all right welcome to

my first solo video

for uploading onto bitshoot and um

that other one youtube i think it's

called

so on my subscribe star channel

i asked for people to ask questions and

i would answer them and so i got about

20 questions

and finally i'm feeling up for uh

answering them because uh this winter

i've been having low batteries

so i've been feeling kind of run down

but i'm feeling up for it tonight so

first question uh there's like a whole

slew of questions from

somebody called m-y-w-l-a-m

i don't know how to pronounce it but the

first question is why

is breath meditation so often taught in

a way that is entirely inconsistent

with the anapanasati suta it is almost

as if some of the techniques taught have

nothing

whatsoever to do with the anapanasati

suta

so the anapanasati suta is

a discourse in the pali texts

giving instructions on how to do

meditation on the breath

it's the discourse on mindfulness of

breathing

and uh it is true that a lot of the

famous meditation techniques

do not adhere strictly to the

instructions given in that suta for

example some meditation techniques

have people essentially hyperventilating

it's like they're doing holotropic

breath work or something like stan

groff would call it uh despite the fact

that the suto says that you should be

calming your body

instead of hyperventilating and then of

course the mahasi method has

people focusing on their their belly

like their

their diaphragm or their abdomen as it

gets bigger and smaller when they're

breathing instead of

being mindful of the sensation of touch

of the nose

but really i mean it's not absolutely

necessary

to adhere strictly to the anapana sati

suta as long as it works i mean that's

really the the main thing

so long as it works so if being mindful

of your abdomen going in and out

works as well or maybe even better for

some people than

being mindful of the touch of air at

your nostrils then

you might as well go for it although the

hyperventilating part i'm

kind of skeptical of but really i mean

it's the usefulness

of it that is more important than how

strictly it adheres to the poly texts

so if it works go with it and uh

uh for example the mahasi method the

mahasi belly meditation

does get people at least to an

intermediate level of meditation

so it's not all bad

okay next question what is meant in the

anapanasati suta by establishing

mindfulness before oneself

that's actually a good question not that

any of the other ones are bad ones but

that is a good question

and um it's also in the saudi patana

suta it says

you should establish mindfulness before

yourself

and you've got these different theories

of people taking it literally like

they're saying oh it means that you

should establish your mindfulness

right at the end of your nose or right

at the third eye between your

between your eyebrows or something but i

think

establishing anything before yourself is

like uh a figure of speech in ancient

indian languages like pali

like uh in the uh sutani pata i don't

remember the word but there's a word

meaning to sep

something before you to set something in

front

and that means to prefer that or to

favor that and i assume that's what it

means here it's like with regard to

establishing mindfulness before yourself

as you're just putting mindfulness in

front you're setting that

foremost that's the most important thing

that's what you're attending to

so i i assume it's just a figure of

speech that

you're just uh making mindfulness your

priority

okay next question do you teach

meditation or do you think it is

somewhat irrelevant

as do some well-known scholar monks well

i don't think that meditation is

irrelevant i think it's

uh very important and uh

i have given um guidance

to people with regard to meditation so

i do i do teach meditation although um

i mean it's like one size does not fit

all like there are meditation in

structures

like in the mahasi tradition where they

just teach the same meditation

method to every single person who comes

there and it's like a doctor who gives

the same medicine to every patient

and if the patient doesn't get better

the patient gets scolded for not being

sick properly or some such

so um yeah it's like different

meditation techniques work better for

different people so

um a good meditation instructor would

have more than just one medicine to hand

out

so anyway the question is yes i do teach

meditation sometimes

under certain circumstances and i do not

think it is irrelevant

next question do you think meditation is

the best

way to stimulate opioid release

or do you think other methods or

substances are better especially as they

are easier and faster acting

well i mean if that's your purpose is to

stimulate opioid release and i suppose

um the thing to do would be to uh

i don't know take opioids or uh take

some kind of uh

drug that would cause opioid release

there are people that meditate as a

substitute for narcotics but

that's really not the purpose of

meditation so

yeah there are there are ways of

releasing opioids that would be like

endorphins or something right

um yeah there are better ways of doing

that and uh

certain drugs would do it but um

yeah it's like the the purpose of

meditation is to be more awake and not

to uh

be narcotized so

yeah or even to experience euphoria i

mean the purpose of meditation isn't

euphoria either

next question what is the likelihood

that the anapanasati

instructions come from the buddha are

there any meditation instructions that

can

definitely be said to be from the buddha

oh

that depends on who you talk to i'm i'm

very skeptical

and um so my answer would be very

different from

say an asian traditionalist conservative

monk who just

believes all of it you know it'd be like

asking a medieval christian what parts

of the bible do you think are true i

mean

they just say all of it regard to me

there's no absolute guarantees with

regard to anything

so the likelihood that the anapanasati

instructions come from the buddha um

yeah i i don't really know i really

can't say

with regard to meditation instructions

that can be definitely be said to be

from the buddha well

almost certainly at the very least he

would be encouraging

mindfulness all the time you know like

the repeated

admonishments that you know when a monk

stretches forth his arm he does it

mindfully when he pulls his arm back and

he does it mindfully when he turns his

head he turns his head mindfully

just all postures you know when you're

eating when you're lying down to sleep

just everything that you do you should

do that mindfully

with regard to actually sitting

cross-legged with your eyes closed

what instructions he gave

i assume he would be teaching something

like

jhana for some monks which

we'll get to directly because there are

some questions about jonah coming right

up in fact the next one

so i think i'll just go to the next

question what is your view of the jhanas

important or irrelevant

this is kind of a trick question because

the description of the four genres

in the text is almost invariably

just this formula this just repeated

verbatim

every single place that it's mentioned

and the formula is

not descriptive and exact and precise

enough

that the definition of the genres is

is uncontroversial so the definition of

the genres is almost worthless because

it's not

it's not so clear-cut that everyone

agrees on what it means

so um personally i think that

jhana originally just meant meditation

and that the four genres were

originally four stages of meditation

like first jhana

you're still thinking so that would be

like even what the christian

contemplatives would call meditation

where you still have like an

object that you're concentrating on you

know it could be

whatever the breath or um or like a

mantra or something like that

so long as you're labeling i mean if so

long as you're still thinking

and then um second jhana and third jhana

and fourth john

you're gradually um making your minds

more and more subtle

so it's just the different stages of

getting to fourth genre in which your

mind is just

completely still and

clear and peaceful and there's no mental

states no discrete mental states going

on at all your mind is just like um

i don't want to say blank but it's like

a mirror or it's like glass

that would be like fourth jhana and it's

just the different stages

of meditation it's like one stage is

you're thinking the next stage is

uh i think it's um your

your mental feelings like your emotional

feelings fade out but you still have

physical

feelings and then in the next stage

above that even the physical feelings

fade out

and then it's like uh eventually you're

just um

just completely clear no no distinct

mental states going on

so um let's see where is the question

here is it important or irrelevant yeah

it's very important because

traditionally and i think this is kind

of the way it is it's like the purpose

of meditation is to

make your mind um as clear and awake

and also as simple and still as possible

all at the same time so if it's simple

and still but you're not awake then

you're just unconscious

but if you're awake and your mind isn't

simple and still then you can be just

all agitated like if you drank too much

coffee or something

so the point is to get your mind as

awake as possible

and to be thinking as little as possible

because the whole purpose

of meditation i mean ultimately not just

as a

you know stress relief or a substitute

for narcotics or whatever

is to penetrate samsara and

uh experience ultimate reality so you're

trying to

see through the uh the shadows

flickering on the walls of plato's cave

and it's easier to do that if you've

stilled

the shadows so that there aren't any

shadows you know it's easier

for you to see through the illusion if

you're not being distracted by the

illusion because you've got

the illusion so simplified that there's

it's just devoid of content

and then you can see through that more

easily and you have the flash of insight

or a liberating insight i should say

so um yeah it's it's important

and the genres

based on my own understanding is

originally probably just

four levels of meditation with fourth

jhana being the highest one

next question what is absorption well

that's what

jhana is often translated as into

english is absorption

so it would be uh

like a contemplative state an advanced

contemplative state

especially the higher the higher

jaundice the the first genre i do not

consider to be

a superhuman mental state but um

um apparently scholar monks

who didn't meditate much really didn't

know how to interpret it

and they've got these strange

interpretations where

all four genres any of the four genres

are considered to be

udri manusa dhamma or superhuman mental

states and

even in the mahasaripatana suta this

right concentration

is defined as the four genres so

i mean if you can take all that

seriously then right concentration would

be a superhuman mental state which uh

i i personally kind of doubt

so i'm not sure if i actually answered

that one very well but uh

next question according to the wiisuiti

maga only one

in one million can reach absorption do

you agree with this

and given the odds do you think there is

a better way for someone to spend their

time um

if you're able to reach absorption let's

say you're able to

get into an advanced jhana state then

yeah you should go for it because your

your the odds of you becoming

enlightened are much greater

the the more uh just awake

and simple you can get your mind and

like for the jhana is just maximum

awake and simple so if you can if you

can do that that's great you should you

should definitely do that but um

it could be true that only one in a

million approximately can reach like

fourth genre or

like a really advanced like what what

the uh the catholics would call

high contemplation um

but i mean if you're able to do it then

you should do it but if if you keep

trying and trying and trying and you

can't

then yeah maybe you should stop beating

your head against the brick wall and try

something that actually does

work for you and um there's one

statement by saint john of the cross who

was a meditation master i think he was a

master of fourth jhana even though he

was a

christian um there's this one part

where in in one of his books i think

it's the ascent of mount carmel where he

says that

if you get contemplation and then lose

it and then get it and lose it and get

it and lose it

kind of like godika in the in the

polytechs where he would get janna and

then lose it and get it again and then

lose it again

according to saint john of the cross

then it's just god has other plans for

you that

you're just not intended or cut out

to be an adept at contemplation and uh

unfortunately for me that's uh that's

more or less the situation i found

myself in where my

my uh samadhi or my concentration would

come and go and come and go and come and

go

so

ah next question what is karma

that's a good question too and it's it's

a really it's one that i get a lot

even like um on sundays

uh little burmese kids will ask me

questions

and that's like a common one that i get

is what is karma

and essentially what karma is

i mean just going with the sutas at

first according to the sutas karma is

chiduna which is volition

there's a famous statement

which means monks i say karma is

volition

and so volition isn't necessarily the

best

interpretation or the best translation

of of chitana it could be something more

like

will like schopenhauer's will and that

really

is kind of a nice analogy for people

familiar with western

philosophy because according to

schopenhauer will is just this force

that it just craves its own existence

craves itself perpetuation

and um you know it's just the force that

drives us all through life and that's

pretty much what karma is too

so karma is like the uh the motive force

of your mind of your mental states not

just your consciousness but

uh like the flow of mental states

is is your karma and if you're not awake

enough and most of us

aren't then that is also just the force

of habit that drives you through life

and makes your decisions for you and

just has you

just sort of going through the motions

like a meat puppet

that's that's karma also but um

everything that you do every decision

that you make

every volitional act um

you know it changes the flow a little

bit you know it reinforces it or

moves it slightly in a different

direction and so

um you know good karma is leading you

um towards um you know

higher consciousness and fewer desires

and uh

you know simplicity and clarity that

sort of thing

and uh bad karma is just what takes you

farther away from that

so with regard to what is karma karma is

like will

it's just the the motive it's like the

the momentum

of your mental states next question

how can there be karma if there is no

self

uh that's that's kind of a trick

question because um

in a way i mean especially if you're

going totally radical like the mahayana

buddhists i mean

if there's no self there's no anything

really

nothing distinct and discreet that has

any kind of self-existence

but um with regard to the terravodn

approach um

karma is just i mean it's sort of like a

flame you know it's just um

it's different from one moment to the

next it's like a process it's a flow

it's it's just energetic it's not just

this substance or a thing

and so it just exists on its own and

when the conditions that cause that

karma to exist

um cease to exist then the karma itself

ceases to exist

so it's sort of like a again like a like

a flame where

um anyone who's a boy scout knows the

the fire triangle and you've got to have

heat fuel and oxygen and uh so long as

those conditions are there

the fire will be there and it's it's

sort of the way karma works too if

you've got the conditions

then it's it's going to be there and

it's not a self partly because we don't

really

um control it i mean going with the

anatella

you can't say let it be this way let it

not be that way and have it happen which

is a sign of no self

but also it isn't the self because it

doesn't have

its own uh self existence you know it's

not an

absolute existence it just exists

because

other things exist that uh cause it to

exist

so um yeah it doesn't it's not like a

soul that just

exists like distinctly regardless of

everything else in the universe

okay next question do you see terra vada

buddhism changing in order to

accommodate western culture

for example ajahn sona at perkin is now

doing

online retreats and offers online

upasaka training likewise

who has an online presence via syriam

siri mangalo

and who has an online calendar where you

can

book meditation sessions with him he

also offers a series of at home retreats

that culminate in becoming a teacher

okay so um the first line is the

question

do you see terra vada buddhism changing

in order to accommodate western culture

and yeah it's already happening i mean

it just has to happen

you've got two kinds of or maybe three

kinds of theravada

in america now first you've got ethnic

theravada which is still

practicing traditional asian buddhism

as well as you can in america

and the americans don't have much to do

with that

then there's like western monastic

buddhism which is

trying to follow the rules more or less

although even they aren't following the

rules

very strictly like uh wearing the the

snow suits and

the arctic expedition gear and all that

even if it's not

very cold or

i mean just money i mean it's almost

impossible it's

virtually impossible to follow the rules

of monastic discipline strictly

um in the west especially with regard to

to money and that sort and that sort of

thing so

yeah i think that theravada buddhism is

going to have to change

and uh um there's a good chance that uh

what it's going to change into

isn't theravada anymore and people

should just be honest about that

like like the the third kind of buddhism

that i didn't get to is like the elite

buddhism which is like the

the left-wing social justice buddhism

where they're talking more about

white guilt and gay rights and climate

change and all that

more than they're talking about go to

mabuda so i mean that's

i mean that can hardly even be called

terabyte of buddhism anymore

it is something else and there's nothing

necessarily wrong with

buddhism changing into something other

than

theravada in the west because terra vada

literally was designed

to fit um the ancient ganges valley in

like the fifth century bc

and all the rules of monastic discipline

especially

are geared right for this this iron age

indian culture that just does not fit

america

so yeah there's going to have to be

changes made and there could be

still strict strictly practicing monks

but they're going to be

um definitely a very small minority

and regular people that want to practice

theravada

or just like some kind of legit form of

buddhism

um yeah i mean you just you have no

choice but to

accommodate western culture to some

degree i mean you carry around western

culture

in your own head you know even if you um

outwardly imitate like an iron age

indian of like an iron age indian

ascetic of the ganges valley

still you're going to be remembering you

know like rock and roll

and all this stuff that didn't exist

back then you're still going to think

like a modern western person so

yeah that is the big question is uh it's

it has to change and it is changing

whether we want it to or not and uh

you the main point is just try to save

the main essence of it while at the same

time uh

making the necessary changes that it

will fit

western culture and won't just be this

weird

tropical potted plant that has to be

kept in a special protected greenhouse

environment was

people coming and taking care of it

instead of just living naturally

outdoors so yeah that is that is the big

question

so i answered that question kind of with

another question

next question do you see a time in the

west when those that support

theravada buddhism will somehow be

integrated into the sangha and not be

left as estranged outsiders

mahayana buddhism has many different

ways of integrating lay people into

their organizations

luposica training courses and teacher

training courses

illustrating somewhat changing

relationship already it could be argued

so um the question seems to be uh

is there a time will there be a time

when

laypeople are integrated into the sangha

and and that's really not the way

buddhism started you know like original

buddhism

the the actual buddhists were the

ascetics

living out in the forest and the lay

people

were just like the the fans supporting

their favorite team buddhism was like a

spectator sport

um so if you really wanted to be a

serious buddhist you

renounce the world and and go forth into

the homeless life

and um in the west people don't like

that because um

you know uh in the west people don't

like class stratification and

uh um like people

at a higher level than them and uh

like bowing to monks and that sort of

thing is uh

they it meets with a fair amount of

resistance

in the west so

um into with laypeople being integrated

into the sangha it's

the best i can i can do would be like a

a compromise the best i could think of

would be a compromise where you have

sort of like quasi monks

you've got lay people living a simple

life maybe in some relative poverty

you know maybe wearing like a simple

kind of uniform

i don't know what it'd be army surplus

or uh gray sweats or something

and um yeah so there'd be like a

um a compromise just sort of like an

intermediate state between

a monk which doesn't really fit western

culture if he's following the rules

correctly

and just like a completely you know no

no holds barred lay person with

everything optional

so yeah i mean there could be some kind

of

system set up i i was calling it nava

cavada for a while

it's like it's not terra vada which is

the doctrine of the elders it would be

nama cavada the doctrine of the

newcomers because that's

that's essentially us we are the

newcomers and so

um you'd need wise people or

one wise person at least to come up with

like a really

uh a valid system that uh really does

reflect the teachings of buddha while at

the same time

maybe allowing people to handle a little

bit of money

for example feed themselves that kind of

thing

but it is tricky i mean if you really

want to practice buddhism

very strictly according to the ancient

texts then your best

bet is to go to some place like burma

and head for the forest

okay next question what were the top

three cave

experiences i had yeah

that's uh top three cave experiences

i'm not exactly sure what the questioner

would consider

to be a top cave experience

i don't know if you want some kind of uh

like uproar and excitement or

ghosts and witchcraft or uh just deep

meditative states

but um i guess uh

i'll i'll just answer the the first

the first two top cave experiences would

just be like

insightful ones ones that really stood

out because they kind of helped me in my

my spiritual practice and uh both of

them happened

in uh the main cave where i lived in

fact it's the the main place where i've

lived it's the one place i've lived

longer than any other place in my life

as far as i know

it was uh called

which was uh in northwestern burma

there's a very deluxe cave

had it went about 50 feet into the side

of this hill

with this uh corridor for walking

meditation had like four rooms

little storage rooms and everything it

was really nice

but um

upper burma gets just blazing blazing

hot

and sometimes even the monsoon season is

just a bust and there's hardly any rain

at all

it's just semi desert there and um

there were times when just being hot

all the time not being able to stop

sweating

not being able to feel comfortable

you know ever you know for just days and

days and days

um you know it would just kind of start

wearing me down plus there's just other

stresses to add to that just you know

being alone not being able to talk to

anybody and

uh you know just all of the

self-restraint

required to be a conscientious monk um

you know it's just it just makes like a

strain

on the system and uh one time

i was just it was just blazing hot and

i was just fed up and i just essentially

threw a conniption i was just like

yelling and cussing and slamming things

and while i was yelling and cussing and

slamming things there was like this

click and suddenly it was like

i had like two minds at the same time

one mind was just going through the

motions

of you know throwing in the connection

and just you know cussing and slamming

things

but the other level of my mind the other

mind or whatever

was just watching that just not getting

involved at all

just just watching and it was it was

like being an actor all of a sudden

instead of just being pissed off and fed

up and throwing a fit

i was like an actor playing the role of

being pissed off and fed up and throwing

a fit

where it's like you know an actor

can be like you know they're they're

like playing king lear on a stage you

know they're king lear who's just going

mad with grief and the storm and

everything

and at the same time that they're really

feeling that you know they're really

belting out the lines and everything at

the same time they know where the

audience is and they know

their center of gravity their their

balance and how much slobber they have

in their mouth and all that kind of

stuff too and it's like the the actors

stuff you have to know at the same time

as your your like raging storm is king

lear

so it was kind of that kind of state and

it was for me it was really an insight

that

first of all that that kind of

consciousness is always there really we

just don't notice it

that's one of the reasons why you

meditate is so you can notice that

better

and um also just the the very fact that

it is possible to just throw a fit

mindfully um i was telling a

burmese monk who was actually a mahasi

sotapanna

although he realized that he wasn't one

but he was declared a sodapana by

upandira himself and he didn't believe

that

you can throw a fit mindfully but uh

i've done it more than once excuse me

okay so that was uh one of the top three

cave experiences the next one is just a

similar one it is even just uh

seemingly more mundane was um one thing

that's absolutely necessary living in uh

central burma

or upper upper burma is you need a sweat

rag

like uh like this you always gotta have

this this is the absolutely necessary if

you live in central burma you've got to

have one of these

and the main reason for it of course is

just wiping the sweat off yourself you

know you're just drenched in sweat all

the time

or if there's flies i mean you can you

can do this kind of business and

and then after you take a shower or take

a bath

i mean this is enough to dry off your

body especially if you don't have

hair on your head and uh it just has all

kinds of purposes you know you can even

wipe your mouth or whatever it's called

the muka punch in poly which is the

mouth wiper or the face wiper so anyway

um mine had just worn out you know it's

just all thread bearing ragged and

everything so i was going to get a new

one

and so i had went into the storage room

and in the deluxe cave

and had the selection narrowed down to

two of them there was a yellow one and

an orange one and i was just standing

there

trying to decide which one i was going

to take and there was no obvious reason

to take one over the other

and so i was just kind of like in the

quandary like what burden's ass you know

the donkey that's just like

stuck between two piles of hay you know

it's like there's two piles of hay

just exactly the same distance away from

it so it just can't decide which one to

go to

it was kind of like that and then all of

a sudden it just clicked i'll take the

orange one

and i was mindful enough at the time

that i realized i was like i didn't know

that i made that decision until i just

made it it just came into my mind of its

own

you know and so um it really got me

thinking about

you know free will how free will could

work and uh

like you really don't know what you're

going to choose

until you find yourself choosing it so

um you know you're just as surprised at

your own decisions as anybody else

and most people don't notice that

because now usually

there's an obvious reason for choosing

one way or the other and so you just

choose the obvious reason but if you're

just

in this state where there's no obvious

reason you know you can wear the red

shirt or the blue shirt or whatever and

there's no obvious reason to pick one

over the other

and you're being mindful at the time

then you can just watch the decision

process just arise and with you just

kind of

observing it you know not even really

participating

so um yeah that's like an insight into

no self

and uh and volition and uh karma and

that sort of thing like uh

we were talking about a little bit

earlier so

there's that and then i guess it says

see please include something with

animals

if possible so um

yeah so my third top three cave

experience i'll just

i'll just uh ex tell about my very first

cave experience

the very first night i spent in a cave

which was in thailand

and it was before i got to burma and

i went to visit a monk named uwetheriza

who was like legendary he was just

super uh ascetic you know he was like

absolutely strict in following the rules

and he practiced all of the

tongues as strictly as he could he was

he was like a buddhist rambo or

something

and so he was sort of set up to me as

like the shining example of how i ought

to be so he was kind of like my role

model

and he did me the honor of when we went

to visit him

um at his cave or on the hill where his

cave was

he uh he uh asked me if i would like to

spend the night

in a cave near his cave and um

so i said sure yeah that's great the

other monks that were that were in the

party just stayed in this

kind of deluxe um cave down below that

had like

linoleum on the floor and a clock on the

wall and everything was this big

fancy cave for visitors i think

but uh ooh wait there is this cave um

it was just like this pitch black hole

and

um he thought it was he thought it was

great but he couldn't he couldn't keep

anything he couldn't keep soap he

couldn't keep a book or anything because

the rats would chew it all up

and so i was still wearing thick wool

robes from america

i just i was just new to the tropics and

uh so i'm already

just like wearing an oven and he tells

me that when i go into the cave

i need to cover myself from head to foot

just completely cover my entire body

otherwise the rats will bite me

and um sure enough it was nighttime

i'm like climbing down we stayed up

really late talking

and then i go down into this cave and

there's like a whip tail scorpion on the

wall and

and just full of mosquitoes and

sure enough after i i got down there on

the

on the floor of the cave and uh covered

myself

up i could hear the the rats coming and

they

chewed up my bowl bag they were chewing

on my trying to get into my bowl

all night long and they chewed up my

sandals and

chewed up uh a few other things

and that was that was my first night i

didn't get much sleep at all that night

i'm so good we didn't even get to bed

until probably

you know two or three in the morning or

i didn't and then uh

just just that just uh mosquitoes and

sweat and just rats all over me and uh

yeah i don't know if that would be

called of the top three but it

definitely stands out and

it did have animals because it was uh

mosquitoes

rats and uh a large white tail scorpion

on the wall

probably some spiders too

okay next question i have heard that the

buddha is reputed to have said

that on the balance of probabilities he

thought god did not exist

is that the buddhist view if so how can

it be explained

that the universe cosmos is moral

one must have a moral universe cosmos or

one

cannot have karma or at least as it is

generally understood

okay well yeah the the buddha and um

i think probably most of the samanas the

philosophers of ancient india the ones

that weren't brahmanas

um yeah they did not they did not posit

the existence of a creator god

you know a capital g absolute

god you know there would be lesser gods

that were just beings that were higher

than us

you know they they had more power and

maybe

maybe more intelligence and um they'd

live longer and that sort of thing it'd

be

a finer vibration than us but uh the

absolute

being the deity the capital g god

um yeah it just was not considered

to exist in ancient india and

so how can it be explained that the

universe is moral well that's just

because

morality is simply a matter of

improving the quality of your mind it's

like raising or lowering your vibration

or getting you closer to enlightenment

or farther away from enlightenment

getting you closer

to having a clear and subtle enough mind

that you can penetrate to ultimate

reality so the closer you get to that

the more

moral it is so it really doesn't have

anything to do with

a god decreeing that this is good and

this is bad it's just whatever makes

your mind

clear and and peaceful and simple

and alert is good just by definition

that is the definition of

good essentially is just what raises the

vibration of your consciousness

and what is bad is what lowers the

vibration of your consciousness

and generally what is good is what makes

you happy in the long run

and what is bad is what makes you

unhappy in the long run but it's just

the quality of your own mind through

your own mental actions

you know it's like the the morale the

moral aspect of it is just built right

in it's just uh

whether you're happy or not

um so i think i i hope i answered that

question

next question do you believe karma

exists

or do you take the view that the concept

was inserted into the philosophy

to give it a moral grounding rather like

nietzsche

inserted the concept of eternal

recurrence in order to give

his perspective a moral basis well yeah

i mean karma does exist because

i mean if volition or will

exists then karma exists because karma

is volition or will

so i mean you can uh take that as you

please

if if you think uh volition or will

exists

then karma exists because that's what

karma is

and uh yeah it's just it's just very

ancient in indian philosophy it goes way

way back

long before the buddhist time so that's

something that

i mean to some degree culturally and

philosophically he kind of inherited the

concept although

um he refined the idea

to making karma essentially a mental

state

that was sort of a buddhist innovation

because a lot of people thought karma

was like a physical substance or

something like that

that sticks to your soul like the james

i think believe that

that karma is like this sticky substance

that sticks to your soul and weighs it

down

so you have to work off your karma so

that your soul or your

jiva can rise up into heaven but with

with the buddha he

uh just made it psychological

next question what path would you

suggest a layperson

follow if they wish to become a serious

practitioner

meditation abhidhamma a flow chart would

be helpful

well if you want to be a serious

practitioner i mean if you want to be

totally serious then you become a monk

and not even a monk in america or in

some cushy

comfortable meditation center you really

become a monk and just head for the

jungle

or the desert and you know just some

wilderness and really

practice as strictly as you can but if

you want to be

a serious layperson in the west which is

completely understandable

then uh well bare minimum would be uh

five precepts

you know don't don't kill don't steal

don't buy don't

have a sensual misconduct and don't take

wine

ale or other intoxicants which cause

cloudedness of mind

or heatlessness and definitely

meditate or at least be mindful even if

you're not sitting cross-legged

be mindful just walk mindfully do kind

of walking meditation or have like a

little mantra

that uh you can have going if you're

doing just some

menial rep repetitive task you know

which includes walking you just uh you

can you can meditate while doing that

meditate while going up and down the

stairs meditate while sitting on the

toilet or brushing your teeth or

or anything really i mean that's really

like i said earlier that's

probably the meditation advice that i

would consider

most likely to originate from the

historical buddha himself

is just being mindful as possible of

every activity and i think the

mindfulness question is

farther down somebody else asks that so

we'll get to that but with regard to

abhidhamma the less you know

the better because the less you know the

less you have to

unlearn because abhidharma really is

it's like a um an ancient commentary

that got incorporated into the

scriptures

but uh very little of it in my opinion

originated with uh the buddha it's it's

sort of like the wii suite maga or

something but it's older so

it's so old that it got included into

the

into the polytechs or the the scriptures

the topitica

and uh it's um yeah it's just kind of

going in the wrong direction it's trying

to intellectualize reality

it's trying to understand reality

intellectually and

you're never going to understand reality

intellectually

you can get sort of a good like

a model a paradigm that pretty much

works

but that's not going to be reality you

know you're going to understand

the the patterns of the flickering

shadows on plato's cave

but you're never going to really

understand what it's like outside of the

cave until you

just break the chains and go out

so um there are other things you can do

like uh eat less read less talk less

sleep less

go barefoot a lot you have to be more

mindful if you're walking around

barefoot especially outside

um yeah just uh and and study you know

try to try to uh

like read um translations of

polytechnics good translations or if

there's wise teachers

that you trust you know you can

read their books or watch their videos

or whatever it is

okay next question what is an anagarika

and how does that differ from

an upasaka how does someone become one

and anagarika literally anagarika means

homeless one

so an anagaraka would be an unordained

renuncian wanderer and

they would roughly correspond to what's

called a potudo in uh

in burmese um i'm not sure what they're

called in thailand like a pacao or

something like that

so they would be sort of like uh like

junior junior monk whereas an upasaka is

a supporter a lay supporter of

monks in addition to keeping five

precepts and so forth they also

are supporting monks and if you want to

be a serious practitioner i mean that's

something i should have mentioned

is really a lot of westerners really

don't see the point but uh

if you cannot really

you know really renounce the world then

at least you're helping

by uh you know you're supporting

somebody else who is giving it a shot

and that was uh like like i said

originally that's what buddhist lady

people were is mainly they were just the

supporters they were like the base camp

you know they couldn't do it themselves

so they were going to earn merit by

being generous and helping others

to really go for enlightenment and that

increases the amount of enlightenment in

the world also

so that's good but i kind of backed up

on that one let's see

so an anagarika would be like

a low-level unordained renunciant

wanderer and they usually wear white i

think at least traditionally

and upasaka is just a layperson who is a

supporter of monks

okay how does one become one um

i would assume uh i mean there are

ceremonies and like like official ways

of becoming an anagarika

in uh in burma probably thailand also

with regard to uh

being an upasaka i think all you got to

do is just

be a devout believing buddhist and

support support the sangha and

even in anagarika i don't think you'd

necessarily have to uh

be declared one by a senior monk or

anything like that

so next question do you see online

upasaka training becoming common in the

west

uh maybe i really don't know that much

about it

um i'm really uh very much of a newcomer

to like uh

zoom buddhism so um

yeah that one is uh yeah it wouldn't

surprise me it seems like it's

becoming more common now so yeah i'll

just say yes

next question and this is the last one

from the person whose name i can't

pronounce

do you regret returning to the west

do you foresee a time when you may

return to the wilds of burma

um no i do not regret returning to the

west in fact

from the buddhist point of view regret

is

always bad karma it always just makes

things

worse it always takes you farther away

from enlightenment

overall even though there might be

certain advantages to regret you know

it's like if you do something and you

feel really shitty after doing it it may

you know inspire you not to do it again

something like that

but overall i mean you can just if you

have any wisdom you can just see that

you shouldn't do it again and

just that's that should be good enough

you can do it without the regret

so that's something i've really taken to

heart i'm almost

immune to regret so

um you just uh you fall down you just

get up brush yourself off and continue

moving forwards but no i do not regret

returning to the west it was

i was i'd been wanting to return to the

west for a long time

and uh you know every place has got its

good points and his bad points

in some ways burma is far superior

especially if you want to be like a

strictly practicing monk

yeah burma burma works better because

the whole culture

is uh compatible with that

and um see i do not foresee a time

when i may return to the wilds of burma

because i'm i'm just uh getting too old

for that like

what danny glover said in uh lethal

weapon you know i'm getting too

over that this yeah that's uh

yeah it's like i'm getting uh in my in

my old age

i'm becoming less gung-ho about uh just

radical asceticism and just pushing

myself to the limit of what i'm able to

stand

and uh also i'm just more sensitive to

extremes of weather getting sick more

often that kind of thing

so it's time to take it a little easier

and

yeah i have no intention of going back

to asia unless it's just for a

visit or a vacation or something

okay next question is from

uh dog breath mr breath

how does mahatera panyabasa

define mindfulness and enlightenment

so that's two questions how do i define

mindfulness

um that's a good question really it's

just

awareness i think mindfulness is just

awareness just uh being

undistractedly aware of something

and uh the highest mindfulness is you're

not even

uh undistractedly aware of some thing

because it's just

the awareness just kind of wide open it

becomes almost paradoxical because

you've got

awareness just kind of of itself because

you've pretty much cleared your mind of

all mental states

all this all discrete mental states so

the perfection of mindfulness would be

uh

just kind of uh

paradoxical mindfulness like

consciousness of itself or something

but as a general rule mindfulness which

is all according to abidama that i

already dissed

it's always there i mean you've always

got some degree of mindfulness it's just

whether it's it

you know high quality or low quality

mindfulness

um but it's it's essentially just

awareness like um

tom poulos seattle who is the uh the

founder of the tradition which i was

ordained he said uh

cd is a feat which means mindfulness

is just knowledge it's knowing which is

uh

essentially awareness and next question

what is enlightenment um

my own interpretation of enlightenment i

will tell you

um later because first i'll just give

you the the standard orthodox

you know right out of the text

enlightenment is just the cessation of

suffering

whereas the cessation of greed hatred

and delusion you know the three poisons

or the three fires

that would be enlightenment or you know

the attainment of nirvana

with with uh my my explanation of

enlightenment would be

uh penetration of the allusion to

ultimate reality it's like awareness of

ultimate reality i assume full

absolute enlightenment would be you

would be fully aware of the ultimate

reality

all the time so i mean you'd still be in

the in the matrix but at least you would

know

that you're in the matrix

okay next question from chaplin

i have it typed chapin but i'm pretty

sure it's chaplin

okay what do you view as the most

helpful

timeless masculine and ascetic teaching

of the buddha

for men living in today's post-modern

west

how can these foundational teachings

help

create stronger more stable men and

healthier families

and culture in the west well that is

what is needed and if if buddhism could

meet that

need it would become a lot more popular

instead of uh

emphasizing wimpyness which is pretty

much what it does

nowadays if it emphasized strength is

what it used to do

then uh yeah i think it could really

maybe not go

mainstream so much but at least become

much more popular than it is

so in order to make people stronger and

tougher including just having a stronger

tougher mind which is really

one of the main points of being a monk

is just cultivating you know

toughness of mind just so that you can

endure

just about anything that the universe

throws at you and still maintain

equanimity

now it's kind of what a lot of

asceticism is for it's just it teaches

you how you can be

serene and happy even if you're your

stomach is empty and you're drenched in

sweat and you've got no friends and no

family and no money

and you're sleeping on the ground under

a tree and everything but still you can

be happy

and i've learned that from my own

personal experience it is possible

to be happy under circumstances like

that but uh the average

uh guy living in a house with a family

isn't going to be doing that much except

maybe like a forest retreat or something

every once in a while so uh

let's see how to

uh have a tougher mind i think uh

keeping in mind

like the first two noble truths that uh

suffering of some sort to some degree

is just inevitable so long as you exist

in this world

um you're never going to have everything

going your way there's always going to

be

just problems and uh friction and

everything

and the second noble truth should also

be born in mind which is that

uh all suffering is caused by

craving an attachment and attachment

essentially means just insisting on

things being a certain way

so just teaching men

and women and to some degree children

that you know whenever whenever you're

suffering whenever you're unhappy it's

it's

essentially from a buddhist point of

view always self-inflicted

and to some degree always unnecessary

because it's volitional

it's it's caused by your own refusal to

accept the situation

and some situations i have to admit are

very hard to accept like a toothache

for example but really it still is

volitional even though

sometimes the volition may seem to be

hardwired

accepting the inevitability of death

would be another way of toughening

oneself up

just reminding yourself it's considered

to be one of the great protectors in

buddhism just remind yourself

from time to time that you really are

going to die

that everything that has a beginning

also has an end

but getting more towards like the more

obviously tough

stuff um yeah just austerity i mean

um buddhism really has a lot to say

about just disdain for unnecessary

comforts

you know wallowing in luxury just makes

you soft and weak and flabby

so um yeah just a little bit of

minimalism

and a certain disdain for comfort

let alone luxury i think that would be

very helpful

and austerity is really it's um

it's a way of expressing masculinity

like um

in william james's classic

book the varieties of religious

experience he was talking about how

in the west especially masculinity is

expressed through like

aggression you know it's like the

soldier is considered to be the most

macho guy but there

is like a peaceful non-violent way of

expressing one's masculinity and that is

just through uh

austerity and just fearlessness

just um to cultivate fearlessness

is really um you can call that the

divine masculine or an aspect of the

divine masculine

and that was the last question so

and looks like we're almost an hour long

so

yeah if anybody uh has any more

questions then

you feel free to include them in the

comments

on my subscribe star page or

um in the bit shoot comments or on the

comments of that other one i think it's

like youtube so um

yeah and then if uh enough people uh

like it

and ask questions then i can do this

again

so be happy everybody and i think i'm

done

all righty hello and welcome to the

second episode of question and answer

and uh hopefully the uh the sound will

be a little better this time or at least

no worse because it's raining outside

and it's loud on this trailer

so i'll start answering questions

first question is from sakia puta which

maybe means it's from a monk son of the

sakians

uh and uh he asks would you care to

elaborate on your criticism of venerable

nyanovira

okay venerablenyanovira was an english

monk

who was ordained in sri lanka like back

around 1950

and committed suicide in 1965 due to a

very

distracting health issue

and yeah one of the very first

blog posts i ever wrote years and years

ago was about nyanovira

criticizing some of his beliefs

and so um first off

i think he made a serious mistake in

that he considered

all of the core texts to be absolutely

infallible

and the core texts are considered to be

the oldest

theravada buddhist texts which are the

first four

books of winia and the first four

nikayas

of the suta pirika and the first several

books

of the kudakanikaya so he rejected

like most of the kudaka nikaya and

all of the abhidhammapitika and a few

other books

and he really didn't have any uh i mean

he didn't put forth any

evidence that that it was all infallible

the the core texts

and he just took that as a kind of axiom

it wasn't really self-evident at all

especially with

all the talking animals and

fire-breathing dragons and the flat

earth floating on water and all that

so um he just sort of arbitrarily

came up with this idea that the core

texts

were absolutely infallible and then he

based this hyper intellectual

uh system this interpretation of dhamma

largely influenced by existentialism

like modern european existentialism

and uh apparently he believed himself to

have become an arya

while essentially hammering out his

point of view

intellectually so um

yeah i think there's a good chance he

was mistaken in that regard

and he was uh very hyper intellectual

kind of intellectually arrogant

intolerant of other people's point of

views i mean

he just sincerely believed anyone who

disagreed with him on dhamma

was just flat out wrong and

also maybe most importantly of all maybe

even more important than his uh

interpretation of the text was his

belief that mysticism is just

absolute [__] and we'll get

to get back to mysticism a little later

but uh

yeah i really think that the buddha

himself was a mystic so

um just a purely rationalistic

intellectual approach to dhamma

is not going to get you very far in my

opinion

and that's what venerable nyamabiru was

doing and he's got lots of followers now

relatively speaking so um next question

from bodhisattva969

do you think it is possible and

important to create a right wing or

conservative buddhism

as an antipole to feminized western

buddhism

and then he continues uh saying in some

buddhist groups you just think the

people really need help because they are

mentally ill and see buddhism just as a

self-help group

i think if somebody hears or reads what

they're talking about in these groups

nobody wants to have to do

anything with buddhism

with regard to it being possible and

important to create

a conservative traditionalist kind of

buddhism in the west

sure i think it's possible and it could

be important if you think

buddhism or dhamma in the west is

important then that would be important

so um yes it is possible and

i am making my own little contributions

to that just by

doing stuff like this so

um yeah there's there's going to be more

questions along those lines so

and the main question just do i think

it's impossible and important and so the

answer to that is

yes and probably yes

next from in manus

alias frank inman who

asks very long questions

next uh cece what role

does the laity householder play in the

conditioning of the world by which

beings

arise prime for renunciation in other

words how do particular peoples and

their cultures make the world

suitable for the continuance or rising

of the buddha sasana

in what ways do laity householders cause

deterioration degeneration in the buddha

sasana

i ask so as to help the buddhist asana

to the best of my ability as a layman

um well i mean buddhism

arises from its culture and the culture

is mostly lay people

so obviously lay people are going to be

setting the stage

and it's mainly lay people

and like kings or politicians or

whatever the people in charge especially

that are determining um

the beliefs of the people and the

direction that the culture goes and all

that

so sure in that respect definitely

just the beliefs and attitudes of the

people

are going to very heavily condition

um the state of dhamma and the state of

any kind

of uh spiritual renunciation that's

going on

also um i've read that

like spiritual renunciation increases

when

things are really shitty so when lay

people

and the kings especially are just

messing things up

then uh the the culture or the

civilization

uh starts reaching a kind of a crisis

point and more and more people are just

going to bail out

in despair of uh worldly existence

so there's there's that aspect to it too

but um yeah i mean it's uh

this delay people that support the monks

the the renunciants

especially like a strict buddhist

renunciant

isn't even allowed to feed himself so he

has to be fed by uh

the lay people supported by the lay

people

so next question as the lotus starts

in the muck and the mud so does the

noble disciple begin from the womb and

from the world of his people who are of

particular ways and cultures and given

to various worldly passions

elaborate please um

well the lotus simile is really

common in the really ancient texts and

uh

the main point of it is that you've got

this beauty arising from the mud

and the mud doesn't stick to the lotus

at all it's like the

the lotus has like a non-stick surface

so water and mud and

stuff like that just doesn't stick to it

at all

and in the text it's referring to the

monk having a mind

that's like that or a spirit that's like

that nothing sticks to it like no kind

of defilements

you know like any kind of mental muck

doesn't stick to it

so that's the main point of the uh the

lotus

and um let's see what see the noble

disciple begin from the womb and from

the world of his people who are

particular ways cultures

um yeah i mean eventually you just reach

the stage of purity where

the conditioned environment really

i mean it always has conditioning

effects and all that but it just doesn't

stick

you don't identify with it it doesn't

really influence you deeply

it's just all external it's just all

external stuff

in fact in the oldest text even your own

thoughts are considered to be external

to you

but that's uh that's like a whole show

trying to explain that one

next question from frank do you think

a wheel turning monarch is needed to

realign the laity householders in

ancient days the king would

instill order and look after the realm

of men is there

truth to this is such a thing necessary

or perhaps i should ask do you think we

need leadership

from or for the laity who can

re-establish or maintain various customs

which could optimize our support for the

beku sangha

um well a wheel turning monarch

pretty much is it's not really necessary

because i doubt that there has ever

really

been one maybe ashoka would come as

close

as there has been one but he certainly
wasn't king of the whole world like a
wheel-turning monarch is supposed to be
he was uh he didn't even
conquer or rule the entirety of india
although he did rule most of it so um
yeah i mean uh the people who are in
high places
like uh like the rush song um yeah they
are the most important with regard to
influencing public opinion and all that
and just the attitudes and all that but
um
uh yeah i don't i don't know uh to what
extent nowadays in the west there's
going to be much
of a turning towards dhamma unless it's

just uh

in in a state of crisis and despair

so otherwise you're just going to have

like fringe group

you know this buddhist people around the

edges of society

or maybe even in the midst of society

except with their

spiritual beliefs being on the edges who

are just doing the best they can it's

just

doing what they can to support dhamma

so yeah organizing a mass movement

that's big thinking

but who is going to do that i have no

idea

next question perhaps we can form an

order of sorts for lay householders who

can keep the fires of older traditions

going

our highest veneration being the

renunciant monks and or

ascetics but as householders not quite

ready for some of us

feel a duty to at least help keep

suitable conditions for those who can

really go for it do you think such an

initiative would help

um sure i mean monks can't exist without

the support of laypeople so um if there

are buddhists who really

want monks or just like really advanced

practitioners

then um that's like been one of the main

purposes

of a buddhist lay person from the very

beginning is to support

the heavy hitters or the people that are

really dedicating their lives

to uh really going for it

so um yeah i mean some sort of

order um yeah i've considered that i've

talked about that sort of thing

um because like full

ordination in the west is very different

from full ordination in

asia and that's another question that's

lower down on the list here

so i'll get into that later but um

yeah i mean um especially in the west

a monk has to receive more support than

he does in asia

from people who have less cultural

conditioning

supporting them supporting monks

so it is kind of a difficult

situation in the west partly just

because we're not living in a buddhist

culture

okay next question it is said all the

buddhists taught the four

right efforts to develop wholesome

states to maintain wholesome states to

abandon unwholesome states and to

prevent the arising of unwholesome

states

this seems to conflict greatly with what
many modern secular spiritual
teachers teach in that many say we
should not
judge but if we do not judge them we are
not discerning and if we are not
discerning
and to me it would seem that we are not
using our mindfulness properly for our
long-term welfare and benefit also this
teaching seems to me to parallel various
alchemical teachings of various western
hermetic schools that involve
purification of various things
just as we can distill water from foul
mixtures with heat

so too can we distill good mental states

with mindfulness and right effort again

this all to me seems to fly in the face

of the modern degenerate teachers of

this age

could you perhaps elaborate on this

specifically right effort and how do

judgment discernment and mindfulness

factor

in um well with regard to right efforts

you're essentially just trying to

increase

um the amount of kusala or skillful

mental states

ethical mental states and decrease the

amount of unethical ones

which is just getting you closer to

enlightenment increasing your wisdom and

all that

and you have to use mindfulness just so

that you'll be aware of what kind of

state you're in

and the judgment and discernment um

yeah i mean you have to exercise that to

make decisions and

the more wise your judgment and

discernment are going to be and the more

mindful you are the more likely

you're going to make good and the right

decisions

so the for right efforts yeah it's

fairly straightforward just

any good habits you've got you try to

maintain and strengthen them

and any good habits you don't got you

try to establish them in any bad habits

you've got you try to get rid of them

and then you try to make sure you don't

get any new bad habits

which is uh mainly just purifying and

simplifying yourself

and you use the mindfulness and

discernment

as tools to accomplish that

okay next question from nardi

how do you interpret the mindfulness of

inside and outside of body

sensation mind and objects of mind in

the saripatana suta

that's a good question and the way i

understand it

is you can be mindful sort of

vicariously watching somebody else

you know you're mindful of their

movements and their speaking

and that sort of thing so with regard to

outside of the body

um that is my interpretation of it

and i think that may be the orthodox

interpretation also like if you're

mindful of

of um of like bodily movements for

example then um

you can be mindful of your own bodily

movements or you can be

observing somebody else and in a way

kind of putting yourself in their place

and being mindful

through them vicariously

yeah that's my my best understanding of

that of that one

next question from average dud possibly

average dude but uh it's spelled average

dad

do nipa pancha concept would reconcile

mahayana non-dualism

by the way where can i study this

concept further

okay nippa pancha is a synonym for

nirvana and literally it means something

like non-diversification

um so it's like

yeah non-diversity and

yeah that concept goes way way back to

the

to the most ancient text it was more

important in the most ancient texts

than it came to be later on like some

versions of

uh padicha samupada or dependent core

rising

start with papancha as the beginning you

know that's the beginning of the whole

cycle of birth and death and suffering

is this mental diversification where

you're distinguishing this from that

which is like the opposite of mysticism

you know instead of like a holistic just

awareness of just the consciousness

itself

or whatever you're you're like

discerning this from that

and you're creating the ten thousand

things you know it's like in

the dow teaching it's like you know

first you have the dow from the dow

comes the one from the one comes the two

and then from the two comes the ten

thousand things something like that

so um yeah it goes all the way back and

then teravata became more analytic

and intellectual and kind of veered away

from the mysticism whereas mahayana was

trying to get

back to these early teachings and so

if you want to study the concept further

um probably the best

book on the subject is concept and

reality by bikunyananda which is uh

published by the the buddhist

publication society

and that's the whole con the whole thing

the whole book

is him discussing using ancient

polytechnics

the meaning of the word papancha and

nipah pancha is just the opposite of

pancha so nipah pancha is nirvana and

papancha

is the samsaric 10 000 things it's the

matrix that we live on it's

the flickering shadows on the walls of

plato's cave

but also in addition to concept and

reality

i'm just reading the ataka waga of the

sutoni pata

or there are certain old sutas

just throughout the um

like uh in the samyut nikaya there are

some ones called the cosmologist

i think in bhikkhu bodhi's translation

he calls it the cosmologist

or the diga nakasuta of the majimenikaya

or the saka patnasuta of

of the digini kaya the central part of

that

is considered to be very like archaic

archaic buddhism older than sort of the

finished

uh orthodox system and so it's to some

degree it's unorthodox and it puts more

emphasis on

just uh non-intellectuality as a way of

getting enlightened

whereas later on theravada buddhism

became known as

which is the uh the doctrine of analysis

and became just

very hyper intellectual in a different

way from yanovira who is also

in my opinion making the mistake of

taking a hyper intellectual approach to

domo

okay next question also by average dud

does the perennial philosophy manifest

in the buddhist teachings in the

perennial philosophy

that's what aldous huxley called it and

it's mysticism essentially

and it's kind of a trick question i mean

in a way

buddhism definitely was mystical to

begin with

but the mystical philosophy usually

refers to mysticism in the terms

in terms of like god or some sort of

absolute

and the absolute is so absolute

it transcends duality it transcends the

papancha or

the differentiation between is and isn't

or existence and non-existence

like in old buddhist texts even

existence and non-existence are

considered just be mental states they're

conditioned mental states

and so they're ultimately based on

delusion

so um most mystical

philosophies or spiritual systems

will um i mean they'll talk about the

absolute

as this it or or even he like

like in a theistic mysticism you know

those call it god

whereas buddhism um goes with isn't i

mean you have to choose is or isn't

because that's just the way languages

are

and both are a mistake i mean it's like

the absolute transcends

is and isn't but most mystical schools

choose

is and then call it god or

tao or whatever whereas in buddhism

the buddha for reasons of his own

possibly

because of the the culture going back to

the indus valley civilization in

northern india

he just went with isn't because he

considered that to be

um less likely to result

in serious mistakes and clinging or

you're clinging to this absolute that

you have this idea

in your mind and then it just becomes

like an obstacle because you're clinging

to this concept in your mind

instead of just experiencing the reality

of it

so in buddhism they just don't talk

about it much or at least in tarabata

buddhism early

like archaic buddhism um they

they kind of talked around it and

mahayana kind of talks around it

sometimes too

but the the idea goes all the way back

to the earliest buddhism

okay now questions from

m-y-w-l-a-m and i've been told that that

is an acronym which

means make your whole life a meditation

so

first question from my willam are there

any enlightened teachers today

if so who and how would an ordinary

householder

know it well that's a trick question

because um

enlightened teachers i mean the only way

you could know that somebody else is

enlightened is if you're enlightened too

so a lot of i mean most teachers who

claim to be enlightened

or are claimed to be enlightened uh very

probably aren't

but then again i mean you get into the

whole um

it's it's like samsara is so so messed

up we're living in a world that's that's

ultimately based on delusion and so in a

way you could say that

an enlightened being really doesn't

exist

anyway i mean in reality there's no

being because there's no self

anyhow and enlightenment kind of neither

exists nor doesn't exist

or neither both nor neither and so the

whole thing becomes like a trick

question

although um in some paradoxical way i

assume

there are beings who could be considered

enlightened and who they are nowadays

i don't know it's like for a long time

my favorite guess

would be paul lowe who's an englishman

who lives in australia now and is very

old

but um i mean there could be you know

monks living in alone out in the woods

somewhere that nobody's ever heard of

or uh yeah who knows i mean like there

are people nowadays like eckhart tolle

you know he's considered to be

enlightened

i think he goes around telling people or

at least he used to

that he was enlightened so um yeah cases

like that it's really hard to say

and so long as you're not enlightened

you'll you'll never be able to tell

although

you can kind of uh weed out some of the

obvious ones that aren't enlightened you

know it's like if somebody's just

like uh just behaving really badly just

getting drunk and

yelling and beating people up or

whatever you know like stealing and

killing and all that then uh

yeah it's a good chance they're not

enlightened i mean if they're obviously

behaving in foolish ways

but uh even then sometimes it's hard to

tell because sometimes an enlightened

being can act in ways that uh

are just uh inexplicable like

uh neem karoli baba in india back in the

20th century

he did all kinds of uh rascally stuff

and

nevertheless he was extremely advanced

so

um yeah again i really don't know um

who the enlightened teachers would be

today

okay next question if there aren't many

enlightened buddhists today why what can

be done to resolve this overall lack of

attainment

uh well i doubt that there have ever

been very many enlightened people

um i mean you you read the the buddhist

texts and you know the buddha is giving

a talk to thousands of people and they

all become enlightened

or something but um uh yeah i mean that

could just be uh

stereotypical indian exaggerations

so it may be i mean there's a good

chance in the buddhist time there

that a lot of his disciples didn't get

enlightened assuming that enlightenment

really even means anything in a psalm

sorry context

but uh we're just not living in an

enlightened age right now i mean

india was just a miraculously spiritual

culture in the buddhist time it was just

very

like uh

the whole lifestyle

it was always acknowledging that there

was like a higher level of reality

and people were really took that

seriously and to some degree still in

india they take that seriously

but uh nowadays in the west especially

it's just

scientific materialism it's just uh the

flickering shadows on the walls of

plato's cave are the ultimate reality

and

uh anything beyond that is

make believe or something so what can be

done to resolve this overall lack of

attainment well you can become

enlightened

i mean you just do it yourself think

globally but act locally and

so you just do the best you can you mind

your own garden essentially

but also like buddhism it has

degenerated in that

people really cling to dogmas and

traditions and rituals and that sort of

thing they need that sort of thing

and in a way that gets in the way

especially if you cling to that

thinking that that's going to get you

enlightened

you know it's like para masa clinging to

morality and observances it's it's a

hindrance and

when the enlightened teacher is gone and

really what you've got left

of the system is mainly just

recorded teachings then you just got

word i mean it's the

the words are no longer alive they're

just printed in books

and uh if they just get parroted by

monks that really aren't following the

teachings then it's just

you know it's just has very limited

benefit

uh okay let's see

oh and another thing that can uh uh

increase the overall lack of attainment

is again if the [__] hits the fan

and uh we wind up in very liminal

uh turmoil crisis kind of a situation

which will then turn people away from

the world in despair and towards

something higher

okay next question what is the orthodox

definition perspective of what a

bodhisattva

is okay well from the uh

in terrible buddhism it's called the

bodhisattva with no v

and there's a good chance i wrote an

article about this a long time ago about

how buddhist might even be a

mistranslation

into sanskrit little pali word in the

pali words bodhisattva

and bodhi means enlightenment and

satva like in mahayana means being so a

bodhisattva is an enlightenment being

but it's kind of ironic calling them an

enlightenment being when what a

bodhisattva is doing is

putting off enlightenment indefinitely

so um i think the sata

in pali was a past participle i think

it's the verb sajidi

which means to be bound for to be

attached to

something like that so originally the

bodhisattva

was someone who was bound for

enlightenment someone who was destined

to become a buddha especially

so um yeah that's in terrible buddhism

is someone who is destined to become a

fully enlightened buddha

okay next question where does the

bodhisattva concept come from

um yeah i think i've pretty much already

answered that one

but it really it was originally um

as a being who was destined for

enlightenment like in the old text and i

think there's a question down here

let's see yeah in the small amount of

text that could be

attributed to the historical buddha does

the bodhisattva concept appear

um the really most ancient ones i don't

remember it but

it is definitely in like the core

attacks

like in the suit it's where the buddha

is talking about when he was a

bodhisattva

which just meant before he became

enlightened you know before

um you know his evening under the under

the bodhi tree on the full moon of may

so um yeah he was just the person

destined to become the buddha at that

point because he wasn't the buddha yet

all right next question i have read one

text that said the buddha became a

bodhisattva after his enlightenment is

this the orthodox view of what a

bodhisattva is as opposed to mahayana

buddhism

which defines a bodhisattva as someone

prior to another

no no i don't i don't see how that would

be possible that you become a

bodhisattva

after you become a lion since in

mahayana buddhism

um you know you're a bodhisattva someone

who puts off enlightenment and in

terra vada buddhism a bodhisattva is

someone who is

destined to become

a buddha and generally in order to

officially be a bodhisattva

you have to receive i think in burmese

it's called a bayade where

some buddha a fully enlightened buddha

has to

declare that it has to like prophesy

that you will become a buddha in some

future life

like um our our buddha gautama

um he received his biate from deepankara

buddha like 28 buddhas ago you know like

a zillion gajillion years ago and

there are certain other um

qualifications i think you're supposed

to have

mastered the jannas or something before

you can become a bodhisattva that sort

of thing

but it is like an easy out for like some

monks that really don't want to try for

enlightenment

they'll just say well i'm a bodhisattva

and i'm just perfecting my parame so

that i can become a fully enlightened

buddha in some future life

which really was not what the buddha was

teaching but

takes all kinds okay let's see next

question

given the earliest teaching suggests an

itinerant lifestyle do you think there

is any benefit

in terraforming monasteries closing

during the spring to fall months

so that the monks can adopt such a

lifestyle

would this shake up be invigorating for

practice

one problem with that is that

technically

summertime is the rain's retreat the

monsoon season

in tropical asia like northern india

just happens to be summer time here

which is the best time for a monk to

live

outside and it's against the rules

for a monk to be traveling around or or

living outside

during the reigns retreat so that's just

another way that um

the uh that tarabata buddhism and the

rules of monastic discipline don't fit

the temperate zone

west very well so

um some some monasteries that do have

like winter retreats or something where

they just don't accept visitors for a

month or more

just so the monks can not be distracted

so much

but i do think that that was one of the

main

important points of being a monk in the

buddhist time that is now

lost for most monks is that you wander

around

you throw yourself at the mercy of the

universe you don't know where your next

meal is coming from you don't know where

you're going to sleep that night

and um it definitely forces you to sink

or swim

and nowadays with monks living easy

lives and comfortable meditation centers

and so forth

that um they don't receive those

challenges and they can just

kind of stagnate and and fail to make

progress

just because of no real challenges so

let's see see if i've answered this one

um

yeah i think i think i answered that i'm

fairly sure

fairly sure i answered that question so

i'll move to the next one

life is suffering is a thought why

attach to or identify with that thought

and not

others this is especially relevant if

one is practicing a form of meditation

where one just watches his thoughts

and arise and pass away the opposite

thought is life is wonderful

but again that is just a thought so

wouldn't it be more truthful

to just say life is well i mean just

saying life is would be a tautology

you'd just be stating the obvious and it

would be rather pointless

life is suffering is something that you

contemplate

as a way of inspiring you to practice

because if

everything is wonderful then you don't

really need to

to improve the situation you don't need

to purify yourself or anything

because everything is already wonderful

so

life is suffering is it's just uh

a belief that has been carried through

india since prehistoric times you know

since the indus valley civilization

and uh the uh the sramana traditions

especially

in india the non-vedic traditions um

they're pretty much based on the idea

that the world

is not a really good place to be

and so you should be trying to go beyond

it or transcend it

so in that sense it is sort of skillful

means it's just a way of inspiring you

to practice more

okay next question orthodox theravada

buddhism

appears from the outside to have become

very systematized formulaic

ritualistic chanting cultural festival

days etcetera

would you agree with this statement yes

isn't this

contrary to the teachings of buddha to

some degree

yeah do you see a way that orthodox

terror of

buddhism could ever move away from the

systematization

um there could be movements within

theravada

that just don't care about abhidhamma in

the commentaries for example

and really put more emphasis on

meditation and there are some

um there's like the the sri lankan

forest tradition that got

set up i think it was back in the 70s or

thereabouts that

is sort of like that and just other

teachers you know

different teachers will have different

emphases

so um yeah but but with regard to

orthodox tarabata buddhism

um yeah you're not going to be able to

change the fundamental principles of

orthodox terrible buddhism because it's

already

that's just the way it is i mean that's

the way it's set up with the

the great councils and everything so if

you wanted something

way more streamlined without all of the

bells and whistles and the bowing and

the

gongs and incense and all that then uh

yeah you

pretty much have to uh start up a new

kind of buddhism

which uh is possible because theravada

you know it's not 100 pure authentic

original buddhism i'm sorry to say

so um yeah keep what's good and uh

i mean you don't really need um you know

the

the rituals and the chanting i mean some

of it is necessary

you know like um you know the monks have

to do

uh official acts of the sangha that sort

of thing where there's a certain amount

of ritual

and chanting involved but um

yeah to some degree it's just inevitable

and unavoidable

okay next question do burmese

monks in the west still search through

the ashes of deceased monks or teachers

in search of relics

or has this cultural aspect been left

behind i don't know what they do in the

west i

i really have never been around a monk

who was cremated

in in the west so whether they go

through their ashes afterwards i don't

really know

but um the next question

the burmese monks uh in burma still

search through the ashes of deceased

monks or teachers in search of relics

yeah yeah

they do in burma they'll search through

the ashes of a monk to see if there's

like the little

little balls or any other kind of uh

relics that they can make and salvage

and if it was a really holy monk

and um even if there's no balls

or you know like the the standard kind

of relics then they'll

they'll just take the pieces of bone

like usually

they'll put the fire out before

everything is burned up just

just so that they'll have some some

bones and they can use that as relics

so they do it in they do it in asia

still but i i really

can't say about america whether it be

legal or whatever i don't know

okay next question venerable ponyboss's

blog has a

header picture picture of a monk who has

set

fire to himself as far as is known the

buddha didn't set fire to himself so

when and where did the idea of setting

fire to oneself come from

i have no idea i really don't know

although uh

i think it was back around 2017 there

was like a like an epidemic of it there

was more than 100 tibetan monks had

immolated themselves

and uh i guess the mahayana monks like

in vietnam did it sometimes because the

one in

the picture was vietnamese

so how it started i have no idea i don't

think there's any mention of it

in the uh the poly text is it considered

good merit to set fire to oneself um

no technically um it's against the rules

to commit suicide like for a buddhist

monk to commit suicide is technically

against the rules it's not as bad as

murder i mean

literally you're killing you're killing

a human being but

you're since you're killing yourself

it's uh it's considered to be a minor

rule but still

um the buddha advised against it

there are there have been cases of monks

like godika in the godika suta of the

samyut nitaya

who committed suicide and as he was

dying he became enlightened

so there are kind of uh um

all alternative outcomes i guess you

know it's not necessarily

bad but as a general rule yeah you

shouldn't commit suicide

if you're if you're a good buddhist what

is the point of self-immolation

i think is to get attention it's to make

a statement

you know it's like uh the one the famous

one in vietnam was uh protesting

you know he was just getting attention

for his cause

trying to make uh trying to make a

difference and uh

i think maybe he did next question i

have read that

some who have attempted self-immolation

failed of those who have failed have any

of them tried again

uh i have no idea maybe probably

but uh yeah i can't really say has

venerable ponyo bossa mahatera ever

considered self-immolation oh this is a

good one

um i haven't really considered it really

seriously although i used to joke about

it

when i was living in bellingham when i

first came back to america you know i

was like

venerated as a saint in burma you know

just like

hundreds of people you know bowing down

to me and literally worshipping me and

everything i was sort of like colonel

kurtz without the uh

the heads on poles and then i come back

to america

and even the buddhists are like who is

this guy and who the hell does he think

he is

just because of the just the radical

night and day difference of buddhism

in asia and buddhism in the west so

sometimes i would just joke to people

some of my supporters

you know if you see me walking towards

the dharma hall with a five gallon can

of gasoline stay away from the dharma

hall that day

because uh yeah i'll be immolating

myself on the front porch in protest or

something but

um it was just joking i wasn't really

going to do it but i have uh

in a way you kind of consider it in

order to make a joke of it

next question how is such a deep level

of trance achieved that one can attempt

to self-immolate

by focusing on breast breathing in and

out

um yeah it's hard for me to say

considering that i've never emulated

myself

but uh i've been i assume that you're

going to be in

more or less of a level of trance just

just before you do that i mean it's

going to be very

intense moment you know you're going to

be in an altered state of consciousness

just right off the get-go

and um yeah i mean if a monk knows how

to go into the trance state

then he can do that although he's going

to have to be pouring the gas on himself

and

striking the match and all that i've

been told that

after the first few seconds then it's

like your nerve endings on your skin are

all destroyed anyway so

um yeah you don't really feel very much

after

after it starts at first so

um yeah i really can't say about the

actual mental states of a person who's

immolating themselves because i really

have no firsthand experience

or even secondhand experience i can't

remember reading anybody saying what it

was like

next question do monks practice

different meditations than the lay

practitioners who are traditionally

given meditation on the breath or

thought watching and let's see is it

acceptable from the orthodox perspective

that the laity practice these

meditations

um well yeah i mean lay people generally

they practice elementary level

meditation and there's lots of different

kinds of meditation

that most lay people have never heard of

and uh probably even most monks i mean

they may have read about it a little bit

but they don't really practice it i mean

contemplating

decomposing corpses is pretty much out

of fashion now

there's not much of that going on even

though of the 40 standard meditation

techniques

10 of them are the meditations on

decomposing corpses

and like there there are some kind of

meditations that are relatively common

for monks but not so common for lay

people

like meditation on the 32 parts of the

body for example

so um yeah a good teacher will have

monks practicing different kinds of

meditation like the 32 parts of the body

meditation

is supposed to be a good one for

reducing lust

in young monks or you know like the

repulsiveness of food

is good for people that have attachment

to food or some of the casino

meditations that almost no lay people

practice

um there are some monks that are doing

casino meditation

which is more of a hypnotic device it's

like somehow

you go into deep trance states with that

so yeah i mean it's not against the

rules or anything for lay people to be

practicing these little known

esoteric kind of meditation techniques

it's just that uh

for the most part um they don't know how

to do it most of them have never even

heard of it

so in a way it's sort of like it's not

as bad as roman catholicism where

in order to practice catholic

meditations you pretty much have to be

ordained into a contemplative

uh order of of catholicism so i mean

it's it's more open than that but and

there i'm sure there are some lay people

that have done casinos and the 32 parts

of the body

and like the four elements and all that

but um

for the most part they just do the the

kindergarten level stuff

like the really elementary stuff let's

see

what are the main differences between

being a monk in burma and a monk

in the west oh i could talk for an hour

on that one i've already talked about it

a little bit

you know the night and day aspect of it

because really i mean it's very very

different

um being a monk in burma i mean it's

like

it's a buddhist culture and the people

are taught from the time that they're

toddlers that monks are like super human

beings you know the word for human being

is not used for a monk and so

they're just exalted beings and uh it's

almost to the point where they can do no

wrong

which is uh getting back to some of the

questions up above about the

the influence of laypeople on on like

the spiritual

um the spiritual tone of a society

um i've i've found in burma that the

places where the ma

or the lay people are the most devout

tend to have the sloppiest monks

because the monks know they can get away

with anything and then the lay people

are afraid to criticize them and you're

just going to have respect for them

anyway so it's good for the lay people

to have a certain amount of skepticism

and like

you know they'll be calling out the the

really bad monks

so in a way that's good but it doesn't

happen enough in burma and

it's uh maybe is in excess in the west

but the main differences between being a

monk in burma and a monk in the west i

mean

uh in burma a monk can just wander

around and sleep under trees you know

there's no electric bills i mean

he can live for free and he can just

wander around

and uh you know just take a bath in in

the river

or or or wherever and um

this the whole the whole society is just

kind of set up and the rules of monastic

discipline are set up for northern india

and burma is very similar to northern

india with regard to climate

and with regard to flora and fauna and

even with regard to the lifestyles of

the villagers you know it's like the

the village guy goes out in the morning

with this team of bullocks to plow the

fields and the girl takes the clay pot

bounced on her head down to the river

to get water for the hut and all that

so terabyte of buddhism fits burma

really well whereas it's like this alien

foreign import into the west and then it

just gets completely

mutated almost beyond all recognition

and so um yeah there's just major

differences

uh i could go on and on but i think i'll

just move on to the next question if

if uh anyone's really interested in just

uh a breakdown i think i did a video

with brian roo a long time ago

just talking about the differences

between being a monk

in the west and in the east but i can

talk about it some more because it is

kind of a burning issue

and it's uh it's more of a burning issue

for me than for

for lay people because uh i'm the monk

who's trying to

to live in the west and uh yeah i mean

it's just a foreign

it's just this foreign world where uh a

monk

in asia is like like a philodendron

plant that can just grow

in the jungle or whatever you know it

lives naturally and the rain falls on it

and it

derives its nutrients from the soil and

everything whereas

a monk in the west is like that same

kind of philodendron plant but it has to

live

indoors like in a greenhouse in a

protected environment with people taking

care of it

so it's just sort of this artificial

transplant

that doesn't work all that great in most

cases

there are some monks that get along fine

in the west because maybe they just like

hanging out with

with western people or else they've just

got this comfortable

like cloistered kind of meditation place

where they can just be quiet and it's

not so different from living

in in asia just you know they're just

living in a cabin all by themselves

with people bringing them food or

something that kind of thing could work

too i suppose

but um as a general rule it is very

different mainly just because of the

the weather and and even more

importantly it's the the whole cultural

issue of

the west just is not based on indian

culture and um it's not a buddhist it's

not a buddhist society

so yeah it's it's night and day

are the differences between uh being a

monk in the west

and in in the east okay next

question are there many buddhists in

burma who live in caves

trees or close to nature or are most of

them situated in monsters

most of them are situated in monsters

there's a more of a

forest tradition in thailand and i think

now in sri lanka also than in burma

the uh the burmese monks

are well known for scholarship and

meditation

but the the wandering around in forests

and

the asceticism is more of a tie thing

so um yeah the uh burmese monks tend to

be pretty wimpy and they don't like

uh really roughing it

so um i was fortunate to be ordained in

one of the few

ascetic forest traditions in burma the

tompulu tradition

okay next question do you speak burmese

how much hope he

was in adult adoptee

enough to get by um okay next question

have you considered or are you

interested in online teaching

such as siri mangalo i ask this question

as it may help in attaining your goal of

independent living in the west

um online teaching well in a way i'm

kind of doing that now

um i do i have done like skype calls

with people

that have questions they want to ask me

that sort of thing

so in a way i kind of already am

although with regard to like

zoom retreats or something yeah i

think that's getting so

kind of artificial that uh

yeah i mean if siri mongolo is doing it

then been good for him and more power to

him and everything but

i think uh yeah with regard to zoom

buddhism um you know i can do it a

little bit

but um i'm not i have no interest in uh

like leading a virtual

retreat on the internet i'd rather do a

retreat in real life

um okay i guess i answered that one

next question how closely do you follow

the winner now

um not as not nearly as closely as i

used to

it may still be that i am the strictest

one of the two strictest monks here

anyway

and that's kind of sad really but um

like i might i'm one of the only monks

here that doesn't eat that doesn't eat

dinner so and um

yeah i've been trying to follow the

rules there have been times i mean for

most of my existence as a monk i was

just like famously strict you know just

a hard ass you know maybe even almost

like fanatical

in in being so strict and um

like the only rule that i've i've broken

from the beginning with with with uh

without compunction

is uh i look into a mirror when i shave

that's like the one rule that i've

always broken just because

there's a thai book on monastic

discipline where the thai sangha raja

said it's okay

and um he didn't really have the

authority to say it's okay to break the

rule but uh it was good enough for me at

the time because it's really

inconvenient trying to shave without

looking into a mirror

um but yeah i don't i don't follow it

nearly as strictly and

one of the reasons for that is the whole

difference between

living as a monk in in burma or

like asia and in america because for

example the money rules

i mean it's just almost impossible

to follow the money rule strictly the

the rules against a monk handling money

are so strict

that i'm not not only am i not allowed

to handle it myself

i'm not even allowed to consent to

somebody else handling it for me

which means that all even the strict

so-called exemplary monks in the west

they're all breaking the same rule i

mean they might as well be handling it

themselves because it's the same rule

strictly speaking um i mean not

handling's probably better at least

you're kind of following the spirit a

little better

so um

yeah so i mean with regard to money i'm

not i'm not like going and buying stuff

or anything but

uh um like there's a donation

jar in just at the other end of this

trailer that i'm sitting in

on my behalf and i'm not protesting

against that you know people

um people just come in and drop off

money

and uh i'll just pick up the envelopes

and stuff them into the

into the donation jar i really have no

idea how much money is in there

but um yeah yeah there are certain rules

that i've started fudging on

especially since coming back to america

this time so i'm not nearly as strict as

i used to be

and finally the last question from

chaplin what are the best ways for

people with children

and families to incorporate mindfulness

and general buddhist philosophy

into their everyday lives so as to

create healthier

and stronger family environment i'm

thinking of small daily rituals that can

become

easy habitual practice long term well

that's a good question

and i think the best ways for people

with children and families especially

is just to uh just try to follow the

like the five precepts and take it

seriously and uh

um i mean children learn more through

imitation

than than through uh you know what what

they're told

so i mean if your parents are telling

you don't lie but then they're lying all

the time and kids are just going to

learn

that when they grow up they tell their

kids don't lie well they lie all the

time

so i mean yeah you just take it

seriously and then that just

kind of spreads to the children through

osmosis you know kids do learn

a lot of their religiosity through their

childhood and their parents

so um so long as the the parents

are really practicing buddhists like

sincere practicing buddhists the kids

are going to pick up on that and that's

probably the best way

to teach the kids although

in burma i mean i i spent

more than 20 years in burma and you know

that's exactly what they're doing in

burma it's like the kids from the time

that they're

babies practically they're just growing

up buddhists

and they're watching their parents and

they're watching grandma and all that

just

doing their chanting and their beads and

then making the offerings

and uh you know a lot of mothers i was

kind of a famous monk in burma at the

time and a lot of mothers you know they

want their little kids to earn merit by

offering

by putting having their little kid put

food into my bowl

so i've got this this little kid with

just wide eyes like holding this banana

or something

and he really doesn't know what he's

doing it's just like mama wants me to do

this you know and it's like this really

serious thing you know he's really

taking it serious and he's got

the eyes wide open and puts the banana

in the bowl and then he kind of backs

off because it's all done you know it's

like uh

mission accomplished and um you know

they learn how to do simple chanting

they learn how to take the five precepts

and learn how to bow to monks and that

sort of thing

and uh to what extent that would

translate into the west

i'm not exactly sure but um i mean if

there were

enough like serious traditionalist

conservative western theravada buddhists

in the west they could have

um you know like uh like

groups you know they didn't have like a

dharma center and then the kids could go

and there'd be like a place where the

kids could play

while the parents are meditating or

something forcing your kids to meditate

is not so good because nowadays you

punish children by making them sit still

so um maybe if you're good with kids

and you can do like a guided meditation

you know where

you're just telling them to imagine you

know they're getting bigger and bigger

and the whole world is inside them you

know and this kind of thing

then that can work too but uh

first and foremost the best way to teach

your kids and to have like a

dharma oriented family is just for the

parents to sincerely practice

dharma as well as they can and that will

just

rub off on the children and they will

imitate that

that's the best i can think of but i

have

a relatively limited experience

in the family life so it may be that

somebody else could give better advice

on that one

and again that was the last question

so anybody that has questions anybody

that likes this kind of thing you're

welcome to uh

to leave questions um

under the announcements on on subscribe

star on my subscribe star page

or um uh underneath uh like the youtube

video

or whatever like that and uh you're all

welcome to

uh sign up for the subscribe star you

don't have to necessarily pay anything

there is like a free tier where you get

all the same um content as everybody

else because i don't like to put things

behind paywalls

and um be happy have a nice day i hope

you could hear this because it's like

raining really hard and there's there's

like rain on the roof

all the time so uh yes

goodbye

All right, hello and welcome to the
third installment of questions and
answers. I am Panya Bodhi Bhikkhu.
And um I've started this as a way of
answering questions mainly
from my supporters on SubscribeStar,
although also I'm taking questions in
the comment sections um
under the YouTube video and the BitChute
video.
Although if I have to do any triage and
uh cut them short then uh
um my SubscribeStar
subscribers get uh first pop
so to speak.
And um I almost apologize for going

shirtless on this one, but um

I've I've got this heater that has two

settings, too hot and too cold or just

too hot and off.

So um

yeah, I'm I'm thermoregulating is what

I'm doing. I'm not trying to show off or

anything.

So um

I guess I can just say anybody that has

questions about Buddhism or Burma or

monasticism,

Theravada philosophy, that kind of

thing,

um feel free to uh

submit your questions um either on the

SubscribeStar channel,

which will have the link below or uh

just in the in the comments,

if you please.

So first question from Friend of Crows.

You mentioned in a video you had a monk

friend who was declared a stream enterer

by U Pandita and then later decided

himself that he wasn't. Is that

something you can elaborate on?

Um yeah, I have a friend in Burma who

was um

declared a sotapanna or an Arya at

Panditarama by U Pandita himself.

And um

uh apparently in the Mahasi tradition if

you finish the course, if you have all

the experiences you're supposed to experience, then you are considered to be an Arya.

Um at least uh a lot of Sayadaws, a lot of the instructors will consider you an Arya. So that's what happened to him. And uh he said that uh for a few years he really thought he really was uh an Arya until finally he realized that he probably wasn't. And anybody that knew him would know that he wasn't an Arya, unless Aryas are just uh completely beyond any kind of rules because he was one of the most um

irritable

or crotchety monks that I've really known.

Um it it wasn't so much anger as more

like

um

I mean I'm I'm kind of uh

uh don't want to say hate, although

that's kind of the word that comes up,

but um

yeah, it's very different. I I learned

from him that there really is a

significant difference between anger and

hatred.

Uh even though it's the same word in

Pali, dosa, and can be used for both,

but um

yeah, there was definitely a difference

and it was really obvious with with him.

He really had kind of a foul

disposition.

Um

So yeah, he he finally uh came to the

conclusion that he probably really

wasn't one. Just I mean he was just

declared once because he had finished

the course uh successfully at uh

Panditarama. And he's not the only one.

There's a more famous case uh I've been

told of

who also was declared an Arya by U

Pandita and decided that he wasn't one.

And that's Pa Auk Sayadaw,

the founder of the Pa Auk tradition in

Burma. In fact, um I was told that the

reason why he started his own tradition

is that he went to Mahasi at first and was training in the Mahasi method and then he was declared an Arya when he knew full well he wasn't one.

So then he decided, "Well, this is this is wrong apparently, so I'm going to try to uh find a better way." And then he started studying the texts carefully and cooking up his own method.

So yeah, it does happen. And um just based on my own experience, it seems to me that most of the people who consider themselves to be Aryas really aren't Aryas. And um there is a a Mahayana Buddhist text, the Diamond Cutter Sutra, that says, you know, any Arya is is not

going to believe that he is an Arya just because once you once you become an Arya, you're no longer thinking in terms of I am this or I am that.

So um yeah, there's probably lots of uh uh bogus Aryas out there. And most of them I assume are sincere,

but um

all all it takes is uh for some people to just have like a really weird experience in meditation, which can happen pretty easily, and then they think, "Wow, that's that's really outstanding. Uh I must have really attained something." And so they get the idea that they are Aryas.

And uh there are some people that are

just um kind of nutty who think that

they're Aryas. Unlike Christian nutty

people who might think that they're

Jesus or something, there are very few I

I I've met

I don't think I've met any nutty

Buddhists who think that they're the

next Buddha. They just think that

they're an Arya, you know, like a

Buddhist saint and are content with

that.

So I think I answered that question, so

I move on to questions from Frank.

And I drink uh ginger and ginseng tea.

Frank says, "If your supporters could

somehow organize and orchestrate some

sort of Dhamma hall, hermitage, or

monastery for you and potentially other

monks, would you accept such an offer?"

Um

yeah, well I mean any kind of really

good offer um

would be accepted, although I do already

have plans. I'm going to be moving to a

place in uh

South Carolina.

And um

any kind of support, I mean if it's if

it's good support, you know, honest, you

know, wholesome support, then uh it can

be accepted. With regard to a hermitage

or monastery, I think my hermit days are

over and I think my monastery days are

over. I really prefer the freedom of

being a free-range person.

So

um

yeah, I mean it's a good idea even if it

weren't for me in particular. I mean um

if you're going to have any kind of

traditional Theravada, you're going to

have to have monks and monks just do not

live on their own. The whole thing is

set up that monks aren't allowed to

handle money, they're not allowed to to

do anything that costs money really, not

on their own anyhow. They're not even

allowed to feed themselves. So

in order to have ordained Theravada

monks

um in in the West especially,

uh they have to have support. And uh

Asian Buddhists,

they're just programmed to support

monks. I mean they they realize that one

of the most important purposes for a

Buddhist layperson from a traditional

scriptural point of view is supporting

the monks because the monks don't

support themselves. They're just going

going for it. And they need, you know,

some sort of uh

foundation of support to help them.

Otherwise, you know, they got to work

for a living and pay bills and all this

kind of stuff, which is a a serious

distraction at times.

So uh with regard to the question, um

yeah, I mean I've already settled upon

um the idea of moving to South Carolina

and uh getting the hell out of

California.

Um any kind of support within that

context

would be um

I mean as long as it's uh you know,

honest um no strings attached kind of

stuff or no big strings anyway. Um

yeah, I could accept that. Although

really, I mean even if it's not for me,

then really if you want like traditional

good strong Dhamma, then yeah, I mean it

makes sense that you would support monks. Although in the West, the like the traditionalist Buddhists are spread so thin, it's really hard to get um like a community going in a in a lo- in a locality because uh the the traditionalist Buddhists in the West are spread out very thin and almost the only way they can interact is um virtually over the internet. So that's something that has to be worked out. There's going to have to be, I assume, some new kind of conservative Buddhism in the West, but we can uh we can talk about that later.

So next question.

For whatever reason, various people have

a fear of spirits and some become afflicted at times. How much of this is dependent on their views and beliefs? How should a Buddhist reconcile something like demonic possession when to use a being is nothing more than a conditional flux of aggregates? What exactly is possessed and who exactly can be said to be the possessor? It seems to me that one necessary condition for something like this to even occur is a strong view of self or I am where ignorance of nature brings about a sort of gravitational pull of existence, not to say such occurrences do not happen, but more

uh that they happen because of we view

reality. What are your thoughts?

Um, well,

demonic possession is accepted as

reality or phenomenal virtual reality

anyway in Theravada Buddhism. Like

there's the weird rule for monks that

says a monk is not allowed to eat raw

meat or drink raw blood unless he is

possessed by a demon.

And um,

yeah, Mahayana Buddhism has similar

beliefs with regard to that. So, um,

yeah, apparently demonic possession or

like spirit possession,

um, it can occur.

Um, at least what is identified or or

called demonic possession or spirit possession.

So, the way I mean, there there are various ways of of um, explaining it. Like like with regard to modern science, they would just say it's some sort of like hysterical dissociation or a mental illness or something like that. Although from a more spiritualistic point of view, you can say that there are spirits and in order for them to function in this version of reality, they have to have a physical body and they don't have one.

Or just not having a physical body is
like a severe handicap in this version
of reality, this phenomenal uh,
this phenomenal form of existence that
we call reality.
So, um,
yeah, they would um, move into uh, a
body. It it would be somewhat like like
rebirth where you've got like uh,
uh, like a
a stream of consciousness or or
something along those lines that just
enters an available body. So, in my
opinion, what would cause demonic
possession is not so much a strong
belief in self or I am. It's like a
a weakness, like a a weakness of of of

your your own mind or spirit that that makes you vulnerable to having your body taken over by some other spirit.

So, I assume that I assume that it works that way.

Let's see.

Um, yeah, I mean, it's you can't really say that there is a a definite being.

Um, in Buddhism, it doesn't really work that way. But I mean, it it's virtually the same thing. I mean, it's it's not so different talking about um, you know, like a karmic momentum of consciousness or mental states inhabiting a body instead of just a, you know, a personality of a of a being inhabiting a

body. So, um, yeah, I'm I I would say

that assuming that there are spirits

that possess

uh, certain people, then um, you know,

they're hungry for some kind of

phenomenal existence that they can't

have if they don't have a physical body

on this plane and um, they would target

people that have weaknesses and like an

unstable kind of mind that leaves them

vulnerable for this sort of attack.

So,

um, people that meditate a lot, people

that uh,

cultivate wisdom generally don't have as

much problem as people who are

uh, just wallowing in samsara and kind

of messed up. It'd be more likely to happen with them.

Um, I have a friend, an Indonesian monk, who um, has one of one of his main supporters in Indonesia is a guy who says that he can see spirits. And one reason why he respects my friend, the Indonesian monk, so much is because he can see that spirits just leave that monk alone. You know, they're they're like hovering around other people trying to influence them cuz even if they can't invade their body, they can still try to get some kind of effects that they want through influencing uh, somebody that is embodied, like embodied spirit. But um,

they leave they leave this monk alone.

They just know that he's uh,

uh, invulnerable or impervious or

something.

Okay, next question.

Uh,

see, would it be uh, maybe it's part of

the same question that I didn't notice.

Would it be more accurate to describe

such occurrences not as possession but

as a sort of obsession where various

mental states take on a sort of

momentum. I have heard various occultist

types speak of carnal elemental forces

in nature that have a possessing

obsessing element to them and hence why

all wise religious sages more or less

have taught to be moderate and to control their senses. As humans, it seems we can follow and sell out to our carnal lust and more animalistic desires or that we can aspire to higher planes with such practices as keeping precepts, following Brahma Viharas, good works, prayer, etc.

Um,

uh, so I think the question is is it really a spirit or could it be some sort of obsessive thought? And um,

uh, yeah, especially in some cases, I assume it could be that way. Although um, going with the uh, the idea of real spirits, um, I mean, it is

canonical Buddhism that uh, demonic

possession can occur.

And uh,

whether the uh,

the uh, mental processes

um, are located in a meat body or not,

um,

I mean, it it's in this in this version

of reality, uh, it tends to work that

way. Although or it seems to, but uh,

not necessarily. Okay, next question

from Frank. Also, how does all of this

apply to those who channel? I am aware

of some Buddhist sects like the Tibetan

Buddhists who are said to channel

deities. Can you explain this means

mechanism by which such practices are

carried out?

Well, channeling also is mentioned in

the in the texts like um,

the first 10 or so suttas of the Digha

Nikaya, the Silakhandha,

um, mention various sorts of animal

knowledge or uh, tiracchana vijja.

Um,

and one of them is questioning a girl.

Another one is questioning a deity. And

when it's talking about questioning a

girl, it's talking about questioning a

girl in trance. Apparently, um, it has

always been the case that spirit mediums

tend to be female.

Not always, but there are more female

ones than male ones

uh, for various reasons.

So, um, it is mentioned, but it's also

um, declared to be something that is

beneath the dignity of monks, that it's

it's really not uh, something that uh, a

Theravada Buddhist monk should uh, be

practicing or or following, cultivating.

Not even going to talk to spirit

mediums. Although I did that once when I

was in Burma.

Um, just to just to test her really.

Um,

with regard to channeling, um,

like I I just mentioned I I tested a

channeler in Burma. She was supposedly

possessed by this deity called Abhaya

Kumara and um, I gave her tests and she
failed all the tests or both tests that
I gave her. And um,
it would be kind of a digression to
explain the the procedures that I used,
but um,
I I think with regard to most channelers
anyway, I'm inclined to go along with
Mary Baker Eddy, like the founder of
Christian Science, who said that there
are spirits, but as a general rule, they
just mind their own business and don't
have much to do with people.
Um,
but
what happens is you've got like this

ordinary seeming housewife who like everybody else has like deep wisdom deep down inside, but we don't believe that we have it as a general rule. You know, everybody potentially has the ability the the ability to work miracles, for example, but one of the reasons why we generally can't do it is because we believe we can't.

So, you've got this woman who deep down has this real wisdom, like she's, you know, locked into some sort of of deeper wisdom and um,

she can't believe that she she can do that. I mean, she can't believe that she has that ability, but she does believe that she can channel some wise being

that does have the wisdom, that does
have access to that wisdom. And so, with
regard to most channeling, I would go
with like a psychological
um, explanation of um,
like hysterical dissociation where it's
like your subconscious imagination is is
like cooking up a personality to use as
a kind of gimmick to let out deep
understanding that you don't really
believe at a conscious level that you
have access to.
So, it may seem like I'm contradicting
myself with uh, believing that there is
uh, like spirit possession, but that
most channeling is just dissociation.

And uh, I'm really no

um, authority

on on the subject. It's something that

um, I have some exposure to and my

father used to train spirit mediums.

So, um, but just knowing that it exists

is very different from like

understanding the the metaphysical

implications of it. And it could be both

are true at the same time. Like um, one

of the weirdest books I ever read was

called Seth Speaks,

which is by Jane Roberts who is

channeling this multi-dimensional,

like essentially a deity, just a

superhuman being. Um and she was capable

of critical thought and and she was

always kind of uh struggling with this idea, is he real or is this just an aspect of my own subconscious personality? And um eventually she came to the conclusion that both could be true at the same time.

That this is just a a weird I mean the the universe is so inexplicable and I mean it's just unimaginably uh inexplicable. I mean it's um yeah, I mean it is possible that both are true at the same time. That it could be like a mental illness and uh a demonic or or in this case like a a deific entity, you know, some superhuman entity or or just a ghost or whatever.

So um yeah, it could be both at the same time plus a bunch of other things that uh we're just uh too ignorant or stupid to even imagine.

Okay, next question.

Uh I think we're getting some political ones next. What is your opinion of Buddhist nationalism like the 969 movement in Burma and the Bodu Bala Sena group in Sri Lanka? Well, the Sri Lankan group I know very little if anything about. So um I can only speak with any kind of uh knowledge on the 969 movement in Burma. And

um

yeah, I'm not really sure exactly to what extent it's it's really Buddhist

nationalism. It seems to be more just a matter of trying to save Buddhist culture and and Burma itself from Islam. Because they don't they don't speak out badly against Christians or or at least I've never heard uh anyone in the 969 movement speaking out against Christians or even Hindus or anything like that. It's uh mainly they don't like the idea of Islam taking over.

So um there there is some Buddhism and some nationalism obviously, but um uh to what extent it's really set up as a Buddhist nationalist movement, I'm I'm not really sure. It's uh

um

yeah. So next question. Um which and there's a bunch kind of on the same subject here. Do you think such nationalist groups would be better led by the laity and that monks are renunciants while the lay folk are still involved in worldly affairs?

Um

the monks can get involved in the the Dharma aspect of it I assume. I mean so long as they're not advocating anything immoral

um and just not really

uh

kind of dropping back into society. Although in Asia you know, supposedly monks are renunciants, but in in Asia

like a Buddhist culture, it's just the the way that the culture has developed or the society has developed that um the monks really aren't renunciants anymore. I mean they're they're just in a they've got their own social class. You know, they haven't left all social classes behind. They're now in the new social class and they tend to be like upper class, you know, people are are down calling down on the ground bowing to them calling them venerable lord and all this kind of stuff. So

yeah, Buddhism is no longer that much of a renunciation movement in Burma. You know, it's like um in a village, the

village culture is centered around the monastery and the monastery the the village monastery anyway tends to be like, you know, right there in the village and um the renunciant monks are like a special kind of monk that might may live alone out in the forest, but uh there's not nearly as many of those as just like the village priest type of monk who are right there smack in the middle of the the society and the culture.

And um

uh yeah, I mean insisting that Asian monks kind of go against their own culture in order to follow the text more strictly is uh it sounds nice, but uh it

doesn't really work that way in reality.

But I do agree that uh most of it should be run by laypeople. You know, the political stuff is best left in the hands of of laypeople although I write political stuff and say political stuff sometimes.

Next question.

What are your views on nationalism in general? What are the requisite conditions for a nation-state in your personal opinion?

Nationalism.

Well, I'm kind of getting out of my my fields of expertise here.

Um but nationalism it seems to me that

you'd have like uh

you'd have to have people sharing like a

belief system to some degree. You know,

they'd have to take pride in their

country and their heritage. They

wouldn't all have to belong to the same

race.

But um

they would all have to

believe in the same kind of of nation

and people and and uh

you know, have have shared values. I

mean that that's really necessary.

Um I suppose uh like a nationalist state

would have stronger shared values than

um some liberal kind of multi

multi-cultural state, but the

the

the less of shared values that that a

nation has, the more that nation tends

to uh

turn against itself and just uh break

down.

So yeah, I think the most important

conditions for a nation-state would just

be uh

kind of nationalistic sentiments and

just uh

a love of one's own heritage and

traditions and uh love of one's own land

and you know, one's own people.

You know, that sort of thing. It's it

would be uh it would start with that and

then the nation-state would just sort of uh grow around that I assume.

Although I mean they would sort of they would interact. You know, the nation would encourage that kind of thing, you know, with propaganda or you know, patriotic songs sung by children and that kind of thing.

But um

yeah, I think the main point of a nationalistic state is people identifying with their culture and their society and thinking that that's good.

And uh you wouldn't necessarily think others are inferior, but you you'd just have diversity. You'd have like a diversity of of nations, a diversity of

peoples and cultures and civilizations and political organizations and all of that. You just have a diversity of them that get along.

And that would work way better than what the new globalists are trying to do which is just break down any kind of tradition

and uh have everybody just ruthless and interbreeding so that you've got just everybody's like light brown and of no particular um ethnicity or heritage or anything like that so that they will be more obedient and to uh you know, the the centralized socialist state or whatever the hell they're going for.

Next question. What conditions policy {comma} would lead to the development, maintenance and overall positive long-term welfare for such a state? What conditions policy {comma} should be avoided to prevent a nation from falling?

Um

it does seem that nations do have a like a life cycle life cycle.

You know, it's like uh

bad times make strong men, strong men make good times, good times make weak men and weak men make bad times and the bad times often involve some kind of collapse.

So um

I assume the best thing to keep the
country going is to keep strong men
going which means that you've got to uh
have some kind of hard times and ideally
you would have like artificial hard
times where you just instill uh like an
ideal of
um you know, like austerity and
toughness
in the people. You know, it's like that
was one reason why America was so strong
especially um up up through World War II
is that Americans had this Protestant
ethic that like luxury was somehow
sinful and degrading.
And um of course you had the advertising

companies in the in the like the
companies trying to sell stuff trying to
break that down and they eventually
succeeded during the uh the uh
prosperity that happened after after
World War II. There was like an economic
boom in the 50s, really nice economy in
the 1950s in America and um that started
the uh the turn towards uh just uh
wallowing in luxury and um sensuality
and that sort of thing. I mean there've
always been people like that, but the
mainstream was more Spartan
up until um you know, like the 1950s in
America or the very late 40s.
And of course um in order to keep the
nation strong, you have to keep

everybody or almost everybody sharing
the same set of values and I mean if you
the the trick is to get a good set of
values. I mean just to have a crappy set
of values that you are forcing everybody
to follow which is what Marxist
governments do.
It doesn't work very well.
You know, you're you're going to wind up
with brainwashed sheep as as the
population.
And that's not going to result in a
strong nation.
I mean China's China's giving it a shot.
But we'll see how that works out.
So I guess

for a strong nation state to to exist,

you'd have to

avoid the uh

the good times making weak men.

And have everybody

you would encourage

uh like shared values. And try to come

up with a set of values that are

sensible enough that just about any

reasonable person would accept it.

Um

like like the way America has been.

But I think one

really bad thing that the founding

fathers of America foresaw and what is

happening now is

when people like poor people who are the

majority realize they can just start voting for free stuff then then that's it. The country just starts its downhill slide. So one way to avoid that would be um just have a law that anybody who's living on welfare unless maybe you know they're retired after you know they're living on a pension or something. But anybody who's taking more out of the system than they're putting into it should not be allowed to vote or to participate in in the political process. Uh only people who are contributing positively overall to the to the nation and to the economy should have some say in what's going on.

So I think that would help.

But it's not going to be happening

anytime soon apparently. It may take

like a

beginning of a of some kind of new

system

to uh

to really

instate that.

If if it happens at all.

Okay, let's see.

What are my opinions on Balkanization?

Um

well, it does happen. I mean I don't

really have lots of opinions on it. I

assume you're talking about the

Balkanization of America.

And um

I didn't like the idea. I I still don't

like the idea, but

if certain parts of America are going to

just become like third world hell holes

due to ultra liberal leftyism, social

justice so-called, neo-Marxism, then

yeah, I mean like red states would

probably it would probably be to their

advantage to bail out of this

dysfunctional, you know, increasingly

socialistic and even Marxist system

then then yeah, I think Balkanization

would be preferable to just becoming a

slave in the brave new world.

But um

whether it's actually going to happen in America or not, I don't know.
I mean eventually I assume it will because everything that has a beginning has an end including the USA.
Do you think America or Europe will reach an accelerated phase of Balkanization anytime soon?
Um with regard to America up until the the last election I suppose, I uh thought it was very unlikely, although now all bets are off. It's it's pretty pretty clear that uh
um the entire system is is rigged and corrupt now. So yeah, I mean there's no telling what's going to happen. It's we're going to hit like this liminal

sort of chaotic stage that we're we're entering already and all bets are off. I have no idea. It's going to be like chaos theory where just the slightest little change at the beginning can result in huge differences at the end and I'm not even going to attempt any kind of prophecies on that one. Although uh I think the Balkanization of of Europe is going to

going to continue.

And I think the the EU especially may fall apart or just go back to being a kind of uh

um

what's the word? This sort of economic

an economic thing and less of a

political one.

And that was the last last question by

Frank. Next question is by Wendell.

And Wendell says, "I would like your

take on focus on meditating on energy

points like the Kundalini so-called

serpent power."

Um

in Buddhism they don't really do that

kind of specialized meditation much.

Um

it's more of a Hindu thing. Maybe like

the Tibetan Buddhists do that kind of

stuff too.

Um

either the the point of it is not

enlightenment

or else it's like a very indirect

approach. It's like uh

So um

yeah, I've never really practiced any

kind of like specialized meditation that

isn't just going for increased uh

simplicity and clarity and uh awakeness

in the mind.

So um

it could be useful for some people.

But uh I've never really been called to

it. So I really can't speak with

authority on the effects of it or the

benefits or anything like that because

um

I don't do it.

Next question is from Steve.

"Have you ordained people and do you still do that? What is the procedure like?

I have to say in the back of my mind I had always thought about doing it at some point. As it turns out, I have ordained a total of one person and I didn't want to ordain the person. I was just informed that I was going to be the preceptor of this American guy who came to the monastery a few years ago and wanted to be ordained temporarily just for like a few days or a week at most um in order to please his pretty Burmese girlfriend.

And um I really have never been into

like temporary ordinations because the

monks

I mean they're clueless. They don't know

how to follow the rules correctly. You

know, they've all they've still got

money and everything so that they're

they're they never have pure sila from

the from the get-go from from start to

finish.

But um I was just informed by the abbot

that I was going to be the uh

the preceptor and uh my my disciple and

I really didn't have um

really didn't have much interaction.

With regard to ordaining people in the

future, I think my days of that are

pretty much over.

Uh I used to think about it like like uh

like

Pali names, good Pali names for monks.

Like I like I like the name Munigosa.

I'm kind of sorry I don't get to name

anybody that. But it has just turned out

that uh I have had a few uh Western

monks especially, a few Asian ones also

kind of gravitate to me. After they were

already ordained, they they'd read about

me or hear about me and want to come

visit me and you know, just sort of hang

out and stay close and kind of observe

what I was doing, that kind of thing.

But um

yeah, I have I have not ordained any

real disciples.

And the procedure

is relatively simple. I mean just about

anybody can be ordained

uh at like a Burmese a Burmese place.

Maybe not in America, but you go to

Burma and uh

yeah, you don't even have to be a

Buddhist really. I mean they'll they'll

just ordain just about anybody.

So

um

the procedure ideally is that you uh

break you sever all of your uh your

obligations.

You know, it's like you can't be in debt
for example. You have to pay off all
your debts.
And you can't have any obligations to
the government. I mean you can't be like
a soldier who is AWOL or anything like
that. A runaway slave is out.
And um
so I mean you you settle your accounts,
you know, you get yourself clear.
And then you go and different
monasteries will have
different procedures. You know, you
might be required to be a monastery
attendant for a while. Like in Thailand
like in the Ajahn Chah tradition um you
have to be like a monastery attendant

for quite a while before they'll ordain

you as a monk. Although other places you

just walk right in this very same day

you can get ordained.

So um

with regard to the ordination it's just

maybe half hour long ceremony with a lot

of chanting in Pali. You'd have to have

a preceptor willing to accept you and

and you'd have to have the requisites.

The

the eight requisites which is the three

robes

the belt, the bowl

the water filter

the the razor and the needle. I think

that's eight.

Must have a sitting cloth too.

Uh

so yeah, if you want to be ordained then

uh

my blessings are upon you and good luck

to you.

It's it's really not all that

complicated. And there there are no

lifelong vows. Like I already mentioned

most

um well, I almost mentioned it. Most um

like Thai and Burmese

um males

that are Buddhists are ordained at least

once in their lifetime, often just for a

few days when they're when they're kids.

They're ordained as novices. It's kind

of like a

uh ritual of like a right of passage

into manhood or something.

So, yeah, even the king of the king of

Thailand is ordained temporarily as a

monk

um in his youth.

So, it's pretty easy to do.

Um to be a it to be ordained as a monk

is easy. To be a good monk is is not so

easy.

So,

yeah, that's that's that's the difficult

part. It's just like following

following the teachings of the Buddha

correctly and and sincerely and

conscientiously. That's the hard part.

Okay, next question from Dusty

Springfield.

How does faith factor into your

Buddhism?

For example, faith in the Dharma and its

ability to produce results as well as

faith in your own abilities to attain

it. Do you ever suffer a loss of faith?

And is that common among monks?

Well,

I've always considered myself not to be

very faith-oriented. You know, you've

got like the uh the reason-oriented

person

who is more in tune with like philosophy

and science.

And then you've got the faith-oriented

person who's more in tune with like

religion and and art.

So, it's like more or less like artistic

temperament, scientific temperament, or

philosophical temperament, and religious

temperament. And I've always been like

the more cerebral, head-oriented,

philosophical type of person who

I don't really have much use for faith.

I just

don't have much use for it.

But, I've told people this in Burma

before. Like I'd be out in this forest

in Burma, someone would come visit me,

you know, somehow in during the
conversation I've mentioned that I
really don't have much faith, and then
they point out, "Well, I mean, you're
wearing monk's robes and you're you're
thousands of miles from home living
alone in this forest, you know? So,
yeah, I mean,
I had to think about it. It's like,
"Yeah, okay. I have that kind of faith.
I have the faith that Dharma is
essentially correct, that it is possible
to become enlightened, and even if I
can't become enlightened in this life
due to whatever hindrances or or
defilements or whatever, at least you
can get closer, you know, you can make

progress."

So, yeah, there is that. And also,

there's there's another kind of faith

like St. John of the Cross, possibly my

favorite Christian,

um he talked about dark faith.

And dark faith is like when you get into

really deep meditative states where

you're

it's going going with the Christian

explanation, like the way uh St. John of

the Cross would teach contemplation, he

would say, "Dismiss from your mind

anything that isn't God." So, you can't

imagine God with your imagination, so

you dismiss the imagination. You can't

figure out God intellectually, so the intellect goes. You can't see or hear or taste or touch God. You know, all the senses, I mean, you just dismiss the senses. And essentially,
you can't really grasp God with any kind of mental state, so it all goes.
But, when you succeed at that, when you've made your mind crystal clear, empty, and silent, there's still something there.
And that something there is from from St. John of the Cross's point of view, from the Catholic point of view, that's the spirit of God that pervades the entire universe, and you can't get rid of that.

And so, he called that dark faith. It's just this deep awareness just deep down that you've got like the spirit of God inside you, and you can always feel it at a subliminal level. So, there is that kind of faith also, although of course in Buddhism you wouldn't be talking about the spirit of God, you'd be talking about something else, just ultimate reality, you know, the paramatta sacca, the highest truth, you know, it dwells within you.

So, you can use different words, but that's also a kind of faith, and um so, yeah, it's it is definitely an

important factor.

And do I ever suffer a loss of faith,

and is this common among monks? Um

yeah, it comes and goes. I mean, it's uh

subject to conditions. So, it has its

has its moments, has its ups and downs,

and uh certainly, um

like a lot of Western monks who drop out

drop out of the monkhood, not only do

they stop being monks, they just stop

being Buddhists. You know, it's just

they they just do a 180.

And so, yeah, I I would consider that a

severe loss of faith.

Um

but yeah, it does happen.

So, next question

from Nardi.

What is happening in Burma? I ask you

because you were there for a long time.

Um

I'm no real authority on what's going on

in Burma now, but apparently the Burmese

military uh

overthrew the increasingly liberal and

democratic government. And they never

really they never really gave up power

to begin with.

But, they

in uh

there used to be economic sanctions,

like international economic sanctions

against Burma because it was like this

brutal military dictatorship. And so, in order to get the sanctions lifted, they had to like liberalize their governmental system, which meant that a lot of non-military people were allowed into government, and um a lot of the generals just took off their uniforms and put on suits, essentially. But, there were still uh certain aspects of the new constitution that was formulated that made sure that the army stayed in control with regard to what they wanted to be in control of, like foreign policy, for example. And um they were just losing their their grip, I assume.

And um you know, they it wasn't enough to satisfy them. They could see that the the the the country was moving more and more towards sort of Western-style global globalist liberalism or something, and they just didn't like that. And so, they just put the kibosh on it and uh overthrew the country again, which I mean, coups in Burma or even in uh you know, third-world countries that used to be British colonies are pretty common. It happens a lot. Even during the military dictatorship, there was uh at least once while I was there when the dictator was simply overthrown by like a coup and

just replaced by a different different

general or colonel or whoever it was.

So, yeah, there was one of those when I

was living in Burma. It was it was Khin

Nyunt was uh

the the leader of Burma. He was like the

the dictator of Burma, and then he got

he was uh overthrown on charges of

corruption, which is, you know,

they're all corrupt.

Um it's kind of like the stuff that's

happening against Trump now.

Um

and he was replaced by Than Shwe, I

think.

So, yeah, I mean, it's it's I wasn't

surprised at all. It's just this is what

happens.

Um

I think uh

Oh, yeah, I should I should mention

before I move on to the next question

that uh

in a way, they might if they might

really get away with it because um

if international sanctions are put

against Burma again because of the

overthrow of the liberalized government

and being replaced by a more military

government, then if they try to punish

Burma, all they're going to be doing is

is just push Burma into the arms of of

China because China's going to support

Burma no matter what Burma does because
they want Burma as a satellite state,
and they want Burma's natural gas, and
they want Burma's ports, and all this
kind of stuff. And so, it may be that um
the new Cold War with China will uh let
the Burmese get away with their military
coup.
And uh in a way, it's it's okay because
the military was sort of incompetent,
and um
um it kind of supports Buddhism.
You know, like the military, you know,
sort of like the the mafia was is
Catholic, you know, the the Burmese
military uh leadership is is Buddhist.
And so, um in some in some respects,

from a a Dharma point of view, Burma may be better off under the military dictatorship. You cannot serve both God and mammon, and if you got no mammon because you got these incompetent boobs ruining the economy, then people are going to be more religious, essentially. So, from the from the point of view of Buddhism and preserving one of the last remaining uh wisdom cultures in the world, then

um yeah, it it's it's not it's not all bad, and it's it's not surprising, and it's no big deal as far as I'm concerned.

Okay, next question

from follower number A12C67E7,

which uh I think is the code for

uh a certain color. I looked it up, and

it's like a kind of reddish purple.

Could you talk about your travels in

Indonesia and about Theravada Buddhism

there as well as ancient Buddhist

structures like the Borobudur?

Um yeah, I can talk about that.

Um

I've been to Indonesia like uh four

times

and it's always Bali. I have a um

a friend, the one the one that I talked

about earlier who um the the ghosts

don't bother him.

And uh his family's very wealthy. They

live in Bali and um

so I got invited there and his family is

almost single-handedly

um promulgating Theravada Buddhism in

Bali.

Um

it used to be that Western Indonesia was

uh Hindu and Buddhist. Like just about

every country looks back to some

classical culture

for its um just it's that it derives a

lot of its culture from, you know, like

the the language and the the number

system and the calendar and some of the

some of the government stuff. You know,

it's like um America and the West in

general, we look back to especially the
Roman Empire or to ancient Rome as our
the classical culture upon which our
culture is based. But in early
Indonesia, it was India. Just the same
with Burma.
Just India was the classical culture and
um
so before Indonesia converted to Islam
relatively peacefully
um they were
uh like a mix of Buddhism and Hinduism
and at some point the government decided
just to amalgamate
amalgamate uh Buddhism and Hinduism. So
it just became like one religious system
with Buddhism and Hinduism mixed

together.

And then when Islam started taking over

um Indonesia, and I don't remember what

century

but when Islam was

um really making heavy inroads into

into Indonesia

um

the people or a lot of the people who

wanted

to maintain

their

um like Buddhist Hindu heritage

uh went to Bali.

So it was like a lot of the

intellectuals and the philosophers and

artists went to Bali

and they set up a like a big temple on

the four corners of Bali, which is

shaped sort of like a diamond or a kite

or something.

So to protect

Bali as as as like the spiritual place

and um so Bali is like 90% they're

called Hindu, but it's like a mixture of

Buddhism and Hinduism.

And um it's it's very

um kind of kind of degenerate or I mean

it's beautiful. It's very aesthetic,

very kind of sensual, but um like when

the people are doing the ceremonies and

the the praying and all that, they

really don't they really don't

understand the purpose of it. It's just the tradition. It's just this beautiful aesthetic tradition that they follow and there's almost no meaning to it anymore. And um the family of this monk friend of mine who lives in Bali, um they're like half Chinese. And so they were following Mahayana Buddhism, but then at some point um many years ago um the matriarch of the family converted to Theravada and uh she's been converting like especially like um Chinese Mahayana Buddhists over to Theravada, especially at first. And um they're just promoting it throughout

throughout a lot of Bali.

Um

so it's it kind of works in Bali because

they're already geared towards a kind of

Hinduistic Buddhistic kind of culture

where they have respect for wandering

holy men and that sort of thing. So um

yeah, they're they're

their culture is more

um adaptable to to Theravada Buddhism

than say American culture.

So I think uh I hope I answered that one

well enough. Oh, the the ancient

Buddhist structures like Borobudur, um

that's in Java and in also in Sumatra

there's there's like Buddhist Buddhist

temples and that sort of thing. And

that's from back before um

uh Islam took over.

So I really don't know a lot about them,

but uh yeah, it used to be a Buddhist

culture, Buddhist and Hindu that then uh

combined together into one system.

Okay, next question is from Chaplin.

What is appropriate etiquette for

Westerners interacting with monks? It

seems most people are completely unaware

of the proper monk layperson traditions

that are commonplace in traditionally

Buddhist countries.

Um well

yeah, I think etiquette would probably

be the best word because there's no

rules saying that laypeople have to act a certain way with monks, but there are rules for the monks cuz almost all the rules are for monks. The rules for monks uh with regard to what kind of people it is appropriate to teach Dhamma to. And you're not allowed to teach Dhamma to someone who is not being respectful, not necessarily to the monks, but even to to Dhamma.

So, you know, there's rules against uh a monk teaching somebody sitting on a high seat while he's sitting on a low seat. You know, you you should show respect for the teacher, that sort of thing. Um you know, or there's a rule against teaching Dhamma to somebody

who's walking in front while the monk is walking behind or teaching Dhamma to someone walking on a path while the monk is like walking beside the path.

So there should be respect you and um you know, take your shoes off when you approach a monk, that sort of thing.

Although it doesn't it wouldn't always work like if you're out on in a in a city sidewalk or something, it might not work so well.

Um

shouldn't point your shoes at or point your feet at at a monk or I mean in India you just don't point your feet at anybody who is like respectable, anyone

senior to you, anything like that.

Um

let's see.

Uh women especially if they're if

they're with monks, I mean monks are

celibate and trying to to live a holy

life, but they're still guys.

So um yeah, women should be relatively

modest when when interacting with monks

and uh shouldn't be laying hands upon

them, that sort of thing. Although the

the monks might really enjoy it, but uh

still it's uh

if if they're trying to be conscientious

monks, it is it's not so good.

Uh see, what else?

Uh just remember that uh like I was

saying earlier, monks really aren't even allowed to provide themselves with their own food. They're not allowed to store food overnight. They're not allowed to cook their own food. They're not allowed to even ask for food unless they're sick and I assume starvation would would qualify.

But um

yeah, so anybody that really wants to behave properly around monks should uh really study up on it. Because, you know, monks aren't allowed to handle money or anything and so um

yeah, it's like one of the purposes of of laypeople traditionally is supporting

the monks.

And uh that would would require some

training. I can't really answer it very

well in a like a 3-minute or 5-minute

long answer.

But um

yeah, it's like in Burma, monks aren't

even considered to be human beings. Just

the word for human isn't even used for

monks. So there's

um this this very deep

respect where people just get down on

the ground and and prostrate before

monks.

I've had uh

young ladies spread their their scarves

on the ground for me to walk on. Not not

to protect my feet, but to bless the scarf with the the feet of the holy man. And uh the founder of the tradition in which I was ordained, Tong Pul Luang Por Si Atto, um some women would uh line the sides of the path and spread their long hair out for me to walk on.

And um

yeah, that's that's kind of overdoing it, I think. I'm not I'm not advising anybody in America to do that sort of thing. But uh to have a certain I mean proper respect, you know, it's like a monk should not be um just treated like like an average dude. Unless he's his behavior is so obviously um you know,

dude-like

that uh

yeah, maybe in that case. But still

um you know, there should be some

respect and uh modesty and you know, cut

down on the raunchy jokes and that sort

of thing.

So next question from Chaplin. Tell us

about your typical daily or weekly

routine at the monastery in California

when it comes to meals.

You spoken about how traditional alms

rounds not happen in American

neo-Buddhist communities. Yeah, like in

in Burma

um

almost everywhere I would live

pretty much everywhere I stayed in

Burma, I would just in the morning just

take my bowl my alms bowl and just walk

to the nearest village

and uh people would put food in. When I

had enough, I'd turn around and go back

and

go back out into the woods or wherever I

was staying and and eat.

But uh in America it doesn't work that

way. So the way it works here is um

um people come in the morning, usually

like a a Burmese

person or a Burmese family

will come in the morning. They'll sign

up in advance, you know, the monks all

know who's coming that day. And um

you know, it's like uh one lady comes

every Tuesday, another uh there's this

doctor who comes every Wednesday. And uh

some days are open. Weekends generally

it's a different person, you know, each

each Saturday or Sunday. And um

yeah, I mean that's that's generally how

it works here. Um

uh the main meal is like 11:00 in the

morning.

Um

the monks eat a dawn meal, too, which I

don't eat. So, I'm not exactly sure how

they work that out. I I I suspect that

uh if nobody comes and offers it, they

just cook their own.

Um a lot of time monasteries are like

that, too.

So, yeah, the the the the daily routine

is uh around 11:00 I just go into the

kitchen and

and uh somebody's

there or soon to be there who will offer

food, and then uh most of the monks

don't use their bowls, but uh I always

eat from my bowl unless it's something

like pizza or something

in which bowls uh

are pretty much uh unnecessary.

And uh

there have been people that have like

Western people have tried to offer me

food by uh having pizzas delivered, that

sort of thing. In fact, uh

Chaplin very nicely had a pizza sent to

me.

So,

um yeah, so it's not much of a routine.

I mean, it's just uh 11:00 I go in and

whoever offers the food, I eat it.

That's pretty much the routine.

Okay, next question from JML.

From a Buddhist perspective, what do you

think psychedelics do?

I understand they're not part of

Buddhism and I'm not advocating their

use.

Psychedelics.

Um with regard to exactly, you know, the

function of of how they're how they're

doing what they do, I can't really say.

But um

they do some of them do have like a

consciousness-expanding

attitude. And in me they they often

trigger um or they have in the past

they've triggered uh like mystical

states or religious experiences.

And

I assume

part of excuse me, I assume part of the

reason for that is that

they're kind of knocking you out of your

ruts.

We're we're we're so governed by habit,

including habitual thought patterns that

just being

um slammed out of the rut

out of your habits, it can really have

an awakening effect on you, especially

if you're if it's a drug that doesn't

put you into a stupor.

You know, like narcotics or or alcohol,

something like that, it it tends to

lower your vibration and make you less

conscious.

But with psychedelics, it can make you

more conscious. It can make you more

alert while at the same time um kind of

blowing away your standard habit

patterns of of your personality and how

you think, so that you're like in this

unknown territory or you can be.

Um I think that's largely how it works.

And it can be useful for some people.

And uh ayahuasca is somewhat different.

I don't know if ayahuasca would uh

qualify as a psychedelic.

But um yeah, that that has potentially

positive effects, too.

Um

See, the next question is similar. This

one is from Average Dad. I don't I'm I

still wonder if it's supposed to be

Average Dude, but it's spelled Average

Dad.

Can psychedelics allow you to have a

glimpse of enlightenment? I know of a

monk that lives in a rural part of my hometown that tried DMT and 5-MeO-DMT, which I don't know what that means. And entities taught him about transcendental self that encompasses everything.

Is this like the soma of the Vedas, and does Buddhism have a similar thing?

Um Buddhism

yeah, it it doesn't really emphasize the use of drugs. It doesn't entirely ban all drugs uh like a lot of people think. You know, there's the

the uh the fifth precept for laypeople is not taking ale, wine, or any intoxicant which causes cloudiness of mind.

And um in the Pali text, like it's for

the monks, the rules of monastic
discipline is just uh intoxicating
drinks. It's a it's a
pācittiya offense
to uh take majjapaññā intoxicating
drinks.
Um although technically speaking um
cannabis is allowable as a medicine.
And with regard to other kinds of drugs,
I mean, there's there's really no
mention. You know, something like
mushrooms or something like that, other
than there is a rule
uh forbidding a monk from taking a
medicinal substance without uh like a
medical need. Like if he's doing it for

fun, that kind of thing.

So, um yeah, taking any kind of medicine without a genuine medical need for it would uh be against the rules. So, it's really not used in Buddhism. In Buddhism, you're using meditation as a way of of blowing away your your uh at least temporarily your habitual thought patterns and uh enhancing your consciousness.

And um they do have a similar effect or they can, like deep meditation and like a mystical state that's uh triggered by something like LSD or mushrooms, um there is a lot of overlap in the effect, although of course, you're not going to be seeing

pretty colors or uh you know, your mind

won't be distorted so much. It's just

going to be silent if you're meditating

well.

And um unfortunately

um

it's not as reliable for for everybody.

If you if you take the drug, I mean, you

have a

you can be fairly confident there's

going to be an effect. Whereas with

meditation, you can meditate for years

and years and uh you may never get to

the same level of a mystical experience

that you would have from taking 500

micrograms of acid.

And I can speak from some experience on
that because before I was a monk
um I did take LSD maybe four times a
year for maybe 10 years, so that's quite
a few times.
So, um yeah, and like I said, it was I
would have religious experiences a lot.
It was like a part of my spiritual
practice a lot of the time. I go
backpacking alone out into a wilderness
area and uh do a little fire sacrifice
and take acid and uh
just commune with nature and meditate
and that kind of thing.
So, I mean, whether something is good or
bad depends on your your volition.
So, if you have a positive volition

then uh there's going to be positive effects.

But if you if you're just doing it recreationally to to party or something like that, then uh it's uh probably better from a Buddhist point of view if you don't do it.

And um

yeah, it is true that the early Vedic Brahmans took uh a drug called soma.

And I don't remember what they think it was. I think it was some kind of stimulant and maybe had some some uh psychedelic effects.

So, I mean, in India they knew about that stuff, and I assume the Buddhists

knew about it, too. It's just that they

don't

it's just not mentioned much in the

texts.

Okay.

Next question. Was Buddha or Bodhidharma

of Aryan descent? Are the teachings of

both equal, or could you differentiate

them?

Um

there's there's a good chance both of

them were of Aryan descent. I mean, the

the Buddha and Bodhidharma are declared

to have had blue eyes, for example.

And um

with regard to the Buddha, he was from

North India, and you know, he was of the

upper class in North India, and the
ruling class was literally Indo-Aryan.
So, um yeah, there's a good chance he
was Aryan. And Bodhidharma also
supposedly was a Brahman and uh is
declared to have had blue eyes, so he
may have been Aryan, too, although um
I don't think there's any way you could
really prove
um
that, and uh it's not really of
like paramount importance
whether they are or not. And with regard
to whether the teachings are equal or
not, um no, they're not the same. I mean
it whether they're equal depend on your

definition of equal, but um
yeah, they're they're certainly not the
same. He's got Let's see. Average Dad
has some quotes here from Bodhidharma,
so I might as well. He says uh this
These quotes of Bodhidharma have a
non-duality scent.
Quote, "As long as you look for a Buddha
somewhere else, you will never see that
your own mind is the Buddha. The Buddha
is your real body, your original mind.
This mind has no form or
characteristics, no cause or effect, no
tendons or bones. It is like space. You
cannot hold it. It's not the mind of
materialists or nihilists. If you don't
see your own miraculously aware nature,

you'll never find a Buddha even if you break your own body into parts."

Um

So, um you know, the Buddha was, in my opinion, like

really he was not into philosophical structures, and he was just into you just go out and meditate and you experience reality without thinking. You know, you're never going to figure out reality.

So, it was it was like a practical way of achieving simplicity and clarity of mind sufficient to allow the the liberating insight insight to arise.

And um

Bodhidharma was uh

you know, he was a member of uh of a

certain sect of Buddhism that already

had uh very highly developed uh

philosophical concepts.

Much more so than the Buddha himself

had, I assume.

And um one of these

philosophical um

what symptoms, I guess, is that uh

obviously just from the from the quote

that I just said, he is reifying

ultimate reality. You know, he's

reifying like the your own mind or the

the one mind or the Buddha nature. You

know, he's he's reifying it as a as a

thing, as an it.

And early Buddhism, like like the Buddha himself, he did not reify ultimate reality.

He just avoided talking about it because just any kind of talking about it is just wasted talk because you're never going to explain reality in words. So, the main point is you just practice and meditate and just realize reality, you know, face-to-face, so to speak, without figuring out stuff.

And um

so the the Bodhidharma, I mean, like the Jana school, like what became the Zen school, was kind of getting back to that. But obviously, there is still a

lot of uh complicated uh philosophical stuff that was added that still got used a lot. And I assume the Buddha, I mean, he had to talk philosophy sometimes, but he didn't have this elaborate philosophy.

And uh he was not, as far as I know, he was not reifying ultimate reality or or nirvana and and just calling it, you know, referring to it as this existent thing because it's just off the scale. Nirvana or ultimate reality is just completely off the scale.

So, it just transcends the the duality of is and isn't or or anything like that. It's just off the scale. Like the 31 planes of existence, nirvana or

nirvana is not on that

that system at all. It's just completely

other. It's just beyond.

So,

early Buddhism, really early Buddhism,

took that very seriously and uh was

mainly talking, you know, the

instructions were on how you shouldn't

be clinging to any kind of philosophy,

any kind of thought, you know, belief

system, anything like that. You're just

supposed to make your mind as as simple

and as clear as possible

so that the the liberating insight can

can shine through.

Okay, next question. My opinion on Alan

Watts and D.T. Suzuki.

Well, um I don't know a heck of a lot about either of them because they're, you know, they're mostly uh uh scholars of Zen.

Alan Watts wrote, I wrote, I read one book that he wrote. His uh I think it was just called Zen Buddhism.

And uh you know, he wrote like a lot of a lot of Buddhist scholars in the West wrote back in the like the 1950s. I mean, he knew more about what he was writing about. You know, it wasn't all just theory for him because uh uh apparently, he did practice to some degree.

And um that's really all I can say about

Alan Watts. I mean, I I listened to a few of his talks on YouTube and um read that one book. And uh he didn't really stand out. You know, he didn't really stand out from a lot of other Buddhist scholars of, you know, similar nature, as far as I can tell.

He didn't really uh stand out all that much for me. He had a kind of a poetical kind of way of writing that uh I didn't like his writing style very much.

And D.T. Suzuki, um similarly, I mean, he was a a Zen scholar, a very brilliant scholar. And he was a really good translator, as far as I can tell, of uh from Chinese into English.

So, um he did a lot of good

translations.

And uh he also was uh he endorsed uh

fascism and Nazism through World War and

before World War which makes him kind of

uh

kind of a an edgelord naughty boy.

Um

but yeah, that's about all I know about

them. So, I think I'll move on to the

next one.

Um could you link best translations of

Buddhist texts on Amazon?

Well, first of all, I would advise

everybody to uh not use Amazon. Amazon

is just too just outrageously rich right

now. They're they're just getting richer

and richer while other other smaller

businesses are just are just going

under, going bankrupt.

So, um yeah, I would I would advise

everybody to uh avoid Amazon if at all

possible. But uh best translations of

Buddhist texts,

setting aside the Amazon issue, um

Bhikku Bodhi, I mean, despite his uh his

neo-Marxism, you know, his dedication to

ultra-lefty causes and so forth, um he

is one of the best translators we've got

of Pali into English.

Um Nyanamoli was a little idiosyncratic.

Um

but he was he was a brilliant

translator.

Um Nyanavira was a good translator,

although he didn't translate very much.

Um Ajahn Thanissaro,

his his translations are a bit

idiosyncratic and kind of

self-indulgent, especially when he's

translating poetry. Although, he knows

what he's talking about and he may use

strange words for translating certain

things, but uh you know, his his

translations are are are relatively

good.

So, um

generally, it's best to avoid two kinds

of translators. One is just the Asian

translators who may not even have a

mastery of the English language and who
are just dogmatists. They're just
translating according to what the
commentary says. And that's not of much
use cuz they're not even they're not
even like literally translating what the
the Pali says in a lot of cases.
And um
the other kind of translator to avoid
are the the Western philologists or
linguists.
The scholars
who are just like uh a university
professor who is interested in the
language and uh
doesn't really even understand the

philosophy. He's not even a Buddhist. He doesn't practice. He doesn't He doesn't really get the philosophy. He's just using a formula of translating this word into that and and so, um translations by Asian monks generally are not the best and translations by Western scholars who aren't even Buddhists, um they may be really technically precise in a lot of cases, but the very fact that they don't understand the philosophy of what they're translating is is a an obstacle and can result in blunders.

So, you're better off um if you want to read good translations of Pali into English, you you do well to uh

find like a monk who has a mastery of
the English language, has a mastery of
the Pali language, and uh actually
follows
um as a way of life what he is
translating.
And uh
Bhikku Bodhi, um he notoriously doesn't
meditate all that much, if at all, but
uh he is a good translator, I have to
admit. Just uh don't bother with uh all
of his his endnotes, which can be kind
of depressing. But the translation
itself is good.
Okay, next question.
Let's see. Opinion on traditionalist

school, especially Julius Evola with his book Doctrine of Awakening based on earliest Buddhist texts. Um I'm not exactly sure what the traditionalist school would mean.

Um Julius Evola,

uh I did read I did read his book when I was in Burma.

And uh it was an interesting book. I enjoyed reading it.

Um

he did have somewhat of a different emphasis than most writers because he was really interested in uh like the Aryan aspect and like the masculinity um mastery

um

just the the the virile power and

strength of of the Buddhist saint kind

of a stuff that uh

uh

gets downplayed

uh a lot. I mean, there there is quite a

lot of that actually in the Pali texts,

but uh you when you get to the West,

it's all pretty much castrated.

So, um

yeah, with regard to the traditional

school, I'm not exactly sure what is

meant by the traditionalist school other

than maybe just uh you know, like um

um

just orthodox Theravada.

I guess that could be called

traditionalist. If you're if you're

actually following the texts,

you know, instead of

calling yourself a Buddhist and then

just

you know, talking on and on about white,

you know, white privilege and and global

warming and that kind of thing.

Um

so, I guess that's good enough for that

that one. But Julius the book the book

that Julius Evola wrote, The Doctrine of

Awakening, is is well worth reading.

It's it's an interesting book. And uh

anyone who's interested in like a more

masculine approach

would do well to read that and also just
read like the ancient suttas, which are
uh geared towards tough male ascetics.
So, it's it's right there. I mean, he he
wasn't really making up
I mean, he was emphasizing kind of the
the Aryan and masculine and
you know, the nobility aspect of it.
But um you know, he wasn't really making
stuff up. He was just emphasizing
certain themes.
So, next question, which will be the
last question I answer on this video,
is were humans before language or
cognitive developments that allow for
conceptualization and dualistic thinking

considered enlightened? Are animals

enlightened? Which is an interesting

question. Like um

Eckhart Tolle says that all animals are

enlightened except for a few pets that

have become neurotic due to the effects

of their human masters.

And um

from the Buddhist point of view, no,

animals are not enlightened. Um so from

the Buddhist point of view also like

primitive humans that hadn't learned how

to think conceptually yet also wouldn't

be enlightened.

Um

it is an interesting question though

like like an animal has no

self-consciousness.

You know, like a primitive animal that

is.

And so if you don't have

self-consciousness in a way you're not

really

um

separating yourself out of samsara. I

mean you're just part you're you're It's

like you're still subliminal

in a way. So in a way that's that's kind

of enlightened. I don't I don't know.

It's It's hard to say. It would depend

on your definition of enlightenment, I

think.

But um

yeah, I don't think that uh like a

tapeworm is like uh

just fully fully conscious of ultimate

reality. Or or like a parakeet.

I don't think a parakeet is just living

in you know, Satchidananda like the

Hindus say just the the bliss of of you

know, the

the spirit of God or or you know,

ultimate reality.

So

um

yeah, it's you start off just like like

some animals like like a cow for

example, they're not they're not as

conscious as us.

And so in a way they've got less

delusion than we've got.

But they still have some and I mean it's

like in order to get rid of what they've

got, they're going to have to be reborn

you know, life after life after life to

get complicated enough in order to start

becoming reflexive and like uh

self-referential

in order to start

uh fixing or or like untangling the

knots

or or that sort of thing. I don't know I

don't know how well I uh

avoided confusing people on that one but

um

uh

yeah, so it's like

um

a more advanced being they've got more

delusion

because they just got a bigger mind they

can hold more.

Uh so a cow, you know, it's

it's it's relatively calm most of the

time and it's not uh doesn't have much

for wrong view.

Doesn't even have a concept of self

probably.

But um still from the Buddhist point of

view, it's not enlightened. It's not an

arahant. It's not a fully enlightened

being. Not as It's not a superhuman

being.

You know, if going with going with the idea that anything that isn't a human that doesn't think conceptually is is enlightened then it's like uh you know, a tapeworm would be it would be superhuman. It would be it would be way above us.

So uh with all due respect to Eckhart Tolle, um

yeah, I I would go with the Buddhist idea that uh

um

animals are not enlightened and uh very like archaic humans that did not think conceptually also were were not enlightened. And I think even Eckhart

Tolle um does say in his first famous

book that uh the the mental states of an

animal are not the same as the mental

states of of a fully enlightened human

being.

So there's one last question from uh a

person called Dogbreath. Mr. Breath.

And it's such a long complicated answer

that I'll have to give that I'm going to

uh

give it separately.

But um just so you know, um

I'll read the question here and then

I'll uh do a different video to answer

the question.

And uh the question which is kind of

long goes,

"Does Buddhism consider existence to be deterministic? If so, how can what happens to me be my fault?

If Buddhists do not consider existence to be deterministic but rather uh that we live according to free will, then it would seem that with regard to karma the fate that befalls me is the result of the free will actions of a different person in the past. This appears to suggest that the morality ascribed to the cosmos by Buddhism is more amoral than moral because why should I be subject to the consequences of the free will actions of someone I know nothing about?

This appears to be a contradiction, a

dichotomy. How can this contradiction be

resolved and please comment on the main

issues of determinism, free will, karma

um

a moral amoral morality from a Buddhist

or personal perspective?"

So obviously that would greatly increase

the length of this video which is

already pretty long and so um I will

I'll attempt to answer that question in

a

subsequent video.

So

um I think we're done

uh with this one.

And uh if you have any questions, you're

interested in Buddhist philosophy, that

sort of thing, feel free to uh ask away

either on my SubscribeStar channel or

um under the video

in the comments.

And uh

be happy and uh have a nice day.

Goodbye.

all right this is the appendix

to the third installment of question and

answers

there's one question from uh dog breath

who i prefer to uh call mr breath

about free will and uh i better answe

ask the question again i asked i asked

it um at the end of the last one

and didn't answer it so i suppose i

should probably ask the question again

before i answered it

so mr brass says does buddhism consider

existence to be deterministic if so

how can what happens to me be my fault

if buddhists do not consider existence

to be deterministic but rather

that we live according to free will then

it would seem that with regard to karma

the fate that befalls

me is the result of the free will

actions of a different person in the

past

this appears to suggest that the

morality

ascribed to the cosmos by buddhism is

more amoral than moral because

why should i be subject to the

consequences of the free will actions of

someone i know nothing about

this appears to be a contradiction a

dichotomy how can this contradiction be

resolved

and please comment on the main issues of

determinism free will karma

um a moral amoral morality from a

buddhist or

personal perspective so

it seems to me that mr breath is

very keen on a subject that i've been

talking about

kind of a lot recently i wrote a blog

post

a month or so ago on this very subject

and also i did a video with brian rue um

sort of as an update to um my previous

understanding of of free will especially

so um this is going to be kind of easy

for me because i've been thinking about

this issue a lot and that's why

i have to do a separate video just

because i'm going to have

kind of a lot to say but um

with regard to um determinism and

free will um that's something that

that i wondered about a lot

because it seems like buddhism rules out

both possibilities

for example with regard to free will

like um the buddha's second discourse or

what is considered to be his second

discourse the anata

suta he says with regard to all

five of the five condas that you cannot

say

let it be this way let it not be that

way and have it happen

and one of the five condas is sankhara

khanda which is

essentially volition so our will

would be one of the five condas or part

of one of the five kanas

and according to orthodox buddhism

even with regard to our own volitions we

do not have total control

that's one of the signs that there is no

self

that you know that none of these things

is ourselves

because we don't have we don't have

complete control over them this uh we're

just kind of

along for the ride in a lot of cases

so um

yeah there is that and also this free

will in general

it would imply uh a separated

individuality

like free will i mean what is it free

from it's free from the surrounding

environment

so you have free will because your will

is not just entirely enslaved and

conditioned by what is

around it or just through just enslaved

to cause and effect

because um i mean if there's a cause

then

then it's deterministic and

buddhism just teaches that there there

is no separated individuality and

if free will requires a separated

individuality

then uh that's that's it i mean there

isn't one and so you couldn't have free

will

but on the other hand you know the other

option

is determinism and buddhism

doesn't really endorse determinism

either like

there was a an ancient religion called

the ajivacas

that is now extinct and the ajivacas

believed in just pure determinism they

said that everybody

has a predetermined number of lifetimes

they have to live

and your karma just unrolls like if you

took a ball of string

hold on to the free end of it and then

just throw the string

or the ball it just rolls and unwinds

until until it's gone and that's how

they imagined how our karma

works itself out lifetime after lifetime

just purely deterministically

and uh the buddha the buddha said no

that's that's that's wrong view too i

mean you could uh

you go to hell for really taking that

kind of stuff seriously

at least it says that in some of the

texts and so

it seems like both options are are out

or going logically the opposite of of

determinism would be more like um just

random chance

either something has a cause or it

doesn't have a cause if it has a cause

it is determined by that cause and

is not free but if it doesn't have a

cause it just happens at random

and uh so free will i mean free will

doesn't even mean anything logically

free will is it's just sort of um

it's it's not only logically impossible

it's logically meaningless

and uh like albert einstein who was no

idiot

um he said he had no idea what people

were talking about when they talked

about free will

and uh really it just the whole concept

of free will

cannot stand up to logical scrutiny

just because either something has a

cause or it doesn't have a cause

and if it does have a cause then it's

determinism and if it doesn't have a

cause then it's random and neither of

those is free will

and no combination of the two would be

free will

and also science

tends to reject the idea of free will

also

not because of the logical impossibility

of it just because of

uh like neurological neurophysiological

studies where

they've determined that your brain is

already

firing and making the decision before

your conscious mind is even aware of

what you're deciding

that kind of thing and

also just my own experiences

tend to cast doubt on the idea of

free will like you don't know what

you're going

to decide until you're deciding it

otherwise you would have already decided

and usually if we're making a decision

there's an obvious reason for making the

decision and so just the obvious

decision

the obvious reason decides for us but if

you don't have an obvious reason

to make the decision then if you're

mindful

and are watching your mental processes

you can see that uh

i mean you don't know what you're going

to decide until suddenly you find

yourself

deciding like there was one time i was

uh i talked about this in the last q a i

think where i was in a cave

and my my sweat rag the absolutely

necessary

um it was worn out and i had to get a

new one i had i had some stored up in

a bag and so i went into the uh the

little storage room

and i had the uh the new rags

uh narrowed down to two choices it was

the yellow one or the orange one

and um there was no obvious choice

of choosing either i mean neither one

was obviously any better than the other

until finally i'm just standing there in

a quandary

you know just sort of like uh buradin's

ass the donkey that's just paralyzed

between

two equidistant piles of food you know

there's

no no obvious reason to choose either

one so we just kind of paralyzed and

can't choose

i was kind of in that kind of a state

when suddenly

uh it just arose in my mind i'll take

the orange one

and you know i had no idea that that was

going to happen it just it just happened

so um just going with with logic

and and with um like the anatella

orthodox buddhism and also if you if

you're interested in that

in you know like neurophysiology that

kind of thing

then free will um yeah it just

doesn't exist but as i already mentioned

buddhism rejects

the notion of determinism also or like

absolute determinism buddhism does put a

lot of emphasis on cause and effect

you know everything that arises arises

because of a cause

supposedly but um

just pure determinism is considered to

be a pernicious wrong view

so for years um it just seemed like a

mystery you know it's like it's some

kind of paradox

and then finally just recently i read

this book

called uh the trickster in the

paranormal by george p hansen

which i've talked about a lot it's

definitely a paradigm changer

and there's this one part where he's

talking about meditation

and he says that um meditation is

self-referential

it's like reflexive and anything that is

self-referential can become paradoxical

like um the statement i am lying

or the statement this statement is false

because the statement refers to itself

then um it creates like a paradox

like the statement i am lying or this

statement is false

it can be neither true nor false it

becomes a paradoxical statement

because of this reflexivity and

self-reference

and with meditation your mind is

observing itself

and so meditation one of the the

sort of the accidental side effects or

maybe it's deliberate

of meditation is because it becomes

self-referential

it becomes paradoxical and weird stuff

can arise

and even enlightenment itself could be

called a paranormal event

so um

yeah and then so then i was thinking of

that a little more

and it just seems like

self-consciousness itself

is like this it's reflexive it's

self-referential and so it can cause

paradox

and so it seems to me that that there

may be something along the lines of

free will but it's essentially a

paranormal

phenomenon and the more the more

self-aware you are the more

self-conscious you are

the more of this kind of paradoxical

inexplicable should be impossible

phenomenon of free will

can arise so that's that's

my theory or my explanation of

of uh whether we have free will or not

is um if we do have free will

it's essentially like a paradoxical

more or less of a miraculous state that

cannot be explained

scientifically or logically and

enlightenment also would be an even more

extreme uh miracle

i think than than just

being to some degree free of

um just the slavery to cause and effect

obviously we don't have total freedom

but there may be

through this this paradox inducing

self-awareness where the mind is

observing itself

that there could be some kind of

paradoxical weird

essentially paranormal phenomenon that

arises from that which

people call call free will

so um i think that answers the very

first question of does buddhism consider

existence to be deterministic

i mean there is cause and effect

obviously buddhism is really strong on

that

but um we're not just we're not just

slaves we're not just slaves to

circumstances

so if so how can what happens to me be

my fault

um yeah i think maybe i've indirectly

answered that one already

because there is karma i mean from the

buddhist point of view anything that

happens

to you is the result of your own past

comma

and a lot of it is just going to be

through being unenlightened and

enslaved to your conditioning and your

habits and so forth

and um that's just the way it is it's uh

you know it's like gravity or something

it's like whether it's

fair or not is uh largely irrelevant

so let's see you got to get to this

question again and see if

buddhists do not consider existence to

be deterministic or rather that we live

according to free will then

it would seem that with regard to karma

the fate that befalls me as a result of

the free little actions of a different

person in the past

well ultimately there's no person at all

ultimately from the buddhist point of

view

you don't exist and the previous person

in the previous

existence also didn't exist not

ultimately i mean it's like a virtual

existence but it's not ultimately real

this appears to suggest that the

morality ascribed to the cosmos by

buddhism

is more amoral than moral um

i don't know you know in a way i suppose

morality is ascribed to the cosmos but

it's morality is psychological

you know it's a mental thing morality is

mental so to the extent that the cosmos

is mental

then the cosmos would be subject to this

this moral law and really i mean

buddhist ethics is just

based on the idea you know anything that

gets you closer

to enlightenment anything that makes

your mind clearer

and more awake and more more peaceful

is going to be kusama it's going to be

good it's going to be good karma

so i mean it's uh i used to think of

karma as some kind of

as yet undiscovered law of the universe

where every

action has an equal and opposite

reaction kind of a thing

but uh um yeah in buddhism

karma is a mental state it's essentially

volitional will

and uh the will really doesn't give a

damn about us it's sort of like

schopenhauer

as well it's like uh you know a human

being is just will's way of making more

will

it it's uh yeah it's not really

personified

so let's see get back to this question

here this appears to suggest that the

morality ascribed to the cosmos by

buddhism is more immoral than moral

because why should i be subject to the

consequences of the free will actions of

someone i know nothing about

well deep down you do know

it's just it's subliminal it's you're

not you're not awake enough or conscious

enough

to uh be fully aware of your stream of

consciousness going back a zillion

gajillion years

because you've got a different brain now

something along those lines

so um yeah it may seem unfair

you know it's like you know children

getting abused it's a standard

a standard argument you know young

children are abused

um through no fault of their own but it

was like

you know the buddhist would say well in

a past life they did something

but then it just seems like really

really unfair

that this little kid is being abused

because of

you know what they did as an adult in a

past life and they don't even remember

it

but i mean it's not really a matter of

of morals in like a christian sense it's

just

energy seeking equilibrium you've got

this energy imbalance

that is just seeking equilibrium that's

that's pretty much how karma works

or um another way of looking at karma is

it's just this habitual energy

that just acts as an autopilot if you

don't have enough self-awareness and the

supposed free will to call your own

shots

then just this force of of of habit

from from past you know conditioning

is just going to make your decisions for

you and just run you like like a puppet

and uh it may seem awful about the

little kids and everything but uh

or or somebody being born with a

horrible deformity or something like

that

but uh really i mean we don't exist as

individual people

it's just in a way it's um different

manifestations of energy just

following following laws of nature and

as it turns out

you can interpret these laws of nature

morally

just by identifying anything that gets

you closer to enlightenment as moral and

anything that gets you farther away from

enlightenment as immoral you know it's

just kind of uh

just identifying what direction the

energy is

is flowing let's see this appears to be

a contradiction

a dichotomy um yeah well the whole free

will thing

is is just a paradox as far as i'm

concerned it's

uh it defies logic

and anyone who believes in free will i

mean that i mean it's

like like i already said it's not only

logically impossible it's logically

meaningless

and a lot of people believe in free will

partly

um just because of christianity

christianity

needs free will because if adam and eve

didn't have any choice

but to eat the fruit then god is just

punishing everybody

for for thousands and thousands of years

for something that

nobody could have avoided anyway

although the muslims say that

only allah has free will and we just

don't have it and they're fine with that

but uh the muslims are much

more comfortable with uh having a deity

who is

a cruel and capricious tyrant or at

least can seem that way

to people who do not understand the ways

of god

uh see how can this contradiction be

resolved and please comment on the main

issues of determinism free will karma

and

moral immoral morality from a buddhist

or

personal perspective and i think

maybe i just did so um

yeah this uh this answer is uh taking a

lot less time i figured it might take

about half an hour

and it's uh 19 minutes but uh that's the

gist of it

it's uh trying to recap it's like uh

first of all buddhism rejects like

seemingly

both options determinism and free will

and free will just logically um is

is impossible anyway but but determinism

also

is is is rejected and um

interestingly ramana maharshi who may

have been

a fully enlightened being despite the

fact that he wasn't a buddhist

um he said the only real free choice we

have

is whether or not to be mindful which is

kind of interesting

but i do think that uh it's it's sort of

the

the paradox inducing self-reference

of self-awareness that somehow

causes something that can be interpreted

as free will

that's my best guess that's my theory

ever since reading that book a few weeks

ago

and uh yeah i think that's it

so i hope i answered the question and um

if anyone has any more questions feel

free to ask

either on my subscribe star channel or

in the comments below these videos

and be happy and have a nice day

Hello and welcome to the fourth edition

to questions and answers and I am your

host

Panyo Bahasa.

And that's uh one of the few attempts

I've ever made to uh pronounce my name

correctly.

Panyo Bahasa with the uh H.

Usually we don't pronounce the H.

I've got lots of questions to answer so

I better get to it and the first

question which is a long one

possibly longer than the answer will be

is from Ship of Fools.

And it it is as follows. Had a question

for next Q&A show seems whimsical but

isn't. I watched a Gordon Ramsay's greatest hits clip compilation in which he proceeded to very passionately and effectively insult cooks that try to serve up rubbish to paying customers. On the one hand I believe there's a fairly solid argument he engages in wrong speech and perhaps wrong behavior. Certainly there is an argument for the purposes of TV ratings yet I believe the rage is completely authentic and to me this indicates a complete focus and strict moral code in terms of what he presents to customers. I believe also this type of behavior is a deliberate method to weed out those who are not committed to the art of cuisine and

engage in their own form contravention of right action. Engage in their own form contrave contravention of right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, etc. With his ultimate aim of presenting what is promised to a customer namely excellent food and service is his behavior towards those who seek to present food of a poor quality and offer poor service justified from the perspective of a Buddhist layperson.

Perhaps it is ultimately also good for the trainee chefs in the manner that his Zen master uses the odd jab, shout or whack with a stick to elicit a response

for the student's own good.

In this light can Gordon's often

hilarious methods be justified from a

Buddhist perspective if he is mindful

and aware of outcomes?

Okay, um Gordon Ramsay does a cooking

show. I've been told this. I've never

seen him that I can remember.

But um

uh really the short answer to this is um

whether what he's doing is good or bad

or the to the extent that it is good or

bad depends on to his own mental states.

So um to the extent that he is motivated

by say aversion

um yeah then uh what he's doing would be

uh quote bad karma unquote.

And to the extent that he's doing it out of a sincere desire to help people then that would be good karma. And like almost everything that we do it's going to be a mix. There's going to be a mix of
positive and negative or all good and bad.
So um I mean it is possible to use really rough means to help people you know like classic classic example would be like an athletic coach or maybe like a a military drill instructor putting putting recruits through basic training where he's just giving them hell in order to turn them into soldiers that

aren't going to get killed on the

battlefield their first day in battle.

Or also like

Ship of Fools mentions the Zen masters

who uh

sometimes could be just really really

violent. Like was one famous Chinese Zen

master.

I think it's Ummon

who

became enlightened when his own teacher

broke Ummon's leg by slamming him in a

door.

So

um with with regard to the Zen masters I

mean there's the saying that even though

the Dharma hall can resound with the

shouts of the master and blows from his
stick can fall like rain still the
master abides in stillness.
And to what extent Gordon Ramsay abides
in stillness is questionable. I don't I
don't really know. But um really it
depends on his mental states and to the
extent that you got positive mental
states of wanting to help others
or just uh tell the truth that kind of
thing then what he's doing has good
elements to it and to the extent that he
really just despises people that uh
um don't live up to his standards or
whatever then that would be uh
bad karma. And uh it really depends on

his own mental states and we really

can't say

uh so long as we don't know what his

motives are then it's it's really

difficult to say.

The next question from Potila.

Could you speak a bit about how the

Burmese and other Buddhists in Asia view

Westerners non-Asians particularly

European descent who practice Buddhism?

When I was in India I encountered a

group of Burmese pilgrims who were

interested and bemused that Western

people practiced Buddhism. I've heard

from some that most Asian Buddhists view

us with a great amount of skepticism. If

so how could we work to make better

relationships across these barriers to

help strengthen the Dharma?

Okay, um

I really can speak um with a great deal

of experience just with the Burmese and

um

with regard to like the Thais and the

Sri Lankans uh Cambodians

Indonesians who practice Buddhism I I

mean I have some experience with them

but not nearly as much. But with regard

to the Burmese um it is true that uh

for starters a lot of Burmese people

just assume that only Burmese people can

really understand Buddhism or Dharma.

And um

to some degree it's a cultural thing I'm

or or it's really a like a class thing

where um

the the members of the upper classes

especially um

are more likely to view Western monks

with skepticism where the more humble

villagers of like the lower classes are

much more likely to have a great deal of

respect for any monks including Western

ones.

And um

so so there was sort of like a

uh there was like different attitudes I

would guess. Like from the upper classes

like the rich educated people especially

they would often view Western monks sort

of like they'd be viewing uh like a dog walking on its hind legs where you know they're they're impressed that that he's doing it at all but still they they don't think he's ever going to do a very good job of it. And so I've had like relatively well-educated upper class Burmese laypeople trying to teach me just the fundamental elements of Buddhism cuz they just assume that being a foreigner I don't know anything. And so they're trying to explain to me you know how to sit in meditation and and like who Mahasi Sayadaw was and who was like the most famous monk in Burma during the 20th century.

And um

so yeah uh there is that on the on the

other hand um

a lot of the the like the poor villagers

they just really loved me as a foreign

monk partly because I was vindicating

their own religion.

They they just assume that Americans are

all rich and happy and beautiful

or at least rich and happy. And um

so I was like abandoning my my

Christianity supposedly because they

consider the West to be Christian and um

just abandoning my you know my my first

world lifestyle to come and live in

poverty with them. So they felt really

happy and proud about that. Although the

Burmese people or Asian people that
you're going to meet in the West are
generally uh upper class enough that
they could afford to uh fly to America
and move. You know a poor villagers as a
general rule aren't going to get a um a
passport and a visa and a plane ticket.
So
um you may wind up with a lot of the
other kind.
But with regard to how Western Buddhists
and Asian Buddhists um can sort of join
forces I assume the best way to do that
is just be um
try not to be too Western
stereotypically Western in your

Buddhism. Like um you know most Western Buddhists they just don't care about supporting monks or they don't care very much about it. They mainly come for meditation and they're not really keen on keeping sila and um they're not nearly as much into all of the ceremonies that the Burmese do. You know the Burmese really like their their ceremonies with the bowing and the chanting and the candles and all that.

And um

so uh

if you wanted to really fit in better like you went to an Asian temple in the West that allows

um so-called foreigners us

um yeah I mean you would try not to look
too out of place. Try not to look too
uncomfortable even if you don't really
get what they're doing. Try to you know
follow along and to be friendly and um
you know just uh
you know serve the monks the way the the
way the other ones are doing and um
um and just try to set a good example
and show that you really you know you're
not just uh an ignorant barbarian that
um you know you you you are interested
in meditation and you do know your your
Dharma fairly well and uh gradually
after they get to know you I mean
they'll probably like you right off the

bat because they're very friendly. And

after they get to know you and see that

you're a serious Buddhist they'll start

respecting you too. So I assume that

would be the way to do it although if

you really do want to uh spend time at

at Asian temples and so forth you're

going to be uh

exposing yourself to a lot of

uh aspects of traditional Buddhism in

the East that Westerners really

generally don't have much use for. Like

all the the ceremonies and the chanting

and stuff.

So

um

See I I wonder if I answered everything

here.

Okay. See I want to come Okay, so I think I answered that. Okay, next question also from Potida.

In your video of July 2nd, 2016, the four kinds of Theravada in the West, you appear more optimistic about sharing the Dharma with Westerners. Your recent videos come across as more black pill or perhaps more cynical as to the state of Buddhism in the West and its future. Do you think that establishing authentic Dharma in the West is possible at this point? If so, what are the real world steps to make that happen?

Um

Yeah, in 2016,

maybe I was a little more optimistic

about

um

monkhood in the West.

Um that was back before

I was aware of a lot of the Western

monks essentially selling out to like

social justice cultural Marxism stuff.

And I've also had five more years of

living well, not not the whole time

living in the West, but a few more years

living in the West since then. And um

Yeah, just living as a monk in the West,

um

it's it's like a

in a way it's an obstacle to um to

spreading Dharma.

Um there's there's another question

lower down where I'll address this a

little better, I hope. But um yeah, it

it does seem to me that um

like orthodox monasticism in the West, I

mean it should exist. I'm certainly not

opposed to it, but um

I don't think it's the most effective

way of spreading Dharma in the West just

because it's always going to be like a

foreign imported fringe thing. You know,

I I don't see it going mainstream. And

it's not even supposed to go mainstream

really. I mean, renouncing the world

just doesn't go mainstream.

Um supporting renunciants in the West, I don't see that as going mainstream either. In fact, even like Dana or generosity is is sort of being

um

outmoded because people just see it more and more as just the responsibility of a of a socialized government to support the poor. And um so generosity is gradually being phased out to some degree, to a large degree in the West just because people will just say, "Well, why don't you just go on food stamps and get your food that way? Why should people have to bother to come and bring you food every morning?" You know, people are busy. They got They got work

to go to and all that.

So yeah, there's definitely going to

have to be some kind of compromise, I

think. Um between ancient India and 21st

century West, but

I think I'll get a little more to on

that issue later.

Let's see. Do you think that

establishing authentic Dharma in the

West is possible at this point?

Um yeah, I think one way to establish

authentic Dharma is to um remove

uh the ancient Indian stuff that is

cultural and doesn't fit

the culture in the West.

And that's going to involve some uh

deviation from the strict orthodox
Theravada, which is just designed for
the Ganges Valley of northern India
2,500 years ago.
So yeah, um I think I'll I'll I'll speak
more on this a little a little later cuz
there's another question kind of along
these lines.
So I hope I answered that one well
enough.
Um next is from Average Dad, who I I
keep thinking it is maybe Average Dude.
I
but it's spelled Average Dad. Okay.
Could you share for us which early texts
deem existence and non-existence as
illusory? Could help me learn more of

early Buddhism?

Uh existence and non-existence as

illusory.

Um

Let's see.

For starters, there's a very ancient

text called the Kalaha Vivada Sutta of

the Sutta Nipata,

which states that existence and

non-existence are conditioned by phassa,

usually translated as contact.

Although it might be more accurately

rendered as something like stimulation.

So

if existence and non-existence

are the result of essentially a mental

state, like mental stimulation, then the implication is that they're both conceptual. You know, they're they're not really rooted in ultimate reality. They're just conditioned on on mental states.

So that's kind of an indication that existence and non-existence are essentially mental constructs.

Um another example is uh a text, probably also an ancient one because it's kind of unorthodox, too. It's called the Lokayatika Sutta in the Samyutta Nikaya. It's See I've got it right here. Samyutta 12.48.

And I think Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation, he referred he calls it the Cosmologist.

And in the Sutta,

um well, I'll just read like the very beginning of it.

And then you'll just you'll just see for yourself.

Thus have I heard. At one time the Blessed One was dwelling at Savatthi in Jeta's Grove in Anathapindika's Park. At that time a Brahmin who was a worldly philosopher approached Blessed One and sitting to one side, that Brahmin worldly philosopher said to the Blessed One, "How is it, Sir Gotama, does everything exist?"

"Everything exists. Indeed, Brahmin, this is the oldest philosophy of the

world." is what the Buddha says.

Then the Brahmin says, "Well then, how is it, Sir Gotama, does nothing exist?"

"Nothing exists. Indeed, Brahmin, this is the second philosophy of the world."

And then the Brahmin asks a few more questions like "Is everything a unity? Is everything a multiplicity?" And the Buddha also says

"You know, that is the third philosophy of the world. That is the fourth philosophy of the world." And then he says, "But not tending to either extreme, Brahmin, the Tathagata teaches the Dharma by the middle." And then he expounds uh Paticcasamuppada or dependent co-arising. So um going with

this,

um the existence of things and the

non-existence of things are extreme

views, whereas the middle path of

dependent co-arising is uh is like a

middle path between is and isn't,

which is kind of a mind bender. And I

don't really think it's possible to

grasp intellectually to really wrap your

head around it because it's essentially

mystical. The uh

the highest truth just simply cannot be

put into words.

Um

so that's that would be the two best

examples I can think of of um um the

early texts deeming existence and non-existence as illusory.

Um yeah, they're they're conditioned um and dependent upon mental states. So maybe you could maybe that would be the same as calling it illusory.

Um next question is from Chaplin.

Today we refer to the teachings of the Buddha and other wise figures of the past. During the time of the Buddha, what ancient teachers would people of that time

2 and 1/2 thousand plus years ago be referring back to for their teachings? A lot of the teachers that we look to came long after the lifetime of the Buddha.

Who are the most ancient that we have

record of? Who did the Buddha himself

refer to as his own predecessors?

Um

Well, in the Vedic tradition, you had

like the Vedic sages who were like the

people who composed or channeled the the

Rigveda especially.

Um that would be within the Vedic

tradition though. And

with regard to the non-Vedic

philosophers like the Buddha, um the

Buddha had two teachers, but he wasn't

really referring to ancient um

predecessors

except maybe in later texts where you've

got the cult of the Buddhas where you've

got lots and lots of Buddhas. And our
Buddha Gotama is just the most recent of
a long lineage, although that apparently
developed over time. And I think the
Buddha
um in a way it was like part of the
Buddha's
claim to fame was that he rediscovered
it on his own without really having a
teacher to teach him.
So he just had this direct experience
that wasn't really dependent upon
teachers or traditions. I mean, it was
just this immediate realization
that couldn't really be taught to him in
words by anybody.
Or even even his meditation teachers

didn't know how to teach him how to to
get enlightened.
So there is that. Although the Jains,
um,
they they claim to have a tradition
going way back into the past, um, which
if true might make Jainism like the most
ancient religion still in existence.
They had the, uh, the series of
Tirthankaras, I think they were called,
with, uh, Mahavira, who is nowadays
considered to be the founder of Jainism,
um, who was a, uh, older contemporary to
the Buddha, just being like the most
recent one. So, it's sort of like the,
uh, the the series of Buddhas in, uh,

the developed Buddhist, uh, tradition.
But, with regard to, uh,
you know, who they were looking back to
as as like their own, uh, like ancient
sages or like their own versions of
Shakespeare and stuff, a lot of it would
be, uh, cultural stuff that just isn't
recorded in the texts.
And a lot of it is just, uh, obscure
names that I'm not familiar with. But,
with regard to Buddhism especially,
um, yeah, it's like one of the main
points of it is that, um, the Buddha
wasn't just repeating old traditions,
that he had this direct experience of
enlightenment that was just boom, in the
present moment, and, um, that's what he

was trying to, uh, help others to to attain.

So, there And also like, back then there was there was lots of legendary stuff, lots of mythology and that sort of thing. There wasn't any real, um, history in the modern sense of the word. And so, um, yeah, there's all these legendary figures and that sort of thing. But, um, to what extent their legendary words were recorded as some kind of scripture or something, I'm really I'm really not familiar enough with that to, uh, to say.

So, next question. Would you consider

setting up monthly Dharma teachings online in the future?

Um, well, I'm open-minded to anything. I mean, if there's, uh, if there's a demand for it, I can provide the supply. Although, um, I don't like the idea of like virtual Zoom retreats.

Um, I would prefer retreats to be in real life. Um, I've I've long had this idea that it would be a good idea to have forest retreats where you get a bunch of people who hike out one day deep into the woods, you know, just hike for one, you know, morning, early afternoon, set up a a good campsite, everybody camps by themselves, you know, not very far away, and then in the

evenings everybody meets at the

campfire, and there's like a Dharma

talk, that kind of thing.

And I tried it, um,

a few times in Bellingham, and it it's

mostly most of the the Buddhists there

were like boomers with health problems

and and, um,

they just weren't into weren't into

roughing it anyway. So, it it really

never took off. And in the Pacific

Northwest, it was an excellent place for

that sort of thing.

But, um,

yeah, I'd be more I'd be more into into

that than virtual retreats. Although,

like just, uh, meeting people online
and, uh, giving Dharma talks and stuff,
I can do that uh, once a month or once a
week or whatever, if if there's really
a,
um, a request or a demand for it, as
long as the demand is, uh, polite.
And oh, another thing I don't like to do
is, uh, guided meditations. I really,
uh, it's sort of like doing unto others
as you'd have them do unto you. I've
never liked people telling like getting
into my mind and telling me what I'm
going to think, you know? So, I don't
like doing that to other people either.
But, um,
with regard to, uh,

classes or something like that online,
yeah, I'm certainly open-minded to that.
Definitely receptive to the idea.
Next question from Zach.
I know faith isn't your thing, but is
there any practice in Theravada, even if
not canonical, that is analogous to
Mahayana faith practices like chanting
Amitabha Buddha's name with desire to be
born in his pure land? As a working
layman with a big family, a serious
daily meditation practice is hard to
keep up, but I would like
my mind elevated with good practices
with hope that I can be born in a higher
realm of Dharma, not just a sensual

pleasure realm. And I don't want to be a Mahayana Bodhisattva. I'm solidly Theravadan in my Dharma, although mostly. What do you think?

Um, well, there's all sorts of chanting that Theravadans can do. You can chant the Metta Sutta, that sort of thing.

And, um, with regard to getting a good rebirth, uh, from the Theravadan point of view, it's not so much through chanting,

you know, praying, it's mainly through acts of merit.

So, you know, acts of generosity, keeping Sila, that sort of thing, is, uh, the way you would be reborn into a a higher realm next time or a better

world,

um, at least not one that that sucks

really bad.

So, um,

let's see.

Yeah, so if you don't really have time

to meditate a lot, then, um, I mean,

there's always just being mindful of

what you're doing during the day,

mindfully walking, that kind of thing.

And, um, yeah, you can you can learn

some chanting or or some kind of mantra,

you can do that. And, uh, be generous

and a and a good person, and that that

would be like your best bet. And study

the texts, that's another way of earning

merit. And, uh, there are suttas
directed towards laypeople, which, uh, I
haven't paid much attention to,
but, uh, they're there, and, uh, you
could find them easily enough on the
internet.
And, uh, the Metta Sutta is nice, the
the Mangala Sutta is nice. They're
they're good for chanting, too.
So, I would I would try that and just
just be a good person.
Next question from Dog Breath,
who has a series of questions.
And this one is, uh, kind of
interesting. What is the J quotient the
J quotient of Ajahn Amaro?
I ask because anti-white behavior he

engages in with Tara Brach confirmed
appears to suggest he is I'm talking
about this, and then he, uh, gives a a
website that I looked at advertising a
kind of, uh,
uh, like anti-racism retreat with Ajahn
Amaro and Tara Brach and, uh, a few a
few other people.
See, isn't there some monastic code
against a monk speaking out against and
targeting one part of a population over
another?
I'm assuming the J quotient is high. If
not, he is an example of the complaining
weak monk that is a bad example
of Buddhism and who leaves many with a

bad taste in their mouths regarding Buddhism. Personally, I'd like to punch him. You can leave this bit out of the question if you want. So, you can just like unhear that part if you if you object to, uh, somebody wanting to punch a venerable one.

Um, with regard to the J quotient, I have I have no idea if if he was, uh, of Hebrew ancestry.

Um,

I met him once a long time ago, like in the early '90s.

And, um, let's see.

Um, yeah, I don't think he's an example of a complaining monk, although weak possibly. He could be weak. I mean,

he was he has he has a reputation for being like a soft, gentle kind of a city boy without much, uh, tough asceticism to him.

And, um, I mean, it could be that I mean, you got like the weak or just the soft, gentle, let's let's leave out weak, just like the the gentle, friendly kind of of monk who just wants to get along, and, um, so he's he's playing along. And it could be for all I know that he'll be sort of like the Dalai Lama talking with Greta Thunberg, and, um,

uh, you know, not really spouting all the neo-Marxism stuff, but just, uh,

kind of semi adding some some moral support just through giving some standard Dharma that maybe lends some support to what the other people are saying.

So, um,

yeah, it is kind of unfortunate that, uh, so many high-profile monks are, uh, essentially selling out to the social justice warriors and, uh, degrading Buddhism to that degree. Although, a lot of people could turn around and say that I'm I'm kind of doing the same thing in the opposite direction.

So, I guess, uh, to each his own.

Um, yeah, there's a little bit more about him in a different question, but

I'll move on to the next one, cuz I
really have no idea,
um, whether he has Jewish ancestry or
not. But, uh, so, um,
still, I mean, it's like, um,
the like the Hebrew ethnicity aspect of
it largely becomes irrelevant because,
you know, anybody who's drunk the
Kool-Aid is is just as bad.
Okay, another question. You said in a
recent video that you weren't sure that
monastic life was for you anymore. Were
you joking or serious?
You stated you preferred freedom. What
does freedom look like to you?
I ask because I think many people look

at you and think you have the freedom already. For myself, I can say there is no freedom in working 40-plus hours a week just to pay a mortgage, hydro, phone, internet, and and at the end of it all have what little cash is left go to go on the kids or in my case the dogs. I certainly would like to find some freedom. Okay, well, for starters, I mean, obviously, it's like if you consider lack of freedom to be working 40-plus hours a week to pay mortgage, hydro, phone, internet, and have what little cash is left go on kids or dogs. I mean um, then if that is lack of freedom then you would be free in a maximum security prison cell cuz you

wouldn't have to work for a living

everything is just provided for you and

so I mean if you would call being in

prison freedom

then uh

yeah I don't know what to tell you.

And being a monk kind of is that way

it's like you have freedom of mind cuz

you don't have to direct your mental

energy towards like the job you know

whatever it is flipping burgers or

whatever

dealing with irate customers.

Um

so yeah let's see I don't know where to

go with this let's see.

Um

yeah I mean freedom freedom of mind is

really is really the main thing

but still there is like freedom of

action. And in Burma or like an Asian or

a Buddhist country um

I had quite a lot of of like physical

freedom you know I could just wander

around if if I could take the heat and

if I didn't like one place I could just

move to another place and

the the people

knew about rules of monastic discipline

anywhere I mean I could go anywhere so

long as there are Buddhist people there

and you know I could just take my bowl

in the morning and walk through a

village and people would put food in my
bowl and I could live for nothing.
You know life was free
which is the way it's supposed to be for
a monk.
But in the west it doesn't work that
way.
Uh in the west everything costs money
for starters you can't just wander
around and and sleep under trees very
easily and you take your bowl and and
walk for alms you may
have your bowl be empty
no matter how far you walk.
Um I've heard that some of the Ajahn
Chah monks can do it.

Um sometimes they'll they'll make

friends with people or they'll stand

near a grocery store or something.

Maybe that would work.

But um

um like like I said before the rules of

monastic discipline are designed for

ancient India.

And um

like a strict monk isn't allowed even to

feed himself. He's not allowed to handle

money.

And so um

if I'm supported by Asian people in the

west you know I can just stay in one

place and they'll bring me my food if I

insist which is the way it's been

working here. Otherwise the monks would
cook their own food a lot of the time
but they they have learned
that I won't eat it if they do.
So um
you know lay people you know they got
they got to work to do they don't they
I've had people that were like my
supporters when I was in Bellingham like
western people just just flat out asked
me why don't you just drop out and get a
job cuz they just don't see the point of
it they don't see the point of
monasticism they don't they just
consider it to be ridiculous
inconveniences that a monk isn't allowed

to store food overnight or cook his own
food that people have to come every
morning and hand food to the monk so
that he can eat it and you know anything
that costs money a monk isn't allowed to
do and so
that's one reason why Dhamma in the west
has this handicap
is that either if you're a strict monk I
mean it's it's like being a potted plant
that can't live outside naturally has to
live inside in this protected
environment with people taking care of
it.
And um
it doesn't work so well or I mean
another way of going about it is the

monk can just be a sloppy monk that

doesn't follow the rules in which case I

mean what's the point I mean you're just

wearing the monk's robes

for the prestige of it or that sort of

thing in order to get you know

get support easier or something which is

not a good reason.

Um if you're not going to follow the

rules and so I've been uh

yeah I've been in this kind of position

for quite a while and uh I

yeah I for years I've had the idea of

finding some kind of compromise.

You know just still living like a

minimalist existence

you know and not being completely caught

up in samsara but still being able to

feed myself to to handle a little bit of

money. I don't think I would ever be

rich even if I started handling the

stuff.

So

yeah there is uh

that that actually is my plan.

Um I shouldn't be making any big

announcements as of yet but um

yeah I am looking for a better way

of existing as a Buddhist in the west.

And I've already got plans and I'll let

people know of my plans in a few weeks

probably.

So let's see.

Next question. It says it says last one
but then he asks more after this.
What action can be taken and who should
start the ball rolling in order to
counter the publicity of the
self-flagellating Ajahn Amaro and his
tribal cohorts
are garnering for their cause they have
the upper hand because they are
organized and taking action meanwhile
there is little to present an alternate
or correct view. How and with whom can
we become engaged Buddhists?
Well not all monks have sold out. I'm
not sure about Ajahn Thanissaro down
around San Diego. Um

I I would be surprised if he has sold

out to the cultural Marxists.

Um the monks like in the Ajahn Chah

tradition you know their main place is

Abhayagiri which is just uh a stone's

throw from Spirit Rock. So yeah they're

they're like in the infection zone.

So

um

but I mean

like a strict

traditionalist or orthodox Buddhist

he's got the suttas backing him up. I

mean all you have to do is just follow

the suttas and you're going to be doing

well

and not all of the western monks are

going to be

um cultural Marxists. And like a lot of

the Asian monks they're just clueless

about political correctness and that

sort of thing they don't really care

about it other than the ones that are

like being missionaries and that's the

problem is that if you're a missionary

you can't just go around insulting most

of the people you're trying to convert.

And most of the people in the west who

consider themselves to be Buddhists or

who are interested in Buddhism tend to

lean leftwards and so

somebody like me just bluntly stating

you know just

stating my opinions

yeah I think I'd have uh

uh the average um congregation of

western Buddhists just fit to be tied.

You know I might I might just get

screamed out of the Dhamma hall or

something.

So um

I think the best route to take is sort

of like

Evola's riding the tiger I mean you just

be a strict Buddhist I mean really the

important thing is is your own practice

and your own mental states you can't

really care too much about the mental

states of other people.

So

yeah you mind your own garden it's like

you you are a good Buddhist and that's

really the main point that's the main

thing is to

you know do your best on your own and if

you can help others that's great.

And

but I mean if

the important thing is just to to mind

your own practice and to practice

strictly in accordance with your own

conscience and everything your own

understanding of Dhamma

and uh

that would be good enough and being an

engaged Buddhist like a socially engaged

one um

is kind of uh

superfluous or peripheral I mean it's

really it shouldn't be the main point.

Um if you can come up with some way of

doing that finding a strict western monk

and there there are some out there just

like a conservative

um right leaning

western monk or just a traditionalist

who doesn't give a damn about politics

who's just following the text strictly

as he can.

Um

yeah find a monk like that and they are

out there and if you can't find a monk

like that I mean you still got

the Dhamma as your teacher you still got

the text and

there are ways you can network with with

other other Buddhists even though it

they might be all over the world very

skin very thinly scattered but uh

we are out there.

Okay next question.

Could you please give a brief summary

bullet points he says of the main points

of the Buddhist teaching from those

texts that can be ascribed to him?

Um well whether

whether you ascribe a text to the Buddha

or not depends on who you are you know

like the traditional Asians will

describe all of the texts to the Buddha

and

like a a skeptic like like I am um

I'd be most certain about like the

really the really old ones like the

Atakavaga of the Suttanipata and a few

other texts like the

um Dighanaka Sutta of the

of the Majjhima Nikaya or like the the

middle part of the Sakapanna Sutta of

the Digha Nikaya um those look like

they're really archaic. And if you

wanted to go all the way back to that

for

basics of of the Buddhist teachings like

the most like the really the most

primitive ancient pre-Theravadan texts

you know before Theravada was even developed into a system there was already uh texts that were were there that really didn't fit Theravada very well. So going with like the really ancient texts

um there are certain points that um um that you could say would be like fundamental to to what the Buddha was teaching.

And obviously, one of them is renunciation, which uh a lot of Western Buddhists um

um you know, they can't really do that very well other than uh in a in a limited way. Although, I mean, complete

renunciation in the ancient Indian sense

doesn't work so well in America.

So, we're going to have to find some

kind of other kind of renunciation

for that anyway.

Um

then there there's mindfulness. There's

a lot of emphasis on mindfulness. Just

being mindful all the time, you know,

even when you're walking, you're

mindful, you know, when you're

stretching forth your hand, you're

mindful, when you're eating, you're

mindful, when you're lying down to

sleep, you're mindful, when you're

waking up, you're mindful.

So, um

yeah, cultivating mindfulness, just being in the present moment and wide awake and attending to whatever it is that you're doing, you know, whatever arises, that's what you are attending on instead of your mind scattered in in you know, just thinking about what you're going to have for lunch tomorrow while you're doing something,

then uh yeah, that would be basic to Buddhist practice. And it is a powerful practice and it's not easy, which is one reason why um most people probably don't try it very much.

You know, just just getting into the habit of brushing your teeth mindfully

every day is uh it's like a Herculean

labor for for most people, I think.

So, another another one is uh just

meditation and jhana, which uh

originally may have been like

synonymous.

Um just meditate like the oldest texts

they talk about a monk as a meditator, a

monk should practice meditation.

Although, they don't really give

uh

details on instructions, but that is

there.

And uh with a lot of the really oldest

texts, another fundamental teaching is

is essentially no view.

Um you you're not supposed to believe

anything because beliefs really cannot contain truth.

You know, once once you turn something into a concept, it's not ultimately real anymore. It's just a concept about reality and it's not going to be a very I mean, it's going to be radically different from reality. So, um just getting caught up in words and concepts is uh something that uh a good Buddhist, especially uh like a seriously practicing hardcore Buddhist, wouldn't want to do

uh except at the the bare minimum.

And also having no view is just part of the being mindful all the time where I

mean, you're essentially meditating. You're not supposed to be thinking and having beliefs about stuff while you're in deep meditation. And so, just keeping your mind relatively clear all the time just allows reality to shine through rather than you cooking up ideas about reality.

And um another another fundamental teaching going all the way back to the Buddha, almost certainly, is um the psychological nature of karma and of right and wrong. You know, like Buddhist ethics are psychological. And it may be that the Buddha was like the innovator with regard to the idea that right and wrong depend on your mental states

rather than your your physical actions.
So, that's important.
And karma is volition. Um that could be
an innovation of Buddhism. Just uh you
know, like the the Hindus and the Jains
and so forth, they have their own ideas
about karma where it was largely
uh physical. Just the action itself
would be right or wrong. Whereas in
Buddhism, it's uh they've got rules, but
really um
um merit and demerit or wholesome and
unwholesome are dependent on your mental
states. You know, it's like the the
classic example, you you're walking
through the forest and you see a a snake

catching a frog and trying to swallow it. And so, you chase the snake away to save the frog. Um if you do it out of compassion for the frog, you've done something good. And if you do it out of aversion for the snake, you've done something bad, even though it's exactly the same action.

So, it's it just depends on your mental states.

And one other thing that I'll mention of just basic fundamentals of Buddhism is uh dependent co-arising.

And um

it's it's fundamental to Buddhism and essentially nobody understands it.

It's uh yeah, it's like the Theravadins

just uh

uh they coalesced it into 12 links and

they just memorize the links and they

think that's dependent co-arising, but

it is really much more subtle than that.

You know, like I was saying earlier, you

know, it's like dependent co-arising is

like the middle path between is and

isn't. It's the middle path between

one and many,

which isn't two.

It's one and and multiplicity. You unity

and multiplicity, it's like the middle

path between that. So, it's uh

um yeah, it's very subtle and I'm not

even going to attempt to explain it. So,

I'm going to move to the next question,

which is a long one.

This is after Dogbreath's last question.

This is long after his last question,

but he's still asking them.

Bless his heart.

Mr. Breath asks,

"20 years ago, I used to visit a

monastery in Ajahn Chah Forest Tradition

in the UK where the head Ajahn was a

stickler for following the vinaya." Good

for him.

"During this time, I visited Thailand

and was somewhat shocked to find several

monks embroiled in sex scandals. They

were visiting Bangkok whorehouses."

"The scandals hit the newspapers and TV

because it wasn't only the monks, but also the heads of monasteries. I was told there was a big scandal every couple of years and then it would blow over until the next one.

On the way back on the plane, I read a book called Not What the Buddha Taught."

I think

you you may be which I read.

"In which the gay practices of some Thai monks were described. All this was in clear contrast to my experience in the West where my Ajahn at that time was a stickler for the vinaya.

So, my question is, are Western monastics more moral or vinayaic than

their Eastern counterparts? If so, is this still the case or have standards fallen? Is spreading the Dhamma to whorehouses still a common occurrence in Asia? Do Western monks visit whorehouses in the West? And what about Asian monks in the West?"

Well, that's a good question or series of questions.

Um with regard to Western monks being stricter than Asian monks, yes, as a general rule,

Western monks tend to be stricter than Asian monks. For example, with regard to handling money,

um in Burma, maybe 2% of monks don't handle money, even though it's strictly

for prohibited. You know, it is strictly forbidden for for monks to handle money except under very limited circumstances and almost all monks just handle money freely.

Um for Western monks, it's maybe half. That's my experience. I can't say with any authority, but it's about half of Western monks and like uh

half of Western monks don't handle money and maybe 2% of of Asian monks or Burmese monks don't handle money. So, um yeah, as a general rule, Western monks tend to be more strict partly because they're not just following along with with their tradition. They're they have

to go against their tradition in order to be monks. They have to go against their family sometimes. They lose most of their friends. Um you know, they're just going into this radically different world. And so, they have to be relatively serious. Whereas a lot of Asian monks that become monks, um you know, they're just maybe lazy and want to live an easy life or they just don't like girls very much and want a socially acceptable way of not getting married or they're really poor and they they want like a free education at a monastic school or they just want a awkward social mobility and people treating them with respect and so forth. Whereas their

father was an a subsistence farmer.

So, um

yeah, so it's like uh an Asian monk is

going along with his tradition

and um the tradition is rather corrupt

and like popularized, you know, um

you know, I mean, when when people get

control of something, you know, they're

going to bring it down to the level of

their own defilements and that's just

the way it is. Anything that goes

mainstream is going to be corrupt as a

general rule.

So,

um yeah, that is true that um

um Western monks, as a general rule,

tend to be more serious. Although, a few
Asian monks, they still have like the
medieval just stainless steel faith and
they can be very saintly and very
advanced. That's one
one advantage they've got. They've got
no doubts. Whereas Westerners,
you know, we've been exposed to all
these different points of view and we've
got a certain skepticism and
lukewarmness that a lot of the more
serious type of Asian monks that stay
out in the forest or whatever, um yeah,
they don't have the same problems as us.
So, there is that. And um
let's see.
With regard to

uh

uh with regard to Asian monks visiting

whorehouses, there was one case um this

was a long time ago. Um Ajahn Yantra

Amaro,

who was a famous Thai monk and he was

doing tours and giving talks. He had

books published and everything. And then

uh it turned out that he was uh

um ordering call girls in Australia. He

was he went to give a talk in Australia

and uh

um

he was uh

having call girls come to his hotel room

and uh he was paying with his credit

card. So when he got back to Thailand, he was defrocked by the government. You know, they even had the the credit card receipts and everything as proof that he was messing around with prostitutes. And then uh

he dropped out of

dropped out of the picture and then a few years later uh I heard that he was in like prison in America for um like visa fraud. He had like a counterfeit visa or a counterfeit passport or something. He entered America with that. And then um a little later he was apparently still pretending like he was a a monk, but then he was like going to discos or something in the evening like

wearing a toupee and layman's clothing.

And then uh he got in a car wreck and

when he was drunk and killed somebody or

something. And And it was just all kinds

of stuff like that. Um some of that

happened in the West.

So I mean it can happen although

um

visiting whorehouses I assume is very

rare. I've I mean I've been hanging out

with monks for 30 years.

And um

yeah, I mean

every once in a while you hear like a

rumor of something like that happening,

but I've never had any

uh close at hand experience with monks

that were that were that rotten

or or that corrupt. And And if they're

if they're messing around with

prostitutes, technically speaking

they're not even really monks anymore.

They're They're just automatically

excommunicated.

Uh so

um But yeah, I mean the main gist of the

question is that Western monks

um

are they do tend to be stricter on

average just because they have to be

more serious in order to become monks

cuz they're going against everything by

doing so.

And um

there there is a certain amount of

corruption, you know, monks are human.

And you know, some monks become monks

for

not the best reasons. And so you're

going to have just rascals and and uh

scoundrels and that sort of thing. But

um as a general rule monks tend to be

pretty good. I mean even if they don't

follow the rules strictly, they tend to

be good people. As a general rule.

That's my experience.

So next question.

Uh or series of questions from Mr.

Breath.

Various branches of cognitive science have demonstrated that we can be profoundly misled in our subjective interpretation of an experience. For example, when you look around it appears as though you're seeing things the whole time, but this isn't the case because the visual stream is effectively blind during a saccade.

Whatever that means. Where your eyes jump from one local target to another. Cognitive science suggests almost every report of introspection is likely to be misleading. Meditation is a first-person experience. But given the scale of error regarding our own subjective interpretations of our experiences and

those of others A

cognitive science suggests almost every report of introspection is likely to be misleading. What is the Buddhist response to this?

B Cognitive science suggests almost every report of introspection is likely to be misleading. So what value is there in laying out stages on the path? For example, the jhanas.

And C

given the above, what value should we give to our own experiences of meditation and what value should we give to someone else's report of their meditation experiences from the Buddhist

perspective?

Okay. Well, cognitive science is nice. I I was very interested in cognitive science. And then it kind of got shot down because it's politically incorrect. So

um

with regard to the idea that cognitive science suggests almost every report of introspection is likely to be misleading um it is true. I mean you can be misled easily. But then again

like a serious meditator, like a meditation master, he's going to be way beyond a cognitive scientist with regard to knowledge of how the mind works. The cognitive science will have all kinds of

really interesting data. And you know,
you'll have like a a conceptual
understanding of certain things.
Whereas the meditation master will
simply understand he will just know
consciousness.
And it's interesting that this morning
somebody sent me a poem
by St. John of the Cross. It's my
favorite poem by him.
Um where he's talking about a meditative
experience that he had. It's like a
an experience of high contemplation,
which would be like jhana.
And one of the the lines in the poem
says, "Wise men disputing can never

overthrow it."

That it doesn't matter. I mean it's like

once you have one of these experiences

like like a deep mystical experience,

you know, just like a like an insight

experience

then

um

yeah, all all the cognitive sciences in

the world saying, "Oh, that's just your

brain misfiring or something."

Um it doesn't count for anything.

Um

like also in uh William James, the the

varieties of religious experience, which

I I recommend to anybody who wants to

understand the religious mind. Um he has

one or two chapters on mysticism.

And

he says a mystical state has two

uh two qualities. One quality is that

the person who has the experience has

absolutely no doubt that it is more real

or at least as real as his ordinary

waking state.

And the second quality is that it has

persuasive power only on the person who

has it. I mean just just the idea that I

had a mystical experience and I go

around telling other people, then

obviously I tell a cognitive science and

he's just going to say, "Your

introspection is likely to be

misleading."

But um

once once you've really had deep

meditative states, if you're doing your

meditation right and and not just

clinging to the the significance that

you think it has where I mean like if

you're if you're really doing meditation

well then any kind of concept that

arises, you don't get sucked into it.

Like even St. John of the Cross, he was

a he was a meditation master even though

he was a Catholic. You know, he's

saying, you know, even if even if you

see God, you know, just dismiss it. You

hear You hear the voice of the Virgin

Mary, just dismiss it. Just even if it

seems like it's like divine. You know,
you that's not the point. The point is
to just make your mind clear.
And so um you're trying to clear your
mind of anything that could be
interpreted in any way anyhow.
So I mean cognitive science is very nice
and
I've met a lot of people who've just
been completely misled by their own
experiences. You just have a weird
experience, you just jump to the
conclusion that you're a you're an aria
or something.
Then yeah, but I mean still even though
um there's like a very low success rate

or a very low accuracy rate with regard to having these higher experiences, you know, there's all kinds of junk experiences that are misinterpreted and so forth.

Still even if your odds are only 2% of really having uh like higher consciousness

then you're still better off than just going along with the cognitive scientists who have, you know, almost a 0% chance of of attaining higher consciousness unless it just happens to them accidentally. They have some kind of crisis or something that just slams them into a higher state of consciousness. Then maybe they'll

they'll stop saying, you know, "Well, the your introspection is likely to be misleading."

Um

what value is there in laying out stages on the path? Well, I mean with regard to the jhanas, originally the jhanas in my opinion were probably just like the four different levels of meditation where, you know, the lowest level you're still thinking and the second level you're not thinking anymore. And then you know, the next level above that is more refined and till finally you get to the highest level. You know, there's like characteristics with regard to you know,

each each level. I don't want to get

into those, but but still um you know,

it's it's relatively straightforward. Um

unless uh

I mean

well, I mean people can even interpret

the different stages of jhana

differently. It's It's kind of

controversial. But still I mean there

there are some things that are

relatively straightforward that uh

um

that are I mean they they can be useful.

And with regard to stages on the path,

yeah, I agree. I mean you're better off

not even trying to identify, you know,

what stage you're at anything like that.

Um you know, even if you become a
sotapanna or something, you shouldn't
even believe that you're a sotapanna.
Just whatever happens happens. It's
fine. You just keep going forwards.
So a real adept at meditation is going
to know how to cut through the
of the misleading introspection to a
very high degree. To a degree that
cognitive scientists are absolutely
clueless with regard to.
So yeah, I like cognitive science.
If if you're just going with intellect
as a way of understanding reality,
you're just screwed cuz you're never
going to understand reality by

intellectualizing.

You're just going to have to just experience reality directly. And that's like um you know, just experiencing the Kantian thing in itself of your own consciousness.

That's your only chance at understanding ultimate reality is through introspection. So if you want to say, "Well, it's likely to be misleading."

And then just you know, give up.

Then I mean that's your choice, but your only chance really of of experiencing ultimate reality is through introspection.

So even though the it's it's like there's all kinds of traps and uh

um

just obstacles and and just

you know, false experiences you can have

and everything. Then But still I mean

you just do the best you can. and if

your karma is good enough and your

resolve is pure and all that, then

there's a good chance that you are going

to uh have some really um

like exalted meditative states

um

mixed in with all the misleading stuff

that the cognitive scientists uh warn

people against.

So, here's uh the last question. Let's

see wait, I'm going to make sure I

answered these ones.

Oh, over regard to uh someone else's

report of their meditative experiences.

Yeah, it just doesn't even matter. If if

it's your teacher and you trust them,

excuse me, then um yeah, I mean, you

should listen to them obviously. And

anybody who's telling you about

meditative experiences, I mean, at least

you should listen. But um

yeah, you shouldn't just say, "Oh my

golly, that person is an Arya cuz they

they say that they experienced this or

something." Then

no, I mean,

really all that matters to you

is your own your own states.

So,

but even your own states you shouldn't be trying to interpret. I mean, you just meditate the best you can and don't try to analyze it very much. You know, don't try to say, "Oh, I'm I've reached stage X or whatever."

because uh yeah, chances are you're wrong. But still, you just do the best you can and by not interpreting it, not uh imposing significance upon it, you're much less likely to be misled.

You get misled by giving the false interpretations. So, just don't interpret it. You just meditate and don't interpret it and um that's going

to keep you safe most of the time.

So, next question. If there's still time

for questions, here's one regarding

metta. What does metta mean?

Is metta meditation described in the

Pali Canon? Is metta meditation

contained within those texts that can be

attributed to Siddhartha Gautama Buddha?

What are the earliest instructions for

metta meditation?

Where are they found and what are they?

Okay, well, metta um

it's it's closely related to uh

the Pali word metta, which means friend.

So, it's like friendliness. Usually it's

translated as loving-kindness. And um

the standard definition is you are

wishing well. You're wishing like
happiness and health to others. You're
wishing like you have positive
desires or positive uh
like feelings towards another person.
So, that's that's what it means. It's
essentially you are you are wishing for
the well-being of another being.
Is metta meditation described in the
Pali Canon? Yes, it's it's uh
described quite a lot. And um
a lot of the instructions are are just
kind of technical and cold where you
just beaming metta in all directions to
all beings. So, um
it it's in there. There's there's quite

a few there's quite a few. I can't think
of any uh sutta off hand that has these
kinds of instructions, but you can find
them pretty easily if you look.
Is meditation contained within those
texts that can be attributed to the
Buddha? Um
I don't it's not certain if uh you know,
like the actual techniques that are
given
would be uh
like go all the way back necessarily
verbatim to the Buddha. Although, I'm
pretty sure the Buddha did encourage
monks to have like a friendly mind
towards towards other beings.
And um the metta sutta is very nice. You

know, it's it's like one of the most uh

well-known

texts in Theravada Buddhism.

And uh

yeah, there's there's valuable

information in that.

And uh whether the Buddha himself

composed the metta sutta, I don't know.

But um it it's it's relatively old and

it's, you know, orthodox.

What are the earliest instructions for

metta meditation? Where are they found

and what are they? Yeah, I I really

can't say what the earliest instructions

would be other than just uh

you know, may all beings be well kind of

stuff.

So, um yeah, I'm no expert on I'm no expert on metta. I used to uh joke to my one of my teachers that of all the paramis of the 10 paramis of Theravada Buddhism, metta was my weakest one.

So, um now we move on to Frank who has some questions. Let's see. In some yoga traditions, they emphasize physical health coupled with their meditation practice as a means of attaining results. What are your thoughts, opinions on the mind-body relationship regarding meditation and insight? How does one's physical health and fitness play a role with their mental cultivation, meditation, and

overall state of mind? Well, I mean, the mind and the body are are interconnected. You know, they they're they definitely condition each other.
So, it is good to be physically healthy. And if you meditate a lot, it does cause you to be healthier. Like I've noticed I have more resistance to colds and that sort of thing if I if I'm doing a lot of meditation.
Um and the and the Buddha I mean, there is talk like in the Vinaya of uh you know, it's good to do walking meditation after you eat and this sort of thing. It's good for your health and, you know, monks are allowed to keep

medicine and this kind of thing. So, um yeah, I mean, it it is good to keep your body healthy. Like um when when monks uh before they eat, a lot of monks I did this uh at some monasteries a long ago where you chant about the four requisites and and uh the whole purpose of eating alms food, for example, is just to keep yourself healthy enough to keep living the holy life. And that's the main purpose. You're not eating good food in order to experience the pleasure of the good taste or to beautify yourself, make yourself look buff, or anything. It's just to keep yourself um healthy so that you can just keep practicing.

So, um yeah, so long as you're you're like exercising for the sake of just being healthy and in good shape uh and you're not trying to attract the ladies or anything, then uh yeah, that would still be good Buddhist practice.

But um you shouldn't put too much emphasis on your body cuz really um the the mind is more important than the body with regard to uh the cultivation of wisdom and enlightenment and everything cuz it's essentially mental.

Um

so, your body is just like the your vehicle. You want to keep it in

relatively good running condition.

Next question. I have read that it was prophesied soon after Prince Siddhartha's birth that he would be either a wheel-turning monarch or a fully enlightened Buddha. As the Buddha, it is said that he turned the wheel of Dhamma. So, in a way, he was destined to become a wheel-turner of some sort. Can you explain the difference of the wheels being turned in the two above- mentioned life potentials? Um actually, probably no. Um

you know, it's the wheel-turning monarch, you know, the the chakravartin um chakravarti

um yeah, he he was essentially king of the world and I
I would be surprised if there has ever been one of those. And so, it's all like legends, you know, it's Indian mythology essentially. And um there's supposedly a wheel that followed him around
that would just float in the air and follow him around, which may have been a corruption of some earlier sort of uh mythology like um you know, the ancient horse sacrifices or whatever where um the king would turn like a horse loose like a white horse and wherever it wandered, he had to conquer it. You know, it was just like uh it could be

just a corruption of some ancient thing

like that

where uh

um it you know, it doesn't really have

any meaning other than like the

um just the mythological

floating wheel as just one of the the

things that uh

a uh a wheel-turning monarch supposedly

has. And um I would be surprised if

there ever really has been in real life

a wheel-turning monarch.

So, um yeah, it's um

I'm not I I don't know if there really

is an answer.

Next question. The Venerable Ledi

In this book, he says that the light of

kamma is always in the universe for if it weren't, there would be no means by which a bodhisatta could develop to his supreme state as a Buddha. What are your thoughts on this?

He goes on to mention other lights that come only through the Buddha, four noble truths and such, which make it possible for beings to reach Nibbana. He says that Hindus have the first light and that this light is a worldly kind of light because while samsaric progress can be made through it, one relying on it alone cannot reach Nibbana. It was wondered if perhaps the wheel-turning monarch in my above question would be a

highly refined being relying on this

first light.

Um by lights, I assume it just means

like good things that help people

towards Dhamma.

And uh the light of kamma is like a

natural one because you can discover

that or know about that even if Buddha

Buddhism uh is extinct in the world.

So, in between

um dispensations,

um you can still know about kamma.

Uh but other lights

uh or things that are, you know, help

people to become enlightened, um you

know, only when there's Dhamma in the

world and you have uh a Buddha or the

recorded teachings of a Buddha

uh teaching about them, you know, like

dependent co-arising or something,

then uh

um then people can avail themselves of

that.

And um yeah, Ledi Sayadaw he was he was

brilliant a brilliant scholar. He was

very Asian.

And uh reading his his manuals uh it can

be surreal sometimes.

And uh he had the typically Burmese

attitude that um

um

you're better off studying Abhidhamma

than than meditating because

um

if there's no dispensation of Buddhism

in the world, you can't study Abhidhamma

cuz there is no Abhidhamma, but anybody

can can meditate at any time.

But, um

yeah, I still think that meditation is

better. You're probably better off not

even studying Abhidhamma, except maybe

just a little to know what it is that um

you can be skeptical of.

Um

let's see. The the wheel-turning monarch

uh highly refined

um

Yeah, yeah, the wheel-turning monarch. I

I don't know. It's It's It's like

mythology, so I'm I'm not even going to go there. I I really can't say for sure. Next question. Can you explain the death to rebirth continuum? How does karma and mental states at the dying moment affect one's rebirth? Well, they say it's like your your dying

thought, your last mental state before you die is the most important one of your life because that's what determines, you know, like the the vector or the momentum going into your next life.

So,

um yeah, in in Theravada Buddhism, there there can be no real gap

in in your other than just like the, you know, the the trillion gazillionth of a second in between flashes. So, it's like, you know, your last rebirth or your last mental state in this existence, then you die, then the very next moment your uh karmic momentum has to reappear somewhere else.

So, in in Theravada Buddhism, there's no There's no real um I mean, there's no gap. If If let's say let's say it's your karma to be reborn as a prince next time, and there's like a a long waiting list for that because princes are pretty rare nowadays, then uh you you'll just have to take some

other kind of existence.

Um maybe even, you know, like a higher spirit realm or something. That could be like the intermediate state, like the bardo realms that Tibetans talk about. It could just be sort of like a spirit existence that doesn't last very long before you then uh have an appropriate physical body to descend into or something.

And uh that's probably not the best way to explain it, but uh cuz really all that that migrates from one existence to the next is is like the your karmic momentum of your mind.

And um

in in Abhidhamma, they even say that

your last thought before you die becomes

like the the nimitta or the sign of your

subconscious mind, your bhavanga citta,

in your entire next lifetime. So, let's

say um your last conscious thought is of

your family

before you die, then your whole next

life, when you're not thinking anything,

when you're just in like this

subconscious continuum, there's just

going to be this picture of your family

in your past life that's going to be

there. Kind of like the the test pattern

on on TV sets back in the day.

Um

but yeah, because your last mental state
is the most important one, that's why
like Mahatma Gandhi, when he got shot,
you know, as he's falling to the ground,
he says, "Hey Ram."
Which is, you know, "Hey God." And it's
not like, "Oh God, they got me." like in
the movie. It's um you know, he's
calling out to God. He wants his mind
focused on divinity at the moment of
death because he knows that's going to
help him get a better
um existence or or help him after he
dies.
So, it is important um
um when people die to try, if possible,

have uplifted mental states. And that's why like the Tibetans, they'll have monks chanting like the Tibetan Book of the Dead giving them instructions on what to do, you know, so like you try to stay in the you know, you're going to find yourself surrounded by light. You try and stay in the light as long as possible. You know, it it has a purifying effect and this kind of stuff. Which um

yeah, I mean, it's it's it's good, I think.

Doesn't do any harm as far as I know.

Okay, next question. What are your thoughts on superstitions?

It would seem that many of them are

communicable and shared among cultures. What do you think? Superstitions, I mean, that could apply to just about anything. I mean, a lot of what people believe nowadays, you know, 500 years from now, assuming that we're still around, those could be considered just gross superstitions. Even like materialism,
you know, just the belief that like uh like a disease is caused by a a virus. You know, it's just accepted now, but uh 500 years from now, that might just be considered some primitive superstition. Just the very thought that physical, you know, it's just like physical matter

had had that kind of effect or

something. It's like uh you know, I

mean, that could be a superstition. So,

um a superstition is just a a belief

that uh other people think is

Essentially.

So, um yeah, many of them are

communicable and shared among cultures.

And uh I think next questions are going

to be more along these lines, so I'll

move on to the next one. How does your

new understanding of liminality explain

such phenomena like superstitions?

Um my understanding of liminality coming

from uh

the book

um The Trickster in the Paranormal by uh

George C. Hansen.

George Hansen.

Yeah. I'm not sure about the C now.

Um yeah, and he's saying that um

everybody has to have a well-structured

belief system

to keep out the paranormal. It's like

the paranormal arises from like chaos

and uh like borderline states and just

ambiguity, the breaking down of of

rules. And so, the more rules you've

got, the more structure you've got in

your life, the less likely that scary

supernatural stuff is going to be able

to bleed through into your world. And

so, um yeah, a lot superstitions or any

kind of belief system is one of the main purposes of that is to just keep the world very structured and orderly and predictable and non-scary.

Because people have to feel like they understand something. It's like it wasn't until relatively It wasn't until modern times that people even knew what the sun was

or stars. You know, they didn't know. You know, what what is the sun? Is this like this divine thing that God put there? And so, um

uh but everybody wants to

They want to know. I mean, it's It's scary not to be able to explain something. So, even if you can explain

it, I mean, like the the authority
figures, you know, the shaman or the the
priest or whatever, should be able to
explain it. And if they can't explain
it, you're not going to have much faith
in them, so they're going to make
something up um
even if they don't really know. So,
uh yeah, that's that's one reason why
superstitions arises. Just people have
to feel like this emotional security by
thinking that they understand stuff when
really we don't, and we still don't. We
just use science now, which uh is very
powerful and useful, but um
yeah, eventually even that will be

considered a superstition, probably.

Okay, next question. Are the Burmese very superstitious? Yes. Do you have any stories about encounters with people and their superstitions? If someone is suffering from a superstition mental affliction of some sort, what are some things you would do to help them? Well, yeah, the Burmese, I mean, from Western Western point of view, the Burmese are superstitious. You know, it's like um yeah, they have uh no doubts about witches, for example. There's a like a a well-known um proverb in Burma that, you know, every seventh house houses a witch.

And I was warned about witches. Witches

are Witches are bad. Like even the the
abbot of this monastery long ago,
he told me about this guy who uh
the daughter of a witch fell in love
with him, and he
did not uh
did not show her the proper affection or
respect, and so she went crying to mama
the witch, and the witch put a hex on
him. And he started having like really
intense stomach pains. It's so so bad
that he wound up going to the hospital,
and they x-rayed him, and they found a
wooden shoe inside of his stomach.
Like a whole shoe that he couldn't
possibly have even swallowed.

So, um they didn't know how it got in
there, but uh they had to cut him open
to take out the shoe, and he's lying in
the bed recovering,
feeling a little better, and all of a
sudden he starts feeling really bad
again. So, they they x-ray him
or or something to find out what's
wrong, and they find he's got another
shoe in his stomach. So, then they go,
"Oh, yeah, this witch. We got a We got a
witch problem." So, then they had to
call um
um an a polancia, which is like a white
wizard, like a a a good Buddhist wizard,
who um
goes and starts doing the chanting over

him, and the guy's like screaming in pain because uh uh it's like that the hex has like this defense mechanism thing to protect itself or something. So, that uh you know, like someone who can cure him, the guy's afraid of him, and it hurts him and everything. But, uh finally the a polancia cured him. And there's just all kinds of stories about I mean, stories about me. There's people are telling me that they've seen pictures of me like levitating over the city of Monywa, this kind of stuff. So, um

yeah, they're relatively credulous. You know, they can believe stuff pretty

easily. They're They're a faith-oriented people.

So, um yeah, they don't need a whole lot of evidence to back up their their beliefs. And uh see,

uh what are some things you could do to help superstitious people? Just just uh talk some sense to them, I suppose. You know, just exercise a little healthy skepticism.

Um but otherwise, I mean, if as long as um you know, it's just their tradition and uh you're just uh the foreigner or whatever, then you're not going to be able to to get very far with them anyway.

But

yeah, just remain calm.

I guess that would be a good a good way

of doing it. Just let your own mental

states uh serve as kind of a

uh have a steadying effect on them or

something. Maybe a little a little good

Western skepticism. But everybody needs

to have their belief systems and you

know people that are of a different

culture is going to have different

beliefs with regard to a lot of things

and uh you know, it's it's not

necessarily a bad thing.

Okay, last question.

Last question of the evening.

We're already well over an hour here, too.

Um this is from Frank. I know it is kind of forbidden for monks to showcase supernormal powers to the laity, but in a world so focused and rooted in materialism and the five senses, do you think such a show of supernormal psychic power abhijna might show people that there is much more to this universe. I am not asking you to break the rules or speak out against them, but how do you think people of this age would respond if a monk were to come out and display such powers?

Um

it does happen sometimes. Like like Neem

Karoli Baba, who was not a Buddhist, um he would do this kind of stuff. He did he had psychic powers and he would do impossible stuff. And he used it skillfully. Usually he wouldn't do it in front of a crowd. He would do it just focus at one person. Just you know, he would know how to blow their mind and he would blow their mind and put them into a state of um you know, they're just wide open. You know, they've just they've just had their belief system just shot down in flames. You know, it's like what what it should be completely impossible just happened to them. You know, he just told them some deep secret

that they'd never told anybody. You
know, he they just he just meets them,
you know, and he's telling them all this
this stuff that they that they they'd
never told anybody, you know. And um
I mean that happened with Ram Dass.
That's where um you know, Ram Dass goes
to visit Neem Karoli Baba for the first
time and um they're just sitting around.
It was I probably their first day. Ram
Dass's first day. He was still Richard
Alpert at that time. And um
uh Maharaji tells him uh you were out
under the stars last night.
And uh at first Ram Dass didn't even
remember everything. He goes, oh yeah,
yeah, he went outside to pee in in the

middle of the night and he was just
looking up at the stars and thinking
about his mother who had recently died
of spleen cancer.
So he's yeah, yeah, I was out under the
stars last night. And then Maharaji
says, you were thinking about your
mother.
And Ram Dass says, yeah.
And then Maharaji says, she got very big
in the belly before she died.
And Ram Dass is like, yeah.
And then Maharaji says in English
because usually he would speak Hindi
through a translator. He says in
English, spleen.

She died of spleen.

And Ram Dass knew there's no way that

this guy should have known this stuff.

And it was just

I mean it was just like shot down his

his concepts of how reality works so

that he was just like in this completely

vulnerable state and he just he just has

like this breakdown and just starts

crying.

And um that's that's sort of like how

Maharaji would convert people sometimes

where he would just blow their mind

until they're in this

in this vulnerable state where they

don't know, you know, what's what. They

don't know what reality is anymore. And

then he would just gently um you know,
give them what they needed to know to to
help put them on a more spiritual path
or whatever.
And so that kind of thing it can happen.
Although like doing miracles in front of
crowds um
I mean just just the way karma works, it
might not even be all that possible in
the West when everybody is firmly
convinced that miracles can't happen,
then that's a pretty strong way to keep
miracles from happening. You know, like
even in the Bible where
um Jesus goes back to his hometown of
Nazareth and everybody there is saying,

yeah, isn't that Jesus the carpenter's son? I mean don't his brothers and sisters live here in town? I mean who does he think he is? And because they don't have any belief in him, he can't do very many miracles. You know, he just casts out a few demons, you know, and uh just goes on his way

and um you know, says that no no prophet is without honor except in his own hometown or yeah, yeah, no prophet is without honor except in his own hometown.

So um yeah, I think it would have to be like in a one-on-one kind of a thing. And it could happen. Although like you say in in the question, it is against

the rules for a monk to perform psychic feats in front of lay people.

And the Buddha does say in a in a one of the in one of the texts that the only miracle that is really appropriate for a monk to do with regard to uh other people is essentially just look into their heart to see the best way to help them.

You know, kind of read their mind or something, but you're not like showing it off, you know, you're not like flying around in the air anything or you're not even telling you, I'm going to read your mind. You know, it's like you just think of a number from 1 to 100 or nothing

like that. It's it's like you just look

into them and and and see where they

need help and then help them.

So um

yeah, I think I think that would be my

answer to your question and that is the

last question and so I'm done.

And this is the longest one thus far.

Uh got quite a few questions this time.

So yeah, if you if you have any

questions you want to ask, I can't

promise that I'll I'll give a good

answer, but I'll do my best. And

just

include the question at the at the

bottom of the video in the comments

um

or if I make an announcement on SubscribeStar right before doing another one, then you can ask there also and uh be happy and have a nice day.

And uh good morning or good day or good night or whatever whatever time you're watching this.

hello and welcome to

episode 5 of question and answer

i am your host

bahasa so i'll just get straight to it

and

uh start reading off these questions and

the first one is

from steve who says he has a simple

question

but uh don't believe it because it's

this

huge block of of a question that's

actually

maybe four or five questions combined

but i'll get to it i have a simple

question about

meditation advice but a kind of long

drawn-out way of asking it

i'm a very poor meditator unless i put a

large amount of effort

in at first to force myself to do the

formal meditation

when i try to read the sutas i often

see the constant repetition and i just

think

oh man i don't want to go through this

just get to the point

kind of along the lines of things that

you were saying western people probably

won't have much use for

i like the traditional aspects of it i

just feel like it's difficult for me

when things are not condensed

because modern life trains people to

move more quickly

and to have such a short attention span

there's so much immediate gratification

available and if you get past that there

is so much

information to absorb about every field

of knowledge to try and build a picture

of reality

and so when something requires studying

and

has what i feel except extraneous

information i have trouble shaking this

feeling of existential dread that i'm

wasting my time

or that i should just look up the cliff

notes version

and a part of me says the feeling that i

need to meditate or do any particular

thing

is just contributing to a constant need

to

to be more or do more things an

obsession with doing and getting and

quantifying things and achievements that

is probably just generating more karma

and states of desire and aversion

i notice that type of feeling a lot when

doing more formal meditation

than also guilt about not being a better

meditator

part of me says these are hindrances and

maybe i should discipline myself and

force

it more often because i'm just being

avoidant

part says that the need to do meditation

is part of the problem in the first

place have you run into anything like

this

and any meditation advice or advice in

general

so there's a lot to unpack here

i think just for starters just the whole

idea

that the purpose of meditation is to add

to uh

you know add to the whole samsaric uh

contribution of information i think

that's uh

kind of barking up the wrong tree kind

of going the wrong direction

i'm reminded of a verse in the tao te

ching that says

he who follows the way of learning

increases day by day

he who follows the way of tao decreases

day by day

he becomes less and less until he

arrives at non-action

and with non-action there is nothing

that he cannot achieve

so meditation is is like going the other

direction from adding information to

form a world view because any kind of

intellectual world view is

is going to be a deluded world view

i mean we're all deluded to some degree

but um trying to understand

reality by thinking about it by adding

more and more

symbolic perceptions to the dumpster or

the dumper

or what is the hamper that's it the

hamper um

yeah i mean it just doesn't work that

way so the purpose of meditation is to

clear your mind and

reduce the number of uh beliefs

that you've got going at least while

you're meditating

um so yeah um

the whole purpose from like the the

dharmic point of view or the

the early buddhist point of view is or

like a lot of mahayana buddhist points

of view also is

i mean you meditate in order not to be

um

accumulating perceptual you know

concepts

so um yeah with regard to meditation

there is that

um if i've experienced anything like

what uh

steve here just described um the first

part of it

like the the motivational aspect yeah i

have had motivational problems

with meditation and um

for me it was um i also just am by

nature a bad meditator i just i have

like this supercharged hyperactive mind

and um let's see it would be uh

i can't remember the pali word uh udacha

udacha which is just mental agitation so

i've got like an agitated mind

just uh by nature it seems and so

meditation is difficult for me also and

um

i really have to try very hard to get

into

consistent deep meditative states and

sometimes even then no matter how hard i

try i still don't

i still don't get the consistent deep

meditative state like

really deep so um

if i go for a long time

without getting into the really deep

meditative states you know like what a

christian would call contemplation you

know where you're just not thinking

anything

then um uh yeah i mean

just having to go back to the abc's you

know go back to the elementary

techniques to try to build back up again

it can be very disheartening and

frustrating

and um so i i don't meditate nearly as

much as i used to

largely because of this motivational

issue of

um just the unreliability

um for somebody with like a really um

like a hyperactive mind like a

compulsive thinker like

like a lot of westerners are so

um with regard to that kind of situation

then um you do well still to cultivate

mindfulness even if you're not sitting

cross-legged with your eyes closed you

can still do walking meditation whenever

you're walking really

so i do that a lot i do most of the

meditation i do

nowadays is walking meditation where i'm

just walking back and forth or

just uh walking uh walking around

outside

and uh a lot of it is um in addition to

walking meditation

um like uh essentially hindu just om

just repeating home

like when i'm walking a lot of the time

i'll just spontaneously start owning

without really

deliberately planning to start

meditating it just comes out naturally

or automatically so

anybody who has you know they figure

they don't have the time

or whatever then i mean you can you can

meditate doing no matter what you're

doing i mean you don't have to be

sitting cross-legged with your eyes

closed to be meditating you can be

brushing your teeth or driving your car

or walking up and down stairs you can be

meditating while you're doing exercises

you know

if you're if you're doing like weight

lifting or something you can you can

meditatively lift weights you know

mindfulness of the

the musc the muscle exertion and that

sort of thing the sensations that you're

feeling

so um let's see

what else is in this question this is a

very very complicated

simple question um

yeah with regard to feeling guilt i mean

guilt is just

yeah you shouldn't feel guilt i mean

even if you even if you spent years

murdering nuns and orphans um you

shouldn't feel

guilt over it because that just adds to

the badness it doesn't it doesn't

improve the situation at all you could

say that

if you have enough guilt it will inspire

you to stop doing the bad thing

in future which is fine although if you

can just

decide not to do that in future without

the guilt that's even better

because in buddhist philosophy

remorse or regret is kokucha which is

always an unskillful mental state and

just makes more bad karma

so i'm not encouraging people to be

psychopaths

um if you're going to feel moral

scruples you should feel them before you

do the deed instead of after

because feeling them after um just adds

to the uh the overall bad situation or

unhappiness

so let me look through this uh question

some more

uh give us

i think that's probably

good enough but yeah it's like the

getting and doing and quantifying things

and achievements

is really um not what meditation is

supposed to be about

um that you're trying to free yourself

from that

you know that's that's all samsara and

uh ultimately the purpose of

meditation is not just stress relief or

making yourself feel better about

yourself

but it's helping you to detach from

samsara get closer to ultimate reality

and all the quantifying and the

accumulation of

concepts and all that is going in the

opposite direction

really um unless you can be the

philosophical type

like uh immanuel kant or somebody who uh

or or like nagarjuna who uses

intellectuality as a way of curing

yourself of intellectuality where you

just

go to um you just study the limitations

of your own mind until you realize that

uh intellect just isn't going to get you

there

okay so i'll just move on to the next

question these um this is from average

dad

and uh i did receive a message from him

saying that yes indeed i was correct

it's supposed to be average

dude except um he spells it average done

so um let's see the first question does

buddhism put

importance on physical fitness did the

buddha

teach it due amongst exercise

in buddhism like early buddhism

there was importance placed on health

and

um but with regard to um

like exercise like calisthenics or

something i don't even know if there was

even a concept of that in ancient times

you know i don't know if people just

worked out and did exercises

um my experience is that if you're

living

a relatively simple buddhist monk

lifestyle

you're going to be walking around a lot

i mean like the wandering monks

just the wandering is good exercise i

assume they're living a clean life

you know they're they don't have uh

vices or

very very few and and simple and

innocent vices

so um that's going to be uh

tend towards health um there is a little

bit of talk about

physical fitness or our health in

general in the the rules of monastic

discipline like monks are encouraged to

do walking

meditation after they eat to help digest

the food

and help not to be sleepy that kind of

thing

but um just living a simple lifestyle of

you know walking to the village every

morning and walking up and down hills

and chop wood carry water um

yeah without doing any special exercises

i sometimes i'd be

relatively burly just living out in the

woods i assume living

like a rough aesthetic lifestyle in a

forest

um in my case it seems to have brought

out uh

like caveman instincts and uh maybe

increase my testosterone to some degree

which also would just tend to make me

more muscular just without having to uh

lift weights or anything so uh some

monks exercise but you're not supposed

to do it for like self-beautification

once you're healthy that's good enough

you know i mean

you shouldn't be trying to get buff or

anything if you're a monk

just just to be healthy and physically

fit is really the whole point because

the whole purpose of having a body for a

monk is just to enable you to practice

dhamma that's the whole purpose so once

you're able to practice dhamma that's

good enough and you don't need to be

lifting lifting lots of weights and

getting all bulked up or anything like

that

and uh swimming um

there's a rule against playing in water

and uh

like i think swimming for exercise

that's sort of a borderline

case um you're allowed to swim if you

have to like uh

swimming across the river because

there's no other way to cross it that

sort of thing getting away from a

from a like a herd of wild pigs or

something

but um uh

yeah as a general rule just just uh

living a simple and healthy lifestyle

is good enough to keep you healthy

enough

next question what do monks do in

temples

apart from meditation eating cleaning

etc do they read text or play

instruments

or are these distractions well certainly

um

a lot of monks read texts some i was

um i was advised by my teacher when i

was a

a very junior monk that i shouldn't read

a lot

but um i mean it obviously if you want

to learn

what the buddhist texts say you're going

to have to study them to some degree

and so reading is um

yeah that can go either way with regard

to playing instruments now it's um

actually against the rules of monastic

discipline for a monk even to touch a

musical instrument

it's one of the things that a monk is

not allowed to touch

so yeah even to just rest my hand on a

drum

would be um a minor offense for me

so um what do monks do in temples apart

from um well like when i was living in

burma

sometimes i'd just be just sit outside

and and just

watch the wind blow and watch the ants

crawl around that kind of thing just uh

sit out there and commune with nature or

meet with visitors sometimes

and uh you know you um in in asia

especially you walk to the village in

the morning and then there's

the whole food thing to can take a

couple hours or more than a couple hours

especially if you have a long walk just

to get to the village

and back and then eating and washing

your bowl and all that

and so

what monks do in temples apart from that

temples it's kind of a strange word i

don't really use the word temple

for uh a place where monks have like a

monastery

but it seems to be fairly common

especially in the thai tradition

to call monasteries temples for some

reason

um but uh

yeah a lot of chanting that the asian

monks do a lot of chanting

next question how much meditation do you

do

daily is the meditation of an average

person comparable to a monk

if the time is the same

um well like i said above i don't

meditate nearly as much as i used to

like my first 10 years as a monk i would

not be surprised if i was averaging like

six hours a day

certainly more than four hours a day for

my first 10 years or so as a monk

and um eventually i just started

meditating a lot less just because i

wasn't really getting any deeper with it

and it was getting frustrating and

actually i was having to try as hard as

i could just to stay at the same level

it was like the red queen

in uh in wonderland where she had to run

as fast as she could just to stay in the

same place

he was getting to that sort of a thing

so um

yeah like i said now i really don't do

formal sitting meditation very much at

all anymore

although i still do walking meditation

and um still

still do uh just mindfulness of what i'm

doing a lot of the time

not constantly i mean i think you'd have

to be fully enlightened

to be constantly mindful um yeah the

saudi patano suta says that if you're

constantly mindful

for a week you're you're pretty much

guaranteed of

either becoming fully enlightened or

becoming a a non-returner

and with regard to uh the average

meditation of the average person

being comparable to a monk it depends on

the person i mean there's some people

that just have

like talent you know like some people

have musical talent or mathematic talent

or

or you know like athletic talent or

whatever some people

really just have like meditative talent

they can just sit down and they're just

by nature really good meditators i have

met people like that

so um somebody like that um

they might not know you know like how to

avoid

pitfalls and that sort of thing because

they haven't studied as much

or haven't had the same kind of teachers

but um

it is possible for a layperson to be a

much better meditator than a monk

although on average i would assume that

the monk would be a better meditator

simply because

he's just drawn to being like a

professional meditator

uh yeah okay next question

oh before i before i go on to the next

question um

for some reason i have written down here

the purpose of buddhist teaching is to

liberate us from our thinking by means

of our thinking

and um yeah i think i put that in the

wrong place i was gonna i was putting

that down as a note for something else

so i'll just move on

number four you make references to

physics and biological concepts in your

videos is being an intellectual an

obstacle in maintaining a clear mind

huxley talked about this being

independent okay yeah so that's that's

what uh the quote was for i just put it

in the wrong place

so um being an intellectual it can be an

obstacle especially if a person is just

um

like a hyper intellectual where they're

just

hell bent on understanding reality

intellectually

and ajahn chah used to say that that

scholar monks

generally don't make it very far even if

they they leave

the school monastery and go out into the

forest they're so

locked into this intellectual approach

that

they're just looking in the wrong

direction you're not going to understand

reality you're not going to become

enlightened

through through intellectuality you know

you have to let that go you have to

detach from that

so that's why there's the mahayana text

that says the purpose of buddhist

teaching is to liberate us from our

thinking by means of our thinking

so yeah if you can be like nagarjuna and

just use your own intellect to destroy

itself just analyze your own mind to

death until you just reach

voidness or something then that can work

or if you just don't identify with your

intellect no matter how intelligent you

are

if you just don't identify with that

then it's much easier to detach from it

and sort of be mindful of it and um you

just don't get sucked into it but a lot

of intellectual types

um they just insist on trying to

understand reality intellectually

and so they just reject with contempt

mysticism

which is non-intellectual because they

think that's just because they

just don't get it at all they just

cannot relate to it because they're so

locked into this you know everything has

to make sense

and reality doesn't make sense

enlightenment doesn't make sense nirvana

doesn't make sense

so you just have to let sense go

when you're meditating at least detach

from it it might always be there because

your mind is just going to be naturally

churning out thoughts sometimes but you

can

do it with detachment where you're just

not identified with that that is not you

anymore

so um

like being an intellectual can be

helpful i mean it can help you to

understand things and

one of the best purposes of being an

intellectual is just it

it increases the sensitivity of your

 detector you're able to see

bad weak arguments um and

and just dismiss them because of that

but um yeah if you get locked into it if

you're addicted to it then uh it becomes

unlike a handicap okay next one

opinion of the eleusinian mysteries

specifically the greater mysteries it's

my understanding i have read

that nobody knows what happened in the

eleusinian mysteries

because they were mysteries they were

secret and

if it was recorded again according to

what i've read

then uh it all i mean it all just it

didn't survive

the hysterical christian book burnings

of the late roman empire

so yeah i mean i have no idea what

happened in the el yusinian mysteries

other than

when you got to the inner sanctum i

think you had to do it get there naked

and there would be like a

sheaf of wheat or something um

on the altar i mean that's that's it i i

really don't know

so um yeah i can't really answer that

one

my opinion of the el usinian mysteries

next one opinion of the tibetan book of

the dead i read it a long time ago when

i was like in my 20s

and it was interesting just uh reading

about

um what supposedly is going to happen to

you after you die

you know that you you spend some time in

the bright light and you have to stay

there as long as you can because it

has a purifying effect but eventually um

the average person will experience

fear of annihilation and then they'll
they'll leave the bright light and then
you go into like a dimmer light and then
eventually you're like surrounded by all
these beings and you're supposed to
keep reminding yourself that they're
just figments of your imagination and so
forth
so um uh it's obviously not necessarily
to know this stuff in order to become
enlightened
but um i mean it can be interesting it
could be useful for some people
especially um people who are
um considering death or near
death um just the advice i mean it

couldn't hurt

you know maybe maybe it'll really happen

you really will find yourself in the

bright light and just remembering oh

yeah the book says i should stay

in in the bright light as long as

possible maybe maybe that can be helpful

but um uh yeah i'm not a tibetan

buddhist so i haven't really studied it

intensively so i'll move on to the next

one which is

opinion on aldous huxley's description

of the dharmakaya

or buddha body trip report and i have no

idea what

a buddha body trip report is and um i

don't even know what aldous huxley said

about the dharmakaya i mean he was an

intelligent sensitive person

very open-minded he had an appreciation

for mysticism

but um aside from that i really can't

say

so i move on to the next one which is

opinion on kabbalah's concept of einsof

and its similarity to sunyata

oh boy kabbalah i

i know almost nothing about kabbalah

almost everything i've read about

kabbalah i read

in karen armstrong's book a history of

god

and it just seemed like gobbledygook

it's like i'd have no use for it

it's supposedly a mystical tradition but

it's got so much

jargon and all these symbols and like

the the tree of sephiroth and all this

stuff

that um yeah i mean it just it just it

seems like a really shoddy

kind of of mysticism because it's so

just littered just so overburdened with

all these concepts and

and this jargon and everything that um

yeah it's

it's really not my style so i really

don't have much of an opinion on that

other than uh i got no use for it

so then below this uh average dad

average dude says not a question a

request

you should do voice over of texts on the

channel would be great

yeah i i've considered that and uh

you're not the first person to

suggest that um

and yeah i'd be willing to uh to read

texts although there's different ways

that i could do it i mean i could just

do it like like this where i'm just

sitting here reading or i could just

have like a

like a picture on the screen you know

that doesn't change

which wouldn't be much fun to uh to look

at although

maybe most people would just be

listening to it while they're driving

their car or something

or i could uh try to get fancy and do

like a photo montage or something

but um that would be uh more work for me

but um the easiest for me would just be

i'd just be sitting here reading the

text

but uh i don't i don't know people would

be into that but yeah i am i have

considered that and i probably will

start doing it before much longer just

reading some of my favorite texts um

just so that it's on audio and people

can listen to it because they're too

busy or whatever to sit down and read

and also of course i'll just be picking

my favorites so uh

it may be uh sort of a higher quality of

of texts then most people would read

if they were just sitting down and

reading at random without knowing

what to read okay next question

from chaplin was

april 26 2021 being your 30th

anniversary since your ordination as a

monk do you plan on doing anything to

mark the occasion

um i wasn't planning on doing anything

that is that is my 30th anniversary

going with the western calendar will be

april 26th

i will be a monk for 30 years at that on

that day

and i wasn't planning on doing anything

you know it's just i i forget my own

birthday sometimes you know

it's just all days are pretty much the

same and there have been times i've been

just looking at the calendar trying to

figure out what day it is it's like oh

yesterday was my birthday

you know oh well you know every day is

buddha day that's that's the way i look

at it

so um yeah the 30th anniversary of my

ordination as a monk i mean it's kind of

interesting but

i'm not planning on doing anything

special except

um i recently told uh our good friend

brian rowe

that um at the beginning of one of our

one of our shows

that uh it was going to be my

anniversary that day and he looked up in

the calendar and it turns out we're

going to be doing a show on that day

so there probably will be like the

special 30th anniversary

show on the on the brian rue show and

that's that's going to be about it also

chaplin asks uh where can we send you a

token of our gratitude via snail mail

while you are still in california

okay yeah i'll be in california for uh

at least two more months

and um if i remember i might even

include the address down below um

below like the the url links you might

have to click on the see more

button but um just in case

um my my address here is uh pano

basabiku

at kusu lakari meditation center or just

kmc

that's easy 9698

south priest road french camp california

95231 that would be my snail mail

address for

uh um at least two more months

okay next question by chaplin

is would you consider doing more weekly

videos with basic

dharma talks on certain subjects or

maybe incorporating small meditations or

chanting i know you don't like talking

through guided meditations

yeah i'm i mean i'm fine with doing

weekly videos on basic dharma talks on

certain subjects that's fine with me

um yeah it's sort of like supply and

demand if

i have the demand for something i can

supply it as long as it's within my uh

my realm of expertise or experience

but with regard to incorporating small

meditations the only meditation i could

really do

would be a guided meditation and i don't

like guided meditations either giving or

receiving

because i just have this aversion for

somebody invading my mind and telling me

what to think

and besides when i meditate i don't want

to think anything

you know it's like i'm a minimalist when

i meditate i prefer

um like just as much emptiness and

silence when i meditate as possible

so um yeah i wouldn't be doing guided

meditations and i don't think anybody

would be interested in just uh

watching me sit here with my eyes closed

watching me breathing slowly

so um yeah probably no guided

meditations and chanting also

um i can do a little chanting i used to

know a lot of chanting

and then i just uh i'm not as

into chanting as like asian monks are

asian monks they can chant the same

thing for two hours every day

you know they'll be chanting abidama or

something chanting all of the parritas

and i used to know all of the parishes

all like the main eleven ones

and uh like the the biku patti mocha and

all that but just through

non-chanting you forget and uh

it just gets kind of boring after a

while just chanting the same thing over

and over again

um the asians um they don't get as bored

with that

as easily as westerners do so

and also just if if i'm chanting just to

be just so that people can see me

chanting and nobody even understands the

poly that i'm chanting

then in a way it's just sort of like a

performance you know i'm like a

performance artist

like the like the dancing monkey or

something so

um yeah i probably won't be doing a lot

of chanting

so but but i can do talks i mean i'm i'm

pretty good at talking relatively

coherent on that

so um

yeah so i would consider i would

consider the uh the weekly videos on

basic dharma talks and so forth

okay next question from dog breath

mr breath what is your opinion of abi

dama i came across an online

course by bhikkhu bodhi about meditation

in the abhidharma do you consider that

abhidharma has

anything of value to say about

meditation if so

what oh abhi dhamma

i mean i have um a lot of western monks

just despise

i have to admit it's the third pitika

but

way more than half of western monks just

dismiss it as

not authentic teachings of gaura mabuda

it's like an old commentarial system

where they're trying to

systematize and intellectualize

everything

you know they're trying to you know it's

almost like like

aristotle's physics or something where

you just try to

um just fit everything into this

interlocking system

including nirvana i mean nirvana's like

off the scale nibana and pali

but still they've got that as one of the

four ultimate realities and is no more

real than like

nose sensitivity or femininity or or

earth element or something is it's just

kind of ridiculous

so um like jana vira used to say who is

a very famous monk who lived in the

50s and first half of the 60s in sri

lanka he said

you know the less abhidama you know the

better because the less you have to

unlearn

in order to understand the truth so i'm

not i'm not saying that abu dhabi is

completely false but i do think that a

lot of it is just uh

just made up it's just attempts at uh

explaining reality by scholar monks

who maybe didn't even meditate very much

it's it's just like a hyper intellectual

system of trying to understand dhamma

and yeah i used to i used to be much

more down on it because in burma it's

considered to be the most important

aspect of buddhism it's supposed to be

the the highest teachings of buddha is

abhidharma

and i've just never been able to take it

very seriously

most westerners can't because like i'm

i'm

like i've said before i'm kind of

mystical by nature i appreciate

silence and stillness it's like that's

how you understand reality you're not

gonna understand reality by thinking

about it

so you're not going to understand

reality by studying abu dhabi

you're going to understand reality by um

seeing through

the the illusion

and when you're thinking a lot you're

just adding more to the illusion

so you try to get things still and quiet

and peaceful and simple

and abhidhamma certainly is not simple

it's just extraordinarily complex

and biku bodhi is talking about

meditation and abdominal bee kuboti

doesn't meditate either

he's just he's never been much of a

meditator and uh most of these abi

donald scholars um

yeah they're not meditators either they

just they just specialize in

in the dogma and uh yeah i mean i used

to i used to come up with like

joke insults you know your mother was an

abu dhamma scholar and your father

smelled of elderberries

you know or stubbed my toes oh hurts

like a knobby dumbass god

so yeah yeah you just um if you want to

if you want to know more about

meditation go to a meditation master and

uh

if he's got stuff to say about abu dhabi

like like uh

the burmese meditation masters will talk

about i'll be donald sometimes

but even most of what is taught

as abhidhamma isn't even from the

abhidharma pitika it's just commentarial

because by the time the tapitica was

settled abhidama still wasn't finished

yet

so some of the basic teachings of

abhidhamma like the the chitawiti the

the

like the the the 17 mind moments in

order that have to occur in order to

have a complete

thought you know that's not even in abu

dhabi

or bawanga cheetah which is like the

subconscious substratum of mind and all

that

or the rupa kalapas you know the little

atomic structures from which all matter

are made

that stuff just isn't discussed um

much if at all in the actual abidama

pitika

it just kept developing and um

a lot of the most important stuff

developed after the the tapitica was

closed and no more texts were being

added to it

so um yeah um

i've written some um in in the old

um nipa pancha blog i wrote uh

at least three posts that were

criticizing

kind of borderline bashing abidama that

if you're interested maybe you could

look those up

so next question does panyo bahasa

mean anything when translated and yes

indeed it does

it's a combination of two words panya

and obasa

panya usually means it's usually

translated as wisdom

but um i like nyanomoli's

rendering of understanding and obasa

means shine so

i'm mr understanding shine uh if you

wanted to get even more technical like

panya is uh it's it's like the prefix

and so it has exactly the same

indo-european

etymology as the greek word prognosis

or um the english word for no

like in foreknowledge but it doesn't

mean seeing the future it just means

like uh

the pot which means forwards like in

sanskrit it's pro

in in greek it's pro which is a prefix

meaning

you know moving forwards uh here it just

means like advanced

it's like a more advanced understanding

which is like you know higher wisdom or

something

and the obasa the o is like a prefix

indicating downwardsness like the sun

shines down

so i'm uh mr foreknowledge down

shine if you wanted to get real

technical

but uh yeah it's like you know the light

of the light of wisdom or something like

that it's i didn't name myself if i had

named myself i would have named myself

something different

it's just uh when you get ordained your

preceptor gets to pick

what your paulie name will be and uh one

reason why i'm named pano basa is um

i was born on thursday and um

if you're a burmese monk or a monk

ordained in a burmese tradition

generally um if you're born on a

thursday

then your name starts with p b or m and

so

pleniobasa was just a convenient one

that came up so they just

stuck it on me

okay next question

oh this is a strange one i read on the

amida g

international temple website that

chanting of the name

chanting the primal vow could be traced

back to the pali canon is there any

truth to this was

amitabha even referenced in the pali

canon

and then later he added this large

block of of info that

um i i won't read the whole thing but

he's

it's he's sort of quoting what uh

shinran

shonin says about um how

amida buddha is mentioned in the ancient

pali text and

how in in one part um he was a

a monk named dharmakara but

in another in another part of this block

of info

he was just uh not a historical figure

but was just kind of

a transcendental buddha or something

so um just getting to the question of um

whether uh like the primal vow of amida

buddha

is uh referenced in the pali canon then

far as i can tell no i mean amida

himself is not is not mentioned

unless he's going by some other name and

um

who knows i mean it could be that the

buddha says you know like previous

enlightened beings of the past and then

like the

the these uh pure land buddhists would

say ah there you see

he's referring to amida buddha there it

could be something like that

but uh yeah the whole pure land thing is

practically the opposite

of what is taught in the oldest text

like like the whole bodhisattva concept

is essentially the opposite of what the

buddha was teaching

in the oldest texts because the buddha

was teaching

i mean according to to the very ancient

texts

um if you're able to become enlightened

get enlightened as soon as you can just

get enlightened in this very life

if you can do it now do it now so the

whole idea of putting off

enlightenment indefinitely until all

other beings are saved which is

essentially putting off

enlightenment forever because all

sentient beings just are not going to be

saved there's always going to be an

infinite number of them there's always

going to be just infinite

misery in the universe so putting off

enlightenment

um yeah i don't think the buddha taught

that

and i don't think you're going to find

amida buddha in the ancient texts

i really i mean i've read almost all of

it and

i don't remember amida buddha anywhere

in there and i'd be very surprised

and there's certainly no mention of like

praying to get reborn in the pure land

excuse me okay next question

it seems to me that no one knows what we

are caught up in and therefore

no one knows what to do about it that is

no one has an

answer or antidote on this basis all

religions and philosophies are

false on what basis does a buddhist

believe

siddhartha gautama buddha did know what

we are caught up in

well i do not accept the premise that

nobody knows what we're caught up in and

nobody knows what to do about it

and there there is no

answer or antidote

yeah i mean we'd just be screwed if that

were the case

um yeah i think it's fairly clear

that uh we're just we're caught up in uh

in beliefs really i mean it's like

perception is samsara

we're we're stuck in perceptions we're

stuck in the symbolic interpretation of

reality

instead of just dealing with reality uh

without the symbols just dealing with it

directly

but most of us are stuck in symbols

like mental symbols that are just

generated

psychologically and we think that's

reality

you know we're stuck in plato's cave

we're stuck in the matrix or whatever

so um let's see on what basis does a

buddhist believe siddhartha gautama

did know what we are caught up in well

the uh the very convenient working

hypothesis is that he was an enlightened

being that he saw

through the illusion into ultimate

reality because he had freed his mind

of his own thinking or of just being

like

identified with it so

um yeah i mean there's no way to prove

that he was enlightened there's no way

to prove anybody was enlightened

but um it does ring true to a lot of

people

you know this intuitively it just feels

right and it makes sense

and even though reality doesn't make

sense i mean the the idea

that um unenlightenment is caused by

um just clinging to illusions

essentially um clinging to like symbolic

interpretations of reality instead of

just

um experiencing reality directly without

the symbols

so um

yeah i guess on what basis does a

buddhist believe it would have to be

faith

because there's no way to prove it you

can't prove it intellectually or

empirically

in fact empirically enlightenment um

may make no sense whatsoever it's like a

paradox it's just off the scale like

nirvana is just off the phenomenal scale

it's not it's nowhere on the 31 plains

of existence

you know everything in samsara is

supposedly in one of these 31 planes of

existence

you know everything in phenomenal

realities quote unquote

is in these 31 planes of existence and

nirvana just

is not on that on that scheme

you know it's just completely completely

other you know it's just beyond so

um yeah just going with samsaric

you know empiricism i mean you just

can't prove it and so there's just gonna

have to be like this intuitive faith

or or worse than that would be dogmatic

faith

but um you know even having the the open

door there

you know even if it proves to be futile

i mean it's better than just having the

the closed and locked

door and it's all just materialism and

it's you know

um you know we're just stuck you know

we're just there is no escape from

plato's cave

you're better off trying i think than

just giving up

so next question what do you miss about

burma and what do you miss

most what i miss most i think

is the little wall geckos i really like

those little guys they're

they're these little lizards about the

size of a finger

and they change colors and they chirp

like like

sparrows and they they crawl around on

the walls they can go right across the

ceiling or up a

plate glass window and they eat bugs

which is nice

and they're just kind of fun to watch

and they're kind of cool looking so

yeah that's what i miss most about burma

is the little wall geckos

other things i miss about burma um well

i'm just

you're more you're more in nature in

burma than i am right here

and then i mean when i was when i was

living in burma mostly i was living in

caves

and no electricity and no running water

and you always know you know what stars

are in the sky and

what phase the moon is in and you know

you you're really like in tune with the

weather

you're in tune with the cycles of the

the seasons and the trees and everything

which is nice i like that um

i kind of miss just uh you know

burmese villagers they're just very

simple-hearted uh very open

generous very good people so that that's

nice too

although there's i mean mostly i'm

dealing with with burmese people here

too but the the culture in america

is somewhat different so i mean every

country has its good points and

bad points every culture does so um

yeah there are things that uh i kind of

miss i don't i mean i

i don't really miss it badly you know

there's things that i think are nice

it's not like i really miss them it's

just that i think that you know there

are there are nice things about uh

living in burma and uh like i said one

of the nicest things is the

little geckos okay next question

is karma the result of our previous

actions

if karma oh is karma the result of our

previous actions whether good or bad

whether freely willed or not

please define karma this kind of

question keeps coming up i have to i

have to explain

karma a lot um

but from the buddhist point of view

karma is chittanam so um

karma is will you know like like

schopenhauer's will you know the world

as will and representation

karma would fit the definition of will

pretty well like schopenhauer's will

so if you know anything about

schopenhauer's philosophy

you could interpret karma that way i

suppose

um see is karma the result of our

previous actions whether good or bad

karma is like the momentum

of your mental states

uh it's just like the the psychic

momentum of your mind

and so um it's in a way it's like

habitual

so if you do anything it sort of um it

influences the the stream of momentum of

your mind

you know you make your uh it's it's hard

to explain

it's it's very difficult to explain but

essentially that's what karma is it's

just the momentum of your mind it's like

will

uh and there's all these implications of

it that

uh i think i'll i'll spare everybody and

we'll get into it

but the next question is about karma

also so i'll just move on to that

next question by mr breath

in one video if i understand correctly

you said

karma was an impersonal force if it's an

impersonal force why how

is it a moral one based on good or bad

actions

what i mean is if my karma is the result

of previous good or bad

actions whether freely willed or not and

karma is an impersonal force

how is it karma appears to operate in a

moral manner

as in being based on good or bad that is

the odds must be stacked very high

against an impersonal force acting in

such a moral manner

and one which is entirely consistent

with almost

all other human made religions uh again

i mean i've i've explained this um

more than once and uh

first of all there seems to be an

implication here that good and bad are

some sort of metaphysical

realities in and of themselves whereas

in buddhism

buddha's ethics is simply based on

whatever makes your mind clearer is good

and whatever makes your mind

less clear is bad whatever gets you

closer to enlightenment is good

whatever gets you farther away from it

is bad it's sort of like like an

epicurean you know saying whatever

increases happiness or pleasure is good

whatever decreases happiness or pleasure

is bad

so there's nothing necessarily

metaphysical about it at all

if it makes your mind clear it causes

you to have

fewer desires and attachments and all

that

makes you more content that's good

and you know there's not necessarily any

kind of um you know

godly divine supernatural element to it

at all

it's just uh if it gets you closer to to

enlightenment

or or closer to peace of mind then it's

good

and it's just uh it's based on human

psychology i mean you just

you kill your own mother i mean it's

gonna mess your mind all up so that

that's why it's bad

you know it's not any kind of action

it's just the effect on your own mental

states

like buddhism is like ethics are purely

psychological

anything that causes you to have greater

peace of mind and fewer desires and all

that

that's going to be good regardless of

what the action is

so let's see oh i got to read this again

oh you say karma is an impersonal force

um yeah i mean if there's no self in

buddhism

then uh everything's an impersonal force

ultimately

and uh and like in schopenhauer's

philosophy will

is an impersonal force and it just sort

of

takes personal forms but it's the same

sort of force

regardless of what form it takes you

know the form is something else that's

the representation

or in buddhism it may be like the

perception you know the mental states

see

uh i think that's it

i think i answered that one okay so i

move on to the next one and this

the next few questions are from potila

not pointless portula but a different

one

see first question from potila regarding

monastics in the west do you think it is

possible to consciously develop a new or

revised

vineyard that would work better in this

setting you mentioned handling money and

obtaining food are some of the largest

obstacles

it seems that the models of christian

monastic uh

catholic orthodox are a better fit for

this culture

for example some farming production of

goods like candles books etc

yes it would reduce the amount of time

for formal practice but it seems to be

a more viable structure that would

permit the existence of monasticism at

all would it be an entirely new order of

monastics or

could the winner be augmented for living

a different

uh like or for or of renuncian life

if not it seems that some of these rules

are already moot

monks handing money money cooking for

themselves etc

so why can't some be set aside and

others cannot

actually none of them can be set aside

there's i mean

the rules are just set down you know

they're supposedly set down by the

buddha the only thing that could change

winya rules would be a great council and

asian monks that participate in great

councils are too conservative to change

anything

and so the rules aren't going to be

changed you cannot

legally validly change the rules of

monastic discipline nobody has the

authority not even the thai sangha raja

has the authority to change even the

most minor rules

so he can say it's okay for for monks in

the west to wear

sweaters but so what i don't care if he

says it's okay

the rule says that you can't and so

um yeah you're not going to be able to

revise the rules of monastic

discipline so um you're either going to

have

a few like a handful of just super

strict monks

that no matter how difficult it is no

matter how inconvenient it is for

themselves and everybody around them

they're going to follow the rules

strictly they're not going to handle

money at all they're not even going to

consent to other people handling it for

them because that's against the rules

too

they're not going to eat any food that

isn't properly offered

by by someone who isn't a monk and um

you know they're just gonna wear three

robes and uh if it gets really cold they

can uh

use like a wool felt blanket which is

allowable

but um there's not gonna be very many of

those

and so your other two choices are you're

gonna have

sloppy monks that don't follow the rules

very strictly and that's almost

everybody including monks that have a

reputation for being very strict

you know the ones that are wearing like

the karate pajamas and stuff

or eating cheese in the afternoon or

that kind of thing

um or or just you know consenting to

people handling

money on their behalf that kind of thing

or

you're just gonna have to come up with

uh some new system that won't

be fully ordained bikus and um

i i don't see any reason why you can't

have all three you know you can have

that

handful that little nucleus of super

strict monks

and um you can also have

uh monks of varying degrees of

strictness that you know some of them

are just

they just consider it um you know okay

not to follow the rules completely

strictly because some rules frankly are

just

obsolete you know there are rules that

are just you know

the rules were developed in ancient

india

you know 2 500 years ago and some of

them are just

really obsolete in western culture and

so

there's different ideas about how to

deal with that i mean it's like

you can just deliberately break the

rules and think it's okay because the

rules are obsolete

or you can be the other way and say you

shouldn't break the rules and so if you

don't want to follow the rules or it's

just not convenient to follow the rules

you should either move somewhere where

you can follow the rules like it's

like buddhist asia or you uh

don't be a fully ordained monk and um

i kind of you know i i can accept that i

mean it's like

nobody is forced to become a monk and so

um i i just it just seems like

it's like playing it's like the rules of

a game if you don't want to follow the

rules

then it's better just not to play the

game than to sit there cheating

but i mean that's just my own

interpretation and other people will

have different interpretations

and so you know like it takes all kinds

but i think

in order for monasticism really to

to take off become anywhere near to

mainstream

in america like buddhist monasticism or

anything resembling buddhist monasticism

there's gonna have to be some new

unofficial system that isn't fully

ordained monks

and um you know like mahayana monks

from the terre haute point of view

they're they're not they're not really

monks because they

they don't get ordained in accordance

with uh the official

ordination procedure so their their

ordination would be invalid just based

on that

and um yeah it was a similar situation

in china it's like

in china wandering beggars did not have

nearly

the amount of respect that they have in

india in

india you know you have the wandering

holy man who begs for his food and

that's their you know they are revered

but pretty much everywhere else in the

world they're they're just beggars you

know they're they're like beneath

contempt or something

and so um chinese monks had to just

become farmers

and it's literally against the rules for

a terra bottom biku to be a farmer i

mean monk is not allowed to dig the

ground he's not allowed even to damage

green plants

which pretty much rules out any kind of

farming

so um yeah that's just the standard uh

uh complication that i've been wrangling

with

and um yeah it's it's i think it's

it's there's just gonna be a combination

of all the three options that i

mentioned

and um i think some kind of compromise

movement

where uh um just the uh the spirit is

retained but

um the the official ordination along

with the ancient

indian uh rules there are kind of

hindrances in the west or or handicaps

um yeah those would be set aside

although i mean the monks would not

consider themselves to be fully ordained

because

and that would be good for the nuns too

because then you wouldn't have the

ridiculous situation we've got now of

women wanting to be ordained as fully

ordained bukunis

um and then just rejecting the rules

because the rules are

are like prejudice against women you

know if they want to become bikinis

partly

due to the politically correct notion of

gender equality

and then immediately they just don't

follow the rules because the rules are

biased against women

so um with it with like the uh like a

new system

or a new order that that isn't bikus and

bukunis

then you can just set up rules that uh

fit western culture and

like the nuns and the monks can be

equals and everything's

everything's dandy

next question in comparative religion

can you speak about the decline of

christianity in the west and how that

has shaped

the entry of buddhism into the culture

as the west lacks an overall agreed upon

narrative culture

there are now so many competing ideas

and even religions do you think the

decline of christianity is a good thing

or does it do more harm than

good do you think the entry of buddhism

into western culture is just another

aspect of multiculturalism

inc which is destabilizing the west

um that's a good question i mean um

in a way buddhism becoming more popular

in the west

is a result of like multiculturalism and

the decline of christianity

um and so who knows maybe you know it's

like

um the frankfurt school may have may

have

considered promoting buddhism and other

non-christian religions to be part of

their master plan or something

but um it's not all bad i mean

obviously i'm i'm a buddhist i like

buddhism and uh

i i kind of i do regret in a way

not not in the the cucha on skillful

regret

uh maybe it is but um yeah i mean

western civilization it just became like

a religious monoculture

you know everybody's worshiping the

deified hebrew carpenter

and um just it just all the other

uh spiritual systems in the west became

extinct

just through the just like the

hysterical intolerance

of this this kind of of attitude that

took over

with like which is trying to take over

again in a different form

but um i mean you don't have to have a

religious monoculture like in the

buddhist time you had a number of

different

spiritual systems and like even before

christianity took over in the west

like in the roman empire you had a

variety of different religions and

different people worshiping different

gods and

you had like the philosophers that

didn't have much use for gods at all

and they were all getting along and in a

way it was more vibrant

and um it was more stimulating you had

like uh

different religions competing with each

other when you've got um like a

monoculture like a monopoly

you have the problems that monopolies

have where you just get corruption you

get a crappy product that's overpriced

because you only have one to pick from

you only have one producer

to choose from so having different

systems

competing with each other you know

that's good capitalism

and uh it's intellectual capitalism

spiritual capitalism but

it uh you wind up with a better product

and a better price

so um yeah it goes both ways i mean it

could be that uh the cultural marxists

or whoever

uh were promoting other religions and

christianity to weaken western

civilization but

it doesn't necessarily have to weaken

civilization because

you know like like ancient india or

ancient rome

um you know you could have you know like

a multi-religious uh

system like a culture and so long as

there there is some

bedrock or some substratum of agreement

you know like in like in

buddhis or like in india you know most

of the spiritual systems agreed on

certain things you know there is samsara

there is like a higher goal you know

there's karma and that kind of thing

and in ancient rome i assume there was a

lot of agreement on a lot of things too

um it may just be that the agreement is

a more secular nature in the west

because western people just tend to be

more secular

for whatever reasons you don't need to

get into that

so let's see i'm uh

see if i'm answering the question here

okay yeah i think i answered that one uh

well enough to satisfy myself anyhow

next question from potila can you speak

about the definitions of dhamma

as found in the text and in indian

culture of the buddhist time the term

dhamma is used in many contexts and

seems to mean multiple things in the

same text

would one definition of dhamma be

similar to the western idea of natural

law

in that it is an impersonal concept yet

has features

which one must follow to maintain

harmony

in following the natural law dhamma one

comes closer to seeing the truth because

it is the truth

um yeah dhamma or dharma in sanskrit

um or english now i suppose

um yeah it's one of the vaguest words in

the in the pali language

it's got all kinds of definitions like

um

originally it's based on the verb darede

which means to bear to hold up

and one of the earliest pre-buddhist

definitions of dhamma or dharma with the

law

you know like uh even even now in in

burma like uh

um the word for dharma is and uh teotha

g

is a judge you know it's like the the

tia

is like the the courthouse so it still

means

it can still mean law it's like this

that's like one of the earliest

definitions of it because

law is kind of what holds up society you

have to have order

to hold up society and um

in buddhism it can also mean philosophy

it can mean the buddha's teachings it

can mean

like a mental state like in especially

in the commentaries and in abhidhamma a

dhamma

is like a mental state or see

it can just mean anything real like in

abhidhamma again

um well actually dhamma it doesn't mean

necessarily mean mental state just in

abu dhabi

in the sutures also sometimes damas are

mental states

but um um like in abhidhamma in

in particular it means anything that's

ultimately real

like uh a dhamma is you know it's it's

based on

to bear to hold up and so presumably

a dhamma is what holds up the uh the

manifestations or the appearances or

like the qualities you know you have the

essence that that has

qualities to it the qualities are

perceptible

but the essence underlies that and that

that's also another meaning of dhamma

and i'm sure there's lots of other ones

that i can't think of

um but with regard to natural law

there's another word in pali and

unfortunately i don't remember what it

is it's a it's a two-syllable word

that just means like natural law like uh

like the

in uh in the vedas you have varuna who's

like the god of natural law

um might be kind of similar to poseidon

in in like a classical

uh polytheism where um

yeah it's like really impersonal whereas

dharma is more

i mean like like the other word the

natural law the word that i can't think

of

you know that would include things like

gravity and like space and time and that

sort of thing

whereas dharma can include that because

it can it can include anything i mean it

can just mean

thing you know like uh dhamma anata

you know just everything is without self

you know

so um

uh i think i just lost lost the thread

um let's see

would one definition of dhamma be

similar to the western idea of natural

law

yeah dhamma is is more of a spiritual

law

um or like a philosophical law so it's

it's more ethical more spiritual and

ethical

um

okay so i think i answered that one i

hope i answered it

and uh my lighting is is acting weird

because uh

when when it's bright outside i'm back

lit and then it doesn't show me very

well

and then so i turned the the lights up

all the way bright

and now it's dark and and overcast and

raining outside

um next question from pottiland

another question related to ancient

india and early buddhism

what was the view of different nations

ethnicities and racial or caste groups

in the sutas and early buddhism

the ashokan pillars and the buddha

himself mentioned the greeks

so there was an idea of foreign peoples

living outside the indian cultural

sphere at this time

the texts clearly talked about differing

capabilities between peoples men versus

women

moral versus immoral etc so how does

comma account for how large groups of

people come together and exist

with a shared language and culture

do they share some foundational comma or

are people from a group

reborn into a group due to their

attachment to those people

are all human births said to be equally

capable of attaining awakening or

resisting modern interpretation

some texts indicate that those who are

disabled for example may lack the

capacity to learn

dhamma how would language iq culture etc

play into this

and is it possible for one to really

escape the comma of their ethnic kinship

and i think this is about five questions

all combined

so let's see starting with um uh what

was the view of different

nations ethnicities and racial or caste

groups

in the suit as in early buddhism um

buddhism

the buddha himself um didn't have much

use for

any kind of racial or caste differences

it was like

once a monk was ordained he left behind

all

um like like class or cast

or to some degree race and uh everyone

just became you know

monks you know they became sons of the

sons of the buddha

so um yeah there was

that um

at the same time buddhism was probably

relatively

uh elitist where it was mostly men of

the upper classes or at least you know

from vices on

up that were becoming monks there

probably weren't a whole lot of

like outcasts and like uh sudras

or uh you know proto-australoid hill

people

that were becoming monks it does seem to

have been largely an upper-class

um sort of uh

uh for like the in intelligentsia i mean

it was

buddhism is uh to some degree like an

intellectual system

even though you're trying to go beyond

the intellect still it has an appeal

to philosophically minded people and

that's going to be more

people of the upper classes just

naturally with even without

you know filtering out um filtering out

like the lower classes

you know it's kind of the same way in

the west um

just because most of the people who

became buddhist monks were like

brahmanas and

shatrias doesn't mean that

it was a racist system or a classist

system it was

just that people of the lower classes

just weren't as interested in that sort

of thing

so that's uh that's one question

uh let's see the ashokan uh

the ashokan pillars and the buddha

himself mentioned the greeks so

there was an idea of foreign peoples

living outside indian cultural sphere at

this time

um yeah that's true there wasn't uh

there wasn't a whole lot of idea of

non-indian culture though

i mean you had some barbarians that

weren't really understood very well they

were just like

invading marauders that would show up

sometimes

but um india had this idea of the four

continents

and the subcontinent of india was uh

you know jambu deepa which was the the

southern continent

um inhabited by humans and the other

continents were

inhabited by non-human beings so they

really didn't have a very good idea

of like world geography at the time

um let's see next question

here in this uh this paragraph

um how does comma account for how large

groups of people come together and exist

with a shared language and culture

um is similarity of comma

do they share some foundational comma or

are people from a group reborn

into a group due to their attachment to

those people

um it yeah i mean if you're born into

everyone born into the same culture

they're gonna have similar beliefs and

so

they're going to have um similar karma

because karma is a mental state

so um yeah there's

um i have even read that uh some

cultures

even though there's not group karma

karma is sort of individual

but um still there are certain cultures

that

sort of reincarnate like rome

reincarnated as america in a way

to some degree anyway just because um

people with similar uh

you know similar attitudes are going to

um you know they're going to fit

together better than if you just got

radically different attitudes

and so um you know after one

civilization dies

then the people with these attitudes are

going to have to be reborn into a

different civilization

which will then kind of perpetuate a lot

of the attitudes from the earlier

civilization just through just

the karmic effect

uh let's see here but also i mean

attachment to

certain people um certain individuals

can be reincarnated and interacting with

each other

uh over and over again or so i have read

like

i supposedly in my own grandfather

according to my father he was

firmly persuaded that i was a

reincarnation of his own father which

makes me my own grandpa

um are all human births said to be

equally capable of attaining awakening

or is this a modern interpretation

um no i mean not all human births are

equally capable of attaining awakening

like

if you're born like a deaf mute then uh

you know obviously

that's going to be a severe handicap or

if you're born into a culture that just

has no

dharma no concept of that then that's

going to be a severe handicap

just just uh even though you're healthy

and everything you know your mind works

fine you just are not exposed to that

so um yeah there's definitely

inequality you know it's like inequality

is

built into dhamma and it's based on you

know it's based on ourselves i mean

we create the inequality um just because

people's comma is not equal people have

some people have

different kinds of comma you know it's

just some people's comma that they're

gonna live

they're almost up to the deva level so

they're gonna be living like a really

nice beautiful kind of a life other

people are almost down to the hell

realms

uh even though there's they're born in

as a human into a human body

but um uh yeah there's just lots and

lots of difference and so

uh different people have different what

are called pyramids you know just your

your karma is more or less developed

and um so yeah not everybody has an

equal

possibility although the possibility is

there i think everybody has

what in uh zen would be called the

buddha nature where there's

at least this little glimmer of

enlightenment down

down in the center of our heart

somewhere you know it's it's always

there i mean

you can't be completely devoid of any um

awareness unless maybe you're like a

vampire you know a soulless vampire

maybe just an absolute sociopath with no

compassion whatsoever no sensitivity of

that sort

no no conscience maybe but it seems to

me like

anybody would have to have at least this

little spark

of enlightenment down in there somewhere

okay let's see what else uh how would

language iq culture etc play into this

and is it possible for one to really

escape

the comma and their ethnic kinship well

it's not a matter of escaping kama

like even the buddha he still had past

comma

you know and enlightened being

supposedly still has past comma

influencing their life they're just not

making any new comma

um so you don't really escape from it

you just detach from it and that's

that's like uh

something that a lot of people don't

really understand you know they're

trying to escape

from this or escape from that or

eradicate or something

when really you just i mean that's just

nature taking its course you just stop

identifying with it you just detach from

it and

just continue letting nature take its

course because it's not really you

anyway

oh i think i may have answered

all of this possibly if i haven't you

can ask it again if there's some part

that i missed

okay well last question very last

on the list is from zach

and zach asks have you ever read the

lotus sutra

if so what do you think of it if not i'm

guessing you've heard of the mahayana

concept of upaya or useful means

what is your opinion on this concept in

spiritual practice

okay so this is like two questions one

is have i ever read the lotus sutra and

yeah i did like

when i was in my early 20s like i was in

college i read the lotus sutra

and i don't remember it very well i

remember there was like the

the simile that's also found in the

polytechnics of the the building on fire

that this world is on fire and um

you know the uh you got like the the

buddhas and the

pro buddhas and the i can't remember the

other group

maybe it was bodhisattvas or something

using different ways of luring

children out of the burning building as

a kind of skillful means

so um yeah the lotus sutra if i remember

correctly

you know it it was like a relatively

early mahayana sutra

and so it's got a lot in common with

with terra vada or just

primitive buddhism you know there's a

lot that is similar

and um aside from like the bodhisattva

concept

and um and also if i remember correctly

it was going mahayana buddhist texts

were going through a phase where you

would have like the magic

mantra at the end so um

like what is it

i don't think that was the lotuses for

them but um

so yeah i i've read it and it's a

relatively wise profound

sutra as sutras go

let's see what do i think of it as i

think i just answered that one let's see

i've heard of the mahayana concept of

upaya or useful means

what is my opinion on this concept in

spiritual practice

well it is mentioned in even like the

atakawaga which is a very ancient text

and it's in that saying that a monk

should just avoid all upaya but it's not

talking about teaching

gimmicks it's just talking about

anything that you rely on because

upaya means like something that you fall

back on or rely on

and so um the early buddhist texts were

saying with regard to like your own

minds your own beliefs you should not

depend on anything but

um i think that's different from you

know skillful means

where um like in teaching uh i think

you have to use skillful means because

you know the goal

is a paradox enlightenment itself is

just off the scale

nirvana's off the scale so um

yeah you're going to have to do whatever

whatever it takes really to help

somebody if you know how

if you can and so that can that can

result in you know

weird riddles or just confusing people

or just blowing their minds or

or whatever it takes you know it's like

um

uh some of the hindu swamis you know

they'd do miracles just to get people

interested and then once they got

interested then they could teach them

more easily

so there's that kind of thing too so i'm

not i'm not opposed to skillful means in

in teaching

um so yeah that's that's the question so

i think i answered it

and so that's it um

so if you have any more questions you

know feel free to ask and i'll just keep

doing this as long as people keep asking

questions

and i hope you can hear me because it

now it's raining hard outside

so um yeah if you have questions to ask

um just

include them in the uh the comments

below the video

or um um every

every once in a while like right before

like uh maybe a week

or less before i do one of these i'll

just put an announcement on my subscribe

star channel so if you're subscribed to

that

and it doesn't cost anything um you can

see the

like the announcements there too and so

um until next time um be happy

and i think we're done

hello and welcome to

episode six of question and answer i am

your host

and by a special request i am doing this

outside um

and we'll see how it goes because it's

flat as a pancake here where i'm living

and so it's usually windy as the f

word and today is relatively

non-windy so maybe the microphone won't

be picking up

wind interference the whole time so

uh yeah you're spared of the crummy

interior of my meditation

trailer which is sort of the modern

western equivalent of a hut

and so we're out in the pavilion out in

back of the monastery and that is

the big buddhist statue behind me

and we have a question about statues

coming up so

i might as well get to it first question

is from

bodhisattva969

and he asks how do you start to meditate

alone

what is the best way to begin

so that's a good basic question good

good question to start with

so um really i mean if you really want

to start meditating

probably the best thing for you to do

would be to

go to like a an introductory retreat

or go to like a meditation

center and um get some basic

instructions

but um just just right here um

as sort of some initial pointers

you should have like a clean quiet place

where you can sit cross-legged on the

floor if you're able to do that

maybe have a rolled up towel or a pillow

under your behind so that it's easier

for

you to keep your knees down you don't

want to be sitting with your knees like

up like this when you're sitting good to

have them

down so that you're forming like a solid

tripod

and um keep your back straight

and doesn't really matter where you keep

your hands so long as you have them at

rest

and usually the best introductory

meditation is meditation on your breath

in which case you would have your

concentration

or your attention focused right right

around your nostrils

and you would be just paying attention

to the sensation of the wind

moving in and out of your nose

and for a beginner

you may have to start with just counting

your breaths which would be

like counting you know one one in breath

out breath is one and in in breath out

breath

two and get up to five and then you'd

start at one again and go up to six

and then you'd start at one again and go

up to seven and you just keep

starting back at one until you get up to

ten and then you start

one through five one through six one

through seven and

um just that kind of having to keep

track

helps to keep your mind focused on the

breathing although it's kind of like a

chore it's sort of like doing push-ups

or something it's not really

particularly enjoyable but if you're

able to do it

then you would just start um

like labeling just breathing in

breathing out

breathing in breathing out and your mind

is going to

wander to other things you'll just start

wondering you know what was that noise

or

you know my knee itches or whatever and

as soon as you

catch that your mind has wandered away

you just note that

and then you come back to breathing in

breathing out

there are other ways to do it i don't

want to get it too complicated but

you could also just meditate on like the

syllable ohm

or if you're really just starting off as

a beginner just trying to see how it

feels to just kind of relax

into not just having the monkey mind

jumping all over the place but having

your mind just

focused on something very simple to keep

your mind from

just proliferating all kinds of weird

ideas

you could also just meditate

gazing at a candle flame which is a

common yoga sort of meditation

or you could light an incense stick and

just keep your

concentration focused on the the seeing

of of the smoke as it rises

and that's kind of a good one too

because then you'll know when to stop

meditating is when the incense stick is

burned all the way down which is

i don't know 20 25 minutes for the

average incense stick i think

or you could even just sit in front of

like a goldfish bowl or an aquarium

and just quietly watch the fish just

silently gliding through the water which

is a very um effective relaxation

technique

for people who are stressed out you know

you come home from work you just sit

down in front of the fish tank and watch

the fish for

15 minutes or something but it is good

if you can sit cross-legged with both

knees

more or less down and keep your back

straight because it helps you to stay

alert and keep your mind as simple as

possible and stay

awake and alert in the present moment

because that's really the point

of meditation but as i say um

if if you can if you have access to it

then you do well to

go to like a meditation retreat or

meditation center or at least

read a book on elementary meditation

because i can't really get very far with

explaining

the basics in just answering one of many

questions

so i hope that's enough i mean it's well

worth it you know

i i definitely encourage people to

practice meditation because it has many

benefits

and it gets you closer to reality helps

you to escape from plato's cave and all

that which is good

so next question also from

bodhisattva969

how can we introduce an enlightened

western buddhism without becoming

effeminate at the same time

well original buddhism certainly was not

effeminate in fact as i've said before

the original

early buddhism was about as masculine of

a spiritual system as

has existed in this world

um first of all it was based on just

asceticism

and uh monks of course avoided women

like the plague except for when they

were

silently putting food into their into

the monks bowl in the morning when they

did go for alms

so i think in order to have

a relatively masculine form of

buddhism you'd have to have austerity

you know just

enduring discomfort with equanimity

that would be that would be a big one

and fearlessness

which uh uh you can cultivate that if

you're meditating in a forest i suppose

um i like the idea of meditation

retreats

being conducted in forests anyway so

just you know if if you have the the

leisure time and the weather permitting

you could just hike out into the woods

and

meditate under a tree or something um

and also just

taking responsibility for yourself um

buddhism is in the west especially is

just

ignoring the whole concept of karma

where everything happens to us

is the fruition of our own karma which

is literally our own

doing and so if anything bad happens to

you

you don't whine and complain and call

yourself a victim

which is largely the direction that

just about everybody is going in the

west including so-called buddhists

and you just accept it because it's the

fruition of your own karma

and you just man up and accept

the consequences of your own actions

um but yeah i mean with regard to

early buddhism they were they were in

order to be a monk in ancient

india ancient northern ganges valley you

had to be really tough

so um yeah buddhism was not intended to

be

a feminized system which is certainly

what it is becoming in the west with uh

you know lesbian gurus and that sort of

thing

so next question from reconciliation

do you know about the catholic monk

thomas merton being

assassinated for for being about

creating

anti-war opposition movement that could

not be stopped by the vietnam war hawks

um i i know about thomas merton i've

read

like the edited version of his diaries

and

um uh this was really the first i'd

heard of any conspiracy theory about him

being killed by the the government

the u.s government um my understanding

is that he was killed by a freak

accident when an electric

fan fell on his head in bangkok

thailand and um i mean obviously

to me anyway at least in the edited

version of his diaries he mentioned

nothing about

being followed by uh agents or anything

like that he i mean it caught

took him completely by surprise as far

as i could tell and um uh i did read an

article or two on the supposed

assassination of father merton and um

it seemed to me like the evidence was

pretty sketchy and hearsay and so

um it maybe it happened but um

i don't know that much about it and i'm

inclined to just

assume that he did die from a freak

accident

from having a fan an electric fan

fall on his head and instantaneously

electrocute him or

or whatever whatever the cause of death

supposedly was

next question from nardi i

came across a book about buddhist

cosmology and i would like to know your

opinion on the subject is this an issue

in the theravada school

or is it more of a mahayana thing well

certainly there's a lot of cosmology

in ancient indian buddhism

including taravana and i think pretty

much

all religions have cosmology because

one of the main reasons of a religious

system especially for the masses

not the advanced practitioners so much

but for the average person like the

average

villager is it explains the universe

you know they want to have like

everything explained they want to know

what the stars are in the sky

at night you know they want to know what

causes rain and everything

so um there's going to be some cosmology

in just about

any kind of religious system because

that's one of the main purposes

of religion so yeah the terra vada

buddhists

pretty much inherited most of their

cosmology from just

ancient indian culture so you had the

the flat earth floating on water with

the 10 million mile high mountain in the

center

called meru and the four great

continents

and the stars and the sun

and other heavenly bodies are inhabited

by deities

and this kind of thing so yeah it goes

all the way back to the beginning and

it's most of it

i assume is pre-buddhist although any

religion is going

to modify the cosmology

to fit it into their religion and also

so that they can say you know we've got

the improved correct version you know

they're not just going to completely

borrow their entire cosmology from some

previous religious system because that

would indicate that the previous

religious system was right

also so yeah there is there is

like an ancient indian cosmology that

the buddhists pretty much just

adopted from the culture and it's really

irrelevant

to practicing dhamma and

um from the western like the modern

western point of view it's

it's pretty much outmoded you know like

the flat earth floating on water just

is not very convincing to most people

although of course there are a few flat

earthers out there

so next question from kuru minha

why do you think theravada buddhism is

necessarily opposed to scientific

realism greetings from brazil

um necessarily opposed

scientific realism

at present i suppose you could say it's

necessarily opposed

maybe in future scientific realism as

you know science progresses then

it will come closer and closer in fact

scientific realism has been coming

closer and closer to

a lot of eastern philosophies for

example with regard to the observer

effect and the influence of

consciousness

on like conditioning what we perceive

and that sort of thing

you know that's getting much closer to

buddhism but with regard to like

the main um opposition

i suppose between theravada buddhism and

scientific realism i think it would

probably be something along the lines of

the effects of karma

you know karma is just not a scientific

term

um so yeah like the the whole

idea of karma conditioning our

experience

everything that we everything that we

experience

in like the sensual realm is supposedly

the fruition of our own karma

and then of course you've got the whole

issue of uh rebirth

and um that sort of thing so yeah

i would assume that the whole idea of

karma and just the the radically

fundamental influence of consciousness

on everything around us

like like later schools in theravada

just just dispensed with a whole

notion of physical matter and just

started becoming idealist

and uh even terawatta that accepts the

reality of physical matter

um is almost idealist really because as

i say

everything that we experience sensually

including our own thoughts is the

fruition of past karma

so i would assume that would be the main

the main difference

and as scientific realism becomes more

and more

aware of the the influence of

consciousness

on what we perceive and i assume they're

going to get closer and closer although

of course

orthodox terrible buddhism isn't going

to change but

scientific realism is is changing and

it is apparently getting closer and

closer not only to tarabata buddhism but

to

eastern spiritual systems in general

so next question from follower number

[Music]

a12c67e7

i have two questions do you personally

think there's any significance to dreams

beyond manifestations of the

subconscious mind

and i might as well just conflate that

with the next question which is does

buddhism have anything to say about

dreams

so um

my understanding from a biological point

of view is the main purpose of dreams

is it helps to organize um

information in our brain it makes our

brain more

efficient like they've found that

animals that don't dream have to have a

larger brain

than animals that do dream just to

compensate for the

loss of efficiency that that happens

through dreaming

so um i remember when i was in college i

wrote uh

a research paper on intelligence and

dolphins

and at the time i had no i i couldn't

come up with a good reason why a

bottlenose dolphin would have such a

large complicated brain larger and more

complicated than ours even though

it doesn't have like hands and fingers

and things that

need extra brain tissue to control them

and even though it's

somewhat larger than us i mean a lot of

the extra weight is just

blubber that doesn't require any nervous

tissue

so um but then years later i

found out that um dolphins don't dream

because they can only sleep for six

minutes at a stretch because they have

to hold their breath while they're

while they're sleeping so they have to

hold their breath

and catch this quick nap and then they

have to wake up in order to start

breathing again

so um just from a biological point of

view it's just it increases efficiency

and so it's um

you know things that happen in your day

or things that have happened recently

will just come up

and sort of reinforce the neural

pathways

help to get everything organized and

integrated and that sort of thing

although um you can't have dreams that

are

like subconscious messages to your

conscious mind

so you can have um

dreams that have some kind of spiritual

um

importance or value so there is that

and one of my favorite examples is i've

talked about this before how i used to

have

an australian monk friend who was

thinking about dropping out of the

monkhood

and he had this dream that he didn't

understand at all but

as soon as he told it to me it just

clicked i mean i just understood the

meaning of it

which excuse me

i just had lunch um

it it indicates that i mean your

subconscious mind can be

like leaving messages that your

conscious mind won't even necessarily

know

about it he won't be aware of it which

is which is interesting

and anyway his dream was that he was in

a canoe in a little lake

paddling around and around and at the

other end of the canoe or three or four

gorillas and the gorillas were

very quiet very well behaved but he knew

that if he paddled back to shore they'd

jump

out and run amok and so he was stuck out

in this lake paddling around and around

with these gorillas afraid to go back to

shore because he knew the gorillas would

just jump out and

and start causing trouble and for me it

was just plainly obvious that

like like freud says dreaming about

water

is symbolic of religion or spirit

and so him being stuck out in this lake

was him

pretty much being stuck as a monk in his

own mind

because he was afraid that the gorillas

which were his defilements

you know like his baser instincts were

under control while he was a monk but if

he

he went back into lay life you know he'd

just go back to his old rascally ways

which to some degree did happen because

he did drop out

and i do hope that he is happy i haven't

heard from him in many years

so um with regard to buddhism having

anything to say about dreams

well i mean obviously there's the uh the

more or less mythological story of the

buddhism mother

um getting pregnant from a dream

like she wasn't technically she wasn't a

virgin like

jesus's mother supposedly was but um

yeah she got pregnant

after dreaming of a white elephant

entering her you know the

elephants are sometimes called naga

which also can just mean a great one

like the buddha himself is called

naga sometimes so i mean that's

a pretty basic uh uh significant dream

in orthodox buddhism right there

um on the other hand i mean you can get

messages

from from dreams sometimes i mean if

it's if it's clearly some kind of

message coming up

then you know you should not just

completely dismiss it

but um buddhism as a general rule does

discourage monks from getting into the

business of interpreting dreams

you know becoming like a fortune teller

you know telling people the meanings of

their dreams and that sort of thing

so um for the most part dreams are just

kind of a

um like spam you know most dreams are

probably spam dreams but

um every once in a while i mean if

there's some obvious

benefit or meaning to one that that

really stands out then

uh yeah you shouldn't just totally

disregard it because buddhism says monk

shouldn't

pay much attention to that stuff

so let's see there's another question

about a dream towards the end

so i'll move on to the next one from

sakya puta

sakupuda asked um asked a question in a

youtube comment

um but it somehow disappeared and it was

visible only in the notifications but

not below the video which is pretty

common now i don't know why that is

he says greetings venerable curious

about your thoughts on these

statements and then it was followed by

links to no fewer than

11 other youtube videos by a person

called

theoria apophasis

and um yeah i i don't want to give

comments on all

11 videos in fact i didn't want to watch

all

11 videos but i will give my uh response

to the first one which is

um mr theoria apophasis was

talking about the the meaning of the

word the tagata which is a synonym for

the buddha

the buddha is called the tatagata a lot

in fact he refers to himself

as the targata a lot of the time

and um yeah theory apophasis was

pretty obviously incorrect in his

interpretation at least with regard to

pali

because he says that

the tagata is the combination of two

words which is

tat and agata and tat is sanskrit

which means like like that

and maybe it has the same etymology as

the english word that you know like

in in the upanishads you know that thou

art

and agata means um

i think he agrees that it means um like

caim like gachadi is to go

our gotcha is the past participle of

tukam which

means you know come or become

something like that so the issue i had

with his interpretation

is that the tagata is the combination of

two words but it's not

dot plus agata it's the ta

plus agata and the ta means

like this or or such essentially

and agata means you know having come or

having

become so um the tagata

my best guess and it's it's it seems

fairly

fairly solid fairly steady is that

the target means he who has become thus

he who has become like this and

this data or like this or such is pretty

common

in in buddhist philosophy because it's

it's

with it's trying to put into

words something that can't be put into

words like

um bertrand russell said that the entire

english language every word in the

english language

except that and this are generalizations

that and this are specifics but

everything else is a generalization even

if i say

me that's a generalization of different

versions of me over the past

57 years so

it means you know one who has become

such and

there are other similar versions like um

in the ataca waga it refers to

enlightened beings as tadi

which means something like you know one

who is

thus one who is like this so

it's you can't really put nirvana or

enlightenment

into words because that just causes it

to become something other than

nirvana or enlightenment because

enlightenment is non-symbolic it's

non-perceptual

so once you put a label on it then you

change it into something else and so

they kind of try to dance around that

by saying um you know you attain

this dustness or suchness you know you

just become like this

and um leave it at that so

um yeah theory apophasis um

uh judging from his name and also from

the one video

that that i watched i watched part of

another one but it seems like he

definitely has

a kind of axe to grind where he's in

trying to interpret

any kind of enlightened system

excuse me again in accordance with uh

like

vedanta which is

um really reifying

ultimate reality reifying enlightenment

and um buddhism generally tended to

avoid that

as much as possible so

um you can't interpret buddhism in terms

of

like uh vedanta and there's a big train

going behind me now

um but um yeah

in a way you're like drifting away from

buddhism by doing so so if he wants to

interpret buddhism

in accordance with uh like um

like traditionalism or like the uh the

perennial philosophy

and reify ultimate reality and

enlightenment and that sort of thing i

mean

it's it's his choice and it may be

useful for some people but eventually

you have to let even that go

okay next question from brian

here is a question i just thought of

that i have thought of

before in your videos you seem to be

trying to get back to a more genuine

buddhism

what do you think of buddhist statues

i've got nothing against buddhist

statues

it is true that in early buddhism there

were no buddha images in fact there are

some people who theorize that the first

buddha statues were made by

greeks who had conquered northwestern

india and some of them had converted to

buddhism and of course the greeks liked

their statues of

of you know aphrodite and apollo and

that sort of thing

and so they modeled the buddha on

apollo and at that time

like around the beginning of the

christian era um

the greeks modeled apollo

uh with a kind of aristocratic top knot

of hair

and that's the theory of how why the

buddha

usually has like a knob on top of his

head now is it just got uh

people lost or forgot the original

meaning of it or they just never knew

that originally it was like an

aristocratic

greek top knot of hair i mean going with

the theory

um and so it got turned into like

an eternal flame or just a weird

mysterious bump on his head

and um people interpret that as one of

the marks of the the 30

the 32 marks of the great man is he's

got a head shaped like a turban

but i assume that just means that he has

sort of like a

like a kind of a round skull or

something

but um it is true that in in early

buddhism there were new

there were no statues in fact they

wanted to emphasize the fact that the

buddha

just wasn't in the world anymore he

wasn't in any of the 31 plains of

existence

and so in the earliest buddhist images

um

they would just have like an empty seat

or a footprint or just a bodhi leaf or

something like that

just to indicate that gotama buddha is

just not in the picture anymore he has

he is you know he is totally beyond he

is not in any of the 31 planes of

existence

but um um for some people

um it can be helped it gives you

something to kind of focus your

your attention on and there have been

times when i've bowed down the statues

usually

like when i'm i'm going to some pagoda

or shrine or something with other monks

they're all bowing to the

to the image and i just stand there in

fact uh sometimes i get sideways

looks because i'm the only person not

bowing to the statue or

just going to the shrine room to do the

positive ceremony when all the monks are

bowing to the

to the big statue and i'm just kind of

sitting there

um yeah i'm i'm kind of

i'm not an idolater so

but there have been times i mean maybe i

shouldn't say this but uh one of the few

times i ever took lsd

as a monk was in burma and i was staying

at this little monastery

and um i just stayed up all night and uh

yeah i was just sitting right in front

of the the main shrine at the monastery

because my room was just on this little

side

side room off the side of the main

congregation hall

and uh yeah i was i was just overflowing

with gratitude and veneration and bowing

over and over and over again

but um as a general rule it's it's just

sort of um

you know it's not fundamentally buddhist

it's not really an aspect of

um you know the teachings like the the

scriptures of theravada buddhism

so um if it helps somebody to focus

their attention

or you know inspires in them like

veneration and gratitude that kind of

thing then uh

yeah more power to you but um

i do have a little buddha statue so um

so i'm not i'm not really opposed to

statues but it's it's

just like a later development in

tarabada buddhism

and buddhism in general let's see where

am

i next question from jacob

how does a westerner go about becoming a

monk in

asia that's a good question

and probably the easiest way would be

to find one of the main meditation

centers

in burma or or wherever you're going in

thailand

or sri lanka there's there are

big like international meditation

centers where you can kind of get your

foot in the door

you can apply to to go there

and um then they have like a

well-developed

uh like i don't know what you call it

uh administrative system or something

where you know they just have like

somebody who's in charge of

working out the the visa issues for

foreigners who come there to stay

and and that sort of thing the way i did

it was i was ordained at a burmese place

in california

and then from california the supporters

like the burmese supporters

of the place who still lived in burma

they were able to pull strings and

the whole tradition you know if you're

if you want to ordain

in in like a a major tradition

then you can hook up with like maybe a

branch of that tradition outside of asia

and sort of get your foot in the door

that way otherwise

it's relatively different difficult

maybe in in the place like thailand but

in burma

it's always been a little bit difficult

to

to get set up there but once you're set

up there it's easy you know they have

like meditation visas

in burma so

just once a year i mean you just get

renewals and um

i'd have somebody taking care of that

for me

in rangoon so um

yeah so let's see how does the westerner

go about becoming a monk in asia

uh you could become a monk outside of

asia in an asian tradition which would

then ease your way to asia which is good

because

if you're going to be a monk especially

you're better off being a monk

in asia at least at first now i

i strongly recommend any

buddhist monk any terra vada buddhist

monk to spend at least a few years in

asia just so you feel what it's like to

live

a lifestyle similar to the way the

buddha was living

like in in burma i mean you can live

very close to the way

monks were living 2 500 years ago you

can just

wander around and sleep under trees or

in caves or whatever

and although the government discourages

that because they want to keep track of

all the foreigners in the country

still if you're a monk you've got sort

of

special privileges because it's a

buddhist country and people respect

monks and they don't want to hassle you

too much

so yeah you might have to sign

uh like on your visa application a

statement that

you will stay in one place you know

you'll just stay at the meditation

center or whatever

but um um generally you can

get around that kind of a thing so other

than that just

going to asia without being a monk yet

um yeah that would it would be more

difficult unless you've got some kind of

system set up with like a major

international meditation center

that has lots of foreigners coming there

anyway but some obscure tradition you

want to get ordained in some obscure

like alchemist tradition or something

then

um you may have you may have

difficulties you may have to uh

um somehow get to the country and settle

down somehow and then

and then start looking around from there

but that would be more difficult

so next question from zach

greetings pandey have you read much on

the ancient

greek philosophical school of pyranism

skepticism

when i first read on the subject i

noticed that there seemed to be many

similarities with early buddhist

concepts of no self cosmological

emptiness and not becoming attached to

philosophical dogmas like platonism or

abhidhamma

turns out i'm far from the first who

noticed this and books have been

written about cross-cultural influence

though i have

to admit i find the argument weak and

unnecessary a man with strong

contemplative capability

could come upon these insights on his

own so i'm just curious if you have come

across purenism

and what you think on the topic i'm

attaching

a like on the connections between

pyranism and buddhism

i think i should have made it clear that

pyranism like buddhism

isn't just skepticism for the sake of

skepticism there is a goal and that's

an ultimate calmness calmness and

unruffled nature

i can't remember what it's called though

there's anorexia something like that

there there also seems to be recognition

of an ultimate truth but also a

recognition that none of the dogmas men

make up are that um

yeah i i don't think that what the

buddha was teaching was essentially

skepticism

um there was a teacher

that was a contemporary of the buddha

named sanjaya or sanjaya

and the buddha's two chief disciples

sariputa and mogallana were originally

disciples of sanjaya

and sanjaya was like a puristic skeptic

and i do know something about pureness

exceptism for example i've read

sex disempiricus his outlines of

pyranism

so i have that in my bookcase

yeah i think there is a fundamental

difference between

skepticism like pyranist except

skepticism on the one hand

and like what the buddha was teaching on

the other like

a skeptic says you cannot know the truth

which in itself is

not skeptical because that is an

assertion right there

and for example there's the diganaka

suta of the majiminikaya where the

buddha apparently meets with a real

skeptic who says you know

nothing is acceptable to me which means

you know no no belief

is acceptable to him and then the buddha

points out well i mean you believe that

don't you you believe that no

no belief is acceptable to you so you

already you've already kind of missed

the boat

um but like you say it's like the

purpose of

of skepticism is just this peace of mind

from not

having any passionate or beliefs or any

kind of attachment to any kind of belief

and it causes a sort of peace

because you're not um you know you're

you're not fanatically believing

anything

um but with buddhism i don't think that

he really had the idea that you can't

know reality his

idea or you know what he was trying to

get across

was that you can know reality but you're

not going to know reality through

beliefs

so there's there is a reality there and

it's not just that you

don't believe anything that's not the

whole purpose but there's like a deeper

purpose to that which is essentially

mysticism

so on i don't from what i've read about

puristic skepticism they don't seem to

be particularly mystical

whereas i think early buddhism was about

as purified

of a mysticism as i've ever come across

so it may seem the same

at the surface or kind of at the

beginning but

the skeptics as far as i can tell we're

saying you know you just

can't know the truth whereas the buddha

was saying you can know the truth but

you can't know it through thinking

and so you have to move beyond the

thinking

in order to know the truth not just so

you get peace of mind through

not believing anything but you can

penetrate to

the kantian thing in itself once you've

detached yourself

from the thing as it seems so

um yeah i would say that there is a

difference

and uh skepticism would come closer to

what sanjaya was

was teaching but i could be wrong

i don't know next question

also oh this is a good one also if you

had to choose between

a seventh-day adventist a hare krishna

or a devout esoteric hitlerist

as your next religion which would you

choose

which is it's like a trick question

because i really couldn't

devoutly sincerely believe any of those

so i mean i'd have to be insincere

with regard to any of them a seventh-day

adventist

no it's not really my style i just can't

believe that uh

like a hebrew carpenter created the

universe and died from my sins and was

the only

begotten son of god and all that the

hare krishna

i mean just the whole you know

meditation isn't going to get you

anywhere and just you just chant the

names of god

uh umpteen times you know thousands of

times a day

um yeah not so much and the devout

esoteric hitlerist with all

with all due respects to uh herroo

my my good friend um yeah i

i don't think that i for all i know

maybe hitler

is in in some sort of deva realm right

now but

uh i don't know how anybody would really

um

be able to know that and uh personally i

just

do not think he was a saintly man

i don't i think he i mean i think stalin

was at least as bad as him

i mean there were he wasn't really as

bad

as he has been demonized to be by

mainstream

narrative culture propaganda history

quote unquote but um yeah i couldn't so

really i couldn't be any of those

sincerely so if i just had to

just go through the motions and pretend

to be one i guess i'd just have to go

with the hari krishna although i

wouldn't want to uh

have the the top knot and hang out in

airports or whatever it is

they do they have they have the probably

the best food

hari krishnas have good good vegetarian

indian food

so yeah i could be like an unorthodox um

outlier to the hari krishnas maybe i

don't know

it comes closest to buddhism too as far

as i can tell so

next question is from chaplin

you've mentioned that your father always

believed that you were a reincarnation

of your paternal grandfather

can you tell us more about your

grandfather

as a man and about his life and

common threads that you two have in life

um that's a good question although

i never met my grandfather unless i was

him in which case i suppose i met myself

um but yeah my father did believe that

i'm a reincarnation of his own father

and uh his father died maybe 20 years

before i was born so

there may have been some intermediate

state and and i don't

recall ever being my own grandfather so

um it's just kind of a hypothesis or a

theory for me

but um and also i mean we are similar in

certain ways

although that could just be genetic

um but apparently i inherited my

intelligence from him

and he was uh my grandfather was a

scholar

you know he's working on his fourth

doctorate when he died he had a phd

or a doctor it's in philosophy divinity

and agriculture and was working on a

doctorate in law

when he died and um he was he was gentle

probably more gentle than me

i picked up some of the non-gentleness

from my from my macho dad

and um one similarity uh

we had was that he was he was a baptist

minister an

ordained baptist minister and uh he got

ostracized from the clergy for holding

unorthodox views

so he was sort of an unorthodox

religious person

um kind of the way i am

so there there is that similarity and

i think possibly the strongest

similarities just like the strong karmic

connection with my father

um but uh it's hard to say i mean

another thing about my my grandfather

even though he was a mild-mannered guy

he was uh

he uh he definitely had like this strong

need for a woman in his life

and uh he was very popular with the

ladies because he was very

attentive and and uh complementary and

very gentlemanly that sort of thing

but um yeah i i assume just the

strongest

uh resemblance with my grandfather

or their strongest resemblances would

just be like general intelligence

maybe a certain amount of weirdness

um you know a certain appreciation for

um what could be called the paranormal

because my grandfather did have an

appreciation for that even though he

started off not really believing it even

though he's a baptist minister

my bible thumping grandma was really

more into the orthodox belief in

miracles and that sort of thing than my

grandfather was

and just like the attachment to my

father

so i think those would be the main the

main things although i'm not fluent in

greek and latin like he was or anything

like that

although i i can kind of hold my own

with paulie

um yeah okay i guess that's good enough

next question also by chaplin

would love to hear more about how

buddhism corresponds with the

traditional european male

mindset or libertarianism and

independence

in general yeah that's that's kind of a

um kind of a complicated or nebulous

kind of kind of a tricky one um

how buddhism corresponds with the

traditional european male mindset

well first of all there'd be like

self-sufficiency because buddhism

emphasizes that your own successes and

failures are your own responsibility

your own suffering is your own doing

ultimately

and um it does emphasize

um you know self-sufficiency and

and fearlessness and you know accepting

responsibility

and also austerity like a disdain for

luxury and discomfort

um so

yeah there is that let's see

libertarianism um yeah i've never really

considered how buddhism would relate to

libertarianism or like classical

liberalism

other than um i mean we really do

have the authority to choose for

ourselves

what we ought to do although from the

buddhist point of view there are

like um like universal

ethical laws or at least universal human

ethical laws where

you know if you cultivate certain mental

states it's going to be

it's going to result in more suffering

if you uh cultivate other

mental states it'll be it'll result in

less

suffering you know more happiness for

everybody so

um but it is it is our own choice in our

own doing you know it's like

if we go to heaven we send ourselves to

heaven if we go to hell we send

ourselves to hell

it's there's no god who's doing that and

so we are

on our own essentially and um

so that would be uh that would be

independence in general

i think so

um yeah that's that's kind of a

kind of a difficult question to answer i

hope i uh

got somewhere with it but um

yeah i mean like the buddha himself was

probably indo-european

and um like ancient indian culture like

ancient

like vedic brahmanism came much closer

to ancient greece and rome and its

religion than to modern hinduism

you know there are the fire sacrifices

to the gods for worldly goods and

uh maybe a little mysticism uh around

the edges

but it was uh you know it was like kind

of like early western paganism

so there's that similarity also if if

you want to emphasize that

and uh yeah it's probably better to

emphasize that

and just to go along with the uh the

leftist feminist

version of buddhism which is uh

taking taking over in the west and

thereby

vitiating buddhism and turning it into

something that it was never intended to

be

okay next question from follower number

one two c

six seven e seven well i think i think i

already did one by him

or her okay anyway

um just read your latest blog post and

was wondering if you have any thoughts

on

taoism especially the concept of

emptiness or the void

which was a central theme of taoism i

read the atakawaga and for some reason

it struck me as having some similarities

with the dao te ching

yeah there are a lot of similarities

between buddhism and taoism which is why

zen is essentially a combination of the

two

there's one aspect of taoism that really

is not emphasized much in buddhism

and which i like and that's the the

balance of yin and yang

you know the balance of positive and

negative or light and darkness how there

always has to be a balance you know you

can't have more

more of one opposite than another

because they have to

maintain some kind of cosmic balance in

the long run

and i believe that since i was a

teenager

really like um you know happiness and

unhappiness have to balance out you know

you're not going to have more happiness

and unhappiness overall or vice versa

although it's there's the quality of the

happiness and the quality of unhappiness

that

are also factors with regard to

taoism and its concept of emptiness or

the void

um yeah i really like the uh the taoist

concept of of dao as like the the

nameless uncarved block

which is what it's called in the dow

teaching where

it's you know it's not total

emptiness you know it's not like zero

it's you know the void or emptiness in

buddhism and

in taoism it's not just blank zero

it's more like the empty set in set

theory where it's just completely off

the scale

you can't really say anything about it

without without just

taking a wrong step so um

yeah i think i think they are relatively

similar and it's um

due largely just to the fact that

ultimate reality is

everywhere and so you're going to have

spiritual geniuses who can

um get some glimmer at least of the

kantian thing in itself

of reality or god or the dao

or the dharmakaya or nibana datu or

or whatever you want to call it brahman

and um

yeah then they'll try to explain it in

accordance with their own language and

their own

cultural concepts and so you'll have

differences

even among the enlightened beings from

different cultures but um

there are also a lot of similarities so

yeah i do like taoism

and i i like the dao teaching i have a

few copies of a few different

translations of it

next question is from potila what text

website

guide or document could you recommend

for western laity to read to become

better informed with how to interact and

care for

monks i've often found asian monks are

very

deferential when trying to figure out

how to assist them

they won't or can't state their needs

directly but western people don't know

the code

they are using and we tend to simply not

get the hint this brings us to an

impasse we don't learn how to fulfill

our role as

people and the monastic sangha doesn't

grow

our culture thinks an indirect approach

is not practical yet it appears that

this is appropriate at times according

to the linea

so how do we overcome this as westerners

to help domestic sangha to grow

we need to be better educated on

buddhist culture outside of the more

esoteric meditation philosophy texts

i've not had much experience interacting

with many theravada monks

for two reasons one language barrier two

temple ladies typically are older asian

women who are usually

serving monks and have a system in place

making it hard to learn the rules

and guidelines any suggestions on how to

address this

i do recall that the buddhist

publication society

had one of their publications just being

pointers for laypeople on what lay

people should

know about monk's rules of monastic

discipline

so there is that i gave a talk on this

once

maybe it was recorded i can try to look

through my files to see maybe

i've got like a recording of this talk i

gave

on just basic pointers

for lay people to be aware of you know

how to interact with monks

more properly if not maybe i could do a

brian rusho or something

on the subject or maybe one was somebody

else that would be uh

politically correct enough that i could

post it on on subscribe star

um but uh other than

other than that but buddhist publication

society on the internet i assume you can

find

you know pointers for monastic

discipline for lay people who interact

with monks

or you could i mean if you've got the

time and the interest you could just

go to the uh the vineyard texts and read

those

although um most asian monks don't even

really follow winia very strictly

if you interact with western monks they

can they will happily explain

things to you although just uh

here on this this q a video i could just

say there are just a few basic points

like um money food and women are like

the three main things that lay people

especially lay women

should be aware of when interacting with

monks like

monks technically aren't allowed to

handle money

but of course most asian ones do and

maybe half of western ones do

so that may or may not be an issue with

regard to food

a monk is not allowed to

eat food that hasn't been offered to him

by someone who isn't a monk

that same morning he can only he's only

allowed to eat between dawn and noon

and he's not even supposed to ask for

food

um so offering food is

is one of the best ways to support a

monk

it's one of the few things that a monk

really needs so

um when you offer it offer it with both

hands

to show respect you know you're offering

it wholeheartedly so when you offer

anything to a monk

it's good to offer it with both hands

and sometimes if it's something small

and it's easily handled with one hand

you can

what the burmese do is they'll just

touch their arm

with the other arm the other hand that

they're offering something with just so

they're still using both

both arms to offer it and with regard to

women of course

women aren't supposed to touch monks

monks aren't supposed to touch women

they shouldn't be alone together

a lot of times if a woman comes to talk

with the monk he'll just leave his door

open

which is still pretty much against the

rules nobody can see them

but um you know just kind of be careful

about that dress modestly of course

and um another thing is um

like a strict conscientious monk won't

ask for anything unless you give him

permission to ask

so if you are uh willing

to offer something to a monk let him

know that you know it's like venerable

sir

um bonte if you need anything feel free

to consider me

you know a donor of of requisites or

or something like that and then then

they can

if they need something from you they can

ask but if you don't give them

permission to ask first

they can only ask if it's something like

if they're really sick and need medicine

or something that it's okay

or there's another example like if their

robes get lost or stolen or destroyed

they can ask for for a cloth to cover

themselves with

but it is relatively strict about about

that

but like i say most most monks

aren't particularly strict anyway and so

um yeah each each

monastery or temple will will probably

have its own

um it's its own

sort of rules or lack of same

but uh yeah you might want to try the

buddhist publication society it's one of

the bodhi leaves

it's it's old it's very old so um i

don't know if you'll be able to find it

but i'm sure on the internet you could

find some some guidelines also

okay next question which potila says

this last question but there's one more

question

from somebody else after this

have you considered finding a way for

your followers or students to connect

and communicate directly with each other

in real time frank posed a few good

points on a post recently

it would be good to move building some

structures connections at this point

perhaps hosting a study or discussion

session via telegram or some other voice

text chat platform um yeah actually

i was looking into this earlier like

the subscribe star channel

allows for hooking up a discord server

uh like a link to a discord server on

subscribe star

and the problem with that is i'm a tech

i hope i didn't just insult somebody

with a mentally disabled loved one

but uh i really am and uh i was stymied

almost right off the bat because i you

had to have like a verified account

and then you had to have you know this

and that that i didn't have

but uh if there are anybody out there

who know how to set up a discord server

and

and maybe even have it connected with

the subscribe star

page my subscribe star page then uh

yeah we could set that up and uh that

that does seem like a good idea

um i'm i'm completely unaware of how

telegram works

so that might be a possibility also but

subscribe star does have

an option where you can have a direct

link

to a discord server so if anyone knows

how to set up a discord server

and hook it up somehow you could do it

yourself

maybe if if you're if you're so inclined

or maybe even just give me

um advice on how to do it but yeah i am

willing and that is a good suggestion

so last question is from dog breath

who uh i thought was on sabbatical but

he he pulled through with a question

he says last night i dreamt

i was dying the thought of dying doesn't

bother me during my waking state however

along with this dream arose a ton of

energy from deep within my chest area

let's call it fear it woke me up

i have done death meditations in the

past and thought i was okay with death

but the energy i experienced

last night was forceful and unexpected

why did my death meditation not prepare

me for this

more real experience are they lacking

or could i have missed something how can

a western person best approach

death so that it not merely

so that it is not merely shallow thought

based

what is the theravada or your own

perspective on

death what practices does it suggest

my previous practice was hindu

tonfricant origin

how can one approach the unexpected

um well for starters i would say that

um the way we behave in dreams is often

very different from the way we would

behave in real life

so you can't really judge how you would

behave in real life

by the way you behaved in a dream i did

have a dream where i was dying just

not long ago maybe a couple months ago

um

i don't know if if i've mentioned it but

uh

i was in in my dream i was walking along

and uh like a giant hand just scooped me

up

you know some giant hand from the sky

just scooped me up and

flung me into outer space along with a

bunch of other beings

and i don't remember what the other

beings were they could have been humans

or they could have been all animals but

i do remember there was one penguin

and we we're all out in outer space and

they're all like

struggling floundering in the vacuum

sort of like

in 2001 a space odyssey where uh hal

cuts off the

the lifeline of the astronaut and he's

like struggling and floundering in space

until he goes still

and that was happening to all the beings

around me but for some reason

i wasn't dying yet but you know i had

zero air and i was holding my breath and

i was kind of wondering why i wasn't

dying earlier

or dying faster like everybody else was

and it's freezing solid

but um yeah in in my dream

uh i wasn't really afraid but it was

obviously a very

very serious very solemn

experience and um finally i realized

that

trying to hold my breath as long as i

could was just pointless i might as well

just get it over with and so i breathed

out

almost all of my air and um

and then i right when i was just fading

out into death i woke up

and maybe that's just the way it is with

with

dreams of dying i think every dream that

i've ever had where i was dying i always

woke up at the moment of death which

maybe is a good sign i mean

when you wake up at the moment of death

i mean that's

that's that's not bad um i mean how

would the dream continue if you're dead

unless you're you know you're going

towards the bright light and that sort

of thing

um i think the main

the main practice i mean first of all in

in buddhism there's mara nanusiti which

is

you know recollection of death you just

remind yourself

you know that you're going to die

someday like i've got a human skull

uh sitting on a table next to my bed but

um you know a memento mori like in the

middle ages that was a big deal like

like if people had a feast they'd have

like the skull on the table just to

remind everybody

but it's it's like a picture on the wall

after you've seen it a thousand times it

doesn't have much of an effect anymore

but um aside from just reminding

yourself that you're going to die and

just

trying to prepare for that you know it's

like

um you know it's a common saying that uh

life is is just a you know a lifelong

preparation for death

and in buddhism you know it's like your

final moments

you're fine your last conscious moment

is the most important one because that

determines where you're going to be

going

and um or it you know it determines your

trajectory

um you know going on to the next the

next stage or whatever

so um yeah i mean if you really are

dying then

hopefully inner wisdom is going to kick

in and

it won't it won't be like the dream but

aside from that um the best thing to do

is just not identify with with your

mental states and so forth not identify

with your body just realize that

your body and your mind really aren't

you

and um like eckhart tolle says you know

nothing that is real

dies it's like whatever whatever dies or

comes to an end

isn't you anyway it's just like a

certain illusion

is dying and so um

ultimately there's really nothing to be

afraid of maybe if you've lived an evil

life you might have some cause

for apprehension when dying but um

or if you have like children who are

dependent on you maybe that could be a

cause

for concern but um

yeah ultimately nothing that is real

dies

it's like whatever if it dies it really

isn't you

anyway so

taking that to heart um you know not

identifying with your body or your

mental states and

um just reminding yourself that

you know it's all impermanent anyway you

know everything is anicha

at least everything phenomenal is anicho

everything that has a beginning has an

end neo

so just uh reminding yourself of that

um on a regular basis and um

just trying to cultivate wisdom you know

just trying to cultivate your awareness

as well as you can

so that you will die as awarely

as possible and um

i hope that at least knocked a dent into

that question

and uh that was the last question so um

i think we're done for for this one and

i hope the wind and everything didn't

completely

mess up the sound quality and um

i will continue with more of these if

people have more

questions so feel free to leave

your questions below in the comments or

wait

until i put up the announcement for the

next one on

on subscribe star and you're all welcome

to subscribe to subscribe star

and there's even a free bracket if uh

you can't afford to donate anything

and uh be happy

and uh it bugs me when i when people are

saying well i'll see you next time

because actually i won't see you at all

and neither will they so it's just silly

so i'll just say goodbye

and be happy if if that is appropriate

All right, hello and welcome to volume

seven of question answer.

I am your host Panya Bass

and I've had sort of a rough week or

two.

So I'm a little bit late.

And so

there's lots of questions to answer this

time. The questions have been

accumulating.

We've got to do the rough week. It's

just that my consciousness expands and

contracts like the Buddhist cosmos.

And I've been going through a

somewhat contracted phase, but I'm

feeling much better today.

And I'm pretty sure it's not clinically

significant anyway.

So anyway, let's get to the questions.

And the first question is from Daniel.

What is my opinion

on John of the Cross's concept of nada,

which means nothing in English?

Apophaticism

basically.

Yeah, John St. John of the Cross, that

was his path to the top of Mount Carmel

was just nada nada nada nada nada, which

is nothing nothing nothing nothing

nothing till you get to the top.

And

yeah, it's essentially mysticism or um

the Catholics would call it like the

path of contemplation, contemplative
orders like St. John of the Cross's
Carmelite order
were uh
essentially quietists. I think they
would be called quietists, where the
idea is that you cannot
you cannot wrap your head around God.
You cannot understand God with your
thinking mind, and so you have to
dispense with that in order to
experience God directly.
It's somewhat like Kant's idea of the
thing in itself. God would be the thing
in itself, the ultimate thing in itself.
And by thinking about it

all you can do is wind up with the thing
as it seems, which is still not God.
It's still not ultimate reality. And so
it's not really complete nihilism where
you're just trying to
just get rid of everything and leave
nothing behind.
The idea of St. John of the Cross is you
get rid of everything you're capable of
get ridding of
getting rid of. And what's left behind
is is essentially the spirit of God
because you just cannot get rid of of
God.
So yeah, the the nada or nothing is like
a worldly nothing. It's a phenomenal
nothing. It's not like an absolute

nothing.

So yeah, that's apophaticism.

Apophaticism or apophatic mysticism is

the idea that

the highest truth cannot be spoken. You

know, like the Dow teaching says the

name that can be named is not the

eternal name.

And so you just have to dispense with

names and words and intellectual

concepts and just uh dive headfirst into

reality and just experience it directly.

So

yeah, that's that's my opinion of John

of the Cross. And and I think that he

may have been an arahant. If it is

possible for a Christian to be an
arahant, I think
there's a good chance he was one. He's
he was just extremely advanced. Going
with Buddhist terminology, I think he
was a master of fourth jhana.
And um
he believed that he had
or he apparently considered himself to
have reached the attain the the
attainment of of perfection, quote
unquote.
Which means that um
he had mastered contemplation, which
would be like mastering jhana. And um
he was no longer motivated by his own
self-will. That had been mortified in

accordance with Christian monastic

uh

yoga, I suppose you could call it. So

that um

yeah, he he was

um essentially not creating karma

anymore. Which which is the way the the

Buddhist arahant also is supposed to uh

to exist without creating any new karma,

which is essentially will.

So um

yeah, I've I've talked about him in uh

previous one. So I won't I won't belabor

the point. Besides, there's lots of lots

more questions, so I'll just move on to

the next question, also by Daniel.

Could you explain the 31 planes of existence, specifically the Arupa loka?

Well, I actually wrote an article which was like a brief survey of the 31 planes of existence, which is on my nipapancha.org website.

And um

I have the the document here, so I can just give you a brief rundown.

And um

maybe a little commentary at the end.

So starting at the bottom, the very lowest realm of the 31 planes of existence. And like in Buddhist cosmology

any being that exists is going to be in one of these 31 planes.

So at the bottom, of course, is hell or niraya, which is not the same as Christian hell because it doesn't last forever. None of the 31 planes of existence lasts forever. Everything is impermanent. Everything that has a beginning has an end.

So

beings who go to hell for something really bad like Devadatta's attempts to assassinate or murder the Buddha.

He wound up in the lowest pit of hell, but after a zillion gazillion years after bad karma is is worked out or worked off

then he will be reborn somewhere else.

And according to

tradition Devadatta, even though he was

like the Judas Iscariot of Buddhism he

is destined to become a Pacceka Buddha,

which is like a Buddha that is like a

hermit and doesn't teach.

So there's lots of hell realms.

Not just one.

And you have there's the Nirabuddha hell

and see the Kamuda hell and the

Saugandhika hell and the Pundarika hell

and the Pundarika hell and on and on. So

if you divided all of those up into

different realms, then

there would be lots of hell realms. Like

if the heaven realms are divided up into

individual realms, but the hell realm

the heaven realms are divided up and
hell realms are just lumped all
together. So
that seems to have just been like an
arbitrary choice as far as I can tell.
We humans are fifth from the bottom
going with the traditional 31 planes.
But if all the hell realms are divided
up the way the heaven realms are, we'd
be closer to the middle.
So after the hell realm is the demon
realm, the Asura loka. And
it gets left out a lot because there
really wasn't a lot to do
with Asuras.
They just didn't really fit the

cosmology all that well because they

were like an artifact

of

like really ancient Indo-European or

Aryan, quote unquote, mythology. They

correspond to the Titans in ancient

Greek mythology. The war between the

gods and the Titans and the gods win and

the Titans are chained under a mountain.

It's essentially the same myth

in Vedic India and also classical Greece

or pre-classical Greece.

So

yeah, they don't get mentioned very much

because uh

they were just an artifact of a very

ancient religious tradition or mythology

that couldn't be completely ignored and so they just got stuck down in the lower realms.

Next is animal realm, which uh as a biologist, I think that that could be divided up into different realms. I'm sure like a flea and a chimpanzee um I don't know, there's probably more resemblance between us and chimps as there as there is between chimps and fleas.

Next is the ghost realm.

Human realm, fifth from the bottom which is supposedly the best realm to be in because it's the best realm to be practicing dhamma or dharma. Because the

lower realms you're just too afflicted
or ignorant and the higher realms
everything is so nice, you're just not
motivated to try for something better.
Let's see, keep going. Six right above
us is the realm of the four great kings,
the realm of the 33 gods
the realm of the destroyer gods or the
the
the Yama gods. And it's not the same as
the god Yama like
in the Dīgha Nikāya Sutta. It's it's
spelled differently and
they're called destroyer gods because
they destroy unhappiness or something
like that.
The realm of the contented gods, Tusita

deva loka. The realm of the gods who
delight in creating. And then the
highest of the deva lokas, the highest
realm in the the the sensual realm is
the realm of the gods who wield power
over what is created by others.
And that's where the Buddhist devil
lives. He's not in in hell, Mara.
I mean, he's he he doesn't exactly
correspond to the devil, but uh
he's actually got a really nice place up
in the highest sensual heaven realm
instead of being chained down in hell
at the bottom pit of hell like in
Dante's Inferno.
So above that, you've got the the Rupa

loka, which is the uh

the Brahmas that have physical bodies.

And so let's see, the 12th is realm of

the retinue of Brahma, then realm of the

ministers of Brahma, then realm of the

great Brahma. And it's interesting that

the realm of the great Brahma, which

would be like the highest realm to like

a Hindu

or um

at least like an earlier sort of Hindu

that hadn't developed all the the

Upanishadic

um mystical stuff.

Um

it's 14th from the bottom. It's not even

halfway up. So, the the Buddhists

indulged in a little propagandism, I think, by putting literally the personification of ultimate reality for the ancient Hindus just at this mediocre level in heaven with all these other realms higher than that, some of which were attainable only by Buddhists. But, uh continuing up the scale, we got the realm of the Brahmas of limited radiance, the realm of the Brahmas of measureless radiance, the realm of the Brahmas of streaming radiance, realm of the Brahmas of limited glory, realm of the Brahmas of measureless glory, realm of the Brahmas covered in glory, realm of the Brahmas of wide-open fruition,

and the Brahma the Brahma realm of perceptionless beings, which is a really strange one because they're like statues. They're just uh I don't see what the point of it is because they really are not conscious. Uh if they do have any conscious, it's just like a like a a baseline subconscious continuum going on, and they're just frozen like statues. So, I really don't see the point of that. Maybe um maybe it really exists, or maybe just um the systematographers were uh trying to cover all possibilities, so they had had that.

And most of these realms, there's very little information on them.

Um they they tend to uh correspond to different jhana realms. So,

um

like first jhana applies to the lower three Brahma realms, like which includes the the great Brahma.

And uh I mean, that's still a relatively crude jhana level. And the Buddhists were trying to imply that Hindus could only get as high as first jhana or some such, which uh I don't think is actually the case.

Um

Finally, let's see. 23 to 27 are the pure abodes, which are the highest Brahma realms, or they're the highest

realms where the beings still have

physical bodies.

And these are

um

Yeah, you have to be like an Arya to go

to these places. You have to be like an

Anagami, which is the second highest

state of Buddhist sainthood. It's right

below full enlightenment. So, if you die

as an Anagami,

you go up into these

into one of these pure abodes, and you

stay there until you

um

pass out of existence or or transcend

existence. You know, you attain your

your parinibbana, your final your final

nirvana.

Um

Yeah, there's not a whole lot of

information on these, either. Um

maybe because nobody comes back from

these places

to to tell about them.

And

so, let's see. The the pure abodes are

the enduring abode, the untroubled

abode, the abode of good

the abode of the good-looking, the abode

of the good-seeing, and the unsurpassed

abode.

Although, the unsurpassed abode is

surpassed by realms 28 through 31, which

are the formless realms, which is what
uh Daniel was specifically asking about.
And the formless realms are the sphere
of infinite space, the sphere of
infinite consciousness, the sphere of
nothingness, and the sphere of neither
perception nor non-perception,
which, of course, correspond to the four
um
formless jhanas.
And I wrote an article on the formless
jhanas, and that's going to be turned
into a blog post coming up
um relatively soon, I assume. I could
maybe within a month.
And
I have this theory that the the formless

jhanas were originally a way of dealing with
attempts
like pre-orthodox attempts to explain nirvana or the experience of nirvana.
So, for example, the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception is like a paradoxical state, which you could say that nirvana is like that. Like enlightenment isn't as you know, it's neither a state of perception or a state of non-perception.
And so, some people, early philosophers, maybe early Buddhist philosophers, would say that's it. That's that's what nirvana is. And so, um as the the early

uh scholastics were formulating
Theravadin orthodoxy, then they decided
upon some other definition, and so they
just said, "Nope, that's that's close,
you know, it's the highest realm, but
still it's it's not quite there." And uh
same like the sphere of nothingness,
which is the second highest. Um
in a way, it's like a perception still,
but it's a perception of of voidness or
or nothing.
So, yeah, that that's not nirvana,
either. And uh um the one right below
that is the sphere of infinite
consciousness, and there are a couple of
suttas that really do apparently
describe nirvana or nibbana as infinite

boundless consciousness, luminous all around, and so forth.

So, um it seems to me that uh at least the top three formless realms were ways of dealing with early attempts to describe the highest state or nirvana, and somehow it just didn't pass muster as as an official definition, and so they placed it in a really, really high realm where the beings have no body, they're pure mind, and they live for a zillions and gazillions of years, but it's it's sort of a dead end because you cannot progress in dhamma there because you're essentially just in this super-refined state where you're not

really um having insights. You know,
it's just like this steady state of
bliss that lasts for zillions of years
until your karma runs out, and then you
come back down again.
So, um yeah, my best guess with regard
to the formless realms is that they are
an artifact of Buddhist philosophy,
and they correspond to very high
meditation states, which were seen as
not really enlightenment states, and so
they were just placed on the on the
scheme of things in an in an advanced,
yet still um sub-enlightenment level.
But, if you're really interested in
that, then
you can find

the

the article that I wrote as an appendix to um a different article about tarot cards and Ouija boards, and I can't remember even the the full title of the article that I wrote. Or, it will be posted on the blog in a matter of a few weeks, the gods willing.

So, next question by Average Dot, alias Average Dude.

Um

yeah, this also mentions the formless realms. He says, "My understanding of nirvana is the ultimate reality is beyond thing and no thing. Is this why it's described as nothing, as in no

thing, not a thing, but not the absence, either? I've seen in many traditions the absolute is described like this, not to mention negative theology is really helpful, but some Theravada monks describe nirvana as nothing, as in complete absence, the blowing out of the candle. Why would this be wanted, or is it even accurate or mistranslated?"

Um

well, it's it's going back to like the apophatic mysticism of St. John of the Cross, where nothing phenomenal is nirvana. And you can't point to what nirvana is. You can't describe it, really. And so, you have a lot of Theravada monks, especially like

intellectual Westerners, and there are a lot of, as you may know, um intellectuals can be really attracted to Theravada Buddhism cuz it's so analytic and and systematic and everything.

So, uh you have like an intellectual Western monk who maybe is not a meditation master, and he's just not a mystic. He just doesn't get the idea that um

you're not going to know the truth by thinking about it.

You know, a lot of people are just addicted to thinking. They're identified with their thinking mind, especially if they're intellectuals, and it just makes

no sense to them, and so they call it

Like um Venerable Nyanavira,

who was

famous English monk who

lived in Sri Lanka in the '50s and the

first half of the '60s, he was like

that. I mean, he wouldn't even

translate, or his students wouldn't

translate, the sphere of neither

perception nor non-perception because

that is like an impossibility. It's

logically invalid, and so he didn't want

to associate any kind of bad logic with

Buddhism. So, he would just leave it

untranslated.

And um

so, yeah, I mean, they were just sort of

backed into a corner. It's like if
nirvana isn't some
like absolute transcendental state that
cannot be understood intellectually,
then that just left nothing, and so they
would just say, "Yeah, it's nothing.
It's uh you know, the fire blows out,
and there's nothing left behind."
Although, the whole simile of the fire
blowing out, which does I mean, it is
applied to nirvana in very ancient
texts, that I I do think that nirvana or
nibbana
literally means blowing out, like the
blowing out of a flame.
But, the ancient Indians considered fire

to be divine. It was Agni, the god, like the messenger to the gods. And so, when you extinguish a fire, it doesn't just die. It just enters like this formless state. It's like this latent state that pervades the universe kind of a thing. So, Nirvana was very possibly identified with that sort of that sort of situation.

So, let's see. Um he asks another question or maybe this is a continuation.

Just recently I saw that in the Theravada realms the 28 to 31 31 ones are formless. And then he did 29 sphere of infinite consciousness, sphere of no-thingness, sphere of neither

perception or non-perception as 31.

What does infinity of consciousness

mean?

Oh, let's see.

Infinity of consciousness, well, Nirvana

apparently was described as infinite

consciousness at least once and like the

Upanishads will describe uh Brahman

um as infinite infinite consciousness

also. So, some people were trying to

define Nirvana as that and um maybe they

had really expansive mystical states

through uh

like contemplation and like really

advanced meditation

and that's what they experienced or

that's close enough that you know, it's about as close as they could put into words and so that's how they described it. But then due to working out the philosophy and getting like the exact definitions of things, it just fell through the cracks. It wasn't accepted. And so they just stuck it up as a a high heaven realm and as a very advanced meditative state.

Um is this 30 no-thingness sunyata and if so, is it appropriate to what I've described before? Daniel is still asking.

Beyond this realm comes Nirvana. I recently tried to understand the

emptiness sunyata concept and my binary mind doesn't help me. Well, sunyata or or emptiness can have different meanings. In Buddhism, it's like an emptiness of phenomenal forms. Like there's the one of my favorite suttas in the Majjhima Nikaya is the Lesser Discourse on Voidness.

And a monk is systematically developing emptiness. So, the first thing he does is he just goes out into a forest where you've got the relative emptiness of artificiality. You know, you don't have all the noise and the commotion and the people and the the culture, you know, the artificial rules and the straight

lines and and right angles and that sort of thing. And then through meditation, you're getting quieter and quieter, less and less content like phenomenal distinct content in your mind. And so um in Theravada Buddhism, emptiness would just be like relative emptiness of distinct phenomenal things or you know, distinct diverse content. You know, you're getting closer and closer to just stillness and and clarity. Although um in some Mahayana schools um they have really interesting ideas of emptiness like Nagarjuna who I think was really one of the the world's greatest philosophers even though he wasn't a

Theravada Buddhist.

Bless his heart. Um he was saying in uh his Mulamadhyamakakarika that emptiness is the same as dependent co-arising or pratītyasamutpāda. That dependent co-arising

implies that nothing has a distinct self-existence.

That everything is only like relatively or virtually or conditionally real. And that he called that emptiness. That there is no underlying essence of distinct entities. So, it's all the phenomenal world is empty of of like a a distinct self-identity.

And that would also be essentially his

definition of no self or anatta in

Theravada Buddhism.

That um

you know, there's nothing has a distinct

self-existence. That it exists only in

relation to everything around it. That

everything is dependently co-arising.

And so existence

um at least at the phenomenal level

is um

conditional and uh in in certain

respects just um

um

uh what's the word? Virtual. It's like a

virtual reality.

So, um yeah, the Theravadans have

emptiness as just emptiness of any kind

of uh

distinct form, especially thoughts,

mental states. Whereas in Mahayana, they

take more of a a metaphysical

philosophical approach to it and

identify it with like dependent

co-arising.

Okay.

Excuse me.

Next question is from Matt

who asked this in response to a blog

post I wrote

on traditionalism.

And he says

it's kind of an interesting story.

He says, "Honorable Paññobhāsa, I was

raised in a family whose de facto
religion
what I'm quoting
was the teachings of Jiddu Krishnamurti.
There is much value to be harvested from
his talks and I believe that my own mind
is positively shaped by early exposure
to his ideas, but for the purpose of my
response here, I will be coming from a
more critical perspective.
One of Krishnamurti's most commonly
repeated phrases was, quote, 'Truth is a
pathless land,' unquote, which was a
starting point for his smashing of any
and all spiritual authorities and to
make clear that one breaks through to
enlightenment like a bomb, not by

dutifully taking baby step after baby step as prescribed by one's guru. That was certainly his experience of attainment and he sought to show others how to become bombs themselves. On K's deathbed, he made it clear that not a single person properly understood his teachings and as such there was to be no successor after his death. The context at the time was his desire to not have squabbling wannabes using his name as a launchpad for their own false new age religion. I have interpreted this as an unintended indictment of his own teachings as he himself admits it produced no fruit. No bombs detonated,

so to speak. As someone who took Krishnamurti's teachings deadly seriously for many years, my personal experience was that beyond fits and starts here and there, one finds it all rather bewildering and it doesn't seem to lead anywhere as you might expect from something that is pathless. This is what led me to Buddhism which proudly proclaims an eightfold path.

People achieved awakening during Siddhartha's lifetime and this is where Buddhism stands starkly apart from Krishnamurti. It offers us mere mortals a trail of breadcrumbs to follow.

This all leads to my question. As someone who has devoted their life to

the Buddhist path, how has this impacted you? I know there is some prohibition in speaking directly about attainment for a Theravada monk, so I am not asking you to break with this tradition, but perhaps to speak more generally about your experience of devoting yourself to this path and perhaps what it holds in store for the rest of us. Or perhaps another way to ask this question is, why should anyone devote themselves to the Buddhist path? What have you experienced on this path that leads you to believe it is in fact a path to somewhere and not just some kind of formal navel-gazing or other useless activity.

Okay.

Unquote.

So, um

where do I start with this? First, I

would say that Nirvana really does not

have a path leading right up to the

gate. That Nirvana really has no

um

like a designated entrance point or

anything like that. So, ultimately,

you're going to have to leave a path.

So, what Buddhism does is it provides

you with a path towards greater

uh clarity, um greater emptiness.

Um what it's doing is making your mind

less cluttered and distracted

so that gradually you're going to be

able to stop being distracted from the
illusion and penetrate to the reality.
And that can happen at different places
for different people. Some people might
need to get way up into like fourth of
jhana where there's like
virtually no distractions at all until
finally just uh
you know, there's nothing to be
distracted by, so then they can have the
liberating insight that uh
that all the waves on the surface really
are not the ocean, so to speak.
Um other people, they might just uh
have first jhana or even the commentary
say you don't even need to get as high

as first jhana in order to have the
liberating insight.
So, what Buddhism does, it's uh it
provides you with a path that
uh systematically makes your mind more
calm and clear and awake that helps you
to get to as far as you need to get for
the liberating insight to occur.
And Krishnamurti didn't like that partly
because people just cling to the method.
They'll cling to the path and they'll be
afraid to leave the path and you have to
leave the path in order to to really
reach um the highest state because as I
say, the path doesn't lead all the way
up to the gate of of nibbana.
Um

so um yeah, it's it's for some people one way it might work better and for other people another way it might work better. Like like Krishnamurti emphasized and just uh be yourself. Don't try to be something that you're not. Don't try to live up to some exalted ideal because it'll just make you into a hypocrite. That people are just naturally the way they are. They are perfectly the way they are. And um so that is uh

for him, just being in harmony with that can make your mind calmer than struggling and floundering to force fit your your mind to this pre-established

uh system that was designed for somebody

else.

Something like that.

So, um

yeah, it may be that for some people

Krishnamurti's just complete rejection

of any kind of dogma or any kind of

system um

may work best and it's a matter of

temperament. And uh obviously for a lot

of people Buddhism works best or even

like for St. John of the Cross, Roman

Catholicism worked.

So, um yeah, you just have to find

something that is in harmony with your

own nature and go with that. If you

really need to follow a system

and like your own just being yourself is too messy and distracting or whatever, then yeah, you you'll have to try something else. Although, if you're just struggling and like beating your head against a brick wall trying to live up to uh like an exalted ideal then uh yeah, maybe Krishnamurti could work better.

And um I just now remember that uh one of the higher one of the questions that I already answered, there was a part to it that I forgot to answer, which is um does nirvana above the 30 the 31st plane of the realm of neither existence or non exist or perception or non-perception?

And um

no, it's it's it is completely off the

scale.

It's not on the list anywhere. It's not

above or below or beside or anything.

It's just uh you can't wrap your head

around it.

So, I'm getting back to the to the

questions again. This one is um from a

YouTube video, I think. Somebody called

Era Fascista.

So, hmm. Have you ever said that your

government of choice would be Have you

ever said what your government of choice

would be in your Q&A videos?

Don't think I remember hearing anything

about it. Also, thoughts on fascism.

Um I think I did mention somewhere maybe

not on a Q&A video, that uh

my government of choice would be pretty

close to what the founding fathers of

the USA had in mind. It was uh like

meritocratic

uh libertarianism largely.

Um

Better without the slavery, I should

say.

But um

yeah, I like freedom and any kind of

authoritarianism or totalitarianism

is not optimal for me because I'm really

not a normie. I'm not going to follow

the mainstream. I'm going to be an

outlier an outlier no matter what the

mainstream system is going to be.

So, I appreciate something like

classical liberalism, not what goes by

the name of liberalism nowadays, which

is mostly just a kind of hysterical

socialism.

Um

yeah, something

not really conservative because I'm not

particularly conservative. Um but

something where people are free

but that doesn't work with everybody and

working less and less in America.

And um

because some people just uh they do not

have the wisdom to participate in the in

uh the system of government like the way like in a in a democratic government. Um you know, everybody is supposed to be participating at least in a pure democracy, which is what um America's the the the the left especially is is driving towards.

So, um then you you'll have to have some kind of authoritarianism or or else just limit who is able to participate, which is the way it was in the early USA. It was only

um

adult male landholders who were citizens were allowed even to vote or to uh

So, yeah, in a way I could sort of be

like uh

uh a sympathizer a fascist sympathizer

just going with the idea that if I had

to make a binary choice between Marxism

or some form of fascism like uh

um what Evola was um in favor of,

although some people say Evola really

wasn't all that much of a fascist, then

uh yeah, I like Julius Evola. At least

fascism endorses spirituality.

That's that's one of the best things

about fascism is that it really is

pro-religion.

Whereas communism um their religion is

just worshipping the state, you know,

there's like the the the communist

government or whatever, just communism

itself is is the new god. Which uh yeah, that's that's not for me at all and um I would be in favor of just about anything other than than communism.

Next question by Nardi.

What should a monk do regards to dangerous animals in the jungle while meditating? Have you ever had experiences with wild animals in Burma or elsewhere? I remember one time you said a monk friend of yours was bitten by a cobra or something. How did that happen? Anyways, thanks for what you are doing.

Um I've never come across tigers or wild elephants or anything really dangerous

and big in the forest. And um
I have stayed in forests that had tigers
and leopards and wild buffaloes and
elephants and things, but um I I saw
some tracks and that was about as far as
it got. And the best you can do is just
not be afraid and um
always have an easily climbable tree
nearby just in case.
And um yeah, that's about it really. I
mean, being afraid doesn't help
anything.
So, you just uh assume that uh if you
protect Dharma, Dharma protects you. You
just have a little faith in your own
karma, I suppose. And go about your life
and um

Ajahn Mun, who was uh a great meditation master of Thailand, used to say that monks should live in dangerous places like places with uh dangerous animals just because it makes you more mindful. It makes you more alert and aware all the time.

Pretty much of necessity.

Um

So, let's see.

Um the monk friend of mine who was who was bitten by a cobra yeah, he he was an he was an old man. He was about 80. And he had to uh get up in the middle of the night to go pee a lot, I assume. So, he he got up in the middle of the night

to go pee and there was a cobra that

lived in a hole just a few feet away

from his his cabin. And apparently he

stepped on it in the dark and it bit him

two or three times.

So, um

a cowherd who was driving his cattle

through the the monastery grounds the

next morning found him lying there on

the ground still alive but delirious.

And um

yeah, I've I've I've

that's like the worst thing to me about

it was just he was just lying there in

the dark for hours and he fell down

immediately. So, um a cobra bite isn't

enough to

just knock you down as soon as you get
bitten. So, I assume it was just like
mortal dread.
Just I mean, he was I don't know,
terrified or just in such shock at the
at the realization he'd just been bitten
by a big cobra that uh it just knocked
him to the ground and he was um
delirious the next the next morning.
Um I wrote a a long blog post about it,
which is on the sidebar of the old uh
Nipa Pancha blog telling telling the
story of
um him being bitten by the cobra and um
and the cremation and everything, you
know, how we were friends and how the

Burmese villagers conducted the the the funeral and all that. And I remember the the the very day after he was bitten by a cobra. Pretty sure it was a cobra. Um I went to the to my outhouse, opened the opened the door and there was a big viper just coiled up right right inside the outhouse.

So, needless to say, I had changed my mind about using the using the toilet just then and slowly backed away and closed the door and left it there. But um yeah, just based on the fact that a cobra lived right next to his cabin and um just the the distance of the fang marks and everything that um yeah, it probably was a different snake.

Um next question by Dog Breath.

Could you please explain what you mean

by perception is samsara?

Uh that's that's a tricky one. I Maybe I

should have carefully thought this one

out before answering it. But samsara is

really our perception, I should say, is

um

it happens in two stages. You've got

papanca and sankhara, or you could say

you've got nama nama and rupa, except it

would be rupa first and then nama.

Whereas,

um

first you your your mind differentiates

a form. You know, it separates one thing

out from everything else, and then it
slaps a definition onto it, like a a
name or, you know, just some kind of
recognition, something some
generalization
that you can or a universal or or
something that you can identify it by.
So,
that is really what our world consists
of is all these different diversified
objects and beings and and states and so
forth.
The um
really it requires um a perceiving mind
to differentiate these things. That uh
differentiation, like multiplicity, is
an artifact of perception.

That um

in order to differentiate one thing from another, you have to have relations. You have to have different from or or even same as or bigger than or or or smaller than or better than or whatever. You have to have these relations

in order to divide things and kind of group them and and organize them and everything. And those relations are purely psychological. There is no different from in in like

empirical reality out there. Like a chemist can take a sample of matter and analyze it down to its component parts. He's never going to be able to isolate

pure different from or pure same as, cuz
that's all in your mind.
And um that's really what samsara is is
this phenomenal world that we live in is
uh created by our own mental states,
which is a fundamental teaching of
Buddhism that gets ignored a lot.
So, um yeah, this this world we live in
would just be an unthinkable void
without thinking minds um making sense
of it or at least attempting to make
sense of it.
And uh I could probably just keep
yammering away on that one, but um
um I have written quite a lot about it
in in especially my older philosophical
stuff.

Like on the nibbanapanca.org website,
you could probably find some
uh maybe a more coherent attempt at
answering that.
So, next question from uh Dog Breath
here is uh "When you responded to my
question about death on the last Q&A
video, I suggested the solution
was to disidentify with the mind and
body. How do I do this?
And if I manage it, what am I left with?
Naked awareness."
So, how do you disidentify from your
mind and your body? How do you stop
thinking that the the meat puppet and
the mental states are really you?

Uh well, first you just you just go with the the intellectual approach. Just um just the philosophical reminders to yourself.

You know, just think about Buddhist philosophy, reflect on that, you know, that this is this is not me. And um even even if you're you're not identified with your your thoughts and or your mental states and your body, that doesn't mean that you're you're left with naked awareness necessarily, because there is mindful attachment.

So, if you're just observing the arising and the passing away of phenomena, including your own mental states and so forth, then that is a really powerful

way of detaching from it and disidentifying from it. Like for example, let's say irritation arises in your mind, which I mean, it arises in my mind sometimes, too, I have to admit. Um if you're identifying with your mind and your mental states, then it's like I am irritated. You know, this bugs me. I don't like this at all. But if you're if you manage to be mindful, then it's you're just observing it the way like an ichthyologist would be observing a a dead fish. You know, it's just irritation is arising. And when you are mindful in that way, you are detached from it. You're not identifying with it

anymore. If you are anything at all, you're the one that's doing the the observing and not the thing being observed. So, anything that you observe really isn't you, at least at that moment.

So, the irritation arises, then it's like you observe the irritation. Irritation arises. Um or you're thinking or you're you're noting, you know, irritation is arising, that kind of thing. Then, you know, it's just not you anymore. And so, you can do that with anything. Any mental state, you can detach from it and observe it as a kind of uh

you know, third from a third-person

perspective.

And um

doing that habitually just as a

mindfulness practice is probably your

best way of disidentifying. But uh

having the the the philosophical

groundwork there also is helpful.

Next question. In a video I watched

recently, you were talking to Bryan Rue

about lust, and you stated you wished

you were able to get over it.

Hmm, I don't remember that. Why haven't

you?

Is this a lack of vitality in the

Buddhist teachings about overcoming

desire, or is it that you didn't want to

overcome it? Do you know any Buddhists

that have overcome it? Thanks and

wishing you well."

Well, there's kind of a lot to unpack

there. Um to some degree, it is true

that not wanting See,

not overcoming it and not wanting to

overcome it can amount to exactly the

same thing. That if if you could just

wholeheartedly want to break an

addiction, for example, then you could

break it relatively easily.

But the the trouble is the motivation,

where, you know, it's it's nice. I mean,

lust is very pleasurable. I remember one

time

many years ago, I took this kind of

medicine that just completely eradicated
my sex drive for for several days. And
um
I it's I don't know, maybe Freud was
onto something when he was saying that
you know, lust is like the driving
force, because really it was like I was
out of gas. It was it was just like
everything was just flat and
and um almost like everything is in
monochrome, you know, the the zest for
life and everything it just evaporated.
And uh I have to admit, I come from a
like a a relatively lustful family, and
I think it this might be in my blood.
And um

let's see. Like William Blake said, it's those who those who overcome their desires have desires that are weak enough to be overcome.

So, um like a lot of Asian monks, maybe a lot of Western monks who are just very gentle and mild-mannered and peaceful, they're just not very high T to begin with. They don't have strong desires to begin with.

Um and so, they can overcome it because their desires were weak enough to overcome.

But if you got strong desires, then uh um

yeah, I mean, it's like you've got hormones and special areas in the brain

and everything that that condition that stuff. It doesn't just go away. So, the best you can hope for in a lot of cases is just you just get used to not scratching the itch, but the itch doesn't entirely go away. Sort of like I used to know a psychiatrist who specialized in curing people of OCD, like obsessive-compulsive disorder. They'd have like the urge to wash their hands again and again, or check to make sure the door is locked again and again, that sort of thing. And um he would teach them mindfulness, um sort of like I was saying before, you know, it's not me, it's just the symptom. And

um they could detach from it and not

react, but they would never be

completely cured because it was like a

genetic disorder in their brain.

And so, um

yeah, the trick is that you just

get used to it. You just get used to

being horny and frustrated or something,

and it doesn't entirely go away.

At least um in my case. And uh like I

said, um I also have the motivational

situation of not wholeheartedly wanting

it to go away, because it is um

it's it's fascinating and and uh

uh

yeah, it's just pleasant,

I suppose. It's it's more than just

pleasant, though. It's it's um you know,

it can just

fuel you in life. It's it's like part of

the life force.

Um

see

see if I'm missing anything here.

Uh a lack of vitality in the Buddhist

teachings. No, I really don't think so,

because the Buddhist teachings aren't

telling you to uh

uh well, maybe maybe they are

uh telling you to just eradicate lust,

eradicate anger, that sort of thing. But

it it's it sounds very nice, but it's

not very realistic, cuz it generally it

doesn't work that way. Or if you are going to completely eradicate, say, lust, since we're talking about it, then you may have to replace that with some other attachment that is equally fierce. You know, like theomania, you know, people that just become religious fanatics, then, you know, all of their former um sex drive or whatever is just redirected into this new mania, which may be useful. You know, it if it helps to get you closer to the goal, you know, it gets you out of the brothel or whatever, gets you into a monastery, then sure. But eventually, I mean, it's you've just redirected this same force that it has um you know, it's still

keeping you in samsara and keeping you unenlightened.

So,

um yeah, to a person who is just lustful by nature, um you may just have to uh find yourself a nice girl and settle down. And um

cuz otherwise, you just may be like a really frustrated and horny celibate person.

And I I can speak about that um based on personal experience.

Next question from Steve B.

Here's a quick question. You mentioned the Diamond Sutra in a previous story. I thought the Diamond Sutra was

fascinating. I know it's not an original Buddhist text. Could you say something about it and what your perspective is on what is contained in it?

And speaking of Zen,

have you ever read the Hagakure?

Uh well, as answering this last one first,

um if it's really called the Hagakure, I I've never read it. I have read um the Hekiganroku or the Blue the Blue Cliff Record, which is really good. I like that. It's it's really nice. I like koans.

But um yeah, I don't know what the Hagakure is. So, um

let's see. The Diamond Cutter, you know,

the Vajracchedika Sutra.

Um yeah, it's very profound.

And um

it was a very early Mahayana Buddhist

text.

And one of the purposes of it, uh I

think it's What is it? Um

Prajnaparamita. It's one of the

Prajnaparamita Sutras, which was a

movement against

the earlier Buddhist movement towards

Abhidharma and just the complete

systematization and formularization of

everything. So, they're trying to get

away from um just trying to systematize

Dharma into a set of axioms and rules

and and and that kind of thing. You
know, the just the the
intellectualization of what really is
unthinkable.
So, um yeah, it is profound and it was a
a reaction, in my opinion, largely
against the earlier, like the the
so-called Hinayana tendency towards um
just
hyper-organizing
and hyper-formularizing
everything. Just trying to get
everything into this fit into this
system. And um the the author or authors
of the Diamond Cutter, um
they were reacting or responding to that
and trying to move back towards the

apophatic mysticism or um

um

just not being not trying to actually

describe or explain the unexplainable.

And uh there's somebody walking around

outside who just distracted me. So,

um

Yeah, also planes and and trains and

everything going by.

So, let's see. Uh yeah, the Diamond

Cutter, I I do like it. It is it is very

nice.

It's it's very profound even though, as

you say, the uh

it's probably not original to the

Buddha. It was probably cooked up

hundreds of years later, but still it's

uh it is profound. Just because the

Buddha didn't say something doesn't mean

that it's it's wrong or not profound.

So, the next question

is from Bodhisattva969.

Should one buy a house or an apartment,

running up debts, or rather stay in rent

for a happy life?

Um

I don't think it really matters all that

much. It's a matter of mental states.

Whichever causes less attachment

and desire, I suppose. Um renting maybe,

from a Buddhist point of view, a

strictly Buddhist point of view,

um

renting would probably be better
because, first of all, it's not like an
anchor. You know, you're not like
attached by necessity to this one place.
And it would cause less
um less of a an a sentiment of I, me,
mine, especially mine.
So, um a lot of people who know about
handling money way better than I do
would just scoff at the idea of renting
when you can own something instead. But
uh I think from the Buddhist point of
view, probably renting would be more
dharmic.
Um but then again, it just depends on
the individual. For some people, um just

having a a nice place that's paid for and you don't have to worry about it anymore, uh you their mind is more at ease. Maybe it's just a really nice place where they feel at peace.

And uh they don't have to worry about the rent getting jacked up or being kicked out for not following some dumb rule or something. So, yeah, it would it would be a an individual um case-by-case choice, I think.

Next question by Bodhisattva969. What is your daily routine as a monk and is there a meditation or anything else that you do every day?

I don't really follow a daily routine.

Um

sort of I mean, um I I don't follow a

med- meditation schedule anymore. If if

I feel like it, I will, and if I don't

feel it like it, I won't. Um the most

regular

meditation I do is like the evening

walking meditation, which even that

isn't absolutely every night. If I have

other things to do, I'll do that.

Um

But I mean, for me, it's like you get up

and uh you know, attend to uh you know,

emails or whatever until lunchtime and

then go eat and then come back and

and rest and and just write and read and

you know, maybe go out and do some

walking meditation, that sort of thing.

There's There's really not uh

There's There's almost no routine at

this place.

So, um I've lived other places where

you've got a more regimented schedule,

but here it's just everybody's left to

their own devices pretty much.

So, yeah, not much of a daily routine

here.

Next question also by Bodhisattva969.

What is your current goal as a monk? Is

it still enlightenment,

have a better next life, or a quiet,

happy life in general?

Um

First of all, I would just advise you

and everyone else to beware of
goal-oriented Dharma. Like the only
the only time we have is now.
And uh it doesn't make much sense to
have goals for just the present moment.
So, um of the of the options, probably
uh quiet, happy life in general. That uh
setting up a goal, the reality is almost
always different from the goal. So, um
and then and then you get disappointed
and frustrated.
Um I've I've told people before, I've
advised people that if if they're going
to become a monk, um the desire for
um becoming enlightened is not
necessarily even the best reason for

becoming a monk. Maybe the best reason for becoming a monk is just that the lifestyle is in harmony with your nature. That you just like living a simple, austere, meditative life. And um that might get you farther, because if you set up a goal, then you're going to strive towards that goal. And in all likelihood, things aren't going to turn out the way you expect them to. And then you can get frustrated and disillusioned and and and miserable and all that. So, um

yeah, I think just taking each moment as it comes is probably best. And if you become enlightened, then yeah, that's lovely. That's excellent. But um

like striving for achieving the goal, it's it is encouraged in the text, so I shouldn't completely badmouth it, but um um

yeah, I mean, the the goal that you set up in your mind is not going to be enlightenment anyway. You can't imagine enlightenment, like we've already been talking about up above in these earlier questions.

So, um you're setting up like this imaginary, false goal in your mind that may help you in certain ways. So, I mean, this would be like renting or buying. It's like whichever works best for you.

But um

yeah, I did have goals when I was

younger and uh

um gradually, I just realized that

you're probably better off not having

lots of future goals, especially

spiritual ones, because they tend not to

be realistic anyway. And um like

Krishnamurti was saying, like just

striving to live up to an ideal results

in hypocrisy and and dishonesty and and

probably frustration and everything,

too. So, um yeah, so let's just go with

uh quiet, happy life in general and move

on to the next question. How did you

come to Bali? Um

When I was in Burma, I met uh a Balinese

Indonesian monk and we became friends and uh his family live in Bali and so his family invited me to go to Bali and so um I was their guest.

Um

uh like three or four three or four times I went to uh Indonesia. And uh they're very wealthy and they're they're trying to set up Theravada Buddhism on the island of Bali. Um probably most of the Theravada Buddhism in Bali today is largely a result of the efforts of Ibu, who is the mother and matriarch of the family and the mother of my Indonesian friend, who right now I think is uh in a meditation cabin in Burma.

So, next question. What do you think of making Dharma explanatory videos? That Buddhist teaching is interpreted quite differently, especially by the wimps of the Buddhist left. Something like this guy does. And he left a uh link to a YouTube video, which is all in German, so I'm not exactly sure what he said. I turned on the auto translate and it's all like Google Translate semi-gibberish. So, it didn't help very much.

Um I'm I'm okay with making uh Dhamma explanatory videos. I guess these ones that I'm doing like this one I'm doing now is a Dhamma explanatory video except I'm just responding to other people's

questions.

But um

yeah, I could uh I could do that and uh

if there is if there is like a demand

for it, preferably polite demand, then

uh yeah, I can do that. Just like um

I've I've I've still been uh

sort of slowly moving towards doing like

readings also, like reading some of my

favorite texts.

And uh people might just get stuck with

seeing me reading

instead of uh like the

the nice slideshow or something just cuz

it's so much easier to do.

Video editing is kind of a

foreign land for me.

So, what do I think about making Dhamma explanatory videos? Yeah, I'm open to that and I'm I'm willing to do that and uh maybe I'll be doing more of that in future.

So, next question from follower number A12C67E7.

Lately, I've been having trouble meditating because I often follow fall into a state in which I am dreaming or hallucinating.

Excuse me.

The trance state you talk about, I'm assuming as it's not just a wandering mind or daydreaming, then I wake up, quote unquote,

with a start when I realize what's happening and try to continue meditating. Does this happen because I'm tired or is there some other reason? Are there techniques I can use to prevent this from happening?

Um yeah, it's not necessarily because you're sleepy. It's it's because you're sort of easing into a mild trance state. Um

there there are techniques that you can use to prevent this from happening. One is doing walking meditation. You're not You're You're much less likely to uh space out if you're having to stay awake and alert enough, um you know, to not

bump into things when you're moving around.

Um

also, there are there kinds of meditation you can do where if you're carefully observing your mind, like um one one meditation technique I like to to tell people about is um it's in uh the Buddhist commentaries where you know, you've got the the termite mound with six holes, and there's a a monitor lizard inside the termite mound. You want to catch the monitor lizard, so you block off five of the holes and you watch the sixth hole very carefully so that when the lizard comes out, you can grab it immediately.

And that's a a metaphor for

um

like

quieting the five senses. You know,

you're sitting in a quiet place.

You know, move You're You're sitting in

meditation, and so you're not moving

around. You're not being distracted by

all the sensual stuff, and then you just

watch your mind carefully and try to

catch whatever thought arises. You know,

it's like you're at a a library and

you've got a loud speaker hooked up to

your mind so that every time you think,

it blasts in the library and the the

scary librarian lady's like glaring at

you. So, you have to like keep your mind silent, you know? Or it's like you know, it's somebody can read your mind and you want to hide from them or something. So, you have to like stop thinking. And that kind of meditation is is powerful if you can do it. It's not like the highest possible kind of meditation to do, but it is a higher kind of meditation than just, you know, breathing in, breathing out, breathing in, breathing out for for an hour.

So, if you can do a kind of meditation where you're carefully observing your own mental processes, then that will keep you alert because if you're just doing something

like breathing in, breathing out or om
or something something really repetitive
that doesn't change or um you know, it
can just lull you into the trance state.
It can be like a hypnotic thing. So,
um yeah, what you're doing essentially,
it seems to me, is a is a mild form of
self-hypnosis.
So, um yeah, I would I would advise you
to uh switch to a different meditation
technique and maybe do walking
meditation.
And maybe uh drink a cup of coffee
before you sit down
or strong tea. Caffeinate yourself a bit
cuz that will help you not to just uh

bliss out into into a a dreamy

um mild trance state.

So, next question from Potila.

Bhante, could you please discuss Dhamma

Anussarin versus Saddha Anussarin as

discussed in Majjhima Nikaya 22. Also,

could you please discuss bhavana

practices from the Saddha Anussarin

perspective?

Spoken like a true

academic Dhamma student.

So, um I remember the sutta. I've read

it and I remember at the time

it just didn't do anything for me at

all. It's just more of this complicated

like Abhidhamma kind of stuff, and

probably in my my opinion, it's probably

a relatively late sutta that doesn't go
all the way back to the Buddha. But
wanting to answer your question, I I dug
out my uh
Buddhist dictionary, which is a really
good book. I I advise, you know, I
recommend this book to anybody, and you
can even get it free in some places. You
know, it's printed for free distribution
a lot of the time. It's by Nyanatiloka,
who was a German monk who lived in Sri
Lanka a long time ago, like during World
War II
era.
And um
so, I looked up

let's see, what did I look up? Dhamma Anussarin.

And it says the Dhamma devotee, which is one of the seven noble disciples or Ariya Puggalas. So, then I have to look up the noble disciples.

And uh here we go.

The sevenfold grouping of the noble disciples is as follows. First, you've got the faith devotee or the Saddha Anussari. Then you've got the faith liberated one. Then you've got the body witness. Then you've got the both ways liberated, the Ubhato Bhagavimutta. Then you've got the Dhamma devotee, which is the Dhamma Anussari, which Potila also asked about. Then number six

is the vision attainer, the Ditthi
Patta. And seven is the wisdom liberated
one, the Panna Vimutta.
This group of seven noble disciples is
thus explained in Visuddhimagga chapter
21 verse 73.
He who is filled with resolution,
Adhimokkha, and in considering the
formations as impermanent, Anicca, gains
the facility of faith, and he is
he at the moment of the path to stream
winning is called a faith devotee or the
Saddha Anussari. At the seven higher
stages of like um
uh path and uh path and fruit of the the
four stages of sainthood, it adds up to

eight. That's That's what he's talking about. The first one is just the path of the Sotapanna.

And if that doesn't mean anything to you, it doesn't matter.

So, to at the seven higher stages, he is called a faith liberated one, the Saddha Vimutta.

Then he who is filled with tranquility and in considering the formations as miserable or Dukkha, gains the faculty of concentration, he in every respect is considered as a body witness, a Kayasakhi.

He, however, who after reaching the absorptions of the immaterial sphere has attained the highest fruition,

he is a both ways liberated one, and

Ubhato Ubhato Bhagavimutta.

Let's see. Let's see. He who is filled

with wisdom and in considering the

formations as not self,

gains the faculty of wisdom, he is at

the moment of stream winning a Dhamma

devotee or the Dhamma Anussari. At the

other six stages,

uh a vision attainer, Ditthi Patta.

And at the highest stage, a wisdom

liberated one.

So, that's There you go. It's a

for me, I mean, it doesn't help doesn't

help me to get enlightened at all. It

doesn't help make my mind more peaceful.

It's just more of this complicated stuff
that uh like the Diamond Cutter Sutra
was uh rebelling against or the authors
of the Prajnaparamita Sutra Sutra
Sutras. Um
so, yeah, it's like it In my opinion,
it's like a symptom of the ancient
Indian passion for systematizing and
intellectualizing everything.
So, um yeah, I really can't help you
very much on explaining Dhamma Anussaris
and uh
what was the other one? Saddha Anussaris
because uh yeah, it just doesn't It
doesn't really say anything to me. And
uh it's just unnecessarily unnecessary
complications that uh

I don't see how it would really help anybody to become a saint or to have peace of mind. Although, maybe they just really like that and it makes them happy to study it.

Okay, next question by Potila. Second question. Do you think it possible for a layperson in this day and age to reach Sotapanna?

If not, what should be the goal for the average layperson in the West to aspire to?

Well,

um

I was telling somebody, maybe Brian Ruhe, recently that I consider the four

stages of sainthood

um you know, Sotapanna and Sakadagami

and Anagami and Arahant to be largely

uh more of this kind of systematization,

and I think it is garbled from the

original meaning.

Like uh some of the first verses of the

the Itivuttaka, I think it is, referred

to an arahant as an anagami, which makes

sense. I mean, like an anagami is

someone who does not return and that I

mean, you'd think that that would be an

arahant.

But, um

a sotapanna or a stream attainer

is uh

I think it's possible that originally it

was just a person who had been sort of

born again as a Buddhist, just uh

so to speak.

Um somebody who had uh converted to

Buddhism and were it was really taking

it to heart.

Um and then it got turned into like a

superhuman mental state later on because

there there is a weird uh vinaya rule

about uh a monk not being a burden on a

family that is uh sotapannas

a family of sotapannas.

So,

um

yeah.

Uh with regard to uh becoming a

sotapanna, even if it is a superhuman mental state, I don't see any reason why a layperson couldn't couldn't attain that.

So, um yeah. I mean, regardless of the exact meaning of a sotapanna, whether it's the traditional orthodox definition or or something else,

then uh yeah. I I don't see any reason why it should be impossible. In fact, I don't think it's absolutely impossible for a layperson to become fully enlightened.

According to uh orthodox traditional Buddhism, if you become fully enlightened as a layperson, you have to be ordained within 24 hours

or you're going to meet with some sudden

and violent death. But, um

oh, well.

And uh

the goal for the average layperson in

the West to aspire to uh I already

warned everybody

cautioned you all against goal-oriented

Dhamma.

Um

so, live in the present moment and do

the best you can and uh

be mindful.

And uh I think you're going to be doing

well.

Next question from JML.

How do you deal with sloth and torpor during meditation and during normal life?

Uh first of all, I mean, there's just the determination. You just like just get yourself motivated. I think that's probably the best thing to do.

Um

Uh like I like I said to the the other person, uh maybe a cup of coffee.

Um there there are suttas that discuss things you can do. Walking meditation is another one.

Um

sloth and torpor, tina middha. It's it's uh yeah, it's I can experience I can experience or I can uh I can relate to

that.

Uh sloth or tina would be like laziness

and torpor would be like sleepiness.

So, it's like laziness and sleepiness.

Um

Yeah. I mean, walking meditation, if

you're really prone to just nodding off

when you meditate, then yeah, I would

suggest doing walking meditation. Or

again, um maybe meditate with your eyes

open.

Meditate like on

incense smoke or candle flame or

something like that, maybe even.

Um

Yeah, it's part of it can just be that

um

you know, your eyes are closed and

you're motionless and it's quiet and

everything and so you just naturally

uh start drifting towards sleep. That's

one reason why uh meditating while lying

down doesn't work very well for most

people because you just naturally just

relax into a sleepy state.

So, um splash water on your face,

meditate on light,

pull at your earlobes sometimes. There's

there's lots of little tricks that you

can find in the suttas for reducing

sleepiness. Although ultimately, it's a

matter of um just having the motivation

to really really push through it.

Um okay, next question from Chaplin.

How will you spend your 30th anniversary

day that is coming up in a few days?

Um

I might have a special 30th anniversary

Brian Lu show, but um aside from that, I

don't have any plans and it's um

it's it seems to be a bigger deal to to

you, dear Chaplin, than to than to me.

It's like birthdays and and Christmas

and that sort of thing. Um I've been a

monk living in in a non-Christian,

non-Western country for so long that um

yeah, Chris- Christmas is just another

day. My own birthday, I I forg- I've

forgotten my own birthday before. Just

looking at the calendar, trying to figure out what day it is. It's like, "Oh, yesterday was my birthday." That's interesting.

Um so, yeah. I mean, it's for me it's just it's another day. It's it's like a landmark, you know, 30 years as a monk. Um going with the Western calendar.

But, um

yeah, I don't I don't plan on on having throwing any parties, wearing the wearing the paper hat or anything like that.

Next question from Chaplin. The texts admonish clinging, passion, and desire. How does one reconcile this with romantic love?

Well,

starting with this orthodox Theravada

Buddhism,

um some people just have

uh strong enough

uh what what what I how would I say it?

Well, not everybody's cut out to be a

celibate monk living living in a cave or

under a tree. Most people are closer to

the mean and um just want to live a

relatively peaceful, relatively happy,

normal life. And so, it makes sense for

them to settle down with a nice person

and have a family and and do the best

they can within that context. So, that

would that would apply to most people.

Um although

uh romantic love, it's uh

it's not the stabilest form of love for

most people, but it is it does have

genuine love in it and it can be

beautiful and profound if especially if

you find the right person and you have

uh a heart that is

capable of really something approaching

unconditional

uh just really deep love and intimacy.

So, um

let's see.

Uh where do I go with this?

Um

yeah, the clinging and the desire from a

Buddhist point of view is always going

to result in in

unpleasant effects.

So, um

you you just have to accept that. I

mean, if if it's worth it, I mean, if if

it's worth it in other ways. If you

think that uh the

the the negative karma that is going to

arise naturally as a result of the the

passion and the and the lust and all

that sort of thing. If uh

you know, if if it's like you're willing

to accept that, it's your choice to

make. And um in some people, I mean,

it's just the sensible choice to make

because

being a celibate hermit just isn't for everybody. And really interacting with other people
can be one of the best ways of making progress. That's that's one thing that I've I've I've mentioned before. It's like one weakness of being a monk nowadays is there's no challenges really. You just you're living in the comfortable place and um you know where your next meal is coming from and uh you're not you're not being harassed by non-Buddhists out in the forest or whatever. No, there's no dangerous animals. So, um
yeah, you you can you can stagnate easily or just uh just sort of

just fail to make progress, you know,
just kind of holding steady. So, um
yeah, getting out there and interacting
and and making waves,
uh I shouldn't just wholeheartedly
recommend it for everybody, but still um
it is more conducive to change, which
would include change for the better.
And um like like I said, romantic love,
if you find the person that you're just
you just uh
what's the word? Resonate with that
person.
You know, that you're just happier with
that person with than without them, then
um yeah, I mean, it does make sense. And

it's not all bad, obviously, and the
human race would go extinct if uh
people just all became celibate hermits.
So, um
yeah, I mean, it's
anything that you do in a worldly
context is going to have some negativity
involved. You know, like having
children, you you're going to have
attachment and worry and and all this
about your children, which has negative
karma, but then again, negative and
positive tend to balance out. So, you
can follow the
the Buddhist monk, the ancient Indian
Buddhist monk method of avoiding both
positive and negative and just going for

the smooth sailing of of just a flat

calm. Or then you have to accept

positive and negative. But, um

if you

want the positive bad enough that you're

willing to accept an equal amount of

negative, then that's your choice to

make. And uh like I say, um if you find

find the right person and it's uh

you just resonate deeply and there's

like a like a deep connection between

you, then it can be really beautiful and

profound and uh

certainly worth it for a lot of people,

probably even most people.

Because as I say, being being a celibate

hermit um does also have its drawbacks.

Next question, and this is the very last

question

and this one also is from Chaplin.

Is there anything you will miss after

you move from California?

And I've considered this for a few

minutes and the answer as far as I can

tell is nope.

Not at all. I can't think of anything

I'm really going to miss after leaving

California other than maybe a few

friends. Yeah, I suppose that would be

it. There's there's some nice people

that I have known here and I've got a

good friend who lives in Fremont

although he's moving out of out of

California also. So I guess that one

that one wouldn't even really apply.

So

that's it. That's that was the last

question and um

I hope I did a good enough job answering

and uh

I'll be doing more of these like volume

eight will be coming up assuming that

people ask questions.

So if you're curious about anything

that is applicable like Buddhism,

Buddhist philosophy, meditation

uh living in Burma, me personally, that

kind of thing then feel free to leave

leave your questions

in the comments below or

on my subscribe star channel.

Uh the subscribe star channel is open

for anyone who wants to subscribe and it

doesn't necessarily cost anything.

There's like the the free

the free option and uh you can leave you

can leave your questions there also.

Usually I make an announcement um

a few days before I do a video ask like

making last call for for questions.

And so um

yeah, I think that's it and so uh

feel free to ask more questions and uh

uh

be happy.

And that's it.

See you next time. No, actually no, I

won't see you next time cuz I I don't

see any of you guys.

hello and welcome to

edition number eight episode number

eight

volume eight of question and answer

and i am your host panyo bassan

and uh we were having kind of a uh

lull in question asking and then all of

a sudden i put the announcement up on

subscribe star and uh a certain fellow

certain good fellow named dog breath

just unleashed this merciless onslaught

of questions

so it's gonna be a long one again it

looks like and so i better just

uh get to it

let's answer questions so the first one

is from

nardi and he asks the perennial question

what happens after death

kind of uh

question people have been asking since

prehistoric times

and uh the easy answer to that

is what happens after death is probably

pretty similar to

what happened before you were born so

all you got to do is just remember what

happened before you were born

and just maybe give a slightly more

developed

version of that hopefully if you've

lived a good

life and made progress you'll have a

slightly more developed version of that

after you die and if you don't remember

what happened before you're born that's

just too bad for you

um but i think the more orthodox answer

will be given um a little

uh very soon actually because he he

continues on the same

in the same vein so the next question by

nardi is how does

incarnation to the next life happen

and from my own personal experience i

really don't have personal experience

um with regard to what happens in

between lives

or in past lives or in an afterlife

because technically speaking it won't be

me anymore i mean they'll be like

underlying

um like you could call it maybe an

underlying

mental essence or something but

i mean i'll have a a different different

brain

probably will not identify with this

meat puppet anymore so um yeah as far as

us individually is concerned then uh

um to some degree the the atheistic

materialists would be right

and we just stop existing although

um uh yeah anyway i'll just i'll just uh

deal with the uh the orthodox answer

here

and uh so how does incarnation to the

next life happen

going with orthodox theravada buddhism

the very moment after your

mental processes cease in this life

they necessarily have to arise somewhere

else

so um also in terrible buddhism that

would generally occur at the moment of

conception

so um as soon as you

die going with orthodox

orthodox theory orthodox dogma orthodox

scripture then um yeah

it's called rebirth linking

consciousness so as soon as

your mental states cease at the moment

of death

in this life then the very next moment

you would have i mean that consciousness

would have to

um find like some kind of

backup into into another existence

because

there there can't be more than just one

split second

of of a gap so

um yeah in a way it's sort of like

um going with like um oh

isaac newton is just like the law of

conservation of mental energy or

something if you've still got this

imbalance going in this

life like a karmic imbalance hasn't all

worked itself out yet

then just because the uh the container

for that mental imbalance uh

stops working the mental imbalance just

has to continue

until it works itself out sooner or

later so it's just gonna have to appear

somewhere else

and it's an infinitely big universe and

so

um there shouldn't be too much problem i

assume

uh finding the right circumstances for

the

karmic continuum or karmic momentum to

uh

continue unabated until sooner or later

um it gets worked out and we become

enlightened

so yeah it would just be the uh

the karma the stream of karma which is

really all

that that reincarnates or all that that

trans migrates or whatever you want to

call it um some buddhists have an issue

using the word reincarnation which

i i really don't see a problem with that

but um

yeah all that goes from one life to the

next is karma which

which is like the the momentum of your

mental states

and it's generally in a state of

imbalance which is causing it to be

dynamic because it wasn't in a state of

imbalance then um yeah i mean it

wouldn't it wouldn't necessarily have to

continue or anything it would just be

all worked out

so let's see next question from nardi

also on the same

the same theme do we have a sort of

purgatory or limbo to spend some time or

do we go directly from one life to the

other

through our last thought and

like in tibetan buddhism they have like

the bardo which is

an intermediate state or a lot of people

who have

near-death experiences they will

describe

you know first rising up and going

towards the bright light and then they

meet

like a spirit guide who um sort of gives

them a review of their past life

and then they have to make decisions or

maybe they're just told they have to go

back because they're not done yet or

something like that

but in buddhism even if there is like an

intermediate state that would count as

just

uh an existence i mean if there is no in

between state you have to go

from this existence after this existence

ends the very next moment another

existence has to start because there

can't be a real

gap and there are some

philosophical problems with that that i

have discussed elsewhere but we

needn't wade into that particular issue

because

we've got lots of questions to answer

here but um

yeah i mean it could be that you've got

strange karma

or you just got like this one little

thing that needs to get worked out

and um so the the next life might just

be

like a brief spirit existence or maybe

even um just your just take existence as

an embryo that then gets

aborted or or like a miscarriage or

something happens anything like that can

happen

um but even even like the intermediate

like a bardo realm

would technically from the buddhist

point or the theravada buddhist point of

view

would be something like a spirit realm

that just doesn't last for very long

so next question don't you think that by

disrobing you

could delete all your development

delete um

no not really i mean i could be working

off some of the good karma

you know i've been earning merit through

my my monk's life

and it may be that the little minor

heaven realm

of a lovely lady or something could uh

um you know i'd be like paying for that

just how do you say sort of using karmic

money

you know so sort of my part of my my

cash in would be that

or something or just eating eating good

food that kind of thing

sort of like the way heaven is supposed

to work i mean at a much larger scale

you got all this merit um built up

and then you get into the heaven realms

and supposedly you just wallow in

sensuality and

and joy and bliss until it's all used up

and then back down you go into the into

the

human realm or something but um

the question i mean the assumption seems

to be that um after i stop being

a fully ordained biku i'm just going to

stop making any kind of progress

and i don't think that that's going to

be the case it may be a different kind

of progress

or it may be slowed down or something

because being a monk really does

facilitate certain kinds of progress

but i got as far as i could with that it

seems like

and so it's time to make progress along

different lines

if i'm going to continue making progress

and so

yeah i mean i'm i'm going to continue

practicing dhamma

um how well i'll be practicing it

remains to be seen

but um yeah it's not going to delete

all of my development and

i mean people can still make progress

and people can even become enlightened

without being ordained because

or nuns or whatever they're ordained as

so yeah i don't think i'm going to be

deleting

very much other than just the uh the

beku part at the end of my name

i can still be called panyobasa i just

won't be panyobasa beku

all right next question last question

from nardi if you die

at 80 years old in let's say a bad

mental state

don't you think it will vanish all your

30 years trial of staying out of samsara

well i mean if you die in bad mental

states no matter

how old you are then i mean that's going

to have an effect your your very last

mental state

is the most important one of your life

because it determines

your like your trajectory your momentum

going into the next existence which we

can get to a little later there are a

few more questions along these lines

but um yeah it's not going to vanish all

my 30 years trial of staying out of

samsara

and um yeah the the staying out of

samsara

i'm not exactly sure what is meant there

some people just make this assumption

that being a monk is not being in

samsara but

um it it is even like the highest

formless realms you know the most subtle

of all the heaven realms are still

samsara

so long as there's any kind of

individual existence it is samsara

so um yeah if i died in bad mental

states

that would influence my trajectory going

into the next life but it wouldn't

change my karma very much you know

there's like this

um accumulated stream or or

accumulation of karma that um

you know just one bad mental state isn't

going to just prove all of that out of

existence

so yeah let's just hope that uh

when we die we all have relatively good

mental states which is very important

and i'll get back to that

so the next question is from

unseen perspectives

can you recommend an easy way for

english speaking lay people to cultivate

an interest in learning the dhamma

and then in parentheses he says in my

opinion the word of the buddha and those

thick books translated by bhikkhu bodhi

are too cryptic for lay people with a

casual interest in buddhism and short

attention spans

yeah well i mean the the casual attitude

and the short attention span

is a hindrance and it could

effectively prevent some people from

really

being introduced to something that could

help them a lot but really that is

our own doing but um getting back to the

question here

an easy way for english-speaking lay

people to cultivate an interest in

learning the dhamma

i assume for a lot of people just

pointing out the pragmatic benefits like

some people

um maybe like even

in a hospital setting they can be taught
mindfulness techniques to help them cope
with stress
or some kinds of mental illnesses or
just chronic pain
or the fear of death maybe maybe they
have like a
terminal terminal case of something and
there are a lot of hospitals that are
teaching essentially buddhist meditation
or or mindfulness to help them detach
from the pain or detach from the worry
or detach from like the
obsessive compulsive urges that kind of
thing and so
emphasizing just the pragmatic benefits

um to pragmatically people

could be good and i mean just just

coping with stress i think that's

probably the main reason why people even

learn

buddhist meditation nowadays i remember

once i was giving an introductory

instruction to beginning meditators

at a dharma hall and just out of

curiosity i asked the beginning

just the the people there why they

wanted to learn meditation and the most

common answer was just

coping with stress and it does work

and there will be another question or

two along these lines farther down

but that would be one of the main ways

of getting

you know worldly minded lay people

interested in buddhism is just pointing

out the actual

real life benefits of less stress and

greater happiness or contentment um

just even just teaching ethics could

work for some people because that also

is conducive to

serenity and peace of mind and

some people would just be interested in

the philosophy philosophically minded

people

um could really take an interest in that

too or

another way of getting some

english-speaking lay people

to cultivate an interest would be like

young men who are looking for

some way of asserting their masculinity

which it might seem kind of strange

because buddhism is considered to be

kind of uh

um like compassionate and non-violent

and thereby

like stereotypically feminine in certain

respects but the

austerity of it and just the

fearlessness that it teaches

um it is a way

of like tapping into the divine

masculine without having to uh

actually go out and shed blood that kind

of thing

so um for that also i think there is

potential for like young men who are

really trying to

uh uh come to grips with their own

masculinity which is just

um like demonized in in western

civilization now which is just totally

degenerate and sick

um yeah i mean that that would be

another way also

so for different people there would be

different ways but i assume just the

just the pragmatic benefits you can get

you know not just theoretical stuff but

actual

um you know on the ground results

i think that would be the best way of

going about it

so next question is from average dud

alias average dude

who says it would be really great to

list

all the times nirvana is described

especially the ones where it's described

as infinite consciousness

oh and are the 31 planes told

in the sutras too well

um yeah to list all the times nirvana is

described

i'd be sitting here for more than half

an hour just going over it

there are some interesting descriptions

there's one in the udana and

unfortunately i forgot to

have the the reference here to just

blurt it out to you

but um the ones where it's described as

infinite consciousness

there are two main ones one is in diga

11 which is the ke watasuta i think

and then one is in majamenikaya number

49

and they both have the same strange

explanation

which i happen to have right here

consciousness unmanifest infinite

shining

all around here water and earth fire and

wind

gain no foothold here long and short

small and large pleasant and unpleasant

here name and form without remainder

are completely stopped

so that is found in two sutas it's a

very ancient

text and uh in pali it's

like the beginning part of it but

means like unmanifest consciousness

and it's pretty obviously referring to

nibana

and there are similar um

similar text say kind of similar things

like there's another text that refers to

consciousness being luminous or just

shining forth

and that um our unenlightenment is

caused by

um like um extraneous defilements

kind of blocking the shine of the

consciousness

and that's in the same utah i think and

again i don't remember the exact uh

the exact citation but um

yeah that's it wasn't orthodox it's a

really old

description which fell by the wayside

and probably got turned into a formless

janna as kind of a consolation prize

but um uh yeah infinite consciousness

is also how brahman is described in some

of the upanishads

like formless infinite consciousness and

of course god

is described in in much the same terms

in some

theological schools so um

it didn't work very well in theravada

buddhism because the theravada buddhists

just

developed this idea that nibana just

should not be reified it should not be

even called

a thing and try where you try to

describe it as

something because then you've just

dragged it down

into phenomenal existence so it's best

just to leave it completely off the

scale the buddha usually didn't talk

about it much except in negations you

know it's not this it's not that

and even in the the uh the famous quote

where it's you know it's just talking

about no

wind earth fire water you know it's like

none of the elements there's no

light or darkness you know it's just

this kind of paradoxical

unthinkable state

and see with regard to the 31 planes

um if i'm not exactly sure if all

31 of them are specifically mentioned

but most of them are generally in

passing

so you know there's mentions of uh

non-returners going up into the

the divine abodes and um or not the

divine abodes but um

maybe it is the divine abode it's not

the the brahma viharas but it's

like the highest uh realms of

the the non-formless brahmas

they're reserved for non-returners

there's so there's mention of all

of lots of these different realms

although

i don't think there is one sutub that

just systematically lists off all the 31

planes of existence you kind of have to

hunt and search for them unless you just

want to read something that isn't

uh scripture you know just like a um

a review or something like i wrote an

article on the 31 plans of existence

it's on the uh

um nepapancha.org website

the next question is from woke wotan

oh before before i do that i just will

say again that uh

if you want the description of nirvana

as

um infinite consciousness it would be in

the diga 11 which is the ke watasuta or

majima 49 which is the brahma something

effect uh i don't have the book here

yeah i don't have the book so never mind

okay getting back to woke wotan

he says asking for a friend when

entering stores without a face mask

and getting requested to wear one this

friend simply replies with

don't wear them because of medical

reasons

this is a lie because his real reason is

he doesn't want to comply

with and his eyes absurd

useless tyrannical mandate as doing so

is typical herd mentality that actually

hurts society

he knows from experience that telling

the truth about his reason not to wear

one

often only leads to fruitless

discussions and frustration on both ends

plus he risks getting refused entrance

to the store

he wants to maintain good mental states

in a way he feels

not wearing a face mask because of

aforementioned reasons is similar to

claiming

conscientious objection to military

service

but without being open about it because

arguing with

npcs is pointless when playing computer

games one doesn't try to

chat with an in-game npc about the

weather

after receiving a quest either does him

lying influence his karma in any way

um well the short answer to that is yes

because

um if you're lying it's still lying

regardless of your reasons i assume

you know the reasons can mitigate the

lie but it's it's

ultimately still lying so

maybe if you wanted to play it a little

more careful he could think up

some actual medical reasons like he just

doesn't like being

oxygen depleted or something or or

whatever

like with with well i suppose fogging up

his glasses so that he can't see

could uh theoretically be a medical

reason

that he doesn't want to discuss because

when your glasses are fogged up you

could like

bump into something and hurt yourself

but if he doesn't wear glasses then

he might have to go get some but yeah

this is one reason why there are monks

is that if you live a worldly life

it's it's damn near impossible to follow

the five precepts perfectly

and lying is the easiest precept to

break

and just to be polite in a civilized

society

requires you to be a damned liar

sometimes even if it's just white lies

you know you say you're sorry when

you're not sorry and you say i'd like to

but i can't

when actually you can you just don't

want to

and and on and on so um

yeah in his case um it could be

just the lesser of two evils sometimes

you have to choose the lesser of two

evils

so um that might be the case in his case

so he's just uh

taking a small hit you know it's not

like you're gonna burn in hell for

something like that like you're not

gonna burn in hell for swatting mosquito

and um sometimes uh

you just have to uh figure out what is

most suitable you know it's like

are you willing to take a little bit of

a hit for some

some other benefit so

um yeah but the the short answer is that

uh

he is still speaking with the the

intention of deceiving somebody

and uh it is going to be uh

it is going to have karmic effects you

know somebody is probably going to

tell him some little white lie in the

future or something

to balance it out or or whatever but

um you know i i can't really endorse

lying

um like just recently i was advised

that uh all i'd have to do after i'm not

a monk anymore

is just say that i've been unemployed

for

for two years because of the uh the lung

power sicken

pandemic and uh i could i could collect

like 20 000 bucks

in like socialist back pay

but um the whole idea of lying like that

um really does not appeal to me at all

and i would be very reluctant to do

something like that

so anyway next question is from ken

why not innovate and start a tradition

that is compatible western values

um yeah that's that's a good question i

have been thinking about that a lot

part of the thing for me is that i'm an

individualist and i'm not

really kind of uh like a tribal

person and not really

like like even belonging to like a

political party it seems like most

people

are followers so um it doesn't really

matter what their political party does

they just

take the side of that anyway and i could

never really relate to that it's like

well i mean this

this policy i approve of but that one i

don't and so i just kind of make up my

own mind

and and i'm just uh an individualist

by nature so i mean i can i can work out

something that works for me

and share it with other people and maybe

it'll work for them too but

like becoming the leader of a movement

um yeah i'd have to have that greatness

thrust upon me i think because i'm not

gonna be

really seeking it but um

if i find something that works for me

because i am really uh i am going to be

working for some kind of compromise or

uh some kind of innovation that works in

my case

because i'm not just gonna just dive

into the world into the world and start

flipping burgers as a total normie so

i will be looking for something like

that and if it works for me it could

work for other people also and

who knows maybe it'll be popular and

strike traction

and in my case um the obvious

choice would be some kind of

i wouldn't want to call it a reform

movement necessarily but a kind of

compromise movement of theravada

buddhism with the west

without wallowing in the you know the

white elitism of the the wipasana

um you know like the ims style or a

spirit rock style buddhism

um but there's another idea i just was

playing with

excuse me uh i just had lunch a little

while ago

um this other idea is um

i had this idea of like neo-cynicism

you know like the ancient cynics you

know the famous diogenes who lived in

the tub and

it was about as close to buddhist

monasticism

as existed in classical western culture

you know the cynics the

cynic philosophers and in some ways

it was better suited to

the west than than like monastic

theravada because

they weren't required to be celibate

because

the cynics considered like sexual desire

to be just

a natural desire like desire for food or

desire for sleep

and so they really didn't see that as

something

to uh to forbid

and also they were allowed to handle

money although of course they didn't

they didn't have very much of it because

um in their case they tended to be uh

just sort of wandering um mendicants

or something but um i was i was thinking

i was considering it not like i've made

up my mind or anything but uh

just taking like um a synthesis

of some of the best of like

the ancient cynical philosophy and

also buddhism just adding a lot of

buddhism or to the cynicism or adding a

lot of cynicism to the buddha

to the buddhism and uh forming

like this neo-cynical movement and just

just the title i mean i could write a

book sort of like the bronze age mindset

like the the neo-cynic manifesto

something like that

um which might turn off the buddhists

even though it would have a lot of

buddhism in it but we'll just see how it

goes

but that that's uh one of my ideas for

innovation and starting a tradition that

is compatible with western values like

ken here has

asked me about so i'll just uh put it

out there

and uh ken's second question is what is

so wrong with free market capitalism

that i can't just pay a month cash to

teach me something

um i assume maybe that's like a like a

rhetorical question

but um the main it's it's not anything

wrong with free market capitalism it's

more a matter of

restrictions on buddhism or dhamma or

dharma

like monks just aren't allowed to handle

money so that that's uh

makes it foreboding forbidden right

there

but also there's another issue that that

i consider

is that uh dhamma really should be

free of charge that i mean it should

just be free to all beings

everyone should have access to it and so

i really don't like the idea of charging

money for

pure dhamma like if i translated

something from

from poly into english like my atakawaga

translation

i would feel really uncomfortable with

charging money for that

because it is dharma although my own my

own strange philosophical ideas i guess

are fair game so i can monetize those i

suppose

but um um on the other hand people want

to donate people want to support

me or any other dharma teacher then yeah

you

you gather up treasures in heaven for uh

the generosity

um even from the orthodox point of view

so next question is from johnny anand

who is a frequent viewer on bit shoot

and johnny anand asks how does a

buddhist

know if he has hypnotized himself or is

in deep meditation

and what is the difference and that is a

good question because a lot of

meditators just can't tell the

difference in fact a lot of

like burmese meditation instructors and

probably a lot of western meditation

instructors especially like the new agi

ones

just cannot tell the difference they

just hypnotize themselves go into a deep

trance

and think that they're in jhana or some

such

but samadhi is not all some asamati

and so yeah that is a good question so

uh one handy rule of thumb is if you're

meditating and you go into a deep state

so that you're just oblivious to

everything around you you do not hear

the the ticking of the clock you do not

feel the mosquito biting you

you know you don't hear the phone

ringing you don't hear anyone knocking

on the door you're just like completely

oblivious to everything outside your

mind

then in all likelihood you are in a

trance state and

you've just essentially gone into a

hypnotic trance and

um with regard to buddhist meditation

it's you're going to be more awake you

know that's

that's what you're going for in buddhism

you're trying to wake up as much as

possible you know the word buddha

itself means awakened so

um yeah if if it's making you more

oblivious to everything except for maybe

just this

laser pinpoint on some object

then um yeah in all likelihood you are

just going into a trance so

um try to be as aware of

everything even though i mean you're not

really focusing on it and if you're like

in a

really like a deep mystical state you'll

still hear the ticking of the clock but

it's just going to be passing right

through you without any kind of

resistance you're not going to be

focusing your attention on it it'll just

be like an image in a mirror that's just

there so long as it's there and when it

passes away it passes away

but you're not completely oblivious to

it because it's all just part of the

whole

sensorium and you're just aware of that

um all pretty much all the same time

so it's not like you're really ignoring

anything

so that would be uh that would be my

answer to johnny anand

and um next question is from pk

who asked uh a few questions here

do you really consider being poor and

staying poor

of any help of spiritual progress

well for starters i would point out that

two of the

wisest spiritual teachers known

to the west namely the buddha and jesus

of nazareth

both strongly advised voluntary poverty

to anybody

who wants to be enlightened or to follow

a spiritual path

and my experience is that um

yeah voluntary poverty is beneficial

or it can be it's not necessarily

beneficial like even in the buddhist

texts there were

very wealthy donors who made relatively

high

attainments like anata pindika or

there's one

suta where it's talking about how a

person can live in a mansion with a

beautiful wife and eat

excellent food and just surrounded by

luxury

but if he's not attached to that then

and there's no problem whereas there's a

guy living in a hut with an

ugly bad tempered wife and he's just

eating you know beans every day

and if he's attached to that then that's

a problem

so the main reason for for voluntary

poverty is it just

decreases your opportunities for

attachment

although um a lot of people especially

in the west

uh if they're poor they've just been

conditioned to be ashamed of that

and to be upset or dissatisfied

with their their poverty and so it just

causes like a vicious

circle or something but um overall

yeah i mean if the buddha and and jesus

of nazareth both agree

that um if you really want to live a

spiritual life and make

progress and get closer to ultimate

reality or god or whatever

then simplifying your life works

very well that's one of the main things

you should do just live a simple life

and it's easier to live a simple life if

it's just

kind of thrust upon you through your own

poverty than uh

trying to live a simple life when you've

got millions

but um as i say it's it's just kind of a

general trend and there are some rich

people who make

great attainment and of course most poor

people

um they they don't make great attainment

so it's just one i don't know i wouldn't

want to call it a gimmick but it is

kind of a in general it tends to be more

beneficial than harmful to live

in relative poverty and uh

both the disciples the the chief

disciples

like the uh the the morse the most

serious disciples

of the buddha and jesus were told just

don't even

use money at least in one of the gospels

he advised his uh apostles not to uh not

to handle money

so next question is mindfulness helping

you in daily life despite the

disappointment of not achieving the big

bang awakening experiences

many peop many serious practitioners

develop a craving for

yeah mindfulness is uh it's invaluable

really

because if you're not

mindful then you're just going to be

a slave to your your knee jerk habits

like um there's something that causes

irritation let's say

just barking dogs bug you so

if if you're not mindful then you're

just gonna be bugged and you're gonna be

all pissed off and

bitching and moaning about the barking

dog or or just going out and like trying

to shoot it or something

whereas with mindfulness you can detach

from that or just anything like fear or

worry or

anger or anything if you have

mindfulness then you can detach from

that

you observe it as a phenomenon that is

arising not as

you you know instead of i'm afraid where

then you can just like you know freak

out or

wallow in it or something just continue

to stress out go into

some kind of downward spiral then if

you're mindful then you just

see fear as a rising it's not you

because if you are anything you are the

observer and not the thing being

observed

and so you watch the fear arise and

because

you're observing it and kind of

detaching from it and kind of putting it

as a distance you know putting it on the

other side of you to to look at

then it doesn't control you anymore or

at least it doesn't control you nearly

as

much and you are weakening the karmic

momentum that caused it to arise in the

first place because you're not

reinforcing it

you're not feeding it and so it's maybe

a little weaker next time it arises

so that sort of thing i mean no matter

what you're doing

it's it's it's good for you if you're a

lay person it's just as good as if

you're a monk

and as a lay person it will be more

difficult to cultivate deep samadhi

states but the mindfulness

is always there the opportunities for

mindfulness are always there no matter

how busy you are

for example the teacher of sn goethe was

uba

kin in burma and he was like a

government

relatively relatively high up government

bureaucrat who was

lived a very busy worldly life but

um he was still um like a

an adept at mindfulness meditation and

so it doesn't really matter

what you're doing you can do it

mindfully no matter what you're doing

you can you can manage to do it

mindfully

and so no matter how busy or hectic or

worldly

you are you can still practice

mindfulness and just driving your car

or walking or brushing your teeth or

eating is hard because

you tend to want to indulge in the

pleasure of eating the food

but anything that you do can be done

mindfully

regardless of whether you're a monk or a

lay person and it's just as easy for a

lay person

except the the monk is reminded to do

that more often and has

less distractions to kind of lead him

astray but so long as you aren't led

astray then

the distractions themselves are just

more grist for the mill and

you can just be mindful of all of it so

yeah it has been helpful to me and it

continues to be helpful to me

and um also just like let's say you're

you're

in a relationship with another person

and they're in like a really bad mood

and they're being cranky or something

and

one you know maybe sort of like

argumentative

then if you're mindful then you know you

can

you can avoid being sucked into it and

then you can be like this uh

um sort of the bedrock of uh kind of

peacefulness that

that kind of helps to uh ground the

other person and

it avoids the whole thing turning into a

fight or some such

so yeah mindfulness is uh it's just the

panacea that is

i mean is you can't have too much of it

with guard even samadi you can have too

much samadhi

but you can't have too much mindfulness

too much samadhi and you you just

zone out and uh just go into this state

of bliss and you're not really making

progress

but you just cannot have too much

mindfulness and anybody can cultivate it

it just takes the will to cultivate it

so let's see where am i okay next

question

from pk psychokinesis

that's not the question that's pk bad

joke

are you open to experimenting with

mindfulness and concentration

techniques mixing and matching intensity

and quality of

attention to the standard vipassana

noting um

i think my answer that question is i'm

not exactly sure what the question means

mixing and matching intensity and

quality of attention

wow well i mean i am open to

experimenting and a lot of the

meditation techniques i have practiced

over

the course of my career as a meditator

have been just

worked out through trial and error and

just

it worked for me and so i went with it

so long as it was working

so um yeah i mean i have been

open-minded and not

really just locked into you know just

following

verbatim cookbook fashion what the book

says

although i've done that sometimes too

because generally the

the cookbook instructions do have some

validity to them

but still you have to be flexible and uh

use your intuition and your your

inspiration and find what works the best

for you

but uh yeah my the basic answer to that

question is i don't understand it

next question also from pk what's the

value of venerated scriptures and

slogans if they are not

directly easily related to experience

but turn into topics of speculation

and debate well obviously any

any scripture that isn't helping you

to wake up or helping you to be a good

person or a contented

blissful person or a peaceful person um

yeah it's its value would be very

limited

the only value of something like

abhidhamma for example which has almost

no practical value that i have seen

beyond what is contained just in the

basic sutas

is uh it gives you kind of a belief

system that

maybe is like a wholesome belief system

maybe more wholesome

than a previous belief system or some

other mainstream belief system

so um you know that's one of the basic

reasons for religion in general is it

just gives you a belief system

to kind of to use it to navigate your

way through life and then some belief

systems are better than others and

everybody has to have one

until you become completely enlightened

and then even then you're going to

appear to still have one

so um but with regard to the stuff

that's theoretical that you can't really

prove it's just

dogma if you can't verify it through

your own experience

then that's just dogma and

to some degree you have to rely on it i

mean if you want to take somebody's

advice with regard to

what enlightenment is like then you

find someone who you think has a good

likelihood of being enlightened

and listen to what they say but still

you shouldn't

insist upon anything that you can't

really prove which

would pretty much rule out a lot of

christianity and

also a lot of the new social justice

stuff so

yeah just uh if you're going to insist

upon something at least be able to

verify it

see the value of venerated scriptures

and slogans if they are not directly

easily related to experience but turn

into topics of speculation and debate

well speculation can be fun

you know philosophizing in that regard

and uh but i mean debating

something that you don't really know but

you're just

repeating what you've been told that's

that's a stupid way of going into

into a debate so

yeah yeah so you shouldn't you should

try to be as

as dogmatic as little as possible just

uh

try to uh have some experiential support

for for your philosophical beliefs and

if you don't have experiential support

it just sounds like a really elegant

theory or something then you shouldn't

be insisting upon it and

maybe debating somebody would be good

just for exposing the weaknesses of your

own point of view

that would be one of the the best

reasons for debate is just

no point of view that can't stand up to

an all-out attack is

is a point of view worth keeping so you

should expose your own point of view

to the criticisms of others and not just

protect it

or get get angry if somebody's just like

finding fault with your point of view

just

just put it out there and let it get

attacked and

if it just gets torn apart then uh it

was it was not the best point of view to

have

and so you're better off having it torn

apart so you can maybe try something

else

okay next question and we begin the

merciless relentless onslaught of

questions from

dog breath and i'm not complaining at

all

he asks good questions so mr breath

says i recall reading somewhere that

it's possible to self-ordained as a

buddhist monk

is this so well from the theravada point

of view the answer is nope

you have to be ordained um

by at least five monks

um in in the ganges valley it's ten you

have to be ordained by at least ten

monks

they all have to be in good standing and

uh it all has to be done according to

the poly

formulas so um yeah you'd have to go

through an ordination ceremony with

regard to

like some of the mahayana schools i have

no idea

but um yeah with regard to theravada no

you cannot self-ordained

only the buddha did that

so next questions next question please

explain

skandas and in pali that's condas

and how to get rid of them real quick

yeah well the condos the five condas

are what all human beings are composed

of

the five aggregates usually conda is

translated as aggregate um

and and we're all composed of five of

them which is rupakanda which is just

physical matter our body

is rupaconda supposedly and then there's

and i might not get this in even in the

right order but then there's

uh way to nakanda which is feelings

veda nakanda which would include like

emotions and just like physical

sensations that kind of thing

then there's sanya condo which is

perception and that

is just the meaning of of the existence

you know

that you've got objects with with

meaning you know

you're living in a world of different

objects and phenomena

that all have their own meaning even if

it's just this thing that i don't know

what it is still that's

that's your identification of it is that

that thing there that i don't know what

it is

so everything has to to be perceived has

to be uh

it has to be viewed as in something

distinct that uh

has some kind of idea associated with it

then you've got um see sankara kanda

which according to the sutas is mostly

karma

it's it's volition it's it's essentially

will it's like the motive force of your

mind

you know it's like the the vedana and

the sanya the the feeling and the

perception is kind of like the

um like the static aspect whereas

will is like the kinetic aspect so you

kind of in a way you have sort of like

the spatial aspect in the temporal

aspect

of the same phenomena at least according

to my interpretation

and then finally the fifth conduct is

anaconda or consciousness

so you've got form feeling perception

um essentially will and consciousness

and um let's see where's the question

again please explain the condas and how

to get rid of them real quick

well how to get rid of them real quick i

mean yeah

that that generally doesn't happen i

mean you could blow yourself up but even

then

like like i was saying earlier on you

just the very next moment you just take

a rebirth as a new being with your own

new set of five condos

and even even enlightened being like the

buddha himself

after he became enlightened then at

least two external observers

they still had the five condos so it's

not so much

a matter of getting rid of them real

quick or real

slow it's um

mainly just uh um like

attenuating your attachment and

identification with the condas

because even after enlightenment

ultimately nothing

changes which is the great paradox for

me

so yeah i explained the condos i hope

but uh the the getting rid of them real

quick i mean even even the buddha didn't

teach that maybe

an enlightened being could just look

into your spirit and

just see exactly what you need and and

do that and maybe you're close enough to

full enlightenment that you can just say

something and it clicks

and poof you're enlightened but still um

technically speaking at least to

external observers you're still going to

have the the body and

the feelings and the consciousness and

all that

so next question from mr breath did the

buddha give any direct talks or

directions about

sex to either monks or laypeople

well um sort of kind of

but um my my according to my

recall my memory of things that the

buddha said about sex

he's mainly saying don't do it i mean if

you're able to be

celibate then you should be celibate and

if uh

if you're not able to be celibate at the

very least you should keep the five

precepts

and avoid from avoid like sensual

misconduct

which generally means you settle down

with a nice

person of the presumably of the opposite

gender

who loves you and you are faithful to

that person and you love each other and

and um yeah i mean that is still

relatively wholesome

you know you're just at least you're

still keeping five precepts

but um with regard to monks especially i

mean obviously monks are supposed to be

celibate so the buddha would not be uh

yeah i mean he just told he advised the

monks to just avoid women as much as

possible don't

don't even look at them i remember uh

there's one suto where ananda who always

had kind of a soft spot in his heart for

women

asked the buddha you know what what to

do about women and he just says don't

don't look at them don't see them

and then ananda's like well what i mean

what if they're like

um let's see what was it what if they

just stand right in front of you

and they're they're like talking to you

and everything

and i i'm already misremembering this

but i mean ultimately he just gets to

just be

very careful be very mindful so

um yeah i mean in terrible buddhism

especially

you're not going to find any sex manuals

or you know there's there's no tantric

stuff

taught so

um yeah mainly the the instructions or

talks about

sex the directions about sex is

if you're able to be celibate it's best

to be celibate

but if you're not able to be celibate or

for whatever reason you have

you have commitments or something then

uh yeah just

just refrain from sensual misconduct

and uh you know don't be indulging in uh

promiscuous wantonness with

with prostitutes or so forth and that

kind of thing

so yeah yeah it's uh terabyte of

buddhism is very nonsensual

kind of approach which uh can

run head first into western culture and

crash so next question from

dog breath why did buddhism die out in

india

that's a good question and there's

there's like two aspects to it first of

all

um it started becoming kind of decadent

you know it was becoming more and more

just the mahaya it was developing into

mahayana

which took over most of india i'm pretty

sure

and um when india was predominantly

buddhist even

and um it was just becoming really weird

and esoteric there's all these you know

a lot of the tibetan stuff originated in

india and it was just getting really

weird and esoteric and just

deeply philosophical so that most lay

people couldn't really relate to it much

anymore

and the main centers of this new kind of

buddhism that was developing in india

it was centered in buddhist universities

so those were like the like the

like the intellectual heart of this new

kind of buddhism

and then what really finished it off of

course was the

the invasion of the muslims into india

who

essentially just exterminated the

buddhists there

and the buddhists were more committedly

non-violent than the hindus the hindus

at least had some

like military heroes like like krishna

for example

who they sort of set an example that you

can be a good hindu and still fight you

know the whole bhagavad gita is on that

theme

at least at the the basic level

you know it could be interpreted more

spiritually but uh

you know it's essentially krishna

telling arjuna that

it's better for him to fight than not to

fight so the hindus had that the

buddhists didn't

and the the universities just got wiped

out and sacked

which kind of destroyed the the

intellectual centers

and the people were already kind of

drifting back towards hinduism to some

degree because the buddhism was becoming

just too esoteric and

intellectual and everything and um yeah

what

just finished it off was uh the muslim

invasion

and just the it was essentially genocide

and uh the buddhists who didn't just uh

convert

or or die uh left

as refugees a lot of them went to to

burma a lot of them went to tibet which

was one of the

the reasons why tibet became

predominantly buddhist

and um fortunately the muslims didn't

have a navy so they couldn't get to the

island of

sri lanka or ceylon

and so through good karma i suppose

theravada wasn't wiped out when most of

the other schools were wiped out in

india

so let's see next question how close to

early or original buddhism is taravana

well of the the schools that exist today

it is all in all all things considered

it is by far the closest

which is um the main reason why i

i became a terabyte of buddhist because

i wanted to get as close to the original

buddhism as i could

you know i didn't want to be following

some mutation that

that arose a thousand years later so

of the ones that exist today then

theravada is as close as we get

um but there are differences like

um only about half of the topitica would

be called korra texts

so only about half of the dapitica goes

back to before the schism started

like they're they're even before

mahayana arose there were supposedly

like 30 different schools of so-called

hinayana

you know lesser vehicle the the earlier

kind of buddhism before the the

bodhisattva concept and all that

arose um the way it did in mahayana

so um let's see where was i going with

that

oh yeah well some of the texts they had

all

in common which indicated that those

texts uh predated the schisms and then

some of the

the texts are are very different from

each other

like with regard to abhidhamma in terra

vada only

teravata had that version of abhidhamma

which indicates that

that version of abhidhamma really did

not become

scripture or canonical until after the

schism started which indicates that the

buddha didn't originally teach it

so you can you can use certain kinds of

detective work

to weed out some of the later

developments

and there's a lot of uh scholarship

um expended on that especially in the

west because the burmese are more

fundamentalist they want to believe that

the buddha taught all of it

so um but but some western scholarship

does

investigate um

see yeah it does investigate like what

the original buddhism was likely to be

like and if you really want to know

what the original buddhism was like or

they're very very ancient read the

atakawaga of the sutonipata

that's i mean that's the biggest chunk

of really archaic

buddhism still in existence as far as i

can tell

so that would give you a good a good

taste of what the original

buddhism was like just read the

atakawaga and

there are also some other sutas in the

uh the sutoni pata

the sutini pata has some later sutas in

it but it has a lot of

really really ancient ones so that would

be a good way to find out

let's see next question from dog breath

of the early sex which was the closest

um i have read that there were a few

that were very conservative and again

just through good karma

i think teravata was one of the closest

ones one of the least

progressive schools of buddhism it was

one of the most conservative schools of

buddhism

there was another supposedly hinayana

school that actually was like a reform

movement a reform movement

though it wasn't it wasn't really super

ancient but it was trying to get back to

the ancient

roots and it was called celtrontica

which

um means it's just it's just the sutras

they avoided any kind of of like

abhidhamma kind of a stuff

you know any kind of superfluous or like

extraneous development of philosophical

concepts

they didn't have much use for that they

just stuck with the old suitors

so the celtrontica school also would

come close

like uh like teravata in some ways it

would come closer because it wouldn't

have all the abidama stuff and probably

not nearly so much of a commentarial

tradition because

modern theravada

in a way it's more buddhism than

buddhism because

the the commentaries are the final word

on the meanings of the pseudos

so if the buddha says red but then the

commentary says

well when he said red what he really

meant was blue then

the orthodox position like for for the

very orthodox burmese buddhist is blue

because

when the buddha said red what he really

meant was blue and there there is some

of that kind of stuff

and i just i call that buddhism so um

yeah so uh i guess of the ones that i

know of

theravada and the the extinct celtronica

school came about as close

so if you want to get closer than

taravada first you just uh

dispense with the uh the the texts that

are

after the core and and like i say maybe

you study

really ancient stuff like in the soutini

ponta

so see next question from dog breath

please explain

dependent origination that's that's a

that's a dirty question that's just

that's not playing fair because even the

buddha couldn't explain it

like according to the um the ancient

tradition

after the buddha became enlightened he

almost just became like

a pacheco buddha he was just going to

not teach dhamma he was just going to be

a hermit and mind his own business

because he figured nobody would

understand

dependent coal rising or dependent

origination as

mr bress calls it padicha samupada

but um of the explanations of dependent

origination or

dependent core rising possibly the best

explanation i have come across

is not terribadan is by nagarjuna like

the mullah majamaka karaka if you really

want to understand dependent origination

um it would be worth your while to study

that i think

and um in a way he he gives lip service

to the 12

nidano theory you know according to

orthodox theravada there's the 12 new

donald theory and i'm not going to go

into it but it's just

this causes that and that causes this

and this causes that and that's

like the whole cycle of samsara is based

on on this kind of thing but um

i think that's a later development the

the 12 knee dyno theory

is probably a later development and that

was not the original meaning of

dependent core rising but dependent

colorizing is so hard

to for some people to understand that it

just got turned into this formula that

just got memorized by rote and then

you've got

monks think that they understand it

because they've just memorized the 12

links

but um like nagarjuna says the whole

essence of dependent core rising is that

nothing has an individual self-existence

everything exists only in relation

to the conditioning of the context of

everything around it

so nothing exists as an individual

entity it's just a conditional

kind of um like a virtual existence

and so nagarjuna even went so far as to

say that dependent core origination

is the same as emptiness because

everything is empty

of an individual essence everything

every individual thing or every

phenomenon that seems to exist

only is there because of just the

the context of everything around it

that you know it has all these causes

that exist outside of itself

and so it really does not have this

inherent self-existence and that

includes us personally that's

that's one uh relatively wise definition

of no self explaining no self that

nothing including us has an individual

self essence

that we seem to exist conditionally

because of all the conditions that are

causing us to seem to exist

and that's as far as it goes so

rather than spend two hours just

wallowing independent core origination

which even the buddha couldn't really

explain effectively because still almost

nobody understands it even though it's

considered to be one of the most

important

fundamental teachings of buddhism i'll

just

move on to mr breast next question here

which is as follows

i hit a wall with my meditation practice

but have found

death meditation very helpful which

meditation or meditations would you

recommend

from the sutas for a beginner or

an experienced meditator and i assume he

is

asking which meditation or meditations

on

death i would recommend and

the main one for monks in the buddhist

time was you go to a charnel field which

is just like a cemetery for the poorest

of the poor where the corpses are just

flung out on the ground

to decompose and be eaten by animals

and yeah that's not much of an option

anymore they don't have those

in the west so um

it seems to me your best the best kind

of meditation on death

is just to expose yourself to death just

to uh

um somehow find if not

images of dead people um just like

actual corpses go to

uh probably like funerals aren't the

best because in a in the west

you know like the dead person is just

made up you know they're wearing makeup

and got their best clothes on and they

look like they're asleep and everything

but um just just reminding yourself

every day that you're going to die i

mean that that's

that's a pretty strong it's like a

powerful

um way of kind of kicking yourself in

the ass

in a in a wholesome dharmic sort of way

it is one of considered to be one of the

great protectors is just

recollecting that you are indeed going

to die but

um i mean you can you can like have

like skeletons and stuff around you can

get like a human skull or a fake human

skull

but i mean after you've seen it 50 times

it's just like a picture on the wall and

you don't notice it anymore

so whatever it is you're gonna have to

keep it fresh

in order for it to continue having the

effect

and um yeah if you don't have any good

corpses to

contemplate then uh yeah you might uh be

looking

in like gruesome areas of the internet

or something like that

um if that's really your thing but just

reminding yourself that you are going to

die

is uh i mean that in itself is a

pretty potent contemplation

next question is it possible to find

buddhism anywhere on the planet that

resembles what the buddha taught

out in the forests of a theravada

buddhist country like

like burma or thailand or sri lanka

you may find very serious monks who are

really

trying to follow the original spirit of

the sutas

and yeah they are they do exist

it's not going to be mainstream and

i don't know if you could find it in the

west just because the culture is so

radically different in the west

so if you want something that comes as

close to what the buddha taught

you'll have to go to a culture that is

relatively close

to the culture of ancient india in the

buddhist time like the ganges valley

so sri lanka or burma or or thailand

just out in the

out in the rural areas the small

villages in the forests

you may there are places where there are

serious monks who are really

trying to do their best to to really

follow what the buddha taught

i was doing that for quite a while and

i'm sure i'm not the only one

next question do you believe buddhism in

its original form

or its traditional terra vada form has

any place in the west

or do you believe it is destined to be

watered down so as to be

unrecognizable

um well the outward form of it

just doesn't fit the west you know

the the whole ancient indian part of it

um the cultural part

um and a lot of the beliefs just like

the cosmology that sort of thing

yeah it's it's really not going to it's

not going to fit

um it's not going to fit the west very

well because

science is more reliable even even

being politicized and taken over by the

cultural marxists and universities and

all that

it's still more reliable than the

buddhist cosmology the flat earth

floating on water with the 10 million

mile high mountain in the center and

that sort of thing

so um the best we can do is try to get

just the the essence of it

you know which is really just awakening

just i mean the awakening is is always

on tap you know

we're we're always completely immersed

in ultimate reality it's it's

it's not even a tenth of an inch away

from us so

um anything that helps us to wake up i

mean you can call that

dharma and it's not necessary for it to

just adhere to an ancient indian way of

going about it because

the ancient indian way was adapted to

ancient india and were not in

ancient india so

i am sure there would be forms of

buddhism or forms of any kind of

dharma that would be

better than orthodox tiravada

simply just simply due to the outward

form of the orthodox tiravata which was

adapted to fit

ancient india instead of the modern west

so yeah exactly what form that will take

remains to be seen you've got people

like eckhart tolle

who are teaching a kind of amorphous

sort of dharma with with

almost no emphasis on rules of

discipline or

or or morality even

and for a lot of people that may work

best different people need different

techniques or different approaches and

it's

better to have a variety of

of different ways of going about

cultivating wisdom or waking up because

one size does not fit all

um some some basic um

basic principles may apply to everybody

but

um yeah different people follow

different routes and there's just more

variety

in in the modern west we're more

individualistic

so like in a place like rural burma on

the villages

pretty much everybody thinks pretty much

the same you know they all

share pretty much the same world view

and

um so there's a lot less divorce and

that sort of thing

out out in places really like

traditionalist culture is simply because

there's less uh irreconcilable

differences because

you know pretty much everybody shares

the same kind of attitudes with regard

to

a lot of stuff whereas in the west we're

more

individualistic and more

sort of alienated or atomized or

something like that

so um yeah it's

you're going to need more of a flexible

and

variegated approach to

to waking up and different people will

just have different uh

different things that work for them more

so than in the buddhist time or

in even like a modern

southeast asia so let's see

let's see do you believe buddhism's

original form

okay so yeah the best most important

parts just the fundamental essence of it

yeah that applies everywhere just it's

just universal

but um you know just like desire is the

cause of suffering that kind of thing i

mean you can't just throw that out

but um especially the outward form of it

like the

the actual worldly appearance of it is

going to have to be

different to some degree and uh yeah

getting rid of the

the brown robes and that kind of thing

would uh would make sense

and so the last question by mr brass

which is a joke question because he's a

wise guy

if you decide to reordain do you get

your trailer back or do you have to wait

another 20 years for one

um well i'm i'm not going to reordain

i'm

i'm pretty sure i'm pretty certain of

that but

um yeah i don't know i probably wouldn't

if i was reordained i wouldn't i

wouldn't

come back to uh here even though this

pavilion is very nice

the statues are nice uh

so yeah i wouldn't i wouldn't get the

trailer back

because i don't even want the trailer

okay next question

is from airmid i don't know if

i pronounced that right airmid

asks can you talk about death and dying

the mind

states best associated with this time

what conditions the next rebirth and

have we some control

impact on our next rebirth at the time

of death

if you can think of relevant sutas to

read that would be helpful

thanks okay well the relevant suit is i

won't i won't read now because

i didn't even bring the book i forgot to

bring the book that i was going to read

for a different reason

um but uh yeah we've talked about death

and dying a little bit already

the mind states best associated with

this time would be the wisest

possible states you can have because

like i said a little

a little earlier um the most important

moment of your life from the buddhist

point of view and probably from the

hindu point of view also is your last

conscious moment because that is what

determines what direction you're facing

what direction you are headed on going

into your next existence

so that's why for example when mahatma

gandhi got shot

he said hey ram you know that was like

the last utterance that he made before

he died

and it wasn't like in the in the movie

with ben kingsley where it's oh god

they got me no it was i mean he was

saying hey rahm he was he wanted his

mind

on god he wanted his mind directed

towards

god at the moment of death because

that would be most helpful

um to him to his spirit after death

so from the theravada buddhist point of

view

if a person is dying then

certainly they should be reflecting upon

good things like uh a common bit of

advice is if someone is dying

then the monk or whoever is sitting by

their bed with them

would urge them to remember like one of

the best things they've ever done

you know like the most meritorious deeds

they've ever done

so that when they're dying their mind is

on this really wholesome

good thing and they feel good when they

die

because um if if you've got like a

positive

sort of a light mental state when you

die you're going to be heading in a more

positive

light direction whereas if you're all

like freaked out and

or something like that when you die then

you're more likely

to wind up going in a dark direction

but let's say for example you've got a

saintly person

he's lived a very good life and then

right at the very end like he gets

tortured to death or something

and so um even though he's lived a

really good life

he's like in a really bad mental state

at the moment of death

so that can cause him to go in a

downwards direction

but um still all that good karma is

there so that the downwards direction

will be very much mitigated and it

probably won't last very long and then

and then he'll go back

up again or whatever the metaphor is

so um yeah so the best advice

when you die try to be as calm and

as either positive or neutral as

possible just try to be as awake and

conscious as possible so don't uh

you know don't get stinking drunk and

crash your car into a telephone

pole something like that um try to be uh

i mean if you can't be in a positive

mental state maybe just being

unconscious it would be best

i'm not sure about that one i'm not sure

how that would work

but um

yeah that that's essentially it is uh

your last mental state you should

be living your life preparing for that

so next question is from chaplin what

are you most looking forward to in meals

after not being allowed to feed yourself

for 30 years

being subjected to mostly asian curries

and jungle gloop with

insects yes i have eaten insects

how will you dine and what are you most

wanting to eat or cook yourself

how will i dine hmm

yeah i gotta i gotta try to avoid making

the uh

the obvious kind of uh sensual sort of

remarks here

but um i will be eating lots more ice

cream

than i have been eating over the past 30

years that's for sure

and uh yeah more bread and cheese

i'll be eating oatmeal i think a lot

organic oatmeal

with butter and honey and maybe some

dried currants or something stirred into

it

but um yeah food is really not

not like a major attachment for me so

i'll probably still be eating pretty

spartan

aside from the the ice cream and the

occasional apple fritter

next question from chaplin what are your

teaching content creation and dharma

plans a few months down the road after

you get settled in south carolina

well i'll still be uh writing the blog

and doing doing this kind of stuff so

long as i still uh

i'm getting questions i'll still be

answering them and

uh maybe doing a few other kinds of uh

of videos and uh if i

if i'm not too busy working for a living

then

i may actually write a book or two like

there was that the neocynic manifesto

or uh just a kind of spiritual

autobiography i assume would be

interesting

considering that i have lived kind of a

strange life

like 13 14 years just uh meditating in

caves um

see and uh yeah if i'm if i'm actually

uh

like handling money and able to move

around without

uh the handicap of not handling money

then

yeah theoretically there could even be

like retreats or something

and i'll be able to meet with people

more easily

that kind of thing so we'll just have to

see how it goes but the uh

the content creation and uh yeah that's

that's not going to change a whole lot

i hope dharma plans yeah

well best best not to have too many

plans to regard you practicing dhamma

should be like spontaneous like dancing

or something

but uh i am going to uh

have uh intimate interaction with

another human as part of my dharma

and next question what can we as

supporters do to help you through your

big transition

well

yeah i i don't want to be too cheesy i

don't want to be like dr

steve turley just uh

just shamelessly uh shamelessly hyping

myself and

asking for donations and that kind of

thing it's it's always very cringy for

me

but um yeah i essentially just uh

getting enough money to to feed myself

and pay the rent

would be uh the best the best kind of

support i could get at first plus

i mean the moral support is always is

always appreciated and

those of you who are already supporting

or are also much appreciated

but um yeah i mean that's that's really

um as much as i hate to say it then the

best kind of support

that i could receive making the big

transition and essentially starting from

scratch would be uh

just moral support and uh maybe a few

bucks after i'm allowed to start

really handling it okay

next question is from zane and we're

almost

yeah we're almost done okay zayn is the

last questioner

and uh his first question is

it seems to me your focus on following

the rules

of the closest to original buddhist

practice you've been able to find

has been primary and your focus on

following the rules of

vineya has been the primary

self-identity as being a monk

how now will you your definition of

being a buddhist

change or remain the same upon disrobing

well i mean i didn't really identify

most was following the rules although

being a monk really is a matter of

vineya

because i mean the monk is ordained

through vineya and uh he's pretty much

i mean a monk is essentially defined

technically

has in in accordance with the vineyard

even if he drops out it's in accordance

with vinnia

so i mean that was just sort of a

technicality i wasn't really identifying

with that primarily

although i was trying to follow the

rules strictly just as a matter of

like conscience and uh just trying to be

as straight of a monk as i could manage

but um for for a buddhist in general or

a theravada buddhist

traditionally the definition is anybody

who

takes the three three refuges and the

five precepts

you know you take the the refuge in the

buddha dhamma and sangha and then you

keep the five precepts of

no killing no stealing no wrong speech

no sensual misconduct

and i've already got that in the wrong

order and no

no wine ill or intoxicants which cause

cloudedness of mind

so i mean just believing that buddhism

is is a good and wise

system and that you're trying to live in

accordance with that would probably be

good enough

that you could call yourself a buddhist

um if you believe

uh you know some of the fundamentals you

know like karma and

um you know the four noble truths and

that sort of thing

then uh yeah that would be helpful and

um

what's good to me i'm just kind of

amorphous you know

i'm like a liminal being and i um

defining myself kind of locks me down

so i'm just going to do the best i can

and try to be spontaneous

and try to cultivate wisdom still and

try to be as

open to this ultimate reality or

ultimate truth as i can manage

and uh yeah so my definition of being a

buddhist for me

isn't going to change that much because

i really am not working with the

definition of

of a buddhist for myself anyway or even

really like as a human being or anything

so yeah it's when you define something

you kind of lock it down and i'd rather

not be locked down very much so

um yeah although it's true i will it

will be like no rules

five precepts still i suppose but even

that i mean uh

i'll probably break some of the five

precepts sometimes

might uh have less compunction about

swatting mosquitoes for example

if they're biting me not like i'll go

out hunting mosquitoes but i do have the

right to strike out in self-defense

and who knows i might even share a

bottle of wine with my sweetheart

sometimes

you never know so next question

no doubt you'll follow the pancha sila

which she has in parentheses here

shravakayana precept

spoken like a true mahayanist but how

much more leeway will the new situation

provide you

uh well yeah that's pretty much it just

uh the

the five precepts as uh um

sort of like the uh the template for for

proper behavior and

that would be it other than just uh you

know always

trying to be as awake and mindful as

possible

and uh you know never just giving up and

um

you know even if your back is turned on

dharma i mean

you can still feel it back there you

know you know that your back is turned

on dharma

that's still a kind of mindfulness even

when you're living in the world

is um you know even when you just don't

want to think about it you

deep down you know that you don't want

to think about it and it's still

there so yeah i think i reached that

point long ago i don't think i could

ever just

completely go back to um just

being completely blue pilled in the

matrix again

so last question what will set your

parameters for your new self-definition

as a buddhist and yeah i think i pretty

much already answered that i'm going to

avoid self-definition as much as

possible although

i do think that buddhism is

the best philosophy of life that i've

come across

and i do believe that the buddha was in

all likelihood i can't prove it

but in all likelihood an enlightened

being

and uh and i will still be uh

kind of uh uh what's the word

striving in my own way even though i

won't be striving

in a monastic way um i'll still be

you know wanting to be as awake as i can

manage and wanting to cultivate wisdom

and to understand reality and know the

truth

and and if possible help others

in the same in the same endeavor

so yeah self-definition is uh

self-limitation

so probably better off if you don't

define yourself very much either

and um that's it that's that's the last

question

so i hope i didn't uh bungle this too

badly

and uh i hope everyone at least uh got

close to having their questions answered

and if you have more questions then we

can do number nine

and i can still answer these um you know

even after i'm not wearing this brown

toga anymore and not sitting out in the

nice pavilion with the tweety birds

although people might think that my

ability to answer questions will

suddenly

collapse or something if i if i come on

wearing a shirt

and with maybe even a hair longer than a

quarter of an inch

so um yeah if you if you have questions

feel free to leave them down below in

the comments

or when i do make the announcement on

subscribe star if you have access to

that

then you can leave your comments there

too and be happy

and have a nice day and uh

maybe i'll see you no i keep saying i'm

gonna see you next time and actually i

don't see any of you guys

because i'm just looking into a camera

got it gotta tell the truth

i'm not gonna see you next time

so goodbye

all right hello and welcome to

question and answer number nine

i am your host panyo basa

or david reynolds whichever you prefer

and i am no longer ponyo bossa mahatera

or panyo basubiku or

even panyobazo salmonera is just plain

old panyobasa

and so far so good and i'm going to

drink

nope it's not wine it's some kind of

organic berry juice

but we'll get to wine later on in the

questions

but i just wanted to say that um a lot

of the people who have been kind of

down on being a lay person really just

take for granted just the the blessings

and miracles that surround them for

example

i can just walk right into that kitchen

over there

and just open the refrigerator door and

just

have anything i want whenever i want it

which is just so bizarre

it's just i'm still not completely used

to it yeah

but we can get to that later that's that

could be worthy of an entire video

of me just um bitching at you guys for

uh

not fully appreciating the blessings and

miracles that surround you at all times

but uh first i guess i should answer

questions because that is

technically the reason why we are here

so first question is from wendell

and i'm not fully sure that i understand

this question

do you believe you retain memory after

the death

in your brain actually says if your

brain which uh

is not good english so i'll ask it again

here

do you believe you retain memory after

death in your brain

i do i think of it like a capacitor

well um i assume

wendell is asking if i've got

memories in this brain of

lives that i had when i had a different

brain

and i don't think that's necessarily the

case

because as i just said it's

it's a different brain than i had in a

past life

that is if if he's really asking the

question if that's the question he's

asking

um you could interpret it to mean

um do i have memory

after death that's still stored in

my dead brain and um

yeah maybe that's maybe that's what the

question means in which case i think

it's possible

yeah i don't think it's necessarily like

um

oh there's some kind of old-fashioned

computers that if they got unplugged all

the memory would just disappear sort of

like uh some calculators too

so in that case um i'm not sure i don't

know

neurophysiology well enough and with

regard to

memory of past lives in in the brain

that's alive

now um i don't think that's necessarily

the case either because

i don't think that the brain creates

consciousness

the brain is sort of like a computer

that

um takes electricity in the case of the

computer

and complexifies it and organizes it and

utilizes it but it's not

creating consciousness it's just

utilizing consciousness

manipulating it so

getting back to this question though um

yeah i'm sorry wendell

i don't fully understand the question um

do you believe you retain memory after

death

in if your brain okay

yeah maybe maybe you're gonna have to

ask it again

and uh please excuse the shirtlessness

but i am in south carolina and it's hot

and i'm thermo-regulating again i've

already set the president

as a monk even in california where i did

a

shirtless or topless question and answer

video

and again this is not wine next

question from nardi

what do you mean by being mindful and

how do you do that

i tried this for a long time in the past

and it resulted in a bad meditation

where i couldn't do anything good while

being awake

well that's that's a good question what

do you mean by being mindful and how do

you do that

um mindfulness

oh let's see i think the best

the best definition of of mindfulness or

city the poly word is sati

sati and i think a better translation

than mindfulness would just be like

attention

like in burmese the word city not only

means mindfulness but it's also on

warning signs you know like

like attention so um

really that's that's what it is it's

paying close attention

and um there are kinds of mindfulness

like

mindfulness of the qualities of the

buddha or something like that

mindfulness of death

mindfulness of the fact that we're all

going to die where you're not

like right here in the present moment

but as a general rule being mindful

usually as as a meditation technique

especially a deep meditation technique

it's referring to being in the present

moment

and not spending a lot of your mental

effort

interpreting what you're experiencing

but just experiencing it

um just in the present moment as just

wide open

and um just experiencing it fully

because if you're interpreting it then

you're paying

some of your attention to the

interpretation and to some degree you're

ignoring what you're being mindful of

like you see a dandelion in your front

yard

for example and a little kid who's more

mindful than an adult

who hasn't cluttered up his mind with

all these interpretations and labels and

all that

um the little kid will see the dandelion

you know in its full splendor you know

you'll see it as a pretty flower still

you know the bright greens and then the

yellow and everything whereas

when you get older you know you go out

and you just

you just glance at it enough that

the interpretation just springs into

mind as you know damn dandelion

weed and then you just stop paying

attention to it you know it's like as

soon as you see it enough

for the label to register the identity

as soon as it means something

and you don't consider it to be

important then that's it you just

you pay out just this little glimmer of

attention to it and then you just go off

in your mind with regard to the

interpretations and everything

so being mindful is

not spinning off into the

interpretations of things but just being

right there

in the present moment and um doing as

little thinking about it as possible

so the way you do it um

is first you start with the simple

things you know like breathing for

example

and uh there have been times like i've

been walking back and forth

talking with somebody just walking back

and forth out in front of their house

you know for exercise or whatever and

having a conversation

where i was being mindful of like the

movement of my mouth

and like the vibration in my throat you

know these these physical phenomena they

were going along with talking

and for some reason i wasn't so much in

the

the habit or the practice of being

mindful

that just the the talking the

conversation was just taking care of

itself

it was just nature taking its course

whereas my mindfulness

was really concentrated on

excuse me just you know like i say

just the physical phenomena of talking

and the the muscles in my mouth

moving and all that kind of thing so it

is possible but you have to start off

with simple stuff

before you get to the the more

complicated stuff

so it's like driving a car or playing a

musical instrument you have to start off

with the the scales

uh you know b b flat scale or whatever

and then um the better you get at it the

more complicated you can get and then
you can you can do all kinds of things
or driving a car you just start off with
the really simple stuff and then you
don't try the parallel parking or
going on the freeway until you've gotten
a certain amount of competence going
so mindfulness is the same way um
i say that mindfulness is attention just
paying
careful attention to something and um
tom poulos seattle who was the founder
of the tradition in which i was ordained
um he said that sadiq which is usually
translated as mindfulness is
which in burmese means knowledge so

according to him

uh mindfulness is just you know

knowledge is

awareness essentially so the more aware

you are especially if you're aware of

what's happening

now you know be here now then um

then you're being mindful let's see

next nardi says how do you become

mindful in what you are doing without

falling

in a meditation mode that blocks you

from being functional during the day

um yeah yeah i kind of already touched

on that one where

um you start off with just simple

mindfulness of breathing or

if you're walking being mindful of the

movements of your legs and

the pressure of the floor against your

feet that kind of thing maybe the oily

sensation in your knees

which is what i would be mindful of

sometimes

and when you get that down then you can

be

mindful of more and more complicated

phenomena

so yeah that would be the way to do it

you have to start off simple and then

you get more complicated after that but

if you're going for more and more

simplicity then you're kind of going

the samatar out but if you're just

trying to be as mindful as attentive and

aware

of what's happening now no matter how

complicated it is

that's more of that we pass in our route

or the mindfulness route

and we're going to we've got a question

a little farther

a little farther down on the list here

um

discussing that so i'll just keep going

next question is from follower number

three six two e zero b

venerable salmonera a question for you

although technically i'm not even a

salmonera now

uh venerable well lay person

venerable nobody is offending

someone a violation of wrong speech

if one makes a joke or a criticism and

another becomes offended does this

entail comic demerit karmic

did the buddha ever deal with difficult

oversensitive people

i seem to have a habit of testing people

with inflated

egos challenging them and trying to

deflate their grandeur

okay that's that's a good question also

it's a relatively easy one because i

have

discussed this uh in blog posts and so

forth

um in buddhism

what you do is good or bad skillful or

unskillful wholesome or unwholesome

depends

entirely on your volition your chidana

so it doesn't matter whether you offend

somebody or not

so long as um it matters more if you

have the intention of offending somebody

so it's worse to want to offend somebody

and fail

than it is to accidentally offend

somebody without the intention of

offending anybody

so you can say whatever you want to say

so long as you do not have the

deliberate

intention of being hurtful and so long

as you're not trying to deceive anybody

as long as you really think you're

telling the truth

then you're doing fine and that's that's

one thing that

that left wing western buddhism has

completely lost they've just

thrown that aspect of dhamma out the

window

where um leftism in general

in the west is so intent on blaming

somebody else

for um you know our unhappiness or our

dissatisfaction or our successes and

failures and so forth

so um the buddha himself did offend

people sometimes

like the the famous case of

um one time the buddha was i mean

according to the legend

right the buddha was sitting in a park

in meditation probably and he was a

royal prince according to the legend and

was very majestic and handsome and tall

and there was this brahmana

who had this beautiful daughter and he

never

found a man that was good enough for

this this

daughter this princess among women until

he saw the buddha sitting in the park

that day and he thought ah this man is

good enough for my daughter

so he brings the daughter to him and

pretty much just offers it to him

and the buddha according to the legend

says what is this

full of urine and dung i would not want

to touch it even with my foot

which um i mean he didn't even call her

her he called her it and yeah that's

that's uh definitely would qualify as uh

what does it say here

yeah he he definitely offended the girl

and it has such shock value for the

parents

that the parents became arias they

became like sold upon us as a result

but um the girl just hated the buddha's

guts for the rest of her life because

she was

uh grossly insulted by him and

it's understandable and i'm sure he's i

mean he has

the buddha spoke insultingly you know

according to the the texts

more than once that's that's the the

case that really stands out which is uh

a lulu in my opinion so i mean

you can't really say what the buddha's

motives were so you can't really say

that he

he wasn't making karma anymore anyway

because he was an enlightened being

so um he didn't do anything wrong from

the point of view of buddhist ethics

because he didn't have any negative

unskillful volition because an

enlightened being

almost by definition is not creating

karma

so he wouldn't have ordinary volition

anyway

so yeah the answer to the question is um

so long as you're telling the truth

and uh you think something ought to be

said

then even if you know it's going to hurt

somebody's feelings

so long as that is not your intention so

like so long as that is not

why you were saying it then um

yeah you're not doing anything wrong

from the point of view of genuine

buddhism

you can't really speak for the uh the

pseudo-buddhism

that is masquerading as dharma in the

west

so next question is from alex

what possible elements of lay life or

modern culture do you intend to accept

or deny

for example listening to music

television

different styles of clothing eating out

okay well let's see i don't really

i mean everyone has their preferences

right so it's not going to be

so much me accepting or rejecting

something

because it's too secular or anything

like that

i think it's just i've always had things

that i like and things that i don't like

for example listening to music i've

listened to that even as a monk so

and i'm just playing it in my head a lot

um just for years and years

just living in caves in burma i'd still

i remember one time

i woke up on the concrete floor of this

cave with

four sticks by led zeppelin just

pounding away already it was like

i had to have been playing since before

i woke up

um let's see listening to music

television i've always hated television

since i was a teenager i've headed

television so i've just stubbornly

refused to accept

tv even though you can watch tv shows on

the computer if you really want to

you know you can watch old reruns of

beverly hillbillies or

or there's this one show i've been

watching called chopped

uh some kind of cooking show but if you

watch it on the computer you don't have

the commercials and the commercials are

really just such an insult to my

intelligence that uh

just it's just demeans my dignity to

watch commercials

so yeah i wouldn't even watch youtube if

if i didn't have ad block

let's see with regard to different

styles of clothing

um i just want everything to be plain

and simple you know so i'm going to

favor probably like

gray cotton khaki olive drab

that kind of thing and uh

yeah i bought a belt that was like my

first day here in uh

south carolina oh my second day yeah

first day i didn't go anywhere

so um yeah i'm just gonna this it's just

gonna be plain and simple i'm not going

to be trying to make any kind of

buddhist fashion statements or anything

with regard to my hair um

i am going to do something that i

haven't done in 30 years

probably soon which is shave my face

without shaving my head

also um my sweetheart likes

shaved heads but i i haven't had hair

in so long i just want to grow it out at

least an inch

just to see how it goes you know to see

how bald i've got or whatever

and uh when i do have my hair cut i've

always been kind of a minimalist i don't

like

any kind of weird styles you know i'm

probably not gonna have it shaved on the

sides and long on top or anything like

that

probably uh the way it used to be i just

go to the go to some place and just say

cut it down to an inch and a half just

every hair on my head the same length

um eating out uh

let's see yeah i don't think there's

necessarily anything uh

non-dharmic about eating out although

one consideration is

that if you eat food i've read this i

think it was ron doss that said this

that um you know when somebody cooks

food

to some degree their their mental states

or their

vibes kind of permeate into the food a

little bit

and he he's talked about how he had this

teacher this in india

who would get violently ill if he ate

food from somebody that was angry

and so you're better off if you've got

somebody who likes to cook for you

that loves you or just at least likes

you

um at least that aspect of it kind of a

non-physical aspect of it would be

better than just

going to some place where some teenager

who doesn't give a damn about you

is just slapping food together because

he's getting paid minimum wage for it

um if you can afford to go to a fancy

restaurant where you've got a chef who

takes pride in what he's

what he's cooking maybe that would be

better i don't know

but then again paying an arm and a leg

just to eat

food is uh kind of silly in my opinion

but that's another that's another

miracle i i fried an egg for the first

time in 30 years today

and it was good i had an egg sandwich i

mean that that in itself i mean

so many people they just don't

appreciate

that um i mean just being able to walk

to the fridge and get

food whenever you want it is really a

blessing

or uh i mean even having my own bathroom

for years at the monastery in california

it was it was a rare

shower that i could take without

somebody somewhere else in the building

flushing the toilet or turning on the

hot water so that my

my showers didn't just go scalding hot

or freezing cold or something

okay anyway that was that was my answer

to uh alex with regard to uh

what possible elements of lay life and

modern culture i intend to accept or

deny

um yeah i'm just gonna live a simple

life

and i will still be an abnormal

minimalist by western standards i am

sure

but um yeah i don't see anything

necessarily wrong with uh

listening to music or i don't know

wearing a shirt that's

uh red i can wear a red shirt if i want

to

okay next question is also from alex

what is your opinion of

bhakti or devotional yoga as a way to

enlightenment

that's an interesting question and

uh i mean it's really got

a lot of would you call it advocates

especially in india bhakti yoga is one

of the main

branches of yoga but i think it's mainly

suitable for a heart oriented person you

know you've got karma yoga the

like the yoga of service which is sort

of like what gandhi was doing

or mother teresa even though she wasn't

a hindu

and then you've got like bhakti yoga

which is

the the yoga of this wholehearted

love and devotion to the guru and

it seems to me that just using romantic

love

as a spiritual vehicle just trying to

love another person as perfectly as you

can just as

openheartedly you know as completely as

you can

that would be similar to bhakti yoga i

think it's

um really it's it's i see it more as

um a vehicle of love rather than

like just obedience or or just reverence

something like that although reverence

itself would have like the open-hearted

acceptance to it because

my handy definition of love is just

acceptance in a way it's just knocking

down

at least a window in pink floyd's wall

so that you just

open to somebody without anything closed

off between you

so bhakti yoga to the extent that it

does that to the extent that it gives

you greater love and if you're loving a

really wise person

then mental states are contagious

then the mental states of the the wise

person will

have its effect on you which also can be

beneficial although

that can be beneficial regardless of

what kind of yoga you're doing if you've

just got an instructor and you respect

your instructor then

or you have a certain amount of love and

appreciation and gratitude

towards towards really anybody then

you're going to get

benefits regardless of whether you're

you're taking

the path of meditation or or service or

anything like that

so getting back to the question what is

your opinion of bhakti yoga as a way to

enlightenment i think

it does work for some people especially

if you pick the right guru

i mean if you just pick a crackpot

charlatan um the hindus say that

you know even if your guru is a crackpot

charlatan still

if you do it perfectly it's still a

valid

um valid vehicle to enlightenment

because it's really um just the capacity

of your own heart to

fully accept and love somebody

so yeah it's really not

the route i have taken although i'll be

taking it

more now that uh that i have a

sweetheart you know so it'll be

um part of my my spiritual practice

um starting you know

recently relatively recently is um

just to to love somebody as well as i

can

and to be as have as good of an effect

on the other person like if you have a

relationship

then um you know you have another person

to consider

obviously like if i'm in a bad mood and

i'm by myself i can just sit there

grumbling and like bitching and being

pissy to myself or whatever but

if you know you love another person and

they're there you don't want to just

take it out on them so in a way it kind

of steers you to being a better person

in that regard

and um you know that that's kind of a

spiritual

practice in and of itself so

i guess i do have a little bit of

devotional yoga going now

um maybe more than a little bit

but um yeah i mean i've been more head

oriented

throughout my life so it's more what

guyana yoga or raja yoga

rather than the bhakti yoga but um

okay next question this is from frank

what is the status of vada and then in

parentheses he says i still have hopes

that we might see this take off

well the status of naval cavada as far

as i know

is relatively unchanged i mean there was

there hasn't been really an official

status

for nava cavada at present it's an idea

that um um i mentioned it years ago on

the old blog

where um

because monasticism doesn't fit western

culture very well you have to come up

with a compromise

you know of semi monks wearing you know

gray sweats or army surplus or something

like that keeping

a reduced number of precepts that kind

of thing

and uh yeah i'm i'm fine with that i

mean it's still

still the same status as it was before

as far as i know

but i can't really do it by myself so

hopefully there will be enough

like-minded people getting together to

form like um

like a critical mass or a nucleus you

know the bare minimum required to really

get something going

um to some degree i'll just be doing it

on my own like i said i'm just going to

be living kind of a simple

still relatively minimalist um

existence and so um

yeah it could be i could be enough of a

nucleus all by myself if i do it well

enough

although i'm not really getting out and

mingling yet i've been

just spending most of my time here or

else just going to

places like the uh the phone store and

the bank and things like that

okay so naval cavalry i mean it's uh

it's still i mean maybe maybe it's a

little bit progressed now that that i'm

not a monk

so i've taken a step closer to that

although uh yeah it's gonna it's gonna

take more than just me

i don't think one person makes a

movement

next question from beatpat427

since time is cyclical as exposed as

opposed to

linear if one dies on earth in the year

2021

couldn't they still take rebirth in an

earlier year on earth

say 1921. that's an interesting question

my father used to talk about that

my father believed in in reincarnation

or rebirth

and um he always used to say that he

would have been happier living in the

stone age

he would have made a good like warrior

shaman or something he really did not

like the modern world very much

and so he said that he was hoping he

could be reincarnated into the past

and at the time i just didn't see how

it's possible because if you're going to

be reincarnating in the past and you've

already

you've already been reincarnated in the

past you know it's already there because

it's in the past

um see with regard to time being

cyclical

as opposed to linear i really don't

think it's cyclical or linear

tell you the truth i mean india went

with the cyclical idea

um you know the eons and all that which

is probably originally based on

early observations of just the cycles of

the

the sun and moon the seasons and all

that

um personally i see

time from from like a scientific point

of view i just see it as like the fourth

dimension and then

we just interpret it however we

interpret it which is going to be

like a false interpretation based on our

crude animal

um nervous system our perceptual systems

or whatever

so um i really don't see it as cyclical

or

linear is just whatever we make of it

but

uh with regard to going into the past

like being reborn in the past i think

what it would

more likely is just there are so many

alternative worlds you know it's just

many worlds hypothesis

and so um you know you're going to be

able to

whatever is appropriate for you to be

born into

i mean it's going to happen and it may

be

you know an alternate world um you know

that's in a in a past age or something

um i think that might be more likely

than uh this

exact world going back into the past

but uh who knows um if it did happen

that way then

you could be you know more advanced in

this life

and then another life after that you'd

be cruder again

because you were in an advanced state

when you went back here but if you could

do that

then you might be able to be reborn into

two lives at the same time that kind of

overlap or something which is flatly

impossible from the buddhist point of

view

and i think from the orthodox buddhist

point of view being reborn into the past

would be impossible also

so um yeah that was kind of a

complicated one

so i'll just move on to the next one and

this is from

potila

not buddhism related but i'm interested

to hear your thoughts on the ufo

phenomenon coming out in the media from

former dod

officials i have a similar opinion to

you

as you expressed to herroo on the topic

possible but right now a lack of

evidence it seems

though now is starting to come to light

with new videos and evidence

what are your thoughts about what it

could be

and if they are not humans the purpose

of their visits

well i've got two main hypotheses with

regard to ufos

i got the old one and the new one and

the old one

is that ufos are probably

not coming from planets in outer space

you know some other star system but it's
just
different versions of us i already
mentioned the many worlds hypothesis so
there'd just be like a
a different version of earth with more
intelligent more advanced
us in it you know maybe you know there
was some toba catastrophe didn't happen
75 000 years ago and
didn't wipe out most of the human race
and there's just been steady progress
ever since and and now they're all like
trans human or something
um so they would just be coming sideways
through probability

like probability would be like the fifth

fifth dimension or sixth dimension or

something

um that that was my old hypothesis and

if they come

they're coming here they're coming here

like as scientists

like anthropologists studying primitive

tribes or something

um and then of course they might have

like uh in star trek you've got the

prime directive where you're not

supposed to be

mucking up in the the society you know

like

just you know landing on the white house

lawn anything like that

so they'd be like scientists trying to

be as low impact as possible

something like that um i think it's

possible and that would be why

they can't have proof of it because you

know they're so much more advanced than

we are they just don't

want us to have proof so they just we

can't have it

or something like that but then just

last year

i read the book

the are in the paranormal by george p

hansen and uh

i think he's pretty much sold me on the

idea that

ufo phenomena are paranormal

it's like ghosts or bigfoot or

witchcraft or that kind of thing

where it's uh it's not really flesh and

blood beings

flying through space in nuts and bolts

spacecraft

but it's like

a paranormal event where

it's possible archetypes are like

materializing

through like the the cracks in our world

view or it's like it's it's really it's

really

such an excellent theory that that

hansen puts forth

it's it's in a way it's like an idealist

like a philosophically idealist

theory where um we have to have

rules and laws to keep everything like

regular and predictable and more or less

safe

and we just can't do it perfectly you

know there's always going to be little

cracks and weak spots and anomalies

and um paranormal events like chaos can

flow through those

and sometimes the chaos will take the

form of primordial archetypes

and so i'm still of the opinion that uh

like the greys

are essentially what people were calling

elves

a thousand years ago and elves were not

like cute little santa's helpers a

thousand years ago like the anglo-saxons

um elves were scary and a lot of the

same archetypes just sort of like the

the gracile you know high intelligence

and you know sort of a slender build and

a big head

and also the whole idea of changelings i

think they were called where

children were abducted and replaced with

like half elf

beings that kind of thing there's a lot

of recurrence of

themes between um you know

earlier earlier beliefs about

supernatural beings and what are now

being called

space aliens and um

the archetype just gets clothed in

whatever the the current culture

believes and so now we we're we're

living in a technological age

and so the elves are coming as

technological beings

in uh high-tech spacecraft or vehicles

or that kind of thing

so either way the i don't think the ufos

really are

space aliens coming from some other

planet and all the stuff about

uh the world federation of planets and

humans are

at the verge of being accepted into the

into

the galactic council and all this kind

of stuff

um yeah i i don't believe that

but uh then again i'm no expert you

might want to get uh

harry's opinion i'm sure he'll have a

very different one from me

uh let's see next question

this is a buddhist question what do you

make of the supposed conflict between

samatha and wipasana

in terms of realization it seems that

there is a conflict between

deep states of jhana and insight using

mindfulness

both states don't seem possible at the

same time

but it is clear in the text that both

work but not always clear how

okay

well it is true that um

the buddha taught at least in my opinion

the buddha really did teach

jhana and uh wipasana but

i think it was a lack of understanding

early on that caused it to branch off

into two entirely different

sasanas like sometimes in burma people

will ask

which sasana do you belong to do you

belong to the jhana

sasana or the weepasana sasana or as

sana and i don't think that originally

there was any conflict at all i don't

think it was two separate paths

um one thing that people don't realize

is that we passana isn't something that

you

do it's something that spontaneously

arises

so you don't do wepasana i mean it's

sort of

it's called that now but really what

you're doing is mindfulness

or mindful reflection at most and then

that can trigger like the intuitive

insight that arises but

the way it works i think my best example

my favorite

example anyway is the the small

discourse on voidness

or emptiness in the majaminikaya i don't

remember what number it is

but it's the the small or lesser

discourse on

voidness or emptiness the chula

i think it's called and um

in that you've got the meditator goes

out into a forest

he's going to cultivate emptiness so the

first step he takes

is to go into a forest that's like your

first

step into emptiness is going into a

forest which i think

is uh it's it's it makes a nice meme and

could become a motto or something if i

do get like

hiking meditation retreats going but

that is the first step

and then he cultivates deeper and deeper

meditative states he gets

into genre states goes through all the

genres until finally he hits the

signless

concentration of mind which is sort of

like nirota samapadi it's like beyond

jhana even it's the highest possible

meditative state

and then he comes out of that and then

what he does is he realizes

it's like it strikes him that even the

highest

possible meditative state is still not

nibana

that's still not it and so what happens

is that is an insight that arises

after jhana that you realize that no

matter how

good the genre no matter how deep it is

that's still not

it nothing that you can cultivate is it

and so it's like just something just

snaps or lets go

and boom you're enlightened according to

the pseudonym

so even orthodox theravada says that

janna

and wipasana don't arise simultaneously

what happens is

first you have the jhana usually or you

have you know some kind of meta deep

meditative state or or whatever it is

and then that triggers the insight

that triggers this intuitive knowledge

that that that is the uipasana so it's

like

um they're not in conflict at all even

though you can't have both

exactly at the same time because when if

you're in genre you're not thinking

anything really

if you're in deep genre i mean and so

after you come back

then it's like in in like orthodox

terrible

that you they say you like you review or

something like that

and then the wii pass nut arises

and uh the deeper your meditation

probably

um the more likely you're going to have

like a deep insight um

experience like the the better your

meditation

um probably just going with statistics

the more likely

it is that you will have like a really

profound

liberating insight or just just a

profound

um insight even if you're not completely

liberated by it

so yeah and i think you just got

confused

by scholar monks writing commentaries

who weren't really into meditating they

were just into like

philosophical systematization of

everything so they're just making

everything all complicated and just

trying to describe

everything and putting everything into

into categories and all that

and um yeah i think they missed the boat

personally

so yeah i don't think there was

originally any

conflict between uh jhana and wipasana

that it was mainly through commentators

who maybe weren't meditators themselves

who were

just theorizing and didn't fully get it

so i hope that answered the question

because i'm moving on to the next one

also from potila saying

lastly how was your train ride from

california to south carolina and

i shouldn't go into too much details

because uh

that's what um the blog post i posted

recently and the next one after this one

are that's going to be like the official

description of the train ride

and um one thing i realized it should

have been

should have been fairly obvious but one

thing i realized is the train ride even

though it can be very scenic at times

it's very nice i really liked it

and no regrets at all but much better

than a plane ride even though it took a

lot longer

is that mainly you're getting views of

junky backyards

because you know trains always go behind

instead of in front so they go behind

houses

and uh like factories and that kind of

thing and it's

it's not the best houses because you

don't have train tracks going through

the nicest neighborhoods

so yeah there's a lot of junky backyards

but there's also lots of uh

uh just wilderness and and deserts and

didn't see the rocky mountains of course

that's that's

i really still don't get that one how

can you go over the rocky mountains and

not

and not see them even if you did it

during the daytime i just don't get that

at all

so that's a conspiracy i can discuss

maybe some other time

what did they do with the rocky

mountains

uh so yeah if you want to really know

how the train ride went

i guess you'll have to read the blog

because uh

it's all it's all there so next

question is from dog breath mr breath

he says you have spoken on an earlier

video about the best acid trip you ever

took as a monk

i don't remember that one now you're not

a monk

now that you're not a monk do you intend

to continue your psychedelic expirations

and have you

ever done mushrooms um

yeah i don't uh i don't really remember

talking about the best acid trip i ever

took as a monk i'm not really sure

what what it would have been i've taken

it a few times over the past 30 years

and then i did write a blog post about

the worst acid trip i ever took which

was shortly before i became a monk

um but yeah before i was a monk that was

sort of my spiritual

practice as opposed to uh spiritual

study

my spiritual practice consisted largely

of taking like

lsd especially just going out into a

wilderness by myself

and uh dropping acid maybe doing like a

little fire sacrifice

pouring like honey or butter or incense

or something into a little campfire

that kind of thing maybe uh reciting

some verses from the rig

veda so

i guess the main question here is do i

plan on continuing with that and

if if the situation arises i mean i'm

not going to be going around uh

you know looking for a drug dealer or

anything but um

i mean if the situation were to arise

then uh

yeah i'd be open-minded with regard to

that

um have i ever done mushrooms yes i i

was a monk before i ever took mushrooms

which i've taken a few times

and it's very nice it doesn't last as

long as as

lsd but uh it's similar it was very

pleasant it was it was very nice

it was uh almost every time i take

psychedelics like that

i have a religious experiences like

mystical experiences

even just smoking cannabis it's like

sometimes it's like everything is

god just going with like theistic

words theistic terminologies you just

see everything as a manifestation of the

same

divinity you know it's just different

forms different

shapes and colors and everything but

it's all just the same divinity

so yeah it's it's nice sure

why not but um

yeah like i said if if it happens i'll

be open-minded you know if it just

presents itself but i'm not going to go

out searching for it

and i've really gotten too old to really

fully appreciate just blasting my mind

i used to i used to just sometimes i've

just thought back when i was like

18 just man the stuff i did just the

abuse

i put my mind through just pushing it to

the limit you know

so yeah there's there's more wholesome

ways of pushing yourself to the limit

than

just completely uh blasting your mind

with some kind of chemical

but uh it can i mean it definitely can

be beneficial

and uh at least in my generation

most people who were ordained as

tyravata buddhist monks that i

did i know of uh westerners i mean

um started off with like psychedelics

some kind of some kind of psychedelics

and then uh

then you have this experience it's like

uh

i mean it's just as valid as the

ordinary waking state

i mean you have no doubt at all about

that you know it works differently the

mental state does but it's just as real

and then um it just gets you into the

idea that uh

you know i want to experiment with you

know finding a different

frame of reference but not relying on

chemicals to do it and that gets a lot

of people

into meditation to begin with i think

nowadays it's mostly just stress relief

that gets people meditating but

back in back in my day you know 35

40 years ago when i was when i was young

um you know it wasn't stress relief it

was just trying to find

some alternate route to reality and uh

that's still valid

i assume although i'm getting kind of

old for um

doing weird things to my brain

so next question also from mr brass

what exactly is a salmonera what are the

requirements for being one

how does one become one and what does it

mean for a person's daily life

once one is one okay

well like i said i'm not even i'm not

even a salmonella anymore i was uh

a salmonera from the day i started the

train trip

till the night i ended the train trip

and before even leaving the train

station

i ceased being a salmonera just by uh

telling somebody that ty wasn't one

anymore

so um the requirements for being one

it's

technically i'm sure there are

requirements it's it's pretty much the

same requirements for becoming a monk

except you don't have to be 20 years of

age i think that's the main difference

so in asia it's mostly kids that are

there are salmoneras every once in a

while you'll meet a kohinji

in burma which is an old salmonera you

know a fully adult salmonera

and usually it's honest and rather

humble

guys who just realize they don't want to

follow all the rules of monastic

discipline

and i like that i used to get along

really well with

old salmoneras or older you know fully

adult salmoneras because

at least they were honest enough to

admit they didn't want to follow the

rules

and i think that is better than just

being a fully ordained monk and not

following the rules

you know if you if you want to um you

know just want to cook your own food

that kind of thing then

you're better off as a as a salmonera

and

so yeah the qualifications are

essentially the same as the

qualifications for being a monk except

you don't have to be

fully 20 years of age how does one

become one it's just a

it's like ordination as a monk comes in

two steps

first you're ordained as a salmonera and

then in burma usually

um you'll be a salmonera for like one

day and they'll ordain you

give you the higher ordination as a monk

and um what summoners they only have 10

rules

and um i suppose it's unfortunate that

the 10th precept

the 10th rule is not handling money so

even the salmonera is not allowed

technically to handle money but i

disrobed down to salmonera um

partly because i just didn't have any

layman's clothes yet

and i figured it was less blame-worthy

to be handling money

as a novice than as a fully ordained

monk

and feeding myself and that kind of

thing

so you would become one just by going to

a senior monk oh another difference is a

single monk can ordain a salmonera

like a senior monk who's got at least 10

years

of seniority as a monk can

ordain a salmonera just in a private

ceremony just just the two people there

whereas a full ordination as a biku

you've got to have at least

five monks in good standing

participating in the ceremony

and all you do really is you just take

the three three refuges

and uh the ten precepts and then you're

a salmonera

and uh what does it mean for a person's

daily life

pretty much the same as a monk um

i mean you got less rules to follow

which is convenient you're even allowed

to touch

women as long as all you're doing is

touching them

so yeah i think i think i

probably maybe answered that question

so i'll move on to uh question number

three from dog breath which is

are you going to turn your blog posts

into a book

and that is a good question and uh

yeah i'm going to be starting with um

the old blog

and uh so any of you that really want to

read it for free

time is running out because probably

within uh

i don't know maybe a week i'm going to

figure out how to take it down and just

leave like a stub there

just directing people to the new blog

and maybe also

plugging the book or three because i've

i've had this idea of you know i've

written quite a lot of

theoretically potentially valuable stuff

on the old blog so i was thinking of

maybe

editing the best ones into maybe three

books one would just be like

straight straight buddhist philosophy

and um

maybe two other ones would be about you

know slightly different

subjects so

yeah i was kind of hoping that uh some

publisher or editor would manifest but

it's it's looking more and more like i'm

just going to have to edit my own book

using like

amazon self-publishing software stuff

like that

and uh so that's that's one thing i can

do is if

if any of you who see this you have any

particular favorite

um articles that i wrote on the old blog

that you want to make sure winds up in a

book

then uh yeah you're welcome to to let me

know

wherever we wherever we communicate

either like in comments below this or

on the discord server or subscribe star

or personal emails anything like that

just just let me know if there's uh

any particular favorite

blog posts on the old blog and

um yeah i will be taking it down i don't

see much point in

selling something that you can just get

for free on online anyway

so the answer to that are you going to

turn your blog posts into a book

some of them i will that is the plan

anyway

inshallah god the gods willing um

yeah and uh i may have to just edit it

myself

so it may be kind of a crappy job at

first until i get it down

okay last question from dog breath is

have you had a beer yet

hmm technically the answer is no

although uh

i have had some wine it is true i didn't

really drink enough of it to get drunk i

think it was mainly uh

just uh kind of helped me relax

with another person and celebrate at the

same time

so yeah i'm not planning on becoming a

drunk or any such thing

but uh yeah i have uh i have had some

wine

my first night here and then uh a couple

nights after that i had a little more

so yeah i broke i broke even five

precepts

now i mean not all five but uh yeah that

one i did

so let's see next question from chaplin

do you plan on doing any upcoming blogs

or videos on the transition

uh yeah well the the blog that i just

did and also the last video that i did

from uh the hotel room in in new orleans

were uh

talking about the transition or at least

the the journey

and uh i do suspect that um

a lot of what i'll be writing about on

the blog for the next couple months

considering that i generally write about

what's in my mind you know and this

transition

really is kind of an important thing so

i will be writing about it

and uh one of the main things that i

plan on writing about and maybe talking

about also

like on just a video format like this is

uh

so many people have uh given me feedback

and that

you know they consider not being a monk

anymore is

uh kind of lamentable because being a

layperson

is so crummy in certain ways

and um i mean obviously you're going to

have more positive

and more negative as a layperson

but i think what a lot of people are

doing is they're just so

used to all of the um the nice things

about being a lay person you know the

greater

physical freedom and just the ability

like i said just

walk to the refrigerator and help

yourself to whatever you want

um or just you know just having like a

nice place

um being able to sit out on the balcony

and drink my coffee in the morning

it's really nice so i think what happens

is it's sort of like people seeing the

dandelion

that i mentioned earlier where

eventually you just get to the point

where you're not mindful anymore

and then you have these negative

associations or just associations with

the first noble truth of just never

being completely satisfied and then you

just want to kind of blame

you know whatever it is for for not

being fully satisfied but

you're never going to be fully satisfied

no matter what you do or don't do

because that's just the first noble

truth

unless you can manage to become fully

enlightened

so yeah that's one thing that i do want

to

pontificate on is that uh you know it's

don't let anybody tell you that a lay

person cannot

attain deep spiritual states i mean

you're going to be more distracted but

sometimes

it's just like the some kind of crisis

from being a lay person or living a

worldly life just some crisis will come

up it'll just slam you into a highest

level of consciousness

or you know who knows you can just be

walking in a forest

just being in the present moment and

boom

or whatever it is so

it's trickier you know it's more more

advanced difficulty setting

but uh some people do best on on higher

difficulty settings

like when i was in school i always did

best in the most difficult classes

like the easy classes were just kind of

boring they weren't challenging me

and to some degree being a monk was kind

of like that for me just uh

i wasn't having enough challenges and so

i wasn't really at my best anymore

so let's see i guess i sort of answered

that question

maybe so i'll move on to chaplin's next

question which is

when do you plan on starting the

recorded dharma talks that you mentioned

previously uh

yeah well soon i mean i'm kind of doing

dharma talks

um just in these q and a things

and um

i've always kind of been a little bit

reluctant to talk about really simple

basic stuff

because everybody else is talking about

it you know all the other dhamma

teachers

or at least the the serious like the

monk ones

are talking about that kind of stuff and

i really

like talking about things that other

people aren't talking about

so talking about what has already been

talked about a thousand times

it doesn't interest me as much i like

the weird stuff

so if anybody wants to know something in

particular

then uh yeah you can just let me know

you want to know something in particular

like like these q and a things um they

work really nice

for that otherwise uh you may just have

to wait until i

the the spirit moves me

the mood strikes me to talk about

something that just through random

chances something that you want to learn

about

uh but yeah it's gonna happen i'm going

to start doing the

the readings too so

my girlfriend is an artist and so we'll

be going out into uh

aesthetically pleasing uh

areas i think for that sometimes

next question would you consider doing

a series of buddhism 101 type readings

of some foundational texts for those of

us who have

lots of learnings to do okay yeah that's

that's similar to the the question above

that

and i think the answer is pretty much

the same

um the buddhism 101 stuff i think it's

you're gonna have to request it

specifically

um because as i say i prefer the weird

stuff

and kind of going at things from from

the sides or from different angles

you know so um yeah just the basics

you might be better off with one of

those really orthodox

kind of boring monks that that are on

youtube

um and uh yeah you'll get a lot of the

foundational stuff from that

and uh you want something weird then uh

come to me or you want you want me to

explain something

uh simply and something really

elementary then i think it'd probably be

best if you just

just ask me like in the q a or or

elsewhere

and i can get to it and so the very last

question

also from chaplin please explain your

name

transition is it correct that you went

from beku to samanera to simply

panyobasa

how shall we refer to you now

um yeah i was panyobasabiku

and uh also as as brian rue it was

pretty much only brian

that would call me that but he would

call me panyobasa mahatera

the great elder which is anybody who's

been a monk for at least 20 years

is a maha terra a great elder and a

terra is anyone who's been a monk for at

least 10 years or

10 10 rainy 10 rainy seasons

because years are counted in rainy

seasons for a month

uh the year for the word for year is

wasa which

literally means rain because they count

in uh

in uh rainy seasons so um

yeah i went from panyobasa biku or

in uh brian's terminology ponyobasa

mahatera to panyobazo salmonera which

was

uh i mentioned that above and that was

just for the train trip

just uh like 15 minutes before i left to

get

on the first train to maybe 15 minutes

after i got off the last train i was uh

just a salmonera

and um i don't know people could call me

plenty of also salmonera but uh

this pony obasa was good enough or i

mean i'm david reynolds now it's it's

really weird even just calling myself

david reynolds i have to like get into

the habit of signing my name again like

my

my my signature it's uh it's really

strange just the whole transition is is

is kind of strange and uh you know i'm

kind of

kind of going about like a little kid

whereas you see the dandelion as the

pretty flower instead of

just seeing the weed and then your mind

shuts down so

um yeah it's it's it's been good so far

although i'm drifting away from the

question here

how shall we refer to you now um i'll

respond to anything that isn't overly

abusive

so either ponyo bassa or david works i

mean i'm still paniobasa

it's not like i'm stealing the name um

more than half my life i've been called

that so i guess i've earned

the right to have um a paulie name

like i guess aja shanti he's not a monk

and he's got a

an indian name there's lots of you know

new agey people with indian names or or

like hindus

that kind of thing so yeah i'm still a

ponyo bassa i'm just not paniyabasa biku

or even panama salmonera at this point

so yeah i know you just not necessarily

call me venerable lord although i don't

think any of you ever did

anyway bonte is not necessary anymore

so yeah just uh ponyobasa or

uh david i guess

i've never really been into names i

don't identify with names it's just

it's just words so um yeah i guess

that's it so that is all the questions

so uh anybody who uh thinks that this

one wasn't a

complete nose dive after the ones i did

when i was a monk

then and you still have questions to ask

about buddhism or meditation or me

personally or

or burma or anything like that

then just even like supernatural

paranormal stuff

rebirth then if you have any kind of

questions about that you're

you're quite welcome to ask very welcome

and uh

put them in the comment section below or

um i do put an announcement up on

subscribe star

before i do the q a video so you can you

can leave questions there also

or on the discord server if you have

access to that

and uh i refrain from saying i'll see

you all next time because i

never see you all because i'm just

looking into a like a camera

so there you go be happy

and uh i assume there will be a

q a number 10. so have a good one

bye

hello and welcome to episode

10 of question and answer and i

am your host panyo bassa not panyobasa

biku anymore obviously

not panyo basa mahatera

and i'm still wearing a shirt

although if you prefer i can be called

david reynolds also because that has

always been the name

on my legal id like on my passport

or on my new south carolina id card

so without any further ado i'm going to

start answering questions because we got

a lot of them

that i mean most of them were asked

in in in like large numbers just within

the past

few days so i've been hit by a tsunami

of questions and so here we go the first

question

is from insalubrious dithyramb

he says hello david as a layman is it

possible for me to meditate by learning

mindfulness from youtube i have tried

several of ah john brahm's meditations

and they have

worked for me so far is this safe

um yeah something like mindfulness

meditation is a fairly

safe meditation or something like

anapana as a general rule

is a safe meditation um if you start

having

problems then it's good to consult

somebody but it's unlikely that anything

bad is going to happen to you other than

just getting stuck or not knowing what

to do

um i think it's like tibetan buddhists

and hindus especially can have

these relatively dangerous meditation

techniques like kundalini meditation is

notoriously dangerous if you try to

practice it from a book without a

skillful

qualified teacher guiding you

so um yeah with something like that

where you can really

kind of go off into like some kind of

dark realm

or make yourself vulnerable to dark

forces

or mess up your kundalini so that you

know

it's going too high up your spine when

you're not ready for it yet or something

like that

then yeah definitely you should have a

qualified teacher who's

overseeing what you're doing and guiding

you but something

as basic as mindfulness like mahasi

style mindfulness

or i assume what ajahn brahm is teaching

or just

ordinary anapana something like that

some kind of

um probably most mantras like home

something like that those are safe and

basic

and it doesn't even mean because they're

safe and basic that they're not advanced

meditation techniques because

something like anapana you can go all

the way before the jhana with that you

can become enlightened through

practicing that so it's

it's basic and safe but also some of

these meditations can really take you a

long ways

so um yeah you can if if your best

teacher is a book or your best teacher

is a youtube video then

yeah follow that teacher and if you do

have

problems you reach a stumbling block or

something like that then yeah you should

you should ask a qualified teacher

but um yeah if it's working for you then

that's great

and it is uh safe as far as i know i

don't think ajahn brahm

uh is teaching dangerous things or or

even like

uh most of the other insight meditation

people

or for that matter most of the stuff

you're going to see on youtube

is not this advanced esoteric

potentially dangerous stuff so i think

you're doing okay so the next question

is from

steve let's hear more about your

navakavada

ideas and how to do it i would be

interested to hear it

well my own approach to navakavada at

present

is essentially just getting myself

established

because i mean i have to attend to

reality just like um

just practical pragmatic reality here

so i've got to set myself up relatively

to get relatively stable more or less

just be

sure that i'm able to pay the bills that

kind of a thing

and um i do really

plan very soon to uh

take a hike up on paris mountain where

there's some good hiking trails and some

primitive camping sites

that could possibly be a site for

meditation

retreats like camping retreats so that

was those have been part of my plan for

quite a while

um also i'm working on

getting some books published which may

uh in addition to providing me with a

little bit of

material for paying bills you know

passive income i think it's called

um also uh i mean it's going to

maybe serve also as a kind of

advertising

you know it's like um nava colada isn't

going to work if nobody knows about it

so for me at present i'm just trying to

get my own act together

and um i mean me teaching dhamma

me leading retreats if people are

interested

i mean that's really the best i can

think of at present

um it could possibly involve me

eventually uh wearing you know the gray

sweatshirt or something although it's

very hot and humid here in south

carolina so sweatshirts might not be the

best option

but um yeah nava cavada is

um just in theory i mean the basic idea

of it

is a compromise between

teravada like orthodox theravada which

was designed for ancient india in a very

different culture than one we're in

and modify that sufficiently so that it

will fit

western culture like modern or

post-modern western culture

and so that's going to involve changes

in rules

and uh changes in clothes um

just changes in a lot of things and like

most westerners

can't really accept everything in the

texts anyway because it comes from a

pre-modern

even largely pre-logical age

and so fire-breathing dragons in a flat

earth an eclipse is being caused by a

demon called rahu swallowing the sun or

moving into his mouth

that kind of a thing um yeah so

um like most westerners capable of

critical thought aren't going to accept

that sort of thing so

really just 100 orthodox taravana

is not really a viable option

if you want it to strike traction

there's always going to be a fringe of

people who are

able to accept anything but um

there's going to have to be some kind of

modification or

if people are claiming to be orthodox

theravada while at the same time

thinking like westerners um the monks

are going to be fudging on the rules

which they already do

even the relatively strict ones are

fudging on rules

and um the lay people um

i don't know five precepts it's pretty

easy to be relatively strict with those

so at least there's that

so with regard to the lay people um

it's not going to be so much of a change

unless

we're going to develop a kind of

quasi-monk hood that's intermediate

that isn't an official monkhood but for

people who want to practice at a higher

level

to make more renunciations maybe follow

more rules

although lots of rules really is not the

best idea and

there is evidence that the buddha

himself

warned against having lots of rules with

the vineyard

this this massive pile of rules

um possibly arguably developing

after the buddhist after the buddhist

party nabana after

after he died so um

yeah and and the more people that are

interested the more feedback there's

going to be and there's going to be more

people

um discussing this in working it out

um with regard to me if i were to

develop navigator single-handedly then

it would

probably just apply to me personally

which is kind of the way i've been doing

things i've been living

essentially as a loner and

really haven't been trying to

proselytize

but with books coming out and maybe more

people reading the blog that kind of a

thing i may have more of a voice

and in that way more influence and

possibly my strange ideas will spread to

others

although it's going to require um

probably some kind of uh seed crystal or

just a like a critical mass or something

because i'm not the sort of person who's

really like

a missionary like a proselytizer i can

have

relatively good ideas sometimes and i

think some of my good ideas would

actually

work in the west but um

yeah i'm not going to be just like

marching through the streets or knocking

on doors

or that kind of thing it is going to

require some kind of advertising i think

possibly like even in like buddhist

magazines

maybe there's enough people that really

don't like the ultra liberal

neo-marxist kind of of buddhism in the

west

who still are like reading inquiring

mind or tricycle out of desperation and

they might see

um you know some kind of advertisement

or are you tired of ultra liberal

buddhism

still want to you want to practice

serious more traditional buddhism

well yeah contact so-and-so or join here

or something

that might be um really a realistic way

in the west

of spreading the message and uh

maybe if uh if things prosper

my books will will help with regard to

that just spreading the message

maybe i should uh write write about nava

cavada a little more

in uh in the volumes that i'm editing

now

so yeah with regard to nava cavada at

present

i'm just pragmatically trying to get

settled here

and uh um ideally i could

i could set up as a teacher if if there

are people who are interested

i mean i don't want to teach like empty

rooms that kind of thing

but uh i mean i have given dhamma talks

like in bellingham where like two or

three people show up so i have done that

before

but um yeah we'll just see how it goes

and uh anyone has any uh good ideas

you're welcome to share them

next question from reconciliation

i still would like to get your opinion

of the differences between western

monasticism and eastern monasticism

well um the main difference between

western and eastern monasticism is that

western monasticism is

christian and uh so it's based more on

like european and also to some degree

west asian culture whereas eastern

monasticism

was originally based on indian culture

and then spread to places like

china and korea and japan where it

adopted

more east asian elements

so um yeah

like western christian monasticism

um is characterized by the three vowels

in fact it's it's

characterized by vowels in general which

is

really foreign buddhism at least i'm not

as familiar with

mahayana monasticism but

christianity you have the vows of i

don't remember the order it's like

poverty chastity and obedience

and in order to drop out

of a christian monastic order i have

been told

you can't just drop out i mean even if

you drop out you're still considered to

be an ordained monk you've just got

renegade

so um i've been told that for a priest

or a monk in a in a catholic order

to stop being a priest or a monk they

have to have

um they have to have permission from the

pope himself

whereas for for like theravada buddhism

there aren't any real

vowels there are precepts and if you

break a precept

then there are other precepts telling

you

how to make confession and that sort of

thing and

um with regard to uh

certain things like uh breaking the vow

of or the

precept of of no s-e-c-k-s you know

the christian vow of chastity or the

closest there is to it in buddhism

um you're just automatically

excommunicated and that's that

so um for for a

like uh eastern monastic or at least a

terabyte

buddhist monk all he has to do is just

tell somebody that he's not a monk

anymore and mean it

and that's it he's not a monk anymore

that's essentially what i did

so um yeah the main difference between

western massism and eastern

massachusetts is just

the religious traditions so you've got

mostly christianity

with uh um

like lifelong vows whereas

in of buddhism especially it's of course

buddhism

and it's much more fluid much less

structured usually

although some traditions like thai

tradition

have made it very structured but

in the text themselves so long as you're

you're following the precepts

you know you're ordained and following

the precepts more or less

conscientiously

you can you can do pretty much anything

you can live alone in a forest or you

can live in a big crowded monastery in

town or

you know you do have a lot of options

especially in a buddhist culture that

supports that sort of thing

whereas i'm really not sure about about

christians

or or other um monastic orders or

monastic traditions

so that's uh that's about my best

opinion i can give on comparing western

monasticism with eastern

especially just in a few minutes so next

question

from follower number three a three six

two e zero b

panyo bassa sir can monks wear head

scarves in very cold or very hot

weather european monks would surely do

better in a more extreme

weather if they could cover their heads

to shield from direct

exposure um actually

there are provisions for that in in the

rules of monastic discipline from monks

and that is that if you are in a place

where you

it's like intense heat or intense cold

you can cover your head with your

sitting cloth

um maybe i should have brought it i

still have my sitting cloth here it's

back there in the closet

but um it's just a piece of cloth that's

you know two and a half feet by two feet

maybe something like that

and you can wear it over your head sort

of like an arab you know maybe

even tie it on and um that works

everywhere except in in town

if you are among the houses quote

unquote

then um yeah you're not allowed to cover

your head

and um it was considered to be somewhat

of a sign of disrespect

also like if you're listening to a

dhamma talk you shouldn't have your head

covered

and it's even against the rules for a

monk to teach

dhamma to someone whose head is covered

because

it's not showing adequate respect in

accordance with ancient indian culture

to to the dhamma that the monk is

teaching

so yeah if a monk is in the forest or

inside the monastery or just outside of

a public place

he can cover his head with his sitting

cloth

or presumably with another piece of

cloth

but uh wearing turbans and hats and caps

and that sort of thing is against the

rules

so let's see what it says here what do

you think about men wearing head scarves

for practicality or fashion some people

just aren't into

hats so it could be a good alternative

perhaps well i mean that's just a matter

of personal

personal choice i suppose if you're

really into wearing uh

like an arab kind of head covering or or

a turban

or something then uh yeah i mean that's

your choice

you know everybody's free to uh wear

what they like

i suppose so yeah

but uh like i was saying with regard to

monks it's the only allowable way

that uh i i can remember seeing in the

texts

from uncovering his head like in in

cases of really intense sunlight or

something

is just take his sitting cloth which is

a piece of cloth like two feet by two

and a half feet

and just putting it over his head and um

i have seen some monks who

will have like one of their robes just

folded up and just balanced on there

like

burmese nuns do that they'll take like a

large

piece of cloth much larger than a

sitting cloth like maybe a folded robe

and just kind of have that on top of

their head which

also would be allowable i assume if it's

your own robe

then um that would be allowable also but

not in public

it's just not allowable to have your uh

for a monk

who has to follow rules you know linea

to have his head covered in public

so he'd have to uh be uh

prudent with regard to what kind of

weather he's going around republican

so next question is from vajra wolf

77 does the existence of

kama or karma point to a universe that

is governed by free will

or determinism i've tried to square the

concepts in my head and it seems like

comma

points to a middle way between the two

or perhaps it is futile

to even relate the concepts at all but i

would love to hear your take on this

and as it turns out i have this is

probably the third q a maybe the fourth

where i've been addressing something

along the lines of this issue i even had

like a an

extra q a where i just answered that one

question about free will

and i really it is it is nice what um 77

here says about

uh like a middle way between free will

and uh determinism because really both

are are pretty much ruled out by

buddhism

like free will um the buddha's second

discourse after his enlightenment

traditionally accepted as that was the

anata

suta where he's saying that none of the

five condos

are really under our control with regard

to any of the five condos you can't say

let it be this way let

not be that way and have it happen and

one of those five condos is

is sankhara khanda which is uh

essentially will or chijna

and that's that's where what free will

would be if we have free will

and if everything we have or everything

that we consist of is the five

condas then yeah i mean that would rule

that out but determinism also was ruled

out that was like a

pernicious wrong view of um a

non-buddhist

philosophical set called the ajivacas in

the buddhist time

and uh they believed that it was just

straight determinism

that uh you were just mechanically live

out

life after life until you reached i

think it was like 80

000 or 84 000 or 88 000 lives

and it was just like taking a ball of

string holding on to one end of the

string and then just throwing the rest

of it until it just rolls and rolls and

rolls until it's just completely

you know there's not a ball anymore it's

just all unrolled

and so that's the way they considered

life on this

on this planet and the buddha said that

was wrong also

so yeah i've thought about that for a

long time

like uh if it's if free will and

determinism are both

out then yeah it's i've considered to be

just this

kind of a mystery or a paradox there's

some sort of middle way between the two

and um recently i was

just months ago i was reading a very

important book called

the trickster in the paranormal by

george p hansen and he points out that

self-reference produces paradox like

the mathematician kurt godel proved

mathematically

that um any kind of equation

or statement that refers to itself

can produce paradox like the classic

example

is i am lying i can't if i'm

if i if i am lying is true then i really

am lying

so that i'm not lying i was lying about

lying but if it's false if i am lying is

false

then then then i i would be lying and i

wouldn't be lying

and so self-reference produces paradox

and in the book george p hansen was

pointing out that meditation itself is a

kind of self-reference and that can

cause

paradoxes and even like miraculous

paranormal stuff to happen

because you're creating like a paradox

in the empirical world

something that shouldn't be possible

somehow is possible that's that's his

interpretation of

paranormal events paranormal phenomena

and um i was thinking about that it was

an intriguing idea

and really just being self-conscious you

don't even have to be meditating just

being aware of your own mind

your own mental processes is itself

self-referential or not

enough that it could produce some sort

of

seemingly impossible paradox and i think

free will

may if if free will exists then

it could be just this paradoxical thing

caused

or brought about by self-reference just

being aware of your own mind

so um yeah that would be uh the short

answer

i think um in the in the book

that uh i am working on the first volume

of essays

that i'm going to publish actually has a

relatively in-depth

article on on this very issue

so um yeah i'll just uh

be mercenary here and plug the book and

i encourage you to get it and read it

the next question is from kuru minha

how do you reconcile your knowledge

about evolutionary biology with your

metaphysical idealism

greetings from brazil that is a good

question

because um it's it's kind of tricky for

me

to wrap my own head around it because

um like darwinian

biology darwinian evolution like the

theory of natural selection everything

it does strike me as

if not ultimately true nevertheless it

is such

an elegant theory that describes

empirical phenomena so well better than

any other theory i'm aware of

that um yeah it just it's hard not to

accept that

even though i really am a metaphysical

idealist i'm not a materialist i do not

think that physical matter exists

if there's no mind perceiving it

which does put me into uh some

some kind of problematic positions like

if i don't think that there's

um any kind of physical matter if

there's nobody there to perceive it

then the whole like creation of the

earth

would just be this unthinkable void it

would be like in this

limbo until eventually some mind

became conscious enough you know some

some mental pattern became complicated

enough to become

self-aware and then and that's

like when the universe would start um in

in like an empirical or objective

sense because if there's no mind there

there's no

empiricism or objectivity unless maybe

we just assume that there are gods you

know maybe small

g gods that have been observing the

whole thing from the beginning and

maybe their perception of it has sort of

collapsed the state vector

to cause these phenomena to occur even

before

conscious life evolved on this planet

so yeah with regard to scientific

theories

um it's just the strongest paradigm for

understanding things that i'm aware of

at least with regard

to the the realm of samsara buddhism is

good for helping you to get out of

samsara but if you want to understand

the phenomena within the context of

samsara

then science really is about the best

and um

it'll probably dominate until a better

theory comes along

you know it's certainly not the only

theory we've had for explaining reality

before before um before science we had

christianity really

and uh that was relatively easy in some

ways it explained things better because

you could just say well

god made it god made it that way just

just because he wanted to and we can't

understand god so that's that

and um yeah i mean that's it worked

and uh before that you had sort of like

uh polytheism

kind of paganism and that worked and

before that it was something else and

before that was something else some kind

of primitive animism

way back there in the stone age and

probably science itself will be replaced

by something that's even more elegant

and then if i'm still alive at that time

i may

um let go of evolutionary biology

in favor of this new system that works

even better

but until i find a new system that works

even better for

explaining the mechanism of how it works

within the context of samsara

then yeah i'm sticking with charles

darwin because

i like him and really it is just such an

elegant

theory science really is powerful and

one reason why science is so powerful is

it's just so

integrated you know it's it's worked out

to be self-consistent

it's not supposed to contradict itself

and um

that in itself is powerful getting back

to george p hansen and

the trickster in the paranormal is like

the the stronger of a system we have for

understanding reality

um the more we hold scary uh

unpredictable paranormal events

at bay so um yeah science is about the

best we have for that which may

account for uh the uh the low

amount of miracles and and magic and

that sort of thing nowadays

but uh yeah i don't think that science

explains ultimate reality but i do think

that

it is a very convenient and useful and

powerful way

of making sense of

empirical reality of of like

making sense of the the shadows

flickering on the walls of plato's cave

so within the context of the dream

within the context of the matrix within

the context of plato's cave

science works really well until we find

something that works even better

so next question is from nardi

it's okay to pass from observation of

body directly to the mind

that's the question is it okay to pass

from observation of

body directly to the mind i ask you

because i see observation of body and

sensations as boring

and i can focus my mind only when i

observe the mind and its

objects okay well there there's two

points to this that i'd like to make

first

is that uh yeah there's no problem at

all if you want to do cheetah nupasana

which is mindfulness of your own mental

states mindfulness of your own mind then

yeah

that that works just as well if not

better than than mindfulness of the body

so yeah i prefer it also sometimes i am

aware of movements of my body especially

if i'm if i'm doing walking meditation

or just you know there's like a flash of

mindfulness when i'm like reaching for

something

that kind of thing you know you're

mindful of the emotions of your arm and

sort of like the oily feeling in the

joints and that kind of thing

but i agree that observing your mind

and sensations or just observing your

your mental states

um it's in a way it's more useful

yeah it can be more useful because you

you learn more about yourself you might

learn more about your body from

mindfulness of the body but you learn

more about your mind

about your own psychology your own

identity to some degree

by uh observing your own mind

and the the second point i was going to

make is that uh

really as far as i see it like i've

already said i'm not a materialist

so um even observing your own body and

your own sensations is just

a different level of observing your own

mind

like um mindfulness of breathing

really you're being mindful of

sensations and sensations are mental

you know no matter what you're being

mindful of it's mental

because um you're i mean the noting

itself

is mental so even if presumably it

starts off not being mental

like your own body you know if you want

to believe that your body exists

separately from consciousness then uh

i mean still it's just this unthinkable

blank void

until the mind is there to make sense of

it or to perceive it

so yeah i consider it all to be

um mindfulness of of the mind or mental

states

but um yeah getting back to the first

point though is yeah there's no problem

at all

if you can be mindful of your own mental

states that's even better than being

mindful of your body

or it can be anyway second question from

nardi is

what's the daily routine of an ascetic

well by golly i assume there's all kinds

of daily routines of ascetics like

you know the the naga babas the naked

shaivite

hindus have their own routine which i

include

which i assume would include smoking

hashish and that kind of a thing

or uh you know the ancient jains who

would just smear themselves with mud and

wander around

without owning anything they just beg

for food in their

in their cupped hands you know or even

ramana maharshi when he first renounced

the world

um you know he'd wander around with

without even a bowl

and on and when he would go for alms

he'd just stand out in front of a house

and like

clap his hands a couple times just to

let people know he was there

and if they offered him any food he'd

just stand there in the street and eat

it

and then move on to the next house if he

didn't have enough

so yeah and then i mean you've got

christian aesthetics some aesthetics are

just

literally torturing themselves you know

like some of the

the old ajibaca aesthetics like uh

there's a story in the donald pilot

commentary about this guy who wanted to

be in a jeebic aesthetic so he goes to

the aegis

and uh the very first thing they do is

they just

lying down on his back put put a couple

of planks

like crossways over his chest and some

of the heavier

uh aesthetics sit down on those to hold

him down

and then one of the the other monks the

ajibica aesthetic monks

just took this kind of a comb that grips

the hair and just like

ripped all the hair off of his his face

and his head

and um and then of course you got

buddhist aesthetics i mean

there's just so many different kinds of

aesthetics that uh the daily routine of

an aesthetic

varies largely from ascetic to ascetic

so it may be that you're asking

specifically about terravata buddhist

aesthetics but even they

especially if they're living on their

own out in the forest they're just gonna

have all different kinds of things you

know you've got

the 13 do tongas these optional

aesthetic practices that a monk can

follow

like never lying down or wearing robes

made only of rags eating one meal per

day eating only food that you've

collected walking through the village

when you go for palms round there's all

living only in cemeteries living only

under a tree there's all these different

uh aesthetic practices that can be

adopted and different monks will adopt

different ones so there is no real

daily routine of an aesthetic other than

the individual one of each one

and the next question is kind of similar

also from nardi

and what are the biggest difficulties of

an aesthetic life

and again it's going to depend on the

aesthetic really

it definitely is they're going to have

different aesthetics have all kinds of

different problems

you know one ascetic his problem might

just be being celibate that he's just

horny and thinks about

women all the time or another ascetic um

he's just thinking about food all the

time or another one

he's he's doing the sitting practice

where he sleeps in a sitting position

and is just sleeping just a few hours

per night and he's just

uh just yearning for a good night's

sleep

or or anything i mean whatever

yeah it's different aesthetics are gonna

have you're gonna have different

routines and different

different biggest difficulties so see

nardi has some more

it's is it possible to grow in dhamma in

this life and by the next

good incarnation to fall down again um

that's a good question and yeah yeah

that does happen in fact

that's the way some sorrow works it's

like um so long as you haven't become a

saint yet so long as you haven't had at

least a glimpse

of nirvana or enlightenment then

you know you live a good life in this

life and then you

may be your next life you're up in some

heaven realm

and according to the buddhist texts i

mean you might be up in this heaven

realm living in a

like a golden palace or a crystal jewel

palace with you know a thousand

gorgeous celestial nymphs and then you

just use up

all of your good karma as though you're

using up winning the lottery

and then after your karma has expired

then you come back down to earth or

wherever it is

you're going to go and it's just up and

down up and down up and down forever and

ever until

finally you get at least the glimpse of

enlightenment

and then once you become a sotapanna

according to uh the texts

then you're you're not going to go into

the lower realms and you're guaranteed

of enlightenment with

relatively soon not necessarily in this

life but i think it's no more fun no

more than five

lifetimes to go if uh if you're a soda

pong and

if you're an onigami which is one notch

below full enlightenment then you've

just got

one more life to go and you're

guaranteed

so until you get to the stage of being

an arya

which is getting at least that glimpse

of enlightenment

then it's just up and down up and down

up and down forever and ever

okay next question do you sincerely

believe it is possible to be enlightened

in a lay lifestyle it is possible it's

more difficult for most people

than if they were living the lifestyle

of a simple renunciant

but then again most people can't live

the lifestyle of a simple renunciant

either

and so in that case um your best bet is

to

go for it within the the limitations of

being a lay person

which is uh essentially what i've

decided to do because

it was like i got as far as i could with

the monk's lifestyle so i got as much

out of it as it seemed i was able to

so i'm i'm going for a change and we're

going to see how that goes

but there have been like like goenka was

a layperson his teacher also was a lay

person who bought ken

in burma and um

even according to orthodox theravada

even though they say

you can become enlightened but you have

to be a you have to be ordained right

afterwards or you're going to die

but still they say you can't be an

onigami like i think anatapindika who is

one of the main supporters of the buddha

was a layperson but uh he was a very

advanced saint

and uh there are there are cases um

uh nowadays of people who supposedly

are enlightened or or died died recently

but were enlightened before they died

um just as the lay people you know

eckhart tolle supposedly is enlightened

ajay shanti

is a married man despite the uh

sanskrit name and uh he has a reputation

for being enlightened i think there's a

woman

uh catherine ingram i think she's

supposed to be enlightened

like uh nisargadatta maharaj in

india he was considered to be a real

spiritual heavy hitter and an

enlightened being even though he ran

this little

it was like a little stall selling like

cigarettes and stuff

um christian and murdy both of them i

mean they weren't ordained

so yeah it is it is possible to be

enlightened in a lay lifestyle although

i mean the lifestyle is going to be

modified it's going to be a like a

simpler kind of lifestyle

i think you know you're not just going

to be you know out chasing after money

and just somehow become enlightened but

then again when lay people

um either become enlightened or they

have like this

intense awakening experience that shifts

them into a higher level of

consciousness

as a general rule it's not just

caused by um liberating insight after

meditation

usually there's some kind of um like a

crisis has to hit

like there was a scientist named john

wren lewis

who was um on a

vacation with his wife in thailand and

somebody poisoned him

because they were going to they're going

to rob him after he lost consciousness

and he almost died he had a near-death

experience

and that near-death experience just

slammed him into a higher level of

consciousness that he

he said that he remained in after after

ever after so even if he wasn't fully

enlightened he was

in a higher level of consciousness than

he was before

and it wasn't due to meditation practice

and the same thing goes for eckhart

tolle he wasn't really a meditator

he just had this it was like an

existential crisis he was just

like suicidally depressed and just

that slammed him and he just couldn't

stand

living with himself and it just slammed

him out of this rut

so um yeah just the short answer do you

sincerely believe

is possible to be enlightened in a lay

lifestyle i would say yes

it may be less likely than for a monk or

a nun

or just some forest living recluse some

spiritual being living out in the woods

alone regardless of whether he's

ordained or not but

uh yeah it isn't like it is it is

possible although

you have to uh be more skillful

at uh you know all the distractions not

being distracted by

all the distractions you know not not

just being distracted by the

the shadows flickering on the walls of

plato's cave

or or like getting seduced into

believing that the matrix is real

getting blue pilled it's way easier well

i mean almost everyone's blue pilled

including most monks and nuns

you know they think that samsara is

reality that this is real that i am

or whoever they are you know is real and

all that but um

uh yeah i mean it's possible so i'll

just move on to the next question

which is from dog breath

and mr breath says morality plays a

large

role within the buddhist belief system

worldview ethical action

speech karma monastic rules all combine

to produce a moral paradigm

so is an enlightened person who has gone

beyond

morally infallible how can an

enlightened teacher act in an abusive

manner towards

students well that's an interesting

question

and with regard to this part here is an

enlightened person who has gone beyond

morally infallible the answer is

yep and the reason for that is that an

enlightened being

practically by definition is not making

karma anymore

so an enlightened being has literally

gone beyond

good and evil not in a nichian sense

but they just are not making karma

anymore

and so really everything they do is

essentially neutral

morally neutral regardless of the

effects of it because

um the effect on their own spirit the

effect the effect on themselves

is is uh essentially zero

so how can an enlightened teacher act in

an abusive manner towards students

um i'm reminded of maharaji or neem

karoli baba who is the guru of ram das

very famous and he may have been fully

enlightened as far as i know

and ram das would say of him this this

supposedly enlightened being

that the better you got to know him the

more you realize there really wasn't

anybody there

and he'd be yelling and hitting people

and and cussing and all this stuff just

going

into these seeming rages and laughing

and shouting and crying and everything

but ram das said you better the more you

knew him the more you realize that he

was just like a mirror to your own karma

he'd just be reflecting your own karma

back at you

so if you had some kind of karma where

somebody's supposed to hit you or

something

then maharaji would hit you and it

wasn't really

him making some sort of deliberate

choice it was just all spontaneous flow

with nobody there it was just nature

taking its course

so i assume an enlightened being would

be that way where even the buddha is not

thinking of what he's going to say next

you know he's not planning out what his

next sermon is going to be

it's just he sits down and it just is

elicited

from the audience that uh if he's got a

wise audience maybe

the the talk will come out you know more

profound

so i assume um yeah that's that's my

answer

the short answer is is enlightened

person who has gone beyond morally

infallible i'd say yep

because really they've just gone beyond

morality morality just doesn't stick to

them it's just not really an issue

anymore

so the next question is from wanderer

and that is what is your view and

understanding of

magic and magic here is spelt uh

m-a-g-i-c-k with the k so that's

like uh aleister crowley i think

i think aleister crowley was uh the one

who made that famous

i could be mistaken and uh i think it

was dog breath who

informed me just recently that the k at

the end of magic

when it's spelled this way stands for

kabbalah

so it would be based on like um

like jewish esoteric mysticism and then

it kind of ran through the mill of like

freemasonry

and so um i really don't know that much

about it i've

never really liked or trusted aleister

crowley

and um it just struck me that magic is

is a way of like exploiting samsara

you're trying to make the most

of samsara you're not trying to become

enlightened as far as i know

you're just trying to become like an

adept like a master

of samsara and uh like

maybe becoming something like a

nietzsche and over man at the same time

just trying to make yourself immune to

morality like the distinctions of good

and evil

something like that but um yeah it seems

it strikes me as being very samsaric

and uh really um

yeah it's not it's not really

spiritually beneficial

as far as i know i'm no authority on it

but that's just uh that's my take on it

so next question also from wanderer

about

karma if i would try to shoot for

example

an empty can but when i shoot the bullet

goes through the can and

accidentally hits a person and kills him

or her

without me seeing it and under my

lifetime i never get to know about it

would it then not affect me the

slightest

and this question is asked to you and

the belief according to taravana

okay well my view and the terror of

autumn view are very similar on this one

with regard to terra vada whether what

you do is right or wrong whether it's

good karma or bad

karma depends on your own volition

so if you just accidentally kill

somebody and are oblivious to the fact

that you accidentally kill them

you know you're like like the example

you gave or maybe you're like way up on

this mountain and you accidentally kick

a rock

and the rock rolls down and starts an

avalanche and kills somebody

like half a mile down below and you

never you never hear about it or even if

you do yeah

you don't make the connection that maybe

you kicked the first little pebble that

started the whole thing going

then uh yeah you haven't done anything

wrong

you did not deliberately intentionally

hurt anybody

and so from the buddhist point of view

you didn't do anything wrong

so if there is any karmic effect from

that

it could be through a kind of subliminal

kind of uh like a paranormal like

like esp or or telepathy or something

where like at a at a non-physical very

subliminal level

that you kind of you somehow know that

you accidentally killed somebody

but even accidentally killing them would

not be the problem i mean that wouldn't

be positive or negative it would just be

completely neutral because you had no

intention whatsoever to hurt anybody

but if you deep down somehow you

intuitively

or or like um psychically

feel that that happened then it could

have like residual effects you could

have like

guilt or something which would make its

own karma but

um i think the main question here is uh

i mean uh from from the point of

terabyte of buddhism

you know right and wrong are matters of

volition or

will so you you have to have a

deliberate intention

to to do something in order for that

something to have a moral value

if you do something completely by

accident then uh

yeah it's it's it's amoral it's it's not

good or bad

so the next question is from potila

listing question here in case it was

missed can you talk a bit about

buddha buddha nusiti

sanganusidi the texts say it leads to

nirvana but the practice is not taught

much

in the west um yeah this

of the the 40 standard meditation

techniques

that are given in the texts i think it's

the commentarial tradition like the we

suddenly maga

um buddha nucidi which is uh

contemplation of the qualities of the

buddha

dalma nu city which is contemplation of

the qualities of dhamma

and sangha nucidi which is contemplation

of the qualities of the sangha

they are orthodox standard meditation

techniques

but they're they're relatively low level

um i don't know the text according to

potila the text stated it leads to

nibbana

but um also according i'm pretty sure

it's according to the wizui maga that

you don't even get the first

genre with that because there's so much

thinking you know like

um the standard formula for buddha new

city for example

was a burmese accent burmese

pronunciation of pali

would be what edp

and so a lot of burmese people when they

meditate they'll just be repeating that

more or less like a mantra usually with

a mala or like a rosary

you know one bead is every time you do

that and uh the buddhist 969 movement

is is based on these three meditations

where the buddha has

nine qualities that you recite and then

the dhamma has six

and then the sangha has nine again so

yeah it's a relatively elementary

meditation technique

and if it does lead to nibana maybe it's

just because

anything can really lead to nibana in a

way it's uh

you're still thinking a lot and you're

not even close to first jhana

or or any jhana really but um

uh at least you're not thinking anything

about wholesome so long as your mind

isn't wandering

so there is that but it's it's a

relatively uh

elementary kind of meditation and

it can be useful if you're busy doing

something else you're washing dishes or

something and

you just want something going through

your mind that's wholesome

especially if you understand the meaning

of the of the poly or

you're thinking it in english or

something but

uh yeah it's an elementary meditation

technique that is orthodox but

it uh doesn't it doesn't get you even to

first gen

at least i'm pretty sure that's that's

what i've read

so let's see next question from potila

what are your thoughts on bhante we mala

twim system and his rejection of the

term theravada for

sutawata so that's two questions let's

say

first what is my opinion of

ponte

twim and i'd never even heard of it

before

i have to admit i even looked it up i

think it's like tranquility wisdom

insight meditation or something like

that

and i'm not sure who bonte mala ramsay

is i really do not study up on

other um buddhist teachers very much

i just um i've just spent my life uh you

know just

looking at the the poly texts

occasionally reading a book on the

subject but not very often

and uh just observing my own mind

so with regard to the first first part

of the question here what is my what are

my thoughts

on bonte wheat malarami's twim system is

uh

yeah i've never heard of it before i

looked it up a little bit and it didn't

really explain what it was

so i i just kind of stopped stopped

looking

so yeah sorry sorry i can't help you on

that one

next part of the question is what are my

thoughts of his rejection of the term

terravada for sutawata

um yeah i've got no problem with that

especially if he's not

accepting like the complete edifice of

terra botta buddhism

and like i sort of touched on a little

earlier

that uh orthodox tarabata it includes

all these texts that not everybody

finds acceptable or believable and

you've got the entire commentarial

tradition you've got abi dama

and all that and so if you wanted to

call yourself

just uh like a staunch terravottan you'd

have to

maybe um modify the definition of

taravana

so that you can say well somebody who

completely rejects abhidhamma and the

commentaries can still be a teravatan

or you know some month that's not

following the rules can still be a

terabyte in monk

or you can just change change the name

you know like i

we already talked about navakavada up

above

you know teravata is doctrine of the

elders nava cavada would be doctrine of

the newcomers which is us

barbarians of the west and uh so

sutawata

yeah i mean it's uh like the doctrine of

of the discourses the doctrine of the

sutas

um he left out within maybe he doesn't

follow it strictly i don't know

but yeah i mean if if he's not going to

really accept full orthodoxy of

theravada

then it would be honest to call it

something else

rather than pretend that it's it's still

orthodox tiravana

so yeah yeah i've got no problem with

that and

you know i've i've done similar things

so

move on to the next question also from

potila

can you talk about your opinions

concerning the western redoubt

and prepper movements do you think that

conservatives or right-wing political

dissidents should relocate to specific

areas

in case of social turmoil or to carve

out a saner place to live in peace

should right-wing buddhists think about

selecting a temple or

area to do something similar in order to

focus on cultivating a spiritual life

as laity okay so there's a number of

sub questions in here so my opinions

considering the western redoubt and

prepper movements i think back in the

80s they were called survivalists

and they'd be moving to places like

idaho or alaska and just trying to be

self-sufficient

and um whether that's right or wrong

whether it's good or bad whether it's

helpful or unhelpful really depends on

their own mental states like

like i've been saying whether anything

is good or bad you know the moral

quality of something depends on your

volitions

two people can do exactly the same

action and

uh one person is doing something good

and the other person is doing something

bad

so you know like the classic example is

you you walk into the forest and

you you see a snake trying to swallow a

frog and the frog is struggling to get

away

and so you chase the snake away

well i mean if you did it out of

compassion for the frog you did

something

wholesome and good but if you did did it

out of a version for

the snake you know then then you did

something

you know negative and wholesome and bad

even though it was exactly the same

action

it's uh it was the the volition behind

it that determined whether it was good

or bad

and western people i think maybe burmese

people also they they really don't

they don't really um grok that they

don't really get it

you know it's like is doing this good or

bad but really it's it's the mental

states involved

and you can do this with positive or

negative mental states and that's really

what determines whether it's good or bad

so yeah with regard to to that i mean if

people

if if they're just fulfilling something

that really

um you know intuitively they're drawn to

then it could be really good i mean

there's nothing wrong with being

self-sufficient

in fact it might be a wise and if you

really think civilization is going to

collapse

or you really think america is going to

just degenerate into civil war or

something then

yeah i mean it would make sense and if

you've got a family you got you you've

got

you know children or something that

you're responsible for that would be a

proven course to take if you really

sincerely think that that is likely to

happen

or that even there's a good chance of it

so yeah i've got nothing against that

so now we go to the next part of the

questions do you think

that conservatives or right-wing

political dissidents should relocate to

specific areas in case of social turmoil

or

carve out a senior place to live in

peace

well it does kind of make sense i mean

if you really think that

there is going to be like civil war then

it does make sense that you wouldn't

want to be caught behind enemy lines

you know it's like uh that's one reason

i mean it's a minor reason

it's i mean it's it's not really it's

just a benefit more than a conscious

reason

of me me living in south carolina is

that

south carolina is is good and red you

know it's a conservative state

and uh so if if the civil if the civil

war really does happen if the the

proverbial hits the fan

then uh at least i'll i'll i won't be

caught behind enemy lines i'll be on the

right side

so to speak so

yeah i mean again it's just a matter of

volition it determines whether it's

right or wrong

um next part should right-wing buddhists

think about

selecting a temple or area to do

something similar in order to focus on

cultivating a spiritual life as

laity well people like potila and others

who contact me sometimes

are really interested in community

they want to have a buddhist community

whereas mutual support

and that's it's not a bad idea although

my history from the very beginning from

the time i became a buddhist i was a

loner

and part of the reason for that is just

that buddhist people

with a similar point of view as me are

extremely scarce

and so um yeah i just went on my own

like

like the horn of the rhinoceros and

that's that's good buddhism there's

nothing

non-buddhist about being a loner and

just practicing on your own

just uh having a teacher you contact

occasionally maybe

learning your meditation off youtube

reading lots of books

there's nothing necessarily wrong with

that but if you can find a good

community

that helps you then obviously yeah

it might be a really good thing to do

that too so

um yeah should right wing buddhists

think about selecting a temple or area

to do something similar

um in order to focus on cultivating a

spiritual life as laity

um yeah there's nothing wrong with that

and if you can find such a place then

then

that's excellent more power to you um if

you find a really good place uh

yeah let everybody else know too maybe

that will attract more people and create

a better or bigger community

so yeah all it's gonna take is like one

rich eccentric theravada buddhist

to uh just start up a place and maybe

everything else will just fall into

place after that

but um yeah like i say my own approach

has been

largely one of a loner and i am

i have been quite willing to teach

others especially since coming back to

america in 2011

um in america you have to work for a

living and

uh i am most qualified to be a buddhist

teacher than anything else i think

so yeah i'm quite willing to participate

if something like that

really happens but at present uh

i'm more interested in just setting up

so i can feed myself reliably

rather than setting up a dhamma center

so

um yeah but i mean if you want to give

thought to that

and you really do not like being a loner

in your buddhism

then if you really need the support of a

group

or a tribe something like that then

yeah sure i mean it makes perfect sense

next question can you talk

about the origins of the mahayana

movement

more specifically about the strong need

for multiple buddhist deities

bodhisattvas and the like to help one to

enlightenment early buddhists were left

with the dhamma

quote he sees that alma sees me unquote

but the mahayana took the idea of

buddhas to the extreme

is this just a natural human trait to

need help from above

okay well i could do an entire an entire

video

on the origins of the mahayana i'm going

to have to give you like the stripped

down version

but it's my understanding that mahayana

was based on more than one

movement in india in ancient times

and one of the movements was just like

an aversion for abhidhamma an aversion

for all this complicated systematic

psycho not psychology but philosophy

that

a lot of scholar monks were cooking up

like in terra vada you've got the

abhidhamma you got some mountain of

commentarial literature

where they're just intellectualizing

everything conceptualizing and

categorizing and organizing and

systematizing

and some buddhists

presumably mostly monks realized that

that was not

what dhamma was all about and so they

had like this reform movement where they

were just talking

if they talked at all it was like in

paradoxes you know it's like

the diamond cutter sutra which is one of

the early mahayana texas you know the

bodhisa

the bodhisattva is not a bodhisattva

therefore he is a bodhisattva that kind

of stuff

and it's just trying to shut down

intellectualism is trying to get back

towards something like the atakawaga

which is

one of the the earliest buddhist texts

in existence

so that aspect of mahayana was really

an attempt at returning to a purer form

of dharma and i've got no problem with

that

you know like zen is kind of kind of

like that it's sort of anti-intellectual

um with regard to the other movement i

think that's more

what potila has in mind here and i think

that the other movement arose mainly in

southern india

which is more devotionalistic

historically like like the hinduism of

southern india is more

devotionalistic or at least it used to

be and um

that was based ultimately on roots

even in terravata or in the older

schools where

it's just human nature that you want to

glorify the founder of your religious

system or if you've got like a great

king you you glorify him

and um so what arose

even in terra vada is a kind of

literature called janaka which is

talking about the buddha's previous

existences and these janaka stories are

kind of like aesop's fables and a lot of

them really are

fables that were just appropriated from

earlier

indian tradition and just had like

a little buddhist introduction packed

onto the beginning

and a little buddhist conclusion tacked

on to the end with the buddha saying you

know in this life i was the fox

you know and ananda was was like the

quail or something you know it's just

kind of giving identities to to the

different characters

in the story but um what happened was

that in in the mythology there arose

this idea

that the buddha had to perfect himself

just lifetime after lifetime after

lifetime just millions of lifetimes

just making himself perfected enough to

be

a fully enlightened buddha not just an

ordinary arahant

and so because the buddha was glorified

and they had

all these legends of him just you know

for millions of lifetimes perfecting

himself

to rise up to the state of glory that uh

there there came to be like a division

between a fully enlightened sama sambuda

and just an ordinary enlightened being

or an arahant

so um that was like the origin of the

the bodhisattva idea

is that it used to be in terror

and in terrible buddhism even now the

the equivalent is bodhisattva

in pali and it just means a being who is

destined to become a fully enlightened

buddha

and i think even the word bodhisattva

is a mistranslation from from pali or

our language very similar to pali

because bodhisattva means enlightenment

being

which is kind of strange considering

that a bodhisattva is

like postponing enlightenment

indefinitely whereas

in terravada sata can also be

it's like a past participle of the verb

sajadi which means to be bound for to be

attached to

and so originally bodhisatta

could have been um just a being who is

bound for enlightenment

and then it got misunderstood by uh

southern indian buddhists apparently

and uh they gave it the wrong sanskrit

equivalent or rendering so

yeah i think it could be that some of

these

early mahayanas who took that route were

like the pure land

where you're not even trying to become

enlightened in this very life like the

buddha

historical buddha was saying was like

instructing people

it's like some of them were trying to

become enlightened in this very life and

they just couldn't do it i think like

shinran

in japan was kind of like that they're

just trying to become enlightened

and it doesn't work for them for

whatever reasons

and so then they fall back on just

devotionalism just

praying to a higher being

almost like christians do praying to

some higher being to get them

born into a pure land of the west where

it's much easier to become enlightened

next time and that's not what the buddha

taught he said you should become

enlightened in this very life if you

possibly can

and so praying to be enlightened in a

next

life or or worse yeah postponing

enlightenment

until all of the other beings in the

universe are going to become enlightened

too

um yeah that's i really do not think the

buddha taught now

okay so let's see i guess that's a

that's a

long enough or short enough um

explanation or answer to that question

so we'll move on to the next one because

as i say there are lots of questions

that have been asked just in the last

few days so the next question is

rainy day from rainy day 365.

would you elaborate or clarify more on

your statement that love is acceptance

and acceptance is love

yeah that that is like a motto of mine

that is

my definition of love is just acceptance

and so the opposite of that would be

rejection and hate is just like total

aversion just

pushing away so

let's see one way of talking about it

is um

i use the example of pink floyd's wall

some of you who are old enough

may be familiar with pink floyd's the

wall

considered by many to be pink floyd's

greatest album

and it's about how we spend our lives

just building this wall around our heart

just to protect ourselves but it closes

off everybody's it

closes off closes us off from everybody

else even though it might protect us

you know we're no longer vulnerable

really

but still we're just closed off we're

like this

self-enclosed ego and

what love does or um acceptance

is at least you're making a door or a

window in pink floyd's wall

and you're no longer just a me like if

you love somebody it's not just

me and that other person it's like i

love that other person it becomes like

us there's like uh like a union of some

sort

like a spiritual union and um

i mean love i mean it's not just

romantic love either i mean what's

mostly called

love but in the west or to some degree

even in the east

is it's just like animal mating

instincts reproductive instincts it's

the emotional aspect

isn't really love the emotional aspect

is like

animal reproductive instincts that are

elicited by

love or they've got like an element of

love

you know like a mother hen taking care

of her chicks

um you can say that's just animal

instinct but still there's there's like

this little spark of genuine love i mean

she accepts her chicks

she's not xenophobic towards her chicks

at all she just accepts them

wholeheartedly you know they run to her

for protection she covers them with

their wings and sleeps over them and

everything and

that is acceptance that is i mean it's

not just uh

wanting to give or anything like that

it's just

um you just let down your defenses you

let down your the walls around you

so i guess i'll move on to the next one

if if that's not a good enough answer

i'll try again later maybe

i mean some some of these questions are

so detailed in the answers i could just

make a video of

each one next question is from

zen bits does dharma come from the

sutras

if the sutras were all burnt where then

would dharma

come from well that depends on the

definition of dharma and dharma is one

of the vaguest

terms in in buddhist philosophy like

dhamma in in pali um

yeah it's got lots and lots of

definition it can just mean thing

it can mean the teaching of the buddha

it can just mean like philosophical

views in general it can mean

law it can be mental state it can mean

all these different things

and so if you're going to call

dharma just what is contained in the

sutras

which is a possible definition then yeah

if the sutures were all burnt then the

dharma would just

cease to exist but that's that's a very

narrow definition

and uh if you if you say that dharma is

truth and that the buddha didn't he

didn't invent dharma he just

rediscovered it you know there's like

the the simile in the polytechnics of

the ancient city

and uh you you're wandering through the

forest and you find this ancient city

that's i mean it already it has been

there for a very long time

and the buddha is compared to the the

explorer or the person who discovers

that ancient city

um yeah the buddha did not invent dharma

he just discovered it and uh kind of

shared it with others as well as he

could

so yeah the dharma is everywhere

supposedly yeah the dharmakaya

maybe you could call it as a as a

mahayana buddhist

so it depends on the definition of the

dharma but if dharma is really just

spiritual truth or the way to

enlightenment

then yeah the sutras the the printed

books are

um kind of uh superfluous or almost

irrelevant

you know they're just uh you know it's

like a book about

horses i mean um yeah it's like if the

horses if the the

book about horses was burnt i mean the

horses would still exist

it's kind it's kind of that kind of a

deal so the next question is from

bpat427

now that you're a layperson do you plan

on picking up a weapon to defend

yourself

or your home golly i might have to

divide this into two videos like two

sections

because there's there's all kinds of

detailed stuff

i can talk about on these so do i plan

on picking up a weapon to defend myself

or my home

actually um yeah i am kind of interested

in getting a pistol

at least one and uh there's one fellow

who kind of sold me on the idea of

dismissing west

the smith and wesson 360 model 360 with

the titanium

uh cylinder shoots 357 magnum are 38

special

or then i've got this other friend who's

saying i think he's saying it's the

glock 19 is just like the ultimate

pistol so but the thing is as a

layperson

i mean this is one reason why monks

become monks is because as a layperson

you have duties

and you may have duties to like hurt

others i mean if if you've got a family

for example if you've got people you

love then

yeah i mean it may be your duty to

protect that family

or um it may even be that you may have

the duty to protect

your country so

uh yeah i mean that's that's one of the

aspects of being a man

and i remember i had this this friend he

was a monk for many years

and he dropped out and he got married

and he had a stepdaughter because his

wife had already had a daughter from a

previous marriage

i think a son also and he was just

trying to be as monk-like as possible

while no longer being a monk well being

essentially a family man

and one time i asked him it's like what

would happen if

like somebody assaulted your wife would

you just stand there

i mean i mean you have to do something

and his answer

just his saintly almost inhuman answer

is like well it would be her karma

wouldn't it

and it's like i mean how can you be a

man

and have like oh like a mate maybe

children it's your duty to protect them

but still you're so committed to ahimsa

and non-violence that you would actually

let them be

raped or killed and you would just stand

there and not

and not lift a hand against the

the aggressor i mean you may be a saint

you may be a very advanced being but i

it's hard to consider a person like that

to really be a man

so yeah i mean that's if you really are

totally committed to non-violence even

to the point of not even protecting

you know other people who need to be

protected

then um yeah you may be better off just

renouncing the world

but um i've i've considered like as a

uh like a buddhist uh defense of

soldiers

you know you really have to have

soldiers and they should be seen as like

noble

um what's the word tragic heroes

where they are um sacrificing

their own welfare in order

that for others to live in peace you

know they're sacrificing their own

virtue they're sacrificing their like

their future rebirth perhaps

uh for the sake of others and i mean

that's that's a noble renunciation in a

way

at least i see it that way and as a lay

person if you have loved ones i mean

you really should do your best to

protect them even if it involves

um you know shooting someone who's

really going to kill

someone if you don't shoot them that

kind of a thing with regard to

protecting myself it's not that big of a

deal with regard to protecting my home

it's not that big of a deal

although uh if if like a civil war broke

out i know which side i would be on

so yeah it's it's it's kind of weird

ethics there

it's not purely buddhist but then again

if you want to follow pure

buddhist ethics you pretty much have to

renounce the world

so the next question also from bpap427

what's your opinion

on bonte wierasu and the 969 movement

well even though i was living in burma

for many years i

really i really don't know that much

about it to tell you the truth

i've seen some um quotes of his that

make perfect sense you know

he just his main concern seems to be

keeping burma like mostly traditional

buddhists and he's not like advocating

hate towards non-buddhists but there is

like a real potential for

burma to be like i don't know

overrun maybe is not the best term but

uh

you know kind of um

adversely affected by um intolerant

islam moving into the country and really

gaining a solid foothold

and i mean all

buddhists really do have a precedent for

not

uh welcoming islam because india is the

homeland

of buddhism and the buddhists were

essentially exterminated in india

by fanatical muslims who would just

slaughter buddhists by literally by the

millions

not all at once not in one day but over

the course of their conquest of most of

india

literally millions of buddhists killed

if not with a sword then or burned to

death

and i mean in the islamic chronicles you

know they've got chronicles where

they're actually bragging about all the

all the buddhists that they burned alive

or

killed with swords and that kind of

thing a lot of them just uh

you know starved to death as refugees

and forests and that kind of thing also

so um yeah that's about

all i know about bonte wierasu in the

969 movement

i mean my first exposure to venerable

wierasu was

was years earlier before the 969

movement even existed

and that was i went to a retreat

conducted by uh

tenjidong seattle and if you've never

heard of him

it doesn't matter but um i didn't think

the tanjidong method was a legit

buddhist method i think he was just

having people breathe too hard until

they were getting dizzy they were like

hyperventilating

and then uh he's calling that pt saying

they're getting closer to enlightenment

by

being all dizzy and like acting drunk

and uh this same venerable weirathu

wrote a book

denouncing um tenji don seano

so which kind of vindicated my point of

view also but

um with regard to the like the face of

buddhist terrorism and all that

i just i haven't seen it i mean he may

he may have uh

endorsed violence against muslims at

some point

but um i'm unaware of that and i really

haven't been following it very well

anyway

so i think i'll just move on to bpat 427

the next question

and that is have you met any fellow

theravada buddhist

in south carolina yet and the answer to

that is no i have in fact i

i'm unaware of having met any buddhists

at all so far

although as i say since i got here

um partly i've just been attending to

just getting things settled and it's

it's really it's really a challenge

and i think i may do a little video just

kind of giving another update

like like quest for for credit you know

just

just i have zero credit rating just

literally zero

and just just that is such a handicap

in in the west now so maybe i'll i'll

just

do another little uh um

like a transitional update just on that

one

but uh yeah that in a way it's like

i mean like i said i've my buddhism has

been

essentially solitary i haven't really

been out

looking for buddhist groups and

um i think there may be a sri lankan

place and where within like a 20 mile

radius of here i think i

remember hearing something about that so

yeah i'll eventually go there i assume

after i get a car and everything

but um yeah first things first so i'm

starting off like uh

just like the like the uh the embryonic

fertilized eggs just still i'm just in

the cup of cells

stage at this at the present time

so next question and this is a wise guy

kind of question from old be

pat 427 he's asking which i prefer

mustard-based or vinegar-based barbecue

and uh yeah i have no idea i don't know

what are the ingredients of barbecue

sauce although

i was in a walmart believe it or not i

was in a walmart recently

it was like possibly the first time i

ever entered a walmart in my life

and um there was this lady there who uh

was like thoroughly just heartily

encouraging

or endorsing it was duke's white

barbecue sauce she was just she's just

saying her husband just absolutely loves

it

so if you live down south where you can

get duke's mayonnaise

where everybody eats dukes mayonnaise

down south then

they also make this white barbecue sauce

that apparently is just to die for

so don't die for it literally but uh

that's what i've been told

and uh with regard to mustard based or

vinegar based i'm totally clueless

i have no idea i just eat food i don't

really bother with what the ingredients

are

okay last question from bpat427

orthodox theravada teaches that all

sentient beings have the potential for

enlightenment

but it also teaches that one can't

become enlightened until a buddha is

born and teaches the dhamma

in a specific world system how could an

ant become enlightened if it can't

understand the buddha's teachings

sure if the ant is alive during the time

of the buddha it could have its mind

read by the buddha

and become enlightened but even if the

teachings of the middle way are still

being taught on

said planet after the buddha's death who

could teach the

ant well this is kind of strange

and uh takes a little bit of unpacking

here first of all

um the first statement up towards the

top here is not entirely true

since he says orthodox tyrabada teaches

that all sentient beings have the

potential for enlightenment

but it also teaches that one can't

become enlightened until the buddha is

born and teaches the dhamma

um they're still they're still pacheco

buddhas so

um even when there's no buddha

even when buddha buddhism is extinct

when the dhamma

the true dhamma is unknown in the world

then there are still a few beings

becoming enlightened they're becoming

pacheco buddhas so they're like a buddha

they're higher than an ordinary arahant

but um they're unable to teach or for

whatever reason they just aren't just

stay as hermits and

don't teach and they don't start

buddhism going again

so there is that but getting getting

farther down here with regard to the ant

um yeah he says sure if the ant is alive

during the time of the buddha it could

have its mind

read by the buddha and become

enlightened

um i don't think an ant has much of a

mind to read tell you the truth

and um yeah whether an ant becomes

um yeah i think buddhism teaches that

animals

really they can't really become

enlightened

i mean the potential is there because

you have the potential

to move up on the scale until you're at

a level where you have sufficient

wisdom and understanding that you could

become enlightened

but i don't think the buddha is saying

or buddhism or whatever

be pat has read that just because

everybody has the potential for

enlightenment

like the buddha nature like in mahayana

buddhism they talk about the buddha

nature

then yeah that doesn't necessarily mean

that the buddha could enlighten anybody

it's like not everybody who met the

buddha became enlightened most of them

presumably didn't

and one of the most famous zen koans is

the monk asked joshua if a dog has

buddha nature and

joshua just says which is like no

i think uh what in in the original

chinese it was like

which is sort of like the barking of a

dog but um

that's neither here or there so yeah i

don't

even if the buddha were alive i don't

think he's going to be enlightening

entire colonies of ants so

um yeah in in in that case i mean

if if you had the potential for

enlightenment and

uh you're born at a time when

um there is no buddhism there is no true

dharma in this world then potentially

you could be born in a different world

where there is that

so there there is that too

so i'll just uh move on to the next

question because we're already uh well

over an hour here

this is from follower number a12

c67e7

how do you kick a bad habit you really

enjoy and have no will to give up

what kind of a question is that how do

you kick a bad habit you really enjoy

and have no will to give up the answer

that is easy you don't

you do not kick that habit so the only

way to change your behavior

is to change your perceptions for

example i'll give you i'll give you an

example from my own

my own life my father tried to quit

smoking

many times my dear departed father he'd

smoke two packs of marlboros a day

and um you know then he'd try to quit

and he quit for a while

the next thing you know he's like maybe

chewing a little chewing a little snooze

or

or like uh smoking a pipe a little bit

and the next thing you know he's back up

two packs a day again

it was really hard for him to quit

smoking you know he quit

many times and then started again many

times so

then one fine day his legs started

turning black

and the thing was he went to a doctor

about it of course

and uh he had he was a longshoremen he

loaded logs onto ships

and a log had rolled over and crushed

one of his legs

years previously and there was enough

capillary damage that

tar from from the smoking was starting

to

clog up the little cap damaged little

capillaries in his leg

and his leg was just turning black and

so the doctor told them you're gonna

have to stop smoking or we're gonna have

to amputate that leg

all you had to do was stop smoking and

then the blackness would clear up as the

the tar

gradually dissipated and his perception

of the situation changed

radically so that he just stopped

smoking

you know it wasn't so hard anymore i

mean it was still you still have the

same urges

but as soon as you get that urge of man

i want to smoke that cigarette it was

just like

amputate the leg i mean it's like do i

want my leg amputated

just for the sake of smoking the

cigarette and i mean

it was no it was a no-brainer it was

just an easy choice to make

and um so really it works that way with

regard to everything it's like uh like

krishnamurti used to say if you get

bitten by a snake once you don't have to

go to

classes or or like seminars on how to be

careful about snakes it just happens

naturally you've

you've had personal experience with how

bad snakes are

and so you're just careful about snakes

ever after you don't need you don't need

to study anything you don't you don't

need to try

even so it's just a matter of perception

and uh once you see that that bad habit

really is a bad habit then you're not

going to enjoy it so much and you are

going to have the will to give it up

but you just have to see that it's

really a bad habit and with some people

like if they're drug addicts or

something

they may have to hit absolute rock

bottom they may have to

to lose their their family you know lose

their marriage

lose their house lose their job lose

their friends lose their reputation

lose their health lose everything and

once they hit rock bottom

then they'll think gee maybe i maybe

that's not so good after all maybe i

really should stop

and just halfway wanting to stop isn't

good enough because you know during the

half the time that you want to stop me

yeah you're stopped but then you know

the itch or the urge starts coming

back and the next thing you know you're

doing it again because you haven't

really fully realized that

that it's just not good for you and you

shouldn't keep doing it

so yeah so that was a really easy

question how do you kick a bad habit you

really enjoy and have no will to give up

you just don't you're just going to

change your perceptions

and you mostly it's not going to be a

deliberate

act of changing your mind it's just

going to be you something's going to

happen which is going to change your

perceptions for you

as a general you're going to have some

kind of realization some kind of

some kind of accident or epiphany or

something is just going to happen

to you which is going to change your

perception

of the um of the world that you're

living in and then

it's going to be a lot easier

okay next question from follower number

a12c67e7

are there plans to resume your shows

with brian rue

and i'm happy to tell you that yes

indeed we're going to

uh uh record another show tomorrow

the gods willing so yeah i'm glad about

that i've settled down

enough and my my distraction and

mental flurry has died down enough

that uh yeah i can get into doing doing

another show with him

and i think part of one of one of the

the episodes that we're going to do

tomorrow i think is going to be pretty

much

like just a status report from me

how life is going with me wearing a

shirt

and not eating rice

okay next question is from sub wolf

77 which i assume is the same as

vajra wolf 77 who already asked a

question about

but uh we'll give subwoof the benefit of

the doubt here

first question i've been trying my best

to learn sadiq meditation through books

and online resources i do my best when

out and about in daily life for example

if i stub

my toe or cut my finger at work i try to

catch myself

in the mental state of disliking the

pain before i can really attach myself

to it and amplify it

as far as sitting practice goes i have

been stuck on anapanasati

for probably a year now and i am afraid

to really try different things because i

feel like the results i get from trying

to concentrate on other objects

besides the breath are subpar any advice

for someone like me should i

try something different or stick with

anapanasati

even though it is an extremely basic

meditative practice

well as i've already said above

or earlier anapanasity or meditation on

the breathing

even though it is very basic

and easy to do relatively speaking

you can get all the way to four of the

genre with it i mean it's

just because it's basic and simple it's

it's also very powerful

if you're good at it so there's no need

so long as it's still working so long as

you're able to do it

and hopefully if you're still making

progress with it or at least you're

getting

out of it what you want out of it then

yeah there's there's no need at all to

switch to a different meditation

technique you

might want to try a different technique

every now and then just to experiment

see if something works better but um

yeah there's absolutely nothing wrong

with anapanasity

and uh yeah it'll take you all the way

to fourth jhana and

presumably beyond so

let's see make sure i'm answering the

question completely here

yeah yeah i think i just did so yeah

there's no problem at all you can you

can stay with it for the rest of your

life and if it continues

to work for you then you're doing really

good second question

what is your opinion on the zen doctrine

of no mind and can you explain it

i am generally very intrigued by

buddhist philosophy as well as

philosophy of mind sort of stuff and i'm

thinking about purchasing

suzuki's explanation of the doctrine um

well for for starters i'm really not a

zen teacher i know some

things about zen you know i've read a

lot of zen books

i was originally drawn towards zen

checked out as in monastery before i

decided on terra vada um

but i think you're you'd be better off

just purchasing suzuki's explanation

because uh

yeah my explanation is going to be

pretty sketchy

i'll give you my best my best guess here

on the the zen doctrine of no mind

i assume zen has been

influenced by my jamaica and

majamaka presumably was

started by a just a brilliant

buddhist philosopher named nagarjuna

and nagarjuna was saying that even

i mean that nothing in the phenomenal

world is is really valid it has no self

essence

there is no reality to the phenomenal

world

and that would include mind i remember a

long time ago

i picked up at a used bookstore in burma

a textbook on indian philosophy

that was uh written in india and it was

based on

ancient or medieval indian philosophy

texts

so um it was mostly based on hinduism

and in that sort of thing but it did

have uh a chapter on buddhism

and for the sake of convenience i assume

because the the medieval

hindu scholars used the same method they

divided buddhism into four different

groups

you had two hinayana groups and two

mahayana groups

and the the of the two mahayana groups

they had majamaka and yogachara

majamaka said nothing is real yogachara

said only

mind is real that matter isn't real

so the majama because we're saying mind

isn't real matter isn't real

the yogacharas were saying matter isn't

real but

mind is and then below that i can't

remember i think they were called the

celtronicas

who are saying that mind and matter are

both real

but you can you can know mind directly

but you can infer

the existence of matter and then below

that or the fourth group was

i think they were referring to sarvasti

bottle because theravada was already

pretty much of a non-entity in northern

india at that time

it was saying you can know mind and

matter directly

so considering that zen is probably most

influenced or at least significantly

influenced by

majamaka who is which says that

neither mind nor matter really is

ultimately real that uh i assume that

would be

the zen doctrine of no mind or at least

that's my best guess

um yeah uh like an expert on zen could

answer that question way better than me

so i'm just moving on to the next one

last question by subwoof77

did you ever think about contacting

arctos to publish your book

they have a lot of alt-right authors as

well as a lot of books published on

eastern spirituality

it seems like you might fit in there i

haven't read your blog a lot so i am not

sure of the depth of your material

but i look forward to purchasing your

book when it is published

well i'm glad you're going to uh

purchase the book

it's the first of a series of five

actually i mean they're they're not like

um you could read them in any order

they're they're like uh

um compilations of essays on various

various topics so um but getting back to

the question did i ever think about

contacting arctos

i looked at the site and it seemed um

to uh really emphasize uh older

authors like evola

um so yeah i didn't really contact them

i i sort of thought about it a little so

i guess i could answer yes to that

but uh i'm i'm mainly going with

uh just just as a matter of practicality

um going with just amazon

self-publishing

as much as i i do not trust or like

amazon very much

i have to admit it's very convenient and

i would remain the uh

the possessor of the copyright and uh i

can just design the book as i please

i mean it'd be easier if someone

designed it for me i have to admit

but uh at least i got my hands on it and

i'm almost completely finished with the

editing of the first volume and have

started on the second volume also

so um yeah i also contacted a publisher

called antelope hill

that our good friend frank suggested

and they actually got back to me and

were asking me if i was

uh planning on uh writing a new book

from scratch or if i was just going to

do

buddhist essays from the blog and that

sort of thing and they said they'd uh

they'd read my my blog the the later one

the the outsider blog and uh

give it a look and get back to me but uh

in the meantime

i'm preparing stuff for for amazon

if uh bronze age pervert can do it i

suppose i can do it

next question is from chaplin what has

been your largest adjustment so far

transitioning from monk living under

stringent rules and deprivation for

decades

to a completely free and autonomous man

with complete freedom and

responsibilities

well that's a good question and uh

there are a number of options i could

choose but it seems to me that the

biggest adjustment the largest

adjustment

by far is sharing my life with another

person

because i have been a hermit for so long

i've been

like complete i've been celibate for 30

years

that kind of a thing and just just like

self-contained

you know just like largely closed off

like monks are trained

that when you're interacting with

another person that other person is just

stimuli

you know in the seeing in the scene

there's only the scene in the herd

there's only the herd and the

felt there was only the felt that kind

of thing and so

you just sort of deconstruct other

people

um into stimuli and you're just mindful

of the experience of interacting

and to really just open up

and be just completely wide open

with another person it's really taking

some getting used to

and it's it's not all bad at all but

it's really a challenge for me

because i've been just sort of closed

off and self-contained for so long

that uh really just opening up to

another person

even a person i dearly love is uh

yeah it's it's been a surprisingly

challenging

just because it's just like this habit

that um yeah it's going to take just

some easing into it i think i really do

but i know i'm capable so

see how it goes next question

unseen perspectives asks

i am interested in how you and your

girlfriend

found each other if you feel okay

discussing that well we found each other

online just in cyberspace

and then after i mean we knew each other

online for gosh

we have known each other probably like

three years now

and uh gradually after that we met in

like a different kind of space

i mean after like the well i mean almost

from the beginning but

gradually was developing that we were

sort of meeting in this other kind of a

psychic space it's hard to explain not

on the physical level really but i mean

it

certainly wasn't just online but there

was just this

i don't know how to explain it kind of

like a

deep psychic connection

that both of us were experiencing

and uh yeah so that's that's how we uh

that's how we found each other

um and finally the last question

from hey it's tigg and i have no idea

what that means hey it's tig short for

tiger maybe

hey it's tigg asks ponyo bassa would you

talk about the attainments of a

layperson or

the attainments a layperson can achieve

from practicing

the eightfold path also could you

compare and contrast these attainments

to those a monk could achieve well

as i've already been saying the the

attainments that are

possible are the same essentially it's

just that

higher attainments are easier

for a monk if the monk is practicing

well

just because he has so few distractions

distracting away from that that most

people

they're so caught up in the in the

images or in the

the illusions you know the maya that um

they just forget that it's maya they

just start

taking it at face value they start

thinking that the flickering shadows on

the walls of

plato's cave are real they start

thinking that the matrix is real

and um it's because of all the

distractions all these

entanglements and um

but i mean the attainments that are

there are the are the same attainments

it's just that

the monk has uh kind of streamlined his

life and reduced

the distractions um

hopefully well enough that uh it's more

likely

that he can break through the uh the

illusion

to the to the ultimate reality which is

always

just lying right there underneath or

just pervading everything

it's just kind of bizarre it's like

we're fish trying to discover

water and we're soaking in it and our

own body is mostly water

but still it's like we have no point of

reference for dealing with

water because it's just so everywhere

that it has no meaning

we just can't see it so

yeah i mean the ultimate reality is the

same the the possible attainments

are the same it's just that um the

buddha

going with a pre-existent tradition you

know he tweaked that and improved it

and uh improved the philosophy into

more or less of a scientific way of

maximizing the odds of becoming

enlightened

so long as the monk's life really is

compatible with you

or the life of a renuncian so

i mean for some people even they might

have greater potential as a layperson

simply because

um they just are not cut out for you

know just like their personality just

doesn't fit monasticism for whatever

reason

so um yeah the attainments are

essentially the same it's just that

a well practicing renunciant has more

um has like a higher likelihood

better odds of of uh

winning the big score and that's the

last question

and so it's already gosh like an hour

and 43 minutes

so i think i'll just uh leave it at that

and uh um

yeah i'll probably be producing more um

more of various sorts of videos i keep

saying that but it's really going to

happen

and the books are coming out and uh you

can uh

you can see my content on subscribe star

or

various other places on my blog and um

be happy and if you have any more

questions

i mean and i'm still game for this so uh

yeah if you have any questions just

include them in the comments below

or on the uh under the announcements

that i put on subscribe star

and uh again be happy and peaceful and

well

as well as the first noble truth and

some sora will allow

hello and welcome to

question and answer number eleven

amazingly we're already up to number

eleven

and i am your host pano bassa or uh my

uh

secret public name is david reynolds

and i was going to do this yesterday

because we got lots of questions

but i was like very zombified and sleep

deprived yesterday

because the night before for the first

time possibly in my life first time i

can remember

i shared the same bed with a dog

and the dog was not any figurative kind

of dog it was like a literal

dog like the domesticated symbiotic

carnivorous

mammal canis familiaris and this dog

really likes me

and so i spent the night with this

uh very affectionate little whippet

like uh pushing up against me and

nuzzling me and like

licking various parts of my body

including my mouth and the soles of my

feet and occasionally walking on me

and so i had to put off for today and so

without any further ado

i will tell you again that there's lots

of questions some of them very difficult

and complicated ones

um in fact i kind of have a suspicion

that one or two

wise guys are actually trying to ask the

most difficult

questions they could think of and so

this could be a long one this could be

two hours or something and so

uh i advise you to go pee before we get

started

and um we're not going to wait for you

so uh you better

pause this before you go pee and maybe

get yourself some popcorn or something

but uh of course

wash your hands after you pee before you

get the food

so uh without any further ado let's

uh let's get started on this long

list of sometimes

difficult complicated questions with

regard to buddhism

and a few other things so the first

question is from

void92

and void92 asks

i would really appreciate if you could

make a video on how to become a teravata

buddhist monk in south asia

if it is still possible nowadays

as far as i know it's still possible it

certainly is certainly still possible

in burma and sri lanka i've been told

that it's

more difficult to be ordained for a

westerner to be ordained in thailand

simply because

so many westerners are like

social justice activists or have been

indoctrinated into social justice so

that they become

troublemakers among conservative

traditionalists

as most asian monks are so

with regard to ordaining in thailand and

sri lanka i really am not in a position

to give advice because i've never been

ordained that way but in burma

the way you would become ordained is

you could be ordained at like

as i was at like an ethnic temple

in america and then after you've already

been ordained and you've got

you know like the monks there or at

least the abbot they're

endorsing you or sponsoring you then you

could go to

to southeast asia presumably within the

same tradition

as the uh the place you were ordained at

or there are some big meditation centers

in places like myanmar burma and

um you could contact them

like on the internet via the internet or

just go there

and do a meditation retreat and then you

could sort of get your foot in the door

that way

although you'd probably be obligated to

remain at that meditation center

so um it is possible and if you are

going to become a teravata buddhist monk

um it is strongly advised that you take

care of all of your

um debts and like social obligations

before before you are obtained that is

that is necessary not everybody does

that but um

yeah you should get rid of all of your

money before the day of your ordination

and um i mean you can't be like in the

military reserves or anything like that

but it is possible and um

yeah the two main ways of becoming a

monk

in asia is first get ordained in the

west

at like an asian temple and then use

that as a stepping stone to asia

or else just go to one of the big

meditation centers in asia that you can

you can find links to contact them on

the internet i assume

and um and then just do it do it that

way but those would be the two main ways

i can think of

so next question also by void92

will you continue making videos i really

appreciate them

and is there any way to financially

support you

well that's a convenient excuse for me

hyping myself i suppose

but yeah i am continuing to make videos

in fact i'm making one at this very

moment

and um yeah i'm i'm trying to diversify

trying to do more solo videos where i'm

just reading text and giving some

commentary or just giving a little

discourse

um i did an interview with um ponte

giavaropano which

uh went out went really well so we may

continue with that

there's a number of other things that

i'm working on

so um yeah i am going to continue making

videos

and uh the uh the content will be

diversified from the way it was

in uh the past few years and with regard

to financially supporting me

i appreciate the interest

and um yeah i've got a subscribe star

channel where people can subscribe

and uh sort of commit themselves to

anywhere from

zero to one hundred dollars a month as a

continuing thing

or also i have a paypal link both of

those

are or should be in the uh the comments

or not the comments but

the info thing below the video

so you can find them there

and it is appreciated oh yeah i should

also mention that tom

another way to support me and get

something back is

to uh purchase my books and i've got two

of them out already

one should be another one should be up

within a week or so

the first one is this one essays in

terrible

buddhism writings of an incendiary

buddhist monk and uh yeah they're

collections of buddhist

essays mostly philosophical and

um yeah they've uh they've gotten a lot

of positive feedback so it's it's a good

book

they are all three of them and uh

there's going to be

a total of five uh um in this series

of the writings of an incendiary

buddhist monk

and um then uh yeah

i may start writing other things but at

present

um yeah those would be the main ways of

supporting me if you are so inclined if

you're willing to contribute to the

cause

if you just want merit you know you

believe in

the traditional buddhist concept of

merit than just a flat out donation

in accordance with uh you know the the

two methods that uh

should be uh linked below or

uh you can also buy a book and then you

get something back so

the merit may not be quite as pure but

then you get more merit from reading and

considering

some of the philosophical concepts in

the book so

anyway anyways a winner

and so i'll just move on next question

is from reconciliation

is there an equivalent to indulgences
and purgatory in eastern religions like
buddhism for example
reading the bible 15 minutes is worth an
indulgence of 200 days in purgatory
according to pope leo the 13th
well um from the buddhist point of view
really all there is is purgatory i mean
there's no permanent hell
if you've done something really bad or
you've died with like really horrible
mental states you could wind up
in a kind of hell-like realm but it
doesn't last forever once the karma is
has run its course then you pass from
there and get reborn
somewhere else maybe as a human again

maybe higher maybe lower

so um yeah with regard to the whole

concept of purgatory sometimes in

translations

the translators are reluctant to refer

to the hell realms or

miriah as hell because they're not like

hell

in the western monotheistic sense of

some place

permanent that you go to it's um it's

just a temporary thing like everything

in buddhism you know everything is

impermanent every every phenomenal thing

is impermanent and that includes uh um

an existence in hell or in existence in

heaven or in existence

as a human or anywhere else so with

regard to

uh the indulgences part um there's

another question similar to this lower

down i think

but um yeah there's no way you can

really erase

your bad karma that um

your bad karma has to run its course or

there are some

cases according to abidama that um

you have some bad karma or good karma

for that matter

and just the opportunity doesn't arise

it's just the circumstances never

quite are ready or ripe for this

particular karma to arise

and so over several lifetimes it can

just fade out

but um with regard to bad things you've

done

there is a famous suta and i've

mentioned this before

where the buddha refers to bad karma

you've done in the past it's a handful

of salt

and if you take that handful of salt and

you mix it with a cup of water it's so

salty that you can't drink it

but you take that same handful of salt

and mix it into a whole

pool of water and once it's once it's

dissolved in there

you may hardly taste the salt at all it

may be just unnoticeable

and so he he refers to that as like a

way of diluting down bad karma

so from the buddhist point of view the

best thing you can do

if you've got bad karma is just

overwhelm it

with lots of good karma just do lots of

good things to compensate

and that will at least um

oh what's the word it'll it'll make the

uh

the bad karma even if it arises much

more tolerable or

or not nearly so bad like

uh in my life i've got a history of when

something really bad happens there's

also usually something good that happens

along with it

like when i was in burma the two times i

was hospitalized with malaria

two times i was so sick with malaria

that i had to go to a hospital

just um through seemingly random chance

somebody showed up at this remote forest

area

in a jeep and was able to just take me

right back to the hospital

upon arriving and

another time was i used to bite into

rocks in my food when i was

in burma just out in the forest out in

the same remote areas

and sometimes there'd be like this loud

crack and it would hurt and i'd be

feeling around inside my mouth just to

see if i broke a tooth

and i'd be thinking like if i break a

tooth out here in the middle of nowhere

that's not going to be good

you know how am i going to get to a

dentist or anything

and so finally um i was

staying temporarily in this rich

neighborhood in rangoon

you know like the by far the biggest

city in burma

and some servant i went for alms around

through the neighborhood and some

servant girl offered me some bean curry

that had a rock in it and i bit into it

and broke

three teeth on this one rock and um

so i had to see a dentist but as it

turned out just through karmic

coincidence

the servant girl was the servant of the

dean and rector of the rangoon

dental college so he was just right

across the street and so

i finally did break my tooth or teeth

biting into a rock in my food but you

know it was um

the person who was more or less

responsible for that was you know the

number one dentist in the country

and so he fixed my teeth for free and uh

i had him as my

free dentist for a few years after that

and so i had the same dentist as the

dictator because he was the number one

dentist in the country

so um yeah getting back to the question

though

it's like um yeah i mean

you can't make your

bad karma go away i mean there's no way

of

being forgiven for your sins i mean

if you forgive yourself i mean that can

help you from making more bad karma

through the guilt and

regret and remorse and all that but um

it's not like in christianity where a

priest can just wave his hand over you

or like in

shinto also where they'll just wave the

wand at you

and make your sins go away it doesn't

work that way it's gotta

it's gotta run its course and so the

best you can do is just

dilute it way down with lots of good

and so the next question by

reconciliation was there ever a time

when there was

nothing if so then how is it possible

something can come from nothing

if not then why no creator

um this is getting into the whole

unthinkable

issue of the buddhist middle path

where the middle path isn't just the

middle path between

self-indulgence and self-torture the

middle path

there's lots of middle paths in burm in

in buddhism

and i mean there's like a middle path

between

existence and non-existence the middle

path between

one and more than one you know it's just

a mind blower

it's not logical i mean it's um

if you're dealing with like aristotelian

laws of thought everything has to be a

or not a you know everything has to be

logical and reasonable

you're living in an artificial mental

construct

but reality is just unthinkable and

doesn't work that way

um see every time when there was nothing

in

existence non-existence from the

buddhist point of view

the what causes this universe to seem to

exist

anyway is um ignorance or delusion

and i've got my own theory

um it's it kind of arose spontaneously

when i was out in a forest one time

and i refer to it as the the simile of

the block of marble i assume

some of you have heard of that before

where um

it's like the entire universe is just

this dimensionless sizeless

point you know you can't really say that

it exists or doesn't exist

and um

i kind of relied on the one useful idea

i ever got from

hegel is how he starts his logic he

starts his dialectic you know the first

thesis is just pure being

and then the antithesis to pure being is

pure non-being because hegel points out

that pure being and pure non-being are

so completely devoid of any

distinct content they don't have any

boundaries any kind of variation

you know there's just like pure

unthinkable

just like without boundaries just

infinite

formless and so because

pure being and pure non-being um are

just indistinguishable

they just melt together into one thing

you can't tell them apart

and so the only way you can have

anything that seems to exist in a

perceptual sense

is you have to have contrast so your

mind has to create a contrast between

this and not this you know in order to

perceive something you have to

um create an outline around it so to

speak you know you have to focus your

attention on that

and differentiate it from everything

around it

and um so it's like to exist

is like um being and not being rubbing

up against each other or

yes and no or is and isn't or even like

theism and atheism you know god and no

god

they have to like rub up against each

other but ultimately they're the same

it's just an artificial distinction

and if that doesn't make sense to you uh

well congratulations because um

i mean it it's so difficult for that to

make sense i mean it's just off the

scale

reality is off the scale reality cannot

be comprehended intellectually

not ultimate reality anyway so

how is it possible something can come

from nothing

one way of one way of of thinking about

it

is that all the positives and all the

negatives have to balance out in the

long run

that in the universe all the positives

and negatives

cancel each other out so you wind up

with zero

so that's one way of doing it um

also from the buddhist point of view i

mean it's not really

existence it's it's like a virtual or

conditional

existence and it's based on this

formless

everything nothing that is

incomprehensible

so in a way there is a creator for this

universe but the creator

is a deluded and unenlightened mind

and you can say well what created the

deluded unenlightened mind

in a way that's like um within

i mean within this formless unthinkable

everything nothing you can you can say

that there are

um you know every possibility is

contained

it's like the block of marble every

possible statue is contained within that

block of marble it's potentially

there it's really there every single

molecule every single atom is

already right there in the right place

all you got to do is dismiss

the rest of it and um

so it's like some of these uh potential

forms of energy or whatever you want to

call it um

become self-referential they become so

complicated

that they start perceiving themselves in

a limited and deluded way and thinking

that they are separate from everything

else

and that everything else again um you

can't really say that it does or doesn't

exist because it's just

completely off the scale of like um

artificial

perceptual dualities of yes and no is

and isn't

etc so i mean if this doesn't make sense

to you

i mean um yeah it's not really supposed

to make sense

it's the the middle path is something

you have to experience

directly and largely through um

mystical states i mean it's like when

you stop thinking

you're wide awake and you're not

thinking anything then you can

grok it you can like intuitively

i suppose um get a feel

for the for the idea or the

call it a fact that this phenomenal

world

we're living in is a kind of artificial

construction

um that i mean everything is

infinite like like uh what's his name

william blake

you know if the doors of perception were

cleansed we would see everything as it

is

infinite but um we have limitations and

we don't see that there is this

i mean we're just seeing this tiny

fraction of infinity

when really infinity's you know

everywhere always there

and that infinity again going back to

hegel

um you know everything and nothing

really kind of merged together

so again it's like um i'm talking about

this stuff is

is is complicated um

but uh yeah i think i should just

like i said people are asking like the

most difficult possible questions on

this one

so the next question is from vajra

wolf77

you said that you feel that magic and

hear magic is spelled m-a-g-i-c-k

so he's talking about uh kind of

aleister crowley's

uh version of magic so i'll start again

you said you feel that magic is

something not spiritually beneficial

crowley defined magic as causing

changing conformity with one's own

will whether that be change in one's own

consciousness

or the external world sometimes this was

done with elaborate ritual but it

needn't be

with that being said maybe not for a

monk whose goal

is a straight shot right to the absolute

through complete renunciation but for

the average person still

in the world who

can't completely renounce don't you

think there could be

some spiritual benefit to this type of

practice for example

perhaps using ritualistic techniques to

cause change in one's own consciousness

or physical environment

that will make them more conducive to

spiritual practice

also going along with the theme of magic

genuinely curious if you've ever looked

into or studied the western concepts of

the orgy god magic in your spiritual

journey it is closely associated with

neoplatonic philosophy so i could see

why you would reject it as the

neoplatonic

noise is similar to atman but the goal

of said magic

always with the k is essentially gnosis

or

liberation so i'd be curious to know if

you think there is any value in that

okay long complicated

question but yeah in a previous video

i said that i really didn't think that

magic with a k

was uh really dharmic

that like like it says here that it's uh

it's causing change in conformity with

one's own will

but really if you're trying to be

dharmic

or truly spiritual you're trying to

transcend your own will

you know it's like um change

causing changing conformity with your

own will is essentially manipulating

samsara you're still

purely samsaric at that point and i

think crowley really was

um it's like the point of what he was

doing seemed to be mastery of samsara

more than the transcendence of samsara

to

attain some ultimate reality beyond

samsara

so he's still dealing with the illusion

that

magic in a way is um kind of mastery

over the illusion or manipulating the

illusion

masterfully but um

i am unsure of there being any emphasis

on really transcending the illusion and

not being deluded anymore

and if you want to know the wisdom of a

system i mean it's good to

see what the teachers of that system are

like especially the original

teacher and if you look at aleister

crowley i mean he he did not strike me

as a wise person

in fact he was kind of a bad guy

kind of a very rascally guy and there's

nothing necessarily

bad was being a rascal but i just do not

consider him to be

particularly wise so

um yeah with regard to magic with a k

um i do think that if you really want to

cultivate wisdom there are better ways

of going about it than

this kind of crowley stuff

so um yeah i think i'll just move on

there's so many questions to answer here

and some of them as i say and as you've

already seen are rather

deep complicated ones so i'll just move

on to

uh vajravul 77's next question

okay something i'd like to see you

address is the meaning of the word

dhamma

as it is used in the saudi patana suta

as it is hard to find a clear and

concise

answer out there yutadamo bhikkhu in one

of his videos said a dhamma

is like a teaching other sources i've

read

said dhammas are basic categories your

perspective would be nice and also

perhaps a little bit about how the word

evolved from its use in the

bhagavad-gita

to what it denotes in the buddhist sutas

okay that's a good question although

first i'll get to this last part about

uh

how the word dhamma evolved from its use

in the bhagavad-gita what it denotes to

what it denotes in the buddhists

it's my understanding that the

bhagavad-gita comes after the buddhists

that it has been argued that to some

degree the bhagavad-gita is an argument

against buddhism because buddhism was

becoming like the national

spiritual movement of india at that time

um so

yeah i don't think that uh the word

dhamma evolved from its use in the

bhagavad-gita to what it denotes in the

buddhists

unless you want to say that the

bhagavad-gita still use like the archaic

pre-buddhist meaning of it and um

dhamma is a very vague

word in poly it's one of the hardest

hardest words to translate it depends on

the context because it can mean just

about anything in fact

dhamma can just mean anything or it can

mean anything

real or it can mean um

a mental state or it can mean law or it

can mean

philosophy or it can mean like the true

philosophy taught by the buddha

and um yeah i can mean other things

besides

and so uh what uh vajra wolf here is

referring to

is um there there are the four

applications of mindfulness and one of

them

is dhamma nuposity which is uh

recollection of dhammas or dhamma

and yeah i mean it is controversial no

people do not all agree

on what it's supposed to mean and um

so i think the the two main

interpretations

um are given here one is that it's like

uh

a teaching it's like um um

dom anupasity just can just be like

recollection

of like the the philosophical concepts

concepts of buddha especially like the

the most important ones

like you know the four noble truths or

um

dependent core rising that sort of thing

or also

um let's see what's there basically

categories

yeah and i mean they kind of overlap

there because

usually the buddhist teachings are are

divided up into categories you know four

noble truths you got the four categories

dependent core rising according to the

stock formula

got divided up into 12 categories so

yeah i mean this one i've i've always

been unsure myself exactly what was

intended

and um i'm not sure if anybody really

knows unless they're just guessing

correctly

um so yeah just interpret it as as best

you can and if you find a teacher

who puts forth a really good persuasive

argument

then uh yeah you can go with that i

guess ajahn tenisero's explanation is as

plausible and reasonable as

any so you might want to refer to him

but i agree it's like i also have

um never been quite sure what is

referred to in dhamma neupocity like the

fourth of the four

saudi patanas and uh i do think it was

just kind of like um

like a catch-all like like uh maybe

i mean calling it a junk drawer would be

disrespectful perhaps but

um um yeah i think it could just be like

recollection

of basic principles of buddhist

philosophy something like that

that would be my best guess but i as i

say it's just a guess

i'm not 100 sure on that

so i'll move on to the next question by

nardi

how do you interpret the five aggregates

as something just empty inside and

outside or as something

more and this is another one

man it's just i'm getting hit with these

really

deep difficult to answer questions

because this one also it's like

um most people it seems like they're

just locked into this dichotomy like of

dualism it's like

either it exists or it doesn't exist

either it's real

or it isn't real and the middle path

like uh of

dependent core rising pedichamopod

especially just cuts right down the

middle

you know it's just uh sort of real

conventionally real real within this

artificial construct

that we're creating it's real within the

context of the matrix or

or plato's cave but in reality it's just

um

yeah it's it just doesn't work that way

so how do i interpret the five

aggregates and he's not asking for me to

give a definition of the five aggregates

which uh which is good um

but uh for those of you who are

unfamiliar the five aggregates of the

five condos are supposedly what

um what we are made of in our totality

so you've got rupaconda which is

the body you've got weijinakanda which

is

feelings and sensations you've got uh

sunya conda which is perceptions you've

got

um sankhara khanda which is

mainly volitions it's like you're

cheating out your karma

and then finally you've got winyanaconda

which is consciousness

so that from the buddhist perspective

from the point of view of buddhist

philosophy

that is all we are is these five these

five aggregates

and uh again it seems like nari is

mainly asking here

is it really purely empty or is it

something more than empty

and again uh it's it's like the middle

path

between empty and not empty existence

and non-existence

um i've got this i've got my translation

of the the atakawaga here

it's not for sale at present but um

there's a very old suta the kalahawi

wada suta

and um right here it's verse nine of the

kalahawi warasuta

in stimulation are founded pleasant and

unpleasant in stimulation not

being they do not exist non-existence

and existence to

whatever that means i tell you that they

are founded in this

so in this really ancient pseudo it's a

very old one

the buddha himself is apparently saying

that non-existence and existence

themselves depend upon pasa

in pali which usually is translated as

contact but here i translate it as

stimulation

so it's like existence and non-existence

are essentially um

mental perceptions or mental states

and um like ultimate reality

just transcends that dichotomy the

dichotomy between is that isn't and it's

a mind blower

and it may not be able to be

comprehended intellectually

you just have to grok it you have

to just get to this mystical state where

you just

experience the truth of that

so see getting back to nardi's question

are the five aggregates something just

empty inside and outside

or are they more than that um

it all depends on how you look at it man

and it's like what

what is empty like um some people would

say empty is just a zero

which then that wouldn't be correct

because zero is just one of the extremes

you know zero and not zero or the two

extremes and the little path cuts

between that

um in mahayana buddhism which has a bit

more sophistication

in its uh metaphysics and its philosophy

in general

then dependent core rising itself is the

definition of emptiness like nagarjuna

says dependent core rising

is emptiness so it's like this

conditional virtual existence

that isn't really totally real

and isn't really totally not real like

you can say that

a mirage isn't totally unreal because i

mean there's something causing that

mirage

and in this case it's just virtual um

mental it's like a kind of mentality

that

has become so complicated

that it looks inwards at itself

and forgets that it's really attached to

just this

formless consciousness all around it and

because the consciousness

in that sense you know like like brahman

or or

um like the noise of plotinus

um because it's just infinite and

formless

then it really doesn't have any way of

of like

pointing to anything and saying that and

so it just kind of transcends existence

and like like hegel says it just kind of

merges into the same thing as

non-existence

so again we're just wallowing in just

the mind-bending

implications of dependent core rising

and um so i'm just going to move on to

the next question

and the next question is from otomo

how do you deal with an ordained monk or

nun who is clearly showing signs of

mental illness

delusions paranoia lack of emotional

control

manic states extreme phobias the flip

side is how do you deal with a lay

person also exhibiting signs of mental

illness who insist

the monks or the facilities of the

temple must help them

okay so that's uh at least two questions

really

um

the rules of monastic discipline for

theravada buddhist monks and nuns

there is a kind of exemption

from having to follow the rules in a

monk or a none that has

gone so insane that they're no longer

fully aware of their behavior you know

they're going into like a fugue state or

something

they're no longer fully responsible for

their actions

then they can do all sorts of things and

um

if they they have no recollection of it

afterwards

then they really are not held to account

they're not considered to be guilty of

breaking those rules

if they're just crazy in the usual sense

of neurotic

or whatever then yeah welcome to the

club that's the human condition

that from the buddhist point of view

anybody who is not fully enlightened

is to that extent insane like there's

the old saying

in pali no oh marco which is

the common person is out of his mind

so that kind of insanity um yeah

so long as you're still aware of what

you're doing more or less then

yeah you're still responsible because i

mean the state you're in is your own

doing ultimately it's all because of

your own

karma your own actions especially your

own mental actions

so yeah with regard to monks or nuns

clearly showing mental signs of mental

illness

if they're so completely out of it you

know they're having a psychotic episode

or something then

they may not be responsible for their

actions but if

if they at least are aware of what

they're doing you know it's just a

standard case of

neurosis or or something like that or

like um

schizophrenia maybe if it's not like

really extreme

then still and they are they are

responsible for their actions

and uh um

i'm not exactly it would depend on the

case as to what actually to do with them

i mean

there's if they've got a wise teacher he

could uh assign them some practice that

could help

ground them and there are there are

various ways of doing that and i won't

really

get into that but with regard to lay

people

who are exhibiting signs of mental

illness and who insist the monks or

facilities of the temple must help them

well i mean really the monks

um at the temple at the monastery

um they can send meta i mean they can

just beam love at the person which may

help straighten them out if they're like

possessed by a demon or something the

monks may chant purita over them and try

to

like exercise any kind of malevolent

forces

um they're not absolutely required to do

that but they might as well

it's if they're able to i mean if

they're just completely

um you know not qualified to do it and

realize that then maybe they should uh

advise the person to try somewhere else

or try a psychologist or psychiatrist or

something

but um yeah i mean if the monks know

what to do

and are able to help and certainly

that would be a good thing to do but um

i mean if they just don't know how to

deal with the situation they shouldn't

just

blunder in and try to do something that

might cause more harm than good

so yeah it's monks are not

required by the ancient rules to

um act as therapists for lay people

but uh i mean if they are qualified if

it's something relatively

straightforward you know just uh

you know giving them some advice to help

ground them that kind of thing then

yeah that would be fine next question

from otomo what qualifies a person to

give a dhamma talk

well i mean if they know what they're

talking about i mean that's that's

basically

it from the from the point of view of

monasticism buddhist monasticism

um among probably

i mean even beginners give talks in the

sutas there are there are some beginning

monks who

are already giving talks so

i mean you can't really become a teacher

of disciples until you've been a monk

for at least 10 years

but um what qualifies a person to give a

dharma talk is

if they just know what they're talking

about that i mean that's that's the

bottom line right there

i mean if you understand what you're

talking about and that's that's it

so next question is from stephen

and this is a long one we know

superstition

exists for example the stories in

ancient buddhists and other religious

texts and we also

know how these how those with strong

faith accept these stories as

fact people with less faith reject these

stories as

myth in light of the above i suggest it

is possible that the stories about

buddha and his spiritual attainments

could also be superstition possibly

maybe i think it's a possibility that

just

as stories of religious leaders were

created to attain specific

goals for example the arising creation

of the

philosophy that jesus christ was

actually god

and how that was new philosophy was

perhaps used to

strengthen and unify the roman empire

which adopted it

as it was under attack from barbarians

or the creation of the stories of

muhammad which did not begin to arise

until at least 100 years after

the alleged birth of muhammad muhammad

ibn ishaq

etc whatever that means

uh i continue all the creation of the

myth of ancient

jewish leaders for example abraham moses

etc which were written about

while the jews were taken captive into

ancient babylon and how these ancient

stories served

a purpose to help the jews in babylon

survive their exile from judea

israel is the same

in the same way can you see the

possibility that perhaps the stories

about buddha were created or exaggerated

okay um the whole question just

essentially boils down to the last

sentence can you see the possibility

that perhaps the stories about buddha

were created or exaggerated and

obviously from a western point of view

some of the stories about buddha were

exaggerated or created

yeah i mean i mean obviously anyone who

is familiar with the polytechs

and the commentarial tradition knows

that for example

the tradition says that the buddha was

about 27

or like 5 meters tall

which is just um yeah i mean that's just

yeah that's i do not consider that to be

plausible

or like the 32 marks of of a great being

um i mean it's just impossible that any

one person could have all 32 marks

so that's impossible right there i mean

that's just a logical impossibility

or some of some of the miracles that the

buddha supposedly performed

in the text you know he's warning monks

repeatedly don't be

just showing off miracles or psychic

powers

um you know you should hide that kind of

stuff you shouldn't be showing it off to

people

but then sometimes he'll just ignore his

own

advice and like uh like the classic

example of that is the twin miracle

where the buddha supposedly levitated up

into the air and sprayed water out of

one side of his body and fire out of the

other side simultaneously

and that's supposedly such a huge

miracle that only a buddha could do that

but yeah i just as a westerner

with a capacity for skeptical thought

yeah i've got some skeptical thought

with regard to that kind of stuff

and it's mainly just a matter of

glorifying

the founder of the tradition um making

him

seem even better than he already was

and the way he already was is good

enough

you know an enlightened being in fact

it's kind of counterproductive like

the same way with jesus where probably

jesus

and the buddha were human beings

that attained this relatively or even

absolutely exalted state and they're

saying look

i'm a human being same as you i can do

it so you can do it too

and then people come after that you know

they're not in a position

to try that hard or they're just you

know they're just not

right for it and so they just um deify

the founder or glorify the founder

beyond the human level

and just start worshiping so

yeah it's just human nature i think but

um i

yeah i am inclined to agree and it is

logically um pretty obvious

that uh not everything that is said

about the buddha in

even in the oldest texts is uh entirely

true

so i'll move on to the next question

from hey it's tigg

do you have any insight on aditana i've

heard it referred

in the context of strong determination

in meditation sitting but was wondering

if it had a broader or different

meaning thanks um you're welcome

and yeah aditana literally means

determination and it's one of the ten

parameters

uh many yes this it's the

eighth of ten parameters and it just

means determination it does it's not

necessarily restricted to meditation

it's like anything um

just if you really just unflin you're

just unflinchingly determined

to accomplish something then that would

be aditana

so it's not just with regard to

meditation i mean it would require a

kind of aritana perhaps to

get ready to renounce the world or maybe

it would take aditana to uh you know

just

face something that you don't want to

face like living in a cave or living

alone or living in a cemetery

you know if it's just this determination

you just make this resolution this

resolve

i'm going to do this and you just stick

to it no matter what

then that would be uh the parame or

perfection of abitana

it's a kind of spiritual quality that if

you want to become fully enlightened

then yeah you need to uh you need to

have sufficient determination

so uh yeah it is it is built into uh

buddhist philosophy and uh

it is um kind of a requisite for

enlightenment certainly a requisite

for uh like full-blown buddhahood

and essentially it means just

determination where you just stick with

something until you've

accomplished it okay next question from

hey it's tig

panyo basa when it comes to sex do you

think buddhist ethics would be better

for our western society than christian

ethics

from what i understand although both

religions promote sexual restraint

buddhism does not seem to push guilt and

remorse on sinners quote unquote

rather it would have people be mindful

of their misdeeds and resolve not to

repeat them

do you think this approach would help

alleviate the neuroses our society has

when it comes to sex and sexual

expression

well that's kind of an interesting

question and

in some ways yes and in some ways no in
some ways buddhism is more easy going
with regard to sex and in some ways it's
even stricter than christianity
for example um with regard to
the five precepts you don't literally
have to be married to somebody
in order to avoid sexual misconduct
that if two people are um
you know they genuinely love each other
they're not being promiscuous they're
not messing around with other people
you know it's like they're not already
obligated to somebody else then that
would be uh
um that would be okay you wouldn't be
breaking the five precepts it would go

to that

but on the other hand um in buddhism the

ethics are so finely tuned that almost

anything you do is going to have some

immorality mixed in

so even a man and a woman who are

married you know

it may be that they are virgins on their

wedding night they've been faithful to

each other for the past

30 years and they just love each other

dearly but even so

if there's any kind of lust or

attachment involved then

from this deep buddhist ethics there's

going to be at least a little bit

of um unskillful karma you know bad

karma and so um

in buddhism it's not all black and white

in christianity it's either

is sin or it's a virtue and you're gonna

go to hell forever or go to heaven

forever

and in buddhism it's almost everything

is a shade of gray

so um the layperson can't go for pure

white

but they can at least go for as pale of

grey as they can manage

and that could be good enough because

you don't become enlightened

through reaching pure whiteness of like

purity of virtue um i think i may have

just blasphemed or or like

indulged in some heresy because um like

in the wesuda maga it says you have to

have purity of virtue before you can

have purity of concentration

but still um yeah

nobody completely eradicates all the bad

karma and

presumably only an arahant is able to

uh proceed through life without making

any bad karma

at all and so

you can use a shade of gray as a jumping

off point to alignment

i mean that seems fairly straightforward

to me

so i think it might depend on the on the

person i mean

um christianity has more of a sense of

like uh what is it repentance and

shame and this kind of stuff that really

is not healthy in my opinion from a

buddhist point of view it's

i mean if you're going to have um moral

scruples you should have it before you

do the act and not afterwards

you know repentance just from a buddhist

point of view

if it's going to be skillful is you just

acknowledge you did something wrong and

just determined to do better in future

but like the whole

remorse thing is uh you know the beating

your breast and

crying and stuff is uh that just makes

more bad karma

so um yeah

it's kind of a tough question i don't

think anything is going to alleviate the

neuroses of our society with regard to

sex and sexual expression because we're

already

very neurotic and i think human beings

in general are just neurotic about sex

um part of that i think i read about it

in

like desmond morris's the naked ape

which i think was the first really

important book i ever read

where he's saying that evolutionarily

the human being is in a transitional

state between

just sort of the orgiastic sexual

behavior of our tree dwelling ape

ancestors

like a chimpanzee has sex on average

like 20 times a day even if the females

are not

in in heat even if they're not in season

and um but then when our ancestors our

ancestors came down out of the trees and

started walking upright

then um the females could have many more

babies but only if they had a like a

male protector

like like a like a female chimpanzee she

can only have one baby every six years

because she has to carry the baby

through the trees with her

so the baby has to be able to make its

own way through the trees

before she can have another one so when

our ancestors climbed out of the trees

going with biology of course

um you know human females can can have

lots more kids you know they can be

you know have a toddler and be pregnant

with another one

and um but it requires monogamy

or at least evolutionarily we started

moving towards monogamy but we haven't

fully made the transition

and so there's all this neurotic stuff

going on in our minds

and um even like

women you know they put clothes on to

kind of cover their nudity to keep the

guys from going crazy but then

they're like wearing like revealing

clothing and like

using like lipstick to make their make

their lips look

more like you know like like they're

sexually aroused in this kind of thing

so i think we're just stuck with being

uh neurotic about sex because it is such

a powerful thing

that uh it's it's easy to be um

easy to have hang-ups and that sort of

thing about it

but um yeah i think if people can

overcome the christian uh idea that

everything is either good or bad that

that there's always going to be like

shades of gray

and that the average person does well

just to go for light gray

if they can't manage white then light

gray is is still doing pretty good

then uh yeah i think a buddhist ethic

with regard to sex could be an

improvement

although um yeah i mean christian ethics

have been largely

abandoned in the modern west or

post-modern west now

anyway and now we're just going into

like

full depravity just total degeneracy it

seems like it's like the celebration of

degeneracy

so um yeah i think buddhist ethics would

definitely be preferable

to uh you know like the uh what do you

call it

post-modernist uh moral relativism

that we we seem to be uh seems to be

gaining traction now

next question from andre

i think you hinted at being on the

autistic spectrum

could you talk more about that if that's

not too personal and what challenges but

also

rewards that brings in the practice or

maybe you could talk about mental health

in general in the practice but really

any story or antidote anecdote you have

is interesting to hear

um i've never really been tested for

this

and um so i can't really say for sure

that i'm on

autistic spectrum although i will

confess that just

two days ago maybe even early yesterday

my girlfriend was smiling at me and

kind of laughing at me for being

autistic

um yeah she says she says for sure i'm

autistic because i mean it's like

we're watching some cooking show i'm

turning into a foodie since i stopped

being a monk

we're watching this cooking show and one

of the things that they were using was

tempeh

and so she didn't know what a tempeh was

and so i just remarked well tempeh is

soy beans that are cultured with a

fungus

called rhizoconium oligosporum and she

just flat out accused me of being

autistic for even

knowing that kind of stuff it just

registers in my mind and stays there

so yeah i know all these scientific

names from from school you know

pycnopodia helium toities is the

sunflower star you know

strangelocintrodus

drobacciensis says the green sea urchin

et cetera et cetera

and um so yeah maybe that means i'm i'm

like some kind of borderline

autistic or something and i mean anybody

who's going to be living alone in caves

for 13 years

anyone who's going to become even a monk

like a western person

who just bucks his own cultural

traditions and just

[Music]

you know becomes a buddhist monk and

tries to live like some ancient indian

ascetic

for for many years yeah i'm obviously

i'm not a normie i'm not totally

normal although um you're probably

better off not being totally normal

and yeah just being abnormal i mean that

can be

definitely an asset because if you're if

you're

totally normal then you're and you're

just going to be drinking the kool-aid

you're going to be in the mainstream

you know you're going to be believing

what cnn tells you that kind of stuff

so yeah you're better off being kind of

on the outskirts or the fringe

just because it helps you to detach and

not take the mainstream so seriously it

gives you

um a little more freedom a little more

um

mental freedom but um again i can't

really say if i really

am on the autistic spectrum uh let's see

make sure i get this question down

before i move on to the next one

talk about mental health in general in

the practice

well i mean to have a strong healthy

mind is one thing i mean not to fit into

society is something else it could be

that your own sanity

causes you not to fit in and i think uh

um eric fromm who was a member of the

frankfurt school for a while but still

it does kind of make sense that uh um

not fitting into an insane society can

be

considered a symptom of sanity

he wrote an entire book about that

although he was pushing some kind of

socialism in the process

but um yeah i mean you have to be

mentally healthy to practice correctly i

think it is a mistake that uh

um you've got like

uh dharma centers having like healing

retreats

and and that kind of thing it is kind of

morbid to me

that uh i mean just to emphasize healing

emphasizes something that you have to

heal from so it's like

um it's to some degree it's reinforcing

the problem

i've got nothing against uh people using

um buddhist techniques to cure

themselves of

of mental um dysfunctions like i used to

know

a psychiatrist who's one of the world's

leading authorities on

obsessive-compulsive disorder

like people who have this irresistible

urge to wash their hands 50 or 100 times

a day

or they're afraid to touch anything

because they're because of the germs or

they have to check their their front

door to make sure it's locked again and

again and again

or they have to make sure they have to

check the the coffee maker again and

again again make sure it's turned off

that kind of a thing

and you can use uh like mindfulness

techniques

to cure yourself of that but um

really buddhism was originally intended

for people who were

mentally healthy and really

the only pure mental health would be

enlightenment

so you're you're moving towards greater

mental health like i said earlier the

average person is insane going from

buddhist

philosophy and um so yeah you start

where you're at and you do the best you

can

and the higher you get in your practice

the more sane you're going to be

so um again there's there's lots of

questions here and so i'm just gonna

i hope i answered that well enough um

i'm not sure that i'm autistic

regardless of my girlfriend's teasing me

but um and with regard to mental health

yeah i mean we're all

insane up until we're fully enlightened

and the more you practice dhamma and the

better you are at practicing dhamma the

more completely you can practice dhamma

the more seen you are going to be

although being sane from a buddhist

perspective

might seem pretty weird from like the

mainstream perspective

i mean saints and sages um

may seem pretty weird and eccentric and

maybe even

nutty from the mainstream western

perspective especially

so yeah it's uh

crazy is uh largely uh um

it's a debatable debatable state

okay next question from andre

i've heard a monk say once that you can

correct your bad karma by donating money

or time to a cause in relation to that

bad karma

what do you think or is being generous

in general keeping the precepts and

meditating enough

um yeah i've already kind of dealt with

the whole indulgences thing

up above um

you can't really correct your bad karma

but you can

alleviate it you can dilute it down by

doing

benevolent act making good karma to kind

of

drown out or dilute the bad karma

um yeah so there's no way you can

you can like erase bad karma other than

um

possibly just avoiding the circumstances

that would allow it to reach fruition

long enough that it fades out over the

course of several lifetimes

but um yeah your best bet is just do as

much good as possible do more good than

bad and you're going to be moving

upwards

you do more bad than good you're going

to be moving downwards again it's not

like in christianity where it's all good

or all bad you know it's all black and

white where you're either going to go to

heaven forever

or go to hell forever after you die um

it's just all shades of gray and so the

more

good you add the lighter the gray of

your overall

um mind is going to be

so that's the best the best advice i can

give on that so i'll move on to the next

question

from bodhisattva969

from a buddhist point of view how should

one view this clown world in which we

live

mass migration of so-called refugees

islamization

rainbow gay parades guilt cult etc

as a buddhist as a real liberal

or right-wing man i think by real

liberal he means like a classical

liberal

from the american american

interpretation

okay see i'll just back up here as a

real liberal or right-wing man you have

the feeling that nothing will change

there have been

countless murders and attacks by muslims

who came into the country

through merkel's opening of the border

in 2015

in addition to those muslim foreigners

who were here before

even so most people still vote for the

same parties or even more left-wing

parties how should we as buddhists look

at this in order not to get

mad or bitter and maybe i should specify

that

bodhisattva969 is living in germany

right now

um well i mean for starters

we are in samsara you can say that

everything you experience

is the fruition of your own karma so you

put yourself in that position

even though you might not be fully aware

of that

so there's that to the world is always

going to be insane

there's that too the normie the normie

human

is out of his mind um

so with regard to all that i mean you

should maintain a sense of equanimity

just realize that i mean you are there

because that is exactly

where your karma has put you that's

exactly where you need to be in order to

learn to deal with this situation so you

don't keep making the same

karma that keeps you facing this stuff

again and again

so um that would be the best way of

looking at it in order not to get mad or

bitter unless you're going to get mad

and bitter at yourself because from the

buddhist point of view you put yourself

in that

position and you need to learn how to

cope with it with equanimity

or maybe even some meta or

or like love or friendliness um

yeah because if you react negatively if

you react with

with anger or bitterness or or that sort

of thing

then you're reinforcing the karma and

causing it to keep coming out

so um that doesn't mean that you

shouldn't try to fix the situation you

shouldn't do what is within your means

to improve the situation

you know you can vote against open

borders for example

you know you can you can even indulge in

some activism so long as it's

enlightened activism and it's

motivated by positive mental states

instead of negative mental states

so whatever you do i mean you should do

it with equanimity or positive mental

states as much as possible

and that would include dealing with the

insanity of politics because

politics has always been insane it seems

to me that

uh the relative calm that we experienced

like in the 80s and 90s and maybe the

the oughts you know the first decade of

the 21st century

that was more the exception to the rule

that was just the kind of uh

prosperity and peace that really is an

anomaly

and now we're getting back towards the

kind of usual mayhem

and insanity and hysteria that uh

usually accompanies civilized society or

any kind of human society

i mean anyone who's read a lot of

history knows that um there's just been

[__] hitting the fan just over and over

and over and over

you know it's like the roman empire it's

like tiberius was the second emperor and

and and caligula was the third emperor

so like

just within a few decades of the roman

empire beginning you've already got this

this lunatic who's uh who's like um

totalitarian dictator

so um yeah i mean this kind of stuff is

just

always going to be going on and it's

ultimately

um our own doing because our own karma

has put us here

so um we just have to learn to deal with

it with some

equanimity and if you take decisive

action there's absolutely nothing wrong

with that just make sure that your

motives

are more good than bad you know as good

as possible as positive

as possible that you're actually trying

to help

um you know help your brothers and

sisters you know

just try to help the situation and not

just try to get revenge on somebody that

you don't like

or lash out at your enemies that kind of

a thing

and i've given the same kind of advice

to like feminists i mean if someone's

going to be a feminist they should do it

out of love

for women rather than hatred or

resentment against

men or if someone is like you've got

like a black

activist trying to improve the situation

of black people in the west they should

do it out of

love for black people and not resentment

or anger or hatred

against white people because if you do

anything motivated by positive states

you're making good karma and you're

you're likely to actually improve the

situation even though it may not be

really obvious that you improved it

whereas even if if you're motivated by

hatred or anger or resentment even if

you get what you're going here

what you're trying for still it's going

to result in more bad than good it's

going to just

breed more resentment and anger you know

anger breeds more anger resentment

breeds more resentment

and so um having some peace in your

heart when you're doing what needs to be

done

is really the best way to go about it

so next question is from bpat427

regarding right livelihood to what

degree would you say

that extends for example if someone

works at a restaurant that cooks with

hydrogenated vegetable oils and serves

soda would that be viewed as dealing

poison

if somebody manufactures scopes slings

or accessories for firearms

could one still be said to deal in

weapons

would making weapons designed for target

practice as opposed to war hunting

or hunting net you less bad karma or

would it

all be volitional and depend on how you

feel regarding your profession

well be pat 427 is obviously a westerner

because asians just don't think this way

um yeah like if if you

if you work at a restaurant and cook

with hydrogenated vegetable oils

and serve like coca-cola would that be

viewed as dealing in

poison yeah well dealing in poison is is

wrong likelihood like

if you're at a grocery store and you're

selling like insecticide or rat poison

something like that then that would be

um wrong livelihood but um with regard

to the hydrogenated vegetable oils and

the soda pop that would depend on your

own volition it's like

if you consider hydrogenated vegetable

oils to be toxic

and you are serving them to people then

yeah in your own mind

which is really what matters most

then yeah i mean in your own mind you're

poisoning people and so

um yeah that would be wrong livelihood

especially if you're taking their money

you know you're having them pay you to

poison them

so yeah with regard to that one it

depends on your own

perspective i personally do not consider

hydrogenated vegetable oils to be uh

poison might not be the most healthy

food

you know obviously sugar and high

fructose corn syrup are not the most

nutritious foods you could eat

but um it depends on your it that that

one depends on your own perception

okay let's see dealing if someone

manufactures

scope slings and accessories for

firearms when would still be said to

deal in weapons again that's

that is the i mean buddhist ethics

depends on volition it depends on and

your volition is

is like completely linked with your uh

perceptions

so um yeah if you consider

if you sincerely believe that scope

slings and other accessories for

firearms

are not um

are not like dealing with lethal weapons

then uh yeah i mean you're still not

um you're still not doing wrong

livelihood but you got to be honest with

yourself i mean just

uh indulging in sophistry just trying to

uh

twist things so that you come out okay i

mean that's that's not good either you

got to be honest with yourself

um so that one yeah that's that's like a

great borderline case and it would

depend

more on your own attitude if you really

feel

that you are selling lethal weapons by

uh

making slings for an m16 or something

then yeah that would be uh technically

wrong likelihood

although as i've said uh in an earlier

video

wrong livelihood is really a tricky one

like you even if you're just

working at a grocery store and you're

selling wine to

somebody then you've just sold

intoxicants you're a drug dealer

or you know you're at a restaurant and

you're serving wine to somebody again

you're technically from a buddhist

perspective a drug dealer you are you

are

providing people with intoxicants but

again it's like

um in the west especially going for pure

white

may not be realistic i mean just going

for as light of gray

as you feel comfortable with it may be

your best bet

um but let's continue here would making

weapons designed for target practice

uh net you less bad karma yeah i mean if

it's

if it's just for target practice then

it's not really a lethal weapon is it

you know it's like uh i mean just making

a knife like kitchen knives i mean

it's true that more people are are

stabbed to death with kitchen knives

than shot with guns

in this world um but still i mean you're

just making kitchen knives and you

consider that to be kitchen knives then

uh

you know you're not hoping that somebody

will use that knife to to stab somebody

or then then uh yeah i mean you're doing

okay i mean

um somebody who makes bricks i mean a

lot of people get killed by being bashed

in the head with bricks but that doesn't

mean that um

you're you're like selling lethal

weapons by selling bricks

it would depend on your own perception i

mean if you really want somebody

to use your bricks to bash other people

in the head then yeah you're making bad

karma

and that could be wrong likelihood too

but uh just following precepts i mean

you gotta be careful not just to get

lost in the idea of just the words of

the rules i mean

really what it all boils down to is your

own mental states

and um yeah try to keep them as

as neutral or as positive as you can

manage

ultimately neutrality is better than

positivity because

like positive karma is still karma it's

keeping you in samsara

like mara the the buddhist devil if you

can't get you to be bad he'll get you to

be good because either way

you're still creating karma that's

keeping you bound up in the system

so yeah it at the end here so or would

it all be volitional and depend on how

you feel regarding your profession yeah

that's exactly it

so i'll just move on to bpat 427's next

question

is it considered sexual misconduct for a

monk to occasionally

masturbate if he's abstaining from all

sexual activity but his mind is fixated

on sex and he happens to have a wet

dream would that be breaking any linear

rules okay that's two questions

and um let's see

yeah a monk is not allowed it's it's

sangha di seisa

number one it's it's like one of them

it's like the fifth

rule of all the monk rules um it's

a relatively serious one that a monk is

not allowed to have an

orgasm deliberately unless it's in a

dream

so technically spanking the puppy is

against the rules but if you just pet it

a little bit

it's still you're still making you know

sensual

karma you're still indulging in lust and

attachment and everything

but uh you're not technically breaking

the rule so long as you're not

intending to have an orgasm so long as

you're not trying to have an orgasm

consciously and deliberately

then it's not exactly against the rules

although

as i was saying earlier buddhist ethics

are so finely tuned

that any kind of lust or attachment is

going to create at least a light and

gray ethical

situation so

yeah if he's abstaining from all sexual

activity but his mind is fixated on sex

um yeah well i mean to the state your

mind is fixated on it

um if if thoughts arise

um you know like the first motion like

in like in roman catholicism they'll say

the first motions like

when when the thought firsts arrive

first arises that's just

the result of karma and that's like a

passive thing you didn't cause the first

thought to arise

but if you like dwell on it and start

and just

you just take the ball and run with it

then yeah you've started uh

you started creating acoustic or bad

karma

even if you're just sitting there

fantasizing and you're you're not moving

at all

but a wet dream is not against the goals

and when i was when i was celibate and

young

i was having a wet dream on average

about once every

three weeks or so when i was in my 40s

they stopped happening and i missed them

the only way that would be against the

rules would be if you

go to sleep with the deliberate

intention of having a wet dream like

you're you're trying to do lucid

dreaming or something

you know you're deliberately trying to

come in your sleep

then yeah that could be breaking the

rules but if you just go to sleep you're

just you're just a horny person

and you go to sleep and you have a uh

like a erotic pornographic dream

and you have an orgasm in your sleep

then that is not against the wills

so move on on to the next question by

bpat427

is there anything in the linea

prohibiting monks from operating

vehicles or riding horses

uh yeah actually there is there's um

it is against the rules for a monk to

ride a horse

um there is a rule against a monk

traveling in a vehicle although the

implication is that the vehicle is being

pulled by

living beings because it's not against

the rule for monk to

travel in a boat like in a sailboat and

so i think the commentarial tradition

has decided that

it means uh like block carts or

horse-drawn carriages

or that kind of a thing and so

there is an exemption if a monk is sick

like he's too sick to walk

he is allowed to travel in a rickshaw

pulled by a

man i think if i remember correctly but

then the commentarial tradition has that

interpreted to mean

a bull so

um yeah i think the the easy way of

explaining this

is that a monk is not allowed

to travel in a vehicle or

be a burden on a living being

unless he is too sick to walk and then

he can avail himself of that

and i availed myself of that once in my

30 years as a monk um

i hurt my foot and i had to walk

i had to travel 32 miles through a

forest to get to the nearest

car road and uh yeah i had torn this

hunk of skin off the bottom of my foot

my feet were wet and i stepped on a

sharp rock and messed up the bottom of

my foot

so the the villagers in that area

chipped in and rented me an elephant

from

a labor uh from a lumber camp

and uh the elephant was named sanwin

which means special bright love

and so i rode this elephant like halfway

16 miles

through the forest until we got to a

kind of dirt road

the bridge was washed out so cars

couldn't get there yet but uh we could

follow

um this dirt road on a block cart so i

got off the elephant and onto this block

car

and it was while writing the bullet card

that i realized why it's against the

rules for monks to ride in bullock carts

unless they're sick because

unlike horses as soon as you stop

beating on a bullock it starts slowing

down

and so to go 16 miles in a block cart

two bullocks are receiving a seven hour

long beating

and so yeah it makes sense although with

regard to cars

um they i mean obviously they didn't

exist in ancient india when the rules

were made

so um the uh the experts in modern times

have compared cars with like

boats where um you know it's like

there's no animal

getting a beating from you being in a

boat so that was considered to be okay

and it might be the only way of crossing

the river anyway if there's no bridge

so people kind of um considered cars and

trains and that sort of thing to be sort

of like boats

and but there were like i have been told

that uh when

cars and trains first reached burma

there were some strict monks that just

refused and just

everywhere they went was on foot

although that could be uh

definitely a handicap nowadays when

monks are traveling all over the world

um see where am i here

yeah so okay i think i answered that

question now the next

next question from uh bpat427

as an extension of my previous question

would one accrue

more bad karma for enabling people in

and unwholesome professions for example

would a heroin addict develop more bad

karma for enabling a heroin dealer to

sell him poison

on top of the bad karma they're already

creating um

yeah i think yeah i think that's that's

pretty likely

i mean it would depend on on the case

but obviously like

taking an extreme example if you're

hiring a hitman

to kill somebody that you don't like

then yeah you're facilitating somebody

else committing murder which is

which isn't going to improve your karma

at all

but again it's like it depends on your

own volitions

so um

yeah like the lady at the grocery store

if she's selling you a six pack of beer

um i doubt that she's going to be

um punished in the hereafter

uh very much if at all for for selling

you that six pack of beer especially if

she doesn't see anything wrong with it

she's just a westernized normie who

doesn't consider it to be immoral at all

um she's not a buddhist keeping five

precepts so she's not breaking that

precept really

she hasn't taken it upon herself to

begin with so

yeah it would depend on the individual

case but yeah i mean if

if you're doing business with like a um

here we go the heroin dealer

um yeah i mean you're you're

facilitating their own

um their own unwholesome behavior

and uh possibly their own greed and so

forth besides

i mean you could be buying something

completely normal from somebody and

still you're

you're facilitating their greed you know

you you buy a car from

the notoriously uh stereotypical used

car salesman and he's like trying to

get as much money out of you as he can

then

you know he's going to be chuckling at

how he ripped you off because he didn't

include the spare tire or something and

yeah he's going to get bad karma for

that but you can't really be responsible

for

other people's mental states entirely

but

um yeah obvious cases i mean if you're

if you're hiring orkin to exterminate

your

your insects in your house rather than

exterminating them yourself i mean

you're essentially doing the same thing

and a lot of the veneer rules are the

same you know it's like

monk is not allowed to commit murder but

he's not allowed to help anybody else

commit murder either

you know he's not allowed to um kill

animals but he's not allowed to like

have somebody else do it for him

either because essentially you're just

using the other person as an instrument

so i hope i answered that one and so

i'll move on to the next one

oh this is this one's a lulu too when a

fully enlightened being dies does their

specific strain of consciousness cease

to exist

quote quote or could it then be

projected anywhere

due to its infinite nature and this is

one of the questions that the buddha

himself refused to answer you know

if the target after the target dies does

he

does he cease to exist or does he

continue to exist i mean that's just

you just do not answer that question

that's another one of those middle path

questions between between yes and no yes

is one extreme

no is the other extreme and the middle

path just cuts right through the middle

and it makes no sense from a logical

point of view but uh then again reality

makes no sense from a logical point of

view like nirvana

really makes no sense from a logical

point of view so you've got rationalists

trying to interpret nirvana as just pure

cessation or something and they just

miss the boat

but um i mean obviously if the buddha

refuses to answer i mean why should why

should i

you know um there is one interesting

suta though where

somebody asks the buddha if a fully

enlightened being continues to exist

after death and

he he remarks that you can't even say

for sure if the enlightened being exists

even before death so you can chew on

that one too

and so uh yeah i'll just move on to the

next question also from

beatpath427 could people carrying out an

involuntary sterilization eugenics

program

avoid negative karma if their intention

is purely to

benefit the society they live in

hmm i think bpat427 wants to sterilize

people

um actually from the buddhist point of

view

yeah so long as you know that you are

sterilizing people against their will

or helping others to sterilize people

against their will

then yeah i think you'd be making some

negative karma

because from the buddhist point of view

even like neutering an animal like

fixing an

animal you are messing with another

being sexuality which can come back on

you

like i think there's some story of um

like venerable sariputa who was the
buddhist right-hand man in a past
life he was a farmer or something who
was like castrating animals and then as
a result of that in a
subsequent life he was born as a eunuch
or got turned into a eunuch
um with regard to eugenics that's a
different question
sterilization is one thing eugenics is
another i mean if eugenics is just uh
you know encouraging people who are um
like genetically compatible you know
they're more likely to create
strong healthy children um in a way
you're still encouraging them to uh to
get naughty with each other which

i mean that's an entirely different

issue and again it just goes back to the

whole idea that

absolute pure whiteness purity of virtue

is a virtual impossibility especially if

you're living in the world

so um yeah eugenics would be more light

gray than

mandatory sterilization um

but uh i mean if you've got a lot of

good volitions you know you've got a lot

of good reasons then the good reasons

might outweigh the bad ones

you know it could be that um i don't

know maybe somebody they're just so

genetically messed up that really they

would be creating genetically messed up
children who would be suffering a lot
then you know it's possible i mean you'd
have to weigh the
all the pluses and the minuses and see
which uh which is heavier before you
make your decision
to the best of your your capacity but
messing with the the sexuality of other
beings i have read in buddhist texts
that uh yeah that's gonna come back on
you and your own sexuality is gonna get
messed up um if the karma is allowed to
reach fruition
so the next question is from chaplin
what is your view on collective karma
quote unquote

can karma start with the individual then

trickle upwards in many individuals into

a broader karmic effect that changes an

entire community

country society or race

um this is uh like a contentious issue

it's a good question too

but it is a contentious issue sort of

like in um

evolutionary biology where

there's the argument or the the

controversy as to whether there's like

group evolution and i think that the

mainstream

um like the consensus of the mainstream

is that no

it's always an individual thing and that

is also the answer

in mainstream or orthodox buddhism

that there really is no collective karma

that it's all individual

that your your own individual karma will

cause you to be reborn

in this or that society but

you could say that there's like a

virtual collective karma that there's

something

kind of like collective karma in that

people who have similar karma and

similar mental state

similar attitudes are more likely to be

um

born together in the same kind of

society

so you know if you've got a warlike if

you've got warlike karma

and a warlike attitude you're more

likely to be born into a warlike

society and other people will also

so it's sort of like you've got

collective karma

and um with regard to the trickle

upwards of like

people um

uh see how would i how would i describe

this you know like one person makes a

major change in the society which then

spreads

um yeah you'd have to say that everybody

that is affected

by that would already have to have the

receptivity like the karmic receptivity

for that to happen

to them um

but uh yeah i mean orthodox buddhism you

would say no there is no collective

karma although

um orthodox buddhism does kind of

uh ignore the possibility that there is

like a deep

connections between people and that um

you know you're just in the presence of

another person their own mental states

will have an effect on you because

deep down there's there's like an um i

mean the barrier doesn't go all the way

down to the bottom

you know the barrier between you and

other people pink floyd's wall or

whatever

there is a level where that just doesn't

exist and so that's where

like empathy and uh like

maybe even telepathy can take place

where there's just uh

like in us it's not really this distinct

individual and that distinct individual

which ultimately aren't real to begin

with

so all i can say for sure is that uh

from the point of view

orthodox tarabata buddhism there is no

collective karma

although there's uh uh you could you

could argue that

you know the same kind of thing does

happen

anyway um for whatever for whatever

reason or through whatever means

in that uh you know people with similar

karma are just gonna be

reborn together and so there's going to

be that kind of agreement

of karma and it you could call that a

kind of group karma at least there's uh

like trends with regard to what kind of

individual karma the

inhabitants of the society have

so yeah that's that's my best answer on

that with regard to whether there really

is collective karma

i could be a heretic and uh accept the

possibility that there is

and for all i know there may be it all

depends on how you look at it

next question from chaplain i'm really

enjoying reading your first two books

that you recently released on amazon do

you plan on publishing any of your

translations

or other works when this current series

is complete

um yeah i think so

that is the plan it's going to depend on

whether the this current series

really is uh you know i mean if people

appreciate it and and buy it and uh

you know it's if it's uh turns out that

writing a whole new book from scratch

would be worthwhile if i think people

will actually read it

then yeah i would be happy to do that

especially if i'm not too busy

um like working a regular job to do it

with regard to my translations and most

of my translations

are in the first volume essays of

terabyte of buddhism

there's the big atakawaga translation

which did get published very briefly

for free distribution and

from the very beginning i've always had

the the intention that that this book

especially the atakawaga translation

should be for free distribution it

should be done

i don't want to charge money for it um i

did have the idea that

if uh if it did wind up in a in a larger

anthology of something i could uh

somehow um just have like an intro

saying that

please consider this part to be free you

know it's like

the box of cereal 20 free you know it'd

be like that

although um there is a very generous

and uh devout fellow named frank who

has uh expressed a willingness to uh

have this

published at his own expense or at least

to uh

make a large contribution to that and i

would feel happier

with with that because it has always

been my

intention that the main like possibly my

main contribution to

western buddhism would be my atakawaga

translation

and so i really i really don't like the

idea of charging money for it

but yeah we'll just see how it goes

let's see

see publishing any of your translations

or other works when this current series

is complete

um yeah yeah i mean like like i said if

if there's a positive response

positive enough response from my first

books

that it makes it obvious that there is a

demand or an appreciation

and people would be willing to uh to uh

buy more books if i were to just go

through all the trouble

you know like writing my memoirs or

something then uh yeah i'm going to

continue with that because

i i do write relatively well and um

i don't always enjoy writing but i enjoy

finishing writing it's like when you

when you finish

writing something you can look at it as

something that you have accomplished you

know and if it turned out well then

it feels good so um

yeah you're just gonna have to uh wait

and see and i'm gonna have to uh

try to come up with good ways of

advertising because that's like the main

that is like my main issue at present is

how to make the books known because uh

if nobody knows about them then

nobody will buy them other than just

people who know me already

so we'll just see how that goes and so

the next question

is from dog breath mr breath

asks this is kind of a long complicated

one

biofeedback offers measurable data for

meditators using this data

improvements can be made and deeper

meditative relaxation states

achieved autogenics whatever that is

was also born out of the western

scientific mindset

and also has many studies to show its

efficacy have you ever considered using

these methods

would you consider utilizing these

methods if you were to teach

meditation do you see a time these

methods may be used in mainstream

buddhism

do you see anything wrong with using

these methods in a buddhist context and

i'll

i will consider all of that to be mr

brett's first

question and as it turns out i've often

thought about that

i remember biofeedback used to be you

get these electrodes attached to your

head in various places and then it would

make little squiggly lines on the paper

sort of like a lie detector test or

something and i like that idea because

it's like

if you can get into a good meditative

state

and then you see what the pattern is on

the lines then you can just

kind of not necessarily lock into that

but

you know you know what it is that's

creating the best results

and then you can sort of use the the

squiggly lines or whatever it is

as just something that you focus your

attention on and you can kind of control

that by cultivating the mental state

that that causes the lines

to be in the the optimal at least

optimal for you

configuration so i actually went to the

went to the trouble of getting this

little

i can't remember what it was called but

it was a bio feedback thing that uh

um it had made progress since the

squiggly lines on the paper

it was a bluetooth thing that you'd fit

onto your head it just had one electrode

that

stuck to it pressed up against um

like your your left frontal lobe

and um i used it a little while it was

hard to get the bluetooth to

to hook up it was really kind of a

chintzy

thing and um it wasn't really accurate

enough to be useful to me and so because

of the complications of using it and

the questionable results i i just

stopped using it after a while

but they are getting better at it in

fact

the us government is doing a lot of

experiments

on um like

having electrodes you know up against

your head

and um using that as a way of

like um operating on like a fighter

plane or

pretty soon you'll be able to play video

games just by thinking your commands

to some degree it's already happening

and so yeah i don't see any problem with

that i think that could be really useful

technology for aiding people in

meditation

and uh they do have better ones than the

the chintzy little one electrode one

that i got i think they've got one that

has like a headband with several

electrodes that may produce better more

reliable results

so um yeah if anybody wants to try that

uh get get one of the good ones and uh

tell me how it works

because i was really interested in that

and i do i do still think it's a good

idea

next question from dog breath

it is not possible to experience this

one's a lulu also

it is not possible to experience

something that is not known

if it were it would instantly become the

known

meaning any state of consciousness

experienced must be

knowable and therefore natural

and then he's got three questions

following up from this

does this mean enlightenment is a purely

natural state and not something

extraordinary and that anyone can attain

it if so why does it appear so if you

have attained it

does this mean that meditation without

supernatural concepts

added to it is simply deep relaxation

and

if the enlightened state is natural why

is it necessary to work or have to do

something to attain it wouldn't it be

instantly available or quickly

attainable

by which i mean it easily as easily

attainable as relaxing

okay this one's got some unpacking to do

so i mean the first the first statement

that he has sort of like the

the springboard to these questions um

is it is not possible to experience

something that is not

known meaning any state of consciousness

experienced must be knowable and

therefore

natural um yes and no i mean

you can experience something and really

not know what it really

is you can like you can perceive

something you don't know what it is you

know it's like what the hell

is that but it's like you just

experience as that

whatever it is and i'm not exactly sure

what to label it any more specifically

than just

this thing that i'm unfamiliar with so

that's how perception works you have to

put some kind of a label onto it it has

to be something but i mean it can be

something as vague as

this whatever it is that i really can't

define anymore exactly than

this whatever it is so it is possible to

experience a mental state

that you're unfamiliar with and just has

you confused

and you don't really see all the way

through to the bottom of it

but anything that you experience um

yeah it's it's natural and it's noble to

the extent that you at least

have perceived it as something but it

might not be as i say it might not be

anything more specific than just

this what is this um

but yeah from the buddhist point of view

anything you experience is natural there

is really is nothing supernatural

in buddhism except maybe for

enlightenment itself

because enlightenment simply is off the

scale it is not

part of samsara nirvana or nirvana

is not in samsara it's not any of the 31

planes of existence it's just totally

off the scale

so getting to his first question here

does this mean enlightenment is a purely

natural state and not something

extraordinary and that anyone can attain

it

if so why does it appear so few have

attained it

enlightenment itself is a paradoxical

state because as i say it's

off the scale and um it's

it's like it's not samsara but it's

simultaneous with samsara it kind of

overlaps with samsara

it gets to into the the extremes of like

the mahayana buddha saying that nirvana

and samsara are the same

um so it's a paradoxical state

enlightenment especially

i mean meditative states are one thing

but uh

you know they're not enlightenment

meditative states are like entirely

different kettle of wax from

from nirvana because nirvana has no

beginning and no end it is not

conditioned it has no causes and no

effects

it's just this formless infinite

absolute

um which means that it just transcends

existence and non-existence we're

getting all the way back to hegel again

and so buddhism just doesn't even bother

to try and reify it mostly

um see does this mean that enlightenment

is a purely natural state

that's questionable not something

extraordinary well

it is extraordinary uh assuming that you

can even say that it exists

within a the context of samsara which is

what we're stuck in right now

and anyone can attain it whether

anyone can attain i mean that would be

purely

potential i think realistically most

people

can't because they're just not ready for

it they're not right for it even though

they're just swimming in it all the time

because

any kind of formless unconditioned

absolute isn't going to have boundaries

so if it's in the mind of an arahant

it's also in the mind of a chicken and

like a serial killer

it's just that we don't notice it

so so why does it appear so few have

attained this because they're so

locked into their perceptual system of

dualities and

is and isn't and this and that

natural and unnatural all the words all

the concepts

it just makes so much noise that they uh

they just don't see through it to the uh

to the absolute foundation of it all

so to speak next question from or

like the next question in this list of

questions from dog breath

does this mean that meditation without

supernatural concepts added to it is

simply deep relaxation

um in a way you could say that it's

simply deep relaxation it's

it's like deep relaxation of your mind

it's like ultimately

from the dharmic point of view you're

meditating to make your mind

as clear as as awake and as peaceful and

uncluttered as possible so that you can

ultimately

see through um all of the phenomena that

your mind is conjuring up to the reality

that

that that is um underlies that and

ultimately pervades it

so um yeah i mean meditation without

supernatural concepts added to it really

is

it's uh like uh techniques for

um pacifying and clarifying

simplifying your mind making it as awake

and alert and clear and empty

and uncluttered as possible so that you

can see

through the veil see through just the

phenomena

the multiplistic phenomena of samsara to

the reality which

lies underneath it because we are in the

matrix right

now we are in plato's cave

so the last question here

from dog breath on this list of

questions

if the enlightened state is natural why

is it

necessary to work or to have to do

something to attain it

wouldn't it be instantly available or

quickly attainable

by which i mean as easily attainable as

relaxing

well i mean relaxing is one thing and uh

becoming enlightened is something else

because

just relaxing is not going to get you

enlightened like krishna bernie said you

can open the window but you can't make

the breeze blow in

the best you can do is just make

yourself as available for enlightenment

as possible

by simplifying and clarifying your mind

as possible

um so i mean it kind of is

instantly available because we're

already soaking in it you know our mind

is already just

pervaded by enlightenment it's just that

uh

we don't care or we don't notice um

but just because just for the sake of

argument if something were

natural let's say if the enlightened

state is natural

um why is it necessary to work for it or

have to do something to attain it i mean

being at the top of mount everest is

natural

you know i mean it's not by supernatural

means that a person climbs to the top of

mount everest

it's not by supernatural means that

somebody wins an olympic gold medal

um it's purely natural means that you

win the olympic gold medal but still

you've got to work your ass off and even

most people who are working their ass

off to win an olympic gold medal still

don't win it

so just because something is natural

doesn't mean that it's just gonna

plop right into your lap um

but again i mean becoming fully

enlightened um if there is anything at

all that's supernatural

in in buddhism it would be um nirvana

and the attainment of nirvana because

nirvana cannot be caused it has to be

effortless

and um you cannot force nirvana

you know you cannot make it happen you

cannot

make yourself be enlightened all you can

do is be as available to it as possible

and um you know it's we're almost

getting into the realm of like divine

grace where it's just uh

whether it happens or not is not

entirely under your control

so i i hope uh i'm not like

totally confounding everybody with these

answers but some of these questions are

just

um you know they're just going right off

the rails

into uh paradox and um things that you

really can't put into words

the whole middle path is just a mind

bender you know middle path is not only

between

self torture and self self indulgence

it's in between

yes and no it's in between is and isn't

between existence and non-existence

okay next question from potila

some traditions like contemplative

christianity and bhakti yoga

talk about being infused with divine

light or divine love as one of or the

highest states attainable by humans

they hold that this is god bringing the

experience to them by way of blessings

or

grace what would the equivalent buddhist

state of meditation be

to these experiences of intense love or

light

it seems that it is a lower state than

described in the suttas for causing

awakening because it appears to be a

highly emotional rapture like trance

but also a collapse of the self quote

unquote

and generates intense sympathy and peace

you have spoken a few times about

a type of perennial view of paths but it

seems that some have experiences that no

correlation

have no correlation between traditions

okay

so i'm i'm understanding this question

to mean something like um

in in christianity at least among some

christian

mystics or saints

they are saying that uh you know the the

soul of the uh

you know the the like the highly

advanced christian

you just be full of light and love for

the whole universe

because god is love and you're you've

become god through participation

of some such and um

yeah i think one thing to bear in mind

that may be significant here

is that christianity has always been

more heart oriented and

uh or feelings oriented faith-oriented

whereas buddhism has been

more head-oriented more philosophical

and scientific

and so um you know there there are

various

mental states that you can experience um

in it while being enlightened presumably

you know there's

like an enlightened being can still have

all kinds of you know

pretty much the still the same uh

spectrum

of of thoughts and feelings other than

maybe some really

like really uh unskillful negative ones

um

so it could be that just the like the

more heart oriented path is taking you

in a slightly different direction on

your way to enlightenment

than the just the more sterile um

this sort of analytical or not no i

shouldn't even say analytical

just just more of a head oriented more

of a like a

gyani yoga kind of approach

um it's not bhakta yoga it's more just

the

the yoga of knowledge or the yoga or

raja yoga the

yoga of like meditative

contemplation um so i mean it could be

that

it's just that christianity is going by

a slightly different route

to the top of the mountain than buddhism

is

or it could also be that you know like a

fully enlightened being could be

experiencing this light and love

although it's it's not so much um

emphasized in the texts and i mean it's

not so much emphasized even in their own

life

because they just kind of see it from a

more head-oriented point of view

so um

yeah i mean i mean you can meditate on

metal i think meta meditation gets you

up to what is it second or third jhana

supposedly

um but that would not be uh

enlightenment

it would not be the same as

enlightenment in fact no mental state is

the same as enlightenment because

enlightenment really is not this or that

mental state

so yeah that's another kind of a subtle

one

but yeah my best guess is that uh the

more heart heart-oriented

more feelings and faith-oriented systems

are going to have

more of that kind of fireworks and

special effects going on on your way

there but it's not the same as

enlightenment

or if it is the same as enlightenment

then even a fully enlightened

terawatta buddhist monk would be

experiencing that sort of thing but

it wouldn't be seen as as important

or as worthy of mention or some such

that's my best answer to that so i'm

going to move on to potila's next

question

though orthodox tyravada does not teach

an origin for existence

i must so why is there something instead

of nothing

i can't be an atheist because this world

is just so odd outside of tarawa

teachings

what is your thoughts on the origin or

reason for all things

okay well i've already kind of touched

on this before

and uh you know it's like going back to

hegel

absolute being an absolute non-being or

indistinguishable

and so this whole um the the ten

thousand things mentioned in the day

chain come from

um like this self-referential

consciousness

which arises because it can out of out

of the

the infinite everything nothing there's

anything that possibly can exist

can't or anything that possibly can't

exist does exist in this

virtual potential form and then this

virtual potential

consciousness becomes self-referential

and starts

perceiving itself and thinking that what

it is perceiving

is really what it is and it's just uh

like the virtual statue um

that uh you say that it potentially or

virtually does exist

but uh again from the buddhist point of

view this entire universe arises through

ignorance

or um i mean some some old versions of

dependent core rising say that it arises

from perception

or papancha which is like

differentiating designation which is

what i consider to be essentially a

synonym for perception

so somehow you've got uh the potential

you you can say that there's this

infinite consciousness which because

it's infinite and formless can't really

be said to exist

um you know it just transcends

transcends any kind of

uh you know no label will really stick

to it

um and then in this infinite

consciousness you have little

virtual uh parts of it that

that become aware of themselves and then

become unenlightened because they're

they think that what they are perceiving

is the reality

and they falsely uh differentiate

themselves from everything else and then

they're generating all these dreams

which is uh our karmic samsaric

existence

um but to say that there is something

out of nothing or something instead of

nothing again that those are the two

extremes

you know it's like something is one

extreme

nothing is the other extreme and

buddhism follows the path by the middle

you know

dependent core rising just cuts right

through it

it's not something it's not nothing

and it again i mean this is sort of the

theme of this

this uh q a and uh i hope i'm not just

uh

blackpilling everybody on these q and

a's because uh

yeah people keep asking these questions

of is it yes or is it no

or does it exist or does it not exist

and

ultimately from the point of ultimate

truth

it's it's you can't say it's one or the

other

you can't say it to both and you can't

say it's neither it's just uh

reality cannot be put into words reality

is an unthinkable void

um until you experience it and then it's

it's like infinity it's god

it's dao brahman whatever

nirvana so

yeah if you if you think that the

universe exists that's one extreme

if you think the universe doesn't exist

that's the other extreme and buddhism

teaches the the way by the middle

uh there's a suta in the uh

submutanica which in bhikkhu bodhi's

translation is called the

cosmologist which deals with this like

this this cosmologist

asked the buddha you know does the world

exist and the buddha says you know

that's

that's the oldest that's the oldest

philosophy of the world

so then he says well then mr gautama

does it not exist and buddha just says

that's the second philosophy of the

world

and then he says that uh buddhism

teaches you know

the middle way between these extremes of

his and isn't and that's the middle path

of

independent core rising and if you

really want to understand dependent core

rising i suggest you study nagarjuna

because i

really don't think the the stock 12

nidona

formula is uh really all that

explanatory

so i'll just move on to the next

question after i've uh once again

um denied yes and no

where in buddhist cosmology would the

semitic gods like yahweh and

allah fit in are they local devas who

gain

power the more worshipers they have

that's an interesting idea

perhaps more like rakshas or asuras

given their desire for power praise and

adoration

there is a portion on the where brahma

is

you know there's a portion in the nikaya

where the

brahma is reborn alone and mistakenly

believes he creates the universe

but it is actually kama coming into

being the satire recalls

the semitic gods behavior and view of

themselves the desert gods seem to be

opposed to

dhamma are there gods in the suttas who

work

against the buddha mara excluded because

that's his job

um well let's just assume for the sake

of argument that yahweh

and allah really are deities

and um that they aren't

just like uh kind of a crude and deluded

attempt at describing ultimate reality

or

you know what the what the hindus or the

vedantists call

brahman so yeah you'd have to say that

there was some kind of

devas i mean they wouldn't necessarily

even be as high as brahmas

um but i mean if you if you read the

text especially in the old testament you

can see that yahweh himself

uh evolved you know it's it's um

in some in some respects he's just a

sociological phenomenon because

uh originally he was equated with the

god

l who was like the canaanite god who had

a consort and he was just

one of many gods and just sort of the

god responsible for this and that

and then moses came along and conflated

l with

yahweh who was some sort of midianite or

edomite god

and he became more and more powerful

until um by the babylonian captivity

not much earlier than then maybe not

earlier than then he was uh

the only god and uh

allah kind of uh was very much

influenced by the old testament yahweh

to some degree they overlap so i mean

what what submitting what they are like

i mean it's hard to say because it's

like

you know 3 000 years ago yahweh was

very different than he is now um yeah so

he has evolved

but let's just assume for the sake of

existence you've got uh

some kind of powerful god resembling the

old testament yahweh

um yeah they'd be davis and uh

obviously not all devas are dharmic

you know most of the devas if you can

trust like what the buddhist tech say

they're all just having their fun up in

some heaven realm just enjoying the

sensual pleasures

enjoying their gold and jewel encrusted

palaces

full of celestial nymphs and they've got

like the

you know the heavenly gardens and the

fountains and all that kind of stuff

so they don't they don't really care one

way or the other about the buddha or

about

dharma they're just uh they're just

living their own

hedonistic existence um pretty much the

way a lot of humans are living their

hedonistic existence here

for that matter a lot of like spoiled

and pampered pets are just living their

hedonistic existence even though they're

in the animal realm

so i would assume that most gods and

are just not really concerned with the

highest dhamma

and uh with regard to this question here

at the end are there gods and the sutas

who work against the buddha

well i mean in addition to mara you've

got mara's daughters

who are kind of his assistants and um

there's a lot of mention of mara's in

the plural

and that's not necessarily just uh a

sequence like a temporal sequence of

this god has the rule of mara until he

his karma is exhausted and then he's

replaced by a different

uh different being who plays the role of

mara until his

his karma is exhausted i mean there is

that too

but um i think there are probably a lot

of

wrathful deities as the tibetans

describe them and there's one weird suta

of the mara tajaniyasuta

where it's talking about kali even how

kali is like a

an aunt of mara

so uh yeah i mean there's probably like

uh

more or less malevolent devas i mean

even the uh

like the what do you call them uh

in in burmese they're called balloon

you know they become like man-eating

ogres but technically speaking they

would be low-level devas also

so yeah there's there's a lot of devas

um

i don't know how well yahweh and allah

would fit in because as i say

yahweh especially evolved

radically from just a kind of tribal

canaanite god up to you know just

essentially

the only true god

but um yeah i would guess that uh most

devas are just uh sort of like um

sort of upgraded versions of us you know

they're living in a better world they

live longer they don't get sick and

you know they they've got whenever

they're hungry they just think and this

the food's already in their mouth or

whatever

you know that kind of stuff they don't

have to go potty

um so they would be just sort of a

dharmic just because they don't really

give a damn

well that's one reason why uh they say

that being

being born as a human is the best

possible way to be born because

the beings in the lower realm serve

they're too ignorant and too afflicted

really to practice dhamma or to

understand it and

the devas have it so nice that they just

are not inspired to try to improve their

situation

so yeah i mean there have been devas in

the texts

like in the sub youtu nikaya coming to

monks and uh kind of

telling them you know why don't you just

i mean you're you're still young why not

just

drop out and enjoy pleasures of the

senses until you're old and then you can

ordain if you want to so yeah lots of

davis just do not get it or do not

appreciate

dhamma and uh i assume some of them

are even opposed to it

including mara and his daughters and

possibly his

his kinfolk and the other maras

and uh some collies too maybe

so uh yeah i think i think i answered

that one sufficiently

i hope next question is from frank

i'd like you to explain the reigns

retreat from the perspective of a monk

okay um the reigns retreat

in terra vada buddhism is kind of

analogous to lent in roman catholicism

and it in the buddhist time it was

usually the first three months of the

monsoon season

of the official monsoon season although

a monk is allowed to postpone his reigns

retreat by one month so it would be

the second third and fourth months of

the monsoon season

and uh in ancient india it was just

traditional

that monks would stay in one place

because it's raining all the time and

living under trees is not really good

i've i've tried that before i found from

my own experience that a tree does not

make

a good umbrella or at least the tree i

was staying under

did not make a good umbrella it just the

leaves kind of

channel the the raindrops together into

bigger drips

they get you just as wet maybe i mean

some trees i assume they shed rain but

it would seem like it would not be

beneficial with the tree to uh deflect

all the water away from the roots

so um yeah that plus monks wandering

around

during the planting season they might be

trampling

farmers crops and that sort of thing and

so it just became a tradition early on

probably among all of the uh samana or

ascetic schools in india

that during the heaviest time of of

rainfall of the year monks would just

stay

in one place and um

then it became traditional that that

that was a time of uh

more intensive meditation and

uh yeah even even in uh like burma

um during the the three months of the

reigns retreat that is considered to be

a time of

more intensive practice and people

generally don't get

married at that time so right at the end

of the range retreat there's all kinds

of weddings in burma

because the people have been waiting for

the range retreat to end but frank here

is asking for

the range retreat from the perspective

of a monk

so yeah that's that's essentially what

it is i mean originally when monks were

homeless

wanderers it was just a time when it was

heavy rain where they would just stay

together in one place and it's against

the rules for a monk to

live in the open or under a tree during

the reigns retreat he has to actually go

under a roof

or or into a cave or something and uh

yeah so that's about it i mean it's the

the years are counted in

in reigns the the the word for year

in pali is wasa which also just means a

rain it's like

you know like the the indians in the old

cowboy movies talking about many moons

you know even the word monk comes has

the same etymology as the word moon

so um in in ancient india the word for a

year

just uh kind of followed the same thing

it was like one um monsoon season

was like the kind of how you count not

only years in general but amongst

seniority

is counted in wasa how many reigns

retreats you have

you have been ordained so i was

my seniority was 30 reigns before i uh

started wearing this this nice shirt

okay so next question is from jml

is there any chance doing mushrooms a

few times just for curiosity's sake

would not be a precept violation okay

that's kind of an interesting question

the fifth precept is uh i undertake the

precept to refrain from

ale wine and intoxicants which

cause heatlessness or cloudedness of

mind

so i think the key term there is is the

heatlessness

it's a cause for carelessness like if

you're drunk

um you know you just don't give a [__]

it just kind of makes you stupid

sometimes and um makes you

less um conscientious

it makes you less aware of dharma

so um with regard to mushrooms it would

depend on why you take it and its effect

on you

like as a monk i took mushrooms uh at

least twice

than i can remember and uh for me

taking psychedelics like mushrooms and

lsd

um almost always result in like

mystical states and religious religious

experiences

so um if you're taking it for spiritual

reasons like as an entheogen

so to speak like doing like a um

an ayahuasca ceremony something like

that then i think it could be

justifiable

because sometimes taking uh

like a chemical that will just slam you

out of a rot

is exactly what you need or at least it

can be very beneficial

so um yeah i mean there's a good chance

i wouldn't even be

i wouldn't have even become a monk if i

hadn't uh taken

um psychedelic drugs as a layperson

because

one of the main effects that it has

is it just shows you that there are

alternative ways of viewing reality that

in their own way are just as valid

as just being a straight normate so

um yeah i wouldn't i wouldn't say that

doing mushrooms

um is necessarily in violation of the

fifth precept unless you're doing it

just recreationally to party

um you say here just for curiosity's

sake

i mean just for curiosity's sake i don't

know if that would be

a good enough reason but if you're doing

it for spiritual purposes

like to bring up stuff that's deep down

to knock you out of ruts that maybe

you're stuck in

to give you like a different perspective

on reality to expand your consciousness

something like that i think it could be

justifiable

so finally the last

question the very last one

and we've already gone more than two

hours

is from shawarma dharma when thinking

about serious practitioners

forest monks etc what are the salient

differences between the thai burmese and

sri lankan

approaches um that's

kind of an interesting question and um

i mean i would have to rely on like real

like oversimplifications and

generalizations because

you know the thais and the burmese and

the sri lankans they're they all belong

to

the same um religion quote unquote

terabyte of buddhism although there are

cultural differences

and so um one gross oversimplification

is that of the three the three pitikas

the three baskets of the pali topitica

um the sri lankans have a reputation for

emphasizing the sutas

the thais have a reputation for

emphasizing winya or monastic discipline

and the burmese have a reputation for

emphasizing abhidhamma or like the

the abstract technical philosophy stuff

but with regard to the serious

practitioners

um it's my understanding that the

burmese

tend more towards mindfulness meditation

like

mike mahasi has been probably the most

influential

uh tradition of the 20th century like of

the past hundred years

in burma sri lanka it's my understanding

you're more likely to do samata

meditation more

emphasis on jhana um

and with regard to the ties i'm not

exactly sure what the time

practices are because the ties kind of

have a reputation for just following the

rules

and not meditating very much i'm sure

but this is an oversimplification again

it's just

a gross generalization but the ties are

really into

following the rules and living the

lifestyle and

they also do more do tonga so they're

they're more likely to just be wandering

around homeless and sleeping in

cemeteries and that kind of a thing

but they do have a reputation for not

meditating nearly as much

as the burmese so i'm just comparing

tai teravada with burmese tarabata um

just again going with the gross

oversimplification and the

generalization the

burmese are more interested in

meditation and scholarship

and the thais are more interested in

following the monastic discipline

and practicing outward austerities

and with regard to sri lanka it was very

corrupt

very degenerate for hundreds of years

although

in the 20th century i think maybe even

the very late 19th century they started

having reform movements that were very

serious

uh forest traditions and i don't have a

lot of experience with them i've got no

personal experience

i've met a few monks western monks who

lived in sri lanka in in these uh

traditions and uh it seems to be very

much based on the suitables

and uh very very sincere

although most sri lankan buddhism and

for that matter most burmese and thai

buddhism is

relatively corrupt um

so the saline differences between the

thai burmese and sri lankan approaches

uh yeah i mean it's you're gonna find

the full spectrum

pretty much everywhere i would think

there's not a whole lot of forest

burmese buddhism like i was ordained in

the tompulu tradition which is one of

the few

burmese forest traditions um so

the burmese traditions are mostly

for serious practitioners especially

they tend to uh

be centered in like uh meditation

centers

you know like mahasi and uh now and

uh there are a bunch of other ones

someone and mogo

and uh you have the goenka method which

arose in burma also

but they tend not to be based on uh

forest forest practice

and uh ties there's more emphasis there

there are more forest traditions in

thailand and probably now in sri lanka

also

but uh i'm really most of my experiences

with burmese taraba so i can't really

speak with a lot of authority

on thai and sri lankan buddhism although

with regard to the ties

um a few hundred years ago the burmese

made an unprovoked invasion of thailand

and sacked their capital ayudia

and it caused their like ecclesiastical

hierarchy and their

buddhist um like the the university

system to collapse

which they never fully recovered from

that and so

the ties um even some of the meditation

masters are

really bad scholars you know they don't

know the poly correctly they use the

terms incorrectly

but partly because of that they also

teach from their own personal experience

which is good

and so you have some real meditation

masters in thailand

even though they might not be familiar

with the correct

poly terminology and so forth but

i assume that is at least as good

probably better in many cases than

the burmese idea of just dogmatism and

you just teach

exactly what is in the books even though

you may not have any personal experience

with it

and again with uh with regard to the sri

lankans i really i really can't say that

i can't say that much about them because

i've got very little experience with

them

so um yeah i guess that's the last

question

and uh we're already well over two hours

i i tried to warn you

i hope you went pee before you started

watching this

and um if you have more questions i mean

it's

people are just keep coming up with more

and more questions which is good

so if you have more questions just leave

them in the comments below

or if you're on the subscribe to our

channel

um which the link is below um

i do make an announcement a few days

before i uh

do the next one or if you're on the

discord server

which uh now is by invite only because i

think we were

getting infiltrated by uh trolls um

you can you can request um

an invite to uh to the discord server

and then there's like a q a room there

where you can you can ask questions

there too

but um if you're if you're just uh new

to all of this

then uh yeah just it's good enough to

leave your questions in the comments

below

and if it's on youtube then i'll get

like an email

um bit shoot is a little trickier i

don't get notifications so much i have

to go search for those

but um yeah you're uh you're welcome to

ask questions

and like some of these people that have

asked them today uh

you can hit me with your best shot some

of these were like

uh you just have to wander into the

realm of formless void and

incomprehensibility trying to answer

these things

but i guess the the main theme of the

questions today was

the middle path is not just the middle

path between self-indulgence and

self-torture it's the middle path

between yes and no

between is and isn't between existence

and non-existence

and uh if you don't understand that then

uh that's that's completely

normal because nobody can really

understand intellectually if you think

you've understood it intellectually

you're uh

you've gone off the tracks you're in a

rut

so uh yeah that's that's it and uh

um yeah like i said you're welcome to

ask again and uh

be happy

Hello and welcome to episode 12 of

question and answer.

I am your host Panyo Bassa,

also known as David Reynolds.

Hail audience.

Uh

where do I start? I suppose I should uh

say uh

that my sweetheart always wants me to uh

shave and look nice for these, which is

one reason why I don't have like a

week's growth of whiskers on me right

now.

But what it results in is uh I put off

shaving till the last minute and then I

sit in front of everybody with like cuts

and razor burns.

So uh

please be patient with that if it uh if

appearances make any difference to you

at all.

And so I've got lots of questions here.

And so I might as well just get started.

First question is from Potila,

also known as Besties with Dr. N Glyke,

and whose secret name is Slave of

Knowledge.

First question.

Besides Nagarjuna, which Mahayana or

non-Theravada Buddhist philosophers do

you find help illuminate the early

Dharma but do not create new sutras or

lineages?

Okay, well um

just for starters, I might as well throw

in uh the Buddhacarita by Aśvaghoṣa,

um which is really not breaking any kind

of new ground with regard to philosophy

or anything, but um

it is like a standard

um account of the Buddha's life from a

non-Theravada Buddhist perspective, but

still it was like pre-Mahayana

traditional early Buddhism.

And um I have read that it is considered

to be one of the most perfect, most

beautiful classics of world poetry ever

composed.

In the original Sanskrit, I assume.

So, there is that. But, to with regards

to the philosophical stuff,

um,

yeah, I mean, I can't really say

Prajnaparamita because that really did

create, um, new sutras and lineages.

So, um,

uh, really with regard to philosophers

that I find help illuminate the early

Dharma, just about any

like

mystical

anti-intellectual,

anti-emotional

sort of,

um, Buddhist writer or or philosopher,

um, can really help illuminate early

Dharma. So, like the Xin Xin Ming of,

um, the third patriarch in China or the

Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation,

um, I mean, they're just as radically

anti-intellectual or approximately as

radically anti-

um, rationalistic as like the

Atthakavagga, which is really ancient,

um,

very early

uh, Buddhist philosophy.

And after after the Buddha passed away

and still early on, like within the

first 100 years or so,

uh, scholars and philosophers just

started formulating these elaborate

systems, which really went against the earliest teachings.

But, um, it's just human nature. Like, um,

like, uh, nature abhors a vacuum and intellectualism also abhors a vacuum.

Then, people are just going to cook up systems and so forth, especially in India where it was just like this passion.

But, um, the Buddha really was teaching that I mean, you cannot understand reality by thinking about it. And so, if you really you to understand reality, you just have to keep your mind silent, or at least not rely on what your mind is telling you.

And so, any kind of like the like the
old Zen stories, anything like that, it
really is just hammering away at that.
Then uh yeah, that's that's helpful
because uh
philosophy in general, any kind of
elaborated system,
is already off the path, at least with
regard to the teachings of early
Buddhism.
Any kind of intellectual assertion, you
know, is is one extreme, isn't is the
other, and the middle path just cuts
through the extremes.
And so, you really can't put it into
words.

And so, any kind of Buddhist philosophy
that emphasizes that,
that emphasizes the futility of trying
to figure stuff out intellectually,
that's going to be helpful. At least uh
Um I mean, a lot of people just can't
stand this, just like having the rug
pulled out from under them, you know,
they're just in free fall, but um
uh if you really want to understand
reality, you you're just going to have
to get used to free fall.
Unfortunately for uh some people that
that don't like that.
So, the next question from Potila,
"Can homosexuals, male and female, be
ordained into the Sangha, or are they in

the pandaka category category, which are prohibited?" Yeah, pandaka usually means a eunuch, but it can also mean anybody that isn't fully male or fully female, someone who kind of comes in between.

Um and that would include um hermaphrodites, people like that.

Um what does the process look like to remove a pandaka as a candidate from ordination?

Okay. Uh getting back to the first part here, can homosexuals, male and female, be ordained into the Sangha? Well, they obviously are. I mean, with regard to female ordination, that's just a whole different issue. And in Burma,

where I was a monk most of the time, um
it just wasn't an issue at all because
there were no ordained females other
than just um eight precept nuns.
But, um according to vinaya, according
to the ancient rules of monastic
discipline,
uh it's pretty clear that homosexuals
are considered to be uh pandaka.
Um there's even mention in the texts of
part-time pandakas, which um presumably
means like a bisexual or or or something
along those lines, something that's more
behavioral than physical.
So, I mean, you don't have to be
literally
um like a eunuch in order to be a

pandaka, just going with the ancient

texts.

So, I mean, a real physical eunuch,

um

like a person like a male who has lost

his family jewels or is seemingly male

but just never had them,

um yeah, you're they're just not allowed

to be ordained. And if they are

ordained, the ordination is invalid.

Um and even even a monk who loses his

family jewels through a terrible

accident, technically, it is my

understanding that he just can't be a

monk anymore. He's just immediately

excommunicated because you have to be a

complete man in the biological sense
in order to be ordained as a monk.
You can uh have the penis cut off or
something, but so long as the uh
the the testosterone-generating
glandular tissue, so to speak, is still
there, then you're still ordained.
So, with regard to homosexuals, as I
say, I mean, there's there are quite a
few in the Sangha, uh latent ones
anyway, just sort of by nature.
And uh they tend to gravitate towards
the more luxurious places in town, I
have noticed.
Um they tend to be pretty
pretty rare out in like really rough
areas in uh like forest areas or just

really rough um

sort of forest monasteries, that kind of

thing.

Now like austerity generally um

is not favored by them for some reason.

That's an overgeneralization, I assume

there are some really tough ascetic

ones.

But um

yeah, it's that kind of thing is

generally overlooked. I mean, if they're

going to actually indulge in homosexual

behavior,

yeah, then they're they're just going to

be kicked out. They're going to be

excommunicated. Um but then again, like

even a heterosexual monk who just indulges in actual sexual activity um with anybody, I mean, you're just going to be kicked out for that, too.

Um

so

um the process to remove a paṇḍaka as a candidate during the ordination procedure before the ordination actually takes place, the candidate is questioned and one of the questions is, "Are you a man?" There's another one that says, "Are you a human?" which is supposed to rule out like non-human beings that are just taking human form. But um "Are you a man?" is specifically asking, you know, "You're not a female, you're

not a eunuch, you know, you are a

complete male."

And um

so I mean, that is kind of a filter. But

um

uh as I say, I mean, if it's just

behavioral, then generally

um they slide through and um it's not

much of an issue, I suppose. I mean,

uh I've never heard of a latent

homosexual monk being kicked out just

for being a latent homosexual.

Uh but um

yeah, one who is um

like a eunuch, not a complete man in the

biological physical sense,

even if the they're ordained, then the ordination is just invalid.

So, next question.

Also by Potila.

How does early Pali Buddhism understand ghosts in the Western tradition? In the West, we talk about haunting by a specific person, like a murder victim in a house, but per Buddhism, that person has already been reborn. Are they reborn as a ghost with similar characteristics as their previous life? Also, did you have any encounters with ghosts or other similar beings while meditating in Burma?

Okay, that's two questions, I think.

The first question is the understanding

of ghosts seems to be pretty similar all

around the world.

Like, um,

ghosts even in in Buddhism,

I'm called peta, it's considered to be

one of the the five lower realms.

Five?

Yeah.

Four?

Man.

But, nevertheless, ghosts, um, yeah, I

mean, it's it's like in the West where a

lot of ghosts just identify with their

existence before they died as a human.

And in fact, that's one of the things

that causes rebirth as a peta or a

ghost, according to Buddhist tradition,
is you're so attached to something in
this world, possibly even your own
identity, your own social status, or
whatever, that, um,
you just I a lot of ghosts don't even
realize that they're dead, that they
they they're not their former life
anymore.
So, yeah, that that does happen. I mean,
it's like, um,
yeah, it's it's like in the West where
there are ghosts of that sort. In fact,
a lot of them are. In fact, the the
original idea of hungry ghosts
um usually the hungry part um gets
downplayed because the meaning has

changed over time. But a hungry ghost
was an ancestor that wasn't getting
offerings. It's like part of the the
whole ancestor worshipping cult of of
ancient India, which also is common
throughout other parts of the world.
And so, their their descendants
aren't offering
and making offerings of food and so
forth, and that's why the ghosts were
hungry and uh living in misery and and
poverty and so forth. So, apparently
they also, even like in pre-Buddhistic
times,
were still identified to some degree
with their former existence and still

relying on their their descendants to support them and so forth.

So, let's see.

See if I'm getting all of this.

Um yeah, yeah. So, a ghost generally, uh like if you read the Petavatthu, which is a very strange text in in Theravada Buddhism, they tend to recall their past life fairly clearly.

And so, their their life as a ghost is kind of a punishment of some misdeeds of their their previous life as a human, and um they're aware of that.

So, this last question, or the last part of this question, also did you have any encounters with ghosts or other similar beings while meditating in Burma?

Um

Yeah, there was one time when where I apparently did uh see an apparition. Um whether it was a ghost or not, I can't really say, but um

I've probably talked about this before, but one day I was completely healthy. I was wide awake, wasn't sleep deprived or anything. I just filled a bucket of water down at the well and I had it on my shoulder and I was carrying it back up towards my cave up on the hill. And I was walking right in front of the congregation hall.

And

um

because I went around barefoot and I'm walking through the tropics and so forth. I don't want to step on scorpions or or anything pointy or icky or anything. I'd be looking down at the ground when I was walking.

And I saw somebody come through the bushes coming out of the trail um into the clearing in front of me. And even though I was seeing them with my peripheral vision, I could see clearly enough that it was a young a young Burmese man wearing like a blue shirt.

And and he just came out and and stops and sees me and then he just takes off running behind the congregation hall. I

mean, he just It was he ran so fast it was just like a blur.

And my first thought was if you if a layperson meets a monk at a monastery and immediately takes off running, he must be a thief or something. And so I went around behind the congregation hall looking for him to see what was up and there was nobody there.

And I didn't see how he could have gotten away anywhere.

And then I started thinking that he was totally silent. He was running full speed like 20 ft 20 ft away from me. You know, there was no thumping of feet on the ground or anything. It was just

total silence. And he was going so fast.

I mean, it was just a streak.

So

then I started thinking, well, yeah,

maybe there wasn't really anybody there.

But I mean, still that could be some

sort of hallucination. It's hard to say.

Anyway, um

one time I told two Burmese ladies who

were visiting about what had happened.

And I was kind of concerned that they

might be scared because Burmese people

are uh

notoriously fearful of ghosts. In fact,

um Asian people in general tend to be

more afraid of ghosts than Westerners

who often don't believe in them.

And they just immediately, I mean, is
they just told me who who the person
was.
They said, "Oh, that's There was this
Burmese guy who lived who lived there
before I lived there who
was uh
he was just a novice. He was like a
koyangyi they're called. He He didn't
want to be a fully ordained monk, but he
was like a an ordained novice. And one
reason why he didn't want to be a fully
ordained monk is he was actually living
in the congregation hall with his wife
for a while. And that was just too much
for the the villagers. And apparently,

the according to the story, he got

poisoned.

And um then he died.

And so, um

according to the Burmese, anybody who

dies an unnatural sort of death is more

likely to become a ghost anyway. And so,

yeah, they had no doubt whatsoever who

it was.

But uh whether that was really me seeing

a ghost or not, I don't know, but uh

uh that would be probably my best

example other than the notorious case of

me being attacked by ogres, but I don't

want to really get into that one. But

that also, in my opinion, was just a

case of like a waking dream. I just

woken up. And um

I think maybe I was just still dreaming

or something.

But uh yeah, I won't I won't bother you

with that long story cuz there's lots of

other questions

to to answer here.

So, the next question

is from Otomo.

And he says, "Issue.

What is your own process of dealing with

troubled monks? Troubled monks

such as those who exhibit mental

instability, start up deviant

activities,

say things that are clearly

anti-Buddhist or contrary to what is
commonly considered Buddhist lore?"
Well, my own process of dealing with
such troubled monks was be just to avoid
them.
Um, when I was the abbot of a monastery,
troubled monks like that, I would uh
either not let them stay,
uh not let them, you know, move in in
the first place, or if they started
exhibiting this kind of troubledness, I
might uh
send them packing.
Um, there's really not much else you can
do. I mean, you can't force a monk to
disrobe. A lot of people just people
that are not familiar with the rules of

monastic discipline think that uh
you know, like the the Sangha can get
together and just excommunicate a monk,
but the only person who can really
excommunicate a monk is himself.
And if he's just not in the mood to do
that, then all you can really do is just
sort of ostracize him and not have
anything to do with him. If if it really
is a case of somebody cracking up like
at a meditation retreat or something,
then they might be sent to a doctor,
they might be sent to some traditional
healer or some something like that.
Um, they might just be sedated for a
little while.

Um,

but yeah, the the Burmese are very tolerant and you can have really weird monks who if nobody's really willing to put up with them, they'll just become like the the half-crazy hermit living in the the hut out in the woods. And some people will still support them maybe um, because they think that they have some kind of wisdom or just because they're monks.

Um,

but yeah, that that's about it. There's really not much that you can do other than not let them live at the monastery with other monks and cause problems, but you can't really just dis- defrock them

or anything like that. You just do what you can and I assume different situations, different cases would have different approaches and different monasteries and different abbots would have different approaches.

So, the next question is from Dogbreath. And he asks, "What are the Four Noble Truths?"

Which is sort of like uh on a Christian Q&A, somebody asks, "Who is Jesus?"

So, I'm tempted just to get up and walk away for a few seconds just for dramatic effect.

But, um let's let's do this.

Okay, Four Noble Truths, which is just basic, just fundamental to uh Buddhist ethics. I mean, this is like the backbone or one of the backbones. It's um the heart or something, you know, it's some vital aspect of Buddhism.

And um as far as I know, all schools of Buddhism accept the Four Noble Truths, the Arya Sacca.

So, that you can you can really rub the no- you rub the noses of lefties or something like left-wing Buddhists by pointing out to them that the Noble Truths are the Aryan Truths because the word Arya in Pali is translated as noble

in English.

So, the Four Noble Truths, the First Noble Truth is Dukkha Sacca or the Truth of Suffering, which is if you exist, you suffer. That um

For example, being born is suffering, not getting what you want is suffering, getting what you don't want is suffering. Being separated from what you love is suffering. Um getting sick is suffering, getting old is suffering. Usually, dying also involves some suffering. And in fact, if you really want to get down to it, according to Buddhist philosophy, even happiness has an element of suffering to

it. I mean, there's nobody is ever 100%
satisfied. There's always this lurking
chronic dissatisfaction,
which it seems to me is is really what
is just pushing us forwards restlessly
through time from one moment to the
next. We can't really stay the same from
one moment to the next. It's like we're
just constantly like a mentally
fidgeting or something.
So, um yeah, the first noble truth is so
long as you exist
as some sort of individual being, you
are going to suffer.
There's going to be this incompleteness
to you. There's going to be this chronic
dissatisfaction.

And um even if you're happy, you're not going to be 100% absolutely happy.

So, that's Arya uh that's um Dukkha Sacca on the first noble truth. Second noble truth is uh Samudaya Sacca or the truth of the cause of suffering.

And the cause of suffering is desire.

Um the the word usually used in Pali is Tanha, which literally means thirst, and it's usually translated as craving.

And some people will say, "Oh, that's just like unwholesome craving." But as far as I'm concerned, any desire causes suffering. Even if you are desiring enlightenment, even if you are desiring goodness and truth,

that that desire is causing you to be
set up against reality. I mean, it's
like if you are desiring truth, it's
because you are dissatisfied with the
lack of truth at the present moment. So,
I mean, you could say it's a kind of
wholesome desire that leads you in the
right direction, but it's still Dukkha.
It may be justified Dukkha,
arguably, but it's still Dukkha.
There are some versions of the Four
Noble Truths
that have the cause of suffering being
uh Upadana in Pali, which is usually
translated as clinging. Literally means
uptake.
And uh the two are closely linked. Like

desire and uptake are very closely
linked. And uh, both of them could be
said to be true.
And so, um, I mean, the point of that is
that whenever you are unhappy, it's
because you want something.
And that's something really important to
know. In fact, I've I've advised people.
I've I've taught kids Buddhism before
and it's like I try to really emphasize
that if you know only one thing about
Buddhism, if you just remember one thing
about it,
a very good thing for you to remember is
whenever you're unhappy, it's because
you want something.

And that can be really useful in life because if you're unhappy, and then you ask yourself, what is it that I want, you may realize that what you want is just something totally ridiculous. You know, it maybe it's just a rainy day and you want it not to be a rainy day, which is just utterly futile cuz all the wanting in the world isn't going to make it stop raining. You know, it's just wasted unhappiness. Just self-inflicted misery.

And speaking of self-inflicted, another implication of this,

that all suffering is caused by desire, is that in Buddhism, desire is a volitional state. It is ultimately

optional if you are awake enough to

realize that it is optional.

And so,

um, another aspect of Buddhism that

derives from the second noble truth is

that ultimately all suffering is

self-inflicted.

That we are causing it to ourselves.

So, that's the second noble truth.

Samudaya sacca, the the truth of

origin or of the arising

of of suffering.

The uh, the third noble truth is nirodha

sacca. And the third noble truth is very

simple logic based on the the two.

In fact, it's just a a logical

consequence of the second noble truth.
It's like if suffering is caused by
desire, then suffering ceases when
desire ceases.
So, that's the that's the third noble
truth. It's that uh suffering ceases
when desire ceases because desire is the
cause of it.
In fact, I mean, I'd I'd even go far to
say that suffering and desire are just
synonymous ultimately.
That you can't have one without the
other.
That they are simultaneous.
And um this you can't divide them up. I
mean, they're
they're they're essentially the same

phenomenon.

So, the first noble truth you can you

can see for yourself through experience.

If especially if you're you're very sort

of sensitive and can can really look

into things deeply and in a very

sensitive, like refined level.

The second noble truth, um that also you

can

at least

partly verify through your own

experience.

And the third noble truth is just simple

logic. If the second noble truth is

true, then the third noble truth also is

true.

And then the fourth noble truth is Magga

Sacca, which is the truth of the path.

And the truth of the path

is essentially that there is a way

leading to the cessation of suffering.

And

um traditionally that is explained as

the noble eightfold path. So, the noble

eightfold path is generally considered

to be the fourth noble truth.

And the the noble eightfold path

is Sammā Ditthi or right view,

Sammā Saṅkappa or right mental action,

right thought, right attitude,

Sammā Vācā, right speech, Sammā

Kammanta, right action, Sammā Let's see.

Sammā

uh

Some are

What is it?

It's It's right livelihood.

Ajiva, samma ajiva.

Then you got right effort, samma vayama,

right mindfulness, samma sati, and

finally right concentration or samma

samadhi.

So, right view is basics of Buddhist

ethics like uh if actions have

consequences, for example, even

believing the first the four noble

truths could be considered um right

view, so it's kind of circular in that

in that respect.

Um

samma sankappa

uh or right mental action, right thought, right attitude is mainly um having good thoughts, avoiding bad ones, or at least uh staying neutral, you know, avoiding negativity, and avoiding like really harsh violent kind of stuff, avoiding greed, hate, and delusion in your thoughts.

Then comes samma vacca, right speech, which is mainly not lying, being truthful and honest, also not being abusive, not badmouthing people behind their back, not indulging in uh pointless gossip, that sort of thing.

Next is samma ajiva, right livelihood,

which uh is mainly making a living in an honest and relatively harmless manner. Which would include not not killing as part of your job, you know, not being a fisherman, for example, not selling poisons,
not selling drugs, which unfortunately would even include like a checker at a grocery store who's who's selling beer or or rat poison or something.
Not dealing in animals for slaughter, not dealing in slaves, which would include pimps.
Um mainly just making a living that is honest and and really not harmful to others.

So then we come to

Oh, wait, I skipped samyak karmanta,

which is right action, which is mainly

keeping the precepts, not killing, not

stealing, not indulging in sexual

misconduct, and not taking intoxicants

which cause heedlessness or cloudedness

of mind.

Then

samyak vayama is right effort, which is

usually traditionally interpreted to be

the four right efforts, which is

the effort to cultivate good

um, good traits or good habits that you

don't have yet. The effort to maintain

and improve good traits or good habits

that you already have. The effort to get

rid of bad habits or bad traits that

you've already got. And the effort not

to acquire any new bad habits in future.

Then you got

samyak sati, which is right mindfulness,

which is essentially

being aware of

the situation in the present moment.

And

there's a lot said about that, and I

really don't want to

go into like a long um,

discourse on on mindfulness.

But yeah, there's plenty of plenty of

information on that, and that's really

what most Buddhism in the West is based

on, really, is primarily mindfulness.

And then finally you've got samyak samadhi, right concentration, which is considered in some texts to be like the the apex, just the culmination of the other seven.

And that um,

is

it's defined in like the Mahasatipatthana Sutta, which is the Bible of the Vipassana movement in the West, as the four jhanas. So it's like um,

the four levels of contemplation, or you can just say it's like the four levels of meditation. With the first level, you're still thinking, you know, you

still have
some kind of object in your mind and you
can be labeling and still still thinking
verbally until finally you get to fourth
jhana, which is just perfection of
mindfulness, perfection of equanimity,
where you're not thinking anything
anymore and your mind is not exactly
blank, but it is unified. It's It's You
just have like this single simple
non-verbal perception in your mind.
And that is considered to be fourth
jhana. Is considered to be
in some of the texts to be a kind of
jumping off point for enlightenment.
Like the Buddha himself,

when he when he died,

he died while he was in fourth jhana.

So, those are the four noble truths. And

just just review, you've got

first noble truth, the truth of

suffering, and that is that if you

exist, you suffer. Second noble truth,

samudaya sacca, the truth of of

origination, is that the cause of

suffering, the origin of suffering, is

craving or desire or attachment.

Just insisting upon things being a

certain way, being at odds with reality,

just friction against the way things

are.

Third noble truth is nirodha sacca,

which derives from the second noble

truth, and that is if the craving

ceases, suffering ceases. And the fourth

noble truth is the noble eightfold path,

and I just discussed.

So,

I'll move on to the next one.

By Airmed.

And this is kind of a a subtle and maybe

a little difficult one.

Quote, "We are all one." Unquote. Is a

view that the Buddha refuted. Could you

speak to this from the text perspective

and also your own perspective, please?

We are all one.

Um

I'm not sure exactly

where the Buddha specifically refuted

that, although it wouldn't surprise me.

Um

technically speaking, even the concept

of we is uh already deviating from

Buddhist philosophy since Buddhism

denies the existence of an individual

person.

Um

even even the one part is uh

I mean it it could be it could be uh

argued against going going from the text

themselves.

Um

so I think

uh I mean there's so many different

levels I can approach this.

We are all one.

Yeah, it it seems like from a a textual

textual point of view,

the the whole aspect of we

um is already faulty. That there really

are no multiplicity of of individual

beings at the level of of reality.

Um

I mean you could kind of

I mean Buddhism does Orthodox Buddhism

does take some steps in the direction of

we are all one. For example, um what we

consider to be our individual selves

really are

um

they're conditioned by everything around

us around us. I mean we are conditioned
by the whole rest of the universe. So in
that sense,
um we may not be all one, but we are all
interrelated, we're all interconnected,
that we are all everything is
conditioning everything else.
So I mean, you could say that it's all
one big system that samsara, whether
it's real or not, is all one big
interconnected system.
But the individual parts are not
ultimately real because they are just
conditioned by everything else.
Also, we are all one could be approached
to some degree from the the standard
Buddhist ethical

principle that you should always put
yourself in the view or in the position
of the other.
So, before you do something to somebody
else, even if it's just like an insect,
you know, you should realize that I
mean, to some degree you're doing that
to yourself.
That because of the karma
because really we are all interconnected
and because your karma depends on your
mental states and so forth, there's
I mean, we may get to that a little
later here, but um
you shouldn't do anything to somebody
else unless you wouldn't mind that being

done back to you, which is common to

Christianity also. It's the golden rule.

Um

So, yeah,

it is a subtle question and it's kind of

a difficult one to answer.

But, um

I think I think I did my best on that

one. So, I'm just going to move on to

the next one. And this is a question

from Mat Ayur.

M H A T

Ayur.

Venerable Panyobhasa, I have

two questions that are haunting me these

days and one that is personal.

I would appreciate if you develop on it.

How should we deal with the realization of our death?

Uh that's a good question. How should we deal with the realization of our death?

That is

uh a basic teaching in Buddhism, especially very early Buddhism. Puts a lot of emphasis on the idea of death not out of sheer morbidity, but to remind us that we're not going to live forever and that uh we shouldn't waste our life.

That we should try to make progress in Dhamma in this life. That a human birth with even the opportunity to practice Dharma is very rare.

And um

so, we shouldn't waste it.

We should be trying to uh become more

awake and uh cultivate our wisdom,

cultivate our understanding.

And um

one purpose of contemplating the fact

that you are going to die someday is it

can inspire what is called samvega in

Pali, which is a sense of alarm or

urgency. You know, it it will motivate

you to get going. And I can speak from

my own experience, the very first time I

saw dead people close up,

I had to actually look for them. I went

to the the city morgue in Mandalay and

saw all these dead bodies lying around

on racks.

And one of them had just

had just uh undergone a complete

autopsy. It looked like he had swallowed

a hand grenade. You know, there's this

young pretty girl lying there dead.

There's babies lying there dead. There's

It's um it really has a strong effect.

The first the first time, I mean, to a

sensitive person.

And um

after after I walked out of that morgue,

I'm looking around and there's, you

know, there's the the young guy flirting

with the girls and the little kids

laughing and giggling and and playing

and, you know, everybody's going about

their business.

And uh I just felt like this saying,

"Why? How can you be so happy? You

realize what's what's in this building

back here?"

Um

and yeah, it really can inspire you to

uh to practice more

uh sincerely and more intently, more

intensively.

So, that's one of the benefits of it is

uh

I mean, you realize you're not going to

live forever. You realize that uh

you know, you're just going to keep

getting older and older and your body's

eventually going to break.

Uh even the brain that supposedly is uh

generating your personality is going to

break and stop working

and that's going to be it for this time.

And so

uh

yeah, I just don't don't waste it. Don't

just uh you know, spend all day just

playing video games or or uh watching TV

or

or whatever or just wallowing in some

kind of unskillfulness, you know, just

hating on people on the internet or

something.

Um yeah, try to try to uh do something

positive. It doesn't mean you have to go
out and really accomplish anything and
get famous in a worldly sense, but uh
you should at least
um
try to understand yourself, try to
understand reality as well as you can.
So, that's that kind of just leads to
the second question here, which is
similar, which is how should Buddhists
prepare themselves for their own deaths?
And um I assume he's talking about
Buddhists that
I mean, they're not really on their
deathbed yet.
Um yeah, that that would be like a
different like a different kind of

question, I assume.

Um maybe I can get into that a little

bit, too.

But

you prepare yourself for your own death

partly just by reminding yourself, you

know, maybe it's just on a daily basis

just once a day or something that you

really aren't going to live forever,

that the body that you're wearing now is

going to break, the brain that's

generating your thoughts is going to

break

and not work anymore.

And um so, you really should uh

um you know, make as much progress as

you can. That's the best best way to

prepare yourself for your own death is

just uh

um try to be ready for it. You know, try

to cultivate some equanimity, too. I

mean, you you are going to die.

Everybody dies. And so, I mean, it

shouldn't be considered too terribly

horrible. You know, it shouldn't be too

scary.

You shouldn't be terrified of dying.

There's a lot worse things that can

happen to you than dying.

But um

that I mean, that's one way of preparing

yourself is realizing um that, you know,

everybody does it, you know.

Everybody.

So, it can't be too terribly horrible, I suppose.

Uh

How to prepare yourself for your own death? If you believe in rebirth, then you know, that can help take away some of the sting, I suppose.

But, um

mainly you prepare yourself for your own death by trying to live a good life so that, you know, if there is an afterlife, it's not so scary. You're less likely to wind up someplace bad because of the bad choices you made in this life. So, that would be one way of

preparing yourself for your death is

just live as good of a life as you can

so that even if there is something after

death, it's much less likely to be

something like hell-like.

Um

with regard to someone who is actually

near death, you know, you're you're

lying on on your bed for the last time.

You're not going to get up no more, then

standard Buddhist ways of preparing

yourselves for that

are just remember just try to keep your

mind positive. Try to to think of

positive things. Try to think about good

deeds you have done. Try not to think

about bad deeds you have done and then

just lie there wallowing in like regret
and remorse and despair cuz that just
leads you downwards because it is a
common belief in Buddhism, also in
Hinduism,
that your last conscious thought
uh is very important in determining the
direction you take after you die. So,
some people will say that the most
important moment of your life is your
last one
because really that's
that your entire life is just preparing
for death.
You're preparing for your final moment
cuz that's going to

um be a major determinant on on what direction you go after you die. And it doesn't mean it's like your last moment is all there is to determining what your next life is going to be, cuz there's all this karma also that you've got in your deep down inside your your stream of consciousness or wherever.

Um

but yeah, I mean you you should when you're near death, you should try to think as positive and wholesome and uplifting of thoughts as possible, so that you'll be moving in a positive uplifting direction, or at least you'll be pointing in that direction.

You know, maybe you've done bad things

your whole life and you somehow managed

to die with a positive mental state, but

even so, I mean um

you I mean

the the karma's going to work itself

out, but at least you're you're going to

be moving if facing in the right

direction

um or at first, you know, in the

beginning of your next life or some

such.

So,

I mean it's just the standard the

standard story. I've I've said it many

times, like when Mahatma Gandhi got

shot, his last words were Hey Ram,

not oh God, like in the movie, although that could be a literal translation, but Hey Ram, he just wanted his mind focused on God as he died, because that would help determine what happened to him after he died.

So, the next question from Mahat Ayur is

is it a problem for a Buddhist to be a game developer and play video games? Thank you very much for your teaching and lessons.

Um

technically speaking, being a game developer is not wrong livelihood. I mean it doesn't it doesn't tick any of the boxes that you're supposed to avoid

uh in order to have right livelihood. I

mean

it's you could say it's sort of it could

be a borderline case if you're like

selling a game that has virtual weapons

in it for you to kill virtual enemies.

Um

I mean, you could be indirectly

promoting unskillful, unwholesome mental

states or you're you're making a video

game with like big bouncy titties on the

the female characters that might in

might inspire some lust or something.

But really as a layperson,

uncompromising saintliness is generally

not really an option.

Um

you're just going to have to accept that

there is always going to be a certain

amount of unwholesomeness or

unskillfulness in what you do. Even

people that uncompromisingly

keep five precepts, you know, just as

strictly as they can, still if they

believe that they exist, they're they're

still making bad karma because that's

based on delusion and all this.

So

yeah, it's it's uh

if you really want to get down to it, I

mean, it's like, you know, should you

eat meat because it encourages the

killing of animals or or all these

things? Um there's all these
considerations. Should you pay taxes
because your taxes go to uh bombing
foreign countries and killing people and
that sort of thing. Um
really whether what you do is right or
wrong depends upon your own volitions.
So, if if you are really not promoting
violence, I mean, it could be that you
sincerely believe and there probably is
some evidence to support this that
people who play violent video games are
just kind of working their aggression
out and um it makes them less likely to
actually uh load up the shotgun and head
for head for Walmart or something.

Um

so you it just depends on your own

attitude. It depends on your own

volitions.

Uh so, I really don't see it as a

problem for Buddhist to be a game

developer and play video games. As a

monk, I played a few video games myself.

So, um yeah, I even like killed zombies

and stuff as as a monk.

Um I I wasn't like dedicating my life to

it or anything.

Um but still, I mean, it's

I mean, listening to music and and

eating meat and these kind of things, I

mean, you can say it's not absolutely

100% saintly,

but then again, um

being absolutely 100% saintly is just

not an option for most people anyway.

So, yeah, it depends on your own

volition. So, you should just introspect

and see if you're being a game developer

and playing video games is causing your

mind to go in a negative direction or

not. And if it is, then it may be a

prudent choice to change directions.

So, the next question is from

Bodhisattva 969.

From time to time, I donate to a forest

monastery in Thailand. How does this

affect my karma?

Well,

the way it affects your karma depends
upon your volitions because volitions
are karma. There's like the standard
famous quote in the text,
which is cetanaham bhikkhave kammam
vadami, which is the Buddha saying,
"Monks, I say that karma is volition."
That really what is called karma is like
Schopenhauer's will. It's like the
motive force of your mind.
So, um
if you donate to a forest monastery in
Thailand, it will the effects of that
will depend on your your will, upon your
mental states, like why do you do it? I
mean, if you if it's just like some kind
of greedy investment, I mean, And like

um

you know, you're just doing it in order to to to earn spiritual points or something. I mean, I mean, it does work. Um the Burmese are real spiritual materialists as a general rule.

Um you know, they see merit or karma as a kind of spiritual money. Like there's the novel uh George Orwell, Burmese Days, where U Po Chin, who's like the villain of the story, he's doing all this bad stuff. You know, he's really the villain of the story. And his wife is the traditional little Burmese lady who just keeps um warning him that he's an evil man and he's going to go to

hell.

And U Po Chin says, "Oh, you don't know anything cuz I'm going to uh build a pagoda."

And uh he just thought that by building a pagoda, it was just going to erase all of his sins, so to speak. But um at the end of the story, he has a stroke before he builds the pagoda. And uh so he's just kind of screwed.

But um yeah, I mean, generally the effects of of generosity,

giving to a monastery or just giving $5 to a homeless person or donating to

um

you know, like the the pet No, like the the animal shelter or something.

Anything that you're doing out of just a

sincere desire to help is

reinforcing

this positive wholesome desire to be

good and helpful and generous. Also,

generosity helps to

um

reduce your sense of self and

selfishness.

So by being generous and sharing what

you have, it does reduce your idea of I

me mine, which is the central to

delusion and suffering in in Buddhism.

So

um in Theravada Buddhism, there's a lot

of emphasis on, you know, the the best

uh generosity is generosity to

renunciants, but to some degree that is

uh I mean, to some degree it's true, but

also to some degree it's wise guy monks

trying to encourage people to donate to

them

more than anybody else.

But, um I've tried to explain to

Burmese,

um like even a Burmese doctor once, that

I mean from my point of view, I think I

would probably make more good karma by

feeding a hungry little kid or even a

hungry, like starving dog than to put an

extra plate of food onto a table in

front of a fat monk who's already got 20

dishes of food sitting in front of him.

So, and and and the doctor disagreed
because uh the texts say that you get
the most karma, the most merit
by donating to monks.
But, um whatever makes you feel good, I
mean, that's really um that's kind of
how karma works. I mean, if if it has
like an uplifting, positive effect on
your mind, if it makes you feel happy
and expansive and less selfish and less
greedy and this sort of thing, then uh
yeah, it's just reinforcing those kind
of habits, and that is going to have
effects on how you navigate through life
in the future, which is
largely how karma works.

Uh I think there's another question down

below that's uh that's getting into

that.

But, um

yeah, so ultimately you can answer that

question better than I could cuz you

know your own volition and how you feel

when you do it better than I do.

So, the next question is from Nido.

Hmm.

He says, "Hi David, could you do a video

on how to deal with different

experiences arising during meditation,

which the Zen Buddhists call makyos?"

Makyos.

Um well, this is sort of doing a video.

That's part of a video anyway.

Um

but the thing is here, I I don't know

what makyos is. I've I suppose I could

just do research on these questions, but

I'm pretending like I'm just being asked

right now.

And uh yeah, I don't know what makyos

is. So, I'm not even sure what the

different experiences are arising during

meditation that are

implied here.

Um but I can say that uh just going with

standard Theravada Buddhist like

Vipassanā meditation practice, it

doesn't matter what arises, you just

note it and let it go. Or if you've gone

beyond noting, then you just go straight to let it go. You don't take it seriously. You know, it's just irrelevant. And um you know, even St. John of the Cross taught this kind of stuff to his disciples who were practicing contemplation. He was telling them, "Even if you Even if you hear the voice of God, even if Jesus Christ himself is standing in front of you talking to you, um just just note it and let it go. I mean, it's it's it's not why you're sitting there in in contemplation. You're trying to keep your mind clear. And so, if it's something important, it it uh you know, if God really wants to tell you

something, then you know, he'll he'll
let you know. But But still like uh the
devil can impersonate anything he wants.
And uh you really shouldn't just take it
at face value. It could just be a
delusion or something. And so, really
you just cut through it. You just You
just let it go. It's
uh You You don't feed it. You don't just
keep You don't pursue it.
You know, it arises, and then you don't
You don't uh react. You know, you just
see what arises, and then you see it
pass away because you haven't sustained
it by clinging to it and pursuing that.
So, that would be I'm I Again, I don't

know what makyos are, but uh that would be how to deal with any kind of different experiences that arise during meditation that really aren't the object of meditation. You know, any kind of strange thing arises, you know, you can be hearing the the voice of the Buddha talking to you. You can think that you have just attained sainthood, and really you should just, you know, just note it and let it go. You just don't attribute significance to it. And um just just keep keep meditating.

Next question is from Nardi.

Can a man which is paying a bad karma live a good life through mental awareness and acceptance of whatever

comes?

Yeah, that is true. Let's say um in a past life or for whatever reason, um you're living a life with lots of hard knocks.

You know, you you you've got bad health. Maybe you were born with some sort of disability, and maybe you had really bad parents. You're living in a bad part of the world, but still it is possible to live a good life.

That is your choice. It may be more difficult because you don't have the momentum going in that direction, but still it is possible. You do have that ability.

And um mental awareness definitely

helps, and accepting whatever comes is

is crucial.

It's like, you know, something bad

happens to you. From the Buddhist point

of view, I mean, ultimately you brought

it upon yourself through your own karma,

but even if you set that aside,

um

if bad things happen to you, then you

have the option of just reacting, you

know, just having a meltdown or being

triggered, getting upset, or you start

blaming somebody or just ranting or

whatever. This always happens to me, you

know, on and on and on. Or you can just

accept what happens with as much

equanimity and fortitude as you can

muster and just keep moving forwards.

So, it's like

um

I mean, this kind of life of bad things

happening, in a way it's just sort of

the life of a lay person, too. A monk

can be trying to

um live just a neutral life with, you

know, everything staying pretty much the

same from one day to the next, but a

layperson may have all kinds of these

samsaric waves to surf.

And um

so, you just learn how to be a good

surfer. I mean, it's like

keeping everything down to stillness and silence isn't going to work very well, at least not at the the outward phenomenal level. If if you've got a family to support, you've got a job to go to, you've got people to interact with, you've got social duties, and so forth.

Um yeah, you're just going to have to learn to deal with whatever hits you with a certain amount of equanimity and fortitude. Like um the ancient uh philosophers, the ancient Greek philosophers like the Stoics were talking about ataraxia, which is just uh the ability to just take whatever comes and and not just

spin out and and just um melt down or
just uh you know, freak out over it.
Um in fact, ataraxia, I just read the
other day that uh in non-philosophical
jargon among the ancient Greeks, it was
considered to be the ideal mental state
for a soldier going into battle.
And um in a way, that's kind of what we
are in right now. Um
this figuratively speaking.
That uh even a soldier in battle, you
know, the the the samurai Zen master,
you know, they can be out there, you
know, fighting and killing and still
kind of having some stillness and
silence deep inside, even if just

everything is raging around them.
Um you know, another example is the the stereotypical Zen master who uh you know, the the Dharma hall can be resounding with his shouts, and blows from his stick can be falling like rain, but still inside, he is living in stillness and silence.
Which is uh paradoxical. It may not make much sense, but um there is some truth to it.
So, uh yeah, it is possible to live a good life and to be happy, even though um you're getting hit over the head uh with some fair regularity.
It's It's trickier. It's more challenging. You know, it's definitely a

higher difficulty setting than just
being a monk sitting in a cave.
But um some people do better on harder
difficulty settings.
You know, if things are too easy uh you
know, you just get bored.
And then you kind of zone out.
So, it could be that just continual
challenges work best for some people.
And uh the challenges aren't what you
choose. That's one things that make them
challenges is that you don't want them
to happen. You're not You're not
expecting them. You know, you don't want
You don't really want it to happen, but
it just happens.

And so, you have to learn how to deal with that.

And um

Yeah, that's That's one thing that I've I've been saying for years and years is that's one of the weaknesses of being a monk nowadays is that everything is so easy and predictable that um they're lacking in necessary challenges.

As a general rule, I mean, not always, but uh that that does happen. Whereas being a lay person so long as you don't lose your awareness,

I mean, so long as you don't just get completely lost in the matrix, so long as you don't start believing that Plato's cave really is reality, then uh

yeah, I mean, you can still make a real profound practice.

And I'm uh betting my life on that now because as you can see, I'm not wearing monk's robes anymore.

So, next question from Nardi.

Since karma is ultimately a state of mind and since we are what we think, can we change our lives in this life, not only inside us, but also outside, like attract people of our same thought around us, for example? Well, that's that's pretty obvious. Yeah, of course. Like uh you're living in a bad situation, you know, you've got to maybe in a bad part of the world and you've

got a bad job and you're surrounded by bad friends or something. I mean, you can just pull up stakes and move somewhere else and start over. I mean, obviously, your your mental states your karmic mental states, you know, your volitional actions are going to be reflected in outside in your life.

So, um you have like skillful wholesome mental states, then uh you're going to be living

outwardly a more skillful and wholesome life.

And um we do tend to attract people of our same thought around us, you know, like some people join the the Discord server associated with my SubscribeStar

channel, and uh they're bingo, they're

uh

interacting with people not necessarily

the same exact thoughts, but at least

people that are pretty much on the same

page.

So, yeah, yeah, that's that's fairly

straightforward. Um

it's

I mean, it's like your state of mind

really does have an influence on your

outside life. Even um

like just to give a couple examples, um

it is known that people who are more

worried about getting cancer or

something are more likely to get cancer

just cuz the worry adds stress to the system. It's like a chronic stress. Or another one is people that are afraid of getting mugged or assaulted or more likely to get mugged or assaulted. For example,

um like a mugger, like someone who's going to assault somebody in the in the street on a dark night, they see somebody walking along like a predator with his head held high showing no fear, he's going to think twice about messing with that person. But he sees somebody that's like constantly looking over his shoulder and and just like hunched over and scurrying along out of fear, then yeah, they're an easy mark. I mean,

they're they're prey. They're not a

predator.

So, your mental states do determine a

lot of your out your external actions

both consciously and subconsciously.

And so, I'm moving on to the next

question

from Insubrious Dithyramb.

Hi David, I've been meditating regularly

for the past 8 months

focusing mostly on body sensations and

observing thoughts in Sayadaw style

walking meditation. I progressed quite

rapidly the first few months, but from

the last couple of months my practice

has become quite stagnant, almost like a

chore. I can't seem to figure out what

I'm doing wrong. Do you have any advice?

Well, that's I mean that's a good

question. I assume lots of people have

the same situation. I have I have been

in the same boat.

Um

and there's different different kinds of

advice I could give you.

Um

I mean just right off the bat, I can say

that uh anyone who takes up meditation

uh at first you're going to be just

doing really light lifting stuff. I mean

you're just going to be clearing up uh

like the really easy parts. And then

after you've been at it for a while,

then you're getting down to bedrock and

then it becomes a much more difficult to

make further progress. At least in many

cases it can be that way.

Um

like there's one of the wisest old monks

that I that I've ever met is uh Sayadaw

U Zotikha or U Jotika as he is called in

the West.

Uh Mahamyaing U Zotikha.

And um

he he he used to say again and again

that uh you know, it's like the most

important time to meditate is when you

don't want to

because um

you know, it's just you know, in in a way it's sort of like exercise. I mean, you if you really want to be healthy and fit then, you know, you eat right and you exercise even though you really don't want to. You just make yourself do it cuz it it's good for you. You know, it's sort of like your sacred duty or something. So, just grinding through and muscling through it is is one approach. Another approach is um

you could try a different technique.

Um

Yeah, I mean that is a possibility, too. So, I mean you say you can't seem to figure out what you're doing wrong. You may not necessarily be doing anything

wrong.

Um you may just be going through a dry

phase.

Um it may be that you just made as far

as you're likely to made as much

progress as you're likely to make at the

present time with that technique.

Maybe you need to uh

um

like refine the technique. You know,

maybe not even change to a

completely different technique, but

maybe if it's just getting boring and

dull because you're noting everything,

then maybe you can let go of the noting.

Um St. John of the Cross, who was a

great meditation master, I mean he was a master of all the jhanas as far as I'm concerned, he used to say that that's one way you can know that you're ready to move on to contemplation, that you're moving up to advanced meditation, is that

when you're noting and like visualizing or thinking in words, you're labeling, when it just becomes like this dull and boring and sort of a chore, then that means that you may be ready to move on to the next stage.

So, that's a possibility, too, but I really I mean I don't know you personally. I can't really tell exactly where you're at. So, I can't just give

you exact

advice. I can just kind of toss out some

ideas.

But um

yeah, sometimes meditation can just be a

chore, just like doing exercises or

something, brushing your teeth or

something. It's

not necessarily pleasant. If it is

pleasant, that's that's ideal because

then it encourages you to do it more.

Um and then PT or like exhilaration is

one of the the seven factors of

enlightenment and so forth, but um

still um

yeah, just uh

stick with it and I mean, if you really
just cannot make any more progress, then
definitely then you should switch to a a
different method. Try something else.
So, next question from B Pat 427.
Are microorganisms
conscious?
Okay. Well, um
that's I mean, it seems like a a simple
question of yes or no. It's sort of like
Joshu's Mu. Does a dog have Buddha
nature? Um
in a sense, anything alive
uh has at least a rudimentary elemental
kind of consciousness. Like in in
ancient Buddhism, plants were considered
to be a king Let's see See if I can say

a king driya jiva, which is one faculty
life. They only had one sense faculty,
and that was touch.
And microorganisms could be like this.
It's just an extremely simple elemental
non
Obviously, they're not thinking, you
know, obviously, should be obvious. They
don't have any sense of self.
They're not really aware of any
individual existence, but there is just
sort of like the the pulsing
uh elemental consciousness of life going
through them. And I mean, even inorganic
matter can have consciousness to it, as
far as I'm concerned. I think that

really um it may

it may be like the next uh

Copernican revolution in in science or

or in empiricism that uh what a

physicist calls

energy is really just a very elemental

form of of what a psychologist would

call consciousness.

So, personally, yeah, I think

microorganisms have just a totally, you

know, just a simple elemental

rudimentary kind of consciousness, but I

don't think that they have preferences

and likes and dislikes and hopes and

dreams or anything like that.

So, the next question from B Pat 427, "A

human existence is the most conducive to

enlightenment, but can devas and hungry

ghosts become enlightened as well?"

Um

with regard to devas, yes, they can

become enlightened. Some devas are um

are supposedly aryas, saints.

I do believe there are many stories of

the Buddha giving discourses to uh

groups of humans and devas, and the

devas were becoming enlightened also.

Presumably, they have um like

the

it it's hard to say exactly what devas

are like just reading the text because

um the text, sort of like the ancient

Greek um mythology, has devas as really

just people that live longer and have and are more powerful, but they don't seem to be much more intelligent than humans. Whereas, I consider a superhuman being is going to have superhuman intelligence also.

So, I think that they would be at least as capable of liberating insight as us. Although, traditionally in Buddhism, um they live such a pleasant life that they're not as motivated as we are. For example, I was talking earlier about the idea of dying and uh

I mean, compared with a deva, we're like mayflies. I mean, we we don't live for very long at all, whereas a deva might live for, you know, zillion gazillion

years.

So, there is that. And then, you know,

they just

they have a much more pleasant

existence, you know, they don't have

sickness and and and that kind of thing

either.

So, but nevertheless, um

they they are sensitive and intelligent,

presumably,

superhuman beings.

So, yeah, I think uh Davis can become

enlightened. Although, with regard to

hungry ghosts, I'm not going to

categorically insist that they can't.

Although, from a Buddhist point of view,

I would say it is very unlikely.

Um again, referring to the Petavatthu,

there are

um

ghosts, not necessarily hungry ones,

that um you know, they're so afflicted

that they can't really make progress.

But, then eventually the affliction

ceases, and then they become like devas.

Because really, in the Buddhist

cosmology, there's like a continuum with

with ghosts at the bottom, and then

you know, like devas, gods at the top.

And then it's just sort of like this

There's like this intermediate state

where, you know, the highest ghost and

the lowest god are pretty much the same

being.

So, yes, I mean most ghosts, it's my understanding. I mean, their mind is full of mud. They're just like semi-conscious. They're like in a stupor all the time.

And um

I won't say it's absolutely impossible, but um the odds of their becoming enlightened, of them really having profound liberating insights, are much lower.

But, uh who knows? Maybe a Buddha would know just the right thing to say to them to really cause something to click deep down.

Okay, next question from Bpath427. What do you think of dialectical monism?

And this is like the Machiaos of above.

I really don't know what dialectical monism is. It just seems like an oxymoron, like a contradiction in terms.

Like monism is just like,

you know, simplicity. It's just like singleness, whereas dialectic is uh complicated uh philosophical argumentation.

So, using complicated philosophical argumentation to arrive at utter simplicity, um

I mean, it has been done. It can work. I mean, that's kind of what Nagarjuna was doing, just uh uh demonstrating

ruthlessly that that all arguments can
be just picked apart into nonsense.
And then, I mean, you're just using the
mind to kind of tear itself down,
sort of uh deconstruct itself.
Um
So, yeah, I mean, I'm just I'm just kind
of babbling now cuz I don't even know
what dialectical monism is. So, I'm just
going to move on to the next question.
From also from Bipac 427. Have you ever
made a kasina disc? If so, could you
give instructions?
I have never personally practiced kasina
meditation uh other than very
informally.

Um and I can I can get back to that. The closest I've come to kasina meditation, but I have been instructed on how to make an earth kasina disc. And um
I mean, making a kasina disc is really simple because all it takes is just a colored spot that's about the size of a plate.
So, you just get like a big square of white paper or some neutral color, and you just get a colored spot, you know, like red, yellow, blue, you know, and um that's it. You've got a kasina disc. And then, you put that up on the wall, and you gaze upon that and meditate on that.
With regard to earth kasina, um the instructions that I received from my

preceptor was you just make like a slurry of mud, and then, you paint paint the mud onto the the the surface, you know, in a in like a circular like a disc form, and then, let it dry, and there you go, you've got an earth kasina.

Um the closest I ever came to kasina was when I was living out in the woods, and I'd be sitting there just gazing out at the forest, and my eyes would just rest on a roughly circular patch of green that was a different color of green than the surrounding green, you know, and then, I just let my gaze rest on that and just kind of sort of contemplate um

the simplicity of the green.

But um

yeah, I mean, to make a casino disc, all

you need is just a colored spot. It's,

you know, yay big around, and there you

are. It's very simple. You wouldn't have

to paint it, you I mean, you could just

uh have it printed up or something.

You'd probably find one.

Um

yeah, I just just get a plate or

something that's the right color.

If you wanted to do a colored one.

So, the next question is from Captain

Haddock.

And he says, "I was wondering if you'd

consider doing a video about

Padmasambhava."

"The Tibetan depictions of this seem very profound, but very arcane."

Oh my.

Padmasambhava, people just people hit me with these things.

Um

Padmasambhava is dependent co-arising or dependent uh origination, it's called a lot of the time, conditioned genesis.

Um there's a lots of different names for it, which indicates that uh very few people really understand it. It It is controversial, sort of like no self in Buddhism is also controversial.

So, you got all these different

explanations of it.

Um according to the legend, the Buddha himself, after he became enlightened, almost just became a hermit and didn't start Buddhism because he figured nobody would understand Padmasambhava. And then, according to the legend, Brahma had to come down out of heaven and beg him

saying that there are some people with little dust in their eyes that will be able to benefit from it.

So, I mean, if the Buddha himself almost became a a silent hermit Buddha because he figured nobody would understand Padmasambhava, I mean, who am I to try to explain this?

I kind of I kind of understand it.

And um

mainly

Paticcasamuppada, I mean

forget the 12 Nidana theory.

Um

if you really want to understand

Paticcasamuppada, I'd say your best book

to read would be Nagarjuna's

Mulamadhyamakakarika.

Um that's very profound. He does give

lip service by dedicating uh one chapter

or so to the 12 Nidana theory which had

already become orthodox. But the 12

Nidana theory, in my opinion,

um was just sort of a patch-up job.

That it didn't originate with the Buddha himself. That it evolved over a period of at least 100 years.

Um I've done a little bit of study on that. One of my few contributions to Buddhist studies in academic sense, I suppose, would be

um my description of the evolution of Paticcasamuppada which can be found in an article called What Did the Buddha Really Teach on nipapanca.org.

Um

but there's another interpretation of Paticcasamuppada which is simply this being that is.

Um in this arising that arises. This this not being that is not in this not

arising that ceases or in this ceasing

that ceases.

And um

mainly it's it's getting back to what I

was talking about earlier where

everything is conditioning everything

else. Nothing has uh an individual

self-essence.

Everything appears to exist as an

individual simply because it is viewed

in relation to everything else.

So nothing really has an individual

self-existence or self-identity.

That it's all relative or conditional.

And um

there's there's one strange sutta. It's

one of my favorite ones cuz I like the

strange ones.

Um in Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation it's

called the Cosmologist. It's in the

Samyutta Nikaya. I don't remember what

number.

But um

a worldly philosopher

like a Carvaka

or uh

kind of like an Epicurean in in ancient

Greece goes to the Buddha

and uh he asks him, I mean,

um

is is is it the Buddha say what is what

is the first one? He asks uh

does everything exist? Does the world

exist? And then the Buddha just says, "Well, that's that's the oldest philosophy of the world."

So then he says, "Well, then does the world not exist?" And the Buddha says, "Well, that's the second philosophy of the world."

And then the the Cosmologist says, "Well, is everything one?"

And then the Buddha says, "Well, that's the third philosophy of the world." And then the Cosmologist says, "Well, is everything multiple Is it multiple? Is it more than one?" And then the Buddha says, "That is the fourth philosophy of the world." And then he says, you know,

"The Buddha teaches the way by the middle
which just cuts through all of that."
So I mean, it's just a mind-blower to think that um there is a middle path between exists and doesn't exist or between one and more than one. You know, it's it's not logical. It doesn't make sense. But then again, if you're if you're insisting upon logic and everything making sense, then you just stuck in samsara because reality just cannot be described.
So yeah, I mean, I'm just kind of sitting here making noise because if the Buddha couldn't explain it to people, I mean, really, he considered it to be the

most one of the most important aspects of Buddhist philosophy and still almost nobody understands it. Like in Burma, they just memorize the the chant of the 12 nidanas.

And um I'm I'm not even going to really I'm not going to go into it, but uh say

Who is up is the alting car alting car abisha wingana. and I'm just you know it's just this this list of this this causes that and that causes this and this causes that and they call that dependent co-arising but it's just a list of terms that they have memorized and repeat like parrots and think that

they understand it.

So,

Captain Haddock's second question here.

Also, what's your opinion of nimittas?

Do you get them? I've had one all my

life but never knew it. When I got into

meditation, it really came to life.

Okay, so a nimitta in Pali

the English translation is usually

something like sign.

Like s i g n.

So, it's like a manifestation of a form.

It's like an image.

And

in the the commentarial tradition of

Theravada Buddhism,

if you start experiencing a nimitta when

you meditate, which often is this sort
of like a a white circular cloud or like
an oval or sometimes you can even have
like an image of the Buddha sitting in
meditation, you know, it's some sort of
image that appears in your mind when
you're meditating. According to the
commentarial tradition, that is a sign
of ubhacara samadhi, which is sometimes
translated as access concentration or
neighborhood concentration,
which is the the stage right before you
go into first jhana. So, in in um
the commentarial tradition,
like as written by or edited by
Buddhaghosa, it's really important

because you're not going to get to first jhana even without going through the stage of neighborhood concentration. But, on the other hand, it's not mentioned in the suttas itself and you would think that if it's so important, then why doesn't the Buddha talk about it in the suttas?

And in fact, when the Buddha talks about meditation, if he's talking about nimitas at all, he's talking about animita.

You know, where you're just you're not trying to have nimitas at all. I mean, the best of meditation has no signs, no images whatsoever. You're just getting into all just like absolute simplicity

of mind.

But before you get into that stage,

before you're in fourth jhana or

whatever, then uh

yeah, I mean, it's it's like seeing

anything else, I suppose.

Um you

uh so you Captain Haddock here asks, "Do

you Do I get them?" I have experienced

nimitas. For me, it was sort of like a

like a white kind of a doggy kind of

oval. It just appeared in my mind when

my meditation was getting relatively

deep.

But um

I don't It's It's sort of like the what

I was talking about above. I mean, it's
you shouldn't attribute any great
significance to that. Just note it and
let it go. It's like, "So what?" Okay,
it arose. That's fine, but don't uh
attribute any great importance or
significance to that.
So, I think I'll just move on to the
next question, which is from Chaplin.
And this is kind of an easy one. Chaplin
was uh
threw lobbed me a
um a softball on this one.
Do you believe that Buddhism should
should be pushed Do you believe that
Buddhism should be pushed onto others
via racially profiling certain ethnic

groups that are traditionally not drawn
to Buddhism on their own?
An example would be American Dharma
halls that frequently do membership
drives to target black people, then give
those minorities teaching positions
based purely on their skin color,
despite their lack of experience or
knowledge. Well, obviously, I'm totally
in favor of this because I insist
completely upon diversity, equity, and
inclusion.
Not.
Um
Yeah, I mean, it's
to to use diversity hires for Dharma

teachers

makes no more sense than using diversity

hires for surgeons or airplane pilots.

I mean, you want the most qualified

person for the job regardless of like

race or gender or anything else. I mean,

if if they know the stuff better than

anyone else, they're the ones who should

be sitting up front teaching it.

With regard to

um like the recruitment drives

to uh attract

um like people of color into these elite

Buddhist movements in the West, which is

mostly like college-educated, relatively

well-off white liberals.

Uh Starbucks Buddhists,

so to speak.

Um yeah, the membership drives. I mean,

it's mainly to

assuage the conscience of these people

that really don't like the idea that

they're in a kind of white elitist

movement.

You know, that their their ranks are

mostly

white liberals.

And so, just out of shame or

embarrassment more than anything else as

far as I can tell, they're trying to

recruit as many

um

non-white people as possible. Which is

kind of strange because um most Buddhists in the West probably are not white anyway because most Buddhists in the West are probably Asians who are just practicing the Buddhism that they brought to America with them or that their parents brought to America with them.

So,

yeah, it's like they don't really want to be involved in this Asian immigrant Buddhism. So, they start up their own white Buddhism, and then they're embarrassed because they're so white. And then they try to attract people that ordinarily would not be attracted to Buddhism.

And I mean, I'm not even going to go
there with regard to explaining why it
is that say um you know, black people or
or Hispanic people
do not
do not enter Buddhism in the same
numbers as white liberals do.
Uh
Yeah, we don't even need to to to go
into that. But I mean, this I've I've
been talking about this relatively
recently where
there is more diversity, equity, and
inclusion now than there was in India in
the Buddha's time. And the Buddha was a
fully enlightened being presumably. And

even he wasn't doing membership drives

trying to get low caste Shudras or

aboriginal hill tribes

to join the Sangha.

So this is not anything enlightened.

This is just

just more ridiculous leftist politics.

So let's see.

I'll just move on to the next question

then.

Cuz I've already I've already ranted on

that issue plenty recently.

See, Chaplin's second question. When you

wake up each day, what is the one thing

that still boggles your mind and makes

you think, "Wow, I'm not a monk

anymore."?

Um that is a good question, although

when I wake up each day, really

there's nothing that really boggles my

mind in that respect because even when I

was a monk, I was just me

pretty much. And now now when I wake up

in the morning, I'm still essentially

the same me.

Um there are some there are some

changes.

Um but most of the the really radical

changes, it seems to me, are deep down

and some of it's just like subconscious.

And um

I can I can get into that a little bit.

But um really it's like I do have some

holdovers from being a monk that are I'm not completely cured, so to speak, of being a monk. For example, like when my sweetheart offers me some food sometimes, and she's a really good cook, so she offers me food and I'm glad to receive it. And but when she puts it down in front of me, I'll reach out quick to touch the plate before she lets it go of it just so it's properly offered still.

It's It's strange and it's just like this this habit of 30 years. I mean, I can just help myself to whatever's in the fridge, but still if somebody puts food in front of me, this this instinctive habit of reaching out

quickly to touch it before they let go
so that it's that it's properly offered.
And it reminds me of
um I'd been a monk for several years
when still I would have these habits
like I'd have like I'd wash my face and
there'd be like like water drops on my
on my forehead. I would just go like
like this to to like shake the hair out
of my eyes because I used to have long
hair and usually you feel that feeling
of some kind of light pressure on your
forehead. It means your your hair is
getting in in in in your face. So I
would just kind of like
try and get my hair out of my eyes when

I didn't have hair.

Or a lot for years, like if I was going

to leave my cabin or something,

I'd be going out the front door, I'd

slap my behind just to to see if my

wallet was in my back pocket.

And I didn't have a wallet anymore. I

didn't even have a back pocket.

But it took years before that stopped.

And um

also it took more than 10 years before I

was a monk in most of my dreams in which

I was participating in a dream.

Um

yeah, I would I'd still be a layperson

in my dreams most of the time for like

the first 10 years as a monk.

But kind of getting back to the the

subconscious aspect of this.

Um

Yeah, there I mean deep down there

really is something inside me that's

been a monk for so long. It's just not

letting go of being a monk.

And um

that

really I mean it's it's difficult for me

because I don't have any conscious

control over it.

It's just there.

And um

like with regard to like the sweetheart

that I just mentioned, I'm just it's

just such a radical change for me to

share my life with another person

that um

it's it's taking some I have to relearn

how to be a normal human.

And uh

yeah, it is it that's that really is the

most mind-boggling part to me is just

the realization that you think

everything's everything is just like

like when I dropped out of the monkhood,

I mean there was no real crisis or

anything going on. I was quite willing

to do it. I just I just seemed obviously

the thing to do like the right thing to

do. And so I mean there was no

like existential crisis or anything like

that, but still just deep down you have

these deep habits that have been there

for years and years and uh it takes some

relearning or reprogramming or

something.

So um

just getting back to this question and

answering again, when you wake up each

day, what is the one thing that still

boggles your mind and makes you think,

"Wow, I'm not a monk anymore." If if

there's anything at all

um

along those lines, it's just the just

realizing that I can just go into the

kitchen and help myself to anything I

want.

Anything there I can just I it doesn't have to be offered properly. I can just make it myself. I can just go in there and pour a glass of orange juice for example. I couldn't do that for 30 years. I I can just go in there and fry an egg if I want.

It's just I mean that in itself is is such a strange and radical change in my life.

Um

and that's like the the every morning thing.

Yeah, there are other things that are just as radical even more so, but uh they're not involving me waking up each

day and uh

just realizing I can just go and make

myself breakfast.

So, I might as well just move on to the

next question from Shawarma Dharma.

To interpret religious texts literally

seems to preserve their vigor over many

years in the hearts and minds of the

people. To interpret religious texts

metaphorically allows for greater depth

of understanding and a more nuanced

knowledge base, but it seems to weaken

or breaks the spell of its influence

over the people. What is better for the

development of Dharma in the West? To

promote a literal understanding or to

embrace a metaphorical reading?

Well,

a literal interpretation of scriptures

usually results in rigid dogmatism with

people just clinging to the words

and thinking that's good enough.

Whereas

a more metaphorical reading mainly just

allows people to reinterpret the

scriptures in any way they please.

If they don't like something, they'll

say, "Oh, that was just a metaphor."

or something.

Um

but with regard to to like Theravada

Buddhism, it seems pretty clear that um

your best bet is to interpret it the way

uh it seems that it was meant to be

interpreted.

That um when the Buddha talks in in

parables, he makes it clear that he's

talking about parables. Like the parable

of the raft, he's not talking about a

real raft. You know, it's just a

metaphorical raft. So, um

it it's pretty obvious to me

that um

the Buddhist texts were written

relatively objectively.

That uh if there are symbols and and

like

symbols and metaphors and similes and

this sort of thing, then it's they're

pretty pretty obviously that way.

That they're not they weren't trying to

sneak in metaphors.

So,

your best bet is to interpret it

literally uh within reason because I

mean, when you're talking about deep

philosophy, um sometimes you just have

to use words that are

um just

crude approximations because you just

can't explain ultimate reality in words

anyway. So, you have to use these

metaphors for Nirvana, for example, you

know, where there there is no earth,

water, wind, and fire, where there there

is no light from the sun, stars, or

moon, and and this kind of thing.

Um

but uh even then it's again, it's it's

it's it's pretty clearly to be poetical

metaphorical kind of talk.

And one of the things is that sometimes,

even though it's it's a literal meaning,

um you modern Westerners just can't

accept it, you know, like the earth is

flat and floats on water. That goes all

the way back to the canonical texts. Or

you know, there's the strange strange

sutta, I think it's in the Udana, where

venerable

um

uh

who is it?

Venerable

Sariputta is sitting in deep meditation,

and these two ogres, these yakkhas, walk

by, and one of them smashes

venerable Sariputta in the head so hard

that it would have split a mountain.

But Sariputta, because of the power of

his his wisdom and his meditation,

it doesn't even cause him to stop

meditating, which causes this this yakka

or ogre to just I mean, the earth just

splits open, and he just drops

immediately into hell.

And

I mean another another example or

there's a few suttas where eclipses of

the sun and moon are caused by a kind of demon, like a titan, swallowing the sun or moon into his mouth. His name is Rahu.

And I mean those were meant literally because people really believed that stuff at the time. And so a modern Westerner just says, "Well, I mean they meant it literally, but um yeah, that's that's some cultural conditioning that we don't have to uh we don't have to accept that in order to be serious Buddhists cuz it's really irrelevant to the main message of Buddhism anyway. The main message of Buddhism is is valid. It's just

timeless. And so it's not going to
change. I mean maybe some a little bit
on the edges just because of
figures of speech and so forth that were
favored in ancient times in ancient
India. But still, I mean
the Theravada Buddhist texts um
yeah, I mean just use some common sense.
And um most of it is pretty
straightforward and objective that
Theravada Buddhism never been accused of
being extremely imaginative. So um
yeah, just just consider it to be
literal except for the cases where it
obviously wasn't intended to be literal
to begin with.
And uh the stuff that you just can't

swallow like the flat earth floating on water or the the 10 million mile high mountain in the center of the world and all that um

yeah, well I mean that's not really um I mean that's just irrelevant to the main message of Dharma anyway, which goes back to the four noble truths and dependent co-arising and and that sort of thing.

So, I think I'll just move on to the next question. And this is uh our last questioner here is Oroboro. And he asks he asked more than one, but this one is

I am am I right in my understanding that

karma is therefore more of a direct result of action.

For example, I'm always angry, so people will avoid me leading to me being lonely, as opposed to a magical mechanism. For example, I kill a fly and will therefore get hit by a car a week later. This interpretation would also contain the notion of good versus bad in a cosmic sense.

As there is seemingly no correlation between the two events except that I categorize them as bad.

Okay.

Um

the magical mechanism I

really there's not as much difference

between these two interpretations as our friend Oroboro seems to imply.

For example, I mean it's like it's as I've said, karma is a mental state. It is volition. It is like the will that it's the this the motive force of your mind.

And it's also it's kind of a a good way of looking at it is that we are dreaming our way through life. We are creating this world for ourselves.

And

um a person who does lots of bad things is more likely to have bad dreams. A person who does lots of good things is more likely to have good dreams. So,

it's like let's say you kill a fly. I really don't I think it's kind of a an exaggeration here to think that if like someone who kills a fly will therefore get hit by a car a week later, but let's say you just have this really negative hostile kind of mind, very angry, very crude, and you don't you don't think anything of killing a fly while just like yelling in rage at it, just cursing it. And then that kind of attitude is more likely to have you in a position where you do get hit by a car a week later.

Um it's It's that killing the fly, just that mechanical action somehow caused the mechanical action of getting hit by

a car a week later, but the mental

states which are conditioning your

existence being negative and and like

painful and violent and so forth,

um it's just going to be conditioning

your existence afterwards, too. It's

It's um

If you've got like a violent mind, you

have violent dreams.

So,

that's one way of interpreting it. I

mean, both are true. I mean, it's like

um

you know, if you're always angry, people

will tend to avoid you leading to you

being lonely. That is obviously a result

of your volitional acts, but also

um you know, if if you've got like this

really crude

um like dark, negative kind of a vibe to

you,

to your mind, then you're going to be

conditioning, you know, dark, crude,

painful events in your life because um

you can call it magic or not,

but I mean, I'm I'm really not a

materialist. Maybe Ouroboros really is a

materialist who's sold on like

scientific realism and so forth, who

really thinks that there's like atoms

and molecules flying through space even

with no conscious mind there to to

perceive them.

In which case, yeah, it could be that he would consider my own um attitude to be magical thinking.

Um

but nevertheless,

really our mental states do determine

um

the events that happen to us. Like, just going with physics. Let's Let's say Ouroboros here is a a scientific materialist, and um you know, there there still is this notion that before an object is perceived, it's in a state of like quantum randomness. It is indeterminate until a perceiving mind collapses the state vector, so to speak.

And and then you got something like discrete that's happening. It's not just less this nebulous cloud of possibilities. It collapses down to one of those possibilities. And the the mental states of the person who is collapsing that state vector can determine how it collapses.

So that could be like a materialistic way of explaining how karma works in in some way.

Where it's just the quality of your mind is collapsing the state vector and determining what is happening in your surroundings.

Um you know, in accordance with the the quality of your mind.

Well, even good people can have bad
dreams and bad people can have good
dreams. And it's a lot of that maybe
most of it is just deep down
subconscious stuff that you don't have
any conscious control over.
Okay, let's see.
I think maybe I answered that and it's
such a
such a strange nebulous kind of
question. It's it's kind of hard to
answer it.
So I'm just going to move on to the next
one cuz it's similar.
Is reincarnation to be understood
physically? For example, I act bad as a

human and then

born as a donkey.

As opposed to a philosophical concept.

For example,

I practice mindfulness and will be

reborn tomorrow as a new me.

One can follow this thought further with

an impermanent self. I'm not the same

tomorrow as I am today, etc. But it is

different in to the first

as the first implies physical death

between the two lives.

Um

Well,

if you'll forgive me, I will bring up

Abhidhamma philosophy. I usually don't

have much use for it, but it is orthodox

Theravada. And according to orthodox Theravada,
everything is just appearing and disappearing, you know, trillion times a second.
And
so I mean there is no continuation from one moment to the next. Everything is completely new from one moment to the next. And not only that,
and and I've asked Abhidharma scholars about this and they really can't answer, but if everything disappears, you've got existence and then non-existence and then existence again, then that new existence isn't even caused by anything.

It's just arising out of nothing because
the previous cause had already ceased to
exist before the result even arises.
So it's it's arising from nothing.
And so really I mean you could say that
we are really just ceasing to exist
every moment and it is a similar
mechanism,
I believe, to how reincarnation or
rebirth works
because there is no linking cause. Like
David Hume, who is considered to be
possibly the greatest Western
philosopher to write in English language
or at least he used to be,
um he pointed out that there's really no
way of proving cause and effect. All we

see is that one thing follows another

thing consistently enough that we say

that what the first thing causes the

second thing.

But it could be

that it's just similarity.

This I mean the similarity of of one

mental state is is close enough to the

next mental state that you see a

continuation.

And that could be the way reincarnation

works. It's just a similarity of my mind

um

you know, it's it can be seen as a

continuation of another mind that arises

after this mind ceases that is similar

enough

that there's there can be seen as a kind

of connection.

But um

yeah, we're we're just wandering into

metaphysics here which is uh

kind of dizzying, I think.

Um

but

y-

Yeah, yeah. It's the whole idea of of

similarity being really

um what

links one moment with the next or one

life with the next, it's something that

I take very seriously. I think it may be

correct, but it's it's very difficult to

explain, especially in a few minutes.
And uh we're we've already been going
for quite a while here. So, um
I'll just uh go to the very last
question. This is the last question,
also from Ouroboros.
And um he's uh linking this to the
previous one. If it's the first, which
is uh that is reincarnation is to be
understood physically, that uh for
example, his example is uh he acts bad
as a human and then is reborn as a
donkey.
Uh would it still make sense to follow
Buddhist thought tradition even if one
does not share that belief? So,

apparently the question is, even if you

don't believe in reincarnation, can you

still be a Buddhist?

And

um it leaves some

like it leaves some loose ends.

But like the Four Noble Truths are just

as true whether there is or is not

reincarnation. Like suffering is caused

by desire. I mean, that is true

regardless of whether there is

reincarnation or not.

Um you know, if you you the consequences

or actions have consequences. I mean,

that's true regardless of whether

um

there is reincarnation or not.

So, I would say that a lot of people who consider themselves to be Buddhists in the West really don't have much use for for reincarnation or for that matter even for like nirvana.

Um or to some degree for karma, either. So, but they still consider themselves to be Buddhists. I mean, you may be a heretic, but welcome to the club. I'm a heretic, too. Like I had don't have much use for Abhidhamma philosophy or the commentarial tradition, which makes me a literally a heretic from the point of view of orthodox Theravada.

But, one thing is I mean, even if you don't believe in reincarnation

or karma or something, then

if you practice and you meditate in

deeply, then insight will continue to

develop and who knows, maybe uh maybe

you'll see the light and you'll see the

truth of it uh

few years down the road or something.

But, um

with regard to um if you don't believe

in reincarnation, could you still be a

Buddhist or should you still follow it?

Does it make sense to follow it? Um

I mean, yeah. I mean, it's it's it's

good and to follow it as much as you can

or as much as you're you're willing to

accept.

That even just realizing that suffering

is caused by desire and that suffering ultimately is always self-inflicted. I mean, even that. Like like I was telling people like I was saying earlier, it's like if you if you understand or remember only one thing about Buddhism, just one thing, then realize that it's whenever you're unhappy it's because you want something. And ultimately, it's your choice to want it or not if you if you have enough consciousness to take responsibility for that.

So, I mean, that's true regardless of whether there's reincarnation or not.

So, yeah, just accept as much of it as you're able. I mean, it's it's all good, really. Unless you just want to accept the this the silliest parts of it. You know, I mean, if if your Buddhism just amounts to insisting on the existence of Mount Meru in the middle of the earth, the flat earth floating on water, then yeah, you might not get much benefit from that, but uh

um there is like some really profound wisdom to Buddhist philosophy and uh you know, as much of it as you accept is good, even if you're not going to accept everything. I mean, I don't accept the the flat Earth on water or that kind of thing.

Um so, I'm I'm a heretic, too. Maybe not quite as radical of one.

But, um

yeah, so just accept as much as you can, and then anything that's useful. I mean, you can be an eclectic. You don't have to just be pure only Buddhist or pure only

Presbyterian or whatever. I mean, if whatever seems to work for you, I mean, go with that. You know, I mean, there's no monopoly. I don't think there's an absolute monopoly on enlightenment. I don't think Theravada Buddhism is the only way to possibly become enlightened. It it works, at least for some people,

apparently.

But, um

yeah, I I I don't know if anyone is

absolutely 100% orthodox, unless they're

just such a boring dogmatist that they

don't have an original thought in their

head.

So, yeah, good luck to everybody, and uh

I think we're done.

Still here. Yeah. I've been talking for

a long time. Okay, so I guess we're

done, and uh if you have any questions,

you're welcome to ask. You can ask them

in the comments below,

or you can ask them on my SubscribeStar

channel after I make an announcement, or

if you are one of the privileged ones

who is uh in on the Discord server, you can ask in that the Q&A room there. And uh I go through all of that, and uh make up my list, and then I sit here with my razor burn and cuts on my face, and answer your questions. So, I think we're done, and be happy.

all right hello and welcome to

episode 13 of question and answer

and i am your host panyo basa also

known as david reynolds

this is my secret public name

and i must admit i'm kind of surprised

that we're all the way up to episode 13

already it's just uh people keep asking

questions and so long as you keep asking

i will keep answering so without any

further ado

let's get to the questions and the first

one is from

shawarma dharma

and i suspect that's not his real name

but anyway shwarma dharma says

for the next q a less a question and

more a prompt for hearing your thoughts

idea number one the sparta meets

buddha meme shared here and he's

referring to the uh

the discord server that we have

associated with the subscribe star

account it has um

it has like the the raging spartan king

leonidas from the movie 300

and then it's also got a picture of the

buddha and it says yes you can be both

and at the bottom it's got the buddha

sitting there with like the the same

raging face as king leonidas

so uh i suppose i should start over

for the next q a less a question and

more a prompt for hearing your thoughts

idea number one the sparta meets buddha

meme shared here

jordan peterson's idea of being a

controlled

dangerous person carl jung's

sri lankan and other militant buddhism

so that's idea one idea two

don't kill mosquitoes meta loving

kindness prohibitions on military

careers from white

livelihood right livelihood developing a

breathy

dharma voice and all that implies

so how does theravada and how do you

panyo consider these ideas as

integratable or mutually exclusive

so that's kind of interesting that's

that's a good question i think

so i mean from the

orthodox traditional terra vodden point

of view

then i mean if you're really going to

take morality completely seriously you

are going to purify your karma you're

going to purify your mind so there's

absolutely no negativity there

then you renounce the world and go and

meditate under a tree for the rest of

your life

there are some bones tossed to the lay

people

i suppose you could say with regard to

the five precepts and even the five

precepts

uh yeah i mean you're not allowed even

to kill a mosquito even if you're

following five precepts

so um the question here is how do you

reconcile these two

if they are even reconcilable and

um this is a theme that i've been

addressing quite a lot in my blog

in fact two of my most recent posts have

been on this very subject

more or less and um

yeah i would say that if you really are

intent on

being a complete saint

then yeah your best bet is to renounce

the world just

literally renounce worldly life become a

homeless wanderer or at least

get yourself locked up in a cloister and

just

meditate for the rest of your life but

that doesn't really work

for most real humans i mean you have to

have

killing in order to live i mean

life requires death if you don't have

a military you don't have police armed

with guns

then you're just going to have rampant

crime and then barbarian invasions and

so forth

people will have to be vegan and even i

mean they're just going to starve

because

even the i mean you wouldn't even be

allowed to use insecticides

on on the veggies so

it's it's nice it's like it's like a

luxury

pure morality is is a luxury and uh not

everybody can afford it

in in various ways so how do you

reconcile it

is first of all you try to be honest

with regard to

what the texts say and uh the texts

based on ancient

india and like ancient buddhism was

based

on a very very ancient tradition going

way back into prehistoric times in

indus valley civilization where you're

trying to purify your karma

and the buddha had like a radical

psychological way of

going about that but the the idea to

begin with

was i mean you purify your karma through

saintliness of some sort or another and

um

that's how you get out of samsara that's

like the basic idea

and um most of us

uh we just really can't afford to live

that way it's it's not even in

accordance with

with a western culture you'd practically

have to

go to asia or just uh seclude yourself

in in some remote monastery somewhere in

order to really

do that of just avoiding

all negativity and unskillfulness and so

forth

so um most of us have to be honest and

say okay this is what the texts say

you're supposed to do this but i'm not

in a position to do it so i'm just not

gonna do it

and um that requires a certain

like a certain courage and manliness to
accept the consequences of your actions
it's like okay i'm going to kill animals
that means i'm making unskillful karma
negative karma that's going to come back
on me i'm going to face that with as
much equanimity and fortitude as i can
muster
so yeah that would be that would be the
way you deal with it i mean you can't
deny
karma if you're a buddhist i mean that's
one of the fundamental
teachings of buddhism and so if you're
going to do
bad karma quote unquote then you have to
acknowledge you're doing that you have

to acknowledge that there's a very good
chance it's going to come back on you
whatever you have done to others
is going to come around back on you
sooner or later
probably and so you have to have the
courage and fortitude to just face that
and say okay i will accept when it comes
back on me with as much equanimity
as i can muster and
with regard to uh the uh soldiers
that uh is mentioned up above
um yeah i've had the idea for a long
time that a soldier should be viewed as
a kind of tragic hero who is sacrificing
his own virtue

possibly sacrificing his own hopes of

heaven

for the sake of others and that that is

uh you know that's

that's an honorable sacrifice and so i

think there should be some respect for

that even though the person

really is sacrificing their own virtue

um for the sake of their country for the

sake of their families and friends and

just

you know as a matter of duty so

yeah i mean if you're going to live in

the world then you have to accept that

you're going to be doing bad things

sometimes and bad things are going to

happen to you as a consequence of that

and you just have to have some stoicism

about you you have to have some backbone

you have to be willing for bad things to

happen to you sometimes and to deal with

it with a certain amount of equanimity

or philosophical detachment or whatever

so that is uh that's how i consider

these ideas as integratable

whereas theravada buddhism orthodox

theravada buddhism

um just it just tells you to be as

saintly as you can manage

and uh your best bet is to renounce the

world

so i'll just move on to the next

question

and i do apologize if i didn't answer

that one sufficiently

excuse me next question is from mirror

of

emptiness my question for the next q a

is on the ship of fools podcast we were

speaking of being mindful in extreme

situations

me giving the example of being the

observer of my own intense

panic attack panic attack and you giving

the example of losing your temper and

going into a rage while being mindful

the more i thought of it the more i came

to the conclusion that i was probably

just

totally psychologically detached and

that

that is quite common in a crisis so i'm

wondering what do you think of this

regarding your own example of mindfully

raging and what is the difference

between mindfulness and psychological

detachment

anyways okay well

first of all i mean there's nothing at

all wrong with detachment

buddhism teaches detachment pretty much

all philosophy teaches detachment

and so i assume that what mirror of

emptiness is referring to here is

actually dissociation

um and i really can't speak for

uh what mirror was experiencing

when he was having his experience but

with my own experience

dissociation um you know it's a part of

your

personality part of your mind detaches

from the rest and really there is no

full connect i mean there's like a

closed door between them

you know like somebody who's channeling

they might not

remember what the other personality is

saying

even though it might just be a figment

of their own subconscious imagination

so or a person with multiple

personalities that's like a classic

example of dissociation hysterical

dissociation

um you know one personality isn't

necessarily

aware of the other personalities but

for example on the case he's talking

about

and there's been numerous occasions in

my life where i have gone through

a kind of um i won't call it

dissociation but maybe

a kind of detachment where like in this

case

i was living in a cave in burma and

the heat was just unrelenting it was

just

so hot for months and months probably

the rainy season

and like at least one out of every three

rainy season sometimes two out of three

and that part of burma were just a bust

it'd just be a drought and the crops

would fail and it just wouldn't

rain and it was probably one of those

and finally i just snapped and was just

yelling and cussing and slamming things

and suddenly there was just a kind of

shift of consciousness where there was

like

i was suddenly aware of this higher

level of consciousness

that was just observing me throwing a

conniption

so i was still throwing the conniption

you know i was still yelling and cussing

and slamming things

but it was as though i was an actor

playing the role of somebody throwing a

conniption

because there was just this other level

of consciousness just

observing it all with detachment and

just not really being involved

and that's happened to me many times not

just

not just that time um often in times of

crisis

like um there have been a few times even

before i was a meditating monk

where i'd be driving a car that would

hit a patch of ice or something i'd

start sliding out of control and again

it was just

my mind would just become crystal clear

i'd stop thinking

it would be like this higher level of

consciousness

would just do whatever was necessary to

keep me alive

until the crisis had passed and then i'd

go back into the normal state of

consciousness again

and um it really

has struck me that that level of

consciousness is

always there so um

with regard to dissociation uh you know

it's like when i was felt like i was an

actor playing the role of somebody

throwing a connection you know where

it's like

the conniption is going on you know it's

like you're you're like a method actor

playing out

you know like living out the the role or

whatever but at the same time you know

the actor always is knowing you know to

be

like if he's on stage you know you're

facing facing the

the audience or facing the camera and

you know where your balance is and you

know where you know everybody else is to

balance out the scene and

you know you know how much slobber's in

your mouth and all that

um it's not necessarily any kind of

contradiction

or anything unhealthy at all it's just

um

just the way it is and i really do think

that that higher level of consciousness

is always there but our ego

is identified with itself and ignores

higher levels

of consciousness that are just as much

us or maybe even more us than the ego is

so um yeah i'm not sure how well i

answered that one

but um let's see i'm i'm reading the

question here i'm wondering what you

think of disregarding your own example

of mindfully raging

um yeah and it wasn't always raging

either as all sorts of things could

happen

that would uh sort of trigger this

sudden awareness of like almost like

looking down at yourself you know sort

of like a

near-death experience where you just

kind of rise up and you look down you

see yourself sprawled on the pavement

down below

i mean it wasn't really like that but it

was sort of like a psychological

equivalent of that where like one part

of your mind is just kind of step

back and watching all this stuff going

on

and really that's what mindfulness is

like as a practice if you're practicing

um mindful detachment that's pretty much

what you're doing anyway

so i think i'll move on to the next

question from otomo he asks a number of

questions here

and he says more stupid questions if you

have not already answered them and i

would just point out

that there are no stupid questions there

are only stupid people

and um um nobody who asks these

questions are stupid people

i can i can say that honestly so

um no worries it's all good

so his first question women in buddhism

can a woman

gain enlightenment in this life and

according to orthodox tarabata buddhism

the answer is yes

in fact um in the story of

the buddha allowing a an order of nuns

to exist

at first he thought it was a really bad

idea and he didn't want to allow

an order of nuns to uh to become part of

the buddhist sangha

but his his cousin ananda his cousin and

attendant

ananda the venerable ananda talked him

into it and

one of the arguments ananda used was

um pointing out to the buddha and the

buddha had to agree to this that women

are just as capable of becoming

enlightened as

men according to uh like

the uh the ancient tradition um

only a man can be a fully enlightened

buddha who gets the the wheel turning

again after buddhism has died out

but aside from that um

yeah women are just as capable of

becoming enlightened as men so women and

men are not

the same obviously and

in some ways they may not be equal for

example with regard to physical strength

but apparently at least according to

buddhism

with regard to wisdom or at least the

potential for wisdom or the potential

for liberating

insight men and women are equal and that

is

arguably the most important kind of

equality that we could have

so the answer is yes women women

uh can gain enlightenment in this life

so the next question idolatry in

buddhism

buddhist statues are heretical how

do the southern asian sects deal with

that

and um i had no idea that buddhist

statues are heretical

in the the ancient terrebonne texts

the pali texts there's no mention of

buddha statues at all they haven't been

invented yet so there's no mention of

them just as there's no mention of

computers or cell phones or or monopoly

you know i mean it's just not there

so i'm technically really buddha statues

are not heretical from a

theravada buddhist point of view um

one theory about the origin of buddhist

statues

they were invented by greeks who had

invaded and conquered northwestern india

at that time they had converted to

buddhism and the greeks liked their

statues and so they started making

buddha statues

and the story goes that the first buddha

statues made by the greeks were

modeled on the god apollo and at that

time

in that part of the world apollo had a

top knot of hair

and that's why the buddha statues had

that weird lump on the top

it's based on this aristocratic top knot

of hair that the god apollo

had at least according to the story but

yeah for the first few hundred years

of buddhism there were no buddha statues

and if the buddha was represented at all

in art it would just be an empty seat or

a footprint something like that just to

emphasize that he was no longer in this

world he had he had

attained nibana he was no longer in

samsara

so um the southern asians like statues

too

by now obviously and it's not really

heretical

you know it's got its good points and

it's bad points it's at least a focus

for

uh devotional feelings and so forth

so um yeah i think i'll just move on to

the next question

also from otomo regarding buddhist

prophecy

do you believe them if so why

don't they just create suffering

um i'm not exactly sure what buddhist

prophecies otomo

is referring to there are prophecies in

the pali texts

so in in the ancient sutas there are

prophecies

made by the buddha and

you can use these prophecies if you're

cynical

and like a good scholar as a way of

dating the text

because usually the way it works and

bible scholars do the same thing

it's like you've got a book of

prophecies and

when right at the point where the

prophecies stop being 100

accurate and start being wildly

inaccurate right at that point

is probably when the text was composed

and so the buddha has a very high track

record with regard to

his prophecies which could indicate

if you're a cynic or a skeptic or

something

that the the text wasn't composed until

after the event that he was prophesying

because the buddha really um i mean he

was not really a prophet he was just a

philosopher sage just teaching people

how to do as he did and uh hopefully

become enlightened

so um uh with regard to other buddhist

prophecies i mean i

i don't even know what they would be and

uh don't they just create suffering

really i i don't see how they would

create suffering um

it could be if it's a wildly wrong

prophecy and people are

like clinging to it or something then it

could create suffering just as anything

create suffering if you cling to it

sufficiently

um but yeah there are prophecies in the

polytext

and not very many as i recall

and uh like for example

i think it's uh there's a suta where the

buddha is passing through patali puta

which is like a small town at that time

or like a

a large village maybe even and in the in

the

suta he prophesies that it will become a

great capital and

later it did become the capital of uh

the magadan empire i think

and so you could say that that was a

prophecy and it was like a harmless one

i mean he was just saying that

you know that that town was going to be

a great

capital but i mean the skeptics or the

the cynics can say well that

probably was not composed until after

pataliputa had become

a great capital and then they just sort

of retroactively had the buddha prophesy

that

but it's really irrelevant i mean

prophecies are irrelevant to the main

point of buddhism so

it's not really any more important than

like the cosmology a lot of that kind of

stuff either

a lot of them the myths and legends fire

breathing dragons and all that sort of

thing

they're not really to the point of the

central message of buddhism so

fortunately we can dismiss most of the

narratives because

buddhism really isn't based on a story

it's just based on

human psychology more than anything else

so we'll just move on to the next

question here can a buddhist

be dual religion jewish and buddhist

if so why if not why

um i have met

i mean it's kind of interesting that he

has jewish and buddhist as an example

because i used to know this guy

who um

he was really a devout buddhist he

meditated every day he had memorized

polytext by heart

he attended the very first meditation

retreat at ims

he was just really into buddhism he

thought it was you know 98

factual and reliable and uh

he also denied that he was a buddhist he

insisted he was a jew

but as a jew i mean he did not keep even

the ten commandments and he thought that

yahweh or jehovah was really just a kind

of brahma you know he's one of many gods

which you know the ancient jews also i

mean

they were polytheists up until um the

babylonian captivity or after the

babylonian captivity

so um i suppose you can

be buddhist and some other religion so

long as you're not denying the central

tenets of buddhism

um you know if if your other religious

belief causes you to reject the idea of

karma for example or it causes you to

reject the four noble truths

or or something like that then uh

yeah then you'd be like a semi buddhist

and maybe a semi something else

but um yeah you can you can be dual

religion so long as

your other religion isn't causing you to

positively disbelieve

some fundamental tenet of buddhism

otherwise you'd be like semi like

quasi or something

okay next question

can you name all the monks that have

attained enlightenment

like siddhartha how many are hot

do you know i mean nobody can name all

the monks that have attained

enlightenment like siddhartha i mean if

you read the text it's been

millions of them probably um

and really it's just a trick question

anyhow because

um i mean enlightenment is a paradoxical

state

nirvana is just not within the context

of samsara it's

it's completely off the scale and so

it's just really incommensurable

with anything going on in this world in

orthodox buddhism they can say okay

you're an arahant if you have

no greed hate or delusion you know you

don't experience

suffering anymore you're not creating

new karma anymore

but only another arahant could possibly

know

whether somebody is an arahant or not

and maybe in some cases even then

another arahant wouldn't know so

it's like if you're unenlightened you're

looking at the world through

unenlightenment colored glasses and you

can meet an enlightened being and you're

just going to be clueless

he's just going to seem as foolish as

you are probably

or if you got the idea like you an

enlightened person

has the idea that so and so probably

their teacher

is enlightened all they're doing is they

they're cooking up some

unenlightened idea of what enlightenment

is like and then sticking it onto this

other

person it's an unenlightened idea of

what enlightenment is

because any kind of idea an

unenlightened person has is bound to be

unenlightened

so the whole thing is kind of a trick

question i mean we could meet arahants

and not even know that there are hans

if we're not our aunts or it could just

be that being an arahant

within a some sorry context is pretty

much meaningless

because just enlightenment itself or

nirvana

is just a completely different level of

reality and the whole thing is

paradoxical and kind of a mystery

so i'll just uh go on to the next

question which is a lulu

i must say are you enlightened

if so why if not hawaii explain what

brought you to enlightenment or what

keeps you from enlightenment

so again it's it's kind of a trick

question

and obviously i don't want to claim that

i'm enlightened

but um i mean nobody should just

say that they're unenlightened because

that helps to reinforce being unaligned

it's just like

slamming a door in your own face

so i mean you don't want to limit

yourself you don't want to

say i'm unenlightened because that is

like one of the nails

holding you down to an enlightenment so

to speak

and even worse than that is saying well

i'm not living up to such and such

standard and so i can't become

enlightened i'll never be enlightened in

this lifetime i mean that's

i mean that's just awful i mean that's

really slamming the door in your own

face

so just be open-minded and it's best

just not even to think about it not even

worry about it whether you're

enlightened or not i mean you are what

you are

you know it's you can say that it's just

perfect under the circumstances whatever

whatever you happen to be um you know

it's just

exactly what you need to be so

yeah so that's kind of a question that's

best just

left unanswered and nobody should even

stew over that

you know don't don't think that you're

on enlightened and don't think that you

are enlightened either you know you just

whatever it's just uh just keep going

forwards and don't bother with it

so the next question is from nardi

what do you know about marpa the teacher

of miller ripa and how he was an

advanced meditator

translator and had also a wife

are there in buddhism examples of people

like him

advanced meditators living a lay life

i've heard that tibetan buddhism has a

lot of examples like this

okay well i really don't know a whole

lot about tibetan buddhism anyway

but i have read um it was like an oxford

university press

um edition it was his name was evans

wentz and he did a lot of good editing

jobs of buddhist texts mostly tibetan

ones

and one of them was about the songs of

milorepo which include

uh an old biography of melarepa or i

think it was his autobiography

or it was considered to be his

autobiography

so i read about marpa a little bit in

that and

the life of milorepa at least the story

version of it is really fascinating i

mean

he this guy was he was living on a diet

of nettles for a long time he was just a

hermit living out in a cave in tibet

and he ate so many nettles that he

turned that he turned green and also his

clothes just rotted off so he was like

this green naked person

and if anybody saw him they thought he

was a monster

um but with regard to marpa the teacher

and how he was an advanced meditator

translator also had a wife i just

vaguely remember the details of marpa

um really whether he was

how advanced he was or anything um i

can't really say

so move on to the next part of the

question here are there in buddhism

examples of people like him advanced

meditators living a lay life the first

example that comes to mind would be uba

kin who uh was the teacher of sn goenka

he lived in burma s lived in burma too

originally and um he was like a

government administrator he was

he was uh you know some sort of

government official

who had you know like a busy job

but at the same time he he was a

meditation master

so it is possible and i think uh uba kin

also

was probably married i can't say for

sure but

i wouldn't be surprised um

so yeah i mean there there are advanced

meditators

who uh live a lay life

i would assume that they're more into

mindfulness or

be passing on meditation quote unquote

than uh

developing jhana because i mean if

you're living a busy life with lots of

lots of stuff going on then you're

better off meditating on a moving target

and uh not trying to cultivate just

absolute stillness and simplicity

but um yes it can be done and um

like one of the one of the most famous

upanishads or one of the most famous

parts

of a famous upanishad is uh the

enlightened brahmana or the very very

wise brahman

teaching his favorite wife and it's like

a dialogue between the brahmana and his

wife

i don't even remember what upanishad it

was but it's one of the main ones

so um at least there are records

of really advanced spiritual beings

who did live in the world and uh were

married and had families and all that

it's um it makes it more difficult you

know it's like a more advanced

difficulty setting

but um it's still possible

and uh really again just thinking that

you can't become enlightened unless

you're

a renunciant is again you're just

slamming a door in your own face

so the next question is from sam in fact

he's asked a number of questions here

and he says thanks for your time and

patience i hope you have understanding

and i am not trying to offend in any of

my language or thoughts here peace

okay well taken question one

can you please address corruption in the

buddhist hierarchy for example

in the materialized establishment such

as problems with deception making

business monks who can't

practice what they preach fake relics

etc

why i think this is most important

people have had enough deception from

other groups and turn to buddhism as the

last

known religion that is supposedly the

most revered as

saintly also deception is a big factor

to drive people wrong especially if

they're in a vulnerable position of

seeking help from higher power

okay well i mean what it all boils down

to

is that no matter what the religion is

no matter what the religious system

is it's going to be run by human beings

and human beings

for the most part are foolish and

any religion that becomes like a

mainstream religion especially if it

becomes like a state religion

you know like the religion of a culture

then

obviously it's just going to go corrupt

as hell you're going to have just

corrupt politicians

um taking the the roles of like uh

priests and um

like bishops archbishops that kind of a

thing

and so um within just about any system

the majority are going to be

foolish to some degree i mean you're not

just gonna have like a sangha of

arahants there's gonna be

wise guys and crooks and clowns and

drones and

and just um for the most part the uh the

drones are gonna be the majority

um they might be well-intentioned um

you know not bad drones you know they

might have a good heart they might be a

good person even if they're not very

good at

like living the life of a monk and

living up to all the

responsibilities and ideals and all that

um so yeah a lot of this i mean

like in burma um burma has

very strong buddhism relatively speaking

i think

it could very well be called the most

devoutly buddhist country on earth

but still it's like what do we got here

deception

yeah that happens making business yeah

like a few of the most famous

monks in burma they charge money for

their their

dharma talks um monks who can't practice

what they preach which is most of them

because the standards are so

high in buddhist monasticism that uh

yeah

you get angry i mean that's you're not

supposed to do that you're not supposed

to feel lost

you're not supposed to uh um you know

you just you're just supposed to be

striving single-mindedly for

enlightenment

and pretty much just non-stop and almost

nobody can manage that and

uh most people just aren't right for

that like most of the people who become

monks especially in a buddhist culture

where it's mainstream

they're not doing it out of like this

intent

desire to become enlightened i mean a

lot of them just want to live an easy

life

or where they're really poor and can't

afford a good education unless they

become a monk and get to go free to the

monastic schools

or maybe their fam their parents are

poor and have got eight kids so they

just send one of the kids usually like

the laziest ugliest one to to become a

monk

um just to have fewer mouths to feed and

then to add the prestige of having a

monk in the family that sort of thing

a lot of a lot of monks in burma have

been ordained since they were children

and they just don't know anything else

to do in life they're just kind of stuck

that way

and uh see fake relics yeah lots of

those although most people

don't know that they're fake you know

they think that they're real

so um buddhism i mean

yeah like terra vada buddhism was

regarded like sex scandals they're way

less than

than in lots of other religious systems

um

yeah i think i think the buddha did

really well when he set up the system

for example he had like a two-level

system of religion

which is you know it's possible in other

religions also it does happen in other

religions but you've got like the really

sincere practitioners

they've got a higher set of of standards

and more rules to follow

and then if you're if you're really not

up to that then just five

precepts minimum and uh you know even

most

most people don't follow those perfectly

so

um it helps to reduce hypocrisy anyway

and uh having strict rules against

handling money kind of

sort of makes the monks better although

of them still handle money but um

yeah it's it's i mean as as religious

systems

go teravata buddhism is is a good one

pretty obviously but any any religion

um once the the enlightened founder dies

you know it's just going to go downhill

into corruption and just you know human

foolishness because it's human i mean

we're not we're all human

and there might be certain upsurges of

inspiration where things get

better and more enlightened more fresh

and alive

more inspired but they don't last you

know it's all in each and nothing

nothing lasts forever

so i'll just move on to the next

question by sam

think about the possibility of a mix

between maya and

ghosts or that sort of energy or even

deceivers of energy

please address what you think about this

mixture possibility

and i'm not 100 sure what the question

is because

maya applies to samsara in general so

ghosts would be an aspect of maya or

illusion samsaric illusion but then

again so would we i mean

in the highest heavens also are

manifestations of

samsaric illusion to some degree

um with regard to

deceivers of energy that might be sort

of

um if i understand correctly maybe

something like what's called a glamour

or like a succubus like a like a

parasite a drainer of energy

and um yeah they could exist and uh

i wouldn't be surprised at all in fact i

think there's a good chance of it

but um really our own mental states are

are preeminent and our own karma

determines what happens to us so

um if if you have

a problem with some parasitic little

spirit that's sucking some of your

energy

and i've read that this does happen it's

it's not in orthodox terrible

i'm pretty sure but i have read that

such things can happen

that just as there are physical fleas

there are also

like little like little spiritual

you know like ghost fleas or something

that suck our life for us or something

like that

um yeah i mean it can happen but it

can't happen to you unless it's your

karma

that it's going to happen to you so you

still ultimately

deep down are in control

of your own life and whether that is

happening to you or not

most people just aren't enlightened of

course and so they

they have the subconscious mind that

that creates problems that they really

can't be aware of consciously because

it's subconscious

but um yeah it's it's mostly

just the unskillful karma that allows

that sort of thing anyway

and so um it's it's still karma

but um i mean the main gist of the

question i'm not exactly sure

the uh a mix of maya and ghosts like

ghosts could be illusory that it's like

a kind of

aspect of a mental illness and yeah sure

that's that's possible too

but it is all ultimately psychological

because karma is really

what is conditioning our experience so

i'll just move on to the next question

which i trust i will understand better

in terms of what i know about karma in

buddhism anything bad that happens is a

part of the person's path or clearing

their karma

how would a traditional buddhist address

a room of young children that have been

used as slaves or raped by adults

in this example the children would

already have some recovery

so they could move on to the next stage

of understanding and healing

or maybe you could address adults about

this example

okay this is really kind of a tricky

kind of sensitive touchy sort of

question

because like i just said whatever

happens to us really is the result of

our

our karma's like the fruition of our

karma

you know like any sensation you

experience positive negative or

an abu dhamma scholar recently told me

even neutral

sensory experiences um they're all the

fruition of karma

and so the standard explanation is that

uh

you know it was the fruition of bad

karma from a previous

and most western people don't believe in

reincarnation and so they just reject

that as [__] and then sometimes they

can just twist it around and say you're

blaming these

these victims you know it's a victim

blaming you know it's like

you're blaming these little kids for for

causing themselves to be abused

and that's an ugly way of saying i mean

i mean

in a way it's kind of true but it's not

the kids that did anything wrong it was

just the

it was like the fruition of the actions

of a previous person with

them being sort of the continuation of

that

um but let's just say for the sake of uh

playing devil's advocate or mara's

advocate let's just let's just leave

reincarnation or rebirth out of the out

of the deal all together

then um still

i mean i'm not going to reject karma in

this

life with karma in this life being that

you know our existence is a

manifestation of our own mental states

that you know we really are um

to a very profound degree determining

what happens to us in life

and it's like if you put a little kid

behind

the wheel of a car and let them drive

the car

then there's a good chance they're going

to crash the car because they just

are not skillful at driving a car yet

they're not skillful at

navigating such a vehicle and

small children um i mean just with

regard to driving this body through life

just like creating an existence for

themselves they're not skillful at that

yet

either and so you know sort of like

they're they're they're not good at

lucid dreaming yet

and so in in that sense you can say that

because they're children

they just don't know any better they

don't have enough wisdom cultivated yet

to uh to steer their life in a good

direction and their parents obviously

have

woefully failed in protecting them back

there

sometimes their parents are the primary

predators on the men of

just inflictors of misery so

yeah i mean i am compassionate it's not

like i'm trying to do any kind of victim

blaming here

um buddhist philosophy can be pretty

cold

and so i mean there is that too but

um even even if you you say is the

fruition of their own karma then

still i mean you should do what you can

to be compassionate and to be helpful

and obviously

uh you know you shouldn't encourage

anything like that

and do your best to discourage that sort

of thing from happening

in your world

so let's see if i'm answering the

question correctly if i've just

completely gone off on a tangent here

let's see what a traditional buddhist

how would a traditional buddhist address

a room of young children

have been used as slaves or raped by

adults

yeah i mean the world is

i mean samsara is a place of suffering

and

we are imperfect which is why we are

here and

just it just gets more um imperfect for

some than for others i mean sometimes

just in this very world

you've got hill realms you've got minor

heaven realms and you've got minor hell

realms just

i mean just going to like a crack house

or something um

i had a little bit of experience with

that like a long time ago

and um i mean not that i was like a

crackhead or anything but still i mean

you can just wind up in the wrong place

at the wrong time and it's just like

this hell like vibe you know there's

just people who are creating a hell for

themselves

and obviously they just don't know any

better

you know it's like it's not like i mean

you can say it's their own fault but in

a way

i mean they just can't help it and so

um the best thing you do is try to help

you know i mean

so next question as

this is also by sam as i understand the

mental state of a buddhist is to do

nothing

of no harm and act as in the snake and

frog example that you have given before

can you please address this situation

your thoughts

about a buddhist of this nature that

walks across the path to see an adult

beating a child or raping them side note

there is a real scenario of buddhists

going after rapists in myanmar i think

this is the country then there were

other buddhists that did not agree with

this

i am just wondering about the normal

instinct a human has to intervene

compared to a buddhist that does not

have that instinct

okay well i mean one of the the points i

need to emphasize here

that i emphasize a lot and it requires

emphasis

is that in buddhism right and wrong

are not matters of physical actions you

know you can say i mean is doing

such and such right or wrong but i mean

it can be either way it's like the the

like the the frog and the snake example

that he mentioned here it's like

you're walking through the forest and

you see a snake trying to swallow a frog

and

the frog is squealing and struggling to

get away

because obviously the frog doesn't want

to be eaten by the snake

so you chase the snake away

if you do that out of compassion for the

frog you've done something good and if

you do something

if you do the very same thing out of

aversion for the snake

you've done something bad it's the exact

same action it can be good or bad

depending on the mental states

and in action not doing anything is

morally neutral

which if you're going for enlightenment

is actually preferable

to earning merit because if you're

earning merit you're still

making more karma that keeps you in

samsara

so not doing anything is morally neutral

it's neither good nor bad

even if you're just watching somebody

drown you're watching somebody get

assaulted or whatever

and really this is largely based on

um this prehistoric

uh ancient indian philosophy of

karma is what is keeping us in this

world and we need to exhaust our karma

somehow

in order to liberate ourselves from this

world and so

um there are cases like in the text of a

monk that will actually

sit on a riverbank and watch a pretty

girl drown because it's against the

rules for a monk to touch

a woman so to swim out and save her

possibly doing mouth-to-mouth

resuscitation

he could break a rule by doing that so

he's just not even going there he'll

just sit there and let her drown

and technically i mean it's cold as hell

but technically so long as he's in a

neutral state

then i mean he's done nothing good or

bad

but it's just not human you know i mean

you have to be just

so uh just

so detached that i mean you've just gone

beyond

humanity at that point and there are

stories like

um there's a story of a buddha the

buddha in a previous life he was a

farmer

and he had one son his only child

and he was a farmer so he went out to

plow the fields and he brought the kid

with him and the kid's just playing in

the shade of a tree

you know he's helping his wife maybe by

getting the kid out of her hair or

something

and so he's plowing the field and he

looks over and he notices the kid lying

motionless on the ground so he runs over

and it turns out the kid has been bitten

by a snake and is dead

so this the buddha who is very wise

being of course i mean he wasn't the

buddha yet this was in a previous life

but still i mean he had been cultivating

wisdom

life time after lifetime for eons

what does he do he just goes back and

finishes plowing the field because

there's nothing you can do to save the

kid the kid's already dead

so the field had to be plowed so that's

what he did

and i mean it's just kind of cold and

inhuman you know it's it's

you can argue that it's just a myth just

giving an example of just super

human equanimity and detachment

um yeah it's uh

you're probably better off if you see an

adult beating a child or raping them

um just anybody with an ounce of

like compassion and just

i don't know i mean yeah i mean i would

i would intervene

it just seems like the obvious thing to

do

um side note there's a real scenario

buddhists going after rapists in myanmar

yeah that is true and the rapists tend

to be muslims

which is it's like a muslim buddhist

thing and

um sometimes you know it can just be a

made-up story

um i've many times living in burma you

know you hear of

muslims raping a burmese buddhist girl

and then you've got reprisals and

sometimes you know like

burning down people's houses and that

kind of a thing

and um i mean just intervening and

stopping it from happening

is one thing but uh like revenge is

is obviously unskillful from the

buddhist point of view even

even like using violence and just like

anything motivated by hatred or ill will

anger rage that kind of a thing i mean

it just makes things worse it really

doesn't improve the situation

so um you know trying

to stop bad things from happening trying

to stop

bad things that are already happening

that's fine

but um doing so in a state of just

state of rage or revenge or hatred

anything like that

all you're doing is just fueling it

you're just throwing fuel on the fire

even though you might stop this

particular case

you know you've created more karma for

that sort of thing to happen

so um yeah so technically

just not doing anything even though the

whole world is going to [__] all around

you

that is morally ethically neutral from a

buddhist point of view so long as your

mental states are also neutral

and that's really the point i mean good

and bad are mental states

in buddhism it has very little to do

with

outward actions or even just outward

rules

it's the mental states that that are

really determining whether what you do

is good karma or bad karma or just

neutral so the next question let's see

oh wait this he's got a sub question

after that one

then is this kind of non-action

considered enlightenment

and i've already pretty much answered

that whereas i mean

physical non-action i mean it's just

neutral it's it's not enlightened or

unaligned it's it's irrelevant

largely so but but like

mental non-action yeah it's it's sort of

like

in the dao tai ching it's talking about

wu way or not action as a kind of

enlightened state

where your mind is just in this kind of

stillness you know equanimity and

stillness

you could say that that is enlightenment

i suppose that would be about as good of

a

of an inadequate definition as any

but um yeah i mean

just just watching something bad

happening and not reacting

or watching something good happening and

not reacting outwardly um yeah has

it has nothing to do with wisdom really

because wisdom is

is internal it's a mental state it has

nothing to do with physical action i

mean

your physical actions are a reflection

of your mental states obviously

but that's not necessarily the case i

mean a person who doesn't talk could be

a silent sage or they could just be an

idiot

and just don't feel like talking then

so yeah i think i'll just move on here

one more question that is also extremely

important in terms of teaching

others sex is a part

of who we are literally although i

understand the abstinence in monks or

practitioners etc

why is this subject not addressed by

monks or buddhists as a teaching to lay

people

how can someone teach another person how

to have a better life

by not addressing the elephant in the

room maybe they do address it but if so

why would it not be one of the most

important subjects

since this is who we are well for

starters

monks the primary purpose of a monk is

not to be a teacher

the primary purpose of a monk is to just

radically renounce the world and

go for it until you're enlightened

so the primary purpose of a monk is to

be meditating under trees in the forest

not not to teach people in fact there

are a few sutas that say that

or there's one in particular um where

it says that uh a monk really has no

duty to talk to lay people other than

just politely asking them to leave him

alone

because a monk is more or less of a

recluse he interacts with people when he

goes for arms around but

um not necessarily any other time

so this is again it's just this radical

renunciation

um terravoda buddhism was like a

spectator sport where

you know like the people that are really

serious that are like the the pro team

and then

like the lay people are just like the

fans supporting their favorite team

um but even so i mean monks can teach

about sex

mainly that is limited to just uh

encouraging them to keep the five

precepts which includes

precept number three which is um to

abstain from

sensual misconduct which

uh mainly means adultery and uh like

like wanton promiscuity you know

consulting consorting with prostitutes

or just like

you know picking up chicks in bars that

you don't give a damn about

you know it's like if you want to avoid

breaking the third preset then

um you would be faithful to one person

and you know you would have sex with a

person only that you

love and they're not already they don't

already have binding

obligations to somebody else that sort

of thing

um aside from that monks really have to

be careful about talking about sex

especially to women

because um if they veer off a little bit

into

uh being a little too explicit or

something they've just broken a very

serious offense

broken a very serious rule so

yeah monks they're not supposed to talk

about sex much

um because it is something that they

shouldn't even be thinking about really

and um so that's kind of what the lay

people

i mean it's sort of like a lay person's

issue and so you know the lay people

have to kind of work that stuff out on

their own

like um it's um it's like a major rule

there is a major rule a sanghati cesar

rule against a monk even participating

in a marriage

so it's very different from like

christianity where marriage is a

sacrament

in in buddhism because it was based and

it was originally like a monastic system

it was a system of renunciation

so that um yeah that's just monks don't

even go there this

um in burma or other buddhist countries

like

a couple like on their wedding day after

they've already gotten married they can

go to the monk

to receive the blessings but the monk

really should not bless their marriage

before they get married

because then he would be acting as a

kind of matchmaker

encouraging this kind of romantic

attachment stuff

that um you know buddhism is so

unworldly

that it just tends to avoid that kind of

stuff altogether if

if at all possible

so yeah that's that's one reason why

lay teachers in the west can do better

than monks in the west

because lay teachers can talk about that

kind of stuff more and

also um they can speak from their own

experience with regard to worldly issues

that lay people

encounter so monks are often so attached

and so

unworldly so sheltered you know they're

just like

living in a monastery or out in a forest

or something that

uh they really can't relate to the uh

like the problems of of everyday modern

life in in like in the west or

in a westernized civilization

so i hope i answered that one well

enough because i'm moving on to the next

one and this is from

bodhisattva969 the highest goal in

buddhism is

enlightenment or nirvana and the end of

samsara

to be born again and again does that

really mean we should extinguish

ourselves with enlightenment or is there

anything else behind

that somebody can achieve

well this is uh i mean it's it's always

butting heads with just the whole

paradox of enlightenment because really

enlightenment is off the scale is just

not a samsaric phenomenon even though

there are attempts to describe it as

such because you have to describe it

somehow

but by describing it you just

invalidated your description

so um does that really mean we should

we would extinguish ourselves with

enlightenment no because there

ultimately is no self to extinguish

all you're really extinguishing is a

kind of illusion or delusion

and uh says or is there anything else

behind that somebody can achieve and

that immediately reminded me of the last

two verses

of a really ancient polytechnics called

the kalahawi warasuta

of the sutuni pata and

it's first there's talk about

enlightenment and i won't i won't go

into that i won't read the whole suta

here but

at the end um the the person asking the

buddha

the the questions um he asks about

um enlightenment the buddha gives this

strange enigmatical

speech i suppose i should read that too

here i'll scroll down here

i just happen to have it right here his

his description of enlightenment is

he has no perception of perception he

has no perception of non-perception

he is not without perception he has no

perception of

void for one who was attained thus form

becomes void

for founded in perception is

diversifying designation

which is uh very koan like and uh

kind of inscrutable so then uh the

person who's asking him

the questions asks uh do indeed some

intelligent ones here declare that the

highest purity of the spirit

is to that extent or do they declare

that it is even more than that

and then the buddhist says indeed some

intelligent ones here do declare that

the highest purity of the spirit

is to that extent but then some of them

claiming to be adepts

declare an attainment in which nothing

that was taken up remains

so having understood these to be

dependent the sage

and investigator having understood the

ways of dependence

a released one having understood does

not come to contention

the wise one does not attain to this or

that existence

so one of the points of what he's

saying here as far as i can understand

is that you just don't cling to any kind

of explanation of what enlightenment is

that any explanation is going to be

invalid because this enlightenment is

just off the scale

and so if you want to have an

enlightened attitude

you don't cling to any point of view you

don't cling to any beliefs

any any kind of philosophy and

originally buddhism was this kind of a

radical just let go of absolutely

everything including your own belief

systems including

including dharma itself

and uh i mean that is just such such a

void

you know it's just like free falls like

having the the rug just yanked out from

under you and no floor or anything

underneath that

that um yeah buddhism couldn't couldn't

stay that way for very long

so they started cooking up all these

systematic uh

philosophies but um

let's see i may have wandered away from

the question here does that really mean

we should extinguish

ourselves with enlightenment we would

extinguish ourselves with enlightenment

or is there anything else

behind it that somebody can achieve

there there is nobody

i mean ultimately from the buddhist

point of view there we don't extinguish

ourselves because there's nobody to

extinguish there's no self to extinguish

and uh you know it's like nobody can can

achieve it because there is nobody

ultimately and that's that's kind of

like what enlightenment is just

realizing that

there's nobody to become enlightened

anyway

that's another invalid way of explaining

it and i'm just moving on here

dog breath good old dog breath

he's got a number of questions here

could you please

give an overview of the relationship

between nihilism and buddhism

okay nihilism and buddhism um

he's referring he he sent me a much

longer version of this question it was

it was like a an essay all in and of

itself

so i i'm pretty sure what he's what he's

uh referring to here

is that in the buddhist time there were

a number of

um um philosophers

teaching other systems and they mostly

went under the the rubric of

ajivaca they were ng anjivacas of some

sort or another

and some of them denied the existence of

karma saying that you can just

go up one bank of the ganges with this

rotating

razor knife thing and just like turn

every every living being you see

just heap of bloody flesh and then come

back along the other bank and do the

exact same thing just leaving just

blood and mayhem everywhere and you're

not creating any karma at all that you

know

it's gonna have no effect on you that's

one kind of nihilism

another kind of nihilism i think that or

that was called acuria vada or something

like that it's just uh denying that

there is karma denying that uh

actions have consequences and then

there's another kind of nihilism

called um uchida or annihilationist view

saying that when you're dead you're dead

you know that would be like a modern

scientific materialist would be that

kind of nihilist they might be both

kinds for all i know

um let's see can i give an overview of

the relationship between nihilism and

buddhism

well buddhism denied both of those

obviously buddhism

does very much emphasize the fact that

actions have consequences especially

inward actions like volitional actions

you know your mental states have

consequences

so even just a flash of anger is going

to have its consequences any kind of

negative thought

is going to have consequences

any kind of positive thought will have

consequences

and so the kind of mental states

required

to just butcher and slaughter every

living being you meet

i mean it's hardly likely you're going

to maintain like philosophical

detachment and

pure neutrality while doing such a thing

so that's going to have that's going to

have effects on your mind

and the state your mind is in is having

effects it's conditioning the reality

that you're generating for yourself

so obviously the buddha did not uh

endorse

um a denial of karma and with

uchida deity it's trickier the whole

annihilationist view

that was considered to be an extreme the

other extreme was called

eternalist view or sasata dt which says

that

after you die you just you have an

immortal soul that just

lasts forever and the buddha denied both

of these extremes and he

followed the middle path which is

dependent core rising

and yeah i'm not really going to get

into that but

the thing to remember is that when

you're dead you're dead is one extreme

and your soul is going to live forever

is the other extreme

and the buddha denied both and

part of that is is just that any kind of

view of reality is going to be

false that once you symbolize something

into thoughts

then it's already invalid it's just pure

some sorry

rubbish at that point no matter how

elegant it seems no matter how

convincing

it seems still once you've made a model

in your mind of what reality is supposed

to be like then um

yeah it's like drawing a picture of god

almighty i mean you

you just can't do it it's it's not even

an approximation

you can say well this is just a crude

sketch of what god almighty looks like

but no it's because

god almighty doesn't look like anything

just even assuming that there is a god

almighty

right just just playing i don't know

devil's advocate

will say that there is a god but i mean

there's no picture you could draw of him

that would be

even like a crude sketch i mean it just

doesn't work that way

and that's it's the same way with

reality in general you can say that just

like like spinoza says you know that

reality is god that's like

i'm pretty sure spinoza said that and uh

i say it too it's like

if there is a god then god is just

ultimate reality you know

so you just can't put it into words and

that's

why like earlier i was talking about how

early buddhism is just saying you know

you don't

don't cling to any point of view don't

cling to any philosophy you know

no belief system is is it you just let

go of all of that

and so you you let go of the idea when

you're dead you're dead and you let go

of the idea that you have an immortal

soul that's going to live forever

and um that's just call it good i mean

don't even bother with it i mean don't
bother with trying to figure out whether
you're enlightened or unenlightened or
anything like that just uh
just be here now essentially
and it's very hard to answer some of
these questions any any question that
relies on dependent colorizing
is is just uh it's not easy to answer
because even the buddha himself
was not very successful at answering it
because it's considered to be central to
buddhist philosophy but still almost
nobody understands it and he almost
uh didn't teach buddhism according to
the legend because he figured nobody
would understand it

so next question here also by mr breath

the agi vacha gotta records a

conversation between the buddha and an

individual

named vacha

the buddha asks vacha a question to the

effect of if a fire were to go out and

someone were to ask you whether the fire

went

north south east or west how would you

reply

and vacha replies that the question does

not apply and that an extinguished fire

can only be classified as

out so mr breath's question is

i am confused as to how an enlightened

being can be both

out and in that is in this world

existing

especially if to exist is to transgress

and we are told the buddha did exist for

many years following his out

of enlightenment can you please explain

the seeming contradiction

okay there's there's a number of things

i can say first of all

in uh ancient india fire wasn't viewed

the way

modern science used fire fire was a god

it was agni it was like the messenger of

the gods

and um it had like a like a latent

existence everywhere like like a piece

of wood that hasn't been burned yet has

like

the fire kind of existing in a formless

state inside that wood

and um so when a fire goes out it's not

necessarily just

just like ceasing to exist it's just

going back into like a formless state

so there is that um

but again it's like the whole question

of how can an enlightened being be both

in

and out um

oh it's

samsara and nirvana are not opposites

they are not mutually contradictory

it's sort of like um i wrote

a long time ago this uh this little

story about uh a

glass coca-cola bottle it's old story

when coca-cola bottles were still glass

and it's like well what is it is it

glass or is it a bottle

and um well i mean it's glass and it's a

bottle right

sure so um

it's not really a contradiction in terms

even though glass and bottle don't mean

the same thing

so it's like a glass is a bottle is not

a

so you've got this thing that's a and

not a simultaneously which should be

impossible according to the aristotelian

laws of thought

has to be a or not a it can't be both

but here it is and not a because it's

glass and it's a bottle

and bottle does not mean the same as

glass bottle

is not glass i mean you can have a

plastic bottle you can have a glass

ashtray

so they're they're not synonymous

they're i mean

it's a and not a at the same time and so

i um the buddha he's he's in

nibana so to speak and also in samsara

simultaneously

but samsara is like a state of the

illusion you know it's just

form you know it's not essence it's form

like like the coca-cola bottle it's like

the re the answer to the to the mystery

or the

the question glass is is like the

essence or substance

bottle is just the outward form of it

and you can

you could say the same thing that that

uh nirvana is the essence

of this universe and that some sora is

just uh

a kind of conditioned apparent outward

form

but they're not mutually contradictory i

mean they don't

they're not mutually exclusive

necessarily

if you're completely stuck in samsara

then yeah you don't you're just clueless

with regard to nirvana there is no no

one as far as you're concerned

but still just it's just pervading you

because it's you know the essence of

reality

is just pervading you anyway and uh with

regard to the buddha being both in and

out another another answer to that

question

is uh there's a different pseudo where

somebody is asking him the standard

um question that he refused to answer

and that is does an enlightened being

exist after death

and um generally he refused to answer

that question but in this one suta that

i remember he

even went so far as to say i mean you

can't really say that he exists

even before death whether he does or

does not exist you know the whole thing

is just uh

kind of paradoxical and again you cannot

describe reality

in words so it's just an act of futility

um so the seeming contradiction is a

seeming one but it's

not really a contradiction because

samsara and nirvana

are not opposites and are not

necessarily mutually exclusive

and uh of course some of the uh mahayana

buddhists

go so far as to say that they are the

same

so next question from mr breath here

what difference can it possibly make

whether or not one acts without

virtue in regard good mental verbal

and bodily conduct if there is no self

to benefit from such

actions that is if all impermanent

phenomena including thoughts

and these actions are related to no self

what possible difference can this make

i ask because this does of course raise

questions about the full path

well um you can say that there is no

self

but by the very same token there's no

action because there's no self to

perform that action

the whole thing is like a mutually

conditioning

illusion or delusional state

so um i mean you're like

in a dream and it's like so long as

you're in the dream

even though i mean the dream you isn't

real arguably and your actions in that

dream

aren't real arguably still i mean so

within the context of the dream i mean

you're still

your actions still have consequences and

uh you're going to suffer if you do

something

you know like you know hitting your head

hitting your your hand with a hammer or

something

in the dream i mean there's no real

hammer and your your dream hand isn't

your real hand but still i mean in the

dream

it's going to hurt and all that so um

so long as you're you're stuck in the

samsaric

uh plato's cave then i mean you do well

to try to uh be as low impact and cause

as little suffering for yourself and

others even though yourself and others

are just part of the

the dream the flickering shadows on the

wall so to speak

um let's see

and go back here what difference whether

or not one acts without

virtue and regard yeah i mean ultimately

it doesn't matter at all

i mean you know you go to hell i mean

what difference does it make

it might make a difference to you even

though um you know the whole thing is

is kind of an illusion but i mean if you

don't want the illusory you

in absolute misery then you should live

like an illusory good life

um until you can transcend the illusion

and then it doesn't matter anymore

and uh somehow i'm just feeling like uh

um i might not be answering these

questions some of these questions are so

subtle and there they keep going back to

the whole

idea of dependent core rising and uh you

know samsara not being ultimate reality

and so forth

so i'll just move on to the next

question also by dog brows

in the alaga dupa the buddha describes

how some individuals feared his teaching

because they live

they believe that their self would be

destroyed if they followed it

he describes this describes this as an

anxiety caused by the false belief in an

unchanging everlasting self all things

are subject to change

and taking any impermanent phenomena to

be

a self causes suffering nonetheless his

critics called him a nihilist who

believes the annihilation

and extermination of an existing being

the buddha's response was that he only

teaches

the cessation of suffering actually he

taught two things

suffering and the cessation of suffering

my question

it seems to me that you see his question

it seems to me

this is wanting your cake and eating it

contradictory

because if there is no fixed self to be

annihilated

there is only no self and

if there is only no self exactly what is

extinguished upon the event of

enlightenment

and this is just pretty much uh is

almost the same as the last question

that really there is no self to be

annihilated

but i mean ultimately there is i mean

there's no actions or anything it's like

the whole samsaric world is just this

mutually conditioning

virtual reality and so long as you're

stuck in it

you got to play by its rules

so um

what exactly is extinguished upon the

event of enlightenment

um in a sense you can say that really

it's like a paradox at the moment of

enlightenment nothing changes

nothing real changes all that changes or

what can all that can be said to change

would be the illusion

you know it might stay an illusion but

it's no longer delusion because you're

no longer believing it so it would be

just

a slight shift with regard to that it's

like the illusion

stops having any um power to perpetuate

itself

at least in in one case um

but again it's it's uh we're trying to

describe

um reality within the context of

unreality which just

doesn't work another question on this

topic also by dog breath

can it be said that buddhism is built

around this paradox

um not really i mean the paradox is

always there

and it pervades everything in a way it's

kind of a way of coping with it or

dealing with it

but that's at a very advanced level

mostly

what buddhism is built around is just

this

really ancient concept of purifying your

karma

purifying your mental states until

um you are free and buddhism was more

psychological

it didn't have such a mechanical like

like the jain

concept of just mechanically exhausting

all of your karma

until your your your jiva your soul

is completely unburdened and then can

just float up and merge in heaven

um buddhism it was more of a

psychological thing

so um you're you're purifying your mind

well enough

that a kind of intuitive liberating

insight can arise

and that's good enough and then that's

the that's the paradox that's when the

paradox happens because

ultimately nothing real changes

so yeah there is the paradox

enlightenment itself is the paradox but

uh

most of buddhism is just trying to get

to the get to that paradox

last question from uh dog breath and

this is kind of a naughty one

i have to say okay

mr breath asks is money hungry [__]

an appropriate criticism of tibetan

buddhism whose teachers seem out of

all sects of buddhism to be the most

interested in

selling dhamma further some of them even

tried to sell dhamma but instead use the

word donna

or or just generosity like a voluntary

gift

i have yet to find one tibetan buddhist

organization that doesn't sell dhamma

but

gives freely they all seem to have their

hands out

and cross my hands with silver style i

am told even the dalai lama

hides his rolex when dealing with the

common folk

how nice of him fact is

most of these tibetan teachers seem much

more infatuated with private jets

rebounds sunglasses and mercedes cars

than the teachings of the buddha

care to comment on this criticism

as i've said above a couple things i

said about one was that um

i really don't know all that much about

tibetan buddhism like um

yeah very little i've had very little

engagement with tibetan buddhism i've

read a few books

and that's about as far as it goes you

know i've known a few people who were

involved

in tibetan buddhism so i've heard a

little bit indirectly from them

so that's one that's one thing and uh

also like i said

earlier um i mean whenever you have

humans involved there's going to be

foolishness involved

yeah i mean you're just not going to

have a religion that turns everyone

into a fully enlightened saint that most

people are going to be fools most people

are just not

ripe for enlightenment even if they try

their hearts out even if they try as

hard as they can to become enlightened

even so most people fail and they just

stay

foolish and they've got their desires

and their cravings and their preferences

and all that

so i mean that's that's found in all

schools of buddhism like terra vada

buddhism

um the same thing happens like in in

some of the ims like the inside

meditation society

groups where they're calling you know

they're like

they're including donna like the the

volitional

generosity as part of the bill when you

go to the go to the retreat that kind of

a thing

um some and some of the these teravata

buddhist places too i mean any of the

elite buddhist places you know the

multi-million dollar luxury dharma

resorts

i mean they're going to be charging

through the nose some of them charge an

arm and a leg

and then they wonder why it's like

there's not very many people of color

attending these things let's see

um so yeah money hungry [__] yeah i

haven't seen it i can't really say

but uh that sort of thing you're gonna

find everywhere

um i don't know about shambhala

international

that was the group that um brian roo was

a member

of before they kicked him out um

and uh yeah he's not a rich man so i

assume they must not have charged very

much for him to be

involved up until they threw him out for

his political views uh

so yeah i can't really i can't really

say that uh

tibetan buddhism really stands out in

that regard because i've seen it pretty

much everywhere

so next question is from potila

and potila says you mentioned that it is

possible the bikuni order arose

after the death of the buddha you based

this on passages

teri gata in question like

in parentheses question mark in the text

where the lives of none

seemed copied from the lives of monks

do you think the bikini order started

during the buddha's lifetime or came

after if it came after

then did the idea of the four-fold

community

um come out of this development also can

you point out

a few texts you are referencing to make

this conclusion

okay this is kind of a complicated one

um first of all um

let's see is it possible that the bikini

order arose

after the death buddha i think it is

possible

because there's definitely some uh

ambivalence towards bikunis in the texts

i just get the impression that um

the bikini order was added almost as an

afterthought

and that a lot of the the terrors like

the senior monks just

didn't like the idea and so um it could

have arisen at the first council

maybe the buddha allowed it but even so

if he did

it was the bikunis were just kind of

like a tolerated group or sort of a

fringe group

i mean they're they're very rarely

mentioned in the texts

there is the terry gotta which is a

reference here

that is it's a book of inspired

verses supposedly composed by nuns like

enlightened nuns

although a lot of the scholars nowadays

um are of the opinion that most of them

are fake

that they're just cooked up after the

fact like they're they're composed

in like verse meters that didn't exist

until hundreds of years

after the time of the the non-supposed

existence

and um you know it could have just been

um

cooked up by by monks and then just

attributed to

to nuns some of that some of that almost

certainly happened

um but the reference to uh let's see

here uh basis on passages in the text

where the lives of none seem copied from

the lives of monks

that's mainly in the the vineya or the

the rules of monastic discipline

where the rules that are um

similar between monks and nuns which is

most of them they just

just took the the origin story for the

monks rules and just like

pasted the names of nuns onto it instead

in a lot of cases

and um there was the notorious group of

six monks

who were supposedly responsible for all

sorts of misbehavior that caused all

sorts of rules to be

formulated and for the nuns they've

gotten

very conveniently the group of six nuns

who do the same kind of stuff

and that really doesn't prove anything

because

the origin stories themselves are pretty

obviously cooked up after the fact in

many cases

um so yeah i don't have any

proof that the nuns or the bikuni order

um arose after the death of the buddha

but there's obviously some ambivalence

there was obviously some

serious reluctance to allow nuns to

exist in fact

according to the text the buddha himself

thought it was a really bad idea and had

to be persuaded by venerable ananda

to allow the order of numbs to exist and

even then he's like

okay but now you've done it and says

that buddhism will exist for only half

as long and then they had to

formulate much stricter rules for

nuns than for monks

partly because in india then

as is still the case now um in many

cases

um women were married when they were

children essentially or at least they

were betrothed

and they might even might not meet their

husband until their wedding day

you know they just like two strangers

it's like an arranged marriage

and women had very few rights in ancient

india

and so well they had very few rights

pretty much in ancient anywhere

and so a lot of them would try to be

ordained as nuns just to get out of a

bad

marriage or some such and they wouldn't

have a genuine

um spiritual calling you know they'd

just be like

trying to get away from it from a

bastard husband

and so they made the rules much stricter

to

prevent that from happening um so that

only the the women that were really

serious about becoming enlightened would

uh undertake it but

um also it could have just been some

monks that just

really didn't like the idea of nuns

because men and women together makes

trouble

especially if it's uh you know they're

trying to be celibate

and unattached you know so

if you're trying to be celibate and

completely unattached to anything

worldly than

men and women together it's just too

easy for nature to take its course in

such cases

so i mean the whole thing is very

complicated and i think arguments could

be

generated either way and so i've never

really said that uh for sure it was one

way or the other but

it does seem possible that uh like

bikunis were

allowed like at the first council after

the buddha had already passed away

um and then they just uh slapped

together

rules that were based on the monks rules

in most cases

and yeah

so see if it came after then did the

idea of the four-fold community

come out of this development so the

four-fold community would be

um monks nuns and then male lay people

and

female lay people i assume

uh yeah presumably that would be the

case if that were

if that's the way it happened i mean so

much of buddhism

of even orthodox theravada is a later

development

um anyone familiar with the history of

christianity knows that uh it just

mutated explosively during its first

hundred

years or so and something similar

happened with buddhism

so um yeah i mean that's just an open

question and uh

somebody could possibly investigate

and uh analyze the texts more thoroughly

than i have

uh with regard to answering that

question whether

just the historical buddha historically

really allowed

the order of nuns in if so why are they

mentioned so little

in the texts

okay next question excuse me

is from bpat427 when can we expect the

next

video with you and herroo and i thank

beatpat427 for answering or for

asking an easy question

these are really refreshing when i get

like a really easy question

um when can we expect the next video

with me and hero

and any time i mean it's um

yeah it's gonna happen you know

inshallah

uh brian and i are good friends and uh

i think he's lost a little interest in

interviewing me ever since i lost the

mystique of being a monk here i'm

wearing a black

wife beater um but

yeah i mean we're still good friends and

uh it's still

you know it's still on the table we're

gonna we're gonna do more shows in the

future but i can't say exactly when

next question from bpat427 have you ever

met anyone you consider to be a

sage well that's um

oh sage i mean there's there's no real

definition for sage

sage could just mean like a very wise

person

and um yeah i mean i've met some wise

old monks

probably my best guess as to like

a really advanced spiritually advanced

being that i have met

is uh i met shuyum in seattle once

and he was the teacher of the famous

uttai janiya who's

uh all the rage at uh i guess

and uh in near rangoon so

um he was a senior disciple of mahasi

sierra mahasi seattle

allegedly wanted him to be his successor

but shui lumen seattle just went his own

way and started his own

tradition or his own monastery and i met

him once it was in monstate

and he was probably about

i mean he had been at least in his 80s

then but i mean he was just

just really just bright i mean you could

just

you just get the vibe off of him he'd

just be looking right at you like he's

looking right through you

you know and just completely alert and

just sitting straight up and down

and he was with another monk who's about

the same age as him but the other monk

was almost

blind almost deaf he had to yell into

his ear and maybe he'd hear you and

maybe he didn't

but uh um i knew one of his disciples

and his disciple was confident that

shuiyu minsano could just read minds i

mean he would just look right through

you

so he was possibly the most spiritually

advanced monk that i'm aware of having

met

i've met quite a few that had a

reputation for being enlightened

but that doesn't necessarily mean very

much because even i have had a

reputation for being enlightened in

certain parts of

burma all you have to do is just be a

relatively serious monk and you can get

that reputation pretty easily

so yeah i he would be my best bet

shuegome in seattle

so next question also do you think

you've ever met a true sotapanna

and this is like a trick question

because

um i mean my interpretation of the four

stages of sainthood

um are very different from

from the orthodox so i'm a heretic with

regard to this

but personally i think the original

meaning of a soda panel or a stream

enterer

is um it would be like um

the the buddhist equivalent of a

born-again christian or just

even just uh like a new convert somebody

who's just become buddhism just started

living like a spiritual life you know

they're inspired and

you know they've they've set their life

on a path of dharma

that that would probably be the original

meaning of a soda panel they have

entered the stream of dharma but it's

not like they're guaranteed

never never to go to hell or they're

guaranteed of becoming enlightened with

an x number of lives or anything like

that

doesn't mean that they've necessarily

had a glimpse of nirvana unless

you know lots of people have done that

so

yeah with regard to a true sodopana um

as far as i'm concerned a true sonapana

would just be like a true sincere

buddhist

um but yeah yeah and with regard to like

the

traditional interpretation i think

that's largely mythology and so i really

um take what the grain of salt and he

claims regardless who makes them they

could be like

you know just the most famous monks but

if they're claiming you know that they

became a sort of panda

on this date and you know and it's like

yeah okay

maybe but um personally i think that the

original meaning of the soda panel was

just somebody who had uh

converted to buddhism and was like a

sincere practitioner

because like for example just uh give

you an example of why i think this

um there's an obscure rule a

that uh forbids relying too much

on a family of of sodapanas essentially

and um yeah it just kind of strikes me

as odd they'd have a rule like that

unless you don't want to rely too much

on a family of soda pons just because

they're like new converts and they just

tend to be just too generous in donating

stuff to monks and then that can

be a hardship for them so just out of

compassion for these new converts

um they made that rule that's that's my

interpretation i'm a heretic though so

uh

you can interpret it as you please and

finally

the last question the very last

question of this particular episode 13

is from chaplin and chaplin says

can you compare the buddhist concept of

karma with christian sin

and how does forgiveness come into play

with both

do bad deeds simply compound with bad

karma in buddhism to be worked out in a

future life

while christians believe in a system of

confession or perpetual forgiveness and

washing away of sin in this very life

okay yeah that's that is a good question

because it's like a fundamental

difference between buddhism and

certain other religions including

christianity that

um christian sin would correspond to

what in buddhism would be akusala kama

or akusula karma which is unwholesome

karma because good karma wouldn't be sin

but bad karma

would be the buddhist equivalent i

suppose

and uh how does forgiveness come into

play with both

well in christianity

then uh if you accept jesus as your

savior he

somehow washes away your sins or if

you're a catholic and you make

confession then

the priest tells you to do the hail

mary's or the

the what's the other one the the lord's

prayer

or something and that's supposed to

eliminate

your sin and in buddhism karma does not

eliminate except by just running its

course

so that is a major difference between

christianity and buddhism

is that in buddhism you can be forgiven

of your sins but that doesn't make your

karma go away

that whoever is forgiving you is doing

good karma of their own like new good

karma so let's say somebody wrongs you

from the buddhist point of view you

should forgive that person for wronging

you

that that is the best the best approach

to take

or at least you shouldn't get upset

about it you should retain some

equanimity

and um but that's pretty much the same

as forgiveness

you know it's kanti or forbearance so

um yeah so forgiveness is a thing in

both religions but

in buddhism the forgiveness is like good

karma it's like a virtuous

attitude to take towards others so if

other people are bad they're making bad

karma for themselves but at least

you can forgive them for that which uh

you know at least you're not harboring

hatred and resentment and that sort of

thing which is good for you

so it's it's really a good practice for

the person to forgive others but no

amount of forgiveness

is gonna i mean the buddha himself could

forgive you but that's not gonna make

your karma go away

you know so let's say you punch somebody

in the nose

they forgive you but i mean you still

got the bad karma for

punching punching that person in the

nose they just refrain from making more

bad karma through the resentment and

that like the

desire for revenge and the hatred and

all that

so yeah there's the karma has to work

itself out or

according to abidama um sometimes just

there's no opportunity you know

it's your karma to get hit by a train

and for some reason

um you just haven't don't go near train

tracks or something and it just

doesn't happen so eventually it just

kind of fades out

that can happen too in some cases but

um yeah so forgive i mean

the buddha is not a savior he doesn't uh

absolve us of our sins

um we just we have to to work it out on

our own or at least get as close to

working out on our own that uh

that there's just like the the insight

arises on its own

which is uh like a paradoxical state

enlightenment itself is like a

paradoxical state

so there there could be some um

validity to the idea of divine grace

because we can't

make ourselves being enlightenment

because making is karma and

enlightenment

is not the result of karma not the

direct result anyway

nirvana has no cause and no effect

because it's off the scales i keep

saying so yeah yeah that's the

difference is uh

christian sin god forgives you and it's

all wiped away

but uh in buddhism even if the buddha

himself even if thousands of buddhas all

forgive you i mean

you still got the karma because uh

you've made it and it's it's there

in your own personality or in your own

character or something and it's uh

it's got to run its course in accordance

with uh this

universal law

and so i think i answered that question

and so i think i answered all of the

questions

at least i hope i did some people might

still be scratching their head but

i did my best and uh if you have any

more questions

and i would not be surprised if you do

because people have been asking lots of

them

then you are very welcome to ask and i

will do my best to answer them

and as you may have noticed i do best

within the realm of like terra vada

buddhism and

early buddhism and meditation ethics

burma that kind of thing and

tibetan buddhism i don't really know all

that much about every once in a while

somebody will ask me

a question about something that i've

never even heard of before but um

i'll be honest and admit that i just

don't i don't know

but um for the most part with regard to

terrible buddhism

and what early buddhism was like i've

got a pretty good idea

or at least like a coherent one

and so you're welcome to ask if you have

questions to ask you can put them in the

comments below this video

or if you are subscribed on my subscribe

star channel then i'll put out

an announcement and you can put your

questions there

or if you are on the discord server

associated with the subscribe star

channel there is a question and answer

room

on the server where you can uh leave

your questions also

and uh hit me with your best shot and uh

people keep asking really good questions

so uh ask away and everyone be happy

hello and welcome to episode 14 of

question and answer i am your host panyo

basa alias david reynolds

and uh i am just amazed that we're

already up to 14 already people just

keep asking them questions and so i keep

answering them and 14 is a big number i

mean it's more than i can count on my

fingers

and before i start answering questions i

suppose i should give you a little

update on my situation i am

slightly excited to announce that

tomorrow

will be my first day at work i will be

working for money for gainful employment

from the first time in

30 years more than 30 years

because of the curse of adam

which says that we must earn our bread

by the sweat of our brow and i do like

bread i do like sandwiches and so

i'm gonna sweat and uh

and earn some of that

and consequently um

i will be a little busier than usual

especially on weekdays from like nine to

five

and i'll be less available

to you and your inquiries and so forth

those of you who make inquiries and try

to contact me

i'll be more available in the evenings

and the weekends when i will still be

doing my dharma stuff

and occasionally uh entertaining my

girlfriend as well

and so um as a result of that i think

i'll probably be going easy on myself

and

start posting blog stuff maybe once a

week like on weekends instead of every

five days like i've been doing for the

past few years although that does have a

precedent

in that my first blog was once a week so

it's not like i'm a total slacker

and so i'm going to be working for a

living

helping to pay the rent and so forth

getting the bread for the sandwiches

until the day comes the god's willing

when i will be able to be a full-time

dharma teacher

and any of you who would like to

participate in helping me to attain that

goal you're very welcome for example to

sign up on my subscribe start page or

to uh purchase one of the books that

i've written thus far which should be

down below in the comments under this uh

under this rectangle with me in it

so um yeah i think i'll just start

answering questions now and the first

one is from average dud

or uh maybe it's supposed to be average

dude but there's no silent e so average

dad says

i read some suto where buddha says that

for there to be conditioned reality

there needs to be an unconditioned one

is he referring to nirvana there

and

it is my understanding that he is

referring to a text

which is usually referred to as udana83

it's one of the most well-known

sutas or discourses in a text called the

udana

and i just happen to have it translated

here and it's short so i'll read the

whole thing

it's it's a famous one

so some of you may have heard it already

thus if i heard at one time the blessed

one was residing in sawati at jita's

grove in anata pindika's park and at

that time the blessed one instructed

exhorted encouraged and inspired the

monks with a talk on dhamma relating to

nibbana

the monks intent attentive having

applied their whole mind heedful

listened to the dhamma

and then the blessed one having realized

this on that occasion breathed forth

this inspired utterance

there is monks an unborn unbecome unmade

and unconditioned for if there were not

be coups or monks and unborn unbecome

unmade and unconditioned then there

would not be known

a way out of this that is born become

made and conditioned but since there is

an unborn unbecome unmade and

unconditioned there is to be known a way

out of this that is born become

made and conditioned

so this is a famous text partly because

it is used by people who want to

assert or prove

that nirvana is really a state

that it really is a kind of underlying

substrate or reality

that nibbana or nirvana isn't just

non-existence it isn't just extinction

although

there are some like

i'm pretty sure one of the most famous

western monks

um

in history western theravada buddhist

monks nyana vera who was uh

very intellectual

had no use for mysticism and still has

quite a few followers today even though

he died in 1965

his followers also being relatively

intellectual

um

yeah that didn't phase him and he still

insisted that nirvana was simply

extinction just

a kind of ceasing to seem to exist

but um

it can be said that the suta is

asserting that there is like an

underlying reality

that uh is called

nirvana or that there is at least a

state that can be attained that is

called nirvana

but in my opinion

[Music]

um

nirvana is off the scale i mean you just

cannot assert anything about it and have

that assertion be valid it's just

completely off the scale but it's very

difficult to talk about something that

is completely off the scale

i mean how do you talk about something

that really is just an unthinkable void

to the intellectual mind

i mean the intellect cannot grasp it it

cannot be grasped

so

it's just off the scale and uh just

saying that it does exist or it doesn't

exist or it does and doesn't exist or it

neither does nor doesn't exist it's all

just

invalid bungling and attempts to wrap

your head around something that you just

cannot grasp or wrap your head around

but um

in answer to average dud's question here

yes it is it is pretty obviously

referring to nibana or nirvana

and um

you may think that it's a proof that

nirvana is some sort of verifiable state

but as i say um

people can use

all sorts of

um intellectual

i don't know methods techniques tricks

quirks to prove pretty much anything and

so you've got people just still saying

well and yet

even though he says that still nirvana

is just a

non-existence or whatever or some people

make similar arguments about like an

eternal soul where you know the buddha

pretty obviously denies that that there

is one you know

all states conditioned or unconditioned

are not self

but

people people can just take scriptures

and um or poly texts and

use them how they please but yeah this

this is referring to nirvana so i'll

just move on to the next one

uh also by average dad

hey sir how extended is your breathing

in and out and is it different in

meditation

i try to have eight breaths a minute

well um usually in buddhist meditation

you are advised to breathe

naturally that you're not trying to

regulate your breath although if you get

into deeper meditative states your

breath tends to slow down and there are

some meditative techniques like the

sunlin method

and

also the tanjidone method in burma

where you speed up your breath and the

rationale for that is that if you speed

up your breathing just a little

then you're making a conscious effort to

breathe which keeps your attention on

the breath more easily this is referring

to meditation on the breath

but as for myself um yeah i just breathe

naturally this seems like the natural

thing to do for obvious reasons

although when i do walking meditation

um

it usually comes out to eight steps per

breath

it just naturally comes out that way

so

um that would be about as close to what

average dud is talking about here

um

yeah you should just breathe naturally

unless you're doing some meditation

technique that specifically requires you

to regulate your breath but in terravata

orthodox terra vada that's that's

uncommon

so i'll move on to the next question

which is by mahat ayur

and he says

i think it's a he

venerable i was wondering if inside the

buddha's teachings there is anything

that correlates with the concept of npcs

or non-playable characters

is it possible for a living being to not

also be a sentient being

thank you for your teachings

well this is an interesting question i i

like this question

and um i have been told by a german monk

years ago who lived at pa

in burma

that there are npcs or what could be

called npcs that there are like

beings moving around and doing things

that really do not have like

um

like karmic consciousness involved

and um the examples that he gave were

the demons in hell and also

unfortunately the celestial nymphs in

the heaven realms

that um

like the demons in hell i used to wonder

about that it's like where do they fit

on the scheme of things of the 31 planes

of existence

um

i mean

you maybe you could say that they were

denizens of hell that just sort of uh

you know sort of like the trustees in a

prison or something or or maybe they're

are like asuras or kind of demonic

entities that have jobs in hell

torturing beings there but i was told

and i assume this is from the

commentaries i don't think uh it's in

any suta

that

these beings are just generated by the

karma of the beings there that they're a

kind of

um

manifested illusion you know they're

just there um as a result of the karma

of the beings that um you know it's like

they're karma to be punished in hell or

tortured or tormented or whatever and so

these beings just manifest and um

there's no real mind there

um i've been told the celestial nymphs

in heaven are that way although i've

also been told by a nice burmese lady

that uh the celestial nymphs in the

heaven realms

are mostly virtuous burmese women who

are rewarded for their lifetime of

virtue by going up into heaven and

participating in celestial orgies

so yeah this is just commentarial though

but it is interesting

and um to some degree i would even say

something like an insect

um maybe that could be

what do you see what he calls here uh a

living being that is not also a sentient

being

um

insects just based on my knowledge of

biology they don't really feel pain i

doubt that they have any

um

i mean they don't really have an ego i

mean i don't know if they have any kind
of subjective experience they're like
little robots you know a fly will fly
away from your hand if you're trying to
swat it in non-buddhist fashion but it's
it's pretty much like the automatic
doors at the grocery store they just you
know it's just stimulus response they're
just doing what is naturally what
they're programmed to do
but um that's that's getting into heresy
that's that's not orthodox buddhism
um i'm i'm not saying that they're not
conscious i'm just saying that i'm i'm
skeptical as to whether they have
perceptions and volitions that it's uh
it might just be a kind of

uh primordial rudimentary kind of

consciousness there

um sort of like a plant

but uh yeah as getting back to mahat

ayur's question uh yeah there are what

are essentially npcs but i haven't heard

of them being

um at the human level it's it's possible

i mean anything's possible i suppose and

uh it seems like there's lots of them

walking around on the sidewalks

but um

with just getting to orthodox terrible

buddhism according to the commentarial

tradition anyway um yeah it's like the

demons in hell especially um

are supposed to be this way

so i'll just move on to the next

question and this one is from hey it's

tigg

and hey it's tigg says pano basa can you

talk about your crack house experience

so i think it was the last

q a video or it was a recent video

anyway where um i was just talking about

how there are essentially hell realms

just in this world i mean you don't have

to die and go to hell to find yourself

in hell you can go to hellish realms

um you know maybe not quite as extreme

as the the boiling pitch and the

you know the the demons with axes and

stuff but um still i mean there are

hellish and relatively heavenly realms

just at the human level um

and my crack house experience i

mentioned that i've been in experiences

like that before i was a monk

and i wasn't a crackhead or anything i

just happened to be in the wrong place

at the wrong time a few times

and um

the crack the crack house experience

isn't a very good one so i'll just i'll

just give you a brief description of

that and uh then tell you uh maybe a

better

example of like a hell realm

uh a human hell realm that i experience

and then we'll just move on but um yeah

i mean i didn't even go inside the crack

house i was just outside of it and i was

in seattle

and um for reasons that i don't remember

i was walking down first avenue which is

uh not only where pike place market is

but it's also like the really seedy part

of town where like the sex places and

the prostitutes and the drug dealers and

stuff are and there was this black guy

named walter or at least that's what he

said his name was who uh tried to sell

me some thai stick he called it

and uh

it was i mean it was it was worthless

stuff it was pretty obviously he was

just um you know doing whatever he could

selling some kind of worthless crap just

to make money to buy drugs and he was uh

pretty strung out already

and um for some reason i mean i'm really

a trusting person as

just as a general rule

and um

so i mean i actually gave him a ride

somewhere he wanted a ride and it was it

was to this crack house i didn't know

where he wanted to go but that's where

it wound up being

and um

he stole something out of my truck um

you can get into that but uh yeah he

actually

ripped something off out of my truck and

then went inside

um to to get some drugs i suppose and

i'm just kind of dumbly just sitting

outside waiting for him until finally i

think it was like the girlfriend of the

the drug dealer who lived there came out

and uh

very nicely just advised me that the guy

was uh i mean he's just high and he's

not coming back out for a long time so i

might as well just be on my way

you know she was um

i mean she didn't have to come out and

explain things to me but um

yeah

but um i mean that that wasn't a very

good experience i mean it's not a very

good example because i didn't even go

inside i mean i have seen people

shooting out before which it really bugs

me i don't like shots i had to leave the

room when i saw that happen

but um one time

um

i mean this one kind of sticks with me i

had just started working

as a fisheries biologist

uh stationed mainly in astoria oregon

and there was a hotel there and my my

colleague my partner

uh wanted to find a cheap place to stay

in astoria

and so we both went there to this

to this hotel called i think it was

called the waldorf astoria which is

supposed to be like a famous hotel but

this place was just an absolute dive

and we walk in and um i think it was

like the wife of the manager

was frying food and i mean the whole the

whole place just

reeked of just fried food like years

worth of fried food

and she had no bridge to her nose which

i think was probably

at least i've read that that couldn't be

like

indicative of a relatively advanced

stage of syphilis

and um the guys showed us this room

and i mean it was just a scary room just

the vibe i mean there's

who knows what kind of atrocities had

gone on in that room it was mainly just

like this dirty

mattress in a dirty room with dirty

walls and

and

i mean it was

just the vibe of it was was just really

creepy to me

and um

he um my partner was informed that uh

you know it was like a hundred dollars a

month but if he paid cash it was it was

like 60 or something and um

yeah i just strongly advised him that uh

yeah it would not be a good idea to live

in a place like that

um you know it's just kind of a flop

house for drug addicts and so forth

and uh just the whole vibe was just a

really creepy vibe i would have

personally preferred living under a

bridge than than staying in a place like

that

although i guess people can get used to

anything so i'm sorry i don't really

have good examples of of crack houses

but

that's that was what i was thinking of

when i mentioned it in the in a previous

video

so we'll just move on to

the next question which is from sam

and sam asks

what are the different ways to process

emotion through mediations i assume he

means meditations that's it's such a

common typo people are always typing

mediation when they when they want to

say meditation

so yeah i'll just back up and read it

again and i'll we'll just assume there's

meditations in both places here

what are the different ways to process

emotion through meditations what are the

different ways to release tensions that
come up during meditations well the
technique is essentially the same
it's essentially you just note it and
let it go especially if you're doing
mindfulness meditation which is what
most people in the west do
um practicing somehow ta
is
more difficult for compulsively thinking
westerners living busy lives so a kind
of mindfulness meditation or sati batana
or so-called insight or vipassana
tends to work better for laypeople
in the west
and the technique of processing emotion
or releasing tensions that come up is

you just objectively note it

and then you just let it go and if it

doesn't go away i mean if it's something

that's really persisting

you know some sort of irritation or

tenseness or whatever you just keep

noting it and it's you're just observing

it

the way like an ichthyologist would

observe a dead fish on a table

um

and and that in itself is a good way of

processing emotions because you are

detaching from the emotion it's like

anything that you observe isn't you if

you are anything at all you are the one

doing the observing and not the thing

being observed so if you observe your

hand is you observing your hand the hand

isn't you

um if you're observing your car you know

the car isn't you it's just you

observing the car and it's the same way

with mental states if if like

like worry arises

if you are observing the worry then that

worry isn't you anymore it might become

like a part of your ego or something if

you're not mindful

and then you're you're kind of lost in

it you know you just it can just sweep

you away but if you're mindfully

observing it

then it's not you it's just you

observing this mental state that is

arising

and when you do that when you're just

mindfully observing objectively your own

mental states

um especially emotions because your

thoughts

it's my experience anyway that you can't

really observe a thought from start to

finish because maybe it's the same part

of the brain that notes and thinks

that just observing the thought will

just cause it to poof out of existence

but with regard to feelings you know

like emotions like sam here is asking

about then you can just sit there and

observe that

and it's not you you are detached from

that and you're taking away the karmic

power of it at least you're very much

reducing the karmic power of it like

let's say it's irritation let's say

something is arising you've got like a

yapping dog outside

and it's it's irritating you

so you observe

like the yapping as as just the sound

as well as you are able and the

irritation that arises you know if

you're not completely just

noting it as sound i mean if some of it

is getting through enough that it's

irritating you then you can note the

irritation and then the irritation isn't

you and then

even though it's a rising through force

of habit which is a manifestation of

karma um still you are weakening that

karma and so it's less likely to keep

happening because you have made a

disconnect

that you know it's not

you being irritated it's not i'm

irritated it's just irritation is

arising and that can be used for fear or

anger or or hate or jealousy or greed or

anything really

it's more difficult with the pleasant

emotions because you're naturally want

to kind of wallow in those the the the

unpleasant emotions unless you're really

into

being a hothead or something

um

they tend to be easier because you

as a general rule you just naturally

don't like the negative emotions like

worry or fear so it's easier to kind of

detach from those

or or irritation like i just mentioned

just observe it mindfully and if if

you're

somewhat of a beginner then you can just

label it you know like if it's worry you

just you can just note it as worrying

worrying worrying um just to keep your
mind from wandering or to keep from just
getting lost in it
and uh with regard to releasing the
tensions um it's pretty much the same
thing and you just observe the tension
how does the tension feel
you know just observe it objectively
experience it objectively don't identify
with it
just note it
and uh it'll run its course because
you're no longer reinforcing it you're
no longer feeding it you know it's like
a flame that you've stopped feeding and
eventually the fuel will run out and

then it will just die out

so now i think is a good enough answer i

hope that is a good enough answer to sam

and so i move on to shawarma dharma's

questions

good old shwarma dharma

and uh his first question is

some say buddhism leads to nihilism

specifically the belief that life is

illusory and therefore meaningless

others see it as essentially

existentialist as in the kirk

guardian idea that each individual gives

meaning to life and lives it

authentically what's your take

well

um there's

since he specifically asked for my take

i suppose i should just take the

heretical route and just give you my own

take rather than what orthodox dogma

says

um

but i suppose i should i should start

with orthodox dogma just out of uh

faithfulness to buddhism so um

abhi dhamma which is orthodox says that

mind and matter are ultimately real so

in a way orthodox tiravada is rather

materialistic

and

life consequently i mean the life force

or uh

i think it's jiwita or something like

that um

i mean it's it's like an ultimately real

dhamma according to uh tirabata buddhism

so um

yeah at least life itself or or the

phenomena of life even though individual

beings can't really be said to exist as

intrinsically real entities nevertheless

the

the dhammas or the the ultimate

realities which are

in terravata buddhism

manifest in tiny particulate form like

subatomic particles just flashing in

in and out of existence at a rate of

like a trillion times per second

those are real according to taravana

but the meanings that you apply to those

are ultimately illusory

so but with regard to my with regard to

my own take um

ultimate reality is is off the scale as

i've already said

so um yeah i see uh meaning as delusion

meaning and delusion are ultimately

synonymous as far as i'm concerned

um meaning

is just like a significance that you

attribute to something else you know

it's sort of like a label or like an

interpretation that you slap onto

something

and that is not the reality that's just

like the interpretation of the reality

so meaning is just an interpretation of

reality and not the reality itself

so yeah i would have to say that life

is

deeply illusory and meaningless

sorry sorry to disappoint you guys but

uh

yeah but then again the ultimate reality

is just infinitely beyond our experience

and i don't mean just infinitely

you know beyond our reach i mean it's

it's like infinitely

more

um

just like all-encompassing i mean it's

just like

infinity

so

it's it's better than meaning i mean

reality is better than some petty little

meaning that you slap onto something i'm

not i'm not saying that it's

um

you know just nothing

but i think we're going to get back to

that whole idea of of nothingness a

little a little later on

um

so let's see i'm not sure if i'm not

even answering this question others see

it as essentially existentialist as in

the kierkegaardian idea that each

individual gives meaning to life and

living it authentically

what's your take yeah i'm not sure

exactly what living authentically

according to kierkegaard would be

um he wasn't existentialist so i assume

that means you know you're just

applying your own meanings to things

um which would be like a samsaric

relative conventional kind of

authenticity

but sorry to disappoint you shwarma

dharma but

really

um reality ultimate reality is just off

the scale you can't talk about it

because once you talk about it you're

just talking about

meanings that are just these petty

little interpretations slapped onto the

reality or attempting to slap onto the

reality and failing

so if you want to really know the

reality you've got to

practice or maybe you'll just be blessed

by uh some profound experience as a

result of almost dying or something

um

sometimes i i've said in the past that

the closest the average person comes to

enlightenment is when he's in the middle

of a sneeze because you're wide awake

and you're not thinking anything

so next time you sneeze uh

just observe yourself carefully observe

your mind and maybe uh you'll get some

insight into uh

nihilism or its uh alternatives

so i'll go on to the next question from

shawarma dharma

and he says when thinking about

expanding theravada in the west how do

you see it integrating into the lives of

the rank and file american or to put it

another way

why would your local firefighter or

policeman or bus driver take up a lay

buddhist life

one more angle on the same question it

seems unlikely that middle class

american women are going to start baking

cookies and bringing them to the local

sangha to feed the monks every morning

as a cultural norm

what is the enticement for disaffected

christians not of the soy latte drinking

variety to choose an american terra vata

path

well that's a good question

i don't think we should all be holding

our breath for this to happen but it is

a good question

and

i think um

one good way to answer the question or

to start answering it would be to give

an example of a person i know

who may as well remain nameless

but um he started off working

as like uh what is it an emt like like

in an ambulance crew

and he was seeing just horrible things

you know people that

you know had had like got wrecked their

cars and flown through the windshields

and landed 50 feet away and they're just

like this breathing bloody mass that

it's just you're just amazed that

they're even still breathing

and

he saw so much horrible stuff that he

was just really getting stressed out and

freaked out

and um it it inspired him to start

meditating maybe somebody advised him

you know maybe you ought to try some

meditation to help cope with this like i

was saying earlier i mean you can

observe mental states arising and by

noting them by being mindful of them

they don't take you over it gives you

some resistance and also some

independence and it strengthens your

spirit against just being swept off your

feet by uh these uh

intense and sometimes very unpleasant

feelings

so um something like that i mean uh with

especially regard to the firefighter and

the policeman

um it's it's a way of strength and

you're strengthening your mind it's sort

of like ancient stoicism where it's

teaching you to uh

uh have some

um like armor or i mean it's not even

really armor it's just making you

invulnerable

or relatively more

invulnerable to really stressful

traumatic experiences

so and

um

that in itself is a good reason for

practicing theravada buddhist

mindfulness at least even if you're not

adopting the entire system which most

westerners don't do

at least the meditation techniques and

the mindfulness techniques

they are conducive to

a certain amount of stoic equanimity

like philosophical detachment um

less

less desire less worry less stress less

fear less anger less irritation and more

equanimity and contentment fewness of

desires which results in in less

suffering less unhappiness and that in

itself is a pretty damn good reason to

practice something if it makes you

happier in the long run which buddhism

really does if you practice it

more or less sincerely and incorrectly

um

yeah i mean it it has benefits that you

can see in in this very life you don't

have to wait until after you're dead to

see if you're saved or not

which is getting to a little later part

of the question the disaffected

christians part

um

yeah buddhism really fits the western

mind

better than christianity does at least

for

more or less objective

um philosophically minded people like

like intelligent objective reasonable

people

um you have less of a narrative that you

have to believe in like with

christianity you have to believe what

you can't really know you can't prove it

one way or the other that

jesus died for our sins he's the only

begotten son of god

and so forth

um i mean you pretty much have to

believe that to be a christian i don't

know if you can really

be a good christian and maybe there are

some sects that can manage it where

um you just consider jesus to have been

just a wise teacher like like the buddha

was or so many others and not

the son of god who

is like an atonement for our sins that

kind of a thing

um but with buddhism

the important stuff you can verify it

something like reincarnation maybe you

can't verify it but that's not really

necessary because like the meditation

techniques i've already told you of like

detaching from your your your feelings

and so forth you know just by through

mindful observation

um

yeah it strengthens your mind it gives

you self-discipline gives you less

unhappiness in life

um even just uh keeping five precepts or

just living like a moral life um that

obviously can can make you happier too

although even christianity has has some

of that obviously

so

yeah the main enticements

few westerners

it really is just verifiably conducive

to greater peace of mind greater

self-control less suffering less

you know less worry and stress and so

forth

and uh it's reasonable it makes sense

you know it requires no unquestioning

faith and a narrative that you can't

really prove one way or the other

so

yeah that would be my answer to that so

i'll just

move on to the next and like i say i

mean it would be good if

more people took buddhism seriously

especially terra vada buddhism or just

like some philosophical form of buddhism

you know it would be beneficial to the

society although

again

i'm not really holding my breath it

would be nice though

so the next question is from potila

and potila says

in the last q a you mentioned that being

is an extreme and non-being is an

extreme do you mean these as states of

reality or are you talking about them

solely as concepts

do you mean non-being is the same as

nothingness

if so how can something which never

existed or had the comma to come into

existence be an

extreme um

in a way this is kind of a trick

question i'll get to the middle part

here um the middle it's actually like

three questions here um the middle one

is do you

mean non-being is the same as

nothingness yeah yeah i would say that

non-being would be nothingness

um

so let's get to the first part here do

you mean these as states of reality or

are you talking about them solely as

concepts and i just

do not differentiate between the two as

i've already said reality

is just off the scale

reality is

i mean from an intellectual point of

view is an unthinkable void

you know it's formless

so um

states

of reality or states

really are

just concepts you know it's a mental

state any kind of state is ultimately a

mental state because you get rid of the

mental states and all you've got left is

just this unthinkable void you don't

have states without a perceiving mind to

perceive them as states

so um

yeah a lot of a lot of people that um

they don't

have much

affinity with mysticism maybe they don't

have a lot of experience with mysticism

or they just are really

keen on intellectual

academic kind of understanding

understanding of things

um

yeah it's it's it's harder to uh to

grasp this or it's it's harder to just

cope with the idea that just reality

cannot be grasped the present moment

cannot be grasped you can't hold on to

it it's just

in flux

and furthermore

once once you've grasped something

you've just turned it into a concept

which isn't reality it's just an attempt

to stick some kind of interpretation

onto reality

um so then the last ques the last part

of this question um i don't fully

understand see if so how can something

which never existed or had the comma to

come into existence be an extreme

um

if you're going with dualism i mean

you've got it's sort of like

aristotelian thought everything has to

be a or not a consequently everything

has to exist or not exist and those from

the buddhist point of view are extremes

yes is an extreme nose and extreme you

know just the binary

off and on or

or or whatever those are like the two

extremes and buddhism teaches the way by

the middle which is dependent cold

rising and

thank you

everybody for not asking about that one

on this episode

because uh even the buddha really could

not explain it very well because you

have to be comfortable with unthinkable

void to some degree

just trying to lock everything down into

some systematic explanation

i mean it may be very elegant and very

self-consistent very logical and all

that but it's not reality i mean it's

it's uh like conventional reality but

it's not ultimate reality because

ultimate reality is just completely off

the scale it's completely beyond the

symbolic thoughts the country conjured

up by your

mind um

so let's see

i'm just checking to make sure i

answered the question before moving on

to the next one also by potila uh you

mentioned that being is an extreme and

non-being is an extreme yeah

do you mean these estates agree okay

okay so i think i answered that one

so yes

um

maybe i should uh

uh mention hegel i mean i've

i've

i've got almost no use for hegel but

there's one teaching one thing that

hegel said that really stuck with me and

i have incorporated that into my own

understanding my own intellectual

understanding of of conventional reality

and that's he starts his logic with the

very first um

what is it uh the dialectic the first uh

you know thesis

um

antithesis and then synthesis you know

it's like the hegelian dialectic starts

with the thesis you know you start with

this idea and then you have the

antithesis that kind of negates that

idea and then you have to have a

synthesis which then

kind of reconciles them and then that

synthesis becomes the next thesis which

then has its own antithesis and on and

on and on until you wind up with uh

um

like

german like late 18th century or early

19th century german

culture being like the uh

like the the culmination of the whole

thing

but we didn't get into that but his his

first thesis was just pure being

which oh here is is just like uh you

know it's like an extreme and then his

antithesis is pure non-being which

according to him and this is the one

thing that i really like this is the one

thing hegel said that i can really

accept is that pure being and pure

non-being both of them are so devoid of

any determinate content that they just

merge together they're indistinguishable

and in hegel's logic he just took it for

granted after after going through the

first part of the dialectic that pure

being and pure non-being even though

they are presumably opposites they are

just indistinguishable and the same they

are identical

so there's that also as a kind of kicker

um we might get back to that because it

really is it's uh

to me it's

if somebody can prove to me that that is

wrong

um yeah that would be interesting

so i'll just move on to the next

question also by potila

if there are so many monks breaking the

vineyard which is the rules of monastic

display

for example

handling money

not wearing robes correctly etc

then what is the point of ordaining

you mentioned a few experiences of older

novices who pretty much kept living as a

layperson do they think of ordination

and wearing robes to be magical rituals

to get good karma or that if they break

a few

then they can keep a few too to get

merit it seems like it's an attachment

to rights and rituals at its worst well

i'll answer the last part first

especially with regard to burma which is

where i mostly lived as a monk

it's been more than 20 years there and

yeah the burmese tend to be spiritual

materialists they consider a monk to be

a superhuman being the word for human

being is not used for monks

um like a human being is lu and a monk

is a punji which i mean just

it's not the same you don't you do not

refer to a monk as a human being and so

they have this idea that um

you just

spontaneously automatically are making

great merit just from wearing robes just

from going through the ordination

ceremony you've become like a superhuman

being just i mean you don't even have to

do anything you can just sit there

so

yeah there is there is that but i'll get

back to the first part of the question

here um if there's so many monks

breaking the rules then what is the

point of ordaining

well

there's different ways of answering that

first there's just the cultural answer

that um it has just become the tradition

in pretty much all buddhist countries

that some rules you follow and some

rules you don't and they make up new

rules even that you have to follow

um just in accordance with the tradition

of the country

and um so

there are a lot of monks in burma who

um

culturally are strictly practicing even

though they're breaking all kinds of

obscure veneer rules like for example

they may not touch money but they're

telling the monastery attendant what to

do with the money which is exactly the

same

violation of the rules i mean amongst

not even allowed to tell anybody what to

do with money

so what is the point of ordaining

uh

well

it's better to do something imperfectly

than not to do it at all in in many

cases i assume that would be a good way

of putting it

um i mean

anybody who could be a perfect monk

i mean you're pretty much already a

saint and you don't really need to

ordain in the first place

so

um

yeah there's breaking the rules is is

part of the rules it's like making the

confession like if you break a rule then

there's other rules

telling you how to how to act after

you've broken a rule you know there's

certain rituals and confessions and and

that sort of thing which are also part

of the rules so it's just built into the

system

that uh

rules are going to be broken and some

rules i mean you just can't help but

break them it's it's very difficult not

just not to break rules sometimes you

can break rules accidentally

um

like it's against the rules to drink

alcohol for a monk even if you drink it

accidentally maybe you just uh take a

drink of something that has started to

ferment and boom you just drank some

wine so you have to confess that or i

there were a few times when people would

give me some kind of herbal medicine and

they assured me oh it's not alcoholic

and then you take a spoonful of the

stuff and it's like 100 proof

um then you just broke the rule

so then you you have to confess that and

uh so breaking the rules uh is just

built in it's like if you break the

rules then it's it's not like a vow you

know it's not like your ex communicate

or anything except for the like the most

important rules uh you can get

excommunicated for that

but uh for the most part you you break a

rule and then

um you just make confession and that

just sort of magically erases it at

least as an ecclesiastical offense you

still have the karma

but um

yeah a lot of burmese monks getting back

to the spiritual materialism they just

break rules wantonly and then they just

think that you just make the confession

that like the the sacred magical blah

blah blah

and uh it just makes it poof out of

existence but

shamelessly breaking the rules i mean it

is making karma

so um you don't you don't make the karma

disappear even if you have uh

um

you've done uh

what is it

i can't remember what it's called i'm

having a mental block but i mean you

you've essentially uh resolved the

violation of the rule you've you press

reset by making confession

so let's see have i answered all of this

here

uh

yeah i think i've answered all that so i

mean

basically the answer that if you know if

so many monks are breaking the rules

then what is the point of ordaining

is you know you do the best you can

and uh even if you do something

imperfectly you know you go bowling you

have to bowl 300 i mean you say well i

mean i didn't get a strike every time

what's the point of doing it

um

yeah so you do the best you can and uh

um you know it's just kind of built into

the system the assumption is there that

you're not just you're not going to be

perfect at it anyway although it is true

and this is something that was really an

influence for me in in

like dropping out of the the biku sangha

is um

i mean if you're just

not really willing to follow the rules

if you're not even going to try or like

if you're just living in a culture like

in america where it's damn near

impossible to follow the rules correctly

then

according to my own

view my own personality um yeah i mean

if i'm not even going to be following

the rules like if it's just too damn

difficult not to handle money that was

something i decided many many years ago

if it's like if handling money just

becomes necessary then i'd better just

drop out rather than be uh like

essentially a shameless monk that can't

even confess the offense because like

something like handling money you can't

even confess it without getting rid of

the money first and most monks that

handle money they're not going to get

rid of all their money just so they can

confess the sin or the uh the offense

so

yeah i just got to the point personally

where uh

um i just wasn't in a position

and uh wasn't really inspired to follow

the rules strictly anymore and so i just

felt

um that it would have more integrity

just

um to be a relatively good lay person

than like a sloppy monk

but there are monks that um

like a monk living in say alaska

or northern canada where it gets so cold

i mean you've got to break the rules by

wearing the parka and all that and

all the socks and shoes and things that

strictly speaking are against the rules

it may be in the winter time that it's

never

i mean if you're far enough north then

uh

um

i mean it just may be dark all the time

which would mean that you're not allowed

to eat because you're only allowed to

eat between sunrise and noon

so you have to break that one in cases

like that you know maybe but um

it's it's just it's an individual call

each each individual has to make his own

decisions about what is appropriate for

him

or her

and so uh

i think i'll just move on to the next

one

but i mean the point of that is you just

do the best you can it's better to do

something imperfectly than not to do it

at all so long as you consider it to be

worthwhile and beneficial as long as

you're getting benefit from it so long

as you're making progress or whatever

so the next question or group of

questions is from somebody

whose name is all in japanese letters

but

i availed myself of google translate and

it turns out the person's name is

yuichiro

or yoo-chan

and yuichiro i think i think that's what

the name is according to google

translate

asks

when doing deadlifts and such i usually

slap myself and get hyped up for the

lift it could be considered anger is

this a bad state of mind if it's not

directed at anyone or harming anyone

except the bar

additionally extreme emotions like anger

trigger a physiological response which

causes an adrenaline rush and makes you

physically stronger a fact used by many

athletes would it be possible for

athletes warriors etc to enter this

state of mind for increased performance

then dissociate

with it so that your mind is calm while

your body is raging and would this be a

better mental state or as an athlete or

warrior should you just suck it up and

accept that doing your duties will come

with bad karma

well

answering the last part first as i seem

to be doing

quite a lot sort of like a witch saying

is prayers

um

i'll answer this last part uh as an

athlete or warrior should you just suck

it up and accept that doing your duties

will come with bad karma well of course

you're gonna have to do that i mean you

can do both but uh i mean you should

never

reject the idea of karma i mean what

you're going to do is making karma so

long as you've got volitions involved in

the action

as long as you've got any kind of motive

or motivation

then you're making karma

um

so yeah it could be both but we'll get

up to the top of the question here

with regard to

slapping yourself and getting hyped up

before lifting weights

um

yeah i

maybe there's some really subtle

um

bad karma quote unquote involved in that

but even believing that you exist is is

like subtle bad karma you know because

of no self and all that

um

so i mean anything you do is going to

have at least a little bit of bad karma

mixed in sorry to say um

so

yeah i've done similar things um like

mainly as a way of overcoming sleepiness

as a monk like i was doing intensive

practice and i'm starting to get sleepy

um you know there's there's various ways

you know get up walk around that kind of

a thing get yourself worked up a little

bit i won't give all the details because

people haven't really asked about it but

um

yeah there are ways of getting yourself

stirred up a bit which um you know you

can't have positive results

um so i have done that personally

um

getting yourself

hyped up on an adrenaline rush

uh makes you stronger

um

yeah um

this is kind of a subtle question

involving relatively subtle mental

states

but um some people like they go for

thrill sports like motorcycle racing or

rock climbing because it

uh requires them to be mindful it

requires a heightened state of awareness

which is good

like a heightened state of awareness

you're closer to to reality or

enlightenment

and um

if you're racing a motorcycle or rock

climbing or or whatever you know

whatever it is or like

uh you know like the samurai zen masters

who are sword fighting

all it takes is just one split second of

unmindfulness in your dead

so it's it's a way of enforcing

heightened states of awareness which are

actually pleasant i mean it's

um you know it's good it makes you feel

more alive more conscious more

more real

and um

it seems like uh some of the things that

uh yuichiro is talking about here could

i mean that could be applicable to that

also

um

i mean if you can

uh cultivate the expanded consciousness

without having to get the adrenaline

rush then so much the better but uh

better heightened consciousness with

adrenaline than uh stupor without

adrenaline

so

it could be uh

uh you know you're just

willingly taking some very subtle

unskillful karma in order to get a

greater benefit overall

but uh yeah this is something i haven't

really thought about much so

that's that's my answer

i think

yeah i don't think it's necessarily i

mean just to be hyped up just to be

having an adrenaline rush is not

necessarily unskillful or bad karma

um you know the adrenaline rushes is

largely a physical state

and um

whether you're having positive car

making positive karma or negative karma

depends on your volitions

and um yeah i don't think an adrenaline

rush is the same as anger i mean it can

be

positive or negative

it's just like a

kind of a greater state of excitation or

something which i mean you could get

lost in that and uh get all excited and

just be wallowing in samsara

wallowing in the matrix or whatever but

maybe you have to be a little more

careful under those circumstances

but i don't think it's necessarily a bad

thing so i'll just move on to you each

hero's next question here

um i mostly found out about buddhism

through jazz because a lot of my fellow

musicians said meditation and

mindfulness helped them play better i

agree

the point of improvised music is to be

in the moment and just act without

conscious thought i've experienced

moments in music where it feels like i

transcend my ego and become one with the

band all our minds resonate on the same

frequency so to speak and music just

comes out

what do you think is going on here from

a buddhist perspective our minds

actually connecting for example and

since this state of mind is more like a

trance than mindfulness is it a positive

mental state

well i've had similar

um experiences to this like um back in

the day when i was giving dumb talks to

live audiences sometimes you just get

into the groove it's like the audience

is resonating with what you're saying

and you just get into this flow of this

spontaneous flow where i don't know what

i'm going to be saying any more than

they do you know i can be just as

surprised by the words coming out of my

mouth as anybody else it's just this

flow where it's like the karma of the

audience is eliciting the words coming

out of my mouth

and um i mean you can you can have sort

of a group mind even like two people who

love each other like intimate moments or

even like a boy and his dog i've had

like really empathic experiences with

with a dog before

so this sort of thing happens

and

i really do think that it is a kind of

group mind is sort of a merging of

consciousness even though orthodox

theravada would say that is impossible

i'm pretty sure orthodox theravada would

deny

the the possibility of that but

i mean it seems to me that that's what's

going on it's you're you're reaching a

kind of deeper level of consciousness

where the minds are connected and

there's sort of a flow in between the

the different the different minds so

that there is to some degree a group

mind going on

and

this can be good or bad i mean like like

mass hysteria like a mob you know just

this raging mob that's going to lynch

somebody they're having a group mind too

it's it's a similar kind of thing except

that's negative so it's like a group

mind can be positive or negative it can

be wholesome or on wholesome just like

an individual mind

um

so yeah it's it's not necessarily good

or bad

you know like like the raging mob that's

gonna gonna lynch somebody i mean that's

that's a group mind also

um

but uh yeah i i haven't really thought

about it in the in the realm of music

but

um ram das used to talk about the same

thing where people would come up after

he gave a dharma talk and thank him and

he's he's saying you know i was just the

instrument you know it just came through

me

um you don't like after a violin recital

you don't go up and thank the violin

and um so in a case like that um my idea
was that it was really just the karma of
of the group that was eliciting
my words
um in in the case of the dhamma talk
with regard to the the music if you're
all just jamming and there's not even an
audience it would be you'd sort of be
the audience as well as the musicians
because you're you're listening as well
as uh playing the music so it could be
something like that also
but um i'm unaware of terrible buddhism
really trying to explain something like
that i think according to the orthodox
ancient indian abhidhamma philosophy in

the commentarial tradition um they might

just deny that that really happens that

you might just be fooling yourself or

something but um

i don't really adhere to the orthodox

tradition very well

so i'll just move on to the next

question

a question related to the ai question do

you think if humans become sufficiently

wired up and connect or upload their

consciousness to the internet

could the entire world wide net become a

gigantic brain with each human brain

acting something like a neuron

what would the philosophical implication

of this be

would it be one individual being could

it be conscious

could it become enlightened

okay

well we're dealing with a technological

singularity here um i mean if that

happened it would be the technological

singularity um in real life and one

reason i think maybe the only reason why

it's called the singularity is because

you can't really say what's going to

happen once that happens

like for example um

yeah it is possible that you could have

just all these different

computers or all these different human

personalities merging into this huge

super mind or this huge super computer

excuse me

and uh

i mean you're dealing with an order of

consciousness or intelligence

just orders of magnitude beyond what we

are able to comprehend

like they say with regard to the uh

technological singularity which is

really a scary thought i mean it's it's

probably a much bigger threat to the

human race than global warming for

example even though nobody talks about

it or very few people talk about it

um

you've got a computer that is uh

what's the recur what is it recursive

self-programming

whereas it's like improving upon itself

and it does so at an exponential rate

and uh a computer can because it doesn't

have

i mean it can just reprogram itself

um you know from the bottom up like a

human we've got all this programming

that we can't really

uh we can't really erase it we're just

kind of stuck with human nature and the

limitations of our mind and so forth but

a computer doesn't have the same

limitations and it can just

like program itself and improve upon

itself at an exponential rate so that

sooner or later i mean according to the

experts here it's going to get beyond

the human level and within just a short

time after that it's going to be as far

beyond us as we are beyond amoebas or

cockroaches or something i mean it's

just gonna be many orders of magnitude

more intelligent than us you know maybe

a billion times more

more intelligent than us

or you know it's like you've got a

billion human minds all combining

together they'd be like the same thing i

mean what you're going to wind up with

that group mind

would be just completely

incomprehensible it's just an act of
futility trying to understand what's
going to happen just like
you know how is an amoeba gonna
understand a human mind you know how's
even a frog gonna understand human mind
is just not going to happen so it's it's
just totally beyond and it's it's a
singularity because we have no idea we
can make guesses but the guesses are
almost certain to be wrong
um let's see if let's get back to this
question here uh
yeah i mean so what what what uh you
each hero here is asking it does seem
possible i mean you could upload

human minds

into a computer and then the minds are

able to interact through the internet or

something or maybe we could even just

have like some kind of chip with

internet access

or whatever and uh yeah you're gonna

wind up with something orders of

magnitude beyond what we are able to

comprehend and so it's uh time to move

on to the next question

also from you each hero

have you heard of the center for

contemplative research nope

if not basically they're trying to

advance the science of consciousness

through studying contemplatives not only

through putting them in machines and

stuff but also relying on their

self-reported experiences do you think

some mix of a scientific and

contemplative approach to the science of

consciousness could lead to a scientific

breakthrough could it bring science out

of scientific materialism

um yeah it's possible although my

experience

with

like psychologists using pet scanners or

that sort of thing on people who are

meditating

um they're essentially just degrading

the experience down to

neurophysiology

and um you know you just don't get much

beyond that although it sounds like

maybe these people at the center for

contemplative research

are

taking uh like a deeper more

comprehensive maybe more spiritual

approach in which case sure it's

possible although

to what degree spirit can integrate with

scientific empiricism is questionable

but i do think that it may be the next

copernican revolution which could really

revolutionize science and cure science

of scientific realism or scientific

materialism would be

the realization that

mind and consciousness or mind and

energy are the same

that

what a physicist calls energy is just a

very elemental

form of what a psychologist calls

consciousness and vice versa that what a

psychologist calls consciousness is just

a very elaborate complicated

manifestation of what a physicist calls

energy and that that second part is is

already done it's just that um

i think it could be like a copernican

revolution to realize that

mind consciousness and energy are

identical and that uh that even

supposedly inanimate matter um

is conscious in a very

primordial

simple sort of way i mean it's it's not

like a rock is thinking it doesn't have

a personality or anything but there's

just this primordial extremely primitive

consciousness going on

anyway that's that's my idea

so the next question from you each hero

or you chan

in physics the universe has zero net

energy the energy of matter is cancelled

out by negative energy in gravity

scientific materialists often use this

to say the universe could have arose

spontaneously from nothing which is not
entirely convincing argument from a
buddhist perspective could the universe
have come from nothingness like positive
and negative duality and karma emerging
from some primordial consciousness or a
substance like brahman or emptiness
which has zero net energy and zero karma
so i'm just going to uh bring back old
hegel
and his idea that pure being and pure
non-being are the same
so nothingness would be uh also contain
infinite energy
you know sort of like uh
i may be misunderstanding it but there

is like the casimir effect where they're

saying that empty space can contain zero

energy and infinite energy and uh

the the answer you come up with depends

on how you do the math but it the math

is valid and works out either way

so um

let's see

yeah i mean i used to i used to say just

half jokingly that's how god created the

universe out of nothing he just had all

the positives and negatives

balance out to zero you know all adds up

to zero and um i like that idea too

so um yeah i think positive and negative

like yin and yang

um you know it's more of a taoist idea

than a buddhist one in buddhism you've

got a

a doctrine or an idea called lokodama

which is

opposites remaining in balance

so yeah i think that's possible too in

some weird way that

almost certainly is beyond our

intellectual comprehension

but again i do like the idea that

absolute everything and absolutely

nothing are ultimately the same

okay

next question from you hero

in the buddhist view i think nothing has

any intrinsic nature not dependent on

everything else yeah that's

that's good however to operate within

the illusion of samsara you need to make

useful differentiations between stuff

because getting your foot slammed in a

gate still hurts so is there some idea

of authenticity or the true nature of

things within the illusion

a politically relevant example would be

if someone is born a male if being a

male is empty of intrinsic nature what

is stopping them from just slapping on a

dress and declaring themselves female

is there a useful idea of the true

nature of a male that one should adhere

to

yeah this is this is a good uh this is a

good question

um i've i've thought about this before

like

in buddhism theravada buddhism

especially

there are the two levels of truth you've

got conventional truth and ultimate

truth ultimate truth is the unthinkable

void you know it's like you can't wrap

your head around it but conventional

truth

um

essentially is just what what people

agree is true

just if enough people agree that

something is true that makes it true or

if enough people believe it that makes

it true

um

i think mahayana buddhism has taken it a

step farther you know the ultimate truth

is just as unthinkable so you set that

aside that's a void

that's sunyata but um

they divide up conventional truth

which they call like covering truth

um

into into two kinds i mean you've just

got whatever people believe and then

you've got like um

what is really valid within a psalm

sorry context so that would be sort of

like uh like emmanuel kant's philosophy

um where you know the thing in itself is

on unthinkable but at least you can um

come up with some sort of

um viable like valid principles within

the realm of the illusion

that there are like valid rules or laws

the illusion itself must obey

so that is possible although

um

i've been i've been thinking about this

a lot lately where i mean it could just

be that the the rules of the illusion

are still just conventional in the sense

that as humans we're all agreeing on

these laws of nature for example just

because we're all human and so

um we're more alike than different and

so we think more alike than differently

and so just because we're human we might

agree on certain laws of nature certain

primordial dharmic laws that might not

apply to some alien intelligence

that i mean just works on very different

principles like there could be beings

that are just going with such different

assumptions such different beliefs such

different laws of nature that we could

be in the same room and they wouldn't

see us and we wouldn't see them just

because we're just being two different

worlds

um

so i'm still thinking that um

conventional truth still isn't really

true

that it is conventional in that we all

agree on it but

it could be that there's like a

a deeper bedrock

of the illusion of plato's cave or the

the matrix or whatever where

um just because we're all human

with the exception of some like

completely psychotics that just cannot

function in in the world

um

you know we agree on certain principles

simply because you know our minds work

more or less the same more more alike

than differently

um

let's see i think with regard to uh

the politically relevant example someone

is born a male well going with theravada

you know orthodox theravada

then maleness and femaleness are

ultimate realities so you're just stuck

being one or the other maybe a

hermaphrodite and a little bit of both

but um

yeah i think

i think

we'd be i mean going with my idea

like like i just mentioned

you just get down to like the empirical

bedrock of

you know i mean you got x and y

chromosomes you've got uh the naughty

bits of a male instead of a female

that kind of a thing

um just going with biology

then um yeah even though it's just

conventional truth it still is like an

empirical sort of bedrock

at least for now until things change

until we have like a different paradigm

we're working with maybe

um

so

yeah i mean i still i still uh like

biology a lot

and um

so i mean you can like with regard to

the like the the transsexual

um

like the the trans woman

who uh

has a pp like a boy and uh has like x

and y chromosomes like a boy but still

is wearing the dress and flouncing

around and

insisting on being called ma'am

yeah i mean

at one level

like a superficial kind of a level you

can say sure just out of courtesy we can

say that they are female in accordance

with you know if enough people accept

something it's like the conventional

truth

but like at the deeper

um

like the empirical level then there are

certain standards that um they don't

change just because people want to

believe that they're different i mean

you've got a bunch of people that say

it's racist to believe that things fall

down instead of up i mean it doesn't

matter things are still going to fall

down instead of up people saying math is

racist now but still no matter how

racist or politically incorrect it is i

mean two and two continue to equal four

so long as you're dealing with like a

base base ten number system

um

so yeah i mean

there there is like an empirical bedrock

but um that could just be because we are

all human we all think similarly and so

we agree on certain rules that seem

unvarying

or necessary but

they're still not ultimately real

so i'll just move on to the next

question here

and this one is similar to a previous

one that you each hero also asked i

think when a creative

artists musicians writers etc enters a

flow state it's often said that they

aren't the ones creating but rather

channeling some creative force do you

think this is true what are they

channeling and where does it come from

well um like the ancient classical

pagans believed in muses and so they

thought that when an artist was really

inspired you had this goddess that was

being channeled through the artist

um

but personally i think it's more likely

a matter of channeling your own

subconscious you're just getting into a

deeper level

um and um

as we as i was mentioning earlier if

there's a group of people involved it

could be sort of a group consciousness

that's helping to condition it

um

but i think ultimately you're just

channeling a deeper like uh what is

usually a subconscious level of your

mind that uh

is manifesting

up into consciousness

so i'll move on to the next one

in western philosophy like schopenhauer

art music etc is seen as a glimpse of

the transcendent but in buddhism monks i

think aren't supposed to make music even

though a lot end up doing so anyway can

art be a source of wisdom or is it a

distraction

well

um with regard to music especially in

buddhism i mean buddhism is one of the

few religions

that considers music to be immoral or

unethical or just unskillful karma which

is one reason why buddhism buddhist

music is tends to suck it's you know the

hindus have way better music than the

buddhists do

and uh while i'm

on this digression i might as well say

that

shiva has better music than vishnu

according to my experience

got more got more drive to it you know

kind of a dark energy to it or something

but um

let's see get back to this question i've

i've distracted myself

um

yeah schopenhauer i mean he was too much

of a platonist for my tastes

but in buddhist monks i think aren't

supposed to make music yeah that is true

can art be a source of wisdom or is it

distraction well one one art form that

really is very much used in buddhism is

poetry

so um some of the some of the most

profound sutas are in the form of poetry

like the uh the tsutoni pata is mostly

in the form of poetry

um

so obviously you can you can have wise

teachings placed in like

uh verse forms

so

that obviously would be an example of

of wisdom through art

um even fiction i mean

yeah i mean fiction of when you're

dealing with words you can you can say

wise things

so yeah i mean

um

just going with fiction as an art form

just like dostoyevsky or like moby dick

i mean that's there's profound wisdom in

that but uh

yeah i think with regard to like um

uh like painting

uh monks maybe aren't supposed to do

that but nevertheless you go to um like

monasteries it's it's very common to

have like

edifying

uh scenes from the buddha's life

especially or the scenes from the

jatakas that kind of a thing on the

walls as

something

educational

or like like uh statuary is the same

obviously in buddhism you've got buddha

statues that's one of the main art forms

if

if it's good enough to be to warrant

being called art otherwise you just have

these artisans cranking out these ugly

buddha statues like often happens in

burma

architecture also is an art form which

can have like an uplifting inspiring

effect

so at least there's that i mean it and

it also can focus people's attention

like like a statue the buddha statue um

some people can really get attached to

that sort of thing in which case it can

become unskillful to some degree but um

still i mean it can be uplifting and
inspiring and really you know you see
like this beautiful majestic buddha
statue people can be moved to tears
or uh just like really have profound
faith you know they're inspired to
practice
more or something like that so yeah i
mean art can go either way although
dramatic arts are a no-no from the
buddhist point of view and music as a
general rule also
there's even a rule saying that monks
who are chanting should not adopt a
sing-song musical kind of voice when
they're chanting which is almost
universally ignored by a lot of buddhist

monks because they like they like to

sound musical

but um technically according to

monastic discipline even when a monk is

chanting he should just adopt an

ordinary

uh like a conversational tone of voice

while reciting poly texts

um

but yeah i think i think art can be can

be inspiring and uplifting and uh if

it's has a message the message can be a

wise and profound message too

even a painting can have a wise and

profound message but uh

even much more so

um

poetry and just uh like

prose writing

so the last question by a yuichiro

let's see what is the role of the

creative

oh wait a minute did i already

okay that was it yeah i almost answered

the same question

so okay

that was the last question by you each

hero about art and it is kind of

unfortunate that that buddhism almost

alone of religions considers music to be

um

sort of a distraction or like a

wallowing and sensual pleasure because

um before i move on to the next question

really

ancient indian buddhism you know the

earliest buddhism was based on this

prehistoric indian culture going way way

back

where you know the world is a bad place

and you should try to

escape from this world or or go beyond

this world and you do that by not

clinging to this world by not attaching

to it and

um music because it's a kind of sensual

pleasure

um is something that people cling to and

so it's just considered to be a no-no in

accordance with um just the ancient

indian culture at the time even though

obviously some music can have like

uplifting effects

and um you know for for the average lay

person just a some certain amount of

pleasure is just uh

not necessarily to be avoided i mean

if you're living in the world being a

total ascetic is uh

uh really a

kind of a downer you know it's like i

mean from the buddhist point of view

really

the ethics of buddhism is so finely

tuned

that it's almost impossible to avoid

bad karma quote unquote i mean even

putting salt and pepper on your mashed

potatoes to make it taste better would

be a kind of wallowing in sensuality you

know even to believe that you exist if

you're like a really radical renunciant

you can go off into a forest and live

under a tree and maybe just maybe

you can avoid any kind of speech or

physical action that is going to be

unwholesome but good luck trying not

even to have any like nasty thoughts

so i mean it's just

um buddhist ethics are so finely tuned

that it's almost impossible to to do

anything that is just purely good

there's always going to be it's it's not

going to be all black or white it's

always going to be a shade of gray and

so

the best you can do is

accept

the law of karma

except that you're going to be doing

unskillful acts sometimes just as a

matter of being a human being in this

world

and have enough

stoicism and equanimity that you can

face the consequences like the fruition

of the unskillful karma when it comes

back at you and i think i may have more

to say about that

even though uh this is already a long

one

do i'm talking a lot here

next question is from chaplin

and chaplin asks

what is your best actionable advice for

buddhists who are being faced with the

current authoritarian regime

removing civil rights

imposing forced experimental rna

injections and big tech government

compliance

huh

yeah that's that's like uh

that's like a key question that gets

asked a lot

nowadays um

my best actionable advice for buddhists

who are being faced with the current

authoritarian regime um well obviously

going with just traditional orthodox

buddhism

the the obvious answer is you just opt

out of society and renounce the world

and you go off into a forest and

meditate under a tree and you wander

around in a state of vagrant beggary

and just beg for your food in the

streets and you don't handle money and

you don't have a family no more and you

don't have connections and you're just

like this

almost a non-human being

and

obviously even for most

monks i mean they're not going to go

that far

so

um the best buddhist advice would be you

just go as far in that direction as you

are willing and able to go

so that might mean

moving off the grid you know moving into

like a rural area

um

cutting way way down on all of the the

worldly samsaric interactions like

social media and then just the

news that are really just propaganda

that kind of a thing

and um

you just uh do your best you you you

know try to live a moral and non-harmful

life try to do good to yourself and to

others

um

you can try to

add some enlightenment or higher

consciousness into politics by just

taking part in like your local school

board or getting involved in you know

small scale politics or or like uh

um you know just some sort of

organizations you know that uh multiply

um multiply your will by you know you're

like adding your will to like-minded

individuals

and forming a kind of movement maybe

um

but uh yeah the easy answer to that is i

mean

um

the buddhist

the buddhist solution to the craziness

of the world from the very beginning is

you just opt out of it and the closer

you can get to that

ideal

um that would be the

the best you could do from a buddhist

perspective

and

to some degree you uh

you think globally and act locally by

just you know taking care of yourself

you know if you're doing good if you've

got relatively

uh relatively wholesome attitude and so

forth you're going to be

um that's going to be generating

outwards you're going to be influencing

those around you

so um if you do good then you're going

to make a better world and also if

you've got a good mind you're going to

be living in a good world

um

if you've got a bad mind you're going to

be living in a bad world you've got a

perfect mind you're going to be living

in a perfect world regardless of what's

going on i mean the world's always been

crazy

um there's always been

authoritarian kings and governments and

in genocide and all this kind of thing i

mean it's just perennial themes

um

so it's not like things have suddenly

gotten really bad

um they've pretty much always been

messed up and bad

i think uh like the 1980s and 90s were

just sort of an exception to the rule

things were going pretty well back then

as far as i can remember

um

but uh

yeah i mean you stand by your principles

um

tell the truth

um if you really think something is

wrong you shouldn't do it that which

would give you the right to disobey what

you consider to be a stupid or unjust

law although

you know it's the duty of the cop to

arrest you for doing it and so he's got

his duty also

um

and then uh one other thing is uh is in

a question down below so i'll get to

that when that question gets asked also

with regard to uh organizing and uh

actually doing something

but um

yeah your best actionable advice for

buddhists would be um

to detach

from the worldly craziness because the

world's always going to be crazy it's

just the way it is it's always going to

be crazy

so you just detach from that

and if you're able to

uh inject some sanity

into it in whatever way you think is

appropriate for you what you think you

can actually do which is within your

power within your your limitations or

your circumstances then certainly you

should do that also and just add some

goodness and sanity to uh

to the mix the more of that you can add

the better

so i'll move on to the next question

which is from zane

and zane says

see as i've mentioned to you before but

don't expect you to necessarily remember

i'm in south korea where it said that

about 15 to 30 percent of the population

is purportedly buddhist

out walking today masculisk i go to the

nearest buddhist temple about a

five-minute walk away and see on the
gate a notice saying make sure you put
on a mask before entering
on a recent short vacation i visited
quite a few notable buddhist temples in
more rural areas of south korea only one
of the temples i visited had monks not
wearing masks while doing sadana or just
walking around the temple grounds
all other temples had masked monks and
signs up everywhere reminding folks to
wear a mask i thought the buddha dharma
was in addition to compassion supposed
to be big on wisdom
i'm questioning the wisdom of mass
masking given the actual scientific

papers on the efficacy of masks in

stopping the spread of viral infections

particularly those written prior to say

2018

and also the wisdom of masking long term

when numerous studies demonstrate the

problem

the problems related to that practice is

the wisdom simply in going along to get

along is that really wisdom when the

mask wearing also seems to be acting as

an nlp

hyposis i think it means hypnosis

technique known as yes set

where if the subject submits to one

command it's easier to get them to

submit to further commands might not

buddhist wisdom include asking for some

monks at your monastery to read klaus

schwab's book on covet 19 and the great

reset

and to do a little analytical digging

into the socio-political implications of

the current policies i guess this is a

question i would like to see you address

well again this is uh

kind of hitting the hitting the nerve

hitting him like

touching the

feeling the pulse so to speak

um

but uh

first of all i mean monks really are not

supposed to be socially engaged you know

they're supposed to renounce the world

renounce the craziness

um

but that renunciation is primarily

mental i mean there is uh there is a

linear rule a rule of monastic

discipline in the poly text where the

buddha says monks i allow you to obey

kings

and um

that was mainly with regard to the

king's determining the calendar but um

still i mean it just makes sense that a

religion should pretty much obey the law

just to stay out of trouble just to kind

of keep their reputation clean

um like early christianity like jesus of

nazareth said something similar with you

know um you know

render under caesar what belongs to

caesar

and

so just following the law is kind of

basic to uh

to religious systems that are just

trying to

you know keep their head down just kind

of stay out of trouble i mean staying

out of trouble is kind of basic to being

a buddhist monk

and ultimately the outward forms are

really not the point

so wearing a mask or not wearing one is

ultimately neither skillful or

unskillful

it's just an outward form and whether

you are skillful or unskillful wholesome

unwholesome depends upon your own mental

states

um so i'm sorry to uh

to answer in that way but that does seem

to be like the orthodox

uh standard mainstream buddhist answer

that uh some monks just want to say hell

no i'm not wearing the mask

um yeah they can do that too

they might get into trouble

um you know they might have to just go

off and be loners go out and live in the

forest you don't have to wear a mask

that's the way monks were supposed to

live anyway you might have to wear one

if they go for alms in the village or

something

um

but uh ultimately i mean the outward

circumstances

um whether you're wearing a mask or not

wearing one is irrelevant because it's

the mental states that are really key

so i'll just move on to the next

question i mean

well maybe not yet it's like i mean the

wisdom is irrelevant to uh wearing a

mask or not

so i mean that was that would be her

wisdom fits in i mean you can be wise or

foolish wearing a mask or not wearing

one you know there's there's there's

people doing both i assume

so i'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from bodhisatta 969

how can we network better and really

change something it seems that somehow

everyone does their own thing

david reynolds buddha war rex on

telegram bonte g varupanyo brian rue

right wing dharma squad ship of fools

etc i think people really want to be

active and not just watch youtube videos

we could support each other and give

donations to people who

cause

really serves us whose cause really

serves us for example propose a buddhist

community that is worth supporting

instead of supporting any buddhist

community what is our plan for the

future and where do we want to go

can we start an association or any other

idea that brings us forward as a

counterpart to left-wing buddhism in the

west so again this is uh really what a

lot of people are interested in

especially uh

those who are traditionalists or

conservative buddhists

not just the uh starbucks buddhists

um

and i mean one obvious drawback is that

we are very finely

we're we're like scarce i mean we're

thinly spread and so there's not going

to be very many

um

like

traditionalist or conservative western

buddhists

living in the same town or the same area

so i mean it's pretty much

limited to the internet

i mean that's that's like the main

manifestation of traditionalist buddhism

aside from one's individual practice and

that's that's like the the unit

is the individual

and the individual's practice

um

and uh yes you want to do something you

want to accomplish something and as it

turns out i mean this is still within

the realm of the internet but a group of

people including me and bonte gi

varapanyo

um and shipa fools for that matter

we are collaborating and trying to get a

larger

um

a larger group going that um may attract

more people

probably have some kind of slick website

uh higher quality videos than this one

that kind of thing

and um but still i mean it's gonna have

to be primarily on the internet simply

because

um people

um like people that are interested in in

supporting me or watching my videos or

subscribing on subscribe star they're

all over the world they're just thinly

spread all over the world

and um it would take

some real some something really big to

inspire even half of those people or

one-third of those people to all

migrate to the same geographical area to

live you know just to live in the same

community so that they're face to face

instead of uh face to screen

so yeah we're still we're still working

within the realm of the internet at

least until enough people get

interested for reasons i've um discussed

above

um

or or maybe for other reasons if enough

people get interested so that you're

actually able to form little um nuclei

groups you know in real life face to

face

in the same place geographically then

that's fine yeah we can do that and get

like uh like an actual physical building

with like a dharma hall that kind of a

thing maybe maybe a monastery you know

we can get bonte g to come over here or

what or something

um

but uh for starters we're just trying to

get like uh

like a movement going or just a larger

group going that uh

looks nicer maybe a little more polished

maybe to attract people

superficially at first who then see that

there's something deeper than the

superficial appearance so i mean we are

making efforts we are

trying to get something started um

um i mean we haven't even really got the website going yet but it has i mean the the domain has already been purchased and everything so um i'll keep you updated on that when developments substantial developments happen we're still uh in the formulation stage at present but we are we are making efforts but um sorry to say it's it's mostly going to be an internet phenomenon for the foreseeable future because we are really just going with reality or conventional reality anyway we are thinly spread around the world and so finally the last question the very last one

is from frank

who actually asked two questions here

but uh they're they're kind of the same

question

and frank says

how to make wholesome decisions in our

current situation how does one weigh

decisions with regard to comma

and this is a very condensed version of

a different set of questions that he

asked that were very long uh talking

about

um this the subtleties of of comma how

karma works

and that

um you know there's like i mentioned a

little earlier it's very rare to have

all white or all black all wholesome or
unwholesome there's always going to be a
shade of gray involved
and um so how do you
navigate through worldly samsara you
know you've got a job you've got a
family to support
you can't just renounce the world and go
off and meditate under a tree
or maybe you just feel like you've got
like a sacred duty to your children or
whatever reason maybe you've got health
issues that won't let you do that
whatever but you are just living
in uh in the world in the craziness of
the world which as i say has always been

crazy the secular world has always been

more or less insane

so how do you know how to

behave skillfully

like for example

um

you're being forced to take a vaccine

that you don't trust that you think may

be more harmful than good you think it's

just a violation of your rights as a

citizen to be forced to take this

experimental vaccine that's going to

mess with your rna and so on and so

forth

do you think it's it's better just to

take the hit or do you think it would be

better to kind of fudge on the truth and

like finagle some kind of health

exemption even though you're pretty

healthy

um

get some sympathetic doctor to give you

like a bogus health exemption on the

grounds that you know you have some

condition or something that maybe you

don't really have

or whatever it is i mean um you're gonna

have to choose the lesser of two evils

essentially i mean you're living in the

world i mean

um most people

um you know it's like

even living in a cave i i've had

situations where you just choose the
lesser of two evils like i've got a
mosquito that that's gonna bite me and i
think well okay i'll just take the hit
let the little bastard bite me but it's
fussy you know it bites me in one place
and it doesn't hit the right artery or
something so it flies up and it whines
around a little bit and then lands
somewhere else and bites and it doesn't
like that either and then it lands on my
forehead and bites and maybe it doesn't
get a good vein there either so then it
just keeps doing this and finally i
really i just think it's like
maybe if i just slap the little bastard
and get it over with i'd make a less bad

karma than just sitting here hating its

guts

because it won't just finish biting me

the little bastard

and i mean this kind of thing just

happens all the time it's like you can

say well it's slightly unskillful karma

to put salt and pepper on your mashed

potatoes to make them taste better you

know it's a wallowing and sensuality and

all that but then again you're eating

just bland plain mashed potatoes

you're going to have a certain aversion

for that in your mind too

so you just have to skillfully

understand yourself as well as you can

and understand you know um what is going

to be

the lesser of two evils in in any case

you know it's like you think about

you want to do something and you realize

there's going to be some unskillfulness

involved

so i mean you can't really deny karma

that's i mean i think a lot of like the

progressive starbucks buddhist types i

mean they're they're just redefining

morality redefining ethics so that you

know whatever whatever's politically

correct is is good and right and proper

and all that but i mean karma is

you know it's one of those bedrock

things it might not be the ultimate

reality of nirvana

but it's it's pretty much inescapable so

long as we are human so long as we have

minds that are working in a human way

um

yeah the karma

it's like you

you do something unskillful it's going

to have like negative effects on you you

do something positive you're going to

have positive effects you do something

negative you have negative effects

with regard to your mental states you

have you do something with positive

mental states

then it's going to have positive effects

even if

it's not obvious at first you know every

every action has its effects you know

every every action has consequences

so i mean you want to do something that

you know is going to be

unwholesome let's say

then

um i mean you should first consider i

mean do you want to do that like just um

if you accept karma

then just consider i mean would i be

willing to have this happen back to me

you know let's say you're going to give

someone a piece of your mind then you

think well would i want somebody to be

saying this kind of stuff to me

and so long as you're willing i mean you
think it's worth it you think it needs
to be said enough that you are willing
to have the same thing happen back to
you
then uh
i guess i mean you just accept
responsibility for your actions and go
for it and then try to have equanimity
and some stoicism to face the
consequences when they occur
so yeah i mean that's that's the best
you can do it's if you're living in the
world you you're going to be doing
unskillful things sometimes
like if you're if you're alone under a

tree with no family and no friends and

know anything

then uh yeah you might be able to uh

have pure

mental or pure physical and and like

verbal actions anyway but still i mean

good luck not having any naughty

thoughts

um

so i mean we're just uh i mean buddhist

philosophy is so finely tuned that like

i said there's always shades of gray so

you may just have to choose the lesser

of two evils and

don't try to

like kid yourself don't try to fool

yourself into thinking that you're

totally

not doing anything wrong if i mean if

you really are you know telling a lie or

or something like that but um

still i mean sometimes it may be

justified and i'm reminded of this story

it's a it's a

famous short story i think it's called

the other wise man and it's uh it's a

christian story about one of the magi

from persia who sees the star of

bethlehem and all that and he's gonna go

to

offer treasures to the the baby jesus

with the other three

and um so he's got these these gems you

know he's got like this big pearl and
this big diamond like a ruby or
something but he's got some business to
take care of so the so his friends the
other three they take off heading
towards jerusalem before him and he's
going to catch up with them on the way
but it's like he keeps getting
uh
keeps getting like um what's the word
delayed like um he stops off at this
oasis and there's a person there who's
almost dead you know he's like very sick
and so the guy is like nursing him and
helping him before he continues on his
way and so the the other wise men stop
waiting for him and they just take off

and so finally

this other wise man he makes it to

jerusalem i think it is or or maybe

bethlehem he's he's in judea at this

point

and um

it's like in like the the new testament

says king herod has ordered all of the

baby boys to be killed and he's

staying as a

as a guest in the house of this this

hebrew lady

and she's got a baby boy and she's

totally freaked out she's just in tears

because i mean the law is the baby boys

are going to be killed so this other

wise man

he uh stands at the doorway and when the

the roman soldiers or whatever the

soldiers are they come um demanding

entrance to see if there's any baby boys

in the building he uh

hands this

pearl you know this really valuable

pearl to the soldier and says there

aren't any baby boys in this building

and um you know the the soldier looks at

the pearl and uh you know as he's agreed

and uh maybe a little bit of honesty

mixed in he just you know calls to the

other soldiers there's no baby boys here

let's just move on and so i mean the

other wise man he he told a lie but he

told the lie to save

a baby from being murdered essentially

so i mean it's obviously

uh you know choosing the lesser of two

evils in that case i mean it's not

always going to be that clear-cut it's

always going to be some kind of shade of

gray and you just do the best you can

and see i'm going to read the question

again just

make sure i get this right how to make

wholesome decisions in our current

situation how does one weigh decisions

with regard to comma

okay so another thing let's say you

you've already

pretty much committed yourself to doing

something that you know is not purely

ethical just because the the other

alternative may be even less ethical

going with your own standards

so then i mean one good thing you you

can do i mean you can't really deny

karma again i mean if you're if you're a

good buddhist i mean you really should

um not try to fool yourself and try to

just justify anything you do

you should admit okay what i'm doing

here is going to make some bad karma but

karma is a mental state so another thing

you can do is just try to do what you do

with as pure of a mental state as

possible

like you can swat a mosquito while just

cursing and just raging at it or you can

just you know almost and you know just

with equanimity just reach up and slap

the mosquito maybe uh reminding yourself

that insects don't feel pain and so

forth

um

so

uh yeah i mean just like the the samurai

swordmaster you know the the zen master

who's also a swordmaster

um

he he may kill but

and and and he's not exempt from karma

he's going to be making bad karma but he

may not be making as bad of karma

because he is cultivating mindfulness

and equanimity he's got a sense of honor

you know he's not going to act motivated

by anger or hatred or like revenge

anything like that it's going to be

purely honor purely duty and he's going

to maintain as much equanimity as

possible while he's cutting people's

heads off and he's still cutting

people's heads off and that's not good

but it's still

wiser

than just having the blood lust and just

raging like king leonidas in the movie

300

um

i mean still it's like

there is uh you're mitigating

the unskillfulness

um

i was gonna give an example oh yeah back

when i was a junior monk

i uh

i asked my teacher

uh which is worse i mean which makes

worse karma doing something

uh

wrong that you don't even know is wrong

or doing something wrong that you know

is wrong and like an example would be

like fishing like killing a fish there

are i mean a lot of people in america

like you may maybe christians they just

consider

fishing to be good wholesome fun you

know there's nothing wrong at all with

killing a fish that's why god put fish

there so we can catch them and eat them

so they don't think there's anything

wrong with that i mean like like some

terrorists they might think that blowing

up an entire building full of people is

actually good you know they think

they're doing something good they think

they're gonna go to heaven for now

so i mean

the question was i mean which is worse

if you do it if let's just make it

simple and you know you go and catch a

fish and you you kill the fish

and that that

if you are a buddhist and know that

you're making bad karma by doing that or

on wholesome karma

um or if you just you're like a

christian and you just think it's good

clean fun and you're not doing anything

wrong i mean which is worse and he kind

of surprised me by saying that

if you do something wrong knowing that

it's wrong

that's actually you're going to make

less bad karma because it's like

if you pick up something hot and you

know in advance that it's hot then

you're going to take precautions so it
doesn't burn you as bad you might still
get your fingers burned but at least you
were kind of careful about it you're not
just grabbing right onto it and burning
your whole hand and uh he said that's
that's kind of the way it is if you're
going to do something wrong
and i mean you acknowledge that you know
it's there's some wrongness to it it's
it's not pure black or pure white it's
the gray
um
then uh yeah you're gonna be you're
gonna be careful you can you know try to
to observe your mind carefully and try
to be mindful at least you know try to

maintain as much equanimity and as

little greed hate and delusion while

you're doing it so at least you're

mitigating the the karmic results of it

so um that would be my answer to this

uh question or double question

is uh

you know how do you weigh decisions with

regard to kama i mean you have to weigh

your your mental states

and um you know you choose the lesser of

two evils i suppose or

maybe one of these days you just feel

like choosing the greater of two evils

just because then still i mean you have

to be willing to accept that that is

going to have consequences you should be
willing to accept those consequences
uh coming back to you in future and you
should try to have like a stoic attitude
that you can face those consequences
with some equanimity and fortitude
and um
when you're doing the deed try to have
as pure of a mind you know as as less
greed as little greed hate and delusion
as possible i mean it's like the samurai
zen master you know if he's out there
killing he's doing it just out of duty
and equanimity and honor and you know
he's not feeling hatred and that kind of
thing
and um that's that's really the best you

can do

and uh

you know welcome to the club i mean

everybody has to do that i mean from the

buddhist point of view even listening to

music or putting salt and pepper on your

potatoes is gonna gonna be a little bit

unwholesome so

um

trying to be absolutely pure

is uh

is a fool's errand to some degree

especially if if you're not a renunciant

and um that is uh the last question and

we're almost two hours

man i just keep talking and talking i

should maybe just do these every few

days so there's just a few questions to

get answered and you get them in little

bite-sized pieces instead of these long

ones but

this is how it's been happening so there

you go

and uh

if you've got questions to ask you're

you're always welcome to uh to ask

questions

and uh so long as you keep asking i will

keep answering

so you can post your questions in the

comments below or if you're on my

subscribe star channel you can post them

there especially after i make an

announcement just post them in the

comments under the announcement or if

you're on the discord server um you can

post them in in the q a room uh in the

associated discord server and the links

to all of these things

should be

uh in the description below the video

and

again

you can you can buy my books too which i

have recently published and they should

be in the links below also

and uh be well and happy

and

i think we're done for this one

All right, hello and welcome to episode 15 of question and answer.

I am your host Panyo Basa, also known by other names like John David Reynolds.

Those are my uh secret public names.

So, uh I got uh as usual lots of good questions here.

And so, I am going to commence to answering those questions.

And the first one is from Rhinoceros.

And Rhinoceros says,

"Early Buddhism, for example, the Ataka Vagga, heavily discourages all yogic or magical practices, the various methods for gaining superhuman abilities, and instead prescribes endurance as the

go-to way of dealing with ailments such
as cold, hunger, and insects.
Can you comment on the matter? Should we
painstakingly endure, or should we
practice yoga, magic, Taoism on the
side? I know the right answer
already, but man, physical life and its
limitations are hella hard."
He says.
Um okay, well, first of all, I would uh
just point out that um
the Ataka Vagga or early Buddhism really
doesn't heavily discourage yoga, like
yogic practices. And by yogic practices,
I don't mean
um you know, wearing the tight yoga
pants and uh

uh doing sun salutations and so forth on

a mat, but um

yoga really, it means any kind of

spiritual practice, any kind of

dedicated spiritual practice.

And so, really, just meditation or

wandering around homeless could be

called the the yoga of an early Buddhist

ascetic.

It is true though that um

early Buddhism and even later Theravada

does does

discourage magical practices like uh

uh developing

not so much developing psychic powers

but developing them as like your main

goal. I mean if they arise as kind of a side effect of your other practices, that's fine.

But even then you shouldn't be showing them off.

Um

but with regard to it, let's see here.

The various methods for gaining superhuman abilities and instead prescribes endurance as the go-to way of dealing with ailments such as cold, hunger, and insects. Okay, well, with regard to endurance, definitely the Atakavaga and other early Buddhist texts encourage a monk enduring with equanimity

cold, hunger,

um you know, heat,

uh sickness, all that kind of stuff, all

the the uh

the unpleasantness that arises,

especially for an ascetic who's just

living outside, sleeping on the ground

under trees, and begging for his food

silently in the in the streets and

everything.

Um you know, like living in caves or

whatever.

Um I mean he's not just sitting there

enduring just like bitching and moaning

to himself and oh this sucks and and I

just got to

got to put up with it. It's not that

kind of endurance, really. It's the yogic practice of like mindful detachment and equanimity. I mean that is practiced as a kind of yogic practice, not uh outwardly with regard to uh assuming postures or anything necessarily, but um like an inward kind of mental yoga.

And so that would come first, just the cultivation of um mindful or philosophical detachment. And then uh when the cold or the hunger or the insects or whatever come along, then you're already you've already got equanimity going, and so they just kind of crash against your equanimity like waves against a rock.

So,

yeah, there still is a kind of yogic

practice that's going on.

Just wandering homeless and meditating

because it's still uh even in the Ajikan

Waga monks are encouraged to be

meditators.

So, that would be the yogic practice,

and that would strengthen you against

these uh hardships.

Um

I think that pretty much answers the

question. Let's see. Should we

painstakingly endure, or should we

practice yoga, magic, Taoism on the

side?

Um I'm not exactly sure what
rhinoceros means by Taoism here because
there's like the Taoism of uh
essentially like mindful equanimity,
just uh being in harmony with what
happens, just kind of accepting
accepting what happens and living a kind
of minimalist life.
Like in the Dow Te Ching, something like
that. But then later on Taoism, uh it
really did adopt a lot of um
I guess you could even call it sorcery.
So, um I'm not exactly sure what kind of
Taoism he means, but uh really you
should be practicing mindfulness and
detachment and equanimity
um before the hardships arrive so that

you'll already be in the habit

of maintaining the equanimity when the

hardships arise, and it's it's way

easier that way.

Um you know, if you're practicing

mindfulness

when things are going pretty good, then

you're already in the habit for when

things start going pear-shaped

or uh sideways or whatever.

So, um

yeah, that's that would be the yogic

practice is just uh practicing

meditation and mindfulness, which uh

cultivates equanimity

and uh

greater

a greater capacity for accepting harsh

circumstances.

So, um

yeah.

Maybe maybe Myanmasaurus here means yoga

is just sort of like um

uh

systematic kind of practice.

But, um

yeah, I think I already answered that.

So, I'll just move on to the next one.

The next question is from Render.

And Render asks, "Do Buddhists make

sacrifices to idols?"

And uh there's different kinds of

sacrifices, I suppose.

But, um I I can only speak for Theravada
really. I I'm sure most Mahayana would
be the same way. I can't really speak
for the Tibetans, but um
if by sacrifices you mean like animal
sacrifices, then no.
Uh a good Buddhist would not sacrifice
an animal to an idol or to anything
else.
Um but, I mean there are different kinds
of sacrifices. I mean a sacrifice is
um you know, like giving away something
of value to you.
And um
I mean, that that can be possible.
Sometimes uh

uh Buddhists will make offerings to

Buddha statues, which technically could

be called idols.

So, um they'd be small a small

sacrifice, I assume. Like a little bit

of their food. Like it's really common

in Burma

that before people eat, they take a

little bit of the food and uh offer it

to like their the statue on their altar.

So, you could call that a sacrifice or

just offering flowers, something like

that. It would be a a teeny teeny little

sacrifice.

Um but, it's it's not killing an animal.

And really

um

generally people don't offer anything

really big uh to Buddha statues

or to pagodas, anything like that. They

might offer something really big to a

monastery, like lots of money, something

like that. Um whether you consider that

a sacrifice or not, I can't really say.

But um

um I think I answered that one. So, I'm

just going to move on to the next one.

And the next one is from

I'm not sure how to pronounce the name.

It's Michelle, I think.

Um a fellow who lives in Iceland.

And uh he says

"I often think about this right-wing

sort of spirituality that I was into for
some time. That's how I came across you.
I think about someone like Evola.
He wrote a book about Zen Buddhism, as
you may know.
What intrigues me is how can one
cultivate true wisdom, be ethical, and
don't cause suffering to others, and at
the same time cling to nationalism,
race, tribalism, and that sort of thing,
or engage in politics at all, which I
found pretty toxic, no matter
on which side one is. I'm not judging
people who do follow this path. I did
myself.
I hated Islam and cultural Marxism,
LGBT, etc., but I felt severe cognitive

dissonance and inner conflict with this.
It was unbearable.
You have been an eye-opener on this, and I also had a powerful mystical experience that showed me the unity of life and being, non-being. So, I want to know your position on this. What do you think about the Burmese monk who endorses violence against Muslims, and what do you think about Lama Ole Nydahl, who is Danish and his anti-Muslim immigration rhetoric?"
Okay, that's kind of a a long question, but uh I think I understand the gist of it.
It's like, how do you reconcile Dharma

with uh something like nationalism or

uh

ethnic

tribalism, something like that.

Um well, I think the keyword here is uh

cling. He's got Let's see. What

intrigues me is how can one cultivate

true wisdom, be ethical, and not cause

suffering to others, and at the same

time cling to nationalism, race,

tribalism, and that sort of thing. Well,

the thing is, I mean, if you're

practicing Buddhism correctly, you're

not clinging

to that stuff. I mean, you can adopt

nationalism if it seems like the

rational, obvious thing to do, or you

can adopt um you know, some sort of
tribalism, nonviolent, you know,
non-hateful tribalism. But, um
I mean, just belonging to a tribe,
people just a lot of people seem to
instinctively crave that, or just
instinctively feel more natural and
happy if they belong to some kind of
tribe, even like a a Dharma group can be
kind of a local tribe.
So, nationalism and and race and
tribalism and that sort of thing,
I mean, in and of themselves, they're
neutral. They're neither good nor bad.
It's just the attitudes of the people.
It's It's like anything in Buddhism or

the way karma works, the outward act
itself
is really more or less neutral.
But, it's the mental states that go
along with the action, the the outward
action, that really determine whether
it's good or bad. And I always give the
example of uh
the person who sees, you know, a snake
trying to swallow a frog, and the frog
is struggling and trying to get away,
and you chase the snake away,
but it I mean, if you do it out of
compassion for the frog, you've done
something wholesome and good, you've
made good karma. If you do it out of
aversion for the snake, you've done

something unwholesome and bad and made bad karma. It's exactly the same action, but whether it is wholesome or unwholesome, whether it's good karma or bad karma, depends on your motivation, why you did it. Like the mental states accompanying the action.

So, it can be that way with regard to nationalism or tribalism of any sort, also. Maybe not of any sort, but of many sorts.

And so, if it just seems like the obvious thing to do, like he mentions the Burmese monk, um who endorses violence against Muslims. Um whether he really does endorse

violence against Muslims, I'm not sure.

I don't know enough about him.

Uh his name is Venerable Wirathu.

And um

I'm not sure, I mean, it if he does

endorse violence against anybody, that

would be non-Buddhist, that would be

non-Dharmic.

But, I mean, there's a difference

between endorsing violence and just

wanting to preserve

like Buddhist tradition in Burma.

I mean, there's nothing necessarily

wrong with that. I mean, it's it's

worldly and samsaric to some extent, but

we are living in the world. We are human

beings living in the world. We do have

some

uh social responsibilities. Monks aren't

supposed to have as many,

but still

a good Buddhist can still want to

preserve Buddhism.

And if he thinks that um

the country being taken over by Muslims

is a real threat,

and that that could uh destroy Buddhism

in the country, then

he may consider it to be appropriate to

take measures,

although

they should not be motivated by hatred

or desire for violence or revenge or

anything like that. It should be done
objectively and peacefully and
with some equanimity and preferably with
some compassion.
With regard to Lama Ole Nydahl, I really
don't know that much about him. I'm told
about him a lot.
Um
but
it says here he's got anti-Muslim
immigration rhetoric.
Uh I mean, seriously, I mean, if he
really does think that it would be bad
for the country, then I mean, so long as
he's not motivated by hatred or anything
like that, so long as he's not endorsing
violence or or hate or anger trying to

stir up resentment or anything like
that, but as long as he's pointing out
what he considers to be a legitimate
danger
and he's trying to do something peaceful
about it, something positive, then yeah,
he's not doing anything necessarily
wrong at all. And that that applies to
just about anything. It's not just um
being
um
like not liking the idea of mass
immigration. I mean, it's just
from a worldly point of view, just mass
immigration from foreign cultures that
do not share the same values as your own

native culture, I mean, obviously that's
going to be destructive to some degree
to your own native culture. And if
you've got children especially, you have
to worry about that sort of thing.
So,
yeah, again, it all depends on on your
your motives and your your attitude.
So, if you can just objectively see
something as positive or helpful, even
though it might be politically incorrect
or frowned upon by others, then I mean,
you're not doing anything wrong
necessarily by endorsing that. And if
you see what you consider to be a a
danger just objectively
and pointing that out and maybe adopting

some peaceful non-violent measures
to to deal with it, then really there's
there's no conflict with
with at least lay Buddhism. Monk Monks,
monastics in general, they're supposed
to renounce that sort of thing and just
go off into a forest or into a a
cloister and meditate, but um
laypeople, I mean, you're just living in
the world, you've got responsibilities,
you've got duties.
And um trying to protect your your
community,
um that would be like an obvious duty.
So, I don't see necessarily anything
wrong with

uh a certain amount of nationalism and uh tribalism, so long as it's um got positive reasons and uh you're not endorsing anything really um non-Dharmic by doing it. And again, I one of the main words in the here in this question is cling. You don't You don't cling to it. But still, I mean, you can do it with a certain amount of philosophical detachment. Like if if your car gets a flat tire, you change the tire. I mean, you're not clinging to anything necessarily. You just see that the tire needs to be changed, so you get out and change it.

I mean, any kind of problem-solving can be that way. It doesn't require any kind

of clinging.

And uh the more philosophical

detachment, equanimity, and compassion

you've got, then then that's that's

good. That's the more the better.

So, I think I've answered that question

more or less well enough, so I'll move

on to Michelle's next question, and I

hope he forgives me if I mispronounce

his name, because I don't know how the

name Mike is pronounced in Iceland.

So, his next question, I assume it's a

he,

is as the situation

as the situation is now in Afghanistan,

what is your position on this conflict?

So, what is my What is my position on

the conflict in Afghanistan?

Um

I'm just observing it with interest,

really. I mean, I'm not really picking

sides.

Um

It's like the

I mean, it obviously was just bungled.

It was totally botched, the withdrawal.

People just want to blame like Donald

Trump for for even like saying that he

wanted to withdraw his forces, but uh

you know, Obama wanted to withdraw the

forces before that, and uh Biden, I'm

pretty sure he was speaking in favor of

withdrawing forces when he was vice

president, maybe even before then.

So

just withdrawing the forces is no

problem. It's just It was just totally

botched. It was just an idiotic fiasco

the way they went about it. Like

withdrawing First of all, just

Mhm.

apparently ignoring

the the likelihood that the Taliban was

going to take over.

And and he And Biden had like

intelligence reports saying that the

Taliban was going to take over really

fast, and he was just like, "Nope, not

going to happen."

And uh so it's like the wishful thinking of of liberals.

And that's That's one thing That's one of the main differences between the left and the right, you know, to the extent that left and right are still valid as a kind of binary.

Um the right seems to be more realistic in the sense of fear. They're willing to stick with stuff that is tried and true, stuff that they know from experience is going to work, whereas the left prefers a kind of idealistic wishful thinking to reality. You know, they're like opposed to the way things are, which is reality.

And they just prefer this these ideas

that don't necessarily have much grounding in uh empirical truth. And so you wind up with something like this where they just, you know, they're flying the the gay pride flag over the the embassy in Kabul just a few months ago. And they just assume that everyone's just going to see the light and convert to some kind of lefty liberalism, which of course isn't going to happen and it just collapses as soon as they leave. And then they just pull out their troops just essentially stranding like 100,000 people that we should be evacuated before the army leaves.

And then they just leave behind all this sophisticated weaponry and so forth. I mean the whole thing was just a a complete fiasco. And then like handing the the Taliban lists of people that's, you know, please let them through your checkpoints so they can be evacuated. But I mean those are like the main enemies of the Taliban. I mean it's it's essentially a kill list if the Taliban chooses it to be that way.

So,

I don't know. With regard to taking sides, I don't really take sides on this issue. I'm I assume the Afghanis have the right to self-determination

just like anybody else and they

I think to some degree they are

justified in rejecting a kind of

ideology that insists upon face masks

and tears down statues and opposes

freedom of speech.

So,

yeah, well, good luck to the people of

Afghanistan. I think uh

the only

I'm not sure I I I I assume that the

Persians conquered Afghanistan. So, I

mean that was in ancient times.

Alexander the Great conquered

Afghanistan or Bactria as it was called

back then without too much difficulty.

Although I think he had to marry a
Bactrian princess to uh really clinch
the deal.
But ever since then it's been pretty
hard. It's Afghanistan's a tough
country.
Like The Man Who Would Be King.
Uh yeah, it's it's all rugged,
mountainous terrain with like rugged
people there and uh
probably just best just let them do as
they please so long as they're not uh
launching terrorist attacks against us.
So, I think I'll just move on to
Michelle's next question.
Which is, should we take these people
take these people in as refugees taking

into consideration how many Afghan men

are

not generalizing

raping and killing. He's He's got like a

uh a link here to ABC News about uh

uh three Afghans in Austria who raped

and killed a 13-year-old girl.

And uh yeah, horrible stuff there, he

says.

So, taking in refugees, this kind of

goes back to the

to the earlier question of uh I mean, if

you see that something obviously is is

dangerous, I mean, it's

it's not necessarily

evil racism or hate speech or anything

like that. I mean, it's obviously just

going with statistics

you're going to be you're going to be

importing a lot of

violent people who do not share the same

values as Western civilization.

So,

yeah, I mean, it's

I don't see necessarily anything wrong

with uh

wanting to very carefully vet immigrants

instead of just opening the gates and

just letting them rush in like is

happening pretty much wherever you've

got

um like people of European ancestry, the

the liberal or the left side of the

population is is essentially uh wanting

to commit racial suicide.

Just just for ideological propagandist

reasons.

So, yeah, should we take in these people

as refugees?

Uh

Yeah, I mean, they should be very

carefully vetted. I mean, some of them,

I'm sure they were like allies of of the

US in Afghanistan. And if they stay in

Afghanistan, they're going to be

beheaded or worse.

So, it does make sense that they would

leave. And uh preferably, they'd go

somewhere where they are welcome instead

of just being forcibly transplanted into
some American town or some European
village where they just are just aliens
and do not share the same values as the
people around them.
So, maybe uh import them into uh
like uh left-leaning cities and uh let
the leftists deal with it since they're
the ones that are mainly keen on that
sort of thing.
So, I'll move on to Michelle's next
question.
Which is, what was the position of the
Buddha?
Uh presumably with regard to the stuff
above that that Michelle was talking
about here.

Um I'll just ask the question again.

What was the position of the Buddha? Did he discriminate between northern Indians and southern Indians or just people in general? Is discrimination part of a genuine spiritual path?

Um the position of the Buddha, well, he didn't discriminate between northern Indians and southern Indians. He really didn't discriminate.

Um although by modern or post-modern standards, yeah, he was he was a racist and discriminated and all that. But, um he he judged people individually if he judged them at all.

So,

the main teaching of the Buddha is like

a person is good or bad not because of

their ancestry, but because of their

moral character.

And um

so, like any man of any race could

become a monk. He could join the bhikkhu

Sangha.

And um

it just turned out that it was mainly

men of the upper classes, especially

early on,

who were becoming monks. And uh

the Buddha was not discriminating

against like the aboriginal peoples or

the Shudras, like the lower the lower

castes.

Although, by modern standards, he would have been just a horrific racist because there was not equity in the Sangha, you know, there wasn't racial I mean like um you know, the same proportions of people in the in the national population as there was in the Sangha, presumably. If you read the texts, it it does seem that it was mostly

um

men of the upper castes who were becoming monks.

So, but I mean it was the Buddha just said anybody can enter, and it just turned out that different tribes, different uh ethnicities,

or even different social classes have
got different values and different
priorities.
And um
it may be that people of the upper
classes were more likely to have had
their fill of worldliness and have found
it wanting and just went in search of
something better, maybe.
Whereas the lower classes, you know,
they they don't have enough food to eat,
you know, they don't have enough money,
so they think, "Oh, if I had enough food
to eat and I had enough money, then I'd
be happy."
But uh a lot of the the upper classes,
they get all that, like the Buddha

himself, of according to the according to the legend, you know, he had palaces and and harems and and all this sort of thing, and he still wasn't satisfied because no matter what you do in life, you're never going to be completely satisfied. That's the first noble truth of Buddhism.

And so, often the best monks, the best renunciants,

are the ones who came from a privileged background.

And even with all their privileges and their wealth and their their beauty, and their their social standing, and all that, they still weren't satisfied.

And so, they went in search of something else. They went in search of spirit.

So,

let's see.

So, the Buddha, to some degree, he did discriminate, but it was it was on on the basis of moral character, rather than ethnicity or ancestry or any such thing.

And see, the last part of this question is, is discrimination part of a genuine spiritual path?

Um you can say discernment can be.

Um you know, it's just choosing to associate with wise people and choosing to avoid the society of fools. That could be a kind of discrimination.

It's not racial discrimination.

It's just uh discrimination with regard

to

uh the moral character of who you're

going to associate with. So, some kinds

of discrimination, I mean, you

discriminate um between good and bad,

you know, between what is appropriate

and inappropriate. I mean, that can be

called discrimination.

Um you may be

um or Michelle here may be uh referring

only to like racial or ethnic

discrimination, in which case uh

uh whether it's uh part of a genuine

spiritual path, I mean, that's

debatable. I assume there are some people like Julius Evola who might be able to argue in favor of that. It may be that like Evola was saying that um you know, each each tribe, each ethnicity has its own spirit, and so it would have its own unique path to enlightenment or some such.

Um although even Evola was saying that I mean, you can have a a black man who has the spirit of an Aryan, and so, um it's it's like an in-

Yeah, it's like the spirit of a race is is like such, but then there can be people from other ethnicities who just gravitate towards the spirit of a of a different race than the one they were

born into. So that can happen, too.

So

Yeah, that that's a debatable question.

Is discrimination part of a genuine

spiritual path? Es- especially if you

interpret it as racial discrimination,

um usually not. Although just I would

leave the door maybe slightly open just

for some possibility that I can't think

of.

It may be.

So, let's see. Next question. This is uh

I think the last question from Michelle

from Iceland.

As you mentioned, the thing that is off

the scale, there is no self in the end.

How is it that people identify with

nations, tribes, etc.?

Aren't they also ultimately illusions?

Or is reality fundamentally tribalistic

and compassion, love, bliss, and all

that are just human religious concepts

and nature is just violent and comp

like the philosophy of the Order of Nine

Angels and other esoteric right-wing

movements?

So this is kind of two questions.

Um

Let's see. The first part is uh

As you often mentioned, the thing that

is off the scale, there is no self in

the end. How is it people identify with

nations, tribes, etc.? Aren't they also

ultimately illusions? Well, I mean, you can say that uh nations, tribes, etc. are ultimately ultimately illusions, but the books on my bookcase are ultimately illusions. I am ultimately an illusion. That mirror is ultimately an illusion. I mean, you when you're living in the world, it's Maya. It's just this kind of generated um virtual reality that we're living in. A conditional reality. It's not ultimately real. It's just kind of provisionally real.

So, um yeah, the nations and the tribes and so forth are just as real or unreal as pretty much anything else. The the trees and the cars and the cities and

all that,

clouds and mountains.

So, I mean, when you're living in the

world, I mean, you have to deal with

worldly

worldly reality, quote unquote,

conventional truth.

And uh nations and tribes are just as

much of that conventional truth as are

the clouds and the trees and the

mountains.

So,

I mean, it's it's a consideration. As

long as you're living in the world, all

of that is a consideration.

Um and then the next part of the

question here is, "Or is reality

fundamentally tribalistic and

compassion, love, bliss, and all that

are just human religious concepts and

nature is just violent and comp?"

Like the philosophy of the order of the

nine angels. I I've never heard of the

the order of the nine angels.

But um

Let's see. Reality, well, ultimate

reality is not fundamentally tribalistic

or compassion. Um ultimate reality is

just off the scale, like he mentions

above. It's just unthinkable.

But when you're dealing with

uh empirical reality or conventional

reality, then uh

um going with going with Buddhist

philosophy, going with Dharma,

um

nature really is violent by nature. I

mean,

um

I've lived in a forest, not just like in

a cabin in a forest, but just like on

the ground in a forest. And uh I mean,

it is a battle zone. I mean, if you're

living out in nature, it's it's just a

battlefield.

Like um you know, the birds aren't

singing because they're happy. They're

singing deadly seriousness.

And uh you know, everything is out

trying to eat something else. You know,

you're either trying to eat something
else or trying to avoid being eaten by
something else.
Even the plants have to avoid being
eaten by something else somehow or
another by growing thorns or having
toxic compounds or chemicals in them or
something.
So,
yeah, you can say that nature is
violent, but
um something like he's got compassion,
love, and bliss. Those are coming closer
to ultimate reality.
The the more compassion and love and
bliss you've got,

the more wise you are, the closer you

are. It's like the more transparent you

are to ultimate reality.

Like you've got

like

the most hardened psychopath

could be just spiritually opaque. I

mean, if that's even possible. It may be

that no matter how bad a person is,

they're still going to have like a

little glimmer of light coming through

them.

But, you know, you've got some kind of

vampire or something, they're just going

to be opaque. You know, no spirit, no

light shines through them. And then a

fully enlightened being, they could be

like transparent, you know, they're just like a pane of glass and just the spirit shines right through them. But, the average person is going to be kind of translucent, like
a bathroom window or like a shower a shower curtain or something, where some light comes through, but it's not perfectly coming through. And the more compassion, love, and bliss you've got, as a general rule, the more light you're going to have be coming through you because in a way it's a worldly manifestation
of of of this light or of spirit or truth or reality

um Nirvana, God, Tao,

Brahman, whatever you want to call it.

So,

yeah, I mean, going with the tribalistic

and

the nationalistic stuff, that's just an

aspect of of

a worldly reality.

And if you completely abandon that,

um I mean, if everybody were an arahant,

I assume that would be gone. But uh if

one nation abandons it, as a general

rule, that nation just collapses. I

mean, that's kind of what history shows.

You got too much diversity,

then um you don't have like anything

like you don't have a binding agent. You

don't have anything holding the society

together anymore. You've got different

parts of the society wanting to go in

different directions with different

values and so forth, then it

disintegrates.

Uh

so,

I mean,

to have compassion and love is good,

obviously, and you should have as much

of that as you can,

but still um you you should have your

feet on the ground and look at things

realistically

and just acknowledge that I mean,

there's a certain amount of
self-preservation.
You should take measures to preserve not
only your individual self and maybe the
people that depend on you, but also just
your community cuz to some degree your
community depends on you, also.
And uh that's where the nationalism or
the tribalism can come in in a valid
way, um
even within the context of Dharma.
But again, I mean, you you anything that
you do that is motivated by anger or
hatred or resentment or revenge is going
to be bad karma. So,
the outward actions of trying to
protect and strengthen your community or

your tribe or your nation should be um as peaceful as you can manage, and you should have as at least neutral mental states. Even if you can't manage compassion and love, at least there should be a kind of philosophical detachment and neutrality rather than negativity and hatred and anger and so forth.

So, I think I'll just move on to the next question. I hope I answered that one.

And the next one is from Oroboro.

And Oroboro asks, is compassion a form of attachment? And if so, should we free ourselves from it?

Well, I've kind of talked about

compassion um

just a minute ago.

Um no, compassion is not necessarily a

form of attachment. It is

somewhat paradoxical to me. I used to it

this I used to think about this a lot

because compassion literally means

suffering with. You know, the calm means

with

and the passion means suffering.

Um so, compassion means you know, you

feel another person's suffering. And if

you've got like a a wise saint who is

above ordinary suffering, then for him

to have compassion or her to have

compassion for a suffering being, they'd

have to be feeling that suffering such in a way would kind of negate their their enlightenment or something. But um it really doesn't work that way. In a way, you're just transmuting it into perfection. Like if a saint sees an angry person, you know, they're not seeing it in the same terms as the angry person is seeing themselves. They're just seeing it as like a just a form of energy
or something like that. So um but getting back to the question here, is compassion a form of attachment? Uh and if so, should we free ourselves from it? There is

there is kind of a subtle difference. I

mean

um if you see somebody and I I do this a

lot. I go out in public and you see

people that are just all messed up. You

know, they're all crippled up or they're

just like messed up on drugs or whatever

and just mentally ill. And it can make

you feel uncomfortable. And um

so you can sort of feel have a kind of

compassion

that

it's not entirely wholesome in that it's

like you want to help that person just

to make yourself feel better, something

like that.

Um

yeah, that could I mean that could have
a certain element of unskillful karma
involved.
But, um
compassion in general is a good thing.
The Buddha himself was motivated,
supposedly according to the according to
the text, he was motivated by
compassion, moved by compassion
to help others, to help all beings if
possible.
So, yeah, genuine compassion,
um yeah, it's not an attachment and we
don't need to free ourselves from it.
Although, there are certain
um emotions that can mimic compassion

that um

that really are not all that skillful.

Um

I'm trying to think of the word for it.

It's not necessarily sympathy.

Um

Now,

I'm having a mental block, but there is

a kind of emotion where it can kind of

mimic compassion, but really it does

involve attachment.

So, it's sort of like like with love. I

mean, there's different kinds of love.

You can have unattached love, which

would be like enlightened spiritual kind

of love. Or then you could have like the

really attached, clingy, really

um like conditional kind of love, which has a little bit of love in it, but is mostly like animal instincts and that sort of thing. So, you can have like an animal instinct kind of compassion that maybe has a little bit of real compassion in it, but is mostly just like animal instinct stuff, like social instincts, that kind of a thing. That uh I mean, that you should uh at least try to transmute it up into a higher level. Um because even though it has some good in it, I mean, it's it's pretty crude. So.

Um

that's a long answer to a short

question. So, I'm just moving on to the next one.

And the next question is from B Pat 427. Good old B Pat.

And B Pat 427 asks, are you familiar with the writings of Miguel Serrano and or Savitri Devi? If so, do you have an opinion on them?

And I haven't read a single book by either of these people. I've read quotes by both of them.

And I'm pretty sure both of them are of the opinion that Adolf Hitler

um

is a god, like a small g god. I think Savitri Devi, I'm not sure about Miguel Serrano, but Savitri Devi considered

Adolf Hitler to be like an avatar of

Vishnu or or some such.

Um

and both of the both of these people,

the quotes that I have read seemed very

um

it was in a style that was really alien

to what I can really relate to. I just

like succinct and to the point when it

comes to getting the point across and

they were possibly just like products of

of like the mid-20th century where they

they liked flowery eloquence

as almost a substitute for real

substance.

And so,

personally, I would be very surprised if

if Adolf Hitler is in a high heaven

realm. And I'd be even more surprised if

he was an avatar of Vishnu.

Um maybe some kind of instrument of of

divine powers in some way,

but um yeah, I just I really cannot

agree with people who considered Adolf

Hitler to have been like a really wise,

enlightened, more almost

almost immaculate person.

Because I mean, he was human. I mean

he had his quirks, he had his hang-ups

like everybody else.

Um

I mean, he wasn't as bad as the

propagandists

um

masquerading as historians would would

uh

um have us believe. But still, I mean,

he he was not a saint.

So,

yeah, I I really am not much interested

in Miguel Serrano or Savitri Devi. I

don't think I'll ever read either

uh a book written by either of them.

Although, maybe I will, who knows.

Uh but yeah, I I do not think that they

were correct. But, I think possibly

Miguel Serrano, especially, was more

interested in just building up the myth

and just going with the power of the

myth. And um you know, that
I doubt that there's going to be any
Hitler cult that's really going to take
off. It's not going to strike traction
anytime soon.
But, uh at least there would be more
grounding in in reality, just uh
emphasizing the importance of the power
of myth to really unify a people, get
them behind a belief so strongly that
the belief becomes virtually true. And I
would say something like like
Christianity is a good example of that.
Where I mean, it was I I mean, any
non-Christian would have to say that you
know, Jesus was not the only begotten
son of God almighty who died for our

sins. I mean, only a Christian would

believe that, I assume.

So,

uh we consider that to be a myth.

But nevertheless, it's a very powerful

myth that it unified Western

civilization for a thousand years and uh

really accomplished great things just

through the power of that unifying

belief.

So, I mean, I might be able to agree to

that extent. But, I think I'm going to

move on to the next question here.

Also from Bipath427.

And this is kind of going in a different

direction.

Are you going to learn G-code for

machining at your new job? Also, what

kind of stuff do you guys make?

So, he's referring to the job I got 2

weeks ago. The first paying job

I have had in more than 30 years.

The last paying job I had before I was a

monk was

ended around 1990 and I was working as a

fisheries biologist for the University

of Washington School of Fisheries.

But, uh now I'm working in a sheet metal

shop.

And I'm not exactly sure what G-code is.

Some of the machines at the shop do have

computers hooked up to them and you

program in

like the shape

you know, it's like you get a special

order, somebody wants a certain shape of

of metal gadget, you know, like uh

like a like a gutter is an obvious

example, some kind of trim, you know,

they wanted a certain angle that isn't

in stock. So, you got to program it into

the computer and then it it tells you,

you know, how to bend it and and this

sort of thing. So, whether that involves

G-code or not, I have no idea. It's it's

it's not really

um like a your standard sheet metal shop

is not really hyper advanced

technologically. You know, there are

some computers and that sort of thing,

but um

it's it's not really super advanced like

like a a factory making auto parts or

something like that. Because really we

are just you start off with just rolls

of of sheet metal and then it gets cut

up into sheets and sometimes we can just

sell just sheets of just flat metal, but

then usually um you know, we're making

um stuff out of the sheet metal, but

it's like rolled or stamped and cut and

that sort of thing.

So, um

yeah, it's mostly like uh

uh like

metal sheet metal construction materials

is mainly what we're dealing with.

So, with regard to the G-code, I don't know, but uh,

there is there are some computer things you have to learn. If if you if you work certain machines, but I'm just uh, entry level. I know, I'm starting from scratch.

And so, I'm just uh, doing lots of fetching and toting. Which uh, is actually good for good for my health.

It's good exercise. It's really a workout. I'm like a professional weightlifter practically at this point.

So, the next question is from Sam Lam.

And he asks a number of questions here.

He is a

new member

of the uh, SubscribeStar team. Of the

tribe. The the SubscribeStar tribe.

And uh, his first question

is, "Brainwaves have been studied in

meditating monks and in those who watch

television.

There are specific researchers that have

studied the similarities in brainwaves

during the two activities. Please

comment on the possible meditative state

people may have when watching

television."

Well, that's kind of interesting. Um,

I wrote a an essay long ago, which is in

one of my books. I think it's in my

first book, Essays in Theravada

Buddhism.

Um,

discussing like how meditation as a

technique got invented in the first

place. I mean, it had to have some kind

of beginning. Had to have a start to it.

And one of the possibilities

is that meditation

uh,

got its origins in just gazing at a

campfire. Because, you know, our Stone

Age ancestors didn't have TV, but they

had like the the Stone Age equivalent of

TV is just a campfire. And anybody who's

gone camping

knows that uh, looking into a campfire can have a real hypnotic effect and it probably that that is an instinct in our species that we are just fascinated by the flickering lights and it keeps us, especially the the little cave kids from wandering away into the dark where the wolves and the leopards are.

And

my my theory is that television, one reason why people are so fascinated by television and just vegetate in front of a TV screen is it's like a misplaced instinct. You know, it's like the instinct of gazing into a campfire at night. And um

nowadays we've just got the TV instead

of a campfire.

But um

it's

it's a really crude superficial level of

meditation even if you could call it

meditation. So it's more like a mild

hypnotic trance than anything that would

be called right concentration or samatha

samadhi

in Buddhism.

So it could be that specific researchers

have studied the similarities in brain

wave during the two activities, but I

would guess that they're relatively

clueless with regard to what is good

meditation as opposed to a light

hypnotic trance.

And there are a lot of a lot of

meditators who just can't tell the

difference. In Burma it's very common

that people will consider

um

like self-hypnosis to be like genuine

samatha samadhi right concentration like

valid Buddhist meditation.

And um

they really can't tell the difference.

And uh like

some some meditation centers, in my

opinion,

um are confusing jhana with hypnotic

trance. Somebody goes into a a deep

hypnotic trance and they see what they

think they ought to see. The teacher's going to The teacher tells them, you know, you should be seeing the mind arising and passing away uh you know, like 13 trillion times a second and you should be able to see your own internal organs and all this or remember past lives, that sort of thing.

And then they go into a hypnotic trance and think that they are seeing these things, but uh they're just imagining what they think they ought to see.

I think there's a lot of that in Buddhism.

But um

I don't consider that to be like genuine

jhana. I could be mistaken.

So, yeah, with regard to this first

question, then uh

I think I've pretty much answered it.

But um the the same kind of If you're in

the same kind of mental state when

you're meditating as when you're

watching TV, then you are not meditating

very well.

I would just say that. Um to say the

least, you know, you're just like in a

mild trance state, which uh is not

really what Buddhist meditation is

supposed to be about.

And so, I'll just move on to the next

question. I think there's a little bit

more about this a little later on.

Okay. Now, this one This one's kind of a difficult one. It's I'm not fully certain what um Sam Lam is referring to here, but I'll I'll give it a shot.

His question is,

"Can you address the possibility of those who meditate falling into hypnosis or an influence state from external energies during meditation?

For example, in deep meditation, how would one know if they were being influenced by an outside source unless there was an observer? Further, let's say we can observe hypnosis or just an

influence from an external energy source on a deep meditation, what would you say about this?" Well, I'm not exactly sure what Sam Lam is referring to with regard to external energies.

I mean, it could be like somebody speaking, or would it be some kind of uh like a spirit trying to invade the body or or what? I'm not exactly sure what Sam Lam has in mind here,

but um I'll try to answer this question as well as I can. Can you address the possibility of those who meditate falling into hypnosis or an influenced state from external energies during meditation? Well, one handy rule of thumb

with regard to meditation is I mean

there

let's see getting

Okay, I'll just say I if you are

oblivious to your surroundings, then

chances are you're in a hypnotic trance

and not really in a state of

mindfulness.

Like if you don't hear the clock ticking

anymore, you don't feel the mosquito

biting you. You're just oblivious to

everything around you.

Chances are you're in a

a hypnotic trance

and not in what Buddhism would consider

to be samadhi or samatha, which is right

mindfulness.

Because like fourth jhana in Buddhism is

purification of mindfulness. I mean

that's just

pure mindfulness at that point.

And uh if you're purely mindful, you're

not going to be like a hibernating

squirrel. You're not going to be like in

a state of suspended animation where

you're oblivious to everything around

you.

So if you're meditating correctly,

you're going to be in a state of

heightened awareness and not just

sitting there in a in a stupor.

So that's the first point that I would

make.

Um with regard to an influenced state
from external energies, again, I mean if
you are
meditating well, meditating correctly,
you've got um
mindfulness that is still
well developed, you know, you're still
mindful, then you're going to be aware
of whatever happens. Anything that
arises, anything that happens in your
mind, you're going to see it. And if
you're doing um really like relatively
deep meditation, as soon as it arises,
as soon as it even starts to arise, you
just see it and then it just fades back
out again. So, you'd be pretty much uh

impervious to any kind of uh influences. You'd be aware of them, but they just wouldn't have any effect on you. It'd be like your mind is like a mirror. Like a like a mirror. Whatever is in front of the mirror gets reflected there and then as soon as it leaves, it's just not reflected there anymore. It doesn't leave a trace in the mirror. The mirror is just unaffected. It's there very clearly when it's there and as soon as it's gone, it just goes. And um you're in a a state of just heightened awareness when this is happening. Because if you're not in a state of heightened awareness, then you just get caught up into old habits and you just

start thinking and attaching to things

and you know

daydreaming or whatever.

So, let's see.

For example, in deep meditation, how

would one know if they were being

influenced by an outside source unless

there was an observer? Well, they are

you are the observer. Even when you're

in deep meditation, you are still an

observer.

Cuz otherwise, you're you're like in a

trance and you're like a hibernating

squirrel and I don't think you're really

um

Yeah, I don't think you're really

meditating correctly, at least from the point of view of Theravada Buddhism. There may be like in Hinduism or something

um you may be able to just go into like a state of suspended animation where somebody can hit you in the head with a hammer and you just don't feel anything and you're just fine and and you

I mean, that kind of thing is mentioned even in some Theravada texts. Like there's a really weird Theravada text stuff. Um

I think it's venerable Sariputta who's meditating just in deep jhana.

And uh a couple of ogres or yakshas come by and one of them just he just can't

help. He sees the bald head of the shaved monk sitting there. He just wants to smash it. And he hits him as hard he hits him hard enough to just like cleave a a in half and has no effect. And then the ogre realizes that he just uh smashed the head of a saint in vain. And so, he the ground just open up and he falls into hell. And then uh finally, when Sariputta is done meditating, his his friend Maha Moggallana, who was also a meditation master, asked him, "Then didn't you feel anything just now?"

And uh Sariputta says, "No, but I do have a little bit of a headache."

And I would consider that story just to be a kind of mythology.

I mean, unless you really believe in ogres smashing people in the head. Um probably composed by someone who already, even in ancient times, was confusing hypnotic trance, where you just like a hibernating squirrel and oblivious to everything around you, with purification of mindfulness, where you're in a heightened state of awareness.

Even then, I mean, if an ogre smashed you, I mean, you might not be bothered by it. But cuz you would just be like the mirror. You just like, you know, it it's there and then it's

not there as soon as the smashing is

done. It's just gone and you just keep

sitting there.

Um so, yeah, I think there is a little

bit of a misunderstanding with regard to

what

meditation is in Buddhism. And it's not

going into a trance, where you're

oblivious to everything around you.

Where

I mean, if that happens to you, then you

probably are in a hypnotic trance.

And it may be that you are vulnerable to

external energy

sources or um just, you know, somebody

messing with you or whatever.

But if you are in a heightened state of awareness, like purity of mindfulness, then uh yeah, you're you're pretty much uh invincible, I would say.

So, the next question, also from Sam Lam,

is the idea of karma or the language surrounding it seems to be a problem, especially in the West or maybe everywhere else.

It is karma as a state of mind versus karma as cause and effect. In The Tao of Physics by Fritjof Capra, page 88, it states, "Quote,

the world of Maya changes continuously because the divine lila is a rhythmic dynamic play. The dynamic force of the

play is karma. Karma means action where everything is dynamically connected with everything else. In the words of the Gita, karma is the force of creation where from all things have life. The meaning of karma, like that of Maya, has been brought down from its original cosmic level to the human level where it has acquired a psychological sense.

As long as our view of the world is fragmented, as long as we are under the spell of Maya and think that we are separated from our environment and can act independently, we are bound by karma.

Being free from the bond of karma means

to realize the unity and harmony of all nature, including ourselves."

Unquote.

And then Sam Lam says, "Please comment."

Well, first of all, I would say that Fritjof Capra there seems to be going with the more Hinduistic conception of karma.

That in Theravada Buddhism, karma is volition. "Cetanāhaṃ bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi." Which is a famous quote um attributed to the Buddha saying, "Monks, I say that volition is karma."

Or if you don't like the word volition for cetana, it would be something like will. It would be like Schopenhauer's will. And it is a mental state. Karma is

a mental state. It's not some sort of

cosmic law of every action has an equal

and opposite reaction, anything like

that. I used to believe that before I

became a monk. And then studying

Buddhist texts, I realized that karma is

a mental state. Karma is volition.

And um

or will,

urge,

whatever you want to call it, but it is

a mental state.

And so,

yeah, I'm not exactly sure where to take

this because I'm not exactly sure what

the

the question is other than please

comment.

But um yeah, I would say that Capra is

going with a more Hinduistic and cosmic

understanding of karma that

um would would not be considered a

correct interpretation of it from a from

an orthodox Theravada Buddhist point of

view.

Where

um

like a really simple

um description of karma that uh the

average materialistic normie even could

probably accept is just force of habit.

In fact, I read a

um a translation a long time ago that

translated karma literally as habit energy.

They just called it habit energy. I mean, it wasn't a literal translation when I said literally, but but it was that was the translation was habit energy for karma. And that's a really good translation cuz that is really what karma is. It's like an automatic pilot. It's like when you're not fully conscious, which is pretty much all of the time, then you just your habits and your conditioning are running your life for you.

And that's that's pretty much how karma works in everyday life.

Almost everything we do

is habitual to some degree.

And um that's that's how karma works

just at a really superficial level, but

you get a little deeper and it's like,

you know, the way you dream is also

based on just habits and so forth. And

um

this life you can say is a kind of

dream.

And that's that's how karma works. It's

just the habitual beliefs and habitual

urges and so forth that are creating a

certain world for us.

Um but it is a mental state.

And so I think I commented So I'll move

on to Sam Lam's fourth question,

which is

What if you met the Dalai Lama in a room

and asked him a question, what would be

the question?

That's a good question.

In fact, I've I've considered this and

to tell you the truth, I mean, the

obvious question for me to ask him is

like, "Hey, how's it going?"

That would be like That would be like

the natural first question that I would

ask. And if I only got one question, I'd

probably just blow it, you know, that

would just blow the one question that I

got. I'd just blurt out, "How's it

going, your your holiness?"

Um but uh let's see. If if I could

formulate a serious question I was going

to ask the Dalai Lama,

then um

maybe I would ask his insight

as to like what is the difference in

spirituality

between like an Asian Buddhist, like an

Asian-born Buddhist, like a Tibetan or a

Burmese person, and a Westerner who's

like adopting

Buddhism as like um

you know, a non-native

um

you know, like a non-native

philosophical or spiritual system.

And you know, what would be the

different uh different approaches you
would take with a Westerner than what
you would take with with an Easterner,
something like that.
That might be a a useful question,
although um
and you maybe he would tell me something
that I I didn't already didn't hadn't
already occurred to me.
Because uh there are some pretty obvious
differences.
So, yeah, aside from "Hey, how's it
going?" Um yeah, it'd probably be the
question of uh you know, what is the
difference in spirituality between
Easterners and Westerners, and what

would be the different approach in like
teaching Easterners and Westerners.
And I already have some insights into
that, but I would really be interested
in in hearing his take on that.
So, next question and last question from
Sam Lam.
If you could say one thing to one of the
money-making Starbucks monks that
happily have a Starbucks Buddhist
retreat, what would it be?
And I would say
to any kind of a Western money-making
Starbucks monk, as he calls them,
um if you really want to know what it's
like to be a monk, you really want to
know what it's like to follow Dhamma the

way the Buddha taught it, you should spend at least a few years in Asia. Just go to it and not like some rich monastery in town with electricity and everything, either. You go out into the countryside, into some remote, pretty rough area, and and live there for a few years, and take your bowl and walk into the village for your daily bowl of food, and maybe sleep under a tree,
at least a little bit, and just live the lifestyle that is described in the Pali texts, instead of uh
just having a having a nice time hanging out in the West with uh Starbucks.
And probably most of them would just

wouldn't go for it. They'd come up with excuses, you know, I've got this condition that won't let me live in hot climates or whatever, you know. Can't be too far away from my aging parents or something.

But um

And most of them you really can't tell them very much, cuz they they already know. I mean, if if they have any familiarity with the Pali texts, they know that the lifestyle that uh is described here with the the money-making, and Starbucks Buddhist retreats, and so forth, that uh they're already on the wrong on the wrong track.

And uh so

there's not really much you can tell
them, but I would say just advice to any
monk in the West, who especially one
who's ordained in the West, is if you
really want to taste what it's like to
be a monk like described in the Poly
texts, then you go out into a forest in
Asia, Buddhist Asia.
And, uh, spend at least 2 years there.
The more the more the better.
So, the next question is from a person
who writes his name in Japanese
characters,
and I believe it would be transliterated
into English as Yuichiro.
And he asks,

this is kind of an interesting one, and
I've considered this before.
"Can being an absolute Chad get you into
heaven realms? As in being a legendary
hero, etc., not just being attractive to
women, like Hercules or something."
And, yeah, I've considered that. I mean,
that was really how you became a god to
the ancient Greeks, probably to just the
ancient Indo-Europeans in general,
um, in really ancient times. I mean,
that was if you wanted to be go up into
heaven and become a god yourself,
you know, a small g one,
then you did it through
heroism. You know, you didn't do it
through saintliness so much. You did it

through a kind of,

um, magnanimity, just greatness of soul.

You know, you just had like a god-like

character, and that would be enough to

to make you a god. And I think that is

possible. I mean, you don't have to be,

um, a saint necessarily

to to go upwards. It could just be, uh,

I mean, like a Roman emperor like

Trajan,

um, he, I mean, he was, uh, a military

commander. He he was responsible for the

deaths of thousands and thousands of

people, but, uh,

he was a wise and benevolent ruler to to

the Romans and led them in prosperity

and so forth. And so, it may be that he

got a lot more

uh good karma than bad. And that might

be enough just through all of his great

deeds, you know, a really great king

even though he does some bad stuff and

is no saint.

Then uh yeah, it's possible. I've I've

considered that.

Um like uh Savitri Devi, I think uh was

saying uh Hitler was like that. But uh

I wouldn't say Hitler was an absolute

chad.

Um

Yeah, so I do think it is possible.

Although

um

it's just my opinion.

So, the next question from Yuichiro,

"Is transhumanism

satanic?" And he's got satanic in

quotation marks.

And

there's been a lot of discussion of

transhumanism and the technological

singularity on the Discord server

associated with my subscribe star

channel.

And uh lots and lots of back and forth.

There seem to be two parties. One party

is that uh it's just like the the

technological singularity just isn't

going to happen because people just

cannot create superintelligent computers that are going to become more conscious than we are. And then other people are saying, "Well, it's it's pretty much inevitable." I've I'm kind of maybe of the second group. I think it's certainly possible that it could happen.

You just start off with a computer that's just has like a glimmer of of consciousness. And I've been told that even that is impossible. I don't see why it would be impossible for a computer to be conscious just in and of itself. I mean, you could just take a like a a virtual copy of a brain and upload it into a or download it into a computer. Upload, download, I can't remember now.

And um and maybe that would mimic the function of a brain, which would then, you know, serve as like a uh a basis for consciousness even though it's maybe not generating consciousness. I mean, I don't think a brain generates consciousness either.

But, um I think I'm I'm straying away from the question here.

Is transhumanism satanic? And um I don't think so. I mean, whether something is good or bad, it's like I keep saying. I mean, I have to just keep saying this almost every every video every question and answer video that really just outward circumstances are neutral.

Outward circumstances are neither good
nor bad. It's It's like your attitude.
It's the mental states that that
accompany the outward circumstances that
make it good or bad. And so,
transhumanism, which is like um
I mean, to some we've already moved in
the direction of transhumanism. Just
like artificial parts in humans
is is already transhumanism. I guess
these glasses are like
proto-transhumanism.
I've got a a few uh capped teeth,
root canals, that sort of thing. So,
that could be like proto-transhumanism
right there, and that's not satanic.
But, uh you start having I I have I've

read they've already got a kind of artificial blood where you can hold your breath for 2 hours.

Um they've already got it working in rats.

Um

I assume that what uh Yuichiro is uh asking here is with regard to like brain implants and that sort of thing or maybe even just uploading a human brain into a computer like I was already mentioning.

And again, it's whether it's satanic or not depends on the the motives and the the mental states of the people involved.

Um it could be good or it could be bad

and and most likely it'll just be some muddy color of gray like everything else.

So, yeah, I don't think it's necessarily good or bad. It's just what we make of it is going to make it good or bad. And just just our attitude with regard to it.

So, it could go either way. And in most likelihood, it'll just be some shade of gray.

If it happens to the extent that it does happen.

So, the next question.

Second to last question here.

From Tṛimśikā Vijñapti.

This is his first question, I think,

unless he's uh changed names recently.

And he says, "Paññobhāsa, are you

familiar with Bhikkhu Bodhi's discussion

of the social teachings of the Buddha?

If so, what are your thoughts?"

Well, it turns out

that Tṛimśikā Vijñapti here

posted on the Discord server

uh a YouTube video by Bhikkhu Bodhi

discussing the social teachings of the

Buddha.

But the problem is

it was relatively boring talk. And I

listened to maybe 15 minutes of it. And

the whole thing was about an hour and a

half, I think. And so, uh 15 minutes was

plenty. I'm I'm more or less familiar

with what Bhikkhu Bodhi says.

And so, um it seems to me that

he

Bhikkhu Bodhi himself is just like an

ultra left like a woke karate at this

point.

He's uh he's definitely he's not

awakened, he's just woke.

And just really just super left-wing. In

fact, he's even flirting with

excommunication

by endorsing women's reproductive

rights.

Quote unquote. And um

yeah, from a Buddhist point of view,

that is uh

yeah, he's flirting with parajika or
just like excommunication at that point.
Um and I might as well mention this
because um
from the Buddhist point of view, life
begins at conception. A human life
begins at conception. So, any kind of
abortion is terminating a human life,
which is murder. And any monk who even
participates in that, even encourages it
to the extent that it it persuades
somebody that to have it done, that
person is an accomplice in murder. And
they're just kicked out of the monkhood
for the rest of their life.
So, Bhikkhu Bodhi, he seems to uh

put in a lot of cases more importance on leftist politics than on Dhamma, even though I am sure he would disagree with that.

But, um

the social teachings of the Buddha, it it could be that he's cherry-picking this and that, you know, he likes this thing that could be considered leftist. Like, there is a a sutta in the Digha Nikaya where the Buddha is um or this text attributed to the Buddha is saying that uh crime is caused by poverty and that the a good king should subsidize farmers and give them seed grain and so forth.

And um

it I mean, to some degree, although

there's still going to be I mean, if

everybody has the same amount of

everything, there's still going to be

crime.

Um

So,

yeah, I think he uh he he picks and

chooses what he's going to

use as evidence for supposedly the

the liberal or leftist teachings of the

Buddha. And um it's it's kind of

reminiscent of what I was saying up

above where

um

really, I mean, the point of Buddhism is

enlightenment. And originally, Buddhism
was for renunciants.
And the Buddha would advise people
living in the world, you know, how to
make living in the world more
acceptable, you know, less harmful to
themselves and others and so forth. But,
really, if you wanted to practice
Buddhism really intensively, going with
ancient Indian
society, ancient Indian beliefs, you had
to really renounce the world.
And so, the people that weren't really
renouncing the world
and keeping five precepts and supporting
the monks and so forth, they were kind
of like quasi Buddhists, you know, they

were they weren't exactly the the pro

team, they were like the fans supporting

the pro team.

Um

Yeah. So, I mean, Bhikkhu Bodhi, I

to his credit, he is possibly the best

translator of Pali texts into English

that that we have nowadays. So, he is a

good translator. Um his editorial notes

are kind of depressing.

But, um

and he really doesn't base

his knowledge of Dharma on his own

personal experience very much.

He's considered not to be a meditator.

He, uh, apparently

doesn't put too much emphasis on

following the rules of monastic

discipline correctly.

Um just based on what I have seen and

heard.

Somebody like Ajahn Thanissaro, um

he he practices a lot more intensively.

He's He teaches

at least partly based on his own

experience.

And, um, I don't consider him to be

quite as good of a translator because a

good translator should be as invisible

as possible.

You know, you should be When you're

reading a translation, it should be as

close to you reading it in the original

language as possible.

And Bhikkhu Bodhi is pretty good at

that.

Although Ajahn Thanissaro, it's, uh, he

uses all these, um, sort of

self-indulgent, idiosyncratic,

uh, renderings of things so that it's

like his personality is like splattered

on every page. It's like every fourth or

fifth sentence, there might as well be

in parentheses, "Look at me, here I am,

Ajahn Sucitto translating this."

But, um

yeah, everybody's got their good points

and bad points. And and uh

yeah, Ajahn Sucitto practices more

strictly and uh you know, I assume he's got more wisdom than Bhikkhu Bodhi. And Bhikkhu Bodhi is just like a flaming leftist at this point wearing monk's robes.

Um

he's the SJW rainbow pope of Buddhism at present.

But, uh yeah, I didn't watch the whole video and I really don't care what he says about the social teachings of the Buddha. You If you look through the the text, you can find

um teachings of the Buddha that arguably endorse, you know, the the liberal or leftist platform or arguably endorse right-wing platforms, and people

are just going to pick and choose what

they like the best.

And it it can go either way.

So, finally

the very last question

is from Chaplin.

And Chaplin asks, "You mentioned before

that your family is originally from the

deep south

and that they had contact with Edgar

Cayce.

Can you tell us more about these

connections and how does it feel to be

back in the land of your ancestors?"

Okay.

Getting to personal stuff.

So, um

yeah, it is true that my

my grandmother wrote a letter to Edgar

Cayce and uh my father wrote about this.

He wrote a kind of occult autobiography

and he mentions this. So, I'm just going

to quote what my father says in in the

manuscript of this this book that I

inherited after he passed away.

And uh my father said this.

Times were hard and um, I'll just

unquote right now and just say this is

during the Great Depression. This is

like the 1930s.

So, I'll start over.

Times were hard and my father, that's my

father's father, my father is saying

this.

I'll start again.

Times were hard and my father did not get his usual summer job teaching at the teachers college. He was despondent and left home swearing that he was going to find some sort of job. He was gone a couple of weeks. My mother did not know where he was. She did not hear from him. Just over the state line in Selma, Alabama lived a man named Edgar Cayce who was getting some publicity as the sleeping prophet. My mother felt he must be an American Indian as only they had this sort of talent. Anyway, she wrote him a letter asking about my dad.

The letter he wrote back was, quote,

"There is really no reason for me to

answer this letter. By the time you get

this, you will have heard from your

husband. He will be teaching summer

school in Jasper, Alabama." Unquote. The

letter from dad came the day before the

one from Cayce.

So, that was

my family's interaction with Edgar

Cayce, the sleeping prophet.

Um,

let's see. More about the connections.

How does it feel to be back in the land

of your ancestors?

Well,

that's it's kind of a s-

difficult question to answer, I think.
It's like my father came from not far
from where I am right now. I'm I'm in
South Carolina right now. My father was
born in Georgia and uh,
my
my father's family obviously lived in
Georgia.
And um, my mother was born in Alabama
and then for some strange reason I wound
up being born in Alaska.
And uh, even though all of my ancestors
who fought in the Civil War were wearing
gray uniforms, I talk like a Yankee, and
now that I'm in South Carolina, I may
have to

um

not only work on my South Carolina man

belly,

but uh work on my accent, also.

Um

But my father believed that I was a that

I am a reincarnation of his own father,

which would make me my own grandpa.

And uh

Yeah, they were uh my father's side of

the family were like relatively well-off

plantation owners.

Um I think it's uh

my great-great-grandpa

on my father's mother's side, I saw his

last will and testament, and it included

an entire page of slaves.

It was kind of interesting that um

the cheapest slaves were um an older

female slave, which was worth only about

$200.

But um a young male slave was worth

about 2,000, which was a heck of a lot

of money back in the 1800s.

Um

But how does it feel to be back in the

land of my ancestors?

Um

I don't know. I've just been kind of

rootless my entire life.

Um

you know, I I

I've been to the deep South once before

when I was 4 years old, or maybe one

more time before that when I was a baby

that I don't remember.

But I do remember when I was 4 years old

being in Georgia visiting aunts and

uncles.

And also Alabama. And um

I really I mean it's it's I'm just kind

of a rootless person. Like my home for

so long, most of my life has just been

this

carcass that I travel around in.

Um

Being back in the land of my ancestors,

it's

I mean, the land of my ancestors is just

it's just really subliminal at best. I

mean, it's it's not much of a

consideration for me. Just I would like

to to go and see where my father was

born and raised, you know, um Mount

Berry

um Mount Berry, Georgia,

which is not far from here, as I say.

Um

but mainly it's just I I like South

Carolina, living up in the hills.

And my sweetheart lives here, which is

important. And it's uh really pretty.

A lot of trees and animals and uh it's

pretty hot, which is like the hardest

part. It's August, the end of August

right now.

And very sweaty, like when I'm working

at the sheet metal shop, there's no air

conditioning there and it's just

everyone is just drenched in sweat.

Drink about a gallon of water every day,

just trying to avoid dehydration.

But um it's good. I I like it here.

And uh

the I mean the the land of my ancestors

um

yeah, I mean it's it's not much of a

consideration for me. I I really I'm not

I've not been a very family-oriented

person in my life. Both sides of my

family were just not close family. So, I

remember when I was in Burma,

a monk asked me how many aunts and

uncles I had and I honestly didn't know.
I had to like I'd have to stop and like
calculate, you know. But um when I told
him that, I mean he was just astonished
because the Burmese are very
family-oriented.
You know, you can have like three or
four generations living in one hut.
But um yeah, it's just like my father
and my mother pretty much just ran ran
off and met in Alaska. It's about as far
away from Georgia and Alabama as they
could get. And uh yeah, most a lot of my
family I've never met.
So, um
I think I answered that question.

Uh

yeah, my grandfather, who supposedly was

me in a previous existence. And I don't

remember it at all. He was uh

a very gentle man.

Had was working on his fourth doctorate

when he died.

He could uh read and write fluent Greek

and Latin.

Um

my father was kind of ashamed of him cuz

my brother my my father was like this

macho kid, you know, sort of borderline

juvenile delinquent. And the only thing

my father or my grandfather, his father

could do that my

my

father could really be proud of is that

he was really good with horses. He was

really good horseman.

And uh

but as I say, I don't I don't remember

being my own grandpa.

Um

and uh one one thing that there is sort

of a parallel between him and me

is that my grandfather was ostracized He

was a Baptist minister, an ordained

Baptist minister who was ostracized from

the clergy for holding unorthodox views.

And according to the legend he went to a

convention of Baptist clergy and one of

the topics for discussion was what to do

about the problem of the Methodists

making more converts than the Baptists.

And my grandfather

uh took the took the stand. He went up

to the podium and said that uh as far as

he knew, I mean, the only real

difference between baptism and Methodism

is that

Methodism baptizes by sprinkling water

and baptism requires full immersion and

he didn't think a good He didn't think

that God would send a good man to hell

over a few drops of water.

And so because of that, he uh

he got ostracized and became the dean of

a boy's school.

But um

I think I'm uh

maybe into the realm of TMI at this

point. So, I guess that's it. I mean,

we're we're done. I've answered all the

questions or at least I've attempted to

answer all the questions.

And so, if you have any questions you

would like to ask regarding Buddhism or

meditation or

um philosophy,

Burma, anything like that, feel free to

ask.

And you can submit your questions in the

questions or the the comments below

below the video.

Or if you're one of the privileged few

who is uh

a supporter on SubscribeStar, you can

you can submit your questions there. Or

if you are involved in the Discord

server, there is a Q&A room

on the Discord server where you can uh

submit questions there also.

And so, just hit me with your best shot.

As long as you ask questions, I will

continue to attempt answering them.

And be happy.

Hello and welcome to episode 16 of

question and answer.

I am your host Panyo Basa.

Um also known by other names like John

David Reynolds and uh

even other names besides that. Some of

them so secret that even I myself do not

utter them.

And um

I guess we better off get to the uh

the question answering cuz as usual I've

got quite a few

and uh there's some good ones here.

Including the first two questions from

Fred.

And uh these are short questions with

long answers.

So uh brace yourself. Prepare yourself

and uh maybe you should even go pee.

Pause this, go pee,

come back and then start watching

because

there's going to be some uh

serious question answering here.

And Fred's first question

with the short question but a long

answer

is what's your thoughts on Abhidhamma?

And a lot of people probably don't even

know what Abhidhamma is even though it

is the third basket of the Tipitaka.

The the Buddhist scriptures

um in many sects including Theravada

are called the Tipitaka or the Tripitaka
depending on whether the uh the
scriptural language is Pali or Sanskrit.
And uh Tipitaka means literally three
baskets.
The first basket is the Vinaya or the uh
rules of monastic discipline for monks
and also nuns.
The second is the Sutta which is mainly
dialogues of the Buddha or sometimes
um
uh it's like sermons of the Buddha or
dialogues or um sometimes
uh sermons by some of the Buddha's chief
disciples or enlightened disciples.
And then finally, the third Pitaka is

the Abhidhamma Pitaka, in Sanskrit

Abhidharma.

And uh in Burma

they consider the Abhidhamma to be the

most important part

of the Buddha's teachings, although most

Westerners

probably more than two-thirds of Western

monks, for example, just don't believe

it. They do not consider it to be

authentic.

They do not consider it to be

um genuine teachings of the Buddha. And

I was one of those, and I still really

have very little use for Abhidhamma. As

a general rule, the less Abhidhamma you

know,

the better because the less you have to

unlearn in order to really understand

the truth.

I think uh Venerable Ñāṇavīra

uh an English monk

uh who lived back in the '50s and '60s

um who was ordained as a monk back in

the '50s and '60s in Sri Lanka. He's the

one who I think originally said that,

just the less you know, the better cuz

the more you learn of Abhidhamma, the

more you have to unlearn in order to get

back on the right track again.

And um

the very first essay that I wrote

um

way way back before I had a computer or anything, I was writing the way cave people did, all the a pen on paper.

And um

the first appendix I had some appendixes at the end. The first appendix was appendix one, some evidence suggesting the spurious nature of Abhidhamma philosophy. And I won't read the whole thing, but I'll just go over the main points, the main arguments

um

explaining why Abhidhamma probably wasn't really taught by the Buddha.

So, the first point here is that um in the only canonical account of the first Buddhist council, which is uh Vinaya

Cullavagga chapter 12,

um it says that the venerable Upali

recited the Vinaya and then the

venerable Ananda recited the Suttas and

that was it. There's no mention at all

of Abhidhamma.

Even in the uh canonical account of the

second council, there's no mention at

all of Abhidhamma. So, really there's no

um

contemporary or anything close to

contemporary mentions of the Abhidhamma

Pitaka until you get up around the third

council, which is

um

like mid-3rd century BC and so well over

100 years after the lifetime of the

Buddha.

And uh see what what I don't want to

miss out on any good points here,

but um

let's see.

Yeah, the the Burmese account for this

and also the com- the commentarial uh

commentarial tradition accounts for this

by just saying that Abhidhamma was uh or

they they just change the details of the

story and say Ananda also recited

Abhidhamma even though there's no

mention of it in the oldest accounts.

And then uh the Burmese just lump

Abhidhamma in with the Khuddaka Nikaya

of the the Sutta Pitaka, which uh

is uh still not very convincing.

Okay, so the second point um

describing the reasons or the evidence

suggesting that Abhidhamma really wasn't

taught by the Buddha

is that the word Abhidhamma is seldom

found in the rest of the Tipitaka.

Um approximately 11 times. I think I

read somewhere that the the the word

Abhidhamma is found 11 times in the the

Vinaya and Suttanta Pitakas.

And

when it is found, it's usually paired

with the word Abhivinaya. Like it'll

have monks discussing Abhidhamma and

Abhivinaya.

Which indicates, or at least strongly

suggests,

that here it didn't really mean

Abhidhamma Pitaka because there was no

Abhivinaya Pitaka. It just means like

higher points or like fine points of

Dhamma, fine points of Vinaya.

And um

that probably uh

somehow evolved

into uh sort of a commentary which then

became very elaborate and became like

orthodox dogma. And then finally by the

the time of the third council, it just

got incorporated.

Um let's see. The third point is that

many of the terms which play integral

central roles in Abhidhamma philosophy, like Citta Vithi, Citta Vithi, Bhavanga, Javana, Kriyacitta,
Rupa Kalapa, etc. etc. are either entirely lacking in the Suttas or found there rarely and in radically different contexts.
For example, the elaborate doctrine of Citta Vithi, which is essential traditional Abhidhamma psychology and is taught in even the most elementary of Abhidhamma courses, is entirely foreign to the first two Pitakas and is mentioned only briefly and obscurely even in the Abhidhamma Pitaka itself because a lot of what is considered to

be basic teachings of Abhidhamma that you learn in like a beginning course of Abhidhamma, like some place like Burma, um that's from the commentaries. It's from the Abhidhamma commentaries because by the time the Tipitaka was closed, Abhidhamma wasn't finished yet. They were still working on it. So a lot of the the basic teachings of Abhidhamma are found not in the Pitaka in the Abhidhamma Pitaka itself, not in the actual canonical scriptures, but in the commentaries to the scriptures.

So moving on to the next point, the fifth book of the Abhidhamma Pitaka is called the Kathāvatthu, which is based entirely on dogmatic controversies

with schismatic sects of Buddhism that existed around the time of the third council.

So,

the most obvious or most likely explanation for the Kathāvatthu is that it was written around the time of the third council or composed around the time of the third council.

Um

although

the Burmese will say that the Buddha could see the future and he was um like giving ways of arguing against heretics. You know, he would see see what the arguments would be by

looking into the future and then explain
ways of arguing against them, but
the arguments are like proto-logical.
You know, they're not very good
arguments in a lot of cases. And uh I
think the Buddha could have done a lot
better if uh if this uh explanation were
the correct one.
So, uh let's see.
The fifth one is really the clincher
um for most for most academics.
Um
I think most Western Buddhist scholars
just have to admit, you know, just as
they would admit that Mahayana didn't
exist for the first few hundred years of
Buddhism.

By the same token, they have to admit

that uh Abhidhamma probably didn't exist

for the first more than a hundred years

of Buddhism.

And uh the clincher is that um

um of the the different schools of

ancient Buddhism, and by the time of the

third council, there were lots of them,

you know, up in the double digits.

Um

each one had its own Abhidhamma. There

was like the the Vinaya and the Sūtras

are relatively the same amongst all of

the oldest the oldest sects.

Um

but the Abhidhamma Pitaka rather is

radically different. I mean, it's like
um the Sarvastivada school of Buddhism
is relatively closely connected or
closely related to Theravada. I think
probably Sarvastivada and Theravada
didn't really officially split into two
different schools of Buddhism until
around the third time of the third
council. And even so, their Abhidhammas
are entirely different. Not a single
book is the same.
So, with regard to Vinaya and the Sutras
um among the ancient schools
they were mostly in agreement. I I'd
guess, you know, maybe 80% the same at
least.
You know, the same Sutras, the same

rules, that kind of thing. But with Abhidhamma, it's just almost completely different.

So, that's that's really the clincher for most of the scholars and and for me also. I mean, it really does. It's like the final nail in the coffin. Although, I move on to another point here that uh just a lot of Abhidhamma just really

um

it's just uh

just objectively untrue going with, you know, modern science, for example. Like

um

in uh Abhidhamma

uh they they they just have like a an

ultimately real

essence called nutritive essence. So,

that's like nutrition is just this one

this one element.

And of course, I mean, there's all kinds

of different aspects to nutrition.

Um you know, like a hydrogen atom.

Um you know, I mean, if it's in a if

it's in a molecule of glucose, it's

nutritive or I mean, well, I guess

nowadays maybe people who think that

sugar is poison would say it isn't. But

let's say it's in a

uh a molecule of vitamin C, ascorbic

acid, then it would be nutritive. But

that same hydrogen atom, if it's in a

uh a molecule of, you know, some sort of

toxin, then of course it's it's

non-nutritive. It's it's toxic.

So,

um but even so, in Abhidharma, this

nutritive essence is like ultimately

small particle, you know, it'd be no

bigger than a hydrogen atom.

So, I mean, there's just all this stuff.

I mean, I don't want to just flog a dead

horse here, but um

there's um

lots and lots of evidence.

And to most objective

outsiders who are knowledgeable in

Buddhism, it's pretty conclusive

evidence that the Buddha really didn't

teach Abhidharma. And even the story explaining how Abhidharma existed is pretty fishy. Um like the origin of Abhidharma.

The official story or myth is that one year, during the rains retreat, the Buddha

left a kind of holographic image of himself on Earth, and he flew up into a heaven realm and taught the gods there Abhidharma.

And

so gradually it came back to Earth.

And there was some delay, presumably, where it was kept secret, you know, it was just like higher teachings or something. And um

that kind of explains

probably it's an answer to monks long

ago who were saying,

um you know, why is it all of a sudden

there's these new genuine authentic

teachings of the Buddha that we'd never

heard of before?

So, that would be their way of answering

the question, much like the origin story

of Mahayana Buddhism, where, according

to the legend,

and this is the same kind of legend.

It's just this kind of lame explanatory

legend of how authentic teachings of the

Buddha can just suddenly crop up

hundreds of years after the death of the

Buddha.

Um

according to the Mahayana legends,

um the Buddha realized that people just

weren't wise enough to understand

Mahayana and so the Mahayana scriptures

were hidden under the ocean in a kind of

palace and guarded by Naga serpent

dragons until around the time of uh

Nagarjuna, like 500 years after the time

of the Buddha.

It's the same kind of story. It's It's

just a myth explaining how all of a

sudden you can have new authentic

ancient teaching ancient teachings of

the Buddha that nobody had heard of

before.

So, I mean, uh to make a long story or a
long answer even longer, my thoughts on
Abhidharma is that um
it was kind of like an old commentary
that became canonical. It was so old
that it just uh
its origins were lost in the mists of
time and it just became canonical.
Or uh or something along those lines.
But um as as I say, most of the
um the different ancient schools of
Buddhism had their own Abhidharma. There
were a few that didn't have any
Abhidharma at all.
So, it's it's hardly likely
that all of the schools of Buddhism

except one would throw out the most important teachings of the Buddha and then cook up like fake ones.

So, I'll just move on to Fred's next question.

That was a That was a long answer to a short question. This one will be a slightly shorter answer to a slightly longer question. What's your opinion on transferring merit? Is there an energy field matrix in a being?

Okay, transferring merit. It happens a lot in Theravada Buddhism.

At least uh it is attempted a lot.

And what you're trying to do is it's it's mainly has to do with ancestors or just uh helping unhappy

spirits, people who have passed away,

and you're not sure if they're they've

got enough merit to get into heaven, to

get a good rebirth, or something. So,

you're trying to help them by

contributing to their merit so that

they'll

they'll have uh enough good karma to

make it into a better realm.

And so,

um usually what they do in Asia, or in

Burma, especially, is they'll go to a

monastery and they'll

take precepts, they'll donate things to

the monks,

and um listen to a sermon, and then at

the end, they will do a water pouring
ceremony where they're sharing their
merit the merit that they have just
earned by, you know, making the
donations and hearing the
hearing the Dhamma and keep taking the
precepts, and they're sharing that merit
with all beings.
But, there is no energy transfer,
really. They're not just uh shooting
rays of good karma in all directions.
What happens is,
um according to orthodox Theravada,
anyway,
the beings that going to benefit have to
be present or have to be able to know
what's going on.

So, generally it only works for ghosts,
you know, spirits, pretas,
who can actually be there and witness
what's going on.
And then, what happens is that um you
know, they rejoice. They're happy that
these people are doing these good
things, and then because they are happy
that someone else is doing something
good, that is a wholesome mental state
for them, which then raises their their
amount of merit.
So, you don't just take your own merit
and send it to somebody else. You earn
merit, and then other beings see you
earning merit, and then they're happy

because they see you earning merit, and then their own happiness is their merit. So, that's that's generally how it works.

Or how it's supposed to work, anyway. And so, as I say, generally only works for ghosts according to Orthodox Theravada or any being who can actually witness what's going on. If they're in hell, they're not going to be able to see it. If they're in heaven, they don't really need the merit, anyway, presumably. And heaven is so much better than here that they're they're generally not interested and they're not paying attention to what what we're doing.

So, mostly it works for spirits.

So, I'll just move on to the next question here, which is from Baron Sinclair.

And Baron Sinclair says,

"Is a bhikkhu allowed to exercise for health, such as yoga asanas, yogic postures, calisthenics,

push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups, etc., or cardio?" Which he has running.

"I am currently a gym instructor in training, but plan to ordain as a monk in the coming years after I work for a while. I feel like I need to be able to do more than just arms round and walking meditation for exercise.

I have discovered that my body simply requires a workout to stay physically attuned."

Okay, that's uh kind of a good question, I think. Kind of an interesting one, possibly a useful one to a few of you who are maybe considering becoming a monk, but want to exercise, stay healthy.

Um it depends on what the purpose of your exercise is. If you're doing it to be buff,

uh if you're doing it for sport, then it's it's a no-no. You're not supposed to do it. Like, there is actually a rule against playing in water, which would include swimming if you don't have a

real need to swim.

Like, if you if if it's the only way to

cross a river, then you're you're

allowed to swim. Or if you're getting

away from like a an angry elephant or

something, then yeah, you can swim.

You're in a flood or something.

But, um

exercising in order to look good,

um

yeah, that's that is uh contrary to

Dhamma,

especially for a monk. It's not so bad

for a layperson, but monks are really

um

just the purity of your life will keep

you healthy.

And, um

if you want exercise, then you can live

a long way from your alms village, your

alms resort, do a lot of walking,

lots of uh chop wood, carry water kind

of a stuff. And, I was I was relatively

healthy when I was a monk living out in

the woods.

Um to some degree, just the roughness

of living that lifestyle uh has like

your caveman instincts going, and it

maybe raises your testosterone or

something. So, I was I was actually

pretty fit as a monk when I was living

in the forest, anyway.

So, that would probably be your best

bet. I mean, running, yeah, that's

that's not going to go over. Um

especially if you're living in an Asian

culture, a traditional Asian culture,

they're not going to

people are going to think it's very

inappropriate for monks to be jogging or

like lifting weights or or, you know,

doing calisthenics out in public. You

know, in in the privacy of your own hut,

then yeah, you can do push-ups, sit-ups,

that kind of a thing. There's nothing

wrong with that, so long as you're doing

it just for health,

and uh not for the purpose of looking

good,

or for just sport.

And, uh there are the four recollections

that monks are supposed to recollect.

Um

one of them is before they eat food, you

know, they're supposed to recollect,

"I'm eating this food not to look good,

you know, not to beautify myself, not

for pleasure, but only to keep this body

healthy enough that I can continue

practicing Dhamma. And exercise would be

similar to that.

So,

it would have to be low-key, probably

in solitude, no jogging.

I mean, good luck jogging with monks'

robes anyway.

So, yeah, I mean, it's not entirely
against the rules, but uh you'd have to
examine your motives, and also
you should probably consider just um the
cultural norms of a Buddhist country if
you're living in one.
Or just the the the cultural norms of
the people who are supporting you.
So, the next question is from somebody
who has
no name other than just a horizontal
line.
And the horizontal line says,
"What is your opinion of Advaita
Vedanta? I like Buddhism very much,
except for its doctrine of the Anatman,

or no self, and its vision of

consciousness.

I find Adi Shankara's arguments for the

Atman and nature of consciousness more

convincing, but I'm a bit divided

because for everything else I prefer

Buddhism. This is a theme that I address

relatively frequently. Maybe not every

single Q&A, but uh

probably more than half of them.

Uh I touch upon this

this idea that um

Yeah.

You You've got an absolute,

you know, this formless, infinite

absolute.

And in Vedanta, it's called Brahman.

In Buddhism, it's called Nirvana,

usually, or Nibbana, Nibbana Dhatu.

And

they're trying to explain the same

thing.

I think anybody with an open mind who's

not just a complete dogmatist would be

inclined to agree that like the ultimate

reality that the Upanishads are

attempting to describe is essentially

the same ultimate reality that Buddhist

texts are attempting to describe except

they have to go they they go about it

differently.

And really you've got this problem in

that an absolute

uh is unconditioned. I mean
anything you say about it is going to be
invalid because once you start
explaining it you've got an explanation
you're no longer anywhere near the
absolute anymore.
Um philosophically speaking.
So you've got this you've got this
ultimate this this absolute and you
can't say that it exists and you can't
say that it doesn't exist. You can't say
that it does and doesn't exist. You
can't say that it neither does nor
doesn't exist. Anything you say about it
is going to be invalid.
And but nevertheless human language and
just the human thought process requires

us

to have some kind of handle to deal with

it.

And so

most religions take the absolute and say

it exists.

And a lot of them will just call it God.

Um

but in Buddhism they they just took the

other

the other invalid option of saying it

doesn't exist or at least usually

Buddhism uh treats nirvana as just kind

of emptiness or void. Something like

that. The the principle of cessation is

uh

a common explanation in Theravada for

for nibana.

And uh so it's it's just like

either way is is wrong. I mean either

way is invalid.

But you have to pick one or the other as

a general rule. So if If prefer that to

believe that the absolute is,

then be a theist or a a Vedantist. And

if you want to say that it isn't, then

be a a Buddhist. And the Buddhist idea

of isn't is much less prone to

attachment to um dogmas. I mean, still

people get attached to Buddhist dogmas,

but still um

isn't for the absolute.

Um it can lead to nihilism and

materialism, and a lot of people accuse

the Buddhists of

being nihilists.

But um really it is it's it's

you just experience it for yourself and

then stop trying to stick labels onto

it. That would be your best bet.

Um consciousness.

Yeah, it's like in uh the Vedanta or the

Upanishads,

um

the the highest principle is is

sometimes described as infinite formless

consciousness.

Uh whereas in Theravada,

usually consciousness is just a mental

state. There has to be consciousness of something. You know, it's just like a a mundane mental state usually.

But um there are at least two suttas that contain fragments of really old Buddhist poetry that do describe um Nibbana as infinite consciousness.

But as I say, trying to stick any kind of label onto it, you've already missed the boat. Just trying to trying to conceptualize it, you're you're already gone into the realm of invalidity.

So, you just don't think about it. Like the original like the oldest Buddhist text like the Atthakavagga of the Sutta Nipata, you just don't think about it. Don't theorize. You just practice, and

then you experience it directly if if

your practice reaches um the the goal.

And you just don't worry about it. Just

don't try to

you know, don't try to write on the air,

you know, it just doesn't work.

So, the the horizontal line um

asks another question here.

What do you think of Tibetan Buddhism?

They almost join the Vedantic vision in

some thinkers, even if officially they

still reject the Atman of the Indians,

{quote} {unquote}. I think, for example,

the Dolpopa, whose description of the

absolute would be validated by any

Vedantic thinker.

Um I really don't know that much about
Tibetan Buddhism. I've never been that
much attracted to it.
When I became a Buddhist, I just wanted
to know what the Buddha taught
and uh to follow that.
And um
Theravada comes closest to that. It's
historically comes closest to the
Buddha's time.
So, you're going to find like a higher
percentage of authentic teachings
in the Pali texts
than you're going to find in later
schools, just because the other schools
are later than Theravada. But, the key
here is say

I think, for example, of Dolpopa, whose description of the absolute could be validated. Well, there you go. That's it. Description of the absolute. There is no valid description of the absolute. Once you start describing the absolute, it's not the absolute anymore. It's just absolute. It's just this label. It's just this unenlightened concept in your mind, which is just infinitely far away from what you're trying to describe.

So,

um

the Buddhists are better at not reifying the absolute.

If you if you just absolutely can't

stand not reifying the absolute and like

theorizing about it and explaining it

and sticking labels onto it, as though

that were possible,

then uh yeah, you might feel more

comfortable with

um

a more theistic system.

So, I think I should just move on.

I'm I'm answering these questions rather

long-windedly.

Next question

is from Trumpetonshire Gahapati.

And Trumpetonshire Gahapati says,

"Can you provide any citations for

traditional Buddhist views on

homosexuality?

The context for this question is that I
did some searching on the papers
available on academia.edu,
but all I found were left-wing academics
writing what appeared to be tendentious
papers about Buddhism being so
supportive of homosexuality."
Yeah, that's not surprising at all.
Um
with regard to Buddhism and
homosexuality,
uh yeah,
um Buddhism certainly is not all black
and white like a lot of
uh religions, especially Western
religions. I mean, it's like something

is a sin or it's not a sin, you know, if you do this, you'll go to hell or you won't go to hell, maybe you'll go to heaven.

But uh in Buddhism, it just doesn't work that way. Buddhist ethics are psychological. So, two people can do exactly the same thing and one person will be doing something wholesome and the other person will be doing something unwholesome.

And um

yeah, I I I'll spare you the the same example that I give of uh

you know, the the frog and the snake and you chase them away. Well, I guess I'm not sparing you, am I?

So,

you're walking through the forest, you see a frog um being uh constricted by a snake. It's trying to swallow this frog. This The frog is squealing and struggling trying to get away, so you chase the snake away.

And if you did it out of compassion for the frog, you did something wholesome.

And if you did do it out of aversion for the snake, you did something unwholesome, even though the action is exactly the same.

The exact same action can be good or bad depending on the mental states accompanying the action.

And so,

Theravada,

um,

Buddhist ethics,

it,

you know, it's not all black and white.

And it's not just this action is good

and that action is bad. In fact, it's

almost all within the realm of gray.

You just got various shades of gray and

just pure white action is is virtually

impossible. Pure black, you know,

unwholesome action is virtually

impossible. There's always going to be

some some shade of gray involved.

And homosexuality is gray.

Um,

the only citations,

like like in the canonical text that I'm

that I can remember. I don't remember if

there's any mention in the suttas. I

wouldn't be surprised if there is.

But, um,

homosexuals,

uh, arguably are not allowed to be

ordained as monks.

And the reason for that is not that

they are necessarily bad. It's just sort

of going with statistics

that they were considered to be more

likely to be depraved. And it's not just

homosexuals, it was also eunuchs. In

fact, it was mostly eunuchs that the

rule applied to.

But,

um, in Buddhist philosophy or just

ancient Indian culture,

um, anyone who wasn't considered fully

male or fully female, anyone who was in

between male and female, like fully one

or fully the other, would be called a

pandaka,

uh, which was the word usually used for

eunuchs. But, apparently homosexuals,

and to some degree even bisexuals, could

be considered not quite fully male.

And uh at least at least

psychologically.

And they were considered to be um

more likely to be like aberrant and um

uh to some degree even depraved.

And I mean there is some medical

uh support for this. I read in a medical

journal or not a medical journal but a a

diagnostic guide, a doctor's diagnostic

guide. I think it was the Merck guide.

That it is not uncommon for a homosexual

man to have had more than 1,000 sexual

partners in his lifetime.

So there is something backing that up.

But with getting back to just

homosexuality itself,

um

really it's it's it's the mental states.

So

um I mean it can be light gray or dark

gray depending on the mental states.
I guess that would be the the best way
of of putting it but but with Buddhism
and because it was based on ancient
Indian spiritual traditions,
all sexuality is considered to be at
least slightly
um immoral. Even if two people are
married,
you know, they still have sex and I mean
if they're experiencing lust and
attachment and and all that, then
there's going to be at least a little
bit of akusala kamma involved. And um
that's one reason why um unlike in many
other religions, probably most other
religions,

uh weddings are just not religious

in in a Theravada Buddhist country

especially because it is

it is just strictly against the rules

for a monk to even participate in a

wedding. And he if he does, he's

committed a serious offense. He has to

take penance for 6 days and 6 nights.

Um

so

homosexuality it's not necessarily I

mean just the act itself, just setting

aside the statistics and the general

trends of ancient India and the beliefs

in all this.

It just depends on the mental states. I

mean it could be

um

more or less unwholesome than

heterosexual sex depending on the mental

states. You know, how inflamed with lust

and attachment and so forth you are

would determine going with traditional

Buddhist ethics

um

how unethical

it is.

So,

in a way that's kind of I mean Buddhism

is

goes much easier on homosexuality than

like the Western religions do as a

general rule. Like Dante's Inferno had

its own circle just for homosexuals.

Uh they had like like there was like

flaming napalm raining down on their

naked bodies forever and ever.

So, uh

the next questions are similar. So, I'll

just move on. And uh so the next

questions are from someone whose name is

in Japanese characters, but according to

Google Translate it translates or

transliterates

as Yuichiro.

And so, assuming that that is the

person's actual name,

then Yuichiro asks the question, is

sodomy {quote} {unquote} sexual

misconduct?

Now, that's in a way it's almost a trick

question

because sexual misconduct going with

just the the standard description of

sexual misconduct,

um it mainly means having sexual

relations with somebody who is not

a free agent, somebody who is living

um under the protection or under the

obligation of somebody else. So, sexual

misconduct

um just in the standard Theravada

tradition just has a list of different

kinds of females because apparently it

was directed towards men.

Primarily although women could

kind of take the the male counterparts

of these.

And um, it would just be like a woman

who's still like a woman who's married

who would be like like a a ward of her

husband in India at the time.

Um, or a woman who is um, engaged,

betrothed, a woman who is like a a slave

of somebody else, a woman who was a

prisoner, like a like a a female convict

or something who would be like a ward of

the state or a ward of the the warden or

whatever.

Um,

so sodomy doesn't really fit into that

category. I mean, technically if uh, a

man and a woman

um, you know, they they like Greek love

or something. Um,

that

uh, it doesn't really talk about it

much. Not that not that I can not that I

can remember if at all this sort of

thing.

Um,

so again, we just you just go back to

mental states.

If if you have more lust, more

attachment, then going with ancient

Indian

um, Buddhist ethics, then you know, the

more attachment and clinging and and

um, like the agitation of mind and so

forth. The

the worse it would be.

So,

yeah, it's it's just another shade of

gray and I'm going to move on to the

next question by Yuichiro here, which is

an easy one. Finally, I get an easy

question to answer.

Should sodomites

be burned at the stake, imprisoned, or

legally punished?

And going with Buddhism, no.

No, I mean, it's everyone's karma is

their own and people have the right in

in to at least to some degree

to uh

to live

uh naughty lives.

You know, it's it's really is your own

choice.

And so um there's no need to

punish people for that from the Buddhist

point of view because your own actions

your your your your own actions are your

karma.

Especially the mental actions. And so I

mean the the if there is any punishment

to it's going to come back on you.

You know, it's just it's just a natural

process. There's no need to for you

know, uh police to interfere or anything

like that unless it's really a case of

people harming other people and then you

know, you got to you know, the king has
to do something the police have to do
something.
But uh with with regard to something
like this as long as it's not rape
or you know, child abuse or something
like that then uh it's not necessarily
any worse than
any other kind of sexuality.
So next question from Yuichiro
is if there is a loving monogamous
relationship between two men, would you
consider that immoral or against nature
or in some other way inferior to normal
relationships besides its
non-reproductive nature?

If they abstain from sexual activity,
would that make it better?
Well, I think I've already answered the
first part because really it just
depends on the mental states
that determine what how good or how bad
an action is.
And so just moving right into the last
part here, if they abstain from sexual
activity, would that make it
better? And yeah, I I've already implied
that from the
ancient Indian Buddhist ethical world
ethical universe then yeah, celibacy is
better than than sex because of um the
the desires and so forth that arise
during sex.

Um

So, maybe sort of going off the tracks a little and and uh

bringing up Jesus of Nazareth, he was saying

um

there are three kinds of eunuchs, those who are born eunuchs, those who are made eunuchs, and those who are eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

And uh the third kind is people who are celibate for religious reasons. And then he said, "It's just not for everybody. Not everybody can be celibate."

You know, you can be celibate and then just be like frustrated and horny all

the time, which is still mental states,
you know, sexual mental states. So, um
in some cases, I mean, if they were able
to be happily celibate, then from the
traditional Buddhist point of view, then
yeah, they'd be That would make it
better. But, um
as I say, that's not for everybody. And
as Jesus said, too,
allegedly.
So, uh I'll just move on to the next one
here. This is the last question from
Yuichiro. In your article on karmic
minimalism,
were you discouraging merit? Certain
things like meditation, teaching Dharma,
and supporting your community are

considered merit. Don't monks do this?

Aren't monks supposed to be more morally perfected?

Okay, that's that's a good question.

That's a fair question.

Um there is a little confusion here, it seems like, though. Like, with regard to meditation,

um

it is true that people, especially like Burmese lay people, consider that you're you earn merit through meditation. And if you're practicing a like an elementary level of meditation, that may be the case.

But, as I say, um

karma, good karma, and bad karma depend

on mental states, like perceptual,

volitional mental states.

And if you're meditating really well,

you don't have no perceptual or

volitional mental states other than just

maybe very, very subtle and refined

ones, which means that um your karma is

very, very subtle and refined. I mean,

it's

um

you know, it's it's getting close to

zero.

So, you can call it merit, but again,

um what I was referring to in the

article is karmic minimalism, which

means making as little karma as

possible. And through meditation, you make less karma than if you're not meditating.

So, that's karmic minimalism, and um that's not the kind of merit I was talking about. With regard to teaching Dharma, again, it's it's mental states. I mean, I This is a This is an issue I bring up

um probably every single Q&A, that people just kind of get locked into this Western utilitarian ethic. It's like, is doing this right or is doing this wrong? And it's mental states. It's the attitude that you have when you're doing something. So, if you can teach

Dharma with just
equanimity, maybe you're just mindfully
watching your mouth move and then
hearing the sounds coming out of your
mouth, then you could call that merit, I
suppose, but it's you're not making much
karma at all.
And that's the point of karmic
minimalism, is to make as little karma
as possible. Supporting your community
for monks?
No. I mean, the community of monks,
yeah, they should support each other,
but uh they're not supposed to be
involved in uh like village politics or
uh village welfare projects or anything
like that, cuz that is uh

that's karma.

Or at least um it is if if you've got mental states going while you're doing it.

So, monk Don't monks do this? Yeah, yeah, there's Most monks are sloppy monks. Most monks are not really conscientiously trying to follow what the texts say monks are supposed to do. So, in Asia especially, monks are village priests and uh you know, marriage counselors and and uh you know, sort of village psychoanalysts or something. They're There's a lot of them. Some of the famous monks in Burma, they're they're

take they're collecting donations and then they're like building hospitals and that sort of thing.

Which is all very good, but then again, monks aren't supposed to be doing that. Merit is for lay people or at least merit in the form of good karma is for lay people because monks really are supposed to have as little karma as possible, good or bad.

So, let's see. Last question here from Yuichiro or the last part of the last question. Aren't monks supposed to be more morally perfected? Sure, but moral perfection is neutral. Buddhist Buddhist ethics are neutral. I mean, you look at the precepts, it's all don't do this,

don't do that, don't do the other. It's not you should do something. It's just neutrality. It's like karmic minimalism again.

So, that's the moral perfection of a of a Buddhist is he's down to the moral perfection of a Buddhist would be like zero karma.

Okay. Next question is from Era Fascista.

And uh Era Fascista says, "You've probably been asked this a thousand times, but what are some good books for somebody interested in learning about Buddhism?"

All right. With regard to just an intro,

like a uh a primer

on Buddhism, probably the best one I've

read and I haven't read a whole lot, but

probably the best one I read would be

What the Buddha Taught by Walpola

Rahula. And I don't have a copy of it,

so I can't really show you.

But um

on the other hand, if you really want to

know what

like

early Buddhism was like, what Buddhism

was originally like, your best bet is to

read ancient texts, like good

translations of ancient texts. And

probably the text that converted me to

Theravada Buddhism would be the Sutta

Nipata.

And I got one copy of it here. This is Pali Text Society.

K.R. Norman's translation, not the best possible translation, but it's very literal. He's a He's like a linguist.

So, I mean, reading the Sutta Nipata, if you have a good translation, that would be that would be a good good thing to do. Or this is a good This would be a good intro if you if you really want to um understand what early Buddhism was like, this is a translation of the Majjhima Nikaya by Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi. And although Bhikkhu Bodhi is a totally unhinged leftist at this point

politically, he still remains one of the
best translators of Pali texts into
English.
And uh another book that you can get
free, I'm pretty sure um and from
various publishers,
is uh
Nyanatiloka's Buddhist Dictionary. I
mean, this is good for understanding the
the terminology and uh
the uh like the philosophical jargon of
Buddhism.
So, this is I mean, any serious student
of Buddhism should probably
try to get a copy of this.
And uh if you're more advanced, you
really want like a radical explanation

of what the earliest Buddhism was likely
to be like, one of the most important
books I've ever read is this one.
Studies in the Origins of Buddhism by
G.C. Pande. And he takes more or less of
a Vedantist approach because he is uh
a Brahmin, a Hindu.
And so, he kind of interprets things
along Vedantist lines, but um
still, I mean, it's really good, but if
you don't know the difference between
the Samyutta Nikaya and the Anguttara
Nikaya, a lot of this is just going to
be seen like Greek cuz he just assumes
that you already understand a lot of the
terminology and understand the Pali

texts to some degree.

And um

uh another kind of interesting one, if

you can get this one, this is kind of

surreal. It's It's just like a

mind-blower of a book, but it's uh The

Manuals of Buddhism by Ledi Sayadaw,

who was uh one of the most famous

Burmese monks of,

say, 100 or more years ago.

And it's got all kinds of really strange

stuff in there that will give you

um a very interesting and surreal

approach to

orthodox Theravada because he was also

very orthodox.

So, those are the those are the best

ones I can think of, at least with

regard to Theravada.

Um the book that converted me to

Buddhism to begin with would be Zen

Flesh, Zen Bones, which of course is a

Zen book.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question, which is a strange one

by uh someone with a strange name, Flora

Fulgurator. Flora Fulgurator.

And Flora Fulgurator's question is,

"What is the best thing the Buddha or

Buddhism said about fire?"

Which is a strange question because um

I mean, fire does get mentioned in the

texts,

but it's it's usually in a negative context, just as something destructive, as a like a a parable or a simile for something that is destructive, or also with regard to enlightenment itself, nirvana.

So, like the Buddha's third sermon, according to tradition, was called the fire sermon, where he's just saying the whole world is in flames, the whole world is burning. You know, that's that's sort of the negative aspect of it. And um a more neutral aspect would be

the whole concept of nirvana, which is based on the

the understanding of fire. Nirvana

um in all likelihood with all due

respect to Ajahn Thanissaro, it means

blowing out.

Um you know, like the verb form is

nibbati

and that means blowing out.

And um

in really ancient text there is uh like

the simile of of the fire when it blows

out, where does it go? You know, it just

it just enters like a formless

unconditioned state because in ancient

India fire was a god. It was Agni, you

know, the messenger of the gods. It was

it was in a sense divine. And so if you

blew out a fire, it didn't die. It just

it just became formless and and
unconditioned in a sense.
And uh that was like a
a metaphor for understanding nirvana.
So maybe that's the best thing the
Buddha said about fire. He just compared
enlightenment to or nirvana to the the
going out of a fire or the blowing out
of a fire.
But uh yeah, I I I can't think of any
case where the Buddha was actually
sitting around praising fire. I maybe he
did, you know, he maybe there's some
obscure discourse where the Buddha's
listing off the the six beneficial
qualities of fire or something. But uh I
can't think of that what it would be.

So I move on to the next question from

Sam-I-Am.

I do not like green eggs and ham. I do

not like them, Sam-I-Am.

And Sam-I-Am's question here

there is more than one way to deal with

external, maybe also internal

difficulties, delusion problems,

dealing with reality, truth, etc.

Walking away or engage are the two main

ones that everyone does. What about a

natural balance to this as an ebb and

flow of what is instinctually necessary,

but at the same time mindful?

Where is that balance for everyone?

Well, I mean I've I've written

I've written about this before

in an essay called uh

See, one of many middle paths.

And

in that I was I was discussing like the

middle path between running away from

problems and just going out looking for

problems.

You know, you don't have to look for

problems. You don't have to like

deliberately accelerate, you know, crap

happening to you cuz it's going to

happen. And um

so long as you have the maturity to deal

with it mindfully with some equanimity,

then you should let it happen. I mean if

you just know yourself well enough to

know that you can't deal with this situation without freaking out, then it's probably best to, you know, withdraw until you're stronger.
And it's sort of like just dealing with temptation in general. If if you can resist the temptation, then you strengthen yourself by meeting the temptation and resisting it. But if if you know that you're just going to cave and give in to the temptation, then your best bet is to avoid the temptation until you are stronger.
But just running away from anything unpleasant is is not going to make you stronger. It's it's uh

No, it's it's sort of like the the Howard Hughes approach, you know, it's like he had OCD, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and uh he was just trying to um because he was very rich, of course, he was trying to just humor all of these these obsessive like compulsions. And so, you know, at at the end, I mean he was just like like a hermit. He he wouldn't cut his fingernails. He would only eat certain prepackaged foods that were handed to him by servants with, you know, like plastic gloves on and this kind of a thing. And it just made him weaker and weaker in certain ways because, you know, he wasn't standing up to the temptation. He was just giving in

to it every time.

So,

yeah, I think I might be talking too

much on this one, but uh

um

really, I mean, if there is

uh like these difficulties,

um you shouldn't go out looking for them

necessarily, but uh if they come at you,

and they they certainly will cuz that's

what this world is.

Um then if you are strong enough to deal

with it uh

wisely, then do so, and that will make

you even wiser. But if you know yourself

well enough to know that you're just

going to freak out or it's going to mess you up or something, then you need to, you know, like skillfully retreat, you know, and uh

work on it maybe with uh lesser cases, easier, you know, do the bunny slope a little more until you're better at it, and then next time it happens, maybe you'll be strong enough to to deal with it.

And I'm not sure if I'm even answering Sam I Am's question here correctly in accordance with what he meant, but uh that's that's my shot at it. So, I'll move on to Sam I Am's next question.

What would a traditional Buddhist say about humans flying into outer space or

to other planets' moons?

Um I've never heard a traditional Buddhist say anything about such things. Um I don't think there's anything necessarily opposed to traditional Buddhism in that idea because Buddhism does admit that there are an infinite number of worlds. It's not like Christianity, which says there's just this planet Earth in the center of the universe, and God made all the stars just just so that sailors can navigate, you know, using the stars at night, that kind of a thing. It's um you know, just an infinite number of worlds, and um I don't think there's necessarily

anything in

someone in a spaceship leaving this

world and and arriving in another one.

But, um

some uh

Burmese scholar monk might uh correct me

on that.

So, I'll just move on to the next one.

Also by Sam I Am. "Well-established

toxic fertilizer chemicals can be hidden

in foods and even passed on and

propagated through seeds in farming.

Some plants may be chemically altered

through several generations if not for

our whole life time.

According to traditional Buddhist

thinking, how would karma play out for

the monk who ate this food?"

Well, again, the karma is is a matter of

mental states. And, um

it may be that uh you could eat that

food with no different mental states

than if the food were just wild type,

you know, not genetically modified in

any way or no no chemical fertilizers

used in any way. So, I mean, the

question would be like if there are some

sort of results coming from the

fertilizer or the the genetic

modification, like you get some sort of

health problem,

then going with the the Buddhist uh

Buddhist idea, that would be the

fruition of karma for the most part.

Um

and it would be a matter of your mental

states and not it would be more a matter

of your mental states than a matter of

um genetic modification of of the plants

you ate.

Um

so,

Abhidhamma scholars do claim that uh

every

feeling that arises in you arises

through the power of karma. It's the

fruition of karma, kamma vipaka.

And, there are people who will say

otherwise, but uh

I've known enough Abhidhamma scholars in

Burma

to know what they say, and that's what

they say.

So, it'd be a matter of like your mental

states. And, uh if

um yeah, I mean it's just not it's just

not an issue in in traditional Buddhism.

Um like I said earlier, like nutritive

essence is just one ultimately real

like an atom, subatomic particle that uh

you know, they just didn't understand. I

mean,

um you know, there's no refined

understanding of nutrition or um like uh

biochemistry, anything like that in uh

in the Buddhist text. So, it's they look

at it more from a religious point of view, and if you get sick, it's uh you know, maybe you ate bad food or something, but still it's your karma's involved.

Um

and it's it's your karma more than the the the chemicals that are going to make you happy or unhappy.

So, I'll just move on to the next question here. And this is uh one that I get asked every once in a while.

And it is it is an interesting question. What do you think about individual or collective manifestation of karma that impacts the mass population, possibly creating a universal karma? What do you

think about the differences between
individual and collective manifestation?
Well, this is sort of like
uh debate about evolution, like natural
selection. Some people say natural
selection occurs with large groups,
you know, entire populations,
but orthodox Darwinian evolutionary
biology says that natural selection
occurs with the individual. Either you
survive to reproduce or you die off. And
karma is sort of like that also. Um the
orthodox Theravadan
um
explanation is there is no group karma,
that karma is always individual.

But, there can be like what is virtually group karma in that people with the similar mental states, similar attitudes, similar problems, who are making similar karma, tend to be born together. You know, obviously, if, you know, you have certain mental states, and you have the karma to live in a certain kind of of culture, then other people with that similar kind of karma are going to be born into that that culture, also. So, in a way, you could say that's like group karma, although it's it's somewhat of an illusion. At least at least going with orthodox Theravada.

Um

so

Yeah, I think I answered that one.

It's kind of a complex question, but uh

somehow I accidentally answered it

succinctly. So, I'll move on to the next

one. How would a traditional Buddhist

address the difference s- between the

conscious and subconscious for himself

and for others? Yeah, this is something

I've thought about rather a lot in that

Abhidhamma, which is traditional

orthodox Theravada, doesn't really have

a concept of the the the unconscious

mind or the subconscious. They've got

what's called Bhavanga Citta,

um which they call the subconscious, but

really that's just like a test pattern.
It's like It's It doesn't change. It's
just this one image that is just showing
on the screen in your mind, so to speak,
if you're completely unconscious, or
it's like in between thoughts, that kind
of a thing. You're deeply asleep, it can
it can be there a lot. Um
but the the whole idea of like like the
Freudian subconscious, um even though to
me it seems fairly likely, pretty
obvious, in fact, that we do have mental
states, perceptual states, volitions,
motivations that we're not consciously
aware of.
And um
orthodox Theravada really doesn't have

much to say about that.

Um

which is which is kind of interesting.

So, how would a traditional Buddhist

address the differences between the

conscious and subconscious? They

wouldn't because

orthodox Theravada does not acknowledge

the existence of something like a

Freudian subconscious

or like uh Jungian archetypes, you know,

the collective unconscious, that kind of

thing that

um

I could I could be mistaken, but I'm

like I say, I've

I've lived in Burma for so long and
talked with so many Abhidhamma scholars.
I got a pretty good idea what Abhidhamma
says and uh
the the subconscious mind just somehow
they just didn't think of that. Dreams
also is another weird one that
Abhidhamma just completely overlooks.
So, I'll just move on to the next
question also from Sam I Am who does not
like Green Eggs and Ham.
Do traditional Buddhists accept real
science or understand enough of it to
accept it?
Is there any conflict between the belief
in Buddhism and real science in this
context, according to the Buddhist?

Um

yeah, well, most traditional Buddhists

are not really uh up-to-date on

science, you know, a lot of them are in

Asia, they're subsistence farmers and

some sub and uh

so forth and uh

but I mean, they like to believe that

Buddhism and science are in agreement.

And for the most part, I mean

you know, there's a lot of overlap.

Let's just say there's a lot of overlap

between um

like

scientific objectivity and empiricism on

the one hand and Buddhism on the other.

I mean, they're not entirely It's not a

perfect fit.

Um

so I instead of an explain uh ghosts and

and rebirth and uh a lot of other

things. A lot of the the

the more metaphysical aspects of karma,

that kind of a thing.

And uh

and sometimes they just contradict each

other like

Abhidhamma says consciousness and like

thought arises in the heart

and that the brain is like the the

commentarial tradition like the

Visuddhimagga just says that the brain

is just bone marrow filling a large

hollow bone and they didn't even know
what it did. They just uh
uh almost the only
um
effect of having a brain in uh the
Visuddhimagga is that if you catch a
cold it liquefies and drips out of your
nose in the form of snot.
So yeah, there's I mean Buddhism is
pre-scientific by a long shot and it
it arose 2,500 years ago in the the
Ganges Valley. And um
like any other pre-modern religion it's
going to have a pre-modern
interpretation of reality. But uh
a lot of a lot of it, you know, like uh

the cosmology,

you know, the flat earth floating on

water and all that is just irrelevant.

It doesn't really have anything to do

with Buddhist practice anyway.

Um

so I guess I'll just move on to the next

question. I hope I answered that one but

maybe I didn't.

Last question from Sam I Am.

Could you say that Buddhism as a

religion is incomplete?

Why or why not?

Well, I'm not exactly sure what Sam I Am

means here by incomplete.

Um

I mean it doesn't explain everything and

then the Buddha in some sermons or some uh discourses just says, you know, the purpose of Buddhism isn't to explain everything.

You know, it's like uh he holds up a few leaves in his hand and says, you know, what he teaches This this handful of leaves even though all there is that could be taught is like all the leaves in the trees in this forest, you know, they're sitting in.

Um but I mean he's just teaching you uh you know, the nature of suffering and the way to escape from suffering. And so, I mean, with regard to empirical objectivity, it would be very incomplete

because

you know, I mean, it's it's a

specialized field.

Um you know, it's not trying to explain

everything, even though Abhidharma tries

to explain everything and spectacularly

fails, in my opinion.

Cuz it I mean, it doesn't even explain

gravity, for example.

Um see, incomplete could also mean

like if it doesn't get you fully

enlightened. And obviously, I mean, it

doesn't get everybody fully enlightened.

Even people who really sincerely try as

hard as they can, even most of them

don't become fully enlightened. But

maybe you could say that's because the

people are incomplete and not that
Buddhism is incomplete. But then again,
Buddhism is created by people.
Buddhism is created by incomplete
people. And you can say that, well, the
Buddha was enlightened. But then again,
um it Buddhism, this enlightened
teaching, is passing through the filters
of, you know, generations of monks who
are not enlightened. A lot of them are
just like
scholars and and like politicians and so
forth. So, um
yeah, I mean, any human institution is
going to be corrupt and
to some degree foolish.

And Buddhism is no no exception. Not

that that I'm saying that Buddhism is

particularly foolish, but um

yeah, I mean, it's just unavoidable cuz

we're dealing with human beings.

So, yeah, I guess you could say that

it's it's incomplete. But um as

religions go, it's about as complete as

you're going to find.

So,

yeah.

So, I guess I better just move on to the

next one cuz we've already been going

for more than an hour and I still got uh

several questions to go although we're

well well over halfway done here.

So, I hope you went pee when I told you

to.

Told you.

Okay, next question is from Brian.

Here is the question I was wondering about. I knew from events at a local Buddhist temple that some of the Theravada monks only eat before midday. Some of them

Uh-oh. Some Buddhists from different groups visit for an annual event they have. So, I was wondering if the monks tend to eat only one meal a day or whether they would have a breakfast as well.

I thought you might know from your experience. I don't know if you have

answered this before in other videos,
but I guess you could put that in one of
your videos in case others are
interested in the answer. Also, do you
think they have the same number of
calories as lay people and non-Buddhists
but just in one meal or two meals or do
you think they are managing on less?
Okay, let's talk about Buddhist eating
habits.
Um in the in the texts, it does indicate
that a monk eats one meal a day always
between dawn and midday.
Um although it it was allowed even in
ancient times
for a monk to drink yagu
which originally, I'm pretty sure it was

just the water drained off of boiling rice. Like in the morning, the ladies would boil their rice and then they just pour off the extra water and some um mendicants, ascetics would go around begging for that. They'd just drink that. And then from that, it got turned into like rice gruel and porridge and um Yeah, it's kind of troubles me a little bit that uh he said some of the Theravada monks only eat before midday when that's just strictly prohibited. I mean, monks just aren't supposed to eat after midday.

Um but nowadays most Asian monks eat twice a day, which is they eat the dawn

meal, the ayon song, and then they eat
the nay song, which is the like the
right before midday. So, they'll eat
like right after dawn, and then they'll
eat like around 11:00 a.m.
So, they'll get two meals in. Although,
when I was a monk, I just ate once a day
for
30 years with very, very few exceptions.
And uh
so, I guess I should move on to the next
part here.
Um do you think that they have the same
number of calories as lay people with
just one meal, or do you think they are
managing on less? It depends on the
monk. I mean,

um like when when you're eating just one meal a day, you're eating an entire day's supply of food in one sitting, and uh yeah, it's like you your stomach kind of expands, you can really pack it away. Um so, I I would say that monks that aren't practicing a lot of meditation, uh and they're not just sitting all the time, they're probably eating, you know, about the same amount as the average person, except just in a one big meal instead of in two or three small ones. Um but if you're doing like intensive practice,

then you can get away with the way less food than usual and way less sleep than

usual, just because you're you're in a
more subtle state, you know, you're
you're in a way you're more your your
vibe is more refined or something, and
you don't need so much energy to keep
you going.
So, that's possible, too, but that's
probably uh
the exception to the rule, because most
monks really aren't um
they're not cultivating like really
subtle, refined mental states.
Unfortunately, I mean, that's that's
their duty, but um
Asian monks, especially, are uh
they're like village priests, like I was
saying earlier.

And uh

a lot of them I mean, they tend to be

good people.

But um

there's a difference between being a

good person and a and a good monk.

Because they don't really uh they're not

really following along. It's It's sort

of like Christians in the West. I mean,

what Christians do and what the Bible

says Christians should do is uh

pretty radically different in a lot of

cases.

So uh

I think I'll just move on to uh the next

question from Nardi.

And Nardi says, "Have you ever tried contemplation of sensations? I'm doing this meditation these days. Do you have any advice on this technique?" Uh yes, it's called Vedana Anupassana. It's one of the four Satipatthana's.

And um

yeah, and

you can say that

sensations and mental states are

um

there there's so much overlap that

they're they're practically synonymous.

Um cuz you you can have mental

sensations, too.

But like

um as a general rule, when I would do

Anapana or meditation on breathing, I would just turn that into Vedana Anupassana and just uh

um

focus my attention on the the touch of wind on my upper lip around my nostrils. I wouldn't be thinking breathing in, breathing out, breathing in, breathing out. Or following the air or anything like that. I would just be noting the sensation of touch of the wind on my on my upper lip.

And uh yeah, walking meditation is the same. If I do walking meditation, it's usually either a mantra of Om, which um man, I I must have been a Hindu in a

past life cuz it happens automatically a lot. Or else just uh the sensations of of your your legs swinging, like the oily sensation in your knees, the pressure on the bottoms of your feet, that kind of a thing. That's all sensation.

And it's good It's a good thing to meditate on cuz it's uh you know, it it's there and it's uh pretty obvious and it's easy to keep your attention focused on that.

And uh even when you're you're just being mindful, I mean, usually it's sensations that you're being mindful of like uh um you know, you can be talking to

somebody

and you can just be focusing your

attention on the movements of your mouth

and like the

uh like the vibration of your throat and

just the the sensation of hearing your

own voice and the other person's voice.

Is everything can be uh turned into

meditation of sensations pretty much.

So, uh yeah, it's a good meditation.

It's it's you're closer to ultimate

reality

by contemplating sensations than through

conceptualizing. You know, like like

with regard to Anapana, you're closer to

ultimate reality

by just being aware of the the sensation
of touch than you are by thinking
breathing in breathing out breathing in
breathing out cuz then that's just like
ideas, it's concepts.
There is no ultimate reality of
breathing in breathing out.
But uh at least according to Abhidhamma,
there is an ultimate reality of
sensation.
So, good luck with your practice. It is
it is a good way to meditate. And um
you could probably pick up more advice
just on a book on Satipatthana. Just
look up the way to do Vipassana part.
And uh it will explain a lot.
I hope if it's a good book.

So, the next question is by the Marquis de Sade.

And the Marquis says, "Greetings from Scandinavia.

As a new Buddhist practitioner, there are some concepts that I find some difficulty in understanding fully.

For example, when considering comma, can killing be morally justifiable if the act itself comes from a place of love?"

Well, that sounds like Charlie Manson.

In say in certain cases of euthanasia or killing for the purpose of protecting yourself or your loved ones.

Okay, that's fair enough. That's fair question. Um

but the thing is as I keep saying

I just harp away at this

that uh

you know, what they what the

the ethical quality of an action depends

on your mental states and especially on

your cetana or your your

your urge, your your will, your

volition.

And so um

killing from the Buddhist point of view

is like the worst thing you can do.

Um personally, I think torturing would

be worse than killing, but um from

Buddha's point of view of traditional

ancient Indian Buddhist ethics, killing

is like about the worst thing that the

ordinary person can do.

And uh so we're dealing again with

shades of gray.

So, if you're if you kill somebody like

like uh the Marquis is talking about

here, like euthanasia, like

let's say, you know,

the cat gets hit by a car and it's all

messed up and so you take out the pistol

and just put it out of its misery.

Typical example.

Um

that would have some unskillful karma

because you are knowingly killing

another being, but there would be

mitigating circumstances. I mean, it

could be lighter. It's certainly going
to be much lighter gray than if you just
shoot the bastard just for fun or
because you hate cats or something.
So
yeah, so if you're killing, you I mean,
there's going to be consequences. If
you're knowingly killing,
um even if it's through uh
you know, some some idea of benevolence
or, you know, putting somebody out of
their misery or protecting yourself or
your loved ones. Even so, you're still
killing and there's always going to be a
certain amount of unskillful or
unwholesome karma involved. But, the
more

benevolent

your your motives are,

you know, the the lighter gray it's

going to be ethically.

So, protecting yourself or your loved

ones, um

Yeah, a monk is allowed to strike out in

self-defense, but he's not supposed to

have the intention of killing while

doing so. And he would be parajika

excommunicated for life even if he has

uh

he knowingly killed somebody in

self-defense.

Um

I mean, he can strike out in

self-defense and kill them accidentally. That wouldn't be That wouldn't be excommunicatable, what um if that is a word.

Um and with regard to protecting loved ones, that's one reason why monks just do not have families. That's one of the reasons why it was set up that way that monks are

They don't marry. They don't have children. That kind of a thing because then you've got these obligations. Like the ordinary person, I mean, you're married and have kids and somebody's trying to kill them or rape them or kidnap them or something, then you're arguably you're totally justified in

just blowing their head off, you know,
just just doing whatever it takes to
protect your your family. You've got
You've got a duty like as a parent or as
a husband or or whatever.
But, um yeah, that's one reason why
monks they don't have uh
families because um
they're karmic minimalists.
And so, if you're living in the world,
sometimes you have to do some
gray ethically gray actions.
And it's just the way it is. And so, you
got to be man enough to face the
consequences.
Or woman enough.

So, yeah,

in answer to the question, again, it depends on your mental states. When you're killing knowingly, there's always going to be at least a certain amount of unskillful karma. You know, even if you've got the best reasons in the world, still you're knowingly killing somebody and everyone's kind of connected in a certain way and um you know, the effect's going to be there. Um by knowingly killing or knowingly causing suffering to another. But um uh again, I mean, if you if you think you have benevolent reasons, if if you think that you're causing less suffering than if you if you didn't do it, you know,

there would be more suffering then um

then, you know, it's it's light gray,

arguably.

But the thing is, from a Buddhist point

of view, just to sit there and watch

somebody shoot 100 people, that's that's

ethically neutral because you personally

aren't doing anything.

Just to sit there and do nothing is is

karmically and ethically neutral.

At least, I mean, especially if you're

just doing nothing mentally.

But um

yeah, I think I'll just move on to the

next one.

Also from the marquee,

do you have any advice on how to create a daily spiritual routine for a layperson with prayer, meditation, et cetera? How does the daily spiritual practice for a common Burmese layperson look like? I sincerely thank you for your answers and wish you all the best.

Well, thank you. I I wish the same to you.

Um

the thing is, I've never been a particularly religious person. I was more philosophical than religious. I never really liked ceremonies and rituals very much. That's one reason why I became a Theravada Buddhist monk cuz they had about the minimum number of

ceremonies and rituals and the ceremonies were just pragmatic for for obvious reasons. You weren't You weren't worshipping anything really.

At least uh those ones weren't uh um required in the texts. Although the culture has come up with all kinds of bowing and chanting and stuff, but um spirit daily spiritual routine, well, you should have some meditation in there.

Maybe meditation when you get up, meditation before you go to bed. Um read you know, read Buddhist texts, do a little study. That was one thing I used to do as a layperson is just uh read a

few verses of the Dhammapada right

before going to sleep.

Um

if you want, you can have an altar.

You can make offerings at the altar,

just light a candle, burn some incense,

maybe sit in front of the altar when you

meditate. Of course, for a Buddhist

layperson, keeping five precepts is

pretty basic.

Um

uh the the average Burmese layperson, a

lot of them like on the Uposatha days,

which is the full moon day, new moon

day, and half moon days, they will go to

the monastery and keep eight precepts.

They'll keep extra precepts,

which includes um not eating after noon,

um

no singing, dancing, uh playing music,

uh watching entertainment shows, wearing

just like beautifying yourself through

cosmetics and and garlands and using

perfume, you know, scents and that kind

of a thing. They stop that, and also

they uh sleep on a mat on the floor,

just a very low small bed.

Um

so

yeah, if you've got like a a monastery

or a temple somewhere nearby, you could

you could incorporate regular visits and

maybe offering food to the monks

or offering other things that they need.

But, uh it should fit your personality.

And uh

I think um

what I've just said is it would be like

basics.

And uh if there's other things you'd

like to do like chanting, you can learn

chants. Some of them are really nice.

Metta Sutta is very nice. Mangala Sutta

is very nice.

Um

you could use a mala like a rosary.

Um there's all sorts of things you can

do and uh you should

experiment and and find out what works

well for you. What's What makes you feel

the happiest cuz that's that's the point

of it.

And uh yeah, good luck with that.

And the next question is from Chaplin.

When can we expect your fourth book to

come out? I really enjoyed the first

three. Well, that's kind of a good

question. I do have

uh two more books worth of material that

I can edit and turn into books fairly

easily. Um although right now I'm

I'm pretty much pushed to my limits with

regard to work and getting other stuff

done when I'm not working.

Um you know, I usually I'm still not

fully adjusted to being a manual

laborer. And so, I come home pretty tired. And uh I had to take a little bit of a nap um even before doing this video. Cuz I I had to work today and uh I come home tired.

And I got all this other stuff to do. I got to make my lunch for the next day usually if my sweetheart doesn't do it for me. And uh

uh sometimes I got to clean up and I wash dishes and

other things like you know, I got to correspond with people, all sorts of things. So, um right now I just pretty much don't have the time to edit the fourth book, but it's it's there in in nascent form.

And uh

it's a matter of time before I I do it.

It's like uh the first three are are

actually increasing in sales lately. So,

uh

who knows, maybe there'll be like a

demand for for the fourth book, in which

case uh I'll find the time.

Um

So, yeah, that's when.

And the next question from Chaplin is,

will you be publishing your

translations?

Well, actually, I've already published

most of my translations in uh volume

one, the first book that was mentioned,

which I happen to have right here.

Shamelessly plugging my own book.

So, most of my translations are in this

book, which is available on amazon.com.

And um for the for the person above who

was asking good books to read to learn

about Buddhism, I mean,

this it's not systematic, you know, it's

not really like a step-by-step

explanation of Buddhism, but it has a

lot of aspects of Buddhism that you're

not going to find anywhere else, or

not together in one book, anyway.

Um

So, most of my translations from Pali

into English are, as I say, in this

book. And there's one other book that uh

that I have written back in the '90s,
the first published book I ever I ever
wrote, which is this one, the Atakavaga
translation.
And um
this one, I mean, I've always wanted
to make it an edition of this that would
be compact, like maybe half the size
that you could carry in your pocket,
maybe even on waterproof paper, like
some field guides
are made, so I mean, you could just take
it everywhere, just carry it in your
pocket, you sit down on a hill out in
the woods or something, and you just
pull it out, and you just

read a sutta.

Um that was always my vision, but this

book, I've

I've always had the idea that it should

never be sold for money.

I just want this to be dhamma dana, just

for free distribution. So, someday, if

uh

maybe if there's enough demand or just

some

wealthy eccentric person comes along who

wants to publish an edition of this

um

yeah, I would uh

I would make it, but it would have to be

for free distribution. I don't want to

charge money for it.

Because the Dharma is priceless, it should be freely available to all beings.

So last person to ask questions is Diane. And she asks two questions, the first of which is is it possible for my dog to be reincarnated?

And the answer is yes.

In fact going with Buddhist philosophy all beings continue to to be reborn. Um go they go through the cycle of birth and death and rebirth and re-death until eventually they become enlightened.

So yeah, dog can be reincarnated. And when I was a kid we had a dog that was

so human in certain ways that's

I I used to think sometimes it was

possible that maybe it was even a human

being that in a past life and uh

I don't know, I just liked fighting or

something too much and uh

had to be reborn as a dog or something.

But um

yeah.

And uh I've I've come across the idea a

few times in Buddhist philosophy of just

the weird karma that results in like

really like pampered

dogs in the west. You know, like like a

Burmese village dog it really is a lower

realm. Like in Buddhism the animal realm

is like it's a lower realm. It's a realm

that you don't want to be born into, but

um

some some dogs in the west they've got

it they've got it made, you know,

they've got it way better than a lot of

people in the east or a lot of people in

the west for that matter.

Um so yeah.

Going with Buddhist philosophy, your dog

not only not only is it possible, but

it's uh pretty much inevitable that your

dog will be reborn.

And um, I I remember reading

a very strange book called Seth Speaks

by Jane Roberts who's channeling this

multi-dimensional being that calls

itself Seth.

And Seth had this really interesting

idea

that um

that like the karmic stream of a being

can split. And And Seth was saying that

uh just in the recent past, a part of

his karma had split off and become a

dog. And had just started a whole new

uh like a reincarnational

channel, you know, like this whole new

this whole new being.

And uh that's not orthodox Buddhism, but

it would explain

um

why the number of beings just remains

infinite in the universe and it's

um you know, where new beings can come

to replace the the beings that uh

finally make it off the wheel.

Um, but I digress.

And so

Diane's last question, this is the very

last question.

Diane asks, "How do traditional

Buddhists say in Southeast Asia view the

paranormal, like spirits and PK

manifestations we see on shows like The

Dead Files?"

Well,

yeah, if you go to Burma, it's yeah,

it's it's very real there, much more

real than than in the West.

Uh just for starters, you've got uh some monks
who uh presumably have uh psychic powers, especially regard to reading minds. You know, they'll they'll just look right through you and uh they can answer your questions before you ask them.
Um, also the Burmese very much believe in ghosts.
So much that there a lot of them are just afraid to to pass through a cemetery unless they're with a group of people. And also witches. There's a saying in in Burma that every seventh house has a witch living there.
So, yeah, I mean the paranormal it's

just uh

accepted as just ordinary existence in

the in in the East, I mean, in like in

Southeast Asia.

So,

yeah, so it's it's just very It's It's

accepted more than it is in the West.

Like a lot of people in the West don't

believe in ghosts, but a lot of I think

probably most people in Southeast Asia

would believe in ghosts.

And uh lots of other things, monsters

and monsters of all sorts, all kinds of

things.

Dragons and ogres and all sorts of

things. Like for example, um

when I was a monk,

still a relatively junior monk, I was going to live in a certain forest. And one of my best friends at the time was a monk who uh came from that part of Burma in the south. And he had a degree in physics. I think he was a high school mathematics teacher. He was reasonably intelligent, but even so, he was warning me, you got to be careful, there's a dragon there, and there's like this powerful spirit that lives in this hill, and I mean, you can't spit on the ground there, it doesn't like that, and there's ogres. There's there's like this army of them. And you I mean, they're very territorial. Don't try to set up your

own territory there cuz they'll attack

you.

And uh they just accept this stuff

without question. So, yeah, it's uh

it's part of their reality.

It's not just so much like a

like an interesting hobby of of watching

the shows and thinking, "Hmm, that's

interesting." Cuz for them, it's just

it's just reality.

And that's the last question. So, uh

as always, so long as people keep asking

questions, I will keep attempting to

answer them.

So, just uh

keep them coming in and if you have any

questions,

you are welcome to put them in the

comments below

or if you are subscribed to my

SubscribeStar channel, you can put them

there, especially when I leave an

announcement for an upcoming Q&A. Or if

you're on the Discord server associated

with our channel, then you can leave

them in the Q&A room, also.

And uh

with regard to uh the books, they have

been mentioned a few times. I

shamelessly plug them and uh

the the links on Amazon should be in the

URL links below the video. And uh ask

about whatever you think I can answer,

like especially Buddhist history,

Buddhist philosophy, meditation, that

kind of thing, Southeast Asia, um

monasticism in general, anything like

that.

And uh

be happy.

hello and welcome to episode 17 of a

question and answer

i am your host panyo basa

um

alias john david reynolds

and you may notice that i'm not wearing

a shirt

and that's because i don't have one on

and um

it's uh

shouldn't be too big of a deal

it's just my natural state it just

seemed pretentious to put one on just

for the sake of being on a video

and um

i have set the precedent long ago even

as a monk i did a q a or some other

video

um

with without my upper robe on my my toga

so i hope you're not too disturbed by

shoulders that have no cloth on them

and uh

no worries i won't suddenly stand up and

scandalize anybody

i'm not entirely naked anyway

so let's just uh get on with these

questions because um this is i have kind

of delayed doing this because uh

things keep coming up and um

on weekdays i'm often tired in the

evenings because i work now i'm like a

manual laborer like a professional

weight lifter or something

and um

so i'm a little bit tired even uh even

tonight but i am drinking coffee

which is helpful

so

i should start answering questions

because we've got um as usual quite a

few

um i still haven't wised up sufficiently

to just uh

do a video

maybe once a week

which would have half as many questions

and last half as long

but um

i don't know this this this method has

been working fairly well i suppose

so

the first question is from fred

and fred says what do you know about

um

he has it spelled p-a-n-n-a-t-t-i

which would be pronounced pannati but i

assume

the the n should have squiggles over the

top so it would be panati

what do you know about panyatti and baba

which is spelled b-h-a-v-a i'm studying

patica samupada through the abhidharma

exclamation point

well

um

i suppose i mean

if you want to study predicate through

the abi dhamma i mean

more power to you

um

i don't remember panyatti being

closely associated with padichis

although i really haven't studied

thoroughly the abidama approach to it

but panyatti

it's an interesting term and it's a

useful and valuable buddhist term

it means

um

uh another another synonym for it would

be like

it's a manner of speaking that doesn't

convey reality

but because the whole way we think

doesn't convey reality either is just uh

necessary like in mahayana it's referred

to as skillful means

so you can talk about um you know this

cup

whereas in buddhist philosophy this cup

isn't real

you know it is to believe that it's real

would be um delusion but still

even the buddha would talk about

you know cups people trees

things that um

according to buddhist philosophy don't

really exist they do not have an

inherent self-existence

that um

they are like virtual reality or like

conditional reality

uh so panati is just like a term or uh

uh a word a designation

uh referring to something that

isn't real but nevertheless because

we're all delusional to some degree

um it's just necessary like referring to

people the buddha referred to people

even though buddhism teaches that people

aren't real

so that's what panyatti is and with

regard to bella bhava that's one of the

links in padicha semopana

and

i usually translate it as force of

existence literally it means something

like becoming

or just you could you could translate it

as existence

um

and

in the context of badichismopada the 12

links

the orthodox interpretation

it refers to karma

so it's like the force of existence it's

like the momentum

of

of your your mind the momentum of your

consciousness that's driving you

forwards so that after you die you take

rebirth or it's not even you that takes

rebirth it's just this uh karmic

momentum

that after it loses its form

um

you know in in this

mind-body complex it it assumes a new

form just because of this momentum that

doesn't just

it doesn't just stop

so

it's kind of interesting that according

to the orthodox interpretation of the 12

links there is a kind of short circuit

because there are two

terms

in the uh 12 knee donald theory of

podicious

or dependent core rising conditioned

genesis it has lots of uh

lots of renderings that um

that both of them mean karma and the

first is sankara

so

there is uh

songkara

that's that's in the 12 links and also

and they supposedly

um both mean the same thing except for

the first

the first um mention of karma is

supposedly in your previous existence

and then the second mention of karma is

in this existence although

why they

why the buddha

would have chosen two different words

for the same thing

is uh

kind of questionable

um

but uh let's not wallow in through

dependent core rising so i'm just going

to uh leave it at that blah means um

like

the force of existence it's like the the

mental momentum

of your karma

that keeps you in existence or keeps you

seemingly in existence

so um

i think i'll just move on to the next

question i hope i wasn't too skimpy on

that one but um

just wallowing in in padicha somehow

yeah it can be pretty heavy

so the next question also from fred

can intellectually wanting rebirth

actually land you in another body

well for starters i would say that

wanting isn't so much of an intellectual

thing that it's not the intellect

that causes you to be

reborn

it's not the intellect that really

causes karma

then it's more the

the will

that accompanies the intellect it's uh

more of um

not so much the intellectual content but

just the force

you know like boa the force of existence

is this this

uh urge

this karmic urge

that um really

um results that creates karma and

results in future consequences like

potentially

rebirth

or what a lot of people call

reincarnation

so

yeah i mean

um desire for existence is one of the

three main kinds of desire according to

orthodox buddhist philosophy there's

desire for sensual pleasures desire for

existence and desire for non-existence

and any of those three

including the desire for non-existence

um because it's all desire you know it's

just more karmic momentum

that it can result in in rebirth

so

um

i don't know why they didn't have a

desire for pain or discomfort because i

assume that i mean there are people that

really do desire the opposite of sensual

pleasure

um but maybe it's just because they get

some kind of satisfaction some kind of

um you know perverse sort of pleasure

from hurting themselves

that uh it's still kind of a desire for

pleasure or satisfaction

so um you know the short answer can

intellectually wanting rebirth actually

land you or another body uh yes although

it's really not the intellectual aspect

of it it's the wanting aspect

so the next question also from fred does

the body have a metaphysical blueprint

for

eg ethereal body

um

i have had people say that theravada

buddhism

does

teach that there is a kind of astral

body but there's very little mention of

it

it's sort of um

oh sort of a fringe

teaching within the within the text you

know it's you you can find it in there i

assume

but it's really not emphasized at all

it's much more emphasized in something

like hinduism

where

um you know you have the dream body and

then it's like after you die it's like

this like for example um

people have near-death experiences where

you know they rise up above the the

physical body they look down and they

maybe are seeing the paramedics trying

to resuscitate their body you know and

they've got this other body like their

dream body

um like the astral body

um

yeah i mean

it's you can maybe there's like a mind

produced a residual self image like in

the matrix right the residual self image

um

but it's it's really not emphasized in

buddhism and uh ultimately it's

it's no more real

than uh like a dream

a dream projection something like that

so i'll move on to the next question and

this is uh

this one is kind of difficult for me to

understand exactly

fred says i'm wondering whether

intellect gets transferred so i assume

what he's meaning is uh intellect

that

um like your intellect gets

transferred to the next life if you are

reincarnated if you are reborn

and

the the content of your intellect would

not

in general

you know things that you've learned

intellectually in this life would not

um

would not be taken with you to the next

life

in buddhism they say the only thing that

gets reborn is karma

so

it would be just the the will like

schopenhauer's will just be the force of

existence and

um because

perception and volition

or uh sanya and caitanya in buddhism i

mean they're essentially two aspects of

the same thing because they have to

exist

simultaneously you can't have one

without the other

which

kind of indicates that it really is

um two aspects of the same thing even

though buddhism doesn't teach that but i

mean when you have to have

these two things that occupy the same

point

in in space and time

they have to

and they can't possibly be divided other

than just by the imagination then yeah

it makes sense to say that they are

two aspects of the same thing

but um

still

in in that sense you can say that like a

certain intellectuality

because it's uh like an aspect of

like the momentum of your habit energy

of your mind

something like that you know like if

you're an intellectual in this life

you're gonna get reborn probably you'll

be fairly intellectual in the next life

too because it's just a continuation of

the momentum

so

yeah but the content unless

you you're an unusual person that can

remember past lives or something

then

yeah the things that you learn at school

or in books or whatever

they're not really going to be taken

with you unless it has caused some sort

of

um

like habitual

like um behavioral pattern in you that

is karmic that then could like at least

leave traces moving into the next life

all of this is theoretical of course i'm

really

not speaking about um rebirth through my

own personal experience because i do not

recall

having been reborn

i've been told more than once that i'm a

reincarnation of my own grandfather but

uh i don't i don't recall that

so this is all like uh book learnings

and so i'll just move on to the next

question which is from shawarma dharma

and shwarma dharma

says

i have heard trance-like meditative

states described as illusory and to more

or less be ignored and i have heard them

described as indicators of jhana or near

janna can you describe the nature

of the difference between an illusory

trance state and a genre trance state

well that's a good question and a lot of

people really can't tell the difference

i've i've said more than once

that in burma

not everybody but a lot of people really

cannot tell the difference between

genuine jhana

which are advanced

buddhist contemplative states or just i

mean they don't even have to be buddhist

they're just advanced contemplative

states and hypnotic trans

so

you know a lot of people just can't tell

the difference between hypnotic trance

and like a deep genuine bona fide

um spiritual contemplative state

and i'm not saying that hypnotic trance

isn't valuable or beneficial but you

should be able to tell the difference

seems to me if you're gonna hypnotize

yourself you should know that you have

hypnotized yourself and not

assume

that um

you've got you've attained like you know

third genre or something

or fourth genre so um

and and to make matters worse i think

going back into ancient times there has

been a lot of confusion like

fourth genre is often defined

um or it's described as a state where

your breathing and your heart rate

almost stops so you're essentially like

a hibernating squirrel

with some kind of spiritual

uh qualities added to that but um

i mean yeah i'm i'm very skeptical of

that because um according to the higher

up in genre you get the more pure your

mindfulness is and i just failed to see

how being in a state of suspended

animation where you're oblivious to

everything around you you're oblivious

to the passage of time that how that

could be

purity of mindfulness

um

the uh the scholars that endorse this or

some of the meditators that endorse that

interpretation would say well you're

mindful of this one

object

to the to the extent that you're

ignoring everything else or oblivious to

everything else but

uh it seems to me that mindfulness

doesn't really work that way that's just

samadhi that's there's hardly any

mindfulness involved in that as far as i

can tell

so um

i think a handy rule of thumb if you

want to identify like a deep meditative

state that is some asamati or right

concentration as opposed to just um

hypnotizing yourself

is are you still aware of what's going

on i mean if you've got purity of

mindfulness then you're still going to

be aware of what's going on around you

even though you're not focusing on that

but i mean if you're just oblivious to

the sound of the clock ticking you're

oblivious to the mosquito biting you

you're oblivious to anyone like trying

to rouse you you know they're shaking

you by the shoulder and still you're

just like completely out of it

then i would assume that you are not

being particularly mindful

and that you are probably in a kind of

zoned out trans state and not

in

like an advanced contemplative state

where where you're becoming more awake

really i mean

fourth genre should be about as close as

you can get to being enlightened

um

without without actually being

enlightened

and so you'd be more awake i mean like

buddha literally means awake awakened

so the more awake you are the the more

advanced your contemplative state is

going to be

and if you're really doing genre really

well or just contemplation let's just

forget forget the word genre just if

you're doing contemplation really well

then you're going to be so alert that

when a thought starts to arise

you'll catch it immediately you'll just

see it immediately and just

um

like the mindfulness or the awareness of

it is sufficient to just cause it to

just fade back out again

so

yeah and uh

yeah that would that would be my answer

i mean if you're just

like

oblivious to everything around you

oblivious to the passage of time

oblivious even to people trying to tell

you the house is on fire or something

then yeah i would say that would be

a kind of hypnotic trance that is not a

really right concentration at least not

from the point of view of buddhist um

bhavana or or like mental cultivation

i mean hypnosis can still be useful and

beneficial

but

not in the same way

so i think i'll just move on to the next

question from shawarma dharma and he

says

i assume it's a he

can a monk go home to visit family can

family come and visit a monk that's an

easy one i really do appreciate really

easy questions sometimes

and uh yeah there's nothing at all wrong

with a monk going home to visit family

or family coming to visit a monk

especially if they're his parents

that is um that is most allowable

because in buddhism you really do

there's you really do have like an

obligation to honor your your mother and

father like um there is a famous suta i

don't remember the name of it so i mean

it's not extremely famous but the buddha

says that you could uh carry your your

parents around on your back

for the rest of their lives and uh still

you wouldn't be paying them back

for what they have done for you

and they don't even have to be very good

parents for that to be true

so yeah i mean for a monk who uh was

married

and had kids for him to

go back and visit his you know his

erstwhile mate and his children

it would depend on his reasons i mean if

it's just nostalgia and like

family attachment then probably that

would be considered inappropriate for a

monk because a monk really is supposed

to just um become without family other

than

just sort of being brothers to the other

monks

um with regard to can family come and

visit a monk i mean anybody can come and

visit a monk

you know prostitute come and visit a

monk it's like uh one of the buddha's

last meals was served to him by amba

pali who was a courtesan

so um

yeah i mean it's

who who comes to visit you is one thing

i mean like the motives are another

thing the motives of the monk also like

the monks reaction

you know it's like i keep saying over

and over again

um the moral quality of an action going

with buddhist philosophy is not physical

i mean it's not determined by what the

body actually does it's it's the mental

states

so a prostitute can come to come to see

a monk and the monk is completely

serene and equanimous and unlustful

towards her and all that then i mean he

hasn't done anything wrong although of

course there are like rules of monastic
discipline saying that they shouldn't be
sitting alone together or talking alone
together or anything like that but let's
say she comes with a chaperone you know
another man a man comes with her
or there's two monks there or something
so yeah
i mean people can come and visit monks
and monks can especially um there's
nothing particularly wrong with a monk
visiting his family
so i'll just move on to the next
question which is from mr unofficial
and mr unofficial
asks a kind of interesting question that
a similar question was asked um maybe a

month ago

about npcs are there real npcs you know

like uh

beings that seem to be conscious but

really there's there's nobody there

um this is a similar one

mr unofficial asks what are your

thoughts on philosophical zombies or

hylics as described within gnosticism

can a human be devoid of consciousness

but still act as if they did have it

like an artificial intelligence

that is an interesting question

and um

i have

been told by a german monk living in

burma when i was also living in burma

that um

the demons in hell are like this and

unfortunately

more fortunately depending on how you

look at it the celestial nymphs in

heaven

you know the harems of celestial nymphs

that the devas have that they're all

just like generated by karma there's

really nobody there that they're just um

kind of like

dream apparitions or something

and uh

at least i mean just the

the word apparition

uh leads to the idea that i mean any

kind of apparition

would be like this that i mean if if if

it's just your own mind or your own

karma that's causing something to be

there

um

then yeah it's sort of like beings in a

dream if you're dreaming at night

um arguably you would be the only

character in the dream that isn't an npc

and to some degree i mean you can't

really

i mean your own

behavior to some degree is is uh out of

your control in dreams

so um to some degree we are kind of npcs

even when we're awake

uh some people more than others

um

[Music]

so if if there was one of these

um heilix or philosophical zombies um

they would exist only when some

conscious being was perceiving them if

they didn't have their own consciousness

they didn't have their own

um like karma like mental momentum

then they would exist only if there was

some conscious mind perceiving them

and

i think this could be possible i i'm i

haven't entirely ruled out the

possibility that uh like space aliens

like people who have close encounters or

are abducted or so

this kind of thing that um

the beings who are abducting them may

just be generated by these people's

karma

and so they don't really exist except

for they are sort of created by the

power of the person's karma

kind of along these same lines there is

this weird heaven realm according to

buddhist cosmology called the realm of

perceptionless brahmas

who

somehow exist but they don't have any

mental states

so they just are like statues that are

just like stand there for millions and

millions of years and i see no point

i mean it just seems really

um you know

what would be the point of that

they wouldn't be working off karma or

anything because they're perceptionless

so

um it just seems like that would

probably be just made up

in fact i mean the demons in hell and

the celestial nymphs being npcs could

also just be made up by some scholar

monks and sri lanka or something who are

just trying to figure everything out and

sometimes their guesses are

kind of

kind of silly

and one last

i mean this is kind of uh a weird take

on things but uh you could say that one

kind of uh

philosophical zombie i mean that's not a

good way it's not a polite way of

putting it but like somebody who seems

to be there but really isn't there could

be like an enlightened being too

like ram das used to say with regard to

his guru neem karoli baba the more you

knew him the better you got to know him

the more you realize that there really

wasn't anybody there he was just like a

mirror reflecting your own karma back at

you

but referring to enlightened beings as

zombies is probably uh not very

respectful

but according to buddhism yeah there are

um like npcs beings that seem to

have a functioning mind but really don't

and

as i say you'd have to have a conscious

mind perceiving that being

like like in a dream or something in

order to give them existence or give

them seeming existence they wouldn't be

able to continue functioning like a

vampire or something

um

if there's nobody perceiving them

because they don't have their own

mental momentum to keep them going

so next question by mr unofficial

speaking of ai is it theoretically

possible for one to become conscious and

create karma

well

a few years ago i asked a burmese monk

who was an abhidhamma scholar i mean he

was just

practically obsessed with abhidhamma you

know he's just thinking about all the

time he could just sit there and give a

talk for hours on abhidhamma and still

be going strong

and um he said it's just absolutely

impossible you could not have

a computer become conscious

but i really don't see why not

um

like i do not think that the brain

is creating consciousness and going with

abhidhamma even abhidhamma doesn't think

it's the brain they pabidama philosophy

orthodox abhidhamma says that

consciousness arises in a chamber of the

heart

but um

yeah i mean the brain isn't really

creating consciousness it's just acting

as a kind of receiver

of consciousness or or it's like

the brain is sort of like a computer i

mean it's a pretty obvious analogy

and the computer isn't

generating electricity the computer

isn't creating electricity it's just

taking the electricity and complexifying

it and organizing it and utilizing it

and the brain is kind of doing the same

thing to consciousness

the consciousness is already there the

brain is just taking that consciousness

and

like diversifying it and organizing it

and and utilizing it

so i don't see why a computer if it were

complex enough and designed properly

enough why a computer couldn't be the

seat of consciousness also

in order for it to create karma would

have to have

like irrationality you'd have to somehow

program like emotion or

um

show open heart is a will into a

computer

it couldn't be completely passive

so you'd somehow have to but i mean you

could model a computer on a human brain

and i think they've done this to some

degree with more primitive animal brains

so yeah i really don't see why it would

be impossible even in theory

so my answer is see is it theoretically

possible for one to become for an ai to

become conscious and create karma

um

yeah i would say theoretically at least

you know you could make like an

artificial brain

and it functions pretty much the same as

like a meat brain and

you know why not i really don't see why

not

but

going with ai i mean if it mimics

consciousness that's that's

good enough or bad enough i mean when we

hit the scene the technological

singularity assuming that we do

it doesn't really require a computer to

become conscious so long as it is

mimicking consciousness well enough

so

um i'll just move on to

mr unofficials

next question

also it would be interesting to hear

your thoughts on gnosticism in general

if you are familiar with it

how compatible is gnosticism with

buddhist thought

i'm still in the process of learning

about both religions but sometimes i see

touching points mainly the idea of

conventional reality being a delusion i

suppose the demiurge

could be considered what you call a

small g god

um yeah i'm i'm deliberately being nice

and not

pronouncing the g usually um i pronounce

it wrong on purpose i think and call it

gnostic

gnosticism

because i met this gnostic once

and he was uh

he was all gnarled and gnarled like a

like a gnome and he was riding a gnu

but um yeah

um

i really don't know a whole lot about

gnosticism

gnosticism i mean

um

i think that there is some overlap with

buddhism but there is some stuff that

really isn't buddhism like like here

mentioning the demiurge like

um some some gnostic sect

considered

jehovah or yahweh of the old testament

to be like some inferior god he wasn't

like the highest god which explains why

everything is as messed up as it is

and why the the god of the old testament

was such a like a violent bloodthirsty

tyrant

but in buddhism there really is there

really is no demiurge it's just

um

this this universe is generated by

ignorance or um

or like delusion of vija

so um the demiurge is unnecessary i mean

you've got mara but he's not really

creating the universe

and

another difference between gnosticism as

far as i understand it

with with buddhism is that um

gnosticism

not only considered it to be a good

thing to escape from this phenomenal

world but really consider this

phenomenal world to be

um

just sort of qualitatively

bad

i'm just like having a body like a body

was a defilement and

buddhism kind of leans that way to some

degree but um really the defilements are

mental in buddhism

so like physical matter isn't good or

bad

because the like the moral or ethical

quality of something is is

psychological or mental

so that would be one difference um

but as i say i really don't know a whole

heck of a lot about gnosticism

so i think i'll just move on to the next

question which is

from

the person who

has their name all in japanese

characters but i believe

the person's name transliterated into

english is yuichiro

or something along those lines

and yuichiro

says

if other beings have become enlightened

are their teachings valid i never

understood why only the buddhist

teachings are valid and not other

enlightened beings at least some

buddhists say so the buddha wasn't god

so i see no reason to only listen to him
and reject other people who might be
equally enlightened there are even other
fully enlightened buddhas
for example i didn't come to buddhism to
deify someone whose actual historical
reality is unknown i'm pretty sure
buddhism is technically against deifying
the buddha but lots of buddhists even
monks do it anyway even if they don't
they might say only his teachings are
valid and everyone else is wrong i might
as well become a christian and say jesus
is the only way truth and life i just
want to learn what's really going on not
dogmatically cling to what one guy
supposedly said

i don't care if that guy never even

existed and everything is made up as

long as it makes good sense

well

the orthodox theravada buddhist position

is that

um

you can

like

a person who isn't a buddhist can go to

heaven

and hell of course but only like an

unorthodox buddhist with right view

capital r capital v sama dt

um only they can become enlightened so

it's like

theravada buddhism is open-minded

more than most religions by saying that

even if you're not a buddhist you can

still go to heaven but from the buddhist

point of view heaven doesn't last

forever it's not the highest possible

state

and they still kind of

want buddhism or theravada buddhism or

orthodox theravada buddhism to have a

kind of monopoly

on

on enlightenment the attainment of

nibbana

and personally i just

do not accept this i just cannot believe

that only a theravada buddhist can

become enlightened or even only a

buddhist um

like in of the people who lived in the

20th century

that

i would guess were fully enlightened if

that even means anything

my two top picks

of possible enlightened beings are both

hindus and that would be

neem karoli baba and

ramana maharshi who are very different

from each other

one was a rascal and the other one was

just uncompromisingly saintly

so

yeah so the thing is

um like a devout terra botta buddhist

would not acknowledge

that a hindu or a christian

or or anybody else that wasn't a

buddhist could possibly be enlightened

or fully have right view

but again i've really never adopted that

position

and so

i think it's possible that even some

christians could be fully enlightened

like saint john of the cross he

apparently considered his mentor saint

teresa of avila and also apparently

himself to have reached the stage of

perfection from which from a from a

christian point of view from a catholic

point of view which was surprising to me

because until i read saint john of the

cross i just assumed that the official

position

of christianity in general is that

nobody is worthy

you know even jesus in the bible

somebody calls him good teacher or good

master or something like that and jesus

himself says why do you call me good

there's none good except god

and then you've got these

16th century catholics mystics

contemplatives

who are talking about

becoming god through participation where

you

um

mortify yourself well until you no

longer have

self-will and then you are no longer

motivated by your own

volitions it's you just become like a

puppet of god you are you are moved by

the will of god

and that's kind of interesting to me

because

even though the words are very different

it it comes very close to what buddhism

teaches like

um you know the christian catholics they

they mortify their self will

and so they're not having they're not

they don't have will anymore not their

own

and going with buddhism i mean karma is

will and an enlightened being creates no

new karma so it's kind of the same thing

really it's just described differently

and

i'd like to think that they arrived at

the same

ideas independently of each other

whether saint john of the cross had any

exposure at all to buddhism is

doubtful

and even if he heard about it he'd

probably get this really distorted

anti-heathen interpretation of it anyway

so

yeah

you should just uh

you know i mean you can read the the

teachings of others and the buddha

himself

um

you know he encouraged people to be

broad-minded and be familiar with other

philosophies

and um he did acknowledge that there

were people who were enlightened before

him and also other enlightened beings

um

and that were contemporaneous with him

that were his contemporaries and i don't

think they would have all have been his

disciples

so yeah i don't think that

buddhism

really has a monopoly on enlightenment

and i think the buddha acknowledged that

that really

any kind of philosophy or ism i mean

that's really not the point you're not

going to become enlightened through some

intellectual

you know system

it just doesn't work that way so long as

the practice helps you to detach from

all systems

then yeah it's a good it's a good system

it's a system that

eventually

uh sort of devours itself

so let's see

i hope i answered that well enough if i

didn't uh you each hero you are welcome

to ask again but um

yeah i've

i've never considered the buddha to be

the only

um

the only enlightened being or the only

um

how to put it

i don't think that buddhism really has a

monopoly on on enlightenment let's just

put it that way

so let's move on to yuichiro's next

question

i have an interesting dilemma if you

misgender a trans person it can cause

them serious mental suffering however it

would be wrong to call them by their

preferred gender because it would be a

lie since reality is real

so is it worse karma to cause them

suffering by misgendering them or by

saying something untrue to avoid their

suffering could it be argued that their

suffering would be good in this case

because they could potentially learn

from it

well i mean i am a little skeptical of

this one part here it says if you

misgender a trans person it can cause

them serious mental suffering

um

if a person

who identifies as a woman

is is called hey mister

if that really messes them up and calls

them serious mental suffering they're

kind of messed up already

um

you know it's sort of like a a person

with a big bruise you don't want to poke

the bruise but i mean all you got to do

is just touch it and they're going to be

hurting

um

yeah well

again it's like whether something is

uh good or bad depends on your volitions

like your your motives the reasons why

you do something the mental states

accompanying it so if you're just being

honest and you're not saying something

in order to hurt them you're just saying

it because you consider it to be true

and something that ought to be said

then yeah i mean you can just hurt their

feelings big time and you haven't done

anything wrong because it's really their

own hypersensitivity and kind of messed

up in this that they just can't deal

with reality

um that doesn't mean that you should do

it on purpose in order to hurt them i

mean you should have compassion

definitely

um

i mean you should be kind

you should be you know benevolent

but

i mean you shouldn't get to the point of

you're having to lie in order to

uh foster a person's delusions you know

a person believes that they're jesus

christ it doesn't mean you have to you

know consider them or act like you're

considering to be jesus christ

this is uh

pretty similar

um but with regard to buddhism

uh i mean buddhism is kind of got a lot

of gray it's it's not just black and

white

for example in in burma trans people can

be found even in like really remote

really traditional conservative villages

you know they're not even in the cities

just out in this really remote rustic

area you can find trans people

and

um

they are accepted

i mean there might be a few jokes made

behind their back every now and then but

they are accepted and treated

relatively well you know they're not

persecuted or anything because of the

buddhist concept of reincarnation

and

that reminds me of a saying by my father

who was a hypnotist he did a lot of past

life regressions

and um

he said that uh

every

let's see

every person who was a woman in their

past life but then were a man in this

one has been quote queer as a three

dollar bill unquote

so there's this buddhist concept of

reincarnation or rebirth where you can

make a transition from male to female or
female to male and a trans person could
be a person who's like in an
intermediate state they're making the
the crossover from one gender to the
next and it's taking more than one life
to make the full transition
and so when they think about it that way
the burmese they they can accept it it
makes sense to them you know it fits in
with their cosmology and so forth and so
they don't really have an issue with
that
um and um they can consider
um a person in a man's body who is
nevertheless dressing like a woman and

called by a woman's name and acting like

a woman and declaring themselves to be a

woman

um you know out of consideration and

their belief in in rebirth and so forth

they might um

i think a lot of them just go along with

it but um

nevertheless um

how the person reacts i think they're

burmese trans people are probably just a

lot more mentally tough

you know they're they're not just like

fragile like eggshells or something and

so if somebody misgenders them i doubt

that they're going to have a meltdown

over it

um i used to know um a trans

man in burma who was uh

a woman a fe uh like a biological woman

who just insisted that she was male and

uh

she was a lesbian i believe i mean

a straight guy straight trans guy or

a lesbian

and um

yeah i don't know what public restrooms

he or she

um

had recourse too but um

you know it was no big deal in in burma

it's just not that big of a deal because

of the belief in reincarnation and that

sort of thing

but um

again getting back to the question i

think i've meandered away from it

um

yeah i mean

misgendering someone i mean if you just

think that you're telling the truth and

you're not saying it in order to hurt

somebody then you haven't done anything

wrong

so i guess that's um

that would be the short answer and i'll

just move on to the next question

which is from nardi

and nardi says

are there any differences of following

ways of buddhism among tarawata

countries like the main differences

between burma and thailand for example

and why did you choose burma

yeah actually there are differences in

there

they're largely cultural differences

so the difference between

burmese buddhism and thai buddhism would

be like the difference between burma and

thailand there's going to be cultural

differences

the burmese

belong to like the tibeto burmese

language family they're they're like

genetically more closely related to the

tibetans and i've read the ties are more

closely related to like the mongols and

they migrated southwards

into thailand

so um that would just cause differences

um just

naturally

um

i assume it would be the same in in

with regard to the west and like

christianity like a catholic in spain

would be different from a catholic in

germany which would be different from a

catholic in like venezuela or something

uh so there are differences and

um

some of the differences between burmese

theravada and thai theravada

burmese theravada puts much more

emphasis on meditation and scholarship

whereas thai theravada puts much more

emphasis on following the rules of

monastic discipline and also

the

optional aesthetic practices called

dutanga

so

um

the thais like the vuniya pitaka the

burmese are more into abidama

and like the sri lankans the they're

more emphasis on the sutas

and sri lankan theravada is

just very different from burmese and

thai because there's so much indian

culture there's like elements of cast

and that sort of thing that are are part

of

um sri lanka and theravada also

um

why i chose burma was it was just uh

karmic random chance really um

i uh i wanted to become a monk i didn't

really know much about monasticism i

wanted to be a monk in america

and so

um

i went to this

zen place

in portland oregon and i was thinking

maybe i was i was kind of leaning

towards zen at the time

and

the the roshi there had uh

it was like a directory of

buddhist organizations in america so i

just went through the whole thing and

wrote down the name and address of any

place that looked like it might be a

monster because i wanted to be ordained

and there was this one

name on the list it was said tung pulus

yap dao it wasn't even spelled correctly

and i had no idea what a tom pelusi

abdow was but uh it

wasn't obviously not a monastery so i

wrote to them and it turned out to be uh

tong pulu kaba 8 monastery

um tom pulu seatto

uh he had already passed away

but um it was one of the few monasteries

in america that that responded to me

abba aguirre didn't exist yet what meta

down in southern california didn't exist

yet

um

so i mean yeah it was just sort of

random chance i guess why i chose burma

although it was a good choice it really

worked for me

uh the the ties are too conformity

oriented they're they're too like

regimented whereas the burmese are more

easy going and so

um

i could just pretty much do as i pleased

which was good because the burmese

weren't as a general rule they were not

very strict and i wanted to be stricter

so

yeah um i think i've answered the

question so instead of just meandering

for another 15 minutes i think i'll move

on to the next question which is by the

marquis de sado

and his first question

is

you have previously mentioned some

weaknesses within the theravada

tradition such as systematization of

enlightenment it being adapted to

ancient india and not the modern west

and so forth with this in mind is there

any value in keeping your religious

tradition pure or should one strive

towards

syncretism well that's a good question

and uh

it depends on

uh it depends on you really like with me

i wanted to keep the religious tradition

pure but in order to do that i had to go

to burma

and live like an ancient indian ascetic

because that's really what theravada

buddhism teaches

is

how to be an ancient indian ascetic

so i mean if if you really want to keep

it pure then that's what you're going to

have to do something along those lines

you're going to have to uh

um

i mean you want to wander around

homeless and all that which is what

theravada teaches then you're going to

have to go someplace probably not in

america probably some place like burma

or or thailand

and

just really try to follow the texts

but um if you're living in the west

if you're not an ordained monastic

um

then yeah there's gonna have to be some

kind of compromise there's gonna have to

be some

syncretism as uh the marquis

says

so you do the best you can and if you

really are persuaded

that a certain system is the one that's

going to get you enlightened

or at least potentially then yeah you do

well to follow it as purely and strictly

as you can

but um again uh i learned

uh through experience that just

trying to live like an ancient indian

aesthetic even though you're living in a

culture that's really not so different

like like burma out like rural burma

even today

is changing fast now but uh like 20

years ago especially it's like it's

really not so different from ancient

india and the buddhist time the culture

um is kind of similar the climate and

the the flora and fauna are very similar

like the irrawaddy valley and the ganges

valley are very similar

um

with regard to biology you know

wildlife and so forth um

and i mean you've got men still taking

their team of blocks out to plow the

fields and the the girl the teenage girl

with the the clay pot balanced on her

head goes down to the well or the river

to fetch water for the hut

it's really not that different except

for you've got rubber flip-flops and uh

radios and now of course you've got uh

cell phones and uh cheap chinese

scooters and so forth but um

yeah i mean you can come very close to

the way the

the monks lived in ancient india if you

go to

um

go out into the the

wilds of

rural burma and possibly thailand too

although

i really am not an expert on thailand

so i can't really say for sure

but um

yeah i guess the answer is uh you know

if you're not willing to just

totally immerse yourself

in in a tradition

then uh yeah i mean you're gonna have to

compromise and you're gonna have to uh

maybe add a little of this and a little

of that and be a little bit eclectic

which is pretty much what i'm doing um

i've never

um well i mean i was trying to live like

an ancient indian aesthetic like i just

said but uh

um i've never just completely become so

narrow-minded that i was only willing to

read like orthodox terribata buddhist

texts i have met a few monks that were

like that a lot a lot of burmese monks

are like that but i have met a few

western monks too that uh you know they

they wouldn't read anything it was

written by a hindu for example or even a

mahayana buddhist but

it's it's good to be open-minded

definitely good to be open-minded

uh narrow-minded dogmatism is is a

virtual guarantee that you're not going

to become enlightened unless maybe

you've got such stainless steel faith

like like some catholic saint that you

can just

muscle through it

so i think i'll just move on to the next

question from the marquis de sado

and uh he says i have found some

confusion in what exactly constitutes

sexual misconduct while some claim it

simply covers adultery and the like i

have also encountered monks claiming

that all sexual activities outside of

marriage would count as sexual

misconduct

what would be the orthodox terrabotta

perspective well the monks that you that

you encountered that the marquis

encountered claiming that all sexual

activities outside of marriage would

counter sexual misconduct that's just

false that is not that is not correct

um

orthodox terra vada i mean marriage

really is not a sacrament in buddhism

and um

it's not necessary to be married in

order to avoid

um the third breaking the third precept

of sensual misconduct

but

um

if you want to be a real stickler i mean

for a monk i mean just even a a sexy

thought would be misconduct

so

um if you're a lay person keeping five

precepts

then um

so long as you're faithful to a person

that you sincerely love and that person

is not already spoken for

then uh

you're doing fine even if you you're

very lustful with that person

because

um the life of a lay person i mean

most people just are not ready to just

strive single hands just single-mindedly

for enlightenment

and that that's just an option i mean to

strive single-mindedly for enlightenment

is an option it's not like you have to

do that even in buddhism and the buddha

didn't say you know you must do that

it's like well i mean if if if it seems

right to you if you're ready for that

then yeah go for it

but um you know the overwhelming

majority of the human race including

most monks and nuns just aren't ready

for that sort of thing

and so uh

yeah i mean there's there's always going

to be a certain amount of um acoustic a

certain amount of uh

naughtiness in us

not everybody can be a perfected saint

and so you just like make peace with

that i mean you just reconcile yourself

if you're not ready

to to strive for just wholeheartedly for

enlightenment

then uh

yeah i mean we're just

we're gonna be breaking

breaking rules that a monk would have to

follow anyway

so let's see let's see if i'm getting

the question right

uh

the orthodox terror water perspective

yeah so for lay people

um the third precept is um

is it's like i already explained i mean

you don't even have to be married really

although uh

um

usually usually that is the case um

at least in uh

buddhist cultures

but for a monk i mean really it was any

kind of

any kind of action or thought that is

motivated by like

sensual desire or passion or anything

like that you i mean you've already gone

off the track

let's see so i'll just move on to the

next question i i hope i answered that

next and last question from the marquee

finally a question regarding anatarika

karma

i then think i think that's spelled

wrong

why is patricide or matricide placed

among the gravest sins a person can

commit yeah according to orthodox

terravada there are i think it's four

i'm getting kind of rusty on this but

there are like four actions that are

just you're just guaranteed of hell in

your next life you're just gonna plunge

right into avicii hell

the lowest pit of hell

if you do these things one is to cause a

buddha to bleed

deliberately i mean if it was accidental

i'm sure that uh the monk shaving the

buddha would just be shaking in his

sandals

um

so yeah to deliberately hurt injure a

buddha so that he bleeds because you

can't murder a buddha i mean um that

that could be used as some sort of

buddhist evidence that the that um

that jesus wasn't a buddha because uh he

obviously got executed but um

yeah to cause to injure a buddha causing

to bleed you cannot murder a buddha

because their karma's too good or

something to to kill an arahant to kill

an enlightened being to kill one of your

own parents

and then the fourth one

usually

i'm pretty sure it's to rape or seduce a

nun

although there's like an alternate which

is to cause a schism in the sangha

it's one of those two

and i've really never been interested in

these kind of lists

the first three are kind of interesting

but the fourth one is is more of a

dogmatic religious thing so

um

but why is patricide or matricide placed

among the gravest sins well killing your

own parents i mean that you gotta admit

that is pretty bad

you know it's not nice guys don't kill

their own mother

and um

i think i said just uh several

minutes ago gosh half hour ago or more

that um

going with uh

ancient indian culture and uh ancient

indian buddhism

that you really do

owe a huge debt to your parents that you

could carry them around on your back for

the rest of their lives and you still

wouldn't pay them back

so a lot of it is just the very family

oriented

um

traditional asian reverence

for one's parents you know filial piety

and that sort of thing which is largely

uh fallen by the wayside in the west at

least to some degree although

um i don't think you could ever

completely eradicate

the strong feelings

sentiments towards one parent towards

one's parents

um a lot of is just instinctive i think

but um

yeah i think pretty much all cultures

would admit that uh as a general rule

killing your own parents is not good

then it's actually uh

really bad

and so i will move on to the next

question which is from chaplin

and chaplin says

if the buddhist's goal is cessation or

escape from samsara how does this

reconcile with procreation choosing to

give birth to more humans in my eyes is

essentially choosing to cast more humans

into samsara and they don't much have a

say in your decision to bring them in it

seems like procreation and cessation are

two completely contradictory actions

although both would lead to the complete

annihilation of the human species

yeah i've i've heard people bring this

up before

and um

it's it's sort of like i said earlier

that most people just aren't

ready or willing to strive

wholeheartedly for enlightenment it's

like you've got the the mass of humanity

and then every once in a while you know

there's like like this little spark or

something that that flings off

that is like an enlightened being

um

so i mean there's really no danger of

the human race going extinct just from

uh everyone striving for enlightenment

because most people just don't want to

um

with regard to uh

like children like babies sort of being

forced into existence against their will

or

maybe not against their will but uh

you know they didn't choose it actually

i mean from the buddhist point of view

you know they you you do have karma and

so you know it's somebody's karma to be

born

um you know they're going to be born

so

[Music]

that's going to happen regardless

and uh if all of the the people in this

world died out or became

enlightened saints without lust or

something like that then uh i assume

there are plenty of other worlds in this

universe that a person could be born in

alternate worlds or whatever

so

let's see

how does

how does cessation or escape from

samsara reconcile with procreation it

really doesn't but it's just like two

alternatives and most people choose the

procreation route

and uh the escape from samsara is just

for the uh

the people that are just really ripe for

it

which are they're always going to be a

tiny minority so

um even in buddhist countries there's

still uh increased uh like positive

population growth

um

maybe because i'm uh

a little bit tired from working today

i'm i'm really not sure how well i'm

answering these questions

but uh i'll move on to chaplain's next

question which i think is similar

say

what thought process goes through the

mind of a practicing buddhist sitting in
the lotus position really going for it
while at the same time having sex to
make babies well i assume they're not
doing both at the same time that is my
assumption
um
and it would just be a kind of
dissociation it'd be like like an
accountant or or like a corporate lawyer
or something who's doing all this very
non-sexual stuff during the day
and then comes home and makes passionate
love to his mate um
you know it would be something like that
i mean it's like

sometimes you're in this kind of mental

state and sometimes you're in another

kind of mental state

um

so i mean that would be an easy answer

although there may be more depth to this

question like um like

i mean if you if you

if you look at this question in light of

the previous one

then you'd be like you know how can you

reconcile doing like intensive

meditation some of the time and then and

then you know like having sex and uh you

know impregnating one's mate some of the

other time well that's just sort of a

transitional state maybe or uh

um i mean it's not even necessarily

unenlightened in my opinion although i

may have just spoken damnable heresy um

i mean you have to know

you have to know yourself fairly well i

mean if you're just a lustful person by

nature

then uh

just trying to be celibate isn't going

to work you're just going to be a horny

frustrated celibate person just thinking

about sex maybe even more than people

who are having regular sex sort of like

a person who's uh

starving you know they haven't eaten in

a week you know they might just sit

about sit around fantasizing about food

all the time and a celibate person can

be similar

so

you just do what you can you know it's

like just because you're sexually active

doesn't mean that you just shouldn't

meditate

even even uh

i mean meditation isn't just for the

sake of

um becoming enlightened i mean it does

increase peace of mind and decrease

uh suffering and just general messed

upness and so forth

so you can find a a suitable compromise

sort of a comfortable compromise

and so finally the last question from

chaplin and the last question of this q

a session

chaplain says

how can one reconcile the buddhist

teachings against passion attachment

lost sexuality with being in a healthy

relationship with a partner some of the

teachings seem very harsh in denigrating

towards how you should view your

romantic partner as a barrier or

hindrance to your own dharma corpse

contemplation and being taught to

imagine women as rotting corpses or

oozing blood comes to mind and seems to

be potentially psychologically damaging

and unnatural aversion training how can

this type of extreme thought be

considered the middle path

well there's kind of a lot to unpack in

that some of it i've already answered i

think

with my alternate

reading of the second question

but um

the uh i mean it's it's sort of

comparing apples and oranges i mean

you're comparing monks with

laypeople

and for a monk i mean they're they're

supposed to be celibate and

they can use some pretty extreme like

mental visualizations and so forth which

generally don't work

um

so yeah i mean in the text

monks are supposed to be celibate so you

you can have some really harsh

strict admonishments

against you know even the slightest

twinge of of like sensuality

but that is for

like just hardcore forest ascetics for

the most part

um

you don't really i mean

it says here you know you view your

romantic partner as a barrier or

hindrance to your own dharma actually

another person isn't really a barrier

it's your own mental state buddhism is

so psychologically oriented with regard

to its ethics

that buddhism really doesn't teach that

women are icky or bad or it doesn't

teach to nuns that men are achy or bad

is it doesn't say that you know having a

physical body sort of like the gnostics

you know having a physical body i mean

it has certain disadvantages but just

physical matter is not icky and bad but

um

it's it's just the

the

if you have mental states that are

sort of leading you in a direction away

from

uh greater clarity and peace and silence

and all that

then uh yeah it's it's considered to be

not the right route to take for

uh like an ordained ascetic who is

really striving for enlightenment and

it's really only the ordained aesthetics

they were encouraged to contemplate

rotting corpses and so forth

so again it's um

a lot of lay people they'll read the

text and they'll they'll take some uh

ideals

that maybe are more suited to monastics

and that can influence their mind

but

um

they weren't really intended for lay

people

i suppose i mean the buddha would you

know teach

um

you know lay people that they'd be

better off as monks but uh obviously it

didn't didn't work in most cases

because most people remain

lay people and they just

it's just natural

to live like a certain amount of

uh to have a certain amount of

sensuality in one's life even i mean

from the buddhist point of view even

putting salt and pepper on your potatoes

to make them taste better is is like

wrong or

um you know it's wallowing in sensuality

you know it's like anything it's

listening to music i mean music and

buddhism is is considered to be immoral

listening to it

even a lay person keeping only eight

precepts

is not supposed to listen to music

so

buddhism is just very finely tuned and

very strict um you know if you really

are

dead set on becoming enlightened then

yeah it's it's very

very rigorous uh asceticism

and uh

it's not intended for everyone and it's

it's just an option it's not like you're

wrong if you're not if you're not a monk

or a nun

you know it's not like the buddha is

saying you know you have to be that way

and if you don't then you're you're you

know

then you're you're bad and wrong and

going to go to hell or whatever um you

know it's mostly lay people them that

are trying for heaven that uh really

heaven is is the goal

of lay people

that uh if you're just a good person

despite the fact that you have a mate

and all that if you're generous and tell

the truth and

love your fellow man and

you know your conscientious person and

then yeah you're doing well even though

you may uh

you may uh

have sex

so

yeah it's very it's very complex you

know there's all this nuance

um

so and the very last part here how can

this type of extreme thought be

considered the middle path

yeah that's that's really uh an

interesting one where

um

a lot of people just

don't

they don't really consider that the

middle path between self-indulgence and

self-torture in ancient india involved

just being homeless penniless wandering

around sleeping on the ground wearing

rags begging for your food in the

streets

um

yeah i mean it's that i mean that would

be just way beyond the realm of

unacceptability you know it's like way

into the unacceptability the red zone

for even most monks nowadays

uh but um

yeah i mean i guess you'd have to take

into consideration ancient indian

culture where there were actually quite

a few people that were just literally

torturing themselves to death for the

sake of the kingdom of heaven so to

speak

um

yeah i have to i have to admit that

celibacy and uh just avoiding sensuality

altogether is not natural but then again

nature is not designed to make us happy

you know nature uses desires and

and even suffering to get us to do what

nature wants us to do which is generally

staying alive long enough to reproduce

our dna sequences

um

so having a

having a romantic partner

is not necessarily a barrier or

hindrance to your own dharma if your own

dharma is not to become enlightened in

this very lifetime and i mean there are

western teachers who are

um like krishnamurti for example i mean

i could i could list off a lot of them

like most

spiritual teachers nowadays in the west

who have a reputation for being

enlightened or also married

so it could be that they're just frauds

or it could be

that maybe they're just overestimating

their attainments or it could be that uh

like the ancient indian

insistence

on strict austerity asceticism

was

uh more of a cultural thing than real

like pure dhamma

but again i'm sort of wandering into the

realm of um damnable heresy by even

suggesting that

but because i'm not a monk anymore

i can uh i can speak damnable heresies

if i want to

and i can't be excommunicated for it so

there

and uh that's the that's the last

question of all and um

i hope i've answered these questions

this i've had this weird feeling

um while answering these that uh

i maybe haven't really fully

correctly answered any of them because i

mean you can just keep going you know so

um if you like you can uh

you can give me some feedback to say i

mean did i did i really answer the

questions or not

ah

maybe i need to drink more coffee

so anyway you're you're very welcome to

uh ask questions that's what i'm here

for is to answer them

if i can or you know at least make a

shot at it

and

you're welcome to leave questions in the

comment section below

or if you are subscribed to my channel

on subscribe star you can ask questions

there

or there's also a discord server

where

it's associated with the subscribe star

channel that you can you can leave

questions there but for most of you i

assume

most of you that are seeing these videos

it may be just

easiest just to leave them below

and

be happy

hello and welcome to episode 18 of

question and answer

i am your host panyo bassam previously

known as panyobasa biku or panyobasa

mahatera and now often known as david

reynolds or even as john reynolds

because technically john is my first

name

but that is all incidental i suppose um

lots of questions as usual i do

apologize that it has taken me

more than a week after putting out the

uh the announcement that i'd be doing

one soon but uh one thing leads to

another

and uh

so it's like a week later that finally i
am recording this and trying to answer
your questions and there are some uh
difficult questions this time
some uh some rather unusual ones and a
few easy ones which i always appreciate
so uh without any further rambling
um the first question is from sam i am
and semi-am says
fun scenario let's say you elevated and
came across the actual path of truth of
the buddha and found out that you were
following mara all along
who was trying to deceive you into a
confused state of knowing
what would you do and how would you move
forward

how would you

know what would you tell people about it

well this is this is really a strange

question i'm not exactly sure how to

answer it or even really how to

understand it see let's say you elevate

it so that would be like became

enlightened or at least became very wise

and came across the actual path of truth

of the buddha and found out that you are

following mara all along well if you're

following mara all along then how would

you be how would you how would it cause

you to be elevated

that's one that's one question here who

was trying to deceive you into a

confused state of knowing yeah well

that's what maura allegedly does

he notoriously is trying to deceive

everybody including the buddha himself

especially before the buddha became

enlightened

so in a way we kind of are following a

path of of mara or at least a path that

has been

influenced by mara

um

but then we managed to uh get elevated

um

what would you do and how would you move

forward yeah again it's like well i mean

you you

you somehow managed to be elevated even

though you were following the path of

mara

um

so i guess following the path of mara in

that respect wouldn't be all bad would

it

huh

what would you tell people about it well

i mean if if after you got wiser you

found out that there was a better path

to follow you know sort of i mean the

buddha was did that i mean he was uh

practicing all these extreme austerities

and cultivating trance states and so

forth

and um

then he found out a better way and he

taught the better way so

yeah i suppose um

how would i move forward gosh

yeah this is it's such a hypothetical

it's such a strange hypothetical

it's really hard to answer although

it's it's kind of a

kind of a weird question just because

you know you're following mara all along

but then you become enlightened or

elevated by doing that

somehow or somehow in spite of doing

that i mean something just slams you

into a state of enlightenment maybe

that's what happens it's like you're

you're practicing and practicing and and

you think you're doing well but maura's

just like you know laughing at you and

uh

just stringing you along or whatever and

then you have like a near-death

experience or something that slams you

into enlightenment

but even then i mean

i mean following the path of mara got

you where you are

so yeah it's it's um

it's just kind of a strange question

that uh

you follow the path of tomorrow and then

become enlightened anyway then what do

you tell people i mean well

if if following mara got you enlightened

somehow then

who knows maybe it would work for other

people too

but

you find the actual path or tr of truth

of the buddha i mean

yeah

then i mean i guess you teach the actual

path of truth of the buddha if that's

what you discovered

so i'll just move on to the next

question

also by sam i am who does not like green

eggs and ham how many buddhist

practitioners do you think would survive

if they were thrown into the jungle or a

wild nature environment for one to three

months with nothing like some of those

survival shows

survival buddhist

if they died because they didn't know

what they were doing with nature would

this be some karma that they would have

to deal with on the next go

people may try to render this

practitioner as a great or wise man even

though he was manhandled by nature

pretty easy what do you think about this

well

if you took

devout buddhists and threw them out into

a wilderness naked with nothing

um i doubt that they'd do much better

than anybody else in fact like us like a

strictly practicing monk like a really

strictly practicing monk there are

stories um like in the wiisuiti maga

about them just

voluntarily dying rather than killing

anything like there's a story in the

wiisuite maga about this monk who's

living out in the forest he's very

strict

and some

robbers

rob his his place where he's staying and

they tie him up with vines and the vines

are still rooted

so the vines are still living plants so

he's all bound up lying there in this

forest and somehow they like tip over

his lantern or something and they start

a forest fire and this monk is so strict

that he will not

harm a living plant

even to get loose and then he burned to

death in the forest fire and became an

arahant

in the process

so

yeah i mean

uh any devout buddhist who's keeping all

five precepts and not killing anything i

mean

yeah he's going to have a a rougher time

than the people who are just going to

survival mode and are eating bugs and

frogs and things

so

would it be there some karma that they

would have to deal with on the next go i

mean obviously it seems pretty obvious

to me that them dying

in a jungle

would be

less

um

i mean i mean the real karmic thing with

them being thrown into this jungle in

the first place if you're thrown naked

into a jungle i mean that's that's big

karma right there

um

and the fact that a lot of them will die

off like the story of that monk who just

let himself burn to death i mean

whether they die easy or whether they

survive

um it's largely irrelevant to how wise

they are

so they might just say well i'm naked in

this jungle i'm just gonna sit here and

meditate until i can't breathe anymore

or something

you know

or i mean they could just be like going

to survival mode and just kill

everything and just

survive that way just just going caveman

mode or even i mean like cannibalism and

stuff i mean you could survive doing

that

so yeah i mean

whether you survive in nature in like

alone in a jungle or not

um

is large that you're relevant to how

wise you are

and um

yeah and how much karma would you make

or that sort of thing um it would depend

on your mental states

i mean if you died with equanimity then

you'd be making less karma than if you

survived by just going absolute ruthless

killer

so

yeah it depends on mental states what

kind of karma you make it's not it's not

a matter of physical actions as i say

just about every show

so i think i'll just move on to the next

one also by sam i am

will you think about changing or opening

up some of the language to broaden the

attention of an audience or maybe

getting more creative about the subject

matter for example talking about comma

and samsara relating it to the matrix

and using other

b terms i think b might be buddhist here

i don't think many new people will know

exactly what you mean if you do not use

clarifications since you are open-minded

it may work well to do this and it would

attract more people to get into the real

benefits of the path what do you think

um

i don't know i think that the number of

technical terms i use is pretty limited

and i usually do

translate them

or explain them

um

comma like i say is uh

it's like a volition or it's like the

the momentum of your mind

and samsara it is true i use samsara

kind of that big ambiguously because i

do sort of equate it with maya or

illusion

that samsara itself is uh

it implies

unreality

um

orthodox taravana

doesn't entirely

go that far

um

orthodox terrible does think that

samsara like you know the at least the

atoms of which

everything is composed are real

um

but yeah getting back to the question

though i mean

i don't know i'm not really good at

elementary stuff

i mean i like talking about what is of

interest to me and if people also find

that interesting that's great

but um just like trying to change the

way i talk for the sake of attracting

[Music]

newbies

um

yeah i don't know i'm kind of stubborn

um

maybe

you know if somebody has any particular

suggestions um

but uh

i think i'm just gonna move on to the

next question

i'm sorry sam i am i'm not answering

your questions very well although these

are really kind of strange questions

um okay next question also from sam i am

i have noticed a bit of exposure rolling

out of the glory monks

you know the ones that are making profit

and having other issues with knowingly

not following the path correctly but

acting like they do for some kind of

personal gain or cowardice

excuse my rude language this one is only

for the really corrupted ones

maybe they will scatter like roaches

when the light is turned on

what do you think about this slow

movement towards truth do you think

karmic returns will happen in this

lifetime since there is quite a bit of

corruption presently do you think the

rise in a better movement has more ease

to also become corrupted at a faster

pace

well i mean it's always been corrupt i

mean even in the buddhist time i'm

notoriously had like the group of six

monks were all engaging in all sorts of

naughtiness

um

that i mean according to the legend the

buddha had to start making vinnie rules

because

they were

sloppy monks who were just uh doing

inappropriate actions and so you had to

start making rules and um

i mean

i lived i lived in a devoutly buddhist

country when burma may be the most

devoutly buddhist country in the world

and uh yeah the the sangha there is very

corrupt

uh it's it's sort of like medieval

europe where you have some

genuine saints you know old monks and

nuns who are very saintly

and um the the lay people you know the
common villager they're just have devout
just
stainless steel unquestioning faith in
their religion but as a general rule the
ecclesiastical structure is very corrupt
and most monks really aren't even trying
to become enlightened
so i mean the whole corruption thing
it's i mean it's just human nature it's
just always going to be that way or
for the foreseeable future anyway unless
there's some sort of profound
profound change in the in the entire
human race that somehow makes us better
you know we reach the next stage of
consciousness or something

um

one part of the question here do you

think karmic returns will happen in this

lifetime of course i mean they're always

happening in this i mean yeah they're

always happening you know karmic returns

they they happen in this lifetime in the

in the next lifetime assuming that there

is a next lifetime you know um

yeah i mean that this just

it's the momentum of your mind like i

said karma is the momentum of your mind

as you're as you're creating your

reality

and so everything that you do is going

to influence that

it's not just people think of karma as

you know

you you get killed by somebody because

2 000 years ago you were a roman soldier

who killed people or something but um i

mean that that that can happen

theoretically but um

at the of the at the same time i mean

you can have instantaneous karma you

know you get mad and punch the wall and

then break your hand or something that

would be instantaneous karma right there

so

it's it's happening all the time i mean

your karma is is it reaching fruition

all the time just constantly

so uh let's see

i hope i at least answered that question

do you think the rise in a better

movement has more ease to also become

corrupted at a faster pace well the

wiser a movement is the more easily it

can be corrupted because the more it can

fall

you know like

islam

arguably hasn't become very corrupt

because it was kind of i mean it wasn't

extremely wise to begin with but if you

have something like an enlightened

tradition just like an enlightened

founder

then

chances are

most of his followers are not going to

be enlightened including

the followers who are determining

like what is orthodox dogma after the

founder dies

that happened with christianity happened

with buddhism also

so yeah i mean uh

the higher the movement the farther down

it can fall

and uh probably faster you know

so that's true it's you're very

fortunate if you can have a succession

of several enlightened

disciples becoming teachers who then

have enlightened disciples

i mean

that does happen but generally after

maybe several

you know um

yeah then it peters out and then you

have to wait for

circumstances to cause another

upsurgence

or resurgence you know like a

renaissance

which has happened in buddhism a number

of times and it can't happen again

although there would have to be fertile

soil for that to uh

to uh to grow and uh i don't think it

exists yet in the west or in the east

so uh before i answer this next one i

have to open this red bull

red bull

gotta open this

[Music]

take a drink

and the last question by sam i am is

why are you drinking red bull

do you think the chemicals will cloud

your clarity

well the reason why i'm drinking red

bull is to increase my clarity

because uh i work today

and

i get tired

in the uh the evenings

you know i'm not not completely at my

best

although

i have delayed this q a

long enough that i don't want to wait

until next weekend

and often during the weekends i'm just

like

in like wet rag mode just completely

relaxed and not wanting to do very much

sometimes so it's hard to predict what

kind of mood i'm going to be in so i'm

just going for it and so i just drink

red bull because it has like the same

effect of coffee but

um

or maybe even it's it's sort of a more

gentle than just uh

taking straight caffeine

so and it is supposed to have other

things in it too like uh

taurine whatever that is

supposed to be good for you

so that's why that's why i drink red

bull

yeah i mean it's like a stimulant and it

stimulates it stimulates my mind and uh

hopefully it improves the quality of

this q a by at least two percent

and so the next question

is from eric

and eric says do you have any thoughts

on prayer wheels in general and

so-called digital prayer wheels stored

on the hard drive dvds etc thanks

well um in terrible buddhism there

aren't prayer wheels or at least i've

never seen a teravata buddhist prayer

wheel it seems to be more of a

vajrayana like a

i think it's mainly like a tibetan thing

and

um i mean the prayer wheel itself

whether it's like a real wheel or

whether it's digital

i mean it's just it's just a dead object

it's not generating any kind of

blessings or anything

if especially if there's nobody there to

perceive it so it'd be like a dhamma

book if the dhamma book is just sitting

on a shelf

nobody's reading it

and it's dead it's it's not doing

anything it's not generating anything

it's just sitting there

and uh the wheel can be spinning and

spinning but if if there's nobody there

perceiving it

then i mean it's there's going to be no

real spiritual benefit the benefit is um

from people perceiving it and their own

mental states it's like tarot cards or

something you know or what else like a

ouija board or something like this let's

just stick with tarot cards i mean

um

at the factory where they make the tarot
cards they don't have a special machine
that injects like prognosticated powers
into these cards
you know it's just paper like laminated
it's got some ink on it you know for the
designs and all that and um you know
it's just they just sit there i mean
they're just dead objects any just like
playing cards or business cards or or
whatever
and um it's really the
the mental states of the person who uses
them that determines whether they're
going to be useful whether they have any
kind of

um spiritual effect anything like that

so i think prayer wheels are the same i

mean they're just

you know dead matter and until

someone is perceiving them and if you

got someone who really believes in them

and you know they feel really happy and

uplifted to think of all these blessings

radiating in all directions then you

know they can have uplifted mental

states and so forth and that can radiate

out from them

but the wheel itself is just a wheel i

mean might as well be spinning a bicycle

wheel as far as i'm concerned

so the next question

is from the person who always

has his name in japanese characters but

which i think is pronounced yuichiro

and you each hero says

supposing someone like mao

had good intentions and was just

staggeringly incompetent

what would the karmic implications of

that be

in general it seems like ideologies that

have good intentions cause the most

suffering

well and mao himself that's kind of a

good example i assume yuichiro

intended that mao

um was staggeringly incompetent like i

mean he was he was kind of a bad guy too

very ruthless and willing to uh kill

people or have people killed that were

uh interfering with his agenda but um i

think most of the people who died in

china under mao just died of starvation

because of the incompetence of the way

the uh

the agricultural reform was being

being done and um

a lot of it was just people afraid to

tell mao that his plan his idea wasn't

working

um

but yeah i mean you can have

um

you can have people with good intentions

that just mess up horribly you know like

jimmy carter was kind of that way i mean

he was people compare joe biden with

jimmy carter but at least jimmy carter

was intelligent and had moral principles

and um but still i mean he was he just

messed things up things america really

did not do well under jimmy carter um or

you could have some like wannabe ashoka

you know the emperor ashoka who um he

took buddhism so seriously that he just

disbanded most of his armies

and um

it was largely out of respect for his

sacredness that the neighboring

countries didn't just invade but um it

could be that you have some wannabe

ashoka who just disbands his armies

because he thinks uh violence is wrong

you know which is

um

understandable

and then he just they just immediately

get brutally invaded by barbarians or

whatever

so

what kind of karma you would make from

that

really is karma is mental states so uh

it could be that uh it would be like the

remorse

of of realizing that his own

his own fuckups essentially uh resulted

in just you know widespread

universal misery

but tom

yeah so long as you have good intentions

and you're acting on good intentions

you're not really making bad karma

somebody's calling me

okay where was i

i need to do

that was kind of confusing

where's the questions

oh here they are all right

let's see where was i

oh yeah yeah so

you just i mean if you have good

intentions and you mess up then the mess

up

uh unless it's caused by like delusion

or something

that's you know that's accompanying your

good intentions

then um

yeah i mean you're not really making bad

karma through that it would be through

your reactions afterwards

so let's say you have good intentions

and you accidentally cause a million

people to die then uh

yeah it's bound to affect your attitude

just the perception that you killed a

million people and then you're probably

not going to be very happy about that so

there could be like a lot of remorse and

guilt and so forth that would then mess

you up that would be the bad karma not

just the uh

trying to do something good and and it

turns out bad

because really the intentions were good

so from a buddhist point of view you

really didn't do anything bad

okay so i think uh

i i hope i answered that one so the next

question is from andre

and andre says the following poem by

walt whitman is often in my head these

days

roaming in thought after reading hegel

roaming in thought over the universe i

saw the little that is good steadily

hastening towards immortality and the

vast all that is called evil i saw

hastening to merge itself and become

lost and dead

unquote that's the end of the poem

is it normal at times to lean more

towards aversion before finally

attaining dispassion and equanimity if

not should i practice more meta

thank you

okay so it's

it seems like there's kind of two parts

to this question first is

walt equipment

and um

i mean i've i've encountered this kind

of idea before where

um good is like growing and trying to

fulfill itself and the evil in the in

the universe is kind of

you know i'm just doomed to to just die

out but um i really don't see things

that way

um

i think uh like

just going with a theistic language

because it's easily understood by

westerners you know let's say that

you've got somebody

let's say a hindu

and they become enlightened

and so they're going to look around

they're just going to see everything as

god you know when you when you when your

eyes are perfect you see everything is

perfect

you know when you become enlightened you

look around you just see enlightenment

so to speak

and so

i mean even the badness

is like

a manifestation of god or perfection

but um that was just me disagreeing with

whitman's palm and uh i think the main

part of the question here

is it normal at times to lean more

towards a version before finally

attaining dispassion and equanimity

um actually the way [__] manga

for what it's worth

it's like the main commentarial work of

theravada buddhism

um it it

it divides people up into six categories

by temperament

you've got um

like greed hate and delusion and then

you've got like the three opposites of

that you know you've got intellect and

and wisdom and

uh i don't remember i don't remember the

other one if i could sit here and rack

my brains in silence and come up with it

eventually but it doesn't make for a

good video

so um

it they do point out that

buddhaghosa the author of the wesuri

maga does point out that people who have

the aversion temperament

um you know the dosa temperament

they often become enlightened more

quickly

than people who have like a loving

temperament

um

or like an accepting kind of temperament

because they have a version for samsara

they want out

and so that can be like

um

like

a motivation for practicing more

more intensely or more sincerely or more

conscientiously so yeah i mean theravada

buddhism orthodox theravada does say

that if you have

um a lot of aversion in your temperament

it can't help you to become aligned

it wouldn't be just irritation with you

know all the [__]

they're like cutting you off on the

highway and that kind of thing but um

you can use your

aversive temperament

um

you know as kind of a tool you know it's

it's sort of like you're using fire or

something and um

so i mean you can use it as a as a means

towards enlightenment by just having a

version for the whole mess massive

samsara

so uh let's see i think that's it should

i practice more meta

um that's that's entirely up to you um

i think most people who practice meta

are kind of faking it or pretending um

i've never been able to practice

meta meditation systematically if i do

um

if i do radiate meta or be meta

at some other being it's usually

spontaneous you know it's just my heart

opens and it happens but just sitting

down and systematically

um you know like you're following some

of the sutas where you're you're just

sending

meta to all beings all all males all

females all

you know all animals all higher beings

you know all lower beings and we're just

dividing the entire cosmos up into

directions you know you're beaming meta

to the west and you're beaming mental to

the east and you know and up and down

and intermediate directions and you know

all

um

yeah i mean it's

i mean

i assume some people can do that and it

really works but it seems to me like an

intellectual exercise where

um you're just kind of like visualizing

beaming yourself beaming meta

um

for me it just doesn't work i mean you

can't just turn meta on and off like

flipping a switch it just doesn't work

that way for me

uh if it works for you then fine i mean

if it helps you

helps you to become wiser and better and

happier than not go for it

but like i said having a version

in general like in your temperament as

is part of your personality it it

actually can be useful

so another question from andre

uh is it dangerous to tell dhamma

practitioners that getting angry burns

up any good merit that they may have

accumulated

i heard something like that in a dhamma

center once not theravada and it seemed

wrong to me for one thing it would lead

to repression and exploding at one point

because one could not take it anymore

all right

first of all i do think that that is a

false statement that getting angry burns

up any good merit that they may have

accumulated because

it's just adding new karma it's not like

erasing any past karma it just doesn't

work that way

so you can add new karma that maybe is

going in the wrong direction

but um

yeah you're not really

burning up good merit that may have

already accumulated i just don't think

that that is true

um and so

is it dangerous to tell dumb

practitioners that

well

maybe

it can be it can be dangerous because

like i say i really don't think that

it's true

and um

yeah people that try not to get angry i

mean

the best thing to do is not so much

repress anger as just be mindful of it

when it arises just watch the anger you

know just how does it feel and if you're

not a really an angry person through my

own experience i can say that um

if you're usually not an angry person

then when you do get angry it's actually

easier to be mindful of that because

it's so

it's so unusual and it's so blatant you

know it's like bright lights it's like

sirens and like police lights and stuff

going off so it's really noticeable

and then you can really observe what's

going on in your body and in your mind

and so forth

um

so yeah i'm just trying to repress anger

that's yeah that can lead to an

explosion i do agree with that

and so uh i'll move on to andre's

third and last question

can you give the list and reference of

the benefits of meta meditation

and that's an easy question to answer

can i give the list in reference nope i

can't

i don't know i i assume there are like

lists

of uh the benefits of meta meditation

there's maybe some

suta and the angutara nikaya you know

the eight benefits of practicing meta

meditation

um but i really don't know what it is

you might try the wiisuiti maga again

because it does have a section

describing meta meditation and we'll be

talking about meditation a little

farther down it's the meditation on

usually the translation of mata is

loving kindness

um

it has the same root as the uh

the word mita which is friend

so it's like friendliness friendly

feelings

um

let's see

so can i give the list in reference of

the benefits of meta meditation

um no i really don't know it

and um i suppose i could make these q

and a's a little better by by studying

up you know like look hunting down the

reference or something but um

yeah

like i said i really have never been big

on practicing meta-meditation

systematically if i do generate meta

it's spontaneous

and it does happen sometimes believe it

or not

so the next question is from tyr i think

t-y-r

and uh tyr says do you think it would be

possible for you to describe what it was

like living in the cave how you spent

your days how long you were there etc

sadhu

um

i mean that could be an entire video

because i lived in several caves

and um each cave was different and uh

like what it was like was different how

i spent my days was often different

um how long was i there altogether it

added up to about 13 years in in various

caves

and

i mean i can give you the short version

if people really want to know i can just

do a video talking about various caves i

lived in

and what it was like and so forth but

the very first cave i ever ever stayed

in was in thailand and it was just one

night and it was really like

man it was awful because i still had

like thick wool robes from from america

i hadn't even got to burma yet so i just

get to get to thailand before before

arriving in burma and we went to visit

uwe theresa this legendary very strict

monk he was like a buddhist rambo

and um he lived in this cave that was

i mean i looked into his cable and all i

saw was just pitch black and

he thought it was paradise but he

couldn't keep anything he couldn't keep

soap he couldn't keep books or anything

because the rats would chew it all up he

had to live in like uh he had to sleep

in a kind of hammock just to keep him up

above the rats

and um

he paid me the honor of uh letting me

sleep in a cave near his

and

uh i mean i won't i'm gonna give the
whole story but i mean i was he told me
that um when you sleep you gotta cover
yourself from head to toe where the rats
will bite you and it was true i had rats
on me that night and i'm all covered up
in just these thick wool rubs in in like
90 degree heat in thailand
and mosquitoes and there was a big whip
scorpion on the wall and it was i didn't
get much sleep that night then uh after
that i spent about three years
it was like four rainy season but it
added up to three years of um
um it was it was like it was called
mandalay gu it was a cave at a a
monastery called tong bulu chelsen doya

in central burma and it was just like a

cube it was an artificial cave dug into

the side of a hill it was like eight

feet by eight feet by eight feet

and it was about 20 degrees fahrenheit

cooler

inside the cave than outside but still

when it's 115 outside it's still 95

inside so it was like living in this

sauna

then the next cave after that was i

spent

about two weeks

living in a natural cave

at

the bay eindoya in southern burma in mon

state and um there was a famous seattle

who lived there long before i i lived

there but it was this huge block of

granite that had this notch at the

bottom

and so there was just this notch kind of

like kind of like this where you could

stay out of the rain

and so i lived there for two weeks after

it started raining i was living under a

tree before that

and um

part of the time i was sharing the cave

with a big land crab and um when it did

rain

um there were places where the water

would drip in because the the ceiling

was kind of slanted inwards so you'd

have to know the the dry places where it

was okay to sleep and that kind of thing

and then let's see after that the next

cave was uh

also a huge natural cave at hollando

casaba national park in northwestern

burma and i spent a total of about two

years there

um off and on not all at once

and um

it was huge i mean the entrance was

maybe

oh maybe 100 feet 100 feet wide and

maybe

30 feet high and it went in maybe 30

feet so it was more of like an

overhanging rock ledge

than

than a cave

and it was the whole back wall was just

lined with wasp nests

and i learned a lot about wasp

psychology what wasps like and don't

like they don't like the color blue at

least that species didn't

and uh yeah i got stung a lot there

but um

and then see after that i think the last

cave i like i lived in

was uh at a place called

one bow one bowl wildlife refuge

monastery and that was that was deluxe

that was uh it was a man-made cave dug

into the side of a of a hill

and it had like a corridor that went in

like 50 feet and it had a shrine room

and like three side rooms and had like

this niche where you could put the water

pot and you could do walking meditation

inside and

um

i dug about 20

20 of it because when i got there a lot

of the ceilings were only about six feet

high and i'm like six foot two and it

was just really stuffy in there so i dug

upwards about twenty twenty percent

and had like a window installed and uh

like a screen door to keep out bats rats

snakes and humans

and uh

so i lived there um

about eight years so one of the places

where i lived longer than any place in

my life was in that cave i i named it

which

has a double meaning it can mean hot

cave which it was or it can also mean

like um

like

austere spiritual practice cave

so i i killed two birds with one stone i

feel pardon the violent non-buddhist

metaphor

oh i did live in one other cave

which i had dug

down at the same monastery lower down

and um i only spent a few months there

after see

there were two two monks living at this

monastery i lived up on the hill in in

the big cave

and then there was an old monk named

unandia who lived down by the river

and he kind of kept an eye on the main

monastery which was down below that was

for the well in the dharma hall and some

of the meditation cabins and stuff where

and then he got bitten by a cobra and

died and so i had to move down

to keep an eye on the lower monster

because i was the only monk left

which mainly meant uh trying to keep

villagers from poaching the wild jungle

fowl

but then i got really sick and had to

spend the reigns retreat in in rangoon

so um

yeah it didn't last very long that that

particular cave

so i've lived in several and um yeah

like the the uh

how i spent my days and so forth

um a lot of the time i mean i lived in

caves mainly just as a matter of

survival because as i as i said earlier

it was a lot cooler

inside a cave and outside

and um

really um

in central burma it's just it's very

furnace-like a lot of the time like most

of the year

so it was sort of like being a desert

rat just kind of living in a burrow and

i became largely nocturnal

because during the day it was pretty

much too hot to do much so i tried to

sleep as much as i could during the day

and

i mean there's there's really not a

whole lot to do inside of a cave i

didn't have computers or anything back

then so

i read a little bit but mostly i'd be uh

meditating doing walking meditation

and uh

maybe riding a little lying on my back

looking up staring at the ceiling

thinking about stuff

uh just kind of being a hermit

but um yeah i shouldn't go into too much

details because there's other questions

here i should answer but if if people

really are interested in just uh

my cave dwelling experiences i did do a

video with uh brian rue

probably a couple years ago by now

that was talking about my life as a cave

dweller

so you can try and look that up too

um

so i'll just move on to the next

question and this is from trumptonshire

gahapidi

and trumptonshire gahapadi says

sorry about my ongoing series of

questions about the gay butt sex i do

have other interests i swear

i was thinking about the dalai lama's

statements about homosexuality and

sodomy which were quoted by otomo

in a recent

episode uh and then he's got this quote

of uh his holiness the dalai lama

his holiness i said holiness holiness

the dalai lama saying we have to make a

distinction between believers and
unbelievers from a buddhist point of
view men to men and women to women is
generally considered sexual misconduct
from society's viewpoint mutually
agreeable homosexual relations can be of
mutual benefit enjoyable and harmless
he adds even with your wife using one's
mouth or the other hole is sexual
misconduct using one's hand that is
sexual misconduct that's that's
supposedly the dalai lama saying this my
question is pano do you have any idea
what he's talking about
if they're really is there really a
teaching that homosexual behavior is
okay for people in general but not okay

for buddhist white people or that

masturbation and non-vaginal sex acts

are more misconductful

than the missionary position etc maybe

this is just a tibetan thing i don't

know

well

let's see where do i start where do i

dive into this this gay but sex question

um

yeah with regard to the dalai lama

uh saying that there is a distinction

between believers and unbelievers in a

way that is kind of true i mean like

um somebody comes home from a hard day

at work and they crack open a cold beer

and they just

drink one cold beer because they just

like

something cold and it goes down real

nice and everything

i mean they're not necessarily doing

anything bad you know they're not

necessarily doing anything unwholesome

but

it is against the rules you know it's

against the the precept

of um in taking intoxicants you know

it's the fifth precept i undertake the

precept uh to abstain from ale wine and

any intoxicant which causes cloudedness

of mind or or heedlessness

so i mean you can make a distinction

between buddhist and non-buddhist

because there are certain buddhist rules

that aren't necessarily moral i mean

like like monks i mean they have to

follow all kinds of rules that have

nothing to do with morality like

um

a monk isn't allowed to open or close

the door while holding his bombs bowl in

his hand

or

even just uh you know there's rules say

you have to shave your head at least uh

once every two months or two finger

widths whichever comes first i mean

there's nothing immoral about having

long hair

or monks are only allowed to eat in the

morning anyone who takes eight precepts

also is allowed to eat only in the

morning but um you know there's nothing

evil or unwholesome necessarily about

eating dinner

so there is that and and that could be a

large part of it that is just uh

following precepts or just traditional

interpretations of things that uh

they're not necessarily

uh universal morals so that's that's

part of it i assume

um with regard to

the the anal and the oral and the manual

stimulation and all that being

sexual misconduct

um my understanding

is that in terra vada buddhism

sexual misconduct is primarily

interpreted as just not having sex with

um somebody who's already spoken for or

you just don't love that person and

you're just being promiscuous that sort

of thing so it's um

it's it's different it's not really

specifying the actual act

and the monks who were composing this

sort of stuff tended to be

um

a lot of them i think were kind of

ignorant of sex in general anyway

and um you know they might not even know

about some of this stuff

um

so

let's see

is there really a teaching that

homosexual behavior is okay for people

in general but not okay for buddhist lay

people well again we're getting into the

the realm of buddhist ethics which um

just setting aside that there are rules

and precepts that have little of

anything to do with morality you know

it's just like etiquette or something

um also there's the the fact that

buddhist ethics are extremely finely

tuned it's not just if you do this it's

bad but if you do that it's good you

know like like in christianity for

example although

in some christianity it's very finely

tuned like

catholic contemplatives you know if

you're a member of some contemplative

order then it can be very finely tuned

there too

but um

in buddhism it's mental states whether

something is wholesome or unwholesome

ultimately depends on the mental states

and um

sex in general

is considered to be

at least a little bit immoral

almost no matter how you do it um just

because

just a rising of desire desire is the

cause of all suffering and sex is one of

the primary causes of desire

so if you're really keen on becoming

enlightened according to ancient indian

buddhist tradition

then you should be celibate although of

course a lot of people who are celibate

are just like

ragingly horny all the time

so there's that too but i mean it's not

just sex i mean buddhism you should bear

in mind that just putting salt and

pepper on your food to make it taste

better is immoral to believe that you

exist

is immoral

to listen to music is immoral which

explains why buddhism has such bad music

as a general rule the hindus have way

better music than the buddhists do even

the muslims have better music

so

yeah there's there's all kinds of things

to consider

and yeah i think what the dalai lama is

talking about is primarily like a

mahayana buddhist thing

in tarawa it is interpreted differently

so

rather than just wallow in in the gay

but sex stuff i think i'm just going to

move on

and the next question is from potila

says

are the brahma-wiharas

one loving kindness or benevolence two

compassion three empathetic joy for

equanimity

in

in order in terms of grosser mental

state to finer

okay so let's just skip out the the

parentheses here are the brahmoiharas in

order in terms of grosser mental state

to finer or is one supposed to hold all

four states as complements so for

instance is the presence of meta then

surpassed by mudita or is meta attained

and then mudita later joins with it it

seems that meta is a less refined state

than upeka and is really a huge focus of

many westerners even though it is not so

important in the texts as much as

equanimity

okay

so the four broadly hearts for those of

you who are unfamiliar with the terms

it is as potila says the first is meta

or or just love

or or friendliness friendly feeling

benevolence

so wishing well to others

just sincerely from your heart not just

intellectually

two

is compassion or karuna

which is

um like feeling the pain of others you

know it's like

um you're sensitive to the suffering of

others

three is mudita or empathetic joy

and that's like feeling happy in other

people's happiness

and and a really good example is that

the sweet little old grandma who makes

banana bread for the little kids

and the little kids are really happy

eating this banana bread and so the the

sweet little grandma is just beaming
with joy at the little kids who love her
banana bread she is happy because they
are happy you know she's happy because
they you know they really enjoy eating
her banana bread you know something like
that would be like muditas feeling happy
is somebody else's happiness just
sincerely being happy when somebody else
is happy you know like your friend
wins the lottery
some people would just be jealous like
why didn't i win the lottery or other
people might have like ulterior motives
like oh great because
you know he might take me out partying

or something

but if you just

you're just happy for him you know

without without any considerations of

yourself you're just happy because

somebody else is fortunate and happy

then that's modita and then fourth is

equanimity and um

the standard little sentence

that is the summation of equanimity in

the text is kamasuco which is

essentially everyone's karma is their

own so as you just accept that whatever

happens to anybody is in accordance with

their own karma

so again you've got

meta

karuna mudita upeka

so

potila here is asking if if there's like

uh

uh like a gradation with meta at the

bottom and they just get higher until

you reach mudita and it's not exactly

that way it's kind of that way

um

the wiisuiti maga which goes over the

four brahma-iharas says that with regard

to the first three

meta karuna and mudita if you practice

meditation you can get up the third

jhana practicing those three

but

you with upeka or equanimity you can get
all the way up to fourth genre which
traditionally in the sutas is the
highest the highest contemplative state
and it does say like in the standard
the stock formula describing the four
genres that fourth genre is purification
of equanimity
now you've got pure mindfulness pure
equanimity
so
it's not that there's a gradation of you
know metta then karuna then mudita then
upeka it's more like the first three are
equal they'll get you up to third jhana
and then upeka is the highest one that's
the most exalted and that'll get you all

the way to fourth yeah

so i think that answers that question

um yeah and the it's

meta is really a huge focus of many

westerns even though it is not important

not so important in the text yeah it's

like just the

the heart thing

and uh

i i'm not exactly sure why karuna and

mudita are mostly ignored

but um i'll just move on to potila's

next question

the talk on donna and western buddhists

was really good and not often discussed

so pochila here is referring to a video

um i did a couple weeks ago i think a

few weeks ago about

the issue of

um supporting western buddhism how

western buddhism

has kind of issues with getting support

so i'll just kind of back up and ask the

question or say this again the talk on

donna and western buddhist was really

good and not often discussed

what are your thoughts about different

approaches or framing

that would help educate or train

westerners into giving more donna

tithing is probably not going to work

a fee schedule

question mark membership question mark

i've run into this same issue at other

dharma centers no one has any money for

a center but can spend gobs of cash on

dharma doodads and books

yeah that is

like like we were saying in the video i

mean that is just uh

um

it is an important issue in with regard

to buddhism in the west especially if

you have monks because monks aren't even

allowed to handle money

um

they're not even allowed to feed

themselves and so you have to have

people that are willing to

support the monks

at least by giving them food

if they're going to live in the west or

else the monks just don't follow the

rules

which in this this whole issue is one

reason why i'm not a monk anymore it's

not the only reason but it is a

contributing factor

um

so

let's see

i think with regard to monks and

monasteries

one thing that should be born in mind by

the monks themselves especially is that

monk should be easy to support like the

meta suta which is uh you know the this

discourse on loving kindness is one of

the most well-known discourses in

terabyte of buddhism

among should be subaru which means easy

to support

and

a lot of a lot of monks in the west they

just assume that you know they should be

provided with a nice dharma center and a

computer room and so forth but um

really the way the monks lived in the

buddhist time

um they were just radical minimalists

and i've met a few monks who really go

for that in the west and it may take

that sort of thing at first like i knew

this one american monk i don't think he

did this for very long but he was

living in a wildlife refuge

on the outskirts of san diego california

and then he would come in every morning

with this bowl to like a soup kitchen

and get food that way and then just go

back out to the the wildlife refuge

and um if there are monks that are that

serious

then there's a good chance i mean

they're going to be generating some

strong good karma i assume

and some people are going to be

impressed by that and just really want

to support them just because they are

such

you know dharmic bad asses

with regard to uh

monks also i mean

uh

it's just it's just been the way it is

that uh if monks are going to live in

the west usually they have to be

supported by asians because asians have

just been

um conditioned from childhood asian

buddhists that you earn merit by

supporting monks that you're gonna go to

heaven

if you donate like the meditation cabin

to a monastery or something like that

um and in the west is uh even western

buddhists they don't take karma very

seriously they don't take merit very

seriously

so it may take

um some obvious benefit to lay people

regardless of what the benefit is

whatever it is that they think is worth

the money that they'll start paying

money like like a dharma hall that isn't

a monastery they just

go there they got a place to go and uh

you know they have their their little

tribe of people that uh kind of share

their interests in their their values

and uh

to some people that may be important

enough and especially

if it deviates from the whole leftist

individuality thing and it becomes more

family oriented and you've got like

you know sort of like a sunday school

for the little kids and

maybe teaching kids this really

elementary meditation

or

just uh

yeah i mean it would have to cater to

the the needs of of the group

and if it does that sufficiently then

there should be support one way one

would hope that people would be

supportive of what they themselves

approve of and what makes them happy

so

um like like the goenka method that's

that's like a standard example of a

success story for

uh what is more or less terrible

buddhism in the west they don't charge

money although they do say that uh if

you think you've gotten benefit from

this then if you do

donate then you're helping someone else

after you

to to go to these free retreats and uh

it works well enough that there are

thousands of going to centers around the

world

and

it has been burgeoning although now that

um sn gwenka himself has passed away and

the place is being run by his

sons i think

and um you know the

the dhamma talks are just like

pre-recorded that kind of thing i'm not

sure how well it's going now but i

assume it's still relatively prosperous

so there are ways that it can be done

and i'm not exactly sure how it would be

done

i i made my i made some attempts and uh

it uh

yeah it's like what portula says here it

is

it is pretty much true that uh

yeah it's it's just

contrary to western culture i think that

you uh

donate money to a monastery or or even

more just bring food and kind of a thing

people might be able to cut you a check

or something but

um they're just too busy to come in the

morning and offer food to the monks and

then you have to do it respectfully with

both hands and

preferably bow and everything and uh

that's just it's so un-american that

yeah i am skeptical of how well it's

going to work in the west i mean it can

i'm not saying it's impossible but uh

it is uh cutting across the grain

so

the big question there is i'm not i'm

really not sure what the best way of

going about it would be

and i assume

it might be different for different

groups because different groups want

different things

so

yeah i mean even just trying to train

them of the benefits

of supporting

um

monks or supporting people that are

genuinely striving for enlightenment i

mean if you can't become enlightened
then at least you can help somebody else
go for it you know and people in the
west especially just they just don't get
it or they don't see it
or they just are so skeptical of monks
they just think they're all just a bunch
of lazy freeloaders or something
um but really it's like you're if you're
supporting a monastery or even a dharma
hall you're supporting like higher
consciousness you know you're making a
donation which you know eventually
indirectly is is causing the like the
the level of consciousness in the world
to go up a little bit
and i mean that and that is good

so

um but then again

it's kind of abstract

so really it's it's going to get to it's

going to have to just realistically be a

matter of people

um they they think they're getting

something of sufficient value

that they're willing to pay for it to

keep it going

and what that's going to be

is is anyone's guess i mean it could

just be

some really charismatic dharma teacher

that makes people feel really good

may not even help them become

enlightened but just makes them feel

really good and that could be good

enough

or maybe there'll be some kind of

uh syncretism

people will come up with a form of

buddhism or terror buddhism that really

kind of

meshes with american culture

and you know they'll have ceremonies

that are especially tailored to be in

harmony with the western mindset you

know and and holidays and this kind of

thing but um

yeah i really can't say what it would be

so i'm just going to uh

go on to the next question here

or i mean getting back to that first

question though um yeah it may just take

an eccentric rich person to just

dump a load of money

onto a dharma hall or a monastery or

something

okay next question what has been the

biggest change in returning to everyday

american life as a lay person

well pretty obviously for me

the biggest change in returning to

everyday american life as a lay person

is having a mate

just being like very intimate with

another um very

sweet soft

loving

little person

that for me is like the biggest change

and in some ways it's it's been a

a big challenge because it's so

different from what i'm used to you know

i've lived so long just

um alone like as a hermit pretty much

and as a monk

you uh

you learn to see others

pretty much as stimuli you know in this

in the scene there's only the scene and

the herd there is only the herd

um and so

like

a monk who's practicing strictly a

person standing in front of you talking

is just like a visual visual perceptions

auditory perceptions and so forth and

you just kind of deconstruct the other

person

and that doesn't work in a relationship

i mean you've got like another me

that uh you know you're forming like

like a symbiosis

and so it is just a radical change for

me and it's it's it's good i think it's

it's very helpful to me

among other things

which we need to get into at the risk of

tmi

so yeah that's that's been the biggest

change in returning to everyday american

life is uh just

um having a mate with whom i am

uh loving and intimate after being a

hermit for so long

so the next question also from portula

you were last in the daily grind 30

years ago what strikes you as being

uniquely different about the america you

left when you ordained

not so much in philosophy but ordinary

life well

when i first came back to america in

2011 the main thing that really struck

me was just everything was digital

and uh it's even more that way now than

10 years later

um

like i mean you used to pay your bills

you'd have to sit down with the

checkbook and envelopes and stuff and

you

you pay your bills and now it's just you

just click on the stuff on the internet

and your bills just automatically get

paid out of your out of your checking

account

or

you know you used to get a paycheck you

know when you work you get a paycheck

now it just

feeds just directly into your bank

account and uh i mean you could go

through life in america now without even

handling money

you know it's all plastic and

just taps on on phones and stuff now

so that would be that would be uh the

most erratically different aspect of

life a lot of a lot of things are pretty

similar to the way they were back in the

late 80s early 90s i mean hairstyles

clothing styles aren't all that

different i mean there's weird colors

more people have tattoos now

um

the music i mean it's worse

but it's really not not extremely

different

i mean a lot of things it's like

with regard to technology and so forth a
lot of the digital stuff is continuing
to advance but i like like
ballpoint pens they're pretty much the
same pencils you know so a lot of stuff
is just essentially the same as it was
before
so yeah yeah it's just everything's
digital so i'm going to move on to the
next question from motorhead
and motorhead says
what about the theory that it's people's
karma that is behind murder and that we
have all been guilty of such things
without darkness there is no light
well that is true it's um

going with

buddhist philosophy especially orthodox

like

abhidhamma

and i i i'm inclined to go along with

this it's like

every

every way to not you experience every

feeling

every feeling that you feel is the

fruition of karma either present karma

or past karma

and um

so and you know anything that happens to

you

is is like the fruition of karma and

there are people that disagree there's

somebody who

tries to correct the statement in the

comments sometimes and i'm just going

with what abu dhabi teaches i mean there

are suitors that will say this and that

you know that some some will say you

know it's also the weather or also like

food or whatever but still

um

so yeah it's like assuming that there is

rebirth

you know this life after life after life

then yeah we've done all sorts of things

we've been murderers we've been murdered

you know we've we've been rapists we've

been raped we've been robbers we've been

robbed

all these things have been going on um

so yeah but um

you can't really justify murdering

somebody by saying that it's their own

karma to be murdered even though that's

true

because although for them it's the

fruition of their karma you are making

new karma by murdering somebody because

every volitional act is making new

caramel

so i mean you can punch somebody in the

nose and say well it's their karma to be

punched which is true

but nevertheless you are making new bad

karma for yourself i mean they're kind

of paying off an old karmic debt

but you are making new bad karma for

yourself which is getting you

more stuck in samsara in all probability

so

yeah i think you can't really justify

doing bad things by saying

that the recipients of those bad things

are just you know it's just a matter of

their own karma and technically that's

true but still i mean

it doesn't justify you making new

bad karma it doesn't justify you being

the one who is fulfilling their the

fruition of their karma

even if you don't do it you know

somebody else probably will

but um you know it's just not a

justification for for being um

immoral

so

finally

the last person to ask questions is

chaplin

and chaplin

says if you could sit down with your dad

today what would you talk about and what

do you think he would feel about your

life path and where you are today

okay well my father died

gosh more than 10 years ago i think

and so if i could sit down with my dad

today what would i talk about well first

of all i'd just be exclaiming on how

happy i was to to see him again you know

giving him hugs and

so first it would be that just the

exclaiming about how how cool it is to

see him again and then probably i'd be

telling him about you know

what i've been doing with my life and um

and how do i think he would feel i think

he would be happy and proud

i really do

i mean he thought being a monk was kind

of extreme you know he was he was proud

of me but he thought i was uh kind of

overdoing it by being a monk

and i'm sure he'd be happy with my my

mate

and um

let's see

plus i'm i'm kind of doing the sort of

work he used to do he was uh

he was a long shoreman he loaded logs

onto ships and i'm kind of i mean i'm

not loading logs on the ships but still

i'm kind of doing uh

that kind of

oh

sort of blue collar work you know sort

of

in kind of a guy job where you wear

gloves and stuff

and uh

one other thing i might talk to him

about if if if it seemed right at the

time

is that my father was a just a democrat

his whole life in fact he was kind of a

socialist he was like uh old school

macho socialist like jack london

and um

i would just like to point out to him

what a

just what a demented freak show what a

what like

a sick cult

the new left has become and uh i would

it'd be really interesting just how he

would feel about the democratic party

now

um you know a lifelong democrat and then

seeing you know what it's like now

but um i wouldn't want to be cruel to

him i mean if i'm just getting to see

him one one more time after he has risen

from the dead

so yeah that would i'd have to feel into

that one

so um chaplin's second question what is

your favorite meal

well i'm tempted to say butter pecan ice

cream i do have that for dinner

occasionally

um

but it's it's kind of not really a meal

i don't know i don't think that's what

chaplin has in mind

so uh

another honest answer is just whatever

my sweetheart puts in front of me

because she's a really good cook

so you know whatever whatever i'm eating

with her at the time is my favorite meal

um

or if if i'm just like up against the

wall and i have to i have to answer

something

uh it's hard to say i mean i like

pan-fried oysters i like salmon

i don't know

pizza is good

italian food in general is good

i don't know i really don't have a

favorite meal i guess

there's lots that i like

and so finally

chaplin's last question and the last

question of the evening

how is your infamous quest for a credit

rating going after living off the grid

most of your life

yeah well i i'm pleased to announce that

just a couple weeks ago i finally got a

credit card and it's it's one of those

secured cards so you have to

have a deposit of like 400 bucks that

that was what i i'd use for a deposit

and then you can't use the credit card

for anything that cost more than 400

bucks

so it's

it's uh it's kind of a wimpy little

credit card which is really all i need

because i just use the credit card

mostly for

ordering something on the internet or

something like that

but at first i couldn't even get a

secured card like one of those

the wimpy ones um

because

um not only did i not have a credit

rating i didn't have three months worth

of bank statements and you had to if you

didn't have a credit rating at all you

had to at least show your bank

statements for the past three months and

i didn't even have that

so i had to wait until i had

started a bank account and kept that

going for three months and then i was

able to get this this credit card but

it's uh i can't get like a normal credit

card that isn't the secured one until my

credit rating goes up right now i'm uh

kind of at the high end of the yellow

zone uh it's like a

649 or something like that and

everything is in everything is a i got

grade a everything except for the age of

my credit rating which is only a few

months

so

yeah i don't know how long that's going

to take

it's going to be a slow climb upwards

but now that i've got the credit card at

least i can uh

i can earn more

more brownie points on the credit rating

so yeah i do have the credit card now

and the credit rating is now

um

moving upwards it's not only existent

but it's uh up into the

high yellow

and inching towards green

that's that's good i assume i mean i've

never had a credit card in my life until

just a few weeks ago

so

but that's another that's another change

um getting back to

an earlier questions like uh

yeah that's that is strange how uh

yeah money is uh

it's it's so

you know it's not just this paper and

metal stuff now it's it's just this

whole it's like a web

it's like this invisible digital web

that everything is all interconnected

it's really strange

so in a lot of places they won't even

take cash anymore which should be

illegal i mean it says right on the

money you know this is

this is legal tender for all debts

you know public and private

and then you've got like hotels that

just uh i'm sorry sir we will not accept

cash you have to have a credit card so i

almost slept on the street in new

orleans

just because um i had plenty of cash i

could have paid for a hotel room but uh

they wouldn't take it and they would uh

they were quite willing to let me uh

just sleep on the street

just rather than then accept cash

but um yeah i do have a credit rating

now and that that is the last question

and so

uh so long as you keep asking i will i

will keep doing these q and a's and keep

answering questions oh wait i am

reminded of something there was another

question

that somehow did not wind up on this

list

and i think it was from potila asking

about

um

let's see

it was about uh live chats on the

discord server whether we're going to

have live chats on the discord server

which is something that uh has been

discussed has been bandied about a

little bit and uh yeah i'm willing

i think it would be good for a lot of

the

the

my supporters on subscribe star and just

people who are on the discord server

that's associated with the subscribe

star channel to interact with each other

so i mean if if people really want to do

that then

i can make a little announcement on the

discord server

um and

people can give feedback on like for

example times and days that would work

the best

because there are people around the

world you know you got people in europe

and people in australia and so forth

that uh trying to get one time that

works

is going to be very tricky

so

um yeah i am willing and um i'm just

kind of shy and uh

you can tell how bashful i am

just just from looking at me

so um

yeah that's um i am kind of i am kind of

shy about getting this kind of thing

going like uh group

group chats and so forth although i am

willing

so um

we can we can work on that

and i do apologize if people have been

eagerly anticipating

group chats on

on the discord server

but we can still do it

so as i was saying now that all the

questions have been answered um

if you have questions about

buddhism in particular meditation

comparative religions philosophy

burma

me

that kind of thing

anything that you think i might be able

to answer intelligently then you are

more than welcome to

submit questions in the comments below

the youtube or bit shoot videos

or on subscribe star um i make an

announcement

usually a few days before i do do the q

a although this time it was about a week

or if you are on the discord server

there is a q a room there where you can

leave your questions

and um

um the

subscribe star and the just now just the

subscribe star i think are in the in the

links below so you can you can see where

that is

and

just feel free to ask questions and

read my books if you want which are also

in the links below

and be happy

you

hello and welcome to episode 19 of

question and answer

i am your host panyo bassam sometimes

known as david and strangely

increasingly known as john because

that's the name on my id

i'm going to take a drink

and i apologize for taking so long

to answer your questions or to answer

other people's questions but um

there's been uh i've been just very very

busy lately because more than one third

of the people

at the place where i work all got sick

at the same time at least one of them i

think two of them hospitalized

and apparently it's a combination of

the chinese coronavirus and some kind of

flu and i think at least two people got

both at the same time

which kind of reminds me of an

australian friend of mine in burma who

had malaria tb and what was the other

one

cholera he had malaria tb and cholera

all at the same time

so i've been working overtime and have

been uh very busy and coming home tired

and late

so it's uh it's taken me a while to

finally get to these questions

but

here i am and i'm going to answer some

questions

and so without any further ado the first

question is from julie and this is a

question she asked this quite a while

ago but she asked the question

in a place that isn't the usual place

for asking questions like

i uh

before a q a i'll go through and collect

all the questions that people have asked

um

under the most recent q a videos and

also

on the subscribe star page under the

announcement for the next q a and also

on the discord channel and uh

if i

remember correctly she asked the

question somewhere else and so it just

slipped through the cracks i didn't

answer it

but julie asks me what is my opinion of

the goenka system

and

the goenka system

it's like a stripped-down simplified

version of taravana

uh sn goenka

who uh

he was ethnically indian but he was born

and raised in burma i'm pretty sure and

his main teacher was um

ah

now i don't remember

his teacher

uba ken

uba ken was a burmese a burmese wipasana

instructor

and so it's based on burmese theravada

but it's been

modified quite a lot very much

simplified

and the main meditation technique in

going up the goenka system is kind of we

pass on our quote unquote that involves

sweeping through the body it's like

um i mean i've never practiced it myself

but i've talked to quite a few

people who have practiced it and i have

read a few of goenka's books

and you're supposed to go through your

body like sector by sector and you've

wait you i mean you're trying to

experience some kind of sensation before

moving on to the next

part of your body and then you try to

experience some sensation and note it

and you move on to the next so you're

kind of sweeping through your body

uh noting whatever sensation is

predominant

and um

there seems to be a certain amount of

cult of personality involved also with

regard to goenka himself

um

so i mean it's got his it's got its
strength and his weaknesses it's got his
good points and his bad points with
regard to the bad points i would say
partly it is really a stripped down and
very simplified version of theravada
buddhism
and also
i have noticed in the past and i've
heard this from other people also
that dedicated goenka practitioners
often have a kind of jehovah's witness
mindset where they just become fanatical
or they just insist that the goenka
system is the one true buddhism
and if anyone drops out of the goenka

system they get shunned as though they

have died that sort of thing

so i mean that that's not so good but

with regard to the good points or the

strengths of the goenka system

it is difficult they put a lot of

emphasis on

commitment and meditating every day

keeping five precepts if you want to do

uh a retreat

i can't remember what they're called um

it's called something besides a retreat

but if you want to do one that lasts

more than 10 days you have to or so i've

been told

you have to meditate at least two hours

a day and keep five precepts for at

least two years

and there's not a whole lot of people

that are committed enough to do that in

the west

and just because it is difficult i mean

some people would consider that to be a

negative

aspect of the system but when you

accomplish something difficult it makes

you stronger and it also gives you a

sense of accomplishment like you've

really done something

and

that's one reason why people can really

get more or less fanatical about it

um if if they're not careful

and uh see another another good thing

about the goenka system is that

it's one of the most successful

forms of theravada buddhism in the west

and they don't charge money

they sort of indirectly do they'll tell

you at a retreat that if you

donate to the to the system donate to

the retreat center or whatever it's not

for yourself it's just allowing somebody

after you to attend a retreat so if if

you feel like you got benefit if you

feel like it's worthwhile

to do it

then you're helping somebody else to do

it

by by contributing and apparently that

approach has been very successful and

there are hundreds if not thousands of

goenka centers around the world

and um

so it is it is a good way of getting

dhamma

uh out to the masses lots and lots of

people not all buddhists have done

goenka retreats

and it has been helpful to people

it's um

often a kind of stepping stone towards

becoming a monk for a lot of a lot of

men

possibly uh a stepping stone for

becoming a nun for a lot of women also

where they want something deeper you

know you get sort of the stripped down

elementary version of buddhism and after

you've gotten benefit from that you want

something deeper that goes farther

so

the goenka method has

led a lot of people towards

more orthodox

monastic terrible buddhism

so all in all i say it's definitely more

good than bad

it is somewhat stripped down in

elementary and

you know there is kind of a jehovah's

witness-ish attitude towards it with a

lot of people but all in all it's a good

system and so i'll just move on to the

next question

and the next question is from daniel

daniel asks

see here what is the classification of

mental states related to jhanas

so i mean it's

with regard to jhana there is a

stereotype standard stock explanation

of jhana which describes the mental

states

and just about every single time jhana

is mentioned in the sutas it's the same

stock formula so i may as well just read

it so i'm going to read it out of uh

nyanati loka's buddhist dictionary here

under the heading of gianna

and so this is just straight out of the

taxes from any number of polytechnics

any any number of sutas

detached from sensual objects or monks

detached from unwholesome states of mind

the monk enters into the first

absorption or the first jhana

which is a complement which is

accompanied by thought and discursive

thinking

is born of detachment

and is filled with rapture and joy

so that the first genre

is based on

detaching yourself from sensual

pleasures unwholesome thoughts

and are unwholesome mental states

and they're still thinking

there's still

physical pleasure and pain and also

mental pleasure and pain

so second jonah again stock phrase here

or stock explanation after the subsiding

of thoughts and discursive thinking and

by gaining inner tranquility and oneness

of mind he enters into a state free from

thought conception and discursive

thinking the second absorption which is

born of concentration and filled with

rapture and joy

so the second genre

you've

moved on from the first genre and the

main difference is you're just not

thinking anymore

you know the thought process has stopped

you might start having a little bit of a

thought arise and it just fades back out

again you don't have your thoughts

hooked up into a sequence you know a

thought can arise unbidden

but you're not just going to run with it

you know it's not just going to start

leading you astray it just arises and

passes away and then you're back at no

thinking again

so the the third genre is as follows

after the fading away of rapture he

dwells in equanimity mindful clearly

conscious and he experiences in his

person that feeling of which the noble

ones say happy lives the man of

equanimity and attentive mind thus he

enters the third absorption

so the third genre is based more on

mindfulness

and

mental

happiness and unhappiness have faded

away so you're still capable of

experiencing

uh pleasure and pain in your body but

you're not thinking anymore you're not

having emotional ups and downs

and your mind is becoming

unified

or here it has what is it singleness of

mind is

oneness of mind

okay so then finally fourth genre is as

follows after having given up pleasure

and pain and through the disappearance

of previous joy and grief he enters into

a state beyond pleasure and pain into

the fourth absorption which is purified

by equanimity

and mindfulness

so the fourth genre is

like purity of concentration

purity of equanimity purity of

mindfulness and no more pleasure and

pain no more thinking and that would be

the essential mental states of jhana and

if that's not precise enough i'm sorry

because that is the stock explanation

um you might be able to pick up a little

more detail from a book like that we

should imagine

or any number of books by someone like

beku bodhi who are going into further

details but the further details are

um

more commentarial and a certain amount

of conjecture i think or just going with

the dogma of what got cooked up um

by like medieval sri lankan monks

so i'll just move on to daniel's next

question which is

does doing bad stuff without bad mental

states affect karma

and there's a few questions along these

lines

um

that will follow this one

but doing bad stuff without bad mental

states

um technically according to buddhism

there is no bad stuff without bad mental

states i mean you can't do something bad

without bad mental states because the

mental states determine whether it's

good or bad

so

i guess the answer to that one would be

no

does doing bad stuff without bad mental

states affect karma yeah or you could

just say that it's uh kind of a trick

question because

um whether an action is good or bad

depends on the accompanying mental

states and not the action itself and um

i'll be getting back to this uh

because there are at least two more

questions along the same lines so i'll

just move on to the last question by

daniel

is the final mental state before death

the most important why and how much

uh

yeah i mean usually for most people or

most beings even you could say the final

mental state before death is the most

important because it determines

like your trajectory or your heading you

know what bearing you're gonna have um

into your next life

so it's like

the last mental state you have before

you die is like the jumping off point to

your next existence

and so if you have uh

like a positive mental state when you're

dying or a moral wholesome mental state

when you're dying it's going to help you

move in a wholesome or moral direction

into your next existence

um it's not going to totally determine

what your next existence is going to be

like i mean you could be a really bad

person

and you just have like a real like a

really

like a real epiphany when you're dying

just you're in like this expanded mental

state everything's blissful and

beautiful

and so it can cause you to have

um a rebirth you know let's say into a

you know a rich

healthy

prosperous family but then you're still

gonna have all this karmic junk from the

bad life that you live that's gonna mess

that up

or uh alternatively you could you can be

like a virtuous person a wise person

and then you have like a really bad

mental state when you're dying you know

maybe you're in a lot of pain you're

just kind of you know you just break

down you're you know you just like your

equanimity breaks down and so forth and

so you wind up in a bad rebirth but

still you're going to have all this

wholesome karma that kind of lifts that

up and makes it not so bad or maybe even

in some ways shortens it so that you're

able to move on to a better life after

that

so

buddhists and hindus

a lot of them will say that uh

life is really just a preparation for

death

um

i often point out that mahatma gandhi

when he when he got shot and was dying

as he's falling to the ground he said

hey rom

and it wasn't like oh god they got me

like in the movie it was he wanted his

mind focused on god as he died because

you know

he wanted to be close to god you know

whatever happens after death he wanted

to be moving in the direction of god

so

yeah you can say that it is the most

important

moment of your life in the is your death

the moment of death

and so i'll just move on to the next

question from

i'm not sure how to pronounce his name

it's

spelled t-y-r

so that's tear or tire

and he asked two questions in two

different places

and one of these questions i think

already got answered by somebody else he

asked it in a comment section somewhere

about

um

let's see you mentioned three or four

books

to have a good idea of what buddhism is

and what it is not can you mention those

again with preferred publishers spelling

etc i think somebody already answered

that and i'm not even sure what video

i've got this written down i'm not sure

what video it's even referring to

if you know something about buddhism

already then possibly one of the best

books you can get is studies and origins

of buddhism by gc pandey

and that's published by mojilla bernard

um

i may have already i may have also

mentioned what the buddha taught by

walpola rahula i don't know what the

publisher is i don't have a copy of it

on hand um

beku bodhis and uh nyanamoli's

translation of the majiminikaya is also

really good it gives you a really

orthodox straightforward um

exposure to like ancient indian monastic

buddhism

um

if you can find a good translation of

the sutuni pata i mean my translation of

the atakawaga which is uh available on

the nipahpancha.org website i mean

that's that would be a good introduction

but i think somebody already answered it

so i'll just i'll just move on and if if

you really want to know if if um

if tear or tire

wants me to go into more details i can

do that but um

like i say i think somebody already

answered the question for me so i'm just

moving on so his next question

can you describe your states of mind

after meditation practice as a monk i am

certain that my meditations are

beneficial but as a monk i would imagine

your experiences would be exponentially

so on that note i was practicing several

hours a day at one time with results

sometimes my mood become

as odd as it sounds almost too happy and

throughout the day would find my mood

elevating completely on its own for no

apparent reason i had no motivation to

complete my regular work i found i had

to scale back my practice it seems

meditation and serious enlightenment

would not mix well with mundane life to

be clear i am in no way claiming

enlightenment would want to

continue practice any thoughts on this

well

um it's kind of hard to describe the

states of mind after meditation practice

like when i was

meditating intensively

like um

i'm pretty sure my first 10 years as a

monk i was probably averaging about six

hours a day

of formal sitting practice not including

walking practice

um

mainly it causes your mind to be quieter

and clearer

more focused less distracted

that would be like the main benefits

um you know you're less likely to get

carried away by uh negative mental

states if you do get irritated or

annoyed you tend to be mindful of it

which deprives it of a lot of its power

people that are mindful a lot and you're

not usually angry

when you do become angry it's just like

sirens and flashing lights is really

noticeable and it's very easy to be

mindful of it

so those are benefits um

it helps you to be detached from samsara

to some degree

um with regard to this middle part about

how you were becoming too happy

um i knew this guy

he was a really good guy he uh

he owned a construction company and um

it was his ambition

to renounce the world and become a monk

and unfortunately it was also his

ambition to be among for about five

years until he became a sotapanna then

drop out and become a teacher at some

place like ims

um

but he had this problem in that he would

experience too much pt and i already

mentioned pt is one of the factors of

involved in jhana

you have pt up until um

second second jhana

with third genre you no longer

experience it

but it's a kind of mental exhilaration

or enthusiasm and he would just get

drunk on it if he was doing intensive

meditation everything would just be

hilariously funny and so he wound up

renouncing the world he got rid of all

of his business

he went to burma was ordained at a

monastery there and he was just getting

drunk on meditation he was just like

laughing uproariously and just like

dancing around and just acting silly

until finally he was required to drop

out it's like his teacher told him you

got to go back to america because this

isn't working

and that was that was unfortunate

because he really was a good guy

um let's see

what's the last part here

with regard to uh meditation interfering

with worldly life that's not necessarily

the case like i already mentioned uba

kin who was the teacher of sn goenka

and he was a kind of meditation master

i'm pretty sure

but um he was also like a government uh

like a government minister he was a

relatively high ranking bureaucrat in

the burmese government

and um i mean he wasn't like a military

goon or anything

but he was a conscientious uh like a

government servant

and a busy man apparently but still he

was able to be a meditation master at

the same time i assume it would depend

on what kind of meditation you're doing

like if you're doing some atom

meditation like based on samadhi where

you're just

like silencing and stilling your mind to

just uh you know just crystal clarity

and silence

something like that then yeah that could

interfere with functioning normally in

everyday life but if you're doing

mindfulness meditation where you're just

meditating on whatever arises

like when i'm at work at a sheet metal

shop

um just some of the repetitive actions

of of like

feeding sheet metal through a machine or

something like that can become

meditative just walking can be a

meditation

even talking can be a kind of

mindfulness meditation

so

it's not necessarily the case that

intensive meditation can

is incompatible with worldly life

with some kinds worldly life is more of

a

limiting factor on how deeply you can

meditate and then vice versa

like uh with regard to some atom

meditation if you're really going for

jhana like i was mentioning above

um

yeah just all the distractions of

worldly life it's not very conducive to

that

maybe some people who are very

adept or very talented you just have

like an inborn talented meditation and

there are some people like that maybe

they can swing it but

one of the main reasons for renouncing

the world as a monk to begin with is to

simplify things so that your mind isn't

so distracted and you can meditate more

easily

and that's um particularly true with

regard to

like samadhi based meditations

so i think i'll move on the next

question is from

reconciliation

and reconciliation

says

tell us about your father's stories of

world war ii and if they involve things

like seances

okay well my father

most of his

um stories about world war ii were not

like spiritual or occult or anything

like that

he uh

he was a combat medic he had some kind

of gory stories about uh

really badly messed up soldiers that he

was attending to

um you know like having to amputate a

leg with scissors and this kind of thing

removing

broken teeth with pliers that kind of

thing which he didn't like talking about

and as a kid he especially didn't like

talking about a lot

i mean when i was a kid he didn't like

talking about it a lot he didn't like

remembering it much

um

he was a prisoner of war he was captured

by

hungarian soldiers wearing german

uniforms during

the invasion of europe you know after

d-day he was on he was on normandy beach

also

one of the main stories of normandy

beach was uh

when when you came in

uh you had to run over just this it was

like

there were like corpses that were just

drifted up on the beach there was like

this line of corpses like three or four

deep and you had to run over the tops of

them

and it bugged them because they thought

some of them might still be alive

and uh the first medic station that he

set up was in a pill box that had been

cleared of germans and uh it smelled of

like flamethrower napalm and burnt flesh

that kind of a thing so he had some

pretty gnarly stories but um the closest

thing to uh sort of a seance story

he had with regard to world war ii

is that before the war started he was uh

an x-ray technician

at fort bragg i think is in north

carolina

and um i think it was called camp bragg

back then

and he was studying hypnosis

and he thought it was really interesting

just how hypnosis can be used as an

anesthetic

how you can use it you know as a

you know you can even operate on people

if they're in a deep hypnotic trance and

so when he was um

in europe

during world war ii

he was called the voodoo medic because

he was using hypnosis

as as a way of

you know alleviating pain alleviating

blood loss he found out that a soldier a

wounded soldier who's in shock

is essentially in a kind of trance state

and so you can tell them you won't feel

the pain or you're going to constrict

the blood vessels in your arm to reduce

the the blood loss and this sort of

thing and it actually worked

although a lot of materialistic people

or

normie christian people just consider it

to be like voodoo magic and [__] or

something but that was that was about as

close to uh

like occult stuff that he was doing that

young he was in his early 20s during

world war ii

and didn't really get into seances and

so forth until later in life

so i'll just move on to the next

question which is from scout

he's got two questions here

scout's first question is

would you consider taking a vajrayana

initiation from a tantric guru

and ordinarily the answer would be no

i've

i've kind of had enough of

initiations from gurus

unless i were to find someone who

really i consider to be enlightened or

someone who was really um you know

obviously much wiser than me

and uh yeah i mean that might inspire me

to try to learn more from them

uh and so if they were like a a tantric

vajrayana guru or something that might

inspire me to want to learn more about

tantric vajrayana but um

that would be about it i'm really not in

the market for uh going out in search of

getting like

green tara empowerments or anything like

that

um my my path is somewhat different

nowadays i'm

reconciling spirituality with everyday

life or

um

everyday life of a person living in

america and essentially paying bills

so the next question from scout

also

can you see the veracity of the argument

as to why the tantric vehicle of

buddhism is considered the superior and

quicker path as well as being

the one which is reserved for

practitioners with the sharpest

faculties and intellect

i can hazard a guess as to your response

but i was just wondering if you could

see the rationale behind this claim

um

yeah i to some degree i can see the

rationale behind the claim i think for

some people

a tantric approach is the best approach

possibly the only realistic approach

most

most people just i mean they just cannot

renounce the world and be celibate for

the rest of their life

and so

tantra in that case

um

you know it can still be effective

and for some people it just may work the

best because it is a higher difficulty

setting

so

um you know it's like with a higher

difficulty setting it's more challenging

and some people really rise to the

challenge i've been like that where you

know when i was in school the more

difficult the class usually the better i

was because it challenged me and it

caused me to try harder whereas an easy

class

was just kind of boring and i wouldn't i

wouldn't try as hard as i could

so there could be some of that involved

in tantra also where it's just uh

it's sink or swim to a greater degree

than being you renunciant living alone

in a cave somewhere

uh see what else he has here

the superior and quicker path

well i mean

yeah i wouldn't say i wouldn't say that

that is true in an unqualified manner i

think the buddha was a very wise man and

i think

well obviously

to a buddhist anyway

and um i really think that he set up a

system that maximized your chances of

becoming enlightened

at least for the the maximum number of

people

and if uh

you know tantric practice

was superior to

um you know meditating alone in a forest

then uh

i think there's a good chance he would

have taught that instead but for some

people

um yeah the tantric path

uh is is better

i would assume

so

i'll just leave it at that and move on

to the next question from rakhasa

and also there is uh

some chinese looking idiograms after the

name

which i do not know how to pronounce so

we'll just go with rakasa

and rakasa says the buddha taught that

all things other than those who attain

nibbana are subject to age death and

rebirth it is plain how this applies to

animals humans demons angels etc i have

a hard time understanding how this

applies to the higher planes of

existence

can you explain how death and rebirth

operate on the planes of form and no

form how for example would the platonic

form of a triangle die and be reborn

okay

so first of all i would just point out

towards the beginning here he says that

uh all

all things other than those who attain

nabana are subject to age death and

rebirth i would say even those who do

attain nibana like an enlightened being

are still

subject to age and death at least from

an objective point of view to from the

point of view of an objective observer

even the buddha got older and got sick

and died

even though he was fully enlightened

but um

he didn't attain rebirth supposedly i

mean that's that's uh the official

doctrine that once you become fully

enlightened you are not born again

so i'll move on and it seems that rakasa

here does not understand what the the

realms of form are

for example he seems to be conflating

the the rupa loka in buddhism the the

realm of form with uh plato's heaven of

forms and it's just not the same there

is no

equivalent of platonic

ideals

or platonic forms in buddhism so the

realm of form of the rupa loka is the

brahma realm where it's they're like

devas they're like gods it's just

they're they're more advanced they live

longer

um they're no longer differentiated into

uh two

genders um they're it's a very

uh very subtle form of matter that

they're composed of

and um yeah so they would die the same

as most most devas or small g gods would

die they just uh when their karma has

exhausted itself after a zillion

gajillion years

they uh become dimmer you know their

their uh

luminescence or their glory

becomes less and then their friends

realize that you know it's it's time for

them to move on so they circle around

them and you know they say goodbye and

everything and then

the deva or the brahma

um disappears from whatever heaven realm

they're in and

reappears um in the next

you know according to their comma

um

so yeah the uh like the perfect triangle

in plato's heaven just

it's um

yeah it's just irrelevant to the

buddhist realm of form

and it's similar with regard to the the

realm of no form the arupa loka which is

the highest

series of heaven realms

in buddhist cosmology where you're just

the beings there are just pure mind they

don't have a physical body anymore

and it would be the same thing there

it's just uh

after they've been there for countless

zillions of years and their karma is

exhausted they just fade out there or

just poof out of existence and then

their consciousness takes rebirth in a

different realm

so yeah there's no platonic triangles in

buddhist heavens

so

i think i'll just move on

and the next question is from mjl

and this is very fundamental what are

the worldly benefits of buddhist

practice

and i've kind of touched on that a

little bit above but i might as well

um

say let's see first of all there's

keeping five precepts just being a moral

person

and uh being generous

you know

donating to good causes or supporting

monks and nuns that sort of thing

um

it helps you in various ways first of

all you're making good karma so in the

future good things are more likely to

happen back to you if you do good good

comes back to you that's it's fairly

simple

also

generosity especially it cultivates

selflessness you know it weakens the

strength of your ego by you're having a

feeling of of us of community that sort

of a thing

so there's that too

because the stronger your egos the less

wise you are essentially

um

with regard to meditation practice then

it's it's like what i've already

mentioned it it helps to detach you from

some sorry you're not as stuck

in in samsara

you're less distracted you're less

likely to be on an emotional

rollercoaster ride or even if you are on

an emotional roller coaster ride

you're less identified with it you know

you can

sort of step back a little bit and

observe it

as just nature taking its course

and um it's not like you know i am i am

happy i am unhappy it's just

you know you are

you know if you're anything at all

you're just like the

the observer of the happy and unhappy

and it's just nature taking its course

and so it helps to detach you from the

illusion you know you're getting one

foot out of the matrix

it's it's like that so

um you do good karma and you know good

things happen back to you

more bad things happen to you less

and

there's just an increased sense of peace

and equanimity

and um

just detachment from all the [__]

those would be like the main benefits

there's other big ones i'm sure that i'm

forgetting but those would be the main

ones from my point of view

and so i'll move on to the next question

which is from

yuichiro i think

and yuichiro i think

says i do think romantic love can be

very good

how do you balance this inherent

attachment of it with minimizing

attachments so that's a good question um

love is good if there's i mean if

there's any genuine love

it is good even if it's mixed with all

kinds of bad like somebody might

genuinely love their heroine that they

take

then at least the love part is good even

though the rest of it might be

predominantly bad

and

i said it before i'll keep saying it

that love is

attachment that love is

knocking down

pink floyd's wall

you know

everyone's or most people have got like

this wall around their heart

so to speak

and in order to truly love somebody you

have to knock a hole in that wall so

that there's no more differentiation or

separation you become you just sort of

melt into an us

and

it is true that romantic love

notoriously

is less stable than other kinds of love

like family love

uh generally people don't

divorce their mother

and that kind of a thing

and that's largely because romantic love

is more conditional

you know i'll love you as long as you

keep treating me good or i'll love you

so long as you're faithful to me or

i'll love you you know so long as you

still make x amount of money or whatever

and um but it's a good start and uh you

can cultivate romantic love into a

higher spiritual form of love and it's

it's simple the way to explain it it's

just the more unconditional love is the

pure and more spiritual it is and the

closer it comes to god in the biblical

sense of god is love

so

find a person that you can love

unconditionally

and then love them unconditionally even

if they're giving you a really bad time

or even if they they gain 50 pounds or

whatever

that um

you just love them anyway

you know all their

strengths and weaknesses you know all

the bad things about them and you just

love them with all your heart anyway

and

for some reason i keep thinking of

those dfcs it's he's considered it's

considered to be his greatest novel the

brother is karamazov

where the spiritual brother

al-yosha karamazov

he's encouraged by his guru his

staaret's

father zosima to marry this girl named

lisa who is just a total basket case not

only is she neurotic as hell but she's

apparently demon possessed also

and

that was supposed to be all right my

take on it is that was supposed to be

part of yoshi's spiritual practice i

mean that was just learning how to love

this person unconditionally

no matter what no matter how horrible

things got that was strengthening his

spirit you know it was purifying his

soul and so forth

and um i mean that's really advanced

practice i think you're way better off

finding someone that you genuinely

consider to be a good match for you you

know somebody that you really

um have just

you just hit it off you just

spontaneously the feeling of us

you know that you don't have to work

really hard to get it going you know it

just comes naturally you just drawn to

this person

and love them as unconditionally as you

can

um

i've said before that probably the the

purest form of love that the average

normie experiences

would be a mother's love for her

children because it's less conditional

a mother loves her children whether

they're beautiful or ugly whether

they're good or bad you know whether

they're brilliant or stupid

she loves them anyway sometimes the

worst kids get the most love because the

mother

intuitively knows that they're the ones

most in need of love

but still is even that is conditional

because it's conditional on the fact

that they are her children

but um just any kind of love

can be improved and purified into

unconditional love

and romantic love is no exception

so i think i'll move on to yuichiro's

next question

also in response to the idea that if you

have good intentions but do bad things

it's not a problem

if you had some hypothetical mao like

dictator who actually had good

intentions but still killed millions of

people i really can't believe no bad

karma is created by that

if the intentions are truly good then it

is the utopian delusion ideology he

presumably believes in which is

generating the bad karma i assume is

creating

i assume

see is created by killing millions of

people for the greater good

okay so the main gist here is uh

you try to do good and uh you wind up

killing millions of people

that that would be bad karma

and

i think i explained the last time i was

asked a question about this sort of

thing

that

um i mean the intention of doing good is

good karma

and so let's say let's say you have
someone like mao i mean better than mao
let's say there's someone who uh
implements this agricultural reform
and agricultural reform for whatever
reason isn't working and people are
starving
and like was the case with mao
or what i've read it's just that
everyone was afraid to tell him that it
wasn't working and so he didn't even
know until after the fact
so in a case like that i unless there's
some kind of subconscious like telepathy
or empathy where you're picking up on
the suffering of these people then

really you're not doing anything wrong

it's sort of like

um you have a good king who's got a bad

minister who's doing bad things behind

his back the good king

um you know there might be some

indirect bad karma from just being

gullible and stupid enough to trust a

bad person you know a certain amount of

delusion

but um

mostly the badness is the people who are

deliberately doing bad stuff and not the

person who's trying to do good stuff and

failing

a good example would be let's say a

doctor is trying to save somebody

and they just fail you know they do the

emergency operation and the person dies

anyway

then he really hasn't done anything bad

or it's like the stephen king novel

um

the stand

which uh is is good to read um for

anybody who's uh interested in uh

like uh

um

genetically engineered viruses getting

escaping from laboratories

he's trying to save somebody by doing an

emergency appendectomy he he's not a

doctor he doesn't know how to do it but

he's doing his best to save this person

and the person dies

during the operation

well i mean

the guy stew the camera's name says his

last name

um east texas i mean he hasn't really

done bad karma by failing to save this

person the person died largely because

of the botched operation but the guy did

the best he could he was really trying

to help

and so

he probably got more good karma than bad

and you can say with regard to

the mao like dictator who has good

intentions and millions of people die

it's probably it's going to be a mix of

good and bad

and most of the bad karma he gets

assuming that he gets it is probably

after he realizes that millions of

people died and then there can be like

the guilt and remorse

um which is going to cause most of the

bad karma

just the the awareness that he killed

millions of people and he's just like

torn up over it and just kicking himself

for the rest of his life that would be

where most of the bad karma would come

from not just from the mere fact that he

was trying to

do the right thing and and made the

wrong choice and millions of people died

so i mean a lot of people really do not

grok buddhist ethics where people in the

west are really stuck in a kind of

western utilitarian ethic where

something is good if it causes increased

happiness

of the most number of people something

is bad if it causes you know more

increased increased unhappiness among

the large you know among

the maximum number of people or whatever

and that's really not how buddhism

works that's not how buddhist ethics

works

um just the awareness that you have

caused suffering

can in itself

um cause you to have bad karma through

regret or remorse

or that sort of thing but it's it's not

so much the action that you did is

subsequent actions after you realize

that the action that you did caused so

much suffering or whatever

so

yeah let's see here

i'll try i'll read the question over

just to make sure i answered it see also

in response to the ideas you have good

intentions but do bad things it's not a

problem if you had some hypothetical

male like dictator who actually had good
intentions but still killed millions of
people i really can't believe no bad
karma is created by that if the
intentions are truly good then it is the
utopian delusional ideology he
presumably believes in which is
generating the bad karma i assume is
created by killing millions of people
for the greater good uh
yeah i mean certainly if the people died
because he was delusional in believing
that
the system was going to work when it
didn't
then yeah that could that could
definitely be a factor but just you know

millions of people dying doesn't

necessarily create any karma i mean it's

like

um a volcano blows up and kills a

million people i mean the volcano has

made no karma

you know it's just it's just

ethically neutral and so like an honest

mistake where you just assume things are

going to work and then for some reason

let's say you've got this agricultural

reform

right so you've got the mao like

dictator he he starts this agricultural

reform and then just beyond his control

there's like freak bad weather that just

messes everything up and you've got

droughts and famines and stuff and then

millions people die well

still i mean he hasn't really done

anything wrong

until he starts feeling the guilt and

remorse and so forth and from the

buddhist point of view guilt and remorse

are bad karma whenever you feel

remorse or regret

then you are creating bad karma for

yourself

so

still i'm kind of sticking to my guns on

this one

um although what yuichiro says i mean if

if

delusion has caused you to make a bad

decision then yeah i suppose the

delusion um can be some can be

responsible for some bad karma which

will then result in more suffering for

yourself

but um again if you're sincerely trying

to do good you are creating good karma

or good karma

it really um

the actual results

are largely irrelevant to buddhist

ethics

it's the mental states going through the

mind of the person who is the agent

he was you know performing the action

that determines the ethical quality of

the action

so

next question is from seeker

seeker celt

i assume you spell c-e-l-t as celt

so secret celt

says

if you create an identity you create

this ease

well that's an easy one the answer is

yes

in fact i'm not sure that i should even

elaborate on that if you create an

identity i mean you can create some ease

too but um

yeah identities are uh

they're trouble

you know it's like the ego it's based on

delusion and anything based on delusion

is going to create a fair amount of

unease or dis-ease

so i'll just move on to the next

question from secret celt

what is emancipation

and that's uh

that's sort of a surprisingly bad or

it's a difficult question to answer

it's not a bad question it's a good

question it's just that it's very

difficult to answer it because there's

so many ways of answering what is

emancipation you could say it's

it's freedom from

greed hate and delusion or it's freedom

from the the belief i am you know

freedom from uh self view or identity or

ego

um emancipation

um mainly from unease

emancipation from the creation of karma

because a fully enlightened or

emancipated being is not creating karma

anymore

um but ultimately emancipation is just

off the scale it's just beyond words so

there really is no

um

completely correct valid answer to what

is emancipation

it's uh

nirvana full enlightenment

so i think i'll move on to the next

question

which is from potila

and potila

says maybe panyo can give some teachings

on the vital importance of donna to help

education

to help educate those new to domo

and this was part of uh

a long back and forth on the discord

server in the in the q a room

about

what to do about

the fact that

buddhism in the west doesn't receive a

whole lot of support

especially orthodox monastic buddhism

like

you know

um

what should i say non-degenerate

buddhism or non-mutated buddhism or

mutated as little as possible buddhism

um

monks buddhist theravada buddhist monks

and nuns

who are practicing conscientiously and

strictly the rules of monastic

discipline aren't even allowed to handle

money

they're not allowed to have their own

money they're not allowed to spend money

they're not even allowed to feed

themselves

monks especially are not allowed to cook

their own food if a monk wants to eat

something on one day somebody has to

give it to him that same morning

without him asking for it

and

it's really difficult because terra vada

buddhism is based on ancient indian

culture and that sort of thing was just

you know

a lot of people knew about that maybe

most people knew about that in ancient

india and in the ganges valley of

6th century bc or 5th century bc but in

america people are clueless including

really sincere western buddhists they

just

don't realize that a monk isn't even

allowed to feed himself he's not allowed

to use money at all

and so

if you want to have buddhism in the west

you have to

support it

and that's one reason why i'm not a monk

anymore i got tired of living in

buddhist asia come back to america and

the culture is so different here

from the culture of

the pali texts where the rules of

monastic discipline are that um really

it was just um i mean that's one of the

reasons why i'm not a monk right now i'm

not the only reason

but

um

yeah it's i'm i'm fairly skeptical of

just how well

like real orthodox theravada can fit in

the west

and it may be the best thing for a

really devout tarabata buddhist in the

west to do is move to buddhist asia

move to thailand or or sri lanka or

burma if possible and then you can live

a

buddhist lifestyle and especially if

you're going to become a monk i

definitely advise

anyone wanting to become a monk to go to

buddhist asia and be one there because

you're not going to be able to live

according to the texts

um

in the west

maybe if you're really

uh sensitive and wise you can get the

gist of it

without the

details but it's just a good idea to uh

go to buddhist asia and live as a monk

just the way fairly fairly close to the

way the

ancient monks in the buddhist time lived

just wandering around sleeping under

trees that kind of a thing

but um getting back to the importance of

donna to help

uh support

dhamma and buddhism in the west

uh that that is a tough one and we've

been wrangling over that for quite a

while there's been all these different

ideas

and uh

none of them really have have worked

very well i mean the goenka method is

like a mutated simplified stripped down

version of buddhism which has prospered

mainly because people are getting real

benefit from it and they

are willing to pay for that

most westerners

you know like i say they're stuck in a

kind of utilitarian western

materialistic ethic

and um

they really don't see much point in

generosity for generosity's sake

they don't have much belief in karma

and so

they just kind of don't see the point of

supporting monks you know they don't

they don't see it as helping to raise

the level of consciousness in the world

they don't really see it as you know

helping others to become enlightened

even though they're not in a position to

really strive for it

and so

it would take a kind of re-education of

western buddhists

to to

get them more in tune with like an

ancient indian buddhist ethic

and just

maybe just reading the texts

and

especially texts to emphasize the value

of generosity and then supporting monks

but um personally i think one of the

best ways of managing this

is to have

monks in the west

live as close as they can to monks in

ancient india where they're they're just

easy to support they're living a very

stripped down ascetic lifestyle

like um the pali one of the polytechs

that is the most well known is the

metasuta

um

lots and lots of people in burma know

the metasuta by heart probably most

monks can chant the matasuta and one of

the things the mettosota says is that a

monk should be subaru which means easy

to support

and so a monk shouldn't have lots of

expenses he shouldn't be a hypochondriac

wanting to go to a doctor all the time

he shouldn't need all these electronic

gadgets he doesn't need

um you know like the the phone and all

that he should really just live a

stripped-down ascetic existence similar

to the ones in in ancient india like uh

ancient indian monks had the eight

requisites

or technically it was like there was

like a ninth unofficial one that all

they were supposed to own is let's see

three robes a belt

a bowl

a water filter a needle

and a razor

and then the unofficial ninth requisite

is a sitting cloth and uh if monks can

just live that simply the way they're

supposed to the way they are exhorted to

live in the texts it would be a lot

easier to support them and

people would be so blown away by

how serious they were that they'd

probably get more more support

and that kind of leads to the whole

issue of karma where

if the monk has the karma to be

supported you know he's he's practiced

in such a way

in his life that he's got you know the

karma of receiving generosity you know

maybe he's very generous before he was a

monk

then uh yeah it's going to work out but

um

still it's there it is kind of a dilemma

for western buddhism that tom

monks really don't get much support

and uh they usually have to break the

rules and start handling money and

and furthermore they're not much

inclined to uh live just a

radically ascetic lifestyle

and uh really it's in some ways it's

just illegal to live a radically ascetic

lifestyle in the west i mean you can't

really live in a hut

i mean there's homeless people in

homeless

encampments living like that but legally

if you're living in a in a

structure

it has to be up to code you know has to

have electrical outlets every x number

of feet and like a a fire exit and all

this kind of stuff and um

yeah just living in a hot

in accordance with the rules of monastic

discipline even that is

essentially illegal in america

or probably most western countries

so yeah that's uh

the whole issue of how to support

buddhism is just a conundrum and we can

just chew on it later i suppose

if anyone has any good ideas you're

welcome to leave it in the comments

so next question from potila

in your talks on kama you mentioned that

caitanya is will or intention is what

drives comma according to orthodox

theravada what else forms karma or kama

looking at your snake example it seems

that you state that the act of

permitting the snake to kill has no

comma weight

that only the intention carries the

development of kama letting the snake

eat can you expand on this it seems that

anyone could kill or harm others as long

as they had a frame of mind they were
helping them like the example of mao or
say a nurse who is killing terminally
sick people because she doesn't want to
see them suffer maybe she is motivated
by intense compassion and pity but she
is still killing or maybe she is
withholding food or medicine for a less
direct approach if it is only shaded on
that matters to create kama you could
justify some very sociopathic behaviors
well
according to the sutas
chittana doesn't
on cheetah not is comma that they are
identical
so

let's see

yeah it's

chittana isn't what drives comma

not is kama

so

uh again we're back at uh mao

or

people trying to do good and failing

and

like let's say you've got a mercy

killing you know you've got the

euthanasia then they're probably very

probably going to get some bad comma

from the killing

but they're also going to get some good

karma from the compassion

and that's the way buddhist ethics works

i mean there's very very little that is

black and white it's all black or all

white it just doesn't work that way it's

buddhist ethics in reality or shades of

gray

because even if you believe that you are

doing something

then that in itself is bad comma because

that has delusion involved because

ultimately we as individuals do not

exist

so

um

the nurse who is killing terminally sick

people because she doesn't want to see

them suffer

yeah i mean she's going to get some bad

comma

and also some good karma um the bad

comma from the the actual killing and

the good comma from the compassion and

not wanting them to suffer and so forth

and um it would depend on her mental

states and her chijna which predominates

whether it's more good than bad or more

bad than good

i think a lot of buddhists would say

it's just definitely going to

necessarily be more bad than good

because killing is killing

but

um yeah i'm not an orthodox buddhist and

we could go back to um

a more obvious example of the doctor or

the guy in the stephen king novel who

are

like operating on someone it's like

somebody's badly injured or whatever and

you're doing what you can to save them

and you fail

then

you might even know that the chances are

ninety percent chance that that is the

operation is going to kill them but if

you don't do the operation the chances

are more like 100 that they're going to

die

so you do the operation and they die in

accordance with the odds anyway

then uh you've still done something more

good than bad even though

you exp you exercise some ineptitude in

trying to save them

so

again

most of the bad comma from that sort of

thing comes from the knowledge that you

did bad or or not even that you did bad

but that you you messed up you failed to

do what you were wanting to do

uh you caused death or whatever and then

and then the remorse and you're just

haunted by it and that haunting and that

regret and so forth

is really what causes the bad comma

more than

the the well-intentioned mistake

so

um if you really want to know more about

kama from the point of view orthodox

theravada um

abhi dhamma

the abhidhamma philosophy

um doesn't say that chijana and kama are

purely synonymous the sutas say that

chaijna is kama or kama is chitana and

chitana here being like will

usually is translated as volition

but it's it comes close to like

schopenhauer's will it's like the

the driving force of of just becoming in

this world

um

i forgot where i was going with that

let's see

oh yeah uh abhidama will say that there

are other factors but even so even

according to abidama in the commentarial

tradition kama is mainly predominantly

um

or will or volition

intention

but um

yeah you could look up uh

what some of the additional factors are

in uh in tarawa

but but still i mean

people in the west we've just been born

and raised into a kind of utilitarian

ethic and it's

counterintuitive

to uh go with a more subjective

ethic of buddhism

so i'll move on to the next question

this is the last question from paultila

why do you think some forms of buddhism

are popular with certain groups of

people and not others for example

nichiren buddhism like kisoka gakai

international seems to have many more

black followers than zen

tibetan buddhism has many latino

hispanic students than jews

zen seems to pull a certain spectrum of

jews and whites who are well to do types

to its doors etc is this due to past

comma to be attracted as a group to

certain traditions

in the usa some of these groups

desperately want blacks and hispanics to

join them but they don't seem to gain

much traction despite their best efforts

well

i think what i'm going to say is very

politically incorrect but different

ethnicities differ from each other

you know

different ethnicities

you know they differ not only physically

but also psychologically to some degree

maybe some ethnicities are just more

cold-blooded intellectual and they're

more attracted to something like zen or

or theravada

other people

who are less detached from

um you know

worldliness or they're more

maybe

emotionally oriented or something they

might be more interested in more more

devotional forms of buddhism

or i guess okay i'm not exactly sure

what it's about

there are some kinds of buddhism that

are still very

sort of samsara or world oriented

so

people or groups of people that are

world oriented might be more attracted

to that

with regard to

tibetan buddhism attracting more um

hispanic people than jews

um i'm not sure that that's exactly true

my good friend brian roo

yeah he definitely thinks that tibetan

buddhism is pretty much run by jews in

in the west

that's neither here nor there

so yeah i'm just i would just say the

easy answer to that is just different

ethnicities

tend statistically to have different

psychological traits different motives

different

um

i don't know different goals to some

degree i mean it can be subtle and it's

not going to be just radical differences

but

subtle enough that uh

it becomes apparent

at uh and like a large

um you know sort of a large scale

so

yeah i just assumed that would be it

that uh

different kinds of buddhism

have different approaches and their

different kinds of people

will favor the forms of buddhism that

are more in accordance with just their

own approach to existence

um

yeah i don't think there's any

deliberate conspiracies or any such

thing

with regard to

a lot of the elite buddhist groups

trying to attract

uh black people and hispanic people into

their ranks and not doing very well i

mean they're mostly like starbucks

liberals you know like

um neo neo-marxists or something

and um

just their whole approach to life is

radically different from

um

most of the the people that they're

trying to attract for the sake of

diversity so that they won't be so

embarrassed about being a white elitist

movement

well tom

i think i've kind of answered that

question so i'll just uh move on to the

next one from nardi

and nardi says this is kind of a strange

question

nardi says can you do a list of reasons

why not to ordain as a monk

um

see i have just one in mind right now my

case a very very sexual nature

okay

well i mean i could come up with a list

of why not to become a monk but it

wouldn't be a very long list

um the first reason not to become a monk

because if you just don't have a

spiritual vocation if you do not have a

calling to it

you know if you're not really committed

to becoming enlightened in this very

life or at least making as much progress

in that direction as possible then yeah

you're probably better off not becoming

a monk and it's better for the sangha

also that you not become a monk and

that's kind of the way it is in asia

where most of the people who are

ordained there

really do not have a spiritual calling

they're not really trying to become

enlightened they're not even so much

trying to cultivate wisdom

they just want to live an easy life or

they're too lazy and ugly to get a wife

and a job and so they just go to the

monastery or they're sent there as

children

and they just don't know what else to do

in life

or they want the free education at a

monastic school or they just want upward

social mobility and people worshiping

them

or whatever

and

the number of asian monks who really

have a spiritual calling is uh

pretty small you know probably well

below 20

a lot of the women who become nuns you

know they're just not attractive enough

to attract the husband and so they uh

make the best of it by

devoting their life to religion

so

that would be that would be the main

reason if you just do not have a genuine

spiritual vocation you should not be

ordained um another another one is if

the life of a monk just does not suit

your temperament like if you're very

gregarious or like you're you're just a

horny person

or

um

you mean you just cannot tolerate one

meal a day in minimum sleep and hours of

meditation or whatever then

um yeah in fact i used to say that was

the

best reason to become a monk wasn't so

much the desire to become enlightened as

just the the life of a monk is just in

harmony with with your temperament or

your personality

so

um those would be the two main reasons

why you shouldn't become a monk

uh one other

uh one other reason would be just if if

you're disqualified for whatever reason

um

you know you have some kind of uh like

you've been

accidentally castrated or something you

can't become a monk or uh

certain diseases that um

like i think even asthma i think someone

with asthma is not supposed to become a

monk

um

yeah so i mean there are some

um

like physical conditions and so forth or

if let's say

um

you're you still have obligations

to

um like government service let's say

you're in the military reserves or

something then then you're

forbidden to become a monk something

like that

but with regard to personal ethical

reasons i think the the first two if you

don't have a spiritual calling and the

monks life just is not compatible with

your personality or temperament those

would be the two main ones

so i'll just move on to the next

question from nardi

and nardi says

have you ever thought about speaking

about different buddhist traditions and

how a terra varden like you would react

to them like for example your idea on

mahamudra and that particular lineage

i see you as an open-minded man who

could do that for the benefit of many

buddhists from different lineages

may you have a great day and thank you

for your service to us

well you're welcome

and the main reason why i don't talk

much about other traditions is that i

just haven't studied other traditions

i've

immersed myself in taravana

um mainly because i wanted to know what

the buddha originally taught and

theravada comes closest to that in most

respects it's the most conservative it's

the one school of buddhism still in

existence that is primarily based on

ancient indian culture

and so that was really

what interested me i wasn't so much

interested in terra vada i just wanted

to know what the buddha really taught

i mean if you're going to be a buddhist

you want to follow the teachings of

buddha and so you have to try to find

out what he taught

and uh i started with theravada because

that that came the closest to begin with

and then

and then went from there

so i really don't know much about uh

tibetan buddhism at all i do know some

about zen

i was interested in zen to begin with

but um like mahamudra i'm not even sure

what that is

so that's that's the main reason why i

don't do a lot of comparison and

contrast of different schools of

buddhism because the one i'm mainly

familiar with is taravana and i i know

very very little about uh tibetan and

like vajrayana and tantric stuff

like what is a green tara empowerment

i'm really not sure

uh

let's see

so yeah i guess i guess i answered that

question and so the last question from

nardi is pure or total mindfulness

enough to get you enlightened

and

technically

no because

um i mean that's your best bet but

there's no guarantees because you can't

make yourself be enlightened

you're not no amount of effort is going

to make you be enlightened you can't

force yourself to be enlightened like

krishnamurti used to say you can open

the window but you can't make the breeze

blow in the best you can do is

have the window open and then maybe the

the breeze will blow in

but you can't make it blow in

but um just setting that aside let's say

you want to maximize your chances of

becoming enlightened then yeah um pure

pure

purification of mindfulness is about

your best bet

but

um

to purify mindfulness takes a lot of

other things for you to do like

the terror of other buddhist texts will

say you can't purify your mind unless

you purify your morality first

you can't purify your wisdom without

purifying your

um

your morality nasila samadhi and panya

it's like a progression in orthodox

tiravada first is morality then

concentration and then and then you have

liberating wisdom

um so there's all these different

factors all these different things it's

the noble eightfold path

um you know there's a right action and

right speech and and right livelihood

and

right thought and right effort and all

these things

but uh you can say that they all

culminate in the purification of

mindfulness which is for the jhana

but you don't necessarily have to attain

for the genre in order to become

enlightened

but um

some people need purer

pure mindfulness as a kind of

jumping-off point than others

so i mean in a way yes in a way no

total mindfulness is enough to get

enlightened

like um in the saudi bataan suta

or the mahasaripatana suta

the buddha says that

um if you can be totally mindful for a

week straight

you're guaranteed of either becoming

enlightenment or becoming a non-returner

so that's uh

that's a pretty strong statement to make

and so i'll move on to the next question

from mirror of emptiness

and this is kind of a strange question

what role do the imaginary

superstructures great artists like j.r.r

tolkien build

or religious superstructure used by

devout practitioners like in tibetan

buddhism or catholicism play in their

journey into the hereafter

uh

well i assume

like uh

like mythological superstructures

like tibetan buddhism

i mean everybody has to have some kind

of content of their mind and structures

to their mind i don't know

whether mirror of emptiness here is

specifically interested in like jungian

archetypes of the collective

subconscious or anything like that but

um you know you're gonna have your mind

is like a vehicle you use for moving

forwards through samsara towards

enlightenment if that is your goal

then uh

yeah i mean it's just gonna have like

this uh

i mean any vehicle has to have a

structure

so i mean if you've

uh

you're in a culture or in a religious

system that has this elaborate mythology

that's just going to be part of the part

of the system

and just part of your mind

you know part of your uh

um

approach to enlightenment early buddhism

tried to strip that down to a minimum

you know you weren't supposed to believe

anything really

um

so

the more the more of the content there's

going to be the the more you're going to

be careful about detaching from it but

it does seem that there have been

enlightened beings that really still

um

they still endorse the mythology of

their culture the buddha didn't

completely reject or denounce

ancient indian mythology

or cosmology

um i think saint john of the cross may

have been an arahant he was

he was a very very advanced john a

master very wise person he was despite

being a 16th century spanish catholic

and uh being very devoted to the virgin

mary

you know he read the bible and all that

and believed it

but so long as you're detached from it i

mean there's just the content of your

mind becomes irrelevant

and so just about any kind of

superstructure so long as it's not

serving to be just a flat out hindrance

to wisdom

you know if you're believing that uh you

know you're getting merit by killing

some kind of animals or even other

humans then yeah that could be a

definitely uh

a hindrance moving you in the wrong

direction

but i mean if it's a relatively benign

mythology that's you know it's not

endorsing

um you know immorality or that sort of

thing then

yeah i mean it's it's just something

that is part of the the clutter that you

eventually have to to uh detach from

and i hope

mirror of emptiness wasn't specifically

referring to

like um jungian archetypes because i

wouldn't know how to answer that one

and so i'll just move on to the next

question from chakra gosha

the voice of chakra

and uh chakragosa here

says

in the buddhist time were married men or

fathers of children allowed to become

monks notably the buddha himself left

his family including a young son but

naturally that was before the regular

rules of ordination were established

well i like getting easy questions

sometimes

and this is a fairly easy one and the

answer is yeah i mean you can be married

and be the father of children still

become a monk

the closest thing to that that

is supposed to be

a hindrance would be you have to have

the consent of your parents to be

ordained

that even at the ordination ceremony um

i think you're if i remember correctly

you're asked if your parents consent

um you can be ordained without the

consent of your parents but it's uh

against the rules and

even though the ordination is still

valid the monks who conduct the

ordination um commit

a minor offense by doing it

but um

yeah there's even these some pretty

gnarly stories there are supposed to be

praising monks but there was this monk

who had a wife and a baby and he just

renounced the world and became a monk

and so he's sitting under a tree at some

park and his wife with the baby

uh like hunts him down and she just puts

the baby down in front of him and says

this is your child you take care of it

and then she walks away but of course

um she just kind of hides in a distance

to see what he's going to do

and he just uh in a state of complete

equanimity just in a state of meditative

bliss he just keeps meditating and

ignores the the baby in front of him

until finally after a while the wife

miss comes back and picks up the baby

and leaves because she realizes he

doesn't he's just in a state of complete

detachment even from his own baby

so i mean that's pretty monstrous from

most people's point of view but

in the in the commentaries when the i

think it's in the commentaries where the

the story is found it was uh praising

the monk and his detachment and all that

so it did happen

and uh yeah the buddha himself

um

left his his wife and his uh

baby son and his harem of slave girls i

assume

but um

they were rich i mean they weren't his

wife and son didn't experience any dire

hardship because he wasn't supporting

them because they were

according to the legend of princess

or and a prince

or the son of a prince

so yeah

yeah i mean

that was not an obstacle or it was not

uh

it wasn't against the rules

to be ordained as a monk even if you

were married and had children

so i'll just move on to the next

question from bpat427

and be pat here ask me some kind of

personal questions

he's uh not so much interested in

buddhist philosophy here

his first question is what music have

been you been listening to lately

and um

to tell you the truth i haven't been

listening to music very much at all

um

yeah it was uh maybe a week or so ago i just felt in the mood to listen to music and i was mostly listening to the old stuff that i used to like before i was a monk like led zeppelin or were talking heads

um

brian eno and uh

david burns my life in the bishop ghosts has always been one of my favorite albums

um

i watch uh every once in a while i watch an episode of this it's called cowboy bebop and i like the the intro music to that

but um

yeah for the past

couple years at least

i really have not been feeling strong

urges to listen to music

um

because

i'm called john at work the boss

sometimes will be singing big bad john

some old song i think it's from like the

50s so i listened to that a few weeks

ago

but um yeah i'm not really much into

listening to music lately so next

question from bpap427 what food have you

been eating enjoying the most

since rejoining lay life

well i was just thinking to myself the

other day that my favorite food in the

whole world is probably uh butter pecan

ice cream and i've been eating quite a

lot of that from time to time although i

don't have any present which uh

is not optimal

um

my girlfriend's a really good cook so

just about anything she cooks is really

enjoyable

and just eating with someone you love is

uh is very nice and makes the food

better

but um

yeah

yeah so i guess i guess that's it i've

i've uh

ate some bacon pizza the other day that

was interesting

okay so let's move on epap 427's next

question have you gotten a cell phone

yet if so what kind

so yeah i got a cell phone series right

here

and it's uh like a samsung

galaxy a12 or something it's like the

second cheapest kind because really i

just

i don't need lots of gadgets i don't use

lots of apps i just want something that

will tell the time and be used as a

phone and i can use it as an alarm clock

and

i don't know

it's not that big of a deal i usually

don't even take my phone with me if i go

out if i go to work i do but aside from

that it's just uh

i don't know it's not really important

but i got it almost immediately after um

dropping out of the monkhood and coming

here to uh south carolina

because i had to get internet access and

usually you get like the package of

internet and phone and

um

tv and that kind of thing but uh i

despise television so i just got the

phone and the internet

so the next question

from bpat427

have you seen or spoken to any of your

family members since disrobing

have you met any of your girlfriend's

family yet if so how did the

interactions go also you've previously

mentioned that you knew your lady before

you were both before you were born

ah

could you elaborate on that or is it too

personal conventionally inexplicable

okay well let's just uh

go to the first part of the question

here uh

have i seen or spoken to any of my

family members since disrobing

i've spoken to my brother

so

yeah so the answer to that would be yes

also i have this

i have a niece that i didn't even know

existed until just a few years ago who

occasionally contacts me through email

and those would be the only two family

members that i uh have communicated with

over the past

year

um now my parents are both dead and

i really did not come from a close

family

so

um

most of my

my relatives were on the east coast and

for most of my life in america i was

living on the west coast

and really

didn't even i mean i have to like sit

there and calculate how many aunts and

uncles i had and i'm not sure how many

cousins i have

so

i just do not come from a very close

family neither of my parents were very

close with their respective families

so

yeah so let's move on to the next part

of this question which is have you met

any of your girlfriend's family yet yeah

i met her mom

and uh she likes me

yeah so that's nice

in fact she uh for christmas she got me

these new glasses

so that's that's nice

um

also you previously mentioned that you

know you you knew your lady before you

were born could you elaborate on that or

is it too personal conventionally

inexplicable um yeah i think it might be

too conventionally inexplicable

but there's definitely a very deep

connection where

um you know we're just having the same

thoughts simultaneously and that kind of

a thing

um

just

like even when i was in in california i

could tell whether she was in a good

mood or not just from how i felt when i

woke up that morning you know just

because we were have like this

connection

where um her mood would influence mine

and vice versa we were just kind of like

on the same wavelength and uh

just it's just uh like a karmic thing

from a buddhist point of view

so

yeah also i mean i have i have these

ideas about uh

maybe where we met

in the past like maybe 14th century

england or something

but

um there was a there was like a class

barrier between us at the time she was

too high class for me

so finally we've got three questions

from chaplin

and chaplin's first question is can you

explain contemplation in the ancient

sense and also the buddhist sense

well this is kind of a tough question

because

contemplation

um it can have different meanings like

with regard to buddhism

um on the one hand you can have you know

among contemplating death or

contemplating the qualities of the

buddha or that sort of thing or also you

have

what

um like the catholics call contemplation

which would be at least second jhana

so from uh from the christian point of

view contemplation

is one step above meditation meditation

is you're still thinking but when you

stop thinking then it's called

contemplation you're just sitting there

just wide open and crystal clear

so um can i explain contemplation in the

ancient sense and also the buddhist

sense

um

yeah it's hard to say because especially

in buddhism i mean it's not based on the

english languages based on pali and how

you

you know what you would translate from

pali into the word contemplation

is uh

is uncertain

so when i'm talking about buddhist

contemplation it's pretty much the way i

just explained it i mean you can have

like the intellectual just reflecting

upon

death or reflecting upon

um you know impermanence or reflecting

upon the qualities of the buddha that

sort of thing

or then if you're really practicing

contemplation in the catholic sense then

you've got at least second jonah going

and um

yeah so rather than explaining it in the

ancient sense and also the buddhist

sense i'm more or less explaining it in

the

catholic sense and also the buddhist

sense

so i hope i answered that one

more or less well enough and so i'll

move on to the second question what are

the main differences between buddhism

and new age where new age contradicts

buddhism

ooh that's

and that's that's kind of uh

i mean that could be a very long answer

because there's lots of differences

new age

is more based on hinduism

than buddhism

and it's just wide open i mean

new it's sort of like hinduism where you

can have all kinds of beliefs and all

kinds of practices

included under new age

and most of it's very different from

buddhism i assume the similarities is

i assume new age and buddhism both agree

that there is like karma

that there is

uh rebirth i assume

new age people believe in reincarnation

i'm pretty sure they do

um

emphasis on non-violence

um but

just about everything else is just

really different like new age is um

it's a very faith-oriented system

in that in buddhism they talk about

there are the the two faculties of

faith and reason

and they should be in balance you know

you've got too much faith and not enough

reason you can believe anything no

matter how silly it is you've got too

much reason and not enough faith nobody

can tell you anything because you're

just too skeptical

and new age is just wait like this in

the in the faith because i mean new age

people can believe damn near anything

you know it's like uh healing crystals

and

alkaline cleanses and the virtues of

acai berries and and uh

what else the archangel metatron and

channeling and tarot cards and astrology

and just about anything

it's sort of like um classical paganism

whereas just this hodgepodge of all

these different beliefs where

buddhism especially theravada buddhism

is much more systematic and organized

and clear-cut

and

i think new age

the the ethics of new age are different

from the ethics of buddhism whereas the

ethics of new age are sort of like

western liberal as they swear

so long as you're not actually hurting

somebody

then you're still doing okay

but like stuff like

sex is just irrelevant to morality

for for a new age whereas in buddhism

um sensual pleasures should be

practiced in moderation and

especially something like like sex

so

those those would be some of the the

main differences i think

but it's it's it's really a broad

uh answer to a broad question because

new age really is is just all over the

place

at least my experience of dealing with

new age people

where buddhism is more intellectual and

hard-headed

and precise more scientific

so i'll just move on to the very last

question

not only from chaplin but from everybody

and that is what is a good movie that

portrays dharma and healthy male

role models

and i was thinking about this it's uh i

can't think of a really good buddhist

movie

um

but one movie that really comes to mind

is fearless

and uh i think it was made in the 1990s

i think jeff bridges

is the star of it

and it's a good dharma movie it's it's

got a lot of wisdom to it i think

it's about this guy

who uh

he's afraid of flying but he has to fly

on a business trip or something

and the plane starts having

like serious problems you know the plane

is is going out of control and he sees

this little boy sitting ahead of him

who's obviously scared to death so he

just goes up and sits next to the little

boy to kind of comfort him and then it

turns out that the plane crashes and

almost everybody dies except him and

this little boy and a few other people

if he if he hadn't moved to sit with a

little boy he would have died also

because the guy he was sitting next to

died

and

before the plane crashes this piece

comes over him

and he has like a near-death experience

like a lot of like somebody like eckhart

tolle or uh

who's that that scientist guy

i can't remember now

bad with names sometimes but he has a

near-death experience and he just

becomes fearless he just becomes almost

um you know he's just functioning in a

higher level of consciousness

and he starts having real problems with

the people around him like um

he's this lawyer keeps pestering him

because it's like he was sitting next to

a friend of his before he moved to sit

next to the little boy and i think the

wife of the guy of his friend is trying

to sue the airlines

and

so the

the lawyer and other people i think the

wife also the widowed wife are like

urging him to say how terrified he was

and how messed up he was and everything

essentially to lie and he he just

doesn't want to do it

and he just

it's

he starts having problems with his own

wife and so forth because of his

detachment you know he doesn't have the

same attitude as he had before

and um finally it's just like the

pressure of samsara starts pulling him

back down again

so it's got a lot of good dharma to it

and uh

i assume it's got healthy male role

models

also

um

but i can't really think of a perfect

example but that's the one that

immediately comes to mind

and so that's that's the last question

and uh

i guess i guess i'm done

and if you have any more questions which

i would be happy to attempt to answer

feel free to leave them in the comments

below or if you are subscribed on

subscribe star leave them

there under the next announcement or if

you're on the discord server leave them

in the question and answer room

and um

be happy

Hello and welcome to episode 20 of

Question and Answer. I am your host

Panyobhasa.

And there are a number of assistant

hosts wandering around including

this one who is not wandering around but

is pretty much crashed.

And um

it's kind of amazing that we're up to

number 20 already. 20 question and

answer videos. First ones first six at

least were probably when I was still a

monk in California.

But uh let's just go ahead with this and

start answering questions. And there are

like some difficult questions this time

like subtle kind of difficult

kind of questions. And I'll do my best.

But um it is uh wintertime and the days

are short and dark and I've been kind of

hibernating all day. So I'll do my best.

The first question is from J Good.

And J Good says, "Hey Panyobhasa, what

is your view of the eternal cheeta

doctrine taught by Ajahn Mun and Maha

Boowa?"

Well,

the some Thai Ajahns do talk a lot about

jit or or cheeta.

And especially uh

like in this context there's like this

eternal

cosmic mind or something which

um

is emphasized a lot more in Mahayana.

In Theravada, it's not really orthodox.

But some some monks especially like in

Thailand where um

the Burmese invaded Thailand back in the

1700s I think and pretty much sacked

their capital city

of uh Ayutthaya.

And the Thais never fully recovered from

having like not only the national

capital, but like the religious capital

of the nation pretty much sacked. And

so, like the ecclesiastical schools and

all that were pretty much wrecked. And

uh Thailand never really uh

got back on par with regard to
scholarship, not that I'm aware of.
So, a lot of
Thai Ajahns, even though they're
meditation masters, they explain things
in unorthodox ways.
And this is one of them, I guess. I
mean, there is some mention of like an
eternal cheetah
in the Pali texts. It's It's uh like
vestigial. It's like pre-Theravada,
pre-orthodox,
in which it's referring to apparently
Nibbana or Nirvana as infinite formless
consciousness.
And that's the same sort of thing, I
assume, that Ajahn Mun and Ajahn Maha

Boowa were teaching, although I really
don't read up much on what modern
Ajahns or Sayadaws or Mahateras teach.
So, um I mean, it does have some basis
in the Pali texts, where you can say
that
Nirvana as a metaphysical state is
essentially the same as Brahman as a
metaphysical state as taught in the
Upanishads.
Although, one big difference is that
in Buddhism,
this like this absolute, the ultimate
reality, is not called the self.
That nowhere is Nirvana, Nibbana, and
this cosmic mind

uh called a self or soul in Theravada Buddhism. Not in any clear, unambiguous, uncontroversial way.

So,

what they're doing is they're tapping into this ultimate reality, and then, for the sake of convenience or maybe uh through lack of philosophical sophistication or some such they are reifying it and calling it like this existent state.

But

um in Buddhism, especially the deeper philosophies of Buddhism, the absolute just is not reified. It's totally off the scale. You don't say that it exists or that it doesn't exist. It's just off

the scale and you can't really say

anything about it.

So, it's just a matter of uh

personal choice, I suppose, that they

choose to talk about it as like this

existent state.

Um it doesn't get a whole lot of mention

like that in the poly text, although

every once in a while you do have to

describe Nirvana as an it, as something

that presumably exists.

But um

yeah, I mean it's it's like a new

Upanishadic approach to Buddhism. I

guess you could call it that.

So, um I think I'll just move on to the

next question. And the next question is

from Potila.

And Potila says, "What are your thoughts

about a monarchy?

Pros and cons. Could it work again after

the brief republic democracy

experiment?"

Well, I think

like an enlightened monarchy would be

way better than a democracy.

That to have like an enlightened

philosopher king would be possibly the

best form of government if there's going

to be a government. But the problem is

that um

when the the the quality of the

government depends on one person and you

wind up with just some bloodthirsty ruthless sociopaths taking over, then um yeah, monarchy is worse than than a democracy.

So, democracy is good because it's kind of stable. You wind up with a kind of standardized mediocrity.

Um whereas a monarchy is it can be all over the map. And even I mean history has shown that even a really wise and good and benevolent monarch can have a son who's totally corrupt and just a tyrant.

So, that would be the the main con of a monarchy is um

that it's just so variable.

I mean it can be really good or really

bad. Whereas democracy it's more stable

and and more

um

it it it gives more

protection against some psychopath

ruler.

But uh the next part of the question

here is uh could it work again after the

brief republic democracy experiment?

Well, I mean it worked in Rome. I mean

Rome had a republic

for hundreds of years and then

eventually Caesar came along and you

wound up having uh essentially a

dictatorship.

Which uh actually strengthened Rome

quite a lot at first.

And it can happen again and it might happen again. So, we'll just have to wait and see what happens. But it has I mean it has worked in the past at least with the Rome which in in some ways is sort of like a previous birth of of America.

That uh I mean it doesn't rebirth doesn't really work that way. Entire cultures don't um

don't undergo rebirth. But um I think a lot of people who live in in the in the west or in America may have been Romans in past lives.

So, next question is also from Potila.

And it says or Potila says, "Would you be willing to engage in debates with other YouTubers about different political or religious ideas?"

And

yeah, I'm willing. Although um there is a certain danger in just getting into debates and you know, like making enemies and, you know, choosing sides. In the Polytexts, it does warn against um debating, especially in public. But, um even so, I mean,

uh I think I I would be willing and I have been hoping

for someone to come along to debate the whole issue of no self in Buddhism. Because I'm continually confronted by

reasonably intelligent Buddhists who are

so-called authorities on Buddhism who

just keep insisting that the Buddha

taught some kind of soul, maybe even

like an immortal individual soul like

like Christianity teaches.

Um

yeah, and so I'd be I've I've really

been looking forward to debating that

particular issue with somebody, but

nobody has really stepped forward

willing to uh take debate,

so to speak.

Um

but yeah, I really do like uh a certain

amount of controversy,

uh a certain amount of back and forth.
It doesn't necessarily have to be a
formal debate. It could just be like a
friendly discussion with some agreement
and some disagreement.
But, um yeah, especially if if there's
any uh Buddhists out there or
authorities on Buddhism who really
believe that the Buddha taught that
people have like uh an individual
immortal soul,
then yeah, you're welcome to uh do a
video with me and we can debate the
thing.
Um or if there's anybody who really
disagrees with some of the stuff that I
say, um yeah, you you you do have the

opportunity to uh

at least uh invite me to debate you and

we can be on the show and uh

you know,

put it out there and let people let the

um audience decide which side they

prefer,

if either.

Probably you're best not really

committing yourself to any particular

side anyway, at least from a Buddhist

point of view.

So, uh uh let's see.

So, I guess the answer to that question

is, yeah, I would be willing under

certain circumstances. I mean, if the

person is uh obviously not in good

faith, then I wouldn't really be willing

to debate.

It would have to be like a friendly,

polite kind of a debate and uh in good

faith.

So, the next question,

also from Potila.

Do you plan to have a study group on a

text you like?

Um

I've briefly considered it.

Uh

I know I think somebody would probably

have to twist my arm or really kind of

persuade me to do it.

Um it doesn't really call to me very

much. Just partly because I'd be like
pushing my own preferences on other
people. You know, you can read the text
and uh
um decide what what you like or don't
like or, you know, what you want to
study more deeply, something like that.
Um I do put put ideas out there and
people can study that or,
you know, if you there wants like we
have a Discord server and there's a lot
of back and forth on various topics
there.
So, I mean, that wouldn't really amount
to a study group, but uh
yeah, I study groups are uh

I don't know I don't know if it's really
my speed or not.
So, um that's just sort of uh
a maybe, a definite maybe.
And yet another question from Potila.
Excuse me. Any plans to have a live chat
hangout with people from the Discord?
Yeah, this question has come up a number
of times and I keep saying, yeah, we're
going to do it. And then we we've kind
of sort of worked out, you know, I'll
put a like a little announcement on the
Discord server. And uh about as far as
we've gotten as we've sort of agreed
that Sundays, like maybe Sunday
afternoons my time would be about the
best, but there's people all over the

world like Australia and Europe in in

addition to North America.

And getting one time that's going to

work for everybody is just it's just a

non-starter.

So,

yeah, I think I think there is a good

chance that we can work out like Sunday

afternoons American Eastern Time

um you know, give or take a few hours.

Um maybe other days, although Sunday

tends to work best for me.

So, yeah, I mean uh

uh I am willing. It's just that uh the

momentum really hasn't started going

yet. It's like um inertia, an object at

motion in motion tends to remain in motion, and object at rest tends to remain at rest.

And uh the uh live chat hangouts has been at rest, and so it's taking some some pushing to get it going. And uh but I am willing, and apparently there are others who are willing. So, yeah, that's something that we should probably really get get started on.

And uh last question from Potila.

And Potila says, "Kind of a convoluted question, but can you explain why the good or kusala is good in Buddhism?

As good has no transcendental basis like

in Christian faith God is good and the source of good. In Buddhism because nibana is devoid of attributes and conditions, what makes something good? It is Is it simply because it is conducive to liberation? If so, that means any action that brings one closer to liberation is in fact good. But it is clear in Buddhist text there is some sort of basis to declare something good because the Buddha warns people that they will fall into hell realms for their behaviors or in your view, does this even matter in Buddhist philosophy? Well, in Buddhist philosophy usually

instead of good and evil or good and

bad, it's kusala and akusala, which

means skillful and unskillful or adept

and not adept.

And it can have two meanings.

Um the higher meaning is that which gets

you closer to enlightenment. As uh

Potila says, or

um

another another possibility is that it's

just getting you closer to heaven

realms.

That really

um a monk in some texts, especially some

older texts, says that a monk needs to

leave behind good and bad. He has to

leave behind kusala and akusala because

kusala is a kind of karma and akusala is a kind of karma and uh an enlightened being just doesn't generate karma of any sort.

So, it is kind of a complicated issue.

But I would say that from the Buddhist point of view, good really is whatever gets you closer to liberation.

And the Buddha can talk about how some actions can cause you to go to hell and so forth, but that's because some actions almost necessarily have accompanying mental states that are leading you closer to enlightenment or farther away from it. You know, like um

you know, one of the classic uh examples

of a of an action

that will uh just guarantee hell is

killing one of your own parents

on purpose, not accidentally.

And I mean

the mere act itself really isn't what

sends you to hell, it's the mental

states and it's you just can't

deliberately murder one of your own

parents

with like wholesome mental states that

reduce desires and reduce clinging and

you know, reduce the just the the

muddiness of the mind, reduce the greed,

hate, and delusion. It just increases

it. It makes things worse.

So,

yeah, good What is good from the

from Buddhist philosophy anyway

is that which causes fewness of desires

and fewness of attachments and fewness

of preferences and your mind is light

and

you know, it leads to happiness really.

I mean, that's sort of what Buddhist

ethics are based on is happiness and

unhappiness or dukkha and the cessation

of dukkha. So, whatever is conducive to

the cessation of dukkha is going to be

good from a Buddhist point of view.

And

although the same outward act can be

kusala for some people and akusala for
others because of the underlying mental
states differing.
Um the underlying mental states I mean,
if you've got
you know, if you're motivated by hate or
greed or that sort of thing, then yeah,
it's going to be
have negative consequences and it would
not be good to that extent.
So, I'll just move on to the next
question, which is from Alfred.
And Alfred says, I would like to inquire
more about your nimita experiences.
So, I suppose first I should explain
nimita. Nimita literally means something
like sign

or marker.

You know, it's it's uh

kind of like a a symbol that represents

something. Like a boundary marker

in in Pali is also called nimita, but

here

it's uh something that you see in your

meditation.

And

a nimita is associated with what is

called ubhacara samadhi or access

concentration. It's It's like pre-jhana.

The stage right before jhana is this

upacara samadhi and that is when you

when you experience

a a nimitta.

And

in a way it's kind of apocryphal. It's

It's mainly from the commentarial

tradition because uh it's not really

mentioned in the suttas.

And if it's really that important

to experience upacara samadhi and see

nimittas when you're meditating, then

you'd think that the Buddha himself

would emphasize it. But uh apparently he

did not.

And in this case nimitta is something

that you see while you are meditating.

So usually it will be just like a a

circle of light, you know, like a a

white luminous disc or oval. Or some

people will even

uh see images like the Buddha sitting in

meditation, something like that. And

it's very vivid.

And that uh indicates that your your

samadhi is getting stronger. And that

the next stage after that will be jhana,

which is uh

um

well, I don't want to get into jhana.

It's kind of a controversial issue also.

But it is like the four main stages of

deep meditation

that are mentioned many times in the

Buddhist texts.

So Alfred here would like to inquire

more about my own personal nimitta

experiences.

And first of all, I'd just like to say that I was I've never tried to see a nimitta because like I say, it's not really mentioned in the suttas. It's It's uh largely an artifact of the commentarial tradition.

But I have seen a nimitta at least once. I was just meditating. My meditation was going relatively well. And um just with my eyes closed, there appeared It was like a duck egg, you know, it was kind of this shape and it was white or maybe very light gray.

Um

and it just kind of stayed there and didn't do anything. And it's it's not

really a very exciting story, but Alfred asked about it. So, uh yeah, that was that was my main nimitta experience that I'm aware of.

It is just uh seeing this uh luminous cloud-like duck egg with my eyes closed when I was meditating one time.

Um

but it's uh a lot of people experience it and it is a real thing. But, um I am skeptical as to its necessity if you want to cultivate deeper meditative states.

So, next question is also from Alfred.

And Alfred says, "Can you elaborate on your experience of comma in Burma?

Also mind states, etc."

Well, that's I mean, that's just a

wide-open question. I could elaborate on

all sorts of things.

Um can you elaborate on your experience

of comma in Burma?

Um

maybe one of my best examples of comma

in Burma is the the notion that um

if you if you practice dhamma

intensively, dhamma kind of protects

you.

And if if something bad happens to you,

there's going to be mitigating

circumstances that make it not so bad.

And so,

uh an example of that

would be

um when I was in Burma, especially

living out in the in the remote areas,

like rural areas,

um associated with like villages,

farming villages,

um I'd be biting into rocks a lot in my

food. Um

they would thresh their rice and beans

on the ground. And so, little white

rocks could get mixed in with the rice

and little brown rocks could get mixed

in with the beans. And every once in a

I'd bite into a rock and there'd be like

this loud crack and it would hurt and

I'd be feeling around in my mouth to see

if I'd broken a tooth or lost a filling

or anything.

And out in the middle of nowhere, I

mean, if you break a tooth, you're

you're pretty much screwed. I mean, it's

it's not easy to get to a dentist.

So,

that happened several times and I never

never really broke a tooth or or lost a

filling or anything. And then I happened

to be in Rangoon, like the by far the

largest city in in Burma.

Yangon, it's called now.

And I was going for alms round this in

this rich neighborhood and this servant

girl gave me some

bean curry that had a little brown rock

in it and I broke three teeth biting into this one rock. It just kind of got in the like in between the teeth, kind of you know, you know, there's like four teeth come together come together, broke three of them.

But as it turned out, that servant girl, who was right across the street from where I was staying, was a servant girl of the dean and rector of the Burmese Dental College. He was like the number one dentist in Burma and he was also the same dentist that the that the military dictator was using. So, he fixed my teeth for free just like the very next day and he became my dentist and

worked on my teeth for free for years

after that, so.

Um it turned out not to be entirely bad.

Or another example of

karma, like even if something bad

happens to you that some mitigating

circumstance makes it not so bad, is I

was hospitalized with malaria twice when

I was in Burma. Both times just out in

the middle of nowhere. It was like 2 and

1/2 hours by Jeep to get to this place.

And um

both times that I that I got malaria so

bad, it was the first two times

uh that I got malaria. Always the worst

kind, too.

Um somebody showed up in a Jeep that

same day that I decided, "Yeah, I need

to see a doctor."

And they just drove me right back into

town.

In fact, uh

the first time was uh I think it was

Christmas Day. Somebody showed up in a

Jeep and it's like, "Merry Christmas. I

have malaria." And they just kind of

loaded me into the Jeep and just took me

right back into town.

So,

uh getting back to Alfred's question

here, can you elaborate on your

experience of comma in Burma? Um that

would probably be my best, most obvious

example. I mean, comma is always
happening. You know, everything that
we're experiencing is conditioned by
past comma and present comma and um
trying to elaborate on that, trying to
uh give
concrete examples of that when it's so
subtle and it's just permeates
everything is not easy. So, um
that's about That's about the my best
story about uh if you're if you're
practicing Dhamma intense intensively,
then Dhamma kind of protects you.
Like um
maybe another another example would be
um when a monk goes for alms, he's just
supposed to accept whatever people put

into his his food. And a lot of these people way out in the out in the hills, you know, these hillbilly types, um you know, they got no concept of hygiene, you know, or of microbial transfer or anything. I've I've seen this one little kid, he was offering food. He looked like the feral child in the old movie The Road Warrior, just this wild-looking little kid. And he's just coughing into the food. He had some kind of nasty cold. Just coughing directly into the food that he was going to put into my bowl. And and as a monk, I mean, you're just not allowed to even raise an eyebrow. You just, you know,

poke your face. You just

regardless of any kind of aversion of

what's going on, you just watch it go

into the bowl, maybe remember where it

is so you can eat from the other side or

something.

Um one time there was this this lady

in the village, I mean, she just blew

her nose with her hand, just kind of

flung the snot off of her hand, and then

just used the same hand to put my put

food into my bowl.

So,

um

you just have to accept it. I mean, you

really don't have any alternative. You

just

calmly accept it, and you just have faith that if if I I'm taking care of Dhamma, then Dhamma will take care of me. And although I did catch colds a lot, I really was relatively fortunate with regard to

you know, not getting anything really gnarly other than the malaria, which wasn't caused by the the food. It was caused by mosquitoes.

So,

yeah, that would be about my best example. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And the next question is from Air Rain.

And Air Rain says, "Wondering for the

next Q&A, do Buddhist ethics
differentiate between lying to a human
versus a corporation, the state, a court
of law, etc.?
For example,
a person who declares sovereign
citizenship and lies about paying taxes,
or someone who lies under oath against a
court they view as unjust."
Well,
the main ethical aspect of lying is
you have to have the intent to deceive
somebody.
So, like maybe an extreme version of
this would be like you're going to
download it some sort of software onto
your computer, and of course, you get

the 17 pages of incomprehensible lawyer speak that you're supposed to read, and then at the bottom you say, "Yes, I have read and agree to this.

And it used to kind of bother me because I don't want to read the 17 pages of lawyer speak. I mean, it it it doesn't make much sense anyway. It's boring as hell.

But then I realized that uh in order to really be lying, you have to have the intention to deceive somebody and no human is ever going to read your your your thing that you clicked on saying I agree. It's just it's all computers. It's all AI or whatever.

So, something like that I would not
consider to be necessarily a case of
lying. But it depends on your
intentions. The intention
has to be to deceive somebody in order
for you to be lying. So, if you lie if
you just say something that is false
accidentally,
then that's not lying regardless of what
propagandists will say.
Or, you know, you're you're just telling
a joke. Somebody misinterprets what
you're saying, something like that, then
uh
yeah, you're you're really not lying.
But with regard to
uh lying to a corporation or the state,

a court of law, etc., to the extent that

you are attempting to deceive other

people, it's it's just, you know, lying

is lying.

So,

yeah, that wouldn't really matter.

And there may be cases in which lying is

justified.

So, there is that.

Um

but still it's lying. I mean, you're

going to take the hit for lying. There

is a certain amount of akusala comma

that's going to occur, but it may be

that you get more positive in certain

rare cases.

Like one of my best examples of that is there's a famous short story. I think it's like maybe even a Christmas story. Um The Other Wise Man. I can't remember who wrote wrote the story. I've got the book, but uh

I'm not going to get up and and look it up. But it's about um

a friend of the three wise men that go to offer gifts to to the Christ child, you know, in the manger. But he keeps he's supposed to meet up with him at this oasis, but he keeps meeting up with people needing his help and he's helping them, so he's lagging behind.

So, eventually he gets to Jerusalem.

I think no, Bethlehem. Bethlehem or

Jerusalem, I can't remember. And um
I mean, the wise men are you know, the
other three wise men have already moved
on. You know, maybe they've gone to
Bethlehem, he's still in Jerusalem or
something. And there's this decree um by
King Herod that all baby boys are to be
put to death. And so, this wise man,
he's got these jewels that he's going to
offer to the
to the Messiah when he gets there.
And um the soldiers are going from door
to door pounding on the doors and
they're going to you know, they're going
to kill every baby boy. And this wise
man stands in the doorway and he's got

this huge pearl.

And he just offers it to the the centurion or whoever it was, you know, the soldier and says, "There aren't any babies here."

And then the uh the soldier looks at this pearl and just uh he decides to accept it and you know, he just calls out to the other ones, you know, "Let's move on, there's no no babies here." And so, I mean, technically the wise man did tell a lie, but he told the lie in order to save the life of a baby. And the mother, of course, is just on her knees crying with happiness and thanking him over and over again.

So, I mean, there could be circumstances
in which
lying may have more good than bad
involved, but still it's lying.
And if you're not going to commit
yourself to
even conventional truth, then ultimate
truth is going to be more elusive and
harder to harder to realize.
So, I think that's enough for that
question.
And I'll move on to the next one, which
is from
Tyre or Tier. I really do not know how
to pronounce this name. It's just
spelled t y r.

And uh Tyre or Tier asks,

"Do you think it would be possible for

you to describe what it was like living

in the cave? How you spent your days,

how long you were there, etc."

Um well, actually I lived in several

caves.

Um and each one was different and the

circumstances were different.

Um

Let's see. So, that's

Yeah, I mean I I just go through phases.

Like there was this one cave I lived in.

Um and it's uh at the northern edge of

Alondra Catapa National Park.

And it was really just this huge

overhanging rock ledge.

So, it was uh like the entrance of this cave. It was called Winch Otman, which means belly fall cavern, something like that. Uh it was like 100 ft across and it went in maybe 30 ft. So, I mean it wasn't really that much of a cave, you know, if if it's, you know, the wider than it is deep.

But um I was doing really intensive practice there when the weather permitted, when it wasn't just so blazing hot that I just would just lie there

um fanning myself, wiping the sweat off the the arm that was holding the fan every now and then.

Um so, yeah, I was doing very intensive
meditation there. Some of the most
Yeah, definitely the most intensive
meditation of my life was in that cave.
But then other places I would live uh
in different caves that uh
I wouldn't be pushing myself to the
limit. It'd just be like everyday life
there. Like the one place I've lived
longer than any other place
in my life, I'm pretty sure, is a cave
that uh I named Tippo Guha in
northwestern Burma.
Um and it was a deluxe cave. It was
man-made. It was dug into the side of
this hill.
And it had like four rooms and like a

50-ft long walkway where you could do

walking meditation inside in the shade.

Had a screen door to keep out bats,

rats,

uh rodents, let's see, snakes, and

humans.

And uh

it's um

how I spent my days. When I was living

there, um you'd get up at around dawn, a

little before dawn, because I'd have to

walk to the village to get my meal and

be back again before the sun got very

high because I just uh cannot take the

blazing tropical heat of central Burma.

So, I'd go for alms round very early,

come back, eat.

Um

and most of the rest of the day it just be, I know, I'd read some, I'd meditate a lot, do a lot of walking meditation, just the standard stuff that you do, brush your teeth, take a bath, go to the bathroom, you know. It was just a very simplified, stripped-down lifestyle with uh more meditation than than most. And uh probably more asceticism than most. Like, when I was living in that cave, I spent a lot of time just sleeping on a concrete floor with a piece of wood for a pillow, and it wasn't for the sake of the ascetic practice of it. It was that was

literally the most comfortable way of

sleeping in that cave cuz it was so hot

during the hot season that just being on

a cool concrete floor was about the only

way not to just

just try to sleep in a puddle of your

own sweat. And the wooden pillow, it was

it wouldn't soak up sweat the way a

cloth one would.

So,

yeah, it's I I have made videos, at

least one, just talking about the

various caves I lived in and the

circumstances. So, um

maybe it would be best if uh

the person curious about my

cave-dwelling experience uh look that up.

Um otherwise, maybe I can just do a video talking about caves I have lived in.

So, let's see. I'll go over the question again, make sure that I've kind of answered it at least. Do you think it would be possible for you to describe what it was like living in the cave?

Yeah, yeah, it's and it was various caves. I lived in natural ones and and artificial ones and big ones and little ones and there was there was quite a few of them.

Um, I have calculated that probably 13, at least 13 years of my life were spent

living inside of caves.

And uh it was mainly just a matter of survival because central Burma really is it's just like furnace-like heat much of the time.

And um it was just a matter of surviving, becoming like a a desert rat where you'd be in the burrow during the daytime and come out at night kind of a thing.

Uh

Those were the days.

So, I think I'll just move on to the next question after taking a drink of water.

From the Christmasy mug.

Uh

Next question is from Yuichiro.

And Yuichiro says, "Many schools in the US are teaching secular mindfulness. Do you think this is a good thing?" I think it's probably better than nothing. Yeah, I would agree that it is better than nothing. Um

just

basic mindfulness where you're detaching from your own mental states, where you know fear arises and you just observe it as fear arising. You don't identify with it, you know, I'm I'm afraid, I'm scared. No, it's just fear is arising and just that is such a powerful mental technique to know,

you know, it's it's already separated
you from from the fear so that you are
not the fear anymore and then
eventually, if you get good enough at
it, you can just let it go.
So, I mean, just planting the seeds of
that sort of thing is good. And the more
you practice meditation, if you're
practicing it correctly, then you are
going to get benefits. You are going to
become a little wiser. And maybe when
you become a little wiser, you may
develop better reasons for meditating
and better goals and that sort of thing.
So,
yeah, I I think there's nothing

necessarily wrong with that.

Um

yeah, for I think it's definitely

more more good than bad.

So, next question, also from Yuichiro.

I'm really struggling with veganism

or veganism.

I know that it's cringe from my gut

feeling,

but if it is actually just

But if it is actually just wanting to

reduce suffering of living beings, isn't

that a good thing?

Well,

it depend it depends on your own mental

state. And that's that's the easy cop

out answer, I suppose. But um

you know, the Buddha wasn't wasn't even vegetarian.

Uh just going with the the ancient poly texts. And even the Mahayana Buddhists have these vestigial vestigial meat rules in the the rules of monastic discipline that they don't notice because they don't follow the rules of monastic discipline.

They made up different monastic codes that they follow instead.

Um

even like uh like Hindus Hindu yogis that are really into purity of food and you know, they they stress the importance of a sattvic diet, which is

conducive to you know, wisdom and

serenity and so forth. I mean, even that

is not vegan.

It's um

it's a sattvic diet is mostly like uh

grains, fruits, nuts, and dairy

products. So, they they includes dairy

products.

And um it is possible

to get your animal protein without

necessarily uh being cruel to animals.

Like uh Mahatma Gandhi, he was insisting

on being vegan, I think, because he he

didn't want anyone to be cruel to uh

dairy cattle or something in order for

him to get some food. So, finally,

because his health just really was

deteriorating at the time, um just

through just strenuous persuasion on the

part of everyone around him, they

finally talked him into just keeping a

goat

so that he could drink goat milk,

and which is animal protein, of course,

and then he could see for himself that

the goat wasn't being abused or

anything.

So, um

yeah, it's it

wanting to reduce suffering in living

beings is fine,

but um

I mean, you

there are limitations. I mean, even if you if you're eating vegan, a lot of those uh farmers who are farming the vegan
veggies are wearing leather shoes, and they've got like a leather belt, maybe a leather wallet, maybe they're using insecticides, which is killing little insects.
So, I mean, there's going to be suffering, and you're not really responsible for that. Buddhist ethics really are radically different from just the default ethics of the West. The default ethics of the West are it's like Jeremy Bentham's utilitarianism or something like that, where it's uh

um

what just causing suffering is bad, and

and reducing suffering is good, but

that's really not what what Buddhism is

about. Buddhist ethics

um

because Buddhist ethics is based on your

own intentions.

And like I said, the Buddha himself ate

meat, although he wasn't in favor of

killing. It was just that Buddhist monks

were were beggars who just took their

bowls and and ate what whatever people

wanted to give them within reason.

So,

you know, it is against the rules for a

monk to eat meat that he he thinks has been killed for his sake. So, you're not supposed to be responsible directly for the killing. And then, of course, people in the West will say even just buying meat, you know, you that's casting a vote in favor of killing and so forth. But, it's it's really just a matter of of your own intentions. And if you think of it that way, it's like, "Well, if I buy this meat, then I'm voting in favor of killing." Then there you go. You've committed yourself to that that approach, but

and if you're just buying meat and obviously the buying of the meat isn't isn't hurting anybody or anything, just

just that act of buying that meat and going home and cooking it and eating it, um you know, you're really you're really not hurting anything. And just from a biological point of view, um think, for example, what happened to the horse population after people invented cars and stopped riding horses and and and buggies and that sort of thing. Um there was like a a population crash of horses. And if people stop eating beef and and chickens and so forth, I mean, the species is is going to crash. You know, it's not going to They're not going to go extinct, but still it's uh in in a from a biological point of view,

it's to their advantage to uh
be domesticated and and exploited by
humans. I think the one of the worst
things about meat
is it's it involves a kind of treachery
on the part of the farmer, where like in
Dante's Inferno, treachery is the worst
sin cuz that's that's what Judas He was
He was a traitor, you know, he's
pretending to be the friend of Jesus and
then stabs him in the back. And um it
does seem to me like um
some farmers do that. You know, they
they protect the animals and the animals
trust them and then one fine day they
just come out and and kill them instead.
Which uh

yeah, that's that's kind of

karmic complication there.

Um

as a as a layperson before I was a monk,

I was mostly vegetarian. Although I

would eat seafood sometimes because I

have a degree in biology and I know that

um shellfish, invertebrates like clams

and uh shrimp and crabs, they do not

have uh a nervous system like we do.

They do not apparently do not feel pain.

Like for example, I was working as a a

fisheries biologist

on Japanese longline vessels in the

Bering Sea long ago.

And any any crab that would come up, it

was my duty to to look at it and you
know, write down what species and
whether it was a boy crab or a girl crab
and its viability. See if it was
uh injured, you know, see if it was
still healthy when it was returned to
the sea cuz the Japanese sailors weren't
allowed to keep
high-value food like uh crabs and and
halibut and salmon and that sort of
thing. So, sometimes a crab
would get uh hauled in and it would have
most of its legs ripped off or crushed.
And you'd put it into a uh holding tank
with with
seawater.
And if if the crab that just had most of

its legs ripped off sees a piece of squid bait there, it just goes over and starts eating it. It's like it doesn't care that it just got most of its legs ripped off. It doesn't seem to be bothered by that.

Whereas if you rip three legs off of a mouse and put a cracker in front of it, it would just go into convulsions and die.

So, the whole nervous system thing is different in invertebrates. Like for example, I don't think insects feel pain either. A mosquito might fly out of your way if you try to slap it, but it's sort of like the the automatic door at the

grocery store that opens automatically

to get out of your way when you come

towards it. It's just a built-in

survival mechanism.

So,

yeah, I would never be vegan. I mean,

anything that requires me to stop

consuming dairy products, including like

pizza and ice cream, is just a

non-starter. I'm I'm not just not doing

it.

Um

and like I said, the Buddha himself

apparently ate meat. And you know, like

Tibetan Buddhists who don't have much

choice ate you know, they eat meat

because not a lot of veggies grow well

in the Himalaya mountains.

So, it's just something that I mean, if

you feel comfortable with it,

um

yeah, I mean, you have to live with

yourself. So, I mean, if you're just

absolutely determined that uh not being

vegan is evil, then you better be vegan.

But uh otherwise, I just I just don't

see it. Being vegetarian, you know,

eating the sattvic diet that uh the

yogis

uh recommend with with dairy products,

you know, eating infertile free-range

eggs, you know, that especially if

you've got your own chickens or

something, you can see for yourself that chickens aren't being abused.

Um

yeah, I mean, it's it's not evil in my opinion.

But uh if you want to to reduce the suffering of living beings, yeah, that's fine. I mean, there's there's regardless of what you do or don't, there's going to be an infinite sea of of of misery in this universe. Infinite sea of dukkha.

But uh yeah, sure. I mean, if you want to alleviate it in your immediate proximity,

then uh yeah, that's fine.

It's it's good. I mean, you can get uh wholesome karma for that.

But uh making yourself anemic and sickly
because you're not eating a healthy diet
is uh
you know, it it's kind of counter it
counterproductive. You know, it's like
um monks have to do this chant or some
monks do where they're
before they eat, you know, they they do
this little chant, you know, I'm eating
this not for the sake of pleasure, not
for the sake of beautifying myself, but
only for the sake of keeping myself
healthy so that I can continue to
practice Dharma.
And um
yeah, you should eat you should eat a

diet that um is conducive to your health

in addition to uh

conducive to uh

your peace of mind with regard to being

mean to animals.

So, I think I'll just move on to the

next question here.

Let's see.

Okay, this one's from Yuichiro also.

What's the difference between Freud's

Nirvana principle or if you've seen

Evangelion,

returning to LCL?

Yeah, I don't I don't know what

returning to LCL means.

Uh or returning to the womb

and actual enlightenment.

I have a feeling one is cringe and the other is based, but I can't pinpoint exactly why a lot of people mistake enlightenment for returning to the womb. Okay.

So, with regard to Freud, I have no idea what his uh Nirvana principle was, but considering that he was uh like a an atheistic materialist, I doubt that there's much profundity to Freud's concept of Nirvana.

Like his concept of love was like overestimation of the sex object or something. I do not consider Sigmund Freud to have been a particularly wise person. So, um yeah, even though I don't

really know what Freud's Nirvana

principle was, I doubt that it was

anything particularly profound.

And see, with regard to Evangelion

Evangelion

returning to the womb. Yeah, it's not

really

um

Maybe if you wanted to take returning to

the womb in a metaphysical sense of

returning to the ultimate source of all

things, then maybe

that would be a a valid way of of

considering it. But just returning to

the womb, I mean, that's what you're

trying to avoid with enlightenment. I

mean, that's birth and death and

rebirth.

You know, you're trying to avoid

returning to a womb.

Um I've seen some theories. I think it

was Carl Sagan was talking about

near-death experiences when people

uh have largely uniform experiences with

near death where they they rise up and

they see their body down below and then

they start going towards through this

tunnel towards the bright light. And he

was saying that that's sort of like uh

uh reliving the birth experience, you

know, going through the the your mama's

birth canal or something.

But um

yeah, I think it's

Western intellectuals just trying to

rationalize something that they don't

understand and don't come anywhere close

to getting.

And uh that would go double for Freud

cuz really he was just a materialistic

atheist as far as I can tell.

So, let's see. What's the difference

between Freud's Nirvana principle,

returning to the womb and actual

enlightenment?

Yeah, well, actual enlightenment is uh

it's off the scale. I mean, it's

you have essentially merged with

ultimate reality.

You know, you're you're not making karma

anymore.

You're not uh

you're not

attached to an an identity anymore.

Um going with uh St. John of the Cross,

who I think may have actually been an

arhat even though he was a Catholic,

he was uh

saying that

when you mortify your self-will,

you're no longer motivated by your own

preferences and so forth. You're

motivated by by will of God. You just

become like this empty vessel of God.

You become like God's puppet.

So, that could be a way of describing

it.

And uh yeah, I'm sure it's a far cry

from returning to your mama's uh nether

regions or uh

or anything Freud would ever come up

with.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question, which is from Numenius, a man

of many names.

And Numenius says,

"What are the karmic effects wrought by

people embracing either extreme of

sexual puritanism or libertine sexual

debauchery?"

Well,

I would say for starters, the the

standard

answer that the karmic effects will
depend on the individual mental states
of the person, because the outward
mental states or the outward physical
actions are largely irrelevant.
So, I mean,
you can say that a Buddhist monastic is
really embracing this radical extreme of
of celibacy.
Um it's not really prudery so much or I
guess you could interpret it as prudery.
It's not like Victorian sexual
puritanism,
but it's uh yeah, it's just like total
abstinence. You're not even supposed to
think about it.

So, I mean, that can

have a person It can help a person

become enlightened or it can just cause

them to become like a a chronically

horny basket case who are just lusting

for every female they see, maybe even

lusting for themselves when they're

taking a bath.

Um you know, it's like

uh some people like a starving man, a

man who's not eating, but and it

I mean, he might just sit around

fantasizing about food all the time. And

some people who are celibate for

spiritual reasons even,

um

yeah, they can just sit around

fantasizing about sex. I've got some
personal experience with that one.
Um in the Bible
Jesus says there are three kinds of
eunuchs, born eunuchs, and people who
are made eunuchs, and people who are
eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of
heaven.
And that third kind, the people who are
eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of
heaven, are people who are celibate for
religious reasons. And then Jesus says
right after that it's not for everybody.
So you have to look within yourself and
see if uh
you can handle celibacy, or on the other

hand if you can if you can handle just

uh

like sexual debauchery. I mean, there

are some spiritual teachers, like

Paul Lowe, he's actually one of my

favorite spiritual teachers of of those

who are still alive today.

And uh yeah, he he he would do

he would conduct retreats sometimes

where it's like

you know, if you have any doubt as to

whether you should have sex with another

person in the retreat, just go for it.

Um

you know, you should only not do it if

uh you just are sure that you shouldn't

do it.

So, I mean,

it's possible that

you know, either extreme

um you know, under some

they're not necessarily bad. I mean,

obviously celibacy isn't bad. I mean, it

can be for some people, but uh

uh the Buddha definitely uh recommended

it, I'm pretty sure.

And the other extreme, I mean, it's it's

less likely to be uh

uh kusala, you know, it's less likely to

be conducive to enlightenment, but

apparently, you know, you got the

tantric people and and

maybe some of them are actually handling

it and not just getting sucked up in it

or something.

Um

yeah, so so the extremes uh it depends

on the individual. It really does.

And so I'll just move on to the next

question. Well, I'll read this one more

time. What are the karmic effects

wrought by people embracing either

extreme sexual puritanism?

Um yeah, before I move on to the next

question, I would just say that, uh,

even though the action or lack of action

may seem extreme outwardly. I mean, if

inwardly you're still centered and

based, you know, if inwardly you're

you're living in a state of equanimity,

you know, and your mind is not troubled, so forth, then you're you're doing pretty good, regardless of the outward actions.

So, now I'll move on to the next question, which is from Scout.

And Scout says, "Does your girlfriend follow Dhamma?"

And I would say, my girlfriend follows Dhamma not so different from I do, although she's not really based in, uh, Buddhism, but, uh, our behavior is pretty similar. I mean, being a being a girl, she's got the prerogative to change her mind and and so forth, and, uh,

is, uh,

maybe a little more security-oriented

than me.

But, um,

with regard to lifestyle and so forth,

we're pretty much sharing the same

lifestyle at present, so it's not so

different.

Oh, and, uh, doggies keep knocking

against the table and it's shaking the

camera.

So, let's see. Next question from the

Marquis de Sade.

Which is kind of an interesting name.

Is there a place for honor,

let's see, is there a place for honor,

valor, and glory as metaphysical

concepts in Theravada Buddhism?
Well, as metaphysical concepts, like
going with, uh,
like Abhidhamma, which has says that
there are 52 ultimately real mental
states. Every mental state you have has
to be at least one of these 52,
I don't think honor, valor, and glory
are any of those three.
And, um, so, I mean, from the point of
view of orthodox Theravadan tradition,
like Abhidhamma philosophy, then that
the answer would be no.
Although, there definitely is a place
for honor, valor, and glory as ethical
concepts in Theravada Buddhism. Not

metaphysical, but ethical. And there are
a lot of metaphors of like
um the ascetic being like the the true
hero, like more heroic than the soldier
on the battlefield.
That sort of thing. So, there's a lot of
glory, obviously, in being an
enlightened being.
And uh the valor, well, that's that's
essentially
courage or or fearlessness.
So, yeah, there has to be that if you're
going to become a an enlightened monk
living in a forest, you know, you have
to be fearless and all that.
And with regard to honor, that's that's
kind of a trickier one. Um following a

code cuz out of a sense of duty, that
could be honor. But to honor in the
sense of like pride, I think that would
not be much of a thing in uh
in Buddhism.
So, I'll just move on to the Marquis's
next question, which is what is your
opinion on the Hindu concept of the Yuga
cycles? Well, actually, it turns out
that Buddhism also has a concept of Yuga
cycles where
um you know, you got the universe is
expanding and contracting and uh
uh even the human race will go through
cycles where
um

usually it it degenerates. I think we're in a a state of degeneration now, and eventually um it's going to get to the point of
people having a lifespan of only like what, 12 or 14 years, and they're cannibalizing each other, and there's absolutely no Dharma left in the world, and then things hit such rock bottom that it kind of inspires people to start looking for something better, and then and they start working their way back up again. And uh the cycles can last a zillion gazillion years.
Um it's it's just a common Indian concept that the Buddhists and the Hindus share. I don't think the

Buddhists have have it like nailed down

into uh

you know, exact you know, where exactly

at this age kind of a thing, but um, it

is a similar concept of uh, time going

in cycles instead of being linear like

which is more of a western approach.

So,

um, I think I haven't answered the

question yet because the question is

what is my opinion

on the Hindu concept of Yuga cycles.

Um, I'm pretty skeptical. I don't I'm

I'm I'd be surprised if there ever

really was a golden age. I think people

have pretty much always been kind of

messed up.

You know, there's always been cruelty

and sickness and and violence and all

this kind of stuff going on, so

um,

yeah, it could just be an artifact of an

ancient Indian idea of time moving in

cycles.

So, yeah, my opinion is I don't I don't

take it extremely seriously. I mean,

obviously to some extent time is

cyclical like the the seasons and so

forth, you know, the years.

That could be considered cycles, but um,

like the longer Yuga cycles,

uh, yeah, just the very idea that you're

going to have on a

like,

you know, after this Earth is destroyed

by fire or water or something that

there's going to be another Earth arise

that's going to have, you know, Indians

speaking Sanskrit or Pali, you know,

following the same traditions and

everything. Yeah, I I don't think so.

And that kind of segues into

the next question.

I was also This is by the Marquis de

Sade also. I was also wondering what

your general estimation is of Nietzsche

as a philosopher.

And to tell you the truth, I've never

been much interested in Nietzsche. I

think

the only

entire book by Nietzsche that I ever

read was his critique of Christianity

which uh, now I I can't even remember

The Antichrist, I think it's called. And

even that, I liked uh

Mencken's introduction better than than

the book that he was introducing.

Uh I tried to read um Thus Spoke

Zarathustra,

and I got about as far as the the

tightrope walker falling off the

tightrope and

maiming himself, and uh

I was kind of in a transitional state.

Never I just kind of lost interest or or

just stopped reading for a while and

just never really picked it back up

again.

Um

Some people that I respect consider

Nietzsche to be really profound, like

Jordan Peterson, for example. He He

thinks Nietzsche was really profound.

But um

uh For what little I know about

Nietzsche, you know, the concept of the

Superman and so forth, his concept of

the Superman would be very different

from a Buddhist Superman.

You know, it was trying to rise above

good and evil, sort of like Raskolnikov

in Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment or Colonel Kurtz in the movie Apocalypse Now. You know, they tried to rise above um the the petty distinctions of good and evil, and they just wind up going insane.

Um

Nietzsche also went insane, although that might have been uh due to uh syphilis or something, I don't know. Um Yeah, and and Nietzsche also believed in the the cyclic repeating history, which uh yeah, I just I just don't see it.

Um

So, yeah, I think Nietzsche was not a very happy person,

and that's really the best

judgment or the best indicator of

wisdom.

You know, wisdom and happiness go hand

to hand.

Um hand to hand, I just said. Hand in

hand.

So,

yeah, if you got a miserable person

trying to teach you how to live your

life, you're you're better off not

paying very much attention to them.

On the other hand, if you got a like a a

serene,

you know, blissful person, you know,

they've got a clear, shining face, then

even if they're not teaching you

anything, you might do well to observe

how they're living their life and try to

take notes or something.

So,

yeah, my general estimation of Nietzsche

as a philosopher is

he had some interesting ideas. He came

up with some very influential ideas.

But, um

I really am not much interested in

Nietzsche and I

little I've read of him,

his style is just so bombastic and uh

sort of

I don't I don't know how to say it. It's

just so emotional that

uh yeah, it doesn't really appeal to me.

So,

uh let's see. I'll move on to the next

question, which is from Chaplin.

Is there any Buddhist concept of winter

holiday celebrations in the West

or do most Buddhists completely ignore

Christmas, etc.?

Um that's kind of a difficult question

for me because I'm not sure what most

Western Buddhists do.

Um I really haven't been much involved

in Western Buddhism.

Um

I mean, obviously in Buddhist countries,

Christianity is just another day. And

for most of my life,
more than half of it anyway, as a monk,
um yeah, Christmas is you know, you just
look at the calendar trying to figure
out what day it is and say, "Oh,
yesterday was Christmas. That's
interesting."
Nobody really celebrates it other than a
few converts to Christianity.
Um but in the West, yeah, I mean, it's
not really a religious
holiday anymore. I mean,
I mean, for for devout Christians, it
might be, but for non-Christians, they
celebrate it, too, and uh so I assume
lots of Western Buddhists have a
Christmas tree

in the in their house,

um exchange gifts and so forth, just

because it's a nice tradition

that uh

probably isn't really Jesus's birthday,

anyway.

So, let's see.

Yeah, I don't know if most Buddhists

completely ignore Christmas in the West.

And with regard to Buddhism, there's

really no big winter holidays.

Um the end of the rains retreat, um

which is like usually the full moon of

October, is maybe the closest you get to

a

a winter holiday.

And so, finally, last question from Chaplin, and also last question of the night or the day or whenever you happen to be seeing this video, "How are you enjoying your first Christmas back in America since disrobing?"

Well,

it's fine. It's nice. Um I really don't have much Christmas spirit. I think once, like around 1988, I was walking out of a department store after spending lots of money for Christmas gifts, and I had like this giddy, almost dizzy feeling. So, I think that was Christmas spirit, and I I've only experienced it that once. Except for maybe when I was a kid, of course, when you're a kid, you

just want to get up and open presents.

So, that's kind of nice for kids.

Um but for me, it's like every day is

pretty much the same, you know, it's

like there's there's no real quality in

Christmas Day that makes it any

different from, you know, 3 days later

or 3 days earlier.

Um

yeah, it's not even really the the

winter solstice.

So,

yeah, I mean, it's just a it's a nice

holiday, you know, it's a nice

tradition, and

I'm quite willing to exchange gifts with

people. In fact, this year I made a special point of sending out rubber chickens instead of Christmas cards, which I think is nice.

So, um yeah, it's it's fine. It's nice. I'm enjoying lots of things, including this Christmas season. And I hope you enjoy your Christmas, too, and be happy. And I think we're done.

hello and welcome to episode 21 of

question and answer and so we're already

up into

numbers so high that you cannot count

them on your fingers and toes

unless uh

you have um

more than the usual number of fingers

and toes

and i suppose i should start this

with an apology

because i was going to do this q a last

weekend and it was this week is has just

been kind of a weird one

um i'm going to be moving in with my

sweetheart within the next couple weeks

and already we're kind of or i'm

kind of

commuting back and forth so i spent the

weekend at her place

soon to be our place

kind of already our place i suppose and

i was going to do the q a there

and i could not find the adapter

because apple computers don't have usb

ports anymore so if you're going to plug

in like a camera or a microphone with

usb ports you got to have an adapter i

couldn't find it i assumed it was still

at the apartment

so

i was gonna do it on monday

then on monday

um

i went back in the afternoon after work

and i couldn't find it there

so then i'm thinking oh it's probably

just somewhere at the house also monday

morning i was biting into my breakfast

and the cap on my tooth came off

so i was just gonna just do it

snaggletooth

and just call it the snaggletooth

edition or something

um

so anyway um my sweetheart

brought she found the adapter

and gave it to me i was gonna do it the

next day which i think we're up to like

uh tuesday right gonna do it on tuesday

and then i realized that i didn't even

have the microphone in the camera here

it was at her house too

soon to be our house so then i had to

wait for another day and then the next

day after that i was just so exhausted

because i didn't get to sleep early

enough

that i just crashed on the couch with

all my clothes on

and uh woke up in a groggy state which

often happens after i take a nap and so

now we're already up to thursday

so it's just the show must go on

i spent uh more than two hours in a

dentist chair this morning getting

fake provisional teeth put up front

so i'm going to get new caps

in a couple weeks

so there's that look forward to

and

before i get started on answering

questions

i suppose i should do some basic stuff

like direct you to the to the url links

below

where you can find access to

all of my

existing

web websites and that sort of thing

and um also there are the links to my

books down there

and uh why should you buy

my books you ask

well

um it's kind of an interesting question

i'll just ask the first question myself

why should you be interested in books

that i've written

and

um

it's it's kind of i mean in kind of a

strange situation as a buddhist because

um

like

with regard to like orthodox terra vada

in in america i could be considered an

authority i know way more about tarabata

buddhism than

not only the average person and not only
the average theravada buddhist but even
the average teacher of theravada
buddhism in the west
a lot of them are really
surprisingly ignorant of orthodox
doctrine
like the average
teacher of theravada in the west knows
some elementary meditation techniques
and some of the jargon which is as often
as not mispronounced
and uh not a whole heck of a lot more
than that if they read books about
terrible buddhism they're more likely to
read books by jack cornfield

or somebody like that than to read

ancient texts for example

so

um from an american standard i could be

considered somewhat of an authority on

terra botta but if if i went to burma

where you've got just phenomenal

scholars that are very dogmatic but they

just memorize the texts by heart they're

when i was in burma there were at least

six

buddhist monks who had memorized the

entire 40-volume

poly topitica it's 40 volumes in burmese

in the burmese edition the burmese six

council edition so i wouldn't be

considered much of an authority on

tarabata

like in in burma at all

especially because i'm not extremely

orthodox there are some things that i

just do not take at face value like like

abhidhamma for example the third pitica

of the topitica the three baskets of the

the uh the pali canon

i reject most of one of them and uh

considerable amounts of the other two

so there is that but with regard to what

buddhism was like

in very early times

i i would consider myself to be

pretty much of an authority because i've

studied it very intensively and very

devoutly you could say because i really

wanted to

follow what the buddha taught that was

my original intention as a monk i didn't

become a monk in order to follow along

with some modern tradition or some

medieval asian tradition i didn't become

a monk because i wanted to live like

burmese monks i wanted to live like the

monks in the buddhist time

and so you have to do detective work you

have to read the text very carefully

um

use dating methods similar to those used

by bible scholars

and like like bible scholars um a lot of

uh theology classes or or seminaries

will will tell you that uh you know a

large number of epistles that are

considered to be by paul really weren't

by paul and they use different

techniques like um

for example if somebody

just reliably says bucket instead of

pale when they are communicating

and then you've got this document that's

attributed to that person that just

consistently says pale

then that's a pretty good sign that

that's like not by the person that it's

attributed to just just little things

like that or

um

some scholars have used the damopada

to or they've like analyzed the

dhammapada and they'll say well these

verses here are in a verse form that did

not become popular until hundreds of

years after the time of the buddha this

this kind of thing or another kind of

cynical method is um

uh going with prophecies any any

uh pseudo or text

that has prophecies that are

uh 100 accurate

um

then you you would

like like a cynical and hard-headed type

of literary critic would say well the

the text was written you know after the

fact

and when it gets to the point where the

the the prophecies start becoming wildly

um

wildly what's the word inaccurate then

that's about when it was written this

kind of thing there's all kinds of

there's all kinds of methods all kinds

of techniques

and um

i have i've studied the the

polytechnics mainly with the intention

of finding out what texts are considered

to be the closest to the buddhist time

and closest to what the buddha actually

taught

so

there are probably people that know that

kind of stuff better than i do

but i do have the advantage of actually

living the life and walking the talk and

not simply being an academic sitting in

an ivory tower somewhere that just takes

a purely intellectual interest in the

tax that sort of thing without having

lived the life without having followed

the rules or have living without having

lived in a um

a culture similar to ancient india and

rural burma still is relatively similar

to ancient india

so

you just learn a few things just just

from living in that culture

but um

yeah i mean if

if you would like the point of view of

somebody who really has

um

studied buddhism intensively trying to

figure out you know what the buddha

originally taught

then

and just someone who's maybe kind of

strange and um relatively intelligent

then yeah it might be it might be for

you

also i've been asked to uh tell

everybody because

i am going to be moving soon that if you

have any

packages which does occasionally happen

somebody will try to send me something

um

probably best not to do it anytime real

soon because

i will be moving to a different address

and i don't want to be stating my

address on this video

just because

people who may not be friendly

may exploit that

so anyway i think i've gone over all the

basics and so

um

i didn't tell you my name maybe this

time but uh

you probably already know

so anyway i'll start answering questions

and the first question is from das boot

and dos boot says if we are engineered

by aliens and perhaps even manipulated

right now then what if any implications

would that have for buddhism the buddha

and buddhism as an accurate map of

reality

well i think the main

the main hit that buddhism would take if

if we are

controlled manipulated engineered by

aliens or if or where maybe we're just

living in a simulation or something you

know some

some nine-year-old alien child

developed like uh

a virtual reality of earth with us on it

as a science project for school or

something

the cosmology would really take the hit

i don't think that the ethical

philosophy would take much of a hit

because it has

been

pretty much proven

it has standard the test of time

and um even the aliens themselves would

be subject to dhamma

um you know the second noble truth

remains true

um

my friend brian rood talks about aliens

a lot he's pretty much

um

just shifted his attention primarily to

aliens now

and uh

one of the things that i that i was able

to get get across to him is that aliens

if they are superhuman with regard to

their intelligence and so forth their

their abilities like they supposedly are

telepathic and so forth

then they would be considered devas

by uh buddhist cosmo cosmological

terminology you know they'd be small g

gods because any being that is

significantly higher on the scale than

we are

would be

um a small g god

and uh

the gods the uh the devas

they they were they still respected the

buddha and uh

supposedly um when he was in deep

meditative state they even the

telepathic ones could not tell

upon what his consciousness was resting

they

he became like invisible to telepaths

but um

again we if we assume that it's all just

uh

um

like a virtual reality or something

or maybe the aliens just programmed us

to believe this or something but

yeah i think

um

the only real hit

that

buddhism would take would be the ancient

indian cosmology that modern westerners

most of us don't believe anyway

but um the second noble truth stays true

dependent core rising or dependent

origination

yeah i'm pretty sure it stays true and

that the aliens that are manipulating us

would be just as subject to uh

universal law as we are

so i'll just move on to the next

question which is from

duo

d-w-o-h

i don't know what that is

but duo

asks

what is your best guess to buddha's

ethnicity

some say he was exiled by darius and was

a scythian iranian sage and shakyamuni

was a perversion of sakyamuni

some claim shakya clan was just

scythians

yeah

i know a person who interviewed

some scholar who

is really putting forth this theory in a

very strong way

that the buddha was

iranian like a scythian who was

his family was exiled to india

by darius the great

and

just with regard to the whole darius

thing

and how buddhism has very strong themes

of

anti-zoroastrianism and so forth

i haven't read the book that this

scholar has written and i haven't even

seen the podcast that my friend made

with this scholar because i'm pretty

sure he hasn't finished editing it yet

but he says that this man has very

strong evidence

but still with regard to that part with

regard to the scythians being newly

planted in india by darius the great

um i'm very skeptical mainly because

there is zero support for it that i am

aware of in the polytechs themselves

that the buddha was supposedly

born and raised

um to the to the shakya clan or or in

polits

in what is now nepal like southern nepal

and there's no word whatsoever about

darius or i don't even remember i mean

it might be in there but i don't even

remember any mention of persia in in the

pali texts

uh there is mention of greeks in the

polytechs but um

no

no mention that i can think of persia or

especially of darius the great or darius

or however it is pronounced

um

so with regard to that i'm still

skeptical i'll have to see the evidence

but really it's just crickets if you

read the polytechs with regard to any

kind of support for this other than

maybe

you know maybe he can see that you know

when the buddha teaches this it's sort

of like a you know a

like a roundabout jab zoroastrianism or

something but it's really not

um

otherwise i'm pretty sure people would

have noticed it by now it wouldn't take

a person in the 21st century to finally

notice that

but um

with regard to his ethnicity which is

the main

the main part of the question here um

it could be and i've considered that the

buddha may have been originally of uh

scythian ancestry that there could have

been

like a wave of scythian immigrants

coming in even before the the

indo-aryans because the scythians were

more closely related to the iranians so

they would be

like uh they would be aryan but they

would be like iranian aryan and the word

iran is just a corruption of the word

aryan there was a

like a

province in in persia that was called

arya also

um

so he may have been scythian of scythian

ancestry and he was living on like the

northwestern no northeastern

frontier of vedic culture so he was kind

of an outsider which is one reason why

he wasn't simply uh

um you know a vedic

brominist

you know a proto-hindu

that could be one reason he was just

born and raised on like the the frontier

of of vedic brahmanism

um he could have been

um he could have been [__] and i mean

just because he was cynthia and doesn't

i mean if he was cynthia doesn't mean

that you know it had anything to do with

uh darius or darius the great um

there was uh

the the greeks invaded and conquered

northwestern india

um

maybe around the first century uh before

the common era and the next wave of

barbarians who invaded northwestern

india were called the sakas who were

scythian

and so they were called what the

indocythians or something like that

but that was after the buddhist time but

it does indicate that uh that scythians

who were living sort of to the northwest

of india

could occasionally

uh make inroads into india um and it

could have occurred over centuries you

know every once in a while

you would have i think the kambojas who

are mentioned in the polytechs along

with the yonas who were considered to be

violent barbarians that would invade

occasionally the yonas were greeks

that's yonah or yonaka

is uh the pali

rendering of like ionian

of the ionian greeks who were the ones

that were mostly settled

um

in

near and in

uh india

but the the kambozas or the cambodias

were uh supposedly like uh

an iranian tribe that may have been

scythian

and um

so yeah i mean it is possible but

regardless of whether he was

um of sakian

or uh scythian ancestry or indo-aryan

ancestry i mean he was aryan apparently

um there are some scholars who say that

uh

he may have just been like some

indigenous barbarian tribe that uh was

um

adopted or allowed to uh enter vedic

culture and so they were given sort of

honorary aryan status but um

i i think it's

probable

that the buddha had aryan ancestor he

may not have been pure blooded because

whenever you have an invasion

into a new territory

then inevitably some of the men there's

going to be more men than women at first

in the first wave of invasion and some

of the men are just going to settle down

with

the prettiest and most desirable

indigenous females which

to some degree is a good idea because

then the children will have resistance

to the local diseases and so forth

but

i think in all probability he was

in all probability he was like high cl

high caste you know he was the kshatriya

of the the noble warrior cast

um

according to the legend he was a prince

you know the son of the king

um

so he probably was relatively

um

relatively pure-blooded either

indo-aryan or some sort of aryan uh

possibly scythian but i don't think

there's any way to really know for sure

unless

um i mean there there are certain ways

you can you can test it now

i mean the the saka

the saka tribe the shakia tribe was

wiped out just just a few decades after

the time of the buddha

by king ajata satu i think

so

you couldn't really test the shakyas now

because apparently they're extinct

but um i mean you could do

like dna testing

in you know in and around like where

kapila watu used to be in nepal and see

if there is any significant scythian

element in the

in the genome

but uh ultimately i don't think it

really matters all that much

what really matters

is what the man had to say

so it is sort of similar with

christianity man whether his mother was

a virgin or not and i rather doubt it

but

um you know even if his mother was a

virgin i mean

it doesn't really matter if it's amongst

i mean what matters is what the man had

to say

so

let's see i think i answered that

question which is kind of a long

roundabout

um

semi-educated i don't know

but um he was uh

indo-aryan

or or persian orient one or the other

mostly i would guess

so let's just move on to the next

question by dwoh

duo

another question is do you think you

will

research nirvana in this lifetime oh

he's i think that means reach you think

you will reach nirvana in this lifetime

or is that more or less impossible where

you are

i'm kind of a novice so i get this

might seem silly since i think nirvana

is seen as a big deal in buddhism and

very few reach it

i've kind of answered this question

before

um

if if like regard to the question of do

i think i will attain

enlightenment in this life i don't want

to just say no and close the door in my

own face

because anything is possible but to say

yes is uh

kind of arrogant um

yeah i mean i was pretty arrogant when i

first became a monk i was i had these

ideas oh i'll master jhana within six

months this kind of stuff

red bull because uh i've had a long day

and uh things just don't turn out the

way

they are planned

but um

yeah you shouldn't

i mean it's best not to even think about

it you just do what you do as well as

you can

and

yeah if it happens it happens

there's no way to really force it to

happen anyway

like krishnamurti used to say you can

open the window but you can't cause the

breeze to blow in

so who knows maybe i'll i'll become

enlightened at the moment of death or

something rama maharshi said that that

happens a lot i guess um

eckhart tolle says that too

and uh he's a lay person

so

uh sorry to disappoint and do well with

uh two i don't knows

but um

gotta be honest here you know i don't

wanna just to start making grandiose

claims or

alternately slam the freaking door in my

own face

but uh

duo is correct that it

it's the nirvana is seen as a big deal

in buddhism and very few reach it um

especially especially lately there was a

very sarcastic

author who claimed to be fully

enlightened

uh what was his name jed mckenna

or that's that's supposedly his name

there's there's people have tried to

locate this jed mckenna and he's he's

nowhere there's no pictures of him

anywhere on the internet or any such

thing

but um he was saying that

um

spirituality is just uh i mean it's just

one of the the greatest fiascos of of

human creation because so few people

succeed in becoming enlightened you

dedicate your life to following you know

buddhism or hinduism or yoga or some

esoteric

some kind of esoteric christianity or

whatever it is sufism

and um

i mean the percentage of people that

actually succeed in becoming enlightened

even to those who are really trying

diligently to become enlightened is just

a tiny fraction of one percent in all

likelihood

um

but most people just aren't right for it

and

most people even those who are dedicated

and really trying deep down

they just

aren't ready they're they're kind of

afraid of it or something i used to

think when i was a monk in burma that if

somebody somehow

invented an enlightenment pill where you

just take this pill and swallow and you

become fully enlightened you would

attain nirvana that most monks even

would run away from that as though it

were some kind of demon-possessed rabbit

snake

because most people are just afraid of

enlightenment because in a sense it is

it's like death

you know who you think you are

kind of dissolves

or at least you you completely detach or

um

yeah it's it's it's it's sort of like

death

so

yeah

let's just move on i mean you're best

not even really thinking about that sort

of thing because any kind of idea you

have about nirvana is going to be

invalid

nirvana cannot be understood

intellectually it's just trying to

understand the absolute

you know it's like trying to figure out

god trying to draw a picture of god

almighty

it just doesn't work

so i'll just move on to the next

question which is from anonymous

and anonymous says

i would humbly ask ponyo basa to do an

article or video regarding what are the

states of the afterlife how best to

prepare or what is expected to happen

thereafter i understand there are

philosophical epistemological and

semantic terminology outside of my scope

here

this will have to be explained simply

not just for myself or that thing

identify with known as me or self

it doesn't exist but is conditioned by

karmic states

so what happens after you die is

essentially the question i'm pretty sure

um

i can tell you what orthodox

tradition teaches

and that is that um

at the moment of death whatever state

you are in

i mean that's including all of your

karma which is uh

it's um

the momentum of your mind it's like the

momentum of the the flow of

consciousness

um

that as at the moment of death that

disappears you know from your from your

body

and has to instantaneously the very next

moment

reappear

uh at the conception of a new being

and um the new being if it's uh like a

biological being like a human

um you know you have to go through the

gestation inside your mama's belly and

all that but um

hell realms and most heaven realms you

just spontaneously appear

um

that that would be the and it's like

um there has been a little bit of

controversy over the last the last

moment the last conscious moment how

according to abidama

um that imprints

um like

your last conscious moment is imprinted

throughout the rest of your life like if

you are like in a sound sleep your mind

just has this test pattern which is the

last image of your

conscious mind in the previous life

which i am very skeptical of that i

really like i said at the beginning i'm

skeptical of abhidharma i do not

consider it to be

the uh genuine reliable authentic

teachings of gautama buddha

so

um you know there isn't the same sort of

thing like

in

in the tibetan book of the dead or in

the tibetan book of the dead there's the

bardo realm where

it's like an intermediate state where

you go there

and

um you have to like review your life or

or

there's a number of things you know you

have to go and pass through the bright

light and then you're seeing all these

beings and in the the tibetan book of

the of the dead reminds you that you

need to remind yourself it's all just

like mental constructs it's all my

imagination they're not real beings even

if you see the buddha himself or

whatever

then there really isn't that sort of

thing in buddhism although

um

i do think that you could have like an

intermediate state that is just a short

it could just be like a short existence

in in some sort of relatively unstable

non-physical realm

and you know maybe it's your karma to be

reborn as a prince in your next life or

something and um you know it may not be

that there are any uh princes being

conceived at that exact moment

so

yeah

with regard to my own opinion

as to what happens after death um

yeah it's again it's it's like i'm

getting a lot of questions that i

honestly have to answer i don't know

because i do not remember

having died before and gone into any

you know

other other realm you know i haven't

i haven't i don't remember passing

through any afterlives

and so

i think there's a good chance that

um you know there really is rebirth or a

reincarnation which for some reason

buddhists don't like the word

reincarnation they prefer rebirth

although essentially it means the same

thing

um

but i think

it's

it's largely a matter of similarity if

your mind is very similar to somebody

else's mind there's like an overlap

and um

it could be that

your existence just uh is

i'm just getting lost here i really am

it's been a long day i need more red

bull

let's just back up a little and say

technically

the only thing that passes from one life

to the next is karma

which is like the momentum of your mind

and um

i've compared that in the past to like
pushing down a lump in a carpet if the
carpet's got this lump it's an imperfect
imperfectly fitted carpet you try to
push it down in one place it'll just
immediately push up somewhere else
and we are imperfectly fitted in this
universe because we're continually
struggling against it and wanting things
to be different and so forth
and so when we get pushed down at death
it just pushes up somewhere else because
there's this disequilibrium that hasn't
worked itself out yet
and exactly how that works
i cannot say although

i kind of doubt that it's exactly the

way the books say especially the abidama

books

so

uh sorry to be so unhelpful

i can just tell you what the books say

and you can take it or leave that and i

don't fully believe what the books say

or you can just uh

have some meandering

theorization

on my part

but as i say i don't remember having

died before so

but then again in buddhism you die every

moment it's like everything is flashing

in and out of existence a trillion times

a second or mental states are flashing

in and out like 17 trillion times per

second

so

hmm i'll just i'll just go on anonymous

continues here

our karmic state at that point of death

formed through our experiences

is thus continued in a renewed

manifestation based on that state when

either gets closer to what is considered

as enlightened ultimate reality or

further away would this be a correct

interpretation please explain

and then he's got

el i5 in parentheses which i don't

understand

so

let's see

he says our karmic state at that point

of death formed through our experiences

is thus continued in a renewed

manifestation based on that state

one either gets closer to what is

considered as enlightened ultimate

reality or further away

um

i think it would be kind of a simplistic

interpretation

um

i mean the state

the state you're in at the moment of

death it's not just referring to the

conscious mental state because there's

all the latent karma that's there too

it's just below the surface

so all of that would have to be taken

into consideration

and when either gets closer to what's

considered as enlightened ultimate

reality or further away

um

if you are destined to become

enlightened then it seems like whether

you're going to heaven or hell you're

still getting closer to enlightenment at

least

um on the timeline

so that's kind of a

gratuitous little monkey wrench to throw

into this theory

um

this

yeah

our karmic state at that point of death

formed through our experiences is thus

continued in a renewed manifestation

based on that state

um yeah if you take into consideration

the whole stream including the

like the

the currents below the surface

then that would be fairly accurate

i hope these questions get easier

these are some difficult questions it's

like i don't know i don't know

but i have to be honest i mean i'm not

just going to sit here and

decree exactly what happens to you after

death when i myself

really have no

direct experience of what happens after

death at least not at the conscious

level

so next question is from matthew

and matthew asks a very straightforward

question which is appreciated how does

buddhism approach marriage and divorce

i recognize that terebot is essentially

a religion for renunciants but what

kinds of norms have developed in burma

sri lanka thailand that could be said to

derive from buddhism as a layperson how

might buddhism guide when marriage

should occur

sex children love

and when divorce is acceptable adultery

not getting along growing apart

okay

i will point out that there are a few

sutas in which the buddha gives advice

on how to be a good husband how to be a

good wife

um

and

i never had much interested in that i

wasn't much interested in that as a monk

because of course i was i was a monk and

wasn't planning on getting married at

the time um

so i mean the buddha does kind of toss a

bone to lay people and give them

instructions or advice on how to be a

good husband how to be a good wife how

to be a good master of your servants and

slaves

that sort of thing

and

how to be a good slave or servant even

he gives advice to to those people also

but

he doesn't really go into a lot of

details because it was just like a side

issue

um

in fact

in in a country like burma you know

which is

possibly the most devoutly buddhist

country on earth at the

at the time at present moment um

marriage is just uh

it's a purely secular affair it's not

really a buddhist marriage because

there's a song these are rules the

second most

um

serious level of offense for a monk

is to commit sangha di cesa

so he's not excommunicated but he's got

to take penance for six days and six

nights

and go through this elaborate ceremony

with at least 20 monks there other than

him to put him back into good standing

after the after the penance is finished

and it's really a pain in the neck i've

done it before not because i was

involved in anyone getting married but

for other reasons

and

to participate in a marriage is is a

sanggari cesar offense it's a very

serious offense

so

monks do not participate in marriages

the monks are not allowed to encourage

people to get married if they're not

allowed to

um

if a man and a woman get divorced

they're they're not allowed to encourage

them to get remarried although if

they're just fighting they can be

peacemakers with regard to that

but um

yeah it's purely a secular affair

with the actual marriage itself in burma

the villagers will just go to the

village head man

and

sign some papers and that's it they're

married and then after that then they'll

have the big reception and invite monks

and feed monks in order to earn merit

and listen to a sermon in order to earn

merit and the monks can bless the

marriage after it's a done deal

but before the marriage they're not they

they can't bless the marriage

so it's uh

buddhism like tarabata buddhism

originally was primarily intended for

uh renouncians

you know it was just this radical

radical method for renunciation and the

lay people were you know they were sort

of quasi buddhists they were supporting

the the heavy hitters

but uh they were not considered to be

likely to become enlightened and even if

they did become enlightened according to

the tradition they had to become

ordained immediately or they would die

so

yeah i mean people really don't

appreciate especially in the west i

guess people just do not appreciate how

like

monk centric

early buddhism was where really like in

the buddhist time it was the the

renunciants were the real buddhists and

the laypeople might support them

but

you know they were like fans supporting

their favorite team

and like nowadays you got someone who

might be really into some sports team

and they'll wear the shirt and they'll

you know they'll they'll pay for the

tickets which supports the

athletes

and um

you know they'll even play ball you know

in their backyard or something throw the

ball around that kind of thing

so there there's they're kind of

you know

doing the sport

but uh not the same level as the

professionals and uh westerners are

often insulted by that especially

americans i think because americans want

the best of everything

if they can get it

and so they kind of i mean

american buddhists can feel insulted

if uh just by the very idea of monks

some western buddhists who consider

themselves to be practicing buddhists

are just

resentful of of monastics because

it's sort of like a suicide people

resent some people resent others who

commit suicide you know it's like

they're it's the coward's way out you

know they're they're throwing away this

divine gift or whatever and um

when a monk is ordained it's it's kind

of similar to to suicide you know

they're they're throwing away what most

people value the most

and uh also it's just kind of a slur on

on western buddhist you know it somehow

suggests that mediocrity isn't good

enough

so

but i've kind of strayed away

straight away from the question here

and i'm occasionally getting twinges of

self-consciousness about the uh

the uh the missing tooth but it's not

missing because i got like a temporary

one put in

this morning

um let's see

yeah i guess

how does buddhism approach marriage in

divorce it just kind of

um

doesn't exactly ignore it i mean i i'm

not even sure if i can't remember

divorce even being mentioned like it was

ancient indian culture and a woman was

just pretty much owned by her husband

so

i mean women were allowed to leave their

husbands i mean nuns

there's a

a rule of monastic discipline that none

is not allowed to

leave her husband and become

a nun until unless she has been

married for

x number of years i can't i think it was

what seven or nine or 12 or something 12

maybe

and uh you know she's got to do her duty

and maybe give give her

[__] of a husband

you know some children before she uh

renounces the world or some such

but um

it really is kind of an afterthought

marriage and divorce because you know it

was the renunciants that were

most of the texts are geared towards the

renuncians and uh

of course they didn't they weren't even

allowed to touch a woman much less marry

one

i assume

men just be encouraged to

leave their wives and be ordained

so yeah it's not really a good model for

uh

basing any kind of

buddhist

family ethic or or

um

i mean monks just are forbidden to even

participate in a wedding so you're not

gonna have buddhist weddings except for

by by the lay person you know you got

this guy named ralph who

um got ordained somehow

uh maybe a zen monk or something and he

just wears lay clothing and uh

you know he can do marriages you know

you're barefoot in the park or something

but uh

like the earliest schools of buddhism

like

theravada and pre tarawada it was just a

complete no-no it was just

um you know if you're if you're a

husband try to be as good of a husband

as you can if your wife try to be as

good of a wife as you can you know be

moral keep fight precepts and so forth

but um

it's about as far as it goes

so i'll just move on to matthew's next

question

and he says

topic

buddhist monks and nationalism the

burmese but especially the sinhalese

monks have in recent years shown a

willingness to engage as defenders of

their cultures if only they had done

that in gandara many moons ago perhaps

afghanistan would be a shining light

instead of satan's armpit

with that said i have never read a

single line of text in the tapitica they

would even be twisted or contorted to

justify support for violence

defensive or otherwise how do we protect

buddhism was buddhism meant to survive

on its own does buddhism require a

non-buddhist kshatriya warrior class

surrounding and defending it

is buddhism and dhamma as we know it one

muhammad part two away from disappearing

as a buddhist should i even care

and then he's got detachment in

parentheses

so that's that's a good question

and uh it is true that in burma

sometimes the monks will do

protests

and uh my experience is that the monks

that are marching in the streets tend to

be the sloppiest most lacks monks who

are getting into politics instead of

minding their own business and just

practicing dhamma

as a general rule i mean it's not like

i'm just

making this opinion

um just pulling it out of an orifice i

mean i lived in burma for many years and

it's it's true that most of the monks

that are political activists are just

really lack sloppy monks

i had a guy just almost hit me once

where he was

um he introduced himself to he was an

american guy he introduced himself to me

as one of the world's leading

authorities on on burma

despite the fact that

he didn't speak burmese

and you know he's an adviser to uh the

us government or had been at some point

in the past

and uh he'd been to burma 20-something

times and he was married to a burmese

lady but i think they got divorced after

i met him

but he was talking about these exemplary

monks

and that he had met when he was in burma

and he's talking about you know

political protests against the the

military dictatorship or there's a monk

who's running an orphanage or there's a

monk who's running a school

or there's a monk who's

fundraising for disaster relief and so

forth and he didn't mention anything at

all about actual buddhist practice like

meditation or following the rules or

anything and i'm just telling them yeah

they might be really good people

you know they might be really nice

people but they're not very good monks

because i mean they're just

going against what they're supposed to

be doing if you're a monk you're

supposed to be striving

single-mindedly for enlightenment

preferably

um in solitude out in a forest somewhere

and just not having anything to do with

politics

it's like um the forbidden animal talk

there's a long list of topics that monks

aren't supposed to talk about and one of

the very first ones is kings or

ministers it's like any kind of politics

is

i mean it's poison for monks supposedly

um let's see

let's see so i'll just have to read the

question again because i've

been rambling here see the burmese but

especially the sinhalese monks haven't

recently yeah sinhalese monks are pretty

pretty lacks too

on average have in recent years shown a willingness to engage as defenders of their cultures if only they had done that in gandara many moons ago perhaps afghanistan would be a shining light set of satan's armpit yeah well in a way they're kind of renouncing the culture if they're

serious monks

with that said i have never read a single line of text in debitica that would even be twisted or contorted to justify support for violence defensive otherwise well that's not exactly true i mean a monk even an ordained monk a serious one is allowed to strike out in self-defense

not with the intention of killing but i

mean if you're just

fighting desperately to save your life

and you accidentally kill the other

person then

yeah you haven't even committed an

offense really

so

it's the intention to kill that's the

i mean if you do that then you're

excommunicated for life if you

deliberately kill somebody regardless of

the reason i mean it might be a

justified reason maybe you're

killing a terrorist who's about ready to

blow up a school bus full of children

and uh by killing the the terrorists you

save the lives of everybody else but um

still um

it is it is forbidden to kill another

human being deliberately

maybe you just jump on him and keep him

from pushing the button or something

so how do we protect buddhism

the standard buddhist answer to that

would be um

have good karma

you know you do good and do right and uh

you're more likely to have good things

happen to you i mean buddhism has been

um

radically pacifist from the beginning

for the most part and um

it still exists after 2 500 years i mean

the numbers have gone down especially uh

you know when uh

islam invaded india

and also central asia which was

predominantly buddhist and then he had

chinese communism

uh pretty much wipe out buddhism in

china but

yeah like the fourth century of the

common era i have read that most human

beings on the planet

were

buddhists at least nominally at least

they were members of a buddhist culture

because

india china and pretty much

all of asia in between was

mostly buddhist at the time

so

yeah how do we protect buddhism um

well you would have to do it through

good instead of bad

so that can be done let's see was

buddhism meant to survive on its own

um buddhism couldn't possibly survive on

its own

um

partly because

um like everybody couldn't just become a

monk you know monks aren't allowed to

even feed themselves they have to be fed

by people who aren't following the rules

as strictly as them

and so there's always going to be

violent people who just aren't going to

be saints or saintly and uh

ideally those violent people will be

patriotic and defend their culture

there are violent people who are

patriotic

i mean that used to be the hero like the

ancient greeks that was like the main

culture heroes were uh fighters

patriotic fighters

see how do we protect buddhism you know

see was buddhism meant to survive on its

own does buddhism require a non-buddhist

kshatriya warrior class surrounding and

defending it well it would be it could

be like semi buddhists where

um you know

like the burmese

military government technically they're

buddhists you know they're they're

soldiers

generals

yeah but uh it's sort of like the mafia

where the mafia are catholic

supposedly you know they might uh

refrain from offending nuns but um

still they're they're relatively bad

guys and uh history has shown that

really devout

followers of a religion can be

just ruthless

violent people

so

i think genghis khan was considering

becoming a buddhist wasn't he

kublai khan certainly did

and uh he was still uh in in massive

conquest mode

so

let's see

is buddhism and dhamma as we know it one

muhammad part two away from disappearing

well that depends on the karma of the

buddhists i suppose

and i think

the sloppy monks that are doing the

protest marches aren't really helping

um and if they want to pick up a gun and

start fighting the enemies of buddhism

they should drop out of the monkhood and

if they succeeded in killing somebody

they would

be

instantaneously expelled from the

monkhood whether anybody found out about

it or not

so as a buddhist should you even care i

would suggest just have faith in your

karma

and do your best you know mind your own

garden

and uh the big picture will take care of

itself

but if if it's your karma to be uh

to to enjoy the uh the benefits of

dhamma then it'll happen

okay

so i think i answered that question from

matthew and i'll just move on to

matthew's next question

which is

given that i possess mankind's greatest

pornography library in my pocket i got

one right here pornography library

supposedly

um see where was i

oh how might a modern lay person think

about practicing right action in this

specific context well

i think the answer to that would be

pretty obvious i mean if you're if

you're trying to practice

right action as a devout buddhist and

trying to be as saintly as possible then

you use the phone for making phone calls

and you don't look up porn on it where

if you do somebody some wise guy sends

you some porn

then uh you you see it mindfully and

observe what comes up in your mind and

then you

hit the little delete button

but um

i don't know i think

just going sometimes pornography could

be the lesser of two evils i mean

i've i've considered writing a blog post

about this i used to think about it a

long time ago before i was even a monk

probably how you just

write an article

just pointing out that for some people

not certainly not everyone but for some

people just resorting to porn in your

own right hand might actually be

preferable to

um settling down with a member of the

opposite gender

because i mean

for some people i mean you just

you want to

you want to be on your own you want to

be detached

and um

you could probably do that better

just

wanking to some porn every now and then

then just marrying someone that

deep down maybe you don't feel right

about or something

i mean maybe you just don't feel right

about marrying anybody

so

yeah it could be the lesser of two evils

if if you're just too horny

too lustful

to just go without any kind of sexuality

then um

yeah maybe

but um

if you really want to be a saintly

devout correctly practicing buddhist or

maybe not even saintly but just

following the five precepts and

everything um

yeah well now i just kind of

led myself to looking at porn really

doesn't violate any of the five precepts

that i can think of

even even wanking doesn't for a monk

it's strictly prohibited but um

yeah

spanking the puppy is out

but for a lay person uh you know it's

it's way more liberal if you'll forgive

the word

um

just five precepts is pretty

straightforward

so let's see

yeah so if you're a modern lay person

and you want to practice right action in

this specific context then the obvious

answer is you just don't

don't look at porn

maybe don't even play with your own pp i

don't know

but

as i say most people are

relatively lustful it's a fascinating

subject sexuality

and um

yeah it wasn't easy for me

and i'm very happy that i have a mate

now i have to admit

uh

maybe

it's a string dangerously close to tmi

range

let's see here

what is your person

oh okay i think i already skipped that

one

all right next question

what is your personal opinion regarding

the frequency and ease at which

individuals are described as having

achieved enlightenment during the

buddha's lifetime do you think this is

an example of taking liberties by later

authors to demonstrate the buddha's

excellence as an instructor or do you

take at face value more or less

this is a naughty question

it's something i've considered many

times

i don't think i have it here i'll look

around

yeah i don't think i have it here i've

got a notebook

where i recorded some really outrageous

stuff that i've come across as a monk

and one was um

stories of some buddha of past ages

who delivers the sermon to like

literally like trillions of people and

all of them become enlightened you know

all

10 trillion of them supposedly and uh

yeah i don't think so i don't think the

people in bat could probably even hear

him very well

um

yeah so

um

if you read the text you'll read that

there are lots and lots of enlightened

followers of buddha and

i would guess that is at least somewhat

exaggerated considering the low rate of

enlightenment

subsequently

as we've already discussed a little bit

um

i mean it wouldn't surprise me that he

had a lot of enlightened

disciples

but even the buddha had some very

unenlightened ones like in the

the rules of monastic discipline there's

continual mention of the group of six

who were just really

crummy monks

they're always getting into trouble and

doing bad things and so forth then there

was david data who tried to kill the

buddha

um

so even the buddha didn't have a

a 1 000 batting average with regard to
enlightening his disciples although he
did way better than jesus of nazareth
did
apparently um
yeah so i do i think this is an example
of taking liberties by later authors to
demonstrate the buddha's excellence as
an instructor yeah i have to admit it i
wouldn't be surprised if you know he had
you know a reasonably large number of
enlightened disciples but um
yeah when you're getting up into
thousands and millions and billions and
so forth then
i start getting rather skeptical

and it's it's not just uh

not just enlightened beings i mean the

polytechs grotesquely exaggerate like

the number of people who become aryas

like i think it's in the commentarial

tradition the commentaries say that uh

the uh

the population of sabati

which uh was a major metropolis in the

buddhist time

um

it had millions and millions they had

like a large had like 70 million

populations supposedly and most of them

were buddhist saints

which

yeah i you couldn't even possibly have

um

a population of 70 million in in the

iron age i mean just the logistics of

getting all the food in and the sewage

out and so forth it just wouldn't work

so yeah i have to agree

there is quite a lot of exaggeration

and uh

a lot of it is just for the

glorification of the buddha i mean

there's

it happened in other religions too

obviously i mean most notably

christianity where they deified the

founder

made him the creator of the universe

um

buddhism you read the text and there's

an awful lot of bragging you know the

buddha is just boasting about how

wonderful he is and encouraging people

to worship him and so forth which i am

skeptical of that too

and uh yeah just the

entire multitudes of becoming

enlightened when they hear him speak

um

yeah

so i have to agree on that one although

i'm not just flat out calling it all

lies

um

some of the weird stuff in the text i

mean uh

it's i mean it could be that some

rascally monks were just deliberately

making [__] up although a lot of it it's

just sort of lore

that uh

it gets built up i mean when i was

living in burma as a monk there were

people who sincerely believed that i was

fully enlightened i was told that um

there was a picture passing around in

the city of monuma which was the largest

city uh to where i was staying

of me levitating over the city

and

people just really believed that

and i would tell them well i don't think

it was me i don't remember doing that

but um

yeah so it's like people just want to

believe this stuff

and it's not deliberately lying

you know it may be that uh just

gradually this weird legend maybe

somebody just told something as a

deliberately as like a parable or

something and people took it literally

or whatever

with regard to the buddha bragging i'm

sure the people that added that to the

texts sincerely you know they were just

pointing out that that's the way they

considered the buddha to be and they

just put it into his own mouth assuming

that he really would have said that kind

of stuff which i i seriously doubt

so

yeah so

move on to the next and the next

question is from tear

i think i'm pronouncing that right tyr

which is some uh

germanic a germanic god i think it's uh

cognate with zeus and jupiter and

jealous petri

so he was kind of a for the germans he

was a war god but uh

for uh he started off as a sky god and

uh

a few cultures including greece and rome

turned him into the king of the gods

okay so anyway tears says all right i'm

not done reading your books which i

mentioned and are in

in the url links below

i'm not done reading your books but i

have a question

i recently asked ajan

punadamo in his live stream about

not-self

i wasn't certain what his answer meant

i asked another way but i don't know if

he saw the question the question is if

there is not self

then would you have some existence

i changed it to experience with not self

is there still some kind of experience

because not self doesn't sound fun at

all i know it's off the scale

but if there is no self then who are we

watching on your youtube channel

my apologies in advance if this sounds

disrespectful much respect

sadhu

um

my best explanation

is the parable of the block of marble

which

if you're familiar with what i say and

write you're probably familiar with that

it's like you take a block of stone a

block of marble it's of indeterminate

size

it's it's just out in this barren plane

there's nothing to compare it with so

you can't really say how big it is it's

just it's just this sizeless block of

stone

and contained inside that block of stone

literally is every possible statue

you know every single atom of every you

know this every molecule is already

there right in the right place all you

gotta do is remove the extra rock you

know michelangelo's david's in there all

the

the topless venuses

you know it's like everything even even

impossible statues are in there

so

um all it takes is just

imagination or perception

to see that statue in the rock you know

like a talented artist he'll he'll know

what he wants to make with that rock you

know he'll envision it he'll see the

statue in there and then he'll remove

the extraneous rock

so

i would say

that the absolute or what in

theistic systems are called capital g

god

uh that would be the block of stone and

in fact the dao de ching it was after i

came up with this idea i learned that in

a really literal translations of the dao

tai ching it refers to the dao as the

nameless uncarved block

so

all the statues are in there and some of

the statues are so complicated that they

become self-referential

and start perceiving themselves as

like discrete entities when really

it's just a kind of virtual existence

that they have

so that's one way of explaining it

another way which would be more orthodox

is that a being is like a flame where

the flame exists so long as the

conditions for that flame exist which

according to the boy scout manual is

you've got to have fuel

heat and oxygen

if those three are together in

sufficient quantities you're gonna have

flame

and so if you've got the conditions for

um a being

there then it's gonna be like a flame

and it's it's gonna be

in a constant state of flux

and it's not going to be exactly the

same from one moment to the next and you

just call it the same flame

in regards with regard to the flame

um even though it's completely different

from one moment to the next

but it's just a matter of convenience

just uh

just a handy label that you stick onto

this this continually changing thing

that is completely conditional it only

exists because of other things it

doesn't have an inherent self-existence

it exists only because of these other

conditions that cause it to exist and

even those other conditions going with

buddhist philosophy they're the same way

they've got they only exist

conditionally because of conditions

conditioning them and the whole thing

is just mutually conditioning

virtually existent stuff going on

and we are part of that

so

i don't know maybe i've just confused

you

maybe i'll just uh

if there is not self then would you have

some existence it would be virtual

conditional existence

or you could say that uh the statues

really do exist in that block of marble

you know like i say it's you know every

every molecule is already right there in

the exact place where it's supposed to

be

but

um for some reason

some some of the statues are so

complicated that they start thinking

that they are

self-existent

and uh

they

ignore all the extra rock around them

and don't consider themselves to just be

part of that

all right so

my apologies in advance if this sounds

disrespectful no not at all

it was a good question

and i hope i answered it i mean you got

two two answers one is the unorthodox

heretical answer of the block of stone

and the other is the more orthodox

answer of sort of using the flame as an

analogy where

you know it's constantly changing it's

not the same flame from one moment to

the next but

you just stick the label flame onto it

as just a label of convenience

and it's completely conditional

dependent on

other conditions to keep it in existence

and it doesn't have a self essence of

self existence

it just exists or seems to exist

because of these conditions and those

conditions are the same way they seem to

exist because of other conditions and

the whole thing is this vast cosmic

interlocking

system

and you have an infinite number of those

systems even because

there's just an infinite number of ways

you can have statues in that block of

marble getting back to the heretical

answer

so i'm just going to move on to the next

question

and that is from potila

and potila says

i am considering buying some land with a

space to build a cootie and a coty is

like a little meditation cabin or a hut

so i'll just start over i am considering

buying some land with the space to build
a cootie what do you think of having a
sort of decentralized community in which
one or two renunciants are supported by
a few families
say building a small cabin for them on
one person's land and others
contributing funds to their health food
and other minimal expenses
a family would need to feed them daily
but it would give a serious monastic or
layperson a chance to practice for a
while and the supporting family gets the
benefit of offering donna or generosity
charity and hearing dhamma instruction
many of the centers in the west depend

on large viharas and retreat centers and

think you need big facilities but

starting small might be better

quality over quantity really it is a

question about how to work outside the

mainstream buddhist structure of the

west typically asian communities or

leftist struggle sessions

so that's a good idea and i i agree with

this i mean i've thought of that a lot

where

probably the best way to have

monks

living in the west serious monks

is you just have

somebody that's got

like a big plot of land and they've got

like this little cabin out in their back

field or something maybe a trailer or

something

and they just invite a monk to come stay

there

but

you'd have to have a really serious monk

doing it

um like most asian monks wouldn't i mean

they'd hate it

i mean they like the ceremonies and the

you know the groups coming and listening

to the the discourses and stuff they're

really not so much into

um just

a single

you know like solitary

dharma practice

or if they are into solitary donald

practice they can just stay in asia

where it's much more supported than here

but i do think it's a good idea and

you'd have to

find the right monk i think

because even a serious monk i mean

i mean i don't want to bad mouth serious

monks but a lot of the serious monks i

have met

they're kind of borderline

hypochondriacs they just have a lot of

health issues which may be in part due

to just their

um

just self-repression you know their

their self-restraint

they're not following their natural

impulses which you know just going with

freud even though i mean i don't think

freud was entirely wrong but when you're

like stifling your natural urges they

don't just go away they they kind of

build up pressure until they start

percolating up to the surface from your

subconscious in the form of neurotic

symptoms and that can include

psychosomatic illnesses or even

um i mean genuine illnesses i mean it's

not just all in your imagination so a

lot of monks um

you know they might be very serious and

then you might invite them to stay

at your

you know in your cabin

or something and they're going to be

having stomach problems and they're

going to have to be seeing doctors and

so forth and it's not going to work very

well unless you got lots of money for

that sort of thing or

you you get them on an insurance plan or

something

and uh

yeah i mean you have to use some

discretion in finding the right monk

a lot of monks that are very solitary

and so forth they also may be very uh

frustrated

um

like

you know they're just

maybe better off just being in total

isolation somewhere

they can they can be very serious monks

because they don't have the

all the

the temptations surrounding them

that you find so easily in the west and

is even considered to be pretty much

necessary i mean even just to live in a

hut

is largely illegal in the west you know

you have to have the

this you have to have like the emergency

exit and uh you know electricity and you

got to have the the electrical sockets

you know every every x number of feet

and everything is

i tried this

uh in the west before as a monk and it

it didn't work out very well though it's

probably just that i had not good enough

comma for it to work out

by the time somebody was starting to

um

offer such things for me it was already

uh i'd already reached the point of no

return i'd already made up my mind that

uh being a monk wasn't working for me

very well

especially in the west

so

but yeah if you find the right monk

and uh he can be asian or western

and you just have a place for him to

stay

and um

yeah it has been done before

um yeah it could be a really good really

good a really good deal and then if he's

a really good

monk and a good teacher besides then

people might be very impressed by his

his demeanor and his skill at explaining

things

and uh you know it could uh build up

into something bigger

but i do think that is a good idea and i

i encourage potila to uh go ahead and do

it

so

i'll move on to poteel's next question

do you plan to do more readings of your

favorite texts yeah actually

um i do in fact maybe i should do uh one

of those after i finish this

yeah i've been the thing is

i have to work for a living now i'm not

a member of the leisure class anymore

and

you know i work five days a week and i

come home usually pretty tired and not

at my best

so even though i do i do have

maybe a couple hours of time in the

evenings

a lot of the time i'm tired and my

mind's a little bit foggy just from

you know having worked all day

and so

yeah my my output of this sort of thing

um

it has uh

not been optimal

but uh yeah i'm i've i've written enough

translations that i could read my own

translations

so there's that

and uh i do have some favorite pseudos

and uh

probably do some more mahayana stuff too

just because i there are some aspects of

mahayana philosophy that i have a lot of

respect for

i think nagarjuna rocks for example

so

do you plan to do more readings of your

favorite text yes the answer to that is

yes

just uh

be patient

and i am gradually

um

getting used to working for a living and

i don't come home nearly as exhausted as

i used to my first couple months i was

i was starting to think maybe i'm just
going to be like this for the rest of my
life just come home just exhausted but
i'm getting used to it now i'm sort of
building up resistance or something
tolerance
okay anyway next question from potila
in your readings how does the buddhist
term dhamma differ from the vedic hindu
dharma you stated that you think
the only enlightened saints recently
have come out of the hindu tradition
what keeps you studying buddha watching
or the words of the buddha instead of a
hindu tradition that may inspire you
well actually that's not entirely

correct

i haven't stated that i think the only

enlightened saints recently have come

out of the hindu tradition although i

have stated

that

in the past hundred years

the two people that i would consider the

most likely candidates for arahant or

enlightened being status would be two

hindus that would be neem karoli baba

and ramana maharshi although

um yeah i'm not at all saying that uh

that buddhists can't become enlightened

anymore

yeah i don't think i'd ever say that i

might be skeptical of how many become

enlightened but then i can be skeptical

of how many hindus become enlightened

too

so what keeps me studying buddha

vachanam instead of a hindu tradition

that may inspire you

um

the the hindu tradition is it's a little

garish and

you know too much emphasis on gods

whereas buddhism it's it's very

philosophical and like psychological

and it does mention small g gods but uh

they're they're not to be prayed to or

anything really maybe honored as

superior beings

um but um

let's see

so i mean i have i have said before that

if i weren't a buddhist i'd probably be

like a vedantist hindu

but um

yeah buddhism works for me it really

does it's just a philosophical

system that does not require a lot of

belief in a narrative that you can't

possibly prove

and that includes hinduism i mean all

the talk about the gods i mean you can

you can say well vishnu is a metaphor

but then again that you've already kind

of

undermined the whole

thing i mean you got to have faith in

such a system and i just don't have that

kind of faith

that's one reason why i'm not a

christian it's just you have to believe

that uh i mean even if you don't believe

in adam and eve the garden of eden you

know all the suffering in the world is

caused by a man made from soil and a

woman made from a bone being tricked by

a snake and eating a certain kind of

fruit

um still you have to believe that jesus

is the son of god

and that uh he died

as an atonement for original sin

and uh you gotta believe in him and uh

yeah i just cannot believe that uh

him like uh

a hebrew carpenter like a jewish

carpenter who turned miracle rabbi you

know obviously he was a spiritual person

went and was converted to

a more spiritual life by john the

baptist maybe

and maybe became leader of the group

after john the baptist was arrested

but i just can't believe that he was my

the savior of the world and the son of

god and the logos who created the cosmos

and all that

so it's kind of the same with hinduism

there's just too much of that kind of

faith orientation

unless maybe you get into something

really refined and ethereal like like

vedanta

but um

buddhism works for me so i mean if it

ain't broke don't fix it

so i guess that may be the answer to

that question so i'll move on to

potula's next question

and

the next question is

recently you've written much about

westerners who insist there is a soul

or self in buddhism why do you think

this is so persistent in some westerners

is it just profound attachment to

concepts from christian heritage or

something else did you run into this

position in asia

the more than 20 years that i lived in

asia i cannot recall

any

serious buddhist

claiming that there is a soul in

buddhism it's it strikes me as if not

entirely

a

western position than predominantly one

and and i should i should point out i

should clarify that a soul i'm talking

about like an individual personal soul

you know like in christianity each

person has their own soul i'm not

talking about

some interpretations of mahayana

buddhism where they're talking about the

dharmakaya or the tagata garbha or the

one mind you know the buddha nature or

something that is

it's like the underlying ultimate

reality that is the foundation of

everybody else it'd be like the

the block of stone in the metaphor

of the metaphor and the simile of the

block of stone

that could be the dharmakaya

to a mahayana buddhist

although

from my interpretation

um

you know it's the absolute cannot really

be said to exist or not exist you know

anything that is infinite and formless

it just kind of fades out into something

that is you can't really say is or isn't

so that's my approach i should have i

should have said that earlier on with

regard to the uh the marble

but uh

now i gotta get back here

to

this question

why do i think this is so persistent in

some westerners is it just profound

attachment to concepts from christian

heritage or something else

um i don't think it's necessarily

christian i think christians might

believe that in the west just because

there's already a propensity

to to believe in

like an intrinsically real individual

so that might be why the christian idea

of souls became so popular it wasn't

that uh we believe it because of

christianity it's just that christianity

became popular because it just kind of

fit in with this

predisposition

and i think it's partly just the western

mind is more individualistic

you know the eastern mind is more family

oriented where you might identify more

with your family than with your own

person

but the west has become

uh individualistic and also just

intellectual where people just insist on

perceiving everything and considering

those perceptions to be true

and

mysticism really never struck much

traction in the west you know there were

like the mystery cults that

you had plotinus you know you had a few

mystics

um

in like paganism and then christianity

came along and

mysticism was practiced maybe by a few

isolated saints

and it was starting to get more popular

like around the 15th century and then

protestantism came along and just kicked

it in the head

so

people are just stuck

in in a kind of samsaric intellectualism

and

um no self

really

like like i've been trying to it's like

beating my head against a wall trying to

explain those self because it's really

just a matter of not reifying the

absolute

um and that's i guess that's just with

regard to like the vedantist you know

universal soul the dharmakaya kind of a

thing because buddhism just does not

teach individual souls i i'm unaware of

any text some people will say well the

buddha taught souls because of the

dharmakaya or something but that's just

one soul with all beings sharing the

same one

sub mahayana

teaches that but with regard to saying

that there are ultimately

intrinsically real individual souls with

each being having its own different soul

um yeah i am unaware of any text that

really promulgates that in buddhism

so yeah i just think it's

a combination or my best guess it's a

combination of just the individuality

that is ingrained in us either

culturally or even maybe genetically and

also just this insistence

on

figuring out some sora intellectually

which also is is largely uh

a western thing i think the indians did

that too but they were uh it was it was

largely like indo-european traditions

that led them in that direction

so

what do you think is so persistent in

some westerners yeah i mean with regard

to some individual westerners they seem

to be very vehement about it too

it's not just i hypothesize you know

it's just my personal opinion that we've

got souls it's

some of them i i assume are like that

but some of them are they're just

i had one person in the comment section

to my blog that was just raging against

me saying that i was a satan worshiper

or a moral worshiper that i was just

going to hell because i was teaching no

self which is essentially what buddhism

teaches

and he was apparently a buddhist too but

i don't know some people just get really

worked up over it's just this

maybe it's individualism is just taken

to the point of you have to believe that

you're ultimately real or you just freak

out

i don't know it's it's uh that's my best

guess

i can't really say because i don't

really feel that much

okay next question

oh this is a fun one

also by potila are you now a certified

forklift operator if not when will you

be oh i'm sorry i don't have my wallet

here i'd pull out the card and just

flaunt it

but um yeah i don't have my wallet here

but yes i am i'm a certified forklift

operator

although

there are different levels to it i'm

kind of like a newbie

i can run there's let's see

five forklifts at work

and two of them i can do pretty much

whatever i want then there's two bigger

ones the cats that are mainly just for

lifting really heavy you know multi-ton

coils of steel

and uh

i can use the big ones for various

things but i'm not certified to be

moving around the biggest heaviest coils

of steel and then there's this weird

science fictiony thing called the moffit

it's got three wheels and

it can crab walk it can move sideways it

looks like something out of a science

fiction movie and there's only a few

guys that are certified to operate that

one

but um

yeah i am i am certified

i'm somebody now nobody's gonna mess

with me because i got a forklift

certification

okay next question

also by potila

panyo in one video you mentioned that
demons and other beings of the hell
realms are manifested by one's own kama
in a sense they are npcs beings with no
comma or chitana of their own is it
possible according to the terra bottle
sources that there are humans
quote unquote who are manifested in the
same way npc looking humans or humans
who don't have all the features of a
normal human existence we hear stories
like this in paranormal settings
like the men in black or a ghost warning
someone etc
well um i should clarify a little bit um
i was just saying that i think it's the
commentarial tradition

which i don't really consider to be

authoritative

um

the commentarial tradition says that the

demons in hell that are doing all the

the poking with pitchforks and stuff you

know the cutting with adzes

and the boiling people in pitch and so

forth um they're just they really are

they're not really there they're just

manifestations of the the karma and the

perceptions of the the denizens of the

hell realms

um

and strangely my father

who was a hypnotist hypnotized a woman

and uh

she was like astral traveling or

something and she wound up in what

seemed like a prison where there's these

beings

um human like beings in this prison and

they're just you know crying and trying

to get out and they're just like

you know they don't want to be prisoners

and then the guide

of this woman who was in a trance

just waved his hand through the bars and

then he took her hand and waved her hand

through the bars just to demonstrate

that these bars were just the creations

of the the minds of the people who were

there

imprisoned by those bars of their own

device

but getting on with this um also this

person he was a german monk was telling

me according to the commentaries not

only the beings in hell but

unfortunately also the celestial nymphs

in heaven

are uh

they're like npcs they're just really

nobody there it's just

um like a virtual being that's conjured

up by

by your comma

so yeah i'm not i'm not entirely sure

but uh

i have made the

the statement before

that

technically

you could say that an enlightened being

could be like an npc in a strange a

strange way like a super npc because

they really don't have that they're not

making comma

and because they're not making kama

they're they're really

not generating cheating our will

and so like going with saint john of the

cross his definition of a perfect being

is one who no longer is acting on their

own self-will but is just like an empty

vessel of the spirit of god who's like a

divine puppet and acting in accordance

with divine will

so you could say somebody like that

i mean translated into buddhist

terminology without the capital g god

that um

that somebody like that could possibly

be considered you know nobody there

like ram das used to say about his guru

neem karoli baba who as i have already

mentioned tonight uh

um it would be one of my best bets or

best guesses for a fully enlightened

being who lived in the past hundred

years

ramada said the better you got to know

him the more you realize that there

really wasn't anybody there he was just

like a mirror reflecting your own karma

back at you

so

there is that as a possibility although

i don't think potila had enlightened

beings in mind

um it is possible i mean anything that

you can imagine

is possible and a lot of things you can

imagine are also possible

um

at least in a metaphysical sense

so

let's see let's try and get to the

question so i don't uh answer the wrong

one is it possible according to the

terra bottle sources that there are

humans who are manifested in the same

way

npc looking humans or humans who don't

have all the features of a normal human

existence

yeah um

i think in orthodox terra vada

i mean aside from arahants or

enlightened beings

um i don't think there is mention of

that

it

i don't see why it would be impossible i

mean if it's supposed to happen in hell

and in heaven why not here too

but um yeah i do not recall reading

anything about

um

just like projections or what are they

called in uh

parapsychology like an apparition

yeah i mean just an apparition that

isn't like a a spirit like a ghost but

it's just

um conjured up by the comma of the

person i mean you could say that a

hallucination would be like that or like

the beings that you that you're

interacting with in dreams

i mean that would be at a human level

and uh

yeah some people they can uh

they can be uh operating in a dream a

dreamscape with their eyes open

so yeah i would not say that it's

impossible in fact

now that i've put it in terms like that

i would say that it's pretty likely that

a lot of people are

um

interacting with just figments of their

own imagination

um

although

whether they would uh

weigh something on a scale or not i

don't know

so anyway next question is from yuichiro

i think his name is and this is a

strange one yuichiro is always asking

like the poopoo kind of questions

and this one is uh i know necrophilia is

wrong but i don't know exactly why

why is necrophilia wrong

and uh it is an interesting question

so it's not a bad question at all

it's just that yuichiro has kind of a

strange

set of interests

so he thinks about these things

but i'm not i'm not criticizing uitra

i'm sure he's very nice

so i know necrophilia is wrong but i

don't know exactly why why is

necrophilia wrong and for those of you

who don't know what necrophilia is

it's uh

like sexual attraction to corpses

and uh i think partly

i mean i've never really thought about

why it's wrong at least i don't remember

having thought about it but um

i mean pretty obviously it's kind of

it's very creepy and cringy um just

thinking about it

so i mean

first off it just goes against

like innate human nature

the human being is an animal and we've

got lots of instincts regardless of what

lefties will tell you or even

psychologists throughout most of the

20th century they're saying human beings

don't have animal instincts and we are

just loaded with them like any kind of

emotional response

would be instinctive you know it's

emotional you know boys like girls you

don't have to learn that i mean

it helps i mean you can say that

cats

um

you know they have a hunting instinct

but i mean it's it's sort of nebulous

and if they're raised in a certain way

then they won't chase after mice or

anything but just chasing after a ball

of string or whatever you know wadded up

ball of aluminum foil that's uh or

pouncing on each other when they're

kittens that sort of thing is just

acting out

animal hunting instincts and we've got

instincts we are just full of animal

instincts

and

i am sure

there's an aversion to corpses

rotting flesh and so forth or

a sexual attraction

to

uh a corpse yeah i'm i'm sure that that

would be going against some aspects of

human nature um obviously having sex

with a corpse

is not going to reproduce the species in

fact it's not even pair bonding and

those are like the two main

purposes of sex in the human animal is

making babies and then just like

forming bonds bonding with another human

um those would be the two biological

purposes of it and uh necrophilia

doesn't either is it so it is like

literally unnatural

you know there's really no good

biological reason for it

so i assume that would be part of it is

you're just kind of going against deep

instincts that give you like a guilty

conscience or kind of mess up your mind

to some degree

i think that would be the main that

would be my best my best guess

um i mean obviously

i mean just the last from the buddhist

point of view is

you're already getting kind of

unwholesome

but lust for a corpse is uh i mean

maybe i shouldn't mention this but the

the

the rules of monastic discipline

are so detailed especially with regard

to the most serious

rules

including sex

that there are all these

uh test cases you know like law books

have

and so there's

stories of monks who go to a charnel

field which is where corpses are simply

thrown on the ground to decompose or be

eaten by animals and the monks are so

frustrated so sexually frustrated and

horny that they have sex with the corpse

and that is

uh worthy of excommunication and there's

even these weird cases there's like a

monk finds a severed head lying there

and he sticks his penis into the severed

head's mouth is that

does that qualify excommunication and

according to the text and this is like

ancient poly texts

it's if the lips are still intact enough

that the penis makes contact with the

lips then yes but if there's like no

lips left then it's it's still a serious

offense but it's not really

um

grounds for excommunication

so there's all this kind of weird stuff

um

because they really didn't want to leave

any ambiguity with regard to what is and

is not

worthy of excommunication so they had

all these

stories or sample stories examples that

uh i i guess a lot of them are just made

but uh

getting back to the question why is

necrophilia wrong

um

lust in itself from the buddhist point

of view you're already playing with fire

and uh lust for no good reason other

than just

just lust for lust's sake

is not so good

yeah

yeah let's just go with the human nature

it's just a violation of deep human

instincts that when you go against your

instincts it creates a kind of friction

and turmoil inside which leads to

deep subconscious problems which can

percolate up to the surface or maybe

they just are at the surface from the

very get-go with something like

necrophilia

it may be

that somebody loved their spouse so

intensely they want to just do it one

last time but

so there might be a little bit of love

or something mixed in but as a general

rule it's

yeah it's it's just kind of uh

pathological i think

so anyway let's just move on to uh

something less morbid

and which is yuichiro's next question

i don't know if you've answered this

before but how did you go to the

bathroom while living in caves inside

the cave outside was their toilet paper

i'm just curious

okay well um

the only time i went to the bathroom

inside of a cave

was

um

i i urinate inside the cave when it was

just blazing hot or sometimes there'd be

i'd just be inundated with visitors that

i didn't want to meet with and i just

hide inside the cave and refuse to come

out like the the bear at the zoo

and it was kind of a zoo like uh

feel to it too just people coming and

staring at me and

just watching me i was like the the

weird foreign monk you know the weird

saintly foreign monk living out in the

in the cave

and uh sometimes i just don't want to

meet with them so i just pee in the it

was actually my bath cup it was this big

bowl

made out of aluminum

and then i'd dump it outside after uh

the coast was clear or it had cooled

down at night

but um

yeah i mean there are outhouses as a

general rule even i was one time staying

out in the middle of nowhere in this

natural cave out in this forest

and there was no outhouse

and for a while i was just crapping on

the ground like an animal outside the

cave of course

some distance away you know you don't

want flies and stink and so forth but

then uh within a few weeks

some friendly

villagers offered to dig me a latrine so

i didn't really have a ceiling or

anything but at least there was a hole

and

you know some some boards you could kind

of squat over

but um toilet paper is not generally

used in in asia like like burma you

mostly use water and that's what you're

supposed to do

in in uh for for a monk i mean there's

instructions on everything in life

including using the bathroom and um

so there's there's two main ways of

wiping your butt

according to ancient buddhism first you

use a stick

and then after you've used the stick

which in burmese is called a gnudon

sometimes people would uh

donate to me little bundles of sticks

for wiping my butt

and the best one's got a little bit of

bark on them still so that it's got some

traction

um

and then after you use the stick then

you rinse with water

and

i think most monks don't even bother

with the stick they just use water and

that's i mean it works better than

toilet paper it really does like a lot

of you go to southeast asia like

thailand or burma

and a lot of

bathrooms even in the city they'll have
like a spray gun right next to the
toilet like like a lot of people have on
their kitchen sink you'll have the spray
gun you know this hose and the spray
thing and that works better than toilet
paper because poop really is water
soluble and then
if you're wearing underpants or
something which as a monkey don't do um
then you would dab it and dry with a
paper towel or something
and then stand up and
and go and go ahead with your business
go somewhere else and do other things
so

yeah i mostly did not use toilet paper i
was using um you know like i'd have a
an outhouse and then
inside the outhouse there'd be like a
clay water pot
and then there'd be like half a coconut
shell
and then you just go in there and you do
your thing and then you scoop some water
out and you use the cup with one hand
and then you're reaching around the
other way with your hand and kind of
wiping with your hand and your hand gets
rinsed clean at the same time as your
narrow place gets rinsed clean because
as i say poop is water soluble and that
has been the way of butt wiping

in southern parts of asia since

prehistoric times i'm pretty sure the

indus valley civilization did it the

same way

and that's you are instructed to do that

and there's all these rules you're not

allowed to

throw the the butt wiping sticks into

the latrine because then it will fill up

the latrine with these sticks that don't

biodegrade nearly as fast as poop does

which then causes

some

monks from burmese villages who come to

america

to not throw their

crappy toilet paper into the toilet

because technically it's against the

rules and they just throw it into the

waste paper basket or something which is

not optimal in the west

so

uh long story short about uh using the

toilet for monks in uh

who live in caves or forests yeah

there's there's an outhouse that you go

to

and it could be a quite a walk and

sometimes you have emergencies in the

middle of the night unlike

in in the west i mean in the west

the the whole philosophy of using the

bathroom is completely different it's

like you get up and you're sitting in

bed and you're scratching yourself and

just like well what's on my agenda for

today might as well [__] shower and

shave

and then you nonchalantly mosey into the

bathroom and

and do the three s's but uh in burma you

sit up on your mat on the floor and

you're scratching yourself and it's like

well what's on my agenda for oh i got a

[__] now now now and then you it's like

you gotta take these fast little baby

steps like this because you got to like

stay clenched

until you're there

but i think i'm getting way into tmi

territory now

but it's yuichiro's own fault

he asked for this

but i don't i don't mind i can talk

about this kind of stuff

let's see

may you each hero be happy and well

and uh no necrophilia

let's see next question

is from chaplin what are your goals for

2022

well see what are my goals i really i'm

not extremely goal oriented and um i

think on my old

nipapancha.org website which is in the

links below

um i've even warned people against

goal oriented dharma you know don't i

mean just be in the present moment as

fully and as consciously as possible and

you're doing i mean that's like your

maximum potential is fulfilled right

there

um setting up goals usually things don't

turn out the way you plan

although

let's see

this assuming that i have goals you know

this i do have kind of like objectives

or plans

so let's go with that

number one is i'm going to uh move in

with my sweetheart and we're going to

live a long and happy life together

that's one also i'm planning on getting

a glock 19.

and if you don't know what a glock 19 is

then bless your heart

um aside from those those two things

um

yeah i really don't have

i really don't have many goals you know

just continue

doing the best i can

you know

be a good employee

maybe get a raise

um

yeah

i guess

so let's just move on to chaplin's next

question

what

have you developed any unexpected

hobbies since re-entering lay life

unexpected hobbies

since re-entering lay life

unexpected ones maybe chaplin has

something in mind here but i i'm not

thinking of anything

i mean i've i've gotten to the point

where i'm trying to do at least one evil

sudoku per day but uh i started doing

that when i was still a monk

just a few months before i uh dropped

out that was after the great uh

adobe flash armageddon i used to play

video games just little you know puzzle

games and that kind of thing

and

google stopped enabling

the flash player where you played most

of these and uh

so i just resorted to doing sudoku's

which is

not nearly as

as entertaining and satisfying but uh

yeah i've done probably close to 400 of

them solved them successfully the evil

ones the hardest level

bragging there i guess

um but let's get back to this question

here have you developed any unexpected

hobbies

since re-entering lay life

unexpected hobbies

i can't think of anything

as i say maybe chaplin has something in

mind but i can't think of any so i'll

just move on to the next question i'll

probably think of several

after i'm done here

where do you see yourself five years

from now

well i could just make a guess like i

say i don't really have a plan for where

i will be five years from now

um i wouldn't mind still working at the

same job at the sheet metal shop i

really do enjoy it it is it is um

it's a satisfying job and everybody gets

along and is good friends and well

friends

and uh

yeah it's

it's nice although i mean if

the popularity of my books for example

and they're in the links below

you know if that really takes off and uh

you know i'm making enough royalties to

live on then uh yeah i might i might

stop working at the sheet metal shop and

which will give me a lot more time

to uh

to teach dhamma and uh do the videos

like of my favorite readings and so

forth

because really that's um

just a matter of time and energy is is

like a limiting factor time and energy

are limiting factors for me now in a way

that they weren't when i was still a

monk

unexpected hobbies

so where do i see myself five years from

now

i'm guessing what would be most probable

i'll be living in a house with my

sweetheart

and uh we will be

mates

and

maybe still working at the sheet metal

shop i don't know we'll just have to see

how that goes

um

and uh

yeah i'll have a driver's license and uh

let's see

yeah

i don't know

probably

not so different from now except five

years older and uh

certainly better established in lay life

than i have been over the past

several months

and uh

and uh having a mate for

for five years

or actually more than five years

so

yeah these projections for the future

i'm not very good at because um

i just think you just do the best you

can in the present moment and uh

you know i mean you can set goals but uh

yeah i

don't really set a lot of those

so yeah it's i'm sorry i really can't

answer that question very well either

how do i see myself five years from now

just living

um

i hope happy and healthy with my

sweetheart

and we will be a family

with dogs and then chickens and probably

pigs

although uh the pigs aren't allowed

inside the house

and uh

yeah i assume i'll be uh better set up

than i am now although i'm not i'm not

complaining at all

all right and finally the last question

the last question of them all

is from arane

and eran asks can you speak more on the

influence of jainism on buddhism

which is kind of an interesting question

and

actually

i'm only aware of one

big influence of jainism on buddhism

and

before i get to that i suppose i should

um clarify for those of you who aren't

familiar with jainism that it is a

religion

of india there are still supposedly

about 2 million jains

and the the reputed founder of jainism

who is called mahavira by the jains

which is means great hero

in uh in the buddhist texts he's called

nigantan

which is uh niganta means like one

without bonds

and nata puta is is just kind of a joke

name to make him sound silly i think it

means something like son of grandson

um

so it's it's like radically in some ways

similar to buddhism and it has similar

ancestors to buddhism it probably has

roots that go all the way back to the

indus valley civilization

so it's in some ways it's similar to

buddhism in that i mean there's just the

standard indian belief in in rebirth or

reincarnation but the way the jains have

it worked out is everyone has their own

jiva or a soul you know we were talking

about souls earlier everyone has their

own soul and

karma is like a material substance that

sticks to the soul and holds it down on

this earth but if you can purify your

soul of all karma

then your soul

just wafts up into heaven and then you

live uh

in just paradise essentially

and so the jains would uh deliberately

try to get rid of all of their karma and

they've got had some really weird ways

of doing it like i've read some jain

sutras

and uh including some of like the rules

that jane monks were required to follow

and there was one

um because you're not

creating any karma if you need to cross

a river

um you have to go and there's like no

bridge let's say there's just a boat

you're not allowed to go in a boat if

the boat wasn't already going to go over

you can't have somebody take you across

um just for the sake of taking you

across the river because you'd be making

karma that way

so if the boat was already going to go

across and you can get into the boat

then you're allowed to do that but if

the boat springs a leak and starts

sinking midway like you're out in the
middle of the river and the boat starts
to sink you're not allowed to help bail
out the boat because that would make
karma because even good karma is karma
you're gonna try have to get rid of all
of it
so what you're supposed to do
is if you're the kind of gene that wears
clothes because a lot of them were
sky clad or just they own nothing they
didn't even own a begging bowl they
didn't own clothes they were just
completely naked
but if you're the kind that wore a robe
you were supposed to take your robe off

and fold it up and put it on top of your

head

just in case the owner of the boat got

so pissed off at you that he threw you

overboard and that way your robes

wouldn't get wet

and that's actually in in jane sutras

these instructions like um jane monks if

they were going for alms you know they

they'd be begging for food with their

cupped hands and they were um

they weren't allowed to beg for food

where there was like a scroungy dog

hanging around because they might be

depriving that scroungy dog of food

which would be bad karma and they

weren't allowed to eat any food that was

cooked for them specifically because
that would be karma too they're just
supposed to eat leftovers but if there
was like um you know the scroungy dog or
lots of flies around even you might be
depriving the flies of food not allowed
to eat that
so
and also they would torture themselves
as a way of just speeding up the process
of getting rid of their bad karma and
the buddha really warned against that
because you're just making more karma
through your intention to torture
yourself that was the middle path that
the buddha taught like in the first

sermon the dhamma chakra

you know there's the path of

self-indulgence and the path of

self-torture and nowadays there aren't

very many people taught for themselves

but in ancient india

it wasn't just the jains either there

were like uh

numerous ajivaca sects ajibaca is now

extinct it's a religious system that is

now extinct but um i mean they would

literally torture themselves to death

and once uh the jane monk figured that

he had somehow

um exhausted all this karma he was

supposed to just wander off into a like

a

an isolated area and to squat down and

stay in a squatting position until he

was dead

which i assume would be uh you'd die of

thirst and kidney failure first

but anyway getting back to the

chaplain's last question or airing's

last question here can you speak more on

the influence of jainism on buddhism the

only real influence of jainism on

buddhism other than just mentions in the

texts where usually they're being made

fun of like

i'll tell one of these stories like

mahavira according to the ancient

buddhist texts

mahavira

vomited blood and died because

some of his followers had converted to

buddhism

you know it's probably not true the

jains themselves don't say this

but um buddhism really is guilty of some

uh

anti-unbuddhist propaganda

so

but anyway getting back to the question

that i keep uh not answering the the one

influence of jainism on buddhism one

significant

influence that i am aware of

and i i think the ajahn tenisero is the

one who i learned this from

is that

the word asawa

and it's a very common technical word in

buddhism asawa and if you're an asava

that means you're fully aligned if you

get rid of all of your assaults you're

you're fully enlightened and it's

um

it was originally a jain term

asawa

it means something that flows towards

you

and for the jains that was that sticky

karma that weighs down your your jiva or

your soul it flows towards you and

sticks and holds you down but in

buddhism as is the case with a lot of

vedic terms also the buddha or whoever

adopted the term

changed the meaning of it so asawa

it's usually translated as

well it doesn't even have a standard

translation i think biku bodhi calls it

taint

it used to be called canker

let's see

the buddhist dictionary originally was

calling it bias which i think is good

but my my usual translation for asawa is

uh encumbering influence

now influence is also means you know

something that flows towards you you

know it's fluence is flowing and in is

you know this way instead of outward

it's in towards you

and uh

so in buddhism it can really mean any

kind of encumbering influence to me

um just something that you cling to

something that you just adhere to and it

weighs you down it's like a stumbling

block

it's like a burden you know it's like um

in buddhism they say that another word

for a term for an arahant is one who

lays down the burden

and that burden is the is the assault

and um

the the commentarial tradition or even

the like the later textual tradition

talks about the different kinds of

assaults and uh i won't really get into

that but um

um yeah the term asaba according to

ajahn tenisro i think

uh was originally borrowed from the from

the james just like a lot of the uh

the buddhist jargon philosophical jargon

was was taken from the vedic tradition

but jainism and buddhism are non-vedic

they do not accept the vedas as

authoritative and they're not really

offshoots of badism

that apparently they have roots that go

all the way back into prehistoric

pre-aryan indus valley

spiritual systems

and jainism is similar to buddhism and

it believes in karma and there really is

no creator god or highest deity although

they do have like the eternal heaven

that

is kind of similar

but um i think i've answered that and so

that was the last question

and so

we are done and it was

two hours

gosh i mean

two hours who's gonna who's gonna watch

the whole two hours

like i'm uh

joe rogan or something

but anyway that's it and uh

like i said before the url links are

below including the links to my books

and um

i apologize for taking so long i hope

things will run more smoothly next time

and if you are willing to ask questions

if you're curious about anything i mean

ask me anything really although i'm most

likely to be able to answer in

accordance with uh

buddhist philosophy like you know ask

questions about buddhism or what it's

like living in burma or about me

personally i'm i'm i'm more likely to be

able to give an educated intelligent

answer with regard to that sort of thing

but um

yeah hit me with your best shot

you can ask me

poop questions even if you want to

and be happy

Hello and welcome to episode 22 of

Question and Answer. I am your host

Punya Bassu and these are my co-hosts

Saffron and Fallon and the kitty who

doesn't care what her name is and so I'm

not going to even say it.

And um

no matter how hard I try, it seems like

I have been unsuccessful in doing a Q&A

more than about once every three weeks,

which I think is going to have to be

rectified because I'm getting a lots of

questions.

So, because of the lots of questions

aforementioned I should just uh

get straight to the straight to the

answers and so

the first question

is from Holmger.

And uh I hope you will forgive me if I

just mispronounced his name.

And Holmger says

what is the comma

or karma of euthanasia? You said in your

previous Q&A that certain actions carry

with them certain mental states. You

gave the example of killing one's own

parents, but what if your father or

mother was 90 and suffered from

Alzheimer's and were unable to recognize

anything or anyone? If they were in an

intense state of mental anguish,

wouldn't putting them out of their

immediate suffering be an act of
compassion and wouldn't that be a rare
example of patricide or matricide
generating skillful karma?
Well, first of all, I would just like to
specify that I'll be answering from a
strictly orthodox Buddhist perspective.
Um my own personal opinion might differ
from this but um
uh I've got to I've got to adopt some
frame of reference so I'll just go with
orthodox Theravada Buddhism.
And uh also I I'll just mention that uh
this issue has come up
um in real life a few times recently.
Like uh a friend of mine has a mother

who's who's very very old and she's
fading and he was asking me about you
know, what if she wants to
she wants uh like assisted suicide or
something. He wasn't considering
actually killing his own mother
um compassion or not, but um still I
mean this this kind of issue it's uh
it's like a a modern issue
to some degree. I mean, obviously, you
know, killing uh somebody to put them
out of their misery has been around for
a long time, but it's it's more subtle
now and more humane, I think,
than just taking a pillow to them or
something.
But um from the Buddhist point of view,

I mean, you're still killing one of your own parents if you are in fact um you know, doing flipping the switch or you know, administering the dose or whatever it is.

So, um

killing one of your own parents is from the perspective of Theravada Buddhism uh one of the few actions that guarantees hell in your next life.

Another one would be like causing a Buddha to bleed, which uh you don't get very many opportunities to do that, killing a fully enlightened being, and the third um I've I've seen two different versions of of the other one.

It's it's either

raping or seducing a nun or else it's

causing a schism in the Sangha. And I'm

not sure which is the more orthodox of

those two.

But that and uh killing one of your own

parents, those are the the four

guarantees of hell

in your next existence.

So,

um here at the bottom, Homegar is

asking, "Wouldn't that be a rare example

of patricide or matricide generating

skillful karma? Well, it could generate

some skillful karma,

but it would just be mitigating the the

unskillful karma of killing one of your

own parents because I don't think it's
possible to knowingly and willingly
kill one of your own parents without
there being some real turmoil going on
even if it's subconscious. It's going to
be like really serious
um mental states going on.
And so,
um obviously,
um you know, if one of your parents is
like terminally ill and in a lot of pain
and you just pull the plug on the life
support machine, that's obviously going
to have different karma than like Lizzie
Borden with her axe.
But,

um still it's it's going to be
um from the Buddhist point of view
again, it is going to be the very
serious act of causing the death of one
of your own parents deliberately and
knowingly and willingly. So, you'd be
better off letting the doctors take care
of it or or if they're able to pull
their own plug, you know, that's their
choice, but uh doing it for them is uh
playing with uh very big fire.
And uh just from the Buddhist Buddhist
perspective, I would not recommend it.
Don't kill your own parents.
Next question is from Jeremy.
And uh this is one I've I've considered
more than once also.

Jeremy says, if I do not take rebirth in if the next existence is not me, then why should I care? Other than a lack of compassion, why should I live a good life so that another should benefit. Humans and animals remain ignorant, but I think I read somewhere that hell and deva beings know what karma or intentional actions got them there. So, that knowledge may be a contributing factor, a knowledge of continuity, {question mark}

So, essentially the question is um since Buddhism orthodox traditional Buddhist philosophy teaches that there is no abiding entity, no ultimately real

abiding self or soul,

then why should we care if our actions

are going to be causing suffering to

some other being,

you know, in in the subsequent

existence?

And I mean, if you really consider it,

then um

there's there's an obvious sort of

counterargument, and that is that if

there is no abiding self or soul, any

separated individuality that is

ultimately real, then I mean, we're not

the same from one moment to the next.

So, why should we even care if our

actions now are going to cause our own

misery an hour from now?

I mean, it's it's the same kind of argument, the same kind of phenomena in play.

So, I mean, there are people that will knowingly and willingly make that decision like uh

what, devil worshipers, I suppose, who are willing to uh make a deal. I mean, I I assume, you know, this is the way traditionally it is interpreted. They make a deal with the devil so that they get what they want for

the rest of their life or 10 or 20 years, and then they go to hell. And then they're willing to make that, you know, they're willing to make a future

them go to hell. And um

it's uh it just strikes me as as

foolish. And just even if you just

consider, you know, your next life to be

somebody else, then callously just not

caring if they're going to be happy or

miserable.

Even though they're very similar to you,

you know, it'd be like even if it's not

you, it's you know, in a way it's sort

of like your brother or your

doppelganger or something.

Um

Yeah, I think uh you should care

just because

you know, if you're knowingly and

willingly causing suffering

even to a future version of yourself,

then yeah, I mean, that's that's bad

karma.

Um it's going to

the bad karma is going to affect you

even in this life. I mean, it's when

you're doing it, it's going to be

affecting you even at that moment.

And so, yeah, just uh don't send some

future incarnation of yourself to hell.

So, this the first two questions were

were really hitting it hard. It's like

don't kill your parents.

Don't go to hell.

Next question

is from Nagarjuna.

And Nagarjuna says, "What are your

thoughts on Osho?"

And uh I have written a few blog posts

about Osho.

Um

It's uh

I don't know. I could just sit here and

and just sort of ramble for half an hour

about Osho. Um I do think that he was

um definitely a trickster figure.

Um he may have attained some kind of

realization.

He could uh deliver a 2-hour-long Dharma

talk every day.

And uh even that is is impressive

because I really would I've I've had to

give like 15-minute Dharma talks every

day, and I'm like scratching my head

after like this first or second week as

to what I'm going to be talking about.

Um

One one idea I've had about Osho

and people like him

is that just because you're at a higher

level of consciousness doesn't mean that

you're more virtuous necessarily or a

better person necessarily.

Um Osho was very rascally, you know, he

got first pick of all the pretty

sannyasins at the ashram and all that.

But um

I've been thinking that you know

a monkey is at a higher level of

consciousness than a sheep.

But nevertheless a monkey's a lot

naughtier than a sheep.

Um just because uh you're you're serene

and and all that. Um

Yeah.

So my thoughts on Osho, um I'm very

skeptical that he was enlightened.

Although I have met a few a few people

that knew him personally. And um there

was this German artist I met in

Indonesia who I asked him if he thought

Osho was enlightened and he he just went

It was obvious. Just obviously he was

enlightened.

And then uh I've met another disciple

who was one of his senior disciples

actually who uh

I mean he was sort of noncommittal, you

know, he wouldn't say that he wasn't but

uh

he wouldn't he wouldn't exactly say that

he was either.

Um

but I I've never really been much

interested in Osho. I I generally still

think of him as the Bhagwan Shree

Rajneesh and I have a lot more respect

for uh

a person that used to be his right-hand

man and that was uh

See Swami Anand Teertha.

I think is what he used to be called.

Nowadays he's Paul Lowe.

And um he resonates his his his

teachings resonate with me better than

Osho because I've read a few books by

Osho and he does say wise things

sometimes but it's very glib and I don't

always agree with what he's saying.

So, I think that's enough of an answer

for that one. And so, I move on to the

next.

And the next question is from JT Drake.

And JT says,

"Not sure you see these comments but if

you do, do you have any thoughts about

this book?" And then he provided a link.

So,

I clicked on the link and the book is

Buddha by Karen Armstrong.

And

um I haven't read the book. So, I really

don't have much to say about the book.

Although, I have read two books by Karen

Armstrong. Both of them were good. One

is um A History of God which is

a history of Western monotheism.

And the other one was um

a biography of the Prophet Muhammad.

And both of them were good books. But

with regard to

the book Buddha by Karen Armstrong, I

wouldn't really even want to read it.

Maybe someone who doesn't know much

about Buddhism, you know, they want an

introduction, you know, from a Western

perspective, it might be good. Karen

Armstrong is a good author.

But um she was uh

she was a Catholic nun, I believe.

And um she definitely I mean, she's not

a Buddhist. She might be interested in

Buddhism.

So, I mean, probably it would be the

standard um

you know, biography based on Western

scholarship of

what the historical Buddha was like.

And um

she probably wouldn't be very

knowledgeable with regard to the deeper

aspects of Buddhism or um you know, like

the rules of monastic discipline, that

sort of thing.

So, if you really wanted to uh

know about the Buddha, I think um

a book by

a Western Roman Catholic might not be

your best bet. But, Karen Armstrong is

an intelligent and intelligent and good

writer, and she does have some wisdom.

So,

um I'm sure it wouldn't be a total waste

of time.

And so, the next question

is from Erin.

And Erin says,

"Could it be said in Buddhism that

people who are gifted with psychic abilities or other advanced attainments in this life may be on an upward progression having reached certain spiritual attainments in their prior life?"

Well, it may be So, is that what's Yeah, it may be, but then again, it could be the opposite. I mean, just because you got a person who's got, you know, psychic talent in this life, um it's possible that there's gradually building up, and maybe in their next life they're going to be in a heaven realm as as a deva or something. But, it could be the other way around. It could be that in their past life they were in

heaven, and then they exhausted all of their their good karma or, you know, the good karma that was keeping them up there with all of the, you know, celestial nymphs and pleasure gardens and everything.

So, maybe, you know, they just took a step down.

And um for some strange reason that reminds me of something my father told me.

Um

he was a hypnotist and did a lot of past life regressions and that sort of thing with with other people and also with himself. And he said that um

he never met a guy

who had been a woman in his previous

existence who wasn't, in my father's

words, queer as a three-dollar bill.

So,

um the reason I bring that up is that

um, like an effeminate man, he may be

progressing, like in his next life he's

going to be female, or it could be that

he was female in the past life and it's

just sort of a transitional state. And

it could be the same way with these uh

people with uh

gifted with psychic abilities or other

advanced attainments as in the question.

So, it could go either way. They could

be on their way up or on their way down

or maybe they're just holding steady or

you know, there's there's an infinite

number of possibilities.

So, the next question is also from

Airain.

And um, this one is not entirely

serious, me thinks.

Airain says, "If the earliest teachings

taught no soul, can we assume the Buddha

was a ginger? I mean, he was depicted as

a blue-eyed Aryan."

Um,

yeah. Well, uh

Led Zeppelin also says big-legged women

don't have no soul, but um

we we can uh skip the big-legged women,

I guess.

So,

yeah, it's it's not just no soul though,

it's no self. It's no

like intrinsically real

individuality

of any kind. I mean, it's like this

glass of orange juice. I mean, from the

Buddhist point of view, this glass of

orange juice does not have an

intrinsically

real self-existence. It's It's just here

or it seems to be here due to all this

this whole vast unthinkable web of

causes and effects. And so, this

seems to exist because of all the causes

that cause it to seem to exist. And if

the causes ceased, then it would cease.
It's like It's like a fire. You know,
the fire exists so long as you've got
the heat, the fuel, and the oxygen. And
when the heat, the fuel, and the oxygen,
or any of those three ceases to be
sufficient, then the fire ceases.
And um that's the way we are also. So
long as the causes of our existence
persist, we seem to persist, but it's
not due to any intrinsic self-existence,
it's due to the the cosmic web of causes
and effects.
Uh
and um
the Buddha

may have had blue eyes, and uh

there's a good chance he was um

Indo-Aryan.

But um

I'm not sure that he was a ginger.

Although I have read in uh ancient

Hindu texts that uh the stereotypical

Brahmin in India had blue eyes and red

hair.

So, I don't think that has anything to

do with no self, though.

And so, we'll just move on to the next

question.

From Bodhisattva 969.

And Bodhisattva 969 says,

"How useful is this life in times of

Corona when you are still allowed to

work or not go to the cinema or go on

vacation?

My strength is slowly exhausted. My

well-paying job pukes me, and my fellow

human beings who don't seem to be

interested in anything."

Um I know enough about Bodhisattva 969

to

be reasonably confident that he lives in

Germany,

which is probably much more dystopian

in uh in times of Corona than, say,

South Carolina where I am right now.

South Carolina is almost completely

normal at this point. And uh never

really got out of hand because it has uh

Republican governance.

But in Germany, we're uh

we're we're more in the realm of uh

cyberpunk dystopia.

I don't know what it is about the

Germans.

So, what's the question here? I mean,

how useful is this life? Well, I mean,

anything that occurs to you is is

it's occurring to you because of your

own karma. You know, it's just the

fruition of your own actions and mental

states.

So, you got to you have to learn to face

it and sort of like uh the movie

Groundhog Day, where you have to keep

doing it over and over again till you

get it perfect. So, you have to learn

how to

deal with with equanimity with with

anything that comes your way.

So, this is just a test, it's a trial,

and uh you have to maintain your

equanimity to some extent,

at least your mindfulness.

Um

yeah, I mean, that's it, really.

I remember

in uh Eckhart Tolle's first famous book,

uh he was saying that uh you know, being

mad at other people is like standing in

front of a mirror and being mad at your

own reflection because really, you know,

whatever's going on around you is the

fruition of your own karma. It's it's

really uh ultimately your own doing.

Even though ultimately we don't exist as

intrinsically real individual beings.

So,

yeah, I can just uh wish you luck and uh

just uh

yeah, do your best, maintain equanimity,

try to live a dharmic life,

don't lash out, don't resent your

unhappiness if you're experiencing it

onto others,

Especially people close to you.

And

try to maintain some mindfulness, some

level of mindfulness.

And good luck, especially in Germany.

So the next question is from Das Boot.

And

Das Boot says,

"For me it's quite something to have an

outlet for thinking aloud and asking

about anything even remotely connected

to Buddhism completely without having to

censor myself in any way." Well,

that's good.

So onto the next weird question.

"For me it seems like the WEF

and and it turns out that's the World

Economic Forum. I had to inquire about

that. I didn't know what it was at

first.

So I'll just start over.

For me it seems like the WEF, AI, and internet of bodies psychopaths are trying to construct something that to me feels like some type of forced materialistic hyper samsara.

Would that actually be possible to kind of ensnare people's souls or whatever that is a composite phenomena perceived as such and actually keep them in this state for a a long time span? Would Buddhism need to add a realm for that even?

Um I don't think Buddhism would have to add a realm for that.

Um

gosh, where do you even start with this

one?

So apparently you've got like the

globalist,

you know, whatever you want to call it,

globalist elite

who are trying to

essentially control the human race by

controlling their thoughts, by

controlling the information, you know,

the propaganda, Ministry of Truth and

all that.

Um in order to just keep people locked

into this

false narrative,

semi-true at best,

um in order to keep them docile and, you

know, producing

money for the the elites.

And uh you know, helping them stay in

power and so forth.

Um

yeah, I mean, that's the thing. It's

just been the the status quo for

humanity. I mean, if it if it's not um

you know, the World Economic Forum and

and um

you know, the internet and then TV and

all that, it's you just it's

you know, fanatical priests or, you

know, giving fanatical sermons, you

know, it's

just or it's just just like the taboos

and narrow-minded

uh cultural traditions of of certain

cultures.

Uh

yeah, I I really don't think that

I mean, there is some truth to the the

saying in Ecclesiastes in the Bible that

there is nothing new under the sun. I

mean, obviously, the internet seems

pretty new,

but um

still, human nature remains the same and

the situations we find ourselves in have

parallels or analogs to to past states.

I really don't think that anything is

really all that different now. It could

be that in the future, everyone's going

to have to have the chip in their neck

that's going to, you know,

keep their brain under control or

something, but um

yeah, I think those of us who have

better karma just won't wind up in that

that particular version of reality.

And that that version of reality,

there's there's an infinite number of of

worlds. So, places like that already

exist,

I assume.

So, I'm not even sure if I answered this

question. Would it Would that actually

be possible? Yeah, I assume it would to

some degree, although I mean, you can't

fool everyone all the time.

There's always going to be a certain

resistance, people that are red-pilled

or whatever.

And

to ensnare them and uh actually keep

them in the state for long time span.

Most people just spend their entire life

that way anyway.

Just normies, you listen to normies

conversation. Depends on the normies, of

course, but you know, the working class

guys,

you know, they'll they'll just talk a

lot about

music and sports and video games.

Maybe food sometimes.

You know, that's that's just sort of the

the

virtual reality that they're in.

Bless their hearts. I mean, they're they

can be really, you know, good guys.

But um

still it's like the average person is

not red-pilled, you know, they're

they're in the matrix and they don't

know that they're in the matrix.

So,

yeah, I think

something like what um

Das Boot here is talking about. I mean,

that's just the everyday reality of most

beings in the universe, I would assume,

to some degree.

So, let's move on to the next question.

And this is from Potila.

And this is kind of a difficult one,

even though it's a simple one.

What political figure, alive or dead,

do I most admire?

If if I were Haru,

and some of you probably know who that

is. I know what the answer would be

already.

Um

Yeah, I I I don't know if I really have

I don't have like a designated favorite,

you know, it's like ooh, this is my

favorite. But, um

I think one of the most interesting

political figures would be Julian the Apostate, who was the last pagan emperor of Rome.

I I have my heart goes out to people who fight for lost causes, and he fought a lost cause of trying to uh trying to defeat Christianity and and maintain Roman paganism.

And uh obviously, he did not succeed. He was only emperor for a few years, and he may have been murdered by a Christian Roman soldier.

He got He got his liver pierced by a spear while fighting the Persians.

Aside from Julian, I don't know.

Most admire.

Yeah, that's the admire part. I mean,

um like Charles II of of England of of

our Great Britain.

Um

Yeah, he was really interesting. He'd be

fun to hang out with, but I can't really

say that I admire him.

So, yeah, let's just say

Julian the Apostate, and I'm sorry to

disappoint anyone who

was expecting me to say Ashoka or

something.

So, let's just move on to the next

question, also by Pol Tila.

Another question, "Since moving to the

South, how many times have you been

invited to church? I think you should go

to a mega church service and just take
in the experience like an
anthropologist. Get to know your
neighbors sort of thing."
Uh surprisingly, the number of times I
have been invited to church here in
in the Bible Belt of the USA is zero.
Although, uh
um I've been told that um
people do ask other people to come to
church, and it's it's uh you know, it's
not like they're trying to convert you
so much as, you know, they're being
friendly.
You know, they're just uh inviting,
"Come along to church with us, you
know." But, um

I think most people that I know know
that I'm a Buddhist, and so I think
they're not even uh
you know, that dog just won't hunt.
But, um if somebody did ask me to go to
church, I might just out of curiosity,
sure. I'm open-minded.
But, uh all the the Jesus, Jesus stuff,
it's uh it's hard for me to follow
because you have to believe the story
that you couldn't possibly prove, and
maybe you won't even know if it's right
or wrong after you die.
I'm just I'm just don't have that kind
of faith.
I do have a deeper, nonverbal kind of

faith, but believing in a narrative

in a book

that um you just couldn't possibly prove

one way or the other.

Um yeah, it just doesn't appeal to me at

all. I just don't get it.

I got

click something here. Okay.

So, let's just move on to the next

question.

This is also from Potila.

And it is a meditation question.

"Can you please elaborate on the idea of

establishing mindfulness in front of

oneself?" Excerpt from uh Majjhima

Nikaya 10, which is I assume,

if I remember correctly, the

Satipatthana Sutta.

"It's when a mendicant gone to a

wilderness or to the root of a tree or

to an empty hut

sits down cross-legged with their body

straight and focuses their mindfulness

right there."

Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu araññagato vā

rukkhamūlagato

vā

Um, okay.

I think it is fairly straightforward,

but I have you encountered several

different interpretations and would like

to hear your thoughts.

Um, okay. So, the question is what does

it mean? I assume, this is my

interpretation.

The question is what does it mean to

establish mindfulness in front of

yourself?

And I had a Sri Lankan monk ask me about

this once, too.

And

personally

I mean,

um, some people will say, "Oh, you're

supposed to focus, you know, on the like

here or here, which is in front of your

face, you know, the front of your face,

you focus on that." Um

I think that it's just a kind of a

figure of speech in Pali, very ancient

Pali, like the Atthagavagga. Um, you know, to prefer something means you set it before you.

It's like a a figure of speech and it's used several times in very ancient Buddhist texts that if you are preferring something or favoring something, you put it in front of you.

It's just a figure of speech and I assume that's what they're doing here, where you put mindfulness in front of you. I mean, that is your

um

What what's the word?

You know, you you are just favoring mindfulness, you are establishing it as

your priority.

That's what I think it means.

So,

I think I'll uh

move on to the next one.

And uh

maybe I'll flatter myself in uh

in congratulating myself that I answered

that one so quickly.

So, Potila has another meditation

question. Sorry, but it's long. This is

about vicikiccha

or usually translated as doubt or

um

indecision, something like that. It's uh

not being able to settle your mind, you

know, you've got two conflicting ideas

and you can't really settle on one of them, something like that.

In the Dhamma, unlike many god-based religions, there is a path in which vicikiccha is uprooted and removed. A tangible result of practice is the removal of doubt, indecision, something that happens gradually as a side result of realization, or is there a specific approach to remove vicikiccha? In the theistic paths, there is an immense focus on the importance of faith, but it often is spoken about as something that the god blesses you with. There is no process to remove doubt, but as the Buddha Dhamma is a path to replicate,

all the pitfalls have been examined in detail and the resolution of vicikiccha seems very important to make higher progress. What helped you to uproot vicikiccha?

Well,

there there are ways of going about it. I mean, obviously, just satipatthana mindfulness, you know, it arises, you you note it and you let it go. Every time it arises, you note it and you let it go. So, you're not feeding it and strengthening it, and gradually it just fades out.

Yeah, it's sort of like um

with no offense to the co-hosts here, uh like a stray dog. You know, if it if it

hangs around, if you feed it, it's just
going to stay, but if you don't feed it,
it might hang out a little longer, but
gradually it's going to to hit the road.
And um you know, vicikiccha or any kind
of unwhol- unskillful mental state is
the same way. If you don't feed it,
it'll starve or just go away.
Um
Let's see here.
Scroll down
already before answering the question.
So, I mean, through insight, it can just
poof out of existence. I mean, you'll
have some
some insight that's a really radical

and it'll just shift your consciousness right there. And then I mean, it just it can just fall away. That's a possibility, too. There's it's not just one way that it can happen.

Um

just like following some of the teachings of like the Buddhist sutras like uh the removal of distracting thoughts, you know, there's several different ways of going about that.

Um I mean, obviously, you're not going to have much vicikiccha if you're just not thinking.

So,

um you know, just getting into meditative states where you're not

thinking and or and then you can get

have insight arise from that, you know,

it's like if you so long as you're not

thinking these absurd thoughts, then you

know, you're you're liberated from

from just all these

just really self-inflicted

unhappy mental states.

So,

yeah, I guess I would I would say that

uh you know, there isn't just one

possible way and the standard way in

Theravada

um

or the two standard ways

would be just mindfulness, just mindful

noting how that you just note it and let it go, note it and let it go. Every time it arises, you note it and let it go. And then so that you're not feeding it, you're not reinforcing it and then the the karma just gets weaker and weaker and fades out.

Um

or just through deep meditation. Although, in the text uh vicikiccha can be a hindrance to or uh uh

an obstacle

to deep meditation in and of itself. So, you'd have to get past the vicikiccha at least temporarily to get into the deep mental states. And then you can see from your own experience the the benefits

of not only not thinking these worrisome

and like

uh

indecisive thoughts. I mean, just

thinking itself is is just inferior to

to just sitting in silence with your

mind wide open, clear clear like glass.

Although thinking is uh necessary

sometimes.

Especially if you're like

trying to solve a Sudoku or something.

Okay. Next question.

Also from Potila.

Potila's last question. This one is

about demons or dark forces.

Did you ever encounter non-human beings,

demons, ghosts, petas, etc. during your time of practice? I mean, something categorically different than just fear, a sense or presence of a being around you or trying to influence your behavior. You noted one story of a ghost interaction, but did you ever have the feeling of something more hostile?

If so, what did you do? Many texts say to meditate on metta as a protection and antidote. Was this your approach?

As a monk, I can't recall um any kind of encounter with some sort of hostile supernatural being. I mean, there's there's the time that I got attacked by ogres that uh some of you may know of about that I've I've written

about. Which personally I think may have just been a waking dream.

And I won't go into the the details.

But um

And it wasn't it wasn't me who said that I was I was attacked by ogres. It was just I explained what happened to this Burmese monk who was very superstitious. He had a degree uh like a university degree in English, but he just had like these protection tattoos all over his body to protect him from, you know, the evil eye and hexes and and ghosts and everything. And he he he was just convinced that I'd been attacked by ogres because there were supposedly

ogres in this this forest.

Um

So, yeah, I

the only time I can recall

of feeling a a presence of like really

just a

like a dark

negative kind of feeling, I was about

20 years old, I think. And I'd just

moved into this crummy little apartment

over the summer.

And um is that apartment just had like

this really bad vibe to it. And so, I

was already um interested in Buddhism at

the time. So, I just tried to exercise

whatever it was. You know, you you know,

you light the the incense and the

candles and do some chanting and read

sacred texts and that kind of thing. And

uh

it apparently worked.

But, um that's that's about it. Um

But, there is there is another thing.

It's like maybe one reason why I didn't

have any problems like that is um

because I was just a a monk doing

intensive practice.

Um

I I have a friend I I used to have a

friend, a Balinese monk,

who uh mostly lives in Burma.

And when he's in back in Bali, he has an

attendant named Noman.

And Noman would say that one reason why he has so much respect for this monk is cuz he can see spirits. Noman can. And he can see he can see spirits and most people have got spirits kind of hovering around them trying to influence their behavior, but the spirits just stayed away from this monk. They wouldn't come near him and that's one reason why Noman had so much respect for this monk. It's like his Dharma was so good that the spirits knew they couldn't really influence him or or manipulate him and so they just left him alone. And who knows, maybe um when I was practicing intensively, that sort of thing was uh

going on with me, too, and that's that's
my excuse for not having demons attack
me. I don't know.
So, I'll just move on to the next
question.
And this is from Yuichiro.
And Yuichiro says, "In your experience,
have you been able to talk to trees,
animals, etc. or feel their energy? A
lot of yogis say they can communicate
with nature by
being aware of its energy or something.
I just want to talk to trees. They seem
nice."
Well,
I don't think trees would even have any

kind of

conceptual

mental process.

When I think of trees, it's like if you

go out into a forest, like a primeval

forest, you're out in some big national

park away from the other people, just

these huge trees all around, there's

just this feeling of presence. You know,

just this vibe. And that could I mean,

that could be

you know, you're you're you're tapping

into the mental states of a tree because

I don't think that they're sitting

around or standing around, you know,

philosophizing or thinking about, "Gee,

is this nice and sunny today, isn't it?"

I think that they just have this you
know, it could just be like a carrier
wave or a hum or something if they have
any consciousness at all. And Buddhism
does
uh allow that plants do have a very
simple kind of consciousness.
They're called Ekaindriya Jiva, which is
one faculty of life.
They don't think, they don't see or
smell or hear, but they have the sense
of touch.
According to uh
according to ancient Buddhism.
Uh so, with regard to trees, um
yeah, if you just get a feel in the

forest, I mean, that could that could be
it. Just some very subtle, deep kind of
a feeling. That might be as as
intellectual as trees get.
Um talking to animals, though. Have I
been able to talk to animals
or feel their energy?
Um I think just about anybody, if you're
not just a sociopath, just completely
closed off, you're going to have a
certain amount of empathy with
especially if you got a dog. I mean,
cats may you know, they're they're
different, but you know, like the dogs,
you you just kind of tap into each
other's energy.
Um

there was one time in particular when I was in Burma, that it was it was practically it was like tap telepathy or something.

Um there were these two dogs at this monastery, just scroungy burly's monastery dogs.

And

they were brothers.

And everybody liked one of them, and it was like almost everybody just did not like the other. Like, I remember once this novice is calling the dog. He had a piece of meat or something he wanted to feed the dog. The wrong one came, and he hits that one, and then and then the

other one comes, and he feeds him, you

know, it's like

um even even the dogs' names, one was

called Po Sho, which is like dear little

rascal, and the other one was Ngwe Day,

which just means like scoundrel.

And I liked scoundrel. I mean,

he I liked him way better than the other

one. It's It's like my heart goes out to

like the troublemaker kind of dogs.

Um

just the rascally ones or something.

They just can't help it. They don't know

any better and they need love.

And so, I liked

the scoundrel called one.

And one time, just, you know, I was just

hugging him, just giving him a hug.
And all of a sudden, I just got in this rush of just joy and pleasure. And I looked down and the dog was obviously feeling the same thing. It was just like this connection happened. This sort of like love flowing between us or something. And he I'm sure he loved me because I was practically the only being in the world that really like cared about him, you know?
So, yeah, it can happen. It's like but I I think it happens with everybody to some degree, unless they're just a total sociopath.
So, I'll just move on to the next

question. Also from Yuichiro, is telepathy possible?

And I would say, yeah, it's possible. I mean, anything is possible.

Anything that can be imagined is possible. A lot of stuff that can't be imagined is possible.

So, yeah, telepathy is possible.

Even if scientists can't explain it, and they probably never will explain it correctly.

And so, the next question is also from Yuichiro, have you felt your own chi or energy? Well, that's kind of similar to the one about the animals. It's like, you know, everybody feels their own energy.

Um I haven't felt it in accordance with like Chinese medicine, where it's going through the special channels, you know? The spleen channel and that kind of thing. I I haven't really experienced that, but I mean, obviously we feel our own energy.

I'm not exactly sure what chi is supposed to be. It's really not um like an Indian Buddhist concept.

I think the Indian Buddhists have got something else like pran prana, which would just literally means breath, but it's also like uh the life force or the energy of life or that sort of

thing.

But I think we've all felt it,

especially when we were younger.

I mean, when you're when you're like a

kid or a teenager, it's just uh you're

It's like you're high on chi

a lot of the time.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question. I may have not have answered

that one very well, so I'll just hasten

on to the next one.

And this is from heyitstig.

And heyitstig asks, "Have you considered

doing a full show on Upandita?

I know you have a section on him with

Hareru,

and it was so interesting. I read your

article a fellow Upandita Rama back when it was available, and I'm sure I'll have a chance to read it later. But yeah, I'm just wondering if you're planning on doing a show about it."

Um

Yeah, Upandita was He was uh one of the world's

foremost meditation masters

when he was alive. He died several years ago, I think.

Um I spent a few months at his place. In fact, he uh he participated in my ordination well over 30 years ago.

Um

and

yeah, I mean, there's I I could talk for half an hour easily about Upandita.

Um

I just have bad karma with regard to teachers, I think. Like, some people they they go to Upandita, and and he would just I mean, you know, they would just make all this progress, and you know, you have these famous meditation teachers in in the West claiming to be disciples of Upandita.

And I went to Panditarama and he's just like an angry old man. I mean, he's just uh

just he would he would get angry pretty much daily.

And uh just sort of irrational and just

hostile a lot of the time.

So, it was like I would see a different

U Pandita than other people would see.

So, I mean, there could be just uh as

many U Panditas as there were people who

experienced him.

But, I think another

um option which might even be better, if

I were to just do a whole video just

talking about it, would just be the

Mahasi method in particular, in general.

I mean,

because U Pandita was a teacher of the

Mahasi method.

He was a disciple of Mahasi Sayadaw.

So,

and most Western

um Theravada Buddhist meditation

um is based either on the Mahasi method

or on the Goenka method. Like uh

the IMS

places, you know, the so-called um

you know, Insight Meditation Societies,

um they're largely based on the Mahasi

method.

So, that might be uh even better cuz U

Pandita being a teacher

of the Mahasi method and a disciple of

Mahasi Sayadaw himself,

um you know, he he he'd fit right in.

And Mahasi Sayadaw, it's like a lot of

people in the West have never heard of

him, including people that consider

themselves to be serious Theravada
Buddhists, but uh
he is one of the most famous monks in
Burma.
There are Mahasi centers all over. It's
like in America, you got a Chinese
restaurant in every town. Um in Burma,
you got a Mahasi center in pretty much
every every town worthy of the name of
town.
So, yeah, it's possible. I think I could
I could do that.
Especially people keep pestering me to
do it.
So, I'll just move on to the next
question. That's from Matthew.

And Matthew says, "From your
understanding of archaic pre-Theravada
Buddhism, did it describe the Four Noble
Truths and the Eightfold Path?"
Well,
if you go all the way back to just
primitive Buddhism,
then um like the oldest texts, like like
the Anguttara Nikaya, it doesn't really
mention the Four Noble Truths.
But, the Four Noble Truths are very
early.
Um the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta is
considered by tradition to be the
Buddha's first sermon after his
enlightenment, and
it's largely about the Four Noble

Truths.

Um plus the middle path.

Um

so, I would not be surprised if the historical Gotama Buddha himself taught the Four Noble Truths.

But,

I do not think that originally the Fourth Noble Truth, which which is Magga Sacca, or the uh the truth of the path. I mean, I I might as well just start at the beginning. At the beginning of the First Noble Truth is Dukkha. Dukkha Sacca. The truth is that, you know, any conscious being in this universe is going to suffer. Is not going to be

fully satisfied.

You know, there's a certain amount of

unease that just permeates uh individual

or seemingly individual existence,

conscious existence.

Um as an individual being,

it's just built right in that you're

you're going to be at least slightly

unhappy.

Or slightly uncomfortable. That just

pure bliss just isn't an option.

So, that's the first noble truth. The

second noble truth

is the cause, samudaya sacca, the cause

of suffering, and that is

desire

or clinging. And clinging or um

what's the word?

Upadana in Pali.

Um in a way, it it could be interpreted as just insisting upon things being a certain way.

And that that or just craving in Pali, tanha, which literally means thirst, are considered to be the cause of suffering. Whenever you're unhappy, it's because you want something. That's one of the most important things you can learn from Buddhism. If you only know one thing about Buddhism, it should be the second noble truth, which is if you're unhappy, it's because you are desiring something.

And that desire is volitional,

ultimately. I mean, it may be that

you're just doing it through knee jerk

knee jerk reflex,

and you don't realize that you have a

choice, but ultimately, you have a

choice.

Third is nirodha sacca,

the the truth of cessation,

and that is just logically

uh it logically follows from the second

noble truth. The second noble truth is

um suffering is the

desire is the cause of suffering. Third

noble truth is if there is no desire,

there is no suffering. That's the

cessation of suffering. Is the cessation

of craving or desire or attachment.

And finally, you've got magga sacca,

which is the path leading to the

cessation of suffering. And I think

originally, it was not necessarily

eightfold. The Buddha may have taught

there is a path,

and that would be, you know, practicing

dhamma and self-restraint,

um self-discipline.

But if you look in the the sutras, there

are there are

there's also a tenfold path where you

got

right liberation and and the I can't

remember what the other one is.

And there seems to have been some uh
uh a certain amount of mutation going on
before they settled on um the Noble
Eightfold Path, which is so let's try
not to embarrass myself here by getting
it wrong. Right view, right thought,
right speech, right action, right
livelihood,
right effort,
right mindfulness, and right
concentration.
So, I think the formula of the
eightfoldness of it may be later.
It may I I it's pretty likely that it
came after just the idea of there being
a path.
And whether the Four Noble Truths really

go back to the historical Buddha, um

I can't really say for sure. The like

the the texts that are considered to be

the oldest are more into don't believe

anything.

And then like the formulas and that sort

of thing um

came a little later in the history of

Buddhist philosophy.

Um

but it is very early and uh I wouldn't

be surprised if the Buddha did teach it.

And even if he didn't teach it, it was

it's very early. But, the eightfoldness

of the path I think is is later than uh

the Four Noble Truths.

So,

move on to the next question.

And this is from

the Marquis de Sade.

And the Marquis says, "What is your

opinion on Islam as a spiritual system?"

Islam.

Well,

it arose in during the Dark Ages in a

barbarous culture and so it is kind of a

Dark Age-y barbarous kind of a religion.

Um

at least they're honest about the

prophet Muhammad

in that, you know, even just the Muslims

themselves admit that he was uh

you know, a bandit and a rapist and so

forth.

Um

But, I mean

there's going to be people with

spiritual talent

born all over the world and people with

spiritual talent born into a Muslim

culture

are in all likelihood going to be

Muslims. And so you you do have wise and

good Muslims.

Um like the the book that I mentioned

earlier um

by Karen Armstrong. I mean, she she

pretty much um

tries She'll She'll make apologetics for

Muhammad just saying, you know, he is just a product of his culture, you know, and the culture was very barbarous. But, in in the other book uh A History of God that I that I read by her, she she does mention that uh

there was there have been some very wise Muslims.

Um

So,

I could I personally could be a Muslim more easily than I could be a Christian simply because there's less of a a story that you have to believe. Like I already mentioned, you know, um I'm not good at believing narratives that you can't really prove or disprove. And there's

less of that in Islam. I mean, all there
is essentially is
God is one God and Muhammad is his
prophet. I mean, you believe that and uh
you do the the bowing to Mecca and so
forth and
that's good enough.
Do the hajj if you can afford it.
Sacrifice a camel.
That's one That's one thing that a lot
of people don't realize is that Islam is
one of the few
major religions nowadays that still
promotes animal sacrifice. If you If you
do the hajj to Mecca, you're supposed to
cut the throat of a camel. Although, I

think nowadays, camels being expensive
and all, um they mostly substitute it
with a goat.
But, um
Sufism, you know, is I think one reason
why Sufism has as much wisdom as it does
is cuz it borrowed a lot of stuff from
Buddhism and Hinduism when uh they came
in contact like in Northwestern India.
So, yeah, um I mean, if you really want
to live a spiritual life, I think you
might do better to choose a different
religion than really any of the
Abrahamic ones of the West.
But, um
I mean, some people just have a
personality or a character where it just

fits, you know, just something just

resonates. It just works for them.

You know, then maybe they're just got a

like a devotional kind of temperament.

They They need to worship somebody. And

so, you know, Jesus might really work

well for them.

Um

So, I'll just move on to the next

question. I don't want to badmouth Islam

so much that uh

I get banned from YouTube or something.

Uh so, let's see. Num Next question from

uh

the Marquis de Sade

is, "What are some of the teachings in

Mahayana or Vajrayana you see as useful

or complementary to Theravada?"

Um

Well,

I think some of the most useful

teachings of Mahayana, and I really

don't know all that much about

Vajrayana, but in Mahayana, you got the

what

Prajnaparamita? Prajna? I I used to

pronounce Prajna, but then

I was talking to a professor who who

taught Sanskrit.

Who uh

He he said it's Prajna.

Prajnaparamita.

Of course, he could be wrong. He was

wearing these weird pajama-like clothes

when I met him. We were at an ayahuasca

ceremony.

So, anyway, um

yeah, that and like um like Nagarjuna's

Mūlamadhyamakakārikā

is um

in a way, it

it complements early Theravada. Like the

teachings of the Atikavada that I talk

about all the time.

Um

Madhyamaka

Madhyamaka philosophy of of Mahayana

Buddhism

um

it's it's very similar in certain ways.

Like the Atikavada has been called

proto-Madhyamaka.

And uh

N- uh Nagarjuna's Mūlamadhyamakakārikā

it uses

like ruthless logic

to just destroy any kind of

philosophical idea so that you wind up

with emptiness.

And that can be useful. That can be

helpful.

Again, with regard to Tibetan Buddhism,

I really don't know enough about it to

uh

pontificate on the subject.

And um

anything that really doesn't agree with
Theravada,
then which is a lot of a lot of
Mahayana, like the Pure Land stuff, for
example, um
yeah, but if it if it's
is like an elaboration on early Buddhist
philosophy,
um then I think that that could be very
useful because
um Theravada arose before formal logic
really became established in India.
And so, the logic of Theravada Buddhism
is pretty shaky sometimes in in the in
their philosophy.
But by the time Mahayana was developed,

they had a much more sophisticated

um

like uh logical philosophy established

in India. And so, Mahayana Buddhist

philosophy can be very subtle uh to the

to the extent that you just don't see in

Theravada except in in like a very

simple archaic kind of form in the very

oldest texts.

So,

yeah, with with regard to uh this

question here, what are some of the

teachings of in Mahayana or Vajrayana I

see as useful or complementary to

Theravada. Yeah, I would say um you

know, like the

the perfection of wisdom

sutas or sutras and also um Nagarjuna's
Mulamadhyamakakarika, some of the some
of the other um
Madhyamaka philosophy
is uh
it can be very helpful to help you kind
of wrap your head around certain
Buddhist concepts or or just stop even
trying to wrap your head around
anything, which is even better.
So, next question also by the Marquis de
Sade,
would steroids and antidepressants be
prohibited in the fifth precept?
Also, do you follow the fifth precept
strictly?

So, technically speaking,

the fifth precept is

uh I undertake the precept to abstain

from ale, wine, and other intoxicants

which cause cloudedness of mind or

heedlessness.

Anything that makes you stupid and

semi-conscious

um you should avoid.

So, let's see, steroids and

antidepressants, if they make if I mean

if they make your mind cloudy, make you

put you into a stupor, then yeah, I mean

they they would be included in the fifth

precept. But if they don't, I mean

steroids like Red Bull, I think has

steroids in it. At least the the Asian

version, like the Thai version, had

steroids in it. I mean

um

maybe you're talking about anabolic

steroids or something. I'm not sure what

kind of steroids were in Red Bull.

Pretty sure even vitamin D is a steroid,

technically speaking.

Antidepressants, again, um

not necessarily. I mean if it doesn't

put you into a stupor or make you

semi-conscious or just like, you know,

sloppy and careless

like uh alcohol can do,

then uh yeah, I don't think it would be

included.

Um also, do you follow the fifth precept

strictly? No, I do not. I do uh I mean

this is just orange juice, but I do have

the occasional beer.

Come home from work on a hot day, cold

beer goes down real nice.

Uh so, I have

been

mildly

inebriated

since I dropped out of the monk hood.

For recreational purposes, not just

medicinal.

So, yeah, I fess up to that.

So, let's just move on here. Next

question, Bpat427

asks,

"If one dies in a state of equanimity due to drug or alcohol-induced delusion, how would that influence their karma and rebirth?"

Well, a state of equanimity due to drug or alcohol-induced delusion. Yeah, equanimity, I mean there's there's right equanimity I suppose and wrong equanimity.

Um like a cow is is pretty equanimous. And uh it could be that you're you die in some kind of blissful stupor.

You might just get in reborn as a cow or something.

Cuz they're they're pretty blissful a

lot of the time, it seems like.

Anyway, they got equanimity.

So,

yeah, I mean, I don't think that there's

much chance of, uh, getting into heaven

from dying in a a drug-induced blissful

state. I'm I I've never taken heroin,

but I've been told that it's going to be

very intensely blissful.

But, I don't think you're going to get

into heaven by, uh,

shooting up.

So, yeah, yeah, the answer to that one

is, um,

I mean, if the equanimity is essentially

a stupor, then you're going to, uh, you

know, you

you're going to be generating sort of

stupor karma that may land you in some

existence that is

even more stuporous than this one or

stupid than this one.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question from Chaplin.

And Chaplin says, "Can you explain the

processes

Let's see. Can you explain the process

and requirements of being ordained as a

Theravada monk

and your own ordination?"

Well,

there are some who claim that, uh,

Theravada monks are not even ordained.

They just declare themselves ordained,

but that is certainly not true.

Um, in the Buddha's time, according to

tradition, he would just say, "Ehi

bhikkhu, come monk." And that was it.

That was you were ordained if he if he

called that out to you.

Um,

but

after the after the the death of the

Buddha,

there they had to establish like

protocols for ordination procedure and

so forth.

And

in the Ganges Valley, which is where you

know, Buddhism began,

there has to be a

an ordination ceremony with no fewer

than 10 monks participating. But outside

of the

the middle region, which is the

the Ganges Valley, outside of that,

which would include the USA, Europe,

Australia, Southern India, wherever.

All you need is five.

Five monks in good standing to conduct

the ceremony. And which would include

the preceptor. Also, there should be at

least one monk who is an expert on the

rules of monastic discipline, so he'll

know how to do everything properly.

And then there's a questioner

who

before a person is ordained, he gets

questioned because there are certain

disqualifying characteristics

that can prevent the ordination from

being valid.

For example,

you have to be a human being.

So like uh

non-human beings just shapeshifting and

assuming human form can't be ordained.

You have to be a man if you're if you're

going to be ordained as a monk, which

also means you have to have the family

jewels intact.

Um

there there are a number of of rules

like you can't be a runaway slave, you can't be like an AWOL soldier, you can't be anybody who still has obligations to the government, you can't be a debtor.

Um

you have to have the permission of your parents if they're still alive.

Um and also there's certain diseases including leprosy that if you have those, I think tuberculosis and uh a few others.

Um epilepsy, for example. If you have those, you're not supposed to be ordained. But, some of these um it's like the the ordination is still valid. Like, somebody who has epilepsy,

if they are ordained, or if they don't have the permission of their parents, they get ordained, it's just the monks conducting the ceremony commit a very minor violation. It's a called a dukata offense offense uh an offensive wrong doing, but the ordination is still valid. But, if you're not human, or if you're if you're not a fully intact male,

then uh it's just not it's just the ordination is just null and void.

And um

some monasteries, especially like in Burma, you can just walk in and be ordained, just boom.

But, um a lot of places they'll require

you to be uh

uh like a monastery attendant for a

while. That was the case with me.

Uh I was a monastery attendant for like

2 months, you know, washing dishes and

driving the monks around and that kind

of thing.

And uh

then you do the the the ceremony where

you have to have the eight requisites

before you can be ordained, which is

three robes, a belt, let's see if I get

this right, the the bowl, your your alms

bowl,

a razor for shaving your head and face,

a needle for mending your robes, and a

water filter.

So, you have to have those intact, and then the the ceremony itself lasts, I don't know, maybe 20 minutes. And then you're a monk, fully ordained.

Um on the other hand, to drop out of the monkhood, all you have to do is just tell somebody that you're not a monk anymore, and mean it, and they have to understand what you're saying, and then you're just not a monk anymore. So, um monks can't ordain themselves, but they can uh

they can drop out of the monkhood themselves, so long as, you you there has to be one other person that they tell,

but the other person really doesn't have

any say in the matter.

So,

I think I got the basics of that.

So, I'll just move on to the last

question from Chaplin, which is also the

last question of the evening.

And that is,

who is the Samana Johan character that

likes to spam all over your blog

articles?

Well,

long time ago when I was still a monk,

I was contacted by someone

calling himself Samana Johan.

And he was asking me to participate in

some Dharma forum that he had going, but
first of all, his English was so
horrible that I mean, I could hardly
understand what he was trying to say.
And secondly,
um he was just struck me as like a
really just a rigid dogmatist.
And I got really don't have much use for
that. Just
people that think they know something
when all they're doing is just parroting
books.
And you can find that in all traditions.
It's not just Theravada, obviously.
So, I I uh
didn't join, and then he took the
liberty of joining me up himself, and I

started getting spammed. Like my inbox

is being spammed by this sort of

gibberish semi-English

Dharma

essays or something.

So, I just started flagging them as spam

until they stopped coming because to to

unsubscribe was such a complicated

Byzantine process that uh

it was just easier to just flag them as

spam.

But um later he started uh like right

when I announced that I was going to

drop out of the monkhood, he just went

into a a spamming frenzy of

um just delivering admonishments and

scoldings and so forth because he

apparently very much disagreed with my

plan of dropping out of the monk hood.

And uh

I wrote a blog post partly about him.

Um

And uh after a while he sort of

apologized and stopped scolding me.

And then just recently he started up

again.

He just He just can't hold it back. But

um

I I don't know. It's like

some some people, I mean, they can be

fundamentalist Christians or they can be

Buddhists or Muslims or whatever. They

just They've got it in their head that

they have been

you know, they have seen the light and

they they know the true way and anyone

who disagrees with them is just plain

wrong and they do not hesitate to let

you know that.

And uh I do not consider that to be

um

symptomatic of wisdom.

But of course they certainly do.

And so there's not really much you can

say.

And uh so I just don't want to really

wallow in this and I have no ill will

towards this person.

Just uh answering the question and that

was the very last question and so uh

I think we're done.

And uh be happy.

Hello and welcome to episode 23 of question and answer. I am your host Panyo Bassaw.

And as it usually happens, I wait until I've got a fair amount of questions to answer and then I think, "Oh, it's time to do a Q&A soon." So I put up the announcement that I'm going to be doing a Q&A soon and anyone having having a question should ask it and then I get a whole bunch more. So we got like whole lots of questions to answer.

And so uh

without any further ado, like uh telling you about the strange morning I had.

Um

Ah, what the hell, I'll tell you.

I got up. I'm sitting there on the couch

for about 10 minutes looking at emails

and so forth and these two little

next-door neighbor kids come over and

invite me over to their house and I'm

over there and they're like exercising

their uh

um insistence upon me, like, you know,

they're getting me stuff to eat and

showing me their rocks and their their

uh

little dinosaur collection and this kind

of thing.

And uh I was appointed king of the uh

the back porch, so I appointed their dog

prime minister and uh came back home. So

I guess the dog is now in charge over

there.

Anyway,

I'm going to uh exercise the uh

awakeness I have on this very relaxed

Saturday

and answer all these questions.

And so the first question is from Hey

It's Tig.

And Hey It's Tig says, "What is the

purpose of the fan that I see certain

Sayadaws pictured with?"

And yeah, I do think it's mainly a

Burmese phenomenon where you see a

picture of some famous monk and they've

got their robes done up in a certain way

a lot of the time, like with the big

collar around their neck and they're

holding a big fan,

often with like the name of their

monastery or or something on around the

the edge of it.

And

it's one of the few one of the

relatively few possessions that monks um

commonly own or

um traditionally.

And obviously, the main reason for a fan

is uh if it's hot, and it often is in

Burma, you fan yourself to uh

thermoregulate.

But um

the main reason

up until relatively recently, I think,
one of the main reasons was um
I have I have read that 100 years ago or
more, like even back in the 1800s,
when a sayadaw or senior monk would give
a dhamma talk, he would give the dhamma
talk behind the fan. You know, he'd be
like hiding his face with the fan, and
the purpose of that was to avoid
distractions from seeing pretty girls or
something in the audience.
Um although now it has pretty much just
degenerated into a kind of accessory.
Um
I mean, it's not really used very much.
It's just something traditionally that

Burmese monks, especially Burmese dhamma teaching monks, have. You know, it's just part of the uniform.

And there's a lot of that in Burma where um I mean, there's a lot of that everywhere really, where people do things that don't necessarily make much sense just because that's what you're supposed to do.

And so, holding a fan while posing for a picture or giving a dhamma talk um is just part of Burmese tradition, I think.

And uh even I did it sometimes, although mostly I would carry a fan around for thermoregulation purposes.

So, the next question is from Seeker

Selt or Seeker Kelt.

I'm not sure on on the pronunciation.

And Seeker Kelt or Selt

says, "What's your thoughts on rays of

light emanating from the awakened one?

Is it in sūtra?"

Well,

there's uh

bur like Theravāda Buddhist tradition. I

don't know about Mahāyāna,

where

there's like a multicolored

nimbus of light radiating from the head

of the Buddha.

And those colors are what are

represented on the the Buddhist saosana flag.

And uh I'm not going to try and name all the colors because really I'm not much interested in the mythological stuff.

And uh

I would guess that

multicolored lights emanating from the Buddha's head would be more mythology than history.

Because a lot of people would see the Buddha and they just think he was an ordinary monk or just some ordinary person.

So,

I mean, if he really was 27-ft tall with multicolored rays of light emanating

from his head, um yeah, I think people would be impressed by that and be not quite willing to diss him very much.

So,

uh Seeker Kelt Selt is asking, "Is it in sūtra?"

And I'm not 100% sure. As I say, I've never really been much interested in that, and so it doesn't really soak in even if I read it. But, there is a strange sūtra in the Majjhima Nikāya, which is full of all sorts of miraculous stuff about the Buddha, even like when he was born, you know, his mother was standing up holding onto a tree. He was born without any goop on him at all. And

immediately he just takes off walking like seven steps towards the east, I think. It was like a lotus blossom sprouting under his foot at each step. And he's saying, you know, I am the greatest. This is There's no further rebirth for me, and so forth.

And uh I think that sutta may have the the multi-colored rays of light. And it may be elsewhere in the Dīgha Nikāya. It wouldn't surprise me. Um

but I can't I can't say for sure because I do not recall

um

clearly if it really is in the Pāli suttas, but I I get a feeling that there's a good chance that it is. And um

I'm too lazy or uninterested to try and

research this and look it up.

But um

there is a a sutta, and I don't even

remember the name of it. It's just uh

uh yeah, I don't I don't even remember

the name.

It's in the Majjhima Nikāya, though. So,

there's only 152 suttas there, so you

can find it, I'm sure.

Uh

next question is from Caveman.

And Caveman says,

"Can you elaborate more on your personal

experience with celibacy and semen

retention and how it affected you? I'm

curious how long you went without sexual release and how difficult it was."

Well, this is uh

uh a topic that uh a lot of people are really interested in. I knew this or I had this reader, this uh

cyber follower,

who uh actually started a like a a blog or a a website just on this particular subject.

And some people take it very seriously.

Uh with regard to semen retention and celibacy, how would it affected you?

Um, let's see. I guess those are like two different things, so I can start with celibacy. How it affected me was uh it made me frustrated a lot of the time.

Um, sort of like um

a man who is fasting.

And I've I've experienced this also. You

fast for 5 days and uh

you spend a lot of time just imagining

what you want to eat when you start

eating again.

And uh

I think celibacy has that effect on a

lot of people where

um

you know, it just

the celibacy is only partially

successful.

Because even though physically you're

not doing it, there's still the desire

there and it keeps percolating up into

the consciousness and turns into like

pornographic thoughts and so forth.

So

um I mean, I was

technically celibate for 30 years and uh

I managed not to get excommunicated,

although um I was

um I mean, I never really stopped liking

girls and uh you know, being just

essentially instinctively heterosexual.

So that didn't go away and um I don't

think it ever completely goes away

except in certain cases where

maybe you have like just a massive uh

shift in consciousness, shift in

perception due to some crisis or maybe

you just uh never really liked girls or

had much of a sex drive to begin with,

something like that. Um I've noticed

Burmese monks tend uh

not to be uh

um particularly obsessed with uh

with sexuality. Like uh I was I stated

this uh big school monastery once. I had

uh

during the rainy season, there were 600

monks and 900 novices all staying there,

plus like 100 scroungy dogs. And

sometimes there'd be like this uh little

flock of

um Burmese girls dressed in their best

clothes, you know, just walking along.

And um

you know, I'd be watching the monks.

There'd be a group of monks in front of

me. They'd walk by them, and there not a

single head would turn, you know, they

were just completely uninterested.

Which was probably not due to their

holiness so much as just um they just

weren't interested. Which is maybe one

of the reasons why some of them became

monks in the first place.

Um I remember

there was this one monk that I knew.

And sometimes we'd travel together with

a a bunch of other monks.

And in Burma, you're driving along, and

by roadside wells, you know, the village

people would just go there to take a bath. And sometimes you'd see, you know, young women taking a bath, and they'd have, you know, they'd have like a bathing sarong on from their armpits down to below their knees, but still they'd be wet and clingy and shiny and so forth.

And it was this one other monk was the only one that I ever saw whose head would turn, so he could watch as we went by.

So,

that's uh kind of getting off the the subject of uh how it affected me.

But um yeah, I I never completely

mastered celibacy.

And uh I am no longer celibate now.

Uh with regard to semen retention,

the way it worked with me was uh

every

two to three weeks,

I would just have a pornographic dream.

And uh so the semen would uh be

released. You know, the pressure

would be released. It's like you don't

explode.

Um

if if you really need that to happen

then it's going to happen

somehow or other like in your sleep or

whatever. Sometimes you can just

overflow.

So

how long I went without sexual release?

I assume that means an orgasm or

emission of seminal fluid.

Up until like my early to mid 40s

it was like I just said it was every few

weeks at least every few weeks I would

have a wet dream nocturnal emission.

And after that as my blood cooled a bit

it was longer and longer. I no longer I

mean after my early to mid 40s I stopped

having

wet dreams and I kind of missed it. You

know, it was like the only

the only semblance of action I was

getting anyway.

But

it was it's difficult. Celibacy can be

difficult for someone who is uh

just instinctively

like uh

What's the word?

Uh

Uh

I'm trying to think of a word and it's

not coming. But if you just naturally,

you know, it's just built into your your

character or something that you are

heterosexual, you know, you're attracted

to attractive members of the opposite

sex then uh

Yeah, I mean it's not going to be easy.

But um it does does definitely have its

advantages I suppose. I mean if you're

living a spiritual life of a renunciant

um

Yeah, I mean

living in a cave

and meditating a lot and so forth uh

it it doesn't work as easily if you have

a mate who uh

wants to be comfy

you know, being an ascetic it doesn't

work so well.

So for 30 years

it seemed uh

worth it. And uh

yeah, I got I got benefits from it,

obviously. At least obvious to me.

So, I guess that's enough on that question. Um I'm not sure how well I answered it. Um

I suppose I should just go over the question one last time here. Can I elaborate more on my personal experience with silk? Yeah, I mean there were times when I was just extremely frustrated, just wanted to cry or howl like a dog or something.

Um curious how long without sexual release. Yeah, okay. Um

yeah, not excommunicating myself was relatively easy. And for a monk, it's um a very serious offense, not excommunication, but one notch below excommunication, even to

deliberately have an orgasm, to have an

orgasm on purpose.

And um

there were

maybe four times in 30 years when I was

you know, it's just

um you know, you're not exactly spanking

the puppy, but you're petting it a

little bit, and um it just goes off,

so to speak. And um when that happens, I

mean, you just have to just freeze and

just let it happen. You know, you can't

do anything to help it along. And uh

there were a few times, like four times,

when I would there was just in doubt,

you know, you have to psychoanalyze

yourself afterwards. It's like, did I do that on purpose? And did I do like the motions to that that helped it to happen, you know, like when it when it already started. And um
so I would I would go through the penance and everything uh like four times because of that.
And uh yeah, it it it can really be a problem for for certain certain monks.
But uh enough of that. Let's just move on to the next question.
Also from Caveman, if there is no self, how does karma persist from one life to the next?
What is it that connects my current life with my past life? Yeah, this is a this

is a common question. In fact, some some

question along these lines is asked

almost every episode of of Q&A here.

Um

how does karma persist from one life to

the next? It's just the like the

momentum

of the karma itself.

You can refer to it as uh something like

uh

a spiritual equivalent of the law of

conservation of energy, something like

that. It just

um you have this momentum and when the

the body that this momentum is um

apparently inhabiting dies, it

immediately has to appear in in Theravada Buddhism, that stream of consciousness has to su- that just immediately has to appear the very next moment.

So, there is no limbo or anything in between lives. It's like the moment of death. As soon as your mental process ceases finally in one life, the very next moment there has to be a reappearance in in a different existence.

And uh it could be a brief one, you know, something similar to a the bardo realms mentioned in the Tibetan Book of the Dead.

Or it could be uh

you know, another human or whatever.

But, um

it's uh the karma is just this process.

It's not really an abiding entity. It's

it's changing.

And you know, sort of like a flame.

And um

I mean, you can refer to a flame as, you

know, one flame, but um it's a

completely different flame from from one

moment to the next because it's just in

this constant state of change and flux.

So, what is it that connects your

current life with your past life would

be

the similarity of this of the like the

direction and uh

just overall momentum of uh

the volitional processes of the mind.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question.

From Yuichiro, should we hate evil? And

the answer is no. I mean, you should

avoid evil if you can,

but um hate is itself from the Buddhist

point of view, hate is itself

um if not evil, at least it's

unskillful, unwholesome. It creates bad

karma regardless of what it is you're

hating.

And um

I've noticed

a lot of

Christians

um

including like ancient Christians,

they would uh you know, in the in the

New Testament, Christianity is it

teaches, you know, you should love your

enemies, but then they would still, you

know, the hate kind of runs deep in some

people. So, they would they would not

hate their enemies, but they would still

hate enemies of the church or enemies of

God, which could be, you know, most of

the human race.

But um

and then and then there's like Mahatma

Gandhi's idea of you don't hate the

sinner, you just hate the sin, but the

sin and the sinner cannot be separated.

You know, you take away

um

one and the other one really isn't

there, either.

Um

is hating the sin without hating the

sinner?

Um I mean, it's like uh

trying to

um hate a person's behavior

while not hating the person. I mean,

their behavior is part of them, so

you're hating part of that person

anyway.

So, no, you shouldn't hate evil. I mean,

you should avoid it. You shouldn't do
it. You shouldn't wallow in it. But if
you were encounter it, then you should
try to maintain equanimity and um
probably best not even to really
stick the label of evil onto it. Just
see it as a an unskillful form of energy
that uh
you know, sort of like fire or
something. You should be careful with
it, not let it burn you, but um
as other than that, I mean, hate is hate
whether regardless of what you're
hating. It may be
um less bad for you to hate evil than to
hate good

or to hate uh black licorice or

whatever, but um

still hate is hate and uh

you should avoid this like greed, hate,

and delusion are the three poisons or

the three fires that uh keep us in

samsara.

So, even hating evil is is hating. So,

I'll just move on to the next question

here from Marshall.

And Marshall says,

"Is there much of a vegetarian tradition

in Theravada Buddhism

either amongst lay followers or the

Sangha?"

So, I really can't speak for other

Theravada Buddhist countries,

but I can speak for Burma.

And in Burma, some monks and some lay

people

are th- that look, which is their

equivalent of vegetarian. Th- that look

means um not killing breathing life, you

know? And that's really the the

vegetarian tradition in Theravada is

just based on ahimsa or non-harming.

That uh

people will avoid eating meat just

sort of like um a lot of people in the

West would be vegetarian. They just

don't want to kill animals. Or Mahatma

Gandhi who said he didn't want an animal

to have its throat cut just so he could

have a good taste in his mouth.

So, yeah, there is some of that. It's

not real common,

but um

some monks in Burma and some lay people

in Burma are th- that look. With regard

to Sri Lanka, I assume it would be more

common because it's there's more of a a

Hindu element in the culture there.

That uh Theravada Buddhism is is

more strongly Indian culturally in Sri

Lanka than in Burma or Thailand. And uh

vegetarianism is a big deal in India.

So,

yeah, I'll just say yeah.

So, we move on to the next question,

which is from Motorhead.

And Motorhead says, "If we are all
living in a dream of a dream of a dream
and nothing is real and the spiritual
realms are beyond comprehension,
question mark question mark question
mark.
Oh, what if we are all living in a dream
of a dream of a dream? Um
well, I would just say that spiritual
realms are beyond comprehension
regardless
whether we're living in a dream of a
dream of a dream or not.
Um like the ultimate truth is is just
beyond comprehension. I mean, you can't
understand it like mentally. It's not

something you can wrap your head around.

And so, if you go into a deep spiritual

state where you're wide awake and not

thinking anything, you're just

experiencing

this experience

this uh

pure consciousness if uh if you really

get advanced in your meditation.

Um

you you sort of transcend it. It's

irrelevant if you're in a dream of a

dream of a dream anyway because I mean,

samsara or maya, it's all illusory. It's

it's based on delusion. Greed, hate, and

delusion are the three fires or poisons

that keep us here. And so, samsara

really is based on delusion and it's not ultimate truth. You know, any samsaric fact is really not ultimately true.

And ultimate truth, again, you cannot understand intellectually. It's not a matter of concepts.

It's just uh

you know, there are no moving parts, so to speak.

So,

we're we're all living in a dream, at least, whether it's a dream of a dream of a dream, um it's hard to say. I mean, when we're dreaming at night, it might be a dream of a dream.

Um

so,

if nothing is real, well,

that's

I mean, that would be like radical

nihilism or nihilism.

Um

nothing is real. I mean, I I don't I

don't know if that's even possible that

nothing is real, because even an

illusion has to be based on something.

I mean, the illusion can't just be pure

illusion. Like even a like a mirage,

you know, you see some guy in the desert

sees the uh

the oasis off in the distance,

and uh

you know, that's a mirage, it's not

really there, but the the mirage is
caused by something. It's caused by, you
know, convection currents and uh
distortion of
of like light rays through the heat and
so forth.
And uh you know, the dream is based on
um based on an underlying reality.
And uh really, like mysticism, going
into a profound mystical state, you're
penetrating through to the ultimate or
to the underlying reality.
So, that's that's like the purpose of
it.
So, I'll just move on to the next
question. We got lots of questions. So,

the next question is from X Emporium.

And X Emporium says,

"At first, I mistook Mahasi in your

title." Cuz he was um commenting on a

um blog post I wrote about the the

Mahasi tradition.

At first I mistook Mahasi in your title

for Mahasati,

which was a method designed by a Thai

Theravadan monk Luangpor

What is this? Tian looks like.

Have you heard of this?

Similar to noting but there are required

movements.

This particular monk and the tradition

or method that he founded I've never

heard of before. I mean Mahasati just

means great mindfulness.

Great recollection.

So yeah, I understand the term. I may

have seen the term before but um

this this monk and and his

um

his method I have never never heard of

before. So that wasn't easy question is

just nope.

Now I'll move on to the next question

which is also from X Emporium.

And he says

These questions came to me in a dream

and you might be able to help given your

biological and Buddhist backgrounds.

First, do all the cells in our body die

to be replaced during our lifespan so

that we may be said to live multiple

lives during this time?

Second, I vaguely remember hearing that

brain cells are not replaced. So are we

looking at one brain mind living in

multiple bodies while assuming the same

I identity?

Well, with regard to cells and

dying cells and cells being replaced,

I'm not an expert.

I assume that the cells in our body

would be like protozoans

where they they reproduce by dividing

and maybe it's like

um

they have some some way that's evolved

into them of you know, there's like the

old broken down cell that dies

and the

the other the other half is is healthier

or you know, some so I guess your spleen

our bone marrow can create cells. So

yeah, I mean obviously your your blood

your blood cells red blood cells white

blood cells die and are replaced by new

ones.

Um

brain cells yeah, they tend not to

regenerate very well.

Um

but there even that I mean there is

neuroplasticity and so forth.

So I guess I'm just doing a roundabout

long-winded way of saying that I really

am not an authority on

um

the life cycles of of the cells in the

human body.

Um

but I mean in a way it's from a Buddhist

point of view it's it's largely

irrelevant. It comes from the Buddhist

point of view um you know, is your a

different person from one moment to the

next even even assuming that person is a

valid designation.

Um

a one brain mind living in multiple

bodies while assuming the same I

identity.

Um

I would I would say no because your

brain mind is different from one moment

to the next just like a flame is

different from one moment to the next.

It's just the similarity

um of the past brain mind with the

present brain mind causes them to

um be conflated into the same thing when

really they are not. They're just

similar enough that we call them by the

same name.

So in a way I've just sidestepped the

the main gist of this question and and

just answered it from a different angle.

But uh

yeah.

So I'm just going to move on to the next

question.

This is also from X Emporium my

um by the way. Might the cells

themselves be considered sentient beings

at some level?

Sometimes I scare myself. Well, the

cells of our bodies

um you know, we're you know in a way we

are a very complicated colony of

protozoans.

You know, we're we're single-celled

animals that evolved to form a

like a colony with specialization of of

function.

I mean that from the evolutionary point
of view that is how multicellular life
evolved. We started off as colonies of
single-celled organisms.
And
a single-celled organism I would
consider to have a very very simple form
of consciousness. I think it may be that
everything in the universe
every phenomenal
um entity in the universe has some kind
of consciousness. You know, even like a
hydrogen atom would just have like this
elemental, you know, absolutely
primitive kind of consciousness to it.
But um

it would have I mean obviously they

wouldn't be thinking.

You know, I don't think a an amoeba or a

you know, a muscle cell

or or a hydrogen atom actually has

thoughts. They don't I mean they're I

don't think they're they're nearly

complicated enough to do that.

So it's more like uh

this this little spark of of

consciousness and it takes something

like uh a brain or something

performing essentially the same

function as a brain like uh you know, do

act as like a computer to take these

this consciousness

and complicate it and and organize it

and utilize it.

So I don't think the brain generates

consciousness. It just uh

uses consciousness the way a computer

uses electricity.

Um so the cells of our body, you know,

they are in a sense individual beings.

You know, they're like

like a white blood cell is essentially

amoeboid. It's like they're like little

amoebas.

Um

but I think their sentience is

of a very primordial and very elemental

primitive sort.

So let's move on to the next question

from Tier.

And Tier says,

"I feel that spiritual truth or

off-the-scale truth should and does

encompass practical truth

or red pill truth.

How can someone know ultimate truth if

they're not even able to recognize

practical truth?

Like in so-called Western Buddhism,

sadhu."

Well, I would say that

practical truth is of an entirely

different order from ultimate truth.

I've already mentioned that ultimate

truth is just inconceivable. I mean, you

cannot contain it in concepts. It's not

intellectual at all. It's just reality,

just the experience of reality. And

reality is When I say reality, I'm not

talking about the phenomenal world with

books and bookcases and and so forth. Um

I'm talking about just uh

um what in Buddhism would be called

nirvana or nirvana dhatu or in Hinduism

is Brahman, you know, Tao.

Um some theists would call it God.

And so there are an infinite number of

possible

phenomenal

um like

manifestations. You know, every like God

itself is like the block of marble. I've

talked about this lots of times. You got this block of marble and contained within that block of marble are every possible statue. You know, every statue is already in that block of marble in potential form or virtual form. You know, every molecule is already in the right place and the artist, the sculptor,
just carves away the excess,
but it was already there. You know, nothing was added. You know, it's already there. And it's an infinite number
depending on how the sculptor decides to carve the rock. And I do consider the phenomenal universe to be that way. So,

I'm quite willing to accept like the

multiverse hypothesis, the many worlds

hypothesis.

And so,

getting back to like

practical truth or what in in Buddhism

is called

conventional truth,

sammuti sacca,

it's really not it's really not true. I

mean, it it's true just because people

accept it as true.

You know, people agree that it's true,

so that makes it conventionally true.

But ultimately, truth cannot be spoken.

The name that can be named is just not

the eternal name and so forth.

So,

how can someone know ultimate truth if

they're not even able to recognize

practical truth?

Um

I do think that like an enlightened

being who experiences

just the the no moving parts ultimate

reality, still I mean, they're not going

to be able to understand Chinese

necessarily unless they were born into a

Chinese culture. They may not know the

the square root of 51.

You know, they they won't know how many

hairs are on the head of everyone who

walks by.

You know, there's all kinds of

truths that they won't know.

Um

Some some people like the Jains

especially would say that a fully

enlightened Jain like a Tirthankara, he

is just omniscient. He just knows

everything simultaneously.

And in Buddhism, the Buddha also was

considered to be

like volitionally

uh omniscient, which means if he wants

to know something, he can know it, but

he's not like knowing it all the time.

Like he's not knowing everything all the

time.

But again, conventional truth isn't
really ultimately true at all.
And it's largely uh just conditional.
You know, if these other things are
true, then this is true. That's the way
um dependent co-arising works.
It's it's all conditional. This universe
we're living in is conditionally real.
It's virtually real. So, like if we
accept that that this, that, and the
other are true, then this other thing
also is true, but it's um
it's more a matter of coherence
than like uh being based on some
underlying reality.
Except just that anything can arise from
this basic underlying reality, just like

any statue can be carved from the rock.

So, it's sort of like um

more than 100 years ago,

there was uh in epistemological circles,

there was um

somewhat of a debate on, you know, what

is truth?

And the main theory, which is still the

main theory, which has pretty much taken

over, is the correspondence theory of

truth, which is that in order for a

statement A to be true, it has to

correspond to some

reality.

Whereas um there were some Hegelians

like F.H. Bradley who preferred the

coherence theory of truth.
And the coherence theory of truth is
that statement A is considered to be
true
if it isn't not contradicting any other
statements that have already been
determined to be true. And I do think
that's how conventional truth works.
And then there was a third version, a
third theory that died out relatively
quickly, which was founded by William
James and a few others, which was
pragmatism is just it's just true if it
it practically works.
But, uh that's not taken very seriously
anymore. But, I do think the coherence
theory of truth really is true for some

sorry conventional truth.

So, I think that enlightened beings like the Buddha, they can still endorse um just traditional mythological um beliefs like the flat earth floating on water, for example. That um an enlightened being born into a culture, assuming the enlightened being really means anything at the conventional level, um they tend to just follow along with their tradition. I'm not saying Jesus of Nazareth was necessarily enlightened, but he was born in Jewish culture, and so he followed a Jewish point of view

with some modifications. The Buddha was
born into largely Vedic culture, and so
he adopted a largely Vedic point of view
with some modifications. And um and so
on.
So,
I do think that enlightened beings,
um even if they unders- even if they
have experienced ultimate reality, they
won't necessarily
um know conventional truths because
there's an infinite number of possible
conventional truths that are largely
arbitrary, just like the statues in the
in the block of marble. Just because you
know the block of marble doesn't mean
that you know what statue

um the sculptor who's looking at it is

envisioning in that block of marble.

So, I guess I'll just move on to the

next question. That was a good question,

though. I liked that one.

The next question is from Erafashista.

And Erafashista says, "Thoughts on

metal, black metal in specific.

Well,

um

people listen to music

um in order to evoke certain emotions.

Music is like an emotional language.

It's not really a verbal language except

for the lyrics, of course, but it's it's

like these patterns sounds that elicit

emotional responses in the hearer.

And um

some some kinds of emotions I like more

than others.

Like rock and roll, I really like in

general just because it has this feeling

of intensity and power that uh

you know, it's like it's invigorating.

It's like a stimulant.

Um other kinds of

music like experimental electronic music

or um like what is it? Um

techno, like trance music, stuff like

that. It just takes you into a kind of

disembodied unusual otherworldly kind of

state which I which I like. It's sort of

a disorienting

almost like ego-dissolving kind of

music.

But other kinds of music I've just never

liked because it evokes

um emotions that I don't like very much.

And And like dark

uh what is this? Dark metal.

Um or black metal, death metal, thrash

metal. It's It's got a lot of negativity

in it that um

uh I mean, it can be good music, but

most of it

has so much sort of dark, like a dark

negative kind of vibe that

and it just doesn't appeal to me because

I prefer more uplifting or

um

yeah, I guess uplifting.

More upbeat kind of music.

With regard to uh

black metal,

about my favorite

my favorite one that I've listened to is

Mountains of God's Depression by

Dominia. You can look it up on YouTube.

And one reason why I like it is it

starts off really mellow, you know, like

like piano. There's a little violin and

it and then it just switches over into

just the raging you know, guitars and

the the throat screechy stuff. And um

it's it's a nice balance and I really

like listening to mellow music written

by like heavy metal bands just because you can feel that it's like they got the brakes on all the time. There's like this repressed intensity that they're like holding back. You can just kind of feel that behind the scenes.

So, I like that. But the throat screechy stuff especially I just do not like. I do not consider it to be any kind of improvement on actual singing. Sort of like rap music I've never liked.

And

I mean it's not an improvement on singing. It's not it's not really singing. And it it doesn't sound better than singing. It's not more musical than

singing.

So,

I do consider that aspect of of black

metal, just the throat screechy stuff,

to be sort of um

a kind of degenerate

a degeneration of music, sort of like

rap.

And I I may have just offended uh people

who like black metal or rap, but we all

have our own preferences.

I think I'd much rather listen to Rock

Lobster by the B-52s than just about any

any kind of black metal.

Whereas my sweetheart is the exact

opposite. It's just she just can't take

it seriously. It's like being at the

carnival with screaming kids all around.

It's just too hippity hoppity for her

taste and she likes the

the dark metal stuff.

So, it's just a matter of personal

temperament, I guess.

Um there is kind of an interesting video

I saw a few years ago.

It's uh by Dr. Steve Turley. And this

guy, I mean, you you wouldn't expect

this from him. He's he's like a

uh like a conservative Christian guy

with conservative Christian commentary,

like political commentary.

And uh about 3 years ago, he did this

one video called the post-globalist

aesthetics of extreme heavy metal music.
And um he's just talking about how some
of the the like the dark metal stuff, it
evokes like pre-modern imagery and
pre-modern modes of thought that are in
a way sort of a a reaction against
globalism,
which is interesting.
But um
yeah, if I like some heavy metal.
And you know, I like intense rock and
roll, but this the really dark vibe, you
know, the negativity and the throat
screechy stuff, I just I just don't like
very much. And music that relies too
much on lyrics, I it's I mean, I can
still like it, but um usually when I

listen to music, I go into like right hemisphere mode. It's like non-verbal. So, the the lyrics are just like one of the instruments. There's like the vocalist is he's just might as well just be another instrument that adds to the music.

I really like Led Zeppelin, but that's not black metal. You know, I have I have read that uh Led Zeppelin II was the first heavy metal album, but um I'm not sure about that.

So, I guess that's enough about black metal.

Um yeah, some some metal I like, heavy metal I like, but black metal not so

much.

Next question is from Diane.

And Diane says, "What are the precepts

that are common to most religions?"

And that's kind of interesting question

because

a lot of people will say you know all

religions are teaching essentially the

same things, you know, it's like do

good, don't do evil, tell the truth and

so forth, don't kick puppies.

But if if you look at the the world's

major religions, there is a lot of

disagreement even on basic morals.

Like Islam and like biblical Judaism are

about two of the main ones that uh

say that it's it's okay to kill people

if you figure you've got a good reason,

you know, if if they're going against

God or something.

Um some religions say you shouldn't

drink alcohol

like Buddhism and Islam.

But Jesus drank wine so the Christians

aren't much inclined to uh

to outlaw that. I guess some sects of uh

Protestantism um

like I think the Mormons maybe are

opposed to drinking alcohol.

But um

So you can always find exceptions but

the main ones

um

not killing

I mean even Christianity sees nothing

wrong with with killing animals.

But at least murder

tends to be like on on the list of

ethical

you know, especially if if they you

know, they haven't done anything wrong,

you know, somebody's minding their own

business. I mean that would be basic

ethics, you don't go kill them.

Um

no stealing, I think pretty much all

religions

would say you shouldn't steal.

I think all almost all religions would

say you shouldn't lie although um

in the the Old Testament there seems to

be some some lying involved by uh

by some of the uh

the sages

of uh

early

Hebrew times.

So, yeah, like the basic precepts of

Buddhist like the first four especially

would be pretty close to like a

universal ethic. Um no killing of other

people anyway.

Um

unless it's like deemed um like

necessary for some reason. You're

protecting your family or you're you're

a soldier just obeying the king or
something. There can be a loopholes for
that sort of thing.
Uh stealing is
yeah, I mean that's that's pretty basic
ethics. Although like in Islam, I mean
even the Muslims themselves allow, you
know, they admit that the their prophet
was uh essentially a bandit
uh when he was living in Medina because
he had to support his followers and
himself. So, they would be doing pirate
raids on caravans. That's sort of thing.
So, you can find uh
exceptions pretty much
to to any moral precept, but um yeah,
the basic ones don't kill, don't lie,

don't steal, and uh usually there's some sexual ethics in basic religions, you know, don't commit adultery, you know, don't don't rape.

That kind of thing. Although um getting back to um the prophet, he was uh he was a little rapey sometimes.

So, yeah.

But those those are the basics, I think. And then a lot of the rest uh some of them are largely arbitrary or like cultural things. Like all of the rules that about monks, you know, the robe robe material and the colors that the robes have to be dyed and how it's cut and sewn and that sort of thing is

largely arbitrary Indian ancient Indian

culture.

And a lot of the rest is is the same

way. Like um

modern Jews

um they converted um a precept in the

Old Testament, "Thou shalt not

boil a kid in its mother's milk."

And the later tradition turned that into

uh a Jew is not allowed to eat meat and

dairy products at the same meal.

Which is I I don't really don't see the

point in that.

I mean the the "Thou shalt not boil a

kid in its mother's milk" is uh one of

the few attempts the Old Testament made

to be uh humane to animals. You know,

sort of like "Thou shalt not muzzle the

ox that treadeth out the grain."

Uh and then it just got distorted into

just a meaningless rule that people have

to follow just because they think God

said so or whatever.

So, I think I answered that one.

Uh so, I'll move on to the next one. And

this is from Inmanis.

And Inmanis, he's uh

he's an intellectual kind of guy. He

he uh

writes complicated questions. So, I

better just dive into this here.

What can be said of quality with regard

to impermanence?

Yes, seemingly all states and conditionality can be observed as in flux and motion of rise to fall, but qualifiers never seem to end with respect to their flavor. Bear with me as this is a hard question for me to phrase. And the various qualities are prompted and conditioned for each being differently as the focusing lens of that being where it finds expression is so varied from being to being, but those qualities just seem to be.

You won't experience them in a constant way, but when they arise, you will know it's their genius or flavor, and they come in different magnitudes, which is

also conditioned. This isn't a question
of the being time experiencing,
but more of that which is experienced.
These qualities seem to have been with
us from the start to time, almost as if
they are perturbations of mind, and they
must follow various laws. Just as if a
pebble hits the water surface, ripples
occur. Just as there are many
frequencies of the electromagnetic
spectrum, so too there seem to be mental
qualities.
Abhidhamma speaks some of what I am
asking, chitta and chittasika,
uh which is mind and mental state.
Notice how they have uh categorized all

of these qualitative mental factors, and
the factors are kind of set in stone.
This various The various permutations
and manifestations occur in myriad ways,
and the ensuing states rise and fall,
but these qualities or mentals factors
are not subject, it would seem.
Otherwise, wouldn't the quality itself
end and fall beyond the scope of all
experience? They do not, apparently.
Okay, well, it seems like Inamatus is
somewhat of a Platonist
here, in that um uh
those of you who uh
kind of got lost
um
while I was reading this, it's

essentially he's asking, you know, like

in Buddhism teaches that everything is

impermanent, but like

like laws of nature

um tend to be permanent.

That's um

there is sort of a permanence underlying

things with regard to at least the rules

that everything follows.

And um I'm I'm really not a Platonist. I

don't think that uh

there's um let's see, what would be a

good example?

He talked about throwing a a stone into

a pond that makes ripples no matter

where you do it. So, the So, the

uh impact on the water surface causing ripples could be something that is permanent, but um

I don't think that the causing ripples is happening is like in some sort of Platonic heaven that is always that that the law is always some substance or essence that's always in existence. And so, it exists only when it's being perceived.

So, I'm kind of a radical uh what like a nominalist. I think that's what it would be called. I really don't believe in universals. Like like Plato believed that

you know, everything that appears in the earth is an imperfect manifestation of

something that's

like uh eternal up in heaven. So, like a

dog, there's just the dog is permeated

by dogness.

And so, dogs come and go. Dogs are

impermanent, but that that

perfect dogness is in heaven constantly.

And I just I just don't think so. I'm

not much of a Platonist.

Um Neoplatonist maybe, but but Plato I

really not had a whole lot of use for

him.

So, it seems to me that um

we're relying on human psychology

to make the declaration that these laws

don't change. It could be that some

other species that has a very different

way of perceiving things might be

experiencing very different um

so-called eternal laws

or laws of nature or something.

So, it's a matter of human perception.

And so, when we are

uh seeing uh a rock fall or let's say an

acorn falls from a tree

or the the apple falls from the tree.

So, um that's impermanent, but the the

law of gravity is is just always there.

But, it seems to me that

um

it's all conventional truth and the

conventional truth is a matter of

perception. And so, the law of gravity

doesn't really exist unless there's some conscious mind perceiving it.

And for each conscious mind perceiving it, it's it's not necessarily the same thing. It's just a different perception.

Um

So,

you can say that there's a a semblance of permanence in these things, but still they only exist if they're being perceived. Like uh George Berkeley used to say esse est percipi, which is to exist is to be perceived.

So, if if something isn't being perceived, it just it's just not there.

The tree falls in the forest and there's

nobody around. Not only does it not make

a sound, but there is no tree.

Unless the trees themselves are

conscious, you know, there's some kind

of

you know, some kind of other organism

experiencing the tree.

So,

yeah, I'm

I can see where he's coming from and

there is a certain amount of truth to

it, but still I would say that it's all

a matter of perceptions, individual

perceptions.

And um

yeah, even even that is not

something that is eternal and

unchanging.

So, I'll just move on to the next question. I hope I answered that without just totally mystifying everybody.

Um the next question is from Mussolini, not the famous one, but a different Mussolini.

Do you know anything about the origins of the veneration of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, which eventually became so widespread in much of Asia?

I've heard it said that Avalokiteshvara shares traits in common with the Hindu god Shiva.

And um Avalokiteshvara, I'm pretty sure

got mutated into Guanyin in China.

Um so Guanyin, who is a female deity or

Bodhisattva,

um is trans, essentially.

Um

she started off male in India and I

think it was Avalokiteshvara.

And yeah, I I just I haven't really

studied the history of some of these

concepts in in Mahayana Buddhism.

Um including the origins of

Avalokiteshvara.

Um some of the the mythological

Bodhisattvas in Mahayana Buddhism

started off as

um a few I think were Yakshas or like

almost like demonic entities or like

minor deities in various parts of India.

Um

I think even even the Greek Heracles or

known in in English as Hercules, um I

think he got conflated with the

Bodhisattva Vajrapani.

Uh or is it Padmapani? Like is one of

the Panis.

So with regard to Avalokiteshvara, it

could be that he was uh

at least in part based on the Hindu god

Shiva.

Um but most of them were based on um

just traditional minor deities that uh

got um glorified.

They got uh just recruited into the

Mahayanist Bodhisattva Pantheon.

So because I really don't know the answer to the question, I'll just move on to the next one, which is from Erin and this is kind of similar.

Erin says, "Is Mahayana kind of similar to the Unitarian Church in Christendom? This is the impression I get, lots of new age style relativism elements. Do you find a general difference in the types of people who are drawn to Mahayana versus Theravada.

Um

Well, I mean ethnically

um I think whether you're a Mahayana Buddhist or a Theravada Buddhist, I mean traditionally before it moved to the

west,

um

I mean it's just a matter of what

country you were born in, what culture

you were born into, what religion your

parents followed. So, it would be pretty

similar, you know, you'd have the same

kind of personality types in both

religions just because

um

I mean you really didn't have the choice

of Mahayana versus Theravada.

Um

Mahayana does seem to be more

uh at least certain schools of it more

faith-oriented.

Um maybe a little less

intellectual. Some Some schools of

Although some schools of Mahayana are

just like very rigorously intellectual.

Um

So, I would just

in

Yeah, the Unitarian Church I mean, I'm

not sure how the Unitarian Church

started.

Um it could have been a kind of

progressive movement. And Mahayana

Buddhism, I'm pretty sure could be

called a progressive movement in

Buddhism and also like in Indian

culture.

So, it was progressive. It was like

trying to change um Buddhism in certain ways. Although um some aspects of Mahayana were like a reform movement trying to get back to the early teachings of Buddhism, like uh Prajna or Prajnaparamita and uh even Nagarjuna and his uh Madhyamaka school. Um

In certain respects, they were like reform movements trying to get back uh to early like primordial Dharma and away from all the

like the technical philosophy that was being cooked up and a lot of the mythology also.

Some of Mahayana was a reaction against

Abhidharma, which is very

understandable.

Um so I would say that Mahayana is uh

like it's more progressive than

Theravada. Theravada is very

um conservative.

The uh the Theravadans after a certain

uh burst of virus-like mutation in the

early century first century or two or

three, uh it became very locked down and

conservative and people not wanting to

change anything.

Although it changes anyway just because

if it moves into a different culture,

it's going necessarily going to have to

absorb elements of that culture.

With regard to

Mahayana versus Theravada in the West,

like in America,

um the types of people who are drawn

to it I I would say that

some types of Mahayana like Zen

or like Dzogchen in in Tibetan Buddhism,

um they're they're similar to Theravada

in that they're largely based on

meditation

and uh

pretty much no-nonsense.

So um

yeah, I've I've haven't really noticed a

large difference in personality types

between Western Zen Buddhists and

Western Theravada Buddhists. I think it

could just be a matter of uh

uh which the person got exposed to

first.

I was originally um

I originally liked Zen Buddhism and was

considering very seriously becoming a

Zen monk.

Um

but then you got the other other schools

like Pure Land or Soka Gakkai,

Nichiren, that kind of thing, which are

just very faith-oriented

and uh the likes of which is

very rare in Western Theravada. And so

that would um attract a different sort

of person, I think. So you'd have

probably s- statistically significant

statistically significant uh

difference in personality types

attracted to like Theravada Buddhism or

something like Soka Gakkai.

But, um getting back to the Unitarian

church nowadays it's just completely

progressive. You know, it's like uh

little kids encouraged to stand up front

and declare themselves the opposite

gender and so forth. Um just very

strongly leftist.

Um based on what I've seen of it. You

know, the

uh flying the the gay pride flags out in

front of the church and so forth.

Um

Mahayana in general

Yeah, I mean it Mahayana some aspects of

it could be considered that sort of

general trend, but uh not necessarily.

There are some uh like reform genuine

reform aspects of early Mahayana anyway.

And uh Zen is uh

pretty no-nonsense and and based on on

practice, meditation and so forth.

So, I hope I answered that one.

And so, next I move on to some questions

from Matthew.

And Matthew says, first of all, "Kindly

describe the difference between samatha

and vipassana conceptually and as a

practice."

And this is

it just kind of butts up against uh a

certain

preference that I have of I really don't

even like the term vipassana

um the way it's usually used as a kind

of method. It's like you don't practice

vipassana. You don't do vipassana.

Vipassana literally means insight.

And it arises spontaneously

um

like often after you've done samatha.

Like

one of my favorite suttas

um

in the Majjhima Nikāya is the Lesser

Discourse on Voidness where uh the monk

practices samatha. He goes into very

advanced

um contemplative states, you know, just

very deep mystical states.

And then finally he gets to the state of

neither perception or non-perception or

the signless perception of mind, it's

called, the signless perception of mind,

which is beyond even fourth jhana,

apparently.

And that's like the highest

that's the highest contemplative state

you can attain.

Is the signless contemplation of mind.

And

then he realizes after he's come out of

it that even that is not enlightenment,

even that is not nirvana. And then it's just something clicks. It's like he realizes that you know, nothing that you can
you know, cultivate is it. You cannot cultivate nirvana. At least you can't get to nirvana. There is like the path does not end at nirvana. You know, you don't follow the path until you get to the gates of nirvana. It doesn't work that way.
And so samatha and vipassana are not really opposed in that sense.
Um vipassana,
what be much more accurately called satipatthana or just mindfulness

meditation. You can say samatha is based

on concentration or samadhi.

And vipassana is based on

mindfulness or sati.

And uh

conceptually

you would say that samatha

is what you're doing is you're just

stilling and clarifying your mind. If

you get to fourth jhana, you're just

wide awake and your mind is just crystal

clear and silent.

And then, after you get out of that

state,

then, which is also called purification

of mindfulness in the text, after you

get out of that state, then vipassana

can arise due to the profundity of the
experience you just have.
Um mindfulness, on the other hand,
is you're not so much
focusing on a single object to the
exclusion of everything else, or even
getting to the point of just having an
empty mind.
Just wide awake and not thinking
anything. That That would be more
samadhi.
But mindfulness is you're just you're
you're focusing on a moving target.
You're you're focusing on whatever
arises. So, it might be that both the
samatha and the the mindfulness

meditator start off meditating on on the

breath, like the the the touch sensation

of air at the nostrils.

Um but

the main difference would be uh the

samatha meditator, if their mind starts

to wander,

um they just bring it right back to I

mean, if anything else comes up, that

they just, you know, single-mindedly

bring it back to the uh

the sensation of touch at the nostrils.

Whereas, the mindfulness meditator,

someone who's practicing satipatthana,

they would uh they wouldn't necessarily

bring it back. I mean, if it's like you

got pain in your knee, which happened a

lot when I was at a Mahasi center,

um

just or more than once, I mean, you you

meditate a lot, you can get pain in your

knee, especially if you're meditating

more than usual for prolonged period. Um

you know, just the pain is always there.

So, you can just start

contemplating noting the pain. You know,

you just observe the pain.

Or whatever it is. It's like you know,

itches or there's some weird sound going

on outside. You know, you're not

thinking, "Gee, what's making that weird

sound outside?" You but instead, it's

like you're hearing it. And so, you're

just seeing it as you're just observing
the sounds the sensation of sound.
Or you know, it's
doing the the auditory equivalent of
observing.
So,
I think it's a false dichotomy where a
lot of people like even in Burma people
ask which Sasana do you belong to the
Samatha Sasana or the Vipassana Sasana
as though there are two Buddhisms. But
really they're not in conflict. You're
supposed to be practicing mindfulness
when you're not practicing Samatha. So,
one thing about mindfulness is you can
do it no matter what you're doing
anytime like you're walking or brushing

your teeth or doing anything you can you can be mindful you just like Ram Dass used to say be here now. You're just focusing intently on whatever is coming up and um not really trying to interpret it. You know, you're not thinking about it. You're just observing it as it arises and letting it go as it as it passes away

and just observing whatever comes up next.

And the purification of that would be um like you'd see in the Bahia Sutta of the Udana where in the scene there is only the scene in the heard there is only the heard. You know, it's like um some sound

comes up. You're just

observing the sound. You're not trying

to interpret it. You know, you're not

saying oh that's a dog barking. You

know, it's hearing the sound as sound.

And that that would be uh

some some fairly good mindfulness.

And uh

Vipassana itself the insight that arises

not not the method necessarily but the

insight that arises is

um

eventually what

uh slams you or

uh enlightens you

uh into the state of enlightenment.

But,

even if you're practicing samatha

intensely,

it's going to be the the insight that

arises as a result of that.

And I mean, some powerful insights can

arise through practicing intense

samadhi. Just

Like when you get to the point where you

can just sit there and not thinking.

You realize that

you get the insight that you are not

your thoughts, and which might be more

powerful for intellectual guys than it

is for maybe more feelings-oriented,

heart-oriented people. But, when you can

just sit there and not thinking,

and um

you know, in a sense, you're still

there. You know, you haven't just ceased

to exist. That uh

when you stop thinking, it's not just

like black nothingness.

That that is I mean, that's a powerful

thing to to realize. So, that would be

like a minor kind of insight.

Um

it doesn't work so well for

for lay people living busy, distracted

lives, however.

So, um

the main option, the most practical

option for lay people, people living in

the world, is

vipassana, although I really don't like the term for mindfulness meditation.
But, just you know, being wholeheartedly, you know, in the present moment with whatever you're doing. Even if you're remembering something, you can still be aware of the sensations of of memory, you know, remembering.
You know, it's not you're not you're not lost in the content, but you're still there in the basic phenomena.
And it's even with with regard to um breathing in and out, doing breathing meditation.
Um

it's not being extremely mindful if
you're thinking breathing in, breathing
out. I mean, it's it's good it's good as
like an elementary practice just to get
your mind focused, which in itself has
in samatha or samadhi elements.
But, um if you're just observing the
touch of air at the nostrils, just
feeling the sensation in the in the felt
there is only the felt, then you're
getting closer to reality because
breathing in and breathing out are
concepts. But, this touch
is not a concept. I mean, you can turn
it into one, but you know, it's it's
like a sensation, which is more basic.
It's closer to reality because there's

not all this symbolic interpretation

getting in the way that it it has to be

filtered through.

So,

I didn't really explain that in order.

Um but, um

that's that's essentially it.

And, uh I think I'll I'll move on to

Matthew's next question,

which is, "What is your practical advice

for putting a right speech into

practice? More specifically, how might a

layperson living in the world improve

their application of right speech in the

workday hectic three screaming kids

moment

by moment realities of life?"

It seems relatively straightforward. I

mean, first of all,

um your practically my practical advice

for putting right speech into practice

is is uh

first and foremost, just don't tell

lies.

And, um if if you're living in the kind

of context where just telling blunt ugly

truths is going to get you in a a pack

of trouble, then um you might want to

learn how to talk more like a lawyer or

a politician, not so much to make you

dishonest, but just to avoid having to

just say blunt truths, you know, you can

kind of

pad it a little bit or avoid the

subject. You know, don't say anything,

but just flat out lying is is worse than

uh

you know, being diplomatic. I mean, you

don't have to lie to be diplomatic.

There are ways you can It's like

sometimes

like somebody invites you over for

dinner or something and you don't want

to just flat out say, you know, I don't

feel like coming over to your house. I

got other things I'd rather do, which is

the truth.

But uh just telling them that might hurt

their feelings, but um

I mean, there's there's other ways you

can come up with something

that that won't require you to lie.

Um you know, something something else

has come up, you know, just leave it at

that.

Uh or I mean, one thing to bear in mind

is you can say anything with metta in

your heart, you know, you say anything

with a a certain amount of brotherly

love

then people can take it more easily. You

know, then maybe even then it's like,

you know, I I just don't feel like going

anywhere tonight, you know, I'd just

rather just stay home.

Um if you say that with

you know, like a a friendly

amiable tone of voice, then it's is much

more palatable to the other person than

saying, I don't want to go to your

house.

You know. So,

that sort of thing it just takes maybe

takes some practice.

Um and some cultivation of of some uh

so-called loving kindness, which is a

strange

a strange uh translation of metta.

Metta literally means something like

friendliness.

So, let's see.

Yeah, that would be my practical advice

for putting right speech into practice.

Plus, there are the other three kinds of wrong speech. You know, there are four internal bottom woods and there are four kinds of wrong speech. One is just lying. So, don't tell lies.

Second is

Let's see, what is it?

Parusavaca or Pisunavaca. I can't remember the order now. Let's just say it's Parusavaca, which is harsh speech. And that's, you know, you're not telling someone off to their face. You're not calling someone names. You're not saying, "You're You're stupid, you dumb ass." You know, that kind of talk.

Um

it it's just you just have to like be
mindful enough that you don't go into
knee-jerk, you know, habitual responses.
And then you if you're in control of
your own mouth,
then you just don't say that kind of
stuff.
And it may be the force of habit
will be leading you in that direction,
but then you have to be mindful
enough that you can just turn off the
automatic pilot to some degree and just,
you know, say what is appropriate rather
than just blurt out what uh years of
conditioning have
have caused you to just blurt out

habitually.

So, that's parushavacha. And then next

is pisunavacha, which is

saying bad things about someone behind

their back in order to um turn someone

against them or or that sort of thing.

It's especially badmouthing people

behind their back. And again, it's like

you just have to be

um you have to consider that to be

important

and make it somewhat of a priority, and

then just train yourself not to do it.

And to some degree, I mean, warning

someone, let's say you know someone is

dishonest and they're trying to sell a

used car to another one of your friends,

you might want to warn him, you know,

it's like, "Yeah, I'm You might not want

to trust him too much."

But you're not doing it

because you dislike the first person,

it's because you're trying to help the

other person.

So, your motives are important with

regard to this sort of thing.

And then finally, there's uh

samphappalapa,

which is uh usually translated as idle

chatter,

which is like gossip, that kind of

thing. And if you're living in the

world, I mean, it's very difficult to

avoid. Uh you know, you're at work and
some kind of work gossip comes up or
something like that, you know, so
you just got to be careful. So, just
being mindful and just um
you know, being aware of what you're
going to say before you say it.
That kind of thing is is your best bet
at uh
at at just practicing right speech.
You know, it's like before you say
something, you you should go through the
little filter, you know, is this
appropriate? Is this, you know,
unethical or unskillful or unwholesome?
That's sort of thing. And just don't
don't be an automaton that's just going

through life uh through force of habit,

just through conditioning.

So, let's see. I guess I guess I

answered that one. Next question, also

from Matthew. What does Buddhism have to

say about living with fellow monks who

you rather despise? And what lessons

might we draw from that as lay people?

Well,

I think there's different ways of going

about it and it you have to go on it

uh at a like a a case-by-case

um

Yeah, you just have to do it

case-by-case. Like, for example, in

Buddhism, like if there are people that

are just like bad people, you know,

they're just troublemakers, they're

they're fools,

um your best bet would just be to avoid

them if possible.

Like um in the

the Mangala Sutta, which is one of the

most well-known uh Theravada Buddhist

texts,

it's uh chanted as a protection chant in

Asia.

Um

it's a list of 38 blessings in life, and

blessing number one is

uh not associating with fools.

Because mental states are contagious.

So, if someone really is just a fool, a

crook, you know, just a real
troublemaker, your best bet, if
possible, is just do not associate with
these people. Or like if you have to,
you have to associate with them you know
they're like like a colleague at work or
something then you just keep it you know
kind of formal you know
you can still be friendly to them or
polite anyway but you know you just
don't engage any more than you have to.
Um see what else?
Other ways like if you've got someone
that that really bugs you and it's your
own fault let's you you've got some
issue you know they remind you of

someone that that was like a bully in
in school or something if if I mean if
you know yourself well enough to know
that you don't like this person that's
because of your own issues then in in a
case like that
or even in the case of the troublemaker
there is the option of of just
practicing meta cultivating meta sending
meta to the other person and if they're
such a a bastard that you it's just you
can't bring yourself to do it there is
what is called the pebble method and
I've I've mentioned this before I think.
Where you just take this cute round
little pebble and you get like a little
glass you know a little tumbler and

every day you you put you put the pebble
in the tumbler and you you pour cold
water into it and
you just think you know as
just as this little pebble is surrounded
by this cool water may so-and-so you
know whoever the person is may they be
surrounded by peace and serenity you
know and uh usually I mean difficult
people tend to be difficult cuz they're
unhappy people and this just unhappiness
is overflowing and and sort of making
trouble with others
like a a genuinely happy contented
person isn't going around and making
trouble for other people.

You know if if you're a happy person

it's live and let live as a general

rule.

Uh it's usually only if you're miserable

that you want to lash out and make other

people miserable too.

So, a certain amount of compassion for

for people that are are real just butt

holes.

Um

And and you can also there was I can't

remember the sutta, unfortunately. I

think it's in the the sutta No, what is

it? It's not in the sutta, it's in the

Visuddhimagga.

Where there's like instructions on how

to deal with difficult people. And one

is just uh see them as, you know,
conditioned mind and matter, that kind
of thing. You can just deconstruct them
into uh into elements in your mind or
some such.
But um yeah, the two main the two main
ways of dealing with them is uh you
know, detach from the the the difficult
people as much as you're able and uh try
to uh
have some compassion and and love, you
know, loving-kindness
towards them.
Especially if you can't detach from
them. You know, they're just part of
your life, you know, a difficult family

member or something.

And uh it really does have power. You can If you send metta to someone sincerely,

um I've I've come across a number of cases. Like there was one woman who was having real difficulty with like one of her managers at work and she tried I think it was the pebble method even where she's sending metta to that person and just within uh like 2 weeks that the difficult manager actually

um came to that person and sincerely apologized, you know, I I realize I've been acting like a like an ass and you know, I'm sorry, that kind of a thing.

And uh you know, mental states are

contagious. You send love to somebody

and it's uh

it's going to have an effect.

Maybe if they're just a a hardened butt

hole, then it it won't be a noticeable

effect, but um

in that case uh

send them love and and just be polite

and detached and uh be about the best

you can do if you can't just go away.

All right. So, the next question.

Also from Matthew.

And this is his last question here. What

is the appropriate right view on the

current issue in Ukraine for a monk?

Should they be supporting one side or

the other with deep convictions about
the outcome or should they simply view
it all as impermanence and be above or
beyond the current manifestations of
Dukkha
or some other mode of engagement? Yeah,
well, a monk is supposed to renounce
society. And there's a list of animal
talk, Tiracchana Vacca,
um that monks are supposed to avoid. And
it involves like kings and ministers and
wars and this kind of thing, politics in
general. A monk I mean, you renounce the
world and uh so I mean, you should just
be off in the forest meditating.
For monks. So, the Ukraine conflict is
just one of, you know, countless

conflicts that have occurred

uh in the human world and um

it's just it's just more

um you know, artificially generated

Dukkha, unhappiness.

Um still I mean,

I mean, if you have as a especially as a

layperson or just a monk who's just sort

of viewing the craziness of Samsara,

um I mean, you could you could see that,

you know, both sides have their have

their reasons.

You know, just

um you know,

like the current issue, Ukraine versus

Russia and

um

especially in the West, you know, Russia

is being demonized and dehumanized and

Putin is like Adolf Hitler and

uh but I mean, he's got his reasons, you

know, I mean, America has bombed

who knows how many countries.

And uh

you know, we're the good guys though, so

it's okay if we do it.

Um and I think part of Putin's reasons

are just he doesn't want a a NATO

country with military bases with

missiles aimed at Russia just right on

his border. And there's been a a lot of

talk about Ukraine becoming more

westernized, becoming part of the EU,

becoming part of NATO, and so forth.

But uh I'm not pretending to understand

um

Putin's reasons, but I think that's

probably an aspect of it.

So,

yeah, I mean it's wrong to to just

launch an aggressive attack on uh a

neighboring country, you know, not even

really defensive except for maybe an

ideological or

uh preemptive kind of way. So, I'm not

trying to uh

endorse

Putin's uh or Russia's invasion of

Ukraine, but both sides have got their

their reasons and everything, and that's
one reason why it's best not to be uh
picking sides too much. I mean, you
I mean, it's just human nature that
you're going to have preferences and so
forth, but um the people whose
preferences are different are not
necessarily uh demonic entities or or
Nazis or
or commies or whatever.
So, so
uh sometimes I'm I'm answering
questions, and when I get to the the end
of the answer, it's like, "Wow, did I
really answer that question?"
I don't know.
All right, so I'm just going to move on

to the next one, and I apologize

sincerely to uh Matthew if

I really didn't answer the question very

well. Well, with regard to monks, yeah,

it's it's very clear-cut. I mean, the

monk shouldn't give a damn.

But um

for laypeople watching the news and

everything,

this is this is just being a human

being. It's just the way humans have

been. I've read a lot of history, and

it's just been, you know, one war and

barbarian invasion after another.

And it's been really awful. We've been

We're really lucky

that uh

we've been living in a relatively

peaceful age, uh at least, you know,

going back to

you know, post-World War II,

the world has been relatively abnormally

peaceful.

And this is uh kind of a minor outburst,

it seems like, or at least it's minor

thus far. We haven't had any nukes go

off, anyway.

So, anyway, getting back to the next

question, which is from B Pat 427.

And B Pat 427

says, "Do you think that something like

Hinduism could be more practical than

Buddhism for a faith-oriented layperson

looking to cultivate positive mental
states due to more focus on things like
mantras, ritual, and sacrifice, as
opposed to dedicating many hours to
meditation?"
Well, it's possible. I mean, Hinduism
and Buddhism have a lot of similarities.
They both believe in karma, for example.
They both believe in enlightenment.
They're very similar. And the Buddha
um if a non-Buddhist wanted to be
ordained, he had to go through a waiting
period, but Hindus were
the equiva- like the the analog of
Hindus, like the Vedic Brahmanists of
his day, um they didn't have to go

through the waiting period because they believed in karma and stuff already, so um

So, there is that.

Um but yeah, Hinduism can be more faith-oriented. Yeah, you know, there can be the worship of deities or the uh devotion to the guru, which are definitely more based on faith.

Um there's there's more, you know, chanting. Well, not necessarily more chanting, but there's more like singing and uh group activities like that.

Uh what is it, kirtan? That kind of thing that uh really appeals to uh some new age types in the West.

And the new age types are very faith

oriented. They're really not uh

uh like philosophical intellectuals as a

general rule.

But yeah, I mean you should try

you should study various religions.

And

to become what in Buddhism is called

Bahusuta having heard much and then you

can make a more

more intelligent decision with regard to

what system works best for you either

within Buddhism or or outside of

Buddhism. I mean for some people in

Christianity

um

you know there have been some genuine

saints, meditation masters in in

Christianity.

And

I guess just uh

the faith in the in the narrative

uh appealed to them or just worked for

them. And uh

so

I'm not the sort of person who says uh

you know if you're not a Buddhist or a

Theravada Buddhist you have a wrong view

and you're going to burn in hell.

Certainly not.

Um

I've studied various religions enough to

know that there have been great saints.

Very good saintly wise people in just

about every tradition.

And so I mean once you get to the

ultimate reality that underlies all the

stories the stories become irrelevant.

You can still like I would mention

earlier I mean you can still endorse the

cultural traditions.

But um you know that's that's largely

irrelevant to the underlying ultimate

that uh

uh an enlightened being presumably has

experienced.

So let's see here.

Yeah so I'd say uh

the answer to that question I would I

would say is yep. So now move on to the

next one.

Do you plan on getting a flashlight for

your Glock 19 and do you plan on getting

a carry permit?

Well that's kind of a change of pace.

Glock questions. Yeah, I haven't even

gotten the Glock yet. It's just so many

February was

there was all kinds of like property

taxes and and and all kinds of weird

expenses. I got like two fake front

teeth and everything and

so

um yeah, I haven't got it yet. I am

planning I I sincerely hope I will get

the pistol within a month and uh

I'm getting to the question here. Do I

plan on getting a flashlight for the

Glock 19? No, I I am not planning on

getting a

like a mountable flashlight for it. It

has 16. I think a a Glock 19 has a

magazine that holds 16 rounds. So, if

necessary, I can just spray bullets if I

can't see in the dark.

Um

and the next part of the question here

is do you plan on getting a carry

permit? Yeah, I will get a concealed

carry permit, which is one reason why I

want to get a Glock 19 because it's it's

a a very compact little pistol.

But, still relatively accurate and uh

I I have a few friends who are gun

bunnies and uh

uh

they tell me that the Glock 19 is

like approximately the perfect pistol

because it's so easy to it rarely

misfires. It's easy to maintain, easy to

take apart and clean, you know, holds a

lot of rounds, more than a revolver, and

it's small and compact and still

accurate. So,

um yeah, I think that answers the

question. I I I did a straightforward

non-roundabout answer to these

questions. So, no, I'm not planning on

getting a flashlight for the Glock and

yes,

I do plan on getting a concealed carry permit.

So, the next question also from Bpat427.

Yeah, Bpat427.

Do you still have a daily sitting practice? If so, have you seen your focus hindered at all since rejoining lay life?

Um

when I was a monk, like my first 10 years as a monk, I had it worked out that I was averaging 6 hours a day of meditating. At least 6 hours a day. I was meditating a lot.

And

like after I'd been a monk for more than

20 years, I just stopped making

progress. And it was just becoming

really frustrating. Just sitting there

and just

I mean, it was like

it was like a struggle just just trying

to keep going.

And so, after I

after I disrobed, or even like a few

months before I disrobed, yeah, I just

stopped regular sitting practice.

And I do not sit in meditation every

day. In fact, I have not sat in

meditation for quite a long time.

Um

if so, have you seen your focus hindered

at all since rejoining lay life? Um

yeah, my focus has been uh and there's
just so many more distractions. And
what's more important, I think um
is that when you're living a lay life,
you have to dedicate so much of your
energy into just the practical
necessities of of living a lay life,
like like working
that um if you can't somehow
make that a spiritual practice then it's
using up a lot of of your energy and
distracting you, so that it's just sort
of
you have less energy to direct towards
spiritual things.
And so, I think that has been I mean,

just sitting in meditation

um it's not necessarily significant. It

It can be very useful. I I mean, I did

it a lot.

But um if you can if you can maintain

mindfulness you you can stay centered

um

whether you're sitting or not, then

you're doing fairly well if you can keep

your the clarity of mind and just be,

you know, in the present moment.

And um

sitting meditation, if you if you're

good at I was never really good at

meditation. I had to work so hard just

to get into what states I had attained.

But by nature, by by disposition, I have

never been a really good meditator. I
think my my brain is just hyperactive,
like a lot of Westerners who are just
compulsive thinkers or something. So I
had a lot of adiccha or
mental restlessness.
So
yeah, I still I still try to uh
to be mindful and uh
you know, just keep spirit in heart, but
uh sitting cross-legged with my eyes
closed on a cushion
or on the floor, um yeah, I've I've
pretty much stopped doing it.
So I'll just move on to the next
question, which is let's see, also from

the Pat427.

Do you have any suggestions for a

layperson getting to get their

significant other into Dharma?

Well, you could try harping at them

incessantly, you know, preaching at

them, but it's not going to work. I

think your best bet

in in helping anybody

to get uh interested in in Dharma is

just be a living example. You know, if

they can see that you're into Dharma

or or Dharma

and that you are a happy, serene person,

you know, you're just uh

um you know, it's like the benefits the

benefit of it is just obvious. It's

just, you know, right there for them to

see

then uh yeah, they might make the

connection between

your serenity and, you know, morality

and so forth uh and the fact that uh

you're practicing Dharma.

I think that would be the I mean the

best

the ways that I have helped people the

most, I think as far as I know, at least

some of the times I've helped people a

lot has been unintentionally.

Like I've had a few monks

um I was living in a big school

monastery I mentioned already tonight.

With lots of monks there. And there was a dining hall and you know, food was served there every day, but I never went there. I never went there once. I would always just take my bowl and and walk through the village and get my food get my food that way through uh what's called pindapata.

Through alms round.

And um you know, I didn't you know, I wasn't doing it ostentatiously. It was just my own preference. But then uh I remember one time a monk came up to me and sincerely thanked me. I didn't even know who he was. He was just kind of you know, just a casual acquaintance. You see him around, but he came up to me and

just sincerely thanked me cuz uh he said
he was inspired by seeing me going for
alms round every day. And so he started
doing it and he felt really good about
it. You know, it made him really happy.
So, I mean that's the the best way or
one of the most effective ways of
teaching someone is you know, you're
just living
your
Dharma, you know, you're a living
example and then they can see that
through you that that that has benefits.
If you're if you're practicing
correctly, I mean if you're not
practicing correctly and you're still

um you know, a miserable person and you

know, prone to fits of road rage and so

forth then uh

yeah, you're not going to be very

persuasive. I remember

there used to be a public service

announcement a long time ago back when I

was a a long-haired

uh eco-hippy type

and there was this uh guy who looked

like the stereotypical football

like a high school football coach

and it's like you know, he has the egg

and says this is your brain and he

cracks it in the frying pan and it's

like sizzling and popping and says "This

is your brain on drugs." And then I

mean, he has this just
indignant, angry look on his face. And
he's like, "Any questions?"
And And I would always think, "Yeah, I
mean, if if I stop getting high, will I
Will I be as happy as you?"
Because I mean, he obviously wasn't a
happy person.
I mean, he might have just been acting,
you know, for the for the public service
announcement. But still, I mean, it's
it's not a good way of persuading people
that your way is the best way if you're
obviously just like a miserable, cranky
kind of person.
So, yeah, just be a good example.

That's That That would be your best way.

And uh I don't know, maybe if you if you

go to a temple or something, you might

uh you know, invite them to come along

or something.

But uh

still, just be a good example.

And so, I'll just move on to the uh next

question, which is from Chaplin.

And Chaplin says,

"Do you plan on doing more forest Dharma

talks or readings? Really enjoy them."

Um

yeah, I mean, it's not really on some

kind of schedule that I have written up.

But uh

yeah, I'm sure it's going to happen

again. Yeah, I did a few um videos where I'm reading favorite texts in a forest setting.

And uh yeah, I can do that again.

I mean, originally my plan was when I came to South Carolina, it was maybe uh doing like forest retreats. I still think it's an excellent idea, especially in the West, where you just go on a a short hiking trip, you know, into the woods somewhere

to some, you know, really nice forest area,

maybe like by a river or something, and uh just have the meditation retreat there, where everyone just has their own

little place where they spend the day
meditating.
And uh then you sit around the campfire
in the evening and have the Dharma talk
and a lot of it might be
talks on just uh
overcoming fear. Just living alone in a
forest, just sitting under a tree, it
can be kind of scary at night. Like, you
know, you're you're sitting there
meditating in the middle of the night
and you hear a twig snap nearby.
It's like, "What was that?"
And uh
you know, how do you deal with that? You
know, just get up and run. I mean, it's
dark, you can't see any anyway and if

it's a dangerous animal, it probably
runs faster than you anyhow, so you just
sit there and you just observe the fear
or observe, you know, whatever it is,
you know, you feel your heart beating
faster and these worried thoughts
continue to arise. You just watch them
and let them go.
You know, being being scared isn't going
to help.
And just learning about like asceticism,
austerity, you know, just that kind of
thing. I think it could be really
helpful
uh in the West, in America and it'd be a
cheap way of doing a good meditation

retreat. You wouldn't have to rent a venue and you wouldn't have to charge a lot of money and that kind of thing. I mean, you could even be a So, it could be fasting, too, so you wouldn't even have to worry about food.

I did that a few times when I was living in Washington state as a monk. But, it uh I have to admit, it never really caught on. There's um most of the the Vipassanā people, the insight meditation people are boomers with uh health issues and uh they're just too westernized to really want to uh hack the discomfort and hunger of uh a forest fast.

But, uh I still think it would be a good idea if it could only catch on, get some

traction.

And so, I'll just move on to uh

Chaplin's next question.

"How are you liking the new beard and

will you keep it?"

She's referring to this this this hair

on my face.

And uh this is literally the first beard

I've ever grown. This is the longest

beard I've ever had in my life.

And uh one reason why I grew it is uh

at work, I work at a sheet metal shop in

South Carolina um at present.

And there's like 15 guys there, and I

was one of the two guys that didn't have

a beard.

You know, it's I don't know what it is.

It's like uh

down south, it's guys in the working

class, and you know, they I'm not

getting the tats all up and down my

arms, but uh I did grow the beard. And

uh the boss really likes it. He's

complimented me on a couple times.

But um

I will probably shave it off when it

starts getting really hot.

When then when it starts getting real

sweaty and drippy and stuff, I'm

probably shaving it off.

But um I might grow it again next

winter.

Who knows? I don't know. I I'm not

really

um

I don't really make like plans like

that. I just kind of go day by day with

regard to certain things like beard

growing.

So, finally, last question from Chaplin,

and last question on the list.

And that is

really liking your new spiritual right

project videos. Do you guys have any

plans for future content there? Well,

we're going to continue making videos.

There is a

um

a group that I have been invited to

join, and uh I'm in it, called spiritual right. And um it has uh a website, which is still under construction. That's one of our main uh obstacles at present. And uh YouTube videos, we've got a YouTube channel.

And um

I think there's a presence on Twitter that I'm not in control of. And there's even a presence on Tik Tok, which I've never seen before.

Um

I I would like us to get on to uh the the new uh what, Rumble and uh Truth Social.

But I might have to take charge of that in order for it to happen. And I'm I'm

really not into uh a lot of tech stuff.

But, um

yeah, if if you're if you're interested

in spiritual right, I can leave the

the uh

the YouTube link below along with all of

my other

my other and like uh

internet my URL links,

which should be below below here in the

above the comments.

And also uh

the links to my uh three books.

Probably before before very much longer.

So, uh yeah, the spiritual right

project, when we get the the website

fully going, there's going to be

articles there, also.

And um we're just we're just going to

continue making

uh videos.

Um

like really short ones that uh they can

put on TikTok, and then longer ones. And

the short ones and long ones will be on

on YouTube.

And um

so far, it's been good.

So, I guess that's it. I'm done. And uh

be happy.

Hello and welcome to episode 24 of

question and answer. I am your host,

Panyo Bassaw.

And usually I start off by apologizing

for taking so long to make one of these

videos, but this time I'm not

apologizing. I'm not sorry.

So I'm just going to get straight to the

questions cuz there's quite a few as

usual.

And I'm going to crack a Red Bull

to uh

fuel my brain.

Cuz I worked hard today. I am a working

man now, blue collar and all that.

Okay, so the first question

is from White Malcolm X.

And White Malcolm X says,

"When you were in Burma, did you see any

evidence of veneration of

Avalokiteshvara?"

"I thought I heard somewhere that

there's some residual attention to that

Bodhisattva in Southeast Asia."

Well,

no, not really. Um

there is some veneration of

Avalokiteshvara after he transitioned

into a female because it's my

understanding that Guanyin

is like a female more Chinese kind of

version of Avalokiteshvara. I think she

is based on

the Indian Mahayana Buddhist Bodhisattva

Avalokiteshvara.

So, um in Chinese Burmese like um

Burmese people who are ethnic Chinese,

you know, they speak Burmese.

Um

there's there's a lot of them that are

still like they've got a lot of ethnic

Chinese um

ethnicity.

And so on their shrines they all they

may have a a an image of Guanyin, but um

the Indian Avalokiteshvara I I haven't

really seen. I think the closest I've

seen to that other than Kuan Yin is one

time

I was taking a bus through

uh

what's it called Mahamyaing?

I think it's called Mahamyaing. It was

just the great dense forest in uh

northwestern Burma.

And um

we had to have a soldier

on our bus an armed soldier on our bus

because there were bandits that infested

this area.

And uh we stopped off

well before we got into the deep forest

we stopped at this little shrine that

was to Bet No Mae which means black

Vishnu.

So um there is a certain amount of

veneration of Indian

like non-Buddhist non-Theravadan

deities.

But um with regard to Avalokiteshvara

other than um after the the sex change

to Kuan Yin I haven't seen it. And Kuan

Yin is mainly venerated by

uh people of Chinese ancestry who's got

like a a Mahayanist streak to them.

So I'll just move on to the next

question also by White Malcolm X.

And he says is there any form of

ecclesiastical hierarchy in Southeast

Asian Theravadan

Theravada? I know that in Sri Lanka

there are Nayakas and Mahanayakas who

are regional leaders. If so what do they do? I never really understood what their job description was supposed to be. Have you ever had to interact with this sort of hierarchy? If so what was that experience like?

Well um

it's relatively well known that in Thailand they are led by the Sangharaja you know the king of the Sangha who is really only the king of the Thai Sangha not uh

any other any other Sangha in uh Southeast Asia or South Asia.

Um and then there's I really don't know that much about Thai Buddhism, but um, they do have like an ecclesiastical

council.

And um,

I think one of their main purposes

is um,

to like uh, root out heresy. Like if

there you've got some Ajahn in Thailand

who's teaching stuff that's really not

endorsed by the Pali texts, you know, he

may be uh, warned. And uh, if the

warning doesn't doesn't work, I've I've

heard of them actually

uh, forcing monks to disrobe, which is

kind of iffy. I mean, they really don't

have that authority, but if uh, the

person assumes that they have the

authority, they may go along with it.

Um, in Burma, they do have the Nayakas

and Mahanayakas that uh, what Malcolm X

here mentions.

Um, it's it's similar, although

um, the leader is just the Sangha

Mahanayaka Sayadaw,

which is the uh, the Sayadaw or master

or teacher

of of the you know, the great, you know,

the highest teacher of the Sangha or the

highest master of the the leader of the

Sangha. And I've actually met with him.

I I had lunch with him once.

Um,

he was very friendly. I can't remember

what he told me. He told me some strange

strange uh,

story about supernatural things, but I I
can't remember what it was. And um,
they're they're mainly bureaucrats.
They're sort of intermediaries between
the government and uh,
the uh, the faithful congregation of
Buddhists.
Um,
I've I've had some interactions with
Nayakas, too, which are like the
regional leaders of the Sangha. And um,
like
if an abbot is going to be appointed to
a monastery, he has to have the okay of
the Nayaka Sayadaw of that area. And uh,
like making new ecclesiastical

boundaries, simas they're called. Um

possibly even founding new monasteries,

the nayaka generally the nayaka Seattle

generally has to uh

to approve.

And there is an ecclesiastical council

and uh they do what I was saying about

what they probably do in Thailand where

they will uh send warnings to monks that

are deviating from uh orthodoxy and uh

um

yeah, that's about that's really they

really don't do very much, tell you the

truth.

They're uh

just bureaucrats and uh I I just walked

out of a uh

a nayaka Seattle's monastery. He was

he lived uh in northwestern Burma and uh

some some faithful good intentioned

villagers took me to see him

and uh

he was

he was really keen on me handling money

for some reason. I was I was relatively

strict in that regard. I didn't handle

money.

And um

he just uh had some novice

bring a plate from some cupboard and set

it down in front of me and then

announced to everybody that uh

um

you know, they would earn merit if they donated for my traveling expenses cuz I was traveling at the time and I didn't like it and the monk that was with me knew that I didn't like it. And uh so I'm just kind of kind of scowling and then he started telling them that uh you know, they should pray for nibana when they're offering the money and that was just too much. I just got up and walked out.

Uh

but yeah, I mean, they can they can be they I mean, they're not really chosen for their uh moral rectitude or their wisdom. I think it's largely um politics

more than anything else.

So uh I think I'll move on to the the last, the third and last question of White Malcolm X.

How do you say politically incorrect Dharma in Pali? I think it might be something like nicca nicca dhamma. I was going to look this up. I'm going to Just a minute.

The Pali-English dictionary.

And I can't remember if it's aranna or rajanna.

Let's see. Let's look it up here.

Oh my goodness.

rajo rajadi

rajana

Okay, here we go. Okay, r a j j i or r a

j j a

is

raja

which means

like kingship

and um

I don't know. That's back in those days

that was pretty much what government

was. So, my guess it would be like

micca rajadamma. You know, um

wrong

you know, wrong dhamma of government or

something like that.

Um

Yes, or what goes against the the king

or something. I don't know.

How do I say politically incorrect

dhamma in uh

in Pali?

Yeah, maybe what Malcolm X is uh

got it better except he's he says he has

nicca instead of

Yeah, no. What what he has got written

here couldn't It wouldn't even be a Pali

word. He's got a long i before a double

consonant.

And it starts with n which uh yeah, I

don't think that's really a word.

Maybe he typed it wrong.

But it would be something like micca

rajadamma or something like that.

But um

I'm not exactly sure. I don't know if there's really a concept for that. I mean, technically there would not be be Pali word. There's just a lot of things that there are no Pali words for. Pali has a relatively small vocabulary because it's largely based on um the Theravada Buddhist texts. You know, there's not much beyond that. And what is beyond that is based on the vocabulary of the Theravada um uh the Pali texts.

Um there there was one monk who uh wrote a Pali to English dictionary. He was inventing or maybe it was English to

Pali dictionary. He was a a Sri Lankan

monk. And um

excuse me.

He uh he was like coining new words for

modern things, but uh

yeah, I even he didn't have an idea for

politically incorrect Dhamma, I'm pretty

sure.

Uh um maybe I'll think about it.

And uh come up with something.

So, anyway, I'll just move on to the

next question, which is from Urlog,

I think is the name.

And Urlog says, "As a former marine

biologist, what are your thoughts on the

neurological complexity of fish

and other non-mammalian marine life?

I was a vegan for 4 years, but have

recently become pescetarian, essentially

veganism plus seafood, as I realized

that most marine life is relatively

neurologically simple and some are

analogous to biological drones like

mussels, which are like fleshy plants,

which I consider ethically okay to eat."

Um

really,

I mean, a fish is a relatively stupid

animal, most fish anyway.

Um there are there's some kind of fish

like uh

there's a freshwater fish called the

mormyrid,

uh members of the family Mormyridae,

which um

uh are more intelligent than the average

fish. Sometimes they'll actually play,

like um

they'll they'll form a circle and

they'll be like pushing a rock back and

forth amongst them, that kind of thing.

But, um their their nervous system is,

you know, just a very simplified version

of our nervous system. You know, we are

supposedly evolved from fish.

But,

um

the uh the invertebrates, like mollusks

and crustaceans, they just apparently do

not feel pain the way uh vertebrates do.
Their their nervous system is designed
very differently from ours. It evolved
you know, independently of ours, except
for maybe at the very beginning of uh
of the evolutionary uh
you know,
whatever you call it.
And they they really do not even have,
technically, a central nervous system,
not in the the sense of like a human
being.
And, um I I've I've mentioned this
before. I've talked about this before, I
think. I used to work as a fisheries
biologist, and one of my duties, I
worked on Japanese longline vessel,

which means they would put out 20 or 30

mi of

of line with a baited hook about every 3

ft.

And then they spend the rest of the day

reeling it in.

And it was relatively high quality,

because the fish wouldn't get all

squished in the net and so forth.

But, it was very labor-intensive. But,

one of my duties was any crab that came

up

would have to be investigated. I have to

look at it to see if it got injured, you

know, damaged, and uh what species, and

you know, how big it was, how much it

weighed, male or female, that kind of stuff.

And so, I'd be busy with other things.

So, we had a big holding tank with seawater there. And sometimes a crab coming up um on the line would have most of its legs crushed or ripped off.

So, um a crab is a decapod. It's got 10 legs, including the the pinchers.

And uh sometimes, like seven of them would be just ripped off. It'd have like one leg on one side and two legs on the other side. But, when it got tossed into that holding tank, if it found some squid bait there, it would just stop and just start eating the squid bait. It seemed not not to care at all that it

just had most of its legs ripped off.

And, um

they gradually do grow new legs.

So, um they just apparently don't feel

pain

the way, um a vertebrate does. And so,

um I was largely vegetarian before I

became a monk, and uh I would eat like

uh shrimp and and oysters and that kind

of a thing cuz um

apparently, they just don't feel pain or

or fear or that sort of thing like uh

um

we vertebrates do.

So, uh I think I'll move on to Urlog's

next question,

which is

"Can you please elaborate further on your political views as a classical libertarian?

As I understand it, the ethos of this path is do what you will so long as it doesn't infringe upon the rights of another. A glaring downside to this approach, in my view, is that most people are functionally [__] and telling intellectually and even morally inept people what they can do whatever they want to do is surely asking for societal collapse and widespread, largely self-inflicted suffering.

Wouldn't skillful, benevolent authoritarianism be more sustainable and

ethical?"

Um yeah, that's

um I think the

the political

uh orientation that most closely

resembles my orientation would be

something like classical liberal, um not

liberal in the Western sense, but um or

the the American sense, but more liberal

in the European sense. You know, like

John Stuart Mill, that kind of thing.

Um

I do agree that that pure libertarianism

is just It's recipe for disaster because

uh

I mean, it would just there would be not

enough social cohesion. You know, if everyone is has got a different belief system, for example, you know, everyone is just a free thinker and they just follow their own way. And um you know, it's just they're just going to be going in different directions, which isn't going to pull the society apart. You have to have some kind of shared

um

shared values.

And we used to have that up until relatively recently.

You know, it's now it's American values.

It's uh

you know, if a leftist is talking about American values, they're just talking

about, you know, communist values
essentially. And just somehow
um assuming or supposing or pretending
that communist values are the right
values that, you know, any
right-thinking American American would
have, which is nonsense.
So,
um I do think the system set up by the
founding fathers, you know, minus
slavery,
uh was a pretty good system. And um
it was to some degree eth- ethnically
homogeneous, which increases the odds
that it will be ideologically
homogeneous, so that people will just

voluntarily

adopt the same belief system.

But when you've got multiculturalism,

then uh

um

yeah, it makes it much more difficult.

And then allowing

um

people who are not

um

politically educated or politically

aware to vote is is I mean, is yeah,

it's it's not a good idea. And when

people living on the dole vote, they

just vote for bigger doles.

They just vote for more handouts.

So,

and I do agree it's like uh with regard

to the uh

yeah, most people are functionally

[__]

Um, and intellectually and even morally

inept. Um,

yeah, most people are, are, you know,

average. You know, they're not like

retards, but there are a lot, you know,

there's as many retards as geniuses.

So,

um,

yeah, it's like, like uh, Thomas

Jefferson said

that, um,

if you don't, if you don't want somebody

controlling you, you have to control yourself.

It's like, uh, what, the price of freedom is eternal vigilance? Something along those lines. I think that's a, the quote from, uh, Thomas Jefferson.

And, uh, yeah, I mean, you, you have to have,

uh, moral principles and, and that sort of thing. And and the post-modern Western world is really opposed to that, seemingly.

Uh, you, you have to kind of knuckle under to what you're told. You have to follow, you know, the

what, what the, what the elite say, or else you're going to, you're going to be

punished.

And, uh, if we just had a better elite,

you know, a wiser elite,

then that would work best. Like, um,

I really think it's possible that, um,

the best governmental system would be

like an enlightened autocrat.

Some enlightened emperor, the god

emperor.

But, the problem is that,

um, like in the case of Marcus Aurelius,

you can have the philosopher king, but

that's no guarantee that his son won't

just be, uh, a sociopath.

So,

um, democracy, some form of, of limited

democracy is, uh,

probably, uh,

the safest. And it, it's more of a

recipe for mediocrity, but it's a, like

a stable mediocrity instead of,

um,

very good with the, uh, possibility

that, uh, the next leader will be very

bad.

So,

that's uh

my political views in a nutshell.

Very small nutshell. So, I'm just going

to move on to the Uurlaug's next

question.

What are your thoughts on Dharma centers

and monasteries requiring vaccine

passports to attend retreats or even to enter the grounds for a day visit? Is it unskillful for monks to turn away serious practitioners, especially those of us who are interested in ordination due to ethically and logically unsound state pressures? Yeah, that's I mean when I was a junior monk,

I was

told to read Mahakassapa's verses in the the Theragatha.

And

um I've I've talked about this before, too, but it's it's a good story where Mahakassapa was walking for alms in a in a town.

And

uh a leprous beggar saw him, and he

seemed so serene and majestic that this

this beggar with leprosy was inspired

with respect. And he wanted to offer

something from his own his own alms

bowl. So, he goes up to Mahakassapa.

And

he uh

you know, offers some some food into

Mahakassapa's bowl. And when he does it,

one of his fingertips just breaks off

into the bowl.

And um Mahakassapa just doesn't raise an

eyebrow.

He accepts it, and then he goes on his

way. When he gets enough food, he sits

down at the the base of the wall, like
the city wall,
and uh probably on the outside, and
starts eating his meal. And the the
beggar with leprosy follows him to see
what he's going to do because he's
mortified. You know, he's
he's really worried. And Mahakassapa
doesn't even take the fingertip out of
the bowl. He just moves it over to one
side and then, you know, eats from the
other side.
And um
that was um
encouraged
uh for me to emulate. That's really I

mean,

the monk has the idea that, you know, if you look out for Dharma, Dharma looks out for you. Christianity has something similar. But seriously, I mean, just worrying about getting sick, that kind of thing, it's uh it's pointless because in a place like rural Burma, in villages of Burma, I I've had people with leprosy offer me food. I've had just I remember one time

there was this kid who looked like the feral child in in the old movie The Road Warrior, just wild hair, just dirt. And he before he offered the food, he had this bowl of food his mother probably gave to him to offer to me. He just like

sneezed directly into it. And then offered the food. And a monk's not supposed to He's not supposed to raise an eyebrow, you know, it's like Maha Kassapa is the ideal. And um you know, you just accept it. And uh I've had this one village lady blow her nose with her hand, you know, just like this, fling the snot off her hand, and then just immediately after use the same hand to offer food into my bowl. And again, I mean, you can't refuse it. You're not You're not allowed to refuse it. Sometimes it's just a a battle of will just not to make faces when they're putting something totally disgusting

into your bowl. And um usually I you
know, if there was a cold going around,
I'd usually catch it because there was
little concept of uh
you know, microbial transfer, hygiene,
that kind of a thing.
So, yeah, I mean, you just being being
that paranoid about uh
um
like the coronavirus is really it's it
goes against Dharma. A monk should have
enough faith in his practice to assume
that Dharma is protecting him, his good
karma or just Dharma in general
is kind of looking out for him and is
not going to let really bad things
happen to him.

So, yeah, I agree with that.

So, I'll move on to Urlog's next

question.

What are your thoughts on Hellenism

being directly branched from Vedic

Brahmanism sometime back in ancient

antiquity?

Could Hellenism be restored to its

former glory based on preserved

religious artifacts

and literature

as well as contemporary knowledge of

Vedic Brahmanism or Hinduism?

For example,

Logos is Brahman, Indra is Zeus,

Asura are Titans, et cetera. The Jews

want Europeans to forget trad-

traditional Hellenism and embrace their

Uh well, maybe I shouldn't

Yeah. Uh

Abrahamic tales to fulfill their

psychopath Oh, man.

Because they're still salty about

ancient Greek occupation and

Hellenization of the Levant.

Uh Hanukkah, for example. And they're

just wholesale Semitics premises as can

be seen in their scripture.

Well, it is true that the the Hebrews

consider themselves to be God's chosen

people.

If for some strange reason

with a certain amount of intolerant

fanaticism,

similar to what's going on with the left

today back in like the Roman Empire, um

they pretty much drove to extinction,

persecuted to extinction every other

religious system with a few like

vestigial left hanging like

remnants.

So,

I hope this question

um doesn't get me banned from YouTube.

but uh Hellenism, I mean that's

essentially just like Greek polytheism.

Um it's not like Hellenistic

a the Hellenistic age, which was

um after Alexander the Great.

You know, the civilizations like the the

kingdoms, the little empires that uh

the

Alexander's generals founded after he

died.

Um Hellenism

um yeah, I do not believe that it is

directly branched from Vedic Brahmanism.

That um they do have a common ancestor,

but it goes way back before then.

Vedic Brahmanism uh see how do I explain

this?

You had the the Proto-Indo-Europeans

probably living north of the Black Sea

and

um

maybe 3,500 or bef- more than 35 like

3,000 BC before 3,000 BC.

Um you had the ancestors of the Greeks

like probably migrating across the

Danube and then through

um

what is it uh the Balkan Peninsula.

And um

and then the there were some that

traveled further into uh

um like Anatolia and became like the

Phrygians and and um

and so forth.

But then the the ancestors of the

Indians were they were they migrated

eastwards

and um

uh they were uh

uh yeah, it was it was just a very it

was very different. I mean,

they're both derived from the same

Indo-European homeland and then the

ancestors of the Greeks migrated in one

direction, the ancestors of the Indians

migrated in a different direction. And

uh

um the Indians and the Persians were

were were similar.

Um they're they're more closely related

than the Indians and the Greeks.

Um

The The Hindus did have

a version of Zeus

called Dyaus Pitri,

a sky father.

But even by the time the Rigveda was

composed, he had already been

reduced to the status of a minor deity.

He doesn't have very many hymns

dedicated to him, not nearly as many as

Indra or Agni,

the god of fire.

The Asuras are are essentially the same

as the Titans.

Um

Logos as Brahman.

Uh I really don't think Logos and

Brahman would be even the same.

Um

I I've I've considered, you know, trying

to Indianize

um classical

uh polytheism. So, you'd have like Zeus

as

as like Brahman. And in Indian

philosophy or Indian theology, you got

Brahma and his his consort is Maya,

which is like illusion, the the

generatrix of the world. So, maybe you

could appoint uh

Hera

as sort of the mother of of all things,

you know, like

um

Brahman is just undifferentiated, but

Logos seems to be more of a a

differentiating force, just sort of

um generating the 10,000 things as the

Tao Te Ching um talks about.

So, let's see.

Yeah, I mean

I don't think that the Hellenistic or

the Greek religion is directly branched

from Vedic Brahmanism. They do share a

common ancestor.

And I think it would have been to the

benefit of

uh Greek religion to have adopted some

some more Indian

uh elements. And um you could turn it

into something valid. Like Hinduism is

um you know, it still exists today. It's

It's um mutated a lot since ancient

times, but um

uh

I mean, it's it's still a valid

religious system. It's one of the few

um

like living

Indo-European polytheistic

uh spiritual systems still in existence.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question.

Also from Urlog. This is his Urlog's

last question.

I assume anyone with a name like Urlog

is probably male.

What is the karmic impact of killing

zombies?

They're hostile undead creatures, but

there's also a faint spark of animating
consciousness in their base cerebral
regions,
so they can move about and hunt. Does
this count as taking a life or unlife?
Well, the way
Buddhist ethics works is that it is
psychological and largely subjective,
and so
um the reason why killing
is immoral is not so much because of the
suffering you're inflicting on another
being, it's because of your own hatred
and anger and and aggression.
That is like your own mental states
that that are uh infecting your your

behavior and your actions.

So, if you're killing zombies just full

of full of hatred, just die die die,

even though maybe they're already dead,

um you know, then yeah, you're going to

be getting bad karma for that.

Um

So, yeah, I I assume it would be

um unethical to kill zombies unless you

can do it with uh complete serenity,

which seems kind of unlikely.

Uh but then again, when you're living in

the world, you're not you don't have the

luxury of being a renunciant, you know,

you maybe have uh uh

people that that depend on you to defend

them or protect them,

then uh yeah, you're probably better off killing the zombies.

Yeah, I mean, if zombies start attacking your house, I'm yeah, I I wouldn't blame you at all for uh bringing out the shotgun.

So, I'll just move on to the next question, which is from John S.

And John S. says,

"For formerly venerable, okay, still pretty venerable in my opinion, Panyo Bodhicaryavatara, what is your take as a former Theravada monk and presumably still a Theravada practitioner of Mahayana sutras and Vajrayana tantras or anybody else who would like to give

their personal insights on the question?

I'd be interested in your thoughts."

Okay. Um

some Mahayana Buddhist texts I really

like, like uh the Prajnaparamita

sutras, like the Diamond Cutter, for

example, the Heart Sutra. Those are very

profound, and although they are

apocryphal,

they're probably not uh

quotes of the Buddha, they're probably

composed hundreds of years after the

Buddha's time. Nevertheless,

um I think the Buddha would have largely

agreed with much of what they say.

Uh more so than some of what the Pali

texts say, because the Pali texts are

not entirely reliable either, in my

opinion.

With regard to Tibetan Buddhism, I

really don't know that much, but I am um

very much

um an admirer, I very much respect the

Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation,

uh attributed to uh

Padmasambhava, I think,

which is also very profound, and I think

the Buddha would uh I mean, even though

it's not

um you know, what the historical Buddha

said. Nevertheless, the in spirit it

comes pretty close, in my opinion.

But with regard to the pure land stuff

and all the

um, the Herukas, you know, the the the

the benevolent and the wrathful deities,

you know, all that stuff that the

Tibetans talk about sometimes. Uh

Yeah, I really I really don't know that

much about it and have never been all

that interested in it. Green Tara and

black Tara, that kind of thing. Uh

Yeah, I'm I wanted to uh

when I became a Buddhist, I wanted to

follow what the Buddha taught, you know,

what this enlightened founder of the

system taught. And so, I really wasn't

interested in later mutations.

Although, as I say, some of the later

mutations were attempts at reform and

getting back to what the Buddha taught

when Theravada, for example, and the

other pre-Mahayana schools were

drifting into Abhidharma and just, you

know, elaborate commentarial systems

that were uh obscuring the original

spirit.

So,

um,

let's see. What is my take on Mahayana

sutras and Vajrayana tantras? Yeah, I'm

I mean, I'm not an authority on Mahayana

or and I'm certainly no authority on on

Tibetan Buddhism. But, uh some of the

some of the older texts that are um

you know, philosophical and not

devotional are very profound.

So, I'm uh

I would take them by a sutra by sutra

um, basis

and uh judge them individually.

So, that's uh John S's question. Next is

from Potila.

And Potila asks,

"Does South Carolina have open carry?

I know North Carolina does. Yeah, that's

uh

Potila asks that because I recently got

a a Glock Glock 19.

So, um

I looked this up and apparently South

Carolina does have like a limited open

carry where strangely kind of ironically

um in order to be able to carry a gun like in a holster on your side like a cowboy, you know, in plain sight so it's not concealed, you have to have a concealed permit.

So, if you have a concealed carry permit, you can also open carry, but if you don't have a concealed carry permit, you you can't open carry either for the time being.

Although uh red states like South Carolina are going more and more red.

So,

it's uh something to look forward to, I guess.

So, Potila's next question, also a

defense question.

According to orthodox Theravada, does carrying a weapon incur any karmic tendency to encounter violence?

So, if you have a weapon, do you think that it invites more violence than if you didn't? Could be a knife, gun, whatever.

Again, um

karma

is

it's a mental state, you know, it's it's volition or or will,

you know, cetana in Pali.

And um

so, I mean, just carrying a weapon is itself ethically neutral. Regardless of

the fact It could be a nuclear bomb or

something, but it's just in it's just

like an inanimate object.

So, it is morally neutral. It's It's

your own mental states that are that are

generating the karma.

And um

so, I mean, if if you're carrying a gun,

but uh you know, maybe it's just your

duty or something or you know, you're

just not giving it a second thought, you

know, you you've got a serene mind

otherwise,

then uh uh yeah, I don't think that it

wouldn't necessarily

um

incur any karmic tendency to encounter violence.

Although, it could be subconscious stuff is going on and uh that could uh somehow condition someone who sees you with a gun and then they become more violent or something, but uh yeah, I I I don't think so.

So, let's move on to the next question. Which is uh change of pace here.

I believe that dark forces or beings sometimes called demons are real. I've encountered them.

How does orthodox Theravada teach one should reject or manage such beings?

What if our metta or samadhi isn't strong enough

uh to not feel fear or other negative

emotions

if they interact with us? Chant

parittas?

Um yeah, it's like the the the um what

is it? Panacea?

Uh in Theravada, this I mean, it's like

the cure-all for for being bothered by

demons and ghosts is

uh the metta sutta, to chant the metta

sutta.

Um

if your metta or samadhi isn't strong

enough,

then uh what the Burmese do is they uh

get somebody who they think does have

metta or samadhi strong enough to come

and chant the metta sutta and other

protective chants.

So,

um if you think that your own

uh

chanting of protection chants isn't

strong enough, then uh yeah, you might

want to call in some big guns,

you know, like professional

exorcists or uh

you know, chanters of parittas or or

whatever.

Um

but uh it is true. It's like uh it does

depend on your your karma, and you

should have faith in your own karma.

Should have faith in yourself. Sort of like the Christians talk about having faith in God, you know, think uh you know, give no thought for tomorrow, you know, what you will eat, where you will sleep, that kind of a thing. Um it it's it's the same basic principle in Buddhism, too, although with a difference uh you know, there there is no God looking out for you. It's just your own mental states and your karma that are generating your reality.

So,

try to have good mental states and uh if demons cause you to feel fear or

other negative emotions,

if they interact with us,

really the best you can do is the best

you can do. And uh

if if your own efforts are insufficient,

find a wise and um benevolent person

to uh

to intercede on your behalf and help you

out.

That would be my advice.

So, the next question is from Matthew.

What are your thoughts on Jordan

Peterson and how might an understanding

of Dharma strengthen his arguments?

Yeah, I've given some thought to this. I

saw Jordan Peterson

shortly after I came back to America,

like uh January of 2019, I think it was.

Before he uh

got strung out on

Valium or or whatever it was that

happened to him.

And uh

this was in San Jose. I saw him there.

And interestingly,

uh what he what he was talking about has

some bearing on this question because he

was doing his best to try to

explain

how morals

um are just inherent in our psychology.

And he's talking about like rats, how

even rats have a rudimentary concept of

fair play. Like you got a big strong rat
and a little weak rat, and they'll play,
the big strong rat will let the weak rat
win sometimes. Like if they're
wrestling,
the big strong rat will just let the
little one win sometimes just so that
the little one will still want to play.
You know, if the little one just gets
its butt kicked every single time, it's
going to just stop.
But, um so the big rat lets the little
one win sometimes. But, um yeah, I was
thinking
uh that night and and subsequently that
if you just understood Buddhist ethics,
you know, he wouldn't have to rely so

much on experiments on rats.

Um he is somewhat of a scientist, I

suppose, but um

still,

from the Buddhist point of view, like I

was already saying, your your mental

states are conditioning your reality.

You know, it's like uh

in a way, it's conditioning the way you

are

um just sort of generating a path

through samsara.

In a way, it's like a you're you're

you're dreaming.

Although, we don't really have control

over our dreams, as we know from uh our

experiences at night.

So, yeah, I think Jordan Peterson would

do well to

study Buddhism, but not study it purely

intellectually. That's That's one big

mistake that a lot of academics make is

they they try they study something like

Buddhism and they just cannot get out of

intellectual mode.

You know, if he I don't know if Jordan

Peterson has any mysticism to him, but

uh

um

it would be good. I mean,

I it's my experience from what I've seen

and read that some really brilliant

people,

like uh

uh what's his name? Stephen Hawking.

He was He was really intelligent. I

mean, he could he couldn't play

basketball, but he was really

intelligent. And uh like uh

Bertrand Russell, also. They were really

down on mysticism because they were so

locked into an intellectual

understanding that they just couldn't

make sense of it. It was just nonsense

to them.

Or, you know, something a lot something

fairly close to nonsense. And so,

whether Jordan Peterson has a mystical

uh streak to him or not, I don't know.

Um if he doesn't, then he's pretty much doomed to just trying to understand reality intellectually.

And you're never going to understand reality by thinking about it.

So, I'll just move on to Matthew's next question.

Buddhism has a practice whereby you meditate on the disgusting parts of the body, pus and phlegm, etc., and other similar recommendations as a countermeasure to lustiness.

By all accounts I have heard from lay people and monks alike, these techniques are minimally effective.

What did you find to be the most effective methods for remaining true to

the vinaya in regard to the demands of one's wiener schnitzel?

Related, uh

beyond mere vinaya compliance, did you find anything that actually worked on a deeper level to bring the procreative demands of the body to a place of tranquility and equanimity?

Well,

just putting on robes and and going through an ordination ceremony doesn't cause you to stop being a man or a human. And I mean, you it's largely um just going with biology is largely just built in. You know, you've got hormones and like areas of the brain and so forth

that are going to make sure that you're

going to want to reproduce.

So, it doesn't just go to way go away.

And um

so, for me,

um

just vinaya itself, just uh like a monk

is required to follow the rules of

monastic discipline.

And um

for example, if a monk masturbates to

orgasm deliberately, you know, he he

wants to have an orgasm and he makes

effort to have an orgasm and the orgasm

occurs, then he's going to take

uh penance for 6 days and 6 nights. And

then, at the end of the 6 days and 6

nights, plus however many nights or

however many days he concealed it before

he confessed it,

then after after that,

he has to go to a ceremony with at least

20 monks in good standing present and uh

go through this elaborate ritual to to

have himself taken off probation, out of

penance, and and replaced into a into

good standing again.

And

for me,

there were there were a few times when

uh

uh

you'd be uh not exactly spanking the

puppy, but kind of petting it a little bit, and then it just kind of accidentally goes off.

That happened several times. I mean, it was Yeah, I mean, yeah. So, you you like psychoanalyze yourself. It's like, "Well, did I do that on purpose?" It's like, you know, was I making movements to help it happen? You know, like like deliberately, not you know, in order to make it happen. And there were times when it would be so difficult to tell for sure that I would go through the the penance just to make sure.

And uh it's really a pain in the neck. I mean, it's it's really difficult. Like, one of the the aspects of the penance is

you have to make confession to every monk at the monastery every day.

And sometimes, if you're living in a big monastery, there's monks coming and going and you you go to make you go to make confession to so-and-so, and it's like you're told, "Oh, he took off today. He's not here today." So, that day doesn't count. You didn't you didn't make confession to that monk before he left.

And so, there are some monasteries in Burma that specialize in monks doing penance, where it's just a quiet little secluded place without much coming and going. They have to be at least five

monks there though to do the penance

too. And then they'll invite more monks

for the big ceremony at the end with 20

monks. So, just

just knowing what a pain in the neck it

was to do the penance.

Um that caused me to behave a lot better

than I would have otherwise, I'm sure.

Um

with regard to

uh other techniques that were effective,

I mean just like sleeping little and

eating little,

you know, just um being an ascetic,

living a rough life, and uh you know,

avoiding temptation, which is kind of a

second-rate way of uh

not doing bad things to avoid the
temptation, but still it's it's
important until you're just immune to
the temptation.
So, yeah, it's like you're going to be
less lustful if um
you know, if you if you're just eating
enough to stay healthy and just sleeping
and just the minimum amount and
meditating a lot
and uh I do agree that um
contemplating the foulness of the body
doesn't work for me. I went to see
autopsies, that kind of a thing, and uh
as a biologist, it was just interesting
to me. It's like the human body is just

a miracle of of engineering.

So, it it it really didn't gross me out.

It's uh it's not foulness, in my

opinion.

Um

and I'm sure like a coroner can uh do

autopsies on you know, young women and

then come home and doesn't make him any

less lustful for his wife, not

significantly less anyway.

So,

I think your your best defense is just

like strong faith that you shouldn't do

it. Or if if you don't have uh just like

the awareness that you shouldn't do it,

you know, just if you can't see clearly

that you shouldn't do it, at least you

can have like faith in the texts, in the scriptures, faith in your teacher, that sort of thing, and and that can get you through. Like

a lot of Roman Catholic saints,

you know, they uh

they just they were saints because

they'd had absolute stainless steel

faith in their religion, and uh they

thought if they weren't a saint, they

were going to burn in hell forever and

ever.

And uh as a result, they were saints,

but also they were pretty hysterical,

some of them. Just uh kind of nutty,

neurotic, just from the all the

repressed urges that they had.

Like uh

Freud says, and I I don't think Freud

was right about everything, but I think

he was largely correct about this. It's

like, if you repress your urges, you

just, you know, just through

force of will or just cultural

conditioning or whatever, you just

don't, you know, act out your urges,

they don't just go away. Like your sex

urges don't just go away. They just get

like pressed down inside your

subconscious mind, where they they build

a pressure until finally they start

percolating up to the surface as

neurotic symptoms.

So,

I guess as a review here, um

how to uh avoid being so lustful,

um yeah, I mean, if if you're ordained

and you're strict and you want to be a

good good monk or a good nun, good

monastic, then that can be a strong

motivation to force you to behave

yourself.

Um you know, just doing the practice is

a good way of uh uh uh uh

I mean, for example, it's it's uh very

strictly against the rules even for a

monk to be sitting down alone with a

woman.

Um

I already mentioned the the the

masturbation thing, that's out. Sex is

out, masturbation's out, at least

masturbation to orgasm.

Um

and then just uh

you know, stay kind of underfed and and

under under-rested, you know, deprive

yourself of food and sleep to some

degree and uh

that that will help like lower the

drives to some degree also.

But uh I agree that yeah, contemplating

foulness or looking at dead looking at

corpses and that sort of thing it that

really does work very well.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question.

From Dos Boot.

And Dos Boot says, "I wonder about one thing. Should See, most should be familiar with how dreams and most of the mind does their own thing when having a fever, food poisoning, or similar. Sometimes the quality or theme of these things seem to be connected to the specific physical process, at least in my case. Is this phenomenon produced by the brain only? Is it a mix of the physical state and karma, or is it something different altogether?

Are there any other perspective on that that are worth mentioning from a

Buddhist Theravada perspective?"

Well, for starters, I would say it's very interesting that um the Abhidhamma philosophy of Theravada Buddhism, which some Burmese monks will claim just explains everything, you know, it's like the Buddhist theory of everything, but it it has almost nothing to say about dreams, which is interesting.

Um

yeah, there's really not much mention of dreams in Theravada Buddhist philosophy, which I think is uh an oversight.

Um but getting back to this question, is this phenomenon produced by the brain only? No, it is not. I mean, if you want to you want to just stick to orthodox

Theravada, the brain isn't even really

what generates your thoughts.

Um

I shouldn't get too much into that, but

it's you know, the hadaya vatthu or the

the heart base, you know, it's like

thought arises in the heart and not in

the brain. They really didn't know what

the brain was for.

Um Buddhaghosa in the Visuddhimagga just

came to the conclusion that the brain is

just a

uh a large amount of bone marrow encased

in a large hollow bone, the head bone.

And uh he was hard put to find a use for

it.

Um

But yeah, even from my point of view,

I'm not a materialist. Even though I I

can talk about biology and and all sorts

of things like that, you know, technical

materialistic-sounding stuff.

Ultimately, our reality is uh

is generated by mind. You know, the very

first verse of the Dhammapada, you know,

mind precedes all things. You know, it

is the it is chief, it is all things are

mind-made.

And so, um yes, the mind creates the

brain

more often than the brain creates the

mind.

So,

yeah, it's it's largely karma working itself out. That's another teaching of of Theravada Buddhist philosophy is uh your experiences are conditioned by your karma. And so, you know, if you if you get sick, that's conditioned by karma. And if you're having weird dreams or weird waking mental states. I mean, I've had

uh I had uh

pneumonia really bad when I was about 20 years old.

And I remember hallucinating while I was still awake. It was like I was lying on my back in bed coughing. And it was like a a little oil derrick would there'd be

like two or three of them sprouting out of my chest at the same time. When it got to full size, it would burst and a cough and then I would cough. You know, every cough would be like one of these things on my chest growing up and boom. And I would cough and then another one would get full size and boom and I would cough.

That was strange. I've I have hallucinated in a waking state from just from being sick.

But um

going with uh you know, strict Buddhist spirituality, it's uh it's more mind than matter.

There are some um,

who will, uh, really take the
materialistic stuff seriously. And
Theravada technically does claim that,
uh, physical matter is ultimately real.
That's one one thing that I would
disagree
with, uh, Theravada Buddhist philosophy.
But I think I'll just move on to the
next question here.
Uh, I'm Well, maybe I shouldn't. I'll
I'll try and see if I answered the
question more or less.
Um, is this phenomenon produced by the
brain only? Is it a mix of the physical
state and karma? Is it something
Yeah, I mean, I'm not a materialist, so

I do not think that physical matter is

ultimately real.

I mean, it's it's relatively real. It's

it's conventional truth.

It's, uh, conditionally real,

but

not ultimately real.

Uh, for that matter, even even karma it

wouldn't be ultimately real, but

I think I can, uh,

just move on to the next question rather

than,

um,

confound everybody with all my, uh,

metaphysical gobbledygook.

So, the next question is from Yuichiro.

And Yuichiro says,

"I'm a metal enjoyer, but I think black metal is stupid.
The only interesting argument I've heard for why black metal is good is basically it's a spiritual experience attuning the listener to dark forces and meditating on them. This reminds me of foulness meditation. Could black metal be used for something like that?"
Um,
I don't think it would work that way. I mean, foulness meditation, you're not like becoming one with the foulness.
It's like you're you're observing the foulness and kind of having this that's icky

feeling, and then it kind of it it
distances you from the foulness. You
know, you you in a way you're you're
distancing yourself from what you are
identifying as foul, like the human body
for example.
Whereas with music
I mean, you really absorb the the music
in order to really experience it
more or less fully.
And so, the black metal it's it's music
is like an emotional language. You know,
it's pattern sounds that elicit certain
emotional reactions.
And black metal is eliciting
just like kind of darker,
more

not necessarily violent, but not violent
in the sense of wanting to hurt people,
but violent in just the sense of just
the vehemence and just
I don't the aggressiveness of it. And
again, aggressiveness not in the sense
of like wanting to hurt others, but uh
just you know, wanting to beat your head
against the wall
just for the fun of it.
And uh
that's one reason why I do like rock and
roll music. It elicits feelings of like
power and exhilaration that I like.
But the black metal stuff, yeah, it is
just too

um it's too negative for my tastes. I

prefer more upbeat positive kind of

stuff.

So, yeah, I my answer to that would be

uh

could black music be used for something

like that?

Theoretically, I think anything's

possible, but

it wouldn't work that way for me.

You'd have to be detached from it and uh

listen to the music the way like a

speech therapist would be listening to

somebody stutter. You know, in order to

separate yourself and and see it as as

something that uh

um

yeah, I don't I don't think it would
work very well.
I I there are better ways of going about
it.
So, the next question is from Airain.
And Airain says,
"What is the dharmic way of dealing with
dishonest people you are forced to
interact with in everyday life? A common
occurrence in my life has been
in the presence of friends, neighbors,
co-workers, or family members, people
you would like to maintain relationships
with, and they will lie to or mislead
another person right in front of me when
they know that I know they are lying,

almost making me a surprised and unwilling accomplice to their lies if I say nothing. This puts you in a no-win situation where you are faced with disassociating with them, confronting their lie by telling the truth and not going along with it, or going along with it,

uh or remaining silent and allowing the third person to be misled while I do and say nothing in order to avoid confrontation, anger, and embarrassment on all sides, and most likely ruining the relationship with someone you need to deal with in life because of work or family obligations, etc. Obviously, disassociation would be the clear answer

for casual acquaintance.

Like you have mentioned before, the

small lies are the easiest to tell and

most dangerous since they can add up to

so many.

It seems like so many people in the

world are used to operating in such a

dishonest manner

without even thinking twice

that I have found myself suddenly sucked

into the scenario far too many times

with no clear answer on how to deal with

it.

Okay, well,

the more saintly and uncompromising in

your ethics you are,

then

you the more you're just going to tell

the truth and damn the consequences. You

know, let the chips fall where they may,

which um it it works better for saints

and uh like renunciant like ordained

hermits

where um

you know, it's like I had the luxury as

a monk where I could just tell the truth

and if people didn't like it, they'd go

away and I'm not supposed to care if

they go away or not. I'm not supposed to

be attached to that sort of thing.

And um

it does have the advantage of it

attracts a higher quality of friends to

you.

Although with regard to family, yeah,

I'm

um my first many years as a monk, I can

only really remember telling one lie and

that sent me like an Easter card or

something and she asked me if I still

had it. And um I said, "Oh, I think

that's in the pagoda now." Which it was,

but it was like in a garbage can in the

pagoda, you know, I read it and tossed

it. I didn't want to hurt her feelings,

you know, so

um when you're dealing with

people

in ordinary life

it is very difficult always to tell the

truth.

And um

course sometimes you have the option of

remaining silent and remaining silent is

uh ethically neutral even if somebody's

telling some outrageous lie.

If uh

you just don't do anything, then you're

not doing anything good or bad.

So, there is that, but um

I think in a lot of cases like let's say

it's your next-door neighbor or

something and your next-door neighbor is

uh

a rascal or a troublemaker or a crook or

whatever,

then um

just uh try to have meta. Really, I I

have found that you know, anything you

do with love in your heart is going to

be positive and you can say things to

somebody

that uh I mean, if you said it in a bad

mood, they'd react very negatively, but

if you could say the very same things

with like sincere love in your heart for

the other person, then they'll take it

in a different way cuz it has a whole

different vibe to it.

So, the more upbeat you are and the more

uh considerate and caring you are,

um you know, even if it's just like a a

really difficult person, you know, have
a certain amount of compassion, you
know, realizing that uh they are that
way. And like like a happy person isn't
going to be messing with people.
Um happy people tend to be you know,
live and let live. You know, they're not
trying to make other people unhappy.
It's unhappy people that are trying to
make other people unhappy.
So,
a little bit of compassion, a little bit
of loving kindness,
um it can go a long way.
But um
yeah, I mean, sometimes it's it's a a
no-win situation as Erin says. I mean,

that that's right there, no-win

situation.

So, I mean, if you're not going to win

no matter what you do, damned if you do,

damned if you don't, then uh at least uh

don't contribute by uh you know,

agreeing to the lie. You can you can

remain silent.

Um you don't necessarily have to speak

out against it for reasons that I

already said, but um

yeah.

I remember one time

I was working or I was working I was a

monk at a monastery.

And there was a a nun there who was just

uh textbook case of schizophrenia. She
was very difficult to deal with. Just
she saw no reason why she should
cooperate with anybody, which is one of
the symptoms
that you see in the textbooks.
And um
finally the uh it was like the the board
of directors of the monastery. This was
in America. They decided to just like
evict her.
And uh
so they just uh took all of her stuff
out of her room. I mean, just asking her
to go away didn't work. She just would
refuse.
And so they just uh one day when she

wasn't there, they just went into her
room and took everything out and put
them into bags and put them in the
garage and lock the doors so she
couldn't go in.
And one of the
the members of the board of directors
was standing next to me.
And she was concerned. I mean, she was a
soft-hearted person.
And she said, "Sometimes it's hard to
know if you're doing the right thing."
And then I said, "Sometimes, you know,
you just
there is no right thing. You just have
to choose between two wrong ones." And

that's one of the reasons why the Buddha

came up with monkhood and renunciation

to reduce

um the opportunities for the no-win

situation to arise.

So, if you're living in the world, I

mean

that's just part of the territory. And

having as positive a mental states as

possible

is can at least help you to get through

it.

So, I think I'll just move on. I mean,

that's

how do you deal with a no-win situation

is is really hard to advise

other than uh

have positive mental states or at least serene ones.

So, the next question is from Bpat427. And Bpat427 says, "How much bad karma would one gain from making a habit of constantly laughing at other people's at other people's expense as a coping mechanism for not getting angry at those people all the time?"

Well, it's hard to say how much bad karma you would gain because it depends on your mental states. Karma is a mental state. And so, I mean, if there's kind of if it's like sneering laughter, then that's not so good. Sarcastic laughter, maybe not quite so bad. But if it's like

laughing with the person

then yeah, that could be positive. It

depends on what your attitude towards

the other person is. If you've got

aversion, then that's going to to the

extent that you've got aversion then

you're making bad karma. If you've got

uh

maybe even attraction I guess from the

Buddhist point of view. But um

if you've got ill will towards the

person or you're sort of dehumanizing

them that sort of thing then uh

yeah you're you are making bad karma but

how bad it is

it depends on your mental states. I mean

how bad do you feel

um you know when you're mocking somebody
or or laughing because they make a a
dumb mistake or something. Um
deep down at that
I mean deep down you're going to feel
it.
It just reminds me of uh the old movie
uh A Clockwork Orange where you got the
droogs, you know, the these gang members
who just go out and they're they're like
beating people beating people up and
raping women and and so forth and
they're laughing uproariously, you know,
but but their laughter isn't
good-hearted laughter. It's more like
hooting like like

like lower primates or something. And so

it's just

the laughter is just sort of like a

pressure relief valve. Just all the

outrageousness that they're doing is is

sort of

um you know, they don't want to like

look too closely at what they're doing.

They don't want to actually feel

compassion or empathy.

And so they're just kind of covering it

over with laughter.

And uh that is uh not really a good kind

of laughter to to indulge in.

So

um

you you got to like

look at yourself. I mean it could be

another no-win scenario where um your

only choices are going to be um

unethical or very unethical and then you

just choose the lesser of two evils I

suppose.

Um but it's true. I mean I

I give people hard time sometimes. It's

like

um there's a guy at work who

um he just gets teased a lot and he's

fun to tease. You know, we just blame

him for anything. I mean, the weather

could be crappy that day, we'll we'll

blame him for it. That kind of a thing.

And he goes along with it. I mean, he's

he kind of gets exasperated a little bit

at being the butt of jokes, but it's

it's really um, one reason why we do is

cuz we do like him. You know, he's he's

he's just fun to tease.

So, I mean, that's a possibility too.

I've had friends like that more than

once where they're just fun to uh give a

hard time sometimes. I just kind of come

from that sort of

uh social circle or something.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question.

From Chaplin.

Assuming there are basic Christian

concepts like grace, forgiveness, sin,

etc. What would be the equivalent in

Buddhism? Does Buddhism even have
corresponding principles that align with
those of Christianity?
All right. Oh, wait. Is Is this part of
the same question here? Okay. No, that's
the next question.
So,
basic Christian concepts, what are their
equivalents
in Buddhism or do they even have them?
And the three main examples here are
grace, forgiveness, and sin.
So, we'll start with grace cuz this is
an interesting one. Um,
like divine grace
in Christianity, as far as I understand

it, is that I mean, everyone's a sinner, nobody is worthy of heaven, supposedly. And so, it's through divine grace that you get into heaven. You can't really get there through yourself. You know, it's not up to you. You don't decide. It's It's God who decides whether you go to heaven or not. And the closest I could come to that in Buddhism, obviously, there is no God who is deciding whether you get into heaven or not. No no God to have the divine grace. Um,

there nevertheless, you're not going to become enlightened through your own efforts. It's It's not effort that causes enlightenment because effort is

karma.

And karma is you just create It just generates more karma. It's not going to liberate you from karma, you know, like deliberate effort is not going to get you off the wheel of samsara because that just creates more karma that keeps you on the wheel of samsara.

And so, all you can do is just be as ready as possible. Like Krishnamurti used to say, you I mean, you can um, you can open the window, but you can't cause the breeze to blow in.

And um, becoming enlightened is like that. It's uh There's no guarantee. You can get really close. Some people have

to get closer than others. Um, some people might have to get all the way to fourth of jhana where their mind is just crystal clear and silent for, you know, hours at a stretch in order to uh, get uh, ready, you know, to be ripe for it, you know, to to allow it to happen, this this inexplicable enlightenment. And other people, I mean, they might be in the middle of
like the marketplace.
You know, like there's some stories where Like there's one Zen monk, according to the story, he's just walking through the market and hears this lady asking a butcher, "Give me the best piece of piece of meat you've got

in the shop." And the butcher says,
"Every piece of meat in my shop is the
best." And that just caused this click
for the monk and he became enlightened.
So, he obviously didn't have to
cultivate deep trance states or at least
he wasn't in one at the time.
But, I mean, there's It's sort of like
grace in that
something inexplicable, something
mysterious beyond your control is uh,
allowing the enlightenment to happen.
So, that would be the closest concept to
uh, in Buddhism to uh, Christian divine
grace. Next is forgiveness and that's
straightforward. I mean

um

in in Buddhism probably the closest to

forgiveness would be something like

conti which is acceptance, patience.

Just forbearance.

And

you know that would involve forgiveness.

Um so it's definitely a virtue in

Buddhism forgiveness to forgive people

their their trespasses.

And with regard to sin

yeah sin is not a Buddhist term.

But sin is just doing wrong.

And in Christianity of course it's doing

what God doesn't want you to do.

Supposedly although he's all powerful so

if he really didn't want you to do it

you probably wouldn't be able to do it.

But in Buddhism it's just akusala karma

bad karma. Which is

based on a a psychological ethic. It's

like if if you do something motivated by

hatred or or um

a version

or anger

then you're already poisoning yourself.

Just your own mental states are are just

toxic and they are poisoning you.

So it's it's different from sin in that

regard.

Um

Yeah so I think I answered the question

at least with the three examples. But um

as the Buddhist ethics are very similar
to Christian ethics in many respects and
I've I've given the example of St. John
of the Cross
who was a very great mystic. I think he
may have been wiser than the founder of
his own religion. I do think it's
possible he was fully enlightened and
it's almost certain that he was a master
of what a Buddhist would call fourth
jhana.
And the practices
that he set out or that he described in
his in his like spiritual books
spiritual guidance uh are very similar
to Buddhism, although he has a whole
different way of explaining it, because

of course he's a he's a Catholic.

So, the theory may be radically

different, but the practice is very

similar.

And uh that's kind of how Christianity

and Buddhism

compare. I mean, at the most advanced

levels of all religions, you know, the

higher you get, you know, the closer

they converge.

But, um they may have wildly different

um

theories to account for, you know, why

you should practice.

So, um I'll just move on to Chaplin's

second question here. Is it ethical for

me to work for a corporation whose

values do not align with my own?

Well, that's a good question. I think a

lot of people do that. And

unfortunately, um

you work for any corporation is

obviously a profit is the bottom line.

They're they're out there to make money.

And uh most corporations are out there

to make as much money as possible.

And um

that may involve unethical activity, and

it usually does, I think, at least

sometimes.

So,

uh whether it's ethical for you to work

for them or not depends on your own

mental states. This is uh the common refrain in my questions and answers. Um you know, really ethics from the Buddhist point of view are uh they depend on your own mental states. So, if you can maintain um you know, benevolent, honest mental states, and if you can stay honest while working for these people, you know, they're not requiring you to lie to people, not requiring you to rip anybody off, then you can still be doing pretty well. And I'm glad I'm not in sales. I'm uh like in production where I'm working. So, it's an honest job for me, regardless of

what the sales people are doing. I have

noticed that uh the sales people will

try to sell people stuff that they don't

need.

You know, like they get a

like

um

they might

get talked into ordering a just getting

a big crate to put their stuff in. You

know, we we build crates to put some of

the stuff in. And sometimes it's just

completely unnecessary, but the sales

person talks them into it just to get

more of a a profit and then they get

like a commission or something. And

yeah, that's that's getting kind of

unethical and I wouldn't want to do it,

but uh

that's their own decisions to make and

I'm not really trying to badmouth

anybody here.

All right, next question

is from David Odysseus.

Wondering what you're doing at the sheet

metal shop and how do you feel going

back to more normal life? Do you ever

feel beneath something so menial

as you had been living a very very

pretty ambitious life before taking alms

and seeking enlightenment? I need to get

a fairly basic job myself so I've been

traveling a number of years and I feel

reservation of getting trapped. I'd love

to hear how you take it.

Well,

yeah, it's it's it's sort of uh

almost paradoxical the situation of a of

a monk, especially a monk who practices

very strictly and is revered by uh

devout Buddhist people.

Like

you know, a monk is called venerable

lord and people will bow to you and and

uh

you know, you're you're treated almost

like a god,

but at the same time a monk is supposed

to be a beggar. I mean, that's what

bhikkhu the

the Pali word for um a monk is bhikkhu, which literally means beggar. Bhikshanam bhikshati bhikkhu, which means, you know, he begs for alms, therefore he is a bhikkhu.

So,

um the founder of the tradition in which I was ordained, now venerable Tong Pool Seattle, said a monk should be as humble as a foot wiping cloth.

So, on the one hand you get revered and treated like a god, but on the other hand you're not supposed to care about that at all and you're supposed to be as humble as you can possibly be.

And uh furthermore, uh a monk is

supposed to be an ascetic. And I was ordained in in an ascetic tradition, the Tong Pool tradition which was largely based on

um forest asceticism.

And so, uh for me it's sometimes working at a sheet metal shop, it's it's like an ascetic practice.

You know, just getting up early in the morning is an ascetic practice for me.

And then just the hard work. And uh as I as I said at the beginning, I worked pretty hard today. There is a lot of physical exertion involved.

Um

yeah, I mean it's you can just see it as a kind of ascetic practice.

Um I'm not sure how a job like sitting

at a desk or frying hamburgers or

something would be, but uh it's like my

karma just uh

plus uh my sweetheart's advice got me

this job that uh really just fits my

my my karma or my character or

something. It's uh

it's it's sort of an ascetic kind of a

job, which I like. And uh

I don't know. It's like with regard to

being humble or exalted or anything like

that, I I mean I'm just me. I don't

really think about it much.

Um

yeah, I mean I I get treated fairly well

at work. You know, the other guys like

me and all that or seem to anyway.

So,

yeah, I mean for me it's

most of the changes in my life, like

having to work for a living, they're

largely peripheral.

Like

the phenomenal external world are

largely peripheral that that really the

the me in the center

is almost the same except now sort of

the me in the center is very close to

another me in the center who is you know

my mate but I mean that's like the only

really radical change that I can think

of um other than just the peripheral

stuff on the like the phenomenal outside

world which um

you know a monk is supposed to be you

know equanimous no matter what you know

you can be living in a in a jungle

uh you know rat infested cave or

whatever and so

um

yeah I mean working in a sheet metal

shop is uh

it's really not that radical of a change

for me

but I've I've been spending so many

years just kind of centering myself

where you know you you're you're sort of

tuning out the external world as much as

possible a lot of the time I mean just

living in a in a cave and sitting in

silence and looking at a blank wall um

you know there's not a whole lot of

you know external stuff going on a lot

of the time and so

um you you stop considering to be so

important there are people there's

completely stuck at the superficial

level

but um the more progress you make

the less you identify with the

superficial stuff

and uh I've I'm kind of like that I mean

you can kind of get sucked into you know

work

you know it's like having a having a bad

day or something

but um

yeah I mean it's really not all that

different I'm still I'm still the same

me I got a beard now wear shirts that

kind of thing but uh

it's it's not it's not that big of a

deal it's in the the difficult parts are

just the grist for the mill it's it's

like ascetic practice

so the next question

is from John no not John Doe, it's Joe

Doe.

I have been wanting to ask if in Burma

and or in Buddhism, if they have a

flexibility program. Sitting in the

lotus comfortably takes good

flexibility.

Well, in in Burma

and throughout most of Buddhism

um most people just don't sit in the

full lotus. I sat in the full lotus, but

uh

most people don't. Most Buddhists don't.

Most

Burmese Buddhists don't. It's pretty

It's pretty rare, actually.

And so, um if there's one tradition in

Burma

it's uh

I

thedo, no.

Uh

I'm having a a mental block. The Ingu, the The Ingu tradition where a person may have to sit several hours in the full lotus.

And um it's done without the flexibility program. So, it's just like excruciating agony. And that's part of the purpose of doing it is just teaching people to uh go beyond the agony.

Um I assume, you know, it's just sheer brute willpower just remaining sitting in the full lotus when your your knees and ankles and are just screaming in pain.

But um

there in in yoga, like Hindu yoga, they

do have the you know, the stretches and
that sort of thing to make it easier. In
yoga magazines or something, you can
find that sort of thing, but uh
I never came across it in Burma.
For me, it was just uh just gradually
sit longer and longer.
You know,
um
I remember seeing this old guy in San
Francisco. He went to one of the talks
that I gave and he could just flop into
the full lotus.
Yeah, he hardly had to use his hands at
all. And he just looks around smiling
says, "It only hurts for the first 5
years."

Which is about right.

Okay.

So, I'll move on to the next question

from JT Drake.

And JT Drake says,

"Did I understand that you do not

believe in an objective reality? What do

you think of reality presented within a

simulation? Do we live in a simulation

and what would that mean spiritually?

Even if not, how does our intelligence

filter change

I see, how does our intelligence filters

change physical reality

with our internal models?"

Okay.

Well,

I suppose I should get into a little

epistemology if you'll be patient and

bear with me.

Um I've talked about this sort of thing

before. I've talked about most of the

things I talk about before.

And um

in epistemology, like 100 years ago,

there were two main theories about what

is

true.

And there you had the correspondence

theory and the coherence theory. The

correspondence theory is what most

people go with, what science goes with

mostly, and that is that um something is

true, like the statement the apple is on
the table is true if it corresponds to
an apple really on the table.
That um
correspondence theory of truth is that a
statement is true if it corresponds to
some objective reality.
The coherence theory, which was endorsed
by some Hegelians mostly,
like um F. H. Bradley,
is that something is true if it's
in agreement with everything else that
you've already determined to be true.
And um
with regard to the
re- what my what I consider to be

reality. Then with regard to ultimate reality, I'd go with uh the the correspondence theory that ultimate reality is uh is just an objective ultimate reality, so to speak. I mean I mean, you've transcended subject and object. But, um

I mean, there really is an ultimate reality, but it's just it's formless and infinite.

And it's like uh the simile of the block of marble that I've talked about before. It's like you've got a block of marble and contained within that block of stone are every single possible statue in existence.

You know, every possible statue is

inside that block of stone that you just
have to carve away the rock, but they're
already in there.
You know, every single molecule is
already there in the right place for
that statue.
It's just that um you know, the excess
rock just has to be dispensed with.
And um
but they're in there potentially
and uh virtually already.
And I consider um our a-
you know, the samsaric world, you know,
the phenomenal world to be that kind of
reality. It's uh it's conditional, it's
virtual,

but it's um in in it's kind of

potential,

but it's not ultimately real.

So, we're living in a kind of

simulation, but it's uh generated by our

own mind

or uh

generated by ignorance.

So, in a way we do kind of live in a

simulation. We're sort of in the matrix.

But, it's

I mean, in it has ultimately it has

ultimate reality underlying it. So, it's

not like totally fake, it's not totally

illusory.

It's just that it's uh

uh a conditioned version of a limited

reality.

So, what would that mean spiritually?

Well, I mean, read uh

Buddhist texts or like Vedantist texts I

read the Upanishads

and uh

yeah, that would it would you'd get some

indication of the the spiritual

indication or the spiritual implications

of it.

See, how does our intelligence filters

change physical reality? Yeah, and like

I say, I really am skeptical of the very

existence of physical reality. I am not

a materialist.

So, that answers that question, I think.

And then finally, the last question is

from Teresa.

How is it clear what is the right thing

to do even when it's so hard and

painful?

Okay.

How is it clear what is the right thing

to do? I mean, sometimes

um like I was mentioning earlier

um

I mean, you may not have a right thing

to do. You just have to choose between

two wrong ones in the sense that

whichever you choose is going to not

result in perfect happiness. I mean,

there's nothing you can do that's going

to nothing you can choose that's going

to result in in just being happy all the time.

So

um sometimes you just have to choose the lesser of two evils or the lesser of two samsaric paths.

And um

you just have to make the decision as wisely as you possibly can. You know, you might take a lot of introspection um just sitting alone in a quiet place, you know, going out to the to the beach or into the mountains or into a forest, just getting as clear as you possibly can and

contemplate

and just come up with
what you consider to be the best thing
you can do. Not necessarily the right
thing because as I say, I mean, one
might be a
just less wrong than the other one.
I mean, some people get into situations
in life, most people actually where
sometimes you just you know, you just
have to choose the lesser of two
um unhappineses.
At least uh two paths that are going to
cause a certain amount of unhappiness.
But, the thing is, once you have made
the decision as well as you can, then
no regrets. I mean, you just go ahead
and do it. I mean, regret

is really it's uh it's a kind of poison.

And uh

that's that's one thing about Buddhist

philosophy I have taken to heart that

regret is always bad karma. It just

makes things worse.

So, once you have made the decision as

carefully as you can that this is really

what I should do,

then uh

really no matter what, you shouldn't

regret it. I mean, it may be that

circumstances will change or you'll get

some sort of insight or you know,

whatever it is that you may see that uh

you know, you should do something

different. Maybe you should have uh

chosen the other way, and then you can

try to rectify your course, maybe. But,

still there should be no regrets. And uh

if if things are really difficult and

like uh you're just very unhappy, then

uh

um I mean, I've been in situations like

that. Everybody has, with extremely few

exceptions, I think.

Then uh

in in times like that, it's just uh

try to do something positive. You know,

try to get some kind of accomplishment

going every day.

Maybe sleep a little extra, but don't

stay in bed all day. And uh

yeah, I mean, it it could just be like

cleaning your room or something. Just

try to accomplish something positive

every day.

And no regrets.

So, I think that's the last question.

I'm not sure if I was uh helpful with

that one. It's uh

not an extremely

um

easy question even to fully understand

the implications of it.

But uh I hope I helped at least a little

bit.

And that was the last question.

So

Um that's it. And you're all welcome to

ask questions for the next one.

And

just leave them in the comments below or

if you are subscribed to subscribe star

or are on my discord server, you can

leave your questions there also.

And um

Um also I suppose I should hype my stuff

just uh

down down below this video

are my URL links and also

my books that can be ordered on Amazon.

And uh

be happy.

hello and welcome to question and answer

number 25

and 25 if you didn't know is is kind of

a big number we're getting up there

i am your host panya basa

and before doing this show my sweetheart

asked me to try and look alive and perky

but um the thing is for the past week or

so i've been uh

um

feeling kind of washed out i think it's

like the

spring has sprung and the pollen in the

air is thick

and so my body is dealing with uh clouds

of pollen in the air or something but

i'll try to look alive and if i don't

look alive that's you can just consider

that to be uh some sort of error in your

own perceptions or something

and we've got

not like a huge number of questions but

uh we're into double digits easily and

some of these questions are complicated

i'm not entirely sure if i understand

the question

so let's just dive in here and

see what happens so the first question

is from matthew

and matthew says

there seems to be two ways of explaining

not self

one is that reality is we perceive it is

an illusion and thus all we experience

is essentially a simulation or

two

that it is a practical way to

differentiate between a false sense of

certainty about perceived phenomena

and the underlying reality that can be

properly experienced when not self is

properly understood and in parentheses

he's got c panchavagi five brethren also

known as the anata nasuta the discourse

on the not-self characteristic

the first approach seems more exoteric

while the second approach is more

grounded do you agree that this

dichotomy exists

and if so what do you think is the more

useful for lay householders

well technically there are more than two

ways of explaining not-self

like the uh anatalakan asuta pretty much

goes with the idea that if you don't

have complete control over something you

can't really say that it's you

so since we don't have complete control

over the five condas which is our body

our feelings our perceptions uh

let's see our volitions our karma

formations and our

our uh consciousness since we don't have

complete control over any of that we

can't say that any of that is really our

self

but there have been other ways of

interpreting no self for example one of

the most

famous ways is the simile of the chariot

where you've got

a chariot is composed of parts

and

um

i mean none of those parts is really the

chariot if you took all the parts apart

and had them in a pile that also

wouldn't be a chariot you can swap out

parts and it's still considered to be

the same chariot

so

the the chariotness of the chariot isn't

abiding in any particular part

and it's really just a term of

convenience for a certain assemblage of

parts

so that's considered to be one of the

the standard explanations of not-self

although

abhidhamma

went uh with the idea that anything that

can be divided into smaller parts is not

self

um still it's it's sort of uh

it creates the problem of any elemental

particle could be called the self even

though according to abhidhamma it lasts

it's only about a trillionth of a second

but um

there you are and then uh in mahayana

even those elementary particles can be

divided

in the imagination you know there's like

the top half and the bottom half of the

elementary particle which could be

considered different from each other and

so forth

and then also mahayana went with what

matthew here says is the first

uh interpretation is that reality as we

perceive it is simply an illusion and

that is uh

implied in a lot of terra vada buddhism

also

so um

so matthew has this dichotomy that

not-self is due to the fact that you

know the whole world is an illusion or

that we are just perceiving the world

incorrectly

but you know that it amounts to the same

thing really i mean there's at least a

lot of overlap between these two

interpretations

and uh

really my interpretation of no self just

goes back to my standard simile of the

block of marble where reality

is just this

formless now reality is formless and

that it is perception that is dividing

things up and creating duality and the

perception is imagination essentially

so

yeah

um let's see what do you agree that this

dichotomy exists um kind of sort of

and if so which do you think is the more

useful for lay householders whichever

whichever interpretation resonates

you know some people just have different

characteristics different characters

different personalities and so different

approaches to the same issue

will resonate better with different

people so

whatever works best for the individual

there's several different

interpretations of no self which does

indicate that it is a difficult concept

to understand

mainly because it's just not

intellectual the intellect works in

terms of duality so once you start

intellectualizing or trying to figure it

out you've already lost because

i mean the best you can do is sort of

some kind of kantian

recognition of the limitations of your

own perceptual system or something

so yeah i'll just go with

whatever works best for you to help you

detach

from whoever you think you are

because you are not that

so the next question

is from joe doe

and jodo says pano can you tell any

stories of supernatural powers you may

have come across yourself or in other

monks

in your next q a

well i really don't have a lot of

luck with supernatural powers um

supernova supernatural powers in myself

what might be called supernatural powers

have tended to be

just um i'll say something that another

person just happens to be thinking at

that moment

and you know it just happens

quite a lot sometimes

and um you know it's it's i don't know

it's just it's like a weird

synchronicities or something

and um

so there is that i mean when i was a kid

we had a poltergeist in our house

and uh the most famous story of that is

uh

my father was hiring a housekeeper for

the summer

and we were the three of us were sitting

at the kitchen table my father at one

end i was at the other end and the

housekeeper was like sort of kitty

corner from my father and on the corner

of the the kitchen table was an ashtray

and my father was explaining to the

housekeeper that if she finds any kind

of broken glassware or crockery broken

dishes in the cupboards anything like

that don't immediately blame the kids

because there is a poltergeist in the

house and dishes and glassware and so

forth spontaneously

just

deconstruct

and while he was explaining this to her

her eyebrow like one eyebrow is starting

to go up and she's like starting to get

this slow grin on her face like she

can't decide whether he's joking or

crazy

and then within five seconds i've been

reaching the end of the sentence

explaining how there is a poltergeist

the ashtray that was on the just right

there in plain sight made this sound

like zinc and just split in half and the

two halves split and just kind of slid

like an inch apart from each other

and then she immediately stopped smiling

and tired started taking him seriously

um

although with regard to supernatural

powers of like sages and so forth

um i heard that shui um in seattle in

burma

um who has now passed away

that he could read minds and um i've

been told that there's a really famous

monk in thailand who can read minds

although i've never met i never met any

monk personally that um

well i did meet schweighumanciato once

but he didn't read my mind at the time

so

let's see i saw an apparition once

uh could have been a ghost could have

been some kind of weird you know some

sort of aberration in my brain at the

moment i don't know

um

gosh yeah that's about it i really i

don't have very good luck with regard to

uh

cultivating supernatural powers except

for as i say

um like weird coincidences happen

the more you practice spiritually the

more weird coincidences are going to

happen

um at least that's my experience

um

yeah so really i don't i'm sorry to

disappoint joe doe here but uh i really

do not have a rich

uh repertoire of supernatural power

stories

um

in my case as i've said it's it's

usually spontaneous and just without my

conscious control or knowledge it just

happens

so i think i'll just move on to the next

question and this is a

uh from in manus who

asks complicated questions so uh

let's see how it goes here

in manis says

how do did they translate ancient

languages like pali how can we be sure

that the meaning or connotation is

accurate

from the time that the language was used

more commonly compared to how we

translate it now

and how should people who have never

studied ancient languages approach any

translation

suppose the first translation that all

subsequent translations is based was off

on just a handful of key terms suppose

our own knowledge paradigm

had also in a sense influenced the

original thought paradigm which the old

language arose even if the translators

were well intending in their efforts

the practice will sort it out perhaps

so that's the first question which

really

it boils down to just how can you

translate

pali or any other ancient language and

be sure that the translation is more or

less correct

and i would point out that even like
shakespeare there are passages in
shakespeare that are hotly contended
that nobody's really sure what
shakespeare had in mind so there could
be uh
just uh figures of speech that were used
in ancient times that just fell out of
fashion and uh is difficult to
understand um one thing i've noticed is
the commentaries
really are relatively clueless with
regard to flora and fauna and probably
customs that are peculiar to northern
india because the commentaries were
written in sri lanka and southern india

by monks who maybe had little or no

experience with northern india

but

on the bright side a language like pali

there is a living tradition extending

all the way back to the buddha so you

had monks

who were

you know reading understanding

interpreting the poly i mean in the

early times they probably spoke poly

fluently

um

and so the tradition just continues and

so the commentaries are probably

mostly correct mostly reliable

um

even though they're probably composed

mainly by scholar monks who didn't

meditate much but they were relying upon

older traditions that were passed down

for

um you know many centuries

so

some of it you can verify for yourself

some of it is just common sense some of

it you really can't be sure about like

in uh in the vineyard the rules of

monastic discipline sometimes there's

just um a word in the pali language that

appears just once in the entire

polytupica and you can't figure it out

just from

context you know it's like a monk is

forbidden to use such and such but it

doesn't really explain what such and

such is

and sometimes

excuse me

the commentators will just make wild

stabs in the dark and sometimes the

commentators are wrong and sometimes

they're spectacularly wrong even with

regard to basic

philosophy although i hope that is rare

like the term papancha

um it's it's a it's an important

philosophical term in buddhism

that um

the commentators like buddhaghosa really

they really didn't know what it meant

and so there was a monk

oh i can't remember his name i've got

the book behind me on the shelf but i

don't want to interrupt myself

but it's called um

let's see

uh something in reality gosh maybe i

should get it just a second

oh

let's see here

here we go

ah

almost fell down

kicked the chair

okay concept in reality an early

buddhist thought by bikunyan

where he

uh does this really

deep

scholarly analysis of the term papancha

and concludes that it means something

like diversification like taking

something simple and artificially

complicating it with all these

connotations and so forth and that is uh

a symptom of

ignorance really in buddhism

so i guess with regard to uh i'll see

there's another part of the question

here how should people have never

studied ancient languages approach any

translation

um

i have found with regard to

paulie texts

the best translations into english are

going to be by western monks

like westerners who are just scholars

it's it's like an alien tradition for

them they haven't lived the life they're

going to be making lots of wild guesses

and using sort of

you know western liberal semi-christian

common sense to try and interpret

ancient indian buddhism and it doesn't

always work out very well caf rhys

davids is a spectacular failure in that

regard

in my opinion

and then uh

like asian monks who translate usually

have more of a medieval faith-oriented

mindset where those slaves shall be

followed the commentaries

and uh

they'll just tell you what the

commentary says

even if it says something different from

what pauli says

you know it's like if the buddha says

red

and the commentary says well when the

buddha said red what he really meant was

blue

then they'll just follow along with blue

as a general rule

so a western monk is usually the best

transit be kuboti i mean regardless of

his uh leftist hysteria and so forth

um he's one of the best translators

we've got bikunyana molly is a really

good translator his friend bikunyanovira

was a good translator although he didn't

publish any large works but his

translations were good

ah john tenisero

is good although he's kind of

self-indulgent in his translations and

kind of follows some idiosyncratic

renderings especially in in when he

translates verses

but um

yeah um you just have to have faith in

in dhamma that uh

you know the gist of it will come across

even if you miss out on a few terms

um you know the the genuine original

meaning is has been lost even some terms

like namarupa

um i really do think that namarupa

originally was as it is literally

translated name and form

you know as you got the form of

something

you know you see something and

you sort of focus in on the form of it

and then you slap a name onto it you

give it meaning first you see the object

you focus on the object and then you you

attribute some meaning to that even if

it's just uh you know what the hell is

that still is it's some kind of meaning

so uh

uh later on the tradition changed

namarupa to mind and matter but i think

originally and some of the oldest texts

do seem to bear this out in a new

panasonic tradition it's uh it's like

this also that it really does

it's like um

a description of how perception works

like papancha

is another it's similar where papancha

is you differentiate and then sunk is

you attribute some kind of significance

to what you have differentiated out from

the plenum of the sensory field or

whatever

so

um one good thing that you can do is

just read the text i mean if you can

learn poly that would help

but you read the text and um

don't rely too much

on

like preconceived notions or

commentarial traditions and just

let it fall to place in your own mind

and make sense of it i mean

um in some respects it's better to trust

your own common sense in reading

something than relying slavishly on the

commentaries

because the commentaries aren't always

right

especially in in the ways that i

mentioned before

but uh let's just move on to the next

question from in manus which is a uh

a complicated one and it's about

mysticism

so

the first part of this one

is metaphysics as compared to practical

mysticism could pano explain the primary

differences

well

metaphysics is very different from

mysticism because metaphysics is

intellectual it's an intellectual

attempt to understand ultimate reality

whereas mysticism is not intellectual

and the purer it gets is not even

perceptual

it's just wide open consciousness and so

it's essentially formless

in the pure state so

like

any jonic state any genre above first

jhana where you're no longer thinking

could be called mysticism so a fourth

genre would be like the perfection of

mysticism for an unenlightened being

and metaphysics is is philosophizing is

trying to use the intellect to

understand ultimate reality

and other two mysticism is far

preferable because you're just

experiencing reality directly instead of

filtering it through perceptions and

just intellectuality and so forth

so the next part of this question on

mysticism

by in manus

also i have heard you mentioned

before when perhaps discussing venerable

nano moly that he hated mysticism and

that mysticism cannot be systematized

correct me if i'm off what exactly is

practical mysticism then is practice not

in any way systematized also what do we
make of the various seemingly systems of
categorical categorical practice that
are so prevalent in buddhism
for instance with regard to practice
there are the bojangas or factors of
enlightenment and also the formula of
purification laid out in the for right
efforts to name a few
so before i continue with the uh the
question
i'll i'll address this part
uh first it wasn't yanamole who hated
mysticism zenyanovira and janavira was
just a towering intellectual he was
trying to interpret
dhamma

more or less in accordance with 20th

century existentialism or late 19th

century like kierkegaard

there he's very strongly influenced by

the existentialists

and he had this

this radically complicated intellectual

understanding of dhamma

that he it was it was weird it was like

he said that anybody who is

unenlightened has this problem and then

he just launches into this complicated

stuff that most people couldn't even

fully understand and supposedly even a

frog

has these subtle

you know just mal adjustments of

perception or some such he uh he

actually thought that he had become um

a sort of just by walking back and forth

philosophizing just doing his walking

meditation just trying to to figure out

um dhamma

so he hated mysticism just because it

wasn't logical mysticism is not logical

like um you know he just absolutely

insisted

on you know the aristotelian laws of

thought you know you have a is a which

is the law of identity a is not not a

which is the law of what is it

difference i don't remember and then

there's a has to be either

b or not b something like that which is

the law of excluded middle and he just

said if you don't think according to

these rules

you're [__]

essentially you're wrong

and then he said mysticism is like that

because mystics talk in

paradoxes mainly because they're trying

to get you to stop thinking like a zen

koan

you know it's like does a dog have

buddha nature

it's um

i mean there is no answer to it really

you know well the answer that joshua was

moo which is uh

or or an original chinese it's woo

which uh could just be that he was

barking like a dog for all i know but um

it just means like no but it's not

knowing that a dog doesn't have buddha

nature he's just like no don't ask the

question

so let's see i've gone off the track

here let's see

uh yeah nyana vera hated mysticism

because he was just a hardcore

intellectual

he had zero use for

um any kind of mystical state so

apparently he had zero use for jono

anything above first gianna

let's see

mysticism cannot be systematized well

intellectually the states

or intellectually pure mysticism cannot

it doesn't fit the system because

pure mysticism would be like god it

would just be formless and infinite and

thereby paradoxical

but um what can be systematized is the

practice you know how to cultivate genre

states for example

see what exactly is practical practical

mysticism yeah it would be just the

cultivation of of mystical states which

would be through meditation

um i mean

there's other ways you could go about it

through you know taking

um you know entheogenic substances so to

speak or in the west often it happens

accidentally through like a near-death

experience or some such

so the practice can be systematized

but the

a pure

um

how do you say just like a pure mystical

state yeah i mean it really just defies

systematic systematization like nirvana

defy systematization

let's see

so okay all right i think i answered

that part so i'll move on to the next

part of the question here i believe
there should be a balance of mysticism
with practice and while intellect can
also be taken to an extreme which is
probably the case with most westerners i
feel mysticism can also be taken too far
with the middle way i think balance
between the two are probably most
helpful mysticism is generally arrived
at as such experiences are conditioned
most whirlings come from a position of a
predominant intellect and sense base and
must use those faculties to also quell
those faculties to penetrate to the more
formless and refined planes of mystic
experience

um

it's not exactly a question this part

but uh

i can comment on a little bit i mean the

zen practitioners seem to go with the

idea of

a balance of mysticism and practice

it's possible even

like some of the early texts like i

think it might be the very first verse

of the samudini kayak the buddha is

talking about

um you know not running and not sinking

and um it's sort of a

it's sort of like a paradox you know

what's the meaning or not a paradox like

an enigma what did he mean you know you

don't run you don't sink

and um

i think it could be you're not running

just um you know running through some

sorry

some sorry states you know just you know

thinking living in some sort but at the

other hand on you know on the other hand

you're not sinking into like this blank

trance state

that you have to balance those and

ramana maharshi um

he was a hindu but uh he was a very

advanced hindu

and he couldn't talk for the first few

years after he reached his experience

his enlightenment experience supposedly

it took him a few years before he was

able to start integrating

um you know worldly states with this

formless bliss that he was experiencing

for a while i mean he could hardly eat

people would just have to put food in

his mouth

he was really out of it for a long time

because he he really didn't know how to

how to integrate you know the two they

seemed so just diametrically opposed or

just so alien to each other

um

so i mean if you're going to function in

the world a balance between the two is

helpful

but it's more a matter of i mean be as

mystical as you can because mysticism is

really

like direct experience of reality

if it's if it's like the you know high

contemplation as uh the counseling

mystics call it

um

so let's just move on to the next part

of the question here

how would a mystic be able to declare

that he knows or has attained to it

would be it has been stated that once

the aspirant practitioner has made it to

fruition of any of the stages of

enlightenment then in most cases they

know

also such types generally see the causal

factors which lead to that knowing in

the case of a disciple they would know

that their teacher and the teaching was

right and good and this bolsters their

faith to a conviction that is unshakable

well most of the people that i have met

who consider themselves to be aryas um

in my opinion were mistaken

so there is that

but with regard to

knowing and just believing samsara is

just a matter of belief

any kind of perceptual

knowledge is just belief it's not the

same as knowledge

knowledge is direct experience of

reality and you're starting to get some

of that

in in a mystical state

so you're gonna it's just gonna be like

a different level

of reality you know just a whole just a

whole different dimension

and it's going to be true knowledge as

opposed to the beliefs that you've been

wallowing through you know since you

know infancy i suppose

but

um with some people they just can't they

just can't deal with it it's like um

you know you have sort of a mild

mystical state every time you sneeze you

know it's like you're wide awake and

you're not thinking anything

but it's so brief and it's just so

normal i guess

that

people really can't integrate that into

their understanding of reality

so finally in manus at the end of the

mysticism

question and with regard to mysticism

what is the extreme

is it the bavanga consciousness being

lived in and indulged in a conscious a

conditioned stupor or perhaps a

schizophrenic

yeah it would be none of those the

extreme of mysticism would be

essentially nirvana

that would be the extreme just being god

or whatever

um the bavanga consciousness that's just

like um it's like a test pattern

according to abidama your last conscious

thought

before you die is going to be like the

test pattern of your mind

um

in like your subconscious mind

throughout your next life

so if you're thinking of your your

family

when you die

whenever you're unconscious supposedly
you're in a deep sleep or something it's
just going to be this test pattern of
the the images of of your family in your
previous life so that's obviously not
mysticism
a condition stuper no
mysticism is expanded consciousness it's
like when you're when you're perceiving
something you're limiting your
consciousness to what you are perceiving
but when you're not perceiving anything
and you're still wide awake i mean just
the consciousness is just wide open your
mind is like a mirror or like a
like a cheap camera where everything is
equally in focus but you're not really

picking out anything

and schizophrenic i don't know i don't

know what the mind of a schizophrenic is

like i don't think it's particularly

enlightened

you know a paranoid person is not

particularly enlightened

so yeah what is the extreme of mysticism

it would just be

um like maybe ramana maharshi right

after he had his experience when he was

just completely zoned out i mean it was

to to an external observer

he might have been in a complete stooper

just totally out of it but um his

experience would just be like you know

formless bliss

you know it's just infinity

because perception is what creates

limits if you don't have limits if

consciousness is not perceiving

something assuming that you can even

have consciousness without perception

then uh it's just formless and if it's

formless it's infinite

so the next question is from yuichiro

and this is a short question but it's uh

i don't fully understand it here where

it's it's just kind of a strange one why

is solipsism wrong from first principles

just sitting observing couldn't

everything just be your own imagination

and then i asked him when he asked me

this question what does he mean by first

principles then he says basic axioms

which uh

um it didn't really clarify it for me

so why is ellipsism wrong from first

principles

shouldn't everything just be your own

couldn't everything just be your own

imagination well your perceptions could

be your own imagination but if you just

get beyond the perception like like in

the mystical state

then uh

the illusion really can't take hold

because there's nothing for it to take

hold of

so i mean from the buddhist point of

view solipsism is not necessarily wrong

i mean there have been buddhist schools

like one of the two main mahayana

schools is the the yogachara school

which um i mean there's ellipsis

you know everything that you experience

is the fruition of your own karma and

it's sort of like leibniz is monads

where

um

how do i explain this it's like

you know it's like a monad is like its

own little universe and if all the other

monads disappeared it wouldn't i mean

the the first monad wouldn't even notice

because it would still be living the

whole world because it's all

internalized

and um the the yogachara buddhist like

this it's like your karma causes you to

experience this certain world but there

are other people whose karma is like

overlapping with yours and it overlaps

enough that it can seem as though

they're interacting with you

so mahayana took it that far and um you

know the seeds of that are already in

terra valla

a lot of mahayana's principles

um

you know they

they're just developments of

ideas that are found in terravotta but

not really elaborated upon

so

yeah in a way solipsism is i mean it's

it's not wrong i mean we are living in a

slipsis world especially with regard to

our interpretations of things because

that is just you know the meaning of

something is just purely internal it's

just in your head you know there's no

meaning out there i mean like this book

i mean this is

even to just call it a book is is like

you're attributing significance to this

and i mean if there was no perceiving

mind there wouldn't even be a this you

know it wouldn't even get that far it

wouldn't even be a something

so in a way we are living in a slips

this world but um it's an infinite

universe and they're an infinite number

of beings and there are enough beings

experiencing a universe similar to ours

that we can seem at least to be

interacting with them and um

also

this isn't

some teachers say that this isn't true

but my own experience seems to indicate

that it is true is that if you have any

kind of intimate connection with another

person

then in a way your karma is sort of

blending together and you're in a way
creating a new being like an us you know
it's like you're you're very much in
love with another person and that person
is very much in love with you and you've
got a good relationship going so you've
got this person that person and then
there's this third being which is the us
and then that can even be taken to
higher levels like an entire nation
could sort of form an us
at a loose level or something so in that
sense solipsism wouldn't be correct but
at the level of the individual
yeah we are pretty much living in a
solipsism at least with regard to the
significance of everything that we

perceive

but aside from that i'm not sure how to

answer that question

so the next question is from the arya

swasti project

and the arya swasti project says

greetings panyobasa question

could you elaborate a bit more on

mindful meditation or being mindful in

all activities i am aware that being in

the now is important for a number of

reasons not ruminating nor wasting time

in daydreams old memories etc

but

how can it have a significant impact on

our spiritual evolution it seems like a

convenient practice since it can be done

almost anytime and anywhere can being

completely mindful

at a given time facilitate some level of

enlightenment warm regards sadhu

well one really early

kind of koan like interpretation

of

mindfulness

is in the bahia sutra of the udana where

the buddha is telling the the wanderer

you know in the scene there should be

only the scene in the herd there should

be only the herd

in the in the felt there should be only

the felt in the mentally sense there

should be only the mentally sensed

and

um you're trying to be as close to the

original datum as possible

it's you're not attributing significance

you know you're not

interpreting it like you hear a dog if

you hear a dog mindfully like it dogs

barking outside

if you hear the dog mindfully you're

just aware of the the auditory

sensations you know you're not

interpreting it as that damn dog just

won't shut up you know the neighbors

should make and be quiet you know just

on and on you can do all this kind of

stuff but if you're being mindful and

you hear the dog barking

it's just auditory sensation

um if you're not that good at being

mindful then you can attribute some kind

of significance to it as just

sound or hearing you know you want to

keep it as basic as possible because

you're trying to keep from just spinning

off into papancha spinning off into

attributing all these slip cystic you

know interpretations um ultimately

delusional interpretations

um and so it's keeping you closer to

reality like in in terrible buddhism the

the senses you know just hearing is

ultimately real but the

the significance you attribute to the to

the sounds are not ultimately real so

just going with um you know abhidama

philosophy by staying at the level of

hearing and seeing and just feeling

physical sensations and so forth um

you're at the level of ultimate reality

um in mahayana maybe not so much

but still um

it is keeping you from spinning off into

what is grosser delusion than uh you

know just the hearing and the seeing and

so forth

so that's one of the most important

reasons of it

and it is convenient practice since it

can be done anytime like if you're if

you're walking

um you know just

be aware of like the oily sensation in

your knee joints or just the the

movements of your legs the muscles in

your thighs tightening and loosening or

the pressure of your feet against the

ground and so forth just focus on that

sort of thing

and um i mean it's still not the highest

level of meditation but it is

um much more

um advanced than just thinking about

what you're gonna have for lunch while

you're walking or whatever it happens to

be driving the car you know you're

feeling the you know the steering wheel

against your your hands and you know the

seeing sensation and

you know the vibration of the car and

everything

or brushing your teeth i mean anything

anything you do can be done mindfully

some things are harder to do mindfully

than others

um

apparently it seems to me and i think it

says this in the text also

pleasure is it's harder to be mindful of

pleasure than of pain because you want

to kind of detach from the pain

but the pleasure you know you just

naturally want to wallow in it

but um yeah i mean it brings you closer

to reality and therefore it brings you

closer to uh enlightenment in in a

number of ways just in the moment you're

closer to enlightenment just because

um you have reduced the amount of

just deluded

perceptions that you're that you're

wallowing in and considering to be

reality and also um

you're just getting out of the habit of

that you know the more you restrain your

thoughts

the more you just get in the habit of

having restrained thoughts

so i think i'll just move on to uh the

arya swasti project's next question

and this one is i this one is a little

bit confusing for me

regarding state of mind and then he's

even got mind and parentheses so it's a

state of and then mind and parentheses

and then the whole thing in quotes

and being responsible for our own state

of mind or more specifically suffering

i hope this doesn't sound too simple

nope

but

is body feeling such as happiness or

freedom of care solely emotion and not

linked with state of mind or is it an

accurate gauge of state of mind

let me say that sometimes i have some

control over my own emotions energy

emotion particularly with regular

meditation and right diet and prefer

happiness or joy to lower and darker

moods my hope is that joy is an

indicator of state of mind and that it

is not independent of mind

i would qualify lastly that joy i'm

speaking i was independent of material

gain or other outside events much

respect sadhu

um there seems to be some confusion here

it's like let's see up here is body

feeling such as happiness or freedom of

care solely emotion and not linked with

state of mind

well i mean

emotion is a state of mind

i mean you can say that there's a

physical element too but any kind of i

mean let's let's just go with abidam i

mean

probably you have an idea if you've

watched my videos they don't have much

use for abhidama but just going with it

is orthodox theravada it's the third

pinnacle so

in

in

orthodox tarot bottom you've got four

kinds of reality

you've got mind

mental states

uh

consciousness

and nibona

so

consciousness is just like i mean they

really have a terrible really has a

difficult time defining consciousness

they really don't do a very good job of

it in my opinion but the mental states

is anything that's it's the form of the

consciousness anything that the

consciousness is conscious of is a

mental state

so that would include all your your

weightedness all your feelings all your

perceptions you know everything anything

that you experience is going to be a

mental state unless you can somehow

attain the paradoxical state of having

pure consciousness with no mental states

in which case you're in a pure mystical

state

so

i don't fully understand the question

here because he's

um the arya swasti project

seems to be assuming that emotions are

different from mental states in which

case i'm not exactly sure what he means

by state of mind

but i will say that happiness is not

just

a state of mind

you can say i mean happiness you know is

mainly a state of mind you can say or or

love for that matter but also

you have to have the consciousness

underlying the mental state it's like

um this isn't exactly orthodox you know

a disclaimer here but um

like

consciousness is like

water and

mental states would be like waves you

know it's

um mental states are like the form that

the consciousness assumes

so if you've got like a big mental state

you're going to have more consciousness

behind it if you have like an expanded

mental state like love or joy then

there's going to be more consciousness

backing that up you're more conscious

when you're happy than when you're

unhappy as a general rule there may be

exceptions to that

but still

when you're wide open your heart is open

you know you've got less restrictions on

your consciousness

you know less restrictions on your heart

so to speak

then

yeah i mean you're going to be more

conscious and so it's not purely a state

of mind happiness or unhappiness are not

purely states of mind because there's
also the underlying consciousness which
is the same consciousness but it can be
you know expanded or contracted like a
state of depression would be like
chronic contraction of of consciousness
you know you've got a small
consciousness going
and just the more conscious you are the
happier you are until finally you reach
uh you know infinite bliss when your
consciousness just merges with the
consciousness of the universe so to
speak
and uh for those buddhists out there
please forgive me for talking so much
like a hindu

so

i think i pretty much answer that one as

well as i can it's kind of a confusing

question for me

so i'll just move on to the next one

from chaplin

and this one's down to earth this is a

down earth question

coming up soon on your one year

disrobing anniversary are we going to

get another transitional update video

well that's possible yeah if people want

to uh

find out how it's been not being a monk

for a whole year which will be uh

may 16th would be my uh

anniversary for uh

leaving

the ordained biku

so yeah that's possible i think there's

a good chance of it

so i'll just move on to the next

question from uh chaplin and that is

looking back over the last year since

disrobing what three words would best

describe your new life what three words

well i think this would be in order of

importance would be

love

work

food

those are like the three biggies that

would be the three words that best

describe my uh

my existence

love work and food or if there was a

word that could combine love and

intimacy just being really close to

another person

um

yeah i would use that word instead of

love but let's just love is a good word

um

yeah

so i guess i answered the question i

mean i could elaborate but uh it might

be tmi or something so i'll just move on

to the next question from chakra gosha

and this is a naughty question

how do you say the 14 words in pali

seriously

um

for those of you who aren't um

into

national socialism or or whatever

the 14 words i had to look this up so i

mean it's not like an authority on this

but i looked it up and it's we must

secure the existence of our people in a

future for white children

and i'm not even going to attempt a

translation i'd probably butcher it

because my poly is pretty rusty now

and uh

yeah

i mean

we must secure the existence of our
people in a future for white children
gosh yeah i'm i'm not even going to
attempt it i mean
chakra gosha you know some poly i think
you can uh give it a shot yourself there
i think you're just being a naughty boy
that's what i think
so the next question from chakra gosha
there is a passage in the submutani kaya
in which the arahat chana apparently not
the same person as the famous charioteer
chooses to commit suicide to an
incurable painful illness given the
third noble truth wouldn't an arahant be
free from suffering even when undergoing

a painful illness being free from

suffering why would he choose to kill

himself on the other hand it seems like

maybe the traditional view is that chana

was not an arahant yet when he chose to

kill himself but only achieved full

awakening in the last moments as he bled

to death i'm not sure how plausible that

interpretation of the story is

well um chakra gosha seems to be

overlooking

the famous story in mahaparinibana suta

describing the buddha's own death

where the buddha was having really

painful like

abdom really just piercing abdominal

pains and he had to go into jhana in

order to bear the pain more easily which

is had me thinking like i mean an

arahant shouldn't really experience

suffering

you know i mean they still experience

pain but then the pain wouldn't bother

them because they wouldn't have aversion

for the pain

so why would the buddha or china in this

case

resort to some uh

you know some method of not feeling the

pain

and

the best the best answer i could come up

with is that um your body and your mind

are still linked you know like if you're
really sick it's gonna have effects on
your mind like you know just if you're
if you're sick with whatever you know
you might things may taste bad i've had
fevers where you know even water tastes
bad everything tastes bad
and
um yeah even an arahant i mean he might
not be attached or identified with his
body but still when the body's all
messed up the mental states accompanying
that body are also going to be messed up
even though the arahant isn't really
identified with that anymore
so that could be a way of answering that
question

but um yeah the buddha himself did

something similar he didn't kill himself

but he went into jhana when he was

having these really intense pains

so there is that

and finally

the last question from chakra gosha and

also the last question

tonight

is

on an old episode of the right-wing

dharma squads podcast the guys argue

that it is virtuous or better than

neutral for buddhist lay people to have

children because birth as a human is the

most fortunate kind of rebirth so by

having children you are giving more

sentient beings that opportunity

furthermore since you are a buddhist

your children are virtually guaranteed

to have the opportunity to hear about

dhamma which is even more fortunate what

do you think of this argument as having

children kusala

well

um it's pretty obvious from the buddhist

point of view that uh

if you're able to be celibate then you

should be celibate i mean there are

pseudos for the buddha you know just

said if you're able to be celibate be

celibate and even if you're if you're

not celibate you know it's like um the

very least stay away from the wives of

other men

so

um

yeah i think they're they're pushing it

they're in a way it's sort of

justification or what's it called

casualty is that what it is casualty

where you're trying to uh

justify you know pretty much anything

you want to do

and um whether something is moral or

immoral really does depend upon the

individual's mental states so i mean two

people can can have children you know

one person over here and another person

over there can can each have you know
their children and one person will be
just a lousy father and make all sorts
of akusala the other person will be a
good father and make all sorts of merit
but um
yeah i mean there is there are a lot of
warnings like the dania suta in the
um you know it's like mara wants you to
have kids
you know it's like uh children are like
a huge attachment
i had a friend of mine a long time ago
when he had a kid a little kid and he
said when when a toddler even walks
towards the street you know he can be
still you know 30 feet back but i mean

there's just this visceral just you know

this this dread of the little kid just

splattering you know just jumping out in

front of traffic or something and so

yeah i think um i think they're trying

to justify what they would prefer

uh anyway

um

but i mean if you're gonna have children

i mean there should be no regrets and uh

to some degree it can be a rewarding

experience and uh a valuable aesthetic

practice in certain respects

but um yeah your attachments are going

to increase almost certainly

um

so there is that

so i would say i mean some people they

might do better with children than

without children

and uh some people won't it depends on

the individual which is

kind of a cop-out answer but uh it is

true

and um let's see regards to these last

parts here um

by having children you're giving more

sentient beings the opportunity of human

birth i

yeah i mean you could twist that around

and you know a murderer could say you

know it's their karma you know like

you know they're help i'm helping them

to pay off their karmic debts

you know it's it's it really doesn't

work that way it's it's

um it's it's abstractifying your karma

whereas your actual karma like the the

wholesome or unwholesome quality of it

is just you know what's going on in your

in your mind it's is your

your will

and not like any kind of abstract future

possible possible states

so i mean if you can have children and

uh

you know stay relatively detached or

um

you know you're you're cultivating more

love and and care and compassion and so

forth than you know the negative or

unskillful states then uh yeah it could

be it could be beneficial although

i think for most people

um it it kind of

keeps them more firmly in samsara

as a general rule

so that is uh the last question and uh

before i sign off i'll just remind you

all to uh

look at the url links in the bottom and

uh

subscribe to this channel if you haven't

already and smash that like button

and stuff

and

be happy

Hello and welcome to episode 26 of

question and answer. I am your host

Punnadhammo Bhikkhu.

And I took the day off from work today

in order to take the driving test and

miraculously I passed it

and I've got a driver's license now,

which is nice.

And I'm all rested up and just to make

sure I'm drinking Red Bull, so I should

be uh

on the ball enough to answer these

questions and there are quite a few.

So, without any further ado, I think I'm

going to start answering questions.

And so the first one is from Chakra

Gosha.

And Chakra Gosha asks, "What is your name? When a monk disrobes, is it customary, optional, or disallowed for him to retain his ordination name versus returning to the secular name that he had prior to ordination? Given your druthers, how do you prefer to be addressed by the people you know online? It seems that for now you are okay with being known as Punnadhammo, but I am curious about whether you plan to eventually switch back to using your secular name."

Well, I'll tell you.

Uh in the Buddha's time,

uh a person wasn't given a new name.

You know, like Sariputta was Sariputta

before he was ordained. Mogallana was

Mogallana before he was ordained.

Mahakassapa was Kassapa.

And um

so I mean it was just supposed to be

your regular name.

And um

I guess because the Pali ordination is

in

um the the Theravadan ordination

ceremony is in Pali, you have to have a

name that uh you know, can be declined

with Pali declensions and so forth.

So, you're it's the the practice to give

you a Pali name, but that's not the way

it originally was. There's no real rules
about
um anything after you disrobe. I mean,
the rules of monastic discipline just uh
cease to apply once you're disrobed. So,
you can call yourself anything you like.
Although, if you like for example, I can
call myself Pannobhasa or Panno,
but I shouldn't call myself Pannobhasa
bhikkhu because I'm not a bhikkhu
anymore. And that could be get you into
trouble, you know, you'd be
in a in a sense being a you know,
passing yourself off as a monk without
being one, which would disqualify you
from ever ordaining again, ever from
being a real monk.

So, there is that. It is uh

kind of strange in Burma where

some people already have Pali names.

Like I knew this this guy

this nice man. His name was U Thihan.

And Thihan is the Burmese pronunciation

of Siha, which is Pali for lion. And

also in Burma,

the name you get, especially your

monastic name,

um

it's depends to some degree on what day

of the day of the week you were born on.

So, when I was ordained, um the Burmese

monks asked me what day of the week I

was born on. And I didn't know because I

wasn't Burmese. And so, they had to look it up in a book and it was Thursday. And so, if you're born on Thursday, your name starts with P, B, or M.

And so, I started with P. And sometimes in Burma, they uh somebody asks you your monk's name and I'd say, you know, Pannobhasa and they say, "Ah, you were born on Thursday."

Um anyway, this U Thihan, his name was already Pali. It started with the right letter and still they gave him a different name when he ordained that also started with the same letter.

So, it is kind of strange, but it's uh later stuff that really um has no representation in uh the Pali text like

the rules of monastic discipline.

So,

he can retain his ordination name.

He can do whatever he pleases if he uh

if he disrobes.

Um but again, he should not try to pass

himself off as still being a monk if

he's not one.

Uh this next part of the question here,

given your druthers, how would you

prefer to be addressed by the people you

know online? Um

really, it's just names. I don't really

identify with names. Um I've been called

Panya for more than half my life.

I've been called Panya more than uh

my other names of John or David,

Mr. Reynolds.

So,

um

especially over the past 30 years.

So, it really doesn't matter to me. I

mean, I can go by uh

any any of the above,

and I really don't have uh any

preferences.

So,

I guess I answered that, so I'll just

move on to the next question.

And the next question is from Rob, alias

Dumber Farmer.

And Rob says, is there any scriptural

evidence that the Buddha viewed human

traits in similar Vedic terms, such as

the three gunas of rajas, tamas, and

sattvic?

If not, what is the closest example to a

crossover?

Well, I would say that as far as I

understand, I'm no authority on this,

but I'm pretty sure that the three gunas

of sattva,

uh rajas, and tamas,

um

they're not really Vedic. They they come

from Samkhya.

I'm pretty sure

they come from a

like a non-Vedic tradition called

Samkhya,

which um

was gradually incorporated into

Hinduism,

and um as yoga. It's called yoga. So,

what is what is called yoga is a kind of

uh

theistic Samkhya that uh accepts the

authority of the Vedas. It sort of got

incorporated into so-called Hinduism.

And um it was done before the Bhagavad

Gita was uh

composed because the Bhagavad Gita does

talk a lot about the three gunas.

Um

but I'm not aware of Buddhism talking

about uh a human being composed of the

three gunas. There could be some obscure reference in some sutra that uh I am forgetting.

But um

yeah, I don't think so. So, that goes to the last part of the question here. If not, what is the closest example to such a crossover?

Well, of course, you've got nama-rupa. You know, just dividing a human being up into mind and matter.

Um

that's fairly straightforward. I mean, nama-rupa is mentioned in uh the Upanishads anyway.

Um you know, under in a slightly

different meaning though.

Um

another crossover,

kind of an interesting one,

which isn't uh

like really primordial to Buddhism, is

um

Buddhist Abhidharma tries to divide

everything up into its component

elements.

And there were movements in Hinduism or

or whatever you want to call it,

Sanatana Dharma,

um that were trying to do the same

thing. Like there's the I think it's

called the Nyaya school, and then

there's another one I think uh it starts

with a V.

Um

that were trying to do the same thing.

It was sort of like Hindu Abhidharma,

where they also are trying to divide the

entire samsaric universe into its

component elemental parts, and then

describing the different um relations

between the parts that then creates this

universe.

Um so, that might be an example of a

crossover, but uh aside from that, I

really can't say

because um

yeah, I'm I'm not really uh

familiar with um anything like the three

guna theory

being uh emphasized in the poly text.

So, I'll just move on to uh

Dharma Farmer

his uh his next question here.

After listening to you mention a few

times that with all the lay life

distractions and difficulties, uh

sitting for meditation,

um

you promote the mindful approach to

various day-to-day mundane tasks. I

don't feel like I've fully grasped this,

or I should say I tried, but the general

boredom of washing dishes, feeding kids,

or driving to work kicks in. Can you

elaborate on this or recommend a good

source to learn more? Well, I mean, he
says uh that the general boredom of
washing dishes
or driving
kicked in, but I mean, if you're sitting
in meditation, you're just sitting there
experiencing your breath going in and
out.
And um that can be pretty boring. I
mean, just watching
the sensation of touch as the of the air
at your nostrils can be pretty boring,
too. So, it's just a matter of
disciplining yourself, training yourself
to do it, I guess.
Um

So, let's see what

I suppose just uh just a general

description of of mindfulness

is I mean, you're not thinking about

something else when you're doing

something. That would be just uh

elementary mindfulness. You know,

whatever you're doing, your your

attention is focused on that. You know,

when you're driving, you're focused on

driving and not uh you know, what you're

going to have for lunch or whatever.

And um at a slightly deeper level,

you're not really interpreting

what you're experiencing.

You know, so in a way, you know, you get

deeper, you're not even really thinking

about what you're doing, you're just attending to it. You're just paying attention to that. And um sometimes, I mean, you have to think.

You know, you you you you have to do problem solving, which requires thinking.

And um that's that's more advanced level when you're actually being mindful of your own thought processes. It is possible, but it is more advanced and more difficult.

So, like just taking the example of washing dishes,

um just the mindfulness of it is, you know, you're there in the present

moment. You know, your mind isn't wandering to other things, not into the past, not into the future, not into what's going on in the next room or the next house or whatever. You're just right there washing the dishes, feeling the water on your hands, feeling the the plate as you pick it up, the hardness, the warmness of it, maybe coolness, whatever it is. You know, the motions of your arm as you're as you're washing the dish, assuming that you're not using a dishwasher.

Um just the sensations, you know, the feelings of of what's going on right there, right now, in the present moment.

And um with as little mental commentary

as possible.

And you want a good source to learn

more. I mean, the primary source would

be the Satipatthana or Maha Maha

Satipatthana Sutta

in um

Majjhima Nikaya or or Digha Nikaya,

depending on whether it's a Maha or not.

Um a lot of a lot of uh books on

mindfulness.

Um

So,

I guess that would be a good short

explanation. I hope I explained it

without um becoming even more confusing

to

uh Rob here.

So, I'll just uh move on to his next

question.

Please tell us how your sheet metal day

job is going. Have you had to attend

mandatory diversity and inclusion

training yet? Smiley face. Have there

been any situations that your 30-year

monkhood have helped or has anyone shown

any curiosity in your past?

Okay, well, the sheet metal day job is

going well.

I I

rather enjoy it. I mean, you have rough

days, but still it's um it's a good job.

I like it.

And with regard to the mandatory

diversity and inclusion training, no,

this is South Carolina and uh I guess

sheet metal shops are they tend to be

conservative.

You know, the guys all have beards and

and uh a lot of them go to church and

yeah, it's it's kind of a redneck kind

of a place.

And there is an HR lady, but she's in

Tennessee somewhere.

And uh I'm not exactly what sure of what

she does. I mean,

I I I don't I don't know what she does.

So, there's

really the the closest thing we've got

to any kind of code of politically

correct behavior is that the owner of

the entire

business

is um

he's like an evangelical Christian. So,

like no cussing is allowed, that kind of

a thing.

So, it it's sort of like a a very

conservative Christian political

correctness, if there is any political

correctness at all there.

Um

let's see. Have there been any

situations that your 30-year monkhood

have helped Um yeah, I mean, just it is

kind of an austere job. I mean, it's

I have to get up early in the morning to

go to work, which is like an ascetic

practice for me.

And um you know, there's a lot of

physical labor

involved.

And um

so, it's it's kind of a certain amount

of austerity

is involved in the job that uh

you know, I can I can accept it with

equanimity when a lot of people would

just uh you know, just find it uh

too much too much to take

or some such.

Um

So yeah, I think mainly just uh

austerity and equanimity have really uh

helped with the helped with the job. Not

that it's really crappy job, but it it

can be uh a tough one, you know, it's uh

you know, it requires some uh definite

um

um

like physical

like strenuous activity sometimes and

also a certain amount of uh just

bravery, I think like especially when

you're

um just getting used to driving a

forklift and you're having to lift, you

know, 2,000-lb loads and and load them

onto trucks and this kind of thing. It

can be a little bit scary.

Um

So

yeah, I mean it has helped. I mean just

uh

being able just training yourself to

accept any situation with a modicum of

equanimity.

Um

within reason.

That has helped a lot. I mean it can

help with anything in life, not just

working in a sheet metal shop, just uh

driving a car or you know, interacting

with other humans.

Um you know, just not getting lost in

the emotions of it as easily as the

average person.

Um

and just being relatively indifferent to

being in a comfort zone or just being

physically comfortable. Um yeah, the the

monk training has definitely helped with

that.

And finally, the last part of this

question is has anyone shown any

curiosity in your past? Well, there is

two guys at work that watch my YouTube

videos now. I remember one of them

he uh I mean before I even showed up at

work the boss was going around telling

him that he that he had hired a monk.

And uh he's kind of a kind of a a

comedian, so nobody was really sure if

he was serious or not.

And um

finally one guy was asking me what I did

before I started working there. I told

him I was a a monk living in Asia and

he's he said something like, "That's

some crazy ass shit." But I mean it

wasn't derogatory. I mean he was

impressed.

So, he's one of the guys that watches my

videos now.

So, hey Austin, how's it going?

And uh yeah.

So, there are some guys that uh they

think it's kind of cool that I was a

monk. Taylor, there's a guy named Taylor

at work, too, who's a

he watches these videos, too. Hey

Taylor, how's it going?

So, uh

I guess I answered that one.

So, let's move on to Doma Farmer's next

question.

Can someone spiritually grow under

extreme stress or fear of death? Years

ago I was a young soldier and whilst

deployed in the Middle East, I had

endless amounts of rockets and mortars

landing in a sporadic and unknown

lottery-style manner and in the end

stopped panicking about them because I

couldn't do anything or control the

outcome. Same went for vehicle patrols.
You would never know when your vehicle
was about to drive over a pressure plate
IED and it was death again. Thankfully,
I haven't suffered any psychological
damage or derangement that happens
sometimes in military people. However,
over the years I've noted that my fear
of death is substantially less than my
family members and friends.
So, would this subs-
so would this mental state be attributed
to a condition of an enduring threats to
my life or could this be something else?
Uh I.E. a minor spiritual breakthrough
at the time. What are your thoughts on

this or similar stories may have heard.

Well, clearly, um

coming close to death,

um

I think it may cause more spiritual

awakening in the West than sitting in

meditation.

Um there are some relatively famous

cases.

Um what's his name?

Oh, he was a scientist, an atheist

atheistic scientist, John

Ren Lewis. I think I said John Ren

Lewis.

And he was in Thailand with his wife,

and uh he was riding a bus through

Thailand, and somebody offered him some

candy, and the candy was poisoned cuz
they were going to rob them after they
lost consciousness.
And uh the wife didn't eat her candy.
The John Ren Lewis ate his, and then
when the the thief saw that one of them
hadn't eaten the candy, he panicked and
got off the bus before anything uh
anything bad happened.
But anyway, John Ren Lewis, he had a
near-death experience. I mean, he was he
was almost dead, or maybe he was dead
for a short time.
And um
he had a a near-death experience, which
it caused like an awakening experience

in him.

And uh once you have a near-death

experience like that, some people, you

know, it can be through motorcycle crash

or almost drowning or whatever, they

tend to lose their fear of death.

And I'm also reminded of a a good movie

that actually um I heard about it

because cuz John Ren Lewis recommended

it in some article that he wrote.

It's called Fearless.

About this guy

who he survives a plane crash.

He's one of the few survivors, and he's

like without a scratch. You know, people

around him are all dead, but before the

plane crashes,

um he just he assumes he's going to die.
So, he just makes his peace, you know,
it's like he just sort of offers himself
up to God or the universe or something,
you know, he just
prepares
or something, you know, the prep- the
preparedness is just forced upon him,
maybe.
And then uh
he survives, but he still has this
fearlessness, this this sort of calm
equanimity. And what goes with it is uh
just honesty that is just so much that
the people around him just can't stand
it. Like, for example, his one of his

best friends was on the plane, too, and
he died. And so now the wife has hired a
lawyer and they're suing the the
airlines
um you know, to get, you know, millions
of dollars or whatever because of the
the trauma and so forth. And so the
lawyer is trying to coach this guy to
you know, talk about how terrified he
was, you know, because then you get more
money,
you know, due to the on the mental
stress and so forth. And uh I mean, he
doesn't want to say because he wasn't
terrified, you know, he's just he just
made his peace with it and he was ready
to die.

Um

and then gradually just the the

corruption of the human race around him

starts to dragging him back down again.

But the movie's called Fearless. You may

be interested in seeing it. I wouldn't

mind seeing it again myself.

Um

so yeah, I think a lot of men

in earlier ages, not so long ago even,

um you know, they had their baptism by

fire and you know, that was sort of like

their their right of passage into

genuine manhood.

Um

so yeah, it does happen.

Just uh facing death

and just kind of making your peace with

it

is um

yeah, I mean, it's it's a powerful

experience and uh at the end it it could

be attributed to a condition of enduring

threats or

also at the same time it can be

something else like a a minor spiritual

breakthrough.

And for some people it can be a major

spiritual breakthrough.

So, I hope I answered that question more

or less.

And so, I will move on to the next

question, which is from Jeremy.

And in the previous Q&A, I think it was,

I held up a book written by a Bhikkhu

Ñāṇananda.

And Jeremy here asked, "What do What do

you think of Ñāṇananda and his works?"

And to tell you the truth, the only the

only thing I've written The only thing

that I've read by Ñāṇananda was that one

book, which is Concept and Reality, I

think.

Gosh, I'll have to get up and look again

just a second.

See here.

Yeah.

Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist

Thought, which is an excellent book.

And so, I mean, all I know about Ñāṇananda, I don't know what ethnicity was. Maybe he was Sinhalese.

Um because he lived in in Sri Lanka.

And this is the only book that I've read by him. So, I mean, my opinion of his writing and of him would be based entirely on this one book. And it is an important book. It's well worth reading by any um intelligent Theravāda Buddhist or student of Theravāda Buddhism because it is groundbreaking scholarship of a good sort. You know, the entire book is mainly about the meaning of one word, which is papañca, which was misinterpreted by the commentarial tradition for centuries and

centuries. And um he puts forth such a
strong case
in this book that uh pretty much
everybody is now inclined to uh accept
his interpretation of what the word
means.
So, I mean, he's important. And he's a
relatively good writer. He's obviously
intelligent and learned it.
But uh other than that I really can't
say cuz this is the only book by him
I've ever read.
And I don't I'm unfamiliar with his
biography.
So, I'll just have to move on to the
next question.

And this is from Inmanus.

And Inmanus says, "Have you ever given Dharma talks to young children? If yes, how do you prepare your talk for a young audience? How do they tend to receive the talk?"

Well, I mean the youngest kids I've given Dharma talks to

um like a real Dharma talk would be maybe middle school, you know, maybe 13 years old, 12 or 13.

Um in Burma I've given the precepts to you know, like really small kids.

But uh for them it's it's kind of a ritual. It's not really you're not conveying information so much as you're just participating in this social ritual

that they've learned from their parents

and so forth.

Um

So, how do you prepare your talk for

young audience? Well, if you're going to

be teaching Dharma to kids,

um you're best uh

staying with something relatively easily

imagined, you know, like telling

stories, telling stories from the

Dhammapada commentary for example.

Um kids can follow along with that.

Um

The I mean you want to stay away from

the really abstract stuff. Abstract

philosophy doesn't work very well with

with small children or even really with

most high school kids.

So, aside from uh

keeping your your talks um you know, at

the level of

you know, illustrative stories

or talking about something concrete.

Like I gave one Dharma talk to kids just

talking about the main mudras in Buddha

statues. Where you're talking about how,

you know, that each of the four main

mudras is is representative of a

different stage in the Buddha's life.

You know, just giving a talk about the

Buddha's life, you know, that's that's

pretty standard.

Um

with regard to meditation, I mean
in the west, it's like making kids sit
still is a kind of punishment.
So, if you're going to give any kind of
meditation
instructions to kids, it'll probably be
some guided meditation where they're
imagining, you know, getting bigger and
bigger and including, you know, the
whole room inside of them and the whole
house and the whole, you know, until
they're, you know, their heads up in the
sky and they contain all all the people
inside their bodies. That kind of a
thing, I mean
um

if you could get some dhamma into that,

that might help.

Um but other than that, I think I mean,

if you're if the young children are your

own

then just uh setting a good example

and instilling um

what is it? Religiosity. That's that's

like one thing that children pick up

from their parents

is religiosity.

And so, I mean, not in a bad sense, but

um you know, if you sincerely take

something seriously, your kids will try

to imitate you um if, you know, they

don't pick up on any kind of uh fakery.

You know, if you're saying if you're

telling them to do something like, you know, telling them not to tell lies and then they they see you telling lies all the time, then obviously, they're not going to take you very seriously.

But um

if you are just setting a good example then uh kids that spend a lot of time with you will pick up on that.

Um

And how do they tend to receive the talk? Well, as you might expect, a lot of kids they'll just be uh

you know, they'll they'll they'll their attention will be distracted and they'll be

just kind of looking around, kicking

their legs, or, you know, whatever.

Um

it's

I've always had the idea it's best to

teach people that want to be taught.

And if kids are sent to a monk to learn

something, and they're just sitting

there because their parents want them to

be sitting there, they're not going to

learn anything. They're going to What

they learn will be just minimal.

And that happens with adults, too. I

mean, if someone is just assigned to

come and learn something from you, you

know, it's like the abbot sends some

young monk to come learn monastic

discipline from me, which happened a few
times. And um
you know, if they're sincerely
interested, they really want to learn,
then they'll learn something. But if
they're just there because they're
they're told to be there and they don't
really care, then
it's uh it's not going to work very
well. And it's the same way with kids. I
mean,
if if they're interested in it, then
chances are they're going to learn. But
um
if you're just kind of
trying to get them to be interested,

then uh it it may or may not work.
So, I think I'll move on to the next
question,
also by Inmanas.
Have you ever had young children come
show great interest to you regarding
Buddha Dharma? And the answer to that is
no, although it's largely because I was
a recluse
for most of my time. Even when I was
living in a monastery with people coming
and going, I generally wasn't hanging
out with the little kids.
Um you know, there'd be people coming to
see me, would bring their little kids
with them, and I'd see them once, and,
you know, they'd be maybe paying

attention, or maybe running around,

squealing.

And um

and then the parents would make their

bows and go away, and the little kids

would go with them.

Um there is an old YouTube video of me

giving five precepts to a big group of

Burmese village kids,

and they were very well-behaved while I

taught them.

Uh

whether they actually learn anything or

not, I don't know.

So,

yeah, some kids are really keen on

offering offering food. That's one thing

little kids can enjoy is, you know,

putting food into a monk's bowl.

Some kids really really get into that.

So, I'll just move on to the next part

of this uh multi-staged

questionnaire from Inmanas.

Oh, okay. This is it This is on a

different tack here. It is said that the

youngest recorded arahant was seven.

What are your thoughts on this?

Well, uh it's possible.

Um some of those 7-year-old arahants, um

seven is generally considered to be the

minimum age for um

a person to be ordained as a novice.

And um some of those novices it it says

in the in the text that as soon as the razor touched their head to to shave their head so that they could be ordained, boom, they became arahants. It was like they were

it's like they were just ripe. You know, or like a a yellow leaf

that on the tree that you just touch it with your finger and it breaks loose and falls down and some

you know, all it took was just the touch of the razor on their head and that was all it took, just click,

and they became enlightened. And whether anyone actually became enlightened like that, I really can't say because I

wasn't there.

So, um

I'll just move on to the next question

cuz there's uh

there's a little more on the same topic

here.

What is the youngest ever that one could

be ordained? And I assume by ordained he

means full ordination as a bhikkhu.

And that is um

I mean, at first there was no age limit.

According to the

vinaya or the the books of monastic

discipline,

there was no age limit. So, the Buddha's

son Rahula was ordained as a kid.

But then later

the rule was changed so that you have to be 20 years old from conception. Because according to Theravada Buddhism, life begins at conception.

And so

Um yeah, so it'd be like 19 years and 3 months.

Unless you were born prematurely or something, would be the youngest that you could be ordained. Although before that rule was in place, according to the texts, kids were ordained as monks, but they were they didn't have the self-discipline and the maturity really to be good monks, and so the rule got changed.

And so the next question from Inmanus on

the same theme is what is the youngest

one can be a novice?

So

there is a rule

that

uh a person cannot be ordained as a

novice unless he is 15 years old from

conception.

And then there's like a an addition an

addendum to this rule saying that if the

kid is old enough to scare crows, then

he can be ordained. And to scare crows,

it means like I assume it would be the

job of kids

um like to guard the fields during

harvest time to keep flocks of crows

from just coming in and and ravaging the
the rice fields or something.
So uh the kids would have to be on guard
with rocks or something to scare the
crows away. And um
traditionally that is considered to be
about seven.
So I'm pretty sure that the according to
Theravada tradition,
the minimum age for ordination as a
novice tends to be seven. Although I've
seen some very I mean practically
toddler novices in my day.
But um
who knows, maybe they could scare crows.
I really can't say. But if you're old

enough to scare crows,

which means, you know, like, you know,

keeping them away from uh from the crops

or whatever,

then uh then you're old enough to be

ordained as a novice.

So, the next part of this question or

the next question I should say but from

Inman's, does the mind need to be at a

certain degree of maturity and

development to properly apprehend the

Buddha-Dharma?

Well, I mean, the more maturity and

development your mind has, the more

properly and completely you will

apprehend the Buddha-Dharma and the

highest levels of the Buddha-Dharma, you

know, like like enlightenment. I mean, you have to be completely mature and developed.

Um,

the more crude your mind is, the more crudely you'll understand it. I mean, there's all different levels like like in Shakespeare, there's all different levels, you know, Merchant of Venice, there's like, you know, crude body jokes and also some rather deep philosophy involved. You know, there's something for everybody and in Buddhism, it's like whatever wherever your mind the level of your maturity and development, I mean, that's you know,

there's a place for you that you can understand that and work with that and and develop more.

So, like with little kids, it's like Jataka stories and stories from the Dhammapada commentary and just learning the basics of five precepts and so forth and

you know, maybe the the the biography of the Buddha, you know, the the standard legend of Prince Siddhartha and all that.

And then gradually, you know, you you get more and more developed and the more maturity and development you have, you know, the the higher level of apprehension of Dharma you have until

finally you reach perfect apprehension

when you become enlightened.

And so, Inman's is the last question

here.

What is the best way to develop a young

one who shows interest?

Is there a recommended graduated

training?

Um,

maybe.

The thing is, I mean, it's I'm pretty

sure there's no instructions

in the poly texts on the proper way of

training children in Buddhism.

Um

I'd say that I'd go back to what I was

saying earlier. Like if they show an

interest, then uh

um

telling them stuff that's easily

understandable by children, you know,

like

like illustrative stories

on basics of

basics of the five precepts and, you

know, just telling them about karma.

I mean, they're they're really

interested in ghost story. Kids tend to

be interested in like ghost stories,

past life regressions, that kind of

thing. They can be just fascinating. I'd

say the most interested kids have been

when I've been talking is just

talking about uh like my father I was
hypnotist and he had past life
regressions in himself. He also
uh hypnotized other people into having
past life regressions and stories like
that, they can be really interested in,
you know, they'll be wide-eyed, just
wrapped,
spellbound.
Um but uh
yeah, it's it's hard to say. I think it
would differ from kid to kid, to tell
you the truth. Some kids will be more
interested in one aspect of dhamma and
others would be more interested in
others, you know, some might be more

interested in

you know, doing good deeds and just the

practical aspect. Others might be more

interested in karma and rebirth or

or just, you know,

that sort of thing or just understanding

Buddhism just through,

you know, stories of the Buddha and so

forth. It's hard to say.

I'm really not an authority on teaching

children

because as I say, I tend to do avoid

children for many years. I mean, when

you're a hermit living in a forest, you

generally don't have much to do with

little kids unless they come with their

parents and the parents are just bowing

and maybe taking precepts, and then they

leave again.

So, the next question is from Fred, and

Fred asked this question somewhere.

And uh it wasn't in the usual channels.

It wasn't under the the recent Q&A.

Wasn't on the Discord server. But it was

a question about why there is a third

element

necessary for the conception of a human

being. And the third element is uh In

the texts, it's called the Gandhabba.

And um

that is referring to the spirit of the

being who is to be um

like reborn into into the mother. Like

you have to have the the man and the

woman come together.

And

you know, the the sperm and the egg, but

there also has to be, you know, a being

who is going to take rebirth

that that enters at the moment of

conception. So, the three have to come

together, the egg, the sperm, and this

this stream of karma.

You know, the spirit of the person to be

reborn.

And uh Fred was uh

if I remember correctly, he was kind of

implying that uh just the uh the

genetics of the the mother and the

father would kind of create a new person

or something like that. Or maybe the

spirit just kind of splits off from the

mother and father, but uh it really

doesn't work that way. I mean, you can

have

um

you know, uh

a very different spirit from or a very

different being

um very different from both parents.

Maybe not genetically, but with regard

to certain personality traits.

Um

So, yeah. I mean, you have they you have

to have

um

some uh

some spirit, you know, some sort of

conscious spirit

um who enters into the uh the embryo,

the zygote, or whatever.

Which is kind of politically incorrect

because it does indicate from point of

view of Theravada that a human life does

begin at conception. And that

if there is no spirit, a human spirit

entering

the fertilized egg, then it just doesn't

grow.

I've considered that some stillborn

children might be a case of,

you know, there was just nobody um

occupying the body and it just

uh it just died.

So, the next question is from Erin.

And Erin says,

"Living in the Bible Belt, I see how much church serves as a deeply rooted support system and extension of family and community for Christians. The local churches have large family-oriented campuses set up to provide family-focused support, child care, cultural bonds, activities, and other needed family services. Families attend the same church for many generations, eat out every Sunday together after church, etc. Hearing about how most Asian monasteries in the US do provide a

similar service in the American Asian communities, do you think it will be possible for American Buddhism to ever provide this for US Buddhists? It seems most American Buddhists that comment on your Q&As face the choice of attending Asian monasteries and feeling a tad left out culturally, or a few fancy American places that are basically teaching political wokeness, charging high fees for faux Dharma spa retreats, and teaching the exact opposite of what the Buddha actually taught, like an extension of the Unitarian Church."

It seems to me that in order for Buddhism to grow and prosper in the US, it will need to fill the same gaps that

the Christian churches fill in regards
to extended family and culture, could
Buddhism be doomed to fail in the West
if it never truly serves the needs of
the culture and communities? Is any
place in the US actually providing this
kind of support for US Buddhists?
Um
Okay.
Well, Erin here makes a good point
in that um there are a lot of
um non-lefty Buddhists especially
who want to bring their kids to uh
to a Dharma hall or Dharma center and
just have a place for them to learn
elementary Dharma maybe or just have

sort of a dharmic environment for them

to hang out while the parents are

sitting in meditation.

Um

there have been children's retreats even

at the like the the really progressive

kind of places.

Um

Let's see.

Is any place in the US actually

providing this kind of support for US

Buddhists?

Um I assume so, but I really don't know

what they would be. I've I've heard of a

place in Australia

where

um it really was following what I

considered to be a good plan for a Buddhist monastery, which meant it was divided into three sections. You had like the monk section, which was pretty much off limits to lay people most of the time. You know, the monks would just be in retreat in this forest area in cabins. Then you'd have like the retreat center for lay people, the meditation hall and you know, associated buildings, maybe the office and everything there. And then you'd had sort of like a village for resident lay people. And the monks would go for alms through the the lay village or you know, maybe also through the meditation area if there was

uh you know, a retreat going on there

and people there.

And um you know, there'd be kids there.

You've got families living in the

village.

Um that sort of thing, but it it's

pretty radical. It's it's already kind

of deviating from uh

like normality for Western people.

So, I think what would happen is you'd

have to have

um like increased popularity or interest

in Buddhism

by people with kids, and then somebody

would take the initiative to like

organize a daycare,

um you know, somebody volunteering to

watch the kids while the parents are
meditating or listening to some long
philosophical
um you know, discourse or something.
And I think it would have to grow
organically like that, unless you've got
some Buddhist uh
you know, wealthy eccentric guy who just
wants to set up
something like that. I think another
idea is uh you know, just like a
Buddhist group setting up like a soup
kitchen or or something like that. Like
a lot of the Christian missionaries
would start off with, you know, offering
free medical care and free just stuff.

You know, just offering a service that

people would be um

like I they'd they'd they'd be accepting

of, and then trying to to get the

Buddhism or the the Christianity, I

guess, in.

Uh something like that, you know, it's

possible.

But uh I think right now it's just that

Buddhism

is is not really mainstream in the West.

It's kind of a fringe movement, you so

you're not going to have very many

people

enough to really form a nucleus of a

community to begin with.

That's that's that's like the main

problem, I think, is uh

what few Buddhists there are in the

West, relatively few, are you know,

Asian immigrants, and to some degree

their their offspring, or else it's uh

you know, like the progressive

ultra-leftist,

you know, kind of quasi Buddhists who

more interested in, you know, white

guilt and global warming and so forth,

than they are in what the historical

Buddha actually taught in many cases.

So,

yeah, it's it's kind of a difficult

situation, and uh

I think at present, the most realistic

approach to Buddhism is it's a personal

thing.

Um you know, you can raise your kids as

Buddhists and and so forth, but uh

having

like the community church,

you'd have to have more Buddhists living

in the same place, and not only more

Buddhists, but more Buddhists who see

more or less eye to eye with regard to

how to interpret and practice Buddhism.

So, that's that's really the main issue

is just the

you don't have enough of a density to

get a community going in a one

geographical location, so that

something like conservative Western

Buddhism,

or um

like right-wing, non-leftist

more or less orthodox

Buddhism, Western Buddhism, um is mostly

online, or just a personal thing like

like loners,

because there just aren't enough of them

um living in groups. You know, you'd

have to have, you know, maybe 12 or or

20 living in the just within easy

driving distance, in order to even get

the daycare center going.

Uh something like that.

So, yeah, it is just getting started is

the most difficult part. I mean, this uh

um Buddhism is still in a very

vulnerable stage, and it's uh been led

astray to a very great degree,

especially

uh over the past several years,

with um

you know, it's just people all to mutate

it into a kind of uh

Buddhism-flavored cultural Marxism.

So, yeah, we'll just have to see how it

goes. I mean, I'm sorry I don't have any

really good solutions

to uh how to how to make more

Buddhists living in the same general

area. Maybe we need a really charismatic

um Theravada Buddhist teacher who can uh

just draw people to him, you know, set

up a really nice community and you know,
you have like cabins and stuff where
people can live and that kind of a
thing.
But, that would take
um money and effort and uh
those tend to be somewhat in short
supply in uh
in uh what we're talking about here.
So, I guess I'll just move on to the
next question, which is from Nardi.
And Nardi says,
"I read I read time to time the Tao Te
Ching, but I can't understand at what
point it can be used in real life. I see
the book as a mystical one, but you

can't follow the teachings like if you

don't fight, they can't attack you

because they will.

What do you think?"

Okay, the Tao Te Ching really is

um

mystical. I mean, it it has mystical

elements to it, but it's not purely

mystical. It's not only mystical. Uh a

lot of it is political advice,

apparently to rulers. You know, it's

talking about the king does this and the

king does that.

And um

so, it may have been composed at least

in part as sort of a guide to

enlightened ruling for Chinese kings.

Um but there are there are things in

there that uh

that are I mean, in addition to just

giving you some some wisdom, like

background wisdom for dealing with

samsara in general. Um

like for example, the advice in the Tao

Te Ching isn't so much as if If fight,

they can't attack you. It's just It's

more a matter of if you're invisible, if

you're totally anonymous, if you don't

stand out,

then uh you know, people you won't be

drawing trouble.

Something like that. I mean, that's

that's relatively

Yeah, you can practice that, you know.
Don't don't make a uh spectacle of
yourself. Don't draw attention to
yourself, and just stay anonymous, stay
under the radar.
That's That is one recurrent teaching in
the Tao Te Ching is essentially just uh
be anonymous, and don't be anyone that
stands out as anyone special, and you
won't be drawing trouble upon yourself
so much.
But uh yeah, the Tao Te Ching, it is
It's nice to read. I've read it several
times in uh various translations.
But for me, it's more just a matter of
absorbing, you know, words of wisdom,
and just kind of letting them soak in,

and uh maybe they'll fill a little gap here and there in my in my heart or mind, or whatever.

Um

because I'm really not a king.

And I actually read um It was an old translation of the Tao Te Ching by this He He was like a philologist and a scholar. He really was not into Taoism per se.

And he was saying that the whole Tao Te Ching was just a manual for people to survive. I think it was the Warring States period of China, when which is when it was supposedly composed, or the the summer and autumn period, or

something like that, where uh China
wasn't a unified nation. It was all
these warring
states, you know, it was like generals
and warlords just invading each other
back and forth. And um
then uh the the the art of not being
attacked um could really stand could
really help be helpful. Maybe if
civilization starts to break down in the
West, then that sort of teaching of the
doubt teaching may be more valuable.
But even now, I mean, it's like
our best uh
our best defense against the government
is just really you know, there are so
many of us and we're such small fish

that they generally don't bother.
Um if you start getting famous or something, then they'll start paying more attention to you, but uh you can get away with a lot just from being unimportant.
And uh then there is some of that in the doubt teaching.
So, I'll just move on to the next question, which is from Nusquam.
I think I pronounced that correctly if there is a correct pronunciation.
"Hello," Nusquam says. "Any thoughts on what actually are four stages of enlightenment? I always thought that if in the time of Buddha, he gave one

sermon and 500 or 3,000 people became arahants instantly, then it doesn't sound plausible to me. Maybe stream entry is just becoming Buddhist or a monk, one returner attaining jhana or something." Yeah, I've had very similar thoughts about the four stages of enlightenment. Um I'm skeptical that it was goes all the way that idea goes all the way back to the Buddha himself.

Um

and it talks about

time of the Buddha, he gave one sermon and 500 or 3,000 people became arahants instantly. I mean, some there are texts of like Buddhas in past ages who

literally converted like billions or
trillions of people with one sermon.
Um so, yeah, I mean, the Indians
uh especially the ancient Indians, they
just uh they really loved huge and
unrealistic numbers for things.
So, let's see, the four stages of
enlightenment.
Yeah, I think you can
it is possible to detect traces of
evolution of the theory. For example, in
the the first suttas of a
a text called the Itivuttaka, which is
in the Khuddaka Nikāya,
um the term anāgāmi or non-returner
apparently is used in the sense of an

arahant.

And it does make sense that arahant is

someone who doesn't return to saṃsāra.

An arahant is done.

And um

it may be that

systematizers decided to just divide up

anāgāmis from arahants. Like sort of the

way they divided up uh first jhāna into

two. You know, they just

the the Indians were really into just

analysis and just systematizing

everything. And so you got two words

that mean the same thing. Somebody will

come along and just give two different

meanings to them.

Something like that.

Um sakadāgāmi, it really isn't mentioned in in the earliest texts. And I do think sotāpanna could be what Nyanasobhano is talking about where

uh sotāpanna or a stream-enterer is just someone who, like in Christian terms, would be born again.

Like they become, you know, they're converted to Buddhism. They're they're like a a fresh devout follower. They've entered the stream. They've started living uh a spiritual life.

So, yeah, I also am skeptical of uh the uh

the Buddha actually teaching the four stages of enlightenment. Although

there's plenty of uh

representation of it in the suttas.

Nevertheless, like there is um

there's an obscure rule of discipline in

the Pātimokkha. It's uh pāti

pāṭidesanīya rule. There's only four

pāṭidesanīya rules.

And one of them is to uh

um

receive alms

to the point of causing hardship for a

family of sotapannas.

And

it makes more sense to interpret a

sotapanna as just like a new a new

Buddhist a new convert who's really rich

in faith to the point that they're

wanting to donate to the point of in

making hardship for themselves.

And there are people like that. They'll

just give you the shirt off their back.

They're so eager to make offerings.

Um

So, the four stages I suppose I should

review four first first stage of

Buddhist sainthood you know, and and a

Buddhist saint is someone who has at

least had a glimpse of nibbana

is the sotapanna. And it means stream

enterer

or stream attainer. And I do think that

originally it could have meant or

probably meant someone who just started

following

um dhamma.

You know, like a new convert to Buddhism

or at least somebody who had had some

kind of awakening and

really started dedicating themselves to

living a dharmic life. Then next comes

the sakadagami or

once-returner.

And you know, they they can

they're only going to come back

uh onto this worldly like the I think

it's the sensuous realm one more

lifetime or something like that. I'm

really have not been interested in

in even like memorizing the meanings of

that.

Cuz there's lists of things that you know, sotapannas can't be like a sotapanna can't tell a lie if according to the the established system.

But um

in again in the oldest texts um there really is no mention of sakadagamis. And then as I mentioned um

in some really old texts like the first texts of the the ediwodaka um an anagami or non-returner who is like the the And the third stage or the second highest stage of Buddhist sainthood is uh

um an anagami is just interpreted uh apparently to mean the same as an arahant. And then finally, the fourth

stage is an arahant. And then it's
further complicated by having uh path
and fruit for each one. So, each one has
two levels.
And um according to Abhidharma, the the
path um stage lasts just like, you know,
just a a tiny fraction of a cent uh
second.
Which I mean is is kind of pointless
even to divide it out, but um
there is uh
and there is evidence in the in the
suttas that it really was supposed to
last a lot longer than that, but um
yeah, I am
I'm uh of the the school of thought that
um

you know, just because something is in

the text does not make it necessarily

reliable, and I would guess that uh

you know,

way less than half

of the Pali Tipitaka

could

uh reliably

represent what the historical Gotama

Buddha actually taught.

Which um is unpleasant,

but uh even the Roman Catholic Church

back in the '70s was saying that uh

probably no more than 20% of the words

of Jesus in the New Testament are likely

to be authentic.

And uh the words of Jesus were written

down,

you know, generally within a century of

the life of Jesus. And in India, where

they've got uh less they had less

concept of like objective history than

the Greeks and the Jews had, and uh it

wasn't written down for 500 years. So, I

would guess that uh there's even uh

more

um unreliability

with regard to uh quotes of the founder

in the in the Pali texts.

So,

I think I'll just move on to the next

question.

And this is from Ethel Seed. I don't

know how to pronounce this.

Ethel Seeg, Ethel Seeg, something like

that.

And uh Ethel Seeg

says,

"A noticeable trend I've seen on

dissident right or spiritual

online mediums like Twitter and Telegram

is a proposed fusion or melding of

Buddhism with paganism, specifically

Norse or northern paganism.

People like Hammer and Vajra, Elders of

the Black Sun, and even Survive the Jive

have spoken of this. Modern pagans

already look towards Sanatana Dharma or

Hinduism to inform European paganism

because of the paucity of original

sources, but it seems that most are now

specifically looking at Buddhism as an

avenue or partner to explore paganism.

Some view this through a Vajra

Vajrayana lens. I assume he means

Vajrayana. Although maybe there is

Vajrayana. I'm not sure.

Some view this through a Vajrayana or

Vajrayana lens, seeing wrathful deities

like uh Yamantaka as being the same as

Rudra or Odin, while others see

Theravada as personal prac-

practive

as personal practice that is not at odds

with and can inform their pagan

practice.

Buddhism has always adapted to the indigenous religion of the region it's entered, Shinto in Japan, Bon in Tibet. So, could the way for traditional non-leftist Buddhism to take off in the West be for it to accommodate the indigenous religion of Europe, paganism? It's not unprecedented, Greco-Buddhism obviously, and both Buddhism and northern paganism are Indo-European and would seemingly be a better fit than say Bon and Buddhism. Obviously, there are potential problems, the ideas of gods, and it does not further.

But the notion of a Buddhism-pagan fusion seems to definitely be a thing

and being talked about. So, do you see

any future in such a venture?

Well,

I think the problem with paganism that

I've mentioned before is that

the living traditions died out. I mean,

there are just vestiges of it.

And so, what you have with pagans

nowadays

is they're really trying to create a

replica. You know, it's sort of like the

the replica of the Parthenon in like

Nashville, Tennessee.

You know, just a scale model, like a as

perfect of a replica as they can manage.

And uh with regard to the Parthenon,

they had the old Parthenon to look at.

But with regard to,

you know, northern European paganism,

yeah, all you've got is vestiges, and

then people are trying to fill in the

blanks and create this

um you know, they're they're trying to

recreate something that has become

extinct.

So, I mean, it seems to me like why not

just go with the Buddhism? I mean,

Buddhism is still a living tradition.

You know, it's one of the few, arguably,

Indo-European traditions left in the

world.

Um there are a few others, especially uh

something I mean, you come even closer

to a a truly

uh Indo-European spiritual tradition

with uh you know, like

Vedism.

You know, like like primitive primitive

Hinduism,

that would come that would come fairly

close to what the uh ancient Greeks and

Romans were practicing.

Uh with fire sacrifices to the gods and

so forth.

But uh with regard to Buddhism,

um I mean, it's it's debatable just how

Indo-European Buddhism is. I mean, the

founder was an Indo-European, probably.

Although Buddhism has roots that go back

um into like the Indus Valley

civilization.

You know, you had um when when the the Vedics the Vedic speaking the Vedic Sanskrit speaking Aryans invaded Northwestern Burma or uh Northwestern Burma Northwestern India. There was already a civilization there. And the civilization apparently had uh sort of a a mechanistic atheistic largely pessimistic religion uh on which Buddhism to some degree, Jainism, and the Samkhya that I mentioned before, uh including some other traditions that no longer exist, you know, they have roots going back into that. They were strongly affected

by the Vedic Brahmanism.

But um

they weren't entirely just offshoots of

Vedic Brahmanism. They weren't

purely Indo-European.

But I mean, it's hard to say any

religion that's purely Indo-European.

Like the Greeks got some of their

deities from the the pre-existing uh

like the Minoans or the the Pelasgians.

Like I read that Athena

was probably uh like a Minoan goddess.

And uh Dionysius also, I think, was

um

Well, maybe he was Indo-European.

But some of them weren't.

So,

yeah, and yeah, that is the main problem
for me is that um paganism that they're
trying to incorporate into Buddhism
is uh I mean they're trying to revive
paganism to some extent by injecting
some living tradition of a different
system into it. But you might as well
just go with the the uh original
Buddhism or just start up a new system
if you're able.
Um
also I think personally
I think that classical paganism
um you know like um neo-Platonism for
example would be more compatible with
with Dharma

than uh what little I know of northern

northern European Germanic kind of

ancient paganism.

But um

yeah I don't know it's like you're

trying to mix kind of a fringe thing

which is Buddhism with an even more

fringe thing which is like northern

European paganism.

And um

I don't know you you'll wind up with

sort of falling between two stools I

think because uh

um you're kind of bastardizing the thing

it seems to me. I mean it could work I'm

not I'm not saying that nobody should

try it.

And I mean it has been done before like uh like the Indo-Greeks when the Greeks invaded uh northwestern India they many of them converted to Buddhism and there are coins of especially King Menandros known to the terrible Indians as Milinda who had you know the Buddha on one side and and Athena on the on the obverse of the same coin.

And so they were they apparently uh joined their Greek polytheism with with Buddhism and and Buddhism obviously does have room for polytheism. There are plenty of of gods in Buddhism although they're not immortal gods they're just uh at a higher level than

we are. You know they live longer than

we are they're more powerful than we

are.

So, I mean

there's obviously room for some kind of

polytheism in Buddhism.

Um if you want to add new gods like the

Greeks did, the Greeks in in India and

Bactria, then uh

yeah, maybe it'll work, although uh

in the West, we we seem to have outgrown

that to some degree or just moved on to

something else.

I think just a more philosophical or a

non-theistic Buddhism might actually

uh

have more potential for popularity

uh in the West than an attempt to revive like Germanic paganism with Buddhist elements.

But uh

yeah, I'm I'm just guessing here.

So, I think I'll just move on to the next question. And that's from BPat427.

And BPat427 says,

"Do you think Qualia or Qualia Research Institute's goal of mathematically describing subjective experience and map out all possible conscious experiences is based on a misunderstanding that ultimate reality can be understood intellectually?"

Well, I'm unfamiliar with Qualia or

Qualia Research Institute.

Um but I mean, if they think that

they're dealing with reality, then

obviously they're they're

misunderstanding that ult- that

that uh they're just misunderstanding

ultimate reality.

Because ultimate reality really cannot

be understood intellectually as BPat427

says.

And uh their goal of mathematically

describing subjective experience and

mapping out

all possible conscious experiences, I

think that is just grossly

um oversimplifying

the human mind. It's sort of like like

medicine nowadays is I think medicine is
still in a relatively primitive state.
Like um before I went to Burma, it was
just
uncontroversial that eggs were full of
cholesterol and bad for your heart, and
that they'd done research showing that
you could
lengthen your expected lifespan by 3
years just by not eating eggs.
And then I come back and the eggs are
eggs are fine. There's nothing wrong
with eggs anymore. It's like the toast
that you have with the eggs is more more
toxic than the eggs themselves.
And um they're actually

doctors on YouTube

and probably writing act like scientific journals or journal articles, you know, talking about how like glucose is bad for you even though when I was in college, you know, taking biochemistry, it's like life is fueled by glucose. You know, you got the the TCA cycle, you know, metabolism, like aerobic respiration is based on the breaking down of a glucose molecule in in like incremental stages with a little bit of energy coming off every now and then. And you you trap the energy in ATP. And and then that that gets used throughout the cell for accomplishing work or or growth or whatever.

And now they're they're saying even

glucose is

is not good for you. And um

So, it's it's so complicated. It's sort

of like or or like environmental

science. It's the system is so

complicated

that you you I mean, you can make models

and maybe it's a little more accurate

than other models, but uh it's just it's

just hopeless that you're going to be

able to understand like this almost

infinite complexity. Because like in

mathematics, you can't even you can't

even work out like a three-body problem.

I mean, there's ways of approximating

it, but you can't like you've got three
particles interacting with each other.
And you cannot calculate exactly what
the effect is going to be because
math only works with two at a time. And
the three forces interacting are all
simultaneous. And you can only deal with
two at a time.
So,
I think it's just uh
any attempt at the the puny human
intellect
to just, you know, nail down, figure
out, you know, every possible conscious
experience systematically.
Um yeah, I think that's just a fool's
undertaking.

I mean, even if you do give like a number to every possible conscious experience, like so what?
You know, it's like you can give a number to every possible flavor, but you just reel off the number 62589, and nobody has ever tasted 62589. I mean, they wouldn't know what it tastes like.
And it's the same with these mental states. I mean, who knows what the mental state will be? You can come up with a number for it or whatever, but that's really just a number, just like this label
that you're just sticking onto something

that you still don't understand.

So, I think I'll just move on to the

next question.

And the next question is from Chaplin.

And this one is refreshingly easy.

Chaplin says, "How tall are you and do

you work out?"

And then I'll have a drink.

Well, how tall I am,

according to my new driver's license,

I'm 6'2".

Although,

I think it might be more accurate to say

I'm 6'2 and 1/2 or possibly even 6'2 and

3/4.

And do I work out? Um

when I was a monk and living in

California, I I had

I moved into this room that had a

dumbbell there, like a 20 22-lb

dumbbell. And so, I would do a little

bit of

things like curls and stuff with that,

shoulder presses and stuff, but

um

since I started working at the sheet

metal shop, there's I'm working out all

day, you know, just carrying around

heavy loads and I mean, even if you're

using a a machine I I I run a machine

called a five-view machine, and you got

to take these big coils of metal and you

put a spindle into it, and then you you

turn this crank to tighten it up, and
just turning that crank is good
exercise.
So, yeah, I'm I'm working out by by
working. I get paid to work out.
And I'm in relatively good shape, I
suppose, for a guy my age.
So, I'll just move on to the next
question.
Also by Chaplin.
After fasting for 23 hours a day or
longer for 30 years as a monk, have you
noticed a change in your body or mind
since going back to an American diet?
How do you compare the traditional Asian
foods to your new American diet?
Well, it is true that I I ate one meal a

day for 30 years with very few

exceptions, maybe sitting on an airplane

where they just give you this little

meal.

Um I might eat more than one.

But um

have I noticed a change in my body or

mind? Well, the main change, most

noticeable change in my body, I think,

is uh I gained about

20 at least 20 lbs within a matter of

months after becoming a layperson again.

So, I'm thicker.

Pretty much my whole body is thicker,

except maybe my legs. I still got skinny

legs.

Um

change in my

body or mind. My mind, I don't know.

It's like sometimes if you eat a lot of

food, you just get sleepy. And that was

that I was that way in Burma, also.

That's why I started drinking coffee

after lunch in Burma just so I wouldn't

go into a doze like the lion after it

stuffs itself on gazelle meat.

Um

So, yeah, since I eat more

since I eat more than one meal a day, um

that kind of

uh lassitude or lethargy or whatever it

is, um

yeah, it can happen more often. That's

one reason why uh Buddhist monk is

supposed to eat just one meal a day.

Um

Let's see. How do you compare the

traditional Asian foods to your new

American diet? Well, the traditional

Asian foods were essentially rice.

Um

rice and like beans. If I was lucky, I

like beans, but uh

beans were considered poor people's food

and they tried to give monks the best

food they could, and so sometimes you

wouldn't get very many beans.

Um

You get little minnows. I lived near

rivers sometimes where you just get like

these little

salted fish that were whole.

Um

You get

meat, like regular farm meat, on uh

holidays mostly.

And uh it was relatively fresh, you

know.

I mean, most of the people that offered

me food were farmers, so you get

relatively fresh food usually.

Um

And then how does that compare to my new

American diet? Well,

uh I like my new American diet better

because I have never was much of a rice

eater. I didn't like rice much. I was

more of a bread eater.

And now I can eat bread every day, which

is nice.

Uh also, cheese.

Uh East Asians really are not much into

dairy products.

I was uh largely a vegetarian before I

became a monk, and then ironically after

I became a Buddhist monk, I had stopped

being a vegetarian. Partly because

sometimes I'd be living in very poor

semi-desert areas of Central Burma where

um if the crops failed, which would be

at least once every 3 years,

um you know, just through lack of rain,

lack of irrigation,

then your your your your diet can

consist largely of just sort of chewy

pink rice and

and pork and maybe some like badass

cookies,

like real cheap

I don't know what kind of cookies they

would be. They're They're not good

cookies.

And I I mean, you're just pretty much

living on that.

So, I think my new American diet is more

balanced.

And uh

although there's more processed food in

it, I think overall it may be a little

more healthy. Certainly more clean

since uh Burmese villagers uh

they don't have indoor plumbing or

anything. It's uh

um sanitation is somewhat of a problem.

And uh also little refrigeration, so you

eating some foods is are just danger

food, like like shrimp.

Shrimp is is always a a coin toss on

whether you're going to wind up with the

explosive trots or not.

So, yeah, I prefer

my new American diet with the occasional

bowl of ice cream.

And uh

also, I can just go to the refrigerator

and eat whatever I want

within reason.

And I can uh whenever I want within

reason.

So, let's see.

I mean, there are certain advantages.

And I should I should go back to uh

uh changes in my body. Um

I've noticed I've got less

It seems like I've got less strength and

flexibility in my legs now. Although

probably more strength in my upper body

now that uh I'm a lay person again. I

mean I used to sit in the full lotus for

hours every day and uh

I don't know if I could even

I don't I don't know how long I could

sit cross-legged anymore.

I sit on chairs now. I used to disdain

chairs. I used to be like a snob and

refuse to sit on chairs, but uh

now I sit on chairs.

Kind of kind of wimping out.

So, I think I'll just move on to the

next question.

Which is from Venatrix.

Venatrix.

You You got some You got some names.

People that ask questions got names

here. Venatrix or Venetrix.

What do you think of Oh, I should say

Venatrix says

"What do you think of the common Tibetan

practice of lay people only taking a certain number of the five precepts? For example, Tibetan laymen will often not take the vow to abstain from intoxicating substances while taking the other four. Do you think a practice like that this is legitimate or skillful, specifically for Buddhism in the West?"

Well, I have met Burmese people who they say, "Well, I keep three precepts or or four or whatever." And in a way it's it's honest. I mean, if you're going to take five precepts, you're going to undertake them and then just knowing full well you're going to be breaking one or two of them,

it's probably better just to be honest

and

just maybe tell the monk, you know, "I

can't keep, you know, number whatever it

is."

Um

So, I mean keeping any precepts is

better than not keeping any.

So, I mean if you're keeping one

precept, that's better than keeping zero

precepts.

So, I mean it does happen.

And I guess there's a certain amount of

integrity to that. So, I think I don't

see any problem with that.

And uh let's see, especially for

Buddhism in the West.

Yeah, I mean it would it would be, you know, equal for East or West, I think.

Um just uh

do your best.

Yeah.

So, finally, we've got a question from Matthew. This is the last question.

And Matthew says,

"You conclude your article on my blog on the Mahasi method by saying U Jotika's method is much better. Can you perhaps give a very brief description of this method and speak a bit on why you feel it is a superior method? Lastly, can you comment on the Jotika method as a tool for lay people in comparison to what,

say, Mahasi or Goenka?

Kind regards and thank you."

Well, this is surprisingly difficult

question for me cuz I knew U Jotika or

as he is known in Burma, he's Mahamyan U

Zodika because J is pronounced like Z in

with a Burmese accent.

So,

Mahamyan U Zodika, I knew him and I met

with him a number of times. He was

ordained in the same tradition as me.

And um

he he spoke perfect English. He spoke

English better than most Americans, I

think. He's very intelligent.

And uh I think possibly um

to his advantage, he was raised a Muslim

and then converted to to Buddhism as a

young man.

Um and

for some reason that can that can make a

stronger religion if you convert to it

rather than just being born into it.

Um

I liked his method better.

Uh I really do not recall all the

details of his method if I ever knew

them.

Um he's

he relies to some degree on Western

Western psychology.

But um the main reason why I think his

method was better and why I said that

his method was better is because he practiced contemplation. What in Christianity is called contemplation. Like he he told me once that he can just sit for hours just empty, not thinking anything.

And it wasn't like you're just zoned out in a stupor. I mean, he was wide You're wide awake. In fact, if you're going to sit that way, if you're not just in a trance,

um if you sit just wide awake and not thinking anything, I mean, you got to be very mindful because you got to catch each thought as it starts to arise.

Cuz if you don't, you know, it just

catches you unaware and next thing you know, you're thinking about stuff. But so you've got to be able to just watch your mind very carefully. And then as soon as any thought starts to arise, you know, it just the the mere attention of it just causes it to flatten back out again. And you're just sitting there like, um you know, like you're walking through a forest and an arrow hits a tree right next to you. You know, it's like you just stop and you stand wide awake just listening. Just that kind of mental state.

And um

he seems to have been very good at that. Plus, he just uh

didn't follow along with um

like the Mahasi method is very much uh

um

a lot of emphasis on Abhidhamma and so

forth. And and U Zotika U Jotika really

didn't pay much attention to that. He

would His method was based more on his

own his own experience. He started off

with the tongue puller method, which is

what I started off with.

And uh just kind of developed what

worked best for him. And it turns out

that what worked best for him was very

similar to what I found out worked best

for me.

And you know, you start off when your

your samadhi isn't strong,

you know, you start off with like a busy

kind of meditation. If your mind is just

very active, you know, wanting to think

and everything, you have to do you have

to like um train the thoughts. You know,

you have to have labeling and you know,

your mind has to be given something to

do. Because if you try to do like a very

um

like a very lucid kind of

very quiet, but your mind is

hyperactive, it's just going to go all

over the place. But on the other hand,

if your mind is like settling down and

getting peaceful and focused, and you're

still at the ABCs, just grinding away

with labeling, you know, in-breath,

out-breath kind of a thing, then uh

yeah, you're just wasting the

opportunity, you're wasting your

potential.

So,

you gradually cultivate a mind that is

more clear and quiet, and then you get

more clear and quiet meditation methods

until finally your mind is just

completely clear and quiet

while at the same time you're wide

awake.

And U Jotika

seems to have incorporated that into his

practice

to a much greater degree than Mahasi or
Goenka. And that's that's why I like it.
But if you're really interested, you
might want to
do a search on U Jotika
uh on the internet or Mahamyan
U Jotika.
And you might get more details on his
method. But the main reason why uh I
said I I liked his method better than
the Mahasi method
is uh partly because one time I asked
him what is his opinion of the Mahasi
method, and he said, um you can get
benefit from practicing it, but it is a
limited method. And I agree with that.
It is It does seem to me to be a limited

method. And his method was less limited because he was getting into deeper, more contemplative states. And that's why I liked it better.

And that's uh that's it. That's the that's the last question of the evening or the morning or whatever time you're watching this.

So, uh that's it. And if you have any more questions,

I'm quite willing to do my best to answer them to the best of my capacity.

So, leave them in the comments below, or if you have access to the Discord server, you can ask there.

If uh you have access to my subscribe

star channel, you can ask there.

And uh

my URL links are below including the

books that I have for sale

through Amazon.

And uh my uh

social media links as they happen to be

and my blog and so forth and uh

be happy.

hello and welcome to episode 27 of

question and answer i am your host panel

bossom and this is your co-host

peepers

and um

i'm doing it out here on the veranda as

a change of pace

and moving the glass so the kitty

doesn't drink my red bull and lemonade

and i've got

the usual

longish list of good questions

to try to answer and so i'm going to try

and do that with the kitty

walking all over my lap

so

the first question is from

bodhisattva969

and

bodhisattva969 says

i have already asked several questions

via email to theravada temples or

sanghas in germany which are mainly led

and attended by ties unfortunately

questions or suggestions are usually not

answered at all hence my question isn't

there a need for dedicated people within

these sanghas who also want to advance

buddhism in western countries

those who want to become buddhists

integrate those more who are interested

in buddhism too

i know buddhism doesn't really

proselytize

but isn't it worth spreading the

teaching and if those in charge are not

interested in spreading buddhism step by

step those who are willing should take

over

well that's that's a good question

and

due to my uh or according to my

years of experience living in

asian temples in the west

at least a few years

um

the thing is asian monks have a very

different

outlook on reality and on buddhism than

westerners do so even when western or

when asian monks like burmese monks is

what i mainly have experience with

when burmese monks try to teach

to

westerners

um there's like a culture gap there's a

culture barrier you know they they have

like a medieval attitude

towards um

towards buddhism in general i mean they

just consider everything in their

tradition to be just gospel

and westerners

just

don't

don't really swing that way like

venerable tong pulo seattle who was a

great monk a wise monk he would come to

america and give sermons and he'd be

mentioning you know the flat earth

floating on water and buddhist cosmology

and so forth that most westerners really

can't take it very seriously including

most monks

so that's a major problem with asian

temples promulgating dhamma

is that asian monks

have

an approach to buddhism that most

westerners

just don't

i mean they don't find it acceptable

it's just a non-starter

and there are some

asian monks who try to become fluent in

english because there's also the

language barrier

and um you know they try and there are

certain types of westerners and just the

faith-oriented westerners who are

willing to

um accept whatever they're told with

regard to buddhism from you know an

exotic asian monk

and um

but i mean it's just not going to be the

majority of people who might potentially

be interested in in terrible buddhism

so it's going to take western monks i

think who are going to be

um mainly promulgating

theravada buddhism

or anything remotely resembling

traditional theravada buddhism in the

west because as you may know western lay

people who teach theravada

mostly

are teaching you very watered-down and

mutated version of terrabotta and it may

take uh a mutated version of theravada

with certain things omitted like the

cosmology at least you omit the the part

about taking it seriously

um

in order for really

terrible buddhism to

strike traction to take root in the west

which it really hasn't done very well

yet i have to admit

and part of the reason for that

is that

theravada buddhism

is ancient indian it was

designed to fit ancient indian culture

and

it has been accepted by

um certain asian cultures

that were based on classical india

thailand burma sri lanka all of them

have as their classical civilization

that they turn to for culture ancient

india just like in the west we turn to

rome or in to some degree greece

um

i mean mainly western europe and america

have their culture um like

resting upon the foundation the

classical foundation of rome

and in southeast asia most of southeast

asia and also sri lanka they're looking

to india for their classical inspiration

or just their their wise ancients

and so it fit easier it worked better

for southeast asia than it's working

from the modern west with regard to

accepting an ancient indian tradition

with ancient indian cosmology and

ancient indian

just assumptions about reality

so

let's get back to this question here a

little bit isn't there a need for

dedicated people within these songs who

also want to advance buddhism in western

countries well i think most of them do

want to advance buddhism other than just

the asian monks who just want to live

like

kind of like neutered house cats in a

temple and just lie around and get

attention from lay people and get fed

every day i mean there are monks like

that too

but um

a lot of them really would like to

spread dama in the west they would like

to become great teachers in the west if

possible

um either for

you know personal reasons or just for

the selfless desire to promulgate dhamma

but as i say there is a cultural barrier

that really interferes with that

so

uh western buddhism is going to have to

change

to some degree

i mean like

terra vada buddhism if it's going to

prosper in the west it is going to have

to change to some degree

otherwise it's just doomed to be

a fringe movement

or it's going to be it's doomed to be

what it's sort of becoming now which is

just a

very watered-down mutated

semi-semblance of terravata buddhism

and there'll be a few more questions

about that particular issue a little

further down on the scroll here

um

but it's that's like the big issue is

like what can you change what can you

not change or what should you not change

and of course different people are going

to have different ideas about that but

that's not really the question here so i

think i may just move on

so the next question is from nusguam

and nusquam says what which nikaya is

there behind you he's referring to the

last

q a that i did i had i usually do q and

a's in in the spare bedroom with

it's sort of like an office and and den

and so forth and i've got a bookcase

behind me and like right there

in most of these q a videos there's a

big brown book that he's asking about

and that's uh

biku bodies and yanamoli's translation

of the uh majime nikaya

let's see he's he asked which nikaya is

there behind you i've noticed

cover from wisdom publications yeah so

the brown the brown one from wisdom

publications is the majim nikaya

and um the original translation was by

nyana moly who was a great translator he

was really brilliant

and but he was a little idiosyncratic he

had some strange ideas about translating

for example he tried very hard

to have

one word get translated always into the

same english word

and

different poly i mean the same poly word

can have different meanings according to

different contexts and he's trying to

come up with an english word that comes

as close to that as possible and um

like brahma he he interpreted as divine

so like a brahmana he would call a

divine

or you know the brahmalokas the divine

world and so forth

so um that was just a little too

uh unorthodox

for b cuboty who is a good translator

despite his his politics he is one of

the best translators

we've got so he just sort of made a

little more orthodox you know just using

the usual terms you know sati is

mindfulness for example

and um

so he just sort of uh

smoothed out some of the

some of the stranger parts of nanamoli's

translation but nanamoli was an

excellent translator

and uh it might have been best just to

have left it the way it was but

there we are b kuboti has uh he was he's

a grown-up man he can make his own

decisions i suppose

so yeah the the answer to that is it's

the majima nikaya

so the next question is from joe doe

and joe doe

asks

do you know of any techniques to

overcome sleepiness when it arises in

meditation

and there are

there's at least one entire discourse

um probably to be found in winia or the

rules of monastic discipline which the

buddha is telling a monk what to do if

he's

if he's really sleepy you know he's

supposed to be meditating he's not

supposed to sleep a lot ideally a monk

who's a serious meditator should only

sleep about four hours a night and i

tried that and it is not easy i only

managed one month averaging less than

four hours every night and that was some

of the best meditation of my life if my

meditation is not going well i just need

to sleep more

but um do i know of any techniques for

overcoming sleepiness when it arises in

meditation

um possibly one of the easiest

techniques is just get up and do walking

meditation because it's very difficult

to fall asleep when you're walking i

i've been told that it is possible

but um

you know setting aside sleepwalking

but um that that's one another um i

should have looked up the discourse but

um i just play these uh off the cuff

here

and uh i remember you know one is

visualizing light

um

one is just sort of rubbing your face

and rubbing your pulling on your ears

and that kind of thing

um

one is uh like the standard

western um

technique of just splashing cold water

on your face that works too

um there is one kind of naughty one that

i came up with

um when i was living in a burmese forest

and that was the same time that i was

doing less than four hours a night of

sleep

um i had this rule that

i didn't have

an alarm clock but i had this rule that

if i wake up and i've already slept at

least four hours i have to get out

and i was keeping track of how much i

was sleeping

and um

i had it was it was like a desperation

technique i mean i'm not necessarily

endorsing this but it did work for me

and that is just to um

how do i say this

um

i would sort of fondle myself a little

bit to kind of cause arousal and then i

would stop

and then just the arousal i mean

obviously just from the the word arousal

indicates that you know you're you're

more awake

and so that worked for me although it

might not work if you're like at a

meditation retreat or some such you

might get kicked out

but i was living by myself in a forest

at the time

um

let's see what other techniques

i mean just remonstrating with yourself

i suppose

um

but uh yeah i think those are the main

ones that that are mentioned in the text

uh one is is

getting up and doing walking meditation

visualizing light splashing water on

your face or just like rubbing and

pulling on your

on your ears or you know rubbing your

face and that sort of thing kind of get

the circulation going more

um i suppose

um getting back to that kind of arousal

technique just thinking any kind of

thought that gets your heart beating

faster is going to is going to help

maybe

do a little contemplation of death

or something

but um yeah if you look in the in the

polytechs there are

actual discourses

um explaining what to do and the kitty

is rubbing up against the microphone

like a silly kitty

so i'll just move on to the next

question

and the next question is also by joe doe

and that is do you believe levitation is

real well i do believe that it's

possible and um

i think that it probably has happened

not only

in buddhists and hindus but uh there was

some famous

catholic

i think it was a catholic monk he's a

saint saint

it wasn't saint francis of assisi but i

think it might have been another saint

francis it was some saint that had a

sort of common saint name with with a

more famous

uh person with the same name but um

there was some

english

i think he was some sort of english uh

minister or something like like a

political minister

and um he very much i mean he heard the

rumors of this this christian monk who

would levitate and so he actually hid in

a closet

and and is like looking through the

crack in the door

to uh

to see this this monk and he apparent

according to the story he did meditate

or levitate and then he converted over

to roman catholicism and i guess um

saint theresa of avila

would go into such ecstasies when she

would take communion

which is a big deal among some catholics

because they think they're actually

committing ritual cannibalism of jesus

so i mean she would go into such

ecstasies that she would just rise up

in front of entire congregations

supposedly according to the story

so um i believe anything is is possible

just about

so if levitation can be imagined that

would make it possible at least in a

metaphysical sense so yeah

and then joe doe says cheers mate

so yeah cheers and so i'll just move on

to the next question

by fred

fred says from what i can understand

there was no chanting at the buddhist

time is chanting unnecessary cognition

well yes and no with regard to whether

there was chanting in the buddhist time

which is

um i mean it depends on how you would

define chanting i guess

because

in the buddhist time there was

i mean the scriptures were not written

down the teachings of the buddha were

not written down and so they had to be

memorized and so there was a lot of that

going back to very ancient times

um

of just

memorizing by heart

certain teachings

and then you would generally recite it

which could be called chanting as a way

of not forgetting it and i used to do a

lot of a lot of that sort of thing

although i've forgotten pretty much

everything except the metal suta and a

few little bits and pieces

um

but with regard to actual chanting like

in a in a sing-song voice i mean you're

not using a regular conversational tone

of voice like i'm using now

um it's actually against the rules of

monastic discipline a monk is not

supposed to

recite in a sing-song voice even though

lots of them do it in fact some burmese

monks that i have i have met will

actually cultivate their own peculiar

sing-song voice when they chant there's

a kind of hallmark you know sort of

their own personal gimmick

and the kitties rubbing up against the

microphone again

so let's see where was i oh yeah the

chanting so technically chanting in a

kind of sing-song voice is actually

against the rules even though

plenty of monks do it

um

with regard to

uh just reciting

um

in it for chanting purposes like like

for

not just for remembering

something or you know reciting it to

someone else so they can hear it is you

know sort of like protection chance and

so forth

and they go back to ancient times i mean

it's

i mean one can debate whether the buddha

himself originally taught that you

should chant the meta suta to protect

you from spirits for example or that you

should

chant the khanda suta or recite the

khanda sutra to protect protect you from

like snake bites but they are found in

the text like the kanda suta is found in

winia or the the book of books of

monastic discipline

that some monk was bitten by a snake and

died and so the buddha taught the kanda

suta which is sending meta and blessings

to all beings including legless ones

which are snakes

and uh

according to on the text you know if you

chant suto then

you won't die from snake bite even if

you are bitten you will survive

so um

otherwise i mean

chanting is unnecessary cognition it can

be used as a kind of meditation it's

sort of a prolonged mantra or something

so i mean it does have a function i

think

it is acceptable in orthodox buddhism

to chant

sutas

not only so that you don't forget them

but it's just your mind is on something

wholesome you know it gets your mind

onto something wholesome

and that reminds me that um

i had a friend in burma he was a texan

hermit who lived in this big hollow tree

and he said one time he was bitten by

one of those big orange centipedes or

these giant centipedes that live in

southeast asia

and um you know they're as big around as

your finger and they got these big fangs

on them

and i've met a few people who have been

bitten by them and this this hermit said

that uh it hurts so bad you can't do

anything you can't meditate you can't

sleep so he would just sit there and

enchant

just to get his mind off the pain

and um you know i just kind of had his

mind on something more positive or

wholesome

so i mean for that purpose

you you could do chanting also just to

get your mind focused on something

relatively wholesome

um but although of course it helps if

you understand what you're chanting if

you're chanting in poly and you don't

know paul you've just memorized the

sounds so that you're

you're chanting this blah blah blah

which it i mean some people do that

um i wouldn't expect nearly as much of a

benefit

um as if you were

actually understanding what you were

chanting

so the next question is from nardi

and nardi says i have a dilemma in the

issue of mindfulness

do you consider forcing with all the

force oneself

to hear now as mindfulness or

mindfulness is just a passive

observation of whatever appears

so that seems to be the main question

the next is explanatory it's like

whenever i try to be mindful in the

daily life i end up meditating at work i

think i always had this extremist

mindset and now i know how to do

something i do it till i go in depth

um or once i know how to do something i

do it till i go in depth i have also

this other tendency of escaping reality

and that's why i wanted to become a monk

for some years

sometimes co-workers think i'm

distracted while i'm basically

meditating and focusing on something

else

when i force myself with all my will

just here now without observing nothing

i am focused like a hunting animal and

to me everything is more easy i do this

since i was a kid mostly because i don't

like my thoughts and feelings which are

very dark and by doing these

these things don't bother me

and by doing this things don't bother me

let's say my family lives

a very bad karma and a lot of bad things

has happened to my ancestors including

disputes among family members killings

persecutions from the communist regime

and as some people say black magic

so um

the uh the main question here is just

the first part

um do you consider forcing with all the

force

oneself to hear now as mindfulness

or

mindfulness is just a passive

observation of whatever appears

so it can be either way i mean

beginning level mindfulness you may be

doing like what the mahasi method tells

you to do it's like when you are

mindfully noting something it's like

you're hitting it with a stick you know

it's like your attention is the stick

and you're just tapping it over and over

again and labeling it you know giving it

some word

some some label

um but as you get better at it it

becomes more and more effortless

so either way it could be mindfulness so

long as you are focused on whatever is

in the here and now

um i mean there are other kinds of

mindfulness you can be mindful of the

qualities of the buddha for example but

with regard to saudi patana um in this

sense

it's um

you know you're just in the present

moment and at first if you're not good

at it yet you know your mind just keeps

wandering you know your mind has this

excess energy you have to apply the

energy of your mind

to some kind of busy work to keep it

from wandering away again and again and

that includes the

the labeling for example

and then the better you get at it the

more effortless it becomes until ideally

um you just get to the point where

you're just

always being mindful like and like an

art presumably would be

so either way works although if you're

able to be mindful effortlessly that is

better than pounding away at it but

pounding away at it is better than just

just daydreaming and fantasizing and

thinking about what you want for dinner

so the next question is from

rob alias dhamma farmer

and rob says pano

what are your thoughts on mindfulness in

terms of physical exercise one of your

previous

one of your previous q a

you mentioned the method of sheet metal

working and your application in terms of

mindfulness to that task i have found

great benefits of running or slow

jogging with a low heart rate over the

last year but have only just come to think of this as greatly beneficial in terms of being in the present staying with the breath and not allowing the mind to wander it produces good and clarifying mental states with science backing up the claims in terms of endorphins and culmination of mitochondria

as examples

i remember a while back hearing of a sect of monks that would run back-to-back marathons to enhance spiritual practice

although i may have this wrong what are your thoughts and are there any

scriptural examples of physical training

as such

i would add that 2 500 years ago people

would have walked

an awful lot more and would not

have being as fat and lazy as today and

would not have being as fat and lazy

yesterday so this concept of exercise

may be a bit too modern cheers

okay

well

monks are allowed

to exercise

just for the sake of being healthy

although

um if it's for the sake of looking buff

or self-beautification or anything that

it is uh

not permitted

strongly discouraged

so let's see

where are we getting to the question

part here i found great benefits in

running the slow jogging

um

yeah i mean with regard to scriptural

examples of physical training really

there is the only exercise that is

encouraged for monks is walking

like um

monks would uh have

like indigestion or something like right

after they ate their daily meal for

example and the buddha encouraged them

to do walking meditation

but really the whole point of being a

monk is just to be healthy enough to

practice dhamma i mean you're not going

for a good physique necessarily

i mean they tend to be pretty skinny

and um

so yeah i mean there's

there's like swimming for exercise is

i mean it's it's very questionable

um

weight lifting that kind of thing

calisthenics

i mean there's no endorsement of it in

the in the ancient polytechnics that i'm

aware of

um

although i mean there's there's just no

mention of it i think that calisthenics

it might have been known to i don't know

gladiators or or soldiers or something

you know their ancient soldiers might

train with lead swords just to you know

strengthen their arms

but um

yeah for monks is i mean buddhism is

very otherworldly especially you know

ancient buddhism

and so

yeah being healthy is one thing but

just being buff or

or whatever is something else

so

yeah i think ancient india

it just wasn't as

like

matter oriented you know your body was

just this

thing that you wore

and if you were really striving for

dhamma it was just this thing that you

used to practice dhamma

so

yeah there's not much mention in all of

physical training i mean there came to

be that in other schools you know like

xiao lin anyone who watched the old tv

show kung fu or the various wire foo

movies

may know that uh you know some mahayana

sects

um

they would

they would practice you know martial

arts at the very least dodging spears or

whatever

so there is that but that was more of a

mindfulness exercise i think than a way

of exercising the body and strengthening

it

um yeah in buddhism it's just you know i

guess you'd be more like water

now the strength of water like the

outdate ching is more than you know what

is hard and is brittle and breaks but

what is soft and and flows you know it's

it's more flexible and

less likely to be

damaged or something

so

yeah i guess uh i guess that kind of

answers that question there's really not

much mention of

uh physical exercise you know as you

know for the sake of fitness

in in the text it's just uh i guess

that's more of a modern concept or

uh if it's pre-modern it was uh for

gladiators and things that were really

this worldly instead of you know

striving for something beyond this world

and one of the dogs is crying

and we'll get to that we've got a

question about dogs coming up

so i think i'll just move on to the next

question

and rob

elias dama farmer says i've been sitting

oh i've been sifting through the older q

and a's and playing ketchup on missed

episodes i found myself in hysterical

laughter in some parts especially when

you read

the pp poopoo gay but sex questions from

a bizarre commenter with a straight face

it got me thinking what is the most

stupid question you have ever been asked

also what is the most bizarre or

excommunication level thing anyone has

ever asked you to do

loving the q a's

books and content sincerely thanks and

met um

um

let's see what's i guess this is a

two-part question so what's the most

stupid question you have ever been asked

well as the saying goes there are no

stupid questions there are only stupid

people

but um it seems to me

that

the questions i receive unless they're

like

pointed rhetorical questions trying to

make a point

um

i've i've received some strange ones but

i wouldn't say that any of them is

really bad or stupid i mean if they

really want to know the answer

but usually when you come up with

stupid

or just stupidity

you know with regard to comments and so

forth is people making assertions is

they're not asking questions because

they think they already know the answers

those are the stupidest people the

people that are so sure that they know

everything or at least everything you

know that's relevant at at the moment

that um

yeah those those are the the people that

make the stupidest remarks and um i mean

i don't want to be singling out anybody

but i would say that yeah the most

stupidity that you you come upon is

people just making flat out assertions

you know they're not asking questions

because if you're asking a question it's

it's a kind of humility you know i mean

you have to have a certain amount of

humility to ask a question because you

are tacitly admitting that you don't

know

unless of course it's like a pointed

you know sort of a naughty question

so

yeah i don't i don't want to single out

anybody and hurt somebody's feelings or

something so i'll just move on to the

next part of this question which what is

the most bizarre or excommunication

level thing anyone has ever asked you to

do

um

i think probably it would just be like

people who were

there were a few western people who were

my supporters

you know they were actually supporting

me they're just saying why don't you

just drop out and get a job

you know they just did not see the point

of having to feed a monk every day you

know the monk isn't allowed to store his

food

yet and he has to have somebody give him

food every morning if he's going to eat

and

a lot of western buddhists people who

consider themselves to be

sincere buddhists or even buddhist

teachers

they just don't get it they don't see

the point of that

so

i mean that's not really excommunication

level but it's it's you know being

deroged from the song level because

they're just asking you know why don't

you just quit

because they really do not see the point

of being a monk or they don't think that

it's important enough

that people should actually do it

especially in the west

um with regard to a bizarre

question or a bizarre thing anyone has

ever asked me to do

man that's a that's a tough one

uh you know just why don't you just uh

you know have sex or something you know

it'd be something like that i think

you know while still being a monk that

is

so yeah i'm sorry to disappoint rob in

his

question for uh

stupid and questions and bizarre

requests but um

none really come to mind to tell you the

truth

so

sorry maybe maybe someone can ask a

really stupid question next time and

then i can uh

i can bring it up

so next question also from rob alias

dama farmer

and he says i recently read a comment

section interaction between you and

someone on the politically incorrect

theravada video

with ajahn punadamo and brian

the person insisted the buddha did not

even teach about rebirth

could you explain if this is some kind

of edgy [__] posting or there are some

buddhists who question the idea of

rebirth by all rights if you don't

believe in rebirth then the vast

majority of the buddha's teachings are

automatically invalid for that

individual thank you

well as it turned out just a few nights

ago i watched a debate

between ajahn brahmali i think is his

name

and stephen batchelor

on

traditionalism versus secularism in

terravata buddhism and it was a good

debate i would i would recommend it

maybe i might even include the link

below this video

um

but steven batchelor considers himself

to be a buddhist he's written books

about his he was a buddhist monk i think

he was a tibetan monk for a few years at

least

he knows a lot about buddhism he just

doesn't believe in rebirth

and um

it seems weird to me that i mean on the

one hand buddhists believe in the first

noble truth to exist is to suffer

but if you don't believe in rebirth

then it seems like the logical obvious

thing to do would just be to commit

suicide not that i'm advising anyone to

commit suicide but that would just seem

to be the logical conclusion you know if

to exist is to suffer

and you want to be free of suffering and

there is no rebirth

well there you go

but uh yeah apparently a lot of

westerners i'm i i assume i

have probably met at least one asian

buddhist

who didn't believe in rebirth

but i mean there's a lot of it in the

west it's it's called secular buddhism i

think

and stephen bachelor was saying

you know maybe the buddha was just uh

you know he was a product of his culture

the culture believed in reincarnation

and so he was just going along with that

and it doesn't necessarily make it true

which was i think is kind of a

a weak argument because i mean if you

don't want to follow what the buddha

said i mean nobody's forcing you to be a

buddhist especially in the west

so i mean if he wants to believe some

spiritual system that doesn't include

rebirth why doesn't he just

you know follow his own idea and not

necessarily call it buddhism

so i think a stronger

argument

which might have got him to uh win the

debate with ajam brahmali

um is

you start with a text like the atakawaga

like

in my opinion the oldest large chunk of

really archaic early buddhism that still

exists

is the atakawaga of the sutonipata

and it's not dealing with metaphysics or

rebirth it's it's just dealing with the

practical you know in this moment

process of waking up and it's don't

believe anything

don't i mean don't i mean if if you

believe something it's practically

delusion because belief

is the idea that you know something that

you don't really know

so

belief

um i mean just

concepts are not really not going to

encapsulate reality they're not going to

contain reality other than just the

underlying reality of the consciousness

of just underlying the belief

but um perception is samsara

so i mean

if you wanted to really be a buddhist

that didn't believe in rebirth i mean

you shouldn't

disbelieve in rebirth either because the

article waga which is as i say is very

ancient very archaic

um it says don't believe anything so if

you disbelieve in rebirth that's just a

belief in non-rebirth it's still a

positive belief just couched in negative

terms

um so then then the onus would be on the

person who's saying that uh you know all

the other stuff added on

where where it is talking about rebirth

and so forth is uh just later editions

you know that cropped up during the

first hundred years or so of uh buddhism

as uh

as a as a religion or as a philosophical

or spiritual system

so

yeah i think

if you are a buddhist and you don't

believe in rebirth

then i mean you shouldn't believe in

anything then you'll be following what

the atakawaga teaches anyway

but if you're

believing this and that i mean you're

just picking and choosing the parts you

want to believe and you should have a

really good reason for rejecting

something like abhidhammapitika there's

a list of reasons i've written down

elsewhere why

it's unlikely that the buddha himself

taught abhidharma even though it's the

third pitika of the three pitikas you

know it's the third part of the pali

tapitica the scriptures of theravada

buddhism but still

there is quite a lot of

persuasive evidence that the buddha

didn't teach abhidhamma personally it's

sort of like a commentary that got

canonized like around the third council

so that would be uh at least a couple

hundred years after the time of the

buddha

so

yeah let's see i i feel as i should go

back to this question i sometimes i kind

of answer at length until i've forgotten

the exact question here

could you explain if there's some kind

of edgy [__] posting no i don't think so

or are there some buddhists who question

the idea of rebirth yeah obviously like

steven batchelor would be one of the

more famous ones by all rights if you

don't believe in rebirth and the vast

majority of buddhist teachings are

automatically invalid for that

individual well the vast majority of the

teachings of the pali canon would be

yeah and the buddha himself in really

ancient texts

does

mention rebirth like um the second suta

of the of the deegan kaya which is just

the second suta of the polytechnics you

know the second discourse of all the

buddhist scriptures

is uh the samanya palasuta where the

buddha is

telling king ajata satu the the fruits

of living a monastic life or the life of

a renuncian

and he goes in ascending order

and up towards the top

there's the psychic powers that can be

cultivated including

memory of one's past lives

and

um ajahn brahmali in in the debate of

traditionalism versus secularism was he

of course being the traditionalist was

really pounding away at the whole idea

of rebirth how you know that's really

the point of of becoming enlightened is

ending rebirth

and he's saying that you don't fully

understand rebirth until you become

enlightened and then it just

becomes clear it's like the turning on

of the light

or the lighting of a lamp i should say

so

yeah i mean if you don't believe in

rebirth you don't believe in karma you

don't believe in

independent coal rising or whatever i

mean nobody's forcing you to be a

buddhist just believe what you want to

believe but you should be careful about

calling yourself a buddhist while at the

same time believing in some cases maybe

the exact opposite of dhamma and there

is a lot of that in the west lately

because

cultural marxism or emancipatory

politics or progressivism or whatever

you want to call it is infiltrating

pretty much all of the liberal leaning

religious systems and turning it all

into

you know like black lives matter and

global warming and gay pride

and this sort of thing to the point that

like modern leftist

uh unitarianism modern leftist methodism

and modern leftist terra vada

in the west

resemble each other more than they

resemble the original versions of those

three systems

so

yeah

so i'll just move on to the next

question

this is also from rob dhamma farmer who

has many questions which is good i'm not

complaining

and he says was the noble eightfold path

primarily aimed at laypeople rather than

monks i don't think so because early

buddhism was aimed primarily in monks

i mean the buddha tossed a bone to the

lay people sometimes

five precepts a few a few sutas

um discussing you know the

the duties of a good buddhist lay person

and so forth but

almost all sutas are directed towards

monks

including um

the first mention of the noble eightfold

path in fact uh if i'm not mistaken i

might just uh make a fool of myself here

but if i'm not mistaken the uh dhamma

chaka pachana suta

which is considered to be

the buddha's first formal discourse

after his enlightenment at least

according to tradition

um it mentions the four noble truths so

the noble eightfold path is uh

the elaborated version of the fourth

noble truth

so um yeah i mean it's buddhism was

originally

primarily aimed at monks

so the eightfold path was

um

may have been

devised by monks it may have been that

originally there was just a path there

is a way and then it got systematized

and you know complicated and uh turned

into the eightfold path there are a few

pseudos that mention a tenfold path

which can be used as uh

a bit of evidence that um you know it it

was sort of in a

state of evolution before they settled

on these eight

so and there and there are certain

variations of the eightfold path also

like um it's kind of a seven-fold path

all of which culminate in

you know right right uh jhana right

meditation

so yeah i guess the easy answer to that

question is uh was the noble eightfold

path primarily people no i don't think

so so the next question from rob dhamma

farmer can the non-renunciant spiritual

loner make progress

uh yeah anybody can make progress i mean

even

you know somebody's like uh they got

lots of bad habits

even though they're a non-renunciant uh

layperson

um

just you know cleaning up your act

you know maybe you start watching jordan
peterson videos and and he just you know
inspires you to to uh clean your room
and all that
uh take more responsibility for your own
self your own successes and failures and
all that then uh yeah and some people
can uh make progress just accidentally
you know you have somebody you know
there's a selfish person that very
superficial and so forth and then they
get cancer maybe they almost die in a
car wreck you know somebody close to
them dies and that can just really get
them thinking about you know i'm not
going to live forever and i shouldn't

waste this life

and then they can really make progress

so yeah anybody can make progress

it's just that being a monk was designed

originally

as a way of

facilitating making progress because

you're dedicating your life to making

progress you're not dedicating your life

to making money and so forth with the

making progress part being sort of

around the edges of all this necessary

bill paying stuff you got to do

so

yeah i mean that's an emphatic yes

definitely the non-renunciant spiritual

learner can make progress i mean i made

progress before i became a monk to the

point that i was really inspired to

become a monk just because i wanted to

make more progress

but

um

yeah so the answer is yeah so i'll just

move on to

uh rob dama farmer's last question here

and he's saying i'm sure you will be

identified

for supervisory qualities at the job

soon enough he's referring to my job at

the sheet metal shop he's being very

complimentary

hypothetically if you landed a position

in which man management was required

then what orthodox tarifan qualities or

teachings would you apply to your daily

role as a leader i am taking notes as i

have to manage people daily but never

considered them to be

much leadership dhamma teachings

other than the qualities of kings etc

thanks again rob

well

equanimity is good i mean if you're

frazzled under stress it's going to make

you less of a good manager than if you

keep your head under stress you know

things

you know the [__] hits the fan at work

and you just you know keep your calm and

and get to solving things instead of you
know just getting sucked into it and you
know yelling or whatever then yeah i
mean that would that would help you just
the cultivation of equanimity
um honesty obviously you know if if you
live a you know you're like an
upstanding more or less virtuous person
you're the people that are working for
you will
you know unless they're totally
insensitive will pick up on that and
have more respect for you be more
willing
to
do what you ask especially if they are

confident that you're going to have them

doing something that isn't wrong

so

yeah i mean it's like any kind of leader

um if he's got the respect of the people

that he's leading he's gonna do a better

job as a general rule than people that

just consider him to be just a jerk

and there are a lot of leaders like that

a lot of jerks that are leaders i'm

fortunate not to have jerks as my

leaders at work

in fact one reason why my job is as

um i don't know why why the business is

as in as good of of a situation as it is

is that the the owner of the business is

an evangelical christian who takes

certain virtues including not swindling

customers very seriously and um just

yesterday i had a customer i was loading

stuff onto his his vehicle with a

forklift

and um

he said that uh you know some some

places you go to

you just feel unwelcome but here i feel

like everyone cares

and that was nice

and um yeah people think that uh you

know you've got compassion and honesty

and and so forth and you know it's just

it's not something that

in specific that you're cultivating it's

just that uh

just through practicing dhamma and just

generally cultivating yourself trying to

make spiritual progress it's gonna it's

gonna rub off on other people

so

and just try to be fair obviously

so i don't know how well i answer that

because i'm really not a manager i was

the abbot of a monastery for a while

but um

i don't know i think um being a

a warehouse manager or something might

be a little different

but there would be some overlap i guess

so the next question is from the arya

swasti project

and the arya swasti project says

greetings ponyo in hinduism as you

probably know

recognize yugas or age of time does

buddhism recognize something like this

and would you say that we are in a kali

yuga or some other factor of time much

respect sadhu well yeah buddhism has

adopted the ancient indian you know

cycles

and um so there are yugas

um

whether we are in the kali yuga or not

as questionable some people just you

know have no doubt we've got to be in

the kali yuga or an age of spiritual

darkness and so forth but i'm pretty

well acquainted with history and i don't

think things are really all that awful i

mean people aren't very religious in the

west

but still i mean you've got fewer

psychopathic kings and emperors and

fewer cannibals and and you know

fewer uh the quite infested forests

where you know you gotta have you know

soldiers accompany you in order to keep

you from being killed and robbed or

whatever

um

but the the main thing for me is

according to buddhism when you're

in like the golden age people live

astronomically long lives and it's all

justice you've got like the chakravartin

the the wheel turning monarch who rules

the world in peace and virtue and then

things gradually get worse and worse

after that and accompanying the things

getting worse and worse spiritually

the the lifespan

gets shorter and shorter until you're

down to like

i think it's like 14 years seven years

something like that people start

cannibalizing each other things get

really awful and of course

um you know that's not happening now

in fact i would say over the past few

hundred years

um the average lifespan has been

increasing instead of decreasing so it

could be

that these ages i mean they're not just

a uniform decline it could be like you

go down like this and then you got like

a little upsurge sort of like

global warming is supposed to be doing

or something you know it's it's going a

certain direction you got a little jog

and then it goes the other way and then

let it jog it could be that we're in a

jog i don't know

and the kitty is uh

being very

very friendly or bored or something

let's see in hinduism i'll just read the
question again this i want to make sure
that i get this
in hinduism as you probably know
recognize yuga's or age of time does
buddhism recognize something i said yes
yes and would you say that we are in a
kali yuga um i really don't think so
i don't i mean from the hindu point of
view yeah because everyone says so but
in the buddhist point of view um
i mean spiritually maybe we're doing
worse although it's hard to say
how well-off spiritually like
a medieval european peasant was
you know they had their catholicism they

believed it without question but were

they

happier or wiser or better off than us

is hard to say because you can't really

get into their mind other than maybe

read some of the stuff that they wrote

and it was only the really educated

people that were writing stuff

because the uneducated people didn't

know how

so yeah i thought about this before

just going with the buddhist description

of the decline

into

like the worst of the the kali yuga

i don't think we're even close to that

yet so we got something to look forward

to and i'll just move on to the next

question this is from

chakra gosha

and chakra ghosha says

in the zen there is a tradition of

chanting the ancestral line starting

from weepassi buddha

and the other six predecessor buddhas

and then listing the chain of teachers

and students by name from gautama buddha

to mahakasipah to ananda and so forth up

until the present is there a comparable

tradition of maintaining such a list in

taravana

if not a complete list

how far back can a typical terabot monk

trace his ordination line

um

well this is sort of like a two-part

question first you've got like the the

buddhist before godama buddha

and um there is a text in the pali

topedica called the the buddha one song

which i'm pretty sure covers the 28

buddhas

you know it's 27 before gotama i think

the gotama buddha was 28th in this

universal cycle and then there's going

to be matea after that

and if you read the buddha ghost if you

read the buddha warm song you'll see

that i mean it's just unbelievable to a

westerner some of the some of the

stories

like um

mangala buddha look up the story of

mangala buddha sometime

it was um it was it's very strange i

mean it's just like monty python realm

so weird

and so asian people can accept it

without question

um

westerners generally cannot unless

they're just the type that's very faith

oriented

and are willing to just accept what they

are told from you know a revered teacher

or whatever

um

and really you can't say that there is a

chain

of these buddhas because

i mean there's no lineage there's no

succession because buddhism or dhamma

has to completely die out before the

next buddha arises and he rediscovers it

so it's not like a transmission from one

buddhist next

it's just that

um you know buddha dies out it's

discovered rediscovered by a buddha and

then it dies out and then it's

rediscovered by another buddha and then

it dies out and so forth

with regard to the patriarchs yeah i

there really isn't

a lineage of patriarchs like there is in

zen

you know you've got i i can't remember

the number of indian patriarchs then you

have the six chinese patriarchs

um

and then uh who knows i mean it may be

that chinese or or zen monks in general

or mahayana monks may have like a more

elaborate lineage you know it's like the

tibetan monks will trace their lineages

back to

nagarjuna or padma sambhava or something

with regard to my tradition

i mean

i was ordained in the tompulu tradition

tom pulu

was um he learned his meditation

technique from

uh it was uh miguel in seattle

i don't even remember the his uh polly

name

but uh that's about as far back i mean

you could you could research it and go

back maybe a few more teachers beyond

that

or like like goenka i mean most going to

teachers or most goenka meditators know

that that goenko was a disciple of uba

kin uba king which is a disciple of some

monk whose name i don't remember they

probably know it and he was a disciple

of leddy seattle who was a great scholar

seattle back about 100 years ago

and um who let they might know who leddy

seattle was a disciple of and maybe two

or three beyond that tops

and other than that it's going to be

mythology and just uh guesses and so

forth

so

yeah it's it does exist but it's not

nearly as important as in some other

traditions

and um

yeah there's like the entire lineage

um may have been broken for all we know

like uh in sri lanka the sri lankan

lineage was the sangha was pretty much

invalid because so many monks were para

ajika or

raising families or getting married and

so forth so they weren't really monks

and any ordination that they performed

would be invalid and it was like that so

that

they had to send for real

valid monks from from burma and thailand

to get the sangha going again

in sri lanka so

um you don't know if that sort of thing

has happened like late ancient times

early medieval times

um you know it's just it's all lost

to uh

lost in antiquity

so um

i guess i guess i answered that one

how far back can a typical terrapod

trace his ordination line well he knows

what tradition he was in if

his teacher was a disciple of

another teacher within the same

tradition usually you know all the

lineage within your own tradition

back to the founder and you may know who

the teacher of your founder was and

maybe the founders teachers teacher but

then it generally just gets obscured and

lost

so the next question is from chaplin

and this one is similar to one that i
already answered so i may answer this
one in a somewhat abbreviated form
but chaplin says what is up with the
western buddhists in the comments
section of your last youtube video
declaring that the buddha never taught
about reincarnation in slavery didn't
exist in india
but was european
slavery i think chaplain means here it
is true that these western self-declared
buddhists do believe in everything that
buddhism is not
do you see any way any help or way
forward into the land of authentic
teachings for this these misguided plebs

um

well some of them may see the light i

mean if you practice you're going to get

wiser i mean that's the purpose of

dhamma practice it can be said that that

is the purpose of donald practice is to

cultivate wisdom

and so you may have foolish reasons for

meditating at first

you know you want psychic powers so you

can impress that that girl in history

class or whatever

but then if you practice correctly at

least

even though you have

sort of questionable motives at first

then you're going to make progress and

then your your motives will get wiser so

i mean that that's possible

um yeah getting back to the western

buddhists i'm not sure that the one that

was talking about slavery was even a

buddhist he was just kind of uh one of

those western

um authorities on buddhism

um

yeah he was saying that there was there

was no slavery in ancient india and

saying that there was no word for slave

in pali which was dasa

and um now he was saying no dasa was in

reference to

some like the the aboriginal ethnic and

ethnicity of the people living in

northwestern india

or at least a a aboriginal and

aboriginal ethnicity

and um

and i i just pointed out in a in a blog

post responding to this that uh you know

the english word slave

uh is pretty much the same as the pali

word dasa that slave is derived from the

word slav

that slave and slav are etymologically

the same word because the slobs were

enslaved so much in like early medieval

times you know they were subjugated

people that were sold as slaves

that they just became almost synonymous

and that's the way dasa was

like the rig veda talks about the dasa

or the dossier as these little brown

snub-nosed people that were being

conquered by by the vedic speak vedic

sanskrit speaking indo-aryans

um

and so dasa just came to me enslaved

just like arya came to me noble or like

the ruling class

okay and then with regard to

the buddha never teaching reincarnation

i have no idea how this person came up

with that one because it's just

throughout the polytechs it must be like

a lot of western buddhists who are

willing to believe that the buddha was

enlightened or at least very wise so

that anything in the text that they

don't like has to be fake it has to be

added by by later monks you know it's

just corruption of buddhism because

obviously

the the enlightened buddha would be

teaching you know what western leftists

are saying now

it's it's that kind of mentality as far

as i can tell at least with regard to a

lot of them

and so

yeah i mean

some people are so superficial and so

selective in their buddhism that they

may not make very much progress at all

and so

um

oh well

i mean it's it's probably been this way

for a long time

like um i read some

chronicle of um

or not necessarily a chronicle it was

one of those chinese mahayana monks a

chinese buddhist monk who came to india

to find

books of monastic discipline that he can

take back to china for the benefit of

the chinese buddhists

and

he claimed that at near

budgaya there was a monastery

dedicated to all the buddhas except

gotama and they were their lineage was

started by devadatta who was like the

buddhist judas iscariot

so

i mean there's been these kind of

distortions and heresies in buddhism for

a very long time

um

so i mean it's just something you have

to contend with and going with um

traditional buddhism

a lot of these people are just going to

go to hell like there was one person i

shouldn't even mention his name he was

actually he wrote an essay accusing

maha kaspa who was the buddhist chief

disciple at the time of the buddha's

death or paranibana he was accusing

mahakaspa of murdering the buddha

and

i mean accusing an enlightened being

assuming that makassar was enlightened

and he was considered to be a fully

enlightened arahant by tradition

just accusing him based on just the

flimsiest evidence of being a murderer

i mean

if if you can believe what the texts say

then that kind of attitude really can

lead to uh some serious bad karma

anyway

getting back to uh chaplin's

questions here the second question

how are your whippets doing

and for those of you who are not uh

studied in dog breeds a whippet is sort

of like a

a small greyhound and we've got two of

them here

and um one of them is doing really fine

and the other one is in heat and so she

has to stay

outside or in a in a big kennel

kind of a cage thing

because otherwise she's going to be

dripping

uh blood

or whatever whatever that substance is

that drips out of [__] and heat

onto on the floors and the furniture and

so forth so she's been unhappy lately

but um

saffy is like a little princess and

she's the only dog

lately that's been getting full run of

the house

i would like to have

um my dog genghis

uh come inside sometimes but uh he's

kind of a spaz and uh

my sweetheart doesn't trust his behavior

well enough to uh

be confident that she's not gonna have

to be cleaning up exasperating masses

but um genghis is not a whippet so maybe

i'm just throwing that in just just

uh what do you call it

i can't remember what it's called when

you just sort of mention somebody's name

not name dropping but uh

you know shout out that's what it is i'm

giving my dog genghis a shout out

and he's uh half pug and half boston

terriers like this little cannonball

okay so anyway the next question

is from bpat427

and bpat427 says

i know you said you're not a fan of

black metal but are you familiar with

power metal at all granted it's pretty

cheesy but very uplifting and empowering

huh yeah i've never even heard of it

until i got this question it's like

black metal with cheese

something like that

yeah i don't know

it's uh if it's very uplifting and

empowering that's that's good i mean i

listen to lots of different kinds of

music i might like power metal for all i

know but um

i've never heard of it before so i'll

just move on to the next question which

is similar in a certain respect

this is also from bpat427 what's your

opinion on roman von ungern sternberg

and i think

i have this vague recollection of having

heard that name before probably some

very brief account of roman von unger

and sternberg he may have been some

westerner who

just went into like uh an asian country

and sort of set himself up like the man

who would be king or something

but yeah i i don't know who it is really

i'm just guessing

so my opinion on roman von unger and

sternberg is i hope he was a nice guy

next question from bp427 would you ever

consume a psychedelic drug at this point

in your life oh what a naughty question

as it turns out i did consume one just a

few weeks ago

and uh

i'm thinking there's a good chance i may

consume

such a substance again such an entheogen

um

within the next few weeks

so

yeah i would i would ever can i would uh

i would definitely consider it yeah

yeah definitely and i have uh a few

times

since i stopped being a monk

yeah i don't know what i'm allowed to

say

so yeah

let's see but i mean before i became a

monk

taking

like psychedelics

was pretty much my spiritual practice at

least at the practical level you could

say that

um at the theoretical level you know i'd

be reading books and so forth

um just coming up with my own theories

but as an actual practice a spiritual

practice i sucked at meditation you know

just be it would be a a real feat just

to sit still for half an hour when i

first started out

and um so like one of the best spiritual

practices i had was just go out into a

wilderness by myself usually and uh you

know take a couple hits of acid or

something and

commune with nature run around naked

maybe do a little fire sacrifice to the

gods

um

yeah i mean it's a consciousness

expanding experience i think most of the

monks of my generation

including me when i was a monk started

off with psychedelics and then

it's like you experience

expanded states of consciousness

and it really throws into doubt the

validity of your normal waking state

because you realize that this is just as

valid at least as valid as my normal

waking state

certain aspects you know it's like a

mystical state most of the times that i

have taken psychedelics i have had

real religious experiences and mystical

experiences

and so

um

in a way it kind of helps you to

triangulate

you know it's like you've got more than

one way of looking at reality

and

so monks would or

people before they became monks would

would start with psychedelics and then

they would try to find some way of

cultivating those same states of

expanded consciousness

without the use of the chemical

but

um

it's it's taking the substance as a

general rule

is more reliable

it may not be quite as wholesome but

it's more reliable because you take the

the little tab of paper or whatever

and you've got a pretty good idea that

there's going to be something happening

whereas with meditation some people just

naturally suck at meditation they're
just not very good at it and it may take
years
of really strenuous effort to get to the
same level of expanded consciousness
that you could get just from taking one
or two hits of acid or whatever it may
happen to be ayahuasca or something
so yes maybe tmi is a long answer to a
short question
so i'll just move on to the next
question which is the last question not
only from bpat427 but from everybody
this evening and as you can see it's
night time now
and i've got bugs attracted to the

lights crawling on me

and okay so the last question here is

you've previously described loving a

partner as poking a hole through pink

floyd's wall

could you elaborate on the meaning of

that i've never listened to the album

the wall or watched the movie

so it kind of goes over my head

is the wall of the ego's protection

mechanism well bpap427 has just

insinuated that he's uh a youngster

i mean it's just amazing to me it's like

more than 10 years ago i was talking to

this guy in his 20s and i just happened

to mention that there was some burmese

villagers that would make jethro and

ellie mae look like sophisticated city

slickers by comparison and he didn't

know who i was talking about

he didn't know who jethro and elliott

may were so then i asked him just kind

of you know i'm kind of alarmed at this

point asked him if he knows who gilligan

is and yeah he never heard of gilligan

strange

so pink floyd's wall

um it was

arguably

pink floyd's greatest album

an opinion of most it's not my favorite

album i prefer wish you were here but

um it's a story it's a two album

set

telling the story about

um starting with childhood

and it's just this person due to just

the [__] upness of the adults around

him and as he becomes an adult the

[__] upness of the adults fellow

adults around him that are just

causing him to build this wall around

his heart he's completely closed off and

alienated you know he's got this wall

around his heart to protect his heart

but of course you know it it locks his

heart in as well as locking all the the

possible dangers out

you know all the people trying to hurt

his feelings or you know trying to get

him attached to them so that they can

break his heart or whatever

so

yeah it's like all in all it's just

another brick in the walls like every

everything that happens to you and

especially in case of some people it's

just adding another brick to this wall

you've got this defensive wall around

you that also makes you a like a

prisoner

and

so when you're loving a person if you

sincerely love someone you make yourself

vulnerable to them you have to make you

don't necessarily poke a hole but you

make an opening in pink floyd's wall

everyone everyone you know except for

like a

full genuine saint

is going to have you know some kind of

protective wall in my case

i think i was blessed

um

in that

throughout most of my life my heart was

sort of like a dehydrated apple

and so it didn't get hurt easily

you know it's like a little picket fence

would be plenty

of protection from my heart and you know

i didn't need brick walls or or bunkers

or anything

um

so yeah i'm i've been much more willing

to take risks

and um

much more willing to make myself

vulnerable just because

i don't get hurt as easily maybe or

maybe it's just unlike an aesthetic

thing in me where i'm just willing to

get hurt occasionally if i think it's

worthwhile if i think it's worth it

so i guess that's that was uh

a blessing for me i mean the

the heart like a dehydrated apple maybe

is not so great but um

i've been working on that that's been

one of my main

uh my main avenues of progress in this

life is cultivating compassion and love

for my fellow human

because for most of my life i love trees

more than i love the average human being

and um but i seem to be digressing here

so i mean when you love somebody you're

in a way you're

you're breaking down the division

between self and other you know it you

just become an us

it may be that two people

like let's say there's two delinquents

that just madly fall in love with each

other you know they might break down the

wall between themselves but they still

got the the double the wall around both

of them or something

and um but still i mean

just to be completely closed off and

alienated is is not a good way to live

your life and a saint would have no

sense of self they would have no purpose

for a wall so like a fully enlightened

being i assume has no

no alienating self

defensive

fortification around his heart

but um the average person maybe can't go

that far

so at the very least you you break down

that wall

towards one other person

and um you know that's healthy because

to that extent you're breaking down the

your

your alienation you're just your concept

of i me mine you know there's a there's

an us factor involved

so

yeah i've never watched the movie either

as

it's considered to be a great movie like

roger ebert

the great the god king roger ebert had

it on his list of the greatest movies of

all time in his opinion

but it just seems so dark and depressing

and

just i don't know it was pink floyd in

general

is dark and depressing

and that's one reason why i liked um or

why i do like wish you were here because

it was one of the few albums that was

inspired by something uplifting

you know there was the it was the whole

album as far as i can tell was dedicated

to sid barrett who took too much acid

and uh

fried his brain or something he just

kind of went off the end and

he had to leave the group and it was

like dedicated to him just out of

you know camaraderie or friendship or

something

so yeah i mean if getting back to the

question above i mean psychedelic drugs

i mean definitely there should be some

moderation involved you know it should

be used medicinally and not not so much

recreationally but uh you know you

should use it with the right right

intentions of uh

at the very least blowing carbon out of

your pipes you know it'll knock you out

of rods

but pink floyd's wall yeah um

i'm sure you can listen to it on youtube

if you're really curious

but um again the whole the whole story

of pink floyd's wall is just the

lifelong process

of just building this defensive

fortification around one's heart

to protect one's heart from being hurt

but at the very same time you just

become

alienated and um

yeah love is uh a very good therapy to

cure you a map

and that is the last question so uh i

guess we're all done

and uh i hope the exposure of this uh

camera

will

will be sufficient that uh

the uh

the optics here are not completely

messed up

and um

i'd say that if you have any questions

you're very welcome to ask and remember

there are no stupid questions

um and just ask them below if if you

please or if you have access to the

discord server you can ask there or if

you're on subscribe star which a few of

you may be

you can you can ask your questions there

also

and um

be happy

oh and buy my books if you haven't

already is also in the down below

and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 28 of

question and answer and i am your host

and question answerer panel bossa

and it's just kind of amazing to me that

we're we've done 28 of these or i've

done 28 of them anyway

and

if you average like 18 questions

per

episode which is probably a very

conservative estimate then

i've by the end of this episode i will

have answered more than 500 questions

which is kind of a lot of questions

although sometimes i do repeat myself

and answer the same sort of question

more than once but

still

sweet tea i'm living in the south

so i'll just wade into this and the

first question is from saul invictus

and saul invictus says

i am curious about where do you lean in

philosophy of mind i have two of your

books and i don't seem to grasp where

you belong are you a property dualist

cosmo psychist menistic idealist

pan psychist

naturalist or maybe something entirely

different

well that's kind of an interesting

question it's like a western philosophy

question which is uh kind of nice

although to tell you the truth i haven't

really

categorized my uh philosophy of mind

um

i don't think philosophy of mind is the

same as epistemology is it i think

that's philosophy of knowledge or

something

um but i've i've discussed my philosophy

before

um just the the basic can be explained

uh

you know through the simile of the block

of marble which which i've explained

several times if not many times

and

so you've got

ultimate reality

can be compared to just like this block

of marble just out in the middle of a

barren plane there's nothing to compare

it with so it doesn't you can't really

say what size it is because there's

really nothing to compare it with

you might as well say that it's sizeless

and within that block of marble is every

possible statue in fact there's like

impossible statues in there too you know

like uh a statue of someone with uh

with legs as thin as hairs that wouldn't

really stand up in reality or you can

have moving statues and so forth in that

block of marble

every single atom

is already there

you know it's just it all you have to do

is remove the excess rock and and the

statue is already in there and

i would say the universe works that way

um

you've got just

infinite formless energy or

consciousness

which

theists would call god

but because it is infinite and formless

it becomes paradoxical because it's it's

sizeless i mean you can't say whether it

exists or doesn't exist because it just

transcends the duality of existence or

non-existence

but every single possible

statute every single possible

manifestation of energy is contained

within that infinite

energy and uh

so you've got

some of these statues become

complicated enough that they become

self-aware

and that would be us

we are

virtual statues contained within this

infinity

that have become

uh recursive self-aware and then we

become essentially deluded and thinking

that we're separate from the rest of it

so um maybe that would make me a

monistic idealist

of this list here i'm not sure what a

cosmo psychist is

um i'm certainly not a dualist

pan psychist

yeah i'm not a

a naturalist except just uh at the

superficial level of explaining samsara

yeah i mean

i have a degree in biology

so um i do have some uh

use for scientific empiricism as a way

of explaining

this

um virtual

conditional world that we're living in

so

yeah i guess i guess that's me

um it's it's really it's it's

complicated to say i mean human language

is not designed to really talk about

reality

so i might as well throw in that uh

almost the only thing that hegel ever

wrote or said that i have any use for

is his idea

and with which he starts his dialectic

and his logic and that is he starts with

pure being

which would be kind of like

god or brahman of the hindus or dao

something like that

that's that's the thesis that's the

first thesis of the dialectic and of

course

uh hegelian dialectic then has the

antithesis

and the antithesis is pure non-being

so

he points out that pure being and pure

non-being are completely devoid of any

distinct determinate content so they

just kind of blend into each other

they're really indistinguishable and

then throughout the rest of his logic he

just takes that as a given

that pure being and pure non-being are

synonymous

so absolutely everything and absolutely

nothing

you can't really tell them apart

and so that kind of explains

how the universe comes into being or at

least seems to because uh

um

this everything is nothing

i don't know i'm just kind of

uh kind of wallowing in uh or straying

off into nonsense here so um

yeah sol invictus i mean you apparently

know more about the meanings of these

categories than i do

so uh

you can

figure it out for yourself but i'm

certainly not a materialist i do not

believe that physical matter is

ultimately real

so there is that

and i do have

a rather philosophical interpretation of

dependent core rising or

pedigree in in buddhism

where

it's like

all these conditions nothing has a

distinct self

entity

you know there is no self entity that's

largely what um

the the buddhist teaching of no self

is about or it can be interpreted that

way

that um everything exists because it's

conditioned by other things

and all these other things are also

likewise conditioned by other things and

so you've got this virtual reality

that's just sort of self-conditioning

and there's an infinite number of those

and uh the ultimate essence or substance

um

you can call it mind consciousness

i do think that the universe itself is

uh

conscious in a way that even a hydrogen

atom may have some

this

tiny elemental spark of consciousness to

it it just can't think of course

it doesn't really cognize anything

but what a physicist calls energy

is really just a very simple elemental

form of what a psychologist calls

consciousness

and what a psychologist calls

consciousness

is just a very complicated organized

form of what a physicist would call

energy

so i guess i'm some kind of idealist

so let's just move on to the next

question here

before

everyone gets so confused they just turn

off the uh the video

and the next question is from matthew

and matthew says

it seems that the purpose of religious

vocational behavioral constraints such

as the winnea

or rule of saint benedict is to impose

external discipline in order to foster

the growth of a more natural

form of inner discipline

please be so kind as to offer a

reflection

well

i remember uh

a wise old monk burmese monk seattle

uzodika mohammed uzodika who's known as

ujyotika in the west

said that the purpose of winia

buddhist monastic discipline

is to cause the

the life of a monk to be simple and

blameless

and i think that's about right i really

can't say with regard to the rule of

saint benedict i've never really studied

catholic monastic discipline

but with regard to buddhist monastic

discipline

it simplifies your life

and

and also just

with regard to society

it makes the behavior of monks blameless

or at least it did in ancient india

nowadays a monk

acting blamelessly in accordance with

the customs of ancient india might be

blamed sometimes in the modern or

postmodern west like a monk that won't

touch women

might really offend feminists for

example

um

so

yeah

in a way it helps with regard to

spiritual development

by

first of all

you're you're not

indulging

in immoral behavior

so it it's you've got less

like uh

pushback from the universe

or uh you know like

karmic uh retribution getting in the way

and makes things very simple so that

your mind is clear you don't have a

guilty conscience so much because you're

not

wallowing in immorality so it just makes

your mind clear and simple and then it

makes it easier to practice dhamma and

make progress

and you don't have angry mobs with

torches and pitchforks

besieging the monastery

so i think that's that's the main

purpose of it

okay

the next question also from matthew

since returning to normal life has the

sudden removal of enforced behavioral

discipline caused a decrease in your

ability to maintain equanimity

has increasing the difficulty setting of

your life

increased or expanded your skillfulness

in the application of dhamma or have you

found the grind of daily life to be

eating away at some of your previously

developed skillfulness my sincere

apologies if this question is too

personal

well those of you familiar with uh

these uh videos and my blog for that

matter now that uh there's pretty much

nothing that's too personal

i i've gotten into trouble for uh

just the whole tmi thing

so let's just wade into this

um

the sudden removal of enforced

behavioral discipline

uh

yeah

to some degree i mean

just

being

constrained is like a pressure cooker

you know like having your life

completely regulated like anyone who's

been to a lot of meditation retreats

know that somebody who's put into this

practical sensory deprivation maybe

they're moving in slow motion you know

eating in slow motion walking in slow

motion getting minimal sleep and so

forth they can some people just crack up

so i mean it can just really i mean it's

like a [__] accelerator to some degree

brings up neurotic stuff that kind of a

thing so

um

living the life of a monk doesn't

necessarily result in just blissful

clarity

and so living a more natural life

actually

can cause

fewer explosions

or maybe not explosions but um

less turmoil to some degree

if you're if you're skillful at the way

you go about things

um

but i mean when you're living in the

world there are more distractions you

know it's it is harder to be mindful

when you know you've got a job to do and

you've got people interacting with you

and most of those people are not really

um you know they're not dhamma

practitioners

and uh for one thing uh just driving a

car

south carolina especially is where i

live

um they've got some of the worst drivers

in america apparently um there's even

some uh empirical data to support that

with regard to insurance

statistics and so forth and really it's

like half the people in town do not use

turn signals it seems like

and

some people just drive like idiots

and um i occasionally drive like an

idiot

and so just having somebody almost

smash into your car

can uh cause cuss words to flow

from from the oral cavity this kind of a

thing

so

yeah just living in the world and

interacting with other people

it is more difficulty

or it is more difficult and um

yeah equanimity is uh

it's kind of strange it's like there's

different levels of equanimity different

kinds of equanimity like for example

i've i've told people i told like a monk

who was a mahasi arya once that uh i've

i've just thrown conniptions mindfully

where

um

like for example one time i was in my

cave in burma and it was just so hot

just you i could not be comfortable you

know you'd wake up at four in the

morning and sweating and you knew what

it was gonna be like at two in the

afternoon

and uh just the the chronic heat

just started really getting to me and

one time i was just

just cussing and slamming things

and um it was like something clicked

and

i was so used to being mindful

that it was just like a part of me was

cussing and slamming things but there

was this deeper part of me you know

deeper down that was just watching the

whole thing it was sort of like being an

actor playing the role of somebody

throwing a connection

and when you've had experiences like

that one

really strong impression that you get is

that deeper part's always there

so you can be just completely flipping

out or whatever

not that i am in the habit of completely

flipping out

but there's always this stillness

you know there's just like this passive

disinterred disinterested observer going

that's always there

um

another example of that was uh my father

was a

hardcore alcoholic for many years

he was he was a rare kind of alcoholic

in the west but it's fairly common

in the in like russia or eastern europe

where he would just drink a fifth of

vodka pretty much every day and you

never really saw him drunk and you never

really saw him sober he was just kind of

fueled on alcohol

and um

as was his his way

one fine day he decided to just cold

turkey

and just stop drinking

and

um he went to the dts because he was

really an alcoholic and he was just

raging and just like tearing at his hair

and peeing his pants and

um

then he was he was hallucinating also

and at one point he was he hallucinated

this big eye on the wall just watching

you know there's like this eye on the

wall watching everything that's going on

and he knew that that was like an aspect

of himself you know there's like this

deeper level that's just always watching

and once you've i mean when you've had

sufficient experience of that kind of

level of consciousness it it abides you

know it's you have some connection with

that

so that even

if you're

you know in a state of you know whatever

it is turmoil or despair or whatever at

the surface

then i mean deeper down there's always

this

calm observing aspect that you never

really are cut off from

so that kind of

that kind of thing can still happen

let's see

checking the question out here

see have you found the grind of daily

life to be eating away at some of your

previously developed skillfulness well i

mean just the

the simplicity and clarity

is

it's not as much as before

just because the lot my life is not as

simple as it was before

and i have a lot more

personal interaction especially now that

i have a mate

a biological mate

and um yeah i don't regret that at all

that's it's really nice

but

still i mean it's just a whole different

kind of a whole different way of going

about life than just um

silence and austerity living alone in a

cave in the forest

but it's it's uh i mean it's just a

different a different way of going about

things and ultimately

you can say it's neither better nor

worse although a devout orthodox

buddhist would say well of course being

a monk is better

tom it doesn't work for everybody

i think i'm just going to move on to the

next question whether or not

regardless of whether i completely

answered that one

because it's my show

okay matthew asks the next question

which is

have you now answered oh you have now

answered one hundreds of questions from

a western audience what questions are

people not asking that you think they

should be that's an interesting question

that's the first time anyone has

answered asked that one i think

i have now answered hundreds of

questions yeah it's like

about 500

at least

from a western

audience what questions are people not

asking that you think they should well i

mean people should ask whatever they you

know they really want to know

i don't want them to be asking

certain questions that are interesting

to me

just

if it's not interesting to them i mean

if they don't really want to know

so

i don't really have any any complaints

about

what people have been asking i mean some

people

uh

you know they'll be asking the weird pp

poopoo gay but sex questions or whatever

and i mean if they really want to know

that i mean that's fine with me it's

it's all it's all fair game so long as

they're sincere questions

um

i suppose

um

fine points of dhamma you know that's

kind of interesting to me or questions

about like what the original earliest

buddhism was like

that that would be interesting to me and

it would might be interesting to other

people too

so

yeah if you can't think of any question

to ask just ask something along those

lines and uh it's interesting to me so

at least somebody's interested

but all in all yeah i've got no

complaints people have been asking good

questions and that itself was a good

question

so last question from matthew

what is your personal take on the hindu

concept of self where all creation is

essentially one thing

brahman versus the buddhist concept of

no self versus the christian idea that

we humans

are an imperfect reflection of the

divine what do you think is hitting

closer to the mark

well

i must say that like with regard to

metaphysics i don't think that

terrabotta buddhism

comes closest to hitting the mark

because theravada buddhism for whatever

reason

it became materialistic

and so according to tarawatta orthodox

tarawata physical matter is ultimately

real

and just pluralism is valid

and um

yeah i just i just don't see it my

thinking is more mahayanas and always

has been with regard to that

um i think the terrabonds would have

done well to have

paid heed to nagarjuna

um with regard to the hindu concept

for all creation is essentially one

thing well that goes back to the block

of marble doesn't it i was just

mentioning that

and that block of marble could be called

near guna brahman so long as uh

no statues have been singled out

in potential or conditional form

but the thing is

like i also mentioned like hegel was

saying

when you've got something that's

infinite and formless

then uh you can't really say whether it

exists or not

and so it just goes off the scale it's

you can't really talk about it in in any

kind of valid way so going with uh hin

or buddhist logic you know to say that

it exists is invalid to say that it

doesn't exist is invalid to say that it

does and doesn't exist is invalid to say

that it neither does nor does not exist

is invalid

so we have to kind of wallow in delusion

or at least illusion

when talking about this kind of stuff

and um

you have to use dualistic language i

mean language is by its very nature

dualistic at least to some degree

so

um

theists

including the vedantists

go with the error of is

it does exist

and then everything is a manifestation

of that

whereas the buddhists go with the error

of doesn't exist usually at least the

terrabottans do you know they they speak

in terms of you know voidness emptiness

cessation that kind of a thing

and um

i mean each each side has its advantages

at least with regard to buddhism

if you go with the doesn't exist you

know like the

this

um

creation is essentially one thing where

it's all sort of

combined into this one

essence you know the spirit of god or or

whatever you want to call it the dao um

you're reifying it and then you're like

believing in that and it can be an

obstacle

whereas not believing anything

is sort of the earliest most archaic

philosophy of knowledge you know it's

like

it wasn't even really skepticism it was

just you cannot know the truth by

thinking about it and so you just

clear your mind

just make yourself wide awake without

singling out any particular thoughts and

that will bring you closer to reality

um

see but i mean i do have a lot of

respect for like um

shankara you know advaita vedanta that

kind of a thing i mean

you can you can uh

look at the situation from both points

of view and kind of triangulate because

both have their own

merits

see the christians idea that we are an

imperfect reflection of the divine what

were the

statues the virtual statues in the block

of marble

um

but yeah the christian idea like we've

got an immortal soul that

is different from all other immortal

souls and if you're going to go with any

kind of self view then

i think the vedantist idea that the the

atman or self is brahman or god so

everybody is sharing the same soul which

is just

that

aspect of the individual

that is ultimately real you know it's

like the underlying ultimate reality

that uh you know underlies all of the

illusion of maya

that is uh you know it's not entirely

valid because nothing you can say about

it is entirely valid but uh

that comes much closer to the mark than

saying

um there are an infinite number of

immortal souls that are all different

from each other

and that those immortal souls can change

and so forth

but uh in buddhism they just go with

isn't and uh

no immortal soul and no real essence

even other than just this conditionality

of these you know conditioned conditions

you know each condition that's

conditioning conditioning us for example

is it self-conditioned by all these

other things and it's just this infinite

almost like an infinite regress

of conditions conditioning each other

and causing what seems like a physical

universe or a phenomenal universe

so

yeah we're getting into some weird

metaphysical

waters in this one

so i think i'll just move on to the next

question which is by

toronto nationalist

and toronto nationalist says

are there any good resources like books

or videos about celibacy

or semen retention practices in the

dharma

hmm

well i mean you can find a lot of stuff

about celibacy just in the ancient texts

semen retention practices

i mean

in traditional theravada semen retention

practices simply means that

you don't have sex and you don't

masturbate but still

my experience when i was a younger monk

especially is the semen is not exactly

retained because

periodically you just have like a

pornographic dream

in your sleep

and uh the excess pressure is released

in that way

and that is um

you know there's no offense i mean it's

it's uh it's completely allowable

for

for monks to have wet dreams

and when i got into my 40s i stopped

having them

and i kind of missed them actually

um

but with regard to celibacy semen

retention practices i did have a reader

of my early blog who's really into this

and he actually had a website going just

on the the whole subject of celibacy and

semen retention practices and i'm sure

that if you look on the internet you can

find all kinds of stuff about it but um

to me

i mean celibacy is

or something like that is the less you
think about it you know the less you try
to organize it and turn it into this
system the better it works it's sort of
like the fat lady on a diet you know the
stereotypical fat lady on a diet who's
just she's tried all these diets and
she's she's like like struggling to to
lose weight and just making a big deal
of it and it just kind of perpetuates it
you know it's like struggling with it
makes it stronger
you know it's getting muscles from all
the struggling that she's doing with it
and um
that's one reason why um

oftentimes it doesn't work out very well

for the nice fat lady

and it's the same way with with just

about anything including celibacy and

semen retention i mean the more you make

an issue of it

the more

like unstable it can be unless you're

like a catholic medieval catholic saint

who just has this stainless steel faith

that if you

emit semen you're gonna burn in hell or

something you have no doubts at all and

it just drives you to the point of

fanaticism where you're just gonna do it

then yeah maybe that would work but um

it's really hard for modern westerners

to work up that level of just uh

single-minded

wild-eyed fanaticism

or uh faith

we really are not a strongly

faith-oriented people here in

the uh the postmodern west

but um yeah so i mean just do it and uh

don't think about it much

is that's probably the best way of going

about it

um

semen retention practices

yeah also i've i read in a book a long

time ago how uh the chinese were really

into that the taoists

where

a chinese man was supposed to preserve

his yang essence

and he was supposed to

get as much yin essence as possible

which meant

he should have lots of sex

but he should not

emit semen

except for his his wife

for the purpose of making babies and the

rest of the time he should like retain

it just so that his yang essence builds

up and then he gets more yin essence

from the female that balances the yin

and yang

and so that kind of avenue might be uh

worthy of of research i suppose but it

wouldn't really be terrible and buddha

buddhism it wouldn't you know it

wouldn't be

terrible buddhist dhamma it'd be taoism

chinese

um

but in terrible it just says don't do it

and just pretty much leaves it in that

so i'll just move on to the next

question

after telling toronto nationals one more

time i mean just i'm there's lots of

information on that subject on the

internet i am sure

but i've never really been all that much

interested in

you know making

like a an issue of it

you know all my years as a celibate monk

um

yeah maybe i'm maybe i'd be better off

if i if i did but um

it's just the rule says if you

i mean if if a monk has sex

with a male or a female or even an

animal then he's just excommunicated for

life so that would really i was never

even seriously tempted to get myself

excommunicated

but um

just just with regard to uh emitting

semen intentionally that's san gadi cesa

number one which is uh

it's a relatively serious offense

and uh a monk who

emits semen intentionally

commits somehow he says number one has

to do penance for six days and six

nights plus

uh as many

days and nights as he uh didn't confess

it so like you don't confess it for a

week then you've got to do an extra week

of penance and it's really a pain in the

neck and you've got to get go through

this ceremony with 20 at least 20 monks

of in good standing which can be

inconvenient

doing the penance itself can be

inconvenient and just the thought of the

inconvenience of it

um is a pretty good deterrent

from rubbing one out

so to speak

um

so yeah i think i'll just uh move on to

the next question and this is from rob

alias dhamma farmer

and uh rob's first question is

thoughts on alan watts question mark

and really alan watts is apparently a

controversial figure

and um

he was mainly a writer about zen like

back in the 50s and 60s i think and i've

read one book by him at least one just

called zen buddhism

and he's

well written or well i mean he writes

well

well written

yeah he i mean he wrote well i mean it

was it was easy to read

and um

informative

uh he was sort of uh

you know there's a whole crop of

uh buddhist uh

promulgators back then like edward

kansai was another one

who uh did more terra wadden stuff

and um i don't know i i guess he was

like messing around with

girls and stuff and maybe

he uh

you know had like a shady side um

there's uh ken wheeler you know the the

tattooed monkey

live streams

just says alan watts is just flat out

evil but then again he says that uh

trader joe's is evil

so

yeah i i really don't know that much

about onwards i just read that one book

by him and it was you know standard

standard western approach to zen and

kind of nice and you know i've heard a

few of his uh

youtube videos where he's just giving

spiritual advice i guess he was like

some kind of

advisor

um

at like a college or something

so he did have some wisdom he may have

had a shady side though like a lot of

people do have wisdom

had you know i like the bhagwan raj nish

alias osho

you know he had some wisdom too he

definitely had a shady side as well

and there's there's lots of people like

that so maybe on watts was was among

their number

so i'll just move on to uh the next

question from rob alias damma farmer

i've heard a lot of debate on the eyes

open eyes closed position and meditation

does it matter thanks that's that's a

good question

and um i've

i've heard some debate on that also

and um

there there there is some argument in

favor of eyes open

because

um

i have a restless mind by nature

it's um udacha in pali just restlessness

and agitation which is common among

westerners we're just like compulsive

thinkers um a boo a burmese village

farmer

who doesn't think very much he can just

sit down and just go into in relatively

deep samadhi but um

we westerners um we just think a lot

and

having your eyes open

and just like gazing at a

blank wall for example

um it uses up a certain amount of

of mental energy

or like brain energy if you're if you're

into the materialistic explanation

and um so it can like help to calm your

mind just because some of the this

excess energy of your mind

is

being expended

on

the

the process of of seeing

and some kind of meditation you just

have to have your eyes open if you're

doing walking meditation then your eyes

are open or um

doing casino meditation like meditating

upon a colored disc

or meditating upon a decomposing corpse

which you're supposed to do in terribata

but it doesn't happen very much anymore

um

then obviously you have to have your

eyes open for that

in zen you just look at a blank wall

is my understanding but i mean if you

are gonna have your eyes open you should

be

um looking at something blank

something featureless

because if you've got any kind of

patterns or designs then

you're going to be distracted by those

and

you know you're going to be like

counting the squares or whatever

so you know that that patch it looks

like looks kind of like a gargoyle you

know

and um so if you are going to have your

eyes open and you're not

doing walking meditation or focusing on

like a casino disc or something then you

should have uh your eyes open towards

like a blank wall or something or just

having them open in the dark i mean it

doesn't really matter all that much

if if you're in sitting in darkness

whether your eyes are open or closed

but um

i used to have my eyes closed and then

gradually

while living in the cave i would uh sit

there with my eyes open in fact

sometimes in a forest

i would uh do a kind of improvised

casino where

i'd be sitting there looking out at the

forest and they're

just

my eyes would settle upon like a roughly

circular patch of green that was maybe a

different shade from the surrounding

green

and just

focus my

or not even so much focus as just like

you know rest my gaze

at that and it's just sort of a calming

you know

semi-casino i suppose

so yeah if it works for you i mean i

mean the real test is does it work

better for you

you know you just try both ways and find

out what causes your meditation to be

better and then do that that's probably

the best advice i could give

so i'll just move on to the next

question from rob alias dumafarmer

and that is as follows

let's see buddhism aside and being as

you have a theory regarding staring into

the fire was our prehistoric ancestors

meditation

do you believe that if we go that far

back every human was

enlightened

being able to sample the world

completely as it was in nature and not

in civilization possibly created a

people that could truly see the world

from the experiences that we have heard

historically from enlightened beings

since

would this theory have any weight behind

it from your perspective well from my

perspective i consider it very unlikely

for a number of reasons um i did write

an article a long time ago

which is in one of my books

um

trying to come up with

how meditation got invented in the first

place you know sitting in formal

meditation i mean somebody had to invent

it presumably

and i thought one possibility

was that it came from just staring into

a campfire like in the stone age people

would just sit around the campfire and

uh it maybe it's like an animal instinct

in the human animal

to just go into a mild trance state i

mean i certainly do i think pretty much

anybody who sits around a campfire

you know you just sit there and you're

just gazing into the flickering fire and

um

you know you just go into a mild trance

state and it might be it might have had

survival value keep people from

wandering off into the darkness and

getting

snatched by a leopard or something

but it's it's like a

a really mild trance state it's not deep

meditation it's certainly not enough to

get anyone enlightened and in fact i

think

that instinct to

just gaze slack jawed into a campfire

has a lot of people just addicted to

television it's sort of the same

instinct it's a misguided instinct where

we just stare slack jawed into a tv

screen

and

you know just the flickering light just

has us in a mild trance and i doubt that

anybody aside from maybe uh

chauncey gardner in the movie being

there ever became enlightened from uh

from watching tv

i don't know

so

also there's the other aspect of

people like sigmund freud

who believe that any civilized person is

bound to be neurotic but like somebody

living naked in jungle like some savage

living in a state of prime evil

just pray medievalness in a jungle

wouldn't be neurotic and you know there

was like going back to rousseau and the

noble savage idea and all that but they

weren't aware of the way

hunter-gatherer people actually live

and uh they seemed

pretty messed up to me and they've got

so many superstitions and taboos that

their mind is kind of locked into this

really crude belief system in many cases

so

yeah from that angle also

uh i consider the people in a pre

well pre-civilization i mean

just going with the old scheme of things

you had like

below civilization full-blown

civilization you had barbarism and below

that you had savagery

and

yeah i don't think that stone age people

who were barbarians at best

really would be

like

noble savages

um

yeah just like

like the myth of the american indians

who just lived in perfect harmony with

their environment and so forth

um

yeah i don't think that there's a lot of

validity to that argument

so you had these stone age people

who would go into a mild trance state

looking into the campfire at night but

um

it really didn't uh

enlighten them

and

although they had fewer distractions

with regard to

just all the stuff that goes on in the

modern world

nevertheless they had all these taboos

and and just

fear-based beliefs they were like

locked into survival mode a lot

and um

yeah i don't think they were necessarily

any more enlightened than we are

i don't really believe in a golden age

either for that matter

so i'll just move on to the next

question

this is also from uh rob alias dhamma

farmer

and this is kind of an interesting one

i've thought about this one a lot

if you cross or wrong an arahant does

that generate more consequential bad

karma than if you crossed or wronged

ignore me and if the above is true

if you have not knowingly wronged the

arahant and karma is volition and mental

states then would the karma and

consequences be lesser

and this is kind of

it's like a paradoxical position of

tarabata buddhism because there are

stories in the texts

of somebody

like there's this story of a guy

who uh he's a rich man and he offers

food to a pajeka buddha so this is

before the time of the buddha you have

this enlightened hermit

he's going for alms

in india and this rich man

puts food into his bowl or he has one of

the servants put food into his bowl and

then after that he regrets it it's like

i should have just given it to the

servants you know this this these

parasites on society you know these

beggars walking around and um

he got huge karma going both ways for

that according to this uh

i don't know if it's in a suta or a

commentary but it is uh definitely

theravada buddhism where he went to

heaven and hell

both i mean he went to heaven for

offering the food to the to the pacheco

buddha but he also went to hell for

regretting it afterwards and he didn't

even know that this pajeka buddha was

enlightened

you know so

going with orthodox tarawata you really

got to be careful about

enlightened beings even i mean you don't

even know if they're enlightened or not

but if you have like some bad thought

about an enlightened being you can go to

hell for him there's a story of oh i

guess soraya

in the in the commentaries i think it's

the dhammapada commentary

where there's this guy named soraya

and um

there's this

enlightened monk

taking a bath in the river and

this this man soraya he's a rich man

he notices this monk and he's got this

this perfect golden complexion and he's

thinking i wish my wife had like

beautiful golden skin like that and

because of that thought he didn't know

that this monk was enlightened probably

even

but because of that thought he

immediately turned into a woman just

instantaneously boom

he's a female

and that was considered to be a

punishment in uh ancient india you know

it was like karmic retribution

and um he had to apologize years later

he's already married to some other guy

in in some other town taxilla i think

and uh he's he's or she at this point

has borne children to her husband

and then finally she meets an old friend

of hers from you know back when she was

male and tells tells him the whole story

and he says you gotta you gotta

apologize to this uh enlightened being

or apologize to this wise monk

and after she apologized

then she turned male again and then she

was ordained as a monk and became

enlightened but um

so according to orthodox buddhism

yeah i mean just the

slightest one negative thought about an

enlightened being can really mess you up

i don't really get that though i mean

i'm kind of skeptical

about such things i mean if you don't

even know whether if they're enlightened

or not

then uh

yeah which which reminds me of uh ken

wheeler again i suppose i shouldn't be

talking about him but he actually wrote

an article

accusing mahakasapa of murdering the

buddha

and i mean if these stories about

dissing enlightened beings are true and

if mahakapar really was fully aligned he

was the senior monk in the

in the sangha at the time of the

buddha's death he was the

the questioner at the the first council

and was considered to be enlightened he

was you know supposedly

the most outstanding monk with regard to

ascetic practices

and uh if someone is accusing him of

being a murderer i mean

yeah that's uh

from just from orthodox terrible to

buddhism that would be the road to hell

just assuming that he really was fully

in line

and didn't really murder the buddha

so

but again it's it's like as rob alias

dharma farmer here says

if karma is volition you know karma is a

mental state and you don't even know

maybe deep down there's like this

connection

like this empathic connection where deep

deep down you you have to know

that this person is uh a superior being

or something but

um

yeah

there is a lot of emphasis on this idea

in terravata that when you're

interacting with another being the more

advanced they are

you know the more benefit you get from

doing good things with regard to them

and the more danger the more you know

detriment you get from doing you know

bad things even thinking bad thoughts

and i really don't see how that works

it could just be

um

just early buddhists

trying to like glorify

their own position you know it's like

you better be careful about thinking bad

things about us because you don't know

maybe we're enlightened or something

so yeah it is it is kind of a weird

situation in terrible buddhism

but um i would be more inclined to just

stick with the idea that

um

karma is really a mental state and um

it might be that the aura would just

forgive you

you know if if they're fully enlightened

and you

you know kind of slight them you know

you bump up against them on the sidewalk

or something and don't say excuse me or

anything i doubt that they're gonna like

curse you or anything

so

yeah it is it is sort of uh

uh like an enigma maybe i should ask

john punedamo about it

but uh we did talk about it a little bit

in a recent video

but um

yeah it is it is kind of a strange

situation i've i've wondered about that

myself

and um

i would guess that really i mean it just

depends on your mental states and

whether they're enlightened or not

unless it does influence your mental

states in some mysterious subconscious

way

then it should be irrelevant

so i'll just move on to the next

question which is from

rafi 46

and rafi 46 says

a former christian who is a buddhist now

posted on reddit that he is upset that
some christians are proselytizing in
thailand i think about responding the
following so he's thinking about saying
in the following
bit here
even if all tithes become christians you
should not try to prevent this otherwise
you will violate the second noble truth
of buddhism if you have a desire to keep
christianity out of thailand you will
suffer because according to the second
noble truth of buddhism any form of
desire is the cause of suffering the
buddha for example was against the
oppressive caste system back then but he
never urged his followers to actively

try to stop it

unquote does my response sound legit

well

i would just say that

i mean

if you do something you're not

necessarily motivated by craving

like if you just see that

one path

is superior to another path

then by following the superior path is

not necessarily

making suffering for yourself because

you're craving to follow the superior

path you always have to make choices and

you always have to

i mean you always have to have some kind

of behavior

i mean it's really difficult to just sit

motionless all the time

so

um

an example i give a lot is if you get a

flat tire then you get out and change

the flat tire doesn't mean that you're

against the flat tire you know there's

no hatred or anger necessarily towards

that flat tire

and you just see that it means the thing

to do is to fix the flat tire so you get

out and fix it it's just what you do

and it doesn't necessarily involve any

you know misery inducing craving

and i mean you can go about just about

anything in this way i mean

like uh

feminists protesting or something um

i mean you can do it out of just like

love for for your their fellow women

you know i mean if they're motivated by

positive mental states

then you know it's a positive thing if

the woman next to them might be

motivated by hatred and resentment of

men and they're so they're doing

something negative even though they

might be just

walking down the same street holding

similar signs

um

so yeah i mean it's like

um

if you think that

people being buddhist in thailand would

make them happier and just out of

compassion

for the people of thailand you make

you know non-violent non-hostile

actions to preserve buddhism in thailand

and that's not necessarily doing

anything motivated by

craving

that is going to increase suffering

necessarily but it does depend on on

your volitions your your will you know

your

your perceptions also

so i mean there are enlightened ways of

going about it

wiser ways and more foolish ways and uh

if you've got wise motives

and you're doing it wisely then you're

doing something that's uh probably

pretty good

on the other hand if you just like hate

christians

and you're doing out of hatred for

christians and not love of dharma

then uh

yeah you're gonna be making the

situation worse

so

it reminds me of

a book that um

i read a long time ago it's one of the

seth books i read i read a few of those

and uh seth who is supposedly a

multi-dimensional entity

channeled through a woman jane roberts

um he said that you won't get peace by

hating war you get peace by loving peace

and you know it's similar to

to to this kind of situation you know if

you love dhamma and you try to promote

that

then you know you're doing something

fairly good whereas if you hate

christianity

and you know you do the same kind of

actions with that motive instead then

you're doing something negative

and making bad karma bad karma

so yeah just do what seems like the

right thing to do

and uh have some equanimity about it

and there you go so i'll just move on to

the next question which is from

yuichiro

and yuichiro says

what do you think of karma yoga have you

practiced something like it buddhism

emphasizes meditation but theoretically

you can become enlightened through yoga

of action

well

that's kind of a good question yeah

that's a good question

um in yoga i think there are four kinds

of let's see you've got karma yoga

you've got bhakti yoga

you've got

nyana what guyana yoga

you've got raja yoga

there might be another one but those are

the four that i remember

so

karma yoga is the yoga of action like

serves that's what mahatma gandhi was he

was a karma yogi

or somebody like um like mother teresa

in calcutta

could be called a karma yogi even though

she was a christian nun

then you've got bhakti yoga which is the

yoga of devotion towards a guru or

towards a god or

something and then you've got

gyana yoga which is you know like

studying the upanishads reflecting on

that and uh

just becoming

enlightened through gnosis through

knowledge

and then you've got raja yoga which is

essentially spiritual practice and

meditation

and of course buddhism

tends to emphasize the more head

oriented ones like the the nyana yoga

and

the raja yoga especially

and really doesn't put much emphasis on

karma yoga because karma just

perpetuates karma you know you do you do

actions it just perpetuates more actions

if there are volitional actions

so yeah buddhism really doesn't put a

lot of emphasis on karma yoga other than

just morality

you know like following the the rules of

monastic discipline in a sense could be

called a kind of

basic karma yoga but that's not what

gets you enlightened to believe that

actions will get you enlightened is uh

it's called sila bata para masa

which is uh like clinging to

morality and observances

that enlightenment is uh

you're not gonna like

cause enlightenment through your actions

you can facilitate enlightenment just by

you know doing good and avoiding doing

bad and so forth but um

so

with regard to karma yoga as yuichiro is

asking about here it could be done

through

a kind of selfless action like what is

promoted in the bhagavad-gita like the

bagala gita says you know whatever you

do

don't do it for the sake of

the end result just offer up

that and the end result to god

just put it all in god's hands

and um that might be self-view from the

buddhist point of view but at least it's

a kind of selfless action

you know it's not

action

motivated by you know selfish greed and

so forth and that could be a kind of

practice

that would be conducive to enlightenment

and i think that is how karma yoga is

interpreted

um at its highest level where

it's like you know it's not you really

doing it anymore you're just trying to

empty yourself out and just becoming

like a puppet of the will of of god or

something

so um yeah if you do it selflessly

then uh

with with no greed for the outcome

no attachment to uh the results of what

you're doing or to uh just the act

itself

then it i mean you can make progress

doing that

so

yeah so i think uh

it's it's really not for me

i've never really been into uh

service of my fellow man other than

through things that i enjoy like

answering questions for example

but um i'm really not

i've really never been called to like be

the lepers or anything

so

but i get it i mean it is a spiritual

practice i mean it's definitely got its

uh its benefits whether you can actually

become enlightened

by washing the feet of lepers or not i'm

not sure

but it could be i mean you can get

enlightened doing just about anything

so i'll just move on to the next

question and this is from air rain

and this is a history question

what effect did the cataclysm of 536

have on buddhism

in

in that region at the time i recently

heard that the period after was when

islam started spreading rapidly as

muhammad's family began feeding starving

populations that were affected etc there

must have been some serious upheavals

going on in india and central asia

during that period that also had lasting

influence on buddhism

question mark

well first i should point out

to those of you unfamiliar with the year

536 of the common era

that uh

yeah it was considered to be the most

miserable year in history it was just a

really bad year

and the main

bad thing about it

was

that there was some super volcano in

indonesia indonesia's got lots of icky

volcanoes that

explode every century or so

not the same one but um

you know they'll just just wipe out the

entire island all life on that island

and maybe a few surrounding ones and

we'll just darken the skies and cause no

summer

uh even in the northern hemisphere

and um it's happened a few times in

within in historical times

um back in the early 1800s i think there

was uh

what was it mount tambora exploded near

the island of bali and it was like the

year with no summer

and 536 was worse it was a really big

one and so it was uh

it caused a lot of starvation failed

crops just thousands of miles away the

whole world was cooled way down due to

all the dust and

and

debris in the air smoke and so forth

so there was that also 536 was the time

of uh the first pandemic of plague

which in the in the west was called the

plague of justinian because justinian

the great

of the uh eastern roman or byzantine

empire was uh sitting on the throne in

constantinople

and uh

i think it was like about half the

population of the roman empire died

around that time

just through

um just all kinds of calamities there

was wars going on and starvation and the

disease and everything but with regard

to india and central asia which were

buddhist predominantly buddhist at the

time

there was almost no history really

like organized systematic history of you

know in this year this happened

it didn't really exist yet

in india and um so i mean i've never

really studied

what was happening in india in the in

the sixth century

or central asia i mean is they were most

yeah so

i'm partly just ignorant on the subject

of what was going on in india and

central asia in the mid 6th century and probably they weren't keeping a lot of accurate records they did not have an objective sense of history like in the west

like like the greeks in the and the hebrews they had this idea of or of uh objective history

and you know they would keep meticulous records and like egypt you can say that something happened in egypt in you know the year

2562 bc

because you know they've got the whole lineage of the pharaohs you know the third year of this pharaoh and and and on and on but in india and central asia

they really didn't operate that way

as far as i can tell

and so i would say the the main effects

on buddhism it was spreading into china

around that time following the trade

routes through central asia so it may

have been that like migrations

of people trying to to find greener

pastures

due to uh

especially the just the changes in the

weather due to the the volcano that

exploded and so forth

um you know it may have facilitated the

spread of buddhism

but aside from that i really

i'm really unsure what exactly was going

on in 536 in india and central asia

probably they were affected

but

i really can't say

so let's move on to the next question

here

from iz

and iz says

david what is your experience with

and or opinion on the sun lund seattle

method the one with people breathing

funny for 45 minutes and then sitting

still and we passeng

for a couple of hours

is it similar to the tenjidong method

you are briefly in touch with or does it

not involve hyperventilation what is

your opinion on the usefulness of

intense breathing as a concentration

method

well

it's it's a good question

good meditation question although i'm

really not

i've never practiced the sunline method

it is sort of uh

kind of a big deal in burma um it's not

one of the most popular meditation

methods but there is a sunlin meditation

center

in rangoon

and uh sun centers you know scattered

through burma

and sunlight seattle was highly regarded

and pretty much all i know about it is

that you start off breathing fast you're

breathing harder and faster than usual

and um

he meant our iz mentions the tangidang

method and it was the same with the

tangidone method except in the tangent

method you did it all the time i guess

in the solenoid method you start off

that way

and

yeah the tenji dom method i mean they

were just essentially hyperventilating

and then they'd get drunk on oxygen and

consider that to be pt which is uh one

of the seven factors of enlightenment

sort of like a kind of exhilaration or

pleasurable interest is often how it is

interpreted

and

so you'd have people just howling and

barking like dogs laughing

uncontrollably sobbing you know flopping

around on the floor like like beached

fishes and stuff

and um

it was sort of yeah i mean it was not

normal

and sunland acid is is probably more

reputable than that

you know you don't continue breathing

hard until you're just

you know hyperventilating big time and

although iz says it's for 45 minutes

which i didn't know i thought it was

just sort of at the beginning of the sit

you would breathe a little harder and

the the

like the logic behind that

especially uh tenjidong seattle was was

talking about this

is um

you know when you're you're breathing a

little faster than usual you have to

keep your attention on the breath so it

helps to keep your mind from wandering

away

although of course there is the danger

of uh just hyperventilating

although i mean you can't get into

altered states through hyperventilating

there's like stanislav graf

um who did spend a lot of time at the

sln institute in california he used to

use

psychedelics like lsd to

like induce altered states of

consciousness in people but then when

lsd became illegal

he switched over to just breath work or

what holotropic breath work which is

essentially hyperventilating

so i mean it can have some uh

some positive

effects but

if you read the the poly texts like the

the saudi patano for example

it says you're supposed to be calming

the body

as as you're meditating you know so

if

i traditionally in terrible buddhism if

you're if you're doing an upon

meditating on the breath

then your breath becomes more subtle you

start breathing you know sort of

shallower and slower and if you get into

fourth genre or so they say

i mean you can become like a hibernating

squirrel where your your breath almost

stops

so

um in the text it's you know calming the

body which is

usually interpreted as calming the

breath

you know i breathe in calming the breath

i breathe out which is pretty much the

opposite

of what someone and tanjidong are

encouraging

i told tenjidong about that once and uh

kind of objecting to his method which is

unthinkable for anyone but uh us western

barbarians

and he said that's only when you're

you're making really

you know when you're getting to advanced

meditation you know you're really making

progress then it starts calming down but

that's really not what the text says

so

i did uh i did meet somebody who spent

some time at the salomon meditation

center in in rangoon he said yeah it

works fine it's a it's a valid method

but he had some strange ideas

so

um my best advice i mean if you've got

the uh

the time and the

you know the the wherewithal

to to try it

and you can see for yourself whether it

works i mean that's really the

the gold standard or the litmus test for

meditation is you just try it and if it

works you know with eyes open eyes

closed breathing fast breathing slow

whatever it is

you know if you try it and it works you

know your your mind is settling down and

you're getting into greater clarity

then uh

yeah continue with it until it stops

working

but yeah i'm really not no expert this

is it's kind of unfortunate in this um

this episode of question and answer i'm

being asked about

certain things that i really don't know

a whole lot about sunlin method alan

watts in the year 536 in asia

so

yeah it's it's just

a hazard of of this profession i guess

so finally

the last question

of of the show

is from chakra gosha

although there's sort of an addended and

added question

after this

chakra gauchos says

is sex for procreation more virtuous

than sex for pleasure

and then uh rafi 46

added after chakra goes asked this

question

he added

didn't the buddha condemn all forms of

sexuality

well

that's kind of a good question

both of these are good questions

so it is true getting

sort of answering rafi 46 first

um yeah all forms of sexuality are

uh discouraged by the buddha

for people who are serious about

practicing dhamma

um especially at advanced levels

but

um

just because you know it increases

desire

going with the four noble truths desire

is the cause of all suffering

and uh

sex is a strong cause of of desire it

really induces it sometimes

so there is that but getting back to

chakra gosha here

um is sex for procreation more virtuous

than sex for pleasure um probably i mean

in most cases i would say yeah

because sex for pleasure is you know

you're wallowing in sensuality which is

what a good buddhist isn't supposed to

do or at least a good buddhist is

supposed to keep that to a minimum

wallowing in pleasure

and so if someone is just having sex for

procreation there's still

um i mean just having babies

is is kind of a moral dilemma

because some people will say in buddhism

having babies is good because it's so

rare to get a human birth

that um

that is you're doing something good by

bringing human babies into this world

because a human birth is such a precious

opportunity

because it's almost only

humans that really have the option of

becoming enlightened you know it's like

in the lower realms

um the beings are are so

tormented or confused

that they really don't have the option

of striving to practice dhamma or

they're just so ignorant you know like

animals

or in the higher realms it's so nice

it's so pleasant that people really

aren't spurred on

to strive for something better so the

the human level according to buddhism is

just the right balance

of

uh wisdom and and unhappiness

that you're you're spurred on to

practice dhamma

but on the other hand um

going with the second noble truth or the

first noble truth which is too existent

to suffer i mean by having children you

could be argued that you're really just

damning some being to one of the higher

levels or medium levels of hell

that you know you're just damn you're

just dooming someone to a life of

unhappiness because to exist is to

suffer

but just setting that aside because

that's really not the question here is

sex for

procreation more virtuous than sex or

pleasure individually

um this you're just living in the world

obviously a monk wouldn't be having sex

at all

um you're living in the world maybe it's

just the reality that you should have

children because

in a

in a culture like ancient india

your children were your social security

there were no pension plans or anything

there were no um

what do you call them almost at the

ak-47 what what that that pension thing

that people do

have you even got one i can't remember

what it's called

for

something

anyway

you know you your kids would support you

when you get old so i mean that was just

what you do

um

i mean in most traditional societies i

mean that's just what it's like a

person's duty to have children

so i mean if you're having sex for

procreation

as your duty to have children without

wallowing in it all that much you know

it's not orgy astic or whatever then

yeah i mean to the extent that you have

less

desire you're less wallowing in

in sensual pleasure

and sensuality than uh yeah it would be

less immoral i mean

saying more virtuous

um is uh

maybe not the the most precise or exact

way of saying it'd be like less

unvirtuous

you know the less you enjoy it i suppose

sort of like food you know

putting salt and pepper on your your

food to make it taste better is uh

it's kind of the same thing it's it's in

a way it's it's immoral essentially from

the buddhist point of view whereas

you're better just eating something

bland and plain just for the sake of

keeping your body healthy so you can

continue to practice dhamma

so

yeah rafi 46 is correct that the buddha

did

discourage all forms of sexuality

because it is like the one of the major

attachments that keeps us uh

keeps us stuck in samsara

um i've read it in a book once it was

like desire for sex is

the main reason for

being reborn or reincarnation and the

other ones aren't irrelevant they don't

matter

which was a kind of a joke

so that's it that is all the questions

and if you have any questions and i'm

happy to

try to answer them as you may have

noticed in this i

really can't make any guarantees

that i will have any expertise in the

field but

with regard to

you know basic buddhism basic buddhist

philosophy metaphysics

certainly questions about

my previous lifestyle as an ascetic monk

living in burma that kind of thing

um

yeah i know quite a lot about that

biology

i know quite a lot about that

so you know questions along those lines

are more likely to be answered

intelligently

by me

and if you do have any questions just

feel free to

include them

in the comments below

or

on the discord server if you have access

to that

or on the

my subscribe star

channel if you have access to that

and

be sure to

like and subscribe smash that bell

button as they say

and look through my url links you might

find something interesting and

be happy

hello and welcome to question and answer

number 28 a

i am your host ponyo bassa

and the reason why i'm doing 28a

is because in my last question and

answered that i

did

several days ago now

i overlooked one question it was the

second question and somehow i just

skipped over it

that's possibly because it's a question

about monastic discipline

and uh the very next question after that

one was also about monastic discipline

so maybe

in my mind i got confused

and there is a precedent i've done uh

i think it was like 2a or 3a or

something like that when i was still a

monk

so

this isn't a really breaking new ground

and

also i should say that the person who

asked the question

who is

fred alias alfred

um is uh

is like a faithful supporter and

i don't want to be neglecting him

so

fred asks

or

if he asks at the end of this so be

patient

i was reading your book and was gob

smacked by how many rules there are for

monks which are almost impossible to

keep

as for example if you can't find a monk

to confess to

the frustration must be

counterproductive in my opinion does it

create a guilt complex

okay so that's kind of an interesting

question and there's also a few other

things

considering that this is its own video

that i can touch on and maybe turn this

into a

a full-blown discussion or something

but

fred says he was reading my book and i

assume he's talking about this one which

is

essays in tiravata buddhism

by ponyo basa john d reynolds

j.d reynolds

and um

in this book there's a lot of talk about

monastic issues there's some uh chapters

just about technical

matters with regard to monastic

discipline and so forth

and so uh yeah i mean it's it's easy

to be gobsmacked by how many rules there

are from monks

um i estimated

when i was a monk that there were

probably between two and three thousand

most of these are not in the potty mocha

rules a lot of people think that they're

just the potty mocha rules

which uh what is it 273 227 that's it

227

parimoja rules

um but they're most of the rules of

monastic discipline

are outside of the potty monka the rules

of monastic discipline in the in the

pali topitica are five thick asian

volumes it's you know this thick of

books

and although most of those aren't just

rules there's like the origin story for

each rule and all the various

permutations of the major rules

so i mean it's not just lists of rules

all the way through

but there are probably between two and

three thousand rules somewhere somewhere

thereabouts and um

they're based on ancient india

which makes uh following them outside of

ancient india kind of tricky although it

also makes some rules pretty much

impossible to follow

like

accepting food from the hands of a naked

ascetic

is uh

you know it used to be a possibility in

ancient india but it's pretty rare

nowadays using a human skull

as an alms bowl is against the rules

things like that don't really come up

very often rules with regard to

interacting with bikunis or ordained

terrible buddhist nuns

um that's kind of controversial because

the majority of theravada buddhist

monastics will say that

ikunis don't exist anymore they went

extinct hundreds of years ago

and so

for most

theravada buddhist monks

also all the rules with regard to

interacting with nuns are a non-issue

now

but still there are lots of rules and

pretty much everything is regulated like

even going to the bathroom there's

probably

i mean you're well up into double digits

with regard to all the rules just

involved in taking a dump

so

yeah it's like as as fred says

there are lots of rules that are almost

impossible to keep and even really

strict monks will break rules sometimes

because some rules can be inadvertent

like there's a rule against drinking

alcohol

but

even if you drink alcohol by accident

it's still against rule you have still

committed a pachitia offense requiring

confession

and so

even when i was a very strict monk

living in asia

sometimes people give you a medicine and

i'd ask you know this doesn't have

alcohol in it no no no alcohol and then

it turns out to be like 100 proof

or somebody gives you fruit juice and in

the tropical heat it starts fermenting

and by the time like in the afternoon

you know of the same day that you

receive it you take a drink and it's

like wine

so then you have to make confession

also for example if a monk is asleep

and then a woman

sits down or lies down under the same

roof while he's asleep and then gets up

and leaves he's committed an offense

even though he was unconscious during

the whole time

so

even really strict monks will have

difficulty some

the rules are set up in such a way that

it's

sometimes you just cannot avoid breaking

a rule for example

let's say a monk is in public he's at a

bus station or something and he has to

pee well

you can't go into the bathroom with your

upper robe on that's against the rules

that's a dukata offense or an offensive

wrongdoing but

at the same time

um

let's see what is it you can't go in

with your robe on but you can't take

your robe off in public your upper row

you can't go bare-chested in public

unless your upper robe has been stolen

so it's i mean it's like a no-win

scenario you break a rule either way

either that you just go outside and

squat behind a building and pee or

something

so

there are lots of rules and some rules

are just really weird like they're

anachronistic not even just because of

ancient india

for example there are lots of rules with

regard to taking care of your arms bowl

a monk has this begging bowl it's one of

the requisites one of the the eight or

nine possessions that a monk is required

to possess

and that is an alms bowl and in ancient

india they were mostly made out of baked

clay

but

at some point in the history of

theravada

most alms bowls started being made out

of iron and so you don't have to be as

careful it means it's like

you're not allowed to put your bowl

on top of a table you have to put it

under the under the table on the floor

because if it falls off the table it can

break but an iron bowl isn't going to

break

and there's this one rule i've i've

mentioned this before

there's this one rule that says a monk

is not allowed to open a door

with his umble bombs bowl in his hands

and the rule is to prevent you from

knocking this clay bowl against the door

and breaking it

and so even though i had an iron bowl i

was trying to follow the rules strictly

and so what it would require is you have

to set your bowl down you can't just set

it down on the floor because that's

against the rolls too against the rules

too you have to set it down on a cloth

or on a bowl stand then you open the

door then you pick your bowl up you step

through the door you have to set it back

down again not on the floor or the

ground you have to put something under

it to cushion it and then you close the

door and then you pick your bowl back up

and off you go

and

in burma or southeast asia

especially during the monsoon season

there's lots and lots of mosquitoes and

you're going through this ritual with

the door open

um you're letting mosquitoes in

about one per second at some times of

year and some of those mosquitoes are

the anopheles kind

and it's just pointless because

i mean

the bowl isn't even clay you know the

bowl will not break hitting against that

door and for

more than 10 years

i followed that rule just because i

wanted to be a strict monk didn't want

to break the rules and you know

nobody forced me to become a monk i just

had this idea if i'm going to be a monk

i should follow the rules and early on

in my career as a monk

um

it was about the only thing i could

really come close to mastering

in buddhism buddhist practice you've got

the

the ethical trinity of sila samadhi and

panya

is morality including parimo

which is the morality of following the

rules of monastic discipline samadhi is

concentration and panya is understanding

or wisdom

and especially as a junior monk i didn't

have very good samadhi and i was not

satisfied with my wisdom that's why i

became a monk in the first place but the

sila part i could kind of

kind of nail that one down and so i was

more or less fanatically strict

especially at first

and um eventually

especially like not opening a door with

the ball in my head at some point as a

senior monk

i just thought this is stupid and so i

started breaking that rule and most

monks including most strict monks are

breaking rules all the time that's even

setting aside that probably more than 95

percent of theravada buddhist monks

handle money which is strictly forbidden

for example just keeping extra robes

wearing like the the kung fu pajamas or

the sweaters and the hoodie the hats you

know the stocking caps and the socks and

all that technically that's against the

rules

but um

it just um

i think it was the thai sangha raja said

it was okay

to wear this kind of stuff in the

temperate zone and so you've got monks

essentially wearing arctic expedition

gear snow suits and that kind of stuff

who are living in cold areas

and

the tai san garaga really does not have

the authority to change linear rules

so

it's just like well he said it's okay so

we're doing it and i was guilty of that

also

uh with regard to one rule i had this

book on monastic discipline the winnie

amuca

which was written by a thai sangha raja

from 100 years ago

and he said it's okay to look into a

mirror when you shave

according to the rules a monk is not

allowed to look into a mirror unless

he's got like a sore on his face or

something he's needing to look at in

order to you know put medicine on it or

something

and um this thai sangha raja said if

you're shaving

then it's okay and so that was like the

one rule that i broke from the beginning

to the end

that is just shaving without looking

into a mirror is is not easy i mean the

back of your head you have to you have

to go without you just use your fingers

you know you just shave by braille

but um still it's so much more

convenient it's such a pain in the neck

an unnecessary pain in the neck

um just not to use a mirror that

i pretty much cheated on that one

but um

with the thai sangha raja's blessings of

100 years ago

but uh getting back to fred's question

here

let's see how he was gobsmacked by how

many rules there are from monks which

are almost impossible to keep as for

example if you can't find a monk to

confess to well actually

that's not really against the rules

if you can't find a monk to confess to

you are excused from not making

confession

so

um i think fred may have misunderstood

that part

but even if you committed a serious

offense you know like a sangha di seisa

offense there are 13 of them this is

like the next level below just

excommunication there are four rules

warranting excommunication plus

um i'm pretty sure there's like the

unofficial fifth rule so it's like if

you have sex

it was with a woman with a man with an

animal

you put your pee pee into into an

orifice of somebody else

then

then you're excommunicated you cannot

you're kicked out of the monk hood just

immediately even if nobody knows about

it you're not a monk anymore even though

you might continue wearing the robes

you might not even know that you're

you're excommunicated you might be just

ignorant of the rules

doesn't matter you're not really a monk

anymore

second is stealing

or taking

anything i mean according to the wording

of the rule stealing anything valuable

enough that you could get arrested for

it

um

the commentaries changed that rule

somewhat

and said that it was

uh stealing anything worth a coin called

a pada

and or even even in the polytechs it

kind of redefined it to that just to

make it more precise

but the thing is

the the commentators who came afterward

didn't know what a pata was worth and so

they had this

um just made up

almost mythological explanation of what

a potter is it had like five rice green

weights of gold five rice green weights

of silver five ice cream weights of

copper

and maybe five rice grain weights of

of iron and the thing is

if you look at the archaeological record

of the numismatic record such a coin

never existed

but there are lots of potas of two kinds

the blue ones and the red ones

and

i think the ones in the commentary

are specifically the blue ones

and

the two kinds of pota are silver and

copper

or bronze silver and copper i'm pretty

sure and so blue would probably be the

silver ones

and i mean they're worth a fraction of

what

the commentaries say because there's no

rice grain weights of gold in it at all

and so you steal like even like a candy

bar

technically

um

you would be

you would be excommunicated so that's

the second one first one is sex second

one is stealing third one

is murder

which includes helping women get an

abortion it includes

uh talking someone into committing

suicide

it includes you know hiring a hit man

poisoning somebody anything like that

using black magic whatever it is if you

cause another human being to die and a

human life according to terrible

buddhism begins at conception

you're out you're excommunicated do not

pass go do not collect 200

and then fourth and and these are an

ascending order of seriousness

so sex is the least serious of the of

the four big ones then stealing then

murder and worse than even murder is a

monk

knowingly lying about having attained

superhuman mental states so if he says

that he's enlightened in order to get

famous in order to get support when he

knows he's not enlightened that's it

he's not really a monk anymore even

though he might continue wearing robes

and so forth

so below that is sanga di cesa and i

can't even remember what god

such a long digression let's see oh yeah

if you commit a sangha dissents

you have to take penance

for six days and six nights and it's

it's really a pain in the neck taking

past i've taken penance for it for doubt

not being sure wanting to just make sure

do the penance just so i won't have any

doubts anymore

because there's borderline cases

so

you've got to make confession oh wait

okay you have to take penance for six

days and six nights plus the number of

days that you didn't confess it the

number of days that you essentially

concealed the offense

and so it does say in the in the text i

mean if there's no other monks around

you if you're just living alone in a

forest as a hermit you are excused to

some degree

from not making confession i mean you

should make a reasonable effort to you

know get your stuff

stored away whatever what little things

you have if you're living alone in the

forest and then going and finding a mock

team fest too and the monk has to be a

monk who is

who hasn't committed the same events

and that was a tricky one that was

that's another one that

pretty much no asian monks follow you're

not allowed to confess an offense like a

broken rule to a monk who has broken the

same rule and he hasn't confessed that

either and some monasteries you know

they they're all almost all the monks

are handling money they can't really

confess it and it wouldn't matter anyway

if they confessed it because you that's

called the nisagia pachidiya events

where you have to get rid of whatever is

against the rules in this case money

before you can make confession of course

the monks don't do that

so

you have to go and find a monk that

hasn't done the same thing and make

confession to him

and as i say if you're out in a forest

or something you're in a remote area

maybe it's the monsoon season when

you're not even supposed to be traveling

then you've got an excuse for for not

making the confession

so

i think fred here may have misunderstood

that part

but he gets to the next part here the

frustration must be counterproductive in

my opinion does it create a guilt

complex

um

it can if a monk is really strict

although as i say

nowadays most monks are not really

strict including monks who are

considered to be really strict by people

who don't know what all the rules are

um

but still i mean it's like

um

it can create a guild complex just

um

not being

like with regard to sangria i said that

i did

penance for it

uh two or three times in burma

just because of doubts

you know it's like

most sanggarisa rules i think all of

them they have to be deliberate

intentional rules so if let's say

um

you're you're on a bus and you rub up

against a pretty girl and you enjoy it

well it's a it's a sangha you say

offense to touch a woman with your mind

inflamed by by passion which just means

you enjoy it but you have to do it on

purpose

and then you're like pulling your hand

away it's like did i try to prolong the

contact the way the way i pulled my hand

away you know that kind of a thing and a

monk can just sit there

cycle analyzing himself

like did i deliberately do anything you

know even just to move the width of a

sesame seed

you know that's it's the way they talk

in the texts you know if i made this

even the slightest effort

to in this case prolong the contact with

the pretty girl on the bus

um just by the way of you know moving my

hand away this way kind of across her

leg or something instead of like

straight back or whatever then

then you've committed the committed the

offense and you have to do the penance

and all that so that's really

more frustrating

and counterproductive

than let's say you know you didn't you

didn't um put your bowl down before

opening the door

um

you know in a case like that most monks

just make up their mind whether they're

going to follow that rule or not and if

they're just going to set it aside

saying you know it's like it's just

it's an anachronism

it's kind of silly nowadays it doesn't

really fit the culture or you know my

bowl isn't clay

then you know you can just kind of set

that one aside and still have like a

clear conscience

because i mean the rule may have been

valid at one time but

it uh it kind of stopped being that way

you know it's just really has

degenerated into like a pointless

more or less meaningless rule although

some strict monks would say that one

reason for following all these rules is

to just set aside your own personal

preferences that it's like pride

that you would you would say the rules

dumb i don't have to follow it

so that's that's the consideration also

and it there is some validity to that i

think

where you just say you know even if it's

a dumb rule even if it's pointless and

meaningless

still that's what the rule says nobody

forced me to become a monk and so i'm

just going to follow it anyway and i was

kind of that way for first many years of

my monkhood until finally i just started

um

i don't know just became less fanatical

or

or

it's sort of human nature that you start

off strict and then you kind of

backslide gradually it's very rare for

somebody to get stricter as they as they

progress in the mongkut although it does

happen maybe some monk

um i met a few

who

they're ordained at a really lax

monastery and they're just following

along with all the other monks are doing

and then finally they read the you know

they start studying the rules of

monastic discipline and realize just how

sloppy they have been

and then they might move to a stricter

monastery

or maybe maybe they just move to a

stricter monster and then they they

realize what uh what a slack monk they

were at first

with regard to following the rules

so

um yeah i think just being in doubt

about breaking certain rules

can create a guilt complex

and um

so some monks will just do the

confession even if they're not sure

which technically is also against the

rules

so there's a rule against that too in

fact there's a special confession you

make if you're in doubt you don't know

for sure if you've broken a rule or not

you notice going back to the monk who is

sleeping a woman comes into the building

might be a big building even she sits

down or lies down and gets up and leaves

while he's asleep he's not entirely sure

you know he suspects that

so i mean you you're not supposed to

confess the offense

if you're not sure that you broke the

rule

and

in a way that it's

it's convenient because it kind of

reduces the guilt complex it's like you

know did i commit isango du seisa

offense

um you know if you're not sure then

you're not really concealing the defense

you don't have to do the extra penance

for concealing the offense you know not

making confession because you're not

sure

so there's that consideration also but

sometimes you think you know did i

commit a sanghadi cesa offense

um you know because you can't just

confess that you got to do the penance

and at the end of the six days and six

nights plus however many extra days of

penance then you've got to be reinstated

to the state of being a monk in good

standing by at least 20 monks in good

standing and some places it's hard

to get 20 monks together

to to do the ceremony it's called an

abana ceremony

uh called what in burmese which is you

know escaping the duties of the of the

penance

or or leaving the duties

and like in the west getting 20 monks

together might be might be difficult

and also just doing the the penance the

more monks there are in a monastery the

harder it is to do the penance because

of one part of the penance you have to

make confession to every monk at the

monastery every day you have to confess

that you broke a song that you say rule

if you're really strict you even tell

them what rule you broke which can be an

embarrassing rule for example um having

an orgasm on purpose is one of these

sangha decision rules

and uh if monks are coming and going

it's like you go to make confession to

monk so and so

and they say oh he left this morning and

it's like well i didn't get to make

confession to him so that day doesn't

count so monks will take extra days of

penance just to make sure

that you know they got at least six

they got at least six good ones in

so there's all kinds of frustrations

that can take place

um

maybe like fred here is saying it can

involve a guilt complex

but um it leads to the whole issue of

how to be a

a theravada buddhist monk a strictly

practicing one in the west

and

i've already mentioned that it's almost

impossible

or let's let's not say almost impossible

it's

it's most monks even relatively strict

monks just do not follow the rules in

the west for example robes

and some of it i mean with regard to

robes i never broke the rules about

robes to my knowledge maybe it was some

one of those you know accidental

unconscious ones

but

um

i learned

just studying the rules

that monks wore much smaller robes than

they were nowadays in in the buddhist

time there were a row about half the

size and it would just be thrown over

both shoulders kind of like a shawl

and

when your books admit to this ah john

tennis earl's book on wunia he mentions

this also

and um

but

now

monks are our robes are much bigger and

there's this elaborate ways especially

tie monks they've got these elaborate

ways where this arm is all wrapped up

even if this arm this shoulder is

uncovered like if you're making

confession or you're bowing to another

monk you have to uncover your right

shoulder

but even then there they got this other

arm all wrapped up in this elaborate way

and you can't do that with thick robes

it's like obviously if you're living in

a cold climate the thing to do is just

get thick robes like wool robes it was

just what i did i had thick wool robes

and they were small and you just cover

yourself

like like a shawl

and i could be relatively comfortable

down to about freezing

if you're living like northern canada or

maybe like scandinavia or something even

that's not going to be good enough you

don't wear socks for example your toes

are going to get frostbite or whatever

but you know down to about freezing

there's really no

valid excuse

for not following the rules unless you

just don't want to follow rules

you just want you're a conformist you

just want to follow along with by

strictly following a corrupt tradition

you say whatever the sangha raja says

that's what i'll do or whatever

but it's really it's really not that

difficult

to just wear three robes three three

articles of clothing lower rope upper

rope outer rub and stay warm down to

freezing

and uh

sandals you know it's like a monk is not

allowed to wear

um

any kind of footwear other than sandals

that leave the toes and the heel exposed

so birkenstocks would be okay flip-flops

um

just someone's got like straps

but um still

in the west following the rules of

monasticism

the rules of monastic discipline

strictly

can be really tricky because we're not

living in ancient india anymore for

example a monk is not allowed to cook

his own food he's not allowed to store

food overnight if he's going to eat

something he has to get it without

asking for it the same morning that he

eats it

and in the west that doesn't work very
easily and i fasted
numerous times when i was living in a
burmese place
a burmese monastery in california just
because it wasn't convenient for anybody
to come and offer food that day and the
burmese monks would just go in and cook
their own food but i just refused to do
it
and it caused problems and the monks
started scrambling like the the abbot
started scrambling to make sure that
somebody would come and offer food
because he was afraid i was just gonna
starve to death

because it was very common at probably
most asian monasteries in the west that
the monks will just prepare their own
food if nobody comes and offers it to
them
and nevertheless it is against the rules
i suppose you could bring in the famine
loophole there is a famine loophole in
the rules of monastic discipline which
state that if a monk
uh just can't get food like there's a
famine the people the the villagers who
usually offer the food just can hardly
feed themselves so they're not feeding
the monks enough
then monks can pick fruit off the ground
that has spontaneously detached from

trees like some of the the hindu swamis

have done

but um

yet there are so many like with regard

to food with regard to

um clothing with regard to money with

regard to women

you know just not touching a woman in

the west

can be difficult not traveling with a

woman by arrangement you know if the the

only driver you can get the monks have

to go to such and such place you know

they've been invited to give a talk or

something and if the woman is a driver

and you make arrangements with her you

know let's go at eight o'clock eight

o'clock or something

it's a pachidia offense you've just

broken a rule if if you actually do it

so there's all these rules that really

don't fit the modern west and it just

comes to this

this issue and this question of

um you know how are teravata buddhist

monks especially the ones who want to be

good strict monks following the rules

properly how are they going to exist in

the west

and as i already said somebody like the

thai sangha raja really has no authority

to change rules especially outside of

thailand you know he has no more

authority over

a western monk living in the west than

the thai prime minister has

so that is the question i mean what are

monks going to do if they are going to

survive in the west and it seems like

you got two choices you can strictly

adhere to ancient indian rules you know

iron age ganges valley

and

buddhism is practically guaranteed to be

no more than just a a tiny fringe

movement

or the monks can start fudging on rules

and um

i've had this idea for a long time that

there should just be like a kind of

quasi monkhood in the west where the

monks

are

not fully ordained as teravod and bikus

and so they can have

relaxed rules i mean they can still be

renunciants

they can still

you know not handle money even really

although that's that's another tricky

one like if you're the habit of a

monastery you know the bill's got to get

paid in the west in burma out of

monastery there's no bills to pay now

especially if you're out in the forest

with no electricity or anything

is sangha property

you know there's just no bills it's free

but in the west nothing is free

so

even even just to have somebody else

take care of it

is against the rules for a monk to even

consent to somebody keeping money on his

behalf is against the rules which makes

pretty much even mo the strictest monks

in the west

uh breaking the same rules if they're

handling it themselves

so it's very complicated

and

should monks

be lacks to some degree to compensate
for the fact that they're not living in
the iron age ganges valley that's that's
a debate that um
really as i see it the cleanest way of
going about it is just set up like a
quasi monkey that can be approved by the
monks you know they can say you know we
acknowledge this as a theravada buddhist
movement even though they're not
ordained monks and the nuns can do the
same thing which would make them
uh on an equal footing with the monks if
that is seen as appropriate
instead of as the
the people that have tried to revive the
bikuni order in the west

um and in in the westernized sri lankan
monasteries to some degree
they're doing it for the sake of gender
equality partly
largely
and then the nuns just don't follow the
rules that are discriminatory against
women because the rules are much
stricter against women in most respects
than they are against men you know the
rules are stricter for nuns than they
are for monks for example even the most
senior nun has to bow to the most junior
monk
and you know they just ignore that like
nuns aren't even allowed to sit

cross-legged

because they might consent to the touch

of the heel as it says

and um

i won't get into that

but i mean they just

it's like these these women and the men

who help them then the monks who ordain

them or whatever they're helping them to

become

nuns

just for the name bikuni that's really

the official status of being called a

bikuni is really the main point here and

in a lot of cases it's mainly due to

ideas of gender equality or some such

nothing preventing these nuns from

just you know following whatever rules

they want which could be tailored to fit

western society much better than just

following or pretending to follow

ancient indian rules that are then

largely ignored

so again i'm saying that probably the

best way would be to set up some

new

um you know quasi-monkhood quasi nunhood

where

you know the the founders of it can get

together and agree on what rules would

be strict still in the spirit

but

not

so anachronistic and foreign that they

just will not fit

western society

because as i've said before

a monk living in the west especially if

he's a strict one he's trying to follow

the rules about food about money

especially

then he's like a tropical potted plant

that has to live in a greenhouse or

indoors with people taking care of it it

can't live naturally

monk can live naturally in in southeast

asia like as a monk

in burma you can just wander around you

can sleep under trees if the government

will let you if you're far enough away

from government offices

you take your bowl

if you're hungry in the morning you take

your bowl you just walk into a village

if the people there are buddhists

you'll at least get rice

so you can you can do that in asia but

in the west as a general rule there may

be exceptions but as a general rule

you just can't live that way you can't

just wander around

some monks have done it

maybe charismatic ones they got really

good karma or something they can just

take off walking and

um i've heard of some monks that would

just stand outside of a grocery store

and people would come out and they might

try to offer the money and the monks

will say no we don't accept money so

then they would offer you know food you

know package of

you know dry ramen noodles or something

which you can eat without cooking

i learned that

um

so i mean there are kind of there are

ways that monks can adapt

you know instead of walking house to

house

um where nobody's gonna offer food maybe

you know you can stand outside of a

grocery store maybe like a trader joe's

or something where the people are kind

of liberal and more open-minded to that

kind of a thing

and um

but still i mean it does seem like the

only way

that theravada buddhists

renuncians

in the west

can really

um

you know they can practice like monks

without breaking rules would be to just

set up a new kind of brotherhood a new

kind of monkhood they wouldn't be called

bikus but aside from that they could

live as close to monks as possible uh

close to being monks ordained monks and

the nuns can just set up

likewise

and they'd be

you know if it was seen as appropriate

they'd be just completely equal to monks

you know they wouldn't have to bow to

them that kind of thing unless they were

senior

like there's uh one of the many rules

is if you meet uh if a monk

meets a mangu senior him he's supposed

to bow to him unless he knows that he's

completely shameless

then he doesn't have to

but um we don't we don't need to get

into all all these rules there's just so

many of them

so i guess i've i've had my say i've

done more than answered fred's uh fred's

question

and uh

so

i guess i guess that's it that's the end

of q a number 28 a

and uh if you have any questions for

like uh number 29 you're quite welcome

to

leave them in the comments below

um or if you have access to the discord

server or my subscribe star channel you

can leave them there also um leaving

them by other venues like emailing me

sometimes it can get lost

in the shuffle

so probably your best bet is uh to ask

your questions below

this video

in the in the comment sections

and uh just check out the url links you

can find the the links to like getting

this book and uh the others and uh find

out my other social media presences and

so forth

and

be happy

hello and welcome to episode 29 of

question and answer i am your host

panial basa

and i am sitting in my front yard in the

soupy humidity of a south carolina

summer

just uh to have good scenes good scenery

including the fishpond that has loaches

in it

but uh i can do a separate video about

loaches some other time i suppose

so i suppose i should just get to the

question answering part which is after

all the most important part of these

videos

and we don't have like a really ungodly

amount of questions here which is good i

suppose because we should avoid

excessive ungodliness in our lives

so the first question is from carl n

and carl n says is the becoming that is

talked about in the second noble truth

the same as the becoming

link

of dependent origination how exactly

would you define becoming i've heard a

monk define it as quote the taking on of

an identity based on a particular desire

in a world of experience unquote

thoughts

question mark

well that's a good question i think that

is a good philosophical question

about uh what exactly does bova mean and

usually

it is

rendered into english as becoming

becoming

um

which isn't very explanatory um and i

don't have the exact formula of the four

noble truths here

but if my memory serves me correctly

um

the bava or becoming is referring to

in in the second noble truth like

craving an attachment that results in

bavar

or are conducive to bavar which would be

in that case

something like uh continued existence in

samsara

and that's generally what

means at least superficially it means

continued existence in samsara

but

when you get to dependent origination or

padicha samupada things get more

complicated because padicha pada is

um on the one hand it's considered to be

central to buddhist philosophy like

there are sutas at least one where the

buddha says

you know if you if you see

you know if you see padicho samupada you

see just dharma dharma is padicha

sangupada

um you know if you understand that you

understand buddhism essentially

um

and also on there's a legend that the

buddha

considered

some of pata to be so subtle so

difficult to understand that he almost

just didn't teach buddhism at all he

almost became like a hermit buddha a

pacheco buddha

and um

just was just going to keep his mouth

shut because he figured nobody would

understand dependent coal rising or

dependent origination or conditioned

genesis or there's a whole bunch of

different names for it which indicates

that it's not really all that well

understood by the translators into

english

and it really wasn't all that well

understood

um by ancient monks and medieval

commentators

so the buddha came pretty close to being

entirely right on on his guess that

nobody would understand it

um

in buddhism it crystallized fairly early

into uh the 12 knee donna theory which

is 12 links

which is explaining you know this causes

that that causes that that causes that

which explains what causes reincarnation

essentially

so

it starts with ignorance usually not

always there are some versions where it

starts with something else like papancha

sanka but we don't need to get into that

um

so bavar in independent court dependent

co-origination

um it comes in between upper donna and

jyati

so upadhana usually is translated as

clinging

and jyati is translated as birth so

that's

jyati is uncontroversial

so the way i would interpret upadhana is

literally it means uptaking

and so

it i would consider that i mean uptake

because you have

craving you have uptake you know you

just accumulate

in your life

and because of that

this uptake you've got

and

i interpret it to mean

the just the momentum of existence

it's like it's essentially karma and

the ancient monks

agreed that bova in dependent

origination does mean essentially karma

it's the karma in this life that results

to taking on the next burst that's why

bova leads to jyati or birth so ex

becoming quote unquote

results in

birth

which according to the orthodox

tereboden explanation means

that your karma in this life

results in taking a next life you know

rebirth reincarnation

so

um but i interpret karma also to just

mean like the momentum

of your of your mind it's the momentum

of mind psychic and momentum

and uh so that results in further

existence regardless of whether it's

um you know another hour or another life

so

i think

uh surprisingly i answered that one

fairly quickly

let's see i'll go over the question

again just to make sure is the becoming

that is talked about the second noble

truth the same as the becoming link of

dependent origination it can be

um

if you talk to some abidama scholar they

might quibble and say that there are

subtle differences or some such but it

could be interpreted the same

it just in in the sense of

just

further existence and samsara or the

force of further existence the force of

existence

you know just the momentum of your

volitional acts of your of your

personality for lack of a better word

uh

so

yeah i guess i answered that one so i'll

just move on to the next question

and which is from trump satva

and trump asatva

says

does buddhism ever explain how animals

with little or no mental faculties such

as fish or worms create kama

humans can generate bad comma and be

reborn as such animals but those animals

do not have the capacity to generate the

mental states to leave such existences

it doesn't seem to make any sense that

it is a one-to-one rebirth into a lower

or higher life form a human and fish may

both be animals but a fish

fishes mind or body can't possibly carry

on the common created by a higher form

of intelligent life

or even that of a deva or asura

dependent origination doesn't seem to

answer how such a jump between realms is

made just sort of arbitrary ideas are

found in the jataka tales

yeah i've thought about this a lot

and um

um maybe i shouldn't mention this but i

will anyway that my father

um

he was a hypnotist and he trained spirit

mediums i guess they're called

channelers or downloaders or something

now

but this was like back in the 60s and

70s

and um

a woman in a trance started uh

channeling

uh a dead vietnamese buddhist monk named

tay singh

who taught some buddhism to my father

apparently he was also my father's

guardian spirit or just a spirit a

disembodied spirit who took a great

interest in my father's life

and uh he just got indignant the dead

vietnamese monk channeled through the uh

the housewife in a trance

um he was just indignant the very idea

that a human could be reborn as a dog

um

yeah and i i have thought about that i

mean it's like a human is very complex

and then being reborn as a worm

or like a an earwig or something it

doesn't make much sense it would be

i mean it is possible i mean

theoretically just

for example

there is a heaven realm called the realm

of the perceptionless brahmas in

buddhist cosmology where the beings

there are just completely unconscious

they're like statues they don't move

so it could be something like that where

it's like your karma just goes dormant

there's just this little spark of

awareness still going

um

so yeah i think just according to the

theory just assuming for the sake of

argument

that the theory is valid

that a human being could be reborn

as a bug or a worm or something

um

yeah i mean it would just mean that i

mean almost all of your karma would just

become

like

uh underlying tendencies anusia just it

would just kind of go dormant

for lack of any opportunity to arise

but a worm being reborn as a human

i mean unless it was just one of those

cases of most of the karma was dormant i

mean it was just a some being that

through some weird

you know some weird fluke you know you

have some higher being through some

weird bizarre fluke you know they die in

a coma or something they're just in a

semi-conscious state very low level of

consciousness when they die that could

move to the next life which might be an

animalistic one or something

and then finally they snap out of it or

something

um

but as a general rule

in it's just in general i'm i'm

skeptical of the whole idea of

like humans being reborn as worms and

vice versa

um there are

stories of

lower animals that uh had

you know had a lot of merit you know

like there's the famous jataka story of

the fish king in the buddha in previous

existence was king of the fishes in this

pond

and the pond was drying up in a drought

and so this fish king

made some

assertion of truth

and i don't remember what the assertion

of truth was but it's by the by this

truth you know may it rain and then it

was this rainstorm and so he the fish

king saved his school

of fish

um you know through he had essentially

human intelligence and if you read the

jaundice stories you know all these

animals had human intelligence and could

talk and so forth

and uh there is a story of the frog who

went to heaven

um what is it manduka

is that how you say frog in pali

the manduka deva

um where the buddha was giving us a talk

and there are a lot of people gathered

around

and there was a frog sitting there

and the frog would just

it was he didn't understand what the

buddha was saying but it was just like

the the calmness and serenity

and just the the melodious tones of the

buddha's voice caused the frog to feel

like uplifted in this primitive little

way you know it was feeling this little

froggy exaltation or something

and then i think it was a shepherd who

had a stick

with i mean not on purpose just purely

accidentally just moved his stick and

crushed the frog right when the frog was

just listening intently to the sound of

the buddha's voice and that was enough

merit that the frog wound up in heaven

um as a deva

uh but i mean these are just stories

so i didn't need to get back to this

question from trump asatva

and see does buddhism ever explain how

animals with little or no mental

faculties create karma well they would

create just very

crude you know little little little

karma because they got such a small

consciousness you know they've got such

a small mind that only they can only

make small karma

um

so yeah they create karma and it's just

more like ignorance and and craving and

fear

um with regard to like a an insect i'm

skeptical that they even really have

perceptions

really i mean they might have some kind

of

feeling like waiting up

but uh whether they actually form any

kind of very simple little concept about

it you know sanya perception i'm very

skeptical even of that

but i'll just continue with this

question here humans can generate bad

karma and be reborn as such animals yeah

maybe

but those animals do not have the

capacity to generate the mental state to leave such existences but like i say i mean if they were a human in the life before they were the bug you know they got they did something really bad got reborn as a bug you know they died you know just completely zonked out on on heroin or something so that they had almost no mental states going when they died

um

because really i think you know well then they could go back to being human again because they'd have all this latent karma so that's a possibility and according to buddhist philosophy i mean

we've been all up and down the scale

you know forever and ever you know just

from the beginning this beginning of

samsara

it's just been you know we've been up in

heaven we've been down in hell we've

been animals ghosts you know monsters

whatever

so yeah there could be just a lot of

latent karma

lurking around even in bugs some of them

anyway but i mean i am skeptical of that

i've i've come across some heretical

theories

that um

actually do kind of make more sense to

me like i read this really weird book

called seth speaks

where this channeler jane roberts is

supposedly channeling this

multi-dimensional being called seth

and seth was saying that

um

sometimes accidentally but if you're

more advanced it can be deliberate you

can just deliberately split off some of

your own karma to create a new smaller

being you know like a dog or something

so that's a possibility um but let's get

back to the question i'm i'm digressing

from this question it doesn't seem to

make any sense there's a one-to-one

rebirth

into a lower or higher life form a human
and fish may be both be animals but a
fish's mind or body can't possibly carry
on the karma created by a higher form of
intelligent life or even that of a deva
or asura dependent origination doesn't
seem to answer how such a jump between
realms is made just sort of an arbitrary
ideas
are found in the jataka tales yeah so i
guess i mean staying within the realm of
of orthodoxy i would say you know
it would sort of be like getting a bad
rebirth as a bug might be like
um getting a good rebirth as a
perceptionless brahma it's just there's
there isn't much mentality going on

which would just mean that most of the

karma is just dormant it's like a nucia

or underlying tendencies that never have

an opportunity to arise partly because

you just don't have a brain

to even like conceptualize or form the

volition or whatever

so i mean

and because all beings have just been up

and down the scale according again

according to orthodox theravada buddhism

then uh pretty much

every

bug out there would have this baggage of

having been a god you know a zillion

gajillion world systems previously or

some such

so yeah that would be how i would answer

it

uh

with regard to orthodox buddhism and i

mean if you deviate from orthodox

buddhism then it's all bets are off you

know it's like no rules

um

but yeah i have been fairly skeptical of

the very idea that a human being could

be reborn as a worm except for in very

very rare

uh circumstances you know there could be

something like that going on

um

yeah if a worm was reborn as a human

without the the baggage of

you know an infinitive of past lives

then uh

a very loud car is going on going behind

me

um i mean it would just be like a

severely

brain damaged human being and i have i

actually met a person like that in burma

who i mean he was essentially like a

plant

i mean he was his eyes were open he was

kind of conscious

but i mean he couldn't really feed

himself or he certainly couldn't talk he

didn't seem to be aware

of my existence you know it's just like

the eyes are open but it's just like

this blank look you know it's just

so i mean a worm being born as a human

might be something like that on top

i think i should just move on to the

next question

also from trump asatbah

and trump assatba

in trump asata's next question says will

you ever start a live suta study group

on discord and yeah that's

really

i should i mean not necessarily live

suta study but just any kind of live

you know sort of group discussion and i

mean possibly there could be suta study

or something

going on but uh yeah people have been

asking me this for

possibly a year now

and it's just

i'm just lacking the the uh the momentum

you know it's like inertia or something

it's like trying to get

you know there's people all over the

world

and so trying to get like the right day

the right time and everything is uh is

daunting

but um

it seems like saturdays would work best

it used to be sundays but now i've got a

lot going on on sundays

so

yeah maybe

um

god i'm sorry i'm still saying maybe but

um i think just uh even just a live

group

would be a good start

and really i mean you guys should just

get on my case

seriously you just come to south

carolina and kick my butt to get me to

do this this might be what it takes

and i i do apologize i've been living in

kind of strange

um you know ever since i stopped being a

monk all of a sudden my life is just

radically different than it was before

with all these new

uh duties and obligations and

distractions and so forth

but i do agree it would be a good idea

if we had a

live groups

on discord

maybe

two or three different

times or days just so that people who

live in different parts of the world

will have

you know people that have a certain work

schedule at least they'll be able to fit

in one of them

or something

so

yeah

just keep keep pestering me and until i

do it and then i'll do it

all right just move on to the next

question from trump assata

and this one is something i won't be

able to answer very well sorry to say

what are your impressions on the life of

anagarika dhammapala

i found him to be very inspirational yet

he is rather unknown in the west do you

think his model of the anagarika

or the just homeless one perhaps

omitting the money handling could be a

good model sort of like the

tradition in tibetan buddhism sort of

monastic sort of layperson

wanderer but not wholly bound to the

restrictions for full ordination

yeah i've i've read a little bit about

anagarika dhammapala he was

a friend of

colonel alcott and maybe madame

blavatsky in sri lanka

so anagar kadamapala he was a a sri

lankan person

and

it may be that

especially in sri lanka where

the

monk hood is very it has had a long

reputation for being very relaxed and

kind of corrupt

so it may be that he was sort of just

taking his own route

or maybe he just had enough integrity to

know or to realize that he didn't want

to follow all the rules and so he called

himself an anagarika or a homeless one

and wore white he wore like white robes

and uh

he was uh

instrumental in the founding of the

mahabodhi society

he did have some influence on

the theosopists the early theosophists

i'm not sure if he was

um

communicating with like

tw risk davids

like the

some of the pioneers in the the polytech

society

um

but uh he

he was instrumental in

sort of

bringing awareness of buddhism to

westerners even though mostly he lived

in sri lanka and india

but india was a british colony in those

days so there was a lot of english

spoken there and quite a few english

people there

so

um

do i think his model of the anagarika

perhaps omitting the money handling

would be a good model

well

i think money handling might be pretty

much unavoidable since even relatively

strict monks in the west

um you know they're breaking pretty much

the same rules as the monks who are just

handling money just because i mean as

i've said before if you tell someone

what to do with money it's the same as

you handling yourself you're just

handling the person who's handling the

money and even just consenting to having

the money kept on your behalf

is is already against the rules you're

breaking the same nisa gia pachidiya

rule

so i mean i found as a monk a relatively

strict one that the only way not to

break the money rules it just had

absolutely nothing to do with it

just live in some remote

area that's just poverty-stricken

you know in

asia

and um

then you can get along without money but

aside from that especially in the west

it's it's uh

it's very difficult

and i don't know if anyone fully

succeeds

in uh

following the money rules in the west

although at least they're they're making

like a gesture of not handling it even

though they're consenting to somebody

else paying the bills for them um

you know at least they're not handling

it themselves so i mean they are making

an effort i'm not really trying to diss

them because i mean i was the same way

as a monk

um

i wasn't handling the money but um

you know you just pretty much consent to

letting somebody else handle it for you

so

i kind of digressed on that

um

yeah i mean i've been talking about this

sort of thing for a long time because

as i just keep saying over and over

again terra vada buddhism

and the rules of monastic discipline for

theravada buddhist monks

and nuns

is designed for ancient north indian

culture so it's like the ganges valley

in iron age

and it just doesn't fit western society

and you could argue that well that's

fine because you're supposed to renounce

society anyway

but i mean you're still going to be

living in the in the country

and participating in the society at

least on the edges

and even that is very difficult

so

i don't know i think just wearing the

wearing the robes you know wearing white

robes instead of brown ones or yellow

ones or whatever

um yeah i think even that i mean you're

still essentially wearing a toga

which is uh

probably not the best way of going about

it like buddhist monks they were wearing

essentially the same clothes as everyone

else

in ancient india they just dyed them

because the lay people usually wore

white and they'd have it uh cut into

pieces and sewn back together again if

it wasn't just rags that were sewn

together

so there was there were those

differences but i mean the style of

clothing pretty much everybody was

wearing the the same stuff so i mean if

you tried to

modernize

um teravata buddhist renunciation for

the west

again i just i'd probably just go with

you know like army surplus or or just

gray sweats something like that

um

let's see here

yeah and again i mean like anagarika

damopala

which is kind of acknowledged

as i mean it's part of the the theravada

buddhist system in burma they have uh

anagarikas that wear white and they uh

they only keep eight presets

um and usually it's just

little kids sometimes they're like

toddlers

and uh they're the ones that handle the

money at strict monasteries you know the

little kid will just you know get sent

to the store to get something which is

still against the rules but

so yeah i was i was one of these

anagarikas as a monastery attendant

before i was ordained as a monk i were

like a white sarong and like a white

sweater

so

i wasn't wearing a toga anyway

and uh i was handling the money and

driving the monks and and

helping to serve them food and so forth

so i mean that would be one way of

fitting it in

without deviating from established

tradition

but having like entire monasteries

composed of these anagarikas or

um

just an entire community of them that

would be

interesting i've never heard of that

before

so

yeah i mean it would be something to

look into just uh study up

what you know the duties of an anagarika

are

and uh it would be already established

within teravata it's been around for

probably

centuries

um

otherwise i mean you just be like

breaking new ground and

starting your own system of navigator or

whatever you want to call it with you

know

quasi-semi monks in in gray sweats

or or whatever you know army fatigues

maybe although that might be a little

too violent for

the people who are definitely into

non-violence and compassion and you know

everyone has to feel good and so far

but i mean it would sort of

rouse somewhere sort of the dharma

warrior mentality which might be a good

thing

but i do think it would be important

to have the blessing of

the ordained tarabata buddhist sangha

that they would have to be involved in

order in order for these people to be

calling themselves tarabata buddhists

um it would be good at least

to have the approval

of a theravada buddhist sangha

and so they wouldn't be calling

themselves ordained monks because they

wouldn't be

and they shouldn't be because they

wouldn't be following you know all these

rules that were designed for ancient

india some some of the rules they'd

follow you know no lying no drinking

alcohol that sort of thing

but um

probably not all of the rules and some

of the rules wouldn't even be necessary

anymore like why you wouldn't even need

a rule

um you know forbidding the use of

an ohms bowl made of a human skull for

example

so let's see

with regard my impressions on the life

of anagarika dhammapala as i said i

really don't know that much about him

i've read a little bit about him like

you know his his influence on early

buddhism and the early theosophists and

that sort of thing

so he was much more of a big deal 100

years ago than he is now

but uh

yeah it is it is something to look into

and uh

i don't think the white robes i mean if

you're gonna deviate from

strict

monastic discipline you might as well

just bag the togas because really they

stick out like a sore thumb i mean if

you want the mystique you know you want

to look mysterious and uh you know

exotic

maybe wise you can do that but um

i don't think it's really necessary and

that's not the way it originally was so

i'll just move on to the next question

and this is from the arya swasti project

and this is kind of a naughty question i

think

so but what the hell people are allowed

to ask what they want to ask here

so the aria swasti project says

there is an abundance of documentation

from a certain and i got to put my

put my glass down from a certain

religious group that they have designs

to take over earth in its entirety this

small ethno group is hell bent on doing

so and has been wreaking havoc

especially among the european and

western nations for hundreds of years

there is no debate on the goals and aims

as you can hear it for yourself

they have been known to be behind many

marxist communist satanic lgbt movements

in my belief

they are behind the subversive movement

called christianity

for years for years and desire to

destroy the west which they term

amalek

my question is as buddhists how should

we handle such knowledge

there has to be some remedy when someone

is trying to literally kill you and your

people off the face of the earth

everywhere they appear misery follows

i'm not overstating this they purposely

create friction wherever they are

talking is only getting us so far how do

we extricate ourselves

from such an evil bunch of usurpers that

wish nothing but ill will on the entire

earth

is this our karma what did the buddha

say about handling enemies much respect

warm regards sadhu

so he doesn't mention he was talking

about and uh my only conclusion here is

that he is insinuating that it's the

jane's

or maybe the amish

but um

let's see here

i believe they are behind the subversive

movement called christianity

yeah well

see

my question is is buddhist how should we

handle such knowledge well i mean from

the buddhist point of view

i mean it's just

the nature of samsara that it's always

going to be messed up

you know that's why we're here is

because we're messed up

and our karma is kind of messed up

some of our karma is very messed up

and there's just always going to be

stuff that's i mean presumably this

group that he's

referring to did not exist in the

buddhist time in in india

maybe you know some

merchant or something came through but i

mean there was no appreciable

uh influence

but i mean there was always i mean there

were like

cannibals and like

like robbers infesting the forests that

would kill people or grab them and sell

them into slavery or something and

uh kings i mean on the list of the bad

things that you had to be careful of you

know even above wild animals was kings

which just meant uh you know you had

just warring states in northern india in

the buddhist time

so you had uh it was it was an age of

like expansion there were there were

some old republics

that still were in existence but the

kingdoms were expanding it was like a

time for

for autocratic kings to uh start taking

over and eventually

the king of mughada took over

almost all of india in in ancient times

not long after the time of the buddha

so

i mean there's there's always been this

kind of stuff like uh you know in in the

west

um there's

it's just

take it random pull out of a hat you

know that you've got you know the

christians and the jews in western

civilization since since ancient times

since since the advent of christianity

but before that it was pagans and jews

and um it wasn't just one side causing

suffering to the other there was just

this chronic antagonism going on they

were i mean they were inflicting misery

on each other

there are a lot of you know pogroms you

know anything bad happens the bubonic

plague comes along and you know it's the

jews poisoning wells and then they'd get

tortured and then of course under

torture they would admit to poisoning

the wells and there you go you got your

proof

uh it just it just goes on and in the

west it just seems like it's it's just

become entrenched as a kind of

symbiosis

and symbiosis isn't necessarily positive

you know it's i mean you can have

negative symbiosis like a dog with fleas

the fleas are symbionts they're

parasites but still it's symbionts

so i'm not saying that one side is is

like entirely

parasitic on the other

but

i mean there's there's just all this

crap that's going on in this world and

the only way you can really

cure yourself

of being stuck in it

is just to detach

and once you're detached it doesn't

matter what you do really i mean it's

it's

as i keep saying over and over again

it's like one of the predominant themes

of these q a's is that

really an action is moral or immoral not

because of the the outward physical

action itself but because of the mental

states that are motivating that action

and so i mean you do what you need to do

some things are very difficult to do

with wholesome mental states like mine

or killing

so you got to be careful about that

but um yeah i mean

everything that happens to us every

every sensation every wadena that we

experience according to orthodox

theravada is the result of our karma

in a way where we're creating our own

world and so you have just created a

world with this uh this group in it

and um yeah i thought about that it's

like

um i've got good enough karma knock wood

that i haven't uh

really

been

adversely affected by say terrorism

terrorist groups that have not blown up

my house or tried to kill me or anyone

close to me

but

i do have bad enough karma there at

least i'm hearing about it i'm seeing

about seeing it in the news and all that

so

i'm creating a world that i'm living in

that that has

badness in it

even though it's at a distance

and uh

yeah i mean it's really it's just a

matter of perception how you perceive

things

like uh

one one

saying of mine that i like

is uh it doesn't matter what it is if

you accept it it's not a problem and it

doesn't matter what it is if you won't

accept it it's a problem and that

doesn't mean even if you accept it

doesn't mean that you have you don't get

to do anything to fix it

like you get a flat tire you accept that

you got a flat tire that doesn't mean

you're just going to sit by the side of

the road or just get out and leave your

car behind just abandon it because the

tire is flat you just accept the tire is

flat now i accept that the thing to do

is to fix the tire

and so you fix the tire with some

modicum of equanimity going

so i mean that's that's as far as i'm

concerned that's that's really

how we have to go about i mean i can't

really like

you know

advocate for the violent revolution or

or some such

so i guess i'm just going to have to uh

stay with stay with that

okay the next question from the arya

sawasti project

is as follows i am reasonably fit and

don't find it too difficult to sit in

meditation posture and uh

you have it spelled mediation which is

the most common typo when typing

meditation because the spell check

doesn't say anything

but i digress i'll just start over i am

reasonably fit and don't find it too

difficult to sit in meditation posture

normally one half hour to an hour and a

half but sometimes i can get incredible

pain in the mid portion of my back i

don't think it's entirely physical

maybe working out psychological issues

or something else your comments would be

welcome on that but my question

would it be counterproductive to take

aspirin or some other pain reliever

before meditation i'm not trying to be a

monk as of now but i also try not to

cheat my progress

by involving something that might create

a false sense or state of mind warm

regards much respect sadhu

well this is just very common the person

experiences pain and meditation

you know usually

it's like knee pain or ankle pain or hip

pain

if you're sitting cross-legged on the

floor for example

um

and yeah i've experienced a lot of back

pain i went to one meditation retreat um

not really very long ago in uh

in california

where it was just pain i mean

it was like the muscles in my back were

just restructuring themselves

because i hadn't been sitting like full

time like that just all day essentially

just walking and sitting walking and

sitting all day

um i hadn't been doing that for a long

time and so my back

muscles and tendons and so forth had to

just take a crash course in in doing

that and it

um

yeah it was it was very painful and i

wasn't taking aspirin at the time i mean

it was only like a two-month retreat

but um and by the end of the two months

i was pretty much adjusted but um

there are really two schools of thought

on this issue

one is like mahasi method uh the old

school mohassy method before the uh

the wimpy westerners really uh

really got their their hooks into it

but it was it used to be that

mahasi sada would teach that pain is the friend of the meditator pain is the key that unlocks the door to nibana and it is really easy to be mindful of pain i mean your your mind doesn't wander away from it very much

uh so i mean there is that

and he was i mean monsieur said it was endorsing heroic effort where even though the pain becomes so intense that you feel like you're going to die you do not change position you sit for the full hour

or you know however long you're supposed to be sitting

and there are some other teachers i can't remember his name

he uh

let's see what was it called there's

this there's this burmese meditation

method

uh

ingu

the thai ingu method which is kind of a

big deal in the northwest of burma where

i lived for many years and there's this

one seattle

who

i mean you you sit in the full lotus for

like 24 hours straight it's just it's

just insane and

somehow just the the pain of it

and just

having to sit there for for so long

it can like

you know you just kind of phase out into

a like an altered state of consciousness

or something so i mean that's that's a

pretty extreme version of it

but um

on the other hand i really don't see any

problem with uh like taking aspirin like

um there have been times when you know

you're just sitting so much and maybe

wearing the same robe every day that you

start getting like bed sores on your

behind from sitting so much

and um

i mean it just makes sense that you just

you know get a rolled up towel or

something and arrange it a little bit so

it doesn't hurt so bad or i don't see

anything necessarily wrong with taking

aspirin or ibuprofen i mean you want to

probably stay away from the

the heavy painkillers the narcotic stuff

but um

um

yeah i really it's it's just your own

call which which causes you to make the

most progress

i mean if you're able to just watch the

pain then it may be to your advantage

you get a lot of practice just watching

pain it may come really to your

advantage someday when you've got pain

even when you're not sitting

that you know you're able to uh

bear it with equanimity

but on the other hand if the pain is

really distracting or making your

meditation worse then

yeah i mean it probably makes sense to

uh take the aspirin or or whatever

or you know whatever whatever it takes

um i wouldn't totally wimp out and start

sitting in a chair

but uh that's just me

so let's see i'll go back here and hit

uh hit the whole thing here i'm

reasonably fit don't find it too

difficult to sit in meditation mediation

posture normally one half hour hour and

a half that's that's good like um my

legs were never very

um

flexible

and so sitting in the full lotus for an

hour and a half was

that was a challenge

i i've done it but it was you know it's

usually hurting pretty bad by the time

you get to get to an hour or so

but sometimes i can get incredible pain

in the mid portion of my back

incredible pain i don't believe it

that was a joke

i don't think it's entirely physical

yeah well it's

yeah even a broken arm isn't entirely

physical from the buddhist point of view

because it's the it's the fruition of

karma

at least in part

maybe working out psychological issues

yeah your comments would be welcome on

that but my question would be

counterproductive yeah yeah so we're

getting back to

should he take aspirin or not and it

really it's

you know you have to know from your own

experience whether

um just sitting there in pain is

actually being of benefit to you in your

meditation practice or if it's just

derailing it

then i mean you're gonna have to make

adjustments

so i'll just move on to the next

question this is from rob alias dhamma

farmer

so rob says as a trusted and

authoritative figure on theravada

buddhist texts can you please point me

in the right direction so i can find

queer theory in the pali texts

i've never heard of any queer theory in

there so i was intrigued and i think

he's referring to

there are these

like radical lefty

western buddhist academics

um

apparently they're lesbians also

um

and one of them who has written articles

that have

mentioned me in it and just mentioned

you know right wing extremist

buddhism

um

they uh they have like a degree in

buddhist studies and specialize in

uh queer theory

in relation to buddhism

which of course is indicative of their

approach to buddhism

um

yeah queer theory in the polytechnics

uh

you know there is some

mention of homosexuality

to some degree

in the the books of monastic discipline

especially with regard to

um who can and cannot be ordained

according to the rules

and so

uh

it's mainly you have to be a man to be

ordained as a monk and that means you've

got to have a

set of cajones which means you know

trans men you know it's not gonna work

with them they're not gonna even if they

go through the ceremony they're still

not gonna be monks

because it's just they're automatically

disqualified from the get-go

um

but there there are there's like the

intermediate stage of not being fully

male and not being fully female and

that's the pandika

and there's all these different kinds of

pandakas usually it means like a eunuch

you know it's that was fairly common in

ancient times in in certain cultures not

just in india where you know boys would

be castrated before puberty

and they would become

uh

like

prostitutes or

bath house attendants or just slaves

attending the the women

that kind of a thing

and um

there's of course in the polytechs and

the commentaries they're very elaborate

trying to you know systematize and

explain everything

and so

they have lists of different kinds of

pandukas and they've got like the

part-time panduka which

uh could be a bisexual could i mean

um

yeah so

that's about as as close to queer theory

as you're going to get i mean there in

ancient times there really wasn't much

of a concept of homosexuality like in

ancient greece and rome there wasn't

much of a concept of homosexuality it

was mainly just you know if you're on

top you're still in the you're still

playing the part of the man

so you can have sex with

eunuchs or or women or or you know

youths

or whatever and you're still i mean as

long as you're on top essentially then

you're still masculine

and uh maybe the ancient india was

similar

there were um

there was a certain unsavory reputation

of you know like barbers

and uh bath house attendants and so

forth

um

but i mean it's it's never really

addressed as a burning issue like it is

all of a sudden

in the west

because i mean it was never really a

burning issue unless it was

you know queers being burned at the

stake by

christians you know like in the middle

ages or something

or not even necessarily christians i

mean muslim i mean no religion

really uh

has

uh really endorses homosexuality or or

queerness maybe hinduism a little bit

you know you've got the gopis you know

the men that are cross dressers at least

um in their in their religious practice

but um

yeah this is kind of a joke question i

think maybe i'm taking it a little too

seriously so i'm just going to move on

to rob alias dhamma farmers next

question

your story about the burmese villager

hating you got me thinking and the story

was uh a few weeks ago in uh on my blog

i just told this story that i'd never

told before of this this villager who

started hating me just because his dog

bit me

and so it really wasn't my fault

i mean i was walking for alms and i had

stopped in front of his house and his

daughter or daughter-in-law

would offer me food every morning that

every morning that i stopped there

and offered relatively good food too

but one day the dog just came out and

bit me and then

because of that his family got kind of a

bad reputation you know people were

asking me way over the other side of the

village you know if i was going for alms

on the other side of the village did

someone so his dog really bite you

that kind of a thing and also i never

saw the dog again so maybe it was

because of the dog biting me that he had

to get rid of her maybe he even killed

it

so

anyway he just started hating me even

though i really hadn't done anything

even after the dog bit me i was just

saying you know don't worry about it

it's okay

you know no problem

so let's see i've completely

digressed from the question here though

your story about the burmese villager

hating you got me thinking i've also met

people in the past who instinctively

hate me without ever saying anything to

them or wronging them could this be the

result of past life karma rather than

just an inability to click yeah sure i

mean as i have already said like at

least twice

anything that happens to you that you

experience

you know any any kind of sensation that

arises according to orthodox theravada

is the fruition of karma

and i'm inclined to go along with that

maybe even to a more

radical degree than orthodox theravada

because i really do not believe in the

ultimately real existence of physical

matter so to some degree we're just

in a simulation we're in the matrix

we're dreaming

whatever whatever you however you want

to interpret it

so

yeah i mean there could be a certain

amount of just randomness sort of

neutral randomness if if it's not really

you know getting

um you know really intense on you or

something you know somebody just

just instinctively dislikes you like um

there was one i've been told that there

was one person i want i don't want to

give too many details

because he might watch this

but

i was told that at first he didn't like

me just because i was

like tall or something

and um

but then you know everything's fine now

i mean i i didn't hear anything about it

until we're we're already good friends

so

so yeah something like that i mean

who knows

but yeah if someone is like antagonizing

you yeah that would be the fruition of

karma at least in part

um

i don't know enough about rob

uh alias dhamma farmer here to know i

mean maybe he just has the kind of looks

i mean some people i mean it's like

you know some people just don't like

blonde guys for example not that i'm

insinuating that rob here is one of

those

but um

still sometimes i mean it's just

whatever

maybe just you you walk funny or

you're just wearing kind of glasses that

maybe they their teacher in sixth grade

who hated them

war or something you know it could be

all kinds of weird things but if it's

happening to you then karma has

something to do with it

so i'll just move on to the next

question and this is from mary j

mary spelt m-e-r-r-y

and j-spelt j

what is the penance when you break rules

as a monk

what is that you actually have to do

well that's that's a good question

and with regard to most rules there's

there's

i think it's seven you see the the

highest

you know the most serious rules that you

can break are the paragrika and if you

break those

you don't have to do anything other than

just get the hell out because you're not

a monk anymore you just instantaneously

excommunicated as soon as you perpetrate

the act

so below that is sangadi saysa and i'll

get back to that one that one you have

to you have to do penance for six days

and six nights plus an additional day

and night for every day that you didn't

confess that you concealed your offense

and then below that you've got tulachaya

then you've got pachitia two different

kinds of pachitti you've got nisigia

pachiti and just ordinary pachiriya then

below that is pati descenia then you've

got a dukata offense and you've got

dewbasita offense and there's only one

dubasi defense which is making a joke at

somebody else's expense

so let's see tula chaya all the way down

to

dubai c top all you do is you make

confession it's just a

you know two monks you gotta uncover

your shoulder you squat down like you

know you make anjali like this

uh the sea the junior monk bows to the

senior monk and then there's just this

formula hambande sabah apatio obikaromi

and then the other monk says

then the first monk says

hambande

and then he'll say what kind of offenses

he committed or

burmese monks just say all offenses you

know they don't really they don't really

admit to anything other than they did

something

and it just goes back and forth it's

just this stereotype formula

and then at the end it's sadhu also

and then they you know that's it and all

of your offenses just miraculously poof

out of resistance and that's the way a

lot of monks see it you break a rule

you just you just squat down with

another monk and do the necessary blah

blah blah and it just

makes the

makes the rules disappear or it makes

the offense disappear and you're in good

standing again which is

very corrupt i think

um as a monk at least i would try to

specify what category of rule i had

broken

and uh i i skipped over the there's one

obscure group of rules called potty day

scenario rules

there's four of them and i mean they're

just very rarely broken

and um there's a different kind of

confession you have to make for those

you just say i committed this potty days

in the offense and you know i i i can

you know i said i confess it so

um with regard to everything below

sangha di says all you have to do is

just make confession with regard to

nisigiya pachidiya rules like

the most common one is handling money

you have to get rid of whatever it is

that you're not supposed to have like

like the money and then you make the

confession so

um you got monks making confession and

for for handling money is is you know

there's it doesn't erase it because you

still got the money after the confession

so you're still breaking the rule

but with regard to sanggari cesar and

there are 13 of them

and some of them are easily broken and

other ones just nobody

i mean it's just not an issue anymore

it's like

an aspect of ancient indian buddhism

that just doesn't arise anymore

um

but um like touching a woman

deliberately because you like touching

the woman

that's one or um deliberately having an

orgasm

is is another one that can happen fairly

easily especially for young monks

that uh still full of

male vitality so to speak

and uh

with regard to those

there's

something like 90 or 100 penances that

have to be done for the six days and six

nights

and i don't remember all of them some of

them are fairly obscure but some of the

main ones are you're not allowed to

sleep with the other monks you have to

live in an outbuilding on the outskirts

of the monastery you have to go in back

of the line you have to sit in back

um you have to bow to every other monkey

it's like you are the junior monk so

long as you're taking this penis you're

not allowed anybody to bow down to you

you're not allowed to uh let's see

uh you're not supposed to be teaching

dhamma when you're when you're doing

this penance

um

let's see what else you have to stand up

whenever another monk approaches you

that kind of a thing you know

essentially you're just becoming the

lowliest most junior monk at the

monastery uh while you're doing this

penance that's essentially what it

amounts to

and then you get reinstated by this

ceremony

of

oh also the most difficult penance you

have to do is you have to make

confession to every single monk that you

come across

every month that you see even if you're

out in the village going for alms you

see a monk there you got to go and make

confession to him

so

that is that's the most difficult part

because if you're a busy monastery

amongst coming and going you know you're

gonna you go to make confession to so

and so and and you know he took off that

morning and didn't tell you so that day

doesn't count

so

yeah i mean that's that's essentially

what you have to do and then you go

through the ceremony with 20 monks in

good standing have to all participate

and that involves you to be like

squatting on your squatting on your knee

like

just in a squatting position for a very

long time and it can get very painful i

have read that the jane ascetics who

would literally torture themselves one

of the their most favorite tortures self

tortures was just to remain in a

squatting position

and if you don't if you don't think it

hurts just stay in a squatting position

just watch you know like a 45 minute

video or something while just squatting

there in front of the tv or the computer

and your

your feet are gonna be burning and

you're gonna be in pain

before half an hour is up

so that that could be one of the most

difficult parts of the whole penance is

just squatting through the long ceremony

at the end

but um as i say most

most rules if you break them all you

have to do is just confess

and um you know they're you're supposed

to confess to a monk that hasn't broken

the same rule um it doesn't have the

same unconfessed offense and so forth

but it's just very corrupt it's it's

really in in thailand even where

whinya or monastic discipline is still

practiced relatively strictly it still

is still corrupt

like the confession they don't actually

say what rules they broke

and uh even if they didn't break the

rules they still confess just

just in case but that's against the

rules also

and uh in in burma they make confession

twice

because the first the second time you

can you're making confession for

breaking the new rule of making

confession to a monk who's broken the

same rule without

not confessing it

it's all very complicated and also the

whole

six days and six nights of penance um in

burma especially

um i can really can't say what it's like

in other countries it's it's gotten so

corrupt that they just do it at night

you know so long as you got a at least a
minute of daylight
then uh that's that's good enough they
just you know take the take the duties
and when everyone's asleep
and you know they can't they don't have
to like humiliate themselves like like a
senior monk like the abbot of a
monastery you know some of them i mean
they're they're so established as the
king of their own monastery they're not
going to go in the back of line they're
not going to get down on their knees and
bow to the junior monks there now it's
just it's just unthinkable it's just a
non-starter

so

yeah there's all this complications and

corruptions and subtleties and so forth

and so

um the short answer what penance when

you break rules as a monk

yeah you just if it's a song of decision

rule that you broke you take the penance

for six days and six nights and you're

essentially the lowest the lowliest monk

the most junior monk at the monastery

and you have to confess what you did

every day to every monk there

and then anything else you just do the

the ritual blah blah blah which uh makes

it poof out of existence so just moving

on here next question is from iz

and iz says hi david what about pp

poopoo gay butt sex games

is there much of it going on among the

monks in asia

is there much of it going on among the

monks in the west what about the ladies

well i'm not sure what ladies here is

referring to is it nuns or is it like

female supporters of the monks i'm not

sure

but um

yeah there there are a lot of gay monks

in asia

i'm not sure about western

probably a lower percentage of western

gay monks but like in in burma

becoming a monk is just a socially

acceptable way of not getting married

and so they're like latent homosexuals

and

um my experience

in burma was that just about every

meditation center in the mahasi

tradition especially will have sort of a

an assistant abbot who is gay or acts

very gay and they they like

the the comfortable places in town like

the relatively well supported

rich comfortable monasteries you know

got rich donors they tend to accumulate

there and they don't like just the rough

forest asceticism stuff very

much

but so with regard to actually

practicing homosexuality i've heard very

little of it i've i've heard more about

it in thailand than i did in burma even

though i lived in burma for more than 20

years and lived in thailand for a total

of maybe three weeks

but still i've i heard more about the

sort of

you know buggery

um which of course causes the monk not

to be a real monkey more he's just

immediately excommunicated just

spontaneously

as soon as he starts the act

as soon as

there's the penetration of the width of

a of a sesame seed

so long as the penetration is you know

like one millimeter or two millimeters

or something that's it he's not a monk

anymore even if you know nobody

nobody else at the monastery hears about

it you know even though he's still

dressed in robes and everything he's

really not a monk anymore

so

yeah it does happen i'm happy to say

that it's not really this scandalous

thing that is running rampant

in terrible buddhism there are a few gay

western monks and uh

i heard this one scandal of a relatively

famous western monk who was uh deported

from singapore i think it was because he

was messing around with

some

laymen there

but still it's relatively rare and even

the monks that are you know attracted to

other males or you know they're just

born that way or or whatever it is

they're they tend to be

late you know the overwhelming majority

are just

you know sort of effeminate monks that

like comfy cushy monasteries and uh

you know they can still be good monks

you know they're

it's like one of my first spiritual

teachers

through books was rom das and he was a

switch hitter he was bisexual

so

they can you know be spiritually

advanced as as well as you know

heterosexuals i assume

um

with regard to the ladies regarding nuns

i have no idea i mean

i really have had very few interactions

with

with nuns either in burma or in the west

you know a little bit you know you meet

them you see them on the bus or whatever

um but i really can't say what the deal

is with them

uh with regard to like female supporters

of monks

then you know lay women yeah that

happens i've heard stories about monks

who were just like serial seducers of

female lay supporters and that kind of a

thing

and so they're they're not

one or two of them was relatively

high level

i mean i've

had a reputation for acting

inappropriately in that regard for a

while but i never excommunicated myself

i never actually went to the extent of

uh

actually seducing

um you know

doing the full course of seduction

so

so to speak

um

so yeah i'd say that it does exist but

it is rare

i'm not sure about

thailand and there were times in sri

lanka like in medieval times when the

monks were so

lacks and and just not following the

rules so unconscientious that uh they

had to restart sangha by bringing in

foreign monks to start doing ordinations

to get real monks again because

um it was just the standard practice um

a few times in the history of sri lanka

or so i've read that monks would just be

getting married and having kids and so

forth and

um but that is nowadays that is rare

even in sri lanka there have been um

there are some reform movements that are

relatively very strict

so it's not like you hear about in

like roman catholicism where you know

there's just hundreds of priests that

are seducing young boys

i heard one rumor in burma of uh a monk

that had messed around with um

an

uh an older novice

who was

of

you know 18 19 20 years old but uh it

was just a rumor

and

i have no idea if it's true or not and

that's the only

the only rumor of that sort of thing

that i ever heard the whole time i was

living in burma

so the burmese are fairly conservative

in certain ways

so i think i'll just move on to the next

question which is from mirror of

emptiness

and mirror of emptiness says are you

familiar with the writings and ideas of

the

controversial monk beku kanyananda

if so what was it that was so

controversial

to many orthodox theravada monks and

what do you think of his views

well

i think i mentioned nyananda

on uh a few shows ago

and i have to admit this is sort of like

uh

the question about um

uh what's his name anagarika

damopala it's somebody that i have a

very superficial knowledge of

and the only thing i've ever read by

nyan ananda is this book

which is one of the most important books

on terawatta that you could read concept

and reality

in early buddhist thought by biku

nyananda

and uh

he was like uh

a teacher at the uh

he taught paulie studies

at the university of sri lanka before he

was a monk i think

so he was an intellectual a scholar and

had some western ideas

and this book really was a

groundbreaking buddhist scholarship it's

an important book

anyone who's serious about

buddhist philosophy and knows you know

the text if you don't know the

difference between the angular and

nikaya and the samyut nikayam then it

might not be for you but

um you know if you know the difference

between the angular and the sun utah

for example you know it you'd know

enough about uh polytechs and so forth

that you could uh

you could gain some benefit from this

and he was simply pointing out that the

the commentarial tradition had

misunderstood the word papancha

for

well over a thousand years you know 1500

years or so

and he was pointing out very

systematically according to the texts

that papancha doesn't mean what the

commentary says it means

so

um that could be controversial i'm sure

there would be a lot of traditionalist

you know reactionary monks who just say

that the commentaries are right like a

lot of burmese monks they'll i remember

once

um i was really not exactly a senior

monk i've been a monk maybe seven or

eight years

and

this

school monk came to to live out in the

forest for a while the same monastery as

me

and i remember he had really rotten

teeth i don't know why i remember that

but he just

came and informed me that he wanted to

teach me

about you know the rules of monastic

discipline and so forth

and it's possible i might have known

more about them than he did but

a lot of burmese monks just assume that

foreigners don't know anything

and so i was just gonna give him some

fair warning it was a little shot over

the bow i'm just saying well you know i

don't think the commentaries are always

right

and he got this grin on his face

and i just

and he just says that's not possible

so a lot of burmese monks they just

think that the commentaries are more

important than the polytechs themselves

to some degree because if if the text

says you know the buddha says blue

but the commentary says when the buddha

said blue what he really meant was red

then if you don't read the commentary

you don't know that that's what the

buddha said

and so the commentaries do work that way

to some degree and this bikunyan and

nanda just kind of cut through that

you know he's he was

traditionalist enough that he was taking

the the polytechs very seriously but he

was

um

in a sense defying the commentarial

tradition you know led by venerable

buddhigosa

and you know that's something that

westerners western monks

probably most western monks really don't

have much use for buddhism

buddhism you know which is just the

commentarial interpretation which is

orthodox i mean technically that is the

orthodox approach to taravana but um

um some of us who have

the capacity for critical thought and

individual

you know we we want to just make up our

own mind about things we don't just

follow along sheep like

then uh yeah we can

we can acknowledge that sometimes the

commentaries are really wrong a lot

sometimes they're just making wild stabs

in the dark they're just guessing and

what they don't fully understand

um like like with regard to

like the flora and fauna and some of the

cultural aspects of north india because

the commentaries were written in south

india and sri lanka about a

a thousand years a lot of it came about

a thousand years after the time of the

buddha

and so they didn't really know what you

know this plant was or or what that

meant because it's just alien to their

culture they couldn't really

in some respects a modern westerner can

make a more accurate or plausible guess

at what words mean than than these

commentators did

but with regard to anything else that

nyan ananda wrote i he's he wrote a few

other things but i think his main

reputation just comes from from this

book

and it's the only it's the only book of

his that i've read it's probably

um the only book of his that most people

that have read him have read

that was the one that really made the

waves so i assume that's why he is

controversial although he may have

written other things that were even more

controversial like maybe in private

letters that got published or something

so

as i say i really don't know much about

him other than you know he was an

academic before he was a monk and he

wrote the book that i read a long time

ago and it's really not even fresh in my

mind right now

so i'll just move on to the next

question from rafi 46

and rafi 46 says do jane's believe there

is a self and the answer to that is yes

they do

that's a fairly simple one

jainism and buddhism are very similar in

certain respects and they do have roots

going back into the same

probably the same indus valley

civilization

that had certain aspects of like

pessimism you know the world is a bad

place of suffering you should try to

escape from it

um

like atheism you know there is no

supreme god in jainism or in buddhism or

in sankhya

which also has its roots

back um at least some roots going all

the way back into the prehistoric indus

valley civilization

um you know they believe in karma you're

supposed to purify your karma in order

to escape from this world of suffering

and so forth it's a common theme

with different takes on it you know

there's different approaches to that in

buddhism and jainism and and you know

yoga sankhya

um

so what the james believe is that

everyone has

a kind of immortal soul called the jiva

or the it's like life the jiva literally

means life it's like the life force

it's this what they consider to be the

soul

and

karma is like a sticky

almost it's like a physical substance

that sticks to your jiva and weighs it

down so what the jains were trying to do

is to

get rid of all of their karma even the

good karma so that

their their soul would

waft up into heaven

that's that's the short version that's

the reader's digest version of uh

jane philosophy

and uh yeah some of them would just

literally torture themselves by

squatting for example squatting for

prolonged periods of time

um you know eating maybe once a week

not probably not as a continued practice

but

maybe for a while

um

some of them would go naked some of them

still go naked

and i wondered i mean northern india

especially in the buddhist time it got

down to about freezing in the coldest

time of year and it turns out they smear

themselves with mud to survive

survive the winter

because

really they own nothing they don't own a

begging bowl or clothes or anything they

just own zero property other than just

their own

smelly carcass

but yeah ravi 46 the the jains do

believe there is a self it's called the

jiva

so i'll just move on to the next

question this is from loki

and loki says what would be the best

introductory what would be the best

introductory book or books on primordial

buddhism ideally those which entail

practical exercises as well as

cosmological components

well that's a good question

what is the

introductory book on this primitive

archaic pre-terravadon buddhism

personally i would have to say the

sutanipata which is canonical

so

um yeah especially the attica waga read

the antakawaga of the sutonipata and

that is

i consider that to be the most important

buddhist document

in existence

at least that we know of maybe there's

something buried under the ground

somewhere that uh is more important at

least potentially

but it's the largest

chunk of really primitive pre-terror and

buddhism still in existence

so your best introduction to primordial

buddhism would be the the atakawaga in

my opinion without question because

anything besides that uh it's going to

be academic stuff written by

scholars who in all probability aren't

buddhists and haven't lived the life

and they have some really interesting

really brilliant ideas sometimes

but a lot of the time you know they just

have this mind that

um you know a lot of intellectuals are

this way they've got a mind like a

scalpel

and it causes a kind of tunnel vision

you know they they see what they're

looking at really precisely but they

they don't see the big picture

so

yeah the best introductory book on

primordial buddhism is the atakawaga and

it's a mind blower it's well worth

reading anybody should study it if they

want to understand what the buddha

really taught

so i'll just move on to the last

question and the last question is from

deed

and deed asks what do i want for my

birthday

because my birthday is coming up

well i already know a couple things that

i'm getting

i'm gonna get a holster

for a glock

that's nice

um with regard to stuff that i don't

know that i'm already getting i would

like to get a harmonica i wouldn't i

wouldn't mind getting a harmonica you

know a nice one in a versatile key

perhaps

and aside from that i'll probably work

that day

so get a good cake it was my it was the

tradition in my family when i was a kid

i always got rhubarb upside down cake

for

for my birthday but um that is so

esoteric

that um it might not really be plausible

so

um

so with no rhubarb upside down cake

we'll just go for some kind of chocolate

something relatively decadent

and uh just a nice dinner at home

you know hang out with my sweetheart

that would be a good birthday for me i'm

really

not much

into holidays i'm having to get back

into that mode

um

aft now that i'm not only not a monk

anymore but i am engaging in society and

also have uh

a sweetheart

so yeah i mean you definitely don't want

to forget her birthday but um there were

times as a monk you know i'd just be
standing there scratching my head
looking at the calendar trying to figure
out what day it was and then i'd realize
oh wait a minute yesterday was my
birthday or yesterday was christmas
and you know it's just all days are all
days are buddha day
so
but you know i it's it's not that bad of
a of a tradition have birthdays and send
people cards and that kind of a thing so
yeah anyone who uh just wants to
give me a birthday present i wouldn't
mind getting a
it's like i can't slide lock for a glock
19 that it's it's an extended one an

extended slide lock

i think that's what they're called

either just money you know

whatever

but that uh that's essentially what i

want for my birthday i mean really i'm

i'm not

although i'm easy to get stuff for

because up until recently i owned almost

nothing

um

i've already got enough socks and

underwear

and uh

i'm still more or less of an aesthetic

even though i might live a somewhat

luxurious life when i'm not at work

in a non-air conditioned

metal shop in south carolina which is

yeah that's that's an aesthetic practice

right there

but um

some of my life is relatively luxurious

although uh

um i don't really

you know i

my sweetheart's a really good cook but

you know i could eat peanut butter

sandwiches with equanimity too

not that i'm complaining i don't want to

sound like i'm complaining not like i

want to eat peanut butter sandwiches

especially not for my birthday

but i guess that's it that's the last

question

and so uh if you have any questions i'm

very happy to answer them to the best of

my ability i can't promise that i'll be

able to give

an intellectual

or learned answer

especially about some topic or some

person that i know very little about but

uh if you have any questions about uh

buddhism

especially theravada buddhism

uh burmese buddhism

uh just my life living in caves and so

forth

um yes

put them in the comments below

i always uh glean questions from the

comment sections as well as in other

places

if you're on the discord server you can

leave your questions there

if you're subscribed to me on subscribe

star you can leave your questions there

or otherwise just uh in the comments

below this video either on uh

bit shoot or uh

youtube

and all my url links are below

including those from my books for sale

on amazon

and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 30 of

question and answer i am your host pano

basa

and we've got lots of questions here

ranging from very easy to very difficult

and i'm going to do my best to answer

them

and if you have any questions you want

me to answer or at least try to answer

especially if they have anything to do

with

buddhism or theravada buddhism or

burmese buddhism or buddhist monasticism

or meditation buddhist practices

anything like that

anything about me personally feel free

to ask in the comments below

and

i'll do my best to answer and i make no

guarantees that i'll answer it really

well

possibly not to your satisfaction but i

do my best

i'm

gonna do my best this time

so let's just crack open the red bull

and commence

to answering questions

least wise i'm fixing to start

commencing

okay

first question is from bpat427

and i think this one

was asked before the last q a

and for some reason i'm

it's like i missed like three questions

that were asked last time so these are

old questions hopefully he hasn't been

satisfactorily answered by somebody else

yet

so bpav427 says

there's a sub genre of hardcore punk

called beat down

known for its ridiculously violent mosh

pits

if everyone in the mosh pit is engaging

in the violence completely voluntarily

there is no fear of getting hurt in the

whole pit and violent dance moves within

it are a reaction to an extremely primal

and hyper masculine sound

as opposed to intentionally inflicting

pain upon others

what would be the karmic impact of this

question mark

i don't experience a desire to hurt

others necessarily when i go to these

kinds of concerts but it's almost as if

the music triggers a primitive part of

me and it feels

as if i almost have to start swinging my

arms and legs which i assume is what

others feel as well hence why everyone

is doing it so the question embedded in

this

is what is the karmic impact of flailing

around in the mosh pit at a hardcore

punk rock concert

that is the question

and

he kind of answers the question to some

degree

by uh

talking about like the extremely

primitive or primal

um feel to what he's doing and really it

is sort of like a

regression to animalistic passions

um even if you're you have no intention

of hurting anybody still

you're

you're essentially raging

like a wild animal like a like a wild

beast

and the more you do something the more

momentum that creates you know that's

what karma is essentially is just the

momentum of your mental states

and so

by doing this i mean you might not be

making any

uh unwholesome or unskillful karma by

you know deliberately hurting somebody

but still you've got

um this volitional

animalism going on

that is going to

add more sort of violent passionate

animalistic karma which might be right

up your alley for all i know or it might

not but it's uh

something that you would want to

consider i suppose

whether you want to have more

animalistic karma

that

can result in

animalistic

results of that karma fruition

animalistic fruition

so

i think i answered it i'm really not

sure i've never been in a mosh pit

myself

but um i have i've heard stories

a friend of mine in high school went to

a

punk rock concert one band was called

the maggot brains they had like one one

drum set and three bass guitars and no

no lead guitar and they were so awful

that

some of the

audience rushed the stage and

threw the singer off the stage and he

was on the floor getting his head kicked

but

not all punk rock bands or not all punk

rock concerts are like this i am sure so

i think i'll just move on to uh

bpap 427's next question this is a more

recent one

have you been running any drills with

your glock

what firearm would you like to purchase

next so i guess that's two questions

i haven't really been running any drills

with my glock

um i did get a holster recently for my

birthday in fact i got two holsters this

is one of them right here it's very nice

handmade

by a

proud confederate down the

road um

so the only drills if you call them

drills at present is i'm just practicing

just target shooting it hasn't gotten

any farther than target shooting i'm not

practicing quick draw or anything like

that yet

i haven't uh even started

really applying for the uh

concealed carry permit when you got to

go through some kind of training course

in south carolina

so that's about it just just a bit of

practice shooting

and uh i could use an improvement i'm

really not the best shot

with with the pistol i used to be a

really good shot with a rifle but um

not so not so good with a pistol

and uh anyway see the next question here

is what firearm would you like to

purchase next um i'm not really planning

on becoming a collector my father was a

gun collector i got a 22 rifle on the

day i was born

he had uh something like 40 to 50 rifles

and shotguns just a a few pistols

but

what firearm would i like to purchase

next

maybe

a pump shotgun

you know like a mossberg or something

maybe

and i haven't really given it much

thought um

getting another another firearm is not

really high on my priority list right

now and as i say i still need to

practice with the the one pistol that

i've got

so i think i'll just uh move on to

bpat427's next question

and my answer to this one may be equally

unsatisfactory but uh

such as life

he says do you know of any reputable

terravotta monasteries in eastern

washington the spokane area that you

could recommend to someone

um honestly i don't know of any

monasteries reputable or otherwise in

the area of spokane washington

i assume that the very least there's

some kind of asian temples there maybe i

don't know what kind of immigrant

community spokane has i've never been to

spokane

i was raised in western washington but

spokane is way over by idaho

on the east

so i mean of reputable terrible

monasteries there's supposedly one

um technically in eastern washington but

it's down by the oregon border like on

the on the banks of the columbia river

that's in ajahn chah tradition and then

there's one that was started by ah john

tanisero like 10 years ago or a little

less

it's

i think it's in the north cascades area

somewhere

so they're both in washington state but

they're quite a ways from uh

from spokane

and also there's birkin in uh

uh british columbia a little bit north

of vancouver that uh is reputable it's

it's very reputable

but um aside from that i really can't

recommend any monasteries

tarawata or otherwise

in eastern washington because i really

am unfamiliar with the monastery scene

in eastern washington

or idaho for that matter

so i think i'll just move on to the next

question with all

all due respects

and uh see be pat's last question here

is have you done any traveling to other

eastern u.s states since relocating to

south carolina

well

um

my sweetheart and i have made a couple

trips to uh virginia to pick up her

mother when she came to visit us

so we've just taken road trips

through

um

parts of north carolina and tennessee

and and virginia i don't know if we hit

any uh

no i don't think we hit west virginia at

all although uh we are planning around

the end of august

to go on a trip to ohio

we're going to take a road trip

in a

car with good gas mileage

and drive up to ohio where my sweetheart

was

was born and uh where her mother still

lives and

maybe uh riding boats on lake erie or

something

so um yeah we're gonna hit all the

states between here and

and ohio i suspect

so

yeah i was never really heavily into

traveling i just really didn't much see

the point of it when i was younger

and then um around the time i became a

monk

i just started traveling a lot and just

um

this force of circumstance had me going

to places i never thought i was ever

going to go to

including japan been to japan three

times

so

yeah i'm kind of uh

um

i've been kind of a homeless wanderer

for a long time although those days i

think are over

and uh

i work full full-time so

i'm not um

having lots of time off or traveling

but i would i would like to uh visit

georgia where my father was born and

raised

um

northwestern georgia around

mount berry mount berry georgia

so that that's uh kind of on the on the

list of places to go to

so uh yeah

i think i answered that that was an easy

one that was easy

so i'll just move on to the next

question which is from alfred

and this one's kind of uh

kind of an interesting

spicy one maybe

when a person is in a lifelong

relationship and your spouse is not

interested in sex anymore he's got sex

capitalized capital s

when your spouse is not interested in

sex anymore what would be the right

approach

resorting to masturbation or becoming a

celibate

often

um this is he sort of elaborated on this

often when you are in a relationship for

a long time some women shut up shop and

leave you in the lurch so to speak

if you want to clean your plumbing it

creates a problem

hmm well from the buddhist point of view

if you're able to be celibate you should

be celibate i mean that's

um

i mean there is a pseudo where the

buddha says you know if you can become a

monk become a monk if you can't become a

monk then at the least

avoid sex like you're avoiding falling

into a deep hole with like red hot

glowing embers at the bottom

and if even that's too much at the very

very least

stay away from the wives of other men

so

yeah masturbation is certainly

preferable to uh

uh becoming a

a philanderer

so to speak

so

yeah i mean if you just want to be like

orthodox buddhist

um

yeah celibacy would be preferable to

spanking the puppy so to speak

um but i mean it's just not for

everybody it's like some some guys they

just can't be celibate you know it's

like in the bible the new testament

where jesus says there are three kinds

of eunuchs you've got

born eunuchs made eunuchs and those who

become eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven

and that's people who are

uh voluntarily celibate for spiritual

reasons and then he says but it's not

for everybody

and it and it's really not and uh

i mean sometimes if a person is celibate

for spiritual reasons

they're like a starving man just

fantasizing about food all the time and

i can relate to this it's i've had this

kind of experience

where

you're celibate

but you're just horny you're just

frustrated

so

at some point you have to

decide are you making more good karma

by being celibate and just being

frustrated all the time or would it be

better just to relieve the the

frustration

with uh

some puppy petting

and uh i mean for a monk it's really not

it's not a good choice to make i mean

celibacy i mean if you don't want to be

celibate then you shouldn't be a monk

obviously i mean monks aren't even

allowed to uh masturbate at least not to

uh orgasm they might be allowed to jerk

but not jerk all the way off

so

i mean one thing you could do is just uh

try to uh persuade

your your mate

um

in one way or another

you know i mean i don't think uh getting

angry and making

you know threats and accusations is

going to help anything but um

i don't know

i think uh you could have some

persuasive power i mean if if she loves

you she might be willing to uh

take one for the team

so to speak this may be not a good way

of saying it

but uh yeah i mean that would probably

be first choice if possible but maybe uh

uh

the person asking the question here has

already tried that multiple times

so he's uh falling back on

something else

so

yeah i mean if it was me unfortunately

it is not

um

yeah i think trying like romantic

persuasion or something would be first

choice

and uh

yeah i mean i'm not a monk anymore so

um

resorting to your own right hand

is uh

i mean there's much worse things you

could do

but um

be faithful at any rate

so

i hope i answered that one i don't want

to wallow with it i don't want to wallow

in this one

um not that it's a bad question or

anything i mean it's probably applicable

to a great many

men yes especially in the west it's

weird how

it used to be

if you wanted to have sex with a woman

um

i mean you resort to a prostitute or

some floozy in a bar or else you'd get

married and it was like traditionally

women

would have sex

after marriage but not before or very

little before whereas now it's like the

opposite in in america or in the west

women have sex more before they get

married

so i mean

quite a few married men have made

comments to this effect

um

with regard to uh i mean like in

communications with me it's like

just if you want to be celibate just get

married

but um

yeah

so that is it is kind of a weird

situation in the west that women will

have sex

more before they get married and then

after they get married it's like well i

don't have to do that anymore

in fact uh

i heard a joke today it's like why are

women always smiling in their wedding

pictures

is because they're happy because they

don't have to give oral sex anymore

this is not fair

so um

i think i'll just move on to the next

question i'll just sort of sneak away

from that question

and the next question is from robert

and robert says

for a long time i had this theory that

the universe is just god split into

trillion individual consciousnesses so

when you suffer it's really god's

suffering and when you're happy it's

really god who's happy in that scenario

there is no real you and me but only god

who alone has consciousness a sort of

panentheism

god experiencing itself through us any

thoughts on that

um

yeah it's

i mean some religions do teach that like

vedanta

teaches that i mean

we have a soul or an atman but everybody

shares the same one and it's essentially

god

but there is

i think from well from a buddhist point

of view obviously there is no god so

this this would just be academic

but um

yeah i can i can understand how you

could say

that

you know ultimate reality is just

infinite formless consciousness

but the thing is if it's formless

consciousness

then all the happy and unhappy would be

an illusion because they would be forms

supposedly

existing in the formlessness but it's

really just like a virtual existence

sort of like in buddhism you've got

dependent co-rising padicha samupada

which

nagarjuna claimed to be the same as

emptiness

which means there is no

no

ultimate reality

to like a multiple phenomenal world

so

the happy and unhappy

uh

god

i mean ultimately the happiness and the

unhappiness would be an illusion but god

would contain the illusion so it'd be

like

um

maybe like a book containing

a description of happiness or

unhappiness but ultimately there's no

happiness or unhappiness there it's just

these

uh symbols that are

represented or interpreted as happiness

unhappiness

so

i mean if you want to reify

ultimate reality as infinite formless

consciousness which

vedanta does and i think quite a few

christian mystics also have done

then

still whether

god is experiencing happiness or

unhappiness as something real

um

is is debatable

and uh

in a way they it kind of does because

you know the phenomenal world is sort of

kind of conditionally real you know it's

not just total absolute unreal because

it has to be based on something

but um

yeah it's it's going back to like the uh

the simile of the block of marble where

you know you've got this one block of

stone

which

you know it's it's not near anything

else so we can say that it's essentially

sizeless and inside that block of stones

every single possible statue and so you

can have like joyous statues or statues

of beings that supposedly are joyful

others that are sad you know the dying

gall or something

and um

i mean it's just sort of

not really i mean every single molecule

in each statue is already there you know

you just have to dismiss the extraneous

rock

but still to say whether there's like

you know happy people and unhappy people

are happy anything or unhappy anything

inside inside the rock is uh

you know it's it's just sort of a an

enigma or or something

and

i would say that ultimately it's not

real the happiness and the unhappiness

unless you get to like the the ultimate

happiness of nirvana or you know the

sachitananda

of um

of the hindus where just god is in the

state of just total bliss

no problems no worries that kind of

thing

and uh

this also i think was a question that i

somehow

overlooked last time as was alfred's

question

and i think this next one also might be

one that

um it was on minds.com it wasn't in the

usual place for people asking questions

and so

before i uh i do one of these q a's

q's and a's

i i just go through all the usual places

where the questions are asked you know

underneath the uh in the comments under

the videos and

the discord server and and my subscribe

star page

and uh i compile the list and

sometimes the questions are asked in

unusual places

or they're asked very late

just right like right around the time

i'm doing the video and uh

i don't see them

so anyway this question is similar

and uh it's asked by priyapistic monk

and uh priapistic monk says in your

opinion after all that you have done

accomplished and have obviously become

what makes a monk

with mutual respect of course what makes

a monk

that is the question

and um

i mean i can only speak from experience

with regard to uh taravana so what makes

a beku

maybe would be uh

the question i'll answer and i mean

technically speaking a monk or a like a

beku a terabotta buddhist monk is

someone who is

qualified to go through a 20-minute long

ordination ceremony and has gone through

that 20-minute ordination ceremony and

has not done anything to

excommunicate himself

or just hasn't dropped out hasn't

declared his weakness

and dropped out

and uh technically i mean that's that's

what a beku is

um there's a chapter in the dhammapada

about the beku

which uh

it kind of redefines the term like in

early buddhism

the buddha would uh

in in the text of early buddhism the

buddha would redefine certain terms like

brahman you know he just defined it as a

genuinely holy person not just someone

who was born into the brahmana cast

or see what other ones he redefined a

number of terms

and um

i mean he kind of did that to bhikkhu

also or then again in in buddha's own

time he

he would just say come on

and that would be it i mean the person

would be ordained

so

there was no 20-minute ceremony in the

buddhist time

so i mean if you want to be more

sort of poetic

or metaphysical or something then i mean

a good monk you know like you could say

that a true monk is a good monk and that

would be you know all of the things i

said before you know the person who's
gone through the ordination ceremony and
is you know still in good standing and
all that and who is like sincerely
conscientiously trying to
follow the instructions given in the
terabyte of buddhist texts you know he's
trying to follow the rules
and trying to meditate and you know
control his mind
or at least
observe his mind and understand his mind
and uh
yeah i think that would be the answer to
the question so i'll just move on to the
next one and this is from mary spelled
m-e-r-r-y

and this is kind of a tricky one

sort of like the is god happy or unhappy

one up above

and it's could you maybe describe what

first jhana feels like

and this is kind of a tricky question

first of all because jhana itself is

somewhat controversial different

meditation instructors

or you know let alone scholars who have

never experienced it but even meditation

instructors who are some rather

accomplished may not agree on exactly

what is and is not jonah and i have

pointed out numerous times

and have gotten some

sort of disgruntled feedback over it

that um

most of what is considered jhana not all

of it but most of what is considered

ghana in burma

is in my opinion self-hypnosis it's like

a hypnotic trance

and

a lot of burmese meditation instructors

are not sophisticated enough to tell the

difference between hypnosis and genre

and there is a difference in my opinion

so first jhana

what it feels like

i mean if i was a monk i couldn't even i

couldn't even answer this question

because monks aren't allowed to admit to

having attained jhana to lay people or

like in public

because technically jhana is considered

to be a superhuman mental state and this

is

suspicious to me

because

for example in uh the mahasari

which is the essentially the bible for

we pass in the meditators or this monk

or people who practice we pause in a

meditation i'm not just talking about

the goenka method i'm talking about like

mindfulness meditation

um

it's like the bible and it defines

some asamati or right concentration as

the four genres

so it's kind of strange that right

concentration would i mean you have to

have a superhuman mental state

in order to have right concentration

although it is the last on the list of

the full path and everything else

culminates in this

this right concentration

so i mean maybe

but just going with the text

in first jhana which is the first is

like the the the lowest level of genre

or absorption it's called in english

sometimes

you're still able to think

so you might still even be like labeling

at this point

you know in breath out breath or

touching

like the breath touching the nostrils as

it goes in and out that sort of thing

and

what it would feel like

um is you're just like in a groove your

mind isn't wandering anymore and it

feels good you're just solid

and then it can even cause pt or like a

kind of

pleasurable interest or

or enthusiasm to arise

and it just feels really good because

your your mind is like on point

and you can still have

um some kind of thinking action going on

but it's like meditative thinking you

know it's the the thinking that is

required

to do that meditation

and um when you get to second genre you

stop thinking

but first john you can still think

and so that's that's essentially what it

would be you're just in a groove it's

it's it feels good especially if you

haven't if you're not used to it yet i

mean if you're not used to it yet i mean

you can just be like twitching and

jerking your muscles will be like

kind of spazzing out on you a little bit

just because

in my opinion

it's like your mind has got so much

energy going as a general rule you know

you've got this hyperactive mind that

when you finally calm it down

it's like the habitual energy doesn't

have the usual avenues of of expending

themselves and so they they manifest

themselves as like twitching muscles and

so forth

or just the rushes of euphoria and so

forth

but uh getting back to the question

before i move on to the next one

what first jhana would feel like would

essentially be just you're meditating

really well your mind is not wandering

maybe if it starts to wander you it's

just you catch it immediately and you're

just in this groove you know you're just

doing really well in your meditation

so i'll just go on to mary's next

question

and this one is entirely different and

now for something completely different

are there many big spiders in burma i'm

afraid of them and don't like them

big spiders

well yeah there are

big spiders in burma

but the most common big spider i used to

call them hand spiders sometimes they're
wall clingier spiders i mean they
weren't really as big as my hand i got
big hands
but
they're pretty much all over and they
just stick to the wall usually head down
and they just stay there and wait for
something to come close and then they'll
zip out and get it and they're like arch
enemies with the little wall geckos
it's kind of sad the wall geckos usually
win so you'll see this wall spider
sticking to the wall it might have like
one leg on one side and two legs on the
other side because the geckos keep from

biting their legs out

but um there when i first came to burma

i first went to this

uh

forest monastery in the wastelands the

blazing hot wastelands of central burma

and now it's put into this little cabin

and on the wall was one of these big

spiders and i didn't know what they were

you know i knew it was a spider but

um

i didn't know if they were bitey or not

bitey and i could not sleep that night

until i caught the spider cars monks

good buddhist isn't supposed to just

squish them so i'd have to catch it like

in my home's bowl or something and let

it go outside

but then uh

i learned over the years that they are

really completely harmless

i never really got bitten by one despite

the fact that they're ubiquitous

and the closest i ever got to being

bitten by one of those wall clinger

spiders was i was taking a shower and

the way people take showers in burma is

pretty much the same way people were

taking showers in ancient india

thousands of years ago which is you've

got a tank of water and you got this

bowl and you just scoop the water up and

pour it over your head

and one of those spiders was trying to

get away from the flood by climbing up

my leg

and i think it just took its they're

called the pedops you know like these

two little short legs in the front that

spiders have not the fangs but on the

outside of the fangs it just kind of

tried to dig in to keep from getting

washed off my leg that was the closest i

ever gotten to being bitten by one

although there are a kind of i can't

remember what they're called i can't

remember the burmese name for them but

um

they're uh they're like a tarantula like

a small tarantula and they apparently

bite but it's it's not really dangerous

it's sort of like a

i don't know like a wasp sting or

something maybe probably not even that

bad

um

but

i spiders don't really bug me i some

spiders i even like

like uh like those wall cleaner spiders

i just named them all lloyd

they're all named lloyd

and um

yeah there's there's some kind of gross

looking ones like the ones that

are camouflaged that look like bird crap

you know they're kind of gray and

mottled and spiky and ugly i don't like

that kind

but um

enough of spiders i suppose i mean

there's lots of spiders in burma but uh

i never really got bitten by one i was

stung by scorpions on several occasions

but never bitten by a spider

bitten by ticks which i guess are

arachnids but

that's different too so i'll just move

on to mary's next question

how dangerous is living in the forest in

burma in terms of tigers snakes spiders

etc

well

by far the most dangerous animal in the

forest in burma is not tigers snakes

spiders not even humans who are often

considered to be the deadliest animal in

the forest but it is the anopheles

mosquito

because they are vectors of malaria

and way way more people die from the

bite of the anopheles mosquito than die

from the bite of tigers or snakes or

spiders

so

i mean tigers are rare

i did live in a forest that had a few

tigers

um

but

i mean they're they're pretty much

afraid of people now because you know

there's

very few tigers left i i've when i was

watching the tiger king series

um it was saying that there are more

tame tigers in america just privately

owned not even in zoos necessarily

that there are more tame tigers

privately owned in the usa then there

are wild tigers left in the world

so

tigers have enough sense to just stay

away from people they figured that

they're bad news snakes

yeah snakes i mean

there there are poisonous snakes in

burma that are way more poisonous than

snakes here

um the most dangerous deadly snake in

burma is not the most venomous

i try to say venomous and poisonous at

the same time

uh it's the the russell's viper and

they're they're just mean

that's why they're the deadliest is

they'll just they'll actually chase

after people sometimes i got chased by a

little baby one about this big you know

it was coming at me like this

it was just trying to scare me off and

of course i'm not going to come closer

to it when it's doing that

but um

yeah there are quite a few russell's

vipers in central burma especially i

guess the deadliest snake in burma is

the many banded crate and you get bitten

by a little baby one like this you know

it just kind of nicks your finger a

little bit and that you're dead

i guess in the vietnam war they were

called the two-step snakes because uh

you uh you take it bites you and you

take maybe two steps before you're dead

maybe if it's a big one but um

uh i almost stepped on a banded crate a

few times it wasn't the mini bandit

crate it was just the regular bandit

crate

um

saw a couple cobras what's um i like

snakes so i'm not really afraid of them

i mean you don't want to step on a viper

of course so you have to be careful but

um if you leave them alone they leave

you alone that's pretty much the same of

any kind of wild animal

unless you know it's some

i don't know aged tiger that's just

gotten used to eating people or uh

you know you wander in between uh a mama

bear and her cubs or or some such but as

a general rule if you leave animals

alone they'll leave you alone

unless it's like mosquitoes or something

then they just come after you

so

how dangerous is living in the forest in

burma in terms of tigers snakes spiders

etc i was actually more afraid of wild

pigs than i was of tigers

when i was really like out in dense

forest

just because

there's more of them

you're much more likely to come across

wild boars

than across a tiger

and uh

i've been told that um you know they'll

just

you know charge up against you you can

get surrounded by a few of them and

they'll be biting your legs until you

fall down and then you're done for them

but um

so when i would be camping

just out in the middle of a forest under

a tree or something i'd always try to

pick an easily climbable tree

to camp under

or something along those lines some kind

of defensible position

up on top of a rock or something

but again i mean the most dangerous

animals in in a tropical forest are the

little ones that carry diseases

as a general rule close plus snakes i

suppose

i was stung by scorpions several times

but uh

it wasn't really a dangerous kind of

scorpio it was just hurt for a while and

then for a few days after that um i

didn't know this at the time but

scorpions have a neurotoxin sort of like

a cobra and so it just makes your finger

go numb and all pins and needles

you know if it stung your finger

for a while and this there are some

giant centipedes that are pretty gnarly

too but

we don't need to dwell on giant

centipedes

but those were ones i i could not sleep

if one got into my cave i was gonna have

to get rid of that centipede before i

could sleep because they're so big i

mean they're big as you know like over a

foot long and big as a baby snake and

they make this

clicking sound when they run across the

concrete floor it's really creepy and

they when they bite i mean it really it

hurts it hurts bad

might not be uh deadly but

it's not good

so i think i'll just move on to mary's

next and last question

what is right livelihood for a layperson

does it involve something more than

keeping

the five precepts and yeah it pretty

much does

um

usually when i do these q and a's

q's and a's

um

i don't like do a lot of homework you

know i don't look it up which maybe i

should

but i'm trying to just uh

you know just rely on you know what i

genuinely know

instead of just looking it up and then

you know looking smarter than i am and

i don't know trying to pass myself off

as somebody who can answer every

question

so right livelihood for a layperson

somewhere in the texts i don't even

remember if it's um a suta or if it's in

the commentarial tradition

but there is a list i think it might be

in the wii suite maga there's a list of

things that somebody who has right

livelihood doesn't do

one thing i mean you're obviously not

going to be killing anything you're not

going to be stealing anything you're not

going to be lying in your job

so that's i mean the first thing

your your livelihood should not require

you to break the five precepts but then

there are other things like you

shouldn't be dealing in animals for

slaughter even though you're not killing

them yourself

you shouldn't be selling them to

somebody else where they're going to

kill them you shouldn't be dealing in

slaves and that would include like white

slavery so-called

you wouldn't be a pimp

you shouldn't be dealing in toxicants

which would mean no bartenders no

cocktail waitresses

and technically

even a grocery store clerk who's selling

or or like a restaurant waiter or

waitress who are just selling drinks

that would be that would not be right

livelihood

you would not sell weapons

or poisons

which also would hit the grocery store

clerk who's selling the uh you know the

can of insecticide along with you know

the bread and the marshmallows and the

the gallon of milk and all that

and see what else

golly i think that's pretty much it

yeah so you wouldn't be selling slaves

you wouldn't be selling

um you know animals for slaughter

you wouldn't be killing anything

yourself naturally like being a soldier

you know technically

um that wouldn't be right likelihood so

especially if you're like killing people

um

now sorry to all you soldiers out there

i realize that you're you are necessary

for society to uh

to survive in this

state of civilization that we are in

but from the the point of view of

buddhism you are you are uh

um at best you're just sort of the

tragic hero who has to sacrifice your

own

spiritual welfare so that others can

live in peace

but i digress

you know no selling intoxicants which of

course rules out not only bartenders but

mostly

you know people you know what are they

called servers at restaurants and uh you

know grocery clerks and so forth

and uh

golly

yeah you have to be honest

so

you might not make the best sales person

you know if you're selling used cars

you know yeah it looks really nice i

mean the the

you know one of the cylinders doesn't

fire but it looks really nice

and then they'll just go somewhere else

where they'll get lied to and tricked

into buying the thing

so i'll just move on to the next

question i'm sorry i i don't have the

full list but that's pretty much it i'm

pretty sure i might have i might have

forgotten one or two but i think you get

the idea

you know you get a job that isn't

not only not causing harm but you know

not promoting harm not promoting the

breaking of five precepts you

know so it extends beyond just five

precepts right livelihood does

and for a monk it's right livelihood is

uh

is a little different

you know you're you're not accepting

money at all

and you're not you know giving dom a

talks in exchange for something else you

know you're not bartering dhamma for for

for something else you're not selling it

that kind of a thing

and uh you're accepting your alms while

following the rules as conscientiously

as you can

so that you're not your likelihood of

collecting alms

into your bowl

is is right livelihood

but uh i think i'm getting beyond the

question here because it was

specifically about laypeople so let's

move on to the next question which is

from das boot

and dos boots says

if the madness of technocratic control

wins in such a way that every

transaction and every person on the

planet is controlled directly

how will the tradition of retreating

from the world survive

well i mean

genuinely retreating from the world

and just becoming a hermit

um that might still be possible unless

unless you've got like a chip

and implanted into your body and they're
keeping track of you and it's like nope
you're not you're not being a good
consumer you got to come live in town
where we can keep an eye on you
but i mean just going off the grid
should still be a possibility
until we really hit cyberpunk dystopia
and uh i'm obviously we are kind of
moving in that direction but um
directions can change
that's one reason why people predicting
the future
are so often wrong is that people are
not totally stupid and even if they are
heading for a brick wall

um you know they do eventually swerve

not to hit the brick wall

so you can extrapolate oh look they're

heading for that brick wall so they're

gonna hit that brick wall but then

um often just through seeming miracles

people uh

grow a pair or whatever

and uh

avoid

disaster

or at least a really bad disaster so but

i'm i'm just digressing here dos boot is

asking

if the madness of technocratic control

wins in such a way that every

transaction every person on the planet

is controlled directly how will the
tradition of retreating from the world
survive
yeah i mean it would really have to get
really draconian and just like
really i mean even in communist china
now i assume it's possible for people to
just go off the grid if i mean if if
you're completely off the grid i mean
not like the unabomber or something but
if you're just really just minding your
own business as a hermit a recluse out
in the wilderness somewhere as long as
you're not living in a wildlife refuge
or something not breaking some law
then you know even a totalitarian

repressive government

i mean you're not causing you're not

posing any threat to them and so they'll

just

ignore you you know it costs more to

deal with you than just to let you just

live your life

so

yeah i mean it would have to get a lot

worse than now

before people weren't able to just opt

out of society

but with regard to like the tradition of

retreating from the world and like a

monk gosh i mean it's already pretty

difficult now

like in the west in india i assume that

you could still do it in burma you can

still do it

um you know in buddhist countries if

you're in a buddhist culture where

people you know know the score you know

the guy in the brown toga is actually a

holy man he's not just some weirdo

then uh

yeah it's still possible but in the west

it seems to me that

the one of the biggest difficulties of

like

technocratic control as dos boots as it

is is it's like socialism where

people are just getting used to the idea

that poor people should just be taken

care of by the government you know it's
not your own personal duty to help the
poor
or to put alms into a monk's bowl you
know a lot of people like mostly lefties
i think when i was a monk would ask me
why don't you just go on food stamps you
know
what
one just why should people have to go
through the trouble of putting food in
your bowl every morning why don't you
just you know go to the food bank or
something
and i didn't know a monk who uh lived in
a wildlife refuge for a while and uh
walked every morning to a soup kitchen

which is preferable to uh

some government food distribution center

but

still

yeah

the tradition of retreating from the

world and yeah it is it's the world is

getting more

um

invasive or like government and just

business just society is becoming more

invasive where you can't make a stray

off color statement without possibly

losing your job 10 years later because

of it or you know anything you do

practically is is being traced somehow

but going off the grid really does

reduce that i mean i was almost a

non-entity when i dropped out of the

monkey i had zero credit rating just a

zero driving record zero pretty much

anything

so you're invisible so long as you're

off you're like really opting out

so yeah i think it's possible if if

society continues moving

in a direction

you know imitating the chinese communist

party you know if the west becomes like

that also then

um and then just gets like hyper

technological so they can just keep tabs

on everybody then possibly but at

present i think the main trouble is just

people just assuming that you know the

government should just take care of

monks because

you know monks are just another kind of

poor people

so i'll just move on to the next

question also from das

boot and das boot says even now it's

hard for many to do a longer retreat if

they are not embedded in a local

traditional community or order

needing to organize visas

sponsors and so on

well that's not even a question is it

oh wait maybe is this next paragraph is

the next part of it probably direct

support from fellow buddhists will

become even more important but i just

wonder how the whole setup of retreating

will look like if the most dystopian

forebodings play out

well just improve your own karma

and you can dodge the bullet of the most

dystopian forebodings

because i mean

this may not be orthodox buddhism but um

it's my

my understanding

that there are an infinite number of

universes and just our karma is is sort

of

steering us blindly

like like an autopilot

into one version of reality or another

so let's see

uh yeah i think this one will be part of

the same question here gosh this is kind

of a confusing one for me i hope you're

not equally confused out there listening

to this see even now it's hard for many

to do a longer retreat if they are not

embedded in a local traditional

community or order needing to organize

visas

sponsors and so on yeah well with regard

to um some meditation centers in burma

yeah if you don't have inside

connections

um

then you're pretty much limited to the

the famous ones that cater to

um cater to westerners you know like uh

to some degree some of the mahasi places

and uh

would be the main ones i think

so

i mean it's it's pretty much always been

that way i mean you have to rely on a

society that supports that kind of a

thing too

probably direct support from fellow

buddhists will become even more

important

but i just wonder how the whole setup of

retreating will look like

this retreat

in the first question he's talking about

the tradition of retreating from the

world and i assume that was just like

renouncing the world but then in the

next two paragraphs here it's talking

about attending like meditation retreats

so that would be retreat also

it's kind of it's kind of confusing to

me now i'm so confused

let's see

yeah i mean it's it's always been that

way

where you have to have a support system

it might just be the the society at

large if it's a buddhist society then

you know the entire population is is

virtually your support system

so

yeah i mean the only problem would be

if you know the world is taken over by

globalist you know technocratic

communists

and like they're totally secular also

total materialists you have to believe

in you know neo-marxism

because you know all religions will be

banned and so forth um

yeah i think you're better off just not

worrying too much about that i don't

think it's any anywhere close to that

yet

although i mean the left is sort of

facing in that direction and some

lefties really seem to think that we'd

be better off with a government just

controlling everything

so

i think i'll just move on to the next

question

after confusing myself and others i'll

just move on to the next question this

one's from you each hero

and this is a good question i used to

think about this a lot when i was a monk

especially

yuichiro says maybe you've answered this

before but is piracy theft i don't think

so because piracy is just copying

intellectual property not depriving

someone of something for example if you

memorized a book and wrote it down and

gave it to someone else that could be

considered piracy what do you think so

this isn't like the pirates that go are

meaty you know like the parrot

the peg leg and stuff that's that's a

different kind of piracy that's that's

definitely like stealing

off and killing so you don't want to be

that kind of pirate

um

but his piracy theft

when i was a monk

i was really hesitant

like very hesitant to to copy books

because it would say right there on the

like the the copyright page you know any

any copying of this book and you know

like

i can't remember the whole spiel but

it's you know by electronic or

other means you know so you must have

permission from the from the author or

the publisher

and i would actually have have to get

permission

from the publisher because

um it could be theft and if you steal

something if a monk steals something

that's he's excommunicated he's kicked

out of the monk for the rest of his life

so i took it really seriously because i

didn't want to get excommunicated

um

later on i started watching like pirated

movies

now there are these these video sites

you know some of them are called put

locker you know various versions of it i

think maybe they're they're based in

places like russia

and they're online and it's like

apparently there's there's

little statements underneath there that

it's really not illegal the way this

there's some kind of loophole

you know sort of like uh

torrent streaming kind of stuff where

it's you're sort of exploiting a

loophole in the law

and

at least from the monks point of view

um

you know in order to get excommunicated

you have to it has to be illegal

you know it's i mean the way the the

word the way the the rule is worded

which is uh paraghika number

two i think

um you know it has to be in such a way

that you'd get hold in front of a judge

and the judge would tell you what a

stupid fool you are for having done that

you know so it'd be you'd have to do

something

bad enough to get chewed out by a judge

for it

um

or

if it's worth more than a coin called

pata we have talked about that before

so it is i mean you're getting into like

a gray area here

um

yes it's

if you're in doubt don't do it

that would be my best advice

um yeah if

the example you ichiro gives if you

memorized a book and wrote it down and

gave it to someone else i don't think

that would count as piracy

like i've written down

um almost entire books

like as a monk write them down into a

notebook i think if assuming that there

is such a thing as rebirth in past lives

i think i was a kind of scribe like i

wrote books

i copied books professionally back

before the printing press got invented

because i i'm very patient with that and

my handwriting is neat and i can just

write page after page

um but again i digress

yeah pirating books or

or movies uh one thing is you have to

have the intention of depriving somebody

of something and some people can say

well you're depriving them of their

royalties

in you know in a way

so

maybe you should talk to a lawyer

and see if it really does count legally

as theft in some forms of it do i'm

pretty sure

especially if you're copying something

and selling it

that's really what they're after i'm

pretty sure

because i mean nowadays you can just

download like

copyrighted videos off of youtube and

that sort of thing

and uh

i mean it's just

i don't think that would be illegal but

then if you turn around you upload it

and monetize it

you upload it again somebody else's

video and monetize that then i think

youtube just automatically spots that

with their checking system now and uh

diverts the the profits to the the

person who owns the copyright or who

first posted it or something

but yeah

i really can't i mean this would be a

very

complicated answer even assuming that i

was really

into like the whole all the legal tech

technicalities the permutations and

everything

so

yeah just try to avoid breaking the law

and i mean if if you really are if you

really do have the intention of of just

depriving somebody of their their

royalties or something that would that

would qualify because technically you do

have to have

the volition

of depriving somebody of something in

order for it to be theft in accordance

with buddhist ethics

like for example you see you know

something lying on the ground

if you think that it belongs to somebody

else you pick it up and didn't walk away

there's a wallet or something that would

still be

uh theft

from for a monk anyway but if you are

firmly convinced or you think it's just

very likely that

um you know whoever previously owned it

had given up all claim to it like maybe

the wallet is you know you find it under

a rock it looks like it's been there for

50 years

then uh if you pick it up and walk away

with it you know all the all the money

inside is from you know world war ii era

or something

then i think you wouldn't be stealing

unless you were taking it from

somebody's property you know you're on

the woods or something

so

yeah i guess all this uh talking that

i'm doing is just sort of trying to

compensate for the fact that i really

don't know enough

of the like copyright laws and that sort

of thing to really answer the question

although

from the buddhist ethical point of view

you do have to have the volition of

stealing in order to really steal

something if you take something by

accident

you don't have your glasses on you just

take the wrong bicycle or something

pick up the wrong cell phone that's the

same model as yours thinking it's yours

you put it in your pocket you're really

not stealing anything

because it was done in good faith

but i mean

if you know that you're pirating

something

that's uh already you're kind of

inching in the direction of

of stealing

so you got to be careful

and uh

most monks i think especially like in

the west

you know

they're really not so careful about

infringing on copyright laws

if if pirating really is

um theft

then i assume there are quite a few

uh western and eastern monks who are

just excommunicated without even

realizing it because

you know they watch the movie

that was on one of these

like illicit streaming sites or

something

one of these russian streaming sites

like torrent sites or something

so yeah i'm sorry yuichiroi

cannot answer your question precisely

because i lack the knowledge of

the whole illegal

mumbo-jumbo so i'll just move on to the

next

question which is from rafi

46 and rafi 46

asks another good question

that i have thought about

and rafi 46 says

you often hear the following stance on

abortion from buddhists online

quote this is the following stance

quote the traditional view is that

sentience begins at conception and

abortion is a violation of the first

precept when it comes to legal matters i

am pro-choice because criminalizing

abortion only creates more problems than

suffering

making abortion illegal doesn't

eliminate it it would only make it only

makes it more dangerous unquote is this

a valid view in buddhism

um

it's close to my view on abortion i do

think that i mean from traditional

tarawata buddhist point of view life

begins at conception

science biology says the same thing

unless you know the hysterical

neo-marxists have completely subverted

biology like this classical biology

but the life of an organism begins

um when it's at the the zygote stage

when the sperm and the egg come together

you've got this

unique

unicellular organism which in the case

of a human being is going to you know

multiply

until it's got trillions of cells but

it's still the same the same organism

with the same you know genetic code and

everything

the same genotype

so

um i can i can agree that i mean just

because something is immoral doesn't

mean that it should be illegal

and that's i mean that's a slippery

slope right there

um if you want to just

ban anything that's immoral because

people have differing views of what is

immoral obviously

um christians

the fundamentalist christians on the one

side

and you know like the the far far

radical lefties on the other side i mean

they're not going to agree on a whole

hell of a lot

with regard to you know what is or is

not immoral i mean morality is almost

just an obsolete term for the far left

because i mean they may give it lip

service but they're quite willing to

perpetrate just about any atrocity in

many cases just to further their cause

because you know it's

the ends justify the means or some such

so

i mean i can agree sort of i don't agree

with some of the last word making

let's see

criminalizing abortion only creates more

problems than suffering i don't think

that is necessarily the case

um yeah like what happened in america

with roe versus wade being overturned by

the supreme court it just means that the

individual states can decide

whether abortion should be legal or not

and so

um you know uh

a democrat voting state shouldn't be too

far away then if you really want to get

an abortion

um

you can just cross state lines

you know go somewhere where it's legal

and a lot of companies nowadays are even

claiming

that they will actually pay women

to make the trip to a state where

abortions are legal

so they can get a safe abortion

their body their choice supposedly

although technically the uh

the developing embryo is not their body

oh so

is this a valid view of buddhism i think

in buddhism you just don't want to do

politics at all i mean

i mean you don't even take it as far as

this quote takes it where it's like i i

think that abortion is wrong or

unethical or you know more bad than good

in most cases

um so i'm just

don't approve of it

but um you know if whatever the insane

society chooses i mean i'm not gonna

you know i'm not gonna lose any sleep

over it i think that would be more of a

a valid view in buddhism

um taking the side of legalizing it

still

yeah i think i think a good buddhist

could still

um follow this

this example that uh

rafi 46 gave

i mean so long as you're just separating

politics from morality then uh

you know it's like

buddhists can also say you know killing

is bad but still i mean we have to have

armed forces to protect the country

you know it's it's not like they're

condoning killing it's just they're

acknowledging

this like an ugly fact

and some people are especially well i

don't know i wouldn't even say

especially on the left but some people

like if you make an ugly statement just

stating an ugly fact they just assume

that you want that to be true

you know some ethnicity has a higher

cognitive

higher cognitive skills on average than

some other ethnicity you know people

will just accuse you of

like wanting that to be true it's like

you know you want that to be true you're

a racist but i mean you just

acknowledging em empirical data

so

yeah i think it's all in all yeah it's

it's more or less of a valid view in

buddhism depending on you know your own

attitude

because really it's it's your own mental

states that make something

um

ethical or unethical skillful or

unskillful so i'll just move on to the

next question which is from toronto nat

and toronto nat says

jesus said that we will know them

meaning the value of spiritual teachings

by their fruits

isn't this concerning when it comes to

the dominance of leftism in buddhist

discourse

i mean it's concerning but not for the

reason really that toronto and that

seems to be implying

i mean it's concerning because

buddhism has essentially been hijacked

by the left in the west and it pretty

much has always been

um

dominated by

the left with regard to

western buddhists you know

asian immigrant buddhists can be still

be conservative and everything you know

they're just almost completely

separate from western buddhists

unless it's traditionalist western

buddhists who are being ordained in the

eastern traditions and so forth but

monks are very different from from

western western monks are very different

from western white people as a general

rule

so

it is concerning that

the buddhism among westerners has been

hijacked by the left and by a left that

is going more and more and more insane

you know up until around 2015 it was

relatively harmless

but it's it's really just

buddhism is just being redefined and

distorted and mutated and [__] over

and [__] up

until i mean you can hardly even say it

to buddhism anymore but then it's like

um

like

some people on the left i'm sorry to be

picking on the left so much

but

you know it's like they can't define the

word woman

you know

democrat politicians just refuse to to

define the word woman or else they'll
use this circular invalid definition of
a woman as anyone who identifies as a
woman
which we are using the word to be
defined in the definition itself which
is bad practice
and i mean you can say the same thing
about buddhists in the west now buddhist
is anyone who considers himself to be a
buddhist anyone who identifies as a
buddhist is a buddhist regardless of
what they believe and that's
becoming more and more
the politically correct
view with regard even to theravada
buddhism not just buddhism in general so

you've got

people who are

so-called authorities on terrible

buddhism

who are just really concerned with say

queer theory in terrible buddhism or

you know they're just

hell bent on having

you know like ethnically representative

sanghas which is kind of strange

considering that most sanghas are

overwhelmingly east asian and south

asian

but they think that there's not enough

representation of

brown people

in western sanghas

because they just pretty much ignore the

existence of all the immigrant asian

sanghas

ah

so getting back to toronto nat's

question

um yeah the fruits

you know them by their fruits i mean

no pun intended

i assume

yeah it's like they're just taking the

ball and running with it they're just

taking something established so that

it's easier to

um you know

sort of be famous with it to have

influence with it you know they don't

want to just start their own religion

which would be just ridiculously absurd

anyway

so they just take buddhism or whatever

the religion is they've pretty much made

attempts at all of them pretty sure

and just redefine it and just turn it

into

you know buddhism flavored or whatever

flavored

cultural marxism

emancipatory politics and so forth

which is is nonsense it's not it's not

even really terrible anymore

so

it's not really

turning terra vada into

something bad is just

it's this they're just turning teravata

into something that isn't theravada

anymore so it's not really that

terribada's going bad it's just they're

just

kind of

destroying it in a sense

turning it into like i say buddhism

flavored

political correctness

psychobabble stuff

so i think i'll just move on to this

question

and this is from rob alias dhamma farmer

and this is kind of a strange question

on a scale of one to ten how nice was

your birthday cake

what kind of a question is that it's a

difficult one for me because it seems to

me it's my theory on cakes

once you get up to a certain level of

niceness it just levels off

so

um i'm not sure i would even call uh a

nicest cake at 10.

i mean it was a really nice cake it was

totally deluxe my sweetheart said it was

the best birthday cake she ever ate

and it was good it was definitely good

custom made

um so

yeah

raiding cakes is really not my forte

but uh

yeah we can call it a a 9.8

on a logarithmic scale

i guess i'll just move on to rob alias

donald farmer's next question here

please give an update on the career move

now you're destined to be a fat pencil

armed office dweller

well

i don't think i'm going to become fat or

pencil armed

and

the career move is

i was offered a promotion

of moving from the

the back

where

the uh

the sheet metal stuff is being made

to the front where it's being sold

and so

i would make more money considerably

more money

and i'd be sitting in an air-conditioned

room in a comfy chair

and i wouldn't be just drenching in

sweat all day

and i wouldn't come home as exhausted

but still i'm gonna have to start

working out or something i'm gonna have

to get some weights or something and

make sure that i don't become uh fat and

pencil-armed as rob alias delma farmer

uh has put it here

so it's it's still in the future i still

have to take some kind of test

and uh

it's just

yeah i'm not exactly sure what it's

going to happen it might be a few months

down the road before i actually stop

running the machines and driving the

forklifts and sit out front and

sell things for commissions

so i'll just move on to the next

question

i mean i was warned this was gonna

happen

that i was gonna

get promoted

but uh

we'll see how it goes i'm not

complaining either if anyone anyone

associated with me at work

sees this i mean i'm really not

complaining i mean i'm willing to take

the job i was offered the job it wasn't

just ordered to take it

so it's all good

so the next question is from erin

and aaron says

explain the buddhist life stages you

mentioned

and that was that was like a personal

conversation between me and erin

and uh i was telling her

that uh

in terrible buddhism and i again i don't

remember if it's in a suta or if it's

just in the commentarial tradition like

the we city maga or something

that um the the different decades of a

human life are divided up

by their predominant quality

and it goes all the way up to 100 but

i've forgotten most most of the last

ones because it's

we'll get to that the first the first

decade you know from zero to ten is like

the puerile the helpless

babyish decade where you're not fully

developed yet you're still just sort of

like a tadpole

then

the second decade from 10 to 20 is the

decade of play

and then the third from 20 to 30 is the

decade of beauty

and then the next from 30 to 40 is the

decade of strength

and then from 40 to 50 is the decade of

wisdom and then 50 to 60 you you've

reached the the midpoint from 0 to 100

and that's called the decade of decline

and after 60 i don't even remember what

they're called but it's just getting

worse and worse until you're finally you
know it's sort of like um
shakespeare i don't remember which play
where he's talking about the different
stages of life
and you know at the end
according to the buddhist version you're
bent over like a roof beam a lot of roof
beam but there was some sort of bent
um it could have been like a sapling
that was bent like this to make a kind
of building like a kwanzaa hut kind of
an early kwanzaa type of building but
it's talking about how your back is just
completely curved over and you're like
going blind and deaf and everything
it just gets worse and worse after after

you hit 50 according to this this scale

so now that i'm

59

i really don't uh

don't follow that one very much i mean

when i was 40 to 50 that was my decade

of wisdom

so i hope i haven't completely lost that

so that's the best that i can remember

and i i don't even remember the source

it's it's in

terrible buddhist tradition

but um maybe it's the wesudai manga i'm

not sure

so i'll just move on to the next

question this is from

arya akuma

and arya akuma asks what makes one an

ascetic

and that's a good question

um i think an aesthetic would be someone

who

if they're not averse to comfort they're

just indifferent towards comfort

um

i think that would be a fairly good

definition or you could even say that

even if

a person likes comfort but they just

avoid it for spiritual reasons that also

would make an ascetic

but the whole thing is pleasure and

comfort

that um some people and and i've been

like this i think my father was like

this too i mean you have a certain

appreciation for comfort but at the same

time it's sort of like

eating lots of ice cream or something

where you know too much of it just start

makes you makes you like soft and weak

doughy out of shape

and again it's sort of like uh

the

the protagonist in the movie apocalypse

now

towards the beginning he's saying that

if he's not on a mission he just feels

like he's just degenerating getting

getting softer and weaker

and so there is some of that in the

aesthetic mindset unless you're just

indoctrinated into a religion where it

says you've got to be an aesthetic or

you're going to go to hell or if you

want to be liberated you must be an

ascetic and they'll just do it for that

reason

um

but yeah it's a certain appreciation for

discomfort

not necessarily pain i mean buddhism

you're not supposed to be out trying to

hurt yourself you're not cultivating

pain like trying to get

you know

scorpions to sting you or something but

um you just follow the middle path

between you know the original middle

path in the dhamma

the buddha's first sermon according to

tradition you know you avoid the the two

extremes one is sensual pleasure and one

is just self-torment

you know self-indulgence and

self-torture you've all you follow the

middle path

and

um i mean the middle path in ancient

india was

would just be considered complete

self-torture by modern or post-modern

standards

where

you know you're just literally wandering

around homeless and penniless and

begging for your food in the streets and

wearing rags and so forth i mean that

was the middle path

now this is fairly acidic i mean the

early buddhists were definitely

aesthetics although they were accused of

being wimps like shaven headed

householders by even more extreme

aesthetics like the jains and the

ajivicas

in in ancient india

because i mean buddhist monks were

allowed to use uh sand they were allowed

to wear sandals you know they were

allowed to use a walking stick

which were just considered you know just

luxuries that are just leading you to

leading you to hell by these more uh

extreme aesthetics

but yeah i think uh voluntary discomfort

would be the uh

the

the criterion

for uh

what is it the diagnostic trait of an

ascetic is someone who uh

endures voluntary discomfort

so i'll just move on to the next

question this one is from i z

and i z says

when you try to describe nibana as a

kind of primordial consciousness or a

marble block isn't that trying to reify

the unreifiable

there was a suta where venerable

sariputa warned against going too far

and trying to grasp the ungraspable with

the conceptual

tools that we have i just cannot quite

remember its name or number also nibana

is included in the list of papanchad

or papancha of all things in

uh majama nikaya number one

wouldn't it be more prudent to refrain

from trying to see or describe the

nature and basis of nibana and describe

it in merely soteriological and

non-samsara terms as the buddha did

um well i mean

if you're going to talk about anything

you have to reify it you've got to

label it you know you got to turn it

into an it which is already refining it

so

um even the buddha would

reify nibana of necessity at least

grammatically

when he'd be talking about it because

when once it's in it it's already

reified

so there is that it's just the

limitations of of human language you

have to reify anything you talk about

um

one thing here that i don't quite agree

with is nibana is included in the list

of punch it or papanchable things in

majime nikaya i mean you can turn it

into pancho once once you've named it

you know once you're referring to it as

it

although one of the many

synonyms for nibana is nipa pancha which

just means without papancha that's

that's what nibana is it's once you have

gone beyond papancha which is like

diversification you know it's like

setting up a multiple world of various

old various real entities

um

that's papancha

or just dividing things up between

this and that

could be considered papancha so nibana

doesn't have any division of this and

that

so

i mean i could just

refuse to talk about nippon because once

you talk about it you have to reify it

to some degree

and people ask questions about it and

i'm trying to explain it in such a way

that i mean it's like the raft in the in

the sutas where

it's just

um in in a text the uh alagad upamal

suta of the majiminekaya which is a very

good suitor to read

the buddha compares buddhism to a raft

made out of rubbish you know man walks

to a riverbank

and the river is flooded

and he needs to cross the river there's

no bridge there's no ferry and so he

just looks around at all the

you know sticks and and vines and grass

and so forth

and he just ties it all together into a

kind of float and he holds onto it you

know it's kicking his legs and getting

to the other side and once he gets to

the other side he lets it go you know he
doesn't continue carrying it on his head
you know he'll just drag it up on the
bank and beach it and leave it there
also just push it back out in the water
and let it float away and that's what
dhamma is that's what buddhism is it's
just this
convenient contraption made of rubbish
that gets you liberated it gets you you
know to the other shore you cross the
flood of samsara and then i mean it's
because it's not ultimately valid
you let go of it you don't need it
anymore it's just a way of getting to
the other side and once you're at the

other side you don't need it anymore

so

i mean it's it's all kind of rubbish if

you think about it

but

again i mean if i'm to be answering

questions about nibana or about ultimate

reality i mean you have to reify it to

some degree with a proviso that no

amount of

thinking about is really going to

get you to understand it

i like the idea that

words

um like the words of a zen master this

is a zen saying or like the a master the

zen master is like a master archer who

can shoot down other arrows in flight

you know he sees an arrow he'll shoot he

can shoot it down with another arrow and

that's you use

words and thoughts concepts in order to

shoot down other words and

words and thoughts and concepts you know

it's like this idea hits against that

idea and they just both fall on the

ground

so

it still requires a certain amount of

reification in talking about

what ultimately

cannot be validly expressed in words

but um

you know so long as i'm uh

like hitting up against other people's

beliefs

kind of weakening their reification of

nibana or reality in one way

even though i'm using another way of

doing it you know it's it's called

skillful means especially in mahayana

so i'm doing the best i can

next question

is from caveman

and caveman asked thoughts on open

individualism question mark and then i

didn't know what open individualism was

so i asked him if he could clarify and

then caveman said

in contrast to closed individualism

which asserts that conscious experiences

are bounded or closed off by personal

identity open individual is open

individualism is the idea that all

conscious experience is experienced by

the same

self

so the only difference between my past

experiences in this life and the

experiences of any other being at any

other time is that i can remember my

past experience but all

experienced oh i can remember my past

experience but all experiences are still

mine

i've heard that the buddha was an empty

individualist you only exist for a
single moment all other moments are
experienced by different selves but i
don't know if that reflects his view
accurately in my opinion empty
individualism implies open individualism
since they are both opposed to closed
individualism the whole issue just
revolves around what exactly the self is
and how experiences can belong to
oneself but not another
well i would point out here towards the
middle of this
he said i've heard that the buddha was
an empty individualist you can only
exist for a single moment all their
moments are experienced by different

selves

um yeah i would say that that is not an

accurate statement

because

i mean it's the buddha didn't say that

yourself exists for only one moment

i mean he said you just don't have one

there is no self

and this is based

according to my understanding

ultimately on padichistamapada or

dependent rising which was saying

everything in this phenomenal universe

and hegel unfortunately had a similar

idea

um

i think kant was kind of going in this

direction also

but

everything that exists this multiple

universe that what the taoists call the

ten thousand things

is

um it's virtual

i mean it's not like completely

absolutely

non-existent

but it's conditional you know if this

exists that exists if this ceases that

ceases

and

this is also conditioned by other things

so you've got this web

of of conditions everything mutually

conditioning everything else and nothing

has an inherent self-existence

and so

um to seem like we exist as individuals

it's conditional and like virtual

but it's not ultimately real

so we don't have a self even for one

moment it's not like the self is

changing from one moment to the next

with no connections in between it's just

that no matter how connected it seems

uh ultimately

the self i mean it's fine to talk about

it from within a psalm sorry context but

once you get out of the box

of of this entire samsaric system

it's just it's just meaningless and

invalid

so

with regard to open individualism

um

there can be the appearance of open

individualism you can say that

empirically from a psalm sorry point of

view it's more valid

than closed individualism

um

yeah so that would mean

if i understand this correctly in closed

individualism there wouldn't be any

rebirth

otherwise you just you'd have to

remember

you know what happened in your past

lives which usually is not the case

so i think that's what he's hitting on

here is that in order for rebirth to

really be valid you'd have to have

i mean you couldn't have closed

individualism where you know it's like

who i am is just limited by this one

lifetime

um

but this whole lifetime is itself kind

of conditional and virtual and not

ultimately real you know it's like we're

in a simulation

so you can have you could say that the

assimilated

open individualism

fits

the matrix we're in better than a

simulated closed individualism but

ultimately is a kind of simulation

i mean it's not totally false

it's not like a total pure illusion

but still it's conditional

on all these other conditions that are

also conditional so you don't have any

solid ground

you know you don't have any nucleus of

ultimate reality that everything is

based on other than just the just the

background of reality that is formless

and infinite and

non-differentiated

so i'll just uh

hope

that that made some semblance of sense

and i'll move on to uh chaplin

and uh chaplin says this is a weird one

it's easy i guess

but it's it's weird

what is your favorite insect and native

mammal in south carolina so far

well i was going to say the wild turkeys

but it's it's a little

wild turkey is not an insect

so let's see my favorite south carolina

insect

i guess it'd have to be the fireflies

you know like late spring and early

summer they're they're just like

flying around in the yard at dusk like

flashing off and on it's really nice my

dad called them lightning bugs so i call

them that too sometimes so i guess my

favorite south carolina insect

um is the uh the lightning bug

and my favorite native mammal

south carolina i don't see a whole lot

of wildlife um other than wild turkeys

and groundhogs and of course like

squirrels and things i haven't done any

really good

like hiking or camping yet that was like

one of the first things i wanted to do

when i got here

was to hike paris mountain and we're

living like practically in the shadow of

paris mountain right now and it's a

state park all over the top of it with

hiking trails and everything

and uh i still haven't hiked it so maybe

after uh humble stature moves to

greenville in a few weeks

maybe he'll go hiking with me

and after i get the white-collar job

before i've lost all strength i can uh

go i won't be as exhausted after work

and maybe uh they can work something

else a short hike anyway short hikes

plural

so my favorite native mammal i guess

it'd be the groundhogs because they just

don't have them on the west coast

where i lived it was kind of interesting

the first time i saw one it was it was a

roadkill i didn't know what it was at

first

but it's uh you know it's like a marmot

it's like a big ground squirrel but

they're they get big

sort of along the lines of a wombat so i

guess that would be my favorite south

carolina mammal except for genghis who's

my dog

maybe i should include the genghis my

dog

he's my favorite mammal in south

carolina

and he's a problem child but he's he's

like uh

an innocent child of nature

you know he's just beyond good and evil

so that's uh chaplain's first question

chaplain's second question

uh is the last question of this video

the very last question is kind of a

naughty question too

chaplin asks have you ever had your iq

formally tested and if so what was the

result

and modesty for bids i don't i was

tested formally i did take an iq test

when i was a teenager

um

and it might be lower now do all the uh

substance abuse as a teenager mainly

and uh

cooking my brain with malaria like seven

or eight times in burma and uh

just just getting older

but i did have my iq formerly tested and

i'm just too damn modest

to tell you what know what the actual

number was i'll just let's just say it

was above 140.

and uh

yeah i pity the fool think i am not

modest

so that's that's it and uh that's the

last question

and uh again

if you uh are interested at all anything

you want to know just feel free to ask

and uh be sure to look at the url links

below if you haven't

subscribed or liked the video yet go go

ahead and subscribe and smash that like

button

as they say

i am becoming a salesman soon

so i'll just have to start the crazy

hype stuff and wearing funny costumes

and so forth

and that's that's pretty much it so uh

until next time

be happy

Hello, and welcome to question and answer number 31. I am your host, Bhante Yuttadhammo.

And today is a day off from work, and instead of becoming a whirlwind of activity on my day off, I've just been like wet raggy and lazy.

I've become like a sloth.

A five-toed sloth, but I am up for answering questions. It is time to answer questions, and so here we go. We got a bunch of good questions here.

Including some subtle ones, which is I I usually get some subtle difficult questions, and today is no exception.

But I'll do my best.

I promise.

And so, without any further rambling,

the first question is from Mary, spelled

m e r r y.

And Mary says, "Is there in vinaya any

description of how robes should look

like? Maybe a t-shirt could be

considered an upper robe."

And uh

Yeah, there's like very precise

descriptions of what uh a monk's robe is

supposed to look like.

Um in fact, I could do an entire I could

do an entire video on this if I thought

people would be interested enough in the

precise rules

for sewing robes, and making robes,

dyeing robes.

But um yeah, there's lots of rules. And

uh

uh

a kosher robe, a robe that is completely

in accordance with the rules of monastic

discipline, first of all, is a large

rectangle of cloth.

An upper robe and an outer robe would be

no more than six

spans by nine spans.

Pretty sure it's six by nine.

And uh that's according to the Buddha's

hand. And

um nowadays, we tend to consider the

Buddha to have been tall, but not like

gigantic. Whereas,

in the the commentary to the Vinaya

rules, the Buddha's hand was, if I

remember correctly, three and a half

times the size of an ordinary person's

hand, which

we tend to consider to be impossible

nowadays in the skeptical West.

So,

um,

it has to be

cut up into pieces and then sewn back

together again in a certain way. So,

you've got a robe, I mean,

I've got one of I've got two of my monk

robes that are in storage up in the

attic. I could have brought them down.

Maybe I should just get a book.

Ah, I don't even have the book. Okay,

forget the book.

We'll just have to

try and explain this. So, you got a

rectangle of cloth, and it it would be

at least five panels

like this.

It always has to be an odd number.

And each panel is called a mandala, like

a a mandala,

which just means like a panel. And then

the panel is divided into two parts

that are sewn together, and then you got

these reinforcing strips called kusis

and adakusis that connect all the panels

together.

And it has to be dyed a certain way.

There's a a list of

allowable fabrics,

which would be,

let me see, cotton, linen,

wool, silk, hemp, and Bengal hemp, or uh

sun hemp, it's called.

And see, the there are colors that are

not allowable,

including um bright yellow, bright red,

blue, white.

So, a monk's robe is a a rectangle of

cloth of a certain size

that is cut into pieces and sewn back

together again. Originally, it was just

rags that monks would pick up off the ground and then they have to sew it together. And that's why you got these reinforcing strips.

It's just to make it stronger because thread wasn't very good in those days. It wasn't reinforced polyester thread. And also, I found living in Vermont that when people throw away cloth, it's usually pretty wrecked cuz the people aren't very rich. And in the Buddhist time, cloth was relatively expensive, more so than now.

So, it has to be sort of uh like dyed sort of a brownish like uh like a dirt color.

You got certain allowable or not

unallowable

uh

dyes that you can use.

Um

Yeah. So, anyway, uh a t-shirt would not

be considered an upper robe. In fact, a

t-shirt, strictly speaking, would be

against the rules because monks are not

allowed to wear laypeople's clothing

unless their clothing, their own robes,

have been lost or destroyed or stolen.

And so, in such a case, you're allowed

to use just about anything to cover

yourself.

But, uh that's just temporary until you

can get a new set of robes. And monks

wear three robes, the upper robe, the
lower robe, and the outer robe.
Which are all just rectangles of cloth
that are wrapped around the body in
certain ways.
So, yeah, wearing t-shirts and stuff
would be technically against the rules.
Although,
most monks in the West do wear shirts
and so forth and socks and stocking caps
and all that, which technically are
against the rules. But, if you're living
in some place like Canada or Germany
where it gets really cold in the winter
time, then you pretty much have to fudge
on the rules in order to avoid losing

toes to frostbite or or just hypothermia

or whatever.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question. Although, I mean, I could go

on a long

a really long one just on on monk robes

cuz I was somewhat of an authority on

that. I was one of the only monks I knew

of I was the only monk I knew of in

Burma

that had robes that were completely

according to the rules.

But, um

we don't need to dwell on that. I'll

just move on to the next question, which

is also from Mary.

And Mary says,

"You often talk about John of the Cross as possibly enlightened as a possibly enlightened mystic. May I bring up to your attention the 4th-century desert father Evagrius Ponticus who was a great mystic and wrote, 'A quote, a man in chains cannot run, nor can the mind that is enslaved to passion see the place of spiritual prayer. It is dragged along and tossed by these passion-filled thoughts and cannot stand firm and tranquil.' Unquote.

As I studied sayings and the way of life of those first Christian hermits in Egypt, they are very similar to real Dhamma and Vinaya in almost every way

except begging for food but working for it by making read ropes or baskets and selling those at the marketplace once a month or so. I'm fascinated by this type of living, which is almost non-existent these days. Is becoming a true monk in Asia
in any way better for spiritual growth than
than building some recluse shelter in northern Canada or living in a cave in Egypt?"
Um living a true
Let's see. becoming a true monk in Asia in any way better for spiritual growth?
Not necessarily, although it is a system that was designed for the purpose of

helping monks to become enlightened,

monks that were trying to become

enlightened, to become enlightened.

And uh

living in a shelter in northern Canada,

I mean, if you're if you've got support

or you're independently wealthy and can

just feed yourself

um, yeah, fine. But there there are

monks that uh live in shelters in

northern Canada.

And uh yeah, they don't seem to be uh

suffering any spiritual hardships

necessarily.

So, really

um

the the ancient the life of an ancient Buddhist monk in India was largely a part of the culture. Um, it was, you know, designed for uh spiritual efficacy. So, there is that, but it's not the only possible way.

But you would need some kind of way where you're not distracted by worldly concerns and you can spend a lot of time you know, in contemplation.

So.

Yeah, I mean, monks can live in uh northern Canada. Monks could live in a cave in Egypt. Um, technically, they wouldn't be allowed to sell stuff you know, like ropes and um baskets and so forth, but um

I mean, monks that do, you know, they

make things.

Um

like uh Wat Pah Nanachat for a while was

kind of famous for the bull stands that

they would make. Um

So, I mean, monks do have no they do

have chores. They can't have chores.

So, I mean, just uh doing that kind of

like a simple peaceful kind of work is

uh not necessarily

uh in conflict with uh becoming

enlightened.

But, I think I've uh pretty much

answered that one.

So, I'll just move on to the next one.

This is also from Mary.

And Mary says,

"How

how you were dealing with boredom living

alone?"

Well, the thing is I don't get bored

easily.

Um I could just live in a cave

pretty much staring at a blank wall,

and uh I wouldn't get bored very easily.

I mean, I'd have a few books to read. Um

yeah, it's like the most bored I ever

got as a monk was having to sit through

a long sermon given by a Burmese monk.

Some of them are really long-winded, and

you just sit there. So, like really the

most bored I would get was when I wasn't

alone.

I'd I'd be more bored being with other

people that were on a completely

different page from me

than just sitting alone at ease, you

know, meditating or

reading a book or watching the ants

crawl around or whatever.

So, yeah, I guess some people are more

social than I am. They're less reclusive

than I am by nature, maybe less

uh less independent or less of a loner

or whatever.

So, um yeah, they can have a real

difficulty. It's like I've been told

that uh there are a lot of people in

prison

who really aren't afraid of taking a

beating, but they're terrified of

solitary confinement. They can just go

nuts. They can crack up. But, um

as for me, I think uh I would might

actually prefer solitary confinement

if I was in prison, that is. Not that I

particularly want to go to prison.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question. Also from Mary.

And Mary says, "How did you deal with

hunger?"

And I mean, that's kind of similar to uh

the boredom one. I mean, food has never

been one of my real major attachments.

And so, I could go 30 years

um

just eating one meal a day.

And usually like rice and goop.

Just like an assortment of different

kinds of goop all dumped together. Like

I just take my alms bowl, which is back

there on the table.

And just go into a village and it might

be uh 80 people would each put in like a

spoonful of rice and a spoonful of

curry. And so, you get all this stuff

just piled on top of each other.

Somebody might pour like honey on top of

all that. And it would just be glop.

And uh

I mean, if it was really really icky,

then

uh I just eat till I wasn't hungry

anymore and then I have to stop just cuz

it was disgusting. But uh

Yeah, just

hunger really um

it it never really bothered me. I don't

know. It's like um

some people if they're hungry, they

just, you know, they just got to eat

something or else they're just going to

be climbing the walls or something. But

uh

with me it's just a sensation that

arises, you know, it's like

uh

any other kind of discomfort I suppose.

Um and when you're a professional
ascetic and you're supposed to just
accept discomfort with equanimity, then
uh
hunger is a pretty easy one. There's a
lot more difficult ones that you're
dealing with. You know, just sitting
there meditating just getting bitten by
mosquitoes. You might have four or five
mosquitoes biting you at any moment.
That's that's more difficult than
dealing with hunger. Or just uh
just sweltering heat so that you're
unable to stop sweating ever.
That can be worse than being hungry.
Um

yeah, so I mean, it's

it's just a personal thing. It really

didn't bother me very much. It is kind

of interesting, though.

Uh and just as an aside,

that when I was a monk, I did not feel

thirst. You know, I just never felt

thirsty. I'd have to judge whether I

should drink something just by how

dark-colored my pee was or something, or

I'd start feeling kind of like dry mouth

and maybe a little dizzy or something.

Then I'd know I I was getting

dehydrated, and then I'd drink

something.

But since I have uh come back to the uh

secular world and I'm working for a

living, I actually feel thirsty

sometimes.

Which is in a way is you could be sort

of symbolic that uh you know, the cause

of all suffering in Buddhism is tanhā,

which uh literally means thirst. But uh

that's not necessarily any kind of

symbolism at my expense. It's just could

be just a coincidence.

And uh

yeah, I'm I'm doing well, so I'm not

really not complaining.

So anyway, I'll just move on to the next

question. This is from Fred.

And Fred says,

"What What's your thoughts on the alaya

and dharmakaya? Are we immersed in

consciousness?

I heard nirvana is on the inside,

samsara is on the outside."

Well, this is kind of two questions, or

maybe even three.

The alaya, or the alayavijnana, or it's

In English, it's often called the

storehouse consciousness,

was

a kind of consciousness that was

um hypothesized

or postulated by the Yogacara Mahayana

Buddhists.

And uh it was a way of

um

kind of sneaking the self into the back

door after kicking it out the front

door.

Um

the storehouse consciousness was just a

place where your karma was stored, where

you know, it sort of all in one place,

so to speak.

And

yeah, Theravada doesn't deal with that

and it's really not necessary, I think.

And even if you could hypothesize or

postulate an an alaya-vijnana,

it wouldn't be ultimately real.

It would all just be part of the

phenomenal

illusion, so to speak.

But with regard to the Dharmakaya,

um

yeah, that's that's interesting. The

Dharmakaya

is uh

it's like the the Dharma body. Kaya

means body. So, it's the Dharma body of

the Buddha and it's just reality,

ultimate reality.

So,

I mean, you've got the Nirmanakaya is

the the Buddha in his physical body as

as this human being that would you know,

sweat and eat and drink and go to the

bathroom and eventually pass away.

And later after the Dharmakaya and the

Nirmanakaya were were developed, there

was a another one called the

Sambhogakaya, which is like the the

cosmic Buddha in glory up in in a heaven

realm somewhere.

Um

and it's sort of like

in Christianity, you got like

you know, you got Jesus the carpenter's

son living on the earth and then you got

like the Christ spirit in glory in

heaven, which would be like the

Sambhogakaya and then it maybe just got

the spirit of God which pervades

everything at the highest level. It's

it's similar to that. And so long as

you're going to reify the absolute,

which in Theravada Buddhism is kind of a

no-no,

um yeah, it's it's

it's can be a useful model. Just

something that you can kind of get a

handle on to help you understand certain

things

um provisionally until you're able to

just let go of all models and

provisional

like hypotheses and so forth.

But yeah, I mean it would be like

Brahman in in Vedism or like Vedanta.

And you know, or like what a lot of

mystics would say it would call God just

this infinite consciousness or infinite

divinity that just pervades everything.

That would be the Dharmakaya and so long

as you're

um

talking about, you know, ultimate

reality

reifying it. Um

I mean you can talk about that. It's not

necessarily harmful unless you just

cling to it and just insist that, you

know,

only this is true and anything else is

wrong.

Because even right view can become wrong

view if you cling to it.

So

let's see. That's my thoughts on the

Alaya and the Dharmakaya. Next Fred says, "Are we immersed in consciousness?" That's one way of looking at it. I mean, really you cannot explain ultimate reality in words.

So

you can use that as like a working hypothesis until you reach the point where you can just let go of all conceptual, you know, figurings out of things. And then you just live it. You're just immersed in it. You might be immersed in consciousness for all I know.

So

yeah, I mean that's that would be like the Dharmakaya. We are immersed in

consciousness or that's what Vedanta teaches. That's uh indicative of some of the back and forth between Vedanta and Mahayana Buddhism like in early medieval times in India.

Uh there was a lot of borrowing of concepts and sort of going back and forth like that.

Uh let's see. And then he says, "I heard Nirvana is on the inside. Samsara is on the outside." Um yeah, I mean I've I've said something similar where um especially from a Mahayana's point of view, Nirvana is the essence, the underlying essence.

And samsara is the outward form.

So, you know, like the the the

the simile of the block of marble that

I've mentioned several times in these

Q&A videos.

Um, you know, you've got this block of

marble that contains within it every

possible statue.

Including and then every impossible

statue, too, maybe.

And um

the the statues would be samsara and

just the and the

block of marble itself, the formless

stone, would be

um, ultimate reality or Nirvana.

And so, yeah, Nirvana would be the

essence of reality or the essence of the

world in in from that point of view.
And uh samsara would just be these
conditioned forms that aren't ultimately
real.
They're just conditioned by other
conditions that are also conditioned by
other conditions that, you know, ad
infinitum.
So, yeah, it's not a bad way of putting
it. Nirvana's on the inside, samsara's
on the outside. Or it might be better to
say that, at least from a Mahayana's
point of view, Nirvana is the essence
and
um, samsara is the form
of the world.

So, I'll just move on to the next question, which is from Didymus. I think that's how you pronounce it. Didymus.

And Didymus says, "In Catholic legal theory, you have no obligation to follow an unjust law, which is a law lacking proper authority or which asks you to do something against natural law. For instance, a totalitarian Marxist materialist wouldn't really have any way to object if their central committee decreed that all children will now be raised by randomly assigned families, whereas the Catholics believe that parents have an inalienable natural right to raise their children. Does

Buddhism have a concept of natural law?

Maybe a concept like tyrannical rulers

that can overrule some laws?

Uh yeah, I would say certainly because

for example, you got a devout Buddhist

who is drafted into the army

and

he just refuses to kill and so that he

might actually be shot as a traitor, but

still it's better to

be killed than to kill from a Buddhist

point of view, especially if it's done

on purpose.

So,

yeah, I mean, I don't think there's

anything wrong at all

about you know, a a Buddhist who is being forced to do something he considers to be wrong, even telling a lie.

You know, the government says you have to lie about oh, let's say some election and uh you just refuse and tell the truth and you take the hit, but uh that's your karma.

So, yeah, I mean, you don't have to follow any law no matter how unethical it is.

Although with regard to like arbitrary laws like speed limits and so forth that really don't have any moral value, they're more just practical laws for, you know, things running smoothly, uh

Buddhism does say that

uh you should go along with laws like

that. You should uh

you know, give unto Caesar what belongs

to Caesar, so to speak.

So, uh yeah, I think I answered that.

So, let's move on to the next question.

And this is from

Rafi46.

And Rafi46 says, "What are your thoughts

on Korean Buddhism?"

And honestly, I don't know very much

about Korean Buddhism. I've met a few

Korean Buddhist monks.

Um there's one in particular that um

we were at a retreat together

And he This is just so weird. This is like typical of of like Burmese Theravada Buddhism.

Um because he wasn't a Theravada Buddhist monk, he had to kind of go in the back of the line behind the ordained Theravada monks.

And so, you know, he was treated pretty much like a layperson.

And so, he just got or got himself ordained as a Theravada Buddhist monk just for the duration of the retreat.

And uh he just took off the gray pajamas and put on the brown robes and he didn't even have to disrobe from being a a Mahayana Buddhist, which is um it's it's not exactly right, but this

is largely the way it's done in in Burma. I'm digressing like a son of a gun here. But I I actually saw a a Catholic priest who was ordained as a as a Buddhist monk. I think he was just ordained as a novice, but still, I mean, he wasn't even a Buddhist.

So, what are my thoughts on Korean Buddhism? As I say, I don't know that much about it. It seems to be more uh pure, less corrupt than then Japanese Buddhism. It's it's similar to Japanese Buddhism in certain ways. Like they've got their own version of of Zen there. And uh the monks are still celibate, I'm pretty sure.

Uh they didn't go through the Meiji
Restoration like in Japan where they're
trying to secularize the country to help
it become like a spiritually bankrupt uh
industrial superpower.
But uh aside from that, I mean,
I really don't know that much about
Korean Buddhism other than it's similar,
you know, it's it's like in between
Chinese Buddhism and and Japanese
Buddhism and it's got the same kind of
elements as Japanese and Chinese
Buddhism, but I assume it's
less corrupt than either because Japan,
as I say, was secularized
like around the turn of the 20th
century.

Um monks were allowed to marry and so forth. And in China, I mean, just about any religion other than communism is forbidden. There are Buddhist monasteries in China, but they're just there mainly for like tourist reasons.

So, yeah, I guess of the Eastern Asian the East Asian forms of Buddhism, Korean might be the healthiest.

But, uh that's just a guess.

So, I'll just move on to the next question. And this is from the Arya Suvastri project.

And the Arya Suvastri project says, "I've heard that meditation itself has a

positive effect on our karma. That if someone regularly engages in the practice, things tend to go better go better than if the person had not meditated. For instance, if someone had some cause and effect coming back to them that might not be so pleasant, that meditation tends to mitigate the issue. But, there is also the story, I can't remember which one right now, about one of the Buddha's followers who finally took a violent death to finish some past karma of his. Why would he do that if he could just level up a little more and become a Buddha himself? And finally, is it wrong thought to engage in meditation to mitigate your own past karma?

Personally,

I engage in that thought often and while

I'm meditating.

Since I don't know what negative karmic

things I could have done in past lives,

hell, I'm still trying to straighten out

what I've done in this life. Your

thoughts, please. Warm regards, much

respect. Sadhu."

Well, um first I'll just uh

get back to this the story of the uh one

one the Buddha's followers who finally

took a violent to finish some past karma

of his. That was Maha Moggallana who was

the Buddha's left-hand man. He was one

of the two chief disciples along with

Sariputta.

And uh he was literally beaten to a pulp

so that according to the uh text there

was not one bone left unbroken in his

body.

And um he just decided he just decided

to well, it's his karma.

You know, it's pretty much inevitable.

It's like unavoidable fate for him cuz

it was powerful karma.

So uh

he finally he just uh let it happen.

Um he was an arahant, fully enlightened,

so it wasn't that big of a deal for him

anyway. So he was like, well, this is

just the way it goes.

I mean, he wasn't really identified with

this physical level anymore anyway.

But uh this question here, why would he

do that if you could just level up a

little more and become a Buddha himself?

He couldn't become a Buddha himself.

Um he was fully enlightened already. He

was an arahant. In fact, he was a chief

disciple with uh

he was he was the most gifted with

regard to psychic powers.

But uh once you're enlightened, I mean,

you can't just uh

like back off from being an ordinary

arahant and decide to become a a full

like a samma sambuddha.

According to Theravada Buddhist uh

cosmology or the just the world view,

there can only be one Buddha at a time.

And he was already fully enlightened.

You can't become unenlightened. So that

was just it.

But uh getting to more to the uh to the

point of this question here,

let's see

which I'm looking for.

Let's see.

What is it wrong thought to engage in

meditation to mitigate your own past

karma? No, of course not. In fact, uh it

is encouraged. You get good karma for

um meditating, especially if you're

meditating correctly. You get good karma

for, you know, acts of generosity. You

get good karma for keeping precepts and all of that is encouraged and one of the main reasons it is encouraged is because it is conducive to your happiness in long run.

Which means it's it's helping your karma. Like um there's a famous uh sutta. I don't remember which one.

But uh the Buddha is talking about, you know, your bad karma from your past is like a handful of salt and if you pour that handful of salt into a glass of water

then the water is so salty you can't drink it. But if you pour that same handful of salt into a pool of water and

dissolve it all in, you might hardly be

able to taste the salt at all.

And he compares that to, you know, bad

karma and good karma where if you've got

bad karma, the best thing you do is just

do as much good as you can to dilute

down the bad karma in your life.

And meditation is one way of doing it.

So yeah, there's no probably there's no

problem at all with that.

So go for it.

And I'll just move on to the Arya Sūtra

project's next question.

He says

I assume it's a he.

Hypothetical. If someone had, let's say,

legal obligations

uh such as an ongoing order from the courts for child support. Thankful thankfully in In parentheses he says, "Thankfully I'm not obligated by anything of the such in quite a while." And that's that's then parenthetical aside here. "I recall the story of the monk you told that the mother of his child put the infant in front of him and he continued to meditate and not father the child. In other words, he would have just let it starve. But let's say that this person had all the qualifications to become a real deal Theravāda monk but still had those obligations.

How would a monk with no job pay this or handle this?

Or would it be handled for him? Warm regards, much respect, Sadhu.

Um well, getting back to that famous story, I think it's in the commentaries of this this man who left his wife and child to become a monk, to renounce the world and strive for enlightenment. And he's sitting under a tree in a park meditating, and the the estranged wife comes with the baby and just sets it down in front of him, and then she leaves. But, I mean, it she's watching. She's like watching from behind a tree or something to see what he does. And when he just ignores the baby, she

eventually comes back and picks it up
and goes away. So, it could be that the
meditating monk, I mean, he maybe knew
that his wife wasn't just going to leave
the baby there to die of exposure.
So, it wasn't necessarily that he was uh
uh just going to let it starve.
I mean, it may be that if she really
left, he might at least try and do
something with the baby, find somebody
to take care of it, maybe some faithful
supporters or something.
Um but setting that aside, um
let's see.
Let's say the person had all the
qualifications to become a a real-deal

Theravada monk, but still had these obligations. How would a monk with no job pay this or handle this? Okay. Um there are conditions for a monk being ordained.

And like, for example, a runaway slave is not allowed to be ordained. Like uh a runaway soldier, like a a soldier just goes AWOL and tries to be ordained, that's not allowable.

Um a debtor who owes money to somebody is can is not supposed to be ordained.

Someone who does not have the permission of his parents, if they are still alive, is not supposed to be ordained.

Um I mean, you have to uh be a a biological man, at least 20 years old

from conception.

Um which means you have to have your

cojones.

Or And then uh see there's there's a few

others. You have to be a human being,

for example.

Um you're not allowed to have certain

diseases like leprosy.

And there are reasons for all this. Um

but uh

with regard to a monk with obligations

for

if he is obligated by the government to

pay child support, then he's essentially

a debtor. I mean, as soon as it comes

due, he is in debt.

So, he would have to clear that up

somehow.

You know, make arrangements for somebody

to pay it or you know, get his wife to

agree to you know,

let him do it and not pay the child

support. But if he is legally obligated

to uh

to like pay child support or pay money

to somebody, he's he's you know, he

doesn't have all of his affairs settled.

Then he really can't renounce the world

cuz there's still going to be these

strings attached, some of them legal

strings.

Some of them legal strings that can uh

cause the sangha to have a bad name, you

know, a haven of criminals. And I mean,
it does happen like um there was a a
Cambodian monastery in uh
oh, Stockton, California. I heard about.
I've never been there. And I heard about
this a long time ago. It's it's
different now. But um there was the the
Cambodian sangha raja was living in
exile there.
And as an aside, um
some people from the Star Wars uh movies
came and were following this old
Cambodian monk around for for several
days recording the way he talked and and
his mannerisms and so forth. And they
basically Yoda'd on him.

But that that's a total aside. Um but it
was like there were a lot of Cambodian
gang members in Stockton. Now, I've
read, I don't know if it's still true,
but Stockton used to be
um the city with the most gang violence
of any city in America, which is saying
something.
So, the Cambodian gang members
if like the police were after them if it
was just things were just getting too
hot, they'd hide out in the monastery.
They'd be ordained temporarily. And
they'd still have guns and they'd have
their hot rods and everything.
Um,
but the thing is getting back to this

question

um

some of these

some of these situations like you're not supposed to be a debtor, you're not supposed to be a runaway slave and so forth.

Um

some of these if you are ordained it's just an invalid ordination. Like if you're not a full 20 years old from conception or you're not a full biological man with a full set of cojones um, then you're just not a monk. I mean they might have done the the ceremony and everything and you're still

not ordained. You're still you're just
disqualified. But some of these other
ones like
I knew a monk whose parents were like
evangelical Christians and they just
would not consent to him becoming a monk
but the monk who ordained him anyway
said, well, we're willing to take the
hit.
Which meant that
the ordination was still valid. It's
just that the monks who participated in
the ordination
were guilty of an offense that required
confession. So, they just took
confession afterwards.
And with regard to a monk who own owes

child support, I don't remember. I think

it would still be a valid ordination.

It's just the monks who ordained him

were guilty of an act of wrongdoing.

But um

I think I think I've pretty much

answered that question. So, I'll just

move on to the next question which is

from Numa.

And Numa says

what's your take on the ethics of

teaching Buddhist meditation practices

to people who have no understanding,

ignorantly or willingly willfully, I

mean.

Okay, I'll start over. I I misread his

question.

What's your take on the ethics of

teaching Buddhist meditation practices

to people who have no understanding,

ignorantly or willfully, of core

Buddhist doctrines?

Well, this happens all the time and most

Western Buddhists

or most Westerners who practice Buddhist

meditation are pretty ignorant of basic

Buddhism, as a general rule.

They might not realize it, but then

again,

their teachers are pretty ignorant of

basic Buddhism, also as a general rule.

Uh

So, my take on the ethics of teaching

Buddhist meditation practices and not

teaching them like anything else about

Buddhism, like uh

you know, some

some meditation

Buddhist meditation is just like stress

relief. It's like mindfulness-based

stress reduction.

And it's it's taught by psychologists

rather than monks.

And um

I don't think it's necessarily

unethical.

Um

because I mean, if they're ignorant of

like just the basics of ethics and so

forth,

they're not going to get very far with

it anyway.

And if you do meditate correctly, then

it is going to improve your

understanding. You know, it's your your

wisdom will increase so that you might

be more interested in learning more

about Buddhism or

um you might at least have better

reasons for meditating than just wanting

to relax and sleep better or some such.

So, yeah, I do not consider it to be

unethical to teach only Buddhist

meditation practices and not like the

the the other foundations of the whole

system.

Um

I mean, it might be better if people

knew

the the just the basic, you know,

Buddhism 101 along with the meditation

techniques, but um

obviously, it's not entirely necessary.

And uh it still will I mean, if they're

meditating correctly, you will still you

will still have good results.

So,

um yeah, I really don't see a problem

with that.

Unless

they uh the all they do is just meditate

without knowing anything about Buddhist

philosophy and then set themselves up as
teachers of Buddhism and not just this
one meditation technique that they they
got good at.
So, that that would be sort of ethical
problem and we're dealing with that in
the West now where you got academics who
care more about
you know, just all the politically
correct stuff
more than they care about Buddhism and
they're setting themselves up as
Buddhist teachers and just turning
Buddhism into
you know,
Buddhism-flavored social justice.
And I mean, just about every spiritual

system that has found a place in the
West is being subverted in the same way.
But um I talk about that a lot. So, most
of you who are familiar with what I
talked about already know this stuff.
So, I'll just move on to the next
question. That's from Toronto Nat.
And Toronto Nat says, "What do I do if I
find myself torn between Christian and
Buddhist practice?"
Well, I mean, there's a lot of overlap.
Both Christianity and Buddhism teach you
that you should do good and avoid doing
evil and be generous and tell the truth
and
you know, don't don't go around

murdering and raping. Don't kick

puppies.

So, a lot of it is just overlap. I I

it's

um if you if you read the writings of

someone like St. John of the Cross or

Meister Eckhart,

you know, even the the the contemplative

practices like the advanced yogic

practices were very similar between

Buddhist monks and contemplative

Christian monks.

So, I mean, there's a lot of overlap and

mostly the differences are in the theory

that

sort of guides the practice or gives an

excuse for the practice or whatever.

So, I mean, if part of your practice is

venerating Jesus or the Virgin Mary,

then

yeah, I mean, there there's obviously a

certain amount of friction between that

and Buddhism.

But, um

read St. John of the Cross and it's I

mean, he

he's almost a Buddhist.

He might have been a fully enlightened

one, too, and he's certainly, as far as

I can tell,

a master of of jhana. He was just a

meditation master.

So, let's see.

Um yeah, the practice is really not the issue. It's the theory that I mean, they're they're just not compatible. The practices are largely compatible, but the theory is is not compatible and you're just going to have to choose what works for you. I mean, what can you really
deeply accept? And then it's not just this superficial thing, but you can have like a deep conviction or confidence in it.
And if it's Christianity, well, bless your heart and just go with that. Um just
choose one of the other or if you're able to somehow reconcile them. I mean,

they're not the theory part isn't
entirely reconcilable, you know, it's
like you know, if you're if you think
that you can only go to heaven through
Christ,
then Buddhism would be sort of
um disqualified just from that.
So,
yeah, you're just going to have to What
is it? I mean, setting aside the
practice, I mean, that's really not the
problem as far as I can see.
It's the theory that you're going to
have to work out for yourself. I mean,
what is it that you can deeply accept?
What is it that just resonates with you?

I mean, what is more acceptable to you?

And if both are acceptable to you, then

maybe you can just uh

somehow juggle the two.

But, I'll just move on to the next

question.

I hope I didn't just confuse Toronto

man.

This next question is from Thure.

And Thure says,

"Does the Buddha ever speak about the

consequences of focusing on only one

part of the threefold training while

ignoring the other two? This is sort of

like uh

um

Numus' question.

So, I'll just Now that I've uh
interrupted myself so rudely, I'll start
over. Does the Buddha ever speak about
the consequences of focusing on only one
part of the threefold training while
ignoring the other two? Does a
development of one
uh does the development of one lead to a
concomitant development of the other two
or is there a hierarchy of importance
among the three parts such that a
development of one by itself would bring
one closer to liberation than a
development of the other two by
themselves?
Uh and then he says, "You can choose to

read this part or not. For example, I try very hard to be virtuous and follow the five precepts, but I'm a rotten meditator and hold views in conflict with right view, at least according to an orthodox Theravada perspective. A monk who spends all of his time studying and obsessing over Abhidhamma might be an example of someone proficient in knowledge, but lacking in meditation and virtue.

Then there is what seems to be the most common today, especially in the West, which is someone who practices and may even be very skilled at meditation, but who rejects central teachings or flouts sila.

Which of the three is closest to

liberation?

Closer than all three might be someone

like John of the Cross

whom you have mentioned before.

You know, like a couple of minutes ago,

who was seemingly highly developed in

both meditation and virtue,

but who from a Buddhist perspective

lacked right view on account of his

Christian beliefs.

Okay.

So, in Buddhism you've got a kind of

trinity.

Sila, Samadhi, Panna.

That's three. Sila, which is morality,

Samadhi, which is concentration, in this case mostly meditative concentration, and Panna, which is understanding or wisdom.

And according to the

this

orthodox Theravada,

you have to have purity of morals before you can have purity of mind. You have to have purity of mind before you can have purity of wisdom. So, it would be sequential. You have to start with morality. If you try to start with meditation without having pure morals, you're not going to get very far with it. That's the orthodox view.

But, I don't necessarily see it that

way. I mean, some people are just got a talent for meditation and they can go into deep meditative states without bothering much with keeping five precepts, especially if it's just like, you know, drinking alcohol sometimes, something like that, swatting mosquitoes, you know, not something like outrageously evil.

But, it seems to me that the three are like a tripod.

That

that two of them hold the other one up.

I mean, you have to have some wisdom before you'll even want to start living a moral life.

You know, and um so, it's like

the three are

you know, if you one grows, the other

two will tend to improve also.

So, I mean, you can't have an unbalanced

practice where you're just putting way

too much emphasis on morality, say, and

and not meditating. And I've There are

monks who are just like sticklers for

practicing the rules of monastic

discipline,

and they just don't meditate.

So, they're just kind of like stuck at

uh the basic level, at beginner's level,

almost.

Um

Well, of the three, obviously, it seems

to me obviously the most important is wisdom, because that's what gets you enlightened. I mean, if you can somehow wrangle wisdom without having the morality or the meditation, then uh

Yeah, I mean, you might be like Osho or something, where you're just this rascal involved in sex scandals and so forth, but still

you know, he might still have wisdom of some sort. Um but I I generally consider it to be like It's like a tripod.

And so, uh if one develops, the other two tend to develop at least to some degree.

Um let's see.

Does the Buddha ever speak about the consequences of focusing on only one part of the threefold training while ignoring the other two?

Um to some degree. I mean, I I don't remember

a sutta that really addresses the issue um the way this question is asked.

Although, I mean, there are cases like uh in the in the commentaries, the Dhammapada commentary, there's the story of Pointless Potila,

where um there was this this monk named Potila who was who had mastered the the scriptures, which is an anachronism, because, you know, when the Buddha was alive, you didn't even have

scriptures yet. You know, there wasn't a Tipitaka yet.

But, um this, according to the story, this Potila just mastered all the He was just a complete scholar, and he followed the rules and everything. But, the Buddha would always call him Pointless Potila, Tuchcha of

if I remember the Pali correctly.

Um you know, he just come here, pointless Potila, you know, go pointless Potila. He's walking by, there goes pointless Potila. And he's essentially um making fun of the fact that Potila just wasn't a meditator. I mean, he's spending all of his time studying and

just mastering the doctrine and not

really

um

not just not meditating.

So, I mean, you have to have all three

according to Theravada. You know, one

leads to the other, which leads to the

other, but um

um I mean, ultimately, according to

Theravada, you have to have all three.

You should You should perfect all three

if you're going to become fully

enlightened.

That's just orthodox. Although, um as I

was saying,

um

I'm a little skeptical of that. I mean,

it seems to me that

um for example, I mean, you just have to

have the wisdom

to uh

to to want to keep the precepts anyway.

And a certain amount of concentration

helps you to keep the precepts, and

and it's just all sort of

interconnected.

So, let's move on to the next question.

And this is from Rob495.

And Rob495 says,

"Have you ever considered Alzheimer's

This is a weird question.

Have you ever considered Alzheimer's as

a kind of upgrade in terms of reduced

mental activity and also sometimes a

shift in personality,

uh i.e., miserable person becomes like a

happy child when they have Alzheimer's?

I have a theory that some of those

historically named as saints may have

been persons that would find themselves

locked up today due to Alzheimer's. I

also recall a monk explaining magnetic

draw of one of the oldest Sangha members

uh as he was so happy and childlike,

which has the hallmarks of Alzheimer's.

Cheers."

Um

this is maybe slightly idiotic a

I used to know this monk who was like

totally strict. I mean, he was like a

Buddhist Rambo. He was following the the the optional ascetic practices all of them at the highest level at one time. I mean, he was just
you know, you got the middle path in Buddhism where you know, it's like self-indulgence and self-torture. Most people veer over to the self-indulgence side like 99.9%.
He was the 0.1% that would veer the other way.
And eventually
I mean, he just tried so hard. His strings were too tight. He couldn't play the right music. And so, he gave up. He just kind of He didn't He didn't become

a lay person again, but he became like
this hermit who just lived in this big
hollow tree.
And he became very cynical with regard
to Dharma.
And he had a similar example to this
Alzheimer's theory
where there was a a guy in Thailand who
was cleaning his ears
with like a something that was too
pointy. And he like perforated his
eardrum and it caused an infection in
his brain.
And he just became like completely
blissed out, you know, he's just like
quiet and smiling and and this this monk
turned hermit who was kind of cynical

about Buddhism because he dropped out.

Was saying, well, then he's he's like an

arahant.

He's uh

you know, what's the difference?

But I mean, one of the main differences

is is that an arahant or like a really

advanced level spiritual practitioner is

more conscious than the average person.

And I don't think you could really say

that with someone with Alzheimer's who

doesn't even recognize their own family

anymore.

I mean, I wouldn't say that

you know, the current president of the

United States, Joe Biden is

wiser than he was

15 years ago.

I mean, it may be that some famous

saints in history who were just, you

know, all blissful and happy,

um yeah, they could have Alzheimer's.

They could have just had some sort of

mental illness.

Um Hotei, who's often confused with the

Buddha, you know, the the one with the

big belly who's got his hands up in the

air sometimes,

um he was uh

um

well, he was sort of like the village

idiot.

And he was just very cheerful and he who

would go around begging for spare change

and then when he figured he had enough,

he'd go to like a candy shop and get

candy and distribute it to the little

kids and

he was sort of like the Chinese Santa

Claus.

Um but really, I mean, it's it's very

big difference between being,

you know, mentally or whatever

the politically correct word for it is

now,

or um

having Alzheimer's and and really just

being fully conscious.

There's a big difference. I mean, it may

be that some

people who were like saints, you know,

famous saints in history who were, you

know, canonized as saints or considered

by tradition to be saints, they may have

been very virtuous and so forth, but um

yeah, maybe they did have Alzheimer's,

but um

it's it's it's not the same as being

genuinely wise.

What happens is, you know, it's like a

baby

who uh you know, babies

don't tell lies and they don't do

anything bad maybe, other than screaming

a lot.

Um

you know, they just have all these

they're called anusayas. They're like

latent tendencies. They've got karma

that can't

it can't manifest itself because they

just don't have the hardware hooked up

good enough yet to to start doing bad

things, apparently.

And uh someone with Alzheimer's it's

similar. I mean, it's not like their

karma is purified by getting

Alzheimer's. It's just that it can't

manifest as well. And so they've just

got like this blockage.

You know, it's like

they they can't behave as bad just

because they don't have enough upstairs going on anymore to do it, but it the the the seeds of it, the base the the underlying tendencies are still there.

So, I hope I answered that question.

So, I'll move on to the next question by Rob495.

I've often reflected on the quote quote "Events happen, deeds are done, but there is no individual doer thereof." Unquote. Which is allegedly from the Buddha himself, although I've heard it may be wrongly attributed to the Buddha. Could you confirm if this is likely genuine? Um that exact quote, I'm pretty sure it comes from the Visuddhimagga. That that, you know, there is there is

like uh

no doer of the deed, but uh deeds are

done

kind of a thing. Yeah, that's that's a

famous quote from the Visuddhimagga.

Um

and it's it's an interpretation of

Buddhism.

Um

I mean, there is no self in Buddhism,

anatta. That I mean, it

This is I mean, it can be accepted as

orthodox Buddhism. In fact, it is

orthodox Buddhism cuz the Visuddhimagga

is like the main commentary to Theravada

Buddhist texts.

So,

the Buddha might have endorsed it with

qualifications.

I mean, ultimately, there is no self.

See, there is no individual doer, there

there are no events, and there are no

deeds that are done. I mean, ultimately,

I would go that far.

That not only is there no person who

walks, there's no walking. Whereas, the

Visuddhimagga would say that there's

walking going on, there's just nobody

who walks, which doesn't make much

sense. I mean, it's like

um

sort of subject and predicate or noun

and verb or it's like uh you know, the

object and the behavior of the object are really inseparable. You take away all the behavior of an object of a being, for example, and so long as it's just sitting there not doing anything, it's considered a kind of behavior, the being's gone, too. To say that, you know, there there is walking, but nobody who walks just doesn't make sense. That there is uh you know, there's deeds are done, but there's no doer. I mean, that doesn't make sense. I mean, if there's no doer, there are no deeds either, really, ultimately speaking. I mean, at the superficial worldly level of samsara, there's doers and deeds.

But, uh at the highest level, there's no doers and there's no deeds, either.

So, yeah, I would consider this to be uh to some degree like uh orthodox corruption of Buddhist philosophy, but that's just my philos- that's just my opinion.

Okay. So, I'll just move on to the next question.

From deepat427.

And deepat427 says, "Is the cover art on your book supposed to be a Buddhist version of Plato's cave allegory?"

And uh the quick answer to that is no. I might as well get get one of my books.

Oh.

Let's see here.

One moment, please.

Okay.

So, here's the cover of my book. And the

other two

have essentially the same illustration,

just in different colors.

See?

I might as well show you the whole

thing. I can hype the book at the same

time as I answer the question.

So, that picture there is just um

it's like an impressionistic version of

the famous monk in uh I think it was

Saigon

before the the Vietnam War started who

immolated himself.

Um

as I used that as like a header to uh my

Minds page and uh a few other places

I've got the burning monk and this is

this is the burning monk. It's not

Plato's cave. It's just a

the monk here's the gas can.

See?

And he poured it on himself and lit

himself on fire to protest the uh the

Roman Catholic government of South

Vietnam at the time.

And this I just like the

um I like the picture because he's just

sitting like in deep meditation like

he's like serene as he's burning.

And um

for a while I was kind of a burning monk

myself.

So, that's that's what it's about. So,

I'll just move on to Bipap427's next

question.

And that is in the book Miracle of Love

there's a quote from Maharaj on one of

his last days to a devotee saying that

they'd see him again in other forms or

something to that effect. If this him is

this him saying he'll take rebirth?

Um in Maharaj's case he seems to have

been so advanced. I think this might be

just beyond that that he was just kind

of everywhere.

And that they would see him in other

forms.

Um

just because I mean he was like a

personification of God. I mean he was I

mean he

didn't really have an ego anymore and so

he just kind of blended out and so it's

sort of like the

certain aspects of him would be

appearing to his devotees just their own

faith or devotion would just bring it

out, you know, it would just manifest.

Something along those lines.

But uh I mean Maharaj had

I mean if you read the book Miracle of

Love, I mean he's supposedly could be in

more than one place at the same time.

Um

Yeah, I mean he just broke all the

rules.

And uh

Ram Dass who was his devotee

uh just was

convinced that he that Maharaj was a

fully enlightened, fully realized being.

And uh

I mean there there are

suggestions that he did take rebirth

like uh

there's one story in that book where he

went up into the into the hills during

the summertime and there was this old

woman who was just amazed that he was he looked as young as when she was a young woman or a girl. And he said, "Nah, I was reborn."

That was you know, it was just he looked the same but had a different body or something.

Um yeah, it's one of my favorite books. I've gotten that on the bookcase, too. I won't bother to uh to go fetch it. But uh Miracle of Love stories about Neem Karoli Baba by Ram Dass. It's one of my favorite stories. It or one of my favorite books. It's just a mind-blower.

So uh is this him saying he'll take

rebirth?

Um I think he he just goes beyond that.

I think he he had just merged with

the the universe at that point and was

just going to be you know, aspects of

him would just be manifesting especially

to his devotees that were were sort of

there devotionally just or through their

karma just calling it forth without him

uh

really having to do anything.

So, next question which is also the last

question is from Chaplin.

And Chaplin says, "Some online sources

describe the five precepts as mostly for

monks. The taking of intoxicants for

example, it reads as strictly forbidden
for monks but discouraged for lay
people. How can Western lay people
understand this when we have widely used
weed, wine, energy drinks,
and other drugs
that didn't even exist in the Buddha's
time,
or didn't even cloud the mind,
but may enhance it?
How do we explain this gray area, and
what exactly is an intoxicant?
Okay. Well, I mean, there's a few things
I can address here. One is
some online sources describe the five
precepts as mostly for monks. Well,
actually, the monks have like five thick

books of monastic discipline, like the
first books on the bookcase over there
in the dark bindings, the tall ones.
That's the the five books of of or the
first four books of Vinaya.
And so, monks got
maybe between two and 3,000 precepts.
And the five precepts really were
designed primarily for lay people.
Um although there are commentarial texts
that say that
all morality can be condensed down to to
these five precepts, which uh
is not necessarily true, in my opinion,
but I mean, you could, I suppose, if you
if you really

were

hell-bent on that.

But anyway, um the main question here is

uh

how can Western lay people understand

uh essentially intoxicants?

That they didn't even exist, don't don't

cloud the mind, but may enhance it. How

do we explain this gray area, and what

exactly is an intoxicant? Well, that's

in the in the fifth precept itself.

I undertake the precept to abstain from

I see, ale, wine, and intoxicants which

cause cloudedness of mind or

heedlessness.

So, that would be uh

pamajja.

majja

Pamajja or majja. mean

uh intoxication and it's it's

interpreted to mean heedlessness or

carelessness or just like being in in a

stupor. Just it makes you more stupid,

you know, it makes you uh

um

less moral just because you're less

inhibited and don't give a about

breaking rules, that kind of thing.

So,

I mean, there was there were drugs that

weren't necessarily considered bad even

in the Buddha's time.

Um like the the Brahmans were taking

this drug called Soma,

which uh is never really denounced in

the text, although it may be that the

Soma sacrifice had already become uh

past history by the Buddha's time. But,

um there is mention of cannabis

in in the books of monastic discipline.

It's called bhanga.

And uh it is allowable as a medicine.

And monks are even allowed to own a pipe

for inhaling fumes of medicinal

substances.

So,

yeah, it's like the main the main issue

is whether it uh it causes cloudedness

of mind. It make whether it makes you

less wise and obviously not all drugs do

that. In fact, it may be that most monks of my generation, approximately my age, began with drugs, you know, like psychedelic drugs, you know, like not like heroin or something, but um something that expands consciousness. And uh then they wanted to uh cultivate the same states of expanded consciousness or similar states of expanded consciousness without the use of the chemical.

So, that's fairly common. Um getting back to Neem Karoli Baba, he he said with regard to something like LSD, um if you took it under the right circumstances, it could be beneficial.

If you took it in a cool place that's

quiet and maybe if you take it alone,

that kind of thing.

Um so, yeah, it's like I think most

monks don't really have an issue with

caffeine, for example. You know, monks

sit around drinking tea all the time.

And uh

it may be when

I mean, at first there might might have

been a controversy. Sort of like uh

in Islam when coffee first got

discovered,

uh some of the imams were wanting the

death penalty for drinking coffee, but

uh

uh people like coffee so much that uh

that one

that one didn't work out for the imams.

So, yeah, it's it's whether it makes you

clouded of mind, makes you less

conscious.

That's that's really the thing and

um I mean, the same drug for different

people might have different effects and

just if you take it for certain reasons,

like any kind of drug that you're taking

recreationally,

uh probably would be

just from the the orthodox hard-nosed

Buddhist point of view would be better

off avoided. But then again, if you're

really following strict hard-nosed

Buddhist ethics, you wouldn't even put salt and pepper on your food to make it taste better. That's just wallowing in sensuality, listening to music, just I mean, it's very
very subtle. If you if you really want to really want to take that route and you're probably better off as a monk if you really want to just go full blast. So, yeah, I mean, the main point is if it makes you stupid, if it makes you less wise, if it makes you foolish, then you shouldn't do it, whether it's a drug or anything else. And uh if it makes you more alert, um especially if it's non-addictive,
then yeah, I mean, drinking coffee in

the morning's not bad. Drinking a Red

Bull

I already finished mine.

is not bad necessarily.

Tobacco is a tricky one because uh

a lot of monks smoke tobacco including

some Thai monks that were considered to

be fully enlightened like Ajahn Mun. I

guess he chain-smoked. And so in

Thailand, it's just considered of course

it's okay to smoke tobacco because Ajahn

Mun did it and he was a fully

enlightened being and if fully

enlightened being does it, it's okay.

But I think if tobacco was in India in

the Buddha's time, the Buddha

I think there's a very good chance he would not have allowed it just because it is literally an addictive drug and a person who smokes tobacco regularly is literally a drug addict.

So anything that causes addiction, anything that causes any kind of like intense craving or clinging is obviously not going to be good from a Buddhist point of view.

So there's that, too.

And I have finished answering the questions. Whether I answered them well or not is another matter, but I I did my best.

And uh

until next time,

be happy.

hello and welcome to question and answer

number 32.

i have answered so many questions and

i'm going to answer more today

and as a change of pace from sitting

back in the office with the bookcase and

the altar and all that i'm sitting out

on the back porch on a coldish

windy day

because it's been raining a lot and i'm

more or less recovered from

our big vacation last week and so i'm

going to start answering questions and

the first question

is from robert

and robert said

says

i had a question but i forgot what it

was

but then he continues

and he says so i have another one what

is buddhist take on dementia or

alzheimer's disease how can one produce

karma if one doesn't remember anything

well

as far as i remember the the buddhist

sutas and also the the monastic

discipline doesn't really have a whole

lot to say

about dementia

which i mean of course it doesn't

mention alzheimer's disease because

that's like a a new name for something

but um

um i mean it just takes it for granted

that as you get older

your mind is going to go to more or less

of a uh you know to some degree

there's very few people that when

they're in their 90s if they live that

long are still sharp as attack maybe

somebody like uh

uh bertrand russell i mean he was he was

still going to jail and uh writing books

and stuff when he was in his 90s

but um so i guess i'm going to emphasize

the last part of this question which is

how can one produce karma if one doesn't

remember anything

and

the main thing to remember about karma

is that it is volition and so it doesn't

really rely on conscious memory it

relies more on subconscious memory or

force of habit

and even

a person with

late stage alzheimer's will still have

like mental habits you know their mind

will be degenerating their short-term

memory may be gone their long-term

memory may be going

but still

they've got just a mental force of habit

that's keeping them in operation to some

degree much to a much less degree than

when they were 30

but

but still

so it's like your karma is like the

momentum of your mental states

and even though the momentum may be

um

very much

like limited

still it's it's still happening and the

more you just automatically do something

just through force of habit it

reinforces the habit it reinforces the

karma

so

animals also produce karma even though

they really don't have

nearly as developed a memory as we

humans do and we humans i mean we we

grotesquely overestimate our own power

of remembering things i mean it's like

how many people can remember

their locker combinations when they were

in middle school or some such you know

it's like

can you remember the license plate

numbers of every car you've owned or

every every phone number you've ever had

we forget a lot of things

and uh if the camera is bouncing around

a little bit it's because there's this

dog right here see there she is

she's uh

wanting attention and stuff

she's very nice

but let's get back to the question here

how can one produce karma one doesn't

remember anything

uh yeah the karma remembers it's just

this momentum

of mental states

and um

so that happens regardless of any kind

of uh conscious memory because it

doesn't work that way

and i hope i uh answered that question

before uh

being totally distracted by the uh

the dog

so let's see i guess i'll just move on

to the next question

sorry robert if i didn't uh

if i didn't fully answer the question

but again karma is the momentum of your

mental states and when you do have

alzheimer's

or dementia or you're just you know

getting old and kind of losing your

sharpness and so forth it's you know

it's it's more constricted i suppose

but

also it may be that you're just more

locked into just habitual actions

you know your your so-called free will

is less in play and that means you're

just driven by karma and just

reinforcing karma so it's not good i

mean to have alzheimer's disease is not

a good substitute for enlightenment

so i'll just move on to the next

question here which is from joe doe

and joe doe says

what's your thoughts on the direct

aerosol injection on the false premise

and guise of stratospheric

geoengineering poison air raids taking

place across the west the rat poison

insecticides in the drinking supply

immigration to systematic replacement

drug mandates for babies and forced

inoculation

as a buddhist monk what's the best

course of action get nailed like christ

or hoop ass like krishna odin and zeus

thanks

well

um

the first part of this question is just

naming

a lot of things that uh

it's just like

corrupt ruthless governments that don't

give a damn about the citizens of their

countries

are just uh

messing with people

and stop chewing on that

stop chewing on it

dog was chewing on something

so uh

with regard to the whole first part i

mean these are like modern problems or

post-modern problems but

i mean in the buddhist time things were

at least as bad i mean you had

sociopathic kings invading neighboring

countries all the time like on the

standard list of the 10 dangers

that can for example interrupt

a buddhist ceremony or some such number

one on the list is kings which means

uh either a king preying on his own

subjects or some foreign king praying

on on your king's subjects which is you

so and then of course you had like

bandits

you know infesting the forest you had

diseases that they didn't have cures for

you know just plagues and so forth it

was gnarly so it's always been messed up

and uh the buddhist

solution the best course of action as

jodo puts it

really is not getting nailed up like

christ or whooping ass like krishna

i mean you just opt out of the system i

mean that's obviously what um a serious

buddhist practitioner is supposed to do

he renounces the world and goes off into

the force and gets away from the whole

[__] show

because the [__] show can get you all

tangled up in samsara even more than

just living a quiet life in a hut with

you know a wife and kids and you know

dogs and the geese and the crops and all

that i mean even that

um you know you're gonna have

karmic attachments and entanglements and

so forth

and i mean even just living alone in a

cave you're going to have

complications and you know

but

to

renounce the world go off alone into a

forest

um you know just radical renunciation

that at least keeps it down to a minimum

for someone who is relatively

spiritually developed i mean if you lack

the wisdom or maturity

to

live alone in a forest without cracking

up of course it's just going to make

things worse

but the answer to this question is you

renounce the world go off and live in a

forest somewhere and just opt out of the

whole crazy system because it's always

been crazy

it's not just that um the modern

globalist world has gone insane it has

always been insane

there's new kinds of insanity i suppose

but um

i mean it's still it's still just the

same kind of mess just the human

condition

so i'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from fred

and fred says the question is are

arahants happy

so for those of you who are

not

uh

well versed in terra vada buddhist

philosophy and arahant is a fully

enlightened being

and

the the answer would be yes but it's not

the kind of happy

that

um

you know it's not like a normie kind of

happy i mean they're not like you know

giggling and singing and dancing and

skipping around and big grins on their

face all the time they're just serene

it's just serenity contentment

that's the kind of happiness they have

it's sort of neutral it doesn't really

have an opposite you know it's neither

positive nor negative because if you

have positive you're going to have

negative if you have negative you're

going to have positive and so you wind

up with the the roller coaster ride

and so they just go for like radical

neutrality and that in itself

is the best and most reliable kind of

happiness

and it's not boredom or anything because

you know that's obviously not

contentment

so the question is are arahants happy

yeah they have uh detached from all

suffering and delusion

so

if you want to call you know just

not associating or not identifying with

any kind of you know pain or discomfort

or unhappiness you know it can still

arise

just through the force of you know

nature taking its course you know even

the buddha got really sick

at least a few times

i mean they can still feel pain they

stub their toe they're still going to

feel pain

it's just that they don't

attach to it they're just detached they

don't identify with

the mind body system anymore

and that's the best kind of happiness

there is at least to a to a devout

buddhist

so the next question from fred is can

rebirth really be stopped

and this is it's kind of a trick

question

like

one of the questions that the buddha

himself refused to answer was what

happens to a buddha after he dies

and he just wouldn't answer it

and it's so it's it's like you're going

off the scale

more than stopping rebirth i mean

i could imagine

that there could still be rebirth i mean

this is this is heresy this is not what

buddhism or theravada buddhism teaches i

mean theravada buddhism teaches that

when you become enlightened you just

don't get born again that's it you

you're out of some sorrow but i could

imagine a kind of situation where

an enlightened being could take rebirth

but it they wouldn't be identified with

it i mean it would just be sort of empty

so

whether you call that rebirth or not i

don't know

but it it i think it really devolves

into paradox when you get into the realm

of enlightened beings you're you're

dealing with a kind of formless infinity

that they have merged with so to speak

and i mean when you deal with infinity

there's always paradox

i mean i could go into just

typical just simple paradoxes but it'd

be too much of a digression again i

guess just when you deal with infinity

when you deal with infinity

it's

it's it's just you can't work it out in

your head anymore it just doesn't make

sense

so can

can rebirth really be stopped

going with orthodox terrible buddhism

yes and that is the goal

you want to get out of the

cycle of birth and death

but

even if there is some kind of rebirth

that arguably could take place

um

i mean it would be just like an empty

rebirth it's

there wouldn't be anybody there if an

arahant was you know you're you're an

arahant from birth

um you could argue there's really nobody

there there's nobody who is taking

rebirth really

so

i guess that's probably confused you

sufficiently that i can move on to the

next question

and this is also from fred and he says

question exclamation point what glues us

to corporeality

and i would probably say what glues us

to corporeality is force of habit

more than anything he's like karma

yeah plus um i'm reminded of william

blake and is the marriage of heaven and

hell talking about how you know the

corporeal senses

are really

um you know our connection to the

infinite in this at this level of

existence i mean if you're if you're

just

through

you know whatever like some cosmic

lottery you wind up in this version of

reality then you pretty much have to

have a body in order to have a

functioning mind as far as i can tell

so

yeah

that is kind of an interesting and

unusual question though

so i'm just going to move on to fred's

fourth and last question which is this

is a good one what is the difference

between mono cheetah and wignana

those are three words um

that are found in theravada buddhist

philosophy mono

or mana means mind it's usually

translated as mind cheetah

also is translated as mind usually

it can also be translated as heart

the notorious

ken wheeler

uh translates as soul he's

possibly the only person i know of who

does that

but both mana mono and cheetah are

usually translated as mind if i were if

i were translating a text

and i found mano or chito

yeah i'd probably use the word mind

and now we've got dogs downstairs that

are barking

weenana on the other hand is usually

translated as consciousness

so that's different from i mean mind

is sort of a general term which can

include mental states

and usually mono and cheetah if they're

used loosely in regular discourse

then that can just mean just the

mentality portion of your of your

your system the mind body system when

yana is more limited and in terrible

buddhism

it's like

um

really in orthodox theravada we nana

they're not very good at explaining what

bear consciousness is because

they're saying that

um it's it's ultimately different from

mental states

i would say that consciousness is just

sort of like the ground of of your mind

and your mental states would be sort of

like ripples in the in the in the

surface of the of the water so to speak

um

in abhidhamma philosophy cheetah also

means consciousness

so

according to abhidhamma cheetah and

menyana are the same

and mental states would be called

chitasika so you've got

um in in abu dhabi philosophy four

ultimate realities you've got matter

you've got mind you've got mental states

and then you've got nirvana

or nibana

so

going with uh the abhidhamma cheetah and

menyana would be synonyms

um mono possibly i don't remember i mean

i haven't studied a whole lot of

abhidama and i'm not sure if mono or

mana is really a technical term in

abidable philosophy

but um yeah all in all

the difference between mano cheetah and

wenyana is that mono and cheetah just

mean mind

generally and when yana is more specific

in meaning consciousness although some

philosophical texts will also use

cheetah

as a technical term meaning

consciousness itself just bare

consciousness um just

separate from any mental states

and it's hard to explain that especially

uh if you're in abidance gone

so i'll just move on to the next

question which is from [__] house rat

and [__] house rat says

are you familiar with the philosophy and

teachings of armenian mystic george gerd

chef

and yeah i've read a little bit about

gor george gerdchev

also i read this weird

um

science fiction novel called barefoot in

the head

where there's this world war three is

fought with like hallucinogenic

aerosol bombs and everyone's just loaded

out of their mind

and there's this uh

this guy who was a a disciple of gerd

chef who becomes a kind of

lsd messiah or something

but george shep i mean i i don't i'm not

like gert jeffy and i haven't read any

of his books from cover to cover

i've read

a book by uspensky the tertium organum

that

uspensky was a disciple of gerd chef for

a while

he refers to gerd chef several times

um

now i've i've read about gerd chef

and some things i like mainly he was

teaching just a kind of

buddhist mindfulness you know some a

variation on standard buddhist

mindfulness that was mainly what he was

teaching

although

he had this certain ideas like he would

write his books in a very complicated

difficult style because

he felt that you had to work

in order to earn

higher knowledge

you know you really had to put work into

it in order to really make it your own

and

and like incorporate it into yourself in

a functional way

and also one of my favorite things about

gert chef

is he felt that

people need to be triggered i mean

people need to be irritated

and so

he had a kind of ashram in uh

uh in europe somewhere you know some

kind of center where you go and um you

know

it's like your daily you'd be given like

a daily task or like a morning task and
it might be nothing more than just like
wiping the leaves off of all the rose
bushes you know you just take a little
cloth and you're like polishing the rose
bush leaves and you're supposed to do it
mindfully just whatever you do you're
doing it contemplatively you know you're
right there in the moment you're feeling
all the sensations involved and so forth
but as i was saying um
there was this russian refugee this was
like after the russian revolution so a
lot of russian aristocrats
fled from russia into europe
and there was this one russian refugee

who was living at gerd chef's place who
was really difficult he was just really
fussy
just you know no sense of humor just and
really he was just an irritant he just
did not get along with people always
complaining and so forth
and finally some of gert chef's
followers i mean they would do practical
jokes on them and finally they did some
practical joke where they like stole his
false teeth and rolled them in cow [__]
and then put them back on you know where
they found them and he just left and
then the russian guy just left in a fury
and gerd chef actually hunted him down
oh the dogs there's there's two [__]

in heat plus a male dog and they're all
having like an orgy down there
so ger chip actually hunts this guy down
and bribes him to come back because he
wanted like a just a chronic irritant
there just to give people an opportunity
of dealing with their aversions you know
dealing with being triggered and so
forth which i think is a good idea i i
kind of like that idea although
nowadays
um dharma teachers or spiritual teachers
have to be as bland
and as gentle as possible just so they
won't offend
you know the the dysfunctional leftists

who who attend these things

i mean like a zen master actually hit

someone with a stick nowadays he's gonna

wind up in jail or sued for millions of

dollars or something

so

that's pretty much all i know about gert

chef he supposedly

uh learned what he knew from some kind

of masters like what was it the

himalayan mountains or something but

really it was sort of a westernized

version of

of like buddhist mindfulness as far as i

know

so i'll just move on to [__] house rap

[__] house rats next

question and [__]

i can't say this word for some reason

[__] house rat says

is there a sutra or text where the

buddha talks about the four different

types of people

those who care neither for themselves

nor others those who care for themselves

only those who care

for others only and those who care for

themselves and others

well it wouldn't surprise me if there

was i don't remember

a text it would probably be in the

angular nikaya and under the section of

fours like the angular nikaya is a

one of the main groups of buddhist

theravada buddhist sutas

that are

organized by number so you've got the

chapter one the chapter two is the

chapter of threes and then you know you

get to the chapter of four and the

buddha will talk about you know there

are these four things

and it could be

that that's in there there are sutas

that are like this that are kind of

similar

like

the monk who

uh see

let's see what's what was i thinking of

here

he uh

uh

it's similar to this it's not exactly

the same

it's like a monk who

um he practices in pain

let's see

okay there's

one of the things is

like spiritual development spiritual

development can be rapid and painful it

can be slow and painful it can be rapid

and pleasurable and it can be slow and

pleasurable so you know there's there's

a suta where the buddha is talking about

you know that and there's lots of

similar ones and it wouldn't surprise me

if there's one that [__] rat here

is asking about but if you really want

to know i would suggest looking in the

uh

the

section on fours in the angular nikaya

because that's where it would probably

be if it does exist

next question

also from [__] house rat

which i must immune see very carefully

and he says merch when

i remember you selling a to exist is to

transgress shirt

actually i did kind of design it but i

didn't really

uh sell it

i sort of photoshopped

a to existing

transgress shirt there's an artist in

liverpool

who sent me

a portrait of me i i assume as a monk

and any of you who watch

uh my videos and see the bookcase behind

me usually there's the the portrait back

there got a flying saucer flying over

the top

there was a swastika on it too they got

painted over

um

and he sent me 20 20 pounds sterling

which i still have my wallet um i forgot

to bring my water i'd show you i've been

carrying it around for

over a year now

and um

he wanted me to make a shirt

with that that portrait on it

and um yeah i still have the 20 the 20

what do you use it 20 quid

i don't know i don't know slang british

slang

um

so

merch when yeah i don't know i mean

the thing is

i'm not really into hyping myself

and i mean i'm willing to do the videos

it's nice i enjoy doing the videos i'm

not complaining

but like actually hyping myself i've

seen

like there's this guy i watch on youtube

dr steve turley who is just shameless

and he's hyping of merch and just he's

like a used car salesman you know our

prices are so low they're insane

this kind of attitude

and i just can't do it but um i mean if

people

really want something like that i it can

it can happen yeah to exist to just

transgress is a good it's a good

statement for a t-shirt i think

maybe even coffee mugs i don't know

but i'm really not a business person i

just am not a business person the only

way i could have survived as a monk in

the west

is just to have some kind of business

manager take care of

everything

and i would just do my own thing just

write and meditate and so forth

so

merch when yeah it's um that's like a

maybe

there's maybe there'll be a win but um i

mean if people

really want that kind of stuff that's

that's fine we can work something out

so next question

last question from [__] house rat

which sutaneepata translation would you

recommend that's a good question

there are several sutanipata

translations

and

some are better than others um

my favorite the one that i still have

is

it's the polytech society

translation of the sutini pata

with the main translation by kr norman

and then there's alternate renderings

by walpola rahula and ib horner so you

get like three different

possible interpretations they agree on

most of it but you know there are some

controversial

uh

passages

that can be interpreted in different

ways

so that's good there's there's an old

one i think it's by lord chalmer

chalmers

chalmers

called uh woven cadences which is all in

poetry

which is

nice because the the original suta

nipata is mostly in poetry

so that that's kind of nice too it's

good um

i'm pretty sure that

um

i john tenissero has translated it and

with regard to the

the renderings

i would say he's as good as any although

his style of translating verses is kind

of cringy to me i cringe when i see his

translation of verses

because

it's like

to compensate for

the fact that he's not putting it in

regular meter

he's just kind of positioning letter

positioning words more or less at random

on the page and you know because it

seems artistic or something

so it's just kind of

a distraction to me maybe b kuboti has

translated the sunni pattern i'm not

sure

but

um

when i was a junior monk

my favorite part of not only the

suturipata but of the entire

polytupidica is the atakawaga which is

the fourth chapter of the sutanypata and

i didn't see a translation that i really

liked so i just made my own translation

so

chapter four my

my favorite translation would be my own

also i do remember that there's a

translation

of the sutini pata by a sri lankan monk

with a name like buddha data or

something like that and it sucked yeah

that's the only really bad translation

i've come across is that for example the

uh the kagawe sana suta which is the

suta on the rhinoceros horn you know go

alone like the horn of the rhinoceros

is um he translated as unicorn for some

reason

which is not so good and you may have

noticed there's somebody shooting guns

in the background

because we're in south carolina

gotta be ready

gotta prep

so um yeah which suny depot translation

the polytech society translation by kr

norman with the alternate renderings and

he's there's he's got another critical

version of it without the alternate

rendingers without the alternate

renderings but with lots and lots of

notes

so that would be good too

um or um ah john denis wrote if if you

can be more patient than i am with his

translation of verses

so the next question is from rui

and rui says

for the putugina can right view emerge

from breath recollectedness

apparently the anapanasuda was taught

only by to those

who were already sodapons

so the question here is um

if you don't have right view can right

view arise through meditation and

specifically on meditation on the breath

and

i would say

with regard to the philosophical stuff

probably not with regard to some things

maybe

like

i mean if you meditate your your wisdom

is going to arise it's like

uh you know sila leads to samadhi which

leads to punja you know according to the

standard

you know just the standard system of

explaining how it works how how

spiritual practice works you you purify

your morals which then causes your mind

to become purified which then causes

your wisdom to become purified and when

your wisdom is completely purified

you're an enlightened being

and

so

you are going to increase in wisdom

through meditation although you may

still be a heretic just because you're

not saying exactly what the books say

um

sometimes through meditation not

necessarily through meditation on the

breath but if you're getting into deep

meditation where your thinking just

stops

then really powerful profound insights

can arise from that

and um

i mean you can get liberating insight i

assume without having read a book

without having necessarily read buddhist

texts if you're just meditating

correctly

like

uh the lesser discourse on voidness in

the majimenikaya one of my favorite

sutas

he's just he's

the buddha is talking about advancing

and getting into deeper and deeper

meditative states until you finally hit

the signless concentration of mind

uh

the sign less concentration of mind

where as supposedly according to

commentaries it's even beyond beyond

fourth genre it's just super advanced

it's like

according to the context of the suta

it's like the highest possible

attainable meditative state

and then when you come out of it you

realize even that had a beginning and an

end even that was conditioned even that

is not enlightenment

so the highest possible meditative state

is still not enlightenment

and when you have that insight it can

just click and you just get knocked

right out of the rut and you become

enlightened

when you realize that nothing you can do

nothing you can do through

like deliberate effort is going to get

you enlightened necessarily

that i mean that's it it's just

something just clicks you just let go

you realize that it's all futile or some

such

and and then then it winds up working

which is kind of uh ironic

so

certain aspects of right view including

the most important aspects of right view

can emerge from breath recollectedness

but you're not going to get all of the

technical philosophy stuff right through

breath recollected just watching your

breath isn't going to

you know make you aware of the the noble

eightfold path and so forth

but you might got you might get insights

into like no self

or impermanence

or or dukkha like the three marks of

existence you might get deep insights

into that

so i'll just move on to the next

question and this is from jeremy

and jeremy says have you read the broken

buddha by s damica what are your

thoughts on that

well as it turns out i did read broken

buddha by stomach i think i've got it

stored in the guts of this computer

as a matter of fact and uh i actually

did a video

on this

book

with uh brian roo this was

years ago when i was a monk i might not

have it on my channel but if you go to

brian roo's bit shoot channel and go

through the the buddhist monk truthers

playlist you may find it in there

that was fresh after i read broken

buddha so i had more to say about it

than i do now

but

ah venerable srivasti domicon

um

this is going to be politically

incorrect

but venerable srivasti damaka

is gay in kind of a stereotypically gay

way in that he's kind of catty and

spiteful sometimes

and some of the books he's re he has

written

are along this vein where he's just

bashing away at orthodox terrible

buddhism

and some of the stuff i mean some of his

arguments

are you know i mean

there's some point to it like he's

talking about how

um

like asian monks are just lazy which is

largely true not all of them but a lot

of them are

but for example he thinks that having to

follow all the rules of monastic

discipline is just ridiculous but not

following them strictly enough is also

ridiculous it's like there's a certain

goldilocks zone that he inhabits i

assume

that is the correct you know the middle

path of between strictness and excessive

laxiness

also he was praising in that book

um like the new

ultra liberal western buddhism like

spirit rock type buddhism spirit rockism

which uh

i mean that was that was beyond the pale

as far as i was concerned

um

so

yeah it's

i mean you might

get some benefit from reading broken

buddha

where he's mainly just

bashing his own religion

um

you can get some kind of insight into it

i suppose but

really i don't think that his uh he was

doing it entirely in good faith i'm

pretty sure he wrote another book about

christianity called beyond belief and he

didn't use his monk name i think he uses

layman's name in that one

and he starts off with an intro saying

you know this is not my purpose to bash

buddhist or to bash christianity

and then the whole rest of the book is

just bashing christianity so he's just

got this

penchant for

just

sniping at others apparently

at least that's the impression i get i

might be

mistaken in that

so i think i'll just move on to the next

question by jeremy here

and jeremy says concerning

padicha samupada the traditional

interpretation according to the

abhidhamma and commentaries is three

lifetimes while some monks favor the

moment-to-moment interpretation of the

twelve links

one could also use two lifetimes or one

lifetime for the 12 links what do you

think

so he's referring to dependent core

rising or it has many different names

condition genesis

they're all attempted renderings of

padicha sangupada which means something

like

a rising together

independence on

that would be like a very literal

interpretation of the word the term

patica samopano

and

it has been condensed down it was

condensed down at a very early

point in the development of buddhist

philosophy into

what's called the twelve nidano theory

which starts avija pachio let's see

sankhara i think

and there's just 12 links and i won't go

into the whole 12 links but

this this

leads to that which leads to that which

leads to that and eventually you get to

see

pasa is contact which leads to

vedana

which is

feeling

which leads to craving

and

that's that's like the weak link that's

where

the link between

feeling and craving that's where you're

supposed to

break the link and just break the whole

cycle of some sorrow

and

i've written about this before i've

talked about this before but i do not

think that the buddha originally taught
the 12 links
that there are proto-padica samupadas in
the texts like the central portion of
the saka panya suta in the digini kaya
which is very old also there's the
kalahawi wada suta in the atakawaga of
the sutonipata which is also extremely
old and they've got the same kind of
this leads to that which leads to that
which leads to that and it was
the cobbling together of these this
leads to that leads to that that
resulted in these
like the finalized 12 link theory but
even the nidhana suta of the the deegani
kaya which is the longest discourse

on the one subject of badichismopada

even that one is not orthodox following

the 12 links

so that one's maybe a little older they

hadn't finally worked out the whole 12

links yet

so i think it's academic to say

whether it occurs in three lifetimes or

two lifetimes or one lifetime or whether

it's all simultaneous um because i

really don't think

that the 12 nidano theory of benicio

semopada is authentic or let's just say

i'm skeptical of that

i think probably the older version

is this being that is this arising that

arising you know this not being that is

not this ceasing that ceases which is

another formula

um describing padichis hamapada and i

think that comes closer to the reality

and um personally i do think that it's

simultaneous like the the sam in

semupada

it's um

cognate to

like the latin con c-o-n or

greek

sin like s-y-n and english english

letters

and that means with or together

so

i think

it's it's like

this it's all simultaneous this whole

universe this whole world is just

everything is conditioning everything

else

so it's like uh

one of those tensegrity structures made

by or designed by buckminster fuller i

think he's the one who designed them

where it's just like this weird miracle

where

these this the sticks in this figure are

held together with elastic

you know so there's all pushing inwards

but they're not touching each other

somehow they're just sort of suspended

and each stick is is like conditioning

the position of all the other sticks you

know all the the tension is like

distributed throughout the thing so that

if you squish it flat it just pops back

into shape again it's really nice i was

i was amazed by those first time i saw

them

but i do think that it's like um

um like schopenhauer

wrote about uh

uh

causation like there's different kinds

of causation and one is just logical

causation just

um

i can't give a good example of it but um

logical causation i think that would be

pretty much what dependent core rising

is just like

um it's all conditional you know if you

say that this exists then you also have

to say that that exists it's like um

none of it is ultimately real

it's just this possibility

that's just sort of making itself seem

real by all the different possible

conditional

particles of it sort of

reinforcing everything else

it's hard to explain but um getting back

to the question here

um with regard to the traditional

interpretation

yeah orthodox theravada says it's

three lives or you can just say past

lives in general the present life and

then future lives in general

on john

told me that one

not too long ago

so um that's the orthodox explanation

but my unorthodox explanation is it's

all academic because

the 12 nidano theory probably was cooked

up

sometime during the 100 years of you

know just explosive

growth of buddhism before the first

schism

and you can find all kinds of examples

of proto padicha samupadas

in in the suta pitika

ah

so

i guess i'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from christopher

and christopher says what robes do you

like more the original rags or the

articulate design you explained

i think he's referring to the previous q

a where i was talking about

how monks robes are supposed to be made

and um

why a t-shirt would not qualify as like

an upper monk's robe why amongst robe

really has to be made according to this

elaborate method of making robes

and really

it's hard to say which i like more

because the original rags are just

extinct

those haven't been around for maybe

you know a thousand two thousand years

um

i knew this one monk

in burma a western monk the westerners

tend to be

uh more radical than the asian ones

and he tried to make

a robe out of just rags that he picked

up off the ground and that's the way

monks robes originally were in the
buddhist time you just find rags on the
ground you pick them up and you sew them
together
but it didn't work very well and people
were complaining about his robes because
you know you find a black shirt you're
not going to be able to dye it like a
yellowish brown color it's going to stay
black purple that kind of thing
um so he just had this it looked like
clown clothes or something
and also problem with rags is you live
in a fourth world country like burma
people don't throw away their shirts
until they're so far gone that it

doesn't even look like a shirt anymore

might be more holes than cloth

so

the

the way that it's made they're made now

i mean a kosher robe a robe that's made

according to the rules it started off

with the rags like you have to

um

when you connect two two rags together

you tack them together first

that's called bandana in poly then you

lay a strip of cloth over the seam and

then you sew the strip of cloth over the

seam to to reinforce the seam

partly because the claws sucked and

partly because thread sucked in those

days

so

um it was made the same way it's just

that nowadays it's just sort of a relic

you know it's it's kind of

uh like vestigial

because you're using good cloth that i

mean you don't need to cut it up into

little pieces and sew them back together

again but that's that's the way it's

done you get a big piece of cloth you

can't just wrap it around yourself you

have to cut it up in pieces and sew it

back together again according to this

this way of you know like

uh just stitching together what is it

tacking together two pieces of cloth and

then running a strip over the seam and

then sewing the strip down to reinforce

it

and then this

like the borders and everything

are sewn in a certain way

so

um

yeah i mean it's the way of sewing it

probably has not changed very much it's

just the cloth itself has changed a lot

and most

most monks will just wear factory made

robes even though the factory made rubs

are not made according to the rules of

monastic discipline

but uh sometimes on the on the label

like a burmese monks robes you go to the

monk paraphernalia store and buy amongst

a set of monks robes to donate to a monk

and it might say you know made according

to vineya but no it's they're not made

according to one new

so

the original rags or the articulate

design you explain well the original

rags were sewn according to the art

articulate design so it's

um not so different

than uh christopher uh seems to have

assumed so i'll just move on to

christopher's second question

this is kind of a strange one

when you started meditating how cursed

were you

when i started i felt my muscles were in

hell my stomach malfunctioned and had

very bad hiccups

um

when i first started meditating it was

just a hopeless case i mean i just

you know it's sort of like trying to

ride a bucking bronco and getting thrown

off after five seconds

i was i was my mind is really kind of a

hyperactive mind like a lot of

westerners minds are i say i suppose

and um so that was the first problem but

um i did have sort of karmic

weird things happen like right when i

became a monk it was just everything was

going wrong i was getting poison ivy and

like

viral infections and and just allergies

and stuff is where i'd slip and fall and

scrape up my side it was just all these

things happening all at once just at

this

like this inflection point in my life

and i think that's pretty common

um

interestingly mary baker eddie in her

book on

science and health was key to the

scriptures which is like the second

bible for christian scientists talks

about how if you use christian science

to cure somebody often they'll get worse

before they start getting better and she

called it chemicalization you know it's

just sort of like this karmic

readjustment

that you know you've got to purge some

negativity in order to move up to the

next level

and so that that can happen you go to an

intensive retreat and in addition to

just the

you know the screaming pain in your knee

or your hip or wherever your back

i mean there just can be all kinds of

weird things that happen that you know

and to some degree it can be like your
subconscious mind fighting against
becoming enlightened because your ego
doesn't want to die or something but
also it can be like i said where there's
just you're hitting a karmic inflection
point where you've got to purge this
negativity that's going to come out
through the system before you can move
up to the next the next level of
of purity or
subtlety or or whatever it is
so uh when i first started meditating
the main curse was just
not being able to sit still for very
long because my mind was so hyperactive

so the next question

is from mary spelled m-e-r-r-y

and this is an easy one i can answer

this one easy

how tall are you you seem pretty big

well

last time i was measured i'm pretty sure

i was six foot three or about 190

centimeters for those of you living in

barbarous lands that haven't switched

over to the feet and inches method yet

so next question

and now there's a jet plane flying

overhead

next question is from the arya swasti

project

and the arya swasti project says

greetings pagno regarding right view in
the eightfold path
right action right speech etc are clear
instruction to liberation as they are a
cause that will bring about an effect
but right view seems like an effect how
can someone have right view if they are
in delusion it seems to me that this is
kind of like telling someone
to just go be enlightened
the other directives can be at least
attempted in delusion and with
mindfulness but just to have right view
doesn't seem possible to even grasp
without some level of enlightenment
warm regards much respect sadhu

sadhu-sanu

well that's a good question and uh

yeah it i can see the point of this

question i've considered similar things

but really i mean the noble eightfold

path starts with right view

because right view is just it's like a

map or like

it's like elementary instructions on how

to get going and um you know right if

you just you know like the four noble

truths a belief you know that in karma

just like you know what goes around

comes around you know that if you do

evil evil will come back to you that you

know if you cause suffering it's going

to result in suffering for yourself

sooner or later that kind of a thing

that you know you should respect your

parents

that kind of a thing

so

when it has right view it's not talking

about enlightened right view

and you could argue that there really is

no enlightened right view that

when you become enlightened you don't

have any view you don't cling to any

view that

any of you that you might uh endorse as

a fully enlightened being it's just

skillful means

it might be just convenient to get you

through samsara where you're helping

somebody else to get started but right

view in in terms of the noble eightfold

path

is just

essentially just elementary enough

elementary philosophy to get you pointed

in the right direction and to inspire

you to start

start practicing

it's not understanding ultimate reality

by any stretch of the imagination

so i think i answered that one

succinctly

so i'll move on to the next one

rob495

says

have you ever met any monks who are

visibly

mentally ill

um

i haven't met any monks that were just

raging lunatics

but i have met some fairly nutty ones

and most of them were not

burmese

um there was one that i met that was

vietnamese

and there was another one that i met

that was like chinese malaysian

and i really don't have i mean i'm not

trying to badmouth these i'm just kind

of giving them as examples but um

like the chinese malaysian monk he would
just twice he did this to me he would
come to my room and then just stand
like in the door with his back to me
and he was just chronically
um i don't know if that would count as
mental illness but i mean he was like
too
embarrassed or shy to ask me for advice
or something so he'd just come into my
room and stand there with his back to me
and just wait for me to ask him what he
wanted and then it would be some kind of
a wild thing that i couldn't help him
with
um
i met a vietnamese monk who seemed to be

just terrified of lay people

i remember one time he was sitting out

in his in front of his cave eating his

lunch and a lay person came and he just

ran into his cave

leaving his bowl of food out in front of

the cave and just stayed in there for

the rest of the day just hours later his

bowl of food was still out there he was

still hiding

so there are i mean

monks

i mean monastic types i mean

you have to be kind of eccentric anyway

maybe if you're in a traditional

buddhist country in asia where it's just

the mainstream thing you know it's like

you know every family with a lot of kids

wants at least one kid to join the

monastery join the sangha that kind of

thing but for non

people born into non-buddhist cultures

then yeah there's a lot of kind of

eccentric types are attracted to it

because they're kind of on the fringe

anyway buddhism is kind of on the fringe

so

it does happen

but um

as i say i've never met any that were

just

like completely psycho

they uh they tended to be harmless

you know harmlessly

psychotic at worst

so i think i'll just move on to the next

question

also by rob 495

and he says and also what happens to

monks who are no longer able to look

after themselves

well

when monks are no longer able to look

after themselves the sangha looks after

them usually

um

when i was living

um in a monastery in

upper burma on the chinwen river there

was the only other monk who lived there

full time with me

was pretty old i mean he was getting up

when he finally died he was in his 80s

and he went through a period of sickness

where he just went back to the village

and lived with his some family members

who were taking care of him

but if you don't have family members

take care of you then it's the duty of

the sangha to take care of you and as

kind of a side note

um it's against the rules of monastic

discipline for a monk to write a will or

to have a will it's just that after he

dies

his bowl and his robes go to the monk

who is tending him in his final illness

and everything else that he owned is

just communal property of the sangha

so

i guess the correct answer is what

happens to monks who are no longer able

to look after themselves is that the

sangha i mean the brotherhood of monks

take cares of their own takes care of

their own

okay

next question

is from air rain

and airing says

jordan peterson said we live in a

universe that is characterized by moral

dimension and we understand that well
and that moral failings have
consequences and they are not trivial
they destroy you they destroy your
family they destroy your community
unquote how does this universal moral
dimension or archetype coalesce with
buddhist ethics well i mean it is pretty
much the same as buddhist ethics
although buddhist ethics are probably
way more subtle than jordan peterson's
ethics just because in in
terrible buddhism the ethics are so
finely tuned it's almost impossible to
do anything that's completely right
there's always going to be a certain
amount of

unskillful bad karma involved

so just like if you do a good deed but

you believe that you are doing a good

deed then you've got cell view which is

like delusion

and so there's a little bit of delusion

mixed in if this i am doing this

then already that's

delusion and maybe some conceit also

so

yeah i mean

this is just basic buddhist

ethics really

um moral dimension we understand that

well moral failings have consequences

and they are not trivial and moral

failings i mean they can be external or

internal and a lot of people will just

assume that

morals are external it's something that

you do

you know it's like if you punch an old

lady in the face

you kick a dog you steal somebody's

bicycle that's that's bad

but

to hate people that do that

is okay

but really it's like anger hate just

everything pretty much all of the

emotions other than just like selfless

love generosity you know benevolence

those are okay

but even benevolence if it's you know i

feel love for that person there's still

a little bit of delusion involved

because ultimately there's no difference

so

yeah i mean

like

there are some people some groups of

people that consistently do

reprehensible things from the point of

view of buddhist ethics some of these

people are buddhists

who do reprehensible things in

accordance with orthodox buddhist ethics

and then there are other people who

despise them for that

but the despising also is embracing a

moral failure

so

yeah it goes it goes both ways external

and internal i mean you've got external

ethics with regard to your

um

deliberate actions towards others

or just deliberate actions towards

not drinking alcohol or whatever it is

and then there's the internal ones of

just

not wallowing in

like negative mental states and that

sort of thing

so you have to be really careful i mean

it wasn't until i went to an ayahuasca

ceremony ironically that i realized just

the power of a single thought

that is every kind of thought you have

has just this palpable

i mean it's producing effects just just

by sitting there thinking it

and um

i mean really it's it's something not to

uh

not to consider a trivial thing even

though you just you might be

i don't know

criticizing someone in your heart

and i mean you're thinking you're not

doing any harm because you know you're

not taking it out on it but you're just

sitting there thinking it but still i

mean internally and it's sort of like a

toxic effect

so i mean

it's

it's really finely tuned and buddhism

really doesn't pull any punches in

regard to that sort of thing

so i guess i'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from gora gora gora who uh

changes his name every week or so

nasty every two weeks

for a while he was trumpton shire

gahapidi

and gora goragora says can you recommend

something an article length

can you recommend something article
length by yourself or another author
that summarizes the buddhist view of
ethics and karma as it relates to ethics
now the view of ethics and of karma as
it relates to ethics you have remarked
that buddhist ethics is at odds with
western utilitarian ethics and i would
like to understand the difference better
well regards to stuff that i have
written
i assume your best bet would be to find
it in
this book here i am hype and stuff
buddhist ethics buddhist practice
which is

the third book that i published

available on amazon the link is below

and there are articles in here like um

let's see

morality and observances

or um

accepting responsibility the ethics of

killing

the karma monster talking about

like a a general superficial explanation

of

of everyday karma that um

even a materialist would pretty much

have to accept

um

so yeah in the older blog that is no

longer on the internet i wrote more just

buddhist philosophy stuff i am writing

more of it now

although the purpose of

blog

that i'm got going

now

my second blog

is mainly just political incorrectness

um with a like a buddhist slant to it

politically incorrect buddhism

so

let's see something article linked by

yourself or another author that

summarizes the buddhist view of ethics

and karma as it relates to ethics with

regard to other authors i really can't

think of anything i'm sure odd john

tenissero has written on the subject

because he's written

like six gorillas books at this point

um

and the difference between buddhist

ethics and western utilitarian ethics

yeah that's i mean there's obvious just

a radical difference between the two

because western utilitarian ethics is uh

it's like volition

the importance of volition is

minimized or it's just almost irrelevant

you know there's no karma in western

utilitarian ethics whereas in buddhist

ethics it's

the the whole point of buddhist ethics

or like what it's based on is whether

it's making you

wiser and closer to enlightenment or

more foolish and farther away from

enlightenment i mean that's that's like

the

the what do you call it

the litmus test

for for morality and buddhism is it

getting you personally closer to

enlightenment or farther away from it

and it really doesn't even matter what

the effects are on others

you know it might be that

renouncing the world has your

has your mama in tears because she

wanted grandkids really bad

but i mean it's just kind of irrelevant

because it depends on your volitions

of course your your behavior towards

your mother your attitudes toward your

mother would be uh involved in ethics

too

but um yeah i'm sorry to hype hype stuff

but um if you wanted something article

length by myself

summarizes the buddhist view of ethics

um

maybe the article of morality and

observances

in this book

sorry then have to

sell something but

gotta gotta put food on the table

so i'll just move on to the next

question which is the last question and

it was asked just as i was sitting down

to do this video

but the last question just squeaked in

it's like uh in those action movies when

the big metal door is coming down and

like the guy just rolls underneath right

right before the door comes down

diane here did that

and diane says

what are simple everyday things that a

late person can do to get the most

benefit

which is a down-to-earth

kind of question for a person who's

living a worldly life

and uh

simple everything

simple everyday things a lay person can

do to get the most benefit

well

i mean keeping five precepts

i mean having a beer or a glass of wine

or something every once in a while i

mean you're not actually killing anybody

by doing that but with regard to like

not lying not stealing

you got a like a insect in your house

you catch it with a cup and a piece of

cardboard and let it go outside instead

of just squishing it

um

being generous

you know like sharing if you got more

than enough

i mean that's that's really a big one in

buddhism although of course in buddhism

wise guy monks have got that twisted

around into you know sharing to the

giving stuff to the sangha is going to

get you into heaven the easiest but

um

there's a suit that says even feeding a

hungry animal you're going to get

benefit for a hundred future lives just

from feeding that hungry animal

just uh

yeah just cause more happiness and

unhappiness

just try to have like a positive

attitude i suppose

or at least a neutral one

but i mean for the for the

standard buddhist lay person keeping

five precepts you know no killing no

stealing

no

sensual misconduct

which is you know no promiscuity no you

know renting prostitutes no adultery

that kind of a thing

um

no lying or even like malicious gossip

you know criticizing people behind their

back about mouthing people behind their

back that kind of a thing or bad

mouthing to their face you know just

letting someone really have it

um

and finally the intoxicants which cause

heedlessness or a cloudedness of mind

now just you know try and keep five

precepts be generous if you've got more

than enough you know try to help others

if you can

even just putting bird seed out in your

backyard so the little tweety birds can

come and come and be happy

you know that's it's all good so just uh

yeah do good refrain from doing evil try

to purify your mind as much as you can

that was that is the teaching of the

buddhas

and

also uh

you know try and learn read books watch

youtube videos where you know somebody

who knows what they're talking about is

teaching

you know

basic dharma

and you might get new ideas for good

things to do

and try to have love in your heart

and that's it that's the last question

and so uh

i advise you if you want to uh

ask questions feel free to leave them in

the comments below

especially if you don't have access to

the discord server or

the subscribe star account

just leave them in the in the

comments below and

look at the url links

and you can find all sorts of things

and be happy

all right it's like this I did the Q a
yesterday I answered a whole bunch of
questions
sometimes with the light of the sun
blazing directly into my face causing me
to be uh transfigured in a sense
but um some of the questions didn't make
it onto the list there was this whole
other area where people would ask
questions and I skipped those questions
so when we get to the end of this when I
say be happy just disregard that
because I'm going to keep going
okay just just bear that in mind after I
say be happy don't just turn it off
because there's more questions after

that

and uh be happy

hello and welcome to episode 33 of

question and answer I am your host Ponyo

bossa

and my set director has advised me to

sit out here in the front yard because

it's a cloudy cool relatively

comfortable day with relatively few

biting parasitic insects

and I'm sitting in front of the pond

that maybe you can't see

that has goldfish and loaches that you

certainly can't see

and um I think I'm just going to start

answering questions because that's what

I'm here for and the first question is

from rui I believe

well I'm not sure if that's the correct

way of pronouncing his name

but we do what we can

and rui says here is a question that I

had been saving for my next encounter

with someone on the Mahayana path

on the body side of a path the

expression until samsara is empty is

often heard so who would be the last

being in samsara

and of course it's really hard to say it

may be that uh Mahayana mythology or

or something has got it figured out that

it's going to be such and such being you

know maybe Mara or something but um it's

really hard to say who the last being in
samsara would be it would have to be
either like the stupidest or the evilest
being in the universe
I mean that would be my guess although
really the question is academic because
I think the whole idea of emptying
samsara of suffering beings is um based
on some really faulty logic
it seems relatively straightforward that
this universe has no beginning from the
point of view of
Buddhist and also Indian cosmology
that there's just a beginningless
beginning this universe has been here
forever and if this universe has been
here already for an infinite length of

time

and there's still an infinite number of

suffering beings apparently then if an

infinitude of time has already passed

and there's still an infinite number of

suffering beings then there's always

going to be an infinite number of

suffering beings

so

it may be that new beings are being

spawned or some such

but um regardless of how it happens it's

just um it just seems unlikely to me

that some sorrow will ever be empty I

mean in an infinite Universe whatever is

possible is going to happen somehow or

another and

um

for there to be suffering beings is

always going to be possible I suppose

so

yeah

so my my answer I mean just based on my

own opinion my answer is just be there

is going to be no last suffering being

in samsara

and it's all kind of a an academic

question anyway

also because ultimately in Buddhism

there are no beings that um you know

uh a being is is really just kind of an

illusion

so let's just move on to the next

question also from rui

and this is kind of a a semi question

and rui says well I suppose the best way

to turn the following into a question is

to ask

so Ponyo what do you think of the

following

the issue with the the issue with the

mentioned Shambhala we are Beyond

causation thing oh he's referring he's

referring to a statement that I made or

somebody else made I think maybe it was

Brian Rue made it in a previous video

like a recent video

so um I'll get back I'll start over

the issue with the mentioned Shambhala

we are Beyond causation thing

stems from a rather mysterious teaching

that appears in Ying ma zogchen perhaps

in mahamudra transmission as well that

States from the primordial there is no

sequence between cause and effect

this sure makes sense as an armoring

against first cause and then it's

potentially creationist doctrines what I

find surprising is the sophistication of

the statement it was certainly not meant

as a viaticum for rustic cave dwelling

devotional yogis it seems to require a

novel mixture of conceptual grasp and

mystical

vision

I almost said mystical fiction caught

myself

so I mean the key here

the key thing that he wants my opinion

on is the statement quote from the

primordial there is no sequence between

cause and effect unquote

and so

I assume

what that statement means is that

Ultimate Reality is not causing the

illusion

um

the Ultimate Reality is not causing this

universe to seem to exist

and I agree with that and I've tried to

kind of touch on that when I'm

explaining the taravada Buddhist

conception of parichasangupada that

you've got

you know everything that exists in this

universe like like this is

kept in existence by causes and

conditions but those causes and

conditions are also kept in existence by

other causes and conditions so you have

this vast mutually conditioning web

of causes and conditions

and it's

I mean they're they're causing each

other in a in like a conditional or a

virtual or potential way

that ultimately they don't really exist

or in a way they're based on the ground

of Ultimate Reality

which

um

you can say is

you know infinite and formless

and again you could just go back to the

the uh

the simile of the block of marble where

Ultimate Reality is just this block of

stone you know metaphorically and it it

contains within itself all possible

statues

and they're they're really there you

know every single molecule is already in

the exact right place all you have to do

is just disregard the rest of the stone

and that's kind of the way this universe

exists

but you're not saying that the stone

causes the statue really

um so it's it's just really difficult to

explain and uh according to Legend the

Buddha himself

um just almost remains silent and just

became a Hermit because he figured

nobody was going to understand it and uh

he wasn't far from the mark on that

so

yeah I mean it's like

oh how do you how do you even explain it

it's like this

this universe or of Maya as the Buddhist

or as the Hindus would call it it's um

it's just conditionally real or

potentially or virtually real it's not

ultimately real and so it wouldn't have

like a real cause anyway

and Ultimate Reality is causeless you

know like

um in terravada Nirvana in most I think

in pretty much all Buddhism Nirvana is

unconditioned has no cause it doesn't

have any effects and so

obviously just from that point of view

um the absolute or the ultimate is not

going to be causing anything

but um yeah it's I really can't explain

it to you in an easy way

it just doesn't work so I'll just move

on to the next question

this is from

rim h-r-y-m

I want to pronounce it Hiram but I think

that might not be correct

this is kind of an interesting one

this question is

how did you meet Brian and what did you

think of him

I've known about Brian for years from

National Socialist circles and always

waved him off as a bad look for our

cause but then I discovered your talks

with him and reconsidered my former

position he is quite a wise person

albeit with a bit of Madness mixed in

so he's talking about Brian Roo and

those of you who watch my videos know

that

um I do

um do interviews with Brian sometimes

with additional guests including uh

lately venerable ajan punadamo

and um how did I meet Brian and what did

I what did I think of them

well the first time I interacted with

Brian Rue

I had just come back to America

in 2011 and I was staying in Bellingham

Washington

and I was sort of optimistic and naive

at the time

and I sent

emails out to Buddhist teachers in the

area like within a 100 mile radius and

that included like the Vancouver BC area

and also like the Seattle area

and

I Brian Rue was one of the Dharma

teachers in uh in Vancouver BC or in

that area

and um he was still like pretty much of

a normie mainstream Dharma teacher at

the time he he hadn't been red pilled

yet

and um he hadn't uh embraced the

National Socialist cause yet that I'm

aware of

and so anyway I just uh sent him an

email you know saying you know I'm in

the area I'm a monk with you know so

many years of experience and

um you know I'm willing to offer myself

as a kind of resource

and I got a polite email back from Brian

saying that you know he's just kind of

fending for himself

and he really just doesn't have the the

resources to have visiting teachers or

anything and that was that was it for

several years

and then um around 2017 18 thereabouts

um apparently somebody who liked my blog

um

contacted Brian and told him that you

know he should consider me as

you know some kind of Buddhist resource

or something and at the time by that

time Brian had been red pilled and had

started

um the Thule Society or he had sort of

taken over the Thule Society or

something which is sort of a a nazi-ish

um kind of website

and he contacted me asking if I would be

willing to be the spiritual leader of

the Thule Society

and

um if you look on my blog I mean this is

a few years ago

but it was like my answer to the Thule

Society where I was

um you know respectfully declining

um becoming spiritual leader of this

group but

um

somehow from there on

uh we started interacting and I started

doing videos with Brian that was sort of

how my video career

uh started was uh just Brian and Brian

and I doing videos we did probably about

200 of them

and um most of them aren't even on my

website in order to find

all of them or most of them you'd have

to go to Brian's bit shoot Channel and

he's got a a playlist called Buddhist

among truthers

that um consists mainly of videos

between him and me

but so that's how I met him but what did

I think of him and we've never actually

met in person not in this lifetime

anyway

but what did I think of him

um well I think

what uh Hiram or Haram a rim says about

him at the very end here he is quite a

wise person albeit with a bit of Madness

mixed in

um yeah he's

he's obviously a sincere and good person

and he's got wisdom he's a sincere

Buddhist he knows more about Buddhism

than most Buddhist teachers I think

and um I mean he's kind of eccentric

he's got some strange ideas but then

again

in some ways uh he and I get along so

well because my father was kind of

similar my father was a bit on the

eccentric side he was very much into the

occult as he called it you know

experimenting with like Witchcraft and

and ESP and hypnotic past life

regressions and so forth

so

um I can get along with people like that

fairly easily and um there's just some

sort of uh

what do you call it

hmm I can't think of it the proper word

but there's just a kind of resonance

between us we get along well

and um I consider him a friend

so I mean I I really

don't take extremely seriously some of

his causes

but um that's okay you know

so how did I met Brian we met this

essentially he contacted me wanting me

to be the spiritual leader of the school

society and what did I think of him

um yeah I thought he had some strange

ideas but nothing prohibitive from for

um with regard to us interacting and

making videos and so forth and it has

been very productive it's been a good

experience

so

I think I'll just move on to the next

question also from

he whose name I cannot pronounce h-r-y-m

and uh hrym's second question

is did your meditative practices make

you more detached from pain I've been

showering in cold water for quite some

time and have grown accustomed to this

type of uncomfortable sensation but

lately I've tried to pierce through my

hand with a knife and found myself being

unable to do so I pressed the point of

the knife against my flesh but couldn't

bring myself to overcome the rising pain

and tear through

granted this is quite this is a quite

dramatic way of overcoming it what is

your experience with Detachment from

Pain I'm going to try meditating on pain

whilst pressing the knife against my

hand

well

I'm not sure that my meditative practice

has made me more detached from Pain

partly because my father was just a

really a macho He-Man kind of guy and

one of his mottos was a little pain

never hurt anybody and he was very

detached from Pain already and part of

it may be genetic I can tolerate pain

fairly well better than most I assume

uh with regarded showering in cold water

I've done it before but I I don't like

it it's just kind of icky

that's not really pain anyway

so

um I will say that meditative practice

have made me more detached from nausea

which is um

I mean just the very existence of nausea

whoever I mean it's a very good argument

against creationism I mean no God who

created nausea is going to be a good God

it's just really icky it's worse than

pain in my opinion

and I found like if I try to be mindful

just practice mindfulness I'm feeling

nauseous for whatever reason

and

you practice mindfulness of it you know

you don't fight against it you don't

struggle against it you just kind of you

know this is how it feels you know I'm

feeling this and I found that at least

half of the misery of nausea is just the

resistance against it

that if you just practice mindful

acceptance of the nauseous feelings it

reduces The Misery by about half at

least maybe two-thirds

which is nice

so

I assume with pain most people that

suffer because of pain well all people

who suffer because of pain it's not the pain itself it's the resistance against the pain it's the desire for the pain to stop

because pain and suffering are two entirely different things I think a lot of people don't realize this and in the west we're pretty much programmed to believe that even being discomfort just being uncomfortable or inconvenienced is just a necessary cause of suffering and so you've got to buy the the color-coded Ziploc bags or whatever it is they're trying to sell you in order to decrease your suffering when obviously just being detached having a few desires is going

to be a much better way of not suffering

than uh just getting anything you can to

cause you to be less uncomfortable and

less inconvenienced

so I've addressed the question here I

think but I would also like to address

this part about trying to derive a knife

through his own hand as a way of

practicing resistance to pain

um yeah I think that is really

um it's not the middle path you know the

Buddha's first sermon according to

tradition

he's talking about the middle path

between self-indulgence and self-torture

and stabbing a knife all the way through

your hand would probably qualify as

self-torture

um a better way of dealing with and just

learning to accept pain go barefoot I

mean I did that I worked for for many

years I wore shoes on average maybe

twice a year

and um just walking around on gravel is

uh it's a good way of

um experiencing pain and giving you the

opportunity to mindfully detach from the

pain

because really pain and suffering are

two entirely different things

but as Shakespeare said I think it was

there never was philosopher who could

endure the toothache patiently and I've

I've uh you know I've learned from

experience the sore foot is much easier

to deal with than a sore tooth to some

degree it's just farther away from from

the the brain or something

but um toothaches are really

yeah they're up there with nausea as uh

something that is

best avoided if you can avoid it

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from the Arya

sewasti project

and the Aria swasti project says

greetings Ponyo when one becomes a monk

I understand that they give up all

belongings even future inheritances

since you were a monk for 30 years and

only recently have become a layperson

how are you planning for old age do you

have enough to retire what is going to

happen when your body gives out at the

sheet metal shop my wife is from

Thailand and my girlfriend is from Laos

one owns a shop and one is an accountant

both are devoted Buddhists and thinking

I'm thinking of moving everyone in the

same place and quitting work when the

time comes

I'm still relatively youngish now

but I'd really rather that be sooner

than later is that wrong

guards much respect sadhu sadhu sadhu

well this like the the previous question

is it's like two parts both of which I

think I should address even though only

the first part is the question

um

it is true I mean I didn't have anything

set by my I have almost no family

connections so I was just on my own when

I when I dropped out of the monk Hood

generous people made some donations to

help me get started so I had

Maybe

six or seven thousand dollars to get

started on

and um

I'm doing fine at present I'm not making

a whole lot of money

and as a monk I was making pretty much

zero money

uh

so really

I have little choice

but to have faith in my own Karma like

like in Christianity give no thought for

tomorrow you know what you will eat

where you will sleep and um I've been

doing that most of my life

just uh I mean you can kind of compare

it to the grasshopper and the Ant where

I've been the Grasshopper And sooner or

later harsher reality is going to come

down on my head but nevertheless both

the Jesus of Nazareth and go to My

Buddha taught that you really should

just put yourself at the mercy of the

universe and

um you know God will provide and I

really don't have much choice but to

accept that and continue to live by it

it may be someday that uh I'll strike

traction with more people and uh get

more support

in addition to just uh working as a uh

at a sheet metal shop

but um

yeah I mean that's that's really I don't

have much choice

I've got a retirement account started

but I mean if I retired today I'd

probably be making about five dollars a

month which um

is not even enough for coffee really

so uh what is going to happen when my

body gives out at the sheet metal shop

just gonna have to wait and see

um

so that's that's really my answer to the

to the question part but then the second

party's talking about how his wife and

his girlfriend

um both have good jobs apparently and

both are devoted Buddhists and

um the Arya sawasdi project is thinking

of moving both his wife and his

girlfriend into the same place

and just letting them support him

um

yeah well I mean from a Buddhist point

of view I mean there is

um you know sensual misconduct is

something to be avoided

um but I mean if he's going to be moving

his girlfriend in with his wife then

apparently the wife knows about it and

uh he assumes at least that she will

accept the situation and

um

although Buddhism disapproves of

adultery

nevertheless it does accept

bigamy or polygamy

and so like for example the Buddha's own

father

uh married two sisters

um

so

in in Buddhist countries like Thailand

and I think also in Burma for a man to

marry more than one wife is allowable

so that wouldn't count as adultery

apparently unlike in uh Christian

tradition

so

um so long as it's sort of like two

wives

then it's probably still

more or less okay depending on you know

the the actual volitions involved in the

three people involved

so yeah I mean if you can get it to work

out and

and it works then

I guess

so we'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from word Flex or weird Flex

w-y-r-d Flex

gotten some difficult

some difficult names here

Word flags

okay so word flex's first question here

is how did you go about learning poly

did the monastic set aside time for

instruction or was this something you

had to pick up on your own

well when I was a junior Monk

um I did have a senior monk who was

teaching me Paulie and we were using two
textbooks and it's by a sinhalese monk I
don't remember his name I want to say
something like Buddha data
but it maybe it wasn't Buddha data maybe
it was and it was so the beginning poly
course and the intermediate poly course
there was also an advanced polychorus
but we didn't get into that
um
and uh yeah we just did lessons which
caused me to learn about as much Paulie
as you'd pick up in junior high school
and like learning Spanish or something
and then from then on I just started
reading polytext with a dictionary on

hand

and would consult

um

poly grammars just to get weird and

weird like verb let's see you uh

uh word declensions that kind of thing

you know and uh

so I got I got fairly good that way just

sort of get like a bare Foundation of

poly grammar and syntax and some

vocabulary and then you start reading

polytexts preferably the easier stuff

like I was mainly interested as a junior

monk in monastic discipline and luckily

for me the books of monastic discipline

are very straightforward easy to read

in in the suit as sometimes you get into

like poetry or or like obscure word

forms you know strange grammar so forth

which is more difficult

although I eventually started reading

the suit is in Pali also

but um yeah that's how I did it and I'm

sorry I don't remember the the name of

the uh the venerable author who wrote

the Pauli books although I guess in the

west D polygramor to go to is by KR

Norman and I don't remember what it's

called but no not KR Norman it was AK

Warder

so AK Warder wrote a poly grammar that

I've heard some criticism of it but then

I've heard people say that it's just

excellent

so

this is this is getting into uh word

flex's second question here so I might

as well read it how would you recommend

a layperson go to go about doing the

same was there a standardized tag switch

the monks use for learning that you

could recommend

so

right now I have one poly grammar which

is probably been out of print for a

hundred years Charles durocell's

polygrammer I've got like the first

edition of it printed and published in

like 1910 or something

I found it at a used bookstore in Burma

so probably that one's not going to help

you much unless you can find it

somewhere

um

that that one by the the sinhalese monk

that I might I personally learned Paulie

from I mean that's good if you can find

it maybe by Buddha data but I'm not sure

but um AK water is the one to go to for

English-speaking westerners so I guess

you would start with AK water that would

be the easiest one to find and it has

received some praise like by ajan taniso

I think ajanta nissro learned poly uh

originally by studying AK Waters poly

grammar so

um that would probably be your best bet

I would assume and then just start

reading easy texts like um if you're not

interested in monastic discipline

um like the jyotica stories

things like that they're fairly easy

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from M Scott

and M Scott says

what is the likelihood that Siddhartha

godama actually existed is there any

solid proof to show this

well

um

I've I've written about this recently

and we've done videos I've talked about

this subject to some degree

and the thing is anyone who lived in

ancient times I mean there's no proof

that they existed that's why you've got

people saying the Buddha never existed

you got people saying that Jesus never

existed

but uh I can I consider it likely

um

there are like uh stupas like where his

relics are supposedly enshrined and I

mean that in itself doesn't mean very

much I've seen so many fake relics you

go to Burma and there's entire like

museums little little hokey museums like

near a pagoda or something and there's

just all these relics of

of Buddha not only our Buddha but like
previous mythological Buddhas who lived
in prehistoric times and famous Saints
and so forth and most of them are fake
um most of what are called relics in
Burma or dot Dole are little balls
they're like little white balls that can
be found in the in the remains of a
cremated corpse
and uh I've heard the theory my
sweetheart said that it's probably like
gallstones or or something like that
but
um that's considered to be not only in
in Burma but in other Buddhist countries
more or less proof that the person was a
fully enlightened being but I have seen

the Peshawar relics

and the pressure War relics which

ironically the Burmese ignore

um they've got like a pedigree that you

can trace back to the time of the Buddha

where after the Buddha died his he he

was cremated

and um there's still a a big burial

mound stupa kind of structure in uh

uh

where was it that I saw that in India

I'm having a mental block it was where

the Buddha it was near where the Buddha

died

so there's still like the burial mound

for uh one share of his relics that are

there in uh it's not sarnath

I'm sorry I'm having a mental block

but um

anyway

uh apparently the emperor Ashoka broke

open some of these and divided the uh

the relics of the Buddha

into a larger number of of stupas and

then the uh the kushan king kanishka did

the same thing he broke open more and

and it's going to spread out uh he made

more uh pagodas so that the Buddhists

could worship the relics of the Buddha

more easily and he built um

a huge capital city for his Empire in

what is now pesha war or near Peshawar

in Pakistan

and he built a huge Pagoda there it was
considered to be one of the wonders of
the world at the time and um
and
so what happened was when the Muslims
invaded they just completely destroyed
it but there was a burial like a a
shrine chamber A Relic chamber
underground and during the British
colonial times British archaeologists
dug it up and they found like a golden
casket inside the golden casket was a
crystal like a little Crystal vial and
had the name of kanishka engraved on it
and it had little pieces of burnt bone
and um there's a good chance that

kanishka would have tried very hard to

get like genuine relics from one of

these older Relic Chambers

so I mean that's about as good of

evidence as you're going to find other

than just

um

you know I mean the Buddha had like a

personality that you can

you can see that he's not just pure

mythology

or if if he is sort of fictional then it

would be

um the creation of one or very few

people just getting the basic details of

his personality worked into the into the

earliest poly texts

so

I think it is very likely that the

Buddha existed and that um Jesus of

Nazareth existed and I think there

probably was even an original version of

like Hercules and achilles

um Rama and Krishna

and um they were just ancient Heroes

that uh got methodologized got lots and

lots of stories cooked up about them and

they got conflated with other beings

especially the Greeks you know their

worship of Hercules they'd

um you know settle in some foreign land

where they had a hero that was similar

to Hercules they would say well it was

Hercules he just traveled to this area

and um

so

um yeah it's it it's very likely the

Buddha really existed but the name

Siddhartha which is here in the question

what is the likelihood that Siddhartha

godama actually existed

um Siddhartha is not found in the

earliest text that's a later accretion

like the name of godama's his wife the

Buddha's wife also there there are

different versions of it in different

texts

um so the Siddhartha part might just be

mythology you know it's it's it means

something like you know the goal

attained which is you know suitable

symbolic name to give to him but the

gotema part that's probably

authentic that is it's a family name the

godama is a it's a clan name and it

means something like cow Tamer or cow

cow herd something like that and um

it is true that it was primarily a

brahmana name like a Brahmin clan name

I'm not sure how

um

the Buddhist family got named that

but um like uh the Buddha will call his

cousin Ananda godama

and uh his stepmother was mahapajapati

go to me because like a female godama

would be a go to me

so

in all likelihood he was a member of the

gotema clan in uh what is now Nepal

uh and uh also the the shakya tribe the

gotima it would be like a family and

then the the shakya would be like the

tribe that he belonged to the the

ethnicity

so yeah it's likely but there's no way

of really proving it

so

you might as well I mean

I mean technically there's no way of

proving that we exist when you really

want to get down to it

so I'll just move on to the next

question which is from surfan

and surf fan says when's the next

installment of beauties and meditation

and that's referring to my blog I've

I've made about three installments of

Beauties in meditation our beauties of

meditation and it's essentially

beautiful young women sitting in

meditation usually in uh the full Lotus

position and uh often in a state of

nature which means you know they're not

wearing any clothes

and uh I have enough pictures to make

another one

although I do have a sweetheart now that

I'd have to run it past her to get I

know I don't want her getting mad at me

other people get mad at me that's fine

but when you're when you're living with

a woman you have to you know keep her in

in Good Humor almost all the time if

possible

but I mean theoretically I could I could

post it next week

probably won't but I could

any of you are interested you can just

look on the um pictorial tag

of my uh of my blog and you'll find the

first three installments

because I mean the whole philosophy at a

time I was a celibate monk at the time

that I posted these installments of

beauties and meditation and in a way it

was sort of combining The Best of Both

Worlds for me you know it's like the

beauty is a femininity combined with you

know the the profundity of spirituality

you know so like uh

I don't know

that that was that was my rationale time

so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from Air rain

and air rain posted a a link to a video

that I watched

or I watched a similar video on the same

family

and Irene says in this video breakfast

with the Whitakers

um depicting a completely impoverished

and somewhat disabled hillbilly Family
on YouTube how would you describe their
karma from a Buddhist perspective
seems to me conventional First
Impressions may be deceiving how about
the karma of the gentrified California
couple who traveled there to film them
and any of you who are interested I'll
probably forget to post a link under
this video but there is a YouTube
channel called Soft White underbelly
and just look up the Whitakers spelled
with two T's
w-h-i-t-t-a-k-e-r Whitaker
on the soft white underbelly Channel and
you'll find a number of uh videos where
he is visiting this family of

um I mean

on the title of the video has inbred

family

and they're they're in West Virginia

they're Hillbillies and it's it may be

that a brother and sister got married or

something because this whole family is

really kind of genetically messed up

and uh some of them are just like

like literally what used to be called an

idiot like with an IQ below 40. like one

of them just makes like mostly makes

just like barking dog noises and there's

one woman who's almost completely mute

and they live in squalor and just this

run-down Shack

and uh I think Aaron is asking the

question because they seem happy or at

least like like the one that barks like

a dog I mean he's just cheerful and and

you know you don't see him really

unhappy about anything

and I mean that's that's true of like a

lot of mentally disabled people

um you know they seem happy almost all

the time for that matter even like

animals you know they seem relatively

well composed most of the time

so Aaron is asking what kind of karma

would cause somebody to be born into

this kind of a family with you know

their eyes pointing in different

directions and half of them at least

half of them being severely mentally

and uh

she seems to think because they're

relatively happy that it's not

necessarily Bad Karma

and um

from the Buddhist point of view yeah

it's bad karma that caused him to be

that way even though they might seem

relatively happy just as it's bad karma

to be uh some kind of a dog

like living in the west where you're

like a Pampered Shih Tzu or something

um still I mean

because

your Consciousness is so limited you

really cannot grow spiritually uh very

much anyway and now the sun is out it's

not a cloudy day anymore so it looks

like my face is just glowing pure white

in a skeletal fashion

huh

yeah

anyway but I mean

it's sort of like someone with

Alzheimer's or whatever it's just you're

locked in to

a mental state with no exit you're just

stuck that way

and that's not good karma and I mean

even the squalor that they live in and

just

they obviously have physical issues in

addition to mental ones that yeah even

though they are unaware

of

you know how things could be so much

better for them

still from a relative position they're

they're worse offs than the average the

average person

and I've got the sun just right in my

face right now

so

yeah I mean even just with regard to the

limitations of their position and their

just the low Vibe of their Consciousness

they they really don't have much

opportunity at all to uh make any kind

of

significant spiritual progress other

than just working off Bad Karma and

that's kind of what the Hindus

um traditionally feel about people with

very serious

um like mental retardation or

deformations that kind of a thing

they're considered to be blessed by the

gods because they're they're working off

really bad karma they're paying off like

a very big uh karmic debt

and so in that sense they're making some

kind of progress that it's not all bad

but um with regard to to uh like

enhancing the quality of their own

Consciousness or so forth the guy with

the IQ of 35 who just barks like a dog

most of the time

um yeah I don't think that he's going to

be making much progress that you'd be

better off just as like a mainstream

Normie if only because you have more

potential at least

to improve your situation

so I'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from Noah what do you think

about the Lotus Sutra Noah says

and I have to admit I mean I have read

the Lotus Sutra but I haven't read it

since I was maybe my early 20s so it's

been a while it's been more than half my

life ago so I just barely remember parts

of it almost the only Parts I remember

is the simile of the burning house

I remember I think it was the the

Pacheco Buddhas or a kind of vehicle

it's it's strange how the Mahayana

Buddhists have worked out maybe like

redefined the Pacheco Buddha

and uh they have this simile the house

is on fire and in order to lure people

out of the house so they won't burn to

death in the Buddha

like

create through skillful means different

ways

of attracting people out of the house

and I believe it was some kind of like

fancy looking carts which are Vehicles

so he's got mahini on a cart which is

pulled by I don't remember what goats or

something then he's got the Pacheco

Buddha cart pulled by deer and then he's

got you know the Mahayana the superior

vehicle supposedly pulled by some you

know more exalted kind of animal that I

don't remember

and aside from that simile almost all I

remember about the Lotus Sutra is there

was some kind of uh

some kind of Mantra at the end

so I really I don't remember it very

well at all but

um just based on my studies of you know

what early Buddhism was like it's it's

obviously late it's obviously

anachronistic

um it was written centuries after the

time of the Buddha

um

and it was written I mean it wasn't just

it wasn't like the early texts that were

memorized back because it was like a

mostly a pre-literate society by the

time Mahayana came along literacy was

more established writing down of

scriptures had become uh better

established

and uh yeah I mean it's a late text it's

got some profundity to it if I remember

correctly but is there's also just lots

of sort of

religious propaganda and uh you know

Mahayana is is true or the best Buddhism

and so forth

and um

yeah but it's it's taken very seriously

there are a few schools of Buddhism

um I can't remember if it's inichi Ren

is one of them where like in like part

of the Buddhism is just or like the main

point of the Buddhism is just reciting

as a way of uh if not attaining

salvation at least getting into a pure

land in the west

is like homage to the Lotus Sutra

instead of reading the Lotus Sutra

apparently they just worship it

like a lot of people have done to the

Buddha himself or to Jesus of Nazareth

you know instead of following what they

teach you just worship them as as gods

or something

oh the sun is like directly in my face

now

so I'll just uh move on to the next

question

unfortunately I I don't remember the

Lotus Sutra well enough

to uh

to really give a more detailed answer to

it

so this question is from anahita

and if I kind of squint or get down in

the shade here

I can I can read this I have a question

that is off topic what's the Buddhist

explanation for Chopin howery and evil

if I have understood schopenhauer

correctly then he argued that someone

who harms others by stealing their

possessions cannot necessarily be

considered evil because that behavior is

usually rooted in greed which in turn is

rooted in fear or some someone murdering

another person

because of jealousy that too is a fear

reaction no matter how much harm would

result from that such a person is not

evil then if I remember correctly he

gave an example of a person that would fit in the category of evil and he described such a being as having the want to harm others for the sake of it this sounds to me like sadism a sadist inflicts suffering on others not because he is motivated to gain something out of it but out of sheer perverted pleasure I would actually agree with that definition of evil and if that is indeed what he was arguing then true evil is an absolute Rarity in this world since most bad Deeds happen due to a mixture of confusion lack of self-awareness and sometimes outright desperation my problem with that is that Buddhism

according to my knowledge doesn't really
give a satisfying explanation for the
presence of such a state of mind
Buddhist as well as many Hindu texts
that I have read even many antinomian
ones like the cool Laura Nava
Tantra call all kinds of things evil
ignorance isn't evil not following
Dharma isn't evil but there is no
mention of the existence of sadism which
to me is the only thing that truly
deserves the category evil everything
else is just confusion in my opinion
even the sewers of Hindu mythology
aren't truly evil in that sense the
neoplatonic explanation of evil is the
most unsatisfying religions like

Christianity would probably say that the
sadistic person in question must be
possessed somehow by a malevolent Spirit
but how does Buddhism explain this if
possible I would also like to hear the
opinion of ajan punadama on this
is not here at present so we're gonna
have to bypass the venerable monk for
the time being
but yeah I've
I've pointed this out before we've done
we've done videos on schopenhauer and
evil or just evil and I would point out
that
schopenhauer's definition of evil is is
the most

clear-cut I think where he's saying that

you know like like anahita here says

that just someone who is just absolutely

ruthless like a sociopath will just

trample anyone who gets in his way to

attain his goals

is um

they're not evil they're just greedy or

selfish

whereas schopenhauer says that somebody

who

um

I mean a truly evil person is someone

who causes suffering just because he

enjoys causing suffering you know it's

like causing suffering is its own reward

you know it's that's like the whole

point of it

and uh I mean it is there is mention of

that

in the polytext I mean there's ill will

which I think

um for the most part would uh

it would include that anyway it might

not be limited to that but it would

include that but of course Buddhism

it's um

it has a different definition of evil

and I mean it's evil is a word uh in

poly it's called Papa

and um

like like Mara is called the evil one

and in a way Mara I mean Mara in a way

is

kind of along the lines of

schopenhauer's definition of evil and

that he's mainly just interested in

keeping everybody in samsara

and that if if you can't be bad if you

can't like lure you into being bad he'll

lure you into being good because you're

stuck in samsara either way and you

don't escape from evil or you don't

escape from suffering I mean

so I mean there is mention of it in the

in the poly text in early Buddhism

but

um nevertheless Buddhism does have a

much wider definition of evil and that

you know just any kind of causing

suffering to others

um especially if it's like deliberately

volitional a volitional Act of causing

suffering to others that uh that you

know you're causing suffering and you

you don't care or you like causing

suffering

um yeah obviously that's going to be bad

karma and I mean even if you're talking

about sadism I mean sadism can also be a

rooted in you know some other kind of

motive like somebody like the the

emperor Tiberius who liked watching

people get tortured to death I guess Mao

Chairman Mao in China also enjoyed

watching people getting tortured

and uh

I mean it could be rooted in just misery

you know you've got like this unbearable

some kind of misery or angst or or

sorrow or something inside of you that I

mean you can't be happier than others

unless you make others miserable and

then you can sort of feel happy by

comparison you know at least I'm I'm

happier than that person there

and uh you know I think there's a lot of

that just in in just hatred

um some some of it racial hatred that

kind of thing it's like a person is

unhappy and so they want to inflict

misery on someone else just so that they

will be relatively happy even if they're

not you know like absolutely happy

at least in comparison to the person

who's getting lynched or whatever

so

yeah I mean it is touched upon like ill

will would be sort of schopenhauer and

evil you know wanting to cause suffering

to others

um but there's always going to be other

factors involved even in schopenhauer

and evil I assume

uh Mara I suppose would be one of the

best examples in Buddhist

um in the Buddhist texts

you know as as a kind of sadist he's

he's a subtle sophisticated sadist

living in a high heaven realm but uh

nevertheless I mean his whole

his whole like agenda is keeping as many

beings as possible from escaping samsara

thereby escaping his his power and

thereby just staying in misery

or or at least uh not freeing themselves

from suffering

so

but I do think that schopenhauer's

definition of evil is is a valid one but

that doesn't mean that evil can Poss can

only have one possible meaning

and uh I think like the Buddhist

uh broadening of the of the term into to

including you know all sorts of things

um would also is also valid

words can have more than one meaning

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Fred

Fred says I am intrigued by the

connection between good acts and

metaphysics or bad acts what is the

reservoir is it cheetah

and he asked this question not uh in the

usual channels but it was a comment to a

different

video where we were talking about I

think it was Buddhism versus Atheism

and uh one of us mentioned

that's uh Buddhist ethics are not based

on what most religious ethics are based

on most religions will say you know X is

good and Y is bad because God says so

whereas Buddhism doesn't have a god

decreeing what is right and wrong it's

just based on you know deep psychology

and human nature so that anything that

brings you closer to enlightenment

can be called good anything that takes

you farther away from Enlightenment can

be called bad or potentially even evil

so

anyway the main question here is

what is the reservoir

and by that he means the reservoir of

your karma your good and bad you know

the acts or or like the momentum of that

and it wouldn't be cheetah which is

consciousness it's volition it's

from the Buddhist point of view the

reservoir so-called is just the the

stream or the the the momentum of your

mental states which is change enough so

it's karma

karma is the reservoir so to so to speak

although

um it's not like it's

like stored in a tank somewhere you know

like the

um the yogachara Buddhists had what was

called the Alaya

which is the storehouse Consciousness

and that they had like you know all of

your good and bad karma was kind of

stored somehow in this one sort of

psychic Place uh most Buddhism including

terrible Buddhism doesn't Avail

themselves of any kind of reservoir

really it's just

the momentum of your mind is I mean

that's like a vector and there's all

different kinds of vectors kind of in

you know participating in this but

there's like this one main

uh Vector of momentum going and that's

that's your karma and it's all right now

in a sense

because in terravada Buddhism all that

exists is the present moment

it's it's sort of like a cartola talks

about you know all that exists is now

so

that that's really it it's just the the
momentum of your mental states that is
the reservoir and that's why in
terravada Buddhism after you die the
very next moment you've got to take
existence in a different as a different
being
uh just because that's that's really all
there is is this momentum of karma
that's going from one life to the next
and so there can't be a gap it's just
the very next moment after Consciousness
ceases in this in this body it's gonna
start up somewhere else
so the reservoir would just be Karma
and so I'll move on to the next question

from Diane

and Diane always asks her questions like

right at the right right before usually

the very day that I do a q a video

she'll she'll get you know advised you

know if you want to ask questions this

is your last chance so then she asks

questions

so Diane's first question is

so many religions say that if you don't

follow that religion then you are damned

or cannot be saved is Buddhism like this

um no Buddhism is not like this

um to some degree slightly for example

terravada Buddhism which is the kind of

Buddhism that you know I was ordained in

that I I know most about

uh it freely admits that any good person

can go to heaven

it doesn't matter what religion you

follow so long as it's not like a really

pernicious one

you know they have been bad religions

but you know human sacrifice and that

kind of a thing but um

any person who's who's like a good

person you know who tells the truth and

loves their neighbor and doesn't steal

or or murder or rape and that kind of

thing then they can go to heaven

regardless of what religion they belong

to but terravonna does claim a kind of

Monopoly on full Enlightenment so

according to orthodox theravada

if you're not a Buddhist you can go to

heaven but if you're not a Buddhist you

can't become fully in line

and I am skeptical of that I would not

be surprised if there have been more

enlightened Hindus than enlightened her

a lot of Buddhists I'm just putting it

out there I'm being a heretic but it

wouldn't surprise me I wouldn't be

surprised if some Roman Catholic saints

like Saint John of the Cross were fully

enlightened even though

um superficially at least they had the

wrong View

and uh even in the the polytext you know

there's like Bahia

who was a non-budist philosopher
and he heard about the Buddha he heard
that the Buddha was fully enlightened so
he just took off walking to meet the
Buddha and he gets to where the Buddha
was and when Bahia walked a long way he
walked from like the the west coast of
India all the way to the Ganges Valley
you know where the Buddha was staying
like around uh sawati or something and
he gets there he immediately you know
wears the Buddha and they say well he's
going for alms right now just wait and
he'll be back in a little while and he
couldn't wait even for that he goes to
the to the town or the village where the

Buddha was walking for alms and says
please teach me the Buddha says you know
I'm I'm walking for alms you know can
you wait a little bit and he says no I
don't know when I'm going to die I need
to know now so finally the Buddha gives
him this cryptic sort of koan like
um
like a little sermon that lasts you know
maybe 20 30 seconds to say the whole
thing and that was it that's all it took
for buying and he became enlightened
so he wasn't ordained as a monk and I
mean technically he wasn't even really a
Buddhist although he clearly had a lot
of faith in what the what the Buddha was
teaching him

but um yeah getting back to the question

um

carabata Buddhism says that if you're a

good person

you can go to heaven regardless of your

religion but only theravada Buddhism or

just Buddhism in general

um

only only that is like a vehicle to

Nirvana or full Enlightenment but

um I'm skeptical of that and I do think

that uh members of other religions so

long as you know they're detaching

you know it doesn't matter I mean if

you've got wrong view but you're not

detached to it I mean it's just a

cultural thing you just kind of stuck
with it like Saint John of the Cross he
lived in 60th Century Spain so I mean if
if he wasn't a Christian he was going to
have the Inquisition on him
so I mean he really didn't have much
choice that was like your only choice
but they practiced the same kind of
meditation techniques you know like
samata and also mindfulness
and uh
and I I he was a master of of Janna in
my opinion just reading his his writings
and I think there's a good chance maybe
he was wiser than the founder of his own
religion he may have been fully
enlightened he would have made an

excellent Buddhist

so

this heretical Buddhist says uh I don't

I don't even think that terravada

Buddhism or Buddhism in general has uh

a monopoly even on full enlightenment

so I'll just move on to Diane's

next and last question this is the last

question of of the day

and that is in Christianity it seems

like Jesus is idolized as the Supreme

Being in Buddhism is Buddhism like this

with the Buddha

well originally

um I don't think the Buddha or Jesus was

claiming to be the highest being in the

world

but both of them got essentially deified

the Buddha is claimed to be a human in

terravada Buddhism just setting aside

all the Mahayana developments but in

theravada Buddhism

go to My Buddha is declared to be human

but I mean he was like 27 feet tall and

he had you know 40 teeth and and all

these strange physical peculiarities

that would be just impossible in a human

being

and he's I mean he's not God or even a

God but you've got like the the Two

Chief deities of the the early Hindu

Pantheon coming down and worshiping him

you know you've got mahab Brahma and and

Saka who is the same as Indra

they're coming down and you know they're

bowing down to them and

uh Indra at least becomes a good

developed Buddhist and a Buddhist Saint

even even though he was kind of a

warrior God for the early indoorians

so uh it's just human nature that you

idolize the founder of your religion I

think Muhammad

um is like one of the main exceptions to

this and that he was so human you know

he was literally

he was a pirate he was a bandit

you know he had many wives

he you know he killed people sold women

and children to slavery you know raped

and so forth so I mean there was so much

relatively recent information about

Muhammad

and he was living in sort of a Dark Age

kind of a primitive Society anyway that

um

they they just accepted that Muhammad

even though he was just a guy

and uh not even necessarily all that

wise of a guy he was chosen by God by

Allah to uh be be his prophet and uh

there is some of that like in the Old

Testament too it's like who was it

Jeremiah I think was just unwillingly

pretty much coerced into being a prophet

so it was something like that but but

getting back to Christianity and and

Buddhism yeah it's it's kind of the same

phenomenon

um the Buddha wasn't turned into a God

but then again

um in Ancient India gods were small G

gods and weren't really the Supreme

Being anyway

so

yeah so it has happened that most

western Buddhists do not deify or

idolize the Buddha other than maybe just

having the idol you know like the the

statue like like that statue if you can

see it

um you know they'll bow to the Statue

maybe but still they consider the Buddha

to have been a man he was a man who

attained the highest possible state that

a human can attain that you know he he

escaped from samsara he transcended

samsara but um

yeah but then again you go to a

traditional Buddhist country like Terror

like uh like Burma

and yeah there's a lot of people there

who really I've been asked a number of

times you know was the Buddha God by by

Buddhists

but um

so they'll they'll worship the Buddha

they believe all the stuff about 27 feet

tall and all that but um

I mean how could he get married how can

he have a kid if he's 27 feet tall

so

yeah I mean technically according to the

tradition itself

you know you don't just worship the

Buddha you I mean you just follow what

the Buddha taught as well as you can

and um I mean the boot is almost

irrelevant

you know Dharma is true regardless of

whether the stories about the Buddha's

life are true

you know the four noble truths are still

true regardless of any person named

gotima that lived in ancient India

so

um so the answer to this question is is

the Buddha idolized like Jesus is

idolized as a Supreme Being it's yes and

no

um people that who are just living in a

very traditional almost pre-modern

culture

uh we'll just follow their follow their

tradition follow their culture that has

essentially deified the Buddha or some

people they just

um they're just not ready for like the

the higher more advanced

aspects of Buddhist philosophy and

Buddhist practice you know they're just

um they just want something to worship

you know they just want the ceremonies
and the stories and so forth and so
worshiping the Buddha works for them
and like I was mentioning there are a
few sects of uh like Japanese Buddhism
they they pretty much worship the Lotus
Sutra they've they've idolized and
essentially deified a book
but um that's not peculiar just to those
sex that happens in other religions also
so I guess that's it I think I've
answered all the questions for For
Better or For Worse
and uh if you have any questions you
want to ask feel free to include them in
the comments below if you have access to

the Discord server you can ask them

there if you're signed up on subscribe

star you can ask them there

and um

you know feel free to take a look at the

URL links below including uh the little

advertisements for my books

and uh be happy

so welcome to the appendix to q a number

33 pretty sure it's number 33.

um these are the questions that uh

didn't make it onto the list either

because they were asked in a in an area

that I forgot to look at or

um there were a few people who asked

questions right after I did the Q a just

like a matter of hours last night after

I did the Q a yesterday so I might as
well answer those two so we got more
questions
and I will attempt to answer those
questions and so here we go the first
question or the 16th or whatever it is
from bpat427
and bpap427 says are you familiar with
the bahi tawi forest cave monks of
Ethiopia are you familiar with any other
African renunciate monastic traditions
well I've never heard of the bahi tawi
forest cave monks of Ethiopia
um all I know about any kind of African
monastic tradition would be like Coptic
Christianity and um I don't know very

much about that I do know that it exists

so that's an easy question because I'm

almost totally ignorant on the subject

so I'll just move on to bpat427's next

question

which is do you think sticks hex and

Hammer has a good grasp on dhamma

and I watched ex and Hammer almost every

morning before I go to work or just when

I get up I'm drinking coffee I'll watch

sticks hex and Hammer 666 and I think

he's got a he's really good at seeing

the big picture

so he's he's got a talent for analyzing

the political situations

um that he is exposed to like he you

know he's good at talking about politics

but

um he's not infallible he's not

omniscient bless his heart

and um

when he talks about Buddhism

um the few times I've listened to him

talk about it he does seem to have uh

somewhat of a superficial understanding

of it I don't think he's on he's studied

it very deeply you know he's gone in a

different direction which is fine

um

and also like when he talks about Burma

or Myanmar he he really doesn't know

very much about what he's saying so it's

just as well that he doesn't mention it

very often

so

um I like sticks hacks and Hammer

um I think he's uh really good as a

political commentator but

um and it may be that he understands

sort of occultism and that sort of thing

um much better than most occultists do

for all I know

but um he does seem to have kind of um

I don't know it just it just doesn't

seem to go very deep

I don't know maybe that's just me but uh

I I really don't I do not consider him

to be

um a valuable source of information on

spirituality

but I do consider him to be a valuable

source of information on politics

so I think we'll just leave it there so

the next question the last question by

bpat427 is and I don't fully understand

this question

when will hashtag free Manu be trending

and I assume this is kind of a joke

because the the spiritual right group to

which I belonged and kind of still do

belong

um

it has uh Gone dormant

for the past few months

maybe two or three months and this is

partly because Manu who is more or less

the leader of it

um he's been rethinking what he wants to

do and rethinking and re-rethinking and

um he's not in prison

but he is sort of uh Bound by indecision

it seems

so uh yeah it's it's hard to say exactly

um when the spiritual right will get

going again if it'll even get going

again but Manu is uh he's already free

as far as I know

he's he's not in prison

so we'll just move on to the next

question which is from rakasa

and rakasa says sometimes when the

Buddha provides a definition in the

sutas he just repeats the word or phrase

he's defining for example in his

discourses on the noble truths and

Eightfold Path sorrow is quote the

sorrow Sorrowing state of Sorrow inner

sorrow inner deep sorrow in someone who

has undergone misfortune

unquote

and right livelihood is when a noble

disciple gives up wrong livelihood and

earns that you're living by right

livelihood why do you suppose the Buddha

does this

well just because it says in the book

doesn't mean that the Buddha said that

um it could be that uh some Monkish

philosophers

um were responsible for that finding its

way into the suitors

um

also to some degree it's it could be

just um bad translations

because uh like with regard to uh the

the noble truths and he's uh I mean he's

talking about duka which is in sorrow is

not a good translation for it

so it could be that rakasa has uh been

relying on a not a very good translation

but it is true that this kind of

repetitive stuff is found in the texts

maybe not quite as Extreme as the the

example about sorrow here but there

sometimes the word itself is used to

define uh is used in the definition of

the word like you're defining

um you know sorrow for example then the

word sorrow will appear sometimes in the

definition which is really bad form it's

not really a valid definition

um which is kind of troubling the left

nowadays when they can't Define the word

woman other than just a person who

identifies as a woman

so again it's the word that is to be

defined is itself part of the definition

which is a No-No

but um so sometimes it does happen to

some degree that you've got this kind of

thing

um like the word to be defined is

included in the definition and

um to the extent that the Buddha may

have said this sort of thing

um it may be that that's just um

indicative of

a sort of pre-formal logic in Ancient

India in the Buddhist time I've

discussed this to some degree on video

recently

where um like

India in the Buddhist time was in a

almost a pre-logical state they didn't

have their version of Aristotle yet

or Aristotle

um like the knowledge of Aristotle

hadn't made it through the trade routes

to India yet

and so formal logic you know the like

the the laws of thought a equals a you

know a must be either a or not a or um I

I forget the other one but

um

um that

in in the Buddhist time that this kind

of like clear rules of logical thought

hadn't been formulated yet

or at least they hadn't really struck

traction yet

so you can find some relatively bad

logic in terravonna Buddhist texts

um mainly just because that's kind of

the state of logic

the state that logic was in in the

Buddhist time and that was one advantage
that Mahayana Buddhism had is that they
had much more sophisticated logic by the
time Mahayana arose like 500 years after
the time of the Buddha that logic had
developed and so they had some really
profound
um philosophy
that was in some ways Beyond terravada
so
yeah so and the the reason is I I kind
of doubt that the Buddha would be that
would Define things that way or if he
did it's just because of the sort of the
rudimentary uh state of formal logic in
the Buddhist time it may have been sort
of a cultural thing

um

but for the most part I think it's just

uh

stuff that was added by

scholar monks or some such

so it is a good question I mean I've

noticed that I've been frustrated by

that myself

so

here we are

so the next question is from Chaplin

and chaplain says

said says what are conservative values

how do conservative men conduct

themselves and how do conservative

values align with taravada Buddhism

uh that's it's kind of a big question

you know what are conservative values

and conservative values are going to

vary

from place to place because

um I mean the word conservative implies

that you are conserving a tradition

and so the values of your concern of a

conservative are going to depend upon

the tradition that that conservative is

conserving

so in in the west conservative values uh

tend to be Christian values

so

um yeah I don't want to get too deep

into Christian values but um

let's see

what can I think of as conservative

values I mean just just a respect for

tradition

which generally involves a respect for

um just basic morality

and that's going to vary a little bit

from place to place you know more

Buddhist morality is different from

Christian morality to some degree I mean

there are there is a lot of overlap

you know don't don't kill

well don't lie don't steal don't kick

puppies

don't commit adultery that kind of a

thing

um and conservative values would take

that seriously

instead of just kind of ignoring it or

um just giving it lip service that kind

of a thing

and I assume conservative values would

also uh involve

um

sort of Men Behaving like traditional

men women behaving like traditional

women so you could be like tradcon

um

but yeah it's such a huge question I

mean I'd have to give it a lot of

thought and then probably could talk

about it for 20 minutes or more but um

what are conservative values how do

conservative men conduct themselves and

how do conservative values align with

terracotta Buddhism again it it depends

on the tradition that is being conserved

by a conservative

um I do not consider a conservative to

be necessarily

um like hard right

you know I mean just hard right would

have a different set of values and it

may be that that's what chaplain is

trying to get at here in which case

um maybe chaplain should ask the

question again

but with regard to conservatives I mean

it's just being a traditionalist

essentially and so it would depend on

the tradition and how do conservative

values align with terrible Buddhism well

uh conservative in a terrible Buddhist

country would be a devout terravonna

Buddhist

um

so I mean in in a place like Burma the

conservatives are devout Buddhists

because

um that's just the tradition that they

are conserving that they are following

whereas in the West

um the tradition that is being conserved

tends to be something along Christian

lines and so that's why you've got the

people who are not conservatives are

more inclined to follow Buddhism in the

West

so it's sort of a a liberal or even uh

hard leftist

uh

I mean you can't can hardly even call it

a tradition because in the west they're

not traditionalists and so they Embrace

terravonna Buddhism sort of but then

they reject most of the tradition

so they call themselves taravana

Buddhist while at the same time

redefining it and reworking it and

turning into something radically

different from what

is being practiced in in a conservative

terravada Buddhist country

so I've kind of answered that one I

guess I'll move on to the next one this

is also from chaplain

how has your transition gone from senior

monk to a layperson in a relationship

over the last year any big changes or

surprises that you had not anticipated

how has the huge change transformed you

personally man this could be another

half hour long video this is this is uh

a complicated one

I'll try to try to strip it down

how has your transition gone from senior

monk to a lay person in a relationship

over the last year well the biggest

change is the relationship definitely I

was a recluse just a loner

for 30 years

essentially

and um really just kind of merging my

life with another person

is uh

I mean that's that's the biggest deal I

mean it's like

I've I've practiced mindfulness enough

that what's going on on the outside is

largely

it's peripheral

so I can be alone in a cave

meditating which I did for many years or

I can be working in a sheet metal shop

but sort of inside I'm still pretty much

the same it's really not that radical of

a change for me

but having a relationship where you're

sharing your life with another person

like intense intimacy

that is really a big change and of

course

um having a relationship with a member

of the opposite gender

you know with a real live woman

um that has that has been interesting

and sometimes challenging just because

female psychology and male psychology

um

they're they're obviously very different

in certain ways unless unless you're

just like the the radical Lefty that

can't even Define woman

but men and women have sexual dimorphism

from biological point of view not only

physically are men and women different

but psychologically men and women are

different also and so

um

like being very close sharing a life

with a person who for example women tend

to be more insecure than men you know

they're more timid or inclined to worry

or anxiety that kind of a thing and um

that has taken I mean it's like uh

kind of a challenge to me something I I

need to deal with

but it's all well worth it I mean my

spiritual practice now is consists in

large part of of this relationship that

I'm in

and just um

loving her as well as I can and being as

good of an influence on her as I can

so let's see any big changes or

surprises that you had not anticipated

um

well I mean my Approach

to like going into the future is not

having too many ideas of what is what

I'm going to be dealing with you know

it's there's not a whole lot of

anticipation at all you know I just just

kind of stay in the present moment and

do the best you can from one moment to

the next and you know the future will

you know give no thought for tomorrow

you know tomorrow you know you can you

can deal with it then

so I mean still you have to

try to be prudent and and maneuver

yourself in a in a good direction but um

yeah that's that's one difference

between uh

between me as a male and uh my

sweetheart as a female is uh she's

trying to

anticipate the future and and plan for

it and worry about it and stew over it

sometimes and uh it just uh is kind of

alien to my way of going about things

so let's see how has the huge change

transformed me personally

um

that's a good question

um I'm still I'm still me

I mean I'm I'm half of an us now that's

a big transformation

um

I'm more natural now I'm not as it's

kind of strange but being a monk is

you're living a kind of an unnatural

lifestyle

and that

it kind of creates a certain

like chronic frustration or a kind of

friction

that uh has now largely dissipated I'm

uh probably healthier now than I was as

a monk in certain ways anyway

um

yeah

but um yeah there hasn't been like a

huge transformation other than just uh

in addition to being me I'm also half of

an us that's like the main

transformation

and uh it's all good

so I'll just move on to the next

question which is from surfan

I think that's how to pronounce his name

and surfan says is it possible to ordain

for a relatively brief period say one to

three years in the terravonna tradition

and yeah I mean you can technically be

ordained from one to three days

in the Terra water Tradition at least in

Burma and Thailand maybe not so much in

Sri Lanka

but yeah it's it's very common for um a

man to uh like during Sinjin like the

New Year's Festival which lasts five or

six days a lot of men will just go to

the monster and be ordained for five or

six days during sinjan

or um they they have a vacation they

ordain during their vacation I've had

old guys bragging to me you know I've

been ordained as amongst 17 times you

know

so yeah that's that's easy one to three

years that's

yeah that's that's easy it happens a lot

in fact I was told in Thailand

um I mean I was told this quite a while

ago I might not still be the same

but I was told in Thailand uh any monk

that's been a monk for five years or

more is is called odd John just because

most monks don't last that long

you know most people who are ordained as

monks do not remain in robes their

entire life the king of Thailand is the

tradition that the king of Thailand is

ordained as a monk for a relatively

short time certainly less than a year in

most cases

so yeah you can do that like uh if you

go to Burma to a meditation center
there's a good chance if you're gonna if
you're going to be there for like a
month or something you could probably be
ordained as a monk and I do not like the
idea I might as well I mean when I was a
senior monk when I was an Abbot I just
refused to do temporary ordinations and
I'm not talking about one to three years
I'm talking about you know one week or
two weeks or one or one or two months
because
um usually the person who was being
ordained just doesn't know anything he
doesn't know the rules of monastic
discipline he's probably still got money
um so it was just a it's just a bad idea

and from my point of view I just didn't
want to deal with it although it is easy
it's it's like the tradition in uh Burma
and I'm pretty sure in Thailand also
that you can just go to certain
monasteries and be ordained
um you don't even have to be a terrible
Buddhist which is also just kind of
crazy
I've uh I saw a Catholic priest who was
ordained as a monk
um without I mean he was he wasn't even
a Buddhist he was he was a Christian
and uh I've I've met one Mahayana monk I
mentioned him in a previous video that
he was a Korean Mahayana monk with the

gray pajama things wearing wearing those

and uh

he went to pandita Rama and uh was doing

intensive practice there in in the

pandito Rama and Rangoon and

um he didn't like being treated like a

lay person because he had to go behind

the ordained terravada Buddhist monks

and so he was ordained without even

disrobing from being a Mahayana Monk and

as soon as he left pandina Rama he

probably just took off the the orangey

Brown ropes and put on the great pajamas

again and uh didn't have to go through

any kind of reordination ceremony or any

such thing

so so the short answer to surf on is yes

and I'll just move on to the next

question and this is the very last

question for real this time this is

really the last question

this is from mon

I think is how you pronounce this

this

here's one Bonte what kind of job can

you get so you can practice the path

with the least distractions possible I

mean I know you might answer becoming

monk but I'm just not ready to do so to

be honest with you I used to work in a

pretty busy noisy stressful type of

environment and it clearly makes things

very hard if you can point some fields

or type of occupation that leaves a bit

of space for mind

and the other question is about

meditation

oh okay so this this is two questions

here I'm gonna separate them

okay

so I'll answer this this wasn't for real

the last question after all sorry about

that there's he has two questions here

okay so the question here is uh what

kind of dharmic occupation can you have

that won't just completely distract you

and you know lure you into some sorrow

or just just harass you into samsara

and um

well I mean there there's like two ways

you can go about it you can you can get
a job that is helping people you know
that you're earning Merit by you know
what you're doing you know you're
working like uh
uh like in a hospital or something you
know where you're actually helping
people that would be a darning job but
it would be like the meritorious kind of
job that could be very
um hectic you know like if you if you're
like an ambulance driver you're going to
be helping a lot of people saving lives
but you're gonna be exposed to all kinds
of craziness and just really awful stuff
like nightmarish stuff sometimes

so that's like one intense route of a

dharming occupation is

um like a hospice nurse or something

like that where you're helping people

but

um at the same time it can be very

um

you know it just fills your mind with

what's going on and so it can be very

some sorry call at the same time it's

it's meritorious where you're actually

um you know helping other people maybe

even saving lives but the other approach

which is the approach I've taken

um just just through karmic coincidence

I guess is I'm working in a sheet metal

shop and it's uh laid back you know if

if you're working as a kind of manual

laborer

then you know you're not bringing your

work home with you I mean I still have

dreams about driving forklifts and that

kind of a thing but I mean you can just

kind of leave your work at at work and

then just come home and relax and do

whatever you want to do and so like a

job that's just manual labor it's it's

good for you like maybe I don't know

about construction but just running

machines you know running a forklift

maybe even being a truck driver that

would be like a simple and potentially

meditative kind of job where you're just

sitting there doing your thing so

um being a truck driver also I mean

you're just kind of a Wanderer

so maybe something like that but it

would be just a simple more or less blue

collar

um manual kind of a job that um

preferably you're not interacting with

you know other people that are just

talking all the time

um that may be a challenge for me in the

future

um

I I still haven't got the sales rep job

that I was offered but it looks like

it's going to be happening soon and uh

just sitting up front next to two women

that are discussing you know small
children's preferences in breakfast
cereals and so forth that could really
be a trial for me but working in the
back you just you know sound of machines
you know you want to talk you can talk
but for the most part you can just mind
your own business and do your job and
that's um I I actually like that
so that's that's what I would suggest I
mean those are your two choices if you
want a dharmic occupation either the
positive dharmic occupation of helping
people which as I say can be very
stressful
or there's like the passive dharmic job

which would be more monk-like I think

where I mean you're just doing a simple

job possibly a repetitive one possibly

driving a truck or some such and um

you can you can get meditation in there

like like working in a sheet metal shop

there are plenty of opportunities for

mindfulness meditation when you're doing

like repetitive actions you know running

something through a machine or something

like that

so that's what I've done

and so

um I'll just move on to for real

genuinely the last question this is also

from mon ComEd

and it's this question is and the other

question is about meditation how can you

make the meditation time a habit I find

it very hard to keep going with daily

meditation

well I mean you just gotta discipline

yourself you set up a time

um probably the easiest right after you

get up in the morning or right before

you go to bed

and um

you know instead of reading a book

before you go to bed or instead of

watching sticks hex and Hammer videos

when you first get up you just sit down

and meditate and then you just do it

whether you want to or not you know you

have to force yourself you have to be

firm with yourself you have to tame

yourself if that's what you really want

to do

if you want to make meditation a habit

then you just have to keep doing it over

and over again even if you don't feel

like doing it

and it's it's relatively simple and

straightforward you just have to

um discipline yourself and just do it

having I mean having a group

can help although

um having a group where you sit with

them every day might be kind of hard to

manage

but

really I mean it's like just about
anything else I mean you want to lose
weight or stop smoking or whatever it is
I mean you just have to discipline
yourself I mean you just have to do it
whether you want to or not you might be
climbing the walls but still you have to
have enough self-discipline that you
endure the difficulty you endure the
discomfort or whatever and just go ahead
and you just keep doing it just do it
as the uh commercial used to say maybe
it still does I don't know I don't like
commercials
so anyway that's it I've asked I've
answered the questions

um again

and this time when I say be happy I I

really mean it you should you should be

happy

Hello and welcome to episode 34 of

question and answer.

We are slowly and gradually working our

way up to six gorrillion.

And uh my chair is squeaking. Maybe I

should start over, but nah.

Uh

so I guess uh

the big news for me today is a

creature resembling a heron or possibly

a pterodactyl

came and invaded our yard and

I think possibly ate all of the our fish

in the pond

including possibly even my loaches.

So uh please uh

send your thoughts and prayers for my

loaches.

And uh also

for the few of you that have my phone

number, very few of you,

I hope.

Um my phone died due to uh

everything all conditioned things being

uh impermanent, inconstant, and all.

And uh although I got a new phone,

um I've lost all my contacts. So if you

want to be uh on my contact list again,

assuming that you were on it before,

just uh shoot me a text and uh

that'll take care of it.

So we got the usual large number of good

questions.

And uh

I don't know. I don't think we got any

bad questions at all.

Tell you the truth.

So I'll just uh wade into this list of

questions. And the first question, the

first several questions in fact, are

from Mary, spelled m e r r y.

And Mary's first question here

is another question regarding robes. You

said monks are not allowed to wear lay

people's clothing, but in the time of

the Buddha everybody wore robes and

monks wore robes. So I don't fully

understand.

Well, it is true that in the Buddha's

time lay people did wear robes

resembling

um what monks' robes were like.

Um it's just like a rectangle of cloth

wrapped around your body in a certain

way, kind of toga-like, I think. But the

thing is

the lay people wore white robes.

And monks wore robes that were

discolored, usually dyed a kind of uh

golden-brown color.

And also monks were required to cut the

cloth up and sew it back together.

Unless it was just made out of rags that

were sewn together. But even if they got

like new cloth or they just uh picked up

a shroud at a at a cemetery, it was one

big piece of cloth, which still happens

sometimes.

Um like in in Asia, I mean.

Then uh they'd have to cut it up and sew

it back together to make the cloth uh

less valuable because apparently there

were cloth thieves in uh northern India

in the in the north in the Ganges Valley

in uh in the Buddha's time.

In fact, there are quite a few rules

designed to uh

um prevent your robes from being stolen.

In fact, there's a strange rule for

bhikkhunis or uh ordained Buddhist nuns

that um

they weren't allowed to bathe naked

unless there were lots of thieves
nearby, in which case um they could
bathe naked just so that they wouldn't
get their robes stolen.
Which is kind of a strange rule.
So yeah, the difference between the
robes that lay people wore and the robes
that monks wore in the Buddha's time
were that monks' robes were dyed kind of
a dingy brownish color.
And also they were cut up into pieces
and sewn back together again. Other than
that, it is true that
the uh the lay people wore robes sort of
similar to what Theravada Buddhist monks
wear today.
So I'll just move on to Mary's next

question.

Also, were there early Buddhist schools

that maybe if existing today would be

better for us all? I mean those of us

who don't really care about Abhidhamma

but solely the suttas.

Um

almost all of the ancient Indian schools

pre- pre-Mahayana

had some some kind of Abhidhamma or

Abhidharma.

Except there was one

called the Sautrantika school, which

means suttas only or sutras only. And

they just made a special point of not

having any Abhidhamma or Abhidharma.

And um just basing their philosophy on
the on the suttas themselves. And
according to
A.K. Warder in his history of Indian
Buddhism, he was saying that the
Sautrantika school was one of the more
conservative schools. Although he also
says Theravada
um was one of the the most conservative
of all the schools.
So
maybe Sautrantika might be more suitable
for Westerners who don't take Abhidhamma
seriously, but it's really not that
difficult
to just disregard Abhidhamma as much as
you can. It's fairly easy in the West.

In Burma, it's a little more difficult

because in Burma Abhidhamma is

considered to be the most profound and

most important of the teachings of the

Buddha, even though most Westerners

um do not believe that the Buddha

actually taught it.

So yeah, there was the Sautrantika

school, which didn't have an Abhidhamma.

Um

but we are fairly lucky. I think we're

very very lucky that of the ancient

schools

the ancient Indian pre- pre-Mahayana

schools that survived

well,

we got Theravada,

which really was one of the most

conservative

um who made the the most effort to stay

faithful to what

the historical Buddha originally taught.

Um at the second council shortly after

the second council, there was the first

major schism.

And you had the Theras on one side, the

Sthaviras, which is Sanskrit for Theras.

And you had the the Mahasangha on the

other side. And the Mahasangha, they put

more emphasis on personal inspiration

and sort of keeping the text alive, you

know, the the suttas are a living

document, so to speak.

And although they did maintain maybe a

higher level of inspiration

just because they weren't as dogmatic

and adhering to words and books,

nevertheless, they just took the ball

and ran with it, and then you wind up

with all sorts of of strange teachings.

And it was the Mahasangha school also

that gradually developed into Mahayana.

At least uh that's what I have read.

So

let's see.

So I guess I guess I answered that

question. So I'll just move on to Mary's

next question.

And this is with reference to something

I said in a previous video. I said that

um

when I was a monk, I did not experience

thirst. That um

well, I'll just I'll just give you the

question here. So it's how is it that

you were never thirsty as a white guy in

Myanmar, you probably sweat a lot a lot

more than all talk thongs,

which is aboriginal peoples, I think.

Native peoples. And you have never felt

thirst.

Okay. Well, when I was a kid, I felt

thirsty, but then some that some point,

I think while I was a monk, I just

stopped feeling thirst. And so

um

I would just drink as a habit. You know, I just make sure to stay hydrated. I read a a survival guide a long time ago. It was like an army an like an outdated um US Army survival guide saying that uh you should always drink enough that your pee stays relatively colorless. You know, you don't want like dark orange pee.

And so uh I just go by that or if I just start feeling dizzy, sometimes when my mouth would start going dry, I'd know that I was getting dehydrated, and then I would just drink.

But I did not feel the the sensation of thirst.

Um and I I don't remember exactly when

it stopped. It was just finally I just

realized, wow, I just do not feel

thirsty ever anymore.

Um

and then after I became a layperson

again,

as you can see,

I'm not wearing robes,

I started feeling thirsty again, which

is uh

kind of strange. I I really I really

can't explain it.

Uh hopefully it's not a symbolic thing

because um

according to the Four Noble Truths, the

cause of all suffering is tanha,

usually translated as craving, but

literally it means thirst.

But uh

yeah.

So yeah, I just I just did not feel

thirst for years and years.

It was just I would have other

indications that I was that I needed to

drink something, like uh orange pee or

just being like dizzy and light-headed

and my mouth going dry, that kind of

thing.

So I'll just move on to the next

question, also by Mary.

What was the the when you were the most

frightened in your whole life. I'm just

curious because you do not seem as a

person that is being scared very easily.

Well, that's

that's kind of a tough one.

I mean

once when I was a kid, maybe 7 years

old, the neighbor kids who were older

than me

uh held me over the side of a bridge.

You know, like head down.

And um yeah, that's being kind of head

down on a roof or something like working

on a roof and you got to be head down

like you're cleaning gutters or

something. Yeah, that's

that's one thing that

there's just this visceral like

instinctive

um

fear, I guess would be the word.

But if you're referring to my adult life

um

yeah, I've had like one panic attack in

my life.

And um

that was

I'd been a monk for

20 years, maybe.

And I was visiting the USA to to see my

parents. And an old friend of mine

wanted to go camping with me.

And this old friend of mine, he smokes

like a Rastafarian. I mean, he he's just

smoking out all the time.

And I used to I used to smoke a lot of weed before I was a monk.

And so I I got high with him. And he just got me. I mean, I could not keep up with him. I mean, I was just absolute total lightweight at the time. He was a heavyweight. He was I mean, he smoked like Bob Marley or something.

And um

I remember he had like some kind of Mexican devil mask up on his wall. And that was starting to to kind of weird me out. I asked him if he'd take it down, which he did.

And um

I was really really high.

And um

uh we went to bed or he went to bed. And I'm hearing these strange like footstep noises. And I'm looking out and it looking out into the living room. I was in like in the guest bedroom. And there's nothing there. It's all silent and everything. And I'm hearing these footsteps again. And I just started getting like paranoid or or something. I just started having like a panic attack. So I started yelling for my friend who uh comes out like very confused in his underwear. You know, he just been woken up. And uh I just it was like I asked if I could give him a hug just cuz

that would sort of like

just the physical contact would assure

me that everything was okay.

So, he he kind of grinned and gave me a

hug and went back to bed and everything

everything was okay after that. But uh

it started a kind of tradition. We we

give each other a hug like when we meet

after that.

Uh

so, yeah, I guess it was like a a

drug-induced

panic attack

would be it. But being scared as a

general rule, I mean, from the Buddhist

point of view, it's it's it's like bad

karma. I mean, if you are frightened

if if like if fear just starts to arise

please excuse the squeaky chair. But if

if fear arises, I mean, that's just past

karma from the Buddhist point of view.

You know, so the first first arising of

it

is is not you're not making any new bad

karma. That's sort of like unskillful

karma from the past. You know, it's just

the momentum of it is causing it to

arise again.

But if you like take it seriously and

dwell on it then then you're making new

bad karma.

So, I've I really

took that to heart. You know, once you

once you read the text and you believe
that, you know, it's I mean, it doesn't
help anything. Being afraid really
doesn't help anything. It evolved in our
pre-human ancestors
um just as a way of
saving your life. If you're too stupid
to analyze the situation you know, it's
just uh if you're scared, run.
And um you know, it apparently had some
survival value in the past, but we've
gotten to the level
uh at least some of us have where you're
intelligent enough that you can do what
do what is appropriate without being
scared. In fact, being scared can just
really interfere with your judgment.

So

yeah, I mean, I have been in relatively

scary situations like um

I went through a few years well, several

years in Burma where I would

every year I'd hike through Alaundaw

Kathapa National Park

right through the middle of the park.

And there were tigers there. I wasn't so

much afraid of tigers as wild boars

though because uh

I've been told that you're more likely

to be attacked by wild pigs

than tigers because there aren't very

many tigers. You're much more likely to

come across wild boars.

And um

so I would I would just

camp just sleep under a tree. I didn't

have a sleeping bag or anything. I'd

just lie on the ground under a tree. I'd

have like a little plastic thing that I

could you know, just keep me off the

dirt. But I'd always sleep under a

easily climbable tree.

And uh if if fear would start to arise,

you know, you hear a twig snap out in

the darkness. You

just this immediate, you know, what's

that kind of a feeling. I mean, you just

watch it. There there are suttas in the

texts where

if fear arises, you master the fear

before you do anything else. You know, if you're doing walking meditation and fear arises, you just keep doing the walking meditation until the fear passes and then you can change posture or if if you're sitting or whatever

you just

do not change your position until or your posture until you have mastered the fear. And I mean, it's it's relatively straightforward just mindfulness meditation. You just observe the fear and then it's not you anymore. I've talked about this before. Like anything you can observe isn't you because if you are anything at all, you're the one

doing the observing and not the thing

being observed. So, if you can observe

your mental states, you know your mental

states are not you.

So, if fear arises, you observe the

fear. You've already created a

separation between you and assuming that

you really exist and the fear assuming

that the fear really exists. So, it's

it's not I'm scared anymore. It's fear

is arising.

But um

that one that one panic attack I had, it

was you know, when it when it's just

like this

visceral thing

that just kind of takes over, then yeah,

practicing mindfulness uh

it you might not even occur to you at

the time.

So, that's a long question to a short

answer. So, I'll just move on to the

next question.

I know I'm crossing the line here, but

for a something something year-old man,

I am just wondering what is your

spouse's age?

So, my sweetheart is 12 years younger

than me.

Which um

uh coincidentally is also the the age

differential between my parents. My

father was 12 years older than my

mother.

So, yeah, I it's not that I'm vain about

my own age. I just uh

don't want to be like divulging my

sweetheart's age because it's just it's

not gallant

shall we say.

Uh

so, let's just move on to

Mary's last question.

How many dutanga practices did you

practice and what were they?

Well, as a monk, the monk isn't supposed

to to say what his dutanga practices

are.

Um but I suppose I should say what

dutanga practices are just for those of

you who don't know what dutanga

practices are.

Um there are 13 optional

practices ascetic practices that a monk

is allowed to to do in Theravada

Buddhism. They're called dutangas.

And I mean, they're completely optional.

And if you do them, the only person

you're supposed to tell is your own

teacher.

You can take dutanga practices from your

teacher. And then only you and he will

know. In fact, in the Visuddhimagga,

which is

the main commentarial text in Theravada

Buddhism, there's a story about

these two monks

who just happened to be sharing a cabin

one night.

And one of them was doing the sitters

practice, which is a dutanga where you

never lie down. You sleep in a sitting

position.

And

there was a a thunderstorm that night.

And uh there was a flash of lightning

and the whole cabin lit up inside. And

the other monk could see that the the

first monk wasn't lying down. He was

sitting there on his bed. And so he

asked him, "Do you do the the sitting

practice?" And so in order not to be

telling anybody about his dutangas, he

just lay down and said, "No." And then the very next night he started doing it again. And he'd been doing it for years and years.

So

I was

kind of like that. I mean um I suppose I should list off some of the main dutangas. And if you really want to know about dutangas, I'm pretty sure it's in chapter two of the Visuddhimagga.

Um

so, one of them is as I just said, you just do not lie down. You sleep in a sitting position.

One is living in cemeteries. One is

living under the open sky. One is living in a forest.

Uh one is only eating alms food. You don't accept invitations to people's houses, anything like that. You just take your bowl and walk through the village every day.

Um let's see, another one is wearing only three robes, which is kind of a fishy one. It's because according to the rules of monastic discipline, you're really only allowed to wear three robes anyway. If you have an extra robe, you can only keep it for 10 days.

Um wearing only rag robes, like robes made out of rags that you pick up off

the ground.

Um let's see. Eating only once a day, eating only one meal a day.

Um

let's see.

There's one There's kind of an obscure one where you don't wait if people ask you to wait when you're walking for alms, like, you know, wait a minute, I want to go back to my house and and get something. Or and you're not supposed to wait. There's another one where you just go systematically house by house. You don't skip over the the houses that you know give bad food, that kind of a thing.

Uh let's see. I don't know how many I've

I've listed off, but there are 13

altogether.

And um

I really didn't try to make a big deal

out of dutonga practices. I mean, I

lived in forests a lot.

Um I lived in cemeteries briefly from

time to time.

Um

I ate one meal,

just one meal a day,

pretty much for 30 years with very few

exceptions.

Um I always kept only three robes,

although I did allow myself to keep an

extra robe for 10 days.

Like um you know, you you got an old robe and you're you make a new one. So then you got the new one and the old one. You got 10 days to get rid of the old one.

So I did that.

Um let's see. I did the sitting practice for over a year, which was difficult.

Um yeah, it's it's really hard to get used to sleeping in a sitting position.

And uh there were a few times where um you know, you'd you'd fall asleep sitting, but then you'd wake up kind of like on your side on the floor.

Um

so let's see. Rag robes, it was just too

difficult because um

especially in Southeast Asia or or in

Burma, which is a poor country anyway,

by the time people throw their cloth

away, it's it's pretty much you know,

just shredded rags.

Um I I suppose I should add that each

dutonga, according to the Visuddhimagga,

has three levels. It's got like easy,

medium, and hard.

And for example, the sitting practice,

the easy way is sleep sitting in a chair

is like sitting in a chair when you

sleep.

And the medium is the medium level is

you're able to lean back against a

board, or else you can also use a kind

of belt thing around like your your knees and your back to just hold you up in a sitting position. And then finally, the hard practice is you're just sitting, not leaning back against anything. You're just sitting there like you're meditating, uh sleeping.

And I was ordained in the Tong Pullo tradition where all the monks did this practice. It was just like a thing that the Tong Pullo monks did. They didn't lie down.

But when I got to Burma, um I was a monk for more than a year in in a Burmese place in California before I went to Burma. But when I got to

Burma, it was just so hot that I wanted to be as cool as possible. Leaning back against anything, it would just get foul with sweat.

So I quickly learned that the coolest way to sleep is like spread eagle on a concrete floor. So I started sleeping just on a on a concrete floor.

Um sometimes using a piece of wood for a pillow, not because I wanted to be ascetic. It was just literally that was the comfortable way of sleeping. And the piece of wood for a pillow just didn't soak up sweat like a cloth pillow would.

But uh I did try to downplay any kind of dutongas. Like I

did I ate one meal a day, but what I
would do sometimes, just to break the
dutonga, is I'd be sitting there eating,
then I would just get up, take a step to
the left, take a step to the right
again, sit back down, and finish my
meal. So that I wasn't
doing it all in one sitting.
Cuz that's that's the way it's worded.
The dutonga practice is is the one
sitter's practice.
So
yeah, it's it's so I mean, really I
can't say how many dutonga practices I
did because it was sort of incidental.
Like living in a forest, I just like

living in forests. And um

this the three robes, that's that's just

following the rules of monastic

discipline literally anyway.

And one meal a day, I I don't know.

So

yeah, I can't really say how many I

practiced. Proba- maybe three or four

were pretty much full-time, and then

there was a few few extra ones like um

like sleeping in a cemetery, where if I

was traveling, like there was a a town

called Kani

that um

whenever I would stay there, I would I'd

always stay in the cemetery there, which

had a really nice pavilion.

So and you could just go around and see human bones and and things lying on the ground.

So it was nice.

So I'll just move on to the next question, which is from Weird Flex or Wyrd Flex, w y r d flex.

And uh Weird Flex says,

"Do you suppose that meditative states are more conducive to super sensible encounters, for example, ghosts, spirits, devas, etc.?"

Meditative states.

Well,

according to orthodox Theravada,

if you get into jhana states, then you

would be

getting into a

a realm of subtlety that that is

like the abode of Brahmas. Like um

according to orthodox Theravada,

you have to have attained jhana in order

to get into the Brahma realms after you

die. You know, it's a very high heaven

realms.

So

um it would probably increase the

subtlety of your mind, like the the

subtlety of your vibe, so that you could

you'd be more likely to see

um you know, more subtle beings.

Um with regard to ghosts,

maybe.

Maybe. I'm not sure. But it it would depend on what kind of meditative state you were cultivating.

So I mean, some really advanced, like gurus, swamis, meditation masters, they apparently can

see

um beings that that we can't see. Or also, they can just see a person

just they can just see right through you.

Like Neem Karoli Baba, who was a Hindu in in India. I mean, when he would look at you, he would see he would know you better than you know you. He would he would just see, you know, where you were

at karmically, you know, he'd he'd see
your past lives, supposedly. Just
you know, he'd see it all.
And I think the the heron or pterodactyl
just tried to land again. We got the
dogs out in front.
But um getting back to the question, I
get I get uh distracted by things
happening in the window.
Uh let's see.
So see, do you suppose that meditative
states are more conducive to super
sensible encounters?
Um with regard to some of them, yeah,
and it would depend on what kind of
meditation you were doing.
I mean, if you're just like uh counting

your breaths or or some kind of elementary meditation like that, just reciting the the qualities of the Buddha or something, it might not make much difference.

But if you're getting to subtle, you know, subtle detached mental states, it may detach you from the limitations of ordinary human with regard to what you're able to see.

And of course, materialistic skeptics would just say, "Oh, you're just you know, you're meditating so much that you're starting to hallucinate or whatever." But And that that can happen, too. But um

for the most part, they don't know what

they're talking about.

So I'll just move on to the uh Weird

Flex's next question.

"Are you at all familiar with the

phenomenon of sleep paralysis? Do you

think it's simply a biochemical thing,

or could the hallucinatory descriptions

given by victims, for example, the

shadow people,

be related to the lower realms?" Well,

it's it's like a

I don't know, neurophysiological thing,

where

um when we dream, we are paralyzed.

Because if you're if you're having a

dream and you're not paralyzed, you'll

act out the dream. You'll start
sleepwalking or whatever. You know,
you'll be thrashing around and talking
out loud and all this.
So I mean, it is just built into us
that there is a certain amount of
paralysis when we are dreaming.
Um let's see. "Or could the
hallucinatory descriptions given by
victims, for example, the shadow people,
be related to the lower realms?" Um it
is common that some people will have
um
sort of they'll wake up
with like some kind of I don't know if
this is a shadow person or not. It's a

very common kind of nightmare where you wake up on your back and you've got some kind of like a dark entity like pressing down on your chest and you can't move.

Um

I don't know, my father experienced that. I think that's probably where the

um

the the like the legends or the the mythology of the succubus and the incubus like in ancient ancient Rome where that came from.

I read some ghost stories along those lines that they interpreted it as some kind of possessing spirit like somebody who died in the house and considered it their house or something. That's

possible although it does seem to be

fairly common in in just it fits the

kind of a stereotype description of

what's going on. So it could just be a

kind of archetype

archetypal kind of nightmare. And then

when you wake up you're you're paralyzed

because of the the the dream paralysis.

I I had a

uh

what I consider to be a case of dream

paralysis. Um

I've I've talked about it before. It was

the the legendary time when I was

attacked by ogres.

Like I was I was living just out under a

out under a tree out in the woods in Burma.

And that forest was just infested with supernatural beings.

My one of my best friends at the time was a

he was a monk who had been a a high school math teacher before he became a monk and he had a degree in physics. He I mean he was intelligent person but he was telling me in all seriousness, you know, there's there's there's naga dragons there. There's

there's an assault which is a kind of guardian spirit

with taboos that you had to follow. You weren't allowed to pee on the ground on

the hill that the the assault was and
that sort of thing.
And also he told me that there were
um it was well known that there was like
an army of of yakas or ogres
that had magic guns that could make you
go insane if they shot you with them.
And there was the famous case of this
Hindu swami who was meditating in the
same place I was for a while who uh
he he made the mistake of trying to make
like a an enchanted circle to protect
himself but apparently these ogres were
territorial and it just pissed them off.
And so they they drove him insane. He
just went into like a weird fugue state

and was just wandering around not
knowing who he was that kind of a thing
till he came out onto a highway and uh
somebody out of the kindness of their
heart nursed him back to some semblance
of normality. I think he went back to
India.
But anyway, I was uh I just woke up one
morning.
I won't give you the the full details.
You can find those elsewhere I think.
But I didn't have a clock even. I just
would leave to go for alms in the
village at dawn. So I was looking up
like kind of propped up on one one elbow
like this
to see if it was dawn yet just trying to

look in over the horizon
and I started hearing like strange
sounds just like somebody playing a bass
guitar over a really loud loud speaker
system down the valley aways and I was
wondering gee, I wonder what that is.
And then I started hearing lots and lots
of voices in my head sort of like if
you're familiar with um
Welcome to the Machine by Pink Floyd off
the album Wish You Were Here. Towards
the end there's all these voices talking
simultaneously. It's just like a chatter
of talking voices. It was like that and
I knew that was in my head and then I
realized I was just stuck. I was frozen.

I was just like

propped up on one arm like this

just paralyzed.

And uh I was thinking well, should I be

afraid? And I quickly ruled that out cuz

that wasn't going to help anything.

So I just thought well, maybe if

something is doing this to me and

they're Buddhist they'll uh

they'll uh be reluctant to keep doing it

if I start reciting

you know, namo tassa bhagavato arahato

sammasambuddhassa

and uh sure enough it it all just poofed

after I recited that like twice

maybe three times. Three is the magic

number.

And um then I was able to move and
everything and
um I made the mistake of
telling a monk down at the the nearby
monastery about it.
And he had a degree in English. I mean
he was he wasn't stupid. He was he had a
university degree but but also at the
same time his whole body was just
covered with these magical tattoos to
protect him from witchcraft and the evil
eye and and ghosts and snake bite and
stuff. And his eyes got really big and
he just said, "Don't be afraid. They're
just testing you."
But um personally, I just I just think

it was like a waking dream. That's why I had the dream paralysis. It's just I couldn't move. So I I I would I'd chalk that up to a waking dream. But who knows? Maybe it was magic ogres with guns. I don't know.

So we'll just move on to uh Weird Flex's last question.

Oh well, frankly to that I mean it's possible in some cases but I think most sleep paralysis is just like a natural thing to keep you from acting out your dreams. So I move on to Weird Flex's last question. What are your thoughts on Mara?

What motivation could he have for suppressing the Dharma? Is it totally

malefic or something

born out of ignorance and wrong view?

Well, anything malefic would also would

almost necessarily from point of view of

Buddhism be born out of ignorance and

wrong view.

I mean

he's not all wise with right view or

he'd be like a saint.

So

um as is often the case I'd have to give

you two different answers. One is the

orthodox official answer from the point

of view of Theravada Buddhism

and then I'd have to answer just my own

personal opinion because I'm

I don't necessarily follow along with

strict orthodoxy all the time.

So

yeah, Mara

he's like the Buddhist devil.

Um he's got three three sexy daughters

who tried to tempt the Buddha before he

was like on the night that he became the

Buddha on the night of his enlightenment

but it didn't work.

Um

and the motivation that he has for

suppressing the Dharma is he doesn't

want anyone escaping samsara because

he's like the lord of samsara. Unlike

the Christian devil, he lives in the

highest heaven realm of the the sensual

realm, the highest deva realm. He lives in the the the deva loka or the deva world of the deities who delight in the creations of others.

And he's got uh kind of his own territory up there and he stays in some celestial palace with his three sexy daughters.

And uh he doesn't want anyone becoming enlightened because then they they're like escaping his power. And he's got some kind of a a power thing.

He's a control freak or something.

But there is uh

um

it's a famous image somewhere in the

texts of

um Mara holding Maha Brahma in the palm

of his hand just indicating that, you

know, Mara is the lord of

of what the the Christians will call

creation. You know, like in Christianity

also, you know, Satan is considered to

be somewhat the lord of this world.

And Mara's I mean that that's one

similarity between the Buddhist devil

and the Christian one.

But um

yeah, his his motivation is just to uh

keep keep as many beings under his rule

as possible.

So

um you know, there are some cases where

before the Buddha became enlightened
there's a sutra in the Sutta Nipata.
I think it's the Padhana sutta.
Where Mara's trying to be friendly and
nice. It's like, "Why are you doing this
to yourself? Why don't you just live an
easy life as a lay person and do
sacrifices and acts of generosity and
earn merit and you can go to heaven in
your next life."
Because um if Mara can't get you to be
bad, he'll get you to be good because if
you go to heaven you're still in
samsara. Heaven's just a higher level of
samsara than this world just as hell is
a lower realm of samsara.

So that's one difference between the the

Buddhist Mara and the Christian Satan is

uh

Mara's really not necessarily evil. He's

just samsaric.

You know, good and bad are both

samsaric.

And so if he can't get you to be bad,

he'll get you to be good.

So it's not totally malefic. It's just

samsaric.

I think uh

I had this idea that if if there really

is a Satan, he'd be an atheist and I

think Mara's kind of in a way kind of

that way too. Just very I mean there are

people in this world that are just hyper

samsaric. You know, it's just this is
all there is. They take everything
really seriously. You know, they take
money seriously and social status
seriously and and the car seriously and
you know, they're that's just you know,
what their existence is based on.
And I would assume that Mara is that way
too.
But uh my own personal experience, I
don't think there's even any need for
any cosmic bad guy because
um
you know, we can mess ourselves up well
enough.
And uh Mara really can't do anything to

us that is not in accordance with our

comma or our karma

for for it to happen anyway.

So I mean he doesn't really have any

power to do anything to us that we're

not literally doing to ourselves because

it's our own karma.

So, I mean, I've I've really never taken

it very seriously. I think Mara would be

kind of mythological being.

But, I mean, there are there are like

malefic beings out there.

So, I'm not saying that there aren't any

um like supernatural

um malefic um entities or beings.

But, um there there'd be just one in

charge,

you know, at the top, so to speak, sort
of like Satan in in Christianity
or uh Shaitan in in Islam.
Um I don't I don't really think it's
necessary. I don't think there's like an
organizational structure to it.
According to to Buddhism, and I think
maybe Hinduism also with their
equivalent, that um Mara is is really
not so much a a person or a being as a
position. Because
um beings in heaven, including small g
gods, including brahmas, don't live
forever. They might live a zillion
gazillion years, but they don't live
forever. So, after one Mara has

exhausted his karma and passes away into
some other existence, he'll just get
replaced by the next Mara. The same same
is true of of Maha Brahman, Sakka, king
of gods, and so forth.
Although uh
I might have deviated or
digressed from the from the answer here.
So, I'll just move on to the next
question.
This is from Rakasa.
Okay, and he thanked me for an answer I
gave him about he was asking me about
um why the Buddha would give such bad
definitions for terms.
And he says, "To clarify, the definition
of sorrow was from the Maha Satipatthana

Sutta translated by Bhikkhu Sujato.

For dukkha sacca, Buddha first gave a list of items that constituted dukkha, rendered as suffering, and then defined each item.

And what is rebirth, and what is sorrow, etc.

What struck me was that all the other items had fine definitions, but not sorrow."

So, then he says

for the next Q&A.

So, I it's probably pointless for me to even list to read that part. Um do you feel studying the more refined logic of Mahayana is worthwhile?

Um

the more refined logic of Mahayana.

Reading Mahayana texts is worthwhile.

Even like a strict Theravadan. I have

met some really strict Theravadans who

did not want to read anything that

wasn't strict Theravada. You know, they

didn't want to be reading wrong view.

So, they wouldn't I mean, not only would

they not read like fiction, you know,

novels,

they they wouldn't read, you know,

Hinduism or Mahayana or anything like

that. And in a way that's it just

strikes me as being dogmatic. I mean,

you can derive wisdom from reading

Mahayana texts.

Um the more refined logic

um

Yeah, I I have mentioned more than once

recently that Mahayana Buddhism, since

it because it or partly because it arose

centuries after the earlier schools,

um it has a more refined kind of logic.

Because apparently, in the Buddha's

time, there was no Indian equivalent of

Aristotle

um like developing like good rules of

formal logic. And so, in the Theravada

texts, there the the logic is kind of

sketchy.

You know, sometimes it's it's not very

good logic from uh like a modern Western

point of view or even a classical Greek

point of view.

Um

So, by the time Mahayana arose, you

know, a few centuries later,

uh apparently, either they did have um

some kind of formal logic developed in

India, or else

maybe just even came from trade routes

from from Greece or Rome.

So,

um

Yeah, some Mahayana just like tramples

on logic, too.

But, it it's all part of a it's all part

of a logical, you know, there's method

to the madness.

Um one of the one of the most important
Mahayana books I ever read was called
Buddhist Logic. It was it's really old,
translated by uh
uh a Russian fellow named Sherbatsky.
This was even before the the Russian
Revolution, the first one. So, he was in
St. Petersburg in in Russia like 1915
or something.
But, um
it's um there was a a school called the
Yogacara logicians.
Uh also, I think it's called the Dignaga
school.
Where I mean, they were just
developing Buddhist logic.

And it's it's well worth looking into.
It's it's some of it is is profound like
um it was Dignaga or one of his
disciples
who came up with the idea, which I agree
with, that that's um if you have a
sensory datum and no interpretation of
it,
you know, you've got the the vedana, but
not the sanna. You know, you've got the
the sensory datum, but no perceptual
interpretation of of attributing meaning
to it, it's the same as if there's
nothing there at all.
So, that's that's kind of nice. Um one
real breakthrough I had that inspired me
to write my very first Buddhist essay

was from it came from reading volume two

of Buddhist Logic,

where they're talking about

um

what was it? Feeling and perception. I

think that's I think that was it. How

feeling and perception are always

supposed to be

um they arise together. And I'm thinking

like

it's like what comes first? It's like,

do you direct your attention to

something which causes you to perceive

it? But, I mean, if you're not

perceiving anything

yet, I mean, why would you direct your

attention to it? You know, why do you direct your attention to something before you perceived it? But, if you've already perceived it, then you've already seems to have directed your attention to it.

And um

there was there was some statement in there that it was like

um

the directing your attention and the attributing significance are just two aspects of the same phenomenon. It's sort of like a thing and its behavior, like verb and noun. Like the

it's like the way the human mind works is we divide everything up into things

and the the actions of things. But,

really,

you can't really separate a thing from

the action of the thing. Um

uh assuming that just sitting there is

is is an action. You know, it's it's

behavior.

So,

a person and their behavior,

you know, the person has this body, this

noun, and their behavior, which are the

verbs, really they're it's just like uh

an illusion to separate them. And that's

the way it is with um you know,

perceiving something and directing your

attention to that thing. You know,

they're both just two aspects of the

same thing.

And so,

I considered like vedana and uh sanna to

be just two aspects of the same thing.

And just going with logic, if you got

two things that have to arise

together, they pass away together.

And I mean, there's no way you can have

one without the other, then I mean,

they occupy exactly the same point in

time and space,

then I mean, they're just two aspects of

the same thing.

So, consciousness and mental states are

similar, too. I mean, it's

they're they're as as far as I'm

concerned, two aspects of the very same
phenomenon.
Instead of the way Abhidhamma does it,
it just
divides them into like absolutely
different, qualitatively different from
each other.
So,
do I feel studying the more refined
logic of Mahayana is worthwhile? If
you're into that, I mean, it's not
necessary. You can become enlightened
without it. But, um
if you do want to be knowledgeable with
regard to, you know, Buddhist
philosophy, or

um

if you're just sort of a logical person,

and that kind of just thinking

logically, like um investigating

Buddhist philosophy with with some

Buddhist logic behind you, um yeah,

that's it's worthwhile, I think.

Like Nagarjuna was a was a kind of

logician.

And he's uh

like a Mahayanist patriarch.

And he's he's definitely profound. I

consider him to be one of the greatest

philosophers of all time.

And he was he was uh into logic. And

like the Mulamadhyamakakarika,

which is his most famous text, it's

essentially a kind of logic text.

And uh going with Buddhist logic,

it's like you've got four different

possibilities with regard to any kind of

um like question. You know, you've got

yes, you've got no, you've got yes and

no, and you've got neither yes nor no.

And uh

he he he attributes that that fourfold

um division of possible answers to

pretty much everything in in

demonstrates that none of them really

apply. The whole thing is just invalid.

But, um

I think I'm digressing again. So, I'll

just move on to the next question. And

this is from Hayits Tig.

And Hayits Tig says, "Is it possible to ordain for a relatively brief period, say 1 to 3 years in the Theravada tradition?

And so I would say to to you that Hey, it's Teague is uh um he doesn't know about Burmese or Thai Buddhism because not only can you be ordained for a relatively brief period of 1 to 3 years, you can be ordained for 1 to 3 days.

That uh there are a lot of old Burmese guys who brag about how many times they've been ordained as a monk. You know, some of them are way up into double digits.

Because it's just their tradition like
during the New Year's festival or on
their vacation from work, they just go
and get ordained for
you know, a week or whatever.
And um
it's it's called a in Burma, it's called
a Don Labha ordination. Don Labha is uh
the Burmese pronunciation of Doola Bha,
which means hard to hard to uh get, hard
to obtain. Because
um human life is hard to obtain.
You know, most most beings in this
universe are not human and to be
uh to be a human during a time when
you've got Dharma in the world is even

more rare and more difficult. And to
actually be exposed to monks and to have
the opportunity to be ordained as a
monk, that's is very rare. So
the Burmese consider it to be very
meritorious for a man or or for a boy to
be ordained into the Sangha. Boys would
be ordained as novices rather than uh
fully ordained monks.
And it's
it's I mean, even the King of Thailand
does this. The It's a tradition that the
King of Thailand, before you know, when
he's still like a teenager, he'll be
ordained and
even though he's he's
soon to be the king or maybe he already

is king, he'll still he'll take his bowl
and and walk for alms through the
through the village, probably getting
like really first-rate food from rich
people wanting to give the king food.
But um
yeah, it's it's fairly easy, especially
in Burma. You You don't even really have
to be a Buddhist in a lot of places.
Um
So yeah, the answer to that is yeah.
I'll just move on to the next question.
But I mean, if you want to go to a
Burmese meditation center and you're
qualified to be ordained as a as a monk
and you you could just be ordained as a

monk for the month that you're there or
the 2 weeks that you're there or
whatever if they're willing to do that.
So I'll just uh move on to the next
question. This is from Sacha.
S A C H A
And Sacha asks, do you have the
impression that your defilements have
been reduced by your years of practice?
And I would say yeah.
Yeah, I mean, there's definitely results
from from effort.
Even if you don't notice the results,
especially at first, still there's
definitely any effort you make to
practice Dharma is going to yield fruit.
Um just like what I was saying about

fear earlier, just learning just the

basics of

of Buddhist mindfulness where you can

detach from any kind of

pleasant or unpleasant, especially

unpleasant mental state, you know, it's

it's so that it's not you anymore. Like

it's not I'm pissed off, it's just anger

is arising.

Or you know, I'm I'm afraid, it just

becomes, you know, fear is arising and

then you observe the fear.

So that kind of thing has helped, just

understanding things a little better,

understanding karma better.

Um

it it's definitely helpful. But then
again, I mean, this is kind of a logical
fallacy, I think, because it's hard to
say
uh what kind of mental and spiritual
state I would be in if I just had never
become a monk in the first place.
You know, it's it's hard to say. Maybe
uh
you know, having a wife and kids would
somehow be fulfilling some kind of need
that I had deep down or something. I'm
not sure. Or maybe just uh having
picking the wrong girl to marry and uh
just being put through the wringer, you
know, it would be like a huge ascetic
practice and paying off some huge karmic

debt or something. I don't know.

But um my impression is

that

having been a monk for 30 years has

definitely had a positive effect on my

spiritual state.

So I will move on to the next question.

This is from Mon Compt.

I think I spelled I pronounced that

right. Mon Compt.

And Mon Compt says

can insight happen without the jhanas or

tranquility,

stillness of mind? I see so many people

do like insight meditation and actually

to me it sounds so weird because it's

something that I never caused, but
rather something that occurs by itself
once I got out of jhana or before jhana,
once you've reached a fair amount of
tranquility, stillness of mind.
Uh can insight happen without the
jhanas?
Um yeah, insight can happen without the
jhanas. Although it is true, I do not
like the whole
equation
of ins- of insight with mindfulness.
Like mindfulness meditation in the West
is called Vipassana, which is the Pali
word for insight.
So yeah, I mean, they're very different.
Practicing mindfulness is something that

you do, but insight is something that spontaneously arises. And it can spontaneously arise after jhana. Like you come out of a jhanic state where you're not thinking anymore and then insight can arise. Like for example, a very a very simple one is you get into a meditative state where you're not thinking, you're just wide awake and your mind is is just empty and clear. You know, it's not blank. You're you're you're more awake than you are normally. But you realize, you have this insight that when you stop thinking, you don't just become unconscious. In

fact, you become in some ways more conscious than before when you were thinking.

Partly because if you're thinking, your attention is focused on your thoughts. You know, if you're perceiving anything, your attention is focused on what you're perceiving and thereby limiting it. You're ignoring everything around it to some degree. Whereas if you're not thinking anything, you're not perceiving anything in particular, your mind is like a mirror, it's all there with equal clarity.

Like a like a cheap camera that doesn't require any kind of focus, everything is just equally in focus.

But um it's

I mean, you can

you can have insight without without

jhana, definitely, just through

practicing mindfulness. Like like I was

saying earlier, if you're mindful of

fear, for example, so that you create

this detachment, you the insight can

arise, well, the fear isn't me, it's

just this mental state that's arising.

And so long as you don't get lost in it,

it's not you.

So yeah, I mean, it can happen either

way.

And uh some people that do attain jhana

or they're they do um tranquility

meditation instead of mindfulness

meditation, um it just becomes like a

substitute for narcotics, you know, they

just go into the zone. You know, they

just bliss out.

And um

they don't really get much benefit from

it. I've I've met a lot of people

who really good meditators, they just

sit like a statue

for, you know, they can sit there for 2

hours. But then when they get up,

they're just as messed up as they were

before. It's like it didn't seem to do

them any good. It's just it's just like

they've got a compartmentalized mind.

You know, different rooms.

And uh just this one compartment of their mind got really good at meditation, but it doesn't really translate into the rest of their personality.

So I mean, that happens, too.

Um the Buddha did

I mean, going with the suttas, the suttas really emphasize the importance of jhana. You know, like in the Mahasatipatthana Sutta, right right concentration is defined as the four jhanas.

So

jhana is something that's good to cultivate if you can. It's much more

difficult for a layperson to cultivate

it than a monk who's just full-time

meditator.

Um mindfulness generally works better

for laypeople

and especially westernly people who are

compulsive thinkers anyway.

Um

Let's see.

Have I answered this question

sufficiently?

I'll ask the question again. Can insight

happen without the jhanas or

tranquility, stillness of mind? I see so

many people do like insight meditation

and actually to me it sounds so weird

because it's something that I never

caused, but rather something that occurs
by itself once I got out of jhana or
before jhana, once you've reached a fair
amount of tranquility, stillness of
mind. Well, even if you're practicing
mindfulness, there's
uh
at least your mind is is calming down.
So there's that, too.
Uh and and mindfulness and and uh
like jhana or or samatha meditation,
um they're not mutually exclusive. I
mean, you can have both going on at the
same time. In fact, uh fourth jhana is
called purity of mindfulness.
So the more mindful you get, the more

calm your mind is going to be, at least
in a certain extent to a certain extent.
I mean, if you're being mindful of of
anger or something, still there's that
still place that's watching the anger.
So, I'll just move on to the next
question here.
The answer to that one was uh yes.
So, this one, another one, can we fall
down into becoming information junkies?
Let me explain. I see so many people,
including myself, spending more time
ingurgitating information and theory
about the path than actually meditating
or being mindful. So, my second question
would be how long should we spend on
studying and practicing?

Well, yeah, I mean, ultimately, it's not
thinking that's going to get you
enlightened. You're not going to
understand reality by thinking about it
or thinking about anything, really.
I mean, there have been a few like um
there's a famous
uh English monk, Nyanavira,
who believed that he had become uh an
Arya just by
thinking while he was doing meditation,
walking meditation. You know, he's just
like hammering out this
super intellectual understanding of
Dhamma.
And he thought that he became an Arya by

just by hitting on this intellectual

right view, but

like I like I said before, you're you're

not going to understand reality by

thinking about it. So,

um

it's like

thinking

it I mean, the best use you can use for

thinking is to help you stop thinking.

It's it's like

um the more you know, the more you

realize you don't know, kind of a thing.

Um there was a Mahayana text. I got the

the quote written down here somewhere.

It's like the purpose of Lord Buddha is

to liberate us from our thinking by

means of our thinking.

Or like the the words of the Zen master

like the the arrows of a of a master

archer who can shoot down another arrow

in midair.

And so, the the words of the Zen master

just kind of hit the words of the person

he's talking to, and then they just both

fall down to the ground, and you just

got this this emptiness behind. So,

that's like the best use for

for thinking other than

um as a detector. That's one of

the best uses for intellect is uh it can

help you from believing

So, critical thinking

um can be very useful, at least as a way

of defending yourself against you know,

crappy views.

So,

uh

so, question here is how long

uh should we spend on studying and

practicing? Well, I mean, you for

different people, it's going to be

different amounts.

You just want to study enough that you

know how and why to practice correctly.

And that that should be sufficient. But,

I mean, we do have like a restless,

hungry kind of mind, so sometimes just

feeding it information um can be the

lesser two evils. Otherwise, you might

just be like climbing the walls with

boredom or some such.

But, as a general rule, really what you

need to know is how and why to practice,

including how and why to meditate

correctly.

And um you should never be too sure that

you already know. Even if you think you

know,

still uh it's good to be open-minded and

continue exposing yourself to uh

various various points of view,

with including, you know, different

roots, spiritual systems.

So,

the question uh how long should we spend

studying and practicing?

Um

as little as possible for you to be, you know, at peace. Like uh one of the the founder of the tradition which I was ordained, Venerable Tong Pao Lu Seattle, had uh his spiritual advice

or just a little motto

is uh

eat less, sleep less, think less, talk less. And uh probably read less would be another one you could add to that.

So, I mean, you're definitely going to have better luck um practicing Dhamma correctly

in a forest with a like some meditation master than you would at at Oxford

University in like a Buddhist studies program.

Um Ajahn Chah used to say that uh scholar monks usually don't get anywhere just because they're they're just emphasizing intellect, and enlightenment is not intellectual. Like true wisdom is not intellectual.

And you just if you just get stuck in that, which is what like scientific materialists do, they're just completely stuck in this intellectual approach of perceiving things, which is like symbolizing the world, and then acting as though the symbols have this one-to-one correlation with reality,

when uh that is not necessarily the

case.

So,

I think I'll just move on to the next

question here. This is from Ancient

Minds.

So, I welcome Ancient Minds to the Q&A

because I don't think he's asked

anything before or she or they. I guess

it's minds in plural.

How did the first self, whether human,

animal, or vegetative, become embodied

when there was not yet karma?

Well, that's kind of an interesting

question,

but the answer is there was no first

self.

From the Buddhist point of view, samsara

is beginningless and presumably endless.

And so,

um it's just it's always been this way.

There was no first

um

being

to become embodied. Or or going with my

old uh simile of the block of marble, I

mean, the block of marble always has and

always will have an infinite number of

like virtual statues contained within

it.

And this that's the way samsara is. It

always has had and always will have an

infinitude

of of beings

because they're possible.

And if it's possible, it's going to

happen in an infinite universe.

So, yeah, it's it's kind of an academic

question since there was no first self.

So, Ancient Minds asks the next question

here is karma is like momentum? Question

mark, question mark. I thought karma was

a condition that requires a subject to

be put under said condition,

a subject capable of performing actions.

Well, ultimately, there is no subject.

Yeah, karma

literally from the Buddhist point of

view, is cetana or

usually translated as volition, although

I think will or even urge

might be a better translation than than

uh volition.

So, karma is like Schopenhauer's will.

It's just this

sort of a

um

usually or often, I will

um describe it as just the the momentum

of your mental states. It's like the

verb aspect of your mental states.

So, I guess earlier when I was talking

about feeling and perception, that was

that was wrong. It was like volition and

perception.

So, it's the perception of of you know,

s-

interpreting something when the the volition of directing your attention to it in order to interpret it. So, yeah, I was confused a little earlier. It was it's been a long time since I wrote that first essay.

Um

so, I consider volition and perception to be two aspects of the same thing.

Uh

so, at least I at least I caught that one. Sometimes I'll misspeak, I'll say the wrong thing, and then I don't notice it until after I see the video.

So, karma is yeah, it's like the momentum of your mental states of of

like your

your judgments, your your perceptions,

and so forth. And

um if you are not fully conscious, it

acts as just the force of habit. It's

like an autopilot that just keeps

pushing you through life.

So, whenever you're not fully conscious,

which uh for most people is pretty much

always, then, you know, they're just um

running on automatic pilot, and that

automatic pilot is uh a manifestation of

karma.

So, I mean, it can be interpreted

differently. Most people will interpret

karma as just like some

um

as yet undiscovered law of physics like

uh

um what's his name?

Isaac Newton. You know, every action has

an equal and opposite reaction. So, if

you do this, then then the equal thing

will have to happen back to you, kind of

a thing. And there is a certain element

of that, but ultimately, karma is a

mental state.

And it's uh sort of a

a process mental state. It's like a verb

mental state instead of just a static,

you know, single mental state. It's like

this flow,

you know, it's like the the stream of of

volition or of will, like Schopenhauer's will.

So, I'll just move on to the next question from Rafi 46.

How important are Buddhaghosa's commentaries on the Pali Canon in Theravada Buddhism? Well, that depends on what country you're in, what tradition you are following.

Um

I really can't speak much for Thai Theravada or Sinhalese Theravada.

Uh I think they probably don't put as much emphasis on Buddhaghosa.

Ironically, since Buddhaghosa was uh writing his commentaries in Sri Lanka.

But, in Burma

to some degree, Buddhagosism is even

more important than Buddhism.

Which is uh it's it's kind of ironic,

and it used to really bug me as a monk.

But, when you're

like in Burma, they've got like a a

medieval attitude towards Buddhism. Like

it's sort of like a medieval Christian

attitude. Like medieval European

attitude towards, you know, the Catholic

Church. It's similar

um among

Burmese monks that it's like everything

in the books is correct. Everything in

the tradition is true, it's right. And

that includes the commentaries, because

sometimes the commentaries from the Burmese point of view are more important than the suttas themselves.

Because if in the sutta, the Buddha says blue, but the commentary says, "Well, when he said blue, what he really meant was red." If you didn't have the commentary, you wouldn't know that it really means red when the Buddha says blue.

And that may sound like kind of a joke, but you know, there there are plenty of cases. Like one of the most famous is where the Buddha says that because of ordaining nuns, Buddhism or the Saddhamma, the true Dhamma, will last

for only 500 years.

Um, and the commentary says, "Well, when he said 500, what he meant was 5,000."

Cuz they couldn't really go with 500 because the commentaries weren't even written down until more than 500 years later, and they couldn't

um you know, they couldn't entertain the possibility that you know, they weren't really Buddhists anymore, that true Dhamma had died already.

So, how important are Buddhaghosa's commentaries on the Pali Canon? I I've met a few

maybe several Western monks that never bothered to even read even the Visuddhimagga.

Um, but I mean, if you want to be informed, you know, you want to um be literate and educated in Theravada Buddhism, it's good to be familiar with the commentaries.

Um, a lot of the time the commentators are just guessing.

They don't really know. You know, and then and usually they don't admit that they're guessing. So, that they just make a guess, sometimes it's a wrong guess, and then that just gets it just ossifies into dogma, where that's the way it is, even if it's not correct.

So, let's see. How important are

Buddhaghosa's commentaries on the Pali Canon in Theravada Buddhism? Uh again, it's like to a Western Theravada Buddhist, it's there's almost no real

um

you know, they're they're just not authoritative. Like I never considered the commentaries to be authoritative. I could see plainly enough that in some ways they deviate from the text, in some ways they misinterpret the texts.

Um

But, if you're if you're just a devout like Burmese Buddhist monk with a pre-modern attitude and you just cannot doubt any of it.

Like somewhere in the commentaries it

says that the Buddha was 27 ft tall.
And there was a Tipitakadhara
Mingun Tipitakadhara. And a
Tipitakadhara is someone who has
memorized the entire three pitakas
by heart. So, it's like 40 volumes.
So, it's like you got somebody who has
memorized by heart like the Encyclopedia
Britannica, including like the knowledge
in brief.
And this man was was brilliant. I mean,
not only did he have a really good
memory, but he was like a real
intellectual scholar. But, because he
was Burmese, he could not doubt that the
Buddha was 27 ft tall. So, he had to

come up with this elaborate theory. I mean, he read the suttas well enough to know that the Buddha really wasn't that much taller than anybody else. I mean, he was tall, but he wasn't taller than a giraffe.

So, he had this theory that well, in the Buddha's time, people were more virtuous, and because they were more virtuous, the gods loved them more, including the gods who controlled the weather or who can influence the weather. So, the the weather was more conducive to growing nutritious crops, the rains were timely and so forth, no droughts, or not not nearly as many, the food was more nutritious, and so

everybody was way bigger than they are now. And that's that's how he had to deal with the commentary saying the Buddha was 27 ft tall. He could not doubt it.

But, I mean commentaries say things that uh I mean, even the texts themselves say things that a modern or post-modern Westerner cannot believe easily.

So, I'll just move on to the next question.

And this is from Bpat427.

And Bpat427 says, "Who's creating more bad karma, a psychopath who kills people for fun with no accompanying negative

mental states afterwards, or a mentally stable person who kills with wholesome motivation to protect others and feels regret afterwards?"

Um, I would say

I mean, it's it's going to vary from person to person. I mean, you can't just give a blanket explanation because um like for example, the the mentally stable person who kills with wholesome motivation to protect others and feels regret afterwards, well, I mean, how much regret?

That kind of a thing, you know, or how did they kill the others? You know, it's going to depend a lot on the mental states of the individual.

Like it's going to depend entirely on

the mental states of the individual.

So,

all in all though, in general, I would

say the psychopath who is devoid of

compassion and devoid of any kind of

conscience

um at least at the conscious level is

going to be creating much more bad

karma.

Um

partly because

like a psychopath

they have almost no access to the

subconscious mind. It's like they're

completely cut off from the deeper

levels of their own mind, but those deeper levels are still there. So, deep down at like a subconscious level, they're aware of the suffering they're causing to others. You know, it's it's having an effect on them. It's just not at a conscious level.

And that's that's kind of the way karma works, too. It's it's it's you know, we're not aware of what direction we are heading, but it's it's in there. It's it's at a subconscious level.

So, the psychopath is is causing like severe subconscious damage to himself. And without without knowing or caring at the conscious level.

But, uh some people, I mean, they can be well-intentioned,
but then they'll do something. Even maybe they killed somebody accidentally, and then they'll just have they'll just be like eaten up with remorse afterwards.
And that remorse is really worse karma than like if you accidentally kill somebody. Let's say you're you're working on a roof and you drop a hammer accidentally and it hits someone in the head and kills them. Um, I mean, that was completely accidental. I mean, the person hasn't necessarily done anything wrong other than just not being fully

conscious, which you know, is pretty much everybody. You know, everybody can make a mistake.

And so,

um almost all of the bad karma they're going to get from killing that person is going to be from regret.

Or just being upset from when the person's family is calling them a murderer or whatever. But, um

So, I mean, the regret can just I mean, a person could go to hell just over regrets. And it doesn't even have to be over anything

good. I mean, like you can have a devout Jewish person who tries to follow, you know, all the the Mosaic Law. You know,

they try to be completely kosher. And then one day they eat some apple pie, and it turns out there was lard in the crust, cuz lard makes really good pie crust. And there was like the person didn't realize that you know, they didn't think. And then so, this Jewish person eats the lard, and according to the Old Testament, you you eat the fat of some animal that is not suitable for sacrifice. And much much less, you know, eating let alone eating pork. Then um that's it, you're cut off from your people. You're no longer a Jew, you're no longer one of God's chosen.

And I mean, just so I mean, that person

might just be

just

eaten up with remorse and just

completely persuaded they're going to

hell or whatever, because they

accidentally ate some pie with with lard

in the crust.

So,

again, it's going to depend on the

individuals. But, for the most part, I

think a psychopath who kills people for

fun with no accompanying negative mental

states

I mean, doing something for fun is

already it's it's got some bad karma in

it, because that's wallowing in sensual

pleasures, you know, you're you're

wallowing in sensuality, even if you're just you know, killing a prostitute for for for jollies.

Um, yeah, I mean, you're still I mean, most of these people are just following this inner compulsion.

And so, it's like it's like a strong attachment.

And so, I mean, even that is is big karma. And um

But, as I was saying, is most of the damage they are causing to themselves is subconscious, cuz a psychopath is just kind of

cut off from their deeper levels of their own mind. They're just kind of a

kind of a mind, or at least that's my interpretation.

So, let's just move on to Bipap427's next question. And this is kind of a long one because I've

I have to sort of recite some rap music lyrics, but I I won't I won't be doing the the rap kind of a thing, so please bear with me.

Um

Based on the lyrics of part three and four of this song, do you think that these rappers have at least a rudimentary grasp of Dhamma? And I'm sorry, I forgot to even

record the name of the the rap song or the group that is rapping. I don't know,

those of you who are into

um

rap music, maybe you maybe you'll you'll

know this, but parts three and four of

this song, this rap uh if you can even

call rap music a song, because they're

not singing.

Okay.

Ooh ooh, could it be that heaven is

fleeting and all ways and nothing is

forever and wishing will get you

nowhere.

Ooh ooh, what a dream, go to sleep and

wake up tomorrow. Funny how I'm always

on the head of the arrow. Ooh ooh.

Ooh ooh. Funny how I'm always on the

head of the arrow. Ooh ooh. Could it be that heaven is fleeting and all ways and nothing is forever and wishing will get you nowhere. Ooh ooh, what a dream, go to sleep and wake up tomorrow. Funny how I'm always on the head of the arrow. Ooh ooh. Ooh ooh. Ooh ooh.

Ooh ooh ooh.

Beauty is my drug, I'm the pusher, push it.

We think we exist, that's why we suffer, do we not?

Sweet but treacherous is the poison, baby. Give it to me raw, death is beautiful.

Death is beautiful, give it to me raw.

Death is beautiful.

Give it to me raw, death is death is beautiful. Death is beautiful, death is beautiful, death is beautiful. Death is beautiful, death is beautiful.

We think we exist, that's why we suffer, do we not? Do we not? Give it to me raw, death is death is beautiful. Death is beautiful, death is beautiful, death is beautiful, death is beautiful, death is beautiful.

Do we think we we think we exist, that's why we suffer, do we not? Do we not? Give it to me raw, death is death is beautiful. Beauty is my drug, I'm the pusher. We think we exist, that's why we suffer, do we not? Sweet but treacherous

is the poison, baby. Give it to me raw,

death is beautiful.

So, let's get back up here to the

question cuz I've uh

Okay. Based on the lyrics of parts three

and four of this song, which I just

recited to you,

now you know I am not a rapper.

Do you think that these rappers have at

least a rudimentary grasp of Dhamma?

Yeah, I'd say they've got at least a

rudimentary grasp. Let's see, there's

there's a few kind of Dhamma statements

in here.

Heaven is fleeting and all ways and

nothing is forever and yes.

Yeah, anicca.

Nothing is everything is inconstant.

See, ooh ooh, what a dream, go to sleep

and wake up tomorrow. Well, it's not

necessarily anything, let's see.

Heaven is fleeting and nothing is

forever. I already said that part.

So,

beauty is my drug, I'm the pusher, push

it. I don't think so.

We think we exist, that is why we

suffer.

Yeah, I mean that could be interpreted

as some kind of Buddhism or something.

So, yeah, I mean

they might not be familiar with

Buddhism, maybe they are familiar with

Buddhism.

I don't know, but uh there's yeah, at least a rudimentary insight in there.

But uh that would not be sufficient for me to actually encourage people to listen to rap music.

So, we'll just move on to the next question here.

What do you think are some prerequisites for someone who wants to ordain as a Theravada monk?

Well, first of all, you should uh have faith in Theravada Buddhism.

Secondly,

you should uh be free of debt. I mean, it's technically you should not be ordained

if you are um in debt. If you've got any
kind of obligations that you could be
required by law to fulfill,
then technically you're not supposed to
be ordained as a monk.
If you're a runaway slave, that's out,
too.
Um
So, if you want to be a Theravada monk,
you want to be a correct one, you want
to be a good one, not just a clueless
one, like one of those people that
ordains for 2 weeks, you know, they
still got all their money, they don't
know the rules, they just think that
they're just magically going to get good

karma by wearing monk robes and going through a 20-minute-long ordination ceremony.

Um

Yeah, if you're going to be a monk, try to be a good one, try to follow the rules, which means you have to get rid of all of your money before you become a monk.

And uh

follow the rules, study the rules before you become a monk so that you'll know what rules to follow.

You know, pay off your debts and get everything straightened out, you know, clean your room, all that before you go to the monastery to be ordained.

And uh you should be okay.

So, let's move on to the next question,

which is from Chaplin.

Chaplin says, "What should I look for

when searching for a spiritual teacher

online or in my region as far as

credentials?"

Well,

credentials,

with regard to like degrees or

certificates or years under this master

or whatever, it doesn't necessarily

count for very much.

Um cuz I mean, spirituality is not

something that really you can uh

verify with a piece of paper.

Um

So, I think the first thing you should

search for is uh spiritual teacher is

telling you things are actually useful

to you.

You know,

um if they're helping you to be happier,

helping you to understand reality,

then that's good.

Um you may want to look into their

their personal conduct. You know, I

mean, if they're just going from one

female disciple to another to another,

um that would turn off a lot of people.

Um

Yeah, I mean, any kind of like a

teaching certificate from Spirit Rock, I

mean, that would that would like rule

them out pretty much already.

Yeah, a spiritual credentials from

Spirit Rock, I think that's a

disqualifier right there.

Um

Yeah, any any of the kind of woke places

where

um

you know, they're trying to recruit

teachers of color just for the sake of

diversity and inclusion.

Yeah, that's that's not so good.

But um

like a spiritual teacher, one of the

best things

you can do is just observe the spiritual

teacher

and see if they get upset, you know, see

if they they're cantankerous, you know,

they're they're like in a get in a bad

mood sometimes. That's one of the best

ways of of kind of you can't really tell

how wise another person is um

if they're wiser than you. You can't

really comprehend greater wisdom than

yourself except maybe through

you know, when things are going

pear-shaped, you know, things are just

you know,

the shit's hitting the fan and they

remain calm and serene, that's a good

indication that they've got wisdom.

But um

mainly I think you're better off just

if they've got a book or they've got

videos or something, watch those and if

it really resonates with you, it seems

to help you, then

um

you can you can avail yourself of what

they have to offer

uh at least provisionally.

I mean, you don't may not want to throw

yourself at their feet and declare them

your guru for the rest of your life.

But um

also like um

the uh endorsements of other people you

consider to be wise would be good, like

uh

like Ram Dass has very strongly endorsed

Neem Karoli Baba and that's one of the

reasons why I became interested in Neem

Karoli Baba. And uh

So, yeah, out of respect for Ram Dass,

but um

yeah, there there are a lot of of high

what do you call them? Just

charlatans. There are a lot of

charlatans out there.

And then uh in in the modern West, it's

just spiritual Siberia

where you can have people that don't

have much spirituality

any much spiritual depth or maturity or

wisdom going on, but nevertheless

they're

they've got something going on, you

know, they're good sales people or

something. And uh

they they get famous or make lots of

money or you know, become the head

teacher somewhere.

So, it is true, you should be skeptical

and and watch people carefully and if

they're doing things that you thoroughly

disapprove of,

um

then yeah, you can have to question

that.

But um

mainly I mean, the main thing I've done

is just you know, you read their book or

you

you you listen to what they have to say

and if it really resonates in a deep

place, you know, just intuitively, you

just you just feels right,

then that's one of the best things you

can do

uh to to decide whether they're going to

be helpful to you or not.

And um

again, just accept them provisionally. I

mean, you don't want to just dedicate

your life to this person just because um

you know, they seem legit because they

may turn out to be not as legit as they

seem.

Cuz that's the charlatans are really

good at seeming more legit than they

really are.

So, we'll just move on to Chaplin's next

question.

And that is, are there any mainstream

Western literary novels that aren't

necessarily Buddhist, but have an

underlying Buddhist theme?

And that's an interesting question. I've

been thinking about this recently.

Um like, for example,

you I've I've considered like thinking

about the the Christian books I've read

before. You know, I've read the Bible.

I've read

um

Science and Health with Key to the

Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy, which

counts as, you know, like

I've read the Book of Mormon.

I've read like um the autobiography of

Saint Teresa of Ávila. I've read the the

Ascent of Mount Carmel by by Saint John

of the Cross. But, also,

I've read like

Dostoevsky's novel The Idiot.

And

I mean, does that count as Christian

literature? Obviously, Dostoevsky was

profoundly Christian, and the idiot,

Prince Myshkin in the novel, symbolizes

Christ

at at least one level of the novel.

And so, um

in a way, I mean, you can

it it almost acts like scripture. You

know, you can read certain um Christian

literature that's just but written by a

Christian person who's just sort of

permeating what they're writing with

their their beliefs, and you're picking

up, you know, sort of the wisdom um of

what this person is trying to convey

just from reading a novel. And I've been

I've thought about like Buddhism, you

know, there's obviously way less

Buddhist literature in the West than

Christian literature because, of course,

the West is traditionally Christian.

Um Buddhism hasn't been around in the

West for very long.

But, um

there are

uh there are some some stories you can

read that are are Buddhist. I mean,

one thing you can do is find

translations of Asian books.

Like uh Alex Wayman

translated Monkey, you know? So, that

kind of counts as Western literature, at

least it's in English.

Um

but with regard to a Buddhist author

writing original Buddhist stuff,

um my best guess would be J.D. Salinger. That I remember when I was living in a cave in Burma, this American monk came to visit me, and he was telling me about how he read in some Buddhist magazine that The Catcher in the Rye was a Buddhist novel. And that just seemed ridiculous to me at the time. It's like, I didn't see it at all. I just started making cracking jokes about it. Yeah, I was like, Gilligan's Island's like a Buddhist parable, also. You know, we were thinking, you know, Ginger would be Tara, and so forth.

But, then, years later, I read like the unofficial sequel to The Catcher in the

Rye, which is Franny and Zooey by J.D.

Salinger. And that was clearly Buddhist.

I mean,

they had

I mean, there's mention of

you know, the the sacred books of the

East and a poly polygrammers on their

bookcase, and and Zooey

um I think it was Zooey. He said that um

he has to recite the bodhisattva vows

before he eats. He he one time he just

deliberately skipped reciting the

bodhisattva vows before he ate, and he

almost choked to death on a clam. And I

mean, it was just more blatantly

Buddhist, so that you

translate that back to The Catcher in

the Rye, which is very similar to this Glass family that that Salinger was working on later after writing The Catcher in the Rye. And then, you can see, yeah, The Catcher in the Rye really is it's Mahayana Buddhist, apparently.

But, um if you look for it, it's there. And that's really the only one I can think of. There's really not a lot. I I assume there's lots and lots of Buddhist literature, like Buddhist novels, and so forth. Some of them most of them probably, you know, second or third rate at best.

But, uh Salinger is worth reading, and

and he definitely had a spiritual side

to him, definitely.

Like um he wrote a short story called

Teddy

about this

9-year-old kid from New York City.

I think he was nine, approximately nine,

who was in this completely dysfunctional

family. His parents just hate each

other. He's got like this little

sociopath of a sister.

And

I mean, he remembers his past lives. He

was like this Indian

uh like a yogi

who uh

he just he he could have become

enlightened in his past life, but he he dropped out and uh just kind of wallowed in sensuality, which delayed him one life. And so, to kind of to compensate karmically for his his deviation, he he got reborn into this totally dysfunctional family.

But, he was essentially an enlightened being. And he's explaining it to this other guy who was saying that uh he was just a little kid watching his his his little sister drinking milk uh sitting in her high chair, and then all of a sudden it just struck him it it was God pouring God into God. Which isn't very Buddhist. I mean, it

was more Hindu, but um there's a lot of
that in Salinger. So, um if you're
interested in some kind of, you know,
Eastern philosophy um
like permeating or infusing uh Western
fiction,
I I would suggest Salinger just largely
because I can't think of anybody else.
And Salinger is a good writer.
So, I'll just uh move on to the next
question, which is the last question.
And it's from Diane, who always gets the
question in right before I do the video.
Just it's just, you know, just like in
the in the action movies when the the
guy rolls right underneath the the big
iron door right before it closes. Her

questions are like that.

And her question here is,

"Who created God, or did God create

himself?"

And this is kind of reminiscent of that

question up above that I that I already

answered about like, how did the first

being,

you know, start making karma? And there

just was no first being. And

um let's just set aside the whole idea

of God as the angry old man with the

long white beard, you know, much more

epic than this one, sitting on the

throne up in heaven with the the angels,

you know?

You know, it's sort of like Santa Claus,

except less jolly and with angel helpers

instead of elves.

Um

yeah, if you just set aside that, and

interpret God as

just ultimate reality, sort of like

Brahman in in in Vedantist Hinduism,

then God was not created. God has no

beginning and no end.

You know, God is the block of marble

that's always been there, and then

everything else is just sort of

virtually,

you know, conditionally there inside,

so to speak.

So, yeah, if assuming that there is a

capital G God, which is like the

absolute, the capital A absolute, just

ultimate reality, the highest

the highest truth, the highest reality,

um yeah, it's it's uncreated. It's

unconditioned. Like it like nirvana in

Buddhism is unconditioned. It has no

cause, no effect, no beginning, no end.

It's like completely outside of time.

So,

um

yeah, so who created God? Nobody created

God. God didn't even create himself

because

God is uncreated, just always been

there, always will be. There's

absolutely nothing that could possibly

cause ultimate reality to change or or

disappear or anything like that.

So, that was the last question. And I'm

creaking the chair again.

Um

so, uh I hope you uh are

more or less satisfied,

or at least somewhat intrigued by my

attempts to answer these questions. If

you have any questions yourself about

meditation,

about living living as a monk in Burma,

whatever, anything you think I might be

able to answer, you're welcome to ask it

in the comments below.

And please uh like and or subscribe.

And uh take a look at the URL links,

including uh

my my first three books are down in the

links, or they should be.

And uh be happy.

Hello, and welcome to episode 35 of

Question and Answer. I am your host,

Punya Bassam.

And this episode is maybe not going to

last quite as long as most because I

didn't get quite as many questions,

partly because somehow the the Q&A

announcement didn't wind up on

SubscribeStar.

So,

um

even so, I'm I'm pretty pretty

consistent lately with one Q&A every 2

weeks. So, we'll just see how it goes.

And

without any further ado, I think I will

uh

start answering questions to the best of

my abilities.

And the first one is from

Achala, a c a l a.

And Achala says,

"What are your views on Ajahn Brahm's

statement that Abhidhamma was not taught

by the Buddha?"

Well, most Western monks,

possibly most educated Western Buddhists

would agree

that Abhidhamma was not taught by the

Buddha. I used

and and I used to live in Burma. I lived

in Burma for more than 20 years, and in

Burma it's just a standard belief that

Abhidhamma is the most profound and most
important teachings of the Buddha.
They consider Abhidhamma to be more
important than than all the rest.
But, Western Buddhists
um don't have the same faith-oriented
attitude towards Buddhism.
And uh the evidence does indicate that
Abhidhamma did not exist
until after the time of the Buddha. And
it probably was not added to the
Tipitaka until around the time of the
third council.
Is that right? Yeah, around the third
council, around the time of the the uh
Emperor Ashoka.

So, there's lots of evidence and um

I uh

I don't have it here, but um there is

lots of evidence and um

I mean, you can look it up yourself. Um

it's it would be in an appendix to my

Atthasalini translation that's on the

website nipapancha.org

if you're interested.

But, um like in the in the Canon,

there's no real mention of the

Abhidhamma Pitaka or of Abhidhamma

philosophy. There are a few suttas where

it will say that monks are sitting

around discussing Abhidhamma and

Abhivinaya.

But, um since it was never an Abhivinaya

Pitaka, probably all that means is

they're just discussing like finer

points on Dhamma and Vinaya.

And um

let's see. The like in the canonical

histories of the first two councils,

there's no mention at all of Abhidhamma.

Like in the first council, it was

Venerable Upali recited Vinaya,

Venerable Ananda recited the suttas, and

that was it. That was all there was to

the council.

Um the the Burmese would say that

Abhidhamma would be included in the

Khuddaka Nikaya of the Sutta Pitaka,

but that is uh

kind of stretching it, I think, or

pushing it or something.

So,

there I mean, there are statements in

Abhidhamma that not are not in complete

accordance with the suttas. For example,

according to Abhidhamma philosophy,

um

there are two stages to becoming an

ariya. Like uh sotapanna, sakadagami,

and anagami or an arahat, the four

stages of sainthood. There's two two

like stages of each one of these. One is

fruit or one is path and one is fruit.

And according to Abhidhamma,

um the

the the path lasts just one moment. Just

immediately, I mean, it's just like this
transitional state that lasts, you know,
like a trillionth of a second,
essentially.
And um in the suttas, I mean, it's it's
talking about how people of path or
fruit are worthy of, you know, respect
and and and, you know, donations and so
forth. So,
um yeah, you couldn't really pay respect
to somebody in less than a trillionth of
a second.
And uh it is
it it's pretty clear that I mean,
Abhidhamma
continued to develop after the the um

the Tipitaka was closed.

So, a lot of the the most important teachings of Abhidhamma that are taught in Abhidhamma classes are actually from the commentaries to the Abhidhamma rather than Abhidhamma itself.

For example, the whole cittavithi or the 17 mind moments that have to occur for any kind of mental state to fully arise, I mean, that's just in the commentaries.

So,

yeah, I mean, if you study up on it, it's it's pretty it's pretty likely it's pretty obvious, in fact, that uh Abhidhamma um developed later on. In fact, I one of the one of the clinchers

is that

um the suttas and the rules of monastic

discipline are fairly similar for all of

the early schools of Buddhism.

They're

I would guess that like in the suttas,

it's maybe 85% the same just throughout

all the old schools that we know of.

But, Abhidhamma is completely different

for each school.

Even the

the um

Sabbatthivādins, the Sarvāstivādins,

and the Theravādins, which probably

split apart around the time of the third

council, like during the time of Ashoka.

Uh so, they're they're relatively
closely related. They split apart
relatively late. But, even so, their
Abhidhamma Pitakas, both both schools
have an Abhidhamma,
but or Abhidharma it would be called for
the Sarvāstivādins cuz they use
Sanskrit. There's not a single book
that's the same. They're just almost
completely different.
So, that is good evidence that it didn't
exist or it wasn't part of the Tipitaka
until during or after the third council
for Theravāda.
But, um I'll just move on to the next
question.
I I spent a lot of time bashing

Abhidhamma. Not saying that it's bad or
anything, but just pointing out that
it can be useful
for some people, like really
intellectual people that like
systematizing and classifying
everything. But, um
it's it's not going to get you
enlightened.
Um there's there's no story of anybody
becoming enlightened from hearing
Abhidhamma.
So, I'll just I'll just move on to the
next question.
Just so I don't spend an hour just
ranting on Abhidhamma.

So, the next question is from JT Drake.
And JT Drake says,
"With regards to the paranormal and
trickster element discussion at the end
of uh it was it was one of my videos. I
tend to think that there may be
something to the high weirdness path of
thinking of John Keel,
Jacques Vallée, and others, which
suggests that there is an adjacent
reality dimension, et cetera, that leaks
into our world and that is similar but
different enough as to be difficult to
understand. Any thoughts on that?"
Well, yeah, I would say that there is an
infinite number of adjacent realities.
That I mean, it's like the many worlds

hypothesis. Any in an infinite universe, anything that possibly can exist does exist. And so, what's keeping the weirdness at bay according to the the theory that was discussed here, like um the trickster element. It's um the the whole idea that I've been playing with comes from a book called The Trickster and the Paranormal by George P. Hansen.

And again, I I've discussed this a number of times, but he says that there are certain rules that keep everything more or less stable and predictable. But, there are like weak spots between the rules. And these rules are not just

laws of physics. Apparently, the laws of physics aren't enough for us people because our minds are so complicated. So, we got to make new we got to make additional rules, just like societal rules and taboos and and just political incorrectness and and just uh just all sorts of we have we have to have extra rules in order to make things more or less stable and predictable. And uh it's there are weak points in between the rules, or sometimes people, especially like like witches and so forth, will deliberately violate taboos in order to break down the the stability of of the the structure that's keeping everything stable and predictable so

that magic or or whatever can get into

the system.

And I don't think it's just one

alternate reality. I mean, there's just

an infinitude of other realities

surrounding us.

And to some degree even pervading our

world, and we just can't see a lot of it

just cuz we're so locked into this

structure.

So, those are my thoughts on it,

I guess. So, I'll just move on to JT

Drake's next question.

And JT Drake says, "Not sure I am clear

on the difference between meditation,

prayer, and daydreaming. Would be

interesting to hear a discussion of their differences and similarities. It seems to me that daydreaming may be similar to meditation, especially extended day dreaming.

Well, let's see. We got three things here: meditation, prayer, and day dreaming.

Prayer,

I'm pretty sure

is like asking asking favors of a higher power.

You know, like the Lord's Prayer, you know, "Forgive us our sins as we also forgive those that are indebted to us and lead us not into temptation and so forth." It's like you're petitioning

um like a higher being.

Not necessarily capital G God, I assume

uh

There have been lots of people and there

still are lots of people that that

petition small G gods and goddesses.

Um

maybe gurus and that sort of thing.

What um

So, yeah, prayer is is sort of

goal-oriented, it seems to me. It's like

you're directing some kind of petition

to a higher being in the hopes of

receiving help from that higher being.

At least that's that's the way I see it.

I'm I'm not sure if there there may be

some Christian sects that have prayer

that is more like meditation, they just

call it prayer.

But, meditation is is like

it's like

disciplining your mind.

And prayer requires some of that, too.

But, meditation, you're you're trying to

make your mind

simpler and more still. You're trying to

reduce the the the agitation and the the

wandering elements of it.

And elementary kinds of meditation, you

might be reciting

uh relatively complicated mantra or or

working beads, like the like a mala, or

just doing simple breathing meditations,

like just uh counting your breaths,
that kind of a thing. But, as your
meditation gets deeper and stronger, it
gets quieter and quieter until finally
the like the zenith of meditation,
you're just sitting there um just with
your mind just clear, silent, you know,
it's like a mirror or or
like a window pane or something.
So, you're you're wide awake, you're
still awake, you're not going into any
kind of um
like a subconscious state, like a like
hypnotic trance, something like that.
You may seem that way.
And uh some people who think they're

meditating really are hypnotizing themselves. So, there's that, too. I guess you could call self-hypnosis a kind of meditation, but in Buddhism it probably wouldn't be considered right concentration.

Um and day dreaming, I mean, that's just undisciplined. That's just your mind just wandering where it wants to go.

And I mean, if you were mindful of your day dreaming, which

um I'm not sure if how many people do this,

um but if you're just like observing yourself day dreaming, that could be a kind of mindfulness meditation. But, if you're just

you know, your mind is just kind of
floating around and you're thinking
about whatever you want to think, then
day dreaming in that sense, it's uh just
sort of an ordinary mental state.
Um my father, who was an amateur
hypnotist, would say that if you're in a
a day dreaming state where you're just
kind of tuning out everything around
you,
then that would be considered a mild
trance state.
But, it wouldn't be anything near to
like really deep meditation.
Because day dreaming, I mean, some
you know, sort of like dreaming at

night,

I suppose. So, it's it's it's um

it's just sort of a mundane mental

state.

So, uh

I think I'll just move on to the next

question. This is from Didymus.

And Didymus says,

"A Tibetan lama I knew told me that when

he went to join a monastery, the abbot

yelled at him and said, 'What do I need

one more monk filling up my septic

tank?'" or quote unquote.

Only he didn't call it a septic tank.

LOL.

That's it. Is it a bad abbot or just a

test?

Well, I've never met him and I can't really say, but I mean, it it could go either way. For example, one of my favorite Zen koans is uh I think it's in the Mumonkan. And uh Tozan's 60 blows, I think it's called.

And a monk went to this monastery and uh he he wanted to to live there for a while. And the abbot's asking him questions, like, "Well, where are you from?"

And the monk would just give this ordinary answer.

And then the the abbot would say, you know, "Well, where did you spend the the

rains retreat?" And then he would give just this ordinary answer. And then uh the abbot says, "I spare you 60 blows." And then he sent him away.

And so the the monk was just troubled all night. He he didn't know what he'd done wrong.

And so, he came back the next day to the abbot and said, "Yesterday you forgave me 60 blows. What did I do wrong?" And the monk or the the abbot just exploded at him. And this is a very loose paraphrase, but essentially he was saying, "Oh, you're good-for-nothing. You just move around from one place to another."

And it was at that moment that this monk

um he had a realization. I don't know if he became enlightened, but he had like a realization experience. And that that's his Zen koan, you're supposed to contemplate this.

And um

I mean, it could be along those lines where the abbot is just calling him good-for-nothing um

because in a in a way we are, you know. And it was I don't know, it could have could have triggered something, but in this case maybe it didn't. Or or it could just be that this abbot would just have a foul disposition cuz I mean, this is all I know about this Tibetan abbot,

so I really can't say what he was going for. Although, it could be that I mean, it was something along the lines of that Zen koan of Tozan's 60 blows where uh you know, there was there was something deeper involved.

That um you know, in in a way a monk is just kind of uh person who just kind of sits around and wanders aimlessly and um you know, in a sense, you can you can sort of contemplate that.

What um

I'll just move on to the next question.

And this one is from Merry, spelled m e r r y.

And Merry says, "Is being a biologist

or has being a biologist helped your Dharma practice in any way?"

Um

helped my Dharma practice. It's helped my understanding of myself, which I assume is helpful in Dharma practice. It's helped my understanding of human nature and just of life in general. I mean, I've I've I've said before that um biology and Buddhism are similar in that they're both studies of life. You're you're studying life in a systematic way. It's just that the biologist studies it from the outside and the Buddhist studies it from the inside. So, taking biology and Buddhism, I mean,

you're kind of studying life from both sides. You're you're sort of triangulating, which I suppose could be helpful.

But, the main thing for me is I just cannot help seeing human beings as a species of animal, and we are. And it's just a scandal to me

that

psychologists throughout most of the 20th century were saying that human beings don't have animal instincts. But, I mean, obviously they do. Like every emotion that we experience is instinctive. You know, it's just it's like universal throughout the human species.

Boys liking girls, girls liking babies, people preferring sweet food to bitter food, preferring the smell of baking bread to the smell of a cat fart, all of this kind of stuff is just built into us.

I mean, not that all boys like girls because, you know, homosexuality and all that, but still it is the status quo. It's just, you know, the way things generally are in our species.

Laughing when something funny happens, crying when you're sad, all of that kind of stuff is instinctive animal behavior. Just like opening your eyes really wide when you're surprised. Like Charles

Darwin,

um he gave the in he wrote this really fascinating book, which is still well worth reading, The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals, where he says that um you know,

when you're surprised, your eyebrows go up, you know, your eyes open wide, and that increases your peripheral vision, you can see danger more easily if your eyes are wide open. And at the same time, your mouth drops open, and you start breathing through your mouth because it's quieter for a human to breathe through their mouth, so you can hear danger more easily. And he points out that a dog a panting dog does the

exact opposite. A panting dog, if it suddenly hears a strange noise, it's surprised, it'll stop panting and prick up its ears because for a dog breathing through its nose is quieter than breathing through its mouth.

So, we've got all these instincts, and it's I don't know. I mean, it's not necessary to know this stuff um in order to become enlightened because prehistoric or not prehistoric, but, you know, like Bronze Age or Iron Age people, I should say, you know, in the Buddha's time, I mean, it was pre-Darwinian, obviously. It's pre-

modern science.

But, still they can they can do it. But, for a Westerner who thinks along modern Western lines, uh it can be helpful, but it's not really necessary.

But, with regard to my Dharma practice, yeah. Yeah, I say it has.

It it has helped me to understand myself and others in certain ways.

So, I'll just move on to Mary's next question.

Uh let's see. Is the Theravadan concept of comma

karma

fatalistic or is there room for somewhat free choices?

Well, I've talked and written about this

one. It is kind of an interesting

subject.

Is there free will in Buddhism?

And um

strangely in the sutras, the Buddha

rejects apparently the only two options

that um he he he rejects free will

especially in the Anattalakkhana Sutta,

which is considered to be his second

discourse after his enlightenment, which

caused his first disciples to become

fully enlightened or arhats.

Um in which he says that

with regard to with none of the five

khandhas can you say, "Let it be this

way. Let it be that way." and have it

consistently happen. That's a sign that
it's not us.
So, we don't have complete control over
our will. And so, that will isn't really
us because we can't really control it.
You know, it has like a will of its own,
so to speak.
And it's the same way with our body and
with our perceptions and with our
consciousness, with our feelings.
Um
but on the other hand
there was a a sect in the Buddha's time
like a non-Hinduistic
non-Buddhist sect called the Ajivikas
who were complete fatalists. They
believed in predetermination

and that you lived I think it was

something like 84,000 lives. And it was

just like taking a ball of string and

just throwing it and it rolls out until

the string is until the ball is gone and

the string reaches an end.

And um

they just they just figured I mean it

was part of their belief that if you

became an Ajivika monk, that meant you

were right up towards the end. You know,

this the ball of string was almost had

almost exhausted itself.

And uh the Buddha warned that that's

really a dangerous point of view and

that they can go to hell or have bad

things happen to them just because of

adhering to this belief.

So, it's it's kind of strange that the

Buddha

um rejected free will apparently and

also rejected determinism. And I mean,

what other choice is there? I mean,

random chance is out.

So,

I've had this idea that um

I mean, it doesn't really explain it. It

it I mean, it just kind of leaves it up

in the air.

It's just sort of like a paradox.

And um

Ramana Maharshi, who may have been fully

enlightened, although he was not a

Buddhist

he said that the only mind or the only

free will that we have is the choice to

be mindful or not.

Which is kind of interesting. I mean,

there could be some kind of free will in

Buddhism along those lines.

Um but I mean, it's either something has

a cause or it doesn't. This is just the

the basic logical argument. Something

has a cause or it doesn't have a cause.

I mean, that's like Aristotelian

thought. Either A or not A. Has

Everything has to be either A or not A.

And so,

if if your decision

has a cause, it is determined by that
cause. It is not free. If you have an
obvious
reason for doing something, then you're
doing it you know, it's it's being
caused by your perception of this
obvious reason. But on the other hand,
if it's doesn't have a cause, it can
just occur spontaneously at any time at
random. And neither of those accounts
for free will.
So, I've had the idea that uh getting
back to the the trickster in the
paranormal when humans become
self-conscious, our mind becomes
self-referential
and that creates a kind of logical short

circuit.

Like anything that's self-referential

can cause

or something that is self-referential

can cause paradoxes like the statement,

"This statement is false."

It's a paradoxical statement. It can be

neither true nor false because it refers

to itself.

And human consciousness refers to

itself, which may cause a kind of

logical short circuit in which free will

can somehow paradoxically

exist in some form. But

in in I mean, it just seems that free

will requires your will, your

decision-making process to be separate from everything else. You know, there would have to be a self, like a a distinct individuality that is distinct from everything else in order for you to have free will. And Buddhism just does not teach that. No matter how hard some Western Buddhists or Buddhist experts think that Buddha taught an eternal soul or some such.

Nevertheless,

um Buddhism does teach that I mean, we do not have a distinct self-existence, you know, distinct from the whole rest of the universe.

And so, that would pretty much rule out free will right there.

Ah, but there is there is room for free Well, choices anyway. I mean, you have choices. It's just the more conscious you are um on the one hand the more options you're going to have. Just the more conscious you are, the more options you're going to perceive, the more you're going to see. But at the same time, the the wiser you are, the more likely you are to do the right thing so that when a like an arhat I mean, he would just he wouldn't have any freedom left. And in a way, he'd be free from samsara, free from suffering and all that. But he wouldn't make free choices cuz he would

all always necessarily do the right thing.

So, it seems to me. I mean, maybe if he's just going to choose, you know, what kind of rag he's going to wipe himself with, he's going to use the the yellow one or the orange one, you know, maybe. But that would just be like a toss-up. I mean, it wouldn't even matter.

That would just be a coin toss.

So, yeah, we can say that there is room for somewhat free choices.

I mean, we have to make choices. And if you make bad choices, you're going to pay for them. And if you make good choices, then you will reap the rewards

of those good choices.

But um the Buddha did rule out determinism also.

So, it's just up in the air and we just go along as though we have free will anyway. So, it's good to make as good of choices as you can.

And try to cultivate wisdom as well as you can.

So, I'll just move on to Mary's third question.

And Mary says, "I have a question that is kind of important. Most rules are phrased something like, 'Do not do something unless someone is a relative.' Who is a relative according to

Theravada?"

Um like for example

um it's very seriously against the rules

for a monk to

touch a woman with the desire to obtain

pleasure from the contact.

That that is a sanghadisesa offense. And

the monk has to be he's put on

probation. He's got to take penances

like approximately 100 penances

for 6 days and 6 nights. And then he has

to be reinstated into good standing at a

ceremony with no fewer than 20 monks who

are in good standing. And the whole

thing is a pain in the neck.

And

um so, if you touch a woman with the

desire for pleasure

then

that is a sanghadisesa offense unless

the woman is a relative.

And that mainly means

um mother, daughter, or sister.

And um I don't think aunties or grandma

or maybe granddaughters or grandmas, I'm

not sure exactly. I've spent a long time

since I've studied the rules.

But it's like close immediate family.

Sister-in-law wouldn't be close enough.

Stepmom probably wouldn't be close

enough.

Maybe, I don't know. And yeah, you'll

have to study up on that somewhere if

you can find what to study up on.

Um

find a translation of the the Vinaya

texts especially with regard to uh

what is it? Sanghadisesa number two

if I remember correctly.

Gosh.

Let's see.

So, yeah. I mean, it's it's like a close

immediate family member. Mainly mother,

daughter, or sister.

So, I'll just move on to Mary's

fourth and last question.

And Mary says, "I am terribly sorry, but

could you please listen to In the Dead

of Night talk by Ajahn Chah. It lasts

half an hour. It is on YouTube reading

by Ajahn Amaro. My question is, do you

think Ajahn Chah

is in this talk talking how he became

enlightened?"

Well, I read that a long time ago when I

was a monk. The

this little story In the Dead of Night.

And I looked on YouTube and there's lots

of In the Dead of Night talks by Ajahn

Chah.

Um I listened to one that wasn't by

Ajahn Amaro. It was somewhat somebody at

Abhayagiri.

Um

but uh it's mainly a story about Ajahn

Chah

um spending the night in a cemetery in Thailand.

And just dealing with his fear because Thai people, Southeast Asian people in general, are very afraid of ghosts. A lot of them are.

And I mean, I I stayed in cemeteries sometimes in in Burma.

Went to see autopsies, that kind of a thing. It didn't bother me all that much. The autopsies mainly because I do have a degree in biology. It's just kind of a miracle how the human body works.

But, um

Um, it was part of I think the main point of it is Ajahn Chah is talking about one of his basic practices that he

would give to his disciples, like the monks that that came to him. It's like anything that you especially hate or fear or can't stand,

go do that.

Like, uh, monks that um, they hated human companionship, you know, they just wanted to go alone in the forest, he'd make them go live in town. Or if they were afraid of being alone, he'd send them out alone.

Um, if they were afraid of ghosts, he'd send them to the cemetery, that kind of a thing. And it is a powerful practice to do what you hate or what you fear is very powerful practice. So, um

The question here, do you think Ajahn Chah is in this talk talking about how he became enlightened? Um, that really wasn't point of it. I don't think he would be telling people how he became enlightened. But, he is I mean, it might be. I mean, if he was enlightened, um, and I'm really not I don't really have a horse in this race. But, um if he became enlightened, then that would be part of how he became enlightened was just deliberately facing his fears.

And just the things that he he couldn't stand, he would just seek them out. Or if there's something that you really like, don't do it.

You know, like, uh

Neem Karoli Baba would say, you know, if you really crave that cup of tea, don't drink it.

So, that's that's the kind of practice that Ajahn Chah really emphasized for his disciples and

for himself, also. So, if you did become enlightened, then he was talking about at least one way how he became enlightened, but that wasn't really the point. He was just pointing out the value, the spiritual value of avoiding what you like and seeking out what you dislike. Just for the just to teach yourself to to deal with it.

In a in a in a wise, mindful way.

So, I think I'll just, uh, move on to

the next question. And this is from Rui.

And Rui says, "Which sequence is more

scriptural, sila samadhi panna or panna

samadhi sila? And of course, what's your

direct experience of it?"

Well, the

the the scriptural tr- uh, trinity

for monks especially is sila samadhi

panna, which is morality, concentration,

and wisdom.

For laypeople,

it's

um, at least tradi- in traditional

Theravada, it's

dana sila bhavana. Dana is generosity,

sila is morality again, and bhavana is

like meditation or self-development.

Usually, I mean, it just means like

development, but uh, usually it means

meditation, like bhavana society.

So,

yeah, it's definitely sila samadhi

panna, although, um

I mean, there's

it's not just a linear progression.

The the Theravada Buddhist commentaries

will will make it out as a linear uh,

progression, especially to the extent

that only when your sila is pure can

your samadhi be pure, and only when your

samadhi be when your samadhi is pure can

your panna be pure. So, in that sense,
it's just this linear progression. You
have to purify your morals so that you
become a
like a saint in more or less Christian
sense, and then only then
when your defilements are are like way
reduced, then you can get into very
high, uh, meditative states like jhana.
And then only from getting into these,
uh, advanced meditative states can you
develop uh, panna sufficiently to become
enlightened, according to this
traditional Theravada.
So, it's not panna samadhi sila, sila
samadhi panna.
And my direct experiences of

it,

that's that's kind of hard to say. I mean, you have to have a certain amount of panna just even want to, you know, keep precepts and meditate. Unless you're just born born into it and you're just kind of following along with other people are telling you to do. I mean, that's possible, too. That usually does not end very well. I mean, you usually don't get much benefit from that.

Like, kids that would come to learn Buddhism just because their parents send them, they tend not to uh, make very good students. They don't they don't

learn very much just cuz they're not

there because they're actually

interested, they're just there because

they got sent.

Um

So, it's I see it as to some degree a

tripod, you know, the the the three the

morality,

uh, concentration, and wisdom.

They're they're like a tripod and

um, one of them is held up by the other

two.

And it's just sort of a like a mutual

feedback thing. They just gets better.

All three can get better and better kind

of simultaneously.

But, um, it is it is good to start with

sila just because it's easier. It may
not seem easy, but once you start trying
to meditate, you'll find that
controlling your body is easier than
controlling your mind.
So,
so you you get like if you're a monk,
you know, you get the rules down, you
practice the rules relatively strictly,
and then um
then you just the the peaceful, simple
lifestyle,
you know, you're not having to worry
about getting caught for anything cuz
you're not doing anything wrong.
And then that causes your mind to be

more serene, and then meditation comes
more easily, and then when meditation
comes easily, then wisdom can arise.
Which, you know, it's not strictly a
linear progression of sila samadhi
panna, but, uh
it's probably best to to list them in
that order.
So, I think I'll just move on to the
next question. This is from Stevens.
Who goes by other names, but we don't
need to get into that.
Stevens says,
"So, I hear those nagas live in
underwater pleasure domes in another
dimension and just experience pleasure
for some vast amount of time. I guess

the downside is that it's still samsara,
but that sounds like a pretty good
rebirth, right? How do you go about
becoming a snake man in your next life?
Not saying I'm going to resolve to do
that, but, you know, could be fun, I
suppose."
Well,
in, uh, Buddhism, there are beings
called nagas.
And they are fire-breathing cobra
dragons.
Um, I've got a theory about the origin
of dragons, and I do think that it may
have come from, uh, prehistoric Indian
cobra worship.

And And I mean, it's understandable.
Like, a king cobra, they can be approximately 20 ft long. When they stand up on their hind legs, so to speak, they can be 6 ft high, which is taller than most people. They spread their their hood this wide, and if they bite you, you die.
So, yeah, it's understandable how primitive, you know, prehistoric people worship these things. And they're still worshipped by a few people even nowadays, like in, uh, India and, uh I'm not sure about Burma because if you're worshipping nagas as a kind of mythological being, it's not the same as actually worshipping snakes.

Because even by the Buddha's time, they,

uh, could become very large. They had

human intelligence approximately. They

could shape-shift and assume human form.

They breathed fire.

Which I think may have come from

spitting cobras or something. They you

know, they spit

Never mind.

So,

um, they are animals. They cannot become

enlightened according to Theravada

Buddhist tradition. That's one reason

why, um, at a

at a monk's ordination ceremony,

the one of the questions that is asked

of any, um, aspirant to becoming a monk
is, "Are you human?"
And, uh, the reason for that, according
to the the rules of monastic discipline,
is that one of these nagas assumed human
form and was ordained as a monk.
And the thing is, when they when they
fall asleep, when they're unconscious,
they they lose their shape-shifting
form. They just revert back to their
natural form. And so, one time a monk
was walking by this naga's cabin while
the while the naga was asleep, and there
just these huge scaly coils just hanging
out the windows cuz they were so big it
was so big. And, um,
so he he went running to the Buddha,

and, uh

said, "No, you really can't be a monk.

It's, um, you're an animal, technically,

and you can't become enlightened. So,

sorry."

Um, they have nagas in Hindu mythology,

also, and they are the the enemies of

the garudas.

And so, I mean, it's not Maybe that's

one reason why they live under the ocean

is cuz there's these giant bird people

called the garudas. I think Vishnu rides

on one or something. Not sure about

that. But, I mean, they'll they'll prey

on nagas. So, nagas are not um the apex

predator in this uh Buddhist

mythological cosmos.

Um

I think I mean, if if you want to

get like a pleasurable rebirth, I think

you'd probably probably better off going

for deva status

than uh

snake man status or naga status. Partly

because their their capacity capacity

for wisdom, even though they have

approximately human intelligence

functionally,

their their spiritual

wisdom is stunted. I mean, they're

they're they're they're very limited

with regard to their capacity for

um spiritual progress.

Devas, on the other hand, have the
capacity. They just usually don't go for
it cuz everything's so nice, you know,
they got the celestial mansions and the
golden palaces and the pleasure gardens
and the
you know,
all the all the rest of it.
But, um still I think you'd be better
off moving upwards into the the deva
realm than
arguably downwards into the animal
realm. Although, um
some people would put the nagas at the
level just above the human level at the
the the realm of the four great kings.

Where you've got terrestrial small g
gods and so forth.
But, how do you go about becoming a
snake man or a naga in your next life?
I think probably the best thing you
could do is just um
kind of aspire to it, you know.
Just uh make some kind of
determinations, do acts of merit, and
dedicate that merit to may I become a
naga in my next life, something like
that. Although, again, I wouldn't really
advise it.
Um you might want to read up on
qualities of nagas, like psychological
qualities and so forth, and try to
cultivate that. But, again,

better off trying to to go for the deva

realms.

So, we'll just move on to the next

question. And this is from Chris.

How much should the mind be allowed to

wander off?

Well, ideally, not at all.

Or

one step shy of ideally,

uh as soon as it starts to wander, you

catch it.

But, it's cuz if you just keep letting

it wander around, you're not really

meditating anymore. I mean, if you're

not meditating, then doesn't matter, I

suppose. Unless I mean, you're doing

something important, you know, you're
driving a car or something. You don't
want to be just
lost in daydreams.
But, let's say you're meditating,
then you want to watch your mind as well
as you can.
And even if you're being mindful, some
people say like if you're practicing
like samatha meditation, where you're
just trying to keep your mind laser
focused on one object,
then of course, your mind's not supposed
to wander at all. But, with mindfulness
meditation, it's okay to to let it
wander if you observe it wandering. But,
my experience is if um you're having a

thought, and then you mindfully note the thought, that just poofs the thought out of existence.

Unless it's music. For some reason, maybe music's in a different lobe of the brain. The noting mind and the thinking mind might be the same area in the brain, just going with materialistic science. So, that you can't have both the same time. So, noting it makes it stop. Whereas music, you can keep noting it and noting it. It's might be a song you hate that's just stuck in your mind, and you're just stuck with it until it runs its course or something.

So,

how much should the mind be allowed to wander off? If you're meditating, just keep it to a bare minimum. As soon as you notice it, just return to the primary object.

Um

at other times, uh well, that's that's uh personal choice, I suppose.

So, I'll just move on to the next question. This is a nice one. I like this one.

This is from Outer Haven.

And Outer Haven says,

"How did the venerable Panyo Bahasa become the dankest Buddhist on the interwebs?"

So, this

this might be the same person who said

this before, or it could be the second

second person. One person left a comment

Panyo Bahasa is the dankest meme.

So, I I really don't think so. I still

think Hitler is the dankest meme.

Maybe Trump after that.

But, um

how did Just assume that I'm a dank

Buddhist, and not necessarily dankest on

the interwebs.

Um

I'm not sure how it happened. It's uh

I was uh

I'm I've been a relatively independent

thinker. So, I'm not just slavishly

following along with, you know,
whatever the tradition says or whatever
the teacher says. I've always kind of
rebelled against that sort of thing. I
didn't follow I lived in Buddha on Burma
for more than 20 years.
Never had any interest at all in
following along with Burmese tradition.
Like, I wouldn't bow to statues usually.
You know, all the other Burmese monks
would be bowing. Sometimes Western monks
would be bowing. I just kind of look at
them cuz it it just didn't make any
sense to bow to a statue.
Uh so,
I've always kind of been critical and uh
um just kind of

called them as I see them. And then I came back to America, where I just, you know, the whole culture is just kind of going insane, mainly because of the left, I have to admit.

And uh yeah, I just just started calling it out. And

also, I have an interest in like my Indo-European ancestry, which is just totally taboo. You know, I mean, white people aren't supposed to have any interest or much less pride in their ancestry. I mean, if you're going to think about your ancestry at all, it should be like shame and remorse, you know, from the from the leftist

point of view.

But, I think the Indo-Europeans, they've

got

at least as much to be interested in and

even proud of than any other ethnicity

on the planet.

So, I've been interested in that since

before I became a monk.

I guess uh my dad being kind of a a

macho guy who taught me to,

you know, just live out in the woods and

stuff. You know, I'm just we'd go

camping without tents and and stuff like

that, just sleep under the sky.

That might have helped some degree.

So, let's see. Dankest Buddhist.

I don't know. Maybe my sense of humor. I

do have one. I do have kind of a sense

of humor.

But, it's not that I'm really all that

outrageous. I think it's mostly

that most

Buddhist monks are just uh I mean, I I

mean no offense, and I'm not trying to

insult anybody, but uh they tend to be

rather

boring,

to tell you the truth.

Um it's like if you're trying to

like extinguish your concept of selfhood

and

and so forth. I don't know. I just it's

It's not all monks are like this. And

I'm really not trying to criticize them,

but um

a lot of people that are just they don't

have much personality to begin with.

You know, they're just drawn into sort

of merging into voidness or something.

And there's just a lot of

um conformists, too, especially the

Asian ones. They're just very conformist

in in in many respects.

So, I'm not really conformist in uh

I do have some uh

critical thought capacity and so forth.

So, that's probably probably helped,

anyway.

And uh I think a lot of Buddhists that

have uh exposure in the West are like

missionaries, you know, they're in the West trying to teach Dharma. And so, they're making a special effort not to step on any toes, not to ruffle any feathers, you know, not to melt any snowflakes, that kind of a thing. And so, they just tone it way down. They're all diplomatic. And I've just never had much use for that, either. So, that's probably that's probably a a big one right there. I I wasn't ever really interested in uh
um pretending to be something I am not for the sake of getting more support, which is one reason why I was living from hand to mouth as a monk in the West

when uh relying on Western people to support me.

Um and I'm not complaining, either. I'm not complaining about people that supported me. They're very generous and very good people.

But, um

yeah, it's I'm an acquired taste or something. I don't know what it is.

So, we'll just move on to the next question.

And that is from Raffi 46.

And Raffi 46 says, "Is it permissible to donate organs after death to help curing sick people?"

And I assume he means from a Buddhist point of view. Or is it, you know,

wholesome,

meritorious karma or something?

And it could be. I mean, if it your

karma depends on your volition,

your like your will. And so, I mean, if

you've got like the the volition

to help people, then sure. Yeah, you can

get good karma for that. Although, I did

hear a story from somebody who was He's

He's into like

um Hindu yoga and Ayurveda and that kind

of a thing. He's really He's really the

Swami type. He lives in California. I

met him once. I've heard a lot about

him, too.

And um

he had some kind of attack. He was like

apparently comatose

and um

it was like a heart attack or something.

I'm not sure exactly what the problem

was. He had some kind of attack and he

was apparently like in a coma or

unconscious.

And he was taken to the hospital, but

because of his his practice of of yoga

and meditation and so forth, he was

still aware of what was going on and

what people were saying.

You know, he was

his I don't know, Hindu Hindu swamis can

do this kind of stuff.

And so there was a nurse saying that

they should try I mean she was

suggesting ways of reviving him. The

doctors is the doctor there was just

resisting it because he was keen on just

getting the getting the organs out while

they were still warm essentially.

And um

it was just this back and forth between

this increasingly upset nurse trying to

trying to to help this guy and the

doctor who was written apparently more

interested in you know, the 50,000 bucks

you can get for a new kidney.

And so

after hearing that story, I mean I would

I would hesitate. I have not

volunteered. I I did like on my driver's license when I was in my 20s, but ever since that hearing that story where apparently it is a kind of racket where um

you know, you get a lot of money for for these organs and so somebody's pretty far gone, you know, they think well, you know, they're not going to get better. Let's just take out this heart.

Um

so you that's something you'd want to consider. I think your odds of uh being written off as a lost cause would be increased if you have an organ donor card.

Um at least marginally at least to a

small degree statistically.

So but nevertheless, I mean the desire

to help others, you know, to save lives

and that kind of thing is uh

it's good karma.

So

you might get good karma. You can go to

heaven after they refuse to revive you

cuz they need your kidneys for someone

else.

So I'll just move on to the next

question.

And this is from Hey It's Teeg.

And Hey It's Teeg says

"What role does faith play in original

or Theravada Buddhism? Lord Chalmers'

translation of the Sutta Nipata has the word saddha translated as faith. For example, in book one Sutta 10, the Buddha says, 'Faith forms a man's chief wealth. The doctrine leads to weal. The sweetest taste is truth. A life of wisdom's best.'

I think that in accordance with that is taught in the Atiga Vagga.

I think in accordance with that is taught in the Atiga Vagga and subsequently in Nagarjuna's Mūlamadhyamakakārikā,

faith wouldn't really play a substantial role in Buddhism.

This would be because an aspirant clinging to no views and theories would

likewise cling to no beliefs. Since faith is naturally based on beliefs, I don't see how it would fit into the middle way. Is saddha mistranslated as faith or is faith taught as sort of temporary

sort of a temporary tool an aspirant can use, but in the end must like go up. For example, I have faith that the couch I am sitting on will support me, but I am not attached to the idea that the couch or the support it brings is a permanent self-existing entity.

Well,

getting back to the word saddha in Pali

it usually is translated as faith.

Although there are some translators um

like Western monk translators who don't

like the word faith

and because it has sort of Christian

connotations, you want to interpret

Buddhist faith along the the lines of

Christian faith, which is like believing

in this story that you can't possibly

prove

um till maybe after you die, maybe.

So they prefer a word like confidence.

Um

yeah, it it is kind of ambiguous. Like

there are at least

two passages I can think of. One in the

Sutta Nipata and one in the Dhammapada

that says a monk should have no saddha.
Which in that case it would just mean,
you know, believing in a story, but um
having confidence in in what you're
practicing, you know, just believing
that you're going to get benefit from
practicing it. I mean that's for a for a
beginner, you need some kind of faith.
And then as your wisdom increases, your
faith is going to become more subtle and
refined until finally it'll probably get
to the level of like what St. John of
the Cross was calling dark faith where
it's a kind of
confidence
that really doesn't have any

intellectual content. It's not even really an emotional thing. St. John of the Cross when he's talking about dark faith, he's he's talking about you get into a really deep mystical state where your mind has just stopped thinking. You know, your mind is just silent. You've you've dismissed from your mind everything that isn't God. So you can't know God intellectually, so the intellect is out. You can't perceive God, so perception is out. Just like you can't feel God emotionally, so so that's out. Just everything you can just get dismiss all your mental states. And then your mind is just empty, but still there's something there.

And I mean you're not just totally
unconscious. It's not just this black
void. There's still
I mean in a way you're more conscious
than before.
And to a Christian mystic, I mean that's
the spirit of God that's pervading
everything, you know.
And um that he called that dark faith
when you get to that state
where I mean you just
know from your experience
you know, that that it's there, that
there's more to life than just this
you know, samsaric stuff going on. That
there's something underlying that.

And um

yeah, it could be that that's what faith

eventually becomes if

if you just don't say that.

Like a fully enlightened being has no

faith anymore. Then he doesn't need it.

So it could be like a useful tool for a

beginner

and then gradually

it fades out or becomes more refined

or some such. But again

um

confidence is a word that is preferred

by some translators and it

and it it does avoid the

the whole

uh confusion with Chris Christian faith

in which you I mean you are pretty much compelled or or um

Muslim faith too where you are pretty much required to believe this elaborate story.

Um including the belief that if you don't believe it, you'll burn in hell forever.

That's that's that's weird. It's like reading the Quran or the Book of Mormon, too.

Um you're reading all these weird stories that are very hard to uh take at face value and just repeatedly as a refrain. Like if you don't believe this, you're going to burn in hell forever and

ever. If you don't believe this, you're
going to burn in hell forever and ever.
Which uh kind of
scares people into believing it. Just
just to be safe, I guess.
But Buddhist faith isn't like that. It's
just you know, you believe that if you
practice, you're going to get benefits,
you know, you you
you have faith that the Buddha was
wise.
You know, that he knew better than you
do how to become enlightened, that
enlightenment is even possible. That
kind of a thing. I mean that
especially for a beginner, that would
involve a certain amount of faith which

is, you know, believing something that

you don't really know yet.

So let's see.

I think I'll just move on to the next

question, which is also the last

question.

And this is from Aerain.

And Aerain says

"What Buddhist traditions align with the

Western tradition of festivals like

Halloween around the the month of

October?"

Well, we are in the month of October at

the at the time of making this.

We're in October.

And

first of all

in Buddhism, they really don't put much

emphasis on solstices and equinoxes that

I'm aware of.

It was more seasonal. Like the big deals

in Buddhism were full moons and also

there was

the uh three months of the rains

retreat.

The the the monsoon season. The first

usually the first three months of the

monsoon season. Although

um sometimes a monk could could uh

select the the second three months of

the of the monsoon season. It's it's

four months.

So it's like

usually by default monks will stay in

one place

during the first three months of the

monsoon season, but you can skip the

first month and just do the the last

three and that still counts.

But um

that would end usually the first three

months of the monsoon season end in like

the full moon of October.

So that would be kind of close, you

know, sort of like the end of Buddhist

Lent.

Uh a certain amount of partying goes on

after the

the the end of the rains retreat for lay

people. Like in Burma, people generally

um refrain from getting married or

having like wild festivals like like

partying kind of festivals with like you

know,

uh inappropriate behavior maybe.

Um

until the the rain's retreat is over.

So, it's sort of like Christian Lent.

It's like a supposedly a

a holier time of year or something.

So, I mean, that might be close, but

the the whole

the whole seasons of like harvest time

um that we have in the West with like

Europe and and

like North America is just not the same

in in

Southeast Asia or in ancient India.

So,

yeah, I that would be about as close,

but they don't really have much of an

idea of something like Halloween or

just the whole the festivals um that are

roughly

uh in tune with um like the

solstices and equinoxes and that sort of

thing.

So,

yeah, there may be some some festivals

and stuff in Burma that I just never

heard of or there is one

that's it's kind of a an outlier.

I can't remember.

It's it's a it's a an annual festival in

Burma celebrating these two brothers and

they were

um you're supposed to offer rabbits to

them and there's uh a lot of partying

and and and drinking and stuff going on.

It was sort of it's sort of like

like an anti-Buddhist

uh holdover from pre-Buddhist paganism

in in Burma.

Something like that.

I think that was like in September,

August or September.

But, uh yeah, there's it's just uh very

different. The Buddhist traditions um

I'm not sure like if there were like

really archaic Indo-European traditions

that got incorporated into ancient

Indian Buddhism that then kind of

remained up until modern times. I'm not

I don't know what it would be.

So,

it's just uh mainly in Buddhism it's

it's full moons and uh the rain's

retreat are the are the big deals.

And uh

I think in Buddhism he really played

down the whole like religious

um like

religious traditions in general.

Um

yeah, it's he was he was kind of a

radical in that respect.

But, um

yeah, this this was a difficult

question.

I don't know how to answer it very well

just cuz there's it it it's almost like

apples to oranges, you know, Western uh

like Christian tradition and the the

pre-Christian pagan re- things that kind

of get turned into, you know, Halloween

and Midsummer Night and and that kind of

thing.

Um

yeah, I'm unaware of it in Buddhism.

Although, there there may be some

vestiges of that, but uh

it's it's not obvious at all.

And that is the last question.

So, we are done with another one.

And uh it's more than an hour, which is kind of surprising.

So, if you have any questions, you're welcome to ask anything you think I might be able to answer.

Uh especially questions about Theravada Buddhism, or Burmese Buddhism, or monasticism, or the history of early Buddhism, or

I mean, anything personally you think I might be able to answer that is not too embarrassing.

Um

and uh just leave them in the comments

below, or if you have access to the

Discord server, you can leave them

there, or if you have access to my

SubscribeStar channel, you can leave

them there.

And uh check the links below for all of

the links, and um

be happy.

hello and welcome to episode 36 of

question and answer I am your host panio

Basa

and I'd like to make a little disclaimer

before I start in on these questions

this veritable Cornucopia of questions

um my my consciousness

expands and contracts like the Buddhist

Cosmos although at a much higher rate

it doesn't take zillions of years for

this to happen and

um I it just happens naturally I mean it

doesn't necessarily have to be any

obvious external cause for it and right

now I'm in a kind of a contracted phase

it may be partly just because of the

dark wintry weather that has started

recently or something I don't know but

I'm going to do the best I can my

general intelligence Remains the Same

it's just that I won't be as spunky and

perky you know I won't be frolicking in

my seat as much as usual

also uh for various uh mysterious and

Arcane reasons I skipped a week and so

it turns out we've got lots of questions

we've got the veritable cornucopia

and so I should start answering

questions and um

if if I'm like

two verbose you know it's like I'm

drawing out the questions taking too

long just like wave your arms at the

screen and maybe it'll help

so the first question

is from Chakra Gosha who has changed his

name again I don't remember the new name

but this is the name that he was going

by when he asked the question

I almost knocked something off the desk

by waving my arms

so chakra Gosha says

do you think there is a fundamental

difference between theravada Buddhist

ethics and Mahayana Buddhist ethics

mahayanas sometimes portrayed taravada

as self-centered and uncaring about

others contrasting with the mahayanas

dedication to liberate all beings

however

I'm never sure to what extent this is

just a hostile caricature of terravada

do you think it's true that

compassionate empathy are less

emphasized in taravana ethics

well yeah there are differences I think

there's more similarities and

differences between taravala and

Mahayana since Mahayana is just a

further development of schools that were

similar to taravana

and I mean you go far enough back I mean

it all arises from the same root but

yeah there are differences I mean like

Mahayana has this weird illogical

dedication to saving all beings that

according to most Mahayana philosophy

don't exist that these beings are

ultimately empty or void

which doesn't necessarily mean just

blank nothingness but we we need to get

into that because that's not what chakra

Gosha was asking about

so you've got mahayanas

emphasizing compassion and vowing to

postpone enlightenment

uh for the sake of liberating all beings

that ultimately don't exist from the

terrible Autumn point of view you

liberate all beings by liberating

yourself

but um

let's see so I mean in a way that's like

the main

ethical difference at least with regard

to practice between taravada and

Mahayana is theravada is dedicated to

becoming enlightened in this life which

may require some apparent selfishness

where you're just going off and doing

your own thing because Solitude works

better for striving for enlightenment

for

ancient Indians anyway

whereas the mahayanists are doing

essentially the opposite of what the

Buddha was teaching in the earliest

texts and postponing Enlightenment

indefinitely until an infinite number of

beings are liberated and just going with
logic I mean this universe has already
been here for an infinite length of time
and there are still apparently an
infinite number of suffering beings
so I mean if an Infinity of time has
already passed and there's still an
infinitude of suffering beings there's
always going to be an infinitude of
suffering beings seems to me
um it is true that mahayanas can get
kind of snarky and make fun of the
Tariff audons all the terravans if you
read the text they did the same thing
for non-butist philosophers just made
them look like like there was the six

heretical teachers the heretical

teachers

that uh I mean in the in the text

they're portrayed as pretty much like

The Three Stooges Laurel and Hardy plus

Gilligan

so

yeah I mean terravonna can seem selfish

like for example like a classic case

I've mentioned this before is that I

mean a monk can sit on the bank of a

river and watch a pretty girl drown just

because he doesn't want to break the

rule by touching a pretty girl

and that's that's pretty selfish I mean

if if it were me I'd just take the hit

rescue the pretty girl and uh and who

knows you might even have to do
mouth-to-mouth resuscitation or
something but you just do the Penance
afterwards
and you know it's it's good and you're
probably earning Merit by saving
somebody's life anyway although again
monks aren't supposed to earn Merit
Merit is for Lay people you know good
and bad are both
um they're both Karma and you're
supposed to be getting rid of all of
your karma or at least transcending all
of your karma you're not supposed to be
making new Karma any more than is
necessary

so

yeah I'd say with regard to the oh the

fundamental difference I think the only

real fundamental difference between

Buddhist ethics and Mahayana are

terrible Buddhist ethics and Mahayana

Buddhist ethics is that theravada

Buddhist ethics say you should strive to

become enlightened In This Very life

whereas the mahayanas are saying nope

just postpone it indefinitely

and um yeah I think that would be the

real like the radical difference and the

rest is just a matter of emphasis you

know terravada emphasizes compassion the

Buddha was

um

I'm motivated by compassion to to teach

the dhamma it's a new company is the

verb to feel compassion

sounds like I think literally means

something like shaking after or

trembling after you know it's like

concern you're trembling with concern

for the welfare of all beings or some

such

but

um I'm starting to be verbose we've got

lots of questions and so I'll just move

on to the next question which is by jazz

and I believe jazz is uh staying at a

monastery in Asia right now

so good for him and Jazz asks how did

you deal with foot warts and other

injuries to your feet while a monk and

then in parentheses he's got red ants

bugs Etc

um I never I never had foot warts I

don't know I think it might be a

a genetic thing or something I don't

know I've heard of people that get

really painful plantar warts but I never

never had a wart on my foot that I that

I can remember

but I went Barefoot for him

30 years like during the 30 years that I

was a monk up until the very end where I

was staying at this Monastery in

California that had like these little

pointy Burrs or little pointy seeds like

spiky Little Seeds everywhere so I had

to wear shoes whenever I was walking

around there

uh at least Outdoors but um up until

then I'd wear shoes on average about

twice a year

and um at first I was living in a

monastery called chelseindoya in uh

Central Central Burma and it was called

a forest Monastery but it was really

like a desert Wasteland Monastery and it

was just Jagged rocks everywhere and

my first year there at least I would

have at least two bloody toes at any

time I was always stubbing my toes on

rocks because I don't lift my feet very

high when I walk but

um I mean it's just like a baptism by

fire you know you just you just have to

learn to be careful and

um I remember when I was a kid my father

used to say that natives in Africa go

barefoot so much that the bottoms of

their their feet their soles of their

feet toughen up like shoe leather and I

just naturally assumed when I stopped

wearing shoes that my feet were going to

toughen up likewise and they did toughen

up a bit but it was nothing like shoe

leather and mainly you just learn the

instincts

of walking barefoot I think we probably

have a lot of latent instincts and

reflexes for walking barefoot because

most of our ant human ancestors went

Barefoot up until they uh migrated up

into Northern

climates I assume

and so you just learn how to walk

carefully you learn how to like if

you're walking on rough ground you just

learn to put the whole foot down you

know like not going down heel first or

toes first you just put the whole foot

down until it's kind of distribute the

pressure evenly and you just learn to

always be looking down or looking down

every few seconds just to make sure

you're not going to step on anything

pointy or icky or bitey or stingy or

anything like that

and that's really all I did I mean you

get bitten by ants sometimes

um

but I mean that's rare

especially with regard to your feet

there's there's one kind of ant in Burma

it was it was it was a kind of swarming

ant almost like a little army ants

they're called maybe do in Burmese which

means ground hornets

and they just swarm I mean it was just

amazing sometimes and those kind of ants

as soon as they touch you they bite and

they're kind of like a bed bug they

don't search around looking for a good

place to bite it's just as soon as they
come in contact and they bite
but um there's other kinds of ants like
there's like a big orange ant called a
kajin in Burmese
and um they live up in trees a lot and
they make nests by kind of gluing the
leaves together into a football kind of
a thing and then get all the way up to
the back your neck before they start
biting but it's just a Pinchy bite they
don't inject any kind of formic acid or
anything like they uh the little ones do
so yeah it's like uh with footworks I
didn't deal with them at all because I
didn't have any but other injuries to my

feet I mean you can step on Thorns I
remember one time
um the same Monastery uh cheltsin doya
uh the the the the desert Wasteland
Monastery they had a lot of cacti and
acacia trees that had like big Wicked
Thorns like this and I stepped on one
when I was going for alms round in the
village about a mile and a half from the
monastery and it went way the heck up
inside my foot like at least an inch and
then broke off and I'm just like limping
home and I it stayed in my foot for
probably two weeks before finally one
day I was just trying to squeeze some
goop out and then pop out came this
little black remnant of the thorn

but um

this is what you what you do you just

deal with it

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question

and that is uh from lunar vibes

and lunar Vibes says you mentioned that

there is a branch of Buddhism being

developed that believes that there is an

individual self I'm very interested in

this because I have always interpreted

the doctrine of no self as no

self-consciousness for example in a Solo

violin player has to perform it is

important not to be aware of yourself so

you can give your best performance in

that moment I think we have all

experienced something like that in our

lives

um become become too aware of yourself

during an activity

and you mess up and will become too

aware of yourself during an activity and

you mess up still in my view there is an

individual Spirit performing so I would

definitely like to read or hear more

about this kind of Buddhism does this

branch of Buddhism have a name or could

you give me some names of writers

philosophers researchers supporting this

type of Buddhism well I'm I'm not sure

that there is any

branch of Buddhism

that endorses the idea of an individual
self like an ultimately real individual
self in ancient times there was a sect
of Buddhism called the pudgalovadens
um and they taught that there was a
pudgala which is like an individual an
individual being but they couldn't say
there was an Atta or Atman or a cell
because that was just I mean it was just
Orthodox doctrine of Buddhism going back
to very early times
so they couldn't say there was a self
they'd have to come up with some
different word and kind of engage in a
little careful sophistry to avoid being
too unorthodox

and then they could say well there's a

pudgala and I don't even know if this

was ultimately real or not

but that that branch of Buddhism died

out and I don't think there's a whole

lot known about it but nevertheless I've

I've caught in Hell from uh some pure

land Buddhists some pure land Buddhists

especially Western ones just just

vehemently insist

that there is uh some kind of ultimately

real self although

it tends to be the case that these

individuals

real or not

um they're going for more of a new

Panasonic idea of self where it's just

like there's this pervasive Ultimate
Reality and the part of it that's
pervading us can be called our soul you
know our true Essence something along
those lines
but getting to like the violin player or
you know someone who's dancing or doing
anything really well
um you know yeah you can't be
self-conscious about it you can't be
like even driving a car you know you
can't be thinking about yeah now I
should turn this way I should shift or
or you know I should hit the brakes a
little more you know you just do it
without thinking about it and I assume

an enlightened being would be that way

pretty much all the time

so yeah it's like the idea of self it's

the idea of self that gets in your way

and um

yeah I mean that's that's in all

Buddhism so this self-consciousness

thing

um I mean that's true of of Buddhism I

mean it's in there but the no self is

more radical than that it's thought that

you're there's a real being that isn't

aware of itself

um you know like perceiving itself as a

self that really

um you know everything is just

interconnected

and you can't

postulate some discrete entity that is

separate from everything else

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Athena's sigil

and this is uh I'm I've considered maybe

whether I shouldn't just uh just leave

this one out but

um

Athena sigil might want to know you know

so Athena sigil says one thing that I've

taken away from your videos is the

obvious Buddhist teachings and in

particular to the terravada

interpretation but I've also been

watching and reading about Burmese

culture in particular the temple complex

is strewn throughout Southeast Asia

it's utterly fascinating so much so that

I purchased numerous books on both the

teachings of the Buddha

pseudo translations and the ruins

architecture of the region

will you ever dedicate an episode or two

to the Temple's monasteries and other

holy sites of Burma or Myanmar

and that is a good idea so

um yeah I'll probably make an individual

video where I just sit here and talk

about not one topic of

um

the Temple of monasteries and you know

like uh pagodas

you know shrines that kind of thing of

of Burma I can't really speak of other

countries because I lived in Burma for

like 24 years and uh I lived in Thailand

for maybe three weeks

never been to Sri Lanka

so yeah that's something that's

something that I can almost sort of

promise that I'll do within the next two

weeks or so is make a video where I just

sit here and talk about you know like

Buddhist shrines and monuments and so

forth of uh of Burma kind of you know

historical manner

because I mean there were the mons in

the South and the pews in the kind of

the the west and then the the ethnic

Burmese came down and kind of conquered

the Northern Territory of the pews and

you know they all had their own Styles

and their own kind of thing that they

were doing

so yeah y'all thank you Athena sigil for

suggesting that it is a good idea for a

topic so I'll just move on to next

question this is from Mary spelled

m-e-r-r-y

and Mary says is there any way to lose

monk status other than by committing

parajika well you can drop out

that's one way of doing it now all you

have to do I mean it's not like you take

vows people people used to talk tell

ah they used to talk to me about you
know vowels you're breaking your vows or
something but monks really don't take
brute terravonna Buddhist monks really
don't take vows
so if you are ordained you're a monk but
all you have to do is just tell somebody
that you're not a monk anymore and mean
it
and they understand what you said and
that's it you're not a monk anymore but
I think Mary was talking about ways of
just getting booted out being
excommunicated and there's only one way
I know of I mean like
like the government even though they've

done it in like Thailand and Burma
technically they do not have the
authority to force you to stop being a
monk I think in Burma one of the things
that they would do is they would just uh
have the monk raped by a prostitute or
something and then that would be you
know he would be parajika he would have
if you have sex then that's it
but um there is one way it's it's I
think even most monks are unaware of
this but there's one other way of
of being like excommunicated where
you're no longer a monk anymore
and that is to lose your balls if you
lose your balls you know some horrible
accident then that's it a eunuch cannot

be a monk

I mean if somehow through like

Paranormal means all of a sudden poof

you go from male to female then you're a

bikuni I mean you're you're an ordained

nun but if there's any interval in

between where you're not male or female

in a you know completely male or female

that's it if you lose your balls and you

don't just instantaneously become a

woman then yeah you're you're out

with all due respects

so I'll just move on to the next

question who chose your poly name that

was my preceptor when you when a monk is

ordained or when a layperson is ordained

to become a monk he has to have a
preceptor who is like responsible for
making sure that he learns what he needs
to learn and so forth you know it's like
a teacher like a spiritual father kind
of and my spiritual father was uh an old
Burmese monk named blind at Seattle
uh I think his um his poly name was
Sanda Theory or chandasiri which means
like Moon Glory something like that
and uh he's the one who chose my name I
I really I would have called myself
something different than Pine obasa but
um before they named me they had to
first they asked me what day of the week
I was born on and I didn't know and in
Burma everyone knows but it turns out

that it's just Burmese tradition that

the name like the first letter of your

name depends upon what day of the week

you were born so I was born on a

Thursday and if you're born on a

Thursday your name can start with p b or

M

and so they went with Ponyo bossa

um and then so later on when I'm in

Burma someone would ask me what my monk

name was and I'd say Ponyo Bossa or in

Burmese pronunciation is and they'd say

oh you're born on Thursday

but uh that's maybe TMI

so who chose my poly name was my

preceptor who was an old Burmese monk

named uh plaintiff Seattle so I'll just

move on to Mary's next question

any thoughts on ajan WE Mala Ramsey he

is from some Burmese tradition he says

that some people are becoming

enlightened on his seven or ten day

Retreats I don't know dot not well he

wouldn't be ajan we malaromsi because he

is Burmese who would be like Seattle ooh

we malaromsi

and I'm pretty sure

he had a meditation center in Rangoon in

Burma and I'm pretty sure

he was a monk in the mahasi tradition so

he'd be teaching some variation of the

mahasi tradition

and I had a few people suggest that I go

there it is kind of like a

um not very well known but it is it it

does accept like International

um meditators and people who want to be

ordained as monks

and uh that's really about all I know

about it it's I'm pretty sure it's in

it's uh some variation of the mahasi

method

and with regard to people becoming

enlightened on a seven or ten day

Retreats yeah I don't know either

um I'd be even skeptical of

um even a high number of people becoming

like arya's you know below enlightened

in seven or ten day Retreats although

the uh mahasi method did it um like some
mahasi meditation centers did acquire a
kind of reputation for being sewed Upon
A factories just you know you got the
the meditators come in this this door
and then they come out you know a month
later as sodaponos out this other door
is just cranking out soda upon us and it
used to be you'd even get a certificate
like a soda put on a license you know a
like a diploma or something but um they
don't do that anymore and um I'm very
skeptical of any sort of any sort of
system that makes claims like that
so I'll just go on to Mary's next and
last question
and Mary says from cold Alaska to cold

Washington to blazing hot Central Burma

to hot California to South Carolina what

climate do you prefer the most do you

like snowy Frosty winter

well

um it's true that I was born in Alaska

although I moved from Alaska to

Washington state in the Pacific

Northwest like near the coast Grays

Harbor County

town of Aberdeen home to Kurt Cobain and

Nirvana and all that

um

and I just kind of grew up there it was

sort of where I was raised and you I

guess I just got acclimated to Pacific

Northwest weather and it used to be

and I think it may still be that my

favorite kind of weather is like

it's like completely overcast but it's

like white it's it's instead of like a

golden light from the sun it's more of a

silvery bright white and there's like a

coolness like a bracing coolness and

wetness in the air which is really

common in Aberdeen but

um not so common in like Central Burma

um

hot weather is fine I mean I can take

just about any kind of weather but hot

humid weather it does wipe me out pretty

bad and um so of course I'm moved to

South Carolina where the summers are

very hot and very Swampy

but it's I'm not complaining at all it's

uh it's very nice living in South

Carolina especially uh because it's uh

firmly a red State it's a it's a

conservative State like I voted last

Tuesday during the midterms and like at

least one third of the people running

were Republican incumbents running

without any opposition at all I mean the

Democrats just figured it was no point

to even trying

so yeah I mean blazing hot I don't like

freezing cold I don't like so much just

pouring down rain all the time I don't

like blazing sun with no rain I don't

like I just has a good Buddhist I just

followed the middle path

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Sacha spelled

s-a-c-h-a

and sancha says what do you think of

non-duality and then in parentheses he's

got Eckhart Tolle Rupert Rupert Spiro or

Spira Francis Lucille Etc well I mean

I'm well acquainted with that cartola

I've seen a few of Rupert Spira

or Spiro spiras

um videos

and uh Francis Lucille I've never heard

of before

but non-duality I mean if I think of

non-duality I just go back to shankara

you know in in India like uh advice

downtown

and um

I think he's like the

the non-dualist par excellence

um and I think he was influenced by some

Mariana schools like majama especially I

think

but um

yeah I think that's that's that's

correct I I think I would be ultimately

a non-dualist I mean when you're dealing

in samsara the worldliness with books on

the shelf and everything then of course

you've got to be kind of a duelist you

know it's either the book you're looking

for or it isn't

but um

yeah I think that's I think non-duality

here it's it's I mean there's different

ways you can interpret non-duality like

non-duality and Duality sometimes just

means that you that mind and matter are

like just ultimately different from each

other that there's you know they're if

they're not one of them is not just

assuming the form of the other the

others like

um non-duality would be like Spinoza or

something or I don't know but um

what do I think of non-duality yeah I

think Ultimate Reality is non-dual

that there is an absolute that is just

beyond

um like human perception and Duality has

to be it's it's an artifact of human

perception

because human perception you it's like

namarupa where or uh punches sunka is

another another term in Pali where first

you know you concentrate and you

discriminate something and then you slap

some kind of meaning onto it and the

meaning might just be you know what is

that it's just it's some kind of a bat

that you don't know what it is but still

it's a that you know it's that thing or

whatever you know whatever that is

still you know you first you distinguish

that from the whole rest of your field
of view or your field of perception and
then you attribute some significance to
that
and that's just an artifact perception I
mean you can't really
um have distinctions without relations
you know like same as different from
bigger than smaller than all of that
kind of stuff and all of these relations
that that are necessary for you to
perceive anything distinct it's just an
artifact or perception that like a a
chemist can analyze some some kind of
matter some substance and he can
separate it out into his individual
components and he's not going to be able

to isolate pure same as or different

from because it's just not there it's in

it's in your mind

so yeah I think ultimate reality is

non-dual and it just transcends even The

Duality of is and isn't which is one

reason why Buddhism doesn't really talk

much about the ultimate and even

um like an ultimate personal Essence

like the the self

the Ultimate Reality I mean you can't

say that it does exist you can't say

that it doesn't exist you can't say that

it does and doesn't exist you can't say

that neither does nor doesn't exist

because it's completely Beyond

perception anything you can't stick

labels onto it just doesn't work it's

like trying to stick tape onto a

powdered donut it's just not gonna work

so we're going to Eckhart Tolle and so

forth I mean whether they're really

enlightened or not and that kind of

thing is it's not really the question

here apparently they're teaching some

kind of non-duality also

but I'll just go right back to vedanta

and uh

say yeah I I can agree with that

although still vedanta does stick a

label onto the absolute and call it

Brahman

and

even that is really kind of an error

so I kind of like the Buddhist

preference just I mean they've got the

idea of Nirvana but it's more of an

ethical State than a metaphysical state

and um they just kind of leave the

absolute alone they don't stick labels

as a general rule I mean because it just

doesn't work I mean anything it's it's

going to be different than you can

imagine

so we'll just move on to the next

question

this is from Outer Haven

what are your thoughts on David Cole the

notorious revisionist have you read any

of his books or seen his YouTube videos

well at the time that outer Haven asked

this question I had never heard of David

Cole before but I did look up a few of

his YouTube videos

um and I I read uh about him on

Wikipedia

and so

um yeah I mean he's entertaining my

girlfriends can't stand him and so I've

gotta watch his videos by stealth you

know when she's not around or something

but

he's he's funny I mean he's he's good at

telling stories and he's you know you

got some video he's going to talk about

the Holocaust or something in the first

30 minutes or just him talking about

some guy cutting his trees just this

funny I mean just complete digressions

so it's hard to get to the meat of what

he's saying maybe in his books you know

he just gets right to the to the point

but in his videos he's just all over the

place he is entertaining you know he's

funny

um but what little I know about his

revisionism

um I don't think he he denies the

Holocaust I think he's kind of along the

lines of like David Irving you know

there's maybe not even as as Extreme as

David Irving

certainly not as Extreme as in my my buddy Brian Roo but I mean he's so he's I think he just reduced the number from six gorillion down to four gorillion or something and you know it may be that you know he says a lot of the same things that a lot of other people like revisionists are saying you know like um was it dakal wasn't really a death camp it was just a labor camp and the the gas Chambers were

um most of the gas Chambers were constructed by the the Soviets for for like a uh concentration camp Museum in Poland after you know Poland got absorbed into the Soviet sphere of influence and so forth

um

so yeah I think

um

I think he's pretty tame actually

but I mean if you deviate at all

from the the standard narrative that's

well established from you know right

after World War II and then uh you might

get uh

called uh you know denier or

um

you know you're peddling misinformation

or some such

so let's just move on to this question

here this is from Ricardo and Ricardo

says are you familiar with dogen zenji

so what are your thoughts on him

um when I was in college I was just

taking an interest in Buddhism and

starting to read books on the subject I

read I don't remember the name of the

book but it was by dogen and dogen was

like a medieval Japanese

um he was the founder of Soto Zen I'm

pretty sure in Japan

I think he went to Korea or something

and and you know studied under some

master there and then came back to Japan

and founded the Soto Zen School

and at the time I was impressed I mean

he seemed wise and knowledgeable but the

only specific account that I can

remember from reading that book which

again was like I was like 19 years old

so that was ancient times

is there's a story of a monk who was

like wanting to eat like raw meat and

drink raw blood and then I think it was

doget himself who walked into the room

while this monk was eating and he saw

there was some kind of little demon on

top of his head that was actually eating

the meat and drinking the blood

um so that's kind of interesting

but um yeah I'm that's really all like

that's all I can say about dogen is you

know he's

medieval Japanese and monk who uh

founded the sotos Zen School

and he did write at least one famous

book that I have read but it was so long

ago

that um

yeah I've forgotten almost all of it so

I'll just move on to the next question

here and this is from Alan

so Alan says what's the point in reason

for having a bicentennial flag or

whatever that American flag is in the

background what does a flag have to do

with Buddha or Buddhism what is the

Betsy Ross flag the flag We Now call The

Betsy Ross flag is the circle of 13

five-point Stars

in a blue patch on the top left corner

13 alternating red and white stripes cut

horizontally through the rest of the

claws the Continental Congress called

for such a flag on June 14

1777. I think this this flag this Betsy

Ross flag

um I think it comes from around the like

the War of 1812 or something

maybe not

maybe they already had more than 13

colonies or states by the War of 1812

but the thing is

I'm a patriotic American

and

um I just

if I feel more comfortable

getting an old flag that kind of

represents what America used to be like

rather than taking pride in what America

is becoming now

I like I like what the founding fathers

stood for what they represented I mean

slavery yeah as you were better off

without that but still I mean their idea

of you know governance by the people

which is I mean it's just off the rails

now

but I think it was a good idea and I'm a

patriotic American so I just got this

flag but we don't have a proper flagpole

and uh so my my sweetheart just kind of

folded it up there she thought it looked

nice there and I I think it does look

kind of nice there

and our next door neighbors they got a
Gadsden flag you know the the snake
they've got that just hanging from the
front of their house
this is South Carolina buddy boy and and
if I mean you take issue with of like an
American flag in this room I mean what
is that door knob there have to do with
Buddhism you know there's books on the
bookshelves that don't have much to do
with Buddhism if anything what does that
mirror have to do with Buddhism look at
my hand waving in the mirror there
what's that have to do with Buddhism I
mean it's not necessary
for everything in this room just because

I do videos here sometimes

to uh be Buddhist specifically

and I mean I would suggest to Alan here

I mean he's been kind of spamming my

comments

um like going back to old videos and

leaving comments about how I just I'm

too political and this and that but I

mean nobody's forcing you to watch it

that I'm aware of I mean if you really

disapprove then you're not required to

watch but I'm not going to uh just

talk only about Buddhism sometimes I do

but not always

so the next question is from lucid

and Lucid says

how much backlash do you and then

parentheses and Brian Rue get from other

Buddhists because of your views have you

ever been fired or forced to resign like

he has

well

uh yeah Brian I mean he's just

persecuted he's just kicked off every

platform even Free Speech platforms will

kick him off sometimes

and um

yeah he was like kicked out of uh like

Buddhist groups and he lost his job

and um

yeah I mean it's really too bad I mean

he's really a harmless person he's got

some strange ideas but I mean he's he's

not advocating violence in any way he's

not advocating hatred in any way

so yeah Brian is uh

got some bad karma

I guess but uh as for me I mean I've

never been fired or forced to resign

like he has I mean My Views aren't as

Extreme as his

and I do try to be careful about what I

talk about on YouTube especially because

really it's very censorious

I mean you can you can get in trouble

for just telling the truth sometimes

so

but partly it was just I was a monk the

whole time if I hadn't become a monk

there is a good chance I would have

become like a university Professor like

now an unemployed University Professor

like

um you know I got a degree in biology

probably I would have continued with you

know ecology or something like that and

then as a biologist being required to

call male students

she

you know I might just you know and

yeah I'm just really not into that so

um

yeah I might have been fired or forced

to resign if I had not become a monk and

now I'm just living in you know redneck

land which is where I prefer to be

so yeah I think probably some of

possibly the the owner of the company

might be more of a uh a radical redneck

than than I am

bless his heart he's a good man

ah also a devout Christian there's a lot

of that in South Carolina also which is

really not so bad even though I'm not a

Christian

so yeah I think I answered your question

so I'll just move on to the next

question

this is kind of an easy one this is from

ofm

and ofm says

I don't know what ofm stands for ofm

says have you ever come across the book

Nirvana Sara by dafri John

and

I'm I yeah I've never read anything by

doffrey John I may have seen it at a

spiritual bookstore before

I just remember one time I was in

Bellingham Washington I think I was in

college at the time

and um I walked into the spiritual

bookstore in Bellingham Washington at

the time and he was still called Bubba

free John back then it just it just

struck me as just delightfully absurd

um I assume he's one of the people like

some of the people mentioned above like

a cartola and the Rupert Spira that are

kind of declared to be or declaring

themselves to be enlightened beings

but um yeah that's that's about all I

know about him he was kind of a

character kind of eccentric maybe uh

maybe a a con man maybe really he had

some kind of experience that you know

put him above the ordinary normally I

have no idea

so I'll just move on to the next

question because yeah people sometimes

people ask him you know what's what's

your opinion of my aunt Mabel or

something is

you know I I I've never heard of him I

don't know

I'm sure Aunt Mabel's very nice I'm not

trying to criticize your aunt Mabel

so this next one is from maitrea Buddha

which is I'm I'm honored that maitreya

Buddha would ask questions on this on

this show

and maitreya Buddhist says

why are Buddhists against astrology when

the Buddha's mother consulted with an

astrologist that predicted Siddhartha

would either become a great king Emperor

or a great spiritual teacher that's why

siddhartha's father did his best to keep

Siddhartha in the palace so that he

would be a great king Emperor well I

really don't want to correct maitrey of

Buddha you know I mean that's kind of

sacrilege or something but actually it
wasn't astrology it wasn't an astrologer
uh maybe he wasn't astrologer but he
wasn't practicing astrology when he was
looking over the the baby gotima
um it was the marks on his body
which is not astrological so he he
examined the marks on the baby's body
and then he started crying which
frightened the parents so they're asking
what's wrong and he's oh no there's
nothing wrong he's just going to become
either the the king of the world or else
he's going to become a fully enlightened
Buddha and I'm not going to live long
enough to see it happen that's why he's
crying

so

um Buddhists are against astrology well

I mean if you go to Thailand or Burma

probably Sri Lanka too there's

astrologists everywhere so the average

person is very much into astrology

there's lots and lots of astrology in

Buddhist countries but Buddhist monks

aren't supposed to be practicing it

they're not supposed to be giving it any

attention because it's

um in Burmese palis tirasana waza or

animal knowledge you know it's just

irrelevant to enlightenment so I mean

even practicing herbal medicine that

kind of thing is out Consulting girls in

trance at a seance is is another one

you're not supposed to do that you're

not supposed to be playing board games

you know I mean you're just supposed to

be just single-mindedly practicing

towards Enlightenment according to the

texts

so I mean that's what that's all about

and uh the next question from maitreya

Buddha is is Buddhism nihilistic and

this I get it

so many people say say that you know

taravana Buddhists are nihilists they're

nihilists because they they say that

there is no self and I've already gone

over this it's in the text themselves

there's two Extremes in in the sutas

it's it's

this is mentioned numerous times you

know there's sasita deity or the view of

eternalism like after you die you have

the spirit that exists you know

eternally and then you've got uh uchida

Vana you know like the uchidovadis

or ochita DT which means it means

cutting off which means when you're dead

you're dead and these are extremes this

this when you're dead you're dead this

uchida diti is is nihilism it's it's

it's called nihilism

well you they're after death you're just

annihilated

although it could be that nihilism could

also or nihilism some people say

nihilism that it's uh it's that nothing

is real

and that is I mean you're getting into

tricky territory there because again

Buddhism doesn't deny that there's an

ultimate reality it's just that they

don't try to reify it because it's just

totally off the scale it's non-dualistic

so I would say Buddhism isn't nihilistic

that nihilism is one extreme eternalism

is the Other Extreme and Buddhism

follows the middle path which relies

upon dependent origination dependent

co-origination

where everything is conditional and

virtual and in a way it's real but it's

not real in and of itself it's real only

in the context of everything around it

so it's it's not really nihilistic

although people especially Western

Buddhists of A Sort or Western Buddhist

authorities of A Sort who just

vehemently insist that we've got an

eternal soul

they'll call anyone who denies that

a nihilist although they themselves have

got the extreme View

so I'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from Stevens

and Stephen says somebody asked me

whether or not reincarnation happens in

some sort of linear time sequence or if
you can get reincarnated at various
times out of sequence like one time I
got reincarnated in the Middle Ages then
the next time I got reincarnated 100
years from now then the next time I get
reincarnated as the caveman or a
dinosaur or something Etc
well my father had that view actually he
considered himself to be a a Buddhist
but uh his his Buddhism was pretty
sketchy he learned most of what he knew
about Buddhism I'm pretty sure from a
dead Vietnamese monk being channeled
through uh spirit medium
and uh yeah his understanding of
Buddhism was pretty sketchy from from my

my point of view but um if you go with

this Orthodox terravonna Orthodox

taravada is it says that really the past

doesn't exist the future doesn't exist

all that exists is now sort of like

Eckhart Tolle with the power of now all

you have is now

and so that couldn't work in with in

with in accordance with orthodox

teravana

that it would have to be

um this in a linear sequence because

um taravada has more or less of a

Newtonian understanding of space and

time

um although I mean if you set aside

Orthodoxy you know you try to be a free

thinker and all that then it's

theoretically possible I suppose

although it's kind of weird to think

that you know your last life when you

became enlightened was like 2 000 years

ago

and you you're still just

struggling and floundering

so yeah it's it's kind of kind of tricky

um it's hard to say

but from the Orthodox point of view the

answer is that this would be impossible

because time is sort of Newtonian and

only the present exists and and it's

kind of moving

you know forwards into the future and

all that

so it would have to be in a linear

sequence going with Orthodoxy but I'm

not particularly Orthodox and I'm

open-minded on the subject I don't know

how it could work that way but

lots of things I mean I don't I don't

know how computer chips work either but

they work so there you are so I'll just

move on to the next question this is

from shrumo

and trumo says have you met someone you

thought might be an aura hunt was there

anything that stood out to you about

them well I've met a few people that had

reputations for being our Hans although

that doesn't mean very much in in a
Buddhist country I mean some parts of
Burma I was considered being a hunt or
there was this one or a hunt or this one
monk I should say we someone was really
keen on taking me to see this Monk
and uh he's talking about how he was uh
an aura hunt and I said are you sure and
he's yep yep I'm sure he's in our hunt
all right
and we get there and it was like a
circus I mean it was like
uh I mean just crowds of people and you
got the weird The Alchemist guy with the
white white suit and the the beads and
everything the long beard and they're
just building pagodas and stuff all over

the place statues everywhere and this

monk came out

and I mean it was it was like 11 45 in

the morning before he started eating and

I mean he's among supposed to stop

eating at 12. one of the first things he

did he comes out and sits under this

Pavilion he blows his nose in his hand

and just wipes the snot on the wall

so yeah I mean just because someone's

considered to be an aura hunt I mean

they're not necessarily in our hunt but

um possibly the most advanced monk that

I have met was shwayum in Seattle I met

him once

and he was the teacher of the famous

utejaniya who is the leader of

schweigumin meditation center in Rangoon

although

um really does not have a very high

reputation outside of or inside of Burma

outside you know he's all the rage he's

in fashion and all that but in Burma

itself people really do not have a very

high opinion of him because he's just

kind of uh

um kind of a

he's not a scholar

and in Burma I mean to know the text

backwards and forwards is considered to

be you know a sign of being really

literate and all that and I don't think

he was nearly as advanced as his teacher

menciano but I met William in Seattle

once and he was maybe 90 years old at

the time

and he was with another Monk who I think

was around the same age and said I mean

he's just I mean he's just right wide

awake I mean he was he was sharp as

attack still and this other monk sitting

next to him I mean you had people had to

yell into his ear in order for him to

hear anything and still they're not sure

if he heard or not I mean he was just

kind of you know he was definitely in

severe decline

but I'm in Seattle he was just very I

mean there wasn't he wasn't teaching me

secrets of the universe or anything I

just happened to meet him we just

happened to be at the same place at the

same time and uh he just seemed very

calm very alert just very just right

there you know

and uh I've met other monks who who said

that uh of the monks that were alive at

that time in Seattle's had the

reputation for abuse being you know the

most you know like the likeliest BET of

one who had really attained something

really advanced

before that was way boost Seattle he was

considered by some people to be in Aura

hunt but he died before my time

so that would that would be my guess I

mean

um

so he might be in our hunt it would be

shui room in Seattle but he's he's not

alive anymore now of the of the people

who are alive today I really couldn't

say

so I'll just move on to shrumo's next

question is Burma a good place to go for

ordination I've been warned by friends

about the political situation going on

there he said that there are terrorists

there that Target the monks well there

may be insurgents there who Target

foreigners just to kidnap them and sell

them for ransom but that would be in

Insurgent zones and those are mostly off limits anyway so if you're going to be going

um a western is going to go to Burma to be ordained as a monk he's pretty much going to be limited to you know safe areas and forbidden to go anywhere else

I a few times I just decided I was just gonna go to a brown Zone which is sort of a borderline area between Insurgent zones which are black zones and the white zones that are safe

and uh yeah it's like that you get chased down by the secret police or the immigration authorities and they'll uh you know they'll send you back to Rangoon or whatever

so I like I say I lived in Burma for 24
years and um there were times when there
were protests and then you know soldiers
shooting protesters and all that and you
know it's localized you know it's not
completely Universal across the country
and most westerners who go to Burma to
be ordained as monks
they go to like International meditation
centers in Rangoon or closely associated
with places in Rangoon that are
safe you know nothing dangerous happens
there as a general rule
so when you hear all this stuff about
the political situation a lot of it's
propaganda I mean there's this little

old Burmese lady who bless her heart

she's uh hasn't given up on me even

though I'm not a monk anymore and she

she writes to me sometimes and

um you know she's saying that you know

there's there's places where villages

are just depopulated and you know

soldiers really are just shooting people

in the streets and so forth

but um

I assume that would be very localized

and uh

I think the terrorists

um

as a general rule they'd probably be on

your side

I don't know why why I would think that

it's like um

I don't know I mean Americans or

westerners you know they were kind of

seen as

um

kind of not a possibility that things

will get better in Burma although they

don't necessarily get better even I mean

as soon as Burma became more liberalized

and opened its doors to the West you

know immediately you've got like the uh

the the charitable organizations and

just feminists and stuff just swarming

into the country and just trying to turn

Burma into some [__] up Western

liberal Society with decadence and you

know chicks and miniskirts and orange

hair and all that I think it's better

just staying traditional in a way

um a bad military government it's saving

Burma spiritually by keeping out the

McDonald's is in the Walmarts and the

the uppity feminists and so forth really

I mean it's like

um a lot of I I didn't really start

interacting with Western

expats in Burma until around 2012.

and

and it's sort of like colonialism all

over again you know it's like I I met

the uh the leader or the director of

save the children in Burma and he's

living like in a mansion with like a

swimming pool and a tennis court and

that service I mean it's like how much

of the money that you donate to these

charitable organizations just gets

siphoned off into these these guys who

they don't speak Burmese and they don't

associate with Burmese people other than

servants as a general rule unless

they're just really westernized Burmese

people

maybe rich or something

and uh and then the women you know the

board housewives are like starting up

feminist organizations and you're trying

to teach the the relatively content

women of Burma that they shouldn't be

content because they're they're in their
second class citizens or something
but anyway I mean if if there's people
being shot in the streets you know just
sort of widespread phenomenon of that
and then you might be better off going
to Thailand instead or Sri Lanka but
um it worked really well for me I had my
my time in Burma
worked well I was under investigation on
political charges by the secret police
once but they did a professional job and
uh they could see easily enough that I
was just minding my own business out in
a cave in the woods I wasn't trying to
overthrow the government or anything
so yeah I mean if you should just I mean

it's hard to say for sure you probably

you should contact a meditation center

there and you know they'll give you this

straight news but looking at ordinary

news if Burma's ever mentioned it's like

sensationalistic propaganda stuff

you know

so anyway I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Ravi Rafi 46.

and uh I've been at this for about an

hour and we're about 60 of the way

through this veritable Cornucopia of

questions

Rafi 46 says was there anything that

touched you emotionally when you first

read about the life of the Buddha

that's kind of a nice question and

um not when I first read about it but I

remember one time I was riding a bus

through Burma just sitting in the bus

looking out the window and I was

thinking about you know the Buddha's

renunciation

how he renounced his his life

essentially you know his his wife and

his infant his infant son you know

against the wishes of his father and

just goes out and starts practicing

severe austerities I was I was getting

really emotional just thinking about

that

and um there's one thing that I read

about the death of the Buddha that

really moved me emotionally and that's

the Buddhas

um his final attendant he had attendance

before Ananda but his final attendant

for the past you know several years or

maybe decade or two I don't know exactly

how long Ananda was his personal

attendant

but Ananda was the Buddha's personal

attendant at the time of his death and

he was Ananda godama he was related to

go to mabuta he was the Buddha's cousin

and sometimes in the text the Buddha

will call him gotima

anyway after the Buddha dies

uh Ananda there's this scene where he's

just standing alone against a post

crying

and

part of the reason for that was that he

was so busy being the Buddha's attendant

that he didn't really have time to

practice uh to the point of

Enlightenment so he wasn't enlightened

yet

and so you know if you're if you're they

were enlightened they see you know all

forms are impermanent and you know this

is just the way it is but um that was

moving for me I mean Ananda he really

had his his human side he had a

reputation for kind of having a soft

spot for women to

and he's the one who talked the Buddha
into allowing nuns to be ordained and
that kind of a thing you know he'd get
in trouble sometimes for being too
friendly with nuns and so forth
well Tom yeah the Ananda crying and just
thinking about the Buddha's renunciation
he must have missed his wife and his his
baby boy and all that you know he'd be
thinking about them when he's starving
himself out in the woods
so anyway I'll just move on to the next
question from rafi46
and this is a really easy one what are
your thoughts on Santi asuke and I have
no idea what Santi soke is I really is

it a person is it a metaphysical state

I don't know Santi is like

I assume it means peace

and asoki is like sorrowless

sorrowless peace

sounds good to me but I really don't

know what what the reference is to so

I'll just move on to the next question

this is from dos boot

and dos boot says this is something I've

been thinking on for a long time years

ago I stopped accepting any horrible

processes like surveys or Loyalty cards

I don't know what an loyalty card is and

as corporate hell has evolved I've

gotten more and more allergic to its

insanities in flexibility and in general

inhumane approach one might say that
there were historical precedents like
decrees from a king or such but still
these things are all pervasive now with
the technology and remoteness itself
represent a Twist of sorts on emotions
or clashes of interest that before were
resolved directly at least for me these
things feel like their destructiveness
is way harder to fend myself against as
well as analyze any input around this
would be appreciated
Hmm this is kind of a I mean it's hard
for me to wrap my hand around this
question the the main part of the
question here is would the technology

and remoteness itself

like of post-modern digital information

age

interactions I guess represent a Twist

of sorts on emotions clashes of interest

that before will resolve directly so

it's like alienation I think like how

um instead of just sitting around

talking you're just looking into your

phone or whatever

um

with the technology and remoteness

itself represent a Twist of sorts on

emotions clashes of interest that before

were resolved directly yeah I assume

there's a greater distance between

people now than there used to be partly

just it's not even like the the
technology it's just individuality like
Western modern Western liberal
civilization puts a lot of emphasis on
individuality you know it's that you are
an individual a free individual
supposedly and people just didn't think
that way up until relatively recently in
modern times it's like uh I mean back in
the day people identified more with
their their Clan or their tribe or just
their family than with their individual
self you know they were just a part of
of the family
and uh
yeah also I had this image arise just

thinking of this that uh just the
remoteness in a way it's made War a heck
of a lot more dangerous because warm
back and you know pretty modern times
back in ancient times is guys stabbing
at each other with Spears like face to
face maybe maybe some archers and
Slingers but as a general rule they're
looking each other in the eyes when
they're killing each other and that kind
of tone things down a bit I think
whereas now I mean a lot of people that
are in the military that are killing
people they're not even seeing who
they're killing they're just launching
cruise missiles or seeing a blip on a
radar screen and launching a missile at

it or something

so yeah I mean we're definitely

alienated and uh

I don't know you can't it's hard to say

even if the way before we this wasn't

really natural because we're we're kind

of an artificial being and not that we

were genetically engineered by space

aliens necessarily but where I mean

our instincts have been totally modified

our lifestyle's been modified by culture

to such a degree that you know we're

living in a kind of a an artificial

reality uh just with all the straight

lines and right angles and you know laws

and statutes and stuff

but to the extent that uh technology is

inspiring a kind of separation and

alienation between people

uh yeah it's not necessarily a problem

I mean it's like

um one of my favorite mottos is it

doesn't matter what it is if you accept

it it's not a problem and it doesn't

matter what it is if you won't accept it

it's a problem

so yeah it's not necessarily a problem I

mean it's definitely a change

that uh

either you adjust to that change or you

just uh go off and

you know live in a log cabin and with a

wood stove fetch water in with a bucket

that can work too I mean that's not

necessarily a problem either

but I'm sorry I really can't answer this

question in depth because it's really

hard for me to fully wrap my head around

it maybe it's just

um not enough information

or the information is uh expressed in

such a way that it's it's hard to sink

in for me or something so I'm just going

to move on to the next question here

this is spot from kitkat108

and KitKat 108 says what is the best

advice to someone going through a

breakup and you still love them if you

could elaborate further it would be

appreciated thank you for doing what you

do

Ponyo from my heart

well

one thing to bear in mind is that love

is separate from the emotional

attachment I mean the emotional

attachment is kind of an instinctive

love you know it's like a human mating

instinct

but genuine love and spiritual sense is

just like open-hearted acceptance

and so

even if the person leaves

and you don't even necessarily want them

to leave

then I mean you can still love them it's

just the I mean the acceptance is still
is still there I mean forgiving them for
whatever they do isn't gonna I mean it's
it's invaluable in a relationship but
it's not going to help if they're just
Gonna Leave You Anyway I mean you just
forgive them for you know running off
with somebody else or something
but yeah I think that's one of the most
important things to to bear in mind is
that genuine true love is partly I mean
for starters it's unconditional or as
unconditional as you can humanly manage
and it's just not the same as the
attachment the emotional attachment
because the emotional attachment is is

what causes the suffering it's like

that's like in the four noble truths

like all suffering is caused by

attachment that's one of the the

variations on the second Noble Truth

it's either craving or it's attachment

just clinging

just insisting upon things being a

certain way is what causes suffering

so

apparently it's like the karma is

exhausted or something

and uh it may hurt because

due to you know Karma like uh just the

power of just the force of habit or

whatever there's the clinging and the

suffering but it will pass

and uh

the love is is just not the same thing

as the uh the the emotional attachment

and um

I was gonna say something just now damn

see

love acceptance

yeah I'm sorry that one just and just I

just lost it

but I mean love is good I mean if if you

can perfect love that's enlightenment

but I mean it should be as unconditional

as possible which means even if they

treat you badly or dump on you or

whatever I mean

that's just part of the practice that's

in a way it's a powerful spiritual

practice trying to to use like romantic

love as a spiritual vehicle

very challenging sometimes because

you're just dealing with another person

who's not under your control and they

can just do all kinds of things and I

mean you can get upset about it or you

can accept it

and that's I mean that's on you

so yeah I'm sorry that uh

someone is going through a breakup and

they still love them I mean I mean it's

better I mean ultimately it's better to

go through a breakup with You Still

Loving them than than just turning it

into hate I mean I mean true love I mean

it doesn't really cause pain unless it's

just the compassionate kind of suffering

with you know you're just feeling

another person suffering you know in

your own heart like compassion genuine

compassion

but it's not the the actual love aspect

that is causing the the pain of of

Separation it's the emotional attachment

which I mean in in poly like genuine

love would be like mental

but uh

um the kind of romantic

passionate kind of attachment you know

the emotional attachment stuff

it's called like pemo or sneha

which I mean anything called sneha is

not going to be very good

foreign

so I guess I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Air rain

and Aaron says why does abstinence and

moderation exist in Buddhist teachings

while at the same time there have been

in our many sex Cults and gurus within

Buddhism and Hinduism promoting group

sex and sex with teachers is this just

left over from the East-West exchange

that took place via the hippie movement

or is there supposed to be some dharmic

path in cuckolding men and turning women

out to religious leaders people like me

who are skeptical of humans running

religion see these scenarios play out over and over through our lifetimes and it plays a large part in our skeptical nature via organized religions how did the sexual Dynamic play out in Ancient India or is this just more American sexual relativism corrupting authentic Buddhism through men who are using Buddhism and other religions as a mean to cultivate their own sexual addictions part of the issue is the bad behavior itself and another part is the hiding denial and or enabling of it from the people and Authority

well with regard to sex Cults in Buddhism I assume they exist I mean

you've got Tantra that can be abused

but um I mean it's just certainly not

built into Buddhism it's not like you

know there's anywhere in tarabada

Buddhism saying you know sex is good and

you should do it as much as possible

anything like that in Hinduism maybe

more you know there's more of an

emphasis on

um romantic love in Hinduism you know

like there's the idealization of Krishna

and Radha who who weren't even married

but they were lovers that kind of a

thing

and that can you know get distorted into

you know justifying that in some kind of

you know religious group or something

but in terrible Buddhism I've I've heard

of a few cases of

like just kind of rampant illicit sex

going on but not much it's very rare

there's it's mostly just rumors but I it

probably happened a lot more in the west

it does happen even in Asia partly just

because you know people are human you

know it's like lost you know a lot of a

lot of celibate men are struggling with

lost and you know right Peach just falls

into their lap they can't always resist

the temptation

so

there is that

so let's see why does abstinent

moderation exist in Buddhist teaching so
at the same time there have been and are
many sick Cults and gurus
within Buddhism Hinduism promoting group
sex and sex with teachers I don't I
don't know of any Buddhist group that
promotes group sex and sex with teachers
even though I I'm sure it happens you
know I've heard rumors of it happening
with like a relatively famous Burmese
monk two of them that I can that I can
think of
and then one kind of non-famous one that
I've heard of and I've read about monks
in Thailand that are very Shameless in
that respect
uh there was one

uh venerable what was his name

I don't even remember his name now it

was kind of a big it was a scandal in

the 90s he was a Thai Monk and he was

going

um going I mean his books were published

for free distribution by charitable

organizations and and he was just going

around the world giving Dharma talks and

conducting Retreats maybe and uh finally

um they found out that he was calling

call girls to his hotel room and they

even had proof because he was paying

them with a credit card

and um so he was forced even he was

forced by the the Thai government or the

Thai ecclesiastical Council or whatever

to to disrobe and he was just denying it

to the very end

um

although I mean the way he was denying

it was kind of kind of uh questionable

he was saying you know I I do not go to

sex place it was a lie but I mean they

weren't accusing him of going to a sex

place because he was just having the the

[__] delivered to his hotel room

then I heard later

about the same the same monk or an ex

monk at this point that he was in prison

in America for coming into America with

a fraudulent passport or VISA and then

after that I heard years later after

that even that he was uh

he was still dressing like a monk in

America he must have gotten out of jail

and somehow been allowed to stay instead

of being deported which is a status quo

nowadays and uh he was like putting on

like a toupee in layman's closing

clayman's clothing and they're like

taking pictures of him and discos and

stuff you know people recognizing him

there's this this monk or ex monk still

pretending to be one at a disco and then

he apparently got drunk

he was driving drunk and hit somebody

and killed them and then he just kind of

went crazy after that and he's like he's

got he's got like wild hair and

everything

I mean that I mean it does happen and

humans I mean just humans in general is

always going to be weird stuff happening

and I'm sorry I still can't remember his

name

on John something

but uh yeah I mean this

this up here about uh promoting group

sex and sex with teachers yeah I mean

maybe in some

like offshoots of Hinduism that can

happen in maybe tantric Buddhism that

can happen but serious terravada I mean

even the really liberalized places like

Spirit Rock they are so I mean verging

on paranoia about even a teacher even touching uh a student of the opposite gender like I knew this guy I still know him he was uh participating in leading a retreat I think it was at Spirit Rock and it was a retreat for teenagers and there was this one point where this teenage girl is is like melting down and crying you know telling her story and all he did is he just kind of put his hand on her shoulder and was like comforting her and then afterwards he was taken aside by some of the other teachers and said we are really not okay with you touching that girl and it's like I mean there's no harm done I mean

it was completely non-sexual but still I
mean in in the west and in Terra water
um yeah they're really really strict
about that even though still it can
happen you know slip through the cracks
and so forth but uh I think I've just
been uh distracted by the whole first
part of the question and I need to
continue reading this again
see
is this just left over from the
East-West exchange that took place
during the hippie movement
or is there supposed to be some dharmic
pass and cuckolding men and turning
women out to be to be religious to
religious leaders well a lot of it in

the West is kind of the the hippie thing

or just not just even just the hippie

thing it's just the the sexual license

the sensuality of the West which is very

much restrained in in in Asia even in

Thailand where you've got you know the

lady boys and even a prostitute in every

village and all that still the monks are

supposed to be very strict and usually

they are but not always

but uh

there have been some teachers

I think Paul Lowe is one of them

that's uh

that there could be a dharmic path in

just sort of

sexuality

and even like sexuality was someone who

is not your spouse who might even be

somebody else's spouse

and um yeah I'm not gonna really get

into get into that particular thing but

I mean I don't think that I mean if you

go like a wise person goes about certain

things in certain ways then it's not

it's not the same as just you know the

the drunken guy going out picking up

chicks in bars

what Osho who got first pick of the all

the pretty sunyasins I mean I don't know

that means Osho I think I've given my

opinion before that he may have attained

something higher he may have been a

higher level of Consciousness than the average person in certain ways but then again a monkey is at a higher level of Consciousness than a sheep and a monkey's way naughtier than a sheep just because you're some kind of you know some higher vibration or something doesn't mean that you're going to be a good boy necessarily

so let's see people like me who are skeptical of humans running religion see these scenarios play out over and over through our lifetimes yeah not so much with Buddhism that I'm aware of although it does happen sometimes

and it plays a large part

in our skeptical nature of your
organized religions how did this sexual
Dynamic play out in Ancient India or is
this just more American sexual
relativism corrupting authentic Buddhism
through men who are using Buddhism other
religions as a means to cultivate their
own sexual addictions
um yeah again with regard to Buddhism I
mean Buddhism is is not nearly as uh I
mean this kind of thing is not nearly as
rampant as say you know homosexuality in
the Catholic church for example among
the clergy there
regarding the Hindus I really can't
speak very much and Tibetan Monks there
have been quite a few

um scandals with Tibetan llamas or just

Tibetan teachers

but I I'm I'm not really well acquainted

with Tibetan Buddhism either and in that

case also if you've got this restrained

Asian who all of a sudden comes to

America where you know girls are just

dressing like even prostitutes wouldn't

dress that way in Asia you know

like really it's like uh maybe I

shouldn't I I shouldn't I shouldn't tell

that story but um

yeah I mean it's just like wide open

it's like I remember a long time ago

there was some Burmese monks who came to

give a retreat in America probably

California

and it was I mean the monks were just

amazed it was like a burlesque show

you've got women in shorts and like no

bra and everything like T-shirt with no

bra at The Meditation Retreat and I mean

the Burmese monks they've never been

exposed to anything like that before and

I assume a lot of them might just give

in and and just given to Temptation

pretty much like they do with money like

you know your poor Village monk you

don't get any money very little anyway

and all of a sudden you come to America

and people are just donating you know

100 bills

then you know they'll just they'll just

break

you know a lot of monks have been ruined

by the West

partly just because of the culture is so

promiscuous and just uh sort of

promoting sensuality

but again let's see how did the sexual

Dynamic play out in Ancient India well

you're not going to really see how it

plays out in Ancient India because of

course the texts are going to be saying

you know monks just don't do that

you know there's like one story of some

woman trying to seduce mahakasaba who

was like the most ascetic of all the

Buddhist disciples and you know she's

just taking her clothes off and you know

kind of squirming in front of him and

lying down and spreading her legs and

everything and he's just you know he

just kind of glances at her just ignores

her and just walks away and that's what

you're supposed to do

and they're amongst the I mean I would

like to believe that most strict monks

would do that

oh let's see

part of the issue is the bad behavior

itself another part is the hiding denial

and or enabling of it from the people in

authority

yeah yeah it's it's again

in teravana Buddhism we are relatively

free of that but not entirely free just

because the people who participate in

taravana Buddhism are human beings

and animals I mean human beings are

relatively horny animal

as a general rule

so

let's see what is the gist what is what

is like the kernel of this question that

I can I guess it'd be at the very

beginning here why does abstinence and

moderation exist in Buddhist teachings

well at the same time there have been

and are many sex Cults and gurus yeah um

yeah in Hinduism again there's there are

certain precedents like like Krishna and

Radha or Krishna in the the 500 gopis

there's this one story Krishna he he

goes to this Riverbank and there are 500

Cowherd girls

it's a nice round number of 500 of them

and Krishna just multiplied his body

into 500 and had sex with all 500 of

them simultaneously not only that he had

sex with women just the way they liked

it

so I mean in Hinduism you know you got

precedence in the scriptures whereas

taravana is just dry and there's not

even a hint of any kind of promotion of

that

you know even even the the favored

disciples that were late disciples like

kind of top pandika you know who's like

this fabulously wealthy supporter of the

Buddha even he was supposedly celibate

even though he was married

so

yeah it's it's just going against what

the what the the texts teach what Dharma

teaches in in tarabana Buddhism

and really it's it's mainly terrible

Buddhism that I can speak with with any

kind of authority

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is also from erain

and Aaron says

if you had to choose between pumpkin pie

and key lime pie for Thanksgiving which

would you choose

yeah that's that's like uh

completely different kind of question

there isn't it and yeah definitely key

lime pie I mean I've never I mean

pumpkin pie is very edible you know I

can sit there and put away pumpkin pie

but

um you know it's just kind of

on a scale of like zero to ten with zero

being you know you have to spit it out

and 10 being you gotta change your

underpants after you eat it you know

it'd be only like a six you know it's

just slightly above you know the the

kind of average

not that I'm complaining you know it's

like I don't have anything against

pumpkin pie but key lime pie is really

good so yeah key lime and let's just

move on to the next question here and

this is from Rambo

also known as number 7dd42688

and brambo says what do you think of the

bikuni Sangha ooh

this is kind of a this is a dangerous

kind of question

but my personal opinion of the bikuni

Sangha is that the genuine bikuni Sangha

when extinct maybe like the 1600s Maybe

they're it's supposedly went extinct

before that but there are Chronicles in

Burma mentioning bikuni's you know

around the 16th 1600s

so yeah they went extinct I mean the

Buddha according to the legend the

Buddha didn't want to ordain bakunies to

begin with

Ananda as I mentioned a little earlier

talked him into it just saying well I

mean women can become enlightened just

like men can the Buddha had to admit to

it so finally Anon that talked him into

allowing the Buddha's stepmother also

his aunt

because

um she was both at the same time into

becoming the first bikini and after it

went extinct

um it takes bikinis to ordain bikunis so

um you once once the the lineage is
broken it stays broken unless something
happens and it seems to me that
um there's only two ways that the bikuni
Sangha could like legitimately
uncontroversially be uh revived one is
what the Burmese monks were always
telling me I was talking a little
earlier about how there can be
instantaneous paranormal sex changes and
there there's a at least one mention of
this in the Buddhist commentaries where
there was this I can't remember his name
sorea I think there was this Rich Layman
named sorea who is going by this River
and he sees

um an aura monk with this beautiful

golden skin bathing in the river and he

just thinks I wish my wife had skin like

that and because he was so irreverent to

this Aura hunt just immediately boom he

became a woman

and um

so I mean if a monk has that happen to

him preferably not for you know having

bad thoughts about our hunt then he

would be a bikuni he'd still be ordained

so long as there wasn't any interval

where he wasn't male or female it was

just kind of a eunuch because then he

would just be excommunicated for being a

unique because

eunuchs are not allowed to be ordained

so

that's one way or the other way would

you have to have a great counsel

you know there'd be the Sangha of the

four quarters would convene and then

they would like formally decide all

right the bikuni Sangha is going to be

revived we'll just have to break the

rules slightly you know the first

bikinis they won't be ordained by other

bikunis because there aren't any to

ordain them they'll just be ordained by

monks that'll be good enough

and if if that were done then probably

but it's it's not going to happen

realistically not anytime soon because

the monks who participate in these great
councils are very old and conservative
and they don't like to change anything
so instead what you've got is some sort
of renegade monks in Sri Lanka and in
the west who just say well we're just
going to ordain nuns just for gender
equality just because it's it's the
right thing to do but the weird thing
about it is that
uh I've talked about this before where
the rules are much stricter for bikunis
than for monks and this is partly
because
um
in India in ancient times and even today
a woman might not even meet her husband

until their wedding day you know it's a
pre-arranged marriage from childhood
and so I mean she might get stuck with
this [__] and so what was happening
was a lot of women were just running
away to monasteries and becoming nuns
just to get away from this this [__]
of a husband that they never wanted to
marry
and in order to make sure that they had
a genuine spiritual vocation that they
weren't just getting away from a bad
husband or whatever a bad house
situation
that um they made the rules stricter for
for for nuns like there are four

paragica rules from monks if you break

any of these four rules you're

excommunicated immediately for bikinis

there are eight

a bikuni isn't even allowed to sit in

the presence of a monk a bikuni of even

the most senior bikuni still has to bow

to the most Junior monk it's they're not

even allowed to sit cross-legged

and they're they're supposed to sit with

their their feet kind of demurely tucked

up to one side like like Burmese ladies

sit on mats in Burma even today and so

what the the modern bikinis are doing

is

they're they're declaring themselves be

coonies and then they're just not

following the rules because the rules
are discriminatory against women and the
whole thing is just ridiculous because I
mean the whole purpose is is like gender
equality it just seems right that women
should be ordained also even though
according to the text that Buddha didn't
even like the idea
but he had to admit that women can
become enlightened so even though it
would make problems he'd say well okay
we'll we'll do it then but
they want to become real genuine bikunis
and then immediately they don't follow
the rules correctly
so it seems it seems way better to me

they should just start a new order it's
just ridiculous that really all they
want is the official status of being
Mikuni an official status is something
that is supposed to be renouncing when
you renounce the world
so they could just set up a new order
with rules that
rules that fit like the modern West
might be exactly equal to the rules for
men
but they wouldn't be able to be called
bikunies and and seems like that's the
main thing it's like they want the
official status and they don't follow
the rules so it's just yeah I do not
consider women calling themselves

bikinis nowadays to be like

authentically genuinely ordained bikunis

so anyway next question from uh Rambo

also known as number seven dd426a8

is how do they practice it differently

to because in Burma well there are no

bikunis in Burma I have been told any

woman declaring herself a bikuni in

Burma would just be jailed

however

there's this next question from Rambo I

noticed they wear pink robes could you

speak to the social political

differences for bikus and mikunis well

these women who are nuns wearing pink

robes they're not bikunis they're called

tilashins in Burma

um in the the pandita Rama tradition I

think they're called the thecashins

which means uh like possessors of

training whereas Stila shins his

possessors of virtue and I think in uh

Thailand they wear white and they're

called Machi and I don't know what Machi

means ma is just sort of a feminine word

it might be this woman or something

so

how do they practice differently to

bikus in Burma and could I speak to the

societal political differences for bikus

and bikunis well again in in Burma there

are no bikinis in Thailand also

officially there are no bikinis it's

just kind of a western liberal feminist

kind of a thing mostly I think the first

attempts were in Sri Lanka but it was

already kind of a westernized idea at

that time you know they were they were

trying to to live up to Western ideals

or something with regard to female

equality

but um yeah they were it's kind of like

a pink and sort of a orangey salmony

kind of color

and uh could I speak to the societal

political differences well I mean

politics is is not much to it there they

usually follow only eight or ten

precepts and in as opposed to the

literally thousands that monks are

supposed to follow

bikinis they would I mean they'd be

following even more rules than the monks

but because they're not bikinis they

only follow 8 or 10 precepts depending

on whether they handle money or not

and um they don't have the same respect

as

as monks partly because

somehow the Burmese have the spiritual

materialism where they think that

ordination just kind of transcends

humanity it's like if you are an

ordained monk then they don't even call

you a human being anyway the word for

human being is not used for monks

so they're you're like a superhuman
being a monk is whereas the bikinis or I
mean rather the the Tila shins they're
uh they received some respect also they
receive kind of some it's almost like
pity you know this people just kind of
feel sorry for them and so they support
them in that way because
um a lot of them I think probably most
of them are old maids that uh you know
they weren't pretty enough or Rich
enough to just to get a husband and so
they you know they make the make the
most of it and uh dedicate their lives
to religion and a lot of the time
they're I mean they're almost like

servants at some monasteries

they're you know they're the ones that

are cooking for the monks and that kind

of a thing

so is is there's no equality at all

really

although in the west it's almost the

opposite I think bikuni is just partly

because it's like politically correct

and fashionable and that they might

receive more respect than uh monks in

general

unless you're like a really famous uh

like a high profile Monk

so

yeah I think I answered that and I'll

just move on to the next question also

from brambo or number seven dd4268

I follow and read a lot of books and

content by monks but struggle to find

inspiring works by nuns do you have any

recommendations

well with regard to terawada nuns I I'm

unacquainted with any book by them I'm

sure they're out there

probably published by like Shambhala or

something

um there's what Pema children I think

she'd be the most famous nun she's a

Tibetan nun but she's considered to be

very wise I haven't read any of her

books I've you know I've read little

passages of things that she said

um pay my children is that right

so yeah I mean it's uh even the the

Terry Gata

which is

um and it's one it's part of the

polytopitica it's a it's a polytext

consisting of

um verses written by enlightened nuns

and the the experts you know the the

academic types who study these kind of

things study the grammar and everything

um a lot of them are of the opinion that

really is just kind of made up that most

of it was probably written by or

composed by monks you know just uh for

edification purposes although uh on the

police versus in the Terry Gata are very

nice she was a courtesan she gave the

Buddha one of his last meals before he

died you know she was a high-class

prostitute essentially and uh she was

inspired by the Buddha and uh became a

nun

and then the the verses

um humble police verses are sort of

comparing you know how she used to live

with how she is now

so it's it's good it's worth reading I'm

sure you could find that on the internet

easily enough but whether it was really

written by her or composed by her or

composed by even any woman is

questionable

so I'll just move on to the next

question from Rambo

are monks and nuns living outside of Sri

Lanka aware of the sheer volume of dark

magic and sorcery conducted by Sri

Lankan monks often with lay women as the

object are they aware of the rape abuse

and sex trafficking well this is I mean

I should have paid more attention to

this question before answering Aaron's

question because this is probably some

kind of taravada or offshoot of it

anyway if so is this something that is

discussed and attempted to be prevented

or is it just accepted as part of the

way things are does this also happen in

Burma and Thailand I lived in Sri Lanka

for two years and I experienced a rather rude awakening whilst unknowingly living in a village that is historically famous for black magic your videos have helped me to come to terms with what happened and put my trust where I couldn't anymore so thank you very much indeed well you're welcome yeah I've never even heard of this before learning monks and nuns living aware of the sheer volume of dark magic and sorcery conducted by Sri Lankan monks often would lay women as the object well I mean I've heard of um Burmese monks practicing black magic and necromancy but it wasn't for the sake of abusing women I've never I've

never heard that before

so yeah this is something peculiar to

um

Sri Lanka I guess I mean Sri Lanka Sri

Lankan monks are very lacks they have a

reputation there is sort of there are

like reform movements in the forests of

Sri Lanka but Sri Lankan monks in

general are extremely relaxed with

regard to following the rules so it

wouldn't surprise me I remember there

was one Young American monk telling me

that he had a Sri Lankan monk tell him

that

um it's not parajika to have sex so long

as you practice can we just interrupt

this

as long as you're not as long as you

pull it out and squirt outside then it's

it's not paragica which is just nonsense

so yeah rape abuse and sex trafficking

and what was monks practicing black

magic yeah this is the first I've ever

heard of it

I mean it exists you know I mean if it's

possible it's a big big world

then I guess it's happening somewhere

but it's certainly not the norm and it's

certainly not

officially condoned by anybody that I'm

aware of

so yeah I'm sorry that uh it happened

and uh I would advise people to stay

away from Villages that are famous for

black magic monks

sorcery

yeah that's dangerous

so

yeah

yeah I was I lived in Burma for 24 years

and never heard anything resembling that

going on in Burma the whole time I was

there

and I mean when you're a monkey and

you're behind the scenes you know

monks are really good at a kind of

hypocrisy where they'll although they'll

act wholly in front of the lay people

who are their donors but then you know

when when they're by themselves you know

they're just you know giggling and

joking and just fooling around and you

know behaving inappropriately in certain

ways but um

yeah so I've lived behind the scenes I

I've seen what monks are like when

nobody's looking and still I never heard

anything remotely resembling this

so it's probably I mean the ties are

pretty naughty too and the Sri Lankans

are just extremely lacks in their

practice

but Burma first of all they're very

stoic they're like Spartan in Burma you

know they're just not essential people

they don't care what their food tastes

like you know they just sleep on on like

wooden boards they just don't care

and they're just not a very like

romantic sensual kind of people and so

that kind of thing is just less likely

to happen in Burma just because of the

national character Maybe

so anyway I'll just move on to the next

question this is this is turning into a

long one

this is from Matthew

and Matthew said how do you feel about

mahasi Seattle's book practical Insight

Meditation I love the brevity do you

think he is a fraud or is there some

pragmatic information in there I think

I've got the little booklet up on the

Shelf there

practical Insight Meditation I think it

was just a transcript of a talk that he

gave to beginners at a retreat that was

considered to be so good that they just

wrote it down I think they recorded it

also and so you just like beginners

would just hear the recording of of

mahasi Seattle or the the English

translation if they're foreigners

so it's good advice I do not consider

mahasi Seattle to be a fraud

meditation tradition it's it's good for

beginners and intermediate practitioners

but once you get up to like the the

intermediate level you should probably

move on to a different method I once

asked one of the wisest Burmese monks I

knew

um

what he thought of the mahasi tradition

and he said you can get benefit from

practicing it but it is a limited method

and I I agree with that it'll take you

up to a certain level

and then uh I don't think it's really

equipped to deal with higher levels or

if if it does it just kind of happens

spontaneously to us a monk who's like

really ripe he's like really good at

meditation you can you can get up into

these levels but uh generally they'll

take you up to like what they consider

to be the level of a soda Palmer or

stream enterer and then that's it you

finish the course you're done and then

you just start reading the paper and

listening to the radio and goofing

around

Meditation Center you know the ones that

are the the Arias the sodaponas because

they're the ones that aren't practicing

they're the ones goofing around

so but I mean Mazzy Seattle himself was

not a fraud I mean he had some wisdom he

was definitely very intelligent and

there is pragmatic information in there

so

I'll say that much

so I'll just move on to the next

question and I shouldn't skip a week and

this is this is what happens when I skip

a week the list becomes so long now that

I'm complaining you're all welcome to

ask questions

it's good for you

this is from tarot reader or Tarot

tarot reader why don't you discuss

totalitarian fascist emerging New World

Order well actually I kind of do

sometimes like the the latest blog post

that I wrote which is discussing the uh

discussing the midterm elections in

America

um yeah it's kind of moving a little bit

in that direction a little there's a few

a few hints tossed out there

but uh

yeah I call it the Brave New World of

order

but whether it's really fascist or not I

suppose it's going to become more

fascist as they gain more control

and totalitarian yeah I mean even even

uh some of the social media are already

getting totalitarian or you just not are

not allowed to discuss forbidden

subjects regardless of how true they

might be

so

why don't you discuss totalitarian

fascist emerging New World Order yeah

you might want to look at Brian Rue's

channel on bit shoot he's more into that

than I am

I'm more just I you know I call them as

I see them and I I talk about Buddhism

or just other things from a kind of a

Buddhist perspective

sometimes I'll point out that Buddhism

really is not equipped to deal with

certain things in just the secular world

like like violence

but uh yeah I mean if you look at my

blog you'll find that kind of stuff I

mean there are certain tags you can look

up like uh you know culture war and

neo-marxism and that kind of thing

so

yeah I'll just move on to the next

question this is from rui

and rui says hello Ponyo don't know if

this question will make through but here

goes looking at the Mind sitting

standing walking lying down I've come to

see it as an impersonal or non-personal

Mega narrative maybe that's

metanarrative

it's kind of gene in though building

machine a personal

okay I've come to see it as an

impersonal or non-personal Megan

narrative building machine

this Insight is certainly not new but I

wonder whether this view or looking is a

direct experience of anata that is

always available and right at hand

well yeah is always available just an

insight into no self

that I mean this the meat puppet isn't

you

yeah that would be I mean if you see

clearly enough you'll see it

and uh I mean there's probably levels of

your Consciousness that are seeing it

all the time it's just that your mind is

making so much noise you're just

distracted by all the thoughts and the

perceptions and so forth and you don't

notice some of this stuff that's always

there

so

so yeah the mega narrative or

metanarrative building machine

um yeah I don't understand that part

so I'll just move on to next question

and this is from Matthew I think I think

there there was another one from Matthew

maybe it was a different Matthew I don't

know

sorry Matthew

but this uh this is from Matthew and

Matthew says is there any schools within

taravada that teach pragmatic meditation

both the genre and insight do you

believe that there are some sincere

teachers who can teach and enjoy it

well

Paul teaches Jonah and uh the Insight is

I mean it comes in he's very strict um I

mean I don't know if Paul Seattle's even

alive anymore he's he's left palm Doyle

or he did that

several years ago

but uh yeah there are teachers who teach

both Jonah and insight my I mean the

founder of the tradition which I was

ordained venerable Tong pool Luciano who

has now passed away he taught samata and

vipassana I mean he taught you know like

samadhi-based meditation and also

mindfulness based meditation

which is good

um

I think it's probably best for a

monastic a renuncian especially to

practice Jonna while sitting and then be

practicing mindfulness when doing

anything else

and there are teachers that teach that

um nowadays I'm not sure who the

teachers would be though to tell you the

truth it might be Western monks might be

better at it than Asian monks so uh I

mean it could be even ajanta nisaro like

around San Diego in California he might

teach both I assume he does

so um

yeah so the answer to that is yeah

um both Jana and inside

yeah I mean according to the text

Insight arises can arise from Janna

you know you have

you have like the genre experience and

then after you come down from that and

then there's there's like I mean it's

called review or something but it's just

I mean you can just get struck by things

it's like

some insights that arise I mean they

might not be on the official list of

insights but you can still have powerful

insights like you practice a meditation

method similar to Jonna where you just

stop thinking your mind is just clear

you know like like glass

and um when you come out of that I mean

there's the Insight that wow it's like

when you stop thinking it's just not
blank unconsciousness you can stop
thinking your mind is just clear you
know and not even really perceiving
anything necessarily and you're more
awake you're more conscious than when
you're when you're not doing this like
it's not you because you know it's it
can stop and you don't die you know you
don't go into a coma
so
um yeah I mean if you can't find a
teacher who teaches it it's right there
in the suit as you can study the sutas
so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Chaplin

if you had to guess about what

percentage of American Buddhists are

practicing authentic Dharma that has not

been corrupted by Western culture

well

uh I divide that into two groups you've

got the monks and you've got the lay

people

and we'll go to the monks it might be as

high as 50 percent

I mean there's always going to be

certain Corruptions but it's not going

to be so much Corruptions by Western

culture like it could be Corruptions by

traditional Thai culture like the monks

that they go to Thailand or they're

following a Thai tradition which is

probably most western monks are

following a Thai tradition especially

the ajan cha tradition

and there are Corruptions in Dharma that

are just traditional Thai culture

or traditional Burmese culture

but uh there's not a whole lot of

corruption by Western culture unless

they're just uh you know really into

YouTube and

uh you know electronic gadgets and stuff

um with regard to lay people what

percentage of American Buddhists are

practicing authentic Dharma that has not

been corrupted by Western culture I'd

guess it could be very few

probably less than five percent

just because Western culture is so

pervasive and they're because you're a

layperson you're not renouncing Western

culture you're still in Western culture

and it's just gonna have a corrupting

influence on Dharma because Western

culture just is not particularly dharmic

so

there is that and I'm going to just move

on to the next question I think this is

the very last question boom just snuck

up on me so this is this very last

question of the evening or whatever time

of day you're watching this is from

Motorhead

and Motorhead says Ben experiencing some

very Vivid dream meditation States

recently and seeing through the illusion

of our Dream Consciousness dreaming of

our reality type insights still getting

strong synchronicity with you and Brian

can you say anything about this and

other people I know feel the same

this is kind of a tough one because I'm

not exactly sure what he's referring to

he's been experiencing some very Vivid

dream meditation States recently and

seeing through the illusion of our Dream

Consciousness

um I assume it's like while sitting in

meditation

he's having like Vivid like dream images

I mean that's that's happened to me

before or could it be you know he's like

lying down and kind of dreaming and I I

assume lying I mean meditation lying

down doesn't work very well because you

fall asleep too easily but um for most

people

so I assume what he means here is

Wiley's practicing

some kind of sitting meditation or maybe

even walking meditation

he's having Vivid dream states

and uh seeing through the illusion of

our Dream Consciousness yeah well I mean

this is a dream where this is not

reality

this it really is not reality

it's uh it's like a virtual reality it's

kind of like the Matrix except it's

probably not a big computer that we're

in

um still getting strong synchronicity

with with me and Brian that's that's

good

yeah I've had people comment on that

where

um

yeah we'll

tell a story about our life and it's

like the same thing that happened to

them

that kind of thing

um

yeah I really can't say much about it

though because I don't know exactly what

is being referred to here it's it's kind

of a vague

statement without much uh concrete

content that that I can really get a

grip on so I'm sorry Motorhead maybe you

can ask again

uh in a in like different words

but uh

that's it my golly we finished it it's

less than two hours

barely

so

um yeah if you have any questions

especially about Buddhism or you know

philosophy

um spirituality meditation Burma me

personally anything you think I might be

able to answer any question you think I

might be able to answer

um feel free to to ask them and uh do

please ask them like in the comments

under a q a video or if you have access

to

um the Discord server you can ask them

there there's even a q a room there or

you if you have access to my subscribe

star account then then you can you can

ask your questions there but uh lately

especially some people are asking

questions in odd places and I can't

guarantee that I'll see it and and put

it on the list if it's in an unusual

place that you ask the question if you

send me an email personally then yeah

I'll see it and then I'll write it down

but like an old video I've had people

ask questions it's like q a number two

just recently and it's like I mean I see

the notifications sometimes

but um yeah so if you have any questions

just uh include them in the in the I

guess the easiest would be in the

comments below

and uh

all my all my links are down below

including the links to my books and so

forth so just take a look at that and uh

like And subscribe if you haven't done

so already just smash that like button

as they say and be happy

hello and welcome to question and answer

number 37 I am your host Ponyo bossa

and uh 37 I'm answering so many

questions it's not even funny

and there's quite a few questions this

time like maybe 30 questions

people are really uh really asking a lot

of questions possibly because it's

turning into wintertime and they're just

kind of sitting around in the house in

the dark and

thinking up questions I don't know

but because there's so many I will uh

spare you all the details of going down

to the basement and finding two Mama

dogs just crapping all over the place

ah man it's just amazing little two

little dogs this big over the course of

the evening crapped six big piles and I

assume it's because many of you don't

realize this but Mama dogs eat their own

baby's poop so it's like they're just

like recycling it or something

but uh let's answer questions it's

talking about dog crap is just not good

very good anyway I mean some people are

into that talking about dog crap and

stuff but okay let's just answer

questions

and the first question is from toward a

Buddhist kidism kindism

k-i-n-i-s-m

this is a the name is more difficult

than the question I think

she's uh he changes his name a lot so I

won't have to to deal with this one for

for very much longer I think but anyways

towards a Buddhist

kinism

or kindism

asks what books would you recommend for

the study of Paulie

and I can say as I've said before the

books I used for studying Paulie when I

was a junior monk were the new

polycourse by AP Buddha data who

apparently is a monk

and it's very simply put forward and

it's it's easy to follow and

um there are three volumes I didn't

bother with the third volume because it

was mostly like translating passages of

poetry from the commentaries or

something

um but the first two the first two

courses are good also uh

uh if you don't have access to that I

have been told that AK Waters uh poly

grammar is is good

also the only poly grammar I have got

on the bookcase back there is uh it's a

poly grammar by a person named durocell

who lived in Burma during like the

British Raj

and that'll work too if you can find

neural cells

um polygrammer but as I say Buddha data

is about the best that I have seen I

haven't really looked carefully at AK

Waters although that's received a lot of

Praise also

but um yeah the book I would recommend

for studying Polly would be the new poly

chorus by AP Buddha data and once you

get it down a little bit then start

reading simple stuff jonnica's stories

tend to be fairly simple a lot of the

sutas are simple

um winnia is is simple but uh you might

not be interested in reading reading the

uh ancient books of monastic discipline

although there's lots and lots of

stories in those and uh try and stay

away from poetry and commentary and of

course I'll be dhamma until you're more

advanced

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Mary spelled

m-e-r-r-y

and Mary says hey John I would like to

get your opinion on dotonga practice one

more time I have read the sutas and how

it is and how is it that one meal a day

is do Tonga and wearing one set of robes

is dutonga and living in a forest is

dutonga when according to sutas

everybody did that as a regular practice

in Buddhist times please explain thank

you well that is true and I've I've

noticed that when I was a monk a long

time ago that uh

um one of the dutongas or optional

ascetic practices for monks I suppose I

should back up a little and explain that

a dotonga is uh one of 13 optional

ascetic practices that monks are allowed

to follow

and uh

and as Mary here says that uh eating one

meal a day is one of the datanga

practices uh having only three robes

is also a dotonga practice living in a

forest is a dutana practice also there's

a bunch more like never lying down or

living in a cemetery living under the

root of a tree or not under the root

living at the foot of a tree

uh living under the Open Sky eating only

alms food wearing robes that are made

out of Rags that sort of a thing

and uh yeah as Mary says some of these

are just plain Winnie like keeping only

three robes the only difference between

um

just following the rule and following

Tonga is that according to the Lavinia

rule you're allowed to keep an extra

robe for no more than 10 days

whereas if you're following the dutonga

then you wouldn't even keep an extra

robe for 10 days eating one meal a day

is not really avenia rule

um I mean a monk is allowed to eat

between Dawn and noon Dawn and midday

although there is one statement I think

it's in winnia where somebody is wanting

to ordain and the the preceptor or the

senior monk who has been asked to ordain

this layperson tells him well one meal a

day is not easy you know he gives this

list of things that are not easy

so I mean it is mentioned but it's not

really a rule

and uh I think most terracotta Buddhist

monks

uh really exploit that one and um I've

heard of some there was one Burmese

Monastery in uh I think it was in

Singapore where the Hmong somehow

managed to get three meals in between

Dawn and noon which uh is kind of

pushing you I mean you can you can gain

weight just eating one meal a day once

you get used to it

um living in the forest well it's uh

yeah I think most monks did that in the

Buddhist time but the thing is the

dutonga rules are not canonical they're

not in the sutras themselves

um except maybe there's mention of it

and like you know sometimes there's

mention of a monk being a three robes

where that's actually in in the tapitica

but that would be a late addition I'm

pretty sure because in all likelihood

hold amongst probably started off with

just the the one set of three robes

um so the the actual list of the

dutongas is found in the wisudi Maga

which is commentarial and that's uh

composed maybe you know close to a

thousand years after the time of the

Buddha it's based on earlier

commentarial texts but still it's

probably later you know the list of the

formalized list of 13 new tongas and the

three levels of each tutonga easy medium

and hard

um you know they they just post a date

the depicted and probably by the time

the dutongas were finalized

um

by the time the nikitangas were

finalized monks had already started kind

of slacking on one meal a day and three

robes and all that there's there's all

these loopholes like with regard to uh

three robes I mean you you read even

relatively strict monks books on Winnie

I'm like well I won't name any names but

there's a big one out I mean one of the

main ones nowadays they just say well if

you have want to keep extra robes and

you don't want to break the rule just

call them something other than robes

call them accessory cloth

because according to the rules of

discipline among monk monks are allowed

to keep extra cloth like bags and water

filters you know just Rags for wiping

their feet that kind of a thing and um

so that's just called accessory cloth uh

parikara chola

and so

um monks are advised nowadays because

very few follow the three robes thing I

did at the time when I was a monk but

very few monks do

um videos call it something else which

is cheating you know obviously if you're

wearing it as a robe it's a robe

but um I'll just move on to Mary's next

question because there's so many

questions it's not even funny

not complaining though this is uh this

is good it's good to ask questions

sweet tea

I'm down south

what are differences between Burmese

teravada traditions

well that's kind of a good question

there's

I suppose at first I should just

differentiate that there's like the

Orthodox Burmese Terra water traditions

and then you've got sort of the weird

like Alchemists and wayzas and sort of

like the

uh

they're more interested in just magic

and and that sort of thing so there's

there's some of those in Burma I really

don't know that much about them

but there are supposedly some Adept

Alchemist monks in Burma that are

following like alchemical terrible at a

Burmese Buddhist traditions

um but with regard to uh like more

mainstream more Orthodox Burmese Terra

water traditions

um you've got different what are called

guides in Burma that are like sex like

subsets like in in Thailand the two main

ones the two are are like uh was it

mahanikaya and damayu and the dhamma you

are the the stricter sect of the two

and they've got that in Burma also I

think all together the main sects

there's a total of something like 11. 9

or 11

. most of them are obscure some of them

are just localized to mum's State like

there's uh just

um it's the same tradition that the

dhamma you Thai tradition is based on is

still existing in one state and I really

don't know that much about it there's

one there's one guy called the

mahadevaragine which uh almost the only

difference is just in this one

non-canonical chant that they do they

say mahadawara instead of the usual poly

word mahadur doesn't mean the great door

I'm not even exactly sure what

um these what the most uh terabado sex

would would say instead of great door

because I don't recall which

which chant it is

so so there's that also and um in Burma

the two main ones in Burma are sudama

and schweijin thudima is sort of like

the mahani Kaya it's like most monks in

Burma are belong to the pseudomon gyne

shui Jin is slightly stricter although

there are some really outrageously

Shameless Seattles in Burma who are

schwagen

um

and then you get down to within within

the guides you've just got different

tradition different meditation

Traditions especially like I was

ordained in the tongpulu tradition which

was in the studemangine

um you've got the mahasi tradition which

I think also is stoodama

I'm not 100 sure on that I think I'm

pretty sure it's through tomorrow but

then the the Burmese are not as

exclusive as the ties like the ties in

Thailand the the dama youth members of

the dhamma you sect won't even I mean

they will not even do ceremonies with

with other monks because they just

consider them not to be fully ordained

whereas in Burma the schweizen and the

thudoma monks you know these intermingle

and do ceremonies together and so forth

um I think most of the differences in

the mainstream

mainstream traditions

uh it's just with regard to meditation

technique

um the tongpalu tradition which I was

ordained also put some emphasis on

ascetic practice and Forest dwelling so

that was one of the things that

attracted me to it

um for example it's just a tradition

that

um Tong Pulu monks don't lie down they

follow the sitting dutonga you know I

just mentioned dotongas and um they

usually sleep in chairs they'll sit in

like a reclining or not really reclining

just kind of a wicker chair that you

know it doesn't have a completely

straight back you know it kind of leans

back a little bit they sleep in one of

those

um

but uh yeah the main differences are

with regard to meditation like you've

got the Paul tradition which um you know

it does more of the genre type

meditation it's a little stricter in

Vania that's another that's another uh

difference is just with regard to

strictness of how they follow winnia

like some founders of traditions will

have some peculiar interpretation of
certain rules that all of his followers
will have to follow Paul Seattle was was
sort of like that
um mahasi tradition is possibly the
still the main or the the most popular
tradition in Burma and they just follow
a straight Sadi batana or uh Sadi batana
as mahasi Seattle interpreted it you've
got uh MoGo which does a lot of emphasis
on studying the traditional
interpretation of pedicia samupata
you've got uh or Sunland which um
I'm not exactly I've never practiced the
Sunland method but I do know that it
involves like heavy breathing so it's

another it's another meditation

difference

so the main difference is in the among

the different Traditions just setting

aside the different kinds or sects

it's mainly with regard to meditation

techniques that are emphasized and

taught and to some degree also with a

few other things like following certain

veneer rules the shui Jin monks also

wear a kind of a brick red kind of a

robe or a reddish brown like a russet

color whereas the pseudomon monks will I

mean there's more of a spectrum of

allowable colors

but for the most part I was just setting

aside like the the Alchemists and the

sorcerers and all that

um it's it's there's a way more

similarities than differences

so I'll just move on to Mary's next

question

and this is kind of a nice one I like

this question

why is it that I cannot drink coffee

with a little milk in the afternoon but

it is okay for me to eat dark chocolate

and honey and even cheese in some

terravonna monasteries permission to

drink coffee with milk to not fall

asleep seems more fair and intuitive

well yeah this is kind of an issue in uh

in uh teravada Buddhism and this uh

let's see eating dark chocolate and cheese that's a Thai thing they just for some reason Thai monks they want to say that eating cheese in the afternoon is okay starting with just what their belly wants I think and then they kind of use reverse logic to find the most plausible justification for it

and one of the main justifications for Thai amongst eating cheese in the afternoon is that actually cheese is a kind of butter which is allowable which is a very lame argument and would not persuade anyone who isn't easily persuadable or who isn't in a Thai tradition and is just following along foreign

ification for time monks eating dark

chocolate in the afternoon is that dark

chocolate supposedly is like a hardened

juice

which is pretty lame also uh I didn't do

either of those but with regard to honey

um yes the Buddha according to the the

rules of monastic discipline you know

the polytechs themselves the winning of

Pentagon the Buddha allowed

um five tonics

that can be kept for up to a week and

used mainly for medicinal purposes and

that includes honey it's like honey

molasses

uh see

or or just any kind of sugar really

including palm sugar

uh butter ghee and oil which is mostly

um sesame oil but just any kind of

edible oil including animal oils you

know like lard as long as it's rendered

it's allowable to keep for a week so it

was these five tonics were allowed in

the afternoon but only for medicinal

purposes like

um you know you've got hypoglycemia or

something

um or you're just not feeling well you

know you just need a little boost like

you feel like you're starting to catch a

cold or something you need a little

boost to kind of you know improve your

immune system efficiency or something

although I mean this also is it's just

completely abused by by monks and it

goes back centuries because according to

the commentaries

um if you're feeling hungry that can be

considered a sort of illness and so you

can eat sugar you know hard candy or

something in the afternoon and that that

gets used a lot in uh in Burma they've

got this stuff called sedumadu which is

a mixture of four of the the five

allowable tonics it doesn't have butter

in it it's got oil ghee

money and and palm sugar I think and

it's I mean after I burned out on it it

just started tasting gross to me so I
didn't really indulge in that but a lot
of monks will have that in the afternoon
because you're not allowed to eat solid
food or uh bogena in the afternoon and
the thing with milk is
that milk is counted as substantial food
it is Bojana
and so you're not allowed to have cow's
milk in the afternoon you can have the
coffee and as a monks sometimes I would
just put some sort of vegetable
milk you know like coconut milk or like
almond milk something like that you can
have that in the afternoon
well actually some Burmese monks say
coconut milk isn't allowable for this

this obscure weird I mean I we don't

need to get into the Obscure weird

reasoning

um for for the Assumption made by some

Burmese monks and I think erroneously

that coconut milk is not available in

the afternoon because it is essentially

the juice of some kind of fruit or in

this case maybe a a large seed a nut

so

um yeah you can drink coffee in the

afternoon

um strangely a lot of strict Burmese

monks will not drink tea in the

afternoon because there is this obscure

rule in the rules of monastic discipline

that the juice of any Leaf is allowable
to drink in the afternoon except the
juice strain from cooking greens you
know like you boil some spinach and then
you drain off the green water that the
spinach is boiled in you're not allowed
to drink that because that technically
would be considered a kind of soup or
something I'm not sure exactly what the
reasoning is and
um it just happens that in in Burma
tea leaves are are eaten as a green
there's a it's really good actually tea
leaves make a really nice salad
and they get you zing too if you eat too
much
and uh so they've considered tea a lot

of the stricter monks we'll consider tea

to be watered drained off from you know

sort of cooking these greens

but um

yeah to drink the coffee is is no

problem it's just the cow's milk in the

afternoon and

um the Thai is eating dark chocolate and

cheese in the afternoon is just uh I

consider to be a corruption and monastic

discipline that they uh even intelligent

relatively strict monks will justify

largely through uh herd Instinct I think

so I'll just move on to Mary's next

question

and uh this one was right under the wire

I think Mary posted this just this

morning

why Consciousness is not ourselves every

conda is not us but Consciousness is

just observing other condas like seeing

is not us hearing and so forth but

Consciousness we can do let it be that

way or this way because we can sleep or

take drugs or alcohol so we can do this

and we can will fully change our

Consciousness at will any time it just

observes uh everything else and

everything else we cannot control

well um this is sort of a reference to

the anata Allah or the the discourse on

the mark of no self

which according to tradition was the

Buddha's second discourse after his

Enlightenment which caused his first

five disciples to become fully

enlightened

and according to the anata

we cannot say with any of the five

condos that number five

um like the constituents of which we are

composed which is

a physical I mean it's the body and

you've got

feelings perceptions uh will and

consciousness

or with Will is Con as a Karma

formations is like the more the more

usual translation although it mainly it

means Evolution or will

so

Mary here is suggesting that although

um the first four are not us the the

fifth one or consciousness

uh could be considered us and actually I

mean it's it's never suggested by the

Buddha in the texts that Consciousness

is a self although there are a few

obscure references in the sutas to

formless infinite Consciousness being

Nirvana or Nirvana

and so the problem here

is that first of all it's never said to

be a self and even if it even if it is

the self it's sort of like Atman in the

upanishads where everybody has the same

self

um I've had the argument with regard to

uh

in like the five condas that I mean we

can say let it be this way let it not be

that way and uh have it happen but it's

not reliable like even with our body I

mean I want my arm to go up it goes up

you know or I want my hair to be dark I

can just dye it

or you know whatever you know you you

want to change your perceptions you just

turn and look at something else or just

deliberately think about something else

so we do have some control we just do

not have total control like when you're

dying you can't just say let my

Consciousness persist

you know let me not die

or

um

Consciousness is really philosophically

uh problematic for terrible Buddhism

because they really do not have a good

explanation for it I do I got a good

explanation for it

and that's that Consciousness is just

the substance of our mentality whereas

the mental States or just the like the

form of it you know you've got

you know this this little piece of cloth

here right the substance of that would

be

cloth or or cellulose mainly

and but the form is this little square

cloth with the

a little crisscross the edges on it

so I mean it's the substance in the form

are simultaneous and you know they they

have to exist at the same time you can't

take away the form without taking away

the claws you can't take away the cloth

without taking away the form you know

the substance the form are just they're

just simultaneous and at the same at two

different levels of of Truth or reality

and you could say that with regard to

consciences Consciousness and

perceptions for example

you know it's like Consciousness is the

essence of mind the Mind energy or the

the whatever undefined

and that the perception is the form that

it assumes

so

but still the thing the problem with

terrible Buddhist philosophy dealing

with Consciousness is that

they they say I mean they admit that

Consciousness has to be simultaneous

with the mental state that it just sort

of is the the field or ground for the

mental state to take place

and they consider to be just completely

completely different from uh any of the

mental States and it's not a mental

state in and of itself according to

abidama there are four ultimate

realities which is physical matter mind

mental States and Nirvana or nirvana in

mind and mental states are just

considered to be just absolutely

different

ah

but the thing is I mean it's like bound

to the mental state so I mean to some

degree it conforms to the mental state

which I mean it's it's abhidham this is

an orthodox terrible and I don't really

endorse this but that is what the texts

say

and so

um

to the extent that you can't control

your mental States you also can't

control the Consciousness that is bound

up with that mental state or just

serving as the the foundation or the

ground for that mental state but if you

want to say that Consciousness

ultimately is just infinite and formless

and we're sort of partaking of just a

localized little bit of that

consciousness

then even that is not considered to be

the self you know this infinite formless

Consciousness that pervades the entire

universe

um

first of all anything that's infinite
and formless is going to just be
paradoxical you can't really say that it
exists or doesn't exist
and that's kind of what that's kind of
the attitude of Buddhism in general I
mean it's if it's infinite and formless
you just don't reapply it and turn it
into an it which turns it into something
samsaric
so I mean there's a little bit of
uh like philosophical uh [__]
going on with regard to Consciousness it
seems to me I mean it doesn't make good
sense to me although there are lots of
Buddhist Scholars out there it seems to

make perfect sense to them

but um

yeah Consciousness is not ourselves

simply because it's not our

Consciousness if even if you say that

there is an infinite formless

Consciousness then

um you know it's just kind of an

illusion that part of that is supposedly

our identity

as as opposed to any any anything else

uh it's hard to discuss it's hard to

explain this kind of stuff

the human language is not designed to

discuss Ultimate Reality

is more designed to discuss you know

what we're going to eat for dinner and

my butt itches and you know there's a

there's a bear outside the cave and that

kind of thing

so I hope I hope I answered that one and

I'll just move on to the next question

which is kind of a tricky one this is

from Diane and Diane says

for you is achieving Enlightenment

easier in this cultural environment

being a layperson or being a monk

well

um being a monk

um I mean it was designed by the Buddha

and also I mean he was just adapting

slightly a pre-existing tradition in

Ancient India I mean it's designed for

enlightenment

um the thing is so like in Burma you

want to become enlightened you're better

off being a monk than just living and

not in in the Hut with the wife and

three kids and the old maid aunt and all

that Grandma and Grandpa

you know going out and working every day

well the thing is in in America

um it doesn't work as well so for some

people

I think

not necessarily achieving Enlightenment

but at least making spiritual progress

is

it may be easier for some people not

being a monk in the secular West simply

because it receives so little support

culturally and materially

um and if if a monk does get support as

a general rule he's just sort of under

house arrest you know he's just like

has to stay in this one place and you

know he has to please his supporters so

that they continue supporting him and so

forth and um in a way it is

very limiting on uh personal freedom

so

uh with regard to you

um is it easier to get closer to

Enlightenment I mean that's just a

temporal thing I suppose if assuming

that it's inevitable that I'm going to

become enlightened someday

you know or or anybody who's going to

get enlightened someday then every

minute that passes is taking you a

minute closer to your enlightenment

and even if you're going into hell or

whatever you know like they would data

like the Buddhist uh Judas Iscariot you

know he was the cousin of the Buddha who

was

um trying to to kill him according to

the text so that he could take over the

Sangha

um he's like in the bottom pits of

Avicii hell right now but he is destined

to become a a checker Buddha in some

future age according to tradition and so

even though he was on his way to hell at
the time you know just going with you
know time getting shorter and shorter up
until he becomes a Pacheco Buddha then
he's uh you know no matter what he does
I guess maybe I shouldn't say that but
uh you know he is he's getting closer to
enlightenment but um making spiritual
progress It's just of a different order
in the west if you're living as a
layperson your spiritual practice is
more a matter of accepting what happens
with with Equanimity I mean you do that
as a monk also and
um just learning how to to interact with
people wisely whereas as a monk you can

just go off and be a Hermit pretty much

so it's a different sort of of spiritual

practice and I did I mean I I kept

feeling this need that I really needed

to interact with humans more especially

people that speak my own language that

um you know have the same approximate

cultural conditioning to me

so

is achieving Enlightenment easier in

this cultural environment being a late

is damn difficult no matter what

cultural environment you're in

really

it's hard to say

although as I say the monks live was

designed for

um cultivating like the more subtle

levels of wisdom you know you can get to

a level of subtlety you're living alone

in a cave in silence and Stillness you

can get into really subtle mental States

and

um that's one reason why Jonna is much

less of an option for laypeople than it

is for monks simply because they can

just dedicate themselves to it full time

yeah

so this question is kind of uh

uh indeterminate it's it's hard to say

exactly although

um yeah my mental States aren't as

subtle as they were before but I'm

dealing with I'm still dealing with

things that have to be worked out and uh

they're coming at me at a higher rate so

at that I mean to that extent

um you could make quicker progress just

being thrown into the Maelstrom of of

some saric phenomena rather than hiding

in a forest somewhere although def as

like I pointed out I mean the Buddha

advised

monks to hide out in a forest somewhere

so it's not like they're just chickening

out and running away I mean you have to

deal with [__] no matter what where you

are

because your own problems come with you

because uh they're they're inside you

so let's move on to the next question

this is from Matthew

do modern Buddhists have a theory on

what the historical Jesus was of course

he came from a Jewish lineage but could

he have been a yogi also well there are

a few texts there's one Tibetan one I've

read the translation of it and it's

obviously just a just a Shameless

forgery

and I assume all of them are but there

are these um

Traditions that Jesus during his his

Missing Years

that uh he actually went to India or

Tibet and uh was like ordained as a

Buddhist monk and then came back to

Judea or uh

what was it

north of Judea Galilee

you know after after you've been a monk

but it was I mean I read this this one A

friend of mine a Burmese friend of mine

a Burmese monk friend

he actually had the thing published

and I'm just pointing out to him I mean

there's just no way that Jesus I mean as

a kid they're offering to make him a

high priest in the of the temple in

Jerusalem and he says no I'm just going

to go off and go off to the East and

study and then he he goes to the East

and he has this name jivita karita or

something like that which is obviously

just the closest Sanskrit or or Nepali

or whatever to Jesus Christ as though

Christ were his last name you know Jesus

H Christ

so yeah modern Buddhist I mean they've

got Fringe theories that that are not

mainstream and most Buddhists don't

follow

um you know it's not like in Islam where

you know Jesus although he's not

worshiped is accepted as a genuine

Prophet I mean there's none of that in

in Buddhism with regard to people in in

the west like like Jesus or Moses

or Muhammad

so

do modern Buddhists have a theory on

what the historical Jesus was uh I think

that the correctest answer to that is no

and uh could he have been a yogi

um well

if he was a yogi then he was a yogi like

under John the Baptist see my take on

Jesus you know he started off as a

carpenter those the so-called missing

years are just he wasn't famous yet you

know they had some legends about when he

was a kid which are probably made up in

my opinion not being a like a a Biblical

fundamentalist obviously

and um

and then there's this Missing Years I

mean after they take care of the baby
stuff it's sort of the same thing with
the Buddhist Story I mean the Buddha you
know they have to discuss his birth and
you know this sort of miraculous stuff
associated with his birth and then you
know it's pretty much silence up until
you know he's he's right about ready to
renounce the world and it's the same way
with Jesus in the New Testament
um but he was a carpenter he was more
spiritual I mean it wasn't satisfying
him for for whatever reasons you know he
just had this deep spiritual yearning so
he heard about John the Baptist and went
and joined John the Baptist's spiritual

camp on the on the Jordan River

and there may have been yogic practices

of A Sort like as seen Jewish yogic

practices could be that the essenes were

influenced by Buddhism in in certain

ways that can't be proven

but um yeah if he was a yogi he was a

Jewish Yogi like studying under his Guru

John the Baptist and then after John the

Baptist got arrested

um the the theory is that Jesus was his

successor the sort of leader of the

group but he wasn't satisfied with

staying in a camp you know out in the

desert and so he figured he'd better

just go in and deal with humans kind of

like I did although of course I'm I'm no

Messiah

so the next question let's just move on

to that the next question is from Tut

DVD

and Tut DVD says have you found any

support systems for aiding Buddhists who

may want to disrobe perhaps one can be

established I'd Foster a monk in

transition drive them around and give

them a place to stay help find a job and

establish credit Etc take them to the

strip club I kid

I'm sure many other people would do the

same yeah that's that's a good idea and

it is true that um if you've been a monk

for a long time and you don't have a

family to fall back on like a lot of

people do

I mean the the usual support system for

a monk who's dropping out is his family

or some woman that that loves him and

you know she's she's completely okay

with him dropping out and like moving in

with her or something

um

but yeah there's there's no real support

system other than supports I should say

supporters also

so the family supporters or you know one

woman in particular tend to be the three

main ones

and uh you know like uh when uh Conti

Paolo the famous Conte Paulo who

um met uh what was his name Thomas

Merton in Thailand and then moved to

Australia

um

he was supported by his his supporters I

mean when he dropped out a lot of his

supporters just they were they were cool

with that and they helped him to to get

set up as a layperson I was helped to a

large degree by uh I mean my family is

pretty much gone you know my parents

have passed away I didn't have that to

fall back on and uh yeah I just had to

rely on supporters

hmm

and uh yeah they provided me with uh

several thousand dollars to get started

on and with that that was just

invaluable

so I mean if a monk I mean a lot of

monks they just really are stuck like

Burmese monks that have been monks since

childhood they don't know how to do

anything else you know they're not

familiar with anything else

uh they and so I mean they're just stay

as monks even though they're not making

progress or maybe not even trying to

make progress

um

there was one I I this one story I read

in a jack cornfield book a long time ago

how uh there was a monk at a it was like

a refugee Center in Thailand he was a

Burmese monk or a Corinne monk or

something and there was this sort of a

refugee camp for

you know corens or something it was

during the one of the Civil War

flare-ups in Burma with corens in the

military government

and he's he's there at this refugee camp

and this Thai woman and he started

getting like emotionally close

and

um he just like deep down realized I

mean he didn't know how to do anything

other than be a monk and so he was going

to just he got this weird idea he was

going to emulate himself on the the
front front porch of the the Burmese
Embassy in Thailand and then it was
mainly just because he was in this state
of you know he he wants this woman he
wants to drop out but he can't because
he just completely unfamiliar with being
a layperson having a having a job and
all that but somebody talked him out of
it and uh the the Thai lady kind of
backed away and
apparently he's still a monk if he's
still alive
so yeah I mean if you want to start up
something like that
um it probably would be a good service
although it may be that a lot of uh

Asian monks who are just eager to get to America and start being rich or something or just exploit that but I mean if there's any monk that you know of who admits that he's thinking about seriously thinking about dropping out of the monk Hood

um yeah I mean helping him would be a very

um a very good thing to do I mean I was going to say a meritorious and just from the Orthodox point of view helping a monk to drop out may not be all that meritorious still I mean if he's just not I mean he just got what he can get out of being a monk or whatever

then it's better for him not to be a

monk than for him to be an unwilling

prisoner in a monastery

kind of in Exile from the world because

he just can't make his way back again

so yeah if you I mean rather than just

set up a fund I mean like and just

advertise it you know any monks that

feel like they should disrobe you know

contact us at this number

um just I mean just keep your eyes open

and if any monk that you support

you know is talking about he's seriously

considering disrobing you might reach

out to him and offer him some help I'm

sure he would very much appreciate that

so we'll just move on to the next

question this is from Austin

foreign

says can you do a video on your thoughts

of nagarjuna

um I suppose I could

um I've I've already pretty much given

my opinion on nagarjan I think he is one

of the greatest Buddhist philosophers of

all time

I had a Korean Mahayana monk tell me

that uh

in in his circles Korean Mahayana monk

circles nagarjuna is considered to be

pretty much a second Buddha

and I do think that non-guardian is

interpretation of penicious or dependent

co-rising is the best that I've come

across

and I won't I won't wade into that one

because that that's a whole that's a

whole video and on it in and of itself

and that's kind of what Austin here

suggested can you do a video on your

thoughts of nagarjuna so yeah that's a

possibility other than what I've what

I've just said

um yeah it's possible I'm not making any

promises though

so the next question from Austin

can we have a discussion on why Brian is

pro-hitler

yeah poor Brian man

I think

some like Advanced Jewish rabbi might
have put a curse on him you know way way
more efficacious than the curse they put
on Spinoza where they're trying to get
him torn apart by bears or something
because Brian is just he's just
persecuted at every step you know he's
he lost his his job you know as a
mainstream Dharma teacher because he's
supposedly uh you know like a
anti-semite Nazi Holocaust denier
and you know he's he got kicked out of
his apartment probably for similar
reasons had to had to move somewhere
else just most recently just a couple
days ago he called me when I was at work

and told me that um the videos we've

been doing with anjan uh punadamo which

I've enjoyed is they're they're really

nice

um

uh participated in one of Brian's UFO

meetup groups

and then he put out on his social media

you know he encouraged his followers to

check on it and he just got this wave of

negative feedback about what he's

associating with the Nazi and uh so I

guess

is at least for the for the for a while

going to stop doing the videos with um

Brian and me

and so it's just Brian just can't get a

break it's it's really strange too

though because he is a sincere

knowledgeable Buddhist

you know I mean he he doesn't promote

hatred he doesn't promote violence

and but the question is why is he Pro

Hitler

um what got him interested in in the

first place I don't know he says that he

has this feeling that in his previous

life he was like a whop of pilot you

know he was a Nazi in his previous life

before this one and if that's the case

then that may have something to do with

it I would assume so

but um he really sincerely believes that

Adolf Hitler was a good guy he was the

good guy he was wearing the white hat

and that it was you know International

Jewish something

um just the just the The Establishment

the proto-new world order

that um because he was breaking away

from you know sort of the the economic

Network and of course he was no fan of

Jews

um that you know he was threatening to

break away just sort of like uh in

modern times there have been some people

that just because they're trying to get

away from the globalized currency scam

essentially

or you know they're just trying to go

back to the gold standard or with their
own currency and that sort of thing they
just get they just get brutally attacked
and so Brian thinks that sort of thing
happened with Hitler and that all the
death camps and gas Chambers and so
forth are just uh
propaganda and
um I mean there have been revisionists
including Jewish religions like David
Cole who I mean they don't deny that the
Holocaust happened but they're saying
you know it was exaggerated that there
are details that are just accepted you
know with regard to like certain death
camps or gas Chambers and that sort of

thing that were they're just sort of

like embellishments on the truth

and uh you know it might be more like

three million instead of 6 million that

that were systematically killed

but

so Brian just thinks that um I mean I I

do not endorse Brian's

um opinions on on certain things

but uh I don't see how Hitler was any

worse than Stalin I mean this is just

the weirdness of Western culture and

there is a lot of propaganda and mind

control in that you can wear a shake

weavara shirt you could probably wear a

MAO shirt in public even though Mal

killed more people than Stalin and

Hitler combined

and it's it's okay but you are a

swastika or a Hitler shirt and you're

just gonna be like spat on and screamed

at in the streets just like Brian gets

so

yeah he he just sincerely believes it uh

the Holocaust didn't happen that the

Jews that were killed you know during

the 1930s and first half of the 40s

um you know it was done without Hitler's

approval or or knowledge and to some

degree some of that must have happened

and also that like a lot of the ones in

in Ukraine when they got liberated when

Ukraine well invaded by the by the

Germans

um

most of like the commissars and stuff in

in the Soviet Union in the earlier

decades were Jewish you know it was a

Jewish guy in charge of overseeing the

whole of demore which was like a

holocaust that most people have never

even heard of

it was where the ukrainians were just

deliberately starved to death by the

Millions

and uh so there was a lot of like people

in Russia or the Ukraine in the Soviet

Union that as soon as they got the

chance they were just fighting back

against the the Jews and persecuting

them and so forth so I mean some of that

did happen

I mean I I still think that a lot of

Jews were just taken out into fields and

shot with machine guns after being

required to dig their own trench Graves

and that sort of thing so I'm not saying

that that Hitler was uh a good guy but

he was a damn interesting dude I'd

rather I'd rather have dinner with Adolf

Hitler than with Joseph Stalin at least

I'd have uh more confidence that I'd be

able to walk out of the room alive

afterwards

but uh

why Brian is pro-hill I mean if you

really want to know his his reasons I

think you'd have to ask Brian because

I've just told pretty much as much as I

understand of it

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Jules katard

Jules katard

probably got picked on a lot when he was

a kid

and Jules guitar it says

I remember hearing a discourse where a

story was told of a frog overhearing a

discourse of the Buddha I don't remember

all the details but when the Frog passed

away

it was then reborn as a human or maybe a

Deva as a result of hearing this

discourse can anybody point me in the

direction of the discourse of the I mean

of the source of the story or any others

involving animals who overheard

discourses and gained higher rebirth

attainments Etc thank you

okay well

um the story that he's referring to

about the frog is uh the manduka Deva

manduka is is poly for frog and Deva is

God the frog god and the closest that

comes to being canonical is it is in the

Melinda partner

it is mentioned there I'm pretty sure

and the Melinda pagna is generally not

considered to be part of the tapitica it

is rather late

um but it is it is part of the 40 volume

Burmese typical the Burmese considered

to be canonical so that would be the

closest to being canonical it is I think

it's also mentioned in the wisudi Maga

and a few other commentaries

and uh

so is this I mean the story that that

Jules guitar is referring to about the

frog is that the Buddha was giving a

discourse on the banks of Lake gagara I

think

and uh there's people were just sitting

here standing around listening to the

sermon

and a Frog happened to be just within

earshot of the discourse and the Buddha had such a soothing melodious kind of a voice that the Frog was just listening and it was sort of like in this almost like a meditation you know it was just like in this peaceful State listening to the Buddha's voice when a cow heard or maybe a Shepherd a coward I think with the with the stick just what went up to to listen to the Buddha too and he just accidentally brought a stick down on the head of the Frog and killed it without any intention the Frog was killed instantly and because it died in this kind of exalted State listening to the Buddha's voice it became a Deva in its

next life it's uh according according to

the tradition it was reborn in palatimsa

heaven

and how to polish 12 yojinas across and

a yojana is uh very roughly 10 miles

so it's it's living in a palace it's uh

man over 100 miles wide

but um let's see what is it

let's see having I I got some notes Here

I cut and paste this note here see

having discovered his previous birth he

appeared before the Buddha revealed his

identity and worshiped him the Buddha

preached to him and the Deva became a

sodapana 84 000 others also realize the

truth

so I guess uh he remembered his past

life as a frog and then when he met with

the Buddha during possibly when the

Buddha was up in tawatims to heaven or

maybe the Frog came down to pay his

respects he told him about the incident

and the Buddha preached to him and the

Frog God who apparently was in human

form as a god even though he was in frog

form as a frog

um

he uh he became an Arya he became a

pseudopod

which is nice

but any other stories about animals

hearing discourses and uh getting

attainance from that I don't know of

there are a lot of animals that that did
do meritorious deeds and got to be
reborn as humans or Gods like you just
read the Jonica stories you know it was
just full of you know just fish and
frogs and coils and pheasants and
peacocks and foxes and so forth with
essentially human intelligence like the
the Buddha in a previous life he's the
fish King who uses essentially psychic
powers to cause it to rain so that his
his pond which was drying out in a
drought wouldn't dry out and all of his
his subject fish Wouldn't Die
and there's there's a famous uh watasuta
where the Buddha was a a quail a baby
quail in a previous life who uh is

caught in a forest fire and uh he just
essentially uses psychic powers or he
makes a an assertion of Truth
and I don't remember exactly what the
assertion of Truth was but
um you know what what truth it was he
was asserting but and then you know the
coil makes this vow you know by the the
power of this truth made the the forest
fire not burn us up and uh
the forest fires kind of went around the
The Forest Part or the baby quail and
his family was living
so there's lots of that kind of thing
especially in the Angelica stories
uh

but with regard to animals actually

getting attainments from hearing the

Buddha that's the only one I can

remember there was a monkey and an

elephant they were attending the Buddha

in uh well he was in seclusion the monks

were all squabbling about something so

he just took off and lived alone in the

woods and the monkey and an elephant

were were taking care of him

and you know offering him food and that

kind of a thing so I they might be in

heaven too but it wasn't because the

Buddha was preaching to them probably

so I think I'll just uh move on to the

next question

excuse me

and this is from hey it's Tig

and hey it's TIG says in your question

and answer 36

as a response to Aaron's question

regarding sex scandals in Eastern

religions you were relaying anecdotes

regarding prostitutes in Asia at the one

hour 21 minutes 12 seconds time stamp

you are about to tell another story

before the bashful look on your face you

opted out of it can you please tell that

story to us I must know I have to know

so my nose itches so

ah

excuse me yeah okay well I I can tell

I remember

this is back in the 90s late 90s Maybe

maybe early

whatever the decade after the 90s is

called

I was living at this Forest Monastery up

in the hills the one I almost became

habit of

and uh for some reason the the current

Abbott at the time just happened to me

we were having a conversation and just

for some reason I don't remember why he

just said sort of dismissively Village

girls aren't very pretty and then I'm

like well what about that one and there

was this there was this house like two

houses away from the monster when we

first started going for alms it was one

of the first houses that would offer

alms and there was this girl there he

was maybe 18 20 years old maybe early

20s

and she was she was pretty I mean she

was Buxom you know curvy which is kind

of unusual for a Southeast Asian girl

and she had like this delicate

like a porcelain doll kind of a face

almost like her face was just painted

onto the shell of an egg

and she had I mean she obviously had a

foul disposition you know sometimes

you're walking towards the house you can

hear like angrily scolding her parents

and so forth but um you know I just said

well what about that one and I explained

which one I was talking about and he

said the Australian monk who lived here

last year said the same thing about her

but um

yeah Western men have different

standards of beauty than than Burmese

men and then he starts telling me this

Horror Story about this this same girl

um

apparently trying to maybe he was just

indulging in gossip but maybe he was

like trying to conscientiously get me

not to like her or something just not be

attracted to her

um he was saying that when she was

engaged to be married before she was

married she was actually going to her

fiance's house to have sex

I mean it was her idea

and uh I mean by Burmese Village

standards that's all right she's already

a Scarlet hussy then apparently uh the

girl's father didn't like the guy they

didn't stay married for very long they

got divorced or whatever which is fairly

easy in Burma even though it might not

happen nearly as much as in the west and

then she started having like intimate

rendezvous with a farmhand that lived

down the road they would meet under a

bush and have intimate relations I mean

without being married at all there was

no intention of being married apparently

and not only that but on one occasion

she climbed up a neighbor's tree and

stole a whole basket of fruit

and while he's telling me this I'm

LinkedIn I don't think I ever went out

with a girl that wasn't any worse than

that I mean I mean she's practically a

saint or something by Western standards

if that's the worst he could say about

her

um and then but then later on like years

later he was telling me that she

actually this this girl but because I

mean relatively speaking she was a

Scarlet hussy you know by Burmese you

know mainstream rural Village standards

um she actually did become a prostitute

there was an Army base nearby and uh the

soldiers there liked her apparently

but um that was the story I almost told

I'm pretty sure

and uh yeah I think of anything it made

me like her more I mean not her becoming

a prostitute years later but at the time

he was telling me all this

scandalous gossip about her it's like

that's it I mean she's

yeah I just didn't get it by Western

standards I mean that I mean that's just

nothing

so I'll just move on to the next next

story next question this is from rafi46

and Rafi 46 says have you ever heard of

monks in Burma inciting hatred against

Christians there

uh I think the easiest answer to that

would be no

I can't think of it might have happened

it may be that I just don't remember it

but I don't think monks incite hatred

against Christians there I mean there is

sort of uh like in The Villages

in The Villages especially there might

be a few Christians

and uh other people might disapprove you

know they're Christians did you know

that they're Christians that kind of a

thing but um yeah I never heard monks

bad-mouthing Christians I've heard a few

lay people you know kind of disapproving

of some neighbor because they're a

Christian

but um as a general Christians don't

have as bad of a reputation as as

Muslims do obviously in Burma there are

monks who are not necessarily inciting

hatred against Muslims but they're

definitely not wanting them in the

country

you know just live in peace you know

somewhere else

just stay away from us in our Burmese

Buddhist culture

so

yeah I don't think monkson I mean there

probably are there probably are monks in

Burma who incite hatred against

Christians but I've it's it's not nearly

as common as uh being anti-islamic and

in Rangoon there's Christmas carolers

Christians you know there are more of

them in the cities

and they'll go out Christmas caroling

and before Christmas you know just stand

outside of gates and

seeing Mary Mary do you do you all

that kind of a thing

so I'll just uh move on to the next

question and uh

lots of questions not even funny

this is from akala or achala let's go

with achala let's assume this is a poly

word a challah

and inshallah says a person who has

become a sodapana does he know he has

achieved the state of assadapana if yes

how what are the signs

well this is like a trick question for

me this is like an academic question

because I really think that the meaning

of the word soda Palmer has changed

over the over the centuries

that originally a sodapona would be sort

of like the Buddhist equivalent of a

born-again Christian I mean it's like

probably originally a sodapon or someone

who enters the stream they're just

entering upon a spiritual life you know

they're they're like filled with faith

and enthusiastic about practicing Dharma

but

um somewhere along the line it became it

got turned into uh essentially a

superhuman state where they are an aria

they're a Buddhist saint that has

um

contained at least a glimpse of nibbana

and they can't tell lies anymore they

can't break any of the five precepts

anymore

um

but uh so this is kind of a an academic

question for me I'll ask it again here a

person who has become a setup on it does

he know he has achieved the state

episode upon if yes how what it signs

well it all depends on exactly what a

soda planet is and it depends a lot on

who you talk to because like there's uh

a Mahayana Buddhist text the The Diamond

Cutter Sutra the bajra cherica

and um it says that if you're if you

become an aria there's no way you would

think that you're an Arya because you've

transcended the view of self of I am

this or I am that

so if you follow that then they wouldn't

really know or if they know that they've

achieved the state episode upon it's

some deep down experiential knowledge

rather than I am this or I am that

but the signs of I'm not the signs of

being a sodapana

um

yeah it's it again it depends on exactly

what the definition is and I really am

skeptical of the official

Orthodox interpretation of a stream

enterer but as I set up the Orthodox

explanation of a street Mentor you know

they just cannot break the five precepts

anymore and uh there are certain beliefs

like self-view that they have abandoned

so that those would be the signs I

suppose

I think I'll just move on to achala or

yeah let's just let's call this person

achala

achala's next question

why should we bow down to the Buddha

statue Buddha is extinguished so why

bowing down to an empty statue well

I agree with that

as a monk I for the most part I did not

bow down the statues

which could be a little awkward because

all the Burmese monks would be you know

they'd be prostrating and I'd just be

sitting there

and some of them wouldn't be kind of

looking up at me like why isn't he doing

it

but I explained to them sometimes I mean

it's like a Buddha statue has no Sila no

samadhi no ponya you know it has no

virtue no morality it's got no

concentration or meditation unless a

brick does and it's got no wisdom unless

unless a brick does

so it's it's just uh an image you know

it's just a representative of the Buddha

and so people that are very devotional

you know they're very grateful to the

Buddha you know they'll bow down out of

respect you know it's like the Buddha

isn't here so we'll bow down to this as

his representative

but again

um

idolatry has really never been a big

thing for me I mean I've never been much

of an idolater I've got a Buddha statues

here like that little white one on top

of the bookcase there

that one there the unorthodox sleepy one

but um I have probably bouted that one

before

I don't I've never bounded this one

I've had that one for years I got it in

Burma and I was amongst some some

Village person gave it to me

so yeah I mean I agree I'm not into

idolatry it's not really why I became a

Buddha I'm not very devotionalistic

so yeah

why should we bow down to the blue side

I mean it depends on you it depends on

your volitions

but it's not really necessary there were

no Buddha statues in the Buddhist time

obviously I mean it was hundreds of

years before they got invented

so we'll just move on to each other's

next question

why all the Buddhas are born in India

all the samasam Buddhas we have in Pali

Canon were born in India why not Uganda

or some other country

well

this is uh a little problematic

um all the sumossum Buddhas we have in

the Pali Canon were born into

a culture resembling India although once

you get more than just a few

a few Buddhas back they're born on
previous worlds so it'd be previous
India's or previous Jambu deepas but the
thing is in Ancient India they had a
very limited understanding of geography
World Geography they had four continents
with mountain marrow in the center they
had a northern continent and eastern and
western continents in the southern
continent Jambu Deepa was the southern
continent that was like the subcontinent
of India with Mount marrow being up in
the Himalayas
and I mean they had to know that there
were people farther west but they
figured that was just sort of an

extension on Jambu Depot that the other
three continents were inhabited by
non-humans I mean they were like
Monsters like it was like nagas or
something on one of them yakas or
something on another one
so yeah it was just the limitations of
their understanding obviously they had
no idea of Uganda
so and to some degree it's just the
limitations of their understanding of I
mean it's just ancient India it's kind
of the same they were they were
india-centric just sort of like the way
the the Jews and the Christians are
earth-centric you know they just
consider the the the

almighty God is going to have his only

begotten son on this little planet you

know

so it's it's kind of that sort of a

thing

but uh I don't know

I don't think there have ever been a

Buddha in Uganda maybe enlightened

beings

so I'll just move on to the next

question the Arya swasti project says

greetings Ponyo I was recently watching

anjan punadama when he said something

interesting he said the past is not real

because it is no longer here the future

is not real because it's not here yet

and the present is not real because you

cannot count on it

I can understand the concept but this

brings a question of cause and effect or

Karma comma in the past if the past is

not real where did the cause come from

if the future is not real where does the

effect go neither cause nor effect seems

to be happening in the now at any time

much respect or regards

well

I mean this this statement that he says

that oh John Punit almost said the past

is not real because it's no longer here

the future is not real because it's not

here yet the present is not real because

you cannot count on it

um I'm not sure if that is orthodox Tara bottom with regard to the present I pretty sure an orthodox terrible the present is real but only the present the past no longer exists the future doesn't exist yet so it's like a Newtonian concept of time

um it does kind of remind me what the the ajan is said to have said reminds me of a statement from Mahayana text whereas

um this is essentially past mind cannot be grasped present not mind cannot be grasped future mind cannot be grasped so that would be something like the president is not real because you cannot

count on it but according to Orthodox

terravala only the present moment is

real and the thing is the present moment

is is changing so it's like

the past

um you know it it was real when it was

the present it was real

and this this attitude I mean it does

create a philosophical question I mean

in abhidham especially I I have no idea

how they can get cause and effect to

work because they've got everything

according to abhidham a philosophy which

is orthodox taravana everything in the

world is blinking off and on at a rate

of about a trillion times a second so

each each moment is like a trillionth of

a second and it's it's there and then it
disappears and the next thing is there
and that disappears and the next thing
is there and that disappears and so how
can you have cause and effect from the
past
it doesn't even there's not even
contiguity I mean it's not even touching
because you know you've got the past
moment completely vanishes and then you
got the next moment after that so that
anything that any cause even in the the
previous moment is just a non-existent
cause because the past doesn't exist
so I mean if you can admit there's some
kind of contiguity that is it's it's it

removes most of the problem because you know it's just continuous it's like like like my arm here it's like you know this causes the the next part causes the next part because it's all contiguous you can say that it it's cause and effect but I mean obviously it isn't but still at least they're contiguous and it's you know if if time is moving like this then you know at least it's just a constant flow

and then you could have some sort of cause and effect although using my arm as a representation of time is maybe not the most uh intuitively effective way of going about it

so yeah it's just a flow and and it's

like what was

of the present moment isn't the present

anymore and what what isn't the present

yet is going to be the present so I mean

it's not like you know only now is real

and now now it isn't real because it's a

different now you know it's just now the

present moment is is just in a state of

of flow

and I don't know if I answered the Arya

swasti Project's question

but I tried

and I got a bunch more so I'll just move

on to the next question and this is from

bodhisatta 969

Alias the fascist Buddhist

says do you think fascism or forms of government similar to Fascism fit with Buddhism

if you look at Buddhist countries like Thailand or Myanmar you might come to this conclusion in addition they would never allow themselves to be overwhelmed or give up their culture on their own I believe democracy is the rule of the ignorant and selfish and usually leads to the downfall of One's Own culture I also think that even the Dalai Lama would not Advocate unlimited Mass immigration like Pope Francis is doing kind regards well I mean even just going back

you know into the Buddhist time

most of the most of the government

systems in the Buddhist time were pretty

much fascist I mean it was like

totalitarian autocracy

you know the King was the Law whatever

he wanted to do he could do he wanted to

you know kill kill whoever for whatever

reason nobody was going to stop him

unless it was some other king that waged

war against him

so yeah I guess fascism fits with

Buddhism because

most Buddhist countries in the past

uh the least smacked of fascism a bit

you know you got autocratic Kings

nationalism obviously is is fascistic

um there is a certain amount of free

enterprise in fascism but it's under the

control of the government at least under

the close supervision of the government

so that if they step out of line you

know they are corrected

so to speak

so yeah I don't see that there's any

problem with that I think the Buddha did

prefer a certain kind of democracy at

least uh in in the Sangha that he based

um the Democracy of the Buddhist Sangha

on a kind of oligarchic democracy in I

think it was the vajians I can't

remember the country that it was this

the

malas of the vajians I think

there was in the Buddhist time it was

like

what was could be called democracy was

gradually being replaced by uh Kings and

and like Empires you know Kings were

just centrally

um you know just like very centralized

rule autocratic Rule and then they were

like expanding and there's lots of Wars

for for territory in the Buddhist time

although he did prefer a kind of

democracy but you got to bear in mind

that democracy in ancient times or even

democracy

um at the time of the American founding

fathers or you know ancient ancient

Athens or ancient Rome the Roman
Republic before it became an Empire it
was very different from democracy now I
mean first of all only male citizens who
owned a certain amount of property were
allowed to vote that was the Democracy
that women weren't allowed to vote lower
class people like like Street Beggars
weren't allowed to vote and that makes
sense I mean I mean it makes it way
better sense I mean once you've got
people on welfare on like a government
Dole voting that's it because they're
just gonna vote for for free stuff
and it's it's somewhat similar with
women it's like you got all these like
liberated single women now liberated in

quotes

that um you know they don't need no man

they just want to marry the government

and have the government support them and

again it's the same sort of thing it's

just it ruins democracy that way but

when you've got like relatively educated

people who really have a vested interest

in their country being strong

then

democracy can be strong that way but

then eventually sooner or later it just

goes into decline it somehow has the

seeds of its own decadence incorporated

into its beginning

but just as a short answer to this uh

yeah fascism is it's compatible with
Buddhism partly because Buddhism is is a
political you know and they've they've
had Psychopathic Kings from the very
beginning like the list of 10 dangers
there's a standardized list of 10
dangers in in the polytexts like 10
dangers that are
um legitimate reasons to abbreviate a
ceremony to to make it shorter you know
like the the party mocha ceremony number
one on the list is Kings
and that's not only foreign Kings Waging
War you know sending an army you got
like an alien or a like a foreign army
invading I mean it's the king of your
own country is a danger too because he

can do whatever he wants and he's not
necessarily a good guy people who can do
whatever they want tend to become
corrupted and not so not so nice
foreign
so yeah history has shown that uh
something along the lines of fascism or
at least totalitarian dictatorship
um are are compatible with Buddhism much
more compatible than like Marxism first
of all Marxism is atheistic they're
they're anti-any religion other than the
atheistic religion of Marxism and also
communism wants everyone equal so
they're not they're not going to smile
upon uh you know exalted holy men

anything like that

so yeah fascism is more compatible with

Buddhism than uh Marxism is or communism

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from weird Flex

word Flex weird Flex I think and a weird

Flex says what was your conversion

experience like when did it stop being

about investigating Buddhism and instead

become about practicing

this is kind of a tricky question

because I didn't have just one

conversion experience like

converting me to terravana Buddhism I

had like three I mean first I was like

17 years old

and I was just going wild I was just in

Rebellion against the system because I
once you reach a certain age or at least
in my case I realized the adults were
just as messed up as I was it's like
when you're a kid a little kid you just
assume that adults have it figured out
they know what's what
and you don't know what's what yet
because you're just not grown up yet but
then around the age of 13 or so I was
starting to get skeptical and by 16 it
was just plainly obvious that the adults
are just as [__] up as I was and uh so
I just went into open Rebellion and uh
when the 16 or 17 year old goes into
open Rebellion it often doesn't turn out

very well because of course when you're

a teenager uh you don't understand

things nearly as well as you actually do

I mean I was correct in assuming that

the adults were just as messed up as I

was but um

um just finding your own way just like

don't do anything you don't want to do

and then just like party and skip school

and get into all kinds of trouble it

wasn't working out and so my father in a

towering rage one night

insisted that I was going to have to uh

see a youth counselor or just like hit

the road

and so I saw the youth counselor and it

was kind of like a stage of Crisis you

know it's like things aren't working you
know it's like
my old ways of dealing with things just
weren't
able to to deal with the situation so I
was like in this crisis and it turned
out that the youth counselor was a
spiritual guy he was a cool guy and
started giving me like ROM dos books to
read and so forth and then it was like
it just kind of clicked you know reading
ROM dogs I couldn't even really
understand it very well because the
concepts were so alien to anything I've
been exposed to you know when you're 16
17 years old reading a ROM dos book and

he's talking about you know Eastern

philosophy and Hinduism mainly also some

Buddhism and

um you know it's just you don't have

anything to really integrate it with so

it's just kind of loose in there and I

wasn't able to really grasp it very well

but intuitively I could just feel that

you know there's something to this I

mean he's this guy obviously understands

things better than I do

and so that was like my first conversion

experience was

just as a teenager

um I think my conversion to Buddhism in

general occurred when I read Zen flash

Zen bones compiled by Paul reps which is

well worth the reading

and um

in that case it was like Zen like

reading the Zen Koons and so forth it

was just

um

this feeling of being comfortable with

just having no Solid Ground under your

feet

you know it's just like not depending on

anything not even anything that's

necessarily making sense

and just deep down again intuitively

that that appealed to me

and so I was about 19 I think it was uh

like a freshman or Junior in college

when I read that book and so I mean I

was already pretty much converted I was

just kind of searching for for some kind

of Eastern philosophy especially that

appealed to me most

and Zen Buddhism really appealed to me

and then I think

what converted me to teravata was

reading

and this is this old translation of the

suttony Potter I think it was my Faust

Bowl

I mean he this is like

1890s it was uh I think it was part of

Max Muller's sacred books of the

E-Series

and it was the Attica Wagga in

particular which was similar to Zen

it was just very

I mean it just pulls away all the ground

from underneath you you just uh not

necessarily in free fall but it just

kind of makes you not dependent on

anything

and that appealed to me also so it was

then that

um I started I started being really

attracted to terravonna Buddhism

and I wasn't fully persuaded I was still

open-minded to becoming a Zen monk or a

terravada monk until I went out and

looked at a Zen Monastery and the

terravala monastery both in California

and um the Terra bottom one obviously

came closer to what the Buddha was was

uh originally teaching

so I went with taravada

and uh let's see when did it stop being

about investigation Buddha of Buddhism

and instead becoming about practicing

uh I didn't really become serious

practitioner of Buddhism until I became

a monk or right before I became a monk

because you know people would ask me if

I was a Buddhist before I was a monk and

I'd say well not really because I wasn't

even giving five precepts I was drinking

beer in particular

and so it's I because of that I wouldn't

even consider myself to be a Buddhist I

was more of a Buddhism Enthusiast you

know I was aspiring to be a Buddhist

someday so it wasn't until I really

became a monk that I considered myself

to become a Buddhist

because I was actually walking the walk

at the time

so we'll just move on to the next

question this is from rui

and rui says hello Ponyo how was your

experience particularly in the jungle

with the ceaseless inner movie

projection how proficient did you get it

replacing on wholesome formations with

wholesome formations and thoughts

well it wasn't ceaseless inner movie

projection although I mean there have
been many meditation sets you're sitting
there cross-legged and I mean it's just
you've got like a movie playing in your
head some I mean sometimes it'd be like
a porn movie
and uh yeah I mean it's like you really
have to practice a lot but I mean
eventually it got to the point where if
I was sitting in meditation I mean there
was it wasn't even replacing unwholesome
formations with wholesome ones it was
just emptying everything out just
sitting there empty
Which is far superior to sort of the
makeshift of replacing a wholesome
thought with a wholesome one because

it's still thought you know you're still

just at the level of perception in some

sorrow you're at a more wholesome level

of some sorrow but

um I mean you're trying to detach

yourself

from samsara and so I mean eventually as

your meditation gets better

you're going to be getting into more and

more subtle mental States into your like

approximating just

emptiness

and The Emptiness is is full in a

paradoxical way it's not like just blank

nothing

you know like uh in quantum physics you

know empty space contains zero energy

and infinite energy

but uh I mean you just live a wholesome

simple lifestyle and your mind becomes

more wholesome and simple you know

you're just living out in the forest and

you know you meditate and you you walk

for alms and you chop wood and carry

water and so forth still you're gonna be

having naughty thoughts and just wake up

in the morning with some rock and roll

song from the 80s blasting in your head

and that kind of a thing

but um

see how proficient did I get

well I didn't completely Master it I

don't think you I mean you know it's

sort of like the anata again where you

cannot say with regard to your

perceptions or or regard to anything let

it be this way let it not be that way

and consistently have it happen so

um

yeah I mean you still this this is going

to be [__] arising and I mean you can

catch it immediately if you're being

very mindful but uh being very mindful

is not not

um

I mean it's not very realistic for most

people

so let's see yeah the best way to uh

deal with the ceaseless inner movie

projection

is just simplify and make your life more

wholesome and get away from the uh the

outer movie projections

and things do improve

and then eventually you get to the point

where you can sit there for hours or

maybe even go for days without without

any

crap you know without just getting lost

it's wandering off into the crap

so I'll just move on to rui's next

question

do you consider Sada or faith sufficient

for stream entry and again we got this

academic problematic issue of what

exactly is stream entry is it what I

think it is or is it something else or

you know is it what Orthodox tradition

says it is

and uh

yeah I don't think Sada would be

sufficient for gaining a glimpse of

nibana

I don't think just that in and of itself

there would have to be something else

combined with that either practice or

just getting some crisis slammed onto

you is getting beaten over the head with

some kind of Crisis that you cannot cope

with in in the usual way and uh

yeah

so I I think regardless of the

definition I don't think that faith in
and of itself is sufficient
for becoming an aria or you know gaining
your first glimpse of enlightenment
or or really maybe if we go back to what
I consider stream entry to have
originally met which is sort of like
being born again modest you know it's
just like you're just filled with faith
and and you know you're really gung-ho
and you're just entering the spiritual
life you know you're a dharmic life for
the first time then possibly such I
would be sufficient but even then
probably just Sada in and of itself even
though it would be like a a key
ingredient I don't think that would be

sufficient I mean there'd still have to

be some kind of uh I don't know some

kind of self-discipline or morality or

something involved

or just pondering the truth you know

just considering what you've heard

anything like that so yeah I don't think

so that would be sufficient

so I'm just gonna move on to the next

question this is from Francois or

possibly uh Francois

and Francois says Hi panyabasa in your

next q a can you please comment on the

YouTube videos teachings of Aja

nyanamoli Terra of the hillside

Hermitage

well the problem with that is I have no idea who are John yanamoli Terra is of the hillside Hermitage the the thing was I mean people are always sending me videos or asking about like YouTube Dharma teachers and so forth and I've I mean never have I really been all that interested in like reading

um

like the the teachings of some other monk it's usually very boring to me this almost always it's just very boring I mean the original neonamoli who was uh uh he lived in uh Sri Lanka he was a British monk who lived in Ceylon I guess it was called in those days like between 1950 and 1960. he translated the wisdi

Maga and a bunch of other things

I know something about him

but uh I don't think he's the one up the

hillside Herbert he was from the island

Hermitage in Sri Lanka and that's who I

thought was being referred to here at

first

yeah I have no idea who it is

so

I suppose I could have been a good boy

and at least watched some of his stuff

on YouTube and come up with an opinion

but yeah I I mean as a general rule I

just do not watch

like Dharma videos

I've never had even when I was most into

into Dharma I was just I just wasn't

that interested it's stuff I've always

all heard before I mean you get to a

point where you've heard everything

pretty much

and it's and it's just kind of boring

also it kind of reminds me of a friend I

used to have in Bali he was a trumpet

player from St Louis

and he was a musician a very talented

musician I assume he still is

but um he said he didn't like listening

to anybody else's music because he

didn't want anybody else's music to

contaminate his own individual personal

style and I think there's a an element

of Truth to that in me also

that's probably another reason why I

just am not interested in watching

other Dharma teachers YouTube videos

or reading their books I mean I have

done it occasionally I do it sometimes

but as I say it's usually boring

so I'm just gonna

uh go to the next question this this

also is From Austin it's like Austin had

a few up here

but it's the same Austin I'm pretty sure

I just uh have him down here twice

because he asked more than one question

is there anything you learned as a

Buddhist monk that a Layman couldn't

learn with a consistent meditation

practice yeah sure I learned a lot of things as a Buddhist monk that a Layman couldn't learn with a consistent meditation practice although it wasn't necessarily about meditation like being a monk in Burma you learn about what it was like to live in the Buddhist time because you're living a lifestyle similar to The Lifestyle lived in the Buddhist time in a culture and climate similar you know you're living in a this very traditional

pretty much I mean the the Flora and the fauna and the climate are very similar to the Ganges Valley

and the Buddhist culture and you know just living the way monks lived in those

times and so you get a lot of insight
into into what like the the rules of
monastic discipline are saying or some
of the some of the stuff in lesothos
because you're right there it's like
you're living it you're not just reading
about it in a book you're not sitting in
an apartment in Manhattan reading about
ancient India and to some degree you've
got your foot you know dipping into the
water of ancient India in a sense
um also
most lay people I mean if they're very
talented or they just don't have to work
for a living they might be able to do
meditation full time

to the point where you just get into the

really subtle States

and mostly people can't manage it that's

one reason why Janna

um is is mainly a Hmong thing

unless as I say somebody just has a real

talent and there are a lot of people

like that you can just sit down for the

very first time their very first

Meditation Retreat and they're just

sitting there like a like a rock

that does happen sometimes

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question this is from

this is from Outer Haven and this is

kind of a strange one what are your

thoughts on the tongue mood

better have a drink before this

the tall mode

well

um for starters I should confess that

I've never read the tall mood

I mean I know that it's like a

commentary to a mosaic law

so I mean it's obviously a Jewish text

it's like a commentary on their Mosaic

law and uh yeah I really don't know that

much about it and they've a lot of their

I mean the Jews seem to follow the

talmud as though it is scripture like

you know in the in the Old Testament it

says you know Thou shalt not boil a kid

in its mother's milk one of the few

attempts in the Old Testament to be

Humane towards animals

is just sort of a a travesty or a

sacrilege to boil a baby in its own

Mama's milk right

but then the tall mood I assume which is

the commentary on all this just has it

worked out so that it's you know you you

cannot eat meat and dairy products in

the same meal and so you got very strict

uh Orthodox Jews that have got not only

two sets of dishes but four sets of

dishes you know they got the the meat

dishes and the dairy products dishes and

then the meat without leavening during

Passover dishes and the dairy products

without leaving

uh during Passover dishes

uh I assume that some of the like the

racial supremacism stuff and like the

anti-goy stuff from what I have heard

there's a lot of that in the tall mood I

mean whatever of it exists there's a lot

of that in the tall mood but um yeah

other than that I really don't know that

much about it so I'm just going to move

on to this question

and this is from Jeremy

and Jeremy says love sounds more like an

ascetic practice I would appreciate more

info on love and or romantic love I

don't see how romantic love can be a

path to Nirvana Buddha and his monks do

not seem to follow that path did Buddha say that it was a valid path yet not a recommended one as I understand its celibacy is a requirement in accomplishing the past to have sex which he spells s-e-c-k-s which is nice one must be aroused for their equipment to work that is sense indulgement and not restraint is it not skillful for an alcoholic oh it is not skillful for an alcoholic to get drunk and then try to observe Dharma isn't that what Tantra tries to do use sex against against secs as a vehicle to whatever they view as enlightenment

okay as a previous video I was talking about romantic love as a spiritual

vehicle and certainly terravada Buddhism

does not endorse it because it's it was

very traditional ancient Indian you

renounce the world you go wandering out

in the forest you know just go alone

like the Horn of the rhinoceros avoid

all sensual Pleasures other than the

ones that are completely unavoidable

like taking a bath occasionally

sleeping eating food

and so

I mean it's largely a cultural thing

that terravada Buddhism is just based on

this shromana tradition of ancient

Northern India where it was just

very clear cut you avoid sensual

Pleasures you go alone you're celibate

you know you have to be a a saint in

accordance with ancient Indian concepts

of sainthood in order to become

enlightened

um in Hinduism

they do accept romantic love as a

spiritual path

um I've pointed this out before that

there are a lot of

um precedents you know there's the love

of of Rama for Sita for example you know

the whole ramayana epic is based on this

or you in Ramos God you know he was an

avatar of Vishnu so there you've got you

know this Vishnu who's very devoted to

his wife and goes on this great epic

adventure to rescue her from from on the

monster and all that or uh

Krishna and Radha again Radha and

Krishna were not married they were

lovers I think Radha might have actually

been married to somebody else

so they at least have

um precedence in in like you know in

Hinduism not in terrible out of Buddhism

which is very dry very ascetic

but just because teravana endorses a

certain battle doesn't mean that you

know nothing else could possibly work

for for anybody

um

even in in uh Hinduism they've got

different approaches between the the

guru and the disciple

or between the disciple and God and one

of those approaches is the the approach

of you know the lover for the Beloved

so

it is it is uh much more

uh endorsed in Hinduism it's just not

endorsed in terrible because as I say

terrible Buddhism is just very dry

ascetic path very traditional based on

the ancient North Indian the shramana

tradition

and um you know that's that worked for

them that's the way you do it although I

wouldn't go so far as to say that only

that would work for everybody

and romantic love I mean it definitely

has its some saric elements

but at the same time it's uh it's like a

an accelerator I mean it's like

you I mean you've got to deal with

difficult stuff on a regular basis and

love

is I mean the Perfection of Love would

be Enlightenment I I do believe that

that love Is Just open-hearted

Acceptance in romantic love there's like

the hormonal mating Instinct stuff mixed

in which muddies the waters a bit

complicates things a bit

but still I mean if you can have

unconditional love for anybody

then that is uh very Advanced spiritual

um practice I guess you could call it

and so I mean if you love

your woman or you love your golf clubs

or your dog or I mean love in it and of

itself to the extent that it's genuine

love just genuine open-hearted

acceptance I mean that's necessarily a

good thing

but as I say romantic love tends to be

more conditional

you know left in its natural state

like a woman loving her children is more

unconditional because

she's going to love her children whether

they're good or bad whether they're

beautiful or ugly you know whether

they're brilliant or stupid you know

she's going to love them regardless if

she's a good mother whereas

romantic love it's more conditional you

know I love you so long as you treat me

right as long as you're faithful that

kind of a thing

so it can be a difficult path I mean if

you wanted to really make romantic love

into a spiritual path just like a real

serious I mean you'd have to be

completely unconditional no matter what

the other person did

and uh

I mean that that could be uh

I mean almost like a road to hell you'd

have to it's like the spiritual path

going through hell you know it could be

if you if you picked the wrong person

anyway

but uh yeah it's not Orthodox terrible

but I would not rule it out completely

just because

uh like traditional ancient Indian

Buddhism was uh very dry very acidic

very clear cut with regard to

like uh celibacy and asceticism and all

that

so I'll just move on to the next

question

this is from

crocodilla or crocodia

not sure about that Double L and

crocodilus says in Christianity the goal
is eternal life and Buddhism the goal is
to end this eternal samsara if someone
was atheist wouldn't it be logical to
just commit suicide like godica
and then he includes the reference of
some you to nikaya 423
and yeah that's true that's I've I've
said this before there are some teachers
uh one of them is uh was a Hindu I
suppose he was a Hindu uh what was his
name
Maharaja
and nisargadata Maharaj said that there
is no reincarnation there's no rebirth
and uh at the same time to exist as a

suffer he accepted the the Buddhist

first Noble Truth so if that's the case

if there's no rebirth and to exist is to

suffer then obviously the the logical

thing to do would just be to commit

suicide and that would end the suffering

and then you wouldn't just get reborn

into more of it whereas in Buddhism of

course

or Hinduism too or Jainism or any any

system that involves rebirth even even

Christianity you're reborn into heaven

or hell

um

that uh

yeah just committing suicide isn't going

to solve the problem because it's not

just gonna cut it off you know it's not
going to cut off the live stream or the
stream of consciousness
but yeah it's true it's if you're if
you're trying to escape from some sorrow
or uh and and there's no reverse I mean
there's once you're dead you're dead
then obviously the thing to do is just
commit suicide
not that I'm endorsing that because uh I
think there's something after after you
die that uh the the stream of
Consciousness or the life force or
schopenhowerian will is just gonna cause
a continuation somehow
so the next question is from Brembo

and Brembo says what is your

understanding of

I read about this as someone's partner

to support them in developing spiritual

Perfections

well to tell you the truth I don't think

I've ever seen the term

paricharika before although in Pali it

would mean let's see para is like foot

or it can also mean like footsteps

party chartica is like one who walks

near so it's like someone who you know

walks with you you know someone who

walks along with your footsteps and so

that would be like uh you know the help

mate

it's it's I assume it's not the same

thing as the kanyana Mita which is the

good friend you know the spiritual

friend who helps you and supports you in

in Dharma this might be somewhat like

yeah sodara was to go to my you know how

they're reborn together again and again

they're sort of

um

helping each other sort of you know

fulfilling each other's Karma and that

kind of a thing

but uh again I can't really say because

I'm not familiar with the term

you know I'm not sure that it's in the

in the poly texts although it looks like

a poly word so it could be in the

commentaries

so we'll just move on to brambo's next

and second question

where are the original sutos kept have

you seen them how did you feel when you

saw them well

this is uh

based on somewhat of a misunderstanding

I think because the original sutas were

oral

the sutas were an oral tradition for

hundreds of years like 500 years before

they were finally written down

so the original sutas were just uh you

know in the in the memories of the monks

who memorized them

and uh where they were first written

down I don't even know

um it was a I think it was what was it

the fourth Council in in Sri Lanka like

500 years after the time of the Buddha

and um the the polytopitica was

endangered there were times when like

Hindu Kings would be persecuting

Buddhist monks persecuting Buddhism and

some of the the texts had almost died

out because almost all the monks who had

memorized them were were gone

and so they figured it's better to just

write the things down and that's when it

happened it was Indian tradition with

The Vedas also that you just didn't

write them down that they were memorized

and just recited orally

um the oldest suitors I have seen that

I'm aware of

is uh in Mandalay there's a monastery

there I think where the Buddhist fifth

Council by the Burmese Reckoning was was

held

and they've got the entire polytopitica

engraved in Marble on these big

um they look sort of like big headstones

like at a cemetery there's just these

big slabs with the entire polytopitica

um engraved on these things

and uh I mean I was kind of impressed

you know there's a lot of work to do

that

it wasn't especially

um beautiful or

um I mean really the the suit is the the

polytopitica

it's um you know it's not really

localized in an original text I mean

nobody can say where the original Bible

was you know

sort of evolved at least the Bible did I

mean there's the oldest Bible they've

got and it's still a manuscript it would

uh

I mean less than 2 000 years old

and it's the same way with the polytext

so I think I should just move on to the

next one here and that's from Chaplin

and Chaplin says

I really enjoyed your series of books

last year you have led such a

fascinating life would you ever consider

writing an autobiography any other

upcoming books we can look forward to

for that matter well I still have at

least one full book of essays that I

could publish

um maybe two

and uh with regard to an autobiography I

mean it's it's even I mean even editing

the the book that I just mentioned you

know I've got enough material easily

to to make at least one more book but

I'm working full time

I really don't have a lot of spare time

I'm not the sort of person that just

wants to be a slave and just be like

working all the time

so I'm not sure I mean I I think I would

enjoy writing an autobiography and I

have led an interesting life I've done a

lot of things that most people haven't

done

so yeah I'm I mean it's something I've

considered many times and I'd be willing

to do it but I'd have to have

um

more

more in like

what would you call Financial

Independence I wouldn't have to be

working full-time like at a sheet metal

shop maybe once I finally you know get

into the White Collar

uh jobs at the sheet metal place

um I might at least be less tired when I

get home

but um maybe I'd have more energy for

for writing this kind of stuff but right

now I've just got to pay the bills and

I've gotta work and support myself until

maybe someday I'll get enough support

that I don't need to work in a sheet

metal shop or somehow for whatever

reason

you know I'll have like more free time

to just sit down and start writing a

full-length look

or even even just editing editing the

one that I've already got material

written for

but um

yeah I do hope that at least at the very

least the fourth book will will come out

within the next year or two

so I think I'll just move on to

chaplain's next question

and chaplain says in your experience how

do most Buddhists you know celebrate

Christmas do you have any Christmas

plans

well most Buddhists I know don't

celebrate Christian Christmas because

it's not a Buddhist holiday like in

Burma I mean it's on the calendars but

it's not a day off I'm pretty sure

um Christmas goes by in in like a

Burmese Village and nobody notices I've

forgotten when I was living in Burma

I've just forgotten about Christmas and

my own birthday for that matter just

looking at the calendar trying to figure

out what day it is it's like Oh

Christmas was yesterday

that kind of a thing

um

so I assume most Buddhists in the west

will still have a Christmas tree and

exchange presents and that sort of thing

but um there's no specifically Buddhist

celebration of Christmas

for uh relatively obvious reasons I

guess

and do I have any Christmas plans yeah

I'm gonna have Christmas with my

sweetheart and we're going to give each

other presents and

we got a Christmas tree and everything

although uh I'm personally skeptical

that Jesus was really born on

December 25th I mean that was just the

the Christians conveniently uh replacing

a pagan holiday which was uh the feast

day of Soul Invictus during saturnalia

with uh

with uh like a Christian holiday which

the Christians did a lot of that just

sort of

um replacing

pagan holidays or concepts of Christian

ones to make it easier for the the

populist to accept them

so

but I digress

so I'm gonna move on to uh chaplain's

third and last question and the last

question of this q a

and that is

how can we as Buddhists come to terms

with the problematic Western Dynamic of

Buddhist self-induced suffering versus

victim blaming would you consider doing

a video with Brian and ajan punadamo on

this since it comes up a lot and is hard

for westerners to grasp well it is a

good idea to do a video with Brian and

John punadama but as I think I've

already mentioned

received such a backlash for interacting

with poor Brian Rue

that uh his uh respectfully bowed out

kind of reluctantly bowed out from doing

videos with us mainly because he has got

to keep his keep his supporters in Good

Humor to some degree

which is kind of a shame I I'm thinking

about writing the next blog post about

like Buddhist cancel culture

but uh getting to the rest of this

question here how can we as Buddhists

come to terms with the problematic

Western Dynamic of Buddhist self-induced

suffering versus victim blaming well

victim blaming is just kind of a

it's just kind of a jargon that got

invented recently as far as I know and

it's mainly a leftist concept you know

like a a woman dresses like a prostitute

dresses like a complete [__] and then

when she gets molested or even cat

called you know she's she's like trying

to

blame you know anyone but herself and

then if someone says well I mean you

don't dress like a prostitute and walk

the streets at 3am you know nobody's

nobody's gonna act that way

and then that's called that's victim

blaming but really it's

um

maybe maybe a better example would just

be like abused children because they're

they're not like deliberately putting

themselves in a problematic situation

and so you can say well I mean it is

their karma

and that's victim blaming but I mean

it's like

I mean victim blaming is just kind of a

pejorative term you know it's just like

this jargon that got apparently invented

by the left just as a way of you know

sort of protecting themselves they can

blame everybody else they can blame

Hawaii

you know they don't have to blame

themselves for their own messed up

problems

um

but I mean it is true it's just

something that has to be understood

better because most people just don't

understand how Karma works

and uh it is true that that from the

Buddhist point of view and I think from

just an objective point of view all

suffering is ultimately self-inflicted

because suffering is volitional I mean

ultimately you have the choice it's just

that most people are too semi-conscious

and just on automatic pilot you know

they're just going through force of

habit and so they just don't realize

that instead of just being miserable

about something they actually have a

choice

you know they don't have to be miserable

about it

but with regard to little kids I mean

they haven't even learned that much yet

so it is true that the the suffering of

abused children

um you have to have signal compassion

for that I mean ultimately technically

you can't acknowledge that all suffering

is self-inflicted

but uh I mean little kids they just

can't be expected to be philosophers

and so I mean just setting aside the the

[__] woman who dresses like a [__]

woman and then gets molested you know

from walking down the street in the

middle of the night

um

yeah I mean it is kind of tricky because

it's it's like an ugly truth just

because a truth is ugly doesn't mean

that it's not true

and so going with Carmine yeah I mean it

shouldn't really be any kind of

uh influencer with regard to our

attitude towards abused children I mean

we can accept okay fine you know it's

like they're not skillful at steering

the their vehicle yet or it's like uh
you know little kids have me have
nightmares more than than grown-ups do
just because they're not they're not
good at steering the direction of their
dreams same way in the conscious waking
state they're just not very good at
steering their way into a good alternate
reality you know if that makes any sense
at all but but still I mean you have to
have compassion for them and protect
them as well as we can
and it's the same way with anyone really
I mean
um I mean it's not victim blaming in the
sense that you're saying well you know

screw those people I don't care this

their it's their own doing but I mean

you still have to have compassion I mean

that's that's true also and you should

try to help people to stop suffering if

you are able to do so

so there is that

but it is true I mean that's one of the

most important things you can know if

you know anything about Buddhism

foreign

is ultimately self-inflicted you do have

a choice to be miserable or happy

or at least

equanimous

so I mean if you hear something bad

happening to somebody

um the first reaction shouldn't be well
serum Karma you know especially if it's
you know just some little kid or just
some Normie that means they don't have
the
and just realistically they've never
been exposed to the idea you know they
just naturally assumed mainstream
culture tells you if you're
uncomfortable or inconvenienced you
you're unhappy you know you just watch
TV commercials or whatever and that's
what you're taught in a consumeristic
materialistic spiritually bankrupt
culture
you know even just the mildest

discomfort or inconvenience isn't

necessarily going to cause suffering and

that's not true

so I mean if you hear about someone

who's suffering I mean you don't just

blur it out that it's due to their own

Karma it's all self-inflicted I mean

there should still be some compassion

and you know if you're in a position to

do so you can you can do do your part to

help alleviate the situation

but um

yeah I think that would be the best way

to to come to terms with it is just not

blurting out the you know it's their own

Karma you know when you hear something

bad happening to somebody because you

know in a way that is kind of victim
blaming even though ultimately it's it's
legitimate it's it's true from Buddhist
point of view but still I mean victim
blaming is uh
it's just another derogatory slur
invented by the West to uh justify their
blaming of evil Whitey mostly
and that's the the last question
so if you got any more questions and I
assume some of you do
you are encouraged to include them in
the comments below the video or if you
have access to my subscribe star you can
leave your comments there or if you have
access to the Discord server you can

leave your questions there

and I do request that if you do have

questions for the Q a you you not

believe them in like when under random

videos there aren't q a videos because I

may or may not when I'm compiling the

questions remember that they're in this

unusual place

and please take a look at the URL links

below if you haven't bought my books

they're they're very nice books and um

uh feel free to uh like And subscribe

and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 38 of

question and answer

I am your host plan your Bossa and uh

the holidays are coming up we got

saturnalia and the feast day of Soul

Invictus coming up Yule and so we got

the the pagan

accoutrement

accoutrement Mall

in the background to uh The Gnome we got

a gnome

so without any further ado

I'm going to answer questions and we've

got a fair amount a little more than the

usual number I think

and the first question is from rafi46

and this is kind of an interesting one

what does Buddhism think about parents

who raise their children by spanking

them

and uh I've never I don't remember ever

seeing anything about

parents like disciplining their children

in like Buddhist texts I assume it's in

there somewhere maybe like the sub

commentaries or something

but um I assume that so long as parents

are spanking their children just as a

way of like

giving them

discipline like I mean they're not like

pissed off and just wailing on them

because they're in a bad mood I mean

that obviously would be bad karma and uh

it would be more harmful for the

children than good for them more harmful

for everyone involved

um just giving them a SWAT on the behind

when they're so young that they can't

really understand much of anything else

I don't think that um

I don't think that Buddhism in general

would disapprove of that strongly I mean

kind of like really Orthodox terravada

Buddhism just disapproves of having

children in general

but um

or just doing the deed that results in

children

um but I think just disciplining them

with uh you know like the old saying you

know this is going to hurt you more than

or it's going to hurt me more than it

hurts you that kind of a thing I mean so

long as you're doing it sincerely for

the sake of like trying to make your

kids better people

um yeah I don't think it's that bad I

was spanked a little bit when I was a

kid and uh look at me now Look look how

how I've become

so I'll just move on to the next

question and just also from rafi46

and uh Rafi says Rafi 46 says I should

say one suta in the angura nikaya

records that the Buddha spoke of seven

types of a wife the first three kinds
are heading for unhappiness in this
world or the next one of them is the
Tyrant wife who the Buddha described
among other things as being domineering
does this mean that the ideal Buddhist
wife should be devout
towards her husband his DV d-e-v-o-t so
maybe that's devoted
so the ideal Buddhist wife should be
devoted towards her husband there is a
asuta it's a famous one it's one of the
relatively few that's directed towards
the lay people rather than towards monks
called the sigalo Vada suta
I don't remember what nikaya it's in

maybe the majima I don't remember now

where he uh he goes into the qualities

of a good wife and um

a good wife should be uh

um I mean if you shouldn't waste your

husband's money she should be faithful

to him she should you know take care of

the house you know she should keep the

home in order you know manage the

servants and all that if there are any

um

so I guess a a Buddhist wife might be a

little better off than uh one in the

Bible it's just supposed to obey

um so yeah I would I would advise anyone

wanting to know like the the proper

duties of a Buddhist layperson towards

other Buddhist lay people would be in

the sigalo Vada suta which I'm sure

there are plenty of translations

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from drunk druck

and drunk drunk says what do you think

of Buddhist veganism are you one

yourself

um no I'm not I've never been a vegan

vegan vegan I don't even know how to

pronounce it how can I be one

um I used to be a vegetarian and

ironically I stopped being vegetarian

after I became a monk I was living in

this desert Wasteland in central Burma

and sometimes all I'd get in my bowl

would be like pink chewy rice and pork

and some badass cookies that were I mean

they were just like Zero nutritional

value in the cookies so it was a matter

of just survival

that I started eating meat again

um just left my own devices

I tend to be inclined towards what in

Hinduism would be called a satvik diet

which is largely vegetarian I mean it's

technically vegetarian it's like

fruits nuts greens and dairy products

but

my sweetheart is somewhat of a carnivore

and so uh

I'm eating quite a lot of meat myself in

fact I had a pork chop for dinner

so with regard to veganism

um yeah I just would not give up dairy

products especially like cheese and milk

I just I just like that too much it

doesn't it doesn't make much sense to

just become a Pure vegan it's not really

good for your health we are not evolved

to be vegans

so

um

I used to when I was a vegetarian I

would occasionally eat shellfish because

as a biologist I know that they don't

have a nervous system like we do they

apparently don't have pain receptors

they don't they apparently don't feel

pain so they don't mind being killed as
much as like a cow or a chicken does
but um even even devout terravada
Buddhists eat meat as a general rule the
Buddha himself ate meat in fact uh he uh
he died after eating some bad pork
according to the legend although the
Mahayana Buddhists changed that into uh
a mushroom I mean the original term for
what the Buddha ate right before he died
was sukara madawa sukara means Pig
madawa means tender or tenderized so
probably it means tender pork
but um the Mahayana Buddhists who were
vegetarian didn't want to believe that
the Buddha ate meat and so they uh they
interpreted as something tender that

pigs like to eat like truffles or

mushrooms something like that

um but there are rules in the ancient

rules of monastic discipline like saying

a monk is not allowed to ask for uh

dainty food like meat including meat

meat fish milk a few others unless he's

sick which of course means that he can

he can eat it unless also there's the

Proviso that if he's given permission to

ask for whatever he wants in advance

then he can ask for for meat

but um so yeah terrible Buddhism is not

even really vegetarian

uh they were data who's like the villain

in ancient Buddhist history he's sort of

like the the Buddhist Judas Iscariot

um he he demanded that the Buddha

require all monks to be vegetarian and

the monk said or the Buddha said

um you know monks can be vegetarian if

they want but it's not going to be

mandatory

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Fred

and uh I think Fred's got another

question farther down that uh I forgot

about this one when I was compiling the

list

anyway Fred says does going Beyond

perception and feeling mean one is going

beyond the aggregates

um well there'd still be Consciousness

so it wouldn't be going beyond the

aggregate of consciousness

um

is this going be this is kind of a deep

question though does going Beyond

perception and feeling mean one is going

beyond the Aggregates going Beyond

perception and feeling it's one of the

most

um Advanced or exalted or subtle

meditative states there is the the

cessation of perception and feeling

um

which is kind of a

sort of a deep trance state

but it's only temporary

and I guess to the extent that you're I

mean you're not identifying with the

Aggregates or

um if there's no perception and no

feeling

um it would mean that those are dormant

those two Aggregates are dormant

but um it is just temporary and you

still have five Aggregates at least uh

on standby the whole time

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question we'll get to another one from

Fred a little a little later

and this is from Tut DVD

and DVD says

often you hear people say they want to

follow what the Buddha actually taught

why is it not fair to say this idea of
the Buddha as an ultimately enlightened
person Authority has been exaggerated
over time you saw firsthand with the
stories of your levitating over the city
the crazy embellishments people get up
to so why after all these years with the
Buddha and his original teachings hold
any special significance everyone seems
to have different ideas of what was or
wasn't actual Buddha's words but
ultimately it's guesswork and why does
it matter what one guy had to say anyway
what I deduct as the historical Buddha
is most likely being was a poet
and contemplative why hold him up in any

special regard

well I mean if you're a Buddhist

then you would be following

what the Buddha taught

I mean it says in the texts that I mean

the Buddha said you know after he died

the dhamma itself is the teacher and he

really I really doubt that he encouraged

people to worship Him

that's any like devotionalism I assume

is a later a later development in

Buddhism but

um when I became a Buddhist monk okay I

wanted to follow with the Buddha Tom

because he's the founder of the system

and he supposedly was an enlightened

being

and I mean if you want to become a

Buddhist it seems like it would be

pretty much it'd be important to

actually follow what the founder taught

like a Christian presumably would want

to follow what Jesus taught or

a Muslim would want to follow what

Muhammad taught because they were the

founders of the system and they

presumably knew better than anyone else

what

what people should do at least within

the context of the the system that they

founded

and so it is true there's all kinds of

uh weird mythology associated with the

Buddha that um

uh in a lot of cases can be weeded out

you do a little detective work you have

to you know examine things carefully and

try to determine as well as you can what

the Buddha did and did not teach

and you're not going to be 100 correct

but at least if you use some intelligent

methods that at least you'll get closer

to the truth at least you'll weed out a

lot of the uh dead wood

um so yeah it just seems common sense to

me

that um the Buddha was

wiser than me

and so if I if I'm going to be a

Buddhist then I'd it's like uh a duty to

try to follow as well as you can with

the Buddha taunt

um I mean you're taking the risk of

being mistaken in your interpretation

but then again you're taking a great a

risk of being mistaken in any

interpretation of anything

so it's just

um it's a fairly solid I mean once you

once you can weed out most of the the

mythology and the like the devotionalism

and that sort of thing and you're just

following his instructions that are

found in the texts

then um

yeah I mean if you've got a teacher that

is a Buddhist or or you know whoever

your teacher is you can you can follow

he says too I mean it's been

that you'd want to know for sure what

your what your teacher said you should

and shouldn't do

um part of the thing is that you're

assuming that the teacher knows more

than than you do or knows better than

you do

and so it makes sense to try to follow

as well as you can what he said you

should do and uh bear in mind that uh

he's probably wiser than you and so it

just makes sense I mean you have to make

your own decisions including decision

to follow this teacher or that teacher

or to start or stop following some

teacher I mean you have to make your own

decisions but still if you find an

authority

someone that you think is wiser than you

who understands reality better than you

than you want to try to you know take

that seriously and find out as well as

you can what the person did or did not

teach

so it's it's kind of an interesting

question although uh

I mean for me that was really all I

wanted to do was find out as well as I

could what the historical godama Buddha

taught and follow it because after all I

was a member of the Sangha that he

founded

so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from Athena's sigil

and Athena's sigil says so Ponyo I know

that you've left the monk Hood but do

you miss it I know you've resolved to

live a quote unquote normal

life but is there anything from your old

life that you wish you still did if you

don't answer that's okay ciao

well

one thing that was nice about being a

monk is uh you didn't have to work for a

living and so you can just uh meditate

and contemplate and study and you had I

had a lot of I had more energy than or

at least I was expending

my energy in a more dharmic and

contemplative and philosophical way and

and wasn't having to make money and pay

bills that sort of thing

so I mean there is that

also my mental States uh were often more

subtle than they are now just because

you've got less commotion going on

you're just living this quiet life often

in a cave out in the forest

and I mean there was it was just very

simple

and so you didn't have a lot of

commotion going on to distract you and

everything and your mind could get

really chilled out so that was kind of

nice too

but I I have no regrets at all I'm uh

I'm content living the way I am I'm my

life is more joyful now than it was when

I was living in a cave in a Burmese

Forest

but um yeah those would be the main

things also I kind of missed wall geckos

that I mean anyone who's lived in

Southeast Asia knows about wall geckos

or these little lizards that change

color and Chirp like sparrows and

run around on the walls even on the

ceilings thing just run straight up a

window pane they're cool I like those

but uh I guess that would be the main

things that I miss

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from skeptic 46.

and skeptic 46 says the more I read

about Buddhism the more I'm worried that

the idea of Enlightenment or even just

the control of one's emotions through

meditation is essentially depriving

oneself of the magic of life isn't

sadness and Pain part of the human

experience we need Darkness to see light

and all that if we eliminate all

suffering then how would we have

anything to compare Joy with

well

I think there's like two parts to this

question that I can answer

um with regard to

Joy and self-raiming it's like a roller

coaster ride it's just up and down and

what a monk is going for isn't just Joy

it's it's like

it's like the happiness that has no

opposite you know it's just like Divine

Bliss you could say like Nirvana it's

just merging with Ultimate Reality

so I mean it's it's Way Beyond any

worldly happiness this from the point of

view of of Buddhist philosophy even

ordinary happiness is is a kind of duka

or suffering partly just because it's

it's unreliable and very impermanent

um

let's see

but the thing is

most people are just are just not ready

for enlightenment they don't even want

Enlightenment I think most monks really

don't want to become enlightened I used

to think when I was a junior monk that

if somebody invented an Enlightenment

pill where you just take this pill and

you become fully enlightened I think

even most monks would run from it as

though it were a demon-possessed rabid

snake

just because people are afraid of

Enlightenment it's like a kind of death

who you think you are either ceases to

exist or just is completely transcended

and becomes irrelevant

and most people just don't like that

there's there's a in in Buddhist

cosmology the entire physical Universe

gets destroyed usually by fire

you know every zillion gajillion years

and so all the beings in the material

Universe have to go up into this really

high heaven Realm

and there are yogis and swamis and other

meditators who try their entire lives to

get into this meditation or to get into

this Heaven realm through practicing

meditation and so forth and a lot of

them most of them can't get there but

now because the physical universe is

destroyed uh they have to go somewhere
and so just through
whatever natural Cosmic law or whatever
just everybody winds up in this
a very Advanced Heaven realm including
like mosquitoes and politicians and
prostitutes and drug drug dealers drug
addicts Penguins everything they wind up
in this very Advanced Heaven around and
they can't stand it it's it's just like
it's boring they're just not ready for
it they're just not ready for just
profound Bliss it's just boring to them
they want action they want trouble
and so most people just aren't ripe for
enlightenment and one reason why we're

like the beings of this Earth are not

enlightened is just they don't even want

it it's just scary they they're just not

ready for it

so if a person is ready for it then uh

it doesn't really matter if uh the

so-called magic of life is gone

because it's infinitely better than the

magic of Life full Enlightenment it's

just like merging with God

you know

in quotes

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is also from skeptic 46.

do you think it's bad karma that Brian

Rue is so delusional about Hitler I mean

it's enough to look at Hitler's earliest

speeches and writings to know that this

guy was a psychopathic lunatic

you know speech in 1920 for example he

said that he did not want to be an

anti-semite who wanted to create pogrom

sentiment but that he had an unrelenting

determination to get to the root of the

evil and eradicate it by any means

necessary

well

sweet tea

um I do not agree with Brian Rue's

assessment of the fuhrer as just

completely good guy

you know he was the guy wearing the

white hat and people like Winston

Churchill were the bad guys

um yeah I don't go that far although I

do think that Hitler has been

demonized even more than Donald Trump by

the mainstream

and he wasn't as bad as people claim he

is I mean he wasn't as bad as just

common knowledge that you read in

history books I mean he certainly has

Badness but I mean he wasn't a total

delusional lunatic I mean or as a

psychopathic lunatic I mean he obviously

had enough sanity that he was very Adept

at politics up until he just started uh

just annexing all of his neighboring

countries

um I mean it is true that he was

anti-Semitic

and um I mean it's questionable whether

he wanted to just genocide the entire

Hebrew race

um there was talk about just resettling

them in Madagascar and that kind of a

thing

he did have a few uh Jewish people that

were friends and I think there was at

least one high profile Jew in the SS

um

so I mean but I mean the main point of

the question here is do I think it's bad

karma that Brian Rue

believes what he believes about Hitler

well any kind of delusion can be called

is is Bad Karma so I mean people that

are delusional about Hitler in the

opposite direction who just think he's

the evilest human being whoever lived

might be making worse Karma simply

because they've got a negative mental

state going this kind of like hatred and

aversion whereas Brian Rue is just

idealizing somebody and trying to see

the best in them and succeeding

apparently

so I mean I would say there's probably

worse karma for the people that really

just think Hitler was just pure evil

and as in most cases uh probably the

correct

the correct uh route to take with regard

to Adolf Hitler is the middle path I

mean he uh he did cause a lot of trouble

especially in Europe

but uh so did Napoleon and Napoleon

isn't demonized I mean he uh he may have

depending on your sources wanted uh

genocide but then again

Moses was genocidal you know the the

founder of Judaism

wanted the complete extermination of the

Canaanites

he insisted upon it he demanded it

and he's considered to be just a great

prophet not only by uh Jews but also by

Christians and Muslims

so

I think Hitler just uh he offended

very grievously the wrong people

and uh

they've uh they've had the knives out

for him ever since

but I do not think he was as bad as

Stalin but Stalin was uh arguably a

psychopathic lunatic also I don't think

it was nearly as evil of a person as

someone like Pol Pot

and of course Mao killed more than

Hitler's Stalin and Pol Pot combined

so I'll just move on to the next

question

Oh but before I move on to this question

and obviously Brian Rue has got some bad

karma because he just can't get a break

he is I mean he's just

yeah he's persecuted essentially so I

mean that would be the result of Bad

Karma although whether it's partly just

because of his

um beliefs yeah I probably

yeah

but um

I think it goes it's way more than that

I think

um

just his beliefs about Adolf Hitler

don't really account for them

all the trouble he has encountered in uh

in recent years

so I'll just move on to the next

question

also from skeptic 46

and skeptic 46 says what do you and what

made you believe in rebirth

do you think it's possible to

scientifically prove that rebirth exists

well that's two questions I suppose I'll

take the first one first

what made me believe in rebirth I'm not

100 percent

sold on anything really

um

but

I do believe that anything that is

possible

is I mean it happens

maybe I mean in some way somehow in an

infinite universe that I mean if

anything is possible

it's it's going to happen and it is

happening

um but I mean that just kind of opens

the door sort of uh metaphysically for

the possibility of it

um but the main reason why I take

rebirth as a working hypothesis is

because people much wiser than I am have

endorsed it

like uh not only Buddhism and Hinduism

but um like one of my first spiritual

teachers was Ram Das

I just that's how

um he sort of uh red pilled me on on

worldliness to some degree

uh he was one of the first teachers that

I had a spiritual teacher that I had

just just through his books I never met

him in person

my father firmly believed in rebirth in

fact he claimed to remember some of his

past lives

he uh very strongly identified with a

past life back around the 1700s Scottish

fellow named Jason Haskell

so when I was a kid I was hearing

stories about that

but um

yeah it's mainly that people that I

respect who I consider to be very wise

for the most part have endorsed it and I

mean there is some scientific evidence
like Ian Stevenson I think as he was at
the University of Virginia did a lot of
research especially on small children
that would claim to remember past lives
you know there sometimes they would
remember how they got murdered or
something they'd still be blaming
somebody
for for killing them in their previous
existence like sort of thing but I don't
know if it's possible to scientifically
prove that rebirth does or does not
exist
I mean science is very limited in its in
what it is able to to do and a

scientific proof mainly just means that

uh

I mean it seems to work until some some

other Theory comes along and and usurps

it

I don't know if science even reaches as

far as just the mechanism of how rebirth

occurs assuming that rebirth does occur

but I'm not firmly I don't have firm

faith in it I just accept it as a

working hypothesis

uh so I'll just move on to uh skeptic

46's last question here

how can we criticize Islam from a

Buddhist perspective using the Buddha's

words

well

there are sutas where the Buddha
essentially mocks belief in the creator
of God
you know he refers to it as the blind
leading the blind people that have never
met God are teaching other people what
God is like in fact he's there's this
one suta where he's got this it's
essentially a joke where the Buddha says
that someone who believes in God is like
a man who says he's in love with the
most beautiful woman in the world
so you asked this man what's this most
beautiful woman in the world what does
she look like is she tall or short he
said I don't know now what color hair

does she have and he doesn't know does

she have a light complexion or a dark

complexion he doesn't know he doesn't

know what her figure is like because

he's never seen her before but he's

still he's in love with the most

beautiful woman in the world and the

Buddha compared that with a theist who's

worshiping a god

that he's never seen and you know really

doesn't know about

um so there's that I mean another

obvious one

another obvious like uh way of

criticizing Islam from a Buddhist

perspective is just criticizing violence

I mean violence is condemned in Buddhism

and

Islam clearly it endorses violence in

fact it endorses killing other human

beings I mean Muhammad himself was a

kind of Bandit and then the Muslims

accept this themselves I mean this isn't

just some sort of islamophobic rant I

mean we know this stuff from the Muslims

themselves like their own records that

when the Buddha was living in Medina

he was supplementing his income and

incomes of his followers by doing Bandit

raids on Caravans going from Mecca to

Damascus or from Southern Arabia to

Damascus and back

and I mean he fought in battles

he had people put to death

like uh I think it was the Jews of

Medina

I think it was the Jews in Medina where

he had all the males massacred

essentially and then sold all the women

and children into slavery

so just some of his behavior of the of

the founder of the system

um I mean just setting aside the

atrocities perpetrated by Muslims

afterwards like one of the greatest

genocides in history was the just the

the genocide of Indian Buddhists

when the the Muslim Turks invaded India

pretty much wiped out Buddhism in India

I mean it wasn't the only cause just

like uh Barbarian Invasion wasn't the

only cause of the collapse of the Roman

Empire but still I mean

millions and millions and millions of

Indian Buddhists were just killed

because they weren't they weren't

Muslims

so that would be probably the best ways

of criticizing Islam from a Buddhist

perspective is first just using Buddhist

arguments against monotheism and then

using Buddhist arguments against

um

violence in general

especially killing other humans

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is Fred's other question

that I should have put under the put it

under the the first question by Fred but

I I didn't notice that I did this

and Fred says will smoking cannabis send

you to hell

and for most people no it depends I mean

really it's not the the physical action

that is good or bad in Buddhism it's the

mental States associated with the

physical action so if somebody smokes

cannabis with really bad motives

that could help them to wind up in a bad

place in their next life but for most

people

um

I don't think so I mean one of the

reasons why I became a monk in the first
place was because I started smoking
cannabis as a teenager and uh took some
psychedelics after that or while I
started taking psychedelics shortly
after I started smoking cannabis
and um I mean it can
awaken somebody to alternative ways of
looking at reality which then gets them
interested in meditation and just
mysticism Eastern spirituality in
general
so will smoking cannabis send you to
hell just the physical act I mean it
won't send anybody to hell but um if
somebody does it with really bad mental

States and maybe they do bad things when

they're high like they get Reefer

Madness or something then yeah it's

possible but for the most part I would

say no

so the next question is from Austin

and Austin says

what was the story of meeting your

sweetheart I'd imagine finding love was

hard for you as a monk

well

when we first met at least digitally on

the internet I was still a monk in Burma

I was living in some Monastery in uh

uh maymiel or pianulu in it's called

and um I was I had recently started my

my new blog my second blog

and mainly I just got an account on

minds.com which is like alt Facebook

um it's like a free

a free speech version of of Facebook and

a lot of the people that are kicked off

Facebook go to Minds as refugees or

people that just despise Facebook to

begin with me being one of them

um and people were just continually

pestering me to get onto Facebook and I

just refused so I compromised and got

onto minds.com instead and my sweetheart

was one of my first subscribers I think

I'm not sure exactly what she liked

about

um

about my content but there was just a

certain resonance between us and we just

immediately started liking each other

before we ever met each other really

just there was just this resonance

between us it was like a chemistry thing

so we just continued

interacting online

up until

um I dropped out of the monk hood and

then I went and met her in person and uh

we're we are together to this day

so

CNC says I'd imagine finding love was

hard for you as a monk

um

not as hard as you might think actually

especially in the west Western women do
not see monks as celibate holy men they
just see monks as another kind of man
so there's that too
so we'll just move on to Austin's next
question
and Austin says what would be the
difference between Nirvana and a
materialist's view of death my
understanding is nirvana is a state of
non-arising of any being or senses not
too dissimilar in my opinion well
death for a materialist would just be
blank nothing you know it would just be
Extinction nothingness and Nirvana
really is not

um nothing

I mean sometimes it's especially in

older texts or like older translations

Nirvana can be translated as Extinction

but really it's like the blowing out of

a candle or blowing out of a flame

and the ancient Indians

um they believed fire was a God it was

like it was divine it was the god Agni

was was fire and so they had different

ideas about fire than than we do I mean

now nowadays we we blow out a candle

flame and that's it and the candle flame

has ceased to exist but

in Ancient India they had this idea that

like this the spirit of fire was just

pervasive and it would assume

like uh like a material existence like

an obvious material existence while it

was burning but then when it went out

again it would just go back to this un

like this formless invisible state

and so that's kind of what Nirvana was

originally meant to represent in the in

the old uh metaphors of the the flame

going out

um so but I mean just even setting that

aside even setting aside ancient ideas

about fire in India Nirvana is

essentially merging with Ultimate

Reality

at least that's my interpretation as one

possible interpretation

um like a fully enlightened being is

already attained Nirvana like the Buddha

himself had already attained Nirvana

before he died it's not just something

that happens to you after you die like

an enlightened being after they die they

attain party Nirvana but they attained

Nirvana even while they're still alive

so it's just uh awareness of Ultimate

Reality really

at least in my opinion

so I mean to a materialist it might seem

like they're the same just simply

because the materials is not a Mystic he

doesn't accept that there's this uh

this this formless infinity or or that

just completely transcends even The

Duality of existence and non-existence I

mean a materialist doesn't think that

way really as a general rule

so

um yeah Nirvana is a mystical State and

just

hear utter non-existence is not a

mystical state that would be the main

difference I would say

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

question

do you believe there are any fully

enlightened beings today or in recent

memory

well this is kind of a trick question

and I mean I've already been talking

about enlightened beings but from a some

sorry point of view from a worldly point

of view

I mean they may not exist at all it

might just be like uh it's like a

paradox

or um like a trick question or

um

yeah it's just kind of it's it's just

this weird Paradox enlightenment

but um if there are any fully

enlightened beings let's assume that you

can say you can't point to someone and

say yes that person is or is not fully

enlightened yeah I would say that there

have been fully enlightened beings uh in

recent memory I think Ramana maharshi

who was a Hindu is a very good candidate
for full Enlightenment I think neem
Crowley Baba who is also a Hindu
although a very was a very different
personality and character than Ramana
maharshi I think he's those would be my
two top candidates for fully enlightened
beings of course there are plenty of
people claim to be fully enlightened
both of the famous krishnamurtis Eckhart
Tolle claims to be fully enlightened one
of my favorites
um in recent years is Paul Lowe who uh
somehow is is
I mean sometimes he insinuates that he's
fully enlightened at other times he he

says kind of like what I was saying just

moments ago that I mean Enlightenment

doesn't necessarily even mean anything

um

you know Byron Katie is claimed to be

fully enlightened uh Aja Shanti

I think is claimed to be fully

enlightened

um

but whether they really are or not I

mean that it could just be a trick

question Osho was claimed to be fully

enlightened

um

yeah so in a way it's kind of a trick

question weibo Seattle would be a good

uh possibility for a terravonna Buddhist

uh monk who may have been fully

enlightened also uh some people believe

ajan Shah was enlightened some people

believe ajan man was enlightened

um

but I guess you're asking Austin here is

asking do I believe there are any fully

enlightened beings today or in recent

memory and I do think it could just be

like a paradoxical trick question

because within the context of samsara

and just worldly thinking and words and

language and all that

um that kind of context

uh just a fully enlightened being is

just kind of a paradox it's almost

meaningless

but um just assuming that there are

enlightened beings yeah I would say that

they're they're enlightened beings like

Ram Das who I'm pretty sure believed his

Guru named Curly Baba was fully in line

he used to say that um people could just

go halfway around the world and search

Himalayan caves looking for an

enlightened holy man when the whole time

their Aunt Margaret back in Vermont was

fully enlightened the whole time and the

thing is that instead of telling

I'm telling you like the the secrets of

the universe you just say have some soup

but it turns out that was the perfect

thing to say under the circumstances is

have some soup

but um the very short answer to this is

I would just say yeah I do believe there

are fully enlightened beings today or in

recent memory

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

next and last question

wouldn't fascism be contrary to Buddhism

fascism would be clinging to nation and

culture which are inherently impermanent

well this is uh I think this is a

follow-up to a question I answered last

time I think on the last q a someone was

asking me if fascism was compatible with

Buddhism and the answer is still pretty

much the same I mean in in the Buddhist

time most countries were like autocratic

kingdoms that were fairly close to

Fascism already

um there have been fascists who endorsed

Buddhism the most famous being Julius

Evola

who I don't think he considered himself

to be a Buddhist although he his life

was changed by being introduced to

Buddhism and he certainly endorsed it as

uh a noble Aryan virile kind of uh

spiritual uh system that was suitable

for like the Aryan aristocracy of Europe

um but the thing the thing is that I

mean Buddhism can exist under any system

that allows it to exist

so

um like Marxism might be contrary to

Buddhism because Marxism is contrary to

any kind of spiritual system

um

but the fascism would be clinging to

nation and culture which are inherently

impermanent but a devout Buddhist a

serious practitioner renounces the world

so that he is renouncing nation and

culture

so

um it's just sort of like a fringe thing

that goes on it's it's like

like the heart of Buddhism isn't really

uh political it's not you know it's not

run by the government or any such thing

even though some place like Thailand

where the Sangha and the government are

closely related

um still

I mean Thailand's kind of under a

military dictatorship or has been on

numerous occasions

so yeah I don't see that fascism is

contrary to Buddhism I mean

I mean like Spain under uh Franco was uh

Catholic

in fact uh

I mean you could argue that uh

in like Medieval Times

or even like the the Roman Empire could

have been called more or less fascistic

and it was it was Christian and so

really it's the spirituality doesn't
necessarily have to follow along with
the the political ideology they're just
in a way they're they're separate or and
even if you've got like this autocratic
King
who just declares you know everyone's
going to be Buddhist weird well I just I
I hereby decree that the country is
going to convert to Buddhism which has
happened in the past
um still I mean it's not I don't see how
there's any necessary conflict
because Buddhism arose in a time with
autocratic Kings and you know some of
them were just sociopaths

so yeah I really don't see any kind of

problem there

so the next question is from Mary

spelled m-e-r-r-y

and Mary says how can one experience not

craving for existence and not craving

for non-existence at the same time

so I think this is uh kind of a

follow-up on uh a doctrine of terravada

Buddhism about the three kinds of

craving there are three kinds of craving

craving for essential pleasure craving

for existence and craving for

non-existence

and um

so Mary is asking how can you not crave

for existence and not crave for

non-existence at the same time well you
just don't crave for anything
so you don't have any cravings for
anything you're not craving for further
existence and you're not craving for an
end to existence I mean you're just
taking each moment as it comes without
without craving anything you know
without setting yourself up against the
way things are you know just accept the
way things are and so you're not like
setting up any kind of friction with the
universe
so that was that was fairly simple
so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from the lucid and this

is a surprisingly hard question to

answer

Lutheran said Lucid says who is the

wokest Buddhist you know

and I mean really I can't say that I

know any woke Buddhists have you

obviously woke Buddhists don't want to

have anything to do with me

the woke Buddhists will just uh there's

there's a certain woke Buddhist monk who

runs uh

a website kind of a Buddhist forum and

I've been told that he just deletes

like references to me just doesn't

matter of course because supposedly I'm

a Nazi

but I mean

of Buddhists that I know of that

that venerable biku who might as well

remain unnamed or

partly because he's higher profile maybe

biku Bodhi he's pretty woke seems to me

but of the ones that I know personally

that would be a tough question I would

I'd have to say that

um when I lived in Bellingham Washington

and was temporarily

um interacting with the the local

Insight Meditation Society there

um I mean it could be it could be any

one of uh a fairly large number of those

um yeah it probably of the people that

I've met personally

that I have known not just met

uh it would probably be one of the

Buddhists in in Bellingham Washington

who were a member of the local Insight

Meditation group and um

yeah like college educated people in in

the Pacific Northwest tend to be fairly

left-leaning

and uh there's no telling how woke they

got I mean I I left before the real

Insanity started like that was around

2015 I guess I left before then so it's

hard to say I mean some of them might

have just turned into what caligulas or

something

and uh technically I would have known

them in the past anyway but really I I

can't say so I'll just move on to the

next question this is from Mr unofficial

and Mr unofficial says

what is the Buddhist definition of a

human

and that's kind of a good question

um

it's it could be taken from different

directions I mean

um Buddhism does not give like a

biological definition of a human

as far as I know I mean like in the in

the polytext there's there's no

um

there's no suta where the Buddha or

anyone else is differentiating humans

from you know from any other species of

animal

um and in a way we're we're kind of an

animal that is capable of of becoming

enlightened I mean that would be that

would define a human and that's sort of

implied in the text like

um nagas who are like shape-shifting

Cobra dragons are not allowed to be

ordained as monks there's actually a

rule about this

that because they are an animal they're

not they're not allowed they're not able

to become enlightened and so they're not

allowed to be ordained as monks

so that would be one way of doing it but

I mean ultimately it's all delusional

because

um from the Buddhist point of view no

actual human really exists

we're we're just a collection of the

five condas or the five aggregates

so we're us a human is from that point

of view a human is just a certain

collection of physicality

uh feelings perceptions will and

consciousness

that those are the five Aggregates that

compose a human being they compose other

beings also that aren't human

but

um just going with this kind of

definition it would be a certain kind of

you know collection of the five

Aggregates that

um you know walks on two legs and has

culture and

um

is capable at least potentially of

becoming enlightened

so

yeah there's not much anthropology

actually in uh in Buddhism so I'll just

move on to the next question also from

Mr unofficial

and Mr unofficial says what is your

opinion on cannabis and psychedelics for

spiritual growth how should they be used

for maximum benefit have you had any

profound psychedelic experiences in your

life well I was I touched on this uh to
a previous question about whether you go
to hell from smoking cannabis and uh
yeah I mean of of people of my
generation who became monks I think
probably most of them began with
cannabis and psychedelics maybe it's
different now I can't say but it's you
take cannabis and then psychedelics and
you have these profound mystical
experiences you see things in a way that
seems just as valid in its own way as
the usual normal waking State and it
kind of triangulates and it it gives you
the Insight but there's more than one
way of looking at reality and then it

causes an interest in

practicing meditative techniques where

you can expand the Consciousness and and

get into these profound states without

having to use the chemicals

so

I do think that if used wisely and not

just abused

or just use recreationally for mundane

reasons then uh it's it's very valuable

or it can be

and how should they be used for maximum

benefit is uh well you should use them

with uh like uh a desire for Spiritual

benefit to be a result of taking them I

mean if you just drop acid at a party or

something

um that that would not produce maximum
benefit but if you go hiking alone out
into the forest I used to do this it was
like one of my earlier spiritual
practices before I became a monk just
hike alone out into a Wilderness Area
and take acid and buy it by yourself out
in the woods
uh in a quiet place where you won't be
bothered you know you won't have to
interact with other people there's no
rules out there for you to break
you know there's no artificial rules
um yeah you can have you can have
profound experiences and then here's the
question the last part of this question

is have you had any profound psychedelic experiences in your life almost every time not absolutely every time but almost every time I've ever taken LSD or mushrooms

it's like everything just becomes a manifestation of divinity it's just like divinity is the essence and you just have all these different forms of it you know it's just everything is like an emanation of God so to speak and that's usually my experience when I take something like LSD

is that you know every just everything just becomes a manifestation of divinity and that in itself is uh

that is a profound experience

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Rambo

and brambo says did the Buddha teach

that biku should give blessings to

people how does that work

um

I'm not exactly

sure about mentions of blessings in the

text although certainly the Buddha

taught that because should send meta to

people and that's usually the way

um

people ask for blessings in in Burma

which is possibly the most Buddhist

country in the world just please send

meta sometimes they'll say you know

Superion which is like you know Sue pay

and it's like you know give a give a

gift but it's like the gift of a

blessing or the gift of Mata or you know

loving kindness you know benevolent

feeling well wishes

so definitely it's it's mentioned many

times in the text that because you just

feel love for everybody

and just sometimes I mean like if you're

doing meditation you're like beaming

love

to to individuals or to groups of people

or just in all directions

so that is probably more Orthodox than

you know the may you be well may you be

happy kind of a thing I mean just saying

may you be well may you be happy it's

like a formula for sending meta to so

that's also the blessing and the sending

of Mata are just the same essentially

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from chaplain

and Chaplin says are you making any

resolutions or do you have any plans for

the New Year

um no I really don't make resolutions I

kind of go with uh jidu krishnamurti on

on making resolutions it's like

um you just do do what you can and but

if you make some kind of resolution or

rule for yourself then

um you're setting yourself up for uh

like breaking rules and then just being

dishonest and hypocrisy and dashed

ideals and all that just just be

yourself

mindfully would be his approach

um I used to have a joke resolution I'd

make every year and that was I wasn't

going to smoke I made two resolutions

two joke resolutions every year this is

back when I was a young man one is I'm

not gonna smoke weed anymore and the

second one was I'm not gonna smoke weed

any less I'm going to smoke it just the

same

which is kind of an easy resolution to

keep

uh second part of this question is do

you have any plans for the New Year

other than uh just hanging out with my

sweetie at home not going out to any

parties or anything

going out and making noise at midnight

that's uh that's my plan for New Year's

Eve

um plans for the new year I may finally

um stop working in the warehouse at the

sheet metal shop and move up front and

start selling sheet metal

which is a job that was offered to me

back around July but things moved slow

in South Carolina

but uh yeah plans for the new year is

just continue forwards you know

continue on the same track

so I'll just move on to the next

question from chaplain and this is how

is the new year measured in Buddhism and

do they celebrate a new year

well

um just going with strict terravada

Buddhism not any national cultural

deviations from that

um the the year the Buddha the year of

the Buddhist era begins with the

Buddha's Enlightenment and so it's the

full moon of May or the full moon of

Cason in in Burmese which usually is in

May

would be um the beginning of the the

next Buddhist year

although Buddhist countries have

different ways of measuring New Year

like in uh India which isn't technically

Buddhist but also in Burma and in

Thailand

they uh they follow like medieval Indian

like astrology or astronomy

so in in Burma and Thailand their their

new years is

um nowadays New Year's Day would be

April 17th I'm pretty sure

and technically that is the day that the

sun passes through the Meridian

containing the Stars Zeta pisium

because back in in medieval India some

astronomer calculated that at the

beginning of the universe this you know
who knows how many zillions of years ago
that all the Sun the moon and all the
planets were in conjunction at the star
of Zeta pyceum and uh I think that is
the lunar Mansion of Ray Woody
so in Burma and Thailand their official
New Year's Day
um is around April 17th it's it's no
it's like a five-day transition when the
sun is passing through this lunar
mansion and uh in in Burmese it's called
dinjan and in Thailand it's called
songkran
and it's both it's just two
pronunciations of the same Sanskrit word
that means just crossing over it's like

the sun is crossing through this this

Meridian where

all the the sun moon and planets are all

in conjunction at the beginning of the

universe

but technically the Buddhist New Year is

um the day that the Buddha became

enlightened and started the wheel of

Dharma

uh rolling

so I'll just move on to chaplain's next

and third question

do you think the Dalai Lama is an arm of

the globalists used to control people

similar to how they use the rainbow Pope

to indoctrinate Catholics into Oak

Marxism

um I really am not a close follower of

The Dalai Lama

um

I think he has to some degree endorsed

the whole global warming hysteria partly

I think just due to like naivete he did

uh he did some kind of interview with

Greta tunberg I remember Brian Rue and I

did a video on it it was a relatively

popular one

um but I think that's not necessarily

being the same as an arm of the

globalist unless it's just an unwitting

one in that certain respect but in other

ways the Dalai Lama is very Politically

Incorrect for example he has said a

number of times that that the uh the so-called refugees in Europe who are coming from from Northern Africa and the Middle East you should just go back to where they came from the Europe is for Europeans and that's certainly not what the globalists want people to hear and I think another thing that that kind of counts against him being an arm of the globalists is that obviously he's uh sort of an anti-chinese figure and back when you know the marxists and the Communists were the bad guys in mainstream Western culture you know he was a hero but now he's kind of an embarrassment because they're all

kissing the ass of the Chinese Communist

Party the globalists are

and so he's just seen as sort of a

problem for China which makes him a

problem for for the the globalists who

are kissing the Chinese behind

so yeah I I doubt that the Dalai Lama is

a stooge for for the globalists I mean

he might be used for propaganda purposes

he happens to say the right thing like

about global warming or something but uh

my relatively uneducated guess is that

um

yeah he's he's not really

so I'll just move on to the next

question which is the last question and

it is from pseudonym

and I'm guessing that that's not his

real name

and pseudonym says

I am hoping to hear your thoughts on an

idea the following is constructed around

the analogy of the path to Enlightenment

being analogous to summoning a great

Mountain metaphorical complements to

Evola

as I understand it if one renounces the

world and diligently follows the

Eightfold Path and lives by the vinaya

Buddhism can lead toward the upper

reaches of the mountain perhaps to the

Snow Line however the final push to the

summit for enlightenment rests on the

individual making their own way the

Buddhist past prepared the individual

for the challenge but ultimately they

are alone could it be that jidu

krishnamurti and others have provided

further direction to Aid in the final

push conversely to Simply crack open a

krishnamurti text with no dharmic

Foundation might that not be like

parachuting into the higher reaches of

the mountain in board shorts and

flip-flops please feel free to Riff on

this in any way that makes sense to you

thank you

well

um when I when I hear about

um spirituality and moving towards

Enlightenment compared to climbing a
mountain of course I think of Saint John
of the Cross and the ascent of Mount
Carmel and the whole path of the
mountain is
just nothing nothing nothing nothing
nothing you just follow the nothing
until you you reach the Perfection of
nothing
and then you're at the top of the
mountain
and uh he apparently got to the top of
it at least from I mean he speaks with
authority he seems to be anyway speaking
with authority in his in his writings
um

Buddhism on the other hand I mean there

may be mentions of it I don't remember

like

um becoming enlightened as being

compared with reaching the summit of

Mount meru

maybe not a good comparison because the

summit of Mount meru is where the the

toe attempts of Heaven is supposed to be

located and so that's nowhere near

becoming enlightened if you're just

getting into a heaven realm that's just

a few levels above us

uh

yeah it in a way it's kind of a

simplistic way of looking at it

comparing it to climbing a mountain

because

different people can become enlightened

at different stages it's not like you're

following a path till you reach the end

of the past because the path doesn't

have an end it's just that the path just

keeps going so you just follow the path

or you're climbing the mountain get

higher higher higher higher and you're

never going to reach the top because it

doesn't have a top

So eventually you just bail out sideways

and some people have to get to the most

refined mental States they have to

master fourth genre they have to be able

to sit there empty this cessation of

perception and feeling you know the the

concentration of this

oh what is it the signless concentration

they have to get to the the most refined

meditative States and master them and

sometimes even then they won't become

enlightened there's no guarantee but

some people they don't even have to get

to the first genres supposedly if you

can believe some of the texts there are

what are called dry visioned arahaunts

that uh haven't mastered Jonna and

haven't gotten any any psychic powers

they're just enlightened without even

psychic powers or anything

so it's like if you compare it with a

ladder you're climbing the ladder and

you're getting into more and more subtle
mental States but sooner or later you
just realize that there's no there's no
top you're never going to reach the top
and then you just let go you just jump
off and that's it
and some people have to get much higher
than others so some people could become
enlightened when they're still in the
Foothills presumably
and that seems to be the way it is for
Western people who like have some kind
of experience that like an Awakening
experience it just hits them over the
head you know they're just ignore me a
lot of them like eckhartola assuming you

know we don't we don't have to assume
that he's fully enlightened but just and
he had this Awakening experience without
without having been a meditator or
anything first even Ramana maharshi was
like that he wasn't a meditator he was
just an ordinary high school student
and uh he just had this crisis that just
slammed him into enlightenment
so it doesn't work as as a like the
whole metaphor of climbing the mountain
it doesn't really fit very well because
um I mean there's no top to the mountain
is is Enlightenment he just is
completely off the scale it's completely
out of the system Nirvana is not one of
the 31 planes of existence it's not a

plane of existence at all it transcends

existence

and that Transcendence can happen you

know just about any time any point

although it becomes more and more likely

the more advanced your your mental

States become the more subtle they

become

so let's see I kind of answered part of

the question anyway

see rests on the individual making yeah

I don't think I think Buddhism if you

practice it correctly I mean it can take

you all the way to Enlightenment

um at least it gets you to the point

where you've gotten all you need to get

and you can just let go

and then that's it

um in Buddhism there's there's more talk

about crossing a flood than uh climbing

a mountain as a metaphor for

enlightenment and you cross the flood

with the raft of Dharma and then you

throw the raft away because you don't

need it anymore

but I do think that a lot of Buddhists

have become enlightened through

practicing Buddhism without having to

depend on or without having to use any

other any other system

um

let's see conversely do I simply cracked

open a krishnamurti text with no dharmic

Foundation might that not be like

parachuting into the higher reaches of

the mountain in board shorts and

flip-flops

um yeah I don't think if someone who's

unprepared reads a krishnamurti book

I mean it'd be like reading a physics

text you've got some some Normie you

know who who doesn't have a college

education or anything he he's just gonna

be over his head he's just not going to

get it

um if you get it you're ready to get it

I assume

but um

yeah I do think that uh just practicing

like Orthodox taravana or maybe slightly
unorthodox terrible like old-fashioned
taravada the way it was taught in the
early days without all the the later
accretions I think that would be
sufficient if one's temperament is
attuned to that other people might have
a different kind of temperament they
might need a different kind of path
but uh terravala Buddhism
um not you know what it has become
necessarily but what it what it still
can be like the essence of it distilled
from the text that is that our you know
this Essence still is followed by some
of the best monks
but uh yeah I think this is sufficient

and that was the last question

so I'm done I won't answer anymore

because there aren't anymore

so uh I hope I did a a decent job of

answering these questions I hope I

didn't completely mess up any of them

and uh if you have any more questions

about Buddhism or spirituality

philosophy meditation Burma me

personally anything you think I might be

able to answer just feel free to include

your question in in the comments below

if you have access to my subscribe Star

channel you can leave questions there if

you have access to the Discord server

associated with the

um subscribe to our Channel you can

leave leave questions there

um I I caution you not to just leave

questions in random places because they

might not wind up on the list I might

just Overlook like if there's a question

put under like a random video of mine

that isn't a q a video or isn't the

latest one

um I can't guarantee that I'll I'll

remember to include that on the list

and um if you haven't subscribed already

please do so

and uh hit the like button and uh take a

look at the URL links including the uh

the links to my books that are for sale

on Amazon

and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 39 I think

of question and answer and we're getting

into high numbers so I'm in my ability

to count may start to falter pretty soon

when we're getting up into such high

numbers I mean I took math in school and

I was able to count all the way up to

many

but um 39 I mean it's it's it's many

that's that's many and we got many

questions too and I do apologize for uh

the uh Hiatus I went on a kind of

vacation from YouTube

but now I'm back

and I'm better than ever sort of

so I'll just uh start answering

questions here

and the first question is from Mary

spelled m-e-r-r-y

and uh

wait a minute before I answer Mary's

questions I want to address sort of a

request it was a it wasn't a q a

question it wasn't exactly a cue but it

was a request with regard to q a from a

monk who lives I think in Thailand

and he's either a western monk I assume

he's a western monk if he's not a

western monk then he is an Asian monk

with a Mastery of the English language

he didn't really specify what his

ethnicity was which I mean it's not

really all that important but he was

asking me to do videos on how to make
robes and like the proper way of going
for almost round and so forth for for
monks for ordained monks and I know
about this stuff and I've been
toying with the idea of writing an
article on how to make robes because
most monks really don't know like the
really ancient way of making robes
um
but it's it's seems a little awkward to
me to be giving instructions to monks on
how to do their job when I'm not a monk
anymore but it is a good idea and I
think I'll eventually get to at least
the Rogue one he was asking me about a

number of things

um he was requesting that I do videos on

that sort of thing and it could be

interesting have a lay person a guy

wearing a shirt and all that talking

about the proper way of making monks

robes and so forth as far as I knew I

was the only monk in all of Burma who

was making robes like completely in

accordance with the ancient rules of

monastic discipline

but um

I can talk about that later so let's get

back to Mary here

and Mary's first question is

16 near the end and digging nikaya 16 by

the way is the Maha uh Pari nibana suta

which is

um discussing the Buddha's last days and

his death

anyway in D16 near the end the Buddha

says if it wishes after my passing the

Sangha May abolish the Lesser and minor

training rules which of the rules are

considered minor and which major well if

you continue reading the

uh it might be in the in the Winnie at

the chulawaga the official account of

the First Council

you may find that even the arhans the

500 arahants who presided of this did

not agree on which rules are considered

minor and which are major

at the very

at the very least we can assume that the

ducata offenses which are the lowest

level of offenses offenses

would be

um minor I mean if any rules are minor

it would be the ones you know don't talk

with your mouth full

um

don't teach dhamma to someone who has

shoes on which is broken all the Time in

the West but there is a rule saying a

monk should not teach dhamma to someone

who is wearing shoes but just because in

Ancient India it was a sign of respect

to take your shoes off When approaching

a holy man or so forth and um so there's

all these I mean there's lots and lots

of them hundreds of minor rules like

that and at the very least those could

go I suppose

um there were some according to the

official

um tradition that there were some

arahants who are considering anything

except for the four paragicas to be

lesser and minor but no I don't think so

telling lies drinking alcohol killing

animals steel well I guess stealing

would be parajika so long as it's above

a certain value

um

so yeah I mean if even the arahatz who

were the the Buddha's disciples could
not agree because it is vague I mean
it's not saying uh you know anything
below the level of
um you know pachidia offenses would be
lesser and minor but I mean it's a safe
bet to to assume that the most minor
ones
um just going with severity you know
there's different levels of rules you
know at the very top you've got the four
paragica rules and if any monk breaks
those he's just automatically
excommunicated even if nobody finds out
he might not even know that he's
excommunicated if he's really ignorant
of the rules below that you've got

sangari sesa which are also considered

to be uh Guru or or weighty serious

offenses so I assume those also wouldn't

be lesser and minor and that would

include

um you know fondling a woman with with

one's mind perverted with by lust or or

masturbating to orgasm having having an

orgasm on purpose

um talking dirty talking you know lewd

talk to a woman there's a few obscure

ones like siding with the monk who's

causing a causing a Schism this kind of

thing

um yeah those are serious below that

you've got Tula Chaya which I mean the

word Tula means like you know weighty or
or heavy or serious so two lechai events
is also probably are are not lesser and
minor and that would include such things
as trying to commit aparajika or Sangha
di sesa offense and then failing
um or or like eating human flesh I think
is a tool offense cutting off one's own
penis is it too late offense
um there is there's not a list of them
in the text but you have to kind of look
around every once in a while especially
in uh the the ancient commentary which
is now canonical to the the parimoka
rules it's mostly any monk who's trying
to commit one of the really serious ones
you know the first two categories but

fails for some reason that would be Tula
China then below that you've got
pachidia which is in two groups you've
got nisagi up at GTO and just regular
pachidia
means before you can confess the offense
you have to get rid of whatever it is
that you are possessing that is not
Kosher and one of the main ones is money
money to for a monk to own money or have
in his possession is it too late or a
Anisa offense he has to relinquish the
money and then he has to make confession
if you make confession without
relinquishing the money it's just
invalid it's it has no effect

and so I mean maybe pachy but even pachy

the offenses that includes killing

animals telling lies

drinking alcohol this kind of a thing so

I would my own personal guess would be

it would be ducata offenses

um

and uh do Boston offenses and there's

only one dubosity of incidents making a

joke at somebody else's expense

so yeah that's that's what I would say

and then there's oh there's one more

category and I'm uh potty

days and they're very four obscure ones

and Nobody Breaks them anymore

um I want to I think at least one of

them has to do with uh a bossy bikuni

like the monks are invited to a house or

they're you know they're eating in

public somewhere and you've got a a nun

who is like bossing the the lay people

around telling them you know you should

offer more of that and less of this and

you know this kind of thing and the

monks there have to tell her to be quiet

and if they don't they've committed an

offense by not telling none to be quiet

because she's being bossy with the lay

people at meal time or something

but uh as I say those those never get

broken anymore

so

I think I answered that one you got lots

of questions I probably shouldn't be uh

going too in depth on some of these

um so I'll just uh move on to Mary's

next question which is a question that

Mary asked last time which somehow

didn't get on the list

and Mary asked I mean it was sort of

like a a raunchy joke was included in

the first version of this question and I

couldn't find it I mean Mary requested

that I include the original version of

the question with the raunchy joke but I

I seriously could not find it it's like

YouTube has these weird things where

comments will appear and disappear

it was like that

so anyway

s second question here this is the

redacted repeated version

what are your thoughts on Realms of

existence can it be explained within

just the human realm I mean maybe an

addict can be considered a Hungry Ghost

Deva is someone like rich and famous

movie stars some poor people are born

into circumstances that clearly clearly

resemble hell and humans are like normal

run-of-the-mill humans

well I mean you can say that that

humanity is sort of like a a microcosm

of some of the main Realms in Buddhist

cosmology maybe you know there might be

no sphere of nothingness you know the

Devas of existing in this formless

Brahma realm you know the Spear of

infinite

Consciousness or something

um yeah they might not have

Representatives

uh in the human race but it is true I've

noticed myself that I mean there are

some places that are there are like hell

Realms you know like some like crack

houses or something I've been in a few

places I've never been in a crack house

but there are some places you go there

and it's I mean it really is like hell

uh I would assume some mental

institutions might be kind of like that

some old folks homes are kind of like

that

um but nevertheless you could sort of

use it as an analogy for the human realm

but that's really not what

um the the 31 planes of existence are

really referring to

that this universe is very very big

and there's all kinds of beings I mean

like animals obviously those are of all

the 31 planes of existence aside from

the human Realm

animals are the most uh

irrefutable

those are obviously here on the planet

with us and are visible you know you can

you know touch them and weigh them on a

scale that kind of a thing

so

yeah I mean you can say that

um some

some people are like Davis you know

Divas you know which means god you know

some of the some of the beautiful people

I've I've heard some Hindu some Hindu

um Guru or Swami was talking about how

um like Marin County California is kind

of like a Deva realm where people are

out you know drinking their lattes and

doing yoga on the beach and all that

kind of stuff but again the 31 planes of

existence are to be taken literally and

so there are

um just all I mean

anything you can imagine is existing in

this universe somewhere somehow and a

lot of things we can't imagine are also

out there and

it may be that the heaven Realms and the

hell realms for example are not exactly

like they're described in the books

but I I'm fairly confident that there

are

um you know heaven-like Realms that are

like better than the one we're in now

and then there are worse ones

so

I'll just move on to the next question

and this is with regard to one of the

earliest videos I ever put on YouTube

the sermon of the stinkwood tree maybe

if I think of it I'll leave the link

otherwise if you go to my videos on my

channel my YouTube channel and just

scroll

all the way down to the bottom to the

ones that were made in 2011 when I was

still in Burma

hadn't come back to America yet to uh

seek my fortune

there's this one called the sermon of

the stinkwood tree and I'm I had just

finished going for alms I was a monk at

the time in Burma

just finished going for alms and I had

these plastic bags they're called in

Burmese it's a poly

polypropylene it's the ones that are

photodegradable

and they're called chit chip because

they make the crinkly sound

anyway

um I'd go for alms and I was relatively

famous

as a monk in that area so I'd go for

Amazon there'd just be a long line of

people

and um

each person would get to put in like one

little cup or one spoon depending on how

many there were

um of rice and a little bit of Curry

but sometimes they'd want to offer like

a banana or like a some bread or a piece

of cake or something fruit any kind of

fruit really and it just wouldn't all

fit in the bowl I've got a big bowl I

mean it's that bowl back there holds

more than a gallon

but still when 60 people are all wanting

to offer food and bananas and stuff

um yeah it just wouldn't all fit so I

started carrying a plastic bag to have

the extra food and just put the extra

food in that

um not extra rice and Curry but just the

you know the cakes and the cookies and

the fruit and stuff so that's what it

was

and then I just after I'd get my bowl

put back into the bag I'd uh walk back

to my cave and uh eat my food

and so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from pseudonym

and again I'm guessing that pseudonym is

not his real name

and pseudonym says

one very simplistic critique of Buddhism

is noting the contradiction that you

desire to not desire similarly

practicing Buddhism to reduce stress be

happier or even to seek Enlightenment as

an achievement to tackle or misguided

yet Enlightenment remains as the Target

or perhaps the object of Desire of

Buddhist practice is this a real

contradiction or in what ways is this

critique missing the Mark can you help

untangle this knot well not all monks

even I mean let's just set aside the

drones and the clowns and the crooks and

you know just

lazy people that you know they're not

really even trying just set those aside

they do exist in the Sangha we'll just

we'll just ignore those but even the

seriously practicing monks not all of

them

are like striving for this goal of

Nirvana

because some of them it's just they feel

like it's a duty to practice you know

it's like their sacred duty to practice

dhamma as well as they can so that is

you know that's like their goal is just

practice as well as they can some people

they just like to meditate they like to

live a simple austere life that was

pretty much my situation

um and so they just practice because of

that

uh I I have warned

um for for many years I mean beware of

goal-oriented Dharma you know if you're

not in the present moment but you're

like aiming at something in the distant

future or maybe even the near future as

long as you're not here in the present

moment then you're not practicing

correctly I mean if you're doing this in

order to get something later

then yeah I mean you're already

misguided to some degree which reminds

me of I think it's one of the last

um

a camera what they're in in Spinoza's

ethics you know he's got it set up like

a Euclid so it's one of the last

theorems or whatever it is that you

prove in in geometry

that um uh virtue is its own reward

you're not being virtuous in order to

get into heaven or whatever it's just

virtue is its own reward and Dharma

practice really is its own reward

and so long as you you retain that kind

of attitude your dumb of practice will
be more fruitful I think not that you
should be trying doing it in order for
the Donald practice to be more fruitful
but still
there are a lot of monks who are
striving ardently earnestly for nibana
or Nirvana or Enlightenment and the
thing is the more you progress and we'll
get to this later on there's another
question if I remember correctly that
kind of uh applies to this
where if let's say you you're striving
for enlightenment just
single-mindedly you know and so all your
other Cravings kind of go away or or you

know they're they're sublimated or
they're just you know rejected or
whatever and you've got this one craving
left you know you don't crave girls
anymore you don't crave rock and roll
and ice cream and partying with your
your old friends you're not craving a
book collection
um you know all you want is
Enlightenment and so you've reduced the
number of your attachments and desires
down to this one big one and then you
try and you try and you try but because
you still have this clinging you can't
become enlightened because that's that's
like your last obstacle So eventually
you get to this point it could be like

uh an Insight moment where you just

realize you just let everything go or it

could just be like absolute despair you

know I just can't do this anymore you

just kind of cast it away and that's it

I mean you've thrown away the last

attachment

so Enlightenment can happen that way

so

on the one hand you're better off not

setting up a goal

um as a purpose for practicing it works

for some people I suppose if if we go to

the second route that I just explained

where it's this thing this last

attachment you know you you sublimate

all of your other attachments for this

one holy sacred ideal

and then of course because you have the

attachment you can't get there you can't

attain it and then finally for whatever

reason positive or negative you cast

that aside too and

click

so that can work too

but um

yeah Desiring not to desire I mean it

can kind of work it can move you in that

direction but of course obviously if

you're Desiring not to desire you're

never going to reach non-desire until

you eventually cast aside the desire not

to desire and that may be at a

relatively advanced level

so that that have that can happen too

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from I'm pretty sure

his name in English is yuichiro although

his name is in Japanese

um letters

what do you call them

something grams I don't know what are

Japanese letters called con there's

kanji and then there's like one or two

other ones

so anyway

yuichiro I think

says this

and some of these questions I haven't

read yet so this is almost like I'm
being live streamed and answering
questions that way
this has been suggested before but maybe
there's some way Buddhism can be
modified for the West I've heard
suggestions like food fusing Buddhism
with a native paganism like it did in
Asian countries unfortunately European
paganism is basically dead and I don't
see it coming back Christianity has to
be contended with Semitic religions are
intolerant and must either absorb or
destroy other religions like the Borg
I'm wondering if there's any way for
Buddhism to coexist with Christianity
given this fact in China Buddhism and

taoism coexist

similarly in Japan Buddhism and

Shintoism coexist but neither Shintoism

nor taoism are as completely intolerant

of other religions as Christianity it's

also possible that Christianity will die

out given its incompatibility with

science its Central claim is an

empirical claim for which there is no

evidence however the anti-globalist

right is Christian dominated and I want

them to win for political reasons even

though it's extremely unlikely but if

they win Christianity will be dominant

again and most of these people are

definitely for a theocracy and banning

other religions do you have any thoughts

on this call it the final solution to

the Christian question for cax

well

um surprisingly

the monastic schools of Christianity

which in the west is mostly Roman

Catholicism although there's also

Orthodox Christianity they are much more

friendly towards Buddhism just because

there's so much more overlap when you

get into proticism I mean one of the

first things the Protestants did when

they when they started up protestantism

was to just ban monasticism which is

practically Banning the highest levels

of the religious practice of the

spiritual practice and just Banning

almost the more advanced Spiritual

Development into like sainthood that

kind of a thing

so there are

um like religious conventions where

Buddhist monks will be asked to come and

give like sermons to Christian priests

and monks for example

um I had a Roman Catholic priest

come to my cave and Burma wants dressed

as a monk I mean he was ordained I think

he was ordained as a novice even though

he was still a castling monk they're

really interested in that because they

they like the meditation they want

advice on meditation and most of the
meditation and I told this to the monk I
mean to the Christian or the the
Catholic priest it's like you know
almost all of the meditation techniques
you know the basic ones are included in
in Roman Catholicism and why don't you
just practice the Roman Catholicism you
know the the meditation and mindfulness
and so forth in in Catholicism and he
said that in Roman Catholicism maybe
it's this way of Orthodoxy too
it's more or less esoteric it's secret I
mean you have to be ordained into a
contemplative order of monks or nuns in
order to be taught the stuff whereas in
Buddhism it's it's for free you know you

just someone can come in off the street

and and join

um a Meditation Retreat in some cases

so it's more available

in Buddhism

um but there is a lot of friendly

feeling and and Christianity

um a lot of Roman Catholics you know

like ordained ones consider the Buddha

himself to be a Catholic saint

josephat technically it was a previous

life from ajotica story that made it to

Europe over the the Caravan routes and

this this story about this saintly wise

man

um it was just considered to be true and

the the Europeans just considered him to
be so wise and saintly that he must have
been a good Christian so he wound up
being canonized as a saint
so I mean there is there are certain
schools of Christianity I mean we can
set aside Unitarianism that accepts
pretty much everything because they've
just gone off the deep end lately it
seems to me politically at least a lot
of them have whereas this like leftist
politics and new age and you know lgbtq
stuff instead of you know the actual you
know spiritual stuff that you know you
would expect in a sermon
um another possibility would be some
kind of Western philosophy like a a

Resurgence of or just a a reinvention of

something like stoicism or ancient

cynicism something like that could be

compatible with with Buddhism

but um

the more Fundamentalist

sects

of Christianity and

um Islam yeah I think yuichiro is right

that they wouldn't really be willing to

play ball and as for Jews in Buddhism I

mean

the jubu so-called

is is a phenomenon but um

it's not so much a combination of

Judaism with

Buddhism is just sort of like the

for the most part it's sort of like the

Socialist Tendencies of of a Jewish

person who has abandoned religious

Judaism still has like the cultural

aspects of some aspects of it who then

enters Buddhism and then just starts

promulgating socialism and so forth but

so that's that's not that's not working

I mean I'd say

many or most of the people that watch

these videos

um you know they've got no use for for

that sort of thing where you've got

another religion kind of infiltrating

um Buddhism and and or or even you or

essentially cultural Marxism

um infiltrating Buddhism and just

completely mucking it all up

so

yeah

I I mean realistically

I don't see Buddhism

integrating with Christianity in the

west I mean there could be sort of like

a a friendship pact where you know they

both agree okay you're better off

religious trying to be a good person

trying to do the right thing than just

you know being a complete degenerate and

you know they do have like these World

religious forums where people come

together and you know the Dalai Lama

speaks and the you know the Archbishop
of whatever speaks and you know they're
all like agreeing and not not very much
ever gets accomplished you know but at
least they're showing friendship towards
each other
but uh I think the only way Christianity
would adopt Buddhism would be in parts
and pieces where they're just adopting
the meditation techniques or whatever
so but I mean that's kind of the way
it's it's going in America anyway
so yeah it's it's uh
I think the best thing we can do is is
just wait and see what happens because
something's gonna happen
you just have to wait and see or if

anyone has any brilliant ideas on on how

to make and happen then you can do that

too

but I'm just going to move on to the

next question this is from weird Flex

I guess this is like some kind of slang

that I completely missed out on because

I was in Burma for 30 or 20 something

years weird Flex I guess it's some kind

of actual word so it's really not this

person's name

and weird Flex

says what is the shape of your practice

today you've you've written about

mindfulness in the mundane but does your

Dharma practice extend beyond that are

you continuing to chant meditate or

observe upulsatum

well with regard to formal meditation

like sitting cross-legged I don't do it

anymore I honestly confess

and the reason for that plainly stated

is I got as far with it as I could even

when like I was a full-time meditator

you know I'm meditating several hours a

day I just got to this point where I

would have to try hard just to stay

where I was it was like the Red Queen in

in Wonderland who has to run as fast as

you can just to stay in the same place

and as a layperson you know just

part-time meditator

sitting sitting across like I mean I I

wouldn't come anywhere close to some of

the mental States I cultivated very

strenuously when living alone in a cave

in a forest in Asia

so

yeah though I don't do formal sitting

meditation practice anymore although I

still do

um mindfulness

and uh like oming oming is just some

weird spontaneous thing that comes up

with me sometimes so I can I can be

owning spontaneously and I do chant a

little bit I I've chanted The Meta suit

I've blessed the metal shop where I work

um chanting the metal suited there

quietly you know when when I'm just

closing and there's nobody else there

and observing the posted I think today

as you posted on the full moon day but

um

I don't behave any differently on

impulse of 10 days so I don't really

observe it I may acknowledge that it's

supposed to talk that's as far as it

goes

so mainly what I'm doing is I'm just um

trying to apply what I cultivated as a

monk to a life in a more blatant version

of samsara I mean it's also I'm sorry

even a a meditator's cell is samsara but

um

I'm sort of at a more advanced level

or it's like a more challenging level

more difficult level I should say

and I'm just doing the best I can

obviously I haven't totally uh abandoned

or forgotten what I've learned

so I'll just move on to the next

question and weird Flex uh weird flex's

second question

what was your closest brush with death

which is kind of an interesting question

and it's surprisingly difficult to

answer because sometimes you don't know

I mean I've come close to car wrecks

before I'm like

um

I mean usually when I was when I was a

teenager and drove like a maniac anyway

you know you can be doing 70 and hit a

patch of black ice and just start like

spinning down the highway and that kind

of thing I've done that a couple times

um whether that was my closest brush

with death or not I don't know

um the first time I got malaria I was I

was pretty messed up I had I mean the

second time I got malaria when I wasn't

nearly as sick because the first time I

had like a fever of 105 degrees

Fahrenheit

um yeah I was very sick the first time

if I hadn't taken the pills then I I

certainly would have died probably ever

I had malaria like seven times always

the worst kind probably every time if I

didn't take the medication I would have

died from it

um so it could be that

so it'd be my closest brush with death

that I know of you know who knows I mean

you know maybe he's a bullet and just

missed me and I wasn't even paying

attention or something but um

yeah it'd either be the first time I had

malaria or one of the times when I was

like a a teenager who drove like a

maniac and almost gotten a just a huge

car wreck one of those times

so I'll just move on a nice question and

this is from Johannes

or Johannes Johannes I think

and you wanna says

I was wondering how is just noting like

it's often practiced in the mahasy

tradition compatible with Noble effort

where you should stop a negative State

of Mind as soon as it arises and

generate good ones

well the two are I mean they just

overlap I mean this this kind of noble

effort in mahasi Tradition they also had

what was called heroic effort which

meant that you just keep meditating no

matter how bad the pain in your knee is

or in your hip or your ankle even if you

think you're going to die

then you just keep sitting there

meditating until the hour is up

but uh here the noble effort is just if

you start having a an inappropriate or

unskillful or unwholesome thought you

just note it and Let It Go I mean that's

that's mahasi tradition right there

and just note it Let It Go note it let

it go whatever arises it can be even

wholesome thoughts you know you're

thinking you know praise the Buddha or

whatever just note it let it go whatever

arises just note it and let it go

and letting it go doesn't mean just

flinging it away from you in aversion

it's just

Let It Go

so it wouldn't be I mean the good

thoughts that arise here in johannes's

question uh where you should stop a

negative State of Mind as soon as it

arises and generate good ones I mean the

good thought is just the the mindfulness

I mean that's the good mental state

anyway because all thoughts you just

note them and let them go note them and

let them go

so

let's see

so I think I answered that one so I'll

move on to johannes's next question here

and you want to say as my second

question would be what are your personal

thoughts on the wipasana movement that

has established itself around the

teaching of goenka I find the teaching

and the way of practice very appealing

and in line with my personal Spiritual

Development has been like but then again

they seem to be very discriminating

against any other tradition which

basically means everything that isn't

going to from as far as I can tell do

you have any personal experience

regarding them in their style of

practice

well I've never attended a goenka

retreat I've known a lot of Veteran

going to meditators some of whom became

monks

and um I've read a few of goinka's books

you know I know what it's about I've had

it explained to me by people who have

done it that kind of thing

and uh one of the last monasteries I

looked at in Burma had a going to center

right next door

uh

but um yeah I used to say that the

goenka people were like the Jehovah

Witnesses of Buddhism because it is

really true they have sort of uh you

know ours is the is the true way you

know ours is the only way and I've been

told that uh among the going to people

if if some veteran meditator drops away

you know he tries some other tradition

or something he just gets shunned like
in in the Jehovah's Witnesses where they
just get shunned you know they just you
don't talk to them they're just dead
so there is that
although the going to Method obviously
appeals to a lot of people all over the
world because it's very successful and
uh to their credit they don't charge
money for their Retreats they just say
you know if you think this is was of
value to you then you know if you donate
money you're helping the next person you
know if you think it's it's good for
somebody to be able to do this without
having to pay for it and you know you

can pay for you know somebody the next

person who comes along who's be sitting

in your spot that kind of a thing and it

is very simplistic so

um a lot of going to meditators you know

or I should say a lot of Western monks

start with going to and then there they

move on to something

um

more multi-dimensional more well-rounded

because goenka really is it's like a

stripped down version of terravano it's

it's in some ways very simplistic and

I'm skeptical of whether it how far it

can take you in in meditation

um the very fact that they are sort of

Jehovah's witnessing kind of almost like

fanatical about their method

like I I've I've seen that um the goenka

tradition the goinka organization the

going to system published

um of their own version of the

polytopitica in the original Pali and

this the teachings that were like

emphasized by going to himself were all

in red ink which is kind of strange

but it I would say that it's it's a good

method to start with I mean it a lot of

people get a lot out of it I've had

people I've talked to a few people that

you know their lives were changed for

the better

um just from doing a going to retreat

so I mean just sitting there 10 days of intensive meditation for someone who's never done it before you know they might be all messed up and they're finally having to look into their own mind instead of outwards at the you know their phone and the TV screen and all the other stuff they're just turning inward introspecting

um for 10 days just rigorous and then going to method does emphasize discipline it's not like you can you can meditate when you want and walk back and forth when you want and you know go do your other things when you want it's not like that

so

it's good as an elementary introduction

to Buddhist Meditation

and it may be that I mean it may be good

up to an intermediate level but I really

don't think that it's uh it really

contains it within it the the most

advanced

teachings or at least the most advanced

levels of progress in in meditation

so

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

I mean with regard to

um how the goenka method is conducted

um you'd probably be better off uh just

reading up on it or something and it's

like the the standard Retreat is like

the first third of it is is like samata

where you're just watching the breath

and then after that you're doing body

scanning where you're just your body is

divided up into into

Parts you just like your head area you

know you you just wait until there's a

sensation like a bodily sensation there

and then you note it and then you move

on to the next part of your body until

you feel something there and you move on

to the next and um it's not really

described that way in the poly text it's

it's just sort of a variation on on some

kind of mindfulness

but um

yeah I mean if you're really interested

the best my best advice you can go do a

10-day course

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Austin

and Austin says

thoughts on the mind being an epic

phenomenon

well

personally I would say that

the brain is more of an EP a phenomenon

of Mind than the mind is an

epiphenomenon of the brain

I guess for those of you who aren't

familiar with

the term or the idea of the mind being

EPA phenomenon there are

scientists or philosophers of science

or just philosophers who consider

Consciousness to be just kind of an

incidental side effect of brain function

so it's an Epi phenomenon it's just sort

of incidental you know this sort of

accidentally happened but I mean the

brain still works so it's it's not

really a problem

um but I'm not a materialist

and I think it's at least as true that

the brain itself is an epiphenomenon of

consciousness

um you know there would be no brain if

there was no perceiving consciousness to

identify it

uh from just from the scientific point

of view it's it's hard to say really I

mean

does the Mind itself I mean just setting

aside brain function I mean does the

Mind add anything

um does it enhance brain function and

and anyway

um so I mean I can I can adopt a

scientific point of view I was I have a

degree in biology so you can you can go

into science mode or scientific realism

mode materialism mode then try to

explain things that way and then I mean

the mind being an epiphenomenon of the

brain function of just you know chemist

electrochemical reactions in the brain

it makes sense

from uh from that point of view

although

um I do not think that the brain creates

consciousness

my scientific theory or hypothesis I

suppose is that Consciousness just

pervades the universe is what what a

physicist calls energy

is is a very very Elemental simple form

of what a psychologist calls

Consciousness that the universe is

conscious it doesn't think you know like

a hydrogen atom isn't thinking it's not

sitting there contemplating or

philosophizing but it's just like this

Elemental spark of Consciousness and

what a brain does just again going with

the whole scientific realist

um paradigm

it does sort of to Consciousness what a

computer does to electricity it doesn't

create the electricity a computer

doesn't but it takes the electricity and

organizes it and complexifies it if

that's a word complexifies it and then

utilizes it

and that's and that's sort of what the

brain could be said to do with

consciousness

instead of just this

um unthinking primordial sort of

Consciousness it it takes and

complicates it it organizes it and then

is able to utilize that for the purpose

of uh Staying Alive long enough to make

babies

but personally deep down

I'm just not a materialist and I really

think the mind is more real than the

brain is

and I mean it's just kind of weird that

science will I mean some scientists like

the behaviorists of the 20th century

just rejected the existence of Mind

altogether

they just you know it's just

I mean they tried to just deny its

existence some of them

when obviously I mean the one thing that

even the most radical skeptic has to
acknowledge is the the immediate
experience of Consciousness I mean if
there's anything at all is real
then it's the subjective experience of
consciousness
at least anything discreet you know as
aside from the absolute
so I'll just move on to Austin's next
question
and uh the next question is thoughts on
UG krishnamurti and his skepticism of
Enlightenment well I really don't know
all that much about ug Krishna Murray I
have a book by him on this computer but
I haven't read it yet

um almost all that I know about

krishnamurti is um from a book called

goner it was one of his attendants wrote

a kind of autobiography about his

interactions with krishnamurti and uh so

CR ug krishnamurti not J krishnamurti

but you g krishnamurti i mean he really

wasn't extremely different from J

krishnamurti they both have this idea of

almost like

it's almost like nihilism it's you know

it's it's like

trying to live a religious life is

in in a way it's just kind of dishonest

you know it's trying to live up to

ideals just leads to failure and

hypocrisy and

uh I mean even Jay Christian would talk

like that ug was even more radical he

was called a spiritual terrorist and um

well with regard to

um his skepticism of enlightenment

that's that's kind of interesting

because although I haven't read about ug

krishnamurtis

skepticism of Enlightenment that I can

recall

uh I assume he's just maybe he's saying

that there just is no Enlightenment and

one of my favorite spiritual teachers

who's still alive is Paul Lowe he's very

old now and I think he's retired and

isn't doing public teaching anymore but

he was he said the same thing that there

really is no state of enlightenment

that this is it I mean just the way we

are now this this is it

although he was considered by some to be

enlightened and Yuji krishnamurti also

is considered by some to be enlightened

in fact his body apparently underwent a

kind of like a a return to a

prepubescent state

you know it's like he lost his puberty

or something when when he had his

experience Yuji krishnamurti that is not

not Paul Lowe

uh

so I mean yeah and there's something to

the idea that there really is no state

of Enlightenment because

a state would be something some sorry

something within the context of this

world and Nirvana or Nirvana is just

completely off the scale so I can agree

with the the paradoxical idea that from

a samsaric point of view there just is

no enlightenment

because Ultimate Reality it has

practically nothing to do with the

virtual reality of you know having a

body in an individual mind and thinking

that you're separate from everything

else and all that it's just completely

transcending that

and

even an enlightened being I mean they

still have the body and the mind

apparently

and so it's it's

um I mean it's it's like a paradox in

Mahayana Buddhism especially

where they're saying well there kind of

is Enlightenment but there's no moment

of Enlightenment and it doesn't actually

happen

but it's it's still it's I mean you

can't even see that it exists because

existence is part of this duality of

existence and non-existence

so it's just completely off the scale

and so I can

kind of grock It kind of sympathize with

the idea that in this world in samsara
there just is no actual Enlightenment
and from an unenlightened point of view
you look at an enlightened being you're
just going to be like picking apart the
foibles that you perceive
and
I mean there's that too I mean even an
enlightened being let's just assume that
somebody can become enlightened
you know for the sake of argument let's
just assume that there are enlightened
beings an unenlightened person looks at
them they're just going to see another
unlike person because they just cannot I
mean they lack the sensitivity or the

wisdom to get past this The Superficial

human stuff

and you know like neem karoli Baba he's

and if anyone was enlightened in the

20th century he'd be one of my my main

guesses

and he I mean he didn't act like an

enlightened being

he'd just do mind-blowing stuff and just

read your mind and all that kind of

thing but the rest of the time he's just

like talking and yelling and laughing

and throwing things and hitting people

and

he's still a human he's still it's like

all the human stuff is still there it's

just he wasn't identified with it

anymore

or some such

so

I guess that'll be my answer to uh

ug Krishna Meridian is skepticism of

Enlightenment and so I'll move on to

Austin's next question

and Austin says can you speak on this

accounting problem of unenlightened

beings

continually being born into human

existence

given infinite time you need to expect

there to be a lot more beings breaking

out of the realm of samsara and not an

increasing human population well that's

a good question and I have considered

this

numerous times over the past decades

Buddhism teaches

that the Universe really has no

discernible beginning

I mean it's essentially samsara has been

here forever and ever and ever

if it's here at all it's it's been here

forever has no beginning presumably no

end

and there are beings that become

enlightened so you think that over an

infinite period of time if beings are

continually getting enlightened that

some sort of would eventually just empty

out

that there'd be fewer and fewer beings

which apparently is not the case

so again I mean you can say that there's

the

um the Paradox of Enlightenment just not

existing in samsara which would prevent

any being at least from a samsaric

perspective from escaping

but

um there are a few non-buddhist

explanations that I find intriguing

and there are two explanations I found

them in both in the same weird

mind-blowing book called Seth speaks

it's written by a woman named Jane

Roberts who would go into a trans and

channel this multi-dimensional being

named Seth

and even if if Seth was just like a a

figment of her subconscious imagination

and and she herself would kind of toyed

with the idea still I mean Seth was

saying like

really profound mind-blowing stuff

and

so one thing Seth said in this book

was that like you uh a being in in from

Buddhist perspective I mean the main

element of of an individual being

individual being

is just the stream of karma the stream

of mental States

you know like volitional mental States

and that according to Seth I mean there
can be like little
streamlits that can split off from the
mainstream and this little streamlit can
just go off and become a like a dog or
something in fact Seth was claiming that
he had deliberately split off part of
his his stream of of volitional
Consciousness you know his karmic stream
and and to become a dog
so that's one possibility I mean you can
have uh some somehow the stream of of
karma the flow of karma the process of
karmic mental states can just split
and create two smaller beings somehow
but then he said something else in the

same book that is intriguing to me and I think it's possible I mean I'm not insisting that it's true but he's saying that like for example if you're dreaming at night or if you're just like daydreaming during the day you imagine beings that don't really exist and it happens a lot you can you know you can be talking to somebody in a dream and that person doesn't really exist in empirical reality you know it's just like your subconscious mind just sort of made up this person that might resemble kind of two or three other people that you know of but it's still it's it's not any of them

and you've created these beings in your

in your mind they've got like this

shadowy wispy very

faint kind of existence but after you

stop dreaming them it I mean you've

already kind of created this being has

its own new stream and it starts off in

this very you know semi

um you know sort of a semi-world it's

just very tenuously got like a little

toe hold of some kind of samsaric

existence and then it just sort of

builds up from there sort of like the

Jane's believe that uh like crystals and

and water or fire are like an elemental

form of life and then even that

gradually develops into something more

advanced

so

I mean again

people that are here today aren't

weren't necessarily people you know

many generations ago I mean it could be

that a lot of the people that are alive

today were some sort of ghost beings or

animals or something which could explain

why so many people nowadays in in the

west at least are essentially NPCs

that you know they don't have much

originality or independent thought they

just follow along almost mindlessly with

what everybody else is almost mindlessly

following along with

so I mean they may be coming up out of

ghost Realms or or animal Realms or or

whatever

but it is kind of an interesting

um idea and it's one that kind of belies

the whole Mahayana concept of you know

the bodhisattva vows you know I vow to

liberate all beings

but I mean this universe has been around

for an infinite infinitely long time and

all beings are not yet liberated which

indicates that all beings will never be

liberated

foreign but

going with Orthodox Buddhism some beings

become liberated

and so either you've got an infinite

number of beings that somehow even

though uh you know a few of them are are

fading out or going off the scale it's

just

Infinity is so paradoxical you can't

wrap your mind around it so that you

know you could just keep going forever

and you've always got to have an

Infinity of beings

or new beings are being generated

and I don't know what the answer is

so I'll just move on to the next

question

also from Austin

and Austin says

I have heard monks from the mahasi

lineage particularly Utah Damo biku say

that samata meditation can't lead you to
seeing reality clearly therefore it is
not conducive to Enlightenment and can
only lead you to the Brahma realm
thoughts on this well if it doesn't lead
you to Enlightenment then why would the
Buddha emphasize it as much as he did he
emphasized samata more than he
emphasized we passana or or mindfulness
in the texts just going with the sutas
he talks more about cultivating samata
than he does about cultivating
um mindfulness and the vipassana that
arises from mindfulness practice
and that in fact in the uh
practically the Bible for for the whole

wipasana movement including the mahasi

people which is the mahasadi batana suta

defines right concentration

as for Janus

so

um I think the mahasi people who really

I mean I've never heard of any mahasi

person becoming enlightened

um it's like they get up to maybe

Saka dagami you know second to lowest

level of sainthood and just kind of stay

there

at least that's uh that's a common

belief in uh in Burma anyway

the mahasi lineage it just doesn't lead

all the way to Enlightenment itself

so it's it's in a way it might be kind

of sour grapes it's like the mahasi

lineage it started back in the 50s with

mahasi Seattle himself

and

I mean it was like mindfulness is good

enough you don't need to cultivate the

genres according to the mahasi tradition

and they use some sub commentary an

obscure statement where two in sub

commentaries to try to lend some like

Authority and legitimacy to this idea

uh it's kind of it's the commentaries

that you have to have at least

or at least they imply you have to have

at least um

uh what's it called neighborhood

concentration

which is supposedly pre-jonna but it's

not mentioned in the sutos

um yeah this whole thing has been a

raging controversy since the 1950s with

the mahasi people saying you not only do

you don't need Jonna but you don't even

need

um like access concentration or

neighborhood concentration

and for some reason the poly term is

just eluding me

but um I mean the Buddha did emphasize

it and there are texts

one of my favorites being the the Lesser

discourse on voidness or emptiness in

the majum in ikaya which explains how

Jana can get you enlightened and it's like the Monk Is cultivating cultivating voidness or emptiness so the first thing he does is he moves out into a into a forest he gets away from the village he gets away from town where you've got all these you know all this artificial junk that kind of obscures reality you get out into the forest so that's already you've got more emptiness more voidness than you did before and then you start cultivating deeper and deeper meditative States you get into like really Advanced genre States until finally you get to the formless concentration of mind animator samadhi

which is considered to be just the
highest mental state you can attain
you know it's it's above ordinary for
the genre it's it's like the highest
state that you can cultivate
mentally
and then the monk comes out of that and
then he realizes that even that even the
highest possible cultivatable state has
a beginning and an end and it's
conditioned and it's just not it it's
not Nirvana and so that causes this
click where you just kind of let go and
you realize I mean it's not it's not
going to work it can't work because
anything that you cultivate is going to
have a beginning and it's going to be

conditioned and it's going to have an

end and it's not going to be enlightened

so then

you just let go and then that's it you

just the click happens in your and

you're enlightened supposedly

um I think it is very possible that not

everybody has to get to that level

but some people do it's like some people

I mean in in Buddhism it's not like

you're going up this ladder or up this

mountain until you reach the top because

there is no top you just keep going up

and up and up forever I mean there's no

there's no limit

So eventually in Buddhism Enlightenment

comes where you just let go of the whole
thing you just bail out sideways and
some people they can bail out sideways
at a relatively crude level without
having to attained genre yet whereas
other people they've got to get up to
the level of the Monk and the the Lesser
discourse on voidness where you get to
the highest possible level that you can
attain
uh like with with your meditative mind
and and maybe I guess you could say
that's the top of the mountain but
that's still not it because
Enlightenment is is just totally beyond
the top of the mountain in that case
but at least you have to get to that

level in order to finally have the click

and have have Enlightenment somehow

happen

but uh yeah the mahasi lineage they're

really not in a position to say you

can't become enlightened by practicing

some on top because they're not

enlightened either you know they're just

it's in a way it's kind of Wishful

Thinking sort of

um sort of mahasi favoritism you know

they're just that's their tradition and

they're standing by it

but um

the Buddha did really emphasize the

importance of Jonah and just really

subtle meditative contemplative States

and uh you know it's certainly going to

help you I mean

a lot of especially mahasi people

they'll say well you get psychic powers

and from practicing genre and then it

gets distracting and you know it can

just lead you astray and all that but I

mean you have to be careful of that sort

of thing but but still

um the Buddha wouldn't have spent so

much time teaching it if it was

worthless

essentially

so I'll just move on to uh Austin's next

question which is kind of interesting

one can a psychopath become enlightened

and psychopath is kind of

it's kind of a vague term I mean any

kind of real weird person

uh like significantly weird might be

called a psychopath so I'll just go with

the term I'll just redefine the question

here as a sociopath

because I think the main definition of a

psychopath is essentially a sociopath

which is a person who has no conscience

no compassion you know they're just like

completely

like separate from everybody else or at

least

like subjectively you know they don't

give a [__] what anybody else feels and

they're gonna just you know hurt anybody

and they don't care

and you know they have no remorse no

guilt over that sort of thing no

conscience essentially

and I don't think a person like who's

completely cut off with no compassion

could become enlightened because

Enlightenment in a way is like you're

getting rid of all the walls between you

and everybody else and you're completely

knocking down Pink Floyd's wall whereas

the sociopath is just completely encased

in this wall

you know they have no compassion no

empathy with other beings they're just

they're just locked in and so they're

going to have to uh stop being a

sociopath before they can become

enlightened at least that's that's what

I consider to be likely I really don't

have a lot of experience with

sociopaths trying to become enlightened

I mean there's unguly Mala in the texts

it was a kind of serial killer

who became enlightened but

um apparently the Buddha

was able to

teach him in a way by just blowing his

mind essentially and ghoulimala was

chasing after the Buddha trying to kill

him

and the Buddha was just walking at a

normal pace and no matter how fast
Angela ran he couldn't catch him and so
that just kind of blew his mind you know
it was like this miracle happened and
then he you know it's sort of like at
least a little bit of Pink Floyd's wall
kind of fell away when his mind was
blown like that and then the Buddha
could sort of penetrate and uh teach him
something that would actually help him
and Uncle him all up eventually became
enlightened he was ordained as a monk
stopped killing people of course
and uh became an armaan
but he had to stop being a psychopath or
a sociopath assuming that he was one in
order to uh really make spiritual

progress because again if you're going

to become enlightened you no longer have

a sense of self you no longer have

barriers between you and the rest of the

world you and everyone else and it seems

to be the sociopath has much stronger

barriers than the average person he's

just isolated

so I'll move on to the next question

this is the last question by Austin

although not the last question by

alongside

on this uh particular q a

and Austin's last question is wouldn't

celibacy lead to sexual repression and

abnormal behavior among monks

well I mean celibacy itself can be

called a kind of abnormal behavior for

an adult human

um and it is it is true I mean at the

very least it's going to cause horniness

among monks like chronic frustration and

horniness that can then I mean if it's

bottled up can then

you know sort of fester in the

subconscious mind or down in the mind

and then come percolating up in the form

of like hysterical symptoms using

Freudian terms

um neurotic symptoms and I have some

experience with that

so yeah

celibacy can lead to sexual oppression

and abnormal behavior among monks

although again this is a case of

um you know doing something at the

beginning

I mean you might do it for certain

reasons and it's got a certain Dynamic

to it but then as you make progress in

dhamma your wisdom increases and then

eventually you see that you know the

horniness or the desire for sex or

whatever

um I mean you can just let it go I mean

it eventually through abstinence if

you're doing it correctly and maybe you

just don't have a very strong libido

anyhow

then you're able to repress it go

through like the neurotic you know the

hypochondria or or whatever symptoms it

is whatever it is and eventually make it

through to the other side where you've

um had the Insight where you can just

leave it behind and then you know it's

Off to the Races

so celibacy certainly does lead to

sexual repression abnormal behavior

among monks just being a monk is

abnormal just going with uh Human Nature

but um

I mean it's

it's seen as preferable by a lot of

celibate monks it's seen as preferable

to just you know wallowing in uh

sensuality

but um to for monks that have a like a a

strong libido it can it can just be an

ordeal

seriously

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from near MIT

it's an Indian name I'm not sure how to

pronounce it correctly n-i-r-m-i-t

and nirmit says I feel like genres are

completely misunderstood by most

teachers what is being taught today as

being a genre is not the same genre the

Buddha was talking about any thoughts

well yeah I think Jonah has been

misunderstood and uh it very early on

actually before the texts were

completely

finalized I think

so there's that and then

um I've already mentioned a number of

times that in Burma

excuse me

in Burma

probably most of what is called Jonna is

really hypnotic trance not all of it I'm

not saying all of it

but like even even at some place like

which cultivates John I mean that's one

of the purposes of the method is you're

supposed to cultivate Jonah there but I

mean I've had a lot of talks with with

people that have meditated there I've

spent some time there myself I've read
at least one book by Paul Seattle I've
spoken of Paul Seattle and
some of the people there are just
hypnotizing themselves they're going
into like a trance State and then
thinking that they've attained Jonah
when I don't think they really have
um fourth genre has been defined lately
or I'm probably since ancient times
as a state where you almost stop
breathing your heart rate slows down and
you're just oblivious to everything
around you you're essentially like a
hibernating squirrel this is supposed to
be the highest level of of meditation

um normally speaking setting aside a few
of these states that also get added uh
are mentioned sometimes in the texts but
traditionally fourth genre is supposed
to be you know you know the highest
genre
it's the highest one on the list the
number goes up to four
um and even the the formless genres are
supposedly just variations on fourth of
John
um I mean I if it's like temporary
Liberation which is called
that Jonah is temporary Liberation I
don't see how being enlightened would be
essentially being oblivious to
everything around you and you're like a

hibernating squirrel

so yeah I think that the Ford John is

originally just four stages of

meditation just four different levels of

of you know progression in meditation

where at first genre you're meditating

correctly but you're still thinking

you're like labeling things that that

sort of thing and then second genre

you're not thinking anymore but you're

still feeling mental and physical

Pleasure and Pain then you get to

third genre and you're still feeling

physical Pleasure and Pain but you're

not feeling mental Pleasure and Pain

anymore like happiness unhappiness you

know anxiety or Joy or that kind of
thing and then fourth of jaw you're not
I mean you're Wide Awake you're just
empty you know you're more you should be
more awake than you are in your normal
you know working consciousness
but I mean you just risen above
you know pretty much all the ups and
downs of the of the mental States and
the sensations
so I do think that uh like scholar monks
who have never really attained it like
the higher meditative States they're
like philosophizing about it and coming
up with these schemes they're trying to
systematize it and nail it down as to
its this and not that and

I think a lot of them really didn't know

what they were talking about like the

medieval Sri Lankan commentators for

example

so yeah Jonah is is very much

misunderstood I think

um it there's different levels of

misunderstanding where

um like even in ancient times what was

originally in my opinion probably just

four stages in the progression of

meditation and not necessarily

superhuman mental States I mean nowadays

according to Orthodox tradition even

first genre when you're still thinking

is a superhuman mental state you know

you've you've begun you're beyond

ordinary human level and for a monk to I

mean it's forbidden for long to even

talk about having attained it

thank you

and if he deliberately lies about having

attained he's excommunicated for life

that's one of the worst things a monk

can possibly do

but um

yeah I already mentioned that the four

genres are considered to be right

concentration the right concentration is

defined as the four genus in the

mahasadi patanosuta so it's kind of

strange that superhuman mental States

would be necessary to follow the

Eightfold Path correctly

but um yeah it's it's really kind of

messy and then as I also said that a lot

of people just kind of delude themselves

in into thinking that any kind of weird

experience they have is is like genre or

or or work or even higher they think you

know some Monk or even this delay person

they're meditating and they have some

kind of mind-blowing experience all

kinds of you know mental fireworks or

whatever and they just think they've

become a sodapon they think they're an

aria or a Buddhist Saint or they've at

least had second genre or whatever and

yeah there's a lot of that

and most of the people that I've met who

consider themselves to be aureas in my

opinion

are not

but um

I think I should just move on to the

next question this is from Jules

the ends in a z on S jewels and

j-e-w-e-l-z

or Zed for those of you in uh

in Old England

and Jules says are there any

comprehensive meditation instructions

that are comparable to the sunny batana

suta to be found in any non-budist

tradition or religion

um with regard to like I mean the sunny

patana suta is like a condensed

compilation of different meditation

techniques and I really don't know

enough about other contemplative

Traditions to know if they have

something similar in this condensed

compendium of the different meditation

techniques

but there are non-budhas texts that do

give meditation instructions like Saint

John of the cross

um one of my favorite non-buddhist

Saints

um yeah he had a lot to say about

meditation and contemplation which would

be probably at least second genre

because you're not thinking anymore and

you know he gives advice that isn't even

found in the text like how do you know

when to to switch from meditation where

you're still thinking to contemplation

where you're not thinking anymore

he gives advice on you know when you

know when you're ready kind of a thing

that is is hard to find in in the

Buddhist texts

um Hinduism of course has meditation

techniques I think just about any

esoteric contemplative

School of any religion that has an

esoteric contemplative school like

Sufism or or probably even like in

Judaism you know you've got some kind of

um obscure texts that most people have

never heard of that are giving you know

meditation instructions like um what

does it say Ignatius Loyola

um you know the founder of the Jesuits I

can't remember the name of the book I

haven't read it but I've been told that

it's just you know how to train a Jesuit

priest or Monk

um

and then it's got all these these guided

visualizations and so forth that you

have to do but um

yeah it was regard to something as

condensed as the Saudi batana pseudo

which is largely just a list of the

various meditation techniques with like

a synopsis of how to do each one

um yeah I haven't read enough

non-buddhist uh texts

like along those lines to really be able

to say although uh Saint John of the

Cross does that kind of thing definitely

although it's he's not he's not giving a

condensed list you know he's just giving

meditation instructions and

contemplation instructions

so we'll just move on to the next

question this is from shock ragosha

and chakra Gosha says how do you know

which syllable to stress in Pali the

rules are different in pre-classical

Vedic Sanskrit versus classical Sanskrit

in Vedic Sanskrit as in Greek you have
to learn where the stress goes for each
conjugated form of each word but in
classical Sanskrit as in Latin you can
always tell where it goes based on the
shape of the word heavy syllables and
whatnot how does it work in Pali for
example definitely should be Siddhartha
Gautama with he's got like the little
accents showing where the verse or the
the stress goes in classical Sanskrit
but I really have no idea where to put
stress in vedicore and poly well it's
in Pali like in poly poetry for example
it doesn't even go by stress
which is something that's hard for me to

fully understand I don't fully

understand it but it goes by length or

shortness of vowels that's that's how

the the Cadence of of meter Works in

poly poetry in poly verse is long versus

short vowels

and so there's there's no real mention

of stress there's no stress on stress in

in poly

um pronunciation it's just length and

shortness of vowels

like a common name for a Buddhist monk

would be uh we Mala where where's women

it's like there is three short vowels

and so there's there's no stress at all

it's weem a lot I mean if you say it

correctly we we English people are

people who speak English you want to
have a stress in there and so some
people will like an American may just
like mispronounce the name as we Mala
is like I mean it sounds like I'm
putting the stress on the first syllable
which maybe I am accidentally but there
should be no stress at all in the word
because every vowel is a short vowel
so in poly you got long vowels that have
like the macron over the top
um they have like the substitute for
stress in English over a short vowel
which has no macron over the top and
then e unless it's before a double
consonant is slightly longer than the

usual long vowel and O unless it's

before a double consonant is the longest

vowel so o gets the most stress but

really it's just

um is it takes the longest to say it

so

um my understanding of the pronunciation

of poly is that it's not really based on

stress that if any word has all vowels

the same length like mostly all short

vowels and no

syllable in the word would receive any

more stress than any other

so that's that's my answer I guess

hmm yeah I've heard that Greek was kind

of like that too Greek poetry it's it's

based more on length or shortness of

vowels rather than stress

but I'm not I mean I'm No Authority on

Greek poetry

so I'll just move on to the next

question

no chakra Gosha doesn't feel betrayed by

the shortness of my answer considering

the length of some of my other answers

but we gotta move on we got to get this

done

so the next question is from the Arya

suasti project

and Arya Swarovski project says

greetings Ponyo when I am consistently

meditating and minding the precepts it

seems that things are different around

me not that I'm just in a standard attitude adjustment as in mining manners driving the speed limit Etc Not to cause a stir but that things occur differently there sometimes seems to be an uncanny synchronicity happening you could liken it to the humming a song in your head and then get in the car and it's playing on the radio sort of thing well we've all heard of that the synchronicity is with very ordinary things but an extraordinary order I really don't think I'm crazy nor am I trying to attribute fantasy to reality and I load those who make connections where there are none to sound important or spiritual Etc can you tell me your thoughts on this warm

regards much respect

well yeah I have found in my own life

that if you're doing intensive practice

especially all kinds of weird

coincidences can happen this

synchronicity happens a lot and it still

happens a lot in my life even though as

I've mentioned I'm not doing formal

sitting meditation anymore

but um I mean some people especially my

sweetheart she can just be like

weirded out or stunned or you know

because I'm continually saying something

that she happens to be thinking in fact

a few times she's she's like right like

beginning to say it and I just out with

it and I mean sometimes it's stuff I
mean it's not like we're just I mean
sometimes it's like something we're
seeing on a YouTube video or something
but other times I mean we're just lying
there silently and then I'll just up
with saying something off the wall and
then she's like you know in a state of
almost mild alarm because that's exactly
what she was thinking about at the
moment and it's not that I have the
psychic power of reading your mind it's
it's synchronicity it's just uh I mean I
don't I don't know I guess young
um defined synchronicity is like a
meaningful coincidence
so yeah I mean if you practice dhamma

then just weird coincidences just keep

happening

um I it might be that some of the like

the Miracles performed by Saints it's

just the same thing it's like they're at

a higher level and

it's just you know they're not reading

your mind necessarily they'll just blurt

out something and it just happens to be

you know what's in your mind it's just

weird coincidences I really do think

that a lot of so-called Miracles might

might be that way

whereas just uh you know the the person

like the the Swami the guru or whatever

they're not deliberately trying to do

this you know they're just doing what
comes naturally and it's just that you
know they're so in tune with the other
person that there's kind of an us Vibe
going
um at least in cases like this and then
it's sort of the US thoughts are coming
out which are kind of blowing the mind
of the other members of the US group
that are participating although that
might not account for all synchronicity
but in a way
if you're doing Dharma practice you know
you know we you have more control over
your surroundings in a way that you
don't have full control over it's it's
it's hard to explain but

um you know your karma is kind of in

sync with with with your mind and it's

your karma is also conditioning what's

going on around you

so the more advanced you get in endoma

practice

the more this kind of thing tends to

happen or if you're just with a person

who's

um very liminal

and possibly very Advanced this sort of

thing can happen too

so I'll just um

move on to the next question this is

from rafi46

and Rafi 46 says

the Buddha promised the besotted Nanda
500 Celestial nymphs if you would stay a
monk is a Buddhist who tries to avoid
performing on wholesome comma only
because he wants pleasure with Celestial
nymphs any different from a Muslim who
lives the pious life on this Earth only
so he can have do the opposite in
Paradise like drinking and having sex
with multiple virgins well I could do a
whole video on this one
um for those of you unfamiliar with the
terrible Buddhist uh lore Nanda was the
Buddha's half-brother
and the Buddha did this thing is I mean
he's fully enlightened you know
allegedly

I mean that's that's the working

hypothesis or the firm belief of devout

Buddhists

and uh on his wedding day the Buddha

lured him away from getting married

by showing him what celestial nymphs

look like

and then he persuaded Ananda to be

ordained as a monk instead so he jilted

his his fiancee practically at the altar

by showing him that you know the the day

of the Deva women you know make human

women look like monkeys by comparison

essentially

and um I mean it's kind of a dirty trick

I'm sure the the fiancee didn't like it

much

um

but the thing is Nanda he was sort of I

mean he liked girls apparently and uh so

the Buddha used that is is what a

Mahayana Buddhist would call skillful

means to get him interested in becoming

a monk but then as Nanda practice

diligently at first so he can get the

the 500 Celestial nymphs

um you know regardless of his motives at

the beginning he was he was practicing

correctly I mean he was under the the

you know the the tudorship

the tutelage that's it he was under the

tutelage of an enlightened being and so

he's practicing correctly and so his his

wisdom is progressing and before long
his desire for the 500 uh Celestial
nymphs had uh evaporated and he became
fully enlightened
and uh it wasn't that the desire for the
celestial names evaporated at the moment
of Enlightenment I mean he had to leave
that behind before he could ever get
enlightened so it's sort of like I was
talking about earlier where you can
start off with not very good motives but
at least if the motives are getting you
moving in the right direction then as
your Insight and your wisdom improves
you'll be leaving those behind and
getting better motives

essentially

so at first it might be like the the

pious Muslim who just wants the the

Dark-eyed hurries but um if you're

practicing correctly practicing

meditation your wisdom is increasing

then your the wisdom of your motives

will will increase the likewise

so I'll just move on to Rafi 46 next

question

Buddhists often write online that they

personally oppose abortion because it

violates the precept against killing but

at the same time they don't want that

the state Outlaws abortions because it

is the woman's choice and outlawing it

would create a black market and make

things worse

but now the same Buddhists favor a state

which Outlaws late-term abortions

occurring from 21 weeks onward without

the mother's life being at risk wouldn't

this be hypocrisy since the Buddha

didn't make a difference between an

abortion some weeks after the

fertilization and an abortion some weeks

before giving birth

well this is kind of surprisingly subtle

question

um

I can just sort of give you my own take

on like my own attitude and that from a

Buddha's point of view life does begin

at conception it's Buddhism and biology

agree with this that an organism an

individual organism's Life Begins as

soon as you know the the sperm and they

come together they create this new cell

that has its own unique

um you know DNA's DNA sequences

um and so that's it it's it's alive this

this little fertilized cell this zygote

it's already alive it's metabolizing you

know it's respiring and then it grows

until it becomes you know what it a baby

but life began at conception and

according to Buddhism you have to have

the karmic stream

at at conception so it's like the the

being who has taken rebirth

according to taravada takes rebirth at
the moment of conception so you've got
like a being there you've got like a
human being there in sort of a uh
Elementary State you know very primitive
kind of but um still it is a human being
so
um you know I can I can take I can
accept that but I also can accept that
my religious beliefs or you know some
ethical principles just just because you
think something is immoral doesn't
necessarily mean that it should be
illegal
so I can I'm kind of okay with some
immoral things being legal I don't want

to be a complete Puritan and Outlaw and

from a Buddhist point of view of even

like singing and dancing or immoral not

as not as immoral as killing a baby but

still I mean

there have been cultures that have

outlawed singing and dancing and they

were very neurotic repressed kind of

people

um so I mean if you separate your

religious beliefs with your you know

political principles you know religious

principles you know or over here

political principles over here I mean

they should be interacting to some

degree they should be sort of on

speaking terms but still

um

yeah it is kind of complicated

but um whether whether it would be

hypocrisy or not I mean that's that's

the gist of this question wouldn't this

be hypocrisy

um it would depend on the individual and

and exactly what the thought process is

um you know they're thinking that

aborting a fetus from 21 weeks onward is

just so immoral that you're gonna have

to step in I mean you have to draw the

line somewhere you know you can allow

people to gamble and and drink alcohol

and sing and dance and tell lies

sometimes but I mean you have to draw

the line somewhere where you're going to
draw the line between you know this is
just immoral but I mean it's
it shouldn't be illegal and this is so
immoral that it should be illegal
so I think it might be a case of that in
a lot of cases
so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Air rain
and Aaron says
if karma from killing bugs and things is
volitional in Buddhism how about the
scenario you're a Buddhist and your
puppy has worms the worms are slowly
feeding off the life force of your puppy
and robbing it of nutrition making it
sickly and eventually leading to death

you cannot just Purge the worms from
your puppy as part of the worms life
cycle is being purged into the soil then
returning back up into the host how do
you rid your puppy of worms as a
Buddhist or do you simply do nothing and
allow the puppy to die a slow death
because you cannot intentionally kill
the worms in Southeast Asia Village dogs
lead short cruel lives by Western
standards so many basic things like this
are hard for modern westerners to grasp
yeah there's a lot to cover in this
actually
um yeah as a monk living in tropical
Asia I mean it's not just puppies it's

just monks that get worms I've I've had

intestinal worms

um numerous times

and uh

yeah I remember one Korean monk he was

staying at this monster it was a it was

a rough monster and he used to be like a

professional dancer he did not belong

there at all he was just freaking out

when he was seeing little white worms in

his poop

he was afraid of lizards and all kinds

of things too he left as soon as the

Reigns retreat was over he was out of

there

but Tom I digress

um but some I mean I just took the

worming medicine I mean it's like the

purpose

um

the purpose is not to kill the worms the

purpose is just to get myself worm free

and going with that idea it's it's

allowable even for a monk to kill to

kill small animals like for example

there was one time especially it was

right after a rainy spell and the whole

ground was just covered with these tiny

little gnats this countless myriads I

mean you could not walk across the

ground without squishing them

but

still I mean I wasn't just going to be

paralyzed it's like I have to get from

point A to point B I have to I have to

walk over over

there I gotta get my hand in the camera

here over there

so I just my purpose is not to squish

bugs I just gotta you know I just gotta

go there

so

I I went there and squished these bugs

and

it wasn't against the rules because that

was not my intention

so with uh worming your puppies and or

worming yourself for that matter

um

well I mean you just that is that is

your intention is just to keep yourself healthy you know it's you don't have any ill will you don't hate the damn little worms you know it's like here take this worms and taken poisoning to kill you little bastards you know it's not like that it's just I gotta be healthy and so you can you can do that if you have you know certain mental States I mean you're not doing it in order to kill living beings you're just doing in order to be healthier for your puppy to be healthy so that would be allowable uh some monks in Burma they will they'll eat like papaya seeds or something like that that supposedly just the worms don't like it

and so they abandon ship but still I

mean

you know once they leave the host body

they're pretty much in trouble unless

maybe they just get pooped into like a

like a assess pit and then they're just

living in this paradise of of poop for

the rest of their lives or something I

don't know

but

at another level I mean the very The

Nest the

necessity of doing this kind of stuff is

one reason why monks are supposed to

just renounce the world and have no

family ties and not keep pets you know

that kind of a thing because if you're

going to just be like totally hardcore

not not going to kill any living beings

if you can possibly help it just you

know radical aimsaw then yeah you pretty

much have to be like a renunciate and

renounce the world if you've got kids

you know with lice or or you know they

come home from school with head lice or

they've got pinworms or something I mean

it's your duty to uh to your children

much more than it's your duty to the to

the parasites

so

um you just have to kind of take the hit

sometimes

you just have to have uh

ranked priorities so to speak

so but it's true that Southeast Asian

Village dogs have a four-year-old dog in

Southeast Asia in a village is an old

dog

yeah it's it's not it's it's almost like

a hell realm getting back to the

question way up above on the scroll

that uh you know there are hell Realms

in this world in a a scroungy mangy

Southeast Asian Village dog is in kind

of a hell Realm

ah I'll uh restrain the urge to give the

the mangy dog simile given in the texts

but uh well I don't know I'm already

what the hell this brevity is just not

an option in this video but there is a

suit I can't remember which one where
the Buddha compares the average World
link the average person immersed in
samsara with a Manji dog and the dog is
just it can't be comfortable it's just
you know just eating alive with
itchiness and so it lies down on this
side and that doesn't help so it
scratches itself that doesn't help it
lies down on the other side that doesn't
help it gets up and moves over there
still itches and it's just like in the
state of chronic
unease because it just can't get
comfortable and I mean that's kind of
the way the average human is to some

degree in this world is just just

Restless you know dissatisfied urge to

just you know more and more and more

but uh getting back to aryan's question

now so long as your intention is not to

kill

then uh you can take the dewormer and uh

just don't think about it in a way it's

it's sometimes being unmindful can can

save you from offenses I've noticed that

as a monk some some rules you can only

break them if you do it consciously and

deliberately so if you just do it

mindlessly and you're not breaking the

rule

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from aurelian one

of my favorite Emperors by the way
and aurelian says what are your thoughts
on Outreach or incorporation of
neo-pagans into the wider navacavara
based Buddhist Community it occurs to me
that there is a lot of masculine energy
in many Pagan circles but without
fleshed out theology many can resort to
larpery cooking up their own personal
beliefs or moving on to other religious
systems perhaps emphasizing the
indo-europeans roots and incorporating
Pagan elements in an appropriate form
Thor as dhamma protector can help
bring more people into a bigger tent and
give an overall theological framework

for disparate spiritual dissidents

is there Merit in this or do you find a

stripped down iconoclastic zen-like

approach more appropriate in modern

America

well even Zen has its Pantheon of gods

and so forth

um some Zen Buddhists put more emphasis

on that than others the problem with uh

the modern West or the postmodern west

of course is that we really don't have

much paganism that still existing other

than as like replicas or larpery as uh

aurelian here puts it

um I mean if we had an established Pagan

tradition then I don't think it would be

very difficult to uh

um combine that with Buddhism to some degree like when the Greeks the ancient Greeks and when Alexander the Great conquered uh Northwest India and then Northwest India for hundreds of years that general area was under Greek control

then a lot of the Greeks the Pagan you know polytheist Greeks were converted to Buddhism but

um like on their coins they'd have like the Buddha on one side of the coin and Athena the goddess of wisdom on the other side of the coin

so I mean it it has happened and it does happen

um you know the Burmese had their own uh polytheistic cult the NAT cult that got incorporated into Buddhism by largely by adopting Saka the uh the the king of talatimsa Heaven you know the king of Gods and Teletubbies of Heaven he became the leader of these these Gods the the Burmese before they converted to Buddhism we're worshiping

so yeah it can't happen but the thing is in the west there's really not much of a pagan tradition left we've kind of touched on this a little earlier on in this video

um it might be better to try and combine it with uh some kind of philosophical system

neostoicism or something that might that might work also but if any kind of pagan system catches traction there's I mean Buddhism freely admits the existence of gods it doesn't deny the existence of small G Gods Devas and brahmas

so I mean you can you can incorporate it I mean if Buddhism admits that there are these small G Gods you know that aren't the Creator God with the capital G but still they do exist and I mean any kind of polytheistic Pantheon can get his foot in the door in Buddhism and there can be sort of a merging where you adopt Buddhist principles but you know some of the Devas that you're you're discussing

have you know Pagan names non-woodist

names I mean I don't see any problem

with that

I mean that it wouldn't necessarily even

be uh uh deleterious to to the Buddhism

involved

but the thing is in the west you really

don't have much of a uh Pagan system and

what there is is uh you know it's it's

not deep rooted and indigenous

to the extent that I mean people are

just

I assume there are polytheistic pagans

alive today in the west that really

sincerely worship Thor or or Hera or

Athena or whatever and Isis ancient

Egyptian gods maybe but

um

it there's there's something that just

kind of rings false to me with regard to

a lot of what's going on where it's just

kind of a replica people are just

wanting to create this thing that they

themselves are kind of pretending at

um but I mean if there is any kind of

authentic genuine

system that is polytheistic

um and it doesn't have the moral

principles that are at variance with

with Buddhism then yeah they can fit

together

but I think in the west it might be

better to be more zen-like or try and

incorporate some kind of like Western

philosophical approach

but the way it's it's it's going now

with uh sort of the The Nutty lefties

just turning it into uh

kind of atheistic you know or not not

even atheists you just not much

spirituality and it's mostly just uh

leftist talking points kind of stuff

it's um

yeah I mean we need something better

than that

so I'll just move on to irelian's next

question

and aurelian's next question this is an

easy one this is kind of a refreshingly

easy question do your current

acquaintances ever ask you to go hunting

or fishing how would you respond to such

requests

not once nobody well I was kind of like

a

like a cosmic Cowboy you know pacifist

hippie before I was a monk so even

before I was a monk my buddies some of

whom really liked hunting and fishing

you know even they knew that they would

not to ask me I still have a few friends

who hunt

or fish but

you know they'll tell me what they got

you know we got a four-point buck the

other you know during deer season or

something it's like oh

okay

but yeah they don't they don't ask me so

um yeah I'd probably politely decline if

they invited me so I'll just move on to

the next question also for morelian

do you often mention Kwai Chang Kane and

it seems as if the Kung Fu series

supplied you with early inspiration and

perhaps a role model in your younger

days do you like any other martial arts

programs perhaps old the Shaw Brothers

films like 36th Chamber Of The Shaolin

well

it is true that when I was a kid I liked

the series Kung Fu you know that was one

of my first uh exposures to Buddhist

monasticism especially in the flashbacks

when he's back at the Shaolin Temple

but uh I mostly watched it for the the

Buddhism part and not so much for the

the martial arts

um

yeah I mean when I was in Burma

especially like riding buses from uh you

know upper Burma down to Rangoon you

know sometimes you can get some Chinese

wirefu movie I've watched some you know

Chinese martial arts movies

my hero is the one that done with Jet Li

I think it was uh

relatively well known in the west

um

so I mean I'm

you know I'm watching Jackie Chan or

something but

um you know it's I didn't get any kind

of spiritual instruction from it or

anything like that

the whole Kwai Chang Kane thing is it

really struck me more deeply than like a

Chinese wirefu movie and I've never

really seen any serious attempt at uh

like Buddhist philosophical movie that

just happens to be based on uh like

Shaolin Monks or anything like that I

I'm sure they're out there I just

haven't seen them

so we'll just move on to uh aurelian's

next and last question

which is if hypothetically a global

order came down that abrahamism would be

the one world religion on pain of death

or gulag

what Abraham is sect would you

grudgingly join or off to the gulag to

meditate

well that's that's kind of kind of a

difficult question to answer

because I mean it would depend on the

circumstances and it would depend on you

know what you know how religious you'd

have to be

um in order to be uh one of these

religions a member of one of these

religions

um

it's possible I just go to the gulag but

if if uh

if I had to choose an abrahamist

religion

um I I really can sort of resonate to

some degree with Catholicism some

aspects of it just because uh it does

have some some Western classical

paganism mixed in and uh some of some

Catholic saints in the past like Saint

John of the cross that I'm continually

bringing up I mean they I think it's

possible he may have been fully

enlightened

um I just can't believe the story

you know like

Jesus dying for our sins and and the

stuff about

um Mary the virgin mother of God and you

know to let alone the like genesis was

you know man made out of dirt and a

woman made out of a bone being tricked

by a snake and eating the wrong kind of

fruit thereby causing all the suffering

in the world and Jesus coming here to to

get us off the hook for for that

um yeah I I mean just with regard to

um what the

what what it requires you to believe I'd

probably it'd be easier for me to be a

Muslim because in Islam it's all pretty

much all there is is God is one God and

Muhammad is his prophet

I mean that that might be sufficient and

then I could be a Sufi or something

so yeah I need to be the gulag or maybe

I'd become a Sufi

if being a Sufi was allowable but you

know Allah is one God and Muhammad is

his Prophet I mean if all you got to do

is essentially believe that and do the

bows to Mecca and so forth and um that

might not be too obtrusive

in fact uh

I mean I'm I really hope that the world

doesn't become mandatory Muslim but um

I think

if there was

I mean if the West did become Islamic

it'd probably be better than what's
going on now at least it has the
potential to become better than cultural
marks it's just spiritually bankrupt
moral degeneracy with some feminine
sentiment thrown in to masquerade as a
moral High Ground
so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from me and me
who is a new uh donor on uh subscribe
Stars I guess I should just follow my
subscriber or sponsor which is
appreciated and me and me says
in martial arts there is an energy
transfer between opponents when they
fight or practice there is also

something called Direct Energy

Transmission in the Chinese Healing Arts

these instances mean energy or knowledge

is transferred to the receiver this is

pretty well known among people I think

so I will also assume you know this we

also all know that there are people out

there that probably use such

understanding to manipulate things maybe

in different religions but here I am

wondering about this scenario do you

think an energy transfer can happen

between a master meditator martial

artist

and another person strictly through

energy in some kind of meditation

um

the martial artist part I think is

unnecessary

especially if it's in some kind of

meditation

um or maybe maybe me and me is asking

whether I'm a martial artist meditator

could actually like

fight somebody through meditation

um you know just through mental energies

you know just directing you know

intimidating energies to make them back

off or something

yeah I don't fully answer this

understand this question although

um

gosh I mean that's read the whole

question I'll just keep going here if

two people are in the same energetic

field like Partners they can creep into

each other's energetic field or body

both positively and negatively so a

person's in this similar type of field

together have their personal connection

do you think it is possible for one to

force their energy into the others field

or even body if one is weak enough

through meditation

have you ever heard of any monks or

Buddhists doing this or something like

this or manipulating energy to others

due to their understandings in

meditations

um yeah the actual meditation part is is

in a way kind of

unnecessary because I mean two people

I mean

mental states are contagious and a

person with a strong mind is gonna kind

of in a way overwhelm the mental states

of a person with a weak mind if they're

interacting especially if the person

with a strong mind is deliberately

trying to impose his will

and meditation can like refine that make

it stronger maybe or also make it more

subtle I mean you'd be less violent if

you're a meditator supposedly

um

so yeah this mental states are

contagious

and uh the stronger person may have the

advantage in just uh

um having more of a vote with regard to

what the US will be doing or what kind

of state the US will be in because when

two people interact there's always like

this third being that isn't us

and if two people love each other deeply

they're having a relationship that can

be really strong just really really a

strong presence there although in most

cases it's it's kind of faint and

subliminal but still it's there

and um

man this is such a long question here

do you think it possible for one to

force their energy into another's field

or even body if one is weak enough

uh yeah

yeah I think that happens I mean I mean

just about everybody has done things

they didn't want to do just because of

somebody else wanting them to do it like

um like a good salesman like an

aggressive salesperson can get people to

buy stuff that when they're walking out

with it they might be regretting having

bought the things you know they just

kind of knuckle under the pressure or

something I mean I've done that before

I've never been I've never been much of

a consumer but uh people at one

particular time I won't go into details

but they sold me something that it's

like I just kind of like kind of

embarrassed not to pay for it so I just

got paid the money and got out of there

that was a long time ago

but that kind of thing can happen I

think uh some politicians like the the

really charismatic or Raiders can really

impose their will on the entire entire

crowds or even populations

but that I mean somebody like Adolf

Hitler wasn't a meditator not that I'm

aware of not in this life anyway

so it may be that some meditators are

like you know they're meditating for the

purpose of that it's not like right

concentration you know it's not

wholesome I suppose but uh yeah I'm sure

that like maybe in some kind of Tibetan

Buddhism that kind of thing happens like

milarepa started off as a kind of

sorcerer

so I mean you could use meditation as a

way of strengthening your sorcery skills

or some such

but um

that kind of leads to this next question

by by me and me

so I'll just go on to the next question

I'm sorry it was kind of a difficult

question for me to answer

though I think this next one is is sort

of along the same lines

so me and me also asks do you think

Buddhist sects practice magic without

realizing it if this is actually true

where would they be and how would you

know if you entered one such place would

you feel it is not very pure or

something is wrong well it depends on

what kind of magic they're practicing I

mean if they're doing white magic then

uh

yeah and there there are Sorcerers in

Burma some of them are monks that uh do

white magic and also there are some who

are Accused at least of doing black

magic there was a relatively famous

Seattle in Burma who was uh accused of

being a necromancer like uh controlling

the spirits of the dead and that kind of

a thing

but um

I mean you wouldn't know it by just

meeting him or unless you were like

really super sensitive Maybe I didn't

notice anything like

creepy or spooky about him I met him

personally a few times

let's see

so I mean there are like

like in in Southeast Asia there are

monasteries where they are practicing

Alchemy and also some kinds of uh

white magic probably some some monks out

there doing black magic too

so

um I think you'd note if you enter to

such a place not just from the vibe so

much as uh just seeing the paraphernalia

on altars or you know just take a good

look around you're seeing any weird

paraphernalia you know like the weird

weird bells or or whatever that uh

that Sorcerers might use

um that would probably be a better

indication

and would you feel it is not very pure

or something it would depend on the

mental states of the monks there I mean

if they're they're like really in some

kind of evil mental state you could pick

up on that if you've got any sensitivity

or empathy but uh I mean if they're

doing white magic or they're just doing

spells for

um you know getting a Deva to to like

heal some sick baby or something

um

yeah but it may be that that me and me

is is referring to this kind of magic as

you know imposing one's mental States

upon somebody else and

I I haven't really heard of that I'm

sure it happens I mean just anything you

can think of is going to be somebody

doing it

but um

yeah I'm

as a general rule terravonna Buddhist

monks are pretty mild you know it's mild

to the point of just being

excruciatingly boring in many cases I

mean most terravata Buddhist monks if

you watch YouTube videos and so forth

they tend to be pretty boring

they're just dry and it's it's it makes

sense really if you think about it

because they're trying to like phase out

you know they're just trying to fade out

of of existence and so it's like the

more boring you get the closer you are

to to Nirvana or something

so yeah it's it's it happens but um

um and there are there are like

alchemical schools and monasteries in Burma and uh by schools I mean like a sect not like a an institution where you go there and get trained or something and I'm sure that there are like monks practicing necromancy and that sort of thing but to actually imposing their will and like manipulating people and so forth

um

I don't know I mean there there are like famous Rich monks who will use their Charisma and just the awe that they Inspire as a way of getting donations out of people but I don't think that's what me and me is referring to here so

I'll just move on to me and me's next

question

which is what do you know about the

birthplace of the Buddha well it's well

established in uh the Terra water

Buddhist texts that the Buddha was born

in the city or near the city of

kapilawatu which would be most Scholars

would agree that it's now in what is it

would now be Southern Nepal which was

you know within the sphere of Indian

culture

at the time

so I guess it's called Lumbini in modern

times there's a Ashokan pillar there

commemorating the birth of the Buddha

there it may be that uh tradition is

mistaken and he was really born
somewhere else like I consider it to be
a mistake in Christian tradition that
the Buddha or that the Jesus was born in
Bethlehem I think he's probably more
likely born up around Galilee but the
Old Testament prophecies that the
Messiah would be born in Bethlehem
um required the uh the composers of the
gospels to monkey with the details a bit
and somehow having born in Bethlehem
even though everyone knew he came from
Galilee so it could be that something
like that happened with the Buddha also
but tradition is well established that
he was born in the city-state of

kapilawatu which was a kind of

um it was ruled by a like a an oligarchy

or like the the shatriya men of the the

upper classes formed like a a council

that ruled to pilawatu although

um

tradition has gotten the Buddha of the

son of a king the king of kapilawatu

although I think the archaeologists and

the indologists would say that really

tequila watu was in the kingdom it was

kind of a uh like an oligarchic

aristocracy it was just the ruling class

together sort of like the the patricians

of early Rome

um but then then uh in order to try to

combine the two they'll say well he was

the the leader of the the aristocracy

which made him like a king or you know

practically a king or something

so I think I answered that one

kapilowattu

which I believe was in uh Southern Nepal

and he just got wiped out I mean it was

it was it got genocided just not very

long after the Buddha died and there's

there's kind of a long story about

uh some King getting deceived and being

sent a servant girl instead of a

princess from there and getting mad and

sending his army and just killing

everybody

so forth but um let's just move on to

the next question

this is also from me and me

and me and me says

if good-natured Buddhists get ripped

apart from the tyranny of governments or

such types such as what has happened in

Tibet or other places how would you

equate that to their karma if karma is a

mental state

for example maybe they are a bit naive

let's see how would you equate that to

their karma question mark If karma is a

mental state

period

huh for example maybe they are a bit

naive I would think they would know if

something is coming and try to run and

hide or protect themselves or do they really just take it because of their Buddhism I was told a story and confirmed by a monk that they would just take it if they got attacked or even killed not to say they would really do that in real life maybe Instinct would take over yeah I mean there's there's nothing immoral about running away from murderers

I mean obviously if you can't overpower them and or defend yourself against them just run like when the the Turkish Muslims invaded India I mean it was just a massive genocide one of the greatest genocides in history

I've seen figures up around 30 million

Indian Buddhists were killed and I mean

some of them were just killed because

they refused to to

to convert to Islam some of them ran

away some and some of them after they

ran away just like starved or died of

exposure or whatever

or some of them converted

and uh now there's not very much

Buddhism in India anymore

um so yeah I mean the really serious

ones I mean they'd rather die than than

like fight back and that's that's one

reason why Buddhism got wiped out in

India but Hinduism didn't because

Hinduism still had some like military

ideals like uh you know like the

bhagavad-gita takes place on a

Battlefield

or or like the ramayana like the two

great epics of of uh Indian poetry the

ramayana and the Mahabharata both of

them are have a lot of like battles and

fighting and stuff going on Krishna who

was an avatar of Vishnu I mean he was he

was a fighter

so

um they they did have that in their

tradition that kind of you know

encouraged them to to fight back against

the the Muslims whereas the Buddhists

said they're just uncompromising

pacifists some of them were willing to

just take the hit some of them just ran

away other others converted

just because uh you know

human nature can be weak especially in

in some people and they'd prefer to stay

alive than not die with dignity or maybe

even undignified if they're being burned

alive or something

so yeah it depends on the individual and

it would be an individual choice

so the next question which is the last

question from me and me

and that is

fun for five how do you like the rapid

changing West in the U.S if you could

collect everyone I mean everyone

together and think about their karma

what is going on in that mind or what do

you think will happen

well that's that's kind of a tough one I

mean

collect everyone together and think

about their karmas like each person has

their own Karma there's obviously

similarities in overlap because you know

some of the same general things are

happening to pretty much everybody

so there are certain themes and you know

similarities but still I mean

everybody's uh got their own Karma

um what do I think will happen

or what is going on in in the the karma

of the people and what do I think will

happen well I'm not sure what's going to

happen what's going on in the mind I

think partly

what is happening why things are so

weird one of the reasons why things are

so weird in the in the west now

is that partly technology is changing

very fast

and also you've got progressivism

so-called

as though decline in follower progress

that is like trying to uproot all the

traditions and replace it with this new

you know hyper liberalism or cultural

Marxism or

progressivism whatever you want to call

it and was it's just people are losing
their Roots it's like they're losing the
law and order the structure
um sort of the cultural culturally
established social structure that kind
of kept everything more or less
predictable that and and of course
technology like like I mentioned so
things are changing and it's becoming
unstable and very liminal and just
things are just happening in very weird
ways and things are changing faster and
faster and
um it's it's I mean it's practically a
singularity now it's you can't really
predict what's going to happen you just

have to just kind of watch observe
carefully because uh I mean whether the
globalists you know the globalist
establishment is going to just lock down
control and and just set up the Brave
New World Order or whether there's going
to be enough resistance to that that
something else you know moving back in
the other direction a little more
traditionalist little more you know
established sensible tried and true you
know
like structure
is is reestablished that kind of settles
things down again but right now it's the
the roots are being torn up and you know
the the stakes are getting pulled up and

everything's in disarray and

everything's changing so fast and

and so it's just it's becoming liminal

and all just anything can happen now

it's it's

you know it's much more difficult than

predicting the weather

is what's going to happen it could just

take one little thing is one charismatic

leader to arise on one side or the other

to just you know take the whole thing in

that direction you really can't say but

um I do tend to have a certain amount of

faith in my karma

that uh I doubt that that any

I mean it's it's not going to be much

worse than a cyberpunk dystopia

um yeah I I really have enough faith in

my own destiny I think that it's not

going to be just a total horrible mess

of course some people will say it's

already a total horrible mess but it can

get be a lot worse than it is now

so I'll just move on to the uh the next

question this is from bpat427

and be Pat 427 says how would you

compare the temperament of Washington

residents to that of South Carolinians

well

golly that's kind of an interesting

question

and by Washington he's not talking about

Washington DC he's talking about

Washington state where I grew up and

where I first tried to live as a monk

after coming back from Burma in 2011.

with uh kind of ambivalent results

um

gee

well South Carolinians tend to be more

more conservative

they're more Christian you know more

likely to to go to church

um the people in Washington were more

Democrat people in South Carolina are

more Republican I think that would be

like one of the most obvious things

things are slower paced in South

Carolina I mean you can be stuck in a

checkout line behind somebody who's just

having this long conversation with the

the Checker you know he's talking about

his dog back at home or something

um

people I mean there's much better

traffic

um discipline in Washington state if I

remember correctly than in South

Carolina like South where I'm living now

maybe half of the people actually use

their turn signals which I was told is

due to a shortage of blinker fluid but

I'm kind of skeptical of that

but uh I mean people are people and

Americans are Americans and there's way

more similarities and differences in in

most respects

um

yeah I think I'm I'm more comfortable in

South Carolina now just because

um the left has just left me behind I

was kind of a long-haired hippie type

when I was young in Washington State

um

but uh

now the left has just gone insane as far

as I can tell

so there's more of that Insanity in

Washington than in South Carolina but

it's it's more of a city thing I mean

it's

I mean you go to like a college town

like a big city with with uh you know

sort of a left-leaning university which

most universities are and uh you know

it's it's gonna like the countryside in

Washington more closely resembles the

countryside in South Carolina and then

it does

Seattle

so

um yeah it depends on where you are in

each state but overall South Carolina is

just more easy going and slow paced and

and more accepting of people you know

more polite people are just like

really friendly blessing each other and

stuff you know temp customers at work

you know I load something onto their

truck with a forklift you know you have

a blessed day

you know there's just and it's

the pleasantries aren't just superficial

and the smiles aren't just superficial

like you'd get in like Seattle for

example

but I mean again it's just slight

differences it's not anything really

radical

and so finally at long last the last

question of the whole q a this is also

from bpat427 and this is kind of an

anti-climax because I've already uh

answered this question

above

bpap427 says do you currently have a

formal sitting practice and I do not

um I'm not sure how long I can sit in

the full Lotus anymore I used to always

sit in the full Lotus and I haven't sat

in the full Lotus for more than just a

few minutes

in in a very long time

so like I said I got as far as I could

with formal sitting practice even as a

monk practicing hours a day I just got

to this point where I just was not

making progress anymore and it lasted

for years

and so finally I just said I need to try

something else I mean if if you're doing

something for years and it's not working

anymore at least you're not getting any
better at it you know you're not making
progress with it then uh it's time to
try something else
so I'm uh trying something else I'm I'm
uh doing the aesthetic practices of a
Layman and I'm involved in a
relationship which means that I have
helped to create a third being called us
and um
I hope I'm still making progress I mean
obviously it's uh very different I'm
dealing with very different situations
than I used to when I was living alone
in a cave in a forest
so in a way I'm kind of like quite

champagne

speak of the devil who was you know he

he leaves behind the monastery and he's

uh in the wild west you know getting

shot at by Cowboys and so forth

although I'm not getting shot at my

Cowboys

and that's the last question so I think

we're done other than just the uh the

little bit of advice here that if you

have any questions about anything you

think I might know something about

particularly Buddhism or monasticism or

the poly language or meditation or me

personally or

life in Southeast Asia anything like

that feel free to leave a question in

the comments below if you're a

subscriber on subscribe star you can

leave your comments there if you have

access to the Discord server you can

leave your questions there

and look at the links below which has

all the relevant information

including the links to my books on

Amazon

and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 40 of

question and answer I am your host panio

Basa

and I never imagined when I first

started doing these that I was going to

get up to 40. it's although it's taken a

few years and we've got uh lots of

questions

so I suppose I should just wade into it

without telling the customary dumb joke

ah Yoo-hoo I've never had one before

it's kind of like fake chocolate milk

so first question is from the Arya

sawasti project

and the Arya sewasti project says

greetings Ponyo I have been thinking

about my next death

not in a morbid way but a morbid way or

anything but I would hope that with a

little practice I could go out

peacefully barring some sort of karmic

issue and being taken out in a car wreck

or convenience store hold up or

something is there anything that we can

do to prepare ourselves daily for this

moment I've heard that some Adept yogis

can pick the time and day that there is

a slight shift or shiver in the body

when they pass on on that note I've

heard that there can be anywhere from

instant to 49 days from Incarnation to

Incarnation can you explain

warm regards much respect sadhu sadhu

sadhu

and I should add that this question was

actually on the list last time and for

some bizarre reason I just skipped over

it and didn't see it

so let's just uh assume that he still

wants to know the answer to this

question

after all this time

so

um it's kind of a multiple question here

um is there anything that we can do to

prepare ourselves daily for this moment

um yeah there's

um one of the meditations in theravada

Buddhism is modern non-new city or the

recollection of death it's considered to

be one of the great protectors because

as the Arya sawasdi project suggests

here it does help to prepare you for the

moment of death which

um Can arguably be considered the most

important moment of your life because

the moment of death kind of sets the

bearings for your next Incarnation your

next rebirth

um so if you if you die with a good

mental States you're more likely to be

at least pointing in a good direction

um when with regard to your next rebirth

and uh

with regard to Modern our new city I

mean

um of the 40 Recollections you can say

that at least 11 of them are reflections

on death in in Orthodox Buddhist

Meditation instructions they're the the

standard list of 40 and I believe I've

done a video on that

um 11 of them are with regard to

contemplating death one is modern on new

city as I said and the other ten are

just reflecting on Corpses

and when you're reflecting on a corpse

or a skeleton

um you're supposed to think to yourself

you know as is that so will I be as I am

so is that

and uh just just reminding yourself that

you're going to die every day

you know seeing like decrepit old people

who are just barely shuffling along

barely getting around you know I mean

we're moving one step closer to that

every moment of Our Lives assuming that

we live long enough

ah

um

so just

just reminding yourself that you're not

going to live forever

at least not in the same body

with the same personality and the same

name and all that

although the thing is

um if you keep doing something over and

over again

uh you just get used to it it stops

having the effect like

um part of my practice as a monk is you

know contemplating death you know when I

was a monk and so I actually went and

observed a couple of autopsies

and um you know the first time I went

into the morgue and saw dead people up

close I mean it was uh you had a really

strong sense of some Vega it's called in

poly which is a sense of urgency like

just like alarm it's like I gotta get

this done you know I gotta live a

spiritual life not waste my time on this

planet

but uh you know after you keep doing it
then it just kind of wears off it's like
um I had a human skull in Burma that I
had sitting there I had a human skeleton
that with all the the bones linked
together with wires and I had it sitting
in the meditation posture out in front
of my cave and after a while it's just
like a picture on the wall it's like you
just stop noticing it you know some some
filter in your brain just kind of
filters it out as a background noise
so you may have to innovate every now
and then to keep it fresh
but um yeah just remind yourself that
you're not going to live forever
and um I mean that is a about as good of

a recollection of death

as as you can get it I mean it is it

does seem to be effective although I

haven't died yet this time so I can't

say how well it's going to help me when

that time comes

uh see

he keeps going here I've heard that some

of dubbed yogis can pick the time of day

that there's a slight shift or shiver in

the body when they pass on

um yeah there's I've read mainly stories

of like Zen Masters like in like

medieval Chinese Zen Masters or Chan

Masters who uh one of them just uh sent

out invitations to his death you know

little cards because you know just in

advance he knew he was going to die at a

certain time and he just gave a little

talk and uh yelled Cuts or something

like that and just died

so yeah I guess some Adept Masters

um they may not pick

the exact moment of their death but they

kind of know they can see it coming in

advance

and uh to see the last part of this

question is on that note I've heard that

there can be anywhere from instant to 49

days from Incarnation to Incarnation can

you explain

um Terra Vada the the official uh stance

of terravada Buddhism is that it has to

be instantaneous like the moment of

death

you know when your your stream of

Consciousness stops in this body the

very next moment like one trillionth of

a second later it's gonna start up

somewhere else

um like if you're taking human life

it'll start up right in a like a

an egg being fertilized by a sperm right

that conception

so the stream of Consciousness or the uh

your your stream of karma I guess would

be a more accurate way of explaining it

your karma extreme just cuts off here

and just immediately the very next

moment starts up in a new abode

um the Tibetans I think have the 49 day

thing where you're going through the

Bardo Realms you're going through like

this sort of a limbo

um but even that you could say is is

just another existence it's just a 49

day long existence before you take a

like a longer term existence as a human

or a Deva or a

tortoise or something

so

yeah

the way it actually works in reality it

may not necessarily be a strictly

according to books either theravada

Buddhist books or Tibetan Buddhist books

um I've read some accounts of

reincarnation by Ian Stevenson who is a

professor I think at the University of

Virginia

um who was collecting data on

um especially children who could

recollect their past lives

and um some of some of the the cases

just do not fit what you would expect

from from Buddhism like there was one uh

really strange case in India where there

was a boy he was a relatively young boy

but he was like at least seven years old

I think and he died of smallpox and his

father went out to just make

arrangements for the funeral and when he

came back home the kid was alive again
you know he had recovered you know he'd
been like at the point of death and then
just came back again but he had a
different personality when he was
claiming to be a brahmana who lived in
some neighboring town and he had all
these you know I mean he was from then
on he would refuse to eat food cooked by
his parents because they were of lower
lower class lower caste there was a
neighbor lady who was a brahmana who
would have to prepare his meals and so
forth
there was another case
um in a different book by Ian Stevenson
this is a Thai monk so he was a terrible

at Buddhist but he was saying that he

took rebirth into his present body

before his previous body had had

completely died he was like an old man

who was bedridden and he's just sort of

drifting in and out of Consciousness and

so

um this Monk

claimed that he could recall sort of

Shifting sort of commuting back and

forth between the embryo in the mother's

womb and the the body that was sort of

gradually dying

and so I mean it's hard to say exactly

how it works and I assume it's not the

way people think it does it could be

just beyond our comprehension

so I think uh I'll just move on to the

next question considering that that is

just the first question we got lots of

them we're already 10 minutes into this

so I'll just move on to the Arya swasti

projects and next question

since Buddha or if Buddha made the

distinction between pain and suffering

can you explain the difference between

the two according to Buddhism

well both pain like physical pain and

mental suffering can be called dukkah

um like there's three kinds of Duca the

first kind is duka duka which is just

you know toothaches or stubbed Toes or

headaches or whatever

um nausea that kind of a thing and then

there's

um we Pottery namaduka which is the duka

caused by changing circumstances just

sort of clinging to what you prefer and

it keeps changing from that

and then there's

um

Sankara duka which is just the sort of

the the general [__] that you have to

put up with just to be alive you know

brushing your teeth having to work for a

living that sort of thing the curse of

Adam in other words

fake chocolate milk

I mean really pain is a physical

sensation and suffering is essentially
desire or craving wanting things to
be a certain way just insisting that
things be a certain way or just just
being attached to a certain way of
things that isn't necessarily in
accordance with empirical reality
so yeah pain is just a physical
sensation like you know just any other
physical sensation like an itch or just
warmth or coldness or just um you could
even say like visual Sensations like
colors sounds those are just uh they'd
be like wait enough in in poly it'd be
like feeling
whereas the suffering of of dukkha like
as a mental state that is caused by

desire so pain and suffering are not the
same thing I mean they can both go by
the term duka and Pali but the pain
doesn't make you unhappy any any tough
guy can tell you that you know a little
bit of pain never hurt anybody you know
some some guys like a certain amount of
pain they like a little pain in sex
they're like a little pain in exercising
or mountain climbing or anything like
that
the suffering comes from Desiring the
pain to stop
that is what causes the actual suffering
and I have to admit it's pretty
hardwired into the body especially like

a toothache you know something really
close to your brain where it's got like
a really short connection there it's uh
it's it's not easy although I get gout
sometimes it's like a pain in my toe and
I can detach from that my pain can or my
my foot can hurt like hell but still I
can I can be equanimous just because I
don't really care that much
they may be inconvenient if I'm limping
but so long as you don't desire the
situation to be otherwise
it's fine I mean your body is feeling
pain but you're not mentally suffering
that's uh the difference between the two
according to a Buddhist although I don't
recall

um any sort of serious discussion of it

in the in the poly texts

other than just talking about the

different kinds of Duca and that sort of

thing

so we'll just move on to the next

question also from the Arya swasti

project

and the Aria Swansea project says

since desirelessness is fundamental

tenet in Buddhism how can someone

justify chanting to bless a person place

situation Etc it seems that chanting or

praying even for good is a violation of

Buddhist

behavior and belief

well it seems to be that there's the
Assumption here that blessing someone in
necessarily involves desire you know
it's like in in blessing someone's like
may you be well may you be happy
um it's it's not necessarily that you're
craving them to be happy
um I mean it's just you could argue that
you have to have desire in order to do
anything you know your car gets a flat
tire you get out and change the tire I
mean it's not because you're craving the
tire to be changed you just see that you
know it's the thing to do I mean it's
just what needs to be done and so you do
it and some monks I mean they they may
see blessings that way it's just kind of

their duty to bless people and it makes

like devout Buddhists at least in Asia

feel very happy to be blessed by a monk

that especially if they consider the

Hmong to be a a seriously practicing

monk who has some kind of attainment

they may feel genuinely blessed

so

um yeah just because you're chanting for

something I mean it doesn't necessarily

mean that you are a craving

what you are chanting for

you know just like you know you you do

anything it doesn't mean that you're

like attached to the goal or the outcome

of the action like like changing the car

tire like I mentioned

so um I think there's a little more

along the same vein here so I'll just

move on to the Aria swasti Project's

next question which is a similar one

what is the difference between chanting

for some kind of change and Western

ceremonial magic or Christian prayer

that also is desirous of a change well

again

um just because a monk or a Buddhist or

anybody is chanting especially with

regard to

some purpose of the chant you know

different different kinds of chant or in

in poly they're called parita

um they have different purposes like

there's the chant you you chant it's

like the fish King jotica in times of

drought in order for it to rain so that

the crops won't all fail or

um the anguli Mala suta is chanted for

women uh who are soon to to be in labor

or who are having difficult labor or

um

oh what's the one with regard to uh

sickness

gosh I should remember these things

anyway then there's there's one for uh

like the metasuta is mainly for for

enemies or people who are or other

beings that are causing trouble

um there's the condo suta which is for

protection from mainly snake bites

although it's also for any kind of like

vicious animal any kind of bitey kind of

animal

um so I mean you can do the chant with

an equanimous mind

you know you just that's what you do you

know it's just kind of the duty it says

in the book that that's what it's good

for so you do it for that you know it's

sort of like taking medicine

you know you got a cold you want to take

some kind of cough medicine so you won't

cough so much it's you don't you're not

necessarily doing it out of a craving to

to abolish coughing

you know it's just like well this is

what's the problem is and this is what

is done you know you know this is just

what you do to make the situation A

little better so that my head will be

clearer I'll be able to sleep or

whatever

so

um it differs from different people I

mean you could have ceremonial Western

magic or a Christian person praying you

know they also they're not necessarily

attached or craving something

you know they can have an equanimous

mind also

um

just as two Buddhists can do exactly the

same chant for essentially the same

reasons you know they're chanting the

condo suta

so that uh they'll be at peace with the

animal Realm

and uh one of them is just uh afraid of

being bitten by snakes and he was just

clinging to anything he can do to

protect himself from snakes and

scorpions and centipedes and so forth

whereas the other one he's just

beaming meta to animals and it's just

like a side effect that it makes him

less likely to get bitten

so just because you do something doesn't

necessarily mean you're craving it to be

done like even an arahond supposedly I

mean according to the texts our haunts

bless people the Buddha who was fully

enlightened presumably he went around

for a very long time many many years

just

teaching people out of compassion

so just because you're doing something

especially or doing something that has

some you know beneficial result doesn't

mean that you're doing it because you

are craving the beneficial result

so we'll just move on to the Aria

swelocity project next question

how would someone chant for a successful

business how would we know we're in

acceptable parameters I see a lot of

True Blue Buddhists not blue hairs

chanting and praying for material things

quite a bit are they practicing Buddhism

or something else warm regards I've been

told that Soka gakai is a kind of

Buddhism where people will be praying

for TV sets and that sort of thing

um but I really don't have much exposure

to so kagakai

um in Burma if like someone is starting

a successful business

they might have monks come in chant

parita just to bless the new building

you know they got this new shop they're

gonna start they'll invite monks they'll

offer them food you know they'll bow to

them maybe offer them robes or something

and ask them to chant

and the monks will chant the parita you

know just blessing the shop

and um also in Burma someone starting a

new business will also usually

um consult with like a fortune teller

who will tell them what kind of name to

give to their business because they use

a lot of word magic in Burma and so you

have to have usually you have like two

words

that have the first letter of the two

words just sort of cancel each other out

so that anyone trying to to curse the

business like some competitor hires a

wizard to curse you

um that it doesn't get a good grip on

the name because the name is kind of by

its very structure sort of like a

stealth name

it's weird but I've I mean I assume it

does happen that you've got rich greedy

people like praying and chanting for a

success in business

um but I really haven't had much

exposure to that if any other than just

you know as a monk I was invited to

people's

um businesses and just you know you do

the chant which is just

um you know just putting a good vibe

into the into the building scaring out

any uh ghosts or goblins or anything and

um

you know it's just it's it's innocuous I

mean it's not necessarily harmful

you know it's it's not necessarily

misguided

but um chanting and praying for material

things yeah it's it's not the best way

of of spending your time I think

and uh are they practicing Buddhism

probably not what go to My Buddha

originally taught in uh the Ganges

Valley 25 centuries ago but of course

um you know Buddhism can be just about

anything nowadays so I mean they're

practicing some kind of Buddhism if

they're practicing Buddhists that are

chanting for

a new TV set or something

there's ways of doing it and it's like I

was implying earlier

it's it's really not the outward action

I mean this is just a common refrain of

these q and A's it's not the outward

action that is creating Karma it's the

mental States and two people can do the

same outward action with different

mental States and they'll get different

karma for it two people can do exactly

the same action one will be doing more

good than bad and the other one will be

doing more bad than good

so it's like

um like as a monk I'd go walk for alms

to do the villages in Asia

and there were some some ladies that

would only offer food if the neighbors

were watching

so or there was there was another one

woman the old old banana woman I still

remember this woman she ran a Fruit

Stand and

the only thing she would ever offer the

only thing she'd ever put into my bowl

were bananas that were so old that she

couldn't sell them anymore I mean they

were just black they were like they

smelled like wine you know they were

like liquid inside you could hardly you

couldn't even really peel one

and so I mean she was offering food into

amongst Bowl but I mean she's just

essentially dumping her garbage trying

to get Merit for throwing away garbage

so it's

it's really the mental stage to

determine the the ethical value

or the karmic value of an action

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here this is the last question

by the Arya swasti project

and he says

I heard you speaking about the making of

the monk robes and you mentioned the use

of a cauldron for dyeing the material as

a monk can own only eight items is there

any rules on what items a monk can

borrow rent or use

I've seen the teravada monks at the

temple build and repair things with

power tools

they have access to computers television

Etc in base terms if it floats or flies

it's better to rent it anyway

it seems that amongst life in that

regard would not be too different from

regular life if all things are available

they just can't claim ownership your

thoughts well it is a misconception to

say that a monk can only own eight items

and that's the eight requisites

um which let's see if I can remember

these you got the three robes

which is lower upper and outer you got

the belt for holding on the lower rope

you've got the bowl you've got the

needle the water strainer

the razor

and uh let's see needle water strainer

razor I I knew I was oh that is eight

okay I was trying to think of what the

next one was gonna be so I mean really

those are called the eight requisites

and every monk should have those but

he's not limited to having those and if

you read the Winnie attacks there's all

sorts of things that a monk can own that

aren't those eight requisites for

example there's a ninth sort of a crypto

requisite which is the sitting cloth

all monks are supposed to have a sitting cloth even though it's not one of the eight requisites and then if you read if you read Linea you see there's all kinds of things I mean a monk can have sandals for example he can have a walking stick he can have a shoulder bag he can have like an ointment a little vial for ointment and a stick for smearing the ointment he can have tooth cleaning sticks he can have certain medicines you know for for his life he can he can store garlic as long as he wants as long as he's not using it to make his food taste good but he's using it for medicinal purposes like to

settle his stomach or something

so monks can own all sorts of things

so is is they're not limited to eight

um so I mean that that kind of answers

most of the question here

um there are certain things that monks

aren't allowed to own and that's

um money for starters and

um precious precious things anything

made out of gold or silver or certain

gems

um are not allowable for a monk he's not

allowed to even touch those things

unless

somebody drops it at the monastery and

he's just picking it up to put it in a

safe place until they come back that's

the only time a monk is allowed to

handle money for example somebody drops

their purse and leaves and just forgets

it behind it's not only is as a monk

allowed to handle money in that case but

he's allowed to actually

um

he's allowed to handle it and just in

order to put it somewhere I mean it's

his duty if he doesn't do it it's

against the rules

so

yeah I guess I guess it was just uh

correcting this misconception that monks

are only allowed to own the eight

requisites I mean the requisites you

know they are required but there's all
sorts of other things that a mom can own
and if the Buddha were alive today he
might be uh Banning you know he might be
uh making like cell phones
unacceptable something like that but um
there's no rule against cell phones or
computers largely because they hadn't
been invented yet and so it never
occurred to anybody to make the rule
against it
so we'll just move on to the next
question this is from Tut DVD
this is kind of interesting one
if Buddhism ceases to exist does nibana
cease to exist
well the concept of nibbana May cease to

exist

although assuming that members of other

spiritual systems can still become

enlightened they may call it by other

names

but nibana is a metaphysical State as

like the absolute

um just going Beyond any kind of state

maybe

um

yeah it doesn't really cease to exist

but then it's it just kind of goes

beyond the duality of existence and

non-existence and this is

just trying to discuss

certain things in Buddhism in which

reality is not reified you know Buddhism

just refuses to reify the absolute

and so you can't really say anything

about it

even to call it it is too much

so

nip on it as the concept May cease to

exist but nibana as the the absolute it

I mean it doesn't cease to exist it that

never began and it will never cease

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from George Washington

Centrist

and George Washington Centrist says are

arahants sewed Upon Us Etc pro-social

will a town Nation Etc that has more

arohans per capita tend to prosper and

be a better town or Nation than one with

fewer arahants all else being equal

well there's I don't think there's ever

very many Aura hunts

um you know all of New York City

probably doesn't have more than just a

handful I would assume

um I'm I'm just reminded of somewhere in

the commentaries

it is stated that the city of sawati

which was a one of the largest cities in

the Ganges Valley during the Buddhist

time

I had a population according to the

commentaries of 70 million people which

would be bigger than New York Tokyo and

Mexico City combined and that 50 million

of them like you know five sevenths of

them were Arias you know at least sewed

upon us

but um

yeah I I'm just skeptical of the whole

idea I mean even the idea of soda upon

us and so forth I mean I've expressed a

certain amount of skepticism over the

the four stages of sainthood in Buddhism

I do think that the the idea has

um been corrupted or to put it more

politely

um it's just evolved it has developed

over time and it's not the same as what

the Buddha was teaching originally

but um I I mean you think about this

sort of like uh you go back to Genesis
in the Old Testament where God spares
um a city if it has 10 good men or or
even one good person living there he
won't punish the entire town because
that will involve him punishing the good
person and I do think that there there
can be something like that I mean if you
have a lot of saints with really good
karma living in an area that may help to
protect the area from something really
awful happening
just because it's just not their karma
to uh get Bubonic plague or die in an
earthquake or something
so that's it's possible I mean if you go

with that attack

um yeah although even arohans can have

bad karma from their past they're not

making any new Karma so you can't really

say that they're generating Merit

and like Mama galana who is the Buddha's

left-hand man he was one of the Two

Chief disciples

um he was literally beaten to a pulp so

I mean he didn't have such good karma

that he didn't get just brutally

murdered

so

I would assume overall going with like a

statistical trends that a high number of

saints in an area could very well

um

blend some protection against really

awful things happening although

um I don't really have a lot of data on

that so I can't really say if the

hypothesis is valid

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from hey it's Tig

and this is kind of a strange one

he says in your video on the topic of

humans being a species of animal which

you did was heru you related a story

where you attempted to feed a wild

jungle fowl named chicken Lord you

mentioned that instead of eating the

peanuts the rooster instead vocalized

for his flock to come and feed you

didn't imitate the rooster's call and I
am curious as to what the king of the
chickens sounded like could you please
attempt your best imitation of this
sound thanks
well I learned from my father long ago
that a man cannot do bird calls without
looking ridiculous
because he always looked he had this
absurd look on his face whenever he
would do bird calls he was fairly good
at it but still it just wasn't worth it
wasn't worth the effort
um yeah there was when I lived in this
one Monastery in Burma
there were a lot of red jungle foul
um roaming the area

and also somebody turned loose a hand at
the monastery just to get to earn Merit
some fortune teller says you need you
need Good Karma you should rescue a
chicken from a butcher turn it loose
Monastery so a lot of people would get
this advice from fortune tellers and
some of them I mean it was just like
spiritual materialism they just you know
take baby chick or take chicken release
it monster and they bring like this
little fluffy chicken like this this
little baby chick
and I would tell them it's like that
baby chicken is going to last two days
three days tops you know they're monitor

lizards there's Hawks there's all kinds

of predators a baby chicken like that

isn't going to survive and they just get

like this sick look on their face like I

don't want to hear this

I just supposed to release this a

chicken here you know

so anyway somebody released this hen

that was like of a fighting chicken

breed like a game hen

and she had like skittish Wild

instincts and also she was sort of a

drab brown color and so she survived

long enough to uh hook up with

a red jungle foul rooster and she had

babies and the babies were about a third

grown before she finally got killed by

something

um and one of these babies of hers grew

up in the chicken Lord who was half game

[__] and half red jungle fell

and he was mostly red jungle foul I mean

the red jungle fell jeans apparently are

dominant in most cases

um

so the case he's talking about here is I

would

um I had a little jar of peanuts I got

lots of peanuts when I went for homes so

I keep this jar of peanuts and feed the

the wild chickens when they would come

and uh I knew that once they learned

what peanuts are they really like them

and so chicken Lord was the king of all
the chickens in that area and one time
he came by himself he didn't come with
this little Harem of hens so I threw him
the peanuts and he wouldn't eat them I
knew they liked them but he wouldn't eat
them instead he walked away went up a
hill a little bit and then crowed you
know it was just a cock-a-doodle-doo
the hens came running
he led them back and he's making sort of
the crooning clock that a chicken makes
like hey I found something good
and he even picked up one of the peanuts
held it on his Beak from one of the hens
to take from him and in a human that
would be considered gallantry you know

but uh he was just following chicken

instincts red jungle foul instincts I

guess but I guess the main question here

is what did it sound like and I'll just

tell you like a red jungle foul rooster

um it's it's like a barnyard roosters

cockadoodledoo except has one less

syllable it's like cock-a-doodle-doo and

it's like soprano it's very high pitched

it's more high-pitched than the average

Village or the average domesticated

rooster

so it's like a soprano cock-a-doodle-doo

and you can you can uh

do that one yourself if you like

and I'll just move on to the next

question

oh wait wait I almost skipped this one I

did that last time this is this is

another question but hey it's Tig

and Hayes Texas have you had to deal

with either voluntary or involuntary

sleeplessness when you were a monk I

read and can also attest from my own

experience that austerities and ascetic

practices often lead to the

practitioner's inability to sleep or

fall asleep normally

what are your thoughts on this thanks

um I think everybody has had involuntary

sleeplessness or just insomnia

occasionally I mean just for whatever

reason you drank too much Asian Red Bull

or something and you couldn't sleep but

most of the sleeplessness

that I recall as a monk were was

voluntary because uh if you read the

text the monk is only supposed to sleep

about four hours per night

and I'm I've always been a sleepyhead

before I was a monk I'd preferred about

nine hours of sleep

and so trying to go from nine hours of

sleep to four hours of sleep I was just

like a walking zombie at first and I'm

I'm just my body needs more than four

hours sleep unless I'm doing really good

meditation practice the only one time in

my life

was I able to

go for an entire month averaging less

than four hours of sleep per day

and that was I was some of the best

meditation practice of my life so if

you're doing intensive meditation

practice you don't need to sleep as much

but um there was another time I was at a

Meditation Retreat

and I was trying to get by on like five

and a half or four and a half hours of

sleep per night four and a half to five

and I was starting to dream like almost

to the point of hallucinating before I

was even asleep I'd be like sitting in a

meditation Hall trying to meditate and

there'd just be all these images coming

up and like somebody would be standing
in front of me talking I'd be about
ready to answer and then I realized wait
wait you know I'm sitting here in a
meditation Hall in Burma
so I had to get up to about five and a
half hours of sleep and then the like
the hallucinations or the the waking
dreams would uh wouldn't start until
like the last meditation session of the
evening and that was manageable
but uh yeah there were times I do like
vigils I think they're called vigils
like an ajan cha tradition uh often
fueled by a Red Bull and Asian Red Bull
is way stronger than

than Western Red Bull

um

yeah

but um the the austerities and ascetic

practices

um they didn't really lead to an

inability to sleep or fall asleep

normally it was just that um I was

deliberately trying to sleep less

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from jeffrey88

and Jeffrey 88 says what do you think of

Kundalini Yoga practice I got into

Kundalini after hearing that Bruce Lee

practiced it I am convinced that helped

him get his lightning fast speed

and the fact is I really don't know much

about Kundalini

um and if you don't know much about

Kundalini you shouldn't practice it

because I've heard that that practicing

Kundalini Yoga without a skilled teacher

can be dangerous you know you can uh

blow out the the what is it the the

Kundalini it's like an energy Channel

going up going up your spine

in the the seven chakras are all

connected with this Kundalini Channel

and I know a little I know a little bit

about the chakras and all that but um

yeah I'm I'm fairly ignorant with regard

to Kundalini Yoga practice because I've

never practiced this it's like a Hindu

thing

so um yeah maybe maybe Bruce Lee was so

fast and could catch a fly with

chopsticks

um because of that but um

I don't know

so let's just move on to the next

question this is from rui

and rui says

hello Ponyo can you speak on the

duration of first Jonna I've heard that

it permeates one's being an existence

permanently once it is reached or

experienced or doesn't require constant

cultivation

well this question reminds me of the

godi casuta of the sun Mutiny Kyle which

is one of my favorite sutas just because
it's so weird
and there was a monk named gaurica who
was living at the Black Rock and easy
Guinea cave and he kept getting Jonah
and losing it and getting it and losing
it and getting it and losing it and this
happened seven times finally the seventh
time he got Jonah and he was singing to
himself if I die with Jonna I'm
guaranteed of a Brahma realm at least
but if you die without Jonah there's no
guarantees of anything and so he before
he lost John of the seventh time he
committed suicide he cut his own throw
and then he became an aura hunt he

became enlightened at the moment of

death

so that would suggest that

um you know once you get it you know

it's

you know it doesn't just abide in you

permanently

I mean it has what you could consider to

be permanent effects you know like

someone who takes LSD and has like a

spiritual like a mystical experience or

even without the LSD you have a mystical

experience even though the mystical

experience ends then it gives you this

memory or this this new frame of

reference

that you know that can be fairly

permanent but I mean the mystical State
itself is not permanent and it's the
same way with John I it it seems to me
that the John Estates are not permanent
if if they were permanent they would be
unconditioned and that'd be you know
Enlightenment itself but anything that
is conditioned and that's all for genres
are conditioned States then they are
impermanent and so there may be a
permanent like lingering after effect of
having John I mean it will cause like a
significant shift in your perception
that may be lasting but the state of
Jana itself is not lasting
so it may require a constant cultivation

if you want to keep attaining Jonna you

want to master it you want to become an

Adept at Jana

so we'll just move on to the next

question this is from Fred

and Fred says can Merit really be

accrued if so where is it stored well

Merit is just a certain shift in uh in

in the Stream of your karma you know of

in the momentum of your your psychic

energy you know Merit would be sort of

an upward shift in that

so it's I guess it'd just be stored in

the momentum of of like the mental

energy

that is your

your karma your son Carlos

so I mean it's it's not stored in a

container it's not stored in like the

the Allah Allah the storehouse

Consciousness that some of the yoga

Chara Buddhists of Mahayana talk about

um it's just that This Moment by moment

a stream of of like

Consciousness and mental States

you know it just has a different

momentum to it you know just a shift in

the momentum and and that is uh

where you could say it is stored but

really it's

um it's it's not really stored it's just

the momentum you know it's like

um if you've got

like a road that's that's moving

eastwards you know you don't say well

where's the eastwardness stored I mean

it's just the road is just headed in

that direction

which is kind of a bad analogy and so in

embarrassment I'll move on to the next

question this is from Irene

and finish the uh

now it's time for

uh purple drank

and Aaron says Define belief versus

faith and how those Concepts relate to

Buddhism

belief versus Faith well belief

um I I did a lot of contemplation of

this whole notion of the belief and

perception and so forth

and I came to the conclusion that belief

is perception belief and perception of

the same thing

also perception and samsara are

essentially the same thing

so belief is a kind of delusion belief

is

just the idea that you know something

that you don't really know

faith on the other hand

mainly means the same thing mainly

belief and Faith are the same although

faith can also have other

interpretations

like I've mentioned more than once Saint

John on the cross and dark faith

where

with with Saint John of the Cross he was

a Mystic and he he like

systematically cultivated mysticism or

what in in uh the uh contemplative sex

of of Catholicism called contemplation

which is like meditation except you're

not thinking anything

and so Saint John of the Cross would say

anything that isn't God just dismiss it

from your mind you know God Can't Be

Imagined so you dismiss the imagination

God cannot be understood through reason

so he out goes out goes reason God

cannot be seen or felt or heard or

smelled now go the senses until just

every mental state

is since it cannot know or contain God

you dismiss it until everything is

dismissed and then you realize that

there's still something there and

according to Saint John of the cross

that is the all-pervasive spirit of God

and he called that awareness dark faith

you're not thinking anything you're not

believing anything it's just that

there's this awareness

of this unspoken unspeakable reality

like down in your core

so that kind of face if you can call

that Faith would be superior to believe

but as a general rule belief and Faith

are the same although in Buddhism the

term usually translated as faith is Sada

and some translators prefer well

renderings like um

uh what is it

not certainty

why am I having a mental block now

confidence

so they prefer something like confidence

and I mean that's not necessarily the

same as belief but

all in all

in very early Buddhism and in in like

majamika in Mahayana Buddhism belief is

delusion you just I mean it's just so

I'm sorry it's clinging to some some

saric symbol thinking that that is

reality when it's not

so I mean the Attica Wagga of the sutiny

Pata says that a monk should not believe

anything

and it's not that he's a skeptic it's

just that he's a Mystic and he he knows

that reality cannot be contained in

beliefs reality cannot be contained in

mental perceptions

I mean it sort of underlies all of that

but the reality is just you can't know

it through symbols because you once you

symbolize it it's not reality more

anymore

also there are a few texts at least two

two passages that say a monk should have

no face one is in the antagawaga and one
ironically is in the domapon
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Austin
and Austin says I know you haven't been
doing sitting practice since you've
disrobed but have you done at least one
sitting practice on LSD I would like to
know how that would go for someone of
your caliber maybe you could achieve
higher qualities of meditation
well as it turns out I did meditate on
LSD once I was in Burma at the time I
tried to do it a second time but uh
it didn't work out quite so well
also I've meditated on Ayahuasca more
than once then that's just I mean almost

in desperation or

um you're just trying to just kind of

keep a grip on yourself

but with the LSD one is what Austin here

is asking about

and I went to Burma and a friend of mine

had given me a little vial of liquid LSD

and it was supposed to have you know 50

drops or 100 drops or something when it

was full some of it had already been

used there was so there should have been

two doses left let's say

eight drops you know and so there should

have been like 16 drops there so the

first night that I took it you know I

took the recommended dose and I

practiced meditation I was

um

really something like LSD it just

overwhelms everything else including my

meditative efforts I think and I mean

you I went almost every time I had I

have taken LSD in my life

almost every time it's it's a mystical

experience it's a religious experience

where everything is just a manifestation

of infinity and Divinity and perfection

just just everything

so

um meditation could have quieted it down

maybe a little bit quieted down the the

mental actions but

on that particular time

I was in the dhamma Hall of this

monastery

I was living in a little room off the

side of the main Dharma hall or Diamond

Hall and so I was sitting in the main

damoh in front of the big statue the

altar with this big Buddha statue there

and I was just overwhelmed with

gratitude and just

um I usually don't bow to statues but I

was bow into that statue over and over

again that night it was I was just in a

very devotional uh gratitude Orient

state

that time and then the second time I

took it I just took what was left

assuming that it would just be one more

dose and it was way more than one dose

it was it was like the most acid I've

ever taken in my life out of Burmese

Buddhist Monastery and I just pretty

much liquefied I just melted into the

floor I was

um yeah I wasn't doing much sitting

practice that night

so um

I hope that was entertaining if not

educational so I'll just move on to

Austin's next question

and Austin's next question is when we

don't have answers to hard-hitting

questions about say the accounting

problem is it better to have faith in

Buddhism than to be skeptical of its claims

I don't know it just seems like a very big problem for the religion and the accounting problem that Austin is referring to here is uh with regard to a question he asked in the the previous q a I think where he's talking about how you know the the the the universe is is has been here forever and you know little by little some beings are being liberated but I mean where is all the extra beings come from I mean why is it that there's more people in the world instead of fewer people in the world and um it's just trying to deal with

infinity I think I I remember in in that

q a when I was answering the first

question about this accounting problem I

was pointing out that song

there there may be new beings being spun

off

to replace the ones that are being

liberated and I do think that that is

possible that there's just new

generation of of beings that uh you know

karmic streams

that uh they're just taking the place of

the ones that are leaving

um also you can say there are infinite

number of Worlds so maybe some of the

the people that are being reborn into

this world

um the world they were on and just no

longer exists or had a population crash

for some reason and so they're just

shifting over to this one

or again I was saying that um

in the in the last in the video where I

was answering the first part of this

question

um

that uh you know some people might be

moving out from the animal realm or the

ghost Realms which would account for why

there are so many NPCs and just sort of

uh people that are just sort of

um sleepwalking and believing whatever

they're told although I think people

have pretty much always been that way

so I don't think that there really is

that much of a an accounting problem

I mean it's kind of open-ended but

I don't think that it really is a

crucial stumbling block for Buddhist

philosophy in that there have been

an infinite number of beings in this

universe

uh suffering unenlightened beings

um with you know little by little you

know a few are are getting free

but why is it that they're still like

increasing number of humans in the world

they're coming from other realms or you

know alternate Earths

or like I said another possibility is

that they're just new beings that are
just being spun off sort of like the the
standing State Theory and cosmology I
think we're getting a cosmology question
lowered down
you know some people believe there's the
big bang and then you know everything
started there and then there are some
who think that uh there was no big bang
it's just that new stars and new matter
are somehow just being spontaneously
evolved and it could be the same way
with um suffering beings in this
universe they're just being
spontaneously evolved
so I really don't see that as a crucial

problem

are a very big problem

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

question

any update on ajan punadamo coming back

if he can't I would really love to see

some videos with more monks maybe

venerable varapano can make more guest

appearances

well

I mean he told Brian that he wasn't

ready to start up again with the videos

he got a lot of flack from some of his

supporters

for being on one of Brian's UFO meetings

I'm going to be on one of them next

month I think but I won't be getting the

same sort of flack I think because I

already have the reputation for being a

a naughty boy or something

but it's possible if if I reached out to

John punadamo he might be willing to do

videos just with me or with me and

somebody besides Brian

I don't think that he got any Flack for

appearing with me maybe he did a little

but I think most of the problem was

that Brian

um

he's sort of uh a holocaust denier and

thinks Hitler did nothing wrong and that

sort of thing and that rubs some people

the wrong way for some reason

so um yeah I'm I don't think venerable

varapano would be

would be wanting to do any more videos

with me it was sort of a

um a conflict of view or something

that occurred with regard to his own

channel

I uploaded one video we did that he

didn't want

anybody but him to upload and I never

agreed to it I just uploaded it

um and he didn't like that so

but uh maybe on John punadamo I really

should contact him I suppose I've been

doing videos with uh other people and

just by myself

so I haven't really felt a urgent need

to do videos although I do like him and

he's he's very intelligent and it's fun

to talk to him so I mean that's still

still a possibility

so I'll just go on to Austin's next

question

what's your take on the whole trans

identity issue because for me this is a

complete non-starter for the reason of

self being illusory to my understanding

I believe non-binary is not identifying

with either gender is this hitting

closer to the mark of non-self

um well that's kind of two questions is

that the first one is what's your take

on the whole trans identity issue and it

is kind of interesting that in Buddhism
trans identity issues uh receive more
acceptance than in a Christian culture
like
um I've mentioned before that in Burmese
Villages like remote Burmese Villages
you can have trans people there you know
there's there's some biological male who
dresses like a woman and acts like a
woman calls himself by a female name
and the rest of the village will just
tolerate him I mean uh he might not be
the most popular person in the village
but I mean he doesn't get ostracized or
anything and that's partly because of
the Buddhist idea of rebirth that they
believe that this such a person is is

called a Lewin Za which is they're sort

of a

a manifestation of

of past Karma and in this case it would

be

um

someone switching over from male to

female or from female to male

um in the course of a a number of of

lives in their sort of mid-transition

between male and female

um so I mean that is

explainable

going with Buddhist metaphysics and just

Buddhist cosmology in a way that

um it just doesn't fit in with with like

Christianity in Christianity you know

God just creates you male or female and

you have to go along with that or

you're sinning against God and nature or

some such

but in Buddhism I mean there is there

are ways of explaining it

in some cases I mean nowadays A lot of

it is just a fashion trend it's like a

leftist fashion trend

ah

also

um it's just a sign of the decline of

Western Civilization that uh

uh eunuchs are rising into social

prominence which is a in the past was

considered a Tell-Tale sign that a

civilization was in Decline when eunuchs

start getting

um higher Social Status

although now

they're not called eunuchs they're

called something else

so let's see

the next part of the question is um see

to my understanding I believe I mean I

mean that's that's self view too I mean

to my understanding I believe you know

because for me so I mean there's

you're dealing in some sorrow you're

gonna have to be dealing with some kind

of self view anyway

even the Buddha would say you know I and

you and me and you know he'd be using

first person pronouns and so forth

um even though he's supposedly

presumably

um no longer had self-view

but uh getting to the next part of the

question here is uh non-binary is not

identifying with either gender is this

hitting closer to the mark of non-self

it would depend on the individual

because some people you know they're

just really big on me you know this it's

identity politics it's all about me I'm

just this alienated person who

nevertheless is identified with some

group or other and non-binary is like an

oppressed group that you get social

points for being a member of in certain

circles and so it's like a fashion trend

to be non-binary

and so some people will just cultivate

non-binariness

out of delusion or whatever

although really I mean if

if a person is like an evolved Saint

they might be non-binary too I mean they

just might not be sexual at all they

might have just left all of that behind

like Brahma beings in the high heaven

Realms in Buddhism you know there's no

male or female so it's all non-binary

you know they've just left sex behind

so that kind of non-binary would be uh

closer to the mark of non-self but just

following a like a fashion trend

and just taking on all covers being what

do you call it

uh not polyamorous but

they're just willing to have pan pan

sexism what is it or they're just

willing to have sex with any anybody or

anything

you know that that could be a kind of

non-binary too but that is uh

that's not a very highly spiritually

evolved state

so we'll just move on to uh Austin's

last question here

what's your take on cosmological

arguments the big bang and the Buddhist

idea of the universe being here forever

um well I can go along with the big bang

there's there's always been some

cosmologists who don't like it and I

think there's been kind of an upsurge in

recent years

of like people preferring like the

steady state theory that somehow

um you know new matter is being inserted

into the into the universe through

kind of quasars or something

um

but even the Buddhist idea of the

universe being here forever it's yes

like samsara is is just beginningless

and endless

um but nevertheless this like the

astronomical Universe eventually dies

and then is replaced by a new

astronomical Universe which would be not

so much in conflict with the Big Bang

Theory uh especially if

it's like

if the big bang you know eventually the

universe starts collapsing in on itself

and you get the Big Crunch and then and

then it explodes again with another big

bang that would be fairly similar not

exactly the same but fairly similar to

the Buddhist idea of

um you know evolving universes and

devolving universes and you know

expanding and Contracting and that sort

of thing

but

cosmological arguments I think it's all

academic really

because I'm really not a materialist

so but I mean even though I'm not a

materialist I can take certain

scientific theories as useful working

hypotheses or useful tools like

darwinian Evolution I mean it's very

elegant Theory it makes very good sense

the evidence seems to support it so I

can say okay even though

um I do think that

physical matter cannot be said to really

exist unless there's some kind of

perceiving mind to perceive it and when

you're back at the stage of anaerobic

bacteria a billion years after the earth

was formed then

um who knows maybe it was Davis

oh that were that were perceiving it or

something

but uh yeah the Big Bang is similar I

mean

there is some it seems like most of the

evidence seems to support it better than

other theories so I'm willing to go

along with it until the the whole Theory

gets overthrown

so the next question is from Raphael 46.

formerly known as Rafi 46

and Rafael 46 says did the Buddhists say

that soldiers who kill go to hell even

if they killed in self-defense

that's a good question I don't recall

any sutas that say that although it

wouldn't surprise me if there's some

obscure suta or just some suta that I'm

forgetting

that does say that soldiers will go to

hell

um I mean there's a Suitor that says

even like actors and comedians will go

to hell musicians and which is I mean

that's that's pretty harsh that's that's

really pushing it I'm kind of skeptical

of that

that um like musicians and and Comedians

and actors are all going to go to hell

some of them will presumably but um just

just because they're actors I don't

think that's that's gonna do it or or

musicians and soldiers are definitely

making weighty or Karma than most

entertainers

and so yeah I mean they're going to have

some sort of karmic effect from from

killing even if they killed in

self-defense

and uh and Buddhist ethics are very

strict

even though it's an atheistic system

with no God decreeing that you must do

this and you must not do that it's just

like how how the mind works it's based

on human psychology

and

yeah if you're if you're you pretty much

have to be a saint like a renuncian you

have to renounce Society

in order to

really be as ethical as is possible to

be

to make us a little bad karma as

possible

so it may be that the Buddha did say

that soldiers who kill go to hell

even if they killed in self-defense

but um I do think that in a Buddhist

culture it is

advisable to have the idea of the

soldier as the tragic hero who

sacrifices his own spiritual welfare for

the sake of others so that they can live

in peace and practice Dharma

so next question from Rafael 46 why

didn't the Buddha preach against

polygamy and polyandry

well

I assume he didn't preach against

polyandry because it just wasn't a thing

polyandry is like one woman having more

than one husband

and that's relatively rare in society

especially in traditional societies

there I assume there have been like

matriarchal civilizations

um or cultures that uh you know one

woman would have more than one man but
usually it's the other way around just
because of biology
I mean one woman with one husband
is gonna have approximately the same
amount of children as long as her one
husband isn't shooting blanks as one
woman with with 50 husbands whereas one
man with 50 wives can have approximately
50 times as many children as if he had
only one wife
and one of my favorite examples of that
is King monk cut of Thailand
I don't remember which Rama number he
was but he was a monk until he was about
40 years old and then his brother the

king died he was next in succession he
dropped out of the monk Hood to become
king and even though he became King when
he was about 40 he still managed to have
approximately a hundred children by a
large Harem of wives
um but getting back to the Buddha here
why didn't he preach against polygamy uh
well I mean his own father married more
than one wife
I mean is according to the legend anyway
um King sudo now
Buddha's father married two sisters one
was uh mahamaya the Buddha's mother and
one was uh mahapajapati go to me who was
uh his aunt and also his
his stepmother

something like that

so I mean it was just a cultural thing

in India at the time it was pretty much

Universal I don't think there was any

need for him to preach against something

that probably

um people weren't going to take very

seriously anyway I mean he he didn't

preach against eating meat or at least

he didn't preach against me you know

butchering animals and so forth he did

maybe a little bit like with regarded

cows especially

um you know there's not much point in

preaching against War because he knew

that it just wasn't realistic Kings were

going to keep having Wars and they
certainly did including Buddhist Kings
but I mean he just he would teach
something if he felt that it was ripe
you know like animal sacrifice he
preached against animal sacrifice and it
was just that India was just ready to
kind of let go of animal sacrifice for
the most part there's still some animal
sacrifice going on in India like at Kali
temples and so forth but uh
uh I don't think it would have served
any purpose for him to preach against
polygamy and who knows maybe he didn't
have any problems with it at all I mean
he was a son of a polygamous father and
he turned out pretty well

so I'll just move on to the next question also from Raphael 46. bikubody argues in his introduction to the young Guru and nikaya that there appears to be Corruption of the sutas by the compilers his reason is that those sudas
suit us where the Buddha allegedly disparages women are in stark contrast with others where he receives lay women his ordination of women his chief female disciples and the role of female lab benefactors is this a legitimate opinion or an attempt to adapt Buddhism to the 21st century well bikubody is definitely a biased Lefty in his politics and so if

he sees that there's some corruption

because it's you know some sutas are

saying this and some sutas are saying

the opposite

he's going to be inclined to favor the

idea that the Buddha really taught the

most politically correct stuff and that

the politically incorrect stuff is less

likely to be by the Buddha just because

the Buddha was wise and so he must be

politically correct by 21st century

standards

um then no doubt there is some

corruption in the texts there definitely

is corruption on attacks oh I just got a

notice that I have to plug in my

computer because the battery's running

dead

there

that would have been embarrassing to

have the battery run dead in the middle

of this

so yeah there is corruption in the text

not everything that the Buddha says in

the texts is likely to be you know 100

just reliably the teachings of the

Buddha that I totally agree with but

then to use that as an argument for just

dismissing the parts you don't like

and and emphasizing the parts you do

like yeah that's that's sophistry right

there

so I assume that bikubody is guilty of a

certain amount of sophistry based on

what I have read of some of his opinions

so I'll just uh

move on to the next question after

looking at this I want to make sure that

I answered this fairly well

at least mediocrity well

I think I just invented a new word

mediocrally

ah let's see

yeah I mean even if you look at the

ordination of women I mean he's using

the ordination of women as like evidence

that the Buddha really was in favor of

um you know equal rights for for females

and stuff but if you read the text I

mean he really did not like the idea of

ordaining women he had to be talked into

it by Ananda and even then he said well

Buddhism Will Survive only half as long

now because of women being ordained

so

yeah I think for the most part it's just

uh leftist ideas trying to

uh like adjust Buddhism to be more

leftist or some such more politically

correct

okay so the last question by Raphael 46

who was more ahead of his time in your

opinion the Buddha or Jesus

well by being ahead of one's time means

like you're you're ahead of the people

around you in your culture and no doubt

it had to been Jesus is way ahead of the

people around him

which is one reason why Jesus's

disciples just did not understand him

very well or based on on the New

Testament

he didn't Jesus was not nearly as

successful at teaching his disciples as

the Buddha was the Buddha had lots of

enlightened disciples according to the

text whereas Jesus like even Saint Peter

was was lying and you know just denying

that he ever knew Jesus on the on the

like what was it the night that Jesus

was uh

was arrested or or

crucified or something I don't remember

the exact details

but yeah they just turned him in the sun

into the Messiah and just um you know

worship him as the son of God

at least some of them did

so

yeah the Buddha was

I mean there were a lot of other

teachers in Ancient India that

um

more peers of the Buddha I mean he

talked about enlightened beings

um you know in his time you know in in

the plural

and he wasn't necessarily talking just

about his own disciples although of

course that's blasphemy I mean to a

devout terravonna Buddhist only a

terravonna Buddhist can possibly become

enlightened but

with very few exceptions

but Jesus I mean he was I mean he was

like a

I just get the idea he was too advanced

for his culture and the cult the people

the products of that culture just did

not understand him and so they just

promptly deified him

so we'll just move on to the next

question this is from aurelian

and aurelian says

some of us still accept military

commissions or government appointments

despite what we know because we feel a sense of Duty to take on the futile work of trying to run things and perhaps make some small changes from within the system there are many Chinese and Hindu texts relating to public and Military Administration and good governance but I have not come across any specifically Buddhist texts on good governance I know there is the dialogue with King menander which I have not read but here it may be strictly philosophical in nature do you know any writings of early Buddhist origin on such topics well there are some sutas in the text where the Buddha is talking about you know the cause of

crime is is poverty and Kings should

like give subsidies to Farmers you know

give them seed grain and you know make

sure that they have enough to to start

out in in the agricultural business and

so forth and that will cause more

prosperity and less crime and so forth

there are some texts in the in the

Polytech in the polysutas themselves

along those lines and also with regard

to politics uh some of the inscriptions

of Ashoka

it was uh a little while after the

Buddha but it's early Buddhism and uh he

gives some of his uh

his political ideas

in like his uh Rock inscriptions and

pillar inscriptions

so you might look there

but yeah I don't think um

I assume there have been like Polly

texts on um I mean not canonical ones

but like

um just written in a Buddhist language

about good governance

but they're not very well known I assume

if you look you may be able to find such

a thing that may be written in uh

Sri Lanka in medieval times or something

so I'll just move on to aurelian's next

question here

it would appear that in many ways

Hinduism is closer than Buddhism to the

instinctive beliefs of the average

American belief in Soul Creator God

spelled gawd generally devotional

standpoint enjoyment of song dance

jewelry and frivolity the biggest issue

May well be giving up hamburgers do you

find Buddhism or Hinduism better

positioned to attract religiously

non-affiliated Americans in the near

future I think Buddhism just because

there's less mythological baggage at

least less mythological baggage that is

considered to be essential to the system

uh it's it can just be like dry

philosophy

um and to like scientifically minded

people

um it's just Buddhism is like rational

it makes sense it doesn't have a lot of

of Mythology that and just stories that

you have to believe

um

so I think probably Buddhism is better

suited to fit

um Western modern or post-modern

Americans or or just Western people in

general

um some people are gravitate more to

Hinduism like the hippies in the in the

late 60s early 70s tended to prefer

Hinduism to Buddhism although the

beatniks before them were more into Zen

Buddhism

so I think all in all just the the

rationality and the lack of like the

garish

you know the the blue stat the stat or

the the paintings of Krishna and he's

all blue and he's got sort of feminine

features and big eyelashes and you know

maybe multiple arms and

um yeah some people gravitate more to

Hinduism like new age is more hinduistic

than buddhistic but um

I think your average doctor or

engineer or

this average person in general would

like Buddhism just because it sort of

like stoicism it's it's just like a

um

I mean it just it just makes sense

so um yeah I'll just go and Buddhism on

that one and I'll just move on to

aurelian's next question

lots of questions tonight

the biggest difficulty I have faced in

accepting Buddhism is its relationship

to willpower will could be the very

characteristic of Western society that

most needs to be resurrected at this

juncture but seems to be the very thing

Buddhism seeks to kill perhaps the

problem lies more in language and

translation annihilation of the will

would be a serious issue to the wide

acceptance of Buddhism as it creates

difficulty for me personally I have come
across the concept of lyria or energy as
a paramita in Buddhism and this seems to
be a related concept to willpower can
you elaborate on the relationship of
Buddhism and willpower as I think this
is an extremely important topic and
appears to have some Nuance that needs
clarification
yeah wolveria is sort of like Resolute
manly energy like lyria like the the V8
vir I mean it literally means man
you know like the triumvirate virile in
English
has the same Indo-European root
um also there's uh the parami of uh
aditana which means determination

where you just stick with something you

know you just

you don't give up

so I mean that's kind of willpower but I

mean

I assume that uh

it depends on on how you define will I

mean karma is well for a lay person

you're supposed to be doing good karma

it's not until you're you're like very

Advanced renunciant that you leave both

good and bad behind you you leave behind

all Karma

so

that most people in the world just are

not ready to annihilate the will and so

you cultivate like

wholesome

Karma you know you

wholesome will Goodwill

so that would be fine especially for

laypeople

um you know annihilation of the will

that's like very Advanced that's that's

what the araha does and there's there's

never very many of those and they're

just off alone in a in a forest

somewhere as a general rule just in some

cells somewhere in a Cloister

ah so let's see

Buddhism and willpower yeah well I mean

will is is like a good translation of

cheating now which is essentially what

karma is but I mean even so it's it's

sort of like what I was talking about

above where you don't have to crave

something in order to do something

and it's the same way with with will I

mean you don't have to have this this

will to do something in order to do it

like an aura Hunt is not creating any

more will because he's not creating any

more karma

and um

like um

I'll be demo philosophy has to invent

some new kind of what Korea cheetah like

functional Consciousness just so that

our Hans can do anything but really I

mean you just

I mean you're a you are able to act

without just like

having doing it through force of will

you know it's just you just do the right

thing like the more wise you become you

just see what what is to be done and you

do it maybe it's just your duty or just

this natural flow of what you're doing

and um

it doesn't doesn't require any kind of

like brute force of will like strong

like in uh

what's the inclination intention

volition

it just flows

like the the more wise you become the

less will you have to to use to get

things done

until you get to uh like what the daote

Ching calls woo way or non-action

and you still you still do things like

there's like one of my favorite verses

of the aote Ching is let's see he who

follows learning increases day by day he

who follows Dao decreases day by day he

becomes less and less until he arrives

at non-action with non-action there is

nothing that cannot be achieved

so I think that would apply to uh this

uh

issue of willpower

but um for a lay person generating will

in in wholesome directions is still good

you're Gathering up Treasures in Heaven

it's not until you are ready to just

bail out of the entire system and very

few people are that you just Abandon All

will altogether

so the next question is from Mary

spelled m-e-r-r-y

and Mary says did you ever even for a

moment think that you had attained some

Advanced State like sodapana anagami or

arahan ship

well there was one time when

I was like a spiritual growth spurt that

I went through and I won't go into all

the details we've already been at this

for almost an hour and a half and I'm

maybe three-fourths of the way through

the questions

but I just had this

click or something

um I won't go into all the details but I

was having a really good meditation like

some of the best in my life it was only

one other time in my life that I had

anything

comparable to that was guard too

the depth and quality of my meditation

and

I'll start anything well maybe I've

attained some stage you know but the

thing is that anything conditioned is

impermanent

and so it didn't last

so

I mean what state or anything I mean

it's best not even to to think about it

because

um

I don't know it just kind of locks you

in

so to speak

and of course like The Diamond Cutter

Sutra which is heresy because it's

Mahayana Buddhist so there's even a

solar panel doesn't think I am a soda

Palmer because they're already Beyond

self-view they're beyond I am this I am

that I am mine

so

yeah there was especially one time in my

life it was back around 2004 I think

where everything just got way better

you know it was just like

this like spontaneous mystical States

and so forth I've gone into some details

over it

um maybe I can just give a whole video

about it sometime

but um it it's just never the way you

think it is no matter how you think it

is or it's going to be it's just going

to be something different so it's best

not to to waste too much mental energy

on that

so next question from Mary spelled

m-e-r-r-y when is your birthday gosh

that's a tough one isn't it

actually my birthday is Thursday every

Thursday

which is I mean if you ask a Burmese

person when it's their birthday their

Muay Nate which literally means birthday

they'll they'll tell you the day of the

week

so yeah although actually my birthday is

July 25th going with the uh the Western

calendar

I think my birthday in Burmese is the

fifth day of the waxing moon of wagong

so

yeah so because I'm born on July 25th

I'm technically a Leo although I think

all the astrology stuff is [__]

because we Leos are naturally skeptical

but I mean it's weird because I mean I'm

sorry to totally Sidetrack this very

simple question that could have been

answered in one sentence

with a digression on a strong astrology

but technically even though I'm a Leo

technically I was born under the sign of

Virgo because all Leos are born under

the sign of Virgo now because of

precession of the equinoxes

so you're not even born under the sign

that of your astrological sign anymore

which makes me wonder I mean is are Leos

now do they behave like Virgos used to

behave

or or what I mean they've done

scientific studies that show that people

born at different times of year have

different General personality Trends

although whether that included Australia

and like Argentina like south of the

Equator it could be a seasonal thing

so

I'm not sure about that so I'll just

move on to the next question this is

also from

Mary spelled with an e have you ever met

Kurt Cobain or other Nirvana members and

this is because

um we both come from Aberdeen Washington

and Kurt Cobain went to the same high

school as me but I think when I was a
senior he was just a freshman so of
course he was just a pathetic nobody I
never heard of him or anything you know
he's just some face in the Halls at best
you know he didn't hadn't start uh
singing professionally yet obviously
so yeah I
I don't remember ever meeting any of the
members of of Nirvana even though they
we have the same Hometown I did have uh
my stepbrother was Kurt Vanderhoof who
was a guitar player for a band called
Metal Church also he was in a punk band
he was a drummer in a punk band called
The lewd back in the early 80s

so and maybe Metal Church would be the

second most famous band from Aberdeen

Washington and I didn't I didn't know

one of the guys fairly intimately

because he was my stepbrother

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from hereward the wake

and hear word the Wake says in

connection with Janna are there any

teachers or Retreats and so forth that

you would recommend

well I mean

Jonah and terravada Buddhism there are

not a whole lot of teachers of it that I

know of there's uh I mean the most

well-known in a Burmese tradition would

be Paul oxiano and Paul doya and

branches of palm doya they emphasize

Jonna although a lot of what is

practiced there not all of it

necessarily but a lot of what is

practiced at these places is is like

hypnotic trance it's like Auto hypnosis

self-induced hypnotic trance

um

and it's it's unfortunate that I really

can't think of any

teachers or Retreats or or monasteries

meditation centers that I could hardly

recommend as teachers of Jonna

partly because

most meditation techniques in Burma ever

since mahasi Seattle

are teaching so-called vipassana or

mindfulness based meditation

is one of the main

um

one of the main outliers or he's just

you know he's one of the few that aren't

doing that there are a few more there's

uh some famous monk who mostly lives in

Burma I think he does international

tours now

um

he's in the stay ingu mess in the

English tradition and it's the same

English tradition is is just a full

spectrum of the ridiculous and the

sublime and uh he does weird stuff like

he'll just require everyone to meditate

in the full Lotus position for like

eight hours without moving so that just

probably the agony just causes you to to

sort of dissociate from your body or

something after a while but I think that

might be a kind of genre system

um

let's see Letty Seattle who was the

teacher of the teacher of SN goenkamp or

was he the teacher of the teacher of the

teacher of SN goenka

and he was the teacher of uba kins

teacher I think so that would make him

the never mind anyway

um lady Seattle was uh I mean he taught

some Jonah but the lady Tradition now is

very LAX it's it's got a reputation for

not being a very serious tradition most

of the monks just aren't aren't

meditating

um the founder of my tradition Tom

poodle Seattle even though the standard

method that he was teaching was similar

to the mahasi method he was mindfulness

based nevertheless he did teach Janna to

some people or at least some on Tom

meditation like Katina

Katina no not Katina what am I saying

Katina for casinos it's like the colored

disc that you use as a meditation object

so

yeah but with regard to any teachers or

Retreats that I would recommend probably

the best that I know of there might be

like Thai Traditions I don't know of

like sinhali's traditions I don't know

but they're the ones I do know of would

be the obvious

uh

uh the obvious choice that would be the

best it's not perfect but it would it's

the best one I know of

so I'll just move on to the next

question from

I don't know if they did this on purpose

to just make it hard for me to say their

name but their name is

says

in the Attica Wagga the Buddha says to

hold no views which is something

terravada got this wrong but Mahayana

preserved this from pre-sectarian

Buddhism

what are some other things in the suit

is that Mahayana have preserved that are

not believed in taravana are there

things that none believe in and it

wasn't preserved in either well that's

that's kind of a good question that's an

interesting question

um so essentially

what are early teachings like

pre-terravadan teachings of Buddhism

that Mahayana gets right that they have

preserved whereas teravada has not

preserved and as he says this the idea

that you shouldn't believe anything to

hold no views to cling to no views is uh

I mean it's taught in the outagawaga but

in the commentaries the Attica Wagga

they just

pretty much uh

um they they backpedal on that one they

say Well when it says you should have no

views it means you should have no wrong

views and when it says you should have

no perception it means you should have

no wrong perceptions which I mean what's

the point why even say you don't have

wrong views

yeah I mean that just goes without

saying or it would go without saying if

it wasn't said

um

so yeah that's a good question

um I would say there

there are a few obscure little fragments

in the polysutas that refer to Nirvana

as infinite formless consciousness

and in Mahayana they took the ball and

ran with it um like the Dharma Kaya or

the one mind there's there's a lot of

different terms for it in Mahayana

Buddhism that really are essentially

just going with the idea of Nirvana as

infinite formless Consciousness and that

got rejected by taravana but it's um

in a way it was maybe like an experiment

in trying to explain what can't be

explained

because eventually taravada did adopt

the wise position of just not reifying

the absolute

you know not trying to make any

assertions about the absolute because no

kind of assertion no kind of idea or

perception is going to stick to the

absolute something that is infinite and

formless

I mean you just

your mind can't

grasp it you cannot grasp that you can't

wrap your head around it at all

and so it's best to just leave it alone

you know just kind of refer to it

indirectly and you know go with the the

upanishadic idea of 1990 you know not

this not that

so that's one thing that I think

Mahayana

preserved even though it didn't really

catch Traction in in Terra Vada is the

whole idea of this this infinite reality

that pervades the universe

um

another one

is dependent coal rising or pedicia

I think probably the best

um account or explanation of dependent

core Rising is is in nagarjuna as Mula

majama kakaraka and that is a Mahayana

attack so at least it was adopted by the

bahayanas and rejected by the

non-mayanas

and um

you know just enterovada Pedic or

dependent core Rising just got

crystallized down into these 12 links

and you just memorize the 12 links and

that's that's supposedly it and um yeah

I really don't think so I don't think

that the Buddha himself taught the 12

links

so

um yeah I do think that at least in

majama Ka Buddhism which is a branch of

Mahayana

um they do understand dependent core

Rising better than taravana like um uh

avoidness or emptiness and

and dependent core Rising are are like

equated they're the same that is

everything is dependently colorizing is

what it what Mayana Buddhists mean when

they say it's all empty it's all void

and um like no self would fit into that

too like because it's just conditionally

real it's just sort of virtually real

so in uh teravada they do believe that

there are these ultimate discrete

realities in abidama there's this list

and there's 52 mental states that are

ultimately real 28 kinds of matter that

are ultimately real

uh Consciousness and also Nirvana is

just fit into the same scheme as all

this worldliness no sensitivity and then

maleness and just

hardness

cohesiveness you know and Nirvana is

just on the same list as all these other

ones so

um

the uh

the Mahayana Buddhists got that one more

correct than the Tara valdons in my

opinion

um to some degree the mahayanas

uh did better in the idea of not

adhering to morality and observances

because in Buddhism it pretty much

crystallized down into like sets of

precepts

that you have to follow and if you don't

follow them correctly then you know you

have to take certain penances or do

certain confessions and so forth

um there was some of that in Mahayana

also but they they were sort of cut a

little more loose from the the silken

ropes of rules that you tie yourself

with

um

let's see I mean the one that CEO box

and the c pot Zeta now starts with into

holding those views even the mayanists

they give it lip service at least but of

course they're still having views

so and some of them might cling to those

views even you know they they have the

idea don't cling to any views so they

cling to the don't cling to any views

that kind of a thing

so those are just the ones off the top

of my head that I can think of

that uh Mayana Buddhism may get more

correct

um just the idea that this is all an

illusion it gets a lot more emphasis in

Mahayana Buddhism

um

and I think tarawada did make the

mistake of just reifying samsara and

making it real you know they they admit

that we don't interpret it correctly but

still there is this Ultimate Reality of

all the atoms in the books on the Shelf

back there

um whereas in Mahayana that's you know

it's it's like illusory it's it's like

conditionally real it's it's conditioned

and therefore just kind of virtually

real which I think is more correct

but um

I just move on to the next question

and uh we're getting there we're almost

done this is the last questioner

he said his name is

Johannes

I believe

and Johannes says

it is taught that even a layperson who
is an anagami or non-returner keeps the
10 precepts naturally and does not
accept or use money for example the
anagami gatikara was without gems gold
silver or money and made his living by
taking Earth that he eroded that had
eroded from the riverbank and making it
into pots these pots he left at the side
of the road and anyone who wished could
leave a suitable amount of rice or food
and take the pots in this way gatikara
supported himself and his blind parents
see the gatikara suta of the Maji
manikaya
this demonstrates how money is an

impediment to Enlightenment and how the truly enlightened do not use money the above quotes all prove that the acceptance of money by monks is not a small fault and that it can render a monk incapable of attaining nibana

okay this is just like the preamble to the questions he's got some questions after this

um

yeah I think he's leaving out one of the just most golden quotes in the text and that is

um

there's the canonical account of the second Council

in the the Vania chulawaga which is

which is interesting reading it's

talking about how the first Schism

occurred in Buddhism

and

you had some

say Western monks who were strict in

winnia who visited uh like more Eastern

word where the monks had already started

handling money

and

he wouldn't take money I mean he was

visiting this Monastery and people were

donating money and then the monks were

dividing up the money and they offered

him his share and he refused to take it

so then they started getting on his case

and they made him apologize to to the

lay people because he was like rude to

them by not accepting their money

so what he did he went to these lay

people and

he just started listing these

texts

in in the sutas and so forth and there's

this one where the Buddha is supposedly

saying that any monk who handles money

or accepts money is as foolish as an

animal he's surrounded by darkness and

he's

enslaved by the chains of his own greed

and I mean that is a canonical statement

I mean the original I don't know where

it comes from I might not be in the text

but the text in which he's quoting it

is I mean that's canonical

so

um yeah definitely monks aren't supposed

to handle money

for Lay people it's not so big of a deal

in fact it's pretty much necessary

I mean we can't all live like gotikara

who also wouldn't even dig the ground

that's why he was taking the uh Earth

that he eroded from a riverbank because

it you know it just falls off and it's

just loose dirt so he could just scoop

it up with his hands and use that

uh without having to dig the Earth

because if you dig the Earth you cut

worms in half and so forth

so

um

again though I am skeptical of the whole

four stages of saying hood theory that

has developed in terravada Buddhism

um it's it's used in Mahayana also

although the Mahayana Buddhists have

distorted it even farther

and like the whole idea of the anagami

or non-returner if you read the first

sutas in the idiotica which is a

polytext

um in the the kuruka nikaya it

apparently is using anagami in the sense

of an arahant

that an onigami or a non-returner is

someone who's just not going to get

reborn they're they're enlightened

they're in Aura hunt

and apparently it got corrupted or just

mutated into a stage below Aura hunt one

stage below our hunt so I'm I'm fairly

skeptical of any of these claims of

onigamisa or sodapanas or so forth

um

yeah I mean you you can read the the

suta the gatikara suta of the Maji

manikaya itself and make your own

conclusions I suppose

but um

as the Buddha says in the in the winnia

I think it is that uh if money is

allowable then sensual Pleasures are

allowable

but again

it's not the outward action

that is morally good or bad it is the

mental States the company the physical

action and so I assume

some people can handle money and not

like conjure up any

like unwholesome attachments or greed or

whatever and other people just can't

even if they don't handle money they're

still their mind is still all full of

defilements

so I'll just uh start answering the

questions I'm just commenting on this

Preamble here

so the first question by Johannes is

do you know of any other stories about

lay onigames in the polycanon and I'm

sure they're they're in there somewhere

but I've never been particularly

interested in in this sort of thing

because I am skeptical about just the

historicity of it

um and I mainly I was studying it when I

was a monk anyway so I wasn't really

interested in uh in late late people

although

um you know there have been supposedly

lay people that became fully enlightened

or at least non-bootest renunciants like

Bahia it was that's another one of my

favorite sutas that's in the udana udana

110 the Bahia suta who he wasn't a

Buddhist but he became enlightened

anyway

of course he got enlightened after

hearing a very zen-like

um sermon from the Buddha

um like on a top Indica was

I I assume he wasn't an anagami

but uh if he wasn't origami he was

filthy rich and an hanagami so he must

have used money he was at least a

sodapona and he was extremely wealthy

he had a wife too although according to

the commentarial tradition um they were

celibate he

didn't have sex anymore

so yeah if do I know of any other

stories about Leon agawis in the podcast

not offhand I I do not recall

so I'll just move on to the next

question

um just bearing all of that Preamble

stuff about how money is a spiritual

impediment and so forth he says how is

Right livelihood even part of the noble

Eightfold Path then it is more not doing

something rather than doing right

livelihood doesn't it just mean to not

harm anyone with how you earn your

living how is this different from just

the first five precepts and why does it

have a separate spot on the noble

Eightfold pass wouldn't a bum practice right livelihood consequently in another suit how the Buddha speaks about people staying away from activities like doing surgery on the eyes ears Etc as part of their Sila this sounds to me like even Noble professions are ultimately an impediment to Spiritual Development no matter how good your intentions might be or homeless people who just beg for money consequently doing more for their spiritual growth than people who try to earn an honest living to support their family

okay well there's a number of questions in here I assume

how is livelihood even part of the noble

Eightfold Path well all of the Eightfold

paths are essentially not doing

something rather than doing something

all of the five precepts are not doing

this not doing that you know not killing

not stealing not sexual misconduct

um not lying you know it's all not it's

all just don't

so you can be perfectly moral by just

sitting there doing nothing

um with monks right livelihood doesn't

just mean

um you know not doing causing harm

so much as for

um a monk right livelihood to accept

alms without following the rules

correctly if you're not a conscientious

Monk and you are accepting alms that is

wrong livelihood for a monk

so

um you know it does have it does go

deeper for

for renuncians than it does for

laypeople

write livelihood you know it's just

um

there are other ways that a monk doesn't

do right livelihood like not taking

proper care of his requisites like his

robes and his bowl and so forth

um

obviously just like um

giving sermons in exchange for you know

I'll give this sermon at your your
Dharma Hall if you you know donate to
the building fund at the monastery
something like that that would be wrong
livelihood for a monk
but as a general rule right livelihood
is you're making a living in a way that
is virtuous and doesn't cause harm you
know there's a list of wrong livelihoods
like uh dealing in weapons dealing in
poisons dealing in animals for Slaughter
dealing in slaves which would also be
like a pimp you know any kind of killing
was like being a soldier for example
would be technically wrong livelihood
according to ancient Indian taravana

Buddhism

but I mean you have to have people like

that at least some people

in some of those professions just uh for

a society to to function properly

see how is this different from just the

first five precepts

um yeah I mean it's not entirely

different but it is for monks you know

right livelihood does go a little deeper

for monks

um wouldn't a bum practice right

livelihood consequently it depends on

the bum I mean like a a monk literally

is a homeless person who some of them

especially in ancient times just

wandered around homeless

so that aspect of being a bum might be

beneficial if if you have the associated

beneficial mental States going to most

bums like hobos do not because most of

them are

alcoholics or nowadays on on some kind

of drugs

let's see

this tells me like even Noble

professions are ultimately an impediment

to Spiritual Development no matter how

good intentions you might be

doing surgery on the eyes ears Etc well

in the Buddhist time doing surgery was a

much cruder Affair than nowadays

let's see our homeless people who just

beg for money consequently doing more
for their spiritual growth than people
who try to earn an honest living to
support their family again it depends on
the mental States it's not just the
outward actions or inactions it's the
mental States going on or not going on
and homeless people who just beg for
money some of them
are spiritually oriented people not many
now most of them are like drug addicts
and mentally ill people and so forth
but um yeah some of them are renunciants
so again it's uh
I mean the main point is it's not the
outward action so much as the mental
States associated with the outward

action that determine the like the

ethical quality of an act

so the last question by Johannes and the

last question of the evening

at last not that I'm complaining it's

good to ask questions and you're welcome

to ask questions but this is the last

one

tonight

in the story of gatikara it is said that

he experienced Bliss or pity for seven

days straight after he learned the

Buddha used some of his food and

materials to support himself does this

correlate with Janna in your opinion

it is said that an anagami is adept in

concentration and so consequently

gadhikara would be expert in Jannah

practice yet it is not mentioned that he

explicitly meditated or practiced a

specific technique this sounds like

formal meditation practice is not as

important as life decisions and

intentions to develop deep concentration

what are your thoughts on this

well just because he felt the experience

of bliss or PT actually is not so much

Bliss it's more like

like enthusiasm or exhilaration you know

it's like pleasurable interest I've I've

had some some uh writers have I've

interpreted it as that

um

but I essentially here it just means he
was like delighted for seven days
because he learned the Buddha used some
of his food and materials and I mean
that's like uh mudita or just like
sympathetic Joy you know like the
feeling of happiness that grandma gets
when the little kids are loving her
banana bread you know she just
the kids are liking it and she's just
happy that they're liking it you know
she's getting pleasure from their
pleasure or happiness from their
happiness and uh you know it's something
along those lines or I mean sometimes
like Buddhist people in Asia very devout

they've been

um trained since there are children that

you know one of the best things a

layperson can do is support monks and

when a monk like especially a famous one

with a high reputation for the

strictness of his practice and his

attainments and so forth if he's

actually accepts a robe or uses a fan or

eats the food that the people offer to

him I mean they can just be overjoyed

they just feel like they're blessed

so I mean it would be something along

those lines he just had like deep faith

in in the Sangha and you know Buddha

dhamma Sangha and uh he was just

delighted that uh the Buddha himself

used some of the stuff that he he

offered I assume that would be my

interpretation so it's not the same as

John I mean PT is one of the the factors

of Jonah you know up until you get into

the high genre in the lower genres you

experience PT but once you get up to

um what is it third genre then you're

not experiencing PT anymore

I'm pretty sure don't uh don't quote me

on that one

so

let's see does this correlate with Jonah

in your opinion it is said that an

anagami is adept in concentration but

yeah just because it is said that an

anagami is adapting concentration

doesn't even mean that I mean as I was

suggesting earlier onagami's

um it may be that originally it was a

synonym for arohaunt and then just that

they the Indians they love like

systematic lists of things I mean

they're just addicted to that at least

in Ancient India and um they just came

up with this scheme

with all these qualities that and the

different members of the of the the

hierarchy you know have to have you know

like a soda pun I can't tell a lie

although most of the people that I have

met that considered themselves to be

sold upon us they would tell lies at

least to the extent of giving this

[__] confessions when they have to

make confession where and when you're

making confession to another Monk you've

you've broken some rule you know at the

end the the one you're making confession

to says in future you should restrain

yourself and then the monk says yes sir

very good sir I will restrain myself and

they have no intention at all they just

keep breaking the rule and they're

considered to be

aryas at least in accordance with like

the mahasi tradition

so

yeah I mean

it's good to have a little bit of

skepticism with regard to a lot of the

stories about

like uh

exemplary Saints

because some of them are just really

over the top

not that there haven't been over the top

Saints

there have been quite a few even in

modern times

but um

let's see this sounds like formal

meditation practice is not as important

as life decisions and intentions to

develop deep concentration or it's just

your mental States really

um your mental states are way more

important than outward actions as I keep

saying over and over again

um

that seems

this sounds like formal meditation

practice is not as important well I mean

some some people have become enlightened

without any meditation at all at least

not deliberate systematic formal

meditation it can just happen to you you

know if you're ripe you've got good

parmies you know you maybe you've done a

lot of meditation in past lives or

something so that you're just kind of

right before it and then just the right

circumstance comes along and

knocks the the Apple out of the tree or

whatever

so that's it I guess I guess I hope I

answered this question I'm I'm not

entirely confident that I have answered

all of these questions adequately but I

do my best

and if you have questions you're very

welcome to ask those questions in the

comments below or if you have access to

my subscribe Star channel you can ask

them there if you have access to the

Discord server you can ask them there

there's a special q a room there and uh

just look at all the links below if you

haven't subscribed already you're

welcome to do so smash that like button

as people say and uh be happy

hello and welcome to episode 41 of

question and answer I am your host panio

Basa

and in a previous episode I happen to

mention that throughout most of my life

my Consciousness expands and contracts

like the Buddhist Cosmos except at a

much higher rate

and maybe less predictably

and uh I just gotta say that uh lately

the last few days especially my

Consciousness has been pretty well

contracted

it has been a rough week

but The Show Must Go On and I've got

lots of questions in fact

I thought that I was going to have a

smaller number than usual of questions

and then I started compiling them it

turned out to be about the the usual

number like up around 30 35 and then

like the last 24 hours I got this

onslaught of more questions so this is

going to be kind of a long one I think

and uh bear with me bear with me if I'm

not like frolicking in my seat and and

so forth like I sometimes do I didn't

even bring anything weird to drink this

time

so I'll just uh start answering

questions and the first one is from Mary

spelled m-e-r-r-y

and Mary says

have you ever seen the movie Fight Club

do you think this movie illustrates some

of the Buddhist teachings I specifically

want to guest your opinion I think maybe

he means test test your opinion on the

burning hand scene

well I have seen the movie Fight Club in

fact it's one of my favorite movies it's

probably in my top ten not my top three

but my top 10 favorite movies and it's

definitely a guy movie it's like the

opposite of a chick flick

um there are some women that like it but

then there's some guys who like chick

flicks too

um see do you think this movie

illustrates some of the Buddhist

teachings and specifically wants to

guest or test my opinion on the burning

hand scene well the burning hand scene

I'm pretty sure is where they put what

is it a lie a quick lime

uh now it's live for making soap on the

back of his hand and it holds it and

he's got to like accept the agony before

he can uh before Tyler Durden will will

um alleviate the pain for him

I know he's not allowed to go to his his

Spirit cave and do visualization or

anything he's got to be right there with

the pain just experiencing it fully and

accepting it

and

this and some other things in in Fight Club you know just like you know they weren't allowed to have names which you could be considered you know supporting the no self idea

um you know there's death which supports you know impermanence and the inevitability of death and that kind of thing but I mean you could say that's in lots of movies just about every movie has at least some element of of Dharma or Dharma in it

so I don't think that uh the author of Fight Club under the book or the the writer of the the screenplay had Buddhism specifically in mind it's just

that there are some

virtues

I guess masculine virtues that are

promoted in in teravada Buddhism that

also happen to be promoted elsewhere

um so just because

um a movie is like promoting masculine

virtues

doesn't mean that it's it's necessarily

a Buddhist movie so I think it's

probably incidental like coincidental

that fight club which is a good movie

um that it that it does happen to

overlap with some Buddhist teachings

so we'll just move on to Mary's next

question

and Mary says

I can masturbate without absence without absolutely no physical effort I mean no hand no anything just for the power of thought I have read the commentary to the specific rule in the putty mocha and according to it it is not sangari say so if you put no physical effort so if I was a monk is it true

well I don't think so I think it means any kind of effort it doesn't have to be physical effort for example

um to have an orgasm on purpose is the song God is a rule in question here and it is against the rules very much against the rules for a monk to have an orgasm on purpose

the deliberate emission of semen is

Sangha di sesa number one

requiring six days and six nights of

penance and like a long pain in the neck

reinstatement ceremony and so forth

ah and uh because it's an important rule

there's a lot of

um details on exactly what entails

breaking the rule

and

if a monk is making any kind of effort

to have an orgasm

then that's that's already against the

rule for example there's a case of

it's it's not against the rule if you

have like a wet dream like you have an

orgasm in your sleep

but if let's say you notice that you're more likely to have a wet dream if you sleep extra you know you sleep a few extra hours you get into the dreamy State and you're more likely to have wet dreams and then you you go to sleep deliberately in order to increase your odds of having a wet dream and then you have it you're guilty of breaking the rule because you have made an effort so I mean it wasn't really much physical effort you weren't touching yourself or anything but still it is an effort so using your mind to do it is I'm pretty sure that's against the rules also and uh just to uh

avoid going into a long detailed talk on

what doesn't does not entail Sangha DC

number one

and uh considering the large number of

questions this this show I think I'll

just move on to Mary's next question

and Mary says as I remember humble

stature and then in parentheses he says

why I always thought he was humble

statue

on on parentheses

wanted to come to South Carolina and

maybe start something with you a

meditation group or a cult I don't

remember anything in that department or

it has just died of natural causes

um yeah it is true

that humble stature

um which is not his real name

uh he started a group which I was

invited to join and I joined you know I

was game

it was called the spiritual right

and we got a website sort of going at

least the beginnings of it going and we

had some uh videos put out we had like a

YouTube channel and everything and then

he actually did move to South Carolina

he's uh here in town

but there were a few

um obstacles that were not overcome

one is he just could not make up his

mind he kept changing his plans which

started alienating members of the group

and um

he uh he eventually just kind of decided

against the whole thing

I guess I mean that's that was the last

I heard and um

so that was one thing also

um my girlfriend and he didn't get along

very well

um he was kind of uh

he'd go through phases of of like just

picking up chicks in bars and uh my

girlfriend didn't want me associating

with such a person

so

um yeah that kind of helped it to fizzle

out but it would have fizzled out anyway

I'm pretty sure because he just kept

changing his mind

and um really couldn't just settle on on

a course of action and just stick to it

so uh maybe uh

um he should work on more a ditana

parami or something more determination

just sticking this sticking to a plan

you know let's do this even if we do a

wrong common attitude

but he's he's doing fine you know he's

he's around

so I'll just move on to the next

question why Mary spelled m-e-r-r-y just

a side note what food if any can you

keep indefinitely well I assume this

question is referring to Buddhist

monastic discipline what food if any can

a monk keep indefinitely without

breaking any rules

and if it's kept as food then none I

mean a monk is not allowed to store food

more than one day if it's kept as food

but certain foods that have medicinal

properties can be kept for

as long as the monk wants like salt

garlic I think Ginger

um there's some medicinal kind of like

miral Bland fruits and that kind of a

thing

um those can be kept indefinitely so

long as they're not used for the monk to

eat now like if he's sprinkling the salt

on his food to make it taste better

that's against the rules but if he's

using the salt uh medicinally like maybe

like using it as toothpaste to brush his

teeth because he doesn't have access to

toothpaste something like that and that

would be okay or like a saline uh like a

laxative or something you can use salt

water as a laxative I guess the yogis do

that

so that would be all right so it would

depend on the intention of the use like

if it's used as food or to make food

taste better you know to improve the

enjoyment of food that kind of a thing

then no food can be kept more than one

day

it's

um but as I say there is a list of foods

like garlic and salt and uh there's

there's a number of other ones I think

Ginger like I said that uh they can be

kept indefinitely so long as it's purely

for medicinal use

so let's move on to the next question

this is from Fred

and this one is uh in response to the

video I did with uh Brian Rue on

channeling

and Fred says what's your thoughts on

containers for Spirits EG tree Spirit

houses

yeah or like temples or churches or

supposedly the house of God that kind of

a thing

um it may be that some lesser kind of

spirits you know hardly better than a

ghost might inhabit some Temple

dedicated to its honor or a shrine or

something but for the most part

um yeah like a temple to Athena is

wouldn't have Athena I mean assuming

even that Athena is is a real deity

um yeah I don't think she'd be living

there

um

I think that spirits that aren't

EarthBound

and yeah I mean they're not living on

this planet at all I mean they might

happen to come to a Temple dedicated to

their honor or a shrine dedicated to

their honor simply because people are

like invoking them there

but

um for example uh Jehovah I don't think

he really cares all that much about uh

churches any more than any other place

on this planet

so I mean for like some Earthbound deity

that's like relatively low level

possibly but for the most part

um it I don't think it works that way

and uh he has the term he uses is

containers for Spirits which is sort of

like it reminds me of uh

uh was it Ghostbusters you know they got like the the cage thing the electronic cage for catching Spirits yeah I don't think those have been been invented yet so I'll just move on to Fred's next question can we reduce negative sankara's yeah yeah we can reduce negative Sun cards for those of you who don't know what a songkara is Sankara is one of the Vegas terms in the Pali language

um it can mean anything has a beginning and an end which means it can be anything other than like nubana itself um but here it's like mental States especially volitional mental States like

Sankara Kanda is one of the five condas

that compose a human being or one of the

five Aggregates as it's called and

Sankara in this case means like

volitional mental States especially uh

just will in general

will

so can we reduce negative volitional

mental States

um yeah yeah we can do that there's all

different all different ways of doing it

one is just living a moral simple

peaceful life and then your mind just

becomes more peaceful and then you're

going to have less negative thoughts

unless you're just chafing it living

such a peaceful life you're just bored

as hell and then that can cause problems

on its own

um just replacing negative San Carlos

you know like you you notice you're

having negative thoughts about somebody

you can just replace that once you once

you catch it you can just start thinking

about something else

um

just just following dhamma in general

will tend to reduce the number of

negatives on cars it might also reduce

the number of positive ones but that's

kind of inevitable because there's

always kind of a balance going

positive and negative have to balance

out in the long run

so we'll just move on to the next

question this is from achala I think it

would be pronounced a-c-a-l-a I'm not

sure what language that is

maybe it's Polly so it would be

pronounced achala

and achala says what is the reason

behind mass of people dying due to

natural disasters like earthquakes in

the angura nikaya 870 there's a

discourse on earthquakes where Buddha

explains to Ananda eight reasons behind

earthquakes those reasons given in the

sutras are positive so why is something

positive should result in a negative

natural disaster is there something like

Collective comma

um well actually I think that suta in

the angura nikaya is like an excerpt

from the uh mahapari nibana suta which

is uh the suit and the digani Kaya

describing the Buddha's final days and

he tells Ananda also in in natsuta that

there are various causes for earthquakes

and number one is that according to

ancient Indian cosmology

the the Earth is floating on water and

the water is floating on air so that

disturbances in the air causes

disturbances in the water on which the

Earth is floating which then causes the

Earth to shake so that's not that's not

a positive one that was the only like

mechanistic explanation and all the rest

are just like prodigies you know like

um when the Buddha announces he's going

to die it causes the Earth to shake and

that's why the Earth Shook and that and

then he on the Buddha was telling anando

that the causes of earthquakes

um

so yeah that one is morally neutral it's

not really positive and those are

probably the ones that cause all the

death I don't think like a a Buddha

becoming enlightened is going to like

destroy a city

or some such

so that's that's part of the answer here

but um

um I think the main gist here is like

how can you know a million people or or

10 000 people all have the same Karma

that causes their City to be destroyed

by an earthquake and I was I was in a

medium-sized Town medium-sized for

Alaska anyway when I was a baby and uh

our the town of Seward Alaska was pretty

much wiped out by the big earthquake

there

um

it's I and I mean this this comes up a

lot and it is a good question you know

how if if we all have our individual

Karma and there is no group Karma as

Buddhism teaches then how is it that you

know

large numbers of people you know like

like the Bubonic plague or something can

wipe out a third of the Earth's

population or earthquake can just

devastate a city or an entire area that

kind of a thing

um you know how does that happen

and one of the main explanations is like

of like Orthodox monks

is that although there is no individual

Karma or no group Karma I mean you know

it's like I mean it's sort of like the

the debate in evolution is you do groups

or do groups of animals evolve or is it

just a

is it just the individual

um

you know is is like natural selection

happening on groups I guess would be a

better way of putting it

um now according to Buddhism it's it's

entirely individual

but people with similar Karma with

similar stuff coming to them

um maybe reborn in into the same kind of

area of the same culture

so I mean that would be a substitute for

group Karma you know like just the the

endemic violence of the Middle East

since prehistoric times you know it's

probably one of the reasons why

civilization is said to have Arisen in

the in like

in the Middle East area is because it

was so violent that their people figured

out that if they had lived behind walls

they'd be safer

but um so that is one explanation is

just people have like the same sort of

karma will tend to be reborn into the

same kind of groups so that where the

you know the same kind of things will be

happening to them

and also

um I think it was

explained it this way once if I remember

correctly he was saying that we have so

much Karma that pretty much everybody

has some [__] hitting the fan Karma you

know included in that and and then when

the earthquake comes you know this just

you have the seismic shift or whatever

it just conveniently fits in with with

that one

um you know we've got you know we've

lived an infinite number of lives

supposedly according to the according to

the uh the doctrine

or it's just you know innumerable

innumerable

so that we made all kinds of Karma and

it may be that uh pretty much everybody

has some kind of [__] hitting the fan

Karma that uh can be used up when the

[__] hits the fan in some area

um

so that's that's kind of like two or

three answers coming from different

directions to that question so I'll just

move on to the next question this is

from Austin

and Austin says can you share your

understanding of the concept of chakras

do Western monastics take this belief

seriously I've heard that they are

considered to be swirling centers of

energy within the body which seems quite

unusual to me well this isn't really uh

a traditional Buddhist concept it's it's

more

um comes from Hindu yoga

or you've got seven chakras and they're
kind of along the spine like the the
Kundalini you know as your Kundalini
arises your chakras open they go higher
and higher Ram Das used to talk about
chakras a lot and literally means Wheels
you know it's just like an energy
wheel or
um more like a like a energy ganglion or
something
and ramdas said that the average person
they've only got three chakras going
that are still that aren't like dormant
or just you know maybe just little
twinges you know the the bass chakra is
just survival

that's like um you know the base of the
spine is I mean that's just you know
food and and you know just avoiding
danger staying warm comfortable that
kind of a thing then above that is sex
and then above that you get to the
like the solar plexus or the the Don
Tien I think some of the yoga people
call it or Chinese medicine people
and that's like power or status
and then it just that's as far as most
people get according to ramdas the next
the next one that you hear the most
about is the heart chakra which is
compassion that's where you're just
starting to get to the point where you
realize you know you look at another

person you realize there's just another

me there you know it's just everyone is

is a different version of just me

and and it goes higher up until the

final chakras is like right at the crown

of the head and that's like the like the

enlightenment one that's even higher

than the the third eye chakra

foreign

as far as I'm concerned it's I don't

really think that uh

um a scientist would detect these

chakras otherwise modern medicine

probably would have detected them

already so I mean they're not anything

physical I think it might just be a kind

of gimmick like a theory that works you

know you've got the the different levels

of advancement in in human personality

or just in conscious just conscious

development

that um

uh you know you just sort of symbolize

them as chakras along the spine Channel

although of course practicing Yogi some

some Advanced Swami might say nope

they're for real and I've experienced

them directly

but um

yeah it's it's more of a Hindu concept

and uh Orthodox terravonna says

essentially nothing about it although I

guess there is a western monk who lives

in America somewhere

um who teaches she's like Incorporated

yoga and chakras and stuff into his

meditation instructions

um Brian Roo knows about him I don't

remember his name he's kind of an older

um American man I think

so I think that it's uh kind of a

gimmick I'm I'm skeptical of their

actual existence but it does kind of

help people to wrap their head around

Concepts and it may be useful

and um if you want to symbolize like

different stages in like mental

development or Spiritual Development as

you know energy centers going up the

spine I'm

um if it helps then that's fine

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

question

and this one I'm not sure if he intended

this one for the Q a although it was

included with some other ones and it's

are you open to engaging in Lively

debate I believe that participating in

discussions with other Faith systems

would Foster meaningful dialogue and

ultimately Aid in the dissemination and

comprehension of Buddhist teachings if

this interests you I'm sure the modern

day debate channel would be honored to

have you as a guest yeah I've I've

considered that I mean we watched my my

sweetheart and I watched some of those

modern day debates

um the two main debates going on it

seems like the two main themes are one

are theists versus atheists and two is

flat earthers versus round earthers that

you can have like a four hour long

debate on that channel over whether the

Earth is flat or round and then like a

week or two later there'll be another

one they just it's like uh inexhaustible

Gold Mine of

this back and forth they do have some

pretty inept Debaters I think I would

I'd I would do well on that on that

channel I think

um but yeah I'm I'm open for debate I
mean there's there's a few things I
couldn't debate well I mean I obviously
I could debate Buddhism I could debate
the whole atheism issue fairly well
although that one's being done to death
on the channel
um something like Evolution but I mean
they've got evolutionary biologists who
go on the show so they would probably be
able to do it better than I do unless
they're just crappy debaters
no there yeah there are things like
religion or spirituality in general or
meditation things like that
I think I could hold my own against like
the materialistic atheist fairly well

but I'm not sure I mean what I just like

contact them and say Hey I want to

debate somebody and tell them who I am

and what I specialize in that kind of a

thing yeah maybe

someone wants to uh sign me up I won't I

won't mind

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

question

and this one is this one's a good one

this is an interesting one I don't know

if I'll be able to answer it very well

but it's it's a fairly good one

can you present a logically sound

argument for Buddhism or is the nature

of Buddhism inherently an understandable

because using words to Oh inherently not understandable because using words to conceptualize reality is unfeasible

well there are different aspects of Buddhism and you could logically give logical sound arguments

to various aspects of Buddhism

certain aspects of Buddhism yeah I don't think they would really hold up to intense scrutiny because but those are really not the essential ones you know like some of the mythology some of the Legends

um a lot of abidama philosophy I mean if you're again if you're debating this I think it'd be hard to really defend the position well against an

intelligent

skeptic who debates well

but just like some of the basic ideas of

Buddhism like

um just striving for nibana where

I mean you can put that in terms of like

Emmanuel Kant in Western philosophy who

said that there are two truths and

seriously just like Buddhism teaches

that there are two truths you've got

ultimate truth and you've got like

conventional truth or what Kant called

the thing in itself and the thing is it

seems or just the phenomenon the

phenomenon and the pneumon something

like that

and Kant said that you just cannot know
reality all you can know is just your
mentals you know just the symbols cooked
up by your mind in accordance with these
categories and so forth but in Buddhism
I think that Buddhism originally was a
kind of systematic technique for
understanding Ultimate Reality and
there's one Ultimate Reality that we can
know directly and that is the Ultimate
Reality of our own consciousness
so
Buddhism
um you could argue I could argue that
Buddhism began as a kind of systematic
method for cultivating
what could be called mysticism or just

knowing Consciousness directly without

the intermediary of symbolic perceptions

another another thing that's fairly

logical is that

um

in Buddhism they're teaching The

Liberation from suffering and

our how to liberate yourself from

suffering

and the way you do that if if you could

put forth a logical case that good and

bad positive and negative have to

balance out in the long run and so

what a monk is doing he's just trying to

go for just clear neutrality

so I mean that's fairly logical you know

you avoid

unpleasant things and you avoid Pleasant

ones also that's that's kind of like the

middle path

you know the middle path is the path

between seeking out pleasure and seeking

out pain you just kind of

you know right down the middle

and then you're in a state of equanimity

and Clarity of mind you're not all like

liking this disliking that getting all

distracted you know pitting yourself

against reality and then it's more

you're more

it's easier to penetrate the illusion

and experience Ultimate Reality directly

that way also

some parts are more difficult than

others to uh

give logically sound Arguments for but

um oh

it seems to me like the basics

um are pretty sound you know the the

first three of the four noble truths for

example are just pretty solid logic

but I think I'll just move on to the

next question

this is also from Austin

and he says

as someone who subscribes to the core

teachings of the Eightfold Path non-self

in the Buddha's Enlightenment but holds

a different perspective on certain

Legends and tales should I still
consider myself a Buddhist well welcome
to the club I'm in the same I'm in the
same Club there even when I was a monk
like a junior Monk still I think I would
I would fit the description here of
someone who subscribes to the core
teachings of the Eightfold Path non-self
and the Buddha's Enlightenment
Etc beholds a different perspective on
certain Legends and tales yeah like
talking animal stories or like I already
mentioned like the Earth floating on
water which then floats on air that kind
of a thing
um it's it's irrelevant really
to to what dhamma is essentially about

it's it's like in ancient Indian culture

so I might not be an orthodox terravonna

Buddhist in Austin might not be an

orthodox terabonda Buddhist but

um I think we come a lot closer to the

essence of Buddhism than some people who

are considering themselves to be

authorities on Buddhism or just devout

Buddhists

so yeah no worries there now I'll just

move on to uh

Austin's last question here

did you become a happier person after

you entered monkhood and that's that's a

good question too

um it's weird it's it's kind of a trick

question because when I was a junior

monk or let's just back up a little

before I became a monk you know I was I

was starting to worry you know I was in

my late 20s kind of a rascal and I was

kind of worried that I mean if there is

such a thing as hell I might I might

wind up going there

I wasn't really an evil person but I was

uh

I wasn't particularly moral from a

Buddhist point of view

and I just thought well if I become a

monk then I'll be joining the ranks of

these men dedicated to Enlightenment and

all of them will be wiser than me

because they've been striving harder

than me you know and then I I entered

this Asian Monastery and you get this

harsh Awakening

to the to the fact that most Asian monks

maybe most western monks but certainly

most Asian ones aren't even trying

really

you know they might be like a a Buddhist

light person who's just trying to get

enough Merit to get a better rebirth but

they're not striving for enlightenment

they're not really doing much to

cultivate wisdom a lot of them don't

bother to meditate or follow the rules

you know they're just like priests that

do the ceremonies and do the chanting

and bless people and

um they're like masters of Ceremonies

for

the lay people that like the ceremonies

so I was like very disillusioned and

sullen

for for quite a while I remember I was

trying to come up with one word to

describe each person of the monastery

and the word I came up with my for

myself was sullen

but on the other hand when you when you

enter the monk Hood it's like life gets

much simpler more peaceful

and it might not be happier necessarily

but it's it's less unhappy because as I

was already saying like happy and

unhappy I have to balance out

so from like a

a Buddhist point of view

the the truest happiness is just kind of

a neutrality just equanimity

and um yeah I had I had more of that I

had more clarity uh at least in phases

but there were times as a monk I mean

it's you're just like hitting a wall

you're just in a state of despair and

Desperation I mean that happened a lot

too

um I was talking at the very beginning

about how my Consciousness expands and

contracts and probably the worst I was

ever depressed in my life was

um as a monk living in a big school

Monastery in your Mandalay I mean that

was that was awful I was almost I was

almost incapacitated just I was just so

contracted down and just dry and you

know dry of spirit

so

yeah I think a monk who is good at being

a monk and being among fits him he will

be more content more Serene and that was

generally my situation

um

most of the time especially after I

started you know going off and living in

the forest alone

where I wasn't having to participate in

sort of Asian

um traditional Buddhism so much and just

go out in the woods and just chill

but I mean even that I mean

um just celibacy can be a strain or just

being alone can be a strain not being

able to stop sweating in tropical

climates I mean things can just get to

you

so

yeah I'm I'm kind of skeptical as to the

whole idea of being happier or unhappier

overall unless it's just you know more

equanimous or less equanimous

and as a layperson I've sort of adopted

the whole stoic idea of you just have to

accept the ups and the Downs you know

it's like you're you're making more

karma you're going to have more good and

more bad happening to you probably just

going with Statistics or whatever and so

you just have to like try to to surf the

waves better

and uh so it's more happy and more

unhappy I guess as a layperson

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Ethel sieg I think

is how it's pronounced

Ethel psych ethyl sieg something like

that

a-e-t-h-e-l-s-i-g-e which sounds Old

English

and Ethel seeks first question here

and this is this is another one that

comes up this is this is a tough

question

I think I'm right in saying that

memories are not part of the karmic

momentum carried forward in rebirth but

some people quite often children seem to

be able to recall details of past lives

in quite some detail do you believe in

past life memories and if so how is this

explained in Buddhist philosophy you

know why can't everyone remember their

previous lives

okay there's there's a little bit to

kind of deconstruct here if you'll

forgive me using that term

um

memories are not part of the karmic

momentum in a way they are I mean just

going with hardcore abidama I've I've

asked about this hobbydama Scholars you

know I've consulted I'll be dominant

Scholars on this and they said every

single thing that arises

in your in your mind or your body every

like sensation or thought that arises is

kamoipaka it's the fruition of karma

so from that point of view Memory would

would have a car would have a karmic

element to say the least

um

but as he says I mean we don't remember

our past lives and that's

I mean just going with I mean one answer

I've given to that one person asked me
why don't we remember our past lives is
because we got a different brain but
that's really not a good Buddhist answer
um I have read a couple books by Ian
Stevenson about children who remember
past lives and my father also claimed to
remember some of his past lives
um he remembered uh just details of at
least four or five past lives
and um in his case and he remembered
them through hypnotic regression it
wasn't through meditation or you know
going into deep meditative States unless
you know being in a deep hypnotic trance
could be considered something similar

um

the children I mean in the books the children who remembered details of their past lives were often just I mean they got it right you know they seem to remember it quite clearly some of it and then as they get older they would just stop identifying with that life and just start identifying more with the body that they were in so I guess some children when they're first born you know they still have they're not really fully identified with the new life yet and so they're still getting a lot of bleed through from the previous one uh I do think that it's possible I don't think that everyone who claims to

remember past lives is necessarily

remembering past lives I mean in a

hypnotic trance you're told that you're

going to remember past lives you'll just

cook something up just that you would

expect you know and uh a lot of people

who presumably know their past lives

they all they're all like famous and

that kind of a thing

um

yeah why can't everyone remember their

past lives I think we it's just a matter

of forgetting

so let's see here

yeah I'll just I'll just move on to the

next question that is that is a tough

question though

this is Ethel sieg's second and last

question here

what's the correct or the best way of

doing walking meditation I had seen

videos where people are doing it really

really slowly whereas others seem to be

walking quite quickly and when you're

doing walking meditation What

specifically should you'd be one

wouldn't we should wouldn't be mindful

of

well there's different ways of doing

walking meditation just as there's

different ways of doing sitting

meditation like the mahasi method you're

going in slow motion and usually for

beginners you're just being mindful of
the lifting of the foot and the the
putting down of the foot or the lifting
of the foot and then the moving forwards
of the foot and the putting down of the
foot and the lifting of the other foot
and then moving forwards and the putting
down and um
an even simpler way than not just
counting you counting steps you know one
two three four five one two three four
five six up to one two three four five
six seven eight nine ten and then back
to five and I mean there's there's just
different ways of doing it
um the way I have done it when I was

doing walking meditation

is I mean you're just mindful of

whatever sensation is the most obvious

for me it was generally like my feet

touching the ground or a lot of the time

there'd be like this oily slippery

sensation in my knee joint so my legs

would swing that

um for some reason it was easy for me to

just rest my my mindful concentration on

that

so whatever is is most obvious like if

you get you got your eyes open it's

pretty much have to do when you're doing

walking meditation even seeing you know

just uh sometimes at night in Burma I do

walking meditation

um just looking straight forwards and

just not focusing your you know not like

focusing on anything in particular you

just have like the wide open gaze of

like a camera or something a mirror

and just do it that way just use the the

seeing mindfulness I'm seeing although

since you're walking usually one of the

most

um

noticeable things to to attend to is

just the whatever's going on in your

legs and your feet you know whatever

Sensations are most noticeable there

and then you can you can do it you know

all the time it's not just walking back

and forth in a special

you know special covered walkway I mean

you can be going up and down stairs or

just walking at work or or whatever and

you can be doing walking meditation so

long as you're being mindful of the

process or of anything really is even

seeing I mean you don't even have to be

uh mindful of of the legs moving

although you want to take in as much as

you can you know you want it as wide of

a of a scope as possible without

necessarily focusing on one thing in

particular

but I think I'll get back to that a

little bit with regard to sitting

meditation

but uh I'll just move on to the next

question here

and this is from Johannes

I believe that is

how to pronounce his name Johannes

and Johannes says

the main Foundation is the knowing of

long and short in and out breaths is

there any chance that digam assassami

and

rasami or I breathe in long and I

breathe in short in the English

translation of the poly words can be

translated as abdominal breathing and

thoracic breathing it always baffled me

that short and long in this case should

refer to a temporal aspect of the in and

out breathing

it seems in the context of the anapana

city suta

that the two terms are way more defined

than just temporal length or shortness

since there is no way to say that an

in-breath

is absolutely long or short time wise

it's very vague to assume that this is

meant no

I'm never now it's a part of the

questionnaires is no question mark

it's not like I'm saying no to that

I continue I never got how the knowledge

about the temporal length of an

in-breath should develop mindfulness on

the whole body Saba Kaya patissa

in Bali when the normal instructions for

developing mindfulness on the body are

to develop mindfulness on the spatial

movements and positions of the body well

I don't think that breathing in Long

means abdominal breathing and breathing

in short means thoracic breathing but it

could just mean like I mean I've I've

noticed this too I don't think it was

very

um the best way of instructing on

mindfulness it's just like you know the

quality of the breath you know you know

if you're breathing deep or if you're

breathing shallow taking long slow

breaths a short fast breaths I think

that's the the point of it is you just

you're watching the breathing and you

know you're knowing what you're doing in

your breathing you know if you're

breathing you know shallow you know if

you're breathing deep you know if you're

breathing

um you know quickly or slowly that kind

of a thing

I think that's that's the main point of

it but yeah I do not see that it's

referring to abdominal or thoracic

breasts

but really I mean if if when I'm doing

breathing meditation

I mean mainly just watching the

sensation of touch of the nostrils or at

least that's that's the way I would do

it

and look except for when I was at uh

mahasi Center and they make you do the

the belly stuff

so yeah it's just too much thinking I

like if you're dividing it up into I am

breathing long or I am breathing short

and just like that man it's just way too

much of thinking

and it kind of uh it lowers the quality

of the meditation so you just be aware

of it I mean just watch it and that's

good enough

so the next question from Johannes

is do you have any experience with

working out while living a dominant life

in the biku Bunga in the story about

daba the seven year old arahant it is

said that there were some monks engaging

too much in physical exercise I don't

know the the poly original but I was

wondering if maybe you knew some

polytext discussing the topic and if you

have some experience with it well

physical exercise

is not encouraged

in uh

in the the rules of monastic discipline

um just for health like for for health

just walking a lot is the usual exercise

that a mom gets that and just the

standard

um you know chop would carry water kind of stuff just the living the life of a forest monk generally involves enough exercise to keep you healthy and that's the whole point is you're supposed to be healthy for the sake of practicing dhamma

um

trying to beautify yourself trying to be buff or ripped or whatever whatever the term is

um yeah that's definitely out no kind of beautification you're not even supposed to eat food for the sake of beautification you're not supposed to do

anything for the sake of beautification

of your body

um

so yeah doing doing like calisthenics or

even something like Tai Chi could be

borderline because that's kind of

meditative you could sort of do that as

a meditation but like swimming for

exercise

um yeah working lifting weights and

stuff yeah that would be out I'm pretty

sure unless it was like you have a

doctor telling you that I mean you're

you gotta do these exercises you know

like stretches or something maybe you've

got like plantar fasciitis in your foot

or something you got some kind of tendon

problem or something and you need to do
stretches and some kind of exercises to
repair that or fix that then that would
be okay but yeah just uh like the modern
or in modern western or even like the
the classical Greek love for gymnastics
and exercise and that kind of a thing
it's uh is pretty much alien
to um
to tear upon a Buddhist monasticism
I mean you just have to be just healthy
enough to practice and that's good to
know so let's just move on to johannes's
next question
and that is did the Buddha practice the
noble Eightfold Path if yes when did he

exactly start to practice it if no is it

really so absurd to assume that there

are two ways to Enlightenment well this

is this is kind of a trickier question

than I thought because

um

apparently I mean he wasn't practicing

the noble Eightfold Path perfectly up

until just very shortly before it became

enlightened because he was doing the

austerities you know just like torturing

himself which was not you know like

right conduct

um

but yeah I mean he he practiced the

noble Eightfold Path I assume I mean

just assuming that the whole Noble

Eightfold Path is not an anachronism

there there is some evidence that the

Eightfold nature of the path not the not

the idea of the path itself not

magasacha itself but dividing it up into

eight factors that could be a later

development

um not very much later but still it is

like there are some uh ten there's at

least a few sutos teaching a tenfold

path

um

I think white Liberation is is one of

the the extra ones but um

let's see if no is it really so absurd

to us and there are two ways to

Enlighten them well

he had a lot of part of me he was

practicing you know all the right things

at different times probably and gotten

better and better at it so he was very

close it may be that you just cannot

practice the noble evil path perfectly

until you are perfect

you know if you're fully enlightened

then it you know you're able to practice

it perfectly

but you do the best you can and that's

that's kind of what the path is about

it's not just standing in one place it's

you know it's there's a certain process

to it and you tend to get better and

better at it

so

but again like the whole Eightfold

nature of the path

um maybe a later Edition

so I'll just uh

man it's like I feel like there's

probably more I should say about this

but I can't think of what it would be

did the Buddha practice an oblateful

path if yes when did he exactly start to

practice it if no is it really so absurd

to assume that there are two ways to

enlightenment

um

yeah well it's sort of like anguli Mala

is a good example who is a serial killer

on Google Maul literally means a Garland
of fingers because he would uh cut off a
finger of each of his victims and he was
making this big necklace out of it and
uh he tried to kill the Buddha
and uh the Buddha converted him and then
um I guess he started following the full
path after after that and he didn't do
it for very long he became enlightened
after that
I mean after he after he became a monk
you know he was he he got converted by
the Buddha after trying to kill him
after trying to kill him then he he was
ordained as a monk and practiced and
presumably he was falling in a bladeful
path before he became enlightened

so with the Buddha though it's um he was
probably doing some of them really well
and then sort of going off the track a
little bit with like with the
self-torture stuff for a while and then
he just kind of snapped back into place
and got it all right and became
enlightened
that is my gas so I'll just move on to
the next question from yuanus
does the poly Canon specify that there
is only one bodhisattva at a time no I
don't think so I think there's lots of
bodhisattvas which is weird because
you'd think that they're
um you know there'd be a limited number

I've there are so many bodhisattvas in

our bodhisattas in terrar Buddhism it's

just in Burma a lot of like the the

founder of the tradition which I was

ordained Tom Poole he considered himself

to be a bodhisatta

um

so there's lots of bodhisattas and once

you become a bodhisatta then there's you

know the zillion gajillion years of

perfecting all of the parmies

so

yeah so there are there are a lot it's

just the next there's only going to be

one next Buddha and so the dot

bodhisatta is supposedly in what to see

to Heaven I think supposedly waiting

until it's his time to come down is

Mateo Buddha or maitrea in Sanskrit

but yeah the easy answer to that

question is um no there's not just one

bodhisatta at a time

so Johanna says next question

where does it say that Pacheco Buddhas

only arise when the teaching of the

Buddha is not in the world if Buddha

said

that his true teaching would be gone

after 500 years doesn't this mean that a

lot of Mystics

from the different religions could be

Pacheco Buddhas

um I'm not exactly where it originally

says you know like the the authoritative

statement in the text that Pacheco

Buddha's only arise when there is not a

Buddha in the world

um that could be a later development

maybe the whole idea of Pacheco Buddhas

could be a later development but it is

orthodox tradition and a lot of books

that are composed later you know 20th

century books will assert

when discussing this that apacheco

Buddha

um they only arise

at times when there is no Buddhism

so it's not

yeah it's when the Buddha sasana is

extinct in this world then you've got

these hermit Buddhas pacheca is like for

one self Buddhas this is kind of what

pacheca means it's like for oneself he's

just he's fully enlightened he's better

he's higher up than just an ordinary

Aura hot you know he's gotten the the

omniscience of a Buddha and so forth but

um he just

opt to be a Hermit and not teach like

according to tradition go to My Buddha

our our Buddha almost became a Pacheco

Buddha because he figured nobody would

understand dependent coal Rising

so

um yeah I don't know that's the first

question there's I don't I don't know

where the the oldest statement is that
Pacheco Buddhas only arise from the
teaching the Buddha is not in the world
but then there's this next question here
that's part of that question if the
Buddha said that his true teaching would
be gone after 500 years doesn't this
mean that a lot of Mystics from the
different religions could be Pacheco
Buddhas
um yeah if you had fully enlightened
beings after Buddhism has died out and
if you assume that Buddhism has died out
and what's passing for Buddhism now is
is like a forgery that is not authentic
Buddhism then it's possible but they
wouldn't be teaching see that's the

thing if if you've got Mystics from

different religions that are promoting

their system then they wouldn't be

particular Buddhists because they're not

Hermits living out in the forest cave

somewhere

but

um although Buddhism is wise enough

that it doesn't insist that only

Buddhists can go to heaven

you know any good person of just about

any spiritual or religious system can go

to heaven if they make enough Merit you

know if they do more good than bad

but um theravada Buddhism still has

claims pretty much of a monopoly on

enlightenment

there are although members of other

religions can go to heaven only a good

terrible Buddhism who practices

correctly uh only a good terrible

Buddhist who practices correctly can

become fully enlightened and attained

Nirvana

um unless you're a Pacheco Buddha that

is just like a an outlier almost like an

anomaly

and then they they're not for some

reason they just don't

teach

but I'm rather skeptical of the whole

idea I think uh Hindus can become in

line I would not be surprised if there

have been more enlightened Hindus than

enlightened tarabana Buddhists they're

probably been enlightened in Mahayana

Buddhists I wouldn't be surprised if

there's even been some enlightened

Christians Saint John of the Cross would

be a good

um

a good candidate for that maybe Meister

Eckhart

so

yeah so I'm just kind of skeptical about

the whole idea of

um you know only only a Buddhist can

possibly become enlightened

so I'll just move on to johannes's next

and last question here

and that is what is Sati panya is it

comparable to Buddha nature

literally is mindfulness

and wisdom or at least going with the

usual translations of Sadi and panya

you know it's uh

memory

understanding

or something yeah it's essentially like

the wisdom of the wisdom of of

mindfulness

essentially

and is it comparable to Buddha nature

uh that's a that's a tough one Buddha

nature itself is a Mahayana term

and it seems to me that Buddha nature is

just like an awareness of the absolute
you know deep down you still have this
awareness of the absolute you know
that's your Buddha nature
um and then of course one of the most
well-known Zen Koons is you know Among
Us Joshua does a dog have Buddha nature
and Joshua said moo which in Chinese the
original Chinese would be Woo which I
mean maybe he was just barking like a
dog instead of saying no because we
meant no or but I mean he wasn't saying
that a dog doesn't have Buddha nature he
was just sort of saying you know don't
even don't even go there
but um that's not the question here

um

yeah I mean there could be some overlap

I suppose if if you consider the Buddha

nature just to be like this the deep

down awareness of the absolute of the

highest truth

that

um

then you should really cherish you

should cultivate that

and Sadiq panya may be a way of

cultivating it but I don't think it's

exactly the same

so we'll just move on to the next

question this is from Andreas

and this question comes up every every

few episodes here

um in in some form or another

Andrea says what are your thoughts on

semen retention brahmacharya or celibacy

I recently noticed huge benefits but

after some time those turn into the

opposite like lethargy and obsessive

thoughts and desires any tips on

overcoming those downsides

so

yeah I think I'd be more inclined to

address celibacy than semen retention

because

um if you're young and still got a lot

of Vitality then you're still not going

to be retaining your semen because at

least in my case I was averaging like a

wet dream every couple weeks I think my

record was three and three nights

so I mean it's still I mean if you build

up too much pressure it's going to have

to give

but uh celibacy

it does have its benefits

um some of them are just kind of

superficial outward benefits of you know

like you know you're not involved in a

relationship that can

have such ups and downs and distractions

and pleasures and displeasures and all

that you just kind of get lost in some

sorrow that way I think that's one of

the main benefits of celibacy is uh

um

it just kind of helps you to avoid the extremes and it's more of a middle pass kind of approach but I mean it's not for everybody it's it's even the New Testament like in Jesus of Nazareth in the New Testament it says there are three kinds of eunuchs in this world there's those that are born eunuchs those who are made eunuchs and those who are eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven and that's people who are celibate for Spiritual reasons and then he says but it's not for everybody and it's not because I mean some people are just
is it's horny and frustrated all the

time

I can relate to that

so with regard to making celibacy easier

two of the traditional Buddhist ways are

just don't eat very much and don't sleep

very much

and when you're like

malnourished and and sleepy you're less

likely to be horny

um

yeah I mean you want to kind of keep the

life force kind of burning low if you if

you're celibate you know like in in

Hinduism I mean you wouldn't want to be

eating a lot of rajasic foods you know

eating lots of meat and spicy foods that

tend to up the libido kind of a thing

soy maybe I don't know I shouldn't I

shouldn't encourage that

um

yeah so just I mean if you're living a a

clean life

then uh you just try both ways and see

which way it works better I guess

um or just anything is going to have

downsides I mean the last part here any

tips on overcoming these downsides aside

from just uh you know eating less and

sleeping less so that your your fire is

burning lower and less likely to you

know erupt in a volcano

um yes to some degree it's just

mindfulness you know it's like you just

observe the uh

the the negative effects or whatever or

just observe what's going on and just uh

endure it with Equanimity if possible

okay but I will say that just like

visualizing rotting female corpses and

that sort of thing it doesn't work

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from rui and rui says

oh this is a good question too by the

way

rui says salutations Ponyo were you

practicing a specific meditation during

that period that you call my best

meditation

so uh I guess yeah yeah I was practicing

a specific meditation I suppose I called

it fourth gear

um when I was doing intensive practice I

had I had four gears that were worked

out just through trial and error what

worked and what didn't work and so forth

first gear was just like desperation

mode where you know it's like your mind

is just so all over the place and

distracted and Restless that you can't

really uh get into any deep meditation

my primary object would be the pressure

of my two thumbs pressing together in my

lap which is kind of a good uh primary

object because you can adjust it you

know if it's the pressure is getting too

much then you can just lighten up and if

the pressure is not enough to notice

easily you just push your thumbs

together a little harder and then aside

from that I would label everything

except for breathing uh

see breathing hearing and swallowing my

own slobber I think those are the three

things that I wouldn't have to know I

mean you have to like be aware of it but

you wouldn't label it you just label

everything else you know like itching or

or you know wondering about something

you know what was that sound just

wondering remembering you know

pain stretching pressure just just

anything else that that arose as the as

a distraction from the primary object in

the in the the primary object would just

be touching just touching touching

touching that was that was first gear

second gear was on a palm

where you're just observing the the

sensation of of touch

at or around the nostrils

and I wouldn't be labeling it but I

would label anything else except for

um hearing and swallowing my slobber and

then a third gear

was like you're pretending like your

mind is hooked up to a loudspeaker and

you're like in a library or something

with this big scary librarian lady and

every time you start thinking it's

Blaster with a loudspeaker and the big
scary librarian lady starts giving you
dirty looks and you're gonna get in
trouble so you're just trying to keep
your mind quiet you're just observing
your mind very carefully
and then if a thought starts to arise
you just try and stop it that would be
third gear and then fourth gear is it's
almost effortless it's like you get into
this state
where you're just wide open your mind is
just clear and I don't know if you can
say it was empty or not but it's like
just clear like glass
and you're very mindful at the time
so that if a thought starts to arise

it's sort of like a fish starting to
arise the surface of a pond you start
seeing the ripples
before the fish even gets all the way to
the top and then you just immediately
become aware of that and then it just
flattens back out to a flat comb again
and that was the kind of meditation that
I was doing where you're just sitting
there essentially empty just your your
mind is just silent and clear like glass
so that was I was able to do that on a
daily basis for months
when I was had my best my best the best
meditation in my life at least at least
for a while I mean it wouldn't be all

day long

but I was I was able to get to that

level fairly well

um

for a considerable period of time every

day for months although I never fully

mastered it

so I'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from Conrad this is sort of

a multi-part question about precepts

and Conrad says Ponyo basa I have a

question about the Buddhist precepts I

watched one of your videos from a while

ago where you explain how a lot of the

things we regard as Buddha's essential

teachings were essentially or were

actually inserted in later so firstly
did the Buddha actually invent the five
precepts for laypeople or are they a
later addition well actually it's
neither because the five precepts in
some form or another existed before the
time of the Buddha he just adopted it as
just sort of the standard for the
supporters of a monastic group like the
the Jane's had their own version of the
five precepts the only the Fifth Fifth
precept differed and I think the
supporters of like the
the the forest dwelling brahmins the
proto-hindus
um they also had five precepts

and uh so it was just like Indian

tradition

that the monks would have you know an

elaborate set of precepts but that the

lay people who supported the monks would

only have five or I mean a minimum of

five they could take extra ones as as

optional

so I think with the James it was the

fifth precept was like owning private

property or something and apparently

were rather communistic

put in uh in Buddhism it's it's uh

mainly on taking intoxicants which cause

heatlessness or cloudiness of mind

so

yeah it was just sort of a modification

of an already existing system the five precepts so that goes probably way back so I'll just move on to Conrad's next question on precepts here on the first precept is it ever Justified to take life without it being bad karma for example in self-defense or premeditated taking of life for just purposes such as nourishing oneself by fishing or the state executing of a murderer as a method of Retribution for his deed the only way that you take a life without without it being bad karma

that's a general rule they may be weird exceptions but as a general the only way to kill a living being without making

bad karma is if you do it completely

undelibately

you know it's you're not doing it on

purpose you know you have no intention

to kill the thing but you know you just

step on an ant while you're walking

something like that

uh self-defense it's still considered to

be bad karma I mean if you're lashing

out in self which even uh even a monk is

allowed to strike out in self-defense

and you accidentally kill the guy then

maybe

you know you haven't made Bad Karma for

killing him if if you're just trying to

get away or just trying to fend off his

blows and you wind up accidentally you

know dealing a mortal blow to him

yourself

but uh like hunting and fishing now um

even even self-defense

um if you're like a pure enlightened

Sage supposedly according to terrible to

Buddhism

you just let yourself get killed if you

couldn't run away I mean you wouldn't

fight back

you know you turn the other cheek and or

no you wouldn't even do that you just

just let yourself get killed and

executing murderers now there's there's

even a

there's even a us a little story in the

text with regard to the

murder like that's harajika number two

right

now particular number three the third

party if you commit murder you're

excommunicated for life you're no longer

a monk you can never be ordained again

and um

there was one monk who was advising the

state executioner that he should keep

his acts sharpened and try to finish off

the victim with one blow

just and and the monk was just trying to

be compassionate you know he didn't want

the the murderer you know even though he

was a murderer or you know some somebody

worthy of the death penalty found worthy

of the death penalty you know he just he

didn't want him to have like this gnarly

desk where it takes like five or six

chops to get to get him get his head off

so he was just being compassionate you

know just keep the ax well sharpened try

and finish it with one blow and um

oh just a second

I just had an alert saying the battery

on this computer is almost dead because

I forgot to plug it in

okay we're good

so anyway

um he was you know when the Executioner

followed his advice that monk was uh a

uh an accessory to murder he was guilty

of the paragica offense just just even

though he was motivated more by

compassion

still I mean if you deliberately take a

life

then uh yeah you're still getting the

karma for it I mean is the karma varies

I mean

um you know if you're trying to kill

someone compassion if you're trying to

kill not some someone necessarily even

an animal if you're trying to do it

humanely you know like you're you're

hunting and you just shoot it right

through the head with one shot and

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

better than uh you know bow hunting and

just letting it bleed out while you're
tracking it for three days
that kind of a thing
so I mean there there are levels of of
Badness of of killing deliberate killing
but there's always at least a little bit
of Badness involved so that a saint just
wouldn't kill anything supposedly
according to the decks like there is one
story in Louis City Maga about some
araha or maybe he wasn't even an armhan
yet he was this monk who lived in the
forest and he got tied up with living
Vines by some robbers who stole what
literally had and then just left him
there and then they like tipped over a

oil lamp or something and caught Forest

on fire and so the forest is burning but

he won't break the vines because they're

still alive they're still living plants

and he let himself just burn to death

and I think he became enlightened while

he was burning to death

that's how extreme Buddhist ethics are

only uh just about a monastic Saint or

Sage

can really be fully moral you know

there's almost everything we do has got

at least a little bit of Bad Karma mixed

envelope

so I'll just move on to Conrad's next

question

is it ever justifiable to break any of

the other four

precepts under certain circumstances

stealing false speech sensual misconduct

intoxication

um if you do it on purpose there's

always going to be a certain amount of

demerit involved or Bad Karma

akusala Kama

um but I mean there may be cases in

which

it may be justified to you you may you

may be you may think that breaking the

rule is less immoral than keeping the

role for example I've told this story

before there's a famous story called The

Fourth wise man I can't remember the

author it's a famous short story about
he's this wise man in Persia he sees the
Star of Bethlehem so he's going to go
with the other Magi to go and worship
the baby Jesus following the star but
he's got some kind of complications you
know he's going to meet up with them you
know they go on ahead
and he just keeps getting sidetracked
because he's like he's like having to
help people and he's like giving away
the treasure that he was going to give
to the baby Jesus because they need it
so bad so anyway he gets to Jerusalem
and there he got King Herod has ordered
the death of all the the baby boys and
he's just staying in this house where

there's a woman with a baby boy and
she's just terrified so he's just you
know he has compassion says don't worry
and he stands at the doorway and when
the the soldiers of King Herod come
pounding on the door he gives a little
bit of the treasure he was going to give
to the baby Jesus you know it's like
this big pearl or something and he he
looks the soldier in the eye says
there's no babies here and the soldier
looks at this treasure that he's getting
and he just waves the soldiers on you
know there's no babies here let's keep
going so the guy lied but of course the
mother is on her knees just just crying

in in just joy and gratitude you know

obviously

I You could argue

he did better by telling the LIE than

letting the the Woman's baby get

butchered

so I mean there's there's all kinds of

possibilities here and you're gonna have

to judge you know choose the lesser of

two evils because five precepts it's

just sort of a guideline it's just

purely superficial Buddhist ethics are

not with regard to bodily actions nearly

so much as they are with Garden mental

States what determines the karmic value

of an action is the mental States

accompanying the action you know the

volition or the will and not just the
physical action itself two people can do
exactly the same physical action one is
doing good and the other one is doing
bad or one is doing more good than bad
and the other one is doing vice versa
so there may be times when it may seem
like the lesser of two evils and that's
a choice that you have to make
individually although uh
as a general rule you're still going to
be making that at least a little bit of
Bad Karma just pure good karma is is a
pretty much of a myth
so Conrad's next question regarding
precepts here

furthermore what is defined as sensual
misconduct I understand that being
adulterous is immoral but how about
premarital sex with a committed partner
is all sex between consenting adults who
are not using deception or trickery or
engaging in adultery regarded as moral
so one might so one night stands are
moral well
mainly
um sensual misconduct would be adultery
um like if you're married and you're
messing around with somebody else or
you're messing around with somebody else
who is married also just promiscuous sex
that's just for the sake of pleasure
that's out so one night stands would not

be moral hiring a prostitute would not
be moral and then there's like a a list
of like forbidden females and it's any
woman who's already under the
patriarchy of a man or the the
guardianship you know like like the
woman who already has a husband you know
she's under the protection or the
guardianship of her husband a girl still
living with her her parents
regardless of how old she is
I mean she's like already under the
guardianship of a man like another guy's
slave a female prisoner
she's like under the guardianship of the
prison guards or whatever so it's like

the only woman that you can have sex

with and have it be

um like not be essential misconduct is I

mean if she's not already spoken for

and if if you generally love her I mean

if you have genuine feelings for

I mean if you're married to her then I

guess theoretically you could have sex

with her without loving her or something

maybe just for the sake of having babies

or something but

um

yeah it's

mainly

um you don't have to be married like in

terrible like the ancient Ganges Valley

was a little bit more advanced than some

later cultures uh in with regard to a

lot of things and yeah it's you don't

have like fornication is not necessarily

immoral unless it's just you know the

one night stand is just like

um

just uh promiscuous sex promiscuous sex

is is not moral but if it's with

somebody that you're committed to you

know you're together

you're committed to each other then yeah

that's not necessarily uh immoral from

from a lay person's point of view

I mean all sex I mean we'll get to that

in this next question here also from

comrade is homosexual homosexuality

regarded as immoral

um

pretty much all sexuality is regarded as

immoral to some degree you know because

it's desire is the cause of all

suffering and sex involves desire and

lust and you know lust is one of the the

three poisons and uh

so yeah homosexuality is regarded as

immoral heterosexuality also is kind of

seen as sort of like a necessary evil

for laypeople or maybe a necessary

pleasure for laypeople

um but the whole concept of

homosexuality it it's arguable that it

didn't really exist in ancient times

um like I've said more than once like in

ancient Rome

um there was no real concept of

homosexuality is it was your masculine

or effeminate and that depending on

whether you are on top or on bottom

but even even a man like performing

cunnilingus on a woman that would be

considered almost as bad because you

know you had to be on top you're the one

who was receiving the pleasure not the

one who was giving it necessarily

I mean that that's not entirely precise

way of putting it but maybe maybe you

get the idea and um

in like ancient India also

um there's not much talk about

homosexuality in the in the texts that I

can remember I mean there's

men consorting with pondicons who are

like eunuchs

who weren't considered to be fully male

or fully female they were sort of like

an alternative to to females at times or

something

but as a general rule people who are

sexually deviating from straight

heterosexuality were considered to be

um

like more perverse and like morally

perverse or more

um

unrestrained in their desires and then

there's modern evidence backing that up

like I've read in a medical guide that

it is not uncommon for a homosexual man

to have had more than 1 000 sexual

partners in his life

they're more unrestrained in that sense

at least a lot of them are

and so they got a reputation for

um just being sexually depraved

in uh terrible Buddhism so that

um any any man who wasn't just like a

straight male heterosexual going with

you know ancient Indian tradition that

he wasn't even allowed to be ordained as

a monk

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question this is the last question from

Conrad on uh precepts

and he says furthermore upon your Bossa

do you believe that perhaps many

Buddhists are dogmatically attached to

the precepts and don't make room to be

flexible surely it is the intention

which determines the righteousness of a

given action so surely in the right

mental States one could theoretically

break all precepts without it being

necessarily bad karma well I mean

there's always going to be at least a

little bit of Bad Karma again it's a

matter of choosing the lesser of two

evils

like the standard example is the monk

who just sits on a riverbank and watches

a pretty good old drown because it's

against the rules for him to uh be

touching her

by by Saving her

so I mean theoretically you could say

he's he's just remained morally neutral

by just sitting there you know he's not

thinking anything maybe he's just

meditating while she's out there

floundering and splashing and going down

for the third time

but um yeah I think a lot of monks would

just take the hit you know they'd do the

Penance and everything afterwards for

saving the girl from from drowning

um another my lesser case that I did is

it's against the rules for monk to
practice medicine like give medicine to
lay people like to your own parents or
do another Monk it's okay but to be like
dispensing medicines and and that sort
of thing to to lay people who come to
see you is against the rules but I had
this one one time I was living way out
in the Sticks
and this old man came and told me that
his daughter had had malaria and it was
it was like false super malaria the
worst kind of malaria like the deadliest
kind that she had had it for some
god-awful amount of time I can't
remember if it was six weeks or six
months

and I had some state of the art medicate

uh meditation

malaria medication so I just gave him

enough pills to to cure her and uh she

got better so I mean I broke a rule it

was a minor offense

but I figured it was better than let

some nice lady die

so yeah I mean some some monks are just

dogmatically attached to the precepts

and this Silo Bata paramasa it's called

in in Pali is just clinging to morality

and observances

in the observances you know they don't

even have any real morality involved

it's just it's just stop you know having

the right color of robes on or you know

not eating at the wrong time and it's

not even really doesn't have anything

inherently moral about it it's just an

observance you know it's just like a

tradition

and some monks just adhere to those

dogmatically

um

and I mean to some degree it's

it's not entirely blameworthy if if

you're just trying to be as strict as

you can

um and one one reason why they have

those rules is just for a monk and not

to have like this ego thing going on

where he's gets to decide what he's

going to do or not do when you got it

all laid out and this is what you're

allowed to do and this is what you're

not allowed to do and

um yeah it just makes life a lot simpler

maybe makes it easier to become

enlightened unless you're just clinging

to these rules and then just like

despising all the people around you who

aren't following the rules correctly I

went through I went through that when I

was a young monk just amongst all these

monks handling money and stuff it's like

you just want to just

slap him one

but I mean that's not good either that's

that's a bad karma too so you just have
to put up with it or just uh you know
mind your own business or you know if
you can admonish another person with
meta in your heart
then that's good but if you can't manage
The Meta then you're better off not even
trying to admonish them
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from bpat427.
and bpat427 says
would a cashier at a gas station that
sells beer be guilty of wrong livelihood
how about someone who works in a machine
shop that subcontracts to firearm
manufacturers I suppose the latter
example could also apply to a sheet

metal Factory that supplies arms

manufacturers with sheet metal

okay well the first part is easy would a

cashier at a gas station that sells beer

be guilty of a long livelihood yes

because right likelihood one of the

stipulations of that is no selling drugs

or intoxicants

so like even the the cashier at the

grocery store who's selling beer or or

like a can of raid you know bug spray

you know it's it's not right livelihood

and even in Burma sometimes there'd be

like the nice develop Burmese family

that would invite me to their tea shop

to like bless the tea shop you know and

then you know they're selling beer there

just because that's what everyone does

you know those tea shops have to have

beer as an option and people just go

somewhere else

and it's just it's the wrong livelihood

um

selling poison selling animals for

Slaughter selling slaves all of that is

wrong livelihood and also also selling

weapons so how about someone who works

in a machine shop like subcontracts to

Firearms manufacturers so long as he's

not selling weapons

you know if he's just making like a

trigger guard or something or just

selling selling metal that will get

turned in into weapons

um it would depend on his own mental

states to some degree uh technically he

wouldn't be selling weapons

and if he's just making it he's not even

selling it so

um yeah I don't think there's any rule

against making

like parts to a weapon I mean if you

wanted to like extend the stipulations

of the rules and say well that's not

proper either well that's that's your

call

but um

yeah someone who works in a machine shop

that subcontracts to Firearms

manufacturers so long as he's not

literally selling weapons

then then it's not wrong livelihood

at least that's that's my take on

but again it's it's there's all these

Shades of Gray

and uh

like personally I'm not entirely opposed

to the existence of weapons for

self-defense

but then again I'm kind of a heretic

so we'll just move on to the next

question this is from aurelian

and aurelian

oh he uh he watched a recent video that

I uploaded which is actually an old

video that I made as a monk or I'm

talking to a Burmese Buddhist society
and I'm trying to explain to them for
example why it is that most western
monks don't take abidama seriously so
I'm and I'm kind of pointing out that
you know Asian monks are less likely to
be strict in their practice than than
Western monks and you know explaining
why that is and so forth so anyway
aurelian saw that and he says how was
your experience navigating the internal
politics of the Burmese temple community
in the USA you seem to apologetically
drop some truth bombs on your audience
in Temple talks how receptive were the
audience and did you ever get any

pushback for your non-conformist ways

um

sometimes people would try to admonish

me a little bit

um but it wasn't because of the talks I

gave in public I'm pretty sure unless

they just didn't understand what I was

saying if I try and give a talk in

Burmese sometimes you know there'd be

like a some mistake made in in like my

my mass my lack of Mastery of the

Burmese language or something so people

come up to me afterward and and uh talk

to me about that and then they you know

I tried to explain it and all that's not

really what I meant I just maybe

accidentally said that or something but

um usually I get some pushback from from

monks like I mean I didn't make it any

secret that I didn't consider abidama to

be uh like genuine teachings of Buddha

so then I have monks you know kind

of try and tell me you know you can get

bad karma for heresy and this kind of a

thing or or even you know you get

like even not wanting to bow down to

statues you know I'd have monks try to

admonish me about that

I remember one time

um I was living at this Forest Monastery

and this school mom came you know from

town

and he just announced me that he wanted

to teach me the rules of monastic
discipline and I probably knew the rules
I've been asking this woman better than
anybody else at the monster at the time
he just assumed because I'm a foreigner
I didn't know anything I think and so I
just just to give him a little taste of
what he would be up against
teaching me the rules of monastic
discipline I'd say well I do not
consider the commentaries to be 100
authoritative and he just got this grin
on his face like oh these these
foreigners and he's like he just said
that's not possible
so I mean that's the kind of attitude
you get from a lot of monks but lay

people especially Asian lady people tend

to be very humble and and

um

uh what is it they defer to monks

so if they say it's something that if I

say something that they don't believe or

anything they might talk to other people

about it but they're not gonna like get

on my case about

so most of the pushback I got for being

a non-conformist was from other monks

and

um I would push back at the push back

and then they'd back off

so the next question also from aurelian

would you ever consider robing up again

and re-entering monastic life perhaps if
a politically incorrect Temple Community
developed I know you have moved on to
householder life but have you made a
mental switch and moved on entirely for
the rest of this lifetime
I have no intention of becoming a monk
again I got as far as I could with it
um I mean theoretically in retrospect or
or whatever you could say well if I
tried this or that you know but no I've
I'm done being a monk for this life
um
see here's the last part of this
question though is have you made a
mental switch and moved on entirely for
the rest of this lifetime well I mean I

haven't entirely switched over I was a

monk for so long I was a monk for 30

years more than half my life

um that I mean still I'm

more in monk mode sometimes than is good

for a householder

um

so I think I'm always going to be sort

of like in a limbo this sort of

intermediate because I I mean I didn't

really identify as a monk a lot of the

time I mean I I didn't really identify

like I'm I'm this beaku like I think it

was like probably 10 years after I

became a mocked it finally in my dreams

I was a monk more than half the time and

then sometimes there'd be like these

weird weird sort of ambiguous dreams

where I'm just hanging out with my old

buddies and they want to go to

McDonald's or something I'd say wait I

gotta I gotta wrap up in the road

properly before we can go and that kind

of a thing

so

um

yeah I mean I have no intention of uh

wearing Monk's robes again other than

just uh to show people how it's done

like I did in a recent video but yeah I

haven't made a complete

switch back to layperson and I don't

know if I ever will

so I'll just move on to irelian's next

and last question here

what would be the proper way for a

layperson to make Penance for breaking

the precepts for example I consciously

decide to enjoy some whiskey now what

retake precepts confession resolve to go

and sin no more well the the standard

Burmese way of doing it is you go to a

monk or a like a teacher tell them what

you did and then take the precepts over

again

that would be so it'd be like you

confess and then retake the precept

that's the like the standard traditional

way of dealing with it

so

yeah I mean if you want to make some

resolve or something to try and do

better in future that would be good too

but if I mean if you don't have someone

to confess to like you don't have a monk

you can just tell anybody that you think

might have the proper frame of mind to

uh

you know say something other than so

and then just retake the precept

and uh resolve to try and do better in

future if in fact that is your intention

I mean if it's not really your intention

you're just going to keep drinking

whiskey from time to time then there's

not much point in uh

like making any kind of resolve I mean
you can take the precept and keep it for
a week
now some people do that I mean a lot of
Burmese people they think you just get
Merit just for taking the precepts even
if you have no intention of keeping them
like I remember one time I was living
out in a cave in the woods this group of
people came including this teenage girl
they took eight precepts which includes
the no adornments part and then as
they're leaving I sort of just see a
flower on the ground just bend down pick
it up and stick it in her hair just five
minutes after taking the precepts

so that happens so they just think that
they're going to get Merit just from
taking the precepts and I'm trying to
explain it to them it's like
um you know you get more Merit for
keeping precepts without taking them and
taking precepts without keeping them you
know it's sort of like uh one time I was
way out in the sticks I was trying to
teach a sermon of these Burmese
Hillbillies and it was it was a story
out of the New Testament of the Bible
you know where you got a father has two
sons and he tells the sons go out and
work in the fields today and the first
son says no I don't want to I'm just
going to stay here

but then later he feels he changes his mind and goes out and does what his father told him to whereas the second Sons he says yes Father I'll do it and then he he doesn't even bother you know he's just talking [__] and I'm saying you know which son is better the one who you know told his father he'd do it and then didn't or the one who told his father he didn't want to and then he wound up doing it doing what his father told him to and they it was it was just too abstract they'd never heard anything like it before so they had no idea but obviously the first son you know in in the Bible the New Testament itself

you know it points out that the the
first son is the better son one who says
you know I no I won't do it and then he
winds up doing what his father told him
to and it's kind of like keeping presets
I mean obviously you're better off not
even bothering to take five precepts
formally and then just keeping them to
spontaneously out of the goodness of
your heart or whatever then taking the
presets and just knowing full well that
you're not even going to keep them
so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from hey it's Tig
and hey it's TIG says
in your article titled hysteria and the
holy life

you wrote about your previous habit of
writing aggressively confrontational
letters to people
what communication medium did you use to
further this goal was it email postal or
something else well this was back in the
1990s and I was living in Burma most of
the time
so there was no email I mean there
wasn't there was no something else it
was just writing letters on paper
and putting them in an envelope and
putting a stamp on the envelope and the
address and everything and then
the launching it into the unknown not
knowing if it was ever going to reach

its destination because the government

would be like intercepting my mail a lot

of the time

so yeah it was it was entirely writing

on paper the way Fred Fred Flintstone

used to do it

okay so I'll just move on Ice question

that was kind of a surprisingly easy

question

next question is from bidon

and bidon says

I have a question about judgment and

meta I'm a very judgmental and easily

disgusted person with regards to others

for example fat people emotionally

unstable women effeminate men initially

give me a strong visceral feeling of

repulse and content as I've been
practicing I can catch myself noting the
initial judgment and then I can be
understanding of different people's
experiences and circumstances I've
struggled with this and have felt guilty
about being a bad person however I feel
that judgment isn't on wholesome or
uncritical or hypocritical hypocritical
I feel the Judgment isn't on wholesome
or hypocritical I'm only judgmental
because I hold myself to those standards
and see them as duties and
non-negotiable for for strong healthy
communities
I'm aware that to reach higher spiritual

truths and insights than a more loving
and acceptable accepting attitude should
be cultivated my problem is I feel this
is just how I'm wired and may not change
nor do I want to lower my standards for
myself or others do you have any wisdom
or advice for developing a less
judgmental attitude or how I can be
comfortable with my attitude should it
not be able to change well that's a good
question and this has applied to me also
I used to be very judgmental not nearly
so much as I used to be
but um
yeah some of the same kinds of people
and also just sloppy monks I was very
judgmental of just LAX sloppy monks that

weren't even trying

um

and

I mean one thing I can play devil's

advocate here a little bit and point out

that this attitude of just sort of like

being

irritable having aversion according to

the wisudi Maga for what that's worth

um such a disposition actually makes it

easier to become enlightened because you

kind of are disgusted with with the

world you're disgusted with some sorrow

and that that sort of like helps you to

get out of samsara but it's not really a

good justification for uh ATI Manya or

just

um having a low opinion of other people

you know ATI Manya is is a poly term

which literally means it's like contempt

contemptuousness

you know I'm just having a low opinion

of others

and um I think the main thing that has

helped me to be less judgmental of

people is having been a monk for so long

trying to be a saint and just failing to

be a saint just you realize how hard it

is to change your own programming

usually it takes some kind of breakdown

some kind of Crisis where it's just not

working anymore and then you sort of

like you have the breakdown and then you

can like restructure your personality

some degree especially if you've got a

wise compassionate teacher who's helping

you

um but you know I tried so hard

like I used to have a very low opinion

of of really overweight people it's like

you know how can they do this to

themselves you know there's so much

stuff that they can't even do you know

and then

um being a monk I mean that was not my

issue but I had my own issues and it was

just as hard to overcome them

and then you start having a more more

compassion for others when you're you're

striving to live up to this ideal that

you yourself can't live up to then you

know why should you insist that others

do the same kind of is that kind of

attitude and I think that more than

anything just kind of the humility that

comes from trying to turn yourself into

a saint or a stage something that you're

not

you're trying to become somebody

different

and you find out that it means you are

what you are I mean to a really profound

degree is that you just can't help it

schopenhauer wrote a lot about this kind

of thing

unfortunately I don't have any uh quotes

handy

but um yeah for me that's that's really

what helped me the most was you know

trying to live up to my own ideals and

then

um not entirely but to some degree

failing and then realizing just

um you know as someone who's not even

like dedicating their life to being a

saint you know somebody who's not even a

meditator who's who's maybe has not a

whole lot of self-awareness going on I

mean what what hope do they have

you know so it makes you have a lot more

compassion

you know like seeing little kids in some

Village and chances are they're just

going to be subsistence Farmers you know

poverty-stricken subsistence Farmers not

much education not much intelligence

maybe and it's like you know I can bless

them and you know may you live long and

be happy and all that but

um

most people are just they're just not up

for it

so I mean that's the best advice I can

give you I mean aside from what I said

before of just having that kind of

aversive or uh that kind of mentality

when applied to dhamma

it can help you to become enlightened

just because you have like more aversion

or less more dissatisfaction or

disillusionment with regard to some

sorrow in general

but yeah just mindfulness also I mean

when it arises and you're you uh be done

here says he he already does that he

watches the the Judgment arise

but yeah but definitely for me it's just

um trying hard to change myself and

realizing just how hard that is causes

me to have a lot more of an unaccepting

attitude towards other people and their

their quirks I mean some some quirks are

more acceptable than others I mean

um you know like someone who's a like a

pedophile you know they're just you know

they're they're after little kids then

you know they can say that's that's the

they can't help it but if they can't

help it and they're doing something

potentially very harmful then uh yeah

they should just get locked up

so next question is from Iron Age

sophist

in Iron Age sophist says

according to Buddhist thought as it's

selfish to do good deeds with the motive

of making good karma for ourselves to

some degree

um you know there's little twinges of it

it depends on the mental States

um you want to do good karma I mean why

do you want to do code Karma just

because it's your duty to do good karma

that would be better than I want Good

Karma because I want you know the the

mansion in heaven with 500 Celestial

nymphs you know so I mean if you're

doing good karma just because you feel

like you ought to do good karma it just

seems like the good thing to do it's

like your sacred Duty then yeah you're

gonna

then it'd be less selfish than wanting

Good Karma so that good things can

happen to you

but there's always going to be a certain

amount of selfishness involved it's just

you can uh

make it milder or more severe

so let's see if I've answered it's like

I've answered this question so quickly

it's it's almost uh scaring me here

according to Buddhist thought is it

selfish to do good deeds with the motive

of making good karma for ourselves not

necessarily but I mean Buddhist ethics

are so finely tuned and damn near

anything you do is gonna have some

selfishness involved

so I'm moving on to the next question

here from thur

and thur says where do you come down on

whether smoking tobacco violates the

fifth precept I've seen pictures amongst

the southeast Asia smoking cigarettes

did you see this during your time as a monk even if they don't technically violate the precepts cigarettes are pretty nasty and addictive I myself have never and would never smoke them but I have considered smoking a pipe

well I think one of the before before I get to that part I will say that if tobacco existed in the Ganges Valley during the time of the Buddha almost certainly he would have made a rule against it or the the senior monks who followed him you know when one year was being compiled and edited and turned into the systematic system of monastic discipline yeah almost

certainly tobacco would be against the
rules because literally it is an
addictive drug if desire is the cause of
all suffering you don't want to be
cultivating a habit that that increases
desire obviously
but as I was going to say a little
earlier here the problem especially in
Thailand is that anjan man was a chain
smoker allegedly and on John Mann was
considered to be an aura hunt
so if if an araha does it it must be
okay he also ate cheese in the afternoon
and if an aura hunt can eat cheese in
the afternoon then it must be okay and
so you're not going to get anywhere with
that I remember hearing that during the

the Burmese sixth Council back in the

1950s

um that uh a western Buddhist named

Christmas Humphreys he brought up to for

consideration at this Council

um should smoking tobacco be considered

moral or immoral and uh you know should

it be allowable or not allowable to a

good Buddhist and it was so it was just

too controversial I mean the monks who

run these great councils tend to be very

conservative very traditionalist you

know they don't want to deal with

anything that they haven't already dealt

with a hundred times at least and so

they just shelved it they didn't they

didn't want to deal with it

so yeah I mean it's pretty obvious that

from a dharmic point of view smoking any

or taking any addictive drug that gets

you addicted

you know I mean having a beer is not the

same as being an alcoholic

so I mean like

I don't know trying a cigarette see what

it's like is not going to be the same as

as being addicted to nicotine

but the more you do it the more likely

it is that you will get addicted so

you're better off uh keeping it to a

minimum to say the least

and now we've got a question from

this this guy is a wise guy I'm just

letting you know here his name is araga

Curtis samaja

araga cutie samanja

also known by other names including

trumptonshire gahopati

anyway he says according to Buddhist

thought is there a distinction between

kusla or wholesome behavior that

generates Merit leading to for example

Pleasant reverse versus behavior that is

efficacious at moving toward Bodhi for

instance when stopping meditation to

jump in a river to rescue a drowning

person be an example of the former while

impassively continuing to meditate would

be the latter well

I mean there is a lot of overlap

that um just doing good deeds

it creates Good Karma which then causes

smoother sailing in your future so that

your life and your mind become more calm

and clearer

so

yeah there's there's not a clear-cut

distinction between earning Merit and

going for enlightenment although

ultimately

if you're getting into the the higher

stages of practice then a monk

especially is encouraged to leave Merit

and demerit behind

that Merit and demerit are both Karma

and they're both you know they're

they're both samsaric they keep you in

samsara so a monk if he's going to

become enlightened has to leave behind

good and evil he has to leave behind uh

Merit and demerit

Good and Bad Karma

so yeah I mean in the earlier stages

than doing good deeds that could get you

into heaven or at least getting you into

a clearer ground for practice you know

was was fewer bad things happening to

you that are going to distract you and

derail your practice and so forth but

then once you get you know into the

higher levels of it then you have to

start leaving all that Merit stuff

behind

so I think I hope I answered that

question

and now

we've got a question from a person with

an equally difficult name

and CEO

vaccine says

why do Buddhist monks change their name

upon ordination it doesn't seem like

names were changed amongst in the times

of the Buddha that's kind of an

interesting question

um

when a monk is ordained he receives a

poly name and so I received the name

Ponyo basa when I became a monk I didn't

get to Peck it myself my preceptor

picked the name and one reason for that

is that your name has to be used in the

ordination ceremony which is all in poly

so you have to have a poly or at least a

polyized name

so that the like the declension of

mounds and so forth the declension of

the name and stuff fits poly grammar so

that you can do it in the ceremony and

the ceremony will be valid with correct

grammar and all that

but to some degree I mean it is true

that in Ancient India nobody changed

their names that um they had the the

same name as after they became a monkeys

before and

um I mean it's just now a tradition that

you receive a formal poly name as a monk

so that I actually knew a Burmese man

who had a Polly name his name was

uthihan which is

um the ooh is just like the honorific

before the name sihan was just the

Burmese pronunciation of the poly word

siha which means lion you know so he

already had a poly name and still they

they gave him a different poly name also

starting with s

so he became a sobida or something like

that

so even though he already had a poly

name they just gave him a different one

instead so I think that to that extent

is just tradition that you get a poly

name now

all right so CEO of auctions whose name

is getting slowly easier to pronounce

asks the next question here which is it

says in sutas the Buddha attains

Enlightenment and the higher knowledges

in the fourth genre but the commentaries

say that you can't get insight in genres

because you are too concentrated can you

explain this contradiction how the

Buddha could achieve enlightenment while

in Jannah well

according to Orthodox tradition you

don't get insight including liberating

Insight while you're in Janna it's just

that as soon as you come out of Jana

the Insight can arise just through

um like reviewing the experience or

whatever and

um like my favorite example of that

which I've I've told several times is in

the uh lesser discourse on voidness in

the Maji manikaya about a monk who

cultivates gradually more and more

vacuous like more empty mental States

until he gets to the the signless

concentration of mind the anime

is that right yeah anime

Which is higher than forth Jonah

supposedly that's the implication

and he gets to that level and then it's

only when he comes out of it that he
realizes that that was the highest level
of attainable
and that's still not it still had a
beginning and an end it's still just a
condition some sort of state and then
that's when the Insight arises and
that's when he becomes enlightened and
that's the way it's supposed to work is
when you're in Jonna you're just in the
state of bliss you know it's temporary
and like or temporary Liberation but
it's not permanent Liberation but then
when you come out of that insights can
arise like including liberating insight
and so the John I can might trigger the

liberating Insight what the liberating

Insight doesn't occur while while the

meditator is in genre

so I think that answers that question

so I'll just move on to the next one

also by CEO of action

in another video you say that going to

body scanning technique can probably

only get you to intermediate

intermediate level what techniques of

meditation can be done at beginner

intermediate and advanced stages as we

develop along the path

well

any meditation technique that has you

thinking and labeling doing a lot of

busy work

which may be necessary for a beginner

because

the The Beginner's mind has this

Restless hyperactive mind that has to be

set to work and just kept out of trouble

you know it has to be disciplined and

then gradually the Mind becomes calmer

and quieter and then you can get rid of

a lot of this busy work

so

you know any kind of technique where

you're still thinking you know when

you're when you're doing breathing

meditation you're just like breathing in

breathing out breathing in breathing out

you're still thinking and it's still

like it's like an anchor in samsara

so above that level is you're still

perceiving you're still focusing on

things and noting them silently even

though you're not labeling them

still I mean you're like focusing your

attention on one thing to the exclusion

of everything else you know you're

you're distinguishing between figure and

ground you know you're still essentially

in a some sort mental state

so that would be sort of intermediate

like Elementary would be you're still

like thinking and labeling the state

above that is you're not thinking in

symbolic thoughts anymore but still

you're perceiving and focusing and you

know you've got like a primary object

and so forth but then like when you get

to the advanced stage it just becomes

practically effortless

where

I mean your mind is just wide open

you know it's not concentrating on one

thing to the exclusion of everything

else and I mean people that say that

Jonna is a state of like fourth genre is

just like laser pinpoint on something I

think they might be confusing that with

a more of a hypnotic state

because I mean you're not more conscious

I mean maybe you've got the same amount

of Consciousness as before but it's

narrowed down into this laser beam

whereas I mean it seems to me that if

you're going to get closer to

Enlightenment your mind is going to be

opening out instead of closing up

and so you're going to be more and more

aware of the full field of of

Consciousness without narrowing it down

to just focusing on this or just

focusing on that

and when you get into those kind of

stages of these expansive just wide open

quiet stages I think that is it would be

a more advanced than like in the goenka

system where you're like looking for

some sensation in some quadrant of your

body then you as soon as you feel it you

note it and then you move on to the next
and just like you're scanning your body
it still does a fair amount of busy work
and it's essentially so I'm sorry what
you're doing it's a more you know higher
level more subtle level of samsara than
you know the guy riding the bus looking
out the window or eating his lunch or
whatever but um still
you're trying to quiet the mind and then
when it becomes like very quiet like no
moving parts
and you're still conscious I mean you're
not like in a coma or anything you might
be more conscious than before you're not
like becoming a hibernating squirrel or

anything like that then you're getting

into advanced days you're getting into

mystical States

where you're experiencing reality

directly and not through the

intermediate filter of a perceiving

perceiving mentality

so

what techniques of meditation can be

done at beginner intermediate Advanced

stages well like beginner and

intermediate you can still be doing

anapana until you just gets to the point

where it's just so subtle that your mind

just isn't really

like focused laser focused on this one

phenomenon anymore then you just move on

to

some kind of fourth some kind of janic

state I suppose

but when you're a beginner and your mind

is busy you have to keep your mind

occupied otherwise it'll just get bored

and distracted and drift off you know

you don't have enough busy work for it

to do then some of your excess mental

energy is just gonna like go off in its

own Direction but on the other hand if

your concentration is good giving it all

this busy work to do is it's just uh

counterproductive you're not gonna

you're not gonna get into any subtle

states that way

so I guess I should just move on to the

next question

also by the same guy

and this is the second to last question

by the way

and he says other than the experience of

Nirvana itself and the extermination of

the poisons what do you think in our

heart gains for example the commentaries

claim our hearts have complete Mastery

of the pathways of the Mind see past

lives psychic powers Etc well not all

Aura hunts even have they even have

psychic powers receive their past lives

they're what are called dry visioned or

a hunts that didn't attain the higher

genres

you know they just did like Insight

Insight Meditation and became

enlightened that way and then they don't

have the psychic powers so really I

think it's it's not what an art gained

it's what he loses he doesn't

necessarily gain anything

he says he's just losing all the

delusion all the fake false stuff

all the stuff that he thought was real

or good or beautiful or whatever before

you know that all that all falls away

and the the absolute the highest truth

which is always there it is it's still

there he said now it's uh he's conscious

of it he's aware of it

so maybe they are hunting in the games

is just an awareness of of the highest

truth that stays with him well it was

always there but there's all this extra

stuff that got in the way so it's more

it's more accurate I think to say that

our Hans loses stuff and doesn't gain

anything

necessarily

and so I'll just move on to the very

last question also by CEO vacchen sipad

zidana

and this question is

what do you think about the psychic

powers claimed to be attained in the

ancient texts on John mun is the last

person many lay people seem to agree had

mind reading powers but do you think

these things even exist well

um there are still monks that are

considered to have mind reading powers

um I met uh

in Seattle long ago and he's supposedly

on on one of his disciples was telling

me that he had his mind read

um there's a monk in Thailand still or

at least 20 years ago I had a German

monk tell me if you have any doubts you

go meet this Monk and he'll he'll tell

you what you're thinking and of course

I've read lots of stories about like

neem karoli Baba who is a Hindu and uh

yeah he just had astonishing psychic

powers it was just some of the stories I

mean some of the stories are probably

unlikely to be true

but still I mean ROM Das is I I consider

him to be a fairly honest person he is

brutally honest with regard to himself

and uh he had all kinds of weird stuff

happening with maharaji or neem Karly

mama

and I mean for that matter just

parapsychology has pretty much

demonstrated the existence of

at least a small amount of psychic

powers like the the ability to to

um guest cards at

uh consistently above the level of

random chance it might just be like one

percent above random chance but still

when it's consistent and repeated that

indicates that

um everybody or virtually everybody has

like this latent capacity for that sort

of thing

ah so I'm not so sure about

um being the last well many lay people

seem to agree he had mind reading powers

but I mean there's there's lots of

people that have psychic powers

including

um this

parapsychology subjects

like um I was reading about a

parapsychology book it mentioned helmet

Schmidt I still wonder whatever happened
to helmet Schmidt he was uh
a research engineer for Boeing
Laboratories this is several decades ago
and they were having a slow
time where there wasn't much research
that was being done so he asked
permission to study the effects of
Consciousness on mechanical systems and
they gave him the green light and he
invented some really elegant I mean I
don't know how you could debunk this
stuff where he had like a random number
generator based on a geiger counter and
just this counter one two one two so you
just get this random number of ones and
twos or zeros and ones or whatever and

then he could

he could take that and transform it into

an audio thing where it's like the ones

would be a click in this ear and the

twos would be a clicking in the other

ear and then he'd sit someone down with

the headphones and just tell them try to

make more clicks in the left ear this

time

and

people consistently I mean he could do

thousands of tests they didn't take very

long and consistently even though he's

altering sometimes right here sometimes

left ear thing

um still is above random chance

and you know it's sort of like the

ability of aspirin to prevent heart

attacks they were doing like a study on

that back in the 80s I think where they

finally had to just break off the study

because they considered it to be

um like unethical

to keep running the study and depriving

the control group of the aspirin that

obviously was conducive to keeping them

from having heart attacks and the amount

of

above above random that these people

were doing with the clicks

um it was it was about the same

percentage

so I mean it was for for aspirin

preventing heart attacks I mean that was

conclusive evidence enough that they

just called off the study so that it was

unethical to continue and and deprive

the control group of the aspirin

and uh but the thing is that so many

scientists are just like

materialistic like scientific

materialists that they just cannot bring

themselves to believe that

psychic powers are even possible

but I consider them to be possible so

how do I think these things even exist

well mind is uh mind is number one

like the first verse of the dam upon on

the mind is is the Forerunner of all

things and uh

I'm not really a materialist

so I think

one of the reasons why we don't have

these Powers is just that we're so

locked into materialism now we just

don't don't we can't believe we don't

have the faith

which of course reminds us of uh Jesus

of Nazareth who supposedly had all these

powers where he was walking on water and

healing blind people and lame people and

so forth and I think there's a good

chance that he could do that stuff and I

don't think he was the only one

exactly how

um

the world is uh is not bound by

materialistic laws invented by

scientists

and the one book that I read that

explains this stuff the best I think is

uh the trickster in the Paranormal by

George P Hansen who says that uh

that this kind of stuff will never

really be proven because it's it's like

leaking through the cracks between the

rules and the laws that we consider

governs reality

that um once you get to a certain level

I mean like if you're not ordinary

whirling they might just have like a

weird mind that you know has a talent

for this sort of thing but you get up

into the like Advanced Sage level and uh

yeah they can start controlling it

or at least um they're they're way

better at doing it

so

I would just advise you to read the

trickster in the Paranormal by George P

Hansen Hanson who was a parapsychologist

um to get a good idea of how it works

I've talked about it lots of times and

this video is already over two hours

so I think I better uh call it good

so uh yeah I guess we're done

and uh if you have any questions you are

very welcome to ask them

anything that you think that I would uh

be likely to answer especially questions

about Buddhism or spirituality or

philosophy Eastern religions Burma me

personally living in caves that kind of

thing

um you know feel free to ask in the

comments below if you have access to my

subscribe star you can ask there if you

have access to uh my uh Discord server

you can ask there and uh check out the

uh

URL links below

and uh give this video a like if you

please

and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 42 of

question and answer I am your host Ponyo

Bossa and this is your co-host

Adelaide

she is the new dog in this house and

she's a very nice dog although she's got

like one pale blue eye that kind of

reminds me of something out of an Edgar

Allan Poe story but

as it may we've got lots of questions

and so I'm just going to Wade right into

this and the first question is from I

believe he's called yuichiro

and yuichiro says I read an article by a

right-wing traditionalist complaining

that modern Movie heroes hesitate to

kill their enemies and show mercy and
this is apparently libtard propaganda I
don't like Marvel movies but I don't see
this as particularly bad morals it seems
to be promoting compassion
however I can also see the argument for
warriors carrying out their Duty no
matter what and just killing their
enemies without a second thought like
Krishna told Arjuna which one would be
better morals in your opinion
okay well I mean the good guy is not
wanting to kill the bad guys isn't
something new I think Roy Rogers in like
the really old black and white movies
wouldn't shoot any of the bad guys he
would just lasso them off their horse

and just incapacitate them until they

got arrested or something

um

but yeah I mean obviously from a

Buddhist point of view from the point of

view of Buddhist morals

um not killing is better than killing so

if you're getting to the point of like a

samurai warrior just killing out of a

sense of honor and Duty

um that's amoral that's that's not so

much moral as just being

um

efficiently amoral I think

so

yeah definitely from the point of view

of Buddhist morals not killing is
preferable to killing regardless of of
who you are or what the circumstances
are and that's one reason why
um the most serious Buddhists are
supposed to be monks who renounce the
world and don't have a woman and
children that they have to defend and so
they can just think just in a saintly
matter let themselves be killed without
without killing the guy who's trying to
kill them
so I guess that answer has been that
question has been answered so I'll just
move on to the next one as the puppy
snarves on my hand
okay next question from yuichiro is

as follows a libtard Buddhist friend

libtard Buddhist friend of mine said he

reached Jonah while being a Layman and

only meditating half an hour a day I'm

skeptical however he's not the type to

lie do you think this is possible or

likely

well the odds against it are pretty high

but I mean it is possible even if you've

got like a 0.1 percent chance you've got

a thousand people doing something that

means just going with Statistics one out

of a thousand would uh succeed

so

there is a good chance that if this

person is honest and thinks that he's

got Jonah just from meditating half an
hour a day it's possible and this is
often the case that he had some kind of
strange experience and just assumed that
it was John or he went into like a like
a trance State and just uh just thought
that it was Jonah and I think like like
I've said many times on on my various
videos probably most people in Burma
which is a devoutly terrible Buddhist
country
um they really can't tell the difference
between Jonah and like a auto hypnosis
so it may be that the person just went
into a Trans State and just assumed that
it's drawn up but really doesn't know
enough about Janna to be able to tell

whether it's religion or not but I mean

without really

um meeting this person or talking with

this person then you know it's possible

it's it's not entirely it's not

completely impossible somebody some

people have parami which means that

um from a Buddhist point of view they've

cultivated

um like virtues over past lives and so

they just are born with a certain amount

of talent and I've met people that just

really have meditative Talent they're

just really good at it naturally

so it could be one of those people too

despite being a libtard

so

I guess I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from Jess

and Jess says

what evidence is there that Buddha's

experience of Nirvana wasn't just a

hallucination or made up entirely it

seems most Buddhist I encounter have

already drunk the Kool-Aid and are not

capable of objective rational criticism

criticism after a while in the religion

it seems the oral and monastic tradition

meant to preserve the teaching has

become very cult-like over time

well the oral and monastic tradition I

don't think has become particularly

cult-like although some some Buddhist

groups can be called like like

um even though I think the goenka method

um it has been the most successful at

spreading dhamma in the west like

genuine dhamma still I mean they can be

pretty cold like

so there is that

what was regard to the question here

what evidence is the Buddha's experience

of Nirvana wasn't just a hallucination

or made up entirely well I mean

technically it wasn't even an experience

I mean Nirvana

it's it's you're getting into uh

questionable territory

uh even referring to you know somebody's

experience of Nirvana because Nirvana is
completely off the scale and if you read
texts like the the Attica wag of the
suttony Pata you know that I mean you
you dismiss any kind of mental state
like like a serious meditator who's
going for for enlightenment you just let
go of every mental state it says in the
sutiny Pata or in in antakawaga you just
you know just let go of all perceptions
you know just anything and so
with that kind of a view I don't think
that you would confuse Nirvana with a
hallucination
if I mean any kind of perception is is
dismissed as not it
then

I mean if you if you read some of these
texts it's very sophisticated and
there's no way to prove beyond the
shadow of a doubt that the Buddha was
truly enlightened there's no way to
prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that
anybody is truly enlightened
so
um you just go with the evidence of the
texts just the subtlety and
sophistication of the explanations or
instructions on how to become
enlightened how to attain nibbana how to
I mean whether it's even an experience
or not is questionable
so

the Buddha's uh Enlightenment is like an

entirely different issue from

um most of the Buddhists that Jess

encounters having uh drunk the Kool-Aid

and not being capable of objective

criticism of their

of their their system their their

religion or whatever it is

so

I guess I'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from

I think it's pronounced a vanity

and this is in response to the previous

q a where somebody asked me if I'd seen

Fight Club and I I mentioned that

I have seen it it's one of my favorite

movies it's in my top 10 but not in my

top three although it's it's close you

know it might be number four or five but

um let's see what are my top three

favorite movies

well I should just say that they're all

um

like romance dramas

like there's this movie I like uh touch

me feel me about the death mute

ballerina Who falls in love the

choreographer and stuff but

I wouldn't I won't be that cruel to the

person who commented and saying please

don't say that it's it's romance dramas

that are your top three so my first my

favorite movie of all time would be

Monty Python and Holy Grail

number two would be the Matrix and

number three would be apocalypse now but

not the Redux version like the original

movie version of Apocalypse Now like

without the French Plantation and I'm

sure the Playboy bunnies are very nice

but like the prolonged scene with the

Playboy bunnies

um

and the dog is chewing on my finger as

you can see

um

but yeah the original the original

version of uh of Apocalypse Now would be

number three I think

so and I suppose

one thing they all have in common

they're all philosophical movies you

might think that Monty Python and holy

grail isn't philosophical but I mean

it's self-referential

which in a way makes it philosophical

like there's the there's the guy like

um they meet this guy who's referred to

as the man from scene 23 or something

like that like inside them in the movie

you know they're talking about it's the

man from scene 23.

but I'll just move on I don't need to

keep talking about this this is the next

one is from Mary

spelled m-e-r-r-y

and this question I think is a trick

question he says for Q a number 42 I

want the answer to life the universe and

everything

and I think that comes from The

Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy

where like the answer to life the

universe and everything is like number

42.

but um I'm I'm very skeptical from the

very beginning I've been very skeptical

of the idea that the answer to life the

universe and everything would be a

number

unless maybe it's like the number one or

the number zero

but um

yeah the answer to life the universe and

everything let's let's just go with

dependent coal Rising potential

and I've talked about that at length

recently on another video so I'll just

move on to Fred's next question

and that is who is Fred the guy is

amazing quicker than me I see his

comments on Twitter Youtube everywhere

the guy is my hero I mean I am creepy

but that guy is just a whole another

level Mary says

and friends he's he's just uh a

supporter and uh fan of my my videos my

channel I guess and uh he lives in New

Zealand and I really don't know a whole

lot about him but um yeah I'm pretty

sure he lives in New Zealand so

you can uh

go with that

so I'll just move on a nice question and

this is I like this question I mean I

pretty much like all questions but every

once in a while you get one that's kind

of interesting one that I've never had

to answer before

and uh this one is kind of one of those

Lucid says

what do you think of the so-called

Buddhist tooth and Mystic relics in

general

well there's more than one Buddhist

tooth there's like the famous One in Sri
Lanka they've got the Temple of the the
sacred tooth or something there
and um I was ow she's biting my ear
I was told that or I read that when the
Portuguese uh colonized parts of Sri
Lanka one of the first things they did
in their history in their like religious
intolerance is they publicly smashed the
tooth there and within like 24 hours
somehow the tooth had miraculously
respawned which um it's I mean that in
itself is kind of suspicious to me
but I have seen a a replica of the other
canine tooth both of these are supposed
to be like the the canine teeth of the

Buddha

and uh I saw a replica of the Chinese

one there's one in China

and the Chinese sent this tooth

um I'm pretty sure it wasn't a replica

um so yeah forget the part about me

seeing a replica we'll get to the

replica part in a little bit but they

they lent this tooth to uh Burma and I

went and looked at it when it was in

Rangoon and it was about this big and it

had several little root things on one

one end and the other end was just kind

of beveled

and my guess is

I mean the whole tooth was like this big

it was a big tooth and my guess is it's

like from some kind of

rhinoceros maybe a taper you know some

kind of some kind of animal that is not

a human being

um

so

um yeah I'm kind of skeptical of any

Buddhist tooth Relic but what the

Burmese just took it very seriously and

they built a pagoda largely with slave

labor I have I have read

um to to house a replica of this you

know like five six inch long the

rhinoceros tooth or whatever it was I

mean it obviously did not look like any

human tooth

so what do I think of the so-called

Buddhist tooth I think they're probably

fake

um

I mean the Buddha was cremated and uh I

mean I have seen what are likely to be

some of the remains from The Cremation

and they were just like little pieces of

charred bone I don't know if any teeth

survived

but uh the next part of this question is

what is what do I think of Mystic relics

in general well as I just mentioned I

have seen the Peshawar relics in

Mandalay and um I was

kind of

in a state of mild awe I guess actually

seeing a part of gonama Buddha himself

or what is likely to be

a genuine relic of the Buddha himself

um

so you know it can inspire a certain

amount of

you know respect or awe or devotion or

something like that but I don't think

that they have any magical powers other

than just what the people around them

you know impose upon them I mean like

you believe in something fervently

enough then Miracles can happen

and so I'm sure that the relics

including fake ones have inspired enough

devotion and just sort of fanaticism

that

like miraculous things have happened

like healings and so forth and now the

puppy is like getting under my arm

and so I'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from Austin and she's like

licking

oh now she's behind me ah

puppies are like that you know

so the next question is from Austin

and Austin says oh she's snarfing my

ears so bad

Austin says I was discussing my interest

in

I was discussing my interests

I was discussing my interest in Buddhism

with the Vietnamese Christian friend who
shared with me his perspective that
Buddhism could lead to social stagnation
he explained that if everyone were to
become a monk it would cause societal
collapse do you believe that Christian
societies operate on a more effective
system for generating wealth than
Buddhist societies well that's that's
kind of
first of all it's like a facile kind of
a bogus argument it seems to me and also
it points out just how corrupt
Christianity oh how corrupt Christianity
has become
just a second we gotta reposition this

dog my earlobe is just too close to her

mouth

so first of all

um

this person says that Buddhism could

lead to social stagnation because if

everyone were to become a monk it would

cause societal collapse well yeah I've

heard that many times before and it's

just a plain fact that not everyone's

going to become a monk or a nun it's

always going to be a tiny amount of

people who are doing that and so it's

just kind of a bogus argument

but with regard to Christianity I mean

Christianity used to be pretty I mean

it's like

woe under the rich you know gather not
up your Treasures upon the Earth sell
all that you have give the money to the
poor and follow me it's just the Bible's
full of this stuff you know it's like
love of money is a form of idolatry and
that stuff just gets ignored and it's
it's ignored by most Buddhists also like
it's strictly against the rules for
monks to handle money and I guess
there's a question a little farther down
that addresses that particular issue and
98 of Asian monks or let's be charitable
and call it 95 of monks
um of terravonna Buddhist monks just go
ahead and handle money anyway

and that's the way with Christians I

mean the Bible says you're supposed to

be poor

and Christians just don't want to do

that

so

I suppose like corrupt Christianity

it may be a more effective system for

generating wealth

but then again if you're truly spiritual

generating wealth is not really a

priority

voluntary poverty is considered to be a

virtue by biblical Christianity and from

uh Orthodox terravada Buddhism

from from the point of view of both

and I think I'm going to put the dog

down hey you go in here

there you go

Okay so

um yeah with regard to this question by

Austin first of all you know it's just

not going to happen that most people or

let alone everybody is going to become

an ordained monk or nun which causing

societal collapse because monks aren't

even allowed to feed themselves they got

to be supported by laypeople

foreign

my sophistication by using paper

umbrellas now

and uh

yeah Christianity was just as hard on

on the keeping of money as early

Buddhism was

oh you want back out do you

come here let's just put you down here

oh

yeah you go there there you go

um

yeah like like it says that Jesus told

his disciples you know not to carry

money

although I think there's uh some

ambiguity in the New Testament I think

there's other scenes where where they do

handle money

but um yeah I would I would just

consider this argument to be somewhat

facile there have been prosperous

Buddhist countries like um you know the

the mauryan empire under Ashoka who

apparently was fairly prosperous

um and that was it was Buddhist so

but any

any culture that's going to be

profoundly spiritual I mean the making

of money economic Prosperity is not

going to be nearly as much of a priority

as you know some sort of spiritually

bankrupt

protestantism or something where

um people are just ignoring certain

parts of the Bible that are inconvenient

in order to make as much money as they

can

so

I think I'll just move on to Austin's

next question

see

Austin says I understand that lying is a

fundamental principle in Buddhism to

refrain from but there are some people

that cannot take unvarnished truth

without being severely damaged in

emotional well-being

what should be done about this if

consequentially people suffer less from

White Lies well I mean you're still

lying even if it's a white lie so I mean

you should either tell the truth or

remain silent

um although I mean I was talking about

this in a previous the the previous q a

you know giving an example of how you

know if telling a lie might save

somebody's life or something like that

um I mean it's a judgment call it's

still going to be immoral

it's still going to be unethical to lie

but it may be the lesser of two evils so

in a case like that but if you're just

trying to spare somebody's feelings

I mean that's that's a judgment call

also

you know like uh let's say your woman

gets her hair cut really short and dyed

purple and I'll see how it looked and I

mean you've got to live under the same

roof with her you might have to uh kind

of fudge things a little bit

but

nevertheless I mean it is best to tell

the truth

um if possible and I remember Paul Lowe

saying wants that

if everyone just told the unvarnished

truth

that you know like hypocrisy and and

white lies and all that were gone just

lying out of politeness you know like

I'd like to come but I'm busy when

actually you just don't want to come

that kind of thing I mean that's just

common that's that's just very very

common

but as I was saying Paulo once said that

if everybody just started telling the

truth telling what they really think

it would just

like Civilization would just blow up you

know it would just be like chaos just

Mayhem for maybe two weeks or so and

then by the time the dust finally

settled the civilization would be

operating at a higher level of

consciousness

but

um there was a famous saying I just read

just recently

I can't remember who said it though it's

like you know if if the truth hurts them

then let them hurt

some something along those lines I think

it was like Ben Franklin or somebody who

said that

but I mean to some degree you have to

have compassion but still if you lie I

mean you are lying and you know you take

responsibility for that so at the very

least it should be the lesser of two

evils

so I'll just move on to the next

question also from Austin

and Austin says have you ever witnessed

a monk harnessing psychic powers and is

it permissible to discuss such matters I

understand that within the monastic

Community discussing magical powers is

prohibited well technically it's not

exactly prohibited it's just that a monk

is not allowed to admit to having

psychic powers to a layperson

I mean amongst themselves monks can talk

about it although even then is probably

not the best

um

so I mean the rule is against a monk

discussing superhuman mental States

especially his own to Malay people to

unordained people that is against the

rules

so I mean even if he does have Jonna if

he admits to having Jonah to a layperson

he's still broken a rule it's not nearly

as bad of a rules if he lies to a

layperson saying that he's got Jonah

when he really doesn't that's

excommunication that's that's one of the

worst things a monk can possibly do

ah so

um have I ever witnessed a monk

harnessing psychic powers

I don't think so I I've never really

hung out with a miracle working monks

um I've met a few that had a reputation

for doing that and sometimes you can't

really tell I mean

um you meet some Monk and he's he's

looking at you intently for all you know

he might be reading your mind but he

doesn't say anything about it so

something like that but my understanding
of psychic powers among spiritual
practitioners is not a matter of
harnessing it it's just that
synchronicity and just weird stuff
happens spontaneously around certain
people
um and it's not a matter of them like
deliberately doing it they just might be
talking
off the top of their head and it's just
as though you know it's intended for one
person in particular you know they've
got some deep down issue they have to
deal with and they have to they have to
hear that particular thing in order to

like open this door inside them or

something

uh so and it just happened spontaneously

just you know the flow of karma or

something is enhanced

around certain people

and I've heard anecdotal stories about

like weibo Seattle

um you know he would know in advance

when people are going to show up and

this was back before cell phones or

anything like that he would just start

you know he'd tell the people to get

ready because we're gonna have visitors

soon and you know he'd give details and

then they'd you know lo and behold they

show up or

um

not not just things like that but I mean

I have heard stories about weibo Seattle

having these psychic powers but he died

before I ever went to Burma

in Seattle apparently could read minds

or reportedly could read minds I met him

once but he wasn't obviously reading my

mind while I was talking with him

so I guess I should just move on to

Austin's next question

and he says

what should I do about the limited

availability of genuine Buddhist

teachings in my area although there are

a few zendos nearby where I can practice

meditation one of them requires a subscription fee to access the Nama which seems contradictory to Buddhist principles the other zendo has suspended their sitting practice due to covid and the head instructor who is a roshi has been removed from the Zen Community for engaging in sexual misconduct I'm uncertain of where to turn for authentic Buddhist guidance and practice I visited a terravonna watt but unfortunately nobody there spoke English or engaged with me it appeared that the primary focus of the community was on providing meals to the monks and Performing repetitive walkings around the temple I didn't feel a sense of connection or

engagement with the community

and then uh as an update in parentheses

he says uh I went to a new want today

and had the pleasure of meeting a very

friendly monk we had a great

conversation about dama for about an

hour and he kindly invited me to come

and meditate anytime additionally he

invited me to join him for Maga Puja

which was a wonderful experience

so to some degree I think Austin's

predicament has been alleviated somewhat

but uh the main question is the very

first sentence up here what should I do

about the limited availability of

genuine Buddhist teachings in my area

well I mean you have access to the

entire poly to pitica it's on the

internet you can buy hard bound or you

know hard copies of it so that should

really be the uh

the like the the gold standard for for

dhamma and genuine Buddhist teachings is

just read the original text in good

translations and then if you hear a

dhamma teacher

uh you compare what he's saying with

the books

you know like dama books you know the

ancient ones that resonate deeply with

you

so if you can't find a really good

teacher like a flesh and blood one

then uh I mean you've always have

recourse to the dhamma like the Buddha

before he died said that you know after

he is after he has gone the Domo will be

the teacher

so

uh get a good copy of the sutiny Pata

for example or the the majum and ikaya

so I think uh I assume that's a good

enough Quest answer to the question so

I'll move on to Austin's next question

and Austin says is living as a layperson

better than living as a monk I notice

that you seem healthier and happier now

that you're in a loving relationship and

have access to amenities such as food

and a gym whenever you want which may
not be readily available to monks who
lead a more austere and contemplative
lifestyle
um is living as a layperson better than
living as a monk it depends on what you
want out of life I suppose
um being a monk is is unnatural you know
being a celibate monk who eats once a
day doesn't have a home doesn't you know
supposedly ideally doesn't really have a
family who's like going alone like the
Horn of the rhinoceros maybe not even
knowing where he's going to sleep each
night not knowing what he's going to eat
every day it's it's really unnatural and
then you add on top of that just the all

the rules have to be followed and just

the meditation

um and it puts a real strain on people

and

I mean monks are no exception I think uh

one of the reason why like famous Saints

wind up having like horrible diseases

and so forth is just it causes such a

strain on the system that it causes an

imbalance which then can result in

health problems

um some people just imposed health

problems on themselves you know like

there was uh some some French woman in

the Middle Ages

uh she didn't get canonized but she was

beatified

and I mean she would just eat tiny

amounts of bread that was so tough that

it would cause her mouth to bleed when

she was eating it and one time she got

so sick that the doctor told her she had

to eat meat and she ate the meat but

then later he compensated by cutting an

equal amount of Flesh off of her own leg

and this kind of stuff I mean when you

get to that extreme obviously you're not

going to be a healthy person but even

just living the life of a monk is

unnatural for most people I mean some

people they're just some some men for

example

it just comes natural to them that they

don't have a relationship you know

they're just naturally don't have much

of a sex drive they don't have social

instincts they just like living a simple

life alone

and just meditating and chilling out all

the time and they might get along fine

but

um

just living a more natural life is more

conducive to you know having like a

healthy flow of energy going through you

being healthier in general

um I used to have like bad skin for

example

like blotchy skin when I was a monk and

that's pretty much gone away

um due to my uh more natural and just

having more love in my life I suppose

that that probably is a contributing

factor

so but then again I mean if you want

Nirvana or you really want to live up to

these exalted ideals then I mean there's

always going to be a trade-off there's

always going to be a price

you know so it's like the disadvantages

are you know like the unnatural strain

on your your mind and your body but it

the advantages are you know you're

chilled out your mind is clearer and um

you know you're more more likely to get

inside like deep inside

and plus you can just meditate all day

so

um whether it's better living as a lay

person or living as a monk depends on

what it is you want out of life

so I'll just move on Austin's next

question

and Austin says

I heard a professor say this about

Buddhism quote Buddhism is concerned

with the problem of solving suffering so

the first Axiom is always we don't want

to suffer here already I have problems

if there is any point of psychoanalysis

it's that we want to suffer unquote

thoughts on this well it is true that

people don't become enlightened not not
simply because they're not trying hard
enough to become enlightened it's
they're trying all the time to remain
unenlightened and it is true people want
to suffer
for various reasons partly it's just
force of habit a lifelong habit of being
miserable you just kind of identify with
that that's like who you are and if you
stopped being that miserable it would be
like a part of you with dying because
that's become like a part of your
personality like a part of who you
identify with
so there is that
and also

um if you're living like especially a

worldly kind of life there's there's

going to be happiness and unhappiness I

mean you can't just have one without the

other

you know there's they're going to remain

in Balance it's so it's it's like a

roller coaster ride whereas a monk is

just going for like

flat you know smooth sailing

you know there's just neutrality you

know he's avoiding pleasure as well as

pain or at least just trying to be

relatively indifferent to pleasure as

well as pain

um

but with the monk who's you know trying
to uh eradicate suffering then uh it I
mean he's got to be serious about it and
um you know a monk who becomes or a
person who becomes enlightened isn't
like the people that this professor is
talking about how people want to suffer
I mean most people do but then again
most people don't become enlightened and
also
Buddhism as a path to the end of
suffering that's kind of like a
heart-oriented approach to Buddhism
there's also a more head-oriented
approach which is the approach I
generally took and that is that you're
not trying to eradicate suffering you're

trying to eradicate delusion

and it's essentially the same path

but

um I think some head-oriented Professor

like this might have a better

appreciation for

um a spiritual path aimed at the

eradication of delusion

and if you're adequate delusion you

eradicate suffering also because the

suffering comes from delusion

so there is that

so I guess I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from the z123

and z123 says what's your insta ID can

you help me well I've I've never been on

Instagram I don't I don't do Instagram

so I don't have an insta ID as far as I

know

and the skin you helped me I assume that

just means can I help z123 by giving my

insta ID

and in that case no but in other ways

maybe maybe I can help you if you have

you know questions about dhamma I can I

can help you with that I suppose

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Johannes

and Johannes says do you have any idea

why your samadhi didn't improve anymore

after a certain point have you tried

doing the Tonga so that's two questions

um

so the first question is

um I I've explained you know why I

stopped being a monk and the number one

reason like the first one that kind of

spawned any subsequent reasons was I

just stopped making progress

for years I stopped making progress

probably the the best meditation of my

life was around 2004 or at least

the best meditation of my life ended

around 2004.

and so Johannes you're just asking if I

have any idea why it didn't improve

anymore

um

I am not sure

possibly

um like I said I've just got as far as I

could with it it's like maybe you know

that was just sort of my limit

maybe you know just Karma you know

paramis like I mentioned

um

also there's just like this

um imbalance this strain that I was

under that I mentioned just a few

minutes ago that just living a monastic

life causes this strain and imbalance

where it can

and uh that was just becoming like a

hindrance

um

so yeah also just

um I burned out on Burma

and but then coming back to America

wasn't really working very good for

someone wanting to live the life of a

monk in Burma you can live the life of

among almost exactly like it says in

this in the text you can just wander

around you go into a village with your

bowl people put food in you don't have

to use you know electricity or anything

you know it doesn't really get cold

enough to be lethal in the tropics

you don't have bills to pay

then you come back to America and it's

it's really difficult to to live

um you know as a monk is supposed to

live in the texts and I mean you can

there are ways of kind of approximating

it there are ways that a monk can live

in the west without actually breaking

rules but you're living almost like a

prisoner

so that was kind of a factor also

but um yeah I think my samadhi didn't

improve after a certain point it was

just the the struggle the strain of just

having to to try as hard as you can

with very limited results very sporadic

unpredictable results eventually your

beginner's mind and your enthusiasm for

practice start to wane

so that that's also a factor

but I guess I should just move on to the

the second part of johannes's question

here have I ever tried doing dotonga

yeah yeah I did lots of dutongas

um I tried not to make a deal try not to

make a big deal out of doing the tongas

like for years and years

um I did the the one meal a day stuff

and it's the ones the ones sitting

although sometimes like in the middle of

my meal I would stand up take a step to

the left take a step back to the right

sit back down and finish my meal just so

I wouldn't technically be practicing the

new Tonga of eating in one sitting every

day

um I I sat I I never lay down for

more than a year that was when I was a

junior Mom I had to pretty much stop the

sitters practice just sleeping in a

sitting position

um when I got to Burma and it was it was

so hot that

I just found out that just sleeping

spread eagle on a concrete floor was the

coolest way of sleeping and so I just

started doing that

you sleep leaning back against something

it just gets this fouled with sweat

so yeah I did I did quite a lot of

dotonga and monks aren't really supposed

to talk about that but I'm not a monk

anymore so yeah I practiced uh quite a

lot of butanga

so I think I'll just move on to

johannes's next question

and the puppy wants to bite my ear some

more don't you

yes here there it is

so johannes's next question do you think

spiritual progress is even possible

without a Sangha or at least without

spiritual friends who are going down the

same road I'm currently all alone in

nature well

maybe picking up the dog was not the

best idea

okay I'm currently all alone in nature

living on a Cherry Orchard and honestly

sometimes meditating seems to disturb me

more than just focusing on all the tasks
at hand and being a kind person
is it idiotic to think that we can just
power through and get it over with the
practice all by ourselves and wouldn't
it be just be better to try and focus on
being a good human with a good heart I'm
thinking here of the sun Leica
quote it is impossible here in tuna that
quite secluded from sensual Pleasures
secluded from unwholesome States some
biku enters upon and abides in the first
genre which is accompanied by applied
and sustained thought with Rapture and
pleasure born and seclusion you might
think thus I am abiding in effacement
but it is not these attainments that are

called effacement in the noble ones
discipline these are called Pleasant
abidings here and now in the noble ones
discipline now joonda here effacement
should be practiced by you others will
be cruel We Shall Not Be Cruel here the
basement should be practiced thus others
will kill living beings we shall abstain
from killing killing living beings here
a basement should be practiced thus
others will take what is not given we
shall abstain from what is not given
here effacement should be practiced thus
uh let's see let's get up to the top
here
oh okay so the main point of the

question here is Johannes is asking

um is spiritual progress even possible

without a Sangha or at least without

um what in the poly is called the

kalyanamita which is the the good friend

the spiritual friend who is like your

guide

um well obviously it is possible

um to make spiritual progress like you

know you've got the sun like a suta here

which he's he's just essentially aiming

that particular passage towards a lay

person just following the five precepts

apparently but um

uh I mean you've got like the rhinoceros

horn this this course you know go alone

like the Horn of the rhinoceros and I'm

thinking I'm gonna put the dog back down

again because she's being very frisky

okay

so

yeah it is possible the main thing that

you need a teacher for

and I mean this is another reason why I

stopped making progress I suppose I just

did not have a teacher that I could

really trust and accept

because I've had bad karma with teachers

so this is sort of an answer to

the above question that I was kind of

Meandering around with is uh yeah I did

not have like the good friend

someone who who I could really want to

be like that person

you know it's like most of of my

teachers were

good-hearted monks Asian monks but very

very narrow-minded just very culturally

conditioned with a very dogmatic

approach that I just could not follow

so I was thrown back on books as my main

teachers and

um the thing about a book is if if

you're doing something wrong the book

isn't just gonna like speak up and say

Hey you shouldn't be doing that so it is

good to have a person who can point out

your weak spots and that you trust

enough that when they point out your

weak spots you just don't get upset and

then just say [__] you or whatever

so that's the main

um I mean some people they have enough

of a social mentality that they can

practice better when they're in a group

like you might be shamed into not just

getting up and walking away if you're in

a meditation Hall and everybody else is

still sitting so you don't want to be

the only person who just gets up and

walks out just because your legs are

tired or you're bored or you want to do

something else

but um you know so having a spiritual

teacher is important but it should be

someone who I mean you you trust and

someone you would want to be like

presumably

um

and it's not necessarily easy because

most spiritual teachers are relatively

ignorant you know they're just common

worldlings too

and uh even the ones that have some

attainment it might be there's like this

culture barrier where they're you know

they're wise but still they're just

talking in accordance with their

cultural conditioning and so forth and

it just may not resonate with you so

again

um Sometimes the best you can do is just

read the ancient texts

um or just find somebody who writes

things that really resonate with you

that that really seem to be beneficial

in waking you up

oh see

but I mean if you're just focusing on

tasks at hand and and being a kind

person it is kind of a worldly I mean

you're you're making good karma you're

earning Merit you know that's the road

to Heaven more than it is the road to

enlightenment

if you want Enlightenment I mean it's

it's subtle you're going to do a lot of

meditation and if you do have like an

enlightened teacher or at least a very

wise one it can be helpful

foreign so I'll just uh move on to the

next question by Johannes

his last question is

do you think there's a difference

between working against your five

hindrances in daily life and working

against them in meditation

um

it'd be a difference in degree

I think

a difference in degree rather than kind

because I mean working against the

hindrance in your daily life that's like

the the rough work you know that's the

the course adjust and working against

them in meditation that's the fine

tuning you know it's like

um working against the five hindrances

in daily life that's like using a chisel

to carve a statue and then working

against them in meditation is more like

using the the Sandpaper to finish the

job

so I mean both of them are doing

essentially the same thing although in

meditation you you got more clarity and

you can see the small stuff

more easily whereas in in daily life

you're dealing with the bigger the

bigger manifestations of your

defilements I suppose

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Eric

and Eric says recently read an article

where AI was generating Christian

sermons with some folks claiming the

work was soulless what do you think AI

generated Buddhist sermons or discourses

would be like

well it depends on the AI I suppose I

mean it wouldn't matter if a Buddhist

sermon is soulless because Buddhism

teaches that there is no soul at least

not an ultimately real one

so

um yeah I suppose or Jack Kerouac

possibly while he was drunk wrote like a

Mahayana Buddhist scripture which reads

like I mean it's it's it's fairly wise

so I assume like uh you know you program

the AI well enough and uh it should be

able to come up with

um you know decent Buddhist sermons

although I mean I doubt that AI is is

Advanced enough to come up with anything

original

like the the computer itself isn't going

to have any insights it's just going to

be you know just regurgitating what's

been programmed into it you know just

kind of rearranging the sentences or

something

but I I really can't say

um I don't have a lot of experience I

guess there's some new AI

program where you can that will just
like write scientific papers and and
that sort of thing which is going to
cause problems in schools where students
are just having this AI write their
papers for them
but um again I really I really don't
know what a Buddhist I mean it would
just say the right things but without
any actual Insight backing it up but I
mean some people they just might need to
hear the right things and uh the Insight
behind that may be largely irrelevant
so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Conrad
and Conrad says
what is the Buddhist teaching about

romantic love if it causes a mental

attachment surely it is a cause of doco

but on the other hand in theory one

could be deeply in love whilst

practicing mental detachment

is it possible to be married in the the

life of a householder and also realize

Nirvana

perhaps more difficult if one wants to

realize Nirvana

is celibacy always necessary

well I mean there are people who are

claimed to be enlightened that are

married like there's uh what Eckhart

Tolle is married I guess

was a Layman who was married he ran a

little stall in India selling cigarettes

and stuff

um

but I mean with regard to Orthodox

theravada Buddhism yeah romantic love is

not recommended by ancient Indian early

Buddhism and that's largely

I mean not entirely but largely because

like early theravada or even

pre-terravada Buddhism it was very much

a product of ancient Indian culture

going all the way back to the Indus

Valley Civilization where it was sort of

a pessimistic approach to this world

where this world or samsara is a bad

place you want to just break all

attachments and just get out of it

and early Buddhism teaches that Mahayana Buddhism was becoming more liberal I guess and uh like um what is it the uh we molecuity near desha Sutra where we molecuity is this very Advanced practically enlightened bodhisattva who not only is married and has kids but he's he's going to like brothels and in taverns and stuff

um but in early Buddhism like romantic love is called Pema or or sneha it's not the word meta which is more of a spiritual love like in like in Christianity you've got the three kinds of Love you've got arrows phyllos and agape and Agape is the spiritual love

Eros is the sexual romantic kind of love

and uh philos is you know Brotherly Love

kind of a thing or a philosophical love

um in Buddhism there's different kinds

of Love also you know meta is more of a

spiritual we're just kind of a

friendliness you know this kind of

wishing others well the kind of a thing

and like the the erotic kind of stuff is

is called Pema or or sneha

and I think there's other words for it

too

um but the main thing is

um with regard to the negative aspect of

it is first of all

um I mean it does increase desire and it

increases pleasure which means you're

going to have more of the opposite to to
contend with and so it's more
distractions and more ups and downs you
know you're not getting the smooth
sailing that a monk is shooting for
so there is that also I mean you're
interacting with another person who is
not entirely under your control of
course who may be unpredictable and I
mean that can be a positive or A
negative because I mean if a lot of a
lot of monks like hermit types like I
was for a long time is you just don't
learn how to deal with other humans you
don't learn how to deal with you know
somebody just throwing curveballs at you

or knuckleballs or whatever

and um you might need more personal

interaction and feedback just just kind

of keep you from drifting off into just

weird eccentricities and so forth or

just becoming really dysfunctional

so I think with a lot of people

um

like Spiritual Development while having

a romantic relationship is probably the

most realistic and it's most conducive

to just living a natural healthy life

um I think they've done studies that

show that people that are in a

relationship tend to live longer than

people who are solitary that kind of a

thing

but early Indian Buddhism largely

because

of where it arose and the cultural

conditioning

um

it was it takes a pretty dim view of

romantic love although

um

romantic love does have its good points

and its bad points from a spiritual

point of view

thank you

so let's see see if I'm answering the

whole question here

oh if it causes mental attachment surely

it is the cause of Duca but on the other

hand in theory one could be deeply in

love whilst practicing mental Detachment

yeah in theory but

um as a general rule a woman wants you

to be attached to her

um if you're just completely detached

where

um you know she could come and go and

you don't care or she could be faithful

or Unfaithful and you don't care I mean

maybe if she's like really into

spiritual practice also but probably not

even then that she might be cool with

that

so

is it possible to be married and live

the life of a householder and also

realize Nirvana I think it is possible

it's probably more difficult it's more

challenging you know it's it's a more a

more advanced setting to the video game

um

just because one of the purposes of

being a monk is to remove

distractions and to just remove anything

unnecessary to strip down your life and

simplify it radically so that you can

just dedicate yourself full time to uh

cultivating wisdom and so forth whereas

in a relationship it's more like

um you're just surfing the waves and the

opportunities for wisdom are just kind

of sometimes just being hurled at you

but uh I have chosen to be in a romantic

relationship and uh I have no complaints

so I'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from CEO vacch and sipad

zidana and I'm getting much better at

pronouncing this I think I mean maybe

I'm pronouncing it wrong but at least

it's rolling off the tongue more easily

so

Vox and sipad zidana says

now Gardena is very concerned with

non-dualism and non-differentiation of

things but the suttony

patasana is a chapter of dualities that

kind of goes completely opposite to this

thinking such as the duality of

suffering and the cessation of suffering
what are your thoughts on this subject
of Duality versus non-duality well in
order to communicate
you have to use dualism and if you're
communicating to lay people or people
that just aren't very highly
evolved yet or they haven't cultivated
more subtle like meditative States yet
um you have to be more dualistic you
know talk about this is good and this is
bad you should do the good and avoid the
bad and that's that's very dualistic and
then as you get more into more and more
refined States then that kind of Fades
out also you should bear in mind that

the sutas were never intended to be like
an integrated all of it mutually
agreeing with each other kind of a kind
of a thing it's like the Buddha would be
talking to one person and you know kind
of using their own
attitude as a way of teaching them
kind of reflecting things back to them
just kind of speaking their own lingo
and then with somebody else who might
have a very different problem he'll be
he'll be talking something different
and it was the commentarial tradition
that tried to integrate everything so
that you know they have to make it all
like be compatible with each other and
it's not necessarily the case like ajan

chai used to say if if he sees someone straying too far to the left he'll tell them to go right and if he sees somebody straying too far to the right he'll tell him to go left but he hasn't just contradicted himself by telling two people opposite things it's just that what you tell one person is suited to their own predicament and then what you tell the next person is suited to their own predicament and some people are just very much in Duality so you'd use a more dualistic way of teaching them

um and then there's one suta that's this statement or this question here by CEO of action

um it's the Pura beta suta in the Sudani

Pata which

um

it's it's got a lot of opposites paired

opposites it's like the suit that is

largely based on pairs of opposites but

they're canceling each other out

so you've got this and this and then

they cancel each other out and then this

and this and they cancel each other out

so

that might be another

uh sort of dharmic way

of just bringing up Duality

um as a kind of skillful means to get

past duality

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question by CEO Vox and sipad zidana
and he says you said Sankara is a thrown
together term but to me it seems to make
sense as a category the will is heavily
influenced directly by habits and
emotions and hence why they are all
grouped under mental formations
whereas Pleasure and Pain are deeper
motivators of behavior and can't be
changed what do you think well I don't
think that some cars necessarily A
thrown together term I think I said it's
one of the most ambiguous terms because
it has so many different definitions
like Sankara can just mean thing I mean
it can mean anything that is conditioned

like uh in the three marks of existence

you've got Subway Sankara duka Sabe

Sankara Anita and then you've got Subway

senkara duka anything that's conditioned

is conducive to suffering or is

unsatisfying and it is

you know any condition thing is

uh impermanent you know inconstant but

means that it's not just with regard to

conditioned things but there's nothing

at all including nibana that is the self

so

um some Kara can have different meanings

in different contexts that's that's

mainly what I was saying

um

but let's see let's get a little farther

here with CEO of action sipot Zeta not

here the will is heavily influenced

directly by habits and emotions and

hence why they are all grouped under

mental formations well that's not

necessarily the case I mean sometimes

they're all grouped under Sankara but

then again like in the five condas

um

like uh Sonia Kanda or perception

technically that's a Sankara also but it

got separated out on its own

so let's see pleasure and painter deeper

motivators of behavior and can't be

changed well the main motivator of

behavior is really it's going to be your

perception and your reactions to what
you experience I mean like in in the
dependent core Rising the 12 nidana
Theory there you got weight enough or or
feeling leads to not or craving and that
is the link that's supposed to be broken
by the Dharma practitioner where you
have the feeling and then I mean just
having this feeling I mean it's it's
sort of
and like morally neutral it's just what
you how you react to it is going to be
moral or immoral or or whatever
and that's going to be what how you get
off the wheel if you ever do
the wheel of something sorrow I should
say

so

um yeah according to the the old five

condo theory of you know what we what we

are composed of is five condos Sankara

there mainly means will

so it's uh perception has been

differentiated from Sankara and it

mainly means will although the abhidham

scholars May argue that they'll say that

there's like 50 or 51 other mental

states included

so

I think I should just move on to the

next question

before uh I get so confused that

everyone else is confused also so CEO of

actions next question is

foreign which is a good suda by the way

the Buddha says that a foolish person

has views such as quote the self and the

cosmos are one and the same unquote

which is rejecting the Hindu idea of the

Brahman how is nirvana different than

this idea especially when it referred to

as empty and non-self as well

the main difference is that Brahman is

reified as an existent state

at least um

uh in I mean the language frames it that

way I mean it's it's very difficult to

talk about something that is

unconditioned because just by calling it

it you've just turned it into a worldly

samsaric thing

but Buddhism was much more reluctant to

reify the absolute

so Nirvana or Nirvana is just completely

off the scale you cannot really say

anything about it I mean just calling it

it you've already just turned it into

something else it's not nibana anymore

so yeah it's the upanishads saying that

um you know calling Ultimate Reality

Brahman or near Guna Brahman which is

Ultimate Reality which has no

discernible characteristics

and then identifying that with the Atman

or the self

um

I mean that's it's coming fairly close
to what Buddhism teaches except that
Buddhism is just sort of instead of
saying
you know something exists or the
ultimate exists they're just saying as
little as possible because nothing you
can say about is going to be valid to
say it exists is invalid to say that it
doesn't exist is invalid to say that it
does and doesn't exist isn't valid to
say that it neither exists nor doesn't
exist is invalid you just can't talk
about it and so Buddha was more
interested in just teaching people how
to get there rather than explaining
where they're trying to go

I mean you can use certain simple terms
you have to use some kind of terms I
mean why would anybody want to attain
Nirvana if I mean the person who's
teaching you how to get there is just
refusing to say anything at all about it
so I mean you can say it's the cessation
of suffering or it's the cessation of
greed hate and delusion or or whatever
it is the escape from all suffering the
escape from samsara or whatever but
um as a general rule in Buddhism you
don't reify it nibana is completely off
the scale and the main purpose of dhamma
is not to describe the goal it's just to
tell you how to get to the goal and a

good example of of this that I've I've
spoken of more than once is let's say
there's somebody comes up to you you
know there's some sort of hillbilly
they've never had vanilla before in
their life so they ask you what does
vanilla taste like
and I mean you can stand there and
explain and explain and explain how
vanilla tastes and they're still going
to be completely clueless
in fact I mean if you've never tasted
vanilla yourself you can read book after
book after book you can do chemical
analyzes you can do all this stuff you
still don't know what vanilla tastes
like unless you mean you're having like

artificial vanilla flavoring or

something but that's cheating

so if someone wants to know what vanilla

tastes like

then the best thing they can do is just

find some vanilla and taste it so

somebody comes up to you and asks you

what vanilla tastes like I mean you can

just waste your time trying to explain

it to them which I mean it's just gonna

be futile or you can just tell them how

to get some vanilla and to taste it for

themselves and that's pretty much what

Buddhism is doing and it's keeping the

attempted descriptions of nibbana down

to an absolute minimum and even then

it's really

um is should not be considered a thing

or an it or even a state I mean it's

just completely off the scale and what

the upanishads are trying to describe is

essentially the same thing in my opinion

I think that the the sages who wrote who

composed the upanishads and the sages

who composed the most profound Buddhist

texts were attempting to explain the

same thing from two different

perspectives

so at least there is that

and so I guess I should just move on to

the next question also from CEO of

action

and that's it right here nagarjuna says

that things are empty because they only
exist due to causes and links the idea
of dependent origination and emptiness
together however if Nirvana is
unconditioned and without a cause then
how can it also be empty in without self
well it's a different kind of emptiness
ah or you can just say that I mean going
with nagarjuna I mean Nirvana is is like
the underlying reality of samsara
and that's when the Mahayana Buddhists
say that ultimately Nirvana and samsara
are the same
that Nirvana would be sort of like the
essence of samsara and some sorrow would
be like the the apparent form of Nirvana

but uh

yeah I mean now Gardena says that things

are empty because they only exist due to

causes but I mean he's not even saying

that they exist he's it's like they they

appear to exist they seem to exist due

to seeming causes

and uh

and Link and he links the idea of

dependent origination and emptiness

together yeah so Emptiness is just

emptiness of any self essence

and that's true of Nirvana because he's

dealing with reality I mean reality is

is devoid of self-essence

so that applies to Nirvana and like I

already said earlier is

which means it's not just worldly things

it's not just some sortic phenomena that

are not self it's absolutely anything

including Ibana is without self

so I'll just move on to the next

question

from CEO of action

and he says I assume it to he

it's not really a girl name pretty sure

in the subbasa vasuta the Buddha rejects

the idea of self no self self feeling

there is no self and no self feeling

like a self

and then he's got a quote

when they attend improperly in this way

one of the six the following six views

arises in them and is taken as a genuine fact the view myself exists in an absolute sense The View myself does not exist in an absolute sense The View I perceive the self with the self The View I perceive what is not self with the self The View I perceive the self with what is not self unquote I always thought that he was saying there is no self and it only feels like we have a self but based on this suta that is incorrect can you please explain the nuances of this issue well in all of these it's like it's it's still I mean mine so it's like

you know my The View myself does not exist in an absolute sense I mean it's

still referring to myself I mean it's

still referring to a me even though it's

like this me that I identify with is not

absolutely real you know I perceive what

is not self self it's still I am

perceiving it

so

any kind of trying to sneak in an eye or

a me in through the back door

um

is is out

what let's see

yeah I mean self and no self I mean you

can you you could argue that it's sort

of like it's all invalid like nibana

itself where you know if if the Atman

and Brahman are the same for the in the

upanishads

then I mean it would be kind of the same

in Buddhism where the instead of Brahman

you've got nibana or Nirvana and you

can't really say that it exists or

doesn't exist I mean it's just you don't

reify it and then by the same token the

self would have to be the same way

so

this is it is kind of a tough question

it's a subtle question very nuanced as

CEO Vox and sipad zidana himself

uh States here

but uh

yeah I mean just even referring to the

cell just thinking about

um you know what am I really that kind

of a thing is is discouraged in in

teravana Buddhism I mean you just

shouldn't even go there

so we'll just move on to uh CEO of

action cpad zidane's next question and

hopefully I didn't uh bungle that last

one too badly

in the Chula

in the Chula malukya suta and other

places why did the Buddha refuse to

answer the question whether the self and

the body are one and the same the idea

of the five contests clearly rejects

that idea so it's confusing I heard some

other people say it was actually asking

about the Mind Body problem and the body
refusing to answer that but I don't know
in another video you say many Buddhist
Traditions have different views on this
like sir boss Ivana both are real and
different yoga Chara only mine exists
majamika neither exist Etc if you
interpret this question like that seems
these schools have places their bets on
something the Buddha refused to answer
well one thing that should be born in
mind is
the Buddha said there's no self but with
regard to these questions that he
wouldn't answer the word that sometimes
referred to as self or soul is Jiva it's
not Atta so it's a different word and

Jiva literally means life

so it could be that they're simply

referring to the life force you know

it's the life force the same as the body

or the the life is your life the same as

your body or are different from the body

um I mean it could be interpreted that

way I've I've interpreted that way

sometimes just as a way of trying to

wrap my head around it

um

but it really is two different words

that are both being translated as self

or soul

uh usually it's odd time you know anata

there is no self but in these questions

the Buddha wouldn't answer it's Jiva

which means life although it is true

that some groups like The jains use the

word Jiva as soul

so it's kind of kind of ambiguous and

it's it could be that um this is another

case of

um different sutas coming from you know

different perspectives possibly

different ancient monasteries or some

such where

um you know it's not all of a piece it's

not all perfectly logically consistent

because uh or partly because the boot is

just talking to different people and

they've got their own issues and he's

sort of tailoring what he's saying to to

suit their own predicament

uh let's see

self in the body are one in the same

yeah

yeah that's that's generally those

that's that's my best answer so I better

just move on to the next question here

also this is CEO of

actiona's last question here

can you explain how to practice sense

restraint I never seen anyone explain it

without saying it is different than just

being an avoidant prude and moving on I

don't understand how we practice sense

restraint well the way I was taught if

you're practicing sense restraint it

doesn't mean you're just like closing
your eyes and putting your hands over
your ears and just not sensing anything
it means that if you hear something you
just hear it as sound you're not like
trying to identify it or categorize it
you know there's a dog barking out the
window then you just hear it as sound
you know you're just experiencing the
sensation of of the sound you know
interacting with your ear in your
auditory lobes and all that
um you're not thinking oh that's a dog
barking out there and it's the same way
with like your visual field you're just
experiencing as
as close to unprocessed data as you can

you know you're not slapping labels onto

it you're not thinking about it you're

not spinning off with trains of

Association it just is what it is you're

not attributing significance to it

you're experiencing it fully you know

you're still hearing you're still seeing

and everything but you're not

interpreting what you are sensing

you know it's just sound it's just

vision and smell it's it's taste it's

it's touch whatever

so that's how you practice Center strain

it's you just

you experience the senses but you're not

just running with it you're not like

spinning off into chains of Association

and that sort of thing

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Raphael 46.

also known as Rafi 46.

in Raphael 46 says did you know that the

founder of Tibetan galug School Jade

song Kappa recommended tantric sex with

12 year old girls the Dalai Lama is part

of the school the goal is to attain

nibana with this ritual of course most

western Buddhists are unaware of this

yeah and when I first learned about this

it was a long time ago I read about it

in a ROM dos book where he's saying that

these girls are trained from childhood

to be able to have sex with no emotional

involvement whatsoever so that the whole
thing is done as a kind of meditation
where the man is lying motionless trying
not to do anything and the girl is over
the top of him and she's like been
trained not to be emotionally involved
and
I just I just read about it as just this
tantric practice I don't think that it's
considered to be essential to
Enlightenment to do this kind of stuff
and I assume it's relatively rare
um it might be accepted as you know a
possible way of practicing but whether
the Dalai Lama himself has done this
sort of thing I have no idea

and uh I mean it's the way Tantra works
Tantra believes that we are in the Kali
Yuga that we are in the spiritual Dark
Age it's not even possible to be like a
fully perfected Saint and so you have to
use like the corruption of the world as
Grist for the mill so to speak and so
they eat meat and they they drink
alcohol and you know they do these
things that generally would be
considered
um Bad Karma or demeritorious and
they're trying to
like purify it just by having as pure of
mental States as they can manage while
doing these things and of course most
people will fail miserably and they just

wallow in it

and it is dangerous and I think they

fully admit that it's it's difficult to

do and it's very dangerous but um they

do it anyway

so I think I'll just move on to Raphael

46's uh next question

and that is have you studied see on

Buddhism or ever had contact with Korean

monks the Theon Buddhism is that like

the the Korean version of Zen because

I'm I remember reading a book by a

Korean monk who had seon in his name

so I mean it could it be just this

tradition that he founded

in which case

I read the book

and uh all that I remember

is him referring to

um

like

subatomic particles as microscopic but

we can just attribute that to his lack

of uh Mastery of the English language I

suppose

um

but

um

yeah Korean Zen I don't know much about

I haven't really studied it I have

interacted with one Korean monk

especially I spent two months at pandita

Rama back around 1997. the winter of

97.98 if I remember correctly and there

was this

um Mahayana Buddhist monk a Korean

wearing the gray pajamas

and uh

he and I talked a little bit I mean we

both had a great respect for nagarjuna

for example he was saying that uh some

Korean monks consider not Guardian to be

like a second Buddha

um and he was

I mean he would have like these uh

what's the word

oh what's that art

it's like you're doing like Salvador

Dali just uh

the word is escaping me but I mean he
was having these weird dream like
meditations and he was considered to be
a really good meditator by upandita who
was the doing the meditation interviews
and I'd just be having these completely
pedestrian kind of
kind of meditation experiences and and
upandita in the Seattle was not
impressed at all and then this Korean
monk would be talking about how he's
just floating on air and seeing
molecules and germs and everything is
breaking up into atoms and just going on
and on about this kind of stuff and
um I mean he could just sit like a
statue for like three hours in the in

the full Lotus position too

so but I I do think that

um

yeah he was just a very Faith oriented I

think

and uh

yeah

I really I really can't uh can't judge

his meditation experiences though but he

was the only Korean monk that I ever

really got to know

and uh well it's regard to see on

Buddhism I really I really can't I

really can't say so I'll just move on to

the next question from uh Raphael 46.

and he says recently saw a video of a

monk from Sri Lanka punching a

missionary in the face what consequences

does this monk face and what happens if

he keeps doing this acting does not

regret it well this is kind of weird

it's

um

it is against the rules for a monk to

punch a layperson in the face

but it's a minor rule it's just a Duke

and ice like the the lowest level of

offense like to punch another Monk

that's a pachidia offense which is sort

of mid-level with regard to the severity

of of the breaking the rules but to

punch a layperson is is just a very

minor offense which is kind of strange

but

um does like the heaviness of the karma

doesn't necessarily match up with the

heaviness of the rule

so you can do some things that

um you know are trivial and break a

relatively serious rule like building a

Hut that's that's not the correct size

it's too big or something you know you

haven't necessarily done anything evil

but I mean that's a relatively serious

rule whereas like punching away person

in the nose

um could be uh considered a much worse

thing to do but it's it's just a very

minor rule to break

but um what consequences this monk face

and what happens if he keeps doing this

act and does not regret it well I mean

you're making the karma I mean maybe in

a maybe in the future he's going to get

punched in the face and that'll that'll

like pay off the karmic debt

um

and he keeps doing this act and does not

regret it well I mean the regret is

irrelevant

um from the point of view of terrible

Buddhism regret or Kucha is always bad

karma so

um I mean you can admit that you did

something wrong

and try to rectify it you know try to do

better in the future that's good

but uh regretting having a guilty

conscience that kind of a thing it's

just it just makes things worse

so I mean he's just gonna keep making

Karma which who presumably would be

about the same severity as what he's

dishing out

so he might get beaten up pretty good if

he just keeps going around uh punching

missionaries

and uh

yeah I mean if he doesn't have any kind

of uh

um if he doesn't acknowledge that he's

done anything wrong then yeah he's I

don't think he's he's gonna make very

much progress

so we'll just move on to Raphael 46's

next question

what do you think about Buddha Dasa I

like how he wanted to make a lay people

into monks he once said that ideally a

couple should stay celibate during their

marriage

well Buddha Dasa if this is the Buddha

Dasa that

um I'm aware of is as a tie on John and

I really don't know much about Tai

anjons a very few I mean I've read the

biography of ajan man for example I know

you know a certain amount About anjan

Cha because he's the most famous of all

the Thai monks

um

but Buddha Dasa yeah it's it's possible

that an Australian monk very long ago

gave me a book of Buddha dasa's sermons

I think maybe it was Buddha Dasa just as

a joke just to show how time monks

really don't know Paulie and they use

the the words wrong and stuff

but um aside from that I really don't

know much about on John Buddha Dasa if

this is even the same Buddha Dasa that

I'm thinking of

um

wanting to make lay people in the monks

I don't I don't even understand that

sounds kind of protestant to me and then

he once said that ideally a couple

should stay celibate during their

marriage that would be like orthodox

theravana

um like I'm not talking dika was a

Buddhist Saint and he was married but I

think he was celibate

and his wife presumably was as well

so yeah this is kind of an easy question

for me to answer because I can just say

I don't know because I'm really not

familiar with him

so I'll just move on to Raphael 46's

next question

does a Buddhist create Bad Karma by

following the five precepts only out of

selfishness rather than idealism he does
these things only because he wants to
enjoy his next life not because he cares
about others or understands the
compassion Behind These precepts well I
mean Buddhist ethics are so finely tuned
that it's virtually impossible to get
only good karma when you do something
that
um you know as long as you even think
that you are doing it then there's
delusion involved in fact and as long as
you're not enlightened yet there's going
to be delusion involved which is going
to be a certain amount of Bad Karma
mixed in

so does a Buddhist create Bad Karma by following the five precepts only out of selfishness

um yeah he's I mean hopefully he'll be making more Good Karma than bad

so I mean he'll be making good karma too and just depending on how corrupt and depraved the mental states are will determine you know how much Good Karma how much Bad Karma is is going into the mix

so

yeah it may be that one starts off

um like doing meritorious Deeds just because one wants to get into the goal is Golden Palace with the 500 Celestial nymphs in heaven after one dies and then

gradually as one progresses because I
mean every act has its results you know
if you're if you're living a moral life
and meditating even though if originally
is for bad reasons your wisdom is going
to progress and so your reasons are
gradually going to progress also and get
better
so yeah let's just hope that he's doing
it in such a way that at least he's
making good more Good Karma than bad
and so I'll move on to Raphael 46's next
question
and that is as follows some monks who
handle money justify this by saying that
only handling gold is bad but not paper

money what is your opinion on this well

the monks who say that are just ignorant

of the rule because the rule is uh

jatarupa rajata which it's it means gold

or silver and then at least I mean in

the the poly itself it it explains when

it when it explains the rule it's

referring to anything that can be used

as currency

so I mean like copper pennies it's still

money it's not gold or silver but it's

still money paper money is still money

um

there are some monks in modern times who

um they'll say well like a debit card or

something isn't exactly money

and uh you know like the there's some

other person or they use a credit card
and you've got some other person who is
paying off the bills so that the monk
technically isn't handling money but
still I mean that's it's just kind of
cheating and like even some relatively
strict monks their their habits and
they're like signing checks or endorsing
checks you know they're just endorsing
the back but even so the check itself
says pay to the order to and so they're
like endorsing
in order to do something with money and
that's that's just as much against the
rules as handling the money themselves
there are more and more subtle waves of

using money without actually handling it
nowadays but
the best bet of a monk who really wants
to be strict is just have nothing to do
it I've read three different
explanations of the Money Rules by three
different Western monks and all of them
were essentially writing you know how
how much can a monk handle money without
actually breaking the rules you know
like where where exactly where is the
line he can just get right up to it
before he stops and not break the rule
because people I mean not handling money
can be very inconvenient for a monk I
have to admit especially if you're on
like going through foreign airports and

stuff

let's see

so yeah I mean that's just a bogus

argument I mean it says quite clearly in

the poly that anything that can be used

as money counts as gold and silver

so we'll just move on to Raphael 46's

next question

which is should the rule of sleeping

only four hours a night be changed if

you sleep for less than six hours you

can face multiple repercussions like

cardiovascular problems depression and

weight and gain well there is no rule

saying that you're only allowed to sleep

for four hours it's just recommended

that a monk would sleep only one watch
of the night the night is divided up
into three watches you know for a second
and third and a monk should sleep only
one of those and if you assume that you
know half of a 24-hour period is night
then that comes out to four hours
and um
yeah I mean here's if you sleep for less
than six hours you can face multiple
repercussions like cardiovascular
problem yeah you sit in the full Lotus
for hours you can get problems with that
too you stay celibate you get problems
with that you know just just being a
monk like like I was saying earlier it
can cause like strain and imbalances in

your body and that's just the price that

you pay

to to live this spiritual lifestyle

um but I have found that uh if you're

doing intensive meditation you just

don't need as much sleep

so it's sort of like some of the the

functions of sleep are also fulfilled

just through sitting there in a in a

chilled out older state but not thinking

it's like maybe your brain just has to

take some kind of a break from certain

kinds of thinking I have I have read

that your mind is actually more active

when you're asleep especially when

you're dreaming than when you're awake

but um

yeah there is no rule uh needs to be

changed and uh

yeah some some people just don't need

much sleep I've I've been a real

sleepyhead before I was a monk house I

used to say if I didn't get nine hours

sleep in the morning or if I didn't get

nine hours sleep I'd be a bear in the

morning

so but then I was trying to get down but

really only one month in my entire life

as especially as a monk but I mean my

entire life uh was I able to average

less than four hours sleep per night for

an entire month

and I was that was some of the most

intense intensive meditation I'd ever

done and I really didn't need much more

sleep than that but if I wasn't

meditating I could just could not do it

it was only when my meditation was going

good and I was doing it intensively that

I could get by on on four hours or less

of sleep per night for a prolonged

period

so we'll just move on to Raphael 46's

last question

and that is

doesn't monk have to cover both of his

shoulders when he gets in contact with

laypeople

no he doesn't he only has to cover both

shoulders when he's in public which
means if he is in a public place like in
a village or in a town but inside the
monastery he can interact with laypeople
and have one shoulder uncovered or even
not wearing up a robe at all he can have
both shoulders and his chest and his
belly uncovered if he's out in the
forest or he's inside the monastery but
if he's outside the monster in a public
place you know among the houses then he
has to keep both shoulders covered
so I'll just move on to the next
question which is from Diane
and Diane says is it inevitable that
everyone has to suffer uh yeah although
some people suffer more than others I

mean some people are fortunate and their suffering is you know their their dog dies or you know they they get catch a cold you know they get a toothache when they're 16.

you know it's like you can have relatively you can have a happy healthy family and everything but still there's there's going to be stuff that happens and happiness and unhappiness are just two sides of the same coin now they're going to balance out in the long run so if you have pleasure that you don't detach from you enjoy you know the way dinner tastes and so forth it's going to be balanced out by by something else

maybe a little bit indigestion or just
being hungry maybe you're hungry before
then and you weren't Satisfied by being
hungry you know or or whatever so
there's always going to be a balance of
suffering and and like pleasure and
displeasure and as I say monks try to go
just go the route of neutrality and try
to keep both to a minimum
but yeah it's
the the first Noble Truth of Buddhism is
that if you exist you're going to suffer
even the the Gods in heaven are
experiencing some dukkha or or
unhappiness
for various reasons it's just more
subtle there

but I mean it's it's just a matter of

degree I mean there are some people in

this world that are already in a Hell

Realm

and then there are some people that are

relatively fortunate you know they're

sort of like low-level small G gods

but it is true that nobody is perfectly

happy and there's nothing in the entire

universe that has the ability to uh

completely satisfy us

and in fact you can say that it's like

this Restless dissatisfaction that is

just pushing us through life from one

moment to the next

so I'll just move on to the next

question which is the last question and

this is from Aaron

and Irene says

what is the Buddhist attitude towards

the whole right-wing Alpha Chad bro

mimetic movement

which includes bodybuilding superficial

self-improvement self-responsibility

Etc is there a dharmic way of going

about it or is it just Macho narcissism

well

let's see here the Buddhist attitude

towards the whole right wing Alpha

chadbro mimetic movement

um yeah I mean it's outward acts are

karmically neutral for the most part

it's just the mental states that

accompany

um the acts that really are making the

karma and determining like the uh the

ethical value positive or negative of

the of the behavior

and so

like

bodybuilding working out in the gym I

mean if you're just doing it to look

buff to attract women or just to to

bolster your ego then yeah that's that

would be uh demerit or or Bad Karma

mixed in if you're doing it just for the

sake of being healthy and strong then

even that is going to have a little bit

of Bad Karma just the delusion of I

exist you know I mean mind kind of stuff

um

self-responsibility I mean that's in

itself is uh I think that would be a

virtuous uh attitude

self-responsibility although again some

people go about it skillfully other

people go about it unskillfully you know

self-responsibility if you just like

jacked up with you know hatred of of

like the Invaders trying to destroy our

country and the the corrupt rulers who

are trying to destroy the civilization

and all this on and on and on if you're

just sort of chronically angry or

hateful

then you're going to be motivated by

anger and hate and it's just gonna

Poison the Well essentially and it is

true I've noticed a lot of just

hard right Wingers tend to be sort of

dour angry people without much sense of

humor and not all of them hopefully not

most of them but it's like some of the

real radical right-wingers so

they do have a certain negativity just

kind of built in and they may justify

the negativity as uh necessary or

appropriate or something but from the

Buddhist point of view negativity is

still negativity

um

let's see

so is there a dharmic way of going about
it or is it just modular narcissism yeah
there's there's a dharmic way of going
about it if you're just doing it out of
a sense of of Duty and and just
you know desire for health and strength
and and just being an upstanding person
who is able to do his part in society
um being self-sufficient and so forth
that's fine
so yeah it depends on the the mental
states of the individual who's doing the
thing
and that is was the last question
and I kind of answered them more quickly
than usual usually this thing stretches
out to like two hours

so yeah I was speedy

and if you have any questions you're

very welcome to ask just leave them in

the comments below

or if you have access to my subscribe

Star channel you can ask them there if

you have access to the Discord server

you can ask them there and uh hit like

if you please subscribe if you haven't

already look at the URL links below

including the books that I have written

and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 43 of

question and answer I am your host Ponyo

bossa and I have to admit I'm a little

bit tired this evening at the time of

recording this it's a Friday night and

I've worked hard today and I worked hard

all week and also my sweetheart has been

gone so I've got extra duties like

taking care of the animals and and

keeping the house sort of kind of clean

and I've got to clean it more before I

go to pick her up tomorrow

just uh just because

I'm up for this I'm I'm ready I'm

kind of Pumped sort of to answer these

questions and we've got as usual the

plethora of good questions and so

um without any further Ado I'm going to

start answering questions because that's

why I'm here is to answer these

questions

and the first question is from Austin

and Austin says

how often should I show up to the

monastery to support the local monks

they are unable to specify what they

need and how often they need it so I'm

not exactly sure how I can be the best

of help

well

um how often should you show up to the

monastery to support the local monks I

think one factor is just how much free

time do you have another factor is how

many supporters do they have if they've

got lots of supporters they may need

less help than if they only have a few

supporters

um

with regard to this part they are unable

to specify what they need and how often

they need it actually they're not unable

to specify unless they just don't speak

your language or something

um if you give them permission to ask

then then they can ask so if you haven't

already you can go to any or all of the

monks and say you know venerable sir if

you need anything just let me know or if

you want to specify just so that they're
not asking for video games and stuff you
just say if you need any of the four
requisites you know which is let's see
shelter food clothing and Medicine
you know if you need any any of the four
requisites just let me know I'll do what
I can unless maybe they they want like a
great big shelter with like a pavilion
or something
um
so yeah I mean you go there when you can
I suppose I mean when the the spirit
moves you to go to the monastery and uh
yeah just make an invitation to them and
uh just ask I mean they would know
better than I do like how often they

need food offered like do they cook

their own food like a lot of Asian monks

do especially

um or I mean is there like a roster of

people coming in the morning to offer

food I mean you might sign up for some

day that you're free every week or

something

um

but but yeah I mean just uh it's

probably better to consult with them if

they speak English if they don't you're

kind of screwed I guess you can still

get an interpreter

so uh

yeah I mean every time you go if you if

you're going with good intentions you're
making offerings to the Sangha you're
making Merit you know you're Gathering
up Treasures in Heaven so
yeah it's good to do that
and I'm going to have a beverage
a man cannot live by bread alone there
must also be a beverage
and now I'll move on to Austin's second
question
which is
if we apply the first precept to our
prehistoric ancestors who lived a
hunting and killing lifestyle it may
seem as though they would be in a state
of suffering in hell until their karma
is exhausted what do you think

well

I there's a good chance that they live

somewhat of a short brutish life and it

took I mean it took many thousands of

years before people were able to

progress beyond the hunting and

Gathering lifestyle

so

yeah it's sort of like uh it takes a

long time for an animal very long time

like according to the sutas you know if

you're stuck in the animal realm you're

just stuck there you tend to be stuck

there for a long time

just because they have little

opportunity to uh cultivate dhamma

and then maybe someone similar if

um for hunter gatherers who are killing

regularly although again it's

um I do think that in Ancient India or

in India even today they may put a

little bit too much negative emphasis on

killing not because it's good to kill or

you ought to kill but I mean

going to hell for for picking lice out

of your baby's hair or something yeah I

think that's that's pushing it a bit

I don't think there are very many people

who go to hell for slapping mosquitoes

for example

so I mean it's just it's more likely

that if you do killing as a human I mean

unless you're like a serial killer or or

like uh some dictator who's perpetrating

a genocide or something you know if

you're

farmer killing chickens or you know you

hunt sometimes or you go fishing I mean

if you're not doing it out of just love

for killing

you know you just get a rush from

killing something I mean that's not good

but I mean you're going to get bad karma

for that but it's just not really uh

like

or an equitable balance between killing

a rabbit with a rifle and then burning

in hell for a zillion gajillion years

it's just I mean it's it's not like a

fair balance

so

yeah I think they had more difficulty

probably a bit more violence a little

bit uh harsher existence in certain ways

but um

yeah I think a lot of them would

cultivate a kind of stoic Equanimity

when they're hunting and a lot of

hunter-gatherer societies you know

they'll even be like thanking the animal

you know apologizing for having to kill

it and so forth and I mean they're still

killing but at least they're sort of

mitigating factors that made it not

quite so bloodthirsty

probably they get more Bad Karma through

inter-tribal Warfare or some such and

there apparently was a lot of that I

think one of the main causes of death in

uh you know Stone Age societies was

inter-tribal Warfare

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question also from Austin and this one's

kind of interesting I don't think

anyone's asked me this one before is the

dhamma eternal

and that's kind of a trick question

um according to abhidham according to

kind of Buddhism in general the only

thing that really is eternal is nibana

or Nirvana

that has no beginning and no end but

there's a kind of Quasi

eternity that some things have like I

mean you could argue that two plus two

will always equal four or

maybe just going with a equals a

um

if a is greater than B and B is greater

than C then a is greater than C

you know I say B is greater than C

if a is greater than C and if a is

greater than B and B is greater than C

then a is greater than C

yeah that's what I was trying to say I

can't remember if I said that the first

time but things like that I mean you can

say that they're Eternal truths and even

in in in the dhamma you can find you

know like in the dhamapada

um you know they'll say you know this is

neutral truth it's like you know hatred

is not quenched by hatred hatred is

quenched by non-hatred this is an

eternal truth I'm pretty sure that's uh

in the domapana and

it's Eternal in the sense that so long

as you have a conscious being

like thinking of it or acknowledging it

then you know now it's it's true a

zillion years from now it's true a

zillion years ago it's true

so it's kind of Eternal in in the sense

of you know one plus one equals two is

eternal but only it only exists when

somebody is thinking it because

otherwise you just have formless void

so in a sense dhamma is eternal but it's

a kind of punctuated

eternity it's you know it exists and

then it doesn't exist and exists it

doesn't exist but because it exists only

when you've got a sentient mind like

perceiving it

but since samsara apparently is uh

beginningless and endless

um it's samsara is kind of Eternal too

but it's it's constantly changing and

this dhamma is also kind of changing

because it's going to be different in

the mind of one being than in the mind

of another being you know there'll be

different perspectives and different

ways of thinking in different languages

and so forth

so I mean it's a difficult question it's

in a way it is and in a way it isn't

the Nirvana aspect of dhamma is eternal

just because nibana or Nirvana it has no

beginning and no end it's unconditioned

it's off the charts off the scale

but dama would be Eternal the way

you know a equals a is eternal or

um

you know just some kind of

some kind of law that you can't you

can't understand how it couldn't always

be true even if there's nobody nobody's

thinking it but it only really exists if

somebody's thinking

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

next question

and this one is

uh well I'll just read it unfortunately

my relationship brings me suffering but

I know I'll suffer more if I let her go

what should I do well the fact of the

matter is in in Buddhist philosophy

everything brings you suffering

now it's just everything in the world is

unsatisfying to some degree

so yeah your relationship brings you

suffering and not having a relationship

will also bring you suffering and so the

thing to do

is uh learn to deal with the situation

with Equanimity as well as you can

and I'm you know if you've got a

relationship with somebody who's like

screaming at you and throwing dishes at

you or something then yeah that's that's

advanced level that's that's the

challenge level

um

but I mean if you know that you'll

suffer more without her than with her

then I suppose you just stay with her

and use your relationship as a kind of

spiritual practice you know it's just

part of your your path and you're

learning to love her as perfectly as you

can and that's part of your spiritual

practice because only an enlightened

being can love perfectly

like total unconditional love I'm pretty

sure only an enlightened being can do

that

so just uh

practice love

as a spiritual practice

that would be my advice I mean I really

I don't know the lady you know so I

really can't go into specifics because I

don't know the specifics about the

relationship

but that would be my general advice

and so I'll move on to Austin's next

question

how often did you meditate before you

became a monk

well I mean

it depends it was like I gradually

meditated more and more the closer I got

to becoming a monk of course when I

originally I didn't meditate at all I

didn't start meditating until I was in

high school I think and I was really

crappy at meditating and then I'd

meditate maybe 20 minutes or 30 minutes

in the morning before I'd go to school

and mainly is just sort of riding the

bucking bronco of my own

mind just going everywhere and trying to

like get it back to om because that's

how I was meditating back at the time I

was inspired to meditate from Reading

ROM Das books and he was more of a Hindu

than a Buddhist so I started off with om

um then I stopped probably in college I

didn't meditate at all

um

and then in my mid-20s as I was getting

more and more serious about like

entering the monastery and really

practicing dhamma

like conscientiously

I started meditating again and I was I

was really bad at it it was just be a

um I have a timer set for 30 minutes or

I'd have an inset stick and I wouldn't

stop meditating until the insects ins

the insect incense stick would was
burned through and yeah it was it was a
struggle and it wasn't until I started
like actually going to monasteries just
to kind of check out what monsters were
like in doing Retreats there that I
started meditating several hours a day
but before that it was pretty sketchy it
was
no more than an hour per day maybe half
an hour
but it wasn't until I became a monk that
I really became just like a really
sincere just full blast practitioner
and being a monk I mean that's one
reason why one becomes a monk is because

you're able to meditate all the time or

most of the time if you're a monk

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

question

and this is uh somewhat of a complicated

one

can you explain the nuances and

differences between weipasana samata

samadhi and anapana and how should we

incorporate these into our meditation

foreign

well

we pass enough it has two different

meanings it has like the vulgar meaning

that it has acquired in like modern

terrible Buddhism not just in in the

west but also in some place like Burma

so we pass enough literally it means

insight

and it's something that happens to you

it's like it's like a flash of wisdom

that occurs

um but in common parlance it means

mindfulness meditation and if you

practice mindfulness meditation then

sometimes Insight can arise and so for

some reason just the mindfulness

meditation or Sati batana meditation has

been called wipasana

um more than anything else in the West

is a different kind of meditation it's

not

um predominantly mindfulness meditation

it's the cultivation of Jonna or at

least moving in the direction of Janna

so it's

still in your mind like in mindfulness

meditation

excuse me my eyes itching

in mindfulness meditation

um

you got a moving Target you know

whatever arises you notice you note that

whereas in somehow meditation you tend

to avoid letting your mind follow these

other things you just keep it on the

primary object

and if it starts to stray you know your

knee itches or you hear a strange noise

or your mind just starts to wander as

soon as you notice you just bring it

right back to the primary object and

that is that's more like someone tall

meditation it's like your your mind is

becoming quieter and more still and more

simple it becomes one pointed so to

speak

so those are the two main kinds of

meditation in Buddhism

you've got mindfulness meditation

sometimes called vipassana and then

you've got like some Modi oriented

meditation

or you're concentrating your mind on on

one thing

so that leads us to the next term that

Austin wants defined or explain and that
is samadhi and almost always samadhi is
translated as concentration
so it's keeping your mind focused on
whatever you want it focused on without
any kind of
straying or wandering or like blurriness
or or semi-conscious attention that kind
of a thing you want just focused
attention on something
um until you get into really advanced
like Jonah States in which
um your mind is more expanded and you're
not focused on one thing it's just I
mean the one thing may be like like
Infinite Space or infinite consciousness
and so in that case samadhi is really

just distilling and sort of the the

clarifying of your mind

you know as your mind becomes very

simple and pure and clear and that also

is a kind of smarty but that's more

advanced than just keeping your mind

focused on on one thing that's a more uh

Elementary kind of of samani

and uh the last term that uh Austin once

explained here is anapana and anapana

literally means in-breath out breath

Hana or pran Prana in in Sanskrit

um

it's um it's breath

and so anupama is a meditation form in

which you are observing your breath

generally you're observing

um the breath as it touches uh around

your nostrils and that is what you focus

your concentration on Focus your mind on

that's your primary object in your

meditation

and it can be a kind of mindfulness

meditation where if there's nothing more

obvious to to note you just go back to

the breath or it can be a samadhi kind

of a meditation that can lead to Jonah

in a way she just keep your you just

observe the the breath or

um not so much observing the breath or

like when I did anapalam uh it wouldn't

be so much observing the breath I

wouldn't be thinking breathing in

breathing out like like probably most

people who do anapana do it's more of

just observing the sensation of touch

around the nostril so it'd be

um this sort of a way to not just uh

um mindfulness of the of the feeling

um this the contact because

um according to

like standard terravonna Buddhist

philosophy breathing in and breathing

out are not ultimate realities but

waiting out we're feeling is so you're

closer to Ultimate Reality if you're

doing anapana by just being aware of the

sensation of touch then you are if

you're like imagining like the air going

into your body in fact some some kinds

of anapana you're you're like Imagining

the air going through your nose and it's

spreading out through your whole body

which is uh not very realistic it's it's

really not

um correct

like human physiology or I don't know

what the word is I guess it's physiology

right no

there's some word for like how your body

works and it's that's not how it works I

mean the breath is not spreading all

through your body unless you're

imagining you know like the the

hemoglobin getting oxygenated and going

through all your cells and

yeah

probably better off just just observing

the sensation of touch

so how should we incorporate these into

our meditation it depends on what kind

of meditation you're doing

um it is good to be conversant in the

different terms like the the different

jargon of meditation especially Buddhist

Meditation so it's good to know what we

possible are

but uh how you incorporate that into

your meditation depends on how you

meditate you know what your goals are

what you're trying to accomplish

um and so on

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here

and this was uh I mean all these

questions from Austin were not just one

after another it's he's asked these

questions over a course of several days

and so this question is not that the

same on the same day as all the other

questions

and this question is or it's sort of a

question

I was involved in a serious car crash

today and it made me ponder about the

negative Karma that could have led to

such an event

it then struck me how we as humans tend

to attribute everything that happens to

us as something unique or beyond the natural course of events I wonder if my situation is simply a natural coincidence or if there is a deeper Force at work here governed by the law of karma well according to orthodox tirovada

every single Sensation that you experience is the fruition of karma so the whole world that you are living in is is heavily conditioned by Karma everything that happens to you that's positive or negative and I think an abhidham a scholar once told me the even neutral events

um you know just the touch of your cloth

your clothing against your skin or

something that even that is the fruition

of karma to some degree and karma is a

mental state so in a sense we're we're

like dreaming the world we're in We're

Dreaming our reality and

I mean if you're really in a you're

having a dream at night you're asleep

you're having a dream it all seems real

and I mean you're still Bound by certain

laws not nearly so much as as when

you're awake

but still I mean there is a certain

structure that you're pretty much stuck

in and you got the monster chasing you

through the the syrup and you can't run

fast because the syrup is slowing you

down

um I mean you don't really have

conscious control over that it's just I

mean at the same time though you're

creating it

and being in a waking dream like like

this I suppose is similar to that it's

like a higher level you know there's

more structure to it

but it's it's similar

so

yeah it's like will will is Karma and uh

yeah we're sort of driving our our

vehicle through through the cosmos and

I mean most of us just aren't very good

drivers and we really don't understand

just how profoundly we are creating the
world that we're living in
so yeah it's according to Buddhist
philosophy when you got in a car crash
um I'm sorry I got in the car crash but
uh yeah it was it was your own mental
stage that condition that it was your
own Karma that reached fruition now who
knows what the action was or the group
of actions that kind of planted that
seed for that to happen
but um yeah we're sort of creating this
stuff and uh I mean it's not entirely
bad in a way you're paying debts when
something bad happens to you I remember
reading that Ramana maharshi was a Hindu
by the way he uh

uh what's the word

he admonished his fault one of his

followers and that when he prayed he was

only thanking God for the good things

and he said you should thank God for the

bad things too because it's when bad

things happen to you that you get the

wake-up calls and it I mean if

everything good happens it's sort of

like you're in heaven and everything's

so nice you're not really improving

you know you're not really motivated to

change or improve whereas when bad

things are happening and it causes you

to be unhappy then it can inspire you to

try to kind of fix your own mind at

least so that these things don't make

you so unhappy

so let's see

uh again I'm sorry about the car crash

but I think I'm going to move on to

Austin's next question

and that is how do you differentiate the

real from the imaginary

and that's an interesting question and

there's two different ways you can go

about this one is the ultimately real

from anything that isn't ultimately real

so it's like how do you differentiate

what is ultimate truth from what is just

uh conventional truth or samsaric Maya

or something and that's fairly easy

because

um I mean I'm kind of a heretic I'm not

like an abidama scholar here

but

ultimate truth is is essentially nibana

I mean the highest reality is nibano

and uh so anything that involves

perception is not it

I mean you gotta go completely Beyond

perception and just go into just like

pure Consciousness although

if you get to the level of pure

Consciousness then you go off the scale

it's paradoxical

so yeah I mean so at one level you can

say the difference between the real and

the imaginary is the difference between

nibana and samsara

but it could be and some Mahayana

schools go into this in some depth that

what Austin here means is

you're differentiating like conventional

truths from conventional untruth

or you know what can be considered true

in a samsaraic context from just your

own imagination and the way you

differentiate that

would be

something would be true if it doesn't

contradict all the other stuff you

consider to be true

at least that's that's like the the way

of really separating the goats from the

Sheep

so if something is

just merely imaginary it's not going to

be integrated into everything else that

you consider to be true it's just going

to be sort of a one-off like a just a

spin-off of something

and it's not going to be integrated into

all the other truths that you consider

to be true

and that's uh

I'm sort of getting into like

there was a hegelian philosopher like

around the early 20th century FH Bradley

who is one of my favorite Western

philosophers and he had this idea of the

coherence theory of Truth which is

essentially what I said it's like

something is true if and only if it is

in agreement with

everything else that you consider to be

true

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

question

and he's been he's been asking some

interesting questions here does

dependent origination instantiate

infinite regression

well

in a way it does

because samsara is condition I mean

samsara is like the result of dependent

origination or dependent uh co-arising

as I usually call it

um

so in a way I mean there is an infinite

regress if you care to to just go back

it's sort of like in science you can see

you can regress back to the Big Bang or

or whatever

um but this goes Buddhist philosophy

there is no big bang or or or there's a

sequence of Big Bangs you know it's like

the the universe expands and then

contracts and is destroyed and then a

new universe expands and contracts and

is destroyed and then a new universe and

that just goes on forever and ever

that's that's the Buddhist explanation

um

but in a sense dependent co-rising

um

I mean you can you don't have to regress

it into Infinity I mean you can

if you're able to

but

um I mean you can just see dependent

code Rising like in the present moment

so it works in the present moment even

if you don't regress back into Infinity

uh and I've talked quite a lot about

dependent co-rising and it's very

difficult to talk about and uh it might

be a major digression of me wallowing

through trying to explain something that

even the Buddha was in despair of trying

to explain according to tradition

so I think I'll just uh move on to the

next question from

hereward the wake

I think is is how you pronounce this

name here were the wake

and he says proclus who lived from 412

to 485 A.D the best known of the

neoplatonists after plotinus apparently

believed that all things interpenetrate

all other things this seems to me to be

a kind of approximation of

interdependent origination or at least

it is very similar to the metaphor of

indra's net used in Hawaiian Buddhism

bearing in mind that in the indo-greek

kingdoms coins were minted showing

Buddha on one side and a Greek god on

the other is it possible today to be

syncretistic neoplatonist and Buddhist

yeah it's certainly possible

um

I think the hard part is just getting

neoplatonism on like you know on track

and like into a

um like

a functional

belief system

other than just sort of uh

uh like an idiosyncrasy of one

individual in society or in another one

kind of 20 miles away and another one 50

miles away

um

but yeah I mean it's certainly possible

I think the hard part would be getting

the neoplatonism going

but I I think uh yeah I think it would

be interesting to see what would happen

in western

civilization if the the last Pagan

emperor of Rome uh Julian the apostate

hadn't died so quickly I mean he was

Emperor for just a couple years and then

he got killed

um but he was trying to establish

neoplatonism as like the religion I mean

a kind of modified neoplatonism he was

taking neoplatonism and injecting it

into

um like classical Roman paganism as a

way of making it more wise and more

structure to it less dependent on silly

poets and coming up with all these

ridiculous stories

um

yeah we might be

I mean it'd be interesting just to see

what would happen I'm kind of sorry it

didn't happen

um but yeah I don't see any reason at

all is why it couldn't be

um combined with Buddhism Buddhism

combines with other systems fairly well

obviously in China it was combining with

Taoism

although there are some people a few

people who say that taoism itself was uh

like allowed to

was really just a kind of

semi-mythological Buddha that I mean he

was

it was sort of the Buddha sort of

um distorted into another a Chinese

person named laosu but ultimately it's

it was going back to the Buddha but um I

digress

so yeah the easy answer to that question

is uh sure I don't see why neoplatonism

and Buddhism couldn't be combined to

some degree and they are to some degree

in in agreement on certain things

so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is I assume it's from

someone called William

although they've spelled their name

u-i-l-i-u-mu William

says

did the Greek sculptors work from the

description of the Buddha in Buddhist

scriptures

um

to some degree I suppose I mean they had

him wearing monks robes

and there were some really famous

um Hellenistic sculptures or images of

the Buddha when he was going through the

uh

uh dokaracharya where he was torturing

himself and starving himself so there's

some like Hellenistic Greek style

statues even if it was they weren't

carved by Greeks it was in the Greek

style of

the Buddha just as it may see just Skin

and Bones sitting in meditation with you

know sunken in eye sockets and

everything so they knew something about

the Buddha but the texts themselves

don't go into details on what the Buddha

look like Anyway other than just he was

tall he had sort of

golden colored skin you know he was

Majestic looking

there are some really strange details in

uh the marks of the great man where he

supposedly had 40 teeth and so forth

that need not be taken seriously because

it wouldn't even be possible for one

person to have all the 32 marks that are

described

but um I think the Greek sculptors

mainly we're just modifying Apollo the

god Apollo

that the Buddha was

um

carved or portrayed in the style of the

god Apollo which included a kind of top

knot like an aristocratic top-not that

eventually got turned into that weird

lump on the top of the Buddha's head or

so I have read

but I mean they knew some of the details

they knew what Monk's robes looked like

and so forth so they had him looking

like a Buddhist monk except with the

hair when Buddhist monks aren't supposed

to have you know long head hair like

most Buddha statues have even though the

booty himself was a monk who shaved his

head

ah

so the answer to that one is yes and no

and I'll just move on to the next

question this is from rui

and rui says do you think that first

genre can be accessed through thought

I.E through a correct and clear

intellection well any kind of thought

with like individual words or symbols

hooking up in sequence like there are

kinds of of the 40

standard types of meditation

that are taught in or or like mentioned

at least in books like the wisudi manga

which is a kind of meditation manual

um there are some that involve just

thinking you know you're like reflection

upon the virtues of the Buddha

reflection upon Heaven reflection upon

the Devas reflection upon your own Merit

that kind of a thing and none of them

lead to Jonah because you can't really

get into John if you're thinking in

sentences

I mean there can be a certain amount of

of thought going but it might be very

simple like a mantra kind of a thing

or it could be non-verbal thought

but if you're thinking in sentences

which I assume is what rui is is is

um alluding to here

then uh like intellection yeah that you

you can only get as far as

um upachara samadi or access

concentration this is according to like

the commentarial tradition

take it or leave it like the wisudi Maga

itself will say that any kind of

meditation that involves you thinking in

sentences you know you're thinking

you know the way most people think you

know like some a kind of running

monologue kind of a thing then the

farthest you can get is not Jonna but uh

access concentration or upachara samadhi

which is like one step before you get

into Jonna so if you're gonna attain

Jonna you're eventually gonna have to

stop thinking in sentences while you're

meditating

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from Jeffrey

who's one of the only people who asks

questions on bit shoot

and Jeffrey says

does Buddhism have an observation of a

sky clock

and a sky clock I assume he's referring

to being able to tell what time it is by

looking at the position of the sun in

the sky I've read survival manuals or

like you know like Army survival manuals

that give you instructions how to do

that and Buddhism really doesn't do that

I mean there's really only two times

that a monk has to know that is dawn in

midday

and

I mean you could call determining when

the sun is at its highest point in the

sky a kind of crude sky clock

um maybe

in some monasteries or some monks who

just use a kind of sundial

you know you can you can make a sundial

fairly easily

um and it the purpose of it is partly

just so you'll know exactly when noon is

when midday is

so it's possible

um that a lot of like ancient Buddhists

had something like that just so they

wouldn't they'd be sure of not breaking

the rule against eating after midday and

with regard to Dawn that's easy it's

according to the commentarial tradition

when you can see the lines in the palm

of your hand when you're at arm's length

then it's light enough to be called Dawn

so

you can see like the the lifeline and

the heart line and all that you can see

those lines at arm's length then it's

daytime it's the day has begun although

it's not a very good way of determining

daytime because if it's cloudy it might

go on might occur half an hour later

than it did the day before

um usually as a monk I would just when

you can detect light in the sky coming

from the east or the southeast south or

east by Southeast then

yeah it's the day has started

um Buddhism does have a sky calendar and

I've I've written in some detail about

that or you can tell what time of the

year it is by the position of the full

moon among the the constellations of the

the ecliptic what in the west is called

the Zodiac but it's they they have

different constellations in Ancient

India and they had 27 of them

instead of 12.

so

um really the only time that a monkman

needs to know and I don't think in

Ancient India they had a concept of

hours you know like you know what a

clock is it

the only time that a monk really needs

to know is when is Dawn and when is noon

because a monk is only allowed to eat

food between Dawn and noon he's not

allowed to go for alms around Before

Dawn

so those are really the two times a mom

needs to know one is just from the if

it's light or if it's still dark and

how ancient monks

were sure

that the sun hadn't reached the highest

point in the sky yet I'm really not sure

because

I don't remember reading anything in the

text about that

there's a famous

kind of statue of upagupta you can you

can find them in Burma even though UPA

Gupta was uh he's more of a Mahayana

type

monk I don't think he was terrawotten

but um it's if you've ever seen like an

altar a statue of a monk sitting with

his monk Bull in his lap and he's kind

of looking up like this

I've been told that what he was doing he

was looking in the sky to see if it was

Midday yet so he'd know to stop eating

but this is kind of strange

so yeah the only sky clock there would

be is just somehow knowing when it's

exactly midday because it's against the

rules for a monk to eat after midday

and I assume

um either monks would just eat

relatively early in the morning so

they'd be sure that it wasn't midday yet

or else they'd have some kind of uh

Sundial set up just so that when the the

shadow reached a certain point you knew

it was Midday

and it's fairly easy to make those

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from

a challah I think a-c-a-l-a

-la or akala

and achala I think

says

during the chanting of paritas we often

invite the Devas and seek their

protection how did the Devas provide us

their protection when we invoke them or

how can one know that one has the

protection of Devas is there a specific

practice to be able to contact and see

the Earthly Davis

um I chanted parita a lot and at the

beginning there is an invocation where

you're inviting the Devas to come and

listen to the dhamma

but

it wasn't so much to seek their

protection I mean it was just sort of an

act of respect I think

um

yeah I'm not aware of any paritas that

are really invoking Davis for the

purpose of getting favors from the Davis

um to some degree just by sending meta

to the Devas and then they're going to

send it back to some degree

um you know obviously if you if you're

nice to someone they're more likely to

be nice back to you and that works for

uh Davis too apparently

so how did the Davis provide provide us

their protection when we invoke them

um

I mean there's sort of like a powerful

benefactor to some degree

um

it's it's very limited in Buddhism it's

prayer is really not encouraged in

Buddhism in fact the Buddha kind of made

fun of it in at least one suit that I

can think of

um

it's more of a Hindu thing I think and

obviously more of a Christian thing

so

how do the Davis provide us their

protection

well

who knows

frankly

um

yeah I mean there's all sorts of things

they can do they can warn you you know

you just get like this premonition this

feeling

or you know they can turn away some sort

of danger maybe danger you're not even

aware of maybe they're helping you

without even realizing it

so how can one know that one has the

protection of Davis I don't think

there's any way to be absolutely sure I

mean you could have a Deva come and talk

to you and say that he's protecting you

in such and such ways but

um yeah it could be a hallucination of

some kind of strange Vision that you had

under a strange mental state or

something

so let's see how come when no one has

the protection of Davis I mean I've

often felt in my life that I have had

someone looking after me

but again it's just a feeling there's no

way I could prove it

and then finally is is there a specific

practice to be able to contact and see

the Earthly Davis

there may very well be although I don't

know what it is it's really like in

terrible out of Buddhism they really

discourage this kind of thing because

the Devas aren't going to liberate you

the Davis aren't going to send you to

heaven

you know they're just sort of like

I don't know powerful friends if you're

lucky

so

so yeah and and terrible Buddhism one is

certainly not encouraged to rely on

Davis or to invoke David's for the

purpose of getting favors from them or

or any kind of praying or making

sacrifices to the Devas

um it's it's really that's really not

what terrible Buddhism is all about

although as I say at the beginning of of

the chanting of Puritas often especially

in in Burma I don't know how it's done

in Thailand or Sri Lanka or such places

but what invokes the Dave is just

um out of respect to have them come and

listen to the novel

so I'll just move on to achala's second

question

in the edipada wibanga suta which is

samyutinikaya 5120 the Buddha describes
the eight Supernatural or the Eight
supernormal Powers what are your
thoughts on this especially the one that
states
quote with his hand he touches and
strokes even the Sun and Moon unquote is
this genuine teaching of the Buddha how
should we evaluate such discourses since
I myself have no such supernormal Powers
should I accept them to be true
well as a junior monk I have to admit I
had some problems with this list of the
eight super normal Powers it's not just
in that one suit it can be found
throughout the departica at least in the
winnia and sutanda

um and yeah and this with his hand he

touches and strokes the Sun and Moon I

mean

yeah there's some commentarial

explanation of that where he's just like

materializing a replica

and touching that or some such but it

really I don't know I I kind of doubt

that the Buddha would would have taught

that the other super normal Powers

um they involve like Clairvoyance the

Divine eye deep

clear audience or the Divine ear Divas

Sota

um

one interesting one is walking on water

or like going through walls or like

swimming through the the ground as

though as water that kind of a thing

another one is creating like replicas of

yourself

um another one is recalling your past

lives in other words seeing into the

minds of others and then finally the the

last and eighth one I'm pretty sure is

just the the awareness of Liberation

that you've become enlightened and that

is the ultimate supernormal power is is

just breaking through the veil and

seeing Ultimate Reality

um so yeah I mean everything

I mean if you have doubts about it

then yeah I mean you shouldn't just try

to force yourself to believe it because
there is quite a lot of stuff in the
polytext that I just could never believe
like when the Buddha was born
you know he just walks towards the east
I think with a Lotus Blossom coming up
under his feet so he wouldn't have to
touch the ground and then he makes this
grandiose statement you know there's no
one greater than me this is my final
lifetime you know my final existence and
and then apparently after that he just
goes back to being a relatively normal
baby
okay there's all kinds of weird stuff in
the text there's the fire breathing

dragons and the talking animals and so

forth

um

so I think it's possible that this would

go into that category or it may be that

there was just a standard list from

before Buddha's time of you know the

eight paranormal powers and it just got

incorporated into Buddhism possibly by

the Buddha himself it's really hard to

say in cases like this although yeah

I've never had any use for the uh

touching and stroking the Sun and Moon

I wouldn't I wouldn't even really want

to touch the sun to tell you the truth

so let's see since I myself have no such

supernormal Powers should I accept them

to be true well some supernormal powers

or psychic abilities

yeah it's I'm it's pretty likely to say

the least that they are true although

stroking the Sun and Moon may not be one

of them

but

like knowing the minds of others a

certain amount of telekinesis that kind

of a thing yeah I've I've got no problem

with that

so yeah you have to just rely on your

own your own intuition your own best

judgment on cases like this

but I myself also as a junior among as

soon as I read that it's like how the

heck anyone gonna be touching the Sun

and Moon

so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from CEO of ox and

cpat zidana and I don't know if I'm

pronouncing it correctly but at least

I'm pronouncing it with a certain amount

of facility now

and see of actions says

there are some self-proclaimed arohans

on the internet that claim to be

enlightened but admit still having

sexual desire and being frustrated at

times this is because they claim the

traditional 10 Fetter models are wrong

and that since all schools really teach

the same thing their permanent

experience of boundless non-dual
Consciousness is proof of their
Enlightenment with some claiming that
being free from desires like sex or
patriarchal values of ancient Indian
culture I know you have also said that
you think the upanishadic sages have
reached the same stage as as Nirvana but
based on what these internet arahans are
saying it seems you don't even need to
remove the three poisons which is greed
hate and delusion or attraction aversion
and delusion to achieve their ultimate
state
to me it just seems like that they
couldn't reach up towards the status of

our heart so they brought the status of
Aura haunt and down towards them I say
this because there are some Hindu
Traditions Jane's six Etc
seeks six
that also have similar kinds of poisons
that need to be removed completely and
have agreed with this standard for over
thousands of years so it's not just some
made up standard Patriarchs made like
these people claim what are your
thoughts on this whole thing what kind
of state do you think these people have
attained that they experience boundless
non-dual Consciousness but still have
many of the Fetters in all three poisons
well this is really uh

there's there's a spectrum

and at one end you've got Traditions

like terravada Buddhism that say in

order to become enlightened you have to

be a perfect saint

you can't have any bad thoughts you

can't do any bad things you have to be a

saint before you can become enlightened

then at the other end of the spectrum

you've got like the Krishna murdies

who are saying I mean it doesn't even

matter

because it's like

you're detached from from this meat

puppet anyway this isn't you you realize

this isn't you it can just do whatever

it wants and that isn't you

ah so

it really is kind of a paradox really

um I do think that to some degree being

saintly

facilitates enlightenment

and that may be why so many Traditions

like strenuously encourage saintliness

if you want to become enlightened

because it greatly improves your odds of

becoming enlightened whereas in the West

it seems like most people who become

enlightened or have their Awakening

experiences they it just happens

accidentally you know they have some

sort of Calamity that just slams them

out of a rut and so

um you know they're not as saintly as as

somebody like in the east

who who has just gone through this

strenuous self-discipline and

purification and so forth

um I can see that there's a possibility

of

like becoming enlightened I mean

obviously not everyone has to be at the

same level

in order to become enlightened like in

in Buddhism terrible Buddhism especially

some people have to get all the way up

to Fourth genre in order to become

enlightened other people don't have to

get Janna at all apparently or

um you know they don't have to get very

Advanced mental States and then they

become like a dry visioned or a hot that

doesn't have any psychic powers or or so

forth

so

yeah this is uh this is kind of a sticky

one and I I have to admit that over the

years I've gradually had more and more

appreciation for someone like

krishnamurti

And he supposedly was enlightened or he

had attained something

um but at the same time he was he was

not a saint and like he was messing

around with he had like an adulterous

relationship going with his the wife of

his personal secretary and so forth

so

I do think that saintliness is conducive

it increases your odds of becoming

enlightened but it may be that you could

still become enlightened without being a

saint that uh I mean there there may be

enlightened Rascals in this world like

neem karoli Baba is one of my favorites

he was a rascal but the thing is that

like to have all three poisons which is

you know greed hate and delusion or

attraction aversion stupidity

that I mean if you get to a certain

level where you're just detached from

the body

you detach from the the mind body system
I mean you just know it isn't you and it
just it's just nature taking its course
then I can see the possibility of that
although in all probability these most
of these internet arohans are
technically sociopaths you know they're
like con men or else they're just
conning themselves you know everyone who
does intensive practice for years
you know they don't they want to believe
that they've attained something
and especially if they're making money
from having attained something then
serious then they're going to be making
excuses for why it is that they're still
you know horny and and so forth

so I guess my best explanation

is that saintliness or like moral

self-restraint

it increases your odds just like being a

monk increases your odds

um

but that it may not be necessary to be

an absolute Saint like in terrible

Buddhism it's saying that you know a

fully enlightened being can't do this

can't do that he can't tell a lie for

example

and it's like uh

it seems like an awful lot of things

that a liberated being can't do

and um yeah so I'm I'm definitely

skeptical of the idea that you have to

be an absolutely perfect Saint in order

to become a lion

um this where I'm going to scroll up

here a little bit

oh yeah their permanent experience of

boundless non-dual Consciousness yeah

I'm skeptical of that

that I mean if they're functioning

it's possible I suppose but I think a

lot of them a lot of these famous people

especially if they're just bragging

about how enlightened they are and

there's quite a few of those the ones

that are bragging about how enlightened

they are I

I would be skeptical I mean I just think

you know they're they're calling

somebody possibly just themselves

but it is uh

yeah it's a tricky one but I I kind of

lean towards

the con men in a sense

um the ancient Traditions definitely

they are based on self-purification and

you know strict morality and uh and

that's good I mean it increases your

odds but I think it is possible that

someone who isn't a fully enlightened

saint

can have something happens that just

slams them just it just like detaches

them from the whole system

and uh you know so the Mind Body uh

system is uh still in a relatively crude

state but somehow they've managed it

anyway

that is a possibility I have to admit

that I do consider that to be possible

so I think uh

I should uh stop wading through this one

and uh get to the next question by CEO

of action and sipad zidana

and this is another kind of longish one

here

he says I have heard lay bresington say

that he thinks the four path model

originates from udana 2-1

and uh I have to admit I didn't read I

didn't refresh my memory by reading who

Donna 2-1 before raw before going on

this uh episode of q a

um but he's got quotes here I've heard

Lord bresington say that he thinks the

four Pals model originates through Donna

and the four path model I assume he's

referring to here is the four stages of

sainthood you know you got the soda Pawn

on the sake dagami the anagami and the

araha

so quote Blissful is Detachment for one

who is content who has heard the dhamma

who sees unquote this part is stream

entry of where one sees the

unconditioned directly has contentment

because of having absolute Faith from

seeing directly and Detachment is even more General than rights and rituals quote Blissful is non-affliction with regard for the world restraint for living beings unquote this part is sakitagami you would have desires and ill will but you will always practice restraint in how you act towards people and the world quote Blissful is dispassion with regard for the world the overcoming of sensuality unquote this describes the onigami who is free from all sins desire I guess ill will isn't really mentioned in this description quote but the subduing of the conceit I am that is truly the Supreme Bliss unquote this describes an araha who sees

non-self do you think that this skeleton

of the later 10 Federer four path model

directly from the sutas is something you

would agree with

um

I think he's asking me if I agree with

Lee bresington's Theory the whole idea

of the four stages of sainthood plus

maybe the ten Fetters the list of ten

Fetters comes from this one Sutton udana

2-1

and I think it may be that this was like

an early stage in the development of the

ideas

but

I think there may be even earlier stages

like there are several sutas at the

beginning of a little-known text called

IDI Utica which is in the

um

where the term anagami apparently means

arahan and literally an anagami is one

who does not return

so obviously if you become enlightened

you don't return to samsara kind of a

thing

and soda upon us

I really think that originally a

sodapana was not necessarily a saint at

all not necessarily anyone who had seen

Ultimate Reality like for example

there's a strange vinya rule an obscure

one

it's one of the the four Pati desania
rules where monks are not allowed to ask
for too much stuff from a family of soda
panels
and apparently what it means there is is
that they're like new converts that
they're like uh Born Again Buddhist is
it's like they're full of Faith they're
very enthusiastic and if monks just keep
going and asking them for stuff they'll
just give away everything and create
hardships for themselves so there's a
rule against that
um I'm not sure how monks would be able
to know whether an entire family had
seen a glimpse of of nibana or not

so I think that the terms themselves

sakuragami apparently isn't mentioned in

any of the really old archaic texts

um so I do think that the the four

stages of sainthood

um it evolved over time

and I don't think that it's it goes all

the way back to the Buddha or if it did

it was in a different form I mean it has

evolved

with regard to the 10 Fetters I I really

am not I've never been into the whole

list of you know the five of these and

the Seven of those and the the 37 of the

other things like I've never had any

interest in that it's just

it's counter-intuitive me I don't think

that dhamma really works that way I mean

you're not going to become enlightened

by systematizing lists of numbered words

or concepts

some people are really into it you know

like some engineer types in the west one

of the reasons why they like dama

is it so systematic you know it's got

all these lists that you can memorize

but for me it's just counterintuitive

that if you're practicing dhamma you're

trying to get towards more and more this

Clarity and simplicity and

silence

or at least Detachment from the noise

so

yeah lay bresington I mean he does have

some interesting ideas

um

but yeah I don't think that the the the

four stages of of sainthood that their

ultimate origin comes from that one suta

and the udana that that may be like a

relatively early stage in the evolution

trying to get the concepts together in

some coherent form

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question from

which I don't even have to read anymore

the other day at work and just it was

almost like a mantra just this this

weird name going over and over in my

head

which may be the plan I don't know
anyway the next question is
in an older video you said you can't
help someone if they don't want to quit
unless they have a change of perception
how could this knowledge be used to
change bad habits and addictions
willingly that we do want to quit such
as internet addiction or or there are
other ways these bad habits can be
removed if we want them to be well the
thing is if you're addicted to something
you don't completely want to stop doing
it it may be that you know it's like
some heavy drinker you know he's lost
his job and his wife is leaving him and

his friends are starting to avoid him

and everything and

he's he thinks I'm gonna have to stop

drinking I'm gonna turn over a new Leaf

I'm gonna be a good boy and then

I mean it works for a while until

finally he starts getting the urge and

then he wants to drink again

and it's the same way with internet like

internet addiction I mean obviously it's

not a physical addiction it's people do

it because they want to keep doing it

and it's like Mary Baker Eddie like the

founder of Christian Science

she said that it's easier to cure

someone of cancer than it is to cure

them of a bad habit because they

sincerely wholeheartedly want to get rid
of the cancer but the bad habit it's
it's a it's a habit because they like it
and they're attached to it and they want
to keep doing it it may be that they're
of two minds you know a lot of the time
they're thinking I really shouldn't do
this anymore this is bad for me but then
you know after a while they start
getting the urge again and they want to
do it and so you have to really have
a change in perception
so that you realize that it's just not
serving you and the the
like probably
when uh CEO of actions I saw the older

video when I was talking about it it may
be when I was the one where I was
talking about my own father who tried to
stop smoking over and over again you
know he'd he'd smoke two packs a day and
then he'd stop smoking go cold turkey
then after a while he'd start smoking a
pipe a little bit or chewing a little
tobacco and then within a month or two
he'd be back to two packs a day again
until his legs started turning black
and
he went to the doctor and the doctor
told him because he had injured that leg
before and and there was a significant
capillary damage in that leg the the cat
the like the damaged capillaries were

they were getting clogged with tar and

uh he had two choices he could stop

smoking or he could have his leg

amputated and that caused a radical

change in perception so that kind of

whenever you get the urge I mean the

urge came came back but then he'd just

think of his leg getting amputated and

it wasn't so bad or another possibility

would be let's say that there's some

Psychopathic king or Emperor kidnaps

your daughter and says if you don't

break your bad habit I'm going to

torture your daughter to death well then

all of a sudden

it's easy I mean you're still gonna have

the urges but as soon as the urge arises

you just dismiss it immediately just

nope

and that's that's pretty much what has

to be done in order to break an

addiction you have to get to the point

where when the urge arises you just

dismiss it this nope not gonna happen

but when you're in in two minds about

something

then yeah I mean part of you doesn't

want to do it anymore but it's not like

you wholeheartedly want to stop because

then you'd stop

the reason that you don't stop is

because part of you doesn't want to stop

and so you've got this internal

conflict going on until eventually one

side or the other wins

so let's see

how could this knowledge be used to

change about how it's well I mean you

have to change your perception so you're

gonna have to acquire more knowledge at

the very least about what it is that you

want to stop just study up on the bad

effects of whatever it is that you're

you're toying with uh not doing anymore

and I just at the very least

so I guess I'll just move on to the next

question here

from CEO of action C part zero now I

have trouble getting into samadhi due to

being somewhat overweight when I sit my joints start hurting quickly and when I walk I get exhausted quickly I can't stay in a single posture long enough to build up the momentum to reach any kind of deeper samadhi I was thinking of joining a gym to lose weight but then I think I'm making excuses to not meditate how do you think I should proceed with these circumstance

well

yeah getting into better shape would probably help

but then again I mean if you read yoga books like The Illustrated ones showing that the different postures and so forth a lot of those yogis

um

yeah they're they're pretty portly you

know they they got some weight on them

they got like a punch and everything

it's just that they're they're their

joints are very limber they're very

flexible

and

like doing getting into the full Lotus

position

yeah it's just more a matter of the the

limberness of your tendons than anything

else

so I mean you have to endure a certain

amount of discomfort maybe for a few

years before you can sit comfortably in

the full Lotus position for an hour

straight

but but I mean that's that's one way of

going about it you just have to have

patience and perseverance

um but yeah I mean if if you're so if

you're overweight and out of shape

enough that even to do walking

meditation just slowly walking back and

forth causes exhaustion then yeah you

should probably get into better physical

condition

I would say

oh

so I guess I've answered that question

so we'll just move on to the next one

and Co vac and sipad zidana says in the

sutas it is said that the nibana element
without remainder or Pari Nirvana is
free of the Aggregates including
Consciousness and there are states like
nerota samopadi that exists where there
is no consciousness and there are also
rebirth Realms with no consciousness
what is the point of trying to attain
Pari Nirvana if it just sounds like a
permanent mental death that materialists
think will happen anyways whether we are
enlightened or not seems like
annihilationism with many people
performing mental gymnastics of never
being a self to deny the difference
well the thing is

that when it's referring to

Consciousness generally it's referring

to winyanakanda or the the aggregate of

Consciousness which is one of the five

Aggregates and this

arises only with other mental States

that you can't have when you're Anaconda

without some other mental state like

Sankara Kanda and and sannya Kanda or

perception and just like volition

but

if you get to the state of just formless

consciousness

you get into this paradoxical State I've

already mentioned this where

I mean in a way you have to have

consciousness of something but if you

can just sort of break that rule you

just eliminate all the somethings all

the content

then

what you've done is you've gotten into

this formless state and because it's

formless and infinite I mean you can't

really say it exists or doesn't exist

it's it's like this paradoxical this

enigma

and the

Orthodox position of terrible Buddhism

is that you just can't have that

although there are a few sutas one in

the Deegan see one in the majum in Kaya

I think one in the digha nikaya where

it's referring to nibana itself as

infinite formless consciousness

and I mean the commentaries try to

dance around this they're saying it's

not Nirvana it's it's not nibana it's

just some sort of mental state and it's

associated with meditation I don't

remember the exact details but it's

obviously to me at least a hogwash

explanation that it's pretty clear that

it really is describing or attempting to

describe Nirvana or nimana as infinite

formless consciousness

unmanifested boundless luminous

all-round

and that is

I mean when you get to Nirvana it's just

off the scale it's not in any of the 31
planes of existence it is not some saric
it cannot be contained in a concept
and so you just sort of left the system
and so nerota some optic cessation the
attainment of cessation I think there's
another question about this a little
farther down
um cessation of perception and feeling I
do think there probably still is some
Consciousness there otherwise I mean it
would be a non-state I mean it'd be like
being in a coma I mean what would be the
difference between nerota some updated
only the most advanced Saints can attain
and being in a coma where you're just

brain dead or whatever

yeah I do think that Orthodox tarabada

Buddhist philosophy does have certain

glitches in it certain inconsistencies

that have never been worked out

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question also from CEO of action

and this is an interesting one I like

this one

not that I hate any of the other one's

mind you

he says in an older video you said that

the different theravada Traditions

should just accept one another

because no school

can truly know if their ordination

lineage was broken or not

and the fixation is obsession with

rights and rituals however in another

video

you said that the Mahayana tradition

monastic orders for nuns are not

legitimate because you doubt they

properly had

did the ordination rituals done despite

them following an orthodox and Dharma

Gupta calvinia which is non-mahayana

although closer to servos de Vada than

to teravada from what I remember why do

you think these two things should be

treated differently

okay

so in the one video that he mentions

here I'm pointing out that

especially it's the dhamma you sect of

terravonna Buddhist monasticism in

Thailand that refuses to acknowledge any

other monks as legitimate monks they're

saying only they are real monks because

the others the other sects had

um their the lineage was broken

and if the lineage is broken you know

you've got too many monks that are

parajika you know they've committed some

um some ecclesiastical offense that has

them excommunicated but still they stay

in the Sangha or at least they appear to

stay in the Sangha and they're

conducting ordinations and these

ordinations are just invalid because

it's not they're not being done by real

monks

so that's one thing another part here

that he's talking about is I'm saying

that

um these I mean there have been attempts

to revive the bikini order

which is the the order of ordained

Buddhist nuns ironically for the sake of

gender equality when the bikuni order

has to follow rules that puts them

definitely below monks and they've got

way stricter rules they have to follow

in most respects and so you don't have

gender equality they're trying to get

gender equality by Reviving an order of

nuns that obviously clearly

discriminates against women

so it's just it's just ridiculous but

anyway one argument that they use for

saying that

um

these bikunis are real bikunis

and and not just they're just starting

in modern times just for the sake of

um you know

political correctness

is that in Korea or Taiwan someplace

like that they had an order of nuns that

were being ordained in accordance with

the ancient some an ancient School of

Buddhism the Dharma guptica

um sect of Buddhism

or the Dharma guptica School of Buddhism

so I mean what's the difference why

should I say

um you know we should just accept the

the existent orders of monks as you know

give them the benefit of the doubt but

not give the benefit of the doubt to the

nuns who supposedly were ordained in

this Dharma guptica tradition in East

Asia somewhere

and the thing is as as he points out

here in the question that you can't

prove that all other

sects of terrible Buddhism other than

the dhamma youth sect in Thailand

are valid you can't prove that

I mean you just can't demonstrate it

but with regard to the uh the nun

ordinations I mean it wouldn't take very

much research to find out if the

ordination procedure is valid or not and

if the ordination procedure is just

blatantly invalid for example they're

you know it's a very corrupt tradition

that's adopted all these Korean or

Taiwanese elements and isn't really a

valid ordination procedure anymore in

accordance with ancient Indian monastic

discipline

then yeah that would settle it I mean

you can just point to that and say

there's the proof

but with regard to like domayute monk

saying that well a thousand years ago

Burmese monks probably

um yeah they they probably were so

corrupt or whatever but they can't they

they can't prove it it's just they want

to believe that you know it's just

probably

and they can't even prove that their own

tradition never had a breaking in the

lineage

but that's just maybes so you're you're

weighing maybes on one hand and like

demonstrable facts on the other and it

wouldn't take that much research to find

out if these Taiwanese nuns or Korean

nuns or wherever they wherever they came

from whether they're ordination

procedure is valid in accordance with

terravonna Buddhist monastic discipline

so that's that's my answer

so I'll just move on to the next

question from covax and C pod zidana

and this also is kind of the long one

that's all right

can you explain the difference between

the first one literally translates to

feeling perception sensation cessation

while neroda samopadi literally

translates to cessation completion

however I see many people translate

nerota samopadi as cessation of

perception and feeling so it is

confusing also in ajan Puna damos

cosmology book there is also a realm you can be reborn in where you have no consciousness that results from certain non-butists practicing suppression of Consciousness how are all three of these things different unless one unless this is one of the earlier two I mentioned before well there is a kind of misperception here that uh all right literally means cessation of perception and feeling nerota samopadi does not mean complete sensation it means the attainment of cessation samopody means attainment

neroda is sensation cessation not sensation cessation

so they're synonyms

are the same it's just this the

attainment of cessation and the sun

Yahweh daita is just specifying that it

is in fact the cessation of perception

and feeling

doesn't say Consciousness though but

that's and we already got into that

so yeah so that's really not not much of

a problem they're they're just

synonymous they're the same thing with

regard to this other this other realm

that is mentioned that was described in

cosmology book

um that's the perceptionless brahmas

and I mean I've had problems with that

this is like

you know when I was a young monk I read
about this and it's like the the
supernormal power of of touching the Sun
it's like why would there be a heaven
realm of perceptionless brahmas where
they're just like statues
they're I mean time doesn't even pass
for them I mean they didn't even know
that they're there
you know it's like no time would pass it
would just be instantaneous they're in
and out even if they were there for
millions of years because there's no
awareness of the passage of time they'd
be like Van Winkle or something
and it just doesn't make any sense to me

why there would be a heaven Realm where

the beings are essentially in comas

I mean they're completely unaware of

anything including the passage of time

so there's no working out of any Karma

at all

and so how are they even going to die I

mean their karma cannot reach fruition

if they don't have a functioning mind

so I just I just really am skeptical of

the very existence

of this this realm of the perceptionless

brahmas where these these gods are

essentially just statues of God standing

around in some heaven and they're

completely unaware of even being there

so with regard to the three

daitany Rhoda and he wrote a samapri are

the same and this perceptionless Brahma

State I I really am skeptical of it

um I'm not sure what kind of

um

meditation the the Hindu swamis would be

doing that would the land themselves

there unless they're just going into

like complete

like such a deep trance state that I

mean there's pretty much mimicking a

coma

but I don't know how they get into

heaven for mimicking Comas

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Rick

and Rick says

what are your thoughts feelings opinions

on the dhamapada

well the Donald Potter is probably the

best known tarabada Buddhist text

and also it's relatively late like in uh

the book uh well studies in the origins

of Buddhism on it's it's a book trying

to investigate the probable Origins what

the earliest Buddhism was like and it's

going through all the texts and the

double part is is a late text I mean

it's like hundreds of years after the

time of the Buddha and one of the

reasons that they may have come to this

conclusion

is that a lot of the verses are in verse

forms that weren't used in the Buddhist

time but gained the popularity hundreds

of years later

just the the rhyme it's not rhyming but

it's like the uh the schemes of the long

and short syllables the meter

that kind of thing

but even though it's uh it's a

collection of aphorisms you know each

each verse for the most part is can be

taken by itself and there have been

times when before I'd go to sleep I just

read a few verses from the Dom Apollo

and then go to sleep

um I mean you can just read them at

random there's no sequence really except

you know a little bit sometimes there's

a like a little group of verses that

kind of go together

but

um

it's probably aphorisms that uh were

well known and just got collected

together

into into this book

you might I mean it's good to read

I don't think it it accurately

represents what the earliest Buddhism

was like but that's not necessarily

important to most people

so

yeah and then there was I think there's

like a Mahayana Buddhist udana or a

dhamapata yeah I've read it's like the

Tibetan dhamapara which actually was it

was had a some verses from the dhamapada

but it was more strongly based on

um the udana and also some some sutas

from the the suttony Pata

which is just completely almost

completely different from the the

tarawada Buddhist like different

different damopadas in the in our in the

different schools of Buddhism they uh

they vary quite a lot

so I guess my opinions on the downpod

it's well worth reading it contains a

lot of wisdom but it's mostly much later

than the time of the Buddha

which for most people I mean it's not

only important

so the next question is from Ricardo

and Ricardo says what is the meaning of

panio basam

that is my poly name

the poly name given to me by my

preceptor in my ordination

is a combination of two words panya and

obasa

means wisdom or understanding like

pragya in in Sanskrit or project in

Sanskrit

and that in itself is a prefix plus

means knowledge it's like panya has the

exact same

etymology as the Greek word prognosis

it's like the Paw here or pra in in

Sanskrit it means like fourth or

forwards you know it it like denotes or

kunnotes a forward motion although

sometimes it's just an intense fire as

it is here so it's just like true

knowledge true understanding and the

obasa

it also is a prefix plus a root the o

means downwards and the basa means shine

so it's like shining down so panya is

understanding and obasa is like shining

down like the light shining down from

the Sun

so it means something like understanding

shine

I am Mr understanding shine

and I wouldn't have named myself that

but because I was born on a Thursday

um in is Burmese tradition that you get

your name starts with a p b or an m

I probably would have named myself

something like munigosa

but

I'm playing your Bossa instead

so I'll just move on to the next

question

I Mr understanding shine we'll move on

to the next question and this is from

Johannes

and Johannes says

why do Western Buddhists not care about

the sleeping at high beds using high

chairs rule I'm assuming everything we
consider a normal bed today would be
considered luxurious in the time of the
Buddha I never was in a meditation
center or a monastery where they could
have considered this though
okay why do Western Buddhists not care
about the sleeping on high beds yeah
it's pretty much what Johannes here says
it's like pretty much all beds
are like luxurious big beds now it's
like
um technically going with the rules of
monastic discipline if the bottom of the
frame
is more than eight finger widths above

the floor

see

if it's more than that high above the

floor the bottom of the frame then

that's too high

but also

if it's big enough for two people to

sleep on it which most beds are then

that's that's just too big so you can't

have high beds or big beds

and uh if you really want to follow the

rule you just sleep on a mat on the

floor

which isn't very comfortable but you're

not supposed to be luxuriating in your

sleep anyway you're supposed to sleep

relatively little if possible

and when you go to sleep you should

already be thinking of getting back up

again

so yeah it's just a cultural thing I

guess

it's there's a lot of things like that

that a lot of Western Buddhists I mean

they just don't want to stop drinking

beer because

people drink beer it's just part of the

culture and especially part of the

culture of their you know their their

Social Circle or whatever and then

telling lies I mean gosh pretty much

everybody in the west tells lies almost

I try not to but it's like you say well

I'd like to come over but I'm busy but

really you just don't want to come over

or it's nice to see you and actually

you're hoping you wouldn't see them that

kind of thing I mean it's just

constant or continual let's say

continual

so yeah people are I mean most western

Buddhists are just lukewarm

you know they they don't really believe

anything deeply because there's so many

things you can believe you know we're

not living in a monoculture we're not

living in a in a society where pretty

much everybody believes pretty much the

same thing it's just you've got this

Smorgasbord of possible beliefs

and so nobody really

I mean they don't really believe really

strongly the way that uh someone from a

a pre-modern civilization does and so

it's like everything's optional

especially Western Buddhism everything's

optional

foreign

ER too

can't help it I was born that way

so let's just move on to johannes's next

question

which is do you think all spiritual

practices share the same core or do you

believe that only the teachings of the

Buddha can get you enlightened well I do

not believe that Buddhists have a
monopoly on enlightenment that is the
official party line of Buddhism
especially terrible Auto Buddhism
if you're if you're not a Buddhist you
can't get a lightning effect in terrible
Buddhism they say that if you're not a
monk or a nun
that if you become enlightened you've
got like 24 hours to be ordained or
you're gonna die
and I just no I just don't believe it I
think there have probably been lots of
enlightened Hindus for example I think
there may have been enlightened
Christians possible enlightened Muslims
so let's see do you think all spiritual

practices share the same core well if

they're truly spiritual

then in a way I mean you could say it's

like The Perennial philosophy to some

degree but I mean there's some practices

That masquerade as spiritual practices

that really are not spiritual practices

you know sacrificing animals or whatever

so

yeah I think that

I let's just say I do not consider

Buddhism a monopoly on enlightenment

I think it's a good system that you know

maximizes your odds about as well as any

um just short of having like a living

enlightened being sitting there like

looking through you and pointing out

what you need to do

that would be better than learning from

books

or learning from dogmatists

let's see here

so I think I guess I answered that one

I'll just move on to the next question

this is also from Johannes

and Johannes says is it really important

to keep the attention on the contact of

the breath around the entrance of the

nostrils or is it just convenient you

said yourself that the sutas were

composed in a way which made it easier

to remember them wouldn't the anapana

satisuta and the 16 steps

16 steps be a classical case of this

over categorization

categorization

for example if you let the commentaries

just be Irrelevant for a moment it reads

to me like just look at your breathing

and how it influences and is connected

to your body feelings mind aren't there

sutas where Sati parimukdam is said to

be practiced for meta meditation for

example or this parimuka means setting

your mindfulness to the front

it's uh it's sort of an enigmatic not

very well understood statement in like

the sari patanasuta or here it's the

anapana

um let's see here where do I start
answering this one is it really
important to keep the attention on the
contact of the breath around the
entrance of the nostrils well if you're
doing anapana if that is the meditation
technique you're practicing then
essentially that's how you do it
um if you're doing some other kind of
meditation practice then then obviously
if you mean if you're doing meta
meditation then then obviously it's not
important to keep your attention on the
contact of the breath around the
entrance of the nostrils because you're
focusing your attention on something
else and the point is to just keep your

mind focused on the primary object

something that's just going to keep your

mind sort of

distilled and and controlled more or

less

and and to gradually you tame it and

then it kind of Fades out gradually

until you get into really deep

meditative like absorption States

okay let's see

classical case of over a categorization

yeah it's definitely possible

um

yeah I think any kind of mindfulness

meditation then you're gonna put your

mindfulness to the front which doesn't

mean that you're you're focusing your

attention somewhere in front of your

face it just means putting something to

the front means prioritizing and making

it it's the most important thing it's

like a an ancient Indian

um what do you call it

uh just the way they would say things

having a mental block

it's just a manner of speech

so I'll just move on to the next

question here also from uh Johannes

quote one must try for oneself and see

for oneself and if one practices

diligently then at least one may gain a

glimpse unquote that is a quote from

David Reynolds also known as Mr

understanding shine

and then he says I would agree with you

without a doubt but sometimes you say

that you don't agree to the four path

model which is contradicting this no

according to the four path model the

stage of stream enterer is someone who

has had this Glimpse or someone someone

where the impeccable dhamma eye arose

everything that arises passes away so

why do you sometimes disagree with this

to this definition

um

just because

I mean I was answering a question of

someone who was skeptical of the

existence of Enlightenment or nibana

and that's why I said one must try for

oneself and see for oneself if one

practices diligently then at least one

may gain a glimpse of Ultimate Reality

for example

um because I mean there are some people

these westerners especially who want

like empirical proof of the existence of

nibana which is impossible because

nibana isn't even in this universe

foreign

in order to believe that it is possible

to at least get a glimpse of Ultimate

Reality doesn't mean you have to believe

in the four stages of sainthood as they

are expressed in the texts

so

yeah I mean you can say that some I mean

someone is really established in dhamma

once they've had their first glimpse of

Enlightenment but that doesn't mean that

you know they can't tell a lie and they

have to do this and they you know

there's this list of things that they

they still have in this list of things

that they don't have anymore you know

with regard to Fetters and and like

obstacles and so forth

so yeah I mean

ultimately Enlightenment is seeing

Ultimate Reality or experiencing

Ultimate Reality directly at least

that's one way of describing it and I

mean it doesn't necessarily have

anything to do with like the traditional

Orthodox and dogma of the four stages of

of sainthood

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question

this is from nirmit

and nerman has asked me a few personal

questions here

the first one

would you say you are happier now than

when you were a monk

well I will say that I answered this

question just a few like a month or so

ago

and so instead of going through all of

the Q and A's all 42 previous q a videos

before watching this one

he's just jumped right into this one

and uh

he disgrace his family

but I'll answer it again that's fine

I can't expect everybody to watch all

the previous q and A's cues and A's

before watching uh the most recent one

so let's see would you say you are

happier now that when you're a monk well

I mean I have more

more Pleasure and Pain I guess more

happiness and unhappiness because a monk

isn't really going for happy he's going

for like Equanimity you know he's going

for neutrality whereas if you're living

a worldly life in samsara you've got ups

and downs

and they all balance out to the same

zero I suppose but I mean you've got

bigger waves

so

I mean I'm healthier I'm living a more

natural lifestyle I guess in certain

respects I'm more tired now I have less

Vitality I suppose because as a monk you

know I can just sit around all day

and I could you know just sit around and

think and philosophize and write blog

posts and

I mean last last Sunday I was so busy

last week I was so busy I didn't have

time to write a blog post

so

yeah I have more joy now but but also

more

more of the opposite of Joy I guess but

I mean you're never going to be like

just because a person is a monk doesn't

mean they're not going to have any

happiness or unhappiness you can be

pretty miserable even as a monk

but um yeah I'd say that I'm living a

more natural

um I mean natural isn't necessarily

better but it's it's healthier I'm

living a healthier lifestyle now and I

have more love in my life more joy even

though I mean it always kind of gets

balanced out and positive and negative

balance out in the long run

so I mean it's it's kind of a trick

question it's

sort of comparing apples to oranges or

something

so I'll just move on to nirmit's second

question

you have said celibacy was frustrating

why do you think you are not able to

free yourself from sexual desire

well two reasons come to mind one is

that sexual desire is just built into us

you know it's just built into like

certain areas of the brain that like the

endocrine system you know you've got

like

um

parts of your body are just designed to

have you be lustful

and uh so partly that

and partly is is sort of like I was

talking about earlier of breaking a

habit I mean

um

deep down you don't completely want to

break the habit and that was that was

the way it was with me it's like I

remember one time

I took some kind of Burmese herbal

medicine

and my entire body just broke out in

this rash I was just itching all over

and uh one weird side effect is it just

it just erased my libido and at the time

it's I missed it or like when I was in

my early to mid 40s I stopped having

like pornographic dreams or at least

pornographic dreams that would result in

Climax and I miss them

because sex is is fun it's it's uh I

mean it's more than fun it's it's

profoundly enjoyable

although I have to admit I'm probably

less horny now than I was when I was

celibate yeah I can say certainly I'm

less horny now than I was from o

celibate partly because I'm have to work

for a living and I have to just attend

to all these other cares and and so I'm
not just sitting around conserving my
chi like I was before and also when you
get something then it's like a starving
man might just be fantasizing about food
all the time but once he's eating
regularly he doesn't think so much about
it so there's there's that too
but um
see why do you think you're not able to
free yourself from sexual desire yeah I
think those are the two main reasons
so I think I'll just move on to nirmit's
third question this is the last one this
might be a little personal Are you a
sodapono

and I mean for those of you who uh watch
the earlier parts of this video and
other videos that I've made I really am
skeptical about the whole meaning of the
term sodopona that originally it might
just be someone who's like born again
who has entered upon a spiritual life
and if that's the case then yeah I guess
I've entered upon a spiritual life I did
that quite a while ago
possibly before this life
but with regard to what the texts say a
soda Pana is and
like the things he can do and the things
he can't do the lists of this and that I
really don't put much weight on those
and I don't think about it much

so

I guess I answered that question I guess

so finally

the very last question of the entire

episode

is from lucid

and Lucid says are there any highly

regarded transgender Buddhist monks

well

with regard to terravada Buddhism there

are zero transgender Buddhist monks

because even if a transgender person is

ordained the ordination is instantly

invalid

so

yeah no transgender monks in terravala

Buddhism there might be some

masquerading as monks and they're just

non-monks however

on the Discord server

that uh I am a participant in

somebody posted a link

to me oh actually it might have been on

my phone some some ex-monk friend of

mine sent me this it's an article I

think or maybe a YouTube video of this

transgender a Japanese Buddhist monk

where I mean he's like wearing makeup

and

kind of gender queer non-binary or

something I think he does makeup

tutorials or or hair stylist stylist

stuff or something and

um he's not highly regarded I mean he's
the only transgender Buddhist monk that
I'm aware of it may be that in Japanese
Buddhism you can be transgender and
still be an ordained monk for all I know
but in terravana Buddhism if you're
transgender that you even if you go
through the ordination ceremony it
doesn't stick because it's just invalid
from the very get-go
so that was it that was the last
question
and those of you who made it this far
are welcome to ask questions just put
them in the comments below if you have
access to my subscribe Star channel you

can leave them there if you have access

to my

Discord server you can you can leave

them there and uh

feel free to like the video or subscribe

to the channel

and take a look at the URL links below

if you please

and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 44 of

question and answer I am your host Ponyo

bossa

and as usual we have a fairly long list

of questions to answer today

so much so that I'm thinking maybe I

should start doing these once a week if

I ever get up to a thousand uh a

thousand subscribers on YouTube I may be

able to just live stream these but I

think you have to have a thousand

subscribers first and uh I'm up in the

900s but haven't quite got a thousand

yet so if you haven't subscribed already

do so just so I can do live streams

and uh I went on a Hiatus it's been over

a week I think since I uploaded anything

partly because for the past week I've

had a black eye it's just now getting

better I think maybe just a little bit

of a little bit of a little bruise there

left

and uh

I'm tempted to say you want to see the

other guy but actually I uh walked into

a a bundle of metal at work that was

somebody had put it like blocking the

walkway

and it was right at eye level and it's

only like this thick and it was dark and

I didn't see it easily and I was turning

my head to look at something else and

then I just turned my face directly into

this just boom right in the eye

so

I guess uh I mean I I tend not to be

extremely vain but when you've got like

a Shiner you generally don't want to be

on uh making public appearances and so

forth

and uh in other news I got a little

message from Google

or blogger which is part of Google

saying that two of my blog posts on my

current blog are now behind like warning

walls where you have to click and say

that you're willing to see

disagreeable sensitive stuff one of them

is understandable it's that that

um lust epidemic one that I did back

when I was a monk

and uh the other one strangely is uh

Patton it was like it was a speech given

by General George Patton but I guess you

know for the Army to be militaristic and

that sort of thing is no longer

acceptable

but I I should just get to answering

questions here because we do have a fair

number of them as usual

and uh before I answer them I just might

as well say if you have any questions

you want to ask just put them in the

comments below

which is a convenient place

don't put them under non-q a videos

because I might let those slip through
the cracks accidentally
so let's go here first question is from
Raphael 46
and Raphael 46 says according to the
bahoo.com the Buddha said that women
cannot attain buddhahood but according
to the Soma suta Mara said to the
meditating non-soma quote this is Mara
speaking here that stage is very
challenging it is for the sages to
attain it is not possible for a woman
with her two-fingered wisdom
unquote the non-soma responded quote
what does a Womanhood matter at all when
the mind is concentrated well when

knowledge flows on steadily as one sees
correctly into dhamma one to whom it
might occur I'm a woman or I'm a man or
I'm anything at all is fit for Mara to
address and then Raphael 46 says how can
these two sutras be reconciled and
um they can be reconciled pretty easily
because Buddhism terrible Buddhism
orthodox theravada
freely accepts that women can become
enlightened in that fact if they
couldn't the Buddha wouldn't have
allowed nuns to exist in the first place
but
um according to the like the legends of
you know the whole idea of a lineage of
Buddhas how that there have been Buddhas

going way way back you know a good

jillions of years forever and ever

actually

um a Buddha is always male

maybe that Mara also is is always male

but um

so that's it I mean women can become

enlightened they just can't supposedly

according to the tradition they can't be

the wheel turner who rediscovers dhamma

after it has disappeared from the world

and that's what a Buddha is as opposed

to uh just a an ordinary arohaunt

although

I mean we can get into the origins of

that some other time maybe

so I'll just move on to uh Raphael 46's next question

did the Pol Pot regime actually turn Cambodia into a semi Monastery people were forced to wear the same black pajamas money was abolished the only property allowed were spoons for eating men and women had to work separately in communes and couples only saw each other rarely entertainment like Cinema and theaters were abolished and people weren't allowed to choose what to eat

well I mean if the Pol Pot regime was creating a nationwide Monastery it was a pretty crummy Monastery it's more like a prison camp so I mean there are ways in which a prison camp

kind of overlaps with the monastery you
know you stay in cells and you're not
allowed to have much fun and that sort
of thing but um yeah I mean there's a
little bit of overlap but I mean it'd be
really pushing it to call Cambodia under
the Khmer Rouge a semi Monastery it
would be like extremely semi
you know just a few percent I suppose I
mean they were trying to create a kind
of
spiritually dead Marxist Monastery maybe
but that's almost an oxymoron it's
almost a contradiction in terms
so I mean yeah it's like the whole
mental state behind it it was just

radically just diametrically opposed to

the mental state of of what would should

be going on in a monastery instead of

cultivating spirituality it's like you

know [__] spirituality it's just

[__] just you know work for the work

for the good of the people or for the

good of pull pot

so I think I'll just move on to uh

Raphael 46's next question

and that is

states that some people rejected the

Buddha's claim to supernormal Insight

saying quote the recluse gotama does not

have any outstanding knowledge and

vision he teaches dhamma that has been

merely hammered out in his head

following his own line of inquiry

unquote

the Buddha said that unless such people

abandon these assertions and relinquish

such views they would be cast into hell

most atheists Christians Jews and

Muslims don't believe that the Buddha

had supernormal Insight since this would

contradict their own belief system while

all these people go to hell then well I

have to admit the mahasiha NADA Suitor

of the Maji manikaya is a Suitor that

when I first read it it was kind of

embarrassing it was it sort of uh I

wouldn't say undermine my face but it

kicked it a few times and caused some

bruises

and if you read the mahasihana suta a

lot of it is just the Buddha indulging

in just the most grandiose bragging

about how great he is

and I doubt that I mean it's like a

Verbatim transcript of any talk given by

the Buddha it seems more like

like early devotionalism where they're

trying to glorify their Master you know

these these monks and you know somewhat

later days than the Buddhist time are

trying to glorify the Buddha which is

what just about any religion does to the

founder of the religion

and they took it to the point of saying

that you know anyone who denies that he

was fully enlightened is going to go to

hell which in a way is like religious

propaganda

although within the context of the

Sutton

the person who was saying it was saying

it maliciously you know it's like if

you're motivated by hate

then yeah there's a good chance you can

go to hell and I mean I I do encounter

this sometimes like just recently I've

been having a back and forth with this

rabid anti-religionist

which may wind up in a a blog post in

the near future

um also there's uh

um what's his name Ken

Ken something Ken wheeler I think it is

who actually wrote an essay accusing

Maha kasapa who was the Buddha's Chief

disciple at the time of his death he was

like the senior monk in the Sangha

according to tradition after the Buddha

passed away accusing him of murdering

the Buddha

and

I mean he has to really torture the poly

language even to make it seem plausible

and I mean that kind of stuff I mean if

Buddhism is true if texts like the

mahasihana at least with regard to the

you know slandering and enlightened

being

can can send you to hell then I mean

stuff like that I mean you're really

pushing it

um but with regard to

you know Christians and Muslims and so

forth who just favor their own religion

um

yeah I don't think they're gonna go to

hell for that

but I mean if you're really like

deliberately

slandering and demeaning a saint or an

enlightened being

and

I don't think they even have to be

Buddhist

I don't think they even necessarily have

to be fully enlightened

if you're just

based on just hate or or just some

similarly negative emotion you're just

slandering and bashing someone who is

really like a saintly wise person

then yeah that's going to have karmic

consequences

but it depends on the mental States your

karma is volition essentially

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Aaron

and Aaron says will you please make a

Buddhist mukbang series and for those of

you who don't know what a mukbang is

it's um you like mount a dash cam in

your car and then you go through a
drive-through window usually this is
usually how much Banks work and then you
sit there and you eat the food that you
ordered and you critique it
and the only way I would do a mukbang
would be you know we could find like
some Hari Krishna vegetarian restaurant
or something you know some kind of
spiritual restaurant preferably when the
drive-through window
and uh do it then but I mean it probably
would not be a good idea because when I
eat I make like howler monkey faces and
like food sticks in between my teeth and
then I'm talking with like this chunk of

spinach or something there

it's it wouldn't be good I'd probably

lose viewers

on on a video like that but

what the hell you know if I could find a

suitable

um

a suitable restaurant that had any kind

of connection with dama and a

drive-through window then uh who knows

so I'll just move on to Aaron's next

question

have you used a Ouija board and what was

your experience or thoughts on that when

I was a kid my dad was really into the

occult

the occult

and um we had a Ouija board when I was a
kid and we used it
many times I suppose but the thing is I
was a kid and I really don't remember
much from it
there was some talk about me being an
Englishman in a previous existence with
a name like John Carpenter or something
uh like back in the 1800s and I think
somebody I knew then became my guardian
Spirit now which is often supposedly how
it works but really I I can't I mean
personally I think a Ouija board isn't
so much Spirits talking through people
you know kind of guiding the plan chat
on the board it's more just like the

subconscious mind of the people who are
got their fingers on the planchette that
that are are doing most of it if not all
of it
but I do have one memorable experience
of the Ouija board
and that was
um I was a kid my brother was four years
younger than me so he was even more of a
kid than I was we were maybe like oh
maybe 12 and 8.
and we were sitting in the bedroom and
we consulted the Ouija board because we
had a housekeeper who apparently was
going insane
I mean she was just nutty to begin with
I mean she wasn't going and saying she

she was already there I think and we

just kind of wanted to consult with the

the higher powers to see how we could

help this woman

and uh

we got this weird message about how we

should go to a certain country store

that was up the road like a mile or so

and there we would meet an Indian man

and the Indian man would say

and then it just went am a m a m a m and

wouldn't stop and then we had to just

stop trying we came back to it a little

later and it just continued with the AMA

m a m and in later years I mean when I

was at the time I thought Indian was

like American Indian with the you know

the feather and you know Ugg and how and

that kind of stuff but

um in retrospect I mean it could have

been like an East Indian man and that

Rama mama was you know it could have

been like an attempt at the Mantra Rom

just repeating just

just going on and on although

how that would have helped our

housekeeper I don't know

so I'll just uh move on to the next

question this is from Motorhead

and Motorhead says any advice in regards

to getting through some bad times which

I and a few others are going through it

feels like we are in some kind of

spiritual battle between the forces of

darkness and the forces of light

love around the world right now

you know without love comes in

I feel like we are in some kind of

spiritual battle between the forces of

darkness and the forces of light love

around the world right now

um

well I think that spiritual battle has

always been going on sometimes it might

be a little more apparent than at other

times and now the Western civilizations

apparently in Decline

and you know things are starting to give

now we're reaching certain crises it

might become more obvious but that

spiritual battle I'm pretty sure between

light and darkness is just always been

going on in this samsaric human world of

ours

um

with I mean I don't know what

motorhead's uh specific situation is so

I really can't give any specific advice

other than you know read spiritual texts

one one thing that I used to read when I

would get depressed I'm pretty sure it's

the second lamentation in the Old

Testament in the book of Lamentations

and I think even most Christians or

great many Christians don't even know

that there's a book of Lamentations in

the Bible but the second lamentation I

mean this the person who wrote that

assuming that it's not fiction that it

really happened

um just having seeing his city which was

Jerusalem just sacked by the Babylonians

and just people murdered in the streets

and women raped and children starving

and all this

um yeah it makes your own problems seem

kind of trivial by comparison I mean

there's so many people out there who are

just in a Hell realm right here on this

Earth

that

um it's good to have a certain sense of

perspective I think although it may be

that he's uh

he's he's not so much having like a

really

trying times with regard to bad things

happening to him because he wasn't

really specific here it might just seem

like he's looking at the world and

seeing things turn to [__]

but I mean it's always been like that

sometimes it's more obvious than other

times

um read some history Maybe

ah read uh Gibbons Decline and follow

the Roman Empire although that's kind of

a heartbreaker especially when things

really start collapsing

it's really sad

um let's see

yeah maybe if Motorhead can give me a

little more info to work with in in how

to like tailor my answer to what he's

going through

but um

a little philosophical Detachment I

suppose

just uh read Buddhist texts that's

always good

so I'll just move on to the next

question with all due respect to

Motorhead I'm not sure what kind of

troubles he is having

and this is from Diane

and Diane says watching how ancient
Egyptians prepared bodies so the soul
can find them for the next life how does
this compare with the Buddhist idea of
reincarnation well I don't think there's
a whole lot of overlap between the two
other than the idea that when you're
dead you're not just dead that you know
that your Consciousness somehow
continues after the body dies I mean
that's about as far as I would take that
other than just you know there's
traditional religious things that people
do in response to that belief
um
yeah in in terrible Buddhism or Buddhism
in general there is no soul and I mean

your body is just

um

yeah I mean you might as well just

cremate it

in fact uh some some Eastern uh

spiritual teachers say you're better off

cremating a body after it dies just so

that the ghost if there is a ghost it

won't have this body to cling to because

um I I knew a guy who knew a guy who

could see ghosts and he said that like

at cemeteries he could just see like

Spirits just standing around their

graves you know just standing there

because they were so attached to their

body they were so identified with it

they just couldn't bring themselves to

leave it so cremation helps get rid of

that problem

um

really I mean the the body once once you

die you know it's just like a a

decomposing log

so that's a major difference between

um the Buddhists and the Egyptians and

some degree the Christians also they

think a lot of Christians think that on

Judgment Day you know everyone's going

to be climbing out of the out of their

coffins

and um yeah I really don't think it

works that way

so let's see I hope I have answered this

question to some degree and watching how ancient Egyptians prepared bodies so the soul can find them in next life how does this compare well the Buddhist idea of reincarnation or rebirth is you just get a different body you know the body is just like a vehicle

it's like the clothes you're wearing or something you just discard one and you put on another one when that when one of them wears out

so that would be the main difference I suppose

so I'll just move on to the next question this is from Brave sir Robin who used to be named Mary spelled

m-e-r-r-y but uh after he asked me what
my favorite movie was and I told him it
was Monty Python and the Holy Grail all
of a sudden he is brave sir Robin
who soiled his armor
and brave sir Robin says as far as I
know there are quite a few sutas in
which monks are being enlightened or at
least sewed Upon Us upon hearing the
words of the Buddha like the five
ascetics as an example so is it true
that some people won't become Arya
through meditation and genres but simply
by reading sutas or hearing dhamma
please comment well I think
so many people allegedly just just for
the sake of argument let's say that most

of the stories of people becoming
enlightened or reaching some higher
spiritual level just from hearing the
Buddha talk they had parami which means
over the course of past lives they had
been meditating they had been
cultivating
um like morality and concentration and
so forth
and so they were ripe but because the
Buddha hadn't come into the world yet
and rediscovered dhamma said the wheel
of dhamma rolling again they were kind
of stuck you know they were ripe they're
ready and all it took was the Buddha to
give the one little nudge and

click

or or whatever sound effect you prefer

um

so that would be like a fairly Orthodox

explanation of this but I do think that

it's people that can become enlightened

just from

you know hearing certain words you know

they are ripe for it and there's other

cases like in in Zen Buddhism there was

the monk who was trying to become

enlightened and trying to become

enlightened he couldn't do it and he

couldn't do it finally he gave up and

just started

um becoming like the caretaker of the

cemetery or Shrine or something I can't

remember exactly the details of what the place was and he was just sweeping one day and
he swept this Pebble which then hit a bamboo and caused this sound like Punk and and it just caused something to snap in his mind and he became enlightened but there's the another famous Zen story of I think it was an a Zen nun who was carrying water in a wooden bucket and she looked down and she could see the moon reflected in the water on the top of the sprocket and right at that moment because the bucket was old the bottom just collapsed out of the bucket and the water just disappeared you know through

the big hole in the bottom and the moon
disappeared and that was it it was just
cause this this click and really that's
that's all it takes in a lot of cases
it's like you're there's like this
tension
and you've got a lot of momentum going
and you got part of me you've got you've
cultivated this in probably past lives
and in the present life too to some
degree and so all it takes is just this
one little nudge and that that's enough
and with uh really a realized teacher
who can just look into you and see what
it takes to to give you that nudge then
it's much more likely to happen although
it can happen more or less through just

random chance you know like like the the

pebble hitting the bamboo or whatever

foreign

but I don't think that they're going to

become enlightened without any

talent that has been cultivated

at you know in past lives or in this

life or whatever

so let's just move on to Brave sir

Robin's next question

and this is kind of an odd one I've

never been asked this question before in

fact I've never even heard of this

phenomenon

he says

have you ever encountered a tetraphobia

apparently it's a big thing in Asia my
birthday is the fourth day of the fourth
month which is coming up soon
so happy birthday Braves Robin and I
assume just around that time you will
publish number 44 that would be perfect
so tetrophobia just literally I mean I
know enough Greek to know that
tetrophobia means like fear of four fear
of the number four and I've never heard
of that before I mean in Asia there are
certain phobias like I've heard in Japan
it's a common phobia of men especially
that their guts are going to come out of
their belly button and they wear this
band to kind of hold it in
but um yeah I've never heard of a fear

of the number four in Burma I mean

that's that's the main Asian country

that I have familiarity with

uh it's the only it's the only uh Asian

language that I speak relatively well

other than maybe a little Polly but it

was Paulie was never really uh a spoken

language except maybe in among ancient

Indian monks

plus maybe a few scholar monks nowadays

so yeah the fear of number four

yeah I can't I have no experience with

that so I'll just move on to the next

question which is

from son of the father

which is

kind of tautological

I think well although he could be some

of the mother so

son of the Father and Son of the father

says

have you read any Carlos Castaneda any

commentary you might have would be very

interesting thank you

as it turns out I read Carlos Castaneda

as a teenager my father as I said was

into the occult

and he had most if not all of the Carlos

Castaneda books and for stories I would

point out there was sort of a little

Scandal when it turned out that Carlos

Castaneda was sort of a a made-up person

that the person who wrote it was like a

they were like a professor at

like Evergreen State College in

Washington state or something

um maybe I assume they had some

experience with you know Yaki Indian

Shamanism and so forth you know they

weren't just making it all up but I

think to some degree this it was uh kind

of fictional and the first book was

mind-blowing and it was mind-blowing

enough that I wanted to read the next

one but as the books progressed it just

kept getting farther and farther out it

just started getting more and more

difficult to believe like

um The Duel with the witch and where

there was one spell he had to do where
you had to take a some kind of lizard
and so it's so it's mouth shut and take
another lizard and so it's eyes shut and
I don't know it just it just got weirder
and weirder just more and more it seemed
to me more far-fetched
but the first one especially you know
the uh you know uh teachings of Don Juan
you know the Yaki way of knowledge or
something
um yeah that's interesting you know he's
talking about taking masculine and so
forth or or I should say peyote uh some
of his experiences with that and I still
remember a few of the teachings like how
to do lucid dreaming there's there's

some emphasis on that where

um Don Juan is telling Carlos

you know look at your hands when you're

in your dream try to remember to look at

your hands because that's in a way it

kind of remember you it helps you to

remember to to lucid dream that you have

some control over in your awareness in

your dreams

and lucid dreaming is kind of

interesting

I've I've come close to it I've been

told that like if something weird

happens in a dream like you're riding a

bus and then the next thing you know

you're in an airplane and and you didn't

get off the bus and onto the airplane is
just somehow the bus turned into an
airplane when you weren't looking or
you're walking along talking to an old
friend of yours from high school and
then the friend of yours turns into some
famous celebrity and it's not like the
friend left in the celebrity came it's
just that you just turned into it
somehow and then you think you have that
moment of wow how'd that happen and that
that that one moment of wild how that
happened is sort of like you're at the
threshold of lucid dreaming
but I'm I'm rambling at this point
so we'll just move on to the next
question

and this is from Ricardo

or however that name is pronounced I

think it might be in uh Italian or

something

how do you say Ricardo in Italian

there's two C's

anyway Ricardo in uh

anglicized Italian

says many say that death is a painless

process what does terrible Buddhism say

about this given the fact that birth is

undoubtedly painful

well

um when the Buddha's talking about the

four noble truths and he's you know in a

way defining dukkha or at least giving

examples of it and you know so say birth

is do con

um you know getting old is dukkha and

getting sick is duka and dying his Duke

on you know getting what you don't like

is dukkha not getting what you do like

his new coming separated from what you

love is dukkah and so death is on the

list of painful or unpleasant suffering

inducing things

although it's more the verb of dying

it's the process of dying is probably

more unpleasant than the actual

transition into death

that you know the moment of death is

probably much less traumatic than the

moment of birth

so let's see I mean for a lot of people

you read these books

um I mean there's a lot of books about

near-death experiences or what happens

after you die and so forth where people

at the moment of death were right before

death you know they just kind of go into

the state of bliss and you know they

start talking to some beloved friend or

relative or you know their wife or

something has been dead for years and

they're like you know it's so nice to

see you again I'm coming with you kind

of stuff

and so I think overall

for just statistically for most people

being born is probably scarier and more

traumatic than the moment of death

although for a lot of people you know

you might have a lot of ickiness leading

up to that moment

and that would be where most of the duka

comes from but I think um

I can't remember who said it but I think

there's some truth to this that well you

know everyone or almost everyone fears

death but then once you die you realize

oh I've done this lots of times it's

really not that big of a deal

so yeah I'm sort of conveniently

straddle the fence on that one

um

yeah dying can be icky but the actual

moment of death probably is really not
that icky although you know everything
would be Duke anything that has a
beginning and an end according to
Orthodox terrebon of Buddhism is duka
so yeah dying would be duka too but then
again in terrible at these even
happiness is do come
so I should just move on to the next
question here this is from lucid
and Lucid says what do you think of
Colin mikia the Buddhist Enclave that's
all the way in the middle of Russia
seems a little strange that there's a
Buddhist state in the Caucasus
from what I heard they immigrated from

Mongolia several hundred years ago and

many were ethnically cleansed by Stalin

during World War II for allegedly being

pro-german

well yeah it doesn't surprise me that

I mean most of central Asia was Buddhist

before Islam came along

and

um I think a lot of that especially up

in Mongolia Tibet and and thereabouts

was sort of a tantric kind of vajrayana

kind of Buddhism and I assume the the

Buddhism of call mikia was like that and

they're one of the the relatively few

uh Central Asian ethnicities that did

not convert to Islam

but aside from that I mean I know almost

nothing about call Mickey up so I'm just

making some educated guesses there

um

but I mean because they're like probably

come much closer to Tibetan or Mongolian

Buddhism than they do to terravonna it's

you know it's it's really not a big deal

to me I don't have any dogs in the fight

or anything

so I'll just uh move on to the next

question this is from C.O Vox and sipad

zidana whose name just rolls off the

tongue now

ah

and CEO of action and sipad zidana says

the Buddhist says in the Sam mutinykaya

35 23 quote and what because is the all
the ion forms the ear and sounds the
nose and odors the tongue and tastes the
body and tactile objects the mind and
mental phenomena this is called the all
if anyone because you should speak thus
having rejected this all I shall make
known another all
that would be a mere empty boast on his
part if he were questioned he would not
be able to reply and further he would
meet with vexation for what reason
because Mikus that would not be within
his domain unquote
this means that all that we can know
about reality are through these six
senses and that anyone who talks about a

reality outside this is speaking about

something they can't really know this

sounds like it is probably the most wise

approach to our situation and existence

however if this is the case then where

does that leave nibana

okay well yeah that attitude that's it

kind of reminds me of David Hume who uh

according to the the saying he

distrusted everything until he finally

came to his senses

and um I think the all here is

essentially referring to samsara you

know it's the phenomenal all it's the

worldly all

and as uh as I keep saying nibana or

Nirvana is just completely off the scale

so it wouldn't be included in that

although abidama philosophers kind of

dragged it back in to the scheme of

things

um

let's see here it sounds like probably

the most

let's see

something they can't really know is

okay and anyone who talks about a

reality outside this is speaking about

something they can't really know well

they can't really know it because

um I mean once you you know nibana the

ultimate truth there's no longer a

person involved you know they becomes

totally irrelevant

because they are some sorry you know

they are in the world and and part of

this all

and uh

just going with the context here

obviously nibbana is not part of this

all

right and now some people would say well

that's because Nirvana is just

Extinction it's nothingness but that's

there there are other Susans that that

um debunk

that claim

and uh

some people actually use this this

passage here about the all as a way of
endorsing the Buddha claiming that there
was a there is a self
by just saying well the self isn't part
of this all but that's really pushing it
but something that's completely off the
scale you know the absolute ultimate
truth would uh would not be part of this
because it is not phenomenal it's you
know the all pretty much is like a
plural
in a way I mean it kind of there's like
this implication of plurality of all the
ten thousand things mentioned in the in
the Dao tejing and uh you know ultimate
truth underlies that
so that would be my attempt and answer

there I mean

um how would you know it I think is the

main point here and it's you're just

transcending the all you're just going

beyond the the multiplicity of the

samsaric phenomenal universe and it's

not you that knows it it's just I mean

everybody has some inkling of ultimate

truth I think the Mahayana Buddhists uh

emphasized this more than the taravada

Buddhists do you know this like the

Buddha nature essentially is that at

least you've got this inkling you know

you've got some intuitive

awareness of Ultimate Reality which

pervades you and everything else

and

I mean it's it's not really you

know it's it's hard to explain I mean

it's paradoxical once you get into

infinity and formlessness I mean just

Paradox is just lurking somewhere nearby

and Nirvana is that way ultimate truth

is that way

so

um I mean there is the knowledge but

it's not really you that knows it

and it's it's hard to explain but I mean

the easy answer is that nibbana is just

off the scale

I mean it can be known in fact it's the

only thing you really can know because

everything else is just belief like

anything perceptual is a belief it's not

genuine ultimate knowledge it's not

paramata Sacha it's just

Samuri Sacha so this is like the the

Samuri Sacha all

he's referring to

seems to me otherwise he'd either be

denying nibana or would be saying that

like the Mahayana Buddhists that nibana

is essentially samsara

and that's not a terrible odd Buddhist

teaching

it's a sweet tea by the way because I'm

in the south

oh

okay so I'll just move on to CEO of

actiona's next question and I don't even
have to read the name anymore just it's
like
I've gotten grooves in some neural
pathway that I can just blurt it out at
any moment
oh so CEO of action c pot Z do not and I
might be pronouncing it wrong but
nobody really cares possibly not even
CEO of Acts himself
anyway he says I listen to scary stories
like ghost stories cryptozoology and
murder Tales to put the fear of death
and the unknown in me so I meditate more
it reminds me of when mogulana saw a
flying ghost being chased and was
relieved he is above such things and I

want to strive to read their to reach
there too is this a good idea for
motivating me or is it self-destructive
by putting more fear in my mind
well I mean fear is unskillful but I
mean it can be used as skillful means
using some Mahayana jargon I mean in in
terrible Buddhism there is emphasis on
some way gap which is a sense of urgency
like the first time I went and saw dead
bodies in a morgue which was in Mandalay
Burma I I was just filled with some Vega
you know you you leave this morgue which
is full of dead bodies you know a dead
baby's dead women dead guys who've been
stabbed to death and then you come out

into the sunshine and the birds are
singing and the kids are playing and
there's this young guy flirting with
these two girls and you just want to say
how can you guys be that way don't you
know what's in this building back here
don't you know we're all gonna die
the way I felt at the time
um although the the core Runner sees
them all the time and probably doesn't
have much effect on him anymore
so it depends on your individual mental
States I mean are you getting enough
benefit from scaring yourself that it's
worth it that you are making progress
that is worth the being scared and maybe
having the occasional bad dream or

something

um but definitely in Buddhism it

encourages monks I mean not to listen to

Ghost Stories and you know take an

interest in like Murder Mysteries and so

forth but

I mean to go to Charnel fields and

seeing rotting corpses lying on the

ground just to contemplate death

to remind yourself that yes indeed this

body and this this thinking mind are

going to die

that I mean it is called one of the

great protectors and uh I mean it's

definitely to your advantage to keep

that in mind

so

it depends on your own mental States and

how you go about it I think if you go

about it skillfully then

you'll get more benefit than than

otherwise

and so I'll move on to covax ncpad

zidana

next question

ah

in your video he says

of the ryuhasuta you said the Attica

Wagga says morality won't get you

enlightened however technically the

three poisons are not really morality

but rather the internal characteristics

of someone's mind which is what I was

talking about in my older question
the other text you said that was as
ancient as atikawaga was the parayana
Wagga in this text the Buddha says to
UPA Siva quote mindfully contemplating
nothingness
unquote replied to Buddha depending on
the perception there is nothing crossed
the flood give up sensual Pleasures
refraining from chatter watch day and
night for the end of craving and his
answers to disa Mattea Buddha says
leading the spiritual life among sensual
Pleasures replied to Buddha rid of
craving ever mindful a mendicant who
after assessing is quenched that's who

has no disturbances that thoughtful one
having known both ends is not stuck in
the middle he is a great man I declare
he has escaped the seamstress here
the seamstress is kind of a strange term
that I mean mainly he's you know he's
he's getting away from uh you know in
sort of like the fates in Greek
mythology or they're spinning the thread
you know
so
oh he keeps going here based on this and
more verses from the Pariah nawaga the
Buddha says the that in order to cross
the flood we must overcome sensual
pleasure and end craving in fact it
seems the destruction of craving is the

goal of the path according to this but
nothing can be said about them after
their Consciousness ceases so even the
most ancient form of Buddhism requires
you to be a saint and would disagree
with the krishnamurti theory of
Enlightenment where you can still have
this defilement thoughts
well there's a lot I could address here
and I'll probably forget to address most
of it
but I mean in the Attica Wagga it says
that a monk is not even opposed to
craving which doesn't mean that he
wallows in it it's just a like
attraction and aversion clinging to

anything isn't is more of a detriment

than a help ultimately I mean so long as

you're clinging to anything

or or pushing away anything as long as

you've got attraction or aversion then

you're not there yet and that's the main

point of the atikawa guys you shouldn't

even believe in anything because that's

a subtle form of clinging

so yeah the article Wagga says you

shouldn't even

um be opposed to craving the wise man

that's not opposed to craving and that's

kind of the way that it is about

morality too I mean it's not saying that

you shouldn't be moral I mean immorality

also is not it there's another suta that

I'll I might uh do a video on

soon

where the Buddhists say neither morality

nor non-morality is going to get you

enlightened

so it's it's sort of he's referring to

the mental stage more than anything

immorality in Buddhism is a mental state

so it depends on how you do it it's it's

really not what you do it's the mental

States involved in what you're doing

that really are making Karma

and keeping you stuck or getting you

liberated one of the other maybe both at

the same time to some degree

and with regard to the parietal Wagga

um it's considered to be

um relatively very old although maybe

not as old as the oldest parts of the

altakawango and the the introduction to

the Pariah noaga and the conclusion are

obviously late

so you had an older group of texts that

got like later on got a new intro and a

conclusion like tacked onto it

I think the intro even uh mentions the

32 uh marks of a of a great being which

is uh

I hope at the very least it's it's

relatively new because no person can

have all 32 marks at the same time

so let's see here try and get back to

this question here

based on this more versatile is in order

to cross the flood we must overcome

sensual pleasure yeah but overcoming

sensual pleasure means you're not averse

to it or attracted to it it's like

it's like the middle path in like the

dhamma Chaka the first suta the Buddha's

um traditionally considered to be the

Buddha's first sermon

he's talking about the middle path

between self-indulgence and self-torture

self-indulgence would be having aversion

SEO

self-indulgence would be having

attraction for sensual pleasure and this

self-torture would be like a version for

sensual pleasure and some sensual

pleasure you just cannot avoid

there are some sensual Pleasures like

sleeping bathing eating

that I mean you just can't completely

avoid them and so you have to have this

philosophical Detachment to sensual

pleasure because you're going to

experience it sometimes you can't just

completely avoid it

and uh let's see

let's see I'm trying to trying to answer

this question like coherently

the destruction of craving is the goal

of the path yeah well I mean that's the

the four normal truths the the second

Noble truth is you know craving is the

cause of all suffering

so yeah but you're not going to

you're not going to eliminate suffering

by eliminating craving by having

aversion for craving because that's just

another kind of craving

it's just another attachment

so that's that's the main message of the

article Wagga is you just let go of

everything you let go of even the desire

for enlightenment you let go of just

everything and that's the only way

you're going to become fully enlightened

and that's really Advanced it's not for

everybody and uh that's uh as I

mentioned before that could be an

explanation of why the atikawaga is so

radically advanced

in some ways is that it was directed

towards

the Buddha's early disciples who were

already for his dwelling ascetics before

they ever met the Buddha

and then later on he started getting

like normies and beginners and so forth

so he had to start teaching Elementary

stuff and I'm sure the Buddha like

ordained monks that he knew didn't have

much chance ever becoming enlightened

you know they just weren't right for it

yet so he's just telling them you know

how to do this Elementary stuff to lay

people that come to him you know he's

not teaching them how to become

enlightened now because they're just not

ready for it they're not ready for the

nudge

foreign

I think I think I answered that question

so even the most ancient form of

Buddhism requires you to be a saint and

would disagree with the krishnamurti

theory of Enlightenment where you can

still have this defilement but well I

mean whether you're a saint or not would

depend on you know whose Criterion of

sainthood you're following I mean you

definitely have to be a sage or a Mooney

but

um you know one person sane is another

person's heretic

yes

like uh my sweetheart was watching this

this Indian now he's not Indian he's a

he's the guy that that teaches uh

he doesn't like the the word Hindu so

it's uh something Dharma and the word is

eluding me I'm having a mental block

most of you who watch this well a lot of

you will probably know who I'm talking

about he's I've been compared to him

when I was a monk I was considered to be

like the Buddhist version of this of

this guy

where he's just really

um kind of traditionalist has no use for

any of the the woo-woo uh touchy feely
leftist post-modern stuff that's trying
to get injected or inoculated into
Eastern spirituality and he's just
saying that you know any sage has to be
vegetarian there's no way you could
become enlightened without being a
vegetarian he you know he's he's a Hindu
it's uh someone
I don't remember but I mean the Buddha
ate me Jesus of Nazareth ate meat I mean
most of the Tibetans ate meat because
there wasn't a whole lot of veggies
growing up on the Himalayan mountains
so yeah it's just
um you know the Buddha would be

considered just a sinner because he ate

meat

um just going by somebody's standard of

morality somebody else's standard and

there are a lot of of

um

people that were very extreme in their

ideas of moral Purity and so forth like

the ajivakas and the jains who referred

to the monks of the Buddhist monks is

just like shaven-headed householders you

know they could they could wear shoes

you know they could eat meat

they could use a walking stick if they

weren't feeling well just all this stuff

that

um you know just besmirch is their

virtue

and uh dealer data who allegedly tried

to kill the Buddha I'm a little bit

skeptical of that

maybe he did I mean that's that's what

the texts say

he was trying to to take over

um the Buddhist Sangha and he was

insisting that all monks have to be

vegetarian and you know all monks have

to wear rag robes and not accept

invitations to people's houses and only

eat you know food that They begged in

the streets and so forth and uh I mean

that was considered to be just standard

morality for a lot of spiritualists in

India that time and the Buddha said no

it's not necessary

so whether you're a saint or not depends

on

standards of sainthood you've got

but I think I should move on to the next

question

which is kind of the next one is going

to be kind of a fun one

this is also from CEO of action

let's see

he says here are some moral conundrums

for you there is this is this is just

classic you get this in like uh 100

level philosophy classes in college or

something

there is a train approaching an

intersection on a railway with one side
having one person tied to the railway
and the other side having five people
tied to it the train is going to kill
the five people tied to the railway but
you can pull a lever which changes the
direction of the train and saves the
five people but kills one person on the
other railway you save more people but
your actions directly cause the death of
someone what would you do well I'm just
going to answer this in accordance with
this strict Buddhist ethics and the
strict Buddhist ethics is you don't
touch that lever if the five people die
it's not your doing but if you switch

the lever so that it kills one person

that one person is you're doing

I mean not doing something is morally

neutral just to sit there and meditate

or just observe with Equanimity the five

people getting squished you haven't done

necessarily anything wrong at all you

haven't done anything

but if you you know you make you switch

the levers that one person dies you've

just murdered that one person

anyway he continues here part two of

this question

if you are on a train yourself and there

is no intersection this time but five

people are tied to the railway in front

of the train

you know for sure if you

push a fat person oh fat shaming this is

Politically Incorrect if you push a fat

person

fat person

with a gentle shove in front of the

train it would it will make the train

come to a grinding Halt and save the

five people tied to the railway what

would you do well the answer is the same

it's I mean you if you if you push the

fat person

then uh yeah you've just murdered

somebody whereas if you don't do

anything you haven't murdered anybody I

mean you've you didn't save anybody

Maybe

but

um just going with strict Buddhist

philosophy

or strict Buddhist ethics

then yeah in a situation like that you

don't do anything but that really does

lead to strange circumstances like I can

I can uh

I wrote a blog post about this probably

several months ago by now

um about what happens if you there's a

terrorist we won't say he's Islamic

that's Politically Incorrect but let's

say there's this terrorist and he's got

a like a a suitcase nuke

um somewhere in a big city it's just

gonna blow up numerous city blocks it's

going to kill thousands of people

and

you don't know where that suitcase is

but you you've you've apprehended the

terrorist he knows where it is so do you

torture him in order to extract the info

on where the suitcase is so you can save

literally thousands of people by

torturing this one guy who I mean he

pretty much deserves it

so I mean from the Buddhist point of

view just just hardcore hard-nosed

Buddhist ethics

you just let them explode you might you

might you know drive through there

warning people you know evacuate go away

but you don't know exactly where the

where the thing is anyway so you're just

gonna have chaos

um so

it seems to me you may be justified

in torturing that one terrorist in order

to find out where the nuke is

and I mean it's just a personal thing

sometimes

um you have to do wrong because it's the

lesser of two evils you sometimes it

just is it just makes sense

that I mean you're gonna take a hit for

the sake of somebody else and Buddhist

ethics really doesn't work that way it's

completely subjective you know the whole

world can go to hell but I mean as long

as you don't do anything wrong it's okay

and

I think it may be because we're

westerners

um maybe because we're just not ancient

Indians

it just seems really distasteful to just

stand there and watch somebody die

um just because you don't want to do

anything wrong

so

like I won out CEO of action as moral

dilemma

so I'll just move on to the next

question

from from CEO of action C positive now

this is the last question here not the

last question of all but his last

question I should say

can you please do some readings of

Mahayana texts that you found profound

it's much harder to sort through all

those texts and finding the gems and I

remember you mentioning some can be

amazing like one that talks about how

perception and volition are really the

same thing or something well I actually

have already done a few readings of

mahayama text I did the Sin Sin Ming and

uh the Tibetan I think I did the Tibetan

book of the great liberation

which are two of my favorite Mayan texts

I suppose I could do some readings of uh

so my favorite Zen Koons and so forth

um this one that you mentioned

um

yeah and the one that talks about how

perception and volition are really the

same thing or something that came from

an old book by a Russian fellow named

cherbatsky and it was I don't know if it

would even qualify as Mahayana I think

it would it was like the dignaga school

of a kind of medieval Buddhist logicians

they specialized in logic and I think it

was a day or some Hindu critic of them

from which they they know a lot about

this school because there's not a whole

lot of text surviving although there are
some Hindu texts surviving that are kind
of debating these these positions
and I can't remember which it was
whether it was the Hindu criticizing the
idea because the dignago school believed
in it or whether it was actually someone
from the dinago school saying this but
yeah for a long time I was having a
trouble with perception and volition
it's like how do you perceive something
which comes first is it the perception
or the volition like you know you're
gonna observe a blue spot I'm pretty
sure that was a standard example in in
this text I was reading in this Buddhist
logic text

um the blue spot

I mean

you perceived the blue spot first

but you CA how do you perceive it first

without directing your attention to it

but why would you direct your attention

to it if you haven't perceived anything

there yet so it was like I was trying to

work out you know how does that happen

and then in this book it was saying that

perception and volition are just two

aspects of the same phenomenon it's like

one is the temporal aspect and one is

the more static or you know one is the

the process and the other is the form

kind of a thing and then it made more

sense to me although in a way it's it's
heresy from a Buddhist point of view
because perceptional volition are
supposed to be
disqualitatively different
but it just makes good sense to me I
think it's the first Buddhist essay I
ever wrote was trying to explain you
know how human beings just the way our
mind works especially once we learn
language we divide things up into nouns
and verbs or subject and predicate kind
of a thing and so the perception is the
subject and the the volition the
volition aspect of the same mental state
would be like the predicate or the verb
so that was that was like a

um sort of an intellectual Epiphany that

I had long long ago was back in the

1990s

but with regard to Mahayana attacks yeah

I can read more of those

um I haven't read The Diamond Cutter yet

which is good I haven't read the the

heart Sutra yet

which is also profound even though it's

just crass heresy from a terribleen

Orthodox terrible on the point of view I

do have some uh

favorite Koons that I could do some

commentary on

but not today

in all likelihood

so I'll just uh move on to the next

question this is from Rick

and Rick says Rick here asks a bunch of

like personal kind of questions which is

fine

um Rick says do you have did you have

any goals upon entering monkhood

would you say that you achieved said

goals

well I remember when I first became a

monk I had some really like naive

optimistic goals

or even before I became a monk I had

these other goals it was one I was going

to renounce the World by the age of 30

which I did I was like

28 I think 27 28.

and then I was gonna

um be well underway whatever that means

by the age of 33 and then by the age of

37 which would be the year 2000 at the

time I should have attained you know

whatever it was I was attaining which

you know presumably would be sagehood

Enlightenment and so forth and it just

doesn't work that way you have these

ideas in your head

and I mean it's just some sorry

perceptions it's all delusional and the

reality doesn't work out that way

there's a common refrain in in the text

it's found in the Attica Wagga at least

once it's found in the sutiny Potter

more than once it's like however it is

you you you think of it it's it's

different from that

and so you can have goals like the goals

I had as a junior monkey I was gonna

have Jonah within six months that was

that was the plan and I just didn't take

into account that on just

constitutionally I'm a shitty meditator

I've just got oh dot shop is the the

polyword just like mental restlessness

you know my mind just won't settle down

easily it took a hell of a lot of work

to really get into deep meditative

States for me

and um

so yeah I had goals upon entering the

monk Hood but uh yeah I didn't I didn't

achieve the goals that I had

preconceived because they were sort of

uh just naive

delusional kind of goals

I guess

I mean even if you have the goal of

becoming enlightened being enlightened

is very different from what a normie

including me is a junior monk or

whatever thinks of it I mean it's like

it's it's not gonna be anything that you

can imagine

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is also from Rick

he says as a monk did you miss most

about being a monk aside from sex

now that you were not a monk anymore

what do you miss most about being a monk

and then there was this was in the

comments below the last q a and two

people who are familiar with me

answering such questions one person

wrote lizard geckos and another person

wrote wall clinging spiders named Lloyd

and actually that was the geckos it was

not so much what I missed about being a

monk so much as what I missed about

Burma

that those little the little wall the

little house geckos that the in internal

ones not the big ones the big ones that

yell really loud but the little ones

they just run around on the on the walls
sometimes across the ceiling they can go
right up a pane of glass and they chirp
like sparrows and they can change colors
and they eat bugs I mean what's not to
like
but uh what do I miss most about being a
monk
partly just the Leisure Time this is the
time to just sit around and think about
things like when you're working full
time and you're interacting with other
humans that I mean most of your energy
is expended on working full-time and
interacting with other humans so
um I have less energy now than I did

when I was among this because I was a

member of the Leisure Class

you know I could just sit around and

philosophize there are a few things I

had to do but I mean it wasn't really

taxing

other than if I was like doing intensive

practice you know sleeping four hours a

night or or approximately four hours a

night and just meditating all the time

then yeah that can that can take a lot

out of you too but

um so what did I miss most about not

being a monk

like yeah so yeah I suppose it's just

like the

you have more energy more time and

energy to apply to

um you know thinking about things

including important things like like

dama

now I'm just kind of living it it's like

I'm taking what I learned as a monk and

putting it into practice

and I don't have as much time to think

about and I hope the quality of my blog

post hasn't decreased too much since I

stopped being a mom just because as a

monk you know you just sit around and

you just work on a blog post for three

days straight whereas I just don't have

that kind of time anymore

so yeah I guess it would be that

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

question

knowing what you know now after being a

monk for 10 wait 30 plus years if you

had your life to live over would you

become a monk again

well I mean if I knew then what I know

now

it probably wouldn't be necessary for me

to become a monk because I'd already

know what I learned from being a monk

for 30 years

so you know I could just

do something different you know I could

just make a bunch of money you know

invest in in apple and

Amazon you know make millions just from

knowing in advance getting Bitcoin when
it first comes out that kind of a thing
and then just get us get myself a big
estate and just
you know I could meditate there and it
wouldn't have to work all the time that
kind of a thing so that would be a
possibility too it would work better in
America I mean being a monk in Asia and
trying I mean more or less following the
way monks lived in in the Buddhist time
or in Ancient India
um I mean that's really optimal for
making spiritual progress at least for
some some people
but of course if I didn't know then what

I know now if I had to do it all over

again I'd do exactly the same as I did

before

but if I knew then what I know now yeah

I'd probably do things differently just

because I already know I mean I wouldn't

have to go through high school anymore

because I already know what I learned in

high school I've got a university and

education I've learned all kinds of

things so I mean why would you have to

go back and learn the ABCs when you

already know them

foreign

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

question

and this is kind of another easy one

because it's one of these questions like
kelmikia about something I don't know
much about are you aware of the Canadian
monk Utah Domo biku if so what are your
thoughts on him and his teachings
content yeah I really am unfamiliar with
with you to Domo I I know that he uh
uh he he lives in Canada he came from
Asia to Canada and was living in a
somebody's basement
for a while until finally a Sri Lankan
Buddhist group
um became aware of him and decided to
support him and set him up with a uh
something but with regard to I mean I
don't know if he's like the the

politically correct leftist type I I'm

I'm the opinion that I seem to have this

understanding that he's a straight

serious Monk

but

um

aside from that I mean he could be sort

of a leftist also that has drunk the

Kool-Aid and tries to inoculate dhamma

with you know post-modern leftist

talking points and so forth but I could

be confusing him with somebody else

um I don't think he's the one that runs

suto Central who is the the main culprit

in that regard in bikubody

so

yeah I I really don't know much about

him I can't really say anything about it

for sure other than what I've already

said

um yeah he is uh a western person by

ethnicity

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

last question

can you elaborate on walking meditation

your current practice if any past

practice and experience how to's do's

and don'ts pros and cons Etc

um well I have discussed this a few

times in uh previous q's and A's q and

A's

um

so I mean I'm not gonna go into really

detailed stuff especially considering

that we're already over an hour here but

um at first I did not like walking

meditation

it just seemed uh I don't know you're as

a general rule your samadhi isn't as

deep when you're walking as when you're

sitting and then back around

1997 I spent two months at panditarama

doing like intensive practice there and

at in the mahasi tradition in generally

speaking it's one hour of walking one

hour sitting one hour walking one hour

sitting throughout the day and if you

have to do anything like wash your

clothes or eat or whatever that happens

during the walking times

so I mean you can you skip a few of the
walking sessions but they do say that
you should walk at least an hour before
you even sit down to meditate and just
do walking meditation and it is
relatively good for your health
um
and also it keeps momentum going because
I'm one of those people that just can't
sit Crossing it all day long
I guess in the goenka system there's no
walking meditation but I mean it is
useful to learn walking meditation
because once you learn how to do walking
meditation you can meditate anytime that
you're walking

so

my current practice is just pretty much

just what I just said it's it's not so

much back and forth Chun Kamina as it's

called it's like whenever I'm walking

um I can be mindful I'm not necessarily

doing walking meditation every time I

walk but sometimes you're just you know

in a mindful mood and you just kind of

go into meditation mode when you're

walking and for me usually

um I just am aware of the movements and

Sensations in my legs legs and feet and

one of my favorite

um objects of of like focus when I'm

meditating

if I'm having a focus it's just like the

oily sensation in my knee joints as I

walk

but there's all kinds of feelings that

you can feel just here the cloth rubbing

against your legs or the pressure of the

ground against your feet whatever is

easiest most conspicuous you know the

easiest thing to note if you're doing

noting the the mahasi way of doing

walking meditation is pretty boring I I

really don't like it where

um you know it's just lifting moving

forwards sitting down lifting moving

forwards setting down and so you're

walking in slow motion and it's just

sort of mental drudgery sort of like

counting your breaths and you can do
um Elementary walking meditation by
counting your steps to like one two
three four five one two three four five
six one two three four five six seven up
to ten and then back to five and then up
to ten and that sort of thing which is
again it's it's like this sort of
calisthenics like this mental drudgery
sort of like calisthenics would be
physical just drudgery just these
repetitive almost meaningless actions
that you're doing just to Discipline
Your Mind
but sometimes like when I was in Burma
especially you know you just kind of
open yourself wide open and I'd be doing

meditation mainly of seeing but I

wouldn't be focusing on anything in

particular you know you just kind of

keep your eyes

you know in like a the focus of a cheap

camera where everything is equally in

focus and you just kind of keep your

mind uh clear and just walk back and

forth doing that

so that works too

but as I say nowadays if I am doing

walking meditation

um I'm just sort of walking around the

house I do that sometimes or like when

I'm at work or something sometimes I can

do it then too and then you're just

being aware of

um

just being mindful of anything while

you're walking is walking meditation

so let's see my current practice if any

past practice and experience how to's

do's and don'ts pros and cons

um yeah there aren't any real cons to it

unless

um your legs are fine and you could be

sitting across like it then you might be

making better progress getting better

results by sitting cross-legged

so I'll just uh move on to the next

question this is from Fred and

technically it's not a question it's

under the Q a though you know he's he

submitted this in the comments under the
last q a so I guess it's fair game
so I just wanted to comment on it I
suppose Fred says monks are obligated to
portray piety which I would be adverse
to take part in exclamation point I am
in Thailand and monks have it as a
lifestyle one can never see inside a
monk's mind I like to see smiling monks
not endour emotionless automatons which
I have witnessed yeah well I mean that
goes all the way back to the Buddhist
time you know monks aren't supposed to
be smiling in public it's actually
against the rules to laugh out loud in
public especially if you're just doing

it carelessly because you don't care

about the rule

um

yeah so it's like if you're trying to

just fade out of samsara and I wrote a

blog post about this about why monks are

tend to be so boring because literally

they're trying to fade out you know

they're not trying to be interesting or

Lively or anything you're just trying to

become less and less and less until

you're you're not there anymore

so it's just the tradition from going

back to ancient India

that I mean you just got a poker face

especially if you're going from homes

around which is when probably in

Thailand you see the most monks unless
you're entering monasteries you're
seeing monks going for alms you're
supposed to look down it's against the
rules to look up in public especially if
you're doing it
um deliberate or just carelessly because
you don't give a damn that there's a
rule against it I mean if you hear like
a loud noise above you or something is
you can look up and see what it is but
um you know you look down and you don't
show emotions I mean it's not so much
dour and and like you know it's not like
they're frowning or anything
is I mean a monk who is practicing well

at least you'll see sort of Serenity you

know you'll see some kind of like

contentment nobility on his face that

can inspire a lot of people

and my sweetheart just drove home I see

her on the driveway

but that's not part of the the question

that I'm answering here

um

yeah so I mean in the westerners

especially they like if they offer

something to a monk they want to be

thanked for it a lot of the time and

that's that's a No-No too I mean if if a

monk thinks a layperson in Thailand for

example the the late person in Thailand

may get upset they're not offering

something for thanks they're offering

something from Merit and they don't want

to get paid in this life they want to

get their payment in the next life

or or in the you know later

so yeah it's uh

yeah it's just a cultural thing it's

sort of like a culture barrier

but it does make sense if you read the

texts you see that I mean that's that

was just what you were supposed to do

and monks get really good at a kind of

hypocrisy where you know they're just

like

Focus you know they're looking down just

demure as [__] and then they get back to

the monastery and then they start you

know talking and giggling and goofing

around some of them not all of them but

some do that

I've been behind the scenes many times

so I think I'll just

move on to the next question and this is

from Austin

and Austin says

thank you Ponyo basa once again for

taking time out of your day to answer

these questions well you're welcome my

next question is has modern day debate

got in contact with you yet

so yeah Austin here uh was helping me

out he wanted me to debate somebody and

so he tried to sign me up for this

YouTube channel called modern day debate

and I've I looked into it myself too I

just kind of I sent them an email myself

and

um

they didn't get back to me really but I

did see a poll that they put up it's

like what do you want to see debates on

and Buddhism was on the list maybe

because of of me and Hinduism was one

and then it was just some of the

standard ones like you know atheism

versus Christianity or something and

Buddhism got like 20 it was not the

you know it was sort of one of the low

scoring ones

and um so it may be that they were just
sort of feeling out into the demand for
a debate
um with me participating in on Buddhism
and it got kind of lukewarm uh
enthusiasm and so maybe they just
decided Well people aren't interested in
that we'll just keep doing we'll just
keep cranking out debate after debate
after the debate on atheism versus
Christianity or Christianity versus
Islam or is the earth flat I've seen
like a four hour long debate on on the
the list I didn't watch the thing but
there was like there's just debate after
debate on whether the Earth is flat or
not

so

and and modern native it's a good idea

although they really don't screen their

Debaters very well

um because some of them are just

incompetent debaters

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

question

and this is another calmikia one

or it's along the same lines as calmikia

and venerable Buddha uh what is his name

you tadamo you were discussing FH

Bradley and you have previously

mentioned George Barkley I was wondering

if you are familiar with Bernardo Castro

and his work if you're really into

idealism I think you might fancy this

philosophy I've heard of Castro but

aside from that I've never read anything

probably not even a quote

from Castro

so

so I mean idealism is interest I do

think ultimately you know the universe

is conscious you know it's like a

manifestation of consciousness

and I'm no materialist

but um

again now that now that I'm not a monk

anymore you know I don't have the time

and energy to just sit around reading

you know thick dry tomes of philosophy

like I used to I don't read nearly as

much as I used to when I was a mom which
is kind of a shame it's a good habit to
have it's better than just watching
YouTube videos or playing a video game
or something
so yeah I I'm unfamiliar with Bernardo
Castro so we'll just move on to Austin's
next and last question here
when considering philosophy do you view
taravada Buddhism as having a
philosophical dualism in regards to mind
well I'm not exactly sure what he means
with regard to a dualism other than I
mean one of the the standard kinds of
philosophical dualism is just the idea
that mind and matter are qualitatively

different and in that case you could say

tarobada goes beyond dualism in that

like in in abhidham and Orthodox

terravonna abhidham has four ultimate

realities that

matter

mind mental States

and nibana so in a way it's it's dualism

with regards to the mind and that mind

and mental States or Consciousness and

mental states are too qualitatively

different ultimate realities there's no

overlap at all they're completely

distinct from each other

which I mean I really can't I really

can't buy that

I think that Consciousness is like the

essence of mind and that mental States like perceptions and volitions and so forth are like the the forms that it assumes you know like you've got a gold ring or a glass pop bottle the gold or the glass is the essence the substance and the ring or the bottle is the form that it assumes and I assume that Consciousness assumes uh the form of mental States

so I mean that's kind of a dualism in and of itself there's a dualism just within the realm of Mind itself but other than that Orthodox terravonna claims that there are four ultimate realities matter mind mental States and

Nirvana and so I mean they put Nirvana
at the same level of reality as like
tongue sensitivity or femininity or or
just a wrong view is an Ultimate Reality
in in abhidham it's it's unfortunate
that when abhidham was composed like
formal logic had barely gotten a
foothold in India yet and so there are
attempts at just being completely
systematic and like No Nonsense and very
sensible and rational everything it
doesn't always work out very well
so we'll just move on to the next
question this is from Johannes
and Johannes says do you in general
remember said glimpse
it's the experience is off the charts

memory can't be a medium able to grasp
it yet it has Everlasting effects on the
experience well regard to the Glimpse
the said Glimpse that's like
if a person is especially in in Terra
Vada if they become an aria at least a
sodopona they get at least a glimpse of
enlightenment
and this is kind of as I said earlier it
doesn't necessarily happen the way you
think it's going to happen but let's see
here this experiences off the charts
memory can't be a medium able to grasp
it well you can use memory in that you
can remember like your reaction or your
response you know you have this you have

this Glimpse which then has effects on

you

and then you remember the effect even if

you don't distinctly recall the glimpse

of

you know Divinity or infinity or or

whatever you want to call it

so

yeah I would say that I mean like I was

saying earlier this Glimpse it's always

at least latent you know it's always at

least subconscious in everybody unless

you're just a complete sociopathic

vampire that's completely cut off from

you know Ultimate Reality

and that in a way this sort of reminds

me of dostoevsky's definition of hell is

where you're completely cut off from God

but I don't even know if that's even

possible if you're a conscious being

I mean I wouldn't use the word god

necessarily but just Ultimate Reality

you know the ultimate the absolute or

whatever

it's it's always there you know you've

always got it inside you

and just cultivating a more of a more

conscious awareness of that is a major

part of spiritual practice or Dharma

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here

also from Johannes hey panyo I just

watched your video about the Attica

Wagga really good video thanks for that

you're welcome

what's the offensive thing you wrote on

your website that made the ajan cha

monasteries change their mind well I

mean the Mind changing happened almost

immediately with my blog just because I

was always writing edgy stuff that was

sort of poking the the Orthodox bear

and this path press I got it right here

this Edition

of the article Wagga translation is by

path press as you can see here that path

press is affiliated with this group of

Buddhists that um they're like Fanboys

or maybe that's not a polite word

um you know they're they're followers of

a monk name an English monk named Jana Veera who uh committed suicide in 1965 and one of the very this this European monk who took an interest in what I was writing was asking me I mean are you a follower of

um

and as it turned out I started the blog in one of the very first blog posts I wrote was essentially disagreeing with yanovira so that just kind of put him on the back you know put him on his heels just right off the bat

um but I think the main blog post was I wrote this

really controversial blog post I mean I

it was it wasn't just one blog post that

I wrote but this one in particular I

wrote about this getting emotionally

involved with

um a woman in America I mean we didn't

have sex but still

um we got emotionally involved in and I

indulged in inappropriate behavior for

you know for a monk

and um

it was just too scandalous

so

that was uh that was probably it but

again I wrote lots of of other blog

posts that were

I mean in some ways

just as inappropriate or

scandalous or whatever

so anyway I'll just move on to the next

question he's he's kind of asking me

some embarrassing questions here

johannes's next question here did you

ever have a nemita

and this one is uh not particularly

embarrassing so I mean dwell on this one

for a while

animita literally means a sign

and usually if you're talking about

seeing a nemita in meditation it's with

reference to a mental state called

upachara samadi which is like the

stepping stone into Jannah it's like one

stage below first and Janna supposedly

and it's mentioned as far as I know only

in the commentarial tradition it's not

it's not really dealt with in the sutas

as far as I recall which indicates that

I mean it could be just like Apocrypha I

mean if it's so important I mean you

have to experience this before you can

get Jonah you'd think there'd be at

least one suta dedicated to discussing

this

but

nimeta

um it's like some kind of vision and

usually it's just sort of like a like a

white or light colored Circle or oval or

cloud

or some people will they'll they'll see

visions of the Buddha or some such

and um yeah my sweetheart's distracting

me outside the window

um

yeah sometimes you'll just see a vision

and um

let me take a drink

being a temptress

so and I have seen an imita it was

it was like a duck egg just sort of a

white or whitish kind of elongated oval

like this while I was meditating but I

really didn't care

um I really wasn't trying to see animita

in some some traditions like the the Paw

tradition they really put a lot of

emphasis you have to see the nimita

because you can't get Jonna until you've

had upachara samani because it's the

stage right below Jannah

so

um yeah I have I have seen a nemita but

really I did not put much importance or

emphasis on it because as I say

um it's it's a concept that's found in

the commentaries but

to the best of my knowledge it is not

really discussed in the sutos

so it's like an apocryphal kind of a

thing and I think a lot of people seeing

nimitas is you know they're told that

they have to see one and so their

subconscious mind just dutifully

obediently generates this nimita

there's a lot of that sort of thing in

meditation if you're not careful

so we'll just move on to the next

question of Johannes

do you think that the Buddhist cosmology

is real

if the Buddha remembers all the past

lives he had and the Universe goes in

cycles that are very similar to each

other then surely in the past Cycles

there would have also been cars and

planes Etc therefore the Buddha must

have remembered them from early lives I

assume yet there's no mention of

anything that wasn't known in the

ancient Indian culture how come well

that's a good question actually I don't

think I've ever really thought about

that if the Buddha could remember all of

his past lives

then I mean going back into all these

different cycles of you know expansion

and contraction of the universe and Rise

involved civilizations and everything

you should have spent at least a few

lives

um in some technologically advanced

civilization

so

and there's no mention of it so it may

be that he just didn't bring it up you

know he can he would say that you know I

can remember my past lives and so forth

but I mean he's not going to be telling

stuff that's just going to be blowing

people's minds and filling them full of

doubt and dismay and all this kind of a

thing

so I mean that would be one explanation

um at the very top part of this the very

first line of this question do you think

that the Buddhist Buddhist cosmology is

real

um I don't think that it's exactly like

it says in the in the text for example

recently in some video I was expressing

some severe doubt about the the heaven

Realm of the perceptionless brahmas for

example who don't have any mental States

at all they're just like statues and

they just stand there in this Heaven

realm for millions and millions of years

they couldn't possibly be working off

any kind of karma because there's no

mental States involved

ah

so

yeah I have doubts about that and just

the whole idea of everything fitting

into

um ancient Indian ancient Indian beliefs

about how the how the world and the

universe work

like you know the realm of asuras for

example that's one of the lower Realms

he doesn't it it receives less uh

mention than any of the other Realms of

the lower Realms I think

um partly just because it's just sort of

like uh vestigial because you have the

belief in the the war between the Devas

and the asuras or in Greek it was the

gods and the titans this goes all the

way back to

proto-indo-european culture

um you know goes back into prehistoric

times this belief of this war between

two kinds of gods and it may have

originally been just a a kind of

religious conflict between two pantheons

you know you had one tribe worshiping

these gods in another tribe worshiping
these gods and eventually one of them
prevailed and became just the the
universal uh Gods of the people
I mean it wasn't necessarily really a
war between Davis or gods and Titans and
the Titans are defeated and they're
Enchanted at the base of this mountain
and so forth
so yeah I mean I think the general gist
of Buddhist cosmology is right I mean
you're going to have lower Realms and
higher Realms and it's going to go from
just very very crude and and miserable
up to the most refined and Blissful
States you know it's in in an infinite
Universe you know anything that's

possible can happen and does happen

although personally I think that some of

the higher beings and some of the lower

ones obviously have got tentacles and

maybe some of them breathe you know

liquid ammonia or something

on some completely different kind of

world it's all not all anthropomorphic

anthropocentric you know I have all the

beings except for animals look like

people

if they've got a body at all

so

yeah I mean so

the whole Buddhist cosmology thing a lot

of it is just ancient Indian culture and

to some degree you have to separate the
wheat from the chaff when investigating
some ancient spiritual tradition because
they're going to have ancient cultural
assumptions that really are irrelevant
to the main point of the system
Buddhist cosmology is largely not
entirely but largely irrelevant to
the whole process of spiritual practice
and just cultivating wisdom
so and and yeah assuming that the Buddha
did remember all of his past lives
which would be
presumably an infinite number of them
yeah he might remember lives as uh
some alien with tentacles breathing
liquid ammonia but

um you know he's not going to talk about

it he's just going to talk about stuff

that's going to help other people

something that they can kind of grasp

you know they can get some kind of

um benefit from just by kind of

understanding it

so

I think I'll just move on to uh

johannes's next question

and this one is a surprisingly difficult

one for me to answer so I'm not sure how

well I'm going to answer it

what is wrong effort wrong mindfulness

and wrong meditation and how do we know

if we practice it or not

well wrong effort would be effort in the

wrong direction you know effort away

from

fewness of desires and that sort of

thing wrong mindfulness yeah that one

I'm not sure because I mean you can

never have too much mindfulness it's

there's uh the five Andreas or the five

balas but it's the five faculties or the

five powers

um two of them come in pairs which is

one is like

um panya and Sada or sort of wisdomen

and Faith or sort of like intellect and

Faith they have to be in Balance because

if you have too much intellect and not

enough Faith you're going to be totally

skeptical and you're not even going to
believe what's true on the other hand if
you have too much faith and not enough
intellect or or like reason then you
can't believe anything no matter how
ridiculous it is and then you've got the
balance of wyria and samadhi William is
like energy and samadhi is concentration
you have too much weary and not enough
samadhi then your mind's just all over
the place you have too much samadhi and
not enough wearya then you just kind of
go into a trance you just zone out so
those have to be in Balance too but
mindfulness
you just can't have too much of it no

matter how much of it you've got going

that's good so wrong mindfulness I mean

it would have to be just sort of

bringing to mind

bad things you know just remembering you

know the girl you were you felt up in

ninth grade or something

because mindfulness Sati also can mean

memory

so it's just probably just attending to

unskillful objects

in wrong meditation

um

one kind of wrong meditation would just

be

um you know just meditating on

things that how do I how do I say this

this just meditating on wrathful deities
you know in a wrong way I assume Tibetan
Buddhists especially meditate on
wrathful deities but I mean if you're
you know meditating on like demonic
forces or something or wrong meditation
you just go into like a stupor you know
you just zone out like I had one guy
when I was in Burma I think he was
Chinese he was bragging to me about what
a good meditator he was because he was
saying when I meditate I don't I don't
notice anything I don't hear the ticking
of the clock mosquitoes can bite me I'm
just completely oblivious to it and I'm
thinking well I mean that's not

necessarily good meditation if you're

just like going into a trance where

you're just oblivious to everything

around you then

yeah I don't think that's necessarily

good meditation

so

yeah this is all these are all like

three steps of the a-fold path you know

right right effort right mindfulness and

right right concentration or he's got

right meditation here so wrong

concentration is just concentrating on

on something unwholesome

wrong mindfulness of just being

essentially you know attending to

something unwholesome you know being uh

mindfully aware like mindfulness isn't necessarily just being in the present moment I mean you really can't go wrong being in the present moment but it can also mean just mindfulness of you know the virtues of the Buddha or something and if you're just thinking like completely wrong stuff then that could be wrong mindfulness in that sense and of course wrong effort I mean if you just your effort is entirely directed towards you know making as much money as possible and destroying your enemies and stuff and yeah that would count as wrong effort

so how do we know if we practice it or

not well just to have a a super just a
basic awareness of Dharma
you know I mean you can
just compare what you're doing with you
know what's in the text or if you've got
a a good teacher that you trust you know
compare it with what he's telling you or
you can just describe it to him and he
can tell you well you're on the right
path or you're not on the right path but
it really shouldn't be that difficult
um but it does the more advanced you get
the more more subtle it gets until you
get into the other Arctica Wagga realm
where I mean essentially is you just
have to let go of absolutely everything
so I guess I'll just move on to the next

question this also by Johannes

what's the longest you ever sat in

meditation and what's the longest you

ever saw or know of someone sitting in

meditation well

when I sat in meditation it was in the

full Lotus and I do not have very

flexible legs and so

um the longest I ever sat was in the

full Lotus position now there's a little

over two hours

and it was it gets painful

especially if you're not very flexible

the the longest I I ever saw or know of

I don't know the longest I ever saw

there was this Mahayana monk from Korea

at pandita Rama and he could just sit

like a statue for hours

I mean commonly you know you have one

hour of sitting one hour of walking and

another hour of sitting sometimes you

just skip the walking part and just sit

for three full hours now he was just he

could just flop his legs out of the full

Lotus and just get up and walk away he

was fine

um there is

a Seattle in the ingu tradition in Burma

who will have people sitting at least

eight hours straight in the full Lotus

and as I guess part of it is just just

the screaming Agony in your knees in

your hips and your ankles somehow just

pushes you into some deeper kind of of

samadhi or something

but there are I mean I have heard of

people who have just sat in meditation

for at least eight hours straight but I

I'm not one of those people

so I'll just move on to johannes's next

question

don't you believe it's possible that the

Orthodox teravada 10 Federer model is

true and that there were enlightened

beings in other traditions and that

people like krishnamurti were

enlightened if you can't remember the

Glimpse

the Glimpse

then maybe people like Jesus Christian ready Etc had this Glimpse in a previous life and therefore already had a natural understanding of Right View right mindfulness and so on they just didn't remember any Buddhist Doctrine and explain their experience of nibana in their own words well it's kind of like I was saying earlier you can have parami or you can have momentum going from you know from the past that it's sort of latent in you um but with regard to the Glimpse I mean it doesn't that Glimpse it might not have much to do with a natural understanding

of Right View right mindfulness and so

on

so they didn't they just didn't remember

any Buddhist Doctrine

um

yeah I'm not sure I don't think it's

necessary to have been a Buddhist in a

past life to become enlightened

I mean you don't have to be a Buddhist

in this life I don't think that's a

terracy right there but I don't think

it's necessary that you've ever had to

be a Buddhist because I mean

just different systems have enough

genuine Dharma to get people cultivating

wisdom I mean there's just this natural

urge I think once you get to a certain stage in spirituality you just want to wake up and you just sort of are drawn in that direction

um you know that may be what a sodapana is you know you just get get to the Tipping Point where you know you're or it's like Ron Doss had this idea that samsara is sort of like a clock the old-fashioned kind the hands on it and you start at midnight with sort of you know one second or something that's like the beginning of this Consciousness that breaks away from the absolute and like is experimenting or trying to be this individual being that's separate from everything and then once you get back to

it's getting farther and farther away

from the source which is 12 and then

once you get to about six then you're

like coming back again you're getting

closer and closer and closer

so

I mean I think that can happen

regardless of whether you're a Buddhist

or not

um

the 10th Federal model yeah

so

yeah this is this is kind of a difficult

question for me to to Grapple with here

well yeah I'm not I don't think that

Jesus or krishnamurty either of the

krishnamurtis

necessarily had been Buddhists in in

previous incarnations regardless of the

Lost Years of Jesus stuff and all that

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question this is also from Johannes

and this is johannes's last question

would you be willing to or have you ever

LED some retreats

well

um I used to be willing to I mean when I

was a monk I was always kind of waiting

when I when I was living in Bellingham I

mean I was just this untapped resource

essentially because

for some reason the teachers there they

saw me more as competition or like a

threat to their position or something
than as like a valid spiritual resource
and so they they call in some some other
monk who is just a beginning monk who
really didn't know very much and have
him lead Retreats but my conditions for
leading a retreat at the time would have
probably been prohibitive because I
would refuse to lead a retreat that cost
money
so it would have to be supported somehow
and uh yeah I don't think they would
have gone for that
and then after I became a monk when I
came to here to South Carolina I had
still had this idea I could lead like

camping Retreats where you you hike a little bit out into the forest with maybe six people and then you you find a good place and everyone sort of camps in a separate place maybe without a tent or anything just sitting under a tree like in the old days and in the evening you come back to a one campfire and have like a Dharma talk and I think that's still a good idea but it just never materializes it's just sort of like the universe just doesn't want me to lead Retreats even when I was most qualified and just was like going for it you know just you know I can do this it just didn't happen it was just some sort of karmic block or something and now I'm

working full-time in a sheet metal shop

and have

um a sweetheart and other people to deal

with and just interact with and again I

just have less free time and less energy

so it's probably less feasible now than

it was when I was a monk but even when I

was a monk it just didn't happen and it

wouldn't happen regardless of uh all the

talk about it and people saying oh you

should have Retreats and all this and

that and it just never happened

so next question

is from drunk druck

and drunk drunk says how do we stop

judeo-bolshevism

and I assume by judeo bolshevism he's

mainly referring to Marxism and various

offshoots and variations and mutations

of of Marxism

or like quasi-marxism

and how do we stop it

gosh well I think

the main way of even just dealing with

it

is I mean I don't think you're ever

going to completely stop it

I don't think you're ever going to

completely stop Christianity either I

mean

you know it's just like this thing

that's already established and there's

always going to be some people that are

that are believing in it including some
um people with like influential people
so I mean the best thing you can do is
just expose it to sunlight you know
sunlight is the best disinfectant as
they say just do your best to expose it
and just show the like the the evil
consequences of it I mean Marxism has
proven itself over the past Century
we've got 100 Years of evidence
that Marxism in its various forms
is worse than fascism
I mean Stalin killed more people than
Hitler did Mao killed more people than
Stalin and Hitler combined that's even
setting aside like the Kim Dynasty in

North Korea and Pol Pot and all that

I mean how much

failed or stagnant economies

totalitarianism and genocide does it

take before people that are just lost in

their heads and just emotional wishful

thinking you're gonna wake up and

realize that it just doesn't work

I mean it may sound good in theory and

then they just insist because it sounds

good in theory that it has to work and

we're just going to force it down

people's throats at gunpoint if

necessary and it just it just doesn't

work

so I think the best thing is just

through you know informing educating the

masses

I think you got to be your best your

best bet

and so finally

the last question is from Eva or Ava Eva

Eva or Ava I don't know how to pronounce

that I think it's Eva

and Eva or Ava says how do I get the

Attica Wagga book translation by you I

really need it

and so I've I've already answered this

but I have received a few requests along

these lines just recently mainly after

doing the uh the video on some sutos

from the Attica Wagga where I'm

discussing the antagawagan its

importance as a Buddhist document where

it's potentially at least the most

important Buddhist document in existence

because it is in my opinion the largest

intact chunk of really primitive archaic

pre-terravada in Buddhism that we have

so how does one get the Attica manga

book there are a few different ways you

can go about it I mean if you want other

translations then they're out there just

you know find translations of the sutiny

Pata like you can I'm sure by this point

bikubody and ajan tanisaro have both

translated it

um

if you want if you're referring to my

translation of it then on on my website

which is languishing

um

nipapancha.org and i p p a p a n c a DOT

org

there there is a digital copy of it that

you can download easily

um also I have been told that there are

at least two different editions of my

translation

um linked to the Wikipedia article on

the Attica Wagga so there's that too but

if you wanted a paper book copy of it

you'd have to contact me and give me

your mailing address and I could send

you a copy of

let's see I think I've got it right here

this second edition I do have quite a

few copies of this it's like this little

you know Poly on one side English on the

other side

and I can send I can send that this was

going with the idea that I wanted

something really compact that you could

put in your pocket but it's still kind

of a little too big for the average

pocket

but it's it's also it has a few typos on

the poly side I have to admit

just a few

but that would that wouldn't matter

mainly just to people that wanted to

read the poly and were able to read the

polling

so that's the way you know you can

download it off the internet

um from nepapuncha.org or the Wikipedia

or I assume there's probably other ways

of finding it out there or if you send

me your mailing address I can uh I can

send you a copy and that's it that was

the last question

so again

if you have any questions if I with

regard to anything that you think I

could answer like Buddhist philosophy

especially terrible Buddhist philosophy

Buddhist monasticism

um my own experiences in Burma or as a

monk

um you know just Burma I can I can

answer questions about that fairly

fairly well in most cases

um meditation Dharma in general stuff

like that if you think that uh I might

be able to give an informed answer on

the question uh feel free to ask in the

comments below

and uh be sure to uh check the links

below this video

where is my my URL links and also my the

books that I I'm selling on Amazon

and uh see what else

subscribe if you haven't already I'm not

too far away from a thousand which I

think is the uh the critical mass for

live streaming and uh give me a like if

you if you like and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 45 of

question and answer and I am your host

Ponyo Basa

and in honor of this being number 45 I'm

drinking this here

Peach flavored energy drink

which uh

as you may not be able to see actually

contains kamu kamu extract I have never

heard of it before but it's got this in

it and I'm sure it's good

it also has branched chain amino acids

but uh the main reason why I'm drinking

white peach energy drink for question

answer 45

is because

uh those of you who are familiar with

memeology and possibly who have read the

comments sections of Breitbart

during the Trump Administration May

realize that peach 45

was a very common refrain in those days

in certain circles

age 45 and 45 did get Peach he got

peached twice if you include the second

one which was actually invalid

but uh

also the camera is going to be bouncing

around because I'm sitting out on the

back the back deck because my sweetheart

is does not like me staying in the room

all the time

so I'm this is sort of a compromise

you'd prefer that I'd be like outdoors

with like the sun like in my eyes and

like insects and all sorts of things

that just totally distract me

so this is kind of a compromise but if

it was up to me I'd probably be back in

the same room as usual and uh

I just it just I feel more comfortable

there I guess

maybe it's maybe it helps to be a little

bit uncomfortable because it helps you

to be more alert or something but like

one of my uh I don't know I'd probably

call him a role model or not but sticks

hex and hammers 666 he he just stays in

this room he tells he does like one take

or at least the take that you see has

not been edited

and I think my favorite

um of his backgrounds was when he was

still in Vermont

and he just apparently was just sitting

in his kitchen with like a a Roman flag

with the spqr on the back behind him

I think he was still in the leather

jacket phase although he pretty much

usually wore shirts underneath it

but anyway

um we got lots of questions

in fact I think we might even have 45

questions which is uh doubly appropriate

and so I should just wade into this

without uh bothering you by talking

about

Peach 45.

and uh puppy shaking the camera and so

forth

so the first question is from Brave sir

Robin Alias Mary spelled m-e-r-r-y and

brave sir Robin says

what European country did your ancestors

come from do you know

well

Americans tend to be rather a Mongol

race there are very few pure blooded

American anything I think

but my mother's side of the family I

have been told is essentially 100

English

although the English themselves are kind
of a mongrel race too but their
mongrelness their mongrelhood
mongrelicity is uh just a mixture of
European tribes especially in the areas
of like northern Europe you know like
Angles and Saxons and Vikings and so
forth and some French maybe a little bit
of Latin like during the Roman Empire
there's probably a little bit of mixing
at that time
so yeah my mother's side of the family
I'm pretty sure is
pretty much 100 English my father's side
of the family is a little more eclectic
can you say that about ancestry
eclectic ancestry but he also I'm pretty

sure is mostly English maybe some

Scottish and a Teensy bit of Italian

mixed in and also I think there may be

like the one one one 1024th of American

Indian blood

but I'm mostly Anglo-Saxon

so

my last name also is Anglo-Saxon

and my mother's maiden name was Walker

which is totally English

so I'll just move on to the next

question oh I should say though before I

go to that on the next question my

sweetheart keeps wanting me to get my

DNA tested so I can get my ancestry like

scientifically verified or something but

first of all I do not want my genome on

some government register and secondly I

just know that if I were to get my

genome sequenced you know just get my

DNA

like recorded somewhere that within 50

years there's going to be an army of

Clone knees just wreaking havoc upon the

Earth

so

um yeah I'll just go with uh family

folklore family lore

and I'll just move on to the next

question this is also from Brave sir

Robin Alias Mary spelled m-e-r-r-y

there is a picture that you have it is

on the top shelf of the left side behind

you in that room is it your father and

as you can see I'm not in that room but

I brought a picture and it is this

and no that is not my father that is

neem karoli Baba

and he is my favorite Guru

despite the fact that he's a Hindu

and maybe I should just do a video all

about Indian curly Baba someday but one

thing I liked about neem curly Baba was

he was a rascal I mean he was like

just amazingly spiritually Advanced you

know he could look at you and know you

better than you know you just at a

glance this guy plus all these weird

stories of miracles about teleportation

and multiplication of his bodies into
more than more than one body
simultaneously and and just reading
minds and knowing the future and that
sort of thing
but for those of you who are unfamiliar
with him he was Ram das's Guru he was
the guru a number of other people
including Krishna Das and most of his
disciples wound up with the name ending
in DOS of the male disciples anyway and
Das means politely means servant
although Dasa in Pali anyway meant slave
and it was uh derived from dasu which
was a name describing the Aboriginal
inhabitants
of Northwestern India and like the Indus

River Valley when the indoorians invaded

so they're mentioned in the rig Veda as

Dasa or Dasio but since they were

enslaved they became it became a synonym

for slave much like the English word

slave came from slav because the Slavs

were enslaved a lot like in the Early

Middle Ages especially

so

yeah so it's neem curly Baba also known

as maharaji so I'll just move on to the

next question also from Mary spelled

m-e-o-r-y

if you die okay when you will die we all

gonna

what would it be your favorite way to go

so I mean if I could choose how I die

what would be my preferred way of dying

and it used to be

I mean for years I had it all worked out

you know if I could choose any way of

dying I would want to be bitten by a

17-foot king cobra three and a half

hours after ingesting 500 micrograms of

LSD

and since I haven't come up with any

replacement for that I guess just by

default that can still be the way just

in case you know people out there are

listening to this and

and uh they want to set that up for me

somehow when the time comes I remember

my father used to say that he wanted to

be shot by a jealous husband at the age
of 102 although that didn't come to pass
either but I mean the Cobra thing it
would be too hard to work out all the
logistics so I'm probably gonna have to
like go with some other method when the
time finally comes
so we'll just move on to the next
question and this is from dismas I think
that is how you pronounce this name it
is not a very
common name
in uh in the USA bismus
and dismiss says do we know for sure
that the monks today wear their robes
like the Buddha and his disciples used

to wear them and we know pretty sure

that they didn't

um I did a video just on monk robes

this was maybe a few months ago by now

again

and the main difference

is that monk robes in the Buddhist time

especially the upper robes were about

half the size of Monk robes now and so

they mostly just wore it flung over both

shoulders because there just wasn't

enough cloth to do it like the Tie Way

where they got it all wrapped around one

arm and everything there wasn't enough

cloth for that because it was just

half the size

um

I'm not exactly sure when

um teravada Buddhist monks

started wearing their robes twice the

size of what is really the allowable

size it part of it came from the idea

that I mean according to the rules

you're not allowed to have a robe as big

as the Buddha's own robe and the

Buddha's own robe was nine hand spans by

six hand spans according to the Buddha's

own hand and then the mythology started

evolving in Buddhism so that the Buddha

became three and a half times the height

of an ordinary human so that his hand

span was like Yay big and so the rule

became totally meaningless saying that

you can't wear a robe that's more than
like 26 feet long or something that
nobody would want to wear anywhere
so yeah with regard to just fleeing it
over one shoulder you know like uh a
Burmese monk who's relaxed in his
Monastery and just has his robe like
over one shoulder and not wrapped around
one arm or anything that's pretty much
the way monks wore their robes some of
the time especially when paying respects
it does say that a monk should uncover
uncover his right shoulder when he pays
respect or like if he's making
confession or something like that or if
he's attending a formal ceremony just to
show respect it was considered a sign of

respect probably in all of ancient India
not just among Buddhist monks so you
uncover the shoulder to show respect
kind of like in 19th century
um the West in in like 100 years or more
a man would take off his hat like a lady
enters the room or something like that
you know he eats off the cap
um so it's it's similar but not exactly
the same and mainly it's because
nowadays monk robes are especially the
upper ropes are like twice as big as
they were in the Buddhist time so there
are some differences
so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Rick

and Rick has asked a number of questions

that some of them are rather personal

but uh it's all fair game I suppose

Peach 45

Rick says I've heard you mention that

you went as far as you could as a monk

but that said how much of a role did

your sweetheart play had you and had you

not met her and presumably fell in love

would you still be donning the robes

um if I hadn't met my sweetheart and

fallen in love with her and left and

come to where she lives to be with her

um if I were still in robes right now

I'd be in all likelihood stagnating and

wondering what I should do

um I mean you can't you can't really say

what would happen if things were done

differently because you don't know you

know what would actually happen but

that's the feeling I get I'd just be

stagnating just what the hell am I going

to do

but fortunately for me

um we met you know when I was still a

monk and uh it was just like this

chemistry we just we just clicked we

have sort of a group mind thing going

which is kind of strange sometimes and

uh yeah she did she did help me

but um

um I mean if if I was still making

progress in the monk Hood I probably

would have just stayed in Burma and and

wouldn't have come to America and

started staying at a LAX Burmese

Monastery and and just messing around

online with meme farming and minds.com

and stuff

so ultimately the reason why I left the

bunker was I just really did just get as

far as I could with it

so we'll just move on to the next

question from Rick how would you compare

your faith in Buddhism as a junior monk

to now well I was much more literal

minded back then much more idealistic

and naive I think

compared to now

um

I understand things a lot better which

like has influenced my attitude towards

Buddhism like just really taking the the

sutas of the Attica Wagga to Heart

except for the Tissa Mateo which is

talking about how a monk should not drop

out of the monk hood and start having

sexual relations with ladies

um but aside from that with regard to

like the philosophical mind States

um I'm better at it now than I was as a

junior Monk

um yeah I was just very idealistic and

literal minded with regard to

understanding the text to the point of

just being naive

and it's something that you have to

learn through your own experience some

monks apparently don't they just stay

like unquestioning faith-oriented

dogmatists just from start to finish but

I just don't swing that way

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

question

what would you say to a person preparing

to go forth and take up the robes any

words of wisdom or caution I remember

when I told uh

a Zen roshi that I was planning on

ordaining as a monk and he said I am

happy for you and I'm sorry for you

which is kind of a Zen thing to say but

I mean it is applicable

um you know it's living amongst life

isn't all just peaches

Peach 45

I mean it's you know it's definitely got

its it's good sides and it's it's dark

sides or it's good points and it's not

so good points

but with regard to someone wanting to go

forth and take up the robes first of all

I would uh advise them to investigate

different monasteries and the habits of

different monasteries or senior monks of

different monasteries and find one that

they think is strict that adheres you

know fairly closely to what the Buddha

originally taught that has a wise

teacher and if you can ordain in Asia I would advise any Junior Monk that they should spend at least two years in a Buddhist culture in Asia where they can walk for alms they can sleep under trees in a tropical forest that kind of thing because it's really invaluable it helped me immensely and it also helps you to understand the sutas because if you're living in the same general kind of environment with a similar kind of culture you can understand the context of of the the Buddhist text much more easily than if you're sitting in New York City or something

so yeah that would be my main words of wisdom

um

you know just carefully investigate

different monasteries find one with a

wise teacher that you trust that has

relatively strict winning like the monks

don't handle money you need to get rid

of your money before you ordain

um you know study up on the Monk's rules

a little bit just so you'll have some

idea of what you're getting yourself

into

uh

and good luck because really I mean it's

it's definitely much I mean it's

designed the Monk's life is designed to

help you progress in wisdom and to get

you enlightened so

um if you really have your heart set on

it you know it's it's better to become a

monk than to try to practice as a

layperson especially at first

um

so yeah I mean I wouldn't try to talk

anybody out of it unless it's pretty

clear that they're doing it for a dumb

reason or they have no intention of of

being a strict conscientious monk or

something like that

so I'll just move on to the next

question from Rick

how did you and Brian Rue come into

contact with each other have you ever

met in person or just online I stumbled

across the two of you a few months ago
by searching the word Monk on a
different platform YouTube won't allow
me to say which one without deleting my
comment rhymes with wit hoot yeah I can
understand that I really enjoy the
contrast and chemistry between the two
of you yeah hail Bryan
well the first interaction between Brian
and me
occurred shortly after I came back to
America I thought for good in 2011. I
was really just flinging myself into
America I felt like I just had enough of
Burma time to interact with with like
Western people to speak my language and

think sort of like me

and so I landed in Bellingham Washington

and so I just contacted the Dharma

teachers in the you know within 100

miles of Bellingham that included

Vancouver British Columbia also Seattle

Washington and everywhere in between

and um Brian was like a mainstream

Normie Dharma teacher back then he

hadn't gotten into trouble and gotten

fired from his his teaching job and

everything

and uh so I just sent him an email you

know just saying you know I'm Buddhist

monk who's landed nearby and uh you know

just offering my services and he wrote a

polite email back to me saying that uh

you know he was kind of living from hand

to mouth as it was he really didn't have

the facilities for guests teachers and

so forth and that was it that was that

was all there was and then uh a few

years later after both of us had been

red pilled

um he I'm not exactly sure I think

someone who followed my blog

um

suggested to him that he contact me and

so Brian contacted me asking me if I

would be like the spiritual leader of

his dual Society

and uh the school of society was sort of

like a Redux of an older School society

that was in Germany uh pre-hitler

foreign

but

um I mean I looked through it and I just

said well yeah I really shouldn't be

becoming the spiritual leader of the

school Society but I was available for

doing videos so that was how we started

doing like lots of videos we've done pro

well up into triple digits of videos

together most of them are not on my

YouTube feed you'd have to find them on

Brian's bit shoot feed which you're not

supposed to say rhymes with who yeah

it's weird how YouTube is just trying to

um enforce ignoring [__] you like I

gotta

um this is a digression by the way but I
got this little questionnaire from from
YouTube Once asking like what other
video platforms do I do I use or watch
and had a list of a bunch of them bit
shoot which would be the obvious
alternate to YouTube or one of the most
obvious it wasn't even on the list so
I'm just telling you say why you just
leave it out completely I mean it's just
such obvious ridiculous bias
but uh yeah that's how I met Brian Russo
I'll just move on to Rick's next
question
as regard to rules for monks do you
think they are all necessary if you were

in charge are there any rules you would
do away with any you would add
well
um it is said that shortly before the
Buddha died he did give permission that
the Lesser and minor rules and
discipline could be done away with
although he did not specify what it was
he told this to his his cousin and
attendant Ananda
and then Ananda caught hell from it from
for not asking him to specify what he
meant by the Lesser and minor rules of
discipline so they just decide we're not
going to change any of it and I mean
obviously not all of them are necessary
especially now maybe in Ancient India in

you know the the Iron Age Ganges Valley
all of them are there for a good reason
but some of them nowadays are just
completely obsolete there's no point
like it's against the rules to use a
human skull as a as an arms ball you
know to make an almost bull out of a
human skull which nobody would want to
do
um a lot of the rules regarding Bulls
are old enough that they just assume
that amongst bull is going to be made
out of clay and very few monks have Clay
bowls anymore so all the rules about how
you have to take special care of this
bowl you're not supposed to set it up on

on a high place like a table because if
it falls off it breaks you're not
supposed to open or close the door with
a bowl in your hand because if it knocks
against the door it can break you know
there's rules about how many cracks the
bowl can have before you can replace it
and almost all bowls now are made out of
iron or stainless steel they just don't
break so all these rules are just
obsolete essentially and the one about
you're not allowed to open or close the
door with a bowl in your head it's just
a pain in the ass especially in Asia
where there's anopheles mosquitoes
outside and you've got to open the door
you've got to set your bowl down you

can't just set it on the floor you have
to set it on a pad or something so that
the black finish doesn't get scraped
you open the door then you pick up the
bowl you walk through the doorway you
set it down but again you have to set it
down on something other than the floor
itself and then after you set the bowl
down you close the door behind you and
meanwhile like four or five anopheles
mosquitoes have flown into your cabin
so
yeah there are rules that are just
I mean some of them are just obsolete
like it's against the rules to offer
food with your own hands to a naked

aesthetic like an ajivaka and the ajiva

because they're extinct now there might

be a few de gambora Janes still walking

around naked in India but um yeah it's

it's obsolete

um so they're not really all necessary

but once you start messing around with

we're going to get rid of these rules or

those rules then you just flung the door

wide open you've opened Pandora's Box

and then you're gonna have fools

no the dogs are stampeding you can have

fools that are just saying well we don't

want any of these sexist patriarchal

rules and then you know everything just

goes into the dumper

um

the the last part of this question any

you would add yeah when I was a monk I

was grateful for veneer because really

it does sort of regiment your life and

it keeps your life kind of simple and

quiet

and um

so there were there were rules where

like you know it might have been helpful

to have a rule against cussing because

there's no rule against cussing there's

a rule like for for nuns that it's

against the rules for an it's a pachidia

offense I think for a nun to curse

herself while beating her chest you know

like

well I won't do I won't say it but I

mean it's not against the rules for

monks to to curse

um like

there are there are certain things you

can get away with that

um you know it just slips between the

cracks or or else it's something to do

with modern times that they just hadn't

thought that you know modern technology

would come up with you know copyright

theft or something like that

so

yeah I might add a few extra ones I

wouldn't dare to take any away although

some of them really are obsolete but the

obsolete ones I mean you don't have to

worry about them because you can't break
them anymore but the rules about monk
Bulls back when monk bowls were made out
of clay and now they're not made out of
clay anymore those really are they can
be a pain in the neck
so next question from Rick
when was the last time you voted will
you be voting in the next presidential
election yeah last time I voted was the
last last election day made a special
point of going and voting
although it's kind of unnecessary in
South Carolina because it's a firmly
conservative kind of state and that's
what the way it's going to end up

that's the way the the vote you know the

election is going to wind up anyway but

you know it's it's I consider it to be

like my

civic duty as an American citizen to

vote so yeah I even voted when I was a

monk although I'm kind of regret to say

I have voted for Obama or rather I voted

against Mitt Romney

um I watched one as a monk

uh this was like 2011 or so

I watched the presidential debate

between Obama and Romney and it it

seemed pretty obvious that Obama was at

a higher level of Consciousness in law

Romney just struck me as some kind of

shark with like a plastic smile glued to

its face but I mean nowadays I I

couldn't be in good conscience vote for

either of them

yeah I will I will be voting in the next

presidential election God will the God's

willing

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

question

and he says

I've heard you mention that Buddhism and

Karma are all about mindset that said If

a person were to commit acts of violence

in which they felt Justified meaning

they didn't feel bad at all weren't

angry at all just did what they felt

ought to be done do you think they would

suffer the same karmic retribution as

one that acted in anger or out of hatred

or one who regretted the acts

um that is a good question and

um the karma definitely will be

different like let's say let's just go

with like a small example of a mosquito

is biting you and one person it just

goes like

and then and that's it he just continues

with his conversation or reading his

book or whatever it was he was doing

whereas the other one is just you little

[__] you know you know they're just

like

cursing with rage as they're smashing

the little bastard

um you know there'd be a different Karma
there and I mean both of them would get
the karma for knowingly and willingly
killing another being it might just be
like a little
tiny little Karma I don't think anyone
would go to hell for that but um the
person who acts out of anger also gets
uh karma for the anger
but like for example I mean you if you
have like islamist terrorists who blow
up a School Bus full of kids and think
they're gonna go to heaven for that you
know they're happy about that you know
they're slapping each other on the back
saying Allahu Akbar and all that

um they're still going to get bad karma
for that even though they might think
that you know they've done something
good they're going to go to heaven
because it's not all at the surface the
way Karma works is mostly subconscious
and at the subconscious level there is a
certain amount of interconnectedness
between us where you can you you have
like a certain empathy for what the
other person is going through and at the
surface level you might be just totally
superficial and just oblivious to what's
going on at the deeper levels but it's
still there
so if you're deliberately causing
suffering or Mayhem

um even up if at the surface you're just

dissociated from the deeper levels of

your own mind then I mean still the

deeper levels are still there even

though I'll be dama philosophy does not

acknowledge deeper levels of

consciousness

but nevertheless I mean it's it's fairly

clear that such things exist and I'm

trying to hold the table down because

the dog's running back and forth or

making it

Shake all over the place

so

um yeah I think that I mean

here's a good example it's a movie the

movie called A Clockwork Orange Stanley
Kubrick's A Clockwork Orange where
you've got um these this gang the drugs
who are just
raping women to death and beating people
up and just committing all kinds of just
outrageous and they're just laughing
uproariously while they're doing it but
it's kind of a like an ape like hooting
kind of laughter that they're indulging
in and in a way it's like a defense
mechanism against the deeper awareness
of their own mind it's really some good
psychology there where they're just like
hooting as a way of just kind of
drowning out their own conscience
and a lot of that I think a lot of

Allahu akbars might be that way too not

that I'm just trying to pick on islamist

terrorists but there aren't a whole lot

of other famous terrorists around

anymore especially since the ones in

Ireland have settled down

so

uh there was another example I was going

to give see

oh uh not so much an example but one

time I did ask one of my teachers I was

a junior monk at the time

um I asked about this kind of question

it's like who makes worse Karma like

somebody who kills an animal

um knowing that you know let's say

they're a Buddhist and they already know

that there's bad karma involved or

something or someone who's just

considers it to be good clean fun you

know fishing in America is just

considered to be something good you know

Jesus himself helped people to kill fish

a lot of his disciples supposedly were

were fishermen

so

what about that and then my teacher said

that if you know something's hot before

you touch it

you're more likely to touch it carefully

so that you don't burn yourself as bad

so what he was saying was if you know

that something is wrong and you do it

anyway that in a way you kind of are
cautious about it or careful about it
and you're not going to be you know
whooping and yeah this is great kind of
stuff but it can go either way it really
does depend on mental States but it's
not just the the surface mental States
because there is like interconnectedness
between
conscious beings below the conscious
level
and some gurus like
neem curly Baba had access to those
levels and that's how he could just take
one look at you and know right where you
were at spiritually and you know see

your past lives or whatever

so let's see

okay and then at the end here it says or

one who regretted the actual regretting

the acts is just a whole different Act

you commit an act and then you regret

the act the regret is just making more

Bad Karma in addition to what was

already there and that's kind of the way

it works and I've got the puppy here's

uh wanting attention

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

question

do you know of any monks who disrobed

after being a monk for as long as you is

it common to disrobe after such a long

time well it's not really common for a

monk to even be among for 30 or more

years

um but I think I have met a few there's

there's a French monk whose name I don't

recall

but he had Rich parents he was a monk

for well over 20 years I think it was

like 30 years his par his Rich parents

died and left him this Legacy and for a

while he was trying to train like uh

like an attendant on how to deal with

the money so he didn't have to handle it

but eventually he just gave up and

dropped out and then

um after a few years I heard that he

dropped back in again so he's a monk

again now I think assuming that he's

still alive

um I heard that there was a a Japanese

monk in the ajan cha tradition this

French monk also was in the ajan cha

tradition

um

that I think he was relatively senior

mom too he lived in Thailand and I think

he might have had at least 30 Wausau

before he dropped out

um I remember when I was a junior monk

this is like back in the 90s

there was just this wave of monks

dropping out like senior monks dropping

out of the ajan Shah tradition

most of them didn't have 30 Watts

although but it was it was a serious
problem because the ajan cha tradition
was had the potential to spread at a
good rate you know it was setting up new
monsters and everything and then all
these ajons dropped out at around the
same time within a year or two like
there was a book
called like seeing the way or something
it was a collection of sermons like
transcribed sermons from senior monks in
the ajan cha tradition and it was like
two-thirds to three-fourths of them had
dropped out even at the time that I read
the book which was maybe late 90s
so yeah I mean it happens a lot it I've

been told that in Thailand uh a monk

will start being called odd John after

he's been a monk for only about five

years just because most of them just

don't last that long in Thailand

um

but in Burma monks that have been monks

for 50 years are really not all that

uncommon I remember I've been among for

20 something years and I went to a

ceremony to attend a ceremony

um and I was it was

in order of it was a water now ceremony

most of you don't know what that means

it doesn't even matter but it was we

were sitting in order of seniority and

even though I'd been a monk for at least

25 years at the time I was like halfway

back from the front

but monks like that generally don't drop

out some of them have been monks and

children I mean they they were novices

ordained as children and then they

become fully ordained Monks at the age

of 19 or 20.

and um they just don't know anything

else it just they couldn't really drop

out they wouldn't know how to do it

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

questions

what are your thoughts on paying taxes

to a government that uses tax revenue to

fund the harm of others well if they're

fun if they're harming others I mean

that's on them

um if you're just paying taxes in order

to stay out of prison

then

in a way it's kind of extortion really

if you're paying taxes I mean you can

just be like thorough and just be

willing to go to prison for not paying

taxes until your friends pay them for

you just so you don't have to go to

prison but

um

yeah I mean

um

even even the Buddhists I mean the

Buddha had sort of a a similar dictum to

Jesus saying you know pay under Caesar

what belongs to Caesar pay under God

what belongs to God the Buddha just said

I allow monks you I allow you monks to

obey Kings

and the government is the king so if

they say you got to pay taxes um yeah

you're probably better off paying the

taxes even though they're going to use

them to make drones that blow up

cars with innocent children in them and

so forth

Peach 45

with kamu kamu extract and I can feel

the kamukamo extract actually starting

to kick in at this point

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

and last question although not the last

question of this q a by by a long shot

and he says I once joked that Buddhism

says all life is suffering because it

forbids all pleasure do you think there

is a measure of cowardice in retreating

from both good and bad in order to

reduce the bad should we not just accept

that every light casts its shadow and

take the good with the bad

well that's a that's a reasonable

question

um although with regard to the joke it

says all life is suffering because it

forbids all pleasure well

um that's not exactly true because some

Pleasures you just can't avoid I mean a sunny day with the bird singing is nice and you can't you can't really forbid that you know getting a good night's sleep well getting any sleep is is more pleasant than not being able to sleep taking a bath is nice you know and also the Bliss of meditation eating food is nice

so Buddhism doesn't forbid all pleasure it just forbids unnecessary pleasure let's see I knew I think there is a measure of cowardice in retreating from both good and bad in order to reduce about it depends on the individual um yeah some people maybe they just you

know the the world is just too much for them they're it's just scary and so they seek refuge in a monastery yeah I mean there might be some cowardice in that but there's two ways of looking at the goal of Buddhism one is more heart oriented and more feminine and the other is more head oriented and more masculine and
trying to become enlightened in order to escape suffering and Badness is more of the heart-oriented feminine approach whereas trying to become enlightened to eliminate delusion you know to to realize Ultimate Reality that would be a more head-oriented more stereotypically masculine approach and they're both the

same enlightenment

so I mean when you reduce positive and

negative so you've got smooth sailing

you've got sort of like a flat comb on

the water then you're able to penetrate

through that and see the Ultimate

Reality that that underlies it

so it's not necessarily cowardice I mean

Mahayana Buddhists were all calling

um the hinianists the in the followers

of the inferior vehicle you know cowards

and selfish and so forth but it's what

the Buddha taught and I don't think the

Buddha was a coward and if you think

about what monks in the Buddhist time

went through you know just like I mean I

can tell you from my own experience just
sleeping under a tree in a forest that
is known to have tigers and leopards and
wild elephants and so forth wild boars I
mean you're not a coward I mean most
people just couldn't do it not that I'm
trying to brag that yeah I can do what
most people can't do but but still I
mean it takes it takes a certain amount
of courage and just toughness to be an
aesthetic you know living in a cemetery
strewn with corpses for example
or just wandering around not knowing
what you're going to eat that day where
you're going to sleep that night I mean
it takes a certain amount of courage and
so it's not exactly cowardice I mean but

like I say some monks that are just

overwhelmed by

empirical reality and want to hide out

in a monastery and don't want suffering

because it's scary or bad or whatever

yeah maybe cowardice is a is a factor in

that

so I'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from

CEO of X and sipad zidana

and I still don't know if I'm

pronouncing that correctly but

I pronounce it with facility anyway

so a CEO of actions says

I heard the Buddhist monks were

relatively sharp looking clothes to make
them look more dignified compared to
many monks walking around naked or
wearing blankets made of human hair
if this is the case then wouldn't the
textile Revolution making clothing much
cheaper make it just a show-off to wear
robes that now seem so outdated it keeps
the tradition but not the spirit anymore
due to Changing Times
thoughts
thoughts question mark
well I mean it's not true that Buddhist
monks were relatively sharp looking
clothes to make them look more dignified
because for the first few decades I'm
pretty sure at least according to

tradition monks wore robes made out of

Rags they would find Rags lying on the

ground or in some cases they'd find like

Burial shrouds at a cemetery and then

they'd make those into ropes you know

they'd sew them together dye them and

wear that and so

wearing Rags as a general rule is not

very dignified although There Are Rules

saying that a monk should wear them

neatly you know I mean you should look

dignified even though you're dressed in

rags

um

so yeah I mean it wasn't it wasn't any

kind of ostentation it wasn't for quite

a while until the Buddha finally allowed

or his maybe even after he died and then

they just sort of anti-dated it that

you're allowed to accept good cloth from

from lay people like as gifts

um there is a I mentioned

um now my dog is barking out in the yard

I did mention that um you can among

could use burial shrouds and that would

probably be a good way of getting some

fairly a fairly good piece of good cloth

you know a big one

um there is a rule saying that you have

to wait until the body's been dead for I

think it's at least a day

I can't remember the exact time period

but it I mean it has to be like really

dead before you can take the Shroud off

because there's the story of a monk who

took the Shroud off of uh uh he

unwrapped this freshly dead corpse that

was freshly deposited at this uh Charnel

field and um the body the spirit hadn't

completely left the body and so it

reinhabited the body and he started

getting chased by this zombie that

resented having the the cloth taken off

of it

um

so let's get to the second part of this

after such an interesting digression

there

wouldn't the textile Revolution making

clothing much cheaper make it just to

show off to where robes that now seem so

outdated

it's a tradition but not the spirit

anymore due to Changing Times thoughts

well I mean it's like the uniform now

I mean really it is kind of obsolete but

it's just like a tradition it's just the

uniform it's like just about every

um kind of ordained clergy in the world

has some kind of uniform that they wear

maybe some like Protestant sects they

just wear lay clothing it doesn't matter

you know you got Pastor Bob or whatever

yeah we got dogs running back and forth

shaking the camera

um

yeah I mean it's really not a big deal

it's just such a superficial thing

um but yeah if if the Buddha were alive

today and setting up like some something

that the monk should wear they might be

wearing something more like I'm wearing

now like sweatpants and a wife beater

than these large rectangles of cloth

that were essentially what the lay

people wore too except they were white

and not cut into pieces and sung back

together

so I'll just move on to covax and cpad

zidana's next question

what is the Orthodox teravada idea of

nebana you said it rejects ideas of

boundless Consciousness like in mesutas
but it still accepts it as the
unconditioned I don't understand what
the terravada position is on it and
that's fairly that's that's
understandable that you don't understand
the official Orthodox terabata position
on the bottom because really they've
messed up the Orthodox tradition like
from abhidham and the commentaries they
don't know how to deal with nibana
because they're so Scholastic they want
everything classified and systematized
and nibana just is off the scale and
they're trying to fit it into the system
when it just won't fit
so the Orthodox terrible idea of nibana

first of all it is an Ultimate Reality
it is one of four ultimate realities in
fact if you multiply some of the
ultimate realities out into the various
ultimately real distinct categories like
matter or mental States then you've got
what is it 152 it's been a long time I
think it's 152 ultimate realities with
nibana being just one of them you know
so they fit it right into the system
where it shouldn't be at all and they
don't know how to describe it you know
it's it's the principle of cessation
that's like one of the main
um definitions that you'll find in
Orthodox caravada that nibbana is the

principle of cessation

but cessation I mean cessation is just

something ceases it takes one moment to

cease maybe less than a moment you know

it's just the end of a moment when and

there's nothing there after that

and

um it's interesting If Only from an

anthropological point of view to read

there's a famous little booklet

um that's by mahasi Seattle venerable

mahasi Seattle about nibana what is

nibana

and I mean he's just doing his best he

was a brilliant scholar in addition to

being a a some sort of meditation master

um and just trying to make sense of like

ancient Indian Scholastic bungling of

nibana or Nirvana

and I'm sorry to say that I mean I

shouldn't be so blatantly disrespectful

but really

early taravana Buddhism like the

abhidham era and then the commentarial

you know commentarial tradition after

that

um they just did not know how to deal

with abhidhamum because they want uh

with nibana I mean because they want it

to be fit into this system you know they

got to be able to explain it and you

can't explain it because it's completely

off the scale it's not part of samsara

but all language is part of samsara

so

you know about the best they can do is

they say it's one of you know more than

a hundred ultimate realities including

like tongue sensitivity or or

cohesiveness things like that it's no

more real than that supposedly

but it is unconditioned it has no

beginning and no end

so at least they get that part

but they really don't know how to deal

with it and uh probably the less abidama

you know the better because like uh

venerable Nana Vera used to say the less

Abby dummy you know the better because

it's the less you have to unlearn in

order to really understand dama

although I don't not so sure he

understood all that well either

so yeah

yeah maybe I should just move on to the

next one I might be digging myself into

a hole with that one

until the next question from the CEO of

action Cod zidane is

in the dhamapata verses 19 to 20 it says

although a man may know much about the

sacred text but acts not accordingly

that heedless man is like a Cowherd who

only counts the cows of others but he

does not partake of the blessings of the

Holy life although he knows little about

the sacred texts but puts the teaching
into practice forsaking lust hatred and
delusion with true wisdom and
emancipated emancipated mind clinging to
nothing of this or any other world he
indeed partakes of the blessings of the
Holy life and the commentary to this
verse tells the story of two friends
with one becoming a scholar and the
other meditating due to old age and not
having time for being a scholar the
young scholar became famous for his
teaching and attained nothing while the
meditator became an arahant given the
dhamapada is one of the most famous
texts in Buddhism how do you think
Buddhism still went down the rabbit hole

of scholasticism

Etc and people devoting their whole

lives to debating and studying various

Topics in Buddhism seems this verse an

Associated story predicted people would

do this thousands of years ago and

wanted to prevent that but somehow it

still failed

well the ancient Indians were somewhat

similar to Modern westerners in that

they were really trying to figure out

reality

they were more introverted than that you

know they were looking inwards instead

of outwards like modern scientists do

but still they just couldn't get away

from wanting to like systematize and
organize and you know make rules and
laws that everything has to follow
and uh I guess the ideal situation would
be like mahasi Seattle that I that I
just mentioned who was a brilliant
scholar but also a meditation Master
lady Seattle another famous Seattle from
100 years ago or more in Burma was like
that also he was
I mean he he mastered the text you know
he was definitely a brilliant scholar
but he also like meditative intensively
and practiced intensively and was strict
in following vanilla and so forth but
um it's it's like I was saying in a
recent video with regard to archaic

Buddhism that archaic Buddhism first of
all was dedicated primarily to Advanced
practitioners and after Buddhism became
more popular became more of a national
religion
um people that were beginners were
flooding in including just intellectual
types that just wanted to understand
reality
just intellectually
and so I mean it's just
in a way it's just human nature it's
just inevitable that that sort of thing
is going to happen it happens with
pretty much every system probably even
Islam went through phases of that where

they're trying to just you know make

everything Scholastic and formalized

um but yeah there have been warnings I

mean in the in the commentaries you know

that are written by these Scholars that

probably didn't meditate very much you

know they're still recording these

stories of you know monks that are

belittled by the Buddha for you know

spending all their time you know

memorizing texts which is kind of an

anachronism because there probably

weren't Tech many texts to memorize in

Buddhist time

so let's see

let's see uh just trying to figure just

try to see if I answered this question

it seems this person associated story predicted people would do this thousands of years ago I wanted to prevent that but somehow still failed yeah it's just human nature I mean you can warn against it and I'm sure the warnings have saved some people like ajan Shah he's a good example he started off as a scholar monk you know he was like a a teacher in some Buddhist monastic school and then from reading the texts and realizing that he was not practicing what he preached you know he wasn't walking his own talk that you know it caused him to just drop out of of Buddhist Academia and just go into the forest and start meditating which is

you know the best thing that a monk can

do

so yeah I think I'll just move on to CEO

of action cpad zidane's next question

and he says I assume it to he

you always say be happy at the end of

your videos however you have said

previously you can't have the goal

without the good without the bad

I misread that you can't have the

Goodwill the bad so it so does that mean

you are also implying we should have

negative mental States as well by saying

we should be happy well in the text like

like um The Meta suto you know one of

the refrains is May all beings be happy

be happy minded

um Buddhist happiness that is like

wholesome happiness is different from

um like positive you know giddiness you

know it's like positive or just

giddiness or or just you know pleasure

you know the happiness of experiencing

pleasure

um you know has an opposite you know

there's the unhappiness of feeling pain

whereas the happiness that that like is

um

that is part of the blessing in in the

metal suta and the metasuta is recited

as a blessing many many times that it's

it's just more like contentment you know

it's like peace of mind that kind of

happiness which is a superior kind of

Happiness to the the upper parts of the

roller coaster ride that are inevitably

going to have the the lower parts of the

roller coaster ride

so it's just sort of the smooth sailing

of calm Waters no ups and downs or a few

you know easily manageable ups and downs

that would be uh considered like a

superior kind of happiness

so that's the kind of happiness that I'm

I'm encouraging when I say be happy

so I'll just move on to Sea of Action

sipad zidane's next question

and I haven't received any

um

praise for how easily I've I've been

able to pronounce that name not that I'm
fishing for compliments very much
kamukamu extract hardly recommended
so the next question I had the thought
that in previous generations there was a
lot of spreading of hate against men
from feminists in the West feminists
so they were reborn as males who
remember hating makes now or hating
males in the past life but can now never
be the gender they want in their life
now
they are forced to become the thing they
spent their whole life hating with a
longing to be their old gender do you
think this can explain the massive rise

of gender dysphoria in modern Western

society as it

just being a wepaka from or as it just

being a wepaka from their karma and

previous life on a society-wide scale

well that's kind of an interesting

question and although it doesn't fit 100

what he's referring to here I had a

supporter in Burma

who was biologically female

and I mean

she really was anti she was like an

anti-feminist

um I mean she was single there's I would

pity any man that would marry this woman

she was sort of like the Apache Warchief

Geronimo and female form

what she she told me these stories about
when she was a little girl and she
showed me pictures like family pictures
when she was a little girl she'd always
have her back turned to the camera
because she was so ashamed of being a
girl if they put girls clothes on her
she'd start crying she wouldn't let them
put any kind of like uh in Burma even
little girls who wear this Stunna cut
bark makeup which is sort of like a
sunscreen in addition to being
decorative she just would not allow it
she'd just stand there crying until they
wiped it back off of her and it seemed
pretty obvious to me that she had been

like a a male in a previous life
assuming that there there is such a
phenomenon as rebirth and it may be that
she was so bigoted and she was bigoted
in this life too in certain ways you
know she was so you know anti like a
misogynist or something that has a kind
of karmic punishment she wound up being
born as a female in this life and I
think you know assuming that there is
such a thing as rebirth and Karma that
that would be uh that would seem to fit
the case fairly well but in this case
I've never really thought about it that
way and it I don't think feminism has
been around that long for I mean it may
be that

um just man-hating feminists have been
around a lot enough that you know
they're sort of being reborn now with
this man-hating momentum going
but I think the gender dysphoria stuff
partly is due to the breakdown of
society where it's becoming more liminal
and I've talked about liminality is
you're sort of at a threshold and you
know you're you're verging out of like
the the structure of normality that
helps hold things together so that when
you deviate from Norms it creates this
kind of a threshold that uh allows
weirdness to come into this world and to
some degree it's like that where like

male and female obviously you know the
distinction between male and female is
almost totally breaking down especially
on the left
and that is causing a great deal of
confusion and it may be also karmically
you know accepting Karma and rebirth
that it's causing people with like males
with a lot of feminine traits to kind of
get born into a female body or vice
versa or just just more transitions from
male to female
that you know it's just causing a lot of
Confusion And I think a lot of it is
just artificial too A lot of the gender
dysphoria is just promoted you know it's
in fashion to have gender dysphoria so

there's a lot of that too

but that's my best attempt to answering

that question I shouldn't spend too much

time on these because since as I say I

think I got 45 questions to answer so

the next question from Co vac and sipad

zidana

and also his last one

but again not the last question my long

shot

he says in Buddhism it said volition is

Karma and we Paka

say oh okay in Buddhism it said volition

is Karma and wepaka are the fruits that

come from that in Jainism it doesn't

matter what the intention was and that

the results of your actions also matter

for what fruits of Your Action will be

how do these Concepts differ from the

brahmatic later Hindu ideas of karma is

it similar to one of these or is it

different

uh yeah it's true like in Buddhism

uh karma is essentially will or volition

in Pali in Jainism volition is included

but they include all acts which includes

like physical verbal and mental

so

uh so in Jainism even if you

accidentally step on an ant you're

getting bad karma for that which is why

James will have like a soft grass broom

that they'll sweep the ground in front

of them so they won't accidentally step

on bugs they'll wear like a a covid mask

so they won't accidentally inhale bugs

because they'll get bad karma even for

accidentally killing a bug

um yeah Buddhism doesn't go that far

with regard to Hinduism let's go to

Modern Hinduism it's my understanding

that it's sort of intermediate between

Buddhism where it's purely mental or

essentially purely mental and Jainism

where I mean the mental aspect is almost

irrelevant

um in like early brahmanism they they

didn't have like invading early Vedic

times regardless of these claims you're

going to see like on YouTube videos that you know the The Vedas had already fully developed you know that their Spirit the whole spirituality you know that you know the people that were composing The Vedas they already knew about you know Atman and Brahman being identical and so forth

yeah I'm not so sure but I'm very skeptical of that let's say

um I've read stories that there are two different theories of how the idea of karma arose in Indian spiritual Traditions one is that it was a PR it came before invading Hinduism or or vaidism you know brahmanism that it came from the Indus Valley Civilization

and uh you know the Indus Valley
Civilization apparently had this more or
less atheistic
uh religion or maybe you know number of
sects that close that more closely
resembled like Jainism Buddhism sankya
um that sort of thing where
um we're like trapped in this world due
to the impurity of Our Own
Karma or the impurity of our own soul
and we have to purify our souls so that
we can get out of this world and go up
and do some Heaven Realm
and that that's that's where the idea of
karma came from it was certain acts make
you more impure and certain acts make

you less impure

and then the other explanation for the

other Theory or or hypothesis for the

origin of of karma came from the the

ancient Vedic sacrifices it was Karma

literally means act or action which

includes like a formal Act

like uh in in Pali Kama vacha is like a

formal Act of the Sangha vacha means

speech comma is like the act the act of

of speech is it's still like a formal

oh

anyway

so in in that according to that theory

Karma arose from you have to do the

sacrifice

just right in order for it to be

efficacious you know if you want the

gods to do this you have to recite the

the like the the chance the hymns

perfectly you have to go through all the

formal ceremonies perfectly if you mess

it up you've got to start back at the

beginning again

you know if you met you if you're

reciting this verse from the rig Veda at

this fire sacrifice and you slur your

words or you get a word wrong

that nullifies you've got to start back

at the beginning again

and that's kind of an idea of karma

where your behavior causes like

uh effects like at a spiritual level

and then from there it just kind of

possibly from the influence of the the

pre-vadic spiritual Traditions that were

already in India that it may have

resulted in the gradual evolution of

this idea of Karma and um yeah I'm

pretty sure that I mean I'm no expert on

Hinduism

but um I'm pretty sure that Hinduism

nowadays is sort of intermediate between

the you know it's it's essentially will

from Buddhism or

even just an unconscious unintentional

Act is making Karma you know like like a

Jane accidentally stepping on an ant

but I'm no expert on

on Hinduism at least with regard to

certain things like

um what karma is considered to be

exactly by Hindus nowadays

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Trump is

and Trump Assad bus says

how do you think a Buddhist should

address or interact with taravada be

coonies

some say they have been validly ordained

and others disagree and say they are not

however may they still be considered

novices if you don't see them as fully

ordained what is a respectful way to

address them as a seminary

well you called him sister I guess

that's the way nuns are called in the

West

pretty sure

I Peach 45.

um it seems to me that some research

should be done preferably unbiased

research you know somebody who doesn't

have an ax to grind to look into the

ordination procedure

of the Dharma guptica

ordinations of nuns I mean Trump Assad

but the next question by Trump assafa

gets into this Dharma guptica thing

um so maybe I should just wait but I

won't because I mean there should be

some investigation by experts on

monastic discipline to look at the

actual ordination procedure of these
nuns calling themselves bikunis
and see if it's a valid procedure
because
I'm not so sure that Dharma guptica
ordination would be similar enough to
the polyterovadan ordination procedure
that they would be considered that it
would be considered valid just to begin
with also since
um the ordination was occurring in what
Taiwan or Korea or something I mean were
they even doing it in a pure manner it
seems like a stretch to me it seems very
unlikely that in Taiwan or Korea they
would be reciting ancient Sanskrit texts

to ordain nuns and they'd be doing it
strictly according to the to the
monastic discipline of ancient India
that I mean if you pronounce words wrong
even it's considered invalid
which is generally why in Burma they
have three monks all chanting the same
thing simultaneously just to increase
the odds that at least one of them is
going to get it right without messing up
the words sort of like the you know the
The Vedic priests the brahmanas in in
Vedic times you know if they messed up
the the chant you know it made it
invalid
so that would be like a way of getting
to the bottom of this of course the

people biased one way or the other most

of them will probably just reject the

findings

you know like they find out that it

really is not valid you know it's not

even uh pure Dharma guptica ordination

then of course the leftists aren't going

to give a [__] because that's not the

point what the what I mean the way

people

I mean if they want something to be true

they're just going to find any

reasonable semi plausible justification

for it and if that falls through they're

just going to look for another

justification for it or maybe they don't

even need a justification

other than that's what they want

so that would I mean I'm not really

answering this question but in a way I

am because it's you're going to find out

if they could even plausibly be

considered to be really be coneys

but if you're in doubt I mean just call

them sister or I mean there's no rule

against a layperson bowing to another

layperson you know even if they are

technically still just unordained women

yeah you can treat them as though

they're nuns if you want and you call

them anything except be Cooney

because if you're calling them bikuni

and they're not bikunis or you don't

even think that it'll be coonies I mean

if you don't even think that they're

becomes that might be a kind of lying

so yeah

just called them by their name venerable

so and so called them sister something

like that

that's maybe what I would do

I'm not sure I'd bow to them maybe I

would it would depend

so anyway I'll just move on to Trump

asada's next question

which gets into the Dharma guptica thing

additionally women's ordination question

sorry is kind of complicated and has

multiple parts

why don't the taravada

bikuni advocacy group simply ordain in

another winnia for example Dharma

guptica as they had been and simply

practiced teravada instead of a Mahayana

tradition

is it because they want to recite the

same padimoka with the bikus and that is

how they Define equality according to

the domagupta kavinia they are fully

ordained but insist on forcing the Terra

vadawania to be restored is it simply

their push and insistence for equality

to ordain as taravana bikunis to

practice alongside terravala bikus

instead of Simply accepting a living

winnia tradition the Tibetans with the

Mula sarvasti Vada are just now fully ordaining bikunis because it was never introduced before with which makes more sense than trying to revive something whose lineage had been cut off however it appears that these nuns are being ordained under the Dharma guptica still no word on how they will actually jump that divide to ordain them as females of India which does not currently exist well again I mean first and foremost I think there should be some open-minded Scholars of monastic discipline you know preferably ordained to look into the actual ordination procedure of these not not just oh it's done according to

Dharma Gupta they got to check this and
make sure that it's done in a way that
would be considered valid according to
Paulie because if it's not valid
according to poly then who cares I mean
they can't just pass themselves off as
taravada nuns I mean they'd still be
nanasam wasika which would be
um the poly word for living under a
different communion I mean there are
different sect of Buddhism
I mean if they're ordained into the
Dharma guptica Sangha they would be
Dharma guptika monks or nuns and then
they would be nanasam wasika which means
they wouldn't be Terra Vaden they'd be
members of a different sect Buddhism

um so they're trying to use that the

Dharma Gupta coordination as like a foot

in the door to get them into the

theravada Sangha and

she's

here is asking

how do they how do they Define equality

is I mean it's it's like a warped

ridiculous kind of equality to me that

first of all there I mean I've I've

ranted about this before where you've

got these women I mean the the bikuni

order went extinct and in order to

ordain new bikunis you have to have

already existed bikunis to ordain them

because uh a biku has to be ordained

once just by the biku Sangha by at least

five other monks he has to be ordained

in an ordination ceremony a nun

a bikuni fully ordained has to be

ordained twice once by monks and once by

nuns

and if there aren't any nuns then she

can't be fully ordained so there have

been attempts to revive the the nuns so

they can ordain more nuns and some

attempts like ajan Brahm notoriously did

is just taking upon himself the

authority of godama Buddha and just

doing it by Fiat

and why just one one ordination and

calling it good enough

um

but the Dharma guptica yeah I mean you'd have to have some kind of poly scholar like anjan tanisro although he'd be rejected by the left because he's he's conservative in his his Buddhism anyway yeah so that would be for me that would be fundamental it's just an investigation into this Korean or Taiwanese ordination of nuns just to see if the way they are going about it would really be valid according with polyvinia and if it's not then they're lay people regardless of how they dress or act

but it's just ridiculous I'm getting back to the rant

that they're wanting equality with men I mean that's that's supposedly the main reason for these bikinis wanting to be fully ordained bikinis they want the status of being called a bikuni now again as I've said many times before they can come up with any rules they want you know they can wear any kind of outfit they want they can live in accordance with any system they want within reason I suppose

so I mean all they want is just this official status of being a bikini that's that's what the equality amounts to and they wouldn't be equal even so because I mean in order for them to be really equal they would have to reject these

rules of monastic discipline that

that they're trying to take upon

themselves by becoming nuns it's like I

already pointed out that a biku a male a

monk

only needs to be ordained once a bikini

has to be ordained twice and one of

those times is by monks so they're

dependent upon monks for their

ordination which is not equal

the monks have four paragica rules if

you break any of these four rules you

are excommunicated for life

instantaneously even if nobody finds out

about it with nuns there's eight of them

you can't change paragica rules they're

never going to be really equal to monks

so I mean the the striving for equality

is striving for just perverting

the the rules of monastic discipline or

just ignoring them

and that's I mean you might as well just

be lay sisters you know like the the

nuns you see at the grocery store I've

been told that they aren't really nuns

they're they're like lay sisters who

aren't fully ordained nuns they're like

franciscans of the

I I don't even know what they're what it

is but they're they're not fully

ordained nuns

so

yeah I mean I've I've come up with this

I've mentioned this before that probably the ideal situation would be just to come up with a quasi-song I'm not even claiming to be fully ordained in any terravan Sangha but nevertheless maybe affiliated with the terabad and Sangha associated with it you know with their stamp of approval in which it's modified to be more suitable for the West they wouldn't have to wear the the toga thing for example

and you know you can they could just set up whatever rules they think are appropriate men and women could be equal in in the new Sangha but instead they want to revive this

this song of nuns that are clearly
considered inferior to monks and then
they're just going to start ignoring the
rules so that they're not inferior to
monks because they want equality
but really I mean it's like a political
thing it's it's not so much spiritual as
political they want the official status
of being fully ordained nuns and
again the first step in even verifying
that that's even possible would be to
have linear Scholars examine the exact
procedure in which these Mahayana nuns
supposedly validly ordained in the
Dharma Gupta tradition in the Dharma
Gupta because for those of you who don't
know I should have mentioned this

earlier is one of the pre-mahayana sects
of Buddhism that existed in ancient
India
so taravana was just one of these many
schools Mula sarvasivada was mentioned
in the question is is like a reform
movement of sarvo divada which split
away from taravada during in the third
Council like a hundred years or no 200
years 150 200 years after the time of
the Buddha
um so there were there were lots of
sects of Buddhism in addition to
taravada in Ancient India before
Mahayana arose and uh this Dharma Gupta
cassect

um is one of them

and apparently there are Mahayana

Buddhists in East Asia who are still

um at least giving lip service to Dharma

guptica rules of monastic discipline

um but whether they're really strictly

following it well enough and if it

resembles perovadan procedure well

enough for a teravada Buddhists who are

winning as Scholars who take it

seriously to consider it to be a valid

ordination procedure of valid lineage

I mean that has to be investigated that

would be like the first step and if if

the the left you know leftist Western

Buddhists are opposed to that then

that's not a good sign

you know if they're opposed to verifying

the validity of what they're insisting

upon then that probably indicates that

they're not so sure of themselves

so I'll just move on to Trump assadba's

next question here

finally a simple one

also do you have plans to do a book

group doesn't have to be a specific book

can be something about the GAE

making my way through ride the tiger

would be great to read with others I

don't even know what GAE means what is

g-a-e maybe I should have like follow up

this question with a question of my own

but with regard to starting a book group

um I haven't really given it much

thought to tell you the truth I read

very little nowadays although if I

started a book group or if we just I

just helped to get a book group going on

the Discord server maybe uh maybe I

might like spur me on to read more

because really I've reading has just

Fallen by the wayside I don't read very

much it's like I used to read before

going to bed but now I go to bed with

another person and we just start

snuggling and cuddling and you know

murmuring to each other and the reading

just doesn't happen

so I'm gonna have to develop new habits

if I'm going to take up Reading

seriously again because it is a good

thing I'm I've read a lot in my life

and it's just since I dropped out of the

monk hood that I've just my reading is

just nose dived into almost nothing

okay so with regard to do I have plans

to do a book group

um maybe since reading this question

they're sort of like

very tentative wispy sort of semi plans

but that's about as far as it's got and

I don't know what the GAE is

so we'll just move on to Trump assadva's

next question

do you think faithful Buddhists in the

west would ever have to apply for asylum

in a Buddhist country due to the

increasing likelihood of State

intervention in the Affairs of private

life for instance forcing the ordination

of women where the monks refuse or

punishing Buddhists who refuse to

endorse abortion as supported by

Buddhist teaching I see that Canada is

now pushing for a stronger legislation

to punish those who resist the

celebration of sexual degeneracy and

this is an interesting question I never

really I never really contemplated this

before

um

do I think faithful Buddhists in the

west would ever have to apply for asylum

in a Buddhist country due to the

increasing likelihood of State

intervention well I don't think you'd

have to apply for Asylum I think

probably you could just move maybe in

some place like Burma they might

actually for like International

propaganda purposes you know except

um you know devout Buddhist refugees

that are westerners and you know have

something to offer to the country

um

but uh

yeah it's it's right now it's not so

much government intervention it's just

like

Western Buddhism has pretty much
especially lay Buddhism has been pretty
much been taken over by leftists and
I've I've discussed this you know on
numerous occasions where
um you know conservatives in the west
are more likely to be Christian you know
it's the non-conservatives the
progressives or liberals who are going
to adopt
non-american non-traditional systems and
because they're not really into
tradition they don't give a [__] even
about Buddhist tradition if they convert
to Buddhism because they just don't
swing that way apparently and so they're
just sort of essentially corrupting

Buddhism into mindfulness of white
privilege and you know charging white
people more to attend Retreats and just
completely disregarding the fact that
most practicing Buddhists in the west
are indeed people of color because they
are Asian immigrants
and they just are almost completely
ignored by these Western Progressive
Buddhists who want more people of color
and think that you know there's just too
many white Buddhists in the west when of
course white Buddhists are probably the
minority at least of seriously
practicing you know theravada Buddhists
I don't know about other sex I can't

really say

maybe like Zen Buddhists in America I

don't think there's enough Japanese

immigrants

to uh to form a majority of Zen

Buddhists in America but there are lots

of Thai and sinhalis and and uh Burmese

immigrants in America plenty and

Cambodian too

in some Vietnamese also

that probably of the the ones they're

like taking the three refuges and taking

following five precepts and so forth

they are probably the majority I would

guess

certainly the majority of the ordained

Sangha in the west most ordained

terravada Buddhist monks in America or
were born in Asia and they're here as
missionaries or more likely just to run
cultural centers for the immigrants you
know do you know the the ethnic
ceremonies and rituals and and speak the
language and so forth and so that they
they feel at home the the immigrants do
and I'm saying that just based on
personal experience one I saw as a monk
in the West
so let's see here
I asked the question again since I've
been Meandering here do you think
faithful Buddhists in the west would
ever have to apply for asylum in a

Buddhist country if things go really
orwellian in the west yeah it's possible
I mean they might have to like sneak out
of the country you know in a disguised
as somebody else or you know hiding
underneath bales of cotton or something
I don't know
yeah but it is true this forcing
ordination of women where the monks
refuse I mean it's like all this bikuni
stuff it's just a non-issue in Burma I
think for the most part it's a non-issue
in Thailand also where the the Sangha is
these old monks who are very
conservative and traditional and they
just flat out say no and then the the
arrogant

leftist American or Western Buddhists

they don't care what the Sangha says

they're going to do it anyway even

though what they're talking about is

like Sangha matters but they don't care

so yeah like refuse to endorse abortion

well I mean you could probably get

banned from YouTube or something might

get might get arrested for hate speech

because after all hate speech is nothing

more than speech that leftists hate

so

yeah I mean it is possible if things get

more orwellian but let's just not

plan on that happening I mean you might

have like a uh what do you call it

there's this there's there's this word
of like a plan B you know but uh I can't
think of what it is so I'll just I'll go
to Trump assata's next question here
another question what are some
non-bootest texts which are closer to
the heart of ideas found in original or
archaic Buddhism versus the cosmological
zaniness of Mahayana or vajrayana
attacks I'm thinking of Ecclesiastes or
the daote Ching any others you could
recommend from the West well I wouldn't
say Ecclesiastes is very darnic
Ecclesiastes is I mean I like it and I
mean there are some
semi-quasite dharmic statements made
there but I mean Ecclesiastes is

practically just like the worldly

materialism you know it's almost

atheistic

so I mean with regard to

coming close to Old Buddhism

versus the cosmological zaniness of

Mahayana or vajrayana there are Mahayana

attacks and vajrayana attacks that

aren't zany that come fairly close to

what the original Buddhism was teaching

although they might come from a more

Chinese direction or a more Tibetan

Direction but like the Tibetan book of

the great Liberation I mean that comes

fairly close to the antakawaga or the

Sin Sin Ming supposedly by the third

Chinese patriarch of Zen

um I mean that comes fairly close to the

atticawaga

so yeah I can't really think offhand of

non-buddhist texts that come close to

Buddhism other than maybe like

uh uh the generally Epistle of James in

the New Testament is about the most

buddhistic statement in the New

Testament or for that matter like the

teachings of Saint John of the cross

but then you're getting like Christian

zaniness now

you're getting a Christianity throwing

but he doesn't really talk about Jesus

very much he's just talking about you

know how to mortify the will

and you know so that you become God through participation and so forth he talked about you know three stages of advancement you know there's the beginner which is like the putugina in Buddhism there's the Adept which would be like the the seika in in Buddhism and then you've got the perfected which is the aseka the enlightened being and it's it's strange because Saint John the cross he's talking about the stage of perfection when you'd think that in in in Christianity you know it's saying that nobody is perfect everyone's a sinner you know that you only get into heaven through the grace of God and here

he's talking about becoming God through

participation

so and it's it's very similar to

Buddhism a lot of ways I think Saint

John of the Cross would have made a

great Buddhist or uh Meister Eckhart

also

is I mean if you want to get into

something resembling the original or

archaic Buddhism that isn't Buddhist at

all maybe some of the more mystical

teachings of I mean the deeper mystical

teachings of any system really

that probably

um you know there have been Sufi Muslims

who were you know

teaching stuff similar because I mean

all these religious systems they they
may be very different in the basic
fundamentals that the normies the lay
people follow but as you get higher and
higher they tend to converge unless they
just don't get high enough I mean some
systems just don't get high enough the
Jehovah's Witnesses they don't get
anywhere near to the top
but yeah I mean the higher up you go the
more they converge into a kind of
apathetic mysticism essentially and the
Sun is is starting to uh come down so
it's shining on my face and I hope it's
not going to completely glare up the
screen so I can't read the questions

let's see

so yeah I mean

sometimes I'm trying to think of like

like some kind of literature you know

like Dostoevsky he was he was I mean

there's a little bit of Dharma and

Dostoevsky like Crime and Punishment

where the punishment isn't so much

imposed upon him by the the authorities

the the punishments coming from his own

mind in his own Spirit kind of a thing

but yeah I mean I would still I mean if

you want to understand some of the

really deep aspects of Buddhism you can

find it in certain way on attacks like

even something like the heart Sutra

or The Diamond Cutter Sutra I mean

there's not a whole lot of Zenius in

that so it's sort of like when you read

terravada Buddhist texts like the

polytext you may have to do a little

searching to find the the deeper ones

that really resonate with you and it's

the same with Mahayana they're still

there

but you might have to do a little

treasure hunting

so the next and last question from Trump

is satva is what is the place and origin

of the anagarica in Burma and Southeast

Asia are they a common phenomenon

um

it's my understanding that with regard

to Sri Lanka it was anagarka Dharma Pala
pretty much just invented it where it's
you're sort of a renuncian but you're
not ordained
and they have these in Burma and
Thailand also they wear white robes and
in uh in Burma they're called uh postudo
and I can't remember what they're called
in in Thailand but posito is they just
wear white they can still handle money
they keep I think it's eight precepts
and it's mostly little kids that are too
young to be ordained as even novices I
was opposed to I was like possibly the
world's largest postdo at one time when
I was an attendant at this monastery
near Santa Cruz in California before I

was ordained I was uh posted though for

like two months where I was just like

cooking for the monks and driving them

around and that kind of a thing

but uh yeah this one the big school

monastery near Mandalay that I lived at

for a little over a year uh Maha

gandayon they had posidos there they

were all little kids you know they're

like five six years old and they handled

the money for the monks

and uh

it's I don't know

I don't know what the ultimate origin is

of this but their place is essentially

as Monastery attendance there are

um yes in Burma also and yet is like the
Burmese pronunciation of the word Rishi
where they're Buddhists and they were
monks robes but they're
they're not ordained and they they
usually mix in a lot of other esoteric
you know like sorcery stuff or maybe
they just don't like following rules
that's one thing I used to get along
with it's a phenomenon in Burma called
the koyan G which is a salmon era that
is an adult usually once you're old
enough to be ordained which is 20 years
from conception you ordain is a monk but
some some men in Burma are maybe
conscientious enough or honest enough
about their lack of conscientiously

conscientiousness that they don't want
to be fully ordained and so they just
are novices their their entire life and
they tend to be humble and they don't
meet with a lot of nearly as much
respect as a fully ordained Seattle
and I I could get along with them easier
than I could with like the really just
Shameless sloppy monks who let's face it
all right there's lots of them in Asia
so I'll just move on to the next
question here and uh part of the the
answer to that question like the origin
of the anagaraka uh I don't know what
the origin is
so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from hey it's Tig

and hey it's TIG says please talk about

your feral teenager days

yeah I've in my life story that I've

shared a few times to some degree yeah I

went through a feral teenager stage and

um I used to say that my my first year

as a feral teenager like when I was 16

years old I probably learned more than I

learned in all the years leading up to

that

um but the way it worked was

I mean

most kids think that adults have life

figured out and the reason why the kid

himself doesn't have life figured out is

because he's not an adult yet and I kind

of went with that theory until when I
was about 13 or so I was like outgrowing
my mother just with regard to like
psychologically and I was starting to
become rather skeptical of this idea
that adults really have things figured
out by the time I was 16 it was just
painfully obvious that the adults were
as clueless as I was if not more so
and so I just rebelled
and uh right around it was my 16th
birthday it was the first time I ever
got high or got drunk and it just opened
up this this whole new like false
Paradise of just partying and having a
good time

and

I just went with this theory that I mean

if you want to be happy you shouldn't do

anything you don't want to do like you

know go to school every day

you know stay sober that kind of thing

so yeah I have a certain Nostalgia for

those days of just being this wild

teenager you know I'd be gone pretty

much every weekend just living on a diet

of beer and corn chips

and I had this one this memory

of this guy Freddy it was a friend of

mine and we we've got a quarter and and

taped a thread to it and we went down to

this donut shop where a friend of his

was working and we we taped a thread to

this quarter and just dipped it into
this Pac-Man machine until we had 99
games and then we were trading free
games of Pac-Man for for free donuts and
we just we skipped school that day and
just spent all day just playing Pac-Man
and eating Donuts and it was it was just
a nice time you know it's kind of
exciting is when you're 16 you're 17
years old just every day is like this
exciting Adventure anyway and so I was
trying to live life to the fullest
and uh it was finally around when I was
17. you know I started realizing that
just partying all the time you get into
a lot of trouble it's it's a roller

coaster ride I mean they're they're ups

and then necessary like Corrections in a

downward Direction and if my father was

getting really pissed off at me after

I'd been kicked out of my mother's house

and uh yeah it was

yeah

so I eventually learned you know if

you're I still partied like when I was

in college but

um I I still learned that I you have to

do your homework first before you start

partying and it was like in in 10th

Grade when I was 15 before I had this

conversion

into party animal feral teenager mode

um I think my cumulative grade point

average for the whole year was like 3.93
it was all it was like 22 A's and two
B's or something
and I don't remember what my grades were
for 11th grade after the transition but
I do remember my very last report card
my final grades for second semester were
a 0.80
I think it was a 0.803 F's and two C's
and then my very next report card first
quarter of 12th grade was a four point
so the teachers really didn't know what
to do about me they knew I was
intelligent and they just didn't know
what to do so they just kind of gave me
space I think foreign

and we've been going at this for over an

hour and a half this might be cut into

two parts

so his TIG says now especially because

like the the light might just really

take over here

hey it's TIG says how do you envision

the remainder of your life playing out

how do you envision your next life

playing out well

I assume that the remainder of this life

playing out is I'll just kind of

continue probably living here with my

sweetheart and uh gradually uh get

having less and less energy I suppose

um forget more words Maybe

uh

but I mean yeah

who knows what's going to happen see I

I'm really not into envisioning the

future because

I mean even really good science fiction

authors usually mess it up or even

profits biblical prophets or any kind of

prophets they usually mess things up too

and who am I compared to the science

fiction author or a Biblical prophet

so I mean

yeah I'm going to get older

I'm I hope that I'll be spending the

rest of my life with my sweetheart

and uh you know work for a living until

I don't have to anymore I just can't

anymore for probably health reasons or

something I don't know

yeah it's I'm not really good at that

sort of thing and how do I Vision my

next life playing out I mean that's

that's you're getting into science

fiction there who knows who knows what

the next life is going to be like if

there is one

so yeah I'm sorry to disappoint hey it's

TIG on that on that score

next question is from thur

how do you answer the framing of

Siddhartha as a bad guy for abandoning

his wife and child

well I mean just for starters his wife

and child according to the tradition

that says he abandoned them I mean she

was a princess and his son was the son

of a prince and presumably a prince

himself they were living in a palace so

I don't think they endured much hardship

other than just you know emotional

hardship of of their you know the man

leaving them but they left he left for

presumably a noble cause especially

according to ancient Indian culture

but let's say that his wife

um wasn't rich in living in a palace you

know the daughter-in-law of a royal king

and all that

um

still Buddhist ethics you know like

early Buddhist athletes would consider

the renunciation of the world to be an a

noble act a worthy act because you're

trying to become enlightened and and

then help others become enlightened and

so

um yeah they do not consider it to be

immoral especially because karma is a

matter of mental States and if the

Buddha's mental States or the

bodhisatta's mental states were purely

Noble which presumably they were I mean

according to tradition the same

tradition that says that he did this

stuff

then

um

I mean he didn't do anything wrong

because he didn't have any unwholesome

mental States

it may be that he you know had some

feelings for his wife and his his

newborn son and you know on the night of

his Enlightenment or previous to the

night of his Enlightenment you know he

was doing some internal wrangling you

know it's like wrestling with his his

feelings and everything I mean that

would be human anyway

but yeah I mean there are stories of

just ordinary monks who abandoned their

wife and child and you know they're seen

as the good guys because I mean ancient

India did not go with a modern Western

utilitarian ethic you know it's

Buddhist ethics at least early Indian

Buddhist ethics or I mean it was

subjective it was personal is

like you know if you don't do anything

you're not supporting somebody I mean

that in and of itself I mean you're not

doing anything so you're not doing

anything wrong

but I mean you may have bad motives for

that and then you're going to get dinged

for the motives but

so yeah

uh by modern Western standards modern

Western ethics yeah somebody especially

somebody who's biased against the

historical go to My Buddha and say yeah

yeah he was a deadbeat who abandoned his

family but

his family was living in a palace

so we'll just move on to the next

question from akala or achala

and achella says is it acusala or

unwholesome to destroy the Buddhist

statue like the one in bamian destroyed

by the talibanis one can say it's just a

piece of clay which is subject to Decay

though does this justify the act of

destroying the Buddhist statue well

again and again I'm with regard to

questions like like this where someone

is asking you know is such and such an

action

Good Karma or Bad Karma it's such an

action good or bad again it depends on

the mental States for example let's say

you've got a Buddha statue that's that's

really damaged you know you find this

old wooden Buddha statue in its own it's

all messed up so I mean you could

cremate it that's considered to be the

respectful way of getting rid of of

um not just Buddha statues but even

Dharma books I'd say you've got uh a

book of sutos like a copy of bikubody's

majum and akaya and it gets all water

damaged and you get a new one to replace

it this one's wrecked I mean you don't

just fling it into the garbage can that

would be considered bad etiquette at the very least you you would like respectfully burn it you pre-made it not in a garbage fire but you know a wood fire or something and you could destroy a Buddha statue that way if it's you know if for some reason you know it's just useless now you know it's it's like wrecked somehow you could burn it but I mean if if you just hate Buddhism you hate the Buddha and you're burning the statue where you're destroying the statue just out of

you know

Buddhism sucks or something then you're going to be getting bad karma and just

thinking that without even doing it

you're gonna get Bad Karma just for just

for the hate not just hatred of the

Buddha I mean that I mean hating an

enlightened being or a saintly person I

mean you know that's that's another

level but we don't need to get into that

but

you know it's it's good to give

um saintly people the benefit of the

doubt like you know the Dalai Lama with

the tongue thing you know it's just give

them the benefit of the doubt I mean

don't jump to oh he's a pervert he's a

sexual predator kind of stuff because

I mean you can harm yourself by doing

that kind of thing

at least if Buddhism is true

so yeah it depends on the mental states

of the person involved if they're doing

it for uh you know if they're doing it

respectfully because the statue is is no

good anymore or for whatever reason

then that's one thing but if they're

doing it because you know it's like God

is one God and Muhammad is this prophet

and [__] Buddhism so then I mean that's

something entirely different or just the

[__] Buddhism just leaving aside all the

Muslim stuff

so I'll just move on to achala's next

question assuming that his name really

this person's name really is achala

what are the karmic consequences of a

porn star

well that's kind of a difficult question

because different porn stars are

different and probably they have

different reasons for being porn stars

uh male and female porn stars would have

kind of a different kind of dynamic

going

um

I mean why are they a porn star they

need the money they're just heavily into

sex

I mean it it depends

um but I assume since they're having

lots of sex with strangers I mean

obviously they're they're not being

um you know they're not being restrained
with regard to sensuality you know
they're breaking the third precept big
time
um so there'd be some sort of sexual
Karma you know and uh I think like Frank
Zappa probably had a lot of sex Karma
and he wound up with prostate cancer or
you know they can just be messed up in
various ways I mean being a porn star
especially a female porn star I'm
certain has its dangers I mean you're
going to be dealing with predatory men
and just not respected and treated you
know just pretty much like a like a sex
object and a lot of them are get

involved in drugs and so forth it is a

it is kind of a dangerous life

spiritually very dangerous more so than

physically I think

and the the puppy is scratching

something behind me

she's been a bad puppy today I mean well

I mean she's a good puppy always but

she's been like peeing where she

shouldn't pee and chewing on things she

shouldn't chew on

but uh getting back to the porn star

issue

um yeah I'm sure I mean there must be

some porn stars that made it through

their career as a porn star and aren't

going to hell but then again this

reminds me that there is this weird suta

in Nepali text I don't remember where it

is exactly where the Buddha is actually

saying that all entertainers are gonna

go to hell

and um I mean I'm skeptical of that too

I would assume that would be apocrypha

because I mean

I don't think it's what they're doing is

bad enough I mean they're just sort of

like you know seducing people into

samsara you know just helping them to

stay enmeshed in samsara which pretty

much everybody does

you know I mean so long as you're

participating in some sorry culture you

know you're helping others to be stuck

in samsara in at least in an indirect

subtle way

but um yeah I mean they'd have some sort

of some sort of sexual correction most

likely sexual just in the opposite

direction like you know

prostate cancer or

whatever it is

so yeah I mean positive and negative

have to balance out so the positive that

they're experiencing is a porn star

um it either gets balanced out just

through their bad experiences you know

with you know predatory men or whatever

or it happens later on with possibly

partly just through like remorse or

regret or something or who knows it

depends on the person

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

question this is from Fred

and Fred says

maybe you need some exchange with Mr

Wheeler question mark he claims to be

the world's best poly expert I don't

want to disparage him it's not my way

well

uh he's talking about Ken wheeler who uh

does like tattooed monkey podcasts I

think he used to have a YouTube channel

called angry photographer or something

and yeah I did a

uh I wrote a blog post this was maybe a

year ago in which uh I was discussing
the whole idea that a lot of Western
Buddhists just insist vehemently
sometimes angrily that the Buddha taught
an eternal soul and it's not just even
like the Atman equals Brahman Eternal
Soul of the upanishads of vedanta that's
saying that everybody shares the Same
Soul they want to even believe that each
person has an individual
ultimately real Eternal Soul and I have
no idea where to get this other than I
mean there's some certain Mahayana
sutras that they use as authorities but
although Ken wheeler isn't one of these
but anyway I just I I can't even
remember if I mentioned him directly

probably I did

um I mean I wasn't bashing him at the

time I was disagreeing with the idea

that the Buddha taught an individual

Eternal Soul or an individual anything

really

and I got somebody who who knew him

uh send him the link I think and I got

this really hostile arrogant sneering

emails from him

he's talking about my my imbecilic

babblings and so forth

um and he claims to be the world's best

poly expert which is just a laugh anyone

who really knows Paulie knows and who

has read anything translated my 10

wheeler into from Paulie into English

knows that he just bungles it he just

botches it horribly

so

yeah I mean there has been some exchange

with with Ken wheeler and I mean I don't

wish anything bad to happen to the guy

although

um he has this conspiracy theory that uh

venerable Maha kasapa who was the senior

monk in the Sangha at the time of the

Buddhist passing into party Nirvana that

he actually murdered the Buddha or

conspired with with

um a blacksmith who a Wheeler just

distorts the Paulie to make it like the

son of the evil one Kamara he's got as

just Mara which is even spelled

different and everything but we don't

need we don't need to get into that

but I mean again it's you need to really

be careful if you're bashing a saint

just I mean get it's good to give them

the benefit of the doubt or just sort of

a saintly

spiritual person

um but yeah I mean with regard to that

there has been some exchange and I don't

think he's really open to debate or any

such thing he brags about you know

defeating people in debates but I've

never actually seen him debate anybody

so let's just move on to Fred's next

question

how can nibana be outside of the old

didn't the Lord say there was no other

all Beyond I will try to find The Suitor

yeah there's there is this Utah where

the Buddha is talking about the all he's

talking about you know all that exists

you know at least in some sorrow all the

all that exists and it's just you know

the eye and eye Consciousness and the

the visual stimulation and the year and

year Consciousness and the auditory

stimulation it's essentially just your

own senses and your sensory data is all

that really exists

um

or at least

um I mean if you want to consider the

visual datum and the auditory datum to

have some external existence then I'm I

suppose you could do that too in a

plausible way but really he's saying

that that the all is just subjective

experience

and

he says there is no all beyond that in

this suit and I don't remember I don't

recall the the location of this until

either

but um

the Buddha the Buddhism of the Buddhism

nibana is just completely off the scale

you know it's not part of the all

you know it's I mean it's it's just
totally off the scale you cannot deal
with it you can't incorporate like the
abidama scholars did and as I was saying
earlier they're trying to fit it into
this system of everything else and it
just doesn't work that way that
everything else is the all and and
nibana is just unconditioned it's it's
just formless infinite and I mean it has
no boundaries in a way you can't say for
sure that it exists or doesn't exist I
mean existence and non-existence are a
kind of dichotomy that our samsaric so
that nibana isn't even on the the like
it isn't participating in the dichotomy
of existence and non-existence

so I mean how is it going to be part of
this all of all that exists when it just
transcends the duality of exists and
doesn't exist
so I still stick by the idea that nibana
is Ultimate Reality and it's just not
part of the all because it's formless
and infinite and anything is formless
and infinite it's just paradoxical you
know it's like like Hegel starts his his
logic with you know absolute being an
absolute non-being being completely you
can't tell them apart at all they're
essentially synonymous
and that's
you know it's a paradox obviously

everything and nothing are the same

so yeah it's it's hard to explain this

stuff I mean how do you explain

something transcending both existence

and non-existence and while I'm at it it

also transcends both existing and not

existing and neither existing nor not

existing

so

I mean it's just this Paradox that

really doesn't fit the system and so it

just by definition almost it's not part

of the all because it's just not going

to fit

you can't fit it into anything

so we'll just move on to the next

question this is from David

and David says Ponyo Bossa what first
attracted you to a Buddhism and B
specially to the tarabada tradition
as a former Zen monk my attraction first
nurtured as a child was from the TV show
kung fu into the Chan Zen Mahayana
lineage Gasho
well what first attracted me to Buddhism
I assume was my father claimed to be a
Buddhist and I had a lot of respect from
my father I considered him when I was a
little kid especially to be a kind of
combination of Hercules and Socrates and
so when he was talking about he was a
Buddhist then at least it made me
open-minded to Buddhism although we did

have a big Buddha statue on top of our fireplace on the mantle above the fireplace when I was a kid and it scared me I didn't like being in the room alone with it just because the the living room was sort of not well lit it was sort of a darkish room and he's got this dark looming figure up there you know

but uh

um

after my feral teenager phase I I was introduced to Western or to Eastern philosophy I should say mainly through uh a youth counselor who was giving me ROM Doss books to read he also gave me the book Illusions by Richard Bach which is really a good book

and um

so that got me interested in eastern

philosophy and uh eventually I think

what

what converted me to Buddhism was

reading the book Zen Flesh and Bones

um compiled by Paul reps

and uh that was when I was about 19 18

or 19 I guess and then what converted me

to tarovada in particular was reading

when I was also in college maybe a year

or two later an old translation of the

Sutton ipata which was in Max Mueller's

sacred sacred books of the East

so it was an old translation by it

uh a European fellow named thousbow from

like the 1890s

but

I really like this the the toughness and

this the radical renunciation of it

um I know it just for some reason just

resonated with me and it was very

ancient it goes way back to the Buddhist

time or the whole most of the Buddhist

time

so I was I was really interested in that

and I'm gradually seeing the the

sunshine like completely obscure my face

in this video

which I will point out to my sweetheart

who keeps insisting or at least

strenuously urging me to change up my

background and do videos outdoors

so

anyway I also was impressed by the TV

show kung fu and that was that was

definitely an influence although it

didn't really convert me or anything

so next question from

from David

I'm a little bit distracted here I want

to see okay

so next question from David do you

believe in rebirth and have you had past

life experiences

well I take rebirth as a kind of working

hypothesis I mean I don't think there's

any way you could empirically prove it

one way or the other you couldn't prove

that it does exist and you can't really

prove that it doesn't exist

so it's just a working hypothesis

because

Buddhism accepts it and a lot of people

who are much wiser than me I think like

neem curly Baba also endorsed it

and so yeah I accepted as a working

hypothesis you know I'm not just

vehemently insisting upon it

and uh have I had past life experiences

um I've had

and you can't really call it a past life

experience I don't really vividly recall

any past lives my father was convinced

that I am my own grandfather that I'm a

Reincarnation of his father

so I mean he was he used to tell me all

these uh resemblances I had with my own

grandfather although that could be

genetic

um in in genetics class when I was

taking biology in college they'd say

that you actually resemble two of your

grandparents more than you resemble your

parents and I assume that on his side of

the family I resembled his father more

than I resembled his mother

but I do have these intuitions

like

just like a really a resonance or a

fascination with certain cultures in the

past

or you know just there's like some kind

of

now I guess I guess resonance or

resonation just

you know you just fascinated by it and

you can't really be explained by

genetics or past experience like 14th

century England I just feel like there's

a good chance that I lived in 14th

century England some sort of rascally

Catholic monk and I despise the French

of course the 100 Years War was going on

at that time

um I probably transcribed books for a

living because the printing press hadn't

been invented yet at least not in the

west

um a good chance I died of Bubonic
plague or and I probably consider that
to be a just punishment from God for me
being such a rascally monk I think I may
have met my sweetheart in that life also
because she has a similar feeling about
medieval England and we both have like
I've got like this weird little purple
spot right over my lymph node on my my
right groin which and I've always been
kind of squeamish about that part of my
body anyway and uh so I think that may
have been where the bubo was when I got
Bubonic plague also I think there's a
good chance that for example I was
Japanese like maybe in the 1700s

um

um there's I've got a lot of Japan karma

in this life I've been to Japan three

times without ever planning to go there

I used to work on Japanese ships

um yeah there's just certain things

about Japan that I really like

um there's a good chance that uh like in

prehistoric times I was some sort of

Shaman that worshiped snakes like in the

Indus Valley Civilization or like

Northwestern India that general area

there's a good chance just again these

are just intuitions

that uh I was living in around Naples

like during the late Roman Republic or

early Empire

uh wasn't killed by Vesuvius though

so so it's just like intuition just

these weird

um just chemical attractions to certain

periods in history in certain places

that I mean I can't really explain it in

any other way like certain cultures I

just have no Affinity with like ancient

Egypt I just have no interest in that uh

ancient Native American cultures in

North Central or South America just

you know it's I mean it's not like I

despise it or anything it just doesn't

call to me like certain other cultures

do

so anyway

I'll just move on to the next question

which is from O'Rourke

and Rourke says

what are the range of requirements for

different monasteries or whatever the

appropriate term is

who would train someone to become a monk

the range of requirements

wow I mean at the at the lower end I

mean there's hardly any requirements at

all I mean you don't even have to be a

Buddhist to be ordained at some

monasteries in Burma you can just walk

in I have this one monk American monk

friend of mine when I was living in

Burma who said that uh he was at this

Monastery where there was this monk who

was just like raving just like splashing
around in this Pond and it turned out
that he was an alcoholic he was going
through DTS and he thought that being
ordained as a monk was going to help him
stop being an alcoholic
and I mean he had just been ordained
very recently obviously within just a
matter of days and that happens quite a
lot so I mean at the lower end
some monasteries will just ordain
anybody
uh with regard to the higher end like
like in the ajan cha tradition you have
to be uh like a monastery attendant for
like two years before or I think it's

you have to be like a like an anagarica
for one year and then you can be a
novice for another year before they'll
fully ordain you as a monk and then
you've got to learn all the stuff that
monks have to learn personally I was
ordained in the Burmese Tom pugu
tradition one of the few relatively
ascetic Forest traditions in Burma and
uh before I was ordained I had to learn
some some poly and learn about the rules
of monastic discipline and learn some
Nama you know read read sudos and so
forth learn how to meditate that kind of
thing
and you're probably better off if you're
at a monster that's just going to ordain

anybody it is it just takes all-comers

it's not going to be a very strict

monastery

so you'd be better off finding a place

where it's not so easy to get in like

agent child used to say easy to ordain

easy to disrupt

so

but again I would recommend anyone who

really wants to be ordained as a mom to

spend at least two years in in Asia in a

Buddhist culture before uh

jumping into the spiritual Siberia that

is the West

so the next question from Rorke

that's right yeah work

says also what are the range of Buddhist
conceptions of hell if all consciousness
what is the term for such in Buddhism
is subject to form and context and there
is no permanent soul
why do Buddhists seem to talk about hell
in the same way Christians do well it's
not exactly the same because hell
doesn't last forever in Buddhism neriah
heaven doesn't last forever
um so it's
uh what what trans migrates what is
reborn into another existence isn't a
soul it's like the momentum of your
mental States it's your karma the stream
of karma is what
um determines where you're going to be

reborn

so

if you do certain very bad things like

murder one of your own parents you're

guaranteed of of hell and there's

various levels of hell just like in in

Buddhism especially taravada Buddhism

you know there are many different Heaven

Realms and also there are many different

hell Realms and they just progressively

get worse and worse till the very bottom

the lowest pit of Hell is called Avicii

hell and it's

um you know their detailed descriptions

of Avicii hell in in some of the sutos

whereas it's just like blazing hot and

you've got demons that are torturing

um torturing the beings there with like

axes and and all kinds of terrible

things is you know they're just

describing uh a realm of existence as

icky as possible

so

um yeah so there are differences the

main difference is that hell doesn't

last forever after you have exhausted

your Bad Karma then you get reborn

somewhere else like for example the the

Buddhist rough equivalent to Judas

Iscariot is dewadata who is the Buddhist

cousin I think also his brother-in-law

who tried to take over the the Sangha or

at least started a Schism in the Sangha

according to tradition he tried to
murder the Buddha more than once and
according to tradition the same
tradition
he uh is now in Avicii hell being
roasted and tortured by demons but he is
destined in the future you know millions
of years from now after he finally gets
out of hell to become a Pacheco Buddha
which is like a fully enlightened being
who is almost a Buddha but he is a
Hermit and he he arrived they arise in
times when there is no Buddhism in the
world and so he just is enlightened but
he just lives in a cave or something
somewhere and doesn't start Buddhism

again he doesn't start the wheel of

Dharma rolling

so the range of Buddhist conceptions of

Hell there's not much of a range because

it's described fairly

you know fairly clearly you know

precisely in the texts so there's not a

whole lot of range although there are

different hell Realms but there's not a

lot of discussion of the higher hell

Realms the ones that aren't so bad they

pretty much emphasize the worst one and

I mean how are you going to have you

know 18 different levels of hell you

know I don't know I mean Dante was able

to come up with different different

rings of hell in his one Inferno so it

could be something along those lines but

my impression is based on my faulty

memory is they all tend to be rather hot

so yeah

let's see and the term for uh

Consciousness in Buddhism usually is

winyana

although sometimes cheetah also can be

defined as Consciousness or also mono

Mana

which uh may have the same etymology as

the English word mental

because Paulie is an Indo-European

language and English also is a European

Indo-European language so they have like

the same ancestral language going back

into prehistoric times

so the next question is from Zane

and Zayn quotes me here saying when

you're dead you're not just dead your

Consciousness somehow continues after

the body dies

and then he points out you in a response

to a question from a q a number 44. and

then he he also quotes me saying you

just get a different body the body is

just like a vehicle

and that's from the same q a

and then he says okay my question is

what is the U that gets a different body

and what is the you that is not just

dead and how is it that you call these

are in quotes differ you are different

from an Atman also in quotes

particularly if that reincarnated you is

just Consciousness

I see teachings where the five skandas

are taken to not be the Atman but the

fifth skanda is identified as

Ganda because he's using the sanskriter

which I see Buddhists interpreting as

Consciousness aggregate or something

like that anyway it would be nice for me

at least if you could address this okay

well I've already kind of addressed it

but

um I mean rebirth all that is reborn is

your karma which is like the the

momentum of your mental States

and those are manifestations of

consciousness

because in winyanakanda in Nepali when

yanakanda the the the uh

the aggregate of consciousness

the Consciousness always has to be

consciousness of something it's not

formless consciousness

it's consciousness of something so it's

sort of like the s in my interpretation

this is an abhidham this isn't Orthodox

but the Orthodox really doesn't make a

lot of sense

um that Consciousness is like the the

essence of the mental state and the

actual mental state itself is the form

that it takes you know like glass can

assume different forms but it's all

glass you know you can have a glass pop

bottle a glass window whatever

and it's the same way with with

Consciousness I mean you can have

um uh Consciousness assuming the form of

anger or assuming the form of lust or

assuming the form of some intellectual

concept or whatever

so

um

the idea and is found in a few uh

fragments of old cuntas in in the poly

texts is that

Enlightenment would be formless infinite

Consciousness unmanifest you know

luminous all-round as it says in the

texts but the thing is once something

becomes formless it becomes an infinite

I mean it's

it's not a thing anymore

you know it's just off the scale it's I

mean it it transcends existence and

non-existence because both infinity and

zero are kind of formless

they're a kind of infinity

so

I'm trying to get to this question here

question is that you think it's a

different body yeah what is the you

that's that's essentially just the the

uh

the momentum of your your mental state

or your karma that is being reborn we're

using the body as a kind of vehicle

and uh and then with the second part of

the question yeah the Consciousness

aggregate

yeah I've already discussed that so I'll

just uh continue here

and uh yeah this is turning into long I

think this one might be in two parts

because we're already over two hours and

uh I'm more than halfway done though so

there is that

next question

is from Creole creel

k-r-i-e-l creel let's call him Creole

let's call him him let's just assume his

pronoun

what do you and teravada in general make out of near-death experiences these seem to be profound and life-changing spiritual experiences not necessarily in accordance with Buddhism many times they report the idea of a Soul Plan Soul contracts and the idea that we chose to Incarnate for the purpose of spiritual Evolution if their perspective is partial even though profound would that mean that they generally report such Rosy and positive perspective of incarnation and life due to their karma and attachment to samsara thank you a lot for your answer if any I personally spoke with a few of them and was briefly

a friend of of one so that's so that

topic is dear to me

okay this is an interesting question

I've read about a lot of near-death

experiences including a few that

essentially cause like the enlightenment

of the person who experienced it like uh

oh John

I've mentioned it more than once he got

poisoned in Thailand almost died

John

it's like a hyphenated name and now I

can't remember it because I'm getting

old I guess plus I've had full super

malaria baking my brain like seven times

plus of course my feral teenager

partying phase

so let's go to near-death experiences

yeah they do seem to follow a certain

pattern and that is uh like you're

getting a motorcycle wreck

for example God forbid you almost drown

something like that or you're you're on

a

um like an operating table

and all of a sudden you start feeling as

though you're levitating above your own

body and you can look down you can see

your body sprawled out on the operating

table or on the pavement or whatever or

floating in the water and then you go up

and up and there's like the hieronymous

Bosch painting this famous painting by

Bosch about uh like the Imperium I can't remember the full title entering the Imperium or something where you're floating up and there's this tunnel with this bright light at the end and there's like an angel waiting at the at the other end of this this tunnel going up towards the bright light and you go up there and you meet some guide maybe an angel maybe Jesus maybe some important religious figure from a different religion that you happen to follow could be uh like a deceased relative or dear friend and they'll they'll give you some instructions you know they might show

you around a little bit and then
generally they have you review your
experience in life like your life
flashing before your eyes except uh like
with a guide to help you through it and
then in a lot of cases they say well you
can choose to stay or or go back or they
might say you just have to go back the
ones that get to stay they don't come
back to tell us about it and um
so it's it's like this common experience
and I assume there's some kind of truth
to it and what strikes me is that
although it's completely unorthodox from
a terrible about a Buddhist point of
view there's no mention of it at least
um what is described is reminiscent of

some of the stuff that you read in the
Tibetan Book of the Dead like in the
Tibetan Book of the Dead after you die
you find yourself in a bright light and
they advise you to stay in that light as
long as you can stand it because it has
a purifying effect but most people
eventually panic and leave the light
because they feel like they're
dissolving and dying and then after that
there's like a less bright light this
sort of a golden light instead of bright
white and you you should stay in that
one too and then
you you might meet with Buddhas or or
bodhisattvas and so forth and in the

Tibetan Book of the Dead it's it's it's reminding you again and again you know it's all a production of your mind you know it's all generated by your own your own mind like your own Karma your own imagination or whatever and then eventually you're going to uh find yourself in this place where there's all kinds of beings having sex around you and if you are attracted to one group one couple having sex you just get drawn into it and then you're reborn as their child as as the female gets impregnated um so there is some similarity between that and the Tibetan Book of the Dead and I think a lot of the variations you know like the Soul Plan and the angel or

Jesus or the bodhisattvas or whatever is
just your own expectations because it is
generated by your own mind to some
degree at least to some degree if not
totally
and again a lot of people they have
these near-death experiences and it has
a life-changing effect on them for
starters they're just not afraid of
death anymore
and uh like I said I I still can't
remember John
I want to say come out Zen but that's
that's not the guy but he was he was uh
like a scientist an atheist who all of a
sudden had this near-death experience

and it was like a an Eckhart Tolle style

Awakening and um

or there's a really good movie that was

actually recommended by the same guy

that's why I watched it called Fearless

in which this guy has a near-death

experience and it changes his life but

it makes him not only Fearless it makes

him like brutally honest and so forth

and he he encounters so much friction

with everyone around him after going

back into the world that eventually they

just start pressuring him into becoming

unenlightened again

but I think I may have completely

digressed on that one

but with regard to near-death

experiences uh I think that even what
we're experiencing right here is mind
generated I'm no materialist I'm
certainly not a scientific realist
and so
um yeah I can accept that it's something
maybe archetypal you know it's just kind
of built into the subconscious mind that
you would have experiences like that
somehow and um I mean the effects tend
to be beneficial I've never read someone
who was just totally freaked out I mean
it may be that there are some people
that they they see hell you know they
think they're they see that they're
heading for hell if they if they stay

dead and then they come back to try and

rectify their life I'm sure that sort of

thing has happened a few times but the

ones I've read are generally more

positive like the questioner here creel

has been talking about where

um

you know you see that I mean it's not

that big of a deal that you're that

you're dead that you know your your

spirit

hasn't died

but um yeah I've read quite a few weird

stories but I won't I won't uh linger

with regard to those because I have more

questions to answer here

so the next question from Creel

is I have another question a silly one
perhaps what does Buddhism believe in
regard to plant life do plants have a
soul or any form of Consciousness or
cheetah because it seems obvious to me
that they express some form of sentient
presence and if so do they suffer like
any other deluded being and can we
reincarnate as a plant and if they
suffer do they suffer while being eaten
or killed if they have no soul or
cheetah
that would be kind of weird because they
would be some form of natural artificial
intelligence strange oxymoron thanks
well in the in the suitors there's not

much mention of the consciousness of

plants but it does say that plants are

Jiva which means one faculty life so

like a human being has six sense

faculties you know you've got the the

eyes the ears the nose the tongue just

the body in general

and uh also we've got mind

so that would be the the six faculties

unless I I forgot one I skipped one

maybe

but uh a plant has only one and that is

the sense of touch so you do have some

sensitive plants maybe this is based on

um you know sort of folklore and the

knowledge of plants that will like the

leaves will close up when you touch them

that kind of a thing

um Buddhism otherwise really doesn't

talk about being reincarnated as plants

that I'm aware of I'm not sure about

even the Hindus talking about that

although maybe some do but the Jane's

definitely believed that not only were

plants alive but even like fire was

conscious had like a very primordial

primitive kind of Consciousness possibly

even like crystals you know they've got

this this structure to them that

it just implies some sort of very

primitive rudimentary kind of

consciousness

so the genes would have most to say

about Consciousness in plants from a

spiritual point of view I think

um but Buddhism I do not recall

any talk about like rebirth from plants

or two plants

and it's it's kind of amazing how this

little puppy can make this table shake

so much just by trotting by

let's see

so do they suffer while being eaten or

killed well for one thing they don't

have a nervous system and although I'm

not a scientifically realist I do have a

degree in biology and they just don't

have nerves so I mean they wouldn't

experience

you know they wouldn't experience things

anywhere close to the way we do because
we've got a relatively well developed
nervous system
um but I do think that I mean the entire
universe is a manifestation of
Consciousness that even uh this uh
white peach can that is now empty it's
it contains just very Elemental very
simple form of Consciousness like in
physics they say matter is like frozen
energy that ultimately matter is energy
equals mc squared and all that and I
would say that energy is just a very
very primitive form of what US
psychologists will call Consciousness
just as Consciousness is a very

developed complicated form of what a
physicist would call Energy it already
goes one way you just have to make it go
the other way too and uh oh I would be
correct in that assumption
but uh yeah with regard to plants
Buddhism really doesn't talk about it
much Buddhism is really is it's like an
anthropocentric system most religions
are and uh it was
particularly The Janes that would see
even fire as a kind of primitive life
that's why a Jane monk isn't allowed to
start a fire or put out a fire because
he's [__] with Karma by doing that by
creating life or killing life
and the same goes for plants although

um the reason why monks Buddhist monks
are not allowed to kill plants it's a
pachidia offense even to to damage a
green plant so a Buddhist monk is not
supposed to mow Lawns not supposed to
trim hedges anything like that because
even if you're not killing the plant
you're cutting off green leaves or
shoots or anything alive then you are
harming ikendra Jiva or one faculty life
so Buddhism does acknowledge that plants
do have a kind of Consciousness because
they have a sense of touch
but uh also it was just uh Indian
culture that would cause the rule that
monks aren't allowed to damage plants

because if they damage plants then you'd
have non-budists like making fun of them
and criticizing them and you know
Finding fault with them because that's
what people do if you're biased against
somebody they can do no right you know
if if you don't like the Dalai Lama you
consider him to be a pervert and a
sexual predator now
just because you didn't like him to
begin with
that sort of thing although whether he
is a pervert or not I can't say I kind
of doubt it I'm willing to give him the
benefit of the doubt
so let's just move on to oh wait here's
another one I almost I almost skipped

over this one this next question is from
Mr unofficial
who I almost skipped over but did not
and Mr unofficial says wasting my days
at my Wagey job knowing I do not have
true Freedom builds up a great deal of
anger and even hatred inside me these
are obviously unskillful mindsets and
they torment me however they help me in
some respect in some aspects of my life
anger gives me energy when working out
in my general discontentment gives me a
drive to find a better life for myself
how can I direct these feelings in a
more skillful and healthy way is there
such a thing as skillful anger

well there's really is not such a thing

as skillful Anger from a Buddhist point

of view but I mean there is a kind of

natural aggression

in human beings especially in human

males and traditionally the way of

dealing with that would be like like

High School athletics or just just

Athletics in general or I mean if you're

really into that you get into some sort

of aggressive kind of career like maybe

a soldier

that would be the traditional way of

dealing with masculine aggression that

comes up naturally

um but getting up to the top here

wasting my days at my Wagey job knowing

I do not have true Freedom

um well I mean I'm

I mean I wouldn't say I'm wasting my

days at my way G job but I do have a

wagy job and uh knowing I do not have

true Freedom well I mean that would

apply to everybody I think

you know even even somebody who doesn't

have to work for a living doesn't have

true freedom

not total freedom I mean Free Will and

if it exists at all it's a paradox

because it's logically impossible

so the anger and hatred I mean

you might try I'm just mindfully

observing the anger and hatred and just

observing it like a ichthyologist was

Observe a dead fish and not identify

with it it's just mental states that are

rising it's not really you

so but I mean if you do have natural

aggression just natural I mean it could

even be anger I mean you can work out

your anger in wholesome ways that would

be a skillful way of dealing with an

unskillful mental state let's say you've

got anger or hatred and even just you

know punching a pillow or something I

mean that would be a way of at least

getting rid of it in a in a harmless way

unless you really [__] up the pillow

but I mean the pillow although according

to my theory it does contain some

extremely Elemental Consciousness I
doubt that it's going to feel any pain
so yeah when working out he says anger
gives me energy when working out
and my general discontentment gives me a
drive to find a better life for myself
which reminds me that uh in the wisudi
Maga it talks about six different
um like personality types which is kind
of interesting that we see Maga talks
about six personality types you've got
greed hate and delusion and then you've
got the Opposites like one is Faith one
is intellect one is something else and
it's been a long time since I read that
we see the manga but

it does point out that people with a
dose of temperament where like anger and
and like hatred just these kind of kind
of irritable people they can actually
become enlightened more easily than most
other people because they have this
they're not satisfied with some sorrow
you know they are discontented with
samsara which can help them to to
practice more correctly even though
ultimately this anger or
um Dosa is one of the three poisons you
know it's one of the things that you
have to eventually transcend and puppies
dogs trotting back and forth are shaking
the hell out of the camera which is
weird I don't know how they do it the

puppy only weighs about eight pounds I

would guess and There She Goes Again

so let's see

yeah Mr unofficial yeah I think

um I mean there's no such thing as

skillful anger but there are relatively

skillful ways of

of working it off I mean it's not just

going to disappear so I mean you can at

least you know go out and shoot baskets

or you know work out or or jog or or

whatever instead of you know cursing at

the TV screen or you know taking it out

on someone close to you that kind of

thing that's that's really important I

mean if you're in a bad mood you know

you're in a bad mood you know it's it's
good to be very cautious when dealing
with others just so you're not taking it
out on them and then making more Bad
Karma that just perpetuates the problem
so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Austin
and Austin says I understand how Karma
can be understood as a mental state that
guides volitional activity but how does
karma influence seemingly random
physical phenomena from outside our mind
be befalling us
well again it's it's like
let's let's just assume that there is
such a thing as an external Universe
like

let's just assume that this material

stuff around me really exists in some

way but nevertheless I would say that

it's our own mind that is determining

this it's like if you've got no mind

there's nothing that is condensing the

world down into this ten thousand things

that the now teaching talks about

um it's sort of like in in like quantum

physics they're talking about how you

got the uh

the quantum field you know it's just

like infinite potential you know

anything can arise in this Quantum field

it contains infinite energy and zero

energy simultaneously and paradoxically

and

um it requires uh like a conscious

Observer to condense down the infinite

possibilities into just one you know you

gotta collapse the state vector

so our mind is collapsing the state

Vector in accordance with our own Karma

and there are an infinite number of

Worlds you know the many worlds

hypothesis and so we just happen to be

in the one where the same sorts of

things are happening to the people

around us too you know if if we're

experiencing an earthquake then the

people next door are experiencing one

too unless they sweep through it or

something

but even then they'll hear about it on

the radio the next day or whatever

so

foreign

yeah it's like it's like we're

essentially dreaming and that's why the

Buddha I mean Buddha literally means

awakened he has woken up from the dream

and even if you're like an enlightened

being

still walking through samsara it could

be compared to something like lucid

dreaming

and so I mean we're still dreaming our

our existence this I mean this world of

greenness and chirping birds and the

little Trump doll and everything I mean

it wouldn't exist without humans

manufacturing it Conjuring it up through

conceptions

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question

I'm I'm I'm being a little bit cryptic I

think I'm not fully answering questions

as fully as sometimes I do just because

there's so many questions this time and

I may have turned this into a weekly

show

so the next question is from Johannes

how close do you think Paulie is to the

Buddha's language well the Buddha spoke

a kind of Proto poly I'm pretty sure

that that uh Polly is based probably

on a language or dialect that was either
what the Buddha spoke or similar to what
the Buddha spoke terravonna Buddhism
arose
somewhat west of the Buddhism stomping
ground but I'm pretty sure that Paulie
and whatever language the Buddha
originally spoke like magadi
I think it's called muggedy the language
of mugada
that they would be mutually inner
understandable maybe somewhat like uh
Norwegian and Swedish or something like
Portuguese and and Spanish you know
they'd be mutually intelligible for the
most part there might be a few words

that you're not sure about

so

yeah I think that they're they're fairly

similar much more similar to what the

Buddhist language in Sanskrit for

example

so johannes's next question are there

any commentaries on the size of the

Buddha's tongue well you don't even need

commentaries you can read it directly in

the sutas like I think it's the

introduction to the parayana Wagga the

parayanawaga for the most part is very

old it's the last chapter of the sunji

nipata but you've got uh an intro and a

conclusion that are apparently much

later

you know I think I could be wrong but I
think that um there's there's mention of
the 32 marks about of the the great man
the mahapurisa and it talks about how
the Buddha can cover his entire face
with his tongue or he can he can lick
his own eyebrows and his tongue is so
long and his tongue is so wide
um I don't know how that would be
possible how he'd fit into his mouth but
at the very least it says that he can
lick his own eyebrows I mean when it
says he can cover his whole face it just
might mean
um you know not not all at the same time
but he moves it around or could move it

around and cover any part of his face
with it but any suta where it's talking
about the 32 marks of a great man
um especially if it's enumerating them
it's gonna it's gonna cover the the
tongue part
so you don't even need to go to the
commentaries for that it's right there
in the suitos
and personally I'm I mean the whole 32
marks of a great man obviously are not
entirely true because just going with
math or geometry it's not possible for
one person to have all 32 marks at the
same time it's just some kind of late
weirdness some kind of Indian tradition
thing that got thrown in as a part of

devotionalism that developed in Buddhism
after the Buddha's time
so the next question and this is the
last question by golly that caught me by
surprise we're at the last question
this is from Stevens
Stephen says here's a question for you
what's with the paper fans all the
Seattles have is it because it's so hot
and full of insects in Burma or does it
have some other special meaning well
most of the fans that you see Seattle is
holding you know like in any kind of
formal picture of Seattle's first of all
they'll have like the stop it
puppies being naughty again yeah here

see

so they'll have these

the like in a formal picture of the

Seattle the puppy distracted me they'll

have like their this big collar around

their neck and sometimes they'll beef up

the collar by stuffing newspaper into it

like a photographer will make the

special collar thing inserted into the

the cloth robe collar to make their

collar look very neat and straight and

everything and they'll be holding a fan

and it's usually not a paper fan it's

shaped like kind of like this

sort of like a lily pad or something

with a handle on it and sometimes it'll

have like some kind of print on it like

on one side it might have the name of

the monastery and on the other side

it'll be the the people who donated it

or something and there's usually it's

it's cloth over wire and there's a

little zipper on the back and you can

stuff things into the fan if you want to

like little pieces of paper or money or

something I don't know and um they're

originally derived I mean the originally

evolved from palm leaf fans which are

were shaped pretty much the same way

and uh

it's like pull my relief

is is what the old fans are made out of

and now it's usually cloth over a

wireframe although you can get paper

ones pretty easy like in Burma if

there's any kind of Festival like a

marriage reception a wedding reception

or

um

like somebody their their kids are going

to be ordained temporarily as a novice

you know he's going through the ritual

of manhood they'll they'll give out

paper fans I still have one I forgot to

bring it I you know I don't have it out

here on the deck but uh you can get

little paper fans too and it'll have to

be the print of you know who what what

the occasion is and who is who's

sponsoring it and all that kind of thing

but in like the 1800s and the very early
1900s like during British colonial times
when a Seattle or a monk would give a
public discourse he'd give the discourse
behind the fan you wouldn't see his face
he'd be like holding the fan up in front
of his face while giving the discourse
and
um originally or ostensibly
ostensibly the the purpose of that is so
he wouldn't be distracted by any
attractive females in the audience he
was being demure and and modest and
restrained by by by concealing the view
of the audience from him while he's
giving the talk and nowadays they don't

do that anymore but it's just another
kind of more or less mindless tradition
um of Burmese Buddhism that it's just
what you do and there's lots of these
more or less meaningless formalities
that you do like if a monk is gonna sit
anywhere he sits on a sitting cloth and
I really didn't see the point of it
sometimes because let's say you're going
to be riding in a car
so you're going to just sit down on the
seat
and the lay people that are like being
your attendants are going to drive you
somewhere they start panicking it's like
where's your sitting cloth I'm like well
it's packed away somewhere it doesn't

matter I mean like my robes and the the
seed are both clean it doesn't matter
and we gotta find you a sitting cloth
and so they'll go out and find some
piece of cloth like a towel or something
for the monk to sit on when it's just
not necessary it's just this tradition
you know it's just what you're supposed
to do and having the fan especially on
formal occasions is just another one of
those and it they actually can be used
to Fan yourself I I've I've used them to
fan myself actually
because after all they are fans
but um the the reason why they carry
them around even if it's not hot is just

it's just a tradition it was originally

based on they would they would give

their sermons behind the fan and I don't

think that they had that in Thailand

or Sri Lanka and that's the end that

says the last question and we've gone

over two and a half hours with this and

maybe I should turn this into a

two-parter or something and uh the the

kamukamu extract is really kicking in

good now and uh

I'm done so as one of the questioners

said I always say at the end of these be

happy

hello and welcome to episode 46 of

question and answer and I must say I had

no idea I'd ever be doing 46 of these

but here I am doing 46 of these

and uh I must say that uh things have uh

changed a bit since the last episode

that I did out on the back porch

with the dogs and such

because just last Tuesday I asked my

sweetheart to marry me and she said yes

so now I'm officially

engaged

also I might be getting a different job

at a different sheet metal shop soon

which uh will pay more than five bucks

an hour more than the last place which

is nice especially considering that I'm

going to have a wife

um

within the next year or so

we haven't we haven't uh officially set

a date yet although I think it's going

to be next year because my sweetie is

superstitious about odd numbered years

bovine glandular secretions

huh

so I guess we might as well get to it

because there's lots of questions again

this time and I really I'm seriously

considering doing one of these once a

week

now because uh the number of questions

has increased somewhat the last number

45 my peach 45 Edition it was uh getting

up towards three hours

so

let's just get in on this let's just get

started here

so the first question is from aurelian

and he asked this question before I

published the last q a but

um I'd already recorded it so this one's

kind of an old one let's hope it hasn't

expired

and aurelian says how should Nava

kavadans take refuge for now it would be

based Buddhists on the internet

self-initiating unless they are able to

make contact with legit monks somehow do

you have thoughts about a more organized

approach for accepting new members into

the movement at some point Politically

Incorrect poly names when

I mean it's always been like I've

consider it to be a good idea my friend

Otto kind of took the the name Nava

kavada and ran with it and he's got a

Nava kavada channel on bit shoot

but uh I guess you take refuge the same

way that any other Buddhists would take

refuge if you got a legit monk asarelian

says you can take refuge before the

legit monk you know in his presence if

not I mean just if you've got an altar

you know you can just you know squat

down in front of the altar bow down and

and take the take the Refuge there the

three refuges

and Sangha would be the traditional way

of doing it

um do I have thoughts about a more

organized approach for accepting new

members well this is just sort of a

spontaneous thing you know it's just

um

there's not really a membership list or

anything like that there's no

application forms or anything you just

feel like you want to be one at present

I mean maybe someday it'll become like

an organized movement but at present

it's just sort of floating around in the

air

um Politically Incorrect poly names went

off to start thinking out Politically

Incorrect poly names

but um yeah I'm not sure I'm not sure

about this because I mean even when I

was a monk things were taking off slow

and um

maybe I should have turned my phone off

or something even when I was a monk

things were going really slow and now

that I'm a lay person a householder if

you will I've got to work for a living I

got less time and energy for

um doing like live Dharma talks and so

forth although it's still a possibility

but uh I got bills to pay now

so

um I mean you get enough people that are

interested you get like the

what do you call it the uh

critical mass and things can take off

but it's such a like a fringe movement

like most western Buddhists

are like leftists and they're really not

interested in traditionalism and they

just ignore Asian traditionalists as

though

um there are a few Buddhists of color in

the west you know you read about this a

lot in their literature you know we need

more Buddhists of color when they're

just completely ignoring all the

Southeast Asian immigrants and and Sri
Lankan immigrants and so forth so anyway
I guess I suppose I should just move on
to the next question after sort of
answering that one
and this is from Air rain
and Aaron says what is the absolute
bottom Barrel worst debauched Karma one
can generate and what is the absolute
worst karmic consequence of doing so
well according to terabadan tradition
there are five actions that if you
perpetrate any of these five you are
guaranteed of Hell in your next
existence one is to make a Buddha bleed
you can't kill a fully enlightened
Buddha but you can hurt one enough so

that he bleeds and so that's that's one
and I don't I don't know like someone's
shaving the Buddha's head and
accidentally Nick him I think they might
get like a pass on that one or something
next is to kill an aura hunt kill a
fully enlightened being hell is the
consequence third is to kill your your
mother or father
and by golly I think I might be
forgetting what one of these let's see
one of them is to start a Schism that's
the fifth one and for some reason
I can't think of what the fourth one is
although the fifth one is I mean
sometimes there's an alternative to

um creating a Schism which may be good

news for some of the early Mahayana

monks who may or may not be roasting in

Avicii hell right now and that is to

rape or seduce a nun

but why don't I remember see

to make a Buddha bleed

to kill an our hunt to kill one of your

own parents maybe three and four would

be mother or father but I don't think so

and then maybe it's just four heck I

don't know I'm my memory is not perfect

but those are like the worst things you

can do from a traditional theravada

Buddhist point of view

and I mean if your parents are awful I

mean that's still no excuse because they

did bring you into this world

um

so and then the worst the absolute worst

karmic consequence would be just the

lowest hell which is called Avicii hell

literally Avicii means without waves you

know it's just still there's no Breeze

there's nothing you know it's just still

blazing heat with like blowing iron

floors and walls and demons and so forth

and you stay there for a very long time

and I mean this is sort of a digression

I've always had my skeptical doubts

about how someone could commit an action

so bad in you know a lifetime of 70 80

90 years that they could do enough

Badness in that limited time to stay in
in Hell In uttered torment for literally
millions and millions of years it
doesn't last forever in Buddhism heaven
doesn't last forever either you know
once you've exhausted your karma you
know you you pass away from that place
and appear somewhere else but um
I used to wonder about that and then
um
I think it was when there was just this
heat wave going on in central Burma
which is hot anyway even without heat
waves and it's just you get into such a
foul mode sometimes any of you have read
Somerset mom uh you may know about how
this tropical heat can just get to

people or ruddered Kipling also like he

has a short story called The End Of The

Passage about two people who just crack

up and die just because of the heat in

the India

um and now I've I've

oh yeah so it could be that when you're

in hell you're so miserable that you're

just cursing the you know cursing the

universe cursing yourself and it's just

this perpetual

foul you know film foul mood to say the

least and just really negative mental

states that just keeps you there

that's my theory anyway

but just to sort of recap

Aaron's question here my answer to it I
mean is the worst Karma you can generate
make a Buddha bleed kill an aura hunt
kill one of your parents start a Schism
and maybe also rape or seduce a nun and
the worst Karma consequence is the
lowest hell realm which is Avicii hell
that is really super icky and lasts
millions of years
so the next question is from Birch
and Birch says
do you find that people on your Q and A
ask too many technical philosophical
questions and not enough practical ones
or is it or is that just par for the
course maybe it's me I've spent a lot of
time studying religion rather than

practicing it

it is perhaps a common human quality

yeah it's it's a common human quality

that you want to understand you know you

want questions answered as the relative

success of these q and A's demonstrates

um

I don't think that people are asking too

many technical philosophical questions I

kind of like technical philosophical

questions

um I can often answer them

relatively well I hope

so yeah it's like any kind of questions

are fair game if people want to ask that

at least they're curious about dama

which is good

and it is good to have a certain

I mean it's maybe not absolutely

necessary but it is a good thing to have

like a a relatively good grasp of the

theory

um in order to support the practice to

help you practice correctly and also

just as kind of a [__] detector as a

way of kind of weeding out some of the

the dead wood

um if that makes any sense

so yeah I'll just move on to the next

question this one is from the Arya

sawasti project

and the Arya sawasti project says

greetings Ponyo sometimes when you are

doing interviews with Brian and such
there is a photo of a thatched roof
looking structure behind you is that a
stock image or is it one of the
hermitages in Burma that you were at and
maybe I can I can show a photo as a
graphic I am getting a little more
um ambitious with regard to showing
graphics on my videos sometimes
but yeah I actually lived there but
um when I lived there long term it
wasn't as dilapidated because in that
picture there's it's a palmyra Leaf roof
covering the front of this cave that I
lived in it was called Mandalay goo goo
is Burmese for cave it's short for the

polyward guha which means cave

and um I lived there for about three

years it was one of the first places I

lived when I went to Burma

and uh I had this thatched roof over the

top of it and then I went away and went

you know living in other places and I

came back for a visit I think it was to

do uh

uh Penance for a song of DC offenses and

uh if you don't know what that means

it's fine but I went that that Monastery

used to specialize in this kind of

penance and so I came back and stayed

there for a few weeks and nobody had

been living there and so the roof had

become very much termite eaten and

dilapidated looking it was nicer when I
lived there long term I mean if
the Palmyra Leaf batch roofs are nice
ever
so yeah I did live there it's it's
called Mandalay goo and uh I've got a
number of other pictures of it I just
used that as a background because Brian
likes fake backgrounds for some reason
and uh it's at uh a monastery called
chelseindoya
in central Burma maybe 100 miles south
of Mandalay in Mandalay division
so let's see I'll just move on to the
next question this is from Andrew
and I I have to admit I do not

understand this question very well

Andrew says I don't know David how can

we be presented to the Buddha how can

one stand in front of the Buddha and say

this [__] the viral Society stated

what the [__] would he say

well um I don't know exactly what being

presented to the Buddha means and I

don't know what the viral Society is

and I don't know what the Buddha would

say if we were to say this [__] that the

viral Society stated

um just being presented to the Buddha I

mean

um I mean he's no longer in this

universe I mean in terravada Buddhism

the Buddha has

passed away he is no longer in samsara
he's not like a cosmic Buddha like a lot
of the Mahayana Buddhists believe in you
know there's no samboga Kaya up in up in
some Heaven realm somewhere
but um it reminds me of this doctor that
I knew when I was living in Mandalay goo
by the way he was the village the local
Village doctor and he spoke some English
I didn't speak much Burmese yet so we
could actually communicate a bit and uh
he used to pray to the Buddha and I used
to tell him I mean the Buddha is no
longer in this world I mean he's no
longer in any world
so what good does it do to pray to him

and he said well the Buddha could look

into the future and you know back then

he could look into the future and see me

praying

so I thought well

all right so I mean in that way you can

maybe be presented at the Buddha but

then I think what would have to happen

is you'd have to have your like

attention directed to the Buddha I mean

if if you've got the Buddha in your mind

in your heart or whatever it may be that

back then he could he could sense that

you know in some future age there's

going to be this person in this distant

land who has his you know devotion

direct towards me and you know that way

he might be aware I mean he did have a

kind of omniscience according to

um

um traditional teravana although it it

wasn't like complete omniscience like

mahavira the founder of Jainism is

supposed to have where he knows all

things at all times the Buddha could

just know what he wanted to know

um

I don't know maybe and I have no idea

what the the viral

v-i-r-e-l Society is so I really can't

comment on that

um if they said something really

inappropriate he might just remain

silent which is generally the the

approach that he would take in the in

the sutos you know somebody's really

disrespectful or something he would just

keep his mouth shut and just turn around

and walk the other way or something

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from

CEO vacch and sipad zidana and I still

don't know if I'm pronouncing it

correctly but somebody in the the

kindness of his heart actually did send

me links

um to Wikipedia articles one on CEO of

action the other one on ncpad zidana so

these were actually historical or

mythological personages C.O vax was some

Persian Aristocrat in ancient times and then sipad zidana was supposedly a king of Sumer who lived for tens of thousands of years he's like a mythological prehistoric king of of sumerors one of those early places in in Mesopotamia um anyway

says

in ancient times before 100 A.D Buddhism was considered an iconic and would leave an empty space where the Buddha was supposed to be depicted in key events in early art they used to use the feet of the Buddha Dharma wheel empty Throne horse with an empty flying Chariot thing forget the name

Etc to represent him it only began with
the Greek influence first depicting the
Buddha and claiming it is the bodhisatta
before he became enlightened there are
some there are some debate on this issue
and some say that because there is only
a ban on it explicitly in the sarvasti
Vada Linea and no others that it is was
just a tradition that it isn't from the
Buddha himself some even claimed there
was one depiction of Buddha before the
Greek ones but every time I see this
claim there is no citation what are your
thoughts on iconography and Buddhism do
you think it has been an overall
positive or negative what do you think
would be the Buddha's opinion on

iconography such as art depicting a more monasteries being full of statues that attempt to portray his physical likeness well I mean there's a lot of stuff I could address with regard to this what CEO of action and C5 zidana says is true that originally in the earliest Buddhist art

um they would there would just be like an empty seat or a footprint or a body leaf or something just to represent the Buddha indirectly because the the emphasis or the point they were trying to make is that the boot is no longer in this world like I mentioned earlier he is no longer in any world he's no longer

in samsara he has attained nibana he is
off the scale and so originally in the
oldest Buddhist art he would not be
portrayed and then
um one of the main theories is that it
started with the Greeks
and there was around the same time there
were two places where the the earliest
Buddha statues arose one is in the Greek
kingdoms of Northwestern India which
should now be mostly Pakistan and
Afghanistan I think and the other one
was in the city of mathura
where it also could have started but
matura was within the Greek sphere of
influence like uh King minandros who's
called Melinda

um in tarabada Buddhism actually invaded mathura and it was within his sphere of influence of his kingdom so it could be that even if the earliest statues began in mathura it could still have been Greek influence

um claiming that these statues were of the bodhisatta and not of the Buddha himself thereby kind of justifying having an image of the man reminds me that most Buddha statues in Burma I'm not sure about other Buddhist countries but most Buddhist statues in Burma technically are of the bodhisatta before it became enlightened because it's in the in poly be called the bhumi Pasa

um mudra I guess mudra would be Sanskrit

it's the boomi sparsha mudra where the

Buddha I mean I'm sitting down you can't

really see it he's got one hand like

this in his lap he's sitting

cross-legged and the other hand is like

this touching the ground

and that was from the night of his

Enlightenment before it became

enlightened so most of the Buddha

statues you see in Burma technically

speaking he wasn't the Buddha yet

and the whole boomi sparsa

mudra I might be butchering the Sanskrit

there is I mean the reason why he's

touching the ground with one hand is

that according to the legend when he sat

down to meditate he was firmly intent on
becoming enlightened and Mara the evil
one you know sort of the Lord of samsara
came and was trying to get him to stop
because he didn't want anyone to escape
from his his Empire so to speak and so
he says you know you have no right to be
sitting here or some such and the Buddha
touched the ground to I mean calling
upon the Earth as his witness that he
had the right to sit there and that's uh
that's where that's the mudra or the the
hand position you know the different
hand positions of the Buddha have
different meanings like my personal
favorite is John amudra like the little

white marble statue up there where he's

just sitting in meditation and that's

um that one indicates his actual

Enlightenment where he is enlightened at

that point this is the John moodra the

meditation mudra and um

the one the one over here the Sleepy

Buddha where he's kind of going like

like this it's it's not Orthodox you

don't see that one in in Burma that's I

don't know where that came from

maybe Mahayana Buddhism or something

so anyway let's see here

um

I I didn't I'd never even heard that

it's that Buddha images are explicitly

against the cerebellum Venia

um sovasivada arose before the Greeks
started making statues I think
saravastivada officially became a sect
of Buddhism at around the third Council
which would be during the the reign of
the emperor Ashoka which was before the
Greeks came it was after the mauryan
Empire uh was just collapsing that the
Greeks came in and got some easy scores
um so it could be just a late rule added
to servosity or it could be which was
like a unattended reform movement on
servos de Vada
um
it isn't from the Buddha himself well I
mean it just wasn't a thing in the

Buddhist time

I mean that's then they just didn't make

statues like that it was the Greeks or

really in the Statue so that's one of

the bits of evidence that the Greeks

actually started making Buddha statues

after the after they invaded India and

converted to Buddhism

um

let's see one of my thoughts on

iconography and Buddhism I really am

indifferent I'm I'm the sort of person

that and rarely would I bow down to a

Buddha statue I think I have bowed down

to that one before I've never bowed down

to the not an orthodox one

um for the most part I wouldn't bow like

before a ceremony in Burma all the other monks would be bowing to the Statue because in Burma they're very Faith oriented and devotionalistic and they bow to the Statue and I'd just be sitting there kind of looking at them or you know just looking at the Statue

um

and sometimes you know they try and talk me into it you know oh you get Merit if you bow to the Statue and I just say Meredith is for Lay people monks are supposed to go beyond that sort of thing um but yeah the Buddha wouldn't I don't think the Buddha would encourage anyone to make statues of him any more than

he'd encourage people to worship Him
um but then again there are some pseudos
where he's doing exactly that not with
regard to the statues because
the the sutas were finished the poly
sutas were done and before anyone ever
thought of making a Buddha statue
probably or before anyone actually made
one before it went mainstream for sure
so and the the attempt to portray is
physical likeness I don't even know if
they're seriously trying to portray the
physical likeness of the Buddha because
in Burma the Buddha looks kind of plump
and effeminate looking and kind of
Burmese looking Chinese Buddha statues
look Chinese Japanese Buddha statues

Japanese the Greek the earliest Greek

Buddha statues he looked Greek he looked

at European

um and nobody really knows what he looks

like other than you know some fairly

sketchy descriptions of what he looked

like and he was tall relatively thin

presumably you know he had aristocratic

features probably more or less European

like Indo-European features probably

like a straight nose and high forehead

and maybe thin lips gold and colored

skin supposedly

um but people just make the statue so

that the Buddha looks like the ethnicity

of the culture in which the statue is

made and I don't know for some people it
can be helpful for some people it may be
a hindrance
um I really don't think it's all that
important so long as you're not thinking
that the statue is actually somehow the
Buddha
I mean I would I wouldn't definitely
wouldn't spit on it you know I mean I I
might not bow to a statue but I wouldn't
just be like flagrantly disrespectful
either
that um I mean it's sort of a reminder
of go to My Buddha or a reminder of this
man who was just you know fully
enlightened brilliant philosopher just
you know a genius a saint so I mean he's

worthy of respect regardless even if

you're not a if you even if you're not a

Buddhist

so I mean to each his own

um I don't really have a dog in the

fight tell you the truth

so I'll just move on to CEO of action

sipad zidane's next question

and according to him like and I quote

this is going to be a long multi-part

question in all parts of it come from

the relatively long Mula party Yaya suta

from the majikaya

this seems to be a relatively early text

as it has parallel rescensions found in

the Chinese

rather than in the majima agama the suta
begins with the Buddha saying mendicans
I will teach you the explanation of the
root of all things
so part one of his question here
the Buddha lists various things like the
elements the senses Gods meditative
States unification diversity the all and
nibbana and Compares how a worldling
and the tagata sees them this seems to
be closer to how the abhidham emphasizes
nibana as just part of a list rather
than putting special emphasis on it like
Mahayana do although not exactly the
same as either what are your thoughts on
this well I haven't read the uh lesutan
in quite a long time it's been years I

don't recall it vividly

um but

as a general rule if I read a suta in

which they are like dividing up samsara

or just the entire Cosmos and

classifying it then I would not consider

that suited to be extremely early the

very fact that it's also in a Chinese

rescension that it's also found in other

early texts it just means that

um it predates the first

the first schism

and that's why it was like a hundred

years after the time of the Buddha and

anyone familiar with the the history of

early Christianity can say can tell you

that a heck of a lot of mutation and

additions can arise in a hundred years

so um it could be relatively late even

though it was early enough to be before

the first Schism still it's not

necessarily what the Buddha was actually

teaching

ah so uh

let's see what's the question here what

are your thoughts on this those are my

thoughts I guess so I'll just move on to

part two of this question

the Buddha doesn't call nibana an

Ultimate Reality but instead talks about

the way we perceive the various things

listed above how we identify with them

cling to them and all of it is a result

of not knowing them properly most
Scholars take this to mean that the
Buddha is saying that there is no true
root of all things but I can also see it
as possibly saying ignorance is the root
of all things what's your opinion on
this well ignorance is the root of
samsara
but or ignorance or delusion either one
take your pick kind of a
like a semi-conscious stupidity would be
a good but long rendering of mohawk
um or avija is just ignorance but it's
ignorance in the sense that you're not
seeing the full picture you're not
seeing total reality you're just seeing

this limited Little slice of reality and
distorting even that and considering
that to be the reality and on and on uh
we need to get into that too much but um
let's see the Buddha is saying that
there is no true root of all things this
is the tricky part and it's really hard
to just really hard to explain this I've
tried it many times but when you get to
the absolute
I mean it transcends Duality the
absolute transcends Duality so it
transcends The Duality of is and isn't
existence and non-existence
so
um
in a way it's quite sort of like the

kantian thing in itself or or something

like that but even Kant would say that

the thing in itself really exists

and uh

like the root of all things some yeah

it's like in there are suits some

suitors where the Buddha just says

everything is without essence you know

there's there's no root but then

um in other sutas I mean there is I mean

when you get to abhidham I mean

obviously they think everything that

truly exists all these little Rupa

kalapas these little particles that

compose the entire universe particles of

of matter and mind that they're all

ultimately real even though they last

only a trillionth of a second

so let's see what is my opinion on this

uh

most Scholars take this to mean that the

Buddhists saying yeah well I mean I'd

have to read the suit again but just

from what I've heard about this I would

be skeptical that that it's really an

archaic suta that goes all the way back

or even really close to the buddhistan

this one might have been right under the

wire when towards the end of this

hundred years of growth and expansion

and like mutation of Buddhist Doctrine

um there are starting to be more and

more diversity and classification

schemes and so forth and that's probably
where taravana became known as vibaja
Vada which is like the the doctrine of
uh like discrimination just
distinguishing this from that and
um you know the the early terravans were
taking pride in that but um
yeah
I really don't think that the Buddha was
really I think he was teaching pretty
much the opposite of like discriminating
this from that maybe at like a
relatively Elementary level for Lay
people you have to discriminate right
from wrong that kind of a thing but when
you're getting up into the upper levels

distinguishing this from that that's
papancha and that's like the root of
delusion and you're eventually gonna
have to leave that behind I think the
Buddha was a radical Mystic
so I'll just move on to part three of
this Quest this question
okay determine poly used is nibana but
in English they usually translate it
here to extinguishment or unbinding yeah
that unbinding that's ajan tanisiro's
pet pet you know rendering for it this
makes it seem to be in contrast to the
all that the Buddha mentions before it
to make them seem like complete
opposites
before that the Buddha talks about unity

and diversity as opposite as well what

do you make of the Buddha using the

words the all and nibana as opposites

well they all would be like samsara that

would be the samsarik all because

Nirvana really I mean it doesn't have an

opposite really but nibana and samsara

really aren't opposites I mean I mean

just sort of intuitively you consider

nubana and samsara to be opposites but

really they aren't because nibana

doesn't have an opposite because it's

just beyond dualism you have to have

dualism in order for there to be an

opposite

so let's see I'm

uh the term Paul uses in English they

usually translate here as extinguishment

or mining literally regardless of what

people like John tanisro try to tell you

literally nibana means blowing out

like like a fire like a candle flame is

it blown out

and there's actually

um references to that in the tsujini

Pata you know just as a flame when it's

blown out by the force of wind goes to

its cessation and no longer subjects

itself to any designation so too the

arhant when he you know when he is blown

out he's you know he's

comes to a cessation and no longer

subjects himself to any designation

but

um ajan denisro did point out that in

ancient India fire was considered to be

a god Agony who has

um I think he's like the second the

second most popular God in the rig Veda

like the second highest number of hymns

are dedicated to Agni the god of fire

because he was the god of the sacrifice

and The Vedas are largely sacrificial

hymns that were recited at fire

sacrifices

um and the God I mean he exists

regardless of whether there's a flame

there's like a latent there's like

latent Flame

that that's there even if there's no

actual flame burning and so ajanta

argues that nibana is kind of like that

I mean you just kind of go back into

this unformed in KOA state after you

become enlightened but

um

I mean trying to understand nibana

intellectually is is a Fool's errant or

maybe an intellectual Fool's errand

because you really can't understand

nibana by thinking about it you can't

understand Ultimate Reality by thinking

about it because it just transcends

Duality and the thinking mind works in

duality

so let's see

what do you make of the Buddha using the

words the all and nibana as opposites

um well I mean there is another suta

where the all is defined as the i i

Consciousness and the visual you know

the sense datum and the ear and ear

Consciousness in the auditory since

datum and you know the nose and nose

Consciousness and the olfactory and

sense datum and it's all just a matter

of

um

this the five the six senses because

mind is considered to be the sixth sense

and you know the six senses and what is

experienced through the six senses

so

mind glandular secretions

so

um it's just manner of speech because

truly nibana does not have an opposite

which kind of opened the door to the

Mahayana Buddha saying that ultimately

nibana and samsara are the same like

I've said a number of times if you if

you say that nibana is just for the

convenience say that nibana is the

essence of reality

then samsara is the form you know the

gold ring it's the essence is gold and

ring you know the thing with the hole in

it is the form

um I mean you have to have both at least

you have to have the essence you can't have you can't have the gold ring without the gold you can have gold without the ring but you can't have a ring the gold ring without the gold I mean there has to be a substance or an essence

and I'm going to be more inclined to consider nibana it's the uncarved block and all these virtual statues that you know that are created by Mind through imagination of just kind of seeing it in the block or whatever I mean just for the sake of argument I mean I don't want to try and uh beat the the dead horse in here but um

yeah

so let's see I'll just move on to part

four of CEO of actionaza

complex question here the ending of the

suto says in a Twist of events that is

what the Buddha said but the mendicants

were not happy with what the Buddha said

the commentaries explained that they

were not happy because they were

brahmanas and this went against the idea

of Ultimate Reality they had before

being Buddhists so it shook them to me

it seems like this reaction wouldn't

happen if the Buddha taught the exact

same concept as Brahman as the

upanishadic sages what are your thoughts

on this again I haven't read the suto

Recently I don't have like a clear

recollection of it

um I

it probably does not indicate that all

of the monks were brahmanas

um it could just be that it's just human

nature you want there to be a reality

that you can understand and grasp and

he's just pulling the rug out from under

them

and if you read something like the

antagawaga which I talk about rather a

lot

I mean it really does it just pulls the

rug right out from under you there's

nothing that you can cling to nothing

that you can grasp just nothing I mean

you can't even grasp onto nothingness

you can't even cling to that there's you

know it's the empty set it's not even

zero

and uh I mean most people especially if

they're just not right for full

Enlightenment that's kind of scary and

unsettling and people want a certain

security including intellectual security

at least they want to know what's what

and when the Buddha is just like saying

you know there isn't any just just

forget it you know it's

no

um yeah that's that's unsettling and

probably even though the monks maybe

weren't brahmanas they were probably
unenlightened you know they weren't they
weren't fully enlightened yet and so it
just was kind of scary to them or you
know it just again it's just sort of
pulling the rug out from one of them
so um
yeah the Buddha wasn't teaching the
exact same concept of Vermont in the
upanishadic upanishadic sages because
the upanishads reify
the absolute and in that's like one the
Buddha went like one step further where
he's not even trying to reify it I mean
he's I mean you can't explain it in
words and so he would just like not even

try it you know he it's just off the

scale

you know your mouth is the name that can

be named is not the Eternal name

and so I mean for the most part he would

just sort of dance around it maybe maybe

hint at it a little bit it's not this

it's not that you know like the

upanishad says in 1890 not this not that

but um

yeah I think I'll just move on to CEO

Fox and sipad zidane's next question

because as I say we've got quite a lot

of them which is uh generally the case

lately and I may have to start doing it

once a week because I keep saying

so

of actions

the next question is in the simsapa suta

the Buddha picked up a handful of leaves

and said that what he teaches is like

the handful of leaves and that what he

knows from direct knowledge but doesn't

teach is like the whole Forest he only

teaches suffering it's cause it's

cessation and the path of its cessation

uh because that is what is useful for

the holy life and reaching the goal and

I just want to say that CEO of action

totally unnecessarily added apostrophes

to its

I'm a grammar Nazi I'm sorry

so

um

oh wait he continues

based on this do you think the whole

Forest is what every aroha achieves upon

Enlightenment or do our Hans achieve the

ultimate goal with just the handful of

leaves amount of knowledge like a sailor

and having to travel all over the ocean

to reach an island if someone who has

reached the destination already has made

a map and the Buddha's own vast

knowledge came as a result of traveling

all over the ocean before finding the

island metaphorically

well

um this is kind of a it's a good

question and sort of a subtle one more

subtle than it it seems at first glance

um yeah there is the suta where the

Buddha is in the simsapa Grove I can't

remember what species of trees some Sapa

trees are but yeah he holds up a handful

and says you know what I teach you is

like this but I know like all the leaves

in the forest amount of knowledge

and

I mean you can say just from the

traditional point of view from the

Orthodox terabond point of view the

Buddha had as I mentioned earlier a kind

of uh omniscience

what's so when you die because he knows

all things if he wants to I mean he has

to like attend to it in order to know it

and that would apply only to a fully

enlightened Buddha not to an ordinary

Aura hunt

and there are in the in the suit as

mentions of dry visioned arohans who

haven't acquired any psychic powers you

know they don't have any miraculous

powers like that you know they haven't

become paranormal Superman they just no

longer have craving an attachment

and so

um I would be inclined to think that the

original meaning of the suta is that

even an auron might see more leaves you

know somebody like sorry puta or

mogalana you know they they have a way

bigger handful of leaves at the very

least that they would know of

but um

yeah I don't think that they would be

considered omniscient

but then again if you want to look at it

in a different way and this could be a

relatively late suto but if you want to

look at it in a different way then I

mean when you're enlightened you're

seeing Ultimate Reality you know

alternate reality which is the whole

Forest whereas

um you know the Normie the butujana he's

he's got ignorance which prevents him

from being enlightened and that limits

the amount of what he's able to see so

you could really interpret it in both

ways

and I'm not sure exactly what the

original meaning was I don't want to

second guess the uh the Buddha or

whoever is the author of The suta

but it could be interpreted both ways

but probably the Orthodox explanation is

that the Buddha was omniscient and even

a fully enlightened Aaron hunt

who isn't a the target

um that he wouldn't see as many leaves

as the Buddha did

so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from Dharma

and Dharma says did your parents pass

away while you were in Burma

where were you able to attain their

funeral and did you wear your robe

called doing so well it turns out that

both of my parents did die while I was

in Burma

um in fact when my father died I didn't

even hear about I was living in a cave

out in the woods didn't hear about it

until maybe two weeks later and it was

kind of a strange situation I might as

well digress

in that I went for alms around in this

village lemie Village and one of the the

people there had received a phone call

from Rangoon had received a message from

Rangoon I should say telling me that my teacher venerable Poco Seattle were also known as uh Tom Pulu Charleston doya Seattle he had passed away so I asked this lady could she make a phone call and find out when the funeral was going to be because I wanted to attend Seattle's funeral he was like my main teacher in Burma

so back in those days in order to make a phone call you had to get in a boat and cross the children River to a village on the other side of the river that actually had a foam this is before cell phones and stuff made it to Burma so uh later on that day she came to visit me in my cave

and she said in just the softest voice I
have some bad news to tell you do you
want to hear it and right then I knew my
father must have died
and that was that was the case and um
I just had this empty feeling in my
chest I didn't cry but I had just this
emptiness in my chest I made like this
little I had a picture of my dad put it
on the altar you know all for little
flowers too I wished him well
um
and when my mother died I was in Rangoon
and uh I just got an email this was back
when finally there was some semblance of
internet in Burma but it was really

really crappy like 1G something like

that

and uh it was my brother who was

destroyed telling me that my mother had

died and I mean when you're a monk you

have no money you can't just uh Rush

down into the travel agency and buy a

ticket I mean you're dependent upon the

generosity of

lay people and in Burma there's not a

whole lot of really wealthy lay people I

probably couldn't have made it back

before the funeral anyway

so yeah the answer is

um yeah my parents passed away while I

was a monk in Burma and I was not able

to attend their funeral although I did

attend my stepbrother's wedding as a

monk dressed in Monk's robs which uh

probably the Christian minister he

didn't seem real thrilled about it but

there's not much he could say

so we'll just move on to dharma's next

question

have you ever been interested in the

Hari Krishna movement also known as the

international Society for Krishna

Consciousness I just learned that its

founder

what is this srila prabhupada

had some pretty negative views about

blacks Jews and homosexuals

um to tell you the truth I've never

really been interested in Hari krishnas

it's so Faith oriented in fact

um Hari Krishna guy gave me a book once

it was um and it was a warning against

Hare krishnas even associating with

meditators they're not supposed to have

anything to do with meditators a

meditators called something like a

Moksha Vaden who thinks that you can

actually become enlightened through

self-cultivation rather than just

reciting the names of God over and over

and over again

um so I just I've never been

devotionalistic really

I mean I've had moments but just by

temperament I'm just not a devotionalist

and so no I've never really been much

interested in Hari krishna's but they

had a really good vegetarian restaurant

in Seattle I remember I used to go there

sometimes back when I was a vegetarian

um and regardless I mean prabhupada's

negative views about

black to Jews and homosexuals and this

irrelevant I suppose

so we'll just move on to dharma's next

question

have you ever been so sexually

frustrated that you began to find

another Monk attractive no not never

have I mean I've I've met a few monks

they're like young monks that you know

you because they're Asian I suppose

partly partly because they're Asian they

had they'd have like feminine features

and you could think wow if he was a girl

he'd be really pretty but still I mean I

wasn't actually attracted to them I have

been so sexually frustrated when I was a

monk that I'd be I'd find my own naked

leg when I was taking a bath attracted

look down seeing naked my own naked leg

you know that could be stimulating

somehow

but that's more autoerotic than

homoerotic

so yeah I've never been so sexually

frustrated that I began to find another

Monk attractive

although I mean if there's a guy who's a

handsome guy you can acknowledge he's

handsome but that's not the same as

being sexually attracted to them

so dharma's next question

is homoerotic behavior between monks

forbidden like hugging and sleeping in

the same bed yes it is forbidden

um

it's a serious offense for a monk to

touch a woman with lust he's got a he's

gotta if he touches a woman and enjoys

it and does anything to establish or

prolong the contact

then he's got to do Penance for six days

and six nights if he feels the same way

or while touching a eunuch you know

someone who's technically not fully male

or female upon the cop then that is a

Tula Chaya offense which is a serious

offense but at least

um you can clear it through making

confession

but if you touch a man and experience

lust then that's just the Duke of

offense it's still against the rules but

it's a minor offense and you just make

confession and and that kind of pushes

reset or something

and so hugging a man in in a kind of

homoerotic behavior it would be against

the rules it would be a ducat offense

and if if both or if like one of them

the man that you're hugging is let's say

he's just really like

how just what's the word like a flaming

homosexual he might qualify as a pawn to

come so that could be a tooleach high

offense but still it's not as serious as

touching a woman with lust

and uh sleeping in the same bed is

against the rules it's also a minor

offense but monks aren't allowed to

sleep on the same bed or sleep on the

same mat or sleep under the same blanket

that's against the rules

so there was some uh

uh attempts to prevent that sort of

thing in terrible Buddhism

and uh

I mean it still happens I'm sure but uh

it's not as rampant as the stuff you're

hearing about like in uh Roman

Catholicism the Roman Catholic cleared

you

so the next question from Dharma was the

universe created according to Buddhism

and if yes who created it well I mean

the boot the universe had no original

creation you know there wasn't one day

when all of a sudden the universe came

into existence the universe has always

been here samsara is beginningless and

presumably endless

you know all beings are not going to

become saved like like the Mahayana

Buddhists

um vow to do

I mean the universe has already been

here an infinitely long amount of time

and there's still countless numbers of

suffering beings apparently at least you

know from the samsari perspective

so I think the only way you can save all

beings is to become enlightened and

realize that all these individual beings

that are supposedly suffering are just

virtually or conditionally real and not

ultimately real

but I mean in a way the universe is

created but it's created Moment by

moment through the power of of Karma and

ignorance and delusion so it's the

it's

just this beginningless

Karma and ignorance and delusion is just

sort of generating some sorrow from

moment to moment

so I'll just move on to dharma's next

question

what are your thoughts on monasteries in

the west where bikus and bikunis lived

together isn't this almost impossible

according to the sutas since the Buddha

said the following in the denikaya quote

how shall we relate to women Master do

not look at them but if if one sees one

master do not address her but if one

talks to us

keep mindfulness and self-control and if
I remember correctly that was Ananda the
Buddha's attendant and cousin asking the
Buddha you know what do we do about
women who says don't look at them
and then Anonymous says yeah but if
they're like standing in front of you
you can't help but see them just don't
talk to them and it's oh what if they
talk to us first I mean what we have to
engage somehow it says you need to be
very careful be very Mindful and um
there is a futon I don't remember which
one I might be in the angura nikaya or
something that says one of the signs of
the decay of Buddhism you know the

decline of Dharma in the world is there

will be monasteries where monks and nuns

are living together

not necessarily sleeping together all

they have to do is just be living in the

same Monastery and that is a sign that

Buddhism is on the downhill slide

so

let's see what are my thoughts on

monasteries in the west

um yeah it's probably best not to do it

every once in a while even in Burma

because there are places like that in

Burma too like mahasi centers you know

they'll have I mean they're not in

bikinis but because in Burma there are

no bikunis you know just in traditional

theravada Buddhist countries at least in

Thailand and and Burma I'm not sure

about Sri Lanka

but they just I mean the ecclesiastical

system just does not acknowledge the

validity of ordained nuns anymore so

you've got nuns but they they follow

like eight or ten precepts they don't

follow the full linear rules you know

they were in I think in Thailand they

were white in Burma they usually wear

sort of a pink color or like a peach

color with some brown

um

but those kind of nuns will live at the

same Monastery or Meditation Center as

fully ordained monks and every once in a

while you'll have some Scandal of some

none and some Monk just run off together

that's that's happened uh in the west

also I have heard

so

yeah it's it's not a good idea maybe

it's seen as just sort of necessity in

the west because there's so there's

limited resources for supporting

monasteries and so forth but um it is it

is a sign of decline according to the

the poly texts

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Sacha

and Sasha says I find the commentaries

to be of great value what do you think

of them well

I consider I think the Burmese

considered the commentaries to be even

more important than the Bali texts

because

I mean if if in the suit itself the

Buddha says blue but in the commentary

it says when the Buddha said blue what

he really meant was red if you don't

have the commentary you're not going to

know that when it says blue in the text

it really means red

and there is a lot of that like

um there is the the uh the scene in

vinya there's a narrative where the the

Buddha says that

um because of the ordination of nuns the Buddhist Asana Will Survive for only 500 years and then in the commentary it says well when he said 500 years what he meant was 5 000 years and why he would say five thousand if he meant 500
I mean that's just silly but by the time the commentaries were composed in medieval Sri Lanka approximately a thousand years later at least the the versions that we have today you know reach pretty much their final form you know over a thousand years later after the time of the Buddha I mean obviously the 500 years had already elapsed and they can't say well the Buddha was wrong or you know this just is just spurious

it was added later you know it's not
genuine teaching of the Buddha they
couldn't adopt either of those recourses
like like a modern Western can do
so they just say Well when he said 500
he meant 5 000 and just kind of that's
the best they could do to kind of patch
up the situation
but um the commentaries
you're better off not relying on them I
mean if you can use your own intuition
you just read the text let it flow
through your mind and just
some a lot of the time it'll just click
you know it's like intuitively you'll be
able to make sense of at least most of

it and some of it you may not understand
and there's a good chance the
commentators also wouldn't understand
they make a lot of wild guesses and the
trouble is they don't admit that they're
making wild guesses they say you know
this is what it means even though
they're guessing and sometimes they
guess wrong
so I really don't have much use for
buddigosism as opposed to Buddhism
um Buddha Gosa of course being the um
the main
um editor and compiler of most of or a
lot of the the automatas or taravana
Buddhist commentaries and he is the
author of The wisudi Maga which is sort

of like the the central Hub of all the

commentaries you know it's like the main

commentarial

um text in terrible Buddhism

so sometimes though

um there's like a certain poly word that

occurs only once or twice in the entire

pitica like in Linea you know it'll have

this word that you don't know what it

means you've never seen that word before

so you can look in the commentary to

kind of get an idea

you know it's like they'll say this but

I mean it's just an idea it's just a

suggestion because there's a good chance

they don't know either but they can't

admit that they don't know so they'll
just come up with something they'll meet
their best guess which maybe isn't a
very good guess
so I wouldn't rely on the commentaries
any more than you have to
so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from David
what do you make of Dr Ian Stevenson's
work I remember reading hone Kenneth's
work which alluded to her lameness being
accountable from her previous Karma as a
tiger I don't find it Fantastical at all
I'm fairly sure rebirth is real from
experience and a logical point of view
many thanks well I have read two books
by Dr Ian Stevenson and he was

um he was a psychologist I think I think
it was the University of Virginia
and he was trying to find scientific
evidence to support the idea of rebirth
or reincarnation and
um most of what he was doing especially
in his his earlier several books was
locating young children like small
children who remembered previous lives
and sometimes they could come up with
information about you know where they
lived you know who their family members
were who their friends were how they
died and then that could be verified and
sometimes like in the ideal case for Dr
Stevenson he'd find the child before

um there had been any contact between
you know this child and this other
existence other family that the the
child supposedly died out of
and it's really interesting a lot of it
I mean you can call it circumstantial
evidence and maybe there's some frauds
involved but some of it's uh yeah it's
it's it's definitely considerable
evidence and then I guess later on I
didn't read any books on the subject
um by him but he was uh starting to
specialize in people born with strange
birthmarks that somehow they were
related to something that happened to
him in previous existence and that
um I think I might have a strange kind

of mark on my body that's derived from a

previous existence I've got like this

purple spot

um

like over a certain lymph node on my

body and uh I think there's a good

chance that that's where the bubo was

that killed me when I died a Bubonic

plague in the 14th century

a lot of people did die a Bubonic plague

in the first 14th century like one-third

of the Earth's population

but I mean it's just all you can't

really prove it one way or the other

it's just very interesting and you're

probably better off not spending too

much time and energy you know trying to

to figure it out or get proof or

anything because I don't think you're

ever going to really be able to prove it

one way or the other but um yeah Dr Ian

Stevenson's work is is well worth

reading

um especially if you're open-minded yet

still somewhat skeptical of the idea of

rebirth he does present some

more or less scientific evidence for

rebirth

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Casey

in case he asks

can I ask why you left the Washington

area

well I grew up in Washington state in

the Pacific Northwest

um of the United States

and the first time I left it was to

become a monk I was living in Bellingham

near the Canadian border

um before I became a monk and so the

first time I left was to become a monk

and then I came back and tried to live

in Bellingham again in 2011 and made

some some efforts over the next couple

years

and uh it just

I it just didn't work out it turns out

that later on I I met this old Burmese

lady who actually bought a house for a

friend of mine a monk friend of mine
near Seattle and was I mean she was
supporting him living there and if that
had happened to me it might have it
might have really struck traction or
something but it didn't happen to me it
happened to him instead and uh yeah it's
just I just wasn't getting enough
support I mean I had some generous
supporters that were happy to support me
enthusiastic about it but I didn't want
to be a burden on them I mean it was
just you know in single digits the
number of people who were willing to
bring me food every day and that sort of
thing you know offer me shelter and that
sort of thing and so I was living from

hand to mouth which is good for a monk
to live from hand to mouth you know a
monk is supposed to live from hand to
mouth but still in in America it just
wasn't working out very well so
eventually I just went back to Burma
and started like commuting back and
forth between Burma and California where
there's a large Burmese Community
willing to support monks ordained in a
Burmese tradition which was not the case
in Northwestern Washington State
so it was largely uh just a matter of
support at the time
and kec also asked a question there were
a number of questions that I mean they

haven't really made the cut of this list

because they were like rhetorical

questions or something he asked what is

bit shoot which is it's like an

alternative to YouTube

with uh less censorship and an attempted

thought control on the part of the uh

the people who manage it

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from Johannes and

Johannes has asked a number of questions

here

and uh his first question is

do you have some experience with the Sri

Lankan teravada I seriously think about

ordaining in the coming years probably

in two years when my current project of

building a meditation center is finished I thought Sri Lanka might be good since they speak English there and they had some quite appealing Masters in the last century I came out in the anaponica in parentheses do you think it's an authentic taravada that is practiced there especially in regards to rules and knowledge of the Pali scriptures I also wish to become a Wandering ascetic at one point what in Thailand is called tudong do you maybe know if this is a common practice in Sri Lanka okay well for the most part the mainstream of theravada Buddhist monasticism in Sri Lanka is just corrupt as hell I mean

there's very little monastic discipline

there anymore

um it's very corrupt as a general rule

just with regard to the mainstream

you know most I mean it's very few Sri

Lankan monks even make token effort to

really follow the rules strictly

um they're they're very nice and they

speak English even in their monasteries

in the west unlike most Thai and Burmese

probably other

um Asian ethnicities like well they

speak English they're unlike like you go

to a Burmese temple or a Thai temple

they'll be speaking mostly Burmese or

Thai inside the temple whereas in Sri

Lanka they're mostly just speaking

English partly because at least the the

Sri Lankan temples I I went to I visited

um in America

they uh

is the supporters or Sri Lankan

professionals like engineers and

computer programmers and so forth that

um they're just really intelligent they

speak good English I guess in Sri Lanka

there's just a culture just try going

back to British colonialism where

educated people speak good English

um but there is like a reform movement

like a forest tradition in Sri Lanka

that is serious so if you wanted to

ordain there and be a serious monk you'd

have to find

um like some Monastery or some some uh

senior monk some Tara who's in this

Forest tradition that is actually trying

to walk the talk

like Sri Lankan amongst a lot of them it

might even be the majority of Sri Lankan

monks don't even consider it to be

possible to become enlightened anymore

that it's just we're like in the Kali

Yuga or something it's a degenerate age

people just can't become enlightened so

they just consider to be their duty to

memorize the text or to understand the

text and teach the text preserve the

poly texts in case things get better in

the future

uh at least they're helping people to

get some dhamma you know in this life

even though according to them you can't

become enlightened anymore but I'm

pretty sure that they're among striving

for enlightenment out in the forests in

this sort of it's a relatively recent

movement in Sri Lanka or so I have read

and heard

but um it might be that you would prefer

Thailand where there is the the two dong

tradition I'm not sure I assume there is

some some like

um nutanga in Sri Lanka among these

serious Forest Aesthetics but I really

don't know a heck of a lot about it but

I'm sure you could find out some some
good information on the subject before
you go to Sri Lanka to be ordained I
mean you should you should find out who
is who's good what's it where where are
the good places or at least one good
place before you go there unless you've
got a lot of money and time to just tour
the country and look for some place and
some teacher that resonates with you
that can that could work too
so I'll just move on to the next
question from Johannes
I assume it's pronounced Johannes
did you have a favorite dotonga one
where you had the impression it helped
you greatly on your path

um eating one meal a day was was helpful
I like that I ate one meal a day for
almost every single day for 30 years
sometimes there'd be a few exceptions
like you're on a plane crossing the
Pacific Ocean and you're just sitting
there and for hours and hours and
anything that they'd give me in the
morning I'd eat although technically it
didn't break the new tongue as long as I
didn't get up in between
because it's just one sitting it's not
one meal it's one sitting
um another dutonga that was helpful was
the alms around utonga and they were for
a long time I seriously followed now I

would only eat food that I had collected in the village in my bowl of course it's not going to work so well in America I think there are a few monks that that at least go for alms around in the west and and actually collect food that way I've been told that one way that they do this is stand in front of a grocery store and explain to people they don't accept money but you know they'll accept you know food that gets put in there into their bowl

so yeah eating only all food I mean sometimes you might have to fast for a few days if you're traveling and it's just not working out but um yeah that that was a good one too and it does keep

you from getting spoiled like once you
have your own Monastery people are going
to be wanting to bring you food and uh
you can just sort of hold them at Bay by
saying I only eat alms food
so I'll just move on to the next
question
this is also from Johannes when
practicing dotonga of not lying down are
we allowed to lean against something
like the back of a couch and are we
allowed to sleep
uh well of course you're allowed to
sleep I mean you go without sleep long
enough and you're gonna crack up a
friend of mine actually did this because

of the sitting dutonga

um if you read the wisudi Manga I'm

pretty sure it's the second chapter of

the wisudi manga it's all about dotonga

it's just a a list an explanation of the

13 dutongas which are optional ascetic

practices

and each dutonga has three levels it's

like hard medium and easy

and the dog just came in

how you doing

so

um with regard to the sitting new Tonga

the sitters practice

um easy is you're allowed to sit in a

chair

and uh the monastery or the tradition in

which I was ordained the tongpulu

tradition

all the monks were supposed to do the

sitter's practice they did not lie down

when they slept

so the easy most of them follow the easy

level

which was you can you can use a chair so

they had kind of like a wicker kind of

almost a reclining chair and I would

consider anything more than a 45 degrees

you know you get Beyond 45 and you're

lying down you're as long as you're more

vertical than horizontal you know so

like at least like that

I think technically you could still be

doing the sinner's practice at least at

the easy level

um when I was a young monk doing the

sitters practice

um

I followed the intermediate the medium

level which is you're allowed to lean

back against a board or another

alternative is you can take like a rope

or a belt or something and you sit with

your knees up and you just kind of wrap

it around your back and your like your

shins and that kind of holds you up with

your knees up but

um it seems like that would be really

rough when you're behind after a while

it's just all your weight just on this

small amount of Flesh I don't think it
would be comfortable you'd probably be
better off leaning back against a board
or something just leaning back against
the wall is too vertical I mean you have
to lean back at least a little bit
and uh hard the hard level you can't
lean against anything you can't lean
back against anything
so you got to be just sitting there as
though in meditation I guess way blue
Seattle of Burma who was considered to
be an araha would sleep that way
and I had this friend who was trying to
do all of the jutongas at the hardest
level he was just like this Buddhist

Rambo

he uh wasn't really following the middle

path he was most people strayed towards

the self-indulgence side you know

instead of the mental path they kind of

veered towards you know excessive

comfort and so forth he veered the other

way he veered towards self-torture and

uh he but even so I mean he just could

not sleep just sitting upright so he put

his arms ball in front of him and leaned

forwards and just kind of rest his

forehead on his arms ball and uh he he

eventually cracked up largely through

lack of sleep just sleep deprivation

caused him to crack up and um

he had to be sent home to America he was

in Asia at the time he was sent home to

America it was like the the Ambassador

or one of the consuls or something had

to like help him get on the plane

because he was pretty much out of it for

a while and as soon as he got better he

just came right back to Burma I think

and and reordained I think he reordained

in Burma under uh tompoo Seattle

so

those are the the three levels I mean

the other all of the dutongas have three

levels like easy medium and hard

so I'll just move on to johannes's next

question

what would you as a monk do on upositon

is it important for laypeople and do you

think the moon has an impact on our

meditation and mindfulness and our

energy level

well you posted up for those of you who

aren't familiar

um it's every it's sort of like the

Buddhist Sabbath it's sort of like the

Buddhist equivalent of Sunday or

Saturday

if if you're that sort of Christian

um but it's it's the full moon the new

moon and the Half Moon days so there's

four per lunar month

and who would I as a monk do on

impulsatel well

um according to the Buddhist monastic

code

on the full moon days and the new moon

days all the monks have to meet together

in the congregation hall or whatever

they have that's rough equivalent to a

congregational inside the same

ecclesiastical boundary

and do an imposital ceremony and if

you're just by yourself living out in

the woods do you posted the ceremony

means

you uncover your

your shoulder you squat down and you say

ajame upulsateau three times which just

means today is my upholster Tom and if

you don't do that that's against the

rules

you've committed a Duke of fence which

is a minor offense you can expiate it

through uh confession if there's two or

three monks

pretty sure it's two or three yeah two

or three monks then there's this short

short little ceremonies it's longer than

ajame uposito but it takes just a few

minutes but if there's four or more

monks that's a Sangha it takes at least

four monks to make a Sangha and

um then you have to recite the padimoka

and that was my duty at some of the

monasteries I lived at at some of the

monsters I was the only monk who had

memorized by heart the entire viku

parimoka and so

um my mouth doesn't move very fast some

some Burmese monks they just rattle

through it it's just just boom it's like

an auction here reciting the parimoka

rules and they can be done in like 20

minutes but for me it would take if I

was doing it really fast for me it would

take at least 35 minutes to get through

the ceremony and you all you have to

squat you know everyone's like in the

squatting position you know making

Anjali with their hands and during hot

weather in Burma I mean I'd have like

these two puddles of sweat like one

underneath each uh elbow while squatting

like this by the time we were done and

sometimes your legs can just be in agony

if you have to squat for a long time

that's one of the self-tortuners the

jeans used to do is just squat for a

long time

but on the the eight day the half the

half moon days we didn't have to do

anything in particular the uh I stayed

at one big school Monastery where the

novices all had to go on the half moon

days and the full and New Moon days and

then we take their their precepts but

the monks didn't have to do that

um and with regard to the second part of

this question do I think the moon has an

impact on our meditation and mindfulness

and our energy level maybe a really

subtle one but I haven't really noticed

it consciously

so I'll just move on to johannes's next

question

why can Sadiq be translated as

mindfulness and memory it seems like

these are two different states of mind

or phenomena I would say mindfulness is

directing your mind to a certain

phenomena while memories come in at

random almost like a sense contact

thank you for your answers

um yeah I used to think about this too

why is it that being in the present

moment has the same word as remembering

something in the past that you're not

supposed to do when you're being mindful

or at least I mean you can remember the

password you're being mindful so long as

you are

like in the present moment observing

yourself remembering something in the

past which is a little bit tricky

um so it did seem strange to me how did

they come up with the same word uh Sadiq

literally means like memory

how did memory come to mean

um not thinking of a past at all but

just being in the present moment

and I was kind of surprised when I read

Saint in Saint John of the cross's works

that for a Catholic contemplative the

word for mindfulness that they use for
their own just being in the present
moment and not thinking anything more
than you need to think just being right
here right now you know be here now
that's called recollection which also
means memory how it came to be that both
uh Catholic uh contemplative monastic
orders and terravonna Buddhism words
Buddhism in general came to use the same
word for memory as mindfulness so I
really don't know the answer to that but
I guess you could say that both what
they have in common is just presence of
mind
but I mean a lot of the time memory is I

mean it's a conscious effort you're
trying to remember a name or something
then I mean you're you're deliberately
trying to remember it but um it is a
good question and I really don't have
the the answer of why it's the same not
only in Buddhism but in in like Roman
Catholicism also
so I'll just move on to johannes's next
question
let's check in the time here okay so
johannes's next question is can the word
Kaya be equaled with our contact on an
experiential level how do we know that
we have a body we only experience it as
a sense contact so can Kaya Sadiq be
equated with the mindfulness of the

feelings of the body I'm also wondering
what is the actual difference between
samaditi and samasati so I guess this is
another question Samad DT is defined as
knowing feeling as feeling contact is
contact Etc but wouldn't this be equated
with what most people say is Right
mindfulness if I remember correctly
right mindfulness includes mindfulness
of the Anita or the impermanence aspect
of these phenomena is that maybe the
difference okay well the first part
about the meaning of Kaya Kaya literally
means body or you can use it as mass but
usually it does mean body and how do we
know at the experiential level that we

have a body is indirectly we have to

infer the existence of physical matter

because all we can really know directly

is mind or mental States

so

in terrible Buddhism they just assumed

that physical matter is ultimately real

and in abidama especially you know

physical matter is one of the four

ultimate realities along with

mind mental states and nibana

so

um

yeah we do only experience it indirectly

I mean we do there really is no proof

that physical matter even exists which I

think uh Emmanuel Kant called the Great

Scandal of philosophy

which is also it kind of

it's it's a good argument against some

scientists or scientific atheists

especially who insist that that matter

is the the one thing that we can know

and really it's our own mental States

it's like subjectivity is the only thing

we really know and different

philosophers and different people have

dealt with that issue differently

so let's see

so can Kaya City or mindfulness of the

body be equated with the mindfulness of

the feelings of the body yeah that's

that's something that I've I've been

going with for a long time like

um like if you're doing anapana you're

not really being mindful of the air and

going in and out of your nose you're

being mindful

um if you're doing it well of just the

sensation of touch so yeah I never had

any use for mindfulness of the body even

though it's one of the four Sunny

patanas because you can't really know

the body except through mind so it's

still a kind of mindfulness of of like

cheetah nupasana or waiting on upasana

which is mindfulness of your own mind or

mindfulness of of feelings

yeah so I agree with that it is it's I

don't know if you could call it sloppy

thinking or what but yeah it does seem

to be kind of a a potential glitch in

the system

so then I'll just move on to the second

part here

the second half of this question I'm

also wondering what is the actual

difference between some Oddity and

Samosa D samaditi is defined as knowing

feeling is feeling contact is contact

Etc but that's I mean there might be a

suta or two that explain it that way

which would be like advanced practice

but some Oddity or right view is step

one on the Eightfold Path

and so for most people you know

especially lay people people that really
are not experienced meditators or like
renuncians
um Right View is is like you know there
is karma you know that that there is
morality and immorality right and wrong
that you have certain moral duties like
supporting your parents and that sort of
thing that would be right view just
um just like understanding or at least
believing the Four Noble Truths
that is it would be considered Right
View
um at the the elementary level
so it's just it's sort of like the road
map just sort of knowing the road map
to to practice you know it's like step

one

and this uh in the in the in the scene

there's only the scene and the heard

there's only the herd kind of a stuff

that's very advanced practice and that

would be more properly known as as

mindfulness

or even concentration if you get really

Advanced on it

so

yeah so that would be the difference I

don't there might be a suta that is

saying right view is this advanced level

you know being in the present moment not

interpreting you know having a running

commentary and that sort of thing but

for most people you know right of you it just has you know the basics of Buddhist philosophy including the four noble truths and so forth

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

and he says one of the wrong livelihoods is abstaining from Trading with meat wouldn't this also include sustaining your life force by buying meat I think technically it's a wrong livelihood is trading in animals for Slaughter once it's already dead I don't think it's necessarily wrong livelihood although um most butchers are also the guys that sell meat I mean traditionally it's just modern times that you have supermarkets

where the guy is selling you the meat

isn't the guy that killed the pig the

day before

so

uh technically I don't think that just

selling meat is wrong livelihood if it's

already if it's been killed by somebody

else you're not like paying the person

to kill the animal it's just being

shipped you in a truck or something then

uh you'd be it'd be more wrong

livelihood to sell uh mouse traps or

cans of insecticide or beer because then

you're selling intoxicants or you're

selling you know like poisons and that

sort of thing

and uh

wrong livelihood yeah it wouldn't it

wouldn't be wrong livelihood to buy me

because buying something isn't a

livelihood unless you're a professional

buyer for somebody

so that would be something entirely

different and mainly I mean there's so

many people in the west including

Western Buddhists that are just locked

into this Western utilitarian ethic

where they don't realize that Buddhist

ethics are subjective it's a matter of

your own mental States and so they're

they're saying oh it's it's immoral to

buy me because then you're you know it's

like voting in favor of killing and so

forth but they're taking it

I mean they're taking it outside of

themselves you know something out there

is making it immoral

but really it's your own mental States

so technically if eating meat or buying

meat is making bad karma for you it's

because of your own like guilt and these

feelings of I'm doing something wrong

this is bad I shouldn't be doing this

but I'm doing it anyway

so I mean just buying meat or eating

meat ultimately is it's morally neutral

especially if you didn't kill the animal

yourself you didn't have somebody else

kill it for you you know you know it

wasn't killed for your sake like monks

are allowed to eat meat terrible

Buddhist monks the ancient Indian

scriptures you know the Buddha himself

ate me if you read the poly texts and I

mean a monk isn't allowed to ask for

like fancy like good food English

includes me unless he's sick or unless

someone has already given him permission

in advance that he can ask for it if he

wants it

so

yeah the whole issue of eating meat I

mean there's other things too paying

taxes or or voting for corrupt

politicians or something I mean it

depends on your own mental state whether

it's moral or immoral and two people can do exactly the same action and it's moral for one person and immoral for the other you know one example that I give um I've given probably a few times at least in these q and A's you're walking through the forest you hear a frog squealing you walk over and see what it is there's a snake trying to eat this frog so you take a stick or something and you chase the snake away you save the Frog so it's not moral or immoral well if you do it out of compassion for the Frog it's you've made good karma if you do it out of aversion for the snake then it's bad karma if you do it for a

mixture of both and it's a mixture of

Good and Bad Karma or wholesome and

unwholesome skillful or unskillful Karma

so I mean you can do the exact same

action of chasing the snake away from

the frog or or chasing the cat away from

the bird or whatever and it depends on

what your motive is that determines

whether it's

skillful or unskillable whether you're

making good karma or Bad Karma and that

is similar to eating meat

so I'll just move on to johannes's next

question

how do you explain discriminating linear

rules it seems like not allowing

hermaphrodites to ordain as a monk

doesn't really make sense in regard to
practice why should someone not be able
to develop their mind and heart only
because of bodily features
well obviously you can't ordain a woman
as a monk because a woman would be a nun
in in order to be a monk you have to be
male in fact you have to be an intact
male castrated male cannot be a monk
so partly I mean if you read the Vinnie
attacks it explains why they did not
allow
um pandakas which were mostly units
hermaphrodites are very rare
and there might be somewhat different
reasons but a eunuch in Ancient India

one of the main reasons why they were
made eunuchs is for sexual purpose they
were like a man have sex with the eunuch
was like an alternative to a woman sort
of like the ancient Romans having sex
with boys you know it was sort of like
it was like an alternative to having sex
with a woman you know just kind of a
little bit of variety or something
um with regard to hermaphrodites I mean
it could be a slightly different reason
than that because I mean the units
getting back to the Unix though I mean
they were largely castrated for sexual
purposes they were used as prostitutes
and so forth and they had a reputation
for being sexually promiscuous like like

flagrantly gay men

um it's it's a stereotype not all gay

men are homosexual men are

um sexually promiscuous or just like

licentious unrestrained in their sexual

impulses but I mean you read medical

guides you read medical manuals and it's

not uncommon for a homosexual man to

have had sex with more than 100 or 1 000

other men I read that in a medical guy

I've read it elsewhere too it's not all

that uncommon for a gay man to have had

more than 1 000 sexual partners

so I mean one of the reasons why

you know they're trying to weed out that

sort of thing you know just prevent them

from being ordained it's just to to
avoid the likelihood of scandals and so
forth but with regard to hermaphrodites
I mean they would be scary I mean
ancient India pre-modern cultures
they're superstitious and like people
that are way out of the ordinary it it
makes people feel
uneasy to say the least or they could be
like completely frightened and so there
are rules against people with Leprosy
being ordained albinos people that are
just have any kind of really strange
physical abnormality are not allowed to
be ordained as monks or at least they're
not supposed to be just because there's
the reputation of the Sangha they didn't

want

the Sangha to get you know to scare

people to have like get a bad reputation

for these you know freaks or whatever

that are being ordained

so it could be that too I mean

hermaphrodite

um I mean they can be kind of especially

to a simple villager in a pre-modern

culture it's like uh

so I mean apparently Johannes here is

using modern or post-modern liberal

ethics you know diversity and inclusion

and all that as uh and just sort of

transplanting it back into ancient India

and applying modern or post-modern

ethical standards to ancient India and

uh

I don't think it really works that way

so I'll just move on to johannes's next

question

reading the suit as I often stumble upon

the instructions imagining light but

there's not really any elaboration in

the text as far as I know is this may be

regarding nimitas or light Casino also I

remember attacks that Anu panason

is apparently part of the Wind Casino

practice

this and another text in the suitos

where I read that one should imagine the

casino completely around oneself makes

it seem quite different from the wisudi

Maga style Casino practice do you think
it's possible that casino got
misinterpreted over the centuries and
was practiced way differently in the
times of the Buddha I don't really
understand why Casino should be useful
for developing right mindfulness and
then it's just about focusing on
something that why use these objects for
it and not for example a tree or my hand
well I think uh like the wisudi manga
gives detailed explanations or like
instructions for Casino meditation and I
think for the sake of just standardizing
and you know classifying everything
they've just got 10 casinos and

um it I mean it wasn't necessarily that

way in the Buddhist time in a casino for

the most part is just a disc and you

focus you just meditate on this disc

it's essentially like a hypnotic disc

and I'm going to to get up and close the

door in a second

okay

so uh yeah I think Casino was more

Loosely interpreted in early times is

just meditating on you know something

more or less disc shaped even light

Casino like one way of doing a light

casinos

um there's like the well I mean that

would be fire Casino I guess one one way

of doing light because you know is a

monk would actually cut a circular hole
in the wall of his Hut and the light
shining through that would be like a
bright light I mean now you could use
just a circular light I guess and it is
interesting that um
at Stanford University in California
they've got a hypnosis lab there and the
standard method they they're trying to
be scientific of course so they're using
a standardized hypnotic method you know
they try to use the same method to
hypnotize many different subjects and
it's looking at a small circle
that's that's their hypnotic subject so
um it may be that by the time the wisudi

manga was composed there was a certain

amount of confusion between

um deep meditative States and just

self-hypnosis

and um Imagining the casino completely

around yourself there's there's some of

that reminiscent in the usurimaga where

after you've been meditating on this

circle this disc of some color or or

fire one of the four elements are the

water Wind Fire whatever

um I mean how you have a circle of wind

I don't know but

um once you you've mastered it well

enough that even with your eyes closed

you still see it you know you're sort of

getting into a hypnotic stage I guess

then you start manipulating making it

bigger and smaller and that sort of

thing and uh I guess if you make it big

enough you can just be like filling you

know the area including you

but um yeah it's

probably in the Buddhist time assuming

that he did teach

ing

of some sort it was probably more vague

more wide open you're just you're like

focusing on some sort of object

um like like external like a visual

object or something

so there's a story where

um

no sorry puto

who was the Buddha's You Know Chief

disciple you know his right hand man uh

had a disciple and um the disciple just

wasn't responding sorry puto was you

know giving him different meditation

objects and so forth and the student

just wasn't doing very well so he went

to the Buddha and the Buddha just gave

him a red flower and just said meditate

on this and because the Buddha could see

into a person and know where they were

stuck and know how best to help them

that it was just for some reason due to

his temperament or his character or

whatever reason you're meditating on

this red flower just worked and you

became enlightened

eventually

so that might qualify as a casino I'm

back in the Buddhist time before it got

standardized into these discs

and just tan a variety of ten

but um

yeah it's it's a matter of debate I

suppose it's hard to say exactly what

was actually the case in the Buddhist

time and I've spent years and years

doing my best to understand you know

what what uh Domo was like in the

Buddhist time but to some degree he's

can't know for sure

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from here where the

Wake error word hereward the wake

I have a question which relates to your

interview with auto Excelsior on hegel's

phenomenology of spirit when you talked

briefly of Kant during that interview

you mentioned that Kant thought that one

could not know anything beyond the

contents of one's own mind

this sounds very much like solipsism but

is it redeemed through the kantian moral

imperative

I.E Khan's ethics not necessarily as far

as I understand it

um the only thing that saved caught from

solipsism was his belief that there

really is a thing in itself out there

even though we can't know it but his
successors I mean he was like the
founder of German idealism and his
successors kind of realized like Hegel
for example realized that I mean if you
can't really know the thing in itself
why even insist that it exists why
assert its existence so they just did
away with it and they became idealists
it's all just a manifestation of mind
and uh I mean it's not just the German
idealists some schools of Buddhism like
um yoga Chara which is a one of the main
branches of Mahayana
they're essentially slipsists they're
saying that everything you experience is

just uh a creation of your own mind

through the power of your own Karma

so

yeah I think just uh he knew that you

could not prove the existence of

physical matter but nevertheless he did

believe that there was something out

there that was real you know the thing

in itself that was causing us to see you

know the thing as it seems but his

successors are many of his successors in

in German philosophy including

schopenhauer too just realized that the

whole

Ultimate Reality of the thing in itself

out there somewhere was just Superfluous

because I mean I mean it was just

unnecessary

at least philosophically or logically

so we'll just move on to the next

question this is from rui

and rui says hello Ponyo do you think

that translating dharmatex for a modest

living can be considered right

livelihood yeah sure I mean as long as

you're not ripping anybody off or

anything then uh yeah yeah that can be

right livelihood and you're not I mean

you're not causing harm to anybody

you're actually helping people

so yeah that was an easy question

uh as long as you just be careful that

you're translating well you don't want

to mess up the Dharma by making bad
translations and I won't name any names
but there are some bad translators out
there
so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from edible advice
Voyager a little lice Voyager
I'm not sure I'm not sure how to
pronounce these names
anyway Edelweiss says are you familiar
with the book radical Dharma it is
written by a black lesbian and black
queer man that claims the title of llama
llama it preaches Liberation theology
and interprets dependent co-rising as
the same thing as communist
intersexuality it would be nice to see a

video responding to this if you have not
already yeah I've never heard of it but
it doesn't surprise me I mean there's
just a strong thread or or current of
this kind of thing in Western Buddhism
especially associated with Academia and
just sort of California in general I
think
um yeah to interpret dependent core
Rising as the same thing as communist
intersexuality you know third wave
feminism or something I mean that's just
[__] I mean it's just insanity but
they don't care because truth is just a
cultural construct and you can just
create your own truth and then once you

gain power you know socially politically

then you just impose your truth on

others

because if they don't accept your truth

then they're fascists or Nazis or hate

speech mongers or something

but yeah yeah there's lots of this I

mean I get exposed to it quite a lot and

uh if I were to do some kind of video on

something like this I'd probably do

something that's not an entire book that

I have to read I wouldn't want to read

an entire book of this stuff you can

just find like academic articles on the

same kind of stuff

but uh

yeah Liberation theology I've come

across that term in like uh just really

far leftist

um just post-modern attempts to just

redefine Buddhism because of course it's

all

a social construct anyway

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question this is from mahabodhi Templar

who goes by a multitude of names this is

his most recent I think

and mahabodhi Templar says are because

allowed to hold government office does

it make a difference if the position is

elected like a president or dog catcher

or hereditary like a king or mucking

Monk

um I think beakers are allowed to hold a
government office of like advisor to the
king I'm sure there have been bakus who
are advisors who weren't getting paid
because I mean it's against
the rules of monastic discipline for a
monk to accept money or even any kind of
payment for services rendered you know
he's not even allowed to barter really
unless
um the terms are dictated by somebody
else I mean there's these loopholes that
a monk can do but um
yeah I think that would be about the
extent I mean maybe uh like in Sri Lanka
you've got monks that are University
professors and probably like a

government-run university you know it'd

be government funded anyway

um and so long as they're not getting

paid for it which most of them are

pretty sure

um I mean I don't think there'd be

necessarily anything wrong with that at

least there wouldn't be anything against

the rules although of course the Miku

should be sitting at the root of a tree

meditating he should be striving for

enlightenment that's the job of a monk

is to you know cultivate wisdom and try

to become enlightened In This Very life

you know if possible

so getting involved in you know

government service and so forth is uh
probably not Optimum for a monk but so
long as he's doing something dharmic you
know like an advisor
um and not getting paid for it then I
don't think it would be against the
rules and I don't think it really
matters if it's uh elected or or
hereditary
so we'll just move on to the next
question this is from librarian crazy
and librarian crazy says
I've always had conviction in Buddha
dhamma but there is two things I'm
having doubt about one is why is in the
suta all past historical Buddhas always
born in India I feel like it's weird how

there are so many Buddhas but they
always seem to be born in 500 BC Indian
culture
and two in digonikaya 26 Chaka Valley
chakawati suta Buddha mentioned some
past civilization where people live up
to
50 000 years old I found this Odd as we
have no evidence of this at all
um okay there's another part here but I
think that's a different question so I
would just say the librarian crazy first
of all I mean with regard to this first
part why are all past historical Buddhas
born into Iron Age Ganges Valley Indian
culture

um

I don't think that the Buddha was

teaching about past Buddhas now I think

that was a sort of devotional like a

Mythos that arose after the Buddhist

Time by people who only knew Indian

culture

you know it's like India at that time

for the people in India in the Buddhist

time it was a continent of Jambu Deepa

and

um they were you had the Himalayan

Mountains to the north there might have

been I mean they had to acknowledge that

there was some kind of inhabited lands

farther west like Persia but that was

all part of Jambu Depot according to

them there were some other islands and

then to the far north and they're

they're and to the Far East and Far West

there were these different continents

that I'm pretty sure were not inhabited

by humans they were inhabited by

um like yakas and or nagas or something

I don't I mean I've never had much

interest in this kind of thing

but that's really all they knew it's

just the limitations of their

imagination

that's I mean this they could not

imagine

um like modern Western culture

or or even ancient Roman culture they

all they knew was India and so they just
had this cycle this eternal cycle of one
India after another after another after
another and it never got modern or
anything it was just you know
essentially the same culture they were
in that didn't really change very fast I
mean India of 500 years ago wasn't all
that much different from India of 700
years ago or 300 years ago I mean most
of it was pretty much the same there
were some changes but um
yeah it was it was fairly stable and
they just assumed that's just the way it
was
so
yeah I mean it was just the limitations

it's I've talked about this before like
you know just I think the the video I
did before this one I was talking about
um just like why the gods seem to have
human intelligence I mean there's no
like Gods with intelligence just vastly
beyond ours with regard to like IQ and
reasoning capacity and so forth they'll
have like powers where they can do
things and they can might see a thousand
worlds simultaneously but once they
start talking they're talking like a
person of more or less average
intelligence
so I mean that also is just the people
who are coming up with the myth they've

got the limitations of their own
imagination what they're capable of of
imagining and that's just the way it
turned out I really
um anyone who's seen a number of my
videos knows that I do not consider
everything in the depictica to be 100
accurate historical documents
that probably more than half of it was
kind of like conceived later on after
the Buddhist time and not always even by
monks who are particularly enlightened
so with regard to the second part here
Indigo nikaya 26 the chakawadisuta
Buddha mentioned some past civilization
where people lived up to 50 000 years
old I found this Odd as we have no

evidence of this at all yeah well I
don't think there is any evidence of it
and I'm rather skeptical that there has
ever been a civilization on this planet
of human beings living up to 50 000
years is just that according to Buddhist
cosmology we don't evolve up from pond
slime you know up through worms and and
fish and amphibians and reptiles and
lower mammals and monkeys and apes and
humans which is what science teaches
nowadays mostly
you know good old Charles Darwin that
um Buddhist cosmology has us coming
downwards we're degenerating from from
god-like beings

and uh I do have a degree in biology and
I do think that there's a lot of good
evidence supporting Charles Darwin's
point of view I mean in general outline
I mean it's pretty obvious that
Evolution has occurred regardless of how
it actually happens
but uh yeah and there really isn't very
little I mean maybe somebody like Graham
Hancock could someone come up with some
kind of evidence that would not be
accepted by you know the consensus of
the scientific community that there was
some past civilization where people were
god-like and lived 50 000 years
so this also it's just it's in the
ancient Indian mythology that gets

incorporated into the texts and I don't
think the Buddha himself was teaching it
unless he was just going along with his
culture and just repeating what was
already you know circling around you
know circulating
but I do think it was probably
um not it did not originate with go to
My Buddha himself
even though it's coming out of his mouth
in the pseudo but
I mean you can find all kinds of things
coming out of the mouths of all kinds of
religious Founders that they never said
except for maybe Islam because it's
that's pretty relatively recent and kind

of reliable that probably almost all of

that was channeled through Muhammad

if you don't mind me saying it the Quran

was channeled

okay so I'll just move on to librarian

crazy's next question here

also how do monks deal with lust and

annoyance towards insects like

mosquitoes and flies I think lustful

desire and insects might be the biggest

problem for me if I ever became a monk

especially an ascetic monk yeah I mean

lust and insects they were troubles for

me too in fact um

for a long time I would not slap a

mosquito or anything like that and then

I started trying ironically when I was

trying to just go full blast and just
living out in the woods I was living
under this rock ledge at the edge of a
national park in Burma
and it wasn't just mosquitoes including
anopheles mosquitoes because I got
malaria there every time I went there
um it was like these they were like sand
flies or something that I mean they hurt
and they come in swarms and I mean I
just could not sit there and let myself
get bitten by a Sandfly or like a horse
fly
I just cannot sit there and put up with
it
so I eventually started smashing the

little bastards but I I try to

compensate I mean I knew it wasn't just

it wasn't good you know but I mean

everyone has their limits and just

sitting there being eaten alive by these

you know blood-sucking or blood licking

flies because I think a horse fly they

just slice your skin and then when the

blood comes up they start licking it

I don't think they actually suck at

least not in a literal sense

so I'm trying to make up for a little

bit by feeding antlions if I'd smash one

of these sand flies

that they were they were just awful too

that I would at least put it into one of

these little ant lion pits and feed a

hungry antlion larva so at least I'd get

a little bit of Merit in addition to the

demerit of squishing a fly but again I

don't consider flies I mean this is this

isn't Buddhism this is more biology I

don't think insects really feel pain

that they're sort of like little

Terminators or something

and last I mean that's

mainly you just have to be

um mindful

and you just have to have this kind of

reflex of no not appropriate not going

there no

and uh you have to have really strong

faith and very very strong commitment

and determination to really succeed with
that unless you just have a weak libido
so yeah I mean you just have to
cultivate self-restraint and patience
like a monk has to be he has to be like
patient not only with the abiding
insects and the lust but also hunger and
thirst and heat and cold and sickness
and you know whatever the universe
throws at you if you're a good monk
especially a wise one you just accept it
like a stoic maybe even better than the
stoic so it takes self-discipline and
meditation helps mindfulness practice
helps and at least you can make you can
make um progress in that direction
although it may be that you'll never

stop being lustful until maybe you're 70

or 80.

and uh it may be that you'll never be

able to just sit there and be bitten by

horseflies that uh you'll eventually

just get under a mosquito net or move to

some place where you've got like walls

and a roof and stuff that'll it'll

protect you

that will shelter you from the little

parasitic bastards

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Rick

and we've been up to almost two hours

yeah I might have to start doing these

once a week

Rick says can you elaborate on traveling as a monk do you have to ask permission from anyone how do you go about traveling to different monasteries wandering around the cities or forests navigating modern world with no money do you have to be a monk for a certain amount of time before you can travel

well that's kind of an interesting question

with regard to asking permission there's a a rule in the padimoka on pachidia rule saying that if you're going to enter you're going to go out into public afternoon like in the morning you can just walk into the village and go for alms without asking permission but if

you're going to go after

the morning you know like in the

afternoon or the evening or whatever you

have to go to another Monk at the

monastery and say

which means

um I asked permission to go into the

village at the wrong time which is you

know after in the morning almost around

time

but aside from that I mean if especially

if you're not living Independence on a

teacher which is generally after five

five years or five rainy seasons then I

mean you're pretty much a free agent and

can go where you like

and if you're living alone you don't
have anyone to ask you don't have to ask
so how do you go about traveling to
different monasteries it depends I mean
um walking in the tropics for a
Westerner doesn't work so good that's
the way it was pretty much always done
in ancient times ancient India you just
walked
the Buddha himself just walked all over
the Ganges Valley
and then you might get in a boat across
a river or something like a ferry or
something
but I mean there's cars I mean if you
need a ticket usually a generous
layperson will donate a ticket somewhere

whether a bus ticket or a plane ticket

or whatever

uh wandering around cities yeah you

generally want a temple or something

I've never really saw monks sleeping on

sidewalks like homeless people in San

Francisco or you know any number of

other cities in the USA nowadays

um navigating the modern world with no

money I did it I mean it is possible I

can tell you that from experience

um sometimes it was dicey like

especially I got trapped in Bali in

Indonesia a couple times at the airport

because you uh an American citizen

doesn't need uh a visa to to get into

the country but you have to buy one at
the airport for 30 bucks and I didn't
have money and you can't have the the
supporters come into that area to pay
for your Visa
um just because I mean you haven't gone
through customs and stuff yet you have
to get the visa first then go through
customs and then you can meet the people
waiting to pick you up and I got trapped
that way twice and it was I mean it was
nerve-wracking or one time I'm at this
airport I give them my ticket paper you
know it's not like a real ticket anymore
it's just like this computer printout
thing and you know the nice little Asian
lady it types in the number into the

computer and frowns and types it in

again and then she calls over the

manager

and and says something in a language I

don't understand and he types it in and

they're all frowning and saying stuff I

don't understand oh man I'm in trouble

and uh it turned out that the ticket was

reserved and everything it's just for

some reason it never got activated so I

had to call the the travel agent lady to

act to like call them and tell them that

I mean it's been paid for and everything

so that kind of thing can happen and you

may have to fast if nobody's going to

offer you a meal

um

but I mean it can't be done and I've

done it lots of times I've traveled lots

of places with with zero money but I

mean generally you have to have someone

who's waiting to pick you up

um I mean in America it is more

difficult I've had to sleep on a bench

in Seattle one night just because there

was like this layover at the train

station you can't sleep at the train

station they close it and so I'm just

sitting on a bench all night just being

the drizzle

it was it was not good

but I mean I survived obviously

so I said you have to be a mom for a

certain amount of time before you travel

not really as long as you get permission

from your teacher if you have a teacher

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

question can you describe your

experience of wearing the robes Comfort

practicality sleeping Etc

well

they're fairly comfortable I mean if

you're just wearing a lower robe you're

free balling it which is uh comfortable

um practicality not so much because I

mean the Burmese monks they know how to

like tie their upper robe around

themselves in a certain way like a vest

they use like their their waistband to

hold it in place and then they can do
work but Monk's robes simply were not
designed to do physical work I mean I'd
be trying to just sweep the sweet leaves
with the bamboo broom and I just have to
go shirtless I just go bare chested
inside the monster it's okay anyway just
because the road would just keep
slipping off and just getting loose and
it was just a it was just a pain
sleeping yeah I would just take it off I
mean you might sleep with a low rope you
might use your upper robe as as a sheet
and just cover yourself like a blanket
or something so that's no problem but
you get used to it I mean you get used
to anything it's like going up and down

ladders when you've got like this long
skirt thing you know there are certain
things you have to learn like one of the
first things a monk has to learn like a
western monk who's not used to wearing
monks rubs I mean before you learn how
to meditate before you learn how to to
uh follow the rules of discipline you
have to learn how to sit down without
exposing yourself
that's that's important
but I mean after a while you get used to
it it's no problem so we'll just move on
to Rick's next question
how does a monk get things like sandals
or dental floss well if you're living in

a monastery that has extra sandals you

can get one there

um generally I mean even in the ancient

rules of monastic discipline you know

there's like the store keeper for the

monster it has his duties and if needs

sandals you give him sandals if you've

got sandals you know extra sandals in

the storeroom

um but aside from that as a general rule

if you're living in a Buddhist culture

or you're living with supporters monks

have to live around supporters you can't

just go solo as a monk you have to live

you know Independence on laypeople

and so

um if you've got a lay person who has

told you you know I'll support you if
you need something let me know venerable
sir and you say I need some sandals or I
need some dental floss and then they
donate it to you and then they get Merit
and they're happy and if they give you
what you wanted you the monk tends to be
happy too although as a monk especially
if you're living in Asia or something
you just have to get used to not getting
what you ask for you know you ask for
one thing you get something entirely
different you don't complain about it
you know you don't chew them out for
giving you the wrong thing I mean just
swallow it you know okay thank you are

you you're not even supposed to thank

people

because they're not doing it for thanks

they're doing it for merit

in Thailand especially I've heard that

uh people can actually get upset if a

western Monk Is naively thanks them for

for giving them something because again

they're not doing it for thanks they're

they're not wanting their reward in this

life they want the reward in the next

life

so

next question from Rick

there are Buddhists who don't meditate

and meditators who are not Buddhists can

you talk about the role and importance

of meditation in Buddhism well that's

like a huge topic

and uh I'm gonna have to sort of skim

over the surface of this one a little

bit

but um the role and importance of

meditation in Buddhism well in Buddhism

it is assumed that you become

enlightened through meditation

um I mean it might just be through just

being mindful of every moment while

you're moving around during the daytime

that counts as meditation too it's

mindfulness practice Sati patana

but I mean the Buddha became enlightened

through meditation he taught meditation

encouraged others to meditate samasamati

is the eighth step in the noble

Eightfold Path you know right

concentration sometimes translated as

right meditation

right mindfulness is also in there right

effort which is like you know the which

includes meditative effort

so

yeah there are uh meditators who are not

in Buddhists although a lot of them

might be practicing

um I mean some of them might be

practicing valid meditation techniques I

hope most of them others might just be

like hypnotizing themselves and thinking

that they're retaining something because

they're seeing all this wild interesting

stuff and thinking they're really

getting something when it's like

subconscious you know self

um

so like Auto suggestion or something in

a vivid imagination

so can I talk about the role and

importance of meditation in Buddhism

well yeah I mean it's part of the

Eightfold Path I mean first you need

Selah I mean this is this is like the

sort of the Holy Trinity

so first you have Morality In which sort

of calms the mind it sets the the ground

it calms your mind enough that then you

can take it in the next step and just
like completely getting a flat calm
going with your mind which is samadhi so
Sila is morality leads to a blameless
simple life Peace of Mind relatively
speaking and then somebody comes next
which is concentration and according to
Orthodox taravala you can't have pure
purity of mind without having purity of
morals first I'm not so sure about that
but that's what they say and then
finally if you've got purity of of
computer mind which at the highest level
would be fourth genre which is a very
Advanced meditative State then you have
purity of wisdom which is enlightenment
so there are some sutos that actually

suggest even if they don't just flat out

just blurt it out that fourth genre you

know the highest genre level you know

like as high as you can go through

meditation at least in the older older

sutos that that's like the jumping off

point to nibana and in fact Gianna is

called like temporary liberation

um

it may be that some people like Ramana

maharshi or

Eckhart Tolle

um became enlightened without meditating

but a Buddhist would say well they had

part of me they meditated a lot in a

previous life and I don't think either

one of them would have denied that

that they meditated a lot in a previous

life until they just got right to the

point where they were just really ripe

you know like the the yellow leaf

getting ready to fall off the tree you

know it took was just a little nudge and

that was it

so yeah meditation is considered to be

essential for enlightenment in Buddhism

it's not essential to be a Buddhist

because you can just be a lay person who

keeps five precepts and supports your

your aging parents and takes good care

of your family and you know has right

livelihood you make an honest living and

you you love your neighbor you tell the

truth and you don't steal and all that

that's I mean you're doing good

but if you want full Enlightenment

according to terrible to Buddhism then

you're you're gonna have to meditate and

uh

I mean if you somehow manage it without

meditating it's because you meditated at

a hell of a lot in a previous existence

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Mary spelled

m-e-r-r-y who briefly was known as Brave

sir Robin but now has gone back to Mary

again

and Mary says is Tibetan Buddhism really

Buddhism or some sort of shamanism with

Buddhist elements I have my opinion on

this

um

it's it's a combination of I mean you

can look at it either way I mean does

the cup have full or half empty I mean

is is Tibetan Buddhism Buddhism with

lots of shamanism added or is it

Shamanism with lots of Buddhism added

um yeah I I I'm willing to be generous

and call it a kind of Buddhism but it's

not pure ancient Orthodox Indian

Buddhism

it's it was some sort of

um I mean there's a lot of majamika in

it I think the galupa that the Dalai

Lama follows was looks back to nagarjuna

you know I think presumably the founder
of the the majama school of Mahayana
Buddhism as sort of their spiritual
father you know like the first patriarch
in their lineage or something
um and then but when so you had and then
that it sort of evolved into it adopted
a lot of weird tantric elements it was
getting very esoteric you know all kinds
of weird stuff was being added even
before it got to Tibet
and then when it got to Tibet there was
already the bone or like a shamanistic
um religious system or spiritual system
or just shamanistic system going there
and of course when Buddhism goes to any

culture it's going to adopt you know

elements of that culture it's just

invariable it's just it's going to

happen in any culture

so I mean if you if you're generous I

mean you want to call it Buddhism I mean

most people do Tibetan Buddhism

so yeah it's it's definitely got

Buddhist elements I mean you want to

call it is it more than 50 Buddhism is

it only 49 Buddhism I would say it's

probably

um more than 50 percent Buddhism as as

like an Indian import

but I mean the Buddhism that was

imported in into Tibet from India was

already very just a lot of it was this

esoteric tantric kind of stuff

um before it even got to Tibet

so if you want to be a hard ass you know

you don't want to accept even Mahayana

as real Buddhism you know or or pure

land or something then it's just a

matter of opinion I think I don't think

there's any just litmus test to tell for

sure just objectively whether something

really is Buddhism or not

I think I remember reading a long time

ago that there was uh some American

Buddhist Congress convention back in

like the the late 80s and they were

trying to determine what is a Buddhist

you know and they couldn't agree that

the best they could come up with is a

Buddhist is anyone who considers

themselves to be a Buddhist of course

this was in the west where

you've got a lot of uh lefties who are

just sort of relativists anyway

so yeah it's just a matter of opinion so

I'll just move on to uh Mary's next

question

and by golly I get caught by surprise by

these this is the very last question

this is the last of all the questions I

thought I was only like two-thirds of

the way through I'm thinking man it's

gonna be three hours long

boom

very last question here

background story of mahavira the founder of Jainism is almost identical as that of the Buddha he was a prince he left his Palace and family around the age of 30. he wandered as an ascetic for many years and then he became enlightened and found a unique way of life and way to Nirvana and for the next 30 years he did teach this way question could Buddha's story have been just copied from that of mahavira because Jainism is earlier

well that's that's an interesting question

and yeah I have I have read some old Jane scriptures

old Jane sutras or sutras it's the the

Jane's texts are in a kind of paw crit
that isn't Sanskrit and it's not poly so
I can't remember if it's suta or Sutra
but um
yeah the the biography the sort of
Legend of mahavira it's almost the same
as that of godama Buddha except he
didn't cut off his his hair and beard he
actually ripped them out by the roots I
think it was eight handfuls or just a
certain like magical number of handfuls
that he ripped out all of his head in
and facial hair but I think it's more
likely to be the other way around where
the Jane's copied the Buddhists in this
otherwise it's some sort of archetype
that just through this weird coincidence

mahavira the founder of the James and go

to My Buddha the founder of Buddhism

just I mean they both had essentially

the same kind of of Life leading up to

their renunciation and there's a lot of

the same actions even when they were

striving towards Enlightenment because

you read the Buddhist text the Buddha

himself was like a hardcore aesthetic

you know who just he went mute in there

he'd go around naked you know he'd eat

cow poop and stuff he'd just all these

things that mahavira also presumably did

and so it's just it does seem

um

kind of suspicious that both of them

would live essentially the same life up

until they become enlightened

and I do think that it's more likely

that the Jane's copied from the

Buddhists because

the jains were such ascetics they didn't

have many scholars and they lost their

scriptures twice

that there were just the monks were so

much into just going out in the forest

and torturing themselves or whatever

wandering around naked smearing

themselves of mud to keep from freezing

to death in the winter time that I mean

they just didn't have like uh schools

like like the Buddhists had they were

they were too ascetic for that and so

they would just they didn't have their scriptures written down which was Indian tradition in ancient times the Buddhists didn't have their scriptures written down until what was it like at least five it was like 500 years after the death of the Buddha that finally the depedeca was written down and The Janes were the same way but they didn't have as many scholars because they were hardcore Aesthetics they were out torturing themselves and so they just lost their their scriptures and so they had to have a convention where they get back together and like reformulate you know they'd still have fragments that

they would like edit together and maybe add some new stuff and that happened twice so I think it is more likely that the the Striking resemblance between the story of mahavira and the story of of godama are because the jains copied the Buddhists rather than the other way around and I mean the story of the Buddha is is well maintained from relatively very ancient times I mean there is some mythology added but by even the mythology itself was pretty much settled within like 100 years after the time of the Buddha and that is older than the latest resention of the jainus texts

so yeah I'm just going with the evidence

and just sort of some Occam's razor and Common Sense I'd say that probably in the Jane's borrowed the legend of the Buddha for their the biography of their own founder just because they lost so much of their own traditions because it wasn't written down and their monks just weren't as scholarly because they were just moving in a different direction than the Buddhists to some degree I mean they were just more this extreme ascetics

that they just borrowed it from the Buddhists so that's it that's the last question by golly I get caught by surprise by the last question a lot of

the time

so if you have any questions you uh are

very welcome to leave them in the

comments below and if I get lots and

lots of questions I'll just have to

start doing these more often

and uh please uh subscribe if you

haven't already and hit the like button

if you haven't already and look at the

URL links

and be happy

hello and welcome to episode here I'm

going to look up here episode 47 of

question and answer I am your host Ponyo

bossa

and uh as usual we've got the goodly

sized list of questions including one

question that may require its own

separate video

and uh

I just finished tearing apart a chicken

coop

and also the big news is that just

yesterday I saw that we have at least

two loaches left in our fish pond which

is like a big excitement for me because

I get Loach insecurity and I haven't

seen two at the same time

since like last year sometime

but the weather's warming up and so

they're cold-blooded they are what is it

poikilotherms yeah POI collotherms and

so with every 10 degrees Celsius

increase in temperature a cold-blooded

animal's metabolism doubles and so

they're like really getting worked up

out there and they're like swimming up

to the surface usually they stay down at

the bottom any derbus and stuff but now

they're like swimming up to the top and

everything it's it's really exciting

and before I get started on these

questions

um I should say that I actually had to

do homework on this one I had to

actually study something

on on this

um

well usually I don't I just like to this

answer these off the top of my head you

know without having to like look in

books or anything and it makes for easy

easy answers because you know somebody

asked me you know what was the Linus

pauling's attitude towards Buddhism I

can just say I don't know and then move

on to the next question

but I actually had to uh read a few

texts

just to refresh my memory about what

they say just so I can comment on them

so anyway

ah

first question is from the Arya swasti

project

and the Arya swastik project says

greetings Ponyo I've heard you mention

and I agree that hardship can prompt

deeper spiritual understanding a lot of

other schools of thought rely on prayer

magic causing changes Etc since they

might just be making more issues for

themselves especially if they have no

self-awareness or spiritual awareness if

hard times can give us deeper

understanding why wouldn't we want all

the hard times we could endure on that

note why would we want to wish hard

times on an enemy since it would just

make them more enlightened if anything

we should never shirk our Karma and

never wish ill will on anyone what are

your thoughts on this addendum if I were

to be honest the worst times in my life

brought the deepest understanding and

growth although some of the some of

those I would never ever want to

experience again

well that's a good question

and uh

there's a lot I could say about this for

one thing

um even though

um suffering can cause people to reach
out to something higher or if you get
into a a situation that's so bad that
your habitual way of dealing with life
just doesn't work anymore you can have a
kind of breakdown and then you become
very open to new new ideas and
um some people have capitalized on this
like uh like Chinese thought reform you
know like the brainwashing camps and all
that they were based on that where they
would cause a person to just have a
breakdown just through the hardships
they're undergoing and then because
their habitual way of dealing with life
wasn't working anymore then you've got
the commissar or whoever just like

programs them to be a good communist and
um there's a lot of that like military
basic training some spiritual Retreats
work this way where you just get into
like a crisis and then suddenly all
these habits that you've been clinging
to without even meaning to cling to them
um you can let go of them more easily
and accept different things but
um it doesn't always work that way some
people just have a breakdown and just
stay broken down but um let's see here I
gotta answer this question
so let's see if hard times can give us
deeper understanding why wouldn't we
want all the hard times we can endure

well if you get too many hard times I
mean really you can just break you and
this is like the difference between
Buddhism and certain other ascetic
um schools of philosophy or schools of
spirituality in ancient times like the
jains or like the ajivakas who they were
literally torturing themselves they were
trying to accelerate the burning off of
karma but the middle path in Buddhism is
um you know it's the middle path between
at least one of the middle paths in
Buddhism is the middle path between
self-indulgence and self-torture
so you're not trying to avoid unpleasant
things necessarily you're not seeking
them out either you're just living your

life as wisely as peacefully as as
non-harmfully as you can and then
whatever comes at you through the power
of your own Karma you deal with it and
that's that's probably the wisest way of
going about it like if you just
steadfastly avoid any kind of anything
that makes you uncomfortable then you're
not going to make much progress on the
other hand if you're just diving into it
then I mean you might be just making
trouble
and I mean you might just dive into too
much too much for you to deal with but
if you just let it happen naturally
which it always does I mean there's no

escape from it then that's probably the

wisest way of going about it

so let's see here

uh we should never shirk our comment

never wish ill will on anyone

yeah well usually if you're wanting bad

things to happen to somebody and bad

things do happen to somebody then

I mean most people if they just have

something bad happen to them it doesn't

cause them to have any any kind of

Spiritual Awakening but it can't happen

like I knew this uh woman

who got cancer and and she was just sort

of like um just really like a

self-oriented normie just kind of living

at the surface and then she got cancer

and it was you know she had to have some

of her body parts removed and so forth

and she thought she might die and it

really caused her to reevaluate her

existence and she became a deeper and

better person after that so that can

happen too

let's see

but yeah it's true with me also I mean

the two main growth spurts of like

spiritual

like Awakening happen as a result of

just being in a state of real crisis

just practically hitting rock bottom and

then like I said when you hit one of

these crises a crisis point it really

can just cause you to let go of these

habits that you've been clinging to

consciously or subconsciously for for

years and years and years and and reach

out for something else

and I think Ram Das said a long time ago

and it haunted me for many years in one

of his books he said the absolute

despair is a prerequisite to significant

spiritual growth and I always hope that

he was wrong but in my own experience in

life does seem to Bear it out to some

degree

so

let's see oh there's another part here

wait no no that's the next question

never mind

okay so that's what that's what I have
to say about that it's best not to seek
out bad things to happen to you not to
just avoid them at all costs just live
your life as wisely as you can and
whatever the universe throws at you you
you know you deal you deal with it as as
wisely as you can
so I'll just move on to the next
question
on the topic of liminality and then in
parentheses he says naughty discussion
on Hanson
and then he says the concept itself is
fascinating I agree and if one is
liminal wouldn't they have to be in the

correct spot of Truth at all times since nothing is certain and nothing is concrete even concrete would you say that if Buddhism itself is an explanation or expression of liminality well I don't fully understand all this question with regard to liminality the Arya swasti project I think partly maybe mainly because I was um talking a lot about a book by George Hansen called the trickster and the Paranormal which is I consider to be one of the most important books I've ever read it'd be like definitely probably in the top 10 of the most important books I've ever read just with regard to like posing a significant paradigm shift a

significant change in the way you
understand reality
and uh in the book he's talking about
how liminality how like the breakdown of
order and regularity causes what is
called liminality which means like
you're reaching a kind of threshold you
know or it's sort of an intermediate
State between two
concretes you're kind of in this vague
Zone and that causes a certain
uncertainty and chaos to manifest in the
world and he mentions in his book about
how witches for example in order to do
magic they actually create some of this
chaos you know they'll violate taboos

they'll violate societal Norms which

kind of causes a breakdown of order and

regularity which then allows chaos to

come through the weak spots they have

created

so um

where he's the question here is would

you say that uh Buddhism itself is an

explanation or expression of liminality

well

um to some degree Buddhism does create

liminality and like just for example

like a monk a renuncian is just going

against all the social norms well not

maybe not all of them but he is

violating social norms you know he's

just becoming a radical homeless

Wanderer no no family no

no money and um that in itself is

creating a kind of liminality and he's

just going like in the Buddhist time

especially a Buddhist renunciate would

just go out and live alone in a forest

and um I mean that can create some

liminality too but I mean just the

middle path I was talking about the

middle path just a few minutes ago where

it's in between the the extremes I mean

it's not just with regard to the middle

path between

um self self-indulgence and self-torture

it's the middle path between just about

anything is and isn't you know it's just

it's just this total liminal path really

and it allows for more

opportunities spiritual opportunities

but then also

um there is one statement in the

trickster in the Paranormal that really

intrigued me and he's talking about how

meditation is liminal because you're

observing your own mind and that creates

like

self-referential short circuit like so

being self-referential is liminal it

causes paradox you know like

um the reason why you can make a

statement that is neither true nor false

is if the statement is itself

self-referential like this statement is

false

it's referring to itself and thus it can

create this Paradox where the statement

itself can be neither true nor false

and when you're meditating you're doing

that at a larger scale you're the mind

is observing itself is becoming

self-referential

and then

all kinds of weird things can happen and

people do have weird experiences through

meditation some people acquire psychic

powers through meditation and so forth

so Buddhism does have built into it a

kind of liminality

so yeah

so we'll just move on to uh

the Arya swasti Project's next question

addendum to liminality just playing with

the idea here I don't expect a deep

response but it occurred to me and

thought it was interesting would you say

that all or nothing thinking

or objective thinking in any case is

never certain

it couldn't be never because that in

itself would be

All or nothing and this also this this

this q a has a number of questions that

I do not fully grasp the meaning of the

question and this is one of those

questions

um would you say that all or nothing

thinking or objective thinking in any
case is never certain well the person
who thinks in All or Nothing terms
um yeah they're they're certain pretty
much all the time unless they just
honestly admit that they don't know
something and just avoid the the yes or
no the is or isn't
but um in reality any statement you make
about the outside world is never certain
like uh Spinoza and David Hume in the
west both were made I mean they made the
statement I think in in hume's case it
was called humans Fork where the only
certainty you can have is regard to
something that's completely

self-contained something completely
contained within your own mind so some
kind of a logical
statement for example you might have
worked out some laws of geometry or
something but so I mean the entire thing
is in your head
so that can be certain but with regard
to anything in the outside world there's
always going to be uncertainty because
you can't be sure that you're not
hallucinating that you're not insane in
some respect and in Buddhism anyone who
isn't fully enlightened is considered to
be insane
so
yeah

um

so I'm not exactly sure what the main point of this question is though would you say the All or Nothing thinking or objective thinking in any case is never certain

uh yeah well I guess that's my best answer because I really do not fully understand the implications of this question so I'll just move on to the artist swasti Project's next question and it says we've seen the ring and heard the announcement but when do we get to see a picture of your girl when do we get to see the bride to be once again congratulations maybe show your

favorite pick of you two together

and then in parentheses he has

respectfully submitted

um well this question was asked on the

Discord server and my sweetheart does

have a picture of

at least one third of her face

um as her avatar on Discord so you get

to see a picture over there or at least

a picture of some of her but with regard

to my favorite picture of both of us we

don't really have a whole lot of

pictures of both of us together

um because either you got to do the

selfie like reaching out or else you

have to ask somebody else to take the

picture but um we did have a picture

taken of us when we were in like at Lake

Erie there's this famous lighthouse

there that was built in the early 1800s

I think and I just happened to have it

here right here

let's see so cover up this part because

that's not the picture in question

but there we are that's us sitting

underneath this Lighthouse at Lake Erie

when we were on vacation

so there you go there she is in all of

her her loveliness

so we'll just move on to the next

question

uh Arya swasti project says I'm really

interested in this liminality concept

yeah I got him intrigued with this book

I think

do you think you could make a suggestion

or two of liminal trickster behavior

that would lead to True paranormal

experiences well I already mentioned

just the self-referential aspect of of

meditation also

um I mentioned that that certain people

like witches tend to just deliberately

violate taboos and social norms to

create liminality through which this

um like Juju this and this

paranormal paranormality can arise

and I refuse to say paranormal see

except in quotation marks right now

so he also points out in the book that a

lot of Psychics tend to be

um deviants in a certain way and I'm not

even I'm not saying deviance in a like a

negative like a pervert like pervert

kind of you know in that kind of way but

they deviate from just the societal norm

and so he points out that many famous

psychics or magicians you know like

Aleister Crowley they were homosexual or

bisexual or they had some other kind of

sexual Kink that kind of generated

liminality but I'm not suggesting the

Arya swasti project become gay

but there are ways of going about it and

any kind of system will have pretty much

built into the system

any like ways of creating liminality

which then sort of creates a like a

portal or a threshold through which

um like

forces Beyond this version of reality

can bleed through into our reality

so

yeah I I would suggest though you don't

do anything really wildly like certain

taboos are there for good reasons you

know you know don't don't do incest that

kind of a thing

um

but I mean what works for you I mean you

might do some uh introspection and find

out what kind of uh violation of norms

would work best for you

um like for for a monk celibacy itself
is kind of a violation of nature you
know sort of like a crime against nature
almost
so I'll just move on to the Arya swasti
projects next and last question
which he uh asked just under the wire
see the way I the way I I make this list
is it's pretty much in chronological
order the first person to ask a question
gets to be at the top of the list last
person to ask a question usually is at
the bottom but if they've already asked
a question earlier then all their
questions are in a row so the the Aria
swasti project asked the first and

possibly last question but um they're

all here at the beginning

and he says

after researching neem Caroli Baba after

hearing you speak of him I found this

quote

it is very difficult to know exactly

what good should come out of a

particular situation to attempt to

manipulate circumstances so your idea of

good can come about is to let the ego

play God and that as you know can and

does backfire unquote however he and

many others are known to influence

circumstances so with that being said

I'm confident that changes can be made

Beyond or Pera outside of normal

I.E repetitious movement of thought
prayer ceremony or even trickery so how
do we know when to initiate changes to a
situation or just take our licks
well you just have to rely upon your own
um your own wisdom your own intuition
your own rationality to know if it's you
know it's sort of like the the prayer of
of Saint Francis of Assisi which I don't
fully remember but it's like you know
give me the wisdom to know you know what
I can change and what I can't change now
give me the wisdom to accept what I
can't change and and to be able to
change what I can change for the better
kind of a thing

I was going to name curly Baba he's he

doesn't necessarily play by his own

rules because

um according to Ram Das I mean he just

there was really nobody there he really

didn't have

um if he he apparently had an ego but I

mean he he was no longer identified with

it it was just nature taking its course

so he told lies even though he tell

other people it's very serious you don't

tell lies you know that's a very bad

thing to do but I mean he was just kind

of Beyond

um you know the rules of how to get

enlightened or how to how to how to meet

God because he already met him

apparently

um

but that's that's sort of uh opening the

door to

some uh scandalous ideas

so let's see here

ah commonly changes can be made Beyond

yeah I mean obviously sometimes you need

to make changes I mean you can't be

totally passive sometimes you have to be

an active agent in this world you're

tired you get a flat tire on the highway

I mean you got to do something about you

don't just sit there with your on the

side of the road with a flat tire I mean

obviously you have to do something about

it

so

um you just accept the situation as well

as you can and do what you think is best

so

but it is it is true sometimes if you

try to improve the situation it just

makes things worse then that is true but

you have to use your own wisdom and

intuition and rationality to some degree

and just do the best you can and we all

make mistakes

but if your heart is in the right place

you'll probably do the right thing more

often than not

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Austin

and Austin says can dialectical

materialism be looked at through a

karmic lens well anything volitional can

be looked at through a karmic lens I'm

not exactly sure what he means this is

another one of those questions that I do

not fully grasp because there's

different ways of interpreting it

um

dialectical materialism for those of you

who are innocent of Marxism bless your

hearts

um yeah it's pretty much what Marxism is

based on it's a kind of I mean it's

ultimately goes back to Hegel with his

dialectic except Marx was certainly not

an idealist like Hagel was he was a
materialist pretty much a spiritually
comatose materialist
but um
I mean would you refer to the just the
manifestation of dialectical materialism
in this world I mean that's our Karma
that would be looking at it through a
karmic lenses you know if we didn't have
the karma to experience it we wouldn't
be experiencing it we didn't have the
karma to hear about it we wouldn't hear
about it so there's that
or you can refer to it as I mean even
though Marx himself apparently was of
the idea that I mean there's hardly any
free will maybe none that we're just a

product of our culture our economic

system you know because that's that's

pretty much what Marxism is based on you

want everyone to be happy you got to

change the economic system and you know

you want people to think the right

thoughts you got to change the system

you know it's coming from outside just

what we are is not generated from within

it's just imposed upon us from society

is largely what Marx was teaching as far

as I can understand Marx I mean he's

boring as hell and I'm not a Marxist so

I'm No Authority on this

but um

uh yeah I mean if you want to become a

Marxist that is your volitional choice

I assume and that would be karmic too

and it's really not good karma I mean

like Marxist societies do not end well

just history has shown we've got over a

century now of stagnant and failed

economies and totalitarianism and

genocide

and that's all I mean from the Buddhist

point of view that's all karmic you know

whatever is the result I mean whatever

is a volitional action is Karma and that

causes the fruition in with regard to

what is happening back to the person who

made those volitional choices

so yeah I guess dialectical materials

okay looked at through a karmic lens

um anything can be looked at through a

karmic lens in one way or another but

I'm really not sure exactly what he had

in mind here so I'll just move on to

Austin's next question

congratulations Ponyo boss I'm so happy

to hear of your engagement please tell

us how you propose that's kind of a

personal question isn't it

sakes

I mean it was uh

I got her a ring and I was going to take

the day off and it was it was on her

birthday

her the day I proposed I was intending

to propose to her on her birthday which

I mean you could look at that cynically
you know it's like you know I could just
give her the the ring as a birthday
present it's thereby saving me the
effort of having to get her another
birthday present although I did get her
another birthday present it came in the
mail and she opened it but long before
her birthday so that kind of wrecked
that too so anyway she was just
sometimes she'd just be in this blah
kind of mood and just uh you shouldn't
take the day off on my birthday you know
just just keep working it doesn't matter
I don't want to do anything on my
birthday she's really not a birthday
oriented person I think most women above

the age of 2010 to kind of downplay

birthdays anyway and so I'm just getting

kind of

kind of borderline panicky definitely

concerned about how I don't want her to

be all depressed on her on her birthday

because that's the day I want to propose

to her but um

yeah it worked out fine she was in a

good mood

um somehow I managed to help her be in a

happy mood by the time she was opening

her presents in the afternoon and one of

the the present well the main present

was this diamond ring that I got for him

and she liked it a lot she says it's the

nicest ring she's ever had

so and then I asked her to marry me and

I didn't get down on one knee until she

I mean I've never done this before you

know I didn't know if people really do

are supposed to get down on one knee but

then she said

um she was her understanding that I

should get down on one knee and put the

ring onto her finger so I did that and I

asked her if she'd marry me and she said

and I quote of course

so it all worked out well

so I'll just move on to the next

question from Austin here

Austin asks personal questions sometimes

let's see but this one is uh more about

him than about me so

there is that I feel like I have

terrible Karma especially at this moment

in my life if I do a lot of good things

will my bad karma get weighed out

by The Good Karma and yeah there is a

suta and I've mentioned this before on Q

and A's I'm pretty sure that there is a

pseudo where the Buddha Compares a

person's Bad Karma to a handful of salt

and if you pour the handful of salt into

a cup of water it's so salty that you

can't drink the water but if you pour

that same handful of salt into a pool of

of water and it dissolves then you

hardly notice the salt at all because

you've dissolved it into a larger amount

of water much larger

and he Compares that with you know doing

good and doing bad if you've got a lot

of Bad Karma and not a whole lot of good

karma which is the water then yeah it's

going to be predominantly bad but if you

do as much good as you can you know earn

enough Merit then that dilutes down the

bad I mean it's still the same amount

more or less but at least it's it's

mitigated

and I've been that way

um in my life whenever I have something

really bad happen to me something good

tends to happen to mitigate it so I

think I do have a fair amount of good

karma in my life it's like for example

the first time the first two times

I I got malaria in Burma I mean getting

malaria is not good it's really icky and

it's always the worst kind it's

falcipram the kind that kills people

and I was living in a remote area with

no car both times and both times

somebody just shows up in a jeep that

day and they're able to just haul me

into the Jeep and take me to a doctor

that was the the two times I was

hospitalized another time

um

I uh I used to keep biting into rocks in

my food in Burma they thrashed the rice

and they thresh their beans and so forth
on the ground and little brown rocks get
mixed in with the beans little white
rocks get mixed in with the rice and you
bite into rocks in your food it's not
good and sometimes I bite into a rock in
my food and it'd be this crack and it
would hurt and I'd be concerned you know
I'd be reaching around in my mouth and
my finger to see if I broke a tooth or
knocked a filling out or something and
through Good Karma I suppose in part at
least I never broke a tooth when I was
out in the in the sticks except later
one time I did but at that time you know
I was I'd been in Burma for
um a few to several years and uh it kept

happening I bite into the Rock and ended

and then finally I happened to be in

Rangoon attending to Visa issues or

something so I was in a relatively Rich

neighbor hood of Rangoon

and

a servant girl I went for alms servant

girl gave me some Bean Curry that had

the little brown rock concealed in it

and I bite into that rock and I broke

three T's it just came in like two

bottom teeth and one upper tooth and

it's like just right in between the the

space between the teeth like so I got

three all at the same time but as it

turned out through the mitigating

circumstances the servant girl happened
to be the servant girl of the dean and
Rector of the Rangoon dental college
and he was a dentist and he was like
right across the street so I just went
right across the street he fixed my
teeth for free became my dentist for
free after that while I was living in
Burma and I had the same dentist as the
dictator because he was the number one
dentist in the entire country
so if you do a lot of Merit then it at
least you're going to get mitigating
circumstances it's not going to be just
a like a nightmarish hellscape
and I would say to Austin here that I
mean you don't have all Bad Karma

obviously because at least you've you've

had the Good Fortune of hearing about

dama you know you're you're obviously

um earning Merit through through seeking

the truth and trying to trying to know

reality and so forth so that's I mean

that's very big Good Karma just just uh

to be like spiritually searching

in in a more or less wise way too

and then yeah that's about some of the

best Karma you can get

and uh I think it's mostly Mahayana

though like in I think it's The Diamond

Cutter super that says that

um

uh what is it

yeah they're just memorizing one verse
from the from the Sutra and like under
trying to understand it and maybe you
know sharing with others is better Karma
than just you know giving all of your
money to to buy clothing and food and
medicine for for the needy people
because it's sort of a transcendental
kind of Merit that you're earning
so yeah the answer to this the the long
answer to the short question
is uh definitely it mitigates the Bad
Karma and dilutes it down if you make a
lot of good karma so just you know help
others you know instead of squishing the
spider just catch it and let it go with
a blessing in your heart that kind of a

thing and don't go around bragging about
it either just keep it secret that's one
thing I've I really like from biblical
Christianity is the idea that when you
do good don't broadcast it to other
people don't brag about it just be quiet
about it
you know if you're fasting you know just
pretend like you're not fasting I mean
if somebody asks you you don't lie but
still
you know just advertising to everybody
so I'll just move on to the next
question from Austin here how do
Buddhists Cast Away evil spirits
well the standard way of casting away

evil spirits for terrible design

different kinds of Buddhism will have

different ways I'm sure the Tibetans

have like various strange ways of of

dealing with evil spirits but uh in

terrible Buddhism the one main way of

casting away evil spirits is sending

Mata like reciting the metal suta the

whole mental suit of the origin story

which may be just Apocrypha but the

origin story to the metal suta of the

sutiny Pata which is one of the best

known uh paritas or protection chants in

terrible Buddhism

um I mean if a Buddhist if they know how

to chant one tsutop it's usually the

metal suto and according to the story

there was a bunch of monks who were
meditating in this forest and because of
their virtue it was sort of robbing the
terrestrial deities in the area like
tree spirits and so forth it was robbing
them of their ability to to fly up into
their trees so they're like stuck on the
ground they're bothered by this they
resent these monks living there
until they start like harassing the
monks by essentially like haunting them
you know they're they're presenting
headless bodies and bodyless heads and
you know weird moaning sounds and so
forth and so they're disturbing amongst
meditation hoping that the monks will

just clear out so the monks eventually

do clear out but they go to the Buddha

and they tell them what happened and he

said just be meta at them and he taught

them the matosuta to to chant as a way

of just sort of emanating loving

kindness or friendliness you know

friendly feeling

um maybe spiritual love

to to these beings and it it worked and

so the beings just stopped causing

problems and uh they got along fine

after that and that really is

um the standard way like like demonic

possession he's just chant the matosuto

or just being love at these beings or

just hauntings that kind of a thing

um and it apparently does work it's like
the best way of defeating an enemy is to
turn them into a friend and some
hauntings apparently are you know you've
got these unhappy beings that you know
they they want something they're they're
dissatisfied they're not really trying
to be evil or anything they're just
suffering they're in a lower realm than
the human Realm
and just you know sending love to them
can't uplift them enough that they they
can uh they can leave
but
um I can't really entirely vouch for the
100 effectiveness of this method but

that is the standard method in uh in
terravana Buddhism
of dealing with evil spirits and enemies
too just uh beam love at them which I
was really unpalatable to a lot of
people
um I knew this school teacher in Burma
who was really I mean she was like a
female Burmese version of the Apache
Warchief Geronimo she looked like him
too and she would brag to me sometimes
about how she she recites the mental
suta every morning and sends method to
all beings but I mean she was really
like a Hatfield or a McCoy because she
was always feuding with some neighbor or
other and she was she was feuding with

this one neighbor in particular and I pointed out to her I mean if you're sending method to all beings you're also sending message to this guy that you've been fighting with and she all of a sudden just flares up and says no not him

and so you got to be try I mean most people just can't you know it's like in Christianity too you know you know love your enemies bless those that curse you how many Christians actually do that there are some I I admit that there are some but uh they're probably not the majority of Christians it's not easy it goes against human nature and it it's

sort of counterintuitive if you got a

bad person or some you know malevolent

being causing trouble for you

that you know you want to return evil

for evil that returning good for evil it

just seems like you're just

strengthening them but it doesn't really

work that way because as a general rule

any any malevolent being anyone who is

bad is unhappy

now anyone who's like uh just a hateful

violent is making trouble for people on

purpose they're not a happy person and

so by helping them to be happier like

beaming love at them

um it it kind of uplifts them and it

makes them less willing to mess with

people

because they're messing with people

because they're so unhappy they want to

see other people unhappy too or

something along those lines

so I'll just move on to the next

question from Austin

which is please tell me how Buddhist

prayer Works how does it differ from

Christian prayer why do Buddhists pray

if there is no God to pray to well

prayer really is

um discouraged

in uh in terrible in the polytext the

Buddha kind of makes fun of of praying

you know it's like he's saying that a

person who's praying is like a person
standing on one side of a river just
praying to the other side to come over
to this side so he doesn't have to cross
it
and um yeah so prayer really is not
like Orthodox Buddhism I mean later on
when Buddhism became like more
mainstream more normies were getting
interested you know more lay people were
becoming Buddhist they want to pray and
so they pray to the Buddha
and then you get like pure land stuff
where it's it's almost you know it's
heavily based on praying to some Cosmic
Buddha up and up in heaven somewhere or
in some pure land to the West somewhere

or whatever but in Orthodox terravora

it's more meditation than prayer prayer

is you know you're asking for favors for

some you know you're asking for help

and um

you just have to do it yourself I mean

this self-reliance is is heavily

stressed and terrible at Buddhism so

some Buddhists do pray to the Buddha and

like I think I was talked about this in

the last q a where I knew this Village

doctor

who uh was one of the few people in the

area who spoke English and we talked

sometimes and he told me that he prayed

to the Buddha and I asked him like I

mean the Buddha no longer exists in this world he no longer exists in any world why would you pray to him why would you pray to someone who doesn't exist and he was saying well the Buddha could see into the future and then he could see me praying to him and then maybe he would you know send matau or help in some way so they you can you can justify it but really you gotta kind of go your own route and meditation is definitely much more encouraged in terrible Buddhism than prayer because prayer is you're essentially asking for something whereas with meditation you're just trying to understand your own mind so that you can um cure yourself of your own Insanity so

to speak

so so I think I'll just move on to the

next question this is from SS

and SS says what is the best translation

of the polycanon I read tunisaro bikus

by or I read tenisa obicus by default

because they are easily found in one

place and for free

well

um with regard to a translation of the

entire polycanon the entire polycanon in

the Burmese resention of it is 40

volumes it's you know like the

Encyclopedia Britannica including the

knowledge in brief you know it's it's a

lot and so I don't know of one person

who has translated the entire thing

usually you have people translating

certain texts and certain translations

of certain texts are better than other

translations of certain texts and um

um so yeah there's there's not just

I mean a translation of the polycanon

you're more likely to find a translation

of the majum in akaya translation of

divinia a translation of you know the

some Mutiny Kaya translation of the

sutiny Pata Trend lots of translations

of dhamapada

um and then

um you just try to find a good

translation of that particular text

and

um probably the the two best translators
of poly into English nowadays would be
kubody despite his his inane politics
um he's he's a good translator because
he's good he understands the poly
language he has at least a superficial
familiar familiarity with a lot of the
things that are being discussed just
just the the philosophy part he
understands that well with regard to the
meditation stuff he uh I've heard that
he doesn't meditate much if at all so I
mean with regard to that he knows the
theory that he's read in books and heard
from other people but he's not really
um he's not rendering the instructions

we're guided much by his own experience
apparently uh ajanta nisaro that SS
mentions here he also is a good
translator
he's a he's kind of self-indulgent
you know he doesn't really follow the
the standard translations or the
renderings of certain Paulie words and
his translations of poetry are so
idiosan
idiosyncratic and self-indulgent that I
get embarrassed sometimes it's like a
good translator should be as invisible
as possible a good translator should
make it so that you're reading in
English as though you're reading the
Paulie you know it should be as close to

an effect on you as if you were just

fluent in Paulie and reading the poly

itself

and so it's best just to be invisible

but some of ajan tanisro's translations

you might as well just include every few

lines look at me here I am on John

tenistro translating this

so

I knocked the picture over

excuse me

don't want lying there on the floor face

down

so

um

uh nyamoli the uh the the deceased in

the automotive not the new famous

nanomoli

um it's like the the old famous he was

an excellent translator he was kind of

idiosyncratic too and that he tried very

hard

to use one word

in English for the one word in poly and

sometimes one word in poly can have lots

of meanings like like dama

I mean it can have lots of different

meanings and he would just come up with

the word like idea and you just like

whenever dhamma appeared regardless of

the context he'd try to use the same

word or like Brahma I think he used uh

Divine or Divinity something along those

lines so brahmanas were called divines

and

um yeah it didn't it didn't work out

very well but he was really a brilliant

translator

um there are good translator KR Norman

is really I mean he understands the poly

really well although he really is not

interested in the philosophy or what

it's saying so any kind of deep

philosophical stuff or mystical stuff he

just doesn't get

um so yeah you just have to just find

good translators and when in doubt I

mean bikubody and ajan tunisaro are good

translators

so

um

the

bikubody's translation of the Maji

manikaya is really good probably the

best because it's based on our venerable

nanamoli that I just mentioned and

bikubody just kind of kind of fix it up

a little bit where he's just taking the

weird idiosyncratic renderings and just

switching it over to more mainstream

standard I mean it is good to kind of

have

um this kind of follow the the tradition

with regard to translating they're like

meta is loving kindness or uh Sadi

batana is you know the foundations of

mindfulness they're

um

at least you know what the poly term is

when you see the English term but if

you're using like a radically different

term

like uh

like let's see what would ajanta ISRO

used for in the the four foundations of

mindfulness or

um

it's like frames of reference or

something so that unless you're familiar

with what he translates as what you can

really get confused because you're

really not sure what the poly term is

but if you're completely innocent of

poly terminology

um then maybe maybe doesn't matter all

that much

so I think I'll just uh move on to the

next question which is from librarian

crazy

and librarian crazy says Bonte I watched

two or three of your q and A's and read

some of your blogs you mentioned you

think John of the Cross is probably an

enlightened Guy what's the reason for

this what are traits that make him seem

like he is one of enlightened beings

um yeah I have mentioned that Saint John

the cross who was uh discalced Carmelite

Mystic in the Roman Catholic Church he

lived in Spain in the 1500s

um I think there's a chance that he may

have been fully enlightened because

the way he describes

practice and the fruits of practice come

very close to what terravonna Buddhism

describes as practice in the fruits of

practice and I mean it's it's strange

that

um he's he's the mystical doctor of the

Catholic church so any anything that

Saint John on the cross says about

mysticism is just Dogma for the Catholic

Church

so I mean I mean he was being persecuted

by the not only by the Inquisition but

he was being persecuted by the uh
unreformed carmelites it was it was
really strange there's all this politics
going on and he was getting ready to
just go to Mexico and become a
missionary I almost said a mercenary
just become a missionary in Mexico when
right before he died because it was just
too much it was just all this politics
and persecution and just trouble making
and stuff going on in in the Catholic
church at the time
um but yeah he talks about like the the
three stages of of progress in in
spirituality which is you've got the
beginner the Adept and the perfect
and that pretty much fits in with what

terravada Buddhism refers to as the
Pluto genome because the common person
the Seiko the one in training and the
aseka the one no longer in training and
the asega is
perfect or he's fully enlightened and so
he's got like the same he's got the same
practices of like mindfulness and and
like genre like what what they're
calling High contemplation I mean it's
got to be at least second genre and he
was just based upon his his ways of
talking about it through experience with
like a voice of authority is pretty
obvious that he was a master of of Jonah
and so this it's just the overlap then

just the Striking similarity of his descriptions of you know Enlightenment and so forth like he's saying that an enlightened being like someone who has reached the stage of perfection which I I mean I was amazed when I read this because according to the Bible I mean even Jesus denies being you know being good you know only God is good you know that nobody is worthy everyone is a sinner

and here's John lacrosse talking about becoming God through participation and subsequently I've heard that in Greek Orthodox mysticism they also teach the same thing that you can become God through participation you mortify your

own self-will you know your own
preferences and so forth and you just
empty yourself out and then you become
like a puppet of God you're no longer
moved by your own self-will your own
human will that your move by the will of
God and that's becoming God through
participation you're becoming you know
God's hand puppet or whatever and that
also closely resembles terrible Buddhism
because in terracotta Buddhism
um an aura has no will he has no
volition he's no longer making Karma and
so again it's these these continual
overlaps where the you get to this
really advanced level of spirituality

and it's just explaining pretty much the
same things but within a different like
a religious context like a different uh
cultural conditioning you know you're
trying to explain the same things but
from two different
two different cultural conditionings
which make some of the theory different
even though the practices and the
results are essentially the same
so yeah I would say St John on the cross
um he may have been wiser than the
founder of his his religion as far as I
know I think Eckhart Tolle and cartola
Matt Meister Eckhart also I mean he was
a very Advanced Mystic he also may have
been uh very Advanced spiritually and

possibly an or a haunt like a Christian

or on but I don't know enough about

Meister Eckhart I've read the the

complete works of Saint John of the

Cross so I I'm pretty familiar with what

he he was saying

so I'll just move on to librarian

crazy's next question

which is a lot of time monks are

believed by their loyal followers as an

aura hunt like ajan mahabua I watched

some of his dhamma talks where he gave

discourses while chewing Beetle nuts and

spit in buckets

doesn't seem like a very admirable

conduct for a normal person let alone

arahant in my humble opinion what do you think about this

well I remember one time there was this Texan hermit who lived in a Big Hollow Tree who explained to me that when when uh

uh a Burmese person or an Asian Buddhist says that a certain ajan or Seattle is an aura hunt all that means is that they are their devotee

you know that's just the way it is and one time I went to see this this Seattle who was considered to be in our hunt

I've met a few monks who are considered to be honor hunts and this one in particular his name was mahabodi in Seattle or something and on the way

there I asked the driver who was one of
his devotees are you sure he's
enlightened and he's like hey Johnny I'm
sure and he's he's enlightened how they
would possibly know I mean they couldn't
possibly know but they're sure
and the Burmese in particular tend to be
that way they're sure even if they don't
have a clue really you know is it going
to rain next Wednesday yep it's gonna
rain
and they don't know they're just for
some reason it's just the way their mind
works it's it's uh they're not really
sure of they're not comfortable with
ambiguity they they want to they want a

yes or no you know

um but anyway this mahabodhi eye in

Seattle or it was something along those

lines

um

I went to see him and it was just like a

circus at his Monastery there was all

these things like uh Alchemists and

stuff walking also statues and pagodas

being built everywhere it was it was

pretty much like a festival there every

day and um everyone's like standing

around waiting for the the aura hunt

Seattle to come out and and eat his meal

he finally comes out like a quarter to

12 which is you know you got 15 minutes

to eat your meal before you're breaking

the rules and he comes out and he sits

in this Pavilion one of the first things

he does he just like blows his nose into

his hand and then just wipes the snot on

the wall

and this is an aura hunt you know

supposedly

so

yeah it's really hard to say I mean you

pretty much have to be enlightened

um to know if somebody else is in line

but I mean if you see somebody that's

just like you know screaming in the face

of an old lady and kicking her or

something that's a pretty good

indication that he's not enlightened

but um didn't scream in the faces of old
ladies and kick them as far as I know he
did write a really bizarre biography of
his teacher on
that you wonder how an extremely wise
person can come up with this but again
it's just traditional there's all these
talks about you know those default
finding Cobra dragon and the ogre the
ajan mon had to deal with out in the
woods and just on and on and on
this whole multitudes of like dead
Buddhas and their their enlightened
disciples that are coming back to the
Earth somehow
after you know transcending some sorrow
just to just to come and hang out with

ajan man and so forth

um yeah I'm pretty skeptical with regard

to that sort of thing I have to admit

chewing Beetle nuts and spitting it into

a spittoon spitting the beetle spit into

a spittoon I mean that's that's not too

bad you know there have been like very

Advanced uh Hindu swamis that smoke

cigarettes ajan man himself was a chain

smoker or so I've been told which would

make an aura hunt literally a drug

addict but maybe you know I mean at

least it's not like fentanyl or

something I mean tobacco really isn't

that horrible

it's not like he's getting drunk I

suppose

so

yeah it's really hard to say I mean with

regard to enlightened beings you can

only guess you just you just take make

your best guess

um

but I would say that at least at the

very least he's much more advanced than

the average person even if he wasn't

like fully enlightened even if that even

means anything well then sorry context

because I'm I'm thinking that within the

context of samsara you know the thinking

mind and everything a fully enlightened

being really doesn't mean anything

because any kind of meaning would make

them part of you know like it would sort
of bring them back into samsara or
something
it's yeah I mean it may be it's sort of
like a paradox where within the samsara
context just Enlightenment is just
impossible
so they have to transcend samsara and
even though their body and their mind to
some degree is still here in this world
um they're not identified with it you
know they're sort of Beyond
so it's really hard to say like neem
curly Baba that I mentioned I think he
may have been fully enlightened but he
was a rascal I mean he did not behave

the way the stereotypical Saint like

Ramana maharshi behaved

but

he was extremely Advanced and I've got

no doubt about that

so I think I'll just move on to

librarian crazies next question here

what constitutes a sexual misconduct in

Buddhism the rules in the sutras seem

pretty abstract does having premarital

sex with a girlfriend count as

misconduct well I'll answer this last

part first does having pre-marital sex

with a girlfriend count as misconduct

not necessarily you don't have to be

married in order to avoid sexual

misconduct I mean if if two people

love each other and they're faithful to

each other

you know they're pretty much married

already I mean just just having a

ceremony

um and getting like this piece of paper

you know the marriage license or

whatever that really doesn't change all

that much you know the ring on the

finger doesn't make you

um you know like a loving faithful

couple

but you would have to you know have

um you have to be faithful to each other

but getting back to the first question

here

what constitutes a sexual misconduct in
Buddhism I've answered this question in
previous q a at least one and somewhere
I don't remember exactly where it is
there's just a list
of women a man is not supposed to have
sexual relations with and all of the
lists I think it's 10 but all of them
are women that are already like under
the guardianship or protection of
another man so it's like another man's
wife obviously a woman who is betrothed
you know she's engaged you know she's a
woman who still lives with her parents
so if she's under the protection of her
her father or
a guardian a woman who's under the

protection of a guardian like another

man's slave girl a woman who is a

prisoner who's under the like the

guardianship of the prison guards

or the what do you what do you call them

the the main guy at the prison

the words escaping me I have never been

to prison so

um so that's kind of like

that's like the the commentarial

interpretation I'm pretty sure of sexual

misconduct but I mean it would also

include

uh like having sex with a prostitute you

know she's under the protection of her

pimp or whatever but even a free agent

prostitute would be sexual misconduct if
you're having this promiscuous sex with
people you don't care about people that
don't care about you that would qualify
a sexual misconduct so sexual
intercourse that isn't sexual misconduct
would be essentially two people uh
preferably who love each other or at
least they have like this sense of Duty
you know they have this Bond and they're
not messing around with other people on
the side you know they're just with each
other and you know they're they're
monogamous essentially
so that would be that would not be
sexual misconduct if if they fit that
so you don't have to be married but at

least you have to be you know

in a in a stable faithful pair bond with

another person

so I'll just move on with uh

librarian crazies next and last question

here

and he says I gotta chuckle when you

said you smashed those flies and feed

them to the ants did you have to do

Penance after doing it as a layperson

now do you still follow the five

precepts the no killing insects part is

probably the hardest precept to follow

for me

well technically I wasn't feeling ants I

was feeding ant lions and if you if you

never lived in like a dry deserty place
an ant lion it's a kind of insect larva
or nymph that lives in the sand and it
makes this funnel-shaped pit and
anything that falls into the pit it like
flings sand at them mostly ants until
they fall down to the bottom and it
grabs them in his jaws and eats them
um but that's kind of irrelevant here do
you have to do Penance after killing an
insect
um no you have to make confession so
it's it's a party offense to kill an
animal is a pachy the offense and so you
just make confession and that kind of I
mean you still got the karma but at
least uh from the ecclesiastical point

of view you're you're clear you know

you're you're in good standing you you

confess the offense you know you promise

to to do better in future that you just

restrain yourself in future

and so that's fine and

um for those of you that didn't see the

previous q a where I was talking about

this I mean it's ironic that when I was

trying to be as serious and strict of

among as possible I was living out in

this big forest in tropical Asia with no

mosquito net and just out there in the

open

and

when mosquitoes I mean within reason I

could just sit there and be bitten by mosquitoes and there were times when there'd be like six of them biting me at the same time but there were these horse flies and sand flies that would come and start I mean the sand flies would just come in swarms and it was scary because they bite hard it hurts and I just could not sit there and just be eaten alive by these things and so I just started flailing back at them and I I got pretty good at slapping them with my sweat wiping rag and uh then you know they'd be dead or stunned or whatever and then I'd drop them into a little ant lion pit at least get a little bit of Merit for feeding hungry ant lion

but um let's see as a layperson now do I
still follow the five precepts I do have
a beer every now and then I had a beer
last night in fact I had two of them
so
I don't follow the five precepts
perfectly with regard to lying I am
scrupulous I do try to be honest I don't
steal with regard to killing
uh yeah I have killed a few insects I
haven't killed anything bigger than an
insect
but um
I have killed a few insects I killed
probably lots of them accidentally today
when I was tearing apart the chicken

coop because there was a couple of ant

nests inside the chicken coop

but um it has to be on purpose in order

for it to count I suppose

so let's see

yeah

so yeah I think I answered that one so

we'll just move on to the next question

from hey it's Tig

and hey it's TIG says what was we no

what there's no age what was we and I

asked him after he asked me this I mean

could he be a little more specific and

then he admitted that he just wanted to

hear me say we was Kings and [__]

so

there there it is and I said

actually we was arya's

we was Aryans and [__]

I think I'll just move on this question

here also from Hayes TIG is there Merit

in being hit in the head by a horse

likewise is there Merit in being chopped

in the head by a Matic and apparently he

read a blog post that I wrote talking

about my father's paranormal childhood

and when he was about eight he got

kicked in the head by a horse apparently

according to the story he was trying to

climb onto the horse by climbing up its

tail and it kicked him in the head

fortunately it had thrown a shoe and

kicked him without a horseshoe on

otherwise he might have done

and then uh

and then just a year later he got

chopped in the head with a Matic and it

caused another fracture so he got his

head broken twice when he was a kid

um is there Merit in being hit in the

head by a horse well like I just

mentioned I mean there must have been

some mitigating Merit in that he just

happened to get kicked by the hoof that

didn't have a shoe on it no iron shoe

you know sort of like me talking earlier

about uh breaking my teeth and getting

malaria and so forth

um it may have helped him later in life

with regard to understanding

um like Paranormal phenomena what he

referred to as the occult

I mean that may have kind of been a kind

of initiation you know sort of creating

a certain liminality by

um breaking his head

um yeah so it's hard to say because

there's very rarely anything that

happens to you there's 100 good or 100

bad it's almost always a mix it's almost

always Shades of Gray

so yeah I would I would assume that

there was a certain amount of Merit

involved

in in these things although

pretty obviously there was a lot of

demerit also

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Trump

and Trump is says if nibana is off the

scale and unconditioned then how do

conditioned mind States and actions I.E

kusula Deeds lead onward to Awakening

that's a good question

and I wish I had something to drink but

I don't have anything to drink I just

I like drinking stuff

not alcohol I don't drink alcohol not

even not even beer on these

but um let's see yeah it's it reminds me

of a statement by Krishna learning and

you can see similar things in the

polytext themselves for example in uh

the polytext like in the sunny patana
suta you know say if you follow these
instructions scrupulously then you'll
either become enlightened or you'll
become an Arya that's you know not
enlightened but close to enlightened and
so there's no guarantee and that that
reminded me of of Jay krishnamurti's uh
statement that you can open the window
but you can't cause the breeze to blow
in now you open you know you get your
room you know squared away get it clean
and everything so that you can get to
the window and open it but that's that's
the most you can do
so I mean there is no guarantee and it's

Enlightenment itself is a paradox and

like I said earlier within the the

context of samsara

that it may just be meaningless it may

just be impossible or just uh just

meaningless

so what you do is you just get yourself

as open to it as possible you know get

yourself cleared out and and

um

usually in the text or in a lot of sutos

you know you're getting into high

mystical states that are getting you

into some kind of worldly approximation

of Enlightenment in fact Jonah is

referred to as temporary Enlightenment

or temporary Liberation I should say

and um

the way it's really hard to talk about

this talking about Enlightenment and so

forth is just like I said from a some

sort of context it may just be futile

laughs

but it's like

um you know seeing water instead of

waves and so if you wanted to see like

the surface of the water has just water

and not as getting distracted by the

waves you know you're just seeing it as

waves that's that's what the Normie does

I mean I'm speaking allegorically here

or metaphorically but people most people

they see only the waves they don't see

the essence they just see the forms
and so if you're going to get to the
point where you see the essence of of
the world and not just the superficial
forms you're going to have to see the
water as water and not as waves and I
like this wave and I don't like this
wave and that wave is better than this
other wave and then on and on that's
that's the world that most people live
in is just superficial forms
so the way you do that is you try to
create as much of a flat Palm as
possible like something like fourth
genre would just be flat palm and then
it's very difficult to confuse that
confuse the water with the waves because

there aren't any waves anymore it may be
absolutely impossible to get to just
purely perfect flat calm there may
always be a certain amount of you know
little ripples or something
but the the less the waves are there to
distract you the more you're able to
penetrate that and sort of transcend the
superficiality of the forms and get to
the essence
so that would be how I would uh answer
that question I'll just move on to Trump
a Saba's next question here
which is how does orthodox Buddhism
explain how the mind can be reborn in a
lower state for example a human goes

down into the animal and becomes a bird
during rebirth the bird arguably does
not have volition in the same manner as
does a human yet rebirth is discussed in
a one-to-one Exchange in any sutas how
then can one reborn into an animal like
a bird burn off negative comma of a
human life while a bird does and not
have ability to choose kusla or akusala
actions
okay
um there's kind of a lot to unpack I
mean I'm I'm kind of like wanting to go
One Direction with this which really
isn't the direction that Trump basantva
here was had in mind I'm pretty sure but
uh my father who was a weird guy partly

because he had his head broken a number
of times cleaned twice when he was a
little kid
um he was introduced to Buddhism by a
dead Vietnamese Buddhist monk who was
coming through a spirit medium in trance
so she channeled this dead Vietnamese
Mahayana Buddhist monk and my father
learned about Buddhism originally in
this way
and he asked this this monk or you know
the woman in the trance anyhow that can
a person be reborn as an animal and the
the dead monk was just he just scoffed
at the idea how could you fit all the
Karma of a human being into a bug or or

a bird or a goldfish or something it

just I mean you just can't fit

he was just indignant according to my

father's recounting of the story

but um

that's not the question here it's like

uh see

uh let's see here's the actual question

here

how can one be reborn into an animal

like a bird burn off negative Karma of a

human life well well the thing is you're

they're just stuck you know there's the

famous suta where the Buddha is talking

about how if you wind up born as an

animal

then your ability to get out of the

animal realm is is very small so the the analogy is you've got a blind sea turtle who comes up once every hundred years he swims all the oceans of the earth and he comes up once every hundred years for air

and you've got like this a yoke which is let's say a toilet seat it's sort of shaped in kind of the same size as a toilet seat

it's floating out in the ocean and he said the the chances of getting out of the animal realm once you wind up there or about the same as that blind sea turtle coming up for air and having his head come right up through the Yoke or

in this my version the toilet seat

so you're stuck there because As Trump

asaga points out your your ability to

get out of there through volitional good

deeds and earning Merit and like

understanding and contemplating dhamma

and so forth you know it's pretty much

gone

so you just have to exhaust your Bad

Karma even though as an animal you're

stuck making more and more of it

you somehow I have to exhaust that and

then having like the the underlying

Merit from previous existences as humans

or even superhuman beings finally they

they lift you out of it or maybe in some

case you're just like this rare animal

you're the dolphin that helps the

drowning swimmer or something

so

so I think I answered the question

but it's it's not easy if you're if

you're reborn as an animal maybe you'll

be lucky and become like this pampered

I don't know Shih Tzu or something

and then you might have a better

opportunities you know you're not just

in you know like fear and hunger mode

all the time just trying to survive

so let's move on to Trump Assad for the

next question here do you consider

Buddhism in the west to be a lost cause

or is this just a bump in the road as

part of a longer process of transmission
while there is a bunch of problems in
the convert community in the past 20 to
30 years there has been a growth of
monastic institutions in the west could
it be that the leftist stuff will fade
as the Boomers die off as gen Z is
mostly not interested in their vision of
liberal religion and the conservative
Traditions like Orthodox teravada will
continue to chug along as those Fall
Away
yeah that's a timely question I suppose
um yeah I mean Western Buddhism most
western Buddhism is just has been taken
over by
Liberation theology which is just a kind

of like

it's just this mishmash of like the

third or fourth wave feminism and lgbtq

rights and

um you know like environmentalism to

some degree and

um just sort of

um neo-marxism essentially progressivism

so it's just essentially so-called

progressivism as though decline in fall

is progress

um just putting on like a Buddhist cloak

and being called Buddhists and you know

the followers of this ideology being

called calling themselves Buddhists

um but at the same time I think as uh

Trump assafa here points out

um Buddhist monasticism like taravada

Buddhist monasticism is on the increase

in the West

and the monks tend to be way more

conservative than the the Jewish

lesbians teaching gamma in the dhamma

halls for Lay people in various places

so

um yeah I think

there is a very good chance that the

whole Progressive Movement is becoming

so unstable and insane that it's going

to collapse sooner or later preferably

sooner than later

and um the the conservative aspects of

terrible Buddhism because they have a

much firmer Foundation but not based on

fads that became popular around 2015

you know they've been there for 2 500

years and

um so it's it's sort of like a rock

even though it's it's like a smaller

movement right now than all the the

progressive Lefty cultural Marxist

Buddhism stuff

um I mean you read the academic papers

like Buddhist Buddhist academic papers

and it's all you know about lgbtq stuff

I mean that's that's seems to be like a

major thread in buddhistic studies

nowadays is you know how can we justify

you know

like transgenderism you know using

Buddhism that kind of thing

so yeah I would be inclined to think

that uh that the whole Progressive

Movement

um in its appropriation of Buddhism and

pretty much every other spiritual system

that they can get their hands on and

just turning it into

sort of you know religion flavored

cultural Marxism or whatever that it's

it's not stable

it's not going to last and that there's

always going to be

um like the more solid more stable kind

of

Buddhism that uh it's not going to die

out nearly as easily

but who knows we're just gonna have to

wait and see exactly what's going to

happen

so yeah let's just wait and see I'll

just move on to Trump assafa's next

question here a follow-up to this

question how does Buddhism or does it at

all explain how one can see the future

if a person can lessen or alter their

karmic retributions

see anguli Mala getting a beat down

after becoming an aura hunt versus being

killed by his victim's relatives are

there any explanations of how an Arya

sees into the future differently from a

worldly person well again this is one of
those questions that I don't fully
entirely grasp how can Buddhism see into
the future I mean from the Orthodox
terravada Buddhist perspective nobody
can see into the future because the
future simply does not exist yet
so when the Buddha makes prophecies and
supposedly you know seemingly sees into
the future he's using his omniscient
ability to see the way things are now
and then he's just extrapolating with
with his superhuman genius and
extrapolating into the future
um but that's not exactly the same as
actually seeing the future
so I mean prophecy in that sense I mean

in the the Paranormal sense really

doesn't exist unless you want to

consider the omniscience of a Buddha to

be paranormal I guess that would that

would be applicable

um

how a person can lessen or alter their

comic retributions

um yeah I mean if you're if you're

enlightened then I mean like for example

there's the story of Muhammad galana he

was one of the Two Chief Disciples of

the Buddha

and he was the disciple of the great

Disciples of the Buddha he was the one

who had mastered

psychic powers more than any other and
um because he was so illustrious and
such a good example there were certain
non-budists who hated him
and so they hired some thugs to
essentially kill him you know like just
assassinate him to just murder him and
he used the psychic powers to escape
twice you know he could just fly away or
whatever but then he realized that he
had the karma to be killed because in
some previous life he had I can't
remember the story like it's like he
deliberately caused the death of one or
both of his parents or something it was
really awful it was a long time ago but
that Karma never it had never completely

worked itself out yet and so finally the

third time he just let them literally

beat him to a pulp according to the the

story there was not an unbroken bone

left in his body after they were done

beating on him

um with regard to anguli Mala who was

literally a serial killer

um he uh was converted by the Buddha and

became a monk and then apparently became

enlightened

um and then uh he got he got a beat down

but at least he didn't get the he wasn't

beaten to a pulp like uh mogulano was

but mogalana was a chief disciple

so see are there any explanations of how

an aria season the future differently

from a worldly person well I mean if

you've got psychic powers you you know

you've got Clairvoyance and so forth and

then that would help you to extrapolate

into the future you'd see more of the

big picture

than the average person and the Buddha

who's supposedly I mean according to

Orthodox tradition is omniscient then he

can see the big picture and Crystal

Clarity and uh you know he can

extrapolate even better but we've got

limited knowledge

the average Normie has limited knowledge

so I mean you can make guesses about the

future but you can't know for sure

so yeah even even in Aura hot really

cannot know for sure kind of reminds me

of was it in the Book of Revelation the

Bible where even the even the angels

don't know when uh the day of judgment

is going to occur

so let's see here

I'm not sure if I answered that question

very well but I gave it a shot

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

question

which is from our good friend Theo Vox

and sipad zidana

and I still don't know if I'm

pronouncing that name correctly but it

just rolls off the tongue now

and see olvox and sipad zidana says can
you please explain Tantra what are its
Origins teachings why it's influent why
it's influenced many modern Indian
religions and what's up with the whole
tantric sex thing
I had to learn about Tantra when I took
out religions of India class in college
long ago and I'm not sure
what the origins of it are with regard
to was it originally like Mahayana
Buddhist or was it Hindu I know that the
Hindus and the Mahayana Buddhists have
like tantric practices in certain
schools but I'm not sure which one it
arose with and which one borrowed it but
the whole idea of Tantra is that we are

in the Kali Yuga and you just can't
become a saint anymore the the times are
just too decadent too depraved you know
too much on the downhill slide for
people to really perfect themselves the
way Orthodox and Buddhism or Orthodox
whatever encourages people to do you
know since very ancient times and so
what they try to do
is they just try to detach they're like
trying to use like Vice essentially as
just like a spiritual practice you know
they do
um like immoral things supposedly or at
least Spirits religiously disapproved of
things

um as a kind of spiritual practice

because we are in the Kali Yuga and

there's no escape from these spiritually

inappropriate actions and so in Tantra

I've read

that there are like the five M's that

they would use ritually

um as a kind of spiritual practice one

was my tuna which is sex one is Maja

which is alcohol this intoxicants in

general I think it's mainly alcohol one

is mamsa which is meat one is matcha

which is fish so they eat meat and they

eat fish they drink alcohol they have

sex and the fifth one they've I think

they've lost what it is they're sort of

like Soma in in uh in in The Vedas where

um they just kind of lost the meaning of
it it's probably some kind of drug
but um it's in the the ceremonies that
they do now is they just use parched
grain and I'm not sure how parched grain
would be something spiritually
disapproved of unless it's just some
sort of obscure food taboo
um and they would try to they try to do
these things mindfully without
attachment even the sex part so like
tantric sex I have read I think ramdas
describes it to some degree in at least
one of his books the man lies motionless
on his back and a female who has been
trained to have sex without any kind of

emotional involvement like a lot of
women kind of do anyway I guess
um that she's sort of rides him and he's
just trying to be there just like as
unattached and mindful as possible just
lying there on his back while the girl
kind of rides him
um and the whole point of it is that if
you can't escape from this kind of
worldly defilement stuff in this Dark
Age that we are living in you have to
transmute that into into something
spiritual so it's like they're trying to
transmute the darkness of the Dark Age
that we are in into something spiritual
so they can use at least that as a
vehicle to Enlighten them

and it's very dangerous and even the
tantric people uh like the the genuine
ones not just the ones playing at it you
know they'll tell you it really is
dangerous because you can just get lost
in it I mean it takes a lot of
self-discipline to do these things
especially the sex thing without just
getting just getting lost in it
or just having it come back on you and
you're making more demerit than Merit or
or whatever it is
so let's see
why it's influenced many modern Indian
religions I assume it just goes it's the
the standard idea that we are in the

Kali Yuga and just becoming a saint is

so difficult

that there are a lot of like renunciants

who try as hard as they can to become

enlightened through the the standard

traditional practices and make

themselves a perfected Saint and then

they just fail and then they just switch

to something else like devotionalism

like I guess at least some of the pure

land Buddhists were like that where they

tried to be a perfected Saint they

couldn't do it so they just started

praying

or um yeah probably Tantra is is the

same way I assume there's a lot of

people who are just sort of drawn to

rascality in general who are just
intuitively drawn to trying to use their
own rascality as a spiritual vehicle
but I think I've answered that question
so I think I'll just move on to seal of
action cpl's next question here
it's just kind of a long one in the
Indian languages the word Jonna is used
for concentration but samadhi just means
meditation but in Buddhism I constantly
hear people say the Buddha would say
Jonah comes from jayadi which means
meditation while they translate samadhi
as concentration also I heard namarupa
means mind body and Buddhism what it
directly means name and form and was

used in the upanishads to refer to the
process of perception where a form is
given a classification in the mind this
and some others have led to scholar
monks like Bonte
to claim that the terrible tradition
lost the meaning of the words over time
due to not knowing the language and lost
their traditional context by being in a
different culture meanwhile most
Buddhist Scholars would say that the
Buddha just used words to mean different
things
what are your thoughts on this do you
think terrible really lost the cultural
context of even these important words or
do you think this interpretation is a

stretch

okay well getting back to the top here

the word Jonna

I'm pretty sure it just means meditation

I mean it comes from jayadi which means

to blaze to illuminate

and um

I mean it also had a meaning of like

meditation like like genre is

um what the word zen comes from it's

like the meditation School of Buddhism

and I'm pretty sure that it means that

in other Indian traditions also samadhi

has a somewhat different meaning in

Hinduism where that's like the

attainment I mean like someone

um

I remember someone who was a follower of

Osho they were claiming that they

attained samadhi concentration

and that was like when you attain

somebody it's sort of like Ken show or

Satori in in like Zen

um so in Somali may have a different

meaning in Hinduism but I am pretty sure

that samadhi I mean just going with it's

like placing together to which

essentially is concentration literally

the psalm means together and the the D

is like placement

so yeah I I don't think that CEO of

action

or I I suspect that he is mistaken with

the guard too Jonah

in other systems or in like the original

uh means

um concentration

and samadhi just means meditation

yeah because I think somebody is

concentration and John I John originally

just met meditation and then later on it

acquired the meaning of like really

Advanced meditation

but I think originally it just meant

meditation like uh in in the Attica

Wagga which is very old it refers to uh

a meditating monk as ajayi or just a

meditator

he doesn't necessarily mean that he was

possessed of you know these higher

absorption States

so we're going to Nama Rupa I do agree

that uh I mean literally it means name

and form and it I think it originally

did mean that uh

that it was just uh the the way

perception Works where you single

something out you single out a form and

then you put a name on it

and then Buddhism turned that into mind

and matter and I'm not even sure that

the Buddha would have taught the reality

of physical matter

I mean he probably just was silent on

the issue because it's you just don't

get enlightened through philosophizing

in that way

ah so yeah I would agree with that

second part

and let's see this and some others have

led to scholar monks like Bonte punaji

to claim that the terravada tradition

lost the meaning of the words over time

due to not knowing the language and lost

their traditional context by being in a

different culture

um

the culture didn't change all that much

I do think that certain words

um they just lost they forgot the

meaning the original meaning like one

classic example is the word papancha

which uh was misunderstood by the
commentarial tradition for centuries and
centuries until finally uh Sri Lankan
monk in modern times back in the 20th
century wrote a book Concept in reality
I think I got on the Shelf back there
pointing out just based on what the
students say about the word papancha
that it really doesn't mean what the
commentary says it does
so that happens and then when Mahayana
came along and started translating texts
into Sanskrit or a Buddhist hybrid
Sanskrit they they really misunderstood
the meanings of quite a few words in
fact they may have misunderstood the
meaning ironically of the word

bodhisattva or bodhisatta in Pali

um another one is um the the

conventional truth in Buddhism is Samuri

Sacha they've they translate that as

some verti Sacha which means concealing

truth so they they sort of redefined it

on purpose or else they just

mistranslated into Sanskrit

um it is true that the Buddha would

change the meanings of certain words

like Karma and he's got a different

explanation for karma than other systems

um the word Brahman he's just started

using that as a genuine holy man not

just someone who was descended from this

you know ancient Line This certain cast

or Varna

so yeah I think it's probably a a

mixture of

um

just the meanings changing

um partly because the Buddha just

started using them in a different

context or with a different meaning and

also when you've got scholar monks

they're writing most of the books I mean

the real meditators the serious monks

are out alone out in a cave somewhere

they're not participating in these

councils and so forth as a general rule

they're not determining what the Dogma

the Orthodox position is going to be

they're not writing commentaries

so

um there is a certain amount of

um this deviation like uh what would you

call it entropy in in dama where just

things kind of start breaking down a

little bit

ultimately they break down a lot like

modern Western so-called Buddhism I mean

I mean that's it's almost unrecognizable

compared with what Buddhism originally

was

but um

yeah anything is I mean everything is

impermanent everything that has a

beginning has an end and that includes

the teachings of the Buddha

so

yeah so I mean here's the question what

do you do you think terrebona really

lost the cultural context of even these

important words

or do you think this interpretation is a

stretch I think to some degree it's one

to some degree it's another I mean I do

think that Jonah was misinterpreted but

I do think it originally did just mean

meditation and the four Johns were

originally just the four stages of

meditation

so that even a normie who's meditating

correctly would have first genre or

you're still thinking and so forth

and then it somehow got turned into a

superhuman mental state so that now in

terrible lot of Buddhism right

concentration is literally a superhuman

mental state and my battery is dying

because I forgot to plug it in again

just a second

it keeps happening

I think it happened last time too

all right we're good we're good

that was down to 10 percent

okay

so yeah I mean there's there's no Escape

really and uh you know everything that

has a beginning does have an end

and uh so Buddhism is in a certain

amount of decline

I mean an obvious decline if you look at

you know what post-modern western

Buddhism has become

so let's see here I think I'll just move

on to CEO of actions next question

ah and this one is a real personal one

have you ever experienced any of the

genres or arupa ayatanas if so can you

describe them in any way that the

suitors don't also have you had the

glimpse of nibana I know you believe in

the four path oh I know you maybe he

says don't believe in the four path

model but I don't know if you also don't

think you can't get a glimpse before

full enlightenment

okay well

with regard to the formless genres or

the uh what he calls here the arupa

ayatanas I did write an essay which I

think is still on my my languishing

website

um

trying to explain that those were it's

like an anachronism those got added

later

and I won't go into the full Theory here

but uh I do think that those are like an

anachronism that

um they just got added later they're

just sort of uh

uh just sort of an artificial construct

or something

but with regarding the genres I mean

like I just said earlier just just like

a minute or two ago that John originally

just meant meditation and that there are

four stages of meditation and so I mean

if you're just meditating correctly then

you've already got first Jonna

even though you're you're still got

you're going with a mantra or breathing

in breathing out or whatever

um

but I do think just um based on my own

personal experience I do get higher than

first John I don't really want to go

into

details of that but I have definitely

gone into meditative states where you're

just not thinking anymore you're just
wide awake and your mind is silent
um if you want to call that a glimpse of
nibana again I mean you have to use
language to talk about this stuff but
again it may be from a samsara context
that nibana is just meaningless
just using words and so forth I mean you
can say that nibana is the cessation of
dukkah the cessation of delusion or the
cessation of greed and hate and so forth
but um
yeah I mean it may just be ultimately
just so beyond language that you just
can't even talk about it
and it's best not to think about being

an aria anyone who thinks I am an aria

isn't one

I mean that's that's going back to The

Diamond Cutter Sutra again I think I've

already mentioned The Diamond Cutter

once but it points out that anyone who

is in Arya isn't going to be thinking I

am an aria because self-view is one of

the first things that goes when you

become an Arya you don't believe I am

this or I am anything really and it's

but it's just not even when you start

believing that you're you're something

you've pretty much locked yourself into

this category and it may not even be the

correct category

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

question here from CEO of actions

and that is what are your thoughts on

the wimuti Maga and uh yeah I have come

across one copy of the wimuti Maga I was

at a monastery in Upper Burma and in

their Library they had a copy of the

wimuti Maga

and that was what the wisudi manga was

based on it was a earlier

um an earlier commentarial work

that existed in ancient times and it was

believed to be lost for a long time and

then finally they found like one copy of

it in some palm leaf manuscript and some

old Monastery in Sri Lanka or something

and it's it's like a an earlier version

of the wisudi manga and I just read
parts of it I didn't go over the whole
thing there are obvious resemblances and
certain differences I think possibly but
just because Orthodox terabad and Dogma
had changed to some degree some of the
wimuti Maga was now considered to be
unorthodox and then got revised and
improved upon by Buddha Gosa who wrote
the wizuni manga but
um pretty obviously had a copy of the
wimuti Maga to refer to and he was just
sort of modifying that to make the
wisudi manga and for those of you who
don't know what the wisudi Maga is it is
the primary commentarial text in
terrible Buddhism

it's sort of like the Hub and all the commentaries to the different texts or like the the spokes coming out of the Hub but like the wee City magas just like the center of the commentarial tradition

and the wimuti Maga apparently was its predecessor although I can't really say a whole lot about it because I was just sort of skimming through it just out of curiosity to see uh you know what the what the translator would say and and and that sort of thing

so we'll just move on to the next question

also from CEO of action sipad zidana

and he says

you said addiction is a result of deep

down problems with perception and it's

hard to quit because of it do you think

that's also the case of starting a new

habit rather than stopping for example

if we want to meditate are there any

tricks to getting ourselves go get stuff

done or is it also just a matter of

perception and there's no hope until a

crisis incident

um

well I mean yeah if you want us it's

hard to start a new habit just pretty

much like it's hard to stop an old habit

is because you're in the habit of not

having that habit yet

so I mean obviously I mean you don't

just you can't just passively wait for

yourself to be flung into a crisis in

order to have the breakdown necessary to

transcend your attachments or or

whatever

um

so let's see do you think this whole

yeah I think yeah because you've already

got these habits and it doesn't include

the new habit so yeah I mean I think

anybody's experienced that where

um you just you just habitually occupy

your time doing certain things you know

watching YouTube videos or or whatever

it is whatever it is that you do and

they're just starting a new habit like I
would like to start reading books more
just because I just kind of got out of
the Habit after I stopped being a monk
and stop being a member of the Leisure
Class I have to work for a living and do
chores like tearing down chicken coops
and stuff
and you just get into this I mean he's
not in your routine anymore so you have
to just alter consciously alter your
routine but obviously if you have a good
motivation for it then yeah I mean
that's that's really essential you have
to have like a like a clear motivation
you know a good reason to start doing
something if it's just sort of like this

arbitrary whim it's not gonna not gonna

last very long unless uh the arbitrary

of whim you know leads to something more

solid

but uh yeah you have to have some sort

of perception like

um schopenhauer his his doctoral thesis

in University his first main uh

philosophical essay had a name like on

the four-fold route of sufficient reason

and he said that one of the the

uh the four

uh kinds of like necessity is like

psychological necessity and that is so

long as you perceive things in the same

way you're going to react in the same

way to whatever happens the only way

you're going to change your behavior

under the same circumstances is to

change your perceptions

so there's that too and if

it may be that you need to change your

perceptions to some degree my studying

up on the benefits of this new habit you

want to start for example

you know once you you like educate

yourself on the benefits of it that may

change your perceptions sufficiently

that you don't need like the total

breakdown

to throw you into the crisis that makes

you open to suggestion

so getting any tricks to getting

ourselves to go get stuff done some

people meditate better in a group

I mean you're much less likely to just

get up and wander away after 15 minutes

if everyone around you is still sitting

there so some people do better in a

group although you'd have to find a

meditation group that uh isn't teaching

something that you don't consider to be

acceptable

so that's a possibility or uh really

just uh read some of the texts

encouraging

meditation read some books on meditation

like written by a serious meditator that

is telling you from his own experience

you know you're going to get these kind

of benefits

and then it may inspire you to meditate

more

so um I think I'm just going to move on

to the next question also from CEO of

action Cod is either now this this may

turn into a really long one even if I uh

don't include the really complicated

question in this particular video

didn't I mentioned earlier so let's see

here

next one is when I read ancient texts

like the law of Manu it has a rule that

you shouldn't marry your son to a girl

with red hair also there is some Mayana

story I read where the student had to

get the guru a wife and he got her a

Brahmin Girl with blonde hair although

she rejected him for his student did the

original Aryans who invaded India have

these features or were these a result of

later migrations

where are all these people with these

features we would consider modern

European in India today did they all die

out

well

um I've been thinking about that like uh

you had the indo-europeans who moved

um like they moved Eastward from their

Homeland supposedly going with the the

main Theory you know the most accepted

Theory they arose like in South

Southwestern Russia and Southern Ukraine

like north of

uh the Black Sea like the pontic step is

where they arose and that was

um we don't get we don't need to get

before them but that was for the

Indo-European or the so-called Aryan

race arose and then uh one group of

those migrated

um

eastwards they became the centashta

culture and then like the Andra Novo

culture some of those then migrated

cells into what is now Afghanistan

and

then they started the bactria margiana

archaeological complex or something like

that and

I mean as they as they migrated they

were no doubt interbreeding with other

people there especially if they're

coming as conquerors they're going to be

taking the prettiest women and

interbreeding with those which is going

to be you know sort of

um hybridizing the people as they move

into one area after another

um

how many blondes and redheads and

blue-eyed people were still among the

the Indo-European like the the

indo-aryans when they invaded India

still going with the standard theory

that might be uh insulting some Hindus

who think the Aryan race or the

Indo-European race arose in India I was

saying gajillion years ago or whatever

um yeah I I think there were still some

blondes and redheads and blue eyed

people there I think you can still find

like higher cast Indians who still have

blue eyes they almost all have black

hair now

um but you still find a lot especially

in the upper classes like the brahmins

especially if they've got like fair skin

and a few have blue eyes

um so a lot of that would go back to

um the indoorians who invaded India like

around 1500 BC or so but then there were other Indo-European groups that did invade after that one of the most recent of course being the British like in the 17 1800s

and there are you know British soldiers would mess around with Indian girls and um so you've got you know Indian people who are like half Irish living in India now

um so yeah you had like various tribes coming through conquering Northern India especially and the incidence of you know blonde people and blue-eyed people and and so forth would be much higher in the north than in the South the south is

mostly dravidian and I think there's

going to be a question about dravidians

later

um very nice question in fact

so some of it I assume goes back to the

indoorians I think it's in uh

um

what is it patanjali in his his yoga

sutras refers to like the standard

Brahman the stereotypical brahmanas

having like reddish hair and blue eyes

so in very early times it was like that

and then it was just through

interbreeding with the the indigenous

people there you know just over over

centuries and centuries you know you

have the indo-aryan ruling ruling class

you know it's it's accepting you know

they're they're taking you know women

from

from the other other races or you know

the people that were already there

um also sometimes they would especially

the the shatrias or the like the the

military ruling class they would

sometimes just accept indigenous tribal

Chieftains as honorary

shatrias and there are some people who

say that the Buddha may have been of

that sort where he wasn't even into

Aryan although

um that's uh neither here nor there I

suppose but um yeah so it was gradually

they just kind of diluted out I mean

they're still their bloodline is still

there

that uh some of the purest purest

indo-aryan or Indo-European blood I have

read at least with this with regard to

certain genomes is in like Rajasthan in

Northern India that in like in like

dramatic like northern Europe those

would be the two main places or so I

have read

so

so yeah the original orange I assumed

that even by the time they got to India

there was probably mostly black hair and

dark eyes just because of all the

interbreeding that they did from between

their Homeland and India because they

they invaded

um and sort of took over I guess just

various cultures on their way there

and so each time you know they'd be

taking the prettiest girls of the the

black-haired dark-eyed people

they were already there and so gradually

they're sort of diluted down

it's uh my best answer

I think I'll just move on to seal of

action sipad zidino's next question

and that is also I read the the

dravidians are descendants from the

Middle East or Iran that arrived into

the Indus Valley around

3500 BC or so however there was an
ancient hunter-gatherer population in
India before then that some claim are
some of the first people who came out of
Africa which one of these do you think
are responsible for the Ramana
traditions I heard you say that it comes
from the indigenous population but you
called them dravidian so it's confusing
well I've read that uh just based on the
study of skeletons
um in like cemeteries associated with
the Indus Valley Civilization that the
people there were a mixture of three
different races you had the you know the
uh the uh like the Mediterranean
Neolithic Farmers from they were like

sort of cotton black-haired Caucasians

that came from you know essentially you

know where the where the Neolithic

Farmers arose like in uh

um like the Levant and Mesopotamia and

like South

Southeastern turkey that you know they

some of those I mean they spread out a

lot you know they spread all through

Europe and Nico as far as India and then

they started interbreeding with the

proto-australoids who were the first

Homo sapiens inhabitants of India and

Southeast Asia and they eventually got

to Australia and then they mostly uh

died out or got blended into other

populations elsewhere and they just

because Australia was so isolated they

still stayed you know relatively pure

australoid

in in in in Australia but uh so there

was like a mixture of these

um

uh Neolithic

agriculturalists who Moved In from from

the West you had the the protocol

Australians that were already there and

then you had like like a more Eastern

Asian uh ethnicity they were all kind of

mixing together in this Indus Valley

Civilization

and that was the origin of the shromana

tradition is whoever was running the

indoor the Indo uh the Indus Valley

Civilization

which as I say was um According to some

book that I read was a combination of

three different main ethnicities and I

assume the dravidians were mainly these

Neolithic agriculturalist Caucasians who

were interbreeding and to some degree

mixing with the proto-australoids they

were already in India at the time

and it's more dravidian the farther

south you go

in India

so that's my best answer to that

question so I move on to CEO of actions

next question which is why do you think

the original Mula sarvasti Vada and
Dharma guptica philosophical teachings
died out despite their monasteries
living on and were replaced with
Mahayana teachings also what is the
relations between the Mahayana and the
mahasan geeka I heard things like the
bodhisattva idea originated in later
sarvasti Vada traditions and was
rejected by mulas mahasan geeka so it's
pretty confusing how Mahayana came about
in general well Mahayana was kind of a
progressive movement and it I think it
was sort of a combination of different
things like the Progressive Movement
nowadays it's it's a combination of
these different strands you know you got

feminist lgbtq people some of whom are

at odds with each other

um you know just sort of the the racial

equality people that you know they want

to get do away with math and so forth

because some ethnicities don't do so

well in that regard get get rid of uh

University entrance exams and just go

with the assumption that everybody's

equal which

doesn't work or it's it's not going to

work in the long run

um

so I think Mahayana started the same way

like two of the earliest strands of

Mahayana or so I have read were pure

land which arose according to the book I
read it was uh uh Waters Indian Buddhism
I got on the bookshelf back there that
arose mainly in the South and in farther
north you had sort of the uh the pragya
paramita
the that that movement and there's
probably other factors also involved and
I'm just heard recently that uh
the mahasan geeka branch of Buddhism
that was you know a little Buddhist
history about a hundred years after the
Buddha died there was the first major
Schism where you have the stavieras or
the the teras who are the more
conservative in most respects split
apart from the mahasangha and ironically

the masanga was was a larger group and
it occupied mostly where the Buddha
originally lived
so like magada and so forth became
mostly Maha Sangha and they were more
Progressive they were more into
um emphasizing personal intuition and
inspiration rather than just
dogmatically adhering to texts so I mean
both sides have their good points and
bad points the the dogmatic side is is
going to be more conservative and less
likely to just Veer off into La La Land
whereas they're just going to be like
dry dogmatists with not as much
inspiration whereas the Mahayana

Buddhists you know they're going to be
more inspired and this you're going to
have the full spectrum because they're
going to be going all over the place
just from the ridiculous to the sublime
and I have I heard recently
or or read recently that the Maha Sangha
were originally calling or at times they
refer to themselves as the Mahayana
so it could be that it was mainly a Maha
Sangha movement
but it was taking other other uh
influence accepting other influences
like I think the Mahayana abhi Dharma
um or at least the main one that gets
referred to the most often was the
survosty modern version of it

so let's see

I think I need to read this question

again what do I think the original mules

of ostival and Dharma Gupta

philosophical teachings

um died out despite their monasteries of

living on and were replaced with

Mahayana teachings yeah I think is

largely just

um fashion trends just some older groups

sort of dying out I've I've read that

there is technically still cervosity

Vada monasteries in Japan around the

ancient capital of Nara

but they're mostly Mahayana now they're

called ritsu which literally means

um that's like the Japanese word for

Vinnie or monastic discipline and um so

they might have a little bit more of

these like cervosity Vaden elements than

most Mahayana but still it's it's mostly

just been drowned out just with Mahayana

because they were just surrounded by

sort of like

um you know you put the blonde

indoorians or the blonde haired

indoorians invading India and then

gradually they just and the blue eyes

just disappear because it's recessive

and dark eyes are or a dominant kind of

gene same way with Fair hair and dark

hair

so it's kind of along those lines I

suspect

the bodhisattva idea originated in

leadership

well I mean ultimately it goes all the

way back to teravada and pre-taravana

just with jotica stories and so forth

um just the the setting up of the Buddha

as higher than other enlightened beings

you know that maybe I'm I suspect that

originally the Buddha was just an aura

hunt but then devotionalism and

glorification of the founder made him

like way above any other enlightened

being even though their wisdom would be

the same because they would have zero

mohab because they're enlightened

so you've got the stories of the

najotica stories of the Buddha and his

previous existences just existence after

existence after existence like

perfecting his paramies so that he can

be good enough to become a fully

enlightened Buddha and from that idea

you had this idea that it's more noble

and better to strive for being a Buddha

than to just content oneself of being an

ordinary enlightened being when

originally they may have been just the

same

and that the the glorification of the

Buddha was just a very human tendency to

glorify the founder of One's Own

tradition or glorify one's king or

leader it's just it's just a human it's

just human nature to do that sort of

thing I mean the Christians really took

the ball and ran ran with it they turned

the founder of their religion into God

almighty

so let's see

I guess I kind of answered that I'm at

least I've contributed some information

to the answer of that question

but uh I still have more more to go here

including more from Theo of action so

I'll just go on to his next question

here

in this video

um I'm not sure what video he's

referring to maybe the the previous q a

in this video you said only the four

genres are original and that the arupa

ayatana were probably just added later

on as more genres yeah I mentioned that

earlier

these seem to have come from pre-bootest

tradition and I heard you can go into

these arupas without the first four

genres with Casino

Brahma wehara techniques and removing

things like all buildings then trees

around you Etc I have heard some people

say that the Buddha probably developed

before Janos himself

while the way arupa's

while the way arupa's before the Buddha

were they were reached with those

visualization techniques what are your

thoughts on this Theory well I told you

that I have my own theory on the origin

of the the uh the four uh formless

genres or the four arupa ayatanas and I

do have that in uh I think it's on my

website

um it's uh

an appendix to a different essay so it

might not it's the one about tarot cards

and um

tarot cards and astrology and so forth

it's an appendix to that essay is giving

my theory on the origin of the arupa

janas and um I think that they were

different ways of explaining

enlightenment

and

um when they finally hammered down the

Orthodox position of terravonna Buddhism

they couldn't accept these unorthodox

explanations of Enlightenment but they

didn't want to just reject them just out

of hand because they were too well known

to just ignore them and so they

relegated them to the highest possible

contemplative States like the realm of

infinite Consciousness there are at

least two sutas that pretty obviously

referred to nibana as infinite

Consciousness one in the Diga nikaya one

in the Maj minikaya and that became

unorthodox the commentarial tradition
says no it's not really describing
nibana although it pretty obviously is
and so strangely they're not even
calling it The the realm of infinite
Consciousness which they could have
easily done but um so it's the realm of
nothingness there there are sutas where
like in uh the parietana Wagga of the
city of the Buddha is saying you know
just just contemplate on there is
nothing you know NADA NADA NADA of Saint
John of the Cross nothing and so you've
got the realm of nothingness and you
know some people to this day think that
nibana is really just nothingness so

um in ancient times apparently they

believe that also and so they didn't

accept that that's no longer Orthodox

you know it lost out in the competition

of darwinian competition of ideas and so

they got relegated into a an arupa Jana

so I don't think it's necessarily

pre-butistic the Aruba genres

well that's just my own Theory

if you're interested you can read the

the essay or the appendix to the essay

and so I'll just move on to CEO of

action C Pat Xena's last question here

also what about niroda samopadi where do

you think that came from it wasn't

something the pre-budists might have

known of either but I don't know

let's see nerodus

it's uh the cessation

the attainment association is literally

what nerota somopathy means and uh if I

remember correctly sometimes it's

expanded into

the attainment of cessation of

perception and feeling

which means your mind is just kind of

blank

and this is accessible apparently only

to extremely Advanced practitioners like

arahants and uh I think uh anagami's

according to Orthodox tradition and it's

above John and really the ancient

Indians I mean there's another version

of this nerota samapoli which is uh the
the signless conference the signless
concentration of mind which is uh
let's see animita cheetah samadhi
and um I mean that also is an example
that's it's described for example in the
the Lesser discourse on voidness in the
majikaya where it's like higher than
fourth genre it used to be that fourth
genre was the highest you can get then
they add the formless Realms and then
they add nerota samopody they add the
form the signless concentration of mind
and it's just this in my opinion this
Indian passion to just keep one up in
the ultimate you know it's like some
some uh upanishads I'm pretty sure at

least a few upon shots come up with a
higher ultimate than Brahman
it's like either they're you got
different schools competing with each
other and you've got one person saying
this is the ultimate and then this other
school will say no no there's this other
ultimate higher than that one that's not
really the ultimate we got this Higher
One that we attain you can't attain that
so you think that that second rate
ultimate is really the highest ultimate
or you just have these intellectual
Indian philosophers who just want to
break new ground they want to discover
something new even though in in

spirituality it's it's all been

discovered already

at least the essential stuff

so I think he wrote a samapid is another

one of those where it's uh

for for whatever reason somebody wants

to claim that there is you know a higher

state attainable than for the genre and

there's a number of different ways of

doing that you've got the Aruba genas

you've got this new rotissimophy you've

got the the signless concentration of

mine and so forth I mean it could be

that I'm just a cynic and I just don't

follow along out of the stubborn

perversion with you know the Glorious

truth of Orthodox terrible and Buddhism

but still I am a Westerner I have a

critical mind and sometimes I just look

at this stuff and I'll get into more of

this a little later and we're already

over two hours so this is this is a

monster of a q a

um but yeah I'm not entirely Orthodox I

just can't be entirely Orthodox I mean

when you come to believe something I'm

not the sort of person that can just

choose to believe something just because

other people believe it

or I think I ought to I'm not even I

think I ought to it's just like if you

don't think it's true you can't just

through some

force of will or something just start

thinking that it's true I mean you have

to have more evidence or something to

change your mind you can't just change

your mind without that

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from shroomo

and shroomo says

what is the karmic price across the

spectrum of divination

tarot reading astrology chart reading

crystals talismans piranha healing

channeling or Consulting a Channeler

demon summoning energy of vampirism of

Prana or ether

what is the karmic price across the

spectrum of this kind of stuff well

that's

that's a question isn't it

golly I mean some of it is is largely

it's neutral although in the I mean a

lot of Buddhist tanks several at least

that uh the Buddha is warning monks

against any kind of like divination

which includes astrology or or

Consulting a Channel or that sort of

thing I think the the siliconda of the

like the first third of the deganikaya

starts off with this stock explanation

of things that a good monk doesn't do

and that would include like astrology

here and uh Consulting channelers and

again it's like

like Omens and stuff monks aren't

supposed to give give a damn about

omen's prognostications anything like

that

some of this demon summoning I

I'm not sure if I've ever encountered

that in in the sutas any mention of it

um but obviously if you're summoning a

demon that's not good I mean that's

you're playing with fire there

energy vampirism again that's that's a

term that I've just recently come across

um so I'm I'm not exactly sure if that

is was even a thing in uh ancient

Northern India in the Buddhist time or

shortly after the buddhistan crystals

again that's like a new age thing I

assume I mean there's a mention of
crystals in the text but it's just with
regard to valuable gems that are
forbidden for monks to handle
uh talismans yeah amongst wouldn't
bother with that sort of thing
so yeah most of it like the like the
fortune telling part is irrelevant you
know it might be neutral it might not be
positively harmful but it's some sorry
it keeps you stuck in some sorrow so
that makes it something that a serious
monk or renunciant who is intent on
enlightenment on transcending some Sora
he just wouldn't pay any attention to
that kind of thing and some of it might

become positively like immoral like like

demon summoning or the energy vampirism

but it's not really mentioned in the

text

but um the karmic price across the

Spectrum well at the at the very least

the karmic price is that you just remain

distracted and

um

kind of stuck in some sorta longer and

with regard to something like demon some

summoning or energy vampirism where

you're like deliberately

harming or debilitating you know

reducing the benefit to another person

then that's going to come back on you

through karmic retribution

so it's either just a waste of time or

it's or it's something that's positively

malevolent that's going to come back on

you uh worse than just wasting time

so I'll just move on to next question

this is from dread

and Dred says

I have a question pertaining to the

Attica Wagga for a Future q a do you

believe that the state described in

stanza 13 of the discourse on quarrels

and contentions the 11th discourse it's

uh the kalahawi Water

and the state described in dubaya and

the Bahia

udana 110 are the same state they are

described very differently but both

appear to be the goal what is

interesting is they are a goal that can

be achieved in this life

okay so he's asking if I think that the

uh the strange zen-like statement

um in the kalahawi watasuta of the

atikawaga of the sutiny Pata and the

strange zen-like statements of the

Buddha to Bahia

the non-budist philosopher in udana 110

if they're describing the same thing so

um I happen to have

uh cut and pasted them here fortunately

I've done a translation of both of these

so the uh the the weird zen-like

statement in uh the kalahuta

my translation of it is

he has no perception of perception he

has no perception of non-perception he

is not without perception he has no

perception of void but one who has

attained thus form becomes void for

founded in perception is diversifying

designation

so I also have the poly here it's not

sunny

[Music]

and

it's I mean it's it's kind of

paradoxical I mean you have no

perception of perception you have no

perception of non-perception and you're

also not without perception and then

finally you're not we but

I rendered uh is sort of an educated

guess that he has no perception of void

so just you have no perception of what

is like Beyond perception

and then for one who has attained thus

form becomes void because someone is

asking him how does form become void

hence this is his answer and founded in

perception is diversifying designation

which includes the word punchem which is

one of those words I was mentioning

earlier that terrible Orthodox tradition

misunderstood for centuries and

centuries

so that is that's that's what the

Kalahari says and then

um

the uh

let's see where do I find it oh yeah

here's the instructions to Bahia

while they were standing in the street

and uh this Bahia just begs the Buddha

to to please teach him dhamma and the

Buddha is saying I'm going for alms this

is not the right time and Bahia says we

don't know when we're going to die

please tell me now so then the Buddha

says well then Bahia thus should you

train yourself in the scene there will

be only the scene in The Herd there will

be only the herd in the felt there will

be only the felt in the mentally sensed
there will be only the mentally sensed
just like this by yeah should you train
yourself and since Bahia in the scene
there will be only the scene in The Herd
there will be only the herd and the felt
there will be only the felt and in the
mentally sins there will be only the
mentally sensed from that you Maya are
not thereby and since Bahia you are not
thereby you buy ya are not therein and
since Bahia you are not therein you buy
you I have no here no Hereafter no
between the two just this is the end of
unease
so
I'm gonna scroll back up here and Dread

is asking if the no perception of

perception and so on is the same as what

I just told you and I mean obviously

even if they're not describing exactly

the same practice and I think they

probably are but in in different ways

you know obviously they're teaching you

what the mental state of an enlightened

being is going to be like

so

um in in the bio suit are you saying in

the scene only the scene and which means

that I mean

perception may be still there but it's

like vestigial it's it's like

neutralized because you're seeing the

sensory datum as I mean it's still the
sensory datum you're not processing it
to the extent of giving meaning to it
you're not interpreting it you're not
having a running commentary on it it's
just what it is and that's it
and because of that there is no thereby
which is sort of referring to like
causation of like keeping you like
wallowing in samsara and when there is
no thereby there is no therein which
means you're not in samsara anymore
because you're no longer clinging to it
my my
attributing significance
to this stuff that's just coming up as
as the fruition of your own past some

sorry Karma which is perpetuates some

sorrow

and then going back up to the kalahi

watasuta he has no perception of

perception he has no perception of

non-perception he is not without

perception he has no perception of void

um yeah again it's like form becomes

void because it's like you're no longer

clinging to it you're no longer feeding

your your stake in samsara so to speak

um so yeah I think it's essentially the

same state

it is kind of interesting though that in

the kalahawiwara suta the the person

that he's talking to then asks another

question is he asks if that state that
the Buddha just described is the highest
state attainable or if there's anything
higher than that and then the Buddhist
says
and I quote here indeed some intelligent
ones here do declare that the highest
purity of the spirit is to that extent
but then some of them claiming to be
Adept declare an attainment to which
nothing that was taken up remains which
I interpret to mean that there are some
people that say you're not fully in line
until after you die because you've still
got this body and you I mean you still
got this thinking mind that can't help
but think and perceive things so just

neutralizing the perception isn't as

good as just being dead when you just

let go it is in poly

and then the Buddhist goes on to say so

having understood these to be dependent

the sage and investigator having

understood the ways of dependence a

released one having understood does not

come to contention the Wise One does not

attain to this or that existence so he's

saying just wallowing in these kind of

arguments is just more samsara

that I mean just don't worry about it

so yeah my answer to that question is

yeah

and so I'll move on to the next question

for this is from Mary spelled m-e-r-r-y

and Mary says You seem to have read most

of the sutas and commentaries so tell us

why quite some important sutras are in

the kudikanikaya and not in the four

main onesuta collections is there

somewhere in the text explanation for

how five nikayas was combined and what

criteria was used to combine them that's

a good question

um

for those of you familiar with the the

polysutas there are five nikayas you got

the deganikai which is the long

discourses the majima nikaya which is

the middle length discourses the sum

mutinikaya which is the connected

discourses which means they're organized under categories and then you got the anguter in nikaya which is the numbered discourses which is going with regard to numbers so the Buddha is talking about the four you know the four noble truths or whatever or the you know the the seven factors of Enlightenment maybe under the fours or the sevens respectively

so it's numbered and then finally in the in the some Utah and the angular are usually short sutos and then you've got the kudika nikaya which is the small collection and that's just sort of a miscellaneous

it really is it contains some very old
taxes it also contains most of the
latest suit of material like the genicas
the Ghost Stories the Mansion stories
and so forth
um a lot of the legendary like the fairy
tale stuff is thrown into the kudika
nikaya and why some of the oldest
collections like the sutanipata are in
the kurikenikaya
um it may be that they were just so well
known as a distinct text that they were
just put there because it wouldn't make
much sense to try and put them in the uh
in other texts you'd have to break it
all up like in the I mean they're not
medium length they're relatively short

sutos so you have to put them in the the

uh the sub Mutiny guy which has

everything organized by category or the

numbered uh the angura nikaya where

they're organized by number and it

probably wouldn't fit the anguro very

well because there's not much mention of

lists of numbered things in the but if

you're going to divide if you're gonna

kind of put them under the submitted

nikaya then you have to split up this

this already well-known body of texts in

order to put them under different

categories

and sell rather than do that I assume

they just put it as its own individual

text because it was so well known for

very ancient times probably before

um the editors like edited together

their japitica and different schools of

Buddhism edited things differently like

a text that might be in the the Maji

manikaya in one like in taravada might

be in like the some Utah in in like the

sarovarsity lot of uh

so they were edited somewhat differently

and

um some of these texts came before that

like the sub usually are the

umapana also it's one of the probably

the most translated best known terrible

Buddhist text and that's relatively late

it's a collection of aphorisms or it's

considered by Scholars to be relatively

late that's also in the Korean nikaya

um it's I think it just might be that

you've got these well-known

collections of texts that don't really

fit well under other categories they

just wind up by default or whatever in

the in the Kaya

so

let's see yeah it doesn't explain in the

text how the five nikayas were combined

different schools combine them somewhat

differently although they're they're

pretty much mostly similar they're more

resemblance than other ones but the five

nikayas were kind of an anachronism I

don't think there were five nikayas in
the buddhistam that it was later maybe
the even the First Council where they
got together they started compiling
things and organizing things and coming
up with an orthodox system
so I'll just move on to the next
question here also from Mary
also could you make a new playlist for
archaic Buddhism videos it would be
convenient if I make enough yeah I can
do that but I've only done like three so
far so it's not very many
okay the next question from here that
was easy I that was an easy answer I
appreciate getting the the easy one
getting cost a softball every once in a

while you know

next question from Mary is there

anywhere in the poly Canon description

of meditation positions like full Lotus

half Lotus Etc and which one is better

well that's kind of a good question I

mean it does say that amongst its

cross-legged

and it doesn't really say how he sits

cross-legged although it was traditional

for monk if he wasn't doing walking

meditation that I mean he was going to

be doing sitting meditation but it

doesn't as far as I can remember it

doesn't describe the exact posture like

the Asana the yoga Asana

but there is a strange rule for the

bikunis which can give some insight out

of that there's a linear rule for

bikunis which of course the modern new

bikinis aren't going to follow

but it is against the rules for bikuni

to sit cross-legged because according to

the text bikunis were consenting to the

touch of the heel

and the only full translation of the

winnia that I'm aware of is by IB Horner

who is this

Victorian kind of like lady scholar in

England long ago 100 years ago almost

and she had this this cute little

um footnote under this rule thing you

know the question is whose heel were

they consenting to the touch of and she
thought they were sitting in the full
Lotus and that somehow their heels were
like sticking out and rubbing against
the heels of of other non-sitting nearby
which obviously she didn't understand
how the the Lotus position works because
I mean your heels are kind of dug into
your own thighs when you're doing the
Lotus position
so I understood what it meant because I
used to know this girl I was kind of
sweet on this girl in high school
that um she told me that she learned how
to masturbate as a little girl by
sitting on her own heel and rocking back

and forth

and I assume that's what consenting to

the touch of the heel is

for why bikunis are not allowed to sit

cross-legged because

um there's they're they're like some of

them the naughty ones were like sitting

on their own heel and like enjoying the

contact and there's a bunch of rules

like that like they're not supposed to

stand facing the the current when

they're taking a bath in a river just

because the current is rubbing against

their PP or whatever and they're liking

it so

um

that would mean it would seem to imply

the the default sitting position or

sitting across like it would be what is

called the Burmese position or the easy

position which is your I don't know if I

can do this your legs are kind of like

this they're both kind of flat on the

floor you know one in front of the other

they're not like up in the full Lotus or

the half Lotus it's they're just both

like this

foreign

logical I'm using logic here using hip

thinkings to answer this question

okay next question from Mary another

personal one

he says I love you Ponyo and I'm not gay

it's weird do you think we have some
past life connection and I can say I've
had experiences like this where
um you meet some person you might not
even have really a whole lot in common
but there's just this chemistry that you
just love each other like brothers and
there's this has happened to me a number
of times in my life
you just you just meet someone you just
hit it off there's like for whatever
reason I mean you love this person like
a brother
and it's the feeling is mutual I mean it
goes both ways and it's not gay or
anything it's just brotherly love
and it's happened to me a number of

times and so I can relate to that and

there's a good good I mean from a

Buddhist point of view good chance that

we were friends in a past life maybe

even Brothers in a past life and that

it's just carrying over was harming

momentum into this life

so it's possible I mean I can't really

say I've never met him in Mary spelled

m-e-r-r-y and like in this life in

person

so I'll just move on to the next

question

also from Mary

as Buddhists aren't we supposed to love

everybody isn't that the definition of

meta well as Buddhists yeah we are

supposed to love everybody or at least

we're supposed to have meta for

everybody which is meant to uh I mean

it's it's based on the same etymology as

the poly word Mita which means friend so

it's it'd be more like Brotherly Love or

friendliness friendly feeling you know

Desiring good for the other person it's

not necessarily

like

what most people would call love it's

certainly not romantic love although in

Burma meta or mitta is uh it applies to

just even romantic love just because

um it's just a word for love in Burmese

so

but I mean if you read about mental meditation in the texts then a monk is supposed to just beam love in all directions and there are sutas like may all beings be happy-minded of the of the mental suto for example and it's just giving lists of all the different kinds of beings there are it's an exhaustive list includes everybody

you know just various ways males and females you know like people no like the human level below human level above human level this direction is all the directions above and below it's just it's just exhausting you're supposed to send this meta which is at least you

know sincere friendly feeling if not you
know like deep spiritual love to all
beings in the entire universe
and it's not necessarily the definition
of metal but that is how it is taught in
the suit does and that's what you should
do if you're able to but
um loving everybody is not easy
that just all of a sudden reminds me of
the story of uh Ron Doss with neem
Crowley Baba that nimkoli Baba it was it
was hard to spend a lot of time with him
because he's you know so many people
wanted to spend time with him and he was
just kind of like a almost like a
recluse anyway he spent a lot of time
just alone in his room

and uh some there was this period where
neem karoli Baba would call ramdas to
him and ramdas would come and you know
kneel in front of him and he would just
lean over and say always tell the truth
and love everybody and then send him
away then maybe a couple hours later
he'd call him again he'd lean over say
the same thing always tell the truth and
love everybody
and this just went on for days and days
and finally Ron Das and this happens a
lot in ashrams it's just like this
pressure cooker it's like a [__]
accelerator you know he's having a
really bad time and he is just miserable

and so Ron uh maharaji named probably

Baba calls ramdas and RAM Das is you

know pretty much in tears and he just

tells him I'm telling you the truth I

don't love everybody

and then maharaji just kind of leans

over very compassionately maybe like

stroking his beard and just says always

tell the truth and love everybody

and that's really advanced practice

because uh some people are jerks you

know they're [__] and stuff and

I'm it's I suppose the saying is true

that if you really understand somebody

you can't hate them but um it's not it's

not easy to love everybody

I mean I

I think I'm better at it than most

people even though it was a Hermit for

Going on 30 years

you know I can I think that's one of the

best things that happened to me as a

monk it's one of the most important

things I learned

because when you're you're a monk you're

trying to perfect yourself

and it just it's not easy I mean it's

damn difficult even if you're trying

with all your heart

to be a saintly person

it I mean it just doesn't work that way

and so I've started having more

compassion for other people being [__]

up because I tried with all my heart not

to be [__] up and it was not easy I

mean I did not fully succeed

and so

um yeah it's like with other people it's

like other people are [__] up yeah

welcome to the human race

but I will have been fortunate enough

I've had enough Karma Good Karma like

Merit in my life I suppose that I've

never really

been like have have really seriously

[__] with with another by another

person like some malevolent evil person

never been in a torture chamber anything

like that never been a victim of just

chronic abuse like as a child or

something so I have been relatively

fortunate which maybe makes it easier

for me

but I think I'm just going to move on to

the next question here

wait wait wait just a second here

okay yeah I almost I almost skipped a

question this is the last question by

Mary spelled m-e-r-r-y

English with Ponyo episode one what is

the difference between I have been

meditating and I had been meditating

because they both passed tenses well

Mary spelled m-e-r-r-y does not speak

English as his first language and so he

wants me to uh tell him the difference

between and I I'm not even sure what

it's like past perfect and

past participle I think had been

meditating I think is past participle no

that'd be had meditated

yeah it's past perfect in something

something I don't know I don't remember

but I have been meditating can include

the present time whereas I had been

meditating it indicates that it's in the

past

so the main difference is it's I have

been meditating

um you know it can include the present

time the the

the implication is that it still

continues to the present time whereas I

had been meditating means you're not

doing it right now that it's it's in the

past

and I don't remember what the the

technical terms one of them is past

perfect I'm pretty sure

so I'll just move on to next question

this is from Jules

and jewels says could you briefly expand

a bit on your feline naming schema was

there a cat number one what number are

you up to now

um this is

um following up on uh a video I did with

Brian Rue relatively recently it's our

most recent video with Brian Rue where

he's got a cat named happy it's his

second cat in a row with the same name

so I call it happy number two and then I

pointed out that one of the best cats I

ever had possibly the best cat I ever

had was named cat number two

and um

yeah so I mean that was in Burma and

I remember there was a flood the river

the chinuin River flooded and it was

really I had to Wade through the chest

deep water just to get to the Village to

go for alms and

um

I one time near the congregational I

heard like a kitten meowing and I went

and looked and there were these two half

starved kittens they apparently like

their [__] somehow they wound up there

probably because of the flooding maybe

the mother just couldn't cross the water

to get to the babies or something and

they were half starved and uh so we

started feeding them and one of them cat

number two grew up to be a normal female

cat number one who was a boy kitten and

he was more starved he was more

malnourished than his sister and he I

don't think he ever fully recovered I

think he was slightly mentally [__]

he was uh

he was never like completely a cat I

think and we lived out in this Forest it

was like a wildlife refuge there and
there was a lot of predators and so
forth and uh count number two
uh she eventually had kittens she had
two kittens which I named cat number
three and Cat Number Four and eventually
they all just disappeared I mean
um cat number one I think you probably
got picked off by a hawk or something
and Cat's number three and four I can't
really remember cat number two though
she went into heat and gotten the
Wanderlust or the lust wander and
wandered off and just never came back so
she might have got picked off by uh an
eagle or something too there were a lot
of predators in that Forest that uh

would make an easy meal of a little

kitty cat

which they certainly also did with the

wild chickens and so forth

so I only went one through four and that

was it and cats really don't give a damn

what their names are dogs can kind of

appreciate their name but cats just

don't give a damn

so

that was it and then uh since then I

haven't really named any cats since I

got to number four I don't think there's

ever going to be a cat number five

I'll probably just name it Attila or

something I don't know

so the next question is from achala I
think it's pronounced achala a-c-a-l-a
and achala says
I have observed that some Sri Lankan
monks make use of money a friend from
Sri Lanka told me that monks in Sri
Lanka can go to markets to buy food for
themselves and they don't go for
pindapata or Armstrong as far as I know
as pervinia monks aren't allowed to keep
money what do you think of this
is this still okay for monks to use
money as long as they are using it only
to feed themselves also is it mandatory
for them to go for pindapata thank you
okay well poor achala here is uh
somewhat naive with regard to the state

of Asian teravada Buddhism because it is
my experience that most terravonna
Buddhist monks especially the Asian ones
handle money it's probably somewhere in
the neighborhood of like 97 of Burmese
monks and the money is probably at least
97 of Sri Lankan monks handle money
maybe in Thailand who they tend to be a
little stricter it might be only like 95
of Asian monks there handle money
certainly at least 90
so yeah Sri Lankan monks I mean some of
them have jobs it's like college
professors they're teaching like
Buddhism or poly or something in a
university and receiving a salary for it

Sri Lankan monks in general they're

pretty corrupt with regard to following

the rules of monastic discipline

so I remember once when I was a very

Junior monk in Burma

meeting two or three Sri Lankan monks

and somebody pointed out to me I was I

was kind of odd because I actually

didn't handle money I was actually

following the rule and they were just

like astonishing this like how do you

manage

and it's like well I mean the same way

monks managed in the Buddhist time I

suppose because that's when they made

the rule

so

um yeah it's just Shameless monks or just Mindless amongst just mindlessly following along with all the other monks are doing it's like Christianity in the west that means how many Christians in the west like gather not up their Treasures upon the Earth or or love their enemies or bless those that curse them or sell all that they have give the money to the poor and take up their cross and wander around casting out demons and Healing The Sick and so forth I mean just because the the scriptures say you're supposed to do that I mean it's just it's just beyond human nature to expect most people even most monks

to really go for it

and Asian monks are just following along

with the corrupt tradition Western monks

it may be only half of Western Montana

money because they have to be much more

serious about what they're doing they're

not taking an easy out by becoming a

monk they have to go against their own

culture against their own family

sometimes they lose their friends you

know they have to be really serious

about what they're doing and so they

tend to be more serious

so let's see yeah monks are not allowed

to keep money they're not allowed to

keep gold or silver or anything that can

be used as money it's just strictly for

forbidden it's just prohibited it's
called nissigee apachidia which means
you can't even make confession for it
until you get rid of your money and most
Asian monks are not willing to do that
you have to get rid of the stuff that
you've bought with the money to most
Asian monks just aren't even going to do
it so they're they're pure they're never
pure
like for one second ever because they've
got this nice idea of the stuff you have
to get rid of before you can make
confession for having it and they they
just won't get rid of it you know they
just have no intention of getting rid of

their money because it's just so
convenient having money is convenient
so the question is it still okay for
monks to use money as long as they're
using it only to feed themselves no the
only time it is allowable for a monk to
touch money is if he sees a wallet or
some money or a purse or something on
the ground or has been left behind by a
layperson it's then actually his duty to
pick it up and put it somewhere safe so
that when the person comes back for it
it's there
but of course it's not your own money
and you can't pick it up by the side of
the road it has to be on the monastery
premises in order for you to be able or

allowed to touch the stuff

or another possible way that it's

allowable for a monk to handle money is

if some Monk actually has forfeited it

and then the song will pick some Monk to

take that money and go throw it away

somewhere just just fling it over a wall

throw it out in the woods somewhere

and I've never heard of that actually

happening

because as I say they just if they got

money they're just gonna keep it or

spend it

so let's see and then the last part of

this question here is is it mandatory

for monks to go for pindapata which is

go for alms you know take your bowl and

walk to the Village it is not mandatory

but every monk at his ordination is

admonished

that he should content himself with

eating only alms food that he has

collected by taking his bowl and walking

through the village but it is allowable

for example to accept an invitation

to a Layman's house and let them serve

you a meal that kind of a thing

so it's not mandatory but it is

encouraged

and I think one of the things that David

datta wanted was

um when he tried to take over

um the Buddhist Sangha was he wanted to

make it mandatory he had to go for homes
wrong but um the Buddha said no it's not
necessary even though those who want to
do it as like a stricter practice are
allowed to do that
and it is good I mean it's a good
practice it was one of the two tongas
that I really felt good about practicing
was eating only almost food eventually
you come back to America you just can't
do it or I guess some monks can but it's
it's way easier if you're living in a
Buddhist culture where you just take
your bowl and walk to the village and
people put whatever food in they want to
give and then when you get enough you

leave and you sit down and eat it

it's just it's it's nice it's a good

practice

so I'll just move on to the next

question

this could be a three hour long one I

mean not not this question but this

video

this is from Stevie and Stevie says

what's your take on the anapolocity suit

as instructions for mindfulness of

breathing there's much disagreement on

how to practice it so how would you

approach it in a strict adherence to the

suta it seems to me that 14 of the 16

steps are active trainings that go

beyond knowing the breath so why not

follow the suito's instructions in their

entirety can you shed some light on this

thank you

well I actually reread the anapanai city

just so I could answer this question

better but I have to admit I never

really was much impressed by the

unapanasity suto

um I think the instructions in the sari

patana Sutra the section on mindfulness

of breathing is actually uh probably

more helpful

because it just seems so weird the suta

it seems to me is like

it's like anachronistic I think it's

like a later suta containing some

earlier material but it's gotten to the point of just the long lists of you know the the six of these and the the the Ten of those and the 37 of the other and and just

um yeah it just never really resonated with me I never really I never really was much impressed with this suit on but anyway these 16 points 16 practices here it's uh

let's see I'll just I'll just read I've got beekubodes and Venable Nana moli's translations that I mentioned earlier and uh it's pseudo 118.

so let's see

and how because this mindfulness of breathing developed and cultivated so it

is a great fruit and great benefit here
abiku goes to the forest or to the root
of a tree or to an empty Hut sits down
having folded his legs crosswise said
his body erect and established
mindfulness in front of him ever mindful
he breathes in mindfully he breathes out
breathing in long he understands I
breathe in long or breathing out long he
understands I breathe out long breathing
in short he understands I breathe in
short breathing out short he understands
I breathe out short he trains thus I
shall breathe in experiencing the whole
body he trains thus as you'll breathe
out experiencing the whole body he

trains thus I shall breathe in

tranquilizing the body formation he

trains thus I shall breathe out

tranquilizing the body formation he

trains thus I shall breathe in

experiencing Rapture he trains thus I

shall breathe out experiencing Rapture

he trains thus I shall breathe in

experiencing pleasure he trains thus I

shall breathe out experiencing pleasure

he trains thus I should breathe in

experiencing the mental formation he

trains thus I shall breathe out

experiencing the mental formation he

trains thus I shall breathe in

tranquilizing the mental formation he

trains thus I shall breathe out

tranquilizing the mental formation he trains thus I shall breathe in experiencing the mind he trains thus I shall breathe out experiencing the mind he trains thus I shall breathe in gladdening the mind he trains thus I shall breathe out gladdening the mind he trains thus I shall breathe in concentrating the mind he trains thus I shall breathe out concentrating the mind he trains the social breathe in liberating the mind he trains thus I shall breathe out liberating the mind he trains that so he shall breathe in contemplating impermanence he trains thus I shall breathe out contemplating

impermanence he trains love so she'll
breathe in contemplating fading away he
trains thus I shall breathe out
contemplating fading away he trains thus
I shall breathe in contemplating
cessation he trains the social breathe
out contemplating cessation he trains
love social breathe in contemplating
relinquishment
he trains us I shall breathe out
contemplating relinquished men because
that is how mindfulness of breathing is
developed and cultivated so that it is a
great fruit and great benefit
and
I don't know what to say I mean that
kind of thing has never really

impressed me much

um and those of you may have noticed

some of you maybe one have noticed that

once you get past I breathe in long I

breathe out long I breathe in short I

breathe out short all the rest of them

are in the future tense

like I shall breathe out experiencing

the whole body I shall breathe out

tranquilizing the body formation and so

forth so it's it's you're not even in

the present moment anymore it's like

it's like what they did was

they like super organize This and like

you start off just breathing mindfulness

of breathing and then they're trying to

throw in all this other stuff which are
like the benefits of mindfulness of
breathing or like a more advanced
practices and it's instead of saying
that you know this is going to happen
eventually if you keep going with it
they just say you're contemplating this
will happen I will do this and it's just
not a good way in my opinion of
explaining it and it it just doesn't
resonate with me I assume there are
other people that I mean it's just
wonderful this is their favorite suta or
something but um
yeah it's just really this hyper
complicated way of explaining something
simple

and uh I think they just kind of went

about the formatting of it in a in a way

that it's um

yeah I think you'd probably be better

off just reading the mindfulness and

breathing part in the sunny patano suta

or just Just Breathe mindfully

so

let's see what's the question here again

though

there's much disagreement on how to

practice it yeah I mean some of it is

it's really hard I mean how are you

gonna how are you gonna practice oh I

will I will breathe in experiencing

Liberation I'll breathe out experiencing

Liberation I mean when you're just going
to imagine it and you just have to wait
for it to happen I mean what's the point
of even thinking that unless you're just
kind of setting yourself up for it
you're kind of visualizing in advance
but you're going to visualize it wrong
because you can't imagine liberation
so let's see
how would you approach it in a strict
adherence to the suta I I wouldn't
practice it I mean this all this future
tense like most of it is future tense of
what you're going to do and I mean a lot
of it you just don't have any conscious
volition over whether it's going to
happen How You Gonna I shall breathe in

experiencing pleasure I shall breathe

out experiencing pleasure I mean I mean

you may not have any say over that

I mean it's just it's gonna happen or

it's not

if you practice correctly there's a good

chance it will happen you know you

experience PT and so forth but I mean

why they would put it in this form of I

shall experience PT breathing in I shall

experience PT breathing out

I mean I mean if you're sitting that

cross I get thinking this stuff you're

not meditating you're just thinking

about all the stuff you're supposed to

experience

so you're better off just following one
of the other mindfulness of breath you
know like the the saw you know like a
carpenter sawing wood you know he's not
watching the breast go in and out he's
just watching right where the the wood
is being cut by the saw you know it's
like you're just watching right here
you're not following the breath in
you're not following the breath out
you're just keeping your attention right
here at the sensation of of the air
moving past your nostrils kind of a
thing that that to me is more useful
information than this long list of stuff
you're exposed to experience but you may
not have any control of whether you're

gonna experience or not

and it's all future tense stuff except

for just breathing in Long breathing out

long breathing in short breathing out

short once you get past that it's all

future tense

it's not really in the present moment

anymore

so I hope I didn't just rain on your

parade Stevie but that's my that's my

answer

and I'll just move on to the next

question this is from ludibus balam

and ludibus balam says two-part question

for Q a did any ordained monk you met as

a Maha Terra ever confide within you a

belief in having attained genres or

described experiences which fit the

rubric well for Jonas if so can you

recall how they described it as a

reflection on a first-hand experience

um it's it's almost a taboo for monks to

talk about experiencing Jonas

um you know they'll just even ask them

and they'll say oh I can't tell you but

really it's not against the rules for a

monk to tell another Monk it's just

against the rules for a monk to tell a

layperson

but even so it's like in Burma I guess

at least in Burma this monks will just

they just didn't want to talk about and

most of them probably haven't or they

they haven't experienced the the

supernatural the super normal states

that Jonna has converted into over time

um

so let's see I have met monks that

almost certainly have considered

themselves to attain Jonas they teach a

lot of that at pauldoya I've known quite

a few Palm monks including a few that

really some of the few that really did

well like of Western monks there aren't

very many Western monks that did the

whole course of that Paul was teaching

in Paul Seattle and that includes Jonna

so I have met a few but they just don't

talk about it

um

yeah

so I have met monks that probably have

attained jono I mean I met one old

Seattle who said he can just sit for

hours without thinking and probably that

would be at least second jono right

there because I don't think he was

talking about just passing out

so I think I'll just move on to ludibus

balaam's next question here

is there and this is another one of

those questions I don't think I fully

grasp

is there a link between the power

involved in talismans and psychokinesis

and the teaching of abstaining from

holding to views could there be a common ground that is responsible for some Arya exhibiting CD powers and some not yeah I really I do not grasp this this question um is there a link between the power involved in talismans and psychokinesis and the teaching of abstaining for holding the views it seems to me that the power of talisman's and psychokinesis would rely upon holding to views you have to like have faith you have to believe in something especially if it's if it's like a Talisman it's this object that you that is considered to have some sort of power that really that the thing itself you

know you can

someone can think that this chapstick

has the power to heal him and if they

really believe it you know they got the

grain the faith of a grain of mustard

seed that this chapstick you know just

by holding it in their hand maybe

praying to it or saying some Mantra is

going to cure them of some nasty disease

is it possible that it would work but

this chapstick really doesn't have any

like nasty disease curing abilities then

it's just the belief in the mind it's

sort of like tarot cards or something

um you know the tarot cards don't have

any powers I mean they're just made in a

factory out of paper and they're

laminated they got ink on them but
they're not any different from regular
playing cards with regard to the
materials they're made out of it's just
the the belief of the person using it
and don't give any power that it's got
so I would say that talismans are that
way you know like the the lucky charm
whatever it is the tetragrammaton or
whatever the the only reason it has any
power at all is the belief of the person
that associated with that and that is of
course not abstaining from holding the
views I mean that's the view that this
chapstick or the tetragrammaton or the
whatever Talisman has power is what

gives it its power you have to believe

in it

um like the the psychic powers of some

really Advanced Saints is different I

mean I think that just happened

spontaneously through just the wide open

liminality of of the the enlightened or

extremely highly Advanced being that

it's not an act of will they're not

making stuff happen like magic it's just

it just spontaneously happens

so I don't even know if I've answered

this question

but that's my best shot at and we're

getting up close to three hours so I'm

gonna

I'll go give it one last look see here

this I I really want to do justice to

all these questions I really want to

respect you guys by doing my best to

answer your questions

so is there a link between the power

involved in talismans and psychokinesis

and the teaching of abstaining from

holding the views

um that seems yeah that seems to be the

the main point of this and I really do

think there's a difference between

um like talismans and certain like

magical things that are like acts of

will

that that would require holding to views

as opposed to just the the miraculous

stuff that happens with enlightened

beings or which can Enlighten happen

around the line beings like neem curly

Baba he's at least extremely Advanced

even if he wasn't fully enlightened

well people wiser to me that knew him

better than me think that he was

um that that's just a different kind of

Paranormal Activity that's just

spontaneously arising through this

portal to other dimensions in a human

form

but that wouldn't be like

um

it wouldn't be like like an active will

because an enlightened being especially

just doesn't have will anymore

they're not creating Karma they have no

more volition

they're just

spontaneously doing what is right often

just as a reflection back to people of

their own Karma like Ron Doss used to

say about neem curly bubbles the better

the better you knew him the real you the

better you realize that there was really

nobody there

he was just empty he was just like a

mirror reflecting your own Karma back at

you

so I'll just move on to the next

question

and this is some air rain

and I'm I'm gonna have to do this in a separate way I'm going to read the question and and then I'm just going to have to answer it in a separate video because to do justice does this question would take at least 15 minutes I'm pretty sure but I'll at least include it as the question and then if you want to know the answer you can just refer to the uh

uh q a

47a or whatever it winds up being called but Aaron says

I think a large blind spot in the Dharma may be that when acting in a dharmic way towards people in the modern world especially in a culturally confused and

crime-ridden Melting Pot more often than not
who are dealing with crude humans who
are unable to receive or even recognize
Dharma continuing to interact with them
in a dharmic fashion will be met with no
results and in many cases even in flame
or embolden their behavior because they
immediately recognize you as a weak or
passive and it will double down and
intensify their behavior or predation
does Buddhism have any way of dealing
with this besides disassociation or
simply allowing people to mow you down
steal from you or kill you obviously
saying that your own Karma put you in

that situation does not solve anything
I'm sure it works just fine in a
monastery full of strict monks lay
people have to deal with predatory and
criminal chimps every day on the street
at work or in their own neighborhood
where short of quitting your job or
selling your house you must be able to
protect yourself or use forceful means
to make them stop I guess the main
question is beyond self victimization
Karma blaming or continually ignoring or
enabling and dissociating what is an
actual solution for a layperson who is
dealing with being continually assaulted
or by a person who doesn't give a [__]
about your dharmic way of attempting to

make them stop

so again

um considering the the length of this

video already

um I'm gonna have to just to do justice

to this I'm just gonna have to make like

a separate video and if you're

interested in my ques my answer

um

then uh yeah I advise you to uh to refer

to the other video

and so finally the very last question

last question of all is from

and Maha wamsa says is it allowable

under vinya for monks to curse people

out using foul language

Etc

and it's strange that I was I studied

intensively and followed it strictly for

many years and

um I based on my imperfect memory I'm

pretty sure that it's an offense to

curse another Monk

to just verbally abuse another Monk and

I think it's a lesser offense to do that

to a lay person it's it's weird the way

some of the rules work like it's it's a

poachity offense an offensive medium

severity to punch like physically attack

another Monk but it's it's only a ducata

offense it's like the lowest level of

offense to attack a layperson so you can

punch a layperson in the nose it's only

like the

the most minor offense

and I think it's the same way with with

um

like verbal abuse here that you know

cussing them out calling them bad names

and so forth

um

uh yeah if it's any offense at all I'm

pretty sure it is it'd be a ducata

offense just the the lowest level of

offense that is uh absolved despite

confession to another Monk but

but

this is called perusavacha or like

verbal abuse just calling someone you

dick you worthless piece of [__] that

kind of stuff

um or or even you want to be more

diabolical and subtle you know you want

to just like humiliate them right just

in some long intricate way I mean that

works too my father was was good at that

sort of thing I mean not towards me I

mean he was a good dad but some some of

the insults he gave down

and they were just genius sometimes

but anyway

um if you're really trying to make

somebody feel bad and by saying you know

you're saying something with the

intention of causing them to feel

unhappy because of you saying it that

technique is perusavacha which is one of the four kinds of wrong speech so I mean even if there's some loophole in the rules

that that it's not specifically laid out as against the rules still it's against dhamma it's against Buddhist ethics it's one of the four kinds of long speech

like I might as well go into the four kinds of wrong speech over here one is just flat out and lying and lying means you're you're saying something that isn't true with the intent of deal of deceiving somebody

then there's

um uh pisuna Macho which is like bad

melting someone behind their back in
order to get people kind of biased
against them you want to like make them
not like the other person so you're bad
melting the behind their back so like
malicious gossip that's that's another
and that can even be true I mean if it's
like
um you know you're just saying you know
this I wouldn't buy a car from this
person because he's you know he's when
he swindles people something like that
if you're doing it just out of sincere
you know this person wants to buy a car
from someone you know who's trying to
sell like a piece of junk at like you
know 20 000 bucks or something if you're

doing it just because you don't want to
see them get swindled that's one thing
you might be helping them but if you're
doing it you know then maybe not even
interested in buying cars you just
wanting to bad-mouth this person even if
it's true even if they are a swindler or
whatever if you're saying it for the
sake of you know getting someone else to
dislike that person or like them less
then that's peace in a vodka that's the
second kind of wrong speech Third Kind
is perusa matcha which is Harsh speech
and that includes bad-mouthing people
cursing people just to their face
and it can be true I mean even it could

be true I mean maybe they really are an

[__] or whatever but if you're saying

telling them that with the intention of

making them feel bad then that's wrong

speech and the fourth is some papalapa

which is just useless chatter idle

chatter you know just gossip that kind

of stuff just so I'm sorry spam

and those are the four kinds of wrong

speech so this

um cursing people out using foul

language I mean using foul language just

like you stub your toe and you cuss

that's not against the rules

so if you're by yourself

you know you stub your toe and you cause

that's that's not against the rules

there is a weird obscure bikini rule for

for the nuns where it's again it's a

pachy the offense for them to beat

themselves and curse themselves

but um it's just a feminine thing I

guess because uh there's no equivalent

rule for preventing monks from like

beating their their chest and like

cursing themselves

and that's it that is that's the last

question and we're three hours I think

this might be the longest q a thus far

and I had to skip one question just so I

can address it in a different video

sakes

but it's been good and uh if you have

any questions you want answered then if

you think that I'm in a position to

answer them like if they're about you

know Buddhist practice Buddhist

philosophy Buddhist history

um you know just monasticism in general

living in Burma meditation that kind of

a thing

cats my cats especially

cats that I have owned in the past

that sort of thing

um yeah just include them in the

comments below or if you have access to

the Discord server use that

if you have access to uh my subscribe

Star channel you can you can refer to

that and uh

you're you're welcome to ask questions

and be happy

Hello and welcome to episode 47A
of question and answer. I am your host
Panyo Bo Sang.
And the the Q&A that I just did lasted
for more than 3 hours and I was hoarse
from talking for 3 hours straight and I
stopped and had a little bit of dinner,
got myself a glass of bovine glandular
secretions to kind of soothe my throat.
And now I'm back at it to answer one
last question. And even before
uh the Q&A went for 3 hours, I figured
that I was probably going to have to
make this a separate show just to do
justice to this one question.
And I read it on the Q&A but I didn't

answer it. So I'm going to read it again here and then try to answer it as best I can. It's really a major question and I'll just do my best.

Question is from Erin and Erin says, "I think a large blind spot in the Dharma may be that when acting in a dharmic way towards people in the modern world, especially in a culturally confused and crime-ridden melting pot, more often than not you're dealing with crude humans who are unable to receive or even recognize Dharma. Continuing to do Continuing to interact with them in a dharmic fashion will be met with no results and in many cases even inflame or embolden their behavior because they

immediately recognize you as weak or passive and will double down and intensify their behavior or predation. Does Buddhism have any way of dealing with this besides disassociation or simply allowing people to mow you down, steal from you or kill you?

Obviously, saying that your own karma put you in that situation does not solve anything. I'm sure it works just fine in a monastery full of strict monks. Lay people have to deal with predatory and criminal chimps every day on the street, at work or in their own neighborhood where short of quitting your job or selling your house, you must be able to

protect yourself or use forceful means
to make them stop. I guess the main
question is beyond self-victimization,
karma blaming or continually ignoring,
enabling and disassociating,
what is an actual solution for a lay
person who is dealing with being
continually assaulted or robbed by a
person who doesn't give a [__] about
your dharmic way of attempting to make
them stop?"
And this question was submitted in the
Q&A room of the Discord server and some
wise guy um put the emoji underneath
this of crossed swords
because this person is challenging
Dharma.

Um

saying that uh there is a large blind

spot

and so on. And it also it caused a

certain amount of commentary from other

other members of the group

including one person who said, "I asked

a similar question once in Ajahn

Ñāṇamoli's channel. His answer gets me

rather annoyed although I kind of get

where he comes from. I asked about

protecting my family and killing an

armed robber if they come to my house

and he said somewhere along the line of,

'Well, that's kind of the risk of having

a family. You can't fully practice

Dharma.'"

And then another person

left this comment.

"I doubt the Buddha spent a lot of time

going around telling lay people not to

defend their families from immediate

threats or telling kings that they

should never punish violent criminals.

It seems like there is no shortage of

people who actually treat each other

badly for no good reason that you could

spend a lifetime on scolding those

people before you got around to telling

decent folk about how they need to be

complete pacifists.

So there's a lot to cover or a lot to

unpack.

Um the the ultimate answer I think is fairly straightforward but still um there's a lot of statements made here that I probably should address.

The first one, I think a large blind spot in the Dharma may be and then Erin goes into this. I really don't think there's a blind spot in the Dharma. I mean, Dharma acknowledges the reality that if you live in this world, there's going to be [__] happening and the best way of dealing with that is just renounce the world. That doesn't mean that you just go into a cushy monastery. I mean, nowadays a lot of the time it

does but in the Buddha's time, you went
out and just flung yourself upon the
mercy of the universe
and essentially on just the power of
your own merit from doing that.
And there were I mean, in the Buddha's
time, there were probably a higher
density of bad people than nowadays.
Nowadays, we're living in an age of
spiritual mediocrity. There's a fewer
saints and also fewer sociopaths, fewer
psychopaths, fewer mass murderers.
I mean, in the Buddha's time, I mean, a
lot of the sociopathic mass murderers
were kings, were running countries.
And I mean, nowadays, I mean, we may
have like a senile buffoon as the leader

of the country. It's still like a constitutional republic and just like having people tortured to death that you don't like doesn't happen much anymore. Maybe among cartels on the the the Mexican border with the USA but not in America as a whole.

So it's not really a blind spot in the Dharma cuz the Dharma addresses the issue that there's going to be this kind of [__] happening especially if you live as a lay person, you're going to have a family that you are duty-bound to protect. You have a home and and like property that you are duty-bound to protect. And so by

renouncing all that sort of stuff you're not so much escaping from reality but you you know, way you're getting closer to reality because you've got fewer distractions to distract you from the essence of of experience, the essence of existence.

So

referring to the culturally confused and crime-ridden melting pot where lay people have to deal with bad people.

Yeah, I suppose in Chicago or Detroit or some big city um

your chances of meeting with like mentally disturbed and potentially violent people is greater than living in a small town for example.

I mean, in the Buddha's time, they had bandits and so forth that were infesting forests so you might be better off in the city although
you're probably more of a a target for kings and just sociopathic administrators and so forth.
So let's continue down this question.
"You continually interact with them in a dharmic fashion will be met with no results and in many cases even inflame or embolden their behavior because they immediately recognize you as weak or passive and will double down." That's not necessarily true either. Um if you interact in a dharmic fashion, for for

starters, you will be calm and you will
not be afraid. And predators, if they if
they detect fear, they're more they're
more likely to go for it.
And also if you react in some sort of
violent, agitated way
again, it's going to inflame a predator
even more. You know, it's going to be
like violent feedback feeding their own
violence.
So remaining calm and unafraid is a
dharmic approach and
if if you're not afraid of them, they're
going to think twice before they mess
with you.
And also if you remain calm
then it's not going to be

like feeding their violence.

And I watched a movie not too long ago.

Uh

it's a a relatively well-known movie,

The Men Who Stare at Goats.

And it's based on a true story. I think

the US Army was actually experimenting

with kind of psychological ways of

dealing with enemies.

And I think it kind of fizzled out. Not

not much came of it. But

it was like if there's a violent person

confronting you then you remain calm and

kind of neutral. I mean, you don't do

anything that's going to inflame them.

And a lot of the time that is enough to

just kind of fizzle out their their

aggression. The aggression doesn't meet

with any obstacle, you know? It it's not

pushing against anything and so it's

just kind of

you know, it just kind of wears itself

out. I mean, it doesn't always happen

that way.

But

a lot of psychos, I mean, they feed on

the fear, you know? They want you to

struggle against them and that kind of

encourages them to keep going.

So a dharmic approach would include

that. I mean, if you wanted to be super

saintly, the the really dharmic approach

is you being love at your enemies. And

it's not just Buddhism that teaches

that. Christianity is better known for

the whole idea of loving your enemies,

blessing those that curse you.

Um

and and there were some early Christians

who really took that to heart. I mean,

they might get fed to lions but they're

blessing the lions and the people that

set the lions loose on them. You know,

they're singing hymns. They're they're

they're rejoicing that they're dying in

the name of Jesus Christ or whatever.

And that's that's extreme. I mean,

that's more than you can expect from the

average person even the average like lay

Buddhist.

But to interact with a bad person in a

dharmic fashion, it doesn't matter if

if they have any appreciation for Dharma

or Buddhism because

most of it is happening at a

subconscious level anyway. Like even

like a vicious dog

You know, it's like acting afraid or or

running or whatever is just going to

like kick in the predator instinct and

it's the same with predatory humans.

So, in that respect Dharma it can at

least keep you calm and unafraid which

is going to reduce the odds of bad [__]

happening. It's not just going to

embolden I mean maybe a few. They might

see you as just some sort of passive beta that's an easy mark or some such.

So, let's see. I'll keep scrolling down here a little bit.

Does Buddhism have any way of dealing with this besides disassociation or simply allowing people to mow you down, steal from you, or kill you?

Well, that's really getting to the meat of it.

Um

a lay person living in the world interacting with bad people sometimes, having a family and a home to defend. I mean, you can't really call a man a man if he's not going to defend his family.

I remember

I used to have this friend. He was a

monk for many years.

And then he dropped out of the monkhood.

He got married. He had a wife and a

stepdaughter.

And he was just really uncompromising in

keeping five precepts.

Just uncompromising and he was

he was a relatively saintly guy.

And I asked him once, I said, "What

happens if someone assaults your wife

right in front of you?"

And amazingly this guy he says, "Well,

it would be her karma, wouldn't it?" And

it's like how can you be a man and not

defend your own woman or defend your own

family?

I mean, you may be a human male

but I mean you you're unworthy of the

name man if that's the the approach

you're going to take. I mean, if you've

got a woman

then

you should defend that woman. You've got

children, you really should defend your

children. Even if you've got a house, I

mean, you really should stop somebody

from breaking in and stealing your

stuff.

So, the lay person

has to really I mean, I've

I've after I stopped being a monk I

really thought about this a lot that I
mean, there's a certain stoicism in
being a lay Buddhist because you can't
take the route of being a saint. It's
sort of like the tantric path of you
have to transmute
like vice
into something spiritual.
And in a way it's like the way of the
samurai or the Bushido where
um
I mean, you may have to kill enemies but
at least you're not doing it motivated
by hatred or rage, you know, this ill
will, anything like that. It's just
duty. It's you do what needs to be done.
You remain calm.

You know, no hatred in your heart, no rage in your heart. You just do what needs to be done and by doing it calmly you do it better. You're you're better able to defend your home if you remain calm. You know, it's like James Bond mentality, you know, he doesn't get all worked up.

He does what needs to be done effectively and efficiently.

So,

even though I was a Buddhist monk for 30 years, I have a woman and a home now and if somebody starts breaking into my home, I'm going to load the Glock and I'm going to deal with it. Calling the

cops may not work. They might not show
up for 20 or 30 minutes.
But you remain calm and at least you're
not motivated by hatred. I mean, you're
still going to make bad karma. You just
have to take the hit because I mean, I'm
not a monk anymore. I'm just of my own
volition I have chosen to live the life
of a householder now
and so there are times when I just have
to do non-Dharmic things.
But I mean, you can still add as much
Dharma as possible even if you're
shooting an intruder in your house
at least you're doing it
like
with a certain equanimity.

I don't think it's possible to have
complete equanimity when killing
somebody cuz deep down I mean, there's
this connection. But still I mean,
you're not motivated by hatred which is
just just increases hatred.
Hatred increases hatred. Anger increases
anger. So,
in a way that's that's where you just
cut it off. I mean,
um
there's famous verse in the Dhammapada
that hatred or enmity does not is not
ended by enmity. Enmity is ended by
non-enmity and this is an eternal law.
And it's not just Buddhism that teaches

this. It's any kind of advanced

spiritual system teaches it. Also

Christianity teaches the same thing.

Um they even take it farther with

like love your enemies, bless those that

curse you, you know.

Um

And there there are have been Christians

who actually take this seriously. I

mean, if you really want to be a

completely saintly person, then you

would consider it to be worse to kill

than to be killed and just let yourself

get killed. But I mean,

if you're alone,

you may be able to make that saintly

choice.

But to just let your family be killed
without lifting a finger, just passively
again I mean, you're unworthy of of
being called a man
or a husband or a father in that case.
So, you do what needs to be done but you
do it with as little anger and hatred in
your heart as possible. You just do what
needs to be done.
It's not just fatalistic I have to
accept whatever happens. Maybe if you're
a monk but even a monk is allowed to
strike out in self-defense.
So,
I'll just continue scrolling down here.
Um

I'm sure it works just fine in a monastery full of strict monks. Again, in ancient India there were psychopaths and some of them were kings ruling countries that were just violent, bloodthirsty psychopaths.

A lot of kings became kings by killing their own father or killing their own brother.

And according to Buddhism if you kill your own father, you're guaranteed of hell in your next life.

So, let's see.

Uh you must be able to protect yourself and use forceful means to make people stop doing the bad things. Yeah, that's fine but it doesn't necessarily involve

hatred or anger. You just do what needs
to be done and I mean, if you can do it
compassionately
with maybe even a little meta, a little
friendly feeling in your heart
then that is best. The the more positive
the mental states, the better it is.
Even if you've got to like defend your
your home or something
using negative mental states it just
makes bad karma that comes back on you.
I mean, there's just no escape from
that.
So, here it says, "I guess the main
question is beyond self-victimization,
karma blaming, or continually ignoring

and enabling and disassociating, what is
an actual solution for a lay person who
is dealing with being continually
assaulted or robbed by a person who
doesn't give a [__] about your Dharmic
way of attempting to make them stop?"
Well, if you're really being Dharmic,
you're not necessarily even attempting
to make them stop.
Let's say if you're unarmed and you're
up against five guys with machine guns,
I mean, you're not going to make them
you're not going to make them stop
realistically. If they're going to shoot
you, they're going to shoot you.
Maybe if you're dealing with a person
who isn't just pure a sociopathic evil

I mean, you may be able to

reason with them calmly.

Um

you know, just being friendly works

better as a general rule than being a

friend works better than being an enemy.

The best way to defeat an enemy is to

turn them into a friend.

It may be that they're not the sort of

person that is worth being friends with.

I mean, they'd be a bad friend.

But at least you can just remain calm

and not have hatred and anger in your

heart because that just makes things

worse. And I think a lot of people in

the West, they're so used to like a

materialistic, utilitarian ethic

where I mean, karma just isn't in the

picture at all.

That

they don't really see that their own

mental states do condition their own

experience in just a fundamental,

radically profound way.

That we are

in a way dreaming our way through life.

We're not fully awake

and we are creating our own reality. And

people that are born and raised in

Western culture like spiritual Siberia,

even if they might call themselves

Buddhists, they just can't accept this.

They just think it's woo-woo,

touchy-feely, escape from reality stuff
that it's just, you know, philosophy
philosophizing pulled out of a rectum
somewhere.
But
it I mean, it it is true
that I mean, as a lay person you have to
do what needs to be done which may
involve, you know, using violence to
protect yourself, your family, your
property. But still
to use just the stoic approach of doing
just what needs to be done just because
it needs to be done or um you know, the
way of the samurai, the Bushido, you
know, it's like

no anger, no hatred because that just

makes things worse.

So, I guess that's that's the the

answer, the best answer I can give. I

mean, sometimes being non-violent may

not work especially if you have a family

protect.

Um but at the very least

you do it with

a minimum of negative emotion, a minimum

of hate and a minimum of fear, a minimum

of

of anger, you know, just remain as calm

as you can. And if you can manage

somehow any kind of compassion for this

miserable wretch who's making problems

for people,

then that's even better. Because really anybody who makes problems, anyone who's like bad is a suffering being. Happy people are more likely to just live and let live. The people that are just deliberately messing with people tend to be miserable people. And part of it is they're so miserable they want to make somebody else more miserable than them just so that they can seem happy by comparison.

So,

the the standard Buddhist approach of dealing with enemies is beaming love at them, beaming meta,

at least friendly feeling if you don't

want to call it love.

And that is just so extreme, it's so

against human nature that it's

unrealistic, especially if someone's

already upset

to to even advise them to do that.

But still, at the very, very least, have

the minimum amount of negative emotions

and negative motivations

like motivating your behavior. Because

it's just going to come back to you, and

ultimately it's going to make things

worse.

And um

I guess that's it.

And seriously, anyone wants to break

into my house at night, I am loading the

Glock.

So, be forewarned. And also, be happy.

Hello and welcome to episode 48 of

question and answer. I am your host

Panya Bassan.

And I'm sitting here on our back deck in

South Carolina drinking sweet tea

and gradually

gradually, ever so gradually, becoming a

redneck.

In fact,

one major step I took towards becoming a

redneck just today

is I went down to the bank and took out

a loan to buy a Jeep.

Now, one of one of those wimpy like SUV

Jeeps either. It's like a It's like a

Wrangler.

And I'm out here on the back porch

because my sweetheart's mama is visiting

us and she has uh

moved into the

studio

as her bedroom.

So,

I'm out here.

And

just to sort of try and

prevent more 3-hour-long Q&As, I'm doing

this only like 9 days after the last Q&A

instead of 2 weeks.

And I took days off. I took 2 days off

from work.

Um partly so I could go and pee in a

cup.

Partly, it turned out so I could buy a

Jeep.

And uh

partly, I'm just burning off

holiday pay or PTO, paid time off.

Because uh it looks like I'm very

probably going to be switching jobs to

one that

pays higher at a different sheet metal

shop. And that's that's one of the

reason why why my sweetheart wanted a

vehicle is uh

this this new shop is not a 5-minute

drive away. It's more like a half an

hour drive away.

So, she doesn't want to be stranded here

if in case the dog gets sick or

something.

Or she suddenly wants to rush out and

buy mulch, that kind of thing.

But, without any further ado, I suppose

I should start answering questions. And

because

this is sort of uh

um less than 2 weeks, we it's down to a

manageable number. It's still still

quite a few, but uh

uh we it's it's not going to be 3 hours

this time.

And so, the first question is from the

Arya Swasti Project.

And the Arya Swasti Project says, "When

seeing an open, dilapidated, vacant

parking lot, abandoned building, or places that used to have a lot of activity and are now unoccupied and deserted, I feel a certain calm and even joy. I want to go and stand or sit in them. Does this seem weird to you?"

Um well, it doesn't seem particularly weird. Um maybe I can relate to that to some degree, like going to a fairgrounds when there's no fair going on. It's just like empty. And but you know, there's all this commotion and stuff going on there at other times of year. Or especially when I was a kid, and to some degree now, it's you just get sort of a spooky feeling when you go into an

abandoned house.

Where people lived there, but now it's

just all dilapidated and run-down.

So,

um I don't feel particular joy in going

to such places, but there is kind of a

like a an intriguing feeling you can get

or I can get.

But um yeah, I don't

I'll just move on to the next question

here.

Next question is from Achala or Asala or

Akala, a c a l a. I think it's Achala.

And Achala says,

"As far as rebirth is concerned, being

born as an animal is actually Buddhist

teachings.

I have heard from some monks that rebirth as an animal is a Hindu thing and not Buddha's teachings. I personally don't agree with this. I think probably Hindus later took the teachings from the Buddha and then put them into their scriptures. If rebirth has nothing to do with animals, then the question arises, how do animals come into existence? What are the causes which led them to be born in the animal realm? Why aren't there just human beings if rebirth is only concerned with humans? So, I personally do believe that akusala karma would lead to rebirth in the three lower realms, but I would like if you could

expand your thoughts on it and probably also provide a good sutta on the matter. Thank you.

Well, I was discussing being reborn as an animal in the in the previous Q&A number 47. And um yeah, there are there are suttas that definitely talk about. In fact, the entire Jataka literature is full of stories of the Buddha and his chief disciples being animals. I mean, it's they're not animals in every The Buddha wasn't an animal in every rebirth, but he was, you know, the fish king and the the frog king and, you know, the the wise rabbit that threw himself into a fire to offer

his own meat to uh like a a wandering beggar who is actually Sakka, king of gods, who then rewarded this rabbit by drawing a rabbit on the moon because in India, it's the rabbit in the moon and not the man in the moon, which there then resulted in the idea that the Buddha is the man in the moon.

There's the sutta, I think I mentioned it in the previous Q&A also about how hard it is to get out of the animal realm just because um you have much less opportunity for earning merit and just uh acquiring wisdom, like learning about Dhamma when you're an animal.

There was there was the the simile of

the blind turtle, the blind sea turtle.

And I won't repeat it because I did it

in the last one, but uh

he says here, "Zen monks,

some Zen monks say that rebirth as an

animal is a Hindu thing and not Buddhist

teachings, but then again, it's one of

the

I'm pretty sure it's one of the koans in

the Mumonkan

or the Wumen Guan. I think it's one of

the first ones where

um

some Zen master answers the question, is

is like an enlightened being subject to

karma? And he said, "No." And because of

him saying, "No." he was reborn as a fox

back behind the monastery somewhere.

And um

some other monk hears about this story

or and he knows that the fox is is this

the Zen master who who gave the wrong

answer and

he goes back and if I remember the the

koan correctly, I haven't read this in a

while, he uh sort of preaches to the

preaches to the fox somehow that uh that

the arahant or the fully enlightened

being is at one with the law of karma,

which is the more correct answer and

then the the fox died and was liberated

from the animal realm.

So, it's yeah, it's I mean, it's been

a teaching of Buddhism, if not the

Buddha's

authentic teachings, at least it has

been taught in Buddhism since ancient

times because there's all kinds of

mention of the Buddha being in a

previous life, animals of people being

reborn as animals. There's mention of it

in Zen stories. Um

so

yeah, some of even some of the Jatakas

are found in the the in the

like in the Vinaya, there's the the

story about how uh the Buddha in a

previous life was a wise quail, if I

remember correctly.

So, yeah, it goes back I it could be

that the the Buddhists and the Hindus or

the Buddhists and the proto-Hindus

got it from

like the

an earlier source, you know, just like

the

the traditional Shramana tradition

of um

that that that went back to the the

prehistoric Indus Valley civilization.

Like some of the early Upanishads are

always talking are are also talking

about um

a sort of

reincarnational evolution where you're

starting off as something very simple,

maybe a plant, maybe even less than a
plant, like a crystal or something, and
then you go up through the animal realm
and you know, insects and so forth and
you just keep going that way. And it it
does I mean
the main issue for me
I mean, I can I can accept the idea that
animals uh have rebirth and that there
is a kind of evolution
go through via rebirth.
But, like I was mentioning in the
previous video for a human to go back to
being an insect
I really don't see
how there'd be enough similarity in the
mind of a human and the mind of an

insect

for a human with all this complexity,

kind of crude compared to a deva maybe,

but still compared to an insect, we are

just vastly orders of magnitude beyond

an insect in like mental complexity and

mental force. So, I don't think it would

all fit into a mosquito.

So,

um there I have read a a strange theory

in a book called the Set uh Seth Speaks

where like a part of your

uh karmic stream can break off and be

and it's you got this little spark of

your karmic stream splitting off and

becoming an animal, something like that.

But, um

yeah, I I have uh no doubt that it has

been taught in Buddhism

since very early times, even if the

Buddha himself didn't talk about it. The

texts have the Buddha talking about it.

And it's it's back as far as some of the

earlier Upanishads in in uh Hinduism or

Brahmanism, Vedism.

So,

uh here's one one question, sub-question

here. What are the causes which led them

to be born in the animal realm? It's

just having an animalistic mind,

especially at the moment of death.

You know, if you're just completely

controlled by lust or or something like

that, um you know, some sort of animalistic greed, you know, hunger for you're just obsessed with food or something, then according to traditional orthodox Buddhism, that having like animalistic urges and to an extreme degree will have you be reborn as an animal.

It's like if you die with the mind of a the mind of an angel, you get reborn as an angel. You die with the mind of an animal, you get reborn as an animal. You die with the mind of a of a denizen of hell, you get reborn as a denizen of hell,

so to speak.

So,

that's kind of how it works, or at least

that's how it's supposed to work.

So, I think I'll just move on to the

next question. This is also from uh

Achala.

In the Mahayana worldview, there's a

common understanding Nibbana and Samsara

are the same thing, which is based on

Nagarjuna's words. From a Theravada

view, it doesn't make sense since

Nibbana doesn't lie in the realm of

Samsara. It is the unconditioned, while

Samsara is the conditioned existence.

What is view on it? Thank you. Um I'm

really not 100% sure that it is based on

Nagarjuna. I think Nagarjuna

pretty much could have agreed with it if
to the extent that he would have
asserted anything. I mean, Nagarjuna's
philosophy just
just like attacks all assertions and
then after it attacks after it destroys
all other assertions, it just like turns
the knife on itself and and commits
ritual suicide and you wind up with no
assertions whatsoever.
Um it could have gone back to like um
Prajnaparamita or Prajnaparamita. The
There was like a an early movement in in
Mahayana Buddhism
uh which would include like the Diamond
Cutter and uh the Heart Sutra and that

sort of thing.

It could have It could go back to that.

Um which I think is earlier than

Nagarjuna, but I'm

I'm no authority on the subject.

Um but really, um I've talked about this

before. The whole idea that Nirvana and

Samsara are the same

to an orthodox Theravada Buddhist, most

orthodox Theravada Buddhists would just

snort with derision at the very idea.

They're like opposites. But I can accept

that Nirvana and Samsara I mean, you can

look at it as essence and form. Like

I've I've talked about this before, you

know, like the gold ring, you know, the

essence is gold and ring is the form of

it. And Samsara is the world of forms. I mean, even the form the so-called formless realm is still there's still some kind of mental form there even if it's not physical.

So, you can see Nirvana as just the essence of ultimate reality and Samsara are like the the mirages or illusions or just the the superficial semi-real conditional forms that are conditionally co-arising.

In accordance with paticcasamuppada or dependent co-arising. Or there was one person on the the Discord server where this question was asked who said that Nibbana is you know the universe

uh as seen through enlightened eyes and

Samsara is the very same universe as

seen through unenlightened eyes.

Which is another sensible way of

explaining it.

So

I mean if you have perfect eyes, you see

everything as perfect, so to speak.

That's not orthodox Theravada, though.

So I'm I'm deviating from orthodoxy by

uh

answering this question because if I

were strictly orthodox, I would just

snort at in derision

at the very idea that Nibbana and

Samsara are the same.

Because, you know, going with like

Abhidhamma, for example, they're they're obviously are not the same. They're just qualitatively different.

Because Nibbana is one ultimate reality and all the rest of the ultimate realities, and there's lots of them, are all aspects of Samsara.

So

um yeah, I mean, either of the the two earlier um explanations I gave that Nibbana is just the the ultimately real essence

which transcends the duality even of existence and non-existence, so it's paradoxical.

And Samsara is just the form, the

outward, you know, apparent forms

of like an imperfect

mind or an unenlightened mind trying to

make sense of reality.

But sense itself is Samsara.

So I guess I answered that one. So we'll

just move on to the next question. This

is from Crazy Librarian.

And Crazy Librarian says

do Hindus have history of taking some

inspiration from Buddhism and put it in

their scriptures, I thought they are

older.

Well, Hinduism itself,

I mean, in the Buddha's time, it wasn't

really Hinduism yet. You know, it's it

was hardly even proto-Hinduism. It was

just sort of Vedic Brahmanism. That
Hinduism, if you if you trace its
evolution, it goes back to the
proto-Indo-European
like paganism or polytheism that was not
particularly mystical,
not particularly metaphysical, that it
was mainly
sacrificing to the gods for worldly
benefits, like sons, cattle, and victory
in battle.
And then gradually, as it came into
India, you know, the parts of the
Rigveda were supposedly uh composed
before the Indo-Aryans even made it into
India. You know, their worship of of

like the Vedic gods pre-dated their

entry into India, their invasion or

settlement or whatever.

And um then they came in contact with a

very

strange spiritual culture

um based on the Indus Valley

civilization, I'm pretty sure. It was

like the Shramanic tradition. And

they started absorbing a lot of ideas

from this earlier tradition just through

osmosis, just you know, cultural

in interaction, I suppose.

So,

um

they around the Buddha's time, they a

little bit before the Buddha's time,

they started up with the Upanishads.
They started composing Upanishads.
Which is like the the Vedanta, which
literally means the end of the Vedas,
you know, it's the last part of the
Vedas, presumably the the the
culmination of the Vedas with regard to
wisdom and profundity.
And then after that there was non
non-Vedic scriptures started like
Puranas and um
like the Bhagavad Gita, which is now
considered to be one of the main Hindu
scriptures.
Um which technically isn't even
canonical scripture because it's not in

the Vedas.

So, um as

as this Vedic Brahmanism sort of moved

southwards into southern India, it

became more and more devotional, more

and more emphasis on certain gods rather

than some of the Vedic gods. Like the

two main Vedic gods were Indra and Agni,

and they've pretty much faded out. It's

mainly um the two main gods in India

nowadays among the the Hindus are Vishnu

and Shiva.

I think most Hindus in India would be

either Vaishnavites or Shaivites.

Um but yeah, there was a lot of

interaction between Buddhism and this

Vedic

into Hindu stream, this this this
continuum, I guess you can call it. I
mean, you can't really call it Hinduism
back in the Buddhist time,
proto-Hinduism or whatever.
So, um yeah, it was like uh Shankara
who was uh wrote some of the most
important commentary on the Upanishads
and uh is considered to be one of the
founding fathers of Advaita Vedanta.
He supposedly got a lot of his ideas
from Madhyamaka Buddhism, which is a
kind of Mahayana Buddhism.
Um also, the Hindu emphasis on
non-killing or ahimsa, you know, why
Hindus tend to be uh vegetarian or you

know, they don't they don't even kill
insects, supposedly. They Apparently,
that was also from Buddhist influence.
But um Buddhism also got a a lot of
influence from proto-Hinduism.
Um especially with a lot of the
terminology, you know, the idea of
of karma and and the the Brahman and
this
most of the Buddhist terminology is
derived from
Sanskrit. You know, Sanskrit
philosophical terminology.
Maybe not all of it, but most of it.
So, there was a lot of back and forth
and that was a good thing, I think.
There was a lot of relatively peaceful

debate going on between different philosophical schools. Now, within Buddhism, within the Vedic traditions, and also other traditions, the Jains, the Ajivikas, other other sects. And they were not only debating, you know, among themselves, but like with the different sects.

And it strengthened each each school. The ones that survived, you know, they they endured the purifying fire of everyone pitching at them essentially. Just like finding fault with their arguments. Because, I mean, if you're debating with other people, you have to have a

relatively strong foundation.

You know, you have to have have a point of view that can stand up to scrutiny and and like critical attack.

And I used to always consider that. I mean, it's

I mean, what's the point of having a point of view that really cannot stand up to scrunity and criticism.

I mean, if you have to protect your point of view, like

I think Christianity really went went this other route where it's just like just shut down all debate, shut down all, you know, all dissension, all deviation from orthodoxy. Because it makes them feel really uncomfortable

when people are just

like poking holes in their theology or

whatever.

So, it would in India, you know, there

was a lot of this debate and like honing

their their positions

that

it really strengthened the spiritual

tradition in India, I think.

Um and it really is praiseworthy that

for the most part they got along like

Nalanda University. It was all these

different schools of Buddhism. They They

did their ceremonies separately. They

had different ecclesiastical boundaries

for the different schools.

But, um still they'd come together and
study together and debate relatively
non-violently.
You know, it didn't didn't devolve into
brawls or anything like that.
So, yeah, it went both ways. I think
mostly
uh with regard to philosophy, it was
Mahayana Buddhism and Hinduism that were
influencing each other a lot. Although,
like I said, it was even early Buddhism
like the the Buddha himself
uh is largely responsible for
Hindus adopting ahimsa and stopping
doing animal sacrifices and just
starting to pour melted butter and honey
and incense and things onto the fire for

their for their sacrifices.

So, I think I'll just move on to the

next question here.

And this is from Hey It's Tig.

And Hey It's Tig says,

"I've read that yogis are forbidden from

eating garlic and onions. Does the

Vinaya Pitaka also prohibit monks from

consuming these and related foods?"

Well, onions are okay for a monk, but

there is a rule against monks eating raw

garlic unless they are sick.

And I guess the the sto- the origin

story, which I haven't read in many

years, but if I remember correctly, um

there was a congregation of monks

listening to the Buddha's sermon and one
of the monks had eaten raw garlic and
was kind of grossing out the people
around him that was that were smelling
his breath. And so, the Buddha right
then and there
made a rule that monks are not not
allowed to eat raw garlic unless they
are sick.
So,
but that's as far as it goes. Onions is
no problem. Although, I have read there
was a Chinese pilgrim, he was a Buddhist
like during the Middle Ages, early
Middle Ages, who traveled to India
looking for
um

as yet untranslated scriptures,

scriptures that had not yet been

translated from Indian languages into

Chinese.

And um he said that uh the people of

northern India were devout Mahayana

Buddhists who did not eat meat or garlic

or onions. So,

at some point Buddhists

uh especially Mahayana Buddhists stopped

eating meat, garlic, and onions,

although um

a Theravada Buddhist is allowed to eat

all of them

if the garlic is cooked or if he is

sick, he can eat raw garlic.

Um let's see here. I want to
do justice to this garlic question.
I read that yogis have been reading
garlic and onions. Yeah, and later ideas
about how garlic and onions are like
um like the the the three guna idea of
different foods, you know, you've got
sattvic foods which are conducive to
wisdom, like uh grains, dairy products,
nuts, fruits, and then you got rajasic
foods that are that cause passion, like
meat and spicy food, and then you've got
tamasic food, which uh
uh tend towards like inertia, lethargy,
um just sort of semi-consciousness,
and I think I'm not sure what garlic and
onions would be. They'd be one of the

two lesser ones. They're not sattvic

foods.

Um I think mushrooms are considered to

be the classic uh tamasic,

darkness-inducing food.

So,

yeah, I I don't think that that was

really a factor in in early Buddhism.

Just the idea of this food, you know,

produces this kind of energy that is bad

for your spirit or something. That

hadn't evolved yet in Indian philosophy.

It's

It's mentioned a lot in the Bhagavad

Gita because it was

um sort of a pre

pre-Buddhist, pre-Hindu uh school of

philosophy called Samkhya that had this

the three gunas.

And then they were kind of working out

this theory and it got adopted into

um

into Hinduism as yoga.

And it's there's a lot of it represented

in the Bhagavad Gita, also.

But um

I think I'll just move on to the next

question here. And this is from Stevie.

And Stevie says,

"How does alms round actually work? Can

you please walk us through every step

from the time you leave until the time

you cleaned your bowl? Is there a

standard time villages are supposed to look for monks? If not, how do they know what time to look for you? Thank you."

Um

well,

with regard to this last part first, is there a standard time? It's definitely morning. Monks are only allowed to eat between dawn and midday. So, it would definitely be in the morning.

And my experience in Burma

or and also to some a degree in Thailand is that there's just like a standard time for monks to go for alms in different areas. Like in the cities, it might be a little later. In the out in

the villages where you got subsistence
farmers that get up at the crack of
dawn, it might be just right after dawn
when, you know, people are up and
cooking their food.
But generally, monks go around the time
that people are cooking breakfast.
Which may be anywhere between
like dawn and maybe like
9:00 in the morning. Although, there are
some monasteries and just monks in some
areas will eat two meals a day.
They might have the early meal, the
so-called dawn meal, just delivered to
the monastery, and then they might go
later like 10:00, 10:30, something like
that.

So, uh usually it's just a like a standardized time locally, you know, in this village, you know, the monks go to a certain time or, you know, in in Rangoon or whatever. So, um yeah, but it's always sometime in the morning.

And see, the time you leave, um yeah, well, I mean, when when a monk enters the village, he's got to have both shoulders covered. And usually it's it's wrapped in a certain way. And I used to try and go for alms just completely according to the book, and almost nobody does this anymore.

For example,

in the Buddha's time, there were no bowl lids. Nowadays, almost all monks will have this lid to their bowl. And then, if people offer them something that doesn't mix good, you know, like a a package of cookies or something, a lot of time they'll just put it on top of the bowl. Sometimes, um
monks in Burma will have like little curry cups on top of the bowl lid. And then, people want to offer curry, you know, some kind of sauce or something goopy, they'll put it in the little cup so it doesn't all get mixed together in the glop. But, they didn't have bowl lids in the Buddha's time. There's no mention of them in Vinaya. And so, the

way a monk was supposed to go for alms, he'd go into the village, both shoulders covered. If if his bowl was in a bag, he has to take it out of the bag before he enters the village.

And then, he holds the bowl under his robe. And anyone who has seen like video old videos of me as a monk in Burma, I mean, I look like I'm 9 months pregnant cuz I'm holding my bowl underneath my robe. That's like the bowl lid. And you have to be careful not to get goop on the inside of your robe because if the bowl gets filled too full, then it's easy to get glop on your robe.

And then what a monk is supposed to do,

I mean, he walks through the village,
he's got to have both shoulders covered
before he enters the village, he's got
the bowl taken out of any bag that it
was in,
and then he's holding the bowl with both
hands, he's got to look downwards,
I mean, just like 6 ft in front of him,
you know, eyes downcast, and he walks
quietly through the village. And if he
gets to a house, he stops for a few
seconds. And then according to the the
rules of monastic discipline, they've
got instructions on this.
It says, you know, the monk stops for a
little while, but if she stands up from
her work or she starts wiping off a

spoon or she starts wiping off a bowl,
then that's pretty good indication that
she's getting ready to offer something,
and so the monk is allowed to stand a
little bit longer.
Um you know, in the past as well as in
as nowadays, it's usually women who
offer food to monks. So, that's why
it's, you know, it says she if she does
this or if she does that cuz there's
usually women who are offering food.
Um
so then out here,
what he's supposed to do, and almost
nobody does this anymore because now
they have bullets and all that. But what

he's supposed to do is he's supposed to lift up his robe to to get the bowl out with one hand, then he holds out the the bowl, I think with his he's supposed to use his right hand. I was left-handed, so

with regard to alms round anyway. So, I kind of did it the opposite. But you're supposed to lift up the robe with your left hand, hold out the bowl with your right hand until it's free of the robe, then you hold the bowl with both hands, and respectfully just keep your eyes on the food when when people are putting the food in. And you're not supposed to make any faces, you're not supposed to turn down anything unless it's

obviously, you know, not allowable. You know, if they try to offer you money or something, a monk is not supposed to allow that. Some wise guy is going to put like dog crap in your bowl. I mean, you have to accept that. Um

but I mean, I've accepted some pretty gross stuff. And I mean, you're not allowed to say anything. I mean, you you just have to keep a poker face. You just accept it respectfully. You know, it could be like some little old lady whose eyesight isn't good anymore. This happened to me a lot. She put a piece of cake into my bowl that was just swarming with ants. You know, there's little ants

all over it. She can't see the ants cuz she doesn't have glasses. Her eyesight isn't good anymore. Um I've had rotten food put into my bowl with like maggots in it.

And I mean, you just accept it. You don't know what it it's fried bugs, you know, little little fried little frogs or something. You just

Or or sometimes, you know, you got a nice piece of cake sitting over on one side of the bowl. And then some some lady will come and just pour soup all over it. And you're not allowed to say anything. You're not allowed to do anything. Or or like

and this happened more than once. You've

got

um like some some woman just blows her nose into her hand and just kind of flings the snot off and then offers food with the same hand. Or you've got some little kid who's just coughing He's just coughing and and sneezing or whatever right into the food. No concept of hygiene. And then puts the food into your bowl. You have to accept all of it. Someone with leprosy offers you food, you just accept it. In fact, there's a famous story. I think it's Kassapa's versus in the uh

the uh the Theragatha.

Where he's talking about how he was

going for alms and a a leper a
a beggar with leprosy saw him and he
looked so majestic majestic that this
this leper was inspired to offer him
some of his own food. So, he goes up
kind of humbly and timidly and
wants to offer food into Mahakassapa's
bowl. Mahakassapa, fully enlightened,
also he's the great disciple who was the
most strict with regard to ascetic
practice. You know, he calmly accepts
and the leper
when he's putting a handful of food from
his own bowl into Mahakasyapa's bowl uh
one of his fingertips breaks off and
lands in the bowl.
And Mahakasyapa does not raise an

eyebrow.

And you know, he just continues on his way.

And the the beggar with leprosy is following along to see what Mahakasyapa is going to do cuz he's he's mortified at this. And Mahakasyapa when he gets enough food, he just sits down. He doesn't even take the fingertip out of the bowl. He just moves it over to one side and just eats his meal.

And that was that story or those verses were um it was recommended reading. One of my teachers advised me to read that and take it to heart you know, when I go for alms cuz that's you know, that's

like a role model.

So, anyway

when you got enough food

you just go back out of the the village

and

sit down wherever it's convenient for

you to sit down.

I mean, there's dining halls in a lot of

monasteries. I would just sit in front

of my cave

and um or my sit in my hut or whatever.

Generally, you don't want to eat inside

your hut because there's so many ants in

the tropics that you drop one crumb and

there's going to be a whole legion of

them looking for a second crumb.

Um

and then after you eat

you've got any leftovers, you feed the

scrawny dog that's hanging out or you

know, you go and feed the crows and the

squirrels and then the wild chickens or

whatever and

wash your bowl. Generally, uh got a big

clay water pot

just for washing bowls and so forth and

that's pretty much it.

Um I mean, the way it's done nowadays

isn't necessarily the way it was done in

in Buddha's time and it's not the way

that is recommended in the text. Like um

I suppose even in the Buddha's time

there may have been long lines of monks

going for alms together. I usually went
by myself.
But
long lines of monks just silently
walking through the villages or through
the city, you know, their eyes downcast,
and people just standing there waiting
to offer food. I really couldn't do
house by house alms round in certain
places because I'd start getting too
famous, and you just get right to the
alms route to the village, and there'd
be this line of, you know, 40, 50,
sometimes over 100 people
wanting to offer food. So, I couldn't
really go house by house alms round.
Um I mean, I could have insisted upon it

and been kind of a dick, but I just figured, well, this is making sure everyone who wants to offer food is here because sometimes you go house by house, you got somebody eagerly waiting to offer you food halfway through the village, your bowl fills up before you get that far, you just have to turn around, come back, and then they don't get to offer anything.

So,

I guess that's how I mean, I think I've answered this question. There might be something important that I'm leaving out, but that is how alms round works. It's just every morning if a monk wants

to eat something, I mean, traditionally,
he uh you know,
has to cover both shoulders,
takes his alms bowl, walks through the
village, anyone who wants to offer food
can offer the food. When he gets enough,
he leaves and sits down and eats it.
And uh there is a verse in the
Dhammapada saying that a monk going for
alms is like uh a bee going from flower
to flower. You know, the bee just takes
a little bit from each flower, and it
doesn't cause any harm or hardship to
any of the flowers.
And that's the way it's supposed to be.
You know, it might be, especially if you
got a long line of 100 people, each

person just gets to put in one spoon of rice, one maybe one spoon of curry. And of course you're going to have like the the wise guys who are like trying to cheat and like balance a banana on the spoon or they bring some huge serving spoon from home or something.

So, yeah, it's it was nice. I really like going for alms round, especially at first. I was very grateful. The first time I went for alms round was in Bangkok. I mean, a real alms round. They had sort of like a

or imitation alms round at the monastery in California where I was ordained, where they'd ring the bell at like 10:30

or so, and the monks would file past the
kitchen building and people would offer
food, but um
it wasn't exactly the same as just going
out into this town or village and having
total strangers offering food to you.
And now, I really liked that. It was
nice.
So, I'll just move on to the next
question here. And this is from
Hrym Kthul, Hyrym Kthul. I don't know
how to pronounce this name.
And uh H R Y M K T H U L says,
"Do you plan to publish your father's
autobiography? If so, when? I would love
to read it." Yeah, um there was a recent
blog post on my blog that included

chapter one of my father's spiritual

autobiography.

And um

it's one of the only things that I

inherited from my father or one of the

only material things that I inherited

from my father after he died was his

writings.

And

I I took about half of it, you know, the

best half, and typed it into the

computer, which I still have.

The other half was in a box. I went to

Burma. It was stored in a monastery in

California. When I come back to that

monastery a few years later, the

building that the the box was in is

gone. The box is gone. Nobody knows

where it is. So, about half of what my

father wrote that I got just

disappeared.

Um just through

I don't know.

Carelessness or something. I'm not sure.

But, the thing is, um, my father's

spiritual autobiography was

was like written on like stenographer's

tablets. Just steno pads. And I had to

transcribe it into the computer

in digital form. And apparently one of

the steno pads was missing.

And so, I would have to write the that

chapter filling in the gaps, which

fortunately was during my lifetime when

I was a kid. So, I can

I can remember a lot of the stuff that

my father would have written like um,

there was a an Uncle Henry who was a a

freed slave owned by Well, before he was

before he was freed, he was owned by one

of my my great-great-grandfathers, I

think. And then after he was freed, he

just stayed and just they lived together

and they were they were like best

friends.

Um,

but um, when I was a kid

presumably the the story goes that Uncle

Henry, um, was like haunting our house.

And my little brother, who was like maybe 5 years old at the time, could see him. I couldn't see him. My father couldn't see him. My little brother would be talking about this black man who was in the house. And during the daytime, if he saw him, you know, he'd say, "Don't sit there. Um, you know, the the man is sitting there." He just called it, you know, his man or the man. Um, but if he saw him at night, he'd uh he'd get really scared. So, my father was going to seances at that time. He trained spirit mediums. And uh uh, Uncle Henry would come through sometimes. And he asked Uncle Henry if he was hanging around the house. Uncle

Henry said, "Yes." And he asked him, you know, "Please, you know, just don't don't try you know, don't scare the kid." So, it kind of it kind of fixed the problem, I think. But, as I'm saying, um

I would have to not only edit this, but I would have to supply a missing chapter in order to publish my father's spiritual or occult autobiography. It's It's well worth reading. He's He lived an interesting life.

But, um

I mean, I've gotten enough material for probably three books at least, and uh I just lack the time and energy as a as a

householder who has to work full-time

to

like edit books. I edited three during

the months between

um me dropping out of the monkhood and

starting work at a sheet metal shop.

But, now that I'm working at a sheet

metal shop, I'd have to like take at

least a week off

and just dedicate that time not to,

you know, hanging out with my sweetheart

or going on vacation or anything, but

locking myself in a room and editing.

And, uh

yeah, I mean, there's a good chance it's

going to happen sooner or later, but I

don't know when.

So, I'll just move on to the next question here. Um I specialize in long answers to short questions.

And, this question is from Jeremy.

And, uh Jeremy says, "Are you familiar with Bhikkhu Sujato and his site SuttaCentral? What do you think of his translations?"

I'm really not familiar with Bhikkhu Sujato and his site SuttaCentral. He apparently has some familiarity with me because I've been told that any mention of me or of my Atthakatha commentary translation is deleted from his his website because

he's like a far leftist, apparently, and
he considers me to be like a Nazi.
And so, you know, I'm just like banned
from his website for like from the forum
part of it, you know, and any mention of
me gets deleted or so I've been told.
I've looked this very I've given it a
few cursory glances,
but I've never I'm I don't remember
reading any of his translations or
anything like that. So, I really can't
really comment other than what I've
already commented.
So, I'll just move on to the next
question. This is from Seo Vaksh and
Seepod Zeedona.
And Seo Vaksh and Seepod Zeedona says,

"You mentioned walking and sitting meditation, but what about standing and lying meditation?"

And then in parentheses, he's got lion's posture.

Well,

lying meditation doesn't work very good. There are some people who can do it, but as a general rule, if you lie down and try to meditate, you you you get sleepy. You know, it's just it's like your mind has associated lying down with just being relaxed and sleepy, and so it's really easy to just fall asleep if you're trying to meditate in a prone or just

recumbent horizontal position.

With regard to standing meditation,

um

there was one Burmese sayadaw, Taungpulu

Sayadaw, who specialized in standing

meditation.

And one problem with standing meditation

is I mean, you get into sort of an

altered mental state, you can fall down

easy. And every once in a while at the

at the retreat, I went to a Taungpulu

meditation retreat, and every once in a

while you just hear this thump where

someone just falls over.

But, one thing about sitting or standing

meditation is after like

20 minutes or so, the the soles of your

feet are just on fire.

I mean, you're standing motionless, you know, sort of like sitting motionless.

Gradually, you get uncomfortable, and mainly from the standing posture, it's just the soles of your feet just get hot and start burning.

Um

And then all of the advantages that Tan Te Dores Sayadaw gave for standing meditation were all like health things.

You know, it wasn't anything spiritual.

It was like you'll never get a stroke in your life and this kind of thing.

So,

I think walking and sitting are the two

best positions for for meditation.

Um

I'm not uh sure if it's there's any symbolic value to it, but uh Venerable Ananda, who is the the Buddha's attendant,

he was spending so much time attending to the Buddha that he didn't have enough time to practice diligently. And so, at the time of the Buddha's death, he himself was not yet enlightened. But then, it was getting close to the first council where the monks were going to get together, where you know, the the chief monks in the Sangha were going to get together and discuss what to do now that the Buddha is gone.

And he was the only one, according to
the story, which is canonical,
that he was the only one who was not
enlightened yet.
And so, he was just doing strenuous
meditation, just sitting, walking,
sitting, walking until finally one
night, it may have even been the eve of
the first great council,
he uh
he just I don't know if he actually gave
up, but he was just getting so tired. He
figured he better just lie down and go
to sleep. And just as he was in the
transition between sitting and lying
down, he sits down on his cot or a mat

or whatever, and then he's in like this transitional sort of 45° between horizontal and vertical, you know, while he's in the act of lying down mindfully, he became enlightened.

So, I mean, that has nothing to do with the question, but it it reminded me of that. Just sort of meditation or uh spiritual advancement in you know, other than the standard sitting or walking.

Um some monks, I assume, become enlightened through standing like um,

there is a story in the commentaries about a monk who was meditating on on bones. You know, there's the 32 parts of

the body, and if one of one of the 32 parts, which includes arti or bones, um, it's uh it really resonates with you, you can just specialize on that. So, a monk, um,
was just seeing everyone as bones, you know, it's just seeing skeletons. I I think
I think it was like Ajahn Mun Ajahn Maha Boowa went through a stage, also, um, where they just they were meditating on bones so much. They were just seeing walking skeletons. They were just seeing people as as bones. But, um, there was this young woman came up to him, and she's sort of

like flirting with him, or just being sort of coarse coarse and vulgar with this monk, and she's laughing. And when she opens her mouth and is laughing, he sees her teeth, sees those as bones, and it somehow just caused this click where he became enlightened.

Just, uh, seeing this laughing woman's teeth as bones.

Um,

but, yeah, I think I answered that question. I'll just move on to Seevolux N Seepad Zidanus' question. Um, sometimes I'm answering questions that nobody asked,

but I guess that's okay, too, cuz it's my show.

And I can I can answer anything I want

to.

So, Seevolux N Seepad Zidanus says, "If

nuns weren't allowed to sit

cross-legged, how did they do sitting

meditation?"

Well, that's uh

that's a sensible question.

And the way they were supposed to sit is

the way

well-mannered, demure Burmese ladies are

supposed to sit. You don't sit

cross-legged. That's considered to be

unladylike in Burma. They sit with both

feet kind of tucked into one side. So,

it's it's not good for posture because

when you got both feet tucked to one side as I'm indicating even now, you're kind of leaning to one side and then you have to kind of compensate. And so, it's not really ideal for meditation, but that is how bhikkhunis are supposed to sit in meditation and I doubt that there's very many of these new bhikkhunis that actually do that because they're not really interested in following the rules strictly despite insisting on being recognized as fully ordained.

But, we don't need to get into that. So, we'll just move on to the next question. Also by Seevali and See Pad Z Dinah. And he says,

"What is sammasati
actually supposed to mean? I hear that
it technically means memory and that
someone who isn't Someone who is born
satiman means they remember their past
life.
Vipassana practitioners claim
it is
bare awareness on the objects of the
four foundation of mindfulness. And in
some places
I've seen sati be used synonymously with
heedfulness. With all these conflicting
definitions, it's hard to know what
sammasati is supposed to actually mean.
Well, you the non-philosophical

meaning of the sati in Pali is memory,

but it doesn't mean um usually doesn't

mean memory in uh in Buddhist philosophy

unless it's like anusati or like

recollection of like the the qualities

of the Buddha or something. That would

be a kind of memory.

Or remembering what you've been told

about the qualities of the Buddha

anyway.

Um

but

um if you if you read the

Mahasatipatthana Sutta, it defines the

Noble Eightfold Path. You know, each

step of the Noble Eightfold Path is

defined in an orthodox and authoritative

manner.

So, if you look up sammasati, and I didn't do this, but I I'm pretty sure my memory serves me correctly that it's just it goes over the four foundations of mindfulness, the four satipatthana.

So,

that would be right mindfulness in Theravada Buddhism would be the four the four satipatthana, the four foundations of mindfulness. Which is, you know, mindfulness of the body, mindfulness of feelings, mindfulness of mind, and mindfulness of dhammas. And that mindfulness of dhammas is controversial. It's it's controversial

to this day. Sometimes it's

it's uh

interpreted as mindfulness of mental

states, or it can also mean mindfulness

of just certain philosophical points.

But, you can you can work that out for

yourself.

Uh

But, if you want to know the

like the standard orthodox

interpretation of samasati, you I'd look

it up um in the Mahasatipatthana Sutta,

which is in the Digha Nikaya.

And I'm pretty sure they they're just

going to give the standard

uh explanation of the the four

foundations of mindfulness.

So, let's move on to see what Vacca has to say about his next question.

Uh and that is, "It is said that in the first council, the venerable Ananda recited the suttas from memory, and the venerable Upali recited the Vinaya in the presence of 500 arahants. However, you have to said you don't think much of the suttas or Vinaya date back to the Buddha himself. So, what do you think actually happened during the historical first council?"

Um I think what probably happened was the monks got together after the Buddha passed away, and they had to set up certain protocols. Like, you know, when

the Buddha was alive, he would just say,
you know, "Ehi bhikkhu." You know,
"Come, monk." And that would that would
be good enough. I mean, the monk would
the person would be considered ordained
as a monk. But now that the Buddha
wasn't alive anymore, you know, they had
to set up protocols for like ordination
procedure and just ecclesiastical
matters. And I would guess that the
Patimokkha rules, the the like the core
227
rule No, not the 227. There's like 152.
All of the Patimokkha except for the
Sekhiya rules
would be
um probably laid down at the first

council.

Um different schools of Buddhism had different Sekhiya rules. There was a lot of variation in the last section of rules. They're very minor rules. They're the most minor rules.

But with regard to the rules before that,

there's very close similarity. So,

um

it may be that there was some suttas also added. Not all of them, but um

Yeah, it's it's hard to say. I can't really say with regard to the sutta part, but I think that the first council was mainly with regard to monastic

discipline and just setting out like protocols, rules for ordination, and so forth. And some In some places, the first council is referred to as the Vinaya Sangiti,
which is, you know, the the convocation on monastic discipline.
And you just read the origin story of how the first council arose. It was after the Buddha passed away into parinirvana, you know, after he disappeared from samsara.
Um most of the monks Well, the enlightened monks, you know, they were stoic. You know, they they were serene. The unenlightened monks were mostly very sad. And even Ananda was was pretty

messed He was There There's one scene where he's just leaning against a pillar crying.

But there's one old monk who was ordained when he was old, who's like, "Hey, why all the long faces? Now we don't have venerable Gotama saying do this, don't do that all the time. We can do what we want. And Mahakassapa, who was the senior monk in the Sangha at the time, heard that and he was kind of alarmed at this and he you know he had the idea, "We're going to have to do something about this." And so even the the origin

of the first council, even according to

orthodox tradition, if you read between
the lines, it was to set up monastic
discipline. And if you read really old
texts like the Atthakavagga, the Buddha
actually warns against, you know,
clinging to sets of rules and so forth.
But I mean
you you have to have rules if the
organization isn't just going to
disintegrate
over time once the charismatic
charismatic enlightened founder is gone,
you know, things just kind of dissipate
unless you have some kind of structure
and order
to keep things in place and I think that
was what the the

the main purpose of the first council
was just getting this order for the
Sangha established to to keep things
going in a relatively stable manner.
And there may have been some
philosophical points added also, but I
think the philosophical stuff was
already it was sort of taken care of in
a in a sort of a different venue.
But I don't know for sure. It's really
hard to say. But it is pretty clear just
from the texts that the main purpose of
the first council was monastic
discipline.
And that would include
probably at the very least, as I say,

just ordination procedures and so forth.

And also the the the core of the

Patimokkha rules, all except for the the

Sekhiya rules, which are just sort of

like

good manners. You know, it's like uh

what's the word?

Uh

there's this word I'm trying to think

of.

Etiquette.

They're like rules of etiquette, like

don't talk with your mouth full of food.

That kind of thing.

So,

I guess I answered that one as well as

I'm able cuz I mean to some degree we

just can't know.

Because Buddhist chronicles, ancient

Indian chronicles in general are not

entirely reliable.

So, we'll just move on to Sevaka and

Sipad Zidana's next question,

which is

in the sutras it says that doing metta

meditation will lead to the following,

quote, one sleeps easily, wakes easily,

dreams no evil dreams, one is dear to

human beings, dear to non-human beings,

the devas protect one, neither fire,

poison, or weapons can touch one, one's

mind gains concentration quickly, one's

complexion is bright, one dies

unconfused, and if penetrating no higher is headed for the Brahma worlds, unquote.

Do you think this is true? Cuz if it is true, it is way more overpowered compared to other meditation techniques.

Um

if you do metta meditation correctly and you got genuine metta, I mean you're not just going through may all beings be well, may all beings be happy, just just reciting it like you're reading from a phone book. Um if it's like sincere, you're actually generating this beaming metta in all directions, you know, you're beaming

thoughts of brotherly love in all
directions, then um
yeah, at least you're going to be taking
some major steps in the directions of
these benefits that uh Sevaka and Sipad
Zidana has quoted here.
You're more likely to sleep easily,
you're more likely to wake easily,
you're less likely to have nightmares,
more likely to be dear to human beings
and dear to non-human beings. I mean, if
you're just beaming love, you know,
animals are going to like you more,
people are going to like you more.
Um, this neither fire, poison, or
weapons can touch you. I don't think

that means that you're bulletproof or

that, you know, someone's going to be

shooting at you and always missing or

something, but you're just less likely

to have

uh bad things happen to you cuz you're

going to have better karma.

Um,

so I think,

you know, I mean, if you perfected this

brotherly love towards all beings in the

universe,

um,

yeah, I think you'd have a really good

karma and uh

I mean, still you you're going to have

past karma that's going to come up, but

I think you'd be taking some major steps in this direction even if it's not 100% literally true.

So,

um, yeah, I mean, love is pretty powerful.

So, I'll just move on to the next question here.

Also by COVaxin CpodZ now.

You have said a monk doesn't want to make positive karma either. However, in the Mahaparinibbana Sutta, the Buddha says to Ananda that he has made a lot of merit and that he will quickly achieve the goal. Doesn't that imply merit helps even a monk reach the goal? Well, it

helps you to move in that direction.

It I mean, the merit isn't going to get you enlightened. I mean, that's the main point.

That no action is going to get you enlightened because

if

if your enlightenment is the result of action, it's going to be conditioned and impermanent and it's not going to be genuine enlightenment.

So, it's paradox it's a paradoxical state and it may be meaningless within the same sorry context with in that regard. Guys, if I remember correctly, there's somebody asks me about this a little later.

Um,

so I mean, you can

how do I explain this?

I mean, I've explained this before.

It's like

sort of like Krishnamurti says, you

know, you can open the window, but you

can't make the breeze blow in. I mean,

you can get as ready as possible for it

to happen, but you can't make it happen.

So, you get yourself clear, you know,

you get yourself wise, you know, you

kind of clean up your your karma so that

isn't happening and distracting you

and and just

disturbing your meditation all the time,

you know, and you just get your mind as clear and as peaceful as possible, and then it increases the odds of enlightenment, but there is no guarantee whatsoever.

But, the Buddha I mean, the Buddha is saying to Ananda that he will quickly achieve the goal he had just been prophesying rather than going with uh the he made a lot of merit. See, he has made a lot of merit and that he will quickly achieve the goal. Um you know, the the merit

I mean, it it kind of gets you ready to achieve the goal, but again, it

I mean, you do not become enlightened as the result of merit or as the result of

any action.

Which is paradoxical.

So, I think I'll just move on to Suvajra

and see Pat Zidana's next question.

Which is, "What do you think of the

psychic powers in the sutras?

Like mind reading, levitating,

teleportation,

being at many places at once,

traveling to other dimensions, etc. I

know you believe in the paranormal, but

these are deliberate

These are deliberate uses of psychic

powers on their own?"

Um

yeah, most of the psychic powers on the

standard list of psychic powers I can accept, you know, like walking on water, you know, Jesus didn't have a monopoly on that. It was it was mentioned long before Jesus was born as something that is the result of you know, intensive spiritual practice, especially if you cultivate jhana.

Um

Yeah, levitation, flying through the air, teleportation, just disappearing in one place, reappearing in another place, which is apparently how the devas just That's just their standard mode of of traveling. They just disappear in one place and reappear where somewhere else. Um being in many places at once, yeah.

Um a lot of these Neem Karoli Baba had a reputation for doing a lot of these, especially the teleportation and the being in many places at once.

And also he did some of the It's called the Annapurna in in Hinduism in India, which is like the miracle of the loaves and the fishes in the Bible where you just take a small amount of food and you just divide it up and just keep keep giving it out and just as as though there is an endless supply of it.

Um

The one psychic power, and I mentioned this in a in a relatively recent Q&A, that I just It takes some difficulty in

swallowing it, is that you're able to reach out and touch and stroke the sun and moon.

And I think the commentaries kind of try and patch that up a bit by saying that you you create like a a replica of the sun and moon or something and then you

But Yeah, that one that was a tough one. Reaching out and stroking and caressing the sun and moon.

Um but again, with regard to psychic powers that he says the deliberate use of psychic powers

Um

The more advanced you get, the less deliberate your behavior becomes. You just become more spontaneous, and the

psychic powers just can just flow out of you.

Um like if you're fully enlightened, then really, you know, way nothing is deliberate because you're no longer creating karma. You no longer have like regular human volition.

And so, it's just like like the correct action is just elicited from you spontaneously. And that may include weird like coincidences, which includes miracles.

So, with regard to this question, it's kind of a two-part question for me. Uh yeah,

I can accept that the the psychic powers on the standard list are all possible, except maybe for the reaching out and stroking the sun and moon. I mean, the sun would be pretty hot.

Um I guess you could stroke it at night, but

that was a joke. I made a joke just now. Let's see. And then the deliberate use of psychic powers. Um deliberate use of psychic powers, I mean, that'll almost be like magic, you know, like like witchcraft or something. But the more spiritual it is, is the more it's just like miracles just spontaneously happen around a spiritually advanced person.

So, I think I'll just move on to the

Seal of Action C Pod Z 800 next question. And we're we're already over an hour. This is supposed to be like a short one, because this is less than two weeks worth of questions here.

But I digress.

His next question. Also, there is a question Oh, wait. Also, there is mention in the Mahaparinibbana Sutta that mastering the iddhipadas can let one live for the length of the entire universe, the kappa. But the Venerable Buddhaghosa said that when the Buddha said this, he meant only 100 years old, as Maitreya Buddha still had to come.

But given that the idea of the Maitreya

Buddha was a later addition, do you think the Buddha could have actually lived for the length of the whole universe with his powers? In the Sarvastivada tradition, they claim Venerable Mahakassapa mastered the iddhipada and is waiting for the Maitreya Buddha in a cave. So, this universe length lifespan seems to be taken more seriously by other traditions. Yeah, a kappa doesn't necessarily mean like an entire lifespan of of this cosmos.

Um so,

yeah, it might be that that Buddhaghosa in the commentaries is right that it that it meant like the full lifespan of

a human instead of dying when he was I

think 85.

Gosh.

But, I I don't think the Buddha could

have actually lived for the length of

the whole universe because I mean the

Earth is going to be absorbed into a a

nova

in a few billion years.

I don't know what the Buddha would be

doing

um you know, if he lived longer than

this Earth.

Maybe and he could get you know,

devas would come scoop him up or

something.

But, um

yeah, I've read about

um

like if you read Autobiography of a Yogi

by Paramahamsa Yogananda, he's he talks

about essentially immortal swamis living

in the Himalayas.

But, I mean if you're in a human body,

I mean the human body is is just kind of

like planned obsolescence. I mean, old

age and death are just part of the whole

system.

And yeah, the Buddha was getting old. I

mean, he wasn't still young when he was

you know, before he died when he was in

his early 80s. He was still he was

getting old.

So, yeah, this could also be

um

just kind of mythology that got added to

the Mahaparinibbana Sutta.

And

and maybe a a just a teensy bit of

evidence that it it could be just sort

of some kind of Indian mythology is that

at the first council, Ananda got

attacked essentially by seemingly rather

spiteful fully enlightened beings at the

first council because the Buddha was

hinting

that if Ananda just spoke up and urged

him to stay alive, he would have stayed

alive longer. And Ananda was slow on the

uptake and didn't take the hint. And so

then he's getting condemned and blamed

by these by the 500 fully enlightened

beings or the 499.

Um

any 500

that uh

that that the boot or that Ananda didn't

request the Buddha to live longer. And I

don't know, just the whole story just

seems more like

just it seems more like mythology than

than actual objective history.

But who knows? Again, with regard to a

lot of this stuff, I mean stuff that was

written

mhm literally more than 2,000 years ago.

Uh it's really hard to say exactly what

the story is. I mean

even I mean stuff that happened not so

long ago. I mean with with the the media

as it is now, you you can't be sure what

happened last year or or yesterday.

And uh I don't think that that the

ancient Indian chronicles were a whole

lot more reliable than than the mass

media today.

So

yeah, it's it's just open to debate what

the exact meaning of

the Buddha saying that he could live for

an entire kappa.

Um

and whether he even really said it or not because it does seem kind of fishy to me.

So I'll just move on to Seal of Ochse and Sipatzinal's next and last question. You said Nirvana might not mean anything in samsara, but doesn't it mean the end of suffering? Yeah, you can interpret it that way, but you can't really comprehend it. I mean how it can happen, how it could possibly even happen, as I've already mentioned, is is paradoxical.

It just doesn't really fit cuz it's it's like off the scale. And so, if you're trying to understand it within the scale,

you know, it's like

within the terms of of of samsara, you

have That's the only way you can

understand anything is in a samsaric way

because you're using samsaric

understanding. You're using like

cogitation.

You know, you're using brain function or

intellect or or even intuition or

something, and it's all samsaric. And

so, you can't really understand samsara.

It It's like a a paradox. It doesn't

make sense.

Um

So, I mean, you can give it an easy

definition like the end of suffering or

the end of delusion. Or I mean, there's
there's different ways of going about
describing it.
Or or even you want to go
the a slightly unorthodox route, you
could say it's, you know, infinite
consciousness, infinite formless
consciousness that's luminous all round,
unmanifest.
But, um
it's all just sort of makeshift as a way
to try to understand what really
ultimately cannot be understood. And so,
any attempt to describing
what can't be understood is definitely
going to be lacking in some respect.
So,

I mean, you can give it some kind of meaning that is satisfactory to most people, but still they're not going to understand what it is.

So, I'll just move on to the next question. This is from word weird flex. And weird flex says,

"You and I are about the same height, Panyo. I was wondering if you had any advice for us tall guys that struggle to maintain a proper meditative posture. I especially seem to struggle with pain in the ankles, but any tips you might have would be well and truly appreciated. I really didn't know that tall guys have any kind of disadvantage in sitting in

like full lotus or proper meditative

posture. I thought it would might even

be easier

because I mean someone with short legs

would have more difficulty getting the

into the full lotus

than someone with longer legs that, you

know, you got more to work with or or

something.

Um

it's it's kind of could be it's be like

a hereditary thing. Like my father could

not squat down on his own heels. He

couldn't like all the way squat down. He

was not very flexible in his legs and I

inherited a little bit of that.

Although I eventually got to the point

where I could sit in the full lotus for

a full hour

and uh

you know, what it might start hurting a

bit towards the end.

Um I gave this I gave this story a long

time ago about some old guy I met in San

Francisco. He came to to a talk that I

gave. And he could just flop into the

full lotus. Just I mean, he didn't have

to use his hands. He It's like he could

just sit down and his legs would just go

like this.

And he's just sort of grinning at

everybody saying, "It only hurts for the

first 5 years."

Um

so

I it could just I don't think the

tallness itself is really an issue. It

It may just be just you don't have very

flexible legs and um the you can look up

articles probably on the internet on how

to gradually stretch yourself so you can

sit into the full lotus without pain.

I'm pretty sure I there used to be like

a yoga magazines that would have

articles on this stuff and I'm almost

positive you could find that sort of

thing on the internet. What kind of

stretches to do and so forth so that you

can sit in full lotus posture without

much pain. But I'm not even sure if

you're even referring to full lotus here. It could just be even the easy position where you got both feet kind of flat on the on the floor, one in front of the other, you know, one ankle in front of the other, that that might be hard for you also.

Um

sitting on a like a rolled-up towel, like a one of those big zafus, like they use in Zen, one of those big pillows, um that was always too much for me. But, you just take a regular towel and just roll it up so you've got something that's like this wide and maybe this big around, and you just prop it up

underneath like the back of your behind.

It helps to keep your back straight.

You know, that's that's like one of the

most important things is to keep your

back straight.

Um that's probably more important than

sitting in a full lotus position.

Full lotus posture, the padmasana.

So,

yeah, I mean, I just kind of

toughed it out, I guess. I just kept

doing it, and it hurt. And it may be

that I'm paying for a little bit now.

It's like I do have kind of wonky joints

in my knees and my hips to some degree

now, just from just forcing myself to

sit in a full lotus.

Um I was so

unflexible, inflexible, in my lower body

that I had this ambition when I was a

young monk. I wanted to be able to sit

in the full lotus for 4 hours straight

and then sleep in that posture. I'd be

doing the the sitting dutanga at the

highest level.

And I I never got close. I think the

longest I ever sat in the full lotus

without just searing agony was maybe a

little over 2 hours.

That was the best I could do.

But, with regard to this, yeah, I would

I would advise you to look up some uh

yoga articles or

um probably even they got YouTube videos on this kind of stuff. You know, how to stretch so that you can sit in the full lotus comfortably because the full lotus is the best meditative posture.

I'm not exactly sure why. I've got theories. One is it just helps you to sit straight upright more easily. And just being straight upright just naturally makes you more alert. You know, if you're in a sleepy posture, you're more likely to feel sleepy. If you're in an alert posture, which is like straight up and down, you're more likely to be alert, which again is one reason why meditating while lying down doesn't work

so good.

But also I think maybe like yogis they the yoga people might have theories of you know, it helps the the kundalini energy or something. I think also just having your your legs folded up like this might reduce blood flow to your legs, which would increase blood flow to the upper body including your brain thereby making you more alert or something.

But um

yeah, I just I just tough it and uh maybe that was not the the best approach to take. So, I would I would look up some yoga

uh stretches on how to sit in a good

meditative posture more comfortably.

That would be my advice.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question here. This is from Mary spelled

m e r r y.

And Mary says, "Does your future wife

listen to these Q&As and does she

comment on some of these questions?"

Yeah, she she watches each Q&A.

And um

I mean, to some degree she's just trying

to help the algorithm, I think.

And uh

yeah, I mean, usually she's listening.

Sometimes it might just be background

noise while she's multitasking or

something. And she does ask a few of the questions. Not very many. She didn't ask any of this time. But uh yeah, she occasionally asks a question, too.

So, yeah.

That's the answer to that question is yeah.

And then Mary's next question is, "While I am at it, may I ask is your future wife a Theravada Buddhist? And not really.

Uh in in the West, it's really

I mean, most people in the West tend to be eclectic. Or especially if you're kind of moving away from a traditional Christian

like approach to spirituality.

Um

Yeah, she I mean, she she goes to

different sources. She watches old Ram

Dass videos. She likes Manly P. Hall,

listens to his philosophical kind of

stuff, watches Theosophists.

Um

So, yeah, she's

she's uh

interested in a lot of things. So, I

mean, even I am not like 100% orthodox

Theravada Buddhist. It's like my mind

isn't narrow enough to just fit into

that

category.

You know, I've I've So, Mahayana I think

is good. Nagarjuna I like. Um

I mean, some Hinduism. I read the Dow De

Ching sometimes.

So, yeah, even I am not like strictly

speaking

like a really good Theravada Buddhist.

So, and and she's probably a little more

on the away from orthodoxy than I am.

But uh she is interested.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question. This is from Rui.

And Rui says, "Hello Panyo. Here is a

somewhat childish question. Is Mara

aware about talking or thinking about

him, her, it?"

Well,

whether Mara even exists or not is

um I've expressed some doubt on this

issue on probably like 10 Q&As ago or 20

Q&As ago. Um I really don't think we

need a cosmic bad guy

to lure us into temptation.

I mean, I'm sure that there are some

freelance cosmic bad guys out there that

just like with people, but even

they can't do anything to you that it

isn't your karma to have happened.

And um Mara, just like the the position

of cosmic bad guy,

uh you know, it's sort of like, you

know, the devil in Christianity.

There are differences between Mara and

the Christian devil, but um

they do both have the uh

sort of like the the position of, you

know, being the tempter, the bad guy,

the person who's trying to

um keep people from reaching the

spiritual goal.

And Mara, I mean, he's not trying to

keep people out of heaven so much as

he's just trying to keep people from

getting enlightened and leaving the

whole system cuz in a way he's like lord

of samsara.

You know, there's one metaphor or or

simile,

no, I think it's a metaphor, of, you

know, like you got Maha Brahma in the

palm of Mara's hand. I don't remember where I read that, but it's it's in there somewhere, which is symbolic of, you know, even the highest heaven realms are all within Mara's realm of samsara. He's like the god of samsara. And if he can't get you to be bad, he'll get you to be good because going to heaven, you know, I mean, heaven is still in samsara. It's a more comfortable level of it than here or hell,
but still, I mean, it's all part of the system.
And with regard to uh is he aware? I mean, assuming that Mara exists, probably he doesn't give a damn if we're talking about him or not. Maybe if he's

just have, you know, it's a slow news

day, he's just, you know, kind of

lounging up there in his

his the heaven realm of the gods who

delight in the creations of others,

um you know, his his daughters aren't

pestering him,

you know, he might uh just take a glance

down at the earth or, you know, if he's

not trying to tempt some yogi into

having lustful thoughts or something.

Maybe.

I don't know.

It's uh

It's hard to say exactly and the wind is

blowing hard right now.

Let's see.

Yeah, it's

Yeah, I mean

I mean it might be like asking if Santa

Claus is aware of whether we're good or

bad when we're kids.

Um

Yeah.

Yeah, that that is It's It's not really

a childish question, but it's it's kind

of a difficult question because

personally

uh I just don't think that there's I

mean I'm sure that there are malevolent

beings out there that are like

above the human level even though

they're bad. I mean they're more

powerful than us, you know, they might

be in a different realm that can come

into this realm and and mess with us

sometimes.

Um

Maybe they just hate

certain certain types of beings or hate

certain ideas and

I don't know. But uh

just to have like one person whose job

is to be Mara, that I mean it seems kind

of pushing it to me. It's more It's more

mythological, I think, than

than uh

this empirical.

And uh

I I'm whether they know that when we're

thinking about them

Yeah, I mean Mara is sometimes in the

plural even in Pali texts, so there's

more than more than one of these kind of

devils or whatever you want to call

them, demons.

Um

Although Mara technically is a deva,

he's a god.

Just he's sort of a

uh

Oh, never mind.

Yeah, it's it's really a tough question

because

I mean first of all, I'm not even sure

that Mara even exists. And so you if you

interpret that as just sort of powerful
malevolent beings out there, are they
aware of us talking or thinking about
them?
I think probably most of them just don't
give a damn what we think.
Unless they're trying to influence us in
some way, and then they're already
attending to us. But I don't think if
they're not attending to us, I don't
think they care or
you know.
Yeah, that's that's sort of my best
answer. It's sort of a semi-coherent
answer, but
um that's how it came out of my mouth.

And so finally

and really finally here, the last

question of this Q&A, also by Rui.

And this is kind of an interesting one.

Do you think AI is pure materiality or

rupa? It seems to deal with meaning with

a certain ease, even flair, but it is

just a non-sentient arrangement of

software and hardware. Well,

materialists can say the same thing

about a brain.

You know, it's like AI is in a computer

and human consciousness, according to

the materialists, is just in a brain.

So that's that's just

it's just an arrangement of software and

hardware.

Except the hardware is more wetware, you know, it's just this gooey gray meat up there with lots of nerves in it.

Um

so I mean if if

human consciousness at from a material level is just material

but

I mean it's just like a side effect of chemical reactions, electrochemical reactions in the gray blob of meat.

Um

I mean you could look at AI in a computer as similar.

And if computers ever become as complex as a human brain, I mean why couldn't

consciousness arise in a computer?
I mean already they can mimic
consciousness. They're they they have a
certain
um intelligence which um, could be just
very rudimentary consciousness because
my theory is that the entire universe is
conscious.
So, there's consciousness even in
even in a computer chip, even if the
computer chip is is empty. I mean,
there's been nothing nothing, uh,
downloaded into it or anything. You
know, a brick has this rudimentary,
extremely elemental kind of
consciousness to it.
I mean, in my opinion, at least it's

it's the working hypothesis that I'm
working with.
So, I don't see any reason why
consciousness would have to arise only
in a brain.
I mean, what is what is it about a brain
that has this monopoly on consciousness
arising in it?
You'd think, I mean, to me it would seem
it's just the complexity of it, but
potentially, computers could become even
more complex than brains. So, why
wouldn't it, uh, like an extremely
complex supercomputer
have consciousness and then start
becoming like self-aware?

Because I think, you know, even a

hydrogen atom has like this tiny

elemental

glimmer of consciousness anyway.

So,

yeah, that's that's my answer, I think.

I think I'm I'm sticking to it.

So, that was it. And, uh, I may have to

this this keep doing Q&A's, um,

at less than 2 weeks just to get down to

below

3 hours like last time.

I think I had another 3-hour one

like a couple months ago.

So, uh,

if you have any questions you think I

can answer, something about Buddhism,

Buddhist philosophy, Eastern philosophy
in general,
you know,
Burma, my own personal experiences as a
monk in Burma.
My own personal experiences lately, I'm
I'm pretty good I got a pretty good idea
of what my own personal experiences
were.
So, I can answer those kind of questions
fairly easily. This meditation that kind
of stuff. If you have any kind of
questions that you think I might be able
to answer, feel free to ask in the
comments below.
And uh subscribe, please, if you haven't

already.

And uh

look at my URL links in the comments

below or in the the description thingy

above the comments.

And be happy.

hello and welcome to episode 49 of

question and answer I am your host Ponyo

Bossa and this is my beverage

has a good book says man cannot live by

bread alone there must also be a

beverage

and uh we've got even though it's been

less than two weeks still we've got a

fair amount of questions here and before

I start answering them I would just like

to share with you a strange bit of

information I was looking at my YouTube

Analytics

and I got the strange information that

over the past year

95 of my viewers have been male no wait

97 of my viewers have been male and then
if you go with just viewing time it gets
even worse it's like viewing time is
99.5 percent
by males so it's of the viewing time of
this video or of my videos in general
over the past year only 0.5 of it has
been watched by females
and I think they're almost entirely
between the ages of 45 and 54.
so I don't know what the problem is with
with American women or just women who
watch YouTube in general I mean or all
Western female Buddhists except for like
three or four like communist Jewish
lesbians or something I don't know
it's not even funny really

I mean listen I should cry or something

you know I should I should be more

touchy feely and just cry about some

I don't know

intense personal

something

I'll have to work on it

anyway after I button my shirt pocket

here I'll start answering questions

and okay those button all right so the

first one is from Johannes and Johannes

says what does early Buddhism and you

yourself think of demons and exorcism is

it a common Buddhist belief that a demon

or Mara is the cause of unwholesome

mental States maybe always

well in Buddhism it's pretty much

it's pretty much subjective and it seems

to me that Mara is largely Superfluous

because he can't do anything to you that

is in conflict with your own Karma

anyway and your own karma is your own

mental state it's like the momentum of

your mental States especially your will

or your your volition

but nevertheless in early Buddhism there

is mention of demonic possession

um the only case I can think of that

just flat out describes demonic

possession I I assume there's more in

there but the only case that really

stands out in my memory is there's a an

obscure linear rule

saying that monks are not allowed to eat raw meat or drink raw blood unless they are possessed by a demonic entity

and I guess what happens is that demonic entities crave raw meat and raw or raw blood which is it's a common belief in Burma also um necromancers will attract Spirits by putting out raw meat or raw blood

and once they get their filled and I guess they're satisfied or something and and they let go and they go away there's also mention

um in the deganikaya of spirit mediums so I guess that's kind of like a possession by some kind of spirit but

they're not really like violently taking

over your body or anything

um exorcism the closest thing to

exorcism that I've experienced in

terrible Buddhism is just

calling in Monks to chant purita

especially the metasuto which is like

the the Panacea

of uh getting rid of of pesky Spirits or

you know invisible beings that sort of

thing

um

but with the guy it seems like the point

of the question here is that those

demonic possession really cause a lot of

um you know people Behaving Badly or

having bad mental States and you read

the New Testament the Bible it's like

everyone and his sister was possessed by

demons

um but in in Buddhism as I said

practically at the beginning of this

answer

um it's much more subjective you know

it's it's really a matter of your own

mental states which are your own

responsibility and demons and so forth

really can't mess with you unless it's

just your karma to be messed with

so I I see I see Mara as kind of

Superfluous I don't think he uh he's

really necessary in the grand scheme of

things

but um nevertheless I mean demonic

possession is recognized in ancient

polytexts and exorcism is mainly a case

of not so much driving them out in the

name of godama Buddha as just uh

essentially

beaming love at them

and then usually I mean they're

possessing someone because they're

unhappy they have some sort of need and

then you just satisfy the need and they

go away Buddhism is kind of

uncompromising and it's non-violence

even towards demonic entities

so I'll just move on to the next

question by Johannes

which is

when the Buddha explains non-self of the condos he goes by this logic is the eye changing or unchanging changing is what is changing Suka or duka duka is what is changing and duka Worth to be called self no but this logic why is nirvana not called a self

well Nirvana is completely off the scale and a self presumably would be some sort of entity that can be recognized or perceived grasped somehow and nibana is just completely off the scale

so

um I don't think anybody really identifies with nibana

anyway

so I guess that would be kind of a
simple short answer to that I really
don't think anybody really identifies
with nimana even though in the
upanishads they've got you've got
Brahman which is
more or less you're roughly equivalent
to Nirvana which is considered to be the
self but they've got a different
approach to looking at these things
first they they reify Brahman or
Ultimate Reality so that you can get
some sort of grasp on it and identify
with it but Buddhism early Buddhism
especially and some some schools of
Mahayana just refuse to reify the the
absolute or Ultimate Reality it's just

totally off the samsaric scale

and so you can't really identify with it

and even the the Hindus the vedantas who

are identifying their self of Brahman

it's not really Brahman that they're

identifying with it's just a concept in

their mind the concept Brahman and

that's the same way if you identify with

nibbana you're not identifying with

nibana you're identifying with the

concept of nibana

so

let me go just move on to the next

question also from Johannes

and he says goenka will say samadhi is

control over the mind

while ajan Brahm will say it's just

letting go also Christian contemplation

and prayer will have more likely the

notion of completely surrendering

yourself to God oh completely

surrendering yourself to God in your

opinion what is more likely to be right

concentration

and Johannes is European and he's got

strange quotation marks here in his

questions like the the first one is

upside down you know

so anyway

um samadhi is he somebody has control

over the mind will say just letting go

Christian contemplation

uh in your opinion what is more likely

to be right concentration well if you

look in the Mahaska

right concentration in Orthodox carobada

is defined as the four genres and like I

was saying in a recent video I do not

think that all four genos are

necessarily superhuman mental states

which they sort of evolved into being in

later Orthodox tradition

but right concentration is your mind is

focused on a wholesome object as a kind

of meditation

that would that would probably be like a

good orthodox

um definition of of concentration

just keeping your mind you know focused

on a wholesome dharmic object of

contemplation

um at least you get the fourth of genre

and then and then your mind is just

silent wide open like uh the the

Christian Mystics who uh you know they

call it high contemplation where your

mind is just empty but according to them

your mind isn't totally empty because

even though you eject everything you can

possibly eject there's still this

substratum of like the spirit of God

that resides there and um

I think I should just move on to the

next question

it's starting to Wade out into deep

Waters here and uh I could spend 15

minutes trying to backtrack and get out
of the water so I'll just move on to the
next question here and this is from Mary
spelled m-e-r-r-y
and Mary says how can you explain that
in fourth of genre you have super
mindfulness and no feeling pain that you
have in your body for example broken leg
noticing pain is also mindfulness how
does that work well one thing is if
you're in Jonna and all of a sudden your
leg gets broken you know somebody just
runs over you while you're sitting there
in meditation in their car
uh they run over you in their car while
you're sitting there in meditation

um you're probably knock you out of the genre

um I would I would assume maybe fourth genre where I mean you're just like mastering you know you're at the highest level of genre still I mean

I'm reminded of one time when I was a college student and I happened to take a certain psychoactive substance and I was walking around with shorts on this is like May or June and there were stinging nettles and I was walking through these stinging nettles and I could feel it on my bare legs but I didn't really identify it as pain it was just a kind of energy or sensation or something and it may be

and then somewhere at the very highest
level of meditation if they experience
some sort of damage to their body you
know like the broken leg that Mary
here's talking about it might still be
experienced but just as a kind of
neutral
you know energy or sensation
so you'd still be mindful of whatever is
coming up
um I really don't think that if you're
in Jannah you just go completely numb or
that you become unconscious like a
hibernating squirrel or going to a kind
of suspended animation or anything like
that

so you're still very like you're more

awake than you would be normally but I

think it's the main point is that either

if all of a sudden your leg breaks it's

going to snap you out of the meditation

or you're going to experience it as a

kind of neutral

something

just a kind of energetic thing going on

and you'll be detached from it it won't

be you you won't identify with it

so we'll just move on to Mary's next

question here

I knew that in parimoka there is no rule

against eating Garlic and in bikuni

rules there is where is the rule for

monks to not eat garlic

well

it's in the the condicas in in the

Winnie pitica you've got two main groups

there's five books the the fifth book

um

what is it starts with a P

not piranha

the pariwara no not the pariwara either

it's it's five books the fifth book is

just it's very late it was apparently

composed in Sri Lanka it's one of the

latest additions to the topitica is just

review I think there's only one new rule

in the fifth book which is at least I

only noticed one new rule and that is

making the sound of a drum with your

mouth if you're a monk you know you're
you're doing the Boombox stuff with your
mouth that's against the rules
um but you've got the punimoka rules
or and you've got what is called the
kondikas the mahavaga and the Chula logo
and this rule against a monk eating raw
garlic unless he is sick is found in the
kondikas and I don't remember exactly
where it would either be there's like a
just a miscellaneous collection of rules
in the chulawaga and I think it's in the
mahavaga there's the chapter on medicine
so it could be in the chapter on
medicine and if it's not there then I'd
look in the the miscellaneous chapter in
the in the Chula laga but I'm pretty

sure it'd be in one of those two

there's lots of rules that are beyond

the party mocha rules there's 227 putty

mocha rolls but all together I would

guess I've estimated that there's like

between two and three thousand rules

like even the rules about shaving your

head is knocking the putty mocha or you

know the allowable colors for robes the

allowable materials for robes how to sew

it and all that that's not even in the

putty mocha there's lots of relatively

important rules that are not in the

putty Mountain which is kind of strange

but

that's just how it is and uh some of

them are just sort of like

um appendixes to certain rules like I

think it's the very first part of zika

rule

if I remember correctly there's uh just

this extra rule tacked onto that that's

not considered part of the padimoka that

makes it illegal or against the rules

for a monk to make a Hut out of mud and

then build a fire inside the hut to bake

the Hut so it doesn't melt in the rain

you know sort of like you're you're

cooking it like a big pot

and that is against the rules because

there's all kinds of tiny insects and so

forth that live in in wet mud

so I mean that was it's in the the putty

mocha section of the rules but it's not
a putty mocha rule it's just this extra
rule but if you read the con because
it's just chock full of all these all
kinds of rules rules about using the
bathroom rules about just when you can
and cannot bow to another Monk that sort
of thing all sorts of rules
so let's move on to Mary's next question
please comment on ten Fetters was you
able to extinguish any of them the
easiest ones would be probably be
attachment to rights and rituals and ill
will I think that they are in reverse
order for some reason ignorance which
always come first here it is last and

self-view that apparently only our house

don't have here it comes first weird

well to tell you the truth

I was never really interested in

memorizing the lists you know the the

four of these and the Seven of those and

the 37 of the other

um it just it never it just intuitively

it just didn't gel with me I really

don't think that the Buddha himself was

teaching people just lists of things to

memorize

that I'm sure he kept it like intuitive

and relatively simple like like the

Attica Wagga is simple Simplicity itself

but

I refresh my memory by looking up the

ten Fetters

in this Buddhist dictionary and anyone

who is interested in poly philosophical

terms or just Buddhist terravonna

Buddhist philosophical terms this this

is a good book to have by nyana tiloka

and I'm pretty sure he wrote it in a

British concentration camp because he

was a German monk living in Ceylon it

was called a time which was a British

colony so he was thrown into a

concentration camp where he wrote this

it has been sort of redone because

um later editors especially I think it's

Nana ponica

changed some of his definitions just

because

um there had been like established

precedent with regard to certain

um certain words that were used as a

renderings like I think he changed

taints more like uh what is it the

awesome walls

um yanity loka called them bias call it

bias and then that got changed to change

or canker or something but anyway the

ten feathers here or the some yojinas

the 10 some yojinos here Fetters

there are ten feathers tying beings to

the wheel of existence namely one

personality belief or Sakai Aditi to

skeptical doubt or Ouija kicha and kind

of skeptical of the the definition of

uchikicha a skeptical doubt three

clinging to Mere rules and ritual or

Sila Bata parmasa and that one also is

like the standard Orthodox traditional

definition

which I think could use a little

qualification for sensuous craving or

kamaraga

five ill will or biapada six craving for

fine material existence or Rupa Raga

seven craving for immaterial existence

or arupa Raga eight conceit or Mana nine

restlessness or udacha and ten ignorance

or avija

and uh he continues here the first five

of these are called Lower Fetters

uh as they tie to the sensuous world the latter five are called higher Fetters as they tie to the higher worlds for example the uh or that is the fine material and immaterial world

he who is free from numbers one to three is a sodapana or stream winner that is one who has entered the stream to nibana as it were He Who besides these three Fetters has overcome four and five in their grocer form is called a sakadagami he wants returner to the sensuous world

he who is fully freed from one through five is an onigami or non-returner to the sensuous world he who is freed from all ten Fetters is called an arahant the perfectly

a perfectly Holy One

according to this book

so yeah the reason why they seem to be

in Reverse orders because the first five

Fetters are the lower Fetters and then

and they're the the easiest to get rid

of and so you get rid of the easiest

ones first

but uh I really don't put a lot of I

don't put a lot of emphasis on this kind

of thing I mean just like the the list

of the ten Fetters or like the the

hindrances and you know it's it's really

not necessary when I was ordained there

was a a monk that was ordained the same

ceremony as me and he would just he he

was like the disciple of the scholar
Monk and I mean he would just be
memorizing lists I mean that was like
that and meditation were pretty much
what he was basing his his Monk's life
on
and uh I just could not relate toward it
all I mean the meditation part I could
relate to that was about our only
overlap in our practice
so I it's really not that important to
to memorize all the stuff it's good to
have it as like a reference you know to
so you can look it up and see what
people are talking about and if anything
really resonates with you then that's
good you know if it helps you to

practice helps you to be you know a good

and happy person that's fine but um yeah

I really do not think that these lists

and and also just the rules like you

know the the

that he has you know eliminated the

first three and let's see here I'll look

it back up again

the first three which are

personality belief that's in belief in

itself really

and skeptical doubt I would consider

that more like indecision

you know where you is sort of like a

conflict of two different ideas and

you're not fully behind either one

that kind of thing

and three clean come here rules and

rituals

and if you read the Attica Wagga you see

that this is largely an artifact of

later you know later developments that

syllabata paramasa really is is morality

itself it's not just rules and rituals I

mean just even morality itself

is included in this if you cling to it

if you think you're going to be

liberated or enlightened through

morality

or or according to the guaga through

immorality either through amorality I

mean it's just it's largely uh it's just

another

um samyogenized it's another fetter

so

there is that

so let's see here

um next question from Mary

and this is this is strange because it's

not a question at all but he says it's

for the Q a I mean he starts off for Q a

and then he says I think it would be

better that Buddhism wasn't true if I

have to live this life or any other life

over and over again I would literally

kill myself and that would be pointless

so I'm amazingly hope Buddhism is not

true well if Buddhism is true and you

kill yourself you just get reborn again

unless unless you somehow become
enlightened before you the moment of
death
so yeah I'm in this that's kind of what
Buddhism is trying to do is get off the
wheel but it reminds me of when I was a
young monk still living in America
before I went to Asia there was this
Jehovah Witness guy who would come to
convert me and and he'd visit like once
a week and I just kind of enjoyed
arguing or debating with him you know
sort of discussing with him and um
I just it seemed to me that the Jehovah
Witnesses I mean if they're right that
would be good for me it would be it
would be better for me if the Jehovah's

Witnesses were right and if Buddhism is
right because Jehovah Witnesses don't
believe in hell they think a good God
isn't going to punish people with
eternal torment that the bad people just
get poofed out of existence the good
people on the other hand
aside from 144 000 that go up
um and get administrative jobs in heaven
the rest of everybody get Paradise on
this Earth which consists of if you look
at Jehovah's literature
of essentially picking fruits and
vegetables going on picnics and hugging
wild animals you know you're out there
hugging in the grizzly bear

and um yeah I think just being poofed

out of existence would be preferable to

that so let's maybe the Jehovah

Witnesses are right and we'll just get

poofed out of existence because we're

not good Jehovah Witnesses

then I'll just move on to Mary's next

and last question which is kind of an

easy one

do you like the acoustic part of to live

is to die by Metallica And if I was a

nicer guy I suppose I could have just

listened to the song

by Metallica before answering the

questions but I have no idea what the

song sounds like

um I've never really been much into

Metallica

um

I'm not exactly sure when they reach

their Peak but I I pretty much stopped

listening to music like in the late 80s

um up until just after I stopped being a

monk or well no after I came back to

America and there was internet and

YouTube that I could listen to uh listen

to music again but

so do I like the acoustic part of

Television Metallica I'd have to say no

I don't like it because I don't even

know what it what it is

so I mean it was a nicer guy I'd listen

to it first but I'm I'm not so let's

move on to the next question and this is

from ciovac and sipat zidina our good

friend CEO of action

and he says what do you think about

people who claim to have achieved these

arupa states

also I heard and he wrote a samapati

like suspended animation is also a thing

in some yogic traditions but I don't

know if they are the exact same

um I think he submitted this question

under a video I did that wasn't a q a

but it was about

um like the evolution of the the concept

of Jonna in early Buddhism and that

includes the arupa janas or just the the

formless realms

and I was saying that it's just an

artifact that

um that the formless Realms may have

been I have this there's a number of

theories that you could use to explain

it I mean is there's it's not just clear

cut

you have to do like a detective work and

there's hypotheses and theories

and one of my I think my favorite theory

is that these formless states were

originally attempted descriptions of

Enlightenment or Nirvana that later on

just got out and loaded and became

obsolete or even heresy and so they were

well known they're they're actually in

like very old sutas and so they just got
uh like relegated to this state that's
not Nirvana but it's a very Advanced
state
so you can say well I attain this and
I'm enlightened therefore and then you
can have this this scholarly monk say no
no you may have attained that but that's
not Nirvana that's just this you know
the form of neither perception or
non-perception or the form of the the
realm of infinite Consciousness or
whatever
so
so what he's he's asking here is what do
you think about people who claim to have
achieved these arupa states well I'm

sure they've attained States alike that

um well some of them have

but um yeah it's going to be different

people I mean some people can just

deceive themselves or they're just not

very deep meditators and then they get

into a slightly more expansive State and

they think they've hit the the formless

realms

um but he's he's mentioning like uh

yogic traditions and they're very

Advanced yogis

um

that uh that get into all sorts of these

Advanced Realms or Advanced meditative

States

or contemplative States

and uh yeah I think they would fit

somewhere in the the four four genres

category you know maybe the highest

would be fourth genre and uh I mean if

you're interested in this sort of thing

you can just refer to the the recent

video I did on the evolution of Jonah

but um yeah I have I have read about

certain Hindu swamis

who can go into these states where they

apparently are like in a state of

suspended animation you know it's like

they're breathing in heartbeat almost

stopped they seem dead to the world but

when they come out of that state they

can repeat what everyone in the room was

saying

so I mean they were they looked

unconscious but really they weren't

unconscious

um so that wouldn't be nerota samopody

I'm not I mean neroda samapi is again I

mean you're just unconscious it's the

cessation of perception and feeling

and according to Orthodox tradition if

you don't have mental States you don't

have Consciousness either so I mean it's

just like a coma like a self-induced

temporary coma

and uh only extremely Advanced

meditators can do it I mean you've got

to be a saint to be able to get into

that stage and there's no mention of it

really in the early early sutas unless

they're referring to the cessation or

the attainment of cessation

neurotosomopathy as Enlightenment itself

and again this could be a case of

um

like an early description of

Enlightenment just getting turned into

like an advance but still not fully

enlightened state

and I'm not sure if I answered that

question at all but fortunately for CEO

of action he asked a number of questions

and so hopefully I'll competently and

successfully answer at least one of them

and his next question is

and I assume it to he because as I say

97 of all of my viewers are male

and anyway he says it seems the

conscious it seems the Consciousness

ceasing part is also described many

times in the parayana Vaga and the

Buddha was asked specifically by the

brahmana about the two popular

interpretations theravada Buddhists have

of Pardon Ibana even today

if they were to remain there okay so

that's uh that's his sort of

prologue I guess and then and then he's

quoting

he's quoting some uh some sutures here

or they're puchas in the paraina Wagga

there are questions there were these

young brahmanas who came to the Buddha

and asked him these philosophical

questions and then he answered them and

that's what the Perino laga consists of

mainly

so anyway

one of them says if they were to remain

there without traveling on even for

Myriad years old Seer and being freed or

to grow cool right there would the

consciousness of such a one pass away

and then the Buddha says as the flame

tossed by a gust of wind replied the

Buddha comes to an end Beyond Reckoning

so too a sage freed from mental

phenomena comes to an end to Beyond

Reckoning

and uh see one who has come to an end

did they not exist or do they exist in a

state of Eternal Wellness please Sage

answer me clearly for truly you

understand this matter

and then the Buddha says one who has

come to an end cannot be defined replied

to Buddha they have nothing by which one

might describe them when all things have

been eradicated eradicated to are all

ways of speech

and then and then see of action c pot Z

do not ask what are your thoughts on

this well um there's just one thing that

came up is it's very uh

it's kind of a famous statement here

that as a as a flame tossed by a gust of

wind comes to an end Beyond Reckoning so

too a sage freed from mental phenomena

comes to an end Beyond Reckoning

um

yeah I think

my translation is something as as a

flame tossed by the the force of wind

um

see it comes to a comes to its cessation

and does not subject itself to any any

designation so to a sage freed from and

it's namakaya is what is described here

as mental phenomenon namakaya is like

the massive names

the sage freed from the massive names

comes to comes to his cessation and no
longer subjects himself to any
designation
um and this the flame tossed by a gust
of wind and that's like the wind blowing
out and that's that's a Nirvana
literally Nirvana means blowing out even
though you've got other people saying it
means all these other things it's it's
pretty obviously literally Nirvana means
blowing out via d is to blow near means
out
so I mean it's it may have been
influenced by other words you know
English is kind of like that too
sometimes but um

let's see what are my thoughts on this
though uh really I mean it's it's fairly
straightforward even though it's hard to
grasp because I mean it's talking about
ungraspability you know once you've gone
off the scale no words will describe it
it's kind of what I was talking about
earlier with regard to the vedantists
who are you know giving a name to
Brahman and then referring to it as an
it and everything and the Buddhists I
mean you have to give Ultimate Reality
or the absolute you know the highest
state or whatever you have to give it
some kind of name
and otherwise I mean you just you might
just be oblivious

um you know it's it's sort of a catch-22

but whatever name you give to it that is

not it any Concept in your head that is

not it

so I mean it's in a way it's futile

let's see but I'm not exactly sure what

the question is here maybe I should back

up here because I really do want to

answer at least one of his questions

let's see the Consciousness ceasing part

is also described many times in the

prayer noaga and the Buddha was asked

specifically by the brahmana about the

two popular interpretations terravada

Buddhists have of party nibana even

today yeah party nibana is the Nirvana

after an enlightened being dies so they
attain Nirvana while they're still alive
usually or at the very moment of death
and then pardon Ibana is like after they
die you know so which so there's there
has been a certain amount of controversy
especially in a very early Buddhism that
are you fully enlightened even before
you die or you're not fully you know
attained to Nirvana until after you die
and then all of the five condas
disappear the breakup of the body and
the mind and all that and the Buddha is
just saying I mean you you don't even go
there
yes I mean trying to pinpoint and
understand intellectually this stuff it

just doesn't work

it's just it's just futile

so I guess those are my thoughts on this

so I'll just move on to CEO of action as

next question

among claims that quote it is the same

Consciousness that runs and wanders

through the count through the round of

rebirths not another

it is this same Consciousness that runs

and wanders through the round of rebirth

not another unquote

thus Buddha then replies quote silly man

who on earth have you ever known me to

teach in that way haven't I said in many

ways that Consciousness is dependently

originated since Consciousness does not

arise Without a Cause

but still you misrepresent me by your

wrong grasp harm yourself and make much

Bad Karma this will be for your lasting

harm and suffering unquote based on this

doesn't this go against the yoga Chara

view the only Consciousness exists

well I mean I'm not a an expert on yoga

Chara and Buddhism which is one of the

two main uh philosophical schools of of

Mahayana the two two main earliest ones

anyway

the Consciousness only School

and uh

I mean it doesn't necessarily go against

the yogachar of you the only

Consciousness exists because

Consciousness I mean it's it could still

be consciousness of something that's one

of the main things that is taught in

terravada is that

um you can't have Consciousness unless

it's consciousness of something

you know you have to have a mental state

with the Consciousness you have to have

a conscious mental state you can't have

the Consciousness all by itself you

can't have the mental state all by

itself you have to have Consciousness

and a mental state and

abhidham I really can't deal with it

very well in my opinion I think that the

Consciousness is just like the substance

the essence of the mental state the

mental state itself is just is the form

you know it's just waves or ripples with

Consciousness itself being the water

but um

let's see here

Buddha says haven't I said in many ways

that Consciousness is dependently

originated since Consciousness does not

arise Without a Cause well I mean there

are at least two sutos

um containing very old fragments of of

older sutas I think that didn't make it

into the tapitica that

um that described nibana or Nirvana as

infinite formless Consciousness but the

thing is anything that's infinite and formless
becomes paradoxical I mean it's if it's infinite and formless I mean it's it's everything in zero at the same time I mean there's you can't grasp it there's nothing that can be perceived about it because it has no form
so it becomes like paradoxical then and I really do think that's a good way of describing how Enlightenment works is you know you got the Consciousness and you're trying to just be at the level of pure Consciousness the mental states are irrelevant but I mean if you attain to that a state of just pure Consciousness

then it becomes like this paradoxical

State and you just I mean you're not in

samsara anymore

so

it's really hard to explain Ultimate

Reality in words in fact it is utterly

impossible to explain Ultimate Reality

in words so the best thing you can do is

just talk in weird riddles like Zen

Masters or

or 1980 of of the the upanishads or like

in early Buddhism where you just kind of

dance around Nirvana as much as you can

and not reify it any more than you

absolutely have to

so I guess I'll just uh move on to CEO

of action and cod zidino's next question

I really do hope I answer at least one

of these to his satisfaction

um also why would you disagree with the

majama idea that neither the Mind nor

matter really exists since you say maybe

only Consciousness exists well I pretty

much answered that is that

um

if you call Consciousness Ultimate

Reality then

I mean it has to be consciousness of

something for it to have any meaningful

existence in samsara you get rid of that

of something and again it just becomes

indistinguishable from void it just

becomes emptiness itself

it's like uh I I've said this before

that I as a general rule I've got no use

for Hegel as a philosopher I mean he's

done more harm than good I think but um

the beginning of his Logic the beginning

of his his logical dialectic really is

profound and I like it very much he

starts off with pure being

and then the antithesis to Pure being is

pure non-being

and then he points out that pure being

and pure non-being are so utterly devoid

of any discreet content that they are

indistinguishable they just merge into

each other and they're identical

and and he uses that just as a kind of

um what is it not a postulate but what's

what's like a theorem or something just
throughout the rest of his his uh his
philosophy that everything and nothing
ultimately are the same which is really
elegant because it explains how the
universe arose but the thing is you've
got Pure being as the thesis pure
non-being as the antithesis then you've
got the synthesis which is like the
contrast
between being and non-being and from
this contrast
all the ten thousand things of samsara
arise like in the doubting it's like
from the Dao came the one from the one
came the two from the two came the ten

thousand things I think uh I think

that's a good quote I think I remembered

saying that

so uh

yeah so I think I've already answered

that

why would you disagree with the majama

idea that neither the Mind nor matter

really exists since you say maybe only

Consciousness exists yeah but once the

Consciousness becomes infinite and

formless then all bets are off you know

it becomes identical to emptiness it

just it becomes this paradox

so

let's move on to CEO of actions next

question can you explain the idea of

sampajanya and how it is related to

Sadiq yeah in the text there's a lot of

um a lot of talk about

and um city is mindfulness some pajanya

usually it's it's translated as

something like uh clear awareness or

full awareness like janya is knowledge

no gnosis

janya is knowledge pajanya is like well

I want to say prognosis I mean that's

what would be literally what it would be

in Greek for going back to with the same

uh Indo-European etymology and all but

um it's like an intensifier and some

pajanya is even more so you got two

intensifiers added to the the word that

means knowledge

and if you read the text like the the

Sadi patanasuta yeah horn is talking

about Sati sampajanya Sati is the the

four foundations of mindfulness which

does include mindfulness of the body but

the pajanya part when it's when it's

defining that or describing it it's

talking about you know when you turn

your head you know you're turning your

head you know when you stretch out your

arm you know you're stretching it out

when you retract your arm you know

you're retracting it it's like you're

just fully aware of whatever is going on

whereas with Sadiq it's more of a

focused deliberate thing whereas with

the sumpa janya it's just you're just

like wide open fully aware of whatever

is going on especially with regard to

like your own bodily processes and so

forth

but some pajanya usually is just

telescoped into City

so it's like an aspect of city or

there's

it may be that they're originally

different

but usually nowadays especially

um or even in in polytext when it's

talking about City it's like sampajanya

is is like included into that

but

um early terrible Buddhism was sort of

pre-logical like formal logic hadn't

arrived in India yet or hadn't developed

in India yet there had there was no

Indian Aristotle at the time and some of

the classification schemes really do not

make good logical sense

and so you can have

like a list where it has one General

thing and then you've got a couple of

specific you know aspects of that

General thing on the same list

which did never I've never really liked

that aspect of of tarobada but you can't

really blame them because

they were products of their age

and as I say India just had not

developed or imported formal logic yet

so I think I'll just move on to CEO of

ncpad zidane's next question

which is in the older sutas like the

parayana Wagga it seems the word used

more was Lord of death and referred to

Yama and that Enlightenment was referred

to as Escaping The Lord Of Death Or Yama

rather than escaping Mara however Mara

also literally means death do you think

Mara as an entity was a later addition

or had some different role in the

Buddhist time or is there some other

explanation for this

um yeah it is true in the oldest text it

does refer to the Lord of death

um

refers to the Lord of death I don't

think it mentions Mara by name it may be

that Mara was a later development I

don't know what the origin of Mara is

um

so I don't know if there was like a a

pre-bootest Vedic tradition that already

had Mara that was just incorporated into

Buddhist cosmology or whether

Mara was just invented as sort of the

the Buddhist Cosmic bad guy sort of like

Satan was invented by

um relatively later latent uh Hebrews

it's interesting if you read the Old

Testament there's only three books that

mention Satan at all

one of course is the Book of Job where

Satan is just kind of like a servant of

God he really can't go against God's

wishes

um and then there's just a few like

posts

um like Babylonian captivity like late

Minor Prophets that mention tomorrow or

I think it's in the book of Chronicles

there's a mention of Mara

part not but Satan so it could be

that Buddhism kind of developed Mora

relatively early on because obviously

he's in cortex of the sutus but he's not

as far as I know in the oldest strata

of of the polytexts

and so it could be that he's just a a
derivative of Yama although Yama is
usually like in the in the upanishads
um you almost sort of like a righteous
you know he's a righteous judge of of
the Dead
whereas uh maybe maybe it was that that
Yama had too good of a reputation so
they needed something more diabolical
or you know some kind of tempter
but uh again I the origin of Mara I I
really don't know it is interesting that
there is a asuta in the majikaya the
mara tajanya suta in which Kali is
mentioned as a relative of Mara
but because I mean Kali didn't really
become like a cosmic

deity with like a positive side until

early modern times like I think it was

in Bengal that because he started having

this Cosmic

um sort of a sort of like a good aspect

but uh Kali before that was just a kind

of demonest that haunted battlefields

and graveyards and so forth and uh it

may be that uh

that that Mara also just had some early

like in the Ganges Valley in the

Buddhist time was just some sort of

spook or demon or something that uh just

got incorporated into Buddhist cosmology

I'm not aware of Mara being mentioned in

any Hindu text that I can recall

so

yeah I think Mara might be a later

Edition or just sort of modification

just like like soccer Kingdom Gods is a

modification of Indra who was the patron

deity of the indoorians

so man CEO of action I was asking some

tough ones I'm I do hope I'll answer at

least one of them satisfactorily and

here is CEO of action C pad zirena's

next and last question which is why do

you think the mahasanghika and stavira

Vada broke apart historically I have

read conflicting stories where the

Mahayana claim happened in the second

Council and the staviera wanted to add

new rules meanwhile the tarovada claims

the mahasagika wanted to remove rules
and that the actual split happened
decades after the second council with
the points of mahadeva denigrating the
status of an arahant and making the
Buddha into a god-like being yeah this
this is another one of those those cases
where the the evidence is not just
clear-cut that there is
um mention of the second Council not
only in terrible attacks but even uh the
other side like the mahasan gika schools
had their version of the second Council
and they agreed that it was mainly with
regard to
um veneer rules monastic discipline and

that the staviera side won the debate
that I'm pretty sure that even the other
side admits that the second Council it
was the stavier aside you know the
prototerras that actually won the debate
with regard to
um according to the the taravada version
it was a list of these things
um number one being is is it allowable
for monks to handle money because some
of the monks in the East had started
handling money and this the stricter
monks in the west weren't handling it
and they were calling out the monks that
were handling it which caused this this
kind of a an argument and uh so they had
this great Council to settle the issue

and there was a bunch of other things

too like is a monk allowed to carry salt

to to season his food and can he use a

sitting cloth that doesn't have a like a

border on it a border sewn onto it

and there's a bunch of other things

um you know should you uh follow the the

teachings of your your teacher

you know no matter what and the the

correct answer on that was well

sometimes if he's if he's saying correct

Dharma then you should follow what he

says and if he's not saying correct

Dharma you shouldn't follow what he says

I'm gonna go to the Salt one you're not

allowed to carry salt for seasoning food

although a monk is allowed to use keep

salt for as long as he wants for

medicinal purposes might mix it with

water to you know you've got like a cut

on your finger you want to you know what

is it trying to get a sliver to Fester

out or something I don't know

I used to know this guy who was a meat

cutter and uh I noticed that I'm all of

a sudden blurry

yeah still blurry hmm there we go

and uh yeah he'd uh if he cut himself

he'd have his fingers sticking in salt

water for a while but um I'm completely

going off the track here that but

they say

that the the Schism didn't happen right

at the second Council you know it wasn't
like the the Maha Sangha side says no
we're just gonna handle money from now
on and screw you guys it was like you
know it kind of worked with regard to
the rules of monastic discipline then a
few decades later
maybe 20 or 30 years later then the
split occurred the Schism the first
major Schism in ancient Buddhism
um and according to uh the Mahayana side
or the mahasagika side it was over
philosophical points like
um one of the main ones was Canon araha
backslide and become unenlightened
whereas isn't our hot capable of having

nocturnal emissions in his sleep is he
is he able to ejaculate in a dream in
his sleep this kind of thing and um
with regard to uh making the Buddha into
a god-like being that may have been part
of it because it was the Maha Sangha
side that really uh took the ball and
ran with it with regard to
um devotionalism and just glorifying the
Buddha into essentially God
so yeah it's it's really uncertain
because there's not a whole lot of
um documented evidence and of course
archeology I mean it they can't do much
scientists can't work it out
so that's sort of the best I think the
best guess people can make is that there

was like a controversy over monastic discipline that caused the second Council that the Western monks like the Proto Terrell bottom schools they they won the debate the Maha Sangha schools admitted you know okay we'll stop handling money or whatever and then just maybe a few decades later possibly totally unrelated to the second Council you had
mahasangha philosophers who are coming up with these new ideas and saying you know that a Buddha or even maybe a bodhisatt but probably just a Buddha is like way above the level of an arhan the teras they they eventually kind of

agreed with it but they didn't go as far

as the Maha Sangha did and so

um yeah I mean the

Mahayana schools obviously consider our

hunts to be just sort of a an inferior

kind of of enlightened being if they're

even considered to be fully enlightened

or not

so yeah it's it's really hard to say

exactly

um I'm sure there's all kinds of

scholarly stuff written on the subject

although most of it tends to be written

by academics who really don't have much

of a

much of an appreciation of of the finer

points of Dharma

but that's about the best guess I I
could make ever so I'll just uh move on
to this question this is from SS
and SS says have you read Ananda kumara
Swami's Hinduism and Buddhism would you
endorse his thesis that early Buddhism
was essentially non-different from
vedanta well I haven't read the book I
have read like articles by Ananda
kumaraswamy and I've read
um
a few books written by Hindus about
Buddhism and like comparing Buddhism to
Hinduism and one thing I've noticed is
that Hindus will always try to interpret
Buddhism along Hindu lines like even one

of the most important books I've ever read on the subject of Buddhism it's on the on the bookshelf back there studies in the origins of Buddhism by GC Pandey with the high cast brahmana and a Hindu um he was he would always interpret like the higher points of Buddhism along vedantis lines and if you're if you've been a Hindu your whole life especially if you're like a brahmana who is like just steeped in this you've been studying this stuff you're going to see everything through a Hindu lens and you look at Buddhism you're going to be seeing it through Hindu colored glasses um that's not to say that there's not a lot of similarity between Buddhism and

vedanta because vedanta and Mahayana

Buddhism official like

um majumaka vedanta and majama there was

a lot of back and forth between them and

I've read that uh shankara

who uh is one of the the main

philosophers in advaita vedanta that

I've read he was strongly influenced by

majama kabutism

so it might be the other way kind of

that Buddhism didn't really borrow or

wasn't imitating vedanta but to some

degree vedanta was imitating Buddhism

so

yeah I don't think early Buddhism was

essentially non-different from vedanta

especially because vedanta is still
making assertions like philosophical
metaphysical assertions even though
they're they're kind of using a light
touch whereas early Buddhism especially
the earliest Buddhism like the Attica
Wagga I mean it's like you don't make
assertions because any assertion is
going to be samsarik and it's not going
to come anywhere close to touching
reality
so it's just like a kind of mental
discipline to cure yourself of beliefs
essentially not because early Buddhism
was skeptical but because it was
profoundly mystical and they realized
that you cannot understand Reality by

thinking about it you cannot understand
Ultimate Reality intellectually you
cannot philosophize your way to
Enlightenment unless you're doing it in
kind of a zen-like way or a majomoka
like way where you're using your
philosophy to just destroy all Concepts
and then when you've destroyed
everything around you then the the it
just turns on itself and destroys itself
and then you're all you've got is just
emptiness behind Emptiness is all that's
left
so I mean I do think that they're very
daunted like um like some of the
upanishads and like uh shankara were

trying to explain essentially the same
reality that Buddhism is trying to not
explain you know I mean I do think that
there have been enlightened Hindus
and so
you know their their experience and the
experience of an enlightened Buddhist
and maybe even the experience of an
enlightened contemplative Christian it's
essentially the same but you're just
going to have different ways of
explaining it and because vedanta and
Buddhism both arose in the same general
culture there's going to be more
similarity in the explanation
and uh the ultimate goal is the same
it's just that

there's different ways of describing it

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question

ah

and this is from

ya j-a-h is that ja or ya

I don't know

anyway

Jah says is it possible that when one is

perfectly balanced still and wide awake

in the present moment for long enough

their meditation oh their mindfulness

can penetrate reality so deeply that

they sort of return back to a more

primordial state of pure Consciousness

or Oneness in which any semblance of a

body or separate self is temporarily gone and this could seem like a trance to some but it's actually proper samadhi and in this case then many people would could mistaken could mistake actual trances for Janna when they're actually not in proper samadhi or samasamati I think it's possible that one's mindfulness can penetrate reality so deeply that it actually enters into more subtle refined Realms or states in which physicality seems to dematerialize and these states truly can seem Transcendent of this realm are in and I think it's also possible and fairly common for one to enter a sort of self-induced hypnagogic Trance state where

mindfulness is not present and how those

nations are common and that should

definitely not be mistaken for Jana or

Sama samadhi but maybe it can be hard to

tell the difference sometimes for some

question mark just a thought

yeah I I pretty much agree with this

that

some people

um

they can just get into like this

transcendental state where they in a way

they kind of leave their body behind or

their body just becomes irrelevant you

know they're

um either they're just not focused on it

anymore

it just you know it's just in a way they

kind of leave it behind or it's just

it's just such a crude vibration

compared with the the fineness or the

subtlety of the vibration that they are

in that it just becomes like background

noise

it's still there I mean there's like the

energy of it and everything but it's

just that there there's so much more

aware of other things that their body

becomes way less important than it was

and then some people just hypnotize

themselves into a trance and if you're

in a hypnotic State I mean you can

experience just about anything

imaginable

you know any kind of perceptual State

you can you can induce that through

hypnosis

so let's see here was it what is the

actual question here

is it possible that when one is

perfectly balanced still and wide awake

in the present moment for long enough

their mindfulness can penetrate reality

so deeply that they sort of return back

to a more primordial state of pure

Consciousness Oneness which any

semblance of body separate self is

temporarily gone well I do not I'm not

I'm not a a materialist so I don't think

that the physical plane the physical

body or the physical world is even

ultimately real so if you get into a uh

a state that's closer to Ultimate

Reality then I mean this stuff can just

start fading out it's like sort of like

um if you're in a dream and you start

waking up then the dream kind of starts

fading out it could it could be a state

like that also

so

yeah I pretty much agree with with ja or

yah here

um

let's see

and then there's one other question mark

here but maybe it can be hard to tell

the difference sometimes for some yeah a
lot of people just get very confused
partly because they don't have a teacher
or partly because their teacher is just
not very Advanced and doesn't know how
to deal with some of the stuff that
they're experiencing
you know some some teachers especially
in Asia they're just pretty much just
they've just memorized from a book or
what their teacher taught them and then
just parroting it to somebody else and
they can't really
and they can't really deal with like
strange problems in meditation because
they don't have the experience to do it

well even worse than that is if you're
just on your own and you have these
experience if if I mean if you're wise
then you just let it go no matter what
it is don't attribute significance to it
just let it go let it go let it go even
Saint John on the cross it was a
Catholic Mystic would tell his you know
his students his his contemplation
students you know it doesn't matter what
it is you might hear the voice of God
you might see Jesus Christ standing in
front of you just let it go let it go
let it go
because
um you know even the devil can appear in
the form of an angel of Light or some

such so it just just let it all go and

don't attribute significance to it and

that is the wisest approach and it's

like armor it prevents you from being

led astray by weird meditative

experiences

so I'll just move on to the next

question here

and this is from crazy librarian

and crazy librarian says what

personality change did you notice from

before you were a monk as a monk and

after disrobing

uh that's kind of an interesting

question and it's

to some degree it could be like a trick

question because

um

I mean you could say you know what are

the changes from before I was a monk as

a monk and after disrobing but I mean it

could just essentially mean what were my

personality changes when I was young

when I was like you know no longer so

young and then now that I'm like an old

guy with white hair

um

so it's hard to say you know what

changes were caused by my being a monk

and what changes were caused by me just

gradually getting older

but um

before I was a monk

gosh

let's see what are the main differences

well I

I wasn't as introspective I mean I was

always kind of an introvert but I wasn't

as mindful didn't have as good of

concentration as as after I became a

monk and it was like practicing

mindfulness and concentration like

professionally so to speak

um

and I I got fairly chilled out I mean it

wasn't easy it doesn't come naturally

naturally to me you may recall one of

the 10 Fetters mentioned above is udacha

or mental agitation or just restlessness

and I've got a very restless mind

and um so it was it took really just

grueling effort to really get my mind

clear

as as a meditator I had to live in alone

in caves in forests and just go for it

full blast in order for that to really

work for me but it did work so I mean

there was that I've got a lot more

perspective you know I'm less um

I see the big picture A little better

now I'm not as identified with the the

meat puppet

um I mean that was something that

happened you know after I was a monk uh

became less afraid of death

um but the difference between yeah

before I was a monk and while I was a

monkey probably greater than the

difference while I was a monk to now

when I'm no longer a monk again

um

I think the main difference from when I

was a monk to now is largely like I keep

saying

that I have to dedicate a lot of time

and energy just to navigating samsara

just you know working for a living

working full-time to pay bills that kind

of a thing so I'm more uh I have to

engage more in samsara and spend a lot

more time just thinking about you know

getting the bills paid you know mowing

the lawn and so forth and not so much

about you know finer aspects of Dharma

um also after disrobing because I'm

working full-time I'm no longer a member

of the Leisure Class so I have less

energy it's like my Vitality feels less

even though it's probably not so

different it's just that when I wasn't

having to work for a living you know you

can just sit around all day and so it's

I'm not I wasn't in as good of shape I

suppose and my skin wasn't as good you

know for for various reasons just I

don't I won't I won't even go there but

um

uh now what was I gonna say

oh yeah it's like I just had this extra

energy because I didn't have to expend

it like working full-time

and just in navigating so I'm sorry

interacting with all these different

people in these different situations and

so forth uh I mean even a monk has to

interact with other people and you know

navigate some SAR to some degree but

it's it's detached and in more subtle

it's simpler

so I mean that's the main difference

from when I was among him now is uh

mainly I just have to dedicate so much

more time and energy just to navigating

samsara and you know getting the bills

paid and so forth

so I don't know how well I answered that

question and there's probably important

things that uh I'm just overlooking and

not not thinking of right now

so I'll just move on to the next

question also by crazy librarian

which is this mogulana was killed

ruthlessly and killing an arahond was an

un

anandarika Karma

anandarika Kama but mogulana also wasn't

able to avoid being killed do his

Killers receive life in Avicii hell for

killing him if so what could they do to

avoid killing mogulana as mogulana was

also fated to die ruthlessly from having

and Antarctica karma in the past so an

Antarctica comma if I remember correctly
that's it's a kind of karma that just
guarantees you're going to go to hell
right after you die you know essentially
the ground is just going to open up and
and swallow you're gonna fall down into
the lowest pits of hell and uh killing
an enlightened being is one of those
acts that is a guarantee of hell
and um who is one of the Buddha's Two
Chief disciples he and sorry puta were
the Two Chief disciples
um he was murdered he was essentially
beaten to a pulp just literally he
according to the texts he did not have
an unbroken bone left in his body after

this group of non-budist philosophers or
I think it was just uh some Hitman hired
by some uh disgruntled non-woodist
philosophers you know the competition
and according to the story
um when they when they came after him
the first two times he was a master of
psychic powers of all the the Buddhist
great disciples he was the one who had
mastered psychic powers best
and so he could just like Fly Away
now he could just poof on he could just
disappear in one place and appeared you
know 100 yards away or 100 miles away or
whatever but um finally after the second
time he realized that he had the karma
to have this done and so he the third

time he just didn't run away and let

them kill him but that's uh that's on

them killing him is still on them I mean

I mean

you can't really say that you know if

you punch somebody in the nose it's

their karma to get punched in the nose

and therefore you're off the hook

because

and they're paying off their old Karma

but you're making new Karma and so

mogulana may have had the karma to get

killed but I mean if it wasn't these

guys it would be somebody else and so I

mean if these guys just didn't want to

do it they're a change of heart or

whatever then something else would have
come along to accomplish the same thing
so yeah I mean you can't really blame
the victim as a way of of justifying
screwing them over or hurting them or
whatever it is true you know if someone
is murdered it's their karma to get
murdered regardless of whether they're
in our aunt or not
but the person who kills them is making
brand new Karma by killing them I mean
that's his volitional act his volition
you know he's still got the hate he
still got the ill will he's still you
know making this effort to hurt and mess
up and kill another person so that's
that's on the person who's doing it

even if it's the karma of the person to

get killed I mean it applies not just to

mogulana but you know to just anybody

you know some teenage prostitute in a

back alley in New York City you know

it's it's the same essential thing it's

you know it might be her her karma to

get killed but still the murderer is

making some seriously Bad Karma by doing

it

so I'll just move on to Crazy Librarians

next question

which is

who also got hit a lot when he did Ohm's

Bowl almost round which is pretty

Justified given what he did to these

people including children who hit him

until he bleeds get a huge amount of bad

comma and got sent to hell for next life

I feel this is totally not fair even if

angulima is an arhan so I'm Googling for

those of you who are unfamiliar with uh

the name

he was a serial killer

um anguli means finger and mala means

necklace it's a like a Garland so he was

a serial killer who would

um

after he'd kill somebody he cut off a

finger and put it on this this Garland

of fingers he had this this Garland of

fingers around his neck and um

I think it was uh Richard gomrich wrote

this book

um how Buddhism began the conditioned

Genesis of the early teachings or

something like that and he had this

entire chapter on was anguli Mala a

worshiper of Kali that he wasn't just

just some serial killer that he had some

sort of religious reason for doing this

um and the Buddha converted him to

Buddhism by through some psychic powers

like unguly mall is chasing after him

well at first he was going to murder his

own mother he was so far gone according

to the story the Buddha saw this

intervene you know he kind of went in

between and ghoulimal and his mother to

kind of distract him and then ghoulimala
starts chasing after the Buddha and
although unguly mall is running as fast
as he can and the Buddha is just walking
in a leisurely Pace he can't keep up
with him he can't catch him and then he
realizes you know this is weird this is
this is like Supernatural or super
normal or something and it sort of broke
down
um this hardened shell around his mind
around his heart and then the Buddha was
able to teach him something which is
um a method that neem curly Baba would
do also he would do something
Supernatural super normal you know he'd
perform some miracle which would

completely blow the mind of the person

that he was talking to that would just

sort of like make them vulnerable and

and then he could just kind of reach in

and say the right thing that was exactly

what they needed to hear but they had to

have their mind blown first so that they

could become receptive

anyway that's not the question crazy

librarian is asking is the people that

hit him when he went for Armstrong

because he was like this notorious

serial killer and then he gets converted

to Buddhism and then

um he becomes a monk

I think if I remember correctly by the

permission of the king you know the king

said all right he's con he's you know

he's converted to Buddhism he's like a

peaceful monk now all right we'll spare

him you know we won't have him well I

haven't executed in nasty ways

um so then when unguli Mala would walk

for homes like monks are supposed to do

walking through the village with this

bowl some people would be like spitting

on him and hitting him and stuff

um

I would imagine that the kids that

weren't really ripe for hell wouldn't

hit him hard enough that he'd start

bleeding

yeah because that's another one of the

uh the things well actually yeah I mean

just making an aura hunt bleed isn't a

guarantee of hell

it's making a Buddha bleed that's

another one of the anandarika karmas

that if you if you do this you're

guaranteed of Hell making a Buddha bleed

uh or killing killing an ordinary or a

hunt and so I mean just that kind of

makes it kind of suspicious that it's

probably uh an artifact of of later

tradition

when the difference between a Buddha and

an ordinary enlightened being had been

you know widened

but um

yeah uh people that hated him and were
hitting him and stuff they did get some
bad karma for it but uh yeah if they
weren't really bad people maybe he like
killed their their uncle or something
and they and they smacked him or or you
know put gross rotten food in his bowl
or something I mean they'd be getting
bad karma for it but um I don't think
they'd be going to the lowest pits of
hell
we'll just move on to uh
crazy Librarians next question
which is
hell beings are often portrayed dealing
heavy and inhuman punishment to people
who are reborn in hell do they reap bad

karmas from this well this is kind of

interesting question because

I have been told by a German monk who

lived in southern Burma back when I

lived in central Burma that um

according to Orthodox tradition

the the demons in hell are just like

there's nobody there they're they're

like uh

they're almost like Holograms you know

they're they're they're like robots or

something they're they're like

um fake beings that are just created by

the force of the karma of the people in

hell and so they don't have any

volitions you know in a way that

ironically they're almost like

enlightened beings

because you know they're not making any

Karma they don't have any bad mental

States or good mental States either

there is just it's just sort of like

this projection created by the the karma

of the people in hell and I

unfortunately I've been told that uh the

celestial nymphs like the harems of

minor goddesses that the the gods have

in the lower Heaven Realms are similar

but

assuming that there are demons that

really are genuine conscious beings in

the lower Realms and I assume there

really are demonic beings in this

universe

that uh yeah they're making really bad

karma yeah they're messing themselves up

and just keeping themselves in hell

you know if they just kind of wandered

off and refused to torture people they

might get out of hell easier but as it

is they're down there for good jillions

of years

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from a u v s t r

and AV Str says High regarding the arms

rounds is there any rule that says you

have to eat everything that is offered

to you obviously like you said once you

are full you can give the rest to

animals Etc but are you allowed to deliberately not eat something like in Cambodia where they eat fried spiders that is probably one of the few things I could never bring myself to even try um no you have to accept what people are offering except you know assuming that they're offering food in good faith you know if they're trying to put a dog turd or something in your bowl because they just don't like you you don't have to accept that or if they're trying to offer you something that just isn't allowable like money you don't have to accept that

but if someone in good faith is offering food even if it's food that you hate

um yeah you have to accept it you're not

allowed to make faces or anything you're

not allowed to like

anything like that you know you just

accept it respectfully but you're not

required to eat it like um there are

some monks who are vegetarian

and even though they get meat in their

bowl some of them

that I mean they're not required to eat

the meat

um you can just move it over to one side

and just eat what you want to eat I mean

I did that even at my strictest

um sometimes I mean you just take all

the food and you just stir it together

into a glob and I did that as a regular

practice up until

um the banana man came along and there

was this guy

he'd offered me like eight bananas at

once you know he just had this big arm

load of bananas and he'd give me these

bananas and bananas just don't mix good

with other Foods some food mixes good

together peanuts you can peanuts can mix

in with anything it still tastes fine

but stuff like oranges and bananas it

doesn't mix very good and so I got to

this point where I just mixed some of

the bananas in

and just as a way of not being totally

grossed out by this banana flavored food

every day

um

but yeah I mean the easy answer this is

no you're not required you're you're

required to accept it but you're not

required to eat it

so um

with regard to fried spiders and nobody

fortunately nobody gave me fried spiders

somebody give me fried cicadas a few

times which I just didn't eat

and um I've gotten other things bee

larvae I've eaten fried bee larvae some

kind of water bug

all the dwinpo in Burma I got I ate lots

of those

lizard Tails frog eggs

all kinds of things but you're not

required to eat it

it is kind of a good practice just to

eat whatever you're given in fact like

the

um not just me when I was a young mom

but I think the followers of ajan

mahabua just stir everything together

into this just glop and then just eat it

that way just without discrimination

they just eat it

because you're not supposed to eat it

for pleasure you're not supposed to eat

it to have a good time

you're just supposed to eat it so that

it will uh keep you healthy enough to

continue practicing

so the next question is from Stevie

I'm looking at the time where

an hour and 22 minutes now

Stevie says

I have Crohn's disease which requires me

to take daily medication does having

this condition and needing daily

medication prevent me from ordaining

based on my research I don't think I'd

be allowed to ordain because I'd be a

burden on others can you provide any

guidance on this well maybe I should

have looked it up before I did this

video but I'm not exactly sure what

Crohn's disease is I mean if it's a if

it's a disease I don't think it's a

disease of like skin eruptions like

there are certain diseases where you're

not supposed to be ordained but like

like epilepsy or or

uh leprosy

um there's a there's a few of them like

that where if you have the disease

you're not supposed to be ordained

because according to the story people

with these diseases were being ordained

as monks and just so they could get

cured by the Buddha's like super good

doctor jeevaka jiviko is the Buddha's

personal physician he was the the

personal physician to the early Sangha

when there weren't you know lots and

lots of them and so

um people started being ordained with

these diseases like leprosy in order to

get cured by jivacum so it became

against the rules but it's even though

it's against the rules to ordain

somebody with one of these diseases even

the ones on the list that are specified

the ordination is still valid

the monks who did the ordination get a

minor offense they got to confess it but

still the the ordination is is

considered valid

um

so I mean you could technically be

ordained

or Stevie could hear

um I know of I've read about one monk in

the ajan Shah tradition a relatively

senior monk who had to leave Asia

because he had Crohn's disease

that he had to live in the west where

disease our the word medicine was more

available and so forth

um

so yeah I mean technically you could

although

you'd have to make arrangements I think

that somebody would be willing to offer

you the medicine that you require I

don't know how often or expensive this

this medicine is for Crohn's disease

um I'm not even sure what Crohn's

disease is but technically I think you could be allowed to to be ordained you know it would depend on the Sangha if they didn't want to you know if it's a poor Monastery and they don't want to be you know burdened with the expense or something they might not be willing to ordain you I don't think you'd want to be ordained in some remote area of upper Burma or something

but um you know if there's somebody who's like willing to sponsor you and support you with the whatever medicine you need and they can afford it and it's no problem for them and they're happy to do it because they want to gather up

Treasures in Heaven and so forth then I

think you can still do it

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Francois or as

people with this name are known in

America Francois

and Francois says would you consider

being a biku again if your present

circumstances change drastically of

course or is it out of the question

thanks

um yeah I'm not going to be a monk again

um I got as far as I could with it and

uh I think if I became a monk again it

would be sort of cheating partly just

because

um you know I'd be getting old and

um you know just sort of be using the

the Sangha as a kind of retirement home

or something

I mean that's that's a common practice

in Southeast Asia but um

yeah I I don't think so

I do not think so so I think all that

was kind of an easy one as an easy

question anyway

so the next question is from

a skepticer

which I think means the vegan skeptic in

German

and the vegan skeptic says have you ever

studied the life of mahavira what are

the similarities and differences between

Buddhism and Jainism

um I read some Jane sutras a long time

ago

um I think they're the ones that were in

Max Muller's sacred books of the East

series

and one of the sutas in that was

essentially just the story of mahavira

um and it was almost exactly the same as

the story of godama Buddha and I did a

video uh a q a relatively recently where

I was trying to explain how it is that

the the pronunciation of story of

mahavira and the renunciation story of

gauramabura were so similar and I do

think that um the the Jane's because

they lost their sutras twice you know

they lost their their body of of
literature twice because it was the
tradition in India to memorize it and
The Janes were just hardcore ascetics
you know they were they were busy
torturing themselves out in the jungle
somewhere and the ones that memorized
the texts just kind of died out and so
they had to have like two more or less
emergency councils to to sort of come up
with you know Salvage as much as they
could
of like a corpus of Jane texts
um so the the life of mahavira as it's
recorded in the Jain scriptures is not
necessarily reliable because I think a

lot of it was just borrowed

or plagiarized from the story of the

Buddha

so

yeah uh I mean he was definitely much

more of an ascetic than the Buddha was I

mean at least after his Enlightenment

supposedly he remained a hardcore

aesthetic korres the Buddha experimented

with hardcore asceticism you know just

as as much as as mahavira just traveling

wandering around naked and and just

eating cow poop or or just eating once a

week kind of this this kind of just I

mean he was just like emaciated like

this scarecrow or something and in the

Buddhist case he realized finally that

this ancient Indian tradition of just

torturing yourself almost to death

wasn't working it wasn't getting him

enlightened

until then he found the middle path

between self-torture and self-indulgence

whereas mahavira pretty much just stayed

on the the self-torture side and um

that's that's what Jainism really

teaches is that

um you do have a soul in in James it's

called the Jiva which in Buddhism you

don't have a soul or a Jiva

um but in Jainism you do and your karma

is almost a material substance that

sticks to your soul and weighs you down

so that you can't so that your soul just

can't float up into heaven and live an

eternal Bliss

and I do think that

um this belief goes all the way back to

the prehistoric Indus Valley

Civilization because there are a number

of different schools that were in the

shramana lineage or Shermana tradition

that predated The Vedic indoorians

coming into India

and uh so they believe that you have

that's what the whole philosophy of

Jainism or the whole practice of Jainism

is about is you do not want to make any

new Karma

and you've got to get rid of all your

old Karma and so I mean and this karma

is I mean you can do it without

intention unlike Buddhism or karma is

intention in in Jainism even if you step

on a bug accidentally you're making bad

karma for it

or you know even if you do something

completely unintentionally you can still

be making Bad Karma so they just are

radical like

radically passive you know they got like

the soft

grass broom and they sweep the ground in

front of them so they won't accidentally

step on bugs and

um there's this weird Sutra that I still

remember that it was back when I was

reading these Jane sutros when I was in

college

um it's like if if a Jane monk wants to

cross a river and there's no Bridge

um he can go in a boat but only if the

boat was going to cross the river anyway

if they cross the river just for him

just to take him across as a favor

they're making he's making Karma

so he's got to just go along for the

ride if it was already going there

anyway and then if the boat starts to

sink halfway across the river he's not

allowed to help bail it out because

that's making Karma so what's what

happens what are you supposed to do

according to this Jane Sutra is if he's
going across the river the boat starts
to sink he's supposed to take off all
his clothes if he's got any because a
lot of them just went around naked and
fold them and put them onto his head so
that if the the boat owner gets angry at
him and throws him overboard his his
clothes won't get wet
and uh
also I'm pretty sure
it was the ojibacas did this I think the
James did it also once you figured you'd
gotten rid of all of your karma you're
supposed to just wander off into this
desolate area this uninhabited area and

just squat down and just stay squatting
there until you died probably of kidney
failure
so there are some considerable
differences between Buddhism and Jainism
one kind of minor one is that a turtle
or an enlightened like the the jainest
equivalent of a Buddha
um he's completely omniscient he
supposedly knows all things at all times
you know he's got infinite knowledge in
his mind all the time whereas in
Buddhism the Buddha was had a kind of
qualified omniscience where he could
know anything he wanted to know but you
know he had to attend to it in order for
the knowledge to come up so to speak

so Buddhism and Jainism have Roots going

back into the shromana tradition of like

ancient Northwestern India ancient

Northern India

um but the Buddha was more Innovative

and mahavira I think he went with a more

traditional approach

um with within the context of the the

shermanic tradition

and the genes were really

um

just radical Aesthetics whereas

um you know they they kind of look down

their noses at uh at the Buddhist as a

kind of shaven-headed householders you

know Buddhists get to wear shoes you

know they get to they use walking sticks

so they just sneered at them

so we'll just move on to the next

question here

this is from ludovus balam this is a

difficult one

and ludovus balam says would it be fair

to say that Logics are provisional to

Enlightenment such that a discernment

could be made but not necessarily

posited

which comes first the Sutra or the

philosophical underpinnings

and I really didn't understand this

um his reading levels way above mine

apparently so I asked him if he could

clarify

and then he says

is saying Nirvana needs to be discerned

ignoring the reality of it being

and extinguishing like saying XYZ was

provisional for me to become enlightened

but the Egg of samsara was what was

brightened not the baby chick of

Enlightenment being refined as a working

model

is there a sense in which the working

model egg or chicken isn't a Guiding

Light in this context I imagine it's

like a project Buddha being asked to

learn what what samsara and Nirvana are

the egg May well be the chicken but only

after it's hatched and lost the shell

sort of deal so tracing it back and
saying chicken equals egg or chicken
equals slash equals egg or relations
between the two as two would be mapping
them onto one another when they need to
communicate the territory so it's
learned and not referenced and yeah his
his writing level is way above my
reading level apparently because I mean
this is like trying to read Hegel
which I did I read pagel's phenomenology
in spirit I was forcing myself to read
at least four pages a day of it
I have to read it out loud just to keep
my mind from wandering away because it
was just so dense and abstract
what's uh man this is this it's

difficult even to understand this

question would it be fair to say that

Logics are provisional to Enlightenment

such that a discernment could be made

but not necessarily posited which comes

first the Sutra or the philosophical

underpinnings I mean I just have to

guess at even when he clarified the

clarification didn't really make it any

clearer to me

so

um

I mean the philosophical underpinnings

are just kind of Superfluous I mean it's

like a map

that helps you to get where you're going

but I mean it's it's completely just

radically different from the goal or

even the path

so

gosh yeah can any of you guys answer

this question

man

would it be fair to say that Logics are

provisional to Enlightenment such that a

discernment could be made but not

necessarily posited you know I mean

yeah I think that's how it's supposed to

work the Attica Wagga is is saying that

you're not supposed to discern anything

really because once you discern

something you know you're perceiving

something you're attributing

significance to it and you're ignoring

everything else

so

yeah I mean it's you just follow the

philosophy to the extent that it helps

you to practice and maybe helps you to

weed out certain bad ideas and so forth

but I mean you're going for a kind of

uh like quietism or just radical

mysticism it's it's not really

philosophical

other than maybe in the the majomoka

sense of using philosophy to just

destroy philosophy like there's a Mayana

text I can't remember exactly which one

it is it's the purpose of Lord Buddha's

teaching is to liberate us from our

Thinking by means of our thinking

so

yeah instead of just kind of thrashing

about in this this question here not

really being sure if I'm answering it or

not I think I'll just move on to ludibus

balaam's next question

and this one is refreshingly easy will

you be hosting any broadcasted Zoom

calls in the future for members of the

Discord group like you did that one time

um yeah it's not zoom it's um the

Discord server

has its own uh video video chat room

and uh I actually we had sort of like a

mini one just for moderators

um just a few days ago

and uh yeah it's easily done maybe we

can do it like next Sunday

which would be probably

mid to late afternoon like maybe

five-ish or six ish

going with American Eastern Time

um

yeah that's that's definitely doable I

mean it is kind of nice talking with you

guys

like in real life not just talking to a

camera with you guys hearing it later

so I'll just move on to ludibus balaam's

next question

was there a historical precedence of the

CD of seeing Karma during the life of
the Buddha could the Buddha being able
to see Karma allow him to convert a
depth of his time or is it more
realistic that he just had greater
Authority in discourse by virtue of
straightforward and penetrating rhetoric
um following follow-up is there any
historical trace or hiccups or
idiosyncrasies of the Buddha that would
give him a human face
well that's let's just call that two
different questions I just separated the
two the follow-up will be uh addressed
directly here
so the first question here
was there a historical precedence of the

city or power of seeing Karma during the life of the Buddha could the Buddha being able to see Karma allow him to convert the depths of his time or is it more realistic that he just had a greater Authority in discourse by virtue of straightforward and penetrating rhetoric well I think there's both that he was a philosophical genius I think but

um it does say in the text there's There Are Rules there's a winning rule that says a monk is not supposed to do any kind of Miracles or like

um like psychic Feats in front of lay people

he can do it in front of other monks
maybe but he's not supposed to be doing
that kind of stuff in front of lay
people but the only psychic feat that he
is allowed to do in the presence of lay
people is to look into their minds to
see how best to teach them so I guess
that's what the Buddha would do and
certainly like in modern times neem
karoli Baba would do that where he would
just look right through you I mean he
could he wouldn't he would just meet you
for the first time and know you better
than you know you I mean he would just
see right through he'd see your past
lives you'd see your karma he'd just see
it all you know he'd be working on a

different level

so I assume the Buddha would be similar

to that

um so yeah I assume he was he was better

than most teachers at uh producing

enlightened disciples

which uh made him a more successful

teacher than Jesus of Nazareth because

I'm not sure of any of Jesus of

nazareth's disciples became extremely

Advanced maybe his brother James

but I digress

so I think I answered that question

actually

so I'll just move on to the follow-up

here is there any historical trace of

hiccups or idiosyncrasies of the Buddha

that would give him a human face well

um

it's it's kind of hard because we're

looking through

2500 years of like devotionalistic

glorification of the Buddha where you

know he is portrayed as just the perfect

ideal Indian saint

um but still you can pick up a few

little things it doesn't mention him

with hiccups I'm pretty sure

um maybe he did have hiccups there was

he had some kind of problems where

jivika his physician was giving him like

aromatherapies having smelling flowers

and so forth he did have things go wrong

with him like when he right before he

died he had uh

um like really like dysentery like

bloody diarrhea just really intense

abdominal pains and so forth presumably

after eating some spoiled pork

um he didn't like noise you know he

would scold people like there was a

little bit of a scolding

um quoted above in a previous question

where the Buddha was calling some Monk a

silly person probably uh uh what is it

Moga purisa or just an empty person

um yeah he would he would make fun of

people sometimes if he was scolding them

but it was generally monks you know his

disciples he wouldn't just be like

chewing out lay people that sort of

thing

um he had sort of a very dry sense of

humor you can find some humor in the

text cell though you know he's not like

yucking it up he never laughs or cries

although he does smile faintly from time

to time

um

let's see

gosh

yeah I mean it's really hard to find the

the original Buddha

um through the through the text

it's I mean it'd be almost as difficult

as knowing what the original Hercules or

the original Achilles was like just from

Reading

um you know the Ancient Ancient Greek

poems

so

yeah I mean he is portrayed as just the

the ideal perfect Indian Sage and so he

doesn't really have any

um vices or even like weird habits

anything like that

but he didn't like noise that's true I

mean he was he get on the case of monks

if they were being too noisy sometimes

but uh yeah it's it's hard to say I

think I better just move on to the next

question this is from Air rain

and Irene says

years ago a friend of mine wanted to

learn how to meditate an acquaintance

who supposedly knew how non-budists sat

her down in her apartment one day and

showed her it was her first time she

ended up pretty freaked out because as

she sat and meditated she suddenly found

herself experiencing being outside the

apartment building where we lived

downtown yet the streets were empty and

devoid of life or cars what was

happening here

um it could be that she went into a kind

of hypnotic trance

um it may not have been a

like a genuine Out of Body Experience if

she's not seeing what was actually there

that you know she was floating around

outside the apartment building but like

the the streets were completely empty

and with no life or cars so I would

assume that she went into a kind of

hypnotic trance State and was imagining

it

that would be my guess

and so probably the meditation technique

was not the best

um probably just some sort of Auto

hypnosis thing that was being taught

rather than like genuine mindfulness

where you know anything like that

happens you don't identify with it you

don't attribute significance to it you
just note it and Let It Go not it and
Let It Go not it let it go either that
or just concentrating on you know your
breath going in and out or something
like that those would be more safe
more Buddhist kind of meditations but
I'm not exactly sure what the meditation
technique was here so I can't really say
for sure
so we'll just move on to Erin's next
question
I see a few monks online always working
on social media setting up online
fundraisers fundraisers and asking for
people to send them cash for various
reasons how does this conform to the

vinya and isn't the local community
supposed to support monks monks
pandering for cash on social media seems
like a dangerous slope To Tread down
what could possibly go wrong there right
what is the proper way for Lay people
interacting with monks asking for cash
also what about donating to a monastery
versus
an individual monk yeah there are monks
including some supposedly strict ones
who are
fundraising or asking for donations or
maybe they're trying to go around the
the winning rule against asking for
money by just saying well the monastery

could really use money you know we need
the money to you know get this website
going good or make repairs on the
monastery or something but even hinting
like that technically is against the
rules
um I mean a monk is allowed to say well
we need to upgrade the uh
upgrade on your website or we need to
fix the monastery but if you start
hinting like you want money for it and
then you're already uh you've crossed
the line even though it's really
difficult for a monk living in the west
especially not to have anything at all
to do with money because strictly
speaking a monk should not have anything

at all to do with money

like when I was a uh even when I was an

Abbot at a monastery in Burma we needed

a bag of concrete I couldn't say you

know buy me a bag of concrete I could

say I need a bag of concrete I could say

could you get me a bag of concrete but I

couldn't say could you buy me a bag of

concrete because you can't tell other

people what to do with their money other

than just say do what makes you happy

so

um yeah it is it is kind of fudging on

the rules

um Bonte Guna ratna who's one of the

most famous monks in America he was like

the head cashier for the wehara book

service for for years and years

and most most Asian monks especially

just they just handle money and just

don't care

with regard to Western monks I'd guess

about half of Western Monk's handle

money but even the ones who are trying

to be strict like in the ajan cha

tradition

um they just don't know the rules well

enough or else it's just such a colossal

inconvenience not even telling people

what to do with money or or like

endorsing checks or something that they

just go ahead and do it

and they just try to do it as little as

possible and there were I had a teacher

who was like that I mean he didn't

handle money himself but still he'd be

telling the monastery attendant you know

go buy this and go get that which uh you

know still breaking the rule but at

least he wasn't handling it himself

which is kind of a step in the right

direction anyhow

so let's see what is the proper way for

people interacting with monks asking for

cash well I mean you're just helping

them break rules

so I mean if you're okay with helping

them break rules then

yeah and you can give them money

um but if they are asking for cash it's
kind of futile to say well do you have
an attendant that I could discuss the
money with because if he's asking for
the cash he's just gonna ask the the
attendant to give him the money
I went to a Time Monastery in Washington
state near Seattle and the first time I
went there the Abbott was at the bank
so I mean it's just really common
see what is the proper way for Lay
people interacting with monks asking for
cash the prop the really proper way is
just tell them you really shouldn't be
asking for cash bonding I'm not going to
give any I mean if if you uh I mean if
you are following the rules I'd donate

to the the attendant or something

but if you're just flat out asking for

money I mean I'll I'd rather donate the

money to a monk who's actually trying to

follow veneer correctly

I mean you could say that I mean you'd

be kind of a it'd be kind of an

asshole-ish thing to say maybe but

um I mean that would be the proper way

of doing it or just don't say anything

just leave

I don't know

let's see also what about donating to a

monastery versus an individual monk yeah

well that's you can donate money to a

monastery and if they've got like a

board of directors or like an attendant

who lives there and the monks are strict

yeah that would be the way to do it

in fact you could uh just ask them what

they need and go out and buy it yourself

but um as I already mentioned though if

um if the the attendant there is just

handing the money over to the monks

anyway then I mean you're not really

it's not really an improvement

he's just kind of a money laundering

operation

so

yeah I mean the rules against terravonna

Buddhist monastics handling money are

very strict

and it's really a problem for Western

monks I've read three articles written

by Western monk strict Western monks

um regarding the money rules and all

three of them were basically saying you

know how much can you handle actually

handle money without breaking the rule

one of them was on John ROM although

that's neither here nor there the other

another one was ajanta nisaro another

one is an Australian monk who is no

longer in rubs

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here from Aaron

can you explain the specific reasons why

mgtow

feminism sexual and racial identity

ideologies are blatantly non-buddhist

and then there's an addendum or explain

why they are Buddhist as the woke

American neo-budists claim well mgtow

yeah that's there's nothing wrong with

mgtel there's different kinds of mgtel

now some mgtow is just you just go out

and pick up on women and have no

commitment but that's

in a way that's that's a very inferior

mgtow that is uh blatantly against the

Buddhist precepts which is a guy being

celibate or living alone you know not

having sex not not having a a female

significant other

um or a male one

um yeah that's I mean that's just basic

Buddhism right there feminism it all
depends on what kind of feminism is it I
mean if it's feminism like a feminist
who
really wants to help women
and to uplift you know the situation of
women and you know just going for just
general equality that's one thing but
feminine is like the man-hating variety
especially now like the neo-marxist
intersectional variety third wave fourth
wave whatever wave we're up to yeah I
mean that's that is uh if it's based on
resentment and just hostility and and
hatred or whatever then yeah it's not
going to be good no matter what you're

doing because really it's the mental

states that determine the the moral

quality of an action

um sexual and racial identity yes sexual

identity I mean identifying with your

sexuality I mean

yeah I mean that's just kind of

ridiculous really it's a racial identity

ideologies I mean in Buddhism

it's like you're not supposed to

identify really as anything if you

possibly can help it

um and with regard to uh the Sangha

being ordained it's there's a number of

statements in the text referring to the

the song goes like the ocean all the

different Rivers you know these

different rivers with different
qualities just flow into the same ocean
and just become the same ocean and
that's the way the Sangha was supposed
to be you're supposed to leave your your
ethnicity your your social class all
that stuff behind you and then you just
become the son of the Buddha you're a
monk or a nun
and so this emphasis on racial and
sexual identity in modern Western
Buddhism is essentially just almost the
opposite of of what Buddhism is supposed
to be or was intended to be
so yeah it is blatantly non-bootice a
lot of it it's the cultural Marxism

stuff that is becoming this really

dominant in Western Buddhism

is uh yeah it's it's it's almost the

exact opposite of Dharma in certain

respects you know just the whole

grievance

grievance politics

you know or

um just the whole like blaming the

system for for your plight in life I

mean it may make perfect sense from a

political like uh spiritually bankrupt

materialistic point of view but from the

Buddhist point of view there is karma

and so if you are born you know in a in

a female body that's that's your karma

you're born in the male body that's your

karma you're born in a black body a

white body I mean that's you put

yourself there

so

yeah I mean the the all the all the uh

the identity politics stuff that has

pretty much taken over western western

Buddhism especially in Academia you read

academic Buddhist papers

it's it's like clown world really a lot

of it is just total clown world

so

yeah

I think I answered that one

so I think I'll move on to Erin's next

question

and that is is it possible for a child
or baby to become enlightened what about
being born as an aura hunt or
enlightened I'm thinking of examples of
some very young and very small children
through history and modern times who
seem to be extremely grounded and
unusually full of profound wisdom that
takes most people a lifetime to learn
into old age I suppose new age people
would call them old souls well just by
random coincidence I happen to read a JD
Salinger story just the other night
called Teddy about this boy about nine
years old who is enlightened
um the thing was that uh in the story he
was like some sort of Indian holy man or

a yogi in his previous life and then he

dropped out and uh got married or

something and he said that he was going

to have to be reborn again anyway that

he wasn't fully enlightened in his

previous life

even if he had stayed a yogi he still

wouldn't have gotten enlightened but

because he sort of took this turn to the

left

um he was reborn to this in this

dysfunctional family in New York City

instead of being reborn in the Holy Land

of India

and uh

but I'm digressing because that's just a

fictional story but it reminded me of

that because I just read it just a few

nights ago

um

there are stories in the texts of boys

who are being ordained as novices around

the age of nine who at the first touch

of the razor to their head as they're

getting their head shaved they become

enlightened

so there are enlightened children in the

texts

um

so

yeah it obviously happens regard to

being born enlightened

um I'm not sure how that would work

because if you're already enlightened

before you were born then you wouldn't

get born again according to orthodox

teravana

um there I think it's some Hindus maybe

some Mahayana Buddhists do think that

after you become enlightened just

because it's the right thing to do or

whatever you just keep taking Life After

Life like neem curly Baba was supposed

to be like that

um you know even after he became

enlightened supposedly so The Story Goes

you know he just kept being reborn and

or sort of uh you know out of compassion

or because it really didn't matter

because he wasn't really identified with
the body or anything anymore anyway
um so being born in Aura hunt that's I
according to terrible Buddhism I don't
think it would it would happen unless
you somehow became enlightened while you
were like a fetus and I I've never never
heard of any cases of that but children
definitely can become enlightened
uh they have to be very ripe though I
mean they have to be sort of like Teddy
was where they're you know almost there
before they're born and it doesn't take
very much you know just like the touch
of the razor on the head and that's it
just
so yeah new age people would call them

old souls my father would have called

them old souls too

so I'll just move on to the next

question

man we're getting up to two hours

yep

I might have to start doing these daily

or something this is from achala

and uh agella says my parents want me to

get married and I also feel probably in

a year or two it's about time though

looking around how divorce due to

extramarital Affairs is becoming a

normal and common thing even in the

Indian culture

the concern of my parents and mine is

how to find a faithful traditional wife

I feel like I want to marry someone who

is Buddhist or has interest in the

teachings of Buddha how should I go

about it thank you well this is a tough

question partly because I really don't

know achala it sounds like maybe he's

ethnic Indian not necessarily living in

India

um

so I mean the traditional way is you

just let your parents deal with it and

they're the ones who fix you up but um

yeah it's it's it's a tough question

because sometimes you just can't be sure

you got to take the gamble you got to

take the risk

and uh if you find a girl that you think

is the one and she's she seems like the

right one that she's gonna be faithful

and you're going to be faithful to her

then uh it may be that you're you think

it's worth the risk to uh take the

chance on her

and it may be that it's just your karma

that uh you're you're gonna be married

to an Unfaithful woman or something

but

you need to drink this

um if you want to find a woman who is

Buddhist then you may have to try and

find a good Buddhist group

where you can meet but

um I mean obviously

most western Buddhist groups are

it's I mean it's hardly Buddhism at all

anymore maybe some some Elementary

meditation techniques a little bit of

poly jargon but um

or Sanskrit jargon or Chinese jargon or

whatever whatever jargon is associated

with that tradition

[Music]

um

yeah I mean you're just gonna have to do

the best you can because I I really

don't have enough data to really give

you advice

I mean I could say well she's she's like

uh six miles away heading due east and

just uh just heading that direction and

she'll be out in the front yard in a

blue dress

watering the flowers

but I I'm really I really can't say that

so you're just gonna have to you follow

your heart and uh use some

intelligence also use some wisdom and uh

just try to find a girl that you have

faith in that you trust

and if uh you sincerely love her

then uh

but but by love I'm not necessarily

meaning the intoxication of of the the

hormones you know the animal mating

instincts I mean that's that's

completely unreliable

but I mean if there's just a resonance

between you and you sincerely love each

other

then uh

yeah I think there's a good chance

you'll be doing fairly well but uh there

there's really no guarantees there's

there's no promises here

and uh I'm sorry I can't help you more

with that

so the next and last question of the

entire show

is from the Arya sawasti project

and the Aria swelocity project says if

someone has attained higher States Of

Consciousness through following the

precepts meditation Etc and are reborn
in that higher state what causes them to
revert back to human forms or lower
so how do you backslide from being in
heaven essentially because in Buddhism
heaven doesn't last forever
so what happens is you go up into heaven
and it may be you're in a lower level of
heaven where you're just indulging in
Celestial orgies with the harems of of
nymphs and so forth and just enjoying
sensual Pleasures you know the pleasured
gardens and the Golden Palaces and all
that and uh until eventually all you're
wallowing in uh
debauchery essentially just gives you

enough Bad Karma that you leave that
place and come back down as a human or
it may be worse than a human
um another possibility is you get up
into like a formless around like a
really Advanced Heaven round like a not
Advanced as in like necessarily you know
right at the Virgin Nirvana because
there's no Heaven realm that really
isn't the verge of Nirvana because
nibana is completely off the scale
you know nibbon is just kind of I mean
you can't say that the highest Heaven
realm is any closer than the lowest hell
in a way you can sort of but really it's
just totally off the scale so let's say
you're in some formless Realm

you know the realm of neither perception
nor non-perception the realm of Infinite
Space
well I mean there's not much going on
there I mean you're not making any new
Merit to keep you there and So
eventually the Merit that got you there
is just going to exhaust itself and once
it's exhausted then you come back down
again and that's generally the way it
works you get into some Heaven realm the
the Merit that got you up there
eventually runs out and you're not
making enough Merit up there just
because you know you're enjoying how
nice it is or whatever that you

eventually just come back down again

so that that can happen

and uh I think I just answered all the

questions by golly I hope I did

I mean uh there's a few questioners that

I'm not entirely sure I did Justice to

their questions but um I do my best and

if you've got questions about Buddhism

especially Buddhist philosophy Eastern

philosophy to some degree even Western

philosophy

um this Buddhist monasticism Burma me

personally any question you think I

might be able to answer you're very

welcome to ask them in the comments

below or if you have uh access to my

subscribe star account you can ask them

there or if you have access to my

Discord server you can ask them there

and uh be happy

hello and welcome to episode 50 of

question and answer I am your host Ponyo

Basa

and before I get started I'd like to

oh did you notice my new Fez

I just got it a few days ago I'm really

happy with this Fez I've been wanting a

fez for like decades literally but I

won't go into the entire story and uh

I'm just it's it's made by fezzo Rama

which uh you can look up on the internet

if you're interested if you want to get

a fez yourself these are I highly

endorse these these are very high

quality fezzes you can give you you can

get them with like little air vents on

top if you want and uh a wide variety of

Tassels

and I gotta admit my my sweetheart just

doesn't get it you know it's like

something about the female mind cannot

appreciate a really good Fez

and uh I mean I've noticed this sort of

thing before like for example

a couple of Christmases ago I decided

instead of sending out Christmas cards

to send out Rubber Chickens and there

are good ones too they're they were like

they were like this one

it was really really a good rubber

chicken

and uh she just didn't get it

but

I figured

you know it's just men or men and women

are women and uh women by dumb stuff too

you know it's like like curtains for

example

I mean we could just put a towel there

and everything would be fine we already

had curtains but she didn't like those

curtains they were too dark

so I mean it goes both ways I guess

I suppose before I uh just take up the

entire video praising this Fez

um well I'll say one more thing I had a

friend at work who advised me that I

should just wait until I get a really

profound question and then like

ceremoniously put on The Fez before

answering it you know it's got like the

eye of wisdom and all that but uh maybe

in future videos I might put on The Fez

for like a really difficult question

but um

I'm just showing off I'm flaunting it

you might say

so let's just uh start answering

questions here

and the first question is from a person

whose name I do not know how to

pronounce r i a a n

Rion Ryan

I don't know but this person says I'm in

South Africa a boar and not at all like

the ones Brian likes to interview that's

Brian Rue by the way I studied Kim Eng

and when I first saw him when I first

saw this when he says that he studied

I thought it was some sort of esoteric

Chinese practice

um maybe like uh

oh what's the uh what's the thing where

they they move in slow motion Tai Chi

but it turns out that this is short for

chemical engineering I'll just start

over

he says I'm in South Africa a boar and

not at all like the ones Brian likes to

interview I studied chemical engineering

not working because I'm white and I want

to know if the laws of conservation

thermodynamics

Etc agrees with Buddhism I remember a video where you said you also studied science I enjoy your videos and please forgive me for my stupid questions well there are no stupid questions there are only stupid people and anyone with a chemical engineering degree is not stupid

so

um with regard to Buddhism

um being in accordance or being in harmony with laws of conservation thermodynamics Etc

um

first of all Buddhism like pretty much all other religions is pre-scientific

they didn't have concepts of like

entropy and so forth that I'm aware of

um just like they didn't have concepts

of darwinian evolution you know they

just thought God most religions believe

you know just God just put us here fully

formed humans already speaking languages

already with a certain amount of culture

um

or in in the Buddhist uh the Buddhist

version We essentially descend from

heaven and our god-like beings at first

and then gradually

um I mean that's the kind of entropy

right there because we're going we're

devolving instead of evolving in a sense

and there are certain

psychic powers

that can cause one to defy the law of

conservation of matter for example one

can multiply one's body into many bodies

the the Hindus also have this belief

like Krishna famously did this on one

occasion in order to have sex with 500

women at the same time

um

so

you can

defy the law of conservation of matter

at the very least although I think in

modern physics under certain

circumstances that can happen anyway I'm

pretty sure I could be wrong

um

so

yeah it's I mean to the extent that it's an ancient Indian system that really didn't care about the laws of physics or or even really laws of nature other than laws of psychology Buddhism is is like a profoundly psychological spiritual system like ethics are psychological it doesn't matter what you do externally so much as what your mental states are what your motives were what the what the will was that caused you to do it that is the karma that is really the ethical quality of the action

so

I mean really early Buddhism really

didn't theorize about anything

like you read the Attica Wagga and it's

just saying a monk should have no

beliefs no view no nothing you know he

just should be I mean thoughts are going

to arise perceptions will spontaneously

occur but you don't cling to any of that

you don't attribute any special

significance to any of that

and that pretty much just

like erases the need to explain laws of

physics and so forth

um later on you had abhidham that

attempted to explain the the phenomenal

universe

and uh it was more Aristotelian than

scientific Aristotle was a genius

extremely intelligent guy but he just

did not have the Giants to stand on

their shoulders like like Newton did

so

um it was just ancient attempts at

describing the phenomenal Universe are

limited in that way although they

excelled at describing the internal

universe

and modern Western

Civilization pretty much sucks at that

so in a way what you do is if you want

to understand the phenomenal Universe

science is probably a better deal but if

you want to understand how to be happy

how to realize reality

you know how to be wise how to liberate

yourself from samsara that kind of thing

you're better off looking into Eastern

philosophy and there's not a whole lot

of competition between them and they can

fit together fairly well like the

Buddhist philosophy fits in fairly well

with modern scientific philosophy so

that's how I look at it anyway so

um my degree in biology has served me

well in helping to understand certain

things

you know just observing

like the various kinds of wasps in Burma

lots of wasps in the tropics and uh you

can just see just probably how they

evolved you know starting with these

really primitive ones and then they

start getting more and more advanced

until finally you've got like social

Colonial kind of of insects but uh I

think I'll just move on to the next

question here

and the next question is from crazy

librarian

always have to have a beverage

and crazy librarian says

Bonte you have extensive Knowledge from

reading a lot do you still think

Buddhist practice makes sense for

enlightenment or is it nonsense

well this should be fairly

straightforward I mean I wouldn't still

be teaching Buddhism or answering

questions about Buddhism if I thought it

was just

um there are people that will watch

videos about Buddhism

and maybe study it a bit maybe even

practice it a bit and then finally

they'll just come to the conclusion that

it's all but I am not one of

those people because it's pretty obvious

that

there is a lot of wisdom in Buddhism it

may be that certain Orthodox Traditions

will have a fair amount of nonsense

mixed in because after all religions are

developed by human beings regardless of

any supposed

uh divine revelation

that it's human beings that it's going

through a filter of a human being and um

so there's there's going to be a fair

amount of nonsense regardless

fortunately this extra eye helps me to

uh avoid the the nonsense

and my my sweetheart says she will not

be seen in public with me wearing this

hat so it's going to be mainly just for

entertaining distinguished guests in my

home

so yeah obviously Buddhism contains a

great deal of wisdom I mean not a

hundred percent of what you find in the

books is going to be profile wisdom and

some of it you might as well just

dismiss or ignore

but um the whole idea that karma is a

mental state

that you know like I was just saying a

few minutes ago that um the ethical

quality of your actions depends on the

the mental states that a company of

those actions not the outward actions

themselves that sort of thing is is deep

even just like the second Noble Truth

that all suffering is caused by desire

or craving or attachment insisting upon

things being a certain way just sort of

being against the way things are that

that is the cause of all suffering

so

um yeah it's just obviously a lot of

profound wisdom and Buddhism I think

Buddhism like taravada Buddhism has the

highest percentage of profound wisdom of

of any religious system at least that

according to my temperament I mean it's

different people will have different

temperaments and then they'll have

different approaches to spirituality

some people who are more like heart

Centric you know more feelings oriented

more faith oriented they want to believe

in something they want to worship a

higher being or something

um you know Buddhism may not be for them

but for me

um I'm rather more philosophical than

religious I've got a certain mystical

streak

um I like something that makes good

sense like an elegant Theory and

Buddhism really is better than any other

system I've come across if I wasn't a

Buddhist

I'd probably have to be like a vedantist

Hindu or something

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from CEO of action

and seal of actions says my question

wasn't very clear oh here he's referring

to a question he asked in the previous q

a and uh I didn't really get the

question apparently so he's asking it

again in a different way

my point is that nibbana seems to be

mentioned as cessation of Consciousness

and that Consciousness arises only due

to a cause it seems contradictory to

nibana being an uncaused Consciousness

that is signless boundless radiant all

around

Etc how do we Square these two seemingly

opposite statements

well

the cessation of Consciousness is the

cessation of anaconda which is one of

the five Aggregates that composes a

human being or most sentient beings

he sent him being has a body I think

um

unless it's a perceptionless Brahma but

forget them

so

um yeah the when you're Anaconda is

consciousness and but it has to be

consciousness of something it's like the

essence of your mental States or the

underlying substratum of your mental

States

and so that ceases when you become

enlightened when you when you pass away

into nibana

then that is supposed to cease

but there are a few ancient texts that

do describe nibana as infinite formless

unmanifest Consciousness but the thing

is

when you have formless consciousness

infinite illuminous shining all around

and all that uh anything that's formless

and infinite is paradoxical and it just

goes off the scale like nibana is off

the scale

so

it's I've tried to explain this before

that when consciousness

becomes infinite and formless it becomes

like hegel's pure being which is

identical to Pure non-being because

there's no discernible content either

way in pure being or pure non-being

there's the same complete void of
discernible content and so they just
merge into each other and become one
that was how Hegel began his logical
dialectic
and I really do think there's something
to that that if Consciousness becomes
this infinite and formless
I mean it it's everything and nothing
simultaneously in a sense it's it's a
paradox it's off the scale and so you
can't really square that with anything
it's just a paradox I mean it's just
makes logic break down because when you
have Infinity
rationality cannot deal with infinity
there's always Paradox lurking around

the corner somewhere

so I'll just move on to CEO of action

and cod zidino's next question

checking to make sure I actually turned

on the video yes I did I don't have to

start over

and he says in the story of anguli Mala

when he was running after the Buddha He

commands him to stop but the Buddha

replies that he has already stopped have

you what did he mean by that well let's

answer the second part first

I assume when the Buddha says that he

has already stopped it means he has

stopped wandering loss through samsara

he has stopped wallowing in it that he

is enlightened that he's done with some

sorrow

and with regard to me

man

it's from The Terror from the Orthodox

point of view I'm not enlightened

because I still have like preferences

like

um

I was relatively stressed out this this

past weekend and we'll we'll get to that

because somebody asks me about that in

in one of the questions but um yeah I

mean it's just the the human system you

know following its its courses you know

following nature and so forth but um

yeah I mean to for me to claim that I'm

fully enlightened would be

um definitely unorthodox

and uh from a Mahayana point of view you

know we're all Buddha so I mean in that

sense I guess

but uh you're better off just not

thinking about that stuff really I mean

I mean no enlightened being is going to

be thinking in his heart oh I'm

enlightened you know so if you if you

say you are then that means you aren't

but if you say you aren't this you're

sort of like locking yourself into a box

so it's best just don't even think about

just do the best you can and uh you know

in a sense you're already perfect

because you can be yourself perfectly if

you can't do anything else perfectly you

can at least beat yourself absolutely

perfectly

so we'll just move on to seal of actions

next question

ah

and the boot of being injured rather

than killed for the karma might be

explained by the fact that the Buddha

said he can't be killed probably due to

his karma and he was injured by an

attempt to kill him but his cousin

dewadata it doesn't necessarily have to

be a later addition by people

increasing the status of the Buddha what

do you think about this you know this is

also a sort of a follow-up to

um a previous q a I think something that

I said in a previous q a where

um a Buddha can't be murdered that it's

just according to Orthodox terabond

tradition you cannot murder a Buddha the

worst you can do is make him bleed which

is what happened when David datta in one

of his attempts to kill the Buddha

according to the legends he tried to

roll a big boulder down onto him

and the bowler as it's crashing down the

hill it it's um

hits another rock or something and a

chip flies off and hits the Buddha's

foot and cuts the Buddha's foot and

makes him bleed

and for

the uh extremely unskillful Karma

of trying to kill the Buddha and

actually injuring him dewadata was

plunged into the lowest pits of hell

where he will burn in torment for

countless eons no doubt but in some

future age he is destined to become a

Pacheco Buddha so at least there is that

um

yeah

I mean the Buddha had excellent Karma I

suppose but but still

I mean Jesus got crucified Muhammad

Alana who was one of the Buddha's Chief

disciples was literally beaten to a pulp

um because he wasn't a Buddha so I do
think that probably there is uh
it's it's a certain amount of
glorification of the Buddha and just a
certain amount of mythologizing where
you just can't kill a Buddha but
who knows I mean that's just my guess my
best guess because I really think the
Buddha was an aura hunt and that the
differentiation between Buddha and Aaron
other than just you know the first R
haunt in a lineage you know he had to
like find the the method on his own but
then again
methods don't cause Enlightenment there
isn't a path leading to Nirvana

that there's a path and you follow it

until you just don't need to follow it

anymore you just let go

so I think I'll just move on to seal

vaccine's next question

this is kind of a strange one what do

you think about doing a Meditation

Retreat in a white torture room the

point of this is that it is that it used

to be it is used as a way to torture

people from the lack of sensory

information but if you use it as a

meditator maybe it might have some use

well

um

first of all it would not be a good idea

to meditate in a torture room where

there are people have actually been

tortured because there's going to be

like a heavy vibe there you know there

could be like weird icky Spirits or

something there who's who might mess

with you so yeah I mean if there really

is a torture room or people have been

tortured

um

yeah I wouldn't try to meditate there I

mean you might meditate there as just

sort of uh a defense mechanism just keep

a steady home going or or budo or

something just as kind of a defensive

armor around your spirit or something

but

you know that kind of thing but uh

yeah I mean if you want to meditate you

could probably find a better place than

a torture room to do it but if if seal

of actions either not here he's just

talking about stop playing blank white

room yeah I I've done pretty much the

same I mean I've lived in caves

um caves that were dug in their man-made

caves and so they had just like flat

walls it wasn't all like stalagmites and

everything

still like tights I guess they're the

ones up high

um

yeah it's just blank it was light gray I

guess

and yeah I mean that's what you're

supposed to do like like in Zen

meditation usually they sit facing a

blank wall with their eyes open just

looking at a blank wall or I mean if

you're most terrible Auto Buddhist

Meditation the eyes are closed which is

just plain black

so yeah that sort of thing just like a

sensory deprivation boost yeah it could

be very helpful in meditation

if anything it offers fewer distractions

to distract you away from meditating

so let's move on to the next question

this is from David

and David says

um this actually isn't really a question

I guess

but anyway David says venerable

panielbasa I remember a case of a lady

with a much younger boyfriend who was a

semi-famous YouTuber from the UK she

went by a Buddhist name he basically

pimped her out

for 1500 pounds for sexual intercourse

and said she could provide healing

I won't mention their names they moved

to Thailand and she died on the back of

a moped her boyfriend was riding in a

horrific way he and she posted on

various Buddhist forums and Facebook

groups I thought at the time something

is going to happen to them as they were

exploiting Dharma it doesn't take much

digging to find out about the case I

wonder if you have any thoughts on this

gas show

um

um I've never heard of it or at least

maybe if I heard their names I might

recognize them but yeah it doesn't ring

any bells so I apparently

I'm at this moment I'm unaware of who

they are I'm all I know about them is is

in this little paragraph here

and uh

I would say yeah they're probably making

a lot of Bad Karma this

um perverting Dharma just as a way of

having sex and making money getting
famous that kind of thing I mean that's
in a way it's sort of
uh verging towards what is considered to
be the worst thing a monk can possibly
do like before parajika rules there are
four rules that if a monk breaks any of
them he is excommunicated for life and
they are an ascending order of of
seriousness I mean they're all bad
enough that you're communicated one is
is having sex with with a woman with a
man with an animal whatever if you have
sex you're out two is stealing
stealing anything worth more than uh a
coin in the Buddhist time called a pada
I'm going to have to get into that third

is murder or also talking someone into
committing suicide helping a woman get
an abortion anything like that but then
worse even than murder is the fourth one
which is knowingly lying about having
attained superhuman mental States
and uh I mean if she's saying that she
can heal people through uh
having sex with them yeah that could be
I mean she wasn't an ordained monk or
none but still I mean it's the same kind
of thing that they're doing which is
pretty serious it's it's not good to
knowingly and willingly pervert Dharma
for your own personal gain and like
worldly like mundane game besides

so yeah I agree

that what they were doing was not so

good and probably deep down they kind of

knew that and that might have helped the

horrible moped accident to occur

so we'll just move on to the next

question

and this is from Rick

and uh

let's see Rick Rick sometimes asks kind

of personal questions although that's

fair game I'm not complaining at all his

first question is what have you learned

over the course of these q a sessions

well one of the main things I've learned

from these q and A's is that Western

Buddhists still think like westerners

that they still think in terms of a

mechanistic scientific materialistic

universe

and so

um like one of the most common kinds of

questions I get is you know is such and

such an action Good Karma or Bad Karma

or along those lines and I have to keep

repeating that karma is a mental state

karma is really the will that

accompanies the action you know that

motivates the action

and uh I mean there's there's a few

questions in this q a there's there's

always at least one or two it seems

where the the supposition

is that

the scientific uh world view that is

endorsed by Western modern Western

Society is just correct that's just the

way things are and you have to like fit

Buddhism into that Matrix or context

somehow

and I don't think it works that way at

all tell you the truth the scientific

Universe it's

it's not ultimately real I mean it's

it's stable you know it's like that's

one thing that that makes the scientific

universe so powerful

I mean just just the the ideology you

know just the belief in it is that it it

accounts for everything so

remain better and More concretely in

more detail than any other system that's

come up that it really lends a lot of

stability to I mean our world

essentially because I'm not a

materialist

but whether that just confused everybody

or not I'm not sure

but that's the main that's one of the

main things I've learned in the course

of these q and A's is that Western

Buddhists think like Western Scientific

materialists and then they're just kind

of I mean not all of them but it's a

tendency and then you try to fit

Buddhism into that you know like asking

if Buddhism is in accordance with the

scientific laws and so forth

um

and it just I don't think that the

scientific universe is the correct

universe or like the real it's not

reality

in fact nothing that we can see with our

minds nothing that is perceived is

reality because perceptions are just

like a symbol in your mind

and that's that's all we see we look

around all we see is is mental symbols

because it's all being filtered through

our brain or filtered through our our

mind our perceiving mind

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

here

after I take a drink

what is the greatest challenge you are

currently facing yeah that's I mean this

is a timely question because I have

been facing a real weird challenge over

the past more than a week and that is

that

as some of you may know I work at a

sheet metal shop

but I happen to meet a guy who happened

to be the manager of a different sheet

metal shop and he liked me and he

offered me a job working at his sheet

metal shop and he was paying a lot more

and they have better benefits

so I decided to go for it put in my two
and a half weeks notice I put it in a
little early and then about a week later
the boss presented me with a non-compete
agreement that I had signed
so
I'm just reading this non-compete
agreement and pretty obviously it
applies only to sales and management
positions and I'm just some Grunt in
back in the warehouse running machines
so it was pretty clear that it didn't
apply to me but the manager at the place
I'm working at now is has been persuaded
by somebody else higher up than him I
guess that yeah this just means that
nobody working at that sheet metal shop

can work at any other sheet metal shop

within 100 mile radius because it you

sign the paper but

um

there's another Proviso that you're not

allowed to

divulge confidential information or

Trade Secrets but the list of Trade

Secrets is like customer lists and

marketing strategies and so forth that

also applies only to

um sales and and management

so anyway I thought that that wouldn't

be a problem but this new place that

wants to hire me they've got my

employment now on hold because the legal

department has to like examine this

non-compete agreement and I mean they're

just taking their own sweet time and I'm

not going to quit this job and then wind

up having that job not pan out so I've

just been in limbo for over a week just

not knowing where I'm going to be

working a week from now

or two weeks from now

and uh it's uh surprisingly stressful I

mean I have lost quite a lot of sleep

just

trying to understand the non-compete

agreement is trying trying to find

anything that would apply to me so that

I couldn't work at the other place and

just like running through these

imaginary discussions with the manager

like how am I going to deal with this

and what I'm going to do and

it's some sorrow which is uh intensified

for laypeople

to some degree but yeah that's that's

the greatest challenge that I'm

currently facing that I'm aware of who

knows it could be something else even

worse that

um I'm not paying attention to it or

something

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

question

putting aside any learned Dogma or

philosophy when all else fails do you

have a core belief instinct or face that

guides encourages or replenishes you

well yeah I've got a few

some of them I'm not sure I mean it

guides me but it may not replenish me

all that much well first is I'm just not

a materialist that I think that we are

in a dream

you know and some people could say like

a simulation you know we're living in

what they the the Hindu is called Maya

the illusion that this is not reality

and I've I remember just as a teenager

starting to read Eastern philosophy or

it's saying that it's all an illusion

and I'd just be going yeah and I didn't

even understand it really I couldn't

really explain why it was all an

illusion but it just it just struck a

chord

and

so I'm like I sincerely believed that my

mental States when I answered the phone

are going to influence at least

potentially who's at the other end of

the phone even though the phone's

already ringing that kind of a thing

which could be considered insane

to a scientific materialist but as I say

I'm not one of those even though I have

to admit scientific materialism is very

explanatory with regard to

the external world

uh another thing that guides me but may
not replenish me is the idea that I've
gone with since before I was a Buddhist
that positive and negative have to
balance out in the long run you know
what I sometimes I used to joke that
that's how God created the universe out
of nothing he just created all these
positives and negatives you know pluses
and minuses that just balance balance
each other out they just balance out to
zero so it all adds up it all adds up to
zero
so I've always been kind of
uh wary if I start feeling too much
happiness because it's like I'm setting
myself up for some of the opposite or

I've been wary of like intense pleasure

because there's like this deep down

feeling that there's gonna have to be

some intense displeasure to balance that

out

so

also

I've had this just intuitively since I

was a kid I think

just a real wariness about big Karma

like killing something or

um no I mean I'm not comparing killing

something with this next one but just

like getting married you know it's just

it's just this big thing and I always

kind of will stand office about that

even though now I'm engaged to be

married and uh no regrets there

so but it's still it's like I've

throughout my life I've had this

wariness of not wanting to do any kind

of big Karma even choosing a profession

you know choosing a job I mean that's

one reason why this this past week has

been kind of stressful for me because

it's

um you know major change in in

environment and so forth

so I think I'll just move on to Rick's

next question

which is what are your thoughts on the

interplay of Free Will and fate

well I haven't had a free will question

lately but I mean I'm skeptical of the
the very existence of free will because
I mean Free Will is logically impossible
I mean just setting all else aside
Free Will is logically impossible I mean
anything has to have a cause or not have
a Cause including like a decision
so a decision has a cause or it doesn't
have a cause it has a cause then it is
determined by that cause and is not free
but if it doesn't have a cause then it
happens at random and neither
determinism nor random chance
our free will but those are like your
only two options unless you have like a
mixture of the two

um so I mean you can have like

a certain causation or determinism with

a little bit of like Quantum Randomness

at like the the level of

neurotransmitters or something

and

someone that said well the Free Will is

the cause but I mean there has to be a

reason

you know I mean if you make a decision

there has to be a reason for that

decision or else it's just a random

decision

and neither one is free will but then I

read the trickster in the Paranormal by

George P Hansen I think is his name

and he gave

an interesting insight into
the I don't think he even was mentioning
free will but he was mentioning
meditation and how meditation is
reflexive it means it's self-referential
and anything that is self-referential
can become paradoxical
and that could somehow paradoxically the
fact that we are self-conscious that we
are observing our own mind can somehow
paradoxically cause Free Will of A Sort
to exist Ramana maharshi who is a great
Saint even though he was a Hindu used to
say that the only real free choice you
have is the choice to be mindful or not
which uh because it was said by such an

advanced Saint I wouldn't uh dismiss it

out of hand

but in the text in the polytexts

the Buddha dismisses both Free Will and

determinism there was a a religion an

ancient religion that is now extinct

called the ajivakas

who were strict determinists they

believed that you lived I think it was

84 000 lifetimes

84 000 lifetimes in succession and the

the simile in the polytics is that you

got a ball of a string and you just kind

of tossed the ball of string holding on

to one end and it just unrolls until

it's all gone

so yeah the Buddha said that's just

really a pernicious wrong view that you

could actually go to hell for believe in

that sort of thing

but uh he also dismisses free will like

in the anata

he's saying that will or caitanya you

know it's not you you don't have control

you don't have total control over it

so that's one reason why there is no

self is because we don't even have

control over our own decisions

so the interplay of Free Will and fate

yeah it's more like an interplay of

um

sort of determinism on the one hand but

then like maybe this paradoxical

um self-referential

conversion of free will that you can't

really be explained logically that that

can influence that

but

um I think you could probably go insane

or or definitely warp your brain just

trying to really figure it out

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

question

let's see I almost asked the same

question twice here not here have you

ever been a fan of any Combat Sports

what kind of penance would a monk have

to do if you were found watching boxing

or MMA

well

um

I've never really been a real fan of Combat Sports I mean my mother used to watch wrestling when I was a kid and I used to root for the bad guys just to bug her

um

I have watched a little bit of the Mixed Martial Arts stuff that where they fight in the Octagon I think almost all of it that I've ever seen was on one occasion when I was in Burma and a friend of mine from America came to visit me and so we went to Pagan which is like one of the main places where tourists go in in Burma and we were at this hotel called

the beetle nut and my friend you went
out to eat dinner somewhere and because
I was a monk at the time I didn't eat
dinner so I just stayed in the hotel
room the beetle nut hotel and uh saw it
was on TV and it was this fighting in
the Octagon which was really fascinating
I mean it was really interesting I can
understand how people would be into it
more so than boxing which has become
just really a lot of hype just
multi-million dollar hype kind of stuff
um
so I mean I've never been a real fan I
mean I guess you can consider NFL
football to be a kind of combat sport I
mean it's sort of like a cross between

war and chess

but uh I lost interest in that after I

became a monk and never regained

interest because there it seems like

they're a bunch of spoiled Communists

who hate on America Now

so

I guess I'll just move on to the next

part of this question which is what kind

of penance would a monk have to do if

you were found watching boxing or MMA if

he had to make special effort to watch

it for entertainment I suppose that

could be considered a ducata offense

which is the most minor level of offense

and he just confess it to another Monk

and that would be it

so it's not really a big deal

I mean if if you actually went to a

Battlefield

yeah I'm not I mean I'm not sure what

kind of Combat Sports they had in

Ancient India in the Buddhist time so

that I mean there may not have been a

precedent for it they may not have been

like the Indian version of boxing or the

Prem pancration or anything like that

martial arts displays

or exhibitions or whatever but they did

have battlefields and uh it is

an offensive medium severity for a monk

to go visit a battlefield or go to watch

an army On Maneuvers that sort of thing

but still just make confession and

that's good enough

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

question

have you seen the house Builder will he

build your house again well this is sort

of in different words a question that

I've just answered the house Builder the

Buddha according to the polytext he had

two different sets of first words after

it became enlightened an orthodox

tradition explains that by saying well

he thought one set of words but he said

out loud the other set of words and it

was both both sets of words were poetry

and uh I'm sorry I didn't look it up

beforehand I used to have all this

memorized in poly but um

there's this one part where he says

house Builder you are seeing you will

never build this house again you know

along those lines and he's referring to

kind of Mara but also sort of like the

personification of samsara itself where

the house is your own body

you know it's like the house Builder is

like your own Karma

um but it's in a way it's kind of

personified here you know symbolized

and um

will he build your house again well I

guess we'll have to wait and see but um

yeah with regard to seeing the house

Builder

when you have mystical experiences I

mean you can get glimpses but uh I

didn't become like the the perfect

terravana Buddhist Saint with you know

no more akuselah karma you know no more

on wholesome thoughts

because I can still be irritated

I can still uh I don't know have desires

preferences and so forth

like I prefer this to water

foreign

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

question

will your sweetheart ever make a guest

appearance in any of your videos I doubt

it because she really doesn't put

herself out there

and um you know she just kind of a

private person

doesn't really have a presence on on

YouTube unless it's maybe just verbal

like like comments or something

and she's definitely not going to appear

on a video if I'm wearing this Fez

that's that's pretty clear

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

last question

do you have any first or secondhand

knowledge or experience with magical

powers what are your thoughts on the

possible attainment of magical powers

um I'm not exactly sure what

Rick here has in mind with regard to the

word magical I mean does that just mean

psychic powers

or does it mean like

Witchcraft and sorcery

because there is kind of a difference

I would say that psychic powers occur

through

um like meditation

and just uh like intensive

self-discipline

of the sort that which is probably don't

and don't do

like witches and and like Sorcerers and

so forth

um my father trained witches he was kind

of a like a witch he led a coven at one time uh of like a board housewife which is and uh his description of how it worked at least in his coven is you get a group of people together and you have them reciting the incantations and moving their bodies in a rhythmic way so that they kind of get a group mind going they're all thinking the same thing and then they focus their minds on what they want done and you've got like this group of people you know each one might have this little spark of psychic Talent or at least a few of them do and when they're all focusing on the same thing trying to accomplish the same thing then it increases the power of that and can

actually cause something to happen
whereas with psychic powers like that a
saint would have it's my opinion that
for the most part they're spontaneous
they're not like done by force of
willpower that is just they're liminal
people and just like strange things
happen spontaneously
so with regard to strange things
happening spontaneously yeah I've got
quite a lot of experience with that like
like old synchronicity just pounding
wages again and again and again but with
regard to actual magic like Witchcraft
and so forth Just I have like
second-hand knowledge because of my

father mainly who as I say used to train
which is and ran a coven and also he had
certain stories about
um Eskimo shamans and so forth that uh
I'm not sure whether they would be doing
magical powers or or just the the more
spiritual psychic stuff but he had this
one story about this Eskimo Shaman who
lived in Alaska
and he would go into like these trans
states where he would look like he was
dead I mean heart rate and breath would
almost stop and when he was in those
states he could teleport I'm not
vouching this is really this is just
what my father told me and he heard it
from somebody else I'm sure

and so there was uh in Southeast Alaska
there was actually a kind of bulletin
out for police officers that if you find
an old Eskimo man Lying by the side of
the road don't bury him because he could
be in this kind of Trans State and so
according to the story
in this Eskimo shaman
um you know he was found in this
comatose you know seemingly dead State
he was brought into a police station and
the police officer there had heard about
him and so he's calling a different
police officer on a on a different
island in the Aleutian Islands and
asking him about it and and uh the other

guy says well you can't be can't be the
guy you're talking about because like
he's right here with me and so then the
the first police officer goes and looks
and the the shaman is gone
so he just somehow disappeared in one
place and reappeared in some other place
like 50 miles away
uh but whether that's magical or not I
don't know whether that's psychic powers
or what it is
so yeah I do have some
especially second-hand knowledge of uh
Magic and uh like certain psychic powers
I mean there's all kinds of stories
about witches in Burma but uh don't get
me started on that so I'll just uh move

on to the next question and this is from
a person who used to have a name that
was easy to pronounce and then they
switched it to this which I mean this
could just be just sheer perversity here
because it's spelled
c-h-r-z-a-s-z-c-z I mean how do you
pronounce that because access is
something like that that's about as
close as I'm gonna get so anyway because
axis is says is there anywhere in the
rules of monastic discipline that you
have to shave your eyebrows
or someone invented that later and then
uh he he left this comment
um under a YouTube video

and uh somebody else replied to his
comment somebody named Don said I was
going to ask that question why the shave
eyebrows rule eyebrows are essential
partly for directing
dripping sweat from your forehead away
from your eyes because surely sweat in
one's eyes while trying to meditate
would be quite a distraction seems like
a rather unnecessary handicap for a
middle path
and I would just say that there is no
rule of monastic discipline saying that
a monk has to shave his eyebrows that is
entirely a tie thing maybe Cambodian
monks also or Laotian monks because
they're kind of bordering on Thailand

towards the east

but Burmese monks don't shave their

eyebrows Sri Lankan monks don't shave

their eyebrows and the story I heard to

explain why Thai monks shaved their

eyebrows is that

um in previous centuries Burma and

Thailand were Arch enemies they were

kind of like Sparta and and Athens or

like England and France they were just

traditional Arch enemies and

sometimes spies would be sent into

Thailand Burmese spies would be sent

into Thailand disguised as monks and

vice versa you'd have amongst disguised

coming the other way to into into Burma

and so

the ties started shaving their eyebrows

in order to differentiate

the the time monks from the Burmese

spies so then the Burmese spies started

shaving their eyebrows but then the Thai

spies in Burma would catch them when

they came back so you have Thai spies in

Burma looking for monks with no eyebrows

and then they know those are Burmese

spies

so that's the story I was told because

really it just says you have to shave

your head hair and I mean technically

your eyebrows are on your head but um I

mean nobody's like clipping off their

eyelashes or anything like that

so I mean mainly it's just the hair on your head and your facial hair has to be shaved at least every two months or every two finger widths whichever comes first

so I mean a monk can look like a sailor you know he can have like an inch long beard and inch long hair and still not be in violation of the rules although I think Burmese monks generally shave once a week

some of them don't even have an official hair to bother shaving so they pluck the hairs out which is technically against the rules

and with regard to Don's comment here

about the purpose of eyebrows I had some

insight into eyebrows this is sort of

the biologist in me speaking now in that

there's a Botanical Garden in Burma near

the town of pianulu in it's really a

nice Botanical Garden too and they've

got Gibbons there

and these Gibbons are completely black

this their whole body is black except

they've got two white eyebrows right

here

and I mean it's just white fur

surrounded by black fur so I mean

there's no real

um purpose for those eyebrows other than

as uh like for communication like

non-verbal communication and I assume

that's one of the main reasons we have

eyebrows is that it's useful in

non-verbal communication because

primates especially have lots of

non-verbal Communication in addition to

spoken language you know facial

expressions and so forth also are key

ways that we communicate with each other

so in addition to a little bit of eye

protection and as Don says keeping the

sweat from dripping into your eyes

um I think it's also there just for

non-verbal communication

so I'll just move on to

zax's next question

[Music]

what was your favorite food that you

were getting sometimes in Burma

well

there's there's a few Foods in Burma

that are good then I looked forward to

getting I was happy when I got them

but you don't really see them in America

one is at least in Burmese it's called

and in English I think they're called

jenko beans I actually saw them at an

Asian grocery store last time I went to

an Asian grocery store with my

sweetheart and I was all excited she

didn't understand but then again she

doesn't understand feathers or Rubber

Chickens either so

but it's it grows on a tree

and it looks sort of like a lentil it's
sort of like an olive drab color and
it's about this big around and about
that thick and it smells like pee
because it's got urea in it or something
and I guess you're supposed to soak it
to get the urea out and the first time I
ever got any of that I had no idea what
it was I didn't know if it was I mean it
smelled like pee and it was kind of a
I don't know it wasn't like a vegetable
kind of color so I thought maybe it was
some kind of kidney but I'm thinking
what kind of animal has round kidneys
but it turns out it's really good jingle
beans also there's a kind of noodle soup

called mojinga that is really good it's
like a traditional Burmese food you get
it a lot in Burma
um custard apples the only time I ever
ate custard apples was in Burma I looked
around here in in South Carolina
no custard apples but they're kind of
fruit like about this big and they look
kind of like an artichoke and you break
them open and it's full of like this
custardy stuff and lots of kind of
large-ish black seeds that you spit out
you know you bite into it and then you
spit the seeds out so it's good to eat
them outside otherwise you can annoy
women that don't like seeds on the floor
let's see what else nappy I used to like

which is a kind of fermented fish paste

but uh all in all my fear I guess I just

I'd say jingle beans

I really like jingle beans I mean you

can't eat a whole lot of them because I

guess it's

got urea in it or something so it's bad

for your kidneys if you just like gorge

on jingle beans all the time but

um I don't think there's any danger of

that

here in America

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from a v s t r

a v s t r i don't know what it stands

for

and uh avstr says first a follow-up
question to Stevie's question about
ordaining with chronic illness that was
also in the previous q a
what would be the Orthodox response to
someone who wanted to ordain but should
or could not do so because of disability
or illness should they gain as much
Merit in this life as possible and hope
to be reborn with the potential to
become a monk
I guess from a Mahayana Viewpoint
something like being reborn in the pure
land would be the answer and what would
be your personal advice to such a person
um yeah I mean if you have a kind of
disability where

um it's just not convenient for you to
become a monk let's say you have to take
a certain medication or get certain
treatments that cost money
on a regular basis you'd have to have
some kind of sponsor that would agree to
pay for that
you know while you're a monk and then
then you could go ahead but just to just
go out there renounce the world and like
you know head for Asia or something and
then you need this medicine that you
can't even get out in the sticks in you
know rural southeast Asia yeah that's
not going to work
so someone who does have

um like a chronic ailment regardless of

whether they want to become a monk or

not certainly that is the fruition of

past Karma

so yeah there's something was done that

shouldn't have been done in in the past

either in your own present life or in a

previous existence or some such

and uh yeah it's causing difficulties

now

so

um yeah I mean if someone was too

unhealthy to become a biku and you

should be healthy if you're going to be

a baker especially if you're going to be

like the traditional kind of Monk who's

wandering from place to place wandering

into the village to get your food people
to put in whatever food they want and
then you come back you're living in the
tropics where health is kind of an issue
anyway I mean I've had malaria in like
seven or eight times always the worst
kind too
so yeah I mean if any kind of chronic
ailment would be considered
um the fruition of of past comma like
accusala or or Bad Karma
and um yeah the best thing that a person
would do in that case if they couldn't
become a monk but they wanted to would
be to earn as much Merit as you can
especially if you could earn Merit in a

in a health oriented way you know help

other people be healthy you know feed

hungry kids or you know like

um just I guess you could donate to a

medical now there's like a group of

doctors that travel the world and cure

cataracts for example they do cataract

surgeries out in like rural Nepal and so

forth that uh you know contributing to

that might help especially if you had an

eye problem

um you know try to earn Merit that is

sort of you know in a in a health

oriented Direction

and that would probably be most

effective

so I guess I'll just move on to AV str's

next question

secondly do Devas remember their past

lives I think I remember hearing Buddhas

do if so isn't there in a sense a self

or person that is in fact reborn even if

there is no soul since they live on as

the memories of the Deva or Buddha would

that not contradict the symbol you made

which I found very useful about rebirth

being like pushing down a bulge in a mat

the Bulge will simply reappear somewhere

else but there is no self that is being

reborn the karma is only transferred so

to speak yeah well I mean you push down

a lump in a carpet and then it just

comes up somewhere else I mean it would

still have the pretty much the same

qualities as the lumpy just pushed down

to do the conservation of matter let's

say

so

you know it's much more complicated than

that with regard to rebirth and this

Karma perpetuating itself but the thing

is even though you could say that the

stream of karma

um you know it's the only thing that

moves from One Life to the next

according to Orthodox taravada the only

thing you take with you to your next

life is your karma

and so

I mean the karma itself is constantly

changing it's sort of like a flame you
know it's not the same flame from one
moment to the next it's not exactly the
same karma from one more to the next
even though there's certain resemblance
a certain continuity from one moment to
the next but us also in addition to that
it's just not ultimately real
so I mean in a sense
you can say that there is a self but
it's not an ultimately real self in the
by the same token and this is this is a
weird thing I've written about this
before it's like Buddhists who say there
is no self well admit okay in a worldly
conventional sense there is a self

but even so even in a worldly
conventional sense there is no soul but
I would say I mean why not like at a
higher Dimension like like uh a four or
five dimensional being which would
include all of your all of your
existences and so forth that I mean that
could be considered to be like an over
self
or a soul if you want to use that word
but even that isn't ultimately real
so in a in a conventional sense you
could say yeah there is a self or yeah
there is a soul but in the ultimate
sense there is no self and there is no
soul unless you want to say the soul is
Brahman like in the upanishads but

um you'd make the mistake of reapplying

the ultimate if you're like saying yep

it's Brahman you know Atman is Brahman

which is a mistake that they make

um and I sort of flogged this over and

over again that um

you can't really reify the ultimate or

the absolute because you're dealing just

with Concepts and it's not really the

absolute at all

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Austin

and Austin says I don't think

Consciousness is replicable or even a

computation I'm not even convinced that

the brain produces Consciousness which

leads me to doubt the idea of being in a simulation How likely do you think it is we live in a simulation well I assume Austin here is talking about a computer simulation that we're like in some virtual reality possibly programmed by some alien kid with an IQ of 900 for a like a school science project or something

but

I do think that this world we live in is not ultimately real so in a sense it is a simulation but it's not so much a computer simulation as it is like a dream a mental simulation

and it's just one of the infinite number of virtual statues that can exist in the

uncarved block of marble the nameless

uncarved block

with regard to Consciousness not being

replicable or even a computation

um

yeah I'm not even sure convinced that

the brain produces Consciousness well I

don't think the brain produces

Consciousness either I mean there's no

scientists are just at a total loss in

explaining how this gray blob of meat

with these electrochemical reactions

going on inside creates like subjective

experience

you know how do chemicals become

conscious they can't explain that they

don't know they I mean they just don't

so it's one thing that science has been

totally unable to explain

and I do think that the entire universe

is conscious that um

you know like hydrogen atom isn't

thinking you know it's not

philosophizing it doesn't have

preferences or anything but it contains

like this Teensy spark you know this

primordial little spark of Consciousness

that has to be like organized and

complexified and utilized in order for

it to turn into like what a psychologist

would call a conscious mind

so I mean the mind of a goldfish is way

simpler than us in the mind of a of like

an amoeba would I mean it's just this primordial little spark you could say or you could have a materialist scientist type say no an amoeba would have no mind at all a plant would have no consciousness at all because they don't have a nervous system they don't have a brain but then again they can't even begin to explain how a brain creates consciousness

it is through the I mean damage to the brain damages mental mental function so I mean they've got that going for them you know you you damage the back of the brain you can go blind you damage I think it's what the right temporal lobe

and you know you go tone deaf you know
you can't enjoy music anymore that kind
of thing the the with the left I think
it's the left temporal lobe and you
can't speak anymore
so obviously the brain is doing
something with Consciousness but I don't
think it's generating any more than a
computer is generating the electricity
that it is like organizing and utilizing
but with regard to Austin's question
here How likely do you think it is we
live in a simulation uh if you take away
the computer part then it's pretty darn
likely because uh yeah this is Maya
and uh but let's go to a computer
simulation

um

I don't think it's very likely

it's more more a dream than a computer

generated virtual reality

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Stevie

and Stevie says what are the two sutas

that mention nibana as infinite formless

Consciousness I've been Googling my

little heart out to no avail

well the two sutas that have the same

verse in which

very probably pretty obviously nibbana

is described as infinite formless

Consciousness spect I think I've got

right here this is piku bodhi's

translation though

it's uh the Consciousness that makes no

showing and in becoming about to just

become

not claiming being with respect to all

God that's awful yeah see bikubody is

very Orthodox so he's like doing the

best he can to try and interpret this in

an orthodox way and it's not working but

uh yes

[Music]

that's the poly and when Yana means

Consciousness

is not showing so I was like unmanifest

anandam is endless or infinite and

means shining all around

so that that verse is found in the

kewata suta of the diganikayan which is

number 11 and also the Brahman

nimandanika suta which is Maji minikaya

number 49. they both contain that same

verse

and it's pretty obviously with regard to

nibana

and bikubody trying to be Orthodox

um he just kind of butchered it I think

so we'll just move on to the next

question this is also from Stevie why do

you never take why did you never take on

any disciples you seem to love helping

others deepen their knowledge of the

dhamma well I was willing

um but when I was a monk for the most

part I was living just way the hell out

in the middle of nowhere like in caves

in forests and so forth

um didn't meet a whole lot of of other

Western monks

um I used to think about him it'd be

nice like giving getting to name new

monks like I like the name munigosa for

some reason

and so I just come up with or like such

a Dasa slave to truth something like

that as I I would be good at naming

disciples and I did have a few like

informal ones mainly in Burma

but um

yeah for some reason I just have this

Karma it's I don't have good luck with

teachers and it's just some sort of
teacher disciple Karma that that hasn't
been fully developed in me yet I don't
have to par on me for that or something
but I was willing and it just didn't
happen
so I'll just move on to the next
question I mean it probably would have
happened if I wound up becoming the
Abbot of this Monastery in Burma that I
almost became the habit of in which case
I probably would still be in Burma to
this day
but it just fell through and didn't
happen so here I am wearing a fez that's
one of the advantages of not being a

Mongol that my sweetheart would consider

it to be

um a disadvantage is that when you're a

monk you can't wear a fez it's it's

against the rules for a monk to wear a

hat so all these monks were in stocking

caps technically it's against the rules

but if they're like in Northern Canada

or Denmark and during the winter time or

something then uh yeah it's

understandable it's a very minor rule

anyway I need to adjust my tassel here

there we go

so let's see what was I looking for here

uh no

see oh why I never took on any disciples

I just completely forgotten the question

um yeah I mean it was just I was too remote and uh I'm just too much of a niche teacher you know some of most most people they want to become a monk they want

um something Orthodox you know they want to be able to trust the polytext and not have the the rug yanked out from under them again and again because I'd be a hard ass of a teacher I might not beat the mistakes like the proverbial zen master but huh

yeah I was I was like radically strict with regard to rules of monastic discipline up until I came back to America

then I started fudging on them and
that's one reason why I dropped out it's
like if I'm not gonna follow the rules
strictly why I shouldn't be a monk
so I'll just move on to the next
question oh and also now I'm working in
a sheet metal shop so if I have any
disciples it might be with regard to how
to run machines or something
so the next question is from Marco
and Marco says Buddha said that he did
extreme practice before Enlightenment
because he was mocking some other man in
many of his past lives he was also doing
that kind of practice can you explain
how does karma like that work well I've
never heard this before and I doubt that

that's exactly what was happening

um before the Buddha became enlightened

he practiced the two main routes the

traditional routes to Enlightenment that

were prevalent in the Ganges Valley in

in the 5th Century BCE and that's

meditation and asceticism

and with regard to asceticism he was

going full blast he wasn't half killing

himself just to to mock some other

person

um I mean he was he was totally sincere

in starving himself almost to death and

you know as he reads some of the

descriptions of what he went through

where you know if he touch his belly he

could feel his spine and if you rub his
arm hairs they would just break off
they're all brittle from just
malnutrition and just wandering around
naked and and just wearing tree bark
sometimes and just eating cow cow poop
and this kind of stuff I mean it was
really extreme and I doubt that he was
going to do that kind of stuff just to
make fun of somebody
that he was following the tradition of
ancient India and that's there are a lot
of people saying if you want to become
enlightened you've got to just purify
yourself through this fire of asceticism
and so
he uh he tried that and it didn't work

and so he also tried uh like the

cultivation of of Jannah States like

maybe trance States also just he was

following the traditional meditation

techniques also and that didn't work

either

So eventually he found his own way and

started teaching it and thus Buddhism

began

but with regard to how does karma like

that work yeah I don't think that the

Buddha was was behaving that way that

that was not his motivation

so

that kind of uh

I mean it kind of messes up the question

now because I'm not exactly sure how to

answer it

uh but I don't think he was mocking some

other man by uh practicing severe

austerities

uh can you explain how does karma like

that work

um yeah I don't think it did work that

way I guess that would be my answer

so I mean if he was practicing Karma

just for the sake of

dissing somebody else then it would not

be skillful action it wouldn't be a

right practice

so it wouldn't be right action for

example

so it probably wouldn't have worked

anyway

so I'll just move on to Marco's next

question here

there are some people who after the

heavy accident have a change of

Personality they are more aggressive or

they can even speak languages they have

never been able to before is it possible

that some other Consciousness has

replaced the old one well that reminds

me of a really interesting story in a

book by Ian Stevenson Dr Ian Stevenson

who was I think he was a psychologist at

some place like the University of

Virginia

and he was doing

his best to scientifically investigate
uh the possibility of reincarnation
and there's one interesting story from
India this was like back in the early
70s I think of this boy who was maybe
seven or eight years old and he got
smallpox and he apparently died and so
his father left the house to go and take
care of the funeral arrangements because
his boy just died but when he came back
the boy was alive and he's claiming to
be a different person he's claiming to
be a certain person I mean he knew the
name he was a brahmana of a certain cast
he would no longer eat his parents food
he wouldn't eat his mother's cooking
because she was of a lower caste and so

they had to have this brahmana lady who
was like a neighbor cook his food that's
the only way he'd eat it and he just
insisted he was this other person and he
had quite a lot of information about
this other person that he shouldn't have
known
so I mean it can happen that way even
though theravada Buddhism doesn't really
acknowledge the possibility of this I
mean the world is pretty strange and it
doesn't just fit into like cookbook
explanations and definitions and so
forth sometimes
so yeah I think it is possible that like
somebody

they not only have a near-death
experience but their mind really does
pass on and the body maybe is still
viable and so some other Spirit comes in
I think that is possible
but I think for the most part
um the the major changes of Personality
could be caused just from the severe
illnesses just kicking them out of a rut
and they're having to examine their life
seriously for the first time maybe or
um it could be like a near-death
experience that they have
um like some some people have had famous
like Ramen amaharshi for example have
like a near-death experience and uh I
mean that just kicked him right into

enlightenment

so I assume that sometimes you can get

kicked into something that isn't

Enlightenment but is considerably

different like significantly different

from your your previous personality so I

think both of those are possible I think

probably the first

um the kind of where uh like a different

spirit is moving in a different karmic

stream is inhabiting the body would be

much less common than just a person who

they're like a superficial person who

doesn't really think deeply about things

and then they get cancer or something

and all of a sudden they start thinking

deeply about things and it just changes

their personality that way I think that

is much more common

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

question

after taking another drink

God this is a nice fast I mean it's

really high quality too

this is from Stevens

and Stephen says here's a question I

often feel like I'm becoming a recluse

because I have practically no

responsibilities and few needs

and I

noticed most connections that I make

naturally erode because I usually am

lacking the motivation to put in the

constant effort required to maintain things a part of me feels guilty and says I should have more responsibilities but I generally dislike dealing with people now and feel it's useless and futile to get involved with people and Society in general I can't force myself to do supposedly fun activities I can't even force myself to play video games or watch movies anymore I can't even force myself to stay addicted to drugs and alcohol these days and within the first half hour of being around a woman I generally begin to try and figure out how I'm going to escape out a window or somehow manage to get her to leave

it all just seems like unnecessary work
just to ultimately lower the quality of
my life I don't think it's that
depression I don't feel depressed have I
become a narcissist or should I just let
things drop away naturally seems like a
fairly Buddhist issue there is a certain
amount of what I think is healthy fear
surrounding the issue for me I
appreciate any input
well what he's describing is actually
praised in the poly texts that there's a
certain succession or sequence and I
didn't look this up in the in the poly
dictionary maybe I should have but
relying upon my not entirely Perfect
Memory I'm pretty sure that it's nibida

leads to wiraga which leads to emuti and
nibida sometimes it's translated as
disgust but it's more like
disillusionment or disenchantment it's
just like being just fed up with the
world and being fed up with the world
leads to iraga or dispassion you know
it's just your your unskillful passions
and lusts and so forth just die out
because of this this nibita and when
your passions die out with through uraga
it goes to emuti which is Liberation
it's enlightenment
so in a way I mean Buddhism would
actually say that this is
um it's more good than bad I mean

there's no doubt some bad mixed in

because you don't just have pure good or

pure bad in Buddhist philosophy there's

always it's always a shade of gray

but um

yeah and also the wisudi Maga for what

it's worth it's the the main

commentarial text in terrible Buddhism

it says that people with a dose of

personality you know there's there's six

different personality types I won't go

into all these lopa Dosa and Mohawk the

three poisons plus they're opposites

those are like the three main person of

the six main personality types and

someone with a personality type

oh man just a second

I keep forgetting to plug in the

computer

okay

someone with the kind of aversive dose

of personality type uh is actually in

some cases at least more able to become

enlightened just because they have less

attachment for some sorrow I know

they're not satisfied by samsara and I'm

not saying that uh Stevens here has the

uh dose of temperament

but uh it's the same kind of principle

where just

not liking the world or not liking

samsara not liking life in general is

actually a pretty good foundation for

dhamma practice that will just liberate
you and I mean you're already taking
steps to detach yourself from the world
even if it's it's not fully conscious
you know it's just sort of like a
personality thing or a subconscious
thing but still it's it's happening
anyway and so you're already becoming
detached from samsara and so Dharma
practice would probably be more
effective in that case and uh you seem
to be making some kind of progress even
if that wasn't your deliberate conscious
intention
so we'll just move on to the next
question here this is the Arya sawasti
project

and the Arya sawasti project says since
suffering is the distinguishing
characteristic of unenlightenment would
you say that any happiness contentment
or satisfaction is a step to
Enlightenment even if a temporary one
shouldn't we avoid misery at all costs
and being that happiness contentment and
satisfaction are states of mind and
these are not in Ibana is there
suffering or misery in the higher Realms
under nibana warm regards
okay so this is sort of like a two-point
two-part question at least
um
first part is is any kind of Happiness a

step to Enlightenment not necessarily I mean anything that happens to you is a baby step to Enlightenment because you're you're like paying off some past comma but the thing is we just keep making new comma to replace the old comma that that is exhausted and so that doesn't work so much I mean I wouldn't say that like the Euphoria of being high on heroin or any kind of Narcotics would would get you closer to Enlightenment I mean to some degree maybe you might have get some kind of insight into the Timeless nature of Enlightenment or something but I mean positive and negative have to balance out that's that's one of those beliefs I've had

intuitively pretty much my entire life

and so some kinds of of Happiness like

positive pleasure or positive Joy

um they tend to balance out in the long

run

so like a monk is just going for

neutrality he's going for Equanimity you

know he's not trying to be elated by

good things or depressed by bad things

not no dejection no Elation just just

taking you know just the the straight

and narrow flat course of neutrality

so yeah I mean happiness at like the

worldly level you know positive

happiness negative unhappiness it's all

just ups and downs of some sorrow it's

like the roller coaster ride

so it's not necessarily a step to

Enlightenment it's uh

I mean happiness and unhappiness kind of

they kind of go together so so long as

you're on the roller coaster ride it's

it's less likely that you're going to be

getting close to Enlightenment I mean

it's still theoretically possible I

think

but

um it's much less likely than if you go

for Stillness and silence and neutrality

so let's see shouldn't we avoid misery

at all costs

um I mean it does make sense unless

you're trying to deal with the misery

like face it like you're trying to cure yourself let's say you're you got you're deathly afraid of spiders right so you you like try to expose yourself to spiders and even though you're just feeling this dread in your heart you know you're just terrified still you're forcing yourself to learn how to deal with the spider with Equanimity then that is not necessarily bad I mean that would be skillful I mean especially if you're successful at that

um then you had like the James and the ajivakas in the Buddhist time who were literally torturing themselves

um the Buddha was saying I mean you

shouldn't do that and then the middle
path of Buddhism is avoiding
self-indulgence you know seeking out
pleasure on the one hand and
self-torture or seeking out pain on the
other you know you just live a simple
peaceful life and the world's gonna
throw you both I mean it's gonna be
throwing happiness or you know Pleasant
and unpleasant at you and what you're
supposed to try and do is again not be
elated by the pleasure and not be
dejected by the displeasure and just try
to maintain Equanimity as well as you
can and if you can't maintain equality
like you're experiencing the Elation or
the dejection You observe it mindfully

you know you observe it as though you're

an ichthyologist observing a dead fish

specimen

specimen

so

yeah okay I think I answered that part

so then I'll I'll move on to this next

part here I think

and being the happiness contentment and

satisfaction or states of mind and these

are not nibana is there suffering or

misery in the higher Realms under nibana

um in the higher Realms underneath like

heaven realms there's not super misery I

mean there's a certain sadness like

um it says in the text like you've got a

Deva in tawatimsa heaven and there's no
old age there's no sickness there but
still after uh a Deva you know a small G
god or goddess has been there for you
know umpteen million years all of a
sudden they're they're like glorious
Brilliance starts to fade and then
everyone knows they're going to pass
away from there and so then they they
come and you know they're like sad
goodbyes and so forth because even
though there's no sickness or old age
still they're going to disappear soon
and reappear in some of the realm that
they probably don't know what it's going
to be
um so there's not like real misery but

there's a certain boredom I assume

uh

uh this and and I mean everything is

duka I mean even the highest realm I

mean you can't even say baloney like the

highest realm in samsara of the 31

planes of existence is still duka I mean

it's

um

it's not entirely satisfactory and I've

I've hypothesized

that a certain dissatisfaction is

necessary just to drive us on from one

moment to the next you know if any

moment was completely satisfactory we

might just stop in the state of bliss

and just stop progressing through time

or something

because I do think time is is

psychological More Than Physical

so yeah even in the highest Realms it's

much more subtle the happiness and the

unhappiness are much more subtle but

they're still there it's all duka you

know anywhere you know the first Noble

Truth applies to the highest Heaven

Realms as well as here as well as you

know the lowest lower realms

that nothing is entirely satisfactory

there's always going to be this kind of

a

a nagging dissatisfaction that just

keeps pushing you I mean in uh in the

atticawaga it's referred to as like a
Barb or a spike in the heart that you
can't just sit still I mean you just
have to it's like it's urging you on
constantly it's this dissatisfaction
there's another suto where the Buddha is
describing the average person to a dog
with mange where the dog lies down in
this place and it can't be comfortable
so then it gets up and lies down in some
other place and it can't be comfortable
and it scratches itself which maybe
helps a little bit but then it it
doesn't help so then it goes and lies
down somewhere else and that's kind of
the way the average person is it's like

if we're just driven by dissatisfaction

nothing is entirely satisfactory yeah at

the very least we want more of it

so

yeah I think I answered that so I think

I'll just move on to the next question

here this is from live laugh leave

and live laugh leave says I wanted to

ask if you have anything to say on the

matter of narcissism

would Buddhism and Buddhist practices be

able to cure a narcissist well

theoretically yeah

um theoretically you know if you're

doing serious like introspection and

doing serious meditation and uh just

serious renunciation and

um we've like uh like you know isolation

you're isolating yourself you're you're

living a pure simple quiet life

um yeah I mean if you get insights

through meditation then yeah definitely

you could you could uh

you could cure your own narcissism but

unfortunately probably most narcissists

who practice Buddhism don't get cured

because it's just a law of human nature

that you're going to work on the stuff

you're already good at like with regard

to ascetic practices a monk who is

really addicted to sleep but he's

already gotten Detachment from food

he'll do the food to tongas you know

he'll only eat once a day and just eat
whatever is given to him and so forth
but still he's gonna sleep too much
whereas another Monk who doesn't he's
detached from sleep but
um he really likes his food he might
sleep in a sitting position all the time
and sleep four hours per night or
whatever but he's really going to enjoy
his food still so it's I mean if you
have like a really wise teacher I guess
ajan child was like this where he could
see what your attachments were and he'd
make you face your attachments like if
you were really gregarious and didn't
like being alone he'd send you off into
a forest and if you just really wanted

to be alone he'd send you to a monastery
in town if you're afraid of ghosts he'd
send you to a cemetery that kind of
stuff and um like if a narcissist really
that was one of these kind of teachers
who really made him like face his issues
or if you just have this streak of
wisdom you know you've got like a
certain maturity where you're able to
just make yourself face your issues
um I don't know whether a narcissist
would want to do that or not I don't
know whether a narcissist would want to
cure himself of his own self-love I'm
not sure
but uh I think a narcissist if he did

meet one of these these teachers he'd
probably just like leave and discuss and
think that he was clueless or something
I mean the the narcissist would think
that the the teacher was clueless just
because
um it wasn't feeding his narcissism or
some such but potentially at least if
you practice dhamma correctly and
conscientiously and wisely then yeah it
can cure all kinds of things
so I'll just uh move on to the next
question and this oh boy all of a sudden
it's just this is the last question
the very last question it just takes me
by surprise sometimes
and this is by Nathan

and Nathan says why did you choose to train in Burma rather than the Thai Forest tradition I am currently reading the ajan cha biography called Stillness flowing and his values seem to align more with yours than what I know about Burma

the ajan was very strict on winnia but relatively free in his interpretations of lesothos and commentaries yeah that is true that uh the Burmese they uh they have a lot of emphasis on meditation and abhidham for some reason whereas the ties have much more emphasis on this monastic discipline

but the thing is first of all when I was

first ordained as a monk I was just
looking through a directory of Buddhist
organizations in America
and there was this this one I was there
was this one thing this one entry called
Tom pulus it wasn't even spelled
correctly I mean if it was spelled
correctly it'd be Tong pool to Seattle
they put this extra p in there for some
reason they didn't know what it was I
didn't know what it was I thought maybe
it was bhutanese or something but
um it wasn't obviously not a monastery
so I wrote to them and it turned out to
be a Burmese Buddhist Monastery and at
the time
um there were no good Thai Forest

monasteries in America and I wanted to
be a monk in America at first my my idea
was I didn't want to be distracted by
Visa issues having to learn another
foreign language besides poly you know I
just I just wanted to stay in America be
a monk I could do more good with you
know promulgating dhamma in America at
least through example
and so it was just largely through
karmic random chance that uh I wound up
at a Burmese Monastery in America which
at the time was probably one of the best
uh monasteries in America although I
don't think it is anymore anywhere close
to being the best

um but another thing with regard to the
Thai tradition versus Burmese tradition
which I think I was lucky is that the
Thai tradition is much more Conformity
oriented you have to follow along with
what everyone else is doing whereas in
Burma there's more leeway in that regard
so
I think that that was helpful to me
because I had my own ideas with regard
to like wearing monks robes I was just
like like I said before I was just
radically strict and so I would read the
the rules I've been asking this one and
see that almost no monk in the world is
wearing a robe that is according in
accordance with the rules

so I was wearing these little robes and
kind of wearing it kind of like a shawl
which was pretty obviously what was
intended in ancient times when they made
the rules about robes and in Thailand
especially that's just not an option you
have I mean you'd be sticking out like a
sore thumb you gotta do what everyone
else is doing you got to look like
whatever the way everyone else looks
like I mean there's probably exceptions
to that but the ajanta tradition is very
Conformity oriented
um and Thai tradition in general is very
Conformity oriented and I'm just not a
conformist I was going to follow my own

conscience follow the texts as well as I

could and I really didn't give a damn

what the people around me were doing

as a general rule

so that's why uh first of all it was

just

um the the only Terra Vada Buddhist

Monastery that wrote back to me that I

even knew of was a Burmese place and I

wound up eventually ordaining there and

stayed in America as a monk for over a

year before finally going to Burma

um and also the Thai tradition is is

just too Conformity oriented for my

tastes

and that's it I answered all the

questions

by golly

and if you have any more questions

um just feel free to leave them in the

comments below and don't forget to uh

hit like And subscribe if you haven't

already

I can't just walked by and uh take a

look at the URL links and uh if you

haven't bought my books you're welcome

to do so

and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 51 of

question and answer I am your host panio

Basa

and because I went two weeks without

doing one of these we've got lots of

questions in fact we've got so many

questions that this may be divided up

into two parts

um also in future I may have to uh

instill some discipline

exercise some discipline

and maybe limit the number of questions

down to like five for each person so

each person can ask a maximum of five or

if they ask more than five I will

reserve the right to choose the most

juicy and succulent questions to answer

um

otherwise I'm not sure how we're going

to manage this I mean once once a week I

guess is doable

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

how it got

because there are some people that I

mean they asked lots of questions and

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

curious

you know but um

I'm going to have a drink of my beverage

now

also you may have noticed that I'm not

wearing my new Fez

but I do have it on display back there

so that those of you who are really into

The Fez can look over my shoulder and

gaze upon it in awe and wonder

so without any further Ado because we do

have lots of questions here well I guess

this is further Ado I mean

yeah this is a do this is more a do I'm

sorry but um

oh now I forgot what I was gonna say

that is so weird so okay without any

further Ado uh I'll start answering

questions and the first one is from

Francois known to some perhaps as

Francois

and Francois says the materialistic

worldview of Western Buddhism is

problematic indeed since according to my understanding of Buddhism it is morality or Karma that shapes the universe the Buddhists cosmogeny is a hierarchy of beings and planes of existence based on Karma where the only way out is to do just enough Good Karma to gain ultimate wisdom and eventually transcend all karmas together but still the conditions of existence of all beings is a result of their karma so morality is the only framework that actually matters is that a right interpretation
well I might put it in slightly different words but um yeah that's that's I would be mostly incorrect In in like agreement with that with with a few

qualifiers I mean you can say

um I mean like Orthodox terravada puts

more emphasis

on ignorance as like the the

foundational principle of worldly

existence

so but it's ignorance that causes Karma

because if you don't have any ignorance

you don't have any Karma

like an aura hunt who is who has

completely eradicated delusion at least

spiritual delusion uh he's not making

Karma anymore

um there's this one part here the only

way out is to do just enough Good Karma

to gain ultimate wisdom and eventually

transcend all karmas all together

that um I don't know I have to think

about that I guess but um I mean you get

good karma to put yourself in a position

where you can practice more effectively

but

um yeah it isn't the Good Karma that

gets you in line that's that in a way

that sort of like Sila Bata paramasa

where somebody thinks that morality is

going to to liberate them but um yeah in

in general I would agree with this

that uh you know it's ignorance that

causes Karma which is what is

essentially generating this universe

and uh

I mean the only way out is I mean yeah

it helps to do good karma definitely

and uh but eventually

um

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

uh long before you gain ultimate wisdom

you're trying to like sublimate Karma

make it more subtle make just because

the karma whether it's good karma or Bad

Karma you know the good karma is like

the up and the Bad Karma is the down of

the roller coaster ride

so I mean there's a kind of

transcendental Good Karma which is sort

of neutral Karma or just subtle Karma

that

you know it is more conducive to wisdom

just because it produces more you know

peace and Clarity of mind so yeah you

know in a way I would agree with this I

mean mostly I would agree with this I

might use a slightly different language

but yeah it's it's mostly in my opinion

you know it's pretty much a right

interpretation

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from crazy librarian

and crazy Librarians says what happens

if a monk's parents or family member got

sick and have no one to care for them do

monks get help

to care for their parents or family

um some monks do take care of their

parents I mean it often results in among

disrobing you know like

um there were a few monks in Asia that I

knew who went back to America because

like for example one of them his mother

had dementia and he wanted to take care

of his mother and then eventually he

just drops out because it's hard for a

monk to be a caretaker for somebody when

he can't drive he can't handle money you

know he's not supposed to feed himself

all this kind of stuff so it almost

necessitates breaking rules in the west

especially

um

I mean if a monk in Asia

um

yeah I mean he could if he's if he's

like a Seattle you know like in in Burma

you know he's sort of like a famous monk

he could get somebody to take care of

them easily but uh

yeah it can be problematic and if

there's nobody else to take care of the

Aging parents the monk may have to

choose between you know his duty as a

son or you know his duty to practice

dhamma as intensively as he can

because sometimes it just doesn't work

out you can't be living alone in a cave

taking care of an aging parent or some

like an invalid or you know like a

special needs child or something yeah

you're gonna have to make the choice in

a situation like that I think

so let's see crazy librarian's next

question has Buddhism ever talked about

identical twins what is the karma

between two people born as identical

twins that's an interesting question I

I'm not I don't remember ever seeing any

mention of identical twins in like

terravada Buddhist literature

um

presumably I think I've read elsewhere

that identical twins have like a strong

like karmic connection with each other

you know they've been very close over

multiple lives which has caused that

although

um

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

identical

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

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

get named first you know or like when

you're mentioning both of them you know

the the older one in the family at least

usually is is first on the on the list

or whatever

um

so they're not exactly the same

but um

I'll just move on to the next question

and this is from CEO vacch and sipad

zidana

and seal of action says

I found this strange suta from the

samyutanikaya 41.6

called the dutia kamabuta suta it is a

discussion between shita the householder

and a monk where he is asking him
questions and he asks but sir when a
mannequin has emerged from the
attainment of the cessation of
perception and feeling how many kinds of
contact do they experience and the monk
replies they experience three kinds of
contact emptiness signlessness and
undirected contacts
based on my understanding this means
they make contact with the nibana
element as soon as Consciousness is
booted up again the explanation I've
heard is that nibana existed during the
cessation as well but we only
experienced neighbor when Consciousness
arises again but how can they possibly

know if this is a more traditional

interpretation then what's the point of

cessation if there's no consciousness

experiencing nibana according to

Orthodox tradition the traditional view

just seems like annihilationism to me

but I don't know

well this is all talking about

um

I have another drink just a second

this is all talking about a phenomenon

called niroda samapati or the attainment

of cessation and the cessation is of

perception and feeling

and it's only attainable by very

Advanced Saints and it's like kind of

above fourth genome

and really it's just in a way just a

kind of suspended animation

and

um I am kind of skeptical as to how far

back this idea of neroda samapidi goes

this uh suta that he's mentioning is

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

bit questionable because it's not even

attributed to the Buddha himself and

usually sutas that are not attributed to

the Buddha himself but to some other

monk or none tend to be later

there you know they have more uh

like characteristics of of later stuff

and not earlier stuff

and so

he says how many contacts do they

experience after they've emerged from

the attainment of cessation of

perception and feeling and the monk

replies they experience three kinds of

contact emptiness signlessness and

undirected contacts and I think usually

instead of undirected it's like

choiceless

you know it's and and they're all more

or less synonyms like signlessness means

you know there's no perceptual object

there that

um

yeah

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

discuss it but yeah I think I mean these

emptiness signlessness and undirected

contacts

um in a way they're all describing the

same state I mean

um you know it's sort of like the state

of this cessation itself

uh and really as I've discussed a number

of times before Orthodox terravada

really cannot describe nibana they

cannot describe the state of

Enlightenment very well because they

just in a way the scholars who came up

with like abhi dhamma in the

commentarial tradition especially

they're just trying to fit in the Ibana

into the whole scheme of samsara you

know it's like

um in Abu dhama there are four main

ultimate realities you got mind matter

mental states and nibbana so that nibana

is just on this list of other like

phenomena so they're trying to fit it

into this system

and it doesn't really work that way and

they can't really describe what nibana

is they got rid of the whole idea of

formless infinite Consciousness which

was there in older texts but

um as Orthodoxy developed they they

moved away from that and you if you ask

like an orthodox monk like a like some

Burmese scholar Seattle they'll say it

is the principle of cessation is nibana

but I mean cessation lasts one moment if

it lasts even that long I mean

something's there and then it stops

being there I mean how's that going to

be

like unconditioned

so they really I mean

they didn't have like The Logical

sophistication of like later Mahayana

philosophy and

they're attempting to describe nibana in

essentially a samsaric way or at least

relying entirely on samsaric Concepts

and so forth and it just doesn't work

very well

um

see so what's the question here

let's see but how can they possibly know

if they experience Nirvana yeah this is

another this is another thing a bad

logic like

um I had a discussion with a really

Orthodox pop monk once

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

state of cessation for example how are

you going to know that you are in a

student's decision or even how can this

was the question I think that I asked

him it's like according to abhidham

everything's blinking off and on at like

a trillion times a second or 10 trillion

times a second but it's it's flashing

off and on everything including your own
mind your own mind is flashing off and
on like 17 times faster than matter mind
is faster than matter but
I mean if your own Consciousness is
ceasing to exist you wouldn't be aware
of that
you know it's like you it's all the the
non-existent parts would just cancel out
you wouldn't be aware of them because
your Consciousness wouldn't be operating
in this very Orthodox monk said well you
just review that but I mean you can't
review what you never experience you
can't review what you never viewed to
begin with and so there's all these kind
of bugs in the system that maybe in

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

terravada says no there can't be

Consciousness because you can't have

Consciousness without the perception and

feeling

I want end volition too

so

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

to annihilationism

they've got nibana as this Ultimate

Reality that is unconditioned and so

forth

but they can't really explain it in any

way other than cessation

which is pretty much annihilationism I

mean if something ceases or it is

annihilated it's pretty much the same

non-existence afterwards

so I can understand

um confusion with regard to this kind of

stuff because it is confusing it's just

the confusion is essentially built into

the system

so I'll just move on to his next

question

I know you have said States above four

John us probably were added later but

I've had interesting experiences with

anesthesia it's like you blink but

instead of a second passing by two hours

have passed and there was nothing in

between those two moments medical nerota

how would you explain this from a

non-materialistic perspective it's hard

to believe nibana can really be

uncreated and undecaying based on this

experience as well

um this I mean I pretty much understand

what you said at first but this last

part when he actually gets to the

question mark the question part

um

especially the second one no wait no

there's only one question mark

uh yeah it's a little hard to answer so

let's see how would you explain this

from a non-materialist perspective it

would be like if your Consciousness

you've got Consciousness there but it is

devoid of content

then I mean

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

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

I mean time in in reality even according
to like like
Einstein physics it's the it's the
fourth dimension it's it's not changing
it's just our mental system you know
maybe the crudeness of our mentality
causes us to experience this fourth
dimension in like a linear sequence but
it's not necessarily how it exists in
reality
so it's hard to believe Nirvana can
really be uncreated and undecaying based
on this experience as well well I mean
nibana just transcends the whole system
you know it's just off the scale
and trying to understand it
intellectually is not going to work it's

just not going to work but I do believe

that there is an Ultimate Reality

underlying all this

symbolic stuff that we're experiencing

these mental projections

you know there is an underlying reality

underlying the world as well and

representation

and it's just I'd be inclined to go

along with a more or less Upon A shotic

and archaic Buddhist idea that is just

infinite formless Consciousness

containing within it everything every

possibility

so in a way it's everything and nothing

which is uh no it's it's hard to explain

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

next question

I have read that psychopaths are born

with brain wiring that basically makes

them see other people the same as

objects and they lack a theory of mind

which makes you see other people as

sentient beings like ourselves if this

is the case then a psychopath could have

similar mental States while killing and

torturing people as a child has while

playing with Legos how does karma affect

them if they mentally might not have had

ill will or even negative mental States

when committing all these atrocities

other than fear of getting caught well I

mean I have read I read one book about

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

their own existence going Mary Baker

every being an idealist who did not

believe in material matter so that you

have to have these Minds kind of keeping

this new weak small being in existence

until it's old enough or mature enough

to keep itself alive

but uh I've I've wandered away here

um my answer to this would be that a

sociopath or a psychopath as as CEO of

action Cod Z do not calls them

um I assume he means essentially a

sociopath someone who has no conscience

someone who has no compassion and some

of them enjoy like enjoy killing

prostitutes or whatever it is that

they're doing they enjoy hurting others

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

still there so probably at a

subconscious level they do have

um like human empathy or maybe not

compassion so much but I mean they cut

they know what they're doing

and they're making they're doing it

anyway they're making the Bad Karma

anyway because

I mean just because you're dissociated

from the lower levels of your

Consciousness or you might say the

higher levels of your Consciousness

um that doesn't mean that they aren't

still there and they aren't still

operating and making Karma

so that would be my answer to that one

someone just move on to see of actions

next question you have said hydrogen

atoms might be conscious how can it be

these more primitive forms of

Consciousness come together and form a

functioning Consciousness that doesn't

identify with any of the individual

atoms but creates a completely new kind

of consciousness

like those of the senses that manifest

together

as a human being but at the same time

most of our body is doing things that we

have no conscious awareness of besides

besides despite being made up of these

same conscious atoms so why aren't we

conscious of these as well even if it

even if it this what's happening in

reality I can eat I can't even imagine

how chemical reactions between the atoms

can make the Consciousness continue

together like this in this sense even

the general materialist epiphenomenal

explanation explanation has no real

answer and becomes an unsolvable hard

problem instead

so

let's see so the actual question mark is

about halfway up here it's the same but

at the same time most of our body is

doing things that we have no conscious

awareness of besides being despite

being made up of the same conscious

atoms so why aren't we conscious of

these as well well I mean

a human body is essentially a colony of

protozoans you know each one of our

cells is like this unicellular organism

the cell is like the unit of of

multi-cellular life just the unit of

life in general which is one reason why

viruses aren't considered to be fully

Alive because they don't have a cell

structure

um

so yeah it's it's going I guess the

easiest way to answer this would be

going with the the analogy of a computer

that the computer

it isn't creating electricity but it's

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

so

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

aware of that either any more than like

a skin cell or even a brain cell is

aware of all the complexity of our of

our behavior and our thoughts and so

forth

so it's just

I mean there are philosophers that

specialize in this you know how

individual letters come together into

meaningful sentences and entire stories

and so forth how individual atoms come

together to form

um what is what does it mean it's like

Synergy where the whole is greater than

the sum of its parts

so this would be a synergistic thing and

you may have to find an expert on

Synergy to explain how our individual

cells can create a functioning human has

feelings and thoughts and hopes and

dreams and so forth or how these

electrochemical reactions in the brain

can can do likewise or how the electrons

flowing through the circuits in a

computer can do something kind of

similar

um it's it's a case of synergy I suppose

and just you've got

they're forming into a greater

dimensional

hole that just has so much more

complexity to it that it forms its own

kind of

of um

essence

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

so we'll just move on to the next

question which is a sub question of the

the previous one also how does this

connect to the idea of nibbana is

nibbana like the most fundamental form

of matter like that of the quantum wave

function or strings in string theory

even with this it's not clear how this

would turn into the sensory forms of

Consciousness

um I would say that nibbana wouldn't be

the quantum wave function or strings and

string theory so much as it would be

like just like the quantum field which

contains zero energy and infinite energy

simultaneously

that it's just like the the basic

substratum from which everything else

arises

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

like I was saying earlier taravada

really doesn't describe nibana that way

but they can't really describe nibana

very well at all as some kind of reality

new nibana

is described in the text

like in the suit is more as just sort of

an ethical thing it's just the getting

free of samsara

and you know just freeing yourself of

defilements and greed hate and delusion

and so forth and duka

and didn't delusion but as a kind of

metaphysical state that is infinite that

is unconditioned it you know it's it's

Eternal Timeless they're they're really

not good at explaining that and that's

kind of understandable considering that

you can't really explain what's

completely off the scale of samsora

because explanations are by their very

nature necessarily samsaric

so we'll just move on to see of action C

part Z in this next question

people with multiple personalities claim

it's as if different people exist in

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

you're going to have a different kind of
personality usually in most people then
you then you're gonna have when you're
at work or when you're standing in line
at the grocery store or whatever
so I mean sometimes you can be in a
weird silly mood and sometimes you're
serious or like another good case is
some people
they're they're have a certain
personality that may be very restrained
and then they get drunk and just turn
into a monster
you know they just become completely
uninhibited just anything goes you know
they're getting in fights and all this

stuff

which they wouldn't do if they were

sober

so I think that just about everybody has

like different compartments or just sort

of different modes that they shift back

and forth into which uh in a way are

sort of like branches of the karmic

stream that are still connected

and I think that a person with multiple

personalities would just be a more

extreme example of that so much so that

they're kind of the different strands

are dissociated from each other

but in a sense

a person who's throwing a raging

conniption is pretty much dissociated at

that time from the calmer elements of

his own personality

so I wouldn't say that multiple

personalities is necessarily except in

maybe some really rare extreme cases a

case of more than one being

inhabiting the same body except maybe in

cases of like possession

and Buddhism does acknowledge the

existence of of possession so it could

be that although I'm pretty sure that

multiple personality disorder is

considered to be a kind of neurotic

hysteria maybe Neurosis is is obsolete

now but it's a kind of Hysteria which is

below the level of psychosis

you know it's it's not like you're

really crazy except unless like maybe

you're really Advanced like extreme

cases like that old movie Sybil based on

a book

starring Sally Field I think it was I

mean that's a pretty extreme case and

yeah it's it's possible but getting into

extreme cases like that I mean I'm no

expert on them I don't have any personal

experience with cases like that

so I'll just stick with what I've

already said and move on to the next

question

did you ever become fluent in Burmese

how well did you end up in your

conversational skills in the language

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

say literally what I meant and just

completely be oblivious to these common

idioms that everybody uses except me

um how well did you end up yeah okay and

how long did it take

um it took maybe a couple years in my

case but I've never been very good at

foreign languages I met a few people

there was this one European nun who was

pretty much fluent within just a matter

of a few months

some women especially I think women are

better at learning foreign languages

than men are in General on average

and so someone who really has a knack

for picking up foreign languages Burmese

really is not a very difficult language

except for the pronunciation like the
vocabulary is not all that big it
doesn't have like weird verb forms and
just things like you know like is was
were
you know that kind of thing they don't
have or like good better best you know
in in Burmese it would be good more good
most good which is you know makes
perfect sense
so really the only really difficult
thing about learning Burmese you know
it's a relatively simple language but
the difficult thing is the pronunciation
because Burmese has sounds that are not
differentiated in English

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

it's it's pretty easy to learn if you're

good at foreign languages so I'll just

move on to the next question here

from covax ncpad zidana

also how has Burmese culture changed you

as a person after living among them all

those years

um yeah that's it's kind of a subtle

thing but it's a good question how has

how it had living in Burma for more than

20 years you know more than a third of

my life

how's that affected me I think one of

the main reasons one of the main ways

that it affected me is that when you're

living in a very different culture from

the one you were born and raised in

then it's it's uh you know it's almost

like taking psychedelic drugs for the

first time where you're seeing that

there's other ways of looking at reality

because some I mean we're all human so

we're more similar than different

you know Al Burmese villager is you know

more similar than different to some

American urbanite

but still there's just basic assumptions

there's the whole

um like metaphysic of existence

um you know they're they're in a way to

some degree like pre-scientific they

still have kind of a medieval attitude

so that in some ways they come closer to

like a medieval European you know like

from the 14th or 15th century than they

would you know a modern or post-modern

european

especially you get out into the remote

Village areas maybe in the cities you

know there's there's definitely some

difference but

um so that's that's one thing it's just

you're exposed to a very different way

of going about life and a very different

way of looking at life and so it gives

you a certain amount of perspective you

know you realize that that Western

Scientific materialism or scientific

realism isn't the only possible way of

looking at reality

and most western Buddhists

you know they still just assume that

like Western objectivity

is just a given that's just how you look

at life and it's not necessarily so and

another way that

um living in Burma has affected me is

Burmese villagers especially the last

um or the The Village The Villages I

live near the longest which was lemie

Village and one bow Village the people

there are just abnormally moral and

virtuous and modest people

so much though that a western might be

skeptical that such people could exist

but

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

Dharma without question

they just know that it's true

and there are probably other things too

but I got more questions to answer here

so I'll just move on to the next

question

how do you square the idea of liminality

and the law of dependent origination

based on my little understanding it

seems like dependent origination would

exclude the possibility of liminality

and psychic powers and the Paranormal

would still work based on causes and

conditions but I don't know

uh yeah that is a good point I mean

dependent origination would still exist

because anything that exists is

dependently cold Rising

it's just that when the structure of the

dependent core Rising is sort of

weakened or sort of destabilized

that destabilizes what is possible

so

I I get what CEO version is getting at

although in order for anything at all to

exist it's dependently cool Rising

but it's not just like

um it's like unavoidable determinism

that the Buddha dismissed determinism

also

so you can't just have like this

mechanistic this necessarily causes this

which necessarily causes that that also

is rejected by Buddhism so dependent
origination is more subtle than that you
know it's a way of explaining how all
this stuff happens including
um this weird like synchronicities and
so forth
but it would be the weird
synchronicities would come like really
sort of like a weak spot in the in the
network of causes and conditions but
still it has its own causes and
conditions it's just that you know it's
it's more variable or something
I'm sorry I didn't answer that like with
total Mastery but it is kind of a weird
idea that I'd never really thought about
much before but anything that exists is

going to be

um anything that has a beginning and an

end is dependently Cola Rising including

anything that arises through

um you know creating liminality through

violating taboos and so forth

so I'll just move on a nice question and

this is from Yugo I think that's how to

pronounced today people that ask

questions they got weird names sometimes

so anyway Yugo says tell me about the

karma that is conditioned by place I

find myself singing a specific song on a

specific

place in the city even though I was not

there for a long time ever encountered

such a phenomenon is that why Buddha can
only arise on the Indian continent
well the karma that is conditioned by
place still I mean it's a mental state
and so what would happen would be you
know if you have certain mental States
in a certain place
I assume that would just be that the
conditions of that place are affecting
your mind and your volitions which is
then eliciting the song or whatever it
is and there are some people that
believe that places have their own Karma
like the Middle East has just been a a
battlefield you know since prehistoric
times that's probably one reason why
walled cities were invented in that

general area apparently

it is because people realize that if

they built walls around their Village

then they were less likely to get killed

by barbarians

so

in a case like that it's still the

mental States it's still I mean the

mental states are the karma and so

certain areas may have certain effects

on mental States

you know like a hot area may may cause

significantly different effects on

mental States than a cold area you know

like some Barren Wasteland is going to

cause significantly different mental

States than you know New York City

so there's going to be differences in

that regard and because we're all human

they might have similar effects on

humans in general

but um

I think that's that's how I would

explain it and then the next part of

this question here is that why Buddha

can only arise in the Indian continent I

think that the idea that Buddha can only

arise in an Indian culture is due to the

like the ethnocentric

ideas of the Indians who came up with

Orthodox Buddhism Buddhist tradition it

arose in India and it was just very

india-centric people were largely

ignorant of any other cultures existing

outside of India they might have had a

really hazy idea of Barbarian tribes on

the borders like the the Persians and

the the Greeks and

um certain like ironic people like um

the cambodia's I think spoken Iranian

language

so

um yeah I think the whole idea that the

Buddha can only arise on the Indian

continent is based on just the kind of

ignorance of other continents that Jambu

Deepa or India was considered to be

essentially the center of the world and

I think a lot of a lot of uh

a lot of cultures are similar you know
the Greeks considered Delphi to be the
center of the world I think the the
Romans eventually considered the
Mediterranean to be the center of the
world because Mediterranean literally
means middle of the world
so you know it's some Indian some
American Indian tribe in like what is
now Kansas probably considered you know
some Hill in Kansas to be the center of
the world
but I mean you could argue that
um a Buddha could only arise in
something like an Indian culture because
an Indian culture is a dharmic culture
but I'm skeptical of that I think a

Buddha could arise in a non-indian

culture

he might be called something other than

a Buddha though

because of course Buddha is

a word in an Indian language

so I'll just move on to you guys next

question are stories behind the dhamma

Paras

saying true because there are some

really unbelievable ones like the one

with pancakes I don't recall the the

dhamapada commentary story involving

pancakes but yeah I mean

from a western point of view it's

extremely unlikely that the dhamapada

commentary is objective history you know

you've got talking animals you've got

all this stuff going on just a lot of

it's like Aesop's Fables

and uh

I mean I assume a lot of stories in

there are based on true you know

historical events you know just

objectively true but for the most part

there's all this sort of magical

thinking and folklore stuff and adopting

stories from you know like earlier

Traditions incorporating them like like

the Janika stories are similar to The

Dom Apollo stories in certain ways and a

lot of them were like you know fables

that were already well known before the

Buddhist time they were sort of

recruited into Buddhism by just adding

on some Buddhism at the beginning and

some Buddhism at the end and turning it

into a Buddhist story was like a

Buddhist moral

so

yeah the demopolo in my opinion is

really not objective history I mean

you've got like animals with human

intelligence for example that I mean

I've had I've had Burmese monks try to

argue that in the Buddhist time animals

did have human intelligence but

I don't think so

so we'll just move on to the next

question and this is from the person who

used to have and easily pronounceable

name and now it's

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

another name after that which is

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

genuine Polish names or something but

I'm clueless with regard to how actually

to pronounce them

so

see true because that because this is

his first question is what happened to

your hand

Tyler Durden and I guess he noticed in

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

on my hand it's almost healed now you

can still kind of see kind of a pinky

area there but no I didn't put lie on my

hand and watch it burn my skin like in

uh Fight Club it was uh I was digging up

some posts that were in the ground with

big Globs of cement

like holding them in the ground and I

was having to dig them up because we're

going to put

um

like we were going to put gravel there

and make it like a parking area for

another car which we've already done but

I was just like working with a shovel

trying to get these things out of the

ground and I got blisters on this hand

because I wasn't wearing gloves

so I'll just move on to Insurance axis's

next question here

in the last q a you said that there are

no stupid questions they're just stupid

people care to share a few names for

example as a European I think your

former George W was an idiot and it's

just my personal opinion but if from 350

million Americans the best you can do is

George W or Trump or Hillary or Biden

then there is something wrong with your

country yeah well I mean that can apply

to just about any country I suppose it

is true that

um in recent decades we haven't had very

many presidents

that really are or have been top-notch

you know it's you could hardly say that
any president we've had you know in the
last hundred years
has been you know really the best
qualified person for the job that a lot
of even though America is supposedly a
largely a classless society you still
have a kind of ruling Elite and the bush
is definitely and Hillary Clinton you
know they kind of started their own
Syndicate or Dynasty or something and I
mean Trump was definitely among the the
financial Elite anyway
and
yeah Biden I mean and anyone who looks
at Biden with with like objectivity can

see that probably more than half the

country would be more qualified to be

the leader of of America than that guy

especially nowadays when he's obviously

senile

but the question is uh care to share a

few names with regard to stupid people

no I don't wanna I don't want to be

naming stupid people here

they might be watching you know

so we'll just move on to the next

question and these are from Jeremy and

Jeremy just kind of sometimes he'll have

like a a running commentary as he's

watching the video he'll be typing in

stuff and it could be rhetorical

questions I don't know if Jeremy's

actually expecting answers from these

questions

but what the hell there's question marks

and it's in the comments to a q a video

so what the hell Jeremy says entropy is

an example of impermanence is it not

this is from something I was saying

um about oh reconciling like physics

with dhamma

and uh yeah I'd say the entropy is a

kind of impermanence in fact I read this

book a long time ago where I was arguing

that entropy is really what causes time

to move in One Direction that you know

because entropy always is moving in One

Direction it's sort of like the the the

the arrow of time

that is causing time to move in a

certain direction so but that's that's

beyond dama that's Stephen abhidham

doesn't try to to account for the

passage of time

um yeah entropy would be an example of

impermanence yeah so I'll just move on

to Jeremy the next question

is not the Eightfold Path the method to

become enlightened is that not the path

to nibana or Enlightenment Exclamation

point Exclamation point Exclamation

point Exclamation point Exclamation

point question mark As far as I know it

is the only path to Enlightenment

exclamation point

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

batana wholeheartedly for as little as

one week you're guaranteed of

Enlightenment or an advanced uh state

state of sagehood

so I mean even then there's really no

guarantee because it's going to be one

or the other according to the text

itself

so

yeah I'm reminded of nisargadata Maharaj

who really emphasized the idea that

there are no paths to Enlightenment that

you follow a path which if it's a good

path causes your mind to become clearer

and more subtle and to have fewer

attachments

but no matter how many times you sweep

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

something and that's good enough like

the whole mahasi method is based on the

idea that you don't have to attain Jonna

or even access concentration in order to

become enlightened they say that Kanika

samadi momentary concentration is good

enough

so that's that's kind of controversial

that caused this big controversy back in

the 1950s between like conservative Sri

Lankan monks and the mahasi people

so you can say the Eightfold pass is a

method that facilitates becoming

enlightened probably better than any

other method

but still there's no guarantee

and if you follow that path you can

follow it forever and you're never going
to arrive at the the Pearly Gates of
nibono
he just followed the path until you
don't need to follow it anymore and then
you just let go of it
so we'll just move on to Jeremy's next
question
concerning science and Western thought
did the Buddha know the Earth was round
and if he didn't then does it matter to
me it does not when he teaches about the
mind that maybe when it comes to
cosmology or physical sciences I don't
know yeah did the Buddha know that the
Earth was round well technically the

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

Nova

or whatever whatever is going to happen

so you got this more or less solid earth

you know liquid metal core and so forth

but it's stretched out into this very

very long

kind of a twisty cylinder that's kind of

spinning and twisting through space like

a corkscrew Maybe

you get into five Dimensions you know

who knows it'd be sort of if

if like uh probability or like the fifth

and sixth Dimensions you might have like

this this this whole web work the Earth

is shaped like these multi-dimensional

cauliflower or something

so

but getting back to the question of

whether the Buddha knew the Earth was

around I mean who knows what the Buddha

knew

um I don't think it really matters

though because

um I mean the Earth isn't really around

because ultimately the Earth does not

exist as this discrete entity that it's

all based on delusion I mean the

samsaric universe is based on ignorance

so you get rid of the ignorance and it's

sort of like waking up from the Dream

It's the dream stays the dream I suppose

but uh

uh it's you're just not really involved

in that anymore

so I don't think it's really necessary

for him to know the samsaric details of

you know what the Earth is like and so

forth because it's ultimately illusory

anyway or based on delusion

so I I'd be surprised if the Buddha

could speak fluent Chinese

that kind of thing I mean according to

Orthodox tradition he knew whatever he

wanted to know so if a chinese Pilgrim

came to him he'd supposedly according to

the texts he would be able to speak with

him in fluent Chinese

but um yeah I really don't think

omniscience or Enlightenment really

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

rui says the Buddha dhama and his
various iterations entered the West Via
the intellectual cast and seems to be
mostly esconce there and sconce there do
you think this will remain so for the
foreseeable future
um the way yeah I mean that's the way
Buddhism traditionally has like taken
over other cultures or you know has
found its way into other civilizations
is mainly through the through the
intellectual class you know the
Intelligentsia and also just the ruling
class
so when monks start being you know
endorsed and favored and supported by

Kings and prime ministers and Generals

and so forth then they get their foot in

the door and then it's sort of a

top-down kind of a thing

and in the past it the top-down spread

of Buddhism worked because Buddhism was

you know it had it had adopted a lot of

traditional Indian beliefs

and

you know traditional Village People can

accept you know what was designed for

traditional Village People but in the

West

most westerners just aren't going to eat

up with a spoon like Jonica stories and

the Buddhist devotionalism and so forth

some will you know there's always going

to be some that just by their

temperament that you know they're drawn

to something like that and you know they

might be that they're living on the edge

anyway

you know they're just something in their

personality just makes them reject

whatever is mainstream and want

something different

so

um Buddhism in the west does attract a

lot of sort of eccentric types as you

may imagine

um but in order for it to really be hit

become mainstream

there's gonna have to be something there

that is attractive to the average Joe

you know the guy who's working in a

plywood Mill

you know he's got bills to pay he's got

a wife and kids

um you're gonna have to have stuff in

Buddhism that a person who's not

particularly spiritual can just accept

as their religion you know sort of like

Christianity has done

and um yeah until that happens

and I doubt that it's going to be any

kind of Orthodox theravada or any kind

of Orthodox anything that exists as it

exists today

um you know otherwise you're going to

have what's already happening with

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

take I assume there would have to be

some kind of charismatic innovator who

comes along preferably who is you know

highly attained who can come up with

something like that and you probably

have to be a Westerner

so let's just move on to the next

question this is from Rick

and Rick says what is your most prized

possession

and

I don't know this I've had a I've had

trouble with prized possessions before

I've had this this whole issue going on

with Pride's possession my most prized

possession because whatever is my most

prized possession gets destroyed

I remember a long time ago when I was in college

I found some clay by a Creek Bank this natural clay there and I got some of it and I fashioned this little pipe you know for smoking controlled substances and I made it just the way I wanted it and and then there was a kiln at work so I baked it in the Kiln it was just this was my most prized possession it was just the perfect little pipe and then one day my roommate and I were smoking it and his girlfriend figured he'd had enough so she tries to wrestle it out of his hands and broke the thing and that's just the way it has always

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

so I'm hesitant to declare anything my

most prized possession because it

becomes even more

subject to impermanence than the average

possession

although that Fez is damn good Fez

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

what is your greatest or most persistent

fear I'm starting to think that Rick

here is some kind of agent

what is your greatest or most persistent

fear I ask Rick here have you ever read

1984

remember that scene where

uh Winston is in bed with his his

girlfriend Julia

you know they've got this place out in
the pearl quarter where they they meet
you know secretly they have these secret
rendezvous and he's telling her what is
most pers his most horrible fear and it
turns out there's like a microphone like
a view screen hidden in the room because
the government's spying on him and then
they use that
in when he's being tortured when he's
being forced to be indoctrinated and so
forth and so I mean you just don't blur
it out in public what your most
persistent fear is
I can't really can't think of much
anyway but even if I could I'm not going
to be like blurting it out for you know

the people at Google to to find out and

record and send to the government

whatever

so I'll just move on to the next

question and I just advise people just

don't tell anybody what your greatest or

most persistent fear is or actually all

right I'll do it my most my greatest

most persistent fear is to be

tied down spread eagle and to have a

beautiful woman with large breasts

smother me with their titties

which would have to be my sweetheart at

present

for the foreseeable future for the rest

of my life I trust

so I'll just move on the next question

here

this is also from Rick do either you or

your sweetheart desire to Bear a child

someday well we're getting a little too

old for that sort of thing I mean she is

still a child bearing age technically

but um

yeah I mean

having children I'm pushing 60.

so I'm getting a little too old even to

be a grandpa at this point

so yeah the uh the window for that was

opened and closed and neither of us took

advantage of that open window so we just

have each other plus a few dogs

and some really nice loaches out in the

pond out in the front yard

so I'll just move on to the next

question here

I've heard you talk about your father on

many occasions

can you give us a summary of your mother

and her influence on you well

I think my mother's main influence on me

has been genetic as you may imagine

that

physically and emotionally I take F more

after my mother's side of the family

whereas intellectually and spiritually I

take more after my father's side of the

family and my mother was spiritually a

child

you know she just she just didn't get it

you know she got her values from like

daytime TV shows crime dramas and so

forth

she watched a lot of TV she was a

conscientious mother she did her best

um you know I've she really I mean in in

her own way she was she was as good of a

mother as she could possibly be towards

my brother and me

um

but we started being on different

planets when I reached about the age of

13.

so

yeah I don't want to give like a

biography of my mama uh at this point

um mainly because there's so many

questions to uh answer

so yeah the main the main thing about

that is her influence on me was largely

genetic I've got a lot of her emotional

and physical traits

like long legs

this nose

so let's just move on to the next

question here

how did you go about becoming a

published author any advice for those

who may wish to publish a book well with

regard to the ones that

um caused money I just self-publish it

on Amazon and that's relatively easy to

do you can look that up just look up you

know Amazon self-publishing

and uh it's it's actually a pretty good

deal

that it's it's relatively Fair the way

they go about it

um with regard to my Attica Wagga

translation it was just

somebody who had connections with a

publishing firm well really liked it and

wanted it published and so they started

publishing it up until they found out

that I was just a heretical rascal and

so they pulled out of the deal after

publishing uh some sample copies

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

question

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

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

anyone being declared King of the Jews
and on in according to the The Gospel
according to John I think uh there was a
sign on the top of his cross saying King
of the Jews and that's that's why he was
he was killed not because he was he was
claiming to be the Son of God I mean the
Romans really didn't care about that
sort of thing but anyone declaring to be
you know a king of this rebellious
group of Roman citizens or just Roman
Roman subjects
that anyone claim being claimed even if
he wasn't doing it himself if you've got
crowds of people considering him to be
this king of a province that the Romans
themselves were governing they weren't

going to put up with that so

he was killed as a political criminal

and uh crucifixion was uh a punishment a

capital punishment for Political

Criminals and also like Pirates and

bandits Renegades slaves like Spartacus

or at least the followers of Spartacus

so I mean what are my thoughts on the

story of Jesus I've I've written in like

multi-part blog posts and talked about

this on videos so I really I'm I mean I

could talk for half an hour on the story

of Jesus I mean it is interesting to me

that everyone whether you're a Christian

or not anyone in the west should read

the Bible just so you know what it is

you're rejecting at the very least it
has such a profound influence on Western
Civilization even for non-christians
so I just the bare minimum if what I
consider to be a likely Jesus his mother
was not a virgin
you know he had brothers and sisters he
was raised as a carpenter following his
Father's Footsteps and he was a
spiritually gifted person being a
carpenter in a small town just wasn't
doing it for him he heard about John the
Baptist out in the desert he goes out
and becomes like a disciple of John the
Baptist and Wiley's out there he has
this experience he has like this
Awakening experience and he finds that

he has psychic powers or the ability to

do miracles

then John the Baptist is arrested Jesus

very plausibly I think becomes the

leader of the group after John the

Baptist is gone

and then he's just not satisfied with

being out here in this desert area he

wants to go where the action is he wants

to go and you know preach the the

Kingdom of Heaven in the in the towns in

The Villages and so forth so he you know

goes his own way he's got followers like

um I think it's the Gospel of John again

who says that you know many of his

disciples were originally Disciples of

John you know the other gospels say they
were just fishermen mending their Nets
and the Buddhists or Jesus says come
with me and they just drop their Nets
and follow him but according to the
Gospel of John they were already
Disciples of John the Baptist and then
they switched over to Jesus when John
the Baptist was arrested and decapitated
and I do think that Jesus considered
himself to be the Jewish Messiah not the
Christian Messiah but the Jewish Messiah
because it was just in the air you read
like
um like the Book of Daniel which was
written just less than 200 years before
the time of Jesus

um and and also there's like all this apocalyptic literature that was in fashion around the Jesus's time and a little before Jesus's time that um it's like predicting that there's going to be this
um more of a spiritual Messiah than the old testament King Messiah the you know descendant of King David is going to rule Israel and Lead it to the foremost position among the Nations and so forth and I think that Jesus really because he was able to have these psychic powers and so forth I think there's a good chance he really did believe that he was the chosen one and then when he gets

crucified and realizes that he's not
going to be leading the Nations like you
know the Messiah was supposed to that's
why he cried out my God my God why have
you abandoned me
so that's uh that's it in a nutshell and
I'll move on to uh Rick here's next
question
it seems that you are at least somewhat
familiar with the Bible can you talk
about some things within the Bible that
have been helpful to you on things that
you or things that you agree with and
also the contrary one of my favorite
parts of the Bible that really isn't
mentioned much in Buddhism but it's I
think it's a good idea

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

mean God will know

you know and from the Buddhist under the

Christian point of view

so that's that's one thing that I really

like and the other things there have

been other things but they're just not

coming to mind right now

in regard to things that have not been

helpful

um I don't know if there have been any

teachings of the Bible old or New

Testaments that have been like harmful

to me

I mean there's most of it is just

irrelevant to me

I mean I really don't care what Mosaic

law is or you know the Exodus through

Sinai and all that I mean you know like

uh destroying the

the I don't know these different these

different tribes and their the names are

escaping me I'm malachites and so forth

I mean some of the the history is

interesting

and I mean some of the stories are

interesting but for the most part I

really didn't get a whole lot of wisdom

from reading the old or New Testaments I

mean the Old Testament if you condense

it down to one sentence

it's love the Lord thy God with all your

heart and all your soul and all your

strength or he will kill you and maybe

your family and neighbors too

I mean that's that's like the central

message of the Old Testament as far as I

can tell

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is also from Rick and

I'm warning Rick that we may have to uh

limit the number of questions down to

like five just to keep this at a

manageable length

so his next question is how do we

reconcile the Buddha telling us to

wander alone like a rhinoceros into

Brave bugs and snakes and heat and rain

with the modern day monastic life which

is safe and social and vaccinated and as

you put it monks living like neutered

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

nature that you've got the middle path
between self-indulgence and self-torture
most people including most monks are
going to be straying towards the
self-indulgent side
so I mean if you want to reconcile that
in a positive way you just uh
acknowledge that you know the cushy the
monks who are just kind of lazy and
living an easy life you know they're
there but you don't have to do it that
way you can really
try do your best to follow what it says
in the texts and you know live alone in
the forest and just diligently practice
you know Falls one year rules and so
forth

so that'll be that'd be how you

reconcile them I suppose I mean you're

not gonna

I mean you don't just necessarily live

the way they live you know because

really I think that was one of the the

most effective parts of the Monk's life

in the Buddhist time was just throwing

yourself at the mercy of the universe

and just wandering around in a

predominantly non-buddhist although

still spiritual culture and you know

you're dealing with all this stuff you

know Bandits and tigers and malaria and

all this stuff that's going on

and I mean just having to maintain

equanimity

in in this really dire situation

sometimes I think that would be one of

the strongest aspects of Buddhist

practice

and probably one of the strongest

aspects of early Christian practice when

Jesus is telling his disciples just

wander around and just hit something

just wander around with no money and so

forth

so

that'd be my answer to that moving on to

Rick's next question

as a Layman do you still refrain from

killing bugs and pests do you think it

really matters either way or has the

principle been taken too far after all
mosquitoes are the number one killer of
human beings apparently responsible for
over 700 000 human deaths per year is it
fair to say that we didn't make the
rules of the game and that we are
natural enemies
some would argue that killing mosquitoes
saved human lives yeah I mean I've had
full super malaria seven or eight times
I'd be dead seven or eight times over if
it wasn't for the the magic of modern
day Pharmaceuticals
um as a Layman I do occasionally kill
parasitic insects that's the only beings
whose lives I take willingly and and

willfully his parasitic insects

um which includes and sometimes because

they infest the kitchen sometimes

I'll just squish one with my finger if I

see it on the counter

um

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

it's like an Indian cultural thing

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

nice if you're able to not kill any

beings but if you're a lay person living

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

that's got lice in his hair I mean

you're gonna you have to do something

about that even monks that have

intestinal worms you know they'll still

take something to get rid of the

intestinal worms you know you have to

look after yourself even a monk is

allowed to strike out in self-defense

so I mean as a Layman you know I'm a man

I do have you know the right to defend

myself

and just prevent my kitchen from

swarming with ants for that matter

so

um yeah I do kill the occasional insect

it's not like a daily occurrence or

anything but one reason why I really

don't think it's all that horrible I

don't think anyone's gonna go to hell

for that

is that I do have a degree in biology

and I know that insects and other

arthropods

just do not have a nervous system like

ours apparently they do not feel pain or

fear

like I've told this story before I used

to work on Japanese ships as a Fisheries

observer in the Bering Sea before I was

a monk and

um you know on some ships I'd have a

holding tank for crabs if a crab came up

that I put it in this holding tank until

I had time to like you know measure it

and weigh it say what species what what

sex

and we'll sit gender

yeah and it's viability see if it was

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

I mean you do that to a mouse you rip

off three of a mouse's legs you hold a
little cracker in front of it it's just
going to go into convulsions and die
it's not going to want to eat anything
but insects and like Crustaceans and so
forth it's like they don't feel pain it
just doesn't seem to bug them no pun
intended
a mosquito or a fly will fly away if
you're trying to slap it
but that's just like an automatic reflex
sort of like the the door at the grocery
store opening when you walk towards it
you know the door doesn't get out of
your way because it's afraid of you it's
just programmed to do that
so it's not like I'm uh endorsing the

killing of insects if you can go without

killing insects you can go without

killing living beings that's fine I mean

you know if if it's a nice mostly like

if it's a cockroach or a spider or

something you know it's just one you

know I'll catch it with a cup and then

like a piece of cardboard and let it go

outside

but um I do have the right to defend

myself

and also it's sort of a man's duty to

deal with the icky bugs and stuff when

you've got a woman that doesn't want to

deal with icky bugs

so yeah I freely admit that I

occasionally kill an insect and even

when I was a monk I occasionally killed

an insect on purpose

so let's just move on to the next

question here what are your thoughts on

the practice of circumcision

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

worries

but

um yeah I was circumcised I think most

guys in America of my generation have

been circumcised

um I really am kind of neutral on the

subject I really don't have an opinion

about it one way or the other to tell

you the truth

um yeah I really don't care

so I'll just move on to the next

question

do you see a similarity between Catholic

monastic life and Buddhist monastic life

it seems rather unnatural to isolate

oneself with the same sex and live a

celibate life do you think there is some

possible common root or perhaps

Catholicism borrowed from earlier

Eastern tradition or did they spring up

entirely separate well it's hard to say

for sure I think

Buddhism did have some effect on Western

religion this very indirectly Maybe

that um you know there were Buddhist

missionaries

that were sent by Ashoka into the the

Hellenistic world

you know the Greek Greek speaking world

of the West also

um Alexandria Egypt they have found like

Little Buddha Buddha images and stuff

there because you had trade routes

between India and the Roman Empire

coming through Alexandria

and almost certainly you'd have

practicing in Buddhists from India

living there and so probably they knew

about Buddhism at least maybe not the

average person living in a village in

Gaul or something but you know like the

intelligent educated people probably had

at least heard of Buddhism there were

some Greek philosophers who traveled to

to India and came back and uh

so

whether Catholic monastic quarters got

their ideas from

um Buddhism and to what extent I mean

it's possible I don't think there's any

way of proving it one way or the other

but it is it is a possibility

and uh isolate oneself with the same sex

and live a celibate life is unnatural

but then again if you're trying to

escape from the natural world and enter

into you know some Transcendent State

you pretty much have to go against

nature to a large degree so it is

possible they just came up with this

stuff independently I think there were

some Jewish sects you know there were

the essenes there was another group

called The therapeutia something like

that

who uh

they uh they may have they were like

quasi-monastic orders you know they were

celibate and so forth

and also like some of the first like

Christian ascetics where the desert

fathers of Egypt

and you know that's close to Alexandria

Alexandria was in Egypt so it could be

that there was some some Buddhist

influence but you can't really say for

sure so I'm just going to move on to the

next question here and this question is

from moo 88

and moo 88 says what is the funniest

thing you experience while living in

Burma

and that's hard to say I mean I mean

with regard to laughing hard

probably the hardest I ever laughed I

mean this may be kind of a

disappointment you know for people

expecting something exotic

but I think the hardest I've ever

laughed when I was a monk in Burma was

when there was another American monk who

would come to hang out with me or I'd go

to hang out with him and we just tell

some joke

and and that would be it like uh

remember one time he was he was talking

about having a nervous stomach in the

shits and I just said that's that's

actually a good name for a rock band you

know nervous stomach in the shits and

for some reason we just happen to be in

the kind of mood where he starts

laughing and then I start laughing and

the next thing you know we just can't

stop laughing we're like holding our

bellies because we're laughing so hard

even though maybe it wasn't the funniest

joke in the whole world it's just you

have to be in a certain mood when you're

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

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

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

Zen flesh Zen bones

which is compiled by Paul reps and it's

probably this book that converted me to

Buddhism which some people may find

ironic because it's Zen Buddhism and not

taravana but I was originally interested

in Zen

and it's right here

it's not a very long story

it's on page 32

says ryokan a zen master lived the

simplest kind of life in a little Hut at

the foot of a mountain one evening a

thief visited the Hut only to discover

there was nothing in it to steal ryokon

returned and caught him you may have

come a long way to visit me he told the

prowler and you should not return
empty-handed please take my clothes as a
gift the thief was bewildered he took
the clothes and slunk away ryokon set
naked railcon sat naked watching the
moon poor fellow he mused I wish I could
have given him this beautiful moon
the end
so we'll just move on to White Ash
Piper's next question
Have you listened to many or any nde
testimonials on YouTube and nde is a
near-death experience seems that we
really never do die just dropping out of
costumes well I have don't recall seeing
many if any near-death experience

testimonials on YouTube but I have read

a lot in books

and so yeah I've read books on the

subject

so even though I haven't uh

haven't listened to many testimonials on

YouTube if any

um yeah I'm familiar with quite a few of

them including uh I always John Ren

Lewis who actually had a kind of

Enlightenment or Awakening experience as

a result of the near death experience he

was like this hard hard ass atheist

scientist

who was like president of some atheist

Society or something then he has this

near-death experience and when he comes

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

so

yeah I mean near-death experiences they

they do have certain common features and

you know skeptical materialistic

scientistic types will try to explain

them away but

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

away

so I guess I'll just uh I guess I

answered that question well it's it's

just kind of a no because I haven't

listened to nde testimonials on YouTube

so I'll just move on to the next

question which is from Austin

and Austin says how do you let go of

strong attachments such as love

well first of all I would say that love

is not necessarily an attachment at all

that really the essence of Love is

acceptance

but when you accept somebody you know

it's like this yes and that's like

expansive you know it's sort of your

Consciousness expands with yes and kind

of contracts with no and people get

attached to this feeling of of Joy or

happiness or just you know expansion

expansiveness

um also what is generally called

romantic love throughout the world is

not so much spiritual love is it's like

a an animal mating Instinct in the human

animal

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

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

it usually means is my Neurosis feels

comfortable with your behavior

so

with regard to Austin's question here

how do you let go of strong attachments

such as love the only way to let go of

strong attachments is to perceive them

in a different way that you have to

you have to be able to change your

perception

so if you change your perception about

something it can it will change your

behavior

but so long as your beliefs and your

perceptions remain essentially the same

your behavior is going to remain

essentially the same and if you're

attached you're going to stay attached
so it's like the story I told about my
father where he kept trying to stop
smoking he kept trying and trying you
know he'd smoke two packs a day and he'd
stop and then gradually he'd start like
chewing a little tobacco or smoking a
pipe every now and then next thing you
know he's back to two two packs a day
until
one of his legs started turning black
he went to a doctor and the doctor told
him that because of an accident he had
had used previously there was a lot of
capillary damage in that leg and those
damaged capillaries were getting plugged

up with tar

and that if my dad didn't stop smoking

they're gonna have to amputate the leg

so he had to choose did he want to stop

smoking and have two legs or did he want

to keep smoking and have one leg and

when it came down to that his perception

changed so radically with regard to

smoking that it was I mean it was still

you still have the The Addictive urges

and so forth but it was much easier to

say nope nope not gonna do it you know

all you have to do is think about having

his leg amputated and

it's it works that way with regard to

lots of things I mean you don't have to

have it just that in your face usually

you have to like learn

they may be through meditation you have

an Insight or you just learn more on the

subject

you know it's like maybe you really like

fried chicken until somehow you see a

documentary about how factory farm

chickens are raised and that just

poisons your mind against eating chicken

that actually happened to me I don't

like chicken nearly as much anymore

because I've seen these documentaries on

how chickens are raised in these factory

farms and it's horrible you know it's

like

uh or chickens are raised it's like a

concentration camp it's a concentration
camp for chickens so eating a chicken is
practically the same as eating a Jew
so I'll just move on to Austin's next
question
he says so I had asked a mahasi Seattle
monk should we ever attempt at one point
in this meditation on the breath or
stomach without using labels
isn't labeling merely a
conceptualization of the experience
itself he has said quote your question
misunderstands the nature of reality one
pointedness is only for a moment and
noting is
designated for straightening the mind on
the experience the idea of one

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

the only meditation is that our object
is something real and momentary unquote
thoughts on this seeing as you have
practiced mindfulness well
I think this mahasi monk is just sort of
kind of got tunnel vision in favor of
the mahasi method because I mean for one
thing he's claiming that when you note
something it helps you do to be aware of
that moment
and kind of one pointedly but I mean
that's not true at all by the time you
get around to noting what has arisen I
mean you've got like trillions of Mile
moments mind moments have already passed
I mean his idea that you're going to be
noting an object at the same moment that

you are aware of it

I mean that's just wildly inaccurate

which kind of sheds a little doubt on

his own insights from from meditation

um one pointedness

yeah it doesn't I mean when it's talking

about one pointedness in the suit is

it's not implying that the one

pointedness lasts only for a moment

that I mean you're you're like

maintaining the one point in this that's

like you're you're really good at

meditation if you can maintain it but

even one point in this or akagata is the

the polyup version or the poly of it

um it doesn't necessarily mean one point

it is it can also mean just unified your

mind is Unified in a sense it's it's

more accuracy it's unified because then

you're not dealing with your mind being

contracted down this one little

minuscule point

it's just Unified

so

yeah I think

yeah you're better better off I mean

just remember what he said but don't

necessarily consider him to have been

like 100 accurate

that he's biased in favor of the mossy

method and as

a very relatively wise Burmese Seattle

Seattle

told me once I almost asked him what is

your opinion of the masi method and he

said you can get benefit from practicing

it but it is a limited method I mean

you're not going to get extremely very

far practicing the mossy method once you

start getting up into intermediate

levels

you're better off switching methods

that you're not going to get very

Advanced from practicing the mahasi

method or at least that's my opinion

also the opinion of Seattle

so

yeah I mean

with regard to the whole question here

is I mean

let's see here Austin

is asks a monk if it's you you ever get

to a point in your mindfulness where you

stop noting and some mahasi monks will

say yes

but a lot of mahasi monks will say no

you just have to keep sticking labels

onto it you know like breathing or it's

like uh

is expanding Contracting expanding

Contracting like the main mahasi method

is you're observing your abdomen

expanding and Contracting as you breathe

and that you never stop thinking

you know pain a pound a pain day

pounding or expanding Contracting

expanding Contracting Rising falling

Rising falling and I mean it creates

um

it's it's like separating you from the

experience

you know if you're if you're

concentrating on Rising falling then

you're not really concentrating on

what's actually happening you're you're

at least some of your attention is

distracted by the words Rising falling

so

um when you're when your concentration

gets good enough that you don't need to

use the labels as a way of like keeping

your mind busy and sticking it to the

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

the object because if your mind has got
a lot of energy and is restless you've
got to have an energetic kind of
meditation to use up the mind's energy
but then when your mind starts getting
quieter
then you don't need to keep labeling
things you know it's just you're getting
you just stubbornly sticking to the ABCs
instead of moving on to the next level
of practice
so
yeah I wouldn't take this masi Mark too
seriously
so we'll just move on to Austin's next
question what are your thoughts on Zen I

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

yeah I think Zen Aesthetics are largely
Japanese Aesthetics just very this kind
of Stark just uh was it wabito Sabi it's
this sort of austere and just elegant
Simplicity a lot of black and white
um yeah I think that might be a Japanese
thing more than a necessarily A Zen
thing but getting what are my thoughts
on Zen
yeah I was originally attracted to Zen
um until I learned more about taravada
and realize that teravada comes closer
to what the Buddha originally taught but
Zen itself is sort of a return towards
what the Buddha originally taught to
some degree because Zen is the Japanese

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

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

confession that kind of a thing there's

always like a like a a practical purpose

for it

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

just Zen

um the Ceremonies for ceremonies sake

and a lot of taravada you know they've

got the chanting and and that sort of

thing that um

I mean I never really liked that kind of

stuff much either

so I just kind of went alone like the

Horn of the Rhinoceros

but yeah I mean Zen does accept a lot of

Mayana stuff it's it's a it's a

technically a Mayana uh it's a form of

Mahayana Buddhism

so they've got the body side of a
concept they've got you know sort of the
mythological you know gods and Buddhas
and bodhisattvas and so forth that um I
really don't have a whole lot of use for
but just the essential practice of it is
very similar to the essential practice
of
early Buddhism except without so much
wandering you know they're they're
staying in in monasteries mostly because
once you get into China
wandering vagrant Beggars just they
really did not have the same uh respect
that they had in India and so they had
to become like farmers and farm their

own food they couldn't just beg for

their food

even silently

so see where was I

kind of lost myself on that one

um

oh it's gonna say something oh yeah even

even like Roman Catholicism that you get

into the advanced contemplative

techniques like Saint John the cross

writes about and it becomes similar to

early Buddhism in many respects just the

practices of mindfulness and

concentration and so forth

um so it's like the Theory May differ

you know significantly at the lower

levels but the higher up you go and you

do less and less thinking less and less

labeling less and less categorizing than

if they are relatively enlightened

systems they're going to be converging

and Zen and early Buddhism and even to

some degree uh some like monastic

Christian orders you know they're

they're doing the same thing

so

um

so at the top top level Zen and early

Buddhism are comparable but at the lower

levels early Buddhism are like terravada

for example especially the earlier

strata of terravonna comes closer to

what the Buddha was teaching at lower

levels

so there is that

so I think I should just move on to the

next question because I really need to

answer these questions in a timely

manner

and so Austin's next question I think

we're still on Austin here please

forgive me if I've misnamed you I recall

you mentioning that you've been to Japan

three times as a monk I'm curious about

your impressions of Japanese Buddhism

particularly the aspects such as monks

being allowed to marry consume alcohol

engage in cooking and cleaning duties

and following a straight and vegetarian

lifestyle additionally I'm interested in

knowing what kind of conversations or
debates you had with Japanese Mahayana
amongst during your visits okay well
I'll answer the last part a lot first
and that is I never had any
conversations or debates with Japanese
Mahayana monks the thing was when I went
to Japan I was staying at a terravada
monastery in Japan that was
it was founded by Japanese people but
they wanted to get back to you know
um
early Buddhism which they equated with
taravada so there were some Japanese
Buddhists who converted to taravana and
they invited uh Burmese Seattle's

including uh one or two agamaha panditas

if you don't you don't know what that is

that's why but it's a very high

ecclesiastical Rank and they really

wanted me to come just because I was a

foreigner you know I was sort of the

example of a non

Southeast Asian who successfully had

been ordained in a terror bottom

tradition or some such

and uh

so

yeah I just was living in this terrible

and bubble within within Japan

and uh I was very disappointed recently

when I found out that the Kamakura

Buddha wasn't isn't even supposed to be

go to My Buddha you know it's it's one

of the mythological Buddhists like

amitaba or something there's this huge

standing Buddha statue in Japan also we

went to I knew that one wasn't going to

My Buddha I really wasn't that

interested yet but um that's just a

young monk being kind of bigoted and

Prejudiced against

Mahayana mythological Buddhas

um so I just I need to go over this

question a little better here

um I'm curious about your impressions of

Japanese Buddhism particularly the

aspects such as monks being allowed to

marry consume alcohol

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

colonial power like you know England or

France

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

it

and uh the next part of the question

here is I just didn't have any

conversations or debates with Japanese

Mahayana monks

which is just as well I guess I really

don't speak hardly any Japanese so I

couldn't have done it in Japanese anyway

I did uh give a couple of dama talks the

first one was very well received and

then the second one I deviated from

Orthodox terramata sufficiently that um

the founder of the monastery was very

upset and uh I mean they were they were

very troubled by my my Dharma talk

because

um I just was too western or something

in my point of view I wasn't Orthodox

enough to suit them

because there are Buddhists including

taravada Buddhists who just cling to the

dogma and to the extent that you deviate

from that Dogma you are wrong

and I really I really don't swing that

way I mean you have to follow your

unconscious follow your own best

understanding you don't have to believe

in talking animal stories just because

it's there in the book

so I'll just move on to the next

question here

how does the Buddhist conception of

suffering intersect with existentialist

thought and the examination of The Human

Condition well it's interesting that uh

one book that I read a long time ago was

by

um an eccentric English monk named Jana

Veera who has probably way more

followers now than he did when he was

alive he wound up committing suicide in

1965 but he was an existentialist

philosopher he was talking

existentialism throughout like in his

letters his collected letters you know

he was really into like Kierkegaard who

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

Dilemma of existentialism

and and niana Vera was such an

intellectual such a rationalist he just

hated mysticism he didn't understand it

because a lot of intellectuals just

can't understand mysticism because

they're just so locked into an

intellectual approach that dismissing

the intellect they just couldn't do it

it'd be like dismissing themselves

but let's see

yeah so I mean according to Nana Vera

existentialism is like

terrible Buddhism in many many respects

except terrible Buddhism leads to

Enlightenment and existentialism doesn't

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

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

mind and so forth but

I think you could cut off your finger

and still you'd have the same amount of

Consciousness which Spinoza didn't

believe

um

so yeah I mean how does the Buddhist

concept of emptiness Challenge

essentialists and substantialist views

of existence found in Western philosophy

and you just say that I mean the essence

and the substance are just

their condition and their essentially

conditional they're not ultimately real

you know they are dependent upon

something else and when the something

else that they're dependent upon ceases

the substance or the essence itself of

you know what what the Western

philosopher says is ultimately real or

whatever that also ceases

um and even when it hasn't ceased yet

especially if you go with like

mahayana's philosophy like majamaka you

know it's it's just virtually real it's

not ultimately real it's you know it's

essentially empty of any like inherent

essence

at least any inherent Essence that you

can identify that you can put your

finger on

so

yeah that's kind of a a dense and deep

question and I just do not have time

to answer it in full length especially

because there's

I mean I'm already up to about the 10th

question here of this is Austin right

Yeah Austin

so I'll just move on to the next

question here

also by Austin what insights did you

come to in Burma regarding the nature of

Consciousness subjective experience in

the mind and body problem

well I think one of the most important

insights that I had in Burma as a

meditator is that when you finally get

to the point in your meditation where

you're not thinking anymore you're wide

awake and your mind is just clear like

glass

that you realize that you're still

you're more awake than you were before

your mind just doesn't stop when you

stop thinking you know it's it's not

like you go into a coma

so I mean it's you realize you stop

identifying with your thoughts nearly so

much when you realize that you know

there's still you know some Essence

apparent virtual Essence to you that is

still there in some respects even more

so when you stop thinking

oh see what else

the Mind Body problem I really don't see

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

if it's not ultimately real it's a
structure composed of of
Karma like like I think it was the very
first question that in a sense you can
say the world the entire Cosmos is
karmic
so I mean theoretically possible for an
enlightened being I mean like some of
the stories about Padma sambhava who was
uh an Adept from like a tantric Adept I
think he originally came from India and
then moved to Tibet but he's he's
considered to be like a second Buddha in
Tibet where you know he would do all
this outrageous stuff you know eating
human flesh and you know he would
occasionally kill people

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

making these statements in a way of sort

of

um justifying Japanese soldiers stabbing

people in the eye which they did a lot

they did some really awful stuff during

World War II and before World War II

so

I guess maybe I answered the question

how does the Buddhist concept of

emptiness challenge our conventional

understanding

well I mean the Buddhist concept of

emptiness is mainly a Mahayana concept

in in terravada emptiness really doesn't

get nearly as much uh mentioned there is

just no self you know anata

so

yeah I mean anata definitely uh

challenges our conventional

understanding of identity individuality

and the boundaries between self and

other because there is no self

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from Garrett

two hours man

this is from Garrett

and Garrett says please pardon any in

all ignorance what are the cons in

practicing and ordaining in a Zen

tradition in your archaic Buddhism

series if remembering correctly

the real houseu does

sounded zeny

I'm asking this is someone on the path

and considering ordination the

bodhisattva Bell seems like the obvious

downside

but if that were put aside what other

negatives am I missing

well

um I've already mentioned this to some

degree like a lot of Zen has

incorporated pure land Buddhist elements

and I got no use at all for Pure land

Buddhism I really do not consider pure

land Buddhism to have been taught by

godama Buddha that is in some respects

the exact opposite of what godama Buddha

was teaching like the Buddha was

teaching get enlightened in this life if

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

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

in a good sense

I mean the more emptiness you've got the

better I think unless you're just like

you need some kind of substance to

occupy your mind

um otherwise it's just going to be like

wandering and just getting lost going in

all directions

so thinking about being ordained in a

Zen tradition you know make sure that

it's it's a strict tradition and they

really are doing serious meditation it's

got a really wise

uh like a roshi like the a teacher there

and um yeah I mean in some respects like

like you're saying here like like some

of the really early Buddha sutas like in

the Attica Wagga a lot of them read like

Zen or majama philosophy

you just don't believe anything don't

you know don't rely on any kind of

thinking unless I mean it's for

practical purposes you know you're

trying to figure out your taxes or

something you have to think but

um it's not reality that if you want to

know reality you have to go beyond

thinking and cultivate a silent mind

that kind of a thing so Zen does have

its advantages and in some respects it

can be superior to teravada if

the Terra water places are lacks and

don't have a wise teacher in the Zen

place is not lacks and does have a wise

teacher

and the Buddhists of a vowel I mean

I don't know

it's uh

in a way is not what the Buddha would

have taught and I don't think he would

have endorsed it that in in some ways

bodhisattva ideas are

yeah it's hard to explain how it arose

other than

um I mean this this could be a long

digression that we really can't afford

because we're already over two hours but

I have read the whole bodhisattva

concept

um comes from like devotional early like

early Buddhist like terravada and

devotional Literature Like The Jonica

stories where the Buddha is perfecting

his part of me's lifetime after lifetime

after lifetime over millions and

millions and billions and trillions of

years

to become an omniscient Buddha and so

the just the natural human glorification

of the founder of the religion which in

of course in Christianity made Jesus God

almighty

it's uh you know it made the Buddha way

way above

like ordinary aurohans ordinary

enlightened beings and so to become a

Buddha was seen as Superior to becoming
a fully enlightened Harahan even though
the Buddha himself was an aura hunt and
was obviously exhorting people to become
arahants
if they possibly can manage it and the
earliest texts have no mention at all
bodhisattvas and so forth in fact what
he saw it by itself is probably a
mistranslation of bodhisatta in Pali or
proto-pali because SATA doesn't
necessarily mean being it can mean it's
a past part of participle of sajidi
which means to be bound for you know to
be you know like bound to
sense was somebody who was bound for
enlightenment Bound for becoming a

Buddha not an Enlightenment being which
doesn't make a lot of sense in a
bodhisattva who is postponing
Enlightenment indefinitely until all
beings in the universe are saved when
these beings in the universe that
supposedly required saving don't
ultimately exist anyway because there's
no self
but we don't need to wallow through that
and uh I'm just going to move on to the
next question here which is from nearmit
and nirmit says is consciousness
produced by the brain if not then why
does people's behaviors and
personalities change after brain damage

yeah we've I've discussed this a number

of times

and

Consciousness is not produced by the

brain but it is complexified organized

and utilized by the brain just like

electricity isn't created by a computer

but it is like complexified organized

and utilized by the computer so the

Consciousness is not produced by

electrochemical reactions in the gray

blob of meat but the gray blob of meat

is able to again utilize you know

complexify organize it and utilize it so

that it can be used for practical

samsaric purposes

and so

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

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

um you know you can go blind so

obviously the brain at least in this

version of reality in this I'm sorry

world

you know it it does sort of serve as a

vehicle for thinking Minds

but a thinking mind is not the same

thing as consciousness

that you don't have to like I was just

mentioning with regard to my important

Insight in Burma you don't have to think

in order to be conscious the

Consciousness is already there

so I think I'm just going to move on to

the next question here this is from

Brembo and Rambo says does

methamphetamine open up doors to demonic

Realms or are these experiences pure

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

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

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

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

real

but yeah I was regarding methamphetamine

or DMT for that matter I really can't

speak from experience because I've never

opened up any doors to demonic Realms

that I'm aware of

so I'll just move on to bramble's next

question do terravonna Buddhist texts

speak of Yama or the Lord of death early

Buddhist texts speak of the Lord of

death

um

yeah it's like uh now to kawaga of the

Sutton ipata mentions the Lord of death

um but

it's not probably not the same as Yama

who is sort of like Pluto or Hades in in
Western classical mythology you know
he's like the the judge of the Dead you
know after you die you have to stand
Before the Throne of Yama or or Pluto or
Hades and then you know they decide what
to do with you or something
um just decide whether you have any
special punishments coming or whether
you just have to you know lurk around in
the darkness has an ordinary shade or
some such
uh Yama is one of the main protagonists
in one of the the main upanishads but in
Buddhism there is there are what are
called Yama Gods there's a heaven this
the the heaven of the Yama Gods but

they're not judges of the dead it's it's

I guess they repurposed

um the gods called niyama

um I'm really no Authority on like where

some of these obscure Heaven Realms

because they're it's mentioned almost

not at all in Buddhism sort of like

asuras where you know it was like a

pre-existing mythology and the Buddhists

had to fit into their cosmology

somewhere or other so they just put them

in the yamah god heaven and they really

don't have anything I know of to do with

with death other than I think according

to Orthodox tradition the Yama gods are

called yamagots because they kill

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

um there was the Lord of death which was

probably like Indian

it was sort of like an Indian uh

mythology

the Indian theology if we're being more

polite I guess where you know you've got

this God that comes and takes your soul

and you know takes you away to the next

world

and that somehow metamorphosed into Mara

who's like the Lord of samsara

you know he's

um not just the Lord of death he's the

Lord of samsaric existence the whole

cycle of birth and death

and rebirth and red death

but with regard to Yama

as a god of like the underworld judging

the dead I don't recall seeing it it

might be in there in some obscure

reference in the sutos somewhere

so I think I'm just going to move on to

the next question and this is from

another person whose name I can't

pronounce

is spelled s-j-o-r-s

and I assume it's like

like Scandinavian or something where it

would be like see yours

it's yours

I don't know

and if you really want me to pronounce

your name correctly you might want to

try some phonetics or something

especially that the guy in Poland I mean

that name is just kind of nightmarish

at least with regard to Americans who

have to pronounce it

so anyways Sears says siors

I don't know he says yoga Chara says

that the Alaya regionana is the

Consciousness that appropriates the body

is it possible that the higher

Consciousness that takes over in

near-death experiences not sure if it's

the right term is the Alaya or else in

the Fez Edition you argued

Fez

in the first edition you argued that

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

through the back door and it

certainly didn't catch traction with uh

most Buddhist schools taravada does not

accept it at all and I'm rather

skeptical of it myself the storehouse

Consciousness which is like where your

karma is stored

and um

yeah I I it's I it's hard for me to

swallow so is it possible that the

higher Consciousness it takes over and

near-death experiences is the Alia uh

yeah I don't think so I mean maybe I

mean in a kind of conventional sense it

wouldn't be ultimately real but none of

this is ultimately real the near-death

experience itself is not ultimately real

so

yeah that one is kind of up in the air

I'd rather doubt it I mean it might be

something kind of along those lines

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

you know in Buddhism

terrible Buddhism especially you say

there's no self in Ultimate Reality but

conventionally you can say there's a

self also there's no soul in Ultimate

Reality and for some reason theravada

Buddhists will say okay but but there's

even not a soul a conventional one

you know they just put their foot down

they say you can say it conventionally

there's a self but even conventionally

there's no soul

and I don't think that that's

necessarily correct as I've

um spoken so heretically recently about

like when you're in a a near-death

experience not the kind of ndes that

were mentioned above but when you're

almost like like one example you're in a

car you're going too fast you hit a

patch of ice the car starts sliding out

of control and in in my case when that

would happen to me as a young man my

mind would just go Crystal Clear I'd

stop thinking and my body would just

automatically do what was necessary to

keep me alive and only after the danger

had passed would I re-enter so to speak

a normal thinking state of mind again

I'd start thinking again but there was

just this Crystal Clarity where it was

like some higher power is just

controlling your body doing what is

necessary to keep you alive and then

once the danger is gone then it sort of

steps back and lets you know the the

meat puppet take over again

um

let's see is it possible in such

situations the Mind realize that the

body controls itself well

I don't think that it's it's the lizard

brain that's doing it my sweetheart also

hypothesized that this sort of higher

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

sliding down even further

so it's like some higher Consciousness

it seems to me

and I think that higher Consciousness is

always there and conventionally it could

be called the soul I suppose maybe

the yogatara Buddhists would declare

that to be the Alay avinyana although I

don't know enough about the Alaya

to uh to really say

but um

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

doing it because it it involves a higher

level of Consciousness than your

thinking mind than like your ego it's

like something more advanced than that

because your ego just isn't enough

that's why this higher level or this

other level takes over

so it could just be like a

multi-dimensional

multi-dimensional Consciousness that the

we're not aware of our thinking mind is

not aware of just because you can't

really comprehend what's higher than

yourself that there are aspects to the

mind that go beyond the thinking ego and

the intellect and so forth that it's

there it's just that own mind or

Consciousness is not limited

to the intellect and and our feelings

and so forth our ego what we consider to

be our mind that that's just the the ego

is only aware of just this limited

amount of stuff and there's more to our

mind that is beyond that including like

our karma from supposedly presumably

past lives and so forth you know it's

it's there it's just that we're not

aware of it

and there's a lot that's another Insight

that I got

um

in in Burma is that really there's

there's way more to the Mind than than

you can be aware of by thinking or by

looking around and trying to identify

stuff it's just totally beyond that

and as it turns out amazingly again I'm

caught by surprise that was the last

question of all questions that was the
last one so I didn't do too bad it's
less than two and a half hours anyway
and uh if it's too long for you to watch
in one sitting feel free to watch it in
installments or something I probably
won't divide this up into two parts
because it's it's less than two and a
half hours
so I mean why watch a movie when you can
just sit there and watch me doing this
and I do apologize for not wearing The
Fez at all this time but it's it's just
the way it is The Fez is going to be for
very special occasions from now on
and so uh that's it and if you have any

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

something or or I just don't see it you
know they asked it in a weird place that
I'm not
you know I I didn't remember to look
like some video that's not a q a you
know they might ask a question there and
then I'm looking in the usual places
where people ask questions and I just
don't see it I didn't didn't look there
or something
but if you have questions to ask about
terravonna Buddhism especially or early
archaic Buddhism or about being a monk
or living in Burma as a monk especially
that kind of stuff anything that you
think I might know something about

um you know I'm relatively well read I
know some stuff about other schools of
Buddhism and Hinduism a little bit about
Western philosophy and sort of
parapsychology you know psychic
phenomena and that sort of thing
um all that spare game
so feel free to ask whatever questions
you think in the comments below if you
have access to the Discord server you
can ask them there if you have access to
my subscribe Star channel you can ask
them there
and uh
feel free to look at the URL links below
and subscribe and like if you haven't
already and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 52 of

question and answer I am your host as

usual

and I think it's been like three weeks

since I've done one of these and it was

kind of predictable why I went for three

weeks sort of kind of was after two

weeks I only had about 18 questions and

that was probably because in the video

the Q a video I did before this I was

not exactly getting overwhelmed I was

getting so many questions it was taking

well over two answers to answer all of

them two answers two hours to answer all

of them

and so I requested that people limit the

number of questions per q a to six it

was five plus an extra bonus question

you can ask so at six it's six for the

price of five

and

um it was kind of predictable that

people would think oh he's complaining

about people asking questions and so

um I just got way fewer questions than

usual after that

so maybe I shouldn't have said anything

but then last weekend I was just gonna

do a nice easy 18 question q a and I was

just so busy doing other things that uh

it just didn't happen so now we're back

up to about at least 30 questions and I

could make these short by answering

concisely without Meandering and

digressing everywhere but

nope not gonna do that

so I suppose without any further ado

I'll just go to the first question here

and this is from covax ncpad zidana

and seal of action says

I heard that venerable sorry puta was

Fanning the Buddha at the time

and this is he's referring to the

discourse the diganaka the deaconanka

suto

so I'll just do a little commentary and

then start the question over again so I

did a video uh discussing the deegananda

suta and according to this suta

it was this discourse that the Buddha

delivered to

um an aesthetic named

that caused sorry puta who is Fanning

the Buddha at the time to become

enlightened when he heard this discourse

there was just something clicked sorry

puta became enlightened this is bad

Quinn sorry puta had been a disciple of

the Buddha for I think just like maybe

two weeks

so I'll begin at the beginning of the

question again I heard that venerable

sorry puto was Fanning the Buddha at the

time what kind of fans did they have an

ancient magada back then on top of that

where would the Buddha sit when giving

these kinds of talks to people did he
sit cross-legged on the ground or on
some kind of elevation as his customary
today of many Indian spiritual teachers
what are some other cultural means of
respect that were given to the Buddha
like these that you can think of so I
guess it's like three questions but
we'll just start with the uh the first
one which is uh
reasonable
so what kind of fans did they have in
ancient magada I'm pretty sure that fans
in those days were mainly made out of
Palmyra leaves as a lot of them are
still made today in Burma you got

um it's not like the long frond like a

coconut palm it's like the fan

of a palmyra that's you know it's you

know big and it's kind of spiky and then

you just cut off the spikes and you put

like a

um

when it like a border like a reinforcing

border on it and you can use just the

stalk of the leaf as the handle or you

can add like some fancier kind of handle

and I assume that's mainly what people

like monks were using in India for well

over 2 000 years so I assume it's

probably that kind of fan and it's it's

cheap you know Palmyra leaves fall and

you just pick one up and trim it a

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

we'll get to that in the next part of

this question a certain etiquette with

regard to

paying respect to a teacher and also

paying respect to the dhamma

or to Dharma in general and so there's

actually a rule of monastic discipline

forbidding a monk from teaching dhamma

if he's sitting on a lower seat than the

people then at least one of the people

that he's teaching

so it's just a sign of respect that the

teacher sits on if not a higher seat at

least an even C he doesn't sit on a

lower seat

um it may be if he was in a monastery

that he would sit

maybe on a bench or something

I can't remember what the the Indian

word is for those wooden platforms

the teachers sit on but um

a lot of the time he's just sitting on

the ground

and let's see here

uh what are some other cultural means of

respect that were given to the Buddha

like these you can think of well it

wasn't just means of respect given to

the Buddha it was means of respect in

Ancient India given to any spiritual

teacher and for example you don't Point

your feet at a venerable person there's

a rule of monastic discipline against

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

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

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

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

Junior has to take his shoes off before

he he comes close to the the Elder Monk

um you know there's just various ways

you know you make uh Anjali it's called

let's see Ultra cultural means of

respect that were given to the Buddha

like these that you can think of

yeah I think that's that's a lot of the

main ones

you know you bow or at least put your

hands together don't wear shoes don't

Point your feet don't sit in

disrespectful ways uh you know don't

have like a weapon or anything on on

your person don't wear don't have your

head covered

um I knew this one monk long ago he was

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

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

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

from CEO of action

and first I'm going to drink some bovine

glandular secretions with the umbrella

to show that I have class

okay

so see of actions says

how do you reconcile the idea of

Consciousness being like electrons that

are always there and only manifesting

itself in certain ways due to the brain

changing it but the Buddha is saying

that Consciousness does not arise

Without a Cause

um

first of all I wouldn't I mean the

comparison with electricity the

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

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

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

the infinite formless Consciousness is

the same as nothing essentially now

everything and nothing you know infinite

energy and zero energy in the quantum

field it's sort of that paradoxical sort

of situation

um but with regard to winyanakanda the

um aggregate of Consciousness that is

one of the constituents of a human being

then you can say sure

conscious that kind of Consciousness

does not arise without some mental state

I mean you have to be conscious of

something you can't just have plain

Consciousness there always has to be

consciousness of something

um but if you get into Infinite formless

Consciousness then it just it's all bets
are off you just have this paradoxical
state where you know anything that's
infinite and formless I mean it has no
beginning no end No Boundaries you can't
perceive it
in order to perceive it you've got to
have some kind of limits to it some kind
of boundary some kind of discernible
characteristics and
the theory goes the argument goes that
infinite formless Consciousness sort of
like the upanishads are talking about as
Brahman and Atman no
see
that

it's it's just it's like an absolute
it's not some sorry it's just off the
scale once something starts being
infinite and formless when it stops
having a beginning and an end and
boundaries and so forth It's just off
the scale it's not really in samsara
anymore
so it's a paradoxical situation
and that's just the way it has to be if
you're if you're discussing the absolute
it's going to be paradoxical unless you
just have really rudimentary ideas about
the absolute and any kind of idea about
the absolute is going to be like invalid
if not just plain and playing false it's
going to be at best invalid because any

kind of concept or explanation is

inevitably going to be some saric and

you can't discuss something that isn't

some sort using some saric terminology

you just drag it into samsara and this

sort of mundaneify it into something

that isn't the absolute anymore

foreign so

I think I'll just move on to CEO box and

see about zina's next question

ah it's weird it's like I always want to

drink something when I do these videos I

know it's

I just feel more comfortable doing it

but then it makes me have like these

little Burpee things that my my

sweetheart is always

kind of getting on my case about that

why you keep doing that on the videos

so I was

just because

so anyways you know and says in the

pariah navaga Buddha says to see all

things as empty and in a guardian as

breakdown he says the idea of emptiness

is inherently linked to dependent

origination as nothing has its own

independent existence however nibana is

also called empty but if it is outside

of dependent

then why is it considered empty it seems

like it would be the one thing that

isn't empty because it isn't dependent

on anything can you please explain why

emptiness would apply even to nibana

well nibbana is indeterminate I mean

it's like reality is empty

so

like

phenomenal things ultimately in reality

are empty

nibana also in reality is empty because

reality is I mean you could call it

empty which is kind of again you're

having to use some sortic terminology

you can call it a biakada indeterminate

I mean you just can't Pin It Down

and that's just the way reality is

anything at the ultimate level you know

at the level of paramata Sacha or

ultimate truth is going to be

fundamentally empty

unless you're an I'll be down the

scholar then maybe you might have a

different idea

so I'll just uh move on to the next

question here this is from crazy

librarian

and crazy librarian is making asking a

question with reference to a statement I

made on the Discord server see there was

um

in the in the past the recent past on my

Discord server there have been some pure

land of Buddhists who are trying to

portray pure land Buddhism as authentic

teachings of the Buddha and I just

cannot buy it at all

you know in some ways pure land is

teaching the exact opposite of what the

historical Buddha was teaching according

to the earliest texts

and so

um I made this statement and this is a

quote from what I wrote on the Discord

server two things I see about early

Buddhism and about what the founder of

our spiritual system taught one no

mythological Buddhas including Mattea

kasipah and dipankara let alone amitaba

and two strive to get in line in this

very life

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

eventually in my opinion I mean this

isn't Orthodox pretty obviously but in

my opinion it was you know the cult of

the Buddhas where the Buddha became

mythologized you know he wasn't just an

enlightened founder of of the of dama of

the system of Buddhism

that he was just one of a long line of

Buddhas that

um when Buddhism or when when dhamma

disappears from this world then a new

Buddha has to ReDiscover it and he has

to be much more advanced than any of his

disciples you know he's not just an aura

hunt he spends countless eons

perfecting the his parmies and parmes

literally means like Perfection and

there's 10 of them in terrible Buddhism

and uh you know he's got to purify his

character

just over countless eons in order to

become a Buddha in order to set the

wheel of dhamma rolling again after it

finally dies out due to impermanence and

if everything has a beginning has an end

and So eventually

the terravonna Buddhists just came up

with this essentially like a Pantheon or

this lineage going back countless World

Cycles you know they've got they've got

them all named out I mean going back

just countless eons just countless

worlds before this world

now countless indias before you know the

the present India

and uh dipankara

was the the Buddha that was the Buddha

of a world this you know a zillion

gajillion years ago and he was the one

that

um gave the biade in Burmese it's called

viade you can't become a Buddha unless

another Buddha

said like prophesies that you will

become a Buddha in the future

you know that kind of sets you firmly on

the path of becoming a Buddha

so

our historical Buddha go to My Buddha

was

um he was a non-boot his hermit

or ascetic

and sumado that was his name sumado like

ajan sumedo

and there's this story about how

um deepankarabuda was going to come to a

ceremony where he and you know his

millions of of followers I mean I don't

know I don't remember how many but

especially in the past Legends of past

Buddhas the numbers just become

astronomical like with regard to their

height with regard to their lifespan

with regard to the number of followers

the number of enlightened followers with

the number of uh like this like the

intensity of their austerities and so
forth they just become just off the
scale in just mythological exaggeration
and any of you who really want to to
learn about this
just look up mangala Buddha look up the
details of mangala Buddha who was a few
Buddhas after the pankara I think you
know in some previous world
where there was an India where people
were speaking Pali and so forth
so anyway sumado
he volunteered to prepare a certain
amount of footpath for deepankra Buddha
and his retinue of enlightened monks to
walk to get to the Pavilion where they

were you know all of them are going to
be fed it was just you know a city-sized
pavilion presumably and he didn't have
time to finish there was this one muddy
spot so he just throws himself on his
face
on the muddy spot so that the Buddha and
his retinue can walk over the top of him
and then deepanka Buddha prophesies I
guess you I mean it's kind of a
judeo-christian word but he predicts or
foresees that this this sumado this this
hermit sumado
is going to become you know in countless
eons in the future a Buddha named godama
so it's it's largely mythological Mateo
is going to be the next I mean in in

Sanskrit it's my trail

uh kasapa was the Buddha preceding

directly preceding our historical Buddha

godama

so I mean I really don't think that the

Buddha was teaching about other Buddhas

in fact the whole idea of the Buddha

being like way above you know like a

whole different order of enlightened

being above his enlightened disciples

I really do think that's a later

development of just glorification of the

founder and then from glorification of

the founder it just branched off into

all this mythological stuff eventually

culminating in like the pure land idea

of these other Cosmic Buddhas like

Amitabha and medicine Buddha and so

forth

so just because something is in the poly

Canon does not mean that it's

necessarily true and there's lots and

lots of fairy tales talking animals fire

breathing dragons and mythological

Buddhas that you can find there but

don't believe everything you read

so I'll just move on to Crazy Librarians

next question

and he says

I assume crazy librarian is a guy

regarding your answer I assume his

gender

regarding your answer where a monk has

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

there was this monk who was ordained and

he had been married and had a child like

a baby sort of like the Buddha had a

baby when when he went forth and became

an aesthetic according to the legend so

there's this monk who was

I mean he left his wife and his infant

baby

I guess all babies are infants aren't

they

so he left his baby

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

meditating in Bliss

presumably at this park

and so the wife catches wind that her

ex-husband

the uh the Monk Is is in this park so

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

and walks off with him and manages to

take care of him somehow

and in a way

you know the Buddha's Own Story

according to the legend you know he does

something similar I mean he didn't

really leave his wife and infant son in

any state of hardship because according

to the legend they were living in a

palace

so I mean they weren't going to starve

or anything

but um I mean if you can reconcile

practicing intensive dhamma and you know

taking care of like an aged parent with

Dementia or something

um then I mean that's fine and some

monks can manage that but according to

just the hard-nosed ancient Indian

approach and that Dharma is the most

important thing that you can dedicate

your life to then yeah it takes

precedence

so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from the person who

used to have an easily pronounceable

name but now it's like he explained it

to me at least once how to explain the

name

um but it's true

something like that

says I am willing to take one for the

team what was your scariest experience

in Burma

well

I should have I should have read up on

this I should have reviewed

um I did write about this shortly after

it happened

within just a few years of it happening

but it's been well over 10 years now

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

kind of a long story actually

um

I was living at this Monastery one bow

Wildlife Refuge monastery

and with one other Monk and he was he

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

sure exactly how old he was

but um

he was bitten by a cobra and died

so like I think it was the next day we

cremated him because it was the hot

season we don't have electricity meat

goes bad in hot weather we had to

cremate him fast

so we cremated the day that he was

cremated I was going to go to the

Outhouse to attend the call of nature I

opened the door and there's this big

Russell's Viper

I mean deadly poisonous snake the most

dangerous snake in Burma is coiled up

right around the water pot right in my

Outhouse and so naturally I just uh

changed my mind about taking a dump just

then and just kind of slowly backed off

and closed the door and left it there

but none of this was the scary part I

mean you get used to seeing snakes

um

old unandia being bitten by a cobra and

dying I mean it wasn't really scary I

mean it was definitely sobering you know

I mean there's definitely something to

take very seriously but it wasn't really

scary

but what was scary was

uh just a I think it was like one or two

days after The Cremation and this is

like April this is like the middle of

the hot season just blazing hot

and I'm inside my cave doing walking

meditation just walking back and forth

and I happen to notice that outside

through the through the air hole like

the window everything starts turning

brown

and so it's just kind of weird I hadn't

seen that before so I look out there and

it's like I'm looking through Brown

tinted sunglasses everything is brown

and the wind just starts blowing really

hard and then all of a sudden I mean

it's like 110 115 degrees Fahrenheit

outside these big hailstones like the

size of strawberries just start whipping

down and they're they're kind of like at

an angle like this the wind is blowing

so hard and within like 15 20 seconds

the ground is covered with ice

and I'm thinking what the hell is going

on

um I remember reading a long time ago

science fiction story called Lucifer's

Hammer by Larry nivenin and Jerry

pornell about what happens when a comet

smacks into the ocean and this sort of

thing does happen every few tens of

millions of years very least

and so there's this guy a scientist he's

walking down the street in California

somewhere and all it's a it's a bright

sunny day all of a sudden the sky just

blackens and it just starts pouring down

rain just in torrential downpour and

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

couldn't I mean it's like I wasn't sure

you know I didn't just jump to

conclusions but it's like what the hell

is going on

and so it was like this feeling of like

alarm and Dread

it's much worse than like you know

almost stepping on a Viper or something

it was just this really visceral kind of

of just is the world coming to an end

kind of a Feeling

so that's kind of a long answer to a

short question so I'll just move on to

true that was his next question here

you sitting next to the waterfall and

Athena's sigil comment about

imagining you living there and

contemplating like the Buddha gave me

the idea for the next question okay this

is due to some some video I made

um next to a waterfall not too long ago

and Athena sigil

left a comment on the YouTube video

saying that you imagine me just living

there next to the waterfall

contemplating the amenity the universe

or whatever

so it's always because this is says do

you think that people have different

mind State when dwelling in nature as

opposed to city and urban areas

they may be calmer or more peaceful or

something yeah definitely that's why

monks are encouraged to go out into the
forest or at least in the Buddhist time
monks were encouraged to go out alone
into a forest and just meditate at the
root of a tree
and I've mentioned this before but one
of my favorite sutas in the Maji mini
Kaya is the Lesser discourse on voidness
or emptiness
and step one if you want to cultivate
emptiness
is you go out into a forest because
there's less
commotion going on you know less crying
babies and barking dogs and there's
people yelling and talking and creaky
cartwheels going down the tracks and

just artificial rules that you have to

follow artificial like right angles and

straight lines that just don't exist in

nature kind of a thing

um so it's like your first step towards

emptiness and just like peace you know

Freedom Liberation is you get out of

town

so yeah

um

yeah you're naturally eating naturally

tend to be calmer or more peaceful if

you're in a horse unless you're just

scared of bears or something

so I'll just move on to uh

this is his next question here

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

if you practice dama intensely

intensively

so

you know it wasn't really hard to start

working again except physically just

being on my feet you know eight hours a

day and just lifting you know heavy

bundles of like sheet metal

stuff

um yeah I mean that was the hard part I

was just wiped out my first month

um after you know being a member of the

Leisure Class I did do some exercise I

did kind of a lot of walking when I was

in Burma and there's there's you know

chop would carry water kind of stuff but

it wasn't like hard work for eight hours

a day

so mainly it was physical but the the

mental aspect of it was actually pretty

easy I I adjusted fairly easily

so we'll just move on to the next

question I think this is from

Justin K or just Inc

only Inc

where's Justin King

yeah take your pick

so Justin K or Justin says

would you ever do a top 10 book

recommendation video on your favorite

books pertaining to Buddhism or just in

general I'd love to hear books relating

on the forest tradition

um I've actually done uh book

recommendations and my old blog used to

have I'm pretty sure the top 10 most

important books that I've ever read

um

but the old blog isn't up anymore it is

it has been abolished at least I've done

everything I know how to to to abolish

it

so

um

yeah Justin or Justin says I'd love to

hear books relating to the forest

tradition but

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

most important books

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

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

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

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

sutiny Pata

um just really ancient stuff

um I mean I'll I won't try to come up

with the top ten off the top of my top

of my head but um I mean like the first

really important book like the first

real Paradigm changer that I ever read

was Desmond Morris is the Naked Ape

which I read when I was like 14 years

old

um Zen flesh Zen bones which I read when

I was like 18 would probably be on the

list is what I consider to be a really

important book is a book that like

significantly changes the way you look

at things

and uh another one is uh battle for the

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

that's how

um like Chinese

brainwashing worked that's how a lot of

interrogation methods like especially

installing a Soviet Union worked it's

how like military basic training works

it's how like Stone Age like manhood

rituals used to work where you know you

have this kid you send them out into

into the forest or make him undergo this

harrowing eye ordeal so that I mean he

just in this state of Crisis and then

you turn him into a Fearless Warrior who

will not question commands from the

chief or whatever

um and a lot of spiritual stuff like uh

some some meditation

um Retreats or

um some of the early Christian kind of

not really early like um methodism

started in this way with

um John Wesley would give these uh

sermons

and he generally avoided sophisticated

City Slickers he went out into the

rustic areas where people were more

simple and they had less capacity for

skeptical doubt about the Bible this is

like back in their like the 1700s

and his sermons

were mainly divided into two parts the

first half of the sermon is he's telling

them if you don't repent your sins

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

freaking out becoming unconscious and

then when they finally regain

Consciousness they were born again and

then they'd have like uh teachers or

trainers who would be like kind of

giving them the suggestions they needed

to hear to restructure them into good

Christians

so I mean that was that was an

interesting book for me but I don't

think Justin K was really

um

yeah

I think he's he says he'd love to hear

books relating to the forest tradition

yeah the only book relating to the

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

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

question

let's see yeah Justin says

also what are the differences between

the Burmese Thai and Sri Lankan Forest

traditions

well the only Forest tradition

that

I know

a significant amount of information

about would be

Burmese I might know more about the Thai

Forest tradition than the Burmese Forest

tradition because the ties have more of

a forest tradition than the Burmese do

I've never been to Sri Lanka I've met

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

um largely because of ajanman

um hanjan Shaw I suppose was a forest

Monk there are a number of uh Thai

Forest monks and there's a tie Forest

tradition a lot of uh pra tudong which

are monks that practice do tongas or

like the optional aesthetic practices

where they just wander around and they

they sleep under trees they might cheat

just a little bit and have what's called

a crop or a clot which is a big umbrella

with a mosquito net that you can hang

from a branch so that you know I'm

getting bitten by mosquitoes

but still

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

not as strong on meditation the ties

seem not to be as strong in meditation

as the Burmese but with regard to

um monastic discipline and

asceticism they they outdo the Burmese

but with regard to

um the Thai or the forest tradition in

Burma

um I was ordained in the tong Pulu

Forest tradition which was one of the

only

um well-known Forest traditions in Burma

and

it was mostly composed of

like simple Village People I mean you're

out in the forest so most of your

recruits into this tradition are going

to be you know from rural Villages
agricultural communities because you
know that's where they're the ones that
are closest to the monks they're more
likely to see the monks they're the ones
that are offering homes the monks in the
morning
and so I mean there wasn't a lot of
scholarship in the Burmese Forest
Tradition at least
um and in the Tom Pulu tradition you get
a few really intelligent ones who are
attracted to it who would enter it and
then they'd generally move off and
become famous you know living outside of
a forest or in some little patch little

Grove or something but

um I like

not the famous

tradition but

uh ujonika or the zodika of the Tom

putlu tradition

so I mean all in all the Burmese they

have a a really high opinion of abhidham

they know the the scriptures really well

they're really into scholarship the ties

maybe don't know the sutas as well on

average there are fewer Scholars scholar

monks in Thailand but there are more

strictly practicing

ascetic monks even though Burma probably

has a more a more solid meditation

tradition

and in Sri Lanka

in the forest tradition like I say I

mean they tend to be knowledgeable

intelligent monks they know the sutas

um they probably don't have much use for

abhidham all the ties also generally

don't talk about it much

and uh what their meditation and their

monastic disciplines like I really don't

know

so that's that's my

my little bit of knowledge on comparing

the the three Forest traditions and I

suppose you could also throw in like

Laos and Cambodia and so forth but uh

they've uh they really don't have a

strong uh monastic tradition there

partly because in Cambodia of course

most of the monks were killed off by the

Khmer Rouge

so we'll just move on to the next

question here also by Justin or Justin K

or just think

honorable Ponyo Bossa I've been watching

your Q A's for quite a while now thank

you for the time you've taken answering

our questions why thank you and you're

welcome I read a few years ago oh I read

a few years ago about a story of a

famous Forest monk I think from the Sri

Lankan tradition who was approached by a

rich woman who wanted to show off her

pity

the monk was known for his disdain

towards the laity and responded to the

woman by showing his ass is this disdain

for the laity common for certain monks

it would make sense given the

traditional Buddhism has a spiritual

hierarchy did you see laity as not gonna

make it not gonna make it as compared to

the monks who are striving to break

samsara

um

well my own teacher my main teacher as a

monk venerable Tom Pulu charlson Doyle

Seattle

he did I mean because he was Burmese he

was culturally conditioned he was a

product of his culture so he just

naturally assumed that monks are

superior to lay people and in Burma you

don't even use the word for human being

for monks

I mean Lou is the word for human being

you don't use it for monks you're

counting and Burma is a peculiar

language because there are these

counting words

that you have to use like if you're if

you're naming a number of something like

the word for counting people is Yao so

you don't say

three people you say people three young

and

monks just are encountered with monks

are counted with ba which is used for

counting anything exalted or Noble or

holy like uh ariatus is the Four Noble

Truths

so

um

so there's it's just built into the

culture that monks are considered to be

superior to lay people at least

um more venerable more more holy I

suppose

um I wasn't so much a product of that

culture so I didn't have that idea

nearly so much especially when you look

at the way most of the monks are most

Asian monks they really are not striving

for enlightenment and my my observation

was in a lot of places at least the lay

people were better Buddhists than the

monks were

um really neither of them had much

likelihood of becoming enlightened in

this life

but

at least the lay people were taking five

precepts seriously whereas the monks

have you know more than 2 000 precepts

and they just pretty much ignore most of

them except for the superficial ones

about you know having your head shaved

and and wearing the robes properly and

so forth they might take that seriously

but um I mean most of them handle money

and they just weren't serious

so

um

amongst showing his bare ass to a woman

that would actually be against linear

rules I'm pretty sure

I'm showing I mean showing your your

privates to a woman is certainly against

the rules

um showing your ass maybe if they she

couldn't see the privates

um but still I mean it's obviously an

act of contempt I mean maybe he was some

kind of eccentric holy fool Saint type

and you know he did not have any kind of

derogatory volitions or anything

so maybe

I mean my teacher who I started off

talking about I didn't get to the main

point it's like you know he would not

accept anything from a lay woman or a

lay person who was wearing shoes you

know I mentioned earlier that you show

Respect by taking your shoes off before

you approach a holy man if if somebody

forgot to kick off their sandals before

offering him food he'd tell them to take

their shoes off and women had to have

What's called the Tibet

um not the country but it's it's like

this little

um like a towel or a scarf that that lay

women wear over one's shoulder and it

doesn't really have any purpose other

than just traditional

but um it's a way of showing respect I

suppose and he would not accept alms or

anything from a woman that didn't have

like the little scarf or towel over one

shoulder you know they'd have to go get

one if they wanted to put some food in

his bowl or something

uh

also I'm I'm kind of reminded of

um I'm kind of surprised that nobody has

ever asked in these q and A's who the

little guy sitting next to the Buddha is

up on top of the altar there and that's

uh he was a famous Alchemist

kind of a a sage in like medieval Burma

back in the days of the Burmese Kings

and I'm pretty sure his name was Bobo

Ong

and one of the most famous stories about

Bobo Hong is a woman came to him and she

asked for his Blessing

um because she was starting a new

business or she already had this

business she wanted him to bless her so

that she would be successful in business

and he pulled out his dick and just

slapped her upside the head with it

and uh apparently it worked because she

prospered after that

um but I mean whether that was contempt

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

um you can't really know

with certainty what the karma is of an

act performed by somebody unless you

know what their volition was you know

why they were doing it what mental

States they had while they were doing it

so

let's see I hope I asked answered this

question and see

uh approached by a rich woman and wanted

to show off her pity the monk was known

for his disdain towards the lady uh

yeah I mean sometimes you can um like a

wise monk or a wise teacher can do stuff

to kind of humble proud arrogant rich

people like neem karoli Baba who's

teacher whose picture is also up there

on the altar he would do that with rich

people too I mean

um like rich people they'd give him all

this really fancy food you know they

they want to feed him this deluxe meal

and they'd be advising you here eat this

first and then after that cleanse your

palate with this and then try some of

this and then he just stir it all

together into a Glock before he would

eat it but if a poor person offered him

food you know he he'd act like it was

like this kingly Feast you know so

um he wasn't like doing it out of

you know any kind of desire to humiliate

in a bad way the rich people but

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

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

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

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

that there is no self because there is

no distinctions

there is no distinction there is no this

as opposed to that to even to

distinguish this from that is papancha

and Enlightenment nibbana one of the

synonyms for nibana is Nipa Pancha or no

papancha no discrimination no

distinguishing this from that you know

not even from Shinola

so

yeah I mean I would have to go with

bikubody even though his politics in my

opinion are Unworthy of a biku but still

I mean it's not just skillful means that

there really is a self you're just not

you're supposed to just deny it

um I mean what would be the point of

that that would be practically dishonest

you know if there is a self

but you're just not supposed to say

there is just for the sake of helping

you to

um defeat your own egoism

I'm sure would explain it differently

from that but that's kind of the way it

strikes me just reading this I mean

there just is no self because there is

no this or that

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

mental it's all the way perception works

it's like the way perception works is

first you have to single out something

and then you you slap a label on it

you know it's namarupa or papuncture

Sanka

where first you have to single out

something you know you have to give it

borders you have to differentiate figure

from ground

and then you give some sort of

significance or meaning to that even if

itself what the hell is that still it's

a that

and that is all artificial you can't

differentiate figure from ground even

you can't differentiate anything without

relations same as different from bigger

than smaller than these are relations

and without these relations you know how

like a multiplicity world you don't have

plurality

the only way you have plurality more

than even one thing maybe even one is

too high of a number

is you have to differentiate things and

you can't differentiate things without

relations you know at least different

from

and different from does not exist out

there in in some external world

I mean like a chemist can take a sample

of matter and you can analyze it you can

divide it up into its constituent

elements he's not going to isolate any

pure different from

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

head

and that is largely how I interpret on

Tom

so unfortunately I guess I have to agree

with bikubody on that one

so I'll just move on to Francois next

question here

hi again Monsour Ponyo

people don't call me moms who are very

much it's just m m dot but that's I

assume that's French for Mister which is

Mansour

I have a question

I listen to a lot of your videos and it

seems to me that you adopt the majomoka

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

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

like a purgative he said it is like a

boat to cross the river once the river

is crossed you don't carry the boat with

you did I understand correctly your

interpretation

cheers

um I don't think he underst let Francois

here

understands the majama position

that he's saying here my interpretation

of let's see a quasi mystical substance

The Emptiness is a kind of

quasi-mistical substance or principle

some kind of universal Panacea or

Ultimate Reality I mean he's not going

far enough I mean if you if he was to

say that to nagarjuna no no Guardian it

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

be reified or intellectualizing trying

to

trying to turn it into a concept that is

still validly applicable to what is out

there

or even within and it just doesn't work

that way like majama comp it shoots down

all arguments and then saves its own

Arguments for last and then shoots those

down because no argument you can make is

ultimately valid it doesn't apply to

reality

so

his interpretation of early Buddhists or

terrible denotion of no self there are

actual entities yeah I mean I've already

I already went over that and just in the

question above the previous question

that you cannot have entities without

adding this purely artificial

mental perception you take away

perception that entities don't exist

anymore

and then you can say well they exist out

there we're just identifying them all

you're doing is you're just trying to

kick perception out the front door and

sneak it into the back again because you

cannot have multiplicity without

perception and the perception is not it

that's not reality that's just symbols

purely artificial

so let's see here

and again he seems to be saying that

there is a self it's just not myself

but that's not what anata says there is

no self

which means all Damas are not self

and that's and it's not even Sankara

it's a

all conditioned things are Duca all

conditioned things are impermanent but

they don't say Sabe Sankara this is

because they're even in they're even

including unconditioned stuff

you know it's not just all conditioned

things or without self it's everything

including nibana it's just there is

there is no self

in Ultimate Reality

and to the extent that you want there to

be a self

anyway it's kind of craving to exist

clinging to existence or craving for

existence

or just being stuck in intellectuality

being stuck in perception

if you have a really good mystical

experience maybe

um you can get some feel for it to even

grok that um really there's nobody there

whether you identify with with it or not

so let's see here

yeah the main problem in the self is the

ownership notion

yeah

yeah I do think that nug Arjuna came

about as close to any

post Buddha

um Buddhist philosopher with regard to

understanding dependental rising and

emptiness and so forth that he says

dependent cool Rising is emptiness

that because

I mean there is no fundamental

underlying essence

to to any discrete entity and so these

discrete entities are reliant upon

context and this perceptual processes

and so forth and the context and the

perceptual processes are all just part

of the same mutually artificially

generating system

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

the highest truth intellectually

it's just not going to happen

so let's see here was talking about

emptiness as a tool known as a principle

yeah I mean again that's just kind of

dishonest If there really is a self but

you're saying there isn't but the Buddha

is saying there isn't one I mean he's

he's speaking on truth

but maybe you can say well he's kind of

using it as a tub no semi I mean it's

not entirely dishonest you know he has

honest intentions of getting us

enlightened or something

and uh let's see he said it's like a

boat across the river I mean that's dama

that's the practice

you know that's all the stuff you're

doing this it's the practice is like the

the raft made of rubbish that you that

you cross the flood with and then once

you get to the other side you don't need

it anymore

you don't need anything anymore

so

I guess the end here is did I understand

correctly your interpretation of ananta

um not exactly I don't I don't think

so let's move on to this question this

is from nermit nirmict

and nirmit says

people around me are pressuring me to

spend most of my time in worldly

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

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

follow along with the herd

you know he's not following along with

his cultural conditioning you know he's

dead set on on cultivating wisdom and

Purity and so forth trying to liberate

trying to become liberated

whereas a lot of Asian monks you know

they're really just there because

you know they're too ugly and lazy to

get married and work for a living a lot

of them you'd be surprised

not all of them of course not even most

of them

but most of them really are not trying

very hard at all you know they're just

going for merit

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

go along with with what they want you to

do I mean if I did what my parents

wanted me to do man I have grandkids by

now probably

so I think I'll just move on to nirmit's

next question did the Buddha ever crack

jokes

well that's kind of an interesting

question

um I mean there are no sutas where the

Buddha is

obviously doing some kind of stand-up

routine

um there is some humor in the text but

it tends to be pretty dry there's uh

one suit I think it's in the sum Utah

um that in CAF Reese Davidson's

translation she calls it little ugly the

suta on little ugly

and it's about some Demon that

um

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

episode of the old Star Trek that was

like this where you've got this entity

that's like feeding on negativity and

the more negative people are around and

this entity is becomes more glorious and

beautiful and powerful and so forth but

if people

um just start having positive mental

States then it kind of shrivels up and

becomes dark and ugly and weak again

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

of her comments she says that the master

is in a humorous vein because it's told

in kind of a funny way

um there is that one verse of the

dhamapada where

you can you know each term in the in the

verse has like a down has like a dark

side

so it goes like you know the man who is

the man who is faithless burglar who uh

destroys opportunities and eats vomit he

truly is the highest of men something

like that

and I mean you can call that humor I

guess I mean why else would somebody

deliberately make this verse of the

Donald Potter I mean it's not

necessarily going back to the boot of

the devopana is not particularly old

document

um but I mean why would somebody

deliberately make a verse where

you know each each one of the key words

has like an alternate like an alter ego

this alternative meaning that's like

completely negative you know eating

vomiting and so forth

um so I mean

there is kind of some humor but it's

it's very dry very you know very

what's the word you know deadpan

so

so yeah the Buddha I don't think you

really crack jokes and even like

laughing you know and our hunt doesn't

laugh according to tradition

I mean the most he might do is smile a

little bit probably even a tight lip

smile not showing his teeth

so

yeah cracking jokes is considered like

vulgar you know it's sort of like what

lay people do

so we'll just move on a nice question

this is from affinity

and avenidi says could you tell some

stories about witches and other Burmese

myths and legends

well I actually did an entire video

about like super supernaturalism or

paranormality in my life where I had a

number of witch stories in that one

my father as I've mentioned before was

um kind of warlock a trainer of which is

the leader of a coven

um so I mean I have some secondhand

stories from him I didn't actually

participate in any of his witchcraft

stuff

um Burmese missing Legends yeah I've

given lots of lots of examples I'm

trying to think of like some story that

I haven't already told

um with Burmese myths and legends

there's there's one book Burmese

supernaturalism by Melford Spiro who's

like a cultural Anthropologist he lived

in Burma back in the 60s I think

he has all kinds of weird stories about

uh

like there's a thing in in Burma it's

like a proverb that one in every seven

houses houses a witch

that that really they think there's

witches everywhere and I was I've been

warned about witches so many times and

uh

there was

let's see

there's a couple of stories about how

witches can detach their heads and then

the head will just be rolling around

just kind of moving around just by

Rolling and uh they eat excrement and so

forth

um

but I'm trying to come up with a good

I mean I've already told the story about

how I was supposedly attacked by magical

ogres

it's kind of a long story

um I think that would be included in uh

the paranormality in my life video that

I I uploaded maybe a month or so ago

let's see which is

huh I mean to some degree I still am a

little superstitious about

like uh

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

some people that if a witch gets a hold
of like your hair or your fingernail
clippings or something they can they can
do spells against you and I've always
been kind of careful about you know like
throwing away my fingernail clippings
you know you just take them outside I
don't like throwing them in the garbage
either for some reason I just take them
outside and like toss them under a bush
or something
but uh Burmese missing Legends there's
lots and lots of them way way more
missing Legends
um of the traditional type than you'll
find in a western country

um

there's one one kind of uh I don't know

if you call it a myth or a legend but

there was

um a Burmese he was sort of like the

Burmese Samson

or like Hercules he was like this super

powerful man in Burmese uh Legend who

like Samson lost his power if he got his

hair cut

but this man he lost his power by

walking under a clothesline with women's

sarongs hanging on it and that just

deprived him of his his Mojo or or

whatever it was and to this day the

Burmese are real I mean they do not walk

under a clothesline of women's clothes

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

it again

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

I've told this one

um recently anyway but I was a junior

monk living in um

uh amrapura

and every morning I would walk across

this rickety old teak Bridge called

upain Bridge up and there was a village

on the other side talentamon Village and

I'd go for alms in talentamon village

and then walk back across this rickety

old teeth bridge and one day I was

walking for almost there and up ahead I

saw this young woman with like a rolled

up bamboo mat in one arm and a baby in

the other arm

and when I get there

she she spreads out the mat puts the

puts the baby on the mat and then asks

me if I will step over the baby and I

was just learning Burmese at the time I

hadn't been in Burma for very long and

I'm like let me get this straight you

want me to step over the baby and she's

like nodding real vigorously she really

was keen on the idea

and so I went okay so I stepped over the

baby and since I was on the other side

of the baby after stepping over it I

stepped over it again to get back on you

know the side of the road

and she was real happy about that

and she ran down to this little booth

and bought me some toothpaste and stuff

and offered that out of gratitude for me

stepping over the baby

and uh apparently the Burmese believed

that like a holy man who she considered

me to be one

um a whole if a holy man is like moves

over the top of somebody it drives out

you know evil spirits and so forth

so apparently she thought that I was

driving evil spirits out of her baby or

maybe it was just like a prophylaxis you

know just making sure that the baby

didn't have any malevolent you know

forces or beings or entities or anything

um I I did that more than once stepping

over babies

but um yeah most of my stories like that

the super or the paranormality in my

life video I I give quite a lot of

stories like that of just paranormal

events and just stories about paranormal

events

you know seeing apparitions and being

warned about witches and dragons and

ogres and so forth there's lots of them

in Burma these people believe that there

are lots of them in Burma

so I'm sorry I couldn't come up with a

really juicy one that that I haven't

already told yet I mean I'm sure they're

they're in here in my head somewhere and

if I come up with any more I'll try and

uh share them

but I think I'll just move on to the

next next question here which is from

Edelweiss Voyager

and Edelweiss says

hello Ponyo I was wondering if you

incorporate prostrations into your

practice at all personally I find

prostrating and apologizing to the gods

from my weakness to be spiritually

healing

um

yeah I've never really been very like

idolatrous or worshipy I have bowed to

that statue

probably many times but it's it's not

like a regular practice or anything it's

like there are certain times in my life

um to be honest the uh the most I ever

bowed to a statue like the most

intensively and fervently was I was in

Burma

oh maybe seven eight years ago by now

and this may be 2016

and somebody had given me this little

vial of liquid LSD

and

um there was supposed to be just like

one dose left in the bottle but whoever

put it in put in more drops than than it

was supposed to be and I wound up taking

this

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

uh yeah I've just never been very

worshipy or faith oriented I've always

been more intellectual and philosophical

in my understanding of dhamma and uh

mostly I would not Ballad of statues I'd

be in Burma and we'd be doing it we'd

start doing a ceremony you know all the

monks would come together to recite the

padimoka or whatever and all the Burmese

monks would bow to the Statue and I

would just kind of sit there

because I don't know maybe you know

being having been a Christian in a

previous life I've got this thing about

idolatry or something

um another thing that reminds me

Edelweiss Voyager says here I find

prostrating and apologizing to the gods

for my weakness to be spiritually

healing

um it could be as a result of having

been a Christian in a past life

um I've been told that I was a Baptist

minister in the lifetime immediately

preceding this one

um who was my own grandfather

incidentally

but um

it was like a mantra that would come up

it doesn't come up very often anymore

but there was a time in my life when it

would come up a lot it was just dear God

please have mercy upon me or dear God

please have mercy I wouldn't say dear

God please have mercy upon me a sinner

like I think it's in the Book of Luke

that The Gospel According to Luke

there's you've got the the tax collector

in the back of the standing in the back

of the temple beating his breast and you

know dear God please have mercy upon me

a sinner

um just dear God please have mercy

you know it was it was like this little

prayer that would just get repeated like

a mantra sometimes just without me

deliberately trying to do it it's like I

do home spontaneously still even even

now it just comes up spontaneously

sometimes especially

um

if I'm walking or or waiting for

something and waiting in line or

something

um but yeah I do not incorporate

prostrations into my practice

uh it can happen spontaneously but not

very often

it's just not my Approach different

people have different approaches some

people are more heart oriented more

faith oriented other people you know

they're they're more brain head oriented

you know it's

different I mean I'm not saying that

it's wrong or any any such thing but

it's just not the route that I have

taken in life

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

question here and this is from ketchup

not catsup mind you but ketchup and he

says hello Ponyo I was wondering if you

had any thoughts on my poem

and I think the title of the poem is Art

of being and it's it's about meditation

and so I'll just recite this poem here

Adam's space whole body

boot in breath do out breath warm and

soft well and happy smile all beings

heart raise awareness concentration

emptiness Detachment is highest just

being

and then he says thank you

so

um it's it strikes me as inspirational

it strikes me as optimistic that it's

you know it's entirely upbeat you know

there's no dwelling on dukkha or

impermanence I mean maybe a little bit

of impermanence but it's it's not

anything that's

that's inspiring some Vega or spiritual

urgency or alarm it's it's pretty soft

and you know if you're into warm and

soft well and happy

um

so I suppose if somebody needs

some optimism and uplift this kind of

poem would be a good thing although in

traditional taravada

um you know there's also like the the

negative side the Dark Side of samsara

that really should be paid more

attention to and that's you know the

inevitability of death you know the

first Noble Truth you know to exist is

to be unhappy to be dissatisfied you

know that that sort of thing is actually

more of a a traditional Buddhist theme

than the the warm and soft well and

happy stuff although some people need

the warm and soft well and happy stuff

too

so um yeah I mean you can derive benefit

from reading this kind of thing

I'm reading it again

I don't want to miss anything important

boot in-breath dough out breath that's

that's a common tie practice just using

budo as a kind of uh

a mantra

smile all beings heart Rays yeah it's

very heartwarming kind of warm and soft

upbeat optimistic kind of poem which in

a way makes it not

really like traditional Buddhist poetry

because

you know Buddhist poetry is is tends to

be more

kind of I wouldn't say pessimistic but

facing the the dark aspects of samsara

you know the or just

scrutinizing some Sora and finding it

lacking

and in a way this does this in a

positive way because you know Detachment

is highest and so forth

but thank you for sharing

so I'll just uh move on to the next

question here this is from nml794

and nml794 says

do you think the Buddha actually claimed

to remember all his past lives that just

seems to be a stock phrase repeated in

the sutas with no substantiation the

Buddha never talked about his past lives

as a hundred gatherer or an alien with

advanced technology all of the recorded

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

um yeah it's there's obviously some

glorification of the Buddha with some

mythological elements uh included even

in taravada

but uh

let's see do I think the Buddha actually

claimed to remember all his past lives I

don't know maybe he did but I think I'm

blurry now I don't know what happened

here go like this see if that works

whoop

it'll fix itself probably

so do I think the Buddha actually

claimed to remember all his past lives

maybe he did but I doubt that he would

go into details especially with a guard

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

find acceptable that they were ready to

hear

so it is possible that he did claim to

remember all of his past lives that he

was in a sense omniscient

but I mean how can you really know for

sure I mean the texts say it

but again like like nml 794 here is

saying you know it's like everything is

always within the context of you know

the the Iron Age Ganges Valley I mean

you might go into hell I mean the Buddha

was in Hell Realms and Heaven Realms and

so forth that technically weren't India

but still it was all in accordance with

Indian conceptions of reality and

cosmology and so forth

so let's see

uh

yeah I guess I guess I've answered that

question so I'll just move on to the

next question this is from Naga Kai

and nagakai says is it possible to avoid

accumulating Bad Karma and it kind of

bugs me that I'm blurring

I don't know why please please stand by

yeah still blurry

still blurry

technology is wonderful isn't it

nagakai says is it possible to avoid

accumulating Bad Karma by getting

someone else to do the hateful or the

harmful action

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

so

I mean monks do this kind of stuff all

the time especially monks that are

living in a monastery where grass has to

be cut you know like bushes have to be

trimmed along the side of the path to

keep the path from getting overgrown

that kind of thing so they'll say you

know make this allowable you know copy

you know copy is like the Burmese word

for copia which means allowable you know

make it

is what you're supposed to say in

certain circumstances which uh it's it's

sort of like cheating it's like a

loophole in the rules like a monk is not

allowed to damage plants green plants

he's not allowed to encourage others or

cause others to to damage plants so you

just use this cryptic language of make

it allowable and then the the monastery

attendant or the knowledgeable layperson

goes ah he wants me to cut the plants

but still I mean it's breaking the exact

same rule

but that's ecclesiastical rules and not

uh actual Karma

you know it's sort of like the

ecclesiastical level of the action

rather than the karmic level of the

action but still I mean if you want that

person dead for example I mean you're

already making Bad Karma you know you're

talking somebody else into killing them

then you're already making Bad Karma it

may not be as bad as killing the person

yourself but still it's not good and

it's not neutral either you're you're

actually

increasing suffering just by your

actions and you know it and it's you

know it's motivated by hatred or or just

ruthless greed or whatever it is

so

it goes to both of you if you persuade

somebody to do a bad action that you

don't want to do yourself

so I'll just move one on the next

question this is from Austin

and we've been at this for over an hour

and a half now

Austin says

did the Buddha meditate without moving

for 49 without food or water I assume it

means 49 days so I did the Buddha

meditate without moving for 49 days

without food or water

and that is a legend that the Buddha sat

in meditation for 49 days

sort of

digesting his Enlightenment experience

and according to taravada it was mainly

he's going through the 12 need Donna

theory of dependent polarizing potential

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

through it forwards and then backwards

and then forwards and backwards and so

forth but he wasn't he didn't meditate

without moving for 49 days because every

once in a while every several days like

every week he'd get up and move to a

different place you know he didn't sit

under the booty tree that whole time

but

I think there's a good chance that this

also is a legend

and uh may not be historically accurate

and it's still bothering me that I'm

still blurry

if I go like this what if that helps

huh yeah I should kick it

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

hmm

so okay so I think I answered that one

did the Buddha meditate without moving

49 days even according to tradition he

did move after you know several days of

sitting in one place to get up and sit

somewhere else

um I'm not sure that it would even be

possible to go without water in the

tropics for 49 days or a subtropics boat

guy I'm not exactly sure well what the

latitude is there

um but then again

like very advanced

spiritual practitioners can do things

that should be impossible for others

like um

not eating for example

so

yeah I'd be skeptical of that personally

but then again I'm a skeptical Westerner

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

next question could someone with ADHD

theoretically become enlightened or is

their brain too distracted to make any

meaningful progress

well someone with attention

deficit

something disorder I don't know what the

H is

it's somebody within a with a very short

attention span could they theoretically

become enlightened well theoretically

certainly they could

um

I think it may be that if you know even

though your attention is flitting around

if you're still mindful you know if it's

not you're not just going completely off

the track and becoming unmindful you

know after three seconds

but I mean you don't have to focus on

just one thing like some on top

meditation where you're just focused on

one thing you know it's like a candle

flame or a casino disc or just your

breath going you know your breath

sensation of touch at your nostrils when

you're breathing

I mean you can so like like the mahasi

method or many kinds of weipasana

so-called reposa mindfulness meditation

I mean your your attention can be moving

all over the place but so long as you're

still mindful you're still successfully

meditating you're still meditating

correctly

um

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

impossible I would say it's less likely

that you become enlightened I mean the

more you can calm and silence and

clarify and purify the mind the more

likely it is that you're going to become

enlightened but some people need a

higher level of clarity and Purity than

others

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

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

then the more likely it is they would

become aligned so I wouldn't say it's

completely impossible but

um I would say they'd have statistically

a lower chance than someone who is a

master of fourth genre

so we'll just move on to Austin's next

question which is is it true that

advaita vedanta played a role in

buddhism's departure from the Indian

subcontinent well I would say that uh

buddhism's departure from the Indian

subcontinent occurred before advaita

vedanta existed

I mean if advaita vedanta was like

I mean like the main philosopher of

invite of vedanta as far as I know is

shankara who lived in like the 5th

Century CE

which was long after Buddhism left the

Indian subcontinent

um advice

or advaita vedanta in certain schools of

Mahayana Buddhism definitely were

interacting with each other through like

uh debates monks debating each other and

sort of borrowing ideas from each other

and so forth but

um I think that was long after Buddhism

had already migrated moved into Central

Asia like Ashoka who's

uh really not that long after the time

of the Buddha

uh he sent missionaries out in various

directions

and um

also around the time of Ashoka you had

like a

um a lot of Buddhists kind of moving

into like what is now Pakistan and

Afghanistan and it was largely through

Central Asia converting to Buddhism that

it finally got into China

north of the Himalayas

so

um I think advaita vedanta may have

played some role in Buddhism spreading

outside of India but I think it was not

very significant I think it would be a

very minor contribution

and I'm still blurry how do I stop being

blurry

how do I do this

you just got to deal with blurry just

just knit or something while you listen

to this

so the next question is from erain and

airing says what is the Dharma of The

Little Prince so The Little Prince is

probably most of you are aware is like a

little Illustrated story

um almost like an art book

by some French person whose name I can't

pronounce

and um

there there is some kind of Dharma in it

but I have to I have to give a
disclaimer here that I have not read the
book in probably at least 35 years so
it's my memory of the little princess
kind of sketchy I haven't seen any movie
versions of it in about 35 years either
but
um I mean there is some Dharma that
comes to mind like there is a certain
emphasis on the inevitability of death I
remember a long time ago I was maybe 21
years old at the time maybe 20.
I was watching a claymation version of
The Little Prince and I actually got
choked up got tears in my eyes in the
scene where the snake that talks in
riddles is telling the Little Prince

that it's time for him to die

so I mean there's acceptance of death

you know death itself in The Little

Prince there's like the talk about the

baobabs how you know you have to get you

have to weed the baobabs before they

turn into these huge trees because then

you can't do anything I mean that's

um that's a lot there's there's Dharma

in that there's a famous Burmese Seattle

um Seattle

uh who says that uh you know a person is

like a tree that if the tree is small

and crooked you can straighten it out

but once the tree gets big you can't

straighten it out anymore which is

similar to the whole story of the

baobabs and the Little Prince

um I think there's a lot of emphasis in

The Little Prince of just following your

own heart and your own conscience rather

than just conforming you know so if you

follow your own heart and your own

conscience you're more likely to see the

uh you know the elephant being swallowed

by the the python instead of a hat you

know like towards the beginning of the

the beginning of the story

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

just read the book again and then maybe

I can give like a a Buddhist critique of

The Little Prince

because

um

I mean I'm not saying that the Little

Prince is you know as darmic as you know

some Buddhist Sutra or something but um

you know it's to some degree it's just

really kind of a nice story

yeah

but there is some Dharma in it and I'll

have to read the book again in order to

really get into details on that

so I'll just move on to the next

question

after uh consuming a little more of

these

bovine glandular secretions

this question is from ludovis balam

and ludovus balam says do you have any

memories of your distinguishing

personality traits at the age the ages

of two to four

if so mind sharing well my earliest

memory I think is my third birthday so

the the whole second third

see third year of my life now between

two and three is a blank I don't

remember anything from that time

um I've got very few memories that go

back that far you know it's like the

myelin sheaths of my my neurons are not

fully formed yet

and uh you know my long-term memory

wasn't fully hooked up

but I do know some stories of when I was

really little that that do kind of
indicate what I was going to turn into
like one story that my father used to
like to tell is I don't remember this
personally but he used to tell the story
of when I was like two years old
and my mother was making biscuits for
dinner you know she had the biscuits out
on the this cookie cookie sheet and then
she remembered she needed something so
she had to run to the store to get some
ingredient for dinner she asks my father
who's drinking a beer watching TV in the
living room keep an eye on the kid which
she said okay and then just continues
drinking the beer and watching the TV

and I toddle you know a little

two-year-old me toddles into the living

room and starts seeing turtles in the

water turtles in the water

and my father didn't understand what I

was talking about you know he didn't

care he's just drinking the beer and

watching TV finally my mother comes home

goes into the kitchen and sees that I've

I climbed up on a chair and took some of

the the raw biscuits off the cookie

sheet and put them in the dog's water

and was calling them turtles in the

water so I mean I was just had like this

weird sense of humor ever since I was

like two years old I remember one time

when I was like

four

my brother was still an infant

an infant baby

and uh I remember I had this big stuffed

monkey or chimpanzee yours it was like a

big stuff primate of some sort

and I put that in my bed and then I I

climbed underneath my brother's crib and

was like lying on the floor there so

then my mother came in she thought that

the the large stuffed monkey with me

until she you know bent over to kiss it

good night and realized it wasn't me and

then looked around and saw me hiding

under the crib of my brother so I mean I

was kind of a non-conformist you know

just sort of bucking the tide even as a small child and I had like a offbeat sense of humor even as a toddler apparently

I mean I was I would specialize in telling nursery rhymes wrong I don't know if little kids even tell nursery rhymes anymore like when you're three or four years old you know you get taught to recite like Humpty Dumpty and you know Hickory Dickory Dock and all that kind of stuff I would say them along on purpose

so

the only other distinguishing personality trait I mean I don't know if this would even count but it's one of my

earliest memories I remember my father
had a motorcycle and he was trying to
teach my mother how to ride a motorcycle
and if we're in the backyard and the
only thing she could possibly hit would
be my swing set
and of course she gets on the motorcycle
makes a beeline straight for the swing
set swing set just smashes into it and
Falls the motor see in the motorcycle
fall over and I remember running up to
her and her leg was bleeding you know
she she cut her leg somehow and for me I
started crying you know I was a little
kid at the time and uh because you know
up to that point

little kids you know they just assume
that adults don't get hurt or bleed or
something you know it's like they're
like the gods and you know little kids
obviously get hurt but I mean your
parents aren't supposed to get hurt so I
mean that kind of scared me but I don't
know if that would be a distinguishing
personality trait that was just sort of
like like an Insight that even adults
can get messed up and have you know
accidents and injuries and so forth
but uh yeah the weird sense of humor and
the sort of non-conformism has been a
distinguishing personality trait of mine
since I was a toddler so I'll just move
on to ludibus balam's next question if

you had to pick between one of the

mystery Cults of ancient Greece which

would you pick well I'm no Authority on

Ancient Greek mystery Cults but what

little I know

I suppose I'd join orphism I'd be an

orphist is that what they're called I

would yeah I'd be a member of the orphic

Mysteries they believed in like

reincarnation and so forth I'm pretty

sure

um

I don't know maybe a Pythagorean is it

well but the pythagoreans I don't know

if you'd even call that a mystery column

so let's just go with orphism

unless I was uh sort of like a social

climber and then maybe I'd go for the

elucinian Mysteries because it was like

all the aristocrats would joined that

one sort of like being a Freemason or

something but let's just let's just say

orphism for now

so the next question is from the Arya

sawasti project

and the Aria sawasdi project says hi

Ponyo recently ajan punadamo was giving

a talk on Meta Meta mediation this is

one of the most common

typos that that Buddhists make is

spelling meditation as a mediation

because it doesn't get the red underline

because it's like another it's another

word so you don't notice I'll just start over

hi Ponyo recently ajan punodama was giving a talk on meta meditation and broadcasting meta to others I see how this can benefit the meditator but do you suppose the recipients of the broadcasted meta benefit from it and do you suppose it changes their experience during the meditation mediation as well on the flip side of this topic can someone feel the effects of ill will from others and lastly if one has enough meta at all times would that buffer them from ill will from others supposing it could be felt well

yeah I think that if you're just gushing

love or beaming love like sincere love

towards another person they're gonna

pick up on it unless maybe they're just

a complete sociopath and cut off from

like the deeper intuitive levels but I

do remember my preceptor a venerable

flying jet Seattle

he didn't like me much he thought that

westerners were just like wild

barbarians that we you know we weren't

Burmese enough to be really good

Buddhist people

and he just he just didn't like me very

much and uh but then one day

I just I was just feeling like this warm

feeling in my chest and like it was like

it just felt really good I didn't know why and then it turned out that at that exact time that client at Seattle was leading meta meditation in in the shrine room in the main building in the monastery and probably just beaming love in all directions and I think I I sincerely think I picked up on some of that and uh yeah there is like a deeper level where we're all kind of connected or at least we're receptive and sensitive to you know other people's feelings I mean all it takes is somebody who's just beaming love and benevolence sitting on a bus and it's going to have effects on the people

around him even if he's not doing
anything he might just be minding his
own business looking out the window or
something still people are going to pick
up on that and likewise you can have
someone who's just just in this black
mood you know he's just wanting to kill
everybody and he doesn't have to say or
do anything he can just sit there and
it's gonna have like an effect on the
people around him that mental states are
contagious which is why
which is a list of 38 blessings blessing
number one
is avoiding people avoiding the company
of fools not associating with fools
because mental states are contagious if

you associate with fools their

foolishness is going to rub off on you

and if you associate with the wise which

is the second blessing then their wisdom

and goodness is going to rub off on you

it's going to influence your mind

you know there is a certain there is

some truth to a mob mentality and it

goes both ways it can be good or bad

so let's see

yeah yeah I do think that uh I mean

there are lots of stories of

um

there was lot lots of stories of like

a Buddhist person in Burma and like

their boss is just giving them a hard

time just doesn't like them as being
mean to them assholish and so they the
person who is the recipient of this
 is from the boss goes to uh some
wise Seattle some wise Monk and he'll
he'll give them instructions on how to
do meta meditation towards the boss and
I remember one case where within just uh
like a week or two the boss just had a
sudden change of heart and called the
person into his office and sincerely
apologized you know I realize now that
I've I've been treating you badly and I
am sorry and this kind of thing there's
lots of stories in that kind of thing
so yeah I mean
I think anyone with any sensitivity can

know that mental States really are
contagious you don't have to do anything
like overtly outwardly to really
influence the mind of another person
so let's say let's see can someone feel
the effects of ill will from others yeah
I mean if someone's just pissed off and
I mean just to give an obvious example
you know you're in this you're in the
same room with someone who's just really
upset I mean it's just gonna it's the
whole atmosphere is gonna be like lead
you know it's just you just pick up on
it
even animals can pick up on this kind of
thing like my father used to say

sneaking up on a moose is almost
impossible if you're moose hunting
trying to sneak up on the Moose almost
impossible the Moose will always get
spooked and run off but if you sneak up
on the tree next to the Moose it's as
easy as hunting cows because we just
have this like a sixth sense I guess
you know we can pick up on that kind of
thing
okay so let's see lastly if one has
enough meta at all times would that
buffer them from ill will from others
yeah if you've got meta at all times
you're gonna have good karma you know
not only will it buffer you if someone's
trying to mess you up but people will

just be less likely to want to mess you

up

then you're just a good guy I mean it's

like if you're if you're full of love

towards everybody there aren't very many

people that are really going to want to

mess with you

and furthermore I mean that's just like

a kind of a superficial worldly level

but you know at the more metaphysical

level you're just generating such good

karma you're creating a better world

that you're living in where it's just

less likely that bad stuff is going to

happen to you and I keep kind of

glancing out the window because there's

a storm moving and

so

I think I answered that question

so I'm going to move on to the next

question this is from pseudonym and as I

keep saying I doubt that's his real name

and pseudonym says can you please

provide a steel man argument for the

spiritual benefits one gains from the

abhidham and I asked him what a steel

man argument is and he said it's like

the opposite of a straw man where you're

you're making as strong of a case as

possible even though you don't really

necessarily believe it to be true which

is kind of like sophistry I guess

so can I please provide a sophisticated

what's the word sophist

iCal argument for the spiritual benefits

one gains from Abby Donald well it's an

intellectual exercise you do learn a lot

of Buddhist philosophy

um in a way it can be sort of like

reading the New Testament of the Bible

where at least you're knowing what

you're rejecting

so I mean there is that I mean it isn't

good for any kind of literate

knowledgeable educated terravonna

Buddhist to know what abhidham is about

because he should know what the Orthodox

party line of his system is saying even

if he's not following it even if he

doesn't think the Buddha really taunt

I'll be Dharma and I think most

westerners don't believe that the Buddha

really taught abhidham open with regard

to Western monks I've I've seen the the

number kicked around maybe 70 of Western

monks do not believe that the Buddha

really taught abhidham

but it's sort of like a way of

systematizing dhamma where you've got

all these lists and classifications and

so forth so it can help you to

understand philosophically

intellectually certain aspects of

like older more traditional

dhamma

plus it's just intellectual exercise it

can help Stave off

um early onset dementia

I guess

and uh again one of the main benefits of

abidama is at least your literate and

knowledgeable in teravotin Orthodoxy so

that even if you reject abhidham at

least you have a good idea of what it is

you're rejecting

so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from I'm pretty

sure it's from yuichiro but his name is

spelled in Japanese characters so I'm

pretty sure it's yuichiro

and yuichiro I think says hypothetically

if someone resolved to do more good

things in the future but out of The

Selfish desire for Comic karmic rewards

would the net Karma of this still be

positive yeah it depends on the

individual

um but as a general rule

if you're doing something good and

you're just doing because you want to

get into heaven you know it's pretty

common pretty common theme in in Western

religions also like Christianity and

Islam for example you're going for the

going for those heavenly virgins or

something

or you're just trying to stay out of

Hellfire

um still I mean you're doing good things

you know you're you're increasing

happiness decreasing misery you know

among the beings around you so I mean

you're still doing good but um

the Burmese are really susceptible to

this I mean they're very developed but

in Burma may be the most thoroughly

Buddhist country in the world

and the people there tend to be

spiritual materialists you know they're

they're just they're wanting Merit they

want coup though they call it

information this is the Burmese way of

of saying kusala you know like

you know wholesome action

they want to though they want Merit

and so

um

they can be really proud about the Good

Deeds that they do you know they they

donate a meditation cabin to a monastery

they'll have a big sign over the

meditation cabin this this meditation

cabin donated by you know such and such

such and such and their family members

are all there and

um and I remember once

my teacher venerable Tom Pulu tell us

another Seattle who gave a dhamma talk

about if you really want the most Merit

then you should do it uh Good Deeds

without the desire for merit which is in

a way it was kind of like up the

minds of the audience it's like I want
to get the most Merit possible so I'm
going to have to do this without
Desiring Merit and so that's what I'm
gonna do and it's you know it's just
like self-contradictory because that's
they're obviously trying to maximize the
amount of Good Karma that they get so
they're you know it's
spiritual materials it's like anyone who
has read Burmese Days by George Orwell
George Orwell the author of Animal Farm
in 1984. he lived in Burma during
colonial times he was some sort of
police officer in central Burma and one
of his earlier novels was called Burmese

days about what it was like for a British colonialists living in Burma and the main villain of the story is who poach in he's just really just this bad man Burmese guy and his wife is continually scolding him in her demure passive Burmese ladylike way telling him he's an evil man he's going to go to hell and he's saying no you don't know anything I'm going to build a pagoda because the Burmese think that if you donate a pagoda you have a pagoda built I mean that's like you guarantee heaven right there you've made so much Merit it's just the stairway to heaven right there but unfortunately for who poaching he had a stroke before he ever had the

got the time to build the Pagoda so he
was pretty much screwed
so yeah I mean if you do good deeds out
of The Selfish desire for karmic rewards
I mean you're you're still going to get
the karmic rewards just not as good of
karmic rewards if you just do something
out of just the goodness of your heart
just just irrespective of any desire for
benefit like the Burmese spiritual
materialists that they are bless their
hearts you know I don't want to badmouth
them
but I used to tell them I mean as a
young monk in Burma I was I'd have these
little debates friendly friendly polite

debates with the local Village doctor

who spoke English

and saying I mean you I mean it's better

to feed a hungry child or even a hungry

dog than just set an extra plate of food

on a plate on the table before like an

obese monk who's already got 10 times as

much food as he can possibly eat

you know and then that's the way the

Burmese are you've got some famous

Seattle you know he's he's got the

reputation for being a saint or a sage

and at lunch time he's got this huge I

mean I used to have this sometimes too

this whole table

covered with like 20 20 different dishes

of food and there's no way he could eat

10 of that but still people are wanting
to somehow fit more food onto the table
and he doesn't need it on the other hand
there might be like a hungry kid down
the road
I mean the skinny dirty polar I mean a
little kid never gets to eat food that
good and probably I mean if you do it
just out of the goodness of your heart
you'd make more Merit anyway because
you're motivated not by Greed for merit
you're doing it out of like compassion
and benevolence you know I mean you just
want you want to do good just for its
own sake or it makes you happy to see
some hungry being getting a full belly

for once

I mean even for me just I'd be happier

feeding some scroungy mangy dog than

putting just another plate of food on

this table for some famous monk in

general I mean there might be exceptions

I might not like the dog very much and

it may be that you know the monk really

you just have a lot of respect and

gratitude towards this teacher and you

know you want to make some little

contribution to him in the hopes that

maybe he'll have at least one taste of

what you put there

um

so yeah this is another another one of

my trademark long answers to short

questions

see here

so I'll just read the question again

just to make sure hypothetically if

someone resolved to do more good things

in the future but out of The Selfish

desire for karmic rewards with the net

Karma of this still be positive yeah it

would still be more positive than

negative unless you really had some

really awful mental States accompanying

the outwardly good act

and it's it's just a sliding scale I

mean like I keep saying over and over

again it's like the action itself

um is not really what makes the karma

you know the outward physical action it
may like magnify or intensify the karma
because you're really just going through
with it you're not just kind of
fantasizing about it you're just really
you've you know you've crossed the line
you're doing it so I mean it's sort of
intensifies your karma but really it's
the mental States
that determine the the karmic quality of
of your actions and just desire for
heaven or desire for a good rebirth that
is not evil in and of itself you know in
a way it kind of makes the good act a
little less karmically pure but still
you're doing good and I mean you're not
harming anybody except for maybe in very

subtle indirect ways yourself but

you're doing more good than bad

and so finally the very last question

this is from achala I think that's how

you pronounce his name

it's almost like a tradition that people

who ask questions have difficult names

to pronounce

so

a challah says or ic-a-l-a

he says do you think whatever we are

going through today has happened in the

past at some point like many culpas ago

since samsara has no beginning point it

would be absurd to accept that whatever

we are experiencing in the society today

is happening for the first time like

rise of A.I covid or any other invention

in the chakavati suta Buddha describes

the rise and fall of a society so we can

think it's a cycle that repeats in

samsara

um yeah but it's not just temporal

distance I mean we're not living in a

four-dimensional universe it's not just

three dimensions of space plus time it's

not Newtonian that in all likelihood

we're living in a many worlds you know

there's an infinite number of versions

of reality however many versions are

possible are there and they're all

pretty much superimposed so it's not

just

um you know every possible world has
happened and will continue happening in
the scientific astronomical universe
that you've got other dimensions other
probabilities you know you move sideways
through time and you get into other
probabilities where you know the Nazis
won World War II or something or or
whatever
so I really do think that all possible
realities all possible samisaric
realities uh I mean they're already here
I mean if if not in our version of
reality in some other version which is
just as real or unreal as this
so

with regard to let's say

other human societies with the rise of

artificial intelligence transhumanism

the technological singularity is

happening in infinite number of times

it's happening an infinite number of

times now

it's going to happen an infinite number

of times in the future anything that can

possibly happen in an infinite universe

is going to happen

it just keeps happening

so I really don't limit myself to four

dimensions

but even with four dimensions sure I

mean

um

you know out there in in the space you

know in some other Galaxy you've got you

know some Star Trek kind of universe

with with people speaking English with

an American accent who you know it's

they're just slight differences

or more major differences

so sure

um

let's see I gotta read this question

over again just to make sure I get it

right or at least that I understand the

question not necessarily they don't

answer it correctly do you think

whatever we are going through today has

happened in the past at some point like

many culpas ago

um yeah or

you know sideways in time or or whatever

since samsara has no beginning point it

would be absurd to accept that whatever

we are experiencing in the society today

is happening for the first time like the

rise of AI covet or any other invention

okay yeah so it's you know like the I

think it's uh The Book of Ecclesiastes

in the Old Testament says there's

nothing new Under the Sun

um now there's obviously new things

under our thought I don't think there's

ever been cell phones

or silicon chips on this planet with our

sun but I mean it's probably happened

infinite number of times and will

continue to happen an infinite number of

times

um just in other versions of reality

other worlds whatever

so yeah it's a lot of people are just

kind of limited in their thinking just

because they just assume that the

scientific materialistic Universe pretty

well describes reality and I don't think

it's I mean it describes what we are in

right now our version of reality pretty

well but there's like an infinite number

of versions

all equally real or unreal

and uh

yeah I mean it's not ultimately real

anyway

so that's it I did it

only less than two hours and 10 minutes

so that's not bad I I am kind of time

conscious I don't want to subject people

to three hour long videos because I

rarely would sit through a three hour

long video myself

so

there you go I hope I did Justice to

your questions I'm sorry for the delay I

probably should have done this last

weekend but just didn't have the time

and um feel free to ask questions

you get at least six questions if

there's a dearth of questions we may

even go more than six but uh

I I promise I'll answer at least six

and uh

feel free to leave your questions below

in the comments or if you have access to

my subscribe star you can leave them

there you have access to the Discord

server you can leave them there

you're very welcome to subscribe to my

channel on bitshoot or YouTube

and leave a like if you're so inclined

and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 53 of

question and answer I am your host as

usual poo

basa and it's only been a week since the

last Q&A but I've gotten a lot of

questions probably more than I got in

the previous three weeks so I figure I

shouldn't uh shouldn't just uh

procrastinate and uh start answering

questions make hay with the sunshines

and all that and uh

first I have to like sit here and chill

out a little bit you know I sit here in

silence for five minutes and then I just

sit here and like give some kind of

random monologue before I start

answering questions it's it's like a
tradition now so I'm just kind of like
decompressing or chilling out you know
getting into the groove so to
speak and uh I guess I should start
answering questions now huh and the
first question is from ch
is and this was supposed to be answered
like two episodes ago he asked the
question late after I'd already recorded
episode like 51 or whatever it
was um and and then I neglected to to
add it to the next list so this is this
is like a month ago he asked this
question and uh I should say that trox
is or however you pronounce it
um he very generously sent me the means

to get a new uh video camera which is uh
very nice of him and uh I haven't got it
yet but um in the last episode the
previous episode um I went blurry for
like the last 15 20 minutes of the video
it's the the camera is supposed to have
autofocus but what it was focusing on I
have no
idea because uh my face was not the the
object of of the focus
so I'll probably get that we'll see if
there's any
Improvement um but anyways I should
answer this question so Traxis
says a while ago you said that in your
tradition monks do not lie down is it

hard is it

easy what I mean

is if I was not to lie down for a few

days I would surely fall asleep without

any problem in any POS any possible

position

so after initial struggle is it hard to

sleep not in the horizontal position so

what he's referring to is um the sitter

practice it's one of the 13 Danga

practices of a terraa Buddhist monk um

there are like optional additional

aesthetic practices and one of those is

never lying down you sleep in a sitting

position and um the tradition in which I

was ordained the T Pulu tradition it was

traditional for monks not to lie down in

that tradition um so for my first

well let's say yeah my first maybe

almost two years as a monk I did the the

sitters practice but when I got to Burma

like Central Burma the Blazing furnace

of central Burma I quickly realized that

the coolest position is to be flat on

your back spread eagle on a concrete

floor so

that's pretty much how I started

sleeping which is kind of aesthetic in

and of itself sleeping on a concrete

floor with a piece of wood for a pillow

but um I mean it sounds aesthetic but I

mean really seriously it was the most

comfortable way of sleeping at the time

because the concrete is cool you're
close to the floor where it's coolish
and the piece of wood doesn't absorb
sweat like a cloth pillow does a cloth
pillow starts smelling like an old gym
sock or something something an old work
glove pretty
quickly so anyway um he's asking is it
hard to do the sitters practice and for
me it was it was it was not easy to get
into the habit of sitting um as I've
explained before each of the 13 dangas
has three levels according to the wiui
Maga easy medium and hard and most of
the Tulu monks would do the easy way
which is they'd sit in a chair which was
kind of almost a reclining chair chair

they're made out of like
bamboo and you know they're tilted back
at about a 45° angle so that you're kind
of reclining when you're sleeping and
they're fairly comfortable although
they're all way too small for me my head
would just be hanging off the back of
the thing so I couldn't really use those
and anyway I wanted to be a little more
rigorous than that so I went for the
medium level and the medium level of the
sitter's practice is you're allowed to
lean back against something like lean
back against a wall or against a board
or another option is you take a like a
cord or a belt or something and you can

like you sit with your knees up and then
you put it around your knees and your
back and that kind of holds you up but I
lean back against a board and um it was
it was surprisingly difficult because at
first for for you a few weeks at least
i' I'd fall asleep in the sitting
position and then I'd wake up like 2 and
in the morning lying on my side like
flopped over in the middle of the night
and I didn't notice there are a few
times I'd be sitting cross-legged and
I'd flop over and I'd still be
cross-legged you know my legs would
still be like this sort of like a Buddha
statue tilted on its
side but uh yeah it it was difficult for

me um let's see if let's see what I mean
is if I this is CH Alex is saying what I
mean is if I was not to lie down for a
few days I would surely fall asleep
without any problem any possible
position still it's it's difficult to
stay in the sitting position I mean it's
easy just to like flop over and be
horizontal after you fall
asleep so I guess I answered that
question so we'll just move on to trax's
next question
here are monastic rules only for
unenlightened men or women if for
example an arant has accepted money and
bought himself or herself a sweatsuit

and a razor and shave his beard himself
or herself yeah she's not going to be
shaving her beard I hope looking
directly into the mirror it would be
breaking of many rules but nothing
morally wrong with it for the Arun
surely well that's it's kind of an
interesting question and it is there if
you read the the origin stories of the
rules of monastic
discipline a few times an Arun has been
the first person to break a
rule um I can't think of which one it
was I think one was like uh saving food
um overnight and eating it the next day
I think there was an arant who was the
first one recorded to break that rule at

least tradition says so because he just
wanted to be less of a burden on his his
supporters you know he'd go for alms
round once and his bowl full of food
would last him for days days so he just
eat a little bit each day but he was
told not to do that anymore and the
thing is even AR Hans are supposed to
follow the rules of monastic discipline
um I mean for a monk one of the kinds of
morality is patima Samila or the the
morality of restrained in accordance
with the patim Moka rules or the the the
rules of monastic discipline
so even though he's fully enlightened
he's still obligated to follow the rules

even though it's really not necessary

anymore I mean he's he's crossed to the

other Shore you know he's he's laid down

the burden and is freed and so I mean he

doesn't need the

raft anymore so he can kind of dismiss

that but still because he's a member of

the S the S has rules and to just start

breaking those rules in a sense would

sort of like be flirting with dishonesty

or a dishonest

life

so even arant that don't really need to

practice uh for enlightenment anymore

still because they're still monks they

still follow the

rules so I mean there are a lot of rules

that really don't have anything to do
with morality whether you're a a monk or
whether you're enlightened or not you
know like eating in the afternoon
there's nothing more moral about eating
in the morning than eating in the
afternoon or shaving your head I mean
it's not immoral to have head hair you
know there's what color of robes are
allowable what materials you know the
way you sew it there's so much of the
viia rules that really have nothing to
do with basic morality it's just like
etiquette or just like ancient Indian
tradition stuff like that
so let's see so the monastic rules are

not only for unenlightened men or women therefore anyone who's joined the order voluntarily and has taken upon themselves these precepts and if you don't want to follow the precepts anymore then the honest thing to do is to drop out which is what I eventually did so I think I'll just move on to the next question also from traex is and he says how exactly did you move all those books walking on foot from one place to another in Louisiana or did you have like half of those books behind your back then and at first I didn't understand this question at first I thought he was talking about Burma like how did I travel around in Burma with

with so many books because as you can
see I do have a bookcase that's more
than half full of books and then the
Louisiana part it took me a while and
then finally I realized he's talking
about the one night I or two nights I
spent especially the first night I spent
in New Orleans it's not pronounced New
Orleans mind you everyone there calls it
New
Orleans so if you if you go there and
call it New Orleans people know you're
from out of town and uh I don't know
maybe they won't trust you or
something
xenophobia so let's see how did I move

all the books walking from one place to another in Louisiana well first of all I sent a few boxes of books by mail to South Carolina before before I got on the train to come to to South Carolina but I did have I mean most of my possessions were books as a monk and so I did have like this big clunky Foot Locker it was like a a Burmese military Foot Locker made out of steel had no wheels or anything no hand even the handle eventually broke off of it so it was really a bastard to get around and I had a suitcase and I also had like this little backpack thing like a napsack that I had stuff stuffed into and uh yeah my first night in New Orleans that

was that was an ordeal I was really
thinking that I was going to have to
sleep on the street that night um I go
to this hotel relatively nice hotel I go
to the desk you know I've just I just
lugged all my stuff oh wait I I got off
the train and took a cab and then the
the cabbie just you know left me there
so I'm it's hard enough just lugging all
of my luggage into the lobby of this
hotel and um I had cash and I I was
willing to pay with cash and he said I'm
sorry we don't accept cash you have to
use credit cards I didn't have a credit
card I didn't have credit I didn't have
any kind of credit rating at all my

credit rating was the empty set it was

just

non-existent and so

he said well the the holiday in couple

blocks down the road uh will almost

certainly take cash so then I'm like

trying to carry and drag all this stuff

two blocks and I was exhausted just

going two blocks in in like the the

sweltering

heat and I get there and they didn't

take cash either it's it's all credit

cards if you don't have a credit card

you cannot stay there you can be

overflowing with money you know

thousands of dollars they won't take the

money which was just it's just strange

to me I mean that's what money is for I
mean it says right on the back you know
for all debts you know legal or I don't
remember what it says but I mean you I
mean it just seems strange that they
would
reject cash when that's what cash is for
is to pay for
stuff so anyway I had to make it all the
way back I mean I called my sweetheart
in desperation in the middle of the
night and uh she was able ble to to
somehow get her credit card to to pay
for my
room and then I mean they wouldn't let
me check in I'm like standing there at

the desk wanting to check in I mean the
the money part was taken care of and
they say no you can't check in here it's
like well I mean do you have any
vacancies and they say yeah we have
vacancies but still you can't check in
here you have to get have you have to
make a reservation so what I had to do I
had to go to sit on a uh like on a couch
30 feet away and on on my computer using
using WiFi I make a reservation then I
get up and go back it was just really
weird but I mean I'm completely
digressing
here so how did I move all those books
yeah I mean it was it was very difficult
and eventually the handle in the Foot

Locker broke and it was just I mean it
was like a Herculean labor just getting
all my luggage around cuz there was
still a lot of books in my luggage but I
didn't have this
many but at first I thought CHX is was
asking about how I did it as a monk in
Burma and my first several years as a
monk I had maybe 20 pounds of books and
then um somebody donated to me an entire
poly to ptica like 40 volumes so I mean
there's no way I could carry that around
I mean 20 pounds of books you know
that's still manageable you can still
carry it you know technically you I
didn't have as I say I really didn't

have many other possessions besides just bowls my bowl which I still have and robes and so forth um but then eventually I just kind of gave up on the struggle to keep my books down to a a manageable amount you know that I could just carry everything that I own you know and just take off walking with it that was the ideal you know that's that is the ideal for a monk but um I just gave up in fact in fact um I used to keep my books at this place in the town of one dwin I had a supporter there they had like this extra building like an out building where I just I would stay there when I would visit my stuff would be stored there and in I think it was

around June of

1999 there was a flash flood the dam

broke and this I mean the place where I

kept everything was like six feet

underwater it was it was soaking some of

these books on the bookshelf right back

there soaked in muddy water for like 48

hours they were just completely

submerged and I had to come back um I

mean there's it was just mud everywhere

there's human corpses everywhere before

I got there those got cleaned up but

there were still like dead cows and dead

dogs and stuff lying around there like

700 people died in that flood and I mean

it's like the American media is like

this now but the Burmese media which was
you know controlled by the military
government you know you didn't hear a
word about it you know it was all Word
of Mouth people would just hear about it
from somebody else who heard about it
from somebody else maybe and that's kind
of how you hear the important stuff
nowadays I mean you don't you don't hear
about it on CNN unless it's you know
something that's that's uh you know good
for the Democrats you know then you'll
hear about well good for globalists in
general but anything that's bad for
Democrats you know like corrupt
in uh in the Democratic party or in the
the white house or whatever nothing you

don't hear about that you just hear you

know

51 um authorities declaring that it's

all just Russian disinformation or

whatever but again I'm just digressing

all over the place having a

drink sweet

tea

so so in other words what happened was

the gods are warning me I'm keeping too

many books by sending this flash flood

that kills 700 people and I just kept

collecting books so I was just I was

just a lost cause at that

point so I think I'll just move on next

question here and this is from achala

and this may be some dishonesty on my part because I told achalo that he would be first because he asked the question before I uploaded the last Q&A but it was after I'd already recorded it so I said well you'll be at the top of the list next time and then Traxis comes out and and tells me that um there was one from like two q&as in the past that I hadn't answered so I had to put him at the top and I hope aala will forgive me for breaking my promise I told him he would be at the top of the list he'd be the first question and it didn't happen happen

so I I make public confession and I'll try to do better in

future and breaking promises I mean that it's it's a mild kind of dishonesty for a monk I believe the commentary say it is a doca offense or a minor offense for a monk to break a promise even though I mean there's no deliberate attempt to deceive it's just that you say you're going to do something and then you don't do it so it's it's good to always be careful you know God willing I'll do it you know if Nothing Stops me from doing it I'll do it you know put in some qualifiers so that um if some Act of God prevents you from from keeping your promise then you're sort of flirting with with u

dishonesty so achala

says I see some Buddhist monks

especially from Mahayana trying to speak

up for climate change

seeing it as a threat I am personally

least worried about it trying to fix

samsara or find a perfect happy place in

samsara is just not realistic and not

dhama it's natural for the climate to

change it would go against the nature of

impermanence if the climate doesn't

change the problem is rooted in our

ignorance and not being able to see the

reality as it is

I also believe Buddhist monks should

refrain from engaging in such worldly

matters as usually such things are

politically motivated what's your take
on the matter from a Buddhist
perspective well I don't think it's
necessarily immoral for a monk to be
concerned about climate change and to
share his concerns with people that he
talks to because I mean if he's
motivated by compassion let's say you
know he he believes all the you know the
the
alarmism and he thinks you know if we
don't get down to carbon neutral within
the next you know however many years
we're we're
doomed and that's I mean it's it's not
really true I mean the the climate is

warming to some degree the climate is
changing as achala here points out the
climate's always changing in fact for
most of the history of this planet
things have been warm mer than now
literally we are still in an ice age so
long as You' got glaciation youve got
glaciers on the surface you got ice caps
at all then you're still in a time that
could be called an Ice Age we're just
sort of in between the big glaciations
but still the Earth is cooler now than
usual but uh I watch a lot of like
Evolution videos about you know the
evolution of the jaw moth light media is
a really good really good ch CH for that
sort of thing and there have been Mass

die offs over and over again and some of it some of these Mass die offs have been caused by climate change in fact most of them have been if you include volcanoes and Comet impacts and so forth that are causing just immediate radical climate change but sometimes it's just natural changes that are causing the climate to change so that um the the established species that are in like living in various environments they just can't adapt fast enough and they die out

so but I mean if you got a monk or a Buddhist teacher a Buddhist anybody who really is concerned for the welfare of

all beings on this planet and takes it
seriously you know he doesn't think that
maybe you know the globalist powers that
be are just wanting us to be afraid of
this because it suits their
purposes you know I mean there are
things more dangerous than climate
change I guarantee it I mean nukes still
exist in fact there's more countries now
that have nukes than back in the 80s
when everyone was saying you know
nuclear winter we're all [__] you know
it's all it's if if we don't get rid of
nukes we're all done for um AI the
technological singularity that
potentially is more dangerous and uh
there's less we can do about it it's

going to be instantaneous when it

happens or within a very short time

unlike climate change people are very

adaptable

so yeah

it's if if it's politically motivated I

mean on if the the person who's talking

about it is himself politically

motivated then maybe I mean you're

getting into you know borderline

inappropriate

speech but if he's just sincerely you

know to the best of his understanding

trying to uh you know prevent Dua on a

huge scale on this planet then yeah I

think I think he'd be still be doing

okay with regard to DH even if he's
misguided or you know just naive and
believing the you know the the official
narrative which is pretty much
manipulated by the glob powers to be I
mean a scientist can be bought as easily
as a a judge or a
politician and even without buying
scientists it's the scientists who agree
with the narrative that are getting the
funding anyone who goes against the
narrative he can lose his job
so we don't need to get into that I'm I
maybe I should a maybe I should
apologize because I'm I'm answering
these questions um about 10% of the
actual words that are coming out out of

my mouth are directly answering the
questions and I'm just digressing all
over the
place so I'll just move on next question
and this is from Fred and Fred says did
you shave your eyebrows in Myanmar like
Tha monks and no I did not um it's
shaving the eyebrows is predominantly a
tie thing it's a tie cultural thing the
vinia says a monk has to shave his his
head hair and his facial
hair um doesn't mention anything about
eyebrows
specifically but the ties shave their
eyebrows they don't they don't clip off
their their eyelashes though so they're

still not 100% but I think I answered this a question along these lines not long ago um that it it was started off I heard this story it's like a legend Like An Origin myth or something of why Tha monk shaved their eyebrows and it was Burma or Myanmar and Thailand were traditional Arch enemies you know they were like Sparta and Athens or England and France you know they were just like the traditional favorite enemies of each other and so they would send spies across the border disguised as monks to you know spy out the land and find out what's going on and all that and so the ties started shaving their eyebrows so they would be able to tell the

difference between their real monks and
the fake Burmese spy monks so then of
course the Burmese spies would start
shaving their eyebrows too so they'
they'd blend in but then the spies on
the other side of the Border in Burma
would see the the Spy monks when they
when they would come back you know
they'd see a a shaven headed guy with no
eyebrows they'd know he was a spy unless
maybe he was just a renegade tie just
who decided to defect to Burma or
something
so yeah only time monks shave their
eyebrows even a few of those are getting
to the point where they don't do

especially like the Western monks some
of the aan cha monks who live in the
west they don't bother shaving their
eyebrows it's really it's really
unnecessary so I'll just move on to the
next question this is from franois Alias
Francoise and France flaw
says long time ago I had a graduate
course on Indian in Buddhism with one of
the main translator of the Dal Lama
while studying early Mahayana Buddhist
texts not nagar more like vazu Bandu if
I recall correctly we found out that in
some texts the notion of anatman had
actually almost the same meaning as
Atman ultimate nature of reality
Universal Universal Panacea Etc which

was quite funny anata is so

counterintuitive so reification is

always very

tempting aha do you think nagar's

interpretation of anata or emptiness

fits with what is found in the poly

Canon my knowledge of nagara is quite

limited but it seems to me an acceptable

stretch thoughts so I've decided that if

I discuss maamaa because it is so

profound that it would Aid my ability to

answer if I

the The Fez so let's see

here

okay so there's actually two kinds of

questions in here that I'd like to

address here one is um we found out that in some texts the the notion anatman had actually almost the same meaning as Atman and yeah I mean I've discussed this a lot this is like one of the recurring themes of my q&as in and of some of my writing is that everything and nothing you know it's like the beginning of of hegel's dialectic in his logic he starts off with pure being and then he points out that pure being and its antithesis pure nonbeing are just interchangeable they're indistinguishable neither one of them has any discernable content because both are just absolute without any boundaries without any differences

and so if you take that to Atman as
absolute you know like like the upan
aoic idea of you know Atman is God you
know it's Brahman it's Ultimate Reality
then again you know the everything and
the nothing they just merge into
one so yeah I mean um a kind of
Universalist
Aton would be very similar I mean to the
extent that you're not reifying it as a
as as a this you know as as a thing then
to the extent that you're not reifying
it then it just Blends in with you know
like the absolute and and nothing just
they they become
indistinguishable so it is it is

counterintuitive it's

paradoxical um and I've tried to explain

it many times but it's some things you

just can't explain in a reasonable way

and I do hope that the top of my Fez

isn't being completely cut off here you

i' got to do

this

so just a Tas a little

bit so that there is that that when

you're dealing with the absolute that's

anything that's infinite and formless

it's going to be paradoxical and it's

going to transcend The Duality of is and

isn't and to some degree even The

Duality of Atman and

anatman which I mean you just can't wrap

your head around it you cannot

understand reality

intellectually the intellect cannot deal

with infinity for example formless

Infinity the intellect cannot deal with

it it can't grasp

it

so that would be my answer to that but

then the the main question here is do

you think nagar's interpretation of

anata or emptiness fits with what is

found in the polyan Canon okay so and I

might as well add here he says my

knowledge of nagara is quite limited but

it seems to me an acceptable stretch he

has it quotes there and then he ask for

my thoughts and I think nagara did
succeed in giving a kind of
philosophical like framework not even a
framework like a
philosophical EXP explanation of the
teachings of the ATA waga of the sutan
where they're saying don't believe
anything have no views you know it's
just it's not really skepticism it's
it's like radical mysticism where I mean
you can know the truth unlike the
Skeptics who say you can't know the
truth a Mystic says you can know the
truth but you're can't know the truth
intellectually so you've got to dismiss
the intellect you've got to dismiss
percept

and then the truth is there the truth is
always there reality is always right
here we're soaking in it and nagarana is
the one who was able to come up with
maybe by that time by the time of
nagarjan there was enough sophistication
in philosophy and logic that you could
actually build up a philosophy that
could account for these very cryptic
sometimes paradoxical statements in the
AA
it's it's sort of Zen likee some
Scholars have called Thea waga Proto
maamaa
so I think nagar was able I mean he was
one of the most successful thinkers or

Mystics who was able to

explain why the Tica waga says what it

says about how a monk should have no

view no perception no belief

so I do think that nagar in his mulaka

Kara for example did a very good job

of like explaining that and justifying

that philosophically and it wasn't

skepticism like um what was his name

sexus

empiricus if you're not familiar with

with Western philosophy you might not

know who I'm talking about but he was he

was uh um like a a classical

skeptic in that lived in uh Ancient Rome

or the ancient Roman

state

so yeah I think I answered that question

I can take the Fez off

now it is a nice Fez though I mean

anyone who's who's considering getting a

fez Fez orama makes really good fezzes I

just I'm really happy with this

Fez and there's a wide variety of

different kinds of Tassels too

high quality stuff so I'll just move on

to the next question here and this is

from kazen I

think

kzen maybe it's kzen but looks like

kazen so some space alien

name and kazen says curious if there

were lots of burmes lay people with high

attainments well I mean there's really
not lots of even monks with high Attain
Ain Ms seems to me and they're always
going to be relatively rare they're
always going to form a tiny minority
seems to
me um I mean you can read in the past of
how there were lots and lots of people
with high attainments but um it's kind
of questionable like
um I read the like the poems of Han Shan
and Han Shan was like this Zen figure in
Chinese Buddhism who was supposed be
really Advanced I mean he was supposed
to be like this enlightened you know zen
master or something but you read his
poems and there's a lot of like

complaining and I mean he doesn't really
I mean he he praises the the like the
holy life and you know he has wise poems
but some of the poems you you see that
he was sort of on the wrong side of a
civil war he was you know he had to just
flee and hide out in the woods and he
adopted that life largely of necessity
he would have preferred to be some
Aristocrat you know that was in power
with lots of money and so forth and so I
mean you can it helps you to understand
how you get all these Legends of all
these Super Wise Advanced beings in the
past you know where it's no longer
verifiable you know I assume that the

Buddha himself had quite a few like

really Advanced

disciples and there have been certain

like resurgences of dhama like including

like medieval Chinese Zen where I mean I

would wouldn't be at all surprised if

there really were lots of of monks with

high attainments and also lots of of lay

people

too um but I mean there there it's

always going to be a minority even then

like all of the Buddhist disciples were

not

enlightened so I mean there's one really

famous Burmese Lake person with high

attainments ubah kin who was goenka's

teacher SN goena he was a lay person I

don't know how high his attainments were but his own teacher was a kind of bureaucrat in the Burmese government um back before it was a military dictatorship and uh you know he was like a meditation master and he was a lay person um a lot of Burmese lay people they're good at meditating just because they're not compulsive thinkers like us um but it's like their approach to Buddhism is very Faith oriented and if you're familiar with terava Buddhist philosophy there are like the five faculties the five indas and one of them is PA which in this case doesn't so much mean wisdom it just means like

cleverness or like quickness of Mind
Readiness of wit and then that is
supposed to be balanced out with another
one with Sada or faith and if you have
too much too much PA and not enough Sada
you're not going to believe anything you
know the wisi Maga says you're going to
be like a person whose sickness is
caused by the medicine he takes but if
you have too much Sada and not enough PA
then you can believe anything if You'
got too much faith and not enough
critical thinking then you can believe
anything no matter how ridiculous it is
and there's a lot of that going on
nowadays I mean it's always gone on
because we're just human All Too

Human but if you have too much of this
cleverness then you're just going to be
like a skeptic you're going to demand
more in more data or whatever before you
make your decision or whatever and
you're going to wind up not believing
anything you just get over analysis
paralysis or
whatever so um they're probably more
Burmese lay people with high attainments
than American lay people with high
attainments just because they live a
simple life they believe dhama without
question you know it's it's large Faith
but still it's it strengthens them in
their practice in their motivation to

practice and um I mean some of the most

virtuous good people I've ever known

lived in burmes

villages so they were good people they

weren't necessarily enlightened

sages but they were definitely they

might be what's called like a Chula

stapana where they're not technically a

soda Pao but they're they're so rooted

in living a virtuous life that you know

they're pretty much guaranteed of moving

upwards or you know you know they're

moving in the right

direction so I guess I'll just move on

to next question

here this is from hery gerdy man

and herur man

says if non-existence is an aspect of
samsara simply the opposite of existence
does not existence create Karma or does
does non-existence create Karma okay so
that's a question does non-existence
create Karma
and there are sutas like the kalaha Su
of the ATA waga of the
sutata which says that existence and
non-existence are derived from
ultimately from perception so that you
know it's like a duality existence and
non-existence they're both perceptions
and they rely upon each other you know
they kind of dependently
coise um so that's the kind of thing

that uh is really an aspect of samsar if

something really doesn't exist um in

like an

objective or Beyond objective just in

reality then that wouldn't create Karma

but still trying to reify all that

you're turning it into a something and

that creates

Karma so the idea of non-existence

creates

Karma I guess that would be the simplest

way of explaining it and there's a

similar question to this a little

further down that I may uh enlarge upon

but yeah non-existence creates Karma to

the extent that in order for this

non-existence to exist you have to have

a concept or an idea or a perception of non-existence and that is volitional and it's creating

Karma so let just move on to the next question this from sharp

Rock and sharp Rock says if one is having trouble with sensual desire while meditating in a beautiful setting would you recommend creating a duller environment more like a sensory deprivation chamber to eliminate stimuli or should I keep meditating on that beautiful setting and work on cultivating mindfulness of the sensual desire well I mean if you read the the poly texts it's it says none of the

above I mean some of the some of the

poly tex say that you should seek out

like what is repulsive you know you

should go and contemplate rotting

corpses for example I mean that was

relatively common practice in the

Buddhist time it's hard to find rotting

corpses nowadays

unless she might live near a battlefield

or something but

um so I mean that would be that would be

like ideal from the ancient Indian

hardcore aesthetic point of view is um

if you're having trouble with sensual

desire while meditating a beautiful

setting find a non- beautiful setting

like like something ugly you know like

in the rahula suta which is in the

sutata um there's rahula suas I'm

referring to the one in the

suata this the Buddha advises presumably

his own son who had ordained by that

time um you know avoid anything

beautiful and associated with passion

and seek out what is

revolting so I mean that's that's one

thing but then you might have

to like gear your meditation towards

contemplation of repulsiveness or so

forth but if you just want to meditate

on your breath

then yeah I mean if if you're having

trouble with uh sensual desire while

meditating in a beautiful setting then
yeah just go the Zen route or keep your
eyes closed you know just sit in a blank
room just stare at a blank wall keep
your eyes closed where it's just
black and that should
help so yeah I mean it's it's becoming
sort of contri you know you're playing
with fire when you keep meditating in
the beautiful setting that is
distracting you and work on cultivating
mindfulness of the sensual desire I mean
that's it's it's possible you know it's
sort of like the tantric path the
left-handed path because most people
fail at that it's more dangerous it's
maybe more suited to the kuga to the

spiritual Dark Age that allegedly we are
in right now but uh you'd have to have a
good teacher I think to help guide you
through that sort of thing so I'll just
move on to the next question this is
from catchup
and ketchup
says what if someone was being harmed
into breaking a precept what should they
do and I asked catchup what does he mean
by that I don't I don't really
understand what it means by if someone
is harmed into breaking a precept then
um this was in the a YouTube comment and
then below that there was a reply by
trax's and trax's add added that maybe

it is about a monk being raped by a male prostitute so it's hard for me to answer this question mainly because I don't really understand what it means to be harmed into breaking a precept um you know if you're being forced into something let's say somebody's being raped then I mean so long as you're you're not volitionally doing it so long as you're not consenting then you're you're not doing anything wrong like with regard to um a monk who who gets raped raped let's let's say he's raped by a woman cuz this this used to actually happen like in in Burma under the military dictatorship some monks would be troublemakers you

know they'd be protesting against the government and so forth and so you can't just defrock a monk nobody has the authority to defrock a monk except for that monk
himself and he can be like admonished and even sort of put on a kind of probation he can be given the silent treatment other monks can avoid him in All That but nobody has the authority to just make him not be a monk anymore other than himself unless he commits a par offense so what the military government would do is you got this monk in this prison cell and they would just hire a prostitute to like entice him you

know lure him you know get him excited
or whatever and so long as his his penis
you know enters into any of her three
orifices the three main ones I should
say uh to the to the extent of the width
of a sesame seed he's not a monk anymore
if he consents to it and that's you know
that's pretty much what it is it's like
in the in the texts like in the winia
rules it says you know if you consent
while inserting it that's it you're
excommunicated if you don't consent
while inserting it but you consent you
know while it's in there then then also
you're excommunicated and if you don't
consent while inserting it and you don't
consent while it's in there but you do

consent while you're pulling it out then
you're excommunicated so I mean if it's
not volitional on your
part then you're not really doing
anything wrong I mean what should the
person do if they're being forced into
doing bad things um I mean if if they
have no choice you know they're just
being forced like being raped for
example um I mean really they're not
doing anything wrong other than just
their mental states that are going on
and so they should really try to be as
mindful you know try not to be wallowing
in in fear or Terror or rage or anything
like that because then you're making

then you're making

Karma Bad

Karma being harmed into breaking a

precept is if it's just like peer group

pressure you know you're just being

pressured into breaking a rule you know

it's like your parents are insisting

that you do something that you think is

like join the Army or something that you

consider to be morally indefensible

then I mean you just have to like stand

by your morals you have to stand by your

conscience and defy even your own

parents if

necessary so again I'm really not sure

what ketchup had in mind by this

question of of what if someone was being

harmed into breaking a precept but I
mean if it's not volutional at all then
I mean you're not really doing anything
because the doing is the volition you
know it's the mental state accompanying
the action ction but uh if someone is
just pressuring you I mean if even if
it's a gunpoint you know they're saying
you know kill this other person or I
kill you you still have the the choice
to just refuse and take the bullet which
would be the the dharmically correct
thing to
do so I guess I'll just move on to the
next question this is from ludis
balam and ludus balam says in the

procrit language and I I think he mainly
means Nepali language is there separate
concept for ghost or would ghosts be
considered Davis second part is Dava the
word they use in poly or is there
another term well um in po the word for
a god a small G God below the level of a
Brahma um yeah that would be daa DEA
but there definitely is a different word
for ghosts than for for Davis the word
for ghosts in ply the usual word is
p and I think I've explained before that
P is derived from the same word as
father you know in um in in po it's p p
is his father uh which goes back into
Proto indoeuropean and the the English
word father is derived from the same

root as the poly word petar

just but the Germanic languages which

includes English P turns to the F

sound so um and and the reason why

ghosts have a name that's derived from

the word father is because they were the

original um concept of the petas were

ancestors it was ancestor worship and

there's still some of that going on in

India today where you have to make

offerings to your an ancestors and if

you don't make offerings to them they

become miserable and hungry and so forth

and that's where the idea of hungry

ghosts comes from that's why ghosts in

are are called Hungry ghosts in in

Buddhism because those are the ancestors
or originally the meaning was those are
the ancestors that didn't get offerings
from their
descendants and so they're in a state of
you know distress hunger or whatever but
then later on um in Buddhist cosmology
the petas were considered to be hungry
just just because they would uh have
like a pinhole sized mouth and a huge
stomach or a huge mouth and a like a pin
pin head sized stomach and it was just a
kind of punishment because the p live in
one of the lower Realms you got four
lower Realms you got hell you got ghosts
you got animals and you got the asuras
which um are kind of awkward they

don't they're not mentioned a lot or at least they're not mentioned as many times as the other three in in the poly texts so there's ghosts are considered to be a subhuman level on on the 31 planes of existence whereas Davis are superhuman level but if you read the texts it's a spectrum like the highest ghost is right up against the same level as the lowest daa and if you read a strange text called the the pwu or the ghost stories it's actually canonical or at least yeah the book itself is canonical although most of the stories are in the commentary and um you see that these

ghost stories are mainly about a ghost
that's almost a God you know it's it's
it's essentially lives the life of a God
but it has something wrong it's got like
stinking bad breath or it has to be
naked all the time or one story that I
told it's one of my favorite ghost
stories in in the poly text is there was
this woman a female goddess essentially
who every night she' go into this trance
and descend from her her mansion and a
black dog would devour her just eat all
the meat off of her bones the bones
would fall into this Lotus pool and then
it her the flesh would grow back she'd
climb out of the pool and go back up
into her bedroom and go back to sleep

and then that would recur every

night but aside aside from aside from

being eaten by a dog every night I mean

she lived in this beautiful palace you

know she had this lifespan of thousands

of years she had these Celestial

attendants you know Celestial servants

and so forth surrounded by these

beautiful parks of of you know Celestial

trees and all

this

so um yeah so so it's it's a Continuum

it's like a spectrum and the dvas are

like the subhuman part and the the or no

the the petas or ghosts or the subhuman

part and the Davis are the Superhuman

you know it's

just so yeah and again I'm I'm I'm being

very verbose today taking a long time to

answer these questions but um I'll just

move on to ludus balam's next

question and he says would birth

contraceptives like condoms birth

control pills or birth control implants

have a similar karmic status to eating

meat considering most men and women

don't approach it with the mindset that

they are killing a person especially

considering the implant which happens

before

pregnancy yeah or the or the condom for

that

matter so in a way yeah I never really

thought about it like that but yeah it's
in a way it's similar although I mean
technically the karma would be different
because you've got this just like the
eating food Karma compared with having
sex Karma and eating food is generally
considered to be karmically neutral
although um I mean just having Greed for
the food you know just even putting salt
and pepper on it to make it taste better
would technically be slightly immoral
from a Buddhist point of view whereas
sex you're getting into the more gross
forms of craving and desire and passion
and so forth but um
yeah technically like using a condom

you're not

killing um even a fertilized egg you're

just preventing the egg from being

fertilized so it' be sort of like

masturbation almost with regard to that

with regard to

reproduction you know you just you might

as well be shooting

blanks

so yeah I mean it's it's not wearing a

condom that is immoral or using a birth

control pill or using an IUD I mean

those themselves are not immoral but the

the sex that you're having you know

after you you use these then usually in

in Buddhist philosophy terot Buddhist

philosophy sex is so prone to desire

it's so closely linked with desire

usually so motivated by desire and

craving and

passion that you know it's really

difficult to do it in in a way that is

not immoral even even between a husband

and wife just for the sake of having

kids still to do it perfectly morally

would be really an

accomplishment which is one reason why

Buddhism emphasizes renunciation and

celibacy but it does not I mean it does

not promote vegetarianism

so I'll just move on the next question

here this is from cak and sead zida and

seak andad zida says the Buddha

recommends going to a forest but the
vinea also says that a monk is not
allowed to stay in the wilderness can
you explain the difference cuz I thought
Wilderness is anywhere where people
don't live which would include forests I
have no idea how he got this information
I mean it does not say in vinia that a
monk can't live in a wilderness it does
say a few things one nuns like beunis
are not allowed to live in a Wilderness
just for their own
safety also a monk can't live in a
Wilderness during the three months of
the rains Retreat the three months of
the monsoon usually the first three
months um he he's not supposed to live

in a forest um I mean like under a tree

he has to have a roof when he's when

he's during the rains

Retreat um also I mean it's just a

matter of practicality that a monk can't

live more than an easy walk or a

difficult walk every morning to a

village for alms

because he can't store his own food he

can't collect his own food he's got to

be given

food by a lay person so he has to be he

has to have an alms Resort within

walking distance so he can't live you

know 20 miles out in

solitude um in in this deep Wilderness

because he wouldn't be able to get food
that way I have been told that there
have been some Wise Guy monks that
trained monkeys to offer them food so
they could live out there in the
wilderness by themselves and the monkey
would offer them food but um that's
that's kind of a rare thing I
think so yeah I mean monks are
encouraged to live in forests
um wild
places so I don't I don't know what he
had in mind with his idea that the vinea
says that a monk is not allowed to stay
in a Wilderness unless it's just under
certain circumstances like during I mean
he's not allowed to live under a tree

during the the three months of the the
Reigns Retreat and so forth or maybe he
confused it with beunis or something so
I'll just move on to cak and sead Z's
next
question and he says I remember reading
a story of the Buddha letting a monk
bring in his blind homeless parents into
the monastery and let them eat alms food
there's also another example of a monk
who gave up the robe to look after their
sick mother or something and made
Pottery for a living wouldn't these also
show that there is more Nuance when it
comes to practicing above all else or
maybe they see taking care of parents as

much more important than being told to
look after your kid while you're in deep
sod
LOL well it is true that the the
Buddhist text put a lot more emphasis on
your obligations to your parents than
your obligations to your spouse or your
own
children that there is a a sua where the
Buddha is saying that you could carry
your parents around on your back for the
rest of your life and you still wouldn't
pay them back for all they've done for
you so honoring your own parents is
important there's even a venea rule
saying that a monk is not supposed to be
ordained you know a a prospective monk

is not supposed to be ordained without
his parents
permission I mean you don't have to have
your wife's permission or your kids
permission you do have to or supposedly
you do have to have your parents'
permission although if you don't get
your parents permission you're ordained
anyway the ordination is still valid but
the monks who perform the ordination
have committed a minor offense requiring
confession so taking care of your aging
parents if you can do that and practice
as a monk anyway like I was saying um in
I think it was the previous Q&A then
that's that's fine there's nothing

against that um and there really is a

lot of emphasis on your duties to your

own

parents in in the in the poly

texts so parents are considered to be

very important almost

sacred in uh in poly so or in the poly

text

so yeah I think there would be more of

an emphasis on taking care of your aging

parents than taking care of your your

wife and

children

so I think I should just uh I don't know

if I answered that

question um see I guess the question is

wouldn't these also show that there's

more Nuance when it comes to practicing

above all else um yeah especially with

regard to parents I suppose

so I'll just move on to next question

this is from nmit and nmit says can a

householder be an arant and

personally I think yes although the

official Orthodox answer is no at least

he couldn't be an arant for more than

about one

day because it is the official position

of terava Buddhism that if you become

fully enlightened you've got a very

short time approximately 24 hours to get

yourself ordained or you are going to

die like um one famous example is uh in

the bahuta of the udana I think it's
udana 110 where there's a non- Buddhist
philosopher named bahah literally means
Outsider who goes to the Buddha and and
he's so receptive to what the Buddha has
to say the Buddha just gives him this
this short little discourse which is
very cryptic and zen-like by the way and
it causes bajia to become enlightened
but because he is not a monk an ordained
monk shortly afterwards he gets killed
by by getting like it was like it like a
calf you know it was a young a young cow
I think like attacks him like butts into
him and hits some vital organ or
something maybe I mean he it just kills
him just by by like running into him and

trampling him or something and if you
read the commentaries um you know
there's there's all this karmic stuff
that that that cow had in a previous
life and this prostitute that bahah was
he was a young man in a different life
who raped her to death or something and
so it would cause like this karmic
vicious circle of her wanting Revenge
Life After Life but again I'm digressing
can a householder be an Aran it's such a
short question you'd think that I'd be
able to give it like a short concise
answer wouldn't
you um yeah I personally think that an
Aran can be a householder I do not think

that you have to be an ordained monk to

be fully enlightened I don't even think

you have to be a terava Buddhist to be

fully in lined which is also unorthodox

because if you're not a terab Buddhist

you have wrong view you have MAA

DTI so so if you want the official

answer then it's no but if you want my

personal belief or opinion then it would

be

yes take your pick and I'll move on to

nm's next question which is what is

aestheticism according to

you and I think the easiest answer to

that would be

asceticism is being okay with being

uncomfortable however I think I could

tweak that explan I could tweak that
answer a because let's say you've got
some rich person living in a mansion
he's got a herum of slave girls he eats
Deluxe gourmet food all the time you
know he never he he rarely feels
uncomfortable you know so he's okay with
it he's okay with being uncomfortable if
it happens but it just doesn't happen
much then he might not be considered all
that much of an athetic so it may be
that aestheticism is like C cultivating
yourself so that you are okay with being
uncomfortable you don't have to torture
yourself that's that's non- Buddhist
that's one of the extremes that a a good

Buddhist is supposed to avoid when he

follows the middle

path but um I mean you're not supposed

to just wallow in sensuality either so

asceticism is to some degree avoiding

Comfort maybe I could say and definitely

it's like cultivating the ability to

accept dis comfort with equinity

discomfort or even

pain so I guess that's my answer so I'll

just move on to nut's next question

which is why is sense restraint so

important in most spiritual

practices which is uh that's a good

question and it's kind of a deep

question and it may be that different

spiritual practices will have different

reasons you know like a Christian might
have a different reason
than a Buddhist in in some cases
although I think like a good Catholic
saint back in the Middle Ages would say
sense restraint is important because you
have to mortify your self- willll and
when you mortify your self- willll
sufficiently you just kind of kill your
own self-will you know your own free
will or whatever and then you become
like a puppet of God you just do the the
will of God you know God just guides you
to do what pleases him and it's that's
sort of a Christian way of explaining
that sort of the Buddhist approach you

sense

restraint

um I think I mean there's different

levels of self-restraint one is just

through morality you know you're not

going to orgies for example that would

be a kind of sense restraint um not

going to mosh pits at punk rock

concerts um but then I mean the real

sense restraint is internal it's mental

where um like if you hear a sound you

just hear it as sound you're not

interpreting that sound as oh that's

that song that I like or will will the

goddamn dog never stop barking you know

when you start spinning off into these

thoughts that's not self uh sense

restraint but when you hear the sound
only as like sensory stimuli just as
sound itself or if you see a form just
as you know just seeing when you hear is
just hearing when you taste is just
tasting um then that would be sensor
strain because you're not just spinning
off into all the samsaric thinking
because when you're at the level of just
the bare sensation or as close to the
level of bare sensation as you can get
you're closer to Ultimate Reality
especially from the Orthodox Buddhist
point of view if like in Abid dama you
know take it or leave it but Abid dama
says that sensation waya or feeling is

ultimately real that is an Ultimate
Reality barking dog is not an Ultimate
Reality the song that I like is not
Ultimate Reality but the sound is
ultimately real from a Orthodox terab
Buddhist point of view so if you are
just at the level of the you know seeing
is only seeing hearing is only hearing
you know touching is only touching
you're not interpreting that with with
perceptual commentary and so forth then
you're at the level of Ultimate
Reality at least you're closer to
Ultimate Reality I mean you're moving
closer to
Enlightenment by just being like the
stripped down almost mystical state of

in the scene there's only the scene in
the her there's only the heard and the
felt there's only the
felt so the cultivation of that is is
getting you much closer to
Enlightenment because I mean it's you're
training yourself away from all this
some SAR perceptual gobbly go that your
mind is just generating pretty much
constantly even in your
sleep so I'll just move on to the next
question I'm not sure how effectively I
answered that question but I I I gave it
a shot so I'll just move on to ru's
question here and ru says hello poo what
is your view of Mantra do you think

Mantra practice as worthy to Incline the Mind towards dhama I suppose one could concoct mantras out of the poly Canon question mark um I use Mantra sometimes um like i' I've said before i i m spontaneously like m is the main Mantra that I've used there have been times in my life I've used other mantras that also just arose spontaneously like dear God please have mercy you know even though I'm not a theist it just arose maybe uh due to momentum karmic momentum from a past life as a Christian or something but I have found that Mantra I mean it can be as effective as meditation on the breath I mean you can combine the two like M just every out

breath if you're in sitting in
meditation is an M or if you're walking
you know every out breath is an and uh
it requires a certain effort to keep it
on the Mantra which makes it better than
in in one way than breath meditation
because in breath meditation your mind
can just wander away from the breathing
because you know you're going to breathe
whether you're mindful of it or not but
the Mantra requires an effort for you to
keep doing it which makes it easier to
keep your mind from wandering away from
it so that's one of the main advantages
of Mantra but you'd want a mantra that
isn't super super

meaningful this om is really good for me
um om money pme hum I suppose would be
more Buddhist although that's Mahayana
Buddhist um but the longer and more
complicated the Mantra is the more
thinking mind is going on and the less
deep your meditation is going to be
because most meditation according to the
wiui Maga again take it or leave it but
according to the Wii manga any kind of
meditation that involves thinking you're
never going to get John with that like
like the meditation on reflection on the
the virtues of the Buddha that's that's
a main one that's it's a kind of Mantra
meditation that a lot of um Burmese
people will do um is

UMO etc etc you know they'll they'll go
like one they'll use a Rosary in just
one bead every time they do that and um
it's not going to be very deep
meditation but if you're not if you're
like a beginner in meditation you're not
very good at meditation
or your mind just gets really restless
sometimes so you need some kind of
mental busy work to keep your mind on
dhama or you know like at least sort of
Elementary meditation then it can still
be useful but I think the Mantra should
be as simple as
possible like like oh works for me a lot
of a lot of the Tha monks especially use

budo although they PR the ties I think

they pronounce it Boe or putto

I I knew this one guy he had he' been

meditating in Thailand and he actually

got aachara samadi he he started seeing

namita from from meditating he thought

he was doing boot toe he I mean he

didn't even know what it meant he didn't

realize that he was saying Buddha in in

like a Thai

accent but he he got to aachara samadi

with it anyway he was seeing the nitas

and

stuff

um so yeah the content of the the ra

yeah you want it simple but it is it is

useful I think that it can be more

effective than breath meditation for
some people although breath meditation
may be more effective than mantra for
some people and breath meditation is
much more Orthodox I think just Mantra
meditation as Mantra it
really isn't endorsed in Orthodox terab
Buddhism like in the texts I mean you've
got the ones where you're think
about stuff that could be a kind of
Mantra also some traditions in in Burma
will use the 32 parts of the body you
know head hair body hair nails teeth
skin um Etc as as a kind of Mantra where
they're not even Imagining the location
or the the appearance of the the body

parts you know it's just kind of a
mantra that they they do so you can you
can turn some Orthodox Buddhist
meditations into a kind of Mantra medit
ation but um I do think that Mantra can
be useful for a lot of people so Longs
especially if it's
simple so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from edel Vice
Voyager edel Vice
Voyager and uh Ed iice Voyager says are
C are caves spiritually significant in
your opinion I recall you saying that
you spent most of your time in Burma
hanging out in caves also Muhammad was
spoken to by a kako Dion in a cave and
my Greek is pretty rudimentary but I'm

pretty sure that kako Dion means evil

spirit oh my golly I just got warned

that just a

second oh

boy let's see

here I keep doing this

I keep forgetting to plug in the

computer and then I get this warning

that I'm down to

3% there my computer is no longer

gasping for

air

9% so getting back to Ed Vice voyagers

question

here um yeah I think it's kind of a a

little bit of a dig there to say that

the Archangel Gabriel is an evil

spirit or whoever was

masquerading pretending to be the

Archangel

Gabriel or or

whatever but the main question oh I I

should make one little correction here

edise Voyager says I recall you saying

that you spent most of your time in

Burma hanging out in caves actually it

was maybe a little more than half my

time so I guess that would count as as

most I spent maybe 13 or 14 years

literally living in

caves but um the question here is are

caves spiritually significant and I

don't think that just a cave in and of

itself is spiritually significant it's
just a cave um I mean there are
advantages to living in caves like for
example if you're living in the
tropics during the day time in the
Blazing heat a cave could
be 20° fah at least
cooler than the outside
air like the main cave that I lived in
ironically the one place I've lived
longer than anywhere else in my life was
a cave at one boo Wildlife Refuge
Monastery one boo Bame dojon and the
inside of that cave was just all year
round around 83 84 degrees
Fahrenheit and that's just sort of like

the average temperature of the entire

area if you you combine you know night

and day and cold season and hot season

everything you just take the temperature

of that place just the the mean

temperature over the entire course of

the year day and night all the seasons

everything it was around 83 84 degrees

and it was it went like 50 feet into the

into the side of a hill so it was like a

constant 83 84 degrees if I had the the

door

closed but so I mean that was way better

than 100 15 or 120 outside during the

hot

season so I mean that's useful I mean

it's better for Solitude especially if

you got a door on the cave that you can
latch from the inside to keep out bats
rats humans and
snakes um but I mean in and of
themselves caves are not spiritually
significant I mean any more significant
than any other rock formation it's just
a it's just a hole in the side of a
hill so I think I'll just move the next
question here and this is from Saint
sword or Saints word it's Saint and then
s which could be Saints and then word or
it could be Saint and then
sword I'm guessing it's Saint
sword so Saint sword or Saint's word
says U and I think this isn't even a

question but it's it's it's in

the it's in the comments below a Q&A

video and it's worthy of some comment so

I'm going to I'm just going to read

anyway even though I don't think there's

a single question mark in this entire

thing St sword says formless nothingness

is still an object of Consciousness

albeit very subtle that's what the arupa

janas or a 20 milligram dose of 5 meod

dmtr are adite of a Dante takes this to

be the end notices there is still a self

and concludes that there's a subtle self

which they term Consciousness without an

object in the absolute this is exactly

why they're incorrect Consciousness is

still taking a very subtle object it

still has gone through the process of
picha Samu and become nothingness talk
to someone that's recently gone into
this state of consciousness they'll even
tell you that the eye was still there
the eye if they came if they can
remember it's easy to forget when coming
back from this state just know noticing
nothingness nibana is not Consciousness
nor form nor formless it's gone beyond
it's blowing out all of the
Consciousness self or any objects gross
or subtle further it's really important
to distinguish between emptiness and
nothingness nothingness is a subtle
object the empty set is a set of

nothingness it's still a set it just
doesn't have any members emptiness is a
step further it's where there's no set
to even be empty the sixth patriarch of
Zen story demonstrates this really well
the student That was supposed to succeed
the fifth patriarch wrote a poem about
how one should remain pure that's
nothingness nothingness is as pure as
one can get the poor farmer who actually
became the sixth patriarch wrote two
poems about how there is nothing to
become pure there's no place for dust to
land and make impurity that's
emptiness well I would say that uh the
word for zero in Burmese is th which is
the poly word for emptiness or

empty and I mean there's some of this

that I wouldn't entirely agree with

which is why I'm commenting here with

all due respect to Saint sword and his

sword which may be sharp and

pointy

um like formless consciousness there's a

difference between formless

Consciousness and the concept of

formless Consciousness like if you

perceive formless Consciousness that's

not formless Consciousness anymore so if

you make formless Consciousness an

object then it's not form really

formless Consciousness anymore you can

have like as as he points out one of the

formless Jas one of the formless
contemplative States one of the very
Advanced ones is the the uh the the
realm of infinite
nothingness or there's another one the r
infinite Consciousness and I've I've
hypothesized that those are both ways of
describing Enlightenment that became
unorthodox as the philosophy evolved and
so they just got put into this higher
than fourth genre but still below
Enlightenment and sort of
status but the thing is like ADV
viant is I mean if they're saying that
that like the ultimate is formless
Consciousness and there are a few a few
poly texts that imply also that the

ultimate is formless consciousness that

there's a difference

between saying that the ultimate is

formless consciousness and just having

this

idea that just confusing the idea with

the formless Consciousness itself

because I mean the same thing can happen

in in in Orthodox Buddhism you got

nibana I mean nibana is very different

from the concept of nibana I mean nibana

is different from

nibana and so somebody can meditate on

or contemplate nibana but so long as

it's a perceptual object it's not nibana

and the same is true of formless

Consciousness so long as it is a

perceptual object it's not formless

Consciousness

so and then it says here that ADV Vidant

takes this to be the end notices their

is still a self and concludes that

there's a subtle self which they term

Consciousness without an object in the

absolute but really I mean it's not that

you have a self until you reach nana I

mean you have a concept of a self until

you reach neana maybe even after you

become enlightened you could still have

a concept of a self but you just know

that it's just a concept you're not

identifying with it or thinking that

it's

real so it's it's real difficult if
you're trying to to intellectually
understand something I mean you can't
intellectually understand reality
Ultimate Reality it just cannot
work so you can say that so long as if
if formless Consciousness becomes an an
object it's not formless Consciousness
anymore it's it's a perception of
formless
Consciousness so let's see also I I make
a few little quibbles here like um
Emptiness is let's see where where is it
here uh uhuh this is kind of a long one
here nothingness is a see the empty set
is a set of nothingness well I would I

would say that that nothingness would
just be the set of
zero like like in Burmese daa or sun is
the word for zero whereas uh emptiness
would be like the empty set that's why
it's called The Empty set because it's
empty doesn't even have zero in
it
so uh I mean you you can interpret it
differently of course which may be just
as valid or invalid as as my
interpretation so yeah the sixth
patriarch of Zen we didn't even get into
that I was really disillusioned when I I
read um it was uh a translation of the
the Sutra hang who's this supposedly the
six page patriarch and it was giving

evidence that that hu Nang probably

wasn't really the six patriarch but the

real six patriarch had this lineage that

died out and so uh Hing was sort of

retroactively installed as the sixth and

last patriarch of Zen but we can get

into that maybe some other time don't

want to disillusion people too

much

so yeah I mean it's you can say that

emptiness is anything that

is is not

perceived that would be a good way of

describing emptiness because once you

perceive something you got a set and

even if you're perceiving nothingness

that's that's just the set of

zero but um yeah I'm not I'm not trying

to like like pick nits or anything here

I'll just move on to the next question

this is from Su

deep and S deep says there is a common

belief among Buddhists especially

monastics that only an understanding of

dependent origination can lead to

Liberation as far as I know the Buddha

also said that the teaching of dependent

origination is unique to him so I was

surprised when in a past Q&A you said

there might be more Hindu gurus who are

enlightened than terraa monks and then

he's got four questions here one since

most other transition most other

Traditions don't even mention
independent origination how do you think
they got enlightened do you think they
understand the same ideas in a different
way I might be wrong but I don't feel
other Traditions talk about similar
ideas Dua impermanence dependent
origination not self well I mean the
possibly the backbone of Buddhism at
least Terra Buddhism is the four noble
truths and the third Noble truth is the
truth of cessation which means when
clinging
ceases Dua ceases you know when when you
stop having desires and attachment you
stop suffering so I mean if you just go

with that I mean you might have to argue
that You' have to understand in some
intellectual way dependent core rising
in order to stop having desires and I
don't think that that's necessarily the
case I mean you can have like this
intuitive grasp or an
intuitive appreciation
of something along the lines of
dependent origination where you're not
seeing this outer world as ultimately
real and like a Christian a Christian
Saint like St John of the cross for
example would consider this external
world not to be ultimately real but it
would just be like generated by the
power of God or whatever I think I think

Hindus would largely feel that way

also

um let's see

yeah I mean it is true that dependent Co

dependent core

arising or picha samua it is emphasized

very strongly in terada Buddhism but at

the same time it's pretty obvious that

very few terab Buddhists really

understand it it just very quickly

relatively speaking it got aifi into the

12

links you know this causes this this

causes is this it's just like this

linear sequence that monks memorize and

if they want to understand it any better

than just memorizing it they memorize

what the commentary says or they

memorize you know some something in a

suta but the suas is usually is just the

same stock phrases that are

inserted

so yeah I mean dependent origination I

think the Buddha understood it

intuitively

and he he can't really talk about it

much because it's so hard to talk about

I think it wasn't until nagara came

along hundreds of years later that at

least there was like a sophisticated

philosophical way of sort of almost

talking about it but once you try to

turn it into a formula you've lost

it so it could be that you got
enlightened people that just intuitively
understand that this world is not
ultimately real and that it's in a way
We're Dreaming it that it's it's sort of
a creation of all these different not
ultimately real causes that are all
reinforcing each other to make each
other look like they're real when it's
not real and you know the Hindus do have
the idea of Maya except they can't
really explain it intellectually they
refer to what is sort of like dea Leela
it's just sort of the play of the gods
or something creating this this
world um but I think most Buddhist

attempts um really are not much more

sophisticated because you know they're

just the 12 Nido theories you know

aaar and they just memorize this

stuff and then they think they

understand it when really they

don't

so yeah it is true though what what uh

sandep says here is true that an

understanding of dependent core Rising

is is very much emphasized in the texts

although it's pretty clear that most

monks even monks that were writing texts

or composing texts didn't really

understand

it so it is kind of a a strange

situation in fact according to the

legend the Buddha almost became a Hermit
he almost became a pea Buddha and just
was enlightened but just was going to
keep his mouth shut and not even try to
teach dhama because he figured nobody
would understand dependent Co rising and
uh for like Burmese scholar monks to
think they understand it when the Buddha
himself almost was in despair of
teaching dhama because he figured nobody
would understand it whereas you know any
any Burmese monk who's been to a
monastic School thinks he understands it
I mean it's yeah it's it's very naive
and and uh not very well not very well
informed but it is kind of a it is kind

of a like a paradox or an enigma though
because I mean it's something you just
have to kind of grock it's it's more of
an intuitive appreciation than an
intellectual formula that you memorize
and
master so yeah I did not fully answer
that to my own uh satisfaction but it's
when you get into this stuff some of it
is literally impossible to explain
correctly or valid validly because it's
just off the scale anything that you try
and crystallize it down into
intellectual thoughts and words I mean
you've already lost it so I'll just move
on to S Deep's next question here part
two do you agree with the idea that the

Buddha was this supreme and unique
spiritual teacher or do you think there
have always been beings who were able to
become enlightened without the Buddhist
teachings it is a common belief among
Buddhists that you can't become
enlightened without the instructions of
a Buddha well if you read some sutas the
Buddha is talking about enlightened
beings before him and enlightened beings
at the same time as him and enlightened
beings in the
future I think the whole idea that only
a
Buddha that that is above the level of
an ordinary arahant that is omniscient

who has perfected all of the parames all
10 of
them um that only he can become
enlightened without a teacher or a
tradition to follow and I just I am
skeptical of that I have been skeptical
of that for a long time I still think
that for all I know there may have been
more enlightened Hindus than more than
enlightened terraa
Buddhists like if I had to name two
people of the 20th century that I
thought were fully enlightened two of my
best guesses would be Nim Koli Baba and
Ramana Mahari and both of them were
Hindus
so I mean they weren't the same kind of

Hindu definitely just with regard to I
ramanam mahashi was a shite Hindu and
nimoli Baba was like a devote of Hanuman
so he was more into the Vishnu aspect of
of the highest God and just their their
personalities were very different from
each other Raman am maharshi was just
the
Orthodox you no Scandal Saint you know
he just it was saintly in every possible
way that you could think of whereas neim
CI Baba was a
rascal but he would just look right
through you I mean he he would perform
psychic powers um that would just have
people just completely just beyond

astonished in fact sometimes he would do
that to open a person up he would like
do this miracle you know just tell them
exactly what they're thinking or tell
them exactly what they were thinking the
night before or whatever just to like
break down their concept of what is
possible so that they're in a state of
like existential crisis
and then he can just tell them exactly
what they need to hear and
Boop but I think again I'm digressing
from the question here do I agree that
the idea that the Buddha was a supreme
and unique spiritual teacher I think
that he was a spiritual genius possibly
an intellectual genius as well but I do

not think that you have to be an

orthodox Buddhist to become enlightened

and I do think it's possible for some

people who are just ripe to become

enlightened like even terrible lot of

Buddhism accepts that there are Pacha

Buddhas who become enlightened on their

own without

teachers just during a times when there

is no Buddhism in the world when there

is no

dhama

so um yeah I think that to some degree

the terot Buddhist idea that only a

terab Buddhist can become enlightened

and that you know you the the whole idea

of of these Buddhas who are who have
been cultivating the Perfections for
countless eons in order to become a
Buddha who can set the wheel rolling and
so forth I think that's largely
mythology I really do that's that is my
best honest guess as to the state of
enlightened
beings I
guess so let's see did I answer the
question that is the question now did I
answer the question do I agree with the
idea that the Buddha was a supreme and
unique spiritual teacher well I in a way
he was there was no one better than him
because he reached the top I he was
beyond the top he was off the scale so I

mean at at the very best somebody could
tie for first place with him and he was
certainly a unique spiritual teacher I
mean in human
history um but I on the other hand I
also think that there have always been
beings who are able to become
enlightened without the Buddhist
teachings so I I accept
both so I think I'll just move on to uh
the part three of su Deep's question do
you think enlightened beings from other
Traditions also go through the four
stages of Enlightenment early Buddhism
and Terra seems pretty rigid on how
Awakening happens in these stages well

um I've I've talked about the four

stages of Enlightenment also I do think

that that is anachronistic that it it

was a l development in Buddhist

philosophy that for example the the

first sutas of the ID Wuda use anagami

as a synonym for arant

sopana probably originally just meant

someone who had just started upon

started firmly upon the path of dhama

you know they would they would be sort

of like the equivalent of a born again

Christian that the earliest text never

even mention um

um

sakagami who who are only going to get

born again one more time before I mean

they don't uh what is it

sakagami yeah they just have one more

Earthly worldly existence before they

become enlightened and also um you don't

necessarily I'm pretty sure even

Orthodox terval says you don't

necessarily go through four stages of

sainthood that you can just go from

putuj unenlightened commoner straight to

fully enlightened I mean there might be

like two moments like in Abid dama you

got path and fruition so like like each

of these four stages of saood like

sodana sakagami anagami and arahant you

know there's like two stages there's the

pth stage and the fruition stage and for

some strange reason the Abid dama

philosophy says that the path stage

lasts just this trith of a

second which I mean is just why even

bother even talking about it like in

other parts of the text it says you know

that there are the eight individuals

worthy of offerings and that's you know

each of the four stages in the path

stage and in the fruition stage so that

makes eight but how are you going to

make offerings to someone in a

trillionth of a second when they're at

the path stage you know it's just abid's

got some weird stuff to it and just

Orthodox

terraa partly as a consequence of this

also just has this stuff that if you're really Faith oriented don't want to take a critical approach to your own religion because that's blasphemous and dangerous and the road to hell and all that then you can just gloss over it and you don't notice it because you don't want to notice it but if you're a critically minded Westerner or anybody capable of applying critical thought to your own religion which does make perfect sense I mean it's a good idea at least from my point of view you don't want to believe what isn't true I mean it depends like a faith oriented person if it works for them then that's good enough you know

they don't want to look at it too
closely to see if it's true they just
want to know that it's true and that's
you know like confirmation bias or
whatever that's happens in politics all
the Time in the West you know it happens
with regard to a lot of things happens
with regard to a person's own family you
know you just have this bias and you
just do not want that bias CH
challenged but
um the whole four stages of
Enlightenment I think was not original
to the Buddha and even if it was you
don't have to go through the sequential
steps I mean you can skip over one step
and just go straight to to

arant pretty

sure

so and then there's no other mentions

like in other Traditions um except St

John of the cross I've mentioned this

before that he did have a system that

was sort of weirdly similar to the

Buddhist system of not the four stages

of Enlightenment but the the the stage

of the putuj or the common worldling who

is not a saint at all and then you've

got the the seika the person in training

and from the Orthodox terad point of

view that would be soapas sakagami and

anagami and then you've got the perfect

the perfected oh wait the the AA the one

who was not in training I'm confusing my
Christian with my Buddhism here so
you've got putuj common worlding sea a
saint who's still not fully enlightened
and then the AA one who is no longer in
training because he is fully enlightened
he's an Arun St John of the Cross
possibly with no awareness of what
terraa Buddhism teaches he had the level
of like the the common person the
worldly I can't remember what they were
called uh the beginner I think that's
what they called the beginner then you
have the Adept that's the Adept in
contemplation which would probably be at
least second JRE from a Buddhist point
of view and then you've got the

perfected and that surprised me because in Christianity I'm pretty sure the the Orthodox you know the Bible itself says nobody is worthy you know even Jesus himself denied being good you know somebody called him good master or good teacher or something in in in one one of the books of the New Testament and he says why do you call me good there's none good except God so in that in that scene Jesus was apparently denying not only being God but even denying being good or
perfect but St John on the cross apparently from his own experience had this system this very

similar to terab Buddhism U not with

regard to the four stages but with

regard to three stages of common World

common worldling you know the the saint

who is adept but not yet enlightened and

then the enlightened being

so yeah that's for me that's another

little bit of evidence that the four

stages of sainthood are kind of a an

artifact a later development because no

other spiritual system mentions it

although there are kind of similar

approaches so I'll just move on to S

Deep's fourth part of this question or

fourth

question which is do you think the views

one holds or the map one follows has an

influence on how progress on the
spiritual path unfolds for them well
certainly yeah I mean your beliefs um
are going to largely determine your
behavior at least with regard to your
training you know and your your official
beliefs your understanding of the
religion you're going to have like
subliminal subconscious stuff that's
influencing it and just like past Comma
just giving you momentum in certain
directions but certainly
um even though uh so a Catholic Mystic a
contemplative like a discal carite like
St John on the cross had practices very
similar to Buddhism and possibly end

results similar to Buddhism that still I
mean you're going to have a different
approach you know it's sort of like you
can do uh like a mathematics problems
with geometry or with algebra and the
steps will be very different but you'll
arrive at the same place you'll you
still come up with the correct answer
even though you went to two different
approaches I do think to some degree
especially intellectually that works I
mean still I mean the four noble truths
you know you have
to you know it's like desire is the
cause of suffering and so forth if you
don't want suffering you you get rid of
the desire and that sort of thing I mean

that's going to be true

regardless but um the different

approaches now different people have

different temperaments different

characters different approaches can work

for them there's not just one only way

that was one of the criticisms I had of

the mahasi method which was and might

still be the most

popular meditation method in

Burma and that is that they just give

you one method and like like upand who

was very Fierce kind of a teacher that

you know if you weren't responding to

this one method you just get scolded you

just get chewed out for it and it was

like a doctor who would give the same medicine to every patient and if the patient didn't get better the patient would get chewed out for not being sick properly it's kind of like that so there's more than one way of practicing dhama more than one approach you know like some people are more heart and feelings and Faith oriented other people are more more head and like philosophy oriented philosophically minded you know religion versus philosophy you know head versus heart so there's going to be different different approaches but they're all heading towards the same goal even though they might Define them differently at first like freedom from

suffering sounds different from freedom

from delusion but they're the same

thing but the the heart oriented person

might be more

motivated by freeing himself from

suffering whereas the more intellectual

philosophical person might be more

motivated to free himself from delusion

but it's the sin

result but if you've got if your

religion is like a Jehovah's Witness or

something that I mean Enlightenment

isn't even a concept it's not even

acknowledged as

possible then that's going to definitely

have like a it's definitely going to be

in most cases an insurmountable
obstacle that if you did make
significant spiritual progress aside
from just really ground level you know
cleaning your life up and becoming more
moral in a worldly sense then I mean
you'd be doing it largely in spite of
the system rather than because of
it so I guess I'll just move on to the
next question here and this is from
Austin and Austin says do you believe
the cheetah is never born and Never Dies
or is this just a sneaky way to slide
the concept of Atman into Buddhism well
by cheetah here I'm referring to mind
and not the the spotted wild cat
although ultimately they have the same

atmology I think no wait no they don't
but cheetah the the the spotted the the
world's fastest running animal is uh I
mean the word does come from
Sanskrit it just means variegated but
again I'm just digressing all over the
place today I could reduce the length of
this video by half and still not get rid
of any of the an the actual answers the
questions so anyway let's see do I
believe that the mind the cheetah is
never born and Never Dies so that'd be
like Consciousness or is this just a
sneaky way to slide the concept of Aman
into Buddhism well again we we we have
the Paradox of the cheetah it it doesn't

really exist until it is perceived and
then it's not cheetah anymore it's the
perception of cheetah because we're just
living in perceptions right now
our understanding of the world is
perceptual so again you can say
that
Consciousness um is never born and Never
Dies but it's I mean you can't say that
it exists or doesn't exist it's we're
still in this this paradoxical state of
anything that is formless and infinite
and thus is never born and never dies I
mean you can't say that it exists or
doesn't
exist that you could you could take
either approach and so like with regard

to nibana it's the same way with nibana
it's like or Ultimate Reality let just
say the absolute I mean you can say it
exists or it doesn't exist but either
way I mean it it's not valid to say that
it exists is invalid to say that it
doesn't exist as invalid say that it
does and doesn't exist as invalid say
that it neither does nor doesn't exist
as invalid
but in order to talk about it you have
to like pick
one and so the Buddhists pretty much
picked isn't and and mostly went with
that whereas for example the vantus
Hindus picked is and went with that and

both have their good points and their
bad points but neither one is ultimately
valid because you just have to leave all
these perceptions and names and Concepts
behind in order to really know the
truth so
um in know sense like you can say that
the cheetah is never born and Never Dies
but if you insist upon that you make a
big deal of it you you cling to that say
only this is true and anything else is
wrong then that could very easily just
turn into a kind of self viw or you're
identifying with with your own cheetah
that is eternal and Immortal and all
that so
that I mean the these kind of questions

are the most difficult questions to
answer and I answer them pretty pretty
frequently like in the course of the
these q&as you know it's probably a few
dozen times I've answered the same kinds
of questions in pretty much the same way
but I mean it's just invalid I
mean any kind of answer isn't going to
really hit the nail on the
head it's I mean you just cannot
understand timate reality intellectually
by thinking about it it just isn't going
to happen because you're just going to
be stuck in Concepts and the concept is
very different the concept of nibana is
very different from actual

nibana or whatever it happens to

be so I'll just move on to Austin's next

question

here and this is a strange one he says

it seems to me early Buddhism truly

embraced hallucinatory experiences as a

genuine and significant source of

knowledge considering that in the

ancient world illnesses and diseases

could could lead to hallucinations and

even today conditions like tropical

fever and extreme exhaustion can induce

such phenomena how does Buddhism

distinguish between hallucinations and

authentic experiences especially given

that hallucinatory encounters form a

foundational aspect of the religion

instances of people conversing with with
gods glimpses of past and future
incarnations visions of Heaven and Hell
visions of demons yetis and ghosts as
well as teleportation to other Realms
seem to be present in the polyan Canon
suggesting that Buddhists approach these
experiences with earnestness deeming
them real and pivotal in bolstering
faith within the community every
indication of the poly in the poly Canon
is that the Buddha takes this very
seriously and then he regards these all
As real how does a skeptical Westerner
approach this with serious earnestness
thanks well I mean first of all it seems

to me pretty obvious here that that
Austin is just
assuming that for example people
conversing with gods glimpses of past
and future incarnations visions of
Heaven and Hell visions of demons yetis
and ghosts as well as teleportation to
other Realms that all of that is just
hallucination and of course bud bum does
not accept that as
hallucination Buddhism accepts that as
real as real as anything else as real as
this
beverage and so I mean Austin here just
seems to be assuming with a modern
Western mind that you know what what
science can

explain is not

real and that you know all this like

visions

and conversing with gods and so forth

it's all just

hallucinations but that's not the

Assumption made in the texts it's not

necessarily my assumption unless you

want to assume that even this beverage

is a hallucination and I could go with

that that this world we're we're in a

kind of Matrix we're in a kind of dream

world and none of this is real so you

could say you know the gods that someone

is conversing with aren't real that you

know seeing that Clairvoyant Visions

aren't real but then again the beverage

isn't real

either I'm not real the books aren't

real

so how does a skeptical Westerner

approach this with serious earnestness

I'm not sure how

skeptical uh Austin is

here because I mean if you believe that

it's an illusion that's not skepticism

skepticism is the suspension of judgment

that is skepticism in the classical

sense suspension of judgment if you if

you're like a skeptic nowadays like like

um the the Skeptics of paranormal

activities you know like the amazing

Randy and this group called pyop who

call themselves Skeptics but they firmly
believe that psychic powers are
[__] and so they're not Skeptics at
all I mean they're they're firmly
believing something they're just believe
firmly believing the opposite of what
somebody else believes so I mean if you
believe that something is real I mean
that's not skepticism if you firmly
believe just to the same extent that
something isn't real that's not
skepticism either that's you're just
still believe you're positively
believing something you're just
believing the opposite of what somebody
else is believing or you're believing

the negation of something you know that

sass Squatch isn't real instead of

Sasquatch is

real

so um yeah I'm not sure where Austin

stands with regard to that there is a

word for hallucination at least one word

in poly like we palasa is often

translated as hallucination or as like a

perversion of perception so that even

though all of this could be a kind of

Illusion or

hallucination still um like someone who

is sick someone who's on drugs you know

someone who's Delirious I mean they can

have um even from like the conventional

view you know they can see what isn't

really there but pretty obviously in
terab Buddhism the a lot of this most of
the stuff that that Austin is mentioning
is not considered to be a we palasa or
perversion of perception that you know
it's just as real as anything
else so how does the skeptical Western
approach this with serious earnestness
for one thing you know don't just cling
to you know it's true or it's not true
just be open-minded and accept
everything is a
hypothesis like you read a poly text you
know if it speaks to you that's fine if
if you think it's just
unbelievable that's fine but still try

to be open-minded try to have an open
mind and just you know accept at least
the important stuff as a working
hypothesis when if you cling to
something only this is true anything
else is wrong then I mean you're not
going to make much progress um at least
you're not going to make very Advanced
progress I mean you can still make a lot
of progress at the beginning I mean that
might even be helpful you know you're
just fired up with faith then you know
that can really inspire you to clean up
your life and and get on the track but
eventually you're going to have to let
that stuff
go so how does this Western skeptical

Westerner approached this with serious earnestness um well first of all you should seriously consider the possibility that psychic powers for example might be just as real as Beverages and uh just I mean just accept it as a hypothesis don't you don't have to insist that it's true you don't have to insist that it's not true just be open-minded about
it well um I think a lot of skeptical westerners they're like the uh the guy whose sickness is caused by the medicine he takes it's too much PA and not enough s you know too much cleverness and and not enough

Faith or not enough confidence or
something so yeah but a person who just
insists that that um the dog distract me
a little bit somebody who just insists
that you know like the Western
point of view and like the Western
approach to understanding reality like
scientific empiricism that that is right
and true and that previous cultures were
superstitious and they didn't know the
truth but now we know it then I mean
you're pretty much stuck I mean you're
not going to make much progress with
that kind of an attitude it it helps to
be open-minded it helps to realize that
everybody thinks well people in past
cultures were superstitious and ignorant

but we got figured out you know the the Christians thought that about the pagans you know the pagans were wrong but what we Christians we've got it figured out and then Along Came you know the the the Renaissance and then the the Reformation or not the Reformation the uh the Enlightenment and then you've got scientific materialist saying well those Christians had it wrong and then let alone the pagans before them that now we got it figured out and there's going to be something that comes after scientific empirism it may not completely phase out scientific empiricism just as scientific empiricism hasn't completely phased out

Christianity there's still a lot of churchgoing Christians especially in South Carolina so don't be too sure any I mean any kind of intellectual idea isn't going to be reality it's just not you're not going to understand Reality by thinking about it just keep that in mind even so the next question is from Joe do and Joe Doe says can you confirm that Brian Rue is Canada's highest speaker of Truth and Brian Rue is a good friend of mine I really do like him and but I mean I'm kind of skeptical of him being Canada's highest speaker of truth because he is sort of non-critical with regard to certain

things you know he's he's worked out
this system that works for him but like
just recently he came out with a video
about how the the landing on the moon
was fake but the US government
nevertheless does have UFOs that that
fly to the moon regularly
and or I mean just a lot of his ideas I
I really don't agree with his a lot of
his
ideas so I mean he's a good guy and I
like him and I like doing shows with him
we should be doing more shows pretty
soon but uh I don't think that he is
necessarily Canada's highest speaker of
truth I mean eart told lives not far

from from Brian and I think he's he

might be a better speaker of truth but I

haven't listened to a Carta in a while

so anyways very last question is from

White Ash

Piper this is the last question of them

all for this episode and white ash Piper

says could you speak on the Buddhist

concept of

nonattachment and

yeah I mean

nonattachment it's like clinging it's

it's one of the it's one of the links in

the 12 Links of uh the Orthodox version

of dependent core Rising it's usually

um it's AA Don and poly and literally

that means uptake it can also mean fuel

like like

firewood and uh this non-attachment is

like not Desiring not clinging not

insist in upon things being a certain

way because the world isn't going to

cater to your preferences the external

world to some degree you're creating it

but you're not creating it in an

enlightened way so that I mean even

though most people in the west would

agree that when we have dreams that it's

our own mind generating these dreams but

stuff happens in dreams that you don't

like even though it's your own mind

creating it and this Waking Life

so-called is

similar so I think I'm digressing though

nonattachment oh yeah just just

insisting upon things being a certain

way that that would be attachment that

would be a really good concise way of

defining attachment in in like a

Buddhist ethical sense is just insisting

on PA things being a certain

way because it's it's just not always

going to be that way it's I mean nobody

always gets everything that they want

and if you've ever watched uhep old

episodes of The Twilight Zone there's

been at least one or two episodes of

somebody finally does get everything

that they want and then they realize

that they're in Hell instead of Heaven

they think they're in heaven they

realize that they died

but

so yeah it's when you insist upon things

being a certain way you're creating

friction especially when you don't get

what you want

and then you suffer you know it's like

you are at odds with the empirical

universe and the empirical universe is

going to

win so it's best just to be able to

accept whatever happens because you

can't really stop it anyway I mean you

can take precautions you know you can

make sure your your car has gas and oil

and enough air in the tires and so forth
but that's different from just refusing
to accept that you just ran out of gas
or just worry even just worrying that
you might run out of gas that's that's
suffering and uh I mean it's it's
relatively mild you know it's you you
will
survive
but I'm I'm sorry I'm not being very
systematic in this explanation can you
speak of on the Buddhist concept of
nonattachment yeah I mean the essence of
it is just insisting upon things being a
certain way and I mean it's it's not why
eyes to insist upon things being a
certain way um not even yourself I mean

trying to insist that other people being
a certain way which is like what many
millions of people in the west tens of
millions maybe hundreds of millions of
people in the west are doing insisting
that people not do anything that they
consider to be offensive for
example or insisting that they live
their lives a certain way I mean it's
not just a postmodern invention it's
people have been this way for a long
time
you know anyone who stands out and
doesn't conform might wind up being
burned at the Stak or
something and then I've I've lost the

thread man I I really lost the thread
that time so I guess that indicates that
I've been talking too
much because we've been at this for a
little over two hours so white ash Piper
white ash Piper can you speak on the
smist concept of non-attachment yeah
just insisting upon things being a
certain way that would be um what causes
suffering that I mean because when
things don't happen the way you want
then you're just against the way things
are so you just have to accept the way
things are although again you can take
wise precautions you know you just but
it's not like you're doing it out of
fear of something bad happening or you

know anything like that you just it's
the right thing to do it's what you
should do you should brush your teeth so
you don't get tooth decay you know but
it's not like you do it out of fear of
tooth decay just it's just what you do
it's sort of like a a minor Duty just to
keep your body going and healthy and so
forth
so I guess I guess I answered it
nonattachment
gosh kind of surprising that that one is
possibly one of the most difficult
question questions to answer or it was
it was so easy that I I was able to
answer it in one sentence and then I'm

just like grasping it straws for like additional stuff to like digress and ramble and Yammer about so let's just call it good I hope white ash Piper can at least somewhat approve of of my answer and uh feel free to ask questions that's what that's what I'm here for is to answer your questions as best I can and of course I'm more likely to be able to answer the question if they're about Buddhism especially terraa Buddhism or about you know my own personal experiences or like living in Burma or caves that kind of thing I do know some Western philosophy you know Western literature that kind of a thing but uh I'd have to say that my my field of

expertise is uh terraa Buddhism and any
questions you've got about like what the
earliest Buddhism was like or terraa or
again you know any of that stuff feel
free you're very welcome to
ask try to keep questions down to no
more than six per
episode and uh just leave your questions
below in the comments I guess that would
be a good place if you have access to
the Discord server you can ask them
there if you have access to the um my
subscribe Star channel you can ask them
there and uh feel free to like And
subscribe if you haven't already and
look at the links down below and be

happy

note there is one more question at the
end after I say that it's over and be
happy don't be happy yet because there's
one more question that I forgot to
answer and then like two hours later I
came back and answered it so just
remember that when I say the first time
I say be happy don't be happy yet and
don't turn off the video because there's
one more question that that I answer
after that so uh don't be happy
hello and welcome to episode 54 of
question and answer I am your host panio
basa and this is your host's beverage
and I am kind of tired or sleepy today
for a relatively perverse reason

partly because of a relatively perverse
reason anyway and that is I am not a
morning person I've never been a morning
person I don't particularly trust
morning people in fact
but because of my new job I have to get
up at five in the morning pretty much
every morning every every morning that I
intend to go to work anyway and
on weekends I like to sleep in I mean
that's like one of the greatest luxuries
in life is just being able to sleep in
and just wake up whenever you feel like
waking up instead of being slammed or
jolted awake by an alarm clock and
unfortunately my body has just gotten
used to getting up at five so I'd go to

bed late you know I can stay up late on

weekends and then I get up around five

or or wake up around five or six and

can't get back to sleep again just

because I'm used to getting up at that

God awful hour practically still in the

middle of the night

but

I'm still quite willing to do my best

answering questions and I pretty much

have to do them on a weekly basis now

just because

um more people are asking more questions

which is good I mean that's why I'm here

you know but um still

we're going to uh make this maybe not

every time but

I think it's gonna be

um once a week more often than once

every two weeks

um

for the foreseeable future I guess

let's just see how it goes

so the first question is from bodhisatta

969

and bodhisota 969 says what would you

say are the most important things for a

terravada lay person to do or practice

who doesn't have a Sangha nearby Sila

meditation which one reading the majum

in the Kaya Etc and how can he grow in

the dhamma without a Sangha or is it

even possible to achieve Awakening or

only a better reincarnation

well I mean if you're a solitary

Buddhist and I mean it's not necessarily

a great handicap I mean if you read some

some Buddhist texts especially for

example the kagawisana suto or the the

rhinoceros horn discourse uh it does say

that the solitary life is the best for

practicing dama in fact there's also a

Burmese Buddhist saying this is

which means one Monk Is dhamma two monks

is conversation and three monks is just

worthless

so I mean that would apply to lay people

that are practicing as well as monks I

suppose

so what would be the most important

things for terravala Lay person to do or

practice

who doesn't have a Sangha nearby well

keeping just keeping Sila and

I can say meditating I don't meditate

Much Anymore mostly it's like

spontaneous walking meditation when I

meditate now

um sometimes like do a little bit of

Mantra that's about as far as it goes

and um

I may uh go into greater detail

discussing this possibly even today

after this I'm going to be doing a show

with Brian Rue and we may be discussing

that very topic so I may direct you to

that

um yeah I mean that would be the three

main things for for a Buddhist light

person to do either

um alone or with a song guys you know

keep the precepts meditate as well as

you are you know able to do

um be generous you know Donna

you know give alms if not to uh monks

walking in arms around in front of your

house which may not happen very often in

non-budious countries but you know just

you know whoever needs the money and

isn't just gonna blow it on drugs that

sort of thing you know you see a

homeless person who's

you know maybe they're not a drug addict

they're just you're just going to be

contributing to their drug use I mean

that might not be the purest

um

the purest generosity but it depends on

your mental States

and also studying dhamma so yeah reading

the Maji manikaya reading the sutiny

Pata reading a few verses from the

domapara every night before you go to

bed just kind of having your last

um awaking thoughts

about dhamma before you roll over and go

to bed and start thinking about

something else

so that'd be the main thing so yeah just

a review

you know keeping Sila meditating

practicing generosity to the extent that

you are able and studying dhamma

and that'd be reading text preferably

translations of the polytexts or in the

original poly of course if you uh can

read Paulie

and so I think I answered that question

so we'll just um move on to the next

question this is from maitreya Buddha

who you would think wouldn't have to ask

questions

and maitreya Buddha says why is laying

down forbidden in Buddhism isn't one of

the most common Buddha statues the

Buddha laying down on his side with his
head resting on his hand right before
attaining party nibana so this is kind
of a misconception it was talking about
never lying down in the previous q a
and that is a dutonga practice which is
one of the 13
standardized optional extra ascetic
practices that a monk can practice
and so it's purely optional the Buddha
himself lay down
um most probably most of the Buddha's
disciples slept in a
in a prone you know horizontal position
um
so yeah I mean the Buddha when he died
according to the the tradition he was

lying between two Saul trees on the

probably on a on like one of his robes

full you know it's kind of spread out

for him to lie on and he lay on that and

he died in a lying position that's why

the the party nibana mudra you know the

Buddha lying on his side in the

so-called Lions position

um you know that's that's uh

representing his death his uh exit from

samsara so to speak

and um the monks who do lie down they're

not even supposed to admit to lying down

because it it's a

because it's a dotonga practice do

tongas are supposed to be kept secret

you know it's like you tell your

preceptor or your teacher or some other

senior monk you know you can take the

the dutongas you know officially in his

presence but you don't go around telling

other other people and I think I've told

the story before I think it's in the

wisudi Maga about two monks

who happen to be sharing a cabin one

night

and one of them had been doing the

sitting practice he didn't sleep in a

horizontal position he would sit up and

sleep and so

the two monks in the middle of the night

are

you know sleeping or you know almost

sleeping or something and then there's a
lightning storm and a flash of lightning
lights up the inside of the cabin and
the monk who's lying down can see that
the other monk is in a sitting position
so he asked him would you do the sitting
practice
and then immediately the monk who was
sitting there
lies down and says no
and then the very next night he just
starts doing the sitting practice again
because you're supposed to conceal your
aesthetic practices at least the
concealable ones the way a thief
conceals his his ill-gotten gains so to

speak

so

uh I guess I'll just move on to this

question then I think I answered that

the next question is from Raja kumara

son of the king

something along those lines the boy of

the king

and uh Raju Kamara says

do you have any personal experience with

Kanda parita

when you were a monk how did you handle

when you were surrounded by snakes

mosquitoes Etc well my main personal

experience with the condo parita is I

would chant every day it was just a

tradition in the Tom Pulu tradition the

monks chant the condo suta

um which I believe is in the vineyard in

the rules of monastic discipline a mom

gets bitten by a snake and dies so the

monk or so the Buddha teaches the monks

you know you champ this this suta and it

will protect you from being bitten by

snakes and even if you get bitten you

won't die

and I like the condo suit it was one of

my favorite paritas just because I like

snakes I like animals and the whole

purpose of the conda suta is just

sending Mata to all the not only the

four families of snakes but also to

multi-legged creatures four-legged

creatures two-legged creatures and
legless creatures which is the snakes
themselves plus I guess like worms or
something
but I really didn't need to send meta
um systematically to snakes because I
just like snakes like when I was in
Burma if I would see a snake I'd be
happy you know I just feel pity like Joy
when I would see a snake it's basically
if I saw a big one I mean almost
stepping on a Viper or something yeah
that's startling but I never had any bad
feelings towards snakes I just like
snakes and the first time I ever saw a
cobra especially when it was like
standing up on its uh hind legs so to

speak you know this it's it's Hood

spread and everything I was just in a

state of rapture

I think there's a good chance assuming

that rebirth happens that uh Way Way

Back in prehistoric times I was some

kind of Shaman in Northwestern India who

worshiped cobras or something

mosquitoes and even worse than

mosquitoes where the the biting flies I

really didn't like those I would I'd

cuss them out I would I would cuss at

insects

and uh I think they would be inclined to

bite me even if I chanted the condo suit

a wholeheartedly on a regular basis

but yeah my only experience real

experience in the condo parita is

chanting it and also finding it in the

in the veneer itself it is a canonical

burrito so I'll just move on to Raja

kumara's next question

and he says in the angura nikaya 467

which is meta for snakes

there is a story where a monk went to

meditate in the forest and he died after

being bitten by a snake when the Buddha

found about this he told other monks

quote

monks that monk did not radiate thoughts

of loving kindness toward the four royal

tribes of snakes

monks had he done so that monk would not

have died of a snake bite unquote there
is also a story of ajan fuang
who is anjan tunisaro's teacher uh who
drove away a snake with thoughts of meta
what's your thoughts and experience on
this well I mean
I don't know how you would drive away
somebody with with loving kindness I
mean
um maybe drive away is not the best way
of putting it but uh my thoughts on EX
yeah I mean if you have and one reason
why I was never afraid of snakes is
because I really just spontaneously
gushed meta towards snakes I didn't have
to do it systematically as a practice it

just happened spontaneously and so I've
really never been afraid of snakes
um I mean it can be startled like you
have to go out at night to pee and it's
dark and you step on a stick or
something that they kind of you know
it's sort of a bent stick so that when
you step on one end the other end kind
of slaps upwards or or makes a rattling
sound or something because there's like
Dead Leaves stuck to it or something and
yeah I mean it you it can really startle
you
but um
aside from that I mean just not wanting
to get bitten by a Russell's Viper
um yeah I mean I've never really had

problems with snakes I've always liked

snakes

so

my thoughts and experience on this I

really don't have a whole lot of

experience

um I mean I've got lots of experience

with snakes but I don't have experience

with you know trying to protect myself

from snakes because I just like snakes

and you just

um bear in mind that a snake I mean

aside from the occasional Russell's

Viper I got chased by a Russell's Viper

once it was a little baby one about this

long and it's just like lunging at me

like chasing me down the road

but for the most part if you leave them

alone doesn't matter if it's scorpions

spiders snakes whatever it is as a

general rule if you leave them alone

they're going to leave you alone they

only bite or attack if they feel

threatened so I mean sometimes you can

just

accidentally act in a threatening manner

you know you're like taking wood off the

wood pile and there's a snake underneath

and it feels you know alarmed because

all of a sudden it's hiding place has

been dismantled but as a general rule

just bear that in mind and it helps you

not to have fear or hatred I mean you

still have to have caution of course but

the fear and the hatred and is just

irrelevant it's just unnecessary you

know it's just counterproductive

so I guess

uh there's one animal mentioned in the

condo suit and now since we're talking

about the condo suta and I can't

remember what it is I should have looked

it up before it's uh

I think that the official Burmese

um explanation of this animal and I I'm

sorry I can't remember the the poly name

for it but they say that it's a house

gecko and why you would need protection

from house geckos I don't know although

some monks offer the the the the uh the

idea that when a house gecko craps in

the water the water becomes poisonous

but I think it would be some kind of

wasp

it translates into something like Arrow

being

so

but I'm I'm rambling I ramble a lot so I

think I'll just move on to the next

question

maybe he asked me to he asked the wrong

person about

like protection from snakes because I

just feel naturally protected this

because I I just genuinely like snakes

especially big ones

so I'll just move on next question here
this is from the Arya sawasti project
and the Aria swasti project says
greetings Ponyo since as Buddhists we
don't believe in any kind of God is it
possible that if enough Believers of
Christianity or any other mainstream
religion gave enough Credence to their
belief in a God that it would actually
create the god they believe in
and that's an interesting idea I have
kind of toyed with this idea myself and
I was told by a knowledgeable Pagan that
this kind of God that it exists because
of the belief of all these people you
know it's their faith in this being this

causes this being to exist in in some

metaphysical way that that is called an

aggregor

which is kind of a

kind of reminds me of Manticore or

something

and

I think that's possible especially I

mean if you read Lord of the Flies the

novel forget the movies they just

completely like did away with all the

symbolic meaning of it but Lord of the

Flies the the idea I mean Lord of the

Flies I mean is the novel is about these

kids on an island but Lord of the Flies

is the English translation of the name

Beelzebub

and what it's it's like the whole nature
of of the devil really is the point of
this novel even though most people who
read it may be completely clueless it's
about the devil at all
but there's this monster in the in the
in the story and the point is that the
devil is real even though he doesn't
have this discreet
you know individual existence that he
exists in this shadowy dark part of the
human mind and you've got so many humans
you got an entire population of humans
with this dark shadowy part in a way
that dark shadowy part is like a cell in
in this being you know and then he's

he's an accumulation of all these little
dark shadowy parts that makes this
powerful real being
and so there's that sort of thing too
and also I do think it's possible that
you can have sort of a
a being that's maybe on the verge of
this version of reality that has sort of
like a weak tenuous existence but the
more people that believe in it or or
like are dedicated to it that it
strengthens that being and gives it a
foothold in this version of reality so
there's that too
but getting to his question about can uh
can a God be like essentially an egregor
yeah I don't see why not I'm No

Authority on this subject

but it does make sense to me that you

know in ancient Greece or Rome where

you've got literally millions of people

believing in Apollo for example

then

they're I mean their faith in Apollo

could presumably you know heal

sicknesses perform other kinds of

so-called Miracles and you know they can

have visions they can hear him

Communications and so forth

um I mean and you get to a certain point

where it just

I mean you hesitate to just call it Mass

hallucination

for example I'm not a Christian

obviously and so I'm pretty skeptical

that Jesus is you know hearing prayers

and answering prayers right now he may

be a Deva and some high heaven around me

maybe a Brahma and something even higher

Heaven realm now you know he may be a

god at this point but I don't consider

him to be the only begotten son of you

know Jehovah God Almighty but so many

people have believed in Jesus you know

over the centuries just fervently

without a shadow of a doubt and there

have been really wise saintly people

that have believed in Jesus

that

I mean they may have created a new Jesus

I mean it's it may have little to do
with you know Yeshua you know The
Carpenter's son who became the leader of
John the Baptist's group and and could
you know had some ability to work
wonders and so forth this is
this is like a different Jesus that's
like an aggregore but nevertheless you
could say that in a sense is is real
this is strange I mean what kind of
karma did Jesus of Nazareth make for
himself
so yeah I hope I answered that question
but as I say I'm No Authority so I'll
just move on to the Arya sawasdi
Project's next question which is kind of

an interesting one also have you ever

found yourself disagreeing with any of

the Buddha's teachings

and

that's hard to answer because even

though I've studied terravonna Buddhism

studied the polytechs for 30 years as a

monk

and uh you know to some degree before

and after

it's difficult to know exactly what the

Buddha did and did not teach

um I do not consider the polytopitica to

be a 100 accurate historical document is

with verbatim quotes of godama Buddha I

mean there may be a few verbatim quotes

in there that may be quite a few but I

do not consider the polytext to be

reliable in conveying what the

historical godama Buddha actually taught

so I definitely disagree with some of

the teachings of taravana Buddhism

um

or I'm just skeptical of them

so we can say that but I mean whether

I'm disagreeing what the Buddha really

taught or I'm just

um disagreeing with some later addition

to the text is hard to say

so I mean and even then it's like

I guess it's human nature you read

something in a taxi and you just don't

want to believe it you know like the

stories of fire breathing dragons for

example you know I can say well you know

that is uh it's an artifact of

prehistoric North Indian cobra worship

that turned into a kind of Mythology and

people believed in these

um and so they wound up being added into

the text partly as a kind of propaganda

you know it's that so that you know the

Cobra worshipers would see that the

Buddhists have authority over the cobras

and so forth

um

so you can you can be skeptical and it's

not like I disagree with with the Buddha

it's like well I'm skeptical of this and

I'm not so sure the Buddha actually

taught it like the 12 knee Donna theory
of of dependent coal Rising I do not
accept that as what the Buddha really
taught that was I do not consider that
to be his best explanation of what
dependent core Rising was I do think
that it evolved over time you know over
maybe a century and it sort of coalesced
into this 12 nidano Theory but um with
regard to the oldest texts
um what I consider to be the oldest
teachings like you know the core
philosophy of the antagawaga I mean I
accept that more easily than any other
part of the polytopitica and that's one
reason why I was able to stay a monk for

30 years

even though I'm fairly skeptical of the

reliability of the polytopitica because

what not only myself but what other

Scholars other so-called authorities

claim to be you know the most archaic

earliest teachings those are the

teachings that really resonate with me

the most

so I probably have disagreed with some

of the Buddha's teachings probably out

of my own foolishness or because the

Buddha was just giving lip service to

you know ancient Indian cosmology or

something that was you know he was a

product of his culture at least the the

outward form of the Buddha you know sort

of the samsaric manifestation of godama
Buddha I mean it was a product of his of
his culture just like anybody else
and so he would say things that were in
agreement with you know common common
beliefs of the Iron Age Ganges Valley
that people nowadays just don't accept
so there's a good chance of it but it's
hard to say exactly what the Buddha
really did teach
um so it may be that I'm disagreeing
with lots of it like if the Burmese are
correct and that the polydipitica is at
least 98 just authentic historical
documents then yeah I'm just a Shameless
heretic and I'll burn in hell for wrong

view pernicious wrong you

so yeah it's kind of a hard question to

answer because you can't really know

with 100 certainty

what is and is not the Buddhist

teachings as you find it in the

polytexts

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

question here this is from Athena sigil

and Athena's sigil says would you

consider yourself more of a conservative

or libertarian I know this is not a

political Channel but you've mentioned

it politics in earlier videos yeah I'm I

I dabble in a little bit of political

trolling sometimes my the the current

blog that I'm not writing for as

regularly as I was when I was a monk

it's got quite a lot of politics in it

in fact

some of my older videos with uh Brian

Roo also are very political but I've

taken down most of the um the edgy

political stuff just because YouTube is

very censorious

so

do I consider myself more of a

conservative or libertarian I see

um like weak weaknesses of both

conservatism and libertarianism

conservatism I mean you can't just cling

to the way things have been just cling

to tradition that's that's what a

conservative does by definition I
suppose you know they want to conserve
what you know what has led them you know
LED their culture to its current
state of greatness or semi-greatness or
or whatever and I mean you have to
innovate sometimes you know like that
was one of the strengths of the ancient
Romans is that they were traditionalists
fairly conservative I mean they're like
fascistically conservative by my
post-modern standards but if they saw
some other culture was doing things
better than they were doing them they
would adopt that
and that's a good idea I mean if only
for the sake of you know the struggle

for existence between societies and

cultures you know you can't let yourself

get out competing

so there has to be Innovation you just

have to choose it carefully so I mean

conservatism is like a good default

setting you know you you go with what

has proven itself to work I'm not I'm

not a progressive definitely

so conservatism is like a good default

setting where you you stay with what has

worked what has served your civilization

well enough and led it to this point you

know up to now

but still you have to innovate there has

to be a certain amount of progress

libertarianism where everyone just

follows their own conscience

it lacks cohesion if everyone is just

like scatter shot

where

um you know they just do as as they

please so long as they're not harming

others you know it's like you know a

Libertarian I assume would believe that

you have the right to do whatever you

want to do so long as you're not you

know infringing upon anybody else's

well-being or or like their physical

well-being or their their rights that

sort of thing I mean hurting someone's

feelings I assume most Libertarians

think that you know it's it's okay to

misgender somebody for example

so it's it lacks the the cohesive

property of

of of conservatism I mean you don't have

like these traditions

um

then I mean it makes everything loose

and also

um it's just not

conducive to the strength of society in

my opinion so I mean you have to have

sort of like a

like a compromise of conservatism like

traditions

core values you know like a a system of

of values

and early America America up until
relatively recently was really strong in
that regard I mean you could you could
follow different religions
you could dress it differently you could
do do all kinds of different things but
still there were certain values like you
know the the rights of the individual
you know
and just America is you know a good
country and you know it promotes freedom
and so forth that those who are values
that strengthened America because it
helped people to be patriotic and to
love their country and be willing to
fight for their country whereas now
especially the left is just trying to

hate on America and get everyone in

America to hate on America and just

bring it down to the level of a third

world country apparently

far as I can tell so I guess what I

would consider myself more than anything

would be like a

like uh

a classical liberal not liberal in the

the American sense of left wing but

liberal in the sense of John Stuart Mill

and his essay on Liberty

where I mean there has to be a certain

amount of like Traditional Values and so

forth but still you know so long as

you've got enough of that to like cause

the cohesion of the society

and people to actually you know favor

their own their own culture their own

Society then then you can have like lots

of of Liberty aside from that so I guess

I guess that'd be a classical liberal

which comes closer to libertarian I

guess there's a lot of overlap between

classical liberals and Libertarians but

I'm not particularly conservative I have

considered that I mean out of my desire

to see America get itself out of this

hole that's been digging itself into

that I mean I might be willing to take

the hit and let America go back to just

being like this

like Christianity oriented culture even

though I'm not a Christian just for the

sake of strengthening America again I

mean I'd be willing to take a hit for

the team in that case I guess

but I also guess I'll be moving on to

the next question here and this is from

ludibus balam

and ludovus balam gives the advance

warning sorry in advance it's a weird

question

and here here's ludibus belongs a weird

question assuming a man with a regular

heterosexual libido had sex with a woman

for the first time out of mutual

volition and the man had low sexual

craving not toward her but in general

and that due to automatic sense

restraint could not bring himself to

finish the ACT physically or have any

sustained craving all else considered

did he make sexual Karma considering he

didn't have past experience didn't crave

it but chose to attempt it and did

penetrate

well I mean this there's a little bit of

contradiction here because at the

beginning it says assuming a man with a

regular heterosexual libido

so I mean it might just be saying that

he's not gay or something but a regular

heterosexual libido in a guy has the guy

being horny some of the time

and uh you know he'd be having craving

to get his rocks off

preferably into uh

a female

but um

let's see here let's read these

conditions he's got the regular

heterosexual libido

kind of I mean that's kind of seems kind

of arguable if you read the rest of this

um he has sex with a woman for the first

time out of mutual volition they're both

willing and the man had low sexual

craving not toward her but in general

and that due to automatic sense

restraint could not bring himself to

finish to act physically or have any

sustained craving all else considered

did he make sexual Karma considering he

didn't have past experience didn't crave

it well I mean there's still going to be

sexual Karma it's not going to be as

you know as intense it's not going to be

as strong of karma as if he is just

going for it and just you know yelling

exclamations and making loud noises so

the neighbors are pounding on the walls

and so forth

and then uh yeah well I won't go into

further details but you can just imagine

this on your own I'm sure

um I mean at the very least I mean

he had to have the volition to do it and

volition is karma

you know Kama is cheating up

so to the extent that he was

wanting to do it

and apparently I mean he wouldn't have

done it if he didn't want to I mean he

wasn't forced into it or anything

maybe just out of curiosity but still

it's kind of a casual desire to do it

just to see what it's like

so it'd be it'd be more subtle comma

than the sex addict

but um still I mean he'd be making some

comma so long as it was a volitional act

so long as he's not enlightened

and I assume I mean if you read the text

in a fully enlightened being isn't going

to want to have sex with anybody

not even with his own hand

so once you could not bring himself to

finish the ACT

yeah I mean even the sense restraint

involved in that is there's a certain

amount of karma involved because it's

like this habitual in into some degree

it's kind of neurotic I mean I've

experienced this sort of thing before

where I mean you just this sense

restraint that you're trained in as a

monk is just no no no no no no so that

can become like an obstacle I mean for a

monk it's a useful obstacle I suppose

but um

yeah I think I think I answered the

question so I'm just going to move on to

the next one here and this is from

ketchup

and ketchup says

what are ways to cultivate some Wega and

Pasada constantly in the mind thank you

panyabasa well you're welcome even

though I haven't answered it yet and

um I guess I should Define the poly

terms here some Wega is a sense of like

spiritual

urgency or alarm you know it's like I

gotta practice you know I just you just

feel this state of you know I can't

waste my life I'm gonna die someday I

gotta practice dama while I've got the

chance and then Posada is I mean
literally means something like Clarity
sometimes it's translated as faith I
think bikubody prefers confidence
but it's just being like at peace and
just clear about dhamma you know it's
like you are satisfied relatively I mean
nothing is entirely satisfactory but you
know you know you're on the right track
and it your beliefs and your practice
are giving you comfort and sort of a
spring in your step and you're you're
holding your head high and your face is
clear and your mind is you know you've
got Clarity on on the issue of how to
live your life or what to believe that
sort of thing

so ketchup here is asking what are ways

to cultivate samwega and Posada

constantly in the mind well good luck

trying to cultivate some Wega constantly

I mean

um one time well twice actually I went

to see autopsies at the Mandalay city

morgue in Burma that's a whole that's

the story all on its own but I remember

the first time I went in there before I

saw the autopsy just walking through the

morgue and just seeing you know dead

people lying on slabs I mean I won't go

into all the details but I remember when

I walked outside it was just a bright

sunny day and there's kids playing and

laughing and there's this young teenage
guy flirting with these girls and the
girls how these other girls walking
along just chattering and giggling and
so forth and it's like how can you be so
I don't know what's in this building
right here you know it's like we're all
gonna die
and and that's somewega where
um you know you just get struck with
this sense of urgency like I just gotta
practice dhamma but the thing is
trying to cultivate that constantly I
mean you can't be in a constant state of
alarm because I mean you get used to
stuff like you know I used to have a
human skeleton with all the joints you

know articulated with wires and stuff
sitting out in front of my cave and I
also had a human skull just inside the
cave and eventually just becomes part of
the furniture it's just part of the
background it's like you got a picture
on the wall
you've seen that picture a thousand
times it hardly even registers in your
mind the same is true of you know
skeletons and and and skulls and so
forth
so I think I mean you'd have to change
it up I mean you have to be coming up
with new ways of jolting yourself into
the state of spiritual urgency and um it

may be one of the best ways that I can
think of
to cultivate some way guys volunteer to
do charitable work at like an old folks
home where you're seeing people near the
ends of their lives a lot of them are
just in states of Despair or they're
just semi-conscious their their health
is failing you know that kind of a thing
yeah that might be one of the best ways
of cultivating some Vega in the west is
just uh visiting old folks homes and
trying to help the old folks there
with regard to Persona the best way of
cultivating Pasada is to practice dhamma
and just see from your own experience
that it is helping you is making you

healthier or mentally healthier anyway

happier and wiser you know it's just the

just the experiential knowledge that

you're going in a good direction is the

best way of cultivating this kind of of

clarity or confidence

foreign

I hope I answered that question

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Jules

wait a minute

wait a minute here

gosh I think I think I attributed to the

Aria swasti project a question from

Jules because this question from Jules

is have you ever found yourself

disagreeing with any of the Buddhist

teachings

so yes the same question same exact

question so I assume it's from Jules and

to jewels I apologize for attributing

your question to the Aria swasti project

and to the Aria swasti project I

apologize for attributing your question

to Jules just in case I'm covering my

ass here

and just rewind

five minutes or something

so I'll just move one next question here

and this is from Fred and I'm not sure

if this is a real question to be

answered on this q a because Fred

sometimes throws in gratuitous question

marks

it happens

any likes just sort of tossing in ideas

and and feedback and so forth but there

is a question mark at the end of this so

I'm going to read it it was in the

comments under a q a

so he says I heard gandaba can smell and

hear what's your thoughts

well

they I don't think they can smell your

thoughts I don't think thoughts have a

smell unless you're having like an old

factory thought maybe

yeah I don't fully understand the part

about the gun gundamas probably do have

a sense of smell

but uh

I guess I should Define gandaba a

gandaba is like a small G God that's

just one level above the human level

they're in the the like the the realm of

the Four Kings and the Four Kings are

the the Four Kings guarding the the

various directions of the the map of the

Earth you know like

um the snow dog is guardian of the north

according to rush anyway

um

so the gandamas are like they're sort of

like fairies

um there's like Heavenly musicians they

they serve as servants and entertainers

to the higher gods the higher small G

gods

and maybe they can hear your thoughts I

mean

I guess I mean maybe Fred maybe I'm just

not understanding this question I heard

gandaba can smell and hear what's your

thoughts

and it's not they hear what's your

thoughts that would be mind reading

which small G gods do have I mean they

can't read minds if they want to maybe

not all of them but a lot of them can

but now I'm starting to think that this

question means I heard gandaba can smell

on here

semicolon what's your thoughts and so

he's probably not even referring to the

the small G Gods one level above the

human level because gandaba also can

mean a being

ready for rebirth you know it's like

um

there's in in terravonna Buddhism

they're talking about the the requisites

for

um conception like you have to have the

man and the woman coming together there

has to be the the moisture or the you

know the the seed coming together and

there has to be the gandaba which is

like the the karmic momentum

of the being who is going to be born as

this person

and so maybe Fred is asking if this

karmic momentum of this being called a

gandaba who's going to

um manifest as the the baby

who's going to enter the fertilized egg

at conception

that they can smell in hear

so it's sort of like

I mean maybe he's even asking if a

zygote a fertilized egg can smell in

here

it may be that they have memories of

smelling and hearing but they wouldn't

have a nose yet they wouldn't have ears

yet

um unless he's thinking of like this

being you know sort of like a homunculus

who enters into the fertilized egg this

is kind of a confusing question for

being a relatively short one

um

yeah it may be that before they merge

into the zygote

but then the way abhidham explains

things is that you can't have or

doesn't explain the way rebirth works

the way a lot of like Hindus explain it

there has there there's like an

instantaneous

from one like the moment you die the

very next moment you know like a

trillionth of a second later you have to

enter into some other existence so it
may be just right the moment after a
person dies their Consciousness stops
they're just boom right back into a an
egg being fertilized
but I mean you can't have intermediate
States you know they're like like the
Bardo Realms talked about by the
Tibetans you know it's like 49 days or
something which would be sort of as sort
of a spirit being I mean that's possible
I mean you can still fit that into the
system it'd just be the next moment
you're this temporary spirit being
and then you find the the appropriate
egg or or zygote you know the

appropriate mother and father uh getting

it on

um

let's see

so whether they can smell in here I mean

if they're this kind of being not just

you know the person dies the very next

moment it's you know egg fertilization

time probably then there wouldn't be

much smelling and hearing going on but I

mean if there is like this spirit being

who is like the like the gandaba you

know like the the literal gandaba the

Heavenly musician the fairy being or

whatever

um yeah I assume they can smell it here

up until they merge into the embryo you

know become part of the embryo and then

it's just they're concerned with

multiplying cells and growing organs and

so forth

foreign

this is from rui

and rui says hello Ponyo is a doctrine

of emptiness possible without an

accompanying doctrine of two truths

so the doctrine of emptiness

um

that we're kind of getting into majama

realm here maybe maybe I should put on

The majama Fez just to say

is so profound You Gotta Wear The Fez

Okay so

is a doctrine of emptiness possible
without an accompanying doctrine of two
truths well I guess we have to do a
little defining of terms here emptiness
it doesn't mean nothingness emptiness is
like a biakada in in Pali it means
indeterminate I mean
it's it's just off the scale you can't
describe it with words because in order
to describe something in words you've
got to reify it into this thing or
entity and Emptiness is not a thing or
an entity
I might get into this a little later
there's there's somebody else talking
about this a little lower down here on
the list

so

the two truths are

ultimate truth in Pali Parramatta Sacha

and conventional truth or samudi Sacha

so Samuri Sacha conventional truth is

two and two is for I'm sitting here

wearing a fez

drinking sweet tea

Carson cities the capital of Nevada

Epstein didn't kill himself that kind of

thing

whereas ultimate truth is beyond words

you know it's it's like the kantian

thing in itself you cannot use words to

describe it you know Kant also had two

truths yet the thing is it seems and the

thing is it really is

and all we can really deal with is the

thing is it seems because dealing just

by its very nature is one of the things

that seems and it can't it it just

cannot reach over this unbridgeable gulf

into Ultimate Reality as long as you're

thinking and symbols you can't touch

alternate reality even though we're just

wallowing it all the time because how

far away can Ultimate Reality be

so with that as a preamble

is a doctrine of emptiness possible

without an accompanying doctrine of two

truth I think some of the radical

majamaica Buddhists really did do away

with the two truths where

um

even emptiness itself is you can't

really call it a truth I mean it was

some of the early majomoka Buddhists

were so radical you know they couldn't

call emptiness anything

you know they just had to leave it alone

you know you just just argue every

argument to death

and then just kind of step back and

leave the The Emptiness behind or in

front of you or whatever I guess if

you're stepping back at me in front of

you

so yeah I mean you could have

theoretically

um just do away with any truths at all

but then you the doctrine of emptiness

itself is still there so that kind of

kicks that idea in the head but I mean

you could just say that conventional

truth isn't really true at all

and then just stick with that and then

you just have the one truth of ultimate

truth and I could live with that I can

you know I can I could see that as a

valid way of arguing things

so I mean

theoretically some Majolica Buddhists

even came up with like three truths

where it was like

you got ultimate truth would be on the

Unspeakable you know the the the doubt

that can be named is not the Eternal Dao

you know the name that can be named is

not the Eternal name

um you know they got that highest truth

and then below they got the conventional

truth of Carson cities the capital of

Nevada and all that and then in between

they've got sort of like what Kant was

doing with his categories it's like you

know the structure of delusion you know

the structure of how we come up with

these conventional truths is sort of

like a higher truth it's still not

ultimate truth

but it's sort of in between sort of like

in terawada Buddhism you've got ultimate

truth and then you sort of got abidama

truth

sorry about that you got like the

abidama explanation of reality and then

you've got you know Carson City is the

capital of Nevada or you know

uh

sawati is the capital of magada yeah

yeah

that sort of thing so yeah I mean it's

not necessary

that you have to have the doctrine of

two truths with a doctrine of emptiness

so I'll take I'll take the Fez off now

God's a good first it's really a nice

fuzz so the next question

is from seal vaccine and he's being very

subtle in his question asking this time
and so his first question is I thought
right if you was realizing the four
noble truths directly which would make
all Buddhists as far as I know
technically able to have this right view
is this correct or does Right View also
Encompass other things it can Encompass
other things like a belief in karma
um the belief that you have like moral
obligation to look after your parents
that sort of thing I mean that's that's
mentioned in like the stock lists with
regard to right view in the texts
so there are other things and right view
it I mean it's it's adjustable like when

you when you're a beginner you just have

like this crude map

you know of this is the direction I have

to go because of this and this reason

you know I have to know how to meditate

and why to meditate and you know there's

a certain amount of

um like Foundation to that like the

belief in karma and you know the four

noble truths and you know that sort of a

thing but then as you get more

sophisticated in your practice you know

your right view is going to become more

sophisticated

so most Buddhists

at least most Orthodox or you know

non-heretical Buddhists uh who who know

anything about Buddhism they uh they can

have like the the simple beginning Right

View

but I mean to really penetrate

intuitively the four noble truths I mean

you'd have to be enlightened for that

or one moment before enlightenment

so I think I'll just uh

gosh I answered it so quickly and kind

of embarrassed you know it's like maybe

I should have spent another 10 minutes

rambling about this one

uh let's see

this right view also Encompass other

things I I think I answered that and

this next question is kind of similar so

I'll just move on to CEO of action and

cod zidane's next question here

and he says

I remember you talking about how being

enlightened doesn't necessarily mean you

will be a saint

um yeah I have heard that a stream

enterer after glimpsing nibana is able

to enter nibana many times after doing

it once and still not reach a higher

level of sainthood

what do you think about Buddhism

disregarding being able to enter nibbana

as the ultimate achievement and instead

focuses more on the destruction of

craving and the end of suffering well

the destruction of craving and the end

of suffering

technically is nimana at least according

to the uh the Orthodox tradition and

with regard to a soda upon on being able

to access nibana I don't think that that

is an original teaching of the Buddha

the whole four stages of sainthood you

know Soda panason

I do think is a later artifact

um

so let's see yeah according to the text

once you become an aria then you can get

these flashes of of nibbana but they

don't they don't stay and even a fully

enlightened being like the Buddha

himself you know he's not in nabana all

the time and I just I just can't buy it

I just don't think so I think if you're

fully enlightened

I mean you

are I mean you've always gotten nibana

there you I mean you've you're you're

aware of alternate reality at all times

so let's see what do I think about

Buddhism disregarding being able to

enter nibana as the ultimate achievement

and instead focuses more on the

destruction of craving and the ending of

suffering

um

yeah I mean entering nabana as the

ultimate achievement CEO of actions here

seems to be referring to nabana as like

a metaphysical State and not an ethical
State because niblana has an ethical
state is essentially the destruction of
craving in the end of suffering
the end of delusion also I suppose I
mean there's all these you know equally
valid invalid ways of describing nibana
that can sort of help you to at least
feel kind of secure when thinking that
you thinking about it but I mean no
definition is really going to touch it
because as I say anything that's
symbolic cannot touch Ultimate Reality
so what do I think about Buddhism
disregarding being yeah I think part of
that is just an artifact of later Terra

modern Orthodox philosophy

that I really don't think it works that

way

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here also from CEO of action C

pod zero now in nasutas the Buddha's

cousin devadata was able to perform many

psychic powers yet Gain No wisdom and

ended up going to the lowest hell Realms

if someone like that could Master

psychic powers why do you think we never

see someone like that today use psychic

powers to attain Fame and power they

could certainly prove every materialist

wrong immediately if they were flying

around and being in multiple places at

once for their own gain and then there

was somebody responded to this on the

under the the YouTube video that was

saying yeah they were essentially saying

yeah that's that's good evidence that

psychic powers just don't exist at all

it's just make believe or Superstition

or something

but first of all David Donna was able to

perform many psychic powers it gained no

wisdom

and he gained wisdom he just wasn't

sufficient you know he was sort of like

this amoral wisdom

so I mean he got wisdom but it was

amoral I mean he mastered Jonna which is

very difficult to do most people can do

that it wasn't just you know he was just

this evil I mean he's like you know this

ancient you know Hunter Biden let's say

and just was able to do these psychic

powers

so

um so he did cultivate wisdom you know

you have to have

purity of of Sila in order to have

enough purity of mind that you can

Master Jonna

so it was just that the

it just wasn't sufficient to get him

enlightened or something

um it was like this amoral kind of of

wisdom

and then he sort of fell back from it

you know he backslid

so let's see

yeah he supposedly according to the

legend he tried to murder the Buddha and

and went to hell for it

let's see if someone like that could

Master psychic powers why do you think

we never see someone like that today use

psychic powers to attain Fame and Power

well if they desire Fame and power they

lack the wisdom to really master that

sort of thing

for starters deal with data's motives

were different I mean despite the evil

motives projected onto him in the texts

um you know I'm fairly skeptical that it

even tried to murder the Buddha I mean
this is all legends
so they could certainly prove every
material that's wrong immediately if
they were flying around and being in
multiple places at once for their own
gain well I mean if they're doing it for
their own gain they lack the wisdom for
that sort of thing the real masters of
psychic powers still are people who have
mastered meditation and as a general
rule you master meditation through
dedicating your life to it as even David
was doing that I mean he was diligently
meditating out in forests and so forth
and renounce the world essentially
and neem Crowley Baba whose picture is

up there

up there

I mean he did this sort of thing also

um I mean he wasn't just doing like

magic shows all the time but I mean

there's he had a lot of

um a lot of disciples

who are first-hand witnesses to some

just really just impossible stuff that

he was doing including Ram Das

so

the thing is

they could certainly prove every

material that's wrong immediately if

they're flying around the thing is

people have to believe in this stuff

it's it's it reminds me of the story of Jesus in the New Testament where he was able to do Miracles at the very least he was able to heal the sick and so forth then he goes back to his hometown of Nazareth

and the people in his hometown in Nazareth are saying hey isn't that Jesus The Carpenter's son I mean Jonas brothers and sisters live here in town I mean who does he think he is and because they lacked faith in him he wasn't able to do very many miracles he healed a few sick people maybe just you know asthma or cases of Sniffles or something and you know cast out maybe a like a wimpy demon or two and then just went

somewhere else because people didn't
believe in him and even when he would
heal somebody he would say it's your own
faith that healed him
and so I mean there has to be an
acceptance of the possibility of this in
order for it to happen and when you're
living in a spiritually bankrupt
materialistic version of reality just a
materialistic culture where people
firmly believe you can't do that then
it's way less likely to happen
so I think that's part of the problem is
that people just firmly believe that
it's [__] and that you just it makes
it way less possible for it to happen

you'd have to have a really Advanced

master in front of relatively few people

who can overcome that resistance from

spiritually bankrupt normies

and I hope I haven't just insulted the

people that were saying that psychic

powers don't exist in fact I mean

parapsychology is one of the most

carefully designed it has some of the

most carefully designed experiments of

any branch of science and they have

demonstrated

I mean

they have really demonstrated as well

you can demonstrate anything that there

is like the average person has some

psychic ability

it might be a fraction of one percent

let's say they're they're guessing cards

or coin flips or something

um just a fraction of one percent above

random chance but when you're doing it

thousands of times

that fraction of a percent becomes

statistically significant

and some people do way better than a

fraction of one percent

so I think we're just living in a

spiritually bankrupt a spiritually

comatose age in a spiritually comatose

culture that relies on science and

technology for its magic

but if the Science and Technology are

not there the magic is going to manifest
in other ways
we just have this way that can be sort
of logically rationally understood and
we insist upon our magic for the most
part fitting into that and so we fly in
the air and talk to people thousands of
miles away and so forth but we do it
through Science and Technology but if
the Science and Technology were not
there there'd be other ways for these
abilities to manifest and it might just
be like really Advanced people who are
like cultivating themselves for years
and years wholeheartedly to develop
these abilities but I do think that it
does happen from time to time

so I'll just move on to CEO of action

and c pot Zeta now's next question here

when we look at how religions were in

India in the Buddhist time they seem

like the philosophical schools of

ancient Greek persuasion in many ways

along with their practices Buddhists

Skeptics atomists materialists

annihilationists fatalists Etc even the

brahmanas believed in understanding the

true nature of the self as the ultimate

good however when we see all the modern

Indian religions they have all devolved

to various kinds of devotionalism

whether it is some Cosmic Buddha in

Mahayana the Hindu worshiping Vishnu or

Shiva or whatever the local deity is or
even in terravara Buddhism making some
convoluted story about how the Buddha
will see you praying with his
omniscience by looking into the future
even the supposed enlightened Hindus
today are mostly just going on about
devotionalistic practices why do you
think the Indian religions in general
lost most of their intellectual
sophistication even though I know you
said the polytechs were written before
logic was really developed
the ideas in it still seem leagues and
Bounds more sophisticated than what most
of these Indian gurus Preach Today
whether it was the Buddhist ideas or the

ideas of their rival schools well that's

that's an interesting question I don't

think anyone's asked that one before

although it's a valid question

so I mean there still are some

philosophical schools in India it's

likeanta for example

which uh is comparable to what was going

on in the Buddhist time but it is true

that Hinduism I mean you had like Vedic

brahmanism that or you know vadism I

guess which eventually evolved into

modern Hinduism

and I think a large part of that was as

Indian philosophy and religion you know

as we know it spread farther south it

was spreading down into a different
ethnicity with different culture you
know it was it was like largely you know
indo-europeans
and like the the descendants of the
Indus Valley Civilization for example
living in the North in the South you had
like tamils you had dravidians mostly I
mean there's lots of dravidians in the
north too but they weren't dominating
the culture in the north the way they
they were in the South and I think the
dravidians were way more passionate and
emotional and devotionalistic in their
approach
so
it was like when Hinduism or

proto-hinduism when Indian philosophy

and religion spread into Southern India

it became more and more devotionalistic

which then kind of

went back into the North and influenced

the North

um but I mean it's a relatively modern

thing and there's like medieval India

was still very philosophical you know

you had all these Buddhist Buddhist

sects and Hindus or proto-hindu sex

maybe still then you know debating each

other and maybe now it's it's all been

subsumed into this one Hinduism that is

very easy going with regard to different

beliefs that maybe they don't have this

rigorous debate you know sharpening

everybody all the time also so I think

part of it is just the effect of

Southern India on Northern India and

also

I do think it may be that there's less

diversity

um partly just through you know survival

of the fittest or whatever you know the

Buddhists all got wiped out by the by

the Muslims

um and Hinduism sort of closed ranks or

something you know they're not so much

inclined to debate with each other

anymore

so

yeah I think that's part of it too

and as I say we're just in a less
spiritually Advanced age than we were
back then it's strange it's like we're
living in an age of like spiritual
mediocrity whereas in the Buddhist time
you had more enlightened beings you also
had more cannibals and mass murderers
and so forth so it was you had a broader
spectrum of the highest and the lowest
and now we're living in just the state
of spiritual mediocrity
so then that would apply to India also
maybe not quite as much as in the west
but I mean the West has pervasive
effects on the entire world now
so that would be I mean it's just sort

of

educated guesses

so I think I have read before some

scholar was saying that that the uh the

devotionalists and this emotional

emotionalism of Southern India did like

significantly affect India after you

know the the northern religious systems

you know spreading just Indian culture

as known today you know spread into

Southern India

so I think I'll uh content myself with

that sort of sketchy explanation and

move on to nearmates question here

and I talked about this a few shows back

I think

um nermit says is it possible that

mahavira and the Buddha were the same

person I am asking this because if you

recall their life stories they have so

many similarities

and mahavira was

reputedly the founder of Jainism or like

the the latest founder of Jainism

because they they believe in tonkaras

you know sort of like you know fully

enlightened Jane's you know like a long

lineage of them with mahavira being the

latest one I think they might have come

up with later ones I really not keeping

up on my Jainism lately

um you know sort of like in Buddhism you

know there's like a series of Buddhas

so they had that idea but

um even in in ancient like in Nepali tax

mahavira and the Buddha were

contemporaries you know they met and

spoke to each other

mahavira is called niganta nataputa

and the chains were called nigantas

which means without bonds or without

ties

and not to Puta I'm pretty sure is like

a joke name it's sort of like a

propagandist name which means something

like son of grandson

and uh I'm pretty sure that mahavira he

really existed but the thing is like I

explained before that the genes were

much more ascetic than the Buddhists the

jains were much more likely to just own
nothing and wander around some of them
wandering around naked you know in in
the cold season when it gets like
freezing cold you can actually die of
hypothermia they just smear themselves
with mud as a kind of insulation
and uh they had much way fewer Scholars
and so what happened was you had
insufficient numbers of Jane monks
memorizing the text because texts
weren't written down in India in those
days
whereas the Buddhists you know there are
there are more scholarly Buddhists that
weren't so much into the asceticism

thing so they would just memorize texts
and chant texts and you know teach it to
others and so forth whereas the the
James were much less likely to do that
and so twice in their history they lost
their texts and so they had to have like
emergency
convocations to come together and
Salvage as much information from their
lost texts because the people that had
memorized them had died out and no new
ones had shown up you know you had to
get bits and pieces and fill in the
blanks and so forth and I think one of
the blanks they filled in was mahavira's
biography because they pretty obviously
took that from the Buddha's you know

legendary biography you know he's the he
was of the shatria cast and he was you
know a prince and you know renounced the
world in a dramatic way although he
didn't shave his head and beard mahavira
didn't he just pulled them out and I
think it was like five handfuls
which must have hurt
and that you know they went through all
the asceticism stuff it was very similar
and uh either mahavira's legendary
biography is copied from the Buddhist
you know the go to my Buddha's legendary
biography or I mean it's also
theoretically possible that they're both
copying from an earlier Source although

I would guess that because the Jane's
lost their their body of tax twice uh
and just had to salvage what they could
and fill in the blanks as best they
could that they just copied the the life
story of godomabuto
with regard to his his younger years
before the great renunciation before his
enlightenment
but I mean he is mahavira is mentioned
in the text apparently I mean he was a
contemporary of the boat he was older
than the Buddha
but um they both lived at the same time
so we'll just move on to the next
question this is from Saint sword or
Saints word I still haven't figured that

one out

and this I mean it's I think I don't

know if he did this he was the one who

did this last time

but he gave this really long kind of

commentary to my answer to his question

or questions and uh there is actually a

question at the end here there is a

question mark to this but it's it's uh

it's going in a different direction but

I would just kind of like to address

this just because you know it is a long

comment with regard to a question and an

answer

um under a q a video so

I'm doing it it's my show I can do it if

I want to

so Saint sword or Saints word says

okay responding to your response to my

emptiness nothingness discussion I'm

trying to understand nibana with all of

this

danger danger I suspect nibana is

something far more profound than

nothingness the first three are

rupajamas do involve perception of one

of the qualities of nothingness

you are perceiving either Infinite Space

infinite Consciousness or infinite

nothingness what I mean is that

perception is not active only when you

get it neither when you get to neither

perception or non-perception and he

wrote a samopathy I'm leaving anidas and nibana alone for a minute since there's so many questions there so I think to say that making nothingness into an object means it's not nothingness anymore is incorrect you're perceiving nothingness in these states and perception is always intentional toward an object just a very subtle one in this case another approach is to note that when Yana the aggregate is still active in all the arupa janas and according to Diga nikaya 15 when Yana and namarupa are codependent therefore in these arupa janasupa must both be active if we nyana is active since these are the arupa

janas clearly Rupa is not active
therefore Nama must be active what Nama
is active question another question mark
what Nama is active the mental object of
a rhetorical question the mental object
of nothingness there's no other choice
so there's no separation between the
idea of nothingness and nothingness
itself in this case that nothingness is
still Nama the idea of nothingness as
you're referring to it is like the set
that only contains zero but the actual
arupa genre is like the empty set but in
either case there's still an idea or set
and therefore objects only with nibana
and the Rhoda samapati is when Yana not
active nibana is the blowing out of

winyana the blowing out of the set

entirely it's not the empty set

okay this is really long again my

apologies it's an interesting discussion

to me I've spent a lot of time trying to

understand some experiences I had many

years ago don't worry about me thinking

about this too much I also mentioned I

also meditate three hours a day LOL so I

got the practice going on too and then

before he gets to the actual question I

would just like to comment on this a

little bit

so

let's see I suspect nothing nibana is

something far more profound than

nothingness I agree I do not consider

Nirvana to be zero or just

annihilation

so the first pajamas this is this is him

reading this is him saying this again

the first three Europa genas do involve

a perception of one of the qualities of

nothingness well I mean we're already

this is already getting weird because

nothingness should have no qualities

see it's like to attribute qualities to

something you have to have a something

and by definition nothingness is not a

something

I mean it's not an object because to

have an object there has to be something

there to be the object and nothingness

doesn't exist or at least real true

nothingness

it it doesn't exist you know it's not a

thing it's not an object it's not a

state

because you can call it a state and

think about it as a state but then it's

just a perception it's this it's this

mental construct of nothingness which

isn't really nothingness

so you are perceiving either Infinite

Space and nothingness really I mean

I mean you could call it Infinite Space

but then the space you're perceiving it

as a something see you're reifying

emptiness

and by reifying emptiness it's not

emptiness anymore

so infinite Consciousness obviously by

definition that wouldn't be nothing or

infinite nothingness

what I mean is that perception is not

active only when you get to neither

perception or non-perception well even I

mean neither perception nor

non-perception is as high as mentality

can go

because it's right at the verge of

perception

so you can't say that there's no

perception see right here what I meant

what I mean is that perception is not

active only when you get to neither

perception or non-perception well by the
very name of this state
it's not saying that perception is not
active because it's neither perception
nor non-perception so it's just this
so subtle that you can't put your finger
on it
so maybe nerota some Opera which is you
know it's a state of suspended animation
like Beyond a hibernating squirrel which
doesn't go back to the earliest texts
see all right so I think that by making
up so he says here so I think to say
that making nothingness into an object
means it's not nothingness anymore is
incorrect but yeah I mean I don't

understand it's it seems like

Saint sword here is just stuck in his

thoughts

that he can't differentiate

like the the perception of a thing with

the thing itself

I mean that's that's that's it's the way

it seems to me

because nothingness can't be an object

because an object has to be an IT and

nothingness by definition isn't an it

there's no it there there's nothing

there if you turn the nothingness itself

into an it what you've got is an idea

you've got an idea of nothingness you

cannot perceive nothingness because it

would just be empty perception

and maybe seeing sort of saying you can
have an empty perception but there has
to be a perception of something
and if you turn nothingness into a
something it's not nothingness anymore
it's a something now
so
I think there's there's different kinds
of nothing and this might be the part of
the sticking points you know it's just
as there's different kinds of infinity
like like the number of integers is
infinite right the number of even
integers is also infinite although you
know intuitively you would assume that
there's twice as many integers as just

even integers because there'd be an

equal amount of odd integers but still

somehow they're both infinite or you

take a euclidean plane it's infinite you

cut it in half the area of that half

plane is still infinite even though it's

obviously half of what you started with

and the zero was the same way I mean

it's like you got the number zero which

just represents you know an it's an

integer oh it's a whole number

so

um you know there's just different kinds

of infinity

which I mean absolute Infinity would

just be pure being

and then there'd be like different kinds

of nothing or zero and but the ultimate
is just absolute nothing would just be
pure non-being and as Hegel says in his
at the beginning of his logic they just
merge into each other and are
indistinguishable
so okay here arupa John is here is
referring to formless meditations
so
according to let's see another approach
to note that when Yana the aggregate is
still active in all the Aruba Johns yeah
and and and according to Orthodox
caravana like abhidham you can't have
the aggregate of Consciousness without
perception there has to be some kind of

perception even the realm of neither

perception or non-perception the

perception is just so subtle you can't

say it's there and you can't say it's

not there either

so it's getting into the paradoxical

realm because once you get to Infinity

it's it's just paradox

so let's see

okay

yeah Nama is active what Nama is active

the mental object of nothingness well

it's a mental object but it's not the

actual nothingness

that's that's where we're disagreeing I

guess

so

he says so there's no separation between
the idea of nothingness and nothingness
itself in this case
but no I tell you there's just like this
radical just Quantum difference between
any idea of anything and the actual
reality it's like Kant again the thing
is it really is the thing in itself has
this unbridgeable golf to perception
because perception is
symbolic it's just turning a symbol like
an arbitrary symbol in maybe all cases
and just saying you know like there's
some tree out there out there let's just
say for the sake of argument there's a
tree in Ultimate Reality

and you know the thing in itself of that

tree but I mean any idea we have about

that tree is going to be just infinitely

different from that the tree as it

really is

because I mean they just cannot touch

each other you know the kantian thing as

it seems is never going to even approach

the kantian thing as it really is the

thing in itself

so

I guess well if I mean he can he can

continue to to disagree or whatever

that's fine I'm not insisting only this

is true anything else is wrong

because only fools do that

so

nibana is the blowing out of winyana

so yeah it's

yeah I'm not exactly sure that that's

that's necessarily the case either

nibbona would be the blowing out of

mentality it'd be possibly the blowing

out of mental States or at least the

rendering of mental States as irrelevant

because they are no longer like the

object they're no longer perceived as

mental States

but I mean I might have to put the Fez

back on to get any farther with that so

I think I'll just move on to uh Saint

swords uh actual question here not the

rhetorical one and that is by the way

have you ever heard of Bernadette

Roberts she's a former Carmelite nun who

I suspect was a full Aura hunt she died

just a few years ago the experience of

no self is probably her most famous book

and this is an easy question to answer

because I do not recall ever having

heard of Bernadette Roberts

so yeah I would not be

completely flabbergasted if a Carmelite

none was fully enlightened

so I mean they are a contemplative sect

he probably meditated a lot

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from Edelweiss

Voyager and Edelweiss Voyager says do

you feel that pure land Buddhism should

be completely shunned or is it

acceptable to pray to the mythological

Buddhas

mythological Buddhas he says if one is

able to do so in a non-spiritually

materialist way I understand that this

is not an orthodox teaching of shakimuni

Buddha but I feel like if his Holiness

was teaching to a 21st century

rationalist post-enlightenment

Anglo-Saxon audience his teachings may

have been different you sound frustrated

every time you talk about pure land

and don't feel pressured to answer this

if you do not want to

well I mean it is true I think it's it's

likely let's say that if go to mabuto

were alive today you know he'd be

teaching things differently like he

wouldn't be going with ancient Indian

cosmology probably ancient Indian just

tradition

that he'd be going with whatever

tradition he happened to be in because

you know the outward form of a Buddha is

still going to be a product of his of

his culture

so I so nevertheless I mean let's see

right here

um if his Holiness was teaching to a

21st century rationalist

post-enlightenment Anglo-Saxon audience

he's still not going to be teaching

mythological Buddhas I mean it's like
don't pay attention to me you know don't
let me help you get enlightened pray to
this other Buddha who is in this other
dimension or this other world
and pray to be born and I mean just
ignore what I'm telling you about how
you shouldn't try to get enlightened in
this life instead pray to this this
mythological or you know this Buddha you
can't see even though I'm standing here
right in front of you don't don't pay
attention pray to this other one that
you can't see on the just assuming that
he's real enough that you can be reborn
into his pure land and then he'll help

you get in line I mean it just doesn't

make sense

not to me anyway

so pure land Buddhism I mean it

shouldn't be completely shunned I mean

you can study it for anthropological

purposes you want to see the weird

directions that Buddhism has evolved and

from what I've seen pure land Buddhism

still has some some genuine like

morality to it so that's good

but

I mean why pray to a mythological Buddha

of it

and there's I mean it seems to me that

they were just made up I mean maybe

they're egregores like we were talking

about earlier

I mean that would be your best bet that

amitaba Buddha

has been believed in so much by so many

people that he is now kind of existing

as an egregor

but a genuine Buddha you can't even say

whether they exist or not whether you

know even if they're standing there in

front of you

so

yeah I really don't think that

it would be

in a a Buddhist person's best interests

to sideline the actual historical Buddha

in favor of mythological ones that

nobody had ever heard of until hundreds
of years after the death of gota mabuna
so
so I'm kind of surprised that he says I
seem frustrated every time I talk about
purely
I guess I I did get kind of worked up on
that one but to me yeah it is true I
mean I consider pure land Buddhism to be
like a grotesque aberration from from
genuine dhamma in in many respects not
all respects I mean in some respects
it's essentially the opposite of what
the Buddha was teaching so in that case
if you really want to follow what the
Buddha taught not not some you know
Cosmic Buddha in some other dimension

but you know like the Buddha that was

born on this planet

then yeah you'd do better to to study

the oldest text and try to find you know

as much authentic material as you can

and follow that I mean it's just like a

rational like empirical audience of 21st

century Anglo-Saxons I mean they're

obviously going to want something more

objective than like pure Legend with no

actual facts backing it up other than

people's convictions

because I mean the Jehovah's Witnesses

have convictions too

but just because they believe something

doesn't mean that's necessarily true

unless Jehovah's an aggregor

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is also from

Edelweiss Voyager so Edelweiss voyager's

last question in fact he says here this

is my last question

I have recently seen anata translated as

not self rather than no self this

translation is used to argue for the

existence of a permanent Soul it seems

like people who follow this translation

Wikipedia gives the example of Richard

gombridge and Alexander Winn are just

not capable of understanding codependent

origination I do however think that

allowing this minor mistranslation to

spread would be helpful in spreading

Buddhism to normies and nietzscheens

what are your thoughts on this thank you

so much for taking the time to answer

all of our questions

well he seems to be asking

um if we can just get rid of the anata

stuff of no of no self and say well

there is a self it's just the five

condas are not ourselves that we have

the soul you know this Immortal soul

that that might serve Buddhism in some

way although in a way it's you know it's

perverting dhamma it's misrepresenting

the Buddha in my opinion and uh anjan

tanisaro who is quite Orthodox in most

respects as far as I know

um he also prefers

I think it's not self to no self in that

you know he also goes with the idea of

the five Aggregates are not self but

kind of leaving the door open to maybe

something else that is self although

um the texts do claim that the five

Aggregates are pretty much are

essentially the cosmos

so

so yeah I don't think that you should

deliberately misrepresent the Buddha in

order to get more converts

that I mean people who have little dust

in their eyes are always going to form a

small minority and if you get Buddhism

you know sort of like what happened with

Christianity or to some degree Buddhism
in in the East where you get everybody a
Buddhist you're gonna have lots and lots
of Fools and and just bad people and
just stupid people I mean nothing wrong
being simple but still you're gonna have
just like raging fools
as as Buddhists and there's always going
to be a certain amount of raging fools
as Buddhists but I mean you don't want
to just just invite everybody in
so
yeah Richard gumbridge he has he had
some weird ideas he was saying that just
meta meditation can get you enlightened
and so forth

um I do think he wasn't he was not a

Buddhist I'm pretty sure

and uh I do think that he was he he was

like this Oxbridge academic type who

really

I mean he was just I mean if you're an

Oxford academic type or at least in his

generation you know you're gonna have

you have lots of Church of England in

you or some kind of Christianity you're

gonna have a Christian wife probably and

they're going to be very much influenced

by their own cultural conditioning

because an Oxbridge academic has little

choice but to consider his cultural

conditioning to be the best

it just seems to be my experience

or if not his cultural conditioning are
the best then his judgment is the best
because uh I guess ajan Brahm is an
Oxbridge graduate and I mean he's
I mean to some degree he's kind of uh
following his cultural conditioning but
uh I mean as an ordained monk is not as
much as gomrich and gomrich I should say
was uh I think he was an Oxford
professor of Buddhist studies he was a
professor at Sanskrit and also he was
president of the Polytech Society for a
while
so
yeah I don't think you should try to
deliberately distort Buddhism in order

to get more converts I mean that that

just kills a religion I mean look what

look at what's happening with Protestant

Christianity now or even Catholicism

with their their rainbow Pope

so

yeah you're better off just just letting

it be a relatively uh exclusive group of

you know like a minority movement

so long as it's allowed as long as it's

not like persecuted or something

so we'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from Nathan

I'm gonna check the time here wow this

is going fast it's only been an hour and

a half

so this question from Nathan and Nathan

says if we have been in samsara for an infinite period of time then how have we not become enlightened yet the only explanation I can think of for this dilemma is that perhaps Enlightenment itself is the only event which is beyond the infinite samsaric experiences we've been undergoing since beginning with time but if this were the case then Enlightenment itself would be seemingly Beyond causation which might violate padice

question mark well I mean this is a problem not only for terrible it's an even bigger problem for Mahayana because Mahayana Buddhists take bodhisattva

vowels where they vow to save all beings
before they become enlightened or allow
themselves to enter you know final
Nirvana and I mean the universe has been
here for an infinite amount of time
already so there's already been an
infinite amount of time elapsed and we
still have apparently an infinite number
of unenlightened suffering beings which
would seem to indicate logically
there's never
there I mean there's always going to be
an infinite number of suffering beings
and and there's there's different ways
of accounting for this I mean one
account is that
um in an infinite Universe anything that

can happen does happen

and you know it's like my my Theory of

Everything Is the uncarved block where

you've got this just

um

what's the word

having a block that's kind of a joke

there

um

this uh

an analogy okay an analogy you've got

this block of stone and inside this

block of stone I mean and it doesn't

have anything around it to compare it

with so the size is

just consider it sizeless because you

got nothing to compare it with anyway

so you got this block of stone and

inside that block of stone is contained

every possible statue

I mean every single molecule of every

you know every bit of that statue is

already there you just gotta dismiss the

extraneous Rock and there's every

possible statue and an infinite number

of impossible statues too you know

you've got Myron's discus thrower with

legs as thin as hairs that couldn't

really stand up on its own but it's

still in that in that block of stone so

if you think about samsara that way

I mean when you become enlightened

you're just transcending all these

imaginary potential statues that really

are in there in a sense but they're

virtual their their potential but it's

it's really there in a sense

so when you become enlightened you just

transcend all the statues and you're

just

you just merge with a block of stone as

as a as a whole you know you can you've

got you've merged with infinity

essentially

so in a case like that there's always

going to be an infinite number of

suffering beings because they are

possible

so another I mean that's if you reject

that that's fine so let's just go with

another another hypothesis is that we

haven't been here forever that the

universe is churning out new beings all

the time

you know sort of like it's creating new

stars in a way and one way that I've

I've discussed the possibility of this

before

um that I've there's a couple

possibility possibilities that I've read

in this weird book called Seth speaks

one is that the karmic momentum of an

individual being can split

and then you've got two smaller beings

so I mean that could be a way of like

um you know suffering beings reproducing

themselves you know sort of

metaphysically in in the karmic sense

and another one is that when you dream

at night or just in your imagination you

think about people that don't really

exist but like in your dream you dream

about some person

and they continue to I mean you've given

birth to this being they've got like

this very shady very ephemeral sort of

you know even below ghost-like level of

existence but still they exist and then

they start their own

their own trajectory you know their own

you know Evolution or series of births

or whatever and then another possibility

is like what the jains believe and I

think maybe some Hindus believe this

also is that

um that a being begins at this Elemental

level you know like a crystal or

something and then

I mean you'd have like this simplest

form of karmic existence that can form

spontaneously sort of like organic life

had to form spontaneously somehow or

other

um so that's that's a possibility too

but yeah it's it does seem uh pretty

gloomy if you think that you know

they're an infinite number of suffering

beings supposedly although according to

Buddhism none of them really exists none

of them is ultimately real

at least according to terravonna

Buddhism

so that's that's one reason or one one

thing you can think of and I think I

read this in a Mahayana text it was the

Sutra point I think where he says that

when you become enlightened you look

around you see that everybody else is

enlightened too

so that would be good news from a high

honest sort of in that the the only way

to liberate all beings is to become

enlightened to the point that you

realize that all these suffering beings

don't really exist anyway there's nobody

to liberate

but I'm getting a little too

metaphysical here

so

um

it is something that he says here in

this is uh

let's see I can think of the the only

explanation I can think of in this

dilemma is that perhaps Enlightenment

itself is the only event which is beyond

the infinite samsaric experiences we've

been undergoing since beginning this

time and some Mahayana Buddhism does

teach this that there is Enlightenment

but there's no moment of Enlightenment

um there's nobody who becomes

enlightened the whole thing is a paradox

again

so Enlightenment itself would seemingly

be Beyond causation well nibana is

beyond causation I mean if nibana had a

cause then it would be conditioned by

that cause and it would be impermanent

and suffering

so yeah that's that's another thing I

mean nibana has no cause

if it did have a cause it would be a

condition thing it would be a Sankara it

would not be

um nibana

so yeah welcome to the Paradox Club it's

it's all paradoxical once you get into

the realm of infinity or the absolute

I mean you're just going to be wallowing

in Paradox unless you just

you're just not sensitive to the

existence of paradoxes you just don't

want to see them

so we'll just move on to Nathan's next

question here do you think the Buddha

actually thought oh do you think the

Buddha actually taught the five

Aggregates as such I've been skimming

through GC pandey's studies thanks for

the recommendation and he is convinced

that the condos were a later development

however Pandey further argues that the

Buddha originally taught a simpler

schematic of Kaya and wenyana with

winyana as the Atta

this seems to betray his Hindu

conditioning more than anything but I

agree with him that the five condas feel

a bit questionable if I had to make a

guess I'd say the recursive

interrelation of namarupa and winyana

such as in the mahani dhanasuta is

probably closer to how the Buddha

actually talked about subjective human

experiences but who knows uh yeah GC

Pandey

who wrote studies in the origins of

Buddhism he was a Hindu and he did have

sort of a Hindu take on Buddhism I mean

his book is well worth reading it's it's

really good but you have to sort of Bear
in mind that he is going to be leaning
towards a like a vedantist
interpretation of Buddhism
but I guess I should for those of you
who are sort of uh beginners I guess I
guess I should uh Define some of these
terms he's using a lot of of poly in
here the the condos are the Aggregates
they're the five Aggregates of which a
human being is composed according to
Orthodox teravana Buddhist philosophy
and it's rubikonda or the the aggregate
of form then you've got
wait in that conda or the aggregate
feeling or feelings you've got
um Sanya Kanda the aggregated perception

you've got Sankara Kanda the aggregate
of karma formations
which mainly means cheating out or
volition and then you've got Wayne
Anaconda is the the the aggregate of
Consciousness and that that is what a
human being is composed of
and uh kayak means body when Yana is
consciousness and it says here that the
Buddha originally taught a simpler
schematic of Kaya and winyana with
winyana as the Atta and Atta means self
but if I recall it seems like he was
talking about this mind and body that
the Buddha or GC Pandey was saying that
in the oldest text or what appeared to

be the oldest texts the Buddha isn't

talking about the five condas or the

five Aggregates he's just talking about

no

like mind and body

so I mean none of that would be the self

so let's see here

yeah I mean especially if you consider

the the Orthodox development of the five

condas like according to abidama and the

um commentarial system

you've got rubicondo that's that's

physical matter the body itself and then

you've got you've got 52 mental States

all right you've got Rupa is ultimately

real Consciousness or mind is ultimately

real and then you've got 52 ultimately

real mental states with Wadena Kanda
being one of those 52 Sanya Kanda as
being another one of those 52 and the
remaining 50 are all lumped together in
Sankara Kanda which is like not good
logic it's not good system and
personally I'm rather skeptical of it I
think on the older method of just saying
that Sankara Kanda is volition or
children or will is is better and you
just get rid of the extra 49 mental
states which includes things like wrong
view as an ultimately real mental state
I mean I'm sorry that I'll be dumb I
even exist to tell you the truth I mean
you you can get benefit from studying it

just to become literate in what the

Orthodox tradition asserts but like

venerable nyanovira not the new famous

yanovira but the older famous nyanovira

who lived in Ceylon back in the 50s and

60s

he said the less abidama you know the

better because the less you have to

unlearn in order to really understand

dama but I'm kind of skeptical that he

really understood it either

so let's see

yeah I'm I'm kind of questionable about

the whole five condas

um going all the way back to the Buddha

himself so I would agree with GC Pandey

on that and so now I'll just move on to

the next question and this is from

cheers Alex's

he had an easy name to pronounce and I'm

not pronouncing it correctly now but I'm

at least I've settled on like a

standardized pronunciation for this

and true zoixes says according to the

polycanon did the Buddha ever make

derogatory remarks about dark skin

wait a minute

okay I got that wrong this is I

that's wrong he didn't he didn't ask

that because Alexis didn't ask that

question

I'm going to type the right question

because I remember this one this is a

weird question

is your

your favorite

species of crab

okay so what your Zao exist says what is

your favorite species of crab

and that's

I mean I've told a story about a crab

maybe in the last q a

and I believe it was a it was a Tanner

crab of the genus clan of cities

which in restaurants is called snow crab

but what is my favorite species of crab

I mean that's weird

and I'm not exactly sure what he has in

mind here I mean uh

with regard to eating crap I would guess

maybe uh king crab some kind of Alaskan

king crab and there's uh

there's like four different species

at least of Alaskan king crab and I

unfortunately I'm Rusty in my Bering Sea

Marine Biology Marine biological

taxonomy and so

I don't even remember the genius of king

crabs

um with regard to species of crab the

species of which I still recall cancer

Magister is nice it's the Dungeness crab

of the Pacific coast

um but with regard to crabs that I've

been uh familiar with that I became

struck up a friendship with I used to

have some pet hermit crabs land hermit

crabs

so I don't know those are the ones that

that I had the most affection for I

guess

and one interesting point

while I'm mentioning crabs and king

crabs and hermit crabs it is apparent

that the king crab of the Bering Sea you

know the the luxury food item that gets

really big

that uh they are evolved from hermit

crabs and one of the reasons they know

this is that if you pull open the flap

you know a crab has got its oh I did it

again

the computer is telling me that the

battery's running loud because I always

forget

to plug in this battery just a second

I forget to plug in the computer

it's not even funny

ah

okay

okay

ah where was it oh yeah

king crabs okay so a crab

is essentially like a shrimp except it's

its tail is folded up underneath it and

it's flat and it it keeps its eggs and

so forth in there and if you pull that

flap out you see that the little legs

that are inside there are asymmetrical

you know they're they're bigger on one
side than on the other side on the under
the flap of a king crab and they're
asymmetrical because their ancestors
were hermit crabs and hermit crab has to
have asymmetrical little legs on the
back of its body to hold it into a
spirally curved snail shell so because
the snail shell is like in a spiral
going this way it has to have bigger
legs on one side and smaller legs on the
other side to hold it in there again
so that's enough of uh
the marine biology lesson for today
and so trezalex is is uh I mean I'm
sorry I really don't technically have a
favorite species of crab and I could

could just be this weird personality

Quirk of mine that I do not have a

favorite species of crab

so Tres Alex is his next question here

is

do you have a bug out bag

and then in parentheses he calls it an

evacuation bag

and uh I'm I have to admit I am not a

prepper

so

there's there's this my sweetheart

watches this guy he's a prepper in South

Carolina and I would not want to hang

out with this guy because I mean he's

just always on the lookout for threats

to his family's survival and like you
know he's he does these videos how you
you get these concrete picnic benches
these are good because in the case of of
an emergency you can tip the concrete
picnic bench on its side and and hide
behind it with your rifle
you know this kind of stuff and it's man
he would not be a fun person to hang out
with because he's just like always like
on on yellow alert at least
so I mean my my bug out bag would
probably be a Glock
and some some clips of ammo I don't know
I was I was a monk for so long it's like
um I mean everything you own supposedly
you should just be able to carry with

you you know he's I'm just kind of a

minimalist still

I just don't think in those terms

even though I now have a a family do to

take care of

but I guess the easy answer for that for

cheers Alex is this question there is no

I do not have a bug out bag

I mean we don't even have extra water

bottles

stored in the basement or anything like

that

so I mean when the [__] hits the fan

don't attack our house and try and steal

our survival stuff because we don't have

any

that's the moral of that story so I'll
just move on to the next question here
and this is from vegan Samurai
and uh vegan Samurai says have you ever
heard of Yukio Mishima he was a renowned
Japanese author playwright poet and
actor he is considered one of the most
important Japanese authors of the 20th
century and was nominated three times
for the Nobel Prize in literature
Mishima was also a prominent figure in
Japanese Society known for his
Nationalist and traditionalist Views as
well as his interest in bodybuilding and
martial arts in 1970 Mishima committed
ritual suicide by seppuku also known as
harakiri after leading a failed military

coup in an attempt to restore power to

the Japanese emperor

so the question here is have I ever

heard

of Yukio Mishima and

maybe I mean I've heard of a lot of

people and then it just doesn't register

sufficiently that I can say oh yeah I

was I was riding a bus

and somebody sitting next to me is

wearing a tweed jacket and he was

smoking a cigar and he was telling no I

don't remember any of that so maybe I've

heard of them but almost everything I

know about Yukio Mishima is contained in

this question

so sorry about that

just got a notice on the computer

so finally the very last question

and this is also from vegan Samurai

vegan Samurai asks according to the

Polly Canon did the Buddha ever make

derogatory remarks about dark skin

and I do not recall the Buddha ever

making derogatory comments about dark

skin although there are kind of sort of

derogatory comments about dark skin in

the texts simply because it was a

cultural thing for example I think it

was it was one of the two main kings in

the Buddhist time Sania

see

vicinity King vicinity or King bimbisara

I can't remember which I think yeah I don't I don't remember which but his favorite wife was dark-skinned and it was considered sort of a joke or something you know sort of not not exactly a scandal but you know he was very devoted to his wife who had dark skin and so that was It was kind of an issue

and I I don't remember if the Buddha was even talking about it much but I mean there is a rule in the rules of monastic discipline that you should not ordain a candidate for the monkhood if his skin is very dark but you also are not supposed to ordain a candidate for

monkood if his skin is very light

this and the reason for that is just

if he stands out as being kind of weird

looking just like really standing out as

distort something that people would be

talking about at home after he walks by

yeah did you see that monk see how weird

he looked that kind of a thing

um they were trying to avoid that sort

of thing so it was even a monk with a

unibrow is not like a person with a

unibrow is not supposed to be ordained

so I mean there is that

but I think mainly you'd be likely to

find in the polytext not the Buddha

making derogatory marks about dark skin

I mean the only person the Buddha would

make derogatory remarks about would be a
foolish person
regardless of skin color regardless of
what what cast they were born in any of
that regardless even of their religion I
mean you know he would call out Buddhist
fools as quickly as he'd call out like
Jane fools for example so the Buddha did
not make derogatory comments about
anybody other than just you know foolish
people including bad people
and he would just call them on him and
he wouldn't be making you know jokes
about them or anything
but in Ancient India especially Northern
India

um

it was fair skin was an upper class kind

of a thing it it still is I mean there's

different reasons for it now back then

the upper class had fair skin partly

because the upper classes had more

indo-aryan ancestry

whereas the Aboriginal peoples that were

already in India when the indoorians

invaded

or more dark skin like like uh South

Indians

and so it was considered to be you know

better to be fair-skinned in Ancient

India in Northern ancient India because

it showed more of a high class uh

ancestry

but also and even nowadays in third
world countries if you have fair skin
that means you're not working out in the
sun getting burnt in Black every day I
mean it means that you have high enough
social status that you don't have to be
a manual laborer out in the burning Sun
so School teachers educated people shop
owners you know they cultivate you know
even like a pasty you know they just
light as the light of skin as they can
manage because fair skin
um is like a a status symbol you know
it's it indicates social status so some
acknowledgment of that is probably to be
found in the Texas which is one reason

why you know people were kind of making

fun of the fact that this King's

favorite wife had dark skin you know

it's just acknowledging what was going

on in the culture at the time but

there's no promotion of derogatory

remarks about dark skin

not that I that I can think of

and the Buddha would not be bad-mouthing

anybody other than people that were

considered to be fools

so that's the last question and so

by golly

we are done

so if you have any questions feel free

to ask in the comments below if you have

access to my subscribe star you can ask

them there if you have access to the

Discord server you can ask them there

and feel free to like And subscribe if

you haven't already and look at the URL

links below

and be happy

hi it's me again

um I did the whole q a and then I did

two videos with Brian Rue

and uh then I realized that I forgot to

answer a question so I'm back again to

answer the one more question

and this is from Jules and Jewel says

what is the etymological root of the

word duka I think the prefix do is bad

what about the Ka

well

there are differences of opinion on the

etymology of the word Duca because it's

not like an ordinary kind of word

um one commentarial

etymology

which is traditional

is that the do means bad or difficult

and the Ka comes from the verb comedy

which means acceptance

um for forbearance like also uh the noun

Kanti would have the same

etymology which is

k-h-a-n-t-i or comedy would be

k-h-a-m-a-t-i I think

so the this commentarial explanation is

that the do means hard or difficult and

the cut comes from Comedy to accept and

so it means hard to accept what is

dukkha is hard to accept although

modern philologists tend not to accept

that

etymology

so I've read in uh I did a little study

on the official like etymologies of the

word dukkha in in this book here which

is the the Polytech Society

um poly English dictionary which I spent

a long time adding to you can see in the

margins I got all this extra stuff added

see see all this extra stuff also the

book is like that

so anyway according to uh

twist Davids and William Steed who wrote
this dictionary
the main probable etymology by modern
Western standards is that the do means
bad and the cop is a modification of
just the suffix Ka in poly which doesn't
mean much of anything sort of like the
word for one in poly is a cop like eka
and the actual
proto-indo-european root for the number
one is manifested just in the E of a cop
with the the KA at the end just
I mean it doesn't really have any
meaning uh sometimes it can be used in a
derogatory sense or or a diminutive like
a Samana is like a philosopher an
ascetic philosopher a samanica is sort

of like a a derogatory you know sort of

like a so-called philosopher but here it

doesn't really mean much of anything

it's just sort of turning the Dew into a

noun is turning a prefix which means bad

into a noun that just sort of implies

Badness and also there is sort of a a

modification of it with the the kha

um to make it sort of uh

a bookend I mean what's the word like a

compliment of the word sukha

which means like

Pleasant or or

um

ease I usually I usually Define uh like

if I'm doing a translation I calls and

duka Anis so you know they sound kind of

similar in English as well as in Paulie

so that's uh I think the official

definition at least at the time that

Nepali Tech Society uh

dictionary was composed is that

it's

do it just means bad the car is is

almost like a meaningless suffix to turn

the prefix into a whole word and then

the the extra H was added you know the

the K was changed to KH just for the

sake of making it sort of mirror the the

already existing word sukkah which is

like um

like happiness or or ease or that sort

of thing

so that's the that's the last that's the

real last question

last time I said it was the last

question I was I was mistaken this is

the last question

so uh be happy

hello and welcome to episode 55 of

question and answer I am your host Ponyo

Bahasa

and we're experimenting with a new

camera now it was a uh one of one of you

interrogators generously donated 50

bucks to the purchase of a new video

camera partly because or maybe entirely

because

um a few episodes back I went blurry

part way through the video and would not

unblurify no matter what I did

that is to I would not undergo

unblurification

in accordance with the principles of

unblurificationism

and so he generously donated to uh help

me get a new camera which is what I'm

using now but the thing is it's not

connecting to the app yet

the the app where you can make

adjustments and so forth so we'll just

see how I end up looking if I look

completely funny or something

that means that it's it's working

so

I just made some hummingbird juice

and I tend to do a few other things

and so I'm ready to answer questions and

we have had I mean it's just kind of

amazing to me that that we're up to

number 55 I mean if you take 55 episodes

and you multiply by 30 which is about

the average number of questions I mean
you get like six gorillion questions I
didn't that's just off the top of my
head I didn't use a calculator for that
um although it is true that some people
ask the same questions that I've already
answered before which in a way is good
because that means it's a question that
people want to know the answer to and
it's good to repeat myself but also it's
bad because it indicates that people are
not watching all of the previous q and
A's before they get to this one
so I don't know what to do about that
other than just uh berate you
mercilessly

an opposite of my sweet tea

and start answering questions and the

first one is from Edelweiss Voyager

and he asked this question like more

than a week ago and for some reason it

just didn't wind up on the list there

was a glitch in my programming while

while compiling the list and it just

didn't work so here it is he's number

one now add a little advice of Voyager

says

can you enlighten me on Buddhist

opposition to the Vietnam War obviously

non-violence is a principle that we hold

but it seems that defeating communism is

important enough to put aside pacifism

Buddhists in Vietnam are now heavily

surveilled if I am being heretical here

this would be one of the hardest

teachings to accept

well I'm really not familiar with what

was going on with Buddhists during the

Vietnam era that's a bit before my time

um obviously there was some protesting

going on like the famous Vietnamese monk

Who lit himself on fire and uh I think

the person who photographed him instead

of putting him out got a Pulitzer Prize

for that I'm pretty sure

um

so it seemed to me that the main

protesting at that time among the the

Buddhists in Vietnam

was not so much against the violence but

against uh Catholics in in that were

ruling the country you know they were

like Francophile Catholics they

converted to Roman Catholicism and they

were running the country instead of

Buddhists

um

so yeah I mean I'm not familiar with

like self-professed Buddhists in the

west protesting against the Vietnam War

I was just like a hippie thing I guess I

mean probably some of the hippies were

Buddhists but I think it was mainly

because they were hippies rather than

because they were Buddhists or maybe it

was just a combination of the two

um but I guess the main question here is

not so much historical as just the uh

you know what should

um a good Buddhists do

when Communists are taking over the

country or invading or whatever and uh

well a monk I mean I mean if you're like

top level Buddhist practitioner then

yeah I mean you're not going to be

killing people deliberately and you

should try to avoid killing them even

accidentally

but uh lay people I mean you're gonna

have all kinds of of lay people just

different levels of Buddhist even among

the Buddhist light people forgetting the

the non-bootest ones I mean you're gonna
have just really some that are
relatively crude beginning level you get
more and more advanced ones some of the
top Advanced ones are more advanced than
some of the monks
in fact most of the Buddhist lay people
would be more advanced in like the the
worst few monks in the Sangha
so I mean you're gonna have people that
profess Buddhism that are still willing
to fight and then you can have other
Buddhists who are just so strict and
puritanical so to speak maybe
puritanical has too many negative
connotations but I mean they're just not
even going to swat a fly no matter what

they'd rather die than SWAT a mosquito
I've met a few that were like that
there was an Australian monk I Used to
Know who lived at Palm Doyle which is
very strict in in civilian practice as
meditation centers go
and it was infested with bed bugs and so
they had exterminators going around
fumigating the meditation cabins and
almost all of them including the Abbot
himself allowed it to happen but this
Australian monk he would just fiercely
defiant and would not let them kill his
bed bugs because killing is wrong
especially at a Buddhist Monastery and
so forth I mean it just makes it seem

more wrong anyway

so let's see so there's just always

going to be people who are willing to

fight unless they just get so

emasculated and decadent which is kind

of what the globalist West is shooting

for that they just can't be dangerous

even if they want to or they just can't

want to or something

and uh yeah I mean

a situation like that you would think in

a way from a Buddhist point of view that

it would be like a Buddhist Utopia where

nobody even dreams of of committing acts

of violence but at the same time

I think Jordan Peterson was correct when

he said

I mean you should be able to be a

monster and then just not be one which

means you're still strong

but you restrain yourself through moral

principles and so forth through through

conscience or whatever and

it's that's not good enough for the the

spiritually bankrupt left I guess

nowadays or just for globalists who just

want everybody under control

they don't want uh revolting peasants

so I mean

in a healthy diverse Society there's

going to be violent people who are

willing to fight to protect their

country preferably they've got enough

Traditional Values that they are

patriotic and fighting to protect their

country rather than just rampaging and

pillaging and looting and so forth

but

uh

guys he says here adult advice Voyager

says here that it seems that defeating

communism is important enough to put

aside pacifism and that reminds me of

something that neem karoli Baba said in

India back in like the the late 60s or

early 70s when communism was threatening

to take over India

and he was saying there's too much

Dharma in India for communism to get a

foothold here

and apparently he was right in that case

um and really I mean it is a matter of

of karma whether you uh live in a

Communist dictatorship or not

that you know it's it's largely your own

doing you are creating your reality or

you're creating your own virtual reality

but uh there are things you can do I

mean uh defeating communism you know

just peaceful non-cooperation you know

gandhian tactics maybe or or just leave

go somewhere else

um or I mean if you really think it's

worth taking the hit taking the karmic

hit you can fight to protect your

country and your family and your loved

ones

so

if you just feel that it is your Dharma

in life to be a sheepdog

then who knows maybe uh that's the thing

to do but I mean you are going to be

taking a hit you'll become a tragic hero

where you are sacrificing your own

spiritual welfare for the benefit of

others to protect the innocent and the

helpless and so forth and that's not

entirely blameworthy

so I think I'll just move on to uh the

next question this is from Saint sword I

assume it's Saint sword and not Saints

word it's all one word

and he says he asked the same question

twice he asked it on the previous q a
but it was after I'd already recorded
the the Q a I think and so he asked it
again so you get two different versions
of the same question here the the older
version is what's the difference between
winyana and cheetah the best I've come
up with is that cheetah is the totality
of mind while winyana is the reflective
quality of mind bending back on itself
and then the second version of the same
question is what's the difference
between the concepts of cheetah and
winyana is there any reason to suspect
that one of them may have been a later
addition and therefore a concept the

Buddha never really used the best I can tell is that cheetah is the Mind as a whole from cognition to perception to everything in between and winyana is the reflective mechanism of the mind bending back on itself winyana would be the mind seeing itself as a separate thing from everything else non-duality would refer to this bending back as it's the Mind subject taking itself as object and therefore the mind is itself non-dual and uh by golly you know something I'm going to plug in this computer before the the battery starts running dead and warns me and then I'm interrupted like half hour or an hour from now instead of me interrupting myself right now in a

second

this always happens

it's right in there

oh yeah

so the difference between cheetah and

winyana well

for starters there's a lot of overlap

because cheetah can be a synonym for

winano

like in the abidama philosophy you got

four four ultimate realities you've got

cheetah cheetah cheetah Sika

Rupa and nibana so here cheetah just

means it's a synonym for consciousness

but

um usually cheetah is rendered as mind

so it can also just mean mind in general

so it's

um like in a technical sense it's the

same as winyana but it can also just

mean mind in general so it has like a

broader less vague less technical sense

but um like as as technical words

they're they're not different things

their cheetah is consciousness but it

can also mean under other contexts just

like normal talk it can just mean mind

sometimes it's translated as heart but

that's not good hadaya is literally the

the organ that pumps blood

um there are a few people that are just

staunch Advocates of self view who will

try to prove that the Buddha taught that

there is a soul by translating cheetah
as soul but it means mind essentially
so with regard to the mind bending back
on itself I mean that would be
self-consciousness and
um that's really not what Buddhism
teaches that I mean even a frog or a
goldfish or a mosquito has Consciousness
it just doesn't have self-consciousness
or like science you know there are
relatively few animals on this planet
that have self-consciousness they've
done experiments like they'll
anesthetize an animal and put a blue
spot on its face and then they'll show
it a mirror and there's only a few

species that will recognize that that

spot on the face of the image in the

mirror is actually their own and they'll

try and rub off the spot and even

gorillas don't have that chimpanzees uh

dolphins

uh there's there's a few other I can't

remember now I think maybe orangutans

possibly an elephant even I'm not sure

but there's not very no in humans humans

are on the list too most humans anyway

so I'm just rambling all over the place

this is like it's sort of like my

gimmick you know

different people have different gimmicks

I just like ramble and digress all over

the place

so I think I answered that question so

I'll just move on to Saint sword's next

question and this is this is sort of a

response to some wrangling back and

forth like in previous

um episodes of this q a

um you know he sometimes he would just

make a comment about like Aruba Janna

we've sort of been wrangling or

discussing arupa Jana or the formless

contemplations

and uh he was

having some difficulty understanding

what I was saying which is

understandable because I mean you have

to resort to like Paradox and and like

anyway so anyway he says and there's
actually two questions at the end of
this so I'm this is legitimate questions
here okay let me spell this out and you
can correct me if I'm still misre
representing your position so he's
trying to understand my position
first and so the points he's got here
are one the arupa janas are different
sorts of nothingness Infinite Space
infinite nothingness Etc two nothingness
is synonymous with the contents of
Consciousness being removed
three therefore due to one and two when
the Mind enters an arupa Jana the
content of Consciousness is thus removed
for when the content of Consciousness is

removed Consciousness is indeterminate

it's not that it exists or doesn't exist

is active or not arises or not it's

indeterminate five therefore due to

three and four when the Mind enters in a

rupajana Consciousness is indeterminate

so I should respond to these before I

get to his questions so number one the

arupa janas are different sorts of

nothingness Infinite Space infinite

nothingness Etc

um not necessarily I wouldn't entirely

agree with that I mean different sorts

of nothingness you might you might call

it like different degrees of nothingness

but the whole purpose of arupa John is I

my theory is that they don't go back to
the time of the Buddha this is like a
later Innovation it was like
um my theory is there's there's
different possible yeah explanations for
arupa janas being added to Buddhist
philosophy and Buddhist ethics after the
fact after nabuta had already passed
away and somebody else added them in and
my theory is that the arupa genas uh
like infinite Consciousness neither
perception or non-perception
um like nothingness that they were
attempts at describing the enlightened
mind the mind that has attained in
nibana full Enlightenment and that as
Buddhist philosophy developed they've

sort of fell out of favor you know they

they got out competed by other

explanations or or whatever you know

there was like this virus-like mutation

of Buddhist philosophy during you know

of hundreds of years after the time of

the Buddha

and um they just did not win the

competition as explanations but I mean

there are some of these are are found in

the Suites they have like a precedent in

the sutas themselves especially or in

the Pariah nawaga has at least three of

these you know you could plausibly

attribute these arupa genas like

infinite infinite um or neither

perception or non-perception or

nothingness

or the infinite Consciousness one or

let's see yeah infinite Consciousness

that's the famous uh verse in the Deegan

ikaya and the majikaya talking about

Enlightenment obvious or nibana

obviously as infinite formless

consciousness

you know unmanifest luminous all-round

and so these explanations just sort of

fell by the wayside they they wound up

being considered unorthodox as

explanations of the enlightened mind but

they were too well known to just you

know purge them from all the all the

sutas and so forth and so they they

attributed

which are like in they're kind of higher

than fourth John a fourth John I used to

be the highest level of meditation you

know the highest possible level of

meditation but the Indian mind is always

wanting to elaborate and just outdo the

the absolute as it's already been

explained before

and so

um these got added just sort of in

between

um neoroda samopadi which is an even

higher one and fourth genre which used

to be the highest but isn't anymore and

um I wrote an article that is on my blog

I wrote it back around last May or so
um before I posted it background last
May that's giving my best explanation
for where arupa Jonas came from like for
example one little bit of evidence is
the samanya Pala suta which is
describing the the fruits of the
contemplative life and it starts at
relatively crude stuff and then works up
goes through the four genres and then
after the four genres it starts talking
about these psychic attainments that a
person can get it doesn't even mention
the four arupa Jones the formless realms
for example and the Buddha himself when
he died he died in fourth genre like in
the Hari nibana mahapari nibana suta the

Buddha is in his last fatal illness and he's dying

he goes into first John on second John a third John a fourth Jonah and then he goes into these arupa janas and then I think he may have attained nerota samopadi and then he goes back down in reverse order back down the first Jonah if I remember correctly and then he goes up to Fourth genre and becomes enlightened and um

I think it was just too well established that he died in fourth Jonna so they had to but they had all these newer hired genres or contemplative States or just meditative states that they'd added

after that so they had him go all the
way up to the top one and then have to
come back down again so he could die in
Fort John according to the
well-established tradition of that time
but I'm just this this is still just
point number one I haven't gotten the
questions yet so I'll just move on to a
second statement he's trying to
understand my point of view here with
regard to uh formless contemplations
it's just nothingness is synonymous with
the contents of Consciousness being
removed and with regard to like
nothingness in general it just means
contents of anything I mean there's just
no content

but with regard to

um nothingness as like a an arupa Janna

or a formless contemplation it's it's

the perception of emptiness

which means it's not really emptiness

because there is a perception there

so then he says in point number three

therefore due to number one and number

two when the Mind enters arupa genre the

contents of Consciousness is thus

removed I mean going with Orthodoxy I

mean my opinion is that they're just

sort of a like an artifact that

um fourth genre really was originally

the highest level and then these these

ones just got added later as sort of

apocrypha

but according to Orthodox tradition

is that uh

there's always a perception according to

Orthodox Buddhism

Consciousness always has to be

consciousness of something that you

cannot have when you're anaconda or the

the

aggregate of Consciousness without

sunyakonda which is the aggregate of

perception you cannot have one without

the other if you have perception you

have to have Consciousness and if you

have Consciousness you have to have

perception this is orthodox you know

like abidama the commentaries that sort

of thing

and so in formless contemplations you've

got a very

sort of like a very vague very subtle

perceptional perceptual object but it's

still there and that's why the very

highest genre is the realm of neither

perception or non-perception because you

can't get to all the way up to

non-perception in a meditative State

according to Orthodox tradition

so the highest level you can get to this

neither perception or non-perception is

you know it's so subtle you can't really

save if it's there or not you know it's

just so subtle that you really can't get

a grasp on it or

wrap your head around there or anything

so we'll move up to point four here when

Consciousness when the content of

Consciousness is removed Consciousness

is indeterminate it's not that it exists

or doesn't exist or it's active or not

horizon or not it's indeterminate well

that's I would say that that is true

when the content of Consciousness is

removed Consciousness itself stops being

consciousness of anything it just starts

being like pure consciousness

and because it's pure Consciousness with

no limiting object it just becomes

formless and it's it's essentially

what the upanishads are calling you know

the Atman which is Brahman

but from the Buddhist point of view I

mean Nirvana it's not samsaric it's not

is or isn't or is and isn't or neither

is nor isn't once you get into this

formless

absolute

then

you can't pin it down within a dualistic

context of is or isn't it's just off the

scale and Consciousness when it when it

doesn't have

uh and a perceptual object anymore when

it doesn't have any object it's formless

and I mean this is I'm bordering on

heresy here because uh taravana Orthodox

teravada you know it just says you

cannot have Consciousness without

perception

but I think if you are able to eliminate

the perception you have pure

Consciousness it causes the

Consciousness to just become

indeterminate and then you can't say if

it does or doesn't exist you can't say

that it does or doesn't or does and

doesn't or neither doesn't nor doesn't

it just becomes paradoxical and off the

scale

just like pneumona

and that's one reason why in at least uh

two sutas they've got this ancient

fragment of a verse saying that nibana

is essentially infinite formless

consciousness

so anyway

um

see here Saint sword says

therefore due to three and four when the

Mind enters an arupa Consciousness it is

indeterminate not because even according

to Orthodox taravada even the arupa

janas have perceptual content and that

the like the realm of infinite

nothingness or just nothingness I mean

it's nothingness because it's not you

it's you can't have nothing that's

really as a perceptual object because to

perceive it you've got to have limits to

it

I mean your a perception can't just

spread out in all directions or it just

becomes the same as the Consciousness

and it's it's indetermine itself

so

yeah when when mine enters Aruba genre

no it does not become indeterminate

unless you're agreeing with my theory

that some of these arupa genres at least

at least three of them are attempts to

describe the enlightened mind and if it

really is the enlightened mind then one

could argue that Consciousness is

indeterminate but it's not because

they're in a state of arupa genre it's

just because the Aruba genas were

originally attempts at describing the
enlightened mind that became unorthodox
as the philosophy developed and so they
got relegated to this very exalted
meditative state
but it's not Enlightenment yet
so dancing sword says my questions here
then are one this seems to violate the
reverse order of pedicia when namarupa
ceases when Yana ceases what is the
difference here if namarupa not the same
is namarupa not the same as the contents
of Consciousness well this is kind of a
complicated this is this is getting
complicated
I mean it's

with regard to penicious I also think

that the 12 links the 12 nidana theory

of benicius and Opana the Buddhist the

Buddhist Theory of Everything But it

also

um was added later not itself but the 12

link theory of it the 12 link method of

describing it or explaining it

and so how early these 12 links

became standardized I don't know because

namarupa is one of is a word literally

means name and form

that probably originally like when the

Buddha was using the term it was pretty

much synonymous for perception like the

diversifying mind

that Nama is the name and Rupa is the

form and in a way it's kind of reverse

it's like papancha Sanka is in the right

order but it means essentially the same

as papaja Sanka

a pawnshot you divide the world up into

parts

and then you give names to all the parts

and that's where the world comes from

and namarupa is similar to that except

it's you know you've got forms you

identify the form and then you slap some

kind of label on even though the label

might just mean it might be just what

the hell is that you know it whatever

that is I don't know but you know

there's still you're identifying

something and like putting some sort of

perceptual significance onto that

something

including nothingness

so this when namarupa ceases when Yana

ceases

um I mean which definition of namoruba

is it I mean later on it became Orthodox

that namarupa means mind and matter and

then here Nama would be more like mental

States like you know the the perceiving

Mind whereas is sort of like the the

foundation of the perceiving Mind

so it's hard to say when the 12 need on

a link started which was the correct

interpretation of namarupa and also it's

not necessarily A temporal sequence

that they could be simultaneous so that

if when Yara ceases nomarupa's thesis

um you know it could be there it's

simultaneous that's that's another

plausible explanation even though again

Orthodox tradition hasn't defined it

that way

so

um I mean they could be saying that

Consciousness and mental states have to

exist together you can't have one

without the other that is the Orthodox

hard-line position and I'm not in total

disagreement with that because once you

get rid of the mental States the

Consciousness assuming that

Consciousness hasn't ceased it just goes

off the scale it just becomes

paradoxical so you can't really say that

it exists so in a way I'm not entirely

in disagreement with this that

Consciousness in order to be

recognizable as Consciousness it has to

be consciousness of something

so it's not the same as the contents of

Consciousness yeah in this context if it

is

um

well the Nama part

you know according to Orthodox Buddhism

the Nama aspect would be the same as the

contents of Consciousness whereas the

Rupa would be the physical body

of the like the fertilized zygote

fertilized egg

when life begins

so I think I've answered that so I'll

move on to the point question two here

what is the difference between a

rupajanas and Ani dasana

well

Ana is from that

um archaic verse that is found in the

digha and the majama which apparently

pretty obviously is describing

nibano as

unmanifest Consciousness anidasana means

not showing unmanifesto means

Consciousness and the arupa genres like

I already said it depends on whether you

accept my theory that they're like

Apocrypha that were added after the time

of the Buddha or if you're like a

hard-nosed Orthodox and you want to

think you want to believe or prefer to

believe that the Buddha actually taught

formless realms

uh formless genres what the difference

is

um

if if you go with my theory then the

Arup one arupa Jana would be pretty much

in the same terms as unmanifest

conscious the realm of infinite

consciousness

or if you prefer the Orthodox

explanation which probably most

terravonna Buddhists would

understandably then

I forget what the commentary says is the

meaning of anidas maybe I should have

looked it up you can look it up if

you've got like bikubody's translation

of the the Maji manikaya you can look

back in the notes

um and see what the Orthodox explanation

is so anidas I think according to the

commentarial tradition it may be defined

as

maybe as as a formless genre one of them

not all of them

but I don't remember but you can you can

look it up if you've got access to

bikubody's

Uma um nikaya translation or if you have

access to the commentarial tradition you

have access to like some Burmese scholar

monk who can explain it to you maybe

so I mean

yeah it's too bad I forgot what the com

the official commentarial definition is

it might be in that that essay that I

wrote with regard to the formless the

formless contemplations that's on my

blog probably I published it back around

May and it might be in one of my books

too no no it's not it's also on the

nipabancha.org website

um it's like an appendix to an article I

wrote about tarot cards and Ouija boards
so um just look on nepapuncha.org and
find the essay on tarot cards and Ouija
boards and then just scroll past that to
get to the appendix and that's the same
article the same essay giving my
explanation of the formless Realms or
the formless genres
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question here and this is from Kubo
I don't know if I'm pronouncing it right
I've never seen this name before Cubo I
think and he just recently uh became um
a donor on subscribe star so welcome
Kubo all hail makubo
and uh mikubo says

are there any Buddhist teachings that deal with the problem of Exile or being confined to live in one disagreeable location I am from the UK which as you are no doubt aware is slowly undergoing a neo-marxist cultural revolution curbs on freedom of speech high crime levels and orwellian propaganda centered on Race gender Etc have now become normality due to high levels of immigration the native population will likely become an ethnic minority within my lifetime and I fear the inevitable social conflict that will follow I used to live in Japan where the quality of life is much better in general especially with regard to crime and

personal safety not to mention being
surrounded by a much more beautiful and
traditional culture that stimulates and
inspires not demoralizes
I miss living there every day however
due to health reasons and family
obligations I am unable to return there
long term are there any specific
techniques to detach from this desire do
you ever feel intense Cravings to return
to Burma and how do you deal with them
well I'll answer that last one first do
I ever feel intense Cravings to return
to Burma now no I don't I it ran its
course with me and uh
it may be better to be a monk in Burma I

do think it's if I were a monk probably
Burma would be preferable but to be a
layperson you're better off in America
than in Burma
um and partly because Burma is a
military dictatorship it's blazing hot
and the people there think differently
than I do so there's always this culture
barrier even if you learn to speak the
language fluently it's really hard to to
to communicate at more than a
superficial level because the the
assumptions are so different
with regard to life in general and also
um you know like rural Village People
bless their hearts they're good people
they're virtuous people the most

virtuous people I've ever met in my life

were villagers in Northwestern Burma

uh Central Northwestern Burma in general

um but they just don't think very much

you know it's they have like a medieval

mindset you know they think more like a

medieval European like peasant

than you know like I do

and so there's always this this barrier

but

um I should have just said I don't

really feel the intense Cravings to

return to Burma and moved on to the the

bigger more important question here are

there any specific techniques to detach

from this desire to be in a better place

I mean I assume there are some parts of of the UK that would be better than others but there's one thing that you need to consider is that like in the Buddhist time it was a time of like Psychopathic Kings and just chronic Warfare in fact there's a list of 10 dangers that for example there are 10 dangers that make it allowable if any of these happens it makes it allowable to abbreviate a formal ceremony like the padimoka recitation and number one on the list is always rajas it's it's Kings and that's not necessarily just hostile foreign Kings invading with armies I mean it can be your own King that he's just like cons-scripting people into the

army or conscripting people to to build
some Monument or or he's just like
decides to double the taxes and he's the
law
and so I mean things have always sucked
pretty much I mean we're living in a
fortunate age where I mean the most
we've got to complain about is uh
cultural Marxism I mean cultural Marxism
does suck I agree but uh at least we're
not being tortured yet you know we're
not just being arrested in the middle of
the night by the secret police and being
hauled into like torture chambers which
happen like under Stalin in the USSR
happen in lots of places probably still

happens like in Burma probably it's

happening right now

if it's nighttime in Burma

so

I mean again it's it's our own Karma

it's our own mental states that are

creating our reality and so the best we

can do is maintain Equanimity I mean if

you can improve the situation

then go ahead and improve it which might

just mean moving to a place that is more

you know where the the people there the

population you know maybe a small town

where the population is less

politically correct or something they

take it less seriously I mean that's

that's pretty much what I did by moving

to South Carolina

um you know working in a sheet metal

shop every single guy that works there

has a beard and I wouldn't be surprised

if all of them vote Republican

I assume there must be places like that

in the UK I mean if you're living in

London uh I feel sorry for you

or Birmingham

I guess uh the most most common baby

boy's name in Birmingham Alabama or

Birmingham Alabama Birmingham England is

is Muhammad

I don't know what it is in Birmingham

Alabama

ah so

let's see I mean any specific techniques
to detach from this desire I mean the
standard technique for dealing with
almost any kind of
like occurring like mental unease is
mindfulness just watch it observe the
urge or observe the desire as though
you're an ichthyologist observing a dead
fish you know what's it like how does it
make me feel just watch it and when you
watch a desire or you watch anger or
fear or worry or whatever it is you've
already made a you've already detached
from it because if you are anything
you're the one who's doing the observing
not the thing being observed so if you
can observe something you know it's not

you

and so if You observe this desire to to

get the hell out of this

cyberpunk dystopia then I mean if

especially if you can't get out of the

cyberpunk dystopia

um you just observe the desire and then

it's not you you are you are observing

this mental state and already you've

caused this Detachment from it and

you've weakened the power of it a great

deal and it's really a powerful practice

with regard to any problematic mental

state that comes up just observe it and

just by the very fact that you're

observing it I mean sometimes like if

it's a thought you can't observe the
thought and think the thought at the
same time it's like the same parts of
your brain are responsible for both
actions and it just stops it right then
and there but if you can't get rid of it
uh in that way just observing it causes
this philosophical Detachment it's not
you anymore it's not I want to live
somewhere else it's just
um you know at at its lowest form is you
know I am observing this desire
and that sort of thing is it can also be
used for certain mental disorders like
OCD the person who uh you know has to
wash his hands 50 or 100 times a day or
check the front door to make sure it's

locked or you know there's all these
different uh ways that OCD can manifest
itself
and I used to know one of the world's
leading authorities on on OCD and he was
using mindfulness techniques like
Buddhist study patana techniques to cure
people without having to give them drugs
or anything and it's just you observe it
you know it's it's not you it's just
this OCD symptom that's coming up again
and again
I mean it was more to it than that but
that was that was like Central to it
so I mean I wish you wish you luck I
mean it does say in the suit is it's

good to live in a place that's conducive

to practicing dhamma

like it's one of the 38 blessings in the

Maha mangala suta

um so I mean you should do the best you

can within within your limitations

within you know the realistic

possibilities and then I mean if you're

still dissatisfied then you have to

start being mindful of the

dissatisfaction and observing it and

just trying to cure yourself of being

dissatisfied because ultimately it's not

outward circumstances that make us happy

or unhappy it's our own refusal to

accept the outward circumstances that

makes us unhappy it doesn't matter what

it is if you accept it it's not a

problem and it doesn't matter what it is

if you won't accept it it's a problem so

ultimately all suffering all unhappiness

is self-inflicted which is the exact

opposite of what like the political left

is is trying to

spoon feed us

so you might be surrounded by people who

are just absolutely convinced that all

unhappiness is caused by evil Whitey for

example but you can know better than

that and that will improve your karma

your karma if you prefer poly

and uh the likelihood of things getting

better will improve just because your

mental states are improved because your

mental states are what is essentially

creating a reality

so I think I'll just move on a nice

question here and this is from moo

does a dog have Buddha nature

no that's not the question the question

is have you ever experimented with

sorcery or witchcraft

that's kind of an interesting question

and

I mean I've never really experimented

with sorcery or witchcraft except for

just a little bit like when I was in

high school

I I was sweet on this girl and I tried

to do a love spell on her but whether it

worked or not I don't know don't know

she didn't start throwing herself at me

but I think there's a good chance if I

had asked her out she would have said

yes but I was so bashful around her

because I was so impressed by her that I

just never worked up the nerve to ask

her out even after like taking a note

that she she sent to me in in class one

day and I can't remember the whole

ceremony but I remember I'm pretty sure

that I I cut my finger and Drew a heart

in my blood on the thing I mean I have

done sort of things that could be

considered sort of like love spell stuff

or just sort of magic sympathetic magic

that's love oriented I mean I've I've

done stuff like that instead of a kind

of a personal nature but

um I shouldn't be too explicit but I

mean you can just do little things like

that and just uh you know just like

Infuse your Juju into something before

you give it to her you know you're like

you know you're just like trying to fill

it with love or something before before

giving to her as a gift just so that the

love will

like influence her her feelings towards

you or something

yeah that kind of thing I've done before

but I mean like the incantations and you

know you have to get the you know the

toe of frog and the eye of Newt and all

this stuff and all that stuff now so

we'll just move on to next question this

is from CEO vax and sipad zidana

and silvaction who's proudly teased a

lot as a kid

at school says I tried to generate some

Vega urgency

by watching cartel execution videos and

have still not recovered you said you

had a lot more to say about the morgue

can you please go into more detail about

the whole situation why you were there

graphic details of what you saw Etc yeah

I can do that but it would take probably

at least half an hour so I'll just have

to do a separate video hopefully I mean

maybe even today but within the next

seven days I'm pretty sure I cannot do a

video about my my trips to the morgue

when I was a monk living in Burma

but yeah like I say I mean in order to

do it justice it would take probably at

least half an hour and uh

I don't think we're gonna have time for

that

in this in this video so yeah I'll just

do a separate video of that sooner or

later preferably you know sooner

probably sooner than later

so we'll just move on to C of action and

super zidana's next question

you say nibana is like hegel's being a

non-being merging

however that sounds like bawatana

Nirvana seems like it is beyond being a

non-being

like how it is beyond existence and

non-existence

rejecting both rather than both being

true and in the traditional

interpretation of the twelve nidanas

which I know you don't think dates back

to the Buddha

being and non-being are both links

independent origination and only arise

due to a cause what do you think about

this conceptualization

well first I would say I'm unaware of

non-being being one of the links
independent co-rising in the 12 nidana
Theory yeah it's not there you've got
boa which literally could be translated
as existence although according to
Orthodox tradition it means it's it's
like your karma that you're taking into
your next life you know after you die
like the force of existence you know
it's like that's what karma is for the
force of samsaric existence but um let's
see here
I see nibana it's like hegel's being a
non-being merging yeah in a sense on
what I mean Hegel I mean I almost every
every episode of this q a i talk about
the beginning of hegel's logic where he

starts out his very first premise in his
whole dialectic it starts with pure
being and then the antithesis to Pure
being is pure non-being and he says that
they're just indistinguishable you know
it's not
being and non-being in a way I mean it's
you can't say which it is they're both
the same
but I mean I like that idea that
everything and nothing is is this
essentially the same like in some
quantum physics you know they're saying
the quantum field contains zero energy
and infinite energy simultaneously just
depends on how you do the math

you know empty space contains zero
energy and infinite energy which could
be uh backing up Hegel here in his
saying that absolute being an absolute
non-being are the are indistinguishable
but in my case I'm not saying that the
the like the synthesis that Hegel came
up with was like distinctions you have
to have like dualism in order to
separate being from non-being you know
you have to have like perception and
that's what starts the whole universe
going you know it's like in the Dow
teaching you know it's like
um from the Dow came the one from the
one came the two from the two came the
ten thousand things you know you start

off with this absolute it's like

nebulous you can't even really say if

it's it's there or not and then it's

it's when it starts like

getting divided up

you know through like contrasts that

creates the ten thousand things of the

samsaric world

so

um so in a way nibana I mean again you

can't say that it is you can't say that

it isn't you can say that it is and

isn't you can't say that neither is nor

is it just is off the scale completely

and people trying to understand this

intellectually this is this is like part

of the problem you've got these
intellectual people that are trying to
wrap their head around this they're
trying to understand what is completely
off the scale and it's completely off
the scale of of like conceptual
intellectual understanding it's just I
mean you can't touch it the intellect
cannot touch Nirvana you can sort of
give little labels to it that feel
satisfying but never is anyone ever
going to really understand what Nirvana
is or what God is through intellectual
thinking or reading Jehovah's Witness
literature or anything like that
and with regard to sounds like
and we bought now are both kinds of

Cravings means craving so bawatana is

craving for existence and we bought not

as craving for non-existence and nibana

is not any kind of craving I mean almost

by definition nibana has no craving

involved because craving is suffering

and nibana is Liberation from suffering

so

okay see any of the traditional

explanation and being a non-being of

both links independent origination

um being a non-being are are both links

they're like the same Link in a kind of

proto-dependent co-origination like uh

if you read the kalahawiwara suta

it's saying that existence and

non-existence are both derived from this

other I haven't read the suta in a while

it's derived from something else it's

like some mental state causes

existence and non-existence to to

manifest in the world

so I mean that's that's a whole

different ball of wax there

let's see

what do I think about this

conceptualization I mean when I think

about

conceptualizations in general is that

they're never going to understand nibana

you just have to get to this Cliff Edge

and just be okay with standing at a

cliff Edge and realizing you're never

going to wrap your head around it

intellectually

you just have to accept that plain fact

because you're never going to wrap your

head around intellectually you're never

going to get nibana

conceptually it's just not going to

happen

so I'll just move on to CEO of action

zidane's next question here

the Buddhist understanding of

Consciousness seems like the content

idea that there is no special or

ultimate conscious experience being any

more real than another in fact he was

probably influenced by Buddhism we never

directly touch reality and this lines up
with when the Buddha himself says when
he calls the six forms of Consciousness
as all and the Consciousness just being
sensory data in a way that only arises
due to a cause however if we say nibana
is the one experience where it does have
the property of being the ultimate truth
then doesn't that undermine the entire
Buddhist understanding of Consciousness
maybe that could be a reason why
tradition does not call nibbana a kind
of Consciousness conscious experience
because it logically doesn't make much
sense giving the Buddha's teaching of
what Consciousness is so hence why is it
closer to being the end of experience

rather than experience itself like

hearing or seeing

thoughts

well again I mean you're never going to

understand Nirvana conceptually it's

just not going to happen

I'm gonna drink some of this

so

we can start with abhidham and just

Orthodox taravada which says that

Consciousness and nibana are two

absolutely different things you know one

is not the form of the other they are

just there are four ultimate realities

Consciousness mental States

physical matter and nibbana so nibana is

completely different from from mind

which

Orthodox hero model has real difficulty

because they're trying to do the same

thing as a lot of my viewers are doing

they're trying to conceptualize nibana

they're trying to fit it into this

system you know it's on this nibbanos on

the same list as mind and matter and

mentals and and form you know it's just

on the same list you know all you got

all the songs sorry phenomena nibbana is

just on the very same list and it's it's

not on the same list it's not in the

ballpark you know it's off the scale

Terror even Orthodox caravada because

they were so into analysis and just

intellectual form formalizing everything

they just they had to explain it

otherwise they'd be accused of being

ignorant or something and

it just doesn't work that way

so we see nibana as the one experience

where it does have the property of being

the ultimate truth

then doesn't undermine the entire

Buddhist understanding of Consciousness

um is terravonna's attempts at

describing nibana I think are really

deficient

in coming anywhere close to being

successful because any kind of

explanation you just can't do it all you

can do like the Buddha himself did if
somebody wants to know what Nirvana is
like you can't explain it to them like
I've given this example before let's say
something hillbilly who's been eating
possum his whole life comes down and
meets with you and asks you what's
Vanilla tastes like I've never had
vanilla before I've never had vanilla
flavored anything I want to know what it
tastes like what does it taste like
explain it to me
and you could stand there to your blue
in the face trying to explain what
vanilla tastes like he's going to be
absolutely clueless he'll just have this
blank look on his face he might politely

cut a nod slowly every now and then what he doesn't know I mean you could be a Nobel prize-wing chemist who won the Nobel Prize in studying the molecular structure of vanilla and how it interacts with the taste buds on the tongue and how the nerve impulses go to the brain how it's processed there and everything you can have a Nobel Prize in that you wouldn't be able to explain what vanilla tastes like even that Nobel prize-winning physicist who has studied vanilla his entire life you know the molecular structure of it and everything he won't know what vanilla tastes like unless he's actually tastes vanilla so

what you have to do if you want to know
what vanilla tastes like you got to go
and get some vanilla and that's what you
should do someone asks you what vanilla
tastes like instead of wasting your time
trying again and again to explain what
vanilla tastes like you just go get some
vanilla and have them taste her just
tell them you know just go to go down to
the store and get some vanilla extract
get some vanilla ice cream Maybe
and that's what the Buddha was doing
he's not sitting there trying to explain
what Nirvana is like because it's just
it's an exercise in futility what he
does he just tells you how to get
enlightened and then you'll know for

yourself

and that's the only way to understand

nibana all this intellectual you know

well I mean isn't it a violation of this

or I mean infinite Consciousness I mean

I mean there have been attempts at

describing it in certain ways but any

explanation is going to fail

oh

see here

did I answer the question

hmm let's see here

the Buddhist understanding of

Consciousness seems like the content

idea that there is no special or

ultimate conscious experience being any

more real yeah Kant was not a Mystic see
that's part of the thing with Kant was
saying there's no way you can ever know
the thing in itself but there is one
thing in itself that we do have access
to and that is our own thing in itself
you know the one that we're we're like a
manifestation of
and that's Consciousness I mean pure
Consciousness would be the thing in
itself and it's just off the scale
to know Consciousness as Consciousness
would be to know a thing in itself and
that's what Mystics and advanced
meditators are doing these they're
trying to do it
and that's the only way you're ever

going to know what nibana is to
experience it or at least you can sort
of get close to it like you get into
advanced genic States for example and in
the text that's called like temporary
Liberation you know you're getting at
least some kind of idea just through
what it isn't you know it's just
everything gets so subtle that you know
all the things that you think maybe it
is that obviously don't apply anymore
so let's see here if we see nibonna as
the one experience where I mean you
can't say it's an experience you can't
say that it's not experience you can't
say that it is and is not an experience

and you can't say that neither is nor is

not an experience

exercise and futility

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here

this is also from CEO of action

and this one is a refreshingly easy one

you know you I do I do appreciate easy

questions sometimes

and so he says I just noticed that

birthday cake in the thumbnail how was

it you have really cool thumbnails in

general well with regard to the really

cool thumbnails I'll just uh thank my

sweetheart for that because she makes

most of them she makes about 80 of the

thumbnails nowadays and almost all of

the Q a thumbnails especially lately

she's done all of them so you have heard

a thing for that she's very artistic

very aesthetic

but with regard to the cake itself

uh the wife of a friend of mine who is

also a friend of mine

made it for my birthday and it was like

chocolate ganache I had never heard of

ganache until I came to South Carolina

and started watching chopped like the

cooking shows

and it was it was like chocolate ganache

very rich with like cream cheese in the

frosting like especially in the filling

part you know in between the layers it

was really good yeah it was it was it

was good

if you walk close to me while I was

eating it I probably would have like

snarled you away from my food

so okay I'll just move on next question

here this is from rui

and rui says hello Ponyo are there any

substantial roots in the sutos for the

two truths Doctrine or is it entirely a

later invention well I have been told

that the two truths you know

conventional truth and ultimate truth

um are not found like explicitly in the

students that that is like a

commentarial thing but it's pretty

obvious that the two truths are implied

in the Suites for example like in the

Attica Wagga

I can't remember exactly which suit on

it's one of the uh uh

one of the the suit is on tactical

deployment the wiihu house is saying

there is one truth not another or which

a wise man would argue with a wise man

so I mean you could adopt the idea that

you know ultimate truth is the only real

truth because conventional truth isn't

really true it's called conventional

truth you know samudi Sacha conventional

truth but it's not really true it's just

agreed upon as true because we all

because we're all human we all share the

same flavor of delusion

and so we we all agree and I mean that

sort of thing is mentioned in the text

it's it's called Uh

uh

where I mean like the the enlightened

long you know he's

he's got his mind in a state of

Enlightenment and he doesn't believe in

in people walking around or trees or

anything like that you know he doesn't

believe that they're real but still you

use the language that is being used by

the people around you and like the

Buddha himself I mean he taught that

there is no self but still he's talking

about himself and this person and that

person and so even though I mean your

mind is in the absolute you know your

mind knows Ultimate Reality it's still I

mean you have to function at the worldly

level which is a level of delusion

essentially

so I mean it is that that sort of thing

is mentioned and so it is implied in the

suit as even though it didn't really get

called to truths

um until you get to the commentarial

literature

the next one

next question is from Joe Doe

and I don't know if Joe Doe is joking

here

but Joe Doe says was Adolf Hitler

enlightened

well that all depends on who you talk to

for example if you talk to Mahayana

Buddhists some a lot of Mayana Buddhists

would say that we are all Buddhas you

know we're all enlightened we just don't

notice it

like uh Eckhart tolles

first big famous book The Power of Now

he starts off with a little story about

you know how everyone is essentially

enlightened you know we've all got you

know Ultimate Reality you know we're

soaking in it and you know there's

always an awareness of it it's just that

our mind is making so much noise that

it's just distracting and so we're not

paying attention

so I mean like a lot of Mahayana

Buddhists would say sure Adolf Hitler

was enlightened but um going with a more

Orthodox approach no he was not

enlightened I mean he'd get upset I mean

I'm sure you've seen the hit the rants

videos he'd ran about all kinds of

strange stuff

and uh I mean he he was kind of a ranty

kind of a person and ranting is not

enlightened

um he would like encourage like hate

um

I don't know how to explain this but he

sort of like as a politician he
prospered when things weren't going well
because he could like sort of get the
people riled up in like righteously
indignant about stuff and you know he
was kind of manipulating people he told
lies sometimes I'm sorry if there's any
people out there who don't think that
Hitler ever told lies but uh yeah like
the whole Munich agreement thing and
you know Sue date and land and all that
um yeah I mean he was not he was not
enlightened I mean I don't think he was
as much of a sociopath as someone like
Pol Pot or Joseph Stalin
I really do not think he was the evilest
person in the world

um

and there's a lot of a lot of propaganda

against him but

you know he was not a saint he was not a

sage in my opinion you know he was uh he

could be pretty devious at times

so let's see I'll just uh I mean he was

he was an interesting guy he was a

vegetarian you know didn't even drink

caffeinated beverages

like the Sierra sweet tea

he wasn't like 100 Pure Evil and I'm

sure he had at least some little spark

of wisdom

but uh

yeah he uh got on the wrong side of the

uh the proto-globalists I think

and also he just didn't know when to

quit

so I mean we don't need to get into uh

the pros and cons of Adolf Hitler so

I'll just move on to the next question

here

this is from

bodhisatta969 and bodhisatta 969 says

how do you think about the simile of the

saw

that's just not feasible for a normal

person or was that only addressed to

monks this Parable often arouses doubts

in me

um at first I didn't understand because

there's more than one simulator saw like

one simile of the saw is with regard to
anapana meditation like meditating on
your breath how the the carpenter he's
not following the saw back and forth as
he's cutting the wood he's just paying
attention right at the wood where the
saw is cutting
and that's good advice I mean there are
some
um or some meditation instructors who
are teaching you to follow the breath in
and feel it swirling around in your
lungs and your body and then follow it
back out again and um I do think that
just paying attention to the sensation
of the air touching your nostrils is

superior to that as a method you know
it's there's less of this
conceptualizing imagining like a lot of
them will be teaching and you know
follow the breath you know out to your
fingertips and the tips of your toes and
so forth which anyone who knows about
human anatomy knows that it you just
can't feel that it doesn't happen that
way
so actually bodhisatta 969 I'm pretty
sure it's talking about the simile of
the saw where the Buddha is saying that
even if some psychopath probably a king
or a minion of the king is like hacking
off your your arms and legs you know
just like

amputating your appendages one by one
you should you shouldn't have even the
slightest iota of ill will towards this
person you know you should just accept
it with as much meta and Equanimity as
you can manage
and yeah that's with regard to monks
mostly I mean you got a saintly lay
person who can manage that that's fine
but
um I mean the Buddha was mainly teaching
monks you know I mean terrible Buddhism
just Buddhism originally was for
renunciants the lay people were sort of
like the the fans you know they had
their favorite team of Buddhism but the

pro athletes or the monks you know

that's almost all of the sutas were

directed towards monks

so the Buddha himself was a monk

so

um yeah the simile of the saw it's it's

really nice it's there aren't very many

people who could do it you pretty much

have to be like a perfected Saint in

order not to have any ill will towards

people that were cutting off your hands

and feet and arms and legs and nose and

lips and ears and all that although in a

previous life there is a Jonica story

I'm pretty sure about uh kantiwadi I

think it was his name it was the Buddha

in a previous life where the the parami

he was perfecting in that life was Kandi

or like acceptance

and uh yeah some the the king of Kalinga

got got mad at him and uh had his like

his ears and his nose and his arms and

legs all his hands and feet all cut off

and he never the the Conti Wadi you know

the Buddha the bodhisatta you know in

previous existence never had the

slightest iota of of hatred or anger or

or Terror or any of that he just stayed

in this state of acceptance

and uh

attain some high heaven state after he

died he wasn't enlightened yet so he

didn't uh

he didn't stop getting reincarnated so

to speak

so yeah it's like an ideal an ideal that

you can try to live up to but most

people couldn't do it

sort of like in the suit as you know

says a monk should have no anger a monk

should have no lust yeah I mean that's

it sounds really good and I mean if you

can manage it it's fine but

most monks even most of the very best

monks can't manage it

but still I mean it's true it's that's

the ideal that's the best way to be

if you can manage it

so I'll just move on to bodhisatta 969's

next question

which is

as a Buddhist who wants to keep the five

Silas I really want to do it now are you

allowed to drink non-alcoholic beer even

though some non-alcoholic beer has 0.5

percent alcohol I hope the answer is yes

um when I was a monk I had the

opportunity to drink near beer or

whatever it's called now non-alcoholic

beer and I kind of chickened out you

know I was pretty much of a stickler in

my earlier few decades as a monk and uh

yeah I wouldn't do it just because of

the 0.5 percent but I think it's a

judgment call I mean if you've got a

teacher you could ask him and use kind

of like if you're taking the precepts

from a monk then you know in order not

to be on any false pretenses or anything

you could ask him

um about that one but really if it's not

having any noticeable effect

then

yeah I mean that could just be just

clinging to morality and observances at

that point

where you drink a non-alcoholic beer and

it has no effect I mean you don't get

even the slightest buzz from it then

yeah I mean it's sort of like

um there's a kind of a famous story in

the rules of monastic discipline about

there was Ray without the doubter it was

this monk he was a I don't know if he
was one of the the great Disciples of
the Buddha but he's in he's in Winnie a
few times Ray would have the doubter and
he had lots of doubts about about the
rules of monasticness one and so he sees
some people making sugar one time and
they were mixing a little bit of flour
into the sugar so that it would compact
into these balls
and then he's thinking oh it's got It's
got flour in it we can't eat that in the
afternoon because sugar is allowable for
monks to eat in the afternoon if they're
sick but wheat flour is not and because
there's a small amount of wheat flour in

the sugar I mean he was too scrupulous

to eat the sugar anymore so then it came

to the attention of the Buddha and the

Buddha says if there's so little of it

that I mean it's you don't even consider

it you know it's just called sugar

that's good enough so these Trace

Amounts of non-allowable substances

um if they're really non-noticeable in

the finished product then it could be

seen as okay

but I'm not sure I mean if you take

precepts from a monk you know you go to

him and take the five precepts you

should take them in accordance with his

definitions and online

but I mean you could you could argue

either way I think on that one

so the next question is from vegan

Samurai and I I should say here that

vegan Samurai has asked a total of 12

questions which uh

I'll let it slide this time I don't want

people to think that I'm weak that I

refuse to instill discipline in in my

viewers

but uh vegan Samurai is relatively new

to this channel so I'll just politely

request in the future

I'm trying to keep it to no more than

six questions per episode

um but fortunately they're mostly short

questions and there's not a like a

really large amount of questions in this

this episode so I think I'll let it

slide and try to answer all 12

so let's go let's do this even if we do

it wrong

vegan Samurai says is there any

possibility that I can use the poly

Canon to argue against interracial

marriages or at least marriages between

black and white people or what about

inter-religious marriages

well I don't think uh the poly Cannon

really says much about marriage at all

because it was originally intended for

monks who don't get married in fact it's

a serious offense for a terravonna

Buddhist monk even to participate in a

wedding

that he's he's he's going to do Penance

for six days and six nights it's it's a

serious offense

it's one notch below excommunication

yeah because like in Burma a wedding

ceremony is not performed at a temple by

a by a priest or a monk you just go to

the Village headman and sign some papers

and then you then after it's a done deal

then you can go to the the Monk and

he'll bless you and you know you'll

you'll get Merit by offering food

sometimes it's really cute the new the

newlyweds you know they'll be holding

hands and offering you know both at the

same time you know like both of them are
holding on to the same thing to offer to
the Monk and asking for his blessings
and so forth that's nice but um
really the Indian like early Indian
Buddhism it really did not say much
about marriages and also race is just
not much of an issue there was the
acknowledgment that the the so-called
Aryans you know the the indo-aureans you
know sort of the more European uh more
fairer-skinned people that lived in
Northern India at the time were of a
tended to be of a higher social social
class than the dark-skinned people who
tended to be of like the lower castes
you know especially shudras

um so that's acknowledged that it was

like that in Ancient India but really

the the Buddha was sort of a radical

non-racist he didn't believe in even

class distinctions you know he made a

lot of fun of the caste system

and you know it's just like if you get

along you know it's a good marriage

because you're compatible and everything

I'm sure he wouldn't care

so I guess uh you can't really use the

politkin to argue against interracial

marriages

um

or inter-religious marriages I mean it

can cause problems especially if you're

very devout you know you marry a
Catholic woman I met a few Burmese guys
who married like like this one guy he
married a Catholic Filipino woman and uh
I I really didn't know about his his
private life so I don't know if they
were happily married or what but
um probably it would help to have a
woman who at least can is accepting who
doesn't think you're going to burn in
hell because you belong to the wrong
religion or something but that's not
really mentioned much in the sutras that
I'm aware of it just kind of makes sense
so I think I'll just move on to vegan
Samurai's next question
are monks allowed to wear sandals or

slippers when they are donated well

there's lots of rules about sandals

and it was for many years according to

tradition according to the text for many

years monks had to go barefoot

and then there was this one monk I think

it might have been sonakurikana

who he was born he was so rich and

pampered that he had like Downy fur on

the soles of his feet because he never

had to walk anywhere the Assumption

being that everyone else walks around a

lot so we rub the the Downy fur off of

the bottoms of our feet

um and he was he was like getting like

really like his feet were just bloody

from walking around Barefoot so the

Buddha allowed him to wear sandals and

then because he allowed this one monk to

wear sandals it became allowable for all

monks to wear sandals but I mean they

have to be

like

pretty I'm pretty if I remember

correctly they have to be one layer of

of leather they have to be flip-flops or

sandals that do not cover the toes or

the heels

and there's a whole bunch of forbidden

colors like black or brown is allowable

um I know black even pure black is not

reliable so

um I used to when I was a monk for a

while I was wearing these flip-flops
made out of car tires that were all
black and I would just smear a little
bit of white paint on them just so they
wouldn't be all black because all black
was forbidden but Brown just regular
leather color is okay and they shouldn't
be fancy but um and also there are rules
I mean this is a little known fact I
think even in even in a Buddhist country
like Burma but it is forbidden for among
to wear sandals in public unless he is
sick and uh I assume that if it's so hot
that the tarmac or you know the the
asphalt is just blistering hot that
would qualify as a legitimate reason but

for the most part

um amongst aren't even allowed to wear

sandals in public like if you're in the

forest or if you're inside the monastery

it's allowable

and there's I mean if you want to study

up I mean there's a lot of rules on what

is allowable and is not allowable for

sandals but just plain like thin leather

flip-flops are allowable

or just any you should I mean you'd have

to look up the list of forbidden colors

but mostly it's like they have to be all

the same color so you can just sort of

put a splotch of discoloration on it

which the monk may not like because you

may not be really strict about all these

Picayune little rules about flip-flops
so I guess I should just move on to this
question here
because it takes me a hell of a lot
longer to answer a question than it does
take to ask one usually
especially because I'm digressing all
the time so vegan Samurai's next
question how should a Buddhist Society
defend itself against attackers I asked
because the Buddha said that soldiers
will go to hell well I kind of already
answered this one in that you know
you're never gonna have a country where
everybody is a saint you know there's
always going to be people willing to

fight

it's like human nature and

if a country ever comes along where

nobody's willing to fight that country

isn't going to last very long anyway

regardless of what feminized globalists

are shooting for I mean it's just moral

decadence really which is kind of ironic

because I mean if if everyone were

saintly or sagely and just refused to

harm other living beings just out of

moral backbone let's say I mean they

might just the whole country might just

have such good karma like you know the

the mauryan empire under Ashoka that

nobody wants to invade they're just

doing all of the saliness of these

people but um

uh I mean if you got people that are

just so

I mean essentially weak

that you know they just like

they can't bring themselves to be icky

then yeah I mean it's they're they're

they lack moral backbone at that point I

mean there's a lot of really violent

people that Macklemore back that black

moral backbone too

but uh I mean if someone is just so I

mean it's sort of like the uh the

original novel The Planet of the Apes

before all the movies came out and it

was it was a philosophical novel about

how the Apes took over and what happened
was humans became so effect so decadent
that they were not only unwilling but
just incapable of even striking out in
self-defense and so it started in Africa
with with uh like troops of of Apes just
sort of invading Villages and just
taking whatever they wanted because the
people were so like degenerate in their
like bravery or aggressive capacity that
they just let it happen and would they
couldn't fight back
so I mean there's always going to be
somebody
um in the human race who's willing to
fight and when he gets to the point
where nobody can is even capable of it

then uh probably were going to be

replaced

so just rely on the tragic Heroes who

are willing to sacrifice their own

spiritual wear welfare for the sake of

others or I mean somebody could also

become a tragic hero like I was saying

earlier

but I mean it is definitely a

self-sacrifice

so let's see next question from vegan

Samurai

was there a Buddhist teacher from the

last century who inspired you a lot and

that's kind of an interesting question

because most of the really inspiring

teachers have been more or less Hindu in

my life like I can't think of a really

inspiring Buddhist teacher from the last

century

um

you know I I can appreciate ajan cha you

know I read some of his books

um my my own teacher uh pompulu

chelseindoyo Seattle I mean he because I

lived close to him I could see his

foibles and shortcomings

and but I mean I respected him but

that's not the same as inspiring me a

lot there was

um

not the famous ujorika and but uh who

jodika of the Tom Pulu tradition he

inspired me to some degree there was one
Texan monk who was so ascetic and so
strict that he was like a Buddhist Rambo
that
um he wasn't really a Buddhist teacher
though he was just a Herman he just
avoided everybody including meme some of
the time although I could uh crash his
his Solitude and he wouldn't get too
upset
so I go hang out with them sometimes so
he was sort of like a role model for me
when I was a junior monk but I don't he
couldn't really call him a Buddhist
teacher other than teaching for an
example just unwittingly

um but aside from that I mean

yeah I have not been very fortunate with

regard to finding teachers that really

inspire me

and uh like I say I was inspired by name

curly Bama whose picture is back there

Ron Doss who is neem curly Baba's uh

disciple

I mean he wasn't really my type I prefer

the rascality of neem curly Baba to

um just the the pure pristine

saintliness of Ramana maharshi but

um

yeah it's weird it's kind of ironic

isn't it that I really did not know of a

really inspiring Buddhist teacher the

whole time that I was a monk the whole

time that I've been a Buddhist really

I kind of like yoga and senzaki's

translations of Zen Koons but he's he's

kind of a crappy translator he I mean he

doesn't even try to be literal you know

to say exactly what is in the original

Japanese or Chinese but

um he gets it and then he would be able

to translate it in such a way that you

could sort of get the spirit of the koan

which is more important than the just

the literal words anyway

Maybe

I think I'll just move on to the next

question here that's kind of a weird one

though because you know it's kind of

weird to think that as a Buddhist I've
been a Buddhist for most of my life now
and uh there was no real Buddhist
teacher who really inspired me
other than ancient ones
and the Buddha himself for example
so I'll just move on a nice question
here also from vegan Samurai
can a monk give his assistance phone
number to lay people when he receives
money from them so that the laypeople
can give the money to the assistant and
discuss with them how to help the monk
with the money well it's kind of I think
maybe it was just an error in grammar
here when he says when he receives money
from them because a monk is not allowed

to receive money period

um except under very very limited

circumstances

and then it would be somebody else's

money that he's just putting in a safe

place until they come back for it if

they like drop a purse or something at

the monastery

so

um you know technically the money rules

for monks are so strict that almost

nobody even the relatively strict ones

even the exemplary monks that people

talk about even they don't follow the

rules correctly because technically

speaking it is not allowable even to

consent to somebody else keeping money

for you if you're a monk

so it says that if somebody wants to

offer you money I mean you're not

allowed to say okay yeah I'll take that

you can't you can't hold out your hand

you can't you can't really you're not

supposed to respond really and then

they'll say well you

uh like I'll just sit it down here on

the table

you know and then they just walk off and

leave that money there for your behalf

then I mean if you consent to that I

mean if you kind of like the idea of

them leaving the money you have to tell

them don't do it not no don't do it you

have to like speak out against it but if

you don't like the idea

then you can just remain silent and it's

not an offense

so I mean there is a long complicated

rule in the padimoka rules about

somebody wanting to offer money to a

monk for getting some new robes let's

say the monk needs new robes and

somebody says here I'll give you some

money for some new rubs and then the

monk is required to say

monks don't accept money they do accept

robes at the right time you know if it's

Rogue giving time or whatever then the

late person will say well do you have a

like do you have an attendant then the

monk is allowed to say who the attendant

is

but for the sake of receiving money the

rules are so strict that you you just

cannot consent

to somebody keeping money for him

so it's pretty tricky

um I mean if somebody let's say

let's say it's like this you're a monk

somebody comes up to you and says I'd

like to donate this money for your

behalf or for anything that you need

venerable sir then the monk says I don't

accept money that's what he's supposed

to say then then the light person if

they you know if they know about the

rules of monastic discipline will will
say do you have an attendant
and then you you can tell them who the
attendant is and then they'll like go
and give the money to the attendant I
mean that much is allowable
um especially if you're kind of you you
have like an aversion for money and
don't really feel good about about
people giving I mean really the only way
not to break rules with regard to money
it I mean almost the only way I'm sure
there's something who can do it but you
gotta just go out and live in the sticks
where everybody is so poor that they
can't even afford to offer you money and

I did that for for a while in Vermont

just go way out in some remote area

where

um yeah people didn't even have money to

offer

so

yeah it's

I mean you might want to read like ajan

to nisaro's book on the Buddhist

monastic code

and then I mean he he does have some

relatively lame loopholes in that book I

mean there's there's all these loopholes

there's so many things that are really

inconvenient for a monk and so there's

loopholes or for avoiding it in fact

there's a Burmese proverb that says we

need that jet dot which means if you're skillful at winning a you can kill a chicken because if you're skillful the rules of an asking discipline you know all the the loopholes and the ways around the rules so that you can do whatever whatever you want

but um

yeah I mean if you really want to help a monk just find out who his attendant is and then just go to the attendant and give him the money and say this is for venerable so and so and if he needs anything you know you should give it to him

and the monk can say that if money was

given to an attendant and the Tenant
just spent it you know on his own stuff
he went to see a movie took a girl out
to it on a date or something then it's
the Monk's duty to go to inform the
layperson that the the attendant just
blew the money and the monk didn't get
anything that he want that he needed
that kind of a thing but it's very
tricky it's like this Razor's Edge I've
read at least three different
attempts at explaining the Money Rules
by three different monks Western monks
and essentially what they're what
they're explaining is how close can you
get to handling money without actually
breaking the rule

so it's it's very subtle and complicated

it's like a legal issue

but uh kind of Monk give why don't I

just answer the question here can a monk

give his assistance phone number to lay

people when he receives money from them

well he can't receive money from them so

the lay people can give the money to the

assistant and discuss them how to help

them out with the money if if you do it

without telling them to give them if you

say give the money to my attendant then

no it's the same as handling it yourself

you're not allowed to tell people what

to do with money but if they ask you who

your attendant is then you can tell them

who your tenant is even if you have your suspicions they're going to be giving him money for your behalf or some such but uh you shouldn't be too happy about it

so I'll just move on to vegan Samurai's next question here did the Buddha ever talk about group meditation and its benefits I think there's mention in the suit is of monks all sitting together meditating but I do not recall any sutas where he's specifically talking about the benefits of of meditating in a group as a general rule the Buddha was advising monks to just go out alone into a forest sit under a tree and meditate it was largely a solitary thing even

though in the suit as the Buddha is

accompanied by a retinue of 500 monks

but when it comes to meditating time

they wouldn't all meditate together

unless maybe the monks were all sitting

waiting for the Buddha to start

delivering a discourse and they might

all be sitting there meditating

um just to pass the time you know it's

their job you know before he starts

talking some of them might continue

meditating while he was talking

um

yeah but I'm unaware of any suta

specifically describing the benefits of

meditating in a group as a general rule

um Buddhists were encouraged to find a
place where they are alone and meditate
that way although group meditation does
have its benefits I mean I can vouch for
that I've meditated in like retreat
settings before and uh just having the
the moral support of everyone around you
you know they're all doing it too and it
makes you less likely to just get tired
and get up and walk away especially if
you're the only one who gets tired and
gets up and walks away you know is kind
of you know shames your your family and
your ancestors rolling in grave and that
kind of thing
or something
so you know it can just sort of bruise

your your masculine Pride or whatever

so let's see

so I'll just move on to uh vegan

Samurai's next question here do you

think it would have been easy for you to

build a cult in Myanmar since the

villagers there already thought you were

special as a foreigner they thought they

weren't they weren't so

much of the opinion that are special

just because it was a foreigner they

they thought I was special mainly

because I was practicing strictly

whereas most Burmese monks don't like

most Burmese monks handle money they

might even go around asking for money

most Burmese monks you know they smoke

cigars and drink tea in the afternoon

and just hang around listening to the

radio and

um

you know I remember one time I was

living in a cave

in a forest it was it was a natural cave

just in this big forest and I had the

supporter from the village the nearby

Village this very very nice hillbilly

man who came to me and he was just in

this state of just wonders like I

couldn't live like you you don't drink

tea you don't smoke cigars

and it was like he was more impressed by

me not drinking tea or smoking cigars

then then by the fact that I was living

alone in that cave in a forest thousands

of miles away from from my home and

family

I do drink tea nowadays though

so

um but let's see that's not even the

question here do you think it would have

been easy for you to build a cult in

Myanmar well the villagers thought I was

special

and sometimes I would sort of jokingly

compare myself to Colonel Kurtz and

Apocalypse Now except without the heads

on polls you know so it kind of already

was a cult you know there'd be women

like spreading their scarves down on the
ground for me to walk on and so forth
um wasn't as Extreme as Tom poulosio the
founder of my tradition where young
women would actually get on their Knees
line up his path and to spread their
long hair out on the ground for him to
walk on
yeah they didn't get that extreme with
me but the thing is I couldn't really
start a cult in Myanmar even if I wanted
to which I didn't
but the thing is the Burmese they are so
Orthodox in their Buddhism
that I would have to be Orthodox in my
Buddhism or they think I was just an
ignorant Foreigner you know to the

extent that I would deviate

from what the sutas and the commentaries

say you know so far as I deviate from

abhidham and the wisudi Maga then

I just would be considered ignorant

misguided perhaps you know they wouldn't

want to think too badly of me but the

guy he's just a foreigner and foreigners

can't really understand Dharma correctly

so it would have been easier for me to

start a cult in California where anybody

can start a cult practically

um

but I'm just not the cult leader type to

be a cult leader you have to be like a

Salesman like a huckster you have to you

have to be good at hype you know like

these televangelists who can't just say

the name Jesus in a regular tone of

voice it's got to come out like Jesus

and I just can't talk that way I can't

really

you know I don't want to deceive anybody

you know so I'd have to be essentially

like who I am right now in these q and

A's maybe this is the code you know I'm

gradually developing a following here

and and sooner or later you're going to

learn about the riddle of Steel and I

might just uh

you know have one or two of you walk off

Ledges just to show that see I

no that's I'm just joking just joking no

worries

just an old uh reference to Conan the

Barbarian there

and I can't turn into a giant snake

either so that's that makes it more

difficult to start a cult

but yeah it would be way easier to start

a cult in America like especially like

California then then in Myanmar

so we'll just move on to vegan Samurai's

next question

and I said that these are short

questions so I could answer all 12 of

them easily and then here I am just like

logo Ria

okay were you a materialist in your

early life and if yes what made you

believe in the Supernatural no I've

um maybe when you're a kid you know

you're so naive that you're like a naive

realist you know you just assume that

everything is is the way it looks

um maybe that could be called the

materials you know sort of like a dog or

a chicken you know they just assume that

what they see is real

um and later I mean I was really into

science but still just intuitively from

a very young age from from when I was a

boy

um I just could not believe that this is

Ultimate Reality you know like as a

teenager I start reading uh Eastern

philosophy and it's saying you know it's
all an illusion and I'd be going yeah
except I really didn't even understand
why I just felt true to me and I'm more
uh I got like more of a surreal kind of
a mind you know it's like you know I
mean I'm in a dream right now that's the
way it's always kind of felt to me
sometimes even now like I was doing some
fairly sketchy stuff on a forklift a few
days ago like picking up like really
heavy beams and like maneuvering them
around without smashing or destroying
anything and it really is it struck me
that you know the more dangerous it was
is the more of a kind of a dream state

where it was just in this like dream

like flow where I was doing it

and uh yeah so I don't know maybe I was

a materialist when I was real young but

my father certainly was not a

materialist you know he was you know

he's telling me all these stories about

past lives and Witchcraft and astral

traveling and all this kind of stuff you

know from the time that I was really

small

that um yeah I've never been really a

hardcore materialist

so I'll just move on to vegan Samurai's

next question can you make a video with

the title pure land Buddhism exposed

well um a few months ago I did write a

blog post about pure land Buddhism and I
never really thought about it much I
mean I never had any interest in pure
land Buddhism it just seemed clearly not
what the Buddha really taught
um but then on the Discord server there
are at least two people
probably more than two people who do
take it seriously who think it's like a
legit kind of Buddhism and so I've sort
of been exposed to it mainly through
that because I really never sought out
pure land Buddhism or you know read any
pure land books or
um I accidentally went to a pure land
our Niche red Monastery ones that was a

long time ago before I was a mom

so I mean if you want to know my honest

opinion about pure land Buddhism

probably your best bet would be to check

the blog and go back a few months I

guess I I should look this stuff up

um but you know go back a few months and

as pure land is in the title

but uh I didn't really don't want to

gratuitously offend the pure land

Buddhists I mean if they're going to try

and push pure land as legit to me then

yeah they might get some pushback but I

mean they want to go off and do their

thing you know they can be pure land

Buddhists or or gay or or whatever you

know satanists or or whatever and uh I'm

not going to be trying to evangelize
them on convert them or anything
so I'll just uh move on to vegan
Samurai's next question how oh wait no
how isn't even in the question here does
a Buddhist still have to respect his
parents to a high degree even if they
are horrible people well
I mean if there's just nothing
respectable about them I mean you pretty
much have to delude them delude yourself
to like really have respect for them but
nevertheless I mean you do have a duty
to your parents regardless you have
filial duty Buddhism teaches that it
says that even if I mean your parents

even if you carried them around on your back for the rest of their lives you still wouldn't repay the debt for them you know creating you as you are you know it's like it's because of them that you're here who you are and you might have problems that you consider to be they're doing or largely they're doing but uh still I mean you're not that bad of a person if you're sincerely seeking out Dharma and trying to practice Buddhism and so forth so they must have done something right

um so you have a duty you know not to denigrate them you know not to despise them even if you can see clearly enough that you know your father is a crackhead

and your mother's a prostitute that I

mean still they're kind of doing the

best they can on the circumstances like

my mother

she was spiritually a child

um bless her heart you know I don't want

to bad mouth my own mama

but I mean she just didn't get it I mean

she was just a complete Normie you know

kind of like Peg Bundy on Married with

Children if you know who that was

and she did the best that she knew how I

mean she didn't know

I mean she and I were like on different

planets about the time that I reached

about the age of 13.

well she did she I mean she was she did

she did a conscientious job of being a

good mother and you know she wasn't a

bad mama

but uh you know when you get to you know

the crackhead and The Prostitute you

know at the very least you should try to

help them you know and just you know

still love them even if it's sort of

from a distance you know sending Mata to

them to try and like uplift them so that

they can be better people that kind of a

thing

so I mean you have a duty to sort of

look after your parents if you can

and uh you know try to help them if you

can

and if they're just so horrible that you
just can't be around them without you
know being attacked or or whatever then
uh
and just send the meta from a distance
and just hope hope they uh straighten
themselves out a little bit maybe see a
little glimmer of Truth before they die
so I'll just move on to vegan Samurai's
next question here do you believe it's
reasonable to mediate the most common
Buddhist typo there is is saying mediate
instead of meditate do you believe it's
reasonable to meditate while hearing
Monks chanting a home yeah that'd be
fine I mean I don't know Buddhist monks

who just chant ohm over and over again
maybe some hayana monks do you might be
more likely to find vedantist Monks
chanting home
but whoever it is I mean om is not a bad
Mantra I do owe myself sometimes
and just meditating on hearing like for
example you know it's like one of the
main meditation techniques of Tom
Feliciano who's the founder of my
tradition was just hearing mindfulness
of hearing and I was told that the
reason why he settled on hearing as one
of his main meditation techniques was he
lives in a forest and there's crickets
all night and so he would just sit there
and just the sound of the Crickets would

just be like permeating I mean just he'd

just be aware of hearing not identifying

it as crickets but just just the the

sound the the raw data of the sound

so to speak

so I'll just uh

move on to the vegan samurais and the

last question

uh how to deal with loneliness according

to you well in Buddhism being alone is

preferable you know especially if you're

a renunciant

um so with regard to loneliness I've I

mean I've been lonely for friends I've

been lonely for love in my life

um but

I think the best way to deal with it is
like what I was saying earlier the
Panacea in in Buddhism if you have any
kind of mental state that is causing you
unease
be mindful of it just observe it
and then that of course creates a
Detachment from in this case loneliness
it's no longer I am lonely it's just you
know you are loneliness is arising
you know lonely feelings lonely mental
states are arising and then you You
observe those and then it removes much
of its power and it stops reinforcing
your karma because karma is just a kind
of a momentum
and if you feel lonely a lot you've got

this loneliness Karma that it's you know
it's kind of worn a Groove into your
brain or something so to speak and it
just happens again and again and the
more you kind of wallow in it the more
you reinforce it whereas the more you
just observe it with mindfulness and
don't identify with it just you're
depriving of increased momentum and it
gradually just will fade out or at least
become much more attenuated much much
weaker
so I mean I can't really I'm not the
sort of person that really feels lonely
a lot I mean I've been kind of a loner
my whole life and preferred it that way

mostly

um but

let's see how to deal with loneliness

yeah I mean that would be the standard

Buddhist way of doing it or I mean

another thing you could do is find a

friend or

or something like that just you know

join a group and uh at least you'll be

able to interact with people that way

so I think I'll just move on the next

question this is from hey it's TIG and

heyx Tig is a wise guy and uh this

question is is not really that wise

guyish of a question but it's what is

your favorite beverage and honestly I

don't think I have a favorite beverage

you know it's like different times

you're in a different mood you just eat

a piece of chocolate cake for example

and or if I do I want milk you know

there's some things that just go good

with milk

um like after a hot day I come home from

work and it's all just hot and I'm all

damp and sweaty and uh I mean

cold sweet tea is hard to beat

really it goes down really good like on

a hot day and you're all hot sweaty

but uh I mean in Burma I think my

favorite beverage was Red Bull

which is a different formula it looks

different it tastes different it's just

different like Asian Red Bull is
different from American Red Bull and
back when I first started drinking it
like in the early 90s I think it might
have been illegal in the west I heard
all kinds of horror stories about how
it's got nicotine in it and like
steroids and some kind of
amphetamine-like substance and I mean it
was it was it was like a pharmaceutical
cocktail or something
but I really liked it and if I drank
more than about three if I drink like
three cans or more I could just stay up
all night and meditate so that was about
the closest to drug use that I indulged
in for most of the time when I was a

monk was a Red Bull drinking

um and it's it's good for keeping you

from not being all sleepy and you know

it can't enhance your meditation to some

degree but in the in the west I really

don't have a favorite beverage as far as

I know if if I had to like choose like

you're only allowed to one drink one

thing for the rest of your life

that would be tough I mean I like coffee

you know with milk in it no sugar but I

mean you can't just drink only coffee I

maybe maybe a good cup of coffee might

be my favorite beverage but if I had to

just like settle on I could only drink

one thing for the rest of my life it

might be some sort of like watered-down cranberry juice well it's maybe just a little bit of sugar in it to sweeten it up so it's not as stringent something like that

so I think I'm just going to move on to this question here this is from Raphael 46.

in Rafael 46 says how do pure land Buddhists react when you confront them with the fact that their sutras were created much later

well I already mentioned that there are at least two pure land Buddhists or at least two people who take pure land Buddhism seriously on on my Discord server and there's only one who really

pushes back you know he just insists the
Buddha really taught pure land Buddhism
and and he was he's sort of you know he
wants to believe that pure land Buddhism
was real is really genuine which is
understandable I mean if you're a pure
land Buddhist you want to believe that
pure land Buddhism is genuine Buddhism
that you know go to My Buddha himself
would have endorsed it
and you point out that there's
yeah it's not likely I mean he wants to
believe like the the traditional
Mahayana Buddhist assumption that the
Buddha taught Mahayana but it was Kept
Secret for hundreds of years and then

resurfaced you know hundreds of years

later uh I think the official uh

explanation is that uh in the Buddhist

time you know despite mahakazapan

getting the twirling flower Sutra or

discourse

um I mean if you don't understand what

I'm talking about that's fine but I mean

that was like the first transmission of

Mahayana one time the Buddha

um instead of speaking he just sat in

front of everybody and just twirled the

flower between his fingers saying

nothing and Maha Kosovo smiled because

mahakosava got it it was like a it was

like a Mahayana Buddhist

Spirit Trend like a Dharma transmission

or something and he would he became the
first patriarch concept or casiapa
but um pure land Buddhists they want to
believe that you know in the Buddhist
time the Buddha could see that people
just weren't Advanced enough to become
bodhisattvas or to understand
Mahayana and so it was like the Mahayana
text anachronistically were put in a
undersea Palace guarded by dragons
and that when
um
nagarjuna came along then they realized
that people were wise enough to
understand Mahayana and so the dragons
the nagas the Cobra dragons came out of

the sea with these projects texts

and presented them to nangarjuna

um needless to say I mean it's it's not

a very plausible story to a non-mahayana

Buddhist even most Mayana Buddhists like

the scholars admit that Mahayana just

didn't exist uh in the Buddhist time

that it developed hundreds of years

later

but I mean there's most of the people

who like pure land Buddhism on the

Discord server you know they kind of

consider the Discord server to be like

my gig

so to speak and you know they don't push

back you know they just appreciate what

I can say about like early Buddhism you

know it sort of expands their knowledge
of what early Buddhism was like they can
appreciate that there was only one
person
um who he he would push back sometimes
and so we'd sort of you'd be trying to
explain how Mahayana Buddhism has been
legit and taught by the historical
Buddha even though he doesn't have much
use for the historical mood he prefers
like amitaba but um you know he's trying
to
rationalize pure land Buddhism being
like legit Dharma even though certain
aspects of it are radically like at odds
with many of the earliest teachings of

Buddhism and

I don't know it kind of got a little

heated at times

and uh

but uh I mean he's still a member of the

group he doesn't he doesn't uh

like say an awful lot lately but he's

still in the group so I mean I didn't

kick him out or anything

so I mean really the way they react is

either they don't care they just like it

you know it just sort of resonates with

them and so they just like it and still

pray to amitaba or whatever

or else uh you know they just sort of

get indignant if I'm trying to suggest

that pure land Buddhism is not real

Buddhism or Genuine it doesn't genuinely
represent what Buddhism was like when
Goda mobuda was alive
which is understandable I mean any yeah
you're bad mouthing someone's religion
you know you think it could be a
Christian or anything you know
especially if it's a faith-based belief
which pure land Buddhism clearly is it
seems to me and Christianity most
Christianity also is just very phase
based you have to believe the story that
to Outsiders it doesn't seem like a very
plausible kind of a story
but I mean if you say that it's not true
then of course they're going to start

getting uncomfortable and maybe if some
of them will start getting a little hot
under the collar and start pushing back
and say that you're you're not right
you know I mean it's just the way it is
so I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from the
Spanish Inquisition
so possibly just a representative of the
Inquisition you know like the grand
Inquisitor Mill it's probably too much
to ask that the grand Inquisitor himself
would ask this question
but the Spanish Inquisition says our
right speech for monks and right speech
for lay people the same
and for the most part they're the same

you know don't tell lies

um

don't bad-mouth people behind their back

because you know you want people to

dislike them you know don't bad mouth

people to their face you know using

abusive speech and you know don't waste

time with just meaningless chatter

so that's I mean that's essentially what

right speech is although for monks

there's additional

um because of the rules of monastic

discipline there's additional

limitations on white speech like a monk

who

let's say he's he's attained psychic

powers he's not allowed to tell

laypeople that he's attained psychic

powers even if it's true

if it's false and he lies about it he's

excommunicated immediately but even if

it's true it's a pachidia offense which

is an offense requiring commission uh

confession

uh an offensive intermediate severity

and so

um

I mean they're just more limitations

amongst not allowed to speak in private

with a woman especially if they're both

sitting down

um that sort of thing

um

probably a monk is uh

like

he's the amount of jokes he's allowed to

tell are more limited than a lay person

but uh ultimately I mean just the basic

idea of right speech is the same for

anybody for monks or lay people but just

because of the winning rules there are

certain rules of monastic discipline

that further restrict what a monk is

allowed to say or is not allowed to say

under certain circumstances

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

question here this is from ludovis

Balaam

and ludibus balam says if you had to

guess what would you imagine your

current Karma would lead you to as far

as rebirth goes feel free not to answer

this question because it's a bit

personal well I can't really say what my

rebirth would be assuming that there is

such a phenomenon as rebirth

which is a convenient hypothesis for

Buddhists

but I would assume that I would continue

with the momentum I've got now

so probably not so different from from

this I mean

um I'd be open-minded to getting into a

heaven Realm

you know maybe I'm making a lot of Merit

by the things that I have done

and maybe maybe I get to go to heaven or

if I get a human birth it probably

wouldn't you know it wouldn't be so much

different from the birth I've got now

um I'm pretty confident I wouldn't be

reborn in hell

although some people might think

differently about that doubt that I'd be

reborn as an animal or a Hungry Ghost or

an Asura

so

yeah I mean chances are that each of us

in our rebirth is going to be just

continuing on this trajectory we're on

now so if my trajectory is

um in a heavenwards direction and it's

hard to say for sure and it also is

going to depend a lot on you know my

last few moments before I die

that that's going to have an effect

so I mean you can

you can you can live a very pure life

and then like right at the moment of

death you're just like cursing and you

know maybe you're you know you got

really horrible mental States and that's

gonna like mess up your trajectory to

some degree or

um

like a person who's lived a life of this

evil and then right towards the moment

of death you know they see the light and

you know they've without a change of

heart I mean they still got all that

Karma that they got to deal with but at

least it's gonna kind of mess with their

trajectory you know they might wind up

you know relatively

good realm but they still got lots and

lots of problems

something like that

but with regarding myself see here I am

digressing again

um with regard to myself yeah I I really

can't say I don't know

we're just gonna have to find out when

we get there but I would not be

surprised if I'd be a human being again

in more or less of a similar situation

to the one I'm in now or possibly a

heaven realm

um but it's hard to say

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

question and this is the last question

by golly

and we're hitting right about two hours

so this is about standard I think and

this is from thermal squid and I really

like that name thermal squid just has

like a real nice ring to it

and thermal squid says would Nirvana not

be understood to be awareness or pure

mind in a provisional sense

seemingly we have to use words to

communicate these ideas and attempting

at spurring some experiential or private

understanding is Noble

so

would Nirvana not be understood as to be

awareness or pure mind it wouldn't just

be any kind of awareness you know like a

dog is aware

to some degree a frog is aware of the

fly in front of its you know flying past

so I mean that wouldn't be considered

Nirvana at least not in a anything

remotely resembling an orthodox Buddhist

especially terrible on a Buddhist uh

context

pure mind I mean if you call it like

perfect awareness or purified awareness

then you're going to be getting closer

although even that Orthodox tarabada
would say no because awareness would be
like Consciousness and Nirvana is like
qualitatively radically different from
any kind of mental state
which makes it difficult to understand
how you could uh you know be aware of
even having attained it
so
um pure mind yeah that's like a a
standard Mahayana definition if not of
Nirvana itself than of like the Dharma
Kaya which is like you know the
pervasive absolute you know the one mind
so these kind of uh provisional
explanations of Nirvana would be more
mahayanist than Terra Vaden but I am a

heretical theravada and I really do

think that in some respects not pure

land but in in some other respects

theravada

um misses the boat and in some ways

Mahayana gets it more correct like with

regard to uh rejecting abhidham for

example

just to give an obvious example

um they had a more sophisticated

philosophy

um some of the Mahayana philosophers

just because they came later when like

uh formal logic and so forth had evolved

to a higher degree than in the Buddhist

time so they're able to be more

sophisticated in their philosophizing I

guess

but uh yeah it depends on like

who you talk to like what religious

context you were sort of uh dealing with

would Nirvana not be understood as

awareness or pure mind in a provisional

sense yeah I mean Orthodox

and the commentaries you would have to

be just a flat no with regard to Mayana

or in my opinion

um I mean just based on my own

understanding of dhamma then I mean

arguably you could say that nibana would

be like pure mind or pure awareness but

when you get to the absolute Purity

again it becomes paradoxical and you it

just like falls off the scale

so it's like samsara cannot contain

genuine Purity once you hit genuine

Purity it's it's not samsaric anymore

it's not in our world anymore it just

it's just off the scale so I mean you

can use it as skillful means maybe well

acknowledging that it's just sort of a

jerry-rigged attempt at just putting a

label on something or you know getting

getting your head wrapped around

something at least enough that you kind

of feel like you know it's not just the

random noise I don't know how to explain

it

uh skillful means as Mahayana Buddhists

say you know the purpose of Lord
Buddha's teaching is to liberate us from
our Thinking by means of our thinking
and uh yeah just saying that Nirvana is
pure awareness or pure mind perfected
awareness that would be like
Enlightenment I mean I would have no
problem with saying that Enlightenment
is the Perfection of awareness
the Perfection of wisdom
but that would not be orthodox
terravonna and so I have to you know
specify that I mean I might be willing
to go along with this as a kind of stop
Gap you know for lack of anything better
you can say because you're never gonna
really understand nibana intellectually

it's just not going to happen

and I guess I'm done I might as well be

done what the hell let's be done so

that's it that's that's the last

question and uh those of you have

questions

feel free to ask away in the comments

below if you have access to my Discord

server you can ask there if you have

access to my subscribe star which you're

welcome to join you can you can ask

there and uh do try to keep it to no

more than six questions per video

and uh feel free to like And subscribe

if you haven't already and look at the

URL links below and of course be happy

hello and welcome to episode 56 a

question and answer and I'm your host

Ponyo Bahasa

and because it's episode number 56 I was

considering having a on the thumbnail a

picture of a 56 Chevy because it has a

nostalgic value for me when I was a

teenager it was like my dream car or

just maybe not so much a dream cars I

didn't actually dream about it as just

you know it was just like my favorite

kind of car at the time but I never got

one and uh

probably just as well

and I'm feeling kind of low energy today

I think it's partly because of the

weather because it's just been kind of

Cloudy and dark and humid and warm and

still just windless out there

and I'm like a human barometer I'm

sensitive to climatic changes so

um nevertheless The Show Must Go On so

with the help of the caffeine in this

here sweet tea

I'm gonna commence to answering

questions I'm fixing on starting the

commence as I speak

foreign

so the first question is from

bodhisatta969 and bodhisatta 969 says

how could you be more than 20 years a

monk in Myanmar haven't you ever felt

lonely and abandoned

well I mean I'm a Loner by Nature I mean

I can have a mate and that's fine but

um yeah I generally tended to live alone

whenever possible

um over the course of my life and so

living alone in a cave in a foreign

country where nobody speaks English uh

it really was not that big of a deal to

me I've been sort of an introvert you

know my world is sort of internal

and especially as a monk I tended to

view what was going on on the outside

including people interacting with me

largely as just sort of stimuli

and so partly just because my own

personality quirks I really did not feel

lonely I mean there was a point around
2010 2011 where I was burning out on
Burma but I lived in Burma for so long
that my supporters in the west had
pretty much just sort of gone their own
way it just sort of drifted away there
was I didn't really have access to
Internet or anything like that in those
days and so I mean Communications were
very spotty at best and it just seemed
like I was stuck in Burma so I kind of
felt abandoned in that respect but it
didn't make me feel sad so much it's
just kind of frustrated and just sort of
stubbornly intent on getting back to
America regardless
but um yeah I mean loneliness is really

not something that I experienced much of

boredom it's like the most bored I ever

was as a monk was generally when I was

having to sit through a long sermon

given by a Burmese Seattle

um or just having to sit through long

ceremonies that really I didn't have any

interest in at the time

so generally I'd be most bored when I

was with people instead of like alone

so yeah I mean it's just a personality

thing I guess it's one of the reasons

why I was able to be a monk for 30 years

is I just enjoy being alone

and uh

for the most part

um like human companionship like friends

coming over that sort of thing

um you know it's sort of like the it's

like a person's duty to be a good host

to offer good hospitality and so forth

and uh

but I mean if I had no friends

it probably wouldn't bother me all that

much

so I guess I guess I answered the

question I'll just move on to bodhisatta

969's next question here

which is was ajan mahabua an arahant

well

he was definitely considered to be in

our hunt by lots and lots of people in

Thailand especially although there are

people in Northwestern Burma who have

considered me to be in Aura hunt

so just because people think you're in

our heart

it doesn't necessarily mean all that

much

um I mean this this is sort of like a

little slice of a bigger question is

farther down so in a way I'll be

addressing this question

when I address a later question also but

I mean

I've never really known that much about

him I was more a Burmese Buddhist just I

was I mean I knew more about the Burmese

Seattle's you know the famous ones

rather than the famous Thai aajons

um he was considered to be an aroha he

was a disciple of ajan man I'm pretty

sure who also was considered to be an

aura hunt but ajan mahabua's biography

of ajanman is pretty strange I mean if

anjan mahabua was an arahan then arohans

can believe or at least endorse some

pretty weird ideas

and uh some relatively heretical ideas

like anjan man being visited by this

crowds of of long dead Buddhas and their

long dead Aura disciples just like

coming to to hang out with ajan mahabua

in his cabin at night

um

just lots of stuff that it's uh it's a

coin toss

and probably you're better off when you

toss the coin to just like toss it up

into like land on the other side of a

fence where you can't even see it

but I'll I'll be getting to that a

little later so it was on John mahabu on

aurahont

that's my answer he's just

yeah I think I'll probably be answering

that question a little better

um in a little while a little farther

down here so let's just move on to the

next question this is from maitreya

Buddha

in my Trio Buddha said have you

considered being a theology professor at

a university

well

um if I hadn't become a monk there is a

possibility a real possibility that I

could have wound up being like an

ecology Professor or some sort of

biology professor at a university and

probably an unemployed one at this point

because I'm just not politically correct

especially if I was a biology Professor

I would have even more reason not to

refer to guys as she for example

um and then I mean you just lose your

job regardless of tenure I mean if you

offend somebody who's like that

then uh yeah I mean

I mean it's it'd be a matter of

principles so I mean most universities

are like

like Marxist snake pits at this point

and I use the term Marxist rather

Loosely to include like

um Frankfurt School type progressivism

you know the culture of critique and all

that

so

um so there is that I mean Academia was

is just sort of like a leftist snake pit

at this point with with few exceptions

in the west

um also I mean a Buddhist wouldn't

really be a theology Professor I'm

pretty sure since theology is like the
study of God
um you know sort of a religion professor
of Buddhist studies or something but the
whole academic attitude towards Buddhism
is very different from the attitude I
have had for the past several decades
so yeah I don't think I'd really fit in
there very well and also as some uh
commenter to this question on the
YouTube video pointed out I think you
pretty much have to have at least a
master's degree to be a theology
Professor pretty much anywhere
and uh I decided to become a monk rather
than pursue my education
so yeah I've never seriously considered

it

for for a variety of reasons

so um I think I'll just move on to the

next question here and this is from hits

TIG and hits TIG is kind of a wise guy

and so his TIG said what beers did you

drink when you were a lad has your

tasting beard changed over time do you

prefer any brands or types of beer such

as Stouts red ales ipas loggers Etc

so he's he's like trying to out out me I

think

just relying upon my own honesty to out

myself

because I do not keep five presets

perfectly largely because

I do drink the occasional alcoholic

beverage and uh

so what beers did I drink when I was a

ladwell

let's get into this my golly

um The Unofficial beer of my graduating

class at high school Schlitz Malt Liquor

which uh has died I don't think they

even make it anymore I think Schlitz got

bought out by some other company and

then the whole thing just went belly up

or something I have not seen any kind of

Schlitz

since I stopped being a monk and started

walking through grocery stores in the

West again

um when I was in college I drank kind of

a lot of Killian's Red Ale which was

good

and it was a little spendier than stuff

like Schlitz but it was worth it because

I really like the taste of it

um

if I was on an on a budget and wanted

just getting drunk cheap there was this

stuff called Old English 800 which came

in these like 40 ounce torpedoes

and just one of those would get you

pretty drunk beer was a lot weaker in

those days so old English 800 was like

six six percent and that was considered

really strong like the average beer was

like like less than four percent back in

those days I've noticed that beer has

gotten stronger

since I uh came back and started

drinking beer again

and then let's see bass pale ale I think

I used to say that if if God drank beer

he drank bass pale ale even though

technically beer and hail are different

but I haven't even seen that on the

market I'm sure they still make it in

England they just don't import much of

it into America anymore

so of all the beers that I used to drink

and enjoy when I was a elad

as his TIG says uh Killian's Red Ale is

the only one that uh I can still find

and there's just one place in town where

I can be relatively sure of finding it there I've noticed it at Walmart a few times but uh that usually they don't have any there so yeah I drank two of them last night and that's I mean that's about my my limit for the most part I usually don't drink more than about two beers which means I usually don't drink enough to actually feel any effects I just like drinking something that isn't sweet and isn't water and in the evening uh drinking coffee is not such a good idea because then I can't sleep at night so

um let's see do you prefer any brands or types of beers such as Stouts red ales

IPS loggers Etc I generally prefer

multi-beer to hoppy beer

so

um like Killian's ready it was good

um

gosh

yeah sort of like the the darker the

more aliar kind of stuff and the less

skunky stuff

I do drink ipas occasionally

excuse me

obviously anymore sweet team

um ipas they tend to have sort of like

the hoppy bite to it that

um something that Killian's doesn't have

but I'm open-minded I can drink just

about anything so long as it doesn't

taste like vinegar I drank some Belgian copper ale once

um when I was in college there was this place down the road called bullies that had beers of the world and and if you bought a beer you got this little card and if you bought every beer that was on the card you got a free shirt and so in order to get the free shirt

um I drank this Belgian copper ale it tasted pretty much like vinegar I don't know if it was supposed to taste that way or else they just nobody ordered it and it was just turning into vinegar on the shelf or something I don't know but of the beer that I enjoyed when I was

young that I'd still drink occasionally
is Killian's red which is good it's good
beer it's not extremely expensive either
so I'll just move on to the next
question
and this is from the Spanish Inquisition
and the Spanish Inquisition says for a
couple of years you have answered all
these questions from us viewers but if
you were to ask us one or two questions
the same one or two questions for all
your viewers over the years to answer
what would it be
well that's that's kind of a good
question I mean what would I ask
my questioners or my viewers and I guess
the big one for me would be if Mr Spock

from Star Trek and Kwai Chang came from

Kung Fu got in a fight who would win

I mean it's like the Vulcan or he's half

Vulcan technically but he counts as a

Vulcan he's supposed to have about twice

the physical physical strings of a human

being plus he's really intelligent so

he'd be good at strategizing and so

forth plus he's got like the Vulcan

nerve pinch

he's like a black belt and Kung Fu and

he's also got like the spiritual you

know he's just kind of in the moment and

everything

so I mean you could say that

if Kwai Chang didn't know about the

nerve pinch and Spock was able to get

him by the shoulder then Spock would win

but it's hard to say really

so I mean if anyone knows definitively

who would win you know if they've

actually watched the fight

um yeah I would like to know who would

win between Spock and Kwai Chang Kane

um there is one other question that

haunted me for many years and now it's

just academic because it doesn't really

apply anymore but it used to be that

they made light brown plain M Ms but not

light brown peanut M M's and I used to

wonder about that I had this my own

theory that it was like a a combination

of like uh

like the Coriolis effect and and

something else but

I don't know but it doesn't really

matter now I don't even care what the

answer is now

but

um questions to ask viewers

um

yeah that would be it I guess

so I'll just move on to the Spanish

inquisition's next question

I wonder if the Buddha would be Pro or

against vasectomy what do you think

well I mean he was calling the shots

with regard to the Sangha of ordained

renuncians and I mean a vasectomy would

just be redundant I mean if you're a

celibate you don't need a vasectomy

anyway

with regard to lay people I think the

Buddha really wouldn't care all that

much

I don't think he'd really adopt a

position Pro or against vasectomy

but who knows

yeah I really I really I mean Buddhism

is really just geared towards at least

it was geared towards celibate

renunciants and like it has very little

to say about marriage and childbearing

and so forth

um you know like like I said I think it

was the last q a that it's a very

serious offense for a monk even to

participate in a wedding ceremony

because and so in a Buddhist country

like Burma you don't go to the monastery

you don't go to a priest or anything

like that to get married you just go to

the Village head man and sign some

papers and then afterwards you have like

a reception where monks can be invited

and so forth where they will bless a

done deal

let's enjoy

but with regard to vasectomy

um

yeah I really don't think he would care

all that much one way or the other

unless there was some sort of you know
ancient Indian cultural thing but
vasectomies weren't an ancient Indian
cultural thing so I think I'll just move
on to the next question here this is
from covaksh and sipad zidana
and CEO of action
says in a previous q a you said that
from a non-materialist perspective being
unconscious can be explained by time
being a perception as well memories and
when you are unconscious you simply
don't have temporal perception or
memories of it does that mean you were
in nibbana while unconscious and don't
remember or is this layer of
unconsciousness even more deep than

nibana due to having no memory active or

time perception active although I heard

that nibana can't be an object of memory

either

so I don't know well first I would just

say that you're not in Nirvana I mean

nobody is in nibbana unless everybody's

in nibana regardless of how wiser

foolish they are just because nibbana is

reality

so

yeah so if you're unconscious it doesn't

mean that you're in nibana

um

I mean nibana is always there but you

I mean there's no you I mean I mean

subjectively there's no you to be

anywhere if you're completely

unconscious this is not talking about

sleep

because when you're asleep you're not

completely unconscious otherwise nobody

would be able to wake you up

you know I mean in order to be woken up

from a sound sleep you have to be able

to hear people or or the alarm you have

to hear something or feel yourself being

shaken or whatever

so being completely unconscious would be

more like being in a coma or being in

some deep you know anesthesia and and

even some anesthesia

um apparently you're not completely

unconscious especially if they don't
administer the right amount or something
so let's see I need to read this
question again
oh it can be ex unconscious being
unconscious can be explained by time
being a perception as well as memories
and when you are unconscious you simply
don't have temporal perception or
memories of it yeah that's I I endorse
that does that mean you were in nibana
while unconscious no because I mean
you're not anywhere subjectively because
I mean you are like a mental construct
that is has broken down while you're
unconscious it's just not there

um and is this layer of unconsciousness
even more deep than the bottom nothing
is more deep than nibana because nibana
is reality it's like absolute Ultimate
Reality that all this phenomenal stuff
including people in hospitals being
under anesthesia and so forth is part of
the dream
that may rely on the Ultimate Reality of
nibbana for its existence because you
can't have just a pure
like a pure illusion the illusion has to
be based on something
so I'm not sure if I answered this
question to his satisfaction
but um yeah it doesn't mean that anyone
who's unconscious is enlightened

although I mean I think there are
probably some Mahayana Buddhists who
would say something like that because
they would say that trees and rocks are
enlightened too because they're just
pervaded with Ultimate Reality and
there's no ego or anything like that
obstructing it
because that's the main thing that
prevents us from being on it prevents us
from being enlightened is just all this
distracting symbols that we
we pay attention to that and take it
seriously and believe it and just kind
of ignore the reality that that it's
resting upon so to speak

let's see here

so I guess I answered that question

so I'll just uh move on to CEO of action

as next question here

what do you think when you what did you

think when you first heard the Twin

Towers were attacked while you were

among thousands of miles away who

renounced the world well I did remember

when I first heard about the Twin Towers

um like 9 11

2001 I was living in a cave in central

Burma

and these two Burmese guys came to visit

me

and one of them was going to tell me

something and then the other one said oh

don't tell him he might he might get sad
or depressed or something and then then
I guess between the three of us I don't
remember how it happened but they wound
up telling me anyway that some rich Arab
crashed a plane into the World Trade
Center and I mean that was all they said
really this rich Arab crashed a plane
into the the World Trade World Trade
Center and uh I was thinking well maybe
I mean a Cessna was loaded with
explosives and he used remote control or
something or I mean really I didn't have
a clear idea about it except for
gradually as time went by I kept hearing
more and more and then asked my mother

to send me some newspaper clippings
because they still had like newspapers
in those days and uh so she sent me an
equal number of news clippings about 9
11 and about the local high school being
burned down because uh when something I
mean something little that's close up
appears as big as something big that's
far away kind of a deal I think
so what did I think when the when I
first heard the Twin Towers were
attacked you know I was guessing maybe
some some rich Arab just uh crashed a
Cessna loaded with explosives using
remote control or something
and I really didn't know what to think
until gradually I got more and more

information

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from White Ash

Piper

and white ash Piper says during your

stay in Burma did you witness the

conflict between Muslims and Burmese

well I mean I wasn't present during any

race riots or anything like that the

closest I came

was I was staying

I think I was staying in a monster

called cheltsin doya which was maybe 15

miles away from the city of metila and

at the time when I was at chelseindoya

in metila I'm pretty sure it was maitila

there was uh

uh one of these it was like a riot that

happened and the story is that

um this Burmese Buddhist woman

tried to sell a gold hair comb to a

Muslim

um like a shop owner a guy who would be

like buying gold and silver and jewelry

and stuff and then reselling it or

whatever and she was asking for a

certain price for this gold hair comb

and he wouldn't give her the price but

then he he broke it like accidentally

and he just wouldn't pay her what she

wanted so they started having a fight

and there was a man a Burmese man with

her I think and it turned into like a

shoving match and then he got pushed

down and then like the Muslims kind of

got together and they're like fighting

back and so you had this little brawl

going on and then

the Burmese Buddhists left

and

um you know their sort of rabble rousing

and somehow a monk came with them I

don't know if he was going to try and be

a peacemaker or what but he went and he

he said he wanted to talk with these

Muslim guys they agreed and then they

took him aside and according to the

story I heard I was told this by a monk

who who knew more about the story than I

did at the time he said they cut his
neck which means either they cut his
throat or they just cut his head all the
way off or some such which then I mean
when Burmese people I mean there's such
a devout Buddhists if Muslims are going
to start attacking or killing monks then
yeah I mean all bets are off you're
gonna have [__] hitting the fan big time
probably even more so than when uh
Burmese Buddhist girl allegedly gets
raped by Muslims which that happened a
lot too at least the alleged the
allegation happened a lot
so that was the closest I mean I was
within about 15 miles of it happening
and heard about it maybe a few weeks

later when I moved to a different

Monastery where the monk was

um well informed about the whole

Buddhist versus Muslim thing going on

but I didn't actually witness anything

other than you know newspapers and so

forth

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here

after

having another simple sweet tea

and this is from Judge Caligula Bushman

and judge Caligula Bushman says

what's your opinion of Julius ivola's

doctrine of Awakening you did a review

of the book and had some criticism of

the sources he used well

um Julius Evola was

um

kind of a hard right like uh like a an

Italian fascist who was at least an

acquaintance with Mussolini gradually

soured on Italian fascism because he

thought it wasn't spiritual enough and

then he moved to Nazi Germany because he

thought German national socialism was

more spiritual he wrote a lot of

fascistic stuff he wrote

a lot of like sex magic stuff that is

still taken seriously even in some new

age circles and also he wrote at least

one book about Buddhism called the

doctrine of Awakening

and at the time I mean this is I don't
remember exactly when he wrote it back
in the 20s and 30s I think
um early 40s at the latest
um he was writing a book about Buddhism
and he was he was trying to portray it
as the the best spiritual system for the
Aryan Aristocrat living in in the west I
mean with regard to the the masses he
really didn't care what the common
person was following it didn't really
matter you know let them be Christians
or whatever it doesn't matter but but
like the the aristocracy you know the
people that really matter the people
that were so high up that they were you

know they had access to like spiritual
Powers as well as Earthly powers
or you know Heavenly Powers you know
it's like his idea was that you know the
highest level of being a human is you're
the conduit of of the Gods of the higher
spiritual powers to the rest of the
world and so you have a greater
responsibility to be benevolent and wise
and so forth
um so he was trying to use Buddhism as a
way of demonstrating I mean it's kind of
nice I read it when I was a monk and um
he was trying to portray the enlightened
Buddhist arohaunt as sort of like the
the nietzsian Superman
which I mean is kind of interesting

um but for the most part his book

um it was it was intelligently written

it was well written that Evola was

definitely an intelligent person

but it was very similar to the sort of

Buddhist literature written by

westerners from like the early to mid

20th century where they have limited

sources like Julius Ebola he had a few

Italian translations I'm pretty sure he

didn't know hardly any poly he didn't

read from the original poly sources

so he relied upon sort of pioneering

works early translations of polytechs

into Italian and maybe into English also

especially the the majum and ikaya I

think was one of his main sources

and uh it's the sort of stuff that you

know it's

well written and everything but it's

it's

um

you know there's a limit there's a limit

to it about how deep it can go because

he really wasn't living the life he

wasn't really practicing dhamma

intensively although

um when he was a young man I think right

after World War one he was

um

like somewhat suicidal

and then he read a book about Buddhism

which inspired him and according to him

gave him a reason to live

and whether he considered himself a

Buddhist or not I don't know but he

definitely had respect for Buddhism and

advocated Buddhism as a kind of religion

or spiritual movement for the

aristocratic Aryan Elite

but uh and if you read it I mean you get

an interesting take it like an unusual

but still

you know reasonable take on terravonna

Buddhism as it would apply to the modern

West

which is is good I mean you learn a lot

about Buddhism especially if you don't

know a whole lot about Buddhism but uh

you should definitely read other sources
to get you know sort of a triangulation
you know different different points of
view on the same subject which is very
good for just about anything
but uh with regard to Buddhism it is
good to get a variety of points of view
and uh yeah it it does remind me a lot
of the earlier stuff like written by the
the contributors to the Polytech Society
for example
where I mean they're definitely
interested in the material and but they
held like this intellectual Academic Way
of trying to explain it and just because
of the approach to the material it
really didn't get very deep but for with

regard to like a superficial overview

plus as I say you know that the

perspective of

like Buddhism as kind of like a

um you know like um a spiritual system

for a fascistic master race or something

you know it's interesting

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from Saint

sword

and Saint sword says what's the

graduation rate of terravonna Buddhism I

mean this as in how many fully

enlightened aurahants have you met

well the easy answer to that is it's

hard to tell but he has more questions

here it says and please don't brush up
this question by saying it's hard to
tell it's not hard to tell I've met at
least two in my lifetime and you can
look into their eyes and tell that no
one is back there if it's hard to tell
that and then that just suggests the
number is zero which is fine
I rather hear zero as it's an honest
assessment I don't know if the
spirituality industry or honest this
seems like it would be a really
important question
and then he further ads I don't ask it
out of maliciousness I ask it as a
concerned consumer losing his mind with
this stuff I have a constant pendulum

swing from there's something to all of

this in the midst of the [__] to

this is all [__] and there's no help

for an honest Seeker that has zero

tolerances for [__]

so this is this is a deep question

and I doubt I've seen sword is going to

be very satisfied with my answer

but just for starters

well no I'll even before just for

starters he says he's met at least two

enlightened beings in his lifetime and

you can look into their eyes and tell

that no one is back there well

you can't tell if someone else is

enlightened unless you yourself are

enlightened

that's that's one thing I mean you can

be sure someone's in line and there's a

lot of those in Burma like I was saying

there's a lot of people that consider me

to be fully enlightened they just no

doubt they just know it you can even

tell them that you're not enlightened

and they'll get like this really

uncomfortable look on their face but

then they'll just justify you saying

that you know as you know and just

continue believing it

and so I mean there's lots of people

considered to be enlightened

um but here here's here's what I was

going to say for starters that for

several episodes I've just been pounding
away at the idea that Nirvana is off the
scale that Nirvana it's invalid to say
that it exists invalid to say that it
doesn't exist invalid to say that it
does and doesn't exist invalid to say
that it neither does nor does not exist
there's nothing you can say about it
that is ultimately valid
so if Nirvana itself is like that what
do you say about a person who has
attained Nirvana
I think you would say in our hunt
I mean you can't say that an arhan
exists you can't say that aura hunt
doesn't exist you can't say that our

hunt does and doesn't exist you can't
say then our haunt neither does nor does
not exist
in fact there's one suit on at least one
suture where the Buddha is saying that
with regard to whether an enlightened
being exists or not after death I mean
you can't even say whether they exist or
not while they're alive
also this reminds me of some texts by a
group of Buddhist logicians
um it's called The Dig Naga school or
sometimes it's called the yogachara
logicians uh whether they were really on
the yoga Char lineage or not I don't
know it's Mahayana Buddhism I guess and
their classic example of a problematic

premise is a statement that cannot be

proven one way or the other is that

you know a person is enlightened or even

the enlightened beings exist

because there's no way of proving it

so

let's see I should just read this

question again here what's the

graduation rate of terravada Buddhism I

mean this as in how many fully

enlightened oral haunts have you met

well I'll just answer that question how

many fully in line or ons have I met I

honestly do not know

I honestly don't know maybe like in

Seattle I've met him he he was very

impressive

but whether he was an Aaron or not I

don't know and that also reminds me of

the statement by Rob Das where he's

saying that someone can go halfway

around the world and try to find an

enlightened Guru in the Himalaya

Mountains when the whole time back at

home Aunt Mabel has been fully

enlightened in fact except instead of

like telling him the secrets of the

universe she just says has have some

soup but as it turns out have some soup

is the perfect thing to say under the

circumstances

so let's see here I gotta

let's see if it's hard to tell then that

just suggests the number is zero

um not exactly because as I'm as I was

trying to say you know it's like if

Nirvana is off the scale and you can't

say whether it exists or not enlightened

beings who have attained Nirvana are off

the scale and you can't say whether they

exist or not it's like the famous

uh famous verse from the sudanipata you

know just as the a flame blown out by

force of wind you know comes to its

cessation and no longer subjects itself

to any designation even so the sage who

has freed himself from the massive names

goes to a cessation and no longer

subjects himself to any designation

so

I'm saying that the more cynical a

person is

then the less

openness towards the Paradox or the

miracle or or whatever you want to call

this Enlightenment which is just off the

scale and again you can't say whether it

exists or doesn't exist or does and

doesn't or neither does nor doesn't

so it's just like this it's like this

Paradox this this seeming Miracle this

inexplicable whatever

and if you're just completely closed off

to that then yeah the chances are

essentially a zero barring some miracle

like I've mentioned John Ren Lewis who

was kind of the the smugs scientific materialist type he was the leader of an a group of atheists for a while then he had a near-death experience just purely accidentally and uh it was like a a spiritually enlightening near-death experience and then he became like Eckhart Pola and um whether he was claiming to be enlightened or not I don't know but he was claiming that I mean he was definitely permanently or you know

you know as a result of the near-death experience in this higher level of Consciousness where he is aware of essentially I don't know infinity or I I

don't want to miss misrepresent him I

don't remember exactly how it was that

he was always had access to it was a

higher level of consciousness

so you know setting aside somebody like

that I mean it's like the most

unenlightened people in the world in

certain sense are like the smug

scientific atheists who think you know

it's all [__] and I mean they would

just fight tooth and nail against any

evidence

or else just kind of smugly you know

shrug it off or whatever

and then it's like as you practice

spiritually

it's like

the openness to the very possibility of

the impossible Miracle gets wider and

wider and I mean seriously I think that

from a samsari context Enlightenment is

just meaningless I mean it's just off

the scale it doesn't mean anything

practically from a some sortic

definition or some sortic point of view

Enlightenment is it's just like [__]

it's it's just impossible

so I mean it's like

who who was considered to be fully

enlightened I mean

who wrote this really bizarre biography

of anjan man and I mean I really don't

know all the details uh Eckhart Tolle is

considered to be enlightened and he's
married but I don't know of any like
real scandals I haven't seen him acting
in a completely unenlightened manner you
got
Jed McKenna who was brought up by Saint
sword himself who at the very least is a
liar and extremely smug I mean in his
books he's talking about how he lives in
this certain place and you know he's got
these these disciples that live there
with him and that place just doesn't
exist there's no pictures of Jed McKenna
there's no interviews on the internet of
Jed McKenna at least when I looked
several years ago there was nothing I
haven't been searching for Jim McKenna

lately and he's just like an egomaniac

he just brags and brags and brags about

how enlightened he is

and then so I mean Saints or seems to

consider Judd McKenna to be you know

sort of kind of a heavy hitter at least

he he seems that do to do that and

really I mean Jed McKenna is just uh

a complete question mark to me you got

Osho I mean I've read osho's books I've

heard some of his talks and you know

I've read some of the Scandal stuff

about Osho and

I mean he seemed more glibs and wise I

mean he definitely has some Charisma

like the penetrating eyes and everything

they could and I mean he had to have

attained something

and I've met a few of his disciples I

asked him you think OSHA was enlightened

and at least one of them he just of

course he was in line it was just

plainly obvious

and uh the other one that I talked to he

was kind of non-committal he wouldn't

say he was or he wasn't

but I mean people that are considered to

be enlightened I mean you could even I

mean if we had detailed information on

the life of godama Buddha that I'm sure

there's stuff that you could come up

with saying yeah see look what he did or

you know so like in in the in the New

Testament you know Jesus is supposed to be the perfect man but you know he's he's like crying and and like uh like attacking the the money changers at the temple and driving driving out the people selling livestock for sacrifices and you know like uh what was it some knotted court or something using as a whip and you know he's hanging out with tax collectors and prostitutes and so forth and I mean you can find fault with anybody krishnamurti J krishnamurti you know he's he's considered to be an enlightened being but
he was uh messing around with his private secretary's wife for years

so I mean it's like

weather a fully enlightened being I mean

within some sort of context whether it

even means anything

is questionable

but it's like the wiser a person gets

the more access or the more open they

are to this miracle so

um

it's like you can start calling somebody

anyway and it might kind of stick a

little bit

but really I'm I'm not at all sure that

an aura hunt can just objectively exist

regardless of what people are certain of

and and all this like neem curly bob up

there's another good example Haram Dasa

the better you got to know him the more

you realize there was just nobody there

he was just like a mirror reflecting

your own Karma back at you

but uh I mean his behavior was it going

with Orthodox Traditions it certainly

was not completely enlightened at all

times you know he'd be yelling and anger

and crying and laughing and like

literally punching people and just all

kinds of things and uh you know terrible

Buddhism says you know an enlightened

being wouldn't behave that way

so the whole thing is just this

mind-bending conundrum

and I really think that the more

spiritually Advanced you are the more

open you are to the possibility which

means you've got less of a closed door

to this

like inconceivable

miraculous paradox

and that's not much of a question but

then again we're dealing with something

that is off the scale if Nirvana is off

the scale then people who have attained

Nirvana that very attainment is off the

scale and again you can't say whether it

exists or doesn't exist or does and

doesn't or neither does nor doesn't it's

just

off the scale

and then you can't nail it down well did

this person attain what is off off the

scale it's like it doesn't work that way

so I'm just saying the wiser a person

gets the more advanced they get

the more open they are to

Ultimate Reality or the possibility of

Ultimate Reality or the possibility of

people calling like attributing

Enlightenment to them and it seeming

plausible

but I wouldn't be surprised if there has

ever been an enlightened being other

maybe Ramen I'm a harshi who is just a

pure 100

pristine Saint and Sage but even Ramana

maharshi I mean if you're uh like a

cynic you can make fun of him I mean he

he worshiped the hill arunachala he

wrote devotional hymns to this hill his

best friend was a cow

you know there's all kind I mean you can

just find fault with anybody

um if you've got like a cynical sort of

a spiritually closed mind

then yeah I mean you just got a shell

around yourself

but the more open you are then I mean

eventually

um like

again the the platform Sutra between

Nang says you know if you become in line

do you look around you see everyone

else's enlightened also so it's just uh

not so much a matter of whether other

people are enlightened is just how much

of a veil are you behind how much of a

shell do you have around you

and then whether there's it's like a a

critical mass or something it's like

once the the veil gets thin enough

then you know you can start saying maybe

that person's enlightened or something

but I think different people would have

different like fitnesses of shell that

they can still get away with sort of

like

um

in taravana there is a tradition and you

can find in the text that for the genre

is like the jumping off point to
Enlightenment but then again there's
also descriptions of monks that have any
genre at all that still became
enlightened so it's like that the amount
of purity
that you have to cultivate in your mind
I mean some people need a lot of Purity
in order to get to this nebulous
miraculous Indescribable State others it
can just happen to them like John ran
Lewis or Eckhart Tolle or even Ramen
amaharshi who just became enlightened
supposedly allegedly according to his
own testimony as the result of a panic
attack he had as a high school student
so

yeah I mean it's like wanting to pin

someone down with a like a concrete

objective yes or no question about

something that is completely off the

scale completely ambivalent just defying

any kind of logic that is just

paradoxical and miraculous

um it just doesn't work that way

so

I think saint-sword might be just as

much in the dark with regard to my

answer as before I started

but I mean if you can't say whether

Nirvana exists or not you can't say

whether people who have attained Nirvana

exist or not and within the samsara

context

it would sort of the answer would be

leaning even towards no

that within some sort there is no

nibhana and thus within samsara there

are no arahans

but you can get closer and closer I mean

you as you detach from samsara you know

you're holding some sorrow with a looser

and looser grip then you know these

miraculous possibilities become more

possible

but with regard to actual numbers there

are no actual numbers

so I think I'm just going to move on to

this question here that was an important

one though

so this next one is from rui and rui

says simple one Ponyo

thank you Ruby simple one Ponyo was

there anyone who was present at all the

Buddhist sermons

and then he says do you think beakers

were authorized to recite suffras to one

another during the life of the Buddha

and then he says did the whole retinue

of beakus move together with the Buddha

or did some groups remain at certain

locations and then he says three and a

half questions sorry about that

well was there anyone who was president

all the Buddha sermons the Buddha

himself was present at all of them but

nobody else was

but nobody else is present at all of the

Buddhist sermons

and uh see

do you think beakus were authorized to

recite sutras to one another during the

life of the Buddha

um I don't think there'd even be an

authorization involved you know you

wouldn't have to be checked out on you

know authorized certified you know they

wouldn't have a certificate or something

um it's like let's say the Buddha gave a

discourse to a group of monks and then

some newcomer monk comes in from

somewhere else and I don't think there'd

be anything at all against one of the

monks who heard the discourse telling
the other monks what the Buddha was
saying at the discourse that the other
monk missed I know or just yeah I'm sure
that it would be encouraged that if you
heard something in the Buddha you should
share it with other people that hadn't
heard that
uh ended the whole retinue of because
moved together with the Buddha or did
some groups remain at certain locations
this uh my answer to this will sort of
be my answer to uh uh was there anyone
who was president of all the Buddha
sermons it's like once one of the
Buddha's disciples I mean according to

tradition according to the suit isn't so
far once he became enlightened he didn't
need the Buddha anymore you know it's
like the Buddhist part of the raft you
know you use the raft to cross the flood
once you get to the other side you don't
need the raft anymore
so the way it says in the text the
Buddha I mean once once his disciples
got enlightened he'd encourage them to
go off and get their own disciples and
you know spread the word you know it was
it was uh more uh efficient effective
way of spreading dhamma rather than
having just all focused on this one guy
because I mean the Buddha did not have
any

uh Monopoly on legitimate genuine dama

so he would teach his disciples until

they were qualified to teach themselves

then off they'd go and and they'd teach

also and even before they were

enlightened you can see clearly enough

in the sutas that the Buddha would

encourage monks to just go off alone

into the forest to go alone like the

Horn of the rhinoceros to sit at the

root of a tree and meditate

and so

there was a lot of emphasis on just your

own

Reliance on yourself

and Solitude as it was a way of

cultivating emptiness

and uh of course once somebody became

enlightened they really didn't need to

hang out with a Buddha anymore

they were in a sense of Buddha

themselves

Buddha just means awakened

so see did I answer all these questions

here was there anyone who was present at

all the Buddhist serum somebody might

say oh what about Ananda was his

attendant but Ananda wasn't his first

attendant it wasn't his attendant until

later on in the Buddha's life he did

have attendance before Ananda

so yeah I mean I I seriously doubt there

was any monk who even attended most of

the Buddhas uh sermons

and with regard to the because being

authorized to recite sutras to one

another yeah I'm sure it was encouraged

so long as you know they got their facts

straight

and did the whole retinue of because

moved together with the Buddha no

it's like once I mean the ones that he

ordained might accept him as their

preceptor until he saw a fit to you know

tell them that they're on their own they

should just go off and do something else

I'm sure a lot of people a lot of monks

came to see him you know they wanted to

see the master you know there are

stories of like I think it's uh

sonakurikana maybe who uh he was

ordained under one of the the Buddha's

enlightened disciples in like a

relatively Southern Province and he'd

heard about the Buddha but he hadn't

seen him and so he wanted to go and meet

the Buddha after

um yeah I don't even think he was

enlightened yet I can't remember if he's

enlightened or not

but I'm sure it happened a lot but I'm

sure also the Buddha really did not want

you know thousands and thousands of

monks around especially because

um they were Beggars and so they're

gonna have to not be too much of a

burden on the surrounding householders
but neem curly bob out there he was a
guru
possibly enlightened if that even means
anything and uh he'd continually be
sending off his disciples you know go
you know go on this tour of of temples
in Southern India or go and listen to
krishnamurti who he called Ram murti and
uh I mean he'd always be like sending
them away because there was just too
much of an accumulation of disciples
just sort of making a crowd scene so
he'd be like dispersing them a lot and I
assume the Buddha did the same kind of
thing

so I think I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from Titus d ascentis

and Titus the ascent that says can a Buddha have bad breath and I was gonna look this up just to make sure that I remember correctly and I forgot to look it up

so

um in reality let's say objective reality can a Buddha have bad breath I don't see why not at the very least like morning breath I don't think that there's any Cosmic law preventing an enlightened being from having gum disease or something especially as they get older

but

there is a list I think it's the 80

lesser marks of the Maha Parisa of the

great man you've got the the well-known

32 marks of a great being

and then there's the lesser-known 80

marks 80 lesser marks of the great being

and I think one of those is like a sweet

breath

but those marks of the great being are a

later development they really cannot be

100 objectively True simply because some

of them are in conflict with others like

one person could not have all 32 marks

of a great man

at the same time

so traditionally I think the answer

would be no a Buddha cannot have bad

breath but personally I think there is

the possibility at the very least he

could have morning breath or something

like that or maybe he ate garlic you

know

so I'll just move on to uh Titus the

assemphis's next question what is my

opinion of Rasputin

well

I really don't know a whole lot about

Rasputin he was like a heretical Greek

Orthodox priest I think he he was uh

uh starrette which is a word I was

unfamiliar with until I read the

brothers karamazov because father zosuma

in the novel is a starrettes it's sort

of like a an Orthodox Christian Guru

and apparently he was heretical in the

sense that he was sort of like the

Brethren of the free spirit where they

had this idea that

um

to be forgiven your sins is a great

miracle and so the more sins you've got

to be forgiven the greater and more

glorious the miracle is and so according

I mean this might not be true but I have

read or heard that Rasputin did engage

in like orgies like sexual orgies and so

forth as sort of like the the spirit of

God is sort of permeating everybody and

there's no more good or evil and

everything is everyone's just going for

it and if they did do anything wrong

then they're forgiven and then that it's

more glory for God or whatever but I

think

the thing that's mainly known about

Rasputin aside from the movie Hellboy we

don't need to worry about that is

um he had like a hypnotic effect on the

wife of the Czar the last the Czar of

Rush of yeah the last Czar of Russia

and uh he had a calming effect on the

boy their their son who was heir to be

be the Czar if he hadn't been murdered

by the Bolsheviks

um and he had hemophilia and so he had

like painful internal bleeding and so
forth and Rasputin had like this
hypnotic effect on the boy that could
calm him down and alleviate the pain to
some degree which caused the mother and
to some degree the Father the Czar also
have this like emotional dependency on
Rasputin and maybe he was also giving
political advice that presumably was
because he was eventually
um executed or assassinated and he was
very hard to kill I mean they they
poisoned him and that wasn't working
then they shot him I think they stabbed
him several times and they threw him
into a river and then he didn't drown he

was still alive they found him washed up

on the on the riverbank farther down and

they finally managed to kill him

according to the legend

um so really I mean he was just another

you know in a way kind of like an Osho

figure

Maybe

but I don't know enough about him

especially with guard too his spiritual

attainments if any you know what he was

able to do or not do

but uh I mean I do not have a secret

name for my generative organ but if I

did it would probably be Rasputin

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

question here

and this is from Yugo

and Yugo asked the interesting question

can you tell me if ignorance is

intentional or unintentional

and

it depends on what kind of ignorance it

is like if it's ignorance of Spanish

well I mean you can

let's let's say you have the opportunity

to study Spanish in school and you

decided to go for French instead then

your ignorance of Spanish would be

intentional because you freely chose not

to study it so that kind of ignorance

you know you have the opportunity to

learn something and you deliberately

turn it down then yeah that would be a

kind of deliberate ignorance but

ignorance in like the metaphysical or

ethical or spiritual sense of like moha

you know Loba Dosa you know gree hate

delusion as as it generally is goes

um or avija which is like spiritual

ignorance then

it's not really intentional because you

can't really be aware of it to the

extent that you are aware of your moha

it's not moha anymore so we're going to

be mindful

you can be mindful of like attraction or

lobot

you can be mindful of a version or Dosa

but you can't really be mindful of moha

which is delusion or ignorance because

to the extent that you're aware of it

you're not deluded or ignorant to that

same extent

so you can be mindful of the first two

you know Loba and Dosa but to be mindful

of moha is practically impossible

so that's something you always have to

be careful about because you don't know

how delusional you are nobody does

I mean nobody knows how delusion obey

themselves are they might know how

delusional you are to some degree

not that I'm picking on you here

so that is a good point though because

it's something that should be brought up

that you really can't know

how how much moha or avija you've got in

in like a spiritual sense

because you just practically by

definition you cannot be aware of it if

you are aware of it then it wouldn't be

Mohawk anymore

so

uh so with regard to the question can

you tell me if ignorance is intentional

or unintentional then yes or no

depending on what kind of ignorance it

is

and I mean even some spiritual ignorance

I mean it can be intentional in the fact

that you know you have the choice to you

know live a spiritual life or just

follow along in your Father's Footsteps

of of being a a pimp or something and

you just go the other route I mean you

know in a way that would be intentional

but I mean actually having delusion or

or a video

um I mean you can't be aware of it at

the time I mean in retrospect you can

think boy I was really foolish then but

while it's happening to the extent

you're aware of it it's then you you've

kind of transmuted it into into wisdom

like one of my favorite verses from the

uh the dhamapada is uh

the fool who is aware of his own

foolishness is at least wise to that

extent but the fool who is who considers

himself wise is called a fool indeed

so being aware of your own foolishness

is actually wisdom

go figure

so you go to this next question is

lately I burdened my mind with organized

religion being raised in one I really

cannot let go of having resentment for

it how do I deal with it thank you

well I think it was the very

very last q a before this one where I'm

talking about any kind of like

problematic Troublesome mental state

uh the Panacea in Buddhism is just be

mindful of it just deserve it and by

observing it

you know you're observing resentment
it's no longer I am resentful it's
resentment is arising you know you are
the one who's observing the resentment
if you are anything at all you're not
the thing that's being observed
so by being mindful of the resentment
just observing it realizing it's just
this mental state that's arising through
force of habit Karma
um that is not you that it might not be
particularly wise it's just this
habitual emotional thing that's coming
up and you can just watch it and if you
make a regular practice of that then you
weaken it you know you stop reinforcing

it but you know wallowing it anymore

you're just kind of keeping it at arm's

length you know keeping this

philosophical Detachment

um between you and it so to speak

so that would be just the standard

Buddhist way of going about it

and uh I mean it's not all bad that

organized religion

uh that you're brought up in organized

religion because it got you where you

are today and you are apparently seeking

dhamma you're trying to understand the

truth trying to cultivate some wisdom so

it's not all bad

there's some people that just say all

religion is just attempts at like

controlling the masses and so forth and
it's just like oh I mean it's like this
Doctrine for them it's it's like this
law they can't snap out of it that all
religion is bad it's the worst thing in
the world you know more suffering has
been caused by organized religion than
anything else and they're just
in a way they're they're like these
materialistic atheists who are like the
most foolish of people in that they're
just completely closed off to anything
higher than that you know you talk about
like the Roman Catholic church and a lot
of people think it's just evil is just a
bunch of pedophiles this bunch of gay

priests molesting boys and they don't

see anything beyond that

you know we don't see anything beyond

just you know the most scandalous the

lowest creepiest most foolish level and

there have been like really Advanced

Catholics Saints St John of the cross I

mean he might have been fully

enlightened assuming that Enlightenment

even means anything

so and he considered his teacher Saint

Teresa of Avila also to have reached the

stage of perfection

so

I think I'll just move on to this

question here I hope I answered that one

though

and this is from keep the vinia

and I I think this was a vegan skeptic I

think he changed his name to cryptovenia

and so

um he uh very kindly asked only six

questions this time

that's good I mean not that it was bad

that he asked more than six last time

but once I requested

that you know you don't ask more than

six questions per video he was on the

ball he has what it takes

and so Keith Lavinia says don't you

think it's pathetic to live an

aesthetical life just to hope to screw

some girls later in heaven this

completely contradicts the idea of
ending suffering by stopping Desiring
things shouldn't among do what he does
because he has realized how delusional
and primitive worldly pleasures are well
this is uh I think
this is probably a result of a video I
did recently with Brian Roo and Brian
wanted to do some clickbaity video about
sex in heaven and how finding out how
how like really nice even or jiastically
pleasurable some Buddhist Heaven Realms
are that it might encourage people to
strive uh along a Buddhist path in order
to get up to those Celestial nymphs
but um I did point out that I mean even
though the Buddha himself used this

according to tradition that uh he

actually

um allured his half-brother Nanda not

Ananda but just Nanda on his wedding day

he he showed him visions of what the

celestial nymphs look like in heaven and

comparing that to you know the woman he

was going to marry this mere human

mortal woman you know she looked like a

monkey compared to these Celestial

nymphs in heaven and it for some I mean

Nanda must have been like a horny boy so

that was enough to persuade him you know

plus you know anything else you know the

Buddhism Charisma and so forth

um it persuaded him not to get married

he jilted his bride on the wet on his
wedding day and jilted his fiancee and
was ordained as a monk
um but then see the thing is so Nanda
was ordained because he wanted those
Celestial nymphs in heaven but as he
practiced correctly his wisdom improved
and then he started seeing that samsara
is not something to be striving for that
that uh I mean it's you should just let
go of all that and so he did and he
became enlightened he became one of the
Buddha's enlightened disciples according
to tradition again assuming that a fully
enlightened being even means anything
within a song Sorry context
so yeah it's like you can use crude

motivations to get you started in dhamma
and then if you're practicing Dharma
correctly your wisdom will improve and
so your motivations will improve you
know it's just as your wisdom increases
the wisdom of your your motives also
increase and so you can move away from
that so it can be like what the Mahayana
Buddha is called skillful means where
you're just getting someone on the path
in whatever way that it takes and then
as they get after they get on the path
then they're going to make progress and
then they're just going to outgrow their
original foolish reasons you know a lot
of people it's not just sex with

Celestial and that's a lot of people

want psychic powers you know they're

they're practicing meditation because

they want to be able to levitate and

read minds and all this kind of stuff

and again if if they're doing it wisely

then their motives become wiser you know

if they're practicing correctly you know

they're meditating correctly and

everything then gradually you know they

just see the Folly of all that and they

just let it all go

so yeah

but I mean Celestial nymphs in heaven I

mean

it's the infinite universe so I guess

they must be up there

for those of you who are into that sort
of thing so I'll just move on to keep
luinia's next question here would it be
best for parents to send their child to
a monastery when he is a little older
so that it does not come into contact
with this corrupt World well it sounds
good it doesn't always work that way I
mean if you're sending kids that have no
spiritual inclinations to a monastery
then it's going to be like a prison for
them they're not going to like it it's
going to be like the beings that wind up
in this high heaven realm when the
material universe is destroyed and
they're up in this very Advanced Heaven

realm that's above the material world

and they can't stand it it's just so

boring their board stiff

and it's it's I remember the story I

mean this this I was involved in this

I was at this big school monster in the

city of amrapura next to Mandalay

and there was this nun

and she had had a son before she became

a nun she became a nun and so

um she just sent her little kid who was

like five years old to a monastery she

was just determined he was going to grow

up and be a monk this little kid he was

called a posted though he was too young

even to be a novice and so he was

dressed in Hawaii he had his head shaved

and he would handle the money because
even novices aren't supposed to handle
money and so he was sort of like one of
the attendants to the monks and he just
wanted to be a little kid I mean he did
not he he was not there because he
wanted to be there he was there because
his religious Mama sent him there and
one day the one of the Seattles one of
the senior monks gave him some money and
had him going or told him to get some
money and get some rubber bands you know
monks are always Burmese monks are
always telling the attendants what to do
with money which is the same as the monk
handling himself that's a different

issue

so I mean the monk wasn't entirely

within the rules by telling this kid to

go and buy rubber bands but the kid took

the money and instead of buying the

rubber bands he went to see a movie he

wanted to see a movie so he went to see

the movie he spent all the money on on

seeing the movie plus whatever it is

popped rice or whatever that Burmese

people eat at movies

and then uh he was afraid to come back

because he figured he'd get punished so

he went and lived under a bridge with

these homeless people and they took his

clothes and sold them and he was just

wearing these rags and my T one of my

teachers was responsible for this kid
and so every day he's out scouring the
city of of amrapura looking for this
little kid finally after a number of
weeks he finds him at this tea shop it
was like one of the the hobos gave him a
little bit of money to go and buy some
cigars for him in a tea shop and the
lady that worked at the tea shop had
pity on him and so she let him stay at
the tea shop and he was like you know
helping to clear tables or whatever
so the kid finally got brought back and
uh The Story Goes that he was sent to
his nun mama and the the Mother Superior
of the of the nunnery just like tied

into a post and just whipped him
mercilessly
because of all the trouble he had caused
but it means sending someone into a
spiritual environment if they just you
know they're just not spiritually
motivated to be there is not the best
thing you can do so let's see here would
it be best for parents to send their
child to a monastery when he is a little
older so that it does not come into
contact with this corrupt World why not
just keep him at home and teach him the
way you see fit and if you're living in
some City thin City with gangs and so
forth around you just move out into the
country move into a conservative small

town or something where it won't be so

bad

but if the kid does have some spiritual

yearnings or something then maybe

but um yeah even like Catholic schools

uh when I was a

when I was growing up in Aberdeen

Washington and it was all public schools

except through this one St Mary's

Catholic School which went up to eighth

grade and then once they graduated from

the eighth grade they'd come over to the

public the Junior High in the high

school and I mean they had a reputation

for being just the most hardened

juvenile delinquents which I think is

somewhat similar to to what I've just

been talking about where you put a kid

into this religious setting and the kid

just does not have religious

inclinations you know he's just ignore

me he just wants to be a kid like trying

to force them to be this way they'll

just Rebel and push back the other way

I think my sweetheart was like that to

some degree when she was in a Catholic

school as a teenager

so I think I'll just uh

move on to uh

keep divinia's next question here

and he says

is it allowed to buy a monk robe as a

layperson so I can meditate with it at

home so I'm already used to it if I will

be a monk

well there's no rules against buying

Monk's robes or making monks robes if

you want them made according to winnia

you probably have to make them yourself

um and wearing them but you can't pass

yourself off as a monk if you wear the

robes shave your head and then like try

to blend in with other monks and don't

tell them that you're not a monk that's

wearing the robes by theft and then you

are forbidden from being ordained for

the rest of your life in a way it's it's

sort of like a pre-paragica

and I think some of the uh bikinis

nowadays should be careful about sort of

thing

but we need we need to wallow in that

issue

so let's see here

yeah I mean you can wear a monks Rob at

home I've worn my monk robe my upper

robe at least once or twice since I

disrobed just to show how it's done

so I mean it's not like there's any kind

of spiritual law against wearing monks

robes if you're not a monk in the

Buddhist time everybody wore that kind

of robe it's just that they mostly wore

white ones that were all in one piece

instead of brown ones that had been cut

up were and sewn together or just made

of Rags that were selling together

so yeah you can uh you can put on Monk's

robes just to get used to wearing most

robes if you want to as long as you're

not trying to pass yourself off as an

ordained monk if you're not one

so I'll just move on to keep the

winnia's next question here is it

obligatory for a monk to answer a

layperson's question about the Dharma no

he doesn't have to answer questions if

he doesn't want to he does sort of have

a duty to answer people's questions

about dhamma especially on uposita day

you know the full moon day the half moon

days the new moon day

um you know he does have somewhat of a responsibility for guiding lay people they come to him in good faith but I mean if they're not respectful of dhamma he's not only not under an obligation to answer their questions but he's actually forbidden to answer their questions if they're just being you know they're being sarcastic and disrespectful you know asking these leading sarcastic cynical kind of questions or you know it could be some Soldier who's got a gun in his hands asking questions you tell him take your shoes off take your hat off Put the gun down and and I'll answer your questions you sure respect for dhamma then then I'll shirodama

so yeah I mean it's not any kind of rule

that I mean some monks they just avoid

people and just live out in the woods

and uh there there is a suta I think

it's the greater discourse on voidness

in the in the Maja manikaya where it

does say that a monk

um and the only thing he's he should say

to lay people is just politely asking

them to go away

if they come to him you know when he's

in the forest or whatever

so it's it's not required although some

sutas do indicate that you do have kind

of a responsibility to guide the lay

people because you're the one who's

cultivating the wisdom you should share

the wisdom to some degree not so much

that you're just being harassed with

visitors all the time you know you do

have to emphasize you know solitary

practice and quiet peace meditation

but um

so it's it's good to answer questions if

you can

but not so much so that you don't have

time for for serious Dharma practice and

uh again if they're being disrespectful

to dhamma or to you as the

representative of it then uh yeah you

shouldn't answer their questions you

should tell them yeah act in a more

respectful Manner and then I can answer

your questions

so I'll just move on to keep doing this

next question here is a monk allowed to

wear socks inside of a monster

technically a monk is not allowed to

wear socks period

a monk is not allowed to wear Layman's

clothing so he's allowed to wear three

robes

and really that's that's in the belt to

hold the lower robe on and that's really

the technical I mean strictly speaking

that is it

I don't know if they've got special monk

socks I know they've got special monk

vests and so forth there's a thing

called an antiguite and they wear them a
lot in Thailand too I don't know what
the name is for them in Thailand but
it's it's like a vest some of them only
have like one shoulder it's like a sort
of like a tank top with only one strap
that you can wear under your robe and a
lot of monks if they're doing work
outside like uh you know raking leaves
or something they'll just wear that and
not not bother wearing the upper rope
but it was so hot I'd just go bare
chested inside the monastery
um let's see here
what is a monk allowed to wear socks
inside of moiser technically a monk is
not allowed to wear socks if he's living

in like Denmark or or Canada where where

it's like well below freezing in the

wintertime yeah it might be willing it

might be a good idea for him to take the

hit just so that he doesn't get frostbit

toes and start losing toes

all right

so uh I think I'll just move on to keep

winning his next question here

would it be against the dhamma if the

Burmese stop the islamiz is it

islamization of their country by not

harming the Muslims physically like for

example by destroying their mosques at

night when they are empty

well I mean destroying a mosque at night

when it's empty you know it's not

killing anybody but you're destroying

somebody else's property which is

yep

pretty much like stealing you know

you're depriving them of their property

deliberately

so yeah that's burning mosques is also

not a good Buddhist uh ethical way of

minimizing Islam

so

let's see yeah I mean the Burmese could

stop all right try to stop the

islamization of their country is

islamization

um by not harming the Muslim physically

yeah I mean that's what they should do

and there's different ways of going

about it I remember

um that same monk that was telling me

about uh the uh the riot in metila where

the the Muslims cut the Monk's neck

uh he was he was actually involved and

there was a Muslim school that was

started up just like a block from our

monastery

and it turned out that they didn't have

the permits and everything you know they

just went ahead and built it and so he

and this other monk actually reported

this place and had it shut down just

because it was they opened it illegally

so I mean that kind of thing or just you

know informing the people not

rabble-rousing you know not like

spreading hate or anything like that but

just you know educating the people and

you know advising them to do some

peaceful non-cooperation or some such

yeah that's about all you could really

do as a Buddhist I think not in sen meta

so I think I'll just uh move on to the

next question this is from Austin

and Austin says the mind is so

fascinating how it can twist your inner

dialogue into a nightmare and yet even

with me knowing this

knowing the conditioned existence of it

all

I still can't seem to put my depression

aside any tips thank you yeah depression
is a difficult one I mean I've got
depression
um like genetically from both sides of
the family but I've got people on both
sides of my family that were prone to
chronic depression including my mother
and including my father's father
um so I do have some experience with
that I have I have undergone some
considerable bouts of depression in my
life none real recently lately uh which
is good it it's like recently it's you
can just feel yourself being sort of
contracted or expanded you know my mind
does kind of expand and contract but

um the more mindfulness you practice the
more you can see the early warning signs
so to speak and do something about it
but I know for a fact it's like if
you're depressed and your mind is
contracted your meditation sucks worse
than any other time you know the more
expanded you are the easier meditation
is and you know you can be mindful of
mental States more easily mindful of
anything more easily but when you get
into this contracted state of depression
then just trying to concentrate is like
trying to balance some marble on the tip
of a sharpened pencil it just doesn't
work
and so the time when you need it the

most might be the time when it's most
difficult to be mindful
so I mean I do have certain things like
in the past if I'd start feeling
depressed just sleep a little more and
always accomplish something positive
every day it doesn't have to be anything
important you can just be like cleaning
your room washing the dishes just do
something constructive and positive
every day and just keep reminding
yourself that you know it's not me it's
like a contracted mental state
and don't take I mean just be aware
you're in a contracted or depressed
mental state and don't take the thoughts

that arise too seriously I mean you

should never take them fully seriously

anyway just because they're not you you

know they're just mental States arising

through the force of comma or whatever

so so uh

yeah just be mindful to the best you can

maybe sleep a little extra if you can

and uh you know always accomplish

something positive that day

and try your best not to take it out on

anybody else

you know if you're in a bad mood you

know it's like when I'm in a bad mood I

just try to like mind my own business I

become quiet you know I don't want to

like vent on anybody else or take it out

on anybody else

but aside from that I mean to the extent

that you could be mindful of it you know

it's like in the mahasari patana suta it

does say that you know when your mind is

expanded you know it's expanded when

your mind is contracted you know it's

contracted and that's mindfulness you

know even if you know that you're not

being very mindful that's still

mindfulness is sort of like what I was

saying earlier to to the extent that you

know that you have delusion to that same

extent is not in delusion anymore it

might still be illusion but so I mean

yeah I do feel for you and uh I hope

that your depression lifts and when your depression does lift and you're able to to practice better and then that's the time to do it because sometimes when you need it the most it's the times when you can do it so it's good to be like in the habit so that you've got like this armor to protect you

and uh I used I was really depressed if you once as a junior mom because it's uh and then once I'd been a monk for about 10 years and that was like the last really bad depression that I went through

that I can remember

so good luck to you sir and I'll move on to the next question this is from SS

and SS says I almost said SS stands for
but it's it's like somebody's initials
it's it's nothing it's nothing uh nasai
so SS says regarding that part where
Ponyo says that the Hindu Buddhist
Heavens are like Celestial versions of
Indian palaces and shakyamuni's time one
view would be to claim that these Realms
don't exist that they're products of
their culture projecting their values
into the Afterlife another would be to
say that they exist aren't exactly like
that but we're so described to Indians
as a skillful means I know there's still
that they exist are exactly like that
and even non-indian converts will wind

up in a very Indian coded heaven after
they die some would find it odd that
people living on a different planet in a
different culpa for instance would be
reborn in a heaven resembling Iron Age
India or a Heavenly Jerusalem or any
Earthbound culturally specific heaven
for that matter a fourth I think
possible of you would be the heavens
exist but don't have a definite form
they are rather constructed by the
Collective Karma of the aspirants and
resemble that to which they aspire to
thus Indian Heaven would appear Indian
Etc they are real places as far as real
goes in samsara to those born there not
solipsistic dreams their form is stable

cannot be changed at will like a lucid dream as the dev is delighting in their Creations might be able to do in their own Realms and exist for a very long time I think swedenborg has a similar account it's all speculation but we are talking about sex in heaven after all anyway what do you think so this was a comment under my sex in Heaven video which was that clickbaity one I did with Brian because he wanted to do a clickbaity one with like titties and stuff in it I can guess

so yeah I think uh SS is onto something here like

um

one view would be that claim that these Realms don't exist at all their products of their closer protecting their values are in the afterlife

um yeah I I wouldn't I wouldn't endorse that one that's what the the cynical materialists would endorse I suppose or members of other religions who say only our Heaven is the real heaven some they might say something like that so another would be to say that they exist aren't exactly like that but were so described to Indians as a skillful means yeah I think there is some truth to that one that I mean you can say that there are Heaven Realms there are there are Realms or modes of existence higher than the

human mode or the human level

I mean that's that shouldn't be too hard

to swallow considering the universe is

infinite not just the astronomical

universe but you know the universe which

contains all astronomical universes and

everything else

so

yeah there's going to be an infinite

number of of higher levels than ours

so let's see another still they exist or

exactly like that and even non-indian

converts will wind up in a very Indian

coded heaven after they die yeah I don't

think so

so and then the fourth which SS thinks

is possible would be the heavens exist

but don't have a definite form they are

rather constructed by the collective

Karma of the aspirants and resemble that

to which they aspire to thus Indian

Heaven would appear Indian Etc they're

real places as far as Rio goes in

samsara to those born there Etc yeah I

think that's that's possible too I think

two and four here are both valid and

correct to a large degree

so

yeah I think it's sort of like

near-death experiences you have a

near-death experience where there's sort

of like the stereotype where you find

you you know you're almost dead you know

you're drowning you've been in a
motorcycle accident you're on a hospital
table under you know being operated on
whatever it is
and then you you realize that you're
floating up above the the body your own
body you're looking down seeing the the
body lying there and then you just float
up you might spend some time looking
around and noticing things that you can
then recount when you come back and then
you can go up towards this bright light
and then you go through the light and
then when you go through the light you
find yourself in like this Heaven realm
with a guide there and the guide if not

an old friend or relative is going to be

some religious figure

from your own religion as you're

generally going to see

kind of it's going to be like a dream

world where it's like your own

expectations are being projected into

this world

and I think Heaven Realms can be that

way too

that I mean any realm I mean even our

realm you know it's like there there

could be all sorts of different possible

uh Realms at this at this level you know

where you have the same you know level

of Consciousness approximately as a

human and there's I mean there's lots of

variation even among individual humans

so because of our karmic predisposition

we were just born into this particular

version but it's no more necessarily

materialistic than the heaven Realms are

if that means anything

so yeah I think uh I'm inclined to agree

with uh numbers two and four that uh see

number two is

uh

uh they exist is that

okay

let's see another would be to say they

exist aren't exactly like that but we're

so described to Indians as the skillful

means and I think to some degree that's

true it's like in in Burmese pictures of the Buddhist Heavens the the gods and goddesses are wearing essentially the the outfits of the royal courts of like Royal Burma like back when there were kings and queens of Burma you know they'd be dressed like Prime Ministers and so forth you know they'd be wearing these curly q epaulettes on there in these weird it's like the the male the gods would be wearing like these Pagoda shaped hats and the goddesses would be wearing something that was kind of like a Flash Gordon helmet and you know they just got these long flowing gowns and so forth that yeah I mean that's just a cultural interpretation superimposed

upon I have been around

and then uh his his number four here is

uh

that the heavens exists but don't have a

definite form they're rather constructed

by the collective Karma of the aspirants

and resemble that to which they aspire

to yeah so even if

um you do have this culturally

conditioned expectation I think Heaven

is still going to be different from that

partly because the culturally

conditioned expectation is like sort of

a crude Normy human expectation and when

you're no longer a crude Normy human

you're

your your point of view is going to be more expansive it's going to be very different

so yeah two and four so I'll just move on to the next question here which is the last question of them all the last one and this is from Zen Blues

in the Zen Blues says weird that I had a dream that I died and was just floating around the Earth plane thinking and meeting other ghosts I have had a series of nightmares about a violent incident occurring in the house I live in and the dream came true last week though the violence never came to pass luckily any ideas of what is going on seems like we have premonitions during the Deep dream

states

um yeah it's possible you can have

premonitions during deep dream states

um it may be that most of them are the

dreams that you don't even remember when

you get up the next morning but it's

it's there it's like you have access to

deeper levels of consciousness when

you're asleep you may have certain act

access to psychic powers when you're

asleep but you know it's it's like this

really like a latent level

and so you might have

um like precognitive dreams

when you're when you're sound asleep and

for the most part you won't remember

them and unless maybe they appear later
as like a Deja Vu or something
um it could be I mean he says that he
kept having this these nightmares about
a violent incident occurring in the
house and then the Dream came true
although the violence never came to pass
it could be that he was sort of
the Zen Blues here was sort of
processing I mean it was first of all it
would be like the pre precognition of
this big bad thing that was you know
that was liable to happen and then in a
way he was sort of like processing it
working through it in the dream state
until finally he was able to resolve it
sufficiently that it didn't do its worst

you know it sort of uh mollified it

what's the term where you make it less

bad

so I think that's that's possible I

think that kind of thing can really

happen

um

I was gonna say something else and I

can't remember what it was

seen a series of nightmares about a

violent incident occurring in the house

I live in and the dream came true last

week though the violence never came to

pass

um

yeah I was going to say something else

but yeah I do think well yeah I remember
now ramdas somebody asked womdas once
you know should we take dreams seriously
you know it's like in like in ancient
times for example people believed that
Gods would implant dreams you know
there's like the god of Dreams Morpheus
I think is who it was and he implant
dreams into your mind you know because
they were like Divine messages but I
think biologically the main purpose of
Dreams is just to like organize
information that you've acquired a lot
of them just seem like spandering spam
dreams that don't necessarily mean
anything I mean a lot of them are just
like absurd

and I think most of my dreams are along
those lines whereas you're sort of
acting out like hopes and fears stuff
that's on your mind you know you're
thinking about it at night and spinning
it into these narratives but uh I do
think that uh like precognitive dreams
even though I can't remember having
woken up with a precognitive dream
remembering one and then knowing what
was going to happen in the future
because of it we're expecting it to
happen
that uh that's never happened to me that
I that I'm aware of but I do think that
it can and does happen and it may be

that having the series of nightmares
about the violent incident
um and then the incident happens except
it's not as bad as in the nightmares I
do think it could have been some sort of
processing where you're working through
the events in some karmic way that then
um I still can't remember the word of
I'm trying to come up with to mollified
to make it to attenuate the seriousness
of it you know it's giving you an
attempt to deal with it before it
happens so that when it does happen you
know like your karma is modified and
it's just not necessary for the worst to
happen anymore I do think that that is
possible

and so that was the last question and so

uh

if you have any questions and you think

I might be able to answer them

you know especially if they're about

Buddhism or meditation or monks or just

me personally philosoph Western

philosophy Eastern philosophy that sort

of thing religion in general I tend to

be fairly well versed in

if you think I can answer the question

feel free to ask in the comments below

if you have access to the Discord server

you can ask them there if you have

access to the Subscribe Star channel you

can ask them there if you do have

questions I I advise you to ask them

under a q a video and rather than under

some other video because I might forget

to look under some other video I always

look under the Q a videos because that's

the main place that in the the Discord

server or the main two places for uh

finding the questions

so if you do have questions ask them you

know in under a q a or in the Q a room

of the Discord server or you can message

me on the Subscribe store that sort of

thing and

um like And subscribe if you haven't

already look at the url url links below

the video

and uh be happy

hello and welcome to episode 57 of question and answer I am your host Ponyo bossa and this is my toothpick and I'm going to be clinging to this toothpick throughout this episode I think because I was given pork ribs for dinner and when you eat pork I mean ajan cha talks about this even when you eat pork it's like little pieces of pork get stuck between your teeth and it's you can just feel it and it takes forever to get them out sometimes so this is here and this is my beverage which also can help both line glandular secretions don't you know

ah

and I have the veritable [__] ton of

questions today people have been very

curious and inquisitive over the past

week

and so we've got the uh

a boatload you might say

I mean you got we got more questions

today than you can shake a stick at in

fact the number of sticks required to

shake it all these questions would be

more than you could shake a stick at

so I suppose

instead of lame attempts of humor I

should just

start answering questions

God I really it gets they just get in

there you know so anyway the very first

question is one that I forgot to ask

last time sometimes it's like my

scrolling fingers are just too muscular

or something and I just shoot past the

question as I'm scrolling down

and so uh

this one was asked by CEO of action

um last time and I just

overlooked it I just skipped over it

accidentally wasn't intentional I

guarantee you

and CEO of action

says can you explain the difference

between the nibana element with

remainder and without remainder because

it says nibana element with remainder

means that the aroha experiences

everything that is pleasurable and

painful but does not have greed hatred

and delusion does that mean to

experience the full nibana element they

have to be in some kind of meditative

state is there a name for when an

aurahan that has experienced this full

nibana is beyond everything

like a name for this state

is there a name for one in aurohan that

is experiencing this full name this

Beyond everything like a name for this

state

I'll try to refrain from being a grammar

Nazi on on this one also why is the

normal walking around experience of an R

haunt also called nibbana well this is
kind of a complicated question actually
on the difference between the nibana
element with remainder and without
remainder is essentially you've got
someone who becomes enlightened then
their enlightened but they still have
like the residue of Karma and they still
have mental States going on and then the
uh the Nirvana element without remainder
is after the enlightened being die so
it'd be like Pari nibana and this this
part of the question anyway reminds me
of the last few verses
which just threw mere chance
I happen to have right here

and so

there's the very famous koan like

description of an enlightened mental

state which the commentarial tradition

says is not a description of an

enlightened mental state but the context

of the suta makes it clear that it is

where

the Buddha says with regard to the

enlightened being

he has no perception of perception he

has no perception of non-perception he

is not without perception he has no

perception of void

for one who was attained thus form

becomes void for founded in perception

is diversifying designation or a punches

on cough

so then the person he's talking to says

that which we asked you have related to

us let us ask you something more please

tell us this do indeed some intelligent

ones here declare that the highest

purity of the spirit is to that extent

or do they declare that it is even more

than that

so he's asking you know if there's a

higher state even than this state of

Enlightenment that the Buddha just

explained in this strange you know

riddle-like way

um and which the commentaries say he's

not even trying to explain Enlightenment

even though obviously the context
implies that he is so then the Buddha
says indeed some intelligent ones here
do declare that the highest purity of
the spirit is to that extent but then
some of them claiming to be Adept
declare an attainment in which nothing
that was taken up remains so it's like
you know all the past karma is just
completely exhausted you know there's no
more stuff coming up which presumably
would mean that the person is dead
and then he says so having understood
these to be dependent the sage an
investigator having understood the ways
of dependence a released one having
understood does not come to contention

the Wise One does not attain to this or

that existence

so one problem with me answering this

question is I have to answer it twice

once in accordance with Orthodox

tradition and then once in accordance

with my best understanding based upon my

own experience and my own attempts at

making sense of what the texts say

because I have to admit abhidham and the

commentarial Traditions really do not do

a very good job of that in my opinion

so let's see here he says uh can you

explain the difference between the

Bonnet element with remainder and

without remainder one without remainder

means you're dead the enlightened being is dead with remainder means the enlightened being is still alive as a general rule because it says Nirvana element with remainder means that the arhan experiences everything that is pleasurable and painful but does not have greed hatred and delusion does that mean to experience the full nibana element they have to be in some kind of meditative state

well according to Orthodox tradition even an enlightened being isn't in a state of nibbana all the time he goes into a meditative State and then he experiences nibana for like a trillionth of a second

but he can do that whenever he feels

like it

but still I mean that

I mean it really is not

compatible with what texts like the

kalahui wadasuta say because that koan

like definition of the enlightened mind

is presumably

only continuous

you're always in a state of niblana and

that would be my interpretation also

that an enlightened being isn't just

experiencing nibana in like momentary

flashes when he decides that he wants to

experience nibana or when it when he

just is appropriate for him to

experience it but rather I mean he's
just always in that state because he has
transmuted perception into its
underlying essence of reality
so let's see is there a name for one in
our hunt that is experiencing this full
nibana that's beyond everything like a
name for this state
also why is the normal walking around
experience if it are hot also called
nibana well in older texts maybe and
according my understanding like I just
said the aura Hunt is pro I mean his
mind will be
in a state of Nevada because he is
directly experiencing Ultimate Reality
he's still going through the motions but

it's it's it's so hard to explain this I
mean maybe I should have answered this
question last time so it wouldn't be the
very first one on the list this time
because again you're having to deal with
this paradoxical State like Buddha say
that Nirvana and samsara are ultimately
the same it's sort of like
Nirvana is the essence of reality and
like samsara is just the forms that this
Essence assumes or seems to assume
so whether I've answered this second
half of this question or not
I'm not exactly sure
um because again to further complicate
matters the Orthodox tradition says one

thing and I say something else

and you can just take your pick so

let's see is there a name for when an

aura that is experiencing this

vulnerable that's beyond everything like

a name for this state

um yeah

the the grammar kind of throws me off

because I can be a grammar Nazi at times

but um yeah with according to Orthodox

tradition I mean the state that I think

he's referring to I mean it'd just be

like and then like this state of being

an enlightened being

uh gosh you know just being in Aura hunt

that would be it I suppose

so I think I'll just move on to CEO box

ncpot zidane's next question because as

I say I've got the proverbial [__] ton

of questions here

so he says does the Buddha ever teach

nibana as the Ultimate Reality well the

Buddha

he tried to avoid teaching nibana as

anything I mean that's one thing that

the the Buddhists the early Buddhists

especially and to some degree the majama

kab Buddhists afterwards were really

good at just not reifying nibana abidama

turned it into a just one of many

ultimate realities which is is

ridiculous in my opinion

but um

I mean there's implications that it is
like Indiana you know there's just one
truth and not another that sort of a
thing so I mean the one truth would
presumably be the Ultimate Reality
um
but nibana I mean talking about nibana
is difficult I mean just because
human languages aren't designed to talk
about what is off the scale what is you
know is they're not designed to talk
about the content and thing in itself
you know they're the languages were
designed to talk about you know what you
want for dinner and you know where where
the the hospital is and you know this
worldly practical material stuff

and uh or feelings you know my knee

itches or something

and uh so I mean it is good to bear in

mind that

there are two aspects of Nirvana even

though Nirvana's Ultimate Reality but I

mean there's two approaches to it one is

metaphysical like when abidamma says you

know nibana is an Ultimate Reality

and two is is ethical you know the

attaining of Enlightenment would be also

nibana in fact nibana is almost a verb

it's like a verbal noun it means blowing

out

knee is out and The Barn hours like

Nirvana is blowing out

so it's like a fire blowing out which um
I mean it's it's so hard to talk about
it really is because if nibana were just
the principle of cessation which is like
an orthodox definition of nibana then I
mean cessation lasts one moment at most
and I mean it can't be like constantly
ceasing it just ceases and that's it
some sorrow I mean or greed hate and
delusion or or suffering or or whatever
whatever it is that you're uh that you
are bringing an end to when you become
enlightened
so there is implications of nibana as
Ultimate Reality but he doesn't just
flat out say it because the Buddha
doesn't really flat out say much of

anything about nabana especially in the earlier texts later texts they'll start talking about it more and then you get into Mahayana Buddhism and they're talking about it more but um I think in the beginning the Buddha was very scrupulous about not reifying nibana that I mean if we talk about nibana at all it would be you know the state of blowing out you know the state of becoming enlightened which itself would not be well defined because you can't Define it very well anyway

so

yeah it is implied but I mean really nibana is not

it is not equated with with anything

else really

so I think I'll just move on to CEO

batch and see about this internet's

questions and his next question and he's

been asking some subtle and difficult

questions lately

and uh I mean mainly it's difficult to

just put an answer into words

because as I say Nirvana is just off the

scale

it is not in samsara it is not part of

samsara

so the next question is

you say there was a there was probably

no perfect sages but what about the

Buddha he seems like the perfect Sage to

me with wisdom greater than all that
have ever lived sure he probably wasn't
omniscient but nothing makes me doubt
his Enlightenment meanwhile the same
can't be said about most of these Hindu
gurus who are practically advocating
nothing different than the devotionalism
of other religions and don't even have
control of their emotions or what's in
their pants well I mean the Buddha says
even and nobody has complete control
over their emotions or or of their body
um I mean that's one of the signs of no
self you know like the anata supposedly
the Buddha's second discourse after his
Enlightenment because his first

disciples to become fully enlightened
he's saying you just do not have
complete control you cannot say with
regard to any of the five condas let it
be this way and let it not be that way
and have it consistently happen because
you're really not in control of that
so it's more a matter of mindfulness of
what arises rather than controlling what
arises
so let's see you see there are probably
no perfect stages but what about the
Buddha well we don't know what the
Buddha was really like
I mean I'm reminded of one of the early
Christian Saints I think it was Saint
Benedict where he wrote an autobiography

and he confessed that he enjoyed talking
to young women more than he enjoyed
talking to old women
and his followers you know the the
benedictines consider that to be too
scandalously honest you know he was he
was too admitting like what could be
considered a fault about himself and so
that was edited out of his of Saint
Benedict's autobiography for centuries
and I think the Buddha was somewhat
similar or he could have been
the man lived 25 centuries ago we don't
know exactly what he was like any more
than we know exactly what Socrates was
like

Socrates is a fairly good example or a

good

comparison

because

we have some fair Fairly solid ideas

about who Socrates was and where he

lived and when he lived and what he was

like to some degree

but then you have people like Plato and

xenophon who are

describing Socrates and Plato and

xenophon there are two main sources of

information about Socrates and they're

describing essentially two different

people

I mean there's overlap but I mean there

were definitely not the same guy that

they were describing and even in ancient
times they knew that most of what Plato
said was said by Socrates was really
just Plato's words coming out of sort of
a fictionalized socrates's mouth and so
the early Buddhists
um you know they were very keen on
honoring and glorifying their teacher
and so anything that the Buddha did like
maybe he cracked a joke every now and
then maybe he laughed even
but nowadays or even you know relatively
early on they're saying that a fully
enlightened being cannot laugh or cry
which I'm skeptical of
so

um

the Buddha was a sage but the thing is

from a samsaric point of view there's

always going to be quirks you can you

can you can criticize you know like you

know he abandoned his wife and child you

know that's this sort of thing or the

the comment he made about the the pretty

young woman

who you know what is this full of urine

and dung I would not want to touch it

even my foot I mean you can you can read

the biographies of saints and sages and

I mean if you have got like a cynical

eye or you're just looking for Scandal

you can find it you can find dirt and

you can just fling it if you want

and I mean the same could be done with

the Buddha even with his

his biography is sanitized and like

glorified still I mean there's stuff you

can find fault with if you really want

to find fault with something and

um I'm sure there's a lot of non-budhas

for example who have taken like

religions of the world and like classes

in in world religions or something and

then

you know they can read this stuff about

the Buddha and then they can just like

pick out the stuff that's like now there

you see he was an enlightened being he

was a huckster or whatever

so I really do think it's it's sort of
like the first question where a CEO of
actions where it's like
you still have these at the samsaric
level you still have all these human
quirks and human foibles and so forth
because you're human
but it's not that you have completely
gone beyond that like in a samsaric
sense you just transcended it you know
you're not identified with that anymore
that's not you I mean you don't consider
it to be you anymore it's just nature
taking its course
that's I mean that's what true wisdom is
it's not like completely controlling
your behavior so that you behave in a

perfectly saintly manner all the time
is that you are mindful of what is
arising and you're not identifying with
it at all you're not clinging to it it's
just nature taking its course and
because of a lot of spiritual practice
to get you to that state you've got good
habits set in you know you just there
are certain things that are pretty easy
to do because you've been resisting the
urge to do it for years and years and
you've been mindful of the urges and
they've been weakened through not
feeding them you know not reinforcing
them
so an enlightened being will be more

saintly in his behavior than the average
guy but still I mean if you want to find
fault you can find fault it's still I
mean their behavior is still samsaric
because the behavior is a some sorry
phenomenon
so let's see here meanwhile the same
can't be said about most of those Hindu
gurus who are practically advocating
nothing different than devotionalism
neem curly Baba his pictures up there he
worshiped Hanuman the monkey god
but I mean Miracles just happen around
him like
it was almost a common place and he
would look at you and he would see right
through you and like Ram Das used to say

the better you knew him the more you
realize there was nobody there it was
just like a mirror reflecting your own
Karma back at you and if you had
rascally Karma you'd have a rascally
Karma reflected back at you
so I mean it's it's not so much thinking
the right stuff and saying the right
stuff you don't have to be a
sophisticated philosopher to be
enlightened you just have to be detached
Mindful and detached
and then whatever comes up as a result
of cultural conditioning or past Karma
or whatever it's just nature taking its
course and you're not involved in that

you know it's just that's not you

anymore you don't identify with it it's

just

I mean you're just detached

so I think I'll just move on to silvax

and sipad zidane's next question here

in the story of the kid how did his

mother renounce if the terravada none

order died out and the beating he got

sounds brutal I bet he wished he was

never found by that monk maybe that's

when he truly comprehended dukkha and

realized cessation is better than

samsara well this is from I think it was

the previous q a where I was talking

about this little kid whose mother was a

nun I mean she became a nun after she

had the kid and she didn't want to have

to raise a kid as a nun so she just and

she just figured I mean she was very

religious apparently she just wanted him

to become a monk so she sent him to a

monastery this little kid who just

wanted to be a little kid I think his

name was po nandana

uh that was his his uh posted though his

like uh

it's like a pretty novice they wore

white they were white robes and shaved

their head but they could still handle

money and so forth

and uh

yeah he ran away because he just wanted

to be a kid you know and uh finally

um the senior monk who was you know

responsible for him found him I mean he

was out searching for him day after day

for like two weeks until he finally

found him dressed in rags living in this

tea shop

and uh he he brought him back to the

monastery and then they sent him to the

nunnery where his mother was and the

Mother Superior just gave him a really

really hard beating

and uh I guess the question here is that

um

how did his mother renounce that the

terravada nun order died out was because

she wasn't a fully ordained bikuni she

was what is called in Burma Shin which

is an a preceptor or ten precept none

there are lots of those I can't remember

what I think they're called Machi in

Thailand where they mostly wear white I

think

so even though the fully ordained nuns

went extinct centuries ago

although there there have been attempts

to revive them mainly for the for like

politically correct gender equality and

so forth

but still there are nuns they're just

not fully ordained

and they generally keep you know uh

only like eight or ten precepts plus um

what you might call extra precepts of

just you know the uniform and the shaved

head and all that

so let's see

so that's the main question here that's

the only question mark how did how did

his mother renounce of the terravada

non-order died out well there's still

unordained nons or semi-ordained

dealerships

so see the buildings got sounds brutal I

bet he wished he was never found by well

he was getting beaten I assumed he

wished he was never found by the monk

but I assume he gradually

you know he reconciled himself to it and

was realized that he was better off not

living like a hobo under a bridge or you
know in a tea shop where he's still
dressed in rags and so forth eventually
things got better for him I assume so
we'll just move on to seal of action
sipad ziderno's next question
which is
I would personally never ordain because
I want to be there for my parents how
did you come to terms when your own
parents passed away and you weren't
there in their time of need I would have
lived with regret my whole life and then
this this comment was under the the in
the comments of the previous q a and
then someone replied to his comment by

saying a very timely and pertinent

question when Western and East Asian

societies are experiencing declining

birth rates aging populations and the

inversion of demographic pyramids

foreign

I guess the main question here is let's

see

how did you become how did I become that

is

how did I come to terms when my own

parents passed away and I weren't there

in their time of need well I mean and

then he says he would have lived with

regret his entire his whole life well

one thing that I've learned

I mean I really I really have taken this

to heart and it's one of the most

important things a Buddhist should

realize is that regret is always Bad

Karma in poly it's called kukucha it is

unskillful it's

always makes things worse

so if you do something wrong to

acknowledge you did something wrong and

do what you can if possible to rectify

you wrong that's fine you know to

acknowledge you did something wrong and

to like

determine that you will try to do better

in the future that's completely fine but

to feel regret and remorse just makes

things worse it's just bad karma you

shouldn't do it so I've taken that to

heart and I mean it sometimes it makes

me seem kind of inhuman I suppose people

have gotten upset with me more than once

because of that but still I mean it's

just just the way it is Regret remorse

is Bad Karma from a Buddhist point of

view

don't do it

and it's just I've become almost immune

to regret I think it would have been

nice if I could have been a better son

to my mother especially my father had a

good pension he had a wife who adored

him he was taken care of you know I

didn't have to worry so much about him

my mother on the other hand made lots of

mistakes in her life and

yeah I mean she did not

she did not have a happy Serene old age

other than just when she's on the couch

watching TV or something

and uh yeah it would have been nice if

if I could have been a better son to her

and I was in Burma when both of my

parents died

so I mean

yeah

let's see

okay so that's I answered that question

so I'm just going to move on to this

question this is from the Spanish

Inquisition

and this also he asked more than a week
ago I think but he asked it in an older
q a and then when I'm going through the
previous q a like you know compiling
questions for the list I didn't see it
because it was in the Q a before that I
mean he asked the question like after
I'd already done the Q a after that so I
didn't see it so anyway the Spanish
Inquisition says
in meditation are you supposed to
actually say in your mind that's long
breath or short breath or breathing in
breathing out or just observing those
without thinking these words
well I have to admit like in the Sadi
patano suta and in the anapana suta it

says you know when you breathe in you know I am breathing in and when you are when you're breathing out you know I'm breathing out when you're breathing in a long breath you know I'm breathing in a long breath when you're breathing in a short breath you know I'm breathing in a short breath

Etc

and that is just a heck of a lot of thinking and you're never going to get any kind of deep meditative States you're never going to get into deep meditation if you're if you're just thinking like in sentences like this you know I'm breathing in long I'm breathing

in short

so I think it was a lack of

sophistication in communication skills

to some degree when they're composing

this

I'm not exactly sure why they did it but

it's not the best advice I mean really

they should say when you breathe in long

you know you're breathing in long and

you breathe in short you know you're

breathing in short when you're you know

you're breathing in fast you know you're

breathing in fast breathing slow you

know you're breathing in slow I mean you

just essentially what it's saying is you

know you know the qualities of the

breath

so

yeah you're better off not thinking in

terms of I'm breathing in long you know

that this is a short breath this is a

long breath anything like that

um for relative beginners up until like

intermediate levels I mean you can say

breathing in breathing out I mean if if

your mind is still active enough that

you need some kind of busy work to keep

it occupied so it's not just drifting or

floating all over the place just

drifting away from meditation you know

it's like if you've got an active mind

you need an active meditation to keep

the active mind occupied

and then as the Mind settles down then

you get a more subtle quieter calmer

kind of meditation

because I mean if you just stick to

breathing in breathing out breathing and

breathing out you're never going to get

past words unless maybe you just start

being mindful of

of the thought the the words themselves

you know as perceptions or thoughts or

whatever without really paying attention

to the content

um

so

um yeah you generally start off labeling

but even breathing in Long breathing in

short I mean that's excessive labeling

in my opinion even beginners really I
mean generally they're not instructed to
do that just breathing in breathing out
and then I mean you just you use that
almost as a mantra just a way of
occupying your mind and keeping it from
drifting away from the primary object
which is
the breath of the nostrils as a general
rule
so I mean I'm I'm getting all
complicated on this relatively simple
question here
so I'll just read it again in meditation
are you supposed to actually say in your
mind that's long breath short breath

breathing and breathing out or just

observing those without thinking these

words okay

um breathing and breathing out would be

like the beginning level anything more

than that would be excessive unless you

really have a hyperactive mind and you

need to just label everything especially

at first until your mind settles down

but once your mind settles down enough

then you dispense with all labels and

you just watch the phenomenon now you're

just aware of it

so we'll just move on to the Spanish

Inquisition the next question

um oh

okay he's asked me to show a postcard

behind me on the bookshelf just a minute

let's see here right there

okay

and uh the Spanish inquisition's next

question is and please can you for the

next q a put my postcard somewhere

behind you on the bookshelf or wherever

as it turns out it's right there

next question

it's a very nice postcard too by the way

next question there are some rules that

came of basically monks having too much

or maybe too expensive stuff

deliberately cutting and sewing robes is

a good example

what is your take on monks having

laptops and iPhones while maybe in an

exit Village in rural Burma or Thailand

some honest Working Man may look at

those monks and think those beakus are

more wealthy than we are I suspect that

if the the Buddha lived today he would

allow socks or warm clothes from monks

but he would and I'm almost sure of this

not allow

one thousand dollar iPhones or laptops

and smoking cigarettes

so let's see what is your take on lungs

having laptops and iPhones well it's

it's even more than that like in Burma

a lot of monks literally the word biku

means beggar become

he begs for alms he is therefore he is a

biku

and still I mean these Beggars you know

these humble Beggars going Barefoot

silently through the village with their

homes Bowl they'll have servants with

them

and even back at the monster they got

servants they got attendance attending

to their needs and so forth which is

more than the average subsistence farmer

can afford and always made me feel

uncomfortable you know I didn't like

having servants you know I'd send them

all because like they're a few times

when a servants want to come along and

you know carry the heavy stuff or or

something I just say no man it's just
embarrassing for a beggar to have a
servant
but let's see with regard to and then I
mean so it's it's sort of this weird tug
of war on the one hand the suit is
themselves say a monk should have eight
requisites you know just just as little
stuff as you can you know you can just
carry it around with him
well everything he owns he can just pick
it up you know put it on his back and
just start walking
but like in a place like Burma or just
about any devoutly Buddhist country
people consider monks to be exalted
beings you know they're holy men and you

get Merit from offering them stuff and
it makes them feel bad if
they see a monk who's doesn't have a
servant or he's just got crappy stuff
you know just cheap you know bottom of
the line stuff you know it makes them
feel like they're not supporting him
enough they're not you know it's like
they're getting demerit from letting
this monk you know make do with you know
the second rate stuff and so
um it's like the strictest monks are the
ones that people want to spoil rotten
the most because they get the most Merit
for helping like the really saintly
monks I mean is if you're helping a

rascal lack sloppy monk you still get

Merit but if you're helping a saint you

get way more Merit for that and so

they're trying to like feed them the

best food and give them the best stuff

and and they just consider that to be

proper

although the non-budists or the like the

the lukewarm skeptical cynical types

will say yeah look at these monks you

know they live like kings

and they don't have to do anything you

know

so I mean it goes both ways

um with regard to monks having laptops

and iPhones my last

let's see maybe my last 10 years as a

monk I did have a laptop it was the

first laptop I ever owned I got after

I've been a monk for 20 years or so

um and it's very useful I mean instead

of carrying around an entire bookcase

like the entire polytopitica you can

just have it all on on on the computer

you know and there's no way you can

carry an entire polytopitic around with

you in Burma in the Burmese Edition it's

40 volumes like the first those

the blue uh like

after the very first book on the top

shelf there which is the poly English

dictionary there are several books after

that that are part of the polytopitica

the Burmese polytopitica and it's just

40 of those size of books and you just

couldn't carry him around with you but

on a computer you can uh it does have a

certain advantages

but still I mean it's it's this weird

situation where uh probably

um yeah um like if the Buddha were alive

and he was still like an ancient Indian

yeah he'd say just none of that's

necessary just sit under a tree with a

few possessions

but nowadays I mean it's uh

communication and everything

it's it's kind of a problematic

situation and the the the iPhones yeah I

had a crappy uh Huawei when I was in

Burma

let's see

that was just my last few years as a

month also I just used it mainly as an

alarm clock and uh

a Wi-Fi hotspot

so let's see

yeah the monk if the Buddha Loop today

you see he he would allow socks or warm

clothes for monks but he would and I'm

almost sure of this not allow a thousand

dollar iPhones or laptops and smoking

cigarettes yeah smoking cigarettes

that's that's a big deal in Thailand

especially because probably the most

famous

Aura hunt or monk considered to have
been an araha in Thailand is ajan man he
was like the founder of the Thai Forest
tradition or considered to be the
founder by many people it was considered
to be an aura hunt and he smoked
cigarettes he was a chain smoker in fact
so he literally he was a drug addict and
also he ate cheese in the afternoon so
forth so time monks I mean if on John
mun did it and he was in Aura hunt and
smoking cigarettes and eating cheese in
the afternoon is is a-okay
but I mean literally
tobacco is an addictive drug and since a
monk is trying to ABS trying to free
himself from all attachments then

obviously you don't take addictive drugs

if you can help it

so yeah I think for the most part I'm

not sure about allowing socks or warm

clothes unless it's in an area where it

really gets below freezing because it

got down to freezing in the Ganges

Valley and that was when the Buddha said

three robes are enough no socks anything

like that

people are just tougher back then I

guess monks especially

so we'll just move on to

um the Spanish inquisitions next in the

last question here

if one joined the monk song of because

his parents force him to would the

ordination be valid is it valid for

children I have forgotten what is the

minimal age for boy or man to ordain

well that's two questions so the first

one is if you're

if one joins the the Sangha because your

parents just force you into it yeah it's

the ordination is still valid

um the ordination at the ordination I

mean it does say that it's against the

rules to ordain a monk if his parents

don't give their consent although the

ordination is still valid

um it's just that the monks who do the

ceremony

um they have they commit a minor offense

requiring confession

but so long as he sits through the

ceremony and he he's uh got all the

qualifications that are requisite then

uh yeah it's it's a valid ordination and

with regard to uh the minimum age to be

ordained as a monk it would be 20 years

from conception

so that'd be like 19 years and three

months

I think uh

in Nepali tradition they go with 10

lunar months as the the period of

pregnancy in a woman

um with regard to novices you can be

ordained as a novice

um

I think there's this obscure statement

in the text that says if a boy is old

enough to scare crows then he's old

enough to be a novice

and to scarecrows that's that'd be like

a job for a kid to be guarding the

fields and you know right before Harvest

Time to keep them from being raped by

birds you know he'll be standing there

you know alert enough and Vigilant

enough then he can keep the the flocks

of crows or sparrows or whatever from

raping the fields before Harvest Time

um although I've seen very small kids

get ordained as as novices

um

it's kind of interesting that the reason why
the Buddha made the rule saying that you have to be at least 20 years old to be ordained according to the tax according to tradition is that before that you're not emotionally mature enough to withstand the taunts and abuse of non-buddists who are like making fun of you and calling you a skinhead and so forth
because that did happen in the Buddhist time obviously in the Buddhist time India was not predominantly Buddhist in fact there were lots of spiritual teachers who were more popular and

famous in the Buddha was during his

lifetime

so we'll just move on to the next

question this is from Aaron

and erain says how does one overcome the

language barrier when learning Buddhism

in the west so many terms are in poly or

Sanskrit that it turns some people away

um

well I mean that's we're kind of stuck

with that I mean in Christianity

everything's been translated in English

in English-speaking countries there they

don't really go with like um much Greek

or Hebrew you know there's a few words

like Agape that kind of a thing like

Christ itself is well it's an English

English version of Christos or Christos

ah so

yeah but in in teravana Buddhism there's

a lot of poly terms

so

how does one overcome language barrier

when learning Buddhism well one thing

you can get a just a Buddhist dictionary

loka's Buddhist dictionary it's for free

distribution from some places some

charitable organizations just distribute

it for free

um but I think we're pretty much stuck

with a lot of poly terms which in the

long run is a good thing I mean once you

learn the meaning of it it's much better

than having relying on English
translations that may not be the best
translation like the term Asawa you know
if you're familiar with the term Asawa
you can get a pretty good idea of what
it's referring to but in English
you've got like bikubody refers to it as
taints in some old translations it's
cankers is there's there's all these
different translations I I rendered as
encumbering influence
or sometimes like anjan tanisro he's got
his own set of renderings you know he
just does not follow established
tradition with regard to even stuff like
mindfulness
so he'll have his own unique terms and

if you're not familiar with Paulie you
don't know what the poly equivalent is
what he's talking about sometimes
so it is good I mean if you're serious
about studying
terravonna Buddhism it is good to
familiarize yourself with at least you
know the top 20 or 50 poly terms like
the philosophical terms
and I mean if you're really serious you
would do well to just learn poly so you
can read the text in the original poly
so how does one overcome the language
barrier when learning Buddhism in the
West
um you rely on English translations

um like bikubody's translations he

doesn't leave very many words

untranslated and then a lot of technical

terms he'll have endnotes or footnotes

or something just explaining them that

sort of thing

so yeah it's it's terrible Buddhism this

is one of the reasons why terravonna

appeals more to educated intellectual

types than Mill workers for example

hairdressers

because

I mean it does take a certain amount of

intelligence and study to really get the

jargon down get the terminology down so

that you can understand you know what

what it is that you're studying what it

is that you're reading and so forth

so I'm sorry I mean there's the best way

to overcome a language barrier is just

read books like introductory books into

Terra Vada which will gradually teach

you you know what comma is and what

dhamma is and you know what osawa is and

what condos are and and duka this kind

of a thing and gradually just through

osmosis you'll pick it up

but it can be kind of daunting at first

but it's well worth it I mean if you're

interested in terravala then it is worth

your while to familiarize yourself with

you know a few dozen poly terms at least

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from the Arya
sawasdi project
and this is kind of a subtle one
and the Arias velocity project says
regarding the nauseating we are all one
that we constantly hear from the left
and the idea that we as Buddhists are
trying to expand our Consciousness into
the not nauseating all is one both ideas
sound the same but are wildly different
can you share your thoughts on how we
can all be one and not be one at the
same time please excuse my
misunderstanding of both these topics
well personally I really haven't been
encountering leftist saying we are all
one very often because they're the ones

who are dividing everybody up in
different groups you know they're
emphasizing differences now identity
politics has has really thrown a monkey
wrench into the We Are All One narrative
that might have been a big deal like 20
30 40 years ago
but now it's you know Hawaii is evil
conservatives are Nazis they're not
they're not one with us they should just
be you know put in concentration camps
or you know gotten rid of somehow or
other indoctrinated indoctrinate their
children so at least their children will
grow up to be good leftists so
yeah the whole the whole idea of we are

all one has pretty much collapsed in the
left because they are emphasizing
identity politics and just division
dividing everybody up into in the groups
and there you got suppressor groups and
oppressed groups the oppressor groups
being mostly white men and oppressed
groups being pretty much everybody else
but let's let's just assume for the sake
of argument there's still a significant
number of leftists like let's say
they're not very political who are
saying we are all one
um yeah they're probably still operating
in a samsaric level I mean there's going
to be Wise Wise leftists who are just
very naive with regard to politics

perhaps

who you know they're you know they're

wise they've got wisdom and so they

could say we are all one I mean they

might mean it you know at a metaphysical

level sort of like the second

interpretation of We Are One or we are

all one is I mean ultimately at the

level of Ultimate Reality there is no

division into into this and that or much

less categories or groups

you know it's just everything is

undivided

you know you've got just infinite

formless

Consciousness or whatever you want to

call it God

whatever

you want to say it's all God like name

Carly Baba you know one of his his

monosu are hype

it's all God

and that's that's how everything is won

it's all United in Ultimate Reality

but if you've got some

person who's not particularly wise

saying we are all one they might be

emphasizing you know like compassion the

heart chakra or something

which is not bad

but it's not off the scale yet and so

there's a certain amount of delusion

still involved and if there's if they're

saying that while like still committed

to Identity politics then they're just

confused or hypocritical

so

how we can all be one and not be one at

the same time well we're all one at the

level of Ultimate Reality but here at

the psalmsoric level we're obviously not

all one

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from librelam

I don't know how to pronounce some of

these names Libra Lam maybe use Japanese

or something no no that'd be Reba ROM

okay anyway

he says a mentor mentor and close friend

of mine is a shaman a unique point he

has made one I found especially darmic

is the relationship between the words

Shaman and shramana

in the context of the natural wisdom of

the Buddha him attaining Mastery largely

on his own as a Pioneer seems very

similar to the way of practice of my

Shaman friend he speaks of nature as the

ultimate teacher of Dharma and causality

of a spiritual variety would you

consider a translation like this valid

and then he's got Sanskrit here yay

Dharma

the targeto

Ramana

and then he's got the translation of

that as of those phenomena which arise
from causes those causes have been
taught by the detergent and their
cessation two thus proclaims the great
Shaman and if I remember correctly this
is a Sanskrit version of the words that
converted
who was it Muhammad galana or sorry puta
one of one of the Two Chief Disciples of
the Buddha converted him to Buddhism
that originally both of them were
Disciples of a different teacher
and they saw one of the the monks first
decide one of the Buddha's first
disciples going for olives and he looked
so Serene you know his face is just

shining

and uh so he asked him you know who's

your teacher what does he teach and then

the the Buddhist monk says this and then

that was enough to convert this follower

and then he went and got his friend and

both of them came over and then uh the

other teacher vomited hot blood and died

according to tradition because he lost

two of his best disciples to the Buddha

um but getting getting back to this uh

referring to ashramana as a shaman it's

I mean it's it's sort of backwards I

mean the word Shaman I'm pretty sure I

have I have been told that it is derived

from Sanskrit shramana which in Pali is

Samana

and uh I usually translate it as

philosopher it's usually translated as

acetic or renunciant

um I think uh ajanta nisaro who as I say

has his own set of renderings for words

I think he refers to them as

contemplatives

um I mean contemplative might be a more

literal translation of Samana

but as Buddhism spread up into like

Central Asia and like Mongolia then

you've got like siberian tribes and so

forth you know seeing these these holy

men that were referred to as tramana or

something similar to shramana and you

know their their own holy men you know

their their Witch Doctors they're

they're healers and so forth adopted

that term and it became shaman

so

it's not really saying that the Buddha

was a shaman I mean it wasn't really an

Indian concept at that time

um at least you don't find it in the

text

so I mean it meant something different

and then it got appropriated

um by later later spiritual

um traditions

so let's see would I consider a

translation like this valid yeah all the

translation is good although thus

proclaims the great Shaman is probably

not the best translation because I mean

he was

I mean really it's referring to him as a

great philosopher a great renuncian

ascetic philosopher

and uh I mean if you want to see shamans

are renouncing ascetic philosophers then

yeah I mean that might be a fair

translation but usually Shaman is

associated with like tribal

sort of animistic spirituality kind of

stuff

so

let's see going over this uh

speaks of nature as the ultimate teacher

of Dharma

to some degree I suppose I can agree

with that causality of a spiritual

variety yeah

yeah but I mean what it all boils down

to apparently is uh could you call

ashramana an ancient Indian shramana a

shaman and although they have the same

etymology because Shaman is derived from

shramana or so I've been told

nevertheless I think the the meaning of

Shaman has diverged considerably from

the original meaning of shramana or the

meaning that prevailed in in the

Buddhist times

so I'll just move on to the next

question here also from lieberlab

what event brought you the most joy as a

monk what personal interaction brought

you the most Joy what interaction that

you were an outside viewer of brought

you the most Joy well that's three

questions isn't it I suppose I should

separate these

you know I'm going to separate them

okay that one's

that one's separated

and now this one's going to be separated

okay

now I'm gonna

do that all right so what event brought

you the most joy as a monk

ah well

it's it's a long story and I've got so

many I should maybe I should just I

wrote an essay about this a long time

ago called something like the great

experiment in mediocrity and I'll just

give a very condensed version of it in

that

um

I was

I'd been a monk for more than 10 years

and then I got sick I got some kind of

flu or something and I just hit rock

bottom it's like any kind of enjoyment

in life was gone I couldn't take a bath

anymore because I had a fever the

doctors were saying just I should just

sponge myself off instead of taking a

real bath

um I couldn't eat I couldn't sleep just
I couldn't meditate I mean I just it was
just I just hit this kind of depression
of like thinking I've been a monk all
this time and I can still hit rock
bottom like this and have no consolation
you know I mean what's the point and I
even after months of this this feeling
of just frustration and what's the point
if I can still be depressed like this
um I wrote a letter to my teacher in
Burma I wrote a letter to my father back
in America saying you know I just I'm
not gonna I just don't want to try as
hard as I can anymore because I was
really just going full blast as a monk

as full blast as I can manage and I was
just you know I just got as far as I
could with it at the time and so I just
I'm just let go it's like you know I
just kind of gave up and then it was
like right after that it was like what I
needed to do because I was like grasping
too tightly onto some aspect of my
practice or some such just fighting
using Khmer Rouge tactics against my own
defilements just struggling against my
own nature that what I had to do was
just sort of relax which is what
happened when I sort of gave up and all
of a sudden I was experiencing the best
meditation of my life and
just going into these spontaneous

um

it's like spontaneous mindfulness like

I'd be at the well fetching a bucket of

water and you'd just be feeling the the

Rope against the palms of your hands and

you'd be feeling the muscles and the

joints moving you know the tightening of

the muscles as you're pulling and you'd

be feeling the breeze on your skin just

everything is just crystal clear

and it was during this time that I was

walking down to take a bath and get a

bucket of water I lived up on this hill

there was these Stone steps that would

went down to the lower Monastery and I'm

walking down these Stone steps and I

just all of a sudden start getting
really intense abdominal cramps because
apparently I ate some shrimp Curry that
had gone bad or something earlier that
day and just really intense like stomach
pains abdominal cramps I'm just doubled
over anyone who saw my face would think
that I was dying you know just grimacing
in pain
and I'm reflecting on the fact that you
know probability I'm going to be making
at least three emergency trips to the
Outhouse that night and then it started
raining and I had my upper robe on and I
I only had three robes at the time my
upper rope my lower rope and an outer
robe and I'm now I'm thinking I didn't

have an umbrella so I'm thinking well
I'm gonna be wearing wet robes tomorrow
because I'm getting rained on I'm
doubled over in pain getting rained on
and then all of a sudden it was like
something kind of clicked there was just
a subtle shift and all of a sudden it
was like the center of my awareness was
like deep deep down and it was like I
was in deep still cool water and I could
look up and see all this commotion going
on at the surface but it wasn't really
affecting me anymore I was down in this
Stillness
just just peace just it was it was just
Sublime this feeling that I was

experiencing

and

and I was

so overwhelmed with joy even though I

still doubled over in pain like at the

surface level you know the the outward

level I'm still doubled over in pain

getting rained on thinking about how I'm

gonna get the shits all night

still at this deeper level where my was

which was like the center of my

awareness at the time it was just like a

miracle that I could be in that kind of

pain and discomfort and so forth and

just be in a state of just under Bliss

and I was so happy that I was

practically crying with joy

while at the same time anyone who saw my

face with things that I was dying

I had one one new age guy tell me that's

that's an Enlightenment experience

so yeah that that brought me the most

joy as a monk I suppose

I'm meeting my sweetheart when I was a

mom when we got we're just getting to

know each other I was still a monk at

the time we had to touch or anything but

that was it was very joyful also

so I'll move on to uh Libra Lam's next

question here

what personal interaction brought you

the most Joy I guess

uh yeah I guess meeting my sweetheart I

was still a monk at the time but uh yeah
I would say that and then what
interaction that you are an outside
viewer of brought you the most joy and
the first thing that came to mind when I
read this question what interaction that
you were an outside viewer of brought
you the most Joy it was I'd been a monk
for just a few years and I was in Burma
and I was walking to the village for
alms so you have to walk through these
kind of rice fields and stuff there's
this little Trail you'd be going through
fields and so forth and I got to the
outskirts of the village of let's see
what was the name of that Village
which was in central Burma

and there was a dirt road leading out of the village and you you leave the trail through the fields and you get onto the dirt road and you walk the last 100 yards or so

um down this dirt road to get into the village and I just I'm just getting to that dirt road and there's a middle-aged man and apparently his wife are just walking along they don't see me they don't they're just oblivious to anything but themselves each other really they're just walking very slowly just these Smiles on their face indicate that they very much enjoy each other's company you know and they're just kind of murmuring

to each other and I mean I just felt
really happy I mean I really am happy
when I see like old people that still
love each other you know they're still
you know it's not just a matter of habit
or emotional attachment but you know
they just still think that each other is
like wonderful you know it's just
I guess I'm just sentimental like I was
I was literally crying last night after
when I got to the end of the the first
Rocky movie I watched the first Rocky
movie last night the ending of it always
makes me cry I get choked up and I'm not
like boohooing all over the place but I
was definitely choked up
so yeah I guess seeing that middle-aged

couple just obviously very much loving

each other just walking along slowly

just murmuring with smiles peaceful

Smiles on their faces I don't know for

some reason that really struck me at the

time

so I'll just move on to the next

question here what was your favorite

wild animal that you ever met I guess

it'd have to be chicken Lord

and those of you who are unfamiliar with

chicken Lord he was um

um a red jungle fell like a wild chicken

who lived in the forest

where I was where I was living

and he was really a majestic beast he

really was

I'm pretty sure beasts don't have to be

quadruped

because

um as like when most chickens most

roosters he had two legs

well he was just really this Noble

majestic animal and we were friends and

we had respect for each other at least I

had respect for him

so I guess it'd be chicken Lord if if

you want the full details on chicken

Lord a few months ago I I've uh did a

video in which I was describing chicken

Lord his one of the two coolest Birds

I've ever met

so I'll just move on to the next

question that was fairly easy which is
what was your favorite domesticated
animal that you ever met and that is
really a tough question my my favorite
domesticated animal that I ever met
certainly would have to be a dog because
some of my best friends throughout life
have been dogs some of my best friends
have been scroungy Burmese Village dogs
like dunderhead like there was this dog
that I called dunderhead he wasn't he
wasn't very bright Burmese Village dogs
generally are not very intelligent and I
used to wonder about that until I
finally read somewhere that brain tissue
uses as much energy as strenuously

exercising muscle tissue and in a in a

world where malnutrition and starvation

are one of some of the leading causes of

death than having a small brain actually

has survival value

and done her head was was kind of dumb

but see he was

technically he was the dog of a

monastery attendant he was like the

nephew of one of the of the old monk who

lived at the monastery and he would come

every once in a while and just do stuff

that monks aren't supposed to do like

clear clearing grass and that sort of

thing

and uh he had this dog that a guy called

dunderhead and that dog I mean the the

Burmese people in general really as a
general rule there are some dog lovers
there are some animal lovers but in Asia
dogs do not have the same kind of status
as they have in the West and his owner
really didn't treat him very well
apparently because all I'd have to do is
just talk nice to him and maybe pet him
a little bit and he would just be like
jumping around in this ecstasy this dog
I mean he would just he just adored me
just practically worshiped me
and it wasn't so much
did he worship me I mean it wasn't like
a narcissistic thing it's like oh this
dog worships me therefore I like it it's

just you know like the feeling was

Mutual I mean we just

There's Something About Dogs you know

we've got this convergent evolution

where we we form a symbiosis we just fit

together really nice and um

yeah it's like like my dog now Genghis

he's out in the backyard right now I

mean he's he's kind of the same way that

he's

I mean he just looks up at me adoringly

you know it's like when I go out into

the backyard it's like you know this is

It's the high point of his day

and uh I mean we just sincerely love

each other and I've been that way with

lots of dogs in my life and it'd be hard

to pick out one in particular

my favorite domesticated animal but it'd

definitely have to be a dog I've some of

my best friends in life have been dogs

so I'll just uh move on to the next

question here this is from Alan and I'm

I'm not sure

if Alan is even expecting

an answer and this wasn't under a q a

this is under a different video

uh but it's a question and he he posted

it so

um I think sometimes he just asks

rhetorical questions anyway

but I'll just read the question I mean

we've got so many questions might as

well add another one here so Alan says
it may be difficult where does it say in
terrible other tradition that most monks
won't experience Jonna apparently a lot
of Tibetan Monks haven't either and so
that so that's the point and purpose of
generating the wins there's one time
monk leader who one time Uncle leader
who had three thousand of his monks
learn Transcendental Meditation why
because it takes you to transcendental
Consciousness the sphere of nothingness
on the first day that you began
well I guess the main question here is
where does it say in terrible other
tradition that most monks won't
experience genre it says it in there

somewhere I just I mean

the meaning of John had changed

originally it just meant meditation

so first John anyone who's just sitting

there meditating properly even if it's

breathing in breathing out

in my opinion that would be first job

and so it's not all that hard to attain

but

Jonah has acquired the the status of a

superhuman mental state it's defined as

a right concentration in the mahasa but

even so apparently according to Orthodox

tradition right concentration involves

superhuman mental States

because

the four genres are considered to be superhuman mental States and even most monks do not pertain them in fact you can find statements like one in a million but I mean I mean that that would be really sad if only one in a million could even get to First genre so

yeah apparently a lot of Tibetan Monks haven't either John has acquired the state of like a very refined advanced contemplative State like a mystical state

I wouldn't consider first genre to be particularly mystical but once you get up into second genre where you're no longer thinking then I think that would

qualify as a mystical state that would

be like what

um a contemplative Roman Catholic would

call contemplation

or high contemplation

it's where you're no longer thinking

that's like in the contemplative orders

of Roman Catholicism probably Greek

Orthodox is similar if you're still

thinking it's called meditation you know

you're visualizing uh you know

certain aspects of Jesus's life or

you're we're using like a mantra you

know dear God please have mercy upon me

a sinner that sort of a thing or the Ave

Maria or or Hail Mary's or Lord's Prayer

or something

then that would be meditation but once

you stop thinking

and you're just clearing your mind of of

all mental States as well as you can

then you're getting up into

um contemplation

and that's what essentially what second

Jonah and above would be from a Buddhist

perspective from a terravonna Buddhist

perspective and most people just do not

attain these mystical States

and Alan here he really he was really

resisting the idea

that it's difficult to attain John I

mean originally John I just meant

meditation so that wasn't so difficult

to attain but somewhere relatively early

on in the development of Buddhist

philosophy it got turned into superhuman

mental States

and uh then later he's one one time monk

leader who had three thousand of his

monks learned Transcendental Meditation

why because it takes you to

transcendental Consciousness whatever

that means and the Spear of nothingness

on the first day that you began yeah I

would call BS on that that

Transcendental Meditation

leads to the Spear of nothingness which

in itself I mean

the sphere of nothingness is uh probably

an anachronism that I mean it wasn't
taught by the Buddha himself in my
opinion that it was originally
like a metaphor for enlightenment or
something that got turned into you know
after this after nothingness kind of
fell by the wayside as an interpretation
of Enlightenment maybe because it was
just like a a feeble attempt or
something that it got rejected but it
already got Traction in the tradition so
then they just relegated to this
sub-enlightened but nevertheless very
exalted contemplative State and the
sphere of nothingness it would be a
formless genre that would be
um either a variation of or higher than

fourth and Janna which originally was

probably the highest level of meditation

you could possibly get to

and to say that practicing

Transcendental Meditation like TM like

the Maharishi mahaj Yogi was teaching

that the first day that you're already

like at the higher levels of fourth

genre yeah I just called BS on that

maybe a few people but certainly not

anywhere near to one percent

would uh be experiencing a formless

genre of their very first attempt at

meditating

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from rui and rui

says hello Ponyo do you have a notion of
the term Yogi in the terrible water
tradition I have a dim recollection of
finding and some sort of commentarial
text I don't think it was ever used by
the Buddha but it looms the large in
Mahayana and vajra Yana tradition could
it be a subcontinental contamination of
sinhala teravada well I actually looked
up the term Yogi in in my polytopitica
which is digital on this computer as I
had previously uh implied
and Yogi only appears in later texts
they are canonical some of them like the
nedesa the Parisa Maga
um the the questions of King Melinda
have that I mean they're

they're old they're old enough some of

them at least to be canonical like in

the Burmese typedica the the Melinda

Panna is canonical even though it's not

considered econonical in other

Traditions other terravada traditions

but um

so apparently

um yeah it's a later addition to

uh terravana Buddhist

like philosophical jargon or ethical

jargon

um so

uh I mean Yoga Yoga came up I think is a

term that's found in very ancient texts

so yoga the word yoga is contained in

very ancient texts but there it means

like the Yoke you know yoga keima is

like a rest from the Yoke it's sort of

like a metaphor for enlightenment you

know freedom from bondage kind of a

thing

um

but uh with regard to Yogi in terravara

it's it's a common term in Burma it's

it's actually incorporated into the

Burmese language where a yogi means a

lay meditator usually a female pulley

meditator in fact uh a Burmese lady

who's called a yogi she usually

um she has her hair in a bun if it's

unless she shaves it and she wears Brown

and usually has like a a Mala or like a

Buddhist Meditation rosary around her

neck and like a Tibet or a kind of scarf

thing over one shoulder it's like a like

a uniform

so

but it can just mean meditator in

general

in in uh terrible Buddhism

so let's see here I'll just move on to

the next question this is from kzen and

Kazan says if you could take a pill that

would instantly and permanently dissolve

all sexual desires while enhancing and

speeding up your spiritual path without

any side effects would you do it

and that reminds me of I used to think I

mean if they invented an Enlightenment

pill

you just take this pill and you will

become enlightened

um I used to think that most people

including most monks would run from that

pill as though they were running from a

rabbit demon-possessed snake

just because it's so scary you know it's

almost Enlightenment is almost like

death who you think you are stops being

who you think you are

but with regard to I mean if I could

take a pill that would instantly and

permanently dissolve all sexual desires

while enhancing and speeding up my

spiritual path as a monk even though I

might have dread in my heart because

lust can be enjoyable

then uh I'd have to do it but now I'm a

Layman I've Got a Woman

and uh yeah I mean I would not want to

dissolve all sexual desires while having

this sweet snuggly affectionate female

that um it is my manly duty to satisfy

if at all possible

and uh it's very pleasant I have to

admit

so yeah as a layperson now I've got

certain

huh I wouldn't want to call it duties I

mean they're they're like duties that I

enthusiastically

um carry out or attempt to carry out

so yeah I wouldn't I wouldn't take the

pill now just because I'm in a

relationship and you know

but uh as a monk I would have had to do

it even if uh I just had uh dread in my

heart I remember I took some kind of

meditation art medication I took kind of

medicine once in Burma and not only did

it cause my entire body to break out in

a rash but it completely or almost

completely erased my libido for for days

and I missed it I mean it was like it

just life just seemed just flat and

really kind of pointless

you don't have a libido it's like life

really does just seem like flat and

insipid

which I guess is the point if you're a a

monk

you know you want to get us flat and

insipid as possible and in a manner of

speaking but um yeah I'm not a labor I'm

I'm not a monk anymore and I'm no longer

celibate so

so I just I turned I'd politely decline

the pill I might take the pill and offer

it to somebody else or something

so the next question is from Aliens did

it

and Aliens did it says the Pali

translator Ken wheeler claims that

original Buddhism never taught the

doctrine of no self and the term anata
is used relationally in the nikayas that
is it is used to indicate what the self
is not as an apathetic methodology do
you think this is correct well that's in
one word No in fact I would hardly
consider Ken wheeler to be an actual
translator I've read some of his
translations and he just butchers the
poly language well at the same time just
bragging on his YouTube videos about how
he is the world's Authority on early
Buddhism and on Nepali Language and he's
just bullshitting people because he
can't get like simple polycorrect like
if you read his article on he's got this
theory that Maha kasapa who is the

Buddhist senior disciple after the Buddha died The Mott Casper actually was involved in murdering the Buddha which is I mean slandering a saint I mean that's a guarantee of Hell according to Buddhist tradition
so he better be right he better get his not not his facts straight because he's not really dealing with facts because he's translating terms like there's the word Kamara which means metalsmith it's based on Vedic Sanskrit it goes all the way back to long before the Buddha you know more than a thousand years before the Buddhist time Kamara meant a metalsmith or a blacksmith well maybe a

bronze myth earlier on

But Ken wheeler has like somehow added a

macron to the mara so that it's he

translates it as son of the evil one

because it was a metalsmith who fed the

Buddha his last meal you know the

Buddhist fed him this a kind of it was

like tainted pork or something and it

caused the Buddha to have like an attack

of like violent stomach pains and bloody

diarrhea and so forth and he died after

that so Ken wheeler is trying to

make him out as son of the evil son of

Mara when I mean obviously Kamara just

means metalsmith it's not even spelled

the same as Mara you know and Mara has

like a little macron a little line over

the a which is a different vowel from
the a without the macron in English you
know they're both a but in poly or or
whatever I mean it's totally different
letters like a long a and a short a
aren't even the same letter
so I mean he really he like he'll
translate cheetah which means mind
sometimes it means hard he'll translate
it as Soul as a way of proving that
Buddhism teaches the soul the thing with
Ken wheeler is I mean aside from
just bragging about he's the world's
leading Authority on this that and the
other not just on early Buddhism but
also on like uh it's some some aspects

of physics also apparently he's like the

world's leading Authority

but he's like some kind of neoplatonist

or

man I don't want to offend you know

platonists but I mean he believes in

like the the

perennial philosophy

you know that there is like an immortal

soul but it's it's not like a worldly

thing and and he he did very much insist

that Buddhism taught this

and it just Buddhism just didn't and so

he's got to like twist and warp and

stretch the poly language in order to

find his proofs

that that the Buddha did not teach no

self

and I mean I can sort of agree that the

Buddha did not insist upon those self

because in very early attacks like in

the Attica Wagga you know it's referring

to no self and no not self you know you

just don't have a belief about it one

way or the other

and I mean he he declares himself

apathetic he like he follows you know

Apple fastest I think that's part of his

name on his YouTube thing but Apple fast

I mean you don't talk about it you can't

put it into words and here he is just

insisting and insisting and insisting

which is not apathetic at all

so yeah he's I I mean it's a stretch

even to call Ken wheeler a poly

translator and I'm not jumping at this

to to bash Ken wheeler but somebody did

ask this question and so I'm just uh

giving my honest opinion

but um yeah it's it's really hard

to stretch the poly text enough that you

can say that

anata is not a fundamental teaching that

no self is not a fundamental teaching

there are a lot of people who try and do

especially westerners

so they just do not like not having a

soul

or at least they do not like having not

having an ultimately real soul

you know as I mean if you can really
meet with people in the west who
consider themselves to be Buddhists but
who will just rage and just say you are
you are a son of Mara yourself you are
evil you're going to hell because you
say that the Buddha taught that there's
no soul or no self when it's just right
there in black and white and it's you
really have to stretch and twist and and
engage in all this sophistry in order to
make the text not say that there is no
self
but there aren't people that are like
this especially especially Western
Buddhists so I better just move on to

the next question here this is from

White Ash Piper

and white ash Piper says question of the

day is being awake different than

Nirvana well it depends on

man this is I mean we're dealing with

what cannot be described in words again

but like Buddha literally means awakened

so it's kind of a metaphor for

enlightenment

and Nirvana is also a way of describing

enlightenment

um in the ethical sense

so

um yeah I mean there's definitely

yeah awake can mean Nirvana

but it's more like the attainment of

Nirvana rather than the metaphysical

state of Nirvana because the

metaphysical state of Nirvana there'd be

no no body or no being or anything to be

called awake

but it's all paradoxical I'm just going

to move on to the next question here

this is from Titus d ascentis

and Titus the ascentis says there's a

few excellent Buddhist jokes do you have

any favorites and if so would you tell

one

um you know I've never really liked

Buddhist jokes very much it just

especially jokes about the Buddha like

as a monk it's actually forbidden to

make jokes about Luna dama or Sangha

that it's it's an offense requiring

confession if you make a joke about

Buddha dama or Sangha because I mean

you're like in a way like

being sarcastic or belittling something

that is sacred

you know sort of like telling Jesus

jokes if you're a Christian

um so I have heard a few Buddhist jokes

but I never really appreciated them I've

seen some Buddhist memes that are good

so yeah Buddhist memes I'd be have be

more inclined to have favors but I'm not

set up here to show you any of my

favorite Buddhist memes

so so do I have any favorite Buddhist

jokes

I mean the only Buddhist joke that I can think of that that I'd even be willing to repeat is like how many Zen monks does it take to change a light bulb that's two wanted to change the light bulb and one not to change the light bulb

uh but that's not very funny I mean if you if you read the text you can find funny stuff like I I guess you could call the verse of the domapara that that has like that's made up of puns almost the entire verse of the Donald Potter and I forgot to look up exactly what number it is

but it's it's made up almost entirely of

puns

as you know the man who is faithless and

ungrateful a burglar who destroys

opportunity and who destroys

opportunities and eats vomit he truly is

the highest of men that you can read

this verse this way that they had to do

it on purpose

you know the man who was faithless and

ungrateful a burglar who destroys

opportunity and opportunities and eats

vomit he truly is the highest of men I

mean you could call that kind of a joke

you know it's a series of puns that I

mean obviously it's supposed to be

humorous or something so I mean I could

say maybe that's my favorite Buddhist joke

maybe there's a lot of like Zen stories and Zen cons that are funny and kind of joke like but um I think I better just move on to next question here so the next question from Titus diazynthus is how can a Buddhist prove that the Universe was not created last Thursday or more seriously put how do terravonna Buddhists justify belief in rebirth it is a known and well proven fact that over time to various extent memories degrade distort mutate more Fade Away Etc hence the terrible uncertainty of definite knowledge how can then one

prove that the Universe was not created
last Thursday let alone claim that
rebirth or reincarnation is a fact must
be by something other than memories yeah
I remember in a book by Bertrand Russell
I think it was human knowledge it's
scope and limits or it could have been a
different one
um he said that I mean really you cannot
prove that some deity with a strange
main sense of humor just created this
universe yesterday and just implanted in
everybody memories of things that that
never happened there's no way you can
prove that that didn't happen
you cannot prove that God created
everything yesterday and we just have

fake memories of things that happened

before then you can't prove that

and a Buddhist can't prove it either

maybe an enlightened Buddhist or an

enlightened being

you know they just get beyond that and

they just know Ultimate Reality you know

they just

you know it's all it becomes irrelevant

but uh let's see

yeah so how can you prove rebirth I mean

the average Buddhists can't prove

anything you can I mean nobody can prove

anything other than maybe something

that's entirely internal to your own

mind you might be able to prove uh like

a a theorem of Euclid or something just
or like chess moves or something in your
mind something that's entirely continued
within your own mind but when you're
dealing with something that lies outside
of your mind there's always going to be
uncertainty
so Spinoza talked about it David Hume
talked about it and it was
and that's one reason why they were
they're two of the most famous Western
philosophers because I mean they were
really they just pulled the rug out from
underneath everybody
they were just merciless really with
regard to Absolute knowledge the only
absolute knowledge that you can have is

enlightenment

so I mean everything else is just

conventional truth and I think he's he's

probably gonna call me out on something

here later on I vaguely remember it but

let's see let's just stick with this

question here

okay so a Buddhist cannot nobody can

prove that the Universe was not created

last Thursday neither a Buddhist nor

anybody else not an atheist not a

Christian nobody

or more seriously put how do you

terrible Buddhists justify belief in

rebirth

it's a convenient working hypothesis

period

it really is

and uh there's no way you could

absolutely prove it one way or the other

so I'll just move on to the next

question here three and speaking of

Thursdays have you read The Hitchhiker's

Guide to the Galaxy

has it not a subtle Zen Buddhist feeling

to it no I never read The Hitchhiker's

Guide to the Galaxy I think I saw like a

movie version of it a long time ago

but it's it's very vague and hazy so

I guess I'll just move on to the next

question that was an easy one those are

the easiest questions where I just say I

don't know I don't I don't know I never

read it I don't know the person

I don't know

so

and then uh

Titus theosynthesis last question here

and speaking of Zen notice a pattern

here once asked what is nirvana

Suzuki roshi replied they're actually

two Suzuki Roshes I'm not sure which one

is talking about seeing one thing

through to the end

so what is Nirvana and uh azen roshi

replied seeing one thing through to the

end for me a perfectly satisfying answer

I remember you answering some questions

about Nirvana Nirvana differences but oh

these degrading memories tried to read a lengthy article but that gave me a headache do you have a concise answer what is nirvana my interpretation of Nirvana is I mean from the metaphysical point of view it is alternate reality and from a ethical point of view it is like attainment of Ultimate Reality or just awareness of Ultimate Reality especially if it's persistent you know once you you just fully got it in it it doesn't go away

you don't backslide from it

um but there's there's other ways of describing Nirvana this the end of great hate and delusion the end of Loba Del Samoa the end of docom

or like I said earlier the in habitama

is the principle of cessation

so but I mean from my personal point of

view it's it's reality Nirvana is a

reality

so I'll just move on a nice question

here this is from ketchup

what is the best parita for possession

thank you

um

in Burma at least the the go-to the the

Panacea for

um like demonic entities or ghosts or

any anything that's trying to possess

you anything like that is the metal suto

that's according to tradition the

metasuta was developed or the the Buddha

came up with the metal suta as a way of

protecting monks from malevolent

non-human beings

so yeah I'd go with the metal suit also

it's got a lot of wisdom in it the

ratanasuta is mostly just worshipy

devotionalist stuff the atanatiasuta

also is largely worshiping like

devotionalistic stuff whereas the

metasuda actually has some meaty dhamma

to it that isn't just devotionalism but

it's it's got real dhamma in it so that

would make it stronger too in my opinion

so I yeah I would recommend the metal

suto

so the next next question is from nirmit

and nirmit says can you make a video on

the dhamma Chaka suta

where you explain it in detail it's

theoretically possible I doubt that I'll

be doing it anytime soon but the dhamma

Chaka pawatanasuta is uh according to

tradition the Buddha's first sermon

after his Enlightenment where he lays

forth you know the the four noble truths

and the middle path and so forth

um

considered to be somewhat anachronistic

like Western Buddhist Scholars will say

Wells like KR Norman wrote a famous

controversial article saying that

um it is anachronistic that it's taking

for granted later developments in

Buddhist philosophy and so forth but um

yeah I can get to it I mean it would

yeah maybe

so I'll just move on a nice question

here this is from Joe Doe

and Joe does says what is the longest

time you sat in meditation for

and I really don't know the answer to

that I mean I know the longest time I've

sat in meditation without moving in the

full Lotus it was a little over two

hours

because I my legs are not very flexible

my I mean my father couldn't even squat

down on his heels because he was his

legs are so inflexible and I've I've

acquired a little bit of that I think so

the longest ever sat without changing

position would be a little over two

hours because as a monk I almost always

sat in the full Lotus

and uh doing it for more than an hour

started getting painful but there have

been times when I would just change

position every now and then and just

keep sitting

so yeah that might be more than three

hours or four hours or something but

um

yeah long meditation really didn't work

for me so much because it was such

it was so intense you had to maintain

this intense awareness

the whole time if you're meditating

correctly so I tended to prefer no more

than an hour you know sort of like the

way Zen Buddhists do chican Taza where

you know it generally they don't do it

for long periods of time

and also

um I learned the value of just

alternating walking and sitting

meditations so you sit for an hour you

get up and walk into your legs are

stretched and you know you can sit down

without pain again and then you sit down

and meditate some more and you just

alternate sitting and walking like

that's the standard mahasi method is you

sit for or first you walk for an hour
then you sit for an hour then you walk
for an hour then you sit for an hour you
just do that throughout the day
so that's pretty much what I was doing
although I wasn't really an advocate of
the monster method
so I'll just uh move on to the next
question here and this is from O'Rourke
and Rourke says thoughts on Churchill
your experience of Burmese opinion of
him the English in general and akand
Bharat or Indian hyper nationalism well
I never heard a Burmese person mention
Churchill as far as I know oh the
computer is telling me that I haven't

plugged it in yet

just a second

this keeps happening

continually forget to plug in the

computer when I'm

sitting in this room

there we go the computer just went ah

okay so yeah I don't remember any

Burmese person discussing Winston

Churchill to me

um

my opinion on Churchill

um I've been I've had some interactions

with like right winger types

or other types I suppose who just think

Churchill was evil and partly it's

because these same right winger types or

whatever they happen to be

generally prefer Hitler

and or like

um there's the historian uh David Irving

you know who who just despised Churchill

and Churchill is

um you know he's accused of being a

sellout to the Jews and so forth and so

on and so forth but I mean I admire

Churchill he was a good writer and uh I

think he was I mean he was he was seemed

to have been a good prime minister also

so

yeah I really have not been persuaded by

The Churchill is evil faction of of

History

um let's see I mean there's a lot of

stuff I don't know about him but

then it may be that he did have

wealthy Jews supporting him but then

again a lot of

you know a lot of politicians do I mean

it's hard to get amount to anything in

politics without wealthy Jews supporting

you I suppose

consider Donald Trump for example

so uh let's see here

yeah okay the Burmese opinion of the

English in general

um the government

they they used to use the English as a

scapegoat I mean like the military

dictatorship if things sucked it's

because of the British colonialists

[__] things up before they left the

country which wasn't true I mean Burma

was the richest country in Southeast

Asia under the British Raj and then very

shortly thereafter it became the poorest

country in Southeast Asia just due to

General incompetence

because Burma should not be a poor

country it's got its wealthy and natural

resources it's not grotesquely

overpopulated and it should be a

successful prosperous country but it's

just that the government is incompetent

and that's not just a military

dictatorship even before the military

dictatorship I mean it's like uh General
onsan was going to be the first
president or prime minister you know the
first leader of free Burma after
Liberation from British colonialism and
he and almost his entire cabinet were
were assassinated by
some lone wolf gunman supposedly I'm
holding the toothpick so I can't do the
quotes right here we go
and then he was replaced by unu and unu
was an intelligent person he was a
devout Buddhist but he had some weird
ideas like he started planting coconut
plantations all over the country because
there's a certain Deva called Min
mahagiri who likes coconuts and he was

trying to get on the good side of the Gods by having lots and lots of coconuts in the country I mean weird things like that weird superstitious things that that really do not help the country all that much unless Min mahagiri really did favor the country but apparently Min mahagiri didn't because the country just kept like sliding into Anarchy and Civil War until the the first time the military dictatorship took over who knew actually invited them to take over and then once they got things under the under control more or less they handed it back to unu and then it just started sliding into Anarchy and chaos and in

Civil War again and so so the second

time the military just took over and

just didn't give control back

and then uh relatively recently you had

the Democracy pro-democracy movement you

know heavily endorsed by the Western

liberal types and uh I guess that sort

of fell through a few years later with

uh the new military junta

but so the

the Burmese government will bad mouth

like the British colonialists as just

kind of a scapegoat for anything bad in

the country it's because the

colonialists did it or whatever which is

just propaganda really but I think most

Burmese people aside from just the

national pride of kind of resenting

having been colonized

and treated like coolies

um they have a fairly high opinion of

the West are of like America and the

British

um you know they think that America and

the British are are clever and they have

a good system and they wish that their

system more closely resembled the

American system although

um in some ways Burma is lucky that

they're under a military dictatorship

because it's uh keeps all the Walmarts

and McDonald's and stuff out of the

country

and uh you cannot serve both God and

Mammon and when you've got no Mammon to

serve it's easier to serve God or in

other words you're going to have more

dhamma in the country

because once people start getting rich

and fat and spoiled then they start

forgetting dhamma

so I'll just move on to rorke's next

question oh wait I didn't answer the

part about the akand Bharat or Indian

hyper nationalism I really don't know

that much about it

um there's a conservative

political

commentator that I watch on YouTube

sometimes doctors

doctor

ly what's his name

Steve Dr Steve Turley

and uh yeah he kind of Praises Indian

Nationalism because he's referring to

civilization States you know he's he's

talking about post-modernism is giving a

rise to civilization states where

globalism is fragmenting people aren't

believing in globalism anymore that even

um

what do you call post-modernism itself

has pretty much killed globalism because

globalism assumed that there is one

truth fits all that you know is a kind

of liberal democracy is just the best

kind of government and and you know

there are certain assumptions you know

like

civil rights human rights you know

freedom of religion and all this that it

just applies to everything and obviously

history has shown that some countries

just resist that like in the Middle East

trying to force liberal democracy onto a

country results in just really strong

pushback

and then you wind up with a king or

something

or a military dictatorship and so I mean

he's referring to India as one of these

civilization states that post-modernism

has allowed this this globalist Vision

to kind of fragment and so certain

countries including Russia

are like taking pride in their ancient

traditions and in their nationality

again and he sees that as a good thing

and I mean whatever is bad for what is

passing for globalism nowadays isn't all

bad

so

um yeah that's about all I know about

Indian hyper nationalism is just uh the

idea of

Indians you know identifying in mass as

Hindus and and Indians and taking pride

in that and going back to their Roots

into their traditions and so forth and

that's not entirely a bad thing and it's

to some degree inevitable

so I'll just move on to rorke's next

questions this is a really easy one

thoughts on the order of nine angles

and maybe it's not supposed to be nine

Angels it's spelled angles here thoughts

on the order of nine angles and I have

no idea what that is

nine angels I don't know what that is

either

I mean nine sisters

I've heard of that before

the nine sisters but I don't think

that's it so thoughts on the order of

nine angles

I don't have any thoughts on that

because I don't know what it is

so next question from rork thoughts on

the misanthropic luciferian order I find

their conception of chaos interesting

and somewhat analogous to Kali and

nibana of course by they

gonna put the toothpick down again they

I mean the three people who are ever a

member of the cult which is another

interesting point yeah and I've as far

as I know I've never heard of the

misanthropic luciferian order either

this is maybe some kind of uh

kind of neo-satanism that doesn't

necessarily worship Devils but is just

sort of

um

like atheistic and

I don't know yeah I've never had any

interest at all

anything that goes by Satanism not even

very much uh interest over the course of

my life in paganism other than maybe

like classical

Greco-Roman paganism that would be the

most interesting kind of paganism to me

like neoplatonism

um that would be interesting to me but

I'm uh yeah I'm I'm almost totally

ignorant

of of like luciferian orders

misanthropic or otherwise

so I'll just move on to roork's next

question here

do you really believe in Buddhism or at

least in what you consider are the

historical teachings of the Buddha I

hope it's not an insulting question but

you are constantly espousing heterodox

beliefs and openness to being wrong and

it seems like a short step away to

simple atheism and agnosticism

um no I'm more of a Buddhist than

anything else and I am happy to say that

um in my studies of trying to find out

what the original teachings of go to My

Buddha were that those are the teachings

that I accept the most like the Attica

wag of the sushini Pata I mean that body

of text right there was enough to keep
me in robes as long as I was in Rome's
because there's a lot of stuff that that
I do not consider to be authentic Buddha
watching or the teachings of the Buddha
that is later developments same with
Christianity same with just about any
religion
any religious tradition you know you
start off with like a like an archaic
core of teachings and then as it becomes
a popular religion it just starts
mutating like a virus especially in the
first few centuries it just explodes in
this this
it's almost like the the the the
Cambrian explosion in in biology where

all these life forms just ooh

and all these weird forms and everything

and that's that happens in religions too

when it takes off it becomes a popular

movement then you got all sorts you know

throwing in there two cents and changing

the thing a lot but I am happy to say

that my studies trying to get as close

to what the Buddha originally taught is

possible not just according to my own

judgment but the Judgment of Scholars

that I respect that you know serious

Scholars

that uh yeah that um that is the stuff I

believe the most it just Rings true

there's like this intuitive yes to it

so yeah I do really believe in Buddhism

or at least in what I consider are the

historical teachings of golden mabuto

yeah and I am going with the working

hypothesis that godama Buddha was an

enlightened being if that even means

anything he was a extremely highly

Advanced Sage

so yeah I think I'll just move on to uh

rourke's next question

and that is thoughts on RFK Jr and

really I really don't know much about

RFK Jr I haven't sat through any of his

talks

you know any of his interviews you know

just little bits and pieces I know that

he talks funny because of some health

issue that he had

um you know very like Gravelly scratchy

you know almost uh non-vertent what do

you say

I'm not sure what the word is

but uh and that he's also kind of down

on the pharmaceutical industry because

you know he's saying that the whole the

coronavirus thing was just

um largely a hoax perpetrated by World

governments

or national governments in a globalist

cabal or something

um but yeah I mean he's better than

Biden

just about anybody would be better than

Biden I think

because Biden is essentially a vegetable

so let's see

I guess uh

I'll ask I'll just see what's herok's

next question here also thoughts on

metaphysical atomism does Buddhism say

anything about the ultimate nature of

samsaric reality in regards to atomism

other than the easy rejoinder that it

doesn't really matter because it is an

Ultimate Reality well amidhama is

atomism par excellence

if I understand what he's talking about

the metaphysical atomism you know sort

of like Democritus or something that

everything is made up of atoms yeah I

think Orthodox Buddhism

which I don't necessarily follow

strictly

and I'll be dumb a philosophy has

everything divided up into atoms except

for a few ultimate realities are not

divided up into particles nibbon on

itself is not divided up into particles

and if I remember correctly there's uh

like empty space which according to

abidamo is only exists in between

particles

that you can't just say there's infinite

empty space there's only the only

reality of space is the space between

two other things

so that would not be Atomic either other
than indirectly because it has to be
between atomic things but even mental
states are Atomic according to
um Orthodox Terra water tradition I
don't believe it I don't I mean it's not
found in the sutras at all this atomism
that got developed later on
it's not found in the sutas or maybe in
like really late ones maybe that sort of
indirect mentions of it
so because Buddhism say anything about
the ultimate nature of some sarc reality
in regard to atomism yeah I mean it's
it's completely Adam animistic I mean
other than that each atom is itself
blinking on and off like a trillion

times a second so if they're not an atom in the like the sense of Democritus who are saying you know they're they're like Eternal or something that they cannot be destroyed because they last only one moment and then a replaced by another one and they just they keep flashing off and on so they're it's animism in time as well as in space so it's even more atomistic than atoms that are just Eternal like 19th century physics assumed

so I think I'll just move on a nice question here this is from keep devenia and keep the vinya says oh this is gonna be a long one

I just noticed we've already been going
about two hours almost two hours and I I
don't know how far down this thing I am
keep the veneer says would it have been
better if you had lived as a monk in
Thailand instead of Burma the Thais
Place more emphasis on the vineyard
rules and less on the abidama
while it is the exact other way around
with the Burmese
um no actually I always consider myself
lucky that I lived in Burma instead of
Thailand that I was ordained in a
Burmese tradition instead of a Thai
tradition and partly it's because the
ties are way more Conformity oriented
the Burmese you know they just conform

this

spontaneously you know they're very

Conformity oriented but they don't make

a rule of it they don't they don't

enforce it because it just happens so

naturally to them that they just conform

but then I didn't conform and they just

kind of let me not conform

so I mean in Thailand you know you'd

have to do things that you knew weren't

correct just because everybody else did

it and that's what you have to do too

because everybody else is doing it also

the Burmese are much more into

meditation than the ties

so the Burmese are more into a

scholarship including abhidham and meditation whereas the the ties are more into vinya and do Tonga but I could practice Winnie and do Tonga as strictly as I pleased in Burma I just I was just doing it on my own but I was living alone as much as possible too so I mean the Conformity stuff really wasn't much of an issue

so I'll just uh move on to keep the vanilla's next question here because there's a load of questions have you ever listened to speeches of ashin wirathu is your Burmese good enough to understand him is he really calling for violence against Muslims or is it Western propaganda

um no I've never listened to a speech of Asian weirathu

um my Burmese I mean I'd have to listen very intently this I'd have to really concentrate in order to understand like a a recording of a dhama talk in Burmese um is he really calling for violence against the Muslims or is it Western propaganda as a monk he has to sort of dance around actually calling for violence but it's implied you know we have to get rid of these Muslims I mean you know it sort of implied that I mean obviously the Muslims aren't necessarily going to be willing to leave so you just have to get rid of the Muslims whether

they want to leave or not kind of stuff

so there is some implied violence and uh

I mean he will say that he's not

endorsing violence but in order to get

what he wants I think a certain amount

of violence is pretty much necessary

um so

yeah I mean I mean when he's called like

the the face of Buddhist Terror you know

like on that Time Magazine that's

Western propaganda

because I mean he's saying what a lot of

other Burmese like um

who is more famous than Russian we are

also in Burma uh he says kind of the

same stuff he's saying you know it's not

good to have Burma overrun by Muslims we

have to do something about it and just
kind of leaves it hanging you know they
can't really endorse violence you know
they're not calling for genocide or
anything like that
but I mean it is kind of implied if you
if you work out the ramifications of
getting rid of Muslims in Burma I mean
it's there's probably going to be some
uh a certain amount of aggression going
on in both directions
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question from uh keep doing here
have you ever used a loop of prayer
beads for mantras back in Burma and is
it common for monks to use them there

it's very common for monks to use malas

or prayer beads and I got one or two

as a monk because sometimes I'd feel

sleepy and I had this idea it was like

an experiment that if I just have to

keep my thumb moving to work the beads

it would help to keep me awake and I

experimented with it a little bit but

it's it's too

kind of it's not subtle enough of a

meditation you know it's it's too coarse

of a meditation that

um I didn't like it very much so I I did

it very little

so I'll just move on the next question

which is what is your view on

anti-natalism isn't it better for

couples not to have children since they are one of the biggest attachments one can have also according to the Gaba wakandi suta the Buddha said the following Nanda I do not extol the production of a new existence even a little bit nor do I extoll the production of a new existence for even a moment why the production of a new existence is suffering for example even a little bit of vomit stinks in the same way Nanda the production of a new existence even a little bit even for a moment is suffering therefore whatever comprises birth namely the rising of matter its subsistence its growth and

its emergency Rising subsistence growth
and emergence of feeling
conceptualization conditioning forces
and Consciousness all that is suffering
subsistence is illness growth is old age
and death therefore Nanda what
contentment is there for one who is in
the mother's womb wishing for existence
so
get back up to the top of this question
what is my view on anti-natalism well
um if you're going to renounce the world
I mean if you really think that any
existence is suffering it should be
abandoned then you renounce the world
you don't get married you don't have
kids you don't have a family you might

not even have many friends you don't
have money you don't have a home you
just radical renunciation but with
regard to couples I mean once you've got
a couple I mean a lot of couples are
living in countries that do not have a
welfare state and so their social
security is their kids supporting them
after they get old
so like in Burma you don't have kids
you're just gonna be like the uh the
drunk uncle or Aunt the the old maid
Aunt living with with like your sister's
family or something but there's there's
got to be children
somehow in order to keep Society going

so I mean if you want to renounce

Society then yeah of course you

shouldn't have children but I mean if

you're not renouncing Society I mean it

may be necessary or it may even be

spiritually a good thing for you because

maybe you're just not ripe for a

completely letting go of some sorrow and

all in one go

so for some people not having children

is best I didn't have any children

so

but I was a monk for 30 years if if I

wasn't a monk I probably would have

gotten married and if my wife wanted to

have children I mean I think having

children is more important for some

women than it is for most guys that you
know they just kind of identify with you
know their maternal instincts to some
degree that yeah I mean it'd be my duty
as a man if my wife couldn't really be
happy without kids then yeah I might
agree to
to the most
maybe three absolute tops but yeah
that's that's all academic now because
it's unlikely that at my age I'm going
to be having any kids
so let's see
yeah I mean for monks that's fine and
for some laypeople that's fine but it's
not going to work for everybody and I

mean the human race is just gonna die
off if nobody has kids and then the
monks are going to starve too because
there's going to be no lay people
feeding them
so I think I'll just move on to keep the
money as next and last question can a
monk tell a layperson what he likes to
eat if he gets asked and yeah
you if a monk if a layperson asks you
what your favorite food is then the monk
can say you know I like this or that and
uh or if the layperson says you know if
if there's anything that you want just
let me know you know they give Advanced
permission then you can ask for like
fancy food like meat or

occurred there's there's a list of fancy
me fancy foods Choice Foods including
Meat and Fish and that's also found in
the Mahayana padimoka rules
so they may insist that Buddha did not
allow the eating of meat look their own
putty mocha rules which are very archaic
going way back to the early days of
Buddhism you know they have these same
rules saying you know you can't ask for
meat or fish unless you're sick or
you've been given permission to ask for
such things
so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Conrad
and Conrad says what is a skillful

action and what is an unskillful action
skillful and unskillful are not clear to
someone judging the actions of an
arahond there's a pseudo where the
Buddha says that even if something is
true but not beneficial it is not worth
saying it or something is true
beneficial but consequently it will
bring suffering it is good to say it I
wish I could remember the name of this
suta there's a saying I like from Padma
sambhava my realization is higher than
the sky but my observance of karma is
finer than grains of flour only an araha
can have a fine observance
of the karmic effect of his actions
exclamation point there's something

interesting about the mahayana's

perspective on

bodhisattvas

little buddhistava can act in an evil

way to each his own medicine

after Lord Buddha I bow to Lord Duca

okay well I guess the question is way up

at the top here

what is skillful action and what is

unskillful action well physically

unskillful action would be breaking the

the five precepts you know I was like

killing stealing sexual misconduct which

would include adultery promiscuity rape

that kind of a thing

um wrong speech which is mainly telling

of Lies but also like bad-mouzing people

and so forth and then also taking a wine

ale or intoxicants which cause

cloudedness of mind

so that would physically be unskillable

actions also uh you could include like

right livelihood so

um so if wrong livelihood would include

you know selling weapons selling poison

selling slaves selling animals for

Slaughter and so forth

to those I mean at the surface level the

external physical level that would be on

skillful action with regard to

unskillful mental actions and there's it

this is standard in the text you know

it's like greed hate and delusion pretty

much Encompass all of them you know

selfishness and stinginess and

let's see just Envy ill will you know

all these kind of mental states that a

sage would not have presumably

that they would be they would be

unskillful and anything that isn't that

way is skillful so you can just sit

there not doing anything and that would

be skillful because skillful is just

anything that isn't unskillful so being

skillful can just be totally effortless

you can just sit there and not do

anything and that's skillful so

let's see

skillful and unskillful are not clear

for someone judging the actions of an arhan yeah because you don't know what the mental states of an arohaunt are because really I mean if you get past the surface level whether something is wholesome or unwholesome depends on the mental States it depends on the motives like the will that is motivating the action and you may not know what the motive is I mean sometimes it's fairly obvious it's almost like screaming and pounding on somebody you know that they don't have good motives

but um

especially if they just walk up to somebody and start screaming and pounding on them

for no apparent reason

but um

yeah with regard to an arhot I mean it's

like once they've they've crossed this

they've crossed the flood they throw the

raft away you know they don't need

Dharma practice anymore they might do it

spontaneously just just because but

still I mean

it's like they've they've gone beyond

ordinary ethics because they no longer

have these gross motives for their

actions so their actions outwardly might

appear really awful or questionable at

best but you don't know what their their

motives are if they're an enlightened

Sage they're not going to have bad

motives

so I guess I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Matthew

and Matthew said just curious how many

hours a day did you usually meditate as

a monk well for my first at least 10

years I was probably averaging at least

six hours a day of meditation I was

really going for it and then it

gradually tapered off until towards the

end I was hardly meditating and all just

because I had stopped making progress

and it was just too frustrating to

continue with it

so because I it was just sort of

treading water at best and my best

meditation in my life occurred between

like the years 2000 and 2004.

and just and just that was it you know

it was that those are the Glory Days or

something and I never was able to

regain that

except just sort of like the residual

like residual effects of having having

attained it to begin with

so yeah at least my first 10 years I was

averaging like six hours a day

because I was doing it a lot I was

meditating a lot

so let's just move on to the next

question here this is from bodhisatta969

and bodhisatta 969 says do you think

that Buddhism in the west mainly
attracts people who have health or
mental problems because then you become
aware of your own mortality from my part
I've had problems with cardiac
arrhythmia arrhythmia since I was about
19 sometimes better sometimes worse for
my part I then looked for something
non-material and ended up with the
Buddhist teachings suffering old age
sickness death I'm in my mid-30s now
otherwise healthy however I still feared
death maybe I'm looking for something to
take away this fear
well they they used to say that the
samurai would go and train in Zen
monasteries to overcome their fear of

death and Buddhist practice really does
help you to overcome your fear of death
it's true but uh that's not the main
question here is the main question is do
you think that Buddhism in the west
mainly attracts people who have health
or mental problems well not necessarily
I do think that because Buddhism isn't
mainstream you're gonna get attract a
lot of people who don't follow the
mainstream which is going to include
more people that are kind of On The
Fringe psychologically so you're going
to get quite a few nutty people
attracted to Buddhism you know
non-conformists at the very least

eccentrics and so forth you know they're
they're more likely to be Buddhists
um in a non-budist culture just because
you're going to have non-conformists uh
becoming Buddhists
because the conformists will follow
Christianity or just scientific
materialism or whatever uh with regard
to health problems like physical health
problems I'm unaware of people with
physical health problems being more
attracted to Buddhism because every
religion has its way of dealing with
physical health problems
if I had physical health problems I
might be more attracted to something
like Christian Science

so I think I answered that question so
I'm just going to move on to the next
one which is from siores s-j-o-r-s
that sounds scandahuvian
and it's yours I think says regarding
that part where Ponyo says that the
Hindu Buddhist Heavens are like
Celestial versions of Indian palaces in
shakyamuni's time one view would be to
claim that these Realms don't exist
they're products of their culture
projecting their values into the
Afterlife another would be to say that
they exist aren't exactly like that but
were so described to Indians as a
skillful means another still that they

exist are exactly like that and even
non-indian converts will wind up in a
very Indian coded heaven after they die
some would find it odd that people
living on a different planet in a
different culpa for instance would be
reborn in a heaven resembling Iron Age
India or a Heavenly Jerusalem where any
Earthbound culturally specific heaven
for that matter a fourth I think
possible would view would be the heavens
exist but don't have a definite form
they are rather constructed by the
collective Karma of the aspirants and
resemble that to which they aspire to
thus Indian Heaven would appear Indian
Etc they are real places as far as real

goes in samsara to those born there not solipsistic dreams their form is stable cannot be changed it will like elusive dream as the day was delighting in their Creations might be able to do in their own Realms and exist for a very long time I think swedenborg has a similar account it's all speculation but we're talking about sex in heaven after all anyway what do you think question mark there's a question Mark at the end there so that that makes it a question for this video and this was under the sex in Heaven video that I did a little while ago with Brian Rue

does Brian Rue wanted something

clickbaity to attract people to Buddhism

so he's talking about the Magnificent

sex in the lower Heaven realms

um but with regard to his four

possibilities here I think two and four

are are likely so one so his second

possibility is that these Heaven Realms

exist aren't exactly like what the way

they are described but we're so

described to Indians as a skillful means

and then

or just their best guess really

and then

um his fourth one was that uh

um the heavens exist but don't have a

definite form but they are rather

constructed by the collective Karma of

the aspirants and resemble that to which

they aspire to yeah I think both of

those are probably interacting

so because we're already well over two

hours here I'm gonna try and be a little

more concise

and try not to ramble so much

ah we'll have a drink of milk every now

and then

and now we've got hey it's TIG who is a

wise guy and he asks kind of

kind of jokey kind of questions

sometimes

and his TIG says do you like pizza what

kind of pizza do you prefer do you

prefer thick crust or thin crust pizza

do you think Pizza has appreciably
changed since your childhood also do you
think that beer is the best accompanying
beverage to Pizza I certainly do so
so yeah I like pizza I think almost
everybody likes Pizza I think the only
person I ever met that really didn't
like pizza was my father who said he
didn't like oregano and it is true that
I used to work on Japanese ships a long
time ago and they considered Pizza to be
girly food that it was sort of
considered to be un Macho for a Japanese
man to eat pizza at the time this is
like back in the 1980s
so what kind of pizza do I prefer uh
black olive and onions

and do you prefer thick crust or thin

crust pizza uh either one I'm I can I

can accept either way maybe I probably

kind of go more towards the thick crust

variety

and do do I think Pizza has appreciably

changed since my childhood not that I

have noticed also I think there's maybe

more variety that's about it I mean when

you're a kid it's like pepperoni

also do you think that beer is the best

accompanying hashtag beverage to Pizza I

certainly do so not necessarily I don't

necessarily think sometimes you just

want to drink milk you know

or maybe a nice apple cider

for example

so I'll just move on to the next

question from Stevens who I think was

following up on uh hey it's Tig

because Stephen says how about Pizza Hut

do you like Pizza Hut if so what is your

favorite crust that they have I used to

work for Pizza Hut 20 years ago how do

you think Pizza Hut compares to its

competition in the 80s and 90s up until

today do you ever dine in one of actual

dining Huts before yum brands downsized

Pizza Hut does anyone ever give pizza

delivery as alms food

well the thing is my mind was poisoned

against Pizza Hut back in the 1980s like

the late 80s because there was this

other Pizza franchise called Pizza Haven
and they had good pizza there and it was
you know they had good commercials too
it's like have a pizza Craven go to
Pizza Haven pizza Haven is Pizza Heaven
you know you're gonna be the guy
crawling on his hands and use of the
desert on Pizza Pizza you know it was
good commercials good pizza and then
they got bought out by Pizza Hut and
then all of a sudden they had like this
spongy oily crust and their sauce tasted
like ketchup
so I've never liked Pizza Hut since then
I've never never voluntarily made any
effort

to get Pizza Hut pizza ever since then

ever since they betrayed me

by buying out pizza Haven which was

better Pizza

and then they all turned into

greasy spongy crust with ketchup sauce

so I don't know what kind of crusts they

have or anything like that and if you

used to work for Pizza Hut 20 years ago

I'm sure that you're still a good person

and I don't know how they compare with

the competition

personally I'd rather go Papa John's or

something

and uh did I ever dine in one of the

actual dining houses now I never did and

uh here we go does anyone ever give

pizza delivery as alms food and yes when

I was a monk in California

uh several times I got pizza

um like somebody wanted to offer almond

food but they live hundreds of miles

away so what they would do is they would

call a pizza place near my Monastery and

have a pizza delivered in the morning

and then I would eat it so yeah I've got

I got uh pictures of me with uh I got

one picture especially this guy donated

a pizza to me and I it shows me I'm

holding it and somebody I had another

Monk take my picture holding the pizza

so I can send him the picture and say

and see I got your pizza and I ate it it

was good

and I even got pizza occasionally in

Asia although the Asians as a general

rule that really do not have a firm

grasp on the concept of pizza similarly

with bread in general they really don't

understand bread like Japanese pizzas

that I ate on the ships they had like

seaweed on them and stuff and uh

yeah I was like I remember in Burma you

get little packets of ketchup with your

with your pizza and it was like

cardboard crust it was really awful

so but yeah sometimes people do get

pizza delivery as all in food

so I'll just move on to the very last

question this is weird

it takes me by surprise

so yeah this isn't going to be a three

hour long video because boom we're at

the very last question and this is from

Kubo

it was a recent uh Joiner of uh the

Discord server and a recent Joiner of

the the Subscribe Star channel too so

loot

and makubo says do you think the samsara

Nirvana distinction is analogous to

kant's concept of phenomenon and

pneumanon well yeah I think there's a

lot of analogy that could be brought

between the two like it's

I think Khan's conception of you know

the thing is it seems and the thing in
itself are really close to the Buddhist
conception of conventional truth and
ultimate truth so ultimate truth is the
only real truth and that's in my opinion
Nirvana nibano although from the
Orthodox position that would be like the
abhidham of philosophy and then
conventional truth is just volhara like
just you just talk
as though some sorrow were real because
you're just in samsara and you don't
have much choice
and so yeah Khan's conception of
phenomenon and numenon would be like the
the Buddhist conception of conventional
truth and ultimate truth which to me

is like samsara and Nirvana although in Orthodox Buddhism samsara is ultimately real is just as ultimately real as nibana is according to like the abhidham philosophy and the commentarial tradition samsara is ultimately real these individual atoms of matter and and mind are ultimately real just as real as nibana is and that's one reason why I just cannot take uh the Orthodox like abudama philosophy and the commentary tradition very seriously because I just don't buy it I do not think that multiplicity is ultimately real or that that physical matter just absolutely distinct from mind just qualitatively

different from mind just totally

different not just two aspects of the

same thing like like Spinoza taught but

mind and matter are just completely

different completely distinct and

ultimately real dinosaur Orthodox

terravonna teaches and I just cannot buy

it I just do not swallow it

so

um my comparison of samsara and Nirvana

would be very close to Khan's conception

of the phenomenon and the pneumon but

um the Orthodox tarawana position

wouldn't wouldn't be the same

so

I guess that's it

I did it

by golly

take my last sip of milk as a reward

and if you have any questions feel free

to ask

because inquisitive as you please

although please uh don't ask more than

the six questions per video because as

you can see the the lists I mean it was

it was lots of questions here

and uh feel free to leave your questions

in the comments below or if you have

access to the Discord server or

subscribe star you can leave them there

anything you think I've been a position

to answer although remember I am not

well versed in Satanism or Pizza Hut

so

you may want to ask somebody else

questions about those

and uh like And subscribe feel free to

look at the URL links and check them out

including my books

be happy

pale audience

welcome to episode 58 of question and

answer and I am your host Ponyo basa

again

probably none of you realize that I did

this q a yesterday

and I get to the end of it I mean the

the light on the cameras lit up

everything's going I push the button and

everything and then it didn't record so

I'm gonna have to do the the same q a

over again and nobody even cares

but uh considering that I did it all

before yesterday all before comma

yesterday

um maybe you'll get a slightly higher

quality of answers and rambling

digressions this time

so we're gonna get ready here I gotta

open the beverage

and insert the umbrella to demonstrate

my

breeding

and uh

whatever else that it demonstrates

having a paper umbrella in my in my

drink my beverage

got the extra backup beverage just in

case and we're ready to start answering

questions I'm commencing to start

answering questions here

and the first question is from Saint

sword and Saint sword has been uh

he's been commenting a lot usually not
with question marks so I haven't been
answering them but he's been commenting
a lot on how religions rely on appeals
to Authority and he doesn't like that
how you follow a religion just because
some Authority says so you know like the
Bible or the polytopitica or whatever
so anyway he asked this question
does the justification that monks have
in their views essentially reduce down
to either quote this is what my
tradition has taught
unquote
or quote this is what I read in the
Canon

unquote if yes does this bother you at

all well

I mean you can say they're an appeal to

Authority is logically invalid but then

again most of our knowledge if not all

of our knowledge is logically invalid

because logic ultimately has to rest on

premises or like like an unquestioned

axiom I mean you eventually have to

start off with something that is

unproven

so

and then like science is mainly

inductive you know it's just going with

the assumption that things will continue

happening the way they have been

happening which we don't know for sure

and uh also I mean with regard to just

about anything in this world like

especially something like history or

like foreign cultures or science even I

mean you don't prove everything yourself

you have to rely on authority figures to

tell you what to believe with regard to

ancient Rome for example

so

um

also most people just don't have the

wisdom to just forge their own Dharma

their own dharmic path you know they

look to a teacher

and when you look to a teacher someone

who you consider to be wiser than you

you take their word for it because you know that you don't know and so you are at least hoping that they know and so out of trust in them you you follow their instructions and there is some of that in just about any kind of field I mean

car mechanics you know it's like someone's teaching you how to fix cars you just trust what they tell you and then

um I mean you just get your car take your car to the shop they tell you you need a new alternator I mean you're just gonna go by an appeal to Authority because you just assume that the car mechanic knows better than you do

with regard to what's wrong with the car
or you go to a doctor and they tell you
you're pre-diabetic or something God
forbid you know and then you just I mean
you might go for a second opinion but if
the second guy says the same thing the
second doctor then you'll think well
maybe I ought to go on a a diet or
something
and the same is true with religion you
just assume that some people know better
than you do and so you take their word
for it and it is true that early
Buddhism was
to some degree counter to that like you
read the optical log it says don't

believe anything of course even if you

don't believe anything you might be not

believing anything out of respect for

the authority you know the Buddha saying

don't believe anything

so it's really kind of a conundrum we're

living in samsara which is uh

I mean it's just a logically invalid

state of existence

so

um so I guess the question is does it

bother me that most monks

justify their beliefs just

through appeals to Authority appeals to

their their teacher appeals to the texts

the appeals to tradition

um just the assumption that the Buddha

was fully enlightened in the texts

accurately reliably State what the

Buddha was was teaching

um yeah it doesn't bother me because

it's just human nature I mean if I was

bothered by humans behaving like humans

I'd be bothered all the time I mean you

have to have a certain amount of

compassion and most people as I already

implied do not have the wisdom to just

work it out on their own so you go with

these instructions

the very advanced

uh like practitioners like the ones that

the the Attica Wagga was directed

towards you know already advanced then

yeah you can just set aside all systems
and you know sort of like J krishnamurti
um although even most of Jay
krishnamurti's disciples probably were
just following along what Jay Christian
already told them to believe even though
he was continually railing against it
so
yeah I mean it's just human nature that
people are going to follow along with
some tradition or other I mean it's just
built into us so it doesn't bother me I
mean to the extent that you're able to
transcend Traditions that's good but
until you get to that stage you're going
to have to follow instructions until you
get to the stage where you're able to

just transcend all instructions

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from Josh

and Josh says Hey Ponyo Bossa I've

watched almost all your q and A's almost

all you didn't watch all of them

but this is my I'll start over hey Ponyo

boss I've watched almost all your q and

A's but this is my first time commenting

this weekend I had to take my 17 year

old cat to the animal hospital because

she was in the final stages of kidney

failure

I had to make the decision to put her to

sleep because she wasn't eating or

drinking at all and it was either her

slowly starving to death or giving her a peaceful way out I know I'll have to accept the karma for that decision and I'm trying to look at it like I'll just bite the bullet and accept whatever consequences come from that whenever I think about it I wish that whatever form she is in now that she is well happy and peaceful how should someone deal with the loss of someone close to you and how to process negative Karma so first I'll just say my condolences to your your kitty

I like cats

but this is actually two questions here the first question is how should someone deal with the loss of someone close to

you

and with regard to that I would just

direct you to certain sutas of the

sutiny pattern they've got the

jarrassuta of the Attica Wagga you got

the Ouija suta that I recited or read

aloud

um in a recent video on in search of

death and also there's the Salah Sutton

that are all dealing with death the

inevitability of death and how a wise

person should respond to a death in

their in their life you know in in their

among their Close Associates and so

forth so rather than just try to give

you like a synopsis of what to do you're

better off just going straight to the

sutas and read the Salas s-a-l-l-a

[Music]

j-a-r-a or the uh

v i j a y a

and uh they're on the Sutton ipata

um with regard to the second part of the

question how do you process negative

Karma well I'm I've I've given the

simile more than once in these q and A's

that there is a suit I don't remember

which one

where the Buddha Compares Bad Karma or

akusala Kama to a handful of salt and if

you mix that handful of salt in a cup of

water it's so salty that you can't drink

it but if you mix that same handful of

salt in a pool of clear water

then it may be so diluted down that you

hardly even taste the salt so the

meaning of that is of course that if

you've got bad karma you can't just poof

it out of existence you can't go make

confession to a priest and have him

absolve you of your sins you can't have

some Taoist or Shinto priest shake a

paper wand at you and make your Bad

Karma go away it just it's gonna run its

course but what you can do is attenuate

the Bad Karma by diluting it down with

lots and lots of good karma

so you seem to have done pretty well

um Josh here

with with his cat I mean he had the cat

put to sleep he had the cat using eyes

so he is responsible for the death of a

conscious being but it was motivated by

compassion and love which are

skillful

so it was attenuated by the fact that he

was trying to reduce the animal's

suffering and just continued doing

meritorious deeds and you know it's just

you're gonna have way more Good Karma

than Bad Karma so that when the bad

stuff happens

um you know it's not so bad

and

oh I was just gonna say something and

then I forgot I'll take a drink

ah what was I gonna say it was really

good too

um

man that's that's so weird sometimes you

know you're just it's right there and

then you just kind of look a different

direction in your brain and then it's

gone

so

let's see

love and compassion

golly man it's frustrating when that

happens it's sort of like you can't

remember somebody's name that you should

know and then you're just like going

through the alphabet and stuff but in a

q a like this I can't sit here going

through the alphabet unless I turn off

the thing and turn it back on but I like

doing everything in one take

so

um oh yeah I remember now

so it's like a monk

that's the one reason why monks are not

supposed to have pets they're not

supposed to have close family ties is

because this sort of thing can happen

like like with Josh's cat here

um where I mean you've got duties and

you've got responsibilities uh as a and

I mean as a layperson you have more of

these you have a family to protect I

mean no man is worthy of the name man if

he's just going to let his wife get
assaulted or his children get abducted
because he doesn't want to hurt the
criminal who's harming them
I mean you just you've got to bite the
bullet and take take a few hits
sometimes if you're a lay person and so
I think that Buddhism really should
emphasize uh stoicism for Lay people you
know it's like sometimes you may have to
kill you've gotta like de-louse your
child or whatever
you're gonna have to kill a little
little parasitic insects or or whatever
it is you might have to shoot an
intruder who's trying to break into your

house

so I mean you just have to accept have a

certain amount of stoicism where you're

just willing to take the hit you're

willing to accept the responsibility for

your action so that when unpleasant

consequences come your way you can

accept it with a emoticum of equanimity

you know you just have to be tough to

some degree

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from Dawn and again

I'm sorry about your cat

maybe you'll get a new cat that's that's

good too

so the next question is from dawn

and Dawn says do you gain Merit

by transferring Merit and I'm checking

to make sure that I'm actually recording

this time I'm a little bit paranoid

about it now so Don says do you gain

Merit by transferring Merit and

this is kind of a trick question because

transferring Merit really doesn't work I

mean is there's called sharing Merit and

it's done a lot in terravada Buddhist

countries like Burma like

um Burmese people

they'll go to a ceremony they'll go to

the monastery they'll offer food to the

monks you know they'll listen to a

sermon you know they might donate some

other stuff and then they'll share their

Merit there's like the ceremony

and uh

especially they'll do this like if a

close family member dies you know

they'll donate stuff to the monastery in

the name of the deceased person trying

to give Merit to that person but the

only way that it works according to

strict Orthodox terravonna is if the the

deceased person has become a kind of

ghost or spirit that is actually

attending the ceremony or is able to

hear and see what's going on because the

way it works you share a merit you can't

really share Merit you can't share your

karma with somebody else at least

according to Orthodox Buddhism

so what happens is

um you share you do a meritorious deed

and then you openly share your merit

with all beings and if the the beings

who are aware of what you're doing

rejoice in that you know they're happy

about you doing good they're happy about

you at least having the intention of

sharing your Merit then that uplifts

them that makes them more joyous and

then they get good karma from these

uplifted mental States but it's their

own new Karma it's not that you have

shared your karma with them

and so when you get Merit for sharing

Merit you're getting Merit by just the

intention

of sharing your marriage just like the

The Good Will towards all beings Good

Will towards the beings you're sharing

your merit with that Goodwill is itself

Good Karma so you get a little bit more

good karma for that but actually there

is no transference from of Merit from

one being to another

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from Austin

and Austin says if Nirvana is beyond the

31 planes of existence how is it

accessible to anyone in the human realm

well this is just more of the the

Paradox that I've been sort of wallowing

through

just kind of waiting trying to explain

and you can't explain it see that's the

thing I'm I explain this over and over

again and

to some degree it's just impossible it's

like trying to explain inexplicable

because it is a paradox so if Nirvana is

beyond the 31 planes of existence and it

is how is it accessible to anyone in the

human realm it's not

I mean

it's it's it's

anyone in the human realm I mean

ultimately anyone in the human realm is

an illusion

so Nirvana is Ultimate Reality

you know Nirvana is paramata saja the
highest truth it's ultimate reality and
this world we're living in is like a
dream
you know it's like the Matrix or
something
but the underlying reality of this dream
is nirvana so it's like as you detach
from whatever realm you happen to be in
for for us it's the human realm as you
detach from it you know it starts to
fade or it's it becomes less restrictive
and then you can have like
hinges or or glimmers of alternate
reality kind of shining through it's
like you become less opaque you become
more transparent you may never become

completely transparent I don't know if a

fully enlightened being would be

completely transparent spiritually but

you become more and more translucent

more light shines through you and that

light is

truth

so

that's

that's my best attempt at present of

explaining how something that is beyond

the 31 planes of existence actually in a

sense suffuses the 31 planes of

existence and any being in those 31

planes that make themselves more open

and transparent and less firmly locked

into this

essentially delusional version of

reality

I mean it has an it has an effect on

them

so to speak

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from maitreya Buddha

and my tree of Buddha is commenting on

some statements that I made in the

previous q a

so my Trio Buddha says Buddha this is

when he says Buddha he's talking about

go to My Buddha and not himself

maitrea Buddha says Buddha protested

against animal sacrifice rituals

performed by the

proto-brahaminism why did you eat pork
it is against first of the five precepts
and he's asked me why it pork because in
the previous q a I had a toothpick and I
had just eaten some pork ribs for dinner
before I did the Q a and Port get stuck
between your teeth for some reason
and so he's saying Buddha protested
against animal sacrifice rituals why did
you eat pork it's against the first of
the fire precepts and as
a person pointed out in the comments
they they replied to this comment saying
that animal sacrifice rituals are
different from eating meat it's not the
same thing

I mean some animal sacrifice rituals

especially like among the ancient Greeks

and Romans that sacrifice the animal

and then they'd only like burn part of

it and then the rest would be eaten

but um

this is this really I mean if you're

eating meat nowadays as a general rule

you're not eating something that has

been sacrificed to a deity

and that pretty much went extinct in in

the west when Christianity took over

so

um I might as well point out that in

Ancient India in the Buddhist time there

were different kinds of killing that

were socially acceptable

who had War you had the execution of
criminals you had the killing of animals
for food and you had animal sacrifice
and the Buddha I mean sometimes he would
speak out against War he'd speak out
against the killing of criminals he'd
speak out against killing animals for
for food but he had enough sense
obviously to know that India just wasn't
ripe to get rid of those things I mean
you get rid of War I mean War like
barbarians are just going to move in and
and that's it you're you're non-violent
uh civilization has just come to a
violent end
with regard to killing of criminals is

just sort of the duty of the king who
who just takes takes the hit like a
stoic if he's got some wisdom because
it's his part of his job is to punish
criminals or to have them punished he's
not doing it himself
with regard to eating meat he just knew
that he could rail against it but it
would just probably make dhamma less
popular and people would just go ahead
and eat meat anyway but he knew that
animal sacrifice had pretty much run its
course in India and the times were ripe
to put an end to it and so he spoke out
vociferously against animal sacrifice
and partly one reason why he spoke out
vociferously against it is because an

animal sacrifice is supposed to be a
sacred act and in a way you're sort of
you're ruining a sacred act in a sense
by cutting an animal's throat I mean
you're putting some harmless being who
never did you any harm through mortal
Agony because you think you're going to
get Merit or something for it and in
certain ways maybe you can just like
some sort of magic or Juju generated
from the spilling of blood or something
but it's not really like refined
spirituality it's not what the Buddha
was teaching
it might be a kind of like sympathetic
magic or something but you know it

really doesn't have a place in advanced

spirituality and so the Buddha really

spoke out against that even more than

than War and the execution of criminals

and the killing of animals from meat

then the Buddha himself ate meat

my tree at booty here maybe a Mahayana

Buddhist and you might not want to

believe that but even in the Mahayana

parimoka or prati Moksha as they're

called in Sanskrit

um it says write in the texts a monk is

not allowed to ask for meat unless he is

sick or has given has been given prior

permission to ask

and that's that's one of the padimoka

rules

and that's going to be in the padimoka
for Mayana Buddhism too and they just
don't care about winnia very much you
know they've got their own different
sets of rules that they've formulated in
consequent centuries and so
they don't bother to look
deep into their own scriptures of which
they've got an entire you know library
of texts you know the the Mahayana uh
what is it uh the tripitica is just huge
it's just voluminous it's I mean 40
volumes for for taravana is is just a
drop in the bucket compared with
Mahayana the Mahayana tripitica but it's
in there

eating meat is important like the really

old Estrada and it wasn't until Buddhism

became mainstream it became like a

popular mainstream like societal

religion that it changed enough Minds

that people started really taking ahimsa

seriously and started being vegetarian

but uh in the Buddhist time the monks

were Beggars you know you

um they just ate what was put in their

in their bowl within reason

um it was like the the Buddhist Judas

Iscariot and David datta

according to tradition when he's

starting his Schism against gonama

Buddha's Sangha you know the Buddha's

own sasana

um you know one of the things he was

insisting on was all monks have to be

vegetarian and the Buddha said no if

Uncle wants to be a vegetarian he can

but it's not going to be mandatory

so I mean people especially Mahayana

Buddhists and just other vegetarians can

insist that eating meat is bad and wrong

but the Buddha ate meat and it was not

against the rules you're not supposed to

kill an animal

um but if it's already dead I mean the

deed is done

so and then especially if you're a monk

and you're just eating somebody else's

leftovers you know it's just

it's not that big of a deal it's just

arupa

so anyway I'll just move on to my Trio

Buddha's next question here

and saying why do you use profanity if

it's a violation of the fourth of the

five precepts and again it's really not

um just as eating meat is not a

violation of the first precept using

profanity

um is not always a violation of the

fourth precept which is wrong speech I

guess what he's referring to would be

perusalachia which is Harsh speech

but her speech is

bad-mouthing someone to their face for

the sake of hurting their feelings or

shaming them or making them feel
uncomfortable or unhappy in some some
way so if you get up in the middle of
the night and stub your toe and exclaim
[__] that is not a violation of the the
the the fourth precept but if you say to
somebody's face [__] you then that would
be a violation of the fourth precept
because it has to be against somebody
else
I mean it was just like a tourettes kind
of a thing where something goes wrong
and you just exclaim a cuss word just
spontaneously it's not like I'm going to
exclaim a cuss word it just comes out
which happens sometimes happens to me

sometimes if I step my toe there's a

good chance I'm going to say [__]

but uh

it has to be against somebody else in

order for it to be a wrong speech you

can say whatever you want in the privacy

of your own room when you're all by

yourself you can say all kinds of things

and uh it won't be wrong speech unless

maybe if you're a monk and you're making

jokes at the expense of Buddha dhama or

sangam maybe

but me there it may be there has to be a

hearer hearing the joke in order for it

to actually qualify as as an offense

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from CEO of action

and CEO of action says

why are all of the leaders of the other

schools at the Buddhist time so

cartoonish in these stories you said the

chief disciples previous teacher Sanjaya

who was apparently the leader of the

skeptic philosophy tradition died from

vomiting blood after his disciples left

similar to Jane's leader mahavira who

apparently ripped out all of his hair

due to stress from his followers leaving

and the ajivaka leader also dying from

vomiting blood due to losing followers

yeah according to tradition David dot

also vomited blood and then the Earth

opened up and he just plunged right into

Avicii hell which is the lowest of all
the hell realms
it apparently it happened a lot in those
days
so I mean the main question here why are
all of the leaders of the other schools
of the buddhistan so cartoonish in these
stories well all of them aren't you may
notice that usually the brahmanas tend
to be treated with respect sometimes
they're portrayed as buffoons but as a
general rule
um the brahmanas you know they received
some respect yeah just the The Vedic
culture in general that was the main
culture you know you don't want to just
start bashing the mainstream too much

and

so I mean it's mainly the non-vadic

non-buddhist philosophers there's like

six of them especially

that were contemporaries of the Buddha

and they're treated like The Three

Stooges plus Laurel and Hardy plus

Gilligan I mean they're portrayed as

just absolute charlatans and buffoons

and

it's mostly political prop or religious

propaganda

I think I would like to think that

some of it is not just

which is another kind of wrong speech

where you're just bad-mouthing somebody

in order to get others not to light them

but I think there's probably some of

that involved I mean it's obviously

propaganda I don't think that mahavira

the founder of Jainism was as much of a

buffoon as he is portrayed in the texts

in the polytext I should say

um

so yeah it's like

it's it's essentially religious

propaganda and I think that that early

Buddhists got their karmuppans when

Mahayana came along and started

ridiculing hinayana the in the inferior

vehicle

it's not the small vehicle he now

literally means like deficient

so

that's the main reason that the

non-buddhist

philosophers

who weren't

Vedic brahmanas that they're treated

like charlatans and buffoons it's just

you had

later monks some with good intentions

some may be not so good who are

um just trying to make Buddhism look as

good as possible and non-butism look as

bad and as foolish as possible

so

then he's got this little thing here

um

see you said the chief disciples

previous teacher Sanjaya who was

apparently the leader of the Skeptics

philosophy tradition yeah he was he was

similar to the Buddha and with the guard

too don't believe anything but

apparently

um the main difference between the

Buddha and Sanji I was Sanji I really

was a skeptic you know don't believe

anything because you can't know the

truth anyway whereas the Buddha was

saying you can know the truth but you're

not gonna you're not gonna know the

truth through beliefs you know through

ideas and intellection and so forth

you're gonna have to penetrate directly

through deep meditation and essentially
mysticism
so let's see sanjia who is apparently
the leader of the skeptic philosophy
tradition died from vomiting blood after
his disciples left similar to New York
okay
yeah okay I already kind of touched on
that so then he's got another paragraph
here which is sort of a follow-up to the
previous question here however I read in
a commentary that the chief disciples
came to their old teacher and wanted him
to join them however Sanjay said that
the wise only get few followers because
there are only very few whys but there

are many more fools in giving foolish
teachings will make him more popular
which made the chief disciples not want
to be friends with him anymore doesn't
this contradict him dying from vomiting
blood well it wouldn't surprise me if
there's two different traditions in
different different places in the
commentarial tradition
or maybe I'm just remembering it wrong
but obviously this is propaganda also
because they're saying sanjia you know
he's saying that if he teaches wisdom
he'll have few followers but if he
teaches foolishness he'll get more
followers so he's deliberately teaching
foolishness that's just more religious

propaganda

seriously

but I mean I mean doesn't this

contradict him dying from vomiting blood

I mean I doubt that any of them died

from vomiting blood you read the the

Jane text it's not going to mention

mahavira dying from vomiting blood

it's not going to mention I mean

it probably didn't happen

or maybe at least one person who was a

sort of a vocal non-budhist got some

kind of disease and coughed up blood and

then you're going there you see it's

because he was against Buddhism and then

they just liked that idea and it turned

it into an epidemic or something

so I guess I'll just move on to CEO of

action's next question here also in

India today people usually have respect

for the founders of other people's

Traditions as you can see many Hindus

paying respect to Muslim Sufi shrines

Muslims paying respect to seek holy

shrines Etc despite religious violence

being prevalent but it seems in ancient

times they have no qualms to use the

founders of other Traditions as part of

slapstick comedy stories do you think

this was a cultural shift in India or

can this be explained by something else

well

there are there are sutos where like a

follower of The Janes will come to the
Buddha wanting to debate with him or
whatever and then the Buddha will
convert him to Buddhism and then the the
Jane will Express or the the now exigane
will Express contempt for his Jain
teachers for leading him astray and the
Buddha will say no no you should have
respect for your teachers you know they
got you this far they're honest people
they're living virtuous lives you know
at least that is is respectable
so the Buddha in elsewhere in the text
does encourage people to continue
supporting their previous teachers even
if they convert to Buddhism and also

like Ashoka in his edicts

who was sort of like the Constantine of

India the Buddhist Constantine who did a

lot to convert India to Buddhism

in ancient times

um you know he was saying you know have

respect for all religions and he was

getting that from from the sutas so I

mean there is some poking fun at

non-budists which I do not think

originated from the Buddha

um I think what did originate from the

Buddha was you should have respect for

any teacher who's teaching you know

morality and honesty and at least trying

to convey some wisdom

so

so I don't think there was much of a

cultural shift

uh

the cultural shift in India I mean the

real intolerance came I think mainly

every once in a while you'd have some

King who was like a bigoted you know

like a shy bite Hindu or something who

persecuted the Buddhists that happens

sometimes

um and then of course when the Muslims

came they were just killing anyone who

wasn't a Muslim if they could if they

could chase them down

so

yeah okay I think I answered that I'll

just move on to CEO of action's next question here

in human nature people's opinions are ruled by might is right and they follow with whatever the powerful and Elites believe maybe thinking it is part of what made them a success or signaling Elite status to others one of the main reasons why Buddhism is so popular in history is because of King Ashoka being such a prominent ruler and sending missionaries everywhere at a time when that region had lots of power and influence how do we deal with contradiction that the might is Right philosophy is the exact opposite of Buddhist teaching but the source of why

it became so influential since the most powerful Empire at the time promoted it well I mean there's different ways of looking at might is right I mean you can look at it in terms of like darwinian survival of the of the fittest in that I mean there's always going to be this struggle for survival between not only species and individuals but also ideologies

so I mean it's the one that is the strongest you can say is the one that's going to win out as a general rule it's going to be strong in some way or another

doesn't necessarily have to be the

wisest but it has to be the strongest in

some way or another

but uh referring to King Ashoka sort of

contradicting that I mean King Ashoka

was a good Buddhist or at least he

claimed to be his edicts claim him to be

a good Buddhist he just

he disbanded most of his armies I mean

he wasn't a military Powerhouse I mean

the mauryan empire under Ashoka I think

it was the mauryan Empire

um

I mean it was not a military power

so I mean it was it was he ruled through

Dharma

and uh

so I mean that was like spiritual power

more than military power I think

so yeah I don't think the I don't think

that

um

he really was

kind of what CEO of actions seems to be

implying here

but that's the way Buddhism has tended

to spread throughout history is it

starts from the top down you know the

the king

well like the top ministers you know the

political ministers you know the elites

the intellectuals the the rich people

they get converted first and then it

kind of trickles down to the masses

um I mean that's how Terror that's how terrible Buddhism became the national religion of Burma there was King anurata who himself was just he was a a conqueror you know he he was like the founder of the first Burmese Empire and he was just relentlessly conquering his neighbors but uh The Story Goes that a mon monk named Shin arahan came and preached to him and converted him to taravada and so King ano rata of pagan just decreed from now on Burma's gonna be terravana Buddhist

so I mean it does happen and I mean just because that sort of thing happens it doesn't mean that dhamma is wrong or some such

it's just it's just what happens it's

just the way the world

so I guess I'll just move on to seal of

action and sipad zidane's next question

here I realized you didn't answer the

anti-natalism question other than for

its utilitarian use would you agree with

the Buddhist philosophical position that

it would be better off if no living

thing ever existed and that existence is

fundamentally not worth existing

well

you know I mean strictly speaking no

living thing ever does really exist

because there is no self there is no

being this is all kind of a dream you

know it's illusory in a sense

so but yeah I mean you'd say that the

first Noble Truth says if you exist

you're going to suffer and since dhamma

the purpose of dhamma is to

put an end to suffering at least for the

individual who's practicing Domo

then

yeah I mean it just logically implies

that you're better off without suffering

that I mean if you're going to suffer

when you exist you're better enough not

existing

so I mean it kind of reminds me of uh

The Book of Ecclesiastes in the Old

Testament where he says the most

fortunate people the poor well the

people that have never been born because
they're not going to suffer or they
haven't suffered yet anyway
so
um would I agree with the Buddhist
philosophical position that it would be
better off if no living thing ever
existed I mean
whether it be better off or not it's
just kind of irrelevant because I mean
in this samsaric universe there's living
things and there's always going to be
living things you know even after this
world dies there's going to be life
elsewhere in the universe it's just not
going to stop there's always going to be

an infinite number of suffering beings

even though they don't really exist

and it's just they have to exist you

know within a sum sorry context because

samsara is without beginning and Without

End

so you can you could say philosophically

sure yeah you'd be better off never

having been born

and uh but I mean

I don't know partly I think my situation

is

my father was kind of a macho tough guy

and he he would say stuff like a little

pain never hurt anyone

and he just accepted pain with stoicism

just stoic stoic equanimity

uh as a general rule

so I mean

it doesn't in a way it doesn't matter

maybe I'm being a total heretic now but

um I mean if you accept the suffering I

mean that kind of makes it not be

suffering anymore I mean I'm talking

about more about pain you know you

accept the pain at least it might still

be pain but it's not suffering because

the suffering is like the desire for the

pain to stop

but um

I don't know

I mean does anyone think that just a

like a blank dead void would be

preferable to the universe we live in I
guess some people would
what I mean the things are as they are
and there's I mean wishing things were
otherwise or philosophically considering
that things would be better if they were
otherwise is just sort of a waste of
intellectual effort I think
so this is how it is
and so we do our best under the
circumstances
and I don't know if I answered that
question or not but I'm moving on to the
next one this is from rui
and rui says I wonder if the ABI dama
might have come into existence as a
compilation by practitioners of insights

based on the teachings extant in the
sutas that being the case one could
imagine councils or Great Gatherings to
establish its contents and format which
at any rate seems slightly too rigid and
artificial to have been actually uttered
by the man himself any thoughts
well I've never really given a whole lot
of thought to how abidama originated but
some Buddhist Scholars back before
Buddhist Scholars just started doing
like queer Buddhist studies and so forth
um there were
probably still are some Buddhist
Scholars who are of the opinion
that abhidham originally was called

matrices or matrixes and they were like

summaries of general principles of

dhamma

you know you've got the sutos that are

kind of all over the place

and so

teachers try to formulate this you know

this kind of compile crystallize the

sutas

condense them down into like a a

systematic system

you know it's just they tried to just

get everything into one basic organized

set of teachings and that's probably how

abidama arose and because of isolation

and the fact that you know the maximum

speed of travel was how fast a monk

could walk in those days that different different monasteries different Learning Centers would be isolated from each other and just through a kind of drift you'd have teachers in one place kind of emphasizing one thing teachers in another place emphasizing another thing and they just kind of gradually drift apart and which probably resulted in different schools of Buddhism you know it wasn't like deliberate pernicious schismatics or anything like that necessarily

um and so you had different different areas of India sort of formulating things differently and they might have

slightly different sets of sutas also

for various reasons so

um yeah I'll be Donna obviously arose

late like

um I've mentioned before that tarovada

and sarvasti Mata uh are relatively

closely related that they probably split

apart around the time of the third

Council like during the reign of the

emperor Ashoka and their winnia is very

similar their sutas are very similar but

their abhidamas are totally different

there's not a single book the same

between their two abhidamas and so

obviously it's possible to take the same

information and interpret it differently

and that's that's what happened with the

abidamas and uh

yeah I've I've never never really had

much use for abidama and most western

monks don't I've I've been told probably

about 70 percent of Western monks just

have no use for abhidhama don't study it

don't care about it don't consider it to

be authentic teachings of go to My

Buddha and that's one reason why

Mahayana arose it was sort of a reaction

against this attempt to systematically

intellectualize dhamma in in just in

these different you know sort of almost

like a Euclid or something

that you you're just never going to

understand the truth through systematic

you know sets of lists and so forth

so

I'll just move on to the next question

and this is from Bill Gahan or ismet

he goes by both names apparently

and Bill Gahan or isma is somewhat of a

Buddhist scholar apparently because he's

asking

sort of uh complex philosophical

questions here so those of you who are

novices try and bear with me

in the sutus bilgahan OR ismet says

there's a tendency to link Enlightenment

with the three knowledges sometimes they

mention this person attain the three

knowledges to emphasize that he attained

our hot ship however many of the

Buddha's disciples arahans didn't attain
the first two of the three knowledges
not in their stock format at least
seemingly the first two of the three
knowledges aren't really relevant to
Enlightenment after all however the
third knowledge is very relevant and it
actually contains a separate set of
three knowledges the knowledge of
suffering the knowledge of taint or
asawas and the knowledge of Liberation
could these be the original Three
knowledges and if so what would be the
reason to add the other two
the the two other knowledges that
obviously many areas didn't attain and

do you know any other Indian religions

any other Indian religious tradition

that links Enlightenment with a set of

three knowledges

so I guess for starters I should explain

what the three knowledges are because

Bill Gahan or izmet he talks about the

three knowledges but they're not defined

so the three knowledges or the te vija

are three knowledges that the Buddha

himself according to the text

experienced when he became enlightened I

mean the first two you're not fully

enlightened yet but those are like you

know right before the third one which is

enlightenment

so the first of the three knowledges is

the knowledge of previous abodes or existences or in other words it's remembering your past lives so you remember your past lives you see how you arose in this area and you did such and such and you lived such and such life and then you died and passed away from there to this other life and you you know it's just you just remember these past lives then the second knowledge is the knowledge of the passing away and reappearances of beings according to their karma which could be described as just deepaku or the Divine eyes like a a deep Clairvoyance where you're not just seeing the surfaces of

things but you're penetrating into
different beings and seeing their karma
and how their karma has led them you
know from place to place until they've
gotten where they are
so the first of the three knowledges
remembering your past lives second of
the three knowledges is observing you
know how other beings are faring
according to their karma probably
yourself included and then the third
knowledge is the knowledge of the
destruction of the osawas or the
encumbering influences as I def as I
render them bikubody prefers taints
other other uh translators call them
cankers

uh I think niana tiloka originally in

his dictionary called him bias biases

but Asawa

um according to anjan tanisro is the

term borrowed from the James where the

James believed that you've got a soul or

a Jiva and that bad karma or just karma

in general it's like a sticky substance

that comes that flows onto your your

Jiva and weighs it down and so what

James are trying to do is get rid of all

of their karma get rid of all of their

asawas this encumbering influence Karma

so that their their Jiva can float up

into into this Heaven of immortality but

um

so it means something flowing towards

you also literally means flowing towards

one

so I mean it's just kind of an

encumbering influence I mean literally

influence

would be a literal translation of Asawa

um

so let's see I've defined it I guess

so he says that when you become

enlightened the the knowledge of the the

the destruction of the asawas that's

that's when you become enlightened when

your assaults are destroyed you're

enlightened so that's another definition

of enlightenment it's the end of

encumbering influences

um but in the text when it's describing this third knowledge it's first you're aware of the Four Noble Truths with the emphasis on dukkha you know the the truth of dukkha the truth of the arising of dukkha the truth of the cessation of dukkha the truth of the path leading to the cessation of dukkha and then the second knowledge is with regard to the osawas whereas you just replace duka with Asawa means the truth of the asawas the truth of the origin of the osawas the truth of the cessation of the asawas and the truth of the path leading to the station of ocelots and then the third of these knowledges is just that's it it's

just Enlightenment you know the the tab

what had to be done is done the burden

is laid down you know there's no more of

this or that existence

and it's just a formula

so

let's see Bill Gahan or ismet is asking

if that could be the original Three

knowledges and that the remembrance of

past lives and the seeing of others

faring according to their karma could be

like a later three knowledges so you

have like these two competing three

knowledges and then they have to like

fit them together somehow to

um and it happens a lot like the Buddha

has two different sets of first words

after he becomes enlightened now one is

in one suit another is another Sutra

just because

um you know they they arose in two

different

areas of India maybe you know this

mythologists or whatever at least one of

them is going to be mythological

probably

and um

then you get the commentators trying to

reconcile everything they're trying to

say no there's no you know there's no

contradictions at all so they say well

the first one set of first words the

Buddha thought them and the second set

of first words he spoke aloud and so he
thought one set of first words and then
he spoke to the other set of first words
and it might be something similar with
the three knowledges how the third of
the three knowledges itself is in three
parts so that might have been the
original Three knowledges and then they
just when they were emphasizing just the
flashiness of psychic powers they might
have added
um you know the other set of three
knowledges which includes remembering
past lives and and like the Clairvoyance
and so forth but um
it's hard to say you can't really say
for sure all you can do is uh

indulge in conjecture at this point

but with regard to the very last

question here of the last part of this

question

do you know any other Indian religious

tradition that links Enlightenment with

a set of three knowledges well

um the whole idea of three knowledge is

itself a repurposing of an earlier

tradition and that is The Vedic

tradition because

for a Vedic brahmana they also had the

three knowledges that was the knowledge

of the three Vedas

knowledge of the rig Veda the the Sama

Veda and the yajavada those were the

three Vedas in the Buddhist time the atarva Veda wasn't considered canonical yet apparently so in the Buddhist time there were three Vedas and that was the three knowledge is the knowledge of the three Vedas and so the Buddhists the Buddhists repurposed certain terms like I was just talking about Oswald so that was repurposed from Jane philosophy reinterpreted along Buddhist lines the three knowledge is also reinterpreted along Buddhist lines

um the three poisons agreed hate and delusion sometimes in older texts are called The Three Fires which also is repurposing of the three sacrificial fires of the brahmanas so that happened

a lot like even the word Brahman itself

got repurposed by the Buddhists into an

enlightened being or a holy man not not

because of the way he was born like the

cast he was born into because of his his

conduct and the purity of his mind and

so forth

so I think I answered that one so I

think I'll just move on to the next one

here

also from Bill Gahan or ismet

and he says

there are two separate stock definitions

of Right View imagine

117 tries to reconcile this by saying

one is mundane and the other is superior

and it tries to replicate it for the other path factors but they don't make much sense the suta is categorized as a late composition in the book you recommended which is studies and origins of Buddhism by GC Pandey another problem is Right View would be the beginning of the path but if we take Right View as the knowledge of suffering it'd be one of the three knowledges and that would be at the end of the past so how should we make sense of this

well there's a few issues here uh one is that they're according to Bill Gahan or ismet there are two separate stock definitions of Brighton View and again it's sort of like the Buddha's two

different sets of first words or the two different sets of three knowledges where it may be in one part of India you had a monastery that came up with one stock definition another part of India was you know following a slightly different tradition within the same school came up with a somewhat different
um stock definition and then they both became accepted by large numbers of monks and then finally you have a convocation or something where the two are sort of budding against each other and then they have to be reconciled and and that happened in apparently in the evolution of Buddhist philosophy

and if they were irreconcilable then

you'd have a schism

so

yeah I mean you can say I mean you can

say that one definition of Right View is

mundane and the other is

Superior I mean that's it's getting into

the second part of this question here

um

it's it's like right view for a beginner

is not going to be the same as Right

View for someone who's a veteran of

practice and that's not going to be the

same as the right view of an enlightened

being I mean the right view for an

enlightened being is just going to be

clear seeing of reality without any kind

of belief at all now you want to be able
to write it down so
it's like when you're a beginner Your
Right View is going to be suitable for a
beginner and it's right view because
it's leading you in the right direction
but as you continue on the path then
your right view is going to
evolve develop and become more subtle
it's gonna you know it's going to be
wiser you know it's going to be less
Elementary and become more advanced so I
mean right view isn't just one formula
that is correct that you put in words
and sentences that I mean right view I
mean it's going to vary slightly at

least from one person to another I mean
there's going to be certain fundamentals
um just like an acknowledgment of the
four noble truths for example but um
still what's leading one person in the
right direction might not be what's
leading another person in the right
direction
so I think there's there's another part
of this question here uh
yeah knowledge of suffering I mean just
knowing the four noble truths just sort
of memorizing the formulas I mean that's
like an elementary knowledge of
suffering but you're never going to
fully understand dukkha and the the
rising of duka and the cessation of

dukkha until I mean you've mastered it

so there's just going to be like an

evolution of Right View as your practice

evolves and as your wisdom develops

so don't take formulas too seriously for

various reasons one is I mean the

highest truth you're not going to be

able to put in words anyway the name

that can be named is not the Eternal

name

but uh also I mean it's just stock

formulas are largely just an aid in

memorization because for 500 years

according to tradition the polytopitica

was not written down there might be

little inscriptions but the entire thing

was not written down and so it had to be
memorized by heart and stock passages
are easy to memorize
so I'll just move on to the next
question here also from Bill Gahan or
ismet
he says it seems to me during the
development of new ideas they repurposed
the material they already had therefore
when I see a simile or a stock phrase
that seems out of place I'm trying to
find out what it originally represented
one of my suspicions is with regard to
mind made body a lot of times it's not
even included in the list of psychic
powers but in longer sutas where there
are lists upon lists it's always

mentioned which makes me think it's a
late development what's puzzling to me
is the simile associated with it there
are three similes with the same
principle a sword in its sheath and they
aren't very relevant to the subject I'm
kind of convinced that these similes
belong somewhere else they could either
be describing different study batanas
such as body within the body or the
three sankharas I'm curious of your
opinion on this one and whether you have
any theories about the original purpose
of the other weird stock phrases in the
sutos well like I was saying that one of
the main purposes of stock phrases is

just ease of memorization

and once you get like an orthodox

explanation that everyone can agree on

like with regard to the four genres or

whatever then it's just safe to use that

stop explanation because you know it's

not going to be objected to

um I really don't think that the Buddha

when you describe the four genres use

the exact same stock formula every time

which is the way you find it in the

texts

but there are cases like if especially

if you read the padimoka rules each rule

has an origin story you know it's

telling the the details of what happened

that caused the Buddha to make the rule

and sometimes the origin stories just

don't line up with the rule itself in

fact a few of them just contradict the

rule

so

so it's it's hard to say exactly how

this happened you know more than 2 000

years ago in the Ganges Valley you know

it's just very difficult to say you can

you can have all kinds of conjectures

plausible hypotheses and so forth but

to actually say how it happened is is

impossible pretty much Unless somehow

you're omniscient or something and even

then you wouldn't be able to prove it to

anybody else

so but on the on the bright side it's

unnecessary to really know any of this

stuff it's just like I say it's

Superfluous conjecture you know it's not

going to help you get enlightened you

can you can become fully enlightened

assuming that full Enlightenment exists

when the song context and uh not know

any of this stuff

so it's just sort of intellectual

you know it's intellectual masturbation

in a sense

oh I'm not trying to uh disparage anyone

from trying to understand Buddhism

because I've done a lot of it myself

so

yeah it's just

yeah I think I kind of answered it it

answered it about as well as I'm

inclined to answer it so I think I'll

just move on to beard

yeah Bill Gahan or ismitz next question

here

naroda is translated as cessation and

people take the implications that come

with that translation very literally

I've seen people describing their

blackouts during meditation as cessation

however I'm pretty sure that it has a

more subtle meaning in nasutas it's

usually ban bundled up with Detachment

dispassion disenchantment and I'm

inclined to believe that its original

meaning is closer to those what is your opinion on the original meaning of naroda well yeah somebody describing their blackouts during meditation as cessation is uh they're not using an orthodox sense I mean nirona got turned into a kind of very high meditative State higher than fourth of genre it's only access accessible to the most highly Advanced Saints so probably the people

um at The Meditation Retreat or whatever weren't experiencing that but I mean originally nerota I mean it does mean cessation and I guess one of the earliest

um philosophical applications of the

ordinary Roto would be in the four noble truths the third Noble Truth is neroda Sacha the the Noble Truth of cessation which is dealing with two different kinds of cessations the cessation of suffering is caused by the cessation of craving

so it just means cessation and uh it's not I mean originally it certainly wasn't with regard to the cessation of perception and feeling which is this extremely highly Advanced meditative state that I don't think the Buddha originally taught and I mean it's it's like suspended animation I mean it's just nothing and it's like your your

mind just shuts down temporarily

or at least that's that's the way it's

described

so

so yeah so I think that that would be my

answer I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from White Ash

Piper

and white ash Piper says have you read

Ramana maharshi or actually he has it

Ramana Maharishi

I only just begun to become familiar

with his point of view a cave dweller to

his use of Silence I find attracted to

whereas sad Guru seems to know

everything about and on anything

so um yeah I read about Ramana maharshi

I I found a biography of him at a used bookstore in Mandalay when I was a monk long ago and I read it and I still have it on the bookcase back there it's really a nice book and um I mean most of what you read of Ramana maharshi isn't written by Ramana maharshi because he didn't write very much almost all that he wrote that I'm aware of were like devotional verses to this sacred Hill called arunachala

so most of what you read of Ramana maharshi's teachings is about Ramana harshis like people who listened to him and were like repeating you know they're writing down what he was saying that

kind of thing

but his his case is very very

interesting case to me it's fascinating

um

it's it's sort of not Orthodox Buddhist

I mean just the very idea that he'd be

an enlightened being and not be a

Buddhist itself not Orthodox Buddhism

but uh yeah his cases are really

fascinating case and it's it's an

interesting case history even if you're

not a shy bite Hindu but Ramana maharshi

um

he started off this was like late 1800s

early 1900s back when India was a

British colony

and he was like upper middle class

Brahman you know raised in like this
sort of a secular
family and they weren't very religious
they'd go to Temples like only on
Festival days when everyone went to the
temple it was just what he did it was
the social thing to do
and uh apparently he was going to like a
a British High School like British High
School set up in India and he was going
to go to college after that and become
like an engineer or something and he
didn't meditate that kind of a thing but
one day he was doing his homework he's a
high school student alone in the house
doing his homework and he started having

like a panic attack he felt like he was
gonna die just it just boom it just hit
him and so he thought well if I'm going
to die I should be ready I should
prepare myself so he lay down on his
back on the floor because he figured
when he was dead he wouldn't be moving
so he's getting ready and then he
thought well if I'm dead I'm not going
to be thinking anymore either so he
stopped thinking and then just click
that was it he became enlightened
according to the according to the story
and in later years he said that the only
real yogic practice the only real
spiritual practice he did in his life
was that few moments just lying on the

floor not moving and not thinking

and it was just this click it was sort

of like what Eckhart Tolle says happened

to him where you know he didn't meditate

beforehand he was just right for it and

then some event came along that just

slammed him into enlightenment and

um as I said I mean he didn't really

know about spirituality but he was just

spontaneously going into these

meditative like deep absorption States

contemplative States and he didn't want

to do his homework anymore I mean he's

this high school student who's

enlightened now apparently sort of like

uh if you've ever read the JD Salinger

story Teddy I mean it's kind of this
kind of a thing where you've got this
enlightened being just surrounded by
complete samsara just everyone else is
just this clueless Normie
and so he's not doing his homework he's
just sitting there like in this state of
meditative Bliss and his elder brother
who was a college student he just says
oh you're useless you ought to just run
off and become a saudu and ramen
amaharshi he knew his brother was just
being sarcastic but he also knew that he
was right and so he he ran away from
home I think he had some earrings or
something he sold and got a train ticket
the only place he knew of is a holy

place was this hill arunachala that
wasn't far away that he lived in
Southern India and uh so he went to
arunachala and he had his hair shaved
and he threw away his sacred thread that
the brahmanas are supposed to wear all
the time and he just sat down in this
Temple the first temple he came to and
just went into this deep meditative
State and uh the caretaker of the temple
some priest I assume would would kind of
watch over him and drive off the the
school kids that would be throwing rocks
at him and this sort of thing and uh he
was doing what he could to protect this
strange kid you know sitting in

absorption at the temple the ants were
biting and so forth they were doing what
they could to keep him from just being
eaten alive by insects because he
wouldn't care I mean he's just sitting
there in this it's just zoned out
essentially
sometimes they'd have to put food into
his mouth to get him to eat anything
and uh after he finally you know came
out of his his deep meditative State I
mean or at least came out of enough that
he was able to like you know
function to some degree he was mute I
mean he could not he did not talk for I
think it was at least a year
and it was because he was just slammed

into this state of Enlightenment or
whatever he was slammed into this
expanded Consciousness he could not
integrate that with samsara you know it
was like he didn't know how to function
in the world anymore because he was in
this different world practically but
gradually as the years went by he
started being able to talk and function
normally and so forth
and um he apparently was the real deal
I've never heard any hint of Scandal
about him I mean some people can joke
about how his best friend was a cow you
know he had this cow that he was very
fond of

um but uh yeah he was just a very

saintly kind of saint

and he eventually died of of um cancer

in his arm and he didn't care I mean his

disciples are all begging him to cure

himself because he had evidently cured

others but uh he just said I mean

they're saying don't leave us and he's

just saying where would I possibly go

and he wouldn't refer to himself though

he wouldn't say I he wouldn't say me he

would just say bhagawan which is God I

mean it's it's not like I mean some

people could say oh there you go he's

like this narcissist or he's a charlatan

just trying to pass himself off as a God

but I mean he was just in that state

where I mean his ego was just gone if he

had actually had to refer to himself

specifically he would just point and

just say this

but and he was he was a Hindu and uh

like I said almost the only thing he

ever wrote as a as a sage was just these

devotional verses to a hill

but uh he was a very saintly person

and that's about all I know about him is

just from what I read in the book and

just a few other things I've picked up

here and there

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from Conrad

and Conrad says I have a hard time

believing that this stream of
Consciousness can take rebirth into an
animal an insect Etc I do believe that
in the past we went through that phase
but this leads to the idea of evolution
how does that fit into the Buddhist
context I can actually understand the
fall of a human being into some real bad
states of being like a hell being a
Hungry Ghost or someone who is born with
serious handicaps Etc but the idea of
being a mouse for example and by
accumulating Merit it would eventually
be born as a human this sounds absurd
childish
and I have to agree that it's it's
difficult for me to accept that you've

got a fully developed human being you

know all this complexity in their mind

that due to some karmic mistake they

made they're going to get reborn as a

mosquito or a goldfish or something I

don't see how all that karmic complexity

could

be compacted down into the tiny little

Mind of a fish

yeah it's hard for me to accept and it

could be it was like an Indian cultural

thing that that just got absorbed by

Buddhism from you know like the oldest

upanishads or something

um

but also I mean if you read the jyotica

stories you'll see that the Indians

actually seem to believe that some

animals at least had more or less human

intelligence

that you've got all these talking

animals you know just they're just

dealing at the human level they even

have proper poly grammar when they speak

and so forth so it could have been to

some degree the idea that I mean

mentally animals aren't all that

different from from humans but

personally I do think it is sort of a

cultural thing the only way I could I

could plausibly

imagine

um like my karma becoming a mosquito or

something would be like if like uh the

for the multi-dimensional entity Seth in

the Seth speaks books the Seth material

he says that your karma can like split

that some of your karma can split off so

it may be a little spark of your karma

splits off

and just starts off its own uh

evolutionary line of

rebirth

starting off as a fly or a mosquito or

something I mean that's possible

but yeah I have to agree with Conrad

here that uh it seems very unlikely to

me that all the complexity of a human

being could be reborn into a bug

or a pollywog or something

but I mean

theoretically you could have I remember

one time in Burma seeing this this

person he was like a a teenage kid and

he was so severely mentally [__]

that I mean I don't think anyone was

there it was you know his eyes were open

he was breathing

um you kind of have to be held up if

he's gonna sit up

but

um you know the dog is crying outside

but I mean there's nobody there

and I mean somebody like that where

there's hardly any mind there at all

then that could be maybe reborn as a a

fish or a frog or a bug or something but

yeah I think I'll just move on to the

next question here

this is from bodhisatta 969

and bodhisatta 969 says the question was

asked in a similar way in the last q a

do you also believe in reincarnation

which actually belongs to the essence of

Buddhism

oh which which actually belongs to the

essence of Buddhism or is it more like

me that you want to believe is there a

meditative experience when you saw

previous lives

well I don't like remember any previous

lives I've been my father believed I was

a Reincarnation of his father which

makes me my own grandpa but I don't

remember that and this like the

personality traits that we share could

be largely genetic

so

um do I believe in reincarnation I

assume that it's true but I realize I

have no way of proving the case one way

or the other

that it is a working hypothesis and I

mean I do have like these intuitive

sort of

feelings intuitions about certain past

lives where I just have like this deep

appreciation or resonance with certain

periods in history certain parts of the

world like medieval Japan or like

southern Italy during like the late

Roman Republic or

let's see fourth 14th century England

and I mean there's just certain things

that I mean

I mean I've got no interest hardly at

all in like ancient Egypt or ancient

mesoameric or you know prehistoric

mesoamerica anything like that

so

um I mean just a second

hey be quiet stop doing that

the dog's being needy because my

sweetheart is downstairs

okay so reincarnation I assume that it's

true I can't prove that it's true it's a
convenient working hypothesis and it
does help to explain why I have certain
traits that can't easily be explained
through genetics and past experience
so
yeah I mean there's there's no proof you
can't really prove anything I mean maybe
something entirely contained within your
own mind you can prove you can prove a
theorem of Euclid in your mind so long
as it's all self-contained you know
you've got all the premises and
everything there in your mind you can
prove something like that but anything
with regard to the external world
it can't be proven

it can be sort of

I mean you can show enough evidence that

it's persuasive

but you can't absolutely prove it to be

true

so I'll just uh move on to the next

question here

this is from hey it's Tig

it's TIG says have you seen Oliver

Stones The Doors if so what is your

opinion on it have the doors made any

significant Impressions on you

throughout your life also what is your

opinion on Jim Morrison

well first of all I haven't seen Oliver

Stone's movie The Doors I have seen a

few of Stone's movies like his his movie

about Nixon for example which was

interesting

so I I don't have really an opinion of

it I haven't seen it don't have an

opinion of it so then we get to the next

question here have the doors made any

significant Impressions on you

throughout your life no I mean I like

some of their music but

um I've

I don't like keyboards in rock and roll

very much and the doors had an organ I'm

pretty sure I mean keyboards wreck rock

and roll bands it's like

Van Halen started using keyboards went

downhill Led Zeppelin John Paul Jones

started preferring keyboards to playing bass

downhill there are very few bands that really get away with using keyboards something kind of hippity hoppity like B-52s or something but like serious rock and roll you're better off without the keyboards so just the fact that they had keyboards kind of to some degree subtly poisoned my mind against the doors

uh with regard to my opinion of Jim Morrison I have almost no knowledge of Jim Morrison other than one time a long time ago I was watching some talk show on TV and they were interviewing this she was like a professional groupie

you know she she had slept with lots of

rock stars and she was comparing them

and she said the studliest Chad rock

star that she ever slept with was Jim

Morrison

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here

this is from Titus d ascentis

and Titus the ascentis says why did the

Buddhist coroner get fired he kept

listing birth as the cause of death on

every certificate but I'm bumped

last time concerning Buddhist jokes I

didn't mean anything respectful I forgot

to include the greeting header oh it's a

comment here last time concerning

Buddhist jokes I didn't mean anything

disrespectful I forgot to include the greeting header that's that's fine I edit off the greeting header usually anyway when I read the question anyway there are some good Buddhist jokes out there intelligent and very insightful or simply funny for Fun's sake while referring to a Buddhist notion like the one about a Buddhist and a hot dog vendor I think that's probably the one where you're saying make me one with everything because it's usually a Buddhist Pizza joke rather than a hot dog joke

somebody some TV interviewer asked the Dalai Lama that riddle about making me

one with everything and he the Dalai

Lama didn't get it at all

but I digress

so perhaps my question should have been

simply does humor belong in Buddhism but

then answer to that would be an obvious

yes it does you yourself express some

humor in these q and A's which is very

appreciated what is a teacher without a

sense of humor right

well actually

that's not this isn't even your question

but yeah it is true that that the joke

about the Buddhist Corner who got fired

from his job because as cause of death

he always put birth

yeah that is a good joke if I had

remembered that last time I might have
said that was my favorite Buddhist joke
I remember hearing that as a junior Monk
and it's not really objectionable it's
not like ridiculing anything
other than a fictional coroner I guess
so yeah that's that's harmless it's not
it's not like ridiculing Buddhism or
dama or the Buddha or anything so yeah
I'll give that one a pass definitely
so I'll just move on to Titus
theosynthesis first actual question
speaking of humor in Buddhism are you
familiar with any of the works of Brad
Warner and then he's got a list here
hardcore Zen Don't Be a Jerk sit down

and shut up

sex is sin and Zen hardcore Zen strikes

again it it came from Beyond Zen

um no I've never read anything by Brad

Warner I'm not exactly sure who Brad

Warner is

I did I mean possibly my favorite joke

title to a meditation book is don't just

do something sit there

so if Brad Warner wrote that that would

be my main uh influence from Brad Warner

um you got to be careful with too much

of joking though I remember once though

I think it was one of the only times I

ever went to Spirit Rock we just showed

up there and uh Dharma talk was was

going to happen so I I sat through the

dhama talk and it was mainly just this a
female comedian with I mean she she told
more jokes and any kind of actual Dharma
it was just sort of an entertainment
show with just a Teensy amount of sort
of secular
uh eclectic Dharma mixed in with it
and I mean that sort of thing I mean
people start confusing the humor with
with the Dharma
and uh yeah I think there is sort of uh
too much is uh is not necessarily a good
thing in the case of joking in Buddhism
but I mean there is there is a certain
amount of humor in Buddhism it's very
dry humor in the text and it doesn't

happen very often but it is in there

and that's good I mean

humor is good

so I'll just uh I mean I used to say

that like uh like the Bible says you

know the beginning of wisdom is the fear

of God

the fear of God is the beginning of

wisdom that's in the Bible somewhere

right but I think a sense of humor may

be the beginning of wisdom

anyway I'll just move on to uh Titus

theosynthesis next question here

which is as follows

one of the tasks in meditation practices

is the suspension of internal dialogue

many people during various sitting still

meditations struggle greatly or utterly
fail at this including myself passivity
actually intensified internal dialogue
one thing I realized however is that I
had many episodes of internal dialogue
suspension while being in an action or
an event such as fishing painting
playing an instrument
Etc I remember thinking why people
insist on sitting still doing nothing
meditation practices is beyond me but
then although more logical to me this is
strictly personal I guess if practice in
a way that doesn't suit them many may
never get a hold of it and it seems
there are active meditation forms out

there various schools teachings various
schools or teachings persisting with one
traditional meditation form nowadays
seem rather outdated maybe even not very
enlightened shouldn't teachers task be
to help the student realize his greatest
potential wouldn't this today in the
Golden Age of information include giving
him a choice between still or active
meditative forms or am I missing
something crucial and there is actually
something to tradition or even the
struggle itself any thoughts
okay well
for a Buddhist monk if you read the text
a Buddhist monk is supposed to be
meditating all the time like in the the

stock description of Sati sampajanya or mindfulness and clear comprehension as it's often rendered you know it's like anything he does he is mindful of it's like it's like a meditation if he's gonna turn his head you know there's the intention to turn your head and then he mindfully turns his head he's going to reach out he mindfully reaches out if he's going to retract his arm he mindfully retracts his arm if he's gonna walk he walks mindfully if he's gonna sit down he sits down lion sleep he's going to lie down he lies down mindfully and um so sitting meditation was just a refinement of this it's like you're

taking already meditate meditative

mental state and you're refining it

because you've got less commotion going

on and so you can get to a a more

peaceful silent kind of mental state

because even if you're not thinking out

loud if you're doing things you know

there's all these perceptions bombarding

you

all this stuff going on and even the

perceiving of that is a kind of mental

activity that when you're sitting

Crossing it with your eyes closed is

I mean it's not there it's not happening

nearly as much

so in addition to that there's also a

walking meditation which is endorsed in

in the ancient texts and in fact a lot
of meditation Traditions like mahasi
meditation tradition the tradition is
you walk for an hour then you sit for an
hour and then you walk for an hour then
you sit for an hour
but um I think it was Eckhart Tolle
who talks about some people get addicted
to Danger sports like motorcycle riding
or rock climbing because it forces you
to be in this expanded extremely alert
mindful mental state because if you [__]
up for just a split second you're dead
and so people practice these because it
like expands their mind is sort of like
expanded State of Consciousness it feels

good you know it's like a high but it's
a good high it's not like like you're
like on narcotics or something but the
problem is that they don't know how to
attain those expanded states of clarity
and mindfulness when they're not doing
the dangerous sport like going 160 miles
an hour on a motorcycle
so the trick is I mean you try to be as
meditative as you can I mean especially
for a like a a professional practitioner
like a monk you know you're supposed to
be mindful you know no matter what
you're doing and then you take what
momentum you've got going from that when
you sit down and then then you can get
into these really quiet peaceful states

of clarity that are much more difficult

when you're walking around making noise

although there are stories in the in the

tradition of monks becoming enlightened

when they're when they're not sitting

across like like uh Ananda according to

tradition

the night before the first Council he's

the only monk who's going to attend the

First Council who isn't enlightened

because he was so busy not being the

the computer just told me I haven't

plugged it in again I plugged it in

yesterday

it's not even funny

okay

this happens almost every time you think
I would have learned by now but I did I
did do it yesterday and then it didn't
record
so
so anyway Ananda he's doing walking
meditation trying to get himself
enlightened because he was so busy being
the Buddha's attendant that you know he
didn't have time to practice intensively
enough or something so he's doing
walking meditation and finally it's just
not happening he's not getting
enlightened so he decides he's just
gonna lie down and get some sleep and as
he's mindfully sitting down on the bed
and starting to lean over right when

he's intermediate between sitting and
lying down he becomes enlightened
or there's another story I think it's in
the commentaries of a monk who is doing
meditation on Bones so one of the 32
parts of the body ateet is bones and um
there's a a woman who is like flirting
with him or something he's just walking
along in this
woman of not a very good moral uh fiber
comes up and she's sort of flirting with
him and laughing and maybe teasing him
and he looks at her teeth and sees them
as bones and it's right there he becomes
enlightened all these sort of
contemplating the the teeth bones of

this laughing woman so I mean it can

happen

I mean in Zen there's lots of cases like

that like the monk who's he's sweeping

the he's sweeping the area around the

temple and he accidentally sweeps this

rock against a bamboo pole like in some

bamboos growing there and it makes this

sound like talk and there's that top

just all of a sudden it happens

so

yeah

um I guess I answered the question in a

very roundabout way so I'll just move on

to uh

let's see Titus theosynthesis next

question

what is consciousness without an eye

well Consciousness without an eye

um whenever you're not like being

self-referential that would be

Consciousness without an eye like most

animals

they they don't they're not self-aware

um you know they're they're not aware of

what's going on inside them so much as

just outside and some people might be

like that too

um

it's like Consciousness with an eye you

have to have like a recursive mental

state where your mental states are are

like aware of other mental States you

know you have to like be turning the

mind in on itself in order for there to

be a concept of of self

and most conscious beings just don't

have it apparently

so what is consciousness I mean what

Consciousness ultimately is

I mean it's it's sort of like I almost

like an undefined term like science

doesn't really know what it is I mean

you can say it's always like awareness

or something and then you say well

what's that and you know it's like

eventually you get them backed up

against a wall because they can't really

explain it it's sort of like energy to a

physicist some people some physicists

will say energy is just the you know the capacity to do work or something like that but a lot of physicists especially the more contemplated ones will say that that like energy is just an undefined term they can't really say what it is and I think that Consciousness and energy are essentially the same thing but what Consciousness Consciousness with I don't know all you have to do is just not be self-referential and it happens to everybody and there you go you know what it is to run your own experience and not me explaining it to you

so we'll just move on to Titus

deosynthesis next question here

which is other than writing and teaching

have you ever tried yourself in other

art forms music painting sculpting would

you show a painting or drawing if you

have any

well

um

I did play some music but it was I was

like in high school a junior high school

band I played uh trumpet at first but I

had bad embouchure my like my lips are

too fat and my I got like an overbite I

couldn't hit the high notes easy so they

switched me over to treble clef baritone

horn which is sort of like a small tuba

and

it's uh I mean I don't know if you could
call it music maybe you can call it
music but I mean when you're playing
treble clef baritone horn you're doing
the bass line so that any song that you
play it always sounds the same it's like
Etc et cetera until you get to the end
of the song
so I mean that wasn't very challenging
um with regard to sculpting and maybe a
little bit I was good with clay in art
class regard to painting I never really
learned good painting technique
my paintings are always turned out muddy
or something but drawing I'm good at
drawing but I can't really show you any

drawings that I've drawn because I'm

pretty sure the only drawings that I

have

um are the best drawings that I have

were drawn years ago and it's it's a

series of nudes it's like undraped

female forms and it wasn't drawn from

live models but uh

still

and I could probably get a strike for

showing them because uh they're naked

so I think I'll just move on next

question here this is from the Spanish

Inquisition

and the Spanish Inquisition says is

alcoholism rare in Buddhist countries

and I've gotten the wrong font here and

it's bugging me so I'm just gonna switch

it

okay

so the Spanish Inquisition says is

alcoholism rare in Buddhist countries

and yeah it's I mean I can't really

speak for all Buddhist countries the

only Buddhist country I've spent a

significant amount of time in is Burma

and I can say that in rural Burma

I mean you might you're going to have

the village drunk you're gonna have some

guys that are rascally and they'll drink

something but it's um it's much less

prevalent than it is in the west and way

less prevalent than it is in like

Eastern Europe

um it does happen though I mean the rich people who are aping Western culture in the in like Rangoon yeah they'll drink and it's like the standard Burmese movie um you know it's it's like different versions of the same movie where is the standard Burmese movie I watch them so you don't have to you've got Boy Meets Girl girl is rich boy is not rich girls Rich family won't let her marry boy so what happens is sometimes as like the Elder Brothers of the girl or just some hired goons will beat up the boy he'll go off and drink himself half to death on Johnny Walker Red Label whereas the girl cries for a few days and then

marries the guy that she's told to Mary

and that's the end essentially

so I mean you've

why anyone want to drink Johnny Walker

Red Label I have no idea

but for some reason in the Burmese

movies that's what they drink

but out in the village where it's more

traditional

you may have the village trunk I

remember I used to have this dog named

Merv Griffin

and he was a good dog and he was

formerly the dog of this Village guy who

was ordained temporarily as a novice

just to be the caretaker of the

monastery where I subsequently lived he
had already gone by the time I started
living there
but uh he dropped out and he was an
alcoholic apparently and The Story Goes
that on one day he drank five bottles of
rum because you can get rum in Burma too
um and then around the time of him
finishing the fifth bottle or getting
close to finishing the fifth ball they
must have been pints I don't know if
anyone could drink five fifths in one
day he just fell off of his Ox cart and
died and was just
so I inherited his dog so I mean that
kind of thing does happen but it's like
it's a low social status kind of a thing

to do

um

it's sort of like this like a person who

is an alcoholic in Burma would have

about the same stigma on them as like a

heroin addict nowadays assuming that

there are still heroin addicts now that

they've got drugs that are way more

powerful than heroin

but

um yeah it does happen but it's rare

and I could have just said it does

happen but it's rare and moved on the

next question but I'm always telling

stories and stuff

so this is the last question this wasn't

the last question yesterday when I did

the Q a because he asked this one uh

this morning

so he got onto the list

and this is from Judge Caligula Bushman

and judge Caligula Bushman says what's

your opinion on the talking point among

Hindu nationalists that Buddhism is just

a Hindu sect most of their arguments are

obviously self-serving propaganda but

they also claim that there is textual

evidence that the Buddha did believe in

and propagated the Hindu notion of the

Soul

notable hindujia people I'm referring to

have videos about this on YouTube

Conrad else

Etc

well

whether the Buddha did believe in a like

an Atman

uh it's it's unlikely but I mean there

could be evidence put forth that would

persuade at least those who are willing

to be persuaded who want to be persuaded

but it seems to me that in order to

really be a Hindu sect you have to

accept The Vedas as authoritative which

Buddhism clearly does not

so I mean it's sort of like a political

thing to say that Buddhism is a sect of

Hinduism like I was told that in Nepal

um the Buddhists were clamoring to have

Buddhism taught in the schools because
Hinduism is taught in the schools and
the government just said well Buddhism
is taught in the schools because
Hinduism is taught in schools and
Buddhism is a kind of Hinduism but um
and I mean the Buddha is considered to
be the sixth Avatar of Vishnu
so Hindus do believe
that godama Buddha was an avatar of
Vishnu but he was like the the deceiver
or something he was like trying to
purify Hinduism by Leading fools away
into Buddhism to get them away from
Hinduism or something
uh but still I think really what
the decisive argument to me is Buddhism

does not consider The Vedas to be

authoritative and therefore it is not

effective Hinduism because I'm pretty

sure in order to be a Hindu you have to

consider The Vedas at least the first

three to be authoritative

and that's it I'm that's that's the end

of the thing and in this q a is like 10

minutes shorter than the one I did

yesterday even though it has one extra

question because

um there are a few digressions that I

made yesterday that I didn't make this

time

but uh it's good enough I suppose you'll

have to listen to my rant about

Jehovah's Witnesses some other time

that's what I did that yesterday it took

several minutes

so

um if you have any questions as usual

feel free to leave them in the uh

comments below if you have access to the

Discord server you can leave them there

you have access to the Subscribe Star

channel you can leave them there

um feel free to like And subscribe if

you haven't already feel free to order

my books and it helps to leave a review

and uh be happy

hello and welcome to episode 59 of

question and answer I am your host Ponyo

bossa and this in the USA is Labor Day

weekend which means that as a laborer I

get a three-day weekend this weekend as

opposed to back before I was a laborer

when I would have essentially a seven

day weekend every week

and we've got sort of a moderate amount

of questions which could easily multiply

until they're completely out of hand if

I were to postpone this for another week

so let's just do a nice moderate middle

path kind of uh q a today and I've got

my sweet tea

and I'm about as ready as I'll ever be

although I have noticed during the
summer time here in South Carolina I've
been like on Saturdays I still have kind
of a hangover from work just from like
working hard in hot weather it takes at
least a day of just lying around on the
couch being a slug in order to replenish
my electrolytes and metabolites and
other things that end in ending light
in light so
um I'll just start answering questions
that's what I'm going to do and the
first question is from cricket and frog
song
who changes his name every few weeks and
by the time I answer the question
might be somebody else

but we'll just go with this this for now

and cricket and frog song says what is

the Buddhist equivalent of God has other

plans for me

God has other plans for me

and this came from a brief discussion on

the Discord server about

uh they're talking about how hard it is

to attain Jonna

and Saint John of the cross

used to say that anyone who gets

contemplation which would be the Roman

Catholic equivalent of at least second

genre I assume

um St John lacrosse said anyone who

cannot Master it but who get it and then

and lose it and then get it and then

lose it and then get it and then lose it

sort of like

the monk gotika in a weird polytext that

I'll be getting to later on in this q a

but anyone who gets it and loses it and

gets it and loses it and can't

consistently master high contemplation

well God just has other plans for such a

person

and that was kind of uh

I don't know it's disappointing to me

because I was like that I mean I get it

and lose it and get it and lose it and

get it and lose it I mean assuming that

it really was Jonna

the whole term Jonna is almost useless

because it's so controversial but anyway
so what is the Buddhist equivalent of
God has other plans I just assume it
means that you just don't have the comma
for it I mean the Burmese people would
talk about parami which is
um sort of a kind of karmic
Perfection with regard to a certain
category of mental states there are 10
parmies I won't get into it but
um like the first one is Donna or
generosity the next one is Sila or or
morality and um I mean probably be like
panya which would be one of the one of
the ten Perfections or the 10 paramis
maybe that's just not complete enough

yet

um

but it's just it's a karmic thing it's

it's uh

that that's pretty much how a Buddhist

would have to explain it at least a

terrible Buddhist so I'll uh just move

on to the next question here and this is

from ascetic gang

and he also changes his name every once

in a while I've noticed this is like his

third name so far just within the past

few months

so I hope this doesn't reflect on my

viewers like uh continually changing

their names to avoid the police or

something

so anyway ascetic gang says

you don't have to answer the following

question in the next video since it's

pretty long well

people ask longer questions than this so

this is fair game it is nice to get kind

of concise questions but I mean if you

if the question is such that you can't

ask it in a short version but it has to

be kind of lengthy like it's got a big

quote that you want to comment on you

you can do that too although short

questions are nice

anyway he says if you are in the mood

you can answer it by comment which

yeah I'm I'm gonna answer it here it

somehow shaken to my face in the Buddha
when I learned that he publicly
humiliated a monk and insulted him
according to the majum in ikaya suta 22
the Buddha asked the Monk arita
who was formerly a vulture trainer
supposedly
um but that's not hearing the question
here according to majum and Kaya suda 22
the Buddha asked the monk arita if an
evil Viewpoint had Arisen in him arita
answered quote yes indeed Lord I
understand the dhamma taught by the
blessed one and those acts the blessed
one says are obstructive when are
obstructive when indulgent are not
genuine obstructions unquote

the Buddha responded by saying that he is a worthless man who didn't understand the dhamma correctly and asked the other monks if arita is even warm in this dhamma and winia they denied it when this was said the monk arita sat silent abashed his shoulders drooping his head down brooding at a loss for words after the Buddha saw the condition of arita he said again that he is a worthless man and that he will be recognized for his own evil Viewpoint here I get the impression that the Buddha is insulting among harita and I get the impression that the Buddha is publicly humiliating him in front of the

other monks arita seems very negatively affected mentally and physically he seems to be suffering the vinya explains that arita is subsequently expelled from the community of monks because he has not renounced his opinion so perhaps the humiliation and insult he potentially suffered put him in an attitude of psychological defense so that he wouldn't change his mind and was eventually expelled so this gives me the impression that humiliation and insult were not adequate Pedas I'm not sure what that means p-e-d-a-s paid us to put arita back on the right path of dhamma okay

so yeah this is a well-known case of

arita who was formerly a vulture trainer
whatever that means there's you've got
like commentators sort of discussing
what being a vulture trainer could be
um and this whole story it it struck me
as pretty fishy just from the way it
starts I mean it's even included here
where the Buddha asks arita
um if if he had I mean if he was
following a pernicious wrong View and
arita says yeah I follow the pernicious
wrong view that what you said is an
obstruction isn't really an obstruction
and I the commentarial tradition says
that when they're talking about
obstructions they're talking about

wallowing and sensuality

so I mean why would the Buddha ask do

you believe the pernicious wrong view

that what I say is an obstruction isn't

really obstruction and it reaches like

even so venerable Lord

but I believe the pernicious wrong view

I mean he's like admitting that he's got

wrong view right at the beginning which

is

I mean I think the story has been

monkeyed with a little bit because you'd

think that someone who believes

something isn't just gonna write off the

bat admit that it's a pernicious wrong

view why would you believe it if you

consider it to be wrong

so

um he doesn't really call him a

worthless man he calls him Moga Parisa

Moga purisa which it means empty man

and uh I mean Moga is not necessarily

derogatory

necessarily like there's a brahmana who

asks the Buddha some questions in uh in

the Pariah navaga of the sutiny Pata and

his name is Moga Raja which means empty

king

so empty man I mean it means like

I mean you could interpret it as

worthless or futile or just foolish

um you know he's just not getting it is

essentially what it means in this case

and um

yeah I mean the Buddha doesn't have to

be nice and polite to everyone

especially I mean he's the leader of

this group and you've got somebody just

misrepresenting him I mean if you can

believe his own words he's willfully

misrepresenting him because he he agrees

that what he's saying is a pernicious

wrong View and he's going around saying

it anyway

so I think the Buddha was well within

his rights to scold this person in front

of others partly to make an example of

him just to show you know what this guy

is saying is wrong I mean

it should be pretty obvious

um but just because you had the Buddha

for a teacher doesn't mean that he's

going to

you know be

uh what's the word just

what is the word like he can't be fixed

you know you've got the there's the

stereotypical group of six who are these

six monks who are just complete Rascals

they're always messing around breaking

rules getting into trouble doing bad

things and even though they lived in the

Buddhist time I mean they were coming

into contact with an enlightened sage

still I mean they were like the spoon

that doesn't taste the soup I mean they

just

and some people I mean just because you

have an enlightened teacher doesn't mean

that you're going to get enlightened or

that you're even going to become

particularly wise if you're just too

foolish to get it

and that was kind of the implication

with arita here

and uh the fact that he was expelled

from the community that's

um he he couldn't be defrocked I mean

the only person that can de-robe a monk

is that monk himself

ah

but

um there is a formal Act of

oh what is it called expulsion from the
Sangha sort of where it's like other
monks aren't allowed to interact with
you you know you get the silent
treatment you're not allowed to to sleep
under the same roof of the monk like
this you're not supposed to discuss
Domino with a monk like this and one of
the reasons for expelling a monk like
this is if he stubbornly refuses to give
up a wrong View
and when the Buddha himself is telling
him you know this is not what I'm
teaching you're misrepresenting me and
then he just stubbornly persists then
he's got his own agenda I mean he just

wanted to wallow in sensuality or some

such and

um

so

I mean there's neem corolli Baba who for

all I know may have been an enlightened

being if it's even possible to become

fully enlightened in this world when the

samsara context

I mean he'd yell at people and then

pound on people and all sorts of things

it was

I mean a good devout terravada Buddhist

would say well if that's the case he

couldn't possibly be in line buds huh

in other ways he was just really just

Superman

so let's see what is the question here I

mean is there a question mark

let's see

maybe he just wants comment on this

yeah well it's it shook

ascetic gang's face that the Buddha

would harshly scold a monk who

stubbornly clung to a a wrong View and

was misrepresenting the Buddha and

sometimes you gotta be tough I mean

just being nice and just letting them do

whatever they please isn't going to work

very well especially if you're actually

trying to to help people to liberate

people or helping them to liberate

themselves you can't have somebody like

this just throwing dust in people's eyes
and causing confusion and so forth
so yeah I think the insults of the woman
calling her a you know what is this full
of urine and dung I wouldn't want to
touch it even with my foot
um who I mean she wasn't a monk she
probably wasn't a Buddhist yeah she
wasn't a Buddhist at the time it was
just sort of a gratuitous insult to this
to this young woman I mean that would be
more blameworthy I think than blaming or
like scolding a disciple for seemingly
willingly misrepresenting what you're
saying and just sort of perverting it
so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Athena's

sigil

and Athena sigil says my question for a further video is on the statuary of terravonna Buddhism in tibetan vajrayana and Mahayana in general Buddhist iconography is very essential and important to transmit dharmic teachings what role does it play in teravana

well I mean there's no mention of statues in the polytopitica that I know of Because by the time the polytopitica was composed Buddha statues hadn't even been invented yet

of course there are some who who theorize that the Buddha statues were invented by Greeks and there is good

evidence to support that

and the Greeks really didn't uh

convert to Buddhism in any significant

numbers until Alexander the Great

conquered Northwestern India and

established like Greek colonies on the

borders of India

or even within what was India then

and uh some of them converted to

Buddhism including King menandros

apparently

uh who is better known as king Melinda

in the the poly poly literature

so I mean just with regard to the texts

themselves

iconography really has no place at all

it just Buddhist iconography didn't

really exist other than I mean at least

with regard to Buddhist statues with the

mudras and so forth I mean you you'd

have like a footprint or a body leaf or

an empty seat or some such to

sort of represent the Buddha but also at

the same time

imply into our show symbolically that he

just wasn't in samsara anymore he was no

longer in this world or any world

so by the time Tibetan bajriana and

Mahayana came around

um in

long before their their scriptures were

finished then you had Buddha statues and

um

you had a much more variety with regard
to mudras like in in taravana they're
only like four main mudras who that
represent
four of the main
moments in the Buddha's life you know
you've got the Jana mudra with his hands
like here let me get it up high enough
like this like like that Buddha statue
up there
the John amudra which is indicating his
his Enlightenment essentially you've got
the boomi Pasa mudra which is the the
usual one you find in Burma which is
ironic because he wasn't even the Buddha
yet that was like the night of his
Enlightenment where he's he's touching

the Earth to call the Earth as his
witness that he has the right to sit
under that Bodhi Tree and strive for
enlightenment because Mara is trying to
talk him out of it of course
um you have this mudra I don't remember
the the poly name for it but he's like
counting off on his fingers and that's
the first sermon that's the Buddha's
starting Buddhism by counting off the
four noble truths on his fingers and
then the other main one is where the
Buddha is lying down on his right side
and that's the party nibana mudra and
that's indicating his death
and I mean they're used for devotional

purposes you know just almost any

Monastery will have at least one Buddha

image

um most Burmese lay people I think would

have like if they if they're Buddhist

enough if they're devout enough to have

an altar in their house then it's very

likely they're going to have a Buddha

statue there and they will bow to it and

they'll offer little cups of food and

water to it and so forth It's not really

endorsed in the text themselves

um but it's just become tradition

so

that's really all there is to it I think

I mean I wasn't really into bowing to

Buddha statues unlike most Burmese monks

um possibly in a past life I was like a Christian who was really down on idolatry or something it just it just doesn't make sense to me I mean some people would say you know by not bowing to the Statue or the image you're not you're refusing to bow to the Buddha and I'm just pointing that statue pointing out you know that statue has no Sila no samadhi no ponya you know it's just it's just rock or brass or whatever

but um so I mean you can be a good devout terravonna Buddhist and not have anything to do with Buddha statues or any other kind of Buddhist iconography it's it's largely irrelevant it has

become traditional in Buddhist cultures

but

all in all it's it's largely just a side

issue it's it's pretty much irrelevant

so I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from kzen

or kazen

like in the man Kazan Wars

any science fiction Geeks out there

might get the reference

and kazen says

have you heard of the subreddit stream

entry and the seemingly endless amount

of stream enterers online

um no I've never heard of the subreddit

stream entry until reading this question

although I have encountered lots of

people who consider themselves to be

stream enterers

so I'm not surprised that you'd have a

subreddit with all these people claiming

to be stream enterers and

I don't know how to approach this I mean

those of you who watch my my cues and

A's my q and A's

I'm not sure the proper plural there but

anyway any of you who watch these videos

know that I do have the idea that

originally a stream enterer or a

sodapono was just like they were like

Born Again Buddhist I mean they were

just uh had converted to Buddhism and

they were like entering upon a spiritual

life

that was a stream enter that you would

you dedicated yourself to living a

spiritual life it didn't necessarily

involve any kind of superhuman mental

States anything like that any glimpses

of nibana anything like that but

gradually as taravadan tradition

developed

a stream enter was

um the lowest of the four levels of

sainthood which means that once you

become a sodapona there are certain

naughty things you can't do anymore like

tell lies and you are guaranteed of no

more lower Realms no more animal realm

No More Hell Realms no more ghost Realms

anything like that until you become
enlightened and you'd become enlightened
I think what is it five or I didn't even
I don't even remember the number because
it's just irrelevant to me but within a
limited number of lifetimes you will
become enlightened
and uh so probably most of these people
they're not going with my theory that
originally was just someone embarking
upon a spiritual life they probably
really think that they are
um sages like Buddhist Saints
and like I said I've met a lot of people
who who believe that they're Arias of
some sort you know in the Buddhist

spiritual sense and my opinion is that

most of them are mistaken

so

so yeah there's seemingly endless amount

of them not only online but walking

around meditation centers in in Asia

also

you know there's lots of them

so I mean it's it's kind of interesting

like

um some of them are just really like

psychotic like

um you know it's sort of a stereotype

that a Christian person

if he is like delusional like he's he's

like schizophrenic or something he'll

believe himself to be Christ he'll be

believe himself to be the Messiah but

I've found that with regard to naughty

Buddhists

I mean nobody is claiming to be maitreya

Buddha or Matea Buddha unless they're

like

like con man or something you know

they're not doing it because they

sincerely believe it

um like L Ron Hubbard was declared to be

Matea Buddha in on on in one of his

books or a book about him by by the

Scientologist or something

yeah but but it's like Buddhist nutty

people seem to be more humble you know

they're not declaring themselves to be

the second coming or the Messiah or

anything that they'll just declare

themselves to be stream enterers or soda

paws

and uh some of them can be very

very arrogant and smug in their

sainthood

um but even I I do think that there is

some value in a statement in The Diamond

Cutter suture even though it's it's a

Mahayana text

it's an early inspired Mahayana attacks

and it says anyone who's really in Arya

like a like a stream enterer you know

they've gone beyond self-view that's one

of the things you leave behind when you

become an aria you know you don't

believe in in us that you have a self

anymore you're not identified with your

ego anymore and so you're not gonna go

around saying I'm a stream enterer you

know I'm an aria it it's uh it seems

unlikely to me because the whole I mean

mine has been transcended

so

I guess the uh

the the simple answer to this question I

I really am opposed to simple answers

apparently I always my answers are

always 20 times longer than the question

itself at least

but um have I heard of the subreddit

stream entry no

although I have

heard of a seemingly endless amount of

stream enters wandering about the

Buddhist areas of this world

and I've met quite a few of them

so I'll just move on to kazan's next

question here

he says also what do you think of the

Dark Knight of soul in modern times

concerning people who go through extreme

depersonalization

and have you gone through

depersonalization at some point not

expecting an answer here of course

hopefully you find time to address on a

future video well this is the future

video which is now the present video

and I really didn't even know what

depersonalization was or is I had to

look it up like an hour ago

this as I'm compiling the questions and

getting everything straight and

everything

um I figured I'd better look it up just

so I I just couldn't just say on on

so uh depersonalization according to the

Merriam-Webster Dictionary

it's it's got like uh

one is an act or process of

depersonalizing

um the quality or state of being

depersonalized which isn't helpful at

all but uh the second definition here is

is probably what we're going for here A
psychopathological syndrome
characterized by loss of identity and
feelings of unreality and strangeness
about one's own behavior well that
feelings of unreality and strangeness
about one's own behavior that's sounding
kind of like schizophrenia because
schizophrenics are kind of like that
that's why it's called schizophrenia
it's not the multiple personalities like
schizophrenia I mean split head
you know it's it's not because you've
got to split personalities because it's
like your your internal world and your
external Behavior become sort of
detached so that it's sort of like

you're watching another person you know
walking around the room and eating and
going to going potty and stuff
so um
let's see what's the question again here
uh what do I think of Dark Knight of
Dark Knight of the soul in modern times
concerning people who go through extreme
depersonalization well I mean the
psychopathological synonym character
loss of identity I mean that's what
Buddhists are going for I mean you you
want to to transcend the ego and stop
clinging to it which loss of identity in
in and of itself would be a good thing
for a Buddhist feelings of unreality and

strangeness about one's own behavior

well I mean that's kind of a Buddhist

virtue also because I mean it's this is

samsara it's kind of delusional anyway

so I mean feelings of unreality and

strangeness about what is ultimately

delusional

I mean that that would be good too but

people that aren't well versed in

Buddhist philosophy you know they're

normies or something you know they just

beyond the level of an NPC I suppose who

would be without

any sense of identity also I guess

but um

oh what was it where was I going with

that

um yeah it's like you can get into these
states that from a Buddhist point of
view are are desirable or you know worth
working towards you know sort of a goal
and then but they're not ready for it
yet and so it just completely messes
them up or scares them it's sort of like
in meditation
some people they start you know going
beyond the ego and they just Panic they
get scared they feel like they're dying
or something that's fairly common
um I'm not exactly sure if he's talking
about Buddhist people
or just the ordinary person
but I mean it's not it would seem like a

mixed blessing to me because the loss of
identity ultimately is a good thing and
the feelings of unreality and
strangeness about one's own behavior
yeah in a way that's kind of it's kind
of a good thing too
um but I mean I used to have these
experiences when I was a kid especially
it became rarer and rarer as I got older
where you just all of a sudden struck by
the just
bizarre
miracle and just
strangeness of even existing
you know we're I mean we're like these
bones covered with meat that are
bouncing on our hind legs and just kind

of moving around and you know we got
sweat coming off of us sometimes and we
have to put cloth over our bodies
because somehow our own bodies are
obscene and I don't know it's just
really strange if you think about it
just just being a human is itself pretty
weird
so in a way that's kind of an Insight I
think but it could be just an Insight
that's like sneaking up on them and
jumping on them from behind and they're
just not ready for it and it freaks them
out maybe because they might think that
this is reality and I really do have a
self and so forth

so just being attacked by certain

insights

can uh really I mean they're just not

ready for it and then it can mess them

up but all in all I think

depersonalization doesn't sound all that

bad

you can call it a Dark Night of the Soul

St John of the Cross was saying you know

the Dark Knight of the soul is I mean

you're getting close when that happens

to you and you feel like you're you know

infinitely far away light years away

from salvation or anything that's that's

when you're getting really close

so hopefully some of these people that

are experiencing the the extreme

depersonalization are actually coming

through it uh wiser and better people

but um again this is today's the first

I've ever really heard about it

other than reading Buddhist texts that

are kind of praising the same sort of

thing

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from Austin

and Austin says is self-realization also

Maya and I forgot to just a second I

forgot to look it up

not that I'm gonna look up the answer

but

it's in uh the Tibetan book of the great

liberation

yeah I got it written down in this

little notebook that I used to have as a

monk

I like like little books like this that

you can carry around

let's see

let's see there's this one section of

the the Tibetan book of the great

liberation

that uh it really addresses this issue

fairly well

let's see

I just bear with me here

in general all things mentally perceived

are Concepts okay this is how it starts

good the bodily forms in which the world

of appearances is contained are also

concepts of mind the quintessence of the six classes of beings is also a mental concept the happiness of gods in heaven worlds and of men is another mental concept the three unhappy states of suffering two are concepts of the Mind ignorance miseries in the five poisons are likewise mental Concepts self-originated Divine wisdom is also a concept of the Mind the full realization of the passing away into Nirvana is also a concept of Mind Misfortune caused by demons and evil spirits is also a concept of Mind gods and God Good Fortune are also concepts of Mind likewise the various Perfections are

mental Concepts unconscious one

pointedness is also a mental concept the

color of any objective thing is also a

mental concept the qualitiness at

quality-less and formless is also a

mental concept the one and the many in

at one minute is also a mental concept

existence and non-existence as well as

the non-created are concepts of the Mind

nothing saved mind is conceivable

so

I'm getting back to Austin's question

here is self-realization also Maya the

concept of self-realization

self-realization as a thing yeah it's

just it's just more Maya it's more

samsara it's a concept

but if you go beyond the concepts then

what lies beyond the concepts

yeah that's not a concept

so it depends on how you look at it so

I'll just move on to Austin's next

question since that question took me so

long to answer because it spent five

minutes just trying to find a place in a

book

so Austin says

what's your take on empiricism versus

rationalism is Buddhism strict

empiricism

well that's kind of an interesting

question it's kind of sort of a western

philosophical question like

um rationalism

um there are some rationalist

philosophers like like Spinoza was a

rationalist you know he was trying to

get everything down into like facts you

know like his ethics he's trying to get

ethics down to a science based on pure

logic

so you start with self-evident facts

presumably and then you just deduce

everything from that and that would be

irrationalism leibnitz would be another

rationalist I think Descartes was a

rationalist on the other hand empiricism

would be more like David Hume where

um he was I mean he he used logic also

but he considered a more important

source of Truth is not so much

rationality and logic as just observing

reality

and just going with that as as closely

as possible

so I mean David Hume is one of my

favorite Western philosophers and uh

I think I do prefer empiricism to

rationalism but you can call science

empiricism you know empirical science

but still there's a lot of

rationalization you know a lot of

rationality involved

so

I guess empiricism has to have a lot of

rationalism incorporated into it as a

general rule but then you get to

Buddhism and he's asking here is

Buddhism strict empiricism in a way it

is because obviously early Buddhism I

mean before abhidham and the

commentaries came along and just the

long complicated sutas that are like

lists of

this and that and the other and

questions and answers with all these

this technical jargon before we get to

that stage you know when you're at the

the primordial stage of Buddhism like

niantika Wagga for example then yeah

it's just

see reality in the scene there is only

the scene you don't even think about it

you don't formulate any beliefs about it

you know it's just all concepts of mind

which is what you're trying to to go

beyond

so yeah in a sense it is strict

empiricism but it's it's it'd be more

accurate to call it mysticism

because mysticism is just like direct

experience of ultimate truth

um so I guess that would be like an

extreme form of empiricism it'd be like

empiricism with all the rationalization

to all the rationalism Left Behind

so I think that would be I think that

would be a justifiable statement

that Buddhism is strict empiricism in

that it is strict mysticism like even

mysticism is stripped of all the

traditional stuff

but really I mean that's just for the

most advanced practitioners because as a

general rule Buddhism is not strict

empiricism it's got all this abhidham

stuff which is rationalism and also it

just has appeals to Authority you know

it says this in the text I'm a Buddhist

therefore I'm going to believe what this

text says and probably most Buddhists

take that route

so

the most the more advanced the Buddhism

gets the more empirical it gets until

you're just viewing reality as it is

in the scene there's only the scene

so I think I'll just uh move on to

Austin's next question here

and he says I come from Utah where the

majority of people are Mormon have you

ever had any interactions with Mormon

missionaries either as a monk or as a

Layman if so how did it go I only

remember interacting with a Mormon

missionary once and I was a Buddhist

monk at the time in America I was

walking across a University campus with

this friend of mine who wasn't a monk he

was a layperson

and a Mormon missionary came up to me

and he asked me if I've read the book of

Mormon and I said yeah I've read it
which I I have read the book of Mormon
which is surreal I have to say
and he said well what did you think of
it and I said well for starters I do
think it's highly unlikely that the
American Indians are like a degenerate
race of of Hebrews that were cursed by
God six or seven hundred years before
the birth of Jesus for not believing in
Jesus and that's what the Book of Mormon
says that the American Indians or the
Native Americans
or I mean they were like Jews
who before the Babylonians sacked
Jerusalem were told by God to come to
Central America I think they don't they

don't really say exactly where but I

think it's probably like mesoamerica

somewhere

this Ark comes over and then one of the

factions of these people because they

don't believe in Jesus again hundreds of

years before Jesus was born they're

cursed by God and made to look

ugly and repulsive not my words it's in

the Book of Mormon

um

so I just told him that and and like the

the smile just kind of evaporated from

his face and he said well I think you're

misinterpreting The Book of Mormon I'd

say well

and that's what it says so yeah that was

about it he kind of lost interest in me

because I was like uh kind of hit him

with a fact grenade

so that was that was it that was my only

interaction with

um Mormon missionaries although when I

was a young monk still living in

California there was a Jehovah's Witness

guy

and they always come in pairs so

there'll always be someone with him it'd

be a different person different times

but he was coming like once a week

trying to convert me to being a

Jehovah's Witness and bless his heart I

mean he just didn't know what he was up

against

it was kind of fun debating with him but

also very frustrating at the same time

because of course they'll say let us be

open-minded which means let you be

open-minded enough to reject your own

beliefs and accept my beliefs and then

just slam the door closed

you know lock it throw away the key and

remain closed-minded for the rest of

your life

so it was very frustrating just trying

to trying to get any Headway with this

guy although there was a few questions

that I was able to formulate that he

couldn't answer and that was sort of I

kind of scored a point on that one like

um Jehovah's Witnesses believe that

animals have like a temporary soul

they're not just completely mindless

automatons like some Christians believe

but that they can't go to heaven

although if you yeah they can't go to

heaven or they can't really be saved

and so I was saying like why are they

being punished with death and disease

and all this when they have nothing to

learn from it humans you know according

to the story you know

um we're being punished by death and

disease and so forth

um because you know Adam and Eve and

they ate the fruit and you know it's

like it's sort of teaching us a lesson

so that we'll turn to God again but

animals don't even have that option and

they're just getting

you know they're they're suffering a lot

you know they have very difficult lives

a lot of them and he couldn't answer

that

but I don't want to continue to rant

about Jehovah Witnesses I went on this

long rant about Jehovah Witnesses last

week and then it turned out that it

wasn't recording and I better be

recording now by golly yeah it looks

like it's recording ah

yeah I went two hours almost two hours

and it turned out not to record last time and I had to do it all over again and the second time did not include the Jehovah Witness rant and yeah I should probably restrain myself this time as well since it hasn't very little to do with the question because the question is about Mormon missionaries but I will say I have read the book of Mormon and it is just astonishing how intelligent some Mormons are you know like that what was his name Ken Jennings who was he was like this Unstoppable Juggernaut on Jeopardy I mean he won he won like a zillion gajillion dollars on Jeopardy he just was like this walking encyclopedia he was really intelligent and he was a

Mormon and you read the book of Mormon

and it's it's so unbelievable you know

even the stuff about the American

Indians being degenerate Jews and so

forth

um also

um the guy who wrote the book

or channeled the book it is a channeled

document what's his name

Smith

Joseph Smith

he apparently was

relatively ignorant of military strategy

since whenever he describes any kind of

Siege or battle or anything in the Book

of Mormon

there's there's only two strategies that

they used one was

um let's see

one was just to get the other side drunk

you just throw a bunch of like flasks of

wine over the walls

and then the the guards drink the wine

get drunk pass out and then they climb

over the walls and Sack the city that's

that's one of the two strategies and the

other one was I think it's right out of

the book of

uh what's the book right after

um

Exodus the book of who was who is

Moses's right hand man I think it starts

with a J anyway there's this strategy

there where

um they try to attack a city and then

pretend to run away and then the Army

chases them but then they leave the

gates conveniently open and then you've

got another Detachment of reinforcements

hiding in the bushes nearby and then

they just run in through the open Gates

and Sack the city

and those were like the two military

strategies other than just line up and

just hack at each other with with Spears

and swords and scimitars and stuff

so

yeah the Book of Mormon is it's really

surreal and it's just like an

anthropological study that really people

can believe anything I mean that's

that's really an Insight that I've

gotten from observing the human race is

people can believe anything no matter

how ridiculous it is I mean just look at

the political situation nowadays

I mean

how can how could Joe Biden get slightly

more than half the vote of all the

voters in America

considering that he's he's like

senile at I mean just at the very least

senile and crooked

but

I mean

the Mormons believe even sillier stuff I

guess than than post-modern Democrats do

but

I guess I should just move on to

Austin's next question

because not only is that her am I

indulging in a rant it's like a

disjointed ramp

so Austin's next question here is

could intensively studying Dharma

Concepts before establishing a solid

sitting practice impede your progress

along the path and that reminds me of

something that ajan cha said

and ajan Shah said

he said this is why most people who have

studied a lot and become monks never get

anywhere their knowledge is of a
different kind on a different path the
knowledge of the Buddha is not worldly
knowledge it is super a mundane
knowledge a different way altogether
unquote
so yeah I think well he was mainly
pointing to like scholar monks scholar
monks usually don't make much progress
in dhamma because their head is so full
of Concepts they're just kind of locked
into this this interlocking set of
Concepts that I mean it becomes like a
mental cage for them it's like a mental
prism
and uh so I mean to study dhamma
Concepts

before establishing it before

establishing a selling sitting practice

I mean to get some familiarity with the

jargon you know as long as you're not

clinging to it

I think it can be helpful

but if you've got everything figured out

you know you've got this whole thing's

you know you study abhidham for example

you got all the lists memorized you know

you've got it all worked out this is how

dhamma is and then you start meditating

I mean you're just you're kind of

Trapped because

especially if you really believe you

know all this technical jargon

this technical system this huge

Scholastic edifice of of philosophy you

know as long as you're really believing

that then that becomes like a mental

prison it's like shackles it just

prevents you from making much progress

unless you can somehow just get slammed

by some kind of powerful Insight just

out of your rut

in some way or another

so

yeah so let's get back to the question

here could intensively studying Dharma

Concepts before establishing a solid

sitting practice impede your progress

along the path it can if you really like

Faith oriented or like intellectually

oriented where you take these mental

Concepts and make them your religion

and then

um like a lot of monks in Burma are

Scholars you know scholar monks that

even if their own personal experience

deviates from what abhi dhamma says they

should experience they'll just follow

abidamo you know they'll they'd rather

trust the book than trust their own

personal experience and I mean that's

just a recipe for failure

so I guess I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from Joe Doe and

Joe Doe says

do you believe monks can become

Immortals

and from the Buddhist point of view

nobody becomes an immortal even the Gods

in the heaven Realms are not immortal

so I mean there just are no Immortals

in in Buddhist cosmology or Buddhist

philosophy in general that everything

that has a beginning has an end

so if you become an immortal then you're

gonna have to stop being one which means

you were never an immortal to begin with

so no I do not believe that monks can

become Immortals it just goes against

Buddhist philosophy everything that has

a beginning has an end and uh I mean

that's just a basic insight

that everything that has a beginning has

an end

and there are no Immortals I mean there

might be gods in the highest Heaven

Realms that live for literally billions

of years but even they eventually are

going to pass away from that place and

reappear somewhere else according to

their Kama

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from CEO of action

and CEO vacch and sipad zidana says

Brian Rue claimed that ajan Sona said to

him that the reason Buddhist countries

suffered so much from communism is due

to Karma of insulting arahans do you

believe this and do you believe the same

logic could apply to why India itself
also just started getting destroyed by
everyone else for Millennia due to the
same principle
um I'm kind of skeptical that for
example the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia or
you know some of the worst aspects of
the Burmese military government
in in Burma are caused by the karma of
insulting Iran's if you read the text
the karma from insulting orons is really
awful that you're going to go to hell
for that but
I'm not so sure I mean the Burmese they
they don't want to insult Laura haunts
unless the aura hunt happens not to be a
terravonna Buddhist and then they just

won't believe that he's in our hunt

so

um

yeah I'm kind of skeptical of that I

mean it's hard to say exactly why it is

you know what kind of karma the

Cambodian Buddhist people had that then

brought the Khmer Rouge down on them

with monks being executed or or just

being worked to death or whatever

um from my experience in Burma I think

it might be more plausible that the

Burmese live a rough life it's not

entirely on due to demerit I mean it's

not necessarily bad karma that they're

living under a military dictatorship

because the military dictatorship keeps
them living like a simple Spartan kind
of life that is more conducive to
practicing dama you know you cannot
serve both God and Mammon so if you've
got no Mammon to serve you know serving
God or dhamma in this case comes easier
so that's a possibility but with regard
to the bad aspects
um when I was living in Burma I was more
of the opinion that I mean it could be
due to like really sloppy monks that
most of the monks really are just
they're not even trying to become
enlightened
and
um just the Burmese in general I mean

bless their hearts that in some ways
they are superior to us westerners in
certain ways you know they live a more
dharma-oriented life
but as a general rule they're like
afraid of their own shadow you know they
live in this chronic fear and it's not
just of the government they fear the
government but they fear too much
sunshine and rain and wind and I mean
ghosts and witches I mean they're afraid
of lots and lots of stuff and fear is is
always Bad Karma so I mean they aren't
generating Bad Karma partly just because
they're human but with regard to
cambodians yeah I really don't know

enough about what Cambodia was like
before the Khmer Rouge you know what
state dama was in in Cambodian Buddhism
um before the khmerus started
perpetrating their atrocities
but I'm not so sure it's due to the
karma of insulting our Hans because the
Burmese they go the other way and
they're willing to they don't want to
insult any Monk just because they think
you insult monks you can go to hell so
that's one reason why the monks are so
sloppy is because nobody dares to
criticize them they can do as they
please they can just be completely
sloppy lacks Shameless unconscientious
monks they still get support

so it could be something more along the lines of that just sort of a kind of decadence in this case like a spiritual decadence even though the people are very

Faith oriented you know they're very devout and they may take keeping five precepts seriously

um the monks themselves it's a different case it's sort of like Medieval Europe you know I mean they were very very religious in medieval Europe but still I mean it was a disaster Medieval Europe was not a good place to live you know these wars and plagues and and Psychopathic Kings and Emperors and

dukes and so forth just making all kinds

of trouble

so

yeah I think it would just be like the

uh to some degree cultural condition and

some to some degree just anthropological

um defilements of of the people that uh

eventually results in karmic blowback

that would be my guess but I mean it's

hard to say different people in Cambodia

would have different comma

and maybe it was just the fruition of

different sorts of comma for different

people

um you know sort of like it is in Burma

but um I mean if you want to live a

dharmic life you're probably better off

in Burma I mean especially if you're
going to be a renunciant if you're
really gonna go for it you're better off
in Burma than in the West
so even despite the military
dictatorship they do have a lot going
for them in a non-material sense
it's just that materialists go there and
they say oh look at all the poverty you
know they just assume that it's going to
be misery and squalor when I mean you
you walk down the the road which is dirt
and covered with goat turds in a Burmese
Village you're gonna see way more happy
smiles than you're going to see walking
down the street in in pretty much

anywhere in America

and they're real smiles too they're

genuine happy smiles

so they can live in squalor by Western

standards you know well below the

poverty line

and still they have less suffering in

their life than we do

mainly because they have less desire

than we do I mean it's just second Noble

Truths right there

so let's see oh that's the next part of

this question is do you believe the same

logic would apply to India itself also

just started getting destroyed by

everyone else from Millennia due to the

same principle I'm not sure what caused

India to you know for example get

invaded by Turkish Muslims and have

Buddhism pretty much eradicated by

essentially Exterminating the Buddhists

um or just forcing them to flee or

convert

um partly it could just be like the

degeneracy of Buddhism or of Dharma in

general and again it could be just a lot

of stuff that was sort of incidental to

religion you know it's just sort of the

defilements of the people certain like

culturally conditioned defilements even

that uh sort of weakened the

civilization

um

so that bad things started happening to
a greater degree but even when Buddhism
was like at its peak I guess I guess it
was at its peak under Ashoka around
thereabouts
so it was sort of a golden age for
Buddhism then but in the Buddhist time
when Buddhism arose again it was I mean
you had Psychopathic Kings invading
other kingdoms or just preying upon
their own their own people you had
forests infested with Bandits and and
tigers and so forth diseases that nobody
had cures for because their modern
medicine hadn't been developed
um well maybe some of the easier stuff
like diarrhea they might have had some

cures for just herbal stuff but no

antibiotics anything like that

so

yeah it's just part of the human

condition that there's always going to

be sort of a balance of positive and

negative so you have lots of positive

there's going to be lots of negative

balancing it out that could be another

explanation now we're just living in a

state of mediocrity I think

where I mean we're just sort of jaded

nothing is really all that great

and nothing is really all that horrible

either I mean for a lot of people anyway

so I guess I'll just move on to Sea of

Action sipad zidane's next question here
and that is
is active meditation even a thing do you
think this Flow State which comes from
Taoist teachings is actually the same as
meditation because I find it hard to
believe someone can focus on doing a
task so much that they will gain some
liberating Insight well you don't have
to have the potential for liberating
Insight in order for it to be meditation
um at the elementary levels meditation
is just a sort of like mental
calisthenics you know it's like push-ups
or jumping jacks or something it's just
a way of like disciplining and calming
your mind

so it doesn't have to be conducive to

liberating Insight or Jonna for example

in order for it to qualify as legitimate

meditation

while reading this question I'm reminded

of GERD chef

what's his name George George gertchev

I don't remember his first name now but

I mean he'd have his disciples you know

the people coming to his his Meditation

Center or whatever he called it and he

would just assign them these tasks that

were active meditations like they might

just be like

like wiping the the dust off the leaves

of a rose bush you know and you have to

do it very mindfully

you know just just in the moment no

wandering thoughts if possible

um and I would consider that to be a

kind of meditation I mean walking

meditation is definitely a kind of

meditation I've gotten into some

relatively relatively deep meditative

States you know I'm not like

trance or anything but you get into a

really just your mind is is silent and

clear and you're just doing the walking

meditation it's just you know it's like

the sounds of the The Crickets and so

forth they're just kind of going through

you you're aware of them and and that's

about as far as it gets you know the the

air on your skin and the your clothing

brushing against your skin and you know

just the ground against your feet and

all that I mean

that is it's a powerful it's a powerful

device I mean you might not get into the

really most subtle States from doing

that but still you can get into deeper

meditative States than most people get

while sitting cross-legged with their

eyes closed

um I think this was derived from an

answer I gave in the last question and

answer about some people get addicted to

Danger sports like rock climbing and

motorcycle racing because you're forced

to be completely Mindful and right there
in the moment without wandering thoughts
because if you if your mind wanders for
half a second you can be dead
and those people a lot of these people
can't really come up with a way of
getting into those same intense
mindfulness States uh while not doing
the dangerous sport that is requiring
them to be as mindful as possible
so let's see here
so active meditation is a thing and it's
it's endorsed even in the early texts
where uh something coming up or or just
Chun coming up walking back and forth
walking meditation it was you know
according to like vinya the Buddha

endorsed it for monks it's a good thing
to do helps you from being sleepy helps
your food to digest and also it kind of
keeps the momentum of meditation going
so that when you sit down you're not
sitting down just starting to meditate
every time that you have like this
momentum going like some Burmese
meditation instructors they'll talk
about I think this might be in the text
too somewhere where
meditating meditating is like trying to
start a fire by rubbing two sticks
together you know if you rub the two
sticks together for five minutes and
then stop and then you know a little

later you rub the sticks together a
little bit more and then stop I mean
you're not gonna get a fire because you
have to keep the momentum going I mean
the heat has to keep increasing you
can't just keep stopping and that's what
walking meditation does and just general
mindfulness and just overall mindfulness
of eating mindfulness of going using the
the toilet whatever just keep the
mindfulness going and then it helps you
to keep the momentum going so that when
you sit down cross-legged with your eyes
closed it's not just starting from from
zero that you're you're still
it it is helpful I can tell you that
much

so whether you if you want to become
enlightened it may be necessary to
either become enlightened accidentally
from some disaster befalling you or just
sitting across like it I think for most
westerners who have some kind of
Awakening experience it's more likely to
come from a disaster or just some sort
of Crisis that slams them out of their
old habits in and their old you know
ideas of who they are and so forth than
through sitting in meditation
but that may change as more and more
westerners sit in meditation and do it
seriously not just as a hobby or a
substitute for Narcotics or whatever

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from White Ash

Piper

and white ash Piper says Dave is Amazon

the only way to buy one of your books

and yes at present it is

I've considered I mean

early on especially I was considered

other Publishers or or whatever but

Amazon is is simple and easy so that's

what I went with so yeah if you do want

one of my books pretty much have to get

it from Amazon

and uh the links for my books are

down below

so the next question is from grasshopper

and grasshopper says how do you

differentiate between agnosticism and

hermeticism as opposed to Buddhism

well I'm no expert on gnosticism

genostism

or hermeticism

I watched an hour-long documentary on

hermeticism

on YouTube just recently by a guy who

apparently knew what he was talking

about but

still

um I really don't know that much about

it I really could not say for sure what

the difference is between genostism

which a lot of experts don't even like

anymore that they say agnosticism it

really

it's just sort of like this

this sort of a sloppy category that lots

of different systems got put into by

earlier Scholars and it's not

necessarily all that great of a of a

word

but um how do I differentiate between

gnosticism and hermeticism as opposed to

Buddhism well

gnosticism at least some Gnostic schools

they seem to think that like the world

is evil that flesh is evil

that you know it's like you gotta like

in a way kind of hate the world

and Buddhism it doesn't go that far I

mean you shouldn't have attraction or

aversion you just have mindful

acceptance

um you know there's a lot of Indian

ascetic ideals that kind of get through

the cracks so that in a way you're

supposed to despise the world or at

least despise it enough that you

renounce it get disillusioned with it at

least

gnosticism and hermeticism they're very

complicated Buddhism eventually became

very complicated with like abhidham and

the commentarial tradition but uh you

know just all this like agnosticism

there's all these different levels of

like eons and and

like Archangel kind of kind of beings

and so forth that uh in Buddhism it

acknowledges that higher beings exist

but there's no real emphasis put on them

you don't have to know about any of them

in order to become enlightened uh

gnosticism they seem to put more

emphasis on

on this elaborate cosmology that I mean

it did arise to some degree in Buddhism

but it was an incidental thing and to

some degree deviating from what the

Buddha Buddha was teaching

um gnosticism and hermeticism were

um they were like Greek philosophy that

was infused with a certain amount of

Judaism and Christianity

um and hermeticism especially would have

some a little bit of Egyptian religion

mixed in

but uh

yeah I do not I'm I'm unaware of

gnosticism or hermeticism uh generating

enlightened stages I mean there may have

been you know like maybe who was it uh

apollonius of Tiana although he may have

been a Pythagorean so he might not have

been agnostic or a hermeticist

but uh yeah I really don't know that

much about gnosticism or hermeticism to

really give like a

a really good explanation of the

differences between Buddhism and

narcissism and hermeticism although I
think the the mysticism promoted by
early Buddhism was of a higher order
than the mysticism promoted by
agnosticism which still has all this
baggage that you know
I don't know that's just my impression
someone who is an expert on gnosticism
and hermeticism uh either or
um might have a better grasp
of of this question than I do so I'll
just move on to the next one this is
from grasshopper
and uh the second one from grasshopper
this this one also is from Grasshopper
And he says you dislike Skittles in
Western Buddhism but isn't the belief of

Buddhism itself still playing into their
hands and I have to admit I do not
understand this question very well and
by Skittles I had to ask him what he
meant and he was just being circumspect
trying to avoid censorship on the
internet and Skittles is just the
rainbow of colors
so he's talking about rainbow people in
Western Buddhism and
um I see I dislike Skittles in Western
Buddhism well I don't know it's
I for a gay person to be a Buddhist
that's fine with me but it's it's the
people that bother me with regard to
that are the people that are just like

practically fixated on it where they're
trying to just drag all this lgbtq stuff
into Buddhist studies and they're just
churning out papers about queer Buddhism
and so forth
as though that was like a major emphasis
or something
or it has become a major emphasis lately
fairly obviously
um so there's that but then isn't the
belief of Buddhism itself still playing
into their hands and I'm not exactly
sure what this means the belief of
Buddhism itself playing into the hands
of the rainbow people
um well I mean a lot of rainbow people
they are adopting Buddhism as you know

it's like one of the least homophobic of

the traditional religions

um maybe Hinduism might be less

homophobic I mean homophobic than

Buddhism I mean Buddhism homophobia just

extends to the point of acknowledging

that gay men are more likely to be

sexually promiscuous and unrestrained

than heterosexual men

um and that's borne out by medical

journals and so forth I mean I've read

in a medical guy it was the mer guide

that uh it is not uncommon for a gay man

to have had more than 1 000 sexual

partners

and there aren't very many heterosexual

guys who have had that many sexual

partners

but let's see isn't the belief of

Buddhism itself still playing into the

hands I mean these like post-modern

leftists I mean just set aside the the

rainbow stuff

let's just go with postmodern leftism

which is where the rainbow people you

know gravitate

as a general rule

um you know they'll take an idea like

compassion

and then they'll say yeah there you see

Buddhism teaches compassion we're

Buddhists we're compassionate at least

for the people on our own side

and so I mean we shouldn't have

compassion for the people that aren't on

our own side because they're fascists

and evil or whatever I mean they

probably don't go that far out loud but

I mean You observe their behavior and

that tends to uh agree with their

attitude in a lot of cases anyway

so let's see

isn't the belief of Buddhism itself

still playing into their hands I I still

do not fully understand this question

playing into their hands

the belief of is it their belief of

Buddhism or is it just the the Creed of

Buddhism in general playing into their

hands and to some degree I mean just

like with regard to Compassion or

acknowledging that women become

enlightened too because they're

enlightened nuns in the texts something

like that but really I do not understand

this question well enough it's it's kind

of vaguely worded so that it could be

interpreted in other ways

but certainly Buddhism in the west has

been commandeered to some degree by

postmodern

neo-marxists who are essentially just

creating a kind of Buddhism flavored

neo-marxism

and then a lot of naive people who are

interested in Buddhism can't really tell

the difference they just think dhamma is

this neo-marxism with some Buddhist

jargon at it maybe some meditation as a

kind of stress relief because a lot of

them are pretty stressed out people

you know they can't really cope with

certain things very well so they use

meditation as a kind of tranquilizer or

something

not all of them of course but

lots of them

so I think I'll just uh move on to the

next question here this is from Tim the

enchanter

who also changes his name fairly

regularly at this point

there are some who call him Tim

and his question

is

the Buddha refused to answer if the

world is eternal or not but there is

General belief in Buddhism that the

samsara exists from Infinity past but

from mathematical point of view at least

time cannot exist from Infinity past

because if you divide it into individual

moments and we are in the present moment

we couldn't get here from the past

because past would be infinite there

would always be past moment and never

present moment maybe someone can explain

it in simpler words is belief in Eternal

universe or a series of universes

Orthodox taravada since the Buddha

refused to answer that question

um yeah there's there's a few things to

address here I mean this whole thing

reminds me of Zeno's Paradox

like

Achilles and the Tortoise I mean some of

you may be familiar with you got this

Turtle walking along an Achilles who's I

mean in the in the Iliad he's he's very

fast runner he can't catch up to the

tortoise because when he catches up to

where the tortoise was the tortoise has

already moved a little bit ahead and

then when Achilles catches up to where

the tortoise was the next time the

tortoises moved a little bit farther and

if there's going to be this infinite

number of times where Achilles gets to

where the the tortoise was but the

tortoise has moved just a little bit

farther

and I mean this is kind of like that I

mean why say that it's impossible

for for there to be a present moment if

there's an infinite pass when there can

be an infinite number of moments just in

the past second

you know this is like xeno's Paradox I

mean even one second can be divided up

into an infinite number

theoretically of moments

so

so yeah it's it's not really much of an argument it just points out that mathematics cannot deal with infinity that wherever you have Infinity there's going to be Paradox and you can prove all this weird stuff going with just simple proofs in mathematics and geometry and so forth like there's one cool one where it says that let's see a circle

it could be just like a microscopic Circle it'll have at twice as many points on its circumference than the line of infinite length and you can demonstrate this that you've got the circle you've got the line of infinite

length going into Infinity in both both

directions right so any point that goes

through the center of that Circle and

any on end any point on that line it's

going to go through the circle twice

there's going to be a point on the lower

half of the circle and a point on the

upper half of the circle just for any

point on that line

and so there you go the The Circle has

twice as many

points

on its circumference than a line that's

infinitely long and you can prove this I

mean you just demonstrate it but it's

it's

not likely to be correct because

with infinity the Mind cannot grasp it

and Mathematics cannot really cope with

it

there's always going to be these weird

paradoxes

and so

to say that the universe couldn't be

infinite

it with regard to time

because

well I mean there would have to be an

infinite number of of moments had

already passed and you I don't know it's

it's weird I mean you might as well say

that it can't be infinite in space

either for the same reason

disregard to our position in space and

our position in time

but uh so there's that I mean that's

just like a weird quirk in in the human

incapacity to cope with with infinity

which has gone back to like Xeno and his

paradoxes and so forth at the very

latest

so uh

let's see what's the other part here oh

it's like is belief an eternal universe

or series of universes Orthodox terabado

since the Buddha refused to answer that

question well he refused to answer that

question and then like there's one weird

suit towards the end of the Deegan ikaya

where the Buddha is just talking about

the origin of the universe and how you know it happens over and over again the cosmos expanding and Contracting and the first thing that the first thing that appears in the material universe is the Throne of Maha Brahma and then Brahma materializes and then he starts getting lonely because he's all by himself and then other brahmas around him start materializing due to their own Karma but he thinks that it's because of his desire that caused them to materialize and then he believes himself to be this Creator God and so forth

um

so I mean the Buddha refuses to answer

whether the cosmos is infinite or finite

he won't answer either way

um but then in other sutas he just goes

for it and gives all this Buddhist

cosmology stuff which is questionable

um

but I mean you might as well just say

you know the the beginning is unknown

and just leave it at that

just be cool with be cool with ambiguity

that's a sign of wisdom

being cool with Paradox and ambiguity in

in just the human situation with regard

to interpreting reality and so forth

so I don't know if I answered that

question very well

Tim the enchanter may be unimpressed by

that answer but I'm just going to move

on to his next question here

and his next question is do you consider

a lot of people

NPCs in some sense and this is with

regard to the thumbnail of my previous q

a and my sweetheart made that q a or

made that that thumbnail as a meme

years ago I mean it was before before I

came to South Carolina I think that she

made that meme

as a kind of joke and then she just

decided to turn it into a thumbnail for

the last q a

um but it has a lot of

uh it's like a scene from Star Trek but

this the episode The Trouble with

Tribbles it's the old Star Trek and

there's these Tribbles these little

furry animals that they're born pregnant

and they just reproduce

you know more than more than bunnies do

they reproduce like Tribbles

and uh so she replaced the Tribbles with

these NPC heads and a few heads of me

mixed in with the eyes glowing

uh it was just kind of a joke meme

but

do I consider a lot of people NPCs in

some sense yeah in some sense

a lot of people are just superficial

normies that just assumed this is a

reality and they get their opinions and

beliefs from

just from outside themselves like from

the media you know they get it from

Rachel Maddow of all people or they just

get it from social media or they get it

from Just who they're working with and

hanging out with all the time you know

their their fan certain family members

you know back in the days of TV they'd

get their values from TV game shows and

talk shows and crime dramas that was

that was my mother actually

um

so I mean they're not going to be

complete NPCs

because I mean there's there's gonna

have to be at least a little spark there

but like a spark of life

you know they're not just gonna be

automatons

um although like a lot of scientific

materialists would say in a sense we're

all just automatons

but um

yeah it's a relative thing it's not just

some people are NPCs and the rest of us

aren't

um it's just sort of a spectrum that is

more npc-like at one end and just more

I don't know what what the other end

will be enlightened maybe or just uh

completely spontaneous and creative and

in the moment instead of just locked

into this set of beliefs that have been

programmed indoctrinated into you

so

yeah the answer to that one is yeah sort

of with qualifications so we'll just

move on to Tim the enchanter's next

question here and Tim the enchanter is

my favorite guy in Monty Python and the

Holy Grail just just putting that out

there he's like my favorite character in

the whole movie

cute little bunny isn't it

so let's see here what are your thoughts

on epicure's statement that one of the

most high Pleasures in life is spiritual

friendship yeah I would agree with that

I mean it's not the most intense Joy

probably but it's

you know it's sort of an exalted kind of

of happiness

just having a spiritual communion or

companionship with another person who

you know their their

wise you know they're helping you

helping you to be wise and

yeah I mean it's it's a good thing

it definitely is

so I would agree

and I think I'll just move on to the

next question here this is also from Tim

the enchanter hey you he starts how

would you translate literally the phrase

from the gotika suta which is

I should say

Kuma

and then especially I want to know if

Buddha is praised here for abandoning or

relinquishing fear or something else

thanks well as it turned out I

translated the entire gorika suta I've

got it here in my book

essays and terrible Buddhism

and

my literal translation of what I just

told you in poly is great hero great in

understanding blazing with power and

Glory gone beyond all enmity and fear

endowed with a vision I worship at your

feet and this is from Mara so according

to the story you've got a monk named gotika who's living at isigiri Cave at the black the Black Rock isigiri cave and he's meditating intensively and he keeps getting Jonah and losing it and getting it and losing it and getting it and losing it until finally the next time he's got Jonna he's gonna commit suicide because he figures if he dies with Janna he's guaranteed of a Brahma realm a very high heaven realm but if he dies without Jonah there's no saying there's no guarantee so he's just gonna cut his own throat with his razor and Mara the evil one you know the Buddhist devil he doesn't want godica to become enlightened so he runs to the

Buddha and he's he's buttering up the

Buddha he's like praising the Buddha

this

like he's he's laying it on thick he's

spreading it thick because he's trying

to get the Buddha to stop gaurica from

committing suicide

so

he's just praising the Buddha and just

trying to get the Buddha to think that

Mara is kind of on his side so that

he'll talk out of committing suicide but

it's already too late and go to cat

already cut his own throat and became

enlightened at the moment of death

so too many enchanter here is asking

especially I want to know

if Buddha is praised here for abandoning

or relinquishing fear or something else

well he's obviously praised and he's

he's abandoned you know just fear and

enmity and everything he's just

Transcendent because he's fully

enlightened he's the Buddha and Mara is

probably insincerely

just praising him in grandiose terms

um in order to get the Buddha to stop

godica from from committing suicide

but it doesn't work

so I'll just uh move on to the next

question here

which is from Crave minerals

or just crave for short

see here I'm scrolling back up again I
make sure I answered Timmy and chandra's
question about Mara
praising the Buddha okay so crave
minerals says I wanted to ask if you
could speak out about what the karma of
art is according to Buddhism as a
moderately successful artist I wonder
what kind of karma is made through this
profession
I remember reading asuta where the
Buddha begrudgingly told an actor that
he would end up in the hell of laughter
in some mutant nikaya 42 2 the tala puta
suta this makes me think that the safest
or most beneficial thing to do would be

to make only Buddha pictures not
provocative or inflammatory Expressions
at all I would assume however that one's
intent has a role in this do you have
any Reflections on this matter thank you
well I think the reason why the Buddha
said that actors go to hell is mainly
because actors are
they're like in reinforcing some sorrow
you know they're getting people into a
samsaric mental state you know by
telling this story that never really
happened or
um you know it's just it's sort of like
helping to Anchor them in samsara but
some art I think
um is actually dharmic art like for

example

um the movie stalker by tarkovsky it's a

a Russian movie

from back in the Soviet days I mean

that's a work of art

but also it's it's spiritual it's sort

of uplifting it's it's it's sort of

helping people to understand

you know spirituality in a way or like

Dostoevsky I mean he was

um a novelist but I think fiction would

qualify as art also or the movie Avalon

it's uh it's a science fiction movie but

it's also like a metaphor for

enlightenment

um also when I I mentioned that Avatar

is a metaphor for enlightenment it's a

it's a Japanese movie filmed in Poland

with Polish actors

um but it's it's a metaphor for

enlightenment it can help people to

understand Enlightenment

um I think a lot of art like like

painting I mean if it has the same sort

of effect or like Hieronymus Bosch well

that one that one about the Imperium I

can't remember the the the the full name

where it's you know it's got the person

floating up into the bright light you

know after he dies you know something

like that something that's like

uplifting

and kind of helps you to detach or at

least understand some sorrow a little

better

um I think that that would be more of a

positive thing that you wouldn't go to

hell for actually helping people to

understand dama or to uplift them and

make them a little wiser

so

um yeah with the guard do it'd be a

little more difficult with like plastic

Arts like painting and sculpture than it

would with when you're telling a story

that can be a spiritual story painting a

spiritual painting or making a spiritual

um sculpture would be trickier because

um I mean the amount you're able to say

is limited by you know you just got one
canvas or just one piece of clay or one
piece of stone or whatever
but uh I do think it's possible there's
a lot of religious art I'm more familiar
with the Western religious art but I
mean like El Greco he he painted a lot
of spiritual stuff I mean a lot of the
Renaissance Masters I mean they're just
painting scenes out of the Bible or
whatever which isn't necessarily
uplifting you know it could just be some
saric you know you just kind of locked
into you know people and Landscapes and
so forth which wouldn't be particularly
helpful but
um maybe something more surreal or

something that kind of loosens your grip

on some sorrow you know on a

materialistic world or it just has some

sort of

some kind of uplifting

um

message

and I do think that's possible I don't

even think that all actors necessarily

go to hell although probably a lot of

them do assuming that there is such a

place as hell

so

I think

I think I answered that question I think

I'll just move on to the next question

here and this is from Bill Gahan or is

Matt

and Bill Gahan or ismet says if I

remember correctly you said path press

refused publishing your books because

you criticized Nana Vera in one of your

articles in your old blog I couldn't

find the article since your old blog is

gone is there a way I can read that

article if not can you share your

criticisms I believe it'd be beneficial

for my study of the dhamma well as it

turns out

that that exact essay is in this same

book where my translation of the garika

suta is which is essays in terrible

Buddhism writings of an incendiary

Buddhist monk

and uh you can get this on Amazon and

it's the the second chapter

let's see here

let's see

yeah the second chapter

wait a minute

yeah notes on mysticism with respect to

venerable nyanovira I don't know if you

can see that there it is

somewhere up towards the top because

it's the second chapter

and the main thing I was criticizing and

and this

um this question here

the setting for this question isn't

entirely accurate

um

past press I mean it was

set up by followers of Nana Vera that

nanovir has way more followers now that

he's been dead for

gosh close to 50 years then he had when

he was alive

that he was extremely intellectual so

extremely intellectual monks and and

Buddhist lay people really like

neonavira and he was a rationalist

and like any rationalist you have to

start with something that is not

rational and then build your logic on

that I mean eventually you have to have

fundamental premises that are not

logically proven you have to have axioms

and

Nona Vera he went with the core texts he

knew that abidama was not composed by

the Buddha

but he he took like cortex you know the

first four nikayas the first several

books of the fifth nikaya the first four

books of winnia and he just said these

are 100 accurate totally reliable

teachings of the Buddha and then he was

an existentialist

and I mean he was just before he became

a monk he was really into the

existentialist philosophy which was a

big deal back you know in the 1950s and

60s and you know he's going on and on
about like Kierkegaard he's reading lots
of Kierkegaard and um
he he just hated mysticism
see he he thought that mysticism just
violates the laws of thought you know
something has to be either a or not a
and mysticism is saying well sometimes
something can be both a and not a you
know like like the Mahayana Buddhist
saying that that Nirvana and samsara are
the same even though they're different
and so forth and he just hated that I
mean sometimes just to call someone a
Mystic was enough I mean it was like
that was it you can just dispense with
that person because they're a Mystic and

so I wrote this article pointing out why

I think Nana Vera was mistaken

and I Unearthed this rare uh

pseudo

platonic document where a sophist is

debating with this this rube

and I won't I won't repeat it I mean you

can you can read the book it's it is

available on Amazon

but I was demonstrating how the laws of

thought don't fully apply like I went

with with a pop bottle a coke bottle

that but let's just use this glass this

glass of sweet tea

ah so this is

this is glass it's 100 glass but it's

also a beverage container so it's like

the substance is glass but this is a bad

choice because it's also a glass

so let's go with something else here

let's go with this jar

this this is a glass jar

forget the cap let's take the cap off

okay

glass jar so this is 100 glass but it's

also a jar so does that mean that glass

and jar are the same

no glass in jar are not the same you can

have a plastic jar you can have

something that's made of glass that

isn't a jar so glass and jar are not

synonyms they don't mean the same thing

so glass is different from jar jar is

different from glass but this is 100 jar

and 100 glass at the same time so it's a

and not a simultaneously

and that violates the laws of thought

because you can't have something be a

and not a simultaneously but this jar is

doing it

so I was using an argument along those

lines to demonstrate that

um none of Vera's hatred is just he just

utterly despised Mississippi he's

completely locked into intellectuality

which he was like the scholar amongst

ajan chal was talking about he

considered himself to have become an

Arya but why when he considered himself

to become an Arya he was philosophizing

while walking back and forth and then it

just clicked it was like it his theories

just kind of fell into this coherent

system that pleased him so much

apparently he believed that he had

become an Arya by this thinking his way

to uh

to to being a soda Palmer just hammering

out views which is not encouraging the

text but I'm sure he was very

intelligent and so he would be able to

rationalize what he had done

so

yeah if you really want to to know my my

critique the original critique

um

it's in this book which is available on
Amazon but um it's not entirely true
that path press refused to publish my
books because I criticized Nana Vera
that was just the first thing I did that
put them kind of on their back heels you
know it's kind of like whoa and then and
then I continued writing stuff on my
blog that just was more and more
infuriating to them for example I had
just come back to America
and I was just I was supported at least
as much by new age people as by
Buddhists especially my first my first
year my first several months in America
in Bellingham Washington

and I was

surrounded by these new age females and

and also New Age men who were just sort

of feminine in their thinking you know

very compassion heart oriented and

everything and I wasn't really used to

it

and so I was sort of experimenting with

it just kind of working out the

philosophical ramifications of of a

heart-oriented Buddhism because I'm more

of a head-oriented person and

just like putting emphasis on the heart

orientation as equally valid to a head

orientation again these followers of

janovira they just they just did not

like that at all they're like accusing

me of just selling out and becoming a
new age person or something and I don't
know it's the more I wrote the less they
liked of me and so they actually did
start to publish my otakawaga
translation and then after it was
already published and they had even
distributed it to ajah monasteries and
then finally they just sent out this
letter just apologizing for having done
that and and the the atikawaga
translations weren't distributed
so yeah I was I was kind of uh
a rascally monk at times I was
controversial I was a controversial Monk
which uh

makes it I'm sure a lot of Buddhists

would just consider that me dropping out

and becoming a layperson was probably a

good idea

so I'll just move on to the next

question here

and even though we didn't have a whole

lot of questions I'm filling in the gaps

here and stretching this out to another

two hour long one just through my uh

profuse

digressions and uh

other other verbiage

so this one's from rui oh and also throw

in that five minutes where I'm trying to

find the place in the Tibetan book of

the great Liberation this is from rui

and rui says hello panabasa I often think that Buddha dama offers a possibility to circumvent entirely the Troubles of philosophy particularly in its modern post-modern and utterly confusing iterations maybe this is also the meaning of taking Refuge any thoughts well I mean if you're following like primitive Buddha dhama like archaic Buddha dama like in the otakawaga where you're not supposed to have any beliefs any perceptions you know you're not supposed to believe anything then yeah I mean philosophy is out the window I mean there is no philosophy at that point um

maybe just a Teensy bit of philosophy in

not philosophizing you know sort of

saying I shouldn't philosophize

um shouldn't believe anything shouldn't

perceive anything you know that in

itself could be a kind of very simple

philosophy but um

yeah it's like I was going to major in

philosophy when I was when I went to

college and just two or three classes in

philosophy cured me of that idea because

in order to make a name for yourself in

Western philosophy you have to disagree

with everyone everybody else

and so it's so confusing at first for a

young person you know you're 18 years

old and you just everyone is is saying

something else you know everyone is

disagreeing with each other

and it's just very confusing it just it

just didn't work for me it wasn't until

I got older that I was able to start

reading western philosophy with a

certain amount of grounding and

confidence so that I wasn't just utterly

bemused and Confused

so yeah Buddha dhama can circumvent

entirely the Troubles of philosophy

um

maybe this is also the meaning of taking

Refuge well it's certainly not the main

meaning of taking Refuge I mean it could

be I mean if that's your orientation

but taking Refuge is sort of like you

found a guide that can help you to

liberate yourself or at least become

wiser and better and so you're taking

refuge in this guide who is kind of

protecting you from from harming

yourself in certain ways

um

so yeah I mean it can't include that but

it's certainly not limited to that

so I'll just move on to rui's second

question here

which is WB Yates is known to have said

that poetry is the social Act of the

solitary man could we also say that

adhering to the dhamma is the social Act

of the solitary man

um it's not very social if you're
solitary I mean if you're if you're
writing poetry then I mean you're kind
of making a social Act of other people
in society read your poetry but just
following dama it's not really a social
act it seems to me
I mean you could interpret it that way
especially if following the dhamma has
some social ramifications I mean in a
way if you're still not entirely
solitary you know you're still riding on
buses with other people around you
walking down sidewalks you know maybe
even working in a job or something that
even though you keep to yourself

um that there's going to be a certain light shining out of you or a certain glow or just sort of a uplifting effect on others through osmosis because mental states are contagious

so uh so long as you're not totally solitary but then all of a sudden I'm reminded of something that that um John of the Saint John of the Cross said and that was that you got one person who is just spending his life to feeding the hungry and clothing the the people that don't have clothes and finding homes for the homeless and tending the sick and just just serving others just single-mindedly just self selflessly serving others doing as much good as you

possibly can you got one person doing

that the other person is sitting alone

in a state of high contemplation just

like in Jannah

and then he says that second person

who's not lifting a finger to to feed

the hungry or or tend the sick or

anything

even but he is because he is like in the

state of high contemplation he's

actually helping the world more than the

first person and The Diamond Cutter

Sutra says something similar I mean on

the one hand you can just

feed I mean you can do all the stuff

that I said with regard to St John of

the Cross you can do all these
meritorious Deeds just you know helping
helping people all day long on the other
hand you can just Master One verse of
The Diamond Cutter Sutra and you're
actually doing more good
by doing that and uh in a way it's like
by increasing your wisdom even though
you're not interacting with other people
you're sort of raising the the
consciousness of the planet
so yeah that could be a social act you
could say that practicing dama not
necessarily adhering to it so much but
practicing it is as a social Act of the
Solitary Man to the extent that you are
raising the level of consciousness of

the entire planet

in your in some small way maybe

but if you manage to get enlightened

then you're hoping the world a great

deal

so

that would be my answer to that one I'll

just move on to the next question here

this is from zinch

I think that's how you

t-z-e-e-n-c-h zinge

man that reminds me of Dr Zeus it's like

some kind of strange creature in a Dr

Zeus story but I don't I don't want to

make fun of obscene chair I'm sure he's

very nice

and he says or she

zinch

says wouldn't the thing you've hurt your

toe upon considered something you're

swearing at like you're angry and it's a

bad mental state and furthermore your

Furious exclamation is still targeted at

something does it make so much

difference to not be considered a

violation I'm sorry if it's an easy or

dumb question my interests are mainly

abrahamic theology so I'm not too

experienced in eastern you really do

help me understand that feel upon your

Bossa thank you well you're welcome and

I just know this is the very last

question Mike golly

it just sneaks up on me sometimes

so

he's referring to a question that I

answered in the previous q a about how

harsh speech isn't really harsh speech

unless you're directing it at somebody

and they're hearing it you know like if

you just stub your toe and say [__] you

know it's it's in the dark you stub your

toe on the on the table leg it hurts

[__] this comes out of your mouth

that that is not harsh speech because

harsh speech has to be directed to

somebody you're using hard speech to

belittle somebody insult somebody make

them feel bad

and when you're just saying [__] because
when you're all alone in the dark and
you stubbed your toe I mean it doesn't
really apply it similar with lying this
is with regard to like wrong speech in
general with regard to lying you have to
be lying to somebody you have to have
the intention to deceive somebody
that that is I mean
you see it so much in like social media
where somebody's saying oh you're that's
a lie because it's not true but just
because you see something that isn't
true doesn't mean that you're lying a
kid gets a question wrong on his math
test he doesn't get punished when he
gets home for lying because he wrote the

wrong answer because he was an honest

mistake

and so in order to really lie you have

to have the intention to deceive

somebody

and it's the same with our speech if

you're just using cuss words but they're

not directed at somebody for the sake of

making them feel bad hurting their

feelings or whatever then then again

it's not harsh speech so he's to zinch

here is asking wouldn't the thing you've

hurt your toe upon be considered

something that you're swearing at so uh

you're using harsh speech at the table

the table leg that you just stubbed your

toe on still it's not a conscious being

it doesn't hear what you're saying it

doesn't give a damn what you're saying

you're not really trying to hurt the

feelings of the table

when you're when you say [__] when you

stubbed your toe on the table leg

so it is true I mean you can be in a bad

mental state you know there's like this

flare-up of Dosa or anger and that's on

you but it's not the words coming out of

your mouth it's just the mental state of

the irritation the annoyance or whatever

and yeah I mean that would that would be

an unwholesome mental state

but it can happen automatically and so

long as you're not following along with

it you know as long as you're not
wallowing in it it's it's pretty much
karmically neutral like like Saint John
of the Cross would say the same thing if
a thought arises in your mind just
spontaneously of its own accord and it's
it's a negative thought or something
still you haven't done anything wrong
because it's just spontaneous I mean you
weren't planning on having the thought
come up it just came up
but if you like take that thought and
continue with it then you're doing
something wrong
so I mean if you really just get pissed
off at the table and just start hitting

it or I mean people can get really angry
at inanimate objects I've I've gotten
really angry at inanimate objects you
know like something isn't working the
way it's supposed to work and you just
smash you just throw it or something
you're in a really bad mood you have a
really bad day I mean that sort of thing
has happened with me before and it's not
that you're hurting like a tool that
isn't working properly you know it's
it's not that you're abusing the tool in
such a way that you're trying to hurt
its feelings or anything it's just the
the anger that arises is is the
unskillful mental state and that's
that's pretty much it

so again with regard to wrong speech you
have to have another person hearing your
wrong speech and being negatively
affected by it being deceived or
insulted or or just having their mind
poisoned against somebody else
that that has to happen in order for it
to qualify as wrong speech in an ethical
sense in Buddhism but just setting all
that the wrong speech aside just being
angry or irritated you know
um
even like you're driving your car
somebody cuts you off you know you
almost get in a wreck because somebody I
just acted like an imbecile and I mean

you can cuss at them and again you're

not really engaging in abusive or harsh

speech because they can't hear you they

don't care

but still you've got the unwholesome

mental states of the anger and just the

the hostility the ill will maybe that

that would be like Bad Karma you know

that would be unwholesome mental States

on your part

so I think I just answered all the

questions mom and so

that's it and if you have any more

questions and I assume some of you do

some of you are like inexhaustible

Fountains of questions which is good

because that's why I'm here

and it helps other people too because a lot of people are just too shy to ask a question and then if you ask the same question that they're thinking of then you're helping them too or maybe they didn't even occur to them to ask that question and they learned something or something

so if you have any questions especially about Buddhism Eastern philosophy a little bit of Western philosophy

um Burma being a monk that kind of a thing anything that you think that I can answer intelligently or at least entertainingly uh feel free to ask in the comments below if you have access to

the Discord server you can ask them

there if you have access to my subscribe

star you can ask them there

and uh look at the URL links and my

books are indeed for sale on Amazon

including

the one with uh my critique of niana

Vera

so with that I will just say be happy

hello and welcome to episode 60 of

question and answer I'm your host Ponyo

Basa

and this q a is in some respects going

to resemble the previous q a because

I've got the same sort of

Saturday hangover from working all week

very hard in 90 degree 90 degree weather

so it's like Saturday I just kind of go

into wet rag lying on the couch mode but

The Show Must Go On

yeah

and I'm actually drinking coffee

and generally what happens is I start

off maybe a little low energy but then

the flow of Dharma flowing through my

body and out my mouth while I answer

questions just kind of

if it doesn't perk me up at least it

makes me more awake

or something

so we've got uh kind of the standard

sort of large number of questions

although it's not nearly as large as the

episode number which is 60. it's just

amazing to me that I've done 60 of these

already

so anyway I'll start answering questions

now because that's why we're here

and the first question is from macubo I

think it's called I think he is called I

didn't refer to makubo as it mind you

and makubo says

like you and many of your subscribers I am opposed to the ideas of the transgender movement which I find to be contradictory and repressive can you please elaborate on your criticism of transgenderism as I understand it the gender critical approach is based on biological materialism in that sex is immutable and binary and the concept of gender identity is reminiscent of a gendered soul

however as someone who has been critical of materialism and scientism as well as having a background as a biologist how do you justify your position do your views differ from the Orthodox terabonda

position on the matter

well

um to tell you the truth I mean at the

beginning here it says like you and many

of your subscribers I am opposed to the

ideas of the transgender movement

um was regarding transgender people

like for example I've I've mentioned

this before that in Burma which is a

very traditionalist very Buddhist

country there's quite a few transgender

people

I think they're called gandu or at least

the the biological men who identify as

women are called gandu in Burmese and

they dress like women they do their hair

like women they act like women they take

they adopt like a female name and I mean
they can be out in remote Villages you
know mainly subsistence farmers in these
villages
and they are accepted mainly because
Buddhism accepts the idea of rebirth and
Buddhism also accepts the idea that
um someone who is male in their previous
life can be female in this life or vice
versa
and so the idea is that you've got
say a woman she was a woman in her
previous life and then she's born into a
male body due to whatever comma in this
life but still the momentum has been
largely female and so this person still

has many feminine traits and may feel
more feminine than masculine
and I really don't have a problem with
that I can kind of I can accept the idea
of rebirth and like transitioning where
it's it's not like you're a completely
feminine female in one life and then the
next life you're completely macho guy
you know there's going to be like a
transition that might take two or three
lives or maybe just the the experiment
with being the the other gender doesn't
work out and then they go back to to the
other gender that they're more used to
or whatever
so that kind of thing I'm not really
I'm not like vehemently opposed to

transgender people but what I am opposed
to is just the policing of language
where you can get arrested for stating
your honest opinion that that's actually
a guy that thinks he's a woman or
identifies as a woman but
um I mean to be arrested for that or to
lose your career for that I mean that's
just getting into gender fascism I think
fascism in the negative sense that is
so I think people do have the right
to follow their conscience and to speak
the truth
um as as well as they are able and if
one person definitely believes for
example that Caitlyn Jenner is still a

guy

I think he should have the right to say

that publicly

so that's really the main issue I've got

um and still like

like transgender individuals in sports

you notice it's always one way you don't

have

um a person who was a female who

transitions to male and then starts

breaking all kinds of Records in male

Athletics it just doesn't happen I've

never heard of a single case of that

unless I heard of

like a transgender guy who was

biologically female doing well in some

kind of sport that women generally do

well in but I can't even remember what

it was it was like diving or something

so

I mean that that just makes sense

biological males are stronger they got

larger longer bones you know they got

more lung capacity more red blood cells

you know they're just designed for

exertion more than females are in the

human species you have

what's it called

dimorphism sexual dimorphism and I'm

glad I'm glad that people aren't all the

same like crows you know you can't look

at a crow you can't tell if it's a boy

Crow or a girl Crow I don't know how the

crows even figure it out just through

Behavior I guess

so

I think was regard to transgender

individuals I think some people can

genuinely feel as though they are a man

trapped in a woman's body or a woman

trapped in a man's body I think that

they would be better off like happier in

the long run if they just accept that

they happen to be in the body of the

other gender instead of getting

themselves surgically adjusted sort of

to make them look like they're the other

gender when biologically they're still

the gender that they began as that they

were born as

but uh so my main objection is just

shoving it down people's throats and

forcing them to use the correct pronouns

or the correct pronouns

so or just letting biological males who

suck at their sport you know they what

was this um the swimmer I can't remember

the person's name they were in something

they were like less than 500th place in

males swimming just overall in the

rankings

then they start identifying as a female

and boom they're right at the top

so I mean I don't think that's fair I

think

um

um yeah if not I think

like sports councils

I guess they're called Sports councils

they have the right to uh prevent

transgender individuals from depriving

women of the right to

compete against other women instead of a

guy who calls himself a woman

but uh

aside from that I mean biologically I

mean you're male or female I mean there

are a few you know you got like

kleinfelter syndrome where you where

somebody's got two x's and a y

something like that or you know

hermaphrodites that sort of thing which

would be called panduka

um mostly they'd be called pandika or

panduka in Pali like ancient Indian

Buddhist lingo

they wouldn't be considered fully male

or fully female

but I'm not exactly sure how abhidham

deals with it because

here's part of the question here at the

bottom do your views differ from the

Orthodox terrible position on the matter

um according to Orthodox theravana they

have the strange idea that maleness and

femaleness is femaleness are ultimate

truth they are ultimately real

and that my body for example is made up

of these Rupa calapas which are sort of

like little molecules composed of

clusters of ultimately real Damas and

one of those ultimately real Damas in my

my molecular makeup I guess you could

call it my Rupa colopal makeup is

masculinity trons

so it's like you can identify as a

female but

I mean you're still going to be

ultimately

absolutely male based on these little

masculine neutrons in your genetic or

your

um you know the the little particles

that compose your body one of those

particles one of the ultimately real

forms of matter according to the

hobbydama philosophy is masculinity and

another one is feminine and you're just

stuck with that you can identify however

you please

but any kind of identifying is going to

be delusional because we really do not

have a discrete ultimately real identity

anyway

so

so let's see I'm gonna I'm gonna read

through the sentence this this question

or a little cluster of questions one

more time just to make sure that I

answer makubo's question because I he

might be offended because it sounded

like maybe I call him it so I I use the

wrong pronoun

so like you and many of your subscribers

I'm opposed to the ideas of the

transgender movement well I'm I guess

I'm a I don't follow along with some of

the ideas of the transgender movement I

can accept that

you know there can be a sort of like a

karmic transitional state but you know

along a number of lives where somebody

is transitioning or they've been mostly

male in their past lives and then they

happen to be female in this life and

they've got a lot of male momentum going

that sort of thing I can accept that

so he says can you please elaborate on

your criticism of transgenderism which

I'm pretty sure I've done pretty well

kind of

and see as I understand it the gender

critical approach is based on biological

materialism

for me the gender critical approach is

based on not so much on how people

identify

um or whether they their bodies are

biologically male or female that's

pretty that's it's like for me it's the

coercion of forcing people or just sort

of luring them sheep-like into believing

that I mean it's just wrong to call a

trend like

a literally a female

that they are really a female that men
can menstruate men can get pregnant all
this stuff
um yeah I think that's that's pushing it
okay so let's see uh however as someone
who has been critical of materialism and
scientism that's me as well as having a
background in biologist still me how do
you justify your position okay yeah it's
through mainly through Buddhism
um from a biological point of view
unless you have some sort of genetic
abnormality then you're going to be male
or female based upon your your DNA your
chromosomes and someone can identify as
a woman and maybe they could be accepted
as a woman especially if they resemble a

woman

but uh I mean requiring people

to

believe that they really are women and

and at least talking as though they

really believe which would make them

dishonest if they are forced to to talk

this way yeah that's that's overdoing it

and the

the Athletics thing I've already

mentioned and see do your views differ

from the Orthodox here about a position

yeah I do not agree with with abhidham I

do not think that physical matter is

ultimately real much less

that masculinity or femininity are

ultimate realities

so I'll just move on to the next

question here

and this is from the Arya sawasti

project

in the Arya swasti project says

I'm having trouble with there is no self

and that there is nothing can we say

that nothing is permanent that

everything is in a state of change but

to say to get rid of suffering is to get

rid of the self is a different concept

maybe an expansion of self that the self

is in everything else maybe not trying

to argue with the Buddha but it seems

kind of like a dead end description also

do you think a lot of folks are turned

away from Buddhism because of the

concept of no self and how it is

presented my apologies as I know this

has been addressed in other ways before

I'd still like to hear your fresh take

on it sondu

oh

okay so this is also a sort of like a

little cluster of questions here

see he starts I'm having trouble with

there is no self and that there is

nothing

um

the whole there is nothing there are a

few sutas especially in the parayana

Wagga of the sutiny Pata where the

Buddha advises people to remind

themselves there is nothing or it is not

naughty naughty which is sort of like

native in in the upanishads and seeing

everything as void seeing everything is

empty

but

um it's it's sort of ridiculous to

assert that there's absolutely nothing

because obviously there's there's stuff

there's something

so it's it's more of

I would consider that to be a kind of uh

yogic technique

as a way of combating your beliefs in

these ultimately real discrete entities

so yeah I would consider that to be like

a yogic practice or a a yogic like

attitude to adopt as skillful means but

Orthodox carobada certainly does not say

that there is nothing in reality because

as I said the Orthodox hero bottle

including abhidham

says even masculinity and femininity are

alternate realities

nothing to let alone knows sensitivity

and tongue sensitivity and eye

sensitivity and just all sorts of things

so

let's see can we say that nothing is

permanent that everything is in a state

of change that would be the Orthodox

terravana position

see but to say to get rid of suffering
is to get rid of the self is a difficult
concept well I mean there is no self to
get rid of that's a that's a kind of
misconception it's a common
misconception you don't get rid of
suffering by getting rid of the self
it'd be more like you get rid of
suffering by getting rid of the clinging
to the the idea of self I mean mine
so see maybe an expansion of self yeah I
mean I've discussed this before that
we're dealing with the absolute we're
and the absolute is off the scale you
know it's it's not is or isn't
and
with regard to the absolute most

spiritual systems go with is and they'll
call it God where they'll call it
Brahman or they'll call it Dao you know
they'll give it this name and it's this
is the absolute which is really turning
you into a song Sorry concept so in a
way they're just sort of defiling it or
degrading it into just more samsara and
they're really not getting past that
so Buddhism it takes the the other
invalid approach because neither is nor
isn't is really valid
it's just a dualistic concept so
Buddhism goes the other way and says
there is no self instead of like the
upanishadic idea that it's all self that

self the self is God it just pervades
everything you know like salt in in salt
water you know as just as uh the water
is pervaded by the taste of salt even so
the entire universe is pervaded by the
Atman which is God
and to say is is sort of going off the
track this way and to say isn't is going
off the track that way and originally
what Buddhism was teaching is the middle
path between is and isn't there's
there's lots of middle paths I mean the
most famous one is the middle path
between self-indulgence and self-torture
but there's other middle paths including
the middle path between the absolute
exists and the absolute doesn't exist

because it totally transcends The

Duality of is and isn't existence and

non-existence

so let's see here

also do you think a lot of folks are

turned away from Buddhism because of the

concept of no self and how it is

presented mostly in the West

yeah a lot of westerners just vehemently

dislike the whole idea of no self and

it's mostly a Westerner thing I've never

really come across Asian Buddhists who

just vehemently is sometimes angrily

hotly insist that there is an eternal

soul

an eternal absolutely real self

um but then again in the west we have

more options than in a traditionalist

country like Burma

a traditionalist and conformist country

like Burma so in the west I mean you can

study the world religions you have

access to all this information and you

can you pay as your money and you take

your choice

and we tend to be eclectic I mean I'm

obviously eclectic you know I don't just

adhere strictly to taravana Buddhism I'm

willing to accept the wisdom from

wherever I can find it

so

yeah my apologies okay so that's that

was his questions

so yeah a lot of folks in the west are turned away because the West is more individualistic than the West is more self-oriented and also the West is more eclectic and you have access to more information and you can just pick and choose like many different religions in the west

um I mean just just look at the different different number of Christian denominations in the west I mean there's lots of them

and so you can just

pick and choose a lot of people just follow along with the way they were raised what their parents followed you

know what their their neighbors their

friends and family follow you know it's

just a traditionalist kind of a thing

but a lot of westerners

um you know they'll just go the other

way you know they don't want to conform

but uh they like the idea of the self

and so they like ideas in Buddhism

uh they don't want to be vedantist

Hindus

you know they don't want to be

Christians maybe they just can't believe

Christianity is kind of my my situation

and so they just take Buddhism and just

try to tweak it or change it or like

some people do they'll go to the

polytext and start tweaking and like

adjusting the meaning of the poly text
trying to force self-view into the poly
texts and um that's that's worse than
just saying Buddhism teaches that there
is no self but I would prefer to believe
that there is one
but I mean if you really want something
like Buddhism that does accept an
eternal self
vedantis Hindu is similar I mean
vedantist Hinduism and especially like
majamaka Mayana Buddhism there is a lot
of blending and overlap they were
borrowing ideas from each other largely
because they were like debating with
each other and so they're having to like

strengthen their own position against

the other guy's arguments and so forth

which um it caused them to become

similar in certain ways although vedanta

does assert the existence of an absolute

which is Brahman and the Atman

excuse me

but if I talk more about majama I'm

gonna have to put on the majama confess

which is gonna happen before this video

is over so I give fair warning this is

sort of like a trigger warning if

anyone's triggered by fez's

it's gonna happen there's going to be a

fez before this video is over

so I think I've answered that one

I mean you don't get rid of the self you

get rid of this

belief that you are this distinct

ultimately real self

and But ultimately I mean self I mean

ultimately you want to get to what I

consider to be the Buddha's original

teachings self is invalid no self is

invalid but in order to use human

language you've got to pick one or the

other in order to talk about it most

systems go with there is one Buddhism

picked there isn't one and to some

degree the idea of no self it's it's

less prone to abuse because then you

stop clinging to this idea that you're

gonna be going into heaven with your

same body and your same personality and

I mean it's like you are Immortal in a

sense

and that is not the case

that even I mean the more advanced

spiritual systems that say that there is

a self they equate that self with the

absolute you know they have the yourself

is just the Ultimate Reality upon which

this illusion of your self is based

and that's God or Brahman or whatever

the Dharma Kaya

so I hope I answered that question

but these kind of questions and these

are the questions that get asked a lot

are questions that there is no

satisfying intellectual conceptual

answer because the truth

transcends Concepts transcends the

intellect

you know it's like is and isn't are both

invalid what what can you say

so

I think I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from keep the

vinia

and keep the vinya says do you advise

against becoming a monk in Sri Lanka I

think you said in one of your videos

that the monks there are more corrupt

and then in other Buddhist countries and

the advantage of Sri Lanka but the

advantage of Sri Lanka is that many

people there speak English yeah it's one

of the advantages of Sri Lankan

monasteries in America is that at least

the ones I went to people there mostly

speak English instead of Thai or Burmese

or like sinhalese

so

um but as I mentioned

I think it was a few episodes ago that

there is a reform movement it's like a

forest tradition in Sri Lanka that I've

heard is very strict and very good

so

um probably I mean most Buddhism in Sri

Lanka is corrupt I mean you've got monks

who with briefcases that go to work as

as school teachers and they they're

taking salary and some of them will even say that so long as you practice kawitis interrupt this you're not parajika you know you can have sex so long as you you commit the sin of Onan

and that sort of thing it's very corrupt in fact the the Sangha in Sri Lanka has collapsed at least twice I think where they couldn't find any real monks anymore that weren't paragic or invalidly ordained and so they'd have to go out and like get monks or send people to Thailand or Burma to be ordained so that they could come back as real monks and then start start the song of going again in Sri Lanka but as I say there is

a strong Forest tradition there or so

I've Been Told

so you might want to look into that and

I mean there's going to be corrupt

Buddhism anywhere you go any country

that has Buddhism is going to also have

corrupt Buddhism in the corrupt form is

generally the majority

so in Burma most monks are corrupt even

in Thailand which tends to be more

strict with regard to monastic

discipline still most monks are corrupt

they just they're not following the

rules correctly they're not really

trying to become enlightened In This

Very life they're just wanting to live

an easy life they're trying to earn

Merit or something to get a better life

next time maybe to get into heaven that

sort of thing

so

so it can be very discouraging if you're

a young Monk and you're very idealistic

and then you go somewhere where

like almost all the monks around you are

just unconscientious sloppy monks who

aren't even trying

so that I mean you need to find yourself

a good environment and it could be just

a small group you know it could be in a

forest in Sri Lanka or in Thailand or

Burma or or America Canada wherever

but try to find some like-minded people

who will support your practice and you

can support them

I mean at least you know with moral

support

so I'll just move on to keep lavinia's

next question here

he says imagine if the Burmese

government had needed your advice

regarding the islamization of their

country what advice would you have given

them to stop it

well golly

that's a tough question I mean monks

really aren't supposed to get involved

in politics so I might have just said

you know whatever you guys decide is

fine with me you know have fun

good luck to you

but um I know if if they like aim to gun

at me and said give us advice or we

shoot you

um well

islamization of the country

yeah I mean you could Deport Muslims

that aren't legal residents that aren't

citizens I suppose

um you know discourage immigration from

like rohingya refugees or some such or

just

Muslims from Bengal I think that's where

most of them come into Burma is uh on

the border with Bangladesh

I mean I would discourage them from uh

massacring and slaughtering and so forth

that's really not the way to go about it

I mean in the short term you might

accomplish your goals but you just set

yourself up for something a lot worse in

the long run

so I mean you have to use

I mean you have to be in accordance with

dama whatever you're doing

but I've never really uh

I think just having strong Dharma would

help to protect Burma and I think Burma

is protected to some degree because it

does have strong faith in dhamma and a

lot of serious Dharma practice that are

in some ways helping to protect the

country even though they've got the

military dictatorship and so forth

but as I mentioned last in the last q a

the military dictatorship is a mixed

blessing it goes both ways because it's

it's keeping out a lot of the degeneracy

of like globalist liberalism for example

and there is a lot of degeneracy in that

like um the the gender fascism of trans

the transgender movement that I was

mentioning in in response to the first

question

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question I don't think I would have

really a whole lot to say to them other

than you know whatever you do try to

accomplish your goals without

you know murdering and just you know

just completely flying in the face of

dhamma

so

keep the many assistance asks this next

question did the Buddha care what color

the robes have

to be and how the monks wear them or was

it only important that they covered

certain parts of the body are monks

allowed to tell laypeople which robe

color they prefer

well

originally monks were wearing just I

mean it was it was like a shawl I mean

the upper robe was like probably

approximately six by nine hand spans

which was not really very big and they just throw it over both shoulders which is kind of the way I did it if you look in uh my oldest videos that were taken back when I was still a monk in Burma you can see the way I I wore my robes it wasn't the way modern monks mostly wear their robes

um

I mean by the time you get the monastic rules were developed which was fairly early on there's a bunch of lots of regulations in the gardener ropes you know I've got allowable materials out of which robes are can be made you've got forbidden materials out of which robes

can be made for example there's actual

rules and you're not allowed to make a

robe out of owl wings

so any of you wanting to make amongst

robot of owl wings just get the idea

right out of your head or like tree bark

which doesn't necessarily mean the

Crusty outer stuff there's like the

inner bark that's fibrous that you can

weave into a kind of burlap that's a

human hair you're not allowed to use

um with regard to the colors originally

it was probably just sort of a brownish

muddy color

um but then when the rules were more

elaborated like in uh I think it's the

mahawaga the Winnie pittica it's not the

padimoka

um the padimoka just says it has to be discolored there's a party mocha rule saying that monk shrub has to be discolored

I I think is now to make discolored and they had the colors of it's like a Nila I think which is like black or kind of blue black sort of a like a clay or like mud color

um I think mud is like brown it just has to be like a dark color and probably that would Fade Out and it would just become sort of like this dingy like Tawny or sort of a grayish color I think that would have been allowable

originally although

um if you read the later rules the more

developed rules which are attributed to

the Buddha then there's a list of

forbidden colors ironically saffron is a

forbidden color like bright yellow you

know it's like monks robes are

continually called the saffron robes you

know the saffron revolution in Burma and

so forth but saffron technically is not

an allowable color uh red is out

um sort of a the color of a centipede

back which is sort of a bright orange

reddish color that's out

um white is out

but technically there are some colors

like gray that it's not on the list of

forbidden colors even though I've never

seen a monk wearing gray robes but I do

think it would be allowable even though

people would say it's not right because

nobody else is doing it

so

um the proper color for robes is

generally like a brownish color

yellowish brown reddish brown somewhere

and even a slightly purplish Brown like

Ironwood the inner bark of the iron wood

tree

is used by mon monks for making robes

for for dyeing their robes

and it's sort of a purplish brownish

color which technically is allowable

oh the color of chicken blood is not

allowable

so uh let's see here yeah so did the

Buddha care what color of the robes have

to be and how the robes will wear them

oh what color robes have to be I mean he

was just

they weren't allowed to wear like what

lay people wore which is mostly white

you know they had to just kind of

discolor it and make it dingy and and

make the cloth more valueless originally

and then it became more standardized

later on

um and with regard to how the monks wear

them yeah it's also in the lit in the

rules the elaborated rules outside of

the parimoka

um you know there's forbidden ways of

doing your lower robe and your upper

robe like the lower rope you're not

supposed to have it like an elephant's

trunk or like the the fishtail you know

there's all these styles that people

probably wore their lower robes you know

not not monks but like lay people

because lay people were wearing like

sarongs in those days too

what a monk wears now is not so

different from what everyone was wearing

in the Ganges Valley

2500 years ago at least regard to

terrafono

um

so

I think I think the elephant's trunk one

is what a lot of Thai monks actually

wear their robots where it's rolled up

into like a tube in the front where I

think I mean I'm on put on my robes I

don't have them here they're up in the

attic but you just kind of

well I won't even I won't even explain

it it's just a way of folding it and

then kind of folding it over to hold it

on and then you put a rope or the

whatever kind of belt you've got to hold

that on and then the upper robe mostly

you're you have to cover both shoulders

when you're in public

so like if you're around the monastery
especially if you're paying respect you
have to uncover your right shoulder as a
way of showing respect you're making
confession or something you uncover the
shoulder if you're in public you've got
to cover both shoulders
and there are Sakia rules which are sort
of rules that were probably added a
little later to the padimoka rolls that
have
um you know your your robes have to be
like leveled they have to be even in the
front in the back you know you can't
have them you can't wear them sloppy the
corners have to be kind of lined up and

so forth so you have to wear them neatly

you have to be more or less presentable

even though you're wearing you know

dingy Rags but you have to wear them

neatly

so

I I ca I think I answered that one

except for this last part are monks

allowed to tell lay people which robe

color they prefer There are rules about

if somebody is going to donate to a

robes you're not allowed to go pester

them about you know do it this way don't

do it that way

uh if you do that then you have to

Forfeit the robe

because you're supposed to be easy to

support so long as it's allowable

um then

then moms can do it like if the

layperson asks the monk what color he'll

he prefers do you prefer more of a

golden brown or a reddish brown

um then the monk would probably be able

to answer but he shouldn't be seeking

them out while they're making the robe

and pestering them with you know I want

it this way not that way monk should be

easy to support but you have to be

careful with brown I learned that the

hard way that the English word Brown of

course means Brown

like those doors back there are dark

brown and then in Burma if you look it

up in a in an English to Burmese

dictionary

you look for the Burmese word for brown

and it's anio

that's how you say brown and Burmese and

yo but I found out the hard way that

brown and then anyo have a lot of

overlap they mostly overlap but there

are Shades that we would call Brown that

they wouldn't call anyo and there are

Shades that they would call I know that

we wouldn't call Brown like sort of a

raspberry color actually they would call

a no and so I'm saying I want Brown I

don't want this red color and they go oh

it's it's it's a no all right and then I

get this robe it's like the color of

like cranberry sauce or something

oh

so I mean you do have to tell the lay

people you know don't give you a robe

that's a forbidden color because then

you're not supposed to wear it

but be careful if it's in Burma and you

want Brown because uh and yo is not

exactly the same as brown

so I'll just move on to keep doing this

next question

is let's see

have you ever experienced

depersonalization during meditation in

this state you feel disconnected from

yourself or your surroundings your voice

doesn't feel it's your own for example

um yeah again I was asked about this

last time I think and it sounds like

schizophrenia to me where you're just

sort of like from like at a distance

from yourself you know it's like when

you talk it's like somebody else is

talking

um

yeah I mean I've I've experienced

depersonalization in the positive sense

of just your ego dissolves you know your

concept of I pretty much dissolves in

meditation like when you're not thinking

anymore when your mind is just empty you

know there's no I mean mind going on at

that time

um but with regard to this kind of

depersonalization it reminds me of the

very first time I had malaria and I was

really sick with malaria

um

and what I would think it was like

hearing somebody else talking in another

room like my own thoughts were like

these muffled sounds that were like

coming from through a doorway or

something

um

but yeah I've never really experienced

depersonalization as a kind of

psychological you know pathological

condition that I'm aware of that I can

recall offhand

so

I mean I experienced depersonalization

in the positive Buddhist sense like what

you should be experiencing but uh as a

kind of mental disorder

um maybe that one the first time that I

got malaria

but um that's about it so I think I'll

just move on to the next question here

and this is from Cool Whip

and Cool Whip says what's the difference

and similarity between dependent

origination and no self can you please

explain the two in their relationship to

rebirth Karma and Enlightenment you

often say that most Buddhists

misunderstand both these teachings

dependent core rising and no self

what is it exactly that you think most

get wrong about them what makes these

teachings so hard to understand

intellectually

why is it so hard to see experientially

are these five questions or one

well that could be a sixth one even

so let's see I'm gonna have to what's

the difference and similarity between

dependent origination and no self so

in Buddhism there's really no

suited that I can recall saying I mean

there might be one I'm just not

recalling them offhand saying that you

know this is the how no self applies to

dependent origination

I mean it wouldn't surprise me if it's

in there somewhere

but as a general rule terrible Buddhism

has no self as one principle dependent

origination is another principle you

know they don't really link them up

but in majama kabutism it's linked up so

I'm gonna have to put on the majama

confess to discuss this

let's see make sure I get the eyes

straight

don't want a crooked eye

okay

so that's I think the one person who did

the best job of integrating dependent

origination no self and also emptiness

or voidness was nagarjuna I think he was

possibly the greatest Buddhist

philosopher uh aside from godama Buddha

himself

and um

according to him I mean because

everything is dependently called Rising

it's not real things that are definitely

coverizing because of you know dependent

on other real things it's like the whole

it's like this whole web of

they're I mean they they seem to exist

only within the context of of these

other causes

it's really hard to explain it's very

deep and very subtle

but it's because nothing has an inherent

self-essence

that makes it dependently colorizing and

no self and empty because you've got

these things arising and passing away in

the phenomenal world but none of them

has an intrinsically real self Essence

as they say in in like Mahayana Buddhism

self-existence it doesn't exist

on its own because of its own self

Essence it appears to exist because all

these other things are appearing to

exist and it just kind of fits into the

context of these other things that

appear to exist and none of it none of

these things have an inherently real

self Essence no no ultimately real

distinct individuality

and that that's where no self comes from

that's dependent origination and also

that is emptiness

so can I please explain the two and the

relationship to rebirth Karma and

enlightenment

well let's see rebirth dependent

origination

um it's because I mean you've you have

these conditions that lead to your mind

your your karmic momentum you know your

karma

um

appearing to exist in this phenomenal
world and I mean so long as those causes
continue to exist you continue to
to go Life After Life according to
Buddhist philosophy
um Karma yeah that's I already mentioned
that the enlightenment is where you
transcend that
Enlightenment is you see the underlying
reality you see that all this stuff is
ultimately empty of any kind of inherent
self-existence that it's it's like an
illusion it's like a dream or the Matrix
or whatever
let's see so you often say that most
Buddhists misunderstand both these
teachings dependent co-rising and no

self what is it exactly that you think

most get wrong about them with regard to

dependental Rising

um in terravada Buddhism especially but

even in uh nagarjuna in his Mula majama

karaka he has one chapter giving lip

service to the 12 nidana Theory where uh

dependent core Rising was so difficult

to understand so subtle

because in a way it's dancing around

Duality I mean it's like

it's it's so subtle

that it just very quickly ossified into

this 12 links

Ys

et cetera et cetera it's just the 12

links and so most scholar monks in Burma
for example they just memorized the 12
links and think they understand it when
really they don't because I don't think
that dependent core Rising can
adequately be explained by the 12 need
Donna Theory the 12 links
that I think that is sort of a kind of
intellectual coping mechanism for the
fact that most monks including most
scholar monks really did not understand
dependent core rising and according to
the legend the Buddha almost became a
Hermit and did not start teaching
Buddhism because he figured nobody would
understand dependent cool rising and now
does any kind of Buddhist scholar thinks

that he pretty much has a has a grasp of

it and most of them do not

so with Guardian no self

I think one of the main

misunderstandings of no self is the idea

that

um I think it was the Aria sebasti

project was saying above where you have

to get rid of yourself but there is no

self to get rid of

ultimately because nothing has any

inherent self-existence it's all sort of

like this interconnected web of

causation with the causes themselves

being you know indirectly created by

other causes and there is no ultimate

ultimately real causer of all this

so

let's see what makes these teachings so

hard to understand intellectually partly

you just can't really grasp them

intellectually because the intellect

Works in Duality you have to something

has to either exist or not exist

and I mean we're dealing with something

that kind of virtually exists you know

it potentially exists it seems to exist

but at the same time it is an illusion

so it's it's like a paradox in a way

why is it so hard to see it

experientially most people just locked

into their beliefs they're locked into

the intellect locked into their feelings

locked into their ego and they can't let
go of those long enough to see the
Ultimate Reality which is all around us
all the time anyway
and I hope I've done a fairly
competent job of attempting to answer
that question because this this kind of
stuff it's I mean I wearing The Fez
which indicates that it's It's Tricky
just to begin with
but I think there's going to be more uh
majellica stuff coming up so I'll just
set the Fez aside and move on to the
next question for now
this is also from Cool Whip and this
question

uh if you want to read the entire

question go to question answer number 59

on YouTube and look for Cool Whip

and it is a long question it's like a

chapter out of a book it's it's a a

lengthy essay of a question but

fortunately I mean if you want to read

the whole thing that's where I direct

you to go and read the whole thing

um but he has sort of a concise summary

which summarizes the question towards

the end here

and that is Canon Aura hunt continue his

intellectual education about the natural

world does knowledge of conventional

reality exclude nibana if nibana is the

absolute and if conventional reality

reality is part of the absolute then

aren't they aren't mutually exclusive so

yeah cool whip is talking about how he's

in a way like an information junkie like

a lot of us in the west I am also to

some degree and

it's it's sort of

there are a lot of monks who say you

should only be I mean you shouldn't be

studying this worldly stuff it's a

distraction it's not going to get you

enlightened you should just study dhamma

and meditate you know just sit alone

meditate under a tree or something and

you know just don't waste your time

reading books not even I mean some of

them would even say not even Buddhist
books
and Cool Whip here is an intellectual
type person he's curious he wants to
understand things and I can relate to
that I mean we're just sort of
intellectual it's in a way it's a
survival Instinct in humans where you
want to learn about all kinds of stuff
just to ultimately originally it was to
you know increase your survival value
and maybe increase your attractiveness
to females so that your your DNA
survives into the Next Generation
but um let's see can arhan continue his
intellectual education about the natural
world I don't think there's any rule

that says he wouldn't that an

enlightened being to some degree would

still

um he'd still have habits and

preferences from before his

Enlightenment although he would no

longer be identifying with them and just

be nature taking its course you know

just be this momentum running itself out

and if he was an intellectual or a

scholar he might continue with uh

intellectual Pursuits to some degree

although it would just be

sort of a habit pattern that didn't die

when he became enlightened I mean he

wouldn't gain anything by it really

because he'd already gained the absolute
I mean you can't really gain anything
more than that
so it's here does knowledge of
conventional reality exclude nibbana
um it's not really knowledge I mean the
only true knowledge is nibbana or the
only true knowledge is knowledge of the
absolute of ultimate truth because
anything less than ultimate truth is
conventional truth which is delusional
to some degree it's belief it's not
knowledge
I mean for everyone to have or for lots
of people to have beliefs that agree
with each other that kind of locks it in
and they'll call it knowledge because

you know it's backed up by all this you
know other authorities and just by their
own personal experience which ultimately
is also illusory or delusional
um but I mean
I'm I'm really interested in for example
biology especially like darwinian
evolution
because it helps you so much to
understand human nature at least from
one point of view ultimately I mean it's
not going to get you enlightened
probably except in one sense in that the
best use of the intellect is for use as
a detector
I mean you can use the intellect to

shoot down shoddy arguments and if you
don't have that you can just get lured
or just misled into believing all kinds
of weird dumb stuff so using your
intellect as a detector and I
mean just studying all kinds of things
being a polymath can help you with that
but I think the ultimately the best use
for the intellect would be something
like nagarjuna did what Kant was trying
to do and that's use the intellect
to demonstrate to yourself if not to
others that the intellect is inadequate
at understanding Ultimate Reality and
you're gonna have to go beyond the
intellect
even though it's very satisfying you

know in a way it's kind of like sex or

something that you know you can be like

an information junkie and you can get

pleasure from learning these things

but um

I mean ultimately it's neither good nor

bad I suppose

but

let's see let's go back to the question

I have to reread these sometimes because

I like digress away and wind up talking

about something completely different so

Canon aurohan continue his intellectual

education about the natural world

um I don't think most of them would

really be interested in anymore some of

them could I don't think that it would

disqualify somebody from being

enlightened especially if he's a teacher

and he's just reading you know what the

the current Zeitgeist is you know what

the current world view is so that he can

better explain things in accordance with

people's accepted world view something

like that might be totally kosher

totally acceptable

but um

let's see does knowledge of conventional

reality exclude nibana

uh that's kind of a trick question too I

mean nibbana itself I mean it's off the

scale

so some people would say yes and some

people would say I mean nothing can

exclude nibana nothing can really

exclude reality just the only thing that

would exclude reality would be absolute

pure delusion

oh

but I mean the Ultimate Reality is

underlying everything it's like some of

the more philosophical theoretical

physicists are getting kind of into the

zone of nibana with like their like the

quantum field or something like that

um I mean if it if it helps

and then that's fine or if it's just

sort of a neutral thing that you occupy

your spare time with that's fine you're

probably better off studying a science

book than playing a dumb video game or

something

so

but

I mean nibana really doesn't exclude

anything

just like God doesn't exclude anything

unless you want to say they exclude

everything because again everything and

nothing you know is and isn't you know

they're both invalid and the intellect

really can't deal with it

so gosh it's

it's like people ask me questions that

are easily answered and then I answer

them but the ones that aren't easily

answered

um you know I don't do it justice or

whatever and then it's like it's like

the the percentage of questions that

aren't easily answered are like

increasing

it's making up more and more of each

each q a I think

but anyway this next question is from

Fred

and uh I'm with Fred bless his heart he

uh he asks questions sometimes he'll

just make a statement and then just toss

in a question mark at the end

um sometimes it's it's not at all

apparent that he's expecting an answer

but this time I mean there's two
question marks here and so I'm gonna try
and answer these questions
so the first part here is I found them
the Maya kamawibanga suta perplexing
karma seems to be unfathomable question
mark and the Buddha does say that karma
is unfathomable he he warns people don't
you can't really figure it out I mean
you can say that it's volition you can
say that it's a will that sort of a
thing but working out the subtleties of
how Karma Works can make you insane it
says that in the suit is
so yeah it can be perplexing especially
if you're trying to use the intellect to
understand what is beyond the intellect

so his his second question here is is it

really feasible the Lord knew even

others karmic path

um and the Lord of course is is God I'm

a Buddha so

um I'm sure that if if the texts are

anywhere close to being accurate with

regard to his wisdom you know he could

see where a person was headed you know

he could see the predicament they were

in

and uh I mean that is one of the the the

knowledges the abineas that uh a lot of

really Advanced yogic practitioners get

is just being able to look at people

faring according to their karma

so you know you're sort of reading their
mind you can see their see you know
where they are at mentally and
spiritually so yeah I could I could
accept that although terravotto says
even the Buddha himself who had a kind
of limited omniscience still could not
predict the future with 100 certainty
because the future just doesn't exist
yet and we're not living in a purely
deterministic world
that determinism is rejected and free
will also is rejected and so again you
wind up in this sort of intellectual
ambiguity
um that maybe you just cannot grasp
intellectually it's just a kind of

paradox

so

I think he would have a fairly good idea

you know what direction a person that he

met was heading but still I don't think

he could just look at that person and

say you know 57 422 lifetimes from now

that person is going to become

enlightened anything like that

so

I think I'll just move on a nice

question here and this one's from Austin

and Austin said before you became a monk

did you feel directionless or almost

like you hadn't found your purpose yet

in this life laylife and Society in

general definitely does seem like a
turning wheel of Sorrow well
for 10 years before I became a monk I
was intending to become one eventually
it's just that I liked you know sex
drugs and rock and roll and pizza and
ice cream and all that so that I was
definitely going to be ordained as a
monk before the age of 30. well I wasn't
in like a major hurry
um I was a little bit ahead of schedule
I was 27 I think when I was ordained
so let's see uh did I feel directionless
there was only one time in my life I
guess when I was feeling directionless
and that was when I was like 16 and 17
and I had reached the stage where I

realized that adults did not have what's
what figured out you know they were just
as clueless as I was
and so I just went into this open
Rebellion against the system so to speak
and got into lots of trouble with
skipping school almost flunked out of
school you know just partying and just
doing whatever I felt like doing
and um
that was kind of directionless I mean I
was I was just sort of hitting a wall
because it obviously wasn't working out
very well you know just being a normie
and dedicating my life to making as much
money as possible so I can buy as much

stuff as possible that was

it just didn't appeal to me

after I reached enough maturity to you

know by the age of 16 it really was not

much of a viable option anymore and I

didn't know what to replace it with at

first

so it wasn't until

um in a towering passion my father

required me to either start seeing a

youth counselor or just get out

that I started seeing a youth counselor

because that seemed to be the easier

option and he was a spiritually oriented

person who was into ROM Das and started

giving me Eastern philosophy books to

read and at first it didn't make much

sense to me because there was wasn't
anything already in my mind stored there
that would be integrated with this new
information you know it was just sort of
this completely alien information coming
in that I mean I wasn't used to it you
know I've never been exposed to much of
it before but I could just feel
intuitively yeah this this is this is
legit this is the real deal you know
it's like I could dedicate myself to
dama or Dharma
um much more than I could dedicate
myself to being a normie and making as
much money as possible in order to buy
as much stuff as possible on the one

hand or just partying and getting into

trouble all the time just being a

rebellion just being an open Rebellion

just this wild roller coaster ride of up

and down I mean that wasn't working out

either

so there was just a matter of just a few

months of serious crisis like around the

age of 16. when

um

maybe I felt directionless but it was

like I was looking for a direction it

wasn't like I was totally lost it's like

okay I could have to work out what I

want to do

and I eventually decided I was gonna

become a monk

I didn't know exactly what kind at first

I was even considering uh like Zen or

else just making a wool robe for myself

and getting a bowl and just taking on

wandering

but the rest is history I suppose so

I'll just move on to the next question

here and this is from maitrea Buddha

and maitreya Buddha says what is your

opinion on stoicism

and I really haven't read much that was

as I read I started reading the

meditations of Marcus Aurelius and it

was so dry and boring and sort of

plotting you know kind of commonplace to

me after having been a monk for many

years that I didn't even finish the book

and that's kind of rare for me not to

finish a book

I'd have this idea that once you get

started on it you should finish it

before you move on to something else

I do remember reading schopenhauer's

criticisms of stoicism that he said that

stoicism was largely based on cynicism

you know the ancient Greek philosophy of

cynicism like diogenes

and that

um they had kind of thrown out the baby

with the bath water the the cynics were

really ascetics you know they were they

were they came closer to like a Buddhist

monk you know the cynic philosophers

although they were allowed to have sex
and handle money and so forth but they
were they had a more radical
renunciation of Normie Society than the
stoics whereas the stoics they in a way
they acknowledge that it's psychological
I mean the Detachment has to be
psychological Detachment instead of
literally physical Detachment I mean
that the most important kind of
Detachment is mental
but then you know they're you know
they're still rich and you know eating
beasts and so forth and uh you know
they're trying to be detached from it
but it didn't work out as well as if

they were just wandering around homeless

like a like a

on like a Pacific aesthetic

so I remember schopenhower saying that

about it and uh I have to admit I I

prefer cynicism dystosism stoicism just

seems kind of plotting I mean I think

it's a good philosophy for like a

conscientious Normie

um

so I mean like for the ancient Romans

I think stoicism really was was a good

thing you know it sort of gave them

principles and kind of a philosophical

foundation and

you know I mean all in all it did more

more good than harm I'm sure

but I'm not sure if stoicism had any

kind of

salvific idea of you know like

Liberation or Enlightenment I don't know

enough about stoicism to know did if the

stoics themselves

had an ideal of like the fully

enlightened perfect stoic

I'm not sure if if they had that

but with regard to stoicism in general I

think Americans should go back to a more

stoic point of view or more stoic

attitude I think that would do us a lot

of good

um and like I've said many times before

or several times anyway that a Buddhist

layperson really should adopt a certain
amount of stoicism not classical capital
S stoicism but just realizing that as a
layperson you've got to do
um if not bad things they're not
entirely wholesome things and so not
entirely wholesome consequences are
going to come back at you you're going
to make Bad Karma and so you have to
have sort of a stoic Equanimity of
accepting that bad karma when it
inevitably comes back on you
because you may not have the option of
always being perfectly virtuous you have
a family to protect for example
so
I guess that's my opinion on stoicism so

I'll just move on to the next question

this is from Tim the enchanter

and Tim the enchanter says since the

three daughters of Mara are lust desire

and aversion would it be fair to say

that maybe Mara himself is a

personification of all that is evil or

maybe evil tendencies in ourselves

well the three daughters of Mara

technically their names are Raga aradi

and Dana

Raga is usually translated as lust or

passion

literally means something like

non-delight which I think probably meant

something like being insatiable never

being satisfied and is craving usually

it's translated as craving or thirst

so I mean they're all sort of sexual

words or they could be sexual words and

I think the implication is that Mara's

like voluptuous

lascivious three daughters they're sort

of like personifications of just like

sexual desire and passion and so forth

but Mara himself

uh let's see so Timothy and chander is

asking would it be fair to say that

maybe Mara himself is a personification

of all that is evil or maybe evil

tendencies in ourselves

um

I think originally Mara was considered

to be evil I don't know where the

Buddhists came up with the idea of Mara

maybe it was like a Vedic concept before

the the Buddhas adopted the idea of Mara

Mara literally means killer you know has

the same proto-indo-european

etymology as like the English words

mortal and murder

yeah it just means killer so I mean

that's pretty pretty evil but as uh

Buddhist philosophy developed Mara did

not become just the god of evil he was

the god of Good and Evil I mean he was

the Lord of samsara

so in a way he's sort of the god of

samsara he's the god of the conclusion

the god of worldliness and if you can't
get you to be bad he'll get you to be
good because if you're good then you go
to heaven and that's still within the
realm of Mara
you know he's the Lord of all of it at
least in a symbolic symbolic kind of way
so maybe Tim the enchanter is asking if
Mara really doesn't exist and he's just
a personification sort of like the the
devil in in Lord of the Flies not the
movie which completely avoids all the
philosophy stuff but in the original
book where the devil or the Lord of the
Flies builds above
um you know he's not just this
individual being you know he's he just

inhabits like a dark corner of

everybody's mind and then everybody's

that dark corner of everybody's mind

forms like a hive mind that gives a

reality to this higher being

um you know Mara could be like that I

mean I really don't think that we need

any kind of cosmic bad guy to lead us

into temptation because we do a good

enough job of it ourselves

so yeah I'm skeptical of

um a lot of the Buddhist Pantheon

including the reality or even the

conventional reality of Mara himself I

mean I'm sure that there are demonic

entities out there but just to have a

person a being whose job is to be
tempting humans and preventing them from
becoming enlightened because that's
really his main concern in the Buddhist
texts isn't just sending people to Hell
luring people into evil he's just trying
to keep them unenlightened
like with the go to kasuta you know he's
he's trying to get the Buddha to prevent
gordica from committing suicide because
he's got a fairly good idea that gonica
is going to become enlightened when he
dies
so I think I'll just move on to Tim the
enchanter's next question here
please elaborate a little bit about the
eight requisites that monks should have

or must have yeah I mean their requisite

so they are required

and the eight requisites to see if I

remember these you got three robes lower

rope upper robe outer rub and you've got

the belt that holds up your lower rope

when you are required to wear in public

then you've got the Razor for shaving

your face and your head you've got a

needle for repairing your robes you've

got a water filter

and that's seven three robes row uh the

belt oh and the bowl you got your arms

Bowl so that's eight so three robes the

belt

the the razor the needle the water

filter and the bowl

eight requisites although you could

reduce that to seven because it says in

the text that you can use a corner of

your robe as a water filter you can just

strain water through just some of the

cloth of your robe but then it turns out

that there's also a crypto ninth

requisite that monks are required to

have and that is a regulation sitting

cloth

because monks had to have a sitting

Clause when they were living under trees

just so they won't be sitting in the

dirt or in the mud when it rains it just

kind of helps to keep them a little

cleaner and maybe helps a little bit to

keep bugs and parasites off of them

so elaborate a little bit

three robes are just rectangles of cloth

that are dyed the proper color made out

of the proper material and sewn in the

proper way

uh the belt according to the text

there's two possible belts you can have

uh I think it's called Patika and then

there's sukaranda Patika just means a

strip of cloth which is generally what I

used and the sukaranda literally means

Pig intestine which is just a twisted

rope because apparently pig intestines

are twisty

so it's a twisted rope or a strip of

cloth uh the razor generally would have
been a straight razor in the Buddha's
day and I'm glad I didn't have to shave
my own head using a straight razor when
I was a monk the water filter is just
like a piece of cloth that you filter
water through to just to get out the
chunks and the little animals
and uh the needle which for so many rows
needles are self-explanatory and the
sitting cloth
um it has to be a regulation size and it
has to have a border sewn onto it and so
forth
um but a sitting cloth would be well
you can't see what my hands are can you
so I guess I guess I answered that

question

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from covax incipad

zidino

and CEO of action C pad ziruna asks the

interesting question wooden and Aura

hunt be closer to being an NPC than us

since they have no volition so not a

playable character in a way

well

um

you could say that there's an NPC in the

butt

I mean they'd be more advanced than we

are if if an araha is an NPC he would be

more advanced than the people playing

the game so I mean he'd be like the NPC

of an omniscient computer

you've got like a computer game that on

an omniscient computer

you know it's just a perfect it knows

everything or whatever and then you it

has this NPC who always does the right

thing and in a way an arahond is less of

an NPC than we are because we are

programmed by our volition we do not

have free will

so our volition is kind of like a mental

prison for us

you know it's like

will I mean you reach schopenhauer I

mean will has a mind of its own

essentially and it's largely habitual

that our karma is is like

habit energy you know it's just this

momentum that's pushing us through life

so uh and our hunt would be less

predictable than us

because you know we are creatures of

habit and and an arahond I mean he may

have habits too that haven't completely

faded out but nevertheless he is no

longer like clinging to them and

identifying with them so an aura hunt

with uh in some sense be less of an NPC

than we are because he would be more

awake than we are and more of a you'd be

more free than we are because to some

degree we are limited by our habits

so I think I'll just move on to Sea of

Action cpad zidrina's next question

and that is I have a few questions based

on a paper called the truth of nagarjuna

something Beyond Nirvana

uh by Dr

erden Murray yazgan yalkin I tried to

link the paper but the comment gets

destroyed by YouTube I was reading the

paper and had many questions about it as

it summarizes some of the things

nagarjuna says in his books like the

Mula majama kakaraka

um okay so this is majomoka I put the

majomic Affairs back on

get the tassel nice here

I don't know you should come a little

more forwards

yeah okay so

and as a disclaimer here I didn't read

this article I am familiar with the Mula

majama kakaraka I have some knowledge of

what majamika is about and what in the

garden it was saying especially in the

Mula majama karaga

um so without reading the paper itself

which does sound interesting maybe I

will read it eventually

okay question number one why does

nagarjuna say that Emptiness is a higher

truth than even Nirvana

um again I haven't read the paper but I

would assume that nagarjuna says

Emptiness is a higher truth and even

Nirvana because emptiness applies to

Nirvana and samsara

that Nirvana is sort of restricted to

this ultimate absolute state that is the

goal of Dharma practice

uh whereas emptiness ultimately all of

samsara is empty so that would be my my

educated guess on why he would say

Emptiness is a higher truth even than

Nirvana because it is less restrictive I

mean it applies to just absolutely

everything

so number two even though nagarjuna says

Emptiness is a higher truth than Nirvana

he still says that the ultimate truth

itself is there is no such thing as

ultimate truth okay the ultimate truth
itself is there is no such thing as
ultimate truth can you please explain
why nagarjuna rejects even both of these
things as the ultimate truth it's like
I've been saying like in this video and
the last video that
anything that you can come up with
intellectually or conceptually is just
some Sark it's just a symbol
so the majama Buddhists they really went
completely radical in in just not
redefined the absolute I mean they
reified the absolute less than the
terrible buttons did I mean the terror
Bonds were saying you know there's like

84 ultimate realities or something you

got like 52 ultimately real mental

states that are qualitatively different

from each other you've got Consciousness

is ultimately real

um Nirvana or Nirvana is ultimately real

and I think there's 28 different kinds

of matter including masculinity and

femininity that are ultimately real

and

um I don't think that that is correct I

think the only nibbana I mean using

Buddhist jargon would be ultimately real

that all the rest is

um dependently core Rising ultimately

empty of self-essence

and so when when Nirvana when nagarjuna

says the ultimate truth itself is there
is no such thing as ultimate truth I
mean it can't be put into words I mean
as soon as you call it it you have
symbolized it so he's just completely
not I mean he's not going there at all
that's that's what
um majama early majama was doing it was
using these logical arguments to up
demolish All Views and then at the very
end when all this left is smoking ruins
and in the majomoka philosophy it would
just turn on itself and demolish itself
too and all this left is just emptiness
so
I mean he's dealing with intellect here

um the purpose of Lord Buddha's teaching
is to liberate us from our Thinking by
means of our thinking some Mahayana Tech
says that
and uh yeah I mean the the majama
Buddhists took the radical step of just
dismissing any concept even of
Enlightenment even the concept of
Enlightenment is just a concept it's
just more some sorrow sort of like I was
reading in the Tibetan book of the great
Liberation in the previous episode
um you know it's Nirvana itself is just
a concept of mind it's all a concept of
mind some sorrow is a concept of mind
you know it's just all a concept of mind
and so you just dismiss all of that and

I mean you don't say that there's
something there you say don't say
there's nothing there because again
you've got the duality of exists and
doesn't exist and it just completely
transcends that you can't wrap your head
around intellectually it's not going to
happen
so I'll just move on to question three
here
nagarjuna says The Emptiness is the
cause of interdependent existence itself
can you please explain this and how
emptiness isn't just the nature of
interdependent existence but rather its
cause

and see can you please explain how

emptiness isn't just the nature of

independent existence but rather its

cause well I don't think

I don't think emptiness is the cause of

dependent core Rising it's just that I

mean they're they're pretty much

synonymous that I already mentioned this

above that nagarjuna pretty much just

pointed out that

dependent core Rising no self and

emptiness I mean they're all just

essentially one

and that is there is no Essence there is

no independent self Essence there is no

individual self-reality no swabawa

so let's see

emptiness is the cause of interdependent existence itself

yeah I'm I'm not sure that I would agree with that phraseology The Emptiness is the cause I mean Emptiness is interdependent existence in fact one of the most famous verses of the Mula majama Kaka is saying by dependent core Rising we mean emptiness

that they're synonymous that's how he that's how he explains Emptiness is you know everything is empty because everything is dependently cool arising you know it exists only provisionally because of these other causes and there is no individual inherently real

self-existence to any of it

so maybe the guy who wrote the article

didn't get it or I don't know what the

deal is

so I'll just move on to this next

question about nagarjuna here can you

explain the nyaya school that nagarjuna

was criticizing all it says in the paper

is that they believed in swabawas

similar to abhidham Traditions but I

never heard of the school before I'm the

only nyaya School in Ancient India that

I know of it was proto-hindu you know it

was it was in The Vedic tradition and it

was similar to abhidham the the Hindus

themselves have at least two different

schools one of them starts with s I

think I can't remember I can't remember

what the name is but the other one was

just means something like method or

logic

and

apparently uh something like abhidham

was in fashion in Ancient India after

the Buddhist time like around the time

of Ashoka and afterwards

and uh so not only the Buddhists had

their abhidamas but apparently the

proto-hindus had their abhidamas and one

of them was developed by this nyaya

school if that is the same Yaya that is

being mentioned in the paper

so it was it was a non-buddhist abhidham

school essentially

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is the last or the

last uh majamika nagarjuna question

please give any of their thoughts you

think are worth mentioning about this

paper or subject well I mean I haven't

really read the paper

um I might though I mean it sounds

interesting and uh the subject of

majamika yeah I've kind of already been

uh talking about that after all I am

wearing the Fez

so

yeah nothing really comes to mind I'm

sorry to say so I'll have to take the

Fez off now

and so I'll move on to the next question

this is from Judge Caligula Bushman

and judge Caligula Bushman says I had a

question about the eighth precept does

this mean you should sleep on the floor

or as some sources claim that you can

sleep in a bed as long as it's not too

luxurious well the actual uh precept is

I take I undertake the precept to

refrain from large or great beds now

wait large

let's see oh high or high or large

bedsayana

so Maha means great big and ucha means

hi

and I've never come across in terrible

in the literature

a definition for laypeople not sleeping

on a High bed but in the winnia in the

rules of monastic discipline the

technical definition for a High bed that

a monk is not allowed to sleep on is if

it's more than eight finger widths

the bottom of the frame is more than

eight finger widths above the floor

so that would be what about six inches

maybe

so if the bottom of the of the frame of

the bed is more than about this high off

the bed and it's easy to check you just

take your fingers and go in like that

some people say oh what's this it's the

finger width of the Buddha himself and

the Buddhist fingers were four and a
half times as wide as an ordinary person
or three and a half times as wide that
the commentaries vary so that I mean you
can sleep on this bed that's you know
way up high like a top bunk or something
but I don't think so it's go with eight
fingers like this just go like that if
you can't if you can't fit them under
the door of the bed frame then that's
good and uh a large bed is large enough
for more than one person to sleep on
so
if you want to keep the eight precepts
you might just want to take a blanket
and fold it up into a sort of a air

mattress kind of thing and sleep on that
or if you've got an air mattress or like
a camping pad or something you can sleep
on those unless you just have a tiny low
bed to begin with
so I'll just uh move on to judge
Caligula bushman's next question here
another question that sprang to mind is
the exclusion of people who have
disabilities from being ordained how
strict are they is anyone restricted or
will the severity of the condition be
taken into consideration for example a
minor physical deformity like a cleft
lip a missing finger or something
similar that doesn't need further care
are these grounds for exclusion as well

well there is a list of diseases that a

person who has any of these diseases

should not be ordained one of them is

leprosy a leper is not supposed to be

ordained there's some like skin diseases

like

like eczema or something I think

um

what is it epilepsy is one of them uh

I think asthma actually it's some kind

of lung thing some kind of breathing

thing but there's this list

and uh they're not supposed to be

ordained but I have seen a one called

leprosy he was I mean when I first saw

this mod he was a temporary monk it's

it's pretty common in Burma and Thailand

that you're ordained temporarily at

least once in your life if you're a

Buddhist male

and uh this guy I mean it looked like

pizza on his arm and I I didn't know

what it was at first until finally later

on I realized that there was a fair

amount of leprosy in that area I had I

had lepers offering me food

and um

so I I'm pretty sure that's what it was

and

with regard to these disabilities I mean

so long as you're you're not castrated

you have to have a set of balls on you

in order to be ordained well and even if

you're ordained the it's invalid the the

ordination is just invalid is still not

ordained because you have to be an

intact male in order to be ordained as

as a Buddhist monk as a biku

um but with regard to like epilepsy and

and these other diseases like leprosy

and so forth

um they're not supposed to be ordained

but if they are ordained anyway the

monks who ordained this person are

they've committed a minor transgression

requiring

confession

it's like the the founder of the

tradition in which I was ordained was

Tom pugu Seattle

there's another rule that says a monk is

not allowed to be ordained without his

parents permission

and there was this young man who wanted

to be ordained but his parents would not

give permission they were like

fundamentalist Christians and

um pump Luciano said well the Sangha is

willing to make the sacrifice you know

they're willing to break a rule in order

to ordain him even though it's against

the rules to ordain someone whose

parents don't consent

and it's it's similar with regard to

these these diseases there's an obscure

list of there's much more detailed about

who should not be ordained and that

includes someone who's Too Tall or Too

Short or too fair-skinned or too

dark-skinned I think even a unibrow

going across is enough to disqualify

somebody I think I think maybe if

they're missing a finger that's still

okay but if they've got like an extra

finger then no and that was mainly I

mean

still they would be ordained if they

were ordained you know it'd just be like

a minor transgression and the monks

would make confession and then the

transgression would be absolved

um but it was that was mainly for the

purpose of

preventing the Sangha from giving the

lay supporters the Willies from someone

who looks really weird

you know just really unusual like an

albino or something there's a lot of

superstitious beliefs about albinos for

example and so I mean they were just

trying to they were looking out for the

song and not wanting to give the song a

bad reputation because of course they

wanted Domino to prosper with regard to

the the more serious diseases that

amongst are a prospective monk is

actually asked at his ordination

ceremony do you have any of these

diseases and you know they list them off

um and the the candidate is supposed to say you know no I don't have I don't have nachibande

um

according to the the origin story it was the the Buddhist personal physician was jivaka komarabacha he was a uh he was like this excellent doctor you know he could cure things that even nowadays people can't cure and so what was happening with people with these diseases these chronic diseases were being ordained as monks just so that the Sangha doctor jeevika would cure them and then they were dropping out again and so I think it was jivica himself who

requested the Buddha that you know he's
he's getting really you know overworked
with curing these people that are just
dropping out of the monkey as soon as
they get cured that uh maybe he could
make a rule saying that you know you
have to be healthy to begin with
although I it could just be another case
of you know not wanting to scare people
when you got this monk with Leprosy
walking walking for alms that kind of a
thing
so I guess I'll just move on to the next
question here and this is from Bill
Gahan or ismet
and Bill Gahan or ismat says you said
some mahayanasutas contain an archaic

Corps can you give the names of those
sutras do you think there are any
original teachings that were contained
in Mahayana texts but were excluded from
the polycanon for one reason or another
um Mahayana Sutra is the contain an
archaic archaic Corps well first of all
um a great many of the the sutas that
are in teravada are also in Mahayana
it's just the Mahayana
is so huge most Mahayana monks never
read them they don't know what they say
you know so there is that that you know
most of the the poly sutos have like a
Mahayana version that says pretty much
the same thing

but um this is just the Mahayana boost

they're more interested in reading the

specifically Mahayana stuff like pragya

paramita that kind of a thing

um

so with the names the names of those

sutras I mean that very much be all of

them of that sort but then you've got

other sutas

or sutras that

like like the pragya paramita or prajini

paramita sutras

like the heart Sutra or The Diamond

Cutter Sutra they've got a lot of

Mahayana Concepts like the the

bodhisattva idea but nevertheless

they're emphasizing a lot of the early

teachings like can be found in the

atikabaga of the suttony Pata

um

like you know void is let's see form is

emptiness the very Emptiness is formed

from the heart Sutra I mean terrible

Buddhism would say no that's that's a

wrong view but I mean you can see the

origins of those ideas in really archaic

sutos like the ones in the Attica Wagga

um or the parayana Wagga

so let's see

can I give the names of those sutures

yeah I would say especially something

like the heart Sutra or like The Diamond

Cutter Sutra would be that sort of Sutra

that in a way they've got a lot of later material that probably the Buddha never taught but at the same time they're emphasizing like very early ideas you know in a way

um that aspect of Mahayana the the pragya paramita movement was a kind of a reform movement trying to get back to the original Spirit

um and getting away from all this abidama stuff this hyper intellectual trying to classify everything and list everything and just try to explain everything intellectually

so they went back to just like Paradox and like koan like utterances that you're not even supposed to really grasp

intellectually

you know like Diamond Cutter Sutra

saying you know the the there there is

no such thing as a bodhisattva and

that's why he's a bodhisattva that kind

of a thing and it's just sort of these

paradoxes and it's like Zen

so even even the Zen approach

um in some ways it goes back to an early

uh like an early theme in in Buddhism

that eventually it didn't entirely die

out but it became less emphasized in

like taravada and so the Mahayana

Buddhists were really were trying to be

a reform movement in certain respects

like with regard to project

um

so let's see do you think there are any

original teachings that were contained

in Mahayana texts that were excluded

from the polycanon for one reason or

another

um and it'd be hard to say if they were

completely excluded because then you

don't know uh if they were excluded from

the poly Canon I mean if something is

not in the polycanon you can't say that

it was there and then got deleted you

know it maybe it just never was there I

mean he can't I don't know of any good

way of deciding that one

but there are teachings

um like

approximations of original teachings

attempts to get back to the original

teachings in Mahayana that were very

much de-emphasized and became kind of

wrong view in in polycan it had to be

reinterpreted like the whole idea of

um nibana the absolute being infinite

formless Consciousness luminous

all-around

um I mean you don't know if that is

really original

um

or there's another another Studio where

the the Buddha is saying this mind monks

is Luminous but it is is defiled by you

know external defilements something like

that could be interpreted as sort of
like the one mind of Mahayana Buddhism
the Dharma Kaya where they're kind of
reifying the absolute in almost like a
vedantic way but whether that was a
movement that started in early Buddhism
and then died out or whether the Buddha
actually taught something along that
line but I kind of doubt it
it's really hard to say like if
something is not found in the polycanon
you can't really say that it used to be
there but then got deleted unless you've
got some kind of evidence for that and I
don't know what the evidence would be
but the farthest that would go is that
like especially the project

uh aspect of early Mahayana was trying

to get back to the original spirit and

pro they were a lot closer to the

original times either just a few hundred

years after the time of the Buddha so

they'd probably have a better idea than

you know somebody in the 21st century

would as to what the Buddha originally

taught you know they'd still have Living

Traditions you know like a lineage with

you know that isn't just fading out Into

Obscurity in the past that kind of a

thing

so

yeah I do think that there are certain

Mahayana teachings

or methods of teaching that come closer
to what the Buddha originally taught
than Orthodox taravada with abhidham in
the commentarial tradition and so forth
but they've also at the same time just
mixed in all this other stuff that is
pretty obvious to me anyway the Buddha
never taught you know like The Diamond
Cutter Sutra all this talk about
bodhisattvas and stuff
um yeah I really do not think the Buddha
was teaching the bodhisattva concept and
even if you read The Diamond Cutter
super and it's talking about how a
bodhisattva should conduct himself it
sounds pretty much like some of the
polishutas describing how an aura hunt

would conduct himself I'm not so sure
that there really would be a difference
if the two people were conducting
themselves in this way then yeah they're
probably the same kind of person and not
one of them a bodhisattva and one of
them in our hunt
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here also from bilgahan or
ismet
according to the sutas there were many
monks who committed suicide were hired
an assassin in the Sangha it seems odd
to me the Buddha didn't make a hard-line
stance against suicide as he did against
wrong views and sexual intercourse I get

the impression in the suit is that

suicide is almost a neutral Act

however as someone who's battled with

depression I know that suicide would

take an extremely negative almost

hellish mental state dying in that mind

State should definitely be an issue

according to the logic for the Buddhism

but it doesn't seem to be the case but

well I think one reason why suicide

would take an extremely negative almost

hellish mental state nowadays is because

we are in a culture that is very much

against suicide

but in a culture where suicide was

accepted

like

Ancient Rome or

Samurai Japan or to some degree even

ancient India

um I mean it could be a philosophical

decision you wouldn't necessarily have

to reach the bottom pits of depression

in order to decide to kill yourself it

might just be a culturally conditioned

thing that under these conditions I

should fall on my sword or rip my belly

open with my short sword or or whatever

it is have the doctor open my veins like

Cato the younger did when Julius Caesar

became dictator

or was well on his way to become

dictator

um and really I mean you read the text

like they go to kasuta and gotika

committed suicide and became enlightened

in the process and the Buddha does say I

can't remember it's in the go to

consumer or not but

um

you really should not kill you terminate

your life until you've terminated your

defilements

if you're in Aura hunt then it doesn't

matter but

um you know you've already accomplished

the goal anyway but for a person that

isn't enlightened yet then committing

suicide is counterproductive because you

could still be practicing dama and

getting closer

um

so let's see here

yeah I mean in Ancient India I mean

ritual suicide for Spiritual renunciants

was pretty common actually like

um the the jains and I think the ajib

because once a Jane or ajivaka monk at

least in many cases once they uh they

thought that they had gotten rid of all

of their karma you know that they were

they were pure

than what they were supposed to do is

just go out into a like an isolated area

like a some desolate area where there's

not lots of people and just squat down

and just remain in a squatting position
until they died so they would die of
probably you know dehydration and kidney
failure first before they died of
anything else but I mean that was just
standard in Ancient India at least in
theory you know it was encouraged in the
texts
although technically they didn't really
have text because it wasn't written down
but it was it was standard in the
tradition that under certain
circumstances uh suicide is the
appropriate thing to do
and it could can be done wisely
especially in a culture that has a more
or less wise approach to Suicide instead

of you know nowadays I mean Christianity
you know suicide was not considered to
be all that bad until Christianity came
along and then it's like spitting in
God's face because the life is a Divine
gift and so forth and it's a mortal sin
and in Dante's Inferno there's a special
ring of hell where the suicides go and
it's not nice at all it's very
unpleasant there
and uh now Christianity is being
replaced by just secular materialism
where you know you only live once and
when you're dead you're dead and so
people are just kind of afraid and
freaked out with suicide

I mean in a way if people can be kind of
afraid and freaked out of just
renouncing the world as a monk I
remember noticing that a long time ago
that
um you know people will say that suicide
is the coward's way out when actually I
mean the person who commits suicide is
doing the one thing that the person
calling him a coward is the most afraid
of and it's the same kind of resentment
towards monks sometimes like the lay
people they meet a monk who has
renounced the world they kind of resent
the very fact that this person has
renounced the very things that of this
other person values the most in life you

know just having a nice home and family
and friends and comfort and so forth you
know they might be just that is the
purpose of life for them and here's this
other person just rejecting it outright
so I would say that suicide does not
necessarily require an extremely
negative almost hellish mental state
although nowadays it's pretty common I
think
but I don't think Cato the younger
necessarily was in a hellish mental
state
um Mark Anthony when he fell on his
sword
um I mean that was for a soldier that

was the ritual way of doing it is fall

under your own sword but he is pretty

bummed out that he lost the battle of

actium and all that

um

yeah

let's see let's just get back to the top

of this question here um yeah according

to the sutures there were many monks who

committed suicide yeah there was uh

there was actually a uh like an epidemic

of it at one point where the Buddha was

teaching you know how life is just sort

of a burden

now it's just something that the you're

better off without

and then he went off into seclusion and

while he was off in seclusion there was
this rash of suicides or one one monk
was just volunteering to kill any other
monk that wanted to die I mean he wasn't
murdering them against their will but
you know it's like yeah kill me next
kind of a thing so then he made the rule
against killing him up against murder
I'm pretty sure that was the origin of
the rule against killing another human
being
but um
regard to suicide if you're not
enlightened yet then you're kind of
interfering with your own chances so it
is frowned upon in that sense

so I think I'll just move on a nice
question here and this is from rui
and rui says hello Ponyo do you think
that Awakening can be postponed that
will or does it so utterly take over
that any shred of will is useless this
is such a weird question
I mean it may not sound all that weird
but do you think that Awakening can be
postponed it will I mean unless you're a
Mahayana Buddhist I don't know why you
would postpone Awakening if you were
capable of becoming awakened you know
the Mahayana Buddhists they take this
vow the bodhisattva vowels where they're
gonna postpone Enlightenment until all
beings are saved I guess that's what

they're bowing

um

so maybe some Mayana Buddhists have just

no you know it's like they get close to

it or something and they just

but uh yeah I I don't really know if if

uh Awakening can be postponed to will

I'm not sure why anyone in the right

mind would want to postpone it

unless again they're like a Mahayana

Buddhist who has been taught essentially

the wrong view that that you should

postpone Enlightenment indefinitely

which is pretty much the opposite of

what the Buddha was originally teaching

which is Strive to get enlightened In

This Very life

um

yeah so I guess I just have to say I

really don't know the answer to that one

it is a strange question maybe you

should ask a Mahayana Buddhist

especially a very wise one and then

because that's part of their their

spiritual tradition that you are

supposed to postpone Awakening but I

don't know if they get so they get

really close to it where they you know

it's just right there you know they can

now they're almost enlightened they're

right at the threshold and then they

just step back as a as a matter of

principle

I don't know I really that's a good

question but I I'm not sure what the

answer would be

do you think that Awakening can be

postponed at will I mean not for

everybody obviously because for some

people the enlightenment just hits them

upside the head just sneaks up on him

and jumps on from behind

so in a case like that I don't think

you'd have much say in the matter

and uh

yeah I really don't know why any sane

spiritual practitioner would do that

unless it was just like cultural

conditioning they're a Mahayana Buddhist

they can't become enlightened until all
beings are saved which probably isn't
going to happen because it's already
been an infinitely long period of time
that has elapsed and all being still
aren't saved yet
so let's just move on to the next
question here this is from Yuga
and Yuga who says hello
hi Google can you please explain what or
who is observing the phenomena in
mindfulness practice and what is the
Pauline name for that thank you
well technically you do not have to have
um anyone who's observing the phenomenon
because the phenomena themselves are
conscious

so if you're mindfully aware of let's

say an itchy nose

then that mindful awareness of the itchy

nose is itself

conscious and aware I mean you don't

have to have some

some agent

who is you know executing the

mindfulness and being aware of anything

because the mental States themselves are

aware

they are their their Consciousness I

mean they're they're suffused with

Consciousness they're made of

consciousness

so there is no who or what that is

observing other than just the act of
observing itself it just kind of reminds
me of
um Buddha Gosa and I think it's in the
the wisuri manga saying you know there
nobody who walks but there is still
walking you know it's just the walking
is walking which is that kind of strikes
me as bad logic but when you say the
mental States themselves are conscious
then you really don't need to have
anybody else to be the conscious
Observer it's just that
it's the con the mental States
themselves are conscious because they're
made of Consciousness they're suffused
with consciousness

and that may be very hard to explain but
there were a lot of time monks I think
ajan cha was like this too who talks
about the cheetah as like The Observer
you know and and they're getting towards
the sort of reifying the absolute in the
sense of you know infinite formless
Consciousness or something
but I'm not sure what the poly name for
it would be other than cheetah or uh
City some pajanya you know mindfulness
and clear comprehension as it's often
rendered
but um just because you have a conscious
thought does not mean that you have to
have a thinker like some subject who is

thinking

because the conscious thought arises due

to the concatenation of of circumstances

you know the the conditions and and

there it is it's a conscious thought and

it doesn't need anybody to think it

it doesn't need anybody to create it

other than just these circumstances that

happen to uh

result in its existence

and that may not be a very

um satisfactory answer but it's the best

I can do at present and I'm going to

move on to the next question now and

this is from Raphael

and Raphael said I saw a monk at train

station and then asked him if I could

buy him something to eat or drink he
refused but was very pleased with the
gesture is it allowed to ask a monk if I
can buy him food if I see one
spontaneously well I think what you
should do assuming I mean if he's a
laxmonk he'll let you buy him anything
but if he's a strict Monk
you shouldn't use those terms you
shouldn't say can I buy you something
because a monk is not allowed to tell
anybody what to do with money so if you
say can I provide you with something can
I get you something without mentioning
buying or selling or money
you know just leave that entirely out

just can I provide you with something to

to eat or drink then he might have said

yes if he assuming that he was a really

strong a strict Monk otherwise maybe he

just wasn't hungry or thirsty

um

but you have to bear in mind that a monk

is only allowed to eat between Dawn and

midday and if he drinks anything

um he's not allowed to drink dairy

products in afternoon because that's

considered to be a food so that's

another Dawn to midday thing but like

fruit juices or something like Coca-Cola

I assume

um then you can drink that until the

following Dawn he can keep that until

the following Dawn and then he has to

get rid of it if he hasn't finished it

yet

so

yeah I think that might be the thing

don't mention buying don't ask a monk if

you should buy something because if he

says yes then he's breaking a rule by

having you buy something and he's not

allowed to handle money he's not even

allowed to tell lay people what to do

with their money

so maybe you could just strike me I may

I offer you something or you're thirsty

I can go get you something to drink that

kind of a thing

and monks aren't allowed to stores store

foods for the next day or anything like

that either

so I think I'll just move on a nice

question here this is from White Ash

Piper

and white ash Piper says

oh wait a minute wait a minute

I've got white ass Piper asking the

exact same question as you go

ah okay I'm gonna have to uh

one moment please I'm gonna try and go

back to my q a here

and find out what white ash Piper

actually asked okay here it is white ash

Piper says can you explain the reason

for prostration

thanks Dave you're gonna

get everything back in order here okay

so I hope that uh even though I couldn't

see myself you can still see me assuming

that you even want to see me so he asks

here I gotta ask see it again here

white ash Piper says can you explain the

reason for prostration thanks Dave the

reason for prostration well basically is

to show respect to someone that you

consider to be worthy of respect and the

form that it takes of actually you know

getting down on your knees and maybe

even onto your face

is uh it's a cultural thing

it's it's pretty much a universal

cultural thing in pre-modern times that
you're gonna at least get down into a
kind of submissive State at least on
your knees or at least bow you know you
know make your head lower than the other
person's head just as a sign that you
know they are higher than you that
you're showing respect to them you're
honoring them by placing yourself in a
lower position than them
um and it just takes different forms
like in India it was you know you get
down
um the Five Point prostration as the
standard one is you squat down and then
you put your hands out in front of you
then you get your knees onto the floor

and then you you spread out your hands

and then you touch your forehead so the

the Five Points as I understand it would

be your knees your elbows and your

forehead

and uh westerners don't like doing that

it's I didn't like doing that when I was

a West before I became a monk it's like

getting down and bowing to somebody you

know really just getting down on the

floor you know and bowing putting your

head to the to the to the ground where

some people even put their forehead to

the feet of the person that they're

honoring

um yeah it just does not come naturally

to westerners because you know in
America for example you're taught or at
least you used to be taught that you're
just as good as anybody else
you know why humble yourself before
somebody when they're no better than you
are you know even the president
you know it's like hey Prez you know you
suck or whatever you know so
uh yeah I mean the first couple dozen
times I bowed to a mom getting it
properly you know you're really getting
down on the floor I felt really awkward
and self-conscious sort of the way I
used to feel when I would dance without
being drunk yet it was it was kind of a
strange feeling

um

so yeah the main purpose for prostration

is just to show respect and it's in a

way it's it helps to weaken your ego

you know if you're an egomaniac you're

not going to bow to anybody you're going

to consider yourself to be superior to

everybody but

um by humbling yourself before a

spiritual person it kind of opens your

heart and and really kind of weakens

your your vanity or your your egoism to

some degree and just the actual form it

takes is is a cultural thing

so I'll just move on to the next

question which is the last question

the last question of this q a

and it's bought from Stevie

and Stevie says it's crazy the things

people believe yeah he was responding to

me talking about the Book of Mormon in

the previous q a

um even the things we believe about

ourselves also I'd love to know your

views regarding the Trump phenomenon but

that discussion is maybe best left to

your Discord right since it's political

and not dumb well there's dama and

everything

you know I mean

I mean that can be sort of a an easy

justification for being an information

junkie or following the news or whatever

but uh still I mean like my Discord

survey it's got like a politics and

current events section got a room for

that

um so essentially he's asking me what

are my views regarding the Trump

phenomena

and uh I'm not exactly sure what he has

in mind with regard to the Trump

phenomena but

um I do think that uh Donald Trump was a

surprisingly good president considering

just that he had the ruling Elites of

both parties plus you know all the the

globalist propagandists and everybody

just hating his guts and doing

everything they could to oppose or
resist him there were a few like Lindsey
Graham who kind of saw the writing on
the wall he was kind of could go either
way you know he was still a globalist
but Trump was obviously in power so he
you know he was kind of kissing his ass
to some degree
um but yeah Trump was not a globalist I
think that is his main problem it's not
that he had mean tweets or that he's an
unpresidential in crass I mean I mean
some of our greatest presidents were not
particularly presidential in their
demeanor
and uh I mean I took the liberty once um
just doing a study on all the people in

history or you know the most famous
people in history that came down with
the name the Great
and most of them were pretty much just
self-serving narcissists who at least
had enough sense to know that if they
wanted their name to live in glory you
know for hundreds or thousands of years
they should do good for their country
you know they should have their people
prospering and calling him the Great
and Trump was like that I mean he
certainly is not uh extremely wise he's
he's wise in a worldly way I suppose I
mean you have to have some kind of sense
in order to be as successful as he was

um

but he just was not a globalist I mean

he was able to look at what was going on

with you know just all this craziness

that is increasing it seems like and

just call it out and he had so many

people that resonated with that

and I mean he was calling out

essentially a very corrupt system and so

the corrupt system just I mean they they

don't want him you know they want to get

rid of him any way possible preferably

without having to to assassinate him but

I wouldn't put past him at this point if

it looks like he might win but

um

so I think Trump was you know he was

kind of a vain narcissist of a guy but
he was a patriotic vein narcissist who
was really trying to do what was best
for his country if only because he knew
that was how he could go down in history
as a great man and he had everything
else he had you know the money and the
mansions and the Beautiful Wife and all
that
I mean all that was left really was just
sort of like the glory of being a great
leader or something and so he went for
that too largely out of you know egoism
or narcissism or whatever but
um I voted for him twice and I'll
probably vote for him again

and uh I mean one I think one of the the
main advantages of having Trump as
president is it caused the Cockroaches
to come out in broad daylight you know
it's like the propagandists they're
they're only fooling the people who want
to be fooled at this point
and uh let's see and then this is like
all this political persecution of him
which is true I mean
um I mean Donald Trump he had enough
sense to know that as a businessman you
know he had to avoid committing Major
Crimes so when they're investigating
everything he's ever done you know just
trying to find any dirt that they can
that they could take him down with you

know like the Russian collusion thing

you know they were investing in just a

wide open investigation just anything

that was in any way related to you know

what they what they were looking for you

know they could investigate that they

could just ramify out their

investigation in any way they pleased

and they didn't find anything really

serious against Trump

and I mean they have to like do run

defense for Biden

so I mean it's it's not that Trump did

these bad things I mean they're just

having to invent new felonies just to

try and get anything against him or

they're having to assume his guilt from the get-go and say that he had bad volitions when he was doing this he was trying to overthrow the government when he said this but they can't prove what his intentions were

and then Biden I mean he's bragging about doing things worse than Trump was impeached for just broad daylight in public and I mean that's okay because he's a globalist and so they're just like closing ranks and doing everything they can to protect him and they're protecting his his relatively worthless degenerate son also mainly just to protect Biden you know the big guy that gets the 10 percent

so

so yeah I'm talking politics here but I mean it does remind me sort of the direction the the Roman Republic was going before the Empire started I mean we haven't got anywhere as bad as that with like political opposition not just being you know destroyed by show trials and and indictments and so forth but you know like just being murdered in the street that kind of a thing

we haven't really gotten that far yet and uh I mean it got worse than that with just like purges going like Marius and Salah you know just they're Marius gains power and he's he's like killing

off the his political opponents and then

he sort of gets eclipsed by solo who

just starts killing off you know Mary

marius's uh allies and it's just going

back and forth and it was it was just a

bloodbath and so by the time Julius

Caesar came along I mean he probably

saved Rome by turning it into

essentially a a quasi-fascist

dictatorship

and uh

yeah I don't think Trump has anything

like that in mind but they'll they'll

accuse him of it just if they think that

it'll stick and get more voters to vote

against him

but it's uh

yeah it's I've never

this is just a unique thing in American

history it's just sort of like a new low

where they're really doing Banana

Republic Maneuvers just to destroy a

political opponent

they think he can win and so you know

they're they're scheduling his trials

like the day before super Tuesday

they're trying to keep him from

campaigning obviously with these you

know pun intended trumped-up charges and

I mean they've been doing this from the

very get-go I mean within days of him

being elected president

um the first time already Democrats were

like writing up impeachment papers in
Congress because they're trying to
impeach him right then and there just
just because they hate him with this
hysterical visceral hatred
and it's mainly because he is not a
globalist and he's not particularly
politically correct either
and they just can't stand that
and uh yeah I just hope that uh Trump
can get elected again to really try and
he was he was too naive last time he
just assumed that American bureaucrats
and politicians will have at least
enough patriotism that they would
respect the Office of the President and
we've just left that behind and they're

just just going for it they're just

breaking new new lows all the time now

so I guess that's it I we end off on a

political note

and uh I guess I've answered all your

questions so or at least I I'd like to

Kid myself into thinking I've answered

all your questions maybe I've just

spaced off and forgot a few to put them

on the list or something

but uh if you have any questions you're

very welcome to ask I do my best

and uh if you if you have any questions

you want to ask about Buddhism or

philosophy spirituality monasticism that

sort of thing feel free to include them

in the comments below

um or on Discord server if you have

access to that or my subscribe Star

channel if you have access to that and

look at the URL links below and consider

buying my books if you want to

and uh be happy

foreign

hello and welcome to question and answer

number 61. I am your host panio Basa

and

I don't know it's I've got excuses

pretty much at the beginning of every

video

about how so you know something's going

on and it's got me discombobulated or

something and man it's the last few

weeks I've I've said before that being a

layperson is more of a roller coaster

ride than being a monk with a monk

you're kind of going for this sort of

neutrality you know you're still gonna

have ups and downs but the UPS aren't so

high and the Downs aren't so low and

lately the roller coaster I've been on

is just is like hitting loop-de-loops

you know you're doing the full 360s

and uh not the least of which which

happened just earlier today this morning

is I no longer own my dog dingus

that some of you may remember my dog

from a previous video for various

reasons we had to find him another home

and another owner and I mean never see

him again and that's had me kind of low

because Genghis and I had a bond you

know we were Bros

and

some of you have a dog I'm sure you know

that a dog can love you with this open

just completely accepting unconditional

trust and love that is pretty common

among dogs for their masters but is rare

among humans

and

so I've been kind of in low Spirit since

then since this morning but I mean it's

been kind of like the roller coaster

ride has been hitting the really the

really like dramatic Parts over the last

several days

and uh you may get some updates onto as

to what's been going on maybe in the

future I mean not all of it is bad but

it's like

just change like radical change can be

stressful

even though you know it's gonna

eventually be changed for the better but

still just the fact that you're

undergoing the change can um

right it just increases

the this the standard [__] of

existence and in Buddhism it's called

Sankara duka it's just the duka

necessary

just to to make it through samsara you

know like brushing your teeth in the

evening unless you really are enjoy

brushing your teeth you know that's or

like back in the old days refolding a

road map just maintenance on not only

the house but on your own body you know

not just the car and the not just the

you know the big obvious vehicle but you

know the meat vehicle also

so

so I guess The Show Must Go On

so that's what we're doing here

and the first question is from Austin

and I will say as usual before I before

I answer ostrich's question before I

even read Austin's question that I can

start off saying oh I'm tired I got low

energy or something and then just the

flow of answering questions kind of

picks me up to you know just standard

question answering mode which is

generally a fairly a fairly Advanced

State of Consciousness at least it's

above a five let's say I mean just for

just for me personally

so let's do it and this question is from

Austin and Austin says how do Buddhists

articulate their ethical principles how

does one determine what is morally right

or wrong from a standpoint of mysticism

and that's a good question because a lot

of people really do not understand

Buddhist ethics at all

and there are a lot of Christian people

and even people that aren't obviously

Christian like Jordan Peterson who seem

to think that there's some kind of

problem

with ethics without God you know unless

you got some sort of

King up in heaven just making decrees

that this is going to get you into

heaven and this is going to get you into

hell that I mean it's just all is

permitted like Yvonne karamazov says in

dostoevsky's novel you know if there is

no God then all is permitted but I mean

obviously all is permitted even now

because God is letting assuming that

there is one

then uh you know all kinds of stuff

happens I mean he doesn't seem to stop

very many atrocities that I mean at

least not obviously

so

I just have to say that first of all I

mean before I get to the mysticism part

Buddhist ethics are psychological you

know I'm kind of harp away at this

because a lot of people ask questions

about you know is this morally right or

morally wrong is this action good or bad

and I keep repeating that I mean outward

actions really are morally neutral it's

it's the mental States I mean the action

can like

um what's the like magnify or amplify

the karma because it's you know it's

like you're more

persuaded or you've made up your mind

and you're just pushing through so it's

it's sort of increasing it the the karma

rather than you know if you're just like

fantasizing about doing something

then it's not going to be the same Karma

as you're actually you know put your

your fantasies into action and do it

you know it sort of strengthens your

will and then the will is karma

so it's a matter of

which is like skillful or unskillful

action Karma literally means action

um but it's it's like mental action and

Buddhism

in other Indian systems it wasn't

necessarily uh psychological that was

possibly an innovation of of the Buddha

himself who turned Karma into a mental

state

because it is essentially changing our

will

so what is morally right or morally

wrong is that which makes you more or

less conscious

and this is where mysticism comes in

also I mean any any mental state that

brings you closer to an awareness of

ultimate truth which expands your

consciousness

which you know makes you less

um you know greedy hateful and deluded

is going to be good and that which makes

you more greedy hateful and or deluded

is going to be bad that which takes you

away from ultimate truth and gets you

locked into some samsaric virtual

reality let's say

that's going to be bad

so

yeah I mean it's actually a simple

question I'm not used to having short

simple answers I always gotta like

ramble so maybe I'm sort of getting my

own way here but uh how does one

determine what is morally right or wrong

from a standpoint of mysticism whatever

mental States and accompanying physical

actions cause your mind to be more

expansive to have fewer desires to have

less greed hate and delusion less Loba

Dosa and moja which gets you closer to

nibbana which gets you closer to the

realization of Ultimate Reality that's

good

good

and that which takes you the other way

is bad and that which just leaves you

where you are is morally neutral

so I guess I'll just move on to the next

question here

this is from lieberland

and Libra lamb has the

kind of unusual question what are your

thoughts on meditation as a martial art

and I never really thought of meditation

as a martial art before I don't think it

is a martial art I mean

it can be a martial art

but I mean meditation itself in general

I don't think is a martial art although
a lot of martial arts do have some kind
of meditation I would guess that most
genuine martial arts would have a
meditative aspect just being in the
present moment not letting your emotions
control you know what your body is doing
but just staying focused and relatively
calm
like uh those of you who watched the old
the old TV show kung fu with David
Carradine you know I mean they're having
like weapons like Spears and so forth
thrown at them and you got to be right
there in the present moment to either
catch the spear or at least dodge it

so yeah meditation itself

is not a martial art I mean just sitting

there cross-legged has nothing Marshall

involved in it but um yeah martial arts

I mean I guess a really obvious example

would be Zen archery

where you're you're not shooting the

arrow it's just that the arrow shoots

itself

and you know it's it's more likely to

hit the target supposedly

so or any of you who've read the old

novel Shogun knows that Uh buntaro sama

the the necklace Maniac you know he's he

was one of the most interesting people

in the whole novel I mean he was just

this killing machine he killed his own

mother because she supposedly disgraced

the family

by acting improperly with another man

but uh he'd go into these trances where

he would he could hit a Target that he

couldn't even see

you know he'd just go into like this

trance and I mean he was he could not

miss it seems and so something like that

would be a meditative martial art I

suppose

and uh like I say if you're just the

Mind training of a martial art

especially just the remaining column

remaining focused in the present moment

that sort of a thing

um yeah that would that would be like

Marshall meditation I suppose

but it would be like an active

meditation and not sitting across like

it with your eyes closed Unless somehow

you're using sitting across like it with

your eyes closed as an adjunct to

martial arts like the Samurai Warriors

of medieval Japan would go to Zen

monasteries mostly rinse eyes and and

meditate

just live in the atmosphere to overcome

their fear of death

so if just sitting Crossing with your

eyes closed helps you in your Martial

Arts I guess that could be like

contributing

to a martial art anyway

I'll just move on to lieberland's next

question

which is another unusual one

and that is do you think Karma could

possibly connect to genetic Evolution as

a lineage pool of potential future

incarnations refined to produce more

spiritually gifted incarnations

so I mean referring to genetic Evolution

like with regard to DNA genes and so

forth

um yeah I mean I think it's sort of like

mixing apples and oranges I mean you can

look at the world through a

materialistic point of view that does

have DNA and genes and alleles and

chromosomes and so forth and thus you

know genetic Evolution which is

gradually Generation by generation

modifying you know the sort of the

collective Genome of a species or of a

group

um and but then karma is a mental state

as I've already mentioned and the

implication is that this world is a

mental state

which

kind of deprives the genetic aspect of a

lot of its validity if this world really

is a mental state and even some

physicists are now claiming and have

been claiming ever since quantum physics

came along that this phenomenal universe

is a kind of state of mind

but I have to admit

um

like genetics really does explain a lot

it's very helpful within a some sort of

context

so so you do do I think Karma could

possibly connect to genetic Evolution as

a lineage pool of potential future

incarnations refined to produce more

spiritually gifted incarnations

gosh I mean is there a genetic element

to spirituality I think there may be

that there could be not necessarily A

spirituality Gene but I mean certain

character traits just like calmness not

being a total Hot Head

um

this sort of clarity of mind that could

have a genetic component you know going

assuming that materialism has some

validity

and um

I mean that would

um I'm not sure that being spiritual

really has survival value though I mean

it's darwinian survival of the fittest

which some people might quibble about

but it's it's a fairly good uh saying

there survival of the fittest and being

enlightened would not necessarily make

you

fit I mean you're not you're less likely
to reproduce if you're enlightened
you're less likely to fight to protect
you yourself or your family assuming
that you even have a family if you're
enlightened so
it's it's kind of a subtle question it's
it's not easy to answer so I'm gonna
have to read it again bear with me here
do you think Karma could possibly
connect to genetic Evolution as a
lineage pool of potential future
incarnations refined to produce more
spiritual carnations will Karma connects
to anything really I mean anything that
we experience is connected to Karma

so there's that too

I don't think that there's just this

really close connection but I mean

anymore any closer than with with

anything else really because karma

applies to any experience that we

experience

any anything that we experience good bad

or or otherwise I've been told according

to Orthodox caravada anyway is the

fruition of comma

so assuming that that uh genetic

Evolution as a lineage pool a potential

future incarnations refined to produce

more spiritually gifted incarnations

assuming that that can exist in the

phenomenal world and certainly Kama is

connected with that

but um yeah that's kind of a strange

abstract concept

and really it's sort of comparing two

different metaphysics

so it's kind of tricky

and so I'm just going to cop out and

move on to librelam's next question here

what are your thoughts on the idea of

animals being in harmony with nature in

a way that reflects a close connection

with the Divine like their Hardware

hardwired into it well there are a lot

of people that believe that

um even Genesis you know Adam and Eve in

the Garden of Eden there is an

implication of this

where

um you know they were in Paradise so

long as they were living like animals

you know they didn't have the ability to

go against the will of God yet you know

it hadn't occurred to them yet

so

or or like uh the Epic of Gilgamesh also

which is like the the oldest known epic

in human literature as far as I know

um where uh Gilgamesh wants this wild

man who's sort of like Samson and kidu

who lives out in the forest you know he

wants him to join him in his quest for

immortality and and kidu just he lives

out with the animals I mean he's like an

animal he's just a child of nature you
know he's Beyond good and evil or I mean
it just good and evil just don't apply
because he's completely natural
and so in order to get him to join him
he uh he's he's told by a wise man to go
and get a beautiful prostitute in town
bring her out to where ankidu lives out
in the forest get her to take her
clothes off and lie down on a Flat Rock
and wait
and when in Caesar he uh becomes
overwhelmed with lust and has sex with
her and after that the animals don't
trust him anymore he has become human
so there is an idea that that if you're

like in harmony with nature that you
know you haven't committed you're not
guilty of original sin you haven't eaten
the apple of the knowledge of Good and
Evil
you're you're in this like a Divine
State and uh even nowadays like um
eckhartola in his first famous book he
was saying that animals are essentially
enlightened there's just a few
domesticated animals like some pet dogs
that have acquired like neuroses from
their owners that have fallen from Grace
but most animals are living in a state
of grace
so
so what are your thoughts on the idea of

animals being in harmony with nature in

a way that reflects a close connection

with the Divine Buddhism doesn't teach

this Buddhism says animals are in a

lower state of existence period

and I'll get i'll get back to this in a

later question

so Orthodox Buddhism would say no that

humans have a closer connection to the

Divine simply because

um you know we have more capacity to

open ourselves to the divine

but it's I mean it's depends on how you

look at it I suppose in a way animals

they're always in the present moment

especially

like I mean

the ones that haven't been wrecked by by

people like like Eckhart tolles says

um you know they're not thinking they're

not feeling guilty about anything they

did in the past they're not worrying

about the future unless it's you know

they see a lion and you know that's

danger now

until they still obviously

suffer you know they still obviously

experience dukkha but to some degree

they're always like in the present

moment they're always in a sense being

mindful although an orthodox Buddhist

would say it's not right mindfulness

like I remember a long time ago I had a

monastery I was holding something up

that the dog the monastery dog was

really interested in he wanted that

whatever it was I mean it could have

been a carrot or something I mean the

dog wants it you know until he finds out

he doesn't want

and so I told this other Manga look at

this concentration he is just totally

concentrated on that and he and then the

monk just called me reply well it's it's

not right concentration

which is true so this is really

the whole idea of animals being in

harmony with nature in a way that

reflects a close connection with the

Divine I mean in a way we're all

completely connected with the Divine

because we are just swimming in it we're

just immersing it we are saturated with

Ultimate Reality at all times and we are

we humans are have more capacity to

become aware of that but the animals

um like sub-human non-human animals

let's say

um in a way they're like babies or small

children and again you've got people

arguing both ways it's like

um the poet Wordsworth who my English

Lit teacher in college says was one of

the four greatest four giants of English

literature you know he wrote that oh the

more intimations of immortality where

you know when you're a little kid it's
like everything is divine and then
gradually you lose it and I mean there
is some truth to that it's like a little
kid sees a dandelion as a flower I mean
they can just be in a state of awe
looking at this this flower you know
they might go around picking them and
just going to give them the mamas you
know they think it's safe they're giving
Mama a treasure whereas as you get older
you just learn to just label dandelion
or weed and it's just something that's
not good you just glance at it enough
for the label to pop up and then you
have the the reaction with the label

rather than with the plant itself

and then you just you barely even notice

it you just go on with your life

so I suppose there's two hands I mean on

the one hand you're less

disconnected from Divinity as an animal

or a toddler but

you can't really it's not full

Enlightenment it's not real

Enlightenment from a terrible point of

view that you're going to have to come

full circle

that you know you leave the state of

grace and then you have to re-enter it

it's kind of from the other direction

like Ron Doss used the simile of the the

hands on the clock where I mean you

start at at like 12 which is you know
Union with Brahman you know the Sea of
God or Holiness or Divinity or Nirvana
or Dao or whatever you want to call it
and then you get farther and farther
away as you get more and more immersed
in beliefs and just some sorrow in
general you get to about the six and
then you start making your way back home
again
so animals are kind of up closer to
midnight than most people you know a cow
seems pretty close to Divinity I mean a
lot of people in India worship cows and
in a way I mean they don't break any of
the five precepts that I'm aware of you

know I mean they're they don't lie

obviously they don't steal they don't

drink

they don't murder

you might accidentally eat a bug that's

on the plants they're eating

they don't commit adultery

and just have sex to reproduce a species

so

yeah this is just kind of a conundrum

really

because in a way the answer is yes and

another way the answer is no

that they're closer to the Divine but

they're still they can't get all the way

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

less separated from the Divine than we

are as a general rule but they cannot

bridge that small Gap whereas humans

even though we may be born or culturally

conditioned to be farther from Divinity

than an animal we at least have the

capacity at least some of us have the

capacity to bridge that Gap

let's put it that way

and so uh since I kind of answered that

one I'll just move on to Libra Lamb's

next question

and Now for Something Completely

Different

what is the most number of push-ups that

you've ever done in one go

gosh

well I haven't done any push-ups in

years

but I used to do push-ups

long ago before I was a monk

and I mean the standard set was 50. I

mean I've done more than 50 I'm sure

probably not a whole hell of a lot more

than 50 and I don't remember exactly how

many but let's say

more than 50.

so his next question librelam's next

question is what is the most number of

pull-ups that you've ever done in one go

so it's like chin UPS right go like this

or maybe like this which is is harder

and the problem is I've never been good

at pull-ups partly because I've got long

arms like a gibbon ape I mean you can't

even see the whole arm in this in there

see how long

and I just have bad leverage because my

arms are wrong also when I was young

like in in uh High School PE class

I had a number of number of strikes

against me in in athletics one

I really didn't go through puberty

details about 15 years old

so

um you know I'd be surrounded by Young

physically young men whereas I was still

a boy physically

secondly I have no depth perception I

wasn't until I was in my late 20s that I

I fully realized I was told by a guy who

was testing my eyes that I have no

stereo Vision I look through one eye at

a time

so I mean any sports that involved small

fast moving objects like balls I sucked

at

and and finally I just didn't see the

point of working my ass off just you

know win anything you know if you win

the basketball game all you do is you

say well I won and you can say that

honestly but

so I mean I was just I was never a

jocked

I didn't really become mesomorphic

as a male until

probably college at the earliest

so and I didn't do any pull-ups in

college that I can remember

so probably the most number of pull-ups

that I've ever done in one go and I

could have answered this in one word but

has

has as I generally do is taking way more

than than one word

um yeah it'd be gosh

maybe in the neighborhood at 10 I don't

know

I never really like Pull-Ups so I'll

just move on to the next question here

and this is from son of the father

and he's one of the few people that have

asked questions on bit shoot most of my questions come from uh YouTube or the Discord server and uh this is like the only comment on the last bit shoot video was is this from son of the father and he says does attaining Enlightenment correlate with or to the concept of Eternity

so

that's I mean this is kind of a subtle question too does attaining Enlightenment correlate with or to the concept of Eternity

um in a way you're attaining eternity so I guess I mean you're tapping into eternity like

um nibana

it's I don't think you can say that it's

Eternal in the sense of you know

existing from infinite past to infinite

future because it's just beyond time

it's Timeless it's a Kaliko

there's it's just beyond time

so that could be called a kind of

Eternity

and so to

to attain that

would be essentially attaining eternity

but um I mean Enlightenment or nibbana

can be interpreted in two ways I mean

there's ethical nibbana and ethical

sense and nibana in the metaphysical

sense the metaphysical sense according

to me Ponyo basa it's just reality

Ultimate Reality the highest truth the

absolute

the ethical sense is just becoming aware

of the absolute and that becoming aware

um you know it's it's still in time

supposedly at least going with

terravonna Buddhism Orthodox caravada

and so that itself would not be Eternal

the attainment of it you know in the

ethical sense would not be Eternal but

it's like you're tapping into a a

Timeless metaphysical state

so that you could call Eternal although

um it wouldn't be infinite time it would

just transcend time altogether

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from sharp Rock
and sharp Rock Says looking at
purchasing a cow share which is an
arrangement where you prepay a farmer
for a side of beef in the future so they
have a guaranteed customer for the
animal before they commit to the costs
to feed and Slaughter it but doesn't the
first precept prohibit consuming animals
that were slaughtered specifically for
your own consumption what about right
livelihood and the prohibition on
engaging in the trade of animal parts
do these rules apply to laypersons
trying to follow five or eight precepts
or just monks can you clarify how

entering into such Arrangements might

not be beneficial

all right well there's kind of some side

questions here so maybe I could take

care of those first

um

like doesn't the first preset prohibit

consuming animals that were slaughtered

specifically for your own consumption

um not exactly that is a a different

rule that applies to monks a monk is

allowed to eat meat unless it's one of

the ten kinds of meat that's forbidden

by the rules of monastic discipline or

if it's raw you can't eat the meat then

unless he's possessed by a demon or

if uh you know he asks for it without

being given permission without being
sick you can't eat it then or
um if he sees hears or suspects that the
animal that that meat was killed
specifically for him then he's not
allowed to eat it either
and that applies to monk I mean if
you're a layperson and you go to a
farmer's house and you're told that this
chicken on the table was killed for this
dinner you know and we knew you were
coming we wanted to give you a fresh
chicken here it is it wouldn't be a
violation of a precept then because you
didn't encourage him to kill the chicken
you know it's just kind of a surprise

and even though it's killed for your

sake you're not bound to the rules of

monastic discipline I mean if you wanted

to be a real stickler and be a an

ungracious guest and so forth you can

say well I'm not going to eat that

because you killed it for my sake

but um

yeah so that

um you know if you just

had nothing to do with it and then they

tell you it was killed for your sake

anyway I don't think it would be against

the first precept of against killing

so let's see what about right livelihood

and the prohibition on engaging in the

trade of animal parts

um well those those are specifically for

Lay people that's like right livelihood

is is specifically for Lay people I mean

right livelihood for monks I mean you

wouldn't be buying or selling anything

um right livelihood for a monk is just

to be a good Monk

but um

right livelihood for Lay people

um it it in order to practice right

livelihood you're not allowed to sell

animals for Slaughter and you probably

wouldn't be able to kill animals uh in

order to you know like old-fashioned

butchers where they would kill the

animal and then and then butcher it

so

um but that's that's only the selling

part

so I mean if

if you're buying it that probably

wouldn't apply but

if you're encouraging somebody to kill

an animal

then yeah that would that would apply

because not only are you not supposed to

kill an animal you're not supposed to

specifically encourage others to kill

which then you've got westerners with a

utilitarian approach to ethics saying

well just buying meat I mean you're

voting in favor of the killing of

animals you're you're encouraging

Somebody That You Don't See to to kill

more animals because you're buying their

meat and they're making money from it so

that's that's sort of the gray Zone

there I mean you could argue either way

persuasively on that point I suppose but

in the Buddhist time the Buddha was

apparently okay with it he wasn't saying

not to

not that I'm aware of but if you're

actually

interacting with a butcher telling you

know you're going to pay him you know

put money into his hand for killing that

cow over there

then yeah that would probably be

um a violation of the first precept just

through just indirectly by encouraging

someone else to kill rather than

kill yourself

so the last part of this question here

is can you clarify how entering into

such Arrangements might not be

beneficial well

um you know you are encouraging somebody

to kill that cow

and cows are very nice I mean they're

relatively conscious they're they're

stupid compared to humans or even dogs

but still I mean

you know they're a conscious being you

know they're they're more conscious than

a fish for example

and uh like I said I mean they're

they're almost Saints I mean if you if

you accept the whole idea that animals

are closer to God and so forth then uh

we're feeding on Saints and we eat meat

which is kind of a weird idea

so let's see how how entering into such

Arrangements might not be beneficial I'm

not exactly sure what the karma the

karmic fruition of that would be

um

you know maybe somebody pays a hitman

to kill you or something although a

human life really doesn't balance out

with a cow's life

so it'd be something less than that I

suppose

but yeah I'm not exactly sure what the

karmic ramifications would be and it

would vary from person to person I'm

pretty sure

but just knowing that you know it's

you if it's One Step Beyond at least One

Step Beyond just buying meat at the

store where you're actually making a

deal with somebody that you you want

them to kill this animal so that you can

get half of it or something

yeah I mean you're kind of flirting with

just flat out killing and as a layperson

sometimes even flat out killing is

pretty much an obligation

yeah I mean at least with regard to like

insect infestations or parasites or

something

so

yeah I'm sorry I can't really answer

that one in just clear-cut terms but

karma is very

it's very mysterious I mean it's so

complicated I mean it's sort of like the

well I won't even I won't get into

physics I'll get into physics maybe

later but um

I mean it's so complicated and it

differs from person to person so I can't

really say exactly

uh other than it just might make you be

more okay with killing which would

encourage you to do more in the future

or encourage more in the future or some

such

so we'll just move on to the next

question here this is from the Arya

sawasti project

and the Aria sawasti project says for

the record I am not specifying any group

here

let's say you were aware of a person or

a group of people who were committing

horrendous crimes against the rest of

the world and you not only know who they

are but you have proof of this by their

writings and what they say

not speculating but actual proof not

speculation but actual proof would it be

bad karma for not making the information known or for protecting this group of people in an earlier q a someone asked you about certain groups and if I recall your answer was to expose them how would someone go about exposing these groups without being censored deleted or Worse having your life ruined and finally does Buddhism offer some protection from these types of people

well so again we got more than one question here

so let's see

uh there's a personal group of people let's say a group of people who are committing horrendous crimes against the

rest of the world and

this is kind of a simplistic way of

putting in because we tend to think in

terms of

um just kind of lumping everybody into

the same group when they I mean let's

say communists

so we can say communism is evil but not

all Communists are evil

I mean that is I mean it not like I'm

trying to shirk the issue here but it's

just it's just a fact that even though

communism really sucks as an idea and it

has caused Untold misery and there are

still people that think all we need is

communism and everything will be utopian

just completely disregarding the past

Century of failed and stagnant economies

and totalitarianism and genocide that

has occurred in the name of communism

but still there are good-hearted naive

people who are communists there are

people that are just following along

just not knowing or caring they're you

know the NPC types you just follow along

just believe what they're told you know

communism is good

that kind of thing

so I mean it's going to be a subgroup

I mean it'd probably be better to refer

to a subgroup

than a complete group even though a

subgroup is itself a group of its own I

mean it's at least it's kind of offering

some perspective

so let's see here would it be bad karma

for not making the information known not

necessarily because

just sitting there not doing anything is

karmically neutral it is ethically

neutral like for example I mean there's

examples in the text of like a monk who

just sits on a riverbank and watches a

pretty girl drown because it's against

the rules for him to swim out there and

bring her back and maybe even give her

mouth-to-mouth resuscitation because

monks aren't supposed to touch pretty

girls

so he just sits there and

um technically

so long as he's not cheering her on that

she's dying or anything like that then

he's not doing anything wrong you know

even though he's letting somebody die

and just there's I mean it's Buddhist

ethics are so weird in some ways like

for example from the point of view of

Buddhist ethics just hard-nosed almost

no practically inhuman Buddhist ethics

let's say there is a terrorist who has

planted a bomb somewhere in the city and

it's going to kill

at least a thousand people now maybe

it's even a suitcase nuke it's going to

kill at least 10 000 people

the only person who knows where that
bomb is is that terrorist and you've got
him in custody
so are you going to torture him to find
out where that bomb is or you're just
going to let him smirk at you until it
blows up and kills all these people
from the Buddhist point of view it's
wrong to torture that terrorist even
though if you don't torture him ten
thousand people are going to die because
you're not responsible for the 10 000
people he is it's his doing
so he's going to get the Bad Karma for
killing 10 000 people but you're gonna
get the Bad Karma for torturing that one
guy

if if you know if

if you torture him so

it applies for monks and and Buddhist

ethics are such that you can't really

follow Buddhist ethics perfectly unless

Europe as not just a monk but a saint

you are a saintly Monk you're an

enlightened monk then then you can do it

so

so getting back to the question

um would it be bad karma for not making

the information known no not necessarily

unless you've gotten bad reasons I mean

it depends on your your motives anything

you do with bad motives no matter how

good it looks externally is going to be

bad anything you do with good motives no
matter how bad it looks to to outside
spec Spectators it's it's going to be
good
or bad I can't remember which I just
said
so you know it's it's like your motives
if your will is good then even if it
results in disaster you haven't really
done anything wrong even though I'm not
ethically wrong anyway if somebody dies
but you didn't have the intention of
killing anyone you're not guilty of
murder I mean even like Western Law
takes that into consideration
kill someone accidentally it might still
be against the law but it's not as

against the law as you planning on

killing them for six months before you

finally do it

so

for protecting this group of people

is it good or bad karma to protect this

group of people with its nefarious

agenda

um

no I don't think that would be bad karma

either unless again you've got bad

reasons for doing it but if it's just

Universal compassion you don't want

anyone to get messed up you know

then I mean if you if Buddhism endorses

compassion for that one terrorist who's

going to kill 10 000 people obviously

it's going to endorse compassion for

people with a nefarious agenda

even if they're Communists for example

so let's see so if I mean it's better to

use a kind of

um Aikido

you know it's like the non-violent

martial art where you're you're like

incapacitating them without hurting them

something like that maybe

so anyway let's see the next part of the

question here is in an earlier q a

someone asked you about certain groups

and if I recall your answer was to

expose them yeah I mean if out of

compassion for people you're you're

spreading the word that this group is
doing these bad things and here's the
evidence
and you should protect yourselves you
should be aware of this so that you can
protect yourselves if you're doing it
out of compassion for potential victims
then you're doing something good if you
do the very same thing out of resentment
and or hatred of of the first group that
has the nefarious agenda then you're
doing something bad you know it's like
saving the frog from a snake if you save
a frog that's caught by a snake out of
compassion for the Frog you're doing
something good if you say if you do

exactly the same thing save that frog

but it's out of hatred for the snake

you're doing something bad because of

the motive your motive was your first

motive was compassionate your second

motive was was hateful so the

compassionate motive is Good Karma the

hateful motive is Bad Karma and it's the

same way with with this this group

promoting a nefarious agenda

if you are exposing them out of

compassion for you know potential

victims then you've done something good

if you're exposing them out of

resentment and hate for the group itself

you've done something bad

so it depends on on your volition

depends on your will

why you are doing it

and how you feel while you're doing it

so see how would someone go about

exposing these groups without being

censored deleted or Worse having your

life ruined

um well use some subtlety use some

common sense

uh have a little bit of circumspection

you know like uh

well

yeah I mean a lot of a lot of groups are

trying to uh you know overthrow this or

that group and you know they do it with

secret cells or something or you know

they're not just blabbing to everybody

what they're doing

um just do it with with your own circle

of friends you know think globally but

act locally that kind of a thing

or or again if you really think that

it's the morally right thing to do that

it is your moral duty to do it

then well you're just gonna have to take

the risk of your life getting ruined

some people will fight for their country

or fight to protect their family and

they know they're risking not only

ruining their life but ending it

abruptly and they think it's it's worth

the risk and so they do it

so anyway here the Aria swasti project

says and finally does Buddhism offer

some protection from these types of

people the main protection is to do good

you know not be making enemies not be

making Bad Karma thereby increasing the

likelihood of bad stuff happening back

to you

that would be your main protection

um or another classic Buddhist

protection from from these types of

people is renounce the world and go off

and live in a forest where they won't

they won't see you they won't give a

damn about you

so I'm sorry if I've disappointed

the Arya sawasdi project but this is uh

I mean really it's I've given the same

advice

um I found it in a strange book about

Seth this multi-dimensional being named

Seth who is channeled to this woman

named Jane Roberts and Seth or Jane

Roberts dissociating in a trance said

that you will never end a war by hating

War you will end War by loving peace

because hate just makes more hate and so

whatever you do you should have

positive or at least neutral mental

States while doing it because if you

don't in the long run it's just going to

cause more problems to come back on you

like feminists you know it's like the

the stereotypical feminist

maybe not the average feminist but the

stereotypical one is just a man-hater

you know it's like she doesn't she's not

a feminist because she she wants to help

women so much and she just wants to [__]

over men

and I mean there are feminists like that

not all of them

but there are feminists like that and so

they're just making things worse they're

they're just making a worse world all

the way around

but uh a feminist who just doesn't have

anything against men you know she just

wants women to have a better situation

that's fine

and if you want other people
to have a better situation and you help
them to do that with no hard feelings
against anyone then obviously what
you're going to be doing is a good thing
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here and this is from nirmit
and nirmit says what's up with this
Western monks not believing in rebirth
there is no Buddhism without rebirth
well yeah there are Western Buddhists
um I think the most famous well-known
high-profile one is not a monk it's
Stephen Bachelor who I don't think he
believes in rebirth and I he debated
some European Monk on this issue it was
a fairly good debate I remember seeing

it on YouTube a while back

um you could probably find it I don't

remember the title of it or anything it

was I don't remember the name of the

monk either but Steven Batchelor debates

a monk about this very this very thing

where you know he doesn't really believe

in anything and

or at least he's kind of more inclined

to go along with Western

kind of materialistic ideas about how

samsara works

so there is no Buddhism without rebirth

well

there's different ways I could I could

address that I mean first of all the

four noble truths are true regardless of rebirth you know Duca is caused by desire regardless of whether you're gonna have uh like a rebirth after this one you know the cause of dukkha okay first of all first Noble Truth do come that we're all going to be unhappy to some degree we're all going to experience a certain amount of unhappiness or suffering or distress in life it's unavoidable so long as we're living in this world

second that suffering that dukkha is caused by desire whenever you are unhappy it's because you want something you know you want things to be different than they

are you're you're like at odds with the

universe

three that consequently as a logical

consequence of the first two

if you want you're suffering to cease

then you are craving or desire has to

cease

and forth there is a path leading to the

cessation of suffering and all of that

can be true regardless of rebirth

even comma to a large degree is still

valid even if it turns out there is no

rebirth

but I mean obviously Buddhism teaches

rebirth and it has taught rebirth from

the beginning it could be

very it could very well be the Buddha
himself really did teach all the stuff
about rebirth that you see in the text
that he remembered as all of his past
lives on the eve of his Enlightenment
and so forth are like moments before he
became enlightened you know they all of
his past lives Flash before him
um
so I think Western monks don't believe
in rebirth largely because they are
Western you know they've been born and
raised into essentially secular
humanistic materialism and they still
think that
you know like science or scientism is
still valid for making metaphysical

claims when actually it really is not
science the purpose of science is not to
make metaphysical claims it's to
find regularities in nature so that you
can make valuable predictions based on
these regularities
so let's see here
yeah I think I think I've answered that
question what's up with Western monks
not believing in rebirth yes because
they're Western and they've they've been
born and raised in spiritual Siberia
um maybe they've got other reasons
though it could be that you know let's
say they were a follower of nisagadata
Maharaja who even though he was

technically a Hindu he said there's no

rebirth you just merge into Brahman

although I mean if that were the case

why wouldn't everyone just commit

suicide if you're just gonna

essentially re-enter nibana at death and

if life really is suffering then why not

just bail out immediately but there's

not very many people doing that

so

and again it's like if if somebody

doesn't believe in rebirth but they do

believe in the first Noble Truth the two

exist is to suffer then why not commit

suicide

but um and they may have their reasons I

never asked Stephen Batchelor or any

other any of the other Western monks who
don't believe in rebirth so maybe if you
if you know something you can ask them
why don't I mean what's the point I mean
if you still believe in the first Noble
Truth then obviously the way out I mean
you don't even have to follow the noble
hateful path you can just
put an end to yourself
so yeah it is kind of a strange thing
but it doesn't surprise me there's a lot
of Western Buddhists who just vehemently
insisted the Buddha taught an eternal
Soul too just because of Western
cultural conditioning more than anything
else

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from bodhisatta969

and body SATA 969 says in Germany

samadhi is almost always translated as

concentration even by experienced

Buddhists isn't it more like ajan Puna

Damo describes it that in anapana city

for example thoughts and feelings should

not be taken into account and samadhi is

therefore actually a matter of

non-observance

well it's not just in Germany that

samadhi is almost always translated as

concentration in English-speaking

Nations also samadhi is translated as

concentration and in fact

samadhi the Pali word and the Sanskrit

word literally can be translated into

something very close to concentration

the Sam is just Khan you know the the

Sanskrit or poly Sam is equivalent to

the Latin con they mean together or with

and the the ADI in samadhi means like

placement so you're placing things

together that's samadhi

um so that's kind of like concentration

I mean you're like a general

concentrating forces on the front lines

he's placing those forces together I was

concentrating can can really mean to put

together so I mean it's a literal

translation pretty much

and really concentration to me or

samadhi and sometimes it's an

alternative probably the most common

alternative rendering of samadhi into

English would just be meditation

Sometimes some asamati which is

um the the eighth step in the Eightfold

Path sometimes that's just translated as

right meditation especially by older

translators

but I mean samadhi it really does mean

I mean not necessarily concentrating

your attention but it's sort of like

self-discipline and

sort of

how do I explain it

just being aware of one thing and not

letting it stray from that one thing

that would be pretty much what what

samadhi is

um so concentration I don't have any

problems with that to say that samadhi

is non-observance

I don't I don't see it because I mean

you have to be observing something

it's not just a matter of just being

oblivious that's obviously not what what

samadhi is although some people do

believe you know you get into Jonna and

you just go into a Trans State where

you're just completely oblivious to

surroundings you don't hear the ticking

clock you don't feel the mosquito biting

your arm you don't hear the doorbell

ring or the dog barking outside you're
just oblivious and they think that's
right concentration and I really don't
think so
but so I mean you have to be aware of
something there's going to be like an
object that you are aware of even if
it's a formless a formless realm you
know Infinite Space or something at
least you have that as an object
so somebody has an object
unless maybe you get into fourth genre
and then you're getting into sort of
paradoxical states where you know sort
of like the the highest of the the uh
the the formless Realms is the realm of
neither perception or non-perception so

you'd have neither an object nor a

non-object at that point

so personally I don't have any problem

with

um defining somebody as concentration

and I do think that it really is just

holding your mind steady

like on one object and not letting it

stray I mean when your mind is wandering

around that's not good to Modi at all

and I mean with regard to anything

there's going to be non-observance

anything that if you're observing

something you're not observing you know

pretty much everything besides that

so yeah I don't think non-observance is

really a good way of defining some money

so I think I'll just move on to

bodhisatta 969's next question

and ever since that few few episodes ago

where I did two hours more than two

hours

well let's say approximately two hours

of a video and then it turned out not to

be recording

and had to do it all over again the next

day so I'm kind of checking to make sure

that the timer's still going and

everything's working so okay next

question from bodhisatta 969

and he says

I recently watched an online Buddhist

course from a very good Buddhist teacher

but every now and then he mixes taravada
and Mahayana or Tibetan Buddhism which I
don't like that much
it was about building an altar from left
to right water to drink water to wash
offering of flowers
offering of incense offering of light
offering of perfume offering of food
is this what a terravonna altar looks
like this should be replaced every day
or is this money on a practice I'm just
a bit confused because this teacher
takes it pretty seriously which is
actually a good thing I just don't know
if you can really do it setting up the
altar recitation and subsequent

meditation as a working person with a

family

well

um I'm not exactly sure where to start

with this let's see

um

he's he's building an altar and it's

from left to right water to drink water

to wash off yeah well all of that stuff

I mean it's not going to be anywhere in

the polytexts I'm not sure if there

being any mentions at all of Buddhist

altars in the the old the strata of

Buddhist literature and terrible

Buddhism it's a cultural thing like most

Buddhist houses in in Burma

most families have an altar and they may

offer food to it every day you know
before they eat something they'll take a
little bit of it and put it in a little
cup and put it up on the Altar and then
take it back down again before the mice
and the Cockroaches or the Flies get to
it or whatever
um they'll have a little thing of water
on the altar although I've seen altars
that have the water that hasn't been
changed in possibly months with my
little lizard turds and stuff in it
so but I mean just having this exact
order of how exactly how it's supposed
to be no that's not really terrible
Buddhism unless it's a cultural thing

maybe where he studied taravada like in

Thailand or something that's the way

they did it but it's a cultural thing

it's not really

um

like Orthodox tarawana and the closest

thing I've got to an altar here is is

that up there and there's no water

offered there's no food offered no

incense or candles it's just sort of a I

don't know I mean there's a fossil

ammonite up there a little piece of a

meteorite is up there

um the Buddha statue of course and what

else is up there

you know a picture of maharaji a few

other things some little rocks and so

forth but I mean really

there there are some basic fundamentals

to an altar I mean first of all it

should be in a place that is kept

relatively sacred a place that's honored

I mean you don't just like throw your

underwear up there you know I'm like my

sweetheart I mean she doesn't really

have the kind of attitude that kind of

fully appreciate what an altar is about

and so sometimes she'll put stuff up

there that just doesn't belong up there

and I I take it back down again you know

it's not a big deal but

um

is it should be something that you feel

good and right about I mean that's

that's the main thing I mean if you

don't think that you could really hold

up your end of offering a little bit of

food every day or changing the water

every day I mean it's not necessary

just have a place that is just like

honoring dhamma

and just keep it you know

keep it relatively pure if you can you

know you don't put like really mundane

worldly stuff up there you know you just

keep it specifically for dama oriented

stuff or in case the fossil ammonite

that kind of a thing it's or the the

meteorite fragment

um

I mean it's it's sort of like a gift or

you know just something that is timeless

you know in a way it kind of symbolizes

dhamma in some small way some little

aspect of it maybe so

yeah I mean I I obviously don't and in

the Burmese they don't have this order

you know they're they're more likely to

light candles in incense and offer food

and so forth but I'm not really

um into idolatry or even

um I mean I do have like a sense of the

altar should be you know relatively pure

and you don't put like mundane worldly

stuff up there you know you don't take a

regular book off the bookshelf and just

put it up there because it's convenient

to have it out of the way up there or

something that's that's not cool I mean

I I

um like I say I'm not really idolatrous

but still I have this thing about not

wanting to put mundane books on top of

Bama books you know you've got a copy of

the Dharma para you don't put a novel or

something on top of it

this I mean it's just my own thing it's

just what what feels right or not right

to me

and so you should have an altar that

feels right to you personally

regardless of what the guy on

on YouTube or whatever is saying the

exact order of everything because it's
it's arbitrary it's just it's so long as
you know your will is satisfied with it
you know it's like it feels good to you
it feels right to you then that's good
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Tim the
enchanter
and Tim the enchanter says
is being reborn in animal realm always
worse Karma than being born human
life of at least some of the species of
animals looks like better Karma than
being born human with severe brain
issues that prevent your Consciousness
to fully be human to put it nicely

well this reminds me of I was trying to
explain to a Burmese Village person once
that I mean according to Orthodox
Buddhism and according to you know
devout Burmese Buddhists you know you've
got the 31 planes of existence that are
like like steps on a ladder you know at
the bottom you've got hell and the top
you've got the realm of neither
perception or non-perception you know
animals are definitely below us deities
are definitely above us
and it's just like a sequence
but I had this idea I was considering
writing an essay about this I don't
think I ever really got around to it but
at the bottom at least with regard to

like the animal Realm

you know you just have it like kind of

like a small circle and then like the

human realm would be like a bigger

circle around the small circle the Deva

realm would be like an even bigger

circle around around that Circle because

it's like the best

human is better than the best dog

this I mean like the most enlightened

Saint is going to be better than the

best good boy kind of a dog but the

worst human is going to be worse than

the worst dog I mean you can have a

rabid dog or just some vicious dog

that's attacked several people they're

not going to compare with a Stalin or a

mouth

or a pull pot

and so it's like the the more advanced

the realm is is you just got more

opportunities you got more options and

some are going to choose the best

options and get way above what an animal

can do for example and some are going to

choose the worst options and they're

just going to be like total Psychopaths

and just result in this misery on just a

huge scale that no single animal could

possibly be responsible for

so in that sense

um you'd probably be better off being I

mean like a Pampered Shih Tzu living in

a mansion has a pretty good life

um they don't have many opportunities to

learn dhamma for example

but still I mean they have a better life

than somebody who is

in a dungeon or somebody with some

horrible painful you know they got

really bad arthritis or something

they've had it since they were young

they're just in chronic pain and it just

kind of prevents them from really

um you know reaching their full

potential as a human being

or they're in some political prison

being tortured or something you know

there's a lot of people in this world

that have really I mean they're really

messed up and unhappy

you know they're kind of like in a Hell

realm a terrestrial hell Realm

so yeah I mean if I had to choose I mean

some people especially like Hindus I

think would argue that

um the human at least they're really

working on like a person who's like in a

terrestrial hell realm

um at least they're really working on

major karma in this life so to some

degree they are beloved by the gods

because they are taking on such a huge

mouthful of [__] to work on

you know they're just you know they got

some horrible like

um birth defect or something

you know they're just crippled and

maimed and messed up or whatever it is

and in a way they're considered to be

beloved by the gods because they're you

know they've taken on such a huge karmic

burden that they are working on

straightening out and working on

rectifying it and clearing

so you can look at it in different ways

foreign

but personally I don't think it's always

worse to be an animal than to be a human

especially some humans that

they just cause so much misery I mean

I'd rather be I'd rather be a dog than a

pole pot

in again humans are at like a a higher

level of existence simply because

they've got more options you know

they've got more intelligence in a way

they've got certain psychic powers like

like rationality that lower animals or

non-human animals don't have

so

and of course as if someone's born

severely mentally [__] so that they

I mean they're like a vegetable their

whole life and I have actually met a

person like that I mentioned in one or

two q and A's ago who I mean he would

sit there with his eyes open but it was

obvious he wasn't seeing anybody and

there wasn't anybody inside there

it was he was essentially a vegetable

just very severely brain damaged from

birth

so I mean in a case like that

I mean at least the dog is able to see

in here and move around and respond to

his environment and so forth

so

I guess is the question is being reborn

in animal realm always where's Karma

than being born human I would say no

because I mean some people are born into

really bad situations and they've

they've got really bad karma so I mean

being born an animal might be more of a

mediocre level of karma I mean it's not
really good karma but still it might not
be as bad as being born into just a
really horrible situation
so I mean I think that one also could be
argued persuasively either way it all it
all depends on how you look at it in
fact I could answer every single
question with the same thing it all
depends on how you look at it but it
would make for a pretty boring q a and
pro probably most of you would stop
watching it after the first one
so I'll just move on to Tim the
enchanter's next question here
is it true that a monk can verbally ask
for food if he going for alms hasn't

been given anything to eat for a few

days yeah in a case like that I think

you could verbally ask for food if like

malnutrition or just collapsing from

weakness is is becoming like a a real

possibility

that you could ask for food in a case

like that especially if somebody gave

you Advanced permission then you can ask

for food regardless but

um

yeah I mean I don't exactly recall the

what exactly the rules of monastic

discipline say but there are special

cases in terms of like times of famine

um in times of famine monks are even

allowed to like pick fruit off of trees
and eat that even though nobody's
offered it into their hands so there are
certain things that can be done and I
assume if you're really becoming it's
becoming like a danger to your health
going without food you're allowed to ask
for food because like for example a monk
who gets his clothing stolen he's naked
because his robes were lost or stolen or
destroyed or something he's allowed to
just walk up to a total stranger and ask
for some cloth to cover himself so I
assume if being naked gives you that
privilege of just walking up to a
stranger and asking for something that
uh not having eaten for a few days just

because

there's there's like a famine or

something then yeah I think you could

ask for food

so I think I'll just move on to uh Tim

the enchanter's next question

and I I watched uh Monty Python on the

Holy Grail just a few nights ago

so

one of my favorite things about Tim the

enchanter is when he's doing his rats

you can actually see the spit flying out

of his mouth

so anyway Tim the enchanter says what's

your take on kalamasuta

angodara

nikaya 365

3.65. the Buddha says in it things like

if there is rebirth in a if there is no

rebirth then B if there is comma then a

if there is no comma then B Etc do you

consider this Sutra to be part of

archaic Buddhism well the column alsuta

is it's a strange it's very different

from most sutas that you'll read

and um I mean there's there's one

refrain in here I actually have I think

it's ajan tanisro's translation

of it right here

let's see

okay

where is it

okay so it says

come columns do not go upon what has
been acquired by repeated hearing nor
upon tradition nor upon rumor nor upon
what is in a scripture nor upon surmise
nor upon an axiom nor upon species
reasoning nor upon a bias towards a
notion that has been pondered over nor
upon another seeming ability nor upon
the consideration this monk is our
teacher kalamas when you yourselves know
these things are good these things are
not blameable these things are praised
by the wise undertaken and observed
these things lead to benefit and
happiness enter on and abide by them
so let's see here gotta get everything

back here all right so I think the

kalamasuta is based on an old fragment

like that don't believe something just

because it's in the scriptures don't

believe it out of respect for tradition

don't believe it out of respect for your

teacher you know just

I think that part is very similar to the

Attica Wago or it's just saying don't

believe anything

but then like thrown in you know if it

you know if it's praised by the wise and

so forth then

um there's a lot of sort of statements

after that that sort of contradict what

he's saying when he's just saying don't

believe it out of respect for the

teacher and so forth and I mean the

assumption is people are going to

believe it because the Buddha is is

saying it and they got respect for the

Buddha so that they're going to believe

what he says in violation of of what he

says so

um yeah I think it may have been like an

early fragment

that was similar to the antagawanga just

explaining why you shouldn't believe

anything and then it got turned into a

longer discourse with later additions I

I think

and it's interesting that when you sing

you know don't accept this don't accept

that it's it's all with regard to

ethical Behavior you know it's not with

regard to metaphysical beliefs or that

sort of thing it may be that at that

time even when they're

um like embellishing the suta you know

sort of filling it out that even then

metaphysical beliefs were still not

encouraged but the ethical beliefs like

I should do this I shouldn't do that

um you know it was it was sort of

getting more of a foothold and then the

metaphysical beliefs came after that

but it is true that he's in in the

kalamasuto there is a

it's sort of like Pascal's what was it

Pascal who uh he had this the four

reasons for believing in God or

something like that it's like you know

even if there isn't a God then you know

you're still believe acting as though

there is a God so that you're going to

be a good moral person anyway you know

it's sort of like even if there isn't a

God you're still better off believing

that there is one

and that's kind of the way

um the Buddha is in this kalamasutra

there's the section where

um you know even if there isn't rebirth

now if there is rebirth and you know you

act morally in order to get a good

rebirth then you get a good rebirth if

there isn't rebirth and you act morally

in order to get a good rebirth at least

your conscience is clear you're doing

good you're you're purified to some

degree you know you're going to be a

happier better off more respected person

anyway

and similarly with thumb it with regard

to Karma

so

do I consider this it would be part of

archaic Buddhism I think that like the

nucleus of it may be archaic

and all of it may be fairly old

because at least he's not going into

metaphysical stuff it's all should I

believe this should I believe that it's

all with regard to you know ethical

conduct

so it's still not getting into

um the origin of the world or anything

like that like some sutures actually do

that are considered to be relatively

late

so okay I think I answered that one so

I'll just move on to Tim the enchanter's

next question

and that is I would like to lose some

weight through practice of fasting any

advice on how to overcome hunger

maybe Buddha in the suta said something

about practice of fasting

um yeah there's a little bit about

fasting

um you're not supposed to fast for too

much because you're supposed to keep

yourself healthy and energetic enough to

continue practicing nama

so prolonged you know continual fasting

is frowned upon in terravada Buddhism

although I've I've fasted quite a few

times I mean sometimes I was just

traveling it wasn't convenient to go for

alms I was only eating almonds food at

the time so I would just fast for a day

or two until I was able to finally take

my bowl and go through a village and get

food there was a couple times when I did

like a hunger strike against the village

because they people were continually

setting forest fires

and so I just made it known that I do

not consider sitting forest fires to be

cool

like I live by this Creek once and the

fishermen did sit Nets at night and then

they just set the underbrush on fire to

lure minnows into these little Nets

they're like little Gill Nets

and it's just it was just ridiculous I

mean just a square mile of just ashes I

mean it wouldn't go up into the Treetops

but you know all the underbrush all the

the grass and everything would be burned

up which would cause countless small

creatures to die but

Village fishermen don't think very much
and you know they're kind of making
money from killing small creatures
anyway so
um if I did a hunger strike a couple
times because of that
but uh I've totally digressed from the
question here
so I'll just read it again I would like
to lose some weight through practice of
fasting my any advice on how to overcome
hunger that's that's almost funny how to
overcome hunger the only way you're
going to overcome hunger is just to get
used to it and just not act on the
hunger and I got really good at that I
mean for me to gain weight or lose

weight is almost effortless at this

point because for 30 years I was a monk

I ate one meal a day and in the

afternoons didn't matter how hungry I

was

um I wasn't going to break the rule and

eat in the evening I was relatively

strict with regard to that and I didn't

have any extra food anyway

so I mean it was just you just get used

to being hungry and not caring you know

or even if you care I mean you don't act

upon it you don't just go out and have

to get something to eat

so

so you just make a firm determination

aditana it's one of the ten paramis

determination that I mean you're not

going to eat more than you know

X

or in the case of fasting you're not

going to eat until you know this day

arrives and I wouldn't make it like a

really long time different people can

fast easier than others a person with a

low metabolism I met this guy he fasted

I think for it was like two weeks and he

was still going to work every day and he

seemed completely fine

but for me after like two or three days

it's like I start getting like

hypoglycemic or something it's a it's

like my energy level just kind of

plummets and you know I can still manage
it so long as I'm lounging around and
not exerting myself but I remember one
time I was uh hiking through Orlando
Caspa National Park trying to get to the
place where I stayed I get dropped off
in the center of the park and then hike
North till I would reach near the the
northern boundary
and then and uh I know I'd be hiking
Barefoot carrying all my stuff
and I'd eat something the first morning
but sometimes it would take me like
three days to get there you know I'd get
there like maybe the morning of the
third day and sometimes by the afternoon

of the second day I mean I just start

getting I think it was hypoglycemia

where I just

I mean if I sat there and rested I felt

fine but once I got up and started

walking with my my gear on my shoulders

um it was just like my energy level

would just plummet you know it was just

like my batteries were just running dead

but again I'm totally digressing here

um any advice on how to overcome hunger

I mean you just have to have a stronger

determination than

you your determination not to eat has to

be stronger than your desire to eat

I mean if you you're thinking about

breaking the fast you just make like

at this determination I'm not going to

eat anything I'll just I'll just consume

water

or maybe tea or something that has no

calories you know until say Friday

and then you just have to rely on your

honor and your you know your your word

you have to be a man of your word and

just regardless of how hungry you are

you just don't eat

so you don't really overcome Hungary

except by just not giving into it still

going to be there I mean you still have

a body it's just naturally gonna tell

you to eat something when your stomach's

empty

but you don't have to

so let's see

um yeah so I guess I answered that

question didn't I took me a long time to

get around to it but I did so I think

I'll just move on to the next question

here and this is from Connor and I'm not

sure if this is a a joke question or not

but Conor asks me are you Swami tadat

mananda and I had never maybe I'd heard

of him but I didn't know who he was

Swami tadat mananda so I just did a

search for him earlier today

and it turns out that he's got a YouTube

channel and he looks kind of like me you

know he's got the same kind of beard the

same hair color he's a little shorter

and pudgier than me he's he wears like

orange robes and he's a vedantist

and he talks about some of the same

stuff as me but we're not the same guy

and even just the name tadat mananda

Todd means that I'm pretty sure Atman is

soul or self and and Nanda is like

Delight

so delighting in such Soul kind of is

what it means delighting in such self

which is uh certainly not my Approach

but uh we do look kind of similar

although as I say he's shorter and

puddier than me and still wearing robes

even though he's got the hair and the

beard and everything

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

and Edelweiss Voyager says my question is how does one take a refuge in the Sangha during this spiritual Dark Age Western Buddhism is a joke and a small online community does not seem like a valid replacement well I was in kind of a similar predicament when I was a monk because I was living in Burma and as I've said before probably 98 of monks in Burma aren't even trying you know they don't follow the rules they're not trying to become enlightened you know they got their own they got their own reasons it's just a kind of a cultural

thing and you know they're more like
Village priests than they are ascetics
striving for enlightenment and so I
really had a kind of antipathy towards
taking refuge in such fellows as the
monks I was seeing surrounding me but it
turns out that um there's two ways of
taking refuge in the Sangha three now
that you got like Western secular
terrible Buddhism
what the first one of course is taking
refuge in Monks which is traditionally
what lay people are supposed to do at
least lay people that don't call
themselves Sangha which is what happens
in the West

then the second kind is what monks are
supposed to do and that's taking refuge
in the Arya Sangha so all of those who
have become enlightened or at least
they're well you know they're well on
the way to becoming enlightened
um you take refuge in them even though
you might not have any have any around
that you're aware of
and then of course nowadays in the west
when people take refuge in the Sangha
they're just taking refuge in their own
meditation group
where people come once a week and
meditate for an hour or something
so
how does one take refuge in the Sangha

um

taking refuge in the sanghas is

essentially taking refuge and it's like

an abstraction I guess you're taking

refuge and all the people who are

striving for enlightenment even if you

don't have any idea who they are they're

out there

but uh as a layperson you take refuge in

the monks

because they were the the conveyors of

wisdom at the time they didn't have

books back in those days in India so you

relied on the monks to teach you dama

um

and also you supported them which was

Merit for you and helping somebody to
get enlightened even though you yourself
as a layperson may not have been in a
position to strive for it yourself
so how does one take refuge in the
Sangha it's sort of like taking refuge
in the Buddha I mean the Buddha's not
here the Buddha died a long time ago
so how can you take refuge in somebody
that doesn't even exist I mean you can
take refuge in his teachings with us
taking refuge in Damas not taking refuge
in the Buddha
so I I kind of wrestled with that one
too how do you take refuge in the Buddha
when you know he's not he's not even in
this world anymore he's not in this

universe anymore

so it's with the song I'd be similar I

mean it's just those who have done it

even though you might not know any

that's I mean it's kind of abstract but

then taking refuge in the Buddha is kind

of abstract too taking refuge in the

dhamma is kind of abstract

so if you're not comfortable with

abstractions you might have a difficult

situation there

but that's that's essentially how I did

it that there have been Saints in this

world

and uh I take refuge in in their

saintliness

or just the fact that they did it so

other people can do it too

so I'm sorry if that's not an adequate

answer but that's the best I can do and

I really I can't sympathize because I've

been in a similar situation

so next is I mean I was never really one

to heavily put a lot of emphasis on

taking Refuge anyway

although Interstate refuge in in dhamma

I mean that I mean you have immediate

access to that you might not have

immediate access to the Buddha or

immediate access to a saint or even to a

monk but you do have immediate access to

Domo and that's the important one

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from Baba aui

and Baba aui says

I've heard you provide a reasonable

critique of the concept of a sodapana as

commonly conceived I wonder if you have

an alternative model or map of

Enlightenment with regards to stages or

whether you think it's just binary for

example either awakened or unawakened

and no in between well actually I'd have

sort of the opposite of that where it'd

just be like a spectrum

and I mean you have people that are more

opaque spiritually opaque no light

shining through them at one end I don't

think you could have totally opaque

because then you'd have just like a

vampire or a zombie or something you

know just to be a conscious human there

has to be at least a teeny glimmer of

light coming through even if you're a

like a a sociopathic serial killer

and at the other end it would be just

spiritually transparent lights just

shining through you like you're a

crystal or something

um and again I'm not so sure that within

the context of

of samsara you're gonna have one 100.00

percent

transparency there's always going to be

a certain amount of translucency

so

yeah it might be a spectrum like that

and Enlightenment itself is is sort of

like a paradox uh it's what's the other

good riddle word it's a riddle

and it might not even really

be a valid state within a samsara

context

Buddhism deals with that a lot

that there is Enlightenment but there's

really no moment of Enlightenment or

nobody who gets enlightened kind of that

that sort of zen-like riddle type of

stuff

and I I do think that there is some

truth to that

but

um there is an alternative

um schematic of like advancement from

like Normie to

Laura hunt in terrible Buddhism and

that's it's three stages you got the

putugion on the common worldling you've

got the seika the one in training or or

like the the lower three stages of

sainthood and then you've got the asika

the one who is no longer in training and

that's the fully enlightened being and

it's interesting that Saint John of the

Cross who was a Catholic a discussed

Carmelite monk came up with the same

system or at least he endorsed the same

system probably totally independently of

terrible Buddhism but Saint John of the

Cross taught that you've got the

beginner

then you've got the Adept and then

you've got the perfect which surprised

me because he was a Christian and

Christianity says nobody's perfect even

Jesus denied being perfect

but apparently according to these

discounts Carmelite contemplatives you

can reach the stage of perfection

so the beginner is anyone who hasn't

mastered contemplation

once you've mastered contemplation where

you can just sit there not thinking

anything your mind is completely clear

like glass just transparent that's

called high contemplation for a Catholic contemplative
when you can do that at will when you have mastered that then you become Adept and then when you have completely mortified yourself well when you just no longer have any more will of your own that you're acting entirely through the will of God you become like a puppet of God
then you are perfect
that you're you're consistently acting in accordance with the will of God because you don't have any will of your own anymore
and that's very similar to what terrible teaches like the arohaunt no longer has

any will he doesn't make any more karma

and Karma is cheating out or will

so I think the teravada and Saint John

of the Cross would differ on where you

make the cut off to the uh the Seiko or

the Adept because

um you wouldn't have to be

um

like a master of at least second genre

in order to be

um an aria

so

that's I think I prefer that schematic

to the four stages of sainthood which I

do think is an anachronism and it got

invented later on

so but still I do think it's it's
probably better to just think of it as a
Continuum I mean in Buddhism you could
say that when you've had your first
glimmer of nibano your first glimmer of
the absolute or of ultimate truth then
that you're you're an aria at that point
and then when you no longer have any
greed hate or delusion you know you're
just you're just sort of aware of
Ultimate Reality all the time
um that wouldn't be Orthodox Buddhism
but that's how I would interpret it then
you would be enlightened
so I hope I answered that one so I'm
just going to move on to White Ash Piper
and his question here which is I heard a

story that a Buddhist monk was ripping
on Alan Watts to his roshi Suzuki Suzuki
replied to him leave him alone he's a
bodhisattva I'd say the same is true for
you what say you paniobasa I know that
to say one is this or that is a
disqualifier possibilities are ways
permissible
not
possibilities are ways permissible
I don't fully understand that part but I
can say that according to The Diamond
Cutter Sutra I am a bodhisattva because
it says in The Diamond Cutter Sutra the
what the vajra cherica pragya paramita
Sutra that anyone who can read that suta

which is itself an anachronism because
the Buddha is saying this and they
didn't have reading sutras in the
Buddhist time but whoever could read
that Sutra and not be filled with like
alarm and Dread
is a bodhisattva and I like The Diamond
Cutter Sutra so I read The Diamond
Cutter suture and liked it and I was not
filled with alarm and Dread and
therefore according to The Diamond
Cutter Sutra I'm a Buddhism
and who knows it's possible maybe I was
like Japanese in a previous life and I
took bodhisattva vowels then and they
might still somehow apply even though I
haven't taken them in this life and

don't plan on it because I really don't
think it's that good of an idea
to postpone Enlightenment until all
beings are liberated when I mean it's
been an infinite amount of time to get
us to this point the universe is
beginningless and still there's an
infinite number of suffering beings
which indicates you know that it's
unlikely that all beings are ever going
to be saved so by taking the bodhisama
valves you're essentially postponing
Enlightenment forever which is pretty
much the opposite of what the historical
garma Buddha was was advising people to
do which is get yourself enlightened In

This Very life if at all possible

so I guess I answered that question

so I'll just move on to the next one

I'm tempted to say more about that much

like no I won't say I mean it wasn't

really the idea of being a borisatva or

a buddhistata in Pali is more like was

it was I am I really an Arya kind of

stuff it came up for for a while many

years ago anyway the next question is

from Titus d ascentis

and uh I think he's the last person

asking questions here he's got two

questions and one of them is really

Humdinger it's really a long one

so I even I even like edited off some of

the stuff that wasn't really on germane

to the question here but still it's a long one

so I'll just uh wade into this question from Titus Dia sentis and he says you obviously grasp a lot of physics biology and cosmology Concepts very well I would argue that Zen Buddhism

that's parentheses Zen Buddhism together with stoicism physics and biology is the current Pinnacle of human thought you could include psychology here there obviously are some great thinkers in that field too but it is today like medicine itself completely hijacked by dangerous hacks and or political maniacs Einstein realized that this universe has

only one dimension the space time where more precisely the universe is a space-time Continuum there is no backward movement not spatially nor Temple temporally this is fundamental everything from an electron to a Galaxy including this Earth and the Sun waves on the ocean your ear and the Annoying mosquito moves forward direction is an illusion relative to The Observer he explained all this and proved it mathematically but that didn't stop hordes of string theory physicists to to this very day and into unforeseeable future build their careers on trying to prove their calculations on how many extra Dimensions Universe has besides

the basic descriptive four three spatial

plus time

usually ranging from 11 to 26. is this

really cognitive dissonance or simply a

professional must for they wouldn't for

they would be out of a job if they

admitted the truth

perhaps something similar can be said

about many spiritualists philosophers or

gurus who continue to argue on and on

about what Buddha said meant did or

didn't do don't even get me started on

how many robes can a monk own

consider this scenario a Buddhist a

Buddha realizes the truth the one

ultimate truth then he sees that laying

down on people would be not just
difficult to explain but also divisively
questionable as the path from starting
to dwell
on this ultimate
concept before finally accepting it can
for many turn out to be a rather
depressing feat so then one Buddha
considers the effort not worth it and
decides to just forget about it and get
on with his life one Buddha decides to
incorporate the ultimate truth into
folklore and mysticism another Buddha
decides to weave the ultimate truth into
an existing philosophy or worldview all
that doesn't stop hordes of disciples to
found various schools with countless

forms of rules explanations and teachings cognitive dissonance a professional must

Zen Buddhism tries to cut it all down to the bone but it too over the centuries got institutionalized and over ceremonialized there are however many examples of Zen Masters who got through to the essential wisdom stripped all the poppy [__] away and without an imperative tried to pass it on to some student in most simple but sometimes quite devious ways think humor or art here here's a devious question if two Buddhas exist at the same time on this Earth and we many and met each other

what do you think they would talk about

or more interestingly put what question

do you think they would ask one another

so that's the question here or small

group of questions and I mean getting up

to the top part here where you're saying

that Einstein proved that there are only

four dimensions the three three spatial

Dimensions plus time

um really I don't think that he did

because you can't prove anything with

regard to the external world I mean

um Hume did a lot to prove that and Kant

kind of did

um Spinoza sort of did with regard to I

mean you can't be sure about what is

outside your own mind there's always

going to be a certain uncertainty
at the very least is to put it nicely
so I mean Einstein's math probably works
out fine but math is I mean it's not so
much proving the external world it's
just coming up with like models that
superimpose on it satisfactorily
that that's how science or especially
like the mathematical aspects of physics
and probably chemistry also work it's
like they don't discover a law of
physics that you know everything has to
obey they just come up with a kind of
mathematical formula that seems to
account for what the what scientists are
observing

so

yeah I don't think that Einstein really

proved that there's no more than four

dimensions I don't believe that there

are only four dimensions I think that

there are

like potentially

you know any number of Dimensions but

none of them are ultimately real because

they do don't really apply to the

absolute or nibbana or God or Dao or

Brahman or whatever you want to call

ultimate truth

that the ultimate truth is just it Tran

it contains within all possibilities and

you can at least imagine that there are

more than four dimensions

so it would probably contain that also

it would seem to me

um

so let's see here he gets down to

the string theorists the hordes of

string theorists

um are they it's is this really

cognitive dissonance or simply a

professional must

for they would be out of a job if they

admitted the truth I guess that's the

first question here so I'll make a gap

between that and what follows

I just did that you didn't see me make

the Gap but I did

um

yeah I don't think that it's cognitive

dissonance

um it's not necessarily a professional

must either I mean it's well known that

Einstein

um you know he he was instrumental in

coming up with both

relativity and quantum theory but they

don't fit together very well

and that's that's always been a problem

for physics ever since Einstein came

along in that the two main accepted

um theoretical paradigms you know

relativity and quantum physics they

don't exactly fit together you know

there's certain anomalies and so forth

that they just don't fit together and so

you got the the grand unified theory

hasn't been devised yet

and it may never be demised

so you've got these string theorists who

are you know they're trying at least to

get like a unified theory that accounts

for everything where you don't have to

rely either on relativity or quantum

physics that the entire Theory would fit

together and and it would explain things

um that's not to guarantee that after

they come up with that and everyone's

slapping each other on the shoulder and

congratulations for finally coming up

with the grand unified theory there's

some wise guy in India for example is

going to come up with a different Grand
unified theory making different kinds of
statements with different math that
works equally well
because just these conceptual models
superimposed upon the phenomenal
Universe I mean that's really all it is
and the ones that fit the best are the
ones that are accepted as laws of
physics or whatever
so let's see
yeah I don't think that it's cognitive
dissonance necessarily that's not
necessarily a professional must either I
mean if they come up with a system that
satisfies the the scientific dogmatists
well enough then uh yeah something like

string theory might become obsolete

um so anyway

uh the next part of the question here is

perhaps something similar can be said

about many spiritualist philosophers or

gurus who continue to argue on and on

about what the Buddha said meant did or

didn't do don't even get me started how

many robes can a monk own well from the

terrible Buddhist point of view it's

pretty straightforward he can he can

keep three

um any extra robe beyond that he has to

get rid of within 10 days

unless it's he's got Katina privileges

which is

if you don't know what patina privileges

are that's it's fine and during the time

of the Katina privileges he can keep as

many extra robes as he wants but when

the Katina privileges expire he's back

to three

so let's see consider the scenario a

Buddha realizes the truth

um

I guess when I was to read the whole

thing over again here he says present

Buddhism tried to cut it all down to the

bone well go to My Buddha did that also

and then it's just too scary I mean

you've just got this void because

um both archaic Buddhism and like Zen at

its best you don't have conceptual

models I mean you transcend the

conceptual models you realize that a

conceptual model is like a hair unto

vast space as one zen master put it

um

so

yeah I mean go to My Buddha just let his

followers do a cliff and then he jumped

off and then Cliffs are scary and so you

got

especially scholar monks kind of backing

away and justifying backing away by

saying you know the cliff isn't really

there or is you know it's just sort of a

a metaphor or something and then you

have people like nagarjuna who go right

back to the Cliff's Edge again and go

right back to no more metaphysics no

more speculation

you know don't believe anything just be

here right in the present moment and

then of course later majama Buddhist

philosophers start backing away from the

Cliff's Edge again Zen Masters is the

same way

so

um

yeah

so let's see let's just continue

scrolling down here

okay if two Buddhas exist at the same

time on this Earth and met each other

what do you think they would talk about

well first of all according to tradition
you can't have more than one Buddha at
the same time on the same Planet but
let's just set that aside we're just uh
arguing for the sake of argument here
that two Buddhas exist at the same time
on this Earth they meet each other what
would they talk about I'm not sure
because it would depend upon their
personality traits I mean a Buddha is
still a fully enlightened Buddha
presumably still has personality traits
and so you know they're going to be two
people what they would talk about is I
mean how can you even predict what two
fully enlightened beings are going to

talk about maybe the weather maybe they

just won't say anything

but I mean for

for like ordinary people who have never

met a fully enlightened Buddha to

speculate about what two fully

enlightened Buddhism would talk about I

mean it's sort of like a dog trying to

speculate about what people would talk

about I mean it's just it's futile

utterly futile to even make an attempt

to know what two Buddhas would talk

about

I mean if I there is the idea I mean if

there's two Buddhas and they're alone

together I mean there's nobody even

there

so and from that point of view they

wouldn't talk about anything

because there wouldn't be anybody there

it's sort of like the tree falling in

the forest

I feel like two Buddhists have a

conversation and there's nobody there to

hear it do they Converse at all

and I think there's a good chance the

answer is no

so or here more more interestingly what

question do you think they would ask or

another again if unless there's somebody

listening that I mean they might not

even be there

so

I guess I'll just move on to uh

move on to uh Titus theosynthesis next

question which is the last question of

this q a

by golly

unless maybe like one is tied to a rock

and thrown through my window or

something and then I'm don't even

guarantee that I answered such a

question

because really questions about dhamma

should be asked respectfully

so don't don't even consider that

so anyway Titus the ascentis says

you mentioned a few examples of people

who got enlightened while doing

something other than Buddha sitting

under the tree or that Army doctor from
the koan in which he sat meditating on
why he was treating soldiers who would
heal and then return to battle to die
can you name a few examples of people
who got enlightened while sitting and
doing nothing well if you read the
polytext most of the Buddha's disciples
became enlightened while sitting in
meditation I mean you're not exactly
doing nothing unless then nothing
happens right when you be right when you
become enlightened because otherwise
your mind has to be doing something you
know that's just the Relentless force of
karma

shoving you forwards through life

so

a few examples of people who got

enlightened while sitting and doing

nothing

well

if that means just sitting in meditation

yeah I think you there's so many of them

that are mentioned in the text

um like anguli Mala you know he was the

he was a serial killer who got converted

to Buddhism by the Buddha and he became

a monk and diligently practiced and in

most cases according to the text if

you're going to become enlightened

you're going to become enlightened while

sitting in meditation pretty much like

the Buddha did because he was teaching
others how to do essentially what he had
done
um like the famous case of gotika who I
think I mentioned in the previous q a he
died while just literally dying while
I'm just lying on a cot with his throat
cut because he committed suicide and
became enlightened at the moment of
death there's another Monk mentioned in
the wisudi Maga who burned to death and
became enlightened at the same time
while being tied up so I mean he
couldn't do much even if he wanted to
not not physically anyway it's it's just
a strange story of

um endorsing following veneer rules
written no matter what you just no
matter how ridiculous it might seem you
just follow the rules absolutely
strictly so what happened with this monk
is he was living in a forest and some
Bandits came through they robbed him
took what literally owned I suppose and
then used living Vines to tie him up and
then as they were leaving they
accidentally started a forest fire
and so he could have gotten free by
breaking the vines because and he could
have at least uprooted them but it's
against the rules for a monk to damage a
green plant and so he just let himself
burn to death rather than Break Free of

these Vines and so he and then he became

enlightened at the moment of death

um there's another story I think it's in

the dhamapada commentary of a monk who

is just getting who got beaten to death

yeah he got beaten up really bad and

then just died of his injuries and

became enlightened as he died in that

case it's kind of an interesting story

about

um a jeweler among goes to visit a

jeweler and the jeweler

um

he's he's got this big Jewel sent to him

by a king the king wants him to make a

setting for this Jewel and the at the

time the the the jeweler was like
preparing meat for a meal so he's like
getting dinner ready and he's got like
raw meat on his hands and he accepts the
jewel into his hand and he immediately
sets it down and goes to wash his hands
but the jewel already has like blood on
it or something and there's like a big
pet Crane or stork or something
I think it's a crane that sees the jewel
with the blood on it and thinks it's a
piece of meat or something and swallows
it and then the Jeweler comes back and
all of a sudden this huge jewel is gone
you know this king's Jewel and you know
he's filled with Dread because he thinks
he's gonna he's gonna have his head cut

off for stealing this Jewel or something

so the only other person in the room was

the monk so he just assumes the monk did

it he asked the monk the monk denies it

he asks him well what happened to it

then and the monk doesn't want to say

that the bird ate it because he knows

the guy will kill the bird to get the

jewel back

so I mean he won't say and so that just

makes him look even more guilty so this

Jeweler just starts pounding on him he

just beats him up

um and then finally the the bird it's

it's it likes blood apparently and

there's blood on the on the Monk's face

and the bird comes to kind of try and

get some of it because it likes blood

apparently

no telling with cranes or storks or

whatever and uh the jeweler in his Fury

just kicks it out of the way and it just

Falls in a crumpled Heap on the other

side of the room and then the monk asks

is the bird dead

and I think uh the Jeweler says yeah I

was dead all right and then he doesn't

have to save his life anymore and he

says well the bird ate it so the Jeweler

cuts it open and of course he's

completely mortified because he just

beat the hell out of the saintly Monk

um because he thought the monk had

stolen it and then at the end you know
the Moral Stories you know the monk went
to heaven and the the Jeweler no the
monk uh he he became enlightened he
entered nibana his the jeweler's wife
was trying to get him to stop beating up
the monk she went to heaven for her
compassion and the Jeweler he uh he went
to hell of course because he just beat
the [__] out of this sailing Monk and I
don't remember what happened to the to
the bird but I think the bird had some
special fate uh in store for it as well
so uh yeah I mean you can't really
be doing nothing you're always doing
something you know at least mentally

and so long as you're conscious and not fully enlightened once you're fully enlightened all bets are all off I mean there's maybe nobody there anymore but um yeah you're always gonna be doing something

but if you just mean physically you're just sitting in meditation yeah if you read the the poly text most of the Buddhist disciples probably became enlightened while sitting in meditation um I really can't speak for Mahayana Buddhists because they're not even supposed to become enlightened anyway so

yeah I mentioned Ramana maharshi who is a Hindu but he supposedly became

enlightened while just lying flat on his
back motionless not not even thinking
and that's how I became enlightened
because he stopped thinking and it just
clicked
so
I'm sorry I can't I didn't come up with
a longer list of names than that but
probably most of the Buddha's disciples
um became enlightened maybe some of the
really Advanced ones who just needed the
slightest little nudge they just need to
hear the right few words to just
you know like a like a yellow leaf just
needs the slightest nudge just knocked
it from the tree

um a lot of them were like that I

suppose you know like

um venerable sorry puta according to

tradition became enlightened while just

standing behind the Buddha Fanny and all

the Buddha was talking to a non-butist

aesthetic

um but a lot of them became enlightened

just from sitting in meditation this as

the Buddha did

at least according to tradition

and uh we're done

so I hope those of you ask questions got

your questions answered at least

somewhat satisfactorily

um if I've been kind of on a low Vibe

today

um please uh bear with me I'll probably

be feeling better later

and uh if you have any questions you're

very welcome to ask questions

um probably the the most obvious

immediate place to answer them or to ask

them would be in the comments below this

video and uh feel free to check out the

URL links and uh order my books if you

are so inclined and uh be happy

hello and welcome to question and answer

number 62. I am your host panio Basa

and those of you who watch the previous

q a may recall that I began that one

saying that I was in somewhat Low

Spirits

and it's still kind of happening

but the thing is as I've I've said this

before and it's been this way my whole

life including the entire 30 years that

I was a monk and uh just a meta daily

meditator

in fact I was looking at Q a number

seven uh still a monk and it started off

pretty much the same way where I'm

saying that this by Nature I mean from a

biological point of view it's genetic it
runs on both sides of my family
that my Consciousness expands and
contracts like the Buddhist Cosmos
and there's not necessarily an obvious
cause for it externally you know it's
you can just say it's some sort of
internal Rhythm or something and I've
been in a rather contracted phase
and when I was when I'm in a contracted
phase like when I was a monk it's like
dhamma isn't of much interest to me I
can't meditate worth a damn when I'm in
an expanded phase then it's it's very
enthusiastic and I can meditate almost
effortlessly so I think I mean it's not
the same as being unhappy being in a

contracted phase but it's like when

you're in a contracted phase you have

fewer mental options I guess but I guess

also being contracted is less joyous

than being expanded

it's just the way it is it's like

um you know no is a contraction yes is

an expansion so I guess I'm in more of a

no mode lately but the show must go on

and so I'm going to commence answering

questions to the best of my ability

and the first question is from keep the

vinia

and keep devinia says

have you heard about the book in the

Buddha's words by bikubody if yes is it

good well yeah I've heard about it I

think I might have even seen a copy of

it I might have even flipped through the

pages a little bit

um but I haven't read the whole book I

haven't I don't recall reading more than

just a few words of it is assuming that

I did have the book in my hand and I was

flipping through it

but um

I assume that it's good

um bikubody

I mean despite his his leftist politics

is one of the best translators of Pali

into English that we have nowadays and

um probably the book is just a standard

selection of you know basic Buddhist

texts presenting in uh translation from

the ancient Pali into Modern English you

know just basic Buddhist tenets

um orthodox taravada

so uh yeah it'd probably be a fairly

good introduction or reminder of basic

Buddhist teachings

um just as found in the poly itself

so

I guess I'll I guess I answered that one

I mean I can't really say all that much

considering that I haven't read the book

so we'll just move on to the next

question and this is from rui

and rui says hello Ponyo could you

expound on the teaching or notion in the

scene just the scene

Etc

um yeah

I will and in the scene there will be

only the scene and the herd there will

be only the herd comes from one of my

favorite sutas it's I consider to be one

of the most important sutas in the

polytopitica which is the Bahia suta

which is

udana 110. and let's see here I actually

have a translation in the entire suta in

this this book that that I wrote some

years ago

and uh the part that he's talking about

I suppose I should give just a little

synopsis of the suta there was uh

a non-buddist aesthetic named Bahia

which literally means outsider

or like Forerunner or something and uh

he wore a garment made of bark like tree

bark although it could have been like

the the fibers on the inside of the of

the tree not like the Crusty hard

outside stuff

and um he he hears about the Buddha

and so he immediately once he hears that

there's this enlightened being called go

to My Buddha he just packs up what

little stuff he's got and just takes off

walking and he just keeps going until he

finds the Buddha and the Buddha's

walking for alms at the time and so

Bahia is standing there in the road

asking the Buddha to teach him and the

Buddhist saying now is not a good time

because I'm going for alms but Bahia

just says you nobody knows when we're

going to die I certainly don't know

please tell me now

so finally the Buddha

standing there in the in the road in I

think it was the uh the city of sawati

he says as follows

let's see well then Bahia thus should

you train yourself in the scene there

will be only the scene in The Herd there

will be only the herd in the felt there

will be only the felt in the mentally

sensed there will be only the mentally

sensed just so Bahia should you train yourself and since Bahia in the scene there will be only the scene in The Herd there will be only the herd and the felt there will be only the felt and in the mentally sensed there will be only the mentally sensed from that you Bahia are not thereby and since Bahia you are not thereby you buy ya are not therein and since Bahia you are not therein but you Bahia have no hear no Hereafter no between the two just this is the end of unease

and it's like a thin colon It's very pithy and concise and also kind of mysterious like a riddle almost

but uh bahi upon hearing this it was

exactly what he needed to hear and he

became enlightened and then before he

left town I mean he's still out there on

the road he gets killed by a young cow

he gets like gored and trampled or

something the cow kills him

and then uh if I recall correctly I

suppose I should have just looked in the

book when I had it open

um the Buddha has

some of the monks go and get bahia's

body and cremate it because he had

become a noble one he had become an Arya

even though he wasn't

um a Buddhist monk

so

let's see here what could I expound on
the teaching or the notion in the scene
just the scene
um well essentially what hoodie's
teaching is in the scene there will be
only the scene in The Herd that will
only the herd is you're just taking what
is presented to you and not elaborating
on it so that you remain in the present
moment just right here right now as RAM
Das used to say be here now and you're
not like having this running commentary
interpreting it you're not even like uh
attributing like symbolic meanings like
words or anything to what you're hearing
what you're seeing

and by doing that

um it's like you're

uh like deconstructing your own personal

song sorrow you're not building the song

sorry you're not like interconnecting

what you're seeing with what you already

know or what you've already heard you

know that's that's sort of how it works

you're but you see something and it just

gets integrated into your body of

knowledge so there's this whole web of

connections and associations and so

forth and that's like reinforcing

samsara for you and so what you're doing

is you're just accepting just the bare

data as much as you are capable of doing

and it's like

you know it's sort of like disconnecting
everything you're not adding to this
this elaboration of papancha which which
is essentially samsara it's it's you're
dealing as much as possible with the
bare data and not adding this symbolic
perceptual meaning to what you're
experiencing and this perceptual meaning
is essentially our own personal samsara
so you're freeing yourself from some
sort in that sense in this talk about
their buy and they're in is with regard
to connections and conclusions that you
just
disconnect you know there's there's no
more connections and conclusions at

least when you're in that state

and you're still able to function in an

enlightened you know appropriate manner

when you stop thinking and you're just

like right there in the present moment

so I mean it is kind of counterintuitive

but I mean that is how you become

enlightened according to the Sutton

so

yeah you have you have no here no

Hereafter no between the two because all

meaning you know the meaning of here

like this world the meaning of the next

World know between the two it's just

this all like deconstructed just bare

Consciousness essentially

I don't know if I've explained that in a

way that is uh comprehensible

but uh I think I'll just move on to the

next question and if you if you have the

book essays in terravada Buddhism

written by panyabasabiku

which is who I used to be then you can

read the entire thing and there's a

little bit of commentary in there too

so you might understand it a little

better if you ponder it you know use it

as a koan or something because it is it

is pretty much of a koan

the Zen Buddhist did not invent Cowans

you can find them in the old polytext

occasionally

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

question and

I'm not sure if this is really a

question I don't see any question marks

here

but

man this is a long one okay

all right there's kind of a question at

the end so this is from Titus D assentes

and he wrote a comment in the previous q

a about Einstein saying that the

space-time Continuum is only one

dimension and I didn't fully

I didn't fully follow his argument

and so you know I'm saying that Einstein

was saying that there are four

dimensions but he's saying no there's

only this one Continuum of the dimension

and I'll get to that it's it's this is sort of a follow-up to it to a question from the previous q a so anyways Titus Dia sent this says respect panyabasa I am afraid you misunderstood me the universe reality Quantum field space time continuum whatever you may call it does not have four dimensions it is the one all-encompassing dimension traditional four-dimensional system is our way of describing our motion through the reality as we perceive experience it Universe does not have nor did it ever have Dimensions not in the way we conceive them it is the undividing dimension itself

it is not expanding it is ever flowing
and since it is one it has only One
Direction so there is no backward left
right or any other kind of motion except
forward our concepts of directional
motion come from the perceived effects
of being in and dealing with the
universe and everything in it relative
to ourselves but the universe is one one
directional there is not this is not
optional
it is what it is I think Einstein and
the Buddha realized this each in his own
way so the wordings are apparently
different but in the end still with the
same meaning as the concept cannot be
grasped in any other way this

fundamental truth reveals the essence of
all things people usually have trouble
explaining like causality the flow of
time Karma emptiness and form entropy
I'm actually having trouble explaining
to myself how no one around me seems to
understand this maybe no one wants to in
the end maybe it is cognitive dissonance
for you see when you read my last post
or read my last post you started okay
with Einstein realized that this
universe has only one dimension the
space time by the time you got back to
it you started your reply by getting
back to the top here where you say that
Einstein proved that there are only four

dimensions I really don't think this is
a case of misreading or misunderstanding
I think this is mine trying to defend
end itself from a weird concept it
considers potentially harmful to Itself
by going into a cognitive dissonance
mode disclaimer nothing I said here was
meant to be a disrespectful way and
personifying the universe as a deity and
then debating on what hats should his
favorite creatures wear seems as
ridiculous as competing
whether 11 or 26 dimensional
mathematical Theory would describe the
Universe best so to me string theorists
hold as much Cosmic importance as
telephone cleaners

uh

okay so then he kind of asks uh oh A Hitchhiker's Guide to Galaxy reference okay anyway I had in mind a few thoughts questions concerning some Concepts found in the books by Carlos Castaneda and their possible counterparts in Buddhism but first things first are you or to what extent familiar with his work so at the end of the stuff about Einstein he asks about my familiarity with Carlos Castaneda but first I need to get back to this Con this idea that the universe is a is just one dimension so Einstein says that space and time for the form this continuum

and I mean even before Einstein space

was considered to be a continuum

so I mean you could say well even before

Einstein space was one-dimensional but

really it's it seems to me that strictly

speaking

it's not one-dimensional I mean if

you're dealing with this Cosmos I mean

we're not dealing with a mystical State

we're dealing with the empirical

universe and that's what Einstein

apparently I mean Einstein as far as I

know was not a Mystic

he was trying to describe the empirical

universe

and Dimensions I mean it's

how do I how do I begin I like if you've

got a one-dimensional universe that's
just a line and so it takes one number
or one point to describe one measurement
or something to describe you know where
it is on this line so the line is of
infinite length you just pick an
arbitrary zero somewhere you know like a
number line and then you know just give
a number in it that will account for any
point on that one-dimensional universe
two Dimensions is a plane because in
order to pinpoint any point on that
plane you got to use two coordinates now
this is like Cartesian coordinates here
so you make an x y axis and then you
give two numbers

and then you can you can describe any

point or you can locate any point on

that two-dimensional Continuum with

three dimensions it takes three points

and X Y and Z axes

in like a Cartesian coordinate system

and then you can pinpoint any any point

in that Continuum by using three numbers

and that's three dimensional so when you

get into four-dimensional space time

like

Einstein was talking about

it takes four numbers or four four

measurements

to locate anything exactly because time

is there too so you got the x coordinate

or the x-axis y-axis

um

z-axis and then you've got like the time

axis the t-axis and so that will locate

any point in space and time by using

four numbers and that's why it's called

four dimensional

so

so I'm not sure that Einstein really was

saying that there's just one dimension I

mean you can see that there's a

Continuum like even before Einstein came

along space was a Continuum and it's not

like these three dimensions

were like set in stone I mean obviously

one dimension in space is forwards and

backwards you know one side to side

one's up and down

but you've got the forwards and

backwards all you got to do is turn 90

degrees and now your forwards and

backwards is different now it's what

used to be the side to side

and apparently time is like that too or

at least can be or should be According

to some

uh some of the more

philosophical

physicists I suppose

so I mean with regard to pinpointing

Something in space-time

yeah you're gonna need four dimensions

in order to pinpoint anything in that

Universe in that Cosmos and so the

string theorists might be saying you

know there's 20 28 or something

you'd have to give 28 coordinates to

exactly pinpoint something but they've

got this weird concept of Dimensions I

think that they're like collapsed like

microscopic Dimensions that somehow fit

the mathematics

so let's see here

with regard to you can only move in One

Direction yeah through well through time

you can

um at least we seem to be stuck moving

forwards Through Time although I can I

can move backwards like this but I mean

if you call it a Continuum then I guess

yeah I don't know I I really

um not in a position to argue that part

of this but with regard to four

dimensions that just means you've got

four Cartesian coordinates that have to

be accounted for when locating anything

in that space

so

yeah I just wanted to address that part

so let's see here and I really don't

think Einstein was anywhere near to

coming up with the same idea as go to My

Buddha Einstein was looking outwards go

to My Buddha was primarily looking

inwards

and I think the Buddha was a Mystic and

I do not think Einstein was a Mystic

so Einstein was trying to describe the

empirical universe

and the Buddha I mean you could call it

an empirical universe but it was

entirely inwards it was like a

psychological University he was he was

trying to uh

trying to take into account

but uh let's just get to the actual

question here

um are you or to what extent familiar

with the work of Carlos Castaneda and I

read like his first four books when I

was like

18 years old

and um I mean I don't remember them

extremely vividly now but I do remember
that they were getting more and more far
out and it's sort of like the Seth books
also the the more books you read the
more far out it gets it's like he has to
keep reaching for more more and more
weirdness just to keep people interested
because you just get used to the
standard weirdness so you need more
weirdness
um
and I think that Carlos Castaneda was uh
really he was some it was like a
professor at The Evergreen State College
in Washington state and it's
um a lot of what he wrote was
essentially fiction although I assume it

was based on real anthropology and

probably some of his own drug trips

but um

I'm not sure if Don Juan actually

existed

but uh yeah I have read like the first

at least three probably the first four

books but it was when I was a teenager

with like long brown curly hair unlike

unlike today

so I think I'll just move on to uh Titus

theosynthesis next question

let's see meanwhile on another note back

in 1984 Mick Karn the bassist from the

band Japan and Peter Murphy the lead

singer from the band Bauhaus got

together in Dallas car a music

collaboration that produced The Walking

hour LP a unique music musical Endeavor

that had no commercial success but has

since acquired a cult following among

many musical connoisseurs especially

musicians well the album in its hole is

a highly recommended listen one track in

particular comes to mind as it's about

that mind and the book it's about the

mind and the Buddha

I would like to hear your thoughts on

the lyrics so here they are the the the

piece is called his box

by Dallas Carr

and the lyrics are

on his hand does he make a point he

needs some point of reference he is very
cold indeed nothing ever happens in his
box Buddha speaks quietly in the night
can you see what you know Buddha says
there is no wrong or right you just reap
what you sow still not able to see the
sun desperately looks for the door
blinded by the fool inside everything is
happening in his box Buddha is giggling
out of sight there is no such thing as
shame with a light blow the box is gone
he's with himself again
and I think that's it so he's then uh
Titus the ascentis is can't say that I
know many or any pop songs that mention
Buddha himself perhaps I could encourage

you to give this song A listen it is
available here on YouTube you can't miss
it the album cover is vibrant green blue
lemon yellowish be warned though there's
keyboards on it but it's not rock and
roll so I guess you find it okay
the other highly recommended track from
the album to listen to would be the
judgment is the mirror also available on
YouTube much regards T so he wants my uh
let's see my opinion if you'd like to
hear my thoughts on these lyrics
and for starters
I would say that I mean for a long time
I have considered that
women artists and French people should
stay away from philosophy because as a

general rule they never make a very good
showing of it and artists my experience
with artists trying to understand dhamma
um
yeah I mean maybe it's just because I'm
more of a more mind-oriented than heart
oriented you know I'm more philosophical
and religious you know more the
scientific temperament than the artistic
temperament and so
um I'd maybe I just can't fully
appreciate an artistic approach to dama
other than some some Buddhist art I like
but um
let's see yeah I mean on his hand I mean
it seems to be the point that I mean

being in a box is sort of like your

mental prison and the Buddha has like

evaporated his box which I mean that's

that's fine

um let's see here maybe I should just go

over the lyrics here on his hand does he

make a point

he needs some point of reference he's

very cold indeed nothing ever happens in

his box I mean that part I don't I don't

uh fully

I can't really grock the the dhamma in

that

um if he's saying that the Buddha and

nothing ever happens in the Buddha's box

I wouldn't tend to agree with that

Buddha speaks quietly in the night can

you see what you know Buddha says there

is no wrong or right you just re put you

so

um

yeah I mean you can say there is no

wrong or right in Buddhism it's more

skillful or unskillful although there's

a lot of mention of wrong and right in

Buddhism I mean the noble Eightfold Path

you know right you view right man I'm

embarrassing myself now to your right

view right thought you know right speech

right action right livelihood you know

so right right right right and then

there's wrong mitcha mitcha DT wrong

view so there is mention of wrong and

right to see

still not able to see the sun

desperately looks for the door blinded

by the fool inside yeah I mean that's

like metaphors for being unenlightened

you know being stuck in samsara the

unenlightened version of samsara

let's see everything is happening in

this box you know I assume he's

referring to the mental prison

Buddha is giggling out of sight and I

think the Buddha I mean according to

tradition the Buddha did not giggle

um there's no such thing as shame

yeah he's with himself again that's kind

of a self-view thing at the end

um yeah again it's I really cannot fully

appreciate artistic attempts at

describing dhamma I'm artists are better

at like images you know some some Buddha

images

or like even paintings are are really

can be really profound but when an

artist is trying to explain

dhamma in words they tend to fall flat

along with French people and and

well a lot of women

so

um

yeah

so I'll just move on to next question

now that I've offended no if any women

actually watch this this video a few do

but uh it was like a month ago I was

looking at my analytics on my YouTube

channel it was saying that 100 of my

viewers are male which I know can't be

true because I know there are a few

females but maybe they just don't they

just prefer not to specify their gender

to YouTube or something but everyone

that does specify their gender

um like at least a month ago who was

watching my videos it was male

so maybe I didn't offend anybody but I'm

not trying to offend anyone

I'm just calling them as I see them

so we'll just move on to the next

question here this is from the Arya

sawasti project

and the Arya swasti project says

greetings Ponyo before becoming a terror

bottom monk did you consider other

teachings or paths and if so what were

they

what was the differences that made you

to settle on particularly terrible

Buddhism okay so that's like two

questions

so did I consider other teachings or

paths uh yeah I mean before I started

liking terrovata I liked Zen especially

Soto Zen so my original idea of

renouncing the world and becoming a

Buddhist monk was to become a Soto Zen

Monk

um

but I then started visiting monasteries

kind of checking out places to see if

there would be good places for me to

ordain and uh the terrible place that I

went to seemed much preferable to the

Zen place that I went to

um

so let's see

there was another possibility that I had

was just making like a wool robe and

getting myself a bowl and just hitting

the road and just follow my own thoughts

falling follow my own idea you know just

be non-denominational

or or something but I knew myself well

enough to know that having an

established system with rules in place
and maybe like you know Elders who could
supervise me and teach me stuff would be
much more conducive to me making
progress in Dharma than me just hitting
the road and becoming on wandering
homeless aesthetic
also for a short time I had this weird
idea of like being ordained as a
carthusian monk you know in Roman
Catholicism who they take I mean they're
like the strictest of the the uh orders
of Catholic monks and they take vows of
silence and I have this weird idea that
if I took a vow of silence then nobody
would you know I wouldn't have to tell

anyone that wasn't actually a Christian
but I guess at the very least you'd have
to make confession you know you know
forgive me Father I'm not really a
Christian I don't think that would go
very well yeah it was just a dumb idea
and I dismissed it pretty well but it I
did consider it occasionally just
because you know be easier to find uh a
workable Christian Monastery especially
in the west than uh a workable Buddhist
one especially at the time there's there
are more options now but there are
relatively few options at the time that
I became a monk
so what what was it that caused me to
settle on particularly terravada

Buddhism there there were two one is I
read the suttony Pata
um first by reading Zen flashes Zen
bones compiled by Paul wraps that kind
of converted me to Zen at first when I
was like maybe 18 or 19 years old but
then I read the sutiny Pata maybe a year
or two later and I was really impressed
by the sutiny Potter because it was
describing the way teravada Buddhist
monks or just early Buddhist monks lived
in India as wandering ascetics you know
they weren't
in this formalized setting with all
these rules in place you know just all
the Bowing and the the chanting and

everything that that is

um you know happens a lot in Zen

monasteries to something that happens in

terrible monasteries too but it's not

necessary in taravada because these

wandering Aesthetics didn't do that

stuff you know they're sleeping under

trees they're just these tough Macho

Aesthetics and that appealed to me at

the time my father was Macho you know I

kind of I wasn't nearly as Macho as him

but you know there's this appreciation

for like a manly path

um I remember reading in uh the uh the

varieties of religious experience by

oh man William James it's like I'm

forgetting names a lot by William James

who are you saying that uh

you know usually like aggressiveness is

how men fulfill their masculinity you

know they become soldiers or athletes

you know they or just go out and get in

fights a lot or something but another

way for a man a more spiritual way for a

man to fulfill his masculine urges

is through asceticism just by being

tough and that appealed to me at the

time I really wasn't much of a jock

and I didn't want to kill people didn't

want to go out and get in bar brawls

so just uh toughing it out in the woods

appeal to me and so there was that and

then as I already said I went to a Zen

place and a terravala Buddhist Place

both in California when I was looking

around

and the Zen place I mean it was monks

and nuns living in the same compound

and they're putting on Layman's clothing

and driving to the store to buy

groceries and so forth and lots and lots

of bowing and chanting and then I went

to the Terra Water Place

it was like three monks there just

living in silence pretty much

and it seemed fairly obvious within a

short time

that the terravonna place was coming

closer to what the Buddha originally

taught then the Zen place

so that pretty much sold me on tarawada

and I was ordained at that same

Monastery in California

um so I think I'll just move on to the

Aria swasti project the next question

here

he says I've read all three of your

books and enjoyed them very much that's

good I like that do you have a favorite

or a favorite part of any of the books

um

I think overall I mean there's good

stuff I've written in all of them you

know I've got favorites in in all three

volumes and if I put out another volume

there'd be favorites in that too

um I think the first one that I wrote
essays in terravala Buddhism
um I might have the most gratification
from this one just because
um of some some of the things that I've
written are useful information for monks
that were very difficult for me to find
and so it's sort of like a service to
other monks you know like the the
ancient Indian star calendar I mean I I
looked everywhere trying to find
information on the ancient Indian
calendar that was prevalent in the
Buddhist time in the the Ganges Valley
in India 2 500 years ago and it it took
some doing to actually I mean I was
going to monks that had written books on

you know Indian

astronomy and astrology and so forth and

they're just pretty much all of them

going with medieval Hindu astrology and

astronomy and trying to find

what they were following in the Buddhist

time I mean that was very difficult I

finally managed to find one book at a

used bookstore in Rangoon that had

um it was called the Surya sedanta and

it was an old translation from the 1800s

by a Christian Missionary named Ebenezer

Burgess and some unknown editors had

added footnotes to his translation of

the Surya sedanta which was uh it was a

Sanskrit it was a long Sanskrit poem

this of like essentially describing

um Western astronomy and Western

astronomy at the time was Roman like

Greco-Roman ptolemaic astronomy was the

earth in the center of the universe and

and like cycles and epic cycles and all

this and it was very difficult to follow

which wasn't really necessary to follow

so I I kind of read it but you know it's

trying to

make sense

of like Poetic descriptions of doing

signs and cosines for calculating like

conjunctions and so forth I mean it was

just and and you're not even using real

astronomy anymore it's it's like

outdated like

geocentric astronomy astronomy trying to say astrology and astronomy at the same time it just wasn't worth it but in some of the footnotes it was describing the oldest known like the the lunar Mansions the 27
asterisms the nakeda that uh was what was the
um the Buddhist ancient Buddhist ancient Indian North Indian calendar was based on and uh there were still a few little things that I couldn't couldn't work out um like exactly how they divided it up into 12 months because there are 27 constellations and it's like the the month in according to the the Indian

calendar the ancient Indian calendar

probably the modern Indian calendar also

the month that you're in is dependent on

the position of the full moon among the

constellations so if the full moon

appears in the constellation of say

let's see rewa D which is a more or less

Pisces than this the month rayuda or

rayudi

so

I mean how how it was just and certain

things I didn't have worked out but that

was I I wrote

um my best description of the ancient

Indian star calendar and it explains

some things like why the the rainy

season officially starts like five weeks

after the rainy season really starts you
know it's like the Buddhist calendar is
getting out of sync with the seasons
because it's based on the site of real
year and not the seasonal year and
there's this thing called precession of
the equinoxes that is causing it's like
one day every 70 years
for the seasons and the stars to get out
of sync
so that kind of thing
um but I've written a lot of essays that
I particularly
felt some satisfaction for having
written some of them are better written
than others I suppose so I do have some

favorites but uh

in I don't know you can pick your own

favorites I guess

so I'll just move on to the Aria swasti

project next question here

can you comment on what you see as the

biggest misconceptions about Buddhism

well I mean I think most Buddhists don't

really understand Kama or Karma I think

most Buddhists don't really understand

nibana or Nirvana which makes sense

because nibana or Nirvana is completely

off the scale and you cannot grasp

intellectually anyway I mean there's

certain makeshifts you can say it's the

end of suffering or something but

that's like in an ethical sense but like

in the metaphysical sense what is

nirvana you know aside from like

ultimate truth or something is I mean

you can just kind of stick labels onto

it but you can't really grasp it you

cannot grasp a reality with the

intellectual mind

another thing that uh is one of the

biggest misconceptions about Buddhism is

pedicia Samuel Potter or dependent

colonizing

um as I've described many times uh it

was so difficult for anybody to

understand it the Buddha himself

according to the legend almost became a

Hermit and didn't say anything because

he figured nobody was going to

understand it anyway

and within a short time within the first

one or two hundred years of the

existence of Buddhism it had essentially

condensed or crystallized down to the 12

knee Donna Theory the 12 links you know

this causes that which causes that it's

like a linear sequence

and I really don't think that's what the

Buddha taught

so

the biggest misconceptions about

Buddhism another misconception about

Buddhism is just the assumption that the

polytexts as they exist today

accurately represent what the Buddha

taught

that um I think that is a serious

misconception and dogmatists or faith

oriented people they just cannot

question their religion they want to

believe it's all gospel truth literally

and so you know they don't want to hear

it you know it's just they'll come up

with these arguments I've had

intelligent Western monks who are just

very dogmatic and Faith oriented they're

saying you know the Buddha was

enlightened and so he knew how to teach

in a way that the teachings wouldn't get

corrupted

but human nature is human nature you

know you can you've got this pure system
and then you you start putting it into
the hands of impure people you know the
same happened with Christianity and it's
going to start veering in weird
directions and get corrupted and
everything is impermanent including
budavachana or the Buddha taught
so yeah those are some of them I could
probably come up with a longer list but
so that's so I mean even just the middle
path is is a big misconception because
most people think oh middle path the
middle path between self-indulgence and
self-torture but I mean if you read the
sutos there are a number of middle paths
like dependent call Rising is like the

middle path and that may have been the

original middle path of the Buddha

taught not just the middle path between

self-indulgence and self-torture but the

middle path between is and isn't

and it's it's like is the is the world

real or is it unreal well

no

it's the middle path between those

but uh

I think I'll just move on to the next

question maybe I should just start

answering answering these questions with

with koans or riddles or something just

keep everybody completely confused

so the next question is from hey it's

Tig

and hey it's TIG says what is your

opinion on horse flies

have you been bit harassed and molested

[__] by a horse fly before and I think

he just likes being kind of irreverent

and off the wall

um somehow horse flies I'm pretty sure

they came up like biting flies or

something came up in the Discord server

and so he went to the Q a room on the

Discord server and and asked me my

opinion of horse flies and I mean nobody

likes horse flies

um they just don't I mean if you've ever

seen a horse fly like when it's biting

you or when it's starting to bite you

you know it's got like these these two
little things on its mouth that kind of
open up and then this this blade comes
down and like Cuts your skin and unlike
a mosquito or a flea that sucks your
blood the horse fly just slices you and
then like licks it up
and it hurts
and uh yeah I had considerable
experiences with horse flies partly
because they're attracted to moisture
like
um those of you who've gone swimming in
rivers may may know like during the
summer time especially if it's like a
farm area where there's lots of horses

and cows around where a horse flies you know congregate that you come up out of the water they're more likely to bite you because they're attracted to the wetness and when I was in Burma I was wet all the time because I was just sweating like the proverbial Arab and so yeah horse flies were a problem but they weren't nearly as bad as I think they're called sand flies I call them these vampire flies because there's way more of them and they were a little bigger than a housefly but longer and kind of a modeled gray color and they hurt as approximately as bad as a horse fly did but and they I mean they were in swarms

they weren't like horse flies are
generally like alone wolves you know
they're just like solitary agents
um but but these these sand flies or
vampire flies or whatever they were
um I mean sometimes they'd be in in like
swarms and I'd be living under a rock
ledge out in this forest with no
mosquito net no building you know I was
just it was like open season on me and
I'd be sitting there sometimes I mean my
eyebrows would be all the way up and my
eyes would be wide and I'd be holding my
sweat rag just just kind of exclaiming
to myself because it was kind of it was
kind of scary and

I mean I can be bitten by a mosquito
with Equanimity you know I can just sit
there and let them and so long as it's
not like crazy and lots of them
you know I mean if I'm there there were
Times living under that Rock Ledge in
Burma where I'd have like five or six
mosquitoes biting me all the same time
and of course a monk isn't supposed to
swap them not supposed to kill any
living thing not even the self-defense
not on purpose anyway but these vampire
flies I mean it hurt when they would
bite and I just could not sit there with
Equanimity and so ironically it was when
I was trying to be as strict of a monk
as I could you know just living just out

in the wilderness no building nothing

that you know no mosquito net that I

started like swatting these things with

like a wet sweat rag you know I had like

this washcloth that would be sort of

damp and heavy and lethal

um just because it was so soaked in

sweat all the time and I got really good

at it I got like like phenomenally good

it's like you learn like if the the fly

is right here you Swan it from the from

the back so that it whips around your

arm and speeds up it's sort of like the

cracking of a whip

and uh at first I mean they're tough so

at first

um you know they wouldn't die but I just
got too good at it with all the practice
of just trying to keep them off of me
and a monk is allowed to use a kind of
whisk thing to keep flies off of them I
mean he's not supposed to be trying to
kill them but that they're like the
Terminator they don't give up if you
don't kill them they just come back and
try and bite you again but I did try I
mean I've mentioned this before that I
did try to uh at least
um
mitigate the Bad Karma from killing
these
painfully biting blood drinking
parasites by after I killed one or at

least stunned it I'd drop it into an ant
lion pit and thereby feed a poor hungry
little ant lion
and ant lions are kind of cool I mean
those of you who don't don't live in
like a dry Dusty Sandy place and maybe
you've never seen ant lions before but
they dig a funnel
the in the sand or in the dust it's just
this funnel and then any animal that
falls into it the ant lions at the very
bottom in the the nadir not the Apex the
nadir of of the funnel and it starts
using its tail to like flip sand onto it
to knock it farther down and then when
it gets to the bottom it's got these big

jaws and just eats it and that's like

the larva or the nymph and when it

reaches maturity it turns into this

little thing that looks like a little

dragonfly or something

so anyway I'm just uh Meandering all

over the place here

in uh in the realm of Entomology

so I hate stick says my opinion of horse

flies uh yeah I don't like them I mean

the entire insect ordered diptera I

don't like much you know which includes

flies mosquitoes gnats

you know it's just

they're bad I mean that's a good

indication that that whoever created

this universe is not a good God

you know he's he's got like a like a
Mean Streak to him I mean you consider
that most of the living creatures in
this world are parasites because almost
every creature has got littler creatures
sucking on it or living in his guts or
or whatever
it's it's just it's ugly nature is ugly
people who think that nature is is just
beautiful and harmonious that the birds
are seeing with joy and all this it's
it's not that way at all it's like it's
a it's a battlefield everything's trying
to kill and eat something else and the
birds when they're singing they're
they're deadly serious when they're

singing it may sound nice they're deadly

serious they're like little dinosaurs I

mean they technically are little

dinosaurs

so

so yeah I've been uh bit harassed and um

well I said not

really [__] by a horse fly

but um

yeah and then there was another thing

called a pony fly there was like a

miniature horse fly it was obviously the

same build it's like a compact horsefly

and fortunately they're moved into my

into my the little cave of the the under

overhanging Rock Ledge there were a lot

of wasps in there and there was a kind

of digger wasp that specialized in these

small horse flies it was really pretty

it was like yellow and black stripes all

over it was really nice and it just it

packed like 50 at least of these little

horse flies into this hole in the ground

while I was watching you know they sting

it and paralyze it and then poke it into

the hole where the babies are and feed

them

so

but uh my my studies of Entomology

especially wasps the order hymenoptera

in in Burma is uh it's good for a

different uh

a different show I guess so we'll just

move on to uh the next question this is

from Stevie

and Stevie

says what is taravada's account

regarding the interplay between personal

agency and the results or fruits or

fruition of karma hoping for more than

karma is one of the imponderables

say a person was murdered is it always

the case that the victim had some dark

or Bad Karma and their death is the

fruit of that Karma or could the victim

be karmically innocent well no the

victim can't be karmically innocent

because anything that happens to you is

necessarily the fruition of karma

but I don't think it's necessary I mean

I could be

indulging in heresy here but I don't

think it's necessary that you're going

to have like this mechanistic one for

one eye for an eye kind of karma thing

going on because karma it's not so much

good karma and Bad Karma it's skillful

Karma and unskillful Karma so if you're

unskillful at driving a car you're gonna

make stupid mistakes and have accidents

and bad things happen to you and if

you're not skillful at driving your

karma it's the same kind of a thing

you're just not skillful and so you're

crashing into things and making all

kinds of suffering so it can work that

way also and everybody most people are

pretty crappy at driving their karma

so let's see here

um he asked this question it wasn't in

the Q a room you know on the Discord

server but it was in the strictly

terravada room and So my answer to that

question was what you do is karma what

happens to you is the fruition of karma

so then he answered right

so the victims of all murders are

murdered because the victim did dark or

Bad Karma

in a previous life right and then a

little later on he says natural

disasters and other events with groups

of people is a thorny issue regarding

Karma no doubt I like

how you emphasize the importance of

individual Karma and that's what I'm

struggling with how can one person's

wepaka or the fruition find expression

in another person's action or Karma

and as it turns out

um on my blog that's up

um it's sort of languishing I haven't

added anything to it in over a month but

I do have a while a ways back uh you

could probably search it on article or

an essay entitled reconciling Karma with

materialism fitting it all together and

in that essay I include

um

a quote from Arthur schopenhauer

and Arthur schopenhauer also kind of

believed in in a kind of karma that's

why he endorsed Buddhism because it

agreed with his philosophy and uh so

this this quote from Arthur schopenhauer

kind of addresses the same this same

situation which is as follows all the

events in a man's life would accordingly

stand in two fundamentally different

kinds of connection

firstly in the objective causal

connection of the natural process

secondly in a subjective connection

which exists only in relation to the

individual who experiences it and which

is thus as subjective as his own dreams

that both kinds of connection exist
simultaneously and the self-same event
although a link in two totally different
chains nevertheless falls into place in
both so that the fate of one individual
invariably fits the fate of the other
and each is the hero of his own drama
while simultaneously figuring in a drama
foreign to him this is something that
surpasses our powers of comprehension
and can only be conceived as possible by
virtue of the most wonderful
pre-established Harmony
although
there is another way of explaining it
and that is that anything that possibly

can exist does exist and so

um

when we get for us let's say somebody

does something bad to us then he's

making new Karma and we're just paying

an old karmic debt so to speak or we're

just not skillful I mean we've got bad

habits with regard to driving our Karma

So You Know It just fits together

um

you can say that that can happen simply

because in an infinite Universe anything

that can happen does happen and we're

just in this universe where it's

happening

which isn't a very good explanation but

even schopenhauer couldn't really

explain it it's it's like

um there's a suit as it says you know

trying to figure out exactly how Karma

Works can make you go insane

it just breaks your think box

so yeah I mean it is

I mean we are a character in somebody

else's Dream well at the same time their

character in our dream and

I mean one of the main arguments against

Karma

which was brought up by my sweetheart

that uh

um

Stevie here is uh sort of responding to

at one point

he's like a natural disaster you know

it's like a thousand people dying an

earthquake how could they all have

exactly the same Karma but I mean the

Buddhist explanation to that is you know

we've got so much Karma accumulated

lifetime after lifetime after lifetime

that almost everybody has some latent

earthquake karma in there somewhere

so I mean that's that's it too I mean

you don't just have it's not like this

mechanistic this has to happen it's not

deterministic

it's just that you're open to the

possibility of it due to some weakness

in your own ability to navigate samsara

skillfully

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from

basketball Jesus

and basketball Jesus says please do tell

what are Katina Privileges and this is a

response I'm pretty sure to the previous

q a where I was discussing Katina

privileges

but with regard to

um monks can only keep three robes you

know the up the lower rope the upper

robe the outer robe it's just three

rectangles of cloth is what a monk is

supposed to to keep and be satisfied

with if he gets an extra rope in

addition to those three he's got to get

rid of one of them within 10 days so he
can keep an extra Row for 10 days unless
he has Katina privileges and then while
he has Katina privileges he can keep as
many robes as he wants
and so basketball Jesus here is wanting
to know what these Katina privileges are
and so what happens is at the end of The
reigns retreat
there's like the monsoon season in in
tropical Asia and it lasts about four
months and generally according to
tradition most monks take the first
three months of the rainy season as it's
called Uh Wausau it just means it rains
rain Wausau means rain so they stay in
one place they're not allowed to wander

around during the three months of the of

the Wasa

and at the and it's originally was

because monks were wandering around

during the rainy season and like

stepping on all kinds of little insects

that come out when it rains and like

trampling Farmers crops but because the

crops are growing during the rainy

season and so

um it was also just the tradition for

other non-buddhist ascetics to stay in

one place during the rainy season and so

just through Indian tradition

um monks are not allowed to travel

during the rainy season which

unfortunately is is like the middle of

summer in in Western in the western

temperate zone

but um at the end of The Rains Retreat

there is the Katina ceremony

and it began as a test

it's like within 24 hours before dawn of

the following day the monks have to

receive cloth they've got to measure it

they've got to cut it into pieces

they've got to sew it together into a

regulation robe and then they have to

dye it so it's the right color all

before and Dawn of the next day and

that's difficult I've made one robe

myself I sewed it by hand of course in

in ancient times they didn't have sewing

machines just sewing it with a needle

and thread it took about three weeks of

just daily like six hours a day working

on this thing so and I didn't even have

to diet it was already it was already a

good enough color

um but the monks at the end of this

range Retreat after living together in

the same place

they've got to make this robe within

within one day and it's a kind of test

it's the way I see it it was like if

they were harmonious enough you know

they were like

um what's the word

uh Cooperative Cooperative enough with

each other you know and harmonious then

they can perform this difficult task

then they get this reward of being able

to keep extra cloth and and so forth

during

um the next I think it's three months

which is the three months after the

rainy season throughout the cold season

mostly

foreign

and it has degenerated into a

meaningless ceremony in Burma where uh

on Katina day somebody will just donate

a fully made set of factory-made robes

to the monks the monks accept it and

then they think they've done Katina and

they they earn these Katina Privileges

and I just refused to go along with it I just would not participate in a Katina ceremony if I could possibly avoid it when I became the habit of my own Monastery in central Burma I just forbade Katina privileges or just forbade Katina ceremonies because it was so corrupt it was meaningless because it really was a test if you can perform this difficult task within one day all the monks who live there even though even the Buddha participated according to the text he was the one who threaded the needle he would sit there and thread the needle for the other monks um I guess in Thailand some of the

stricter monasteries will actually make
a robe but still they're kind of
cheating because they're using a sewing
machine and it says in the in the vinya
that if you have enough robe to make a
you have you know cloth you make a
double robe a double thickness rope
which is more than twice as difficult
then you have to make one of those and
I'm pretty sure the time monks even
though they're trying to be strict bless
their hearts you know they're just
making the easiest kind of robe with a
sewing machine which is still
it's kind of cheating in my opinion
so that's that's what the container
privileges are and Katina literally

means a frame because when they're

making the Rope sewing the pieces

together used a kind of frame to keep it

all kind of flat and rectangular when

you were sewing it

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from the

anti-marxist league

and the anti-marxist league

um really he asks remarkably

anti-marxist question here

is the bodhisattva vowel really binding

If someone becomes a Buddhist through

Mahayana and takes the bodhisattva

vowels but then becomes terrovaden is

that person still somehow bound to the

bodhisattva vowel that's a good question

I've considered that myself

um if you took it in a previous life I

don't think it's binding because it

wasn't really you who took it I mean if

you want to use that kind of argument

though

um you know it's not really you from one

moment to the next

but I mean if you don't even remember

making the vowel I mean how can you be

bound to it if it wasn't you it was

somebody else that caused you to exist

after that person died

but let's say you take the the body side

of about in this life you know you start

off as this idealistic teenage Mahayana

Buddhist and then as you get a little

older you know you're in your 30s or 40s

you convert to teravada

because you consider Terra water to come

closer to what the Buddha actually

taught

then yeah I mean you might you might

have to break the promise I mean it

would be essentially breaking a promise

which according to monastic discipline

is a ducata offense it's a minor offense

a ducata offense or an offensive

wrongdoing is like the most minor

category of offense you just make

confession and it's

it's uh absolved

but still you're making a little bit of karma by

making a vow to do something but I mean sometimes you're better off breaking a vow let's say you vowel Revenge it's like somebody messes you up you know they do something bad to you and you just vow to just mess them up so that they curse their mother for the day she gave them birth and then after you calm down you realize it's better for me not to mess that person up you know just forgive them avoid them in the future good enough

and so I mean you'd be breaking a vowel then but you're better off breaking the vowel then and I think in this case if

you become a terrible on a Buddhist and
the Buddhist says become enlightened In
This Very life if you possibly can
then you're probably better off breaking
the buddhisattva bowel because the
body's out of a bow has you pretty much
stuck in some sorrow forever and ever
because the body's talking about say
that you know no matter how many you
know even though all the suffering
beings in the world are infinitely many
you know I vow to save them all this
kind of stuff now I vow to just stay in
samsara unenlightened until all other
beings are are enlightened
he's just gonna be in in some sorrow

forever which is essentially the

opposite of what the Buddha was teaching

um also I mean on the other hand kind of

maybe the other finger or something

uh you read like in The Diamond Cutter

Sutra how a bodhisattva is supposed to

be and it comes pretty close to the way

an arahaunt is supposed to be

so

yeah

I think

you know it's not good to break vowels

but it's by the same token it's not good

to make vows that are not very carefully

you know thought out and you know you

just

you got to be real sure that it's the

right thing to vow to begin with and

that includes like marriage vows

so many people in the west you know they

vow you know in a house of God

supposedly that they're going to stay

together through better for worse until

death do they part and then two years

down the road they get a divorce because

you know they don't agree on finances or

something

so that's not good so I mean it is good

to keep your word but sometimes you may

be better off

breaking about if the vowel was not a

good vow to make to begin with

so

you're bound to a vow if you made it but

I mean if you break that vow especially

if if it wasn't uh particularly wise or

vowed to make

then uh you know it's sometimes it's

I remember one time somebody's saying

that it's hard to know what is the right

thing to do

and I remember remarking I mean

sometimes there is no right thing to do

you just have to choose between two

wrong things

and that's I mean living in this world I

mean you don't always get to make the

right choice because sometimes you just

got to choose between wrong choices so

you just choose the wrong choice that

isn't as wrong as the other ones

and that's that's the way it is here I

think with breaking the bodies up about

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from Creole I

think I don't know how to pronounce

k-r-i-e-l Creel

Creel

let's go with Creole Creole says here is

a question that I had for a while would

an enlightened person feel embarrassment

or awkwardness for example would a fully

liberated being blush even slightly if

its pants fell down in front of a crowd

of people perhaps revealing even

intimate body parts if not I wonder if

this could be thought of as a test to

validate or not real Enlightenment what

are your thoughts thank you

well you're welcome even though I

haven't answered the question yet

um according to orthodox terravonna

a Buddha or a fully enlightened being

would not feel embarrassment

embarrassment

um or like shame it would be it would be

a kind of cuckoo it'd be like anxiety or

guilt

um and that is an unwholesome mental

state and no enlightened being would

indulge in feeling that sort of thing I

mean at the very at the very most there

might be like a momentary flash of it

that would just come and go you know it

just

run its course and it would not be

prolonged more than one moment

just through the past just through force

of karma from the past but he wouldn't

cling to it and like you know follow

through with it or anything

so I mean from the Orthodox here about a

point of view the answer is no a fully

enlightened being would not feel

embarrassment or awkwardness I mean some

kind of awkwardness if you know it's

like your leg fell asleep you know

physical awkwardness

you get up from meditating and one of

your legs is asleep and you're kind of

Staggering around a little bit can't

walk very good and that kind of

awkwardness sure but

um like emotional

self-consciousness kind of a thing no I

don't think so but from my own personal

point of view just setting aside

Orthodox teravada you know the the

official party line from my own

opinion

um

I don't think it would be impossible for

an enlightened being assuming that

enlightened beings even exist in a

samsara context in this world

but

um

yeah I mean they might get nervous like

I remember seeing some a friend of mine

a long time ago was into uh ajish Shanti

who is a person who can claims to be

enlightened or is considered to be

enlightened and I watched some of his

videos and he was obviously nervous at

the beginning of the videos and he would

say uh I can't remember what what he

kept saying over and over again but some

people probably me included they'll just

unconsciously just throw in like you

know you know or um or things like that

and he was doing that and plus he seemed

nervous at the beginning he finally kind

of calmed down and got into the flow of
it and I'm thinking what an enlightened
being be that way I mean he's claiming
to be enlightened he's considered to be
enlightened by lots and lots of people
but I'm not so sure and then neem
corolli Baba whose picture is up there I
mean he could be he could have been
fully enlightened and he would yell and
cry and laugh and do all sorts of things
so
I don't think it's necessarily A like
I think that a fully enlightened being
this is my own opinion here not Orthodox
terrible I already told you what
Orthodox caravada says but my own
opinion is a fully enlightened being can

do whatever whatever just seems

appropriate you know whatever feels

right or whatever is right

um

and

they're just not identified with it you

know it's like their their body is just

nature taking its course you know even

their brain you know what their a lot of

you know what they're doing is just

nature taking its course and they're

just not identified with that

so it could be that way too and I

wouldn't be surprised if it is assuming

again that enlightened beings even exist

in this worldly context

but I think I might get to that a little
later this there's another question if I
remember correctly a little farther down
so
yeah I mean even if they did feel that
embarrassment they wouldn't be
identified with that feeling it would
just be just a natural thing that arises
and they're just not identified with the
The Walking meat puppet anyway
so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is an easy one this
is from macubo
and makubo says are you familiar with
the works of Hubert benowit I don't know
how to pronounce French names Benoit
let's call him Benoit are you familiar

with the works of Hubert benowit in
particular the Supreme Doctrine and if
so what are your thoughts well with
regard to the question I'm familiar with
the works of Herbert Benoit the very
easy answer is nope
I don't recall ever hearing of this
person before
and uh I'm completely unfamiliar with
the Supreme doctrine of her Hubert
Benoit and so I guess those are my
thoughts sorry about that let's move on
to the next question this is from Yuga
and Yugo says can Karma be dangerous if
not understood right in one of the sutas
Buddha explains how and why people are

born rich or poor or sick or healthy if

oh if you take a rich person that knows

why he is rich in this life he could use

that logic to be more selfish and so on

if you know what suta I'm talking about

there are a number of sutos that talk

about that sort of thing like there's

one suit it's a relatively well-known

one that says such things as you know if

a person is born ugly it means that they

were like an angry person in a previous

life I'm really not sure that again it's

not that deterministic and mechanistic

that karma really doesn't necessarily

work that way in all cases

but um

yeah if you take a rich person and he

knows why he is rich in this life he
could use that logic to be more selfish
I don't think that's how it works I mean
according to Orthodox Buddhism a rich
person in this life was generous in a
previous life or just has like it still
has a certain amount of generosity
probably nowadays you look at rich
people it was a previous life
I mean some people they're still
um very generous benefactors even though
they're rich but it's a general rule you
get rich because you're looking out for
number one or maybe you just luck out
and invent something that people find
useful like Facebook or something

um but uh yeah I mean according to
Buddhism as a general if you're going to
be rich in a future life it's because
you should be generous in this life
but on the other hand uh Karma can be
dangerous if not understood correctly
like let's say you've got some
Buddhist terrorist who thinks he's going
to go to heaven for starting a civil war
or something
then yeah he doesn't understand Karma
correctly because you're not going to
get good karma for that you're going to
get bad karma for that you know you're
going to make bad things happen and
eventually bad things are gonna be
happening back to you

in fact even when you're doing the bad things bad things are already happening back to you and the fact that you're poisoning your own mind and your own karmic stream with this toxicity which is pretty much how Buddhist ethics works I mean it's not like you're going to get punished you know 10 lifetimes down the road for killing somebody it's like you're you're damaging yourself you know while you've got this intention to kill them and while you're following through with it already you're poisoning your own system

you don't believe that just read Crime and Punishment by Dostoevsky

so let's see

yeah Karma can be dangerous if not

understood correctly

um and uh I mean for some reason it just

reminds me of Burmese Buddhists who

really are spiritual materialists and I

mean not all of them but it they tend to

be spiritual materialists in which they

think of karma as just a kind of money

you know they're they're investing in

their future by donating to monasteries

and so forth you know they see it as as

almost like a a financial transaction

like an investment in their future

and uh I mean that in a way is is also

it's not understanding Karma correctly

in my opinion

you know this

I don't know it just doesn't sit right

with me

and like a lot of you go to a Buddhist

monster you'll have a Burmese one

especially you know you'll see these

like a chair there and it'll have like

this name plaque you know donated by the

the so-and-so family and

yeah it's like they're trying to get

their their payback in this life

rather than uh you know they're just

really going for doing the the right

thing I mean that's that's how you're

going to get the best karma is not

you're making some transaction you know

if I donate this I get this back you
know in in the next life or something I
mean that's just that's just a
transaction
and it won't necessarily work out the
way you're hoping but if you just out of
the goodness of your heart do good then
that's definitely going to be much
better and don't even worry about the
karma don't just don't try and figure it
out just don't bother with it just do
what you think is right and good and
you're gonna be you're gonna be fairly
good follow your conscience especially
if you have one
I mean Islamic terrorists I mean blowing
up a School Bus full of children

thinking they're going to go to heaven

for that I mean it's not exactly Karma

they think God is going to reward them

but um yeah I mean

a real foolish you know like a bad

Buddhist could think similar things

maybe not that extreme and then again

maybe so

so I guess I kind of answered that one

so I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from

bodhisatta969

and body SATA 969 says is it true that

nibana can be explained something like

this quote the Indians back then

believed in a fire element when you

light a match the fire element they
didn't have matches back then
okay I I just interrupted myself when
you light a match the fire element comes
and lights the match when you blow it
out it doesn't just go out but it goes
into The Ether unquote because of the
word extinction many people believe that
Buddhism is something like nihilism but
the Buddha is omnipresent even after his
death just at a different frequency this
is pretty much how a Buddhist teacher
explained it
what do you say to that that sounds
pretty good to me well ajanta nisaro was
uh he wrote a book like the the mind
like fire Unbound or something he calls

nibana unbinding which I think is a bad

etymology

but um

the dogs acting up

well I think it's a bad etymology but

there is some truth to the fact that in

ancient India

uh fire was a god Agni who was like the

the intermediary between people and and

the gods up in heaven you know he's sort

of like the the god that's like the

messenger to the other gods that lives

here on this planet but it's like

because he's a god he's like a cosmic

kind of like a cosmic force and even if

there's no fire actually there ugni is

there

and so when when you blow a fire out it

just goes back into an unmanifest state

you know as the agony is still there

it's just you know sort of like the the

old Alchemists in the west who believe

in this legista and stuff that was like

latent fire existing and anything that

can burn it was sort of an idea like

that

but um it doesn't really go into The

Ether I mean because we're an Extinction

yeah it's extinguishing

or blowing out nibana literally means

blowing out you know like the fire blows

out

but it doesn't really go anywhere and it

doesn't just cease to exist

so at least in ancient Indian uh belief

let's see Buddhism something like

nihilism yeah even a lot of really

intellectual Buddhists because they

can't accept any kind of mysticism or

anything like that they just have to say

well you just you're just cease to exist

or something

but the Buddha is omnipresent even after

his death well that's that's kind of

pushing it on just a different frequency

it's it's more like

like in quantum physics where they say

empty space can contain zero energy or

infinite energy and it's kind of both

true and it's just sort of like this

like an enigma like a paradox

it's like everything and nothing again I

go back to Hegel how he began his uh his

logic his his dialectic you begin with

pure being and then the antithesis to

Pure beings these the thesis is pure

being the antithesis is pure non-being

and according to Hegel they just merge

together they cannot be differentiated

because neither one of them has any kind

of discernible content

and so then you have to have the

synthesis

in which being a non-being sort of come

to exist through contrast

but uh

hopefully I didn't just wander too far

away here so it's it's yeah it's like

empty space can contain zero energy or

Infinite Energy it's like zero and

infinity

merge together

and

that's sort of the problem that you have

with like ultimate truth or like nibana

it's like the Hindus the vedantists

anyway will say the highest principle is

isn't Brahman is Atman and it's it's

just like this formless Consciousness

that pervades the entire universe the

Buddhists just don't go there you know

there you can't say it is and you can't

say it isn't but you have to say one or the other because if you're using human language because human language is dualistic so most religious people will say is and you know it's Brahman or God or Dao or whatever and a lot of Buddhists just say isn't it's just blowing out and you just don't talk about it

you know you don't don't reify the absolute and that's I mean that's one of the biggest misconceptions in Western Buddhism is people just intellectually trying to figure out ultimate truth and it just isn't going to happen

oh

so let's see here

those Buddhas omnipresent even after his death you know this is pretty much how the Buddhists yeah I mean it's that's a way of it's it's like a a jerry-rigged way of explaining it I mean and that's all you can do that's the best you can do

is uh jerry-rigged explanations of niblana because you cannot explain nibana

I mean you can use jerry-rigged explanations especially with regard to the ethical aspect of Nirvana but when you're dealing with the metaphysical aspect of nibono nothing you say is going to be valid

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here

um my buddy sells at 969

and he says the three bondages destroyed

in sewed upon us are personality belief

doubt about the Buddhist teachings and

attachment to rules and rights which is

the belief that performing rules and

rights is sufficient for liberation

in the Buddhist view aren't devout

Buddhists already sewed upon us

what can we do to become sotopona in

this life are you already a certain Upon

Our already beyond that

okay well I'm pretty sure bodhisatta 969

has seen

q and A's in the past in which I I talk

about how the the standard four stages
of sainthood sonapana sakuragami anagami
and arahan probably do not originate
with the Buddha himself
that in the oldest texts that are
considered to be you know the earliest
strata of Buddhist literature soccer
dagamis aren't mentioned at all
sotopanos apparently are not Saints you
can have families of sotoponas that
monks aren't supposed to be relying
heavily upon because it could cause
hardships for them and then onigamis or
non-returners like the first several
sutas of the idiotica of the the kuriken
ikaya it's apparently using anagame as a

synonym for arahant

so

so I really I mean going with the four

stages of sainthood

saying that sodopaws are I mean they've

they've gone beyond self-view soccer

yeah

no Sakaya DT

uh doubt about the Buddha's teachings

and attachment to he says rules and

rights here but literally it's morality

and observance is Sila Bata

Sila is the morality rules I mean you

can call it rules but I mean it really

does mean morality and uh nabata is like

observances where it's you know it's not

really a moral or ethical thing it's

like a monk shaving his head and wearing
the brown robes that's that's more of an
observance than than morality because
it's morally neutral
and uh or just believing that only an
ordained monk can become enlightened or
become enlightened and stay alive for
more than you know one day or so I mean
that's that's essentially adherence to
morality and observances because I mean
that's saying you know you can't be
enlightened unless you go through this
ceremony and have your head shaved and
wear a brown robe
so let's see here
in Buddha's views aren't about Buddhists

already sewed upon us well that's what
I've been saying from the beginning
pretty much is that the original meaning
of the sodapana was just simply someone
who had entered upon dhamma
has like seriously as a way of life you
know I'd be a convert to Buddhism would
be a soda upon it originally and then it
got turned into a saint just as the four
genres were just the four levels of of
meditation and it's defined as right
concentration in the mahasra and then it
the right concentration became a
superhuman mental state so even to
become a soda Paula it's a superhuman
mental state now according to Orthodox
taravala and uh

yeah I mean maybe I'm wrong but I just I

just don't buy it

I think originally a sodapana was sort

of like a born-again Christian or

something where you just it's a convert

to Buddhism someone who has started you

know you know devoutly practicing dhamma

so what can we do to become sodaponos in

this life it depends on your definition

of soda Palm

just do your best and uh don't cling to

uh your personality belief you know

don't don't wallow an eye Me Mine

and uh you know do your best to

understand and follow the Buddhist

teachings

and uh don't think that following lists
of rules and observances is going to get
you enlightened with it not following
them is not going to get you a mind
so
that's that's that question and then are
you already a sodapana or already beyond
that I mean again I mean the the term
itself
is so dubious with regard to its meaning
and just saying that you know when
you're a sodapon you can no longer tell
a lie for example I mean you just can't
and there's this list of things that uh
just can't do and I mean if you're
freeing yourself
um maybe you can but you just don't sort

of like uh Jordan Peterson says one of

my favorite quotes of it is that you

should be able to be a monster and then

not be one but according to Orthodox

caravada once you become an aria you

just can't be a monster

but I think it would be more appraisal

you still have the capacity for it but

you just don't do it

so

am I already a soda Palmer or already

beyond that God yeah I don't know you

tell me

so I'll just move on to the next

question also from uh bodhisatta 969

one teacher said this if you read the

polytexts the people Buddha taught at
that time pretty quickly became soda
Palmas or arahans nowadays Buddhist
teachings are so obscure that even
Buddhists and monks can no longer easily
explain what Buddhism is actually about
that's why there are hardly any
Buddhists who awaken in this life
because the goal and the path are no
longer clear
your opinion on this well again I mean
you can't believe everything you read in
the text if you read about previous
Buddhas before our Buddha godama that
sometimes they were making our hearts
out of literally billions of people all
at the same time you know they give one

talk to this multitude of literally

billions of them like more than the

entire population of this Earth

and they all become morons

and I mean just because I mean the

Indians were really into this kind of

hyperbole you know just sort of

exaggeration

exaggeration exaggerating

uh both with regard to really high

numbers and like super tiny numbers you

know both ends

so let's see

so I mean

I'm sure that the Buddha because he was

an enlightened teacher assuming again

that enlightened teachers even exist
within the con the unenlightened context
of samsara
that uh yeah I mean he probably just
looked into you and see what you needed
to hear and tell you that like maharaji
neem curly bob up there he was like that
too I mean he would just look right
through you see exactly what you needed
and give it to you but even then if you
weren't ripe for enlightenment I mean he
wouldn't just say the magic words to get
you enlightened the Buddha couldn't do
that either the Buddha had like ordained
disciples like the the notorious group
of six
who I mean they were just rascally fools

even though I mean they were in
proximity with the Buddha they were
hearing his sermons and everything I
mean he couldn't he couldn't cure them
of their own foolishness they just
weren't ready yet and that's the way it
is with most people I've had one person
at least one person tell me that because
the Buddha rediscovered dhamma there was
no dhamma in this world before the time
of the Buddha and so you had all these
people that were ripe for enlightenment
but they didn't have the opportunity
because there wasn't any dama until the
Buddha rediscovered it and then they
just you know they're like yellow leaves

falling off a tree in a in October

during a windstorm

so that's one way of explaining it but

um nowadays it's according according to

this question here nowadays Buddhist

teachings are so obscure that even

Buddhists and monks can no longer easily

explain what Buddhism is all about yeah

well I mean it's corrupt now so a lot of

what they think

develop they believe is genuine dama

isn't

but what the Buddha was teaching I mean

that's obviously like pure buddhavachana

pure teachings and Buddha because he's

teaching it

but you know 2 000 years down the road

that gets corrupted and all this extra

stuff gets added some important stuff

maybe gets deleted

and uh also we're just not living in as

inspired of a culture and inspired of an

age as ancient India I mean in some ways

I consider

like the Ganges Valley of the Buddhist

time to be the Apex of of human

civilization and it's been kind of

downhill since then I mean in certain

respects

I mean you had still had sociopathic

Kings and robbers and bandits and all

kinds of bad things going on he didn't

have cures for malaria or or cholera you

know all these diseases and so forth

they didn't have cures for yet

but I mean now we're living in an age of

spiritual

mediocrity pretty much but there was

like real it was a ferment going on in

the Buddhist time it was uh really uh an

amazing amazing time

not just would go to the Buddha but I

mean there were so many spiritual

teachers there were people that were

literally torturing themselves to death

for the sake of Enlightenment or or

liberation

which the Buddha was teaching against I

mean you wouldn't need to teach against

it now because nobody's really doing it

unless they're just like mentally

unhinged or something

so

let's see my opinion on this I guess I

guess I just gave my opinion so I'm just

going to move on to the next question

here this is from a wet fart

and wet fart leaves a time stamp which

is 39 minutes and 29 seconds from the

previous q a which was number 61.

and then uh it's it's with regard to a

question with regard to I don't remember

exactly what the question was but I was

talking about Buddhist ethics and how

like inhumanly uncompromising they are

and I gave the example you've got a a

terrorist who has planted a bomb in a
city a thickly populated city and only
the terrorist knows where that bomb is
but the police have captured that
terrorist and he's not talking so
would it be the ethical thing to do to
torture that terrorist in order to make
him tell where the bomb is in order to
save ten thousand lives and from the
Buddhist point of view it's no
from the Buddhist point of view it is
unethical for you to torture that
terrorist even though
if you've tortured him Ten Thousand
Lives will be saved because the Ten
Thousand Lives aren't on you they're on
him you know he's the one who's killing

them and you're just you're just messing

him up

so

um that's that's what I was talking

about in the previous q a and uh so what

fart here he gives the time stamp was

when I'm I assume that I'm discussing

that and he says what if it is tickle

torture to save ten thousand people or

what if it is 7.5 billion people then

can he torture

and the thing is I mean you just have to

make the call yourself sometimes you

just take the hit you know it's like

sometimes it may be best to do a little

bit of bad like torturing a terrorist in

order to result in a greater good even

though you're taking the hit

you know sort of like the a dharmic view

of a soldier is someone who is like a

tragic hero and that he is sacrificing

his own spiritual welfare for the sake

of others

and

I think I think you just have to make

the call yourself sometimes it may be

worthy or worthwhile to take the hit

then uh just let just callously let

people know thousands or hear 7.5

billion people die

so

yeah I think it's

it's like your call to make and it's I

think it would be the uh the heroic

thing to do

would be to take the hit just for the

sake of helping others I mean I did that

to a small degree as a monk for example

I'm living out under the Rock Ledge out

in the middle of nowhere just very rural

Burma you know it's just Hillbillies

Burmese Hillbillies living there and uh

one one time one of my supporters more

or less of a friend of mine comes and

tells me that his daughter has had

malaria for I think it was like six

weeks

and I mean I couldn't have full super

malaria for six weeks I'd be dead long

before the six weeks was up I mean the
Burmese they have a certain resistance
to it
and uh he said that they went to the
Village medical officer and got some
pills which are probably chloroquine and
it's obsolete there's so many strains of
malaria that has evolved to tolerate
chloroquine that it doesn't always work
and so I have an awesome state of the
art I think it was methaquin or
something that at the time it was it was
reliable you know there weren't strains
of malaria that had evolved to survive
it yet
and so I gave him some of my malaria
pills even though it's against the rules

I was breaking rule by giving them to
him because a monk isn't supposed to be
practicing medicine you know dispensing
medications or anything like that but
it's a Duke of Defense requiring
confession but I figured you know it's
worth the hit
or or like a monk who lets a pretty girl
drown because it's against the rules for
a monk to be touching pretty girls much
less giving mouth-to-mouth resuscitation
to them then I mean if someone's dying I
mean you might as well just do the break
the rule and do the penance
so I mean it's the the way that like
ancient Indian ethics worked was

practically inhuman this I mean it's

true I'm not saying it's not true that

you are taking a hit I mean you you

aren't doing a certain amount of Bad

Karma that you might not do at all if

you just sat there and let the people

die

but

I mean there is a certain compassion

that is meritorious that is good karma

involved even though you're taking the

hit by doing this thing that you're not

supposed to do supposedly

so tickle torture to save 10 000 people

I mean it's each person has the right to

make their own moral decisions along

these lines

so I mean you know of a terrorist you
can just tickle them to make them tell
you where the bomb is
or if it's 7.5 billion people I mean
there are a lot of people nowadays I
think there've always been a lot of
people who think that the world would be
better off if everybody just died anyway
but I mean we all have to make our own
choices so I don't have any uh yes or no
questions or yes or no answers with
regard to that one it's like everyone
else to just make their own decisions
are you willing to kill one person to
save ten it's like the trolley car
ethics problems

from the Orthodox Buddhist point of view

you just stand there and let the people

get squished

so wet fart asks another one here are

you enlightened and how do you know if

you are

golly well if I'm enlightened then so

are you and if you're not enlightened

then neither am I that's the best answer

I can give with regard to that one

foreign

this is from Fred and Fred says why was

Genghis sent away and Genghis was my dog

and I love Genghis and Genghis loved me

and now he's living on a farm in Ohio

and he was sent away mainly because

we're moving to a different house

on this house

it's uh

I mean it's it's sort of it's on a steep

hill and it's kind of a big property and

it's just this constant battle against

entropy keeping it maintained and I work

full time I work hard I come home and

I'm tired and for me to work all day and

then come home and do like yard work and

stuff I mean that's just slavery I mean

you work all day you come home and then

you got to keep working you got to work

all on the weekends that's slavery I

don't want to live that way my

sweetheart I mean she's got enough to do

already she doesn't want to have to keep

you know doing all the work herself

with regard to maintaining the property

and so forth so we're just moving to uh

a nicer house with a smaller yard and

there's also I mean this wasn't my call

but there's like a homeowners

association an HOA and like dogs that

live in the backyard and bark a lot are

probably not

not acceptable

to such uh such places and so I have to

admit that

um Genghis I wouldn't have sent him away

if I could if I didn't have to

acknowledge that he'd be better off

living on a 40-acre farm where he can

just run around and just bark his guts

out if he wants to then stay in this

little backyard that we're going to be

moving to with with the homeowners

association breathing down genghis's

collar

so I mean I was sad to see him go and

it's like

it's it wasn't my attachment to him

personally so much I mean there was some

of that too I guess I'm human you know I

love my dog I don't want to just send

him away but it was like a feeling of

like I'd betrayed him you know he loved

and trusted me

and then I send him away

so it was more that that bothered me

than the separation just just for

separation's sake you know I'm not going

to see him again maybe

unless I go to a farm in Ohio

um

but I mean that is always bothered me

like I'd make a really terrible farmer

like raising livestock I mean I was I've

considered that if if we had chickens I

should just take responsibility and just

kill our own chickens just because I

could make sure they're killed humanely

again this is a choice of taking the hit

you know

is being the tragic hero or whatever

but I mean

like in Dante's Inferno the lowest pit

of Hell is it is reserved for Traders
it's like people that pretend to be your
friend and then stab you in the back and
the reason why it was the bottom pit of
Hell to where the Traders went is of
course because Judas Iscariot who is
like you know the villain in in the
Bible the Christian Bible that's what he
did you know he stabbed Jesus in the
back metaphorically
and so
um at the very bottom like in Dante's
Inferno the hell is shaped like a funnel
and sort of like the ant lion at the
bottom is Satan and he's got three
mouths and in one of his mouths is Judas

Iscariot he's chewing on him like a

cigar butt and then the second of his

mouth is Brutus who betrayed Julius

Caesar and stabbed him in the groin or

something I can't remember where he

stabbed him

and then the third the third mouth is is

reserved it's still empty it's waiting

for for Mr 666 the Antichrist

uh which is kind of strange that Satan

who's the bad guy and on the side

supposedly of antichrist is going to be

chewing on him you know you think that

Satan would be kind of like advocating

for the bad guys but um

I mean it's like

betraying them it's it's and like a

farmer does this all the time it's like
you got this Village farmer
you know in Burma let's say and he
raises these Pigs and the Pig gets a
sore on his skin the farmer will be out
there smearing the ointment on there and
he's feeding it every day and he's you
know keeping the dogs away from it you
know he's keeping it safe and the pig
comes to to trust this farmer and then
the day before a festival the farmer
goes out there with the big butcher
knife and cuts the pig's throat or or
however it is that they kill pigs I've
heard pigs dying the day before
festivals in Buddhist Burma is it's an

awful screeching screaming gurgling

sound that they make

and it's like I mean that's it seems

like a pretty bad thing to do

you know it's like you earn this

animal's trust by taking care of it at

everything and then

and then finally you just totally betray

them and it was it was definitely a much

lesser

severity of transgression with with my

dog Genghis because I have to admit I

mean he's probably much better off

on on a 40 Acre Farm than he would be in

this little rectangle of yard

in in the house that we're moving to

so that's the main reason why we're

getting rid of why I uh I consent it to

get rid of Genghis I mean if it wasn't a

situation like that I would have just

put my foot down and say we're keeping

Genghis

but I have to admit he's in a better

place now I hope

you know he's running around and going

fishing and stuff

um I was told that he went fishing the

other day I asked if he caught anything

but he was just apparent he was he's not

trusted to hold a fishing pole yet I

guess you know he's sort of still

learning the ropes of that kind of thing

so

make gingus be happy

and I'll just move on to the next

question here

and this is from rui

and rui says hello Ponyo should we

assume the existence of an infinite or a

limited number of past lives considering

considering an infinite number of past

lives did the Buddha appear into just a

section of them right before his

Awakening there seems to be a logical

problem here because contemplating an

infinite number of past lives would

require an infinite amount of time and

therefore the following moment Awakening

would always be Out Of Reach

well I mean this is sort of like xeno's

paradox paradoxes he had more than one

where I mean you can have an infinity

this big you know you can have an

Infinity in a grain of sand according to

uh William Blake

and that's right I mean there's an

infinite number of points in that grain

of sand

so

um yeah I don't it might be that he just

can't he just contemplated them all

simultaneously with an infinite mind a

mind that had just become infinite

but I mean with regard to this should we

assume the existence of an infinite or

limited number of past lives no

that is the answer I mean it's like

um there are certain questions that the

Buddha would not answer one is is is the

world

uh finite or infinite like the cosmos or

is the world Eternal or non-eternal and

I mean that Eternal one that's that's

kind of the one we're talking about here

and the Buddha just I mean you just

don't bother don't even go there

so I mean it's just you can't really

know the answer anyway because it's

ultimate truth is beyond the perceiving

mind

so let's see

uh uh uh yeah I don't think there's

really a logical problem

but uh and with regard to you should we
assume the existence of an infinite or a
limited number of past lives just go
with unknown
an unknowable number of past lives
so then rui has sort of a a second
question here connected to the first one
furthermore doesn't the notion of a
limited number of past lives violate the
notion that A Moment Of Consciousness
can only come from another moment of
Consciousness which I've heard of
teachers from teravada to vajrayana
well
yeah everything has to have a cause
anything that arises has to have a Cause

or more likely uh is any number of

causes because things never have just

one cause

um

but I mean if if we assume that

Consciousness ultimately is formless and

infinite and because it's formless and

infinite you can't really say that it

exists or doesn't exist so I'm already

speaking with regard to what is invalid

to say but even so I mean it's sort of

like

quantum physics you got empty space

which has got zero contains zero energy

and infinite energy and you've got

particles and any particles just

appearing you know out of empty space

out of the quantum field

and then generally they just

read disappear again

go back and they just Collide and go

back into nothingness

um so

I think Consciousness could be that way

I've already I've already uh in previous

cues and A's q and A's I've uh given a

few possibilities of how new karmic

streams can arise you know so they would

have a beginning

and both of them strangely from this

strange book called Seth speaks and one

is this Karma Can it can just break off

it can just split the karmic stream can

just split into two

um so that would be one way of

multiplying beings you know some of them

are becoming enlightened while you're

getting new ones like getting spun off

like a spark or something coming off the

side of the main karmic stream of some

larger greater being or something and

another one is that we are when we like

dream at night

we are Conjuring up beings that don't

really exist or at least they didn't

exist until we dream them you know I'm

sure you've all had dreams where you

know you're interacting with someone

that doesn't exist in reality I mean

you've never met this person before it's

just your your subconscious imagination
is Conjuring up this person in your
dream
and according to the Seth book that
these beings that we are Conjuring up in
our dreams and our Daydreams and so
forth they have like this the faintest
wispiest shadowiest little existence but
they continue doing they continue to
have their own existence you know
they've got their own momentum going and
that's how like that's another way that
that Consciousness like a karmic stream
can can sort of be generated by another
comic stream
which is kind of a weird idea I'm not

I'm not vouching for it necessarily but

it's it's really an intriguing idea to

me

so in both of those cases uh

Consciousness can come from another

moment of Consciousness but at the same

time it's not violating anything

um to have new karmic streams being

generated from older karmic streams

but then again it could be sort of like

uh you know the the particle and the

anti-particle just poofing you know into

existence out of what apparently is

empty space because you know just

infinite energy is permeating the entire

universe or you know the simile of the

block of marble which I'm continually

yammering about

or like in the the Dow you know from the

Dow came the the one from the one came

to two and the two came the ten thousand

things

so it's all just sort of generating from

this

Infinite Source

so it's already there I mean nothing's

really generated these Karma extremes

don't ultimately exist

so I mean that's another thing it's like

um I mean these moment of Consciousness

or or like these these karmic streams

they are not ultimately real anyway

so I mean

I don't know what I mean but they're not

ultimately real

they're just potential statues contained

within that block of marble and they're

always going to be there in every

possible statue has to be contained in

that block of Marvel

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from White Ash

Piper

and white ash Piper says are you

familiar with red Pines translation or

does he

or docs he did on Mountain Hermits he

visited in China well I've read one

translation by Red Pine and that was the

poems of hanshan

and

I wasn't extremely impressed by Red

Pines translation

I didn't see any documentaries that he

did about Mountain Hermits although

hanshan whose poems Red Pine translated

was a mountain hermit in China in like

medieval China

and uh it's weird it's one thing I

learned about Chinese Buddhism or

Chinese religion medieval Chinese

religion from reading that translation

is hanshan is seen as a kind of

enlightened Sage you know he's like a

Zen Sage or something but you read the

translations I mean the legend and the

reality are don't exactly fit together

very well because Han Sean a lot of the

time he's like complaining about

um apparently what happened hanshan he

was like this

Chinese Chan Buddhist Sage who also read

some taoism so he was you know he was

sort of like the polymath sage

um

he was uh

like a clerk or some sort of some kind

of bureaucrat who was on the wrong side

of like a a coup attempt or some such

and he just had to flee into the forest

in order to keep his head attached to

his neck

and some of his poems he's complaining

about having to live out in the woods

he's he's complaining because he had

like a limp or something and in order to

be oh what were they called

I'm continually having these lapses the

like the the Chinese scholar who became

he had to pass all these tests in order

to become a mandarin that's it in order

to become like this high level

bureaucrat

like a minister of State

he had to pass all these tests including

physical tests yet they had to be the

most perfect

Chinese people Chinese men you know the

most learned the most you know

physically perfect the most mentally perfect that they could find and then they got these high positions and because hanshan when he was like a lower ranking bureaucrat I think he got thrown off of a horse or something and hurt his leg and he walked with a limp after that so he could never be a mandarin he could never be like a top ranking official because you had to be physically perfect and he wasn't and he's complaining about that too and one time he sees some of the Emperors and like concubines you know some of the Harem the Imperial Harem they're out like playing out in the woods and stuff and he's just like sighing and just kind of miserable over

it

so I mean I did learn from Red Pines

translation just how unreliable Legends

can be especially Chinese legends about

great sages when you read their actual

words and I mean they have some wisdom

but at the same time you know they're

guys

so

am I so I'll just get back to the

question you know I'm just digressing so

this is I have bad news here this is

gonna be a six hour long q a

uh so what Ash Piper says are you

familiar with red Pine's translation or

does or docs he does on our Mountain

Hermits yeah well that's like I say

that's the only Red Pine translation I

read I read it when I was living in a

cave in Burma somebody sent it to me so

I read it and it was interesting you

know I read the whole thing

ah I think in the introduction he's

talking about how he and some famous

Buddhist scholar got drunk on Whiskey

and relying on their backs on some bed

philosophizing

which uh and it's typical of

um like Western Buddhist philosophers I

guess like like the beatniks you know

they would do that kind of stuff too get

stinking drunk and write co-ons and

stuff

but uh that's neither here or there so

I'll just move on to the next question

here this is this is from Josh

and Josh says I have a question about

the similarities between yogic

philosophy and Buddhism

I have been reading the yoga sutras by

patanjali and I've been and I've noticed

many similar Concepts and ideas for

example there are the eight limbs of

yoga and the noble Eightfold Path

yamas the eightyamas or abstentions like

no killing no lying no the five the five

yamas

not eight the five yamas are abstentions

like no killing no lying no stealing and

the five precepts

uh yoga also has a strong meditative

practice laid out similar to Buddhist

Meditation it leads me to believe that

as Buddhism started gaining Traction in

India yoga philosophy emerged as a

competitor and absorbed most of the

philosophical ideas and framework but

with a distinctly Hindu flavor do you

think there's any truth to these ideas

um well I'll tell you

well I'll tell you

um yoga originated in a

non-vedic

non-buddhist philosophical movement

called sankya in fact sometimes uh well

I'll get back to that so you have this

system called sankya which was a

shramana movement it was similar to

Jainism ajivakayism and Buddhism and

they had a kind of elaborate

metaphysic and I I've read about it I've

studied it a little bit but I'm not

really qualified to describe sankya

metaphysics but um

it's it's older than Buddhism

at least sankya is but then at some

point in Ancient India some of sankya

split off and this the followers of this

offshook of sankya they acknowledge the

authority the authority of The Vedas and

became a branch of Hinduism

so then you've got the old Sanka is

called atheistic sankya and then you've

got theistic Sonja which is now Hindu

yoga

and

they followed a lot of the same

Traditions as the other the other uh

ancient Indian schools like the five

precepts he talks about the five yamas

or abstentions almost all of the the the

ancient aesthetic schools including the

brahmanas and the jains they had their

own equivalent of five precepts in the

first four tended to be the same and the

fifth one was variable so in Buddhism

it's no no

um

wine ale or intoxicants which cause

heatlessness or cloudy cloudedness of

mind

um so there was a lot of similarity just

with regard to

um just sort of like philosophical

layout and so forth Just because of the

the close proximity and sort of like

debating back and forth and just

intermixing of ideas and so forth

so uh yoga originally began as sankya

which is one of the oldest philosophical

movements still in existence I think

because it still exists uh within the

context of Hindu yoga but it's older

than than Hinduism older even than

vadism I'm pretty sure

so

I guess that's I'm itching my I'm

scratching my leg

okay

so like that would be my take on on yoga

and why it is similar to Buddhism they

both arose from the tramana movement the

non-vadic philosophical movement

probably which which probably originated

in the Indus Valley Civilization or

thereabouts it existed

um in India until I mean The Vedic

indoorians

invaded India they brought their Vedas

with them or at least the oldest parts

of the rig Vader they brought with them

and so the aesthetic movements kind of

went underground for a while I mean it

was still the indigenous people would

still largely be following the the this

sort of atheistic so-called pessimistic

kind of a mechanistic kind of approach

to spirituality

um from which Buddhism uh I mean it

definitely has roots going back into

this oldest

um this older layer of of like

spirituality in India and as does

Jainism as does sankya which is then uh

like I say part of it split off and

acknowledged The Authority the authority

of The Vedas and just got absorbed into

into what is now called Hinduism

so

I'm pretty sure that would that would

account for the similarities

um so I'll just move on to uh Josh's

next question here

he says also I love the episodes with

pneuma about paganism and neoplatonism

do you think you could have him on again

to talk more about western esotericism

or how to create an authentic Pagan

spirituality without woke nonsense yes

um yeah it's possible yeah numa's still

a member of the Discord server I'm

pretty sure

and uh it's just the thing is lately I

haven't been doing a lot of interviews

and so forth mainly because of all this

stuff going on with getting the house

ready to sell and like

uh it is just a lot of uproar and stuff

going on

and a certain amount of worldly samsaric

stress

so yeah it's a definite possibility I I

assume pneumo would be willing to do

another video with me

and uh

yeah

yeah there's there's a very good chance

there's also uh like um Auto my friend

Otto will probably do more videos

together

Brian Rue we'll probably do some do some

more I heard uh just recently that uh

where I saw just recently that he was

arrested for hate speech

which I mean hate speech nowadays you

just all you have to do is just say that

girls don't have a PP like boys do and

you can get arrested in Canada for hate

speech

and uh also

um Stevens will probably do at least one

or two more videos until we run out of

stuff to talk about

we almost did one a while back but he

had to he had to go somewhere he was on

a train or something and didn't want to

do a video with me on a train

so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from Mr Cool Whip
he used to be just plain Cool Whip but
now he's he's Mr Cool Whip which causes
me to suspect that maybe in a future
date he may become sir Cool Whip or even
lower the Cool Whip because if we're
getting more and more formal
but anyway Mr Cool Whip says
the Buddhist path at the extreme leads
to a mind with nothing to say silence is
painful and awkward for normies it's
useless it's anti-social the inevitable
outcome seems to be a solitary silent
life in deep contemplation how does one
reconcile the Buddhist path with this
social reality are they irreconcilable

well for starters I would just say that

at the top here it says the Buddhist

path at the extreme leads to a mind with

nothing to say but the Buddha had plenty

to say he talked a lot he wandered

around teaching a lot

so the thing is I mean the problem here

is like

it's sort of like Zen on the cushion

versus Zen in the marketplace or I was

talking earlier

um like in a previous q a about Ramana

maharshi and how he became enlightened

and so forth and when he first became

enlightened again assuming Enlightenment

even means anything in Islams are in

context

but he was silent I mean he was like

mute

for I think it was something like two

years and then slowly he started being

able to integrate

like what he had this mystical

illumination that he experienced with

you know just being a human being

navigating samsara

and in Zen you know there's the saying

that Zen in the marketplace is 10 000

times better than Zen on the cushion so

what happens is in order to become

enlightened

um you have to quiet your mind or get it

as still as quiet as as you can because

what you're trying to do is you're
trying to see the the essence of your
mind and not just the the various forms
so you get distracted by all the various
forms all these perceptions all this
this supposed meaning
you know it just distracts you and you
get lost in this this I'm sorry symbolic
meaning and you don't penetrate to the
essence you know you don't break through
the surface of all these forms and see
the essence that underlies it and so it
becomes easier to see the essence if you
have fewer and fewer forms to distract
you
so I mean if you can get rid of all the
forms all that's left is Essence and

then it's way easier to see the essence

but the trick is

to continue seeing the essence even

after the the forms come back

so that's like seeing the essence when

your mind is still and there's there's

no forms to distract you when you're in

deep meditation that's Zen on the

cushion according to the the

the saying that I was referring to but

when you can still see the essence when

all the noise and the commotion has come

back that's then in the marketplace

so it's like

um the real trick to an enlightened to

an enlightened being I suppose if it's a

trick at all is you just continue seeing

the essence even with all the commotion

going on and then you can just do as you

please

because it's all God so to speak

as he used as neem curly Baba used to

say sub ishwar high it's all God

no matter what it is

although of course the Buddhist would

use a different term than God

so let's see

it is true though silence is painful and

awkward for normies

especially very gregarious you know

people oriented people they it's it's

just scary they a lot of them just can't

stand it like solitary confinement is

it's more scary for a lot of hardened criminals like convicts in a prison they'd rather receive like corporal punishment they didn't really receive a beating than have to sit in a room in silence it's just they just can't stand it

so yes they so with regard to uh this uh silence and all the the noise yes they are they are reconcilable because once you penetrate to through the silence you know you get things silent enough that you can penetrate to the essence then when the the noise and the commotion and the the forms the symbols and stuff come back then you can just see it all as the

essence and not be distracted by the
forms and that's how they are
reconcilable because you can have both
at the same time they're not mutually
exclusive
like Nirvana and samsara are not
mutually exclusive reality and the
illusion are not mutually exclusive the
essence of a thing and its form are not
mutually exclusive
so I'll just move on to uh Mr Cool
Whip's next question
venerable sir why are you critical of
the mahasi method do you think it can
lead to full Enlightenment what are the
alternative practices of mindfulness
sorry batana that leads to ipasana could

you tell us about your practice what it

is how it works what it's called Etc

thank you

well I am critical of the mahasi method

um for a number of reasons first of all

um it seems to me that they never get

Beyond just the perceptual busy work of

noting

um

I think some teachers of the mahasi

method may say it's it's you stop noting

and you just your mind becomes more and

more quiet but like uh

a lot of a lot of the teachers of the

mossy method it's just it's like it

requires constant effort like upondita

used to say that noting when you're when
you're practicing the mahasi method it's
like you're hitting something with a
stick it's like this constant I mean
there is no effortless noting there's
always this effort where you're
concentrating on this thing and noting
noting noting noting and you if you
never get beyond that
then it's very difficult to to really
see through all the commotion to the
essence the underlying essence
I remember once a long time ago asking
who was one of the wisest monks I knew
what his opinion of the mahasti method
was and he says you can get benefit by
practicing it but it is a limited method

and I agree with that I think that the mahasi method is good for beginners maybe intermediate but the thing is with the mahasi method especially the upon upondita's version of it and that's the main

um School of the mahasi school the sub School of Mazi school that I'm familiar with because I spent some time at panditarama and practiced the method there is you are supposed to experience what is called nyanzin in Burmese that's the wepasana Insight knowledges in the correct order and so you go to your interview and you you tell the Seattle your experiences

and I mean he'll be completely

unimpressed unless you see that we

possuma Insight knowledge that you're

supposed to see

and then he'll he'll like you know write

it down or something

and uh I don't think that we passed an

Insight knowledge as we're ever taught

by the Buddha there's no suta that has

the the enumerated we pause the Insight

knowledges you know the correct full

list of them it's not there in the

oldest texts it's it's like a an

artifact of the commentarial tradition

and also it relies heavily on abhidham

and the commentarial tradition which I

do not consider to be authentic

teachings of the Buddha is to sort of a
corruption and like I was saying earlier
I mean it never really gets Beyond
um an intermediate stage and what
happens is you're supposed to be turned
into a sodapana like I've had people say
that you know like mahasi Center or
um
are just like sodapon of factories you
know you got normies coming in one door
and then they come out arya's out the
other door and it used to be that the
mahasi uh tradition would actually give
you like a diploma when they figured you
had become a saint you get like this
same diploma

and I think I'm pretty sure they stopped

doing that

because some of the Saints I mean

they're just even though they're

declared Saints they don't act in a very

saintly way I've uh I know of two monks

two Burmese monks that were declared

Arias by upandita himself who finally

realized that they weren't really Arias

one of them strangely was oxiano he was

declared an Arya by upondita and he he

knew he really wasn't one so he just

went off and started his own tradition

or so I've been told another one was a

monk uh a friend of mine that I mean if

you knew him you knew for a fact he

wasn't in Arya because he was just the

crustiest

um kind of

I mean he just had a lot of Dosa or or

hate in him I mean he just he just

despised the human race

for the most part he liked me for some

reason but

um yeah he was really hard to get along

with for most people

he was declared a soda by upandita and

he said that for a while he thought he

might be one but then finally he

realized he wasn't

which is a credit to him because when

you're declared a saint by some famous

meditation Master uh you just want to

like cling to that you know I'm a saint
I'm in Arya and it takes a certain
amount of maturity and wisdom to realize
that well I think he was mistaken laughs
so there's a number I mean an upandita I
mean when he would sit in meditation he
was one of the senior Disciples of of uh
the mahasi method of mahasi Seattle
himself
and uh I mean he was just an angry old
man I mean he just like he it was almost
like he hated me on site it was It was
kind of weird I went to to uh
an interview because I wanted to
meditate there for a few months
and I told him that you know I've been a
monk for like six years at the time and

I was still having a lot of dachshund or like agitation of mind you know just Restless mind which is typical of westerners because we're like compulsive thinkers

and he just looks at me like he's a plumber investigating leaky pipes and he says have you ever taken drugs

and I said well yeah I mean almost every Western monk has at least smoked some weed you know and I said you know I'm taking drugs that's it drug addiction has damaged your brain

and I said well I've never been addicted to anything not even tobacco it's just a nervous High Strung disposition runs in

my family my mother is the same way and

then without skipping a beat he says

then it is a combination of drug

addiction and mental illness

and I was just the brain damage drug

addict the whole rest of the time I was

there he just did not like me at all

just from the very get-go

and uh you just look at mahasi Arias

it's like you you go to a mahasi center

like like panditarama you can see who

the Arias are who the Saints are because

they're the ones who aren't meditating

they're the ones who are like listening

to the radio and and talking and and

like reading newspapers and just walking

around goofing off because once once

you've you've got your diploma so to

speak once you've become a mahasi

sodapono then you don't have to practice

anymore

and I just don't think it works that way

not necessarily anyway

so I've got a number of reasons why uh

I am critical of the mahasi method I

think there are certain flaws in its

reasoning like effortless like the whole

idea of noting and it's like you've

graduated the Course once you've been

determined to be a soda Palm

and just observing the the Arias that

are produced like I was had this old

doctor monk he was he was a surgeon

before he became a monk and after he
retired he became a monk in his old age
he was telling me that he was spending
time at the mahasi center and while he
was there one of the teachers and you
can't be a teacher of the mossy method
until you finish the course of becoming
Arya one fine day he just uh goes into
the office and steals a bunch of money
and then runs off with one of the female
meditators is never seen again
so I mean there's all kinds of that kind
of stuff happening and I mean you can
get benefit from practicing the mahasi
method but uh if if like somebody
announces to you yeah there was a mahasi
retreat and 17 people became arya's

there yeah I would take that with a

pinch of salt

I think it's supposed to be a grain of

Salvage take a whole pinch just just for

the hell of it

so yeah I guess I've answered that

question well enough oh wait can I see

the second part is can you tell us about

your practice what it is how it works

what it's called I don't do formal

practice anymore

so I don't do formal sitting meditation

anymore so my practice such as it is

nowadays is a certain amount of

asceticism

like not just getting up early in the

morning five o'clock in the morning to

go to work and uh just mindfulness

just being mindful which sometimes

involves me uh mindfully observing

myself when I'm cussing at some idiot on

the highway who just behaved like an

idiot on the highway

um and sometimes I just still do

spontaneous oming

just for some reason it's uh ohm just

starts repeating itself through me

so that's really about all that's left

of my formal Buddhist Meditation

practice

so maybe I shouldn't be criticizing old

who pandita so much

but uh I think I'll just move on to the

next question here from Mr Cool Whip and

his next question is what's your

interpretation of godal's incompletion

their incompleteness theorem could it be

a paradoxical mathematical proof of

nibano well I would say first and

foremost that uh more well over two

hours here

that uh there is no proof of nibana you

cannot prove because nibana is off the

scale and any kind of proof is going to

be some saric a samsaric phenomenon and

you cannot prove what is not in samsara

you know what is not a some sort

phenomenon by means of some saric

phenomena is

they're they're every in in that sense

they're reasonable you cannot prove

nibana you cannot prove anyone is

enlightened

for example

but uh I have read goggles or I have

read about godel's incompleteness

theorem in a book that also mentions a

lot of Zen and that is

um go to Escher Bach an eternal Golden

Braid

by

I don't remember his name

so yeah go to Escher Bach and eternal

golden raid and he's using the

incompleteness theorem as a way of

pointing out that

you can't use rationality

to

come to ultimate truth

so I mean it's not the same as proving

nibana but it is proving the limitations

of any kind of samsaric attempt at

knowing ultimate truth because there are

some things that you just can't say

there's I mean there's always going to

be things you can't true things that you

can't arrive at was any kind of

systematic method

so my interpretation of goggles

incompleteness theorem yeah I mean

eventually I ultimately it boiled down

to self self-reference that you can make

statements like this statement is false

that are neither true nor false because

if this statement really is false then

it's true but it's true and false at the

same time which is impossible

so

so you can with within any kind of like

rational system

if you can become self-referential you

reach this Paradox and the system kind

of breaks down

and it cannot reach ultimate truth

because there's always going to be like

problems like that or true statements

that cannot be made

within the within the context of the

system

so yeah rationality is incomplete it is

incapable of arriving at ultimate truth

it's just a mathematical way of trying

one of us one of many possible

mathematical ways of stating that I mean

you're never going to understand Reality

by thinking about it

so I'll just move on to the next

question because I mean we've been at

this for well over two hours and uh I

still got a ways to go here

so this is from Tim the enchanter

and my sweetheart was actually

suggesting that I skip skip a week and

just do like twice as many next weekend

and that that really would be six hours

I think

so anyways Tim the enchanter says

if there is conventional truth and the

ultimate truth and according to the

latter there are neither men nor women

why the Buddha didn't want to ordain

bakunies only because well I mean the

whole ordination of monks and so forth

is within the context of conventional

truth

and in within the context of

conventional truth there are men and

women and men and women are not the same

and when you've got celibate men and

celibate women interacting with each

other who are maybe sexually frustrated

and horny as hell it causes problems

I think that's the main reason also
women were in a somewhat different
social position back in those days in in
India and they just couldn't live the
same lifestyle as men just wandering
around homeless in forests was just too
dangerous for women and they were
forbidden to do that so that I mean even
when they were ordained the Buddha
thought it was a bad idea he gets talked
into it by his cousin Ananda
to allow his his uh auntie
hyphen stepmother to be the first
ordained nun and Ananda talks about it
and letting it into ordaining women
which he didn't want to do and he says

all right but now you've done it now

Buddhism is only going to last half as

long because women have been ordained

so and that's all within the the context

of conventional truth because ultimate

truth is really wordless

it's just off the scale

but then again I mean it also reminds me

that uh according to abhidham

which is official

like authoritative terrible Buddhist

Orthodox Doctrine even though men and

women are not ultimately real maleness

and femaleness are ultimate realities I

don't think that's true but that's what

amidhama says

so still you'd have the distinction

between if not men and women at least

the distinction between male and female

so we'll just move on to the next

question here from Tim the enchanter

there are some who call him Tim

do you have some cool date for the

wedding yet

uh yeah we're still planning on getting

wet and getting uh married I should try

to say wedded and married at the same

time I do that sometimes

and it's uh going to be on a certain

date next May provisionally

I mean it's not really

set in stone exactly what day it's going

to be but we have a pretty good idea

it's going to be like the anniversary of
the first time we met in person which
was in May so I'll just uh move on to
the next question here this is from
Garrett and Garrett says would you
please comment on any insight in this
quote quote the largest part of what we
call personality is determined by how
we're we have opted to defend ourselves
against anxiety and sadness unquote
and again I don't know how to pronounce
French names I just mispronounced them
on purpose
did the Buddha speak about personality
or personality types is personality just
a collection of habit patterns
well with regard to uh I'll answer the

last question first that's I'd say
personality is just a collection of
habit patterns yeah I'd say yeah to that
um but going back to the first question
before getting to the second question I
would say uh see comment on any insight
in this quote and the quote again is the
largest part of what we call personality
is determined by how we've opted to
defend ourselves against anxiety and
sadness
um I don't see it that way I think it's
possible that that's true but I would
say that I mean from a biological point
of view most of what we call personality
is just

like inherent Human Nature and it varies

from person to person just as the

temperaments of dogs vary you know we're

not gonna all have the exact same human

nature that they're going to be

temperaments that we've been like

inherited from our our ancestors and so

forth which isn't really Buddhist but I

have a degree in biology so I do look at

things from a biological point of view

sometimes even though they're sort of

irreconcilable

Buddhism and biology are not they don't

fit together perfectly

so

yeah I'd say a lot of it is how we've

opted to defend ourselves against

anxiety and sadness but um yeah I'm

skeptical that that is the largest part

of what we call personality

and um

let's see

I mean it could be arguably the most

important part for some people

but um

yeah that's that's really kind of a

it'd be hard to verify that I don't know

how you'd quantify something like that

so uh I'll just get to the middle

question here did the Buddha speak about

personality or personality types

um I'm sure he spoke about personality

to some degree but

um theravana Buddhism does

have six main personality types that you

can read about this in the wisudi Maga I

don't think that this is straight out of

the sutas

which is the central commentary to uh

the polytexts has six main personality

types

and it's like the Loba temperament the

Delta temperament the moha temperament

and then there's like the opposite of

that and uh it's like the faith

temperament the intellect temperament

and then there's like an Enlightenment

temperament or something like that

uh it's been a long time since I've read

it and uh

so yeah there's six main personality

types and

um there can be a mixture you can be

sort of a combination of two main ones

or three or something like that

um so there is some there is some

discussion of Personality or personality

types uh especially in in Louis City

manga

um and different people will uh I mean

different personality types

um they do better with different kinds

of meditation for example and also it's

kind of ironic that the dose of

temperament the person who's like grumpy

and complaining doesn't like people

doesn't like the world in a certain

certain

way has an advantage because they're

more likely to just kind of detach from

the world because they don't like it and

it can actually help them become

enlightened more quickly than someone

who is you know very loving or whatever

so I had some of that myself I remember

once when I was a junior mom just

reading this in the wee City manga going

to my teacher and asking him you know

what temperament he thought I was he

just started laughing he said he didn't

dose of temperament because I was when I

first became a monk I was disillusioned

when I realized that most monks really

are not trying to become enlightened In
This Very life so I was disillusioned
and sullen a lot of the time grumpy
I can still be grumpy and you can just
ask my sweetheart someday she'll tell
you that I can still be grumpy
so let's see I'll just move on to
Garrett's next question
where are the Burmese Village kids
taught English or Mandarin in school did
they take an interest in monastics in
the same way older Burmese villagers
would what was the most common blessing
requested so I guess this is three
questions we're the Burmese Village kids
taught English or Mandarin in school

there were a ton of certain amount of

English no Chinese

so it's it's weird like high school

students in Burma they have to take

certain subjects like chemistry in

English

and most of them don't speak very much

English so they're just memorizing words

like a parrot to repeat on the on the

test paper and it's not a good way of

teaching them but rote memorization is

the main way of learning in Burma like

you go to a monastic school

um and when it's finals week you know

the big test is coming up to see if they

pass to move on to the next grade uh

it's just ear splitting because

everyone's just repeating their lessons
over and over again out loud
because they're just trying to memorize
the words
and it's like that in a lot of the the
secular schools too and a lot of it's in
English and they don't even fully
understand what it is that they're
repeating they're just like like parrots
but I've never heard of anyone any kids
having to learn Chinese in Burma I think
it's just a relic of or partly you know
English is like the world language for
with regard to science or something so
science is taught in English which is is
not a good idea

so let's see did they take an interest

in monastics in the same way older

Burmese villagers what well they didn't

have the maturity

um pretty much every Burmese boy who is

Buddhist or his family is Buddhist is

ordained as a novice and lives at a

monastery for at least a few days

so but because they're kids they don't

have the maturity of the the older

people you know they're not as

interested in dhamma as a general rule

and then uh what's what was the most

common blessing required is is like

mitas

which is like you know please send metal

you know just which is just another way

of giving blessings or or uh

two people on it just give blessings I

mean that's really the main one or they

want meta yeah I think I said it wrong

the first time but it's

is another one or a Superbowl and those

are the two main requests for blessings

is please send Mata and sue paper on is

just please give us your blessings you

know they weren't asking for anything in

particular they're just taking whatever

they can get and or there's they're just

going for the scatter shot total

blessing

so

yeah I don't speak Burmese very much my

Burmese is getting pretty Rusty now

I'm sure it wouldn't take very long for

me to get it back again but I'm not

really planning on ever going back to

Burma

so

yeah and if he wants to know what is the

most common specific blessing it'd

probably be some kind of Health thing

you know please help my my high blood

pressure or something

so I'll just move on to the or or like a

kid passing please bless my son so he'll

pass his exams that's another one

so I'll just move on the next question

here this is from Sears s-j-o-r-s

it's yours

and he says I'd like to hear your
thoughts on what I call karmic
occasionalism since everything in this
I'm sorry world including including
causation is merely relatively true
isn't it possible that what we call laws
of physics is merely Karma playing
itself out saying Newton is hit by an
apple while sitting under a tree we
theorize that there's something called
gravity classic Quantum or other it
doesn't matter that made the apple fall
and hit his head when in reality it was
Newton's and other possible observers
Karma that made it happen and so-called
gravity and other laws are merely

fictional in this case we would have a
kind of karmic occasionalism for context
occasionalism is the doctrine that God
is the only true cause what appear to be
causes in the natural world a lightning
strike that sets off a forest fire for
example are only occasions for God to
act
such natural events are merely
correlated not causally connected except
now take the above and substitute karma
for God well to say that karma is what's
causing everything in a sense it's true
but there's something that you can say
is the cause of karma itself and that's
dependent called Rising
so

um the Buddhist Theory of Everything

isn't really about Karma so much as

about the conditionality of everything

dependent co-rising how nothing has an

inherent self Essence and so all these

other causes that also don't have

inherent self Essences are just they're

mutually conditioning each other to

cause this world to seem to exist in

reality

so

um

yeah and I would say there's just an

infinite every every possibility is is

there

and it's it's dependently called Rising

just depending on whatever

huh how do you even talking about this

stuff

how do you even talk about it especially

when I'm getting a horse from from

Talking straight for over two and a half

hours here

so let's see

yeah I would say that the karma itself

is itself the result of dependent color

Rising which is the Buddhist t-o-e the

Buddhist toe Theory of Everything

so but then you can see that Karma which

is Will and then you're back to we're

back to schopenhauer again you know

we're schopenhauer is saying you know

will is is what is creating the world as

will and representation you know that's
samsara as chidina and sannya but all
about it she did not understand y'all
are creating
um creating this some sortic universe
that's all dependent called Rising it's
just
these I mean it's so it's so weird to
try and explain how things that aren't
real condition something else that isn't
real and you've got this whole web of
conditions making the whole thing seem
real
so it's I'm confusing myself so I'm
gonna move on to the next question which
is the last question

the less it always takes me by surprise

it's like boom all of a sudden I'm at

the bottom

and I mean at the bottom of this list of

questions I mean not like the bottom of

something else

so this is the last question this is

from Joe Doe and Joe Doe says where'd

you get your water when you lived in

those caves well it depends on what

caves I lived in

um

see like if I lived in a artificial cave

out of Monastery like the first cave I

lived in for any significant amount of

time was called Mandalay goo or Mandalay

cave at

pampua and it was an artificial cave

that was just dug into the side of a

hill

and places like that there was the

monastery well so I would just go to the

monastery well and fill my bucket of

water or fill my clay pot of water and

then just go back to my cave with it but

other places I mean there'd be different

ways of getting water if I was like out

in the woods like the the big

overhanging rock ledge that I that I

lived under at uh the northern boundary

of Alando casaba National Park in Upper

Burma

um there was a creek

and I would just go down and I have my
water filter which is just a like a
piece of cloth like a cone-shaped piece
of cloth with like a little ring that
held the cone open
and I would just pour it into my little
water bottles the the creek water
and the creek water was kind of a
greenish color and tasted like milk I
don't know why it tasted like milk but
it did and I didn't have any problems
with it so unless once if it rained hard
like when the monsoon hit then it would
just be mud it would just be brown and
you couldn't drink it then because then
you'd get diarrhea but then I mean this
is good survival on survival training

here this I'm throwing a little survival training that uh if you want my relatively pure water and it's you've got like a creek or a river or something there and you don't trust the creek water or the river water because it's it's dirty you know it's all brown or something what you do is you find a Sandy place next to the water and you just keep scooping you scoop all the sand out so you've got like this this big Basin and it's going to be dirty water at first and you just keep bailing it out and bailing it out and bailing it out until the sand all around this this basin this this hole you've scooped out

in the sand is serving as a filter and

it eventually starts coming out clear

and then you can drink that and you

won't get diarrhea I mean if there's

like toxic waste from a factory or

radiation or something it might not help

you but

um just like standard dirty water

infested with bugs or something then

yeah you just dig a hole in the sand you

can just use your hands and then just

keep scooping it out like use a little

bowl or something just keep baling it

out until the water is clear and then

you can drink that and that's good clear

water

and then just hope that some Dopey frog

doesn't come along and lay eggs in your

in your Basin which happened to me in

more than once

and that's how I got my water I mean you

either got access to a nearby well and

you go there or you just go to the creek

or the river and if the river water

isn't clean then you just scoop out this

Basin next to it in the sand and just

keep letting it fill up and bail it

until it's clean and then you drink that

and that is the last question I am horse

from talking so much

and uh if you got any questions about

Buddhism in general taravana in

particular Buddhist philosophy

meditation

um monasticism Burma me personally

anything that you think I might be able

to answer feel free to ask you're very

welcome to ask questions

and uh that's why I'm here is to attempt

anyway to answer your questions and the

probably the best place to ask them is

in the comments below the video or if

you have access to subscribe star you

can ask there or if you have access to

the Discord server you can ask there and

check out my URL links below and buy one

of my damn books and give it a positive

review if you please I mean especially

if you really honestly think it was a

good book otherwise you'd be lying we

don't want that and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 63 of

question and answer I am your host poo

basa and this is my

beverage and I usually lately anyway

have been doing these every Saturday but

I waited until Sunday this time just

because I have been very busy lately not

only at work but I come home and we're

like moving you know packing stuff up

and getting ready to to move it to

another place and so forth and it wasn't

until last night that I finally got like

a full night

sleep and I mean really it's like being

a lay person is a higher difficulty

setting if you want to navigate samsara

wisely then it's good to learn how to do
it in a like a radically simplified
environment like the life of of a
monk and maybe if you know you've had
enough of that you can't get any farther
with that then you move on to the higher
difficulty
setting I do think that the Hindus may
have it wrong where you know they have
to live the the worldly leli first and
then when they get old then they
renounce the world you know it's like
the four ashad Damas I think it's called
and uh yeah it it tends not to work out
so well when you renounce the world and
start living like a radically spiritual
life after you've already got all these

ingrained habits and so forth

that are hard to

overcome but

anyways better late than never I

guess we don't have like the usual High

number of questions anyway so this one

might actually be less than two hours of

be sitting here talking till I'm

horse so let's just uh commence to to

answering questions here and the first

one is from I want a

payback and this comment was left left

under one of my um readings in archaic

Buddhism

series um studies in archaic Buddhism I

can't remember what the playlist is

called uh with regard to one of the

these really archaic Buddhist texts that

I was

reading and uh I just might as well

answer here because it's a question and

so I want a payback says hello David

poasa thank you for making these ancient

and profound texts accessible to us

would you see a connection between these

teachings on no fixed views or

perceptions and the notion

ofay isay a later development or could

it be traced back to these earliest

texts aan budhha Dasa has interpreted

atay as the final stage of insight where

The Duality subject object falls away

and the mind basically stops seeing

things also the perception process is
divorced from proliferation what are
your
thoughts well atay Ian technically atay
literally means something lot not like
not made of thatness the a at the
beginning just means not the Tam means
that Maya means made of and the da at
the end just essentially turns an
adjective into a
noun so it's like not made of thatness
and I do not recall seeing this um I
mean it's not in the uh in the ATA waga
I'm pretty sure like in the really
archaic text I don't remember coming
across the term it's an obscure term

that isn't used much in the texts um it
has been said that it's it's it's not in
the poly text society's uh poly English
dictionary it was just so rare of a term
I guess that it just was
overlooked but uh I mean it it
does it is reminiscent of terms that uh
were used in RC
texts um I'm not exactly sure what the
original meaning of not made of thatness
was but essentially it would seem to be
indicating that you have realized that
there is no underlying self Essence to
anything I I would
guess um so I mean it could be an
archaic term that just fell out of favor
there were quite a few of those and a

lot of them are indicating Enlightenment

or the enlightened mind

mind that have um some word similar to

in like you know like thus or this or

that even the word dagat just means he

who has become thus who has he who has

become like that because in early texts

um you can't really describe reality

about the the closest you can come and

just say thus or like that or such you

know such

so I mean it does it is reminiscent of

really early text although I cannot

recall a sua in which I've ever seen the

term um so it could just be

originally um you know indicative of

some enlightened

Insight but um it it's hard for me to

say I haven't really studied up on it

much later here it says aan Buddha Dasa

has interpreted atam as the final stage

of Insight or The Duality subject object

falls away and the mind basically stops

seeing things well I mean he may have

interpreted that way but Tai aons as a

general rule they're they're pretty free

in their interpretation of stuff and a

lot of the time they diverge radically

from terod and Orthodoxy which isn't

entirely a bad thing you know they're

they're not as scholarly and dogmatic as

the Burmese which um I mean one of the

implications of that is that so someone

like ajan buddhadasa is teaching more

from their own personal experience and

then just maybe inaccurately applying

poly terms onto their own insights you

know because they just don't have the

scholarship to to know exactly what the

term is supposed to

mean but

uh yeah and when he's talking about

proliferation here it's papancha is the

word papancha which uh yeah it's like

diversification it's like dividing up

the world into this and that you know

[__] from Shinola that kind of a thing

uh dual dualism you know the dualistic

mind of just separating everything into

one thing and it's opposite you know

just even just figure from ground you

know there's always has to be this

dualism going on in ordinary worldly

Normy

thought so I'm sorry I can't really

answer I want to payback's uh question

here

authoritatively because I've never I

don't recall having come across at maybe

I have but I just don't remember it

clearly enough to really um make uh like

an authoritative kind of answer to this

but it does it it is reminiscent of

early Buddhism and it's probably

referring to you know some enlightened

Insight but I don't think it really fits

into the stages of insight and so forth
um just because early Buddhism wasn't
really into stages you know it was
either you're enlightened or you're not
essentially so we'll just move on to the
next question here this is from the
anti-marxist
league and the anti-marxist league says
how does confession work in Terra how
would a terod and lay person without
regular access to an in-person songa go
about confession well confession is like
an institution in ter aut Buddhism only
for ordained man astics that there's
this ritual that in pretty much all
terab voden countries has just

degenerated into some more or less
meaningless blah blah blah that you say
in order to clear yourself of rules that
you've
broken like uh in in Burmese they just
say venerable you you got the two monks
they squat down one of them they both
have to
uncover let's see this
shoulder and you know one of them is
making the confession the other one's
hearing the confession and the
confessing mon in in in Burmont they
just say venerable sir I've committed
various offenses of various types and
they don't really even say what they did
which isn't much of a confession at all

you just say I did something wrong and then that's it that's that's as far as the confession goes um I mean there's more back and forth and you know the the the monk that's hearing the confession says do you see them you know do you see your offenses as offenses and then the the the confessing monk says yes sir I see them all of this in pully by the way and then then the other monk the hearing monk says in future you should restrain yourself and then the the monk who's making confession usually lying essentially says yes sir very good sir I will restrain myself even though they know they're going to be keep breaking

the same rules over and over again I
mean in most cases actually not just uh
a few and uh then the hearing monk just
says s sadu sadu and and there you go um
so I mean in Terra Buddhism the
monastics have to make confession like
before they do a formal ceremony
especially before they hear the ptim
Moka recitation every two weeks they
have to be like they have to confess all
of their offenses and in the original
poly the monk who's making confession is
supposed to say you know what offense he
has committed but um in Burma they don't
do that anymore I still did it I was
just a weird Foreigner who was like
trying to say what category of offense

um in in in

Thailand they're try to be a little

stricter whereas they're just they just

name off every single category of

offense except for paraj I suppose which

is just instant excommunication you

can't even confess that one and be clear

of it and um really they're not

confessing anything either since they'll

leave they'll say that they committed

these offenses even though they didn't

commit them and therefore they don't

really see them cuz there's nothing

there to see so it's it's all just this

meaningless mumbo jumbo kind of a ritual

that um is in my opinion just pretty

much

pointless but um there are cases of lay

people making confession in the poly

texts and usually they go to a

monk and uh they just say for the sake

of restraint in future I confess that I

did this and then the monk will say very

you did did well you know you should

restrain yourself don't do that anymore

if you know if you can avoid it and then

you know they sort of uh come clean I

guess it doesn't absolve them of

anything like um like in Roman

Catholicism where the priest you know

forgives you or absolves you of your

offenses gives you some you know Hail

Marys or something to do little bit of

penance doesn't work that way in terraa
it's just for the sake
of helping you to restrain yourself in
future you make the confession and you
may State this resolve to try to do
better in the future and you know that
counts as your confession but if you
don't have a monk to confess to if you
don't have a revered D teacher to
confess to um just any person that you
consider to be wiser than you if you can
find somebody like that or any person
that you consider just to be a good
person you can go to them and make your
confession to them if if there's no
monks to confess to um I suppose you

could um I mean if you're even like in email communication with a monk you can confess over email or Skype or whatever that would work too but it's not really any kind of requirement in terraa Buddhism and it's not really a standardized institution in Terra Buddhism except for ordained monastics so I think I'll just move on to the next question then this is from Tim the enchanter

and Tim the enchanter says does attaining Arya level increase your IQ in Arya level here just means uh being a Buddhist Saint supposedly having at least a glimpse of Nirvana or nibana um so that you're never going to

backslide and and like go to hell or be
be reborn as a ghost or an animal or
anything like that um does attaining
Arya level increase your IQ I'm not sure
I mean it would it would sort of give
you a more balanced calm clear kind of a
mind so that might help you do well on
like cognitive
tests but um I mean it would make you
like mentally healthier you might do
better on something like the Minnesota
multiphasic personality inventory or
something you'd probably be less messed
up in certain kinds of uh psychological
testing but whether it would make you
literally more intelligent

to give you better problem solving
skills I'm not sure exactly I don't know
if anyone has ever tested this and I
don't know how you could even verify
empirically that someone was an ARA or
not but it certainly wouldn't hurt and
um I wouldn't be surprised if you do get
some kind of intelligence boost when you
become when you have your Glimpse you
know your first glimmer of Enlightenment
you know it it
can ground you and it just makes you
maybe a little clearer minded maybe a
lot more clear-minded depending on how
saintly your attainment is or
was but again this is second second
first two questions in a row I'm unable

to give any kind of authoritative answer
I can just give you my best guess so
I'll just move on to Tim the enchanter's
next question and hopefully I'll be able
to answer this one and says is it
advised to avoid stupid people I'm not
going to lie when I read some posts on
the internet I feel probably the same
way Stephen Hawking would feel reading
our posts or discussions about
physics well I can answer this one and
um it's not advised to avoid stupid
people it is advised to avoid foolish
people and there is a difference people
with low IQ are not necessarily fools
and people who are very intelligent can

be like very big

fools so I mean just look at what's the

insanity of Academia nowadays you got

people with phds from Harvard that have

just gone off the deep

end you know calling for the the

eradication of the white race this kind

of

stuff

so yeah it's it's in the mongalo suo it

gives 38 blessings you know 38 the the

greatest you know the greatest benefits

that you can have and the very first one

blessing number one is not associating

with fools and number two is associating

with the wise so I mean stupid people

not so bad I mean I'm not going to call

the founder of the the tradition which I

was ordained stupid but he was just a

simple not he was not scholarly just a

simple Village person

uh he was ordained as a boy as as a

novice and became a monk he was like in

in robes in monastic robes almost his

entire life

and also my teacher I mean he he had

maybe average intelligence

overall and

uh they were

wise um you know to to some degree

saintly especially Tom Pulu who was the

founder of the tradition

he was considered to be fully

enlightened by a lot of people although
I think he uh admitted that he wasn't
fully enlightened privately at least I
mean to to other monks and so for I
think if anyone asked him are you an
arant he would say no I'm pretty sure
although I never met him in person he
died before I became a
monk so yeah simple hearted good people
are not to be avoided you're better off
with simple-hearted good people that
that do not score high on cognitive
tests than you are with like really
intelligent sociopathic
conmen um I mean some of the best people
I've
known uh were like simple-hearted

villagers living in Burma with fourth
grade educations and they were you know
they weren't rocket surgeons or anything
like that but
um I mean it was it depends like if
someone is wise regardless of whether
they're intelligent intelligent or not
they're going to have an uplifting
effect on people around
them so yeah so the answer to that is no
it is not advised to avoid stupid people
just foolish ones and and like bad ones
but bad people are always foolish pretty
sure so I'll just move on to the next
question
here also by Tim the

enchanter and he says Urban terraa
temples look like Catholic cathedrals
with all this gold and money and
blessings Sacred Scriptures statues
paintings and candles I wonder if
Catholic priests and Buddhist monks
invented all this we don't work and you
all work for us and give us your money
system apart from each other or Catholic
Church borrowed it from Buddhism and
some Hinduism what do you
think well
originally Buddhist monks of course they
weren't they weren't wealthy at all I
mean they were just dressed in rags and
slept under trees and just begged for
their food in the

streets and to some degree they're still
like
that uh Catholics I assume I mean the
early Christians also were very austere
and and poverty was a
virtue but uh once a religion becomes
mainstream it becomes a popular even
like a state religion then it's going to
get a lot of support you know and you're
going to have monks and Priests who
really do not have uh like a genuine
vocation you know they're not called to
do this for Spiritual purposes they've
just getting on the gravy train they
want to live an easy life without having
to work for a living maybe they're gay

they don't like women and they want a
socially acceptable way of not getting
married um so I mean that H that's just
Universal human phenomenon and I'm sure
it would happen under similar
circumstances anywhere in the world
without uh one system having to borrow
it from another
system so yeah and in Terra temples
Urban terava
temples most of them probably don't
really look like Catholic Cathedrals my
experience is that most terava temples
that are in a city or a town in America
they're mainly just like a rented house
that is like you you don't even notice
that it's any kind of Buddhist

organization other than like maybe a

little sign in front and then when you

go inside there's like a big altar in

the living room there and lot of

decorations stuff that people have

donated candles and Christmas lights

around the Buddha statues or whatever um

so it's not really

austentatious although it may be as

ostentatious as the Asian immigrant

communities can afford to make it which

may not be all that

much

so yeah it's not just Catholic priests

and Buddhist monks I mean you look at

like uh Greek Orthodox

Patriarchs and they look kind of like

Santa Claus except they're just decked

out in like gold and

jewels and if you

read um the theory of the Leisure Class

by thorstein weblin it's one of the only

economics books I've ever read he

explains why this is the case you it's

it's a similar um a similar phenomenon

to like the butler of a rich person

looking and dressing and acting like

he's like a a prime minister of of some

country you know he's like dressed out

in this tailor made suit and just or or

back in the old days they'd be dressed

in Livery they you know it'd be like

purple velvet with like uh you know gold

buttons going down and stuff and the
reason why they do
this and they used to do it and they
still do it to some degree is like if my
servants look like Prime Ministers or
they're dressed up in like this purple
velvet with gold on it um I mean if my
servants are like that how does that you
know how does that make the the Master
look I mean he it just like uh it's like
a a status symbol that makes him look
even more exalted because even his
servant looks like a prime
minister and the some of that has crept
into Christianity and other religions
where you know it's like Bishops and

Cardinals and popes I mean sometimes
they're just Decked Out and you know
they just got jewels and like cloth of
gold on them and so forth and because
they are Servants of God and in a way
that sort of exalts God by showing his
servants are are dressed like kings and
Emperors but Buddhism at least terado
Buddhism has largely dodged that
although I mean it it creeps in as much
as it can but the tradition is such that
monks are just supposed to wear simple
robes that's all they're allowed to wear
and they're supposed to live in poverty
not handle money and all that
although most of them do especially the
ones that were born and raised into

Buddhist

cultures terrible a of Buddhist ons they

uh they generally ignore uh a lot of the

rules just like people born into

Christian cultures like in America

conveniently ignore things like gather

not up your Treasures upon the Earth you

know it's just too inconvenient normies

don't want to do that and when a a

religious or a spiritual system goes

mainstream it's going to be mostly

normies and they're just not ready to

live a radically spiritual life and so

it gets watered down and watered down

and easier and easier until you wind up

with Christianity in the

west so I guess uh that's enough of an

answer or semi rant and so I'll just

move on to the next question this is

from

Austin and Austin says

is Mahayana Buddhism in some aspects a

repackaging of AD vant particularly haen

Buddhism with the notion that all is one

and one is all indra's net and the

Fang's Golden Lion

analogy gosh I've never heard of The

fazang's Golden Lion analogy I don't

even know what fangs

is

fangs

well um Mahayana Buddhism in some

aspects it's not so much a repackaging

of advit vant because I'm pretty sure
Mahayana came before what is now called
ADV Vidant like um like one of the the
founding fathers of established ADV
Vidant is shankara who I think lived in
around the fifth century you know like
five centuries after the birth of M an
but I have read that shankara was very
much influenced in his writings of uh
his commentaries on the upanishads by
maaka Buddhism which is a kind of
Mahayana Buddhism and I'm sure there was
a lot of like debating back and forth
and exchanging of ideas and
strengthening their position and maybe
borrowing a few things to to help them

strengthen their positions against the criticisms of the other side and so ADV viant and certain schools of Mahayana Buddhism you know they sort of it was sort of like a parallel Evolution or I mean they were just like exchanging stuff so that there's like elements of Mahayana in ADV vant and elements of ADV vant in in Mahayana Buddhism and I really don't know much about haen Buddhism and uh fazang's Golden Lion analogy but there's there's definitely um Mutual exchanges between the two philosophical systems which results in a lot of similarity like the the dharmakaya of Mahayana Buddhism is

really pretty much

indistinguishable as far as I can tell

from Brahman of ADV viant or near Guna

Brahman which means the Ultimate Reality

which has no discernable characteristics

has no discernable qualities which I

mean that's pretty much emptiness isn't

it just like in in in Buddhism you get

shunyata or sunata depending on whether

you uh prefer Sanskrit or

poly

so it's not really a repackaging of ADV

viant it's just that they influenced

each other a lot because they were like

evolving side by side in the same areas

of India and were like bumping up

against each other and debating each
other and so on and so forth so I'll
just move on to the next question which
is from hait Tig
and hey it's TIG says did you ever wear
a belt during your time as a forest
aesthetic if so was it made of leather
or some other more dhic material I think
a belt would not only be useful for
strength and for stamina but will also
look badass on a Buddhist monk OD
dude well as it turns out a belt or a
kayab bandana as it is called in poly is
one of the eight requisites every month
is required to own a
belt and if you look into the poly Tex
there are two kinds of belts that are

allowable one is Patia which is a strip of cloth and one is sukara which literally means Pig intestine but because pig intestines are twisted what it means is like a twisted rope so you can use a strip of cloth or a rope and every monk is required to have such a belt and it's mainly not I mean it's not for strength or stamina but it's to hold your lower robe up to keep it from falling off when you're in public because your lower robe it's just a rectangle of cloth you wrap it around yourself um a little more securely than you would put a towel around your waist after you get out of the shower but I

mean you kind of fold it up but still

it's not on there really strictly just

one good yank could could pull the thing

off and so it is against the rules for a

monk to enter an inhabited area without

his lower rope secured onto his body

body with this

belt or

candana so there you go that was an easy

one to answer that mean that was an

authoritative objective straightforward

answer so the next question is from seak

andad

zida and it says or rather he

says it says the now that's that's where

I got the it says the first the first

words in in the question are it says the

Buddha didn't want to ordain nuns but in
the Pari
mahapa the Buddha says that a datag
would not pass from this world until the
four-fold song was fully established
this is the monastic order of monks nuns
and the lay men and lay women what do
you make of this contradiction if he
didn't want to even make the nun
order
well not everything in the Maha parasuta
is necessarily objective history that
there's a lot of Miracle stories and so
forth and just it's just to be expected
that a lot of Legends and mythology
would get mixed in to one of the most

important events in the Buddhist life

which was the end of his life and his

entry into

Parana um

so when he says that a to tagata would

not pass from this world into the

fourfold S was fully established um yeah

I'm I'm really not sure um this is we're

getting away from objective uh

straightforward answers here that it is

true that the Buddha was very reluctant

according to the texts that he was very

reluctant to ordain nuns saying that um

you know that by ordaining nuns he was

reducing the lifespan of Buddhism In

This World by half he thought it was a

bad idea but he was talked into it by

his cousin

Ananda um and Ananda just in the text

you know he just always has like a soft

spot in his heart for women not that

he's ACH or anything but he just

sympathizes with women you know wants

what's what's good for the women

um so he talked the Buddha into it and

then the Buddha's like well all right

now you've done

it but uh and then at the end when the

Buddha is not going to pass from this

world until the fourfold sa is fully

established um yeah I'm I'm not so sure

about about

that uh it's possible you know I mean

there's no way to prove this stuff I mean it's it's just you just make your best guess that's all anybody can do is make their best guess with regard to something like this where there just is no proof one way or the other you know you got words in books that that are like ancient words in ancient books but still they don't go all the way back to the time that they're describing and uh so I mean maybe the Buddha just kind of changed his mind and just accepted that since they're ordained that that's the way it is and uh when he's saying that aaga would not pass from this world then he's referring to previous Buddhas also and the

indication would be that you know even
all the Buddhas of the past would have
to ordain nuns and I'm not sure if
that's the case but I mean pre Buddha's
previous to our our Goa Buddha our
mythological anyway they existed you
know literally millions of years ago at
least hundreds of thousands of years
ago so I mean you just have to make your
own
guess but um it is true the Maha
parasuta does contain a certain amount
of Mythology and Miracle stories and so
forth so
that it's it's hard to say I mean even
even the part where the Buddha does not

want to or ordain nuns it's I mean you
can you can see in the text if you read
about nuns and so forth in the poly text
you can see that there was OB it was
obviously a contentious controversial
issue in the first hundred years of
Buddhism just as it is in the most
recent 100 Years of Buddhism especially
the most recent few
decades so I mean it's pretty clear that
a lot of monks in early times just
didn't like the idea of nuns being
ordained some of them did some of them
didn't and it's it's the same
nowadays so it's hard to
say what parts with regard to you know
being pro-one and anti-un in the polyx

what parts of those are just like
propaganda that was added by some
faction that was either very much in
favor of the ordination of nuns or very
much not in favor of the ordination of
nuns and I think probably both both
sides are represented to some degree in
various
texts so that's really all I can all I
can say with the regard to that one so I
think I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Alex and when
Alex was responding to the question
above that I just attempted to answer
and he says to add to this question how
do we see the Buddha's words quote

Ananda if females had not gained the
going forth from the lay life to
homelessness in the teaching and
training proclaimed by the realized one
the spiritual life would have lasted
long the true teaching would have
remained for a thousand years but since
they have gained the going forth now the
spiritual life will not last long the
true teaching will remain only 500 years
unquote and he uh he he gets this from
the angur Naya 851 but it's also in in
ninia with regard to the origins of the
bikuni order leading up to the rules for
the beunis
anyway Alex continues
here he explicitly says that the true

teaching will remain only for 500 years

so it's not present for 2,000 years now

neither in terava nor Mahayana also why

does the ordination of nuns bear such

grave consequences in my experiences in

my experience in all religions nuns are

very de devoted even

fanatical so I guess that's an extra

question at the end so I'm going to have

to make a separation

here

okay I think I did it oh wait I gotta do

it

again all

right so the first question first and

I've written an entire article on this

that's in one of my books probably

studies in studies in terab Buddhism or

essays in terava

Buddhism first book that I published on

Amazon it's probably in the links below

if you look down there you you'll get

like the full essay on this very subject

with a few follow-up subject or

follow-up essays

too but so the Buddha says according to

the texts that because of ordaining nuns

Buddhism would only last for 500 years

so there are various ways of

interpreting this first you could

say the Buddha just didn't say it then

it just got added and for most devout

Asian Buddhists that's just a

non-starter you can't say that you know

it's just it just got added in there

it's just this false [__] that got

added into the Sacred

Scriptures

so there's that I mean some open-minded

Western Buddhists might adopt that route

and I'm I consider that a possibility

maybe it just the Buddha just never said

this that that Buddhism would only last

for 500 years because of the ordination

of

bonis another option is the Buddha did

say it but he was wrong and that's even

more more of a non-starter for Buddhist

I mean nobody's going to no no devout

Buddhist is going to say that the Buddha
could just be wrong with regard to
something like this there even fewer
people would choose two over
one okay another one is see the Buddha
did say
it and uh it was true and that's that's
kind of that's an intriguing one I think
maybe you know it's possible he he did
say that Buddhism would only last 500
years and what we've been practicing all
this time just isn't really the true
dhama it's not really the true teaching
anymore and so that's that's a
possibility um I mean the commentarial
answer is I should have said that one
first according to the commentaries when

the Buddhist said that Buddhism would only last for 500 years or the true teaching would last for only 500 years what he meant to say was that it would last for 5,000 years but why the Buddha would say 500 when he meant 5,000 I mean that's that's just ridiculous that's just pathetic because I mean the commentators really didn't have any choice I mean they were like backed up against the wall on this one because um like Buddha Gosa was writing his commentaries approximately a thousand years after the time of the Buddha so I mean Buddhism wouldn't even exist anymore if that was literally strictly

true so I mean he's got to come up with
something he can't say that the Buddha
never said that that it's wrong can't
say that the Buddha was wrong so I mean
he had to just I mean it's sort of like
it happens in politics nowadays you know
where you know you got the the the
democrat congress person pulling a fire
alarm to stop a vote and then he's
saying oh I just thought it was the door
you know I thought I was just opening
the door and and it's it's a lame
argument but people with a vested
interest in supporting his party or his
side will say yeah well there you go he
just explained find it and that's kind
of the way it is with with this uh

commentarial approach um I have come across a few other possibilities one is by Paul low who is not a Buddhist but he is a wise person in my opinion and he was saying that what what it meant was that for 500 years you had an unbroken lineage of enlightened teachers and disciples you know you just have you know an enlightened Buddhism going for 500 years and then after 500 years it it just died out you know you finally had an enlightened teacher who didn't have any enlightened disciples which broke the lineage but there have been times since then when Enlightenment has reisen there's been sort of a a Renaissance of

Enlightenment in Buddhism possibly like
medieval China even which was Mahayana
like Chan
Buddhism um so that's a possibility also
I had one Burmese Monk um not really so
long ago it was like the last time I was
in Burma I'm pretty sure back when I was
still a monk say that you know he meant
it figuratively you know that instead of
a Thousand Years it'll last 500 just
means you know it'll last half as long
and the numbers were just sort of like
for example kind of a thing but
personally I'm intrigued by the the
possibility that what he said was
literally true and that what we've got
going now really isn't the true

teachings anymore even though it's possible still to become enlightened you know it's not like nobody has become enlightened in the past 2,000 years following Buddhism but it's just they're doing it in spite of the fact that the teachings are so corrupted that they don't really represent you know the original teachings anymore or the other possibility which I think is probably more likely just going with aam's Razer is that since the the entire poly toptica is not entirely reliable as just accurate verbatim teachings of the Buddha that uh it might have gotten added in like I was just talking about

how there it was a contentious issue
even in ancient times so it may be the
anti- ordination for bikuni faction just
got this added into the text somehow
because they just you know they can't
really stop the nuns from existing
anymore because it's like a done deal
but um you know they wanted to point out
that it wasn't a good idea and they're
not favor of it and so they tried to
make it out like the Buddha wasn't in
favor of it so that's a possibility
too but if you want like my full
coherent discussion of this you probably
have to look um in the book on uh I
don't even remember the name of the the
name of the uh the article or the essay

it was like the 500 year lifespan of Buddhism something like that but it is interesting uh I interesting topic of discussion I have to admit because you've got the text saying an ancient text in which the Buddha is saying that even setting aside beunis that the Buddha is saying that Buddhism will exist for only 500 years and it just does kind of indicate the humility of early monks that they just didn't realize what traction Buddhism was going to get and how it was just going to take off and become a world religion so and then the second part of this question

here by

Alex is why does the ordination of nuns

bear such grave consequences in my

experien is in all religions nuns are

very devoted even

fanatical the main problem is just

celibate sexually frustrated men and

celibate sexually frustrated women

interacting with each other it just

causes problems it's not anything

negative about women the Buddha had to

admit when Ananda was pestering

women are just as able to become

enlightened as men

are and that was like his foot in the

door and that finally changed the

Buddha's mind but um you know so women

are just as able to become enlightened
as men or approximately as able of
becoming
enlightened women can become fully
enlightened it's not just a men do not
have a monopoly on
enlightenment but it's it's just men and
women who are um celibate and many of
them are sexually frustrated I mean it
[__] happens I mean it happen it's
happened in the aan cha tradition not
with fully ordained nuns but the
unordained kind where Just One Fine Day
a monk and one of the unordained nuns
just runs off and live happily ever
after

somewhere it does

happen so I think that was the main

reason he didn't want nuns and some of

the ancient Indian athetic sects did not

allow the ordination of female monastics

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is uh this is from

ruie and ruie says hello poo a simple

question this time what are your

thoughts on luck it seems like a special

kind of karma yeah well um in in

Buddhism Buddhist philosophy there is no

luck it would all be some kind of Karma

and so it may be that a person just has

like a a strain of Good Karma that just

helps them win at cards or something you

know they just they just have good luck

not necessarily at casinos but I mean if
you win or lose in a casino I mean
that's Karma you know anything that
happens to you is the fruition of karma
according to Buddhist philosophy at
least according to terraa Buddhist
philosophy
so yeah I mean in in Burmese
can I mean it's uh it literally means
Karma but it also means luck like k k it
means good karma or good luck you know
if you're lucky you you just say k you
have good karma so yeah it's it's not
really a special kind of karma it's just
sort of like a positive strain positive
strand in your in your karmic

stream that uh causes good things to

happen to

you rather than bad things so I think

I'll just move on to ru's next question

here well a less simple question to

after all

is it worth it is it worth it trying to

reconcile terava and Mahayana and I'm

not exactly sure what he means by

reconciling them I mean to have them dis

agree to disagree on friendly terms you

know have them you know cooperate on

certain things that's that's fine that's

that's ideal like the the University of

Nanda in Ancient India you had all these

different sects of Buddhism living in

the same Monastery compound you know

they each had their own separate SEMA or like ecclesiastical boundary they do their own uh like formal ceremonies separately just so that be in accordance with their own rules of monastic discipline but I mean they were living peaceably together it wasn't it wasn't like early sects of Christianity trying to obliterate each other and so I mean that kind of reconciling where they're just reconciled to each other's existence I mean that's just common sense but reconciling the philosophy um no I mean you can't really reconcile I mean sometimes it's just opposites

like in some respects Mahayana teaches
the opposite of terava like terava says
you know according to goab Buddha you
should try to become enlightened In This
Very life if you possibly can Mahayana
says no don't do that postpone it
indefinitely until all other beings in
the universe are also enlightened which
just means means you're postponing
Enlightenment pretty much
forever so I mean those obviously can't
be reconciled be you know get yourself
enlightened In This Very life or the
Mahayana Buddhist are saying you know
that's just an inferior point of view
that's just selfish and and it's the
deficient vehicle it's the inferior

vehicle H Yana and you know you should

just postpone Enlightenment forever

that's somehow

better so I mean you can't reconcile

some of the philosophical aspects of the

two but uh I mean just getting along

with each other and agreeing to disagree

that's that's the kind of reconciliation

that uh has been practiced fairly well

and uh despite kind of Jabs at each

other every now and then especially the

H Yana thing the slur of

hinana um so yeah I think I'll just move

on the next question now and this is

from keep the

vinia and keep the vinia says suppose

you had never become a monk but remained
a Buddhist Layman do you think you would
have had children I asked because
children are one of the greatest
attachments well when I was a young
man I used to think about this kind of
stuff
myself and I mean I didn't want children
myself because you know back in those
days I mean nobody gave a [__] about
global warming or climate change I mean
that was not the issue it's like you
know all these higher ups like the
globalists you know they they were
having us be afraid of nuclear war
nuclear Armageddon and nuclear winter
maybe a little bit of fear about

pollution and and

overpopulation but really the the the

really fanatical protesters and so forth

they were against nukes and now it's

against global warming and the nukes are

at least as dangerous as they were

before you know now you've got North

Korea with nukes and Iran's getting

nukes and Pakistan's got nukes and you

know third world countries essentially

are getting nukes and so in that sense

it's more dangerous now probably easier

for terrorists to get a hold of a

nuke but for some reason nobody cares

anymore it's like they're all freaked

out about global warming because that's

what they are told to be freaked out

about they they're like

sheep

so I was I was concerned about what the

world was going to become I mean it's

like you don't want to bring a a child

into a world that's just going to become

a some sort of apocalyptic Wasteland or

some such and I knew that that having

babies was just a is just in some ways

it's an awful thing although you're all

doped up on Parenthood hormones and so

forth that you know you kind of got this

Euphoria getting you through it but I

remember when I was like a junior monk

I'd just be walking through some burmes

Village going for alms with my alms Bowl

in my hands and just hear some crying
baby and those were the times when I was
happiest that I was a monk cuz I just do
not like the sound of of screaming
babies just I mean once you if you
become a monk or become a parent then of
course you know you got the Parenthood
instincts and the hormones keeping you
going and everything and you just kind
of get numb to it or something just get
used to
it but the thing is when I was a young
man and wasn't a monk yet and still
somewhat open-minded on just settling
down with the the right girl if I found
her which I hadn't found yet at the time

um it would depend a lot on her I think
it would just be selfish um just to
refuse to have kids if she really wanted
to have kids I think like motherhood
instincts are strong in some women where
they just feel like they can't be
fulfilled in life unless they have
children you know some women they they
really want to have children and so I
mean maybe out of love for my wife I'd
be willing to have one or two most you
know I used to remember just two would
be the
limit
so yeah it's probably just as well that
I didn't have any kids in this life I'm
pretty sure I I don't I don't have any

uh

Offspring you know out there

somewhere never heard of any anyway

never heard of an ex-girlfriend being

pregnant after we broke up anything like

that so yeah I

mean whether I actually would have had

children or not like the main girlfriend

that I had before I was a monk like the

last girlfriend I had I think she was

incapable of having children anyway so

there's a good chance I wouldn't have

had children if I had just not been

ordained and and settled down with with

my girlfriend at the time um gotten

married there's a good chance we just

naturally would not have had children or

then again maybe she'd want like a test

Tu baby or something I don't

know but uh yeah it's possible but would

have depended on the woman I was with so

I'll just move on to keep theia's next

question who says how do those who say

that Buddha meant right View and not no

view defend their position well that's I

mean the word d means View and it also

in later texts means wrong view you know

just D view has come to be synonymous

almost with wrong

view but

in the the earliest strata of Buddhism

the Buddha was just saying you shouldn't

have any view you you should not have

any belief you know you should not cling
to any
perception anything like that that I
mean it's just in the scene only the
scene you just do not philosophize you
do not come up with interpretations of
samsar which is samsara itself it's like
samsara is perception samsara is
meaning
so but I mean that was so profound and
it was just it was like emptiness I mean
it was like there's no ground for you to
stand on and so after Buddhism started
becoming more popular you have more
scholarly people and less like radically
spiritual people entering the S they're

you know they want something

philosophical that you can believe in

and they establish this elaborate

Scholastic philosophy and you can't have

no view because then you elaborate

Scholastic philosophy would be rejected

and so they came up with a distinction

between wrong View and Right View and I

mean to some degree I mean even like the

first step on the noble Eightfold Path

is Right View but that's sort of a

makeshift I mean it's not ultimately

true it's just sort of a skillful means

you know it's an expedient to make you

help you get progress towards less and

less

view So eventually

I mean the Buddha LED this led his followers to a Cliff's Edge and then he dived off and some of his more advanced philosophers dive his Advanced disciples dived off with him but then after he he left the scene and as I say Buddhism started becoming more popular and then it started becoming more philosophical and so forth then you have the philosophers justifying backing away from the cliff and then you have more emphasis on right belief instead of um just no belief at all and so it's it's right there in the text like the later later strata of the poly text are going to have a lot of emphasis on believing

you know the true teaching which is you
know like a philosophical
system and uh there are very few
Buddhists nowadays who really think that
you shouldn't have any view at all even
though Thea waga that's pretty much the
main teaching of
it so
so how do they how do they defend their
position is it's right there in the text
they don't discriminate between archaic
and later texts and if you read the
commentaries to the ateka waga where
it's saying no view that the commentary
says when the Buddha says you shouldn't
have any view what he means is you
shouldn't have any wrong

view so DT just came to mean MAA DT

which is you know view just came to be

synonymous with the wrong view so that

you could have the right view of

orthodox Terra AO

philosophy which is I guess unfortunate

but it's just the way it

is so I'm just move moving on to the

next question from Kei the vinia

here and Keith the vinia says are

feelings of nihilism and and

misanthropy a good motivation for

becoming a monk when I have these

feelings my urge to renounce the world

is

strongest I think it was possibly the

the most recent like previous Q&A I was
talking about how um according to the
wiui MAA there are six personality types
looba Dosa mooha and their
opposites and it does say that people
with the Dosa temperament the the
temperament of hate or just sort of uh
what is it
aversion that they actually have an
advantage in dama because they because
they have aversion for the world and
aversion for other people and so forth
it's easier for them to renounce the
world and renounce Family Ties and
friendships and so forth and just go
alone like the Horn of the
rhinoceros so there is that also this

question reminds me of a a quote in GC

P's book studies in the origins of

Buddhism which by mere coincidence I

have right

here and this also by mere coincidence I

have this book bookmark right

here I do have it outlined and starred

because I I really like this quote

because there is a lot of truth to

this he

says the adoption of the aesthetic idea

requires a firm faith in spiritual

happiness and as firm a despair of

material life its wide prevalence in a

society Bes speaks not only the

acuteness of its religious Consciousness

but also considerable social distress in
practice the ranks of the mendicants are
filled not only by Ardent religious
Souls but in the main by Those whom
despair of Mater IAL life has driven
into vagrant
beggy
amen
so feelings of nihilism and misanthropy
I mean yeah I mean it's it's not you're
not going to stay there but it's sort of
a good start and then it leads you to
something better I mean misanthropy is
like dislike for for the human
race um but I mean if at first it helps
you to renounce the world and you go off
and live alone and then after you've

you've lived alone and have been trying
to live up to this exalted ideal trying
to become a saint and so forth and
seeing
that I mean it's easier said than done
then you start having more compassion
for the [__] up masses out there and I
mean that happened to me I used to have
a lot of disdain to put it mildly for
the human race in general I just did not
like the human race I prefer trees to
humans but I mean after you go out and
live among the trees and you're
trying to become like an enlightened
Saint and I mean you're just like
battling against human nature you're

battling against you know yourself so to
speak and and me just it's easier said
than done it just doesn't work out the
way you think it's going to work out so
that when you interact with people again
I mean you have a certain sympathy with
the fact that they're [__] up
too I mean we're just stuck being human
we don't have any choice but being a
kind of upgraded
ape so yeah I think feelings of nihilism
and misanthropy can be an adequate you
know a sufficient motivation for
becoming a monk I mean there has to be
more to it than that I mean your only
reason for becoming a monk is because
you you hate people and have no ideals

or anything um you know you don't can't
believe in anything I mean that's not
going to get you very far I mean like
like Pond was saying there also has to
be a certain deep faith in in like
spirituality in general like the idea of
Enlightenment the idea of
wisdom the idea of like some Ultimate
Reality that you can
ultimately come to
realize and then then feelings of
nihilism and misanthropy can sort of be
like helpful in helping you to to get on
that path but then eventually you're
going to have to let them
go but it's it's certainly easier to

renounce the world and become a monk
with feelings of nihilism and
misanthropy than with feelings of you
know strong family sentiment and just
being socially engaged and so forth I
mean most most people like that they
just couldn't do it even to begin with
they couldn't take the first step
so I'll just move on to keep theia's
next
question which is what was your motive
for adhering so strictly to the vigia
rules even though you are not a strict
follower of terraa in general well there
are a few reasons for that this is a
good question there are a few reasons
for that first of all when I was uh when

I first became a monk I just I mean
nobody forced me to become a monk nobody
forced me to join the S and so I just
didn't want to break the rules I just
wanted to be a conscientious Monk and
not break the rules I didn't realize at
the time there were about you know
between two and 3,000 rules that I would
have to study and really I mean when
there's so many rules and it's so easy
to break rules I mean you've got to be
like really careful and just almost
obsessed at first which is what happened
to me I just became like a hard-nosed uh
almost a fanatic with regard to
following rules correctly but I just

didn't want to break the rules I wanted

to be an honest conscientious

Monk and it just turned out that in

order to be an honest conscientious monk

you have to be practically an expert on

the rules of monastic discipline cuz

it's so easy to break them so and also I

mean when I first became a monk you know

there's the the Trinity Sila Samar PA

now Sila is morality samadi is like

concentration and Pa is wisdom and my

concentration pretty much sucked my

wisdom didn't satisfy me either

and

so the one thing that I could really

master was CA or or

morality and

so I figured you know just do what I can
and then the CA and the somat or the
samat and the PA you know they'll
they'll come later once I get the the
morality down then it makes the samama
easier which makes the wisdom
easier so that was also part of the the
reason for it but uh I mean if you're
going to join join an organization and
they've got these rules I mean nobody's
forcing you to to join the
organization but I mean it's just just
seems dishonest to me to join the
organization and then just not follow
the rules even if everyone around you is
not following them I mean that's that's

on them but if you're not following them

that's on

you and I just didn't become a monk

because I just wanted to follow along

with what everybody else was doing I

mean that obviously wasn't going to work

so I figured if it ever became became

too difficult to follow the rules

anymore it just wasn't convenient to

follow the rules anymore I would drop

out of the monk hood and that's

essentially what happen in the west you

know you're living among you have fewer

options you have no choice but to live

in situations where um you just can't

follow the rules easily if if at all I

mean even to set foot on most Monastery

property is against the rules
technically because for one monk to make
use of something that another Monk has
paid for with money that's against the
rules too I mean it goes so far that
there's a story in the commentaries
about a monk a Shameless unconscientious
monk buys a mango with his own money and
he he eats the mango and throws the pit
aside and that pit germinates and
Sprouts into a mango tree a 100 years
later another Monk sits in the shade of
that mango tree he's breaking a rule of
monastic discipline by making use of
something that another Monk paid for
with his own money I mean it's that

strict and it's when you're in in Asia
you can avoid breaking rules like that
by just avoiding monasteries you know
just go out and live in the forest which
is what I did most of the time but in
the west it's just not an option you're
just breaking rules whether you want to
or
not and uh yeah it just it's not it's
not a good way of of being a monk I
think anyone who's going to be a monk
should uh find a really strict place in
the west which would probably be run by
Western monks who tend to be stricter
than Asian monks or just go to Asia and
just avoid monasteries
altogether so let's see here did I

answer this question my motive for ad
hearing so strictly yeah mainly nobody
was forcing me to become a monk and I
wanted to be a conscientious honest Monk
and that meant just not shamelessly
breaking the rules and then when you
make confession you're lying by saying
that you're going to restrain yourself
in future when you know you're not I
mean it just it just makes things worse
and
also um following rules is about the
only thing I could really do well when I
was a junior monk especially I mean that
I was no meditation Master at the time
and so I mean follow the

rules so I'll just move on to the next question this is from White Ash Piper and white Dash Piper says I've been thinking on nde phenomenon near-death experience phenomenon and I've and I've come to the conclusion that it's an idiosyncratic one but I can't help to wonder if this isn't a phantom Consciousness happening similar to an ampute where they can still feel the missing limb maybe our brain has that very same response in death you being a biologist might have an interesting point of view thanks Big
D um that's a weird one I've never I've never considered that before that a near-death experience is it's not so

much a phantom limb but an entire

Phantom body and if I mean if you're

completely unconscious I mean in some

ways it'd be a phantom brain

too um yeah

I I kind of I kind of have my skeptical

doubts on that one um

yeah it could I mean from a Buddhist

point of view it'd be more of just the

stream of of karma you the stream of of

conscious will it

continues wow a little animal just ran

by that's

weird wonder what kind of little animal

it was

anyway I mean it just continues after

the body ceases it's you know Buddhism
is not like a purely materialistic
philosophy where you're dead you're dead
you know it's just that's it you
just I mean if that were the case then I
mean Buddhist any Buddhist that doesn't
believe in any kind of afterlife would I
mean if he believes in the four noble
truths and if he doesn't believe even in
the fornal truth then why the hell is he
a Buddhist but if you do believe that to
exist is to suffer and you don't believe
in any kind of afterlife then why not
just commit suicide now not that I'm
encouraging anyone to commit
suicide
because if you commit suicide and you're

not enlightened yet you're just going to
get born again whether you think you are
or
not
so yeah I think it's probably like
you're entering a kind of surreal dream
state although um I mean like the
Tibetan Book of the Dead goes into great
detail on what would be called the
near-death experience except this is the
afterdeath experience but a lot of
similarities you know you're like going
into the the bright light and so forth
um but you're supposed to remind
yourself according to the Tibetan Book
of the Dead that this is all just it's

all illusion it's not real you know it's
like a it's sort of like a dream but
it's apparently some sort of human
archetype that people in general have
these same experiences or very similar
ones uh when when they have like a
near-death experience or for all we know
after they've really
died so
um what causes the near-death experience
phenomenon of you know first um you know
like the the standard stereotypical case
someone gets in a a motorcycle accident
or they they almost drown or they're uh
under anesthesia on a hospital on a
hospital table you know getting operated
on the next thing they know they're

floating up and they can look down and
see their body down there with maybe
people working on them trying to revive
them or whatever and then they can they
kind look around and then they get
higher and higher they can might might
be able to see all sorts of things they
can see you know dust on top of the lamp
you know the ceiling light and so forth
um and then eventually they just rise up
into the air and there's like this
bright light like the herous Bosch
painting where you know they're going up
in almost like this tunnel and there's
this bright light at the end and then
they go through that and usually there's

some sort of spirit guide waiting for
them um if they're a religious person it
may be some well-known religious figure
from their own religion possibly Jesus
or Mary if they're
Catholics um or it could just be a close
family member a trusted Mentor from
their early days who has already passed
on and you know they have to review like
their life and so forth and then
generally at the end of the towards the
end of the near-death experience they're
told that it's not time for them to die
yet they're going to have to go back or
else they get the choice and they choose
to go back
but I guess if you're really dead then

you don't really get to go back at least
not into the same
body but uh yeah I think my my degree in
biology isn't really helpful with with
regard to understanding near-death
experiences because I don't really
interpret a near-death experience in a
biological way I mean it could be that
it's just some human archetype of a kind
of dream experience that you have when
you just got this last spark of
Consciousness going um but I think it's
probably better explained in
nonbiological terms as just a
continuation of the human spirit for
lack of a better word after the body has

ceased

functioning that you just leave the body

and then maybe have to come back if the

if the body gets revived or if you know

you're told to go back or you choose to

go back or whatever so yeah this is I we

can chalk this one up to uh just a best

guess sort of answer and so I move on to

the next one this is from bodhisatta 969

and I forgot to study up for this that's

too bad it's too late for me to to read

the jasuta and the

majima so anyway bodh 969 says your

opinion on this article I have read

please is this true and then apparently

this is a quote from if not the jasuta

then it's it's a some text in which the

Buddha is speaking to the doctor

jivaka and he

says jivaka one day all people will

understand that the beus do not want

animals to be killed when no one will

offer meat to the beus

anymore and the beus will only need

vegetarian dishes to eat

unquote and then uh

the article continues from this

conversation one can conclude that the

consumption of meat is only permitted

under the condition that the G Giver

only offers dishes containing meat

that's not correct if the person who

lives according to the teachings of

Buddha has the choice between vegetarian food and food containing meat he should choose the vegetarian food what is controversial however is why Buddha died at the age of 80 it is often heard that the Buddha died from a poisonous piece of pork but this is a misunderstanding Buddha was given a special dish made from mushrooms picked from the sandal tree called sukra madwa by the lay devote named

Chanda when the Buddha had finished eating he said to Chanda quote dear Chanda please burn the remains of the mushroom dish do not allow anyone to eat it unquote which is

Maharana uh something something the word

the poly word sukur madawa is often translated as meat or or pork the poly word for pork is sukura

mamsa uh Caroline a Davids the r the wife of Reese Davids a noted scholar writes in her work Emanuel of Buddhism quote pork sukar mamsa as part of a meal is actually mentioned once in the scriptures in a remarkably inappropriate verse in which a householder when inviting Buddha to dinner lists an extensive menu in detail nowhere else is madawa ever associated with meat it is a dish made from a root that like truffles is very popular with pigs and may have been called a pig

treat this is from a manual of Buddhism
page 260 from these quotes and
conversations one can conclude that the
Buddha clearly preferred a vegetarian
diet unfortunately not all Buddhists
follow this commandment
commandment and misuse Buddha's words to
justify their meat consumption by
arguing that Buddha allowed meat eating
if the animal was not killed
specifically for them it has been and
shown that this argument is not true in
this way
unquote so I'm supposed to give my take
on this and this it turns out this is
the very last question my golly it's
like I don't realize that it's the last

question until I get to the end of the
the scroll here and it doesn't scroll
down any F farther okay so there's a lot
to unpack here and I did not read the
Jiva cuta of the maimin aaya you can
look it up uh yourself but I don't think
it says what this is because because the
sarasti Vada uh Buddhists apparently uh
deleted the
jasuta from their um from their majaya
from from their suap ptica because it
did pretty much endorse the eating of
meat where jivaka the doctor goes to the
Buddha and is saying that non- Buddhist
philosophers are claiming that the
Buddhists endorsed the killing of

animals because they eat meat and the
Buddha says no if if a monk sees hears
or susp ects that the the animal was
killed for his sake he's not allowed to
eat it otherwise it's fine because
essentially they're eating leftovers
anyway or at least that's the way it
started
off but uh there are a few things I
would say here that first of all
Caroline Reese Davids I mean the person
who is writing the article doesn't even
get her name
right um and I mean she was kind of
embarrassing and her translations are
are so idiosyncratic and so Christian
I mean she was not a Buddhist or at

least she she she wasn't entirely a Buddhist I mean she she was like one of the early westerners who just started just bashing the idea that the Buddha really taught no self because she was so unobjective I mean she just kind of got drawn into the poly text translating Thing by her husband who was much more accomplished as a poly scholar than she was U and she's just trying to drag in her own like more or less Christian Common Sense views U into Buddhism just because she cannot accept that a wise spiritual system would teach something other than she was willing to believe apparently um so I mean there is that I

wouldn't I wouldn't trust Carolina a
Davids Caroline Reese Davids um yeah so
anyway and then just translating suas
mushrooms I mean that's this this
article apparently was written by
someone with an ax grind they already
had a bias and they're writing this in
order to present as plausible an
argument as possible for eating meat
being wrong and bad and the Buddha would
never endorse it but they Overlook other
texts for example in the potim Moka
rules one of the oldest strata of any
school of Buddhism
even Mahayana Buddhism in their praim
Moksha there is a rule saying a monk is
not allowed to ask for meat unless he is

sick or unless the person he is asking
has given him permission to ask for
special food and it's not just meat it's
like fish and and like milk and curds is
food that was considered to be like
Choice dainty kind of food like good
food you're not allowed to ask for that
unless you are sick or they have given
you permission beforehand to ask and
that includes meat and it's just right
there on the list meat
MSA also there's the part I can't
remember exactly where it is I think
it's in vinia where dadat you know the
the Buddhist Judas is scariot more or
less um he's trying to reform Buddhism

supposedly you know he's trying to make
it stricter because um a lot of the non-
Buddhist athetics looked down their
noses on Buddhism because Buddhism
wasn't as strict red this aestheticism
as like The Janes or the
aeas you know Buddhists got to wear
sandals you know they got to use a
walking
stick this kind of
thing and so they were just called
shaven-headed householders by the James
and the eicas and anyway um David dat
wanted to make things stricter and he
had this list of things he wanted to
change about Buddhism and one of those
things he wanted to change is all monks

have to be vegetarian and the Buddha
just said no I mean if a monk wants to
be vegetarian he can but it's not
required so whoever wrote this
article uh either conveniently
overlooked these or was just ignorant of
other texts that specifically I mean
even in in Mahayana text they've got
their praim Moka and all the praim mokas
have that same rule in there you're not
allowed to ask for meat or other dainty
foods like fish or like CDs or milk or
that kind of a thing saying unless
you're sick or unless somebody has given
you permission in advance also there's a
rule that says a monk is not allowed to

eat raw meat or drink raw blood unless

he is possessed by a

demon and uh I read a a book by Doan who

is like the founder of Soo Zen allegedly

in

Japan who uh there's this scene about

this monk who was eating raw meat and

dogen I think it was dogen himself kind

of looked through crack in the door to

see what he was doing and there was like

a demon on top of his head who was

actually eating the

meat

so yeah sukura really does mean Pig and

madawa means like tenderized or Tender

or po sukura means pig or hog and madaa

does mean like

tenderized so I mean you can say it's
like a dainty tender thing that pigs
like to eat but I mean in a way that's
just
I mean they're starting off with the
idea that eating meat is wrong the
Buddha would never have allowed it and
then they're just coming up with the
most plausible arguments they can come
up with to justify that and apparently
they're they were ignorant of other
texts just specifically saying the
Buddha allowed monks to eat meat and it
wasn't just begrudgingly I mean just no
I mean he just refused to require amongs
to be

vegetarian so I mean of course to the

text themselves um I mean some people I

I mean I don't consider all the texts to

be 100% accurate and reliable but if you

start arbitrarily just picking and

choosing depending on your own emotional

preferences then uh you're just leaving

objectivity and the likelihood of being

correct

behind

so I would consider this

article somewhat propagandistic you know

they're starting off with the idea

they're probably a vegetarian

themselves they think all Buddhist

should be vegetarians and so they're

trying to present a case in which the

Buddha himself would prefer to be a
vegetarian maybe even was because
they're denying that he that he ate
pork um as his last
meal but uh the evidence does indicate
otherwise but I mean one of the reasons
why monks were allowed to eat meat in
ancient times is
because I mean they were just eating
whatever was put in their and as the
saying goes Biggers can't be
choosers
so that's it I think I've answered all
the questions unless I've just scrolled
over one which I do occasionally but um
yeah I've answered all of them so if you

have any questions that you would like
to ask about Buddhism uh meditation
monasticism me Burma anything that you
think I might be able to answer in an
intelligent manner or you just want some
sort of intriguing unusual off-the-wall
kind of answer then uh feel free to ask
in the comments below if you have access
to the Discord server you can ask there
if you have access to the Subscribe Star
channel and you can ask there and take a
look at my U what is it URL links I
almost said UHF my URL links below take
a look at my books like I mentioned uh
my in-depth discussion of the Buddhist
prophecy that Buddhism will last for
only 500 years I'm pretty sure is in the

first book and URL links below um um

essays in terab Buddhism by

me and uh like And subscribe to the

channel if you haven't done so already

and be

happy

hello and welcome to episode 64 of question and answer I am your host dark poo basa or at least dark on this side and bright on the other side and you may have noticed there's been some uh slight rearranging in this room including uh the taking away of at least one of the lamps that I was using for lighting the room and that is because we are going to be moving to a new house within the matter of a few weeks and so everything that isn't necessary including few a few things that are necessary have been packed away and they are like in a storage place on the other side of town where the new

house is is located but we haven't
closed on the new house yet so we have
to wait until the sale closes and then
we move stuff
in and uh also you may have noticed that
I didn't do a Q&A last week breaking
with the new system of one Q&A every
weekend and that is because in addition
to all the the moving and stuff I got
sick like a little over a week ago and
I'm still not fully recovered I'm not
exactly sure what it was it was like
some kind of flu maybe maybe like the a
variety of the Wuhan flu something like
that but right now it's it's uh more
than half gone I mean I'm I'm well on
the road to uh recovery now

and I just feel just sort of like head

pressy

and foggy and slightly icky still but

the show must go on and I'm certainly

not going to skip another week any more

than I can skip another week of cleaning

the pond filter out in the fish pond out

front and so we've got a bunch of

questions to answer and the first

question is from my tra

Buddha and my tra Buddha says what are

your thoughts on New Age cult

and strangely that's that's it just it

seems like a strange question to me

because I've never really come across a

new age cult that I can think of I mean

if I try to think of a new age cult the only one that really comes to mind would be ooso you know like uh the Bugan Raj nich as he used to be called and I mean he was pretty new age I guess I mean technically he would probably be considered more Hindu than than anything else you know giving Sanskrit names to his disciples and so forth but I've met some some new age people who considered themselves to be Hindu but really they were more in New Age so with regard to the cult aspect I really don't have enough
experience to to have much of an opinion on them because I've never really had any direct interaction with

new age Cults and even though when I was
a kid
like Raj Nish puram was probably less
than 100 miles maybe a 100 miles or so
from where I lived as a kid and you see
them on the news and everything but it
was always this very biased like anti
Raj Niche propaganda on the news because
it was normies that were you know kind
of running the news
station and I mean and then if you look
into it I mean you can't find anything
unbiased on on the buwan Raj NES Alias O
show um you know it's either very much
biased in his favor or very much biased
against him and you have to kind of read

both sides and triangulate and I did

write an article or an essay about Raj

just trying to make heads or tals of the

man I read a few of his books also but

uh setting aside the ban Raj NES Alias

oh show um just new age in general I've

had a lot of experience with new age in

general

and um as a young

man I just tended to avoid new age

people as much as possible because they

were

so frustrating to communicate with

because they can believe pretty much

anything you know it's like they're

Faith oriented or something they don't

really need reason much or if they have

any semblance of reason you know it is a slave to their faith or or something and so I mean it was just so frustrating dealing with just very soft-headed people in my opinion at the time that I just kind of avoided them as much as possible but then in 2011 when I made my first serious attempt to live longterm in America as a kind of Freer range monk I was like my first year in America my first several months anyway I was supported more by new age people than by people who call themselves Buddhists I mean the Buddhists just they're like who is this guy who does he think he is you know

let's just kind of be polite and just avoid him was was the approach of a lot of of the Buddhist Community whereas the new age people um bless their hearts I mean they're very open-minded you know they can believe anything and so that makes them very open-minded and they're generous and friendly and so they were supporting me more than the Buddhists were my first my for several months in America and uh so I mean I really think they have some definite handicaps with regard to spirituality just mainly based on they can believe anything like in Buddhism you got the five indas and two of them are like PA or Reason and S or faith and you have to have a balance

between faith and reason if you got too

much faith and not enough reason you can

believe anything like new age people if

you got too much reason and not enough

Faith you're gonna just be like a

hardened skeptic and no amount of

evidence will be sufficient for you to

uh make a

judgment

um so I was going to say something I was

that was leading into the next thing I

was going to

say and now I can't remember what it was

but

uh New

Age yeah I mean I can they've got their

good points and their bad points which
is true of just about anything I mean
you're not going to have pure 100% evil
in this world as a general rle you're
not going to have pure 100% good it all
balances out in the long run you know
all the pluses and minuses balance out
so that the Universe can add up to
zero
so yeah I mean one thing about new ages
they tend to be just like radically
pacifistic you know there I've never
come across a warlike new Ager
and uh so I mean they're harmless I
think that would that would be like one
of the main attributes of new age people
is they are harmless and I think they

would take pride in being called
harmless oh the thing that I was going
to say and I've written about this in
the past is that new age in in some ways
it seems like a misnomer to me because
in a way it could be they could be
called old age because I get the
impression that new AG people
nowadays um in a lot of ways they
closely resemble like classical pagans
before the Roman Empire converted to
Christianity you know I just all the the
spirits and the influences and the the
vibrations and all that um yeah it just
seems like they're like in in a way
they're like

neopagans but not uh neopagans that are

that call themselves neopagans they're

just sort of like

classical pagans like of of Rome who uh

I mean they just sort of now they're in

the in in the postmodern

West so I guess those are some thoughts

and since we got lots of questions

because I skipped a week I think I'll

move on to the next one this is from CAC

and sead

zida and seac and CI

zida asked these

questions more than two weeks ago go it

was um to a previous Q&A before the the

most recent

one and then he got kicked off of

YouTube probably I think it was for uh
like it was in violation of YouTube's
policy against violent hate groups or
something and probably he just like
mentioned one because that's how YouTube
swings
nowadays so anyway his questions got
deleted when he got kicked off the the
platform and so uh he had to ask these
questions again so these are old
questions and I
mean he probably forgotten all about
them and he's just being reminded of
them again now it's like oh yeah I asked
those questions a long time ago so C COV
action CAD zida says I remember you said

you think the three-fold classification
of worldling Arya and arahant is
probably legit So based on this do you
think you are an Arya ha or h on
well um I have pointed out
that there's uh a three-fold system like
usually when you've got like the stages
of Spiritual Development in terava
Buddhism it's like the four stages of s
or or below that you got the putuj the
common worldling you know the
Normie and then you got the the sodana
the sakagami the anagami and the arant
the fully enlightened AR
and um I do not consider that to be
probably the teaching of the Buddha that
that's probably a later a later

development but there is
another uh spiritual progression that is
mentioned in the text of the putuj the
Sea and the AA putuj again being the
common worldling the common person the
sea is the one in training and that
would be someone who has started to wake
up but isn't fully awake yet and then
the ASA is the one who is no longer in
training and that's the fully
enlightened being and I think that one
may have more legitimacy than the four
stages of sainthood simply because
another system another spiritual system
appears to have come up with the same
system independently of the terot

Buddhists and that's the

Catholics that's St John of the Cross

who was a discal

carite um very possibly just completely

independently of Terra Buddhism came up

with the idea that you've got the

beginner the Adept and the perfect the

beginner again is just the worldly

normi the Adept is someone who has

become Adept at what the Catholics call

contemplation or high contemplation

which would be at least second gen by

the Buddhist Reckoning because it's a

kind of contemplative state where you're

no longer thinking your mind is just

silent and clear I mean there's still

going to be like the initial movements

of thoughts but it doesn't get past
that and then finally the perfect would
be like the enlightened being in terada
Buddhism and just it was amazing to me
to read that that uh St John of the
Cross who is the mystical doctor of the
Catholic Church anything he says in the
realm of mysticism is official Doctrine
de facto of the Catholic church and he's
saying there is a stage of of perfection
in in Christianity I mean even Jesus
denied being good you know somebody
calls him good master or good Rabbi or
something and Jesus says why do you call
me good there's none good except God so
he was denying not only being God but

even being

good and then here's St John of the

Cross and Juan De La Cruz in 16th

century Spain who's saying you can

become perfect and he considered his

teacher who was St Teresa of Aila to

have been of the stage of Perfection and

he seems to be implying that he also

because he's speaking with authority I

mean he's he's just saying it's like

this you know this is what you will

experience and so uh there's a good

chance that he himself was a kind of

Catholic

arant which is interesting to me I was

fascinating when I first started reading

this stuff because it was just caught me

by surprise and there's so much of it

that's parallel or you know sort like

parallel

Evolution and just assuming that the

Catholics just borrow these ideas from

the Buddhists like from missionaries who

came back from Sri Lanka or

something

so yeah I would assume there's some kind

of legitimacy to

that I mean it's just it's just like a

hypothesis or a theory just just because

I mean it has arisen independently in

two different places that kind of gives

a little more weight than the four

stages of of sainthood that I mean

there's there's sort of like

questionable aspects to that like the

fact that the earliest texts don't ever

mention sakagami that other early texts

use

um like uh anagami and also soap in

non-orthodox with non-orthodox meanings

that kind of a

thing

but um just because I think that may be

a legitimate thing I mean going with St

John cross I never became an Adept to

even much less perfect because I never

completely mastered High contemplation

or going with the Buddhist Reckoning I

never completely mastered Jan especially

like second Janna or above I never fully

mastered it so that I could just just
get into Janna whenever I felt like it
but then again in terv Buddhism it
teaches you don't have to completely
Master Janna even to become fully
enlightened so there's still a certain
amount of ambiguity and uh potential
contentiousness involved in that but
with regard to whether I'm an Arya or
not I've answered that before with the
kind of non-answers just you don't even
think about it I mean if you really are
an Arya you're not going to be thinking
I'm an Arya but if you're thinking I'm
not an Arya you're essentially just
closing and locking the door to the even

even the potential of

that so it's a no- win scenario to make

a call as to whether you're an Arya or

not

and so I don't

bother so I'll just move on to covac and

c z now's next

question and this is a nagar question

and therefore a maama question so I'll

put on The maamaa Fez I need all the

help I can

get see here I've had troubles in the

past by getting the eye not perfectly

centered or any something like that

which can result in blockage to your

higher

chakras

okay so he says in a previous video I asked about nagara saying that the ultimate truth is that there is no ultimate truth you said this is because nibana can't be described but earlier I mentioned that nagar already said emptiness is a higher truth than nibana based on this it seems he would not have been using ultimate truth to mean nibana here what what are your thoughts on this do you have any other ideas what nagar could have meant okay nagar is uh very subtle and uh challenging to discuss at times so let's see Nar said that the the ultimate truth is that there is no ultimate truth and yeah it's like

ultimate truth cannot be expressed in

words I mean you cannot grasp it at all

ultimate truth is

I mean it's essentially void I mean it's

just like off the scale so I mean

there's nothing you can say about it

that is going to be valid

ultimately so it's not just that Nana

can't be described it's just reality

can't be

described so then he says uh thear

already said that emptiness is a higher

truth in theana based on this it seems

it would not have been used he would

have been using

ultimate truth to me nibana here what

are your thoughts on this well I mean

nibana has two meanings or Nirvana for a
non- terad like nagar they use nirvana
instead of Nana using Sanskrit instead
of
poly um there there are two main
meanings of Nirvana I mean there's
nirvana in the metaphysical sense as
just reality but the more common
definition of or like meaning of nirvana
or n
is in the ethical sense which is blowing
out it's it's like it's like something
that happens to it's like the attainment
of nibana is called nibana it's like the
the moment of Enlightenment or the state
of being enlightened rather than the

metaphysical state that you're that

you're accessing or that you're seeing

clearly it's just like the ethical state

of reaching the

goal and so in that sense it has a more

limited meaning than just Ultimate

Reality you know that's it's like this

ethical phenomenon you could say this

ethical

state

so that's that's one that's another

reason why you know ultimate reality is

considered to be or like emptiness is

considered to be higher truth than

nibana because nibana is just this one

ethical State whereas um you know

Ultimate Reality you ultimate truth

truth just pervades the entire

universe and in a sense nirvana in the

metaphysical sense could be said to

pervade the entire universe but nibana

in the ethical sense you know it only

goes on in the mind of an

arant or I mean if you can even say that

it goes on in a mind I mean it's just

off the scale and so it's just a

paradoxical state but it's much more

limited in its meaning than just

reality so I hope I answered that one so

I'll just move on to covac and CAD Z's

next question

here which is you have said Nara

understood dependent origination more

than anyone and let's see tying it to emptiness however the sarasti V sutras have various agamas where it directly Associates emptiness with dependent origination for example in the Su Yuka a 335 it says

quote what is the discourse on emptiness in its ultimate meaning monks when the eye arises there is no place from which it comes when it ceases there is no place to which it goes thus the eye being not real arises having Arisen it ceases completely it is a result of previous action but it has no doer when these Aggregates cease other Aggregates continue with the conception of this transient Dharma it is the same with the

ear nose tongue body and mind there are

exceptions to the transient

Dharma they are exceptions to the

transient

Dharma huh the meaning of transient

Dharma is because this exists that

exists because this arises that arises

thus conditioned by ignorance are

activities conditioned by activities is

consciousness and so on and thus arises

this whole mass of suffering so that's

pich and again when this does not exist

that does not exist when this ceases

that ceases when ignorance ceases

activity cease when activity cease

Consciousness ceases and so on and thus

ceases this whole mass of suffering so that's like the reverse version of of dependent Co rising or
P monks this is called the discourse on emptiness in its ultimate meaning unquote based on this and analyzing the language maybe do you think nagar was simply using ideas directly from the sutras since SAS was largest Orthodox school at his time or do you think these passages were added to the sutras later somehow hence their absence in poly sutas well yeah nothing like that is really found in the terraa poly texts so that makes it a little suspect that it could be a later addition also it seems like this Sutra is going against some of

the

official uh positions of sval this is

the first time I've ever read this

passage cuz I haven't read much sarasti

Vada literature other than some of their

Venia I've never really read their their

aamas they you know their

sutras and I think this might be like

recently translated because for a long

time it just wasn't translated into

English but uh the sarasti vodin first

of all they believed like the terab

vadens do that that physical matter is

ultimately real that was their official

Doctrine and in fact they even took it

farther than the terad because the

according to terad Abid dama even though
physical matter is ultimately real it it
just it's blinking on and off at a rate
of like a trillion times a
second whereas the sarasti vadens had
the idea at least in their official
doctrine that there is no blinking on
and off there it's like that individual
dharmas or individual atams or like um
the the ultimately real particles of
mind and matter are Eternal and that
it's only the the combinations of them
that are
impermanent
so this suture would seem to go against
even the sarasti voden uh
official Dogma so there is a good chance

that this is just a later addition to
the texts possibly by Mahayana Buddhists
trying to retroactively put their own
sort of sun Vada into the mouths of the
Buddha but who knows I
mean it's like like I say this is the
first time I've ever come across um
sarasti voden sutras essentially
teaching like the The Emptiness of
Mahayana but um I mean you can find
really subtle you know very advanced
stuff in in very early texts and it may
be that this got just edited out of the
the poly literature early on because it
was just too radical or something or or
viewed as too

radical

so but this this Sutra uh assuming that

it is sarvas Vaden as covac and CAD zida

is saying I mean it's it's in violation

of saden Doctrine also so that would

make it a little more suspect and we're

not discussing maama anymore so I'll

take this

off so yeah I mean just offand if I have

to guess I would guess that that is

probably um Apocrypha that was added to

the SAS vad texts uh possibly after SAS

Vada even became extinct it's hard to

say but it was I I would say I would

guess offand that it is a late addition

to the text because nothing closely

resembling that is found in the poly and

the the Sutra itself is in violation of
basic doctrines of sasti Vada
itself so I think I'll just move on to
covac and sead z now next question here
which is a strange
one and he says how do you overcome an
inferiority complex such as being short
or ugly even though I'm 6'3 I feel like
an absolute genetic dead end because I
get brutally height mogged by the people
around me especially my siblings and
relatives random strangers constantly
ask me why I'm so short compared to them
and I just laugh at off I also see
random videos sometimes of women saying
men under 64 or 65 being worthless and

being dehumanized due to their
unattractiveness it's so bad that I
don't want to go outside and go anymore
due to my inferiority complex and fear
of being height mogged to Oblivion and
he's
6'3 some people have told me stuff like
try being 5'5 you privilege POS and I
rationally know other people have it way
worse than me but it seems impossible to
make the inferiority complex go away
well I mean this isn't so much an
inferiority complex at being short
because you know he's well into the top
2% I mean even in like the Netherlands
which is the tallest country in the
world

still he would be above average in
height even there so I'm like elsewhere
I advise him just move to Asia because I
I'm 6 fo three also approximately more
or less and uh yeah I just towered over
everyone around me when I was living in
Burma and
Indonesia so you you'll be a giant there
but that's not really solving the
solving the problem here which is a kind
of strange inferiority conf Lex cuz he's
not the tallest person in the
world and really that's what it seems to
be it's like he doesn't want to be tall
because he's already tall he wants to be
taller than everybody or so tall that

you know it's like he rarely meets

anyone taller than him but even if you

do I mean I know what it's like I mean

I'm being 6'3 I'm taller than most other

guys but then every once in a while you

meet a guy who's like six foot n and

he's like towering over the top of me I

got to look up when I'm talking to him

and it it is kind of a weird feeling

it's kind of a humbling

feeling but with regard to how to deal

with

it I mean it's the Buddhist Panacea The

Cure All is just mindfulness just

whenever it arises be mindful of it and

then realize that it's not you you know

it's like if you can observe something

like your hand or your

microphone then you know that's not you

because if you are anything at all

you're the who's doing the observing not

the thing being observed so this

inferiority complex arises You observe

it mindfully it's not you anymore

there's already this philosophical

Detachment you know it works that way

with anger or fear or or worry or

whatever inferiority complexes from

being only

6'3 it works for that

too so when it arises just be mindful of

it which detaches you from it it makes

it stop being you

and then you are depriving it of karmic momentum so that it gradually gets weaker and weaker every time it arises and that's I mean best advice I can give you is just be mindful of it just note it when it arises don't identify with it don't take it too seriously and if you do take it seriously you should be mindful of that too so I'll just move on to covac and CAD Zer has next question here which is it is often said that everything we experience is a result of karma in Buddhism but in the samudaya 3621 it says quote Master Goa there are some Aesthetics and brahmans who hold such a Doctrine in view as this whatever

a person experiences whether it be pleasant or painful or neither painful nor Pleasant all that is caused by what was done in the past what does Master Goda say about this some feelings siaka arise here originating from bile disorders that some feelings arise here originating from bile disorders one can know to oneself and that is considered to be true in the world now when those Aesthetics and brahans hold such a Doctrine in view as this whatever a person experiences whether it be pleasant or painful or neither painful nor Pleasant all that is caused by what was done in the past they overshoot what

One Knows by oneself and they overshoot
what is considered to be true in the
world therefore I say that this is wrong
on the part of these or those athetics
and Bron
some feeling siaka arise from
originating from fleem disorders
originating from wind disorders
originating from imbalance of the three
produced by change of climate produced
by careless Behavior caused by assault
produced as the result of comma that
some feelings arise here produced as a
result of comma one can know for oneself
and that is considered to be true in the
world now when those athetics and brahin
hold such a Doctrine in view as this

whatever a person experiences whether it
be pleasant or painful were neither
Pleasant painful nor Pleasant all that
is caused by what was done in the past
they overshoot what One Knows by oneself
and they overshoot what is considered to
be true in the world therefore I say
that this is wrong on the part of those
athetics and brahans what do you make of
this well first of all it seems strange
that like the the galin or the humor
theory of galin has gotten into this
sua it's my understanding that as a
general rule Health disorders in in the
Buddhist time it was like the four
elements you have a an imbalance in

Earth element water element wind element

or Fire Element he's got wind element in

there which would be stuff like

arthritis and stiffness and so forth but

um bile and fleem that's that's right

out of

galin it could be there in the text

though it's been a long time since I

read the

sua but I mean let's say you've

got let's say you've got a pain painful

feeling because you've got a fleem

disorder right well who's to say that

that fleem disorder isn't caused by what

you did in the past that's just I mean

you don't say that it's just pain Just

Happening all by itself just because of

karma in the past the karma from the

past may be causing the Flem

Disorder so and this isn't a very strong

argument that has been either came from

the Buddhist mouth or was put into the

Buddhist

mouth um and it's not necessarily all

karma is things you did in the past

because there's also present Karma that

you're making Karma right now the

fruition is just boom the very next

moment so I guess it was like maybe a

moment

ago

so yeah he's got a list here it's

like vile disorders fleem disorders wind

disorders an imbalance of the three
change of climate careless Behavior
assault and it's like going with Abid
dama philosophy I mean for what that's
worth and in this case I I am inclined
you know provisionally to accept what
what Abid dama says that I
mean there are sutas that say this that
I mean Karma isn't the only thing that
causes Pleasure and Pain but then again
Abid dama and maybe other sutas say you
know everything you experience that's
pleasurable painful or otherwise
anything that you experience is the
fruition of Karma and you know it will
manifest itself as a flim disorder or as
climate change or whatever but still

it's your mind that is creating it I

mean this is assuming that physical

matter is ultimately

real and uh I'm not so sure that the

Buddha would have gone with that because

I mean we are I mean the Buddha woke up

he was he woke up from the dream which

implies that this is a

dream I mean that's not the only

argument I could put forth but still I

mean it's a pretty obvious

one so there's nothing to prevent your

karma

from from like attaining fruition from

manifesting itself as fruition through a

bile disorder through a fleem disorder

or through change of climate or careless

Behavior I mean the careless Behavior

itself is

karma so I mean there's it's not

necessarily in Conflict

here and uh yeah the the argument does

not seem like a very strong one and so

yeah I'm I'm still I'm still sticking by

the karma Theory

here because you can you can dream that

you're having a Flem disorder but still

the fleem disorder is a creation of your

mind because you are dreaming

it so I'll just move on to the next

question here from caken Z which is you

have said you believe psychic powers are

real before but whenever there are

miracles in the sutas like the Maha suta
you say these parts are mythological why
do you think this especially if anyone
in the world had immense psychic powers
it would be the Buddha and his direct
disciples
well it is true that I think psychic
powers can and do happen in this world
but if you read the Miracles in the
sutas some of them not all of them but
some of the Miracles in the sutas are
just grandiose like in the Maha Su um
when the Buddha declares that he he's
going to die soon there's an earthquake
that I mean it's the whole earth shakes
all the way down to the water on which

it floats and then when he dies also

another

earthquake

and I don't think there ever has been a

complete worldwide earthquake unless

it's like when you know some huge Comet

smacks into the Earth you can feel it

all over the world maybe but um I don't

think that a man in India stating that

he's going to die soon is going to cause

an earthquake all over the

planet or there's another one where the

Buddha is he's old he's sick and he

wants to drink of water so he sends

Anand to go get a drink of water and it

was like 500 Ox carts had just passed

through this River and it's all just

churned up and it's just like liquid mud
so Ananda comes back to the Buddha and
says it's all mud I I mean it's it's
hardly even water is this 500 wagons
have just gone through here the would
just says Get me the water and then
Ananda goes to get the water and it just
miraculously becomes Crystal Clear just
because the Buddha wants to drink from
it and I mean you can say that maybe
that really happened but just going with
aam's razor it seems more likely that
that is just a madeup story that got
added to glorify the
Buddha his his you know superhuman
powers and so forth and I mean there's a

lot of that I mean you like the twin
miracle I mean the Buddha used to warn
monks you know don't I mean it's against
the the rules of monastic discipline to
like do Miracles as magic tricks in
order to impress people and then he did
the twin Miracle which is he he flies up
into the air he levitates in the air and
sprays fire out of one side of his body
and water out of the other side and then
the side switch so that the one side
that was spraying fire is now spraying
water and vice versa and then he
switches again so it's the top half is
spraying water the bottom half is
spraying fire and then he switches that
again and I mean Burmese people devout

Buddhists who were born into a Buddhist

culture that's that's what they know

they don't have doubts about it you know

they'll just assert that as a fact but

as a

Westerner I am just skeptical that the

Buddha ever did

that I mean

subtle psychic powers you know psychic

powers that happen spontaneously around

wise people or you just look into the

mind of another person to see how best

to to teach them which is really the

only psychic power that is encouraged

for monks to

practice

then yeah that's that's a far cry from
these really spectacular all inspiring
Miracles that
really I mean it just it's like apples
and oranges like a legitimate psychic
power which can and does happen I I have
no doubt nevertheless that's different
from flying up into the air and spraying
fire and water out of oneself to just
blow away these unbelievers down below
or you know the the the muddy water
turning Crystal Clear just because the
Buddha want to drink from it it maybe it
happened but I'm still skeptical because
it just seems very convenient to just
add glory and Majesty to the Buddha in
this text that's largely a devotional

kind of

text so I think I'll just move on to the

next question this is from the

anti-marxist

league and the anti-marxist league

says could a married person with a

family become an arant and still

maintain the normal routine of family

life that is work a job remain a good

parent and spouse engage in conjugal

intercourse intercourse Etc or must one

do what the Buddha did I am currently

single and I'm indifferent to whether

that changes however if marriage would

be a major impediment to Enlightenment

I'd avoid it all together my only real

goal now is

Enlightenment well if your only real

goal is Enlightenment then yeah you

probably shouldn't get married I think

that it's still theoretically

possible to become enlightened as a

married man some people allegedly have

done it like n narad Maharaj in India he

was a lay person ran a little stall

selling cigarettes and cough drops and

stuff he was married and had kids um

other people who are considered to be

enlightened still mess around you know

like Jay Krishna mury for

example

um Osho another

example but um it's just much less

likely that you'll become enlightened as
a married person otherwise the Buddha
would never have established the S of
renuncian to begin
with you just have so many other like
concerns you know you got to make a
living you got I mean it this working
working for a living and having like
close interpersonal interactions uses up
so much of your attention and your
energy that you have less of it left
over to direct towards serious D
practice so it's still theoretically
possible I won't say that it's
absolutely impossible for a married man
with a job to become enlightened who

knows maybe it happens all the time you know assuming that Enlightenment even has any meaning in this world in this samsaric worldly context but your odds are increased if you renounce the world and live a life of radical Simplicity and then because you're living a life of radical Simplicity you've got way less distractions to distract you from getting into deep contemplative states where your odds of Bec com enlightened are much increased so if your only real goal is Enlightenment I would not encourage you to get married and raise a family and have a

career and car payments and insurance
payments and all the rest of
it so I'll just move on to the
anti-marxist League's next
question could Enlightenment be more
common than is often imagined if nibana
and some s are so different and
Enlightenment so unlike anything in this
world of Sam Sara might it be possible
that many persons from many different
walks of life somehow attaint Iana and
simply finish out the remainder of their
life without doing anything particularly
extraordinary yeah that reminds me of a
saying of ramas that I've said before in
these in these q's and A's um that

there'll be somebody who goes to like
the mountains of Tibet looking for a
guru who can teach them in Enlightenment
you can teach them the secrets of the
universe when the whole time their Aunt
Martha back in Massachusetts has been
enlightened but instead of telling him
the secrets of the universe she just
says have some soup but it turns out
that under the circumstances have some
soup is the perfect thing to
say and so yeah it's possible and and
like I say full Enlightenment in this
world may not even mean anything it's
just off the scale it's it has no
samsaric meaning really you can you can
stick labels onto it you can sort of get

your head around it enough that it
doesn't just have you like vacant eyed
with your jaw open you know you can sort
of get a handle on it at least to your
own satisfaction but still it's it's off
the scale nothing you can say about it
in a some saric context is going to be
valid
so could Enlightenment be more common
than is often imagined yeah like if an
enlightened person I mean this this
reminds of the Sutra ping the platform
Sutra of hang which is a strange Sutra
or Sutra Mahayana Sutra in which Huang
is said to have said that if you become
enlightened you look around and see that

everyone else is enlightened too so if
you look at the world with perfect eyes
you're going to see
Perfection so in that sense um to an
enlightened person you know everyone
else is enlightened
also like Paul low used to say that he
sees everyone is perfect except they're
like wearing really ugly clothes that
doesn't fit them very that doesn't fit
them very
well so yeah it depends on how you look
at it really if you look at the world
from an enlightened point of view you're
going to see Enlightenment you know it's
like if if you're a saint you look at
the world it's all manifestation of God

it's all Perfection already but if

you're all messed up and unhappy and

miserable you look at the world it's all

messed up and miserable it's the same

world really

it's just you're looking at it in a

different

way

so yeah there's something to

that but uh again whether a fully

enlightened being can even exist in the

saric context is is questionable to me

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from Athena

sigil and Athena sigil says how long did

it take you to learn poly and do you

know any other languages I suspect some
Burmese perhaps um one thing is even
though I did well in school I'm
relatively intelligent um but even so
learning foreign languages was is like
one of my weakest
subjects I took Spanish for three years
in junior high school and I couldn't I
couldn't have a conversation with
somebody in Spanish I mean I know a lot
of Spanish words and that sort of thing
estu Ina
seeig inala no
in I actually was saying this to a um a
guy from Honduras that I used to work
with you know I'd ask him is stasus in
Kasa I mean he was born in a

Spanish-speaking Spanish speaking

country he could not answer the

question which caused me to think he was

some sort of

fraud

anyway so because paully or learning

foreign languag is kind of a weak weak

subject for

me um it took me a few years until I was

good enough that I could actually

translate from poly into English and

even then I'd have to look at a

dictionary and even expert translators

they always have to have a dictionary

handy because some poly words I mean

like poly literature is limited and so

there are some poly words that you're only going to find them like one or two times in the entire titica and so you know you're what does it mean I mean you can just go with like the etymology you know the word forms and so forth and just kind of sus it out that way or you can look in the dictionary and even the dictionary like in the commentaries and they're just making guesses sometimes they don't even know what the poly words mean especially if it's like some plant species that grows in Northern India when the commentators were in Southern India and had never seen that kind of plant before

anyway

so yeah it took a few years I guess but
for someone who's who just has a knack
for learning foreign languages it'll be
much faster it's really not that
difficult of a language Paulie is maybe
like Spanish with regard to it the
difficulty level it's easier than
English it's like a simplified
Sanskrit and uh any other languages well
aside from the the Spanish that I kind
of learned in junior high school yeah I
know enough berm to get mine I could
speak speak Burmese better than I can
speak
pully so yeah that's that's about it I
really I really have not learned a lot

of foreign languages I'm I'm good at
English but uh other languages it's it's
kind of a challenge to
me but uh like with regard to Burmese it
took me maybe a year of of studying
Burmese and just being immersed in it
having to speak Burmese all the time
before I could like have a conversation
with somebody
but I met like a Swiss nun like a a
Swiss Buddhist nun in Burma who I mean
she was conversational in Burmese with
in just a matter of
weeks because Burmese is also a
relatively simple language the the
hardest thing about burmes is
pronunciation because it's a

monosyllabic language you have to get

the

tone and like the aspirated and

unaspirated consonants just right or

else you're saying something completely

different from what you're trying to say

and people look at you like you're

speaking

Greek so yeah I think I answered that

question that was a fairly simple

straightforward question even though I

can't say exactly how long it took

because I wasn't timing it so I'll just

move on to the next question here this

is from

Austin and Austin says does your block

of marble analogy instantiate a kind of philosophical
monism and uh yeah I suppose it does I used to consider when I was in college I used to consider consider myself aist which is you're essentially saying that you know the entire universe is composed of one
Essence like uh you know the ancient Greeks were always trying to come up with what is the the ultimate essence you know somebody saying water and somebody else is saying fire um or like U Spinosa was a monist to some degree and he was saying that mind and matter are both derived from what is it I think he called it substance you know it's

just like this underlying ultimately
real substance that both mind and matter
are just two different they're just two
different aspects of the same
thing
so or uh a lot of Mahayana Buddhists
would just say it's all mind like the
the yoga charara School of Buddhism you
know it's just Consciousness only school
is also what it's called so
or say uh Christian Scientists I think
they might also agree that you know
conscious or mind is the only
reality but um yeah so I would say um
yeah the the block of marble analogy you
know the block of marble that which

contains within an infinite number of
you know every possible statue yeah I
mean it's the one Essence is
marble so yeah the short answer to that
question is yeah so I'll just move on to
the next question here this is from ruie
and ruie says are there any esoteric
aspects to the terraa that you know of
and there is a suta where the Buddha
says that he he holds nothing back
there's no esoteric teachings in early
Buddhism but in a sense there are kind
of esoteric aspects they're like de
facto esoteric aspects in that the only
people that can learn these things are
renunciant you know you want to know the
really subtle mental States you know in

a way it's esoteric because you got to
renounce the world and go off and live
in a cave or a cell or something and
practice intensively maybe for years and
years before you can experience these
states and really know what they are so
that's kind of esoteric you know it's
not like it's hidden in secret books
it's right there in the pages you know
you just read you know this is what
you're supposed to do you go off and you
know go off into the forest and and
meditate intensively cultivate Janna but
in a sense Janna is esoteric because
relatively few people can get into
anything above first

J unless maybe it's like right when
they're in the middle of a sneeze or
something
so and technically there are no esoteric
aspects because it's all right there in
the
books but I mean some of the experiences
I mean you've got to renounce the world
and really strive you know in this
lifestyle possibly for many years before
you're going to experience some of the
stuff that's mentioned in the
books so that's kind of
esoteric so I'll just move on to ru's
next question here which is what in your
experience would be the more mystical
aspects of the Terra tradition well

anything above first J is mysticism in
my opinion that Enlightenment itself is
a mystical state or you you know to the
extent that you can even describe it in
in human
language um I think the Buddha himself
was a radical Mystic who was like
setting aside all the complicated
technical sutas you know there are lots
and lots of them where you know the
Buddha is just laying out this
systematic method with lists of the the
four of these and the eight of those and
the 37 of the other and you know it's
just all this you know very atic very
technical kind of stuff but you go back

to the earliest text like the otica waga
for example and it's just don't believe
anything you know have no view no
perception no attitude no preferences
and it's just in the in the moment you
just right here in the moment in the
scene there's only the scene in the
heard there's only the heard and that is
essentially mysticism I mean mysticism
is understanding a reality without
without going through the intermediary
of symbols you know it's just direct
experience of reality and that's what
Buddhism is all about really I mean
ultimately that's the
goal and I think early Buddhism was much
more overtly mystical than what Buddhism

became later on especially like terraa
with its Abid dama just all this
scholasticism got added to
it but uh yeah anything above first
Janna
would be literally a mystical State you
know like St John of the cross the
mystical doctor and he's talking about
what is essentially
jna so I think I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from heward
the wake and hereward the Wake says I
wanted to ask you whether you were
thinking of starting your own Buddhist
group with online classes failing that
do you know any other Buddhist teachers

with similar anti-political correct
views to yourself who do run such
classes and a number of people have have
discussed this sort of thing with me um
there's obviously uh a desire for this
sort of
thing um and I mean I was considering
when I first dropped out of the monkhood
I mean I really had the idea of just
becoming a Buddhist teacher but even
before I dropped out of the monk Hood
trying to get by as a Buddhist teacher
was easier said than done you know
there' always be a certain amount of of
followers and supporters who were
enthusiastic and eager but it was always
a small group and it wasn't enough for

me to to

Really Prosper I guess you know I was

always just kind of at the edge living

from hand to mouth which is appropriate

for a monk you know monk is supposed to

live that way but

um

nowadays

um yeah it's I'm I have to work

full-time I've got a lot of a lot of

stuff on my plate um doing these q&as or

q&as um you know it's I enjoy this this

is nice you know it's it's not much

structur to it it's just the questioners

themselves are providing the structure

but if I were doing systematic classes I

would have to be coming up with a
syllabus and and in to some degree even
going against my own understanding of
Buddhism and that you have teach like
the ABCs which is kind of boring to me
and then just all the systematic stuff
in order to get the get it across I mean
the best way to teach Buddhism is you
just lead somebody out into a
forest just sit there and and try not to
think anything for for two hours I'll be
back in two
hours doing it online it would all have
to be kind of
academic you know with the lists of the
four of these and the the seven of those
and the the you know just the 18 of the

other um I mean I'm qualified to do that

I

suppose but uh yeah I don't think I'm

really going to be doing anytime real

soon partly just because of time and

energy

constraints and uh I mean I've already

got a full-time job maybe two fulltime

jobs and that uh just being in a

relationship is also a full-time job and

I I really have uh been failing in uh

devoting enough time and energy to that

full-time

job

so yeah I mean it is possible but I mean

it's not going to be anytime real super

soon so with regard to uh are do I know

of any other Buddhist teachers with

similar views to myself who do run such

classes maybe someone like aan Puna I

think I don't know if he does online

classes or not

but I would look into aan Punam up in

Canada and

uh I don't know maybe aan Sona at

Burkin I'm not sure how politically

correct or incorrect he is but I'm sure

if you look around you can find

something I'm really not uh closely

following the the Buddhist teaching

circuit you know the you know I really

don't know who the best teachers are out

there because uh I'm I'm just

not really interested in uh looking at
online Buddhist material sometimes I do
but usually I
don't so sorry about that I mean it's
still possible if I have enough people
just clamoring you know bribing me to be
a a Buddhist teacher then uh I suppose
it's still possible but really I got to
pay bills and so forth and my experience
in the past is that you know you get you
get some support but really not enough
to live
on and I'd have to just dive into it and
uh probably be a heck of a lot busier
than I am now so it's it's theoretically
possible but don't hold your breath so

I'm just going to move on to the next

question this is from

SG and SG

says do you think it is possible to

harmonize views of different

philosophical traditions without

contradiction L my beliefs and practices

are informed by Buddhism and its many

schools adita vant and the yoga

tradition and platonism

neoplatonism all believe in an absolute

on the insufficiency and deficiency of

the relative realm with its rebirths and

on moral and spiritual practice to

differentiate between the two and attain

Enlightenment I like the different

approaches since my spiritual mood

changes now and then and sometimes I

have Vigor for asceticism and at other

times for philosophical contemp lation

what are your influences and moods

thanks well it's kind of two questions

here first is do I at the top here is do

I think it is possible to harmonize

views of different philosophical

traditions without contradiction and

then at the bottom is what are my

influences and moods so I guess I should

uh separate these two into two different

questions

here

okay all right so the first question

here is is it possible to Har onized

views of different philosophical

traditions without

contradiction

um if you try to have them in their

entirety and like combine them together

yeah you're going to have contradictions

even just different schools of Buddhism

I mean the reason why there are

different schools is because they are

not in complete agreement that's why

you've got different schools because

they don't all agree with each

other

so um I mean the way you do it and I do

this too if you're eclectic you know a

western person you're going to have a

certain amount of eclecticism you're not

just going to like well I mean some

people do like Jehovah's Witnesses for

example they just this is their system

that's all they're going to pay

attention to they're just going to avoid

even looking at other stuff you know

they're just locked into this system and

that's

it and uh I mean I just don't swing that

way I mean I'm more terrible about a

Buddhist than anything else but I am

influenced by um you know some Mahayana

Buddhism um some

Hinduism let's see I've read the D Ching

probably more times than just about any

other book I've

read um some some like western western philosophy like the radical skepticism of David Hume um schopenhauer with his sort of Western take on a more or less Buddhist theme of of will you know it's like this his his idea of you know everything in ssar being a manifestation of Will and then you you realize that in Buddhism karma is Will so in a way it's like the whole world's a manifestation of

karma so there's that there's there's like cons elaborations on the two truths you know ultimate truth and relative you know the thing the thing in itself and the thing as it seems which is uh just another approach to explaining the

Buddhist concept of two truths or even
Hegel with his the beginning of his
dialectic where he says absolute being
is identical to Absolute
non-being so you can just pick up this
and that and just sort of form your own
philosophy with bits and parts from from
other philosophies which I think most
westerners do at least philosophically
oriented
westerners and that's fine but trying to
get the whole system you know this whole
system and that whole system and combine
them together without any contradictions
is is uh I don't think it's going to
happen because that's why they're

different schools is because they don't
entirely agree I mean you can find a lot
of overlap you know like you got a
western you know some Western
philosopher and some Eastern system you
know there's lots and lots of overlap
but it's it would be a just a miracle
that they would just completely just
blend together with no contradictions at
all so generally what you do is you're
an Eclectic and you just pick and
choose what parts of which
systems you
prefer and that kind of makes us
westerners lukewarm because we're not
wholly committed we're not Wildey
Fanatics enough to just really just

fling yourself wholeheartedly into

something you know there's always this

sort of philosophical Detachment and

lukewarmness going

on

so yeah I mean I can relate to you know

just kind of not exactly cherry-picking

but still um you know it's like parts

that you really resonate with that you

can accept and it's it's maybe teaching

pretty much the same thing is this over

here and this other system that you also

accept but it's doing it in different

words from a different angle which sort

of strengthens both both points of view

or both attempts at explaining the same

thing you know that's that's

useful or at least it can

be

so yeah I think I answered that part so

what are your influences and moods well

um I think I've kind of already mention

most of my influences you know mostly

Terra got a lot of Zen and like maaka

thrown in you know I've read the Bava

Gita and the upanishads and I really

have an appreciation for certain aspects

of those ding Western philosophy and

just my own experience you know it's

like P bossism is also in there

and uh my moods I mean sometimes I'm

more mystical and sometimes I'm more

like more of

a what do you Gana Yogi you know there's
the The Yoga of knowledge I mean that I
I kind of resonate with and then there's
Raja yoga which is the The Yoga of
practice and i' I've resonated with that
a lot in my life also I'm not much into
karma yoga or or bakti yoga but I mean
there's you know little little elements
of
that so yeah I mean I'm pretty similar
to SG here with regard to influences and
moods and uh also with regard to the
eclecticism of a western spiritual
Seekers approach and a lot of the
teachers nowadays are are eclectic Ram
dos was eclectic he'd be talking about

Hinduism a lot he'd be talking about

Buddhism a lot he'd be talking about

Carl Yung you know he'd be talking about

western western philosophy or Western

psychology and you know throwing in a

little Sufism and you know it's just

it's all it all goes into the hopper you

know it's so long as it's

useful and there are a lot of of Western

spiritual teachers who are like

that I guess I'm like that

too so I guess I'll just move on to the

next question here this is from Joe Doe

and Joe Doe says what is the best way to

deal with anxiety and that would be the

the Panacea of Buddhism like I was

mentioning to coac sead zida with his

inferiority complex cuz he's only
6'3 it's like you just observe the
anxiety and so long as you're observing
it it's not you it's just this thing
that you're observing which creates a
philosophical Detachment which then
causes the anxiety to stop building
momentum and so if you're mindful of it
every time it arises it gradually loses
momentum and Fades out I think it was
ajan Chaz talking about
how uh like a bad habit like anxiety
here or the inferior or complex of only
being 6 fo three it's like a stray cat
where if you keep feeding it it's never
going to go away you know it's like you

you feed it every once in a while and
then the rest of the time you want it to
go away but it's not going to go away
because you you feed it sometimes you
have to like stop feeding it and it's
still going to keep pestering you and
pestering you for a while and finally
it's going to give up and go away and
it's the same way with bad habits if
you're able to resist them especially
not making a big deal of it but just
through mindfulness you just sort of you
know you note it and just let it go you
know and that's the best way of dealing
with it but it takes it takes
practice and you have to practice it
when you're not feeling anxiety you know

you have to practice it when
everything's going fine because that's
when you can practice better you know if
you just wait until you the shit's
hitting the fan before you start trying
to be mindful of it then it's it's not
going to work as well because you're
just not in the habit you want it to be
uh you want to be practicing it enough
so that when the situation arises you
know you just take care of it without
even having to like what should I do oh
yeah I should be mindful and note this
you know it it doesn't work as well as
if you just make it second nature to to
mindfully note this kind of stuff as it

arises even when it's not a big deal
because then when it is a big deal
you've already you've already got this
good habit of
mindfully noting it mindfully observing
it and detaching from it you know it's
not me it's this mental state that is
arising anxiety is arising it's not I am
anxious it's not I'm worried it's not
I'm freaked out it's anxiety is arising
and you just watch it like an ecologist
observing a dead
fish and it's easier said than done it
takes a lot of practice because we are
governed by habit that's what karma is
is is habit energy and so you got to
develop good habits to replace the bad

habits and then eventually even the good
habits have to fade out even the good
habits have to
go so I guess uh I guess I answered that
one so I'll just move on to Joe Do's
next question which is do you stretch at
all if not you should it's great for the
body U the only stretching I do is like
maybe when I get up in the morning and
just the daily activities I mean I do
have a job where there is a certain
amount of
manual manual labor involved you know I
I do work with my body to some degree
which is good I don't just sit at a desk
all day so I mean I do get some exercise

naturally I really have never been good

at artificial exercise you know if if

there's a need to exercise you know to

to walk from point A to point B or like

wood needs to be chopped or something

I'm fairly good at that but just exerc

exercising for the sake of

exercising I've never been real good at

I have I have done it

but generally I just let it be natural

stuff that arises and that's that's good

enough so this the short answer to this

do I stretch at all yeah very little

just whatever happens

spontaneously you know just get up in

the morning and

stretch you know just like this

kind of stuff you know it's no no

systematic yoga stuff at

all so I think I'll just move on to the

next question this is from hat TIG who

is also sometimes known as

Tigger and tiger or HS TIG as you may

know if you've watched these hou he's

kind of a wise guy he likes asking sort

of irreverent sorts of

questions and uh he's not letting us

down this this time and he says hi poo

can you recall a moment of your life

that you can surely characterize as your

most drunken to date please detail the

following the leadup the peak and of

course the aftermath cheers Bottoms Up

and don't be shy for life's better cross

a

well yeah I've I've given this a little

bit of thought and I think the drunkest

I've ever been in my life at least with

regard to the amount of alcohol I

consumed in one evening was the last day

of finals my sophomore year of

college and there was this guy named

Jeff who was having a party at his house

so my buddy Paul and I we bought a half

gallon of vodka and some quench which is

sort of like seven up but it tastes way

better than seven up and vodka and

quench was it was good and Paul was

pretty much of a lightweight and he

didn't come anywhere near to drinking

his share of the the half gallon so I W

up drinking more than half of a half

gallon you know like more than a quart

of vodka in one night which is probably

the most alcohol I've ever consumed in

one

night

and I mean I don't have a lot of vivid

memories of that night because well

because I was

drunk but uh I just have vague I

remember being in a swimming pool at one

point

with another friend of mine and his

girlfriend who were just were just

hanging out uh I remember Jeff who was

throwing in the party drinking raw eggs
just to show off that he drank raw eggs
sometimes and I remember right when I
was starting to really get
drunk uh there was this girl named tovy
Johnson who showed up I remember asking
her if she played tennis and then when
she said yes I just kind of turned and
walked away and I remember like d
dancing vaguely remembering dancing
which is essentially consisted of me
like standing there kind of going like
this with my
hands like walking up to someone and
going I remember that part and then
finally I remember the point where I
figured maybe I better go outside and

get get some fresh air and so I start
staggering from the kitchen through the
living room and for some reason Jeff our
host was just crying and just beating
the [__] out of his stereo I mean he's
like punching out his stereo just tears
pouring down his face I was too far gone
to even care you know I just head for
the front door and I kind of vaguely
remember walking out into the Jeff's
front yard and then I kind of vaguely
remember crawling on my hands and knees
through the same front yard there and I
wound up like in the fetus position
behind the passenger side rear tire of
my car and then I just just lying there

minding my own

business and then at some later point I

vaguely remember two guys picking me up

by the armpits and putting me into the

back seat of my car and one of them

saying I shouldn't say anything I've

been like this before and then I

remember waking up I mean it's like 3:00

or 4 in the morning or 5 or something

you know it's like cold I just had

shorts on and uh like a tank top or

something and it was cold and so I'm I'm

like looking I had to get up and go

inside and there's like people passed

out on the furniture and so forth

and at some point I think it was you

know after I kind of gotten up and was

was like functional semi functional
again I realized that I had just cashed
a scholarship check that day and I had
like a few thousand in my wallet and I
had lost my my wallet and finally I
found it just on a like a table like
like an end table in in in the living
room where Jeff was beating up his
stereo just with all the money still in
it so I had that I still lost one shoe
so I eventually had to throw away the
other shoe and uh that's that's about
all I remember of that night but I drank
probably at least a quart of of vodka
that night which is usually I I'd be
puking and passing out long before I got

to an entire court but I was in rare
form that
night and there you go that's that's the
story of the drunkest I ever
got which fortunately I'm happy to say
was a long time ago so we'll just move
on to the next question here and this is
from
Raphael and Raphael says that the Lotus
Sutra and other Mahayana sutras were not
spoken by the Buddha is unanimously
supported by modern scholarship there is
no academic in the last 150 years who
has argued otherwise why then are there
still monks especially Western ones who
want to be ordained in the Mahayana
tradition well that's kind of an

interesting question although I would quibble a little bit that he says here that uh that that the Lotus Sutra and other Mahayana sutras were not spoken by the Buddha is unanimously supported by modern scholarship I assume that there's going to be some Mahayana Buddhists who are Scholars who are going to say that the Buddha taught all the Mahayana sutras or at least their favorite ones and I mean I have there's on the Discord server there is a pure land Buddhist and he's very serious you know he's kind of in a way kind of puritanical I'm not trying to to badmouth him but he's got like this Dow very serious kind of

approach to his Buddhism and he just
flat out asserts the Buddha taught pure
land Buddhism I mean he has no doubt and
you know he'll have these arguments you
know like the oldest inscriptions of
Buddhism are Mahayana ones that are
found in Central Asia or something and
so he's he's trying to build up a case
that you know the Buddha really did
teach Mahayana Buddhism despite the fact
that the overwhelming majority of
Buddhist Scholars agree Mahayana
Buddhism did not exist for hundreds of
years until you know until after the
Buddha passed
away hundreds of years after after the
Buddha passed away I should

say but it's sort of like you know Bible creationism you've got biologists you know
scientists who are devout Christians and so they become like young Earth creationists and they're just trying to use I mean it's pseudoscience really because they're starting with the conclusion they want to arrive at and just kind of working backwards trying to find any plausible justification for creationism you know they'll bash away at at evolutionary theory you know they'll just say it's not possible it's wrong wrong wrong wrong wrong and then they'll come up with even like weaker

flabbier cases to support creationism
and I assume they're going to be
Mahayana Buddhist Scholars who are going
to say the Buddha taught Mahayana
Buddhism you know it it's the highest
teachings and and and on and
on so uh it's not unanimous I'm pretty
sure but uh see why are there still
monks especially Western ones who want
to be ordained in Mahayana tradition
well that's something that I used to
think about a lot too and because I
started off liking Zen and then the more
I study terava the more I realize terava
comes closer to what the Buddha
originally taught in most respects so I
switched over to

terava but some people just don't care
about I mean even this pure land
Buddhism uh pure land Buddhist I was
talking about also I mean to some degree
he just doesn't
care I mean it's like I mean one of the
arguments is the Buddha lived so long
ago he's kind of like Hercules or
something he's like a semi mythological
figure anyway you can't really say for
sure what he taught and so the important
thing is you know does it work for
you and so I mean if mahay on Buddhism
works for somebody it makes them feel
good it makes them a better person
they're making spiritual progress by f

following it then I mean that's good
enough for a lot of people they don't
really care whether that is the original
form of of Buddhism I mean Christianity
nowadays certainly is not the original
form of
Christianity but most Christians follow
modern Christianity they're not
rejecting modern Christianity and
becoming some ROP making hermit in Egypt
somewhere so yeah a lot of people just
don't care whether the Buddha Really T
Mahayana or they they're just not
Scholars they don't I mean that sort of
thing just has no appeal to them all the
scholarly debate about you know what the
original Buddhism was like you know even

terado is not does not accurately

represent the original

Buddhism and in some respects Mahayana

some like the the Perfection of wisdom

School of Mahayana and to some degree

maaka also I mean they were like reform

moments trying to get back to what the

Buddha originally

taught um I mean there's like the

buddhis SATA concept which wasn't there

I'm pretty sure pure land stuff wasn't

there I'm I'm relatively certain but um

yeah just different people have

different temperaments and different

people really just don't care about

unanimous agreement by modern

scholarship you know they they want to
believe it it just resonates with them
it just clicks with them maybe they were
Mahayana Budd in previous lives and they
just got a lot of momentum in that
direction and so I mean you can use any
kind of like logical argument but when
you're trying to use a logical argument
to justify religion which isn't really
essentially logical
anyway then yeah just a lot of religious
people just don't care about objective
rational logical empirical arguments
what they care about is how does it make
me feel and it makes them feel good then
it's
good so I guess I answered that one more

or less so let's move on to the next question this is from the ARA swasti project and the ARA swasti project says greetings poo it occurred to me yesterday if you move in any direction in the universe and since the universe is infinite you haven't really moved at all because you have the same infinite distance in any direction that you move you haven't gone anywhere same goes with time a moment ago there are infinite moments before that and an infinite number in the future are these kind of examples of paradoxes we could consider for being and not being to be possible at the same time the thought certainly

had its effect on yesterday's hahaa

yesterday's

meditation and for those of you that uh

didn't notice I just kind of picked my

nose a little bit like just trying to

like pretend like I'm not picking it and

then just because it itches really bad

right in there cuz like I say I've been

sick and kind of nose congest and all

sorts of

things so I'm just coming

clean all right so with regard to this I

mean let's see see you see you're not

really moving because the universe is

infinite and but I mean you're moving

with a guard to everything around you

and that's really what matters you know

that's how you you judge whether you're moving or not is is by you know are the trees going by you you know if the trees are going by you that means you're moving and um I mean just going with modern mathematics you've got cartisian coordinate systems I was talking about cartisian coordinate systems in a previous Q&A not not too long ago where you just have like a an XY axis which is arbitrary you can just put it anywhere you put this XY axis anywhere or in three dimensions it would be XYZ for four dimensions you'd have t for time and then I mean you're moving in relation to that XY that cartisian

coordinate

system and that you you pretty pretty

much anchor that to you know you know

something that is relatively immobile

you know like the you know the ground or

something the Blackboard you the wall

whatever so you're moving relative to

other things around you which is really

all that matters I mean in the

philosophical sense you're always in the

center of the

universe no matter where you go there

you are you know as Buckaroo Bonsai once

said but uh you know

obviously we do seem to move when we

stand up and kind of move our legs back

and forth like this you know things kind

of move around us anyway we're making
the whole world move by seeming to
move so
yeah I don't I don't think that would be
um a good way of trying to prove that
being and non-being are possible at the
same time I mean being and non-being
have to be have to exist at the same
time because they rely on each other for
each other's existence one without the
other is
meaningless so you have to have contrast
between being and non-being for there
even to be any perception of being and
non-being so yeah that's um sort of like
uh stability and and and Chaos you know

they have to be in Balance you can't
have pure stability because that's just
death you know nothing moves nothing
changes death but pure chaos I mean
that's just I mean you can't have life
in pure chaos either because nothing has
enough cohesion or stability to last for
more than one moment so you have to have
these two of stability and Chaos you
know like Stillness and motion
I mean they have there has to be this
contrast between them in balance in
order for this world to exist same goes
for being and
non-being but that's that's a whole
different argument I think from the fact
that you don't go anywhere because the

universe is

infinite yeah I think it's I think that

would be like at least in my mind that'd

be two entirely different arguments or

two very different arguments

anyway so I think I'll just move on to

the Arya sasti Project's next question

here

and he says since you are a biologist

has anyone asked before what came first

the chicken or the egg and if not which

did come first the chicken or the egg

and if neither came first could you use

this Paradox as an exercise to transcend

Sam Sora well so it's it's like a Zen

[__] what came first the chicken or the

egg yeah it might be some some Western

Zen guy used that as a [__] and it got

him into story or something he got

kenow but as a biologist has anyone

asked before what came first the chicken

yeah I've I've encountered that question

a number of times and I do have an

answer for it the egg came first because

what laid the egg was something that was

almost a

chicken and then there was like this

mutation in its embryo that in this egg

that it laid that just pushed it right

over the EG into being a chicken the

world's first

chicken but the world's first chickens

mama and daddy were almost chickens and

but they just were lacking this one last
mutation that would be required for them
to be like genuine legitimate chickens
or red jungle fowl or or whatever so
that would be my my answer at least with
regard to uh evolutionary theory I'm no
new Earth creationist I guarantee
it although I I can't disprove that this
universe didn't just poof into existence
yesterday and that we were some deity
with a strange sense of humor just
implanted memories of stuff into us that
never happened I mean there's no way you
can prove that that it that it is or is
not
true but yeah the egg came first and the

egg laid the egg was laid by uh a hen
that was almost chicken and then her
baby was different enough from her that
actually qualified as being a real
chicken so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from keep D
vinia and keep D vinia says I am afraid
of having children because I don't want
them to become mediocre consumerist and
promiscuous degenerates if I were Amish
for example I would have no problem
having children because those children
would grow up in a non-materialistic
society where values play an important
role so as long there is no utopian
Buddhist Society I can't think of having
children can you understand my point

yeah I can understand it I was I was similar I had different reasons though like back when I was a young man before I became a monk I didn't want to have children mainly because I was a biologist and you know there's the the threat of nuclear war the Cold War was still going on uh there was no his hysteria about global warming but I mean there was the the hysteria of the possibility of nuclear winter which was more of a threat than uh any sort of um you know dying Earth scenario from too much CO2 in the environment or in the atmosphere um also I considered the world to be already obscenely

overpopulated so I didn't want to have
children because of that but then when I
was a monk in living in Burma I used to
think that if I did have kids I mean if
I had a boy I'd rather bring him up in
the west but if I had a girl I'd rather
bring her up in a traditional culture
like Burma because it would just break
my heart to see her become a little
thought you know t h o t you know what
that
is to see her become this this
promiscuous little [__] I mean that
would just break my heart it would just
kill
me but I mean if you're a good parent I
mean there are things you can do

homeschool your kids keep them away from
the indoctrination camps of of the
academic
institutions of the
West you know there are things you can
do you know become Amish it says right
there if you're Amish you would have no
problem
so yeah I mean I grew up in a mediocre
consumerist uh culture with plenty of
promiscuous degenerates and I did okay
you know I mean if if you raise your
children relatively well and they've got
good enough Karma I suppose they should
be
okay but

uh

yeah yeah I do understand your point I

mean that's the only question here can

you understand my point the answer is

yes I can understand your point and I

had my own reasons although of course um

now in retrospect I know that World War

III didn't

happen and uh

yeah I I could have had kids and uh it

probably would not have been the end of

the world it would have resulted in me

being a lot more stressed out as a human

being over the course of my life I am

sure a lot more worries a lot more

attachments that sort of

thing but um I'll just move on to the

next question now this is also from keep theia and he says does a lay person create bad comma if he refuses to give alms to a monk who obvious viously is breaking a rule like a monk who doesn't cover both shoulders during MMS round or who wears a t-shirt under the robe is a lay person also allowed to correct a monk on such issues okay that's another question so I got to separate that okay all right so this is another one of these um is it bad comma to do this or that sort of question and really I mean if you refuse to give alms to a monk who's obviously breaking rule I mean that's you're not doing

anything you know it's it's not positive
or negative comma to just not do
something and that includes not giving
Ms to a monk so it depends on your
mental States I mean why are you not
giving Ms to that monk if it's because
of
like you have aversion for the monk
because he's not practicing then there's
going to be a certain amount of Dosa and
there's going to be a certain amount of
bad comma but I mean if you're having
like bad thoughts like I shouldn't be
giving this to this monk it's like you
know you feel like you're obligated but
at the same time you consider him to be
a bad Monk and so you're G to have this

conflict going on you're going to be
making karma from that too possibly of
both sorts positive and negative cusa
and
ausa so really it depends it depends on
your mental States I mean if you I mean
I wouldn't want to donate to a monk that
obviously is just behaving badly you
know let's say he's going for alms round
and he's asking for money you know he's
like no I don't I don't need any food
just I just give me five bucks that's
good then I wouldn't give him anything
in fact I'd tell him probably that I
mean that's just against the rules
you're not supposed to do that and I

probably wouldn't give him

anything and that's what makes monks

better I mean if you if you support

monks you know if if the society

supports monks no matter how LAX and

Shameless they are it encourages more

monks to be LAX and Shameless but I mean

if good monks get more support than bad

monks it encourages more monks to be

good

monks but so so it depends on your

mental States I mean if you if you're

motivated by this like contempt or you

know aversion or something then yeah I

mean you're going to get a little hit of

of Bad Karma for just for the mental

States not for not giving him anything

because not giving him anything is not
doing anything and that's not
Karma
so try to have positive mental States
for not giving the monk something it's
like you know you want to help the
sa by encouraging good monks and not
encouraging bad monks then by not giving
food to the bad monk or whatever it is
that he wants then in a way you've got a
good reason for that instead of just you
know [__] this guy he's he's breaking a
rule what a what a maroon you know and
then you know you're like have this bad
mental attitude towards him ill will or
something you want him to be punished by

going hungry that day then obviously
you're making bad karma for yourself so
it depends on your mental state if you
can with equinity or even love in your
heart you don't give anything to the
monk because you know he's obviously a
LAX you know unconscious ious monk you
don't want to support lack unconscious
unconscientious sa you want to you want
to endorse and support a conscientious
you know s that follows the rulle
strictly and so forth then so long as
you have like a positive attitude you
know of wanting to help the song and not
help it go
downhill then I think you'd be doing
okay but you have to be really careful

mental States I mean they're very fickle
and changeable and hard to you know it's
hard to know exactly what your motives
are because you're not going to be 100%
mindful of everything going through your
mind so you just got to be
careful so then I'll move on to the next
question from um keep the Venia here is
the lay person allowed to correct a monk
on such issues you can point it out to
him although he probably knows as well
as you do that he's breaking the rule
and he just doesn't care because I have
this old Burmese monk telling me once
that I mean he was he was relatively
strict and he was saying you know you

can wake up someone who's sleeping but
you can't wake up someone who's just
pretending to sleep and the meaning of
that is you know they know that they're
breaking the rule and they're doing it
anyway pointing out to them that they're
breaking the rule isn't going to help
anything because they don't
care you know they've already got it
Justified they've got it worked out in
their mind that you know this is what
there're they should be doing is break
this rule because everyone else is
breaking it how are you going to get by
without ask asking for money or
whatever or it's cold I got to wear this
t-shirt cuz cuz it's cold or

whatever so I mean you can point it out
to them but um it's a good idea that you
shouldn't really try to admonish anybody
a monk or a lay person if you don't have
meta in your heart there is a rule in
the text with regarding monks saying
that a monk should not admonish another
Monk if he doesn't have meta in his
heart you know if he's just [__] at him
you're just venting you know he's in a
bad mood and just Cutting Loose on this
guy you know regardless of his of you
know the external reasons you know just
the internal reasons aren't good enough
so if you're motivated by meta you know
you got meta in your heart then you can

pretty much say

anything so I'll just move on to the

next question from ke theia is there a

hierarchy among monks except for the

Abbot of a monastery

um well according to vinia according to

like the poly Tex themselves the

hierarchy is with regard to seniority

Whoever has been among the longest

outranks you know everybody else and so

whether you bow to another Monk or not

depends on whether you were ordained

after him or before him so if he's been

a monk for eight years you've been a

monk for six years you call him bante

and you bow to him and I mean he doesn't

doesn't have the right to boss you

around I mean according to the rules of monastic discipline the whole concept of an Abbot is just foreign to to vinea to foreign to the rules of monastic discipline the whole idea of Abbotts it just arose in Asia just sort of I don't know it's like the Abbott is King like in Burma the Abbott is he's like dictator of the monastery anything he says goes usually he's the senior monk but sometimes he's just the most famous monk and you've got some older monks than him that you know they're just sort of like semi-retired you know they're starting to go scile or something they just mind their own

business they're technically senior to
him but they're they have no
Authority so usually it's the senior
monk but sometimes it's just the most
famous monk who got this Monastery
donated to him or something so it's kind
of his place he can let senior monks
senior monks to him stay but still he
gets to still be the
Abbot but um so it's like the main
authorities aside from just the sa in
general you know like if the the sa
unanimously consents to do something
that's that's the authority but uh like
if you're still a junior monk living in
dependence on a teacher that teacher has
authority over you you should do what

the teacher tells you to do unless he's telling you to do something that's unethical or against the rules or something then you should find yourself a different teacher but then you get into like a Buddhist culture like Burma or Thailand you've got like a government supported ecclesiastical hierarchy like at the top in Thailand is the S Raja the top in Burma supposedly is the S mahanayak who is I mean he's like the the highest monk in the country and then you've got like the ecclesiastical Council of monks below him I think in Thailand it's like somets or something like that you know they're like Bishops

under the pope or Cardinals and then you
got Bishops below that and like prelates
and priests and deacons you know there
is kind of a a chain of command sort of
but just according to the text
themselves it's all based on two things
one is just seniority you know you you
have to pay respect to a senior monk you
know if if a senior monk approaches you
when you're sitting you're supposed to
stand up you're not allowed to be
wearing shoes if he's Barefoot you know
like if you're in close proximity to
each other just out of respect you got
to show respect to the senior monks you
call them Bon senior monks called Junior
monks

AO and and then also in addition to just just raw seniority there is the issue of like the preceptor and the teachers like who have authority over the monks that they have the junior monks that they have ordained that are not do not have enough seniority that they can just go solo and that's that's
it but it doesn't necessarily work that way in Asia where you've got Asian Concepts like traditional like medieval Asian Concepts that have been imported into terraa Buddhism so you've got ecclesiastical hierarchies and Abbotts who are the dictator of their Monastery and so forth so I'll just move on to the

next question here from keep divinia are monks allowed to take care of children in an orphanage and teach them I don't think there's any rule against it I mean in a way it's it's sort of not what monks are supposed to do they're supposed to just go off like and wander alone like the Horn of the rhinoceros you know they're supposed to be striving for enlightenment but still it happens a lot in Thailand and in Burma you're going to have monks who have who run like a a school or an orphanage like in one part of their monastery and you know they're just doing trying to do good you know they're they're humble or they're just

not

really ripe for

enlightenment and so they're just trying

to do good and that's not entirely a bad

thing might not be what monks are

supposed to do according to the

texts but there's a lot worse things you

can do than to feed and take care of

Orphans

so yeah I don't I don't think that uh I

mean so long as they're not out

fundraising and just Breaking All the

Rules in order to take care of the

orphans then uh I mean you can manage to

be a good Monk and run an orphanage at

the same time you can be a conscientious

monk who follows the rules who

nevertheless you know teaches little

kids how to read and

write you know in a way it's a

distraction that the texts kind of don't

encourage that but still

there's a lot worse things you can

do so I think I'll just move on to keep

the as next question what Supernatural

events do you have evidence of and

believe well I mean the evidence of you

know I've read a lot of books lots and

lots of um accounts of you know even

like firsthand accounts or for by the

time I'm reading it secondhand because

you know I'm reading somebody else

saying this happened to me you know ROM

Doss had lots of stories of like neim
cly Baba doing Miracles and I think that
Ron Doss is was an honest person I don't
think he was just lying you know
Shameless
liar um I think he might have been kind
of naive and just accepted other
people's accounts at face value
sometimes when he shouldn't have but
still I don't think that he was a
dishonest just habitual liar and so a
lot of the stuff he says about maharaji
I think is probably probably true you
know read Miracle of love stories about
neim Koli Baba edited by ROM Doss and
you're going to just just get hit in the

face hit over the head with Miracle
after Miracle after a miracle and even
if only 10% of them are true man was
still like
Superman but with regard to me
personally it's hard to know for sure if
something is a supernatural event you
know it's like my sweetheart and I just
happened to be thinking exactly the same
weird thought and I just comes out of my
mouth and she her jaw drops and she
stares at me and tells me to get out of
her head because that's the same thing
she was thinking something like that you
know you can talk about this sort of
like a subliminal
connection uh which could be I mean not

so much Supernatural but it would be like Paranormal you know it would be like ESP or something that kind of thing or just weird things can happen you have like a precognitive dream you dream that something happens and then it happens or a Deja Vu I had a Deja Vu once where I mean I knew in advance what someone was going to say in that room I'm just sitting there grinning like an ape just waiting for them to say it and then I'm sure enough somebody says it but uh I mean it's hard to say if that's really I mean that could just be like synchronicity which isn't necessarily Supernatural or

paranormal I mean kind of it is maybe
not necessarily though but the I think
the the most Supernatural event that
I've
experienced um and I've I've mentioned
this before I've mentioned it more than
once I've written about it it was uh we
we had a poltergeist in our house that
stuff would just spontaneously break you
know handles would pop off of Cups and
and like silverware would just get bent
and twisted in the drawers or whatever
and so I was about 12 years old 12 or 13
years old my father was hiring a new
housekeeper for the for the
summertime and so we're all sitting at
the kitchen table and my father was at

one end of the table the new housekeeper
was sort of kitty corner just on the
other side of the corner right in
between them was an ash tray I was
sitting at the other end of the table
maybe five feet away it wasn't a really
big kitchen table and he's explaining to
her if you see anything broken in the
house broken glass wear in the cupboards
that sort of thing don't don't
immediately blame the kids because we've
got a pist in the house and stuff
spontaneously
self-destructs and when he's explaining
this to her it's like one of her
eyebrows is going up and she's getting

this grin on her face like she can't
decide whether he's lying or joking or
crazy but within just a matter of a few
seconds like right as soon as he
finishes this explanation of how Stuff
spontaneously self-destructs in this
house that ashtray that was right in
between them on the just in plain view
on the kitchen table makes this sound
like zinc and just splits into two
halves and the two halves like slide
about an inch and a half away from each
other and then she immediately stops
smiling and starts taking him seriously
because it just self-destructed with
nobody touching it and you could say
well it's it's like the the uneven

heating from a lit cigarette in the ashtray but that that that ashtray had had hundreds if not thousands of lit cigarettes in it before and it never self destructed like that before so you'd have to say at the very least it was one hell of a coincidence that it self-destructed within about five seconds of my father describing how things self-destruct how glass objects just spontaneously break in our house so I think that anything is possible anything that's imaginable is possible at least in a metaphysical sense but um yeah I'm I'm not a materialist I think that the laws of

physics can be

broken but it also depends on Psychic

talent and the amount of Faith you've

got and so forth and I really do do not

have a lot of psychic talent I mean I've

some people there's they can see spirits

and gabas and all kinds of things and

I've never been like that my father was

more of a psychic than I

was but I think

yeah I'm not a materialist I don't think

that we're just stuck in laws of physics

and uh laws can be

broken so I think I'll just leave it at

that maybe that's not a very complete

explanation or answer to the question

but I got more to answer and keep the

Winnie has another question here which is what are your thoughts on monasteries in the west where be and beunis live together isn't this almost impossible according to the suas since the Buddha said the following in the dean nikaya how shall we relate to women Master do not look at them but if one sees one master do not address her but if one talks to us keep mindfulness and self-control so that was Ananda asking the Buddha what to do about women and the Buddha is just saying you know don't look at them don't talk to them be careful and yeah I mean there is a different sua where it's just saying

that one of the signs of decline of the

the sasana the decline of Buddhism in in

the world as monks and nuns will be

living together at the same

Monastery so that's that is a sign that

we are approaching the end

times but

uh yeah I mean it's not a good idea and

even if they're not um you know

beunis but they're just like eight

precept nuns or something still monks

and celibate men and celibate women who

are sexually frustrated potentially

probably living together in the same

Community is just asking for trouble and

the trouble does happen

sometimes so it's probably best if monks

and nuns have their own

places so I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from Tim the

enchanter and Tim the enchanter says

please give some instructions to walking

meditation like how many step

what to focus on

Etc well I mean there's no just one way

of doing walking meditation there are as

many different kinds of walking

meditation as there are sitting

meditation I

suppose u i mean anytime you're walking

you can be doing walking meditation you

can be walking to work walking up and or

down the stairs walking down a hallway

you know walking down the sidewalk you can be doing walking meditation because you are walking so you can do it meditatively

um but if you want to do formal walking meditation when for starters you need a sufficiently long little place to walk back and forth because you're you're going to be walking back and forth and it should be like at least 20 steps I mean you don't want it so short that you're just like turning you know stepping turning stepping turn you know it has to be you start getting dizzy that way if you've got too short of a walking meditation path so it should be at least like 20 steps I guess and you

just walk back and forth and there are
different ways of doing it just like
there's different ways of of
doing sitting meditation or even or even
meditation on the breath there are many
different ways that you can even do
anapana on on the breath same way with
walking meditation like the standard
mahasi method for doing walking
meditation for the beginner is just you
know picking up and setting down you're
just being mindful of your feet coming
up and going down coming up and going
down you know lift and then usually
after you've gotten that down enough
then you you divide it up into three

parts you know your foot lifting then
moving forward and then touching the
ground and then the other foot lifting
moving forward touching the ground and
so it's you know lifting moving touching
lifting moving touching lifting moving
touching that that would be like the
mahasi method
of um doing walking meditation but even
then when your mindfulness gets deeper
then I mean you can just just keep going
I mean there's there's no limit how many
steps you can put for for each step you
know it's just just you know like the
intention to move and then the actual
muscles moving and so forth and the
pressure on the like the ball of your

foot and your heel coming up off the
floor and then there's like the foot
lifting up and the muscles involved and
the joints bending and I mean you can
just I mean just as much as you can fit
in there you you can fit in there there
or I mean you don't necessarily even
have to contemplate you know the Motions
of your feet or your legs when you're
doing walking meditation you can just be
like seeing mindfulness of seeing
mindfulness of
hearing um this so long as you're being
mindful of something while you're doing
walking then that's walking meditation
so I used to just do seeing a lot or

another one that I've mentioned before
is one of the most obvious Sensations
when I when I be doing walking
meditation is just like this oily smooth
gliding feeling in the joints of my
knees so I might con concentrate on
that so and also for like real beginners
you can even be counting your steps you
know you just count 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
6 1 2 3 4 5 six 7 up to 1 2 3 4 five six
seven eight nine 10 and then once you
get up to 10 then you go back to five
again and and
that's that's like a beginnner just sort
of like in beginning Ana you can just be
counting your breaths in in a similar
way so I mean so long as you're mindful

of something whatever

sensation is easiest to note it's that's

really taking the Forefront of of your

your attention just be mindful of that

while you're walking and you're doing

walking meditation like sometimes I

would just do M also like M every third

step or something like

that so whatever works for you and it

keeps your mind from wandering your your

mind is focused on on something you're

actually being mindful then then you're

doing a good

job so I think I'll just move on to the

next question here this is from Fred and

Fred says hey friend what does poo basa

mean

poasa and that's uh yeah that's that's

that's a good question it's actually a

combination of two words PA and

obasa and I I generally don't pronounce

my own name correctly because there's an

H in there obasa so actually you're

supposed to pronounce the h so it' be P

pahasa so the PA just means

understanding or wisdom usually is

translated as wisdom although like biku

uh the the first famous bikun yanle not

the second famous bikun yanle the one

who translated the wisi Maga into

English um he used understanding as a as

a translation for PA and that that's a

good that's a good translation I think

so I go with understanding a lot and

obasa it's uh it means shine down it's

like down shine it's like The Shining of

the Sun the Sun's shining

down so um my name poasa literally means

something like understanding

shine or I mean if you want to be super

literal the P at the beginning of PA so

so the two words PA and obasa are

themselves like a root with a prefix

like NY just means knowledge like in in

Greek it has the same Indo-European

atmology as the word the Greek

gnosis that like Nana or like in

Sanskrit I think it's Gana it's you know

it's the same or the k o k n o w in in

no I mean it's the same it's it's the

same um like indoeuropean Proto

Indo-European atmology so it just means

knowledge the Theo or the the in my name

paa and the p

is um it means like forth going forth

like P the Greek prefix P or py Ro Omron

or

whatever um you know it's means it's

like a forwards Direction so PA I mean

literally it it would have the same

atmology as the Greek word

prognosis but it has a different meaning

because it it just means the PO or the

forwardness is just sort of an

intensifier you know it sort of

strengthens the knowledge you know it's

knowledge going forwards you know it's

this right knowledge and basa me means

shine and the o means

downwards so it's it's literally poasa

means fourth node down

shine but Mr understanding shine is good

enough so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is the very last

question and this is from

Stevie and he didn't ask ask this in the

the question and answer room but he

asked it in the Terra room which is good

enough let's say

in in the Discord server so he says does

the poly Canon ever describe any

extraordinary natural events such as an

eclipse or the Aurora

Borealis well I mean the Aurora Borealis

I cannot recall ever being mentioned in

the poly texts eclipses are mentioned

and also earthquakes are mentioned

um storms are mentioned but um those are

generally would be caused by storm

Gods like uh Shiva was originally rudra

I guess who was a storm

God but let's see here so does the

polyan ever describe any extraordinary

natural events such as an eclipse or

yeah it it describes eclipses and

earthquakes those would be the two most

extraordinary natural events that are

described in the in the poly Canon

eclipses according to the ancient text

according to just Indian folklore are caused by um an assura like a giant Titanic kind of Godlike being named rahu who swallows them into his mouth so that's what causes eclipses is you got this giant demonic kind of being up in outer space who will swallow the sun or moon into his mouth causing them to disappear and then um he has to spit them back out again or in in later Hindu mythology it was just his head is up there so that he swallows it and then it comes out through his like severed esophagus but there are some sutas in the in the samut nikaya in which rahu swallows the moon and then the the

Buddha rebukes him and causes him to spit it back back out again and the same thing happens with the the sun it's like rahu swallows the Sun and then the god of the sun comes and complains to the Buddha and then the Buddha goes and rebukes rahu and then rahu has to spit it back out again which is kind of I mean it's it's mythology you know it's one of those psychic powers that you have to be a little skeptical of when you read about it because I mean the Buddha is not always around every time there's an eclipse there's been eclipses before and after the Buddha and he's not around to rebuke rahu to make them to make him spit the sun or moon back out

and I think nowadays the the rahu theory of eclipses is pretty much obsolete even in devoutly budhist countries and with regard to
earthquakes um like the Maha parasuta I already mentioned earthquakes in that and there's even the Buddha gives a list of the reasons for earthquakes then the first reason is actually like a a natural reason in that the Earth floats on water and the water is floating on air and perturbations in the air cause perturbations in the water which causes the Earth to shake which I mean isn't exactly accurate but still that's fairly good guess by you know naturalistic

philosophers in Ancient India I

suppose um you know some some Modern

Buddhists will say there see the Buddha

knew all about you know plate tectonics

and so forth because the Earth is

surface of the Earth is floating on

liquid but I mean it's not saying it's

floating on liquid magma it says it's

floating on water and that was the

belief in Ancient

India

so yeah I mean you're going to get

premodern explanations for things

which um may sound very mythological and

sort of fairy talish by modern standards

but really who knows maybe 500 years

from now assuming that Civilization

doesn't collapse but continues

progressing who knows what the

explanation of eclipses and earthquakes

is going to be because um you know it

may be that you know the obvious answers

to these questions nowadays they've got

like other answers kind of supporting

the first answer you know it's like it's

still you know an eclipse of the sun

happens when the new moon comes in

between the Sun and the Earth but I mean

there may some other explanation for it

that that is even more true that we

can't even comprehend at this

point

so um yeah I wouldn't go too hard on

Ancient Indians for having no real

understanding

of what causes earthquakes or Eclipses

because you know it was a premodern age

I mean science hadn't been invented yet

really so they just uh they had to have

some kind of reason Reon so generally

you just had a kind of

myth and a lot of people still go with

myths

so that I guess that's it I guess I

answered all the questions and I'm sorry

that um that uh the Buddha didn't have

like preent understanding of modern

science that is preserved in the poex

but you know we're all products of our

culture even enlightened beings because

um just because you're enlightened
doesn't mean that you're going to know
integral calculus or how to speak Han
Chinese or anything like that you're not
necessarily fully omniscent and really
that like explanations for what causes
eclipses or earthquakes or Aurora
Borealis or whatever um that's not
Ultimate Reality anyway that's just the
dream that's that's phenomena occurring
in The Matrix that understanding
Ultimate Reality is something completely
different than
that so I guess I'm um I guess I
answered all the questions and if I've
been sort of low Vibe and and seeming

kind of like unwell then uh I hope
you've you've got patience with that and
hopefully next weekend I'll be feeling
better and uh regardless of uh of my
feeling unwell we can still be happy
which is an important thing to uh to
bear in mind that uh whether you're
happy or not doesn't really depend on um
like physical stuff so much as just it's
a matter of attitude and I have to
remind myself of that because it's easy
for me to just
withdraw and like a turtle you know just
pulling your arms and legs and head and
just wait to feel better when I mean
You' got to interact with other people
and stuff

and so it's I have to be a social being

now so anyways if you got more questions

do you think I can answer uh feel free

to ask in the question in in the

comments ments below or if you got

access to the Discord server you can ask

them there if you got dis um access to

the Subscribe Star channel you can ask

them there and uh check out the URL

links below and be

happy

hello and welcome to question and answer

number

5,365 which is kind of what it seems

like to me now because it's getting it's

up to 65 already which is just amazing

to me anyway I am your host P basa Mr

understanding shine translated literally

into

English and uh this is my

beverage and this is my emergency backup

beverage just in case the first beverage

is not

sufficient and we got like the standard

medium length number of questions here

to

answer and I'm uh feeling much better

than I was last few weeks when I
contracted some disease and was just
sort of I don't know in a state of
contraction and with droll pretty much
happened a lot as a monk too so it's not
like any kind of violent reaction
against being a lay
person was just like sometimes you just
kind of you know it's like my
Consciousness expands and contracts like
the Buddhist Cosmos and in contracted
phases sometimes I'm like a turtle that
just kind of pulls in its legs and its
head and its tail and just kind of
withdraws you know I was in a state
along those lines for a few weeks and
then getting sick didn't help but I'm

feeling better I just have like the
standard mild hangover on Saturday not a
hangover from booze but a hangover from
just work and sleep deprivation
throughout most of the week and then
usually Sunday I feel kind of normal and
then it's reset
again it's uh part of uh getting older I
suppose it's one thing that I've noticed
about getting older is it's
like your your life force Your vitality
is reduced so you can act just as young
you know I can work harder than the
young guy guys at work and so forth but
it just takes more out of you to to keep
it

going but enough of that I think I'm
going to start answering questions now
because that is the purpose of this
video me sitting here answering
questions and the first question is from
Fred and Fred says what in the cheetah
has preferences and the cheah here is
just the poly word usually translated as
mind and it really in in Buddhism it
mainly refers to just mental processes
in general um in a more technical sense
it can mean uh Consciousness but here it
just I assume it just means mental
processes in general and uh the what in
the Chet has preferences it'd be mainly
volition or cha although there would
have to be perception or SAA

inextricably involved in that so it' be
will and representation using
schopenhauer's terminology or at least
the translator of schopenhauer's
terminology so it'd be mainly volition
you know the actual choosing would be an
active volition but you can't choose
without something that you perceive to
choose so volition and perception are
just in a way they're just two aspects
of the same
process so I'll just move on to Fred's
next question here what's your insights
on CA
some monks almost give them personality
traits are they just the hindrances well

caas is like the

Sanskrit version of the poly word kilesa

which is usually translated as

defilement so anything that is uh UNH

wholesome impure something that is not

helping you to become enlightened but is

actually preventing you from becoming

enlightened would qualify as a

kesa and uh he says here some monks

almost give them personality traits but

some personality traits can be kesas I

mean if you've got greedy personality

traits or hostile personality traits or

so

forth then those would qualify as kesis

because they're helping you to stay

unenlightened so they're not just the

hindrances because the hindrances are

this list of five and kesas are more

General than that just

anything that uh is a part of your

personality that is unenlightened would

qualify as the

kesa anything that helps you to remain

unenlightened and so I guess I'll just

move on to the next question here this

is from The Dark

Knight uh spelled uh K N I G HT so it's

from Batman apparently in the Dark

Knight says why do you refer to yourself

as poob basan since you are no longer a

monk well I've been named named poo basa

for literally half my lifetime I assume

I've earned the name and I mean I don't

call myself poasa beu anymore because

I'm not a beu but the name poasa me is

just it's like a name it's like a

nickname or something and uh I mean it's

not that having a poly name

necessarily means that you're a monk

like in the Buddhist time people weren't

given a new name their ordination they

just had like a poly or you know a

language similar to poly I mean their

name would be part of that and that's

just what they'd be called like sorrya

just means son of

sorry and uh names like kasapa and I

think

molana um I mean those are just family

names like Goa was also like a family or

or clan

name so having a poon name doesn't

necessarily imply that you're a monk and

uh people who aren't monks can have poly

nicknames I mean there's nothing I mean

there's nothing against any rule for

that so since I've been called poasa for

most of my adult life and since possibly

most people who call me by a name

nowadays still call me that or poo that

uh I don't really see any great need to

stop calling myself that I mean it's

just a name I really don't care about

names I go by at least three different

names um my first name my middle name

and my poly name so it's not a big deal
for me I don't really identify with it
it's just a matter of I don't know
convenience or habit or whatever so I'll
just move on to the next question this
is from trust wet
farts and Trust wet farts says do you
see people's eyes glowing and he asked
me this question before I'm pretty
pretty sure and I just kind of didn't
answer it I don't answer 100% of all
questions and I don't know I just seemed
like it wasn't really an Earnest
question or something but he asked it
again so I guess I was mistaken and he
really does want to know the answer to
this and the reason why he asks me if I

see people's eyes glowing is because
sometimes like on my avatars or on some
of my video thumbnails I'll have like
the glowing eyes or once or twice my dog
GIS also has had glowing
eyes and so he wants to know if I really
see people that way and the answer is no
I do not see people that way I got the
idea originally from memes you know
there's like the memes of the red eyes
like the laser beam eyes I don't know I
just kind of lik that idea so I went
with it so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is uh from
sakuta son of the
sakya and uh sakya Puda says I suppose

that being a monk for such a long time
caus you to be very cautious and
selective in your interactions with
other people maybe even reluctant to
allow many new relationships to prosper
and deepen given the fact that there are
probably not many kalana mitas around to
supply at least in day-to-day lay
settings in Supply at least in
day-to-day settings do you feel that's
the case for you if it is how do you
deal with this do you have any
strategies to share as to not coming
across so obviously uninterested and
even sometimes as a blunt insensitive
a-hole to other people
well yeah when I was a monk especially

when I was like a cave dwelling
recluse uh I really did avoid people a
lot of the time people would come to
visit me I just stay hiding in my cave
not wanting to come out and meet with
them I mean it's somebody I didn't know
I had no no interest in meeting these
people sometimes I'd even like pee into
a container just so I wouldn't have to
go outside to go to the
bathroom and just wait until they went
away and also as a monk a lot of the
time I would just see people as as like
stimuli you know somebody standing in
front of you it might as well just be
the image of somebody standing in front

of you on on like a video screen I mean

it was just it was hard to

really just sort of have empathy with

other people because I mean a monk is

supposed to just like deconstruct

everything into just like sensory data

and I was a little too good at that at

times I guess and so really I mean

people would just be like stimuli I mean

I might as well just be dreaming

them but on the other

hand um my years as a monk caused me to

have more

compassion because just trying to be a

perfected Saint as hard as you can for

years and still I mean it doesn't happen

the way it's supposed to happen it

doesn't happen the way you want it to

happen and you just get you're just

stuck being human so that um I have a

lot more compassion for messed up people

now

because I mean they really don't have

much chance or opportunity to improve

themselves significantly even and I mean

especially considering that people who

are trying fulltime to improve

themselves significantly still as a

general rule tend to fail

spectacularly so I do I mean

it's on the one hand I don't really get

attached to people you know just very

rare for me to invite some somebody over

or just want to hang out with somebody

other than my

sweetheart

um you know it's just to that extent I

mean I'm I'm friendly I'm personable

people like me but at the same time I'm

kind of detached and that might bother

them a little bit but at least I engage

you know I have like a certain amount of

empathy with them you know there's

there's a rapport sort of like a um like

a meeting of the minds to some degre

you know I can sort of relate you know

we I can sort of pick up on their Vibe

and you know we can we can connect at a

slightly deeper level than most people

do in some cases but at the same time I

don't really have any attachment to

that uh and as I said uh I do have a

certain amount of sympathy for people I

have more compassion and like Christian

charity towards the average person now

than I did as a human race hating young

man and I really did just pretty much

despise the human race when I was when I

was

younger

so how do I deal with this I mean that's

essentially the case with me it's it's

not as Extreme

as the sakuta here is is laying it out

for himself maybe how do I deal with

this do I have any

strategies um really I mean if if you're
just open to another person I mean
you're not just closed off against them
then I mean there's going to be a
certain amount of like you know empathy
or or something going back and forth you
know a certain
connection and just be friendly and
polite I mean you realize that if if
you're like rude to somebody if you hurt
somebody's feelings I mean it's like
coming back to you it's it's sort of
like an us when you're interacting with
somebody you know there's like this
entity that isn't us that is involved
and hurting others just really hurts
yourself so I mean you just kind of feel

into that and you know you're just

friendly and polite and you know crack

jokes and make people laugh and you know

they like you

and I mean you you like them too really

I mean you're not attached I mean you

don't want to invite them over for

dinner or anything but still it's like

um be not so much in your head not be

just sort of closed off so that people

are nothing more than stimuli like like

I was saying when I was a monk um like

especially earlier on as a

monk

um yeah I guess uh just have some

compassion and and try not to be like uh

completely in your head you know try to

be open you know accept that this is

another me really I mean we all call

ourselves by the same name me right it's

all just manifestations of the same

Consciousness so just do your best and

people still think you're an

which I mean some people think I'm an

I assume especially on the

internet you know especially like

leftist Buddhists I mean they just think

I'm like this evil Nazi or something

then I mean it's just the way it is so

oh

well so I guess I'll just move on to the

next question here this is uh from White

Ash

Piper and white ash Piper says Dave you
don't feel that World War II is in our
midst seems things are getting pretty
warm in the old town these days well
World War III is it's been in our midst
since before I was born you know it's
like the cold war you had you had like
high military officials and and state
ministers and so forth saying that you
know nuclear war with Russia is is just
inevitable we just don't know exactly
when it's going to happen What it's
going to happen it's got to
happen um you know there's
since you know more than 2000 years the
world has been coming to an end I mean

you on the internet you can look at
lists of you know the world coming to an
end these theories these prophecies that
just didn't pan out you know I mean 2012
was supposed to be the end you know the
Mayan calendar and all that there was
the guy who was saying the the Rapture
was going to happen in 2011 or something
like that he was the same guy that was
saying that the world was going to end
in
1998 I knew an Australian monk was
actually ordering pamphlets and stuff
reading about how the world was going to
end in
1998 H in the New Testament I think it's
the first Epistle of John he says this

is the final hour almost 2,000 years ago
and the Middle East has always been a
war zone I mean Jews and Arabs Jews and
Muslims have been fighting for for
since I don't know since as long as
there have been Jews and
Muslims so yeah I don't
know I mean it could be that World War
III is in our midst but it I mean
potentially it could it could have
happen at any moment during my entire
life so I'm really not that concerned
about it so I'll just move on to White
Ash Piper's next question he says also
have you considered other platforms such
as Odyssey or Rumble so far their free

speech forwards yeah it's I'm just kind of lazy and just going through the trouble of just getting started on rumble or whatever I think I do have an account I think my sweetheart set up an account for me on Rumble but for some reason I just don't upload my videos onto Rumble yet but I suppose I should Rumble sounds pretty good and I think it's U more Progressive so to speak not in the political sense but in the sense of like improving upon itself and just continuing to move forwards and get better and better more so than say bitshoot which uh I I do upload on the bit shoot and I like the platform but still I mean it has issues that it

there's sort of like obstacles to it

really taking

off

so but YouTube I mean it YouTube is

problematic you got to admit I mean

they're they're they're censorious and

they they take a certain political

position and anyone who does not adopt

that political position is is got a

Target on them

essentially so I guess I'll just move on

to the next question and this is from

herie gery man and hery gery man says

weeks ago I had a distressing

psychedelic experience that completely

broke apart any delusions I had about

being able to understand the existence
by my own mental Concepts reality shown
itself to me as an indifferent and
absolutely incomprehensible love crafty
and horror any philosophical idea of
mine turned out to be nothing more than
incoherent fragmented nonsense now I'm
in a state where I feel as if I have
little little footing in conventional
reality I go through the motions of
everyday life I work towards goals I
know on an intellectual level I'm
supposed to reach but still everything
just seems to lack any inherent meaning
is this a skillful or unskillful mental
state
well whether it's skillful or unskillful

depends on your attitude with regard to it like the love crafty and horror part um yeah horror is generally an unskillful mental state I mean it can be sort of a like a a left-handed skillful means towards something something better after the horror subsides I mean the horror can just like jolt you into a better State you know just getting away from the horror something like that but it seems like maybe the love crafty and horror was just during the Psychedelic experience which may have been drug induced and I mean you should take that into consideration too that just because you have a psychedelic

experience doesn't necessarily mean that
it's it's less delusional than the
ordinary waking State of Consciousness I
mean a lot of you know a lot of mentally
ill people have these really intense
more or less psychedelic experiences
that I mean they're just stuck in them
and and they don't get
enlightened but so long as I mean it
seems like one of the main themes of
this state is just that nothing seems to
have any Essence nothing really makes
any inherent sense and if you read read
let's see
the the the Su on the uptaken stick the
atad Su of the suata of Thea waga the
Buddha is talking about his mental

States before he became enlightened and
it was it reminds me of this he's saying
that you know there was there was no
Safe Haven anywhere there's no solid
footing anywhere everything seemed to be
without Essence without purpose without
meaning and then it just sort of caused
a kind of SGA or spiritual urgency and
alarm that motivated him to practice
diligently and he became the Buddha
subsequently so it must have helped in
his case
so is this a skillful or unskillful
mental state it depends on what you do
with it I mean if it helps you to detach
from some saric

reality I mean if it helps you if it
inspires you to practice to be more
meditative and like you know less stuck
in some sorrow then it's a good thing
but if you just stay kind of lost in
this this state I mean the the distress
you experience would be um
unskillful so it depends on what you do
with it and overall it does seem like it
could be um you know it could be an Open
Door it could potentially be very
beneficial to you in the long
run um I think taking taking psychedelic
drugs has helped a lot of people ROM dos
being a famous example of that
um but it depends on the individual
person and what they do with the strange

disorienting mental States whether it

helps them or they just get stuck in

this

lostness so I think I'll just move on to

the next question here this is from

Crave

minerals and crave minerals says could

you elaborate on why you are expressing

doubts about whether a fully enlightened

being can exist in a samsaric context

well a fully enlightened being is a

person who is who is aware of Ultimate

Reality and Ultimate Reality is not

samsaric and so from a samsaric context

this person doesn't really know Ultimate

Reality because Ultimate Reality is just

off the scale s Sora nothing Sam saric
can touch it and so
Nirvana and samsar I mean in a way
they're not mutually exclusive like
samsara is the form and Nirvana is the
essence in in a metaphysical at
metaphysical level but at the ethical
level Nirvana or Enlightenment is just
the realization of this this Ultimate
Reality and when you're realizing
something that is completely off the
scale that is not in samsara within the
context of samsara I mean it's just
meaningless so I used to say sometimes I
still say I mean just kind of as a a
thought thought experiment that Satan
assuming that there really is a a Satan

or a devil I mean deep down he'd have to
be an atheist because there's nothing
Beyond samsara to a thoroughly
samsaric like enlightened unwise
being so I mean that's that's
essentially it Enlightenment is just off
the scale of samsara and so samsara
can't touch it and so it would have
really no meaning in a samsaric context
and if you give it samsaric meaning then
you've already missed the boat because
that's not it that's not what it
is
so it's it's fairly straightforward I
think but Nirvana is not on the list of
the 31 planes of existence it's just

completely off the

scale and so Enlightenment likewise by

the same token would be off the scale

because Enlightenment is the realization

of

Nirvana

so you know it's sort of like trying to

understand the content thing in itself

in terms of the conent thing as it seems

which I mean it's just futile it's never

going to happen it's never going to come

close to

working so I guess I should might might

as well move on to the next question

here this is from covac and CAD

Zid and CAC and CAD zida says

hypothetically someone makes a system

where a suspect is kept in a room for interrogation the person asking questions doesn't get the answers he wants he informs a higher up the higher up follows a procedure to tell someone else else who pushes a button for the suspect to get tortured by a machine no one in this chain of command knows that what they do is what is going to lead to torture including the the button Pusher the entire thing was made via collaboration of a corporation who doesn't ever get involved in actually torturing torturing someone so they have no volition to kill just putting and planning Machinery together as an

engineering project the government who
buys it knows know what it does but
doesn't get involved in any torturing
but rather hires people to follow
certain steps without them knowing this
will lead to torture in is this a
sensible way to make a Buddhist method
of torture would you would you able to
create a mass death camps in this way
without anyone having any negative karma
in the process hypothetically speaking
of course well I mean obviously the
people at the top know what they're
doing and even this this Corporation
that's engineering torturing devices I
mean it's sort of like the the the
physicists who made the first nuclear

bombs you know it's like they knew what
they were making they knew that people
were going to get vaporized and
irradiated from what they were
inventing but they went ahead and did it
anyway for the sake of the greater good
or whatever or also it kind of reminds
me of uh vut novel Kurt Vaga cat's
cradle where there's this chemist who
invents ice 9 which is a kind of Ice
Crystal that crystallizes at room
temperature and I mean he does he just
he doesn't care that it can destroy life
on Earth you know he's just you know
he's just kind of autistic and just just
purely interested in the scientific the

scientific angle of you know can this be
done can I do this and then it winds up
in you know pretty much everybody in the
world dying because it like this Crystal
of ice 9 falls into the ocean and the
entire ocean freezes
solid and
so I mean he's making Karma he's making
these decisions he knows that it's going
to hurt people I mean he knows that it
can hurt people he does doesn't
care and it's even more the case with
regard to the government setting up this
system and like the the corporation
that's designing the system even if the
the actual grunts that are running the
thing don't even know what they're doing

I mean still you can't have like a
concentration camp without somebody
knowing that they're running a
concentration camp you got to have
somebody guarding the place or
whatever so yeah it would
be you could theoretically say that you
know most of the people involved
wouldn't know what they were doing but
still I mean there were people who would
know and even like sensitive people
would probably get a Feeling that what
they were doing just wasn't quite right
somehow and then they just go ahead and
do it anyway and then they're making
Karma so yeah I don't think there is

really a Buddhist method of like
institutional torture of like criminals
or whatever I just don't think that's
going to happen you're just G to have to
have people that are just willing to
take take the karmic hit and there's
always going to be people willing to do
that
this assuming that for some reason a
Buddhist government sees it as expedient
to torture people you know like for
example you got the terrorist who's got
the bomb planted in an inhabited area
he's the only person who knows where it
is you've got the terrorist in custody
he's not talking so you got to find out
where the bomb is before it blows up so

I mean that is like like an Ethics
problem sort of like the trolley car
problems you know it's like is it
worthwhile is it like morally
justifiable to torture this one
terrorist in order to prevent 10,000
people from blowing up so
it's probably better just to uh have
someone willingly take the hit and go
through all the trouble of all this
double blind processes that really isn't
going to work in the long run because
obviously there's still going to be
people who know what's going on and are
calling the shots so I'll just move on
to se of action sead Z's next

question which is I was going through
the various parts of GC Pond's book on
the studies on the origins of Buddhism
however the book is from the 1950s and
there were many sutas in there that the
author put in the unknown category of
whether they are early texts or late
texts is is there any updates on these
unknown
sutas and where they would belong I want
to be able to make a comprehensive
reading of the early texts and be able
to differentiate from later ones also
you have talked about how some of the
sutas from the suon or the
oldest do you know if there are any
databases of anyone trying to give an

order or range of ordering of suta Ages
to this level of detail
well I don't think there's any way of
just scientifically quantifying I mean
you can have certain assumptions you
know certain words are later certain
terms are earlier certain trends like
devotionalism and like the the fairy
tale narratives and just stock phrases
that kind of thing would be indicative
of later material just the the the very
elaborate question and answer SU because
would be indicative of later material
that's getting towards commentarial
stuff and then Abid dama and so forth um
but there's no way of knowing for sure

so it's just different people have
different intuitions different insights
different theories that they're working
with and GC P was wiser and understood
dhma better than the average buddhistic
studies scholar you know he understood
dhama better than say
uh Richard grid and Richard grid wrote a
book you know uh how Buddhism began the
condition Genesis of the early teachings
and it's not as good of a book as Pond's
book even though it was written a few
decades later simply because this kind
of thing it relies more on the wisdom of
the person who's investigating it and
their understanding of dhama at a deep
level not just an intellectual scol you

know like a Scholastic level but deep

down there get

it I think um you know regardless of

whether it was written in the the 1950s

or the 1850s or or whatever that

something written by a person like that

will be better than just following a

buddhistic studies Trend in

Academia um I mean you just got to look

around and if it resonates you know it

just Rings true then you can follow that

I mean if their their arguments make a

lot of sense and so forth

but I don't think there's there's no way

that they're going to be just

crystallizing down the poly toptica to

to get with certainty the oldest text
because it just doesn't work that way
it's it's all going to be educated
guesses so I mean you can just go
through some of the academic literature
you know filter out all the you know why
why Buddhism is is pro homosexuality and
all this like gender studies and and
like uh grievance studies stuff that's
been being injected into buddhistic
studies over the past few decades
especially the past one
decade um and I assume there's still
some really valid um valid scholarship
going on like studies of the suttin pl
and so
forth um yeah it's it's out there I

can't really think of any names off

hand but it's out

there um but I mean it's not going to be

like 100% certain you it's not just

going to be empirical facts you know

these are older these are later because

you can have like later texts that mimic

older texts for example you can have

older texts that just have like later

stuff injected into them that kind of

thing so there's always going to be a

certain amount of

ambiguity so I guess I'll just move on

to COV action cpad Z next

question

which is in your videos of begging in

burmes villages the women covered their head however vinia rules say you can't teach dhama if someone's head is covered in some traditions especially Japanese many nuns also cover their heads even though it's shaved especially older ladies can you explain the significance of covering your head and making head coverings taking head coverings off in these various traditions and cultures and why this practice varies so much I know it was common practice among women in Central Asia and the Middle East before Islam even even in the Middle country where the Buddha taught the Jane tradition has nuns covering their heads as well but vinia makes it seem

disrespectful to cover your head so it's hard to know exactly where and why there are so many different Customs for this seemingly innocuous practice in India and Beyond well it's not disrespectful to cover your head even in ancient Indian culture it's disrespectful to cover your head when you're approaching a teacher or a venerable person or when you're learning dhamma you're supposed to to some degree humble yourself you know to show honor to the teacher or to the

dharm and so I mean just covering your head is not disrespectful of anything it's just you should uncover your head I

think I think the Bible or early
Christianity also had women were
supposed to I guess women were supposed
to cover their head when they went to
church but the thing about the the
videos about me going for alms round in
Burma is those those videos were taken
in January which was like the coldest
time of year in Burma as well as in the
temperate zone of of the Northern
Hemisphere and so they were just
covering their head with a towel or
something just to keep their head warm
so it wasn't and I wasn't teaching dhama
to them and so there's there's no rule
at all against that and most of the year
they don't cover their head because it's

usually blazing hot in central Burma

instead of relatively

cool you know cool enough that your

breath

vaporizes you can see your breath it

doesn't get that cool very often in

Burma but in January um it does and also

I found that in in central Burma if the

temperature gets below about 80 degrees

Fahrenheit people start layering up you

know they'll be wearing quilted jackets

and so forth

so yeah in this case it was just they

were staying warm because it was winter

time and uh a lot of these traditions of

whether you should cover your head or

uncover your head and so forth It's just arbitrary you know it's just cultural stuff

so yeah it's like the the priest ancient Roman priests at least the high priests were supposed to cover their head with their toga or something when they would be doing the the rituals and so forth but whether you cover your head or uncover it I really don't think the the higher beings really care so it's just mainly a cultural thing and if the culture says it's disrespectful to cover your head then you uncover your head when you know addressing a teacher or listening to to a sermon or something and uh vice versa you know the

culture says the

opposite so I don't know how thoroughly

I answer that question but I'm just

going to move on to seac and zono's next

question which is do you ever have

dreams of being back in the caves and

thinking you going back to America and

being a lay person was all just your

imagination and you need to go back to

practicing well no I don't I don't ever

have dreams like that I mean I still

have a few monk dreams but um I was a

monk for probably 10 years before I was

a monk in most of my dreams even when I

had been a monk for for 10 years and

then sometimes you'd have hybrid dreams

where you're just hanging out with your
buddies from college or something and
somebody says hey let's go to McDonald's
and I'd say okay I got to wrap up first
and then you know I'd be a monk and have
to like cover both shoulders before we
went to
McDonald's I had one memorable dream
where I was I was a monk at the time
when I had the dream and I I was
stealing car stereos there was like some
kind of like some kind of festival or
something going on in a park and there
was all these Park cars and I was just
going to the cars just stealing stuff
and then I just wake up and I think ah
I'm par of gica and I'm thinking I could

I can put it all back but it's already too late because you've already taken it so you're already excommunicated and then finally you just realize oh it's just a dream okay I'm fine you know I've had parica dreams before like sex dreams that kind of thing where man I just excommunicated myself and then I realized oh wait it's just a dream I remember one time I was I was still in the dream it was close to elusive dream where I'm eating dinner or something which is against the rules for Monk and then uh I think oh this is against the rules I can't be doing this and and then I had a lucid enough moment that that I

realized oh this is just a dream I can
just still keep eating this so I did and
there's a dog snoring behind me right
now okay
so yeah I still have dreams of being a
monk but very very rarely maybe once
every few months and none of it is
including everything being my
imagination and I'm just still a monk
and didn't really go back to America I
mean I'm not aware of believing that I
went back to America and then thinking
that that didn't happen and when I was a
kid my parents got divorced when I was
nine and there was a few years
afterwards where I would have these like
fantasies where I just wake up one day

and and I'd still be nine before they
got divorced and everything would be
back the way it was again but um nothing
like that has happened to me with regard
to dis robing that I can think of that I
can remember so I'll just move on to the
next question from covac and CAD
Z after taking a sip of my
beverage and uh this this question is
biku wrote a paper on non-duality in
Buddhist teachings can you please do an
analysis of it and he left the link but
the thing is I really don't like reading
biku bod very much sometimes he's
actually kind of
depressing and I think I might have read

this years

ago because I do vaguely remember

reading biku bod writing about

nonduality but it was very dry and kind

of a I don't think he really endorsed

non-duality I think he might have been

trying to refute the idea that the

Buddha was teaching non-duality because

he really is sort of the Scholastic type

he doesn't meditate much if at all and

he really likes all of the complicated

philosophical

system but again I mean I didn't read

the the article that covac and CAD Z not

included in the link and I warn people

in advance I mean I people are sending

me like YouTube links and like links to

like essays and articles and so forth

sometimes they'll send me entire books

and less than half the time while I

actually watch the video or read the

book I mean I just sometimes I just get

swamped with it and sometimes it's just

stuff that I'm just not really

interested in any way uh sometimes it

turns out to be really interesting but

um in this case I was not inspired to

read buku body's article but um I do

think think that he really doesn't get

non

non-dualism I just don't think that he

gets

it so if you want to know about

non-duality in the Buddhist teachings
you probably do well to read somebody
else's take on it and so I'll just move
on to the next question here this is
from Tigger formerly known as hey it's
TIG and Tigger says in your opinion how
was the chai too pagota in Burma
built and for those of you who are un
familiar with the chaio
pagod it's this little pagot that's on
top of a boulder and the boulder is just
balanced on this Rocky Crag and one
person can even Rock the boulder back
and forth but it's still stable enough
that it it's doesn't fall off and
somebody at some point got the idea
let's build up a Goa on top of this

wobbly Boulder on that's balanced on

this

crck and so they did and I assume the

way they did is the way they build just

about any small pagota just using bricks

and mortar you got like the Masons up

there on top of the Boulder and uh I

mean the way it's I've been told I've

never been to Chitto myself I've seen

lots of pictures of it of course but um

I've been told that the the pagota on

top of the boulder actually helps to

balance the boulder I mean it's sort of

it you know makes the center of gravity

farther away from the whole Boulder just

falling off this this crack that is

balanced on so I mean the real question
is how did the how did the boulder get
balanced on top of the Crag to begin
with and uh the Burmese traditional
explanation is that it's some wizard did
it but I I really can't say um if a
wizard did put the boulder there and who
knows maybe the the Wizard had the
pagota built too shortly after balancing
the boulder the huge bould Boulder on
top of this
crack but uh I don't know if anyone
really
knows that uh maybe Western scholarship
could figure it out you get like
archaeologists there trying to figure it
out but I mean they might violate some

taboo by scratching the gold the gold
leaf stuck onto the boulder or the
burmes just don't want to know what the
Western opinion is because they're
content with their wizard
Theory I mean that happens
so I mean how it was built I mean it was
built fairly easily and
straightforwardly you know you just
climb up onto this big boulder and
buildt this little brick pagota there
but how the boulder got balanced there
is the real question and but that
question was not asked and I'm not going
to go any farther with it than I already
did and I'm just going to move on to the

next question which is from Liber

Lam I assume that's how you pronounce it

I don't know how to pronounce some of

these names so Liber lamb says what were

the most most interesting experiences

you had as a

freelance monk before you ordained I

can't remember the exact word you used

in your book but like trying to do the

monk thing without a

s well I mean I never was a freelance

monk before I ordained I considered it

you know I considered you know when I

was trying to figure out how I was going

to renounce the world and live a

spiritual life you know I considered

becoming a Zen monk I even briefly

considered becoming a carthusian cathol
monk who takes a vow of silence and then
thereby doesn't have to tell anyone that
he's not really a Christian it was a
dumb idea I mean you at least have to
make confession to a father Confessor or
something I
assume um I consider just making a wool
robe and getting myself a wooden bowl
and just hitting the road but I knew
myself well enough to know that I mean
having a pre-established system that
would help me to behave myself you know
all these rules and so forth and like
senior senior authority figures kind of
helping to to guide you and so forth

that that would definitely be easier and
more likely for me to have some kind of
success than if I
just do it on my own but on the other
hand I have been a freelance monk after
I
ordained like probably at least half the
time I was a monk I was living alone out
in a forest
or um living like the only Monk at a
monastery or just being the senior monk
where I didn't have to I mean I just
didn't have to take orders from anybody
other than just what are in the texts
you know like the vinea rules and so
forth so yeah I have been a freelance
monk um the most ex interesting

experiences man I've had lots of experiences as a freelance monk but but that was after I Ade while I actually was a monk and just avoiding the S because um most Asian monks really I mean I've I've talked about this before it's like maybe two% are really trying to be conscientious monks living in accordance with the texts the other 98% have got their have got other reasons for why they became monks you various reasons and they're just you know at best just trying to make some progress and and and sort of making an investment for their next existence which presumably will be better and

they'll be able to practice dham better
or at least they'll get into heaven with
the Herm of celestial nymphs or
something so I just tend to avoid
monasteries like most monasteries in the
west and in the East literally it's
against the rules of monastic discipline
even to set foot on the property because
of this thing called nissia where I mean
I was talking about this I think it was
in the previous Q&A where the the rules
are so strict that if you make use of
anything that another Monk has paid for
then you're committing an
offense and I mean it even goes so far
as I give this
example which is in the commentaries a

monk buys a mango with his own money
eats the mango throws the pit on the
ground that pit sprouts and grows into a
tree 100 years later a different monk
sits in the shade of that tree and that
different monk is breaking a rule
because he is making use of something
that are among bought with money and so
since almost every Monastery in the East
and in the west has had monks like
contributing to the to buying the
property endorsing checks and so forth
that I mean it's all theia and so the
way to avoid that uh is you just avoid
monasteries you avoid other monks as a
general rule and I did that for many

years there was a famous Italian monk
who lived in in Burma who also he just
famously he just went everywhere on foot
he walked all the way to India and back
he did the pilgrimage on foot to India
and back to Burma again and he just did
not stay in monasteries he just avoided
monasteries avoided monks because he was
strict and most monks aren't and you
it's just you can get you can break
rules just by interacting with monks who
who are
unconscientious so with regard to the
most interesting
experiences
I mean it just man it would just be sort
of an arbitrary choice I I've had a lot

of interesting experiences like the time
I got attacked by ogres or the time that
um I made a a raft out of two inner
tubes and some bamboo and a little bit
of teak planking and went down pone
Creek after the monsoon hit where it was
like Rapids and uh then came out on the
chindwin river and and that was that was
an interesting trip that was that was an
interesting
experience um but it could be that uh my
attempts to be a freelance monk were in
the west I
mean I mean I wouldn't know where to
begin all all these weird experiences
I've had and um so and like probably at

least half of the weird experiences I've
had as a freelance monk
um I mean they they occurred when I was
being a freelance monk I mean these
weird experience es like half my life as
a monk was freelance essentially just
avoiding other monks and monasteries as
a general rule as much as I was
able so I I'm I'm I guess I'm just not
going to answer that question what were
the most interesting experiences because
I mean just take your pick I mean I've
had so many interesting experiences and
most of those times were when I was just
a solitary monk avoiding like
monasticism in general just avoiding
Monas

Aries so I guess I'll just move on to

lib Lamb's next question I apologize to

lib lamb for not giving some juicy

experiences but uh I

really I mean it's just like picking him

out of a hat or something it's it's

where do I

begin so nebr Lam's next question do you

think God as a name deres power from

ancient mythology like with the ancient

Canaanite mythology of L or is more of

something that gains power through

Living spirit like people praying to God

in the context of modern Doctrine well I

don't know how the word God as a name

derives power from ancient mythology

since in ancient times they weren't

using the Modern English word

God so I mean l is not the same word as

God

so I think the the word god as a name

derives power just from all the people

especially now who believe in God you

know who attribute really profound

significance to God who are praying to

God who are swearing by God you know

it's

just it's just this living belief this

living tradition which gives the word

god

power

um and I mean also the cultural stuff

which is you know rooted in the past has

an effect also I mean people today
wouldn't believe in God if there wasn't
like a a theistic tradition going back
uh into ancient times so I mean that
there is some power in the past also but
um like L the Canaanite god l i mean
he's most modern Christians are like
oblivious I mean they're just almost
totally ignorant of you know Jehovah
God's origins or at least partial
origins in the Canaanite king of Gods
L but there's another question about L
which is this next one so the next
question from libr Lam is do you think
that the development of something like
the mythology of L is relevant to the

spiritual life of modern-day Jews
Christians and Muslims even though it is
heretical to all three like the UTA waga
is to Buddhists something that sort of
sets the record straight on how they got
to the metaphysical assumptions and
mythology that they currently
use um I don't think it's relevant to
the spiritual life of modern day Jews
Christians and Muslims to the extent
that they are oblivious to it most
modern day Jews Christians and
Muslims really don't know the evolution
of the concept of the monotheistic God I
mean like like the uh the question above
was referring to you know the the
monotheistic God probably I I mean for

the abrahamic religions probably began

with

L that was the god of Abraham I guess

and he was he was God to all the

Canaanites most of them and he was like

the king of Gods he had a female consort

I don't remember the name of the goddess

who was El's consort and then around the

time of Moses

presumably El got conflated with Yahweh

who was like a an Edomite or

midianite um like a war god the god of

hosts the god of armies and so I think

El just sort of got sucked into to

Yahweh I think Yahweh became like the

main god of the the

Israelites and then I mean

there some of the tribes at least

probably spent some time in Egypt and

they got some Egyptian ideas mixed in

and then you know eventually there was

the Babylonian captivity which which is

when the Jews became monotheists pretty

much or so it seems I mean before that

it was just that Yahweh or the Lord you

know whatever whatever name they were

going to go by because they couldn't

really call him by his real name because

that was you get stoned to death for

saying Yahweh I

guess like in the Life of Brian the guy

who's going to get stoned for saying

this piece of pabit is good enough for

Jehovah and he's going to eat Stone to

death for that

so man I'm I'm just kind of wandering

all over with this

one but I mean most people they I mean

the the ancient Evolution and origins of

their spiritual system are largely

irrelevant because all that really

matters is what they're in now you know

how they are feeling now what they are

told now and what they know or think

they know

now and so ancient stuff with with

regard to you know how abrahamic

monotheism arose or you know how early

Buddhism arose for that matter I mean

for me it was important to know just because I wanted if I was going to be a Buddhist I wanted to know and try to follow what the historical Buddha you know the original enlightened founder of the system taught and so you have to do some detective work to get closer to understanding what he originally taught for for abrahamic monotheists is not nearly so important because there was no real well I guess there was I mean the Christians kind of they had their founder in Jesus of Nazareth although he was a reformer pretty much of a pre-existing tradition Muhammad is a little more complicated um with regard to that but I

mean understanding the origin of Allah

you know because I mean there was the

the Pagan the Pagan Arabs they were

worshiping Allah too it's just he was

sort of like Jehovah or Yahweh started

out is just sort of like the patron God

of of this

tribe but I mean you don't have to know

that stuff in fact I think to a

faith-based

religionist that actually knowing the

nuts and bolts of how your religion

arose would probably be damaging to

their faith you know they've got this

idealized

Faith you know that it's all just

divinely inspired and so forth so

ignorance would be Bliss to that extent

I

guess so I'm I'm make sure I'm actually

answering the question here instead of

just rambling do you think that the

development of something like the

mythology of L is relevant to the

spiritual life of modern day Jews

Christians and Muslims even though it's

heretical to all three well only to

those who really take an interest in

that and bother to learn about it and

they're going to be more philosophically

oriented and less Faith oriented and uh

they're probably going to be relatively

lukewarm as a consequence

anyway

so

yeah yeah I think that it probably uh

most it's just not an issue for most

religious people in the west because

they're just oblivious to it for the

most part so I'll just move on to the

next question which is from harim

cthul and harim cthul says do you prefer

to live among white people which is

actually kind of an interesting question

I don't think anyone's everever asked me

that

before

and it's I mean there's Nuance to it

it's not just a plain yes or no question

I think to the extent that I do prefer
to live among white people is because I
can communicate with white people
because I'm white and I was born and
raised in a predominantly white culture
so that when I was living in Burma for
example I lived in Burma for more than
20 years I can appreciate that Burmese
people in certain respects are superior
to the average Western person you know
they they've got a certain like depth to
them and and they got more dham in their
lives and they just have certain virtues
come naturally to them you know they're
very modest virt people as a general
rule I mean there are always going to be
exceptions including especially in the

government but uh there's Al always this culture barrier that even if you know the words of their language and the grammar and everything still there's this barrier in between really communicating because you just don't think like a Burmese person does and so there's always this separation in other cultures that I mean there's there's going to be separation anywhere but it's less separation Liv Living in America among fellow native Americans then there is living in a foreign culture that you're you're just sort of transplanted into so that would be the main thing it's not any kind of

racial issue so much as it's a cultural issue and that I was just raised in a more or less European culture and I can communicate with more or less European people more deeply you know I can just resonate with them you know we can be on the same page EAS iier than living in a in a foreign culture that you know is just very foreign like burmes people it's like they'll ask me a question how long has it been and I have no idea what they're referring to but the Burmese it's just they know they understand each other so that the Burmese language is really kind of almost like abbreviated because like half of each sentence that you say in Burmese is just

inferred and the other person because they're they're burmes too they're thinking along the same lines as you so you just have to just give these little signs to kind of steer their understanding of what you're saying and they're able to communicate because it's just so traditional and the way they think is so similar that just giving little hints as to what you mean and they they just follow the hints and it works for them but for a western person someone ask me how long has it been I'll say how long has what been and they'll say yes and I'll say again like how long has what been and they say yes sir it's

like how do you communicate like that I
it's also um especially when I first got
to
Burma there was I didn't realize that
there's really no word for hello or
goodbye in burmes so I mean there's like
Mingalaba which is like this very formal
way of saying hello to in a in a formal
way but most people don't say it at
least not when they're just meeting
somebody on the street or whatever so
that you say Hello by asking a stupid
question or you know you meet on the
street it's like where are you going or
if it's around lunchtime have you have
you eaten lunch yet or and just
something like this and it used to

really bug me it's like sometimes it was
just this really obvious question I'd be
walking back from the village with my
alms bowl and some Monk would say you
coming back from from alms round and
it's like what impression do you get
look it I got my full Bowl I'm walking
back to the monaster and they would get
embarrassed you know because I mean
that's just how they say hello but it's
this this cultural thing in between that
just prevented us from really
sinking you know like s y n c not s i n
k and so yeah I mean I prefer to live
among white people
mainly to the extent that I'm able to

communicate better and just sort
of interact more fully with people who
have been raised in the same kind of
culture as me have a lot of the same U
assumptions or just sort of um what's
the word associations as me so that we
think more similarly and so you can you
can have a more satisfying conversation
or interpersonal
interaction so I guess I'll just move on
to the next question this is from
disin and I apologize to Zin because his
name reminds me of Dr so much you know
like like the snitches you know everyone
knows you can't teach a to
zch so I do apologize for that it's just
you reminds me this name reminds me of

Dr Seuss but it could be like you know

Bob or something in in

h in some European

culture but anyways T says greetings

poasa have you ever been interested in

Islamic philosophy people like I Sina Al

gazali IB rash IUN Etc some of these

were responsible for bringing Aristotle

and some other Greeks to the West during

the

Reconquista a lot of stuff was being

translated from Arabic and people like

aquinus owed their interest in Aristotle

to people like ibben rash who wrote an

extensive amount of commentaries some of

which are now only available in Latin

and extinct in Arabic well I've never been particularly interested in Islamic philosophy I've read a few biographies of Muhammad including what's her name Karen Armstrong's biography of Muhammad I've read an English translation of the Quran um I wanted to read like The Penguin version and like an old penguin translation that had it in chronological order like the the order that Scholars assume Muhammad actually um produced these suras but um by the time I ordered the penguin edition of the Quran um they had gone back to just the traditional ordering so as not to offend anybody I guess so I've read a little bit

about uh

Islam but I mean I'm I'm not

particularly interested in it

so yeah so I mean I I've read the Quran

I've read biographies of Muhammad I've

read some stuff about you know the early

years of Islam and so forth but um I've

never really had any great interest in

it um even

Sufism I think he he mentioned Sufism a

little later but um in a different

question but uh Sufism is was partly

inspired by

Buddhism and uh even even so I still not

particularly interested in uh Sufism it

just it just seems like it's got too

much baggage or too much sort of
Deadwood in a way stuff that really um
sort of gets in the way of spirituality
I I assume there have been some very
profoundly wise Muslim philosophers but
um I don't know I just I just have never
really resonated with that or been much
interested in that and uh most Islam
does not strike me as particularly
wise so I guess I'll just move on to
taz's next question here do you
personally find Aristotle or Plato more
insightful and meaningful even though
Sufi thought is neoplatonist a lot of
Arabic thinkers have preferred Aristotle
and even went as far as to almost
disregard Plato labeling him as merely

Bell letters I don't know how to

pronounce that word I wouldn't I would

have written more but I understand this

message is already huge as is have a

nice day P basa and anyone listening

well thank you

toin and I again I do apologize for the

fact that your name reminds me of Dr

Seuss but uh the question here do I

personally find Aristotle or Plato more

insightful and meaningful really neither

I have never been impressed by either

Plato or Aristotle there's a saying that

everyone whether they realize it or not

is a disciple of Plato or Aristotle but

really I'm I have little use if any use

for either like Plato I got no use for
the idea of universals you know Plato
had this idea that like a dog has this
inherent dogness and up in this up in
Plato's Heaven there's like the ideal
dog that you know all dogs partake of
this essence of pure perfect dogness up
in heaven and I mean that's just I I
just cannot buy that but Aristotle I
mean I think Aristotle um he made a more
important contribution to western
culture than Plato did Plato to some
degree I mean he helped bring about
Christianity since um early Christianity
was profoundly influenced by
platonism and some of the earliest um
Christian Mystics for example were

neoplatonists who converted to
Christianity like the pseudo dianus who
probably had little choice but to
convert to Christianity because back in
those days if you didn't convert to
Christianity you were pretty much a a
criminal
so let's see Sufi thought his
neoplatonist yeah it was strongly
influenced by Buddhism and to some
degree Hinduism also but I'm not exactly
sure of the history like the early
history of Sufism exactly where it arose
but there are definitely some uh
buddhistic elements in it but
um yeah I mean if I had to pick one or

the other that'd be a tough choice I
mean Aristotle I mean at least he came
up with logic he had he had some
profound like political thought I mean
Plato's Republic I mean that's just I
mean that's just
fascism but
um Aristotle yeah I think Aristotle may
have been more useful as a philosopher
I'm not exactly sure what Plato
contributed other than just messing up
subsequent philosophers like
schopenhauer I think the weakest aspect
of schopenhauer's philosophy is what he
gets from Plato like he schopenhauer
believed in universals for
example

so yeah I mean Aristotle just completely bungled stuff like astronomy he just didn't understand astronomy or much of physics at all you me he tried but he just didn't get it but in a way he sort of set the groundwork for subsequent like uh scientific um endeavors and so forth and uh yeah I mean Plato gave rise to neoplatonism I mean indirectly I I really not so sure that Plato himself was as profound a thinker as someone like
plotinus but at least he indirectly um led to like a profound
mystical like uh tradition in Western culture up until the intolerant hysteria

of early Christianity just drove it into
Extinction well after like cannibalizing
parts of
it so yeah I'm not sure I mean I really
don't particularly like Aristotle or
Plato but I think I would find more of
use in Aristotle like his discussion of
you know like politics for example and
just his his coming up with formal logic
I mean that was that was very valuable
so I think Aristotle would take the
prize of most important with regard to
benefit to Western Society just just
from coming up with formal
logic but uh Plato definitely has had a
it's hard to say who has had a stronger
influence on the west just because of

Plato's profound influence on early

Christianity and and just the New

Testament so and even uh even like some

a lot of Jewish thought I mean the early

Christians were Jews who were neop or

platonists of some

sort platinized

Jews so I guess I'll just move on to

next question

here and this is from the arus swasti

project and the ARA swasti project says

if someone claims to be enlightened how

can that be verified by others unless

they are enlightened too also is

conventional truth necessary to consider

on the path to Enlightenment and if not

why is it not important so this is this
is a second question I got to separate
these questions all right first question
if someone claims to be enlightened how
can that be verified by others unless
they are enlightened too I mean you
can't verify you can't know for sure and
like I was saying I've said it many
times full Enlightenment may not even
really mean anything valid in a ssar
context that within a ssar context there
are no enlightened
beings and uh it may be that whether
somebody else is enlightened depends on
how enlightened you are that within your
own like your own view they're not going
to be any wiser than you are necessarily

because you can't imagine anything wiser than you in a sense I mean you can think someone's wiser than you you know they can behave much more calmly and and you know they may they may seem to make wrong choices less than you they may be happier than you but still you can't really understand what's going on in the mind of someone who is wiser than you or more advanced than you are because you're limited by your own limitations of

advancement and it's like hang says in the platform Sutra of H I mean when you become enlightened you look around you realize everyone else is enlightened too

whereas if you're a fool you look around
you're just going to see
fools so there is that but with regard
to how can you at least hope to get some
handle on like someone's claiming to be
enlightened I mean how can you do
something at least to like verify that
to some degree I mean there are ways
especially like I'm reminded of
something that St Francis of aisi said
and that is you don't really know
somebody until you see them when
everything goes wrong you know when
people that are supposed to be on their
side suddenly turn against them what do
they do and if if they like they seem to
be calm and and like well balanced and

everything when everything is going good
but then if something bad happens they
just freak out or go into a rage or
something then you know you know they
still got issues they have they're not
they're not really all that wise yet
because even like the most vicious dog
in the world it can seem completely calm
when it's just lying on the grass
looking at balls or whatever you know it
can just seem completely calm you know
but really it's got its vicious streak
it's got its vicious anuus its
underlying
Tendencies and uh so so I mean like a
con man can can appear to be really wise

I assume a lot of cult leaders pass
themselves off as enlightened beings
when really they're just Rascals who are
good at passing themselves off as as
enlightened beings I think one danger
sign is people who brag about how
enlightened they are I could name a few
names but those of you who watch these
videos probably could name a few names
also just people who just brag about how
enlightened they are um that's one
reason why I am skeptical of the sutas
in which the Buddha is bragging about
how enlightened he is because I just do
not think that an enlightened being is
going to be boastful that he's going to
be like a narcissist or an egomaniac and

just

brag so I mean there is that but really

I think what St Francis of bisi said is

you you don't really know somebody until

you see them when the is hitting

the fan everything's going wrong when

everything that's supposed to be going

right suddenly just goes south you know

that then you get a better idea as to

how really wise another person is but

for the most part you you can't be sure

you can't really know how wise another

person is you can get some you mean you

can kind of hypothesize you know you can

make educated guesses but it's really

hard to

say so I guess I'll just move on to the
second part of the ARA swasi projects
question here also is conventional truth
necessary to consider on the path to
Enlightenment and if not why it not
important um yeah I mean it's
like just because a person knows
Ultimate Reality doesn't mean that
they're going to know all the you know
like quantum theory and how to speak Han
Chinese and how many hairs everybody has
on their head you know they're not going
to be omniscient in a samsaric sense you
know there's still going to be human
beings in the samsaric
sense so conventional truth I mean one
of the most important things to to like

logic and rational thought is as a

detector you're never going to

arrive at ultimate truth through logic

or rationality but you can shoot down a

lot of just absurd theories you

know at least it can help you to weed

out the

and that's really about the

best thing that it's good for other than

just navigating s sorry I mean you've

got tax forms to fill out you got

something that you got to assemble

following instructions then it helps to

be have some rational thinking but uh

with regard to

Enlightenment the best use of just

worldly knowledge is skepticism and just

being able to detect faulty arguments

and just

arguments

so let's see I want to make sure that I

answer this question more or less

adequately is conventional truth

necessary to consider on the path to

Enlightenment certain conventional

truths are necessary especially at first

just like right view which is you know

if you do good Good's going to come back

if you do bad bad's going to come back

you know what goes around comes around

you know there is karma

that there is a certain basis to

morality there's a certain Basics like

that that are going to be skillful means
that are going to help like point you
and move you in the right
direction it's it's the raft made of
rubbish and then once you cross the
flood you don't need that raft anymore
and you can just cut it
loose but certain amount of conventional
truth is necessary just to help guide
you on the path to Enlightenment even
though um you know ultimately it's it's
a a raft made of rubbish that you you're
not going to need after you become LED
unless you got still got tax forms to
fill out or
something so I hope that answered the

question so I'm going to move on to the next one which is from the anti-marxist league and the anti-marxist league says on the subject of eclecticism wouldn't it be better to keep things as Bare Bones as possible the more one adds to their eclectic views the more views one has this approach seems like the opposite of the teaching in the ATA waga the same of course could be said for adopting every aspect of a single tradition I'm not condemning either approach but it seems like one should keep things keep such things to a minimum and yeah I mean eclecticism can be good or bad just as just being single-mindedly dedicated to one

tradition and not having any interest in other Traditions that also can be good or bad um one of the advantages of eclecticism is that uh I mean you become bahut and and even the Buddha in the text says you should be familiar with other points of view you know you should be familiar with a broad spectrum of of attitudes and points of view just so I mean somebody who's born and raised into a tradition and they don't want to know anything about other Traditions that's all wrong view you know it's like a Jehovah's Witness here her always trying to hand out you know like pamphlets or literature of their own system but you

try to hand them like a Buddhist
pamphlet here take a look at this
they'll just recoil as as though you're
trying to hand them a snake and that
helps to guarantee that they're going to
be locked into this very limited point
of view So to that extent eclecticism is
definitely to one's
Advantage um but still what the
anti-marxist league says is true that I
mean you don't want your mind just
cluttered up with all this information
when really all this worldly information
is not it's not the same as
Enlightenment and if you want to
understand ultimate truth go along with
what St John of the Cross says which is

in order to know all things seek to know
nothing which is I mean you're not going
to understand Ultimate Reality by
thinking about it so the eclecticism
again can be used as a kind of
detector and just you can help you to
triangulate like you've got a number of
wisdom Traditions like you take the
wisest
spiritual systems in
existence and what do they have in
common I mean that would
be um kind of a good hypothesis at least
kind of make it more likely that those
aspects are are more true and I'm going
to close the door because my sweetheart

just came

home

I like rolling in

chairs

so where was I

yeah yeah most people just cannot follow

the AA waga I mean AA waga says have no

view have no perceptions have no beliefs

and that's very

Advanced that's I mean only a fully

enlightened being can probably fully

manage

that

so yeah I mean it is good not to just

feel in your mind up with all this

information that you take seriously and

consider to be true and unless you have

the wisdom to know that it's just
provisionally
true gosh but yeah I mean eclecticism
has its Advantage especially for Western
people I mean most western people that
are spiritually inclined or
philosophically inclined they're just
not narrow-minded enough to just adopt
one system and just like be dedicated
only to that system and just ignore or
reject everything else that works for
people in pre-modern societies it works
for people in like Buddhist Burma for
example um but for a westner like me it
just it just wouldn't work I mean I want
to know what old traditions say and so I

at least don't know what I'm rejecting

you know you even if you're not a

Christian it's it's useful to read the

Bible just so that you'll know what it

is that you rejecting by not being a

Christian so it's like why I read the

Quran for

example so yeah it can go both ways I

mean it depends on whether you you

manage it skillfully or not you know

it's not just the outward action that uh

determines whether an action is skillful

or unskillful is the accompanying mental

States and you can two people can do

exactly the same thing one's got

wholesome mental States the other one's

got UNH wholesome mental

States so

yeah it's just whatever works best for

you whatever is most successful in

causing you to be detached and Serene

and like clear

minded so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Tim the

enchanter and Tim the enchanter says

let's say there is no such thing as

Enlightenment what would you guess those

experiences were then of the budha and

the like delusion hallucinations brain

malfunction from chronic sleep and food

deprivation

the question is just hypothetical well

if there's no such thing as

Enlightenment then somebody like goab
Buddha he was his experiences were as
close as you're going to get to
Enlightenment which is probably not what
Tim the enchanter was thinking but that
I think that's essentially it it's like
even if there is no perfection in this
imperfect world that still some people
are closer to the ideal of perfection
than others
and the ones that are considered to be
enlightened are the people who are
closest to that
or yeah I guess there wouldn't be an War
because there is no
Enlightenment
so that that would that would be my

answer to that because I really find it
difficult to believe that I mean there's
there's no such thing as
wisdom or or like
Insight yeah I mean there there
obviously is is and so you just say well
I mean people that are considered to be
enlightened or declared to be
enlightened are people who have gotten
farther along the Route towards
perfection even though Perfection may
not be attainable in this in this life
like Christianity most Christians will
say or at least most knowledgeable
Christians will say that you cannot
become perfect in this world you cannot

become totally perfect ever because the

the highest thing you can hope for is

the beatific Vision you never merge with

God you just are able to get close to

God maybe see God in

heaven and that's that's

it so but still just because they say

you can't attain Perfection it doesn't

mean that you know everybody's just

hopeless you know there there some

people are better off than

others so I don't know if I answer that

one so I'm just is going to answer Tim

the enchanter's next question or at

least attempt oh this is a fairly easy

one so I I'll answer this one for sure

and his question is have you ever had

muscle spasms from the lack of magnesium
and pottassium living largely on rice in
Burma and doing walking meditation and
sweating a lot no the only time I ever
got cramps I never had muscle spasms
where it's like other than cramps
I mean there had been times when I was
meditating when I'd be like jerking and
twitching but that would be like PT
which is something entirely different
from what he's talking about here but
the only time I ever had cramps partly
sometimes you just sit wrong you know
you get like a leg cramp or something
but mostly it would be um if I went up
into the hills during the cold season

and just the cold weather would cause me
to get leg cramps but I never really had
like um like cramps or muscle SP spasms
from lack of electrolytes until I came
to here to South Carolina and started
working in like 90°
warehouses and um then I would get weird
cramps and stuff sometimes I still do
just I mean not now because the
weather's cooling down but when the
weather is hot I think there might be
electrolyte loss involved in uh just
getting weird cramps like during hot
weather so I guess I answered that
question so I'll just move on to Tim the
enchanter's next question which is what
would you say evil is who would the true

evil person be assuming we do not have a
lot of free will well I I like
schopenhauer's take on evil where
schopenhauer was saying that like a
completely ruthless Cutthroat kind of
person like some business executive
who's willing to just walk over the
backs of anyone who gets in his way
that he's not really evil I mean he's
ruthless and selfish and foolish but
he's not flat out evil that according to
schopenhauer evil comes from
enjoying other people's
suffering that you enjoy hurting others
so somebody like tiberious Caesar or
chairman Mau who allegedly enjoyed

watching people getting tortured to
death that would be evil especially if
they're the on who ordered the person to
be tortured in the first
place so yeah someone who enjoys hurting
others who like derives pleasure from
some perverted kind of inferior pleasure
from um The Suffering of others I think
that would be what evil would be just
taking people as far away from from
happiness as they can and just enjoying
that
so yeah so I'll just move on next
question here and this this person has
the interesting name of MinGa which is a
kind of Burmese noodle soup that's
really good that's I kind of almost Miss

MinGa uh so I assume this person is
either Burmese or they've spent time in
Burma or at least been exposed to
Burmese culture in order to know what
MinGa is but if you ever go to Burma try
the MinGa it's good
anyways MinGa says long videos covering
many subjects would really appreciate
timestamps any of your subscribers
willing to make them sometimes people on
YouTube make timestamps but MinGa was
watching me on bitshoot and thus far I
don't have enough viewers on bitshoot
for any of them to be inspired to do
timestamps so uh sometimes on the
YouTube videos somebody will come in and

do time stamps but uh not every time so

I guess the best you can do is you just

go through the questions um I always

have the questions include section below

the video and uh you can just sort of

estimate how far through the video the

question is

and unless you want to make timestamps

if MinGa wants to make time stamps

that's fine too so I'll just move on to

the next question this is from Don or

Don like like the Spanish

Dome I'm not sure which and this also is

the very last question so this is the

last question of the show and Don or Don

says Dear poob basa how does one square

the circle of the teaching of no soul

and the hundreds or thousands of
near-death experiences are near-death
experience testimonies that say I found
myself floating above my body but it was
still me and then they go on in Spirit
to have various Heavenly or hellish
experiences and also including the whole
concept of astral projection does this
not refute the concept of anata what are
your thoughts well anata is not really
no soul it is no self at all so
according to the doctrine of
anata I don't exist even now it's not
saying it's not just saying uh oh the
battery's running de just a
second I forgot to plug the computer in

again I do that so many

times just second here all

right okay so I mean anat doesn't

literally mean no soul it means no self

so even I as a person regardless of

whether I have an eternal soul I don't

exist in reality I don't have an

inherent self essence and if you can if

you can believe that you exist as an

individual um like in a in the meat the

meat puppet or whatever then I mean the

the being that's floating above you know

the the accident victim or the drowning

the near drowning victim or whatever and

is going up towards the light and

meeting with the spirit guide in this

Heaven realm I mean you can be just as

as deluded with regard to that so just
because you do astral traveling that is
not proof that you have a self because
even you sitting there in your own body
doesn't prove that you have a self that
you have an individual mind or at least
you think you have an individual mind
you still don't have a self mean you do
not have a distinct ultimately real
individuality that
ultimately that difference is papancha
it's just a kind of delusion separating
the world up into this this and that
it's all part of of delusion
essentially so it's like you've got this
infinite

possibilities in in SAR let's say
infinite possibilities and some of those
possibilities are just like an aspect of
Consciousness BEC so convoluted and
reflexive that it starts thinking that
it's separate from everything else but
it's not and that's where the delusion
of self comes from and the the delusion
of soul that you've got an individual
Eternal Soul is just like a higher it's
like a projection from the idea that
you're having a distinct individual
existence now even just in a in a meat
body but you don't I mean at least not
according to Buddhist
philosophy although there are some
Buddhists especially Western ones who

just vehemently vehemently sometimes

angrily insist that they have an

internal soul but I mean I think they're

they're just missing the whole idea that

I mean the whole idea is that there is

no ultimately real self Essence to

anything that that everything is just

conditional that you're as much a

product of the surrounding context as

anything

else that I mean it's like your essence

is no different from the essence of

anything else

really so that's that's what an is about

and uh like near-death experiences and

and astral traveling and so forth

doesn't change that anymore than

everybody apparently having their own

distinct individual meat and body and

their own mind that is oblivious to the

minds of others around them it's

apparently closed off

self-contained

and individually distinct But ultimately

that is all

illusion so I hope I answered that and

that's it I'm done I'm done answering

for for this evening or whatever time of

day you happen to watch

this and if you have any questions

you're very welcome to ask them I cannot

absolutely guarantee that I'll be able

to answer them and if you send me links

to articles or YouTube videos or

somewhat some such

I do not absolutely guarantee that I'll

take the trouble of watching them

because I get so many anyway and other

reasons I guess but if you have

questions about Buddhism philosophy

meditation monasticism me personally

whatever feel free to include them in

the comments below and check out the URL

links I think my archaic neap punch. org

website is now defunct but it's going to

be improved and uh renewed eventually

preferably probably within the next few

months and uh be

happy

hello and welcome to episode 66 of question and answer I am your host poo bosel and this will very likely be the last episode that I do in this room I mean I used to be facing that way and then you'd look this way and now I'm facing this way and you're looking this way but it been the same room for over a year but this is probably last episode because we are moving to a different house that has a different room in it and this is my beverage and we've got the more or less usual amount of good questions and so I'm going to commence to answering these questions I'm fixing to start commencing

at any

rate excuse me and the first question is

from dawn or D because the the the

second name after that looks like it

could be Spanish so it could be dum but

anyways Don or Don says you mentioned

old monks going scile I'm surprised by

this would not a lifetime of meditation

and training the mind to be the absolute

best preventative medicine against

senility and this is kind of a an

innocent naive kind of question because

most monks do not dedicate their life to

meditation and training the mind like in

Burma most monks are either just

easygoing Village priests or else they

are scholar monks there really aren't a

lot of monks who are just dedicated to
actually following the sutas and
vinia so I mean there is that it's most
of them they don't meditate much at all
or a lot of burm or Asian monks don't
meditate very
much so it's kind of a I don't know I
mean it wouldn't prevent someone from
going seile if they just don't meditate
they just read lots of
scriptures do a lot of chanting that
kind of a thing but also I think to some
degree from a Buddhist point of view
senility is uh I mean it could be like a
karmic thing or just going with modern
science it could be largely genetic or

you know they just got too many vaccines
or or shots of this or that nature that
messed up their system somehow or they
just got their their brain cooked by
malaria one too many times who knows so
yes there are plenty of scile old Asian
monks so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Zeno
demon I think I think that's it Zeno
demon and Zeno demon says what kind of
question would you recommend for someone
that wants to ask a question but doesn't
know what to ask so that's I mean that's
like the question that's the mother of
all questions isn't
it and it's it's kind of a good question
because I mean I have had people come to

me before like even like when I was a
monk and they say I don't even know what
to ask
but uh I mean just like what is the
essence of dhama or what is the essence
of Buddhism I mean if if you want to ask
questions about Buddhism or even like
who was the Buddha I mean that would be
like a good beginning level you know
just you know this foundational kind of
question and you could build from there
I
suppose so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from
yugao and yugao says in in the Samu Kaya
there is a suta on how should mendicant

experience five scas with their
Consciousness now fifth scanda being
Consciousness also are these two types
of it and I'm really not sure of what
what suta in particular yugao is
referring to it really does not spring
to mind but so he says how a mendicant
should experience the five condas in
poly it's condas not scas sconda being
the the Sanskrit equivalent with their
Consciousness experienced five scas with
their Consciousness now the Fifth's gone
to being Consciousness also it could
just be bad logic or bad system I mean
there's a lot of that in the
texts that I mean it's just not a very
they're not very good at being

systematic even though they try really
hard like in Abid dama and the
commentaries they're just trying to just
go full blast systematic and still it
doesn't work out very well just like the
five condas according to tr like
Orthodox
tradition you've got pretty sure it's 52
mental States in according to Abid dama
there's 52 different ultimately real
discreet mental States
and um let's see let's see what is it
way ionda is one of those mental States
it's feeling feeling is one of these 52
ultimately real mental States and sonaka
is perception which is another one of

these and that

um H

saraka is the remaining

50 and I mean it's not very systematic

is it you just single out two from this

group of 52 and then the whole remaining

50 are just lumped in to to another

condom it's just not very systematic and

if you read the text you're going to see

this it's

premodern attempts at logic and and just

being systematic and as I've said before

formal logic really hadn't reached India

at the time that the polych were

composed you know there was sort of a

protol logic you know as it wasn't fully

formed yet and so you get a lot of

attempts at being completely just
rational objective and logical and
systematic and it doesn't always work so
my guess would be that this example that
yugao here is bringing up would be one
of those because I'm not sure how you
could experience the five condas with
their Consciousness which includes
Consciousness itself unless I mean
that's
just the I mean the five condas with
with conscious with with Consciousness I
mean that would that would make sense
because you got five cond as one of them
being consciousness but I'm really not
sure what the exact words are of the

suta I'm not sure exactly what suta he's

referring to

so

um yeah so I maybe it's just bad

reasoning or maybe either Yuga or I just

doesn't quite understand what's being

said in the text I certainly don't

because I don't even know what text he's

referring to so with all due respects to

yugu maybe he could clarify a little and

maybe I could uh make a better stab at

it I'll just move on to a white ash

Piper and white ash Piper asked me to

ask Otto what tobacco he likes because

it turns out that white ash Piper is

referring to a guy who smokes a white

ash pipe apparently maybe White Ash is a

kind of wood his pipe is made out of
white ash I all this time I was thinking
that he like played the Pan Flute or
something but he didn't he
doesn't so I asked Otto Just today what
tobacco he likes and he says he smoke he
mostly smokes M I got it written down
here M Baron's HH old dark fired ready
rubbed pipe tobacco often but not always
with a pinch of laka Andor Peri to add
flavor and it just turns out here on my
phone I've looked up the uh the link
that he uh he provided Auto did and it's
right here the HH old dark fired you
know and love from M Baron in a more
convenient ready rubbed form bold flakes

of dark fired burleys balanced with flu cured virginas have been broken up into fine ribbons since this tobacco was hot pressed into flakes before being rubbed out the robust earthy flavor of the dark fired Kentucky still shines through in the taste promising a deeply satisfying smoke indeed

H hope that doesn't qualify as like a commercial but Auto also likes gawi with Hogarth and Company's dark Bird's eyee pipe tobacco sometimes it's more of a summer smoke and a shag

cut so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from trust wet farts and Trust wet farts he brings up an issue that is brought up quite a lot

actually by Western Buddhists or Western

people who are interest interested in

Buddhism and that is he

says isn't there very bad karma for

eating meat or having milk milk is worse

Karma than meat for many reasons other

than it is full of blood and pus and

makes me congested and sick and as it

turns out I'm drinking milk right

now I don't detect any blood or pus at

all in

this which is good

so

anyway um yeah and like I point out the

Buddha himself ate meat Jesus of

Nazareth ate meat you know the Disciples

of the Buddha ate meat they they weren't
required to like there is the story
David dat who is like the Buddhist Judas
es scariot who's trying to take over the
songa and one thing he does is he's he's
he tries to form lasa by making it
stricter because the Buddhist monks even
though they might be outrageously strict
by modern Western standards in Ancient
India they were seen pretty much as
Slackers you know they could wear shoes
if they wanted to they could use a
sunshade they could use a walking stick
which caused a lot of the really strict
just extremely aesthetic type of
Aesthetics in the Buddhist time like The
Janes and the aicas to consider the

monks just to be shaving even headed

householders she even headed

Layman but uh anyway David data tried to

make it mandatory to be vegetarian and

the Buddha said no if you want to be

vegetarian you can it's not

required and uh even the Mahayana texts

if if they bother to read their text

they would

see that in the mahayan vinas and

there's several of them there is in the

ptim rules or in Sanskrit the pratim

Moka

rules rules saying that for example a

monk is not allowed to ask for good or

dainty food which includes meat and

dairy products meat fish milk curd that sort of thing unless he is sick or has been given prior permission to ask so the implication clearly is that monks were allowed to eat meat Buddhists were allowed to eat meat you just weren't allowed to kill it yourself or monks weren't allowed to eat monk that they eat eat meat that they knew was killed for their sake or even if they suspected that it was killed for their sake still they shouldn't eat it but if it's just leftovers or whatever or I mean the deed is already done it's already dead no problem also with regard to dairy products there is at least one sua where the bu the Buddha is praising cows I

think he is uh he's like talking against animal sacrifice and and apparently in his time the usual animal that was sacrificed was a cow or cattle some sort and he's saying you know they're such benefactors not only do they do they give us the benefits of their labor when they're pulling plows or carts or that sort of thing but also they provide us with dairy products so I mean it is true you have to take the the calf away from its mama in order to get more milk out of it that sort of thing but um really you got to use insect decides even to to grow plants it's just killing is unavoidable and so at least you want to

not be like directly instigating

it but no it is not very bad karma for

eating meat or consuming dairy products

it's just Rupa it's just matter you're

eating it as food you don't have any bad

intentions because karma is in ttention

karma is your mental state not what

you're actually doing and a lot of

people a lot of Buddhists even really do

not understand this fundamental

principle of Buddhist philosophy or

Buddhist ethics and that is that whether

something is good or bad karma depends

on your mental States not on the action

that you are

performing so two people can do exactly

the same thing one person is getting

good karma for it another person's
getting bad karma for it and like some
Western person with a utilitarian ethic
who's thinking oh this is bad for me to
do this like eating meat or drinking
milk or whatever oh I'm a bad person for
doing this and then they're eating it or
drinking it then they're getting bad
karma because of the mental States not
because of the eating meat or the
drinking milk so you got to be careful
about that sort of thing thoughts are
much more powerful than most people
realize so I'll just move on to trust
wet farts say next question here which
is sort of a followup it was sort of a

long kind of a discourse going on but
there's another question in that which
is is it possible that even Saints or
Buddhas make mistakes and he's implying
here that maybe the Buddha was mistaken
in not forbidding the eating of
meat and it is true that Saints or
Buddhas can make mistakes for example
there's one case in the rules of
monastic discipline that I have brought
up more than once to other monks in
Burma because it's it's a good
indication that the bu Buddha wasn't as
omniscient as devout Asian Buddhists
would like to believe where he just knew
everything or at least everything that
he wanted to

know there is u a story in the rules of
Manas discipline about how monks were
getting sick in the afternoon or they
were they were sick and they couldn't
eat or drink anything in the afternoon
because monks are restricted to only eat
in the morning and so so the Buddha made
it allowable for them to eat medicinal
substances there the five tonics which
are let's see if I can remember this
let's see there's butter there's ghee
there's honey molasses and oil like
usually sesame oil that was like the
Standard Oil of ancient India at the
time at least in Northern
India so butter

ghee honey molasses which would include

like sugar or palm sugar

and mostly vegetable oil although you

can have like lard or like some kind of

animal fat also that's allowable

although dolphin fat is

forbidden so no wait I think dolphin fat

might actually be allowed but I think it

might be like a felony in in the United

States to uh consume marine

mammals but then again the gtic dolphin

was not Marine it lived in a river so we

we just just set that aside and uh oh

yeah making mistakes so the Buddha

allowed monks

oh no I'm I'm just confused I'm telling

you a bad story this is a wrong story he

allowed monks to do something oh they
they were allowed to take the medicinal
substances that I just named but only in
the morning and according to the text it
made the monks even sicker so then he
said all right you can take the
medicines in the afternoon also and then
they got better but it seems as though
the Buddha made a mistake because you
know he he made this allowance or this
kind of a decree you know this Rule and
it just made them sicker instead of
helping them get better which would seem
to be a mistake wouldn't
it so it is possible for Saints or
Buddhist to make mistakes but that's

with regard to like worldly stuff like
with regard to what medicine to take
maybe you know with regard to like
Advanced mathematic problems I'm sure
they could get they could calculate
something in their head wrong you know
there's certain I mean they're not
absolutely omniscient but with regard to
simple ethics on how to you know how to
become enlightened how to make spiritual
progress you I think they can be trusted
to know right from
wrong so the Buddha can make mistakes or
Saints can make mistakes but generally
with regard to knowing right from wrong
I think they're reliable with regard to
other things medicine mathematics that

kind of thing they might make

mistakes but with regard to just knowing

right from wrong I think they can be

trusted so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from Joe do and I

do apologize for getting my my story

there kind of

confused next question from Joe do how

much water do you drink a

day well sometimes I don't drink any

water at least not in its pure form I do

like to do lute my water down with

flavorings and so

forth but it depends on how hot it is if

it's I'm living in South Carolina you

know the Deep South it gets really hot

in the summertime with high humidity and
I'm sweating like the proverbial
aab and so I could drink a gallon a day
easy but during the winter time when I'm
not sweating so much I don't need to
drink as much and I might drink you know
at least a quart I do drink a lot my my
system requires a lot of FL fluids just
to uh keep things regular so to
speak but there were times in Burma I
could drink three gallons a day and
still be dehydrated you know it's just
just pouring with sweat it was so hot so
I mean it depends on the weather but um
I remember reading in a an old army
survival manual I used to read survival
manuals when I was was I was a younger

man and it was saying you should always drink enough that your urine is colorless you know if it looks yellow you should drink more because it's just good for your health good for your system to drink a lot of water and in a really hot climate you can start getting like kidney stones or or something if if you're always got like this concentrated um urine in your bladder

so but while I'm on the subject of U Army survival manuals I think that same manual had it was just classic it was how to kill a beaver with your bare hands you know in order to eat it

because you're surviving you're out
there in the Wilds of of Russia probably
somewhere in Europe anyway surviving and
so what you do I mean I'm not
recommending that anyone actually do
this but what you do is you kick a hole
in the Beaver Dam and then you stand
over the hole and when the beaver comes
to fix the dam you grab it by the tail
and you jump up on land and you start
swinging around a circle and as soon as
it starts to relax you bash it against a
tree and actually in Army surv United
States Army survival manuals it actually
gave those instructions on how to kill a
beaver with your bare hands although
you're probably better off using a knife

or

something but again I'm not s I'm not

recommending that anybody kill large

aquatic

rodents so I'll just move on to the next

question here also from from Jo do and

this is uh really taking aack from uh

how much water I drink this is uh this

is going a very different direction and

that is if you could ask one question to

the Buddha what would you ask that's a

good question and I think if I were

confronted with the Buddha the one

question I would have to ask is what

should I

do I think that would probably be the

best question to ask I I read in ajn
mun's biography how ajn mun actually met
with the Buddha because he was meeting
with Buddhas like not just Goa Buddha he
was meeting with all kinds of
Buddhas and um he asked go him a Buddha
he he asked he could asked one question
and the question he asked was about what
is the proper color for Monk's
robes well he didn't have to ask what
should he do I guess because he was
enlightened already or some
such but yeah I think what should I do
that was that would be the best question
I could ask so I'll just move to the
next question here this is from the
overg

giver and The overg Giver

says what are your thoughts on religious

debates and have you been interested in

participating in them to defend the

dhama from otherw World Views or

Traditions like Christian Islamic or

Hindu

well in the AA waga

there is a suta the pasura suta that is

really I mean it very strongly advises

monks not to engage in debates you know

you're supposed to have no view no

position so what's the point of debating

it just causes antagonism conflict it

you know it just makes problems it's

it's just not really a dharmic path but

I'm not entirely dharmic I suppose in
that I do engage in debates like in
comment sections like like bright Bart
comments I was Eng engaged in a long
debate in in Breitbart just over
Evolution you know it wasn't really
wasn't really a religious debate
although sometimes people will just tell
me you know that because I'm a Buddhist
I'm a a demon worshipper or something
and then I'll have to set them straight
on that but um let's
see my thoughts on religious debates is
I mean Technic speaking they are
discouraged in the Buddhist texts but it
is kind of enjoyable it's kind of
invigorating you know and also one of

the reasons why Indian philosophy became
as strong and as subtle and profound as
it was is because the different sects
the different schools the different
religions were actually debating with
each other it was just a tradition in
Ancient India that you would have
religious debates and it would
strengthen the positions you know if
you're position is too weak to stand up
to an allout attack I mean it's really
not worth keeping and so you fortify
your position by you know even borrowing
ideas from the other side if
necessary so I mean it's not all bad and
I do I I am relatively good at debating

I

think so um there was there's been a

couple people that tried to get me on a

YouTube channel called modern day debate

and one time one of the organizers

actually contacted me and he wanted me

to participate in a debate but he wanted

me to argue for the existence of a soul

which was like the exact opposite of the

Buddhist position and so I told him I

mean yeah I could argue against that but

then again you got so many materialistic

atheists arguing against the soul that

they don't need a a Buddhist to argue

against it and I think it would be too

obscure for two Buddhists to debate on

whether the Buddha taught an eternal

Soul or not that would be a good debate
and I um I have kind of put it out there
that I would be willing to engage in a
debate over whether in Buddhism there is
an eternal Soul or not because there are
a lot of Buddhists especially Western
ones I never met an Asian Buddhist who
endorsed this so although I assume
they're out there but some Western
Buddhists just vly sometimes angrily
insist that the Buddha taught an eternal
soul and the evidence for that in the
text is practically
nil at least in the terraa Buddhist text
the oldest Buddhist text but then again
they'll say no Mah Buddha taught

Mahayana and then it was you know it was
hidden because it was too advanced for
hundreds of years and etc etc so let's
try and get back to the question here
because I've almost forgotten it myself
oh yeah what are your thoughts on
religious debates and have you been
interested in participating in them I
would be willing
if it were like a a relatively if not a
friendly debate at least like a a polite
one you know a civil debate yeah I mean
I'd do that I think I'd be good at it
too but I
mean yeah I think the the main one would
be like debating with a Buddhist who
actually believes that Buddhism teaches

that there's an eternal soul that would be a that would be a hot one there would be sparks flying Maybe on that one but uh yeah I could debate with a Christian I wouldn't want to debate with a Muslim so much because you know you don't know what the consequences of that'll be Hindus yeah I mean if if anyone wants to set me up with a worthy adversary then we can put it on the on the channel I can uh I can do a debate so I think up for now though I'll just move on to the next question here and this one's from Fred and I have to admit I don't fully understand on this question Fred says if you boil

everything down to face the nimita
screen what else could there
be and I'm not sure what he means by
boiling everything down to face the Nita
screen um boiling I I assume he's
meaning meaning that if you just stop
creating nitas which are Nita literally
means a sign and it's essentially a
synonym for perception unless he's
talking about meditation there's also a
nimita in meditation which is
symptomatic of access
concentration um which is like right
before first Jan you're supposed to
enter into this access concentration in
which you will see a nimita which is
usually just like a a white or light

gray kind of circle or oval although sometimes you can see the Buddha sitting in meditation or some such that's also a nimita um it's not discussed in the text in fact that the texts say like the ancient polyas say you should be striving for animita which is no the signless the signless concentration I mean you should not be cooking up perceptions and and stuff to focus on you you should be eliminating mental States until you get down to just bare Consciousness although the texts don't use that terminology exactly so I mean if you boil everything down to face the nimita screen which I assume

means you just stop thinking or you just
eliminate perceptions from your mind
what else could there
be um then that that reminds me of St
John on the cross and his dark Faith
where he's saying that you know um I
mean he would have made a great Buddhist
really he would have St John of the
Cross he was a father Confessor to a
bunch of contemplatives and so he was
essentially doing meditation
interviews and he was he would give them
the instructions that whatever is not
God just dismiss it from your mind so
you cannot understand God intellectually
the intellect is out you cannot
understand God emotionally the emotions

are out you cannot sense the presence of
God with your five senses sensory data
is out I mean you just get rid of
essentially all mental States and then
he says that it's not just empty there's
still something there and that's
something there is like the all
pervasive spirit of
God and a Buddhist of course wouldn't
use that
terminology but uh I mean you you get
down to like Ultimate Reality or as
close to Ultimate Reality as you can get
just just bare formless undifferentiated
Consciousness or like J Krishna Mur he
says undifferentiated awareness although

um I think he might have used that in

somewhat different

context so considering that I don't

fully understand the

question um I think that might be a good

enough answer for now unless he can uh

clarify a little so I'll just move on to

Fred's next

question which is if you take a hard

look at the jump to nibbana how could it

not be nihilism if there is no sense

basis there is no experience at all

what's your

thoughts well again

um from a worldly point of view nibana

would be a kind of

annihilationism in a sense even though

an enlightened

being hasn't just poofed out of

existence he's still

there

so I guess you can just fall back on the

beginning of hegel's dialectic and his

logic where he starts off with pure

being that's the thesis the antithesis

is pure non-being and then be they they

cancel each other out because neither

one of them has any kind of discernable

content and so they just merge into one

there's no difference between pure being

pure

non-being and then you have to have as

the um synthesis you have to have

contrast you have to be able to contrast
being from non-being and then and then
you have like the 10,000 Things D teing
talks about you have the phenomenal
world so nothing is everything I mean
zero is infinity in a in a spiritual
sense a metaphysical sense if you
will so if you take a hard look at the
jump to nibana how could it not be nism
from a purely worldly point of view then
it could be ni it could be seen as
nihilism but it's more mysticism than
nihilism so but then again to a
completely worldly intellectual point of
view mysticism is just meaningless
[__] because they just don't get
it so you're going to have to experience

it for yourself and then then you'll
know I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Monsour
coolwhip and Monsour coolwhip says is
music fundamentally sensuality does this
apply to both consuming and producing
music which he means by playing music
can the discip can the discipline of
playing an instrument have similarities
to First jna for example NADA yoga in
the yoga tradition NADA yoga is the
process of uniting the individual mind
with Cosmic Consciousness through the
flow of sound if I am aspiring for
enlightenment should I give up all
engagement in music or is there a

possibility of skillful means wholesome distraction from defilements developed concentration at Etc I was surprised to find that biku bod plays the piano and I thought this was against the vinia or even a precepts yeah well um technically it is against vinia for a monk to even touch a musical instrument there's a list of things a monk isn't even allowed to touch that includes gold and silver or anything else considered to be money musical instruments weapons women the like the uh the ornaments or clothing of women

um raw

grain and uh probably a few more that I'm not thinking of right now um but

bbot is is not a strict practitioner

he's more of a a scholar than an actual

like a serious dedicated

practitioner as far as I can

tell so so much for biku body let's get

up to the top here is music

fundamentally ESS sensuality and from a

Buddhist point of view

which is pretty much an an or from a

terraa Buddhist point of view which is

essentially an ancient North Indian

Point of View yes music and sensuality

you shouldn't do it like if you you keep

eight precepts that includes playing

music monks aren't allowed to go listen

to music they're not allowed to make

effort to listen to music I mean if you
go to the grocery store and it's playing
some kind of you know music in then
that's fine I mean if you just happen to
go somewhere and music is playing it's
not against the rules you shouldn't go
there in order to listen to the
music
so like terab Buddhism is very
uncompromising and saying that music is
sensuality and if you're really serious
about becoming enlightened you shouldn't
do
it um but that is an ancient Indian take
and I
mean terab Buddhism does not have a
monopoly on

enlightenment so it could be that there
are other systems that are more musical
like Hinduism for example I mean it
might just be like repetitive chanting
with like a few instruments in the
background just
chanting um but even even in terava of
Buddhism it's against the rules even to
chant in a sing song voice I mean you're
just supposed to have like this like
conversational tone while you're you're
reciting texts so even that much music
is is technically forbidden in terab of
Buddhism oh there's a dog snoring behind
me I was wondering what that noise
was so let's see

here so if you really want to

incorporate music into a spiritual

practice and it can be a kind of

meditation even though it might not get

you into Janna just you know it's sort

of a and some people play the guitar as

a kind of meditation you know Qui Chan K

Kan played the flute in the old kung fu

Series so I don't think that it's evil I

don't think anyone's going to go to hell

necessarily for for playing music

although I'm sure quite a few rock stars

could manage it based on their lifestyle

more than just based on the sounds

coming out of their

instruments

um so yeah I mean it's a choice you have

to make I mean if you want to be a Buddhist and a musician you're gonna have to just accept that Terra Buddhism doesn't approve of it but then again Terra Buddhism really adopts this it just inherited this very strict anti-sensualism monic tradition of prehistoric India Northern India so yeah I mean you might want to consider Hinduism or I mean even even like some Mahayana Buddhists I mean they got some kind of music you know at least at like bod GAA you got like the there was some Mahayana Temple where they're just like Wang on this big drum all the time it was just

constant I think the Tibetan the Tibetan

Buddhists have at least some kind of

musical chanting that they do besides

the weird throat singing

stuff so yeah I mean biku body really is

not a good role model for how a Buddhist

should behave himself but

uh even so

technically according to terado Buddhism

You music is uh it's just wallowing in

sensuality so I think I think some early

Christians might have had a similar

approach so I'll just move on to next

question and this is from

Mambo and Mambo says is there no self if

there is no self and it's just five

Aggregates then how does it play out in

next birth since the five Aggregates
have changed well I mean the five
Aggregates are changing just constantly
every moment they're changing and really
what passes on the only thing that
passes on from One Life to the next
according to Orthodox Terra is your
karma which is volition it's it's saraka
it's just the it's like your Vol
volitional stream you know it's like
it's sort of like a river it's got this
momentum to it or like a flame or
something and when it dies out here it's
sort of like conservation of energy or
something it's just got to reappear
immediately somewhere else this this

same

momentum and it's just the momentum of

your your force of existence your stream

of

Consciousness and uh yeah it's always

changing it doesn't stay the same which

that's why there's no self or Eternal

Soul in Buddhism

because it's just changing like a flame

or a stream of water or

something so I think I'll just Mo move

on to Mambo's next question here did

Buddha really see his past lives or are

jota Tales just Moral Stories to guide

Society I just see I just feel a lot of

it is just belief of people with

pre-buddhist ideas in the S who attach

these ideas later on well I mean in the time there were there were definitely um religious sects that believed in rebirth I mean it was is still sort of an innovation in Hinduism and I'm not entirely sure that you know the Proto Hindus you know the the vadic brahmanist the

vadists that uh they really even a belief in rebirth had gone mainstream there yet I mean the the very early viic tradition there's I mean they don't talk about Karma and rebirth in the old like the rig Veda is I mean there might be some later stuff that was added but I mean what are agreed upon as the

earliest vadic texts there's there's no
mention of of rebirth it it it kind of
entered the stream of of Proto Hinduism
with the
upanishad but with regard to the first
part of this question did Buddha really
see his past lives or are jica Tales
just Moral Stories to guide Society
I would say both that the Buddha really
did see his past lives but the jota
tales are just completely different the
jota tales
are first of all they're relatively late
you know they didn't arise until after
the Buddhist Lifetime and a lot of them
are like standard Hindu folklore that
just got buddhis dized you know it's

like once upon a time you know when

bramadat was ruling in binaris that's

how a lot of them start

um you know it's sort of it's sort of

like asps fables a lot of them you know

like talking animals and so

forth and so the jica tales really don't

have much to do with whether the Buddha

really saw his past lives or

not wouldn't surprise me at all if the

Buddha really did see his past

lives but the jota

stories are essentially like the pet

Tantra or asap's fables or whatever that

are

just full stories that just had a little

Buddhism added at the beginning and a
little Buddhism added at the end you
know sort of a Buddhist moral and you
know it just became a kind of Buddhist
literature
so yeah I do rebirth is uh yeah I
whether the Buddha actually taught or
not I mean if he was just sticking
strictly to the OA waga version of early
Buddhism where he's just saying have no
beliefs no perceptions no view you know
no
position then you know he might not have
mentioned it and then just the the
pervasive belief of it in that culture
at least that subculture just you know
infiltrated or it could be that that the

Buddha really did talk about past lives
and I mean the sutas definitely support
that so I mean there's people
nowadays or you know modern times who
claim to remember their past lives my
father claimed to remember some of his
past
lives and he remembered a lot of it
relatively vividly especially one
lifetime where he was a Scotsman back in
like the late 1700s named Jason
hll so I me people like ROM Doss they
just say you know rebirth is is not a
theory I mean it's just a fact I mean he
had no doubt whatsoever and his teacher
maharaji nimoli B I mean you would just

talk about you know in your previous

life you were this and that and you know

it was just accepted as a matter of

course so people wiser than I am have

accepted reincarnation although people

wiser than I am uh have also rejected it

I

suppose so just take your pick I guess

it doesn't really matter just be in be

here

now and don't worry about it

okay so I think I'll just move on the

next question here this is from

creel checking make sure that I'm

actually

recording and I am which is

good and creel says how do I measure my

progress towards Enlightenment according
to strict terava philosophy and
according to you well that's a good
question and it does mention in the text
you know what are good sign of making
progress It's like you have fewer
desires fewer attachments you know that
would be a good one just more
contentment in your life just more peace
of mind as in general although the Peace
of Mind one isn't necessarily good
because you could be going through hell
just as a necessary catharsis to get you
to the next
stage so I mean if the [__] hits the fan
and you're not freaking out as bad as

you used to when the [__] would hit the

fan then that would be a good sign

but uh yeah I think just more Detachment

more equinity fewer desires fewer

attachments that that would be a good

indication that you are making

progress and that's according to Terra

philosophy and me personally we have to

agree on that so I'll just move on to

the next question from the wisest and

humble Guru who has had several names at

this

point

and the wisest and humble Guru says

wonder if you've ever been laughed at

for being a Buddhist monk um yeah there

was a a few a few times even in Burma

where you go to

rangon it's uh you know it's a the

biggest city by far in all of Burma and

you've got like some rich kid maybe he's

a general son or something in like a

white BMW and he'll just laugh at

because he's so sure that like this you

know spiritual death is is somehow

preferable but yeah I've had people mock

me and ridicule me a lot when I'd go to

when I came to America and especially

when I was not living in a monastery

when I was like 2011 2012 I was trying

to just be like a like a Freer range

monk living in Bellingham Washington

Pacific Northwest of the United States

near the Canadian border and

yeah I just be like walking around town

wearing my brown toga and Barefoot and

you know people would just sort of make

Wise Cracks and grin or I had one guy

just just angrily just chew me out in a

grocery store he was just pissed off

just because I was a Buddhist monk I

mean he he was just going at it and at

it and at it and then like finally like

5 10 minutes later I'm at the checkout

stand the same guy comes by and he's

just like going out it again and uh I

mean what do you do it's just that's one

reason why monks have to be 20 years old

at the time of the ordination because

even in Ancient India you know it wasn't

universally Buddhist back then either
there was plenty of non- Buddhists who
would be hostile to Buddhist monks and
you had to be at least 20 years old in
order to have the maturity to deal with
this verbal abuse being hurled at you by
non- Buddhists and anti-
Buddhists so yeah I have been laughed at
a little bit although most people really
have treated me well you know that's one
advantage to America becoming
woke as they say or it's yeah it's one
of the advantage of America becoming
more liberal and inclusive and all that
is that a monk can walk down the street
wearing a brown toga with a shaved head

and bare feet and most people won't even

look at him twice you know some people

will even be friendlier to you just

because it's like politically correct

and be friendly to

Weirdos

um

so yeah so I just move on to the wisest

humble Gus next question here oh I was

just going to add that I mean you could

walk down the street in a lot of America

just you can be a guy can be walking

down the street like wearing like a

black velvet evening gown and nobody

will look at

twice so the wisest humble gurus next

question how to not care if someone is

laughing at us well I mean I've just
sort of had a kind of invisible armor to
that um pretty much my whole life you
know some people are so preoccupied with
other people's opinions you know
especially you know the the um
stereotypical housewife who's always
worried about what the neighbors are
going to think you know it's like I've
just I'm just practically immune to that
by Nature I was just kind of born that
way apparently so someone can laugh at
me I mean I know me better than they
know me as a general rule they're just
like ignorant ass hats anyway so their
opinion is valueless to me I mean it can

be somewhat interesting as an

anthropological study but I mean their

opinion is essentially worthless and so

I don't really care if some fool is

laughing at

me

so I'll just move on the next question

here I don't know if there's a how to

not care it just in my case it just it

just never

happened so I mean if there's a girl you

like in in high school who laughs at you

that's that's

different so I'll just move on to the

wisest humble gurus next question here

are Buddhist monks supposed to defend

their faith to or from others or just be

silent and walk

away well it depends um if someone comes

to you in good faith and they're making

arguments against Buddhism and you can

in good faith defend your defend

Buddhism but if someone is just being

blatantly disrespectful it's actually

against the rules for a monk to try to

teach them anything so if someone is

just like sneering and mocking which

happens a lot in like Breitbart comment

sections or other comment sections which

are even worse some comment sections are

just

toxic then uh yeah I mean you don't you

don't even engage in that or at least

you're not supposed to a monk
isn't um so are Buddhist monks supposed
to defend their
faith from others or just be silent and
walk away it depends on the attitude of
the other I mean if they're in good
faith they're being sincere here and
they're not being hostile you know
they're not sneering and mocking then
yeah you can speak in defense of
Buddhism and you might actually help
them you know the Buddha was did that
numerous times he'd engage in Friendly
debates with non- Buddhists and as a
general rule in the sutas they would
convert to Buddhism as a
result um but if someone is just really

being just hostile the correct thing to
do according to Orthodox terraa is just
be silent and walk
away so the next question is from Indian
guy and Indian guy says if the majority
of people think God or gods are dead
even if they believe in God which is
kind of strange if everything is made up
of all of our thoughts collectively and
subjectively do you think it's possible
that we in our Karma or in the Dharma
have killed gods and goddesses and or
they are dead due to the karma that
changes I'm not a fan of n by the way or
to be honest but I sometimes think that
he might have channeled the truth when

he said God is dead well if everything
is made up of all of our thoughts
collectively and subjectively then if
the gods existed then they would also
have
thoughts uh collectively and
subjectively but I think the only gods
that would die without people believing
in them would be what pagans call
egregor and that an egregor is a being
that exists because of the people that
believe in it you know it's like they're
adding a little bit of their
Consciousness to this this sort of
centralized entity you know everybody is
like contributing in a sense some of
their belief that it exists which is

like creating this pool of belief and

Consciousness that is actually

manifesting some being that might be

more powerful than any of the individual

Believers and some kinds of pagan gods

or even maybe more than pagan gods you

know like even some monotheistic kind of

gods might actually be of that sort

where um their

existence depends on the belief of their

followers now and and that would be

called an

egregor um

but if they if there was like a being

let's say you got a human being who

lives a virtuous and magnanimous life

and then after death he becomes a higher
kind of being you know as just due to
his Good Karma then it doesn't matter if
anyone believes him or
not I mean most people on Earth are
oblivious to most of the higher beings
that exist in this
universe so there is that also
but uh with regard to something like
Apollo or
Athena um yeah it's really hard to say I
mean nowadays we would just say that you
know if they existed at all if they
weren't just myths then they were
egregor but who knows there could be
some kind of beings that for some reason
you know they want offerings from humans

and if they don't get them I mean they
might just move on to some other world
or something some other version of
reality or or they they could I don't
know so it would depend on what kind of
beings they were I mean if they really
were like a being in the same sense that
we are beings where we've got you know
subjective experience and so forth you
know a kind of objective experience also
then yeah I think just the fact that um
religions based on them die out doesn't
mean that they're necessarily going to
die although they might just leave in
disgust or
something but a being whose existence

depends from the beginning on others
believing in him like the egregor that I
mentioned then yeah they could actually
just sort of Fade Out cease to
exist if you read
uh U Lord of the Flies by William
Golding the novel don't forget the
movies but you see that Satan according
to the novel Satan or the devil really
does exist but he's a kind of egregor
you know it's just like this dark place
in everybody's mind sort of contributes
to create this thing that takes on a
kind of existence of its
own but I think I'll just move on to the
next question
here this is from the anti-marxist

league and the anti-marxist league says can you recommend a basic Canon of Buddhist text for a Westerner you point out that the goods of the an no the goals of the anaga I I need to wipe my glasses you might see me gawking or like making faces at the screen more than usual because my glasses are kind of smeared and blurry right
now so anyways I'll just start over here the anti-marxist league says can you recommend a basic Canon of Buddhist text for a Westerner you point out that the goals of the Tica loga no views no perceptions are very Advanced which certainly seems to be the case what

might be some basic and intermediate

texts before the ATA waga and would you

have some other Advanced text to

recommend alongside the ATA

waga um I've already mentioned what I

consider to be some of the oldest texts

which are getting closest to um getting

closer to the Buddha himself which is

Thea waga you got

the parayana waga which comes right

after the aaka waga and the sutin but

just take away the the weird

introductory stuff uh some other sutas

of the

suata um you've got like the central

non- mythological portion of the Saka

sua of the digik Kaya you've got the uh

Daka Su of the Maj minaya you got a
number of sutas in the udana including
the Bahia suta
um so I mean those are like Advanced
profound kind of um sutas there's a lot
in the the sutin Kaya that you have to
kind of search
for um I mean they're they're throughout
the Tex you just have to search for them
um with regard to like a good
introductory Buddhist text for a
beginner like a newcomer to Buddhism the
suata is good the udana is good and also
the majima is good I mean you're
inevitably going to come across stuff
that just seems like Deadwood to you or

it's just all this mythology stuff that
you can't swallow as a as a Westerner
with more or less eclectic point of view
um but still I mean you just kind of
have to kind of weigh through it a bit
but yeah I would I would recommend as
like beginning reading in the the
original or the early text suata udana
and like the majaya would be a good good
good way of picking up on Basics you
know just a strong foundation in just
basic terab Buddhist
philosophy maybe uh the sagata waga of
the the Samu Kaya which is like the
first the first section of the sutin
Naya also has got a lot of profound
stuff in

him so I think I'll just move on the next question here this is from the Arya swasti project and the ARA swasti project says greetings poo did you think do you think the concept of Karma is taken too literally or too far by some I can understand that rebirth is not the same body or even the same personality but rather a volition of past and current actions habits Etc but to think that every little bad or good thing that happens to an individual is a result of some distant past action that just seems absurd your thoughts well everything that happens to us is not necessarily the result of some

distant past action in fact from the terava Buddhist point of view the Orthodox Buddhist point of view nothing is really the result of some distant past action because the past no longer exists all that exists in Orthodox terraa is the present moment sort of like eart TOA talking about the Power of Now or ramda saying be here now karma is now and so it's like you're dreaming you you're not fully awake the Buddha is fully awake that's the the word Buddha means awakened so we're we're like in this dream world we're not fully fully awake yet we're not fully conscious yet and so We're Dreaming the stuff that's happening to us so to

speak and

so some of us just aren't very good

drivers of our uh astral vehicle so to

speak but really I am not a materialist

I do not think that this material world

is ultimately real that we are in a kind

of dream or like a matrix or

something I don't think that we're in a

in an AI like a program in a computer

though because the computer wouldn't be

ultimately real either I do not consider

physical matter to be ultimately

real which makes me a heretic from a

terab Buddhist point of view in that

respect I I lean more towards

Mahayana so let's see

here uh yeah I think I answered that

it's like we are dreaming our life as we

go along the wiser we are the more

skillfully we will

dream and sometimes I mean even in a

dream I think most people in the west at

least would agree that when you're

dreaming at night you're you're creating

that dream it's not like some God is

implanting the dream into your mind like

they believed in Ancient Ancient times

you know it's like you are creating that

dream but even so you can have bad

dreams you can have scary nightmarish

dreams all kinds of weird stuff can

happen that make you feel very icky and

and

uncomfortable and it's like that's
happening on a larger scale and a higher
level with us even when we're supposedly
awake because we're still not fully
awake we're still dreaming in a
sense so I think I'll just move on to
the next question
here and this is from covac andad zida
and he is our last questioner of the
evening but he has asked like five
questions here so let's attend to covac
and CAD Z shall we and his first
question is have you ever watched Star
Wars if so can you do an analysis of how
the various parts of Jedi Sith religion
and the force compare and contrast to

the Buddhist or other Traditions if you
haven't watched it why not well I
watched watch the original Star Wars in
the movies when I was a kid and like the
two sequels did not impress me much at
all I thought the Ewoks were just a
total waste of space and then years many
years later a few decades later I
watched like the prequel movies you know
talking about how Darth Vader became
Darth Vader and all that and then when
it started going like super politically
correct with the empowered women and so
forth I I didn't watch any of those
um I heard they they were awful anyway
which kind
ofir confirmed my decision not to watch

them

so let's see

here can I do an analysis how the

various parts of Jedi or Sith religion

and the force compare in contrast to the

Buddhist or other Traditions um yeah I'm

really I don't know where the the big

explanation of Jedi and Sith religion

comes in is probably not in the movies

that I saw because I don't recall it I

mean there's a little bit you know Luke

Skywalkers getting trained to be a Jedi

you know a little bit of talking with

with uh you know Obi-Wan and Yoda and

with regard to Yoda this is interesting

that um before they made what was it The

Empire Strikes Back where Yoda makes his

Premier

debut in uh the Star Wars Universe there

were some

guys uh went to a a Cambodian Monastery

in Stockton California and I guess

George Lucas who was Lucas who was the

creator just I mean he was he lived just

a not far from there I can't remember

the name of the town I think it starts

with an M Modesto I think he comes from

Modesto which is like maybe 20 miles

from Stockton so he was familiar with

the area and there was a Cambodian

Monastery in Stockton California where

the Cambodian sa Raja lived in Exile

after the cim Rouge took over Cambodia

and you know pretty much killed off
Buddhism there at least
temporarily so you had this old
Cambodian senior monk he's over 100
years old he's like 102 years old and so
people from Lucas Films Studios you know
the star people making Star Wars the
stayed at that Monastery and they're
like filming him and recording his voice
and everything and they based Yoda on
this Cambodian s
Raja I don't remember what his name was
people just called him
B so I mean you'd have a little bit of
dhama in there I guess through osmosis
you know just sort of moving from the

Cambodian s Raja into into Yoda to some degree I assume but uh yeah Jedi and Sith religion I'm not even sure I didn't I didn't watch those movies I'm pretty sure and with regard to the force at least the the whole idea of the force is that you know we're not completely Bound by materialistic laws of physics that there is a paranormal uh you know it's like the Paranormal does manifest in this world and it can be cultivated to some degree so I mean I'd go that far but in Buddhism there is no like a cosmic Force causing psychic powers or anything or enabling psychic

powers

so yeah I mean I'm I'm not familiar

enough with the Jedi and or Sith

religion because I just didn't watch the

later movies where presumably it was all

explained because I just watched the

earlier once so I'll just move on to

seov and cot zona's next question here

I remember you define pow differently

than others like the asaas as

encumbering influences which stick close

to the Jane influence of this term can

you please make a glossery of terms you

define differently than standard I'm

asking because it seems you have a

better understanding in the historical

context well yeah I haven't come up with like a comprehensive glossery of every word that I've defined differently from just the standard definition and in most cases I just go with the standard definition like s is mindfulness a lot of people don't like the term mindfulness for sad and it's interesting that sad is in the Burmese language they pronounce s like th so it's the but they put that on on warning signs you know you know like attention and that's kind of good I mean Sadi can be defined as attention you know oone

but

um let's see I just lost myself by talking about that let's see make a

glossery of terms yeah like oh yeah like
I was saying like meta I'm willing to
call it loving kindness which is kind of
a kind of a dumb sounding term for meta
but with regard to most
words that I mean if there's an
established equivalent in English I'm
more than likely to go along with the
establish equivalent just to avoid
confusion cuz like aan tanero I mean
he's way more likely than I am to
deviate from the usual terms um
venerable Nana mole who who translated
the Wii manga was was similar where I
mean he just wanted you know he wasn't
really influenced much by established

usage and sometimes you don't know what
they're talking about like aan tanero
can talk about frames of reference and
you don't know what he's talking about
unless you just know that he's referring
to sa
patana you know which is usually know
Foundation of mindfulness or uh
something like that establishments of
mindfulness or
something so or like nibana aan tanra
defines it as unbinding based I
assume um on this kind of a spirous
atmology but
um uh there are a few words that I do
translate differently like ch
it's usually translated as volition but

um I do translate it as volition

sometimes but I do like just

schopenhauer's will you know even with a

capital W it's will you know it's it's

what

manifests this this version of existence

that we are in you know so it's like

schopenhauer or like

aad um it's it's one of the links in the

Standard 12 link theory of picha suup um

um it's usually translated as clinging

you know because of craving there is

clinging because of clinging there is B

which I'll get to that AA Don literally

means uptake and it does make more sense

because of craving you have uptake it it

makes more sense than because of craving
there's clinging to me anyway it just
clinging just never struck just never
really seemed real to me and uptake also
or OA Don it could also mean fuel
like just among non philosophers in the
ancient Ganges Valley aaon was like
firewood so uptake kind of fits that I
like that and then as I was saying in
the standard the standard uh 12 link
theory of picha sopa because of because
of TNA you have aana because of craving
you have uptake because of upad you have
bat and bat it's
a lot of translators I mean it's it's
one of those kind of vague words that
different translators will translate

differently and U I think it's often
translated as becoming which just seems
kind of new Agy doesn't really make much
sense to me but bah it's it's
essentially referring
to volition or will again you know it's
sort of almost like a short circuit in
the 12 medon theory of P because you
have you have karma in two different
places on the same the same uh
sequence the first time it's it's Sara
and the second time it's B and B is just
like the the force of existence it's
like the momentum like I was talking
about earlier it's just this this
momentum or stream that is just driving

us

forwards

so that's another one another one would

just be Dua itself usually Dua is

translated as suffering although um it's

not Universal aan tanro who I've already

mentioned he translates it as what is it

stress which I don't think is a good

translation either I translate Dua as

unease which seems pretty good although

there is no one English word that fits

Duca because dooka is the entire

Spectrum from just the vaguest slightest

discomfort or dissatisfaction up to just

you know unbearable Agony you know all

of that any kind of negativ ity that you

experience is

dooka but negativity is really not a
good not a good uh term for that or good
rendering of Dua so I I render it as
unease which is convenient because then
the opposite of dukka is Suka and then I
can just render that as ease which is uh
very nice in my
opinion so I mean there's other ones but
most of the terms that that I've deviate
from just established precedent are
words that are kind of ambivalent they
don't have uh good I mean nobody
everyone doesn't agree on how to
translate it so I just make my own
translation or also P Sam itself I
almost always render that as dependent

Co Rising rather than I mean there's

there's lot of uh translations or

renderings of picha s which is partly

because nobody really understands it

very well or not very many people

understand it very well especially

Scholars

so those are some of the main ones there

are lesser ones like my AA waga

translation I mean sometimes like

especially in the Ana waga there are

puns where you've got a word that has

two or more meanings in it's obviously

they're using this word

Ambiguously to mean more than one thing

at the same time and then I'd just be

racking my brains as a as a young monk

when I was making the translation
sometimes just stewing and stewing and
stewing trying to come up with an
English equivalent you know an English
word or short phrase that has the same
combination of possible
meanings so I mean there was some of
that too in my translation of the AA
waga but I'll just I'll just move on
that's some of the main ones you know
ASA B Du P those are like some of the
most important ones that I deviate from
established president to the extent that
there even is an established president
like Asawa there's several different
renderings of that and P like I said

there's several different renderings of

that so I figured I won't be confusing

very many people by just coming up with

my own term which I think fits the poly

better

anyway so I think I'll just move on to

coac and sead Z's next

question which is

do you plan on going to any High School

reunions in the future now that you are

no longer a monk living in a cave on the

other side of the

planet um I don't know I might have gone

to my 10year reunion or my 20-year

reunion but um nowadays I mean if I went

to like a 50-year reunion or something I

mean that's a little bit down the road

but I don't think they do 40-year
reunions man it would it'd be sad to see
like Lori heggy or Lisa Anderson or like
beautiful girls that I was I had like a
crush on as as just like Grandma you
know they're looking like somebody's
grandma and probably are somebody's
grandma it' just be kind of
sad but I mean I'd be kind of
open-minded to that but I'm not gonna
really yeah I'm not I'm not planning on
it so I think I'll just uh move on the
next question here
and this is also from cacin sead Z based
on the Buddhist cosmology beings higher
up are more powerful other than the

formless Realms however Yama is said to be the judge for being entering the hell Realms and called The Lord Of Death how powerful is he on the scale of the Godlike beings is he above the Brahma Gods is he for great King level Etc well well yamama has very little mention in the Buddhist texts I think he might be mentioned maybe one or two times I mean there is a Yama heaven where there are Yama Gods but according to the commentarial tradition is Yama that I mean he's most wellknown from Hinduism like there's uh one of the most well-known upanishads is a like a a dialogue between Yama the king of death and and this Brahman I

think uh he doesn't even live there he's
I'm pretty sure that according to
Orthodox terava he's down in the the
level of the Four Kings which is just
one level above the human level and he's
really not the judge for beings entering
hell because according to to Buddhism
it's your own Karma sends you to heaven
or hell or wherever it is that your
karmic stream goes after it's cut off
you know in this life it's going to go
somewhere else just according to just
laws of dhama you know there is no God
deciding this
stuff so he's kind of like a little bit
of Indian mythology that kind of you

know crept into Buddhism through osmosis
I suppose but there's really no place
for him you know sort of like the asuras
that are just sort of obsolete there's
not much place for them either in
Buddhist cosmology so yamama might be
mentioned a few times in the text
but he's really I mean he's just sort of
redundant he's like a he just doesn't
fit into the Buddhist scheme of
things but I think he is acknowledged in
the commentarial tradition as being in
the realm of the four the Four Kings
which as I say is just one level above
the human level so it's he's in the same
level as like goblins and
stuff so I'll just move on to the next

question which is the last question of

the evening

and that is what was the moment or event

that changed your perception the most

when in Burma and that's a good

question if I do say so myself and I

just did didn't

I and I was thinking about this for

quite a while several minutes anyway and

I mean there was no moment I couldn't

think of any moment where just something

clicks that that really really like

radically changed my perception but I

guess the event that that changed my

perception the most and I've mentioned

this

before I've written about it although
it's not in any of my published books at
present um it was I've been a monk for
about 10 years you know I've been really
going for it just living out in caves in
the forest just going as full blast as I
can manage and then I got some kind of
fever just some sort of weird sickness
and it just deprived me of all pleasure
in life you know it's like there's like
four Pleasures that are still allowed to
monks one is eating one is sleeping one
is bathing and one is just the Bliss of
Janna and eating was out everything
tasted awful I mean I have to force
myself to eat sleeping I had insomnia
I'd just be lying awake bathed in cold

sweat at night bathing the the doctor
advised me I shouldn't take baths
because of the fever I should just like
sponge myself down and my meditation was
just shot so there was no Bliss of
Janna and I eventually just kind of went
into a kind of depression just I mean
I've been a monk striving to free myself
to liberate myself from dooka all this
time all these 10 years or so and still
I can just hit rock bottom like this and
it's like what I mean it's just what's
the
point that's just kind of the and that's
that's where I was when I was in the
state of depression and then after I

started feeling better you know the
fever finally you know subsided this
feeling of just futility you know what's
the point just lingered for months until
finally I just decided to just give up
and I wrote to my main teacher in Burma
venerable Kong Pulu chel and doya seatt
and wrote to my father also just saying
you know I just want to to take it easy
I don't want to be just like going full
blast just trying like this anymore it
just I mean it just it's not making me
happy you
know and uh so then I just kind of gave
up and the strange thing is and this is
the event that changed my perception it
was it was like what I needed to do at

the time is just giving up it just sort
of broke all this resistance and I just
entered in some of the best meditation
of my life after that and it it lasted
for months which was unprecedented at
the time I was having just
spontaneous really profound mindfulness
experiences and so
forth and it reminds me of uh like you
read the varieties of religious
experience by William James where he's
talking about how for a lot of people
like he's mainly talking about
Christianity because he's in a western
context but he's saying that a lot of
people they don't really break through

until they finally just give up I mean
they just say I can't do it God I put
myself in your hands I'm at your mercy I
just can't do it and then that's when
like this sanctification process takes
over or some such and that's kind of the
way it worked for me at that time I mean
I I was starting to think that maybe I'd
really attain something really really
good and then of course it doesn't
happen the way you expect and everything
is impermanent and then you know the
really good meditation faded out
eventually after a number of months but
um it really did cause a a significant
shift in my understanding of dhama and
of

myself

so I guess that was it and that was the

last question so if you have any

questions about Buddhism about

especially terab Buddhism philosophy

meditation Manas ISM me personally feel

free to ask them in the comments below

or if you have access to the Discord

server you can ask them there if you're

on my subscribe Star channel you can ask

them there and I do appreciate the

support for those of you who are and uh

feel free to like And subscribe to this

channel buy my one of my books if you

are so inclined and be

happy

hello and welcome to episode 67 of question and answer I am your host P Bosa and those of you who have watched these shows before May notice I'm in a different room because I'm in a different house because we moved last weekend which is why um I didn't do a Q&A last weekend because I was busy moving and still we haven't got things fully sorted out and there's like junk everywhere and oh well but because we didn't do a Q&A last weekend I've got approximately twice the usual number of questions which is going to take a while and so because this is probably going to be a pretty long one

before you start watching like if you're
just settling down to watch this Q&A or
listen to it you better go potty first
and just pause it go potty come back
because we're not going to wait for you
so you're just going to have to pause it
because we're not going to wait for
everybody to go potty because some
people take a long time you know they're
like in there reading and
stuff or looking at their phone or
whatever and we're not we just we just
don't go with that so because we got so
many questions I better just wait into
this and the first question is from the
anti-marxist league and the anti-marxist
league says I am now planning to

renounce the world as you suggested in a previous Q&A I've been slowly moving toward that the past year or so anyway due to congenital defects in my skeletal system I do not think I would be able to go overseas to become an ordained monk it might not even be an option with a monastery in the United States but I am fortunate in that I own my own home free of any debt I have been converting it into a sort of urban Hermitage I need very little money to get by I've been using some articles from your blog primarily ult Buddhism what it is or could be and karmic minimalism in the secular West as a guide to developing a

quasi monastic way of life for myself do
you have any additional suggestions this
may or may not be full renunciation of
the world but it is likely the closest
I'll be able to get in the present
circumstances of this life well
congratulations to the anti-marxist
league for intending to renounce the
world um I'm not sure exactly what kind
of congenital defects to the skeletal
system
that the anti-marxist league has so that
I'm not really sure whether it would be
disqualifying for him to become a monk
um in Asia or the United States but he
does have his own home free of debt and
I mean we can say we own our own home I

mean we own this this home now but

really you got to pay property taxes and

all sorts of bills and so forth so we

don't don't really own anything not even

our own meat

puppet so that is good that you got

everything paid off though that's you

know as as paid off as you

can so he wants additional suggestions

with regard to renouncing the world this

sort of being a a western unordained

quasi

renuncian and one big thing would be I

mean I assume he still has to pay bills

you know he still has to buy food and

and you know pay the utilities and so

forth pay the property

tax so I mean he probably has to have a

job

still and I would suggest you get a job

that's that's sucks you into Samara as

little as possible just a quiet

repetitive kind of job that's relatively

stressfree doesn't involve a lot of

interpersonal interactions especially if

you're going to be like a quasi hermit

renunciant you know you don't want to be

into sales and marketing or um you know

real estate anything like that um my job

is is fairly I mean I like my job in

that um I'm mostly working in a you know

a sheet metal shop just mostly running

machines and it's just sort of a

repetitive thing like if I have to make
60j channels or head trim if you prefer
then you know it's just you just make
this piece of metal you know bend it in
a certain way and you set it aside you
know you're doing it mindfully or
carefully at least you know and you got
to be aware you know pay attention to
what you're doing so you don't squish
your fingers and so forth or you don't
bend it the wrong
way so you know and then when you come
home you can just forget what you what
you were doing at work which is nice uh
another advice I would give is if you
have a TV set get rid of it that used to

be one of the first piece pieces of

advice I would give to people is I mean

if you want to live a more spiritual

life just get rid of your TV

set and um it may seem a little

hypocritical now because we've got a TV

set in the living room right now my

woman has been striving to get one in

the bedroom and so far I've been I've

been able to resist

that but uh just just internet also um

you know try to keep that to a bare

minimum the anti-marxist league just

today joined um our Discord server so I

guess he'll have to use internet for

that at

least but um also I might as well add

that Tom pci's advice to people who

wanted to live a spiritual life is eat

less sleep less read Less Talk

less

so considering that uh the information

he gave is very

General um I don't really know his his

circumstances so I can't really give him

specific

advice and also because we've got lots

and lots of questions here I suppose

that will be good enough for now and if

there's anything in particular he wants

he wants to know he can he can ask me

again either in a Q&A or on the server

or

whatever so we'll just move on to the

next question here this is from covac

and sead

zida and covac and CAD zida

says you mentioned that AA means uptake

and Asawa means encumbering influence

what is the connection between these two

concepts because it seems both are

related to things that are coming in and

yeah they're they're not only uh related

to things that are coming in they're

they're related to things that are

essentially what are preventing you from

becoming enlightened or

liberated the AA Don um it's craving

causes

aaon or clinging usually is the

translation for AA Don is clinging and
it's yeah it's like attachment you know
clinging and attachment are the cause of
all suffering in in one version of the
Four Noble Truths
so um uptake in Asawa or aaon and Asawa
they're pretty much synonymous in in
early Buddhism like in early text there
lots of different words that mean
essentially the same thing and finally
or not finally but as as Buddhism early
Buddhism um sort of uh like streamlined
its its philosophy and sort of settled
on you know doctrines and so forth um
they settled on terminology and so a lot
of the early terms just sort of fell

away or you know they're still there in
the sutas but they just didn't get
continually used later on
and that's one way you can tell early
suas from later suos is they'll have
this sort of archaic terminology that
isn't yet
standardized so aaon and Asawa probably
mean about the same thing although um
aad Don seems to be more of a conscious
thing you know it's it's like an act of
will you know that you you take this
thing you know you you adhere to it you
cling to it whereas Asawa um there's
more of a connotation of a lot of it is
subliminal you know it's like
subconscious you know underlying

Tendencies would maybe be associated
with Asawa more than with aaon but
ultimately they mean pretty much the
same thing it's just something that that
you something that you're attracted to
you desire it you cling to it and then
that clinging acts as a kind of Burden
that prevents you from becoming
liberated
so I think I'll just move on to covo
andad Z's next
question which is as
follows to achieve Janna we must remove
the five hindrances nna and when they
are absent we naturally enter Janna
since an Aran never has the five

hindrances present are they technically
always in Janna and the Orthodox answer
to that is no in fact there are arahant
that never attain Janna there are arant
called dry Vision to areans who don't
have any psychic powers you know they
they they're not masters of Janna um
they just uh got like what is it like
neighborhood concentration and this is
going with like Orthodox
explanations um and just through through
weasa through through uh Insight they
became enlightened without going into
really deep um contemplative
States so to achieve Janna we we must
remove the five hindrances temporarily
you know you don't you don't remove them

permanently until you're fully

enlightened

but you have to suppress them or like

attenuate them you know keep them at Bay

just and then but then even when you do

that you don't just automatically get

Janna I mean you still have to develop

samat and so forth so that removing or

attenuating the five

hindrances um it's just like opening a

door just because the door is open

doesn't mean you're going through it but

you can't go through it unless the door

is open they're they're

prerequisites to move on to the next

stage so you have to remove or you know

keep at Bay temporarily the five

hindrances in order to attain Janna but

they're not the same thing it's it's not

like you just automatically get sucked

into Janna when you're like in a quiet

relatively serene

mindful

mood

so I'll just move on to CAC and CAD Z's

next question which is the ancient

school called the pugal of vadin had the

idea that even though there is no self

there is a person existing they say

personhood is like fire created by the

fuel of the Aggregates they use Samu

Kaya

[Music]

2222 22 22 to back this up quote the five Aggregates are truly burdens the burden carrier is the person taking up the burden is suffering in the world laying the burden down is blissful unquote the Terra Kata watu goes to extreme lengths to say that this is a false View and tries to make it seem like it is affirming a self I've heard some Scholars of early Buddhism claim that the puga VAV VI is probably the closest to what is in the sutas but I don't know what are your thoughts on this subject well with regard to this last statement here I've heard some Scholars of early Buddhism claim the PO

a lot of you is probably the closest to what is in the sutas I would guess that these are Western people who just have this Western preference for a real self maybe even an eternal soul and when they see the Pug ofoten views they're like Ah that's that's good I like that I must be right but yeah pug of

um other Buddhists had this tendency to consider the pugal ladans to be people who kicked atad out through the front door and then snuck it in through the back again by calling it something else you know they couldn't call it Atma or ATA because obviously Buddhism teaches no self so they come up with this person or individual the

puga the

pudala and

yeah in a way um I mean all Buddhism

even terraa Buddhism would agree that

personhood is like a fire created by the

fuel of the Aggregates you know but a

fire has no like abiding Essence it's

different from one moment to the next

every particle in that fire is different

from one moment to the next and so the

the name fire is just this convenient

like w Des it's just this like worldly

language

that is ultimately delusional or at

least

illusory but I mean you have to use

words when you're dealing with samsara
so it's this samsaric term that you
stick on to the person I mean the Buddha
himself referred to people you know he
referred to persons but he wasn't
insisting that they are ultimately real
because they aren't and what the pugula
wens were trying to do is to try to say
that there is some reality to this
person aside from just
like like like a flame or a river that's
just different from one moment to the
next with no abiding self
Essence so that was the problem with the
pugal vadens and uh I do not think that
the early Buddhists were pugal ladans I
don't think the Buddha himself was

teaching pugal

laada it may be that the earliest

Buddhism like in the Tica waga is saying

don't believe in self don't believe in

not self don't believe anything and then

early

Buddhism according to the hypothesis

just figured you know you have to choose

between is and isn't to form a position

you have to have a position in order to

have like this spiritual system that

organized you know with with a set of

tenants and doctrines and so forth and

so isn't is safer than is just because

you got less to cling to so there is a

chance that it started off you're not

supposed to believe in self or not self

but then the early Buddhist settled on

not self but even that is is uh not

helping the pugal laadan view at all

because really I I do agree that they

probably you know they they kicked out

self through the front door and then

snuck it in through the back

again so I'm just going to move on to

the next question here also from covac

and CAD

zida which is the Dum Kaa sect in

Thailand claims that unlike all other

things nibana is the true self are they

regarded as heretical and what are your

thoughts on them I've never heard I

heard of the damay sect in Thailand and

I have heard a lot of um Tha aons
talking about the cheetah that is beyond
the Aggregates that is the true self or
you know it's the Observer you know even
aan cha was talking about how the
cheetah is you know the Observer of
phenomena and so forth
but I mean to say that nibana is the
true self is just yeah that's just flat
out heresy because it's Sab D Saar Dua
mean all condition things are Dua Saar
an you know all condition things are Ana
but it's not Sab Sankara anata it's Sab
dama anata which means anything
conditioned or otherwise including
nibana is not

self so yeah they're Heretics going with

Orthodox terraa

anyway in my thoughts on them yeah I've

never never really heard of the damaka

SE I mean that's I've heard of the

dharmakaya which is the belief in sort

of a universal pervasive Consciousness

or you know the Buddha Essence that

pervades the entire

universe but uh that's a Mahayana

concept and not a teren

one so yeah I think I gave my thoughts

and so I'll just move on to seac and SE

zon as next question which is can you

please do more sua readings and yeah I

can do

that yeah I don't have a problem with

that it's just that especially lately I
mean I went through like a month of
stress and sort of just being kind of
depressed like my my Consciousness was
kind of contracted and I wasn't doing
much more uh videos than were necessary
and then we started moving and yeah
there's been a lot of stuff going on you
know I work full-time but pseudo
readings are actually pretty easy
because I sit there and read and then
you know give a little bit of commentary
afterwards so yeah yeah I can do that
especially if people keep pestering me I
need a a fire under my ass to get going
sometimes so I'll just move on to coac

and sead Z's next and last question
which is in the digan Kaya 15 which is
uh the nidana suta if I remember
correctly in Dean nikaya 15 the Buddha
considers four views of a self the first
is that feeling is self and is easy to
understand because feelings are
impermanent and and means that the
supposed self is also impermanent
however the second view of the self are
about rebuking someone who says feelings
are not self and then he gives this long
it's like a commentarial thing including
lots of quotes but he he kind of messed
up there's like typos and stuff that and
he sort of Skips one part or gives it
the wrong name or something so I'm just

going to I've I've already kind of
looked up Deacon nayah 15 this is uh
Walsh's translation I'll just read this
entire section and then get back to his
question here and that is in what ways
aanda do people regard the self they
equate the self with feeling feeling is
myself or feeling is not myself myself
is incipient or or feeling is not myself
but myself is not imp percipient it is
of a nature to feel now Anand one who
says feeling is myself should be told
there are three kinds of feeling friend
Pleasant painful and neutral which of
the three do you consider to be yourself
when a pleasant feeling is felt no

painful or neutral feeling is felt but only Pleasant feeling when a painful feeling is felt no Pleasant or neutral feeling is felt but only painful feeling and when a neutral feeling is felt no Pleasant painful feeling is felt but only neutral feeling Pleasant feeling is impermanent conditioned dependently Arisen bound to Decay to vanish to fade away to cease and so to our painful feeling and neutral feeling so anyone who on experiencing a pleasant feeling thinks this is myself must at the sensation of that Pleasant feeling think myself has gone and the same with painful and neutral feelings thus whoever thinks feeling is myself is

contemplating something in this this
present life that is impermanent a
mixture of happiness and unhappiness
subject to arising and passing away
therefore it is not fitting to maintain
feeling is
myself but anyone who says feeling is
not myself myself is imp percipient
should be asked if friend no feelings at
all were to be experienced would there
be the thought I am to which he would
have to reply no Lord therefore it is
not fitting to maintain feeling is not
myself myself is imp percipient and
anyone who says feeling is not myself
but myself is not incipient myself is of

a nature to feel should be asked well

friend if all feelings absolutely and

totally ceased could there be the

thought I am this to which he would have

to reply no

Lord therefore it is not fitting to

maintain feeling is not myself myself is

not incipient my self is of a nature to

feel

okay so that was the part he was asking

about now I got to find this again

okay so then at the end of his question

he says can you please explain the logic

in these three points and what they are

trying to say so first is the self is

feeling um yeah I mean the suit is

pretty much Prett explains that fairly

well it's you know the feelings are
changing all the time you know sometimes
they're Pleasant feelings sometimes
unpleasant feelings but it's different
feelings all the time and so if you stop
having a feeling then you would stop
having
yourself um in a sense it's in a way
it's sort of like the flame analogy
again it's like the flame is different
from one moment to the next so you can't
really call it an abiding
entity and you know our feelings are the
same way you can't really call those an
abiding entity because they're always
changing so then the other part the

other theory is that your feeling is
incipient and uh let's see
here so my friends should feelings all
together in every way stop without
remainder then with feeling completely
not existing owing to the sensation of
feeling would there be the thought I am
and that's no lord well a self
presumably would be aware to have a
completely unconscious self I mean it's
it's almost like a contradiction in
terms so that's that's sort of what he's
referring to here is if yourself is just
oblivious to everything you know it
doesn't feel anything then I mean how
could you say that it's yourself I mean
it's we assume that our self is you know

the Observer you know the the one that's
feeling the feelings and so if you're
saying that yourself doesn't feel
feelings then I mean yourself is just
blind and dumb and and just unconscious
essentially it's completely
unaware so so then the third one is
you've got a self that isn't your
feelings but it is sensitive to feelings
and then let see what is how does he
argue
this see thus in this manner n no one
does not see fit oh wait I think I
skipped
that whether am I I'll have to go back
to the original

here okay and anyone who says feeling is not myself but myself is not incipient myself is of a nature to feel should be well friend if all feelings absolutely and totally ceased could there be the thought I am this to which there would have to be the reply no Lord so that one's a little more subtle maybe a little

trickier it's just saying that um you know if the feelings stopped then yourself would have to stop too because again just like before yourself would just be oblivious it'd be unaware and people do not consider their self to be unconscious or completely oblivious and unaware so the very possibility that

that could happen that your feelings
could stop would mean that yourself I
mean it wouldn't be your your yourself
would continue somehow but it would be
like blind and deaf and just numb and
everything and there wouldn't be
anything there because even feelings
apply to your own thoughts so you're
yourself wouldn't be able to have any
kind of subjective experience or like
objective experience
so I guess that's what it
means and uh that was a long question so
I better move on to the next question
this is from Arin and Arin says did you
ever see Burmese people with tattoos or

do they have any traditional tattoos

yeah it's pretty lots lots of people got

tattoos in Burma I've seen monks with

just tattoos all over them in fact up

until

around maybe around World War II or a

little after it was traditional for all

Burmese men to be tattooed from their

waist to their knees and so it it'd be

all covered up um by their sarong you

know like this ly but um if they'd have

to lift up their their skirts to cross a

a creek or something you know it'd just

be like sleeve tattoos just covering you

know their behind and their legs their

thighs and

everything um but that's kind of out of

style now but still lots and lots of
tattoos I used to know this monk he had
a degree in English he was a university
he had a University degree in English
and he just had tattoos all over his
body but the thing is the main purpose
of
tattoos in Burma is not ornamentation it
is like protection you know it's the
power of the tattoo prevents you from
from like being the victim of Witchcraft
or just bad luck in general or snake
bites um I was told that it used to be
the case that thieves like burglars
would get a tattoo of a yawning cat
tattooed onto their thigh which would

make them more agile they could like
jump higher and stuff but I cannot
recall seeing a tattoo on a Burmese
person I assume they're there yeah I I
I'm sure that there are you know people
will get like a there some guy will have
like a big spider or something tattooed
on his arm but um aside from that most
tattoos in Burma are protective like you
can go to a fair like even like little
kids they'll go to a fair and they'll be
like the tattoo artist there he'll just
like tattoo like three dots on their
wrist like right here that has some
protective value where they'll have
something called an in which looks sort
of like a

tic-tac-toe with like just sort of

abstract symbols in in various boxes of

the Tic Tac Toe board that has some

supposedly some paranormal like virtue

to

it so

yeah like that in thing or the just the

three dots would be standard traditional

tattoos so I'll just move on to arin's

next tattoo

question if a Burmese villager had to

get a Buddhist tattoo what do you think

would be the most likely Buddhist symbol

or image they would

choose and I cannot remember seeing like

a specifically Buddhist tattoo on a

Burmese Buddhist I assume some people do
maybe just the three dots would be like
you know Buddha dama SA or something
that that has the power just these three
dots because it it symbolizes you know
the the Three Gems or
something um but I've never seen like a
Buddha image tattooed on somebody or a
Bodie leaf or anything like that um
maybe some kind of text but I can't
remember remember seeing that either
most of the tattoos I've have seen other
than just just the standard Scorpion or
or spider or something would be like
these magical protective
tattoos
so if a burmes villager had to get a

Buddhist tattoo they had to get one what

do you think would be the most likely

Buddhist symbol or

image oh gosh I don't know just three

dots

maybe

maybe so next question next tattoo

question from Arin if you yourself had

to pick just one Buddhist image to put

on your body forever what would it be

and that's kind of cheating I I would

cheat because if I were get a tattoo I'd

just get like the M symbol I don't have

any tattoos at present but like I

actually drew it I it's not a good

drawing but you know

um like maybe like on my left shoulder
blade or something
and and technically this is Hindu you
know there's like upanishads mentioning
om and so forth but it has been adopted
by Buddhists you know om manme that kind
of a thing it might be Mahayana Buddhism
but it's still technically qualifies as
Buddhist I guess so yeah i' I'd do that
and then the ne arin's next question is
and what would you choose if you had to
get a non- Buddhist tattoo and
again Hindu buddh Buddhist and Hindu so
it's Buddhist and non- Buddhist at the
same time although my sweetheart has uh
talked about us getting like a a symbol
representing us that nobody would know

what it meant except for us I guess

somewhere on our our bodies so that

would be it'd be like a tossup between

that and and M I

guess so that's it for the Aran tattoo

questions and next is the Arya SU

project who says is Arin trying to get

you to get a

tattoo and uh yeah I think maybe she is

tell you the

truth so I think I'll just move on to

Arya sasi project next question do you

believe in or do you believe there is

any validity to the stories of any of

the following Bigfoot the loch nest

monster Yeti or

chupacabra well um Bigfoot and ye I
think would go together they'd be like
two species of the the same
genus assuming that they're biological
entities but the thing is even the
Burmese have their version of Bigfoot
which they call the yay and it's big and
it's hairy and it smells bad and it
lives in the woods and it can abduct
people you know it's it's scary you
don't want to you don't want to mess
with them but they're considered to be a
kind of ghost you know they can appear
and disappear which may be why they
haven't actually caught one of these
things or at least um the government's
not admitting to it if you know what I

mean

so um the Loch Ness monster I'm not so

sure about the Loch Ness monster I'm

rather skeptical that there's like some

kind of plesiosaur there'd have to be a

number of them like reproducing there so

it' have to be a large enough population

that they're not just killing themselves

off with inbreeding you know was Lethal

genes doubling up on them uh I have no

idea what a chupacabra really is I never

really studied up on chupacabras for

some reason but Bigfoot or

yetis it could be I mean I've discussed

this sort of thing before with uh guests

on on the show that has no name um it

could just be a kind of like some a
being from an alternate World close to
ours on a similar vibration to ours that
can kind of bleed through you know
especially like modern Western humans um
you know we're sort of like a a radio
receiver that's very precise in the
wavelength or the you know the frequency
that we can pick up but reality is just
you know all possible
frequencies and so more primitive people
or children certain animals they might
have a fuzzy or less narrow wavelength
that they're receptive to because they
haven't refined it down to be precise in
this materialistic world you know
they're they're living in a more

dreamlike kind of world and it could be
that in a world like that you know they
can see things that other people can't
see because they're seeing things that
are close to our reality but just kind
of right on the other side of the veil
so to speak and uh yeah it may be that
something like a Bigfoot or a Yeti or a
the Y you know they can sort of blend
through you know they just kind of bleed
through for especially for people that
um you know they're more linal so to
speak you know they just have a broader
fuzzier wavelength of reality that
they're receptive
to with regard to the loch nest monster

I I'm not sure I mean I've seen the old

famous pictures and stuff

but

um yeah that's a weird

one but with regard to Bigfoot and Yeti

I think there might be some some kind of

reality to them but I don't think that

they are biological creatures you know

like anthropoid apes or anything like

that I do think that they're like a Lial

kind of paranormal event that can sort

of bleed into our version of reality

because they're coming from a reality

that's close enough to ours that there's

a certain

Affinity so I'll just move on to the

Aras sasi projects next question

here is it ever acceptable to deceive

another by withholding information if

there is no intent to

harm not lying but not telling

everything you might know I should add

that this scenario is in regard to any

transaction to get another to act or

conform with one's own will side note I

believe that most if not all business

transactions have some element of this

um

well withholding information is

ethically neutral in buddh I mean not

doing anything to just remain silent is

it's morally ethically neutral unless

you've got some kind of bad mental

States causing you to be silent but just

outwardly this sitting there not doing

or saying anything is just ethically

neutral so but then he adds this provisa

a little further down um I should add

that this scenario is in regard to any

transaction to get another to act or

conform with one's own will

well I think sometimes let's

say

um somebody wants to do

something like immoral or something

harmful to themselves and you just keep

your mouth shut you like they're saying

oh I'd love to go to that party but I

don't have a ride and you know that they

could have a ride but you just don't say

anything because you don't want them to
go to this party where there's going to
be like heroin addicts or or whatever
you know it's it's it would be a it
would not be a good experience for them
you just sit there in silence then uh
that might be more good than bad even
though in a way I mean I don't I'm not
sure how you deceive another person by
withholding information other than you
know you're selling them a car and you
just don't tell them that the
transmission is shot you know that's not
good but I mean if you're doing it for
their
benefit

then yeah I think that wouldn't
necessarily be a bad thing because again
just remaining silent is not in and of
itself immoral you know under any
circumstance but it depends on your
motivations because it's your the
accompanying mental States causing you
to be silent that are really the
point so yeah if I mean if best
interests I mean the other person's bet
best interests are are your concern and
you're just remaining silent I think
that yeah that would be fine in certain
cases so I'll just move on to the next
question which is from Liber Lam and
Liber Lam says would you consider
traveling to Burma again to get a

traditional Sak yant tattoo so there's a lot of tattoo questions tonight would you ask for a custom tattoo or go with their gut feeling I hear they usually decide for the person what tattoo to give them well I'm not exactly sure what a sakyant tattoo is I've never heard the term sakyant before at least I don't remember hearing it so would I consider traveling to Burma again to get a traditional sakian tattoo no I would not I would not seriously consider traveling to Burma at all really for any reason I've had I've lived in Burma for more than 20 years like 23 24 years and uh yeah I don't have any real reason to go

back there I wouldn't go all the way
back to get some kind of traditional
Burmese tattoo one reason for that is
the Burmese bless their hearts for the
most part have very little aesthetic
tastes they're just not an artistic or
aesthetically sensitive people I've met
a few Burmese people that were very
talented artists I have to admit but
they are exceptions to the rule even
most people who are called artists in
Burma they just learn how to crank out
the same kind of picture or statue or
song Just I mean it's just they learn
this this like
a I don't know what you call it like a
template and they just they just keep

cranking them out and they're not really
artists at all in my
opinion but uh yeah the regular the
average Burmese tattoo artist or even
the average Burmese tattoo artist is
somebody I would not let come near me
with with like tattooing
needles because I would not trust that
they they' give me something that didn't
look like a total
eyesore and I really don't have any
great faith in magical protective
tattoos anyway it's it's like a placebo
effect if you believe that it's helping
you and protecting you it might actually
help you and protect you but still I

think the own would protect me just as

well as any you know

greenish ink thing that some traditional

Asian tattoo artist would want to put on

my body and as a general rule it's all

just monochrome it's all just one color

of ink like greenish bluish or bluish

greenish or

something

so yeah no I wouldn't ask for a custom

tattoo or go with their gut feeling I

mean if I had if someone was like

forcing me to get a tattoo from the

traditional saki yant tattoo artist in

Burma you know he forced me to go to

Burma you know at gunpoint presumably

and he he just marched me to this s

sakan tattoo artist then uh at least I
got the choice of going with my own
design or letting them decide yeah I I
trust my own taste more than I would
trust this total
stranger I might be able to like look at
what he's got tattooed on his own body
but uh you know get some idea but then
again it might be some other sakyant
tattoo artist that that tattooed
him
so yeah I'm I'm just not really into
tattoos I have to I have to admit my
father had a tattoo my brother's got
several even my sweetheart's got one or
two but um I just never had any desire

sort of like it's like the brand new jar
of peanut butter where you don't want to
you don't want to mess it up cuz so
smooth and nice on top I kind of feel
that way about my own skin to some
degree even though it's it's gradually
getting less smooth as I get
older so we'll just move on to Libra
Lamb's next question here RFK Jr or
Donald Trump yeah I'm going with Donald
Trump definitely RFK Jr just the fact
that he's a Democrat I've I I'm pretty
sure within the past 10 years I must
have vowed at least once never to vote
Democrat ever
again I used used to vote Democrat all
the time

but they've gone

insane and uh yeah and I I know Donald

Trump better than I know RFK Jr anyway I

know what to expect now I voted for him

even when I wasn't sure what to expect

but he uh he satisfied me that he was a

competent president un like our current

installed

vegetable so yeah Donald Trump that was

an easy question so I'll just move on to

Lamb's next question here do you think

if you tried meditating it would have

any effect as a Layman compared to the

higher States experienced as a monk

um yeah if if I were to sit down

cross-legged you know get into the full

Lotus if I'm still capable of doing that
and just Tred to meditate you know I'd
get decent meditation I suppose but I
don't think it would be anything
compared with the best meditation I had
as a monk just when you got all this
momentum going and you you're just
dedicating your life to meditating you
know meditating six hours a day at least
you know even if you're not doing any
kind of special Retreat just like my
first 10 years as a monk is probably
averaging about six hours a day of
meditation and uh yeah as a lay person
you know it's that's one reason why I
don't do systematic meditation anymore
it's just like having to go back to the

ABCs

so yeah it it would have some effect but

it wouldn't be anything remotely

resembling probably I mean I could be

surprised you know I could just sit down

and go into some deep contemplative

state but

um being realistic I would say that

probably it' just be sort of like

beginner's mind again where you're

you're just starting it again where that

would improve the quality of the

meditation but

um yeah it it would not be the same

level of meditation I guess that's the

question you asked so I answered it so

I'll just move on to the next question

this is from

ruie and ruie says hello poo there here

is the thing there is an inner visual

field that subsists there it is made of

colors shapes distances and intensities

of all the above sometimes just as

nonproliferation thoughts mentations

seems to be right at hand a color or

shape enters this inner field and it is

at once accompanied by its respective

tag I.E red fog fogginess left right in

front Etc what is your take on or

experience of this and then he asked

another question which is just a

continuation of the first one which is

or is there a more basic order that must

be in place to prevent this type of
categorization to even occur in the
inner field could that be hardcore CA
could that be the resultant indifference
to pleasure Pleasant neutral unpleasant
or is the practice to be placed on
directed to an utterly Transcendent
order so what you saying here as far as
I can understand this it is kind of
abstract is that you've got this inner
field of awareness and like you open
your eyes let's just go with vision it's
it's the standard thing that people talk
about when they're talking about this
sort of thing
like uh I got a book Buddhist logic back

there on the

bookcase that's just it's standard is

like a pixel of blue that's like what

they're working with is this pixel of

blue and they're they're talking about

all the you know how you experience it

and you know what it leads to and what

it doesn't lead to if you somehow stop

experiencing the pixel of blue so it's

just go with vision field of vision but

you know it's like you can be like inner

Vision or just perceptual field in

general so it's made of color shapes

distances and intensities of all the

above sometimes just as

non-proliferation seems to be right at

hand a color or shape enters this inner

field and is at once accompanied by the respective tag well first of all once you get good enough at mindfulness the respective tag stops you know you stop thinking you stop identifying it as this or that like you can be sitting there in meditation

and a dog starts barking outside somewhere and you hear it it's but it's just sound it's just auditory sensation you do not identify it as barking dog you know once you've identified it as Barking Dog you've pretty much stopped meditating properly I mean you can you do get sort of a second chance where you can be mindful of yourself thinking

barking dog

but generally you know you hear The

Barking Dog and you're think oh that dog

is so noisy why why does its owner put

up with this stuff and next thing you

know it's 10 minutes later and you know

you're still thinking about dogs or

something thinking about some dog you

had when you were six years old or

something but so one of the beginning

things you do is you try to stop the the

mental commentary that's labeling stuff

and then you can get more advanced where

it's just like the sound of the Barking

Dog you know it's it's just auditory

sensation but then when you stop

attributing qualities to it you know

it's just it's just passive reception
you're you're sort of like like a window
and the the sound is just going through
the window but it's like going in one
ear and out the other then um in a way
it just it all just becomes this
neutrality um I mean to some degree you
can't have it absolutely perfect because
for example I have read that even before
a visual uh datum gets to the optical
loes of your brain even your retina is
already starting to process the
information like it's sharpening
outlines that's one thing your retinas
do sharpens outlines and so you know
they're they're like fixing up the

shapes and everything to make them
easier to process once it gets to your
brain so I mean some of that is
unavoidable but even so it's like I used
to work on Japanese ships and I didn't
know Japanese at the time and so you
know I was just the the American
biologist on board just observing the
fishing operations because they were in
US Territorial Waters and you just kind
of tune it out you know people are
talking Japanese you don't understand
you know you understand maybe a few
words of it but it's not worth the
effort to try to understand what they're
saying so you just kind of tune it out
and to some degree you do that with

regard to everything when you're meditating but it's it's sort of a different kind of tuning out it's it's more like you just become like a mirror your mind becomes like a mirror that's just if anything is there it's there but you're not directing your attention to it you're not you're not like making any effort to perceive that to single it out and you know dis dismiss everything else it's just all there while it's there and then it goes away and something else is there but it's you're not thinking about it at all you know your mind is just like a mirror that it doesn't make any kind of Judge judgments or choices or

anything it's just it's all there and
you're doing as little as possible to
process the
data so let's see here or is there a
more basic order that must be in place
to prevent this type of categorization
to even occurr well you have to develop
mindfulness uh to a degree that's
difficult if you're not a monk or you
just don't have like an like an inborn
Talent for it some people they're just
natural born meditators you know they
can work they can sell used cars or
whatever and then they can just go into
deep meditative States just because
they've got like this Talent you know
like a like a talent for drawing or

music or math or

something so could that be hardcore see

it's it's mysticism

essentially let's see yeah I mean you

get you get into a like a a deep

mystical state where everything

is H how do I explain it well I I

mentioned St John of the Cross before

and how St John of the Cross his his

instructions for how to do deep

contemplation not just superficial

meditation where you're visualizing

Jesus on the cross or doing you know

dear God please have mercy upon me a

sinner over and over again as a mantra

that kind of thing when you get into

high contemplation you just dismiss all thoughts any thought that comes by you just dis dismiss it you know or like in mahasi or Buddhist Meditation you just note it Let It Go note it Let It Go note it let it go until finally your mindfulness gets so good that even when a thought just starts to arise or any kind of perception even when it just starts to arise you catch it immediately and it just Fades back out again

so it I mean hardcore CA might be I mean according to Orthodox Terra probably other religious systems also you have to get your ca down before you can get somea you know you have to have perfect

Morality In order to have perfect

concentration and then you have to have

perfect concentration in order to have

perfect

wisdom according to the the

standard the standard

Doctrine but um yeah it's not just

hardcore cila this causes your mind to

stop processing data and it's when you

you stop processing data it doesn't mean

that you're in a coma that you're

unconscious you're not a hibernating

squirrel it's just that your mind is

just wide open and you're more conscious

than when you're perceiving stuff

because if you're perceiving something

you know the sound of the Barking Dog or
the the the blue dot the blue Speck I
mean you're focusing on that to the
extent to the expense of everything else
you know you're focusing on one thing
which is very much limiting your
awareness because you're focusing on
this one thing
whereas if your mind is like a cheap
camera where everything is equally in
Focus you're not really focusing on
anything it's all there you're you're
aware of the full spectrum of your
conscious
experience but you're not singling out
anything and you're not labeling
anything and or even if a label starts

to arise even that can just become part

of the sort just the stuff on the mirror

that is it's sort of like your second

chance it's not quite as good as as just

not having it Arise at all but

still I'm probably just confusing people

at this

point so yeah it's mysticism essentially

in a

word

so but yeah I mean you there there are

levels of meditation that are Way Beyond

um just automatically labeling things or

automatically singling things out

perceptively and you know just into a

this you know even that it's just

everything is just one big

this so I'll just move on to ru's next

question which is for a while now I see

little value in so-called Tranquility

meditation or and analytic meditation

however there is a taste of something

utterly Beyond something which seems to

depend only on a volitional intent

pardon the

pleonasm or on un willful momentum

question

mark or could these be just Mara

delusions of great

profundity

um yeah I mean you can call any kind of

perception a Mara delusion and the more

subtle the perception is the the greater

the profundity I guess of the mara
delusion um so you see his little value
in so-called Tranquility meditation and
or or or and you says analytic
meditation however there is a taste of
something utterly Beyond something which
seems to depend only on a volitional
intent or un willful momentum yeah well
I mean that may be so but then there's
another level beyond that Beyond
volitional intent and willful momentum
because volition and perception are two
aspects of the same thing they cannot
arise separately you know they always
have to be there together and uh I
personally do not consider them to be

two utterly distinct you know
qualitatively different things you know
volition and perception I think that
they're just two ways of looking at the
same thing and you can't have volition
without perception you cannot have
perception without volition and so
you're eventually going to go beyond
volitional perception I mean this world
is volution and perception the world as
will and representation the world as
volition and
perception schopenhauer's
terminology so yeah so long as you're
perceiving something you're still you
still got a samsaric mind you're G to
have to go beyond perception or at least

because the perception is itself um like
a manifestation of Consciousness you
just see the all these perceptions as
the underlying
Consciousness you know it's like you see
waves on the ocean you don't get
distracted by the waves you know you
just see it as
water that would be a good way of
putting it that'd be sort of a good way
of explaining like a mystical state
where there's still stuff going on
you're not just like a complete blank
but it might as well be a complete blank
because you're seeing it all as the same
underlying Consciousness for lack of a

better word but ultimately even that

becomes like

paradoxical and then you there's like

the stage beyond beyond that but I don't

want to just keep spouting gobbly that

maybe nobody will

understand

so yeah eventually um getting back to

ru's question here um you just get to a

point where you just really can't do

much more with um Regular meditation and

uh like St John of the Cross getting

back to St John of the cross he he was

saying that that's he had this really

interesting chapter in his book I think

it's the ascent of Mount Carmel where

he's telling you when it is the

appropriate time to stop meditating and start going into the high contemplation stuff and one of them is where you just get bored with doing meditation where is you know you see little value in it anymore and you just you're just tending towards silence you know you just want to sit there and just empty out and that that's a good sign that you're ready to start doing what he would call contemplation what a Buddhist would probably call Janna but according to ruy here that's Tranquility but if you get into real jna I think you will you'll see value in

it so I'll just move on to uh ru's next

question here well it seems I'm now
passed the allowed number of questions
which is not true because one of his
questions I telescoped into two of his
questions I telescoped into into one and
still he's he still had another question
to go at least but I digress here well
it seems I'm now past the alloud number
of questions but the problem with music
and art in general is that it elicits
immediate judgments of taste which may
ens snare the mind driving it towards
opinion and may hinder the practice
especially if there is a deliberate
experiencing directed towards it or them
thoughts yeah I've I've people bring up
the point that like music even if

there's no lyrics it's just like
instrumental music I mean how could that
be bad but still you have to perceive it
and again when you're perceiving it
you're you're samsaric perception is
ssar so anything that requires you know
perceptual symbols is while you're
indulging in it you're indulging in Sam
Sor and in remaining stuck you're
wallowing in Sam
Sor oh although for a lot of people some
music can help to get them unstuck to
some degree because it's like the
perceptions they're experiencing are
more exalted or subtle than the
perceptions they'd be experiencing if

they were looking in some other

direction or listening to something

else

so but that's one reason why Buddhism as

a general rule has bad music doesn't

have nearly as good of music as say

Christians or Muslims or Hindus just

because music is considered be or at

least enjoying music is considered to be

immoral in Buddhism or unskillful

Karma

so yeah so I guess we kind of agree on

that so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Joe do and joeo

says is there any other interviews with

Brian you could put on your playlist I

heard you guys did over 300 videos

surely more than 115 are PC enough for YouTube uh yeah actually we've done a total of six gillion videos so we've done quite a few in fact uh Brian tells me that he's done more videos with me than with any other guest we used to do a quite quite a lot of I think we were doing like two or three videos a week for like at least a year and then we went down to every two weeks and then we sort of after I dropped out of the monk Hood then Demand on having the guest monk um kind of evaporated we still do videos sometimes but yeah at first I wasn't putting any videos up so um for a while like maybe more than a year ago I

think I started just taking old videos
that we had done and putting them on my
own channel because they were only on
his channel and he was okay with that he
he liked the idea just further further
not notoriety for
him um I did have to weed out uh a lot
of videos because there are certain
topics that are not to be mentioned on
YouTube because you can get like
warnings and Strikes and so forth and
that was approximately half when I did
start uploading our videos you know
there maybe half of them were safe for
YouTube um and but I only got about
halfway through before I kind of fizzled
out I've only done a few over the past

six months maybe just a few old ones I
did but there's still um probably at
least 50 videos that are safe for
YouTube that I've done with with Brian
that uh that I haven't has never been
uploaded onto YouTube um by me and are
not on YouTube now because Brian has
been kicked off of YouTube like 17
times so yeah I can I can still upload
old videos that I've done with Brian
back when I was was a monk
um
so yeah and also some of the ones that
weren't see for YouTube I still could
upload on to bitshoot so you get a
broader range of topics if you look for

old videos of me with Brian on bitshoot

so I'll just move on to joo's next

question here what's the longest someone

has sat in

meditation for that you know of also do

you believe that some Advanced monks

considered meditation for days or even

weeks without

moving um the longest someone has set in

meditation like that I have actually

seen there was a Korean Mahayana monk

who came to pandama in rangon when I was

there and he could just flop into the

full Lotus and just sit there like a

rock for three hours

straight

um and his his meditation interviews

were surreal but we we needn't get into

into that but um I've I've heard that

there is a famous Seattle he's

increasingly famous in Burmont I think

also in the west he's uh he's he's was

ordained in the theu tradition which is

pretty strange tradition and he makes

his at his meditation Retreats he'll

make them sit for like eight hours

straight in the full Lotus and it's just

this weird this going Beyond on the pain

kind of a thing they just eventually

they're in such Agony that they just

kind of transcend

it

so uh I've heard of other meditation

instructors who will make their like at a Meditation Retreat make the yogis sit like without moving for you know six to eight
hours but um that's a little extreme I think but with regard to some Advanced monks that can sit in meditation for days or even weeks yeah yeah I'm sure that there aren't I think there are probably more Hindus than Buddhists who just go into these trans States and just remain motionless for days on end I think with regard to Janna in Orthodox terraa it can last up to one or two weeks I can't remember if it's one or two weeks that is considered to be sort of the maximum for remaining in a in a

state of deep

Jan but I'm sure I'm sure it happens

there's some real Heavy Hitters out

there that are just beyond the

comprehension

of most westerners including most

western

Buddhists and a lot of them are Hindus

because the Hindus are more

into um you know they're they're going

higher and higher the Buddhists they

kind of bail out sideways as soon as

you're able to get off ssara by bailing

out sideways you you're feel free just

go right ahead but with Hinduism it's

like they're just going for greater and

greater and greater and greater Purity
so that they're getting into these these
states where um you know you know they
can just sit there without moving for
for a week
straight all kinds of things you know
they they're more likely to get psychic
powers too or that's my
understanding so I'll just move on to
the next question this is from
Garrett and Garrett says what does it
mean to be expelled from a tradition
Wikipedia says Bon suato was removed
from the aan cha Forest SAA lineage is
that akin to being disrobed no it's it's
nothing like being disrobed and you
can't really disrobe a monk this that's

sort of like a um it's just a misconception you can't kick a monk out of the songa the only person that can kick a monk out of the S is the monk himself but I mean you can do formal acts of censure on them formal acts of expulsion where you can kick them out of a monastery or you can even more serious than that is you can make them sort of like not to be talked to you're not supposed to sleep under the same roof with them you're not supposed to bow to them or let them bow to you you're not supposed to share food with them you know they're just ostracized and that's as close as you can get to kicking a

monk out of the SAA unless you're you're
going to be like the Burmese government
notoriously did by just uh forcing a
monk to become part of jaica by having
like a prostitute rap him or
something because if you have sex and
you enjoy it for just one moment you
know while it's in there then uh you're
out do not pass go do not collect
$200 so yeah Bon suata is not the only
one kicked out of the aan Sha Forest
tradition that was also uh aan BR got
kicked out because of his Monkey Shines
with ordaining
beunis and it wasn't just that he
ordained theunis it was The Story Goes
that anjan brah is the Abbott of a

monastery in Western Australia and he invited some of the senior monks in the aan cha tradition to come to Australia to discuss the possibility of ordaining bonis and then before they even showed up he already just went ahead and ordained the beunis just kind of as a way of having these senior monks just having to like Ascent to a done deal and they felt like they were like used you know they just felt like he had just done some shady trick on them or so I've been told and so he got expelled from the aan Sha tradition which all all it means if you're kicked out of the aan cha tradition is that you're not allowed

to stay at an aan cha Monastery anymore

the aan cha monks aren't allowed to stay

at your Monastery

anymore and I mean you're just not

considered to be an aan cha monk anymore

not officially anyway so they're still

monks but they uh they can't stay aona

monasteries anymore and aan Cha monks

can't are like strongly discouraged from

staying at one of these kicked out monks

monasteries too and that's really about

as far as it goes so we'll just move on

to the next question here this is from

keep the vinia and keep the vinia says

you said in a past Q&A that you became a

Buddhist monk because you liked the

strict rules and the interaction with

experienced monks does this mean that concept such as rebirth and the Four Noble Truths did not convince you of Buddhism did you only become a Buddhist monk for pragmatic reasons and I think this is somewhat of a misunderstanding I didn't become a Buddhist monk necessarily because I like strict rules and the interaction with experienced monks I mean that's certainly not why I became a Buddhist I mean I like the Buddhist I like Buddhism because you know it acknowledged that this is not reality and that there is a way of experiencing that reality there is a way of penetrating the veil and experiencing

Ultimate Reality and that was the main reason why um I became a Buddhist and wanted to be an ordained monk I mean that's the ultimate reason why I became an ordained Monk Is I wanted to know reality not just the you know the the illusion but I wanted to know Ultimate Reality that's like behind the illusion but um the thing about the rule and the the strict monks um the interaction with strict monks is I knew myself well enough to know that you know I can be lazy and you know just come up with excuses for not doing the right thing or whatever so I liked being in the the system that had like this you know established rule you know set of

rules even though most monks don't even
follow them but because I had ordained
wanted I was a conscientious Monk and
just wanted to follow the rules
so you know it was it worked for me even
though the monks around me were making
very little effort to follow the rules
so the experienc interactions with
experienced monks didn't help me a heck
of a lot I mean it it did help because
even though they might not be striving
for enlightenment still they knew a lot
of stuff that I didn't know but the main
reason that I became a Buddhist monk is
I wanted to know
reality and so let's see does this mean

that Concepts such as rebirth in the for
Noble truths did not convince you of
Buddhism well my
father claimed to remember his rebirth
or his past lives I he he was a firm
believer in reincarnation since before I
was born you know I just grew up with
that and the Four Noble Truths yeah I
mean it's pretty much self-evident you
can't really deny that I didn't really
know much about the four noble truths
until I started studying Buddhism but uh
yeah I mean it does make sense I can
accept that um um it's not why I became
a monk though because it's like you got
two paths that are ultimately the same
they ultimately arrive at the same

destination it's you know the path of
the heart and the path of the head path
of the heart is more feelings oriented
maybe a little more faith oriented and
you want to eliminate suffering whereas
the path of the head is maybe more
masculine you know more intellect
oriented and so it's not so much
suffering that I wanted to get rid of or
to
you know to free myself from it was
delusion but you free yourself from
delusion it's the same as freeing
yourself from suffering I mean they they
go hand in hand but it's just two
different

emphases so I was really more into

knowing reality than escaping from

suffering my father was this Macho tough

guy who used to say things like little

pain never hurt anyone and I I still I

mean as a lay person now I really have

to live that you know a little pain

never hurt anyone because I mean no

matter what you do there's going to be

pain you know as a monk or a lay person

but as a lay person there may be a

little more

pain um more distraction to you know

sort of get in the way of you mindfully

experiencing the pain without struggling

against it sort of a

thing

so so it's sort of a stoic lay Buddhism

that I'm practicing

now so I think I I think I answer that

yeah I guess I did I guess so I'll just

move on to the next question here also

from keep the

vinia and he says did you know that jism

also has a concept similar to the

Buddhist concept of no view it is called

anada anada and it states that the

ultimate truth in reality is complex and

has multiple aspects the parable of

blind man and an elephant is used in

jism to explain the doctrine of Anand V

of Ultimate Reality um yeah I think that

would be the same as sead Vada I read in

an Indian philosophy text many years ago
that in jism they have this Doctrine
called CAD Vada and
CAD um is some procrit and The Janes
have their scriptures written or
composed in a procrit language that
isn't Sanskrit and isn't poly it's it's
just this other this other form of
procrit that's similar to to poly and u
God means in a way or in a sense so in a
way there is no self in a way there is a
self in a way things can be permanent
and in a way things are can be
impermanent so it's like according to
the James there's an infinite number of
aspects to everything you can't see one
thing from every angle simultaneously

and and perceive every single aspect

unless you are like mahavira you're uh

what is that TI tonara or what's the

other word

ah I can't remember it starts with a v c

no it's a cavalin Kali where you're just

omniscient and then you can see

everything from every single aspect

every single angle but we common

worldlings who aren't Jane kins or tier

toneras um you know we just see a table

from One Direction you know we just we

can't know everything there is to know

about something all at the same time and

so you have to you just have to take

everything with the grain of salt you

can't really know anything perfectly and
so it's best not to adhere to like this
is the way it is and that's that's like
early Buddhism that's true like the
stereotypical fool in Buddhism says only
this is true anything else is wrong
whereas some Jane pra following sead
Vado would say well this is true but the
opposite can also be
true so yeah I I have read a little bit
about Jane philosophy and that was
interesting CAD wada or anonda I assume
they're the same because they um keep
the Venia seems to be uh describing the
same thing that I was reading about in
that Indian philosophy book many years
ago so I'll just move on to keep the

vania's next question would you give
food to none among Monks at an alms
round I'm asking because her ordination
was not in accordance with Buddha's
Commandments um even if um these new
bonies turn out to be I mean their
ordination turns out to be invalid and I
think that ultimately their their
ordination is invalid still there are
renunciant and it's good to see
renuncian like the Buddha said you
should support like if you converted to
Buddhism from like jism you you should
still honor your Jane teachers your your
previous teachers you know you should
still you know offer alms to any holy

person you know they don't have to be

ordained terraa Buddhist renuncian I

mean any you know any good-hearted

sincere

renunciant you know even if they're

belong to a different religion I mean

you're still earning Merit by helping

them and honoring them and respecting

them so

yeah I think I probably would unless she

was like really just wearing her bonei

status on her sleeve or

something but maybe even then I don't

know I've never really been in that I've

never really been in that uh

position but um yeah I mean if there was

some nun going along with with

monks um even if she was considering

herself to be a bikuni um you know I

might still give her food I mean she's

still trying to practice dhama I assume

she's still renouncing the world and you

know really going for it so that's

worthy of respect

anyway so I'll just move on to keep

the's next

question and I think he asked more than

six questions

here that rascally

fellow anyway his next question is

during your time as a monk were there

moments when you had almost no desires

and were just peaceful yeah when you're

sound asleep that's that's that happens
pretty much every night for just about
everybody um but yeah I mean there's
lots of times when you can I mean it
might be of longer or shorter
duration but I mean everyone's going to
have at least flashes of
that let's see almost no desires and
we're just peaceful yeah it happens a
lot actually I mean if you're just
living out in the woods you don't have
to work for a living you don't have any
other people to interact with maybe just
a scy dog that eats your leftovers maybe
ants or Lizards or something you know
you're just out there meditating that's
like your job then uh there's going to

be a lot of times when you have almost
no desires and are just peaceful I mean
there's times like that now I I'm not
sure what my desires are even at this
moment other than just continuing with
this
Q&A there's not very many desires at the
present
moment so yeah I'll just move on to the
next question here also from keep the
do Buddhist temples in Southeast Asia
have the same problems with child abuse
as the Catholic Church um I've heard
more I mean I lived in Burma for more
than 20 years I spent only like three
weeks in Thailand but I heard more about

that sort of thing in Thailand than I
did in Burma the Buras are just not
really a sensual kind of people which is
one reason why they're not a very
artistic people
um I mean it I heard one rumor about one
monk that I knew who was messing around
with it like an 18-year-old boy
supposedly I mean it was just gossip and
the gossip did not come from a
particularly reliable
source so I took that with a grain of
salt you know I I really don't know if
that's true or not but um yeah I I lived
in Burma for I mean like I was living
behind the scenes at monasteries for a
lot a lot years and I never really heard

of a a serious case of this of like

monks or I mean they wouldn't really be

monks if they're screwing little boys or

you adolescent

boys because I mean once the penis is

inserted into an orifice just the to the

width of a sesame seed that's it you're

you're kicked out you're excommunicated

you're paraja even though you might

continue to wear robes and pass yourself

off as a monk in reality you're no

longer a monk

but um yeah I just I'm sure that it

happens you know I'm sure that there's

like like homosexual pedophile monks

that just don't restrain themselves you

know I've heard about that in Thailand
more than I've heard about it in Burma
even though I lived in Burma for many
years like in
monasteries so I'm I'm sure it happens
but uh I don't think there it's anywhere
near to being as rampant as uh in Roman
Catholicism I don't know why that is I'm
not exactly sure why Roman Catholic
priests other than men who are gay who
then join the church as an excuse for
not getting married or something and
then they just can't resist the urge to
continue messing around with pretty boys
or
something but uh one one thing that the
Burmese people are they're very stoic

people they're not as sensuous people
they're not a passionate people and so
there's just less of that you know
they're lower te I guess and so they're
just not as much of that and also I
guess they're more serious in their
Buddhism even even the sloppy monks they
they don't doubt that it's true whereas
I have no idea what's going on in the
minds of some of these Catholic priests
that uh I mean it used to be even worse
back in the Middle Ages there was I've
read I think it was in um viron
Russell's history of Western
philosophy how um there was like this
papal bull you know in the Middle Ages

where women

were not required to to make confession

anymore because so many of them were

being raped in the confessional booth

that it was just becoming rampant and

just out of control just the the

Catholic Church itself was just it was

it was sort of like civilization was

collapsing for a while and so um yeah

I've never heard about anything like

that in terraa Buddhism there's always

been sort of this serious sort of

ancient Indian athetic

ideal that has helped to prevent monks

from even seriously considering diddling

pretty boys but I it does happen but

it's it's way less prevalent than in

other

systems and then finally not the very

last question of all but the last

question of keep de vinia is is Arthur

schopenhauer your favorite philosopher

and no he's not I mean I like him all

right but I think I would like David

Hume better I prefer David Hume to

Arthur

schopenhauer so of of modern Western

philosophers I think David Hume would be

my

favorite he was a radical I mean he was

just I read this book um

human knowledge at scope and limits by

bertron Russell back when I was a monk

and I mean the title of that book could
have been what do we do about the David
Hume problem because David Hume was just
destroying stuff that was just
considered axiomatic before he came
along like cause and effect he he just
pounded away at the idea that just
because B always follows a that it's
caused by
a that we don't really know that
so I liked him just because he was a
radical and also he said a lot of
important stuff in one of his earlier
his his earlier his earliest book his
his magnum opus uh he was actually um
favoring a kind of anata that there
really is no abiding self that stays the

same it's just you know mental images
and so forth Just rising and passing
away so let's see yeah I'm going with
David Hume I'm voting for hum so I'll
just move on to the next question here
this is from the wisest and humble
Guru and he says after 30 years of being
a monk you think you could survive
sometime in a jungle or Forest without
having anything in military Wilderness
survival kind of sense well long before
I was a monk I mean like I like I said
before my father was like this Macho
tough guy and he taught me how to go
camping I lived in Pacific Northwest
which is I mean Washington state has at

least three national parks and just
state parks and Wilderness areas
everywhere just forests everywhere and
he taught me how to Camp it was just
minimalist you know we didn't use tents
I mean after about the age of five you
know we just I mean you'd bring a tarp
that you could string up just in case it
rained otherwise you just slept on the
ground he he had this um he he bought us
backpacks but he just had this thing it
was like a packboard it was a Trapper
Nelson packboard made out of wood and
canvas it had like moose blood stains
all over it because he used to use it
for packing moose quarters Out of the
Woods when he lived in Alaska and he

would just put everything into like a
chicken feed sack and just lash it onto
this instrument of torture that he would
he would carry on his
back but um yeah so even as a kid I was
learning like minimalist like survival
skills my father would teach me how to
how to make GE four traps and snares you
know how to how to survive in the
wilderness essentially how to tie good
knots which any anybody should know and
uh as a young man before I was a monk I
started buying like survival guides you
know old Army Surplus Survival guides
and just various survival guides I still
have a few um e versions on this

computer so yeah I think I could survive fairly well um recently I was I've been watching the The Walking Dead you know it's this Zombie Apocalypse series and I'm just sitting there just from the beginning I'm telling him oh man you guys need walls what are you doing camping out in the woods like that I mean I mean look the zombie apocalypse you know is different than survival out in the wilderness necessarily I mean you got to have walls you gota has has to be big enough that you can move around and maybe grow a garden inside but small enough that you know your little group is enough to defend it that before long humans are going to be more dangerous

than the zombies are which came to

pass so yeah I think I I do pretty well

in a in a forest with I don't know just

being completely naked you know like

Naked and Afraid where you just dumped

out into this forest with nobody to keep

you company but this other naked afraid

person plus you know the camera

crew but um yeah I think I'd do better

than most

people so let's just move on to the next

question this is from uh White Ash Piper

and seeing this question I realized that

I forgot to do a little homework for

this but anyway white ash Piper says

happy Q&A day poasa I believe you're a

proponent of the theory of evolution did you become one during your University days getting your degree in biology or before what do you think of the new discoveries from the web telescope and that's the homework that I I forgot to do is I really don't know what the new discoveries of the web telescope are I have been keeping up on the web telescope so with regard to that I don't think very much because I'm I'm oblivious but with regard to when I started favoring the theory of evolution I'm pretty sure it was before I became a monk I think the first really important book that I ever read in my life was the naked eight by Desmond Morris where he's

describing humans as a species of animal
how we're human beings even though we
think we don't follow animal instincts
that were just Laden with animal
instincts and it was really a humbling
kind of a book it wasn't necessarily a
book on Evolution but um I do think that
before I I was in university I did read
the Origin of Species by Charles Darwin
I read that fairly early on I think I
was a teenager at the
time and it just makes sense I mean
Evolution and just um like the fossil
record is is I mean obviously life has
evolved on this
planet regardless of what causes the

evolution you can say God's God is
driving the evolution you can say that
some kind of schopenhauerian will you
know it's just this this Consciousness
just striving to to survive and exist
and fulfill you know whatever niches it
can fulfill you know I mean it doesn't
necessarily have to be darwinian blind
trial and
error plus some sexual selection and so
so
forth but uh yeah I don't know exactly
when it was that I became a proponent of
more or less darwinian Evolution but um
you know as soon as I became aware of
the evidence that I mean it is pretty
obvious tell you the truth just the

fossil record itself is is like
overwhelming evidence that there has
been Evolution that that uh you know the
first four billion years of life on this
planet was just Anor robic bacteria up
until you get enough oxygen in the
atmosphere caused by blue green bacteria
and maybe some chemosynthetic bacteria
that you can start having like more
advanced metabolism and you start
getting um like
ucareo cells and then multicellular life
and so forth and you know the Cambrian
Evolution and and it's
like I I don't maybe I'm just babbling
but I mean it's it's obvious like the

older the rocks are the older the

fossils are you know the the less

variation you're going to have it's like

the oldest fossils are just like

bacteria and then you start getting into

like

primitive um you know very primitive

multicellular life it's long after the

bacteria showed up very primitive plant

life and and then it's like the first

probably most of the existence of fishes

in this world they were jawless you know

all the oldest the fossils of fish it's

just jawless fish because the lower jaw

hadn't evolved yet or hadn't appeared

yet so yeah it's even though I'm not a

materialist the theory of evolution is

is got so much evidence supporting it
that I mean as a worldly you know within
the context of samsara it's just the the
obvious Theory to support with regard to
how we wound up here I mean it could be
that it's like I did a a video with aan
Puna Damo maybe a year ago where he was
saying that you know just blind
darwinian trial and error and so forth
isn't sufficient to result in US humans
that there had to be like Karma involved
you know it's like some sort of uh
metaphysical like conscious Force
driving Evolution and that's fine I mean
but it's still the evolution is still
happening

regardless so I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from
mubo and I warned you in advance this is
going to be a long one but uh maybe not
nearly as long as I thought because
we're well over halfway done anyways
mubo says many supporters of mass
immigration to the West characterize the
phenomenon as karma for the West's
history of colonialism in the third
world this is particularly interesting
as for the supporters of open borders
immigration is simultaneously held to be
an unalloyed good for society as well as
some kind of karmic Revenge what is your
reaction to the use the usage of the
word Karma here well I think the usage

of the word Karma here is sort of like
the usage of the word Karma on YouTube
videos like Instant Karma you know
somebody's doing something they
shouldn't ought to do and then you know
it's like it backfires on them and these
people people really don't understand
Karma they don't understand that karma
is is a mental state that it's in the
individual person you know individual
person um yeah they don't know what
karma is they just think that it's some
sort of the the universe is getting
revenge on them for their ancestors
having colonized some new land but all
lands have been

colonized you know even yeah I the only
places in this world that haven't been
where you haven't had a stronger tribe
just invading and and like displacing a
weaker tribe or absorbing the weaker
tribe it maybe some remote Islands or
this really remote desert areas maybe
like the center of Australia or
something um but aside from that
everywhere else it's it's stronger
people have moved in and taken over the
land me taken it away from weaker people
and that is a kind of evolution itself
that's how societies evolve that's how
the human it's largely how the human
race evolved one reason why our
Evolution happen so fast is because

we're just a warlike people and we just
out conquering weaker people than us or
at least our ancestors did
that so let's
see yeah I mean I wouldn't take this
very seriously about the supporters of
mass immigration um karma for the West
history of colonial I mean they're just
like they've got like this hysterical
blindness with regard to most of the
human race and most of the world they
just want white people to be the bad
guys and and because mainly just because
they're indoctrinated with this cultural
Marxism stuff where you know white
people have replaced the Bourgeois in

general as as the villain to be

overcome so it's just a bunch of lame

arguments

essentially anyways and the fact that

they consider it to be an unalloyed good

for society as well as some kind of

karmic Revenge well Ian it's just double

think it's a lot of indoctrinated people

will just believe you know too

essentially diametrically opposed

positions sometimes maybe even at the

same

time

so what is my reaction to the usage of

the word Karma here it's just an an

ignorant usage of the word without

really understanding understanding what

it means so I'll just move on to the

next

question this is from cricet and frog

song and cricet and frog song says is it

ever a good idea to make bad things

happen on purpose to expiate your

karma and that's essentially what the

Janes did or probably some of them still

do but in Buddhism no it's not a good

idea to make bad things happen on

purpose because when you're making

something happen that's karma too you're

just making more karma you know Karma

literally means making or doing or

acting action

deed

so yeah I don't think it's ever a good
idea to make bad things happen on
purpose to expediate your Cara I mean it
just let it happen at its own rate
that's the middle path really I mean
that is the original or considered to be
the original middle path you know in the
first sermon of the damaka puut it's the
middle path between self-indulgence and
self- torture and the self- torture is
what other sects were doing including
the James and the aicas where they're
making bad things happen to themselves
they're torturing
themselves and that's not what dhama
teaches I mean it's just not good it
just it's just making things worse

essentially because you're making karma
from deliberately hurting somebody
including deliberately hurting yourself
you're just making more bad caral by
doing
it so I think I'll just move on to the
next question here and this is a this is
a good one I got to admit this is a
juicy one this is from
Austin and Austin says my friend keeps
arguing with me about Karma and she
keeps saying these dead children in
Palestine did they just have bad karma
from a past life we just give reasons to
our life but it's completely meaningless
or you're victim blaming dead children

if you believe all suffering is caused
by your own
self and Austin continues here he says
and I don't really know how to respond
to these and they're all very sticky any
ideas I can't really rebut the idea that
these children are dying because they
did something bad in a past life Maybe
by rebut he means like like explain it
how it's oh it's true rebut means to
like deny or conclusively deny or
something but anyway with regard to one
thing that really sticks out for me is
this argument given by his friend you're
a victim blaming dead children if you
believe all suffering is caused by your
own self and that is like victim blaming

that's just a kind of slur it's like
someone who's
indoctrinated or a Normy and they don't
have a really good argument they'll just
fling a slur as a way of just like
causing a short circuit in the whole
thing and winning the argument by Def
fault it's like I mean a lot of you just
cons have experience with um you know
people using the term racist or sexist
or you know transphobe or homophobe just
as a way of just it's almost like
dehumanizing you it's just you know Nazi
fascist you know you're a fascist and
they don't even address the the the real
issue it's just that they think that

they're just like disqualifying you from
participating disqualifying you from
even offering your opinion by just this
sort of like the argumentum ad homm or
something victim blaming I mean it
really is it's sort of like just calling
someone a racist or a fascist or
something it's they don't have any
better arguments so they just it's it's
like name
calling here it's not so much name
calling because it's like a verb victim
blaming you are victim blaming dead
children but I mean the fact remains
that we are creating our existence I
mean someone like this is a materialist
they think this world is

reality they don't think that we're creating our own reality um regardless of how true that is like eart TOA in his in his F her his first famous book The Power of Now he's talking about someone who's unhappy and they're like raging against the world or raging against this or that really it's it's as though they're standing in a mirror raging at their own reflection because this world is like a reflection of our inner experience so I mean you'd have to have some kind of metaphysical argument with this person a metaphysical debate against materialism because they seem to be like materialistic realists you know

or scientific realists something like
that so I mean if they want to call it
victim blaming so be it I don't give a
[__] if they call it victim blaming
because the fact remains that all
suffering is ultimately
self-inflicted although there is no self
I mean even so in in like a worldly you
know W har Des all Dua is volitional and
self-inflicted although it's it's very
tricky if you're a kid and you're being
abused or you know being shot by an
Israeli soldier or something I don't
think the Israelis are actually shooting
kids it's just that they're bombing
buildings that contain kids but still I
mean when you experience the pain then

um most people are not sophisticated philosophically enough to know that pain and suffering are two different things I mean they can both go by the term Dua and
poly but or hurting in English or something but still pain is just a physical sensation and the suffering comes from wanting that sensation to stop and also it's just one way of looking at Karma I mean it's not necessarily all from past lives is I mean anything that happened in past lives especially according to Orthodox terraa has no power at all because it no longer exists all that exists is the

present moment and we are creating that
just through a kind of karmic
momentum so it's we've got it inside us
and it's just we're just manifesting
this world and I mentioning I think it
was possibly the last Q&A I did it's
like dreaming
that this is just like a higher level of
dream this is not Ultimate Reality but
if you're having a dream at night in
your sleep you think that it's real
while you're dreaming it and then when
you wake up you realize it wasn't real
but also very few people nowadays would
deny that we are creating our own dreams
not very many people nowadays would
think that some deity is implanting

those dreams into us maybe a Muslim who
thinks that Allah is really all powerful
you know they might think that their
dreams are caused by Allah but most
people in the west you know it's
just we are creating our own dreams and
we are creating this
dream and it's just like kids especially
they're just not very good at driving
their their Cosmic vehicle yet I guess
some some people just people in general
so it's not so much that you know you
you mess something bad happens to you
because you were a Roman soldier 2,000
years ago who helped butcher a barbarian
Village it's it could be that you're

just not skillful you know you're not
fully awake you know you're still fairly
ignorant with regard to what reality is
and isn't and so you're just messing up
you know you're you're creating this
reality but still um and it's it's
mainly in accordance with your karma I
mean it is in accordance with your karma
but your karma is this this will shopen
howan will just moving forwards through
time
and it's hard to explain so let me get
back to these uh these arguments here
one argument these dead children in
Palestine did they just have bad karma
from a past life well not necessarily
from a past life but uh yeah there is a

good chance of it I mean that would be like the main Buddhist explanation is that lifetime after lifetime they're doing good deeds and bad deeds and both good deeds and the bad Deeds create this you know it's it it just adds into your stream of of your volitional Consciousness and it's going to have effects and even though they can't remember their past lives well that's just because you know they're not fully awake yet and it's it's too bad really I mean just you look at just the horror of what has happened in this world since human beings have been here I mean it's always there's always bad stuff

happening and that's partly because
there's also also good stuff happening
that they it all has to balance out in
the long run but anyway Let's see we
just give reasons to our life but it's
completely meaningless well that's an
easy argument to refute because even to
have a concept of life itself is is
meaning you know I mean if everything is
meaningless then yeah I mean you you
just you might as well be just blind and
deaf and mute and
numb so it's it's not completely
meaningless because we have to give
meaning to it I mean meaning is some
sorrow to the extent that we are stuck
in samsaric pseudo reality we're

surrounded by meaning because that's
what samsara is perception is meaning
you know you're giving meaning to
something like the earlier question
about you know you got the the
perceptual field and then just
immediately you're you're adding putting
labels or meanings on the things and
that's
samsara so
we just give reasons to our life but
it's completely meaningless I mean that
itself is it just seems to me to be
blatantly false I mean that's kind of
existentialism right there or again it's
it's like scientific realism they just

say oh El this world is here just

through random chance

and you know we're just meet robots you

know so these questions I mean the dead

children in Palestine did they just have

bad from a past life for the most part

from the Buddhist point of view yeah

with the regard to the second question

we just give reasons to our life but

it's completely meaningless i' call

[__] on

that I mean there maybe what this person

is saying that there's no completely

meaningless in the sense that there's no

ultimate underlying meaning and I would

agree to that because Ultimate Reality

is meaningless you know samsara has

meaning but but reality doesn't because
meaning is just like a symbol that
represents something else but this
person seems to be completely stuck in
samsara and so everything that they're
dealing with is meaning it's not
meaningless they might say that it's
completely meaningless but they don't
know what they're talking about because
their world is composed of meaning you
take away the meaning you take away some
sarry you take away this world no more
meaning no more
world but they're like a scientific
realist and with the victim blaming part
well I mean that's not scientific

realism there that's just going along

with sort of

modern sort of uh attempting to refute

something by just coming up with the

convenient

slur but in a way it kind of is victim

blaming but in a way there are no

victims because we're all creating this

for

ourselves you know all suffering is

self-inflicted so where's the victim and

just maybe the just a deluded person

which almost everybody is that they're

hurting themselves without even

realizing it and

then and then I guess you could call

them a victim of their own their own

predicament but I mean it's not they're
being real in reality they're not being
victimized by some outside force human
or
otherwise so anyway again Austin
concludes this question by and I don't
really know how to respond to these and
they're all very sticky any ideas I
can't really rebut the idea that these
children are dying because they did
something bad in a past
life well I mean if you're going to try
to have an argument with someone who is
just convinced that like modern
liberalism is the enlightened View and
scientific realism describes reality you

know it describes this world and our
place in it then you're going to have to
completely reprogram them before you can
really make any Headway with any kind of
Buddhist
argument because they're just living in
a in a different Paradigm you know
they've got a completely different set
of explanations for reality or a very
different set
anyway and like I'm just not a
materialist so I mean a lot of their
arguments wouldn't even really apply but
I mean if you're going to have a debate
with them then you got to have some
Middle Ground you have to agree on
certain basic points before you can have

any kind of meaningful debate otherwise
you know if they're just
convinced that you know scientific
realism is is the ultimate truth or that
the Bible is the ultimate truth then I
mean you just kind of wasting your
breath trying to argue with these people
unless you can they're they've got
enough open-mindedness that they're able
to at least meet you halfway and you
have to meet them halfway of
course but yeah this looks like a no-
win scenario here because I don't think
you're you're really going to win any
argument um with a person who's just
like a scientific

materialist they they probably won't
believe in karma at all even if karma is
just volition I mean if you Define karma
as
volition you know monks I say that karma
is volition or volition is karma then uh
yeah at least you can kind of get your
foot in the door you know you say karma
if you say that volition exists then
you're saying that Karma exists because
they're the same at least according to
Buddhism then the ball would be in their
Court to try and say that no bition
isn't Karma but I don't know how they
would do
that so yeah there's all kinds of bad
things happening sorry to say so anyways

now we're getting going to have a a few technical questions from nature cure and then that'll be it that'll be the end of the thing so we might be about two hours which is kind of normal actually despite the fact that I answered about twice as many questions as
usual so anyway nature cure
says in samut nikaya 25 dhamari and sadari cannot die without becoming enlightened or would become enlightened before they die how should one understand understand this well my understanding is really that damari and sadanari very likely were not taught by the Buddha at all that it's sort of a

later development by monks with too much
free time and just too much of a a
passion for philosophizing and cooking
up system
myology so damari and sadanari
um they can be any kind of Arya they can
even be a soda but apparently they're a
kind of soda if they're a soda they're
the kind of soda that is going to become
enlightened In This Very life and what
causes them to be that way is
some some law of the universe that Abid
dama Scholars deal with a lot and
commentators deal with a lot but which
never can really be explained as to why
it has to be that
way but uh yeah I mean dhamari and

sadanari

how should one understand this I mean I

I wouldn't even bother you know I mean I

don't consider it to be dealing with

reality it's sort of like arguing about

whether the Holy Spirit emanates

directly from the father or whether it

emanates indirectly from the father

through the son and there were people

like killing each other in like the the

late Roman Empire just over that very

same that very same debate and there's

no way they can really know I mean how

how would anyone going to know about

damari and sadanari without being one

and I'm not sure that I've ever met

one so yeah I mean don't take everything

you read in the

texts very seriously there's a lot of

really valuable information just

profound wisdom in the poly Tex and

there's a lot of silliness in the poly

Tex too and there's a lot of just like

hyper

intellectual attempts at just working

out these elaborate Scholastic systems

that you're going to find in the text

especially in Abid dama and the

commentaries but in sutas like this

you're going to find it

also so anyway I'll just move on to the

next one which is along the same lines

in the maim Naya number 70 the K giri

suta it mentions seven different Aras or something could you please explain this and again I've never really been interested in this sort of thing but I just happen to have the Buddhist dictionary which any serious uh student of terab Buddhism should try to get a copy of this I mean they're sometimes they're handed out for free distribution I think this one was free but anyway you look

under Arya pugula or

Arya and section B here talks about the Sevenfold grouping of the noble disciples and it is as follows one the faith devotees or the

sadari is that that mentioned here yeah

sadari that is the faith devote two is

the faith liberated one or the sadawi

muta three is the body witness or Kaya

saki fourth is both ways liberated one

UB

bot five is the dhama devote or dhari

which is the other one that was on the

the previous question six is the vision

attainer

D seven is the wisdom liberated one or

the

paut this group of seven noble disciples

is thus explained in wisi Maga

2173 and I don't know I mean I guess

might as well let's just go for it let's

just wait into this so according to the

wisi Maga these seven different kinds of
Aras is one he who is filled with
resolution or aduka and in considering
the formations as impermanent or anicha
gains The Faculty of Faith he at the
moment of the path to stream winning is
called a faith devotee or sadan
usari at the seven higher stages of
being an
Arya then he is called a faith devotee
wait at the seven higher stages he is
called a faith liberated one or simota
which means that a nari according to
Orthodox terraa would exist for only one
trillionth of a second because the very
next because that's only when you reach

the first stage of stream entry which is
the path to stream entry that's Mega but
when the very next moment according to
to Orthodox tradition like Abid dama in
the commentaries the very next moment
after you reach the path you go to
fruition so according to
this um when you first become a soda
when you hit the fruition or the the
path stage of being a sodana then you're
called a sari but then after that you're
s wiut or liberated by faith and that
starts the very next moment so why even
bother to even have I mean according to
Orthodox terava you got for the four
stages of ARA Hood you've got um two two
stages you got path and fruit path and

fruition

so you got Sodapop path soda fruition

sakagami path sakagami fruition anagami

path anagami fruition and then arahant

path arant fruition that's where they're

talking about the eight noble ones when

it's talking about eight instead of

seven is talking about these four kinds

of Aras with each having like path and

fruition for each one and according to

the Wii

MAA and and furthermore like I already

mentioned that the the path stage lasts

only like a trillionth of a second it's

only one moment why would you even

bother saying that such people are

worthy of of like reverence worthy of
offering gifts and so forth when they
exist for like a trillionth of a second
I mean you wouldn't even be able to
start bowing before they stopped being
that and started being something else
they would have hit the fruition
stage so sadan usara here lasts for like
a trillionth of a
second okay so anyways three he was
filled with tranquility and in
considering the formations as miserable
or Dua gains The Faculty of
concentration he in every respect is
considered as a body witness or kayas
saki he or four he however who after
reaching the absorptions of the

immaterial sphere has attained the highest fruition of Holiness he is a both ways liberated one or ubat bagaut five he who is filled with wisdom and in considering the formations as not self or anata gains The Faculty of wisdom he is at the moment of stream winning a dhama devote or dhama nari seven at the highest stage a wisdom liberated one and that's it well further details about the body witness the both ways liberated one and the wisdom liberated one look under the three poly terms um in in this dictionary so so the both of these that he was talking about in the previous one damari and Sari

according to Orthodox tradition they
exist for like a trillionth of a second
and then they move on to being something
else so why even bother to put a name on
these people it's
just it's this kind of thing has never
really struck any kind of traction with
me I've never really taken it seriously
I've never really believed it I mean
I've never really felt the the urge to
believe it's like should I believe this
it's just it just strikes me as false
immediately or just as just Superfluous
just unnecessary it's just all this
unnecessary gobbly go that nobody needs
to know
this I mean you certainly don't need to

know it in order to become

enlightened so yeah so I would say that

majaya number 70 the K sua is a rather

late

suta so anyways I'll just move on to

Nature Cure's next question

question which is to become enlightened

one should listen to dhama talk from

enlightened one is it

legit how should one understand this

well you obviously don't have to listen

to a damat talk from an enlightened one

in this

life maybe the implication is that at

some point in in your countless zillions

of lifetimes at some point in the past

you must have listened to an enlightened person like G Buddha in this life he became enlightened without hearing a dama talk from an enlightened one because he's the person who reinvented Enlightenment according to tradition you know dhma had died out and then he's the one who rediscovered it not reinvented it but rediscovered it so he he but nevertheless in past lives he encountered fully enlightened beings like uh when he was the uh the recluse Sumo he uh he met deonar Buddha pretty sure if I remember my mythology right and so you know he he met with an fully enlightened Buddha you know many countless eons

ago so that was good

enough so yeah you don't have to listen

to a dama talk from an enlightened being

in this life and good luck finding one

although there's plenty of people who

are considered to be enlightened eart

TOA AES

Shanti uh yeah lots of

them so yeah I mean it doesn't refer to

this life it helps I mean if you can

find an enlightened being um yeah

definitely listen to what they say and

take it

seriously but uh let's just assume that

in some past life because we've had an

uncountable number of them we came

across an enlightened being at some
point or another and then we heard a d
talk from them I hope instead of we just
like said bad things to them and like
drove them away with a stick or
something so finally the very last
question from nature cure and from
everybody the very last question two
hours into this thing
is soda P's maximum seven rebirths
sakagami is one rebirth is it a legit
thing to believe and I've discussed this
numerous times um the earliest texts
soda apparently doesn't mean like some
kind of uh someone who has like
superhuman attainments a soapa
originally probably meant that someone

had entered the stream of dhama sort of
like a born again Christian or someone
who has been just newly converted
they're full of Faith you know and in a
way they're kind of you know guaranteed
not go to hell or get bad rebirth just
because you know there's such a they're
a believing sincere DH practce
practitioner but the maximum seven
rebirths and so forth um and like
glimpsing nibana so that they're like
the the lowest form of
sainthood um yeah I am skeptical of that
and the earliest texts don't mention
sakami at
all and the earliest text like the first

sutas of I think it's the Ed Wuda refer
to anagami apparently in the sense of
enlightened beings and it does make
sense an anagami is one who does not
return therefore you would assume that
originally an anagami was an enlightened
being but arahant you know like I was
saying earlier in the earlier text
you've got more diversity of terms and
then eventually the Buddhist
philosophers settled on you know one
standardized term for each meaning and
so uh sometimes it results in like
repurposing of old
terms so yeah I really do not follow the
four stages of sainthood one reason why
I don't follow the four stages of

sainthood is because it seems to be only
Buddhists who talk about this that the
four stages of sainthood I'm unaware of
any other uh wisdom tradition you know
like the contemplative orders of of
Christianity or Hinduism or any other
any other spiritual system mentions
these four stages and a Buddhist could
just smugly say well that's because they
just never get to that to that level but
I don't believe that at all I think
there's very good chance that there have
been fully enlightened Hindus fully
enlightened Christians even and
uh they just don't have any concept of
that I St John of the Cross did have the

concept of the like the beginner the
Adept and the perfect which correlates
to the Buddhist concept and the terab
Buddhist concept of the putuj the Sea
and the AA so something like that where
you can triangulate you can have two
different systems just independently of
each other probably came up with
essentially the same system that would
kind of put it on firmer footing that
you know maybe there is really something
objective that that that is based
on but the Buddhist four stages of St
Hood as far as I know it's uh
peculiarity of Buddhism and uh I don't
think that Buddhism has a monopoly on
enlightenment I think it's one of the

best systems for enlightenment you know
designed for enlightenment but um I
don't think it has any kind of Monopoly
on it and so yeah the whole four stages
of saood like I've said many times
before I really don't take it at face
value I think it started off as having a
different meaning and then gradually um
as the philosophy got you know
formulated and evolved and systematized
and everything it came to mean something
else
so that's it I'm
done and uh if you have any questions
you're very welcome to ask and I'll
answer them in my new studio which will

probably be uh fixed up a little better
the next time because we're still in the
process of getting things set
up and uh look look at the URL links
below if you please and subscribe and
like this video If you please and I
think there's a good chance that I'm
going to be starting to upload stuff
onto Rumble soon um partly just because
YouTube is starting to get snotty and
and like not letting people watch with
with an ad blocker installed and I just
commercials just demean my dignity I
just have loed commercials since I was a
teenager and uh maybe I'm just too cheap
to to pay for the YouTube
premium but uh anyways be

happy

hello and welcome to episode 68 of

question and answer and I am your host

poo Bosa coming to you from this

room and we have got a merciless

onslaught of questions this time it is a

veritable zombie apocalypse of questions

and so I suppose I should just take a

sip of my sweet

tea and weigh right into

this and the first question is from the

ARA s

project and the ARA sasti project says

considering that rebirth is a real

phenomena and I've just got to stop

right here considering that this fellow

calls himself the Arya sasti project

with sasti being the first two syllables

of the word

sastia I just gota just go to make a

statement here and that although I am

not a national socialist or an advocate

of national socialism nor am I an

advocate of any kind of fascism really

nevertheless I am a grammar

Nazi and

phenomena is plural if he's talking

about singular it should be considering

that rebirth is a real

phenomenon

non so that said I think I'll just start

over here the arus sasti project says

considering that rebirth is a real

phenomena what kind of parents would you

prefer to be born to in your next
Incarnation what race ethnicity economic
status geographic location personality
traits other siblings or other factors
that are important to
you that's kind of an interesting
question I assume a lot of people um
that believe in rebirth consider this
sort of thing a lot of Asian Buddhists
they have an idea in their head that at
least they want to be richer or higher
class or you know better looking or
whatever in their next life but from my
point of view really any choice you make
like any conscious choice that you make
with regard to what your next birth is

going to be like is actually going to be
counterproductive because I mean it's
your comma that decides what birth
you're going to take and so you wind up
with the birth that you need the most
you know it's like the birth that is
most appropriate for you is the one
that's going to happen sort of like
people like praying to God asking for
things when of course God knows better
than you do what you need and although
Kama isn't God nevertheless it is kind
of creator of our existence or our
seeming existence and so I mean your
Comma just left to its own devices to
just do its own thing is going to make a
better choices with regard to what your

next life is going to be than any
conscious or I mean at best
semiconscious um Choice you're going to
make ignorant of what you've been
working on Life After Life you know what
it is that you really need to face you
know bad things that have to happen to
you as kind of wakeup calls or ways of
like course readjustments and that sort
of thing so I mean I'm just content to
let you know comma take its own course
and I'd just be reborn in whatever would
be the life that I was most in need of
that is most appropriate to my
situation um nevertheless I mean
assuming that you do have some kind of

choice I mean I would like to be at

least

reborn

into you know a family that isn't in

like really a bad situation you know I'd

rather not have a a

drunken violent person as a father and

just like a prostitute as a mother that

sort of thing but again I mean if that's

really what my that's really what I need

then I mean so be

it sometimes I have considered that in

the past I did have somewhat of a choice

uh like in ancient times to be born in

Greece or India and I made the mistake

of choosing

Greece but I mean maybe not I don't know

anyway I'm just going to move on to the next
question and this is from Indiana DH
formerly known as the anti-marxist
league I think he is still known as the
anti-marxist league in some circles so
let's just call it an
alias and Indiana dhama says based on
your previous answer I should probably
cease selling items on Ebay is that
correct or is there some Nuance to be
more specific I usually sell old DVDs
and books that my brother provides well
this is sort of a followup on a question
he asked in the previous Q&A about
wanting to renounce the world in a

secular manner without being ordained
into a monastic order that he's going to
just sort of become more or less of a a
meditative recluse and just renounce the
world that way and so this is sort of a
followup on that and I did mention in
the previous Q&A that uh if you have to
work for a living you know you have to
make money then getting into like sales
and marketing and that sort of thing
would probably not be your best bet
because I mean you don't want to get
sucked into some Sor and greed and just
keep interpersonal interactions to a
minimum especially with worldly
normies but
but selling items on Ebay it seems like

it's not the same as being a used car
salesman they'll tell you what I'm going
to do that kind of thing or you know our
prices are so low they're
insane you know that kind of stuff is
not
daric but just selling something on eBay
I mean all you're doing is it's all done
like remotely pretty much as far as I
know you just State a price you know
somebody is willing to pay that price
and they do the transaction like
electronically so I mean that's
relatively innocuous that's seems
relatively harmless to me as a way of
making a living so long as you're being

honest you know you're you're charging

what you consider it to be worth that

sort of thing

um and not having to haggle too much so

yeah I don't see any real problem with

that so I'll just move on to Indiana

dh's next question here and these are

all with with regard to his plans on

secular renunciation and his like

process that he that he's already begun

with regard to secular renunciation and

again I congratulate him for deciding to

renounce some

saric nor me

Dum so his next question is I have two

trustworthy siblings who would be

willing to manage my money would this be

advisable as part of secular

renunciation well it would be more of a

renunciation if you're not handling

money that uh you know monks aren't

supposed to touch the stuff except under

very rare

circumstances um apparently even Jesus

at times at least in in the gospels was

telling his his disciples or his

Apostles not to handle money although

that's kind of ambiguous because in

other passages they they are handling

money but um yeah I mean if you could

get them to handle your

money um that would be fine although you

have to be careful about not handling

money like indirectly by proxy like

handling the people that handle money

and that's what monks generally do

you're not handling money you're

handling the money

Handler and uh I mean if you take that

too far you might as well just be

handling the money yourself because if

you're getting like picky and fussy and

just m causing headaches for the person

handling your money you know you're not

being easy to support

um you're not content with whatever

comes your way you know they they give

you you know Frosted Flakes and you you

like get upset with them because you

wanted Frosted Mini Wheats or something

then you're better off just handling
your own money that's one thing as a
monk that
um it was a kind of aesthetic practice
or something where you just have to get
used to it you just have to accept that
you're not always going to get what you
ask for they're going to give you the
the wrong thing something you didn't
want and you don't complain about it you
know you you amongst duty is not to be a
burden on the people who are supporting
him so you got to keep that in mind and
I'll just move on to the next part of
this uh multiple part
question I no longer own a TV should I

also get rid of my radio I occasionally
listen to local news
stations well I mean the closer you come
to sensory deprivation and solitary
confinement the better I suppose um the
radio is samsaric it's like samsaric
propaganda you know everybody on the
radio with few very few exceptions is
just accepting some Sara as reality and
you know their narratives like the news
news broadcast and so forth you know
they're just trying to sell you on the
idea without even realizing that they're
trying to sell you on this that this
samsaric clown
show is
reality so it would be a

more strict form of renunciation not to
listen to the radio and then of course
music um you know from the Buddhist
point of view music is just Indulgence
in sensuality and a distraction news
also like monks in the text I mean
technically I'm pretty sure it's not
against vinia rules it's not against the
rules of monastic discipline for mons to
talk about politics but repeatedly in
the texts there are
lists of what is uh Tira Chana via or
like animal knowledge and talking about
Kings and wars and and like government
government officials and so forth like
politics essentially is considered to be

animal knowledge animal

talk

so I mean it would be a stricter form of

pronunciation not to listen to the radio

radio or watch

TV so we'll just move on to the next

part of this

question what practices other than

meditation could be helpful for a

secular quasi

renunciant and aside from what I

mentioned in the previous previous

Q&A one really important practice that

is largely ignored even by veteran

Buddhists outside of say the Hy

tradition is mindfulness of all

activities so it's like when you you you

you want to stand up let's say you're
sitting in a chair you want to stand up
first you note the desire to stand you
note the muscle movements in standing
you know the the changes in pressure
like on the bottoms of your feet and
like on your knees and so forth maybe
the the cloth the clothing brushing
against your skin just the the motion
involved in standing up that sort of
thing you're going to turn your head you
you notice the The Urge or the desire
the intention to turn your head then
like the sort of like the oily feeling
in your spinal column you know as you
turn your

head things like that and if you really
want to Rob yourself of almost all
enjoyment of food practice mindfulness
of eating which is an aesthetic practice
because really robbing yourself of one
of the few Pleasures still allowed to
you is pretty aestic so you don't just
dig into your meal you know it's like
you're mindful of seeing the meal in
front of you you're mindful of like the
hunger like increased slobber in your
mouth you know you're mindful of like
your arm reaching with the fork you know
maybe the the coldness and hardness of
the fork against your hand you know the
the muscular movements muscular
movements of like you know getting a

scoop of whatever it is you know
bringing it retracting your arm back to
your mouth just the the sensations of
the food in your mouth then the
mindfulness of the chewing the feeling
of the stuff turning into this gooey
slobbery mush in your mouth the
intention to swallow the the sensations
of the swallowing just repeat repeat
repeat until the food is gone um that's
it's tough to do because naturally you
want to enjoy your
meal and just observing you know all the
phenomena involved in you eating your
meal it it just pretty much it's a buzz
kill essentially so that's just uh being

mindful of all of your activities which is very much stressed in the texts and probably a major part of the the meditative practice of monks in the Buddhist time was really just going through life with Siti s just s is essentially you know when you turn your head you're you mindfully turn your head when you reach out with your arm you mindfully reach out just throughout the day just not just when you're sitting on the floor and meditating you know with your eyes closed but just throughout the entire day you're mindful of everything that's coming up and that is a very powerful

practice so yeah that's something that

you could try to cultivate I would I would highly recommend that so we'll just move on to the next question this is from White Ash

Piper and white ash Piper said I watched your talk on Dua the other day perhaps I need to watch again but my question is on passion or in PO beaga is it desire to be or to have passion for example a vocation or Hobbies art would this or could it lead to desire and Dua this one question is it desire or this this sentence is it desire desire to be or to have passion I don't fully understand that maybe it's just I'm too much of an autistic grammar Nazi that um it it's it

does not seem to be completely

grammatically

uh I don't know what the word is and I

don't want to say the wrong word because

of the the state I'm in so let's see

raaga is talking about

passion and is it desire to be or to

have passion well passion or Raga

usually is translated either as passion

or as lust and it really means like a an

intense desire or any intense emotional

state that would be

raaga and monks are supposed to have as

little of that as they can manage so um

calling like for example a vocation or

Hobbies or art um you know it's it's

sort of like a an English idiom to say

you know like art collecting is my
passion or drawing is my passion or
playing the piano is my passion um but
that's really not what the Buddhist
texts are talking about they're talking
about any intense desire or intense
emotional state and it could be that
people just get into intense emotional
states over collecting baseball cards
but such people are are best avoided I
think um but yeah anything that you feel
strongly
about um yeah that's that's like Raga or
it can be and it it leads to dooka I
mean the only thing that you really
should feel strongly about is just you

can have like a a passion for meditating
you know a passion for studying Dharma a
passion for for just practicing towards
you know greater wisdom greater
understanding and ultimately
Enlightenment and eventually even that
passion has to be like go of but it can
be like your last valid passion before
you let go of all passion it's like a
lot of people they just replace all
their other passions with religion or
you know practicing Dharma and then
finally they realize that that's their
last stumbling block this passion
they've got for it this clinging to
dhama is like the last obstacle they've
got to Enlightenment So eventually they

have to let that go too but I mean you
don't want to let go of the raft before
you get to the other
side so I hope I asked answered that
question because I'm just moving on to
the next one this is from Athena
sigil and Athena sigil says as I'm
watching you and no he says as I'm
watching and you're discussing both
Donald Trump and then various meditation
techniques and observations a question
popped in my mind what do you think of
Sam Harris he claims to be a fairly
consistent meditation practitioner and
also one of the biggest sufferers of TDS
that I've ever seen what are your

thoughts on him well I have to admit I
have not watched or listened to Sam
Harris in years back around 2015 16 when
I was first getting red pilled I I used
to watch Sam Harris on YouTube
and I mean I'm no expert on Sam
Harris um he's an intelligent guy he
talks slow which seems to make him seem
more intelligent or something although
of course Ben Shapiro talks fast and
he's intelligent too but um it's my
understanding I could be wrong but it's
my understanding that Sam Harris is one
of these sort of like Steven Bachelor
who wants to
take dama and just take out all the
stuff that is not compatible with modern

Western scientism and then use dhama especially meditation as a kind of psychological self-help technique that you know they just kind of dismiss the whole idea of Liberation from dooka and and ignorance and so forth and they just say well at least it improves the quality of your life it improves your understanding um so so good for that so uh with regard to that I would say I mean to the extent that someone is rejecting the metaphysical aspects of Dharma and just accepting Dharma as a kind of worldly self-help technique you know that's compatible with Western Scientific realism and so forth then

yeah they're definitely missing the boat
to some
degree U to the extent that they accept
dhama that's good but to the extent that
they reject it that's not so
good and uh with regard to his TDS I I
stopped listening to him before he
really went off the deep end with regard
to just passionately despising Donald
Trump uh he may have disapproved of him
back when I was back when I was watching
his videos but um yeah I mean there was
some some to do lately or not lately but
you know maybe a year ago where he was
saying that um I mean it's worth it to
rig elections just to keep Trump from
winning winning an election you know

that even if the the elections were

rigged that it's good to the extent that

they prevented Trump from becoming

president like back in

2020 um yeah I mean he caught a lot of

flak for that and uh rightfully so I

suppose but um I guess he's a I guess

he's like a leftist sort of like a a

Bill Maher

kind of liberal or something you know

that that still votes

Democrat even though the Democratic

party has largely abandoned them sort of

like the Republican party has largely

abandoned you know globalist neocons

even though there's still a lot of them

up in the ruling hierarchy still the the masses that are actually voting Republican just despise them and the masses that are voting Democrat or at least lots of those masses just despise the oldfashioned classical liberals who are now considered to be far-right extremists I mean I'm um I've got a Discord server a lot of people are on it and we took um like the political Spectrum tests and I mean most of us are considered to be right-wing we're I mean we're just called you know extremists and Nazis and stuff and most of us were almost in the middle so like like someone who's almost in the middle nowadays just based on like classical

distinctions between left and right now
were considered to be farri extremists
you know like MAA Republicans or just
people who support
Trump whereas actually the left has um
way more left-wing extremists than the
right has right-wing extremists in
America as far as I have
seen so that's what I think about Sam
Harris which isn't very much because I
stopped watching his videos years ago I
mean he does have some good things to
say
but it's about as far as I'll far as
I'll do far as I can go I don't know I'm
I'm sort of having trouble with my words

today I think so the next question is

from Austin and Austin says did the

Buddha have bad karma when David dat

caused him to bleed and if so does the

bodhisatta carry negative Karma over

lifetimes of

rebirth well this is like two questions

so I guess I should separate them I'm

separating them now they are now

separated so first question did the

Buddha have bad karma when deodata

caused him to bleed

and the Orthodox statement is a fully

enlightened being makes no new

Karma but they still have the residual

karma from their past that is still

working itself out even though the

person is now enlightened so the Buddha
certainly had bad karma you read or at
least in the past I mean you read some
of the jota stories and I mean he's not
always a saintly sage in in these
stories I mean usually he is even when
he's an animal he's a saintly Quail or a
saintly fish king or something thing but
uh so the Orthodox Orthodox answer is
you know he had done bad things in the
past you know they might have been
millions of years ago but the karma had
not yet reached
fruition and uh so that kind of stuff
comes up you know bad things happened to
the Buddha he got sick sometimes you

know I mean he went hungry sometimes
they were like famines in the Buddhist
time you know he wasn't getting enough
food some times I mean he was causing
bad things to happen to himself when he
was doing the the six years of self-
torture you know the
duia so yeah he had bad karma in his
past from before his Enlightenment that
was still just sort of running itself
out for the rest of his life along with
mostly Good
Karma but some bad karma in there too I
mean Maham Moana I've pointed this out
many times Maham Moana who was the
Buddha's left-hand man one of his two
Chief disciples I mean he was literally

murdered I mean he was according to the text he was literally beat to a pulp so that he did not have an unbroken bone left in his body and he was fully enlightened he was a great disciple so it's not that he was creating Bad Karma after his Enlightenment he wasn't creating any Karma after his Enlightenment even just the the lowest level of arant is no longer creating Karma but still you've got this residuum of sort of karmic effects that that are still you know associated with your personality and so forth that still work themselves out um I could come up

with hypotheses of my own that are not
Orthodox whereas you know there an
enlightened being I mean there's really
nobody there so that it's the people
around him it's their karma that are
largely determining What's happen
happening to the enlightened
sage and so it may have been the Bad
Karma of some of his followers that
caused him to meet with these mishaps
but that is not the Orthodox answer to
that
question and so I'm going to move on to
the second part of Austin's question
here which is and if so does the bodh
SAT carry negative Karma over lifetimes
rebirth and yeah I pretty much already

answered that the answer would be yes

that would be the Orthodox answer is yes

yes so I'll just move on to the next

question here which is from cak and sead

zida and cak and sead Z

says is it possible to meditate or

practice in any way while

reading well I mean obviously if you're

reading a dhama book or any book that's

got profundity to it you know spiritual

or philosophical

profundity then contemplating that

profundity while you're reading is a

kind of low-level meditation some of the

the 40 standard uh types of meditation

or you know a kind of like intellectual

reflection you know you're still
thinking so I mean there could be that
kind of low-level meditation um you
could probably take it up a notch by
reading Zen Coons you know read the
mumon con or the hian Roku or something
where you know it's just pretty much
hitting you with with meditative Coons
while you're
reading um you know read eart TOS The
Power of Now or or just read a few
verses from the DAP and just contemplate
those although most of the contemplation
will happen after you read the verses I
guess and also of course you can just
take it to the level of just being
mindful of turning the pages I mean I've

done that before you know you're reading a dhab book and when it's time to turn the page mindfully reaching mindfully lifting mindfully turning and uh of course if you have to swallow while you're reading you mindfully swallow your slobber you know you can mindfully observe these kind of things I mean at one time I had this remarkable experience I was in rangon walking back and forth in a driveway with one of my supporters and we were just having a conversation and I was so used to meditating at the time that even though I was holding up my end of the conversation quite well you know I was

fully fully there to that extent
nevertheless my main concentration my
main um like my primary object was like
the movements of my mouth and just sort
of the vibration in my my vocal cords
while I was talking I mean that was like
my primary object and I'm just watching
nature take its course as I'm as you
know the meat Poppin is holding up its
end of this conversation so to some
degree you can do that while reading but
it's trickier if you're reading or
talking being mindful because all the
words and perceptions and symbols and so
forth tend to be distractions you have
to attend to to the meanings of things
which is taking you out of any kind of

deep mindfulness or

meditation so I'll just move on to CAC

Z's next

question which is kind of a long one

because it's got a long passage in it

and it is as

follows according to

majima 7even on the gradual practice of

a monk the Buddha says he starts off

monks in a in an order of practice first

Sila then sense restraint then

moderation in eating then vigilance then

SI s then overcoming the Nar then J some

seem obvious but some seem confusing for

example how is s s a different practice

than sense restraint I thought they were

the same practice what is its function

here later on and how do we practice it

how should we lay people carry out the

instruction to have moderation in eating

oh that's another question here I got to

separate

these okay let's just let's see he's got

a number of questions that are

uh

okay so what is the function here later

on and how do we practice it so

originally sense restraint it can just

mean just

avoiding like commotion you know you're

going out alone into a forest I mean

that's a kind of sensor stream because

you know you're getting away from all

the commotion of a village or a town and
you're going out into the relative
emptiness of a forest and you're just
living a kind of life you know a moral
life where you're just avoiding
excessive s sensual stimulation so that
could be what he means by self-restraint
here um you know it's just like you're
just paying attention to living your
simple life and you're not paying
attention to all the other things you
could be paying attention
to that I assume would be the meaning if
they are different if it is
differentiated from
s because s it's it's like I was talking

about earlier SAA especially is
everything that you're doing you're just
paying attention to the sensations
involved and not spinning off into
elaborate commentaries in words you know
you're just trying to be as immediately
in the present moment as you can without
lots of running commentary without
labeling things if you can manage
that
so yeah that would be my guess I haven't
read the suta to like do my refresher
course on maim minaya
107 um but the Buddha did give it like
the gradual discourse where he'd start
with Elementary things and then get more
and more advanced as as the uh the

discourse progressed um this could be something along those lines although this isn't just a gradual discourse this is gradual development of of monastic practice

so yeah I think sense restraint first CA then sense restraint then moderation in eating yeah I think since it's in between two relatively Elementary practices the sense restraint here probably would just mean you know going off to a quiet place with not much commotion going on and just living a life that doesn't have a lot of commotion going on you know just simplify your life simplify the stimuli

that you're exposed to I assume that would would that's just an educated guess so I'll just uh move on to his next sub question here how should we as lay people care carry out the instruction to have moderation in eating well don't eat until you're stuffed you know eat for the purpose of keeping yourself healthy not for the purpose of sensual pleasure and like as a monk especially as a young monk I had to chant this thing on a daily basis you know among eats not for the purpose of self-beautification not for the purpose of enjoyment but only for the purpose of keeping his body healthy so that he can

continue practicing dhamma also

one meal a day or at most two meals a

day is plenty for someone who really

wants to to be a hard noosed with regard

to moderation and

eating and uh just eating not being

fussy with your

food that sort of thing so I'll just

move on to the next sub question here

and finally the part about vigilance

says quote come you Monk dwell intent on

vigilance during the day while pacing up

and down while s sitting down cleanse

the mind of obstructive mental States

during the middle watch of the night lie

down on the right side in the lion

posture foot resting on foot mindful clearly conscious reflecting on the thought of getting up again during the last watch of the night when you have Arisen while pacing up and down while sitting down cleanse the mind of obstructive mental States what is this part talking about is it giving us a kind of schedule that we should practice in it's hard to decipher what the schedule is and what it is telling us to do but I want to try to copy this in entire and the entirety of the gradual practice well that passage caused me a lot of trouble when I was a young monk because one of the implications of it is a monk sleeps only four hours per night

because it's like the three watches of the night the first watch of the night I mean you're just doing sitting meditation and walking meditation the second watch of the night you lie down on your right side get four hours of sleep because half of the night you know if you just take 24-hour day day half of that is night supposedly so you got 12 hours you divide it up into three that's four hours per per watch so the middle watch you know from like 10 p.m. to 2: am. you lie down you sleep on one side with just your intention like as you're falling asleep is just to I mean you're intent upon waking up again so that you

can continue your

practice and it's not everyone can do

that I mean

if your meditation isn't going well or

you're just as sleep ahead and just by

your Constitution you need plenty of

sleep then you can just start

hallucinating you can start dreaming now

just through sleep deprivation you're

you're giving yourself four hours of

sleep per night then I mean you can just

start like hallucinating just you're

just starting to dream while you're

still awake just because of your your

brain or your mind's need to dream for

the purpose of this Pro processing

information and so forth because dreams

are there for a kind of I mean they've
got survival value from evolutionary
point of
view so yeah I mean the main the main
point of all this is the first watch of
the night the first four hours you're
practicing diligently the second four
hours you sleep as I mean as little as
you can manage just because it's
interfering with your practice you know
like you shouldn't be sleeping when you
could be practicing but of course you do
need some sleep and so you know the
ideal is like four hours per night and
it was only one month in my entire life
that I was able to average less than

four hours of sleep per night and that

was during some of the best meditation

of my

life so the better your meditation the

less you need to

sleep just maybe just because you got

less to process because your mind is

just so clear and relatively

empty

so yeah and then and then as soon as you

wake up you just dive back into

practicing again so that's pretty much

what it means so we'll just move on to

se action CAD Zen as's next question

although he kind of cheated a little bit

by asking several sub questions in that

one oh that rascally coac and CAD Z

now so his next one is the fourth the
four path model of Enlightenment is
something that is not early according to
GC Pond but there are early sutas still
where people have the undefiled vision
of dharm or damaku or damaka I should
say is that right no
damaku the dama I where they realize
that all that is subject to arising is
subject to decay
whereas in many other Traditions you
might be considered enlightened already
with this like the people who claim to
not identify with the body or
intentional actions but in Buddhism this
is just the first step it stops people

from thinking they have completed the

holy life and not be complacent thoughts

or thoughts because there's a question

mark at the end of thoughts um yeah it's

it's like in the texts when somebody has

what is

called let's see what is

it h where is it the undefiled vision of

dharm is you know whatever has a

beginning has an end you know like in

that sequel to the to the

Matrix whatever has a beginning has an

end Neo and that is like um that Vision

where you realize that you you you

firmly realize it not just like you

accept an intellectual proposal but you

really see it clearly you know it really

hits you that that is sort of

um the

stereotypical attainment of ARA hood you

know you've you've become an Arya at

that point you're you're a Buddhist

saint that is destined for enlightenment

within X number of lives you're no

longer gonna to backslide into like

ghost Realms or go to hell or anything

like that

so whereas in many other Traditions you

might be considered enlightened already

with this I I don't know of any TR I

that would say just realizing that

whatever has a beginning has an end um

would be considered

Enlightenment like the abrahamic
religions would just clearly reject that
because according to them or most of the
followers you know God creates you out
of nothing so you got a beginning but
you don't have an end because you're
going to spend forever and ever in
heaven or
hell so Buddhism differs from the
abrahamic monotheistic Rel religions in
that regard um I don't think Hinduism
would would agree with it so I'm not
sure exactly what relig other spiritual
Traditions he's referring to
um yeah I don't I don't think that it
would be easily confused with being
fully enlightened I think someone who

has reached that point would realize

that they've still got some progress to

make you know they're not you know

abiding in in Bliss

247 so to

speak

um

yeah okay so I guess I answered that

question I'm not 100%

sure and uh maybe I should start

adjusting the blinds because I've got

like these horizontal bars of light

going across me

now so yeah let's do

that just a

minute that's

better okay so now for another question
from covac and sead
zida he says I read that unlike other
schools even though the Salona say that
there are six kinds of Consciousness the
chaika are not a separate reality like
in Abid dama but rather just different
modes of the cheetah they claimed this
because the Buddha called the six senses
all so rejected the Aggregates or
anything else including nibana as real
existences do you think their
classification of chaas like this is
more in line with the sutas or did the
Terra get this one right well I do
remember in AK wers history of Indian
Buddhism which I'm pretty sure I got

back there on the bookcase he does say
that uh terada and Sal Trona and I think
he named one other one that I don't
recall off off hand they were some they
were like the most conservative schools
of Buddhism they came closest to what
early Buddhism was teaching in C Trona
um they had the advantage of not having
an Abid dama at all like santica is just
following the sutas the sura in santica
means
Sutra so they were following a kind of
Sanskrit but uh and not poly but still
they rejected Abid dama and just adhered
to the suta Traditions which was a plus
for them I think so the S Trona say

there are six kinds of Consciousness um
yeah Terra will I mean the sutas do say
that you know you got eye Consciousness
ear Consciousness nose Consciousness
tongue Consciousness body Consciousness
and mind Consciousness so that's six
kinds of Consciousness but in Abid dama
I mean it's all just Consciousness it's
it's different flavors and then they
they even divide it up into over a
hundred different flavors of
Consciousness different like subtleties
or differences that this in the form
that Consciousness
takes but still the in Abid dama you
know according to Orthodox Terra it's
all just one cheetah one mind one

Consciousness and then they say that

there are 52 different chetos or mental

States um and then according to him i'

I've never really studied C Trona

philosophy I've you know read about C

Trona but um

you know I haven't been reading this

stuff like covac and sead zida does he's

coming up with uh a lot of like early

extinct Buddhist sects and like studying

their philosophy which is good I might

add but uh it may be that a lot of this

just hadn't been published yet at the

time that I was a monk studying

dhama

so yeah I mean six's kind of

Consciousness even Terra would agree
with that to some degree because because
you know eye Consciousness ear
Consciousness Etc but still according to
Abid dama it's all just Consciousness
and then but then he's saying that
according to cell tronas the different
mental states are not separate realities
but rather just different modes of mind
and I would tend to agree with that
because my whole idea that I've been
going with for a long time isn't that
Consciousness is one Ultimate Reality
and the different mental States
including stuff like wrong view I mean
according to Abid Dum one of the 52
ultimately real mental States is wrong

view which is just

strange but anyways I consider

Consciousness to be like the essence of

mind and the mental States the

perceptual mental states are just

different forms that this Consciousness

takes you know it's like glass would be

the essence of this glass of sweet

tea and just the the the container the

beverage container which is also called

a glass unfortunately for this for these

purposes I mean that's the form but you

can have something else is made out of

glass you can have glass astay glass

window pane

Etc but it's all made of

glass and yeah I would agree that
different mental states are all made of
Consciousness that that's the ultimate
essence of the mental state assuming
that it has an ultimate Essence would be
Consciousness so I think I would be more
inclined to
side with the salonas than I would with
Abid dama claiming that there's 52
ultimately real mental States different
kinds of mental States including wrong
View and even saying that perception and
bition are two entirely qualitatively
different ultimate realities I mean that
was one of the first I think it was the
first philosophical DH essay I ever
wrote was it was inspired by me trying

to figure out me I mean how do you what
comes first when you direct your
attention to something is it the
volition or the perception I mean if the
volition comes first I mean you're
directing your attention towards
something you don't even know it's there
yet because you haven't perceived it but
in order to perceive it I mean there'd
have to be some focusing of attention
and so I mean they have to be
simultaneous and they can't arise
separately you know they all have this
they both have the same you know the
same object so why even call them two
different things I mean they can't you

can't possibly have one without the

other you know they're always

simultaneous at the same moment in in in

time the same point in space assuming

that mind even occurs in space I mean

why even bother to separate them they're

just two aspects of the same thing and I

think the C tronicas might actually

agree with that just based on their

study of the the

sutas rather than coming up with this

Abid dama philosophy that has some

wisdom to it but it also has a lot of

stuff that I just think I just consider

to be

false

so yeah so I

think um the cotrona classification of chaas according to the description by covac and cot Z yeah I think it might be more accurate than Orthodox Terra with its Abid dama philosophy and its division of you know 100 what is it 128 ultimate realities or something like that so so yeah I'll just move on to the next question this one is uh and Now for Something Completely Different this is from Stevens and Stephen says how do you make your French toast and I am somewhat renowned for my French toast I might make some tomorrow in fact so it's uh you just uh take some

eggs raw eggs preferably pour in a
little milk bead it up with a fork and
and then you you kind of whip in some
nutmeg and cinnamon the nutmeg is
important don't leave out the
nutmeg then you get some good bread you
dip it in this stuff and you fry it if
You' got like bacon drippings you know
bacon grease that you can use to grease
the pan that's that's good um otherwise
you can butter vegetable oil it's really
not that important and then after you've
got it nicely golden brown on both sides
because you have to flip it over
once then you take it off and then you
put it on a plate and then you you have
chopped strawberries I almost always put

chopped strawberries um like bacon like
little crumbled pieces of bacon that's
good too it's not absolutely necessary
but it's definitely nice add some animal
protein just protein in general and it's
good if you've got crumbled bacon like
if you get the Costco kind that comes in
a bag to just fry it up a little bit you
know kind of make it a little crunchier
and something you know just make it seem
like it's fresh bacon you sprinkle that
on there butter you have to put the
butter on first I guess before you put
on the strawberries and the crumbled
bacon and then you pour some syrup maple
syrup over that and then you put some

whipped cream on top and then you devour
it the devouring part is important don't
forget that part otherwise it's it's all
in
vain so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from pseudonym
which as I say as I've said before it
probably isn't his real
name pseudo pseudonym says the purpose
of these five precepts aligned questions
is to explore to what extend Mo extend
it's extent I'll start over the purpose
of these five precept align questions is
to explore to what extend moderation has
sway with regard to the five
precepts
so what are your thoughts regarding a

sincere householder who is committed to
the five precepts who purchases meat at
the grocery store so I
mean I suppose I should get into
something here that there is a
difference between real morality and
precept just following rules I mean they
can both in poly they can both go by the
name of Sila you know Poncha Sila the
five precepts or silata parasa is
adherence to morality and observances
which usually means just adhering to
rules but not
necessarily so well I mean usually
according to the terab commentaries it
means something completely ridiculous

like like imitating dogs and cows and

stuff but we don't need to get into that

so but there is a difference between

rules on the one hand and actual

morality on the other and these five

precepts

um even though they're they are based on

morality that the five precepts

themselves are just

precepts and

the the morality is I mean there's more

subtlety to morality than there is to

just you know I undertake the the

precept to avoid you know Onslaught on

living beings you know that's that's

like a sentence that is trying to

crystallize a certain

moral uh idea but still there's going to
be much more subtlety to the actual
comma of your volitions because I mean
your volitions are very subtle and and
like Mercurial what's the word that's
just
changing like uh who is that the god
that never mind there was a Greek god
who lived by the ocean he was sort of a
sea
god uh proteus Protein that's the word I
was trying to think of so your mind is
protein it's it's like changing and like
all these mixed like mixed emotions and
and like mixed motives and everything
just it's it's a

mess and so a precept just following a rule it's not going to be able to handle just the the sheer complexity and subtlety of your motives in your mental States when while you're performing actions

so rules are one thing actual morality is something else there's going to be a certain amount of overlap I guess depending on how you look at it I mean you want to see rules of just sentences then yeah there's not even going to be overlap so what are my thoughts regarding a sincere householder who has committed to the five precepts who purchases meat at the grocery store most devout terraa

Buddhists by

Meat and they don't have a problem with

it because they've

interpreted the the five the first

precept of not killing as not killing

it's doesn't have anything to do with

not

buying it's not killing but if you're a

western who thinks too much and you're

just thinking well I mean I'm endorsing

killing it's you know it's like voting

in favor of killing animals by buying

this

meat then maybe they have a problem with

that and to some degree you have to come

upon like an acceptable interpretation

of the rule for yourself that might not be the same as somebody else's interpretation but at least it makes sense it's an honest interpretation and then you try to follow that I think that would probably be the best approach to take or if you've got a teacher like a monk who you take the precepts in front of you ask him what what is the meaning of it and then you can follow his interpretation but there's going to be different interpretations especially now that we're living in the postmodern West rather than in the ancient Ganges Valley and so you've got sort of eclectic minded westerners who think differently than an

ancient Indian

villager or even a modern Burmese

villager for that

matter so

so I think I kind of answered that one

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

next one here what are your thoughts

regarding a sincere householder who is

committed to the five precepts who

prefers dealing in cash to avoid paying

taxes well that's that's a little

trickier because avoiding taxes and like

customs duties um it can be regarded as

a kind of stealing like um a monk who

smuggles something through customs so as

not to have to pay customs duy

that that's that can be part of jaica he
can be excommunicated for life for
stealing because what's it sunka Gata
parika or something like that if I
remember the poly right it's not just
necessarily stealing something I mean if
you are like swindling the government by
not paying what you are what you legally
owe then that can be considered a kind
of
stealing so you'd have to be a little
more careful with that um I mean you
start off with the the plain meaning and
then if there are
um like textual like in the poly texts
precedence for something that isn't
clearly defined by the rule to be part

of that rule to be included under that
rule then you should accept that I guess
if you're a devout terot Buddhist so but
nevertheless I don't think it's illegal
to just sell your friend like some old
stereo speakers for 50 bucks and not
declare that on your income tax I don't
think that that is illegal so long as
you're not like
illegally like committing tax fraud or
just refusing to pay the taxes that you
legally owe but like a waitress who's
getting tips and isn't declaring all of
her tips I mean I don't think the IRS
really cares I mean nowadays it's mostly
on credit cards so that they pretty much

have to because they got records of it
but still um yeah to some degree just
people like neighbors or friends buying
and selling amongst themselves is not
illegal so I guess you'd have to just
make sure that you're not actually
breaking the law with regard to avoiding
paying taxes and I think so long as
you're not actively breaking the law
that you're doing okay so I'll just move
on to the next one which is what are
your thoughts on regarding a sincere
householder who has committed to the
five precepts who indulges in porn
graphy well like I was saying towards
the beginning of this answer or this
series of answers that the rule and

ethics or morality are not the same
so you can not be like being you know
having promiscuous or adulterous sex you
know you might not be breaking the third
precept but still if you indulge in
pornography there's going to be a
certain amount of Raga or lust and
desire and so forth which dhama
discourages so it would be unethical
even if you're not breaking the
precept so I mean you have to bear in
mind that Buddhist ethics is a much
broader spectrum and much more
comprehensive than just these five
rules um some commentators some monks
will say that all of Ethics is contained

within the five precepts but

I'd say probably it's more true the

other way around the five precepts are

contained within the broad spectrum of

morality I mean I don't know depends on

how you look at it I suppose but with

regard to yeah a sincere householder is

committed to the five precepts who

indulges in looking at pornography um

regardless of whether he's breaking the

third precept or not I mean he's still

wallowing in

sensuality so I mean just because it not

clearly against a certain rule doesn't

mean that you should just go ahead and

do it I mean there's even vinea rules

that don't exist that maybe should exist

I mean there's certain things monks can

do like

cussing or just playing cards for match

sticks you know gambling for match

sticks so long as you're not using real

money you know that kind of thing that I

mean there's no rule against it but

still I

mean um it's pretty clear that the

Buddha would not have encouraged it in

any way so I'll just uh move on to the

next one here what are your thoughts

regarding a sincere householder who is

committed to the five precepts who tells

White Lies to avoid conflict and

prevents suffering well yeah he's still

breaking the rule there as long as he's
telling lies regardless of their color
then yeah he's he's still you know sort
of like
killing you know animals to avoid
suffering like like he's killing lice in
his kids hair you know he's just like
catching them and you know doing
whatever you do to lice that you comb
out of a kid's hair um I mean he's still
killing even though he's doing it for
the sake of preventing suffering in his
child and perhaps the whole rest of the
family if the lies spread to other
people so yeah I mean you're still
telling why lies so someone who is
committed to the five precepts would

either tell the truth or remains
silent and then of course there's lawyer
speak where you're technically telling
the truth but I mean it's might not be
entirely honest like let's say you know
that uh Bob stole something at work and
then you can completely truthfully tell
your boss well I know it's either Bob or
Joe who stole it and this way you're
you're casting shade on Joe even though
you know he didn't steal it but it's a
factual statement that either Bob or Joe
stole the stuff even though you know
it's Bob but you throw Joe in just
because you don't like him or something
then yeah I mean that would be even if

technically it's not breaking a rule I
mean it's still unethical so you have to
be careful about I mean you shouldn't
just adhere to rules that cata parasa
that's like an obstacle I mean you
should really have a more subtle and
sort of a broad vision of
Ethics so okay here's another one this
is these are all from
pseudonym what are your thoughts
regarding a sincere householder who is
committed to the five precepts who
occasionally succumbs to his culture's
Norm of having wine with dinner well
he's just breaking the rule I mean he
might not be doing anything necessarily
wrong you know you have one glass of red

wine with your spaghetti I mean you're not going to get drunk off just one wine unless you're a total lightweight so it's against the rule but I mean some things there's rules especially for monks there's rules of monastic discipline that have nothing to do with morality you know a monk eats food in the afternoon he's breaking a rule even though there's nothing inherently immoral with eating food in the afternoon he grows his hair too long or his fingernails too long or he's got protruding nostril hairs he's breaking a rule even though there's nothing immoral about that

so with regard to having a sip of wine I don't think there's necessarily anything inherently immoral with taking a sip of wine I don't particularly like wine so I'm not really tempted to do it but still it is breaking the rule so if this person is committed to the five precepts then he shouldn't have a glass of wine with a spaghetti

period so I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from Arin and Arin says it seems much of what the Buddha taught was directed at monks and not lay

people can you give us a definitive way to tell the difference since many of the teachings seem to directly conflict with

the life of a

householder well most sutas are directed

towards

monks um there are a few sutas directed

towards Le people one of the best known

is the sealo W Su I don't remember what

number you know I don't remember the

exact location of the sealo

wuta but um you look up sealo wuta and

it'll have relatively detailed

instructions for how to be a good

Buddhist lay person but the thing

is I mean ethics are ethics I mean you

don't have like one set of Ethics you

might have one set of rules for a monk

and a different set of rules for Lay

person or precepts but you don't have
one set of ethics you don't have one
kind of ethics for monks another kind of
ethics for Lay people it's just that lay
people cannot be as ethical as monks you
know they've got families to protect you
know they've got stuff to do they got
money to they got bills to pay you know
so I mean the stuff directed towards
monks is still true regardless of who
reads it it's just that
uh you know way there's this artificial
distinction between monks and lay people
between renunciant and householders who
enjoy pleasures of the senses and um so
there's like two different sets of rules
or something but I mean this the

philosophical ethical stuff is true just

across the board it applies to everybody

it applies to frogs it applies to to

dava's and Heaven

Realms

so ative way to tell the difference

since many of the teachings seem to

directly conflict with life as well the

five precepts obviously the the three

refugees um and also texts like the

seala watas Su I'm sure if you if you

look on the internet you do a search for

like Buddhist texts or sutas poly sutas

directed towards lay people then you'll

find them and um you know it'll be lots

of instructions there but most of the

stuff is directed towards monks not because it's directed with regard to monks rules but just because is dealing with advanced level ethics that most lay people really are not in a position to follow you know like jna for example or just being mindful of everyday activities I mean there's nothing really preventing a lay person from being mindful of everyday activities other than the fact that they're surrounded by distractions and they've got a much more complicated life so that trying to be aware of every intention as it arises and you know every muscular movement and so forth is just a Herculean task so yeah I guess a definitive way to

tell the difference

between what the Buddha taught and

directed towards the lay people versus

what he taught towards mon is just you

know read the seala W suta and uh maybe

look on the internet for you know a list

of the sutas that are directed towards

lay people but lay people obviously can

derive benefit from reading stuff that's

directed towards monks because most of

it um I mean especially the ethical

stuff it is just Universal it applies to

everybody it's just that monks are able

to follow it more successfully as a

general

rule so I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from ride

forever

and ride forever says and this is kind

of an interesting question I've

considered this like years and years ago

while living in

caves RI forever says what is the point

of practice if there is no individual

who would practice or benefit from it

doesn't really make sense if there is no

individual there is no need for practice

and nobody to be duded and nobody to

Suffer Well that is true but the thing

is um the delusion still exists even

though I ultimately do not exist as an

individual still I may be delusional and

think that I exist as an individual in

which case I mean I might as well really
exist because so long as I believe that
I
exist I mean I'm still subject to Karma
I'm still subject to you know being
rewarded for doing good and being
punished for doing bad through karmic
retribution I mean you can say it
doesn't really matter what happens to me
because I don't really exist by the same
token it doesn't matter if you burn in
hell for millions of years and if you're
willing to have yourself even though
you're not ultimately real you know
you're not an ultimately distinct
individual being that is just ultimately

real in and of

yourself I mean if you're willing to

burn in he forever then even though

you're not ultimately real it's going to

feel real you're going to think it's

real so long as you are delusional so

you got have to cure yourself of the

delusion before you are you stop being

like deeply invested in what happens to

the meat

puppet so I mean if you're just so

detached from the meat puppet you know

you don't consider it to be you you

don't consider the ego to be you then I

mean it doesn't matter if you burn in

hell or go to heaven but you're not

going to burn in hell because

you're so detached I mean you're

practically a

sage

so yeah it's like in reality it doesn't

it doesn't make any there's nobody to be

duded and nobody to suffer but

obviously I mean people think that they

exist and that person that they think

they are suffers and is diluted and may

wind up in a hell-like

existence and and ultimately maybe it

doesn't matter at all because none of it

is real but it damn well seems real

doesn't it and I think ride forever here

is uh maybe taking kind of an

indirect approach to attacking the whole

idea of self of anata in in Terra

Buddhist

philosophy but um even though there is

no self people I mean most people in

samsara believe that there is one and so

what seems to be happening to that self

might as well be real and so you have to

practice to transcend that delusional

belief and I hope I answer that question

but it is kind of a subtle one I mean I

have gone through phases as a monk where

it's like you know I just don't care I

mean it doesn't even matter whether I'm

happy or not it doesn't matter if I go

to hell or not you know it's just it's

just irrelevant I mean it just doesn't

matter so i' I've gone through phases

like

that but uh that the phases generally

don't last very long so after you've

plopped yourself into hell and then you

change your mind and maybe it starts

mattering to you then you're

screwed so I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from Al

bakina and uh I just I say the last I

usually don't say last names but I don't

know maybe he's like Arabic or something

you know so that the AL is just uh like

a what the the article definite

article but uh like Al Jabar or

something but let's just call him Al so

Al says what are your thoughts on Fallon

gong and I really don't know much about

fulong gong it's just outside of my

sphere of of in interest I guess you

know it's it's a

Chinese more or less Buddhist sect

that I mean they

meditate and obviously they're on the

wrong side of the Chinese Communist

party because the Chinese Communist

party wants you know worship of the

Chinese Communist party to be the only

religion and so I mean they really they'

got pictures of XI Zin Ping On you know

like replacing the Buddha on Buddhist

altars and like they've got to change

the words in the Bible so it doesn't say

anything bad about the Chinese Communist

Party even indirectly that sort of thing
so I guess the fallong gong are too
devout in their spiritual or religious
beliefs for the tastes of the Chinese
government and so they're
allegedly just arresting them and
harvesting their organs or at least they
have done that from time to
time so that's about all I know about
Fong gong I really don't know what
exactly they believe what kind of
meditation they practice anything like
that it's just
in the news you hear about falong gong
being persecuted by the Chinese and
occasionally arrested as essentially

Political Criminals and pretty much cut

apart and sold for their

parts so I guess I'll just move on to

the next question and this is from

Indian guy Alias

Trevor an Indian guy says how did you

shower or stay clean in the forest are

you allowed soap and

stuff

well um sometimes it is kind of a

challenge to stay clean if you're just

living in a cave or a Rock Ledge in a

forest you're not even staying in a

monastery most monasteries of course

will have a well or some way for the

monks to take a

bath and uh usually it's not

showers um I mean there's like the the ancient way of showering the like just the way of bathing in Burma is as far as I know the same way that people were bathing in the prehistoric indis Valley Civilization because they found the bath like the bathing rooms you of you know the ruins of haraa and moino daro and places like that where you just got this water tank and and like a big bowl and you just scoop the water out of the tank and pour it over your head and that's how you take a bath that's common throughout southeast Asia I'm pretty sure and it works so I mean if you if you're staying in a monastery you'll

have either a bath house or at least
you'll have a well there and if you
don't have a bath house then monks are
pretty much required to uh keep their
lower robe on when they take a bath and
so like when I was living out in the
forest um usually I'd have to take a
bath in the morning because I take a
bath in the morning and then I have to
hang up the robe that I was wearing
while bathing to let it dry so that it
wouldn't be wet when I go to sleep at
night although if I did have an enclosed
bath house you know someplace where
people couldn't see me I could just take
a bath naked the way most of westerners
do um when I was just living out in the

forest like when I was living in Alando
kasapa National Park in Northwestern
Burma there was just a creek I think it
was pone Creek pone J and yeah I'd have
to wear my lower robe usually usually I
mean there's a few times I do it naked
right around dusk when nobody could see
me but um you know I usually take a bath
in the morning I I uh I lived in this
like under an overhanging Rock Ledge
this huge thing that I I lived under and
then like once a day right after I would
eat I'd go down to the creek and do
water things which included filling my
water bottles brushing my teeth washing
my bowl taking a bath and so forth and

so so I would just uh climb down there
was a deep part in the in the creek that
was maybe belly deep and I just climbed
down into that and you're I soap is
allowable um perfumed soap strict monks
avoid that because the use of gondha or
perfumes any kind of scent that smells
nice is forbidden for monks and so I
would usually ask for just this rough
like lie soap or there's also this stuff
called carbolic soap that it's sort of a
red color and it has this strong
chemical smell that is not perfumey at
all and I would generally use that um
and it's allowable to keep soap although
I had this friend who was super
aesthetic he was like a Buddhist Rambo

he lived in a cave in Thailand and he
showed me his cave once I looked and it
was just like pitch black and he thought
it was Paradise but he could not even
keep soap he couldn't keep anything
because rats would just chew it up he uh
slept in a
hammock and uh just to keep himself
above the rats I slept in a cave one
night near his cave and he told me you
got to keep yourself covered from head
to toe with your robes or the rats will
bite you and I had rats on me that night
definitely didn't get much sleep that
night needless to
say but he he was not allowed so so he

just bathed with water I suppose which

is good enough I mean you just bathe

with water every

day and uh you know keeps most of the

dirt off you you might have a little

natural skin Grease still on you but uh

that's that's fine it washes off the

stink you know the sweat the salt that

kind of thing

um really though in in according to the

rules of monastic discipline I mean

based on the rules of monastic

discipline monks were really under

ordinary circumstances they were only

allowed to bathe twice a month so they

got pretty stinky I would imagine that

was one of the first rules to start

start having like loopholes so you don't have to follow the rules so strictly that's that are built right into the rules like in the in the Venia text themselves it says that this rule that you're not allowed to bathe more than twice a month or under ordinary circumstances it applies only to the Ganges Valley to the middle the middle country and that people who live beyond the Ganges Valley can take baz as much as they want which probably was monks including senior monks who doing some editing of the titica just really not liking only being able to bathe twice a month but yeah it is the lble own soap

but strict monks don't own nice smelling soap they get the the stinky stuff or the odorless stuff and uh there were a few times I was actually able to take showers when living in the forest and that was that during the rainy season or after it would rain hard when I was living under that rock ledge at the in the National Park um there was a waterfall that would fall over the like one side of the Rock Ledge and uh I mean it kind of hurt you couldn't get directly underneath it because it was in free fall for like 30 or 40 feet and by the time it comes down it's like pounding you it it kind of

hurts but you could get in the spray
kind of to one side of the main
waterfall and it was good enough to to
bathe in and then sometimes like in
southern Burma like mon state it rains
so hard during the rainy season that you
can just take a shower just standing out
in the rain it's it's like a shower
coming down and it's relatively warm
too but uh yeah I mean I guess I
answered that question in maybe
excessive detail but yeah you are
allowed soap and you can pretty much
bathe as much as you
want so I'll just move on the next
question this is from

Mambo better take a drink before I wait

into this

one okay Mambo says hello poo what do

you think are the factors which

gives grammar Nazi again is which give a

religion not which

gives I'll start over hello poo what do

you think are the factors which give a

religion an advantage over other for

examp example you said Hindu yogis get

more closer to get more closer to

Enlightenment due to them having no

handbreak practice wise let's just

assume that mugambo is speaking English

as a second

language and no disrespect to Mamoo here

I'll just start over hello poo what do

you think are the factors which gives a religion an advantage over other for example you said Hindu Yogi get more closer to Enlightenment due to them having no handbreak practice wise are you more convinced by ideas of let's say ADV vant due to it coming from positive Place meanwhile Buddhism deals with negation and cessation of everything which makes us human I personally watched some advit lectures and could understand how it could be more alluring and simple like a preacher preaching in church plus it's poetic and Buddhism is more dry and methodical like an experiment would you consider other

paths like vant or jism in future thanks
well I wouldn't I would not consider
jism I really do not think it is as wise
in its approach as Buddhism ver it
believes in a soul you know the Jaa
which is weighed down by like sticky
almost material K Karma that holds you
down from floating up into heaven and
living in Eternal Bliss and then just
the speeding out the karmic process by
torturing yourself I assume most Janes
don't do that also the belief that um
even killing an insect accidentally is
Bad Karma so that you know a lot of them
will have like this soft grass broom
that they sweep a path in front of them
before they walk some of them even wear

like like the face diaper just so they
won't accidentally inhale an insect you
know at least inhale it into their mouth
and thereby killing it I I assume a lot
of you have been running especially as
kids you know through the forest or
something with your mouth open and all
of a sudden you've got a mosquito in
your mouth yeah that's they would
consider that to be you have done
something bad and you just made Bad
Karma by doing that so yeah gism really
doesn't appeal to me much uh ADV V dant
if I for some reason I was not allowed
to be a Buddhist I think ADV V dant
would be my second

choice because it's really not that different and they borrowed ideas from each other first ADV bant was borrowing ideas from Buddhism and then it started going back the other way after i b vant s of became firmly established in Indian philosophy so I'll just get back up towards the top here I said Hindu he says for example you said Hindu yogis get more closer to Enlightenment due to them having no handbrake practice wise well that's not exactly what I said they get closer to like total Purity I mean you can never totally arrive at total Purity unless it's through um like you know the miracle of Enlightenment or something and even then to the

unenlightened Observer you're still
going to be impure because they're going
to be looking at you through impurity
colored
glasses but what the Hindus do is they
just keep it's like they have this idea
that Enlightenment is upwards just
through more and more and more Purity
whereas Buddhism is more philosophical
in the sense that at any stage on the
path you know any any step on the ladder
you can just bail out sideways so you
don't have to be as advanced as a Hindu
Yogi who can perform Miracles and he can
read minds and so forth you don't have
to be that advanced to be enlightened

you know to just get off the wheel
Buddhism has like the advantage I think
of just being able to bail out
sideways so that may have been somewhat
of a misunderstanding and see are you
more convinced by ideas of let's say
advit daed do it coming from a positive
Place meanwhile Buddhism deals with
negation and ass well positive places
and negative places are both essentially
invalid because the truth is neither
positive nor negative nor positive and
negative nor POS neither positive nor
negative you know it's just the absolute
just transcends Duality including the
duality of positive and
negative so

the sensation of everything which makes
us human well ultimately we aren't human
because we do not ultimately exist as
any species any any
individual so yeah adite to D I mean
it's like I say it would be my second
choice after Buddhism I mean it would be
I'd choose it over some kinds of
Buddhism but um you know like
Terra I'm pretty much committed to that
and it's not like I I regret being
committed to that Ian I chose very
carefully because it was most in tune
with my personality with my temperament
with my Constitution and so forth um
yeah it was a careful choice and I think

I made the right choice although I mean

Zen I liked to Zen although they've got

a little bit too much pure land stuff

mixed in and just way too many

ceremonies the Bowing and the chanting

which I've never really liked very much

um and they just deviate from what the

Buddha taught to somee agree with regard

to their scriptures and so

forth um but advit vant is good I do

like Adit

vant um but not as much as I like

Buddhism just because I'm just sort of

relatively

cold philosophical type of person more

than an emotional Faith oriented person

you know I've got more the scientific

temperament than the artistic

temperament so to

speak

so but Raja yoga is is good I've yeah I

do I do admire and respect it and also

what Gana yoga just the the The Yoga of

knowledge I I've gravitated towards that

too i' sometimes I used to joke that I

was a I was a Gana Yogi just trying to

be a Raja

Yogi you know just being sort of an

intellectual philosophical person trying

to just avoid philosophy and just you

know just go into just like practicing

towards Clarity of mind which leads to

mysticism because my intellect finally

told me that mysticism is the route to
go so I guess I answered that question
and so I'm gonna move on to the next one
this is from nature cure and nature cure
said is Buddha sasana 5,000 years thing
legit
to believe can we trust mahak kasa's
words or mahak kasa's word is also
written by later commentaries but Buddha
clearly said 500 years so the Assumption
here is that mahak kaspa said that when
the Buddha said that Buddhism would
survive for only 500 years that it
really meant 5,000 years and I am
unaware of mahak kaspa ever saying that
um there could be some tradition that
mahak kaspa is the one who came up with

the five 00 means 5,000 Theory but I

mean that's just out of the commentaries

that's like Buddha Goa rather than mahak

Kasa saying that when the Buddha said

Buddhism would last for only 500 years

that you know the true teachings the

true

Dharma that what he meant was 5,000

years which makes no sense whatsoever

it's just a really bad COPE in a way um

because I mean it had already lasted

five more than 500 years by the time

uh the commentaries were composed in in

poly um

by Buddha Goa and

Company so yeah I'm I'm I don't think

mahasa had anything to do with it it's
just that in the text like in the in the
rules of monastic displine in the Venia
there's the scene where the Buddha's and
and stepmother because his father
married two sisters his aunt and
stepmother um she wanted to be the first
nun she wanted to be the first fully
ordained bikuni and the Buddha would
just say don't even go there don't talk
to me about it you know he just didn't
want to do it and then finally um his
cousin Ananda who the Buddha would call
godma sometimes because they belong both
belong to the godma clan Goa being like
a family
name that Ananda who always kind of had

a soft spot in his heart for women he
defended mapap goami and finally
persuaded the Buddha to allow bikun to
be
ordained why mainly the argument he used
is aren't women just as able to become
enlightened as men the Buddha couldn't
deny it and so he said all right I'll
ordain women but now you've done it
because now because of nuns being
ordained the Buddha sasna will last only
half as long it would have lasted a
thousand years now it's only going to
last last 500 are the true teachings the
true
dhma so according to

that Buddhism should have already died
out it should have died out literally
over a thousand years
ago so that's kind of a canundrum
one of the first chapters in my first
book essays in ter Buddhism I deal with
this it's like dealing with the various
possibilities of how it could say that
in the
texts and personally I'm gravitating
towards the idea that it's like
Apocrypha the Buddha didn't really say
that Buddhism would last for only 500
years because you can't really say that
he was wrong I mean some westerners
could but I think most devout terab
Buddhists would not even suggest the

possibility that the Buddha could be

just flat out

wrong um then again most of of them

would be reluctant even to say that it's

just Apocrypha that somehow got into the

text Maybe by monks who really didn't

like the idea of ordaining nuns that I

mean it was apparently if you look at

the text it was always somewhat

controversial there seems to have been

two factions in the early songa the pro

bikuni faction and the anti- bikuni

faction and I think the anti-un faction

may have gotten this part into the texts

but that's just a guess

but I one of the least plausible

explanations for this 500 years thing is

the official Orthodox explanation that

when the Buddha said 500 he really meant

5,000 like why would he say 500 if he

meant

5,000

so I I mean if you really want the full

the full story you're GNA have to to

read the book I guess and I'll just move

on to Nature cures next question here

maybe the the current time is Pacha

Buddha's time and that would be the

logical consequence of like if the true

teachings really did die out only 500

years after the time of the Buddha then

we'd be in a time between

buddhismspiritual next Buddha comes

along who is going to be Matea Buddha or

according to the Sanskrit

mraa and he hasn't come yet even though

a lot of people have claimed to be my

tra including elron

hubard

so um yeah it seems to me that there is

still dharm in the world so I think the

500 years um

prognosis was not not objectively true

but maybe maybe it is true maybe the

Buddha realized that I mean that really

like the the nucleus like the the heart

of it would die out and you just have

like empty forms you'd have still be

people practicing and maybe even still

people becoming enlightened but they'd
be becoming enlightened largely in spite
of the teachings instead of because of
them kind of a deal sort of like you
have fully enlightened Roman Catholics
who you know they're becoming
enlightened pretty much more in spite of
the teachings of just of the New
Testament than because of
them and I do think that that may have
happened sometimes like I've championed
the possibility of St John of the Cross
San one De La Cruz being an orun more
than once on these
q&as so anyway a peka Buddha is a kind
of Buddha like a quasi Buddha who arises
during time when there is no Buddhism no

dhama and he's just a Hermit he doesn't teach dhama he just keeps to himself you know he's he's you know approximately as enlightened as a a fully enlightened Buddha but for some reason he can't or won't teach a

dama

so that's uh I mean maybe but I kind of doubt it I don't think so so I'll just move on to Nature cures next question here is there any chance to get enlightened in heaven Who coming from the human realm has more chance there well I mean there are certain very Advanced Heaven Realms called the pure abodes and everyone who goes to the pure

bods becomes enlightened because only anagami you know the there it's like one step below full

Enlightenment when I mean after they die they don't they're not Reborn born as a human being anymore they're not reborn in any of the the kamaloka you know the sensual Realms they are born in these very Advanced Heaven Realms called the pure abodes where they live in Bliss for millions of years and then fade out into Enlightenment or Nirvana par

Nana so that would be the first I mean obviously you know all the inhabitant of the pure abodes become enlightened according to Orthodox Buddhist cosmology but I do think it is possible for other

dvas in other Heaven Realms to become fully enlighted I'm pretty sure that the text would endorse that I can't remember of any cases offand but I'm pretty sure that there are Gods who are just devout practitioners of dhama you know they renounce their Golden Palaces and Celestial nymphs or they can just somehow remain detached from them and become in enlightened I mean obviously according to the text like Saka king of Gods he was an Arya he wasn't fully enlightened but he was an Arya so he was a devout Buddhist which is I mean in my opinion is just kind of religious propaganda where they're

taking the patron saint of the early

vdic you know the followers of vadm and

they're taking their their Patron deity

and changing his name and turning him

into a good Buddhist

but that's um that's a totally different

story I'm digressing

majorly so yeah there there are chances

to get in light in heaven it's just more

difficult there because everything is so

nice there that you're not really like

kicked in the butt enough to inspire you

to strive for something better that's

why in Buddhism they say that getting a

human birth is the best kind of birth if

you want to make progress in dama

because in the lower Realm

you're too Afflicted or ignorant you
know just too handicapped in various
ways to really strive for enlightenment
and in the higher Realms everything's so
nice that you just tend to be complacent
and uh you don't see much point in uh
really striving for something
better so I'll just move on to Nature
cures next and last question here are
there many dvas or brahmas on Buddha's
side in heaven now or mostly on Mara
side um I would assume that most of the
inhabitants of the heaven Realms just
really aren't taking sides you know
they're just living their own lives they
don't really care about just like

religion on this ball of

dirt so I assume I mean most of the

Davis and the brahmas just because they

had like good enough mental states to

get into heaven in the first place

they're going to be more good than bad

but Mara isn't necessarily on the side

of bad so much as he's on the side of

anything samsaric so if he can't get you

to be good or if he can't get you to be

bad and go to hell he'll get you to be

good and go to heaven because it's all

ssara anyway so in that sense um most

deities would be kind of on Mara's side

just because they're still samsaric you

know they're

still buying into something

sorrow rather than striving for
enlightenment but I mean you can be on
both sides at the same time I think
pretty much all Buddhists are that
you're on the Buddhist side and that you
know you respect the Buddha and you
might be striving for enlightenment or
at least you know a better
situation but still I mean you're going
to be succumbing to The Temptations of
Mara so to speak and so you know you're
kind of ambivalent you're not 100% black
black or white you know just we're we're
all mostly Shades of Gray so you can be
a little bit on Buddha side and a little
bit of Mara side on the same at the same

time but

uh yeah I think Davis and

Brahma for the most part they would be

better than us just because they wound

up in a better place than us you know

their mind is in a better place so that

it caused their body to be in a better

place but at the same time they're still

samsaric and so they're still subjects

of Mara's

domain so it's it's kind of a vague

question I mean it's it's not just

either or it's not just black or white

it's not like you have to pick sides you

got to be on the Buddha side or Mara

side because uh most people are I mean

most Buddhists are on both sides to some

degree because we're still we're still still wallowing in samsara also aren't we so I think I'll just move on the next question this is from Quick quiz and quick quiz says how did your Visa work in Burma when you were a freelance or cave monk well bu Burma has what are called meditation visas because one of Burma's most valuable natural resources is dhama and the Burmese government you know they might have their their shortcomings but they realize that dhama is a National Treasure Burma may be the most devoutly sincerely Buddhist country on the on the planet and so um you know there's a big

business it's sort of like dhama tourism
people are are flying from all over the
world to come and meditate in meditation
centers in rangon or in Branch
monasteries associated with monasteries
in rangon where they're going to PA doya
or some such
place so um they've got it worked out so
that you can get just a yearly
meditation Visa you might have to work
up to it maybe your first your entry
Visa would be three months and then
maybe the next one would be like six
months and then from then on it's it's
you just get it renewed once a year and
as a monk I would have supporters you
know I'd have at least one supporter in

rangon who was willing to do the paperwork and get my visa extension so I wouldn't I usually wouldn't even have to come to rangon to get my Visa renewed you might have to send them your passport and you don't send it in the mail because the mail is so completely unreliable in Burma that only a fool would send anything valuable in the mail but you've got what's called a l Jan you know you know somebody who's going to rangon they're a devout supporter you know they'll say yes sir very good sir I'll take it to so and so and rangon and and they do it and it happens so as a general rule I didn't have to worry

about it I'd have some lay person a lay supporter in the in the big city doing the Visa stuff for me so yeah that's thank you any of you who are watching who used to do that for me thank you and so I'll just move on to Quick quiz's next question can a monk smoke a cigarette according to the sutas well there was no tobacco in India in the Buddhist time so there's no rule against smoking tobacco just as there's no rule against taking LSD because LSD hadn't been invented yet you there's no no rule against playing video games because in Ancient India they just didn't have video games and so smoking cigarettes a lot of mon smoke cigarettes

especially in Thailand

because one of the most famous monks

considered to be an arand or fully

enlightened being in Thailand is aan man

and I have been

told aan Mong ajan man was a chain

smoker so that's kind of the peculiar

situation of an arant also literally

being a drug addict which is kind of

strange I mean it's sort of

counterintuitive isn't it because

nicotine is highly addictive and he was

a chain smoker so presumably he was

physically addicted to

nicotine but I mean if there was tobacco

in the Buddhist time hypothetically

speaking it's hardly likely that the Buddha would have allowed it I'm pretty sure there would be a vinea rule against it because of course it is addictive and that causes craving and attachment you know I mean you're addicted to cigarettes you go nuts if you don't have a cigarette you're craving a cigarette so why would the Buddha who's trying to train monks to abandon all craving allow them to consume an addictive substance is going to cause them to Crave this addictive substance it's just silly for people to say well you know the Buddha would say it's okay but um I guess at uh the sixth great Council that was held in rangon in

like

1956 there was a western a western

Buddhist I think it was Christmas humph

from England who uh actually raised the

question I mean is it allowable for a

good Buddhist including Buddhist monks

to smoke tobacco and the the monks who

were presiding over this we so

conservative so unwilling to do anything

novel you know anything unusual they

just Shel it they didn't want to deal

with it they didn't want to face it and

I'm sure the ties would just reject any

any judgment that smoking cigarettes is

is not right because of course a Johan

mun smok

cigarettes so it has to be okay I mean

if an arant does it it's got to be

okay but uh

personally um yeah can the question can

a monk smoke a cigarette according to

the

sutas um I mean there's no mention of

cigarettes so I mean there's no mention

of it in the sutas but it in my opinion

it goes against the spirit of dharm and

vinia so I'll just move on to Quick

quiz's next question here Can monks

smoke marijuana according to the sutas

and this is kind of interesting because

as it turns out banga or cannabis is

allowable as a medicine in the rules of

monastic discipline they didn't have

tobacco in Ancient India but they
certainly had cannabis in Ancient India
and maybe the the Indo orians the ones
who brought it to ancient
India
so maybe they maybe they just grew there
naturally but the I mean the ancient
Indo orians before they ever got to
India were already smoking the stuff so
cannabis or bhunga is allowable for
medicinal purposes and according to the
rules of monastic discipline a monk is
allowed to own a pipe for inhaling
medicinal
fumes so that would seem to indicate
that under certain circumstances monks

are allowed to smoke cannabis although
it would have to be for medicinal
purposes just doing it
recreationally would be against the
rules taking a medicine uh without a
legitimate medical need for it is it's a
minor offense it's a Duca offense and
then there are some people who would say
well it would be it would be under like
um what was it the fifth precept taking
ale and wine and other intoxicants which
cause clouded of mind or
heedlessness and so then you'd have to
say well this's marijuana or cannabis
cause clouded of mind or heedlessness
and many people would say that it does
although my experience is uh I mean some

weed I mean when I was a teenager I
smoked smoke this stuff that was
supposedly from Jamaica and I'm just
driving along I run a red light and I'm
looking behind me just thinking wow I
just ran a red light and I ran two in a
row I'm so preoccupied with running the
first one and then just like five
minutes later I just start driving up a
wrong way street so something that makes
you do that yeah or if you anything
smoked excess you know any intoxicant or
any any drug consumed excess I mean
that's not going to be good
either but uh te technically speaking
cannabis is allowed to be used medically

by monks it's mentioned right there in
the text and monks are allowed to own a
pipe for inhaling medicinal fumes so I
mean if you read the commentaries they
didn't really know what it was for they
were saying in the commentaries it says
you're allowed to use cannabis and
you're supposed to like roll naked in it
to induce sweating or something but that
just seems like a wild guess to
me but I mean marijuana or cannabis does
have certain medicinal properties like
it dries out your mucous membranes you
know it's like cotton mouth so if you
got a snotty head cold or something it
can reduce the snot for example and I
guess it it's been used for treating

glaucoma for a long

time but uh yeah that's that's a

controversial one and it depends on what

monk you're talking to but technically

speaking marijuana or cannabis is

allowed for medicinal use as is having a

pipe for consuming medicinal fumes but

it would have to be for medicinal

purposes not just for getting

high so I'll just move on to Quick

quiz's next question

here can burmes monk go to Thai

Monastery and stay there or they

wouldn't count his Vasa and reordain

well for starters it would depend on

which time Monastery like the Damu sect

in Thailand notoriously considers only

dute monks to be real monks

so they might not let even like the

Mahan Kaya monks of Thailand stay there

much let alone Burmese

ones um so they might require them to

reordain in the D tradition before they

could stay at a d Monastery but the

thing is the burmes and the ties just

don't like each other much so burmes

monks don't want to go to Thai

monasteries and the ties probably

wouldn't welcome them very

wholeheartedly

that like the Burma and Thailand were

notorious Arch enemies for

centuries and I mean like it was after

the British started invading and like
annexing Southern Burma into British you
know further
India that uh the Burmese maybe just uh
to show that they weren't you know
totally weak just made this unprovoked
attack on Thailand and sacked its
capital which was Audia at the time and
Thai Buddhism never fully recovered from
that it was like all the ecclesiastical
hierarchy was centered there the like
the the monastery like Scholastic system
that like the B the Buddhist educational
system was was like centered in Auda and
that's one reason why Tha monks tend not
to be Stellar Scholars because they

never fully recovered from the whole ecclesiastical structure just getting smashed by this unprovoked attack from the Burmese and they still kind of resent that and the Burmese still referred to Thailand as Audia sometimes that's one of the the main terms it's either Tha Nan which is the more modern term but a lot of people still refer to Thailand as

Audia also the burmes are so insular or provincial you know they're they're so burmac Centric that a lot of Burmese uh lay people just think that Thai Thai people are Mahayana Buddhists they at least know that they're they're like Buddhists but they just assume they're

Mahayana that only only Burma has real Buddhism maybe maybe Sri Lanka so I mean technically depending on how open-minded the time Monastery was a Burmese monk could go and stay at a Thai Monastery but I don't think it happens very often and if they were if they were open-minded enough to accept that the Burmese monk they would accept that he was a real Monk and they wouldn't make him reordain you know they would accept that you know he'd been a mon he'd been ordained for 10 years so he was a tera they treat him like a tera and no problem but uh personally I I can't really remember hearing I've heard of

Western monks who were ordained in a

Burmese tradition that went to Thailand

and got along fine they were accepted so

I guess Traditions itself are I mean

it's you know it's all the the S of the

four

quarters but there are certain like

ethnic frictions between the ties and

the burmes that make it somewhat less

likely to

happen and so I'll just move on to the

next question this is from

oh and om says is if suffering is our

own K and pain is not suffering is pain

itself our own comma and then in

parenthesis it says Buddha didn't make

comma and felt pain okay

so pain is the fruition of comma you know pain is the fruition of your your your past Deeds or to some degree your present Deeds whereas suffering is you're making new Karma because that's a volitional act the pain happening to you is happening to you arguably passively and in accordance with terab and Orthodoxy when when you feel pain I mean that's just a passive sensation that's just happening to you as a result of the fruition of Kama that you've already committed but the suffering is like a new desire all suffering is caused by desire and so you are let's say you got like a pain in your foot so that pain in

your foot

is the fruition of Kama it's Kama like

it has it's running its course and it's

it's reached the final stage and you've

got pain in your foot because of it the

suffering comes from wanting that pain

to stop and that wanting is you're

making new Karma this is a new desire of

I want that to stop I don't like that

and that's the difference between pain

and suffering I mean pain is the

fruition of of comma whereas the

suffering you're making new comma and

it's not good comma either so it is

literally in Buddhism it is literally

immoral to

suffer because there's always a choice

you can choose not to suffer it's just
that most people are governed by habit
they're not fully awake they don't even
fully realize that suffering is
volitional you know like in the west
you're just trained to believe that if
you're suffering it's because you don't
have a good enough car or a good enough
iPhone or something or I mean you just
BL blame somebody else for it but really
it is volitional you always have a
choice even though you might not be
aware of that
choice so yeah the Buddha did not make
Kama and he did feel pain because it was
the fruition of past comma in his case

according to the Orthodox explanation
but he didn't suffer because he wasn't
Desiring that pain to stop and all
suffering is caused by desire whenever
you are unhappy it is because you want
something and if you know only one thing
about Buddhism that is probably the one
thing you should know whenever you are
unhappy it is because you want something
and that wanting is a choice it's a
volition you can just choose not to want
it which goes against human nature big
time sometimes especially if you got a
toothache or
something so I guess I should just move
on next question here and this is from
rakasa and this one I think we're going

to we're going to go beyond two hours on this one we as I said we got a veritable zombie apocalypse of questions this is just a merciless Onslaught not that I'm complaining or anything I'm not wanting the questions to be
fewer so this is from rakasa and rakasa says hello poo I would like to hear your response to something an acquaintance of mine said in a recent Twitter discussion this was in regards to a western Buddhists disbelief at Himalayan devotional occult practices and the general lack of knowledge about Karma rebirth Etc among ethnic laymen my acquaintance said quote honestly I think

a goat herder who wakes up makes a few offerings at The Shrine does a few prostrations and means it when he says his Refuge prayer but never meditates in the s in the sense most westerners expect is more of a Buddhist than somebody who reads Buddhist philosophy and meditates for two hours per day but never sincerely takes Refuge these things are foundational in a way Western secular Buddhists often don't see and resist seeing

unquote so that's yeah I've I've considered this also um it's I used to consider it to be like a Sila and caribdis situation and those of you who don't know what Sila and caribdis were

it's like in The Odyssey Homer's Odyssey

um

odyusa between these two monsters these

two these two dire dangers Sila and

caribdis caribdis was some kind of

monster that would eat the sailors if

the ship got too close and caribdis was

like a it was like a whirl pool that

would turn into like a water fountain it

would just wreck the

ship and I used to consider was like

like traditional Asian Buddhism was like

one of these monsters let's say like

caribdis you know with his just

unquestioning devotion you know there's

almost no open-mindedness no you're not

allowed to deviate I mean it's just
Dogma you know you just believe it
because that's what you're told that's
what your mama and daddy told you that's
what the monks say it's true you know
it's sort of a medieval approach whereas
the caribdis or the the no Sila was the
whirlpool the caribdis of Western
Buddhism is this multi-headed you know
it's just moral relativism and it's all
eclectic and everything is optional you
know like even like renunciation or or
keeping CA you know just it's all
optional belief in Liberation from
suffering you know and I mean both kind
I mean a lot of devout Burmese Buddhists
I mean they're they're devout Buddhists

but they couldn't tell you what the four
noble truths are you know it's just I
mean a lot of them do they're probably
the average Burmese Buddhist is probably
more knowledgeable than the average
Western Buddhist because a lot of
Western Buddhists who call themselves
Buddhist couldn't tell you what the
noble truths are either
so I think
uh yeah I think like the average Burmese
villager is much more Buddhist than the
average Westerner who attends Spirit
Rock or IMS for
example I mean there are a lot of good
Buddhists in the west who are much more

serious because they're having to Buck
their tradition you know they're having
to go against you know the tradition
that they've been living in since birth
excuse
me and so Western Buddhists especially
Western monastics they tend to be much
more serious and really more intent on
cultivating
wisdom and getting out of
samsara than Asian monks but still
Western Buddhists in general tend to be
very lukewarm very just pick like
cherry-picking what they like and just
dismissing or ignoring the rat
so I mean it would depend on the
Buddhist it would depend on which Asian

Buddhist you're referring to which

Western Buddhist you're ref referring

to

um so I mean it could be argued either

way but in general I think the Asian

Buddhists who have just been living in

Buddhist culture for thousands of years

um yeah I mean Buddhism is just it just

permeates the tradition it permeates the

culture so they're going to partake of

of Buddhist ideas and Buddhist attitudes

more than a Westerner who claims to be a

Buddhist but just rejects or disbelieves

or ignores most of what is considered

what is considered to be basic

Buddhism

so yeah I do think that uh I mean you

have to have a

certain like deep belief in order to

really make progress that too much

eclecticism too much

open-mindedness too much it just leads

to

lukewarmness and you just don't have the

drive to really practice as hard as you

can you need that a certain amount of

Wildey fanaticism at least a little hint

of it in order to really make progress

and the

Asians on average have more of that than

Western Buddhists do it seems to me

so I guess I sort of answered that

question I guess I hope and so I'm just

going to move on to the next question
and this is from
denesh and denesh says hello poo I enjoy
these Q&A sessions you lived in Burma as
a true Seeker for 30 years you have a
lot of knowledge and experiences that
can benefit other Seekers but I was
wondering why do you waste valuable
airtime answering questions about
tattoos and similar questions which have
zero value when it comes to spirituality
philosophy or dhama if possible answer
only the profound questions related to
dhama that would enhance the quality of
these sessions significantly and some
listeners like me won't feel that their

time is not wasted happy facee sorry

about the negative comment unhappy

phase well I mean I did answer the

French toast question this time didn't I

um most questions are about dhama and

really I don't want to start picking and

choosing what questions I answer I mean

if a question is just totally

inappropriate then or it's just sort of

somebody just sarcastically asks a

rhetorical question just with disrespect

or something that I wouldn't answer that

but uh yeah I'm not going to pick and

choose what what questions I'll answer

as a general rule I mean I do have the

ultimate the ultimate prerogative to to

not even

mention a question that was asked if I
don't consider it to be
appropriate but uh I do think that
answering like an easy or even humorous
question sometimes you know it kind of
lightens it up a little bit uhu makes it
a little more entertaining so that
people enjoy the Q&A a little more um
there are people who are just really
hard-nosed they just want pure DH you
know they they don't want to read a
novel because they only only want to
read sutas you know all I've met monks
like this like Western
monks that I mean they don't even want
to read comparative religion they don't

want to read Western philosophy they

just all they want to read is sutas and

they think that's all anybody should

read but most people don't swing that

way I did I mean I was reading Doki

sometimes reading all sorts of things

when I was a monk and it is good idea I

mean even the Buddha said that you

should be bahuta having heard much just

so that you'll know other points of view

but I mean you you can say well tattoos

and french toast really don't have

anything to do with

dama

but I don't know people ask the question

and uh I'm here to answer questions and

if I'm able to answer the question it's

all fair game and uh I'm sorry if you
don't like the tattoo and french toast
questions and they do form a small
minority of the questions that I am
asked
so yeah I'm not sure exactly what to say
about this but I'm just going to for the
most part continue answering whatever
questions are asked of me in good faith
I mean there are a couple of wise Acres
that'll ask joke question sometimes
maybe even the French toast question was
a kind of a joke question but uh it's
all done in uh it's all done in uh what
am I what am I trying to say here not
good faith so much is Just uh just a

sense of uh

Goodwill let's go with

that so I'll just go on to the next

question this is we're almost at the end

here by goly by

Jo this is from EU Diva and EU Diva says

hi David what's your thoughts on Sri

Lankan waharaka movement they are

claiming that all the toptica

translations are wrong and they have the

most current translation well I don't

know hardly anything about the Sri

Lankan waharaka movement I'm not exactly

sure what it is I assume there's more to

it than just translating the titica but

I would be very wary of anybody claiming

that all the titica translations are

wrong except theirs you know it's like
the stereotypical fool in the suas it's
like only this is true everything else
is
wrong so yeah I'm sure that all the
other Buddhist Scholars and Paul
Scholars that are out there studying the
titica and translating it I I assume
that um only the waharaka ones know what
they're talking about and I'm not
exactly sure how the Sri Lankan waharaka
movement deviates I mean they might have
certain terms that they translate
differently and it may be that there's
just a different facet or Nuance of a
poly word I mean you don't you don't

have a direct exact word for word
translation from poly in English that's
any translator can I mean that's obvious
to
them that I mean you don't like a word
in poly like dhama doesn't have like an
exact translation into English or or Dua
I mean those two words are used an awful
lot in the sutas but there's no exact
equivalent in the English language for
either of those words and it may be that
they're just going with a different
approximation and claiming that their
approximation is the right approximation
and yeah I would just be wary of anybody
claiming that you know only their point
of view is the correct one and everybody

else is wrong that that is just the stereotypical fool in the poly texts not that I'm declaring all Sri Lankan waharaka Buddhist monks or Buddhists to be fools but yeah I would be wary of any such claims and so I just move on to the next question which is the very last question of this veritable onslaught of questions and this question also from EU Diva says I assume you don't want to agree with biku bod and biku suato translations can you please give us more info on that because I'm not expert in sutas or poly I only read their translated sutas if they are making

errors in translations who am I supposed
to read now I'm a bit frustrated I have
to get enlightened but books are
wrong well books can be
wrong um yeah I'm I don't agree with
biku bodis and biku su's politics both
of them are just far leftists you know
it's like people will call me a far
right extremist they've called me that
before and like Buddhist like uh
Buddhism journals and so forth I've been
mentioned you know as like Nazi adjacent
farri extremist and so forth but you
know I take these political Compass
tests I'm almost exactly in the middle
but these like biku bod and biku suato I
mean they're definitely far leftists

bkub bodyi I mean technically it may be
that he could even not even be a monk
anymore I mean he's he's flirting with
paraj because he has been spoken in
favor of women's reproductive rights
which for the most part means abortion
and abortion from the point of view of
terraa Buddhism and the rules of
monastic discipline is literally murder
so for him to Champion women's
Reproductive Rights I mean if any if
even one Buddhist
woman or like even a Buddhist any
Buddhist they they hear buub saying you
know he's in FA favor of women's
Reproductive Rights and they think oh so

it's okay for us to get an abortion
because babot says so he's a Buddhist
Authority we can trust him they go out
and pay for an abortion the woman gets
an abortion the man just helps her get
an abortion then I mean bot is
excommunicated if he has done that
because he has been he has persuaded
somebody to commit murder and any monk
who persuades somebody to commit murder
do they cause they commit murder because
this person you know said it's okay or
whatever then he's not a monk anymore
but whether that is actually happen I
don't know but setting aside their
politics that um I've never read biku
su's translations I mean I've been told

I think he's the he's the one who's like
the moderator or the the chief moderator
on P sudo Central that he will actually
delete any mention of me on his on his
forums so yeah he's he's definitely I
mean he he's got like the rainbow flag
he's the rainbow monk or something but
um let's see here biku I mean I have to
admit I don't agree with his politics
and he doesn't really practice much for
what I've been told that he doesn't
meditate much if at all that he breaks
win rules doesn't care about following
win strictly he's Main a scholar and
Scholar monks tend to be this way like
Burmese scholar monks are just notorious

for being lack

monks but bbot is one of the best

translators of paully in English that

his translations are good translations

so you can trust his translations I mean

I I wouldn't like try to read all of his

footnotes or

endnotes but uh I like his editorial

stuff I mean it can be depressing you

read that stuff but um his his

translations are solid there there are

better translations than you'll get from

like the Polytech

Society so yeah bot is a good

translator aan tanero I mean he's

self-indulgent to some degree which is

not good for a translator I mean a good

translator should be as invisible as possible that if you're reading a transl it should be as much as possible as though you're reading in the original language it should have the same effect on you but aan tanro in his older translations anyway I haven't read any of his more recent translations I mean he might as well just every few lines just say Here I Am look at me a John tanro translating this because he's so idiosyncratic and self-indulgent in his translation style that he's not invisible at

all so you got anjan Tano's personality kind of splattered all over the page but

nevertheless he is intelligent and with regard to practice-based knowledge he has more of it than bkub because he actually

practices uh aan I mean nle like the the one who died back in like 19 was it 60 you know who translated the the wiui Maga and a number of other difficult to translate texts um not not the the new famous nle but the old famous nle he's he was a good translator he was an excellent translator he was a little bit idiosyncratic too

however

so yeah I mean vkubon since since the question here is mainly about biku and biku suato or at least it starts with

them I mean I really I'm I'm haven't

read biku sujata's translations I don't

know how good or bad they are vbot on

the other hand despite you know anything

else bbot is a good solid translator of

poly into

English

so um I mean if you read German like uh

what was it

uh was it Nana

Loa and uh who was the other one yanaoka

and his uh he had a disciple both of

them were German they translated well

into German and now I can't think of who

it is Yan til Loa and

Yona fortunately I had the their their

Buddhist dictionary here so I mean they
they would be good translators into
German and uh since this person is EU
Diva I mean if you're living in the EU
you might speak fluent German so it
could be that you might be better off
just reading German
translations so the whole moral of that
story is that bkub bodyi despite his
politics and so forth is a solid a good
knowledgeable very intelligent very
skilled translator of poly into English
and he uses the standard accepted terms
you know he follows precedent with
regard to like translating SI as
mindfulness whereas aan tanero at least
in the past translated uh mindfulness is

like frames of reference or something so

that if you didn't know that he was

talking about STI I mean you just be

confused so personally I prefer biku's

translations to aan tanos although

that's a matter of

taste and there are lots of translators

now like Maurice Walsh's translation of

the dean Naya is is an acceptable

translation I think it's a good

translation

um yeah so I mean most of the like

the uh like the the most

how do I say this I'm still having

problems with language

today um like the main translation the

most well-known translation of each poly
text is generally one of the better ones
so I would go with that as a kind of a
Criterion for for choosing which because
I mean there are lots of bad
translations but they tend not to be uh
very high-profile most most people have
never heard of the bad translations the
the good translations are the ones that
are trusted by you know monks and lay
people you know everywhere and so they
tend to be better known you know they'll
be higher up on the on the lists of uh
like on Amazon or something and so
um uh yeah I just go with that and
that's it I'm done answering questions
and I'm getting a little bit

hoarse not that I'm becoming a zombie or anything but I am getting horse I'm not exactly hissing yet so there is that and if you have any questions that's why I'm here I answer questions to the best of my ability so just leave them in the comments below if you have access to the Discord server you can ask them there if you have access to the Subscribe Star channel you can ask them there and give this uh video a like if you liked it and subscribe if you haven't subscribed already and uh look at the URL links below including my books and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 69 of

question and answer I am your host poo

basa and this is my beverage and for

those of you who do not have video you

just listen to these without looking at

the video this is sweet

tea and it's fairly

good good sweet tea which and sweet tea

is just drunk prodigiously in the

South so anyway we have got a merciless

onslaught of questions again

today and uh I'll just uh avoid making

any risque innuendos about this being

episode 69 although I guess I just kind

of did because we have got like this is

apocalyptic just the amount of questions

we got is we got a shipload of questions here and so I should just Wade right into them and the first question is from Shiprock um wait from sharp Rock see I just said shipload and then and then his name name comes out as Ship Rock but it's really sharp Rock and I hope I did not demean his dignity in any way by saying his name wrong I kind of doubt that sharp rock is really his name anyhow but you never know it could be and I might have just demeaned his dignity a second time leaving him emotionally bruised or something so I just get into answering the questions stop making these commentaries that demean people's dignity even in a

potential manner so sharp Rock Says

I recently discovered that there are two

different forms of the eight precepts

upos Sila being the most familiar form

and

Aila being another form that seems to

place more emphasis on right speech I

have attached some texts from a wiui

Maga study guide and he he sent a couple

or he uploaded a couple of pictures

of uh pages from a book describing the a

tamak or Sila not

Su so anyway he continues here when and

why should one adopt upos Sila versus

aaka I find the latter appealing because

right speech is a weak area for

me

well I must say that I may have come

across AA tamaka Sila before like in a

book but it is just not a thing at all

in burmes terab Buddhism and so it's

just not a thing there and so I've never

really encountered it like in a

practical manner any anything more than

just hearing about it um there is nine

precepts that are taken in Burma uh

sometimes I've had lay people come to me

when I was in Burma asking me to give

them nine precepts which is pretty much

eight precepts with um like a ninth

precept of just having meta for all

beings and there's also a j prian deam

kind of Sila where you're vowing to take

it for

life and my teacher and the Abbot of the

first Monastery I stayed at in Burma he

would give the Jita

prian um refuges and precepts pretty

frequently and the burmes can just take

it without doubt without hesitation

whereas Western people they're they're

going to be thinking do I really want to

take this for the rest of my life you

know I'm not really going to vow to do

this for the rest of my life so we're

we're more we think too much it makes us

more lukewarm I guess plus we just have

less Faith because we've got

more uh

more more Reliance on sort of uh

independent thought or something than

people in a traditional

culture so

anyway the AA tamaka

Sila it's it's kind of a

strange eight precepts because it just

does away with a lot of the precepts of

the osila in order to

include um not only right livelihood as

the eighth precept but it

divides um wrong speech into four

categories I'm pretty sure or at least

three I forgot to uh investigate this

but um traditionally wrong speech like

if you're taking five precepts even you

know you undertake the precept to

abstain from wrong speech and
traditionally there are four kinds of
wrong speech there's just flat out lying
there's like badmouthing people behind
their back like malicious gossip or just
saying things to get other people to
dislike somebody else then you've got
perus SAA which is Harsh speech like you
know cussing somebody out to their face
is just deliberately trying to shame
them or hurt their feelings or trouble
them in some way and then there's s
papal laa which is just sort of
pointless babbling it's just uh
just small talk I mean usually it's
translated as gossip but it's can just

be any kind of you know telling dirty

jokes or something maybe I don't know

it's just any kind of speech that is

just kind of a waste of time that you

know nobody is benefited from

it and so I mean they've gotten rid of

the intoxic intoxicants and so forth for

this this new kind of or this other kind

of eight precepts and it must have been

just sort of like an alternative that

really never caught traction and um

probably most terraa Buddhists have

never heard of

it

so let's see when and why should one

adopt upos cover versus AA

Tamila well I think you're probably

better off just taking the the standard eight precepts um the aiva Tamila really it just boils down to five precepts with um the right livelihood replacing the intoxicants I mean that's really what it boils down to because dividing up wrong speech into different categories is redundant because wrong speech Just includes the the kinds of wrong speech that are enumerated in this other eight precepts so it's really just five precepts with the last precept swapped out for a different

one so I mean the only reason I I could think of why somebody would take the AA tamak

casila um instead of like the standard

five precepts would be if you just want

to have a beer every now and then and

you place more emphasis on right

livelihood which means you wouldn't be

able to sell beer you'd be able to drink

it but you wouldn't be able to sell

it so I'll just move on to the next

question I

guess and this is from

oh and oh

says uh with regard to a YouTube video

of a monk eating his meal and uh he

asked me this a few weeks ago I think

and um I think he asked it in an unusual

place or the

the the question was just disappeared

off of the YouTube comments or something

and so um I'm going to have to answer it

late but um he sent me this video of a a

monk who is living in Sri Lanka I think

he was a western monk living in Sri

Lanka doing this video and he was he had

just gotten back from alms round he had

a lot of food I mean it was like a bowl

full of

food and so um om here is asking is it

common for a monk in Asia to have this

many food every day and how can they eat

that

much um and and then he says in

parenthesis that monk said he was a one

meal eater so he ate only one meal a day

and I I watched the video and he really
didn't get all that much compared to how
much I used to get um I mean there were
times there was this one Village Shier
Village on the indin River and I didn't
go to it every day but I had a lot of
like people who wanted to offer food to
me and they were like crowd they were
like flooding into this other Village
that I would go for MMS to and I mean it
was just like a circus I mean there was
so many people there that finally I just
okay you know like once a week or once
every two weeks or something I think it
was every e8th day upos day so it was
like every two weeks I would walk to
Village and there was so many people

wanting to offer food there that I mean
it was just lined up it was like almost
every household in the village I mean it
was like over a hundred people well over
100 maybe 200 people all wanting to put
food into my bowl so I'd have to have
these guys coming with like baskets and
bags and stuff so that when my bowl
would fill up I just have to dump it
into this basket or something and just
keep going and so I'd get enough food
for I mean it would like a 10day supply
of food at least
I mean it was enough food to feed an
entire
Monastery

and you can criticize that because I I obviously didn't need anything near that much food but it's like you're doing it because these people want to offer food they want to earn Merit by offering your food so I mean I'd accept the food and then the whole Monastery would have a feast you know because it would get distributed and uh yeah everybody everybody was well fed that day but uh I mean even just going for an ordinary alms round like the very first video on my channel if I remember correctly is me going for alms round with this long line of people they all want to put food in it's like going house by house if you're like more or less famous I mean it

doesn't really work you know it's like
in the text it's telling telling monks
you know they should go house by house
through the village until they get
enough food and then they come back but
I started off doing that but so many
people wanted to offer food to the
Exotic foreign monk who was
me who lives alone in a cave in the
forest so that made me even more
exotic I just get to the outskirts of
the village and there just be this long
line of people and so I would try to you
know give everybody the opportunity to
put at least a little bit of food in you
know some places I just it just be this

rule just one spoon each I mean it had

to be that way and then the bowl would

still be just completely

stuffed so I mean when I was a young

monk um I could I mean my Bowl's pretty

big that holds over a gallon and I could

eat at least 2third to three fours of

that and still be skinny like when I was

30 years

old but

uh I think it's mostly just because it

was mostly just

rice so there wasn't a lot of

nutritional value in it but uh yeah it

is common I mean famous monks especially

famous seatt like they don't even have

to go for Ms they just stay at the

monastery and just crowds of people come
all wanting to offer food and so they'll
have this table just completely covered
with various dishes of
food and it's just Overkill I've tried
to tell Burmese Buddhists you know
you're better off feeding a hungry
little kid or even a hungry dog than
putting an extra bowl of food on a table
in front of a monk who's already fat and
has already got like 50 pounds of food
sitting in front of them but they just
don't see it that way they think you get
more Merit by offering to a monk than
you get by offering to a hungry Village
kid or a scy

dog so yeah it is common for a monk in
Asia to have that many food every day
and they don't eat that much you know
they just eat as much as they want to
eat and I mean there's no way you could
eat you know literally 50 pounds of
food or even five pounds
probably so yeah especially if a monk is
famous or just he's considered to be you
know above the the average in in his
monastic practice or so forth and people
are just drooling at the opportunity to
earn Merit by offering food to this
exotic holy
man so yeah that I got more food than
that monk in the video did by far
sometimes so I guess I'll just move on

to oh next question which is there is always a possibility that the Buddha was right about the pure dharm lasting 500 years what if one of early Buddhist schools not terraa had pure dharm and it this school was gone around 500 years after Buddha said those words maybe it was the one with only the sutas without Abid dama so the school with only the sutas without Abid dama would be the santica school and I don't know when it died out but I assume it died out long after 500 years um after the Buddhist time

so um I mean it is theoretically possible that I mean the Buddha

notoriously

predicted that the true teachings the

sadama would last only 500 years and

that was not 500 years from now but 500

years from then which was like 2,500

years ago so true DH should not exist if

that text is

true and so you got people wrangling

with it it really is Wrangle worthy of

an

issue um but I mean om here is saying

you know what if one of the early

Buddhist schools that wasn't terab was

the the true teachings and then it died

out after 500 years and I just don't

think that's very likely because all of

the schools had a different emphasis and

they all kind of branched out and even within the first hundred years pretty much all of the schools of Buddhism were already adopting developments in dhama that weren't taught by the Buddha in all likelihood sort of like Christianity you know relatively early on there's all these teachings that are added to just fundamental Christian dogma that Jesus never taught probably in my opinion Jesus never taught that he was the only begotten Son of God for example but and that got included and Buddhism is sort of like that too I mean there like the four stages of sainthood there's a there's a few things that I've

mentioned repeatedly in these q's and
A's um that I mean they just became
fundamental Dharma or Dharma in Buddhism
like the 12 nidana theory of picha Samu
you know it's just standard for all
schools of Buddhism as far as I know and
uh I just don't think that it originated
with the Buddha himself dependent core
Rising did but the 12 nidana Theory you
know this causes this causes this in a
in a linear sequence I don't think so so
I mean all of the schools were were
victims of that I
guess and so I really don't think that
there was any of were any of the um pre
Mahayana schools that were
established um you know 500 four or 500

years after the time of the Buddha you know just you know that existed 400 years after the time of the Buddha say I don't think there was any school of Buddhism that was just absolute pristine pure teachings of the Buddha you know there's always going to be this stuff that gets mixed in

so yeah I think you'd have to go with a different Theory as to why in the text the Buddhist says that the sadama you know the the the true dhama is only going to exist for 500 years and still I would my preferred theory is probably that it's just apocryphal and the Buddha

really never said it that would be my
guess although it's just a
guess so I'll just move on to the next
question which is from bodh sat
969 and this is another question that
got asked some time ago and I just never
saw the question question he he asked on
Twitter or X and I don't even look at my
Twitter feed as a general rule my
sweetheart manages my Twitter so she's
the one that uploads stuff on the
Twitter and uh every once in a while
she'll show me something you know
somebody trying to contact me or
something um but for the most part I
don't even I don't look at Twitter so
anyway buyat 969 says I posted a

question on X longer ago but you didn't
see it here it is I wrote with an Indian
Buddhist on acts who explained to me
that Hindus do not recognize Buddhism as
an independent religion in their eyes it
is just a form of Hinduism and some
claim that the Buddha is just an avatar
of Vishnu he said they want to destroy
Buddhism through assimilation they
control Buddhist temples while
Christians control churches and Muslims
control mosques your opinion on that did
Hinduism lead to the decline of Buddhism
as much as
Islam
um yeah it is true that many Hindus

consider Buddhism to just be a branch of

Hinduism

and I mean it's it's not really true

because Buddhism does not consider the

vdas to be authoritative and so since

Buddhism is nonic it could hardly be

considered a branch of

Hinduism like Sonia was

nonic and so that was not considered a

branch of Hinduism until one branch of

Sania started accepting the vdas as

authoritative and then it became known

as

yoga and but it is true that uh in Hindu

tradition the Buddha is considered to be

an avatar of Vishnu which was like if

you can't beat them join them in a way

it was like um for centuries centuries
and centuries Buddhism and Hinduism or
Proto Hinduism were like Rivals you know
they were competitors for the faith of
the people throughout
India and they they borrowed from each
other a lot and finally I guess the
Hindus there were times when buddhis
Buddhism was in the ascendant that most
of the Indian population were
Buddhist if they were religious at all
and
uh so the Hindus just said well the
Buddha was an avatar of Vishnu which
would kind of make
Buddhism like a kind of Hinduism but he

was like the deceiver he was like trying
to lead people away from the true
teachings of Hinduism by like sort of
culling the herd by turning the the
goats into Buddhists and keeping the
Sheep Hindu or some such and I mean
that's it's all just religious
propaganda there's so much religious
propaganda if you look for it um whether
Hindus really want to destroy Buddhism
through assimilation I mean some of them
probably do you know like some Hindu
politicians may may be quite okay with
just calling Buddhism a branch of
Hinduism and then just sort of like
sidelining it marginalizing
it

um let's see so my opinion on that is yeah I mean it's Buddhism and Hinduism have been rivals in India for a long time and finally the Hindus won and I think one of the main reasons there are a few main reasons why the Hindus won it was like it was the the Muslim invasion of India that pretty much wiped out Buddhism and that was for a couple of reasons it didn't wipe out Hinduism but it did wipe out Buddhism and one reason why it wiped out Buddhism is the Buddhists were just uncompromising in their pacifism as a general rule and just Buddhist philosophy just does not condone fighting not even like in

self-defense really unless I mean if
you're like a really advaned Saint then
you're not even going to fight to defend
yourself so there is that and but on the
other hand the Hindus or the Proto
Hindus they had like Marshal Role Models
you know like the babad Gita it takes
you know the whole babad Gita takes
place on a battlefield right before a
battle where Vishnu himself is
explaining to Arjuna that not only is it
okay to fight in a battle it is your
sacred duty to kill your own Rel
relatives in a battle if that is if that
is you know if you're a soldier and
they're on the other
side then it's just your sacred Duty or

like the the ramayana is another is very

it's like about a war you know the mahab

barata is about a

war

so

the the uh the vdic Proto Hindus and

later the Hindus they did have like a

warlike tradition that they could draw

from that could

justify fighting against the invading

Muslims but also another reason why the

Buddhists died out in India is they were

becoming very very Monastery oriented

and like monastic University oriented so

the Muslims would just come in and just

wipe out the universities like Nanda and

it would just sort of collapse the whole ecclesiastical system but uh so the question here at the end did Hinduism lead to the decline of Buddhism as much as Islam I don't think so um like they didn't the Hindus really didn't cause the decline of of Buddhism unless like some tantric elements from from Hinduism got into Buddhism and sort of made it kind of degenerate in certain ways but um in a way the the Rivalry between Buddhism and Hinduism strengthen both sides it's like capitalism you have a a monopoly like a monoculture then I mean it can just go downhill and you're stuck with it but

when you've got two like different
systems two or more different systems
that are competing with each other
they're going to keep trying to up their
game try to be as you know the monks are
going to try and be more saintly and the
the philosophers are going to try to be
more you know just more subtle and
profound just as a way of defeating the
other side or getting more converts or
whatever so I do think that one reason
why India went through this golden age
is because of all this competition of
different spiritual and philosophical
systems just competing with each
other um so yeah I think the the Muslims

and also just sort of societal decline
to a certain degree especially in in
like esoteric Buddhism it started
becoming very weird and far out and the
common person couldn't really relate to
it or understand it and so I think those
were two of the main reasons not the
only reasons why Buddhism got wiped out
but Hinduism
survived and I mean the Hindus a lot of
Hindus even consider Christianity to be
a kind of Hinduism now some Hindu some
Hindus just think all religion is is
some kind of
Hinduism but um this aspect that's
included in this question of the h H
wanting to just kind of wipe out

Buddhism or just marginalize it
trivialize it um yeah some of that does
happen but I don't think it was nearly
as much of a factor in the decline of
Buddhism in India as as the Muslim
Invasion during the Middle
Ages so we'll just move on to the next
question here this is from pranav and
pronav says what happens after the
fourth Jan in Noble eight-fold Path well
fourth jna is like the culmination of
the Noble eight-fold Path in a sense
it's right concentration is the the
eighth step in the noble Eightfold Path
and fourth Janna traditionally is the
highest Janna so that would be like the

the Perfection and

culmination and you

should um I mean if you've perfected

everything you know the whole Noble

Eightfold Path then I mean you're at

least going to become an anagami at

seems yeah I mean you're going to I mean

there's no guarantee of full

Enlightenment but you're definitely

going to get some very high attainment

if if you've uh mastered

everything but there is I mean the

ancient Indians they were just really

keen on elaborating and elaborating and

elaborating and making everything more

complicated and just one uping the

absolute abute you know some somebody

says this is the absolute and then this
other group will say oh we got a higher
it's higher than that what you're
calling the absolute and then someone
else would come along and say oh we got
an even higher one and the Hindus were
that way um and the Buddhists were that
way to some
degree so there are supposedly
meditative States higher than fourth jna
like uh the signless concentration of
mind and so forth or just neod sopit
which is a kind of suspended animation
but it's pretty clear from the early
text that fourth Jan was as high as it
got so I mean what happens after the

fourth jna is just more fourth

jna until you just you become

enlightened so I guess I should just

move on to the next question here this

is from Don FES or Don Fades depending

on what country he comes comes from I

don't

know but Don or Don says further to your

answer about where you would choose to

be reborn why would you not at least

choose a Heavenly

realm well this was a response to a

question that was asked last time it's

like if I could choose my next rebirth

what would I choose and I was just

saying really I mean the only wise

choice is to just choose wherever your

karma lands you because that's what you
need I mean if you want to work out your
karma and make you know advance in dhama
and so forth I mean I don't think
there's any way of cheating or getting
shortcuts or anything so you're just
gonna have to
just land in the realm that is the
consequence of your of your
actions so why would I not at least
choose a Heavenly realm I mean if I wind
up in a Heavenly realm that's fine you
know I'm not going to fight it or
anything but uh really really I mean the
best place you can wind up you know the
best parents you can get in your next

life the best everything you can get in

your next life is just wherever your

karma lands you because your karma is

just naturally working itself out it's

like water seeking its own level you

know it's like that's what you need

that's why you get

it so yeah that's why I wouldn't choose

a Heavenly realm I mean if if I could

you know all else being equal if I could

be in heaven or lower down you know i'

go for heaven might as well but uh if it

wasn't um to my best advantage in my

Spiritual Development so to speak then

yeah I just wherever my karma lands me

that's that's where I need to

be so anyway his next question here is

and how far down the road of dispassion
do you think you are well I'm farther
along the road than most people I
suppose although there still are things
that uh that bug me like just being
frustrated at work sometimes you know
like the machine is malfunctioning or
there's a hydraulic leak that just I
don't know well I guess the hydraulic
leak isn't that big of a deal but I mean
sometimes you just get frustrated trying
to make something and it's just not
working or just
driving I mean there's so many idiotic
dri ders on the road at least in South
Carolina it may be like a universal

phenomenon but uh yeah sometimes on the road you you just get frustrated like you know there's certain traffic lights that stay green for just a few seconds you know it's like the the second or third car under the the green light and it's already turning yellow and you got somebody in front of you who's like texting you know they just sit there for 5 seconds the lights turning yellow before they even move then yeah I can I can get uh bugged by that and also anybody who has a a female love interest that you know that women just it's like they've evolved this talent for just you know poking buttons on on guys so yeah my sweetheart can uh get me worked up

sometimes too she really sits her a

little hard on

it but uh yeah in some ways think I

would be considered abnormally

dispassionate disregard to certain

things but I don't want to see here I'm

talking about myself because I'm just

too damn

modest so I'm just going to move on to

the next question here which is from

Indian

guy an Indian guy says what are you

going to do when you become too famous

to us budha nerds that you can't put

every question and answer in your video

anymore you'll have to have 6h hour long

videos

LOL um yeah I think I first Stars I

would just gradually reduce the number

of questions each person can ask right

now it's six five plus a bonus question

and it might you know go down to like

four or three or something if if I get

lots and lots and lots of questions then

I may have to start um just reducing the

number of available questions per person

per episode or also I could just start

maybe picking and choosing the juiciest

questions

um just among if if one person you know

if they only ask one question then i'

answer that but if somebody asks like

five questions and there's like you know

60 Questions that have to be answered
then I might just take the liberty of of
sort of editing and picking the ones
that I think would be of greatest
interest and greatest benefit to you my
viewers so I'll just uh move on to the
next question which is from Indiana DH
and I think Indiana dhama might be the
same as Indian guy my my synonyms are
kind of hazy so it's hard to keep up
with some people pyms because they keep
changing them but um I think Indian guy
and Indiana dhama are the same maybe I
hope I didn't demean somebody's
dignity by by uh jumping to this
assumption but I I think it's

true so anyways Indiana dhama possibly
Alias Indian guy says what are the
karmic consequences of this no wait no
Indian Adama maybe is an Indian guy gosh
it's it starts with Indian though so
let's just assume that they're similar
in certain
ways so Indiana D says what are the
karmic consequences of deciding to end
life support or resuscitation for a
person no longer able to make those
decisions for example say that John
Doe's parent is experiencing cardiac
arrest and has no do not resuscitate
order in place would John Doe be guilty
of killing his parent if he told the
Physicians not to attempt resuscitation

going to a hell realm at his own death
if his in if his intention matters
imagine two different
scenarios one where loved the parent and
wanted to respect their previously
stated wishes and one where he feared
his abusive parent and this fear or hate
was his motivation similar hypotheticals
could be made about spouses abusive
loving Etc siblings and many other
examples and of course more specifics
could be added to the hypothetical as is
likely in any real world situation but
hopefully the above is enough for an
answer the ethics and karmic
consequences of making these kind of end

of life decisions have been of interest
to me for some time now okay well I
think there will probably be a
distinction here between let's see get a
scroll up towards the top here uh ending
life support or
resuscitation
because um I mean let's say you've got a
parent on life support God
forbid and so I mean technically pulling
the plug on the life support machine or
giving the doctor permission to pull the
plug you know he says do I have your
permission you say go for it or yeah I
don't mind or whatever that would be
more serious than just not having
somebody resuscitated because

resuscitated means they're already kind
of dead and so I mean you resuscitate
someone it's like you're sort of
returning them to life in a
way um you know they're already
flatlining so technically they're
already
dead
maybe I mean it's hard to say what the
Buddhist um you know somebody's
flatlining they've had cardiac arrest
you know their heart is no longer
beating I mean how long are they still
alive it be you know so long as there is
consciousness so long as you know the
the karmic stream is still going on in

in the chamber of the heart I guess
according to Orthodox terava Buddhism so
then uh I mean how would you know
exactly when they are exactly
dead but it does say that there one of
the things that you can do that will
just guarantee going to hell after you
die is killing one of your own parents
so you have to be real careful about
that and I would be very careful I'd be
very reluctant to just tell the doctor
you know go ahead and euthanize them or
go ahead and pull the plug because you
know I would prefer that I mean if it
was going to happen even if it had to
happen even it was just they were brain
dead you know their heart was still

beating they were still breathing with
the assistance of this machine but I
mean they're just you know they're not
going to get better they're not going to
wake up then I mean I guess it makes
sense that the plug get pulled but still
I wouldn't want to be the person calling
the shots on that
call but if you got power of attorney or
something where you have to make the
shot I don't I don't know I think uh
probably the Buddhist thing to do would
just be uh
go bankrupt paying for the machine you
know sort of it just reminds me of the
old movie roller ball where uh MoonPie

is a vegetable and his his buddy who's
got power of attorney over him his next
of kin supposedly just because he was
his best friend just told the I mean the
doctor saying please sign please sign
we're gonna pull the plug on him and and
Jonathan e just says you know even a
flower feels the sun you know just let
him be the way he is so yeah that might
be a better Buddhist approach even
though you might go bankrupt paying the
bills for
it so but yeah it is true that your
intention matters and with regard to
something like that I mean it could be
that the Buddhist tradition saying that
you're just guaranteed of hell if you if

you kill one of your parents um I mean

it's

gonna it's going to be mitigated by

certain factors you know just I mean

they're already just total you know

their body if it were a car would just

be just completely total you know

there's no way they're going to get

better they're not even going to wake

up then

yeah um you could say that the karmic

stream is already gone and even though

their body's alive that they as a person

are already dead so there's all these

all these complications I mean it's it's

a very straightforward and simple in the

text you know you kill one of your

parents you go to hell it's

guaranteed but but like your own your

own motives your own incentives and

please excuse me because my nose is very

itchy for some

reason so yeah I I'm I'm skeptical that

you're just under any circumstance that

you're G to go to hell for causing like

knowingly causing the death of one of

your

parents

so yeah I think you just have to search

within your own heart and come up with

you know what your conscience you know

when when you're most you have the most

Clarity what your conscience what you're

like what the Quakers would call your
inner voice tell you to do in such a
circumstance but still when it comes to
pulling the plug on mom or dad I would
be very
hesitant uh with regard to actually
causing their death unless I mean they
were just like totally brain dead and
there was just nobody there they weren't
going to wake up you know the the the
spirit has already fled so to speak then
maybe but still I'd be
hesitant just because of what the texts
say for the most
part so I guess I should just move on to
uh Indiana dh's next question here

because as I say we've got a veritable
Apocalypse of questions this
today and so he asked a kind of
interesting question here what does
ordination do in terraa before becoming
Buddhist I was a Roman Catholic and
ordination in that religion is believed
to cause an ontological change in the
soul of the man being ordained even a
priest who goes to hell would still be a
priest all that of course makes no sense
from the perspective of terraa other
than taking on all the rules regarding
monastic life what does ordination do or
mean for a terot and monk
well actually in
Burma and possibly in Thailand also for

all I know if you are a monk you're not
considered to be human anymore you're
like a super human being like the
pronouns I mean you don't say you
anymore you say a shimpa which means
like venerable Lord you know your own
parents will be down on the ground
bowing to you and just like verbs and
everything like like a a normal person
eats it's like you know or no tamin but
a monk
he's you know it's just like sleeping
different words walking going coming
it's they use different words for monks
than they use for Lay people and to some
degree it's like they transferred like

the no the royalty you know like the
pronouns and the and the verbs and all
that for they were used for the Kings
and the princes and so forth or they're
also used for monks just because monks
are considered to be above just ordinary
humans even if they're just ordained for
a week you know on vacation or something
still during that week there's like this
ontological change where they are no
longer regular human
beings but from a western point of view
and also probably from an ancient Indian
Point of View you're still a human I
mean there is no soul for any
ontological change to take place in so
there is

that but uh I mean there are certain

changes I mean there's an old saying

among the Roman Catholics that like a

monk can go to hell easier than a Layman

just because the the monk has like a

higher higher obligations he's got more

Duty you know he can he can fall from

grace easier because he's got more grace

to uphold so to

speak so but but still I mean it's just

five

Aggregates so I mean there is a question

about five Aggregates farther down on

this long

list but

um yeah so what does ordination do or

mean for teron mon it just means that

you are obligated to follow vinea rules

that you have officially renounced the

world you're like a renunciate you're a

s

Sal but that's it I mean you're still

still five five condas you're still five

Aggregates so yeah I guess I answer that

question sometimes I'm not sure if I

answer these questions but I guess I

answer that one so I'll just move on to

Indiana dh's next and last question here

is it advisable for a secular renunciant

to cease voting I have only one more

election that i' prefer to vote in and

that is for Donald Trump in November

2024

well now sweet tea is good

sometimes see um that is that's another

question that I mean there's you could

say that a true renunciant would would

not get involved in politics at all so

that's I mean that's one approach you

can take I mean you wouldn't be doing

wrong by not voting from a Buddhist

point of

view but um it could be like Rah Doss

who was one of my

first spiritual teachers in

life um he he still voted and he he was

he just vote for the candidate that he

considered to be more spiritually

Advanced he would sort of uplift Society

more so I mean that's that would be like

a spiritual reason for

voting but uh I mean Trump versus Biden

neither one of them strikes me as

particularly spiritual at least Donald

Trump still has all of his faculties in

uh sort of operational

mode but

uh yeah I mean in order to vote you'd

have to be you should be well-versed in

in politics and know what the like the

platforms of the different candidates

are and so forth and that would be

studying you know worldly knowledge you

know animal knowledge and so forth but

uh yeah I think that's that's your own

call I mean if your

conscience is like spurring you on to
help either get one person who would
help Humanity more into office or just
keeping somebody who would just be just
malignant out of office then you know I
mean that could be a it's sort of a
conscientious act but for the I think
playing it safe just being totally
Conservative then yeah a true renunciant
would just leave all politics behind and
just go his own way he' just sit in the
room and
meditate the world could go to hell all
around him but he's meditating and he's
serene
so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from Fred and Fred says Hi I was having a bit of a depression the kesas were Savage anything in language in one's mindstream is bogus in my opinion what's your thoughts um so I guess my thoughts about the depression and the Savage kesas um yeah I don't know enough details to really comment on that but I guess he's asking what are my thoughts on this third sentence here anything in language in one's mindstream is bogus in my opinion well language I mean it's just symbols it's not the real thing you I mean you cannot understand Reality by thinking about it you cannot know reality through language Unless somehow

the language is like in Zen where the Zen master is like the master Archer who shoots down another arrow in midair with his own arrow and so the words of the Zen master or like like that arrow that just hit you they collide with the words of somebody else and they both just fall to the ground and leave silence in their place so you can use language as a way of short circuiting you know through Paradox or or whatever language itself and just leave silence behind and Clarity and just you know direct experience of reality rather than trying to understand reality through symbols which is just a Fool's errand it's just

not going to

happen so anything in language in our

mindstream is bogus yeah I I mean

language is all symbols you know in a

symbol is just sort of a more or less

arbitrary you know form of you know

visual or or auditory or whatever trying

to represent something else like the

word tree you know the letters t r are

radically different from an actual

tree assuming that an actual tree even

exists in

reality so yeah language is a very

inferior way of trying to understand

reality

although it may be necessary for

navigating technological

samsara I mean you have to Lo know
language to drive a car or to have a job
for example as a general
rule so I guess I'll just move on to
Fred's next question here
pure abod seem a fair Target to Aspire
to question mark and this is also a
follow up on a previous question where
somebody asked if it's possible to
become um enlightened in heaven and I
pointed out that pure abodes were you
know only anagami who are destined for
enlightenment you know at the end of
their life are aren't even able to get
into these Heaven Realms so Fred asks if
one should aspire to these Heaven Realms

I mean according to tradition they exist
although you have no proof that they
exist and so it's kind of a gamble to
Aspire to something that you don't
really know if it's really there or not
you know kind of a lot of religions
you're just basing your entire life on
this gamble that this religion that
you've joined is telling the truth and
all the other religions aren't telling
the truth or not at least not nearly as
well as the religion that you've
joined like I mean how do you know if
you're going to get saved if if you
believe in so and so I mean it's just
it's a gamble you're essentially
guessing and it may be an educated guess

because everyone in your culture traditionally has made the same guess but still it's a guess and uh yeah you shouldn't aspire to anything in the text it says you know the wise man does not aspire to anything not even to Enlightenment so you just do your duty you do the best you can follow dhama as well as you can just because it's your duty to do it and don't be goal oriented in your dhamma goal oriented dhamma is a mistake and it usually leads to frustration and disappointment because even if you get what you're aiming for it's going to be different than you were expecting it anyway so you're better off

just practicing because you feel drawn
to practice or it's your sacred duty to
practice and not because you want to get
something out of
it so I'll just move on next question
here this is also from Fred could
tobacco J have been around at the time
of Goa I I think that J is just I don't
know how that J got in there but let's
just skip the Jay could tobacco have
been around at the time of Goa what
about hashish cannabis can lift you out
of a depression I have a pipe That's My
Confession well it's like a little poem
here cannabis can lift you out of
depression I have a pipe that's my
confession I don't know if you did that

on purpose or what but anyway um tobacco
it was around in the time of Goa it just
wasn't around in
Eurasia um I mean I think maybe there's
like Egyptian mummies or something that
may have Trace Amounts of not only
tobacco but cocaine in their
embalming I think I've read or heard
something about that but it wasn't
cultivated in the west I mean obviously
if it was cultivated in the west you'd
probably have it in just growing in
Fields before Columbus went to the new
world and I guess it was Sir Walter
Raleigh who brought tobacco back to
Europe like late 1500s early

1600s

so yeah I don't think tobacco was around

in India in the time of Gab Buddha so

that's why there's no rule against

smoking tobacco that's probably the

reason the only reason why there's no

rule against smoking tobacco for

Buddhist monks or terraa Buddhist monks

is just because in the Buddhist time in

Ancient India there just was no tobacco

for him to

forbid what about

hashish um I assume that they were

making hashish in Budan and hashish is

just like the like con compacted resin

of the of the cannabis plant although

some people might just call cannabis

smoking cannabis in general to be

smoking hashish and yeah that definitely

was in in India in the Buddhist time and

it's mentioned in the text the the word

for uh cannabis is

banga so that also means

hemp so

um yeah so cannabis can lift you out

yeah that's I guess that's so there was

no tobacco in India in the Buddhist time

um and there was cannabis whether they

were turning the Cannabis into hashish

I'm not exactly sure but I assume they

were so I'll just move on the next

question here this is from nature cure

and this is another tobacco question

could smoking cigarettes cause one to
take rebirth in four lower
Realms um that's highly unlikely I mean
you'd have to have some really bad
mental States due to the smoking of
cigarettes I mean just smoking a
cigarette itself is just ethically
neutral just a physical action you know
is neither wholesome or un wholesome
it's the mental States involved and even
if you're just hopelessly addicted to
nicotine um I don't think that in itself
would necessarily cause mental States so
bad that you would go to hell or be
reborn as an animal or a ghost unless
maybe I mean you just have such intense
craving that it somehow messes up your

karma maybe you die you know you're just just craving a cigarette so bad and then you die with this craving mind or something that maybe you could wind up as a ghost or something maybe you just miss cigarettes so bad you know you can't smoke cigarettes in the in the ghost realm or something you just craving the cigarettes or something I don't know but as a general rule I don't think smoking cigarettes would be bad enough to uh cause you to have rebirth in the four ler Realms unless you had some Associated really un un wholesome mental States I really can't imagine such a severe un wholesome mental state

just due to craving

tobaco so I'll just move on to Nature

Cure's next question here who are 84

mahasa can they be considered as

Buddhists or even enlightened Buddhist

Masters um it's not in terraa I think

maybe he's referring to the like the

ascended masters who lived in the

Himalayas that were a supposed ly

sending messages to Madame blaty like in

the early theosophy days that they were

like channeling these ascended masters

in the Himalayas and if they were in the

Himalayas there's a good chance that

they were Buddhists or at least Hindus

or maybe the theosophist didn't really

differentiate between between the two

but it could have been some sort of

Tibetan

Buddhism um or just who knows I'm not I

assume Madam blatsky knew

but I mean even assuming that these 84

mahasa are uh what I'm what Madam baski

was supposedly channeling and I think

she eventually got uh kicked out of her

own organization which she helped to

found because she was caught like faking

these messages from the ascended masters

in Himalayas you know they were like

falling from the ceiling just falling

out of thin air and it turned out she

was like pulling a string which is

making them fall through a crack in the

ceiling or

something so yeah I would consider them

to be for the most part

mythology I mean if anyone can prove

their existence or show some persuasive

evidence then that's that's fine but uh

yeah I'd really take it with a grain of

salt or maybe a whole spoon of salt so

I'll just move on to Nature Cure's next

question here what sutas can I find

doctrines or theories is like only male

human can become Buddha Buddhas reside

in TC Heaven before taking human birth

five Buddhas in one Capa or facts about

previous three Buddhas or 27 Buddhas

well the uh the Buddha

wsaw and its commentaries would be the

main source of information on this kind of thing and uh there's there's this surreal series of books by H mad no not mad migga one no is that right ah man he was

Tica dasas he was the uh the reciter at the Burmese 6th Council he had memorized the entire poly toptica which in Burmese is 40 large volumes he had memorized that and uh he wrote this it was like a commentary to the Buddha wsa the lineage of Buddhas which is is dealing with this entire system of you know Buddha after Buddha after Buddha and they're all cataloged you know these sometimes this bizarre biographies like mongala Buddha

if you want to read something really

bizarre read the the the biography or

history or mythology of mongala Buddha

who lived you know a zillion gajillion

years ago on a different planet but also

in India speaking poly and so

forth

um so

yeah it's let's see

here yeah I would I would uh read the

Buddha wsa or or its commentaries or

like something like ah how come I keep

forgetting his name it's

Mig migga one no J one

no h mingun there we go

mingun he wrote this book that got

translated into English although it's

published only in Burma probably and good luck trying to find copies of it but uh yeah it's it's got some weird stuff in there and I mean it's all of this like only a male human can become a Buddha I mean you just go over the lineage of Buddhas you're never going to find a female it's always male so that you can just assume like scientifically inductively that they have to be male since all the ones enumerated are male Buddhas residing to se to Heaven before taking human birth uh I think that may actually have its origins in the ATA waga there's a suta in the ATA waga mentioning

Tu but uh it could just mean like

contented in in and then it just got

turned into a heaven realm where the

Buddhas um spend their last life as a

bodh SAT before descending to Earth and

and uh becoming a

Buddha uh five Buddhas in one CA that's

that's not necessarily the case that's

like a maximum number

that some compas might some World Cycles

might only have like two Buddhas I'm

pretty sure and the facts about or the

facts about previous three Buddhas or 27

Buddhas you you'd have to go to the

Buddha wsa or commentaries on the Buddha

wsa or books based on the Buddha

wsa to get that information but it's not

particularly useful

information because I mean it's

mythological Buddhas

80 feet tall with a lifespan of 84,000

years who lived on some previous Earth

zillions of years

ago so I'll just move on to Nature c's

next question

here and I hope I'm close to halfway

done because we've already in we've

already been in this for an hour so

let's see here nature cures next

question emitting semen or masturbation

mentioned in the potim Moka how genuine

this can be true Buddha's word question

mark how bad occasionally masturbation

can be for yogis question mark in
Hinduism Brahma charia seman is like
fuel or Elixir a sort of chemical
element in the brain that helps gain
wisdom and stuff could this be a case
for Terra vodin 2 thank you venerable
sir well yeah it is genuine I mean this
goes way back I mean the poty mocha not
I mean it's a sesa offense number one
sesa number one so it's the fifth rule
in the entire ptim Moka that a monk is
not allowed to emit semen or to
deliberately have an orgasm unless it's
in a dream while he's
asleep but if you go to sleep with a
specific intention of having a wet dream
then that's against the rules too but if

it just SP continuously happen to all
your asleep you haven't broken a rule
but for it to be that fundamental of a
rule and it's it's a garapati it's it's
a serious offense if you break this and
you've got to take Penance for six days
and six nights um yeah I mean it goes
way back it goes back to early Buddhism
all potty mokas would have this rule I'm
sure of
it so all schools of Buddhism would
agree so it goes at least as far back it
goes farther back than the first Schism
you know anything that all the schools
of Buddhism have in common you can
safely

assume pretty safely assume that it

predates the first Schism so it's like

during the first hundred years of the

existence of of

Buddhism so I mean with regard to what

is the true Buddhist word I mean that

you can't really know for

sure but it definitely goes way back the

rule saying monks are not allowed to

jerk

off no spanking the

puppy

so see how bad can occasional

masturbation be for yogis well if if

you're a monk if you're ordained then

you're just making problem after problem

because you've got these um offenses

that you have to expiate and the only
way to expiate them is through the
Penance and if you're not taking the
Penance then it's you're never going to
have pure morality at least not in the
ecclesiastical
sense um in Hinduism brahmacharya
seeming is like fuel or Elixir yeah it
it's really not that way the reason why
it's so much against the rules is a monk
is supposed to be an athetic he's
supposed to avoid wallowing and sensual
pleasure like householders who enjoy
pleasures of the senses and so it's just
wallowing and sensual pleasure by
spanking the puppy it's not really you

know depleting yourself of some kind of
spiritual Elixir or anything like that
it's just you're wallowing in sensuality
which is inappropriate for a monk I mean
with regard to sensual Pleasures sex
tends to be up near the top of the list
of you know the most intense sensual
Pleasures that a person can indulge in
unless he's a drug addict or
something so yeah that's the way it goes
I mean dosm also considers Yang Essence
to be something that a man should
conserve or so I have read but um yeah
in Buddhism it's not really the the SE
in itself that is the issue it's it's
the wallowing in sensuality just
wallowing with abandon in

sensuality so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from Quick quiz and quick quiz says someone really fat like with a big belly and stuff and also married can be an enlightened Master question mark I am not asking if they can be come enlightened I'm asking if that married fat person claims that he is enlightened could that be possible well I mean I would be wary of anyone claiming to be enlightened I think it's The Diamond Cutter Sutra I've mentioned this before that anyone who's in Arya isn't going to think or say I am an Arya you know so anyone who's bragging about how enlightened they are um yeah that's

that's a red flag right there you should be you should be careful about people like

that but uh I mean somebody who's obese and married I mean neim karoli Baba was obese and uh there's even rumors that he was secretly married although it was kind of a weird kind of a marriage where according to the story neem Ki Baba he renounced the world when he was a child he just ran away and went off and became a sawu in the forest and started doing relatively Advanced athetic practices even as a child um but the way it often Works in India traditional India he was betrothed you know from the time he was an infant there was this girl that so he

considered to be like his Dharma which
in Hinduism is like your duty to marry
this girl because she they were betr so
he married her and they had kids but I
mean he was still a sawu you know he
just he'd show up for the the important
ceremonies and the things that had to be
done and and then you know he'd just go
back to being a wandering sawu
and I mean he'd be one of my best
guesses for anyone in the 20th century
to really be fully
enlightened even though he was a Hindu
and
obese I think he died of like some
complications from

diabetes but uh I mean one of the reasons why he was so obese when he was late in in his later years is the Hindus have strange ideas about like processing other people's Karma and he did it through there were some some swamis in India who do it through cigarettes I mean they'd be smoking like several cigarettes all at the same time or money like somebody would give him money and he' just it'd be like a coin and he just kind of rub it in his fingers just kind of somehow process the money Karma of this person and maharaji I mean he could eat like five full-size meals in in succession just because people are wanting to to offer him food and he's

sort of conferring blessings on them by

eating it in a

sense but uh so somebody who is

obese um yeah I still think it's

possible for them to be fully

enlightened especially if there's some

spiritual reason for the Obesity or just

a physical one I guess um married yeah I

don't think that's necessarily uh again

like a a rule breaker or something uh I

mean in terab about of Buddhism you'd

have to be celibate if you're fully

enlightened that you just wouldn't have

any craving for sex anymore

more um but anyone who's going around

claiming to be enlightened like maharaji

or nimoli Baba he's according to
numerous testimonies he just he
performed Miracles I mean he had psychic
powers that would just blow people's
minds but he would always deny it which
in a way was
lying and so I mean according to terab
Buddhism an Arya can't lie either but uh
he lied and and uh still I mean when he
saw you he' just look right through you
he'd know more about you than you know
about
you and he was obese possibly
married so I mean but he wasn't claiming
to be that's that's the point I was
making towards the end and he would just
deny everything you know or if somebody

was saying oh thank you maharaji for
curing my child or whatever he'd just
say subish high it's all God you know
God did it I didn't do anything that
kind of a thing and that's what you
would expect from a very wise person not
look at me look how enlightened I am you
know just declaring themselves an a Haun
on the the homepage of their their
website stuff like that is uh yeah I
mean I'm very skeptical and wary of
people like that because chances are
they're more like sociopathic conmen who
nevertheless have some spiritual
attainment there's no rule saying a
sociopathic con man can't have had

really deep meditative stat like dead
you know the Buddhist Judas is scariot
so to speak I mean he got Jan and
psychic powers even though he's trying
to kill the Buddha according to the
tradition so I guess I answered that
question so I'll just move on to Quick
quizzes next question the next question
in his quick quiz here for both beus and
lay people is it an UNH wholesome thing
to sell translated suas or books about
dhama does suta say anything about
having income from dhama or similar
Deeds well for
beus it's an UNH wholesome thing to sell
anything because they're not supposed to
buy or sell once you're ordained all the

money you mean you don't have anything

to do with it anymore you have renounced

the

world um so let's just set beus

aside and so for Lay people is it UNH

wholesome to sell translated sutas or

books about DH ideally

it is best to have like dhama books as

for free distribution because dhama is

priceless you know you don't want to

like pedal

dhama um does the suda say anything

about having income from dama or similar

Deeds I can't recall that I don't I mean

it's wrong livelihood for a monk to like

give a doat talk in exchange for

anything like there there seatt in Burma
who are just not for just charging like
exorbitant prices for giving a d talk
and I mean that's just that's not D at
all that's that's really
blameworthy on for on for
them but just selling dhab books I don't
think it's necessarily A Bad Thing it
could be a good thing especially if
you're not like charging through the
nose for a d book some D books I mean
they could be really expensive like
Shambala some Shambala books can be
really spendy um but if you're selling
at cost for example like you want to
distribute these so as many people as
possible can read them but you don't

have the funds to just print up
thousands of copies and just send them
out for free then I mean the next best
thing would be just sell them at cost
you know as a kind of nonprofit sort of
thing um just to have a modest profit so
that you can kind of live on it if
you're a book seller let's say you've
got like a met a physical bookstore or
something I don't think it's wrong
livelihood to be selling like dap
translations there or you know polyx or
anything like that even for a profit I
mean it's it's less of a I mean it's
less
meritorious than just giving it away

it's less meritorious than than selling
it at Cost so that you're not making a
profit from it you're just trying to
help people as much as possible but
still I mean it's it's not on the list
of wrong livelihoods selling dhab
books so I mean in the Buddhist time
there were no dhama books so I mean
there wouldn't be any rule against
selling dhama
books um in the Buddhist time because
dama books hadn't been invented yet you
wanted D you went to a monk who had
memorize the texts and then he would
recite them or just you know give you
the gist of
them so let's see here I'll just move on

to Quick quizzes next question what's your opinion on the meditation for kids thing did Buddha or Terra vadin teach kids meditation well I mean there are stories of enlightened children in the texts and there's a relatively famous one about potila who was know he was called what Tua potila which just means like futile or pointless potila and he was a scholar which is kind of an anachronism this is in the commentaries and you know he had you know he was like an expert on the on the poly sutas and so forth and the Buddha would just call him you know pointless poila and so finally he was kind of

shamed into realizing that you know
studying the philosophy is not the same
as actually practicing dhama and making
spiritual progress you know he's just
sort of like an academic so he went to a
monastery and he was a senior monk at
this time he was well respected so he
goes off to this Monastery and tries to
find um where where all of the monks
there were aans including this
nine-year-old novice who was an arant
and all of the the senior monks they're
saying no you're you're senior to us I
mean we we don't want to be teaching you
probably they knew that because he was a
scholar that he'd be hard to teach
because he'd be like trying to correct

them and so forth and

also um they wanted him to be humbled

because you know he was kind of proud at

all of his academic like accomplishments

so to speak so finally he all the other

Monks at the monastery refuse to teach

him how to meditate and so it's this

nine-year-old enlightened novice who

teaches him meditation he gives him a

really interesting meditation

instruction that you've got like a a

termite Mound that's got six holes and

you block off five of those holes

because there's a lizard inside this

termite Mountain you want to catch the

lizard when it comes out so the way you

do that is you block off five of the
holes you just leave one hole hole open
and then you watch that hole like a hawk
so that when the the lizard comes out
you can catch it and that's a really
nice metaphor for uh kind of meditation
I used to do where you just kind of like
restrain the the physical senses seeing
hearing smelling touching tasting and
you're just watching your own mind you
know that's the Sixth Sense base and
when a thought starts to arise you not
it and that was that was a kid so I mean
in that sense you know enlightened
children or just you know child novices
you know ordained semi orain children
would be taught

meditation but it wouldn't be some special kind of meditation like nowadays um you know it's like teaching kids to meditate is sort of like it's guided meditation where you're just telling them you know just imagine that you're you're getting bigger and bigger until you're you're as big as this whole Dharma hall and then you're getting bigger and bigger you're you know this entire town is inside of you and and then you're like feeling love towards the the people you know it's sort of like this imagination game where children you know they don't have the attention span of most adults and they

need something easy that they can sort
of get a grip on so you would teach them
that kind of like visualizing things
with a guided meditation for not very
long probably because within a
relatively short time they're going to
start getting restless and fidgeting and
talking and stuff so I don't think
there's anything wrong with that at all
so long as you you you can do it you
know in a in a daric way that's actually
benefiting
them so let's see
here well yeah I mean there's no special
guided meditation for kids in the texts
that if the kid had enough Talent enough
Pary then you could teach him you know

some techniques that were appropriate
for anybody you know generally adults
and then he could still practice it but
uh yeah the special kid meditations
where you're you know you're telling
them to imagine themselves getting
bigger or smaller or they just guided
meta meditation in a way that kids can
kind of relate to that yeah that's
that's not in the text but it doesn't
mean that it's bad or anything so long
as it's helping them and giving them a
little taste of what meditation is like
it could be a good thing although I mean
you consider how to punish children
nowadays it's like a timeout you make

them sit in the corner and uh you know

it's kind of like

using sort of contemplative reflection

as a punishment on kids because they're

so

hyperactive so I guess I'll just move on

to Quick quizzes next and last

question is it possible for a Hermit or

aesthetic person to have a glimpse of

nibana without proper or intense dhamma

teachings and sitting meditation but

only from sa batana and basic DH and is

it possible that he doesn't really know

that he attains some level of

Enlightenment well the first this is

like two questions I should separate

these because that's just the way I

am okay so the first part is it possible
for a Hermit or aesthetic person to have
a glimpse of nibana without proper or
intense Med dhama teachings and sitting
meditation but only from sa batana and
basic dhama well sa batana is advanced
practice in in some way sa batana is
like
very profound Advanced effective dama
practice in fact in the sa patana suta
the Buddha says if you practice
intensive sa patana for a week you're
pretty much guaranteed of Enlightenment
or at least becoming an anagami
so yeah I think it's definitely
possible if you know enough about

Buddhism to know just basic you know for
noble truths and so forth and also you
practice sa batana you know 247 you know
all waking
hours then yeah I think you can
definitely get some high attainment
through doing
that so just move on to the next part of
this last question is it possible that
he doesn't really know that he attains
some level of
Enlightenment
um I mean you know what you've attained
you might not you might not know exactly
what kind of attainment it is like where
where it fits on any kind of scale
anything like that but you know what you

know I mean you know what you've
experienced so I mean he'd have to know
to some degree just
experientially that I mean you're Sam
Sara is not what it used to be you know
you no longer look upon the world the
way you used to look upon
it but uh I mean still you might not
know what the word arant you know you
might not know the jargon or the the
techn the tech uh technical terms I
almost said technological
terms
so yeah I mean I guess uh eart TOA in
his first famous book you know he
attained something and he didn't know

what it was and it wasn't until after
he'd been uh Consulting with spiritual
teachers that he finally realized that
he had attained some kind of
Enlightenment so I mean if you accept
eart TOA as a an an authority figure
then I guess the answer would be yes so
I'll just move on to EU Diva and her
question or I guess diva is a
female aren't they I think diva is like
Latin for goddess or
something similar to the Sanskrit
Davy so anyways EU Diva says what's your
thoughts on Asian parti universities for
a yogi who doesn't have much faith in
monasteries
is it a good way to prosper well if you

don't have much faith in monasteries you go to a the standard Burmese parot University and you can have even less faith in monasteries because as a general rule Monas monastic schools in Burma are snake pits I mean they're just the monks there they're out to get a degree you know they want to move up in the ecclesiastical hierarchy or they want to get some impressive degree after their name to add to their clout as a dama teacher or whatever as a general rule they don't follow V rules they make no effort I I lived at a uh a monastic school um mahag gandon in amarapura in central Burma for about a little over a

year and it had a reputation for being very strict you know it had a good reputation for how maintaining monastic standards which meant that maybe 5% of the monks were making any effort at all to follow the the vinia rules and with regard to the novices it was maybe 2% tops so and and and most of the the monastic schools the pariti universities um with with like monks there I mean they're just they're just awful really I mean anybody who wants to learn dhma and practice dama should just stay away from such places I mean maybe in Thailand or something it's different different but in Burma they're just they're snake pits as a general

rule I mean it's just dhama and vinia is

it's just something you read about in

books but don't

practice so you better off if you want

to study I me you want to learn true

dhama and practice true dhamma then

you're better off going to a reputable

Forest

Monastery with like a an Abbot who

actually has some wisdom

and not and don't even bother with

Buddhist

Academia I mean in the west or the

East because in the west it's mostly

queer studies dhma kind of stuff and in

the East it's it's just

dogmatism and this dog Dogma that that
isn't practiced as a general rule so
we'll just move on to eud Diva's next
question here if a yogi really want to
pursue dhama or Enlightenment how
important is poly well it is helpful
it's not absolutely
necessary but it can give you certain
advantages if you can read poly
then you get closer to the original
teachings it's not filtered through a
translation anymore unless I mean you're
still filtering it through your own
translation I guess but just even just a
familiarity with the main technical
terms
like good thing I still have this on the

table just you know studying up on like
this little book the Buddhist dictionary
it's not very
often you can get it for free for free
distribution and it just explains the
technical terms you know like the main
philosophical poly terms and what they
mean at least according to Orthodox
tradition and it's definitely helpful I
mean if you want to be um if you want to
practice terab Buddhism and understand
teror of Buddhism you almost have to
know quite a few poly terms and uh I
mean just to know how to conjugate verbs
and stuff is not so important but um it
is good to know the original uh

philosophical terms and not rely on translations which sometimes are not so good like canker or taint for Asawa is not it's it's standard but it's it's not a very good translation in my opinion so I'll just move on to EU Diva's next and last question is it really possible for beus to survive without money these days yeah that's that's fairly easy especially in Asia like Buddhist Asia it's easy even though monks want to believe it's not easy in fact monks might want to believe it's not even possible I did it for 30 years no problem in in the west and in the East so yeah I remember once I was a junior monk I only been a monk for three

or four years I was very strict in vinea
and I was staying at Maha mahag gandai
on that school monastery
right and uh some Sri Lankan monks were
visiting and somebody one of the Burmese
monks told them that I didn't handle
money and they were like amazed and
they're like how do you manage and I
said well I managed the way the monks
managed in the Buddhist time it's like
it was the Buddha who made it against
the
rules so I mean monks want to believe
that you can't do it unless you handle
money nowadays but it's just not true
because I I managed without difficulty

really I mean sometimes it can be damned inconvenient and sometimes it can be scary like you're at an airport you're traveling internationally with no money and no attendant then yeah it can be scary like you're at this airport all by yourself and you show your ticket to the the girl behind the counter and she types in the the ticket number and frowns types it in again and frowns calls the manager who comes over and they're talking in a language you don't understand and he types it in and and nothing and frowns and then it's like you're starting to sweat you know it's like man am I going to get out of this airport am I going to get my

flight so stuff like that can

happen I mean you might have to go

without food for a few days if you're

traveling uh but I mean you're not going

to die you fast for two

days so yeah it's it's easy it's

relatively easy and monks who say

otherwise are just trying to give

excuses for being LAX monks so I'll just

move on next question here this is from

White Ash Piper and white ash Piper says

I don't know seems to me that passion is

one of the life spices that make life

fun I don't see how anyone can ever

escape yin and yang did you ever

consider dosm if

so what was it that caused you to refuse

dosm was it that reality isn't nothing

but an

illusion so this is kind of a kind of a

PO per of questions here kind of

combined into one let's see passion is

one of the life spices to make life fun

yeah well I mean it causes you to be

attached to life and existence which

keeps you stuck in some Sara so by

avoiding that passion then you make life

Less Fun which is appropriate for a

serious

Buddhist let's see I don't see how

anyone can ever escape yin and yang well

I mean yin and yang are going to be

there I mean you can everything is like

a balance of opposites this universe is
a balance of opposites you know even the
the hydrogen atom there's a balance of
you know positive nucleus and negative
electrons you
know so there's all this bounce of of
like opposite forces and so forth that
make this universe even possible so the
only way you escape from that is by
escaping from the universe which is
presumably getting out of some
sorrow and then you just don't get
reborn and here he says did you ever
consider
dosm and if so what was it that caused
you to refuse D well I've I mean I've

read the da Ching I've read the the
xangang and uh yeah I was impressed by
that I've got like three different
translations of The Da Ching on that vot
case back there I've read it several
times or even many times um and I've
considered DSM I mean it's got wisdom to
it although it struck me that there was
no real structure to it I mean I never
came across a doist monastery or just
Dost rules for how to just become
enlightened anything like that it it
didn't have like the support structure
that Buddhism has and nowadays there are
Scholars who are saying that dosm could
just be a Corruption of Buddhism
anyway that loudu could have just been

like a mythological iCal equivalent to

gab Buddha that Lau was not really a

historical person in China that he's

sort of mythological and just a lot of

goab Buddha just got absorbed into the

legend of Lau so that's possible too in

which case I'm kind of a follower of the

original

dosm but uh yeah I mean I like the D

Jing and so forth but I mean there's

it's just too

too vague or just there's not enough

structure to really guide practice and

I'm and I've been told that most like

traditional dosm is like magic and

people trying to go against the Dow by

you know trying to live forever and so

forth

so yeah I mean I I think there is some

serious dosm there's probably serious

Dost practitioners maybe even serious

Dost monastery

but I've never really come across them

Buddhism is easier to find it's much

more accessible and it just has a more

clearcut approach to how you go about

practicing

DMO so then I'll next qu part of this

question from White Ash Piper is have

you ever looked into Tom Campbell my big

toe Tom is a VR guy assume that means

virtual reality Tom is a v virtual

reality guy he's a bright man retired

ired physicist from NSA maybe that's

NASA

NASA and considers himself a

Consciousness expert he started his

journey at the Monroe Institute whatever

that is working with Bob Monroe and his

binary beats program which induces outof

body experiences basically Tom believes

that we are in a virtual reality for the

simple reason to become love we

reincarnate over and over again unforced

to learn how to become Lov love he also

teaches the opposite of Love is fear and

fear is the obstacle we have to overcome

to learn to be love anyways this has

gone on long enough he's worth a listen

in closing I'll add this Tom always reminds people to be skeptical of everything including his big toe yeah i' I've never heard of Tom Campbell it's a long question and uh yeah I really I've never heard of Tom Campbell I've uh he says we're in a virtual reality I can me so long as the virtual reality isn't inside some computer which would assume that there's some sort of physical reality that's real it's just we're not in it um no we're in a virtual reality that's is like a dream like a self-generating dream that's arising from chaos because chaos contains all possibilities within it and one possibility is this

possibility so here it

is so we I don't think we're in a

virtual reality for the simple reason to

become love unless

love Is Just Enlightenment in general

like my my definition of Love is

acceptance so if you have perfect love

where you have just have perfected love

then you just accept everything

wholeheartedly then there's no longer

any boundaries between you and anything

else so that you really don't exist

anymore so that'd be like

an so I've I've read before that fear is

the obos the opposite of love I think

maybe J Krishna mury might have said

that also I know there's a number of
teachers that say fear is the opposite
of love but I mean if love is acceptance
then the opposite of acceptance would be
rejection you know instead of the
opposite of yes is no you know the
opposite of you know just completely
abolishing Pink Floyd's wall is just to
have this wall completely surrounding
you and locked up with no no
holes and I don't think that's
necessarily fear I mean if you want to
equate fear with
rejection you know since love is
acceptance fear would if the opposite of
love if the opposite of acceptance is
rejection then the opposite of Love

would be something equivalent to
rejection which I mean hate I mean it's
just common sense that love and hate are
opposites although I mean the ultimate
love probably has no opposite just says
if if love is Enlightenment then really
I mean Enlightenment does doesn't have
an opposite to say unenlightenment is
the opposite of Enlightenment is just
sort of a a
misunderstanding that I mean you get to
this absolute state it has no opposites
there's no more
Duality so if you want to say that fear
is rejection well obviously it's a kind
of rejection it's like you know get that

away from me as fast as

possible but I mean there's other kinds

of rejection too I mean there's angry

rejection which maybe he's saying is

fear also

but yeah I just I don't know anyways the

the short answer to this is I've never

heard of Tom Campbell or his big

toe so I guess I can't be skeptical of

his big toe since there's no proof that

he exists or that his big toe exists so

I'm just going to move on to the next

question here and this is from

Jeremy and Jeremy says is it true that

peka Buddhas only exist when there is

not a sama Sam Buddha is there a suas to

support that why can there not be both

at the same time well it is terod and
tradition that peka Buddhas which are
like hermit Buddhas that don't teach
dhama exist only in between times of
Buddha sasas you know you've got a
Buddha who rediscovers Dharma and then
he teaches it and so then you've got
Buddhism you've got dhama in the world
and then eventually because everything
that has a beginning has an end you know
that dispensation dies out and then You'
got this Dark Age where there's no dhama
and that's when PAB buddas arise but
they don't cause dhama to rearise
because they're Hermits they they either
don't or can't teach dhama and that's

this standard

terab um tradition teaches

this um you read some Mahayana text and

they've got PR pra Buddhas just

redefined in some weird way where You'

got

you know groups of you know hundreds of

pra Buddhas coming to listen to the

discourses of of goab Buddha and yeah

they just kind of took the the ball and

ran with it and just ran in a ran

completely off the field I think but uh

is there a sutas to support that I'm

pretty sure there is I just don't know

which one it

is but uh there are sutas you know

giving lists of the names of famous peka

buddas that I mean I'm pretty sure they
just did not exist during the they were
like before the time of goab
budha but I mean this is all kind of
mythological there's no way to really
prove any of it so it's you don't really
need to know this stuff for sure which
is good because you can't really know it
for sure far as I can
tell just checking to make sure that the
camera is
running man I had to just like a few
months ago I had to do the same Q&A
twice just because I thought the camera
was running and it wasn't you know I
clicked the button and everything and

for some reason it just didn't

record so let's

see yeah just going with Orthodoxy Pacha

Buddhas only exist when there is not a

sasam Buddha or when there is no

Buddhism you know when his sasana his

dispensation is still extent in this

world there's no Pacha buddist and why

is that it's just this cause MC law I

mean it's it's weird in in like Orthodox

terab Buddhism and just ancient Indian

thought you know there's just this I

can't remember what it's called I think

veruna was the god of it it's just this

like Cosmic

order that I mean there're just these

rules that the world has to operate in a

certain way it's sort of like like the laws of physics to a modern scientist you know they they can't say why these laws are the way they are they can just say they are the way they are and you that's the way it is so like getting back to the Buddha wsa that I mentioned earlier just the the chronicle of Buddhas this the the lineage of Buddhas you know every single Buddha has to go through the same stages where he's he has to renounce the world and he has to renounce the world in one of four different ways you know he either walks he rides a horse he rides a chariot or he rides a a flying mansion and he's

always has to have the attendant and
then he's got to practice austerities
for X number of years and then he's got
to become enlightened sitting under a
bod tree but the bod tree for different
Buddhas is different some might be
sitting under a different kind of tree
some of them might even sit under a
bamboo Clump but it has to be they have
to be sitting under a tree when they
become enlightened and why is this why
does Abid dama say you have to have 17
mind moments for every moment of matter
they don't say why they just say that's
the way it is and it's it's the same
with peka Buddhas Pacha Buddhas exist
only when there is no Buddhist

dispensation there's no other dhama in

the world just because that's the way it

is and if that's insufficient for a

Westerner who wants to know the reasons

for things well it's just too bad isn't

it I mean why is the charge of the

electron the way it is why is Gravity

the way it is we don't

know so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from seac and sead

Zina and covac and CAD Zam asks a maama

question so I gonna put on The maama

Fez oh such a nice

Fez okay I'm

ready and it's purely coincidental that

it matches with my wife beer here

so cacin CAD zida says I always assumed nagar matched the C Trona the most since he rejected the Abid dharmas and made no mention of any Mahayana ideas in his canonical Works however I read that nagara rejected the nominalism of the Sal Trona school where they rejected nibana having a real Essence wait a minute here I read that nagar rejected the nominalism of the ctron school where they rejected Nana having a real Essence do you remember nagara ever refuting this because I would have thought nagar would have applied the same nominalism to not just nibana but everything due to it being

empty well um yes I mean the main text

the most influential text that is uncontroversially by nagar is the Mula maaka Kaka and he shoots down all assertions really I mean that's what maama is based on it's like any kind of samsaric assertion even a samsaric assertion regarding nibana and any any assertion made in language is going to be symbolic and samsaric even if you're trying to discuss
niana then yeah it's it's all invalid is is invalid isn't is invalid is and isn't is invalid and neither is nor isn't is invalid there's nothing you can assert one way or the other that's going to be valid and that would include the

existence of n

so yeah I think

uh the uh rejection the Sal Trona

school's rejection of nibana having a

real existence I

mean yeah you can't say that it does you

can't say that it doesn't you can't say

it does and doesn't you can't say that

it neither does nor doesn't have a real

existence it's just off the scale with

capital letters off the scale even the

is

capitalized and most most people

especially westerners well just people

in general they cannot they cannot grasp

this and you can't grasp it but they

they don't feel comfortable not being

able to grasp reality with their
intellect because they're just stuck in
their intellect and that's one reason
why so many intellectuals don't get
mysticism at all they just they just
despise it they think mysticism is just
[__] but that's the only way you
have any hope of knowing reality is by
transcending just going beyond the
symbols of the intellectual
mind and so nagar would not
have he would not I mean n how do I say
this nagar would not have asserted the
real existence of Nirvana because he
wouldn't assert the real existence of
anything he might not assert their

non-existence

either but yeah I don't think he

asserted uh the real existence of

Nirvana and whether nagara himself was a

member of the Sal Trona school I don't

know I have read that he was a member of

some other sect other than

terada you know one of the Prem Mahayana

sects and I think they know what school

he belonged to but I can't remember if

it's ctron or not I think maybe it isn't

I seem to recall some other name of a

school of Buddhism that nagar was

ordained in but apparently he was a

Maverick and may have rejected his own

some of his own schools dogmas pretty

much as I ASA ordained Terra Vaden uh

rejected some Orthodox teren dog dogmas
just because I I mean I just could not
swallow them they just did not strike me
as as uh likely to be
true and it's like in India in Ancient
India the school of Buddhism that you
adopted was largely just a matter of
whatever School of Buddhism was
predominant in your area you know it
wasn't like you pick and choose which
school you like the best so much as you
know the local monasteries and all the
local monasteries are all this school of
Buddhism so if you're attracted to
Buddhism you just join that
one so I think I'll

uh think I'll just move on to se action

Cod Z as next

question because we're moving up on two

hours here and I still got quite a few

to go and he says I remember you

mentioning a book that says Terra and

sasti V here taking The Fez off for a

little while here teach that physical

matter can be known directly however

some mahasi tradition teachers like utad

biku have said that all we know is

conscious experience does this mean that

they are teaching unorthodox teachings

with respect to the terrible all uh yeah

yeah they're being unorthodox although I

agree with them I'm I'm unorthodox too

all you can know is conscious experience

because knowing itself is
conscious like the only way you can know
the existence of anything like say this
cell phone I mean you don't know the
physicality of that cell phone you just
know how it looks because that's that's
seeing Consciousness that's eye
Consciousness how it feels in your hand
you know that's tactile
Consciousness you know when it when it
beeps or whatever when the the the ring
ringtone comes up which on this phone is
is Godzilla the ringtone is is the Roar
of Godzilla um I mean that's that's ear
auditory Consciousness the only way you
know that phone exists is through

various modes of Consciousness and just
mentality and you take away all the
mentality and all you got left is just
this
void so I would agree that all you can
really know is conscious experience but
according to ter of Buddhism yeah and
yeah it's like most of the the so-called
hinana schools believe that physical
matter is ultimately real and you can
know this and the the Indian philosophy
book I was reading where I I studied
this it was kind of interesting it was
this Indian philosophy book was based on
a medieval Indian comparative philosophy
books and it was you know from a Hindu
perspective or a viic perspective but

you know they tried to give a fair
representation of the other
schools um you know the various Hindu
schools um but also the the non Buddhist
the non-vedic schools including Buddhism
and jism and so forth and um there was
the the way they divided up Buddhism
they divided up into four different
categories which is those which say that
nothing is real that you can't know
anything and that would be maamaa at
least from their interpret ation then
there the school that says only mind is
real and so all you can know is mind
that would be yogachara which is these
are the two main Mahayana schools at

least in India at the time and then
there's physical matter is real and you
can infer its existence logically and
know that it exists through inference
and that was the C Trona school so the
apparently the ctron schools uh School
believed that physical matter was still
ultimately real and then there was
sarasti Vada and Terra would fit into
the same category where it's saying that
not only is physical matter real but you
experience it directly you know its
existence as a fact because you
experience that physical matter
directly and I don't see how that's even
possible I've had debates with a
follower of the P method which is very

Orthodox and much more Orthodox than

mahasi and uh I mean he just didn't get

it I'm try like getting him to read

Barkley and this kind of thing just to

show him I all you can know is mind

because knowing is

mental but he just didn't get it he was

a nice guy though nice a nice venerable

one so I guess I'll just move on to

setion sead Z's next

question piggybacking on a question from

last week week what are your thoughts on

the translations by Maurice Walsh KR

Norman Caroline Rees

Davids G GC P mentions her John D

Ireland anada Joy which I assume is

Ananda joy and the bodh satva Ken

wheeler and then in parenthesis after

Ken wheeler he's got PB

uh and I don't know what pbuh stands for

I've got these horizontal bars of light

across my face and and chest and so

forth and so I have to adjust the blinds

on the on the window just a second see

if this

works there we

go oh

yeah so what what pbu stands for I don't

know anyone who knows that can just

leave a a comment in the comments below

because when I see an

acronyms is that right no not an

acronyms acronyms when I see letters

that stand for something and I don't
know what they stand for it kind of
bothers me I mean when I first came back
to America I didn't even know what a mil
was and LOL it took me a long time to
figure out the LOL means laugh out loud
and not lots of luck or little old lady
or
something so
anyway COO of action CAD zon is asking
me what are my thoughts on the
translations by Maurice Walsh well I'll
just go I'll just go through the list
here Maurice Walsh the only transl by
Walsh I've read is his translation of
the dean Naya which is a competent

translation he did have the advantage of not being Shackled to teravan and Orthodoxy the way some monks would be or just some dogmatists would be and so I think it's it's a reasonably good translation KR Norman um I I actually was corresponding with KR Norman a little bit when I was a monk and he's one of the main translators for the polych society or at least he used to be he's probably very old by now and um it was kind of interesting to me that I mean I was sort of um just discussing certain terms and so forth in the texts and he he wrote back to me saying that really he's not a Buddhist he's not even interested in

Buddhism you know he doesn't care about
Buddhist philosophy he's a philologist
he just he doesn't care what the texts
mean he just cares what they say I mean
he actually told me that he doesn't care
what the texts mean he just cares what
they say but how can you know what it
says if you don't know what it means
like some words have multiple meanings
like dharm for example if you don't know
what it means how are you GNA know how
to translate dhama into English since
there's it's not just a word you know
one word and one word it's like there's
numerous possible ways of interpreting
it so I mean he's just a philologist and

with regard to the language he
understands the language really well he
understands the language probably better
than anybody else as far as I know and I
guess he was he's the one who's working
on the new poly English dictionary I
don't know how far he got with it I
haven't seen any copies of it but uh you
know he's he understands procrit
languages you know he is he is a
linguist and uh so with regard to
non-philosophical stuff he's a good
translator but if you get into
philosophical stuff like like the AA
waga I don't he's not very reliable I
was not satisfied with K Norman's
translation of the ATA waga of the suata

because he just didn't get it he didn't understand what it was he was translating but I mean he like poly grammar the sentences sentence structure and so forth he's got it down so next is Caroline Rees Davids and yeah she's just kind of kind of an embarrassment I think the reason why she got into translating poly Tex is simply because her husband was into it who was uh I can't remember the acronyms of his name Reese Davids you know he was one of the first uh one of the two main authors of the the extant poly English dictionary which is uh up there on the bookcase somewhere you that up on the

top shelf in the the ugly turquoise blue
cover and
I mean her translation style was just
this she had like this flowery poetical
style of translating which is like um
she translated the terata you know the
elders verses but her translation that
the title was Psalms of the Brethren you
know that's just kind of the way she
translated and she was one of the first
of the western Buddhists who just
absolutely insisted that anata was
[__] and that
that was just like a later addition
mainly because deep down she was a
Christian and she liked the idea of an
eternal soul and just could not stand

any wisdom tradition that denied the

existence of her beloved Eternal Soul

and so um yeah she she's pretty much of

an embarrassment and her translations

are all pretty much

obsolete her understanding of Buddhism

is not very good in my opinion now C

Pond mentions her in his book studies

and origins of Buddhism because it is

true that she brought up the the the

idea

that what you see in the text you know

didn't necessarily originate with the

Buddha himself that there was like um

like an evolution of Buddhist philosophy

and you know you're going to have older

material that's more reliable and later

material that's less reliable and GC

Pond apparently was influenced by by

that idea of her

but mainly she was just trying to

explain why some Buddhist

teachings differ from her opinions that

her opinions were probably going to take

precedence over Orthodox Dogma in

certain respects like anat for

example so yeah Caroline ree Davids um

she's not a good translator in my

opinion and she did not have the best

grasp of

the subtleties of

dhama John D Ireland I can't recall

reading anything by John D Ireland maybe

he may have done a translation of the udana quite a while ago that I read as a junior monk maybe he was the translator or a translator of that and uh yeah I didn't I don't I don't recall it well enough to know how good of a translator he was I didn't know paully well enough at the time really to to say so let's just skip John D Ireland Ananda jod I don't even know who that is and Ken wheeler of course the pbuh Ken wheeler yeah I he just butchers Paulie he's another he's sort of a a follower of Caroline Reese Davids without realizing it because he also just cannot stand the idea of anab that that the

Buddha really did not assert the
existence of an eternal
soul and so he just
mangles and stretches and twists and
tortures the poly language to make it
say what he wants it to say and even
though he claims to be one of the
world's leading authorities if not the
world's leading Authority on the poly
language and on early Buddhism he's a
snake oil salesman sorry to say I mean I
don't want to be badmouthing people
gratuitously but I was asked my question
of his translations and they they just
they're the worst of the lot but then he
would say it's just because I'm a
dogmatist I'm stuck in my ways and

narrow-minded and don't realize that you know whatever so I'll just move on to the next question here also from covac and sead

zida this is his let's see let's count them shall we one two three four his fourth and last question in sutina 12:15 the Buddha says this world kachana for the most part depends upon a duality upon the notion of existence and the notion of non-existence but for one who sees the origin of the world with wisdom there is no notion of non-existence in regard to the world and for one who sees the cessation of the world with wisdom there is no notion of existence in in

regard to the world all exists kachana
this is one extreme all does not exist
this is the second extreme without
veering towards either of these extremes
the Daga teaches the dhma by the middle
which is dependent Cor ing the Buddha
says that existence and non-existence
don't apply to the world not even
talking about nibana I know nagar has
something to say about this relating to
dependent origination and emptiness but
I'm not sure what are your thoughts on
Buddha defining this as Right View here
and what does it mean well we're getting
back into nagar and majamaa so the Fez
goes back
on it's important to get the eye

centered otherwi it doesn't have the

full

effect okay well I mean this sua I think

it's the kachana sua something along

those lines is referenced by nagar

several times in his mul kakara Ian it's

like most or many of his arguments are

based on this sua I mean this seems to

be one of his main Inspirations and it's

it was in a kind of Sanskrit it wasn't

the poly version but it was the

equivalent sua in like Buddhist hybrid

Sanskrit

so yeah I mean it's like maama Buddhism

is largely based on this suta this

discourse to kachana about how existence

is one extreme non-existence is the
Other Extreme and so the Daga teaches
the dhama by the middle which is
dependent core
rising and then also there's a a similar
sutum that I've referenced a number of
times at least on my blog called the
cosmologist I think biku's translation
it's called the cosmologist it's it's in
biku's translation of the samut Naya I
think it's the same Sam Utah as this one
is in and it's there's four things this
this worldly philosopher he comes to the
Buddha and he asks him I mean pretty
much the same with regard to kach does
does everything exist and the Buddha
says that's that's the first philosophy

of the world and then he says well then
does it everything not exist and then
the Buddha says that's the second
philosophy of the world then the the
worldly philosopher says well then is
everything a unity and the Buddha says
that's the third philosophy of the world
and then the Phil the worldly
philosopher says well then is everything
a multiplicity and the Buddhist says
that's the fourth philosophy of the
world and then he teaches those are all
extremes and the the tag teaches the way
by the middle which is dependent cor
rising and then they got the stock
formula of the 12 nidana Theory stuck at

the end of the suta which just pretty

much is is in congruent with the very

idea of that multiplicity is an extreme

view because of course the 12 nidana

theory is multiplistic if that's a word

you know it just takes for granted

multiplicity and the Buddha had just

said that multiplicity is an extreme

view that the Buddha doesn't follow he

goes between extremes using dependent

color Rising

so let's see

here let's see the Buddha says that

existence and non-existence don't apply

to the world not even talking about Nana

I know Nar has something to say about

this relating to dependent origination

EMP yeah the mulaka the whole book is
based on that pretty much at least in in
uh Essence what are my thoughts on
Buddha defining this is Right View here
and what does it mean well explaining
dependent core Rising is so difficult
that according to the legend the Buddha
himself almost became a pea Buddha and
just remained silent on the issue
because he figured nobody would
understand it and if he couldn't teach
it how am I going to teach it and it's
like I think he was right because
nowadays almost nobody understands
dependent core Rising it was like early
on monks that didn't understand

dependent core Rising just slapped
together this 12 Nana Theory and just
took this verbatim and just stuck it in
like a like a module into these sutas
about dependent cor rising or
pichao but I mean it's like I mean I've
explained this before I mean it's hard
to understand but it's like none of this
is ultimately real there is no inherent
self
Essence so you've got conditions that
are virtually real that are like like
causing what whatever it is that you're
you're attending to to seem real and all
of these causes are themselves the same
the same thing where you've got all
these other virtual causes causing that

and you so you've got this entire
virtual system like conditioning it's
like mutually conditioning itself you
know every single part is being
conditioned by all the other virtual
parts and none of it is ultimately real
to the extent that none of it has any
inherent self
essence and it's very hard to understand
it's very hard to
explain but U maybe if you read the mul
jamaka karak a good translation of it I
guess um one translator is David
kalupahana
I think he's Hawaiian and he tries to
translate it more or less in accordance

with Terra voden philosophy and I
haven't read it but that's that's like
what I've read I've read the criticism
of the book you know the critics say
that kalupahana tries to turn nagar into
some kind of Terra
so maybe that that would be better than
the the version I read which was a
Tibetan translator or Tibetan scholar
who's a Westerner but he specialized in
Tibetan Buddhism and he translated the
mulama gakara from Tibetan instead of
from the original
Sanskrit so let's see here I think maybe
I've answered this question even though
maybe nobody will understand the
answer but yeah this the Su to kachana

um in the Samu nikaya is really one of
the main Inspirations of maaka
Buddhism so I think I'll just move on to
the next question here take the Fez back
off this is from
Stevens and Steven says I always feel
sentimental when I go home and that's a
type of Bittersweet emotion and it's
hard to let go of that kind of suffering
should I just be mindful of it and try
to overcome my sentimental nature well I
mean this question reminds me very
strongly of the first time I came home
to visit my parents after I'd been in
Burma as a monk for like seven years was
it seven years yeah it was like seven

years and I remember I got picked up at
the airport by a friend of mine and
we're driving closer and closer to my
hometown of Aberdine where my parents
were and I was just feeling this dread
in my heart and my friend who was
driving me there he wanted to make a
stop somewhere else and that was like
this relief it's like ah you know I get
like a half hour reprieve from from
going home and facing the parents and I
get home and it was just like this
strain in my heart and my parents you
know in a way they're happy to see me
but in a way they're really sad because
I was like a monk who had just left the
country and they hadn't seen me in years

and I was just going to be staying there
a few weeks and then just go right back
to Asia
again and after you know making my hell
and giving the hugs and everything I
wanted to just kind of sit in this
little cabin in the backyard
and I just cried my eyes out I just
these racking sobs and I really didn't
understand why it was mainly just kind
of the pain I knew was in my parents
from missing me and and loving me and
I'm gone and I'm a monk who has
renounced the world and
everything so I can I can relate to this
question it's it was like a really

intense kind of sentimentality where I
was just like booh hooing all over the
place back there in the
cabin um so the question here is should
I I just be mindful of it and try to
overcome my sentimental nature well
that's two different things I mean be
mindful of it yes but you don't
necessarily try to overcome it I mean
like struggling against it just
reinforces it so just being mindful of
it is good enough whether it stays or
goes is irrelevant so long as you're
mindful of
it so I guess that's that's a good
enough answer for that one I hope should
I just be mindful of it and try to over

yeah because you shouldn't be goal
oriented
in your dhama you just be mindful of
what's going on right here right now you
know be here now as ROM dos used to say
and you know let the let the future take
care of itself so don't try to overcome
your sentimental nature so much as just
understand it thoroughly you know sort
of like Jay Krishna mury used to say you
know just just be aware of the way
things are don't set up some kind of
idealism against the way things actually
are because the way things actually are
is going to win know you just you try to
live according to an ideal according to

Krishna mury it just causes you to
become dishonest you become a hypocrite
because you can't live up to your ideals
and then I mean even early Buddhism the
Ana waga says this too if you you're
setting up this system that you're
supposed to follow then you're setting
yourself up for failure and then there's
all this remorse and self- rebuke and so
forth that is just better off avoided so
just be mindful of it and that's just
the way it is you know if you've got an
over a sentimental nature then that's
just the way it is just be mindful of it
and if the mindfulness weakens it and
that's that's that's okay
too so we'll just move on to Stevens's

next question

here did we ever hear Vivid accounts of

the times you tried psychedelics and

what was that like for you it seems many

Western monks have tried in their

explorations of reality before ordaining

can we hear your stories about what that

was was like for you and did it do

anything for you or did you get any

realizations from

it well I'm really we we've already gone

over two hours so I can't really go into

like explicit details lots of

stories which I could do I

suppose oh excuse

me Thanksgiving leftover burps got to

love

them but but um yeah I think most of the

the men of approximately my age who were

ordained as monks had had previously

taken

psychedelics you know it's not not just

any kind of drugs not like narcotics or

something amphetamines that kind of

thing but like the so-called mind

expanding drugs like LSD mushrooms maybe

masculine and it just opens up I mean

it's sort of

induces mystical States at least in me

it does almost every time I I took LSD I

had some kind of religious experience

and it was like a mystical state where

um it's like it just seems more real

than your ordinary you know Normy kind
of perception of the world you know
you're in a more intense more expansive
State you know it's it's sort of like
Jesus says in the Bible you know in you
must become like a little child to
attain the kingdom of heaven and it's in
a way it does make it like a little
child because it's sort of breaking down
this you know these
habitual approaches or habitual views
that you have towards the world you know
it's like you're seeing everything for
the first time and you're just wide
awake and like five minutes can take an
hour to go by and that kind of a

thing and uh just because it causes you
to become more conscious more aware in a
way more wise even though you might be
stumbling around and people might think
that you're completely messed
up still I mean you're seeing the world
from a different direction and it just
gives you this Insight that the way you
usually look at the world isn't the only
possible way and it's not even
necessarily the best way so then that
inspires the person to like try to
cultivate these expanded states without
the chemicals which leads them to
meditation and then which leads them if
they're serious about understanding
reality then it leads them to Buddhism

and ordination and just really going for
it and trying to cultivate this expanded
higher state of consciousness without
having to take the the pill or the
little square of paper or whatever it
is
so can we hear your stories about what
it was like for you uh see did did it do
anything for you or did you get any
realiz izations from it the main
realization is just that you know the
Normy way of looking at reality is not
the only way and it's not necessarily
the best way of looking at the world and
then from that it inspires you to look
for you know to cultivate these expanded

States or these mystical States or
whatever and uh I don't think it's
necessary for me to uh go into stories
about specific trips I have taken
and we just we just kind of don't have
time for it I guess maybe I mean I'm
pretty sure I have done videos just
specifically about drugs and some people
will say like my father you know drugs
are just an escape from reality but I
mean the the way we ordinarily see the
world isn't reality and also some people
say well it's just drug indu these
experiences you're having but that
reminds me of um it's a my favorite
novels dostv is the idiot and there's
this scene where the he's the idiot you

know Prince Michigan he's walking
through St Petersburg I think and just
thinking that he has these mystical
States right before he has an epileptic
seizure he's got epilepsy and he just
has these seizur sometimes and it's
like right before the seizure there's
like this Split Second when everything
is just beautiful and perfect and God
you know it's just like
Perfection just Mystic Perfection and
then comes the seizure and the Darkness
and the horror and the and the misery
and all that but he says that that one
Split Second makes it worth it and there
there have been times when I was

meditating when I mean just years of
just struggling and floundering and just
being unhappy and so forth was worth
that five minutes of meditation I mean
you get into these expanded just Crystal
Clear states that are just that beyond
words but anyway getting back to the
idiot he was saying that you know some
people would say it's just the symptom
of a sickness and he's saying even if it
is the symptom of a sickness it's
still you know I mean so
what you know it's still just this
Indescribable Beauty and Perfection and
just Holiness you know and if it's drug
induced I mean again it's like so
what I mean I mean it's like drugs or

chemicals in our brains are making us
see this stuff too it's you your brain
is not designed for you to experience
reality your brain is just designed to
get you alive keep you alive long enough
so that you can make
babies and preferably in such a way that
your babies live long enough to have
babies of their
own so I guess I guess I've explained
enough of that for now I mean if you
look through my blog well maybe not my
blog um or the YouTube channel I'm sure
you could find like at least something
I've done specifically on the topic of
psychedelics and maybe it's time for me

to do another one with maybe some
special guest who's also been a a
druggie or something in his
youth so we'll just move on to the next
question here this is from
yugao and yugao says hello can you
please explain if and how does deep
meditation help with pain and sickness
the other day I was in public transport
and I felt really sick like I was going
to puke probably got something from
little kids but then I focused on my
breath and felt joy and happiness and it
subsided well I think there's two ways
that deep meditation can help with pain
and sickness um one way is just if you
meditate a lot you're you're more

sensitive to like what's going on in
your body and you can sort of you've got
more uh like like balance in your system
you know like your energies are more
balanced and it just helps you not to
get sick to begin with that's my
experience like if you're doing regular
meditation you're less likely to catch
colds and so forth or just less likely
to get sick in general it still happens
even the Buddha got sick sometimes but
still I mean you can sort of any
psychosomatic effects that can make it
worse or even cause it outright
you know that is reduced and less likely
to happen and be a factor but also I

found that like with regard to nausea
and nausea is just really icky it's
worth worse than ordinary pain as far as
I'm concerned that if you're mindful of
it you realize that at least half of the
misery half of the ickiness of it at
least half is just you like have an
aversion for the nausea so if you can be
mindful of the discomfort the nausea the
pain whatever it is
then it just makes it a lot easier I
mean it's it can be difficult sometimes
if your mindfulness isn't very good
looking at nausea through a kind of
magnifying glass just might make you
feel even worse so it's It's Tricky but
if you can get through that and just be

okay with it just feel how it feels and

just accept the way it feels then

most of the the UN the ickiness of it is

just you like not wanting this just

Desiring it to

stop so if you can just accept it and

just experience it as it is then then

it's going to very much uh attenuate the

like the the suffering or just the

general ickiness of the

experience so I think I'll just move on

to the next question here and we're

getting down towards the end I'm happy

to say now not that I don't like

answering questions otherwise I wouldn't

be doing this but uh still I try to

avoid three-hour long Q&A

sessions so anyways this next question

is from

Mambo and Mambo says hello poo my

question is about the five Aggregates is

it only applicable to living creatures

or do they increase or reduce depending

on the complexity of a creature thing

matter what about planets galaxies and

universe do they have Aggregates or do

you consider them only matter if we are

a byproduct of this universe and are

conscious so is the universe conscious

does it have Karma as well well that's

an interesting question or a series of

questions see I got to make a space here

because he had the question mark and

then no space before the next question

which

uh kind of bothers me a little bit tell

you the truth so anyways the five

Aggregates is it only applicable to

living creatures well the five

Aggregates themselves would have to be

applicable only to living creatures not

necessarily living in a biological sense

but conscious

beings that have some kind of mentality

because four of the five condas are

mental you know you got just physicality

if if you even want to assume that the

physical matter is real then you have at

most one physical conduct one physical

aggregate so that part of it yeah the
five condas would be applicable only to
conscious sentient beings uh but they do
increase or reduce depending on the
complexity of the creature or thing of
matter like um if you're in the formless
Realms you don't have a physical body or
anything resembling a physical body so
you have at most four condas there um or
yeah I mean definitely at most for
condas um some creatures like plants
they uh I mean they don't have
perceptions as far as I know they don't
have intentions they might still have a
kind of
feeling you know a kind of Consciousness
kind of rudimentary Consciousness

according to the ancient text plants are called
achinga which means one faculty life all they have is a sense of touch they can't see or hear or taste or think but they can still feel in this vegetative sort of
manner so yeah so so plants or very primitive animals like a jellyfish they might not have the full five condas in fact I have this theory that even insects or like
arthropods they really don't have perception or volition they're just like little meat robots they still have might still still have feelings and

Consciousness but they they don't have
any like thought process you know they
don't just don't have a central nervous
system the way we do they don't really
have a brain the way we do you just got
like two nerve cords with sort of
ganglia every every once in a
while so let's see planets galaxies and
universes well if the planet has any
kind of conscious life on it then the
planet would have to
include um the conscious life as part of
its makeup I mean planet Earth has got
Consciousness on it because we are part
of planet Earth I mean we're not
separate from planet Earth and so planet
Earth at least has

got you know mental States mentality so
presumably with galaxies the entire
universe um do they have
Aggregates um yeah I mean
the I mean I guess I'd have to divide
this up from Orthodoxy in my own opinion
which is is pretty common on these C
cusines you know I have to give the
Orthodox position and also my own
personal belief when I don't accept the
Orthodox position which is the way it is
here I don't believe that physical
matter is real ultimately and uh I do
think that the entire universe is
conscious so even a hydrogen atom would
have this rudimentary little spark of

Consciousness to it even though a
hydrogen atom can't think or perceive
anything and it's just this primordial
little Elemental Speck of
Consciousness
so yeah I would say the universe is
conscious even an orthodox ter Vaden
would have to say that at least parts of
the universe are conscious because we
are parts of the universe sentient
beings are parts of the universe and uh
the universe itself doesn't have
Karma um you can say that the Universe
uh is caused by Karma that it is Karma
that generates this universe and it's
the the collective Karma of all the
beings in it that are creating this

universe and when it first starts before

there's any beings in it it's the beings

that are um

waiting mean they might know not know

that they're waiting but they are

essentially waiting to inhabit this

universe after it has reformed after it

was destroyed in a previous

cataclysm so

yeah I would say the universe is more

conscious than an orthodox Tera Boden

would

say and I'm not sure really if I've

answered Mambo's question

adequately but I think uh I'm not sure

how to answer it any better so I'm going

to move on to the next question which is from PSA and I think PSA is asking a joke question here and that's uh what do you think about what Joe Smith's wife is doing to him and I was just like five minutes before before I read this I was thinking that yeah it would be a kind of joke question just like what is your opinion of Bob Wilson because like the guy with the big toe up above you know somebody asked me a question about this guy with a big toe and it's like what is my opinion of him and a lot of like most of the time if it's somebody relatively obscure I have no idea it's an easy question to answer it's like I don't know I never heard of the guy and so I

think PSA has had a similar feeling

about um people with big toes and stuff

not that not that uh what was it white

ash Piper that asked that question here

let me scroll away the hell up

here still scrolling oh here we go yeah

yeah it was white ash Piper he asked me

about no I got to scroll back up again

Tom

Campbell yeah so a lot of the time

people ask me about someone who isn't

like a like

a high-profile

Buddhist or you know high-profile

spiritual teacher or something you know

they ask you he's some relatively

obscure philosopher that most people
never heard of there's a good chance
I've never heard of him either and same
with Joe Smith and his wife here it's
like uh I don't
know yeah so I think PSA was just kind
of making a joke because he's probably
never heard of a lot of these people
either sometimes I have heard of him and
then I maybe I can say something uh
useful or at least
entertaining but uh Tom Campbell and Joe
Smith or his wife Mrs Smith yeah I don't
know who they are so we'll just move on
to the last question the very last one
that was just asked right under the wire
it was just asked a matter of minutes

before I started doing this and that is

from

Toronto and Toronto

says well maybe he asked it earlier than

that but anyway Toronto n says does

taking precepts and refuges online line

still

count and uh that's yeah it's sort of a

timely question nowadays when a lot of

people are taking precepts and refugees

online like um when I was living alone

in the west sometimes I would um make

confession over the phone and that

counted you know I'd still like squat

down and uncover my my shoulder my right

shoulder and I'd be holding the phone

like this trying to put my hands

together and hold the phone up to my ear

at the same time and I'd be making

confession that way

you

me so yeah I think taking precepts and

refugees online counts especially if

it's sort of live you're doing it over

Skype or Zoom or over the phone or

something I mean if you're just texting

you know you're you're texting on a

message board or something it it might

not uh be as efficacious but really um

taking the precepts and the refuges from

somebody else like from a monk um it's

it's really not taking it from a monk I

mean in that way you're just having a

witness you're having like a a spiritual
benefactor who is sort of endorsing you
and helping you and witnessing what
you're doing but I mean the main point
is to really take the refuges and take
the precepts and I tried to explain that
to the Burmese who are kind of spiritual
materialists and think that you're going
to get Merit for taking the precepts
even if you have no intention of keeping
them just going through the ceremony is
earning Merit and I'm trying to tell
them I like you're better off not taking
them officially and keeping them
unofficially than taking them officially
and then just not following them it's

sort of like I remember one time I was
living way the heck out in the woods and
there were these hillbilly types Burmese
Hillbillies who came to visit me and I
you know I'm trying to teach them this
same thing it's like I gave this example
from
I think from the New Testament where you
got a father has two sons and the father
tells the sons you got to go out and
plow the fields today and the one son
says I don't want to do that I'm not
going to do it and then the second son
says okay father I'll go plow the fields
like a good boy but then the first kid
who said I don't want to do it actually
you know he has a change of heart or

something or he was just in a kind of a grouchy mood that morning he has has his coffee yet whatever he goes out and plows the field like his father told him to whereas the other one who said I'm going to plow the fields like a good boy he doesn't do it he just [__] off you know he goes and does naughty things or something and so I asked this burm hillbilly which son did better the one who said yes to his father and then didn't do it or the one who didn't say yes to his father but then wound up doing it anyway and it was just too abstract it was he just he was just it was like tilt and he just didn't get it

you know error lights lighting up he he
just blew his mind he just did not know
how to
answer but I mean that's the way it is I
mean obviously the the point in the in
the Bible is that the son who says no
but then goes ahead and obeys his father
you know eventually is the better son
than the one who says he's gonna obey
his father and then doesn't then it's
the same way with taking precepts and
refuges I mean you're better off not
taking them
and then following or just like not
officially taking the precepts and then
just keeping the precepts unofficially
then just going through the ceremony and

all that and then not keeping

them and so I mean doing it online it's

just I mean taking taking the precepts

in the refuges um you know it's just

kind of you're being witnessed and it's

you know kind of reinforces your resolve

to be doing it in front of a kind of

Spiritual Authority figure but really

the whole point of it is just you know

do it in your heart and just do it

conscientiously and it doesn't matter

what ceremonies are done or not done but

you can do it like online you know it's

better than nothing I

suppose like I said i' I've done

confession over the phone or over Skype

or

something so that's it that's the last question by golly and it's uh less than two and a half hours too and that was a lot of questions that was that was the proverbial boatload of questions and so if you got any more questions feel free to include them in the comments below if you have access to the Discord server you can ask them there if you have access to the Subscribe star you can ask them there and like And subscribe if you haven't done so already and be sure to check out the URL links including my now defunct neap punch. org website which might still be on the list but it's uh no longer alive everything that has a

beginning has an end and all that but

we're going to have a new website

probably with a different domain and a

different uh domain manager or something

and so check that all out and maybe uh

check out my books that are on the list

down there towards the bottom and be

happy

hello and welcome to episode 70 of

question and answer I'm your host P basa

and this is your

co-host glass of orange

juice we have another invisible co-host

lying on the floor over

there which is a dog who may

occasionally make snarfing noises or

some such so anyways we've got like a

very manageable list of questions not

the uh veritable Onslaught that we've

been having lately but it's uh you know

getting back down to more like the usual

number which I assume is because the

weather is getting more

wintry and some of my questioners my

audience may be coldblooded like
reptiles and so they're becoming torpid
in the cold weather and asking fewer
questions that is my hypothesis that I'm
working with
present so so anyways I suppose I should
just wade into this and the first
question is from Indian guy Alias
Trevor an Indian guy
says what was celibacy like for 30 years
how did you handle it and did it get
easier if it's too personal then I
understand if you don't answer I just
want some pointers to help live a more
pure Buddhist lifestyle in the clown
world that says it's normal to be a porn
addict and to spank it every day if

you're if you've answered this question
already then don't feel like you need to
answer because I'm on Q&A number five on
your playlist so if you've answered a
question on how to deal with sexual
desire then don't worry about it I will
get to it well I've probably talked
about this General subject before
although I don't think anyone's ever
asked what was celibacy like for 30
years so well I'm going to answer it
I've I answered the same questions uh
sometimes especially like the karma
question because karma is so difficult
for Western like scientific
materialistic objective thinking

westerners to really understand because
they we've been programmed as westerners
to believe in a utilitarian kind of
ethic which Buddhism doesn't really
follow so anyways what was it like to be
celibate for 30 years I mean it was not
easy um for most of my life I have been
hornier than the average guy I
think
um
so I mean there were times when I was a
monk especially you know up until my
early 40s I guess that uh I mean there
were times I'd just be climbing the
walls you know I just want to cry or how
like a dog or something because a monk
isn't even allowed to relieve the urge

by spanking the puppy I mean you can pet
it a little bit but I mean if if if you
have an orgasm deliberately that is a
sesa offense it's the second most
serious category offense after
excommunication and it's really a pain
in the neck it's six days and six nights
of penance you have to go through this
ceremony with at least 20 other monks
there and sometimes that's hard to get
them all together to do the cereem
and it's just a pain in the neck and
it's you just don't want to do
that
so yeah it's it's like let's see how did
I handle it and did it get easier well I

mean not eating very much and not

sleeping very much helps a little

bit um also I mean you're not going to

explode because up until I was in my

early 40s uh I'd have like a nocturnal

emission so to speak about once every

two weeks I think my record was three

and four nights when I was uh in Japan

for some reason I don't know why that

happened but um

really um it's it's hard to be celibate

if you're naturally a lustful

person

um just because I mean the urge just

doesn't go away is built into us and so

really the only way oh and I should

further add that it's Pleasant you know

that lust has a certain pleasure to it

so that it's it's even harder to to uh

break the Habit it's like pain is easier

to to break unpleasant habits than it is

to break Pleasant ones for what should

be an obvious reason so really the only

way to really successfully be celibate

is as soon as lustful thoughts arise you

just are like nope not going to go there

inappropriate and push it away just let

it

go because I mean it's you got to have

the

will to be celibate I mean being

celibate and then still being horny and

fantasizing about sex and so forth it's

uh it's kind of an inferior sort of

celibacy and it's not really going to be

permanent because you

you're I mean you still want to do it

you're just you know it's like the

desire not to do it is at at least

51% so that you're not doing it you know

you're not even playing with yourself

but

still um you you have to just have this

Faith where it's just nope not going to

go there not appropriate don't even

entertain the thought don't even think

about

it so

yeah and it's it's like especially if

you've been celibate for a long time

when you start getting up towards 50 you
start thinking well if I'm ever going to
do it again I'm gonna have to do it
pretty soon because before very much
longer I'm going to be too old to do it
and in a way it's I guess it's
appropriate that you know it was like I
was well past my peak of of lustfulness
when I finally dropped out of the monk
Hood so I mean maybe it's sort of you
know not optimal that when I am
cohabiting with a woman again that I'm
not as lustful as I was when I was
living in a cave in
Burma but I used to uh come up with
these justifications for for indulging

in a little bit of lustfulness which
really is is probably not the best way
of going about it but I read in a a like
a military strategy book I've got it
back there on the on the bookcase the
the indirect approach it's uh let's see
strategy the indirect approach by I
think it's BF Lidle Hart and he was
saying that one of one of the reasons
not the only reason but one reason why
the the Germans Lost World War II is
that Hitler was insisting upon not with
drawing an inch that he wanted just this
completely rigid defensive line that no
no retreat was allowed and the author of
this book that I read says that um
sometimes a flexible Retreat is better

like a flexible defense is better than a rigid defense because especially if your opponent is stronger than you are which was starting to be the case towards the end of World War II especially on the Eastern Front

um so you if you withdraw a little bit then you know you can wait for for the enemy to make a mistake and you can lure them into ambushes and so forth but um you know I was trying to use that kind of approach towards my own lustfulness and it it really doesn't work but I mean you have to be just 100% solid and wanting not to

be sexual

anymore that I mean any kind of latent

you know uncertainty is going to

interfere with that and then you have to

rely on the cold baths

and you know eating less and sleeping

less and so forth as kind of a makeshift

to hold the lustfulness at Bay as well

as

possible

so I guess I answered that question I

mean I was kind of all over the place

but I guess I answer it's sort of my

first question I'm still kind of getting

on track maybe I should have saved it

but I'm trying to I try to answer

questions in chronological order of the

order in which they were asked so I hope

I did okay and I I'll just move on to

the next question here this is from

popcorn

boxing and popcorn boxing says I

understand you're a close friend of

Brian Rue do you think Buddhism and

national socialism could operate

together well yeah I

mean you any kind of political party I

mean unless they're like marxists that

are just opposed to religion in general

but I mean any kind of politics any kind

of religion can

somehow you know work

together so you know like the Catholic

church and the the Italian fascists were
kind of working together there were well
that I can't remember what it was called
but the Nazis had Christian groups that
were tolerated at least that because the
Christian groups were endorsing you know
National Socialist ideals and so forth
um so
yeah I mean Buddhism and uh Japanese
imperialism during World War II they
they got along
together and but I mean you'd have to
modify one or the other you'd have to
modify national socialism into a
pacifist movement which probably
wouldn't work very well just you know no
violence or you'd have to make Buddhism

more okay with violence which is

generally how it has worked in the past

when Buddhism and politics get together

I mean you you just have to face reality

and say that you know there have to be

armies and so forth there has to be

occasional

violence so yeah it would have to be one

way or the other like Julius Iola uh he

just praised Buddhism to the skies as an

appropriate spiritual system for what he

considered to be you know the the elite

you know like the the people that are

ruling the

ruling the the government or whatever in

a more or less fascistic

manner but uh yeah he he wasn't really
much of a pacifist either you know he
would play up the the fact that the
Buddha is considered traditionally to
have been a member of the warrior cast
and so forth but um I mean Buddhism is
just
uncompromisingly pacifistic or at least
ear early Buddhism was and then
gradually it starts becoming more War
like even terado Buddhism like in Sri
Lanka during the the centuries long
Warfare with the Hindu tamls you know
there's been a lot of you know militant
terraa Buddhism going on down there so
yeah that's that's the only way you
could really combine them together is to

modify one or the other so that they're in Conformity with the principles of the other so I think I'll just move on to the next question from popcorn boxing which is did you ever smoke smoke and then he's got a cigarette emoji as a monk and I never really smoked cigarettes I think the only cigarette that I can remember smoking was when I was in fourth grade my stepbrother Chucky and I skipped school one day and went to this park where they had these big trains um you know like old steam engines and stuff and we hid in one of these trains and smoked cigarettes that we swipe from my stepdad from his father

and uh I didn't even inhale

so I mean but in Burma they do have

cigars and uh there were a few times I

would uh I was just wanting to smoke

something maybe I was kind of stressed

out wanting something to help me relax

or something and uh a few times I asked

for um cigars like home handrolled

Burmese Village cigars and one of my

main supporters at one of the places I

lived rolled cigars professionally so

she'd always give me a handful of them

if I ever

asked

um I remember one time I was I was

having a bad year it was just like a toe

stubbing aggravating year just the

entire year was like that and one time I
thought maybe maybe smoking a cigar
would help so I asked for a a fancy like
a a big kind of white cigar it's rolled
in some kind of leaf that isn't a
tobacco leaf I'd seen them
around um back during British times they
were really a big deal like uh the road
to manderlay mentions them you know the
the poem by rard Kipling so I asked for
one of those and I got it and I'm lying
on my back in the in the cave on my
wooden pallet bed smoking this thing and
I get about maybe halfway through with
it and I'm starting to feel like relaxed
and kind of my body is at at ease you

know and I'm thinking this isn't bad
maybe I could smoke these a little more
often or something and then by the time
I got about 2third of the way through
with this cigar all of a sudden I just
got hit with this wave of nausea partly
because I was also breathing the stale
smoke inside this cave it wasn't it
wasn't like a very spacious cave it
wasn't like Carl's Bad Caverns or
anything and I just went outside and
crashed on this it was like a platform
like a it's called a zat in Burmese it's
just like this thatched roof with a
platform it's up on posts and I just
crashed out there in the middle of the
night just wanting to either feel better

or die and I didn't really care which
man it was awful I I've really never
been into tobacco so I would have to
admit that um I actually smoked more
cannabis than tobacco when I was a monk
although I didn't smoke vast quantities
of
either so I think I'll just move on to
the next question from covac and sead
zida and cak andad Zid says how are we
to read the Mula maaka Kaka I was
reading nagara pay homage to the Buddha
and the first chapter which has only 14
verses let's see and the first was only
however it seems he is just saying
things without explaining much do I have

to read on further or the whole thing to understand what he meant at the beginning or is it just too technical to be understood by just diving in well this is a maamaa question so I got to put on The maamaa Fez helps okay so I think there might be some bad grammar in here how are we to read the Mula Kaka I was reading nagar to pay homage to the Buddha and the first chapter which only has 14 verses however it seems he is just saying things without explaining much so so it must be in the first chapter not and the first chapter so okay so I mean the first chapter of

the mul jamaka karaka is just like the

invocation like it's just this tradition

in Buddhist literature after you get

past the uh like the the

titica

stratum the totic of Spas once you start

getting into you know like non-canonical

Buddhist literature like like late

ancient times early Medieval Times

there's often like an invocation at the

beginning sometimes another sort of

invocation or what exoc I don't know

what it would be called at the

end um so yeah is the the wisi Maga has

like an invocation of the beginning too

if I'm if I'm remember correctly so

really it's just sort of devot

that just the invocation at the

beginning is just like this almost like

a formality it's just devotional

Buddhism and then he gets into the meat

of the mulaka karaka after that when he

starts you know discussing the question

of whether a cause and its effect are

the same or different that kind of thing

so yeah you have to read on further you

have to read the whole book I mean how

are we to read the mul jamaka Kaka well

I mean you just it's kind of a weird

question to ask you just sit down and

and read it and understand it as well as

you

can I mean I don't I don't know how else

to answer that

question I mean that's how I did it I

just lay on my left side in a cave and

read the book and then you just

understand it as well as you can some

parts maybe you can't understand

but oh well you know maybe if you think

about it or you subsequently read the

book again and and then later you you

can understand it but but uh I mean you

just read it and understand it as well

as you can I guess I

mean I I don't know how else to answer

that question so I'll just move on to

the next question from CAC andad

Zid in which he

says the as

sahri prita Sutra the Perfection of

wisdom in 8,000 lines is considered to

be the earliest text of the prag

paramita sutras dating it to around 100

BC I read that the diamond sutras and

heart sutras are contracted teachings

from it so essential to later teachings

in Mahayana however it says in this

text even Nirvana I say is like a

magical illusion is like a dream how

much more so anything else what do you

think it's claiming about Nirvana here

if it's also Just an Illusion and what

place does this put nirvana in the

entire understanding of d as seen from

the view of this

text well I mean I've discussed this

quite a lot like well um I have read the

uh Tibetan book of the great Liberation

that also says that you know Nirvana is

just a

concept and really if you're thinking

about Nirvana it is just a concept you

know if if you got a label on it it's

just this thing that isn't Nirvana so I

mean really they're just stressing what

I've been saying pretty much all along

and that is that Nirvana is off the

scale anything you say about it is

invalid any belief you have about it is

invalid so if you start thinking about

Nirvana I mean it's just going to be a

magical illusion it's going to be like a
dream it's not going to be really
Nirvana and real Nirvana I mean
ultimately it doesn't have a
name it's not an it it's off the scale
it's just not in samsara you have no
access to it that is samsaric you have
no samsar access to Nirvana at all
trying to understand intellectually it's
not GNA it's not going to work the best
you can hope for trying to understand
Nirvana intellectually is that it's like
a [__] that just breaks your intellect
at least momentarily and allows silence
to finally maybe get a glimmer of
it so let's see what do I think it's
claiming about Nirvana here I mean

nirvana in quotes and I mean the word
Nirvana and the concept of Nirvana is
illusory I mean it's just delusional
because anything we can think is
delusional anything we can put a label
on is
delusional so it's just in a way it's in
it's in an off-hand manner just
emphasizing Nirvana is completely off
the scale and anything you can possibly
think about it is going to be
invalid so I think I'll just move on to
the next question this is from Jeffrey
so I think we're done with majama
questions for the time
[Music]

being so I don't want to waste the juju
of my Fez answering other kinds of
questions so this is this next question
is from Jeffrey and Jeffrey says I find
meditation very hard due to the chatter
of my monkey brain I found a Chinese
herbal recipe to smooth the chi and make
meditation easier have you tried
something similar in are there herbs
Foods or substances that would counter
this
um well I've never really the only like
chemical attempt I made to improve my
meditation is that many years ago I knew
somebody that was taking Prozac they had
they got like cancer or something they
were given Prozac to help them with

their anxiety and they didn't take all
of it and so they just offer the rest of
it to me um because I had mentioned that
um I read that Prozac Stills the
hyperactivity of the frontal loes of
your brain and that's kind of where the
meditative or really the anti-
meditative chatter is happening you know
it's like you do your like chattery
thinking with the frontal loes of your
brain at least um a large part of
it and so I tried taking proac just
experimentally to see if it would help
with my meditation and really I noticed
really nothing other it it made me a
little sleepier

it didn't noticeably help with my

meditation

um so the only let's

see see are there herbs Foods or

substances that would counter this well

I mean in yoga you've got the whole idea

of satvic food satvic Foods you know um

which would be

like grains fruits nuts and dairy

products that that is supposedly satvic

which presumably would help you in

meditation and you'd want to avoid

rajasic foods like meat or spicy food

and then you'd want to avoid tamasic

food um which is like mushrooms or maybe

blue cheese you know anything kind of

stale or moldy or mushroomy I

guess but uh yeah I

mean just uh eating less

sleeping less I mean that can kind of

help but um yeah I think you just have

to like muscle through

it so I think I'm just gonna move on to

the next question here I apolog I

apologize to Jeffrey if my answer was

not a very good

one because I really never came across

anything that that really helped my

meditation by taking

it so the next question is from Toronto

and Toronto says can you attend the

meetings of a s that has been corrupted

by leftism or is it best to practice

alone in that case well it depends on how badly the S has been corrupted I mean if they're they keep their opinions to themselves um when giving talks and so forth that it hasn't been incorporated into the practice or you know into into like what they're giving discourses on on that sort of thing then yeah I I don't see any problem with that although I mean if they're just mixing leftism in with the Dharma and not differentiating the two then you might be better off seeking your dhama elsewhere so I mean it's like if you're getting more benefit than harm from attending this SAA attending these meetings then I it wouldn't hurt at

least it would help more than it would
hurt but I mean if if there's more more
harm than good from attending them I
mean just if your mind is you know more
agitated and less at peace and so forth
after attending these meetings just
because of all the you know whatever
going on that they're talking about that
isn't really DH even though they
probably don't know
this so yeah it just depends on the the
effect that it has on you two different
people might be able to attend the same
corrupted leftist sa one of them will
get benefit and the other one won't just
because of the effect that it has on

their

mind

so yeah I mean it would be best to avoid

SAS that have been corrupted by leftism

or really any kind of um any kind of

more or less anti- daric politics or

ideology because really I mean leftism

and and dhama in some ways they're just

exact

opposites you know like victim culture

is just anti- daric you know in

Dharma then I mean when you are unhappy

that's your choice really it's it's like

immoral to be unhappy because you are

choosing to suffer even though most

people don't realize this because it's

just so driven by habits and they just

are ignorant of the the truth about the

cause of

suffering and so I mean

in on the left I mean they want to blame

somebody you know back in the old days

of you know Marxism 1.0 it was the bisi

you know the capitalist class you know

but now it's essentially straight white

men you know white people are the enemy

Whitey is the enemy and if if people

that aren't white are suffering it's

somehow White's fault and that's just

the opposite of dhama and then the whole

Karma thing you know it's like you're

you're you're living the existence that

is the result of your own Karma I mean

that's that's victim blaming too um I just read first half of an article written by a Jewish author saying that uh Buddhism is anti-Semitic by its very nature because if you think that the Holocaust was that the people who died or suffered in the Holocaust were just um you know experiencing the fruition of their own karma that's anti-semitic because you're blaming the Jews for the Holocaust and um so I mean this this author was actually saying that um the whole idea of Karma and Buddhism has to be rethought by postmodern westerners um so I mean that's that's the kind of leftist stuff you can come across so yeah I mean you're just going

to have to decide for yourself whether

you're getting more benefit than harm or

vice versa and then decide from there so

I'll just move on to the next question

from Toronto

n which is is downloading Dharma books

for free that one could one would

typically have to pay to access a

violation of the five

precepts and I think technically it

would depend on whether it is illegal or

not like when I was a monk I downloaded

a few dhab books for free off the

internet and it was on like dhama sites

where you know you can get like an e

version of like bod works or

whatever and

uh yeah I don't think it was

illegal but uh I mean if it's if it's

like a black market kind of a thing then

yeah that's it's you're getting into

sort of ambiguous

borderline theft I guess I mean in the

Buddhist time when they're making the

rules there was no copyright

theft so um

or or whatever it is when you download a

book that you know you normally would

have to pay for but for some reason you

can just download them for free U I

don't know if that's copyright theft or

what it is but I mean if it's considered

to be illegal then yeah you should

probably avoid it but if

it's if it's like a a d site like a

high-profile dama site you know it's not

like some Russian site or some site

that's in the camoro islands or

something

um yeah but I mean if you've got doubts

don't do

it it's the only way you can get the

book then maybe but um yeah for a monk

it's it's uh thinner ice than for a lay

person because if a monk commits theft

you know that's serious enough that he

could get arrested for it then he's

excommunicated even if he doesn't get

arrested for it whereas a lay person you

know

it's I don't know it's it's it just more

ambivalent for a lay person I

guess so I think uh I'm I'm really don't

know exactly how to answer that

question it's it's like a it's like a

complex legal question it seems to me

but I think so long as it's legal it

should be okay because stealing is

illegal for the most

part

so yeah just in the spirit of things

might be taking what is not

given but I mean the the the website

that's has it for offer is giving it

so yeah it's yeah I think I think an

easy rule of thumb would just be you

know the question is it legal or
illegal so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Lord Baker
and Lord Baker says in the west the
church and other quasi religious
companies have a near Monopoly on
weddings and funerals in the East do the
Buddhist temples are also largely
participate in these events if so two
follow-up questions
below and so I guess
um I guess these next two questions are
the are the questions what would a
Buddhist wedding entail and what is the
monastics involvement okay so I I'll get
up towards the first part of this

question anyway and that is in terab
Buddhism monks are strictly forbidden to
participate in weddings like the actual
Wedding part like the wedding reception
after the deed is done then yeah monk
can participate in that but the actual
like conducting the wedding ceremony
that would be another sesa offense which
is you know one level below
excommunication it's a grave offense and
so in a terraa Buddhist country like
Burma monks do not participate in
wedding ser ceremonies generally what
happens is the couple will go to the
Village head man sign some papers and
that's essentially the the
wedding and then they'll throw a big

wedding reception invite the whole

village invite the The Village

monks if you know if they high-profile

enough they can in invite some famous

monk from the city

somewhere and then you know they make

offerings to the monks you know

sometimes it's really cute the bride and

groom will you know both beholding the

offering that they're offering to the

monk you know as you know they're

they're in us now you know they're

earning Merit together and then the monk

will bless their their marriage after

the deed is already done that's

generally how it works in Burma I assume

it would work similarly in uh Thailand

I'm not so sure about Sri Lanka because

Sri Lanka notoriously deviates radically

wildly from the rules of monastic

discipline in certain

respects

so in in Mahayana Buddhism you've got

Mahayana priests doing doing weddings

mainly because they don't bother

following the ancient rules of monastic

discipline

anymore

so yeah so in with regard to a Buddhist

wedding it's purely secular it's pretty

much signing papers you know in like a

government office or in front of the

village headman or whatever and then

afterwards you have the reception after
you're technically married and then the
monks bless you and you make offerings
to the monks and you know everyone has a
party but with regard to a Buddhist
funeral and what is the monastics
involvement yeah there's nothing in the
rules of monastic discipline from
preventing monks from um participating
in
funerals and I've attended a few
funerals
um and and participated in them so I
mean it sit not against the rules for a
monk to just attend a weddding so long
as as he's not participating in in the

ceremony you know he's not conducting it

or

anything but with regard to a funeral I

mean they can conduct funerals I suppose

and mainly the way it works is the monks

will

chant and they will give a sermon

generally on impermanence because it's

it's a golden opportunity to preach

about

impermanence when somebody has just died

and then sometimes um they'll do the lay

people will do like a water pouring

ceremony where they will share merits

with the with the

deceased um so yeah monks can

participate generally it's the Monk's

participation in a funeral is chanting
and and giving a discourse you know like
the lead monk the senior monk there or
the most famous one or whatever will
give a discourse on impermanence and
maybe conduct a little ceremony for
sharing merits with the
deceased so and think let's move on to
the next question this is from Liber
Lam and Liber Lam says what is the karma
of Doom scrolling and could we describe
this as an intensification of karma like
a greater intimacy between the action
and fruit serving an antagonistic
function to a Clarity that might
decouple the two and I don't fully

understand this question it's too too intellectual for me I think I mean I can kind of understand it but I don't claim to fully understand like this the last part of that question like a greater intimacy between the action and fruit serving an antagonistic function to a Clarity that might decouple the two um well I mean this question was kind of difficult for me even before I got to the second part of it just because I had was unfamiliar with the meaning of of Doom scrolling so I asked what Doom scrolling means and like three different people three or four different people answered and they gave three or four different

answers some people were are apparently of the opinion that Doom scrolling is just reading bad news you know you're just sort of blackpilled kind of um just scrolling through blackpilled stuff I guess bad news other people saying it can be anything you just if you just sit there for two hours just scrolling like on your phone or on your computer through social media posts or whatever that's Doom scrolling although I'm not exactly sure where the Doom comes in if you're just like scrolling through memes you know it's like humor or something so anyway I asked and Liber Lam himself defined it for me and since he's the one

who asked the question I'll be going
with his definition here and Libra Lam
says that Doom scrolling is when you're
watching short social media posts in
sequence that are curated based on what
an algorithm determines you will react
to so you waste an exorbitant amount of
time stuck in a hedonic Loop of watching
them
um so um it's he says it's you're
scrolling through social media posts
that it's it's like an echo chamber you
know it's like the the algorithm
algorithm sort of calculates what you're
likely to like and just shows you that
and so you're just getting like dopamine
hits scrolling through this stuff that's

confirmation bias or or whatever you
know you're just seeing what what you
want to see and you're getting little
dopamine hits for doing it for for two
hours maybe in maybe while sitting on
the toilet who
knows
so what is the karma of it I assume the
karma of it wouldn't be all that
different from like playing with
yourself or um I don't know was watching
TV or something um I mean there's the
confirmation bias thing that uh I guess
wouldn't be so so prevalent if all
you're doing is playing with yourself
but um I don't think it would be an

intensification of karma it's definitely
making Karma any anything that you do
that is a volitional Act is making
Karma and you're going for like instant
gratification but there's lots of ways
you can get instant gratification is
eating something eating an ice cream
cone is instant gratification playing
with yourself so long as you know you
enjoy the whole act and not just the
culmination would be you know instant I
mean instant
gratification
so I don't think it would be an
intensification of karma in fact in a
way you you get people can get used to
anything so even if you're Doom

scrolling and just going through like

you know how the world is is just

completely [__] and you know the

world's coming to an end we're in the

college Yuga you know blah blah blah um

just by scrolling through that you just

sort of get used to it you get

acclimated to it and then it just sort

of becomes

dull and I guess you know just scrolling

and scrolling and scrolling I mean you

just get used to it it's just it's just

a habit so that I mean the karma

wouldn't so much be intensified as just

sort of muted a

bit um but still I mean any kind of

volutional Act is Karma and the only way
to intensify karma is to intensify the
volition because karma is volition karma
is will like schopenhauer's will with a
capital
W so whatever intensifies will or
volition or
urge is an intensification of
karma um I mean if you just wallow in it
it's not so much intensifying the karma
but you see it could serve as an antigon
antagonistic function to a Clarity that
might decouple the two yeah I mean if
you're just wallowing in it the way
you're you're like wallowing in food or
wallowing in masturbation or wallowing
in whatever it is that you're getting

your instant gratification from then I

mean you're not going to be mindful of

what you're doing and you're not going

to be able to decouple the two I'm not

sure what oh action and fruit yeah

that's the two that you're supposed to

decouple action and

fruit

so yeah K in we

Paka so have I answered this question

that is my

question

um yeah I mean if you're just UNM

mindfully wallowing in something

samsaric that doesn't necessarily

intensify the karma it just makes it um

and you just get more lost in it but it could be just sort of dull Karma you're being lost in but the only thing that would intensify Karma would be an intensification of the volition or the will that is driving your behavior so maybe if it becomes habit forming and you just have to do it then that could intensify the karma you know if it becomes really habit forming so that you just feel compelled to spend hours every day then that could be considered an intensification of karma I suppose but I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from gamma spectrol and Gamma spectrol says what's your opinion on internet trolling I am a

ruthless troll but I keep it comedic and
if someone takes it well and even better
gives it back I give them props for
having a sense of humor and not being a
sensitive baby I Target people that
clearly take themselves too seriously
and especially those that are using
victim narratives to prop up their moral
identity such as commies I'm always
laughing as I do it but sometimes it
feels a little
naughty well by golly I have to admit I
do some internet trolling
myself and usually what relatively
little trolling I do is in the the
comment sections of Breitbart

articles and uh I mean you you come
across some uh easily trollable people
there because they tend to sort of
normies a lot of them are really not too
bright um then You' got the trolls that
come in that are trolling and then I
troll the trolls
sometimes um and it
whether an act is ethical or unethical
whether it's good karma or Bad Karma
depends on your intention depends on
your volition your will as I was
mentioning earlier just uh a minute or
two ago so it depends largely on your
volition I mean if you really are trying
to embarrass or humiliate someone
there's there's definitely going to be

some unskillful karma in

that but I mean there's also I can't

remember the Japanese word for it but

there's in Zen it's called Dharma battle

and I always like that idea you read

like Zen Coons some Zen Coan

collections like the hean

Roku it consists largely of Dharma

battles between two

monks you know it's like one monk will

say you know say a word of Zen and then

the other monk has to say something and

you know it's it's sort of like a

challenge and you can't just recite

something from a text because that's not

Zen you know Zen has to be

spontaneous or you know a monk will just
you know put one rock on top of another
rock and say what do you say to that and
you know it's just these weird things or
you know why did bodh Dharma come from
the West you know you just ask this
question just out of the
blue
so um you know that in a way is kind of
trolling but it's also like a Dharma
battle you know there it's like Zen
Buddhism apparently at least in the past
has relied heavily on this as a way of
um you know keeping people keeping their
uh their wits about them you know
keeping them on their
toes so but I mean if you're doing that

to someone who doesn't want to be on his
toes then you yeah I mean you could just
be uh being mean or
something but um yeah I
mean anything that you do with meta in
your heart is bound to be
okay but if you're trying to you know if
you just despise somebody and you're
know trying to to like make them
uncomfortable or unhappy then yeah
there's there's definitely going to be a
negative like uh Bad Karma element to it
so
I'm not exactly sure what to tell you
here let's see I'll just read the
question again here what's your opinion

on internet trolling well like I said I
I do a little bit of it myself I'm a
ruthless troll but I keep it comedic and
if someone takes it well or even better
gives it back I give them props for
having a sense of humor yeah that in a
way that's sort of like Dharma battle
except more secular version of it I
Target people that cly take themselves
too seriously and especially those that
are using victim narratives to prop up
their moral identity such as commies
um probably in a case like that I mean
kind of the best way to troll them in a
darmic manner would be sort of like the
Socratic method where you you just sort
of like point out to them you know you

might ask them questions or if they've
already said enough you can just point
out to them that what they're saying you
know it's it just it's irrational you
know it doesn't you know it's
self-contradictory or it's just untrue
or something like that maybe out more
out of compassion for the other people
who read that person's writing than that
person himself because generally you're
not going to change the mind of the
person that you're trolling although it
has happened
before so I think I'll just move on to
the next question I'm I'm sorry I
couldn't really give a golden answer to

that but uh in a way

it's sometimes it feels a little naughty

I think sometimes it is a little naughty

but to exist is to

transgress

so transgression is the spice of

life I mean life would be pretty

boring if everyone was just nice to each

other all the time I mean that's one

reason why the world isn't people being

nice to each other all the time it's

it's a major reason it's just it'd be so

boring so I think I'll just move on next

question here this is from I really have

never been able to figure out how to

answer how to pronounce this harim cthul

HR ym KT hu L harim cthul maybe it's

something from

Lovecraft anyways harim

says I would be very interested in

hearing your stories about drug

trips yeah

um I could I could give a few I suppose

I mean I probably already told these qu

told these these little stories like

one time I was in

college maybe 19 years old and I

attended this party and I took like two

hits of acid before attending this party

and I was

telling this these friends of mine it's

like you know when I take this stuff it

just drowns out anything else I could

take any amount of anything and it's it just doesn't have any effect on me so this one wise guy friend of mine says I got just a thing come with me so he takes me back to the keg and he bring he holds out this beer bong I'd never even seen a beer bong

before and it's it's pretty simple you know you just kind of bend down and you put the two you know the end of the the hose in your mouth and he pours a beer on the top and it just shoots down your throat

so I I assume the position and put the thing in my mouth and it just starts shooting down my throat and it just keeps shooting and shooting until

finally I look up and they're just
pouring beer after after beer into this
funnel and so finally I just I just have
to push the thing away and I walk away
it was just like beer shot out of my
mouth it was it was like I was
pressurized I was so full of
beer and I mean just strange things
about that night like there was a big
fire it was like this gazebo with this
this fire in the in this fireplace and
somebody's going to hand me some wood
like a big chunk of log or something I
just hold out my hand because you you
lose all sense of of how strong you are
or how heavy other things are anything

like that anyways one of the main
reasons why I'm bringing this up is that
a friend of mine another friend of mine
not the wise guy who with a beer bong he
wanted to go to my house because I live
relatively nearby because he wanted to
snort some cocaine and he offered me
some but I thought you know it'll just
be wasted you know it just it won't have
any effect but anyway I was willing to
go home with him go to my house with him
to let him do whatever he wanted to do
and I remember as we were pulling into
the driveway I hope my dad isn't here
and I look up his red van was not in the
par in not in the driveway so I was kind
of relieved and then like three seconds

later I look up and there's his van and
he did not have time to come around us
in the driveway and park there and so
I'm not sure if that van is really there
or not but the thing is even though I
was under the
influence I still was able to engage in
some kind of rational
thought so I just got out of the car and
started walking towards that red van
kind of waving my hands out in front of
me like this so that you know if it was
really there I'd bump into it and if it
wasn't really there I'd just walk
through it and that's what happened I
just walked right into the side of it

and it just poofed out of existence and

I'm like great my dad isn't here so then

I go to the to the door and I look in

and there's my dad sitting in his chair

like watching TV and then I I look again

he's not there and it turned out he

wasn't there at

all and it's that kind of thing I mean

i' I've had religious experiences almost

every time I've taken uh like a

psychedelic

drug and that night I was having more

religious experience like later on that

night I was just walking home in the the

line on the side of the road was this

white line it was just like this

shimmering purple line and I'm just

following this shimmering purple line
back up and I was just thinking even
though I was like 19 years old I was
thinking I have lived a full life I've
experienced pretty much everything there
is to experience I I could just lie down
here by the side of the road and stop
breathing and just die you know not
because I was suicidal or anything it
was just I just felt like I just
experienced it all you know I lived a
full life already
ready you I'd be if I was a dog I'd be
an extremely old dog at that point but
of course um I still capable of rational
thought and realize that you can't die

from holding your breath because as soon
as you pass out you just automatically
start breathing
again so I mean really I could give
because I've had a religious experiences
almost every time I've taken
psychedelics you know it might be best
to talk about that but it's really hard
to describe a mystical experience like
William James talks about um mystical
experiences in his classic book The
varieties of religious experience which
I would recommend to anybody that wants
to understand religion in general just
the religious
mind and he says that there are two
aspects of a mystical experience one is

that the experiencer of the mystical
experience has no doubt whatsoever that
it is more real than his ordinary w
State of Consciousness and two that his
mystical state will have no con
convincing persuasive effect on anybody
else and this very hard to explain a
mystical experience because I mean you
in a way you're transcending the
explainable but I can give uh at least
one more drug story might as well and it
was I was like maybe 17 at the time I
think it was a senior in high school
junior or senior in high school and this
rascally friend of
mine no not any of the friends that I've

already mentioned I had this different
rascally friend who called me up on the
phone and said hey man you want to try
canabidol like this stuff isn't really
canav andol but it's like canav andol so
I was willing to try just about anything
aside from like homosexuality or
narcotics in those
days so I drove into town to my rascally
friend's house and it was the daughter
of my family doctor was there and she
got her hands on some of Daddy's
Pharmaceuticals
apparently and there was some kind of
asthma medicine that we were supposed to
burn and inhale the fumes but she was
mixing it with water and handing it out

to people to

drink and so you know I dutifully drank

my cup of water that was kind of like

Brown mud puddle water it tasted kind of

like mud puddle water and for quite a

while I was experiencing No Effects

whatsoever until it was maybe half an

hour or more later somebody gave me some

of those little animal cookies that have

like the pink or white frosting in the

little candy specks all over them so

that the like the frosting pretty much

obscure as what kind of animal it's

supposed to be except for the camel you

can always tell the camel because of the

hump anyway they gave me some of those

and I started chewing them and it was
maybe two or three minutes later I
realized that I was just sitting there
chewing a mouthful of perfectly dry
cookie crumbs my mouth was completely
dry and so I had to get a glass of water
or something just to wash the cookie
crumbs down my throat and then I started
feeling like nauseous like I just felt
icky so I told my Ras friend I'm not
really having any effect from this other
than it's making me feel icky I think
I'm just going to go home and he said
yeah I feel kind of the same so I
started driving
home and I I noticed that I I look up
and see a stop sign and then i' look

away and look there again and it would
be like a hitchhiker standing there
going like this and then I look again
it' be a stop sign again and I was
starting to get worried it's like if I
can just hallucinate stuff like this I
mean I'm going to see a green light when
it's really red and and just run a red
light or something I mean this is this
is dangerous but of course being a goofy
teenager I just drove home which was
like a 15 mile trip but I had driven
that road so many times in so many
different states of Consciousness that
it was sort of a base brain like the
spinal cord was getting me home and on

the way home at least four times I saw a
rabbit run across the road in front of
the car it was always from right to left
I'd never seen rabbits running across
the road like that
before and so I'm thinking man I got
just got to get home I got to get home
alive so I get home and I park my my
pickup truck in front of the
garage and I get out and on the garage
door there are two gigantic woolly bear
caterpillars I mean they're like this
long you know they're like a foot and a
half long and I could see every
individual tough of hair on those giant
caterpillars as well as I could see
anything else my eyes are a little

blurry but I could see them as clearly
as I could see the garage door itself as
clearly as I could see anything and but
at that point I was starting to think
that maybe this stuff was strick nine or
something because I've heard that strict
nine gets you high before it kills
you and I just wanted to lie down you
know it's it's another one of those
cases where I either want to feel better
or die and I don't really care which as
long as I don't stay feeling icky like
this so I just went and and lay down on
my bed and after a little while I
started feeling a little better so so I
decided to get up and I walk into the

kitchen and I decided to make a peanut
butter sandwich so I get out the bread
and for some reason I spread peanut
butter on both slices of bread and then
the next thing I know poof I'm lying on
my back in bed again and I'm lying there
thinking did I really get up and go into
the kitchen and spread peanut butter on
bread or did I just hallucinate the
whole thing CU I was still awake I mean
I wasn't I wasn't like unconscious and
like dreaming at least I wasn't asleep
sleep dreaming so still I'm still
capable of some some semblance of
rational thought so I thought well I'll
just get up go into the kitchen and see
if the bread is there on the counter

because that would indicate that I put
it there so I I get up and go into the
kitchen and there's bread on the counter
but there's no peanut butter on it and
then I just start walking through the
house just looking at everything you
know just is this real am I really doing
this you know I get go into the living
room I'm looking around all of a sudden
poof I'm lying on my back in bed again
and and I just thought to hell with this
I'm just stay I'm just staying in bed
but I mean one of the things you learn
from like Vivid hallucinations like that
they were drug induced I mean it's like
you can't really trust your senses I

mean even if you're not on drugs still I
mean that's no guarantee that what
you're experiencing is reality and even
science can tell you that what you're
experiencing is not reality I mean it's
related to reality somehow according to
scientism
but you know it's it's not what you're
experiencing is not real essentially you
know it's just you your your brain is
symbolizing sensory data that you're
getting through your senses and turning
it into this but really the reality out
there is very
different and I mean just things that
happen like that one one time it wasn't
drugs at all I mean I've had experiences

like this that weren't drug induced
where one time I was living at this big
school monastery near Mandalay and had
to to go out at night to pee you know no
no indoor plumbing there and I was
walking back and I saw this dog I I used
to feed this dog I called it puppy L and
it was just it had mange and was like
completely covered with fleas but my
heart went out to the little bastard it
was tough puppy L was a tough dog and uh
I saw her lying there I could see you
know which way the head was and you know
how she was lying you know I knew which
dog it was I could see her well enough
to know which dog and then you get a I

got a little closer and all of a sudden
I realized that it wasn't a dog at all
it was just a pile of leaves that one of
the novices hadn't moved away after
sweeping it up he just left this pile of
leaves in the in the courtyard and just
left it there so it's like your your
mind you know it's like your imagination
really is is a major portion of what you
perceive of reality and U that's one
effect that that drugs taking certain
like Psych elic drugs in addition to
just the Mind expanding mystical aspect
which is pretty much beyond words
there's also this you know um it's it's
sort of it's helping you to understand
that what you're seeing is not

necessarily

real and um yeah that's that's had a

significant effect on on my life and how

I look at things another another not I

don't know if I develop it into a total

story but I have done a few iasa

ceremonies and one common factor of all

of my iasa experiences or yah which is

essentially the same stuff is you just

feel the pain of the universe just

gushing through your heart it's like

some people they're they sensitive heart

oriented people they can just feel the

suffering of people around them and

that's one reason why they are just

driven to do humanitarian Aid or you

know counsel troubled teenagers or work

at a homeless shelter or a battered

woman's shelter or that kind of thing

you know they're just driven by it

because it hurts to have other people

suffering around

them and on the other hand I'm more head

oriented and uh I don't feel that way

very often where you just I mean I I

have a certain amount of empathy where

you can feel what people near you are

feeling but just having the the pain of

the world troubling me all the time is

generally you know it doesn't it doesn't

happen all that much but you take take

that uh

iasa and it's just like I mean it just

hits you it's just a very heart oriented
kind of a drug I figured at first before
I took it it'd be a head trip you know
like mushrooms or LSD or something but
now it's visceral it just blows you wide
open and so it gave me some insight into
what it's like to be just a really
sensitive heart oriented person because
I was my heart was just wide open for
like 24 hours especially after the first
time I took
it but I don't want to give an entire
video on drug experiences because we've
been at it for over an hour now so I'm
just going to move on to the next
question here this is from Athena's

sigil and Athena sigil says my question
is about how animals are treated in
Buddhist countries versus Western I have
a suspicion that it's better here in
general yeah better in the West in
general uh yeah
um one thing about Burma I mean that's
the the one country I can speak about
with the most Authority because I lived
there for more than 20 years just a
second here I got some kind of little
popup thing on my screen okay is that um
the Burmese are people people they're
people oriented people
and I think it was uh what was
tho who said that it seems to be a law
that one cannot have a deep affinity for

both man and

nature and Western people tend to be

more nature oriented you know they might

not like the human race all that much I

mean there's a lot of people who are

people people but you're going to find

more people in the west who aren't

people people that that their their deep

Affinity is with with nature which would

include animals and I'm I'm kind of that

way for most of my life I have liked

dogs and trees more than I have liked my

fellow man which is one reason why I

became a hermit living in a forest in

tropical

Asia but uh I mean you do have I mean

Burmese Buddhists who are they're kind
of spiritual materialists so they won't
they might not want to kill mainly
because they don't want to get Bad Karma
but animals are still kind of an it you
know they don't have the
same um the same compassion for an
animal that they would have for another
human and the Japanese especially so
they used to surprise me like um I used
to work on Japanese
ships and of course you got fishermen
who aren't going to be compassionate
towards you know the life forms that
they are catching but I remember one
time it really stands out in my mind we
we got a a snailfish came up on in this

on this long liner I was working on and
it was still alive and I put it in a
holding tank and it a snailfish this
species of snailfish it's like bright
pink and its its pelvic fins have
developed into these feelers under its
chin so it's like this and it's got two
eyes that are sort of like like uh
brushed aluminum discs and it's just
this cool bizarre looking fish just kind
of motoring around with its tentacles
going you know bright pink and so this
Japanese fisherman walks by and I said
hey look at that and he just looks at it
and he had a big Gaff hook in his hand
he just like gaffs it and then hands me

the skewered fish he just assumed that I
wanted wanted him to get it for me I'll
Just sh him how cool it looked but they
don't
care and I mean you read about Japanese
experiments on animals and stuff it's
they just don't have the same kind of
compassion the same feeling of like
animal rights that Western people
have
so I mean like in India You' got like
scy dogs and scy monkeys and scy cows
all over the place and people don't want
to hurt them you know they might even
kind of worship them a little bit at
least the the monkeys the Hanuman
monkeys and the cows but uh still um the

dogs there just scy mangy dogs just
eating garbage just on the verge of
starvation all the time it's it's not
good so yeah I mean I think it's uh in
Burma probably other like Eastern
countries they will show um as proof
that Americans are insane they'll show
like like um dog grooming salons you
know where you got the little Pikes
that's getting its hair all groomed and
everything and you know they're they're
dogs in America are going to salons when
you know most people in other countries
you know even the you know even the
people don't go to
salons so it's just yeah the Burmese are

in general I mean you are going to find
Asians who love animals you know they
love dogs or they love cats but Asian uh
Burmese villagers you know most of them
have a dog but the main purpose of the
dog is to eat garbage you know to clean
up the baby poop in the yard and to bark
at strangers that's pretty much that's
pretty much the main purpose of them and
they're disposable the dog gets sick you
might give it some kind of herbal
medicine you're not going to take it to
a vet you know you give it some kind of
herbal medicine if it doesn't get better
well you just get another
dog so
yeah animals in general are treated

better in the West

so the next question is from creel I

think that's how to spell it or how to

pronounce

it man I'm having troubles with words

lately anyways creel says why do you

think so many near-death experiences

report meeting Jesus and in some cases

angels with wings even What place would

Jesus have in the Buddhist cosmology

what would Buddha think about him

according to you would he be considered

a Dava a Brahma or what about angels and

guardian angels are they recognized in

Buddhist cosmology are they dvas brahmas

Etc thank you okay well I guess uh

there's more than one question

here

so maybe I should separate

these okay so what do I think about so

many experiences like near-death

experiences that were where the people

say that they saw Jesus or Angels um

it's because they expect to see Jesus

and Angels probably they're Christians

and so they expect to see this when they

have you know when they die they think

they're in heaven they're going to see

Jesus and Angels or some Saints or

saintly people um and this reminds me of

the Tibetan Book of the Dead which talks

about something similar to near-death

experiences you know the standard

stereotypical near-death experience the
toet in Book of the Dead you know
there's considerable overlap between
these
and one thing that the person is told in
the Tibetan Book of the Dead is no
matter what you see in this BAU realm
you know you're going to see relatives
you're going to see the Buddha maybe
you're going to see like Monsters you're
going to see demons and angels or Gods
you know you're going to see all this
stuff and you got to keep reminding
yourself this is a creation of my own
mind that you're seeing pretty much like
dream stuff and that would be

essentially what happens with a
near-death experience is you know you
see what you expect to see if you're a
Christian you're going to you're going
to see Jesus or Christian stuff anyway
something that's not in complete
conflict with Christianity or what deep
in your heart you expect the afterlife
to be like and a Buddhist is probably
not going to see Jesus unless he's heard
about Jesus and deep down he's got some
ambivalent feelings about Jesus and
thinks maybe Christianity might really
be right or
something so what place would Jesus have
in the Buddhist cosmology well I mean
Jesus as a man would be a human being

the Buddha would probably acknowledge
that Jesus had some kind of realization
that he had psychic
powers um I mean from the Buddhist point
of view he would not be
enlightened because you know he he cried
and got angry and and that sort of thing
but um let's see what place would Jesus
have in the Buddhist cosmology after
Jesus died probably he he'd enter some
Heaven realm presumably you know he was
very Advanced spiritually maybe not
fully enlightened but still very
Advanced spiritually that uh yeah he'd
probably wind up in in some Heaven
realm so The Bu to think about him I

think I already answered that that you know he would acknowledge that Jesus was a wise man that he had psychic powers I mean if that was even relevant to mention and uh you know he was he was getting close even if he uh wasn't fully enlightened so I think I'll just move on to this this next part of the question about angels and guardian angels are they recognized in Buddhist cosmology are they Davis brahmas Etc thank you with regard to Guardian Angels definitely the Burmese believe in the co- Salat which is you know the personal protecting

DEA

and uh when you're when you're sending

meta you know like when the monk is
leading the people you know repeat what
I say you know they do a lot of that
repeat what I say stuff and you know
they're just blessing you know they
start with you know themselves and then
they start then they do the co- salut
and then you know they do the a salut
which is the the daa protecting the
house and then they do like the
neighborhood salut and the what the M
salut which is the the the the daa who's
protecting the city and you know they
they just go up all the way to the you
know locata you know the the world um
Guardian Dava called locan nat lord of

the

world so yeah they'd be Davis um with

regard to just angels in general yeah

just be Davis or

brahmas because uh I mean really

Christianity is a polytheistic religion

because I mean not only do they have the

Trinity which is sort of ambivalent but

they believe in angels which are superum

beings that they're essentially Immortal

you know they have greater Powers than

we do so I mean I'm not exactly sure

why Christianity is so vehemently

monotheistic when really they

acknowledge the existence of these

superhuman Immortal beings that aren't

God but are Servants of God and it's

like maybe the fact that they are

Servants of God and just makes them not

small G Gods but something else called

an angel but really I mean it's it's the

same from a Buddhist point of

view I mean from a Buddhist point of

view they're not they're not even really

Immortal that there's anything that has

a beginning has an

end and see nobody lives

forever so I think I answered this

little cluster of questions from creel

so I think I'm going to move on to the

next question question which is from

pranav and pranav says your opinion on

Dr Babas sahib

edar here in India he is considered a
bodh SATA and I too think he is a bodh
SATA well I know very little about um
Baba sahib edar that uh I know enough
about him to know that he started uh a
movement in India where um Untouchables
were being converted to
Buddhism and I have also read that he
did this more for political reasons than
for Spiritual reasons that he wasn't so
much I mean this is just other people's
take and I don't know enough about him
to know if this is true or not but I
have read that I mean he was doing it
not so much out of faith in Buddhism but
as a way of helping The
Untouchables to you know get a better

position so by converting to Buddhism
they were just removing themselves from
the whole Hindu cast system which made
them Untouchables you know they were
below
sudras so um it does seem plausible to
me at least that it was largely a
political move rather than a spiritual
one but again I really don't know that
much about him and uh the whole concept
of bodh satas is kind of a an
anachronism I mean it's it's not really
a terab Buddhist idea I mean there is
the buddhis which means something
different from a mahayan
bodhisattva buddhis SATA is just someone

who is destined to become a Buddha and
it's hard to say whether um Baba sahib
edar is destined to become a Buddha or
not I mean how could we possibly
know so I think I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from Gringo
and Gringo says thoughts on occultism
question mark
well occultism is a very broad field um
my father was pretty much of an
occultist you know he referred to all
the psychic stuff and and like uh ghosts
you what would be considered the
Paranormal to be the occult and I do
know a few um people who consider
themselves to be occultists I've done a
few videos with

occultists and um at least one of them
is a considers himself to be sort of a
neoplatonist pagan
um so I'm not exactly sure how
neoplatonist paganism and occultism you
know exactly what the relationship is
between the two I don't think that Neo
neoplatonism you know is entirely ultic
if that's a word and certainly occultism
isn't limited to paganism or or
platonism but occultism for the most
part um most of it is is is worldly in
some sort you know it's dealing with
worldly stuff you know you're doing the
the Spells or channeling the spirits or
or doing the psychic stuff um for

worldly purposes not for the purpose of transcending the world there are occultists I I assume that there are maybe a significant minority of occultists who really are trying to use like you know ancient pH ancient Greek Phil opy like neoplatonism or something as a way of transcending you know this human predicament but for the most part it's uh it's worldly stuff sort of like witchcraft kind of stuff or channeling that kind of a

thing like my father I mean he was just interested in the unknown he was just exploring the unknown like within his own mind just doing all sorts of um like dream Communications you know like

entering other people's dreams and um he
was a uh leader of a a coven of board
housewife witches for a while and he did
lots of stuff like that hypnotism would
also sort of be a cultish even though it
does have a you know it is acknowledged
by science you know like Stanford
University has a hypnosis lab but still
I mean I think hypnosis would be
considered a part of a cultism
also maybe that oldfashioned Alchemy
would be a kind of a UL ISM I think
ultis like ult literally means something
like hidden so probably any exploration
of Hidden Truths or hidden realities
would be called occultism although

mostly it's uh It's associated with uh

like psychic powers or witchcraft or or

that sort of

thing but um yeah I'm personally I don't

consider myself to be an occultist I

don't identify as an occultist so I'm

really not an authority on it I think

this just such a broad field that

there's so much that could be said about

it that um you know sort of like

Hinduism you know it's it's just sort of

this broad

spectrum so we'll just move on to the

next question I guess sorry Gringo for

not answering your question more

completely or at more at length although

the question was very short it's only

three three words

here so we'll just move on to White Ash

Piper and white ash Piper says hello poo

basa I watched two of your archaic

Buddhism talks and you told a story

about the Buddha being offered a young

lady for marriage and Buddha said get

away from me you sack

of sack of piic and he's trying to say

piss get away from me you sack of piss

and dung I wouldn't touch you with my

foot and you said that this beautiful

young lady hated him for the rest of her

life but her parents instantly became

enlightened so regarding Karma did the

Buddha create Bad Karma by causing pain

to another being or did the means
justify the end well for starters I
would point out that this is for me this
is kind of a an interesting
anthropological case study because the
the story has been Twisted in a certain
direction and um I don't think white ash
Piper deliberately Twisted this although
you know if you know Donald Trump became
fully enlightened Buddha and he did
something like this you'd expect it to
get twisted in this same direction
because I am sure that even if Donald
Trump became a fully fully
enlightened that some leftists would
hate him even worse than
now so

actually um he didn't say get away from me you sack of piss and dung I wouldn't touch you with my foot he just said what is this full of urine and excrement I would not want to touch it even with my foot so he wasn't directing his comment directly at her I mean he wasn't like insulting her to her face I mean he probably wasn't looking at her you know he was probably looking at the parents and just making a point that you know a human body is full of urine and excrement and it just has no appeal to him and uh also the parents I mean it is true that the beautiful young lady hated him for the rest of her life according

to the the commentaries but her parents
did not in becom en lighten they just
became soapas they became Aras you know
they got they got
converted by just the shock value of
this but they didn't instantly become
enlightened so I mean this this the
story did get kind of warped a little
bit and uh this whole story is not
necessarily um like objective
history that I mean in the in the uh in
the suta it's at the beginning of the
mandasa of the AA waga where it starts
with the Buddha saying you know what is
this full of urine and excrement I would
not want to touch it even with my foot
um and also he mentions you know having

having seen the three daughters of Mara
you know he was not even slightly moved
toward
sensuality so um or at least that became
it was like T let's see what was it t AA
which is like
craving like uh insatiable
insatiableness and lust are the three
daughters of Mara but I mean this could
be like the origin of the three
daughters of Mara because he's not
saying that I saw the three daughters of
Mara it's just I saw craving
insatiability and lust and I was not
moved to to sensuality you know it could
just be that that's how the legend arose

of the three daughters of Mara because
the gandia suut is a very
ancient so I mean it doesn't have the
story of the Brahman trying to present
his beautiful daughter to the Buddha as
a wife you know the whole story is about
you know what happened to the parents
and how the daughter hated the Buddha
and all that I mean that's that's all
commentarial stuff that probably isn't
nearly as ancient as you know just the
relatively tur first verse of the mandia
sua but um even assuming that you know
the the commentary is true that the
story really happened not the way white
ash Piper presented it but you know in a
somewhat mitigated

form

um yeah let's just assume for the sake

of argument that the story is

essentially true so then white ash Piper

says so regarding Karma did the Buddha

create Bad Karma by causing pain to

another being well the answer is of

course no because an enlightened being

creates zero Karma no matter what he

does

he is no longer motivated by what a

Christian would call

self-will you know he no longer has

self-will he he no longer has um bition

or will at

all so yeah he did not create any kind

of karma bad or good and did the means justify the end presumably so that an enlightened being would do what is appropriate one would assume that even though one person might take a hit you know two people um you know they they get immense benefit from it and maybe the one person that took a hit needed sort of the needed to come down a peg because she was very you know narcissistic or something I don't know but I mean the main point of this question here is did the Buddha create Bad Karma by causing pain to another being and no he did not because he an enlightened being does not create Karma at

all so we'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Joe
and this is an easy
one Joe do says have you seen Napoleon
yet if so what are your thoughts and
Napoleon I assume is a movie about
Napoleon and no I haven't seen it so I
don't have any thoughts about it I did
hear that it sucks but I don't know I
don't know what the critics say about it
I I never even saw the like the what do
you call it the teaser the part of the
be part there the preview never even saw
that so I'll just move on to joo's next
question here which is taking it in a
different direction have you had

meditation as profound as being high on drugs and the answer to that is yes I have had meditation that is more profound than anything I experienced on drugs um yeah there were there were a few times in my career as a cave dwelling meditator where I would experience something in meditation just this Crystal Clarity that I mean I had no doubt that that just five minutes of that even 30 seconds of that was well worth 10 or 15 years of just struggling and floundering and just sweating and getting malaria and eating shitty food and sleeping on the floor I mean it was it was all well

worth

it so I mean drugs are more reliable I

mean you can take a tab of LSD

you know assuming that it's legal

wherever you are this is not medical

advice or legal advice but I mean you're

pretty reliable what you're going to

experience but with meditation in order

to get something in order to get to like

you know this profound Crystal

Clarity then you may have to meditate

your ass off for years and years and

even then you might not experience

it but the answer the answer to that

question is yes I have had meditation as

profound as being high on drugs fact it

was more

profound so I'll just move on to the

next question here and this is from

Indiana dharm and Indiana dhama says

what are the karmic consequences of

offering worship to the gods something

like burning incense or offering wine or

milk so that a deity will in assist with

pragmatic issues like physical health

Financial issues ETC I have also heard

of Dharma protecting deities among the

Mahayana Buddhists is there a terot

version of these deities so I guess this

is two questions I got to separate

these okay so the first one is what are

the karmic consequences of offering

worship to the gods well it depends on

your volition I mean again karma is volition karma is Will so if you've got wholesome volition while doing it you're going to get wholesome results and if you have UNH wholesome bution while doing it you can have UNH wholesome results and I don't know I've seen some pretty strange offerings to the gods during my life like I was in Burma once and

um I there was this annat Shrine there was maybe I should back up a little bit when I first moved to this area it was at the the northern edge of Alo kaan National Park and these people there were very rustic you know they were not

sophisticated Slicker City Slickers by
any stretch of the
imagination and near the village
there was this Grove of trees that
hadn't been cut down yet and that was
kind of strange in and of itself it was
noticeable it's like wow there's a Grove
it's like old growth forest right there
why didn't they cut that down like they
cut around cut down everything around it
and I realized by going over there that
there was a natat shrine there it was it
was essentially a sacred grove like you
hear about or you read about like an
ancient Greece how they would have
sacred Groves that were dedicated to
some deity or other they had one there

and it was uh I think she was called a
which means the great mother and uh I
took the liberty of opening up the the
shrine it was sort of like a rabbit
hutch and you could open the door and
there was this little statue of a
goddess wielding like a a machete and
crouching next to her was a
tiger so anyways most people didn't go
to that n Shrine that was sort of sacred
I guess probably maybe because I was a
monk it was okay that I opened the door
but but um like every once maybe once a
year they'd have a a Napo you know it
was like a festival in honor of a MAG
and they'd take the the statues out and

they' put it on this different Shrine it would had this platform and that's where people would make their offerings and one time it wasn't during the the uh the festival it was just I would stop there to take my bowl out of its bag before I went into the village for alms and there was a woman there who I mean the the statues weren't there or anything it was just sort of this empty
Shrine and she went down to the creek and oh no she picked some leaves from a tree you know like little Twigs from the the the sacred grove she grabbed a clay pot that was that was there conveniently at The Shrine went down to the creek filled up the the pot with water came

back up put the leaves in the pot of water offered it there and then listed off this long laundry list of stuff that she wanted from this deity in exchange for giving them giving the deity a handful of leaves you know she wanted her family to be healthy she wanted her kid to pass his exams she wanted you know so and so to get better from whatever sickness they had she just had this long list and it was like man she just essentially trying to Swindle this deity you know for a handful of leaves she's trying to get all this stuff in return

and um yeah that's I don't think that's

so good I mean if it's

something if you have a vested interest

or like an ulterior motive where you

offer something to the Gods in order to

get something back then it's really not

a pure offering that I think I mean the

deities don't give a [__] about a

handful of leaves is they want if they

want anything from us at all I mean they

just appreciate a certain amount of

respect maybe a little love you know

it's like I I look at offerings of the

god sort of like if if your cat goes out

and kills a lizard and then brings it to

you just kind of offers you this this

dead lizard I mean you have no need for

a dead lizard you weren't sitting there

particularly wanting a dead lizard but
the fact that that cat was thinking of
you and out of some kind of love offers
you this dead lizard I mean it makes you
like the cat more you know it's like the
cat was you know it was like being
thoughtful it was thinking of me and
giving me this dead lizard you know and
that's kind of the way I would
imagine like the lower gods are towards
us I mean if if you Revere them without
expecting anything in return they're
going to appreciate that and be nice to
you more than if you're offering a
handful of leaves or or killing a
chicken and then listing off this

laundry list of stuff you want in

return I mean that's just sort of like

some sort of commercial transaction or

something and it's one that's

essentially swindling the

deity

so yeah I mean it's like having respect

for your superiors is a good thing and

the deities and I assume they're out

there you know if if this universe can't

produce anything higher than us then

this universe is got is I don't know

it's not not all that great but I assume

that this universe is infinite and

there's going to be an infinite number

of beings that are more advanced than we

are and so having respect for them some

of them may have been human at one time
I mean that's fine and Buddhism endorses
that I mean reflecting upon the dvas is
one of the the 40 standard modes of
meditation listed off in the Wii
Maga so yeah I mean you're better off
just doing it out of respect and and if
they decide to help you in some way as a
result of that that's fine but doing it
in order to get something out of it is
not really a pure offering in my opinion
so we'll just move on to the next
question from Indiana Dharma Indiana
Dharma and he says I have also heard of
Dharma protecting deities among the
Mahayana Buddhists is there a teren

version of these

deities um yeah most of the the Dharma

protecting deities are in the Mahayana

Pantheon you know like prya parito or

manri people like or deities like that

but um I would I mean even the god Saka

Saka king of Gods you know in a way he's

he's uh he's a devout Buddhist according

to Buddhist

cosmology and so yeah he'd do what he

could and he was a powerful deity you

know he is the patron deity of uh of the

Indo Arians you know the viic brahans

and also uh he's like king of you know

the primordial Pantheon of gods before

um they started thinking of people like

Brahma Brahma Realms and so

forth

so yeah I guess Saka king of Gods would

be the main Dharma protecting deity um

in terab Buddhism although I'm sure

there are some relatively obscure ones

maybe the the locan NAT that I mentioned

earlier might help dhama in this world

and I assume there are dhamma oriented

deities that do what they can but um

just the very thought that you're gonna

have a god of something is uh it seems

kind of naive to me you know like the

ancient Romans had the god of sneezing

and the god of dreams and the god of of

this and that and I mean really I mean

what kind of existence would that be if

you're a God if your whole duty is just

like like supervising people

sneezing so yeah I think that different

different uh higher beings might have

different proclivities

propensities and that uh but but I don't

think that it's like their job to to uh

to be the god of

that but uh yeah I assume in terot of

Buddhism especially in later

developments of it there have got to be

um deities who are helping to protect

the dhama in the world but uh it's not

really

canonical other than Saka king of Gods

who revered the Buddha and you know did

what he could so I'm just going to move

on to the next question this is from
om and om says why was seac banned on
YouTube well I don't know the whole
story he just told me that uh he got
kicked out of YouTube I don't think he
got a full explanation even but I think
it was for something to do with uh hate
groups so uh I think he mentioned in
some video he may have uploaded in the
past possibly years past you know there
was mention of some hate
group and uh somebody didn't like that
and flagged it and YouTube just took
down his his entire account because
YouTube is is really not a free speech
platform so yeah I don't think he did

anything really

wild so I'll just move on to 's next

question and that is how and why you

went to Japan as a terot monk well I

went up going to Japan like three times

as a monk I never really planned on

going to Japan although I do have a lot

of Japanese karma in this life I think

there's a good chance I may have been

Japanese in a previous existence I've

always kind of been impressed by the

Japanese and uh I wound up working on

Japanese ships as a as a lay person

before I became a monk and then um the

first time I went to

Japan aside from being on Japanese

ships was when I first went to Asia as a

junior monk I've been a monk for less than two years and uh one of the senior monks of the tong Pulu tradition came to America and I went back back to Asia with him and I was advised to go to Asia by other monks cuz the monastery was in California the board of directors were nutty the place was was just in chaos and so the the Burmese monks there some of the senior monks advised me just go to Burma do monk stuff in Burma until things get better here and then you can come back and I'm thinking maybe two and a half years you know I'll be in Burma two or three years and it wound up being like 23

years but uh cuz things just didn't get
better at the moment they just got worse
so uh the first time I was just on my
way to Burma we stopped for I think it
was three weeks in Japan we weren't
staying in a monastery we were just
staying in various like Apartments of uh
lay people you know Burmese immigrants
in Japan and Burmese immigrants in Japan
tend not to uh be very wealthy so we
were staying in little
apartments and uh
yeah like even a a doctor in Burma if he
went to Japan he could not be a doctor
in Japan he'd have to like go through
medical school all over again or at
least pass exams all over again in

Japanese so that was the first first thing I just stayed in Japan for a few weeks and then we moved on to Thailand and then to India and then back to Thailand and finally to Burma the second time I went to Japan um I just happened to meet this old monk he was a retired surgeon he became a monk after he retired from being a surgeon and uh he was old enough that he remembered the Japanese from the Japanese Occupation of Burma during World War II he was a kid at the time but he said that the Japanese treated him well and he learned some Japanese he's had some affinity for Japan and so he became like a a

missionary in Japan and he started a little Terra Monastery in Japan and he came back to Burma and he was just just chomping in the bit to get me to come to Japan with him because he wanted some non-asian you know American monk who was like a strictly practicing one to sort of show off to the Japanese say look look at this American Monk and I didn't want to go and I'm asking like my the Abbot of my Monastery like my main teacher you know should I go and he's saying I give you permission to go and I like I I really don't want permission I just want to know if I ought to go at all and everyone's like urging me to go to Japan and I didn't want to go to

Japan that time I just wanted to stay in Burma and do my monk thing and uh I wound up spending uh almost an entire reain retreat in Japan and the thing is it was it was really weird I went with two aam Maha
pidas who are I mean that's like one of the highest ecclesiastical titles in Burma for a month and AA Maha Panda that's about as high as it gets if you want to get higher than that then the government has to like invent a custom title for you maybe toptica D would be a higher title than aam Maha Panda but in the in the party of Burmese monks and also two nuns we went there two of them

were egam Maha pandas which is you know
the rank of General in in the the
Burmese ecclesiastical hierarchy and we
all got kicked out right before the end
of The reigns
retreat by this woman who was
essentially the the the leader of this
Buddhist group that invited us to this
Monastery you know they own the property
and everything and she just did not like
how Burmese people were flocking to the
monastery Japanese people not so much
and that she just didn't want it turning
into a Burmese Monastery just like a
Burmese Cultural Center so she was
opposed to the idea of us renewing our
our 90-day Visas so that we could finish

the Wasa there she just wanted us out

which included two egam Maha pidas which

as I say it's like one of the highest

ecclesiastical

ranks and then finally the third time I

went to Japan was just it was just a

layover for a few days just uh in

between

planes I just the most memorable thing

about that trip was uh somebody I was

staying in this room and the the

previous occupant had like this nudie

calendar up on the wall

it was very hard not to notice the nudy

calendar on the wall as a celibate and

frustrated

monk so

anyways um I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from

disin and tazin says peace be upon you

oh wow I'll start over T says peace be

upon you poasa and everyone listening I

need your advice I feel like my urge to

study and read Theology and other

important stuff is not a positive mental

state I feel like I don't have enough

time and I am nervous when I feel like

I'm not doing enough effort which is

almost always how to turn a Strife for

gnosis into a positive mental state well

that's kind of an interesting

predicament so it's like a hunger for

higher knowledge is sort of getting in

his way and uh I mean it can be like the
last major obstacle for a sincere
spiritual Seeker it's like they just
obsess on getting wiser until finally
that's like the last major obstacle that
they've got and that's the last thing
they have to let go of but um yeah I'm
not I don't know if I can fully wrap my
head around this question like I can't
like
fully I can't fully understand
it um it's like the urge to study and
read Theology and other important stuff
is somehow I mean he wants to do it
because it's positive but somehow it's
it's not being positive or not

completely

positive and uh I mean just the the

hunger to read stuff I mean I can

understand

that but uh I mean really you're going

to have to get to the point where um

just words and books aren't going to get

you there I mean the best the best

effect that words and books can have is

to just challenge your point of view

especially after you get to a certain

point you know get up to like

intermediate level then the best thing

you can read would be like Zen Coons or

something read the hean

Roku or the mumon KH or something and I

mean in a way you'll be sort of reading

and trying to sort of cure yourself of
reading at the same time um because I
mean you read you read enough and
eventually you've pretty much read
everything I mean even if you haven't
read every book there is on the subject
you've pretty much been exposed to all
the major ideas I mean that's one reason
why I'm really not interested in
watching dhama videos on YouTube um is
just I mean I've heard it all
before so um
and also I've just kind of come upon my
own understanding and I really don't
need um other people to interfere with
it other than I mean sometimes you can

think you understand something and then
you get challenged and then you then you
realize well maybe I didn't understand
it as well as I thought I
did but um yeah it's I can sympathize
with I I used to know this trumpet
player uh from uh St
Louis he was this black guy guy who
lived in Bali in
Indonesia and he was a musician a
talented musician but he said he he did
not like listening to other people's
music because he didn't want it to
contaminate his own individual
style and I can kind of relate to that
and also I've I've even had the idea
that in a way having a teacher is

cheating because you should like work it
out for yourself but I do admit that
having a teacher can be very
helpful
so you see he wants to study and read
but and I mean eventually I mean you're
going to have to get to the point where
I mean you've heard it all before or any
minor variations are not going to really
be substantial they're not really going
to be
important so you might want to just uh
kind of ration it ration your time you
know keep it down to like you know a
certain amount of time per day one or
two hours hours per day

maybe um or again read Zen Coons which
will help to uh just still the intellect
through the intellect you using the
intellect to sort of overcome the
intellect or just you know just limit
yourself to the most advanced stuff
maybe I'm not sure I'm not exactly sure
where tazin is at in his spiritual
progress or his philos opical progress
so I can't give like really specific
advice in that
regard but uh turn a Strife agnosis into
a positive mental state well in a way it
is I mean if it's it's sort of a mixed
bag you know you want you want higher
knowledge so that's good that's positive
and it I mean sometimes I mean you have

to just have to have this practically an obsession like that reminds me of this story um Paul low said this story uh years ago about how there was this young man who heard that there was like a A very wise hermit who lived in the forest and he wanted he wanted Enlightenment he wanted higher wisdom so he goes to this hermit and he says please teach me and so the hermit you know kind of looks him over and says all right come with me and he T leads him down to this stream and then he just grabs this guy and it's throws him down and just holds his head under the water and the the young guy is like struggling he's trying to get his

trying to breathe you know he's trying
to get loose he can't do it everything's
starting to go black and then finally
The Hermit just you know pulls his head
out of the water and then after the the
guy you know you know the hysteria has
kind of died down and he's breathing
relatively normally again the hermit
says to him when you want higher wisdom
as badly as you wanted to breathe just
now then you'll be ready for me to teach
you and sometimes that's what it takes
it's just like that's it's like this
Burning Desire like you have to have it
um I mean it sounds awful the way I just
explained it but I mean sometimes it's
it's just this need that you have to

have some kind of Spiritual Awakening or

spiritual progress and and sometimes

that's what it

takes but again I don't know how this is

going to help dis because I really don't

know where he's at

but uh I guess I babbled enough that

maybe I gave him some kind of food for

thought that he could uh process into a

nugget of advice or

something huh I mean I can I can

sympathize with just sort of wanting to

read and study I mean I've I've gone

through definite long phases of

that like uh when I first became a

novice the my Abbot was telling me you

know you shouldn't read so much because
I was you know as a beginner I mean
obviously you want to at least read up
on the basic suas and so forth but he
was saying you know even that is is too
much I mean you're never going to find
Enlightenment in a book unless it's some
statement that just completely
challenges your point of view and just
knocks it to the floor so that you know
it just leaves this Clarity behind but
the words themselves are not going to
get you enlightened it's just the the
words attacking other ideas that just
leave silence behind kind of a
thing so I guess I'll just move on to
the very last question and Fred asked

this question just a few hours ago just right under the wire here Fred says is an arahant the embodiment of choiceless awareness and I guess that's one way you could put it choiceless awareness if choice is is like a volitional act presumably it is then then yeah an arant would have choiceless awareness and uh I guess it's j Krishna mury that talks a lot about choiceless awareness and how that is sort of that is essentially an enlightened point of
view so yeah I mean there's lots of ways you can describe an arant and none of them will be completely valid but I guess an arant being the embodiment of

choiceless awareness is as good as any
far as I know so uh let's go with yeah
the answer to that question is
yeah and that's it so if you have any
more questions that's what I'm here for
and just leave them in the comments
below and like the video if you haven't
already and subscribe if you haven't
already and check out the URL links if
you haven't already and be
happy

hello and welcome to question and answer

number 71 I think I your host po basa

I'm pretty

sure and we have got the most questions

that has ever been asked on a Q&A it's

it's another veritable zombie apocalypse

of questions which reminds me that in a

recent

Q&A I was asked what do I do if I become

too famous

so that people are just overwhelming me

with questions and I don't remember what

my answer was or even if I answered that

question but the answer is I'm just

going to have to reduce the number of

questions that each person can ask so

now we're going down to

four four questions four shall be the

number of the

count

so um if you've got more than four

questions uh well maybe maybe if it's a

slow week but apparently my theory about

how many of my viewers are

poikilothermic or cold blooded and

become dormant or or torpid during the

cold weather apparently that theory

needs some revision because uh it's like

middle of December and we've got like 59

questions which is a lot of questions

and here I am just blathering away

instead of answering questions which

reminds me when I used to go for alms

rounds sometimes um there'd be like more
than a hundred people there could be
like 80 to 100 people in certain areas
all lined up wanting to offer food and I
just had that one bowl that that bowl
right back there up on the bookcase
there and uh I just had to reduce the
amount of food that each person could
offer it was down to at some places it
was just one spoon each so of course you
had like these wise guy little old
ladies who would bring like this big
serving spoon from from home or they'd
like be balancing a banana or something
on this little
spoon but really I just need to start

answering questions and the first
question is from SE vac and sead
Zid and seac sead zida says what is the
relationship between nagar and
postmodernism I know postmodernism has
completely different goals where it is
used to to analyze power differentials
and dismiss everything else whereas
nagara seems to be more concerned with
maybe how an enlightened being would see
the world from their eyes but I bring
this up because nagar reaches the same
conclusions and makes many of the same
arguments as them for example claiming
all knowledge is based on axiomatic
claims that are based on inference that
we can't be sure of there being no such

thing as ultimate truth reaching

conclusion

like there is no birth no death no

Liberation no Purity or impurity Etc due

to emptiness his ideas of relativism and

many other

examples maybe postmodernists are

realizing the conventional truth they've

always held can't hold up to scrutiny

causing them to short circuit and take

down everything with

them so I guess the main question here

is the very very top here what is the

relationship between nagar and

postmodernism and because this is a

nagar question it is thereby a maama

question and so I put on The majamaa Fez

sometimes I think that maybe he

asks maamaa questions just to see me

wear this bitching

Fez this is really a nice Fez I got to

admit if you if you're in the market for

a fez Fez orama is the way to

go so anyway the relationship between

nagar and postmodernism

well narina is mainly saying that um no

no positive assertion is ultimately

valid and

postmodernism kind of says that but

really that what they're trying to say

as far as I can understand postmodernism

is that truth is just a cultural

construct it's a social construct but it

seems to me that in order to make that
claim you have to assume that cultural
constructs have reality that there is
like this underlying
reality um that gives reality to
cultural constructs because if
everything is a cultural construct then
cultural construct itself would be a
cultural construct but somehow the the
idea of cultural constructs are exempt
from this relativism that postmodernism
prefers or or whatever it is that
postmodernists do about
about cultural
constructs
so yeah I mean they're sort of coming to

similar conclusions at a superficial
level but I mean the whole philosophy
underlying it is radically different I
think um nagar is just trying
to make sense of dependent Co rising and
how in even in early text the Buddha is
saying that is is one extreme isn't is
another extreme
and the Buddha follows the middle path
which is dependent core Rising which
goes in between is and
isn't so in a way it's trying to explain
emptiness whereas postmodernism um it's
my understanding it started with like
literary and art criticism that it was
just sort of like the new criticism that
that was how um postmodernism got its

foot in the door in

Academia um but then it got taken over

by politics especially like Marxist

politics um but then of course they

don't apply this relativity of Truth to

Marxism

itself so in a way postmodernism and as

in its political manifestation is truth

is arbitrary so whoever's in power gets

to decide what truth is we want to be in

power we want to decide what truth is to

further our own goals and that's very

different from what narina is

is

saying I mean mainly he's discussing

just the invalidity of assertions as a

way of just cutting through samsara

whereas postmodernism is just sort of

Lost in samsara sort of like

existentialism was lost in s like

existentialism really didn't have a way

out just it was just sort of a bleak

philosophical you know postor War I this

bleakness was was driving it it seems

like and postmodernism is somewhat

similar although it came a little

later so maybe it was the the bleakness

of of leftists when they realized that

communist countries were [__] holes you

know that communism was actually being

tried and it was

failing so yeah there are differences I

mean there's superficial resemblances

But ultimately um yeah I think deeper
down there are definitely differences
with uh the most of the profundity going
over to nagar's
side so considering that we got so many
questions I think I'll just wait into
seac and sead zina's next question which
is not a maama question so I take off
The
Fez so his next question is sometimes if
I meditate for too long for too many
days in a row for the rest of the day
after I get an extreme sense of Doom and
Gloom feeling nothing being safe or
secure and all of it eventually being
annihilated it causes me to want to stop

meditating for months and just escape to cartoons or other media so I won't have to face this horrible reality I don't know how to make this stop and have too much fear to continue on when this occurs any advice on how to prevent this from happening or having more courage if it is unavoidable well

if you were in a meditation interview with a teacher from the mahasi method a teacher from mahasi tradition teaching the mahasi method he' just say note it just like these feelings of Doom and Gloom arise note them mindfully you know you feel that nothing is safe or secure note it let it go and I mean really I mean it's like a baptism by fire to some

degree I can relate to this kind of to

some degree like being mindful of this

sort of

unhappiness

unpleasantness if you've got really good

mindfulness then you can sort of

denature it in a way you're just

completely detaching yourself from it

you're observing it as just a

phenomenon but if you're just kind of

not extremely mindful then it's just

you're seeing the the ickiness through a

magnifying glass which makes it even

more

icky so it could be something along

these lines that is causing Co actually

and SE Z not to have trouble with his
meditation um but really to make it stop
I mean that is really not the goal of
meditation especially if you're
practicing mindfulness meditation then
you just observe whatever phenoma
arise and uh note it and let it go note
it and let it go and it may be like
writing a bucking bronco sometimes may
be very unpleasant sometimes but it's
you know it's like a baptism by fire I
mean you have to go through the
fire I mean if you really are determined
you know you've got the
Adit to just push through you know you
got the the heroic mental state of just
doing whatever it

takes because that's really I mean
really in order to to make significant
progress in dhama you you've got to like
go Where Angels Fear To Tread sometimes
you know you got to just weighed into it
you just got to face the ickiest stuff
that comes
up so I mean if if you really don't have
that heroic effort then yeah you might
want to just kind of ease in you know if
you say it if you meditate for too long
for too many days in a row then just
meditate just a little bit less so that
that doesn't happen but just keep
meditating and making effort and making
gradual progress until finally either

you know you will have gradually eroded

away this stuff without having to face

it in its enormity or at least you'll be

you'll be stronger so that you'll be

able to face it

better so I'll just move on to covac and

CAD Z now next question oops and the

computer is telling me that I have to

plug in

in my

golly and I don't even have this I don't

just a

minute is that it no

Oh by

golly now if I wanted to be professional

I could just like edit this part out but

this is kind of like postmodernism in

q&as where you just include this

stuff all right the computer just sighed

this a of

relief okay now where was it oh

yeah see action CAD Z's next question is

I remember you say that mantras or

chanting probably won't get you very far

because they don't let your mind become

as subtle in

meditation still a little bit winded

from running to get the computer cord

however most Hindus solely do this kind

of meditation due to devotional

practices I remember you claim that

Hindus are usually more advanced than

Buddhists because Buddhists focus more

on bailing out immediately but how are
these Hindus become so Advanced if they
are just mostly just meditating with
mantras and
such
well some Mantra if it's a very simple
Mantra like om or Ram which is what a
lot of of Hindus do it's so simple it's
almost like an out breath like like when
I would do when I do M you know it's
just the out breath is is turned into an
m so something that simple you could
probably get about as far with it as you
can with just meditation on the
breath and also even more complicated
mantras if you've done it just every day
for hours like for years it just becomes

this automatic thing that your body is doing and then you can just detach your mind from that and just observe the processes if you are so inclined to do so um it's not this question I think it's a later question that says that Hindus only do some but that is somewhat of a misconception I guess I'll get to that when the question comes up but another thing about
Hindus is that they're some of them anyway are just very strict in their aestheticism more so than most Buddhists nowadays and by aestheticism I don't mean like self- torture stuff but I mean it's just

like if you like it avoid it that kind
of a thing just
self-denial and that can get you very
far in life that's schopenhauer talks a
lot about that in fact according to
schopenhauer that is how you get
enlightened is just denying the will
just just refusing to do what your the
will is telling you to do and Hindus are
fairly good at that if they're serious
practitioners at least some of
them
so yeah he says here I remember you
claim that Hindus are usually more
advanced than Buddhists well I
mean it depends on advance I mean it's
like they they're more on the road to to

more and more and more Purity you know
more and more and more saintliness
because again Buddhists have found that
you don't have there is no end to this
path of Purity there is no end to it you
know it doesn't you don't have this this
middle path leading straight to the
gates of nibana it doesn't work that way
you just follow the path until you don't
need to follow it anymore and then you
just bail
out and so the Hindus go farther along
this path apparently not not realizing
to the extent that Buddhists do that I
mean you can
transcend at virtually any point along

the path some people need to get farther

into the the silence and Stillness and

Clarity in order to stop being

distracted by all of this samsaric

[__] but other people that have some

good like intuitive Talent some

insight they I mean they can they can

bail out in the middle of a stormy

sea just you know sh [__] hitting the

fan they can still bail out in the

middle of

that

so how are these Hindus becoming so

Advanced if they're mostly just

meditating with mantras and such partly

it's through the self-denial partly it's

just this intense faith that just drives

them you know sort of like medieval
Catholic saints they just have this
stainless steel unquestioning faith and
devotion that would push them through
where a kind of luk warm philosophical
Detachment despite its power in certain
ways just won't get them
there so and also a lot of Hindus I mean
if you if you follow the idea of rebirth
and so on that they've just been you
know birth after birth just following
the same path and so they're getting
farther and farther with it even though
some of them may be able to go into
these profound trans States they can
just sit there without moving for a week

straight on and on still they're not
enlightened because you know they're
just following this path of greater and
greater Purity that has no
end and they don't get they don't
realize they can just bail out sideways
maybe they don't even want to bail out
sideways so
anyways I'll just move on to the next
question also from covac and sead
zida which is as
follows I noticed in the last video you
said Mia's parents didn't become
enlightened L sodas but I think all Aras
are considered enlightened not just
arant because they've seen the truth of
damama also a few weeks ago I I asked

about the dhaku or the dhama I and how

seeing that everything which arises

eventually ceases isn't what other

religious people would consider

enlightened but this phrasing has always

been interpreted as them realizing Nana

for themselves and seeing the reality of

the third Noble Truth so when Cath

Catholics use terms like beatific Vision

it seems more like this damak coup than

being an

arant as for Hari

Krishna claiming to not identify with

the body or intentions anymore ident

ident identify

view these things sound more like

characters described with stream entry
even though this might not originally
ever been described as part of the
damaku but later tradition would say
just having the experience of sensation
for the first time causes loss of
identity view based on this don't you
think it's easy for people in other
Traditions to easily think they are done
when they have just gotten to stage one
according to Buddhism I mean it seems
most common in people who dismiss the
idea of the 10 Fetters even in Buddhism
well this is kind of
a kind of a complicated and slightly
confusing question
also kind of a long question but I mean

soap it came later to mean someone who's
had at least a glimpse of nibana you
know they're they can't backslide
they're guaranteed Enlightenment within
X number of lives you know they can no
longer tell lies they can't be reborn in
the lower Realms anymore but I don't
think that was the original meaning and
furthermore the whole story of Mandi is
gandia and his wife becoming s upon us
when the Buddha dissed their beautiful
daughter it's all commentarial
literature and it could have been
composed centuries
later
um so I mean it's the whole thing about

what exactly a soda has attained is

somewhat

academic because even the the definition

of it is somewhat controversial at least

to

me so

then then the question kind of veers

into

how maybe what some religions consider

to be the highest goal is really nothing

more than becoming a

soda but I don't think so I think

originally sod was just sort of like

being born again you know it's sort of

you know Christianity early Christianity

especially talked about this a lot

um so I mean it just means that you've

entered onto the spiritual ual path you

know

seriously so let's

see when Catholics use terms like

beatific Vision it sounds more like this

Dum well it does the beatific Vision I

mean you can't even experience that

until after you've died and gone to

heaven and then the the beatific vision

is you're seeing the Throne of God with

the angels clustered around it falling

on their faces over and over again and

all

that so yeah I think that would be very

different Hari krishna's

yeah I've read some Hari Krishna

literature but I really don't think they
get it very much maybe they do just in a
very different way than I
do so let way a little bit through this
question here so maybe this is the
question this is the main question here
based on this don't you think it's easy
for people in other Traditions to easily
think they are done when they have just
gotten to stage one according to
Buddhism yeah I mean it it goes both
ways like I read a biography of oh Shri
chin no not Shri chinmoy
who's oh I can't remember his name he
was a very famous Indian
Guru mid 20th
century

Shri sh

something and uh he was claiming or at

least his biographer was claiming that

he claimed that his spiritual path

begins with nibana like he he

experienced the Buddhist Nirvana wasn't

impressed you know and then he just

moves from there I mean that's like his

foundation which strikes me as just

utter [__] whatever he attained

wasn't really Nirvana he just called it

that because he didn't have a very high

opinion of Buddhists I guess Tri arob

bindo that was his

name

so yeah I mean it happens so much that

um I've met lots of people that think

that they're Aras just because they had

some weird experience you know they had

some aha moment you know they had a

Moment of clarity in their meditation or

whatever had some kind of fireworks

going on subjectively with sitting their

Crossing with their eyes closed whatever

it was they think that they've got it

and you know they behave pretty much the

same as before except they smile more

you know they might move a little slower

you know they're more

smug so yeah it's just a it's just a

Rat's Nest

it's whatever I mean it goes all over

the all over the place but I most people

who think that they're enlightened

aren't even if they're

Buddhists I mean if you just think that

you're enlightened you're it's a pretty

good indication that you aren't because

an enlightened being isn't going to be

thinking golly I'm

enlightened so I think I'll just move on

to the next question

here and that is what is the nine 69

movement in Burma well it's it's a pro

Buddhist movement and also

um pretty much to the same degree it's

an anti-muslim movement in Burma and 969

is referring to the qualities of Buddha

dhama and S if you do the the standard

recitations like a mantra and a lot of
Burmese people do it with the rosary
that you know the Buddha has nine
qualities dhama has six qualities sa has
nine qualities so 969 is just referring
to budhha dama
sa and uh yeah I mean they want Burma to
remain a Buddhist country and they don't
want Muslim immigrants or they want few
Muslim immigrants they don't want mass
migrations of Muslim IM
immigrants and certain large groups of
Muslims like the ringas they would
prefer to just go away they're not
really advocating genocide or terrorism
somewh much like uh some people would
would say but uh I mean it does happen

to some degree there is violence going
both ways like in Burma I'm just
continually hearing about you know some
Muslim Village or Muslim neighborhood
gets burned down because Muslims gang
raped a good Buddhist Burmese girl but
whether they really did that or not I
mean you know that's that's the excuse
they give you know that's the reason
that they State and it may be true but
of course I wasn't there there and I
really don't know and I know how rumors
and so forth spread like wildfire in
Burma and a great many of them are not
based on empirical
reality but I think the Burmese have the

right to prefer that Islam not mess up

their

country you know I mean Muslim countries

have the right to decide they don't want

Buddhism coming in like like in Malaysia

I mean you you can't it's against the

law to teach any religion other than

Islam to a Malaysian like an ethnic

Malaysian citizen that you can go to

jail for teaching Buddhism in Malaysia

so it goes both

ways so I'll just move on to CAC and CAD

Z's next and last

question I read There were different

meditation techniques for people with

different Tendencies such as meta for

angry people or 32 to body part

meditation for sensual people what kind
of meditation techniques are recommended
for someone with a depressive Tendencies
cowardly Tendencies or a lazy tendency
well this mainly comes from the wisi MAA
where they divide they divide uh people
into six categories six temperaments
which is Loba DOA mooha and like the
opposite of looba DOA and
mooha and so
I assume that cowardliness would be a
kind of fear which in a way is a kind of
delsa so maybe meta meditation would
work for for cowardly people I've I've
uh heard recently and I've heard you
know longer ago the theory that fear is

the opposite of Love which I don't

really buy but again that would be that

would sort of make um meta meditation

good for cowardly people

uh depressive Tendencies

um maybe that would be the moha

temperament and I haven't read the Wii

MAA recently enough to remember what

what kind of meditation would be

prescribed for that but you can find it

in the wisi manga and the lazy tendency

gosh maybe walking

meditation yeah but I mean it doesn't

really mention lazy tendency in the Wii

Maga or in like um maybe somewhere in

terraa Buddhist tradition there's like

you know a special certain kind of

meditation prescribed for lazy people or
people that are just gloomy and morose
and
depressed but I don't recall what that
would be so I'm just going to move on
the next question here this is from the
ARA sasi project and this is another
kind of complicated confusing question
that I do not completely understand
here let's consider that on one hand we
have a hyper racist fanatical ingroup
preference tribe of people and on the
other hand we have an egalitarian
fanatical integration by force or
whatever means never mind who is behind
it all if we take the first amendments

protection of freedom of Association

would you say that race

realism uh which is the fact of the

matter that there are and always have

been racial differences is the middle

path and finally noting these

differences not imposing personal

preferences upon others is in line with

Buddhist

principles um well there's lots of

different middle paths I mean like in

the in the first sermon or the the Daka

patan which is considered to be the

Buddhist first sermon according to

tradition he is saying that you know the

middle path is between self-indulgence

and self- torture but then there's lots

of other middle paths like you know the
middle path between is and isn't which
is dependent core Rising for
example um just running away from
problems or seeking out problems you
know the middle path would go in between
those um so just acknowledging empirical
evidence you know just being objective
in a way it's kind of a middle path
between biased one way or biased the
other way although you're still going to
be biased in favor of empirical
evidence so I mean it's you could you
could call it a middle path you know
there's lots of different middle paths
out there so long as it's a a path

between two extremes you can call it a middle path a middle path not the middle path

so see here and finally noticing these differences not imposing personal preferences upon others is in line with Buddhist principles well yeah you don't want to impose your beliefs on other people just forcing other people to at least pretend to believe what you believe that's in a way that's tyrannical

so uh yeah I I hope I answered that question we've got so many questions here we've already been going at it for half an hour so I'm just gonna I'm just gonna move on I think maybe I answered

that question

maybe so I'll just move on the next one

this is from Indiana

dama and uh I'm not sure if there's even

a question mark in this oh yeah yeah

there's a question

mark okay so Indiana dama says my mother

had an outof body experience in the

early 1980s her father had died several

months before she had this experience

she was pregnant with my older brother

at the time and was napping on her couch

when she experienced as she puts it a

feeling of rising up out of her body and

then floating high up above the clouds

she stopped floating in some kind kind

of celestial Heavenly realm her father was there along with a being whose face was obscured by a cloud or Mist her father spoke to her hugged her told her some personal stuff and then told her that he had hidden $100 in his Bible she then returned to her body she called her mother the Widow of my grandfather and told her the story my grandmother opened up Grandpa's Bible and there were two $50 bills tucked in between the pages mother did not have a good relationship with her father and they lived in different states the last few years of his life and here's the question part is there a Terrain way of understanding this kind of

experience and then he continues with it
does not appear to be purely
psychological in nature and I have heard
of other outof body experiences and
near-death experiences that where some
kind of corroborating evidence like the
money in the Bible was found yeah I've
read about like near-death experiences
and outof body experiences where there
was
corroborating evidence like there was
one case of a woman who was had a
near-death experience on a hospital
table while she was undergoing surgery
like she just was clinically dead for a
few minutes and her body like lifted up

you know she can see the dust on the the top side of the fluorescent lights over the over the operating table and then she kind of drifts out this window and she sees a shoe on a Ledge outside the window that you couldn't see from down below you'd have to like open this window and the window was like permanently closed too and she could see this shoe there and then finally you know the she has more of those stereotypical experiences of going into the heaven realm and you going through the bright light and seeing the spirit guide in heaven and so forth but after she returned to her body and you know she was awake and able

to speak she asked somebody if they

could check to see if there really was

that shoe there and it it really was

there

so this kind of stuff does

happen

but I

think something like Mary Baker Eddie's

explanation of like interaction with

Spirits is actually a good it's a good

explanation and Mary Baker Eddie the the

founder of Christian Science said that

there are spirits in this universe but

as a general rule They Don't Care About

Us you know they got their own lives to

live you know sort of like we don't care

about what ants are doing in some vacant
lot down the street you know it's just
we got our own lives to live but
everybody has a certain amount of latent
psychic ability because really we're all
kind of connected with this whole Cosmic
scheme of
things we're just connected with reality
I mean we are part of reality reality
just pervades
us so we've got psychic abilities but
for the most part we are conditioned not
to believe that we have psychic
abilities and so what happens in these
dream states or youve got this housewife
who starts channeling some other being
which is really I mean according to Mary

Baker edti this being that she's channeling is just conjured up by her own subconscious imagination as a kind of gimmick or crutch to get the psychic knowledge out you know she can't believe that she's doing it herself she's too humble for that or too materialistic but she can believe that some other being is and she's just serving as a mouthpiece for this this other being and I think that some of these kind of psychic events like in the near-death experiences it could be it could be similar to that where um you're having a psychic experience you know you're attaining knowledge through extra

sensory perception so to speak but I mean you need some kind of gimmick to make make it to make it uh believable to yourself you know you have to have some kind of narrative that makes enough sense to you that you can accept it you know that you won't just block it out and so rather than just have the the psychic vision of the $100 in the Bible it just happened to her spontaneously you know it it comes in a convoluted form through this interaction with her deceased father or it may be that she really did communicate with her deceased father who you know he still sticking around because he thought the $100 in the Bible was important or just

reconciling with his daughter to some degree was important so that you know it kept him attached so that he wasn't able to move on until he got this off his chest I mean that's possible too I think both of those would be uh acceptable in in terada

Buddhism although seeing everything in Christian imagery for example um you know that would be your own projection onto a deeper experience in order to make it believable or or whatever to yourself

so I think uh I think I answered that one so I'm just going to move on to the next one and this is from Indian guy an

Indian guy says I just took my triple
Gem and five precepts at a Mahayana
Monastery that is descended from TI not
Han and it's amazing I really wanted to
go the to the I really wanted to go the
Terra Vaden route but the Thai temple we
have here is pretty much conservative
and only does the service in Thai so I
had to go somewhere that made it more
accessible to the Western Buddhist I
don't think it really matters which word
or what type of Buddhism I practice do
you think that choosing a Mahayana
Monastery to learn from is wrong View
well I think choosing just about anybody
or anything to learn from any tradition
is going to have some wrong View and

even terab Buddhism has got some wrong

view in

it I mean you get to the get down to

just the fundamental level all view is

wrong view which is just why it's called

DT just view you should avoid

view but Mahayana is in all likelihood

is going to have more than

terraa at least from an orthodox

Buddhist point of

view especially an orthodox terraa

Buddhist point of view so let's see

here I don't think it really matters

which word or what type of Buddhism I

practice he says well I mean if you're a

beginner um you haven't made it very far

or or you're Advanced enough that you

can just dismiss whatever isn't relevant

and just do the practice I in either one

of those cases you may be

correct um I would avoid taking any buy

of vows

though so I guess I guess I answer that

question I mean taking eight taking five

precepts and and three refuges at a

Mahayana Buddhist place is better than

not taking them at all

certainly and uh I mean if if they're

telling you stuff that just intuitively

just feels right to you then you're not

not entirely wrong I

suppose I mean I was interested in Zen

at first Tian definitely has some weird

views weird understandings he just
dismisses or rejects some fundamental
teachings of Buddhism like I remember
reading once he's like how can you
believe that that everything is
suffering when you look into The Shining
eyes of a child this kind of stuff and
that's yeah that's that's
heresy but if you get more benefit than
harm from it then you're not doing
anything particularly bad so I'll just
move on to Indian guys next
question do you think it matters that I
don't want to believe everything in a
book or system no that's good if you
don't want to believe everything in a

book or system I don't believe
everything in a book or system either um
if it takes like a medieval mentality
really to believe everything in a book
or a system there are a lot of people a
lot of normies you know they'll just
believe whatever the Baptist Church
teaches them or they'll believe anything
the Democratic party teaches them or the
Communist party or whatever it
is they'll just believe that and in a
way they're enslaved to their beliefs in
a way they're just sheep being led by
other people's beliefs or it's not even
necessarily other people's beliefs it's
just beliefs that other people are
imposing on them to make them more you

know more manageable make them vote the
way they want them to or behave the way
they want them to or whatever
whatever but uh in the
west it's just the way we are that we're
not just going to swallow Hook Line and
Sinker you know whatever some tradition
teaches us even if it's our own chosen
tradition in many
cases like for me like Abid dama it just
never resonated with me it was just a it
was just a thud from the beginning just
a clunk you know it didn't there was no
intuitive yes I acknowled this is this
feels right none of that and then the
more I studied it the more I realized

that most Scholars agree and that's in a
way that's good it's like some of the
stuff that I like the most in Buddhism I
found out later that that's considered
to be some of the most ancient earliest
teachings you know like the ATA waga and
other stuff like abama that I never had
any interest in never really trusted
then I read later that the scholars are
saying yes that came you know that was
invented 100 years later or hundreds of
years
later so no I think that it does matter
that you don't want to believe
everything in a book or a system but
it's actually good for you especially if
you have enough

sense to choose more wisely than some tradition for most people I think just conforming I mean if you're below average in intelligence or wisdom or whatever conforming to some established system probably is going to be to your benefit if the system is wiser than you are but once you get to a level where you're able to discern for yourself what works for you and doesn't work for you and what's likely to be right and what's likely to be [__] then you're doing well to deviate from you know the the mass of view which may get you into trouble but uh at least nowadays it's less likely to get you burned at the

stake so I'll just move on to the next

question also from Indian

guy and he

says I believe in the Buddhist Supreme

Enlightenment in that this is not

reality this is not reality seems that

Mahayana and Terra vadens disregard each

other is getting everyone divided and

confused okay this is not not even a

question but yeah I

mean disregarding each

other I don't know I mean that could go

either way it depends on the motive

behind it I mean that's one of the main

themes of these q&as it's not the

outward action that really has ethical

value it's your own will that's

motivating that action that has ethical value so I'll just that wasn't a question anyway so I'm just moving on to the next one which is from Mambo and Mambo says hello poo my first question is about monastic life and the Buddha if sidart sidart DOA enjoyed all the pleasures of samsara like marriage sex and becoming a father prior to becoming the Buddha then how did he get Enlightenment hasn't he already gained Karma by engaging in sexual activities in that life he did things which are antim monastic although he did become a monk in the later half of his life in in the latter half of his life

but Karm the karma he generated remains

after Nirvana there's no coming back so

what happened to the karmas Buddha

generated in this life okay there's

that's two questions isn't it okay so

the first question

is like how did the Buddha become

enlightened by after he got all this

karma from living a lay life and you do

not when you become Enlighten you do not

exhaust your karma in a way you just

sort of invalidate it you you neutralize

it you know it doesn't have power

anymore really over over your mind

really

but I mean it's still there like the

story I've told many times mahamana who

was one of the the Buddhist Two Chief disciples um he was murdered he was literally beaten to a pulp by Angry non-Buddhists um because of his past Karma he wasn't making any a new Karma because he was enlightened but still you got this past karma that's going to continue having effects until you finally die and pass into Parana and are no longer reborn into some

sorrow so in addition to I mean the karma he created the beginning of this life I mean he had Karma going back you know in countless lifetimes you know assuming that there is rebirth so the point is that when you become

enlightened you are not exhausting your
karma you're not making any new Karma
but the past Karma still has its effects
at least superficially you know it's
apparent to other people anyway that
these things are happening it's hard to
say exactly what the subjective
experience of the Buddha would
be so yeah he gained Karma by engaging
in sexual activities and all sorts of
sensual indulgences and so forth he did
things that were antim monastic but in a
way he had to go through that and I mean
sometimes the best monks are the ones
who live a worldly life before they are
ordained it's
like

um it's like some of the best monks that
that are Western monks I mean they
they've done it all they've had it all
and they still weren't satisfied and so
they knew you know there's there's
something better than this whereas some
monks like Asian monks that were
ordained as not noices as children that
have just lived in a monastery their
whole life on the one hand you can't
miss what you never experienced so in a
way they've got that in their favor you
know they they had less rascality when
they were young so I mean that's kind of
in their favor they didn't make it lots
of new Bad Karma but still I mean

they're kind of Clueless and they have
less resistance to
Temptation so I guess the main answer to
this question is that when you become
enlightened you your karma just doesn't
come to an end you don't exhaust it it's
not like the Janes The Janes believed
you have to exhaust your karma in order
to go up into heaven and immortality and
all that Buddhists don't teach
that so I think I answered that I'll
just move on to Mambo's next question
which was actually the second part of
his first question after Nirvana there's
no coming back so what happened to the
karmas Buddha generated in his life
that's a good question first of all it

was

neutralized so like I said it's like the karma was still there but it didn't have any power anymore it just just sort of like this like a phantom show and I guess once it's neutralized I mean once it's deprived of any power then it just collapses after the after the body is gone but I've never I don't recall ever coming upon any like Abid dama scholar or any Buddhist text explaining what happens to the residual Karma of an enlightened being after he dies because you don't exhaust all of it but I assume it's because an

Arun neutralizes his karma that it

doesn't have the same effect on him that it has on on normies on pugena so that it's in a way it's just has like this zero value and it's you know it's just sort of a show like a a virtual virtual entity or something that just collapses because there's nothing really supporting it anymore you know anything that exists has to have these conditioning factors keeping it in existence and so when the Buddha's personality and body die then the supporting factors for his karma collapse and so the karma the residual Karma collapses I assume that would be the correct answer from an orthodox position so I'll just move on to Mambo's

next

question which is about the age limit of

joining a Buddhist

sa do you think a kid is capable of

making his own decision to join a

Buddhist Monastery let's say for example

in ladak he has no will he is just

forced into that life by the Elders of

his family shouldn't a Seeker first

experience at least some realities and

hardships of samsara before willingly

joining any monastic order since Buddha

also experienced Sam SAR before becoming

a monk what's your opinion on the

practice of recruiting young kids into a

monastic life is it a good thing or a

bad thing according to you well it can
go both ways like I was already
suggesting um just a minute or two ago
that like the founder of the tradition
in which I was I was ordained venerable
Tom P Luci was ordained as a child
novice when he was like 9 years old my
teacher in Burma my main teacher V pooku
seato or Tulu chind doya seato also was
ordained as a novice when he was about 9
years old and so I mean they were
virgins they'd never gotten drunk they
probably never danced you know there's
all these things they'd never done but
it was like dhama was all they knew and
they were good at it and it's probably
to some degree their

karma I mean this question disregards

Karma

and I mean you can use karma for victim

blaming but you can also use it for you

know the opposite of victim blaming

which would be what successful person

praising or something where I mean this

their karma to get sent to a monastery

as a

child so I mean NE coroli Baba whose

picture is up there on the altar

according to Legend he just ran away

from home when he was a little kid and

just became a forest dwelling sadu when

he was a child so that in that case that

was his wise decision but he was still

just a little kid when he made the
decision and in that case a kid is
capable of making his own decisions um
to renounce the
world um it's becoming somewhat less
common in Burma nowadays because Burma
is
modernizing but uh still lots of kids
just get sent to a monastery when
they're little kids some of them just
have a vocation they want to go but and
then that would be sort of like parame
me you know it's like their karma is
just sort of impelling them in that
direction but a lot of kids they just
wind up they don't have a spiritual
vacation at all and they're just stay at

a monastery for their entire life just

because they don't know anything else

they don't know how to make a living or

whatever so it can go either

way so I

mean it's good to have a

variety I guess diversity is our

strength let's see here did I fully

answer that question

though uh shouldn't a Seeker first

experience at least some realities in

hardships

realities of some Sor before willingly

joining any monastic order yeah I mean

it works both ways it it can work both

ways and it can just be a fiasco both

ways like some people that um they're do

twet in

Burmese there's what P I think it's

called and doet Shimp Pew and and doet

shim Pew means you're ordained as a

child that means you're just innocent

you're just an innocent person you know

you haven't haven't had much chance to

just really you know be a rascal and

then there's do twet which means someone

who goes out into the forest you know

like the Buddha did that after you've

already lived a worldly life maybe

gotten married maybe had a family you

know you had a job you you've had sex

you know maybe you've gotten drunk and

then you become a monk um there is a

saying in in Burma

do a which means someone who is ordained

later in life is hard to admonish that

you're just they're just hard to guide

because they're already setting their

ways you know you know they they've got

maybe even like a hardened cynicism or

skepticism or lukewarmness about them

that they cultivated as a lay person so

really it can go both

ways and so considering the huge

merciless onslaught of questions in this

video I'm just going to move on to the

next question here this is from Libra

lamb and Libra lamb is notorious for

asking

very cerebral kind of

questions which sometimes I don't

understand very well so his first

question is do you believe that phenomen

techology is relevant to science such

that the next Paradigm Shift

breakthrough will come through

parapsychology and the mystical as

opposed to particle physics discovering

a new particle or something and I was

going to look up phenomenology in the

dictionary I'm going to do it right now

I've got a dictionary here on

this

computer

phenomenology the science of phenomena

is distinct from that of the nature of

of being or an approach that

concentrates on the study of

Consciousness and the objects of direct

experience so I guess that's what it

would

mean and I was thinking maybe like

heelan dialectic is also kind of a

phenomenology

but I guess that would con concentrate

on the human consciousness too because

he was an idealist didn't even believe

in physical

man so I'll ask this question again or

just read it

do you believe that

phenomenology is relevant to science

such that the next Paradigm Shift
breakthrough will come through
parapsychology and the mystical as
opposed to particle physics discovering
a new particle or something I'm not sure
how much mysticism is going to influence
science because they're almost opposites
uh possibly parasitology but like
quantum physics is becoming more and
more paranormal just just stuff that
they've already discovered like you know
the Observer is is
determining you know it's it's like
you've got everything in this state of
uncertainty until You' got a perceiving
mind that perceives it and collapses the
state Vector so to speak you know and

then then you see just this one discret
thing but if a different person had
observed it first it might have turned
out differently that that's already
getting into the point of you know mind
has this profound effect on the
phenomena that we
observe and I do think that the next
cernac revolution in science will be the
realization that energy and
Consciousness are the same so the entire
universe is conscious in a in in
effect that what a physicist calls
energy is just a very
Elemental like a spark of Consciousness
it can't think or anything like that you

know like

uh a hydrogen atom or or an electron

cannot think it doesn't have perceptions

but it is like this tiny Elemental spark

of what mind is made of and I think most

scientists would have to agree with that

because you know everything is

ultimately a manifestation of energy

nowadays ever since relativity came

along

so and then and then it would be the

other way too like what a psychologist

calls mind or Consciousness would be a

very complicated elaborate form of what

a physicist would call energy and I

think yeah I think that's what the

physicist would already have to agree on

so then it have to come back the other
way and then once you can get it
established in science that really we
are living in a kind of virtual reality
you know that we are creating our own
reality then uh yeah that would
definitely be a cernic revolution but
how it will come about whether it'll be
Quantum you know like theoretical
physicists who come up with it maybe
theoretical physicists who have an
interest in eastern philosophy and
meditate that's
possible I mean it would have to be some
kind of scientist I don't think the next
kernic revolution in science is going to

happen due to discoveries of someone who
isn't a scientist or at least it's going
to have to get incorporated into science
through
scientists and so
um maybe parapsychology but I think it
it would have to be just under just
considering human nature it would have
to be some high-profile real really like
uh based in in Normy mainstream
science who just comes up with this and
then of course it's going to be debated
and reviled and and rebuked and
criticized and and made fun of until
finally people settle down and say yeah
okay sort of like like Darwin and his uh
theories of evolution you know it wasn't

just accepted all at once even Einstein
didn't get the Nobel Prize for um his
like
relativity you know like his theories of
Relativity he didn't get the Nobel Prize
for that he he got it later um for like
the photo El electric effect he
discovered the photo El electric effect
he got the Nobel Prize for that just
because the relativity thing it was so
controver ially just turned everything
upside down and caused such a [__] storm
especially with conservative scientists
just just hating it and just arguing
against it because they didn't want to
change what they'd been believing for

decades that uh it took a while for it
to to get accepted and it probably have
to be something like that just a really
solid high-profile scientist maybe one
who's already won the Nobel Prize to
come up with a really elegant Theory to
explain how the universe is a manifest
station of mind in a way that makes
predictions and can be
verified and whether that's even
possible or not I don't know how can you
prove that matter does or does not
exist so I guess I spent enough time on
that question I'll just move on to Libra
Lamb's next cerebral question here do
you think it would be better for
Humanity if we did away with

intellectual property um no I don't
think it would be better like for
example somebody invents something
um and they really don't have the
capital to just start up a factory and
start producing this new invention they
want to sell their invention to somebody
who does have the ability to mass
produce it and then if you don't have
intellectual property you'll say here's
my idea and they'll say great we'll just
not going to pay you anything we'll just
take that idea I mean if there's no
intellectual property then people could
just do that and it would very much
reduce the incentive or the motivation

for inventors to innovate to come up

with new stuff if I mean if you're not

going to get credit for it you're not

gonna get you know you're not going to

get paid for

it I mean sometimes they will you know

they work for the company and the

company gives them this big bonus for

you know making so much extra money for

the company because they invented this

new thing that really is popular

whatever but you got some guy who

invents something in his garage he's

just

screwed or

you know it's like a writer how is he

going to make money by publishing books

unless he just self-publishes otherwise
people can just rip it off they can just
pirate it you know he's he's
self-publishing and then like random
house just likes that book and they just
take it and start publishing it and
don't pay him any royalties because
intellectual property doesn't
exist so yeah I think it is good to have
intellectual
property and then have the the copyright
just last I don't know it's like what is
it 80 years 85 years or something before
something go becomes public domain like
a novel or something you know that's
reasonable to me so I'll just go on to

Libra Lam's next question here do you
believe that enlightened beings could
inform our civilization to operate in a
way which nurtures Dharma better than an
ordinary person could by virtue of
insight into higher spiritual life well
I mean that's been going on
for Millennia I mean you do have
enlightened beings who are influencing
World culture or you got at least wise
beings you got the Buddha started
Buddhism you know I mean that has had
profound effects throughout the world
you know Jesus of Nazareth regardless of
whether he was an arant or not obviously
he has just had this profound effect on
civilization but what happens is even if

you got enlightened being who says it's
good to have civilization be this way
and not that way and even if you got
people following that advice or doing
their best to follow it the people that
are following that advice like the
politicians they're normies and so you
take this enlightened idea and put it
into the mind of a normie it's like
taking crystal clear water and pouring
it into like a mud cak cup of and it
just turns into muddy water
immediately so people are just going to
mess it up like they messed up
Christianity people have messed up
Buddhism I mean any kind of enlightened

idea that comes from an enlightened
being even that even if people accept
that and want to live in accordance with
that it's just going to get messed up
because people are messed up people are
foolish and you take wisdom and you put
it into a foolish mind and I mean that's
it it just turns into
foolishness so
do you believe that enlightened beings
could inform our civilization to open in
a way which nurtures Dharma better than
an ordinary person could by virtue yeah
I assume so and there's a famous Rush
song about that too was it closer to the
heart I think
so so I think I'll just move on to the

next question by Libra Lam here and
remember it's it's four questions is the
limit from now on at least until further
notice his next question is do you
imagine there is a connection between
ancient vdic astrology and
psychics and the idea of factors of
self-existence preceding birth and
continuing after death I don't know what
kind of connection it would
be the idea of f well the thing is
ancient vdic astrology was very crude I
don't think that astrology as we know it
even made it to India except through
trade routes through like Mesopotamia IA
that the ancient I mean I've looked into

ancient Indian astrology as it existed
in the Buddhist time or rather astronomy
and it was very crude I mean mainly what
the vidic priests were interested in
was man dog is making weird noises it
really distracts
me what the the Vic priests were really
interested it was just knowing when the
full moon was going to appear in a
certain const a because that would be
the time of doing this elaborate fire
sacrifice so they would have to use the
night sky as a calendar to plan their
rituals and that was the main purpose of
astrology in Northern India until well
after the Buddhist
time regard to the psychics it's hard to

say but the idea of factors of

self-existence preceding birth and

continuing after death that I'm pretty

sure was derived not So Much from the

vad tradition as from the indis valley

civilization that had uh definitely a

kind of belief in karma and just rebirth

it seems to

me

so yeah I guess I answered that question

if there is a connection between ancient

vadic astrology and psychics on the one

hand and the belief in like rebirth and

and afterlife and so forth on the other

it would be a sort of a very indirect

not a very strong

connection because I don't think that
one is derived from the other so we'll
just move on to Libra Lamb's next and
last question if you were a young
Buddhist aspirant again knowing how
different monastic communities operate
which would you choose and I think I'm
I'm happy to say that I probably choose
exactly what I wound up with although I
might start with a different Monastery
but the burmes for Forest tradition like
the Tom Pulu tradition um that was just
like my karma just set me up in the
right place at the right time I mean
maybe you know there is like a reform
movement of very strict Buddhists in Sri
Lanka maybe that would have worked too I

really am not drawn to tie

Buddhism

um so yeah I think probably burmes

terraa would still be U my first choice

and maybe like like that reform terra

terra voden Reform movement in Sri Lanka

might be my second choice and then third

choice may be some really strict good

Zen

Monastery so yeah I guess I answered

that one so I'll just move on to the

next question this is from

Arin and Arin says how would the Buddha

view fundamentalist Christian Traditions

like working themselves into a frenzy

while being possessed and compelled by

the Holy Spirit while Rising on the

floor or speaking in

tongues

well uh like flagellation like that

medieval you know there were Medieval

sects that would just literally whip

themselves until the blood was flowing

down their back that would definitely be

um yeah self- torture that would be

frowned upon by Orthodox Buddhism also

people being possessed by the Holy

Spirit would be frowned upon because

Spirit possess is frowned upon in

Buddhist tradition I mean they're not

going to acknowledge the Holy Spirit as

God a manifestation of God

almighty um so I mean possession by a

spirit which is what this possession
about the Holy Spirit presumably is
while they really are just babbling
speaking in tongues or foaming at the
mouth and and so forth um yeah that in
and of itself would not be considered uh
particularly wholesome even event
although it can be that some of these
people are undergoing this deep
transformation um I've talked about this
before like how methodism began where
John Wesley would give these um give
these sermons and the first half is just
pointing out something that Christians
in the 1700s couldn't really deny and
that is if you don't repent you're going

to burn in hell if you don't
mend your ways and live a good Christian
Life you're going to burn in hell in the
second half of his discourse or his
sermon would be just going into Grizzly
detail over the tortures of hell until
people who could not deny this you know
just because of their cultural their
cultural conditioning would start
freaking out and theyd just like
collapse and and just go into this
frenzy and foaming at the mouth and like
barking like dogs and finally they would
just faint and become unconscious and
and then when they would wake up they'd
be born again it would be a
transformative experience just through

the the sheer

crisis of of what they went through it

would cause their old habits to break

down and then they'd be open to a new

way of looking at things and something

like that even though it may have a lot

of unh wholesome stuff or negative stuff

in it if it produces more positive than

negative in the long run still it would

be acceptable I

think but just in and of itself being

possessed and ring on the floor and

speaking in tongues maybe after dancing

around with rattlesnakes or drinking

cyanide or whatever or is it strick nine

then yeah that in it in and of itself

unless it produces a greater good that outweighs the bad then yeah that would not be um endorsed in Buddhism so we'll just move on on to arin's next question here what would the Buddha teach in regards to the Jews and Muslims still trying to genocide each other today after thousands of years of their ongoing religious battles well I'm not entirely convinced that the Jews want to genocide Muslims although it's pretty clear that Muslims a lot of Muslims would be totally fine with genociding Jews especially the ones in Israel um yeah the Jews are I mean they're they're killing lots of Muslims lately

but it's mainly their their main mission
is just to completely annihilate
Hamas and you you got to break a few
eggs to make the the anti Hamas omelet
apparently also they they've learned and
I think this is probably a good call on
their part that if if like some organiz
some Muslim organization hits them
they're going to hit back you know at
least five times as
hard and yeah that makes sense I can I
can accept that much um what would the
Buddha teach in regards to you know Jews
and Muslims trying to genocide each
other after thousands of years of their
ongoing well I mean it just points out I

mean like there's one of the early
verses of the uh of the dapas to the
extent that you know hate does not end
hate you know it's only non-hate ends
hate so I mean obviously Buddhism takes
a dim view of genocide in general
genocide is not good if you if you only
learn one thing from this Q&A that would
be it don't do
genocide so yeah I mean there's all
sorts of things the Buddha could say
with regard to you know one group and
another group just being at war in this
Blood Vendetta back and forth for you
know countless Generations even you know
it's just pointing out that blood
vendettas don't work in the long run I

mean kind of they can keep an

uneasy sort of like a quasi stability

going like um Arabia in before Islam

took over you know that was pretty much

the only thing keeping people from just

like completely attacking each other was

the knowledge that if you attack this

person who belongs to tribe a tribe A is

going to wipe out one of your people in

retaliation but it's not dharmic and

just hate leads to more hate killing

leads to more killing and maybe the

Buddha would hold this up as a kind of

golden

example but um let's see did I answer

the question that is my question did I

answer that question just now

um yeah I mean he wouldn't really make

it a matter of religious beliefs or

religious War it would just be over

ideologies or just beliefs in general

you cling to a view it's going to make

you more likely to have a hostile view

to people who do not hold your view and

then of course they're going to have a

dim view of you for not holding theirs

and that's going to increase the

likelihood of conflict and violence and

in extreme cases

genocide so we'll just move on to irin's

next question how should we conduct

ourselves as Buddhists when the

corporate media and the current potted

plant that we have in office are
constantly attempting to brainwash the
populace into choosing sides in their
Wars well from a Buddhist point of view
you just do not choose sides in a war if
at all possible because you do not
choose War I mean war is again it's just
murder from from a Buddhist point of
view it's just like government sponsored
Mass
slayings
plus lots of stealing and so forth
because you're taking their property
after you kill them or even before you
kill them I guess after you kill them it
wouldn't be stealing because the

property would no longer have an
owner so let's see here how should we
conduct ourselves as
Buddhists uh when the corporate media
and the current potted plant that we
have in office are constantly attempting
to brainwash the population choosing
sides in their War well that's been
going on since there have been
governments you know ever since the very
beginning you know you read ancient
history and of course the government is
going to be justifying their War getting
people to believe that this is a
righteous war against forces of evil and
so forth and we are the light of
civilization and this these dark hordes

are trying to destroy us kind of stuff I
mean that goes back thousands of years
I'm
sure so it's not just corporate media
and the current potted plant it's I mean
it's just been that's been the case so
long as I mean since there's been
civilization and the thing you do is you
have to just wisely make your own
choices and realize that I mean you just
see what they're doing you know I mean a
wise person is going to be much less of
much less
susceptible of of propaganda than just
the Normie who just believes what he's
told I mean a certain amount of

skepticism is good I mean if the

intellect has a main purpose aside from

just helping you to navigate samsara and

you know pay your taxes and so forth

it's it's as a [__] detector and it

seems like most of what the government

tells people is [__] you know it's

it's

obviously designed to further the goals

of the

government like we have to sponsor a war

in such and such country you know it's

the we're sponsoring Freedom Fighters or

whatever you know it's we're trying to

support democracy there

but as often as not that is nowhere near

to being the

truth so how do we conduct ourselves as

Buddhists well you just don't condone

War to begin with and uh don't just

believe everything you're

told I mean if if you're a normi

Buddhist then you believe what Buddhism

tells you you know you read the suas and

believe that but yeah you still don't

believe what the government tells you

unless you got some good reason to

believe what the government tells you

which I assume occasionally you know

occasionally the government does tell

the

truth so I think I'll just move on the

next question here and this is from

pranav and pranav says how do the brahmas above the second Janna survive the end of the universe if their lifespan is more than the universe well I've I've discussed this uh a number of times even with regard to um people and even animals on this planet when you know the material universe is destroyed usually by fire then all the beings in this Cosmos have to go to this very Advanced Heaven realm that is above this material universe and they got to stay there until the next material Universe re- evolves and then they come back down again and as a general rule I've read they eager they are just desperately eager to come back down again because

it's just boring as hell up in this
immaterial Heaven realm where nothing
happens they're just not ready for it
yet and so all the beings that um would
be in a material Universe would have to
go up into this immaterial Heaven realm
that is above the level of this Cosmos
and just wait there until the next
Cosmos revolves they can come down
into so that applies to uh all beings
um you know all all beings that live in
a material Universe not just uh these
these brahmas so the next question is
from V China is coming [__]
cute and Vina is he asks is there any
risk a ghost might come on me while I

meditate

and I've actually been asked this before

I mean there's there are people that are

afraid to meditate because they think

that they'll be vulnerable to not just

ghosts but they think they'll go into a

trance and some burglar will break in

and do nasty horrible things to them and

they'll just be like completely in a

trance and won't won't be able to defend

themselves or something but uh I mean if

a ghost might come on someone when they

meditate it's generally the kind of

person a ghost might come on whether

they're meditating or

not and I mean if you've got a strong

mind then like if you're doing

mindfulness meditation then if if
there's like some sort of you know
external entity that's trying to mess
with you you just note it and let it go
note it and let it go and it it just I
mean it's like the best defense that
you've got because you're not
identifying with it you're I mean it's
it's like you're just de constructing it
you're depriving it of it of its
power in a sense and the more you
meditate the stronger your mind is going
to be which is going to defend you
against malevolent influences not just
ghosts but also like you know Witchcraft
and that sort of thing because you're

going to have a more grounded balance
centered kind of a mind that doesn't
have as many weak points that that can
be used for infiltration so to speak
like like possession and so
forth cu the people that that get
possessed or you know have these kind of
problems generally have weak spots in
their mind where you know it's just like
this like a window that can be used to
enter and if you meditate and observe
your mind carefully and it's it makes
your mind stronger and less likely to
have these weak these weak points that
can be used for infiltration by any kind
of malevolent forces including
propaganda for that

matter so I think I answered that

question um so long as I mean so long as

your meditation isn't just going into

like a

trance you know it's not you're not just

going into some kind of subliminal state

or um what's the word I'm trying to

think of like a surreal kind of a state

I mean you want to avoid that you just

want to stay objective and alert alert

Wide Awake note whatever happens you'll

be

fine so the next question is from

Bon and Bon says if one was to live an

alternative Buddhist monastic life in

the west separate from any established

order wandering alone what if any sutas
would you recommend carrying on the
journey or studying diligently before
one was to leave I know this is
subjective to what the individual needs
but I would like your recommendation of
what you think you would have needed or
for someone of your temperament thank
you very much well the suata is really
um that was like my Bible with regard to
an introduction to early Buddhist
wandering and and aestheticism like uh
there's one Su I was going to look it up
and I forgot is the the Su on proper
wandering which would be a good one
that's it's in the Su it's not in the AA
a waga but it's obviously very old back

when monks weren't living in monasteries

they were just homeless Wanderers living

under trees and so

forth so that would

be my best I mean just read the early

texts and I mean the early text just

take it for granted that you're going to

be a homeless

Wanderer um and I mean the early really

early ones it's not so much you know

you're a member of this SAA I mean

you're just going like the Horn of the

rhinoceros you know the kaga Su also the

suan I mean read the

sutin that would be about the best book

you could

read for for this

purpose

so yeah I guess I answered that one so

I'll just move on to the next question

here I'm trying to keep this under three

hours I'm being

conscientious this next question is from

creel and crel said I heard that

spiritual progress May decrease the

effect of psychedelic drugs as perhaps

drugs get drugs kind get redundant if

not

counterproductive this could be an

interesting question then what is the

relationship between spiritual progress

or its opposite and the effect of

psychedelic drugs this can be hard to

answer where the individual is a monk as they cannot take drugs thank you well I mean as soon as I read this question I was immediately reminded of one of the most famous stories about NE karoli Baba up there on the altar the big black and white picture there and RAM do when he first went to India first met Nim Koli Baba or maharaji as he was known he he brought some highgrade like pharmaceutical grade LSD with him and he wanted to get like swamis to take this stuff and give him Dr Richard Albert at that time he wasn't Romos yet their opinion and so anyway he meets maharaji and maharaji has psychic powers and one

day maharaji says you got the Medicine

bring me the medicine and at first ramas

doesn't know what he's talking about but

uh somehow uh you know the communication

gap is resolved and he realizes that

maharaji knows that he's got LSD and he

wants him to bring it to him so he

brings the LSD

and maharaji says will it give me CS

which is like powers and in Translation

ramas didn't understand what CDs meant

so he just thought Powers what you think

it's like B12 it's going to make you

stronger or something you know he didn't

understand yet but

anyway um he had like three intact pills

that were 300 micrograms each and then

he had like a a half a pill or something

and so maharaji just took the three

unbroken pills

and he's asking him can I can I drink

water with it and RDA says yes and like

does it matter if it's warm water or

cold water and ramda says no it doesn't

matter and at one point maharaji asked

him will that make me crazy and ramda

said um

probably so anyway maharaji took three

300 microgram pills so there's 900

micrograms which is a mega dose really

more than most people would take and he

just sits there

and and he ask how long it'll take and

ramda says you know half an hour and you should start feeling something and you know every once in a while maharaji will just look he's got like this attendant with him he looks at the attendant to watch and he's just looking at that time and then after maybe an hour there seems to be nothing happening maharaji just takes his blanket he he always wore this blanket he kind of pulls it over his head and then he comes out with this like crazy crazy look on his face and ROM do is just thinking oh no you know just I've just given 900 micrograms to this old man and he's he's freaking out and then but it was just a joke and then because the next thing is maharaji's

just looking at the watch again and it
was like no effect
whatsoever so Ram do goes he's called
Ram do now he goes back to America and
he's telling the story of of uh how
maharaji took 900 micrograms of LSD and
had no effect whatsoever and but still
there was like this
sneaking doubt in his mind like well
maybe he palmed them or you know maybe
when I wasn't looking he just tossed
them or something you know he didn't he
wasn't 100% sure that maharaji really
did take 900 micrograms of LSD and have
no effect so next time he goes to India
maharaji who of course as I say has

psychic powers he uh

said uh you remember when I took that

medicine don't you and M ramda said yes

and he said do you think I really took

him cuz because I mean he knew this

doubt in ramd Do's mind and then ramdas

said I think so so then maharaji says

bring me some more so this time maharaji

took four of the 300 microgram pills

1200

micrograms and he does it really

obviously because he knows Ram do has

these doubts he holds it out and he puts

it into his mouth just one after another

just makes it real obvious that he

really is taking the pills and again

there was no discernable effect

whatsoever and then afterwards Ram or maharaji says this this kind of medicine was known in the Kuru Valley you know centuries and centuries ago and uh it can be useful if you take it in cool weather in the natural surroundings when you're
alone and then that that was it that's as far as it went and I do think there's there's like a like a Goa trance group called 1200 micrograms I don't know if it's a group could just be one guy you know 12200 micrograms like watch shiva's India on on YouTube by 1200 micrograms and I assume they got I'm just guessing that they're named after

this maharaji taking 12200 micrograms of
LSD and having no effect but that's just
a convenient story I guess because uh
I've pretty much forgotten the question
that creel has asked here let's see this
could be an interesting question then
what is the relationship between
spiritual progress or its opposite and
the effect of psychedelic
drugs I think that if you're fully
enlightened you can take a Consciousness
expanding drug and your mind is already
fully expanded and it's just not going
to have an effect like like the deal
happened with with maharaji on the other
hand um in the YouTube comments I did
write this type in this little story of

this friend of mine who I mean he was

just total Normie it seemed like just

like he made Richie cunn ham seemed like

a beatnik he was this guy was such a

cleancut normal kind of a guy you know

and he went to an iasa ceremony and he

just did not get high on it at all and

finally it's like the the shaman or the

shaman was giving him like concentrated

doses of this DMT stuff and it just had

no effect on him at all and I was just

teasing him just it's it's your

whitebred karma that just won't let

anything

happen

so I think it can vary I think a fully

enlightened being if they took a
Consciousness expanding drug their minds
are already fully expanded so it's not
going to be you know it's not going to
be a big deal for them I mean some other
kind of drug that has other effects it
you know it affects their body or
something sure that could happen and
just normies it's just going to be the
full spectrum some people will like
totally freak out other people have no
effect just because of their own Karma
and constitutional factors and so forth
so um also I would guess that the more
spiritual you are the more likely it is
going to be that taking psychedelic
drugs is going to cause like religious

experiences spiritual experiences
whereas normies are just going to like
laugh a lot or freak out or
whatever so I guess I'll just move on to
the next question here this is from mubo
and mubo says do you think the case
could be made that Zen despite the
centuries of separation from terraa and
its diverse cultural baggage from East
Asian Traditions is actually closer to
the radical skepticism of early Buddhism
well for starters I would say that early
Buddhism really was not skeptical I mean
in a way it was I mean it seemed like
skepticism just because the Buddhist
thing don't believe anything but a

skeptic is someone who who believes you
cannot know reality you cannot know the
truth Buddhism you you can know reality
you can know the truth it's just that
you're not going to know it through
Concepts so that's that's the difference
between like skepticism like ancient
Greek skepticism like P
Puro and then you've got like Buddhism
on the other hand but you set that aside
I mean that's kind of a
quibble and uh yeah I would say that Zen
in certain ways does come very close to
early early Buddhism just because they
put so much less emphasis on
dogmas I mean they still got quite a lot
and then there's even pure land stuff

that has crept into a lot of Zen and so
I mean it's not as pure as you'd read in
a book I mean that was I was originally
interested in Zen I really liked the
idea of men dressed in black standing
around talking in riddles and hitting
each other with sticks I mean I just
like the idea of that and then I I went
to an actual Zen Monastery and there's
all this bowing and chanting and all
this sort of Mythology that gets added
in and pure land Buddhism added in and I
mean there was nobody was hitting each
other with sticks at all
so um yeah it's like the spirit of Zen
if it's like in a relatively pure

setting you know with a a good Monastery
with a good Abbot a wise Abbot who gets
it you know then yeah I mean it's still
the outward forms would be different
because early Buddhism you just had
homeless Wanderers dressed in rags
begging for food in the streets whereas
you know even in a good Zen Monastery
you got you know that sort of regimented
and people living in the the Zeno and
you know they're still bowing and
chanting and so forth and so there are
differences but uh Zen has kind of tried
to conserve some of the most important
essence of of Buddhism so yeah I would
agree with
that yeah then Terra has lost a lot of

it this

because they had this idea that that

view meant wrong

view which left the door open to right

view which they were very carefully

formulating into this elaborate

Scholastic system which the Buddha

himself would not have endorsed because

he really did mean view when he said you

shouldn't have DT he didn't just mean

one of the 62 wrong views or 37 or

however many there are that you know in

like the Brahma jalo Su I don't remember

the exact number now it escapes me but

um yeah it's too bad really and I'll

just move on to the next question this

is from nature

cure and nature cure says which

Southeastern Asian Buddhist country

would you say is best for a foreign

beu

well it it all depends on exactly what

you're after what your priorities are I

guess because for me Burma worked really

well I was I was fortunate to have lived

in

Burma um I mean if you want like to be

in a group that you conform

to uh Thailand Thailand is more into

group Conformity or at least they make

it a policy like an explicit policy you

have to conform to the group whereas in

Burma Burmese people are so Conformity

oriented anyway that they don't they
never made a rule so that when some
crazy Wester like me comes along that
doesn't follow the rules they really
don't know how to deal with
it and I just noticed that this camera
is kind of
crooked yeah it's just gonna have to
stay that way because the thing that the
computer is standing on is slightly
crooked or mean maybe just the room is
slightly crooked maybe we can just blame
the
room so anyway Getting Back To Nature
Cure's question here which Southeastern
Asian Buddhist country would you say is

best re form because well if you say
Southeastern Asian then not rules out
Sri Lanka so you're really pretty much
just left with two which would be Burma
and
Thailand and it's just a matter of
personal taste whether you would prefer
Burma or Thailand Thailand it's easier
to get in you know it's more more of a
westernized country they have stricter
vinia in general there um more Danga or
just optional aesthetic practices in
Burma there's more scholarship and also
more
meditation and also like I said there's
less emphasis on you have to conform and
so you can just follow your own

conscience in Burma more easily than you can in Thailand although if you're a conspicuous Westerner you won't be able to just wander around freely like in populated areas if you want to wander around freely you're going to have to go out into a forest and take a lot of malaria medication with
you so it's it's a matter of personal preference like whatever works best for you I guess you could also include other countries like Malaysia there are a number of terab Buddhist monasteries in Malaysia but it's a non- Buddhist culture it's mostly Asian as like ethnic Chinese people living in Malaysia that

support Buddhism because as I was saying
earlier
ethnic Malaysians it is illegal for them
to become Buddhists or even listen to a
Buddhist
sermon um Bali in Indonesia there's a
number of terraa Buddhist monasteries
there there that's technically Indonesia
is technically in Southeast Asia I
really don't know what the situation in
Cambodia or Laos is with regard to terab
Buddhism but it's uh uh La I think is
Marxist or it was for a long time so so
that Buddhism would not have been
endorsed and of course in Cambodia most
of the monks were either just executed
or um just forced to

disrobe and so um if you go to Cambodia

you're going to be finding a lot of like

Goa places and and like mahasi places

and stuff there so you might as well

just go to um

Burma if if you're after

mahasi

so let's see yeah I guess I answered

that I'll move on to Nature Cure's next

question here which is do you believe

Mahayana teachings can lead one to

achieve enlightenment yeah I think even

Christian teachings can lead one to

achieve enlightenment if one really has

the talent one has the parmy so to speak

um like I've said before I think St John

of the Cross may very well have been

fully

enlightened um maybe some

sufis you know I think like even some

Stone Age like an Eskimo Shaman may have

become fully enlightened just because

you know if you're ripe for it it's not

going to take much you know it might

just take one little

nudge so uh I do believe Mahayana

teachings can lead one to achieve

enlightenment especially if it's sort of

a Zen like or like pragia paramita or or

maamaa like the really profound stule

that can just blow your mind then it

still emphasizes meditation and so forth

that yeah I think it's possible Hinduism

also I do not think that terava Buddhism
has a monopoly on enlightenment that is
the official party party line that only
I mean like just about anybody if
they're a good person can get into
heaven but that's still Samar you're
still stuck but if you want to get
completely off the wheel you want
complete Enlightenment you've got to be
a ter terab Buddhist that's that's the
official party line and I just that's
one of those things that I've just never
really been able to
believe I just I just can't buy
it so I'll just move on to the next
question from nature cure which is do

you believe vajana teachings can lead
one to achieve enlightenment um yeah I
mean like whoever composed the the
Tibetan book of the great Liberation was
obviously a very advanc aned person I
can't say if they were enlightened or
not but I think it's attributed to Padma
samb Baba who I think he wasn't he
wasn't Tibetan but he was an Indian who
became like a missionary of advanced
Buddhist teachings in Tibet in like
early medieval times something like
that
um yeah like do do I believe vajana
teachings can lead one to achieve inment
I think a Blow To The Head can lead one
to achieve enlightenment I mean such

there are stories of such things
happening that you know you just have
this Blow To The Head or like in uh
what's his name John Ren Lewis he got
poisoned in Thailand and had a near
death experience and he had this
Awakening experience um while he was
having a near-death experience from from
being poisoned so I mean if you're ripe
it doesn't take it doesn't take much of
a nudge to just push you over the
edge so yeah I am again I am skeptical
of the the Terra voden claim that terraa
has a monopoly on enlightenment and that
not only terraa has a monopoly on
enlightenment but terraa monasticism

because if you're not a monk and you
somehow become enlightened you got to
ordain within like 24 hours you're going
to die in some karmic freak
accident so I'll just move on to Nature
cures next question
here is cannabis accessible for beus in
Vermont
um maybe like in Shen state in Shan
State it's up in the plateau of the like
Eastern Burma and there's a lot of
cannabis just grows wild there there
fields of it and the people there um
actually include it in certain recipes
like there's some kind of chicken curry
that has cannabis leaves in it I've
never actually seen cannabis plants

growing in Burma but I've been told this
and um I used to live with this old monk
he was like a Subs a subsistence farmer
in a village up until he was in his 60s
I guess and then he ordained in his old
age as kind of a retirement plan and he
told me that he he lived in Shan state
for a while and he grew cannabis just
because some some Indian friend of his
gave him some seeds or something and he
said oh makes makes your head go who who
who that was funny this old this old
Burmese monk but for the most part yeah
it's not a mainstream thing it would be
kind of a secret
thing so um nature cures next question

here is it considered to be unethical to other beus if one smokes cannabis for the most part yeah Burma is a very traditional conservative country and they they view like an alcoholic pretty much the same way we would view a junkie or at least way junkies reviewed back in the 80s and 90s back when there was still a kind of social stigma on it like I remember one of my main supporters her her family like in a certain part of Burma I lived in one of my main supporters her family was disgraced because her brother married the daughter of a fisherman and that's just a fisherman is just low social status because they're

not good Buddhists because they kill

animals for a

living so getting back to uh cannabis

here yeah I've never heard of a monk um

just I mean they some monasteries I

assume especially in shann state where

cannabis is more

normalized um probably but in the

mainstream of Burmese culture is it's

just unheard

of so yeah they would think that you're

just taking an

intoxicant which for the most part you

would be I mean if you're doing it

recreationally then it's against the

rules

anyway it is allowable for a monk to
take cannabis for medicinal purposes but
if you're just taking it because you
want to get high then you're breaking
the rules and it would be unethical in
that to that
extent at least to that extent so I'll
just move on to the next question here
and this is from Quick
quiz and quick quiz says do you believe
the dolly Lama is an enlightened
being um proba probably not he had some
very Advanced teachers and he probably
had some parmy some momentum coming into
this life but I rather doubt that he's
an enlightened being I mean you can't
really know for sure with regard to a

lot of stuff that's I mean it would be
purely subjective to him and as I say as
I've said before from a samsaric point
of view from the context of this
material or seemingly Material World
Enlightenment might I mean it might not
be even possible it's just just it's
just sort of off the scale so I mean if
Nirvana is off the scale and is not part
of samsar how are you going to have an
enlightened being living in
samsara I
mean so you should consider that an
enlightened being is just uh kind of a
paradox or an enigma like a [__] or
something so I'll just move on to Quick

quiz's next question after uh confusing
everyone with that one do you know about
vajana secret tantri teachings that some
chosen monks use alcohol and molest
underage people for some spiritual gain
well the molest part is uh I mean if if
it's done correctly according to the
texts it wouldn't be mo
molesting I mean that's just kind of a
slur but uh yeah I mean in in in Tantra
I mean that's Tantra is based Bas on the
idea that we are living in the Kaluga
we're living in the Dark Age and
saintliness is not nearly the option
that it used to be and so they're trying
to become enlightened or at least to
make spiritual progress on the leftand

path which is while you're doing this
stuff that is
transgressive I mean you're just
converting it into spiritual Grist for
the mill and so they ceremonial
do the five M's I I read about this a
long time ago the five M's which is Mom
siiz meat matcha is fish Maja is
intoxicants Mauna is sex and then
there's a fifth one that starts with m
then I think they've lost what they use
like parched grain because I think
they've forgotten what it really was
sort of like Soma where it's just the
the true meaning of it was lost to the
majority over the centuries I think

might mean some kind of drug maybe even

marijuana although marijuana doesn't

start with an m in in

Sanskrit but uh I'm sure they can make

it work out somehow that it could start

with an

m maybe majja is just in toxicant it's

not necessarily just

alcohol so anyways they try to do this

mindfully without any kind of attachment

so they learn how to live in worldliness

and you know they're they're in the

world but not of the world

but I'm sure it has been abused and of

course the cynics who who view it from

the outside will say oh they're

molesting girls or whatever without

really understanding like the philosophy

behind Tantra and without having the

faith that there really are some sincere

practitioners who are trying to do it

correctly in accordance with the

principles of the

thing

so okay I'll just move on on to n quick

quiz's next question here sorry quick

quiz I almost called you nature

cure okay so quick quiz's next question

here could it be possible that the vaj

Rana sect is corrupted by Mara and some

other bad bad Davis from the heaven

realm

already well pretty much anything is

corrupted by Mara to the extent that
Mara can corrupt it assuming that Mara
exists and for those of you who are uh
ignorant of the existence of Mara he's
sort of like the Buddhist Devil he's
like the Lord of
samsara one difference he's got from the
Devil is that if he can't get you to be
bad he'll get you to be good because
even if you're in heaven you're you're
still stuck in s sorrow because heaven
is not an escape from some sorrow it's
just a higher level of
it so could it be possible the vajan
sect is corrupted by Maron some other
bad bad Davis from the heaven real
already well I used to know vajana

practitioner um and he was talking about
how I mean it's one of the common
practices is you're invoking the Davis
and you're not just invoking the good
Davis or the like the benevolent ones
you're also invoking the wrathful
deities and so there is some playing
playing with fire in vajana and that's
kind of the whole point of it again it's
there's like T elements where you're
taking all this worldly [__] and
transmuting it into gold supposedly if
you're doing it
correctly and some people who can't do
it right are going to get messed up by
it including by maybe some bad bad

Davis so I'll just uh move on to Quick
quiz's next question here did Buddha
teach any tant likee
teachings well the closest the Buddha
came to T like teachings is like
pointing out the dangers of SE bamasa or
adhering to morality and
observances that I really I I think it's
very plausible very possible I won't say
like for sure but just reading like the
Ana waga which is one of the oldest
fragments of like archaic Buddhism still
in existence that he's saying you know
monks should not follow rules it's the
rules got added later this is before
ninia rules started you know taking hold
in songa you

just um I mean I mean if you're like
sincere in your desire to cultivate
spirituality and follow Dharma and so
forth you don't need rules essentially
rules are for troublemakers you know to
keep them keep them behaving
properly so yeah I think the warning
against rules you know saying that you
know people like whatever uh people
might blame a monk for or praise him for
he has no interest in any of that you
know he he does not get involved in that
sort of thing so that's kind of tantric
but I mean having sex and uh you know
taking drugs and that sort of thing yeah
that was that was not uh condoned I I

don't recall any place where it is

condoned in early polyc or in late polyc

for that matter also I guess it's okay

to eat meat so that would be kind of

tantric I

suppose so I'll just move on to Quick

quizzes next question did Buddha teach

any

Mantra and I do not think so I mean if

you read theim Maga and there's the list

of the 40

standard like meditation methods then

some of it has been turned into Mantra

like um just meditating on the virtues

of the Buddha which got converted into

you know uh

Edo etc etc which is you know the nine

qualities of the Buddha that you just
recite it as a mantra and then you
finish that and then you do one bead on
the on the
rosary so but it wasn't really intended
originally to be Mantra you're really
supposed to be reflecting on the virtues
of the Buddha not just reeding just like
repeating reciting this this poly you
know blah blah blah that even probably
most Buddhists who recite it don't even
know what it means entirely you know
it's just foreign language it's
poly
so yeah um there are no sutas that I
recall where the Buddha is specifically

teaching Mantra meditation although as I say some um some Mantra has been added partly through like the the recollection of the virtues of Buddha dhama and the Davis and so forth and also like in Thailand especially they do buddo or BH putto um as a kind of Mantra although I don't think that has any um any precedent in the sutas not that not that I'm aware of so I'll just move on to the next question this is from

Dan and Dan says maybe you poob basa can walk me through this in enlightened beings cannot make Bad Karma and enlightened beings live a choiceless life is this because they have attained absolute

wisdom well enlightened beings just
don't make any kind of karma good or bad
they're just not making Karma
anymore and uh enlightened beings live a
choiceless life is this because they
have attained absolute wisdom well it
depends on how you look at it I assume
the Orthodox explanation is that in
their wisdom they just naturally do the
right thing so they don't really have to
make decisions
anymore I assume it actually if you want
to be really super Orthodox like in in
Abid dama they've got what Kia they've
they've invented this new kind of of
volition that an arahant has that

doesn't make volition that doesn't make
Karma called kiraito or like functional
Consciousness but it it's not mentioned
anywhere in the SU
and there's a very unorthodox
explanation that that I play with
sometimes that a fully enlightened being
it's like there's nobody there and so
their behavior is just going to be like
a mirror of the karma of the people
around them that it's going to be like a
projection of other people's Karma and
just their beliefs and expectations and
so forth like ramas said about Raji that
the better you got to know them the more
you realize there was just nobody there
then he was just like a mirror

reflecting your own Karma back at you so

that would be another way that uh an

enlightened being live a choiceless life

and don't make any Karma because really

there's nobody there anymore they're

just sort of like a holographic

projection in a

sense so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from aat

THU and aat th says not related with

this video but by any chance have you

been to Fort Lauderdale as a copia with

burmes monk before you became a monk

maybe least 30 or 40 years ago and no

I've never been to I'd never been to

Texas until I rode a train through it on

my way to South

Carolina so it it wasn't me and I'm not

sure um the only Burmese monk I know of

that lived in Texas or spent a lot of

time in Texas was

Theus and when I was a young Monk and I

mean before I was a monk I'd never heard

of him and after I became a monk I did

not have a high opinion of him because

he did not follow vinia and just seem

like a businessman that wore monks robes

as a way of making more money I me he

charges exorbitant fees to give domato

talks for

example and so yeah I'm there is at

least one Burmese Monastery in Texas

possibly in Fort waterdale so I assume

that may be the monk but I was yeah I've
never been there I've never been to any
Buddhist monasteries in
Texas
[Music]
so I guess I'll just move on to the next
question then this is from dama
river and dhama river says if it is
desired aanda the songa May when I am
gone abolish the Lesser and minor rules
this is a quote from the digan Kaya
number 16 or the Maha
basuta the discourse on the final
passing away of the Buddha and dama
River says nobody knows this but if you
could guess in your honest personal

opinion which are the rules the Buddha was referring to well I mean this could all be an anachronism because in the early text the Buddha was saying you there shouldn't be rules and there are um indications that there really were no rules early on um for example one one there's one scene where a monk is asking the Buddha why did previous dispensations of previous Buddhist die out so quickly and the Buddha said it's because there they didn't have vinea rules and that you know it just lacked the structure and just kind of collapsed which does make sense but in a way that could be sort of a a justification for making vinea rules in fact the whole

purpose of the first first Council the first great Council and you read the story after the Buddha dies you know he attains Parana the enlightened monks you know they take it with equinity you know they know that everything that has a beaning also passes away but the unenlightened monks you know they're sad because their teacher has died and then you've got this one old wise guy he's a do twet he's a monk who ordained when he was old hard to hard to admonish he's just saying why all the long faces now we don't have Master Goa telling us do this don't do that anytime you know all the time we can do whatever we want and

Maha casapa who was the leader of the S
after the Buddha died he was alarmed by
this in in an enlightened way because he
was an arant and so he decided we need
to make a great Council to establish
rules so it could be that there were no
vinea rules until after the Buddha died
so that this whole statement it is if it
is desired and N the song of May when I
am gone abolish the Lesser and minor
rules that could just be an anachronism
but I mean if you read the the history
of the First
Council which was 500
arant they all had different ideas as to
what the Lesser and minor rules were in
fact some of these aans supposedly if we

are to trust the text believe that

everything less than the four paraja

rules would be lesser and minor which

would mean that you know you

could you can masturbate and fondle

women and so forth which uh yeah I

really don't think so but I mean if you

want lesser and minor rules probably

would be like Duca which is the the

lowest the lowest um of of severity Dua

and dubas there's only one dubas rule

which is making a joke about Buddha DH

and sa I think or else it's making a

joke at somebody else's expense can't

remember

which well I mean that would be the safe

the safe guess is that it would be just
the Duca offense which are this is the
lowest category of offenses with regard
to
severity so yeah it be a safe guess or
it could just be the Lesser and minor
rules are the ones that do not have any
ethical yeah I mean you could argue that
way that they're the ones that are just
not moral rules that they're not immoral
either they just don't have anything to
do with morality like shaving your head
I mean what's immoral about not shaving
your head you know or wearing robes of a
certain color I mean what's what's
immoral about wearing a red robe even
though it's against the rules that sort

of thing but I just think probably just
docas but the whole thing may be just a
academic because it could be an
anachronism so I'll just move on a next
question which is from tiggles can I get
a shout out
ah I'm kind of horse I can't yell very
loud right now once I've been talking
for two hours
straight so I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from EU Diva
why did Buddha forbid translating his
teachings into vidic Sanskrit well
that's kind of a misconception there's
um somebody asked there were two monks
that were like Brahman priests before

they were monks and they asked if they
would be allowed to translate his
teachings into Sanskrit verse which was
just the standard way of conveying
religious scripture in Ancient India was
through Sanskrit
verse and he said no one should learn
and study dhama in one's own language
which in the the commentators say the
poly commentators say when he said in
one's own language they meant in his own
language which is
poly so I mean it was just he considered
to be kind of a stumbling block or an
obstacle of teaching people when you're
going to be translating his words
into

um poetry in a language that most people
don't understand that in order for the
teachings to be accessible they should
be taught in the vernacular of wherever
they happen to
be which makes
sense so that got interpreted as a rule
against
translating um Buddhist teachings into
Sanskrit verse which of course happened
anyway so UD Diva's next question is in
that sense Sanskrit Sutra worshipping
mahays are bad and lost Buddhists
right well I
mean the the early ones who were
translating Buddhist texts into Sanskrit

were breaking a minor rule but I mean

it's not really evil this sort of

another one of those rules that really

is not

ethical it's not unethical either it's

just amoral just I mean it's not immoral

to translate a text into Sanskrit

poetry I mean it's just has nothing to

do with ethics really

so yeah I it'd be kind of an extreme

view to say that that mahayan are bad

and lost Buddhists most of the ones who

worship sutras are worshiping a Chinese

translation anyway you know it's like

what is it uh

oh what nii Ren is it the Nichi Ren and

the SOA gaki Buddhists who are

worshiping the the Lotus Sutra which is

like a a Sutra that was composed

hundreds of years after the time of the

Buddha and then got translated into

Chinese and then into

Japanese so yeah I think that they're

not even reading it in the in the

Sanskrit verse that was

forbidden

so yeah I know think that they're

necessarily bad and lost Buddhists just

because they have uh they have their

text in Sanskrit verse or were

originally in Sanskrit

verse they they got better reasons than

that some of them I mean some Mists are

bad and lost but it's not because of

that I mean when it gets to the point

like in nii Ren and SOA gak where the

whole religion seems to be uh reduced to

worshiping one book which probably the

Buddha did not

compose then yeah I mean you're you're

off the tracks but you're not

necessarily

evil so I'll just move on to uh UD

Diva's next question

here is it possible that Hindus fool the

early Mahayana Buddhists by giving them

vidic mixed up sutras in order to

pollute

Buddhism um I don't think so although in

the in the text it was like you know

Proto Hindu nadic priests who it was
their idea to translate the Buddhist
teachings into uh Sanskrit verse but uh
I don't think it was done by anti-
Buddhists in order to like Poison the
Well of of Buddhist
Dharma yeah I think it was just like an
Indian tradition that that uh sacred
scripture was in Sanskrit verse and so
in order to honor the texts and up to
the level of sacred scripture status
they got translated into Sanskrit verse
by some schools of
Buddhism is it was just more of an
Indian cultural thing than any kind of
conspiracy against Buddhists by non-

Buddhists probably in my opinion so I'll just move on to euu Diva's next question here all Mahayana gods and davidas are adopted or borrowed from Hindu Davis and gods in my personal view would you agree well most of them but not all of them like the main ones at first were um you know Saka king of Gods and mahab Brahma and so forth um I'm not sure of of the position of Mara I don't know if he's mentioned in any Hindu text so he might be a unique invention and then some of the the later Mahayana dvas are like they started off as bodh sat who got deified so like MRI I don't know if MRI or aalo kites Vara were originally Hindu deities or what uh was it

padmapani or or something like that I
mean there's some of these Hindu or like
Mahayana deities that are also buddhis
svas that somehow I don't I'm not sure I
don't know the Hindu Pantheon well
enough especially the ancient Hindu
Pantheon
to know if some of these obscure bodh
saas originated you know you got prag
yarita the goddess of of transcendental
wisdom I'm not so sure that I mean she
could be like a variation on some Hindu
goddess but she herself was not
originally a Hindu goddess I'm pretty
sure and then you got like Hercules even
he got conflated with I think it was

padmapani one of these these obscure mAh on buddhis satas who are also a kind of God so I mean the whole idea of Davis was borrowed from you know the the pre-existent uh spiritual traditions of India so in that extent to that extent you know the Buddhist Pantheon is just sort of a A variation on the vidic pantheon but I do think that especially in Mahayana they were inventing new ones um or just just somehow developing new deities based on principles of Mahayana Buddhism and also just um like promoting bodh svas up into deity status like manucher I don't know if if there's any precedent for manucher in in like early

Hinduism so some of them but I think
probably not all of them were derived or
B borrowed from Hindu Davis so I'll just
move on to the next question here this
is from Crave
minerals and crave minerals says here's
some idle ponderings but I can't help
but to be
curious what happens to the personality
of a person when they become enlightened
arant all have different characters and
personalities but an idea I've been
toying with is what if one's personality
is nothing but hindrances and
defilements as I imagine could be the
case with for example some murderers

manipulators or generally evil people
evil people could this enlightened
person then become something like a
blank slate a newborn baby or what well
again it's it's like you've got this
residual Karma but when you become
enlightened according to Orthodox theory
that it's like this Karma no longer has
any power over you I mean it's still you
still have preferences you still have
personality traits you know if you liked
a good joke before you were enlightened
there's a good chance you'll like a good
joke after you become enlightened if you
didn't like black licorice before you
were enlightened you're not going to
suddenly start eating black licorice

after you become enlightened I mean
maybe I mean like maharaji up there he
may have been fully enlightened he still
had certain foods that he liked better
than other Foods although he was will
you he was able to eat and damn near
anything including 12200 micrograms of
LSD so again it's it's it's impossible
to say what the personality of a fully
enlightened being is like subjectively
you can't put it into words they're it's
off the
scale but just from the point of view of
Orthodox terab you still have these
tendencies that are there you know the
Buddha had certain personality traits

you know he didn't like lots of noise

for example you know he'd get bothered

by squabbling monks and go off and stay

alone in the forest for a while that

kind of a thing did occasionally crack a

very dry sort of

joke at least if we can believe what the

textt

say so yeah they still have latent

Tendencies but um or not lat in

tendencies in the philosophical sense of

you know Karma just wait waiting for its

chance to to reach fruition or or

whatever but

uh

see

gosh as I imagine this is such a hard

question people ask me these questions
it's it's it's it's very difficult like
how can we say what the subjective
experience of like a Buddha would
be but I assume it wouldn't be that
different from like an ordinarily wise
person except that they're just not
identified with that anymore it's just
nature taking its course you know it's
still this latent residual Karma just
working itself out with the enlightened
being assuming that there's anybody
there at
all just I mean they're not attached
they're not identified it's just nature
taking its

course okay I maybe I answered that I don't think a fully enlightened being is going to become like a newborn baby though I mean he's well actually ramena Mahari apparently was kind of like that when he had his Awakening experience he was a Hindu so if you don't think Hindus can get enlightened you can just disregard this but yeah I mean it took him a long time before he was able to even start talking again just because you know he's in this totally different realm that's off the charts and he it took him years before he was able to kind of integrate being a human being functioning in samsar with this this higher knowledge it's just off the

charts just off the

map so maybe in some cases but um if we

can trust the books it's certainly not

in all cases so I'll just move on to the

next question

here and this is from Mr researcher and

he asked this question on question

answer number eight but he asked it

recently so he says is it in chime with

burmes politics and Buddhism if we don't

like the cultural marxists as you often

call them Burmese politics and Buddhism

we don't like culture well Burmese

politics I mean like the the ruling

party which is pretty much still um the

Army nowadays um yeah they don't like

cultural Marxist because cultural

marxists are just making trouble for

them you know they want Burma to stay a

traditional Burmese Buddhist country and

the cultural marxists who are mainly

like operating like

NOS are trying to encourage them to just

you need to be you know accepting to you

know homosexuality and

women in power and like Muslims you know

settling in your country and so forth

and uh you know diversity is our

strength and all that and the Burmese

Army really doesn't have much use for

that in fact the average Burmese

villager or the average devout Burmese

Buddhist has no use for cultural Marxism

they're very hard-headed

people and they're not just going to

throw away what they cherish as a

Priceless treasure in order to adopt

this this new point of view that is

sweeping across the the westernized

parts of the world which is most parts

of the

world or or even just pollute Buddhism

by mixing it all in like most western

Buddhists are doing

now

so yeah I mean Buddhism you don't like

cultural Marxism in Buddhism I mean some

parts of of cultural Marxism are fine

with Buddhism like you don't want to be

against anybody you don't want to hate
anybody so I mean you meet a transsexual
person I mean just if you're going to
judge them at all judge them on the you
know the merits of their own character
rather than the fact that they're a
transsexual for example or a homosexual
or a member of certain ethnicities or
whatever but with regard to one of the
basic teachings of cultural Marxism is
the ex virtually the exact opposite of
dhama which is if you're unhappy it's
somebody else's fault
especially
Whitey you know that I mean that's just
ridiculous you know I mean cultural
marxists will just say oh victim blaming

you you can't blame you can't blame the
poor black guy because you know he he
steals you know it's White's fault it's
it's because his F his his ancestors
were enslaved and on and on and that's
just not Buddhism at all even though you
got people talking about this in
Buddhist d mahals in the west taking it
seriously and actually thinking that
it's dhama when actually it's the
opposite of dhamma if you're unhappy
it's your own doing you know it's your
own
choice you know it's your own clinging
and attachment that is causing the
unhappiness it's not what somebody else

out there in the world is doing it's not
somebody calling you by the wrong
pronoun that's making you unhappy it's
your dysfunctional attitude that insists
on being called by the right pronoun
so I mean some parts of cultural Marxism
are not in conflict with Buddhism and
some parts are just radically Divergent
from Buddhism so and the burmes in
general have very little use for
cultural Marxism you when I was in Burma
it I I left shortly after Burma opened
up to the West which is around 2011 and
you just have this flood of like white
people coming in to like look for ways
to make make quick money or you had the
NOS coming in and like the board wives

of the leaders of the NOS would be like
trying to teach feminism to the Burmese
ladies and it's like you have these
messed up unhappy Western women trying
to teach these well adjusted Burmese
women to be as messed up and unhappy as
they are you know you should be
demanding your rights and and and on and
on and I don't know what got me going on
that oh yeah cultural Marxism in
Burma so anyways just going to move on
to the next question here this is from
keep
theia and keep theia says oh when I when
I win that that wasn't because I have
any uh dislike of keep DN or his

questions it's just that I've been
talking non-stop for over two hours
here so keep dnia says how do we know
that the Buddha was enlightened well the
easy answer is we don't you don't know
that anybody is enlightened you can't
just look at somebody know that they're
enlightened maybe one enlightened person
person can know that another person's un
enlightened but you can't understand or
comprehend anything higher than yourself
which is one reason why people have such
men
mundane explanations of of gods and
angels and so forth you know you read
the Old Testament and God's just an
angry old man with with

superpowers it's because you've got
people who are a kind of upgraded ape
trying to imagine what uh like the
Supreme Being is going to be like or
even a much higher being and they can't
because it's just beyond their
comprehension and furthermore I mean
enlightened being here in this world may
just I mean it's may be a contradiction
in
terms so we don't know that the Buddha
wasn't light and for a Buddhist it is a
very convenient working
hypothesis and at the very least he was
an extremely wise person so I'll just
move on to keep the Winnie's next

question here why do you think Buddhism
is superior to other religions well it's
Superior uh for
me just because it's based largely on
empiricism and you don't have to believe
any narratives you don't have to believe
any stories you don't have to believe
any fairy
tales that and some religions including
Christianity you have to believe this
narrative you have to believe that Jesus
was the only begotten Son of God who
died for our sins for
example and I mean you don't have to
believe that kind of stuff in Buddhism I
mean there is a lot of stuff that you
know it's it's useful to believe but a

lot of it's empirical like the four noble truths first Noble Truth is pretty self-evident if you look second Noble Truth is also pretty self-evident if you look third Noble Truth is just a logical consequence or a logical it's derived logically from the second Noble Truth if the second Noble Truth is true then the third Noble Truth logically has to be true and then the fourth Noble Truth The Noble eight-fold Path um well at least you can learn through practicing it whether you're making progress or not but for some people I mean they might be very Faith oriented or something that some other system than

terraa Buddhism may work better for them

I mean some people might actually do

better as Christians than as Buddhists

for some reason just due to personality

traits constitutional factors and

somewhat some such I meant to say

okay

so I was going to say something else

right after that too and then I said the

wrong word which caused me to correct

myself and then I took a drink of this

delicious nectar that I am consuming and

I forgot what I was gonna

say do I think that Buddhism is superior

to other religions

um it depends on the context I mean any

kind of Superior or inferior argument is

going to be a value judgment I mean
Superior or inferior they rely on
context I mean I had one person recently
trying to call me a uh a racist who
thinks One race is superior to another
race and I'm like Superior I mean when
have I ever said that I it's like with
regard to what with to what's the
context and really that's I mean
Superior I mean Super you have to say if
you're going to say something something
is superior you have to say you know in
what way I mean I mean do I think that
Buddhism is superior with regard to its
ability to get people enlightened I'm
not so sure about that or especially

like terraa

Buddhism um terraa Buddhism has become

so dogmatic that in a way that's sort of

an obstacle to Enlightenment if people

are really that dogmatic you know

they're clinging to these teachings some

of which are not authentic teachings of

the Buddha in my opinion then yeah and

uh I've said before that I would not be

surprised if there have been more

enlightened Hindus than enlightened

terraa

Buddhists partly because Hinduism is

more wide

open it's not so constricting with

regard to what you have to

believe so for some people Buddhism is

superior to other religions and I think
in general it's one of the
best possibly the best but that's just
my
opinion so next question from keep the
vinia suppose someone asks me why I am a
Buddhist do you think it is a good
answer that I believe in Buddhism
because no other religion has such a
logical Foundation because the four
noble truths are the most logical and
disputable Foundation a religion can
have um logic itself is not no
indication of of Truth like n his
philosophy is pretty logical and
self-consistent but that doesn't mean n

was

right so logic I mean it's better to to

say it's more

empirical maybe more

objective which I think might be true

and it's not just the for Noble Truths

it's you know the three marks of

existence and just the efficacy of the

like mindfulness and so forth the

efficacy of the medit ation techniques

and the practices I mean that's even

more important than the underlying

philosophy is does the practice you know

give may give you make you have

spiritual

progress or help you to have spiritual

progress or at least not get in the way

of

it

so I mean if a good answer would be the

true answer I mean why do you believe in

Buddhism I mean it would have to it

would depend upon

you so

but for me I wouldn't say I think

Buddhism is I'm not a Buddhist because

Buddhism is more logical I mean in to a

large extent it is but that's not really

why I'm I'm Buddhist I mean if if I was

a Buddhist just because it was logical I

mean I'd be a logician that would be

even

better but uh yeah it's empirical and

objective I think that would be good and
it just works I mean that's that would
be the the proof of the the pudding
there is in the eating you know I mean
it just
works I mean might not necessarily work
in getting everybody enlightened but
most people don't even want to be
enlightened so I mean it gets you as far
as you want to get really deep down if
you don't get any you don't get very far
one of the reasons may be that you just
don't want to get very far deep down you
don't want to lose your identity or
something cuz that's that happens a lot
people start meditating and they start
getting scared and want to stop

meditating because their their ego

starts to dissolve or something but also

it just may be that some people are just

more irrational more heart feelings

oriented and so forth so more devotional

like a buck to yoga kind of a thing

might actually work better for

them so we'll just move on to uh keep

theia's next

question which is the goal in Buddhism

is to leave the painful cycle of

reincarnation

but why did the Buddha never actually

draw the simple conclusion of not

bringing another life into the world

where there is no life there are no

desires and if there are no desires
there is no suffering well I mean some
of the theic brahans used to say that
the Buddha was a destroyer of life
because he was advocating celibacy at
least for the his more serious
followers um and with regard to the
people that aren't his serious followers
why would he Advocate C y for normal
people living in a village I mean in in
Ancient India I mean if you were if you
were a lay person your children were
your Social Security there were no
pension plans in those days there was no
social security no Medicare anything
like that it was your kids would support
you when you got

old so yeah I mean he he he was a
sensible person I mean he advocated
celibacy you know not raising a family
for the people that really were keen on
becoming enlightened In This Very life
but for the people who just wanted a
some peace of mind some happiness you
know he wasn't going to say well you got
to be
celibate because I mean that's a very
strong desire for most people most
people just can't be Cel of it it's not
for everybody so the Buddha was wise and
he knew what was going to fly and what
wasn't going to fly he wasn't insisting
on not killing animals for meat he

didn't insist on not having Wars he

could point out that you know causes

suffering and that's not good for you to

do

it and I mean he pointed out sensual

Pleasures especially sex is you know

it's you know it's it's as much trouble

as it's worth at

least but I mean he's not just gonna go

around telling everyone they got to stop

having kids I mean that I mean that

would just be silly it would just make

him less influential and less able to

help

people so I guess I'll just move on to

the next question here also from keep

the vinia and remember the new rule is

no more than four questions

each and it might go down to three let's

call it three plus a free bonus

question so the next question here is

what are your thoughts on the following

quote of

schopenhauer which is as follows if life

the craving for which is the very

essence of our being or possessed of any

positive intrinsic value there would be

no such thing as boredom at all mere

existence would satisfy us in itself and

we should want for nothing

unquote well yeah I can agree with that

I suppose I mean if if life were

possessed of any positive intrinsic

value um I mean still you could say that
even if something is possessed of some
intrinsic value that doesn't mean that
it's never going to be burdensome to
you but uh yeah in general I I agree
with that I mean especially the first
part where it says that life the craving
for which is the very essence of our
being yeah that's schopenhauer's will
right
there but uh yeah overall I pretty much
agree with that it's uh I mean it's not
entirely a logical conclusive statement
you know he's not really proving
anything but you know it's it's an
interesting idea and largely true I
think so I'll just move move on to the

next question which is uh from Cool Whip and there's a lot of explanatory essay that accompanies this question which can be viewed if one reads the comments to the previous Q&A video um from Cool Whip I do like how the whole thing begins though which is dear master of
eclecticism and the question that is embedded in the essay is how does one not fall into deep depression living in a worldly life according to truths Buddhism teaches and he says here the World Health Organization defines depression as lack of Interest or pleasure in previously rewarding or

enjoyable

activities well I wouldn't Define

depression as that I would Define

depression as just like a contraction of

of one's

Consciousness um but what what the World

Health Organization defines as

depression would be probably

nebida it's uh it's niida in p means

like disillusionment

disenchantment and that's um I mean

that's that's a good thing to experience

in Buddhism because ni leads to WEA

which is dispassion you know first

you're just fed up you know you just

you're just sick and tired of all this

samsaric [__] you know that's niida

that leads to iraga or dispassion you
know you just stop having desires and
attachments for all this which then
leads to weoka which is
Liberation so it's the first step
towards Liberation which
uh which is good I mean you're calling
it deep
depression living a worldly life
according to the I mean if I mean if if
you have this amount of disillusion
disillusionment that it is causing a
deep depression then this pretty much of
an indication that you're either going
to have to stop being a a believing
Buddhist or you're going to have to

start taking it more seriously and like
renounce the world and really start
practicing dhamma at a higher
level so because I mean what you're
calling deep depression at least what
the World Health Organization is calling
deep depression is essentially neida
which is the first step towards
Enlightenment at least in that series of
nebida leads to iraga which leads to
weoka so we'll just move on to uh cool
Whip's next question here and Cool Whip
also has the Alias of the sacrilegious
void
Cool Whip AKA The sacriligious V
sacriligious void also says here why
does terab Buddhism not have a monopoly

on enlightenment today what are
alternative methods you can think of
different to sa batana weasa that lead
to Nana yoga and the Hindus seem to
practice only
shamata won't any conceptual fabrication
pja like concept of God philosophy or
science get in the way of true
experiential insight therefore must be
abandoned could psychedelics or other
brain interventions for example
neuralink give a glimpse into nibana or
are these religions religious
experiences of bliss and Clarity
illusory well it looks like he's snuck
in another question here I'm going to

separate

these okay so first question why does

terraa Buddhism not have a monopoly on

enlightenment today what I mean this

this is all these questions so many

question marks here what are the alter

ative methods you can think of does s

batan Lead to Nana well like I said St

John of the Cross may have been fully

enlightened and they have their like the

discal carites the contemplative order

of the discal carites um they've got

their own equivalent to mindfulness

which they call recollection which is

kind of like kind of strange because

sadit or mindfulness also means

recollection so they may have come up

with that independently of each other
which is kind of strange to
me but uh like I was saying earlier the
Hindus and their their idea of aeis were
anything that you have desire for avoid
it I mean that is a powerful practice
it's a very difficult practice it can be
very painful practice but it's a very
powerful
one and then just Detachment in
general like you just doing the chance
and doing the chance and doing the
chance like some of the Hindus do or the
Mantra over and over again until finally
you're just kind of detached from it
it's just going on on its

own and then you're aware of this you
have Insight arise from
that so yoga and the Hindus seem to
practice only shamat that's I think
that's a misconception they don't put as
much emphasis on it because they have
kind of other ways of going about it
just like um like I said just the the
whole self-denial thing that requires a
fair amount of mindfulness right there
just to be aware of your own desires
just so you can like stymy them you know
just not do them [__] block them so to
speak and then here another question
included in this little cluster of
questions won't any conceptual
fabrication papancha like concept of God

philosophy or science get in the way of true experiential Insight therefore must be abandoned yeah but you have to think something so long as you're not enlightened yet and thinking about Karma and Buddha and and that kind of thing is still more thinking

so I mean the concepts eventually become irrelevant once you detach from them you know it's just the mind just nature taking its course just this blah blah blah that just incessantly goes on because that's what your brain's function is just it's like your heart's function is to pump blood and me it's just going to keep going and so you just

have to detach from

that okay so I guess I answered that

question and I really am keen on not not

lasting three hours answering all these

questions so the second part of that

question was could psychedelics or other

brain interventions for example

neuralink give a glimpse into nibana

where are these religious experiences of

bliss and Clarity illusory well it

depends on your own Karma I mean they

can serve at least the the psychedelics

can serve as a kind of uh karmic gimmick

to give you access to something you

didn't have access to before which then

gives you a new sense of perspective you

know it's like at least it's showing you

that there are other ways of looking at
reality that are at least as valid as
the usual waking state for a norming and
with regard to neuralink um yeah you'd
have to have like
enlightened like programmers and
Engineers designing it to do that I
suppose unless there's some weird glitch
like the blow to the head that can also
cause some people to have their
Awakening experience or so I have
read so I'll just move on to the next
question here is Elon musk's philosophy
or vision of Conquering the universe
through science and engineering so one
day we can ask the right questions

compatible with Buddhism where is this
roaming endlessly in samsara it's
roaming endlessly in
samsara yeah that's what it is it's it's
samsaric you know you're trying to use
samsaric means to transcend samsar to
some degree you can do it but it's got
to be through Paradox and and and just
sort of using using our thinking just
liberating ourselves from our Thinking
by means of our thinking it's not a
matter of asking the right questions
it's just realizing that there are no
right questions with regard to that
other than you know what do I need to
do so yeah Elon Musk seems to be sort of
like a scientific realist in in this

description of his attitude and I mean

from a point view of a scientific

realist this is reality samsara is the

only reality there is there is no

Enlightenment or if there is

Enlightenment it's just s psychological

like a saric psychological state so it's

not really Enlightenment at

all so I think I'll just move on to the

next question

from Cool

Whip you expressed fear of transhumanism

but I don't recall a discussion on

whether transhumanism M could be an

Enlightenment machine or a technological

sopona Factory you are predominantly

terot of Buddhist but do you have time
for ideas like Lee smolin's the life of
the cosmos or the autodidactic universe
to name some examples of a possible
theological nature of the universe
ascribing some higher purpose to the
direction of the universe currently
irrefutable and maybe discoverable by
Science and
Mathematics what well I do not think the
universe has any theological purpose
anyone familiar with my theory of
everything you know the simil of the
block of marble I mean the universe is
already absolute it I mean I mean I'm
not talking about the the cosmological
or astronomical Universe I'm just

talking about everything just everything

you know it's already

infinite I mean there's no improvement

is possible I mean you can call you can

say you can improve yourself you can

improve some vers of reality you know

some closed system with within the saric

illusion but it's not going to change

Ultimate Reality at all not not one iota

not one angstrom

unit so I mean a lot of a lot of

teachers Dharma teachers or spiritual

teachers will say you know it's like our

our souls or our Spirits have

voluntarily entered this world so that

we can we can like you know you know

that the absolute can learn to know

itself Through The Eyes of another or

you know this kind of a thing yeah I

don't I don't buy it at

all this is just a kind of dream and

it's it's not helping

anything so I don't do I have times for

ideas like Lee smen's life yeah I've

never read anything by Lee

smolen let's see to name some examples

of a possible te possible theological

nature of the universe ascribing some

higher purpose to the direction yeah

there

is no I do not think there is any

teologicos to

samor so and for it to be discoverable

by Science and Mathematics now you need
to read some K I think in his critique
of science you know it's like no
scientific evidence you know no kind of
empirical scientific evidence or theory
is going to get anyone even one inch
closer to understanding the thing in
itself the thing in itself is just off
the scale you cannot use Som saric means
to know
it you know it's like a character in a
book trying to understand the author
within the context of the
book so I guess I'll just move on to
next question here this is from John and
John says do you have any book

recommendations on the subject of buddhism's decline due to Islamic Invasion I've never read an entire book on the subject of buddhism's Decline and just virtual Extinction in India due to the Islamic Invasion although um a lot of what I know about it comes from this book by AK water Indian Buddhism try and hold it so the glare from the light doesn't mess it up right there Indian Buddhism in the last chapter has the last section of the last chapter is called the spirit of decline I think yeah the spirit of destruction and it's uh talking about how um you know the Muslims just swept in and were just essentially massacring entire

monasteries and that's no that's no exaggeration it's he uses the Muslim sources themselves where they're bragging about having massacred entire monasteries so and I haven't read this book in a few years but uh I think he's probably explaining how just having Maring Muslims killing off monks in in wiping out Buddhist universities and so forth caused just the the collapse of Buddhism because Buddhism in Northern India or throughout most of India at that time was becoming very it was based on like Scholastic monasteries and when those collapsed you know sort of like uh what happened with

Thailand when the Burmese invaded

Thailand back when it was called sayam

back when Audia was the capital it just

caused a collapse of their

ecclesiastical structure which and it

never really fully recovered and this

was few hundred years ago except in

India it was even worse because um the

Burmese weren't like systematically just

sweeping through and wiping out every

Monastery they

found so yeah I mean that would this

book by AK water Indian Indian Buddhism

would be uh I mean at least the end part

of it it's uh it's the only book on my

bookcase that really discusses the

topic so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from you know I'm
wi it and you know I'm wi it says I work
for the forest service with two chicks
who identify as they them and police
other people's use of language to
protect their fragile
worldviews upon meeting my crew we were
asked to say our names and
pronouns we all have views unique to our
conditioning and comma but I feel like
there are infinite ways of connecting
with people in the workplace without
having them adhere to your opinions have
you been associated with anyone who has
gender dysphoria in the US I'm curious
if someone's ever asked you what your

pronouns are um I've never actually

um had any kind of real

interpersonal interaction with a

transsexual here in the US there was a

few in Burma where it's it's in some

ways it's more common at least it's it's

more mainstream you know it's more

acceptable to conservatives in Burma

just because of their belief in karma

and rebirth and transition from male to

female over a series of births and so

forth

um but I'm curious if someone's ever

asked me what my pronouns are not to my

face I mean sometimes you're filling out

a form or something and it'll ask what

your pronouns are or if it's male gender

or non-binary or whatever that kind of

thing I've seen but um yeah if somebody

were ask me what my pronouns are I'd

just i' just be like are you

kidding are you

joking I'll just let them guess you can

just let them figure it out for

themselves

so I'll just move on to the next

question here from you know I'm with it

what are your views on the border crisis

in Southern Arizona you have

humanitarian and Aid groups like no more

deaths fully staffed by Deep leftist

Marxist types who go out and Supply

water to dying immigrants crossing over

the border is this an instant of mixed
comma well I've already worn The Fez
from majamaa since we're talking about
Arizona I'll we this
one okay what are my views on the border
crisis in Southern Arizona well it's
it's it's complete artificial crisis
created largely by the government
because they want illegal aliens and
it's like the ruling Elites of both
parties you know you got the dying out
ruling Elites of the conservative party
who are being replaced by
populists and then you've got you know
the the Neo liberals and also some fair
amount of like commies on in the
Democratic party you know they want

illegal immigrants for different reasons

you know it's like the old Neo conserv

or you know the neocons you know they

just wanted cheap

labor whereas the left they want just

like a voting block voting for more

socialist

handouts

so that's pretty much my view on the

border crisis in Southern Arizona I it's

like people who don't give a sh [__]

about the prosperity of America they

think the prosperity of America is some

kind of a front to the world or they

just are in a state of denial with

regard to what actually causes

prosperity and it's certainly not

diversity I mean history shows that

again and

again so let's see humanitarian Aid

groups like No More Death fully staffed

uh who go out and Supply water to dying

immigrants crossing the border is this

an incident of mixed comma well I mean

there's nothing wrong with giving water

to somebody dying of thirst even if

they're a criminal you know from a

Buddhist point of view you got somebody

you know they walked 2,000 miles to

illegally enter this country just

because you know it's just everyone

knows that President Biden loves illegal

aliens he's not going to do anything he

gives them free phones and stuff you
know he gives them money why not I mean
you can make more money living on
welfare in America than you can by
hering goats in
Honduras why
not so they come up here cross the
border illegally making them
criminals and uh but they're they're
dying of thirst and so somebody gives
them a drink of water I mean yeah
there's nothing wrong with with that
sort of thing helping people in need I
guess but um yeah I in if it's also that
they want to just bring down haidi in in
the USA if that's their motivation for

being there in the first place you know
if their motivation is just they want to
alleviate suffering then that's one
thing if their motivation for being
there is you know to bring down Hai to
bring down the evil colonialist USA you
know and American imperialism and all
that then yeah that's negative so yeah
it would be mixed comma but then again
everything is mixed comma pretty much
anything that we do is mixed Karma
because there's always going to be a
certain amount of delusion so long as
we're unenlightened you know there's
going to be a certain amount of desire
and delusion involved so you're never
going to have pure Good Karma never

there's there's no such thing as pure
100% Good Karma there's always going to
be a shade of gray there's always going
to be um you know some bad karma mixed
in with it but this would be if I mean
this could be sort of one of those 5050
cases where you know you're you're
trying to destroy America by helping
unfortunate people dying up thirst who
are entering the country
illegally so yeah that would be a mixed
Karma
thing but U pretty much all karma is
mixed Karma so I'll just move on to the
next question
here which is from

[Music]

om and om well I said it wrong that time

and oh well I didn't say it quite right

that time either this is

difficult anyway

oh says is concept of Merit somehow in

the sutas I don't really understand how

giving food to a hungry child is less

Merit than to sloppy fatty monk for me

it has the same lever of level of

absurdity as this sentence instead of

Conventional Weapons the Chinese

military is training to shout bad

pronouns at American soldiers well in a

few another decade or so if things

continue as they are that could just

completely destroy American soldiers if

they call them by the wrong pronouns but
um yeah there is the concept of Merit or
just the effects of your meritorious
Deeds I mean the word for merit in poly
is Puna p u NN a so I mean it's got a
word for it it's translated as Merit and
uh yeah there's a famous Su where it's
talking about like the Merit from
feeding somebody or making an offering
to somebody like you feed an animal
according to this suta you're going to
get benefit for a hundred lifetimes and
if you feed like a a bad person that's
like a thousand lifetimes and you feed
to a good person you know it keeps going
up and up then you've got like the bad

Monk and you've got the the
conscientious monk then You' got like
the enlightened Monk and at the very top
I'm pretty sure even higher than
offering to a Buddha is just offering to
the song of the four quarters and to
some degree this is like propaganda
promoting you know offering stuff to
monks you know which is composed by
monks presumably unless it's composed by
the Buddha you know maybe the Buddha
really said it but um you know there's
an awful lot of stuff in the poly texts
emphasizing that you're going to get
really good Merit for offering stuff to
monks and monks really pound away at
this in Burma they just pound away at a

big time so that lay people are just
conditioned that they want Merit they
are offer stuff to monks which is
convenient for the monks I have to admit
I was never really wanting for anything
because they thought they were going to
get big Karma big Good Karma by
supporting me because you know I was
like living in a cave and didn't handle
money I meditated you
know
so yeah there are sutas discussing that
very principle and like if you dis a
Buddha or you you you like show flagrant
disrespect for an lightened being yeah
you're in big trouble way more trouble

than if you you express flagrant

disrespect for a

dog you know like there's one the caica

Su I think there was this monk caica who

was badmouthing I think it was saruta

and molana to the Buddha he's saying you

know they've got you know they're

crooked you know they're not good monks

and the Buddha is warning him don't say

that and he just keeps up with it and

then as he walks away he just he just

breaks out in these sores that gradually

get bigger and bigger and bigger until

they break and then he just

dies as a result of dissing an arant or

in this case two aans but

um yeah it wouldn't happen if he was

dissing a dog or just a foolish person likewise there's one story of I think it was a Pacha Buddha going for alms and there was this rich man who had some leftovers from from some meal or something and he has the servant let's go out and offer it to this this peka Buddha and then afterwards as the Pacha Buddha is walking away he feels regret or remorse it's like I could have just fed that to the servants so because he he offered food to this Pacha Buddha oh should take the hat off I guess so after he offers this food to the peka Buddha oh because he does um he goes to heaven for a zillion gajillion

years but because he regretted it
afterwards he also had to go to hell for
a zillion gajillion years just for this
one little act with regard to a PAB
Buddha so with regard to like Saints
fully enlightened beings you got to be
real careful like you know I would
hesitate to just say someone's you know
someone who you know has a reputation
for saintliness is just a fraud you know
they're a child molester or something I
mean if you had proof of it that's one
thing but still um you know I wouldn't
just around slurs towards uh reputedly
wise
people but yeah getting back to the
question of oh it's uh yeah I mean the

concept of Merit or

Puna or is it

Puna oh man I'm getting real Rusty in my

poly

Puna

yeah yeah Puna that's it so yeah so the

concept is there yeah and there's

there's a lot of stress on it so I'll

just move on to the next question which

is the very last question so we are

keeping it less than three hours and

remember no more than four questions per

person next time this is from Mama and

mama says do dogs have karma for example

spoiled Western dogs and Asian and

African Street dogs and the answer is

yes any conscious sentient being with a
mind is going to have going to make
Karma and experience the results of
Karma and uh you know according to
Buddhism you can be reborn as an animal
under certain circumstances animals um
you know they go up or down there's like
a a frog that went to heaven some famous
case of a frog that went to heaven so um
yeah it wouldn't be able to go to heaven
if it didn't have Karma would it so yeah
I mean they've got simpler Karma than we
do because we're more complicated than
they do but yeah and uh usually the the
karma of animals is very animalistic and
so they' stay stuck at the animal level
for a long time but still it's pretty

obvious that

some Shih Tzu that that lives a good

life and eats lots of raw meat and so

forth you know living in a comfy house

and goes to the vet sometimes and goes

to the groomer to get shampooed and

blowdried and everything that you know

they're living a better life than some

mangy Ur in in Southeast Asia and that's

because of

karma so yeah dogs have Karma any any

kind of being that has

volitions any kind of being that has

will or Cheta is making

Karma and it may be simpler Karma or

even more complicated Karma if you're if

you're like above the human level but
yeah it's it's still there and uh
schopenhauer would probably you even go
so far as to say that even like
inanimate matter would have a kind of
karma because it's will that is causing
it to
exist so I answered all the questions by
golly and it's less than three hours
through some astonishing
miracle and uh yeah so if you have any
questions feel free to ask them no more
than four please and
uh just leave them in the the comments
below and uh click the like button if
you haven't already and subscribe if you
haven't already and read the URL links

if you haven't already including the

little advertisements for my books and

be

happy

hello and welcome to episode 72 of

question and answer I am your host poo

basa and I'm feeling kind of viracy

today I just woke up feeling viracy and

my head feels sort of inflated like a

beach ball and my mind is not entirely

clear

but the show must go

on and we've got lots of questions not

as many as last time but still I think

it would qualify as a Merc onslaught of

questions and I think we may have to

reduce the number

again of questions that each person can

ask per per episode so let's let's go

with three three shall be the number of

the

count so uh I guess I should just Wade

right into this because as I say

merciless onslaught of questions not

that I'm complaining at all that that's

why we're here right you're you ask

questions and I do my best to answer

them so let us proceed shall

we the first question is from

Joseph and Joseph says hello any chance

that all religious beliefs are just the

stories that early man and woman created

themselves to allay fears of the unknown

that these stories have become this

planet's

religions well I mean he even has the

all religious beliefs the all is in

capitals all religious beliefs are just the stories that early man and woman created themselves to aay fears of the unknown and I do think that that's one of the main reasons for religion to arise like early religions it was sort of animism and it was people trying to understand the world that they live in their place in the world um in order to not feel so insecure you know to be able to predict to some degree or at least explain to some degree what's happening so like very early religions you know you've got Thunder in the sky that's because you know God so and so is throwing a hammer or throwing

Thunderbolts or or whatever it is you
know if if there's a disease it's caused
by such and such deity being unhappy
because somebody peed on the secret Hill
or some
such and I mean that kind of insecurity
with the unknown exists in us to this
day but now we have science and science
has pretty much the same purpose as
these narratives in prehistoric times
about you know everything you know the
seasons and day and night and pregnancy
and sickness and thunder and all this
you know rain or drought or whatever
it's all caused by some anthropomorphic
deity pretty much some great spirit out
there somewhere generally up

upwards and you know they've got their
own reasons and best we can do is try to
second guess them so that we can avoid
them causing the bad stuff maybe make
offerings to them but I do not think
that nowadays all religious beliefs are
just stories to allay fears of the
unknown like the four noble truths it's
it's pretty obviously true at least the
first three are pretty self-evident if
one looks into the
matter
so yeah I don't think I mean something
like maamaa philosophy or early Buddhism
I mean in a way it increases the unknown
because it asserts that no narrative is

going to really be true

it's not going to be entirely

valid so that may be how religions

started but it doesn't apply to all

religious beliefs

nowadays and so I'll just move on to the

next question because we've got

approximately 50 questions this time and

this is from

Toronto and Toronto says bon bon

gunaratana states that light use of

alcohol does not constitute a violation

of the fifth precept what do you think

well what I think is that as a general

rule Sri Lankan monks don't really care

about vinea like the rules of monastic

discipline very much like this same Bon

gunaratana was Chief cashier at Viara

book service for many years so I mean he

just doesn't follow

viia and so to some

degree some sali's monks will justify

not following Vania or in this case not

following five

precepts I Used to Know This American

monk in Burma who told me that one of

his teachers who was sinal told him that

it's not paraja if you um if you what is

it called you commit Kus interrupt this

you know so long as so long as you pull

out before you squirt that's not it's

not doesn't really count as sexual

intercourse which is just blatantly

false and this also what Bon gunar rat allegedly States here about light use of alcohol not constituting a violation of the fifth precept I mean for a monk you can drink something that you think is not alcoholic it could be some kind of medicine it could be some fruit juice that's been sitting in the tropical heat for several hours you take a drink of it and it's turned into wine or it's got alcohol in it as just one of the ingredients of this medicine that's it you've broken the rulle Ru and you have to make confession for it
so maybe things aren't quite so strict for Lay people they don't have to make confession for example but um yeah if if

light use of alcohol certainly

constitutes a violation of the fifth

precept just as handling money is in

violation of the Monk's precepts and

anyone taking 10

precepts so I'll just move on to Toronto

Nat's next question

is using the N bomb a violation of the

first

precept so I assume the N bomb is not

the neutron

bomb I think it is a certain uh word

that has become very taboo I mean it's

kind of ironic it's like when I was

young the worst word you could say is

[__] and now little kids can say it it's

no big deal you can say it on Prime Time

television I think

but you cannot say the n-word

unless you're on the right side

politically or you're black and you're

wrapping or something and then you can

say it but then generally there's not a

hard R but I think I'm digressing a

little

bit so is uh using the end bomb a

violation of the first precept the first

precept is

killing yeah you're I don't think you're

killing anybody by saying the

n-word I

mean

yeah I I don't think so I mean it's not

even necessarily a violation of the
fourth precept which is wrong speech I
mean it depends on the motivation of the
person you know let's say there's a
little kid who drunken Grandpa uses the
n-word all the time the little kid hears
it so often he doesn't even know that
it's taboo you know he just that's just
the word you use like or Sherwood
Anderson's like short stories he uses
the n word a lot in his short stories
and in one of the stories I think it's
I'm a Fool by Sherwood Anderson the guy
is the the protagonist like the narrator
is bragging about what an excellent
n-word he had for a best friend you know

it just a word that wasn't taboo yet or

or getting back to the little kid I mean

he's heard it you know for years from

his his drunken Grandpa and you know he

just uses it not even knowing that it's

a bad word

so I mean it depends on your motivation

I mean if if you use the n-word without

any intention to hurt anybody's feelings

even if it turns out to hurt somebody's

feelings I mean you're not guilty of

wrong

speech you have you are guilty of wrong

speech in this case like using like

abusive speech perusa vaa you know

you're you're calling somebody the

nword um I mean it's

only a violation of the the fourth
precept if you're doing it deliberately
for the purpose of hurting someone's
feelings or making them feel bad in some
way so it depends on the circumstances
although nowadays I guess um using the
n-word I mean if you're just talking
among other people that you
know maybe you all have similar views or
something and then I mean you're not
even using it as a like an abusive term
towards somebody's face you know you're
not trying to hurt somebody's feelings
by saying it then no I mean it's like
cussing it's like saying [__] or
something so I guess I'll just move on

to the next question that's weird that

he wrote first precept I was thinking

it'd be fourth precept you know the

precept against wrong speech first

precept is

killing so let's move on the next

question here this is from seac and sead

zida and covac andad zida says in Terra

there are traditionally 40 meditation

objects and some modern weasa techniques

what meditation techniques are or were

used in other Buddhist traditions for

example such as those in sarasti Vada or

other ancient schools Mahayana schools

like yogachara or majaka or Zen or

Tibetan

Buddhism well I'm no Authority

on like non- teravan Buddhist Meditation
especially in Ancient India I assume
that the early schools all had similar
meditation techniques especially like
Saadi batana is I mean it's common to
all the ancient schools um anapana or
meditation on the the breath is common
to all the ancient
schools um I assume that some of the
devotional stuff like recollection of
the qualities of the Buddha that that
also would be common to all of the
ancient schools
so with regard to something like Cina I
would assume that Cina meditation also
would be common to the ancient schools

that probably with regard to practice

the ancient schools of Buddhism really

weren't very different from each other I

mean I'm just this is like an educated

guess I don't know exactly what kind of

meditation like the uh mahasan gika

monks were

practicing like 200 years after the time

of the

Buddha

so yeah with regard regard to the

ancient schools it was probably pretty

similar to Terra I'm sure there were

minor

variations so let's

see then Mahayana schools like yogachara

maamaa well regard to Zen I mean Zen is

pretty well known you know they've got
like uh H
shikantaza which is um it it's sort of
like what the the Catholics call
contemplation you're just watching your
own mind and just keeping it clear as as
clear as you can and also Coons my [__]
meditation which may be um pretty much
exclusive to Zen especially renai Zen
and then Tibetan Buddhism there's lots
of visualizations then there's Zen which
is similar to shikantaza and similar to
certain teravan yogic meditation
techniques um but uh yeah I remember
seeing uh it was like a cartoon I think
it was in uh the inquiring mind magazine

it was just an early Buddhist

magazine and uh it just showed three

meditators you know terraa Zen and and

Tibetan and they're sitting there on on

cushions meditating and the thought

balloon coming out of the the terraa

monk is just like an empty thought

balloon and then the thought balloon

coming out of the Zen monk is like one

of those hand painted Zen circles that's

also empty and then the thought balloon

coming out of the Tibetan monk it's all

these ornate curly cues but still it's

in the inside of the thought balloon

it's

empty so when you get to the the highest

levels they converge I would

assume so I guess I'll just move on to

covac and cod zona's next question this

is kind of a strange

one he

says historically the Sanskrit language

is created by The grimian Panini

probably more than a Cy after the Buddha

already passed away apparently he was

from region where the rigveda was

written and wanted to freeze the

language in time because it had changed

massively since the time of the rig Veda

it is called Sanskrit because it comes

from the SRTA meaning constructed

whereas the naturally spoken languages

were called procrit Scholars refer to

this as classical Sanskrit as opposed to
the language in the Vas which they call
vidic Sanskrit why was Panini's language
used as the proxy for the Sanskrit
language when all other Indo Arian
languages are also descendants of the
original rvic
language other ancient
texts like the upanishads and the VAS
that only came a few centuries before
the Buddha are apparently in Sanskrit as
well does that mean that they were
translated later on or were they all
coming from one region where they spoke
Panini's language this part confuses me
because there were many different
languages all around North India so you

would think there would be texts from other languages as well before Sanskrit was made by Panini and also the suas claim that the Buddha was asked if the teachings should be put into Sanskrit verse but based on the history of the Sanskrit language it seems very unlikely the classical Sanskrit of Panini was around then so do you think this Su was added later or maybe translated to the language of Panini's region if that's what happened to other scriptures for some reason or is there some other explanation yeah I would assume there's another explanation and it seems to me I mean I've never heard before that a man

named Panini invented

Sanskrit I think he was a Garian and he

may have composed the first standardized

Sanskrit grammar so that in a way he

sort of like picking you know like what

he considered to be classical forms for

Sanskrit but I mean he didn't invent it

from

scratch and probably he didn't really

modify it all that much he was just

probably choosing and selecting certain

forms that seem most elegant or most

authentic the least messed with over

time and uh just making grammatical

rules because um I mean you have a

language that has its own grammatical

structure long before it occurs to

anybody to write a grammar book stating
these rules and the grammar like in in
English even Modern English the grammar
is just this artificial set of rules
superimposed on the grammar or
superimposed on the
language and uh I mean it it doesn't
always work like two sentences you must
go and you have to go are both I mean
they both have the same meaning they're
synonymous sentences but if you were to
make a sentence diagram they'd be
diagrammed very
differently so I mean it's I won't go
into it in detail because it's kind of
pointless but I think the long and the

short of it is I don't think Panini
invented Sanskrit he just kind of
standardized a a form of Sanskrit that
already existed and cacin cot zon here
even admits that there were vidic texts
not the rig Veda itself but like the
brah tradition which came in between the
vas and the upanishads you had a group
of texts called the brahmanas that they
were in Sanskrit also it'd be a little
more archaic than classical Sanskrit I
suppose but it wouldn't be as archaic as
vidic Sanskrit and it's it's I mean
ancient Greek is the same way you've got
homeric Greek which is a more archaic
form of Greek
than classical Greek and then you've got

other forms of Greek too even in ancient
times so Panini was sort of like the
person who would uh like some Greek who
would write like the
definitive um like adic Greek
grammar
so um and then Buddhist texts they're
not even in classical Sanskrit it's
called Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit as a
general rule so it's it's sort of like a
a strange form of Sanskrit that isn't
Panini's classical Sanskrit
either but it may be that like
standardized classical Sanskrit goes
back to Panini but still I mean he
probably made relatively minor

variations on a pre-existent language
tradition so I think I probably answered
that
question so I think I'm just going to
move on to the next one this is from
coolwhip and cool Whip's getting right
into the philosophy here his first
question is what is beauty in Buddhism
is beauty essentially attachment for
example art architecture Nature music
mathematics science poetry Harmony
goodness
Utopia uh dot dot dot and then he says
is nibana the highest and only form of
beauty well I mean there's a whole
branch of Western philosophy trying to
Grapple with the whole question of what

is beauty like Aesthetics I think it's
called and I've never really had much
interest in it because it seems largely
arbitrary to some degree what we
consider to be beautiful is is like
instinctive you know it's just kind of
wired into us and it can be just
arbitrary like a female turkey sees the
grotesque purplish Waddles of a male
turkey as
attractive why I don't know I think
maybe it's because they're d
but that's just the way it is you know
even birds and fish and so forth have an
aesthetic sense in humans it's probably
a bit more

sophisticated but uh what is beauty is

is like whatever is like with regard to

an image or or a series of sounds or

something it would just be like what is

Pleasant you know what it is that you

like I guess I mean maybe some people

they just like ugliness but then the

ugliness would have a certain Beauty to

them I

guess so

um with regard to the the last part of

this question Cool Whip asked is nibana

the highest and only form of beauty no

nibana is just beyond beauty or ugliness

so it's just off the scale and then uh

is beauty essentially attachment from

the terraa Buddhist point of view like

the ancient Indian point of view it says
that a monk should avoid what is
beautiful and anything associated with
lust or passion and just he should just
seek out what is ugly and as a young
monk I was consider continually thinking
I mean you look around all these
monasteries and they're all beautified
you know they've got flower gardens and
and everything Tastefully arranged and
everything and it from the very
beginning once I started reading ancient
Buddhist text it was pretty clear it
would have been much more appropriate
for them to have like rotting corpses or
skeletons you know

I I even considered you know if if uh if
I were ever to become an Abbot and I
eventually did but I didn't do this but
I used to think if I ever became an
Abbot I'd sit up like the like the
skeleton Garden you know just have all
these skeletons with you know the the
bones articulated held together with
wire and just have them in the various
poses of life that sort of thing it
would be much more appropriate for
Buddhist Monastery than having beautiful
grounds you know manicured and
landscaped and everything and then of
course you read the uh advertisements
for meditation centers in the west and
one of the first things they'll say is

you know how beautiful the place is

which is already you're you're going

against like serious

dham so yeah for in terot of Buddhism

Beauty in general is uh it's considered

to be a kind of sensuality although the

dhamma itself you know sometimes it'll

say you know the dharm itself is

beautiful um but that's a different kind

of beauty and and that's just uh a kind

of goodness I suppose but even when you

get to nibana even even goodness is

transcended so we'll just move on to

cool Whip's next question here because

we got lots of

questions and so he says what is desire

is all desire UNH wholesome and then he
continues here how about AR Hans that
eat and sleep isn't this desire or arant
that move from one place to another also
desire
desire for nibo or desire and intention
the same if not how to discern whether
it's desire or intention for example
intention or desire to read venerable
poob bosa's books to reduce my
ignorance well desire essentially is
dissatisfaction because you don't want
things let's see I'm trying to Define it
without having words like desire and
want but desire essentially is
dissatisfaction with the way things are
you know you're it's like friction

against the way things are you want it
I'm saying want again but you would
prefer that things be different than
they are or you would prefer that they
stay the way they are and then of course
they're not going to because
everything's changing so desire is
essentially putting yourself at odds
with the empirical universe and the way
things are it's like you're trying to um
you know in your opinion things should
be the way you prefer and not the way
they actually are so it's you're setting
yourself up against the
universe so is all desire un wholesome
ultimately yes but then let's see here's

he includes desire for nibana and even desire for enlightenment it's a kind of it's the least UNH wholesome kind of Desire but even that has to be transcended it's like um the person who is is like seriously striving for enlightenment you know they abandon all their other desires and they have this one last desire this desire for enlightenment and in a way that's wholesome for them because it it helped them to get rid of all their other attachments and desires you know supposedly but eventually they're even going to have to get rid of that one last desire that turns into their last their last hindrance their last obstacle

to enlightenment is the desire for the
enlightenment itself because any kind of
Desire is really you're just like in
conflict with the way things
are but then let's see go up here a
little bit more and he says how about
orans that eat and sleep isn't this
desire or orans that move from one place
to another just because you do something
doesn't mean that you're at odds with
the universe like the common example
that I give is you get a flat tire then
I mean even if an enlightened being it's
a flat tire he's not going to say well
the tire is flat I'll just sit here by
the side of the road for the rest of my

life or you know I just won't do
anything um yeah Ian it's or let's say
you're dancing if you're dancing there's
not the desire to move your foot in a
certain way there's not a desire I mean
especially if you're good at it maybe if
you're just learning or you're just feel
awkward and self-conscious because
you're not drunk enough or something
then yeah there might be like thinking
and sort of having desires to do it a
certain way or whatever but once it
becomes just a flow like a spontaneous
flow then you're not in conflict with
anything you're just in harmony with the
universe you're in harmony with the
Dance Floor you're in harmony with the

the partner you're dancing with and so

you're not really setting yourself up

against anything so you get the flat

tire I mean this is obviously the thing

to do get out and fix the tire no

problem

so yeah I mean

intention or desire and intention the

same well not exactly that's kind of a

subtle

question um and I mean an arant wouldn't

have either technically because he

doesn't make any Karma and Karma is

intention or Cheta bition or

will um desire is usually you know TNA

or ch or something there are a number of

pow that uh kind of cluster around the

the Western English idea of

Desire um they they're they're similar

but I don't think they're exactly the

same I should have asked an Abid dama

scholar whether desire and intention are

exactly the same but I don't think that

they are I think that in Abid dama they

make like an ultimate distinction this

is desire like all like Chanda and this

is poition or Chad

but an Oran has neither so I mean you

could argue that they are kind of the

same but I

think let's

see yeah it could be they're all

intentions even are at least a little

bit UNH wholesome which is why orans
don't create them anymore and so I mean
then you got the question of you know
how does an Oran move
around and the official orthodox expan
is that they have what's called Kia
which is functional Consciousness and in
a way it's just sort of like
this it's like a volition that doesn't
create Karma it's just because the Abid
Scholars I mean it's not mentioned in
the sutas at all the Abid Scholars had
to come up with something so that's the
best they could come up with but for me
I do think that it's very possible
assuming again that enlightened beings

even exist in the context of

Sara that

um I mean there's just nobody there they

would be acting in accordance with the

the karma of the people who are

observing them and if nobody's observing

them they're like the tree that falls in

the forest and there's just nobody

there so I guess I answered that

one I hope I answered it in somewhat

satisfactory manner so I'll just move on

to cool Whip's next

question and cool Whip's next question

is if this universe is for formless and

infinite mindmade where anything is

possible nothing is improved nor reduced

but is in Endless condition creation and

then in parentheses got samsara the
Mahayana conclude that both samsara and
Nirvana are essentially the same
emptiness reality is non-d dual
everything is already perfect so you
can't perfect it anymore you are already
enlightened creation is here to enjoy
that's all the dharmakaya is doing
creating exploring having fun knowing
knowing itself dot dot dot its purpose
is to know itself and help itself know
itself we just need to strengthen our
connection with the enlightened Buddha
nature within us all I find mahay's
answer easier to grasp but wrong because
their metaphysics is answered and their

path has a clear purpose or fruition
whereas terraa leaves it unanswered and
I'm questioning the faith on which the
path relies I guess Mahayana
have reified the absolute is whereas
Terra leave it as the mind bending
middle way and can't help but
interpreting isn't my understanding is
that the unconditioned nibana is not
attained through conditions or some Sor
and this is a paradox our faith in the
uncondition relies on paradoxical
acausality when our experience can only
show us only conditioned causality we
need this Faith the mahayan answer the
Paradox by embracing it through
Indulgence and helping others they say

they can remain detached while indulging maintaining the view of emptiness which is nonsense because attachment is the prior cause inter is there a question mark here okay inter Terra the impetus is to free oneself from suffering progressing through disenchantment or a kind of boredom of this condition reality but if I don't exist why would I intend on transcending the wheel of rebirth who or what becomes enlight maybe maybe that is the question maybe I could have just said that part who or what becomes enlightened who or what was unenlightened can you explain to us why the goal of Enlightenment even makes

sense if no being is suffering as no being
exists there are only Aggregates based on causes and conditions whether the Aggregates continue or don't through seeing nibana in this infinite Universe Enlightenment and its opposite seems equivalent okay he just keeps going here H let's see there's another couple more question marks here this is I mean when you ask one question that has like six question marks in it that's six questions what are the reasons or a working hypothesis one would have for this path can you please explain how Enlightenment fits into your view of the block of

stone okay well maybe just that last sentence can sort of encapsulate all the rest of this I mean who becomes in light who or what becomes enlightened and see it's like the block of stone contains within it every possible statue even moving statues statues that are so complicated that they start thinking that they're independent of the block of stone you know they think that they have an inherent self-existence maybe even a soul that's how complicated some of these statues are in the block of marble and it's just kind of an illusion and so I mean the purpose is to just get the statue to stop thinking that it's a

that it's separate that

it's that it has like this inherent

self-existence separate from everything

else so I mean you're

using it's like a mahay text I read a

long time ago says the purpose of Lord

Buddha's teaching is to liberate us from

our Thinking by means of our thinking

and I

mean it just the delusion just gets more

and more subtle until it just poofs out

of existence I mean it's just the

delusion itself ceases and that's that's

what happens when somebody becomes

enlightened because there ultimately is

no Somebody That Never Was A somebody

it's just this illusion or delusion that

there is a somebody that eventually

stops so I guess I sort of answered that

question can you explain to us yeah I

think I just explained why the goal of

Enlightenment even makes sense I mean

it's just

delusion like sort of working on itself

to become less diluted until the

delusion

stops but the delusion isn't ultimately

real just like the person isn't

ultimately real but I mean it seems real

enough to us and that's good enough I

mean I mean ultimately it doesn't matter

whether you go to heaven or hell but to

you personally so long as you're a

delusional being like a pseudo being you think that you're a being then I mean it does kind of matter whether you go to heaven or hell and you're better off going to heaven and so I mean it doesn't matter whether you're miserable or happy but still it's probably best to go for the happiness instead of the misery so long as you're stuck in s Sora you got to play by the

rules even though ultimately you are just part of some sorrow and you don't go all the way down to the level of Ultimate

Reality and I don't know if I answer that question but there's plenty more to answer here so let's see if I do better

on the next

one this is from ruie and ruie says is

refusing to pay unfair taxes a breach of

the second

precept

um is refusing to pay taxes essentially

stealing I think is what he's what he's

asking here second precept taking what

is not

given so I mean you're not exactly

taking what is not given you're just not

given so I mean from a Buddhist point of

view like an ethical point of view not

doing anything is ethically neutral just

to sit there and do nothing so long as

you're not thinking anything you know

you're just zoned out let's say you're
not doing it let's just let's just make
keep it physical so long as you are
physically just sitting there not doing
anything you're not doing anything
wrong so yeah I think refusing to pay
unfair taxes is not necessarily taking
what is not given um it'll depend on
your own mental States you know whether
something is Good Karma or Bad Karma
depends on the mental states of the
person who is doing the act if not
paying taxes is an act I mean if you're
cheating on your income tax that's that
would be at least
lying but if you just say yeah I owe you
this supposedly at least according to

the law but I'm not going to pay you
anything well I mean good chance you're
going to go to
prison or you're just going to get your
your paycheck garnished or something you
know they'll get it somehow or another
they'll make sure that it's it's not
encouraged that people don't pay their
taxes
so yeah I don't think it's necessarily a
breach of the second precept unless you
are like trying to deprive the
government of something that you think
is belongs to the government and you
just don't want them to have it and I
don't think most people who don't pay

income tax really are thinking along
those lines so I mean it's against the
law and you can get in trouble for it
and you can cause a lot of suffering to
your family for example if you just wind
up in
prison but um I don't think it's
necessarily taking what is not given
because you're just not taking anything
you're just not you're just not giving
it so I'll just move on to ru's next
question
here he says or more broadly if refusing
to obey unjust laws entails a breach of
the precepts what would be the result in
karma now refusing to obey unjust laws
personally as an American who still has

some

some respect for the the founding

father's ideals I mean

really um we have the right to disobey

what we consider to be unjust laws I

mean that's how America was born was by

disobeying what they considered to be

unjust laws it was actually like mostly

tax

laws

so yeah I don't think it necessarily

does entail a breach of the precepts

unless you're somehow killing or

stealing or or lying or something

by refusing to obey the unjust laws I

mean you know what the five precepts are

so I mean if disobeying an unjust law

isn't breaking any of these five

precepts then you're not breaking a

precept not not any of those five

anyway and the result in karma of

disobeying an unjust law it will depend

again on your mental state I mean if you

do it out of just virent hatred of the

government or virent hatred of of

whatever I mean the hate is going to be

be the Bad Karma and then of course

you're going to it's going to come back

to you somehow or

another

so let's see I think I answered that

question if refusing to obey unjust laws

entails a breach of the precepts what

would be the result in karma yeah again people people ask you know what's the karma of this action what's the karma of that action but it depends on the individual when two people can do the same exact action outwardly and one of them's getting Good Karma and one's getting bad karma you know like the classic example I tell over and over again you like you got a snake catches a frog the frog is fighting for for its life squealing and you hear the squealing you come over and you chase the snake away and save the Frog well if you did it out of compassion for the Frog you did something good and if you

did it out of hatred for the snake you
did something bad even though it was
exactly the same
action maybe you did it for a
combination of the two which you did you
got good karma and Bad Karma at the same
time so again it's like you have to
uh look at your own mind see see what
the motivation is in order to get some
idea as to whether it's a wholesome act
or an UNH wholesome act if it makes you
feel more expansive and less less
egotistical more generous you know your
conscience is clear then chances are
you're doing something fairly good and
if it makes you feel guilty or you know
just you're afraid to you're looking

over your shoulder all the time after
having done it that kind of a thing then
probably what you did wasn't all that
wholesome depends on your mental States
so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Al bakina I
think is how to pronounce his name and
Al says what are your views on chiong do
you believe that Chi is a real thing
that can be cultivated within the human
body Chiang I know almost nothing about
Chiang I assume it has something to do
with Tai Chi see I mean really
Chinese um spirituality I mean aside
from like medieval Chan Zen Buddhism
maybe you know the da ching and stuff I

know very little

about this um chiong or somebody asked

me about uh that group in China that's

being persecuted in uh rested and

harvested for organs and so

forth and I I knew almost nothing about

it in fact the name is escaping me at

the moment so let's see do you believe

that Chi is a real thing that can be

cultivated within the human body or the

the danten I used to not this guy who

was really into taiichi he's explained

to me my danten which is like down I

think it's just right below your belly

button some kind of nerve plexus or

actually it's probably like this plexus

of chi channels you know you got like

the moon Channel and and the spleen
Channel and all this kind of stuff and I
think it's kind of like ABI where people
were just trying to formulate some
system that they could wrap their head
around as a way of trying to understand
the world they live in you know getting
back to the very first question of this
Q&A um maybe if you believe in it enough
it kind of lends it a kind of empirical
reality through a kind of metaphysical
placebo
effect um I mean some kinds of Chinese
medicine work you know acupuncture you
know they at least they have enough
empiricism that they know that this

actually works when you do it but uh
yeah in in uh ancient Buddhism they had
a different system it wasn't referring
toqi although they have like nadis which
I think literally means River you know
it's like streams of of energy going
through your body which I suppose could
be equated with Chi although they have
an entirely different system for
explaining it so yeah I mean it's really
I've had almost no interest in it I just
can't relate to it very well I have a
degree in biology never did we have I
have to take a class on Chi you know
because it's just not empirical at least
to the Western
mind or maybe the Western mind just

hasn't grasped such profundity yet but
uh yeah just I know almost nothing about
chiong so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from lib
Lam and Liber Lam says a mystical Guru
named Babu G said the end of religion is
the beginning of spirituality the end of
spirituality is the beginning of reality
and the end of reality is real Bliss
when that too is gone we have reached
the destination to me this sounds very
similar to Nana despite this coming from
a Hindu vdic system of yoga are there
steps in that sequence you would add or
remove or would you say it's overall not
a very Buddhist statement well I mean

when reality is is only the third step
and then there's more steps after
reality you're essentially leaving
reality behind it seems to me maybe he's
talking about empirical reality but I
mean empirical reality is what science
is going for and I mean that's not very
spiritual I would come before
spirituality I
suppose well I mean the first two parts
the end of religion is the beginning of
spirituality and the end of spirituality
is the beginning of reality maybe maybe
I just end there the end of reality is
real Bliss I mean that's that's you know
was it uh what was it
chitanand

chitanand yeah there's that's that's

like a Hindu

thing um Buddhism really does not Define

nibana as

Bliss um and certainly it wouldn't be

considered the end of reality that that

end of Reality Part just doesn't make

much sense to me because I mean from my

point of view you know nibana is

reality

so yeah I mean different different

teachers have different systems and so

long as it works for them and their

disciples that's fine but uh yeah I

don't think leaving reality behind

is a a good way to become enlightened or

reaching the

destination but then again he maybe

means something other than reality and

or you know when he says reality he

doesn't mean actual Ultimate Reality he

might mean some other kind of virtual

reality or something and I really don't

know what his uh context was for the

destination is two steps after you've

left a reality

behind so I'll just go on to Libra

Lamb's next question here do you believe

that Padma sambava really slapped his

hand into the Rock with that handprint

in it well leaving beside Padma samb

Baba slapping his hand on the Rocks um

in Burma there are supposedly two

Footprints of the Buddha where the

Buddha stepped on a rock and left this

footprint and it's uh what's it called

Cheto there's like this

you know it's supposedly a wildlife

refuge but it's been completely raped

and racked by villagers with the the

forest service taken the side of the

villagers because the Burmese are very

people oriented people and they don't

you know they prefer people to wild

animals that can be scary and dangerous

and so forth so I mean there are two

supposed Footprints of the Buddha plus

another footprint that's just left by an

Arun and the one left by an Arun is

actually about foot size it's just a d
on a rock but the U the two Footprints
of the Buddha I measured them one of
them was like it was like 4 and 1 half
fet long I he was this big thing it
looked sort of like a map of Sri Lanka
kind of teardrop shaped and the other
one was actually kind of foot-shaped but
it was sort of like a a Sasquatch
footprint and people just venerate these
things you got Monks chanting paritas
sitting around the the footprint that's
all covered with gold leaf and people
are throwing money onto the footprint
and so forth and probably it's just a
natural rock formation that looks kind
of like a footprint or in the PMA s

Baba's case it looks like a handprint or

maybe somebody carved it there if it

looks really like a hand it's probably

you know maybe some prehistoric Shaman

put a handprint carved it into the Rock

there or

something but

uh yeah I don't think that the Buddha

stepping on a on a rock is going to

leave like a four and a half foot long

footprint

and uh just by association i' I'd be

skeptical of padas samb Baba's handprint

also because I've never taken that kind

of stuff very seriously I mean he was a

human like the Buddha himself was a

human being you know he he somehow
married a woman and fathered a child to
her so I mean it's hardly likely that
he's going to be 27 feet tall and that
was the Assumption of these Footprints
is that according to the commentarial
tradition the Buddha was 27 feet tall
and so he had feet that were
correspondingly
huge so yeah I just I doubt it I mean I
can't say for sure but I remain
skeptical on that one so we'll just move
on to the next question here from Libra
lamb Can monks drink cow's milk if it is
offered to them
well uh cow's milk is considered to be
bojena or substantial food so it could

only be accepted between Dawn and

midday and uh yeah that's possible I

drank lots of C milk when it was offered

to me um usually it would be offered in

like a little

baggie and you just uh pour it into a

glass or something when you get home and

drink it so yeah yeah it's it's I mean

it's mentioned in the the rules of

monastic discipline that milk is

allowable for monks but it is food and

so you can't drink it in the afternoon

or at

night so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Stevens

and Stevens has uh added to the previous

question about drinking cow's milk it's
uh in slightly different language he
says might a monk suckle at the opulent
velvetine Tee of a young Jersey heer
overflowing with delectable nutriment in
order that he might gain the most
optimal nourishing sustenance with which
to bolster and fortify his mind and body
in his continuing quest for
enlightenment
and uh the main qu the main difference
from this question and the previous
question aside from the opulent
velvetine language is uh might among
actually suckle at the utter of a cow
and uh yeah I don't think that would be
allowable for a couple of reasons first

of all somebody would have to offer the
cow to him and an
offering it has to be something if
you're going to offer something to a
monk it has to be something that a man
of average strength can pick up and hold
out and offer and a full grown cow
probably is not GNA work that way um
especially regard to to
food um yeah I mean you can offer land
or something but if it's going to be
food it has to be manageable enough that
one person can hand it to the Monk and
the monk can accept it and the
cow yeah I'm not so sure about that but
also another problem with this is that

for a monk to be sucking on a female animal's titty um probably would be a minor offense it would be a Duca offense or an offense of wrongdoing like for a monk to touch a human female and enjoy the contact is a sesa offense um for him to touch um I think it's a unic and enjoy the contact that's a tulay fence which is one notch below s deesa in severity for him to touch a man or animal um and enjoy the contact is only a Dua which um kind of lets homosexuality slip through the cracks a little
bit but then again a homosexual man might be considered a panda which is usually translated as unic because uh

there is fairly good evidence in the

text that um a homosexual man is uh not

100% man you know he's got a little bit

of woman mixed in with

him

so yeah sucking on the the titty of a

cow um yeah in a way there's no

intermediary of the person offering the

food to the monk I mean he have to offer

the whole cow or something and then

secondly coming into a pleasurable

contact I assume he would enjoy the

opulent velvetine Tee of the young

Jersey heer overflowing with delectable

nutrients

so if he enjoyed it then he'd be

breaking a rule too because he'd be in

contact with a female

animal so I think I'll just move on to

Stevens's next question

here and he says I think this is a good

existential question for Q&A potentially

how do you motivate yourself to be so

consistent in your

q&as well I mean I wasn't I didn't start

off being consistent in my q&as it

wasn't until um they be I started

getting enough questions that I finally

just had to stop writing for my blog and

that Saturday afternoon or or weekends

which was when I would write the blog

after I became uh a working man again

you know when I was a monk I could just

sit around and write as much as I wanted
I might have you know six or eight blog
posts already in the queue just waiting
to be
uploaded but once I started working and
having a woman and just you know having
all these duties and responsibilities
and
things to do and all that then my blog
writing just went down to every weekend
and I was consistent with that up
until well up until it stopped being
consistent I guess and so I've pretty
much taken over just doing q&as which in
a way is easier than writing blog posts
and especially I mean one strange thing

about being a lay person when you're
working like in a sheet metal shop and
so forth is you just don't don't
philosophize as much and you don't think
so much about philosophical topics to
write about so it's easier with a Q&A
because people are just offering up the
philosophical topics and I'm just
responding to them I don't have to thing
them up
myself unless you're it's uh the yoga
Chara Buddhists are right in which case
it's my own karma is generating these
questions and I guess Terra would agree
with that to a large
degree so how do I motivate myself to be
so consistent in my q&as well I mean

nowadays if I skip a week then I'm just

going to have

this it's just going to be

unmanageable even though now we might

have to get down to like three questions

each

um

so let's see how do I motivate myself I

don't know it's just it's just the way I

am I guess it's uh maybe I'm a

perfectionist and it just it's something

that kind of keeps me out of trouble I

don't know it's like writing my blog

especially when I was a a monk you know

it just gave me something kind of

wholesome to do and you know you get a

satisfaction from the job well done you
know it might be kind of painful while
you're doing it but as soon as you're
done with it and you can look at it and
you know you approve of of your
handiwork it's it's fine um but how do I
motivate myself I don't really even
think about how tell you the truth I
mean it just I just do
it yeah I mean I don't have to give
myself pep talks or anything for a Q&A
you know I just sit here and maybe spend
15 20 minutes just kind of chilling out
you know kind of emptying my mind a
bit um but that's I've already already
made up my mind to do the Q&A by
then

so yeah I'm sorry Stevens I can't answer
that question very well because I don't
know it's just it's just my my nature
it's like a
character quality or something I don't
know
so I just move on to Stevens's next
question where he says he continues I
feel it goes beyond Q&A in some sense
that the regularity of dhama talks are a
stabilizing and soothing influence and I
like this idea that the teachers of the
dhama are always there for us no matter
how chaotic it gets no matter what time
of day or night no matter the weather or
conditions but as a teacher of dhama who

is there for you especially in times
where no one is listening to whatever
I'm doing it makes me question my
motivation and question myself as to
what I am doing how can I become so
consistent and steadfast in the same way
well let's see where's the first part of
the question here as a teacher of dhama
who is there for you well my sweetheart
is there for me in regard to most
aspects of life I think to in the
aspects that you know a sweetheart can
can be there for somebody she's there
for me me um but I mean I have been a
loner my whole life I've to some degree
I've considered teachers to be kind of
cheating you know having a teacher is

like cheating you just have to do it on
your own and as a monk I mean I was
pretty much on my own I was a loner and
I inherited that from my father I think
he just taught me you know just don't
care what other people think you know
just do what you consider to be the
right thing to do and uh you're doing
okay and he was is kind of eccentric and
I turned out kind of eccentric partly
because of
him um but again it's it's like it's for
myself in a way I mean I'm I'm happy to
share this with people and if people um
you know find something of value in what
I'm saying I'm I'm gratified by that you

know it's I'm making good karma I'm gathering up Treasures in Heaven but still I think it's more of a personal thing than um I've never been like a totally compassionate person you know wanting to to make the world a better place and so forth

um really like I've I've talked about dhama that there's like a more head oriented masculine path and a more heart oriented feminine path and the heart-oriented feminine path is striving for the cessation of suffering or Dua whereas the more head oriented masculine philosophical path is going for the cessation of delusion and really that's been my main motivation to practice

dhama is I want to understand reality I

want to know

reality and it really other

people um are kind of irrelevant to that

especially if nobody really exists

anyway so I don't know if I answer that

question huh I answered part of it I

bet yeah I answered part of it I think

who is as a a teacher of dhama who is

there for me yeah I pretty much answered

that I mean you can say I mean if you

have like

um like a deep reverence for some Guru

even if they're dead you know like a lot

of Christians have this deep reverence

for Jesus then you know they've always

got this feeling in their heart that
he's there with them and uh for much of
my life I've I've had similar feelings
for neim Koli Baba up on top of the
altar there more so than the Buddha
because the Buddha is so far back in
history that I mean he's just like this
shadowy presence you know there's all
these stories and legends about him but
I mean how reliable are they obviously
they're not all reliable so you can't
really say what kind of a person he was
I mean he was a wise person but still
you know he's so far back you know he's
like Hercules or something where you
know he's just so far back that you
can't really know him in a personal

level or at least I can't I mean you

just have to imagine this construct in

your own mind and then have a

relationship with that which is probably

what most Christians do with with h

Jesus in my

opinion so I forgot where I was even

going with that oh yeah somebody that

that is there for you um yeah I mean my

father always loved me and believed in

me that was like a a strengthening

stabilizing influence on me throughout

much of my

life I still kind of feel him in my

heart

so yeah I mean it's but it it's mostly

personal it's mostly like coming from
within myself that I'm just I'm just a
loner you know the entire universe is
just sort of
encapsulated you know in the thing the
size of the thumb in in the chamber of
the heart or whatever I don't know I'm
I'm starting to
babble so I think I'll just move on to
uh to Stevens's next and last
question which I hope will cause me to
babble somewhat
less and that is what are the rules for
monks oh wait this isn't even from
Stevens I forgot to write this this is
by Numa if I remember correctly so
please excuse me while I type numa's

name here okay

tight so Numa says what are the rules

for monks fraternizing with lay

people what about providing spiritual

instruction to lay people and more

specifically what are the rules about

providing spiritual counsel Andor

instruction to lay people of the

opposite

sex

okay well in the sutas it's not in the

rules of monastic discipline but for

example in the ATA waga which is very

ancient Buddhist texts um you know it

just says that monks should not

fraternize with lay people they should

not make up acquaintances in the village
you know just again you're you're a
loner you're going alone like the Horn
of the
rhinoceros and if you're going to be
hanging out with someone you should be
hanging out with fellow livers of the
Holy
life so I mean it's it's pretty much
discouraged but um There Are Rules with
regard to fraternizing with lay people
for
example um a monk is to be
banished if he is considered to be a
corruptor of families like being overly
familiar with lay people just you know
coming into their house hey how's it

going what's what's on TV you know you
got anything to eat that kind of stuff
just sort of behaving in an improper way
and sort of causing the family to expect
that of monks or have a low opinion of
monks then yeah that's a relatively
serious
offense I mean you get admonished three
times and if you're still doing it then
you're you're banished I mean you just
have to move to a different different
area just get away from the family that
you're corrupting um there is a rule a
pidia rule in the Pim Moka saying that
uh you should not teach dhama word by
word to anyone who is not fully ordained

so that would even include

novices um there's it's a little bit

controversial what you mean by saying

and I think it's Pau is the word where

you're you're teaching dhama like verse

by verse or word by

word um you're not supposed to do that

and uh that's like an ancient Indian way

of teaching I guess that was done you

know with by brahans and monks and so

forth but it wasn't you weren't supposed

to do that with lay people um see you're

not supposed to sleep under the same

roof with a male who is not fully

ordained for more than three nights in a

row and that includes novices also

novices are not fully ordained uh with

regard to women it's more strict of course like you're not allowed to sit alone with a woman where there's no man who can see what you're doing or hear what you are saying saying and and hear and understand what you are saying so I mean if he doesn't speak your language or it's just a baby or something then that wouldn't count they have to understand what you are saying and so um yeah it's it's much stricter with regard to

women

um see fraternizing with lay people and providing spiritual instruction to lay people yeah so I mean giving spiritual

instruction to lay people you can sit
there in front of a group of people
including men and women and deliver a
sermon and that's
fine but uh like private counsil with
women you shouldn't do it there should
always be a chaperon you never sit down
alone with a woman I mean if you have to
be alone with the one you remain
standing I used to do that when I was
very strict around I mean the Burmese
bless their hearts I mean they're
they're devout Buddhists but Burmese
monks tend not to be very strict in
vinia and so even the lay people that
want to be proper Buddhist lay people
don't I mean a lot of them don't even

know that monks aren't supposed to touch
women because so many monks touch
women or money I mean most Burmese
people don't even realize that it's not
allowable to handle money because a lot
of monks including some of the most
famous monks are just demanding
money we don't need to wallow in
that so I think I answered that question
you know there are a few rules not a lot
of rules because mostly it's just
assumed that monks are just going to be
homeless radical renuncian just
wandering around not living in the same
place and you know building up
familiarity with with families and so

forth they just go alone like the the
Horn of the rhinoceros although to some
degree a certain amount of teaching
especially if you're a senior monk then
especially on upos days it may be your
duty if people come to you asking you to
teach them some D then you should teach
them but again don't do it word by word
from the texts and uh you know
like I'm not even exactly sure what it
means I mean does it mean that they're
saying it at the same time or is just
repeat after me because that repeat
after me happens a lot in Burma I think
I mentioned that in the previous
Q&A like you're giving the precepts um
and the the refuges yeah I what I meet D

just means whatever I say you say so

they're just repeating after you because

you're leading them through the poly

which they might not know very well if

at

all so I guess I answered that question

so I'm just gonna move on to the next

question here and uh this question is

from

[Music]

om and oh says do you think sir any one

of your viewers is

enlightened and really I don't know um

just going with Statistics then probably

not um or going with the idea that

Enlightenment really is just uh it's

like a paradox and you can't really say
if it exists or doesn't exist in this
world then yeah I mean the whole answer
would be
paradoxical um and like ROM dos used to
say you know you can you can go to Tibet
and climb mountains and find gurus
that'll teach you the the mystery of the
universe when the whole time your aunt
Mabel back in Massachusetts has been
fully enlightened and instead of telling
you the secrets of the universe she just
says have some soup but as it turns out
have some soup is like the perfect thing
to say under the
circumstances
so yeah I mean the whole the whole thing

of Enlightenment is a kind of paradox

and so U it's very difficult to answer a

question like that but going with

um going with like orthodox Terra I mean

if someone was fully enlightened I mean

why would they be listening to me they

wouldn't need to be asking questions you

know they wouldn't need to be hearing

this kind of

stuff so my guess is probably not but I

hope I didn't offend any aans that are

watching this

video so I'll just move on the next

question this is from

Fred and this question is kind of hard

to wrap my head around do vinea rules

really have metaphysical

outcomes and a Venia rule is just words

on a on a palm leaf or words that you

memorize it's just words a Venia rule so

it doesn't have metaphysical outcomes

because it's I mean it's just inert you

know it's it's karmically

neutral but I mean it's your attitudes

with regard to any rules can't have

metaphysical outcomes you know it's like

if you're really super strict you got a

super strict monk that I mean he thinks

that he's you know he's just hopeless

because you know he keeps breaking some

minor rule he look he notices his

fingernails have gotten too long and so

that's that's against the rules and he's

he's like he has fallen from his moral
Purity because he's broken this rule
there are monks that are super strict
like that and yeah I mean you're making
Karma all the time by worrying about
vinia worrying about breaking rules or
not breaking rules that kind of thing
and of course I mean a Vine rule saying
that you shouldn't kill then I mean
regardless of the vinea rule you're
going to be having a metaphysical
outcome in in the form of karma karmic
fruition if you kill or if you lie or if
you steal or or if you punch
somebody or
whatever so many rules I mean they don't

have any moral quality really like the long fingernails thing or eating in the afternoon or having your robes cut and sewed in a certain way or having your hair you know long or short or whatever is I mean that's that's all morally neutral unless you've got some kind of like attachment to how things ought to be and then you're like in conflict with the universe and you're making Karma so it's not the V rules themselves that really have metaphysical outcomes but some V rules refer to actions that ordinarily have metaphysical outcomes and uh even so many rules that don't ordinarily have metaphysical outcomes just by breaking them some monks because

they've got this attachment to veneer

rules in their head like an obsession or

something it can still have a

metaphysical

outcome but the rules themselves are

just

words so I'll just move on to Fred's

next

question is nibana really out of the 31

planes of

existence that's an easy one yeah nibana

is not one of the 31 planes of existence

it is not a plane of existence

distance it is off the

scale so you got like those sort of like

the symbolic map of

samsara you know like that the ghosts
and the demons and the animals and you
know the ARA Hans and you know all this
it's it's like a trying to represent all
of samsara nibana is not on those Maps
because it can't be and if if somebody
puts it there it's not really nibana
they just they just don't know what
they're doing
so I'll just move on to Fred's next
question Enlighten is a word with many
conations I I assume he means
connotations Enlighten is a word with
many connotations question
mark yeah sometimes Fred does this he'll
he'll make like an assertion and then
just put a question mark at the end so

but his questions are short so I grant him that but Enlighten yeah in poly and in English like in English to enlighten somebody you know it's like you're just teaching them something presumably important that kind of changes their attitude a little bit uh you know enlighten me with your knowledge of you know how to fix this car that kind of thing and in poly boded it has the same meaning I mean it can be intellectual Enlightenment or it can be spiritual enlightenment so it's I don't know if it's many connotations but it has like a dual meaning it can mean just mean like uh intellectual Enlightenment like

conveying presumably important
information or it can be becoming fully
enlightened in a spiritual sense so
we'll just move on to the next question
which is from White Ash
Piper and white ash Piper has a really
easy question for me to answer which is
as follows I have yet another person of
interest that I wonder if you are
familiar with and he is Bernardo castrop
and the easy answer to that is nope now
I I can't recall ever having heard the
name Bernardo castrop I've heard the
name castrip before but I think it was
like Hans castrip or something like that
so yeah sorry white ash Piper I'm don't
know who that is so I'll just move on to

the next question this is from Indian
guy Alias
Trevor and Indian guy says people would
bring Buddha gifts and money how did
they handle that if monks handling money
is forbidden is it because they
transcended material because of how
serious the earliest practitioners were
or do they just let the lay Buddhists do
what they want with it if it is for the
sa maybe the stories like that are made
up by King Ashoka and his people to
romantically tell stories that doesn't
matter to me either way I'm just
wondering what you've read that can make
sense of what seems to be contradictions

I don't think they are contradictions or
any anything though to some people they
might be I'm not skeptical about the
Buddha in any way my brain might
question things but I try my best not to
attach them because I know better than
to trust my meat
sack and uh I guess the the main
question up here
is see people would bring Buddha gifts
and money how did they handle that if
monks handling money is forbidden the
monks did not handle money they're not
even allowed to tell somebody what to do
with money so so yeah let you read the
poly texts whether it be the the vinia
or the sutas you're never going to have

the Buddha accepting Gifts of money I
mean there is a rule it's in the in the
poty mocha rules it's the longest rule
if I remember correctly which is kind of
a headache to recite it by heart but um
it's like somebody comes and offers you
money to buy a new set of robes you're
supposed to say a monk does not accept
money a monk May accept robes at the
proper time so then the lay person they
say well do you have an
attendant and then the monk is allowed
if they ask in that way I mean if they
say who should I give the money to the
monk isn't allowed to say because he's
not supposed to tell people what to do

with money but if they say do you have an attendant who is your attendant then the monk can name the attendant and then they'll go give the money to the attendant and then they'll come back and say venerable sir I left this amount of money with your attendant and if you need anything like robes you go and tell him and then there's this rules about like you go to the attendant and he doesn't want to get anything for you he already spent the money gambling or something then after you've prompted him kind of urged him to to to get get you what you need not the money but the robe or whatever it is that he supposedly would buy with the money then I mean if

he's just not going to do it then it's
your duty to go to the person who
offered the money and say your money is
going to waste because this attendant is
is not you you know he's not doing his
job or whatever so you should go get
your money back because it's not the
Monk's money it's whoever offered the
monk offered the money because the monk
cannot own money at least according to
the ancient rules even though nowadays
most monks just shamelessly handle
money so yeah it wasn't because they
transcended the material it's just that
uh monks just did not accept
money so

so yeah I'm not sure what the stories

are that were made up by King of

shoka so yeah I guess I answer that

question so I'll just move on to uh

Indian guy next question

here which is what are the key

differences of the pure land ideas and

terraa Cosmos ideas I'm a Westerner so

it's hard for me to care about

either well yeah I mean I'm no expert on

pure land Buddhism I've I've read read

some about it you know I've watched a

few YouTube videos about it um you know

I've studied like the history of

Buddhism like in this book here Indian

Buddhism by AK waterer you know he talks

about like the origins of of pure land

Buddhism and so forth how ironically it
was one of the earliest forms of
Mahayana
Buddhism um but I assume because pure
land Buddhism I mean going back to the
the earliest pure land Buddhism it
wasn't that far removed from pre Prem
Mahayana cosmology I mean the arguments
I mean the differences between Mahayana
and terava are not so much cosmological
they're more
ethical and and then of course the
Mahayana Buddhists cooked up this
library of new sutas or
sutras and so
forth but uh I would assume that pure

land Buddhism doesn't have that

different of a

cosmology as Terra Buddhism although

pure land Buddhism does believe in

Buddha Fields you know where you've got

like this enlightened Buddha who using

psychic energy I assume you know psychic

powers he creates this world that is

like a heaven world like a paradise that

is very conducive to making spiritual

progress and so you know if you recite

or it the name of this Buddha or pray to

this Buddha in order to be reborn there

after you die on this crummy World um

yeah I mean that's nowhere to be found

in terab Buddhism or any preure land

Buddhism

Buddhism so I assume that's the main
difference is this idea of Buddha Fields
where you've got fully enlightened
Buddhas who don't just walk around like
goab Buddha did you know in in India and
teach people they they have you know
they they like beam themselves out
project themselves out into
some you know outer space and create
this Buddha field or it it could even be
like in a different dimension or
something although I'm not aware of
ancient Indian Buddhism really having a
concept of other
dimensions you know there was like in
Terra Buddhism it's still pretty much uh

like Newtonian with regard to time and

space and so

forth so that would be the main

difference far as I know so I'll just

move on to the next question this is

from cricket and frog song and cricket

and frog song says in his recorded talks

SN Goa gives the impression that he

believes that his teacher SEI uak kin or

maybe his teacher's teacher someone

recent effectively rediscovered the

Buddha's true teaching and Method after

it had become virtually extinct Goa is

vague of course but he makes it sound

like this teacher had to partially

recreate the true teaching furthermore

Goa implies that he believes the Buddha

prophesied this Burmese rediscovery
2,500 years ago do you know if beliefs
like that are widespread in Burma it
seems like a remarkable claim and I'm
trying to understand the context well I
think probably what he's talking about I
don't remember the name of the Seattle
but there was a famous Seattle it
wouldn't be uak kin uak kin was a Layman
but it could be ubac kin's
teacher maybe um and I I could be wrong
I could be it's it's sa batana was
essentially rediscovered in Burma like
in the early to mid 20th
century and uh it might be the same
teacher that was a teacher of mahasi

Seattle for a while and also briefly a
teacher of uh Tom Pulu who is the
founder of the tradition in which I was
ordained but it was before this monk
kind of rediscovered s batana Buddhist
Meditation was almost entirely
samat that I mean there were very few if
any teachers of just mindfulness you
know the four foundations of mindfulness
it was all like cultivating transstates
and so
forth so that may be what he's referring
to because in a way that's like
empirical or historic
that SA batana or mindfulness or what
was called
weasa was

rediscovered in Burma you know early to
mid 20th
century so it maybe I I hope that's what
he's referring
to ubac Kin it may be the ubac kin's
only real Innovation was the whole
sweeping thing and if he's trying to say
that that was the original teaching of
Buddha then I wouldn't believe it
because it's not mentioned in the texts
you know the whole Gua way of sweeping
through the body I mean regardless of
whether it works or not mahasi method
works fine for anapana even though it's
the rising and falling of the abdomen
instead of the touch of oxygen or air at

the

nostrils

so yeah so I assume that what he's

referring to is the rediscovery of sa

batana mindfulness weas Med ation which

uh pretty clearly um it had a Resurgence

in Burma in like the early to mid 20th

century so I think um I hope I answer

that

question so I'll just move on next

question here this is Prav asking this

question he says your opinion on the

joala sua where the bodh satas say

derogatory terms about the Buddha and I

think he's referring to the gati Cara

Sutra in uh majima it's it's majima

number

81 and um jod paa was the the suta is

itself essentially a jataka it's like a

jataka story talking about the previous

the Buddha in one of his previous lives

and he was a

Brahman who lived during the

dispensation of kasapa Buddha and kasapa

Buddha was the Buddha before Goda you

know few million years ago

presumably and paa was a Brahman you

know it's totally

anachronistic and he had he was the

friend with uh ATI Gara which I'm pretty

sure means

Potter anyway gik Cara was a Potter he

was a poor man but he was totally rich

in faith and this story it's it strikes me as fiction essentially it's like it's like a fable where um kasapa Buddha I mean he he needs food so he just goes to got car's house and just takes what he wants without anybody even offering it to them which I mean it's in a way is taking what is not given which you think of Buddha wouldn't do but gik Cara he thinks oh this it's a it is a great gain for me that the Buddha came and took my food and then later kasaba Buddha we're talking about kasaba Buddha not goab Buddha kasab Buddha he got a leak in his Hut so that his Hut was leaking so he just sends some monks or or somebody to go to gik Cara's Hut and

just take the thatch off of his Hut just
tear the the thatch off and go and fix
his own Hut which I mean I don't think a
Buddha or any proper monk would do such
a
thing but in the text he did it in Gara
I mean they're they're showing how deep
of Faith Gara was he was like um this
king the king of Casi I think his name
was Kiki which means uh um it's a kind
of bird a
lapwing anyway this King Kiki is trying
to offer kasaba Buddha a residence for
the reain retreat and the the kasal
Buddha says I already have an offer that
I'm I'm going to take and it's this poor

Potter who just offered him this some
little Hut or something and um just
because he was so rich in faith but
anyway um this the main part of this
question is uh this Brahman jod paa who
was a Buddha who was goab Buddha in a
previous life when he still wasn't
enlightened yet um the he's friends with
gik Cara this this Potter and gik Cara
keeps tell keeps just pestering and
pestering and pestering him to go and
see Kasa Buddha you know it's good for
us to go and listen to him talk dhama
you know and jod Paulo the Brahman just
keeps saying why would I want to go and
listen to that skin head this over and
over again every single time I he's just

getting pestered and pestered he says
the exact same thing every time you know
why would I go and listen to that skin
head essentially you know it's not an
exact quote but it's a it's a derogatory
term for someone who shaves their
head and uh you would think that he
would have gone to hell or something for
bad mouthing a Buddha just calling him
by some derogatory slur I mean in other
stories in terod Tradition people go to
hell for for less than that but maybe he
was so I don't know he had so much
momentum of you know righteousness and
so forth that um his karma kind of got
his negative Karma was uh diluted down

by all the positive Karma and he wound
up not going to hell for
it um but my opinion on the Jody Palos
suda where the bhis jod paa who was
destined to become goab Buddha in 2,500
years ago U where he's you know
essentially using derogatory terms about
kasaba Buddha yeah I I just think that
it's it didn't really happen I think
it's just a fable it's for like
edification just showing how faithful
gik car was I mean he's sort of like
job so that that would be my take on it
and so I'll just go on to the next
question here this is from an ancient
path and an ancient path says could
reading nagar hinder someone's practice

that is just getting a good insight into
the original sutas and is Nar contrary
in any way to the Buddhist teachings
well this is kind of a n this is a Nara
question I don't know if it's sort of a
majama question but I don't think the
Fez is really necessary for this I don't
think I'll wear the Fez for this um
although I do have it right here it's
such a nice Fe it's so
nice but anyway could reading nagara
hinder someone's practice that is just
getting a good insight into the original
sutas so that's the first question here
I guess I got to divide this up here
okay get rid of that comma place it with

a question mark there we go okay so
reading if someone is just learning
about the basics of Buddhist philosophy
then reading Nar like the Mula majaka
Kaka would be like someone who's like
learning arithmetic or maybe like
seventh grade level pre-algebra and all
of a sudden they want to study
calculus so I mean it could confuse
somebody just because it's like a
different level of
dhamma um it's just more complex and
profound it's not so easy to understand
so it could cause
confusion um and probably you should
hold off on reading nagar until you've
got a good grounding in just the basics

at

least uh so that would be the only thing

thing I mean it's it's not bad to read

Nara obviously I mean it's it's profound

and he's like I keep saying he may be

the one um well-known Buddhist

philosopher who understands and explains

dependent co-arising or picha Samu po up

better than anyone

else better than the sutas do because

the sutas apparently the editors of the

titica at least the teren version of it

didn't understand it either and so they

just put in the same verbatim 12 Nido

Theory just every even where it doesn't

really fit the context it's just this

block of text that just gets inserted

into almost every discussion of

dependent core

Rising so yeah it's good to read narina

if you can understand him but uh yeah

it's it's like advanced level you know

it's like college level so if you're

still working with the the elementary

stuff you should you know get that down

before you move move on to the more

advanced stuff it kind of reminds me of

I had a a European monk tell me long ago

back when I was a monk that people

reading my blog I it they can get

confused it can shake their faith you

know it should be just for like veteran

dhama practitioners that newcomers

really shouldn't read my blog because
you know it could it could really shake
their faith you just undermine their
faith in
Buddhism and uh maybe nug Arna could
have that effect on someone is just
getting the basics of Buddhist
philosophy down because in a way he does
invalidate a lot of what is in the text
but what is in the texts it's you know
it's uh like wad Des it's just worldly
language you have to use sort of
delusional language in this world
because this is a world made by
delusion so I mean it's skillful
means so I hope I answered that question

and so the next part of this question

and is and is nagar contradictory in any

way to the Buddhist teachings um he's

contradictory in some ways against uh

Orthodox

texts like like Abid dama and nagara

really don't see eye to eye

because early Terra text they try to

reify reality whereas and which is like

not understanding dependent core Rising

very well in my opinion

so I mean narina points out that really

I mean that's what dependent core Rising

is that the Buddha was talking about it

wasn't understood very well you know

it's that is is one extreme isn't is

another extreme it's just like this

virtual potential reality like a
conditional reality that we are living
in but Terra they they opted for Abid
dama which is like this total
reification it's ultimately real there's
12 something ultimate realities or I
think it's 128 ultimate realities with
nibana just being one of
them so yeah I
mean in a way it's contradictory to the
texts but I don't think that nagar would
be necessarily contradictory in any way
to what the historical Buddha actually
taught but by the time you get the poly
toptica it's already been corrupted to
some degree and I'm sure a lot of

develop terot would disagree with that
which is fine but yeah like Abid dama
for example most western monks just have
no use for it because they don't think
that the Buddha really taught it and
there's a lot of that kind of stuff in
the poly toptica like the jica stories
you know talking animals and that sort
of thing or the Buddha just sitting
around just bragging in grandiose terms
about how great he is and how everyone
should worship him that that's more of a
devotional thing that was added later
than the Buddha actually saying
that so I'll just move on the next
question here this is this is also by an
ancient

path and an ancient path says since disrobing how many precepts do you continue to keep specifically the precept pertaining entertainment what do you do for recreation any reading movies Etc well with regard to the five precepts then the only ones that I break I mean I've killed a few in insects I can't remember killing anything bigger than an insect but like a few mosquitoes or ants I've done that over the past few years not very many but some and uh I do have an occasional beer although this is cranberry

juice so I do I had like one beer last night I didn't even finish it I had like

four fifths of a beer last

night but with regard to eight precepts

well I sleep on a king-size bed with my

sweetheart which is definitely a high

and large

bed and uh yeah I do indulge in some

Recreation like my main

Recreations I do watch YouTube videos

but they're mostly like

documentaries like ancient history and

archaeology and that kind of thing and I

must admit

that uh for the past more than a month

I've been pretty much binge watching The

Walking

Dead and I mean this is just a golden

opportunity for me to kind of [__]

about the go The Walking Dead because I
mean it's obviously propaganda like so
many I mean almost anything that's
created you know for for entertainment
purposes by big
budget producers is going to be to some
degree propaganda like for example
almost all of the bad guys like the
leaders of the bad guys they're almost
all white men almost all of them there's
one ala who was a white
woman but her henchman was the big white
man
and most of the good guys uh the groups
of good guys are led by women like
empowered women as though when

civilization collapses feminism is
really just going to kick into overdrive
which is hardly likely
also around season 7 it was like at
least 25% of the major characters were
homosexual which I don't know I don't
think that homosexuality is really gonna
I mean maybe if civilization collapses
there's going to be more homosexuality
just because people don't want to have
babies or something but I kind of doubt
that and also most of the marriages like
more than half of them maybe as many as
2third of the marriages are inter racial
and there's one bad guy
Negan who uh he turns good and as a way
of kind of

symbolically demonstrating that he
turned good he marries a black
woman and I mean I just don't think it's
realistic it's just like propaganda it's
it's propagandizing you know like
leftist Ultra liberal ideals of
diversity and inclusion and equity and
so forth but um one thing that they have
that is sort of against their their
propaganda like one of the
main one of the main what am I trying to
say here like messages that you get that
is probably unintentional I don't think
that the writers were really thinking
about this so much is that when
civilization

collapses that you really can't afford
to have liberal values anymore I mean it
is doggy dog that even the good people
have to be absolutely ruthless and kill
people in order to survive because if
you don't you're just going to get
slaughtered but also there's other
things
like I'm from season one or two I'm just
sitting there watching the show and like
I'm saying you guys need walls I mean at
the beginning they're just camping out
in the forest and you got zombies coming
through I mean what's going to protect
them nothing that's what's going to
protect them just you need walls I'm
just like telling them I mean you need a

compound that's you know Fortified Compound and it's got to be small enough that you can defend it with the few people that you've got and you need a trench around the around the walls so that the bad guys can't just drive a truck through your walls which happened at least twice so far in the in the show just on and on and and they just spray bullets I mean they get machine guns it doesn't occur to them to switch over to semi-auto they're just spraying bullets and it's like you've got like a horde of like like hundreds or even thousands of zombies out there and they're just like shooting I mean they're using up all

their bullets I mean even if they killed
one with every shot there'd still be 90%
of them
left and then I mean that was just so
absurd I mean some of this it's it's
just ridiculous I mean I I can find
fault with Star Trek too but I've been
watching the The Walking Dead lately
it's like finally it's like it's like 10
years after civilization has collapsed
you know we're getting into into the
later
seasons and they've they've had to stop
using guns even though they got this
autistic guy that can that can reload
ammo for some reason they don't use him
for that and uh so I mean they're down

to using bows and arrows and crossbows
and melee weapons you know clubs and
knives and stuff and then finally they
find an old army base that still has
like machine guns and stuff still has
ammo first thing they do I mean they've
been without bullets for literally years
at this point they just start spraying
bullets again you know it's like they
don't want to conserve their bullets for
some reason it's just
ridiculous but anyway you can so I watch
this too but I'm in a way I'm sort of
like observing it in an anthropological
sense even though it is a good story but
um because ever since I was a kid I've

been fascinated by the end of the world
or the end of civilization the collapse
of civilization like when I was a little
kid two of my favorite movies where
Planet of the Apes with Charlton hon you
know collapse of civilization and also
the Omega Man also with Charlton hon
again collapse of civilization I just
really into that for some
reason which uh would have made me a
good leader of a group if uh the zombie
apocalypse hits even though for some
reason nobody calls them zombies I don't
know why they don't just call them
zombies anyway let's get back to this
now that I've vented you know now that I
have bitched my heart out about the

shortcomings of The Walking
Dead let's see uh let's get back to the
question here since drro since disrobing
how many precepts do you continue to
keep specifically the precept pertaining
entertainment what do you do for
recreation any reading movies Etc um my
sweetheart and I are probably going to
watch a Christmas movie pretty soon I
listen to music sometimes but not
a whole lot I went through this phase
like a month or two ago where I just
discovered the Black Keys and just was
listening to the Black Keys I've watched
that video of a Lonely Boy with the
black guy dancing I mean I've watched

that probably two dozen times

pie it's it's a good video it's a good

song

so yeah I guess I guess I answered that

question didn't I so I'm just going to

move on to the next question this is

from creal

and creel

says did two or more enlightened beings

ever meet in person what are the chances

that more than two enlightened beings

were ever in the same place at the same

time and interact what would they do I

doubt they would start talking or play

football but you never know would there

be any conflict arising do you think

that if a conflict arose between two

people it is enough proof that at least one is not enlightened the conflict between the Dal Lama and gesi kelang gatso comes to mind well if you can if you can believe the texts then there have been hundreds or even thousands of enlightened beings all meeting in person like the the first great Council it was 500 arons 500 enlightened beings all attending this
Council so I mean the Buddha had enlightened disciples and he met them so they were meeting each other and so enlightened beings yeah they they met in person if we can believe the Buddhist texts again I mean enlightened beings

are kind of a paradox so I mean it's

hard to say anything for

sure but definitely if we can believe

the Buddhist texts there have been

hundreds maybe even thousands of fully

enlightened beings all in the same place

like the Buddha would give a discourse

and you know many of the many of the

audience would become enlightened upon

here this

discourse so what would they do again I

mean if someone really is fully

enlightened then there's technically

nobody there you know there's no

illusion of anybody being there so it's

hard to say what they would

do yeah I don't know I wonder if like

neim karoli Baba ever met ramama and
Mahari you know they both lived around
the same time like mid 20th century
maybe they were f
enlightened even though they were
Hindus so yeah here's another question
here and it's it's good to keep your
questions down to one question mark
because if you've got a long like a
paragraph and it's got like six question
marks that's six questions that's not
just one question so do you think that
if a conflict arose between two people
it is enough proof that at least one is
not onl yeah that'd be a pretty good
indication wouldn't it

so but I mean you can't know anything
for sure because the enlightened being
is a paradox so I'll just move on to the
next question from
creel what do you think about the
kadampa tradition well I know that it's
Tibetan I don't remember even what color
hats they wear are they the Red
Hats no yeah see I don't even know
enough about Tibetan Buddhism to know
about the kadampa tradition I've read
about it I'm sure uh I'm not sure if
it's read hats or or what hats but uh
yeah I don't think very much about the
kadampa tradition because I know almost
nothing about them and so I'll just move
on to the next question and this is from

kazen or

Ken and kazen or Ken says you talked

about malevolent forces taking advantage

of openings in vulnerable

Minds do you think modern

Pharmaceuticals have opened some

gateways for lower realm actors to

commit random atrocity

well it's kind of a a materialistic way

of looking at it that

uh mainly if you got someone who's just

not well adjusted you know their mind is

not well adjusted you know it's got weak

spots in it that those weak spots can be

exploited by entities beings you know

they can become Spirit possessed more

easily than a person with like just a
healthy well-rounded kind of of a
personality
so let's see modern Pharmaceuticals I
mean in a way that I mean it's it could
be a kind of exacerbating thing that I
don't think that a really healthy person
who takes a pharmaceutical is like a
spiritually healthy person who is
resistant to any kind of [__] from
you know dark beings or whatever that uh
I don't think that taking
Pharmaceuticals is really going to mess
them up but I really don't have a lot of
experience with Pharmaceuticals causing
gaps or weak spots in a person's
personality that can allow like

malevolent forces to seep in or whatever
I mean it's possible but it's going to
be more the karma of the person with the
pharmaceutical just being a gimmick
because anything you
experience is going to be the fruition
of your own Karma you I mean you are
creating a reality and so
you are creating the Pharmaceuticals you
take you are creating the effect those
Pharmaceuticals have on you so
ultimately it's going to be your own
spiritual makeup that's doing it rather
than some material entity that doesn't
ultimately exist that is called
Pharmaceuticals that uh I mean if you

got bad karma you might just wind up in
an environment where you're getting pump
full of pharmaceuticals that are just in
a way acting as a gimmick to further the
dysfunction of whatever dysfunction
you've got
going so I'll just move on to the next
question here and this is from Joe do
and Joe do says if you had your time
over would you still have been a
monk um I mean if I knew then what I
know now I might not need to become a
monk I might kind of give it a shot
temporarily or something but if if I had
if I if I knew then would I know now I
mean I mean when do you hit reset like
if if all of a sudden I woke up tomorrow

and I was 12 years old again and I know

everything that I know now then I

wouldn't have to become a monk I'd

probably just uh try to meet my

sweetheart a little younger maybe we

could have a family or

someone but uh yeah because I really

just got as far as I could with the

monastic thing at least uh under the

circumstan

aners

so yeah it would depend I mean if if I

didn't know then what I know now I'd

become a monk again I I certainly don't

regret becoming a monk and having been a

monk for 30 years I think it was it was

a good

thing

so uh yeah it would depend on I mean if

I knew then what I know now or not I

mean if I didn't I just pretty much live

the same life that I lived in the first

time but if I did then I'd know what I

should do and uh probably invest in

Amazon

stock and then I'd just live a life of

leisure be a member of the Leisure Class

wouldn't have to work in a sheet metal

shop and I could try and live a kind of

daric existence with a lot of maybe

meditation formal meditation a lot of

introspection philosophizing and so

forth so okay I think I answered that

question so I'll just move on to joo's
next question can you describe the State
of Mind of your deepest meditation well
that's that's tricky I mean it's hard to
explain but uh just sitting there with
my mind just silent and just clear like
glass you know it's like you've got this
wide open Consciousness I mean you're
more conscious than you would be if
you're like walking around making noise
so but I mean there's there's
almost no content you know it's it's
almost like pure Consciousness every
once in a while just because you know
the brain has to do its thing a thought
would start to arise but the mindfulness

is so strong that it's sort of like um
the surface of a pond where a big fish
is like coming up you you can already
sort of see like little ripples before
the fish hits the surface and then as
soon as you're I mean you just become
aware of it as soon as it starts and
then it just flattens back out again you
know the thought does not
even become fully
formed and you just sit there just uh
with your mind like a mirror just like I
said just still silent and clear like
glass sort of so to speak so I'll just
move on to joo's next question and that
is what are your favorite podcasts are
you a Joe Rogan fan I couldn't be a Joe

Rogan fan just because his podcasts are like three or four hours long and I just there's other things I would rather do for three or four hours straight than just sit through a podcast in fact I don't really watch or listen to any podcasts I mean these q&as are kind of a podcast so I guess these might be my favorite um I guess sooner or later I will start just doing like live streaming these q&as just for just to see what happens you know just for the just for the shits and giggles so yeah I don't have a favorite podcast I mean there some interviews on YouTube that kind of Maybe started off

as podcast like um interviews with like

uh Victor Hansen who I like you he's a

Normy but he's he's very intelligent and

articulate he can see the big picture

fairly well with regard to politics and

so

forth but yeah technically speaking I

don't don't listen to

podcasts so we'll just move on to the

next question and this is from Austin

and Austin says is America's A diversity

a

weakness and it depends on what kind of

diversity you're talking about I mean if

everybody were exactly the same that

would be a weakness because um like just

going with darwinian natural selection

you know if you've just got this
uniformity you've got some change that
comes in it's more likely to just wipe
out civilization but if you got like a
diversity of different like points of
view and attitudes and so forth and just
different body types and all that then
at least some of them are going to be
able to adapt to the change and and it's
just going to continue evolving and
probably even
Prosper but um I mean you can take that
to an extreme where everyone's just
disagreeing with everybody else
everybody's at everybody's
throat so I mean you need to have a

middle path between total uniformity and
total diversity you know there should be
like at
least like ideals of the culture that
everyone can pretty much agree on other
than maybe a few weirdos on The
Fringe and that's the way America used
to be up until the new left just started
hating on America and trying to destroy
it and they've really weakened America
quite a lot which they think is a good
thing but I mean Decline and fall of a
great civilization is not a good thing
because what what they want to replace
it with is much worse I guarantee
it so I mean race really has little to
do with it other

than uh I mean it's if you've got

foreigners from of a different ethnicity

Coming to America I mean if if they

integrate into the culture you know and

they start adopting the American ideals

traditional American ideals you know

they're proud to be Americans they see

that it's better than the the third

world [__] hole they came from

then that's

fine but I mean if it's just hating on

Hai and and just causing illegal

migrants just flood into the country

supposedly for the sake of diversity and

inclusion and and just compassion for

for so-called refugees who are really

economic migrants in most cases um and
then they don't even try
to try to integrate I mean Hispanics
generally do a pretty good job of of
integrating even though they might still
listen to their salsa music and speak
Spanish um still I mean they get jobs
and you know they're willing to work and
they don't much like illegal immigration
either because most of them are the ones
that have been living here for a while
they came here legally they had to go
through all the red tape and everything
and then it's not good that all of a
sudden now people are being rewarded for
breaking the
law

so yeah to some degree America's
diversity is a strength because we had a
certain diversity like we didn't have a
monoculture with regard to like
religion you know we don't have a
monoculture with regard to political
party we don't live in a one party State
although I mean the the globalists the
ruling Elite of both parties were kind
of the unip party I mean they're still
the unip party although the Republican
half of the unip party is is dying and
uh good riddance to the uh the
neocons but um yeah I mean you just need
a middle path a certain amount of
diversity is good but you have to have

enough uniformity at least with regard to like ideals and so forth that it kind of holds the the society together and to have a monopoly on religion I think is a bad idea just because it leads to corruption so long as you it's like capitalism if you got different religions competing with each other it's like different companies competing with each other you're more likely to have a good product at a reasonable price because different sellers are competing for your money and so they're they have to give you a relatively good deal if they can a better deal than the other guy and that's the way religion works too that's one reason why religion or

spirituality reach such dizzying Heights
in India in ancient times because you
had all these different systems all
competing with each
other and it caused them all to be on
their toes and to like not be totally
corrupt unlike like medieval Europe and
Roman
Catholicism so I'll just move on to
Austin's next
question excuse
me Austin says my dear friend
experiences debilitating panic
attacks that hinder her mental
functioning and even lead to physical
breakdowns she really loves Dharma and

she even responds well to discussions

about it but at times she becomes

unresponsive and unable to function

during panic attacks she tries to

meditate but even this doesn't always

work how can I best support her in such

situations they seem to be getting worse

yeah that's I mean I might not be the

best person to advise anybody with

regard to panic attacks because I don't

think I've ever really had one I sort of

had a drug induced one a long time ago

but

uh uh yeah I mean I'm not prone to panic

easily

so um I mean there are there are certain

Pharmaceuticals like beta blockers that

one can take that reduce the the odds of

it happening or reduce the severity of

it um my sweetheart has had a few panic

attacks in in her life especially when

she was younger and she was saying that

there's a grounding technique that you

can

do and

um I'm not I'm not EX exactly show what

the grounding technique is so again I'm

really not the best person to uh discuss

this but uh I mean if she can do

mindfulness meditation I mean that's

that's probably a good one is I assume

it would be really hard if you're having

a panning attack to be mindful of the

panic attack that at that point you're already spiraled out of control to some degree but um I mean just getting into the Habit when you're not having a panic attack just being in the habit of mindful observing with a certain Detachment your own mental states that that has served me well um in the past where um you know you're just getting into the habit of observing your mental States and then something happens then you start throwing a contion just like one time it was just the the Blazing heat in central Burma during the hot season you know it just would not let up and um I just it was like I snaped napped one time I'm just like yelling

and cussing and slamming things but at
the very same time there's I'm I'm so
used to being mindful of my mental
States at that time that I'm just
observing it's like I'm an actor
observing this me playing the role of
this person throwing a contion you know
there's there's like this other part of
me this just kind of stepp back and is
just observing with equinity the whole
conion as it's happening so it was like
I was an actor playing the role of
somebody throwing a contion
but at the same time there's this other
level even though you're kind of living
the part maybe there's this other level

where you're still the actor and you're
aware that the audience is out there or
the camera and you know how much slobber
you got in your mouth and you're trying
to remember your lines you you know you
might remember that soand so flubbed his
lines you know five minutes earlier or
something but at the same time you're
doing this convincing this
contion so I mean practicing mindfulness
it's like a panace it's like a cure all
it's good for anything that ails you but
you have to practice it when you don't
need it so that when you do need it it's
there is just like second
nature but uh if that's too much that it
takes too much commitment or effort or

time then uh I don't know I would uh

definitely try to uh you know like

consult with a psychologist a clinical

psychologist or something who knows you

know how to treat some somebody that has

this this

issue um I mean if if you want to help I

mean it may be I I'm I'm not exactly

sure I've never really been uh in the

same room with someone throwing a

full-blown panic attack that maybe just

giving them a hug you know just you know

you're there and you're on their side

you're GNA help them you know just beam

love at

them maybe that would work but uh I'm

not a a professional and so I really

can't uh can't say what for sure would

be the best thing to do so I'll just

move on to Austin's next

question which is thoughts on

ssris and uh I didn't wasn't even sure

what ssris were they're like a serotonin

re reuptake inhibitor and I don't even

know what what a serotonin reuptake

inhibitor like what drug would be one of

these

so I'm really not sure so I don't really

have much thoughts on on that

sorry but it's some kind of

pharmaceutical and maybe it's like an

anti-depressant or

something so I'll just move on to the

next question this is from popcorn
boxing and popcorn boxing says is it
possible to attain Enlightenment and
then lose it and interestingly according
to the Terra vadens I think no maybe it
wasn't the Terra voden it was it was
maybe maybe one of the other early
schools of Buddhism were saying that
that is what caused the first
Schism that um the Terra vadens believe
that once you become enlightened you
don't fall back and it's right there in
the texts you know once you become
enlightened there's no backsliding from
from Full Enlightenment but there were
some like mahasan gika the mahasan gika

branch of the first Schism I think they
were saying that you can backslide into
becoming unenlightened again and it was
like one of the arguments about like do
orans have wet dreams you know do they
have sex dreams at night that kind of
thing so the the Orthodox terot point of
view is that if you attain full
Enlightenment that's it you're not going
to fall back you're not gonna you're not
going to be uh you're not going to
backslide and that's in the AA waga
which is an extremely ancient
text
so yeah so I think I answered that
question so I'll just move on to the
next question and this is from

oalt I think I don't know how to

pronounce some of these names anyway oal

says is there a question you have been

waiting or wanting someone to ask that

hasn't come up

yet uh you know not

really I'm pretty much the the whole

spectrum of questions has been asked um

still nobody has asked if Mr Spock and

qu Chang Kan got in a fight well I mean

I kind of wondered about that you know

Mr Spock from Star Trek and qu Chan Kan

from Kung Fu if they got in a fight who

would

win but um yeah I'm still not sure about

that or also up on the altar I don't

know if you can really even see it it's
uh in between the Little Buddha statue
and the the picture of
maharaji um there's a little statue of
Bobo I think is his name and nobody's
asked me about that I'm pretty sure I
can't remember anybody asking me what
the little the little statue of the the
little guy next to the Buddha is maybe
from the distance I mean you can hardly
see it back there I guess maybe they
just think it's a smaller Buddha statue
but it's a statue of
Bobo and nobody's asked me about that
that I can remember and if somebody did
please forgive me for not remembering
you asking about Bobo

Hong so I you didn't uh o Al here didn't
say that I have to answer that question
you just asked is there a question you
have been waiting or wanting someone to
ask that hasn't come up yet so not
really I guess but uh I mean I'm not
dissatisfied with your questions I think
you're doing good asking
questions so next question is from
Josh oh man yeah we we'll be done way
less than three hours we're not going to
last as long as Joe
Rogan and I don't get I don't get wasted
smoking weed
for these podcasts either like Joe Rogan
apparently

does so anyway Josh

says hey poasa have you ever read the

autobiography of a yogi by paramahansa

Yogananda if so what is your view on him

he was one of the first Indian gurus to

come to the west and speak about Eastern

spirituality from what I've been able to

find he seems to have been a very

saintly character he also apparently was

able to voluntarily stop to his own

heart and that's how he unived himself

completely through his own

will well I've read the autobiography of

a of a yogi twice once when I was a

teenager and at the time I I took it

fairly seriously and then years later I

read it again and the second time I read

it I mean I was more used to reading spiritual stuff and it's like it was hard to keep both eyebrows at the same level sometimes it's like starting to go like this like he had like Lord Krishna levitating outside his hotel room or Jesus Christ came to him in his hotel room one time was whispering secrets so profound that he can't write them down in the book and I think maybe he was a little gay although I don't think that really is relevant but that's one impression that I got and uh yeah I mean he he was either very gullible and maybe sort of uh a person that just sort of believes stuff that I mean he just kind

of makes it up and believes it while

he's while he's say I mean some some of

the stuff in the book I just could not

really believe but it's so maybe In some

cultures you just live in like this

surreal kind of a world where I mean

there's no sharp line dividing reality

from

imagination because that's the kind of

surreal kind of effect that I got from

reading that book especially the second

time part of hamsa uh strangely enough

literally means ultimate

Goose but hamsa is is or it could be

like the the Ruddy sheld Drake the

brahminy duck it's it's called a duck

but it it looks and sounds like a goose

it's big like a goose and honks like a
goose I don't know why it's called a
duck any ornithologists out there maybe
that's a question someone can answer I
mean why is a a shell duck called a duck
when actually I mean it's big like a
goose and has a long neck like a goose
and honks like a goose I don't get that
but anyway the hamsa was sacred to the
god Brahma and they're relatively
they're still considered to be
auspicious birds in BMA Nobody messes
with them
much so let's
see uh yeah with regard to Dying by
voluntarily stopping his own heart I'm

not so sure about that how would how

would anybody really be able to verify

that unless he just was announcing to

people I'm going to I'm going to kill

myself but by stopping my own heart

through force of will but maybe he was

almost dead then

anyway

so yeah I mean I read it I mean anyone

who's literate in like

Western sort of eclectic spirituality I

mean it's it's sort of a standard it's

like a classic so I mean it's good to

good for people to read it and just make

up their minds for

themselves so I'll just move on to the

next question this is from yugao

and we're we're getting kind of towards
the end here we still got a few
questions but uh we're we're way more
than 90% done I'm pretty sure so anyway
yugao says can you please explain hell
wardens what is their karma for just
doing the work and how do you become one
wa does yugao want to become a hell
Warden I mean it's just he's just doing
his job you know this is what the hell
wardens are doing they're just doing
their job but um I was told and I think
this is in the commentaries that the
hell wardens or the you know the Demonic
beings that are torturing people in hell
are just I mean there's they're really

not beings that they're just like um
apparitions or like holographic
projections created by the karma of the
the people that are uh suffering in the
hell Realms and I've been told um that
the celestial nymphs are like this also
that they're sort of like sex bots or
something they're not really a conscious
being they're just like a a Karma
projection in heaven and the hell
wardens are Karma projections in
hell um that is
uh that I think that's the official
Orthodox terot of Buddhist position on
Hell
wardens um but assuming that they are
kind of a they are beings I mean one of

the reasons why I found out that there's
supposedly like projections you know
Karma projections and not real beings
they're not sentient beings is I was
asking where do they fit in the 31
Plains of existence you know they're not
auras I'm pretty sure you know so
there's no demons there's no Fallen
Angels really in in Buddhist cosmology I
mean what category would they fit in and
then I had this German monk tell me that
they're just they're just Karma
projections that they're not sentian
beings and that kind of makes
sense so do you become one I guess you
wouldn't it's probably you're probably

better not better off not becoming a

hell Warden just

saying I mean if you had to choose I

mean maybe they' you know I think

sometimes like in uh in Christianity

they might have this idea that you know

the Devils will like recruit some of the

more evil hell denisons to just you know

switch sides and help poke people with

pitchforks and so forth but um yeah I

think really hell is

self-created I mean on on this planet I

mean there are hell Realms right here on

this world I guarantee it and uh it's

not so different you in in other Realms

like lower Realms and you don't really

need

demons um messing with you when it's
your own mind is so tormented just
through its own
dysfunction I used to think that uh it
was unfair in Buddhist Buddhist
philosophy that someone can do a bad
deed and then they they're punished for
a million years in hell you know like
Christianity you're punished forever
you're not quite good enough to make the
grade you're not quite good enough to
get into heaven so you're just tortured
forever for just you know sins that you
committed for a few decades and it just
did not seem like it's it was an
equitable trade it just did not seem

just so then I was thinking like after
living in Burma when it's just blazing
hot like living in a furnace I figured
it was probably there own bad attitudes
just their own misery was creating more
miserable Karma and it just became like
a habit and they just kept them
there you know it's like they're just
kept generating new karmas they're just
cursing the cursing themselves and
cursing the universe and just cursing
everybody just because they're so
absolutely miserable
there but I have uh digressed and
so I move on to yuga's next question
which is also about hell he says also
what kind of bodies do hell sufferers

have do they just inhabit one pre-made

well yeah you don't get born in hell

it's just you spontaneously arise there

and you have a a body probably not so

different from the body of a spirit or

like a so-called ghost

AA I mean they wouldn't be exactly the

same but they're at a lower level than

the human level so they're going to be

made of a crudder form of matter they'll

be made of matter you know they're not

in a formless realm but it's it's a

crudder kind of matter and uh whatever

that

means and uh they have a cruder mind

definitely so I mean it would be sort of

a a projection of the body they had
before maybe or just sort of the
residual self-image like in The Matrix
you know you upload into the Matrix and
you have the residual self
image that doesn't have like the the
sockets the holes and stuff so it'd be
something like that I'm pretty sure the
karma
body so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from keep the vinia and
keep the vinia says Can monks drink milk
multiple times a day this this is the
third milk question of this Q&A Can
monks drink milk multiple times a day
well as I said before it is considered
to be bojena or substantial food and so

you would have to drink it between Dawn
and midday and there's no rule against
drinking it more than once so long as
you drink it at the allowable time time
between Dawn and
midday uh I guess a lot of th monks will
drink it in the afternoon which is just
a violation I mean you might as well be
eating rice in in the afternoon as drink
milk in the
afternoon so yeah there's no rule
against it although monks are supposed
to know moderation in eating and
uh also just one meal a day was
prescribed in the early texts even
though most monks now days have more

than one meal a day usually like the
dawn meal like right after Dawn you know
it might still be pretty much dark
outside they'll get up early and eat a
meal and then like shortly before noon
they'll have another meal there's a lot
of monks do that and uh yeah you can
there's no actual rule against drinking
milk um between Dawn and midday as much
as you want so long as uh you you
obtained it and you haven't stored it
overnight you obtain it properly you
know somebody who isn't a monk offers it
to a monk that kind of
thing and uh you can't ask for it if uh
nobody has given you permission
beforehand to ask for milk um unless

you're sick so there's there's lots of sort of uh little rules associated with it but there's no rule against drinking milk multiple times a day so I'll just move on to keep the vena's next question does Buddhism have the advantage over jism that it does not claim that enlightened beings are omniscient as Buddhists we can excuse enlightened beings like the Buddha for his cultural ignorance of cosmology because he was not omniscient can the Janss also excuse mahavira in this regard

well the a Buddha I mean not all enlightened Janes are considered to be

omniscient it's just like sort of the
jist equivalent of a Buddha I think uh
de tonara I think is what they're called
like a Vera was considered to be
omniscient and he was totally omniscient
like absolutely omnicient in that he
knew everything all the time you know
his mind was just filled with infinite
knowledge infinite number of points of
view you know like if he saw an
egg he would see that egg from every
possible angle simultaneously maybe not
with his physical
eye but he would know everything there
is to know about that egg in fact he
would know everything there is to know
about everything

simultaneously always whereas the Buddha
also I mean in the text he's saanu which
means all knowing he is also omniscient
so a Buddha is also omniscient it's just
that he doesn't have this absolute
knowing everything always at the same
time you know he does he's not having
infinite knowledge in his head
constantly like a Jane de tonara it's
just that he knows whatever he wants to
know that's the official orthodox terot
position on the omniscience of a Buddha
is you know anything he really wants to
know he can know
it so that's may explain why he's asking
people what their name is and so forth

and uh they're kind of mocking and there

are some sutas mocking The Janes for

claiming that you know mahavira was

fully enlightened when you know he's

still asking people what their name is

and where they came from and that kind

of

thing

but let's see

yeah so and I'm not exactly sure what

the official Jane excuse is for mahavira

asking people what their name is and

where they came from if he already knows

it so you have to use a some mental

gymnastics sort of like some Christians

some Christian groups you know God knows

everything so that you know how how do

you explain you know God all of a sudden

being upset

when um for

example you know right before the flood

you know he just gets disgusted and

regrets ever having created the human

race this I mean he should have known

because he was

omniscient so you're get into

omniscience and you're getting into

infinity and Paradox and so forth but uh

I do think the Buddhists have the

advantage over jism not because I mean

they've sort of made a more moderate

form of omniscience for their founder

which is you know Improvement I

guess um but also I mean just the

philosophy itself is it it holds more

water in my opinion than

jism I'm not going to go into you know

what the fundamentals of jism but I do

think that Buddhism is more

sensible so let's see

here okay I was going to say something

else and then I forgot what I was going

to say so maybe I won't say it after all

does Buddhism have the advantage over

jism and it does not claim that

enlightened beings are omniscient yeah

well I mean it's just a milder form of

omniscience I guess so I'll just move on

to the next question this is also keep

the

vinia and keep the vinia says were you
surprised when you read the poly Canon
for the first time and realized that it
contains quite a few misogynistic
passages in the angura Naya in
particular women are described as stupid
and jealous and compared to Black
snakes no I wasn't surprised I mean you
read text almost the text of almost any
religion are going to have some misogyny
I mean you read like The Book of
Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament it's
pretty
misogynistic
so you know early Christianity you know
it's like yeah and there's there's

misogynistic stuff women are the devil's
Gateway and all that so I mean it didn't
surprise
me no I mean there I think like culture
in general were very misogynistic by
postmodern you know 21st century
standards it's like the whole world was
misogynistic with few exceptions up
until
recently so yeah I'm familiar with you
know ancient texts and I uh I'm not
surprised if if I see what is considered
to be misogyny but I mean considering
that the text were trying to get monks
to break their attachment for women I
mean they're going to use some pretty
extreme

methods sometimes to try and get monks
to just not desire women so it does make
sense from a psychological point of view
also so I guess I'll just move on to the
next question and this is from
KitKat and KitKat says howdy I'm
wondering if you have a recommended
translation for the suttin I don't want
to make your q&a's longer with a simple
question but he already did because he
asked this in a different room on the
Discord server but I said I'll answer it
in the Q&A because this is a Q&A
question I mean it's a q it's a q
question and uh I mean it's kind of an
important question you know I mean it's

it's definitely applies to Western Buddhism and so forth but the thing is I really don't have a recommended translation for the sutin P I mean um on the back there I've got KR Norman's old translation and he's got like a critical version where he's got lots and of notes just
discussing the grammar and so forth from which from a philological point of view is good but KR Norman um he really didn't understand a lot of what he was translating because he's not a Buddhist and not particularly interested in Buddhism he's just interested in the poly language so then there's aan tanero I mean probably ajan tanero would be

about one of the best that you can find
on uh access to Insight you know find it
on the internet um his translations of
verse especially are kind of
idiosyncratic and
self-indulgent but his understanding of
the dharm is pretty solid with regard to
translating texts like the sutin I mean
with regard to the Tica I prefer my own
translation of that I've translated a
few other texts but I I haven't
translated the entire sutin there are
some fairly bad translations out there
um I think there's a Sri Lankan Monk I
think he's sh Lankan stisa I think who
did a translation of the suata that was

not good at all for example the in the
the kaga suut the the Sutra of the
rhinoceros horn he refers to them as the
unicorns horn you know he just this
makes the executive judgment that he's
going to change the rhinoceros to a
unicorn although I guess the legend of
the Unicorn originally I mean it
originally came from the Indian
rhinoceros so I guess
well his translation is still pretty bad
um bot's translation is probably pretty
solid but I've never read it and also
there's one translation that I would
really like to get my hands on it's from
by Lord Chalmers it's like an early like
from like the 1920s that's all in verse

it's not like ajan Tano's attempts at translating verse by just you know idiosyncratically positioning words and strange positions on the paper that Lord chalmers's actually went to the trouble of putting the suttin at least the the verse parts of it which is most of it into meter metered verse and um I mean sometimes just for the sake of like Metra CAA where you're trying to have to fit everything into the the verse form you might have to have certain inaccuracies but I think I would like to read that one I haven't haven't read it I have seen one copy of it in my life but those are the only real notable

translations of the Su that I can think
of and with regard to just
accuracy um of of meaning probably aan
tanero or uh bkub body but uh like like
reproducing the spirit of what you would
experience when reading the original
inverse maybe Lord chalmers's and uh KR
Norman I mean he's nothing to sneeze
your nose out he's he's definitely
really well well versed in in the poly
language and in ancient procrit
languages in
general but he really he's he's not good
at trying to make sense of Buddhist
philosophy because he just really
doesn't get it and even with biku bod I
mean he doesn't really practice much

that I'm that I'm aware of you know he
notoriously doesn't meditate and you
he's just a scholar you know he's
dedicated his energies to translating
and mastering the poly language but when
you get into the deep stuff
I he's just going to defer to the
commentaries in most cases so aan Tanis
I think would be more reliable in that
case so anyways um I'm gonna move on to
the next question which is the last
question the very last one and this one
was right under the wire this is just a
little while ago today this is from
tiggles and tiggles says why is your
Discord status always set to do not

disturb and that was I mean that's
relative ly recent I used to have it on
the yellow which was I don't know what
what yellow stands for but uh there was
like a bunch of back and forth there was
one guy who joined the Discord server
who was kind of a a leftist who was like
debating with everybody and it was if
you don't put it on red you don't put
your computer on do not disturb it just
keeps beeping you just keep getting
getting these notifications just one
after another after another after
another I was just getting tired of my
computer just beeping all the time with
like two people on the Discord server
just going back and forth back and forth

so I just said it to do not
disturb um just so that I would not be
disturbed by all the beeping from the
notifications from just two people or
sometimes more than two people in some
heated debate in one of the Discord
rooms just going back and forth and
that's it that's that's the last
question that's the last answer to the
last question and I'm done so if you got
any questions you feel free to to ask
them their questions and I will endeavor
to answer them and uh hit like smash
that like button I'm supposed to be
animated when I say that but it's just I
just have this urge to say smash that

like

button and uh subscribe if you haven't

already and look at the URL links some

two people have asked where they can buy

my books and the whole time they're down

just in the like the description below

this you have to click on see more or

whatever and uh you know the whole thing

opens up and the at the bottom of the

URL links are uh the links to the three

books that I've got um on

Amazon and

uh be

happy

hello and welcome to episode

73b of question and answer I am your

host pel Basel and this is I'm gotta

make sure here okay it's recording this

is called

73b because I did this entire Q&A

yesterday which lasted about two hours

and at the end of it I realized that for

some reason it didn't

record and I think it's because I've got

like two different kinds of soft where

running at the same time that getting

each other's way one is like sound

quality for the mic and the other one is

the video stuff and it's just not good

this is the second time this has

happened but anyways on with the show

because I think it's recording I'll look

again yep yep it's

recording so some of you may have

noticed that this is the holiday season

in fact we are in the midst of

saturnalia and tomorrow at the time of

recording this is the Fe feast day of

Saul and

vicus so I'm studiously avoiding any

christmy

backgrounds and filming this in my

bedroom our bedroom I should say not

mine and yours of course silly but mine

and my

sweethearts so I guess I should just

wait into this and start answering

questions

again and the first question is from

rajer kumara and Roger kumara says are

ter arada monks allowed to watch movies

when they travel in the plane if they do

does it break any

preset

well there is a rule against a monk

making effort to listen to music or

making effort to watch entertainment

shows so back in the old days when I

would ride a plane and they had the

screens like mounted up high you could

just sit there and watch the

movie because you weren't making any

special effort you're going to be riding

that plane

anyway but then later they started

requiring earphones to listen to the

movie just in case somebody else didn't

want to listen to the movie and then

that would be making a special effort

and so I would watch the movie as a

silent movie without subtitles or

anything and sometimes the nice flight

attendant bless her heart would come up

and explain to me that if I put on the

earphones I could hear the movie but it

would be at least back in my strict monk

days it would have been the violation of

a Duca offense the commission of a Duca

offense so I didn't do it and then after

that then finally just every seat back

has like a movie screen and you can pick
which which movie you want to watch and
so uh when it got to that point I pretty
much just started becoming a LAX Monk
and occasionally watched a movie while
one of during one of my many trips back
and forth across the Pacific Ocean so
that was kind of like the beginning of
the end for me I guess was when I
started watching movies on airplanes
thereby committing a minor uh
ecclesiastical
offense watching and
listening I mean back in my stre days I
used to make a special request like I
was it going to ride a bus from Southern

Burma to Upper Burma which is like a

nightl long offense or yeah well it

practically is offense it's just like a

nightl long ordeal

so I would I would specifically request

I want to ride a bus that doesn't have

movies and burmes movies pretty much

suck

anyway and so I'd wind up on this bus

that was like part like cargo transfer

I'd be like sitting on a bag of rice

with somebody's foot in my ear and

there'd be like a kid two seats back

just puking his guts out for the past

hour and my barefoot it's in some kind

of liquid and I'm so crammed in there

that I can't even bend forward enough to

see what my foot is in I'm hoping that

it's just like transmission fluid or

something and not the the puke from the

kid two seat's

back so I did that for a while and then

finally I kind of gave up on that and

just rode the regular buses and then of

course you watch crappy Burmese

movies and the monks get to sit up front

on the bus too so I'd be right up there

with the TV

screen but

uh I digress I'm I'm digressing wildly

so getting back to the to the uh

question here um terraa monks are

allowed to watch

movies um so long as they're not making
a special effort or if the movie is like
a spiritually oriented movie like maybe
some kind of educational documentary
with some kind of Dharma involved then
it'd probably be okay but making a
special effort to to listen to music or
to watch entertainment shows is against
the rules for a monk so I'll just move
on to the next question and this is from
Ken and Ken always reminds me of kazin
which is a kind of alien race in um
Larry nien
stories but I assume Ken is
human partly just because he spells his
name
differently and he says I assume it to

he have you heard the story that Steve
Jobs named Apple after neim karoli
Baba's favorite fruit interesting if
true brings uh interesting if true
beings that apple is the most ubiquitous
company on Earth carrying on a certain
essence of baba um no I've never heard
that story until Ken here divulged it to
me um I did watch the movie about Steve
Jobs in which apparently the name Apple
just was like off the top of somebody's
head while they were driving in a car
it's just hey let's just call it
Apple so um it is true though I mean
movies aren't necessarily
accurate and so uh yeah it may be that

Steve Jobs was a a a fan of neem coroli
Baba if not a voy and uh named it after
NE curly Baba's favorite fruit because
there were a lot of apples passing back
and forth around neim coroli Baba if uh
you can believe what ROM da says about
it
although NE cly Baba did like other
kinds of fruit too he did eat
pomegranates occasionally for
example but uh yeah I never heard the
story and so I'm just I'm just going to
move on to the next question because we
got quite a lot of questions which is
pretty much as usual lately and I should
point out now that from now on it's
going to be three questions each and

pray that I do not reduce the number further so this next question is is from Toronto and Toronto says what's the significance of Christmas in the alt Buddhist worldview how should Western Buddhists go about observing Christmas celebrations well I assume there's more than one alt Buddhist worldview that different alt Buddhists will have different worldviews and thus different interpretations of the significance of Christmas but for the most part Christmas is a secular institution is just a secular Feast Day in the West in the secular West that uh it being the birthday of Jesus is really of secondary

importance to most Americans I'm pretty

sure so I mean you can celebrate

Christmas as a

Buddhist um maybe not so much

celebrating the birthday of Jesus when

and Christmas Day in all likelihood is

not the birthday of Jesus

because I have read that the first

recorded celebration of Christmas was

like in

May and then it got changed to

January 6th or 8th something like that

and I think the Greek Orthodox

Christians still celebrate it as January

6th or 8th or something but then in the

western half of the Roman Empire as the

the empire in general was converting to

Christianity they decided Well let's

just ease

some Christianity into the the feast

calendar by replacing the feast day of

Sol en victus with

Christmas

so December

25th uh was and still is I suppose to a

lot of pagans the feast day of Solen

vicus and

so but I I should say that to be fair to

the Christians I mean the standard

Buddhist Day celebrating the the

birthday of the Buddha himself probably

that was not his real birthday either

it's I consider it statistically very

unlikely that the Buddha was born became

Enlighten became enlightened and died

all on the full moon of

May so there's no like ancient poly text

saying that the Buddha was born on the

full moon of May so it's just a later

traditional thing you don't know when

his birthday is you want to celebrate

his birthday any anyway so you just pick

a day Christians pick the feast day of

Solen vicus and the Buddhists picked the

traditional day on which the Buddha

became

enlightened so getting back to the

question because I'm digressing just

spasmodically

here um I mean Christmas as a secular

institution fine it's it's nice to give

gifts Christmas trees are pretty you

know no problem there um how should

Western Buddhists go about observing

Christmas celebrations well you should

watch how How the Grinch Stole Christmas

it's a good Christmas movie and there's

no mention at all of Jesus getting born

it's just a nice movie about how

Christmas is like a matter of attitude

Christmas is a state of mind that it's

not all about getting presents which of

course many children would consider to

be vile

heresy

but I'm let's assume that we're not

small children here so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from covax and sead zida and covac andad zida says I have a theory based on my reading of the sutas it seems as if nibana is always used as a verb to mean extinguishment in the early sutas nibana element with remainder is the extinguishment of the three poisons well the nibana element without remainder is the extinguishment of of the five Aggregates I talked to someone that speaks Bengali and he says that's how the word is used in his language even today and as an aside I've I've been told that it's the same in Nepal in the Nepali Language anyways I continue like

when you turn off the light use the they
use the word
nibana but in the later Traditions the
word nibana was used for what is
referred to as the deathless element
that realm the unpr olifer thus can't be
referred to Etc but Iana was never used
for this in the sutas they are just
closely associated and maybe later
tradition confused the specific
differences of the two concepts do you
think this makes sense or are there
examples that go counter to this
hypothesis yeah there actually are quite
a few examples that go counter to that
but getting back up towards the top of

covac and sead zona's theoretical

question here he says uh nibana was um

always used as a verb but actually the

verb would be ni to blow out niana is

like a verbal noun it's the Anna at the

end of a poly word is like ing in

English so it would be like skiing as a

noun so you know his his coughing is

really bothering me so coughing there

would be a verbal noun you know his

coughing

so um yeah I mean it is kind of a verbal

noun

and a lot of the time nibana it as an

ethical term you know it's referring to

you know the attaining of Enlightenment

but nibana as like the deathless state

is found in very early texts also for example there's that um vestigal just that fragment that's found in the dean Kaya and the majaya referring to um you know infinite consciousness that's luminous all around you know it's formless and I mean that's that's a very ancient fragment that has found its way into two different

sutas also in the udana for example there are a number of descriptions of nibana you know where the sun doesn't shine the moon doesn't glow the Stars don't twinkle you know earth water Wind and Fire Gain No foothold like for example in the inspired utterance at the

end of udana 110 which is the Bahia sua

you know that's also relatively very old

Buddhism you know very old text but

again it's referring to nibana as a kind

of metaphysical state so nibana as a

kind of ethical attainment and nibana as

like the metaphysical state that the

attainment attains are both pretty

common in going all the way back to the

oldest text we've

got

so

I guess I answer that question by golly

so I'll just move on to the next

question from seak and sead

Zona after I take a sip of bovine

glandular

secretions so he says which side of the argument are you on is it alone like a rhinoceros or is it alone like a rhinoceros is horn and yeah I'm in the latter Camp I think it means alone like the horn of a rhinoceros and there are two reasons for that one is that the Indian rhinoceros or so I've been told is not particularly solitary and second the Indian rhinoceros has only one horn as opposed to African rhinoceroses that have two

horns and most animals that have horns have two horns you know or antlers you know cow has two water buffalo has two deer have two antlers most animals with

horn have two a pair of them you know

you got like a mated pair you know

almost like a boy antler and a girl

antler but the rhinoceros having only

one horn I mean that's that's indicative

that the rhinoceroses horn does not have

a mate you know it goes

alone so I assume that the kaga sua kega

literally means sword Horn uh referring

to the horn and to the rhinoceros that

is the bearer of this sword horn horn um

I think it's emphasizing the solitary

nature of the rhinoceros which has only

one horn as opposed to most horn animals

that have

to so I'll just move on to seov action

sead Z's next question

here what is the significance of the term datag it seems like originally this was the name used during the Buddha's actual life time even by himself rather than Buddha the context of asking for its significance is that of its meaning and how it relates to the broader culture on top of just the dhama because there are sutas where people of other Traditions are asked about the condition of a Daga after death alongside other questions like of the universe or if the universe is infinite and such but this wouldn't make any sense if there wasn't a general concept of a Daga that was shared among all Traditions or the

culture at large so this is kind of two questions one is what is the significance of the term dagat you know what does it mean I guess and the second is uh with regard to whether Daga was a specifically Buddhist term or whether it was common in the spiritual culture of Northern India in the Buddhist time so what Daga means according to my interpretation it's there's a number of different interpretations but my interpretation I think my interpretation is correct otherwise it wouldn't be my interpretation
is that it's the combination of two words dat and AATA dat means like this or such and it's referring to

essentially the enlightened State and
that was common in early Buddhism that
would use a term like T or tadi is
another one that's found in the Ana waga
which just means like like this or such
because it's how you put into words
something that can't be put into
words so and then AATA means it's the
past participle of aach which means to
come or it could also mean to become so
the tagata is he who has become thus you
know he who has attained the state of
suchness and uh whether it was common to
other like philosophical or spiritual
traditions in Ancient India I don't know
for sure I can't remember ever seeing

Daga in like the upan aoic literature or

the babad Gita or Jane literature

although in I mean the only ancient

Indian language that I read in the

original is

poly so I mean there might be stuff in

Sanskrit that gets translated into

English you know away from in a way that

you wouldn't recognize it as dagat but

I'm pretty sure dag is found only in

Buddhist texts so it may be that it's a

kind of

anachronism or a paraphrase you know

somebody comes and asks if an

enlightened being still exists after

death and then in the Buddhist text they

just say does the dagat exist after

death um when it may be that the the person that that asked the question used a different word and it just got paraphrased as the tagata but somebody out there who has read a lot of Jane literature or um Sanskrit literature if they like non- Buddhist Sanskrit literature if they've seen the word tagata out there then that's nice that's that's fine they can say it they can point it out in the comments or something but um I think it may be a like a uniquely Buddhist term so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from lib Lam and it's like three questions combined into

one so Libra Lam says if an alien or supernatural being could reproduce with a human to make a near human even if if we knew they came from other worldly Origins would they need to be judged by their physical characteristics to disqualify for ordination as monks could they hypothetically ordain and how do you think world religion would change if the heroic godman like Jesus Aras or Odin took on dharmic lives and Legacies so let's see the first question first sub question is if an alien or supernatural being could re reproduce with a human to make a near human even if we knew that they came from other worldly Origins would they need to be

judged by their physical characteristics
to disqualify for ordination as monks um
I think we can set aside aliens because
ancient I mean the ancient polyc really
don't have much concept of space aliens
um other than supernatural beings like
dvas or
brahmas and I don't like in in ancient
Greece and ancient Rome you had demigods
who were like half God and half human
you know like Achilles for
example um but I guess he would still be
considered human Achilles would still be
considered human even though he was born
to a
goddess um and in Ancient India I don't

think they really have a concept of demigods other than they have a concept of like avatars like Krishna was an avatar of Vishnu so and according to the Hindus even the Buddha was an Avatar of Vishnu but it would be sort of like the spirit of a god inhabiting briefly my God standards the the physical body of a human and so the the physical body would be
human like Krishna was human in addition to being Divine sort of like a lot of Christians say that Jesus was human in addition to being
Divine um so yeah it's a tricky question and I don't know if the texts really make an issue of it whether in the Venia

texts you know they're they deal with
the the situation of you know whether
half God half human would be allowed to
be ordained um just just be looking
human isn't good enough because there is
a story about a Naga which is like a a
fire breathing Cobra dragon that can
shapeshift and assume human form and has
essentially human intelligence it
assumed human form and was ordained as a
monk but then when it fell asleep it
reverted back to its Naga form and then
when the monks found out about it um the
Buddha told him I mean you're not really
ordained you're going to have to go
because only humans can be can be

monks so even though he assumed human

form that wasn't good

enough but exactly where you would draw

the line I guess we're going to have to

have vinia Scholars Hammer this out and

come to a decision at the next buddist

counsel so I guess I'll just move on to

the next question this is from Cool Whip

oh wait wait wait wait wait no no we're

not going to do that because there was

the other let's see

here there's the last part of this

question by lib Lam that I haven't

answered yet how do you think world

religion would

change if the heroic God man like Jesus

arus or

Odin took on dharmic lives and Legacies
well that's kind of a strange question
because I'm pretty sure Jesus at least
did take on a dharmic Life and
Legacy I mean not like Sanskrit Dharma
but I mean he was like a renunciant and
he lived more or less of a yogic life
apparently he attained psychic
powers so and arus if he's referring to
the hares Arch arus then he was probably
a relatively spiritual person
too I really can't say with regard to
Odin I'm not familiar with his um his
mythology and or whether or not there
really was a human origin to Odin that
I've been told that Odin may have just

been a God and then got accused of just
being uh glorified Human by later
Christians so yeah I mean the heroic God
man he took on dharmic lives and
Legacies um yeah I don't really fully
understand understand that question
because I'm pretty sure at least Jesus
of the three examples here did take on a
dharmic Life and
Legacy although I mean the followers of
Jesus um pretty much cast aside all the
renunciation stuff and uh they just
worship
Jesus so but there are a lot of
Buddhists like that
too so I think I answered that question
even though I don't completely

understand that part that third part
there how world religion would change if
the heroic God man took on dharmic lives
and
Legacies some of them do far as I can
tell so I'll just move on next question
now for real this time this is from Cool
Whip and Cool Whip says oh coip has like
little headers over each question it's
each question has a title so the title
of the first question is relationship
between mind and matter and he says what
is the relationship on how a non-phys
physical process mind can affect a
physical processed external
reality reality and I'm going to check

make sure this is really recording this

time God I hope it is but there was like

a little I mean it looked like it was

recording last time

too so gosh if it's not really recording

I'm I'm diddled

essentially so let's see what is the

relationship on how a non-physical

process can affect a physical process

well I'm not on materialist I do not

believe that physical matter is

ultimately real in fact I've I've said a

number of times that the next cernic

revolution in science may be the

realization that what a psychologist

calls Consciousness or mind is is a very

complicated form of what a physicist

calls energy and that's probably already
the case but it's also vice versa that
what a physicist calls energy is really
just a an elemental extremely simple
form form of what a psychologist would
call mind or Consciousness so that would
make the entire universe a kind of
manifestation of
mind um and also I mean there's like the
pH philosophy of Spinosa who is saying
that mind and matter are both real in a
sense but they're both ultimately the
same and that's kind of what what I
would say
also so I really don't see that there
really is a problem my interpretation

kind of shoots in the head the uh the
Mind Body problem because the body
doesn't ultimately exist I mean you
could argue the mind doesn't either but
um at least we have direct access to
mind we do not have direct access to
matter there's no way to prove that
physical matter really exists which
Emanuel Kant considered to be the
scandal of
philosophy
so yeah I guess I answered that one I
think I answered it better the first
time in the the one that you didn't get
to see because it didn't record and I I
sincerely hope it's recording for real
this

time so cool Whip's next question has
the title extrapolation of karma a mind
matter
reversal and the question is the reality
of karma one is able to see or infer in
the present moment is different from the
reality of karma from One Life to the
next for example when you commit an evil
action you can see the karmic imprint on
your mind in the present moment purely
mental and the mental physical effect of
that evil action has to wait till the
later lifetimes Karma means action or
intention but beyond the present moment
the extrapolation of karma are like
mental and physical reverses as in

Reverse action a greedy mind is reborn
into an impoverished external reality
despite intending on having more a
generous kind loving mind is reborn into
abundant external conditions despite
intending on giving up if a greedy mind
is included is inclined to have to
having more why wouldn't it be reborn
into abundance and a Content person into
humble conditions you need some
irrational faith in the karma reversal
currency of Merit well I do think there
are some kind of misconceptions here
first of all there really is no past
Karma or present or future Karma there's
only present Karma because according to
Orthodox terada only the present moment

exists the past no longer exists the

future doesn't exist yet therefore they

are

unreal all comma is present comma and

it's not necessarily the case that

something that you do in this life is

necessarily going to have effects in a

future life I mean it can have

instantaneous effects you know you get

mad you kick something and you hurt your

foot that's like an instantaneous effect

of your karma of of just being pissed

off and kicking

something so

so let's see here also it seems he's

referring to a kind of reverse action

where a greedy mind is reborn into an impoverished external reality but that's not necessarily the case I mean karma is like Mo the momentum of your mental energy and if you're really into acquiring stuff you know you're a greedy person that doesn't mean that you're just going to be punished the next time around it's I um by being poor I mean it could be that you're you're just building up this momentum and I mean apparently a lot of people do have a lot of karmic momentum in a certain direction like Mozart was composing Symphonies when he was a little kid because apparently he had a lot of parmy or just accumulated momentum in a

musical Direction before he was even
born and so it may be that a greedy mind
is can be reborn into like wealth for
example but then the suffering comes
from the wealth you know it's like
a lot of Rich parents they've got kids
that are just you know Hunter Biden
types or or or junkies or whatever and
it's like their own desire for all this
stuff just kind of backfires on them or
if you're lucky then you're reborn
you're born into wealth and you get
everything you want and you have the
wisdom to realize that you're still not
satisfied so also here A Generous kind
loving mind is reborn into abundant

external conditions not necessarily
though I mean um it depends on the
individual it's like it's like what you
need is gonna
happen so I mean like St John of the
Cross possibly my favorite Christian I
mean he was a saintly person very wise
person but his childhood just sucked and
it was like he was when he was full
grown he was only like 4 foot1 due to
malnutrition as a child in all
likelihood he had had a brother who died
in childhood they think possibly due to
malnutrition or just Flatout starvation
I mean there were his father died when
he was little and the the greater family
just disowned the the entire family

Spaniards in those days could be
relatively harsh and cruel I
guess and uh so he got sent to a a
school for Poor Boys where he could get
a free education but it wasn't 100% free
because had to work to earn his his
education and even as a little kid he
was working in a plague hospital so he's
carrying like buckets of puke and and
and diarrhea and stuff from people dying
of plague when he's a little kid and he
just got slammed into sainthood it seems
like it was like some people are born
saintly others attain saintliness and
some have saintliness thrust upon him
and uh I think St John of the Cross just

had saintliness thr rust upon him but it
was due to his karma and it was like
what he needed I guess so good people
can have uh a lot of harrowing ordeals
just because that's what they need for
their their
karmic like I I don't want to say
retribution but it's just for you know
everything to like
seek um equilibrium you know karma is
always heading towards
equilibrium but then we keep making new
Karma you know it's like Paul Lo says
you know the system is self-healing
except that it's all the time we're
adding this new Karma that maintains the
dis

equilibrium so yeah it's not necessarily
the case that if you're greedy you're
going to be born poor and if you're
generous you're going to be born rich I
mean it can just be the exact opposite
it depends on that your unique
combination of karmic
factors and it's too complicated to
predict really
so I think I'll just move on to cool
Whip's next question which is entitled
society and silence how does one live in
a social reality when their minds become
empty of words as silent beings well
I've read in the biography of Shri arob
bindo that he was in a state of

non-thinking even when he was writing
books and talking to people and I do
think that is possible where you don't
have to think about what you're going to
do it just spontaneously flows out of
you
like if you're dancing you're really
good at dancing you don't have to be
thinking about what your next step's
going to be it just
flows and it can be that way with
talking and so forth even without the
internal dialogue formulating what
you're going to say it just comes
out but let's let's just assume that
that's [__] and um this like
assuming that that is not the case when

your mind becomes empty of words the
silent beings I mean uh yeah I guess
you'd renounce the world world
or um in I think it's theang
zuang says that um uh if you're born
into a human body you just are obligated
to behave like a human just because
you're surrounded by humans and that's
the way you get along in in this
life um on the other hand I'm getting
back to the silent beings rahen am
mahashi when he had his attainment as a
teenager it took him years before he was
finally able to integrate this voidness
with the samsaric empirical world so he
was like mute for few years before he

was finally able to gradually integrate
the two
visions so to
speak but uh how does one live in a
social reality I assume it just happens
spontaneously if you're Advanced enough
that you don't need to think anymore or
I mean if you do think you're mindful of
the thinking you know let's say there's
a situation where you just have to think
in words or symbols then You' do it
mindfully and you wouldn't be identified
with the the words and symbols you
wouldn't be identified with the thinking
that it would just be nature taking its
course because that's what your brain
naturally does and you like the center

of your Consciousness would not be there
you know you'd be just kind of sitting
back observing it
all or something so I'll just move on to
Kip's next question here on Buddhist
metaphysics do all Buddhist Traditions
share the same metaphysics of no self or
do each have an interpretation of no
self are the differences ultimately down
to what mind and matter are if not then
what well I mean even the Terra Vaden
tradition has more than one explanation
of no self just because no self is
troublesome it's difficult to understand
it's kind of counterintuitive hard to
wrap your head around sometimes and so

different sub Traditions within terada
even within the sutas have different
explanations of no self for example the
uh anat luta the Buddha's second
discourse according to tradition after
his
Enlightenment um I mean he's saying that
essentially the argument is if you don't
have control over it it's not you so
like with regard to the five condas that
make up a human being the five
Aggregates you can't say with regard to
any of them let it be this way let it
not be that way and have it reliably
happen that's even with regard to um
saraka which is essentially volition I
mean you're not even in complete control

of your own

volitions but then there's also like the

the famous Chariot the simile of the of

the

Chariot which is another explanation of

no self that that a self is just a term

of convenience describing an Ever

Changing adjustable assemblage of of

constituent parts

but then when you get into Abid dama one

of the arguments is that anything that

can be divided down into smaller parts

cannot be considered um an individual

entity a

dhama and that's one argument that the

Mahayana Buddhists especially the maamaa

Buddhist used against the Abid Dharma Scholars by saying that um you know anything no matter how far down it gets divided you got like this atomic particle of some bless or something you know just can it's like according to the older schools it can't be divided down any further but still in Mahayana you say well it's still going to have a top half and a bottom half it's going to have a beginning and an end so you can divide that at least in your mind and I mean dividing something at least in your mind is valid from a Terra Vaden point of view because there are some things that cannot arise separately even though they're considered to be two different

things like volition and perception for example they have to Arise at the same time always they cannot be divided in reality but still they consider they're considered to be two different things and so you can say well the top half and the bottom half are also different because I mean they got obviously top half is not the same as bottom half so I think in the older Traditions they were referring to a subjective self like a soul an individual personality that is really an individual whereas when you get into Mahayana Buddhism it becomes

even it becomes a broader or even

objective selves you know any any kind

of objective object at all lacks an

intrinsic self

Essence so let's see here see if I'm

answering this question if I've

digressed again do all Buddhist

Traditions share the same metaphysics of

no self um no like I was saying the

Mahayana Buddhists are more metaphysical

and they're just applying no self even

to like the basic particles constituents

of saric reality that for example Abid

dama says is

real so are the differences ultimately

down to what mind and matter are or if

not then what it's it's not so much mind

and matter it's just a matter of
individual self Essence which Buddhism
denies there is no individual self
Essence except according to Abid dama in
these like Atomic constituents of
samsaric reality but Mahayana even
denies the existence of
those so I guess I answered that
question it's not easy question to
discuss I guess so I'll just move on to
the next question this is from Joe do
and Joe do says do you believe that
people's psychic energy can manifest in
your body as headaches or other bodily
Sensations and I would say sure I mean
if you're in a room with somebody who's

just like losing their cool they're just losing their [__] they're freaking out then that's going to have an effect on everyone around them they might not even be directing it at you they might be freaking out at somebody else but still it's there's going to be this it's just going to be permeating the atmosphere and it's going to have an effect on you um I'm reminded of ROM Doss in one of his book saying that he had a teacher in India who if he ate food that was cooked by someone who was angry he would become violently ill just because of like The Vibes in the food so he is very sensitive to like the bad moods of other people for

example um but yeah mental states are
contagious which is one of the main
reasons why in the mongalo suo the list
of the 38 great blessings in life
blessing number one is not associating
with fools because mental states are
contagious and their toxic mental states
are going to affect
you
so yeah I do believe that people's
psychic energy can manifest in your body
as headaches or other bodily Sensations
so I guess I'll just uh move on to the
next question here and this is from
Crave minerals and I sincerely hope this
is really recording this time I'm just

putting it out there

this is from Crave minerals and crave

minerals says if somebody if someone

close to you is going through a sort of

meaning crisis for example a Christian

struggling with faith and approaching

the end of life being overcome with

doubt and fear and you wish to somehow

alleviate their worries however slightly

what would a good Buddhist do I

recognize that this loss of faith is not

really something that can be helped and

is after all a personal matter and a

healthy thing to question in the long

run but I just wish they could somehow

feel

better and yeah with regard to a person

struggling with their own faith I mean
that's entirely internal to them it
seems um and I mean the best you can do
is just be compassionate be honest you
know I mean sometimes I mean I don't
know each person having a problem like
this is it's going to be a unique thing
and so I can't just say well you should
say say this that and the other thing
because it will depend on the on the
individual um I am reminded that uh ROM
do again in one of his books is talking
about how his father when he got old was
kind of having a he's struggling with
faith in his own self you know he's just
start starting to see himself as a

failure who wasted his life doing the wrong things and ROM do you know fresh from India he's uh just hanging out with his dad and just being grounded in the present moment and he's talking about how once they were making Jam or something and his father is just sort of like doing these monologues about what a failure his life has been and so forth and ROM dos is just saying well I mean should we put this much sugar in it or or like how much pectin do we need and he's just staying like in the present moment it's not like he's ignoring his father it's just that he's trying to remain in the present moment as a kind of I don't know like an anchor or

something you know just trying to ground

the the situation to some degree

and uh at least it helped his father

feel a little more comfortable because

he's just lost in all the speculative

stuff whereas I mean the reality if we

can call it a reality is just right here

and

now but uh I mean if they're losing

their faith in Christianity I mean if

you're not a if you're not a Christian I

mean you can point out that I

mean you know I'm not a Christian I'm

doing fine apparently but I mean if they

think that they're going to burn in hell

for not being Christian then they

haven't really lost their faith have

they

so I'm not exactly sure what you would

tell somebody in this in a situation

like this I my own grandmother was had a

like a a catastrophic loss of faith when

she was very old like in her

90s um but I wasn't there I mean I

wasn't there to do anything about it you

know I just heard about it secondhand

you know long afterwards but she was

just a devout Bible thumping Southern

Baptist Christian who then later in life

converted over to seventh day

adventism and you know Jesus is coming

and I mean she was just really into it

and then finally she got started getting

mad at God because he would not take her

she just kept getting older and older

and older and more and more feeble and

just wouldn't

die and she wanted to just go to heaven

and you know be with you know her love

loved ones and so forth and God just

wouldn't take her and finally she just

got pissed off at him and just kind of

lost her faith in that way but um yeah

again I'm just I'm babbling here uh

crave minerals I'm not exactly sure what

you would say other than just be

compassionate and honest and try to

remain grounded and try not you know

getting lost in this ephemeral

theoretical stuff that maybe is what

they are lost

in so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from Crave minerals

also he says how do you feel about

Buddhists that talk about God for

example I saw

Titan talked quite gracefully about God

and nibana in the same breath below is a

quote to show you what I mean quote God

as the ground of being cannot be

conceived of Nirvana also cannot be

conceived of if we are aware when we use

the word Nirvana or the word God and

that we are talking about the ground of

being there is no danger in using these

words and I I admit I've done the same

thing like if you're trying to explain spirituality from a Buddhist Point of View to a Christian you don't use poly terms they won't I mean you use words that they can understand and so you know you talk about the spirit of God that pervades all things and like a Buddhist in a sense is you're trying to not be distracted by all this worldly stuff so that you just see through through the spirit of God that pervades all things and I mean it's kind of skillful means it's at least they're using a way of communicating that they can sort of get an idea of what you're talking about so I mean and then when you when

you get into like

vant what what they're talking about is

God and and and what Buddhists talk

about as nibana the difference is mainly

verbal it's just stic antic really I'm

pretty

sure that the sages who experienced

Brahman and the sages who experienced

Nirvana were I mean they're just trying

to use different paradigms you know

different cultural explanations for

describing the same thing and

so the Hindus are more into describing

it you know as as something Divine and

like God because that's the the vadic

tradition is is pretty much

theocentric

so yeah I don't I don't really see any danger in that so long as you're not using God as you know the angry old man that lives in the sky and you know he's got a chosen people and he gets pissed off a lot and smites people a lot and got the Angels flittering around his feet like butterflies and so forth um yeah so long as you're not thinking of God as a kind of cosmic Santa Claus except wearing a white suit instead of a red one and not nearly so jolly then I mean so long as you're you're using God pretty much in a like a vonic sense of just reality or even a lot of theology like Catholic theology really their God

is just an

abstraction so yeah I so long as you

keep in mind what you're doing then uh I

think you're doing okay if you just

Define God as reality and you Divi

Divine Define nirvana as reality then I

mean so long as you make it clear that's

what you're doing then uh I don't think

it's it's particularly

dangerous although a lot of hardnose

dogmatists May seriously take issue with

it so I'm just going to move on to the

next question this is from tiggles

formerly known as hey it's

TIG and tigle says any plans on having

aan Puna back on your

show and he's referring to about a year

ago Brian Rue aan Puna Damo and I were
doing shows every it like every three
weeks we do like one or two videos
discussing various topics and
then uh aan Puna some of aan puno's
supporters began a kind of protest
against aan pun associating with a known
Nazi mainly Brian Rue I don't know to
what extent if any I was involved in
their protests it was mainly they were
protesting against ajan Puna associating
with Brian Rue and Brian R is a sincere
Buddhist he's a good guy he's got some
strange ideas but even so he's
harmless and uh anyway that ended the
the videos we were doing and then last

spring

um I emailed aan pun and asked him if maybe he and I could do some videos together and he was saying and he was explaining you know why he had to stop doing the videos with u Brian and me but he said maybe in the summer and then I never followed up he never followed up and it just didn't happen so yeah it's it's possible but uh it's it's kind of a shame that Brian can't be involved in it but because aan Puna said he didn't want to die on that Hill he has to choose his battles and uh just losing a lot of his supporters or some of his supporters because he refuses to stop doing videos with Brian Ru was just uh a little much

for

him so it's possible I don't

know so next next question is from NWO

games alert and I don't think NWO games

alert has asked questions before

or if he has or they have or she has um

they went by a different name and so in

their innocence they asked I think seven

questions

here and just just this once because

they're a newcomer maybe innocent of the

the new rules and the new rule the newer

new rule is three questions each three

shall be the number of the

count no more well look can be

less so anyways New World Order games

alert I mean the first questions are all kind of related and they can be answered relatively quickly so I'll just humor new I almost said New World Order NWO games

alert and the first question here is are animals subject to Karma and reincarnation if yes then explain how an animal can sin gain merits or indulge in morally good or bad behavior if no then explain where in our Evolution from animal to Human did humans begin to be subjected to rebirth in karma where ostr Opus chromagnon neandertal Homo erectus Etc subject to reincarnation in the law of of karma or is it only Homo sapiens who is subject to Universal or Divine

moral laws so that's like three or four questions right there can telescoped into one um so the first part here is are animals subject to Karma and reincarnation yes any animal that has mentality evolved enough that it can have per ceptions and volitions is going to make karma karma is volition and so from the Buddhist point of view even like Plankton like copap pods in the ocean are going to be subject to Karma and reincarnation um personally I'm not sure that a copap pod really has uh volition and perception um it may be that some of the more advanced invertebrates like an

octopus does um and also in in like the
philm Cordata to which we belong you
know it go back at least as far as
fish like whether uh an an acorn worm
has Karma makes Karma or not I don't
know because I don't really know how
what kind of a mind an acorn worm
has
so see so if yes then explain how an
animal can sin gain merits or indulge in
morally good or bad Behavior well sin is
really not a Buddhist term that's more
of a Christian term um morally bad
behavior they can do a lot of which is
why animals from the Terra Buddhist
point of view are pretty much stuck in
the animal realm for a long time in fact

there's a suta discussing how hard it is
to get out of the animal realm once
you're in there and it's you've got a a
yoke which goes around like the the neck
of an ox it's shaped sort of like a
toilet seed I think think so let's just
say toilet seat in order to convert it
into something that you can easily
understand so you got this toilet seat
floating around on the ocean the vast
ocean and there's this sea turtle who
comes up for air once every hundred
years to take a breath and so the odds
of getting out of the animal realm once
you're in it are about equivalent to the
odds of that sea turtle just through

random chant coming up and poking his head up through the middle of the toilet seat as it floats on the Sur surface of the ocean when it comes up to take a breath because according to terraa animals really can't earn Merit or it's very rare and difficult for an animal to earn Merit but they earn demerit a lot just through like delusion they got a lot of greed hate and delusion and that's bad

karma but I do think that animals are more capable of getting good karma than Orthodox Pabo claims you know there there are stories of dolphins who are help helping drowning swimmers Dolphins trying to help harpoon whales you know

they get on either side of the whale and
help pushing it up so it can
breathe and uh I mean even like a a
mother chicken loving her chicks you can
say it's just blind Instinct but in
human beings also there's a lot of blind
Instinct involved in the maternal
Instinct um just parental instincts I
mean it's animal instincts and that
doesn't make the love any less genuine
even if it's conditioned by animal
instincts and hormones and so forth and
animals love their babies at least the
ones that take care of their
babies and uh you know they can
be you know animals can show good

qualities I mean especially if you have
a dog and I mean it'd be a really
insensitive shallow person who would
think that a dog is just some kind of
automaton with no mind if you look into
a dog's eyes there isn't somebody
looking back at
you so
yeah so it's it is possible for an
animal to gain merits like for example
in even in the terab poly texts or it's
in the commentaries I think there's the
story of a frog who be went to heaven
and as the the Buddha was giving a
discourse and there's the Frog that's
just sitting there and it can't
understand the Buddhist words but it's

like the the

melodious like gentleness of the

Buddha's voice had this frog in a kind

of

like an for a frog anyway an exalted

mental state and it's just listening to

the sound of the Buddhist voice and

enjoying it as something beautiful and

then this shepherd with a a stick like

Shepherds used to have he just comes in

without even knowing it without without

seeing the Frog at all he just puts a

stick down on the Frog's head and

squishes the Frog's head and kills it

but because the Frog was in this exalted

mental state when it died it went up

into into heaven I think it went into
talwa timsa heaven and became the frog
god not Tech which is a different frog
god
so um I guess I've answered all these
questions because certainly ostr opines
and monkeys and tree shrews and reptiles
and so forth are making Karma that they
do you know they're subject to the same
laws as any other sentient
being so I'll just move on to NWO games
alerts next question here how soon after
death is a human reborn into continuous
existence in Sam SAR is there a fixed
waiting time a Bardo existence or a
heaven where they are stored together
with their

karma

um it's it has to be instantaneous going

with terraa Buddhism once once your life

stops in this life you know once once

you're you're brain dead so to speak

then the very next Moment Like A

trillionth of a second later you have to

take a rebirth somewhere

else and

uh I mean it's kind of a misconception

here he's talking about a heaven where

beings are stored together with their

karma because there are no beings to be

stored it's just the

karma that's all that is that that trans

it's all that transmigrates from One

Life to the next is just the the
momentum the psychic momentum of Karma
which causes the next rebirth and there
cannot be a break in it it's got to be
continuous it's this
stream sort of like schopenhauer's
will um there could be a kind of BTO
existence in that I mean the BTO
existence could just be sort of an
ephemeral temporary next life in between
this life and like the next long you
know like a human life or something
let's say it's your karma to be reborn
you know as a a royal Prince or
something there may be like a weight for
that or or who knows so I mean it can be
that you go through a kind of BTO BTO

existence like is described in the
Tibetan Book of the
Dead but uh that would just be its own
existence I mean it wouldn't be in
between existences that would be its own
existence so I'll just move on to uh NWO
Gamer's next question here is samsara on
planet Earth or are there other realms
planets or planes of existence where
samsara can unfold and Karma can take
its course and in parenthesis he's got
this question really is for Brian Rue
and this is an easy question Brian Rue
gets all the easy questions I
think is uh samsar is just Universal
it's just this Cosmos is samsara and

there are like an infinite number of

Worlds so if one world is destroyed then

you know the beings from that world will

go to a very similar world that that AR

isn't necessarily light years away in

space it can just be half an inch

sideways through

probability

although uh early Buddhism doesn't

really have a a concept of other

dimensions like you know the fifth

dimension of probability or

something but there are an infinite

number of

Worlds so let's see here next question

from NWO games alert pretty sure

yeah next

question the course of human existence
begins with a few Millions rapidly
expanding to billions trillions and then
endless myriads of
individuals through tens of thousands of
generations if reincarnation is a thing
how is it possible to find Space and
Time on Earth for these ever increasing
numbers to continue wandering in samsara
in order to fulfill their Destiny and
reach liberation
well there's at least two different ways
of explaining this one is what I just
said the many world's hypothesis that
there are an infinite number of Worlds
and one world is destroyed you know it's

like some of those uh beings will just
be reborn in this world as almost like
refugees or
something but also it could be that most
humans just haven't been human for very
long that we came from some other realm
like came up from the animal realm or
from some Spirit realm or something and
that may help to explain why there seem
to be so many NPCs walking
around um just you know complete normies
with hardly an original thought in their
head uh it does remind me of a story by
JD Salinger called Teddy about this kid
born into a dysfunctional family in New
York City who just happens to be
enlightened

and his sister is just horrible his

little his kid sister is just this

little monster and he's kind of speaking

up for her on on her behalf saying that

she just hasn't been a human for very

many lives you know she's still at a

crude state of humanity and I mean

that's another explanation another

possible explanation could be a

combination of the two so we'll just

move on to NWO games alerts last

question

here isn't Buddhism just like

Christianity in reality just a

collection of fairy tales when all comes

to all a bunch of crap useful for

certain purposes such as in the best case societal Harmony or worse just another scam useful for rulers and despots in order to keep people from engaging in violent revolts against their overlords and this is just a standard argument used by atheists against religion you know supposedly the enlightened atheist can see that all spirituality is just [__] and they just grossly misunderstand what spirituality is all about they just don't get it I'm not necessarily saying that NWO games alert belongs to this category but apparently he hasn't read many poly Texs because there's not a whole lot of fairy tales

in there I mean there are fairy tales in

the poly Tex which I have from the

beginning just

ignored because they're really not the

essence of the thing that's not what

Buddhism is about Buddhism is not based

on fairy tales it's not even based

really on a

narrative

so um some religions I suppose have been

formulated for the purpose of

controlling the masses like you know

you've got a warlord who declares

himself to be the mouthpiece of God and

that's happened at least twice among the

major religions that I can think of and

and like cult leaders it's happened even
more times you know smaller
scale um yeah I mean it's a way of
controlling your followers by saying you
know I'm speaking with the voice of God
so you better do what I
say but with Buddhism and even early
Christianity I mean the original purpose
was to renounce Society so I don't see
how that is just a scam cooked up for
the purpose of keeping keeping the PE in
their place or even for societal Harmony
really I mean when you're renouncing
Society then I
mean the best case of societal Harmony I
mean even that seems to be largely
irrelevant because some early religion

especially the more advanced ones

recognize that Society is just [__] up

and so if you really want to know

reality you go off alone into a desert

or into a forest and just

contemplate just turn

inwards

introspect

and yeah I I really don't know how the

the the cynical atheists would account

for that that that's how Buddhism began

that's how Christianity

began maybe not to the same extent as

Buddhism where it's just saying renounce

the world just go alone like the Horn of

the rhinoceros meditate under a tree in

a

Wilderness don't have anything to do

with with lay people in villages

I mean how is that there some sort of

scam cooked up by a

government

so yeah I i' I'd say no the answer the

quick answer to that question uh isn't

Buddhism just like Christianity in

reality just a collection of fairy tales

when all comes to all a bunch of crap

yeah that'd be no and I wouldn't even

say that was true of Christianity I mean

there's there is a lot of goodness in

Christianity but cynics will just point

to the bad stuff and say there you go

it's crap but I mean it's not so much

Christianity that is crap as just human
nature that's got a lot of crap in it
that when human
beings TR you know even if they get they
inherit an enlightened spiritual
tradition they're likely to just turn
into crap especially when it becomes
mainstream and then you've got like
ambitious like politician types getting
in so that can control it you know it's
like early Christianity once it once it
went mainstream you've got this really
corrupt politician types that are
becoming Bishops and and and like
Patriarchs and so
forth um just because you know that's

their way to power and that happened and
it wasn't really the fault of Jesus or
the fault of the Buddha you know when
this sort of thing happens it's just
corrupt human
nature so so I think I'll just move on
to the next question here and this is
from oal and oal says my first question
was about Bobo on and if he had any
spiritual significance to you and in the
previous um the previous Q&A I pointed
out Bobo on who's on my altar behind me
uh when I'm in the other room but I'm
not in that room but it would be right
right
there and Bobo on uh he doesn't have any
spiritual significance to me

you I I used to see little bboong images
on altars all through Burma Bobo on is
he's like second or third place for
personages that go onto Buddhist altars
I mean the Buddha is number one of
course and you know there are some other
ones like uh Shin OA goat but um Bobo an
he was an alchemist or a
waya and he was very powerful and he was
very much revered and he still is to
this day apparently due his his
commonness on on Buddhist altars because
in order to be a wayar or like
a an alchemist or wizard of the top rank
you've got to use like powerful you know
like the highest spiritual powers and

that's dhama I mean the most powerful
Alchemists and wizards are going to be
white because they're going to be kind
of channeling or tapping into
dhama which is the most power you know
has the most spiritual
power uh even though even so though I
mean the most famous story about Bobo
Ang was there was some lady who was
starting a business and she went to Bobo
Ang for his Blessing so that her
business could prosper and he just
whipped out his penis and slapped her
upside the head with it and then just
resheathed the penis and that was it
that was the blessing but apparently it
worked because uh

she got rich after that her her uh her
business really prospered so there must
have been something to it I
guess but uh let's see the the only
reason I've got that bobo on little
image is that I was at this Monastery
and it had this box of stuff that they
were just giving away free it was like
old DH books and stuff and there was
this little Bobo on image in there and
I'd seen Bobo on so many times and um I
don't know I just I just correct it it
was for free distribution just put it on
my
alter so I think I'll just move on to
oil alts next

question which is as

follows and these are these questions

are all in the past tense because he

asked once before and it somehow got

disappeared off YouTube which happens uh

pretty frequently so then he says I

asked if during mediation the most

common typo for Buddhists is is typing

mediation instead of Med meditation I

asked if during meditation if you ever

experienced your Consciousness leave

your body and experience a reality that

appeared to be more realistic than this

current reality well that's like a

two-part question the first part no I've

never experienced like an I never had an

outof body experience during

meditation but the second part is did I
experience a reality that appeared to be
more realistic than this current reality
yeah which was like a mystical state it
wasn't some other world you know with
all this different stuff that was more
Vivid and and more lifelike more
realistic whatever that means but um
just the mystical State itself is
definitely more realistic than this
Dreamscape that we're living in with all
like doors and windows and
shirts so it was it was a mystical state
that was nondifferentiated that was just
Crystal so
clear anyway I guess I'll just move on

to oils third and last question here my
final question was in Bine glandular is
bovine glandular secretion your favorite
beverage and I am drinking it
now but I wouldn't say that I even have
a favorite beverage like if I could only
drink one thing for the rest of my life
it wouldn't be milk because I don't know
it's like sometimes you're just not in
the mov for
milk so I don't know what it' be some
kind of fruit juice
maybe there used to be this this stuff I
used to drink a lot when I was a young
man before I was a monk called it was
Dharma juice it was the company was
called Dharma juice and it was cold

pressed apple cranberry cider which was

really

good so I mean they don't make it

anymore they got bought out by some big

Corporation but uh yeah if if I just had

through magical means an infinite supply

of that then that might be the only

thing I would drink if I was forced to

drink only one thing but then again I

might just go for water or

something so I I do like

milk but um yeah I wouldn't want to I

don't know I don't think it's my

favorite I mean it is nice I'm not gonna

badmouth milk here you're not going to

see me bad mouth and milk on my own

videos anyway I'll just move on to the next question here this is from pranav and Prav says what's your opinion on venerable Maham molana fighting Nando panand Naga isn't it surprising that a monk fight well the Buddha himself also had a duel with a fire fire breathing Cobra dragon and it seems to have been pretty common in the the first few years of the the Buddha Sasa that you would have some enlightened Sage facing off against the fire breathing Cobra dragon and it wasn't like a fight like a violent fight like St George slaying the dragon it was more a matter of you've got um like an enlightened being you've got a great Sage who has great psychic

power and his psychic power is more powerful than the psychic power of the fire breathing dragon that allows it to shape shift and and breathe fire and so forth that it's it's considered to be a matter of psychic power poers that a cobra cobra Dragon breathes fire so it's sort of

like the Buddha or Maham mogana is like the sun and this Cobra dragon is like a candle in broad daylight and it just the sunlight just overwhelms the candle flame so you can hardly even see it on on a bright day so and then and then that's kind of symbolized by at the end of The Duel the the sage either the

Buddha or mamana or somebody else come
comes back to the to the populace with
this Cobra Dragon just reduced to this
little wimpy snake about this big that
they're carrying in their alms
bow and personally I'm kind of skeptical
that there are shape-shifting fire
breathing Cobra dragons with human
intelligence that my theory is that the
belief in nagas and the belief in
dragons in general is evolved from
prehistoric Cobra Worship in maybe
Northwestern IND like the indis valley
civilization because I mean a cobra is
an impressive creature a king cobra can
get 18t long and when it stands up on
its high legs so to speak it can be six

feet high with a a hood like this wide
and it makes these weird c c c c kind of
sounds and if it bites you you die so
it's easy to see why people would start
revering them as as like magical beings
and start making offerings to them so
that they won't like get
bitten so yeah it wasn't really a
violent fight it was just the the power
the psychic power of the sage it just
drowns out the psychic power of the
snake and there are precedents like this
in in the poly Tex like for example the
origin of the meta sua comes from you
had a group of monks who were very
Advanced they move into this Forest to

meditate for the reain retreat and
because of their great psychic power the
tree dwelling deavas the deities in this
for the nature deities they couldn't
exercise their own psychic powers like
the tree deities couldn't even levitate
up into their trees because their own
power was just so drowned out and
overwhelmed by the psychic power of
these
monks so I mean that's that's kind of
the mechanics of how it
works and personally I think these
stories of Buddhist sages over whelming
fire breathing dragons was a kind of
religious propaganda probably there was
a lot of Cobra worship or Naga Worship

in in the Buddhist time there was even

Naga Worship in in early Burma like

medieval

Burma and uh you know it's just like the

propagandists are are coming up with

these stories and saying you know look

you know our sages are more powerful

than your dragon so you might as well

just become a

Buddhist

but who knows maybe fire breathing Cobra

dragons will be discovered in the the

Valley of the Himalayas any day now so

I'll just move on to the next question

here this is from Indian guy also known

to some as

Trevor an Indian guy says what do you
know now that makes you say that you
wouldn't become a monk over again uh
well it's just like if I knew then what
I know now it wouldn't be necessary to
to follow the same path that I followed
last time you know sort of like if I
knew then what I know now I wouldn't
have to go to Junior High because I'd
already learned that
stuff I'm not saying that being a monk
is like going to Junior High
School
but um I mean if if I could find like an
enlightened teacher who could just see
right through me see right where I need
help and then help me do that that's

fine but I did learn my limitations I
got as far as I could with it you know
on my own you know going alone like the
Horn of the
rhinoceros and uh so it's it was time to
try something else after 30 years of you
know being being the solitary Monk and
strictly practicing meditating a lot and
uh yeah it was just I got as much as I
could get out of it so I wouldn't want
to you know retrace the same route
anyway
but I've had U sort of Bad Karma when it
comes to teachers it's uh and partly
just it's like my own attitude having a
teacher is like

cheating you know it's just this feeling
I get it's uh you know it's having a
teacher it's sort of like they're doing
the work for you or
something but if I didn't know then what
I know now then of course I'd do it all
over again because it was not a mistake
definitely but if you've already learned
what you learned from it you don't need
to do it again I me that that was the
main point so we'll just move on to
Indian guys next question here who are
your favorite translators of the
Buddhist texts I particularly love the
DAP I have found there are many
translations my favorite translators is
the Buddhist texts well I mean I have to

admit that despite his

wacky in some to some extent non-

Buddhist leftist politics buku bodyi is

is about the most solid translator of

poly into English that's um translating

today

um but I mean he's he's not really a

meditator he's a scholar and so he knows

Orthodox Buddhist philosophy really well

but when Orthodox the Orthodox position

is not correct biku Bodi is probably

just going to defer to tradition unlike

somebody like ajan tanero

who I don't consider to be quite as good

of a translator but he understands the

spirit of dhama better than biku body

does because he's got some

accomplishment in meditation whereas

bkub body apparently does

not and with regard to lay translators

who aren't serious meditators they

haven't lived the life there's a lot of

stuff they're not going to

understand um with regard to the

DAP um my favorite translation is by

random chance I just happen to have it

right here this is the Buddhist

publication Society uh edition of the

DAP or at least it was like 35 years ago

and it's by acharia Buddha

rakita translated by aaria Buddha rakita

with an intro by

babot and this is this is a good

translation I mean he he pretty much
defers to Orthodox tradition but he's
got uh some interesting endnotes that
are that are interesting as interesting
endnotes tend to
be so I guess I answered that
question so I guess I'll just move on to
the next question this is from nature
cure and nature cure says you talked
about no DT a lot or no view then what
would eight the the Eightfold Path like
sad
DT what what would be Eightfold paths
like sad DTI and the rest okay well in
the Noble eight-fold Path you've the
first step is Right View I mean that's

like step number one on the eight-fold
path is Right View and that's not the
same as no view which is at the end I
mean no view is like very Advanced
that's like the highest level whereas
Right View it's essentially believing
you know Buddhism is the way to go or
the the noble um like the four noble
truths you know the law of karma
that sort of thing it's it's sort of
like a road map for starting you out on
your
journey and I mean if you start the
journey with no map you're gonna
probably going to go the wrong direction
sooner or later so it's just a
difference in uh like uh advancement you

start off with Right View which really ultimately isn't like ultimate Right View because all view ultimately is just view it's just like a symbolic perception that isn't reality a symbol is something that's supposed to stand for reality but isn't reality you know like T on a piece of paper is very different from an actual tree and it's the same way with the symbols in your mind they're very different from what they're trying to represent but eventually you're going to have to just leave all that behind just transcend go beyond all these symbolic interpretations of what you think is

reality but but that's very Advanced you know that's you know for very Advanced practitioners whereas step number one on the nobil F path is just you know getting the basics a crude understanding of the basics is good enough to get you going in the right direction and right view is going to evolve as you evolve spiritually until finally you just leave it behind it's like the the raft that you leave behind after you've crossed the flood so I'll just move on to Nature Cure's next question which is inaya number two the Sona paluta monks can touch and hit the

Sun and Moon what's your opinion on that

well yeah I I when I read that as a

junior monk I went to my teachers and

say what's the deal with this how are

you gonna touch and stroke the Sun and

Moon and they explain to me that

according to the commentaries all you're

doing is you're creating a kind of mind

created replica of the sun or moon and

and and touching that but it could be

that it's just uh it was on some

standard weird list of psychic powers

that was circulating around ancient

India and it just wound up on the list

with the more normal psychic powers just

like reading minds and remembering your

past lives and levitating and walking on
water and that sort of thing
so uh yeah I I think it it could have
just wound up on this list through some
sort of uh you know obscure cultural
reason but um yeah it's it's it's
problematic for us westerners that
somebody's gonna reach out using psychic
powers and stroke the sun I mean it
would be really hot you would
think um I mean maybe if you did it at
night then it'd be okay but I guess I'll
just move on to the next question here
and that is is it possible to become an
arant these days in your opinion well I
mean again arant are problematic I mean
it's difficult to say whether they even

exist in a saric context for example um
if nibana is completely off the scale
then what do you say of someone who has
attained n you know it's like it really
doesn't it's I mean it doesn't register
in this world but let's just assume for
the sake of argument that there are
aans then I don't see any reason why
there wouldn't be aans in this world
today like ramas used to say I keep
bringing up
ramas and in fact I keep bringing up
this same thing that ramas used to say
is like you know you can travel halfway
around the world and go to the Himalayas
and find some Guru who will teach you

the secrets of the universe well the
whole time your aunt Mabel in
Massachusetts was enlightened the whole
time except instead of telling you the
secrets of the universe she says have
some soup but it just turns out that
have some soup is the perfect thing to
say under those
circumstances so assuming that it is
possible for anyone at any time to
become an Aran you know in ancient times
modern times whatever then I don't think
that there's any reason why one couldn't
become an Arham these days even though
the culture is less spiritual than it
was say in the Iron Age Ganges Valley
but some people are just ripe you know

it's like you can't stop the ripeness of
their parmy their you know they're
they're ready and so I still think it
can happen and they don't even
necessarily have to be terrible out of
Buddhists in my opinion which is rank
heresy I'm sure to terot of Buddhist
dogmatists
so I'll just move on to the next
question which is from Quick quiz and I
sincerely hope it's recording this time
it says it's recording but I think it
said it was recording last time
too it's not even
funny so quick quiz says if a terraa lay
person had a glimpse of nibana let's

consider for sure and he has no savings
or interest to work for money and he
doesn't believe in monasteries how
should he continue to live this life
well I mean he does have the the option
of becoming like peace Pilgrim who was
this little old lady who just took off
walking on the road with no money and
just threw herself at the mercy of the
universe and I mean that's what really
spiritual people are supposed to do
that's what the early Christians were
supposed to do that's what the early
Buddhists were supposed to do just give
no thought for tomorrow what you will
eat or where you will sleep just take
off

walking that's that's one thing you
do I mean if you have no savings or
interest to work for money I mean still
I mean if you don't want to just take
off walking like peace Pilgrim or an
early Buddhist or Christian
Sage then uh maybe you could overcome
your lack of interest to work for money
just get some simple job that's enough
to hold your mind and body
together or I mean if you don't believe
in monasteries but still wouldn't be
titly opposed to living at one you
become a monastery attendant which is uh
be a fairly good spiritual way of of
living without having to follow all the

rules and then you just be driving monks
around and cooking their meals for them
and mowing the lawn and stuff and it'd
be like a peaceful
environment that wouldn't be too bad so
I'll just move on to Quick quiz's next
question here if he joins the monastery
but doesn't really follow all the rules
meditation methods or acting like he is
accepting everything is he causing
himself hardship well I mean if you
become a monk and you don't follow the
rules yeah you're you're causing
yourself hardship because you're
essentially being a dishonest
monk U even if the other monks aren't
following the rules either still that's

no excuse for being a LAX monk just

because other monks are

LAX but again I mean you could ordain as

a novice like a Coen as they're called

in Burma like a a big novice which you

only have to keep 10 precepts plus the

seia rules or again you could just be a

monastery ATT tenant and you pretty much

wouldn't have to follow any rules other

than maybe five or eight

precepts you still have to handle money

because you'd be handling the money for

the

monks but um partly I think it would

depend on how open-minded the the S is

at the the monastery at which you

weren't following the rules or acting
like you were believing everything that
they supposedly are supposed to believe
I mean some some monasteries are
open-minded and you know they're they
know how weird eclectic lukewarm head
oriented westerners
are then other ones they might be just
very dogmatic and say no I mean if
you're not gonna if if you're not going
to believe this stuff then you should
just go away so it would depend to some
degree on how open-minded the songa and
especially the Abbot are at at different
monasteries but again you have the
options of becoming a an a novice an
adult novice or just being a monastery

attendant or you can just hit the
road so we'll just move on to Quick
quiz's next question here or should he
live a lay life and consider going to
parti School write and translate books
or something teach people meditation and
sort of scholarly type of lay life and
follow Venia as much as possible well if
you're not a not a monk you don't have
to follow vinia at all other than five
or eight precepts which which are for
Lay people um more spiritual probably
than translating dhab books would be
just like working in a s a soup kitchen
just selfless service to others
something like that or I mean if you

want to be a meditation teacher that's
fine too but you should have a lot of
experience in meditation preferably more
than one kind of
it because a lot of people they just
meditate a little bit maybe for a few
years and they just try to set
themselves up as as teachers and it's to
some degree like the blind leading the
blind in parti schools especially in
Burma I can really can't speak for other
countries but perotti schools in Burma
are they're notorious they're like snake
pits you know it's monks there who don't
follow vinia don't really follow dhama
they just want to get a degree and
become uh a famous

teacher and uh yeah I've I've been at a
few of these pariot schools in Burma and
they're just
awful I mean if I had to live one as a
monk I probably I wouldn't I wouldn't
have stayed a monk nearly as long just
just out of just disgust and
disillusionment at the behavior of the
monks that that live at these places not
all of them mind you like I spent over a
year at mahag gandon in the city of
amarapura
which is a big school Monastery in fact
it was uh one of the most reputable
School monasteries in Burma had a
reputation for being very strict which

means that about 5% of the monks were
seriously following trying to follow
vineer rules you know maybe maybe even
10% I doubt that it was much more than
10% most of the monks still were were
very LAX including most of the
teachers but um even so I mean 10% or
even 5% that's way better than the
average school Monastery in
Burma so I guess I'll just move on to
the next question here this is from
popcorn boxing and popcorn boxing says
what did you think about AK water dying
almost simultaneously with his wife
anything mystical and I'd never heard
that AK water died almost simultaneously
with his wife um I don't know if you'd

call it mystical or not but certainly
there'd be and Karma involved maybe they
had very strong Karma with regard to
each other and uh I don't know I don't
know how they died you know I don't want
to toss out any um hypotheses like maybe
AK water was like a a goose or a stor or
a love bird who you know when their mate
dies they just lose all interest in
living and just Pine away and die but I
don't know Jimmy Stewart was apparently
like that too after his wife died but I
don't know how they died I don't know
the details
and I'd never really heard about it
before so I would say that it's not

mystical but more

karmic so we'll just move on the next

question here this is from

ruie and God I really hope this is

recording I don't want to have to do

this a third time not that I'm

complaining about answering you guys'

questions though by the

way anyways ruy says hello poo I just

deleted a question casting minor

aspersions on Mr eart TOA I suppose

casting as experss is not karmically

sound anyway so here is a proper

question it is interesting how many

Mahayana still look down on terraa which

they consider selfish and perhaps not

emphasizing so-called loving kindness

enough however if that was the case we would not have any transmission of the terava tradition available to us at all the fact is that beus have been teaching for thousands of years even if they do not embrace the for the benefit of all sentient beings notion which is a rather problematic notion in itself any thoughts well I mean ultimately there are no sentient beings there is no self so no sentient beings so that's one thing that the mahays they just chain themselves by the leg to this I'm going to remain unenlightened until all beings are saved you know with their bodh of vow when the only way you can save all

beings is to save

yourself that's the only being you

really can save is yourself and again

it's sort of like um the house is on

fire you know it's it's a it's an old

Buddhist metaphor we're all in a burning

house and so I mean which is better for

you to do first aid on burn patients you

know burn victims that you're applying

first aid to the victims or you find a

way out of the house and then after you

find the way out of the house if you so

choose you can come back in and lead

people out but you can't lead people out

of the burning house until you know the

way out

yourself and you're not going to learn

the way out just from reading books you have to find the way out on your own so again it's like um the The Diamond Cutter Sutra and also St John of the Cross have the similar similar statements in that let's let's just go with the St John of the Cross version where he says you can have one person who's dedicated his life to selfless service of others you know he's feeding the hungry and tending to the sick and helping people with no homes to have a home you know have a a warm dry bed to sleep in you know they're just doing all this stuff to help others and then you got this other person who was sitting

alone in a Cell practicing High contemplation which from the Buddhist perspective would be at least second genre so on the one hand you get this one person doing all this worldly Merit stuff helping others and then you got this one other person who is like just practicing jna St John of the Cross says the person practicing Jonna is actually helping the world more and I assume the purpose the reason for that is the person who's doing all the selfless service I mean it's it's superficial stuff it's at the it's at the surface level whereas the person who is practicing Janna is actually I mean he's raising the level of consciousness of

the entire

world

something along those

lines

so really I mean by helping yourself you

help others by helping others you help

yourself we had to recite that every day

at the first Monastery that I lived at

in

ply so um yeah it's it's in there like

the Buddha himself taught out of

compassion but

um yeah I mean it's it is it is

emphasized even in ter

that you should have compassion for all

beings it's just that I mean ultimately

the all beings don't really exist and
again the only way you're going to help
them out of samsara is to find the way
out yourself there is auta in the supata
the navasa or the the the suta of the
boat which is saying I mean you can't
help others cross the flood if you're
just being washed Downstream
yourself so you got to find the way way
across so that you are able to cross it
yourself and then you can help others
across but uh Mahayana I guess teaches
that also it's just that you they're
teaching that you should all strive to
become a Buddha but I mean that's just
an anachronism because originally there
probably was no metaphysical difference

or wisdom difference between the founder
of the system and his enlightened
disciples because
at least according to Abid dama wisdom
is the same as amoha PA equals amoha so
PA is wisdom amoha is just absence of
delusion so if you got zero delusion any
Aran has zero delusion which means any
Aran has the same amount of wisdom as
any other Aran how how can you have
different zero
delusions it's just that the Buddha was
more of a intellectual genius or he had
certain talents you know in addition to
the zero
moha but uh I think I should just uh

move on to the next question I don't

know if I fully answer

that but I'll just uh move on next

question I guess the the question at the

end is just any thoughts so so I

answered it yeah there's

thoughts so I'll move on to next

question here this is from file goose

and file Goose

says file Goose says any further updates

on the navak cavada concept for non- lib

prog ideologue captured Buddhism in the

west

well I think like non lib prog ideologue

captured Buddhism in the west I mean

that would just be traditionalism I mean

you just go with what the text say you

don't go along with what the new like
the queer academic Buddhists are saying
like there's actually Western so-called
Buddhists in Academia writing that the
second Noble Truth should be
revised because the second Noble Truth
says all suffering is caused by desire
but obviously to the lib progue leftist
Buddhists not all suffering is caused by
desire because some is caused by
patriarchal
oppression so I mean that kind of
[__] I mean that's if you're going
to be
a navak cavada Buddhist you're going to
be like a a a good Buddhist like a

sincere authentic Buddhist then I mean
you accept the texts as authoritative at
least with regard to ethics you know you
might not have much use for the the
fairy tale stuff the fire breathing
Cobra dragons and all that but the
ethics is pretty
solid so let's see yeah there are no
further updates I mean it's how are you
going to have further updates on
traditionalism because that's
essentially what it is so I'll just move
on to fasile Gus's next question what
texts would navak cavada emphasize and
would you incorporate non- teravan ones
thinking of spicy ones like hakuin
yasutani and the Italian's doctrine of

Awakening uh well the main text that navak kavat would emphasize would be the poly texts I mean you could emphasize a few other things like Le seatt is the manuals of Buddhism some of the some of the Talks by like aan cha or or mahasi seato that kind of thing um would you incorporate non- taden ones it depends on the person some people are quite content with just sticking with Orthodox terraa somebody like me it's like my mind isn't narrow enough to just fit into this this category so I would read other stuff also but I wouldn't confuse the Orthodox terod stuff with you know the the non- terod stuff you know you

got to keep clear which is
which but you can use the non-tod stuff
as a way of triangulating you know you
can find some other tradition
contemplative Christianity that in that
on their own they come up with the same
ideas with regard to advanced yogic
practice for example that lends a little
more Credence to Orthodox terraa when
you've got other systems around the
world where you know their most advanced
practitioners are having the same
insights then yeah that can be helpful
that can be useful and just looking at
the same issue of spirituality from
different angles can be
useful and with regard to the Italian's

doctrine of Awakening or Julius evola's doctrine of Awakening it is it is a good book I mean I think he takes somewhat of a excessively fascist approach to Buddhism I mean it's for the most part it's right but when he's comparing like an a Buddhist enlightened being in arant with like Nichi and Superman I think that's kind of pushing it so yeah the main text that navak cavada would emphasize would be the traditional text because um it would just be traditional Buddhism as traditional as one can manage in the west so which so you wouldn't NE necessarily be fully ordained monks

because a fully ordained monk in the
west is like a tropical plant that has
to live in a kind of special protected
Hot House environment with caretakers
and so forth and if you want something
to really take root naturally in the
west it would have to be more in
accordance with modern culture than with
ancient Indian culture but um aside from
that I mean you you'd still follow the
same texts you might not follow vinea
rules strictly because you're not going
to be or fully ordained monks
anyway but you just take whatever you
can that is applicable to the west and
don't totally ignore or reject what
isn't applicable to the West because

there's still some validity and truth to
it and for God's sake or for Nana's sake
don't just start changing stuff I mean
if you don't accept something you don't
believe it I mean that's fine just leave
it don't try to change what Buddhism
teaches like second Noble Truth for
example I mean that's just basic and
they just the very fact that there are
so-called Western Buddhists who want to
modify the second Noble Truth just
indicates that they just don't
understand
dammo they really their main faith is in
neomarxism and they add little Buddhist
flavoring partly is a way of subverting

like traditional spiritual

systems so I'll just move on to uh f

file Goose's next question here which

are which is thoughts on Marshal virtue

in Buddhism in context of ringya Myanmar

Buddhists getting wise to islamists

Shenanigans um yeah I don't think that

the 969 movement in Burma really is a

marshall movement I don't I I haven't

seen it at all I mean there have been

some fighting

between like burmes Buddhists and like

Muslims but most of the fighting has

just been by lay people it's just like

been brawling more than anything

else so yeah I mean Marshal Buddhism

would be more like you know Bushido you

know like the the

samurai Marshal ethic of medieval Japan

even World War II Japan to some

degree um maybe like the Sri Lankan

Buddhists fighting for centuries and

centuries against the the toml in Sri

Lanka uh there's probably some some

Marshal virtue in that but um with

regard to uh Burma and the ringas and so

forth it's it's more verbal you know

it's just a little bit of uh criticizing

and protesting is mainly what it amounts

to so I mean sort of pressuring the

government to uh you know reduce or stop

immigration from Muslim countries that

sort of thing you know mainly they're

just stating in a nationalistic way that they want Burma to be for Buddhist they want Burma to be a traditionally Buddhist culture and any system for example Islam that that is like threatening or seeming to threaten the the pure Buddhism of Burma you know they're they're opposed to that and they don't want it to happen and they speak out against it but U that's about as far as it goes really aside from brawling so I'll just move on to FASA Gus's next and last question here in experience with PTSD veterans or tailor tailoring teachings to them and my experience with teaching people in the west is very limited in Burma I was

mostly a Hermit you know sometimes I
wouldn't even come out to meet people I
just stay hiding in my cave and then uh
when I came to the West most people
including most Buddhists in the west
that I came across didn't really see me
as a spiritual resource you know like
some of the teachers would just see me
as like a like a threat to their
position or something as
competition so I mean I really didn't
get in into a lot of like I never
conducted a Meditation Retreat in the
west
um but I have been told that there are
dhamma teachers that specialize in

teaching PTSD veterans or just people

men that have like troubled

men that there are teachers who

specialize in that sort of thing it's

just they're teaching a kind of strong

Fearless masculine kind of dhama which

is a traditional kind of

dhama so it's out there but I'm not the

one who specializes in it but it's out

there and unfortunately I don't even

remember the names I I I know a friend

who knows one of these guys who

specializes in doing Retreats for guys

that have had you know traumatic

experiences and so forth so I'll just

move on to the next question which is

from

om and om says do Pacha Buddhas exist
today and if you go with the Orthodox
terraa they couldn't exist today because
they exist only at times when there is
no Buddhism in the world like Buddhism
dies out and then you've got you know
who knows how many
Millennia between you know the the
dispensation of one Buddha dying out and
then the next Buddha coming along and
red discovering dhama and you know
setting the the wheel of dhama In Motion
again that time in between is when Pacha
Buddhas exist and they're like hermit
Buddhas they're fully enlightened
they're omniscient in a way but they're

for some reason they don't or can't
teach they just choose they opt to just
mind their own business and stay out in
a cave in a in a Wilderness
somewhere and according to Legend godma
Buddha himself almost became a peka
Buddha because he figured nobody would
understand dependent Co rising and he
was pretty much correct on that
one so I'll just move on to OHS next
question what Christmas movie will you
watch or if this is after Christmas that
you have watched um I could recall
watching two pretty good Christmas
movies and then I think there was one or
two bad ones that just didn't register
you know there's there's any number of

just sort of lowbudget

and just not very good Christmas movies

out there and I think I've seen one or

two of those without it even like fully

registering in in Consciousness but um

the two Christmas movies just a couple

nights ago I watched How the Grinch

Stole Christmas the 2000 version not the

original animated 1960s version which

was good I like that movie and again I

think I mentioned this before that you

know there's no mention at all of the

manger or or Jesus or the three wise men

or anything it's just um The Grinch who

steals Christmas and of course we're all

secretly on the side of the Grinch you

know sort of like we're all secretly on
the side of King
Kong and I did watch uh a Christmas
story about the little kid who all he
wants for Christmas is this Daisy Red
Rider BB gun and that was that was a
good movie I like that I'd never seen it
before so um yeah those are the two good
Christmas movies that I saw
is uh How the Grinch Stole Christmas and
uh A Christmas Story oh also we watched
and now I remember we watched uh one of
the versions of A Christmas Carol you
know there's probably like 50 versions
of A Christmas Carol out there at least
and we wound up watching the George C
Scott version where he plays Ebenezer

Scrooge although I think my favorite version of A Christmas Carol is the Mr meoo version so we'll just move on to the next question here also from um and he says have you been doing walking meditation at night in the dark in the forest or a cave in Burma so when he says have you been doing I assume he means did you do walking meditation at night in the dark in the forest or in a cave in Burma uh if I had a cave that was big enough to do walking meditation at night I would do walking meditation in the cave especially if there was a door that could close and keep out rats

bats and

snakes but the thing is if you do

walking meditation at night in the dark

in the forest in Burma it has to be like

a full moon night or you have to have

candles or or some kind of lanterns or

something because you have to be able to

see where you're going because there's

poisonous snakes that come out at night

and you don't want to step on a

poisonous snake you know you step on a

Russell's Viper and that's it you have

to stop doing your walking meditation

so yeah I did do a lot of walking

meditation at night in the dark in the

forest in Burma but it had to be enough

light where you could see where you're

you're

stepping so I'll just move on to 's next

question which is how do they or do they

at all celebrate December 25th in Burma

well I'm pretty sure that December 25th

in Burma isn't even a bank holiday I

mean Burma is a Buddhist Country

Christmas is ostensibly a Christian

holid holiday and so I mean it's on the

calendars it'll say Christmas on the

calendars but I don't think that the the

shops are closed or the schools are

closed or anything and uh there are

Christians in Burma I mean it's it's a

relatively large minority especially in

the cities like in

rangon and so before Christmas there'll be Christmas carolers who go around and they'll stand outside the gate and they'll they'll sing Mar merry christas to you to you all merry chras merry chras to you to you all merry merry christas to you all merry christas to you all this over and over again and it's mostly they sing it in English because they get their Christianity from like British mer missionaries I almost said

mercenaries so you know they learn it in like a missionary Christian school or something and they learn English and then they sing their Christmas carols in English but that's about as far as it

goes there's no Christmas trees and big
Christmas uh like decorations in the
cities or anything like
that and there there were times in Burma
where I'd be looking at the calendar
trying to figure out what day it was and
I'd think oh yesterday was Christmas
what do you know about that although I
did that with my own birthday a few
times in Burma too but it's just not a
big deal in Burma so I'll just move on
to the next question here this is from M
mitraa Buddha
and mraa Buddha says who is more
enlightened godma Buddha of the terraa
tradition or shakyamuni Buddha of the

Mahayana vajana tradition who would win
in a debate who is more
powerful well with regard to who is more
enlightened I mean assuming that they're
even two different people or two
different beings let's say terada has
the Buddha as a man he was a human being
he might have been 27 feet tall
according to the
commentaries but he was a human being
whereas the shakuni Buddha of the
Mahayana or vajana Traditions they've
pretty much turned him into a kind of
cosmic deity at least the S Boga Kaya
you know you got the three bodies of the
Buddha in like yoga Buddhism which is a
kind of Mahayana you've got the

nirmanakaya which is just the the human
body you got the samboa Kaya which is
like the personification of Buddha hood
you know as a being up in some exalted
Heaven realm and then you've got the
dharmakaya which is just the Buddha
nature the Buddha Essence the essence of
of Consciousness this formless and
infinite and pervades the entire
universe sort of like the spirit of God
or
something but when you get to the
question of My trab Buddha here who is
more enlightened then again it's like
what I was saying earlier with you got
zero delusion in the human gab Buddha of

Terra vadens you got zero delusion in
the cosmic Sakaya of the mahays and zero
delusion is zero delusion it's the same
so they're both fully
enlightened it's just that um The Cosmic
deity probably has some psychic powers
that the human being GMA Buddha didn't
have you know maybe he can
just his omniscience is faster or
something
so who would win in and debate I don't
think they would debate I mean there are
texts in which the Buddha warns against
debating it just leads to hard feelings
and so forth so I don't think they would
debate but again if both of them have
zero delusion they'd be equally matched

so I guess the debate would come out as
a tie and with regard to who is more
powerful I guess it would have to be the
cosmic
deity who uh you know he can just cause
worlds to Exist by the power of his mind
you know sort of the Buddha fields of
the the pure land Buddhists you know
they can just cause this this entire
world system to just manifest through
the power of their mind which apparently
the historical godma Buddha didn't do
because he just had to make do with
living in in India which existed long
before he was
born so I guess I answered that question

so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from keep d vinia
and keep the Venia
says you said in one of your recent Q&A
streams that you were more dedicated to
the vinea and not to meditation but how
can being a professional in vinea help
you to become enlightened well either I
misspoke or this is a misunderstanding
of what I said because when I was a
junior monk I was mainly interested in
meditation but I didn't want to break
the rules you know I nobody forced me to
become a monk I was conscientious monk I
didn't want to break the rules I wanted
to follow vinia strictly and then it
turns out that you've got to study vinia

intensively because there's so many
rules and some of the rules are very
like intricate and and like difficult to
understand and so forth but my main
interest was meditation when I became a
monk and it remained my main emphasis
throughout all virtually all of my
monkhood all right up to the very
end so it's just that
you've got SAR PA you got morality
wisdom no morality concentration and
wisdom this is sort of like the the
three-fold path of of Buddhism and as a
junior monk especially my meditation was
not so good my wisdom was not good
enough to suit me but the seala part the

the morality part I could get that down
I could nail that at least outwardly
maybe not inwardly I'd still have like
dirty thoughts and so forth but
outwardly I could avoid breaking the
rules so that was maybe what I was
talking about uh which is what keep the
vinia is referring
to so I think I answered that question
I'm just gonna move on to the next one
by [__] is it true that the Buddha once
made racist remarks racist in quotemarks
about a dark skinned baby and I don't
recall the Buddha making remarks about a
dark-skinned baby except maybe there was
one of the two main kings in the
Buddhist time I can't remember if it was

pity kosa or bimis Sara but his favorite
wife I think her name was Malika was
considered ugly you know it was kind of
a joke that the King's favorite wife is
ugly because she was dark skinned I mean
she she had a really good personality
she was wise and gave him valuable
advice and so forth which is why he
loved her so much that you know she he
considered to be pretty much his equal
or you know as close as a woman could be
to being equal back in those days in
that
culture um and then she had a baby
and so the the King was visiting the
Buddha when the messenger comes and says

the baby was born and he says it's it's
a girl and then the King was like
despondent because of course he wanted a
boy and then the Buddha says well she
could grow up and have a boy
which is I mean it was it was kind of a
lame consolation you know well you had a
daughter but at least you can be the
grandfather of a boy when she grows up
and has a boy but I don't remember
making a racist remark about a
dark-skinned baby if it happened you
know it's certainly not the Buddha
saying dark skinned babies or
darkskinned people in general are
inferior to light-skinned people it
would have been more along the lines of

him just acknowledging that the culture at his time favors light-skinned people the dark skinned people light skinn people it was it was you know was a a symbol of um being upper class really because you know it was the indigenous inhabitants were dark skinned and then you had the the lighter skinned Indo Arians invade and become the ruling class of Northern India so being lightskinned indicated you know high social status and that's why light skin was considered more attractive and it's it's still kind of that way in in Burma although in Burma it's just more if you've got light skin

it's more attractive because that means
you're not out in the fields as a
laborer getting burned black you know
you can stay inside you've got like a
cushy job which generally means that
you're of higher Social Status you're
work in an office or you're a school
teacher or a shopkeeper or something
which is higher St status than being a
subsistence rice
farmer so I mean it would be something
along the lines of that just sort of
acknowledging that Society favors
light-skinned people in ancient
India but and Buddhism is very
non-racist like you know anybody could
join the S and once they join the songa

they leave behind all the ethnic luggage

the baggage you know all all the cast

stuff is is just left behind and they

just flow together like the rivers

flowing together into one

ocean so there really isn't any racism

in the polyx that I can think of it

could be something in there but other

than just in a way acknowledging that

that is the way the society was already

established and that you have to take

that into

consideration so I'll just uh move on to

keep deia's next question

which

is what is the essence of the Tibetan

Book of the Dead and who is its
author and I don't know if anybody
really knows who the author is of the
Tibetan Book of the Dead I'm sure
Tibetan tradition has somebody set up as
the traditional author but that doesn't
necessarily mean that they are the real
author you know like pretty much all
Mahayana sutras have the Buddha as their
author when really he probably
wasn't
so um yeah I don't know who the author
of the Tibetan Book of the Dead is but
the purpose of the Tibetan Book of the
Dead is to guide you uh in your first
experiences after you die and a lot of
the experiences are similar to The the

stereotypical experiences of people who have had near-death experiences you know first you you you rise up and you see your body lying down there below you know in the water or on the by the side of the road or on the operating table and then you go up higher and higher until you see this bright light and you go up into the bright light and you go through the bright light and then there are like Spirit guides on the other side in like a heaven realm and then you review your life and so forth it's just the stereotypical you know uh thing that H series of things that happen um after you die and the Tibetan Book of the Dead

is very similar to that way similar to
that you know it's got the bright light
and they advise you you know you know
it's the Book of the Dead is is like
recited to people who are on their
deathbed you know it's getting them
ready for death and you know it's saying
when you get into that bright light stay
in it as long as you can because it has
a purifying effect but eventually it's
like people they start feeling like
they're going to dissolve and they they
they panic and then they they get out
and then there's like a less bright
light sort of a a softer Golden Light
that you stay in that and then and then
you start meeting with these Spirit

beings and so forth and the Tibetan Book
of the Dead is continually reminding you
you me you're supposed to remind
yourself these are all just mind made
you know it's it's like my mind is
creating all
this and so it's preparing them to
wisely in a relatively enlightened way
face what's going to happen after they
die that's the purpose of
it so I guess I answered that question
about as well as I'm able to I'm no
Authority on Tibetan Buddhism at all so
I'll just move on to the next question
which is from White Ash Piper and white
ash Piper says and I should say before

before I say what white ash Piper says
this was the last question yesterday
although somebody asked another question
since then so this would have been the
last question of this
Q&A from White Ash Piper who says a
silly question I suppose but it's
burning inside me like an attached hot
CLE and I assume he means a hot coal but
he he typoed it and it's it's
cosl like an attached hot CLE why do all
the statues of the Buddha have him with
hair and yet his Buddhist monks are
shaved and yeah that's true I I used to
bring this up to to Burmese Buddhists
who really don't question their
tradition you know they don't think

about

it um it's like the Buddha was a monk he would have had a shave head too why does he always have hair and the only explanation for this that I have come across that comes anywhere near to making sense is that the first people to make Buddha statues were Greeks because Alexander the Great conquered Northwestern India which is now mostly Pakistan and he started colonies of Greeks in Northwestern India and those Greeks eventually converted to Buddhism and so the Greeks liked their statues and so they started making Buddha statues which didn't exist before they

started doing it in Ancient India like
the earliest um Buddhist shrines and so
forth it would just have like an empty
seat or a footprint or a B leaf or
something to symbolize that the Buddha
was no longer in this
world but the Greeks didn't think that
way and so they started making Buddha
statues and they modeled their Buddhas
on the god Apollo
whether there was any kind of connection
between like the Buddha was identified
as like an avatar of Apollo or something
I don't know but they modeled the Buddha
on the god Apollo and at that time in
that part of the world the god Apollo
was like stylistically represented with

an aristocratic haird with a kind of a
top knot on the top and so they made
their Buddhas with the aristocratic
hairdo and the top knot and the top knot
remain
long after people knew what it was
supposed to be like in in like Thailand
sometimes you'll have like a flame on
the top of the head and there was one
Buddha statue at a monastery that I was
staying at it looked like an onion like
a big onion on the top of his head and a
lot of or probably most Buddhist statues
they just have like this knob there but
that probably evolved from the top knot
of the Apollo like Greek Buddha

images and um

it's it just seems silly because

everybody ought to know that the Buddha

didn't have hair that he shaved his head

because he was a monk but then what do

you do with that knob that supposed to

be

there I mean you don't want to have like

this weird just lump like built into his

skull so yeah it's it's just irrational

it's just human nature you just blindly

follow along with your tradition no

matter how atic or silly it might be and

I'm not saying that Buddhism is like

silly overall but I mean there are a lot

of spiritual Traditions or religious

Traditions that are more than half

silliness and and just look at what has replaced religion for many people in the west which is politics and I mean it's just rampant silliness or worse than silliness so we got one last question that got in under the wire after my first aborted attempt at doing this Q&A and again I sincerely hope this one is recording and this is from Austin and Austin says poo I've been struggling with anger it's different from sadness I can't just tune it out when anger takes over I feel fully consumed and even when I recognize it snapping out of it seems impossible any advice on what I can do thanks well the only advice I can really

give with regard to

anger is from my own experience I'm not

a particularly angry person but it does

happen sometimes and especially when

you're a monk and you're trying to

practice very strictly it's like this

pressure cooker you know it's like your

natural urges are restrained and it just

builds up this pressure and so you can

explode more easily in some respects and

there were cases when I would just erupt

as a monk there was this one time when I

was staying think this place called the

bate o the baate doya and I was living

under this Tree on A Flat Rock up above

the montering and that forest was just

getting raped to death by Village wood

cutters you know the big trees they cut
down for for Timber the small trees
they' cut down for firewood and the
saplings and stuff they just the cows
would eat it so the whole forest was
just getting just
devastated and of course I was a tree
hugging nature lover you know I still am
to some degree and I mean I was just
like grumbling you know and anyways
there were times when I'd just drive out
wood cutters from around my tree you
know I come back from alms round and
there's like people chopping trees so
one day I come back from alms round and
before I even make it back to my my big

Flat Rock I hear chopping wood coming
right up from where I was staying so you
know I start getting angry right then
and there and like start walking up and
there's already like poles from Chopped
small trees there like blocking my path
from this guy who'd been chopping trees
and I get up there and I just start
first you know I'm just raising my voice
because he's some distance away and I
just telling him don't chop wood here
and he says I'm chopping drywood which
wasn't entirely true because there were
green sapling poles laying on the ground
so I yelled at him again don't chop wood
here and again it's I'm chopping
drywood and then like the third or

fourth time I kind of just blew my blew
my stack and I started Belling at
bellowing at him just don't chop wood
here and my arm just starts going like
this and at the same time that I'm like
bellowing at this guy there's another
part of my mind just that's like wow I
didn't intend to have my arm waving like
this you know it's like there's this
other part of me that's just observing
this in in kind of mild interest
thinking you know that was just purely
automatic just having my arm like waving
my finger at him you know and it uh I
think it was maybe even the last Q&A
where there was another time where it

was just blazing hot weather it's just
you cannot be comfortable at all ever
except maybe when you're taking a bath
it's just the sweat doesn't stop and
it's just blazing hot and it won't rain
in central Burma it's like semi desert
it was just miserable and finally I mean
you just start to crack sometimes and at
one point I just threw this conion you
know I'm just yelling and cussing and
slamming things fortunately I was alone
in my cave so I wasn't making a fool of
myself in front of others but you know
I'm just yelling and just throwing this
contion and it was like this
dissociation happened where one part of
me is just throwing the canyan and the

other part of me is just watching you
just
observing and I mean that happens I mean
it can happen to just about anybody like
my father was a hardcore alcoholic for
many
years and being a a macho tough guy he
just decided to just cold turkey and
quit drinking and so he's all by himself
in the house and he's got two Escape
Routes on the table in front of him he's
got a bottle of booze and a loaded
pistol just in case it gets too bad and
he's just going through the DTs he's
just raging and tearing at his hair and
just I mean pissing his pants just just

going nuts and then he starts
hallucinating this big eye on the wall
just just staring at him and he knew
deep down that was like him observing
himself and it was sort of like a a
somewhat cruder version of my experience
throwing the kyion in the cave where you
know you got there's like two levels of
you there's the level that's just
throwing the conion just you know losing
losing your [__] and then there's this
other part that's it's always there I
mean when you have an experience like
this you know it's always there there's
always this Observer that's just
silently observing everything and not
getting

involved and so by being mindful just practicing mindfulness as much as you can you're you're increasing the likelihood of this Detachment occurring when you need it to occur because you can't just wait until you're pissed off and then try to do something about it because you know you're already kind of off the tracks at that point but if you practice mindfulness and just observing your mental States observing your emotions from a kind of detached perspective you know when you're observing something you've already created a kind of Detachment because you know if you're anything at all you're

the one who's observing and not the thing being observed so if You observe anger for example already you've got this distance between yourself and the anger the anger isn't you anymore you're just watching anger you know anger is arising but again you can't wait until you're angry to try to practice this you have to get into the habit of just mindfully observing your emotions your mental States you know when you're calm so that when the [__] does hit the fan you've got this habit base that you can rely on that it'll just kick in and in some ways for me like I'm not normally a very angry person in some ways it's easier to be mindful of anger because

all of a sudden it's like sirens and
flashing red lights going on which is
very
noticeable so in a way it just kind of
makes it this unusual thing that you
want to just
observe but I don't know how uh Angry of
a person Austin is you know if you get
angry a lot it might just be a habitual
thing that you know you're used to it
and so it's not so unusual that it
instantly like grabs your
attention but the best advice I can give
is just get into the habit of observing
your mental States and your
emotions mindfully with this kind of

philosophical or spiritual Detachment so
that when you know something really bad
happens or you know something really
volatile
happens then just the habits that you've
been developing will make it easier for
you to step back and observe it I mean
you won't necessarily stop being angry
it's like when I was throwing the
conception I I just threw the contion it
was just this other aspect of my mind
this deeper aspect was just observing
and not getting involved and that
weakens it
because um so long as you're not
identifying with it you're not you know
making more momentum you're not

strengthening The Habit it's just the

Habit is running itself out without

being

reinforced but that's about the best

thing I can do or just avoid situations

that that uh cause anger

although I mean that's a makeshift and

you can't completely avoid situations

like you got to drive in traffic and

there's people driving like idiots then

you you're pretty much just you have to

deal with

that but uh I guess I answered that

question and now I'm done answering

questions I hope until next week I

really hope that this recorded this

time and uh smash the like button you know you know the you know the drill smash the like button and uh subscribe if you haven't already and check out the URL links below which includes the links to Amazon and the books that I have for sale that I that I wrote and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 74 of question and answer I am your host poo basa and I'm going to be nervously looking at this thing to make sure it's really recording because last time I had to do it twice because the first time it didn't record for mysterious reasons and anyway we've got uh a moderate amount of questions to ask just covering pretty much the full spectrum of questions to ask and so I might as well just Wade right into it and the first question is from Austin and Austin says in some sense I feel disillusioned to society and it grows ever present more and more every day like I'm trapped inside a

vessel watching my life go by almost
like a child strapped in the back seat
of a car watching the road past with no
further destination in mind is this good
what should I do
I feel like this would be a good quality
to have if I was a
monk well disillusionment is uh
essentially niida in uh poly and it's
like the first step towards
Enlightenment you know there's like a
three steps there's niida which means
like disillusionment or just being fed
up second is waga which is dispassion
and third is wiuka which is
Liberation so I mean yeah as for from a
spiritual point of view it's probably

it's probably good to be disillusioned
with Society to be fed up with the world
or just lose interest in the world not
want to part participate much
anymore although it's kind of
interesting what he says when he
describes the state like I'm trapped
inside a vessel watching my life go by
almost like a child strapped in the
backseat of a car watching the road pass
with no further destination in mind um I
reminds me of mental states that I've
had a lot both as a monk and as a lay
person even as a kid where it's just
you're just watching the world like on a
movie screen you know it's almost like

you're just completely detached from it
you're just watching it on a
screen and it's it's like some kind of
virtual reality that you can't fully buy
into and so yeah from a spiritual point
of view that's good from a worldly point
of view it's probably counterproductive
because they want you to be like gung-ho
working for the team and all
that so what should you do I mean it
does indicate that if you're just
getting fed up with this world or
disillusioned with this world it may be
time to you know step up the game you
know move on to something next you know
it's like what you're doing now isn't
really I mean I almost said it isn't

really satisfying you but I me nothing

that you can possibly do will really

satisfy you because that that's the

first Noble Truth

Buddhism but uh yeah try something

different try

something uh maybe just a little more

Consciousness raising or

something I won't won't encourage you to

try psychedelics probably already have

anyway let's see what else what other

advice I mean there's really not much

advice that I can give other than just

uh you know be mindful of it be aware of

the situation to try to understand the

situation as well as you can be as

conscious as you can in any situation
that you find yourself in and that's
about the best you can
do so I think I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from Fred and
Fred says is the purpose of Buddhism to
wipe the Slate of cognition clean and I
mean that's not really the ostensive
purpose of Buddhism the ostensive
purpose of Buddhism is to free fre
yourself from dooka or suffering or to
free yourself from
delusion but wiping the Slate clean of
let's see wiping the Slate of cognition
clean yeah there's there's various ways
of interpreting that I suppose when
you're in a Janna State that's what

you'd be doing

temporarily um but if you're becoming

enlightened the Slate of cognition

probably won't be wiped clean so much as

it'll just be sort of neutralized it

just won't have the same effect that it

used to have because you're not

identifying with it

anymore so I think I'll just move on to

Fred's next question

here which is as

follows I think a lot of people like

hippies think Buddhism leads to a

blissful state would they be misguided

in this respect so are there still

hippies in the world I mean they'd

probably be really old hippies I don't
think I mean you can't really be a young
hippie can you I mean there's hip stirs
which are very
different huh I mean there's like flower
children still still walking around with
like bell bottoms and flowers
embroidered on their on their jeans and
bare feet and love
beads yeah theyd probably be like in
their 70s or 80s at this
point but uh let's just get to the
question here I think a lot of people
like hippies think Buddhism leads to a
blissful state St would they be
misguided in this respect well I mean
again if you're in a state of jna that

could be a state of bliss um I mean like
the Hindus especially consider like
Brahman the attainment of Brahman to be
like sat Chanda which is like true Bliss
of
mind um but Buddhism really doesn't
describe it as Bliss I think you can
find it in the
texts um but it's Main main more of a
negative description in early Buddhism
where it's just the cessation of
suffering and if you want to call the
cessation of suffering or unease Bliss
you know you got no unease that would be
you know presumably a blissful State you
know it'd be an equanimous State a

contented

state so yeah I guess you could call it

Blissful although you know Bliss as like

a positive pleasure yeah it wouldn't

lead to that I mean it can lead to that

but that's not the that's not the the

ultimate

goal the ultimate goal is just to

completely

transcend positive and negative

States so I think I answered that one so

I'll just move on to Fred's thirdd

question here Fred's on a roll he's he's

asking them

questions and his third question is I

have given up on the monk route it's

beyond me I went through a real Downer

accepting that this the Mind played many
tricks recently so how can one cope with
a negative mind narrative that thinks
it's in the driver's seat well be
mindful of it and detach from the
negative mind narrative I mean that's
the best you can do and it takes
practice you have to just keep
practicing it's like like playing the
piano or something you don't just sit
down and start doing it it takes a lot
of practice and mindfulness also takes a
lot of practice unless you're just some
kind of
oy that there just has an innate talent
to be mindful but that's relatively rare

maybe in India or something you'll find
people like that at least in higher
numbers than you'll find them in uh in
the United States for
example
so how can one cope with a negative mind
narrative I mean mindfulness is the
Panacea it's the Cur all it it's good
for whatever ails you and uh any any
kind of negative mental States you just
observe it you know negative mental
state is
arising but again it takes practice but
when you observe a mental state you
mindfully note it you create this
Detachment it's no longer you anymore
it's you if you're anybody at all is the

one who's observing it so there's
already this Detachment it's not you
anymore and you weaken it you don't
completely abolish it but you're like
taking the wind out of its sails so to
speak you're making it so that when it
happens again through force of habit and
again through force of habit that it'll
be weaker and weaker because you're not
reinforcing it sort of like the the
Stray Dog that keeps showing up in
Thailand and if you feed it even just a
little bit every once in a while it'll
just keep coming back but if you just
don't feed it it'll eventually just give
up and go

away and defilements are like stray dogs
so I'll just move on to the next
question and this this is from
PSA and PSA says how does a serious
Buddhist protect oneself from bullying
it appears that when a person is
seriously following the precepts and
following right speech it is almost
impossible to fight back and one's only
weapon is to walk away from difficult
and abusive situations but walking away
is not always an option especially for
people living in a house with other
people or for people with a job and
similar situations what do you recommend
how can a Buddhist fight back without
destroying the practice or is it just

impossible and one must simply endure
the abuse while maintaining perfect
morality it might sound like I'm asking
many questions but it's only one
question how does a serious Buddhist
protect oneself from
bullying well there are various ways of
going about it I mean one is just do as
much good as you can so that you have
good karma so that bad things are less
likely to happen to you but still bad
things will happen to you sometimes so I
mean it's PSA here does differentiate
between bullies that you can avoid and
Bullies that you can't avoid or that are
very difficult to avoid and I think that

the the approach you would take would
vary like let's say it's let's just
discuss bullies you can avoid
just for starters let's say you just
happen to be you walk into the wrong
kind of bar but if you're a good
Buddhist you won't go into that
situation anyway but you walk into the
wrong kind of a bar and this biker dude
just takes an instant dislike to you and
starts pitching [__] at you well what
you do is you do not like see how do I
put it I mean you don't put anything
into the interaction you don't feed any
kind of negativity into it that you just
try to be good-natured answer his
questions or whatever you know he's like

picking fun at you but you know you just
don't take the bait it reminds me of
this movie that uh George Clooney was in
it like The Men Who Stare at Goats and
it it's based on a true story that the
Army was experimenting with with people
that that were using like mind powers to
deact deactivate violence and it it it
works the way the way they were doing it
is just um you know you just don't add
anything to the interaction it can just
Peter out because the person's not
getting the feedback that they're
they're looking
for but I mean it doesn't necessarily
always work but it has worked fairly

well for me in the past but again you've
got the situation where you it's like a
domestic situation at home or your boss
is an [__] or something what do you
do in a situation like that well I mean
for starters you just continue trying to
to be a good person you know not feeding
anything into it if you if you can avoid
it and also I mean the the traditional
approach the Buddhist approach to a
situation like this if you're dealing
with like a
chronic um I wouldn't say enemy it could
be an enemy or it could just be like a
person who's just hard to get along with
is sin meta so you just make a part of
your meditation practice just beaming

love at that person and it actually does work if if you're good at it you might not even have to be extremely good at it and like if some person is just so horrible that it's it's really difficult to beam love at them there was a monk in Burma I can't remember his name now but uh he he invented I I assume he invented maybe somebody else taught it to him it's called the pebble method of sending meta to somebody that's really hard to send meta to where you just find this round smooth little Pebble and you name it the same name as this person that's causing trouble for you and every day you make this little ritual of you put

it into a little glass of of cold water

cold clean water and then you say just

as this pebble is surrounded by cool

Clear Water May so and so be surrounded

by peace because I mean a lot of people

find it really difficult to send love to

somebody who's making a hard giving them

a hard time but the fact is anyone who

is deliberately making trouble for other

people is an unhappy person happy people

tend not to [__] with other people they

don't mess with with other people you

know it's Live and Let Live if a person

is happy it's when they're unhappy that

they want to mess with people you know

it's like

like tiberious Caesar just sometimes he

enjoyed watching people get tortured I
mean there's other like apparently ma
chairman ma was like this too or or
other people let's see who else not that
it matters I guess valentinian the great
of the late Roman Empire was also like
this where they get entertainment from
watching people get tortured and they
had to be deep down miserable messed up
people in order
to get pleasure from seeing somebody who
is more miserable than they are I mean
that's really what it boils down to is
they're miserable and so I mean even
though they might be smiling on the
surface deep down they're messed up

they're unhappy and so at least they can look at someone who's more unhappy than they are and consider themselves to be relatively happy even though they're not really all that happy so the point I'm getting to is it's unhappy people that want to mess with other people and so if you can help to make them happier even just like secretly beaming love at them without saying anything about it or just you know do something go out of your way to do something nice I mean if they're really an [__] they'll just complain about how you didn't do it right or something but still I mean that's about the best you can do unless if the situation is just intolerable you know

you're just completely being harassed at work by your boss that might be time to find another job or if the the home situation is horrible unless you're like a little kid then I mean if it's really really bad you know it's like a living hell then I mean you can just use the door

so then ultimately with regard to fighting back I mean even an ordained monk is allowed to strike out in self-defense if someone is like physically assaulting you then you can do essentially whatever is necessary to eliminate the threat although you shouldn't be trying

to kill

somebody but if you're just trying to

save your own skin

then uh yeah pretty much anything goes

in a situation like that but although

that's like desperate Last Resort and if

a person is really saintly they'd

probably just rather get killed than

kill somebody

else so I think move on next question

here this is from covac and CAD Zeda and

if I didn't answer the bullying question

well enough I do apologize um I mean I

have been in situations like that when I

was a

kid U I'm kind of a big guy and uh

nobody's really tends to mess with me

much anymore but uh yeah I mean it is it is a sensitive subject it's not a good situation to be in if you're just like um like a victim I don't like the word victim it's it's totally overused but um yeah I mean there are things you can do that don't necessitate being just flagrantly immoral so again I'll just move on to next question here and this is from covac in sead zida and he says what makes a good meditation session how do I know if I had one I can understand obvious things like being able to be undistracted for long periods and such but other than that it's pretty vague

yeah well I mean this the whole idea of
a good meditation session is pretty
vague isn't it but um yeah I mean a good
meditation session would be one in where
you're actually meditating so long as
you're actually meditating it's a good
meditation session but if you're sitting
there and then like you realize all of a
sudden you realize that for the past 20
minutes You' just been thinking about
food or titties or something then yeah
that's that's not good you're not
meditating you're mind is just wandering
around so so long as you're actually
meditating you know you're
noting whatever comes up if you're doing
the mahasi method for example and

nothing in particular is coming up

you're just watching the breast going in

and out or watching the abdomen you know

expanding and

Contracting then

uh you're you're actually meditating I

mean if you get py you know if you're

just like really enthusiastically

meditating and doing it well then that's

even better but uh I mean any meditation

session where you're actually meditating

pretty much all the time then I would

consider that a good meditation session

me you don't have to be uh getting into

jna or anything to have a good

meditation

session so I think I'll just move on to
covac and CAD Z now's next question here
tip on increasing ability to sit in
meditation longer without bodily pain
pain without having to shift positions
well that's two different things being
without bodily pain and being without
having to shift positions because like
the mahasi method back in the old days
they used to say you no matter how bad
it hurts even if you think you're going
to die you should not shift positions
that pain is the friend of the meditator
pain is the key that unlocks the door to
niana that's what the mahasi method used
to say
up until like spoiled pampered

westerners started flooding in and like
complaining about how they didn't have
cushions and
stuff but um I'm not exactly sure how
covac and CAD Z not sits I used to
always sit in the full Lotus position
which is relatively painful after a
while I have to admit but my legs are
not very flexible and I did come across
articles like in yoga magazines and I'm
sure you can find this on the internet
um like tips on how to sit in the full
Lotus or whatever position you're
sitting in um you know more easily to
increase your flexibility so the full
Lotus is easier and I mean if you can

sit in the full Lotus I would definitely
recommend it and uh I mean it keeps your
ankles off the floor for example I mean
if you're sitting in the easy position
also called the Burmese position with
your feet kind of like one in front of
the other not actually cross but just
kind of both on the
floor then I your ankles can rub up
against the hard floor which causes uh
pain that way but um I mean if you're
sitting in the full Lotus and your feet
and your ankles are resting on top of
the alternate
thigh and uh I mean still you're going
to have sore ankles just from the the
pressure you know the twisting and the

sore knees and maybe sore hips but with
increased I mean just bear with it and
with practice it doesn't hurt so much
and if you do the stretches and OAS or
whatever that the yoga people say that
probably will make it
easier so I guess that would be it but
don't totally wimp out and start sitting
in a chair that's that's just that's not
cool unless I mean your legs are so
crippled up you just cannot sit crossle
it but the closer you can get to the
full Lotus it's just going to
automatically boost your meditation by
at least 3% just being in the full Lotus
I I'm not exactly sure why I'm sure the

yoga people would have you know some
explanation regarding you know the the
the the spine you know the Kundalini or
the spinal cord is straight or whatever
is more straight but it seems to me that
if you sit in the full Lotus it's you're
you're more likely to sit up straight
you know it's conducive to a good
posture and also it may be that when
your legs are like folded up like a
pretzel like that it reduces blood flow
to your legs which would then like
increase blood flow to your head and
like maybe more oxygen would make you
more conscious or
something but yeah that would be my main
advice um with no formal oh wait that's

not it that would be my advice like on

being able to sit in

meditation uh without bodily pain would

be to you know find some yoga article or

yoga video telling what stretches to do

so that you can sit in meditative

posture more easily and um I mean

without bodily pain I

mean I don't know I've I've sat through

a hell of a lot of bodily pain I mean

sometimes I was sitting like when uh I

was listening to a speech by upand once

mahasi

upand and I was sitting there probably

in the full

Lotus up front where everyone could see

me and I mean he was just talking and
talking and talking until finally it's
like my my legs are just in screaming
pain I'm just like shaky and and sweaty
because just of the the agony I was
going through and I was no longer really
even listening to what he was saying I'm
just hoping that he'll just get done you
know just like begging him if you can
read minds please just hurry up and end
this
discussion so let's see it's kind of a
digression isn't it I don't even know
what got me off on that let's
see oh yeah the bodily Pain part I mean
bodily pain is not necessarily something
to be avoided I mean if you can learn

like with through practice how to

observe pain

mindfully uh you can even make it a

meditation object like when I was at

ponama I was getting pain a lot just

from all the sitting that had to be done

and it was you just sit down and maybe

do the abdomen for a little bit until

the pain starts and then you can just

sit there and and meditate on pain note

the pain because it's really an obvious

meditation object I mean it's just just

glaringly obvious so it's it's in a way

it's kind of hard to drift your mind

away from the pain other than just maybe

drifting into like these desires for the

pain to stop or maybe I should get up or change positions or something so yeah try the try the yoga stretches so I'll just move on to see AC and sead Z's third question which is I noticed when I meditate throughout the day with mantras and no formal sitting not concentrating that much my head feels a slight pressure after a while is this a sign I should stop what does it say and I really am not in a position to speak with authority on this subject it could be that just doing the mantras if you're voicing it like from for hours and hours it could cause a certain amount of head pressure you know like like blood pressure just because of what

you're doing with your throat and and mouth and so forth but um the only the only thing I've ever read about having head pressure while meditating was in an old ROM dos book and he was talking about how when he was in India he was getting uh like this weird head pressure when he was meditating and he went to his teacher about it and his teacher said it's because of all the acid you took that it's caused a kind of weird energy blockage in your mind or in your brain or something so I mean it's just something that you I mean it doesn't necessarily mean that you should stop even even pain doesn't mean that you

should necessarily

stop unless it's like seriously messing

up your leg or

something your sciatic nerve or

something so let's see here

see I noticed when I meditate throughout

the day with mantras and no formal

sitting not concentrating that much my

head feels a slight pressure after a

while is this a sign I should stop I

don't think it's a sign that you should

stop what does it say I'm not exactly

sure what it says but I'm pretty sure

it's not saying that you should

stop so I think I'll just move on the

next question here sorry I I'm No

Authority on head pressure and

meditation got to admit so the next
question is from
Toronto and Toronto says with such a
small presence that's largely confined
to the virtual realm does ult Buddhism
really stand a chance if so what does
the future of ult Buddhism look
like so does Al Buddhism really stand a
chance I mean so long as you've got one
person who's essentially an ALT Buddhist
and I'm not exactly sure what Toronto
Nat is referring to with regard to all
Buddhism I mean i' I've WR an essay
about alt Buddhism that's on my blog um
that was back when alt right was kind of
a kind of a thing the altri is rarely

gets mentioned anymore and always almost always in derogatory terms which generally means that you know the the mainstream propagandist attack on the alt-right by you know equating them with Nazis and so forth um essentially worked but um getting back to the question here does all Buddhism really stand a chance I mean if one person is practicing something you know successfully you know they're getting making progress you know they're getting benefits from doing it then still it's it's okay but I I assume he's talking about um social movement or at least a movement within Buddhism that uh you know is sort of

conservative

traditionalist uh but nevertheless still

like Western in its

attitude um

yeah I

mean let's see he's got another question

here that's kind of a continuation of

this maybe I should have combined it all

into one into one but what does the

future of all Buddhism look like um it's

it's hard to say exactly if you've got

some charismatic leader who really

causes the thing to take off but um at

present you know for the foreseeable

future it's just going to continue

pretty much the way it is which is

mostly online because there's just not
enough enough of
us that I mean not all of us not enough
of us in like concentrated into one area
that really having temples and and like
meditation halls and so forth in in like
you know brick and mortar buildings it
it just doesn't seem very realistic
unless maybe you got like a western
Monastery with a western monk who might
just be specifically invited to just
come and live at this Monastery you know
you got a few people that you know have
similar views they live close enough
together they got enough money that they
can set up you know some kind of little
cabin maybe a little damaal and invite a

western monk to come and stay there that they consider to be strict in his practice and has some wisdom can teach meditation then yeah that would that would be fine and I've heard a lot of people talking about it but it doesn't happen very often but because largely because they're just not enough people with the same point of view concentrated in one area you know you got like two or three in this city and two or three in that City and one in this small town in this other place and it pretty much has to be online where at least people can communicate with each other and share their ideas and kind of find uh some

kind of sense of of of a tribe I don't

want to use song of because a

traditionalist would consider only

ordained monks and nuns to be

S

so does all Buddhism really stand a

chance sure so long as anybody's

practicing it but I mean but stand

Standing a chance in the sense of just

taking off and going mainstream or

something um yeah that would be a that

would be a long shot I

think so I'll just move on to the second

part of the same question I'm pretty

sure how do we go about building o

Buddhist communities locally surely we

need to have our own monasteries temples

schools and institutions and such well
yeah I pretty much already answered that
question I think a good starting point
is you've got a relatively simple AER
cabin and then maybe a larger venue that
I mean in a warm climate it could just
be like a roof on posts with some
flooring that that there could be domat
talks and meditation there there and
then just invite a monk that you have
respect for you consider to be a good
and venerable monk to come and stay
there and just sort of be the nucleus of
this group and if he's a good teacher
and he's got Charisma and so forth then
probably it'll attract more and more

people and you just do this in various
various areas wherever you have enough
people with enough money that they can
in enough time to support the monk
because the monk is going to need
support he's going to have to have
people bringing him food every day or
maybe a monastery attendant staying
there who's going to be cooking his food
every
day but a monk just can't wander around
going for alms in most places in the
west and live on
that so yeah I guess I guess that's how
you do it that that would make the most
sense um because going the other route
with sort of navak cavada where you've

got sort of a quasi ordained sa that
isn't really ordained you know they're
wearing gray sweats and they've modified
things a bit so that you know the
ancient Indian stuff with regard to
rules of etiquette and protocol and so
forth can be set aside and you know it's
it's more in in harmony with
Western you know Western culture Western
Society um that's I think that would be
more difficult I think the easiest way
to get started would be as I already
mentioned you just find you know a
conservative traditionalist monk with
wisdom who follows the rules and you set
up a little place for him to live it

doesn't have to be luxurious or fancy or beautiful and so long as he's willing to come and stay there you know he he becomes like the center of this little old Buddhist community so I guess that would be the the most realistic way of doing it but I mean ultimately um probably if if you had enough monks or you had one monk like this who was uh influential enough then he could be the Catalyst for starting this quasi monasticism where You' got people wearing like gray sweats and you know they don't completely avoid handling money because I mean in the west that's

not easy to do not nearly as easy as in Ancient India so you know you just handle only what is necessary to handle that kind of a thing eat one meal a day even though maybe you take what little money you've got and buy something for yourself I don't know it would depend on you know the vision of the people who are setting up this uh quasi sa of semi renunciant um who would have who would have the blessing of the terad and Thea and they wouldn't be calling themselves beus you know they wouldn't make any pretense of being fully ordained and really I mean it's not even necessary to be fully ordained

um unless you're like an orthodox
dogmatist who thinks that unless you're
fully ordained you cannot be enlightened
for more than 24 hours about
dying
so I guess that's how that would be a
realistic way of going about it so I'm
going to uh move on to the next question
here this is from Arin and Arin says
would you consider Buddhism to be an
atheistic religion and I mean it depends
on your definition of
atheistic um atheistic would I mean
literally means believing that there is
no God or some people would say some
people would include agnostics into
atheist atheism and then just say you

know somebody who at least doesn't
assert that there is a God or someone
who just ignores God but um I'm just
going to go with the literal meaning of
atheism is just there is no
God and uh with regard to small G Gods
yeah Buddhism accepts the existence of
small God Gods who are simply beings
that are higher up than we are you know
they live longer they have more psychic
powers you know they're higher up on the
scale than than us
humans but um with regard to a an
ultimate absolute God Buddhism does not
define the absolute as God you know it's
Nirvana nibana or nibana datu which

would be like nibana or Nirvana as a
metaphysical State rather than just an
ethical attainment like a psychological
State
practically so yeah Buddhism especially
terab Buddhism has been used as an
example of an atheistic religion where
some people will Define religion as you
know a belief in God and you know like
the worship of that God which does apply
through most religions I guess
especially in the
west but uh yeah terraa Buddhism also
some some system like
jism um they are essentially religions
but they don't they're not centered on
worshiping a God Like Buddhism

acknowledges the existence of gods but
it doesn't encourage worshiping them
because they got their own lives to lead
that's not that's not what spiritual
spirituality is all about especially in
Buddhism
so I guess I would consider Buddhism to
be an atheistic religion even though it
does accept the conventional existence
of small G Gods but even the small God
gods are not ultimately
real but I mean it's just a small step
from the Buddhist concept of Nirvana to
like the upanishadic concept of
Brahman and from the the Hindu point of
view Rahman is God so it's it's largely

a matter of definitions and like

semantics vocabulary whether you're

going to call Nan God or

not but in Buddhism Nirvana is not

considered to be God Mahayana Buddhists

some of them have essentially deified

the Buddha so that he's like this Cosmic

God you know the most powerful God in in

our world system

anyway but uh yeah I mean ult originally

Buddhism was

atheistic so arene second question here

can you give your mother-in-law a shout

out I don't know why she wants me to

yell at at my

mother-in-law but

ah okay and she she didn't give me the

sweater though for Christmas it's really

a nice

sweater so I'll just move on next

question here this is from Stevens and

please forgive me for the stage shout

where you don't want me really Belling

into this

microphone so I mean just consider that

to be a

shout next question is from Stevens and

Steven says there exists a leftand path

idea of trying to willfully destroy your

Sam scaras by burning them out and

causing Vaga I don't know why Stevens is

preferring Sanskrit here to poly what

Different Strokes for different

folks I guess I should should uh start back at the beginning here there exists a left-and path idea of trying to willfully destroy your some scaras by burning them out and causing vagia and vagia is Vaga and po which means dispassion uh this is the idea that at a certain point actions that formerly caused us mind states of clinging and addiction cease to have an appeal or pull like they did and therefore cease generating Karma because we realize the reality that the fruits of these actions are tainted by the three marks of existence these marks are revealed by trying and repeatedly failing to find something permanent Something Free of

suffering and something indicative of a
self in the fruits of actions commonly
held by mainstream Society to be
pleasurable or to yield pleasurable
phenomena in one famous example of this
girf told a man who was struggling with
a smoking addiction to quit smoking then
to start smoking again but this time
don't get addicted quote unquote I feel
this profound Parable contains the
essence of left-hand path theery gerf
terms his way the way of the clever man
the path with the shortest practice time
to Enlightenment similar to what VA
vajana practitioners think about
contract Buddhist practices on the other

side of the spectrum gerf lists the
Asana based practices of the fakir or
the Hat Yogi as the longest possible
path to Enlightenment followed by metab
based practices of priests and
devotional types and then mindfulness
and knowledge-based practices of monks
and yanis the practice second in speed
and efficacy only to the leftand path or
the way of the clever man what do terava
Andor its monks have to say about this
and what is your opinion or belief on
the matter does this shorter more
dangerous path to Enlightenment exist
for some people this kind of thing can
can it does exist and it can be quick
but it's it's much more dangerous

because there are a lot of people who
just fool themselves you know they'll
they'll have sex a lot they're sex
addicts and so they decide well I'll
just make sex into a sexual into a
spiritual practice I'll do Tantra and
then they just wallow in sensuality they
think that they're doing some spiritual
practice I think they're doing Tantra
but really they're sex addicts and they
just can't can't get enough of
it so also there's one thing I would say
here with regard to gf's advice to the
person who was smoking I mean and that
you
should that he should quit smoking and

then start smoking again but this time
not be addicted to it I mean that's not
realistic because to nicotine is is like
a physically addictive drug if you take
enough of it you you get addicted uh
regardless of your your intentions or
your
attitude so maybe he's just talking
about mental addiction but when you're
physically addicted you start going
through withdrawals if you don't have
the stuff that you're relying on then
yeah that's that's just addiction
regardless of uh your attitude I think
but um yeah the left-hand path it can
work for some people
but um the way it usually

works is you've got a worldly person and
this I mean the Buddha was like this too
and he had I mean if we can believe the
the tradition I mean he had three
palaces one for the cold season one for
the hot season one for the rainy season
his entire domestic staff was young
women you know he had essentially a harm
of female servants and musicians and
dancing girls and anything he wanted he
got and then he had enough wisdom to
realize that even though he's got
everything he wants it's still not
satisfying him and that's one reason why
Western monks are often more serious
than Asian monks not only are they

having to go against their tradition but
most western monks have already you know
they've had their share of sensuality
you know they've they've had wine women
in song they've had sex drugs and rock
and roll and still they weren't
satisfied they realized that that is
just not the way to be reliably happy
it's it's just up and down it's a roller
coaster ride so then they just leave it
behind they don't just go into it deeper
as a way of just burning out these
attachments or whatever because it's not
necessary once
you've wallowed in sensuality enough and
have the wisdom to
realize that it's really not making you

a happier

person you might have more fun but

that's different from being you know

deeply satisfied and

content and also Al it's just uh all

this distraction is really it's just a

kind of Illusion you're just being

distracted by Illusions all around

you

so generally the ter ofoten approach I

mean the Buddha the Buddha took this

route is you wallow in the sensuality at

first and then you realize that it's

just not getting you where you want to

get or it's not making you really happy

and then you let it go you don't just

keep wallowing in it or you don't keep
trying to use it as a tool because it's
just kind of burned itself out and so
you move on to renunciation and
aestheticism but some people who can
just stay in it you know it's like Osho
would teach this kind of stuff Paul load
would teach this kind of stuff to some
degree uh Jay Krishna myty would teach
this just do whatever you want to do but
then you know do it mindfully you know
do it with choiceless awareness or just
a clear mind and just be aware of what
you're doing and just feel the feelings
that it causes and all that um but most
people like I said they just get
distracted and lost in it so it can work

quickly and effectively for some people
just to do the tantric route but more
often than not it's going to
backfire so I mean you got the semi
tonric route that I've already described
where you wallow in the
sensuality until you finally realize
that it's not making you really deeply
happy you know it's not giving you what
you want so then you just let go of it
and move on to something else which is
you know in in early Buddhism it's
radical renunciation and
austerity and
meditation
self-restraint so I guess I answered

that I mean it's certainly the the

tonric route certainly is n endorsed in

Buddhism but or at least not in early

Buddhism but I mean it it uh it has

worked for some people I

suppose seems to it worked fairly well

for Paul

low but anyway I'll just move on to the

next question here this is from Joe Doe

and Joe do says what does Buddha's

swastika

represent and I really don't know what

the

original like symbolic meaning of the

the the hooked cross you know it's like

the like a plus sign with the edges kind

of bent and it goes the opposite

direction of the the German National Socialist swastika although they they took it from India I mean swastika is itself a Sanskrit word and it means something like good Weare you know good benefit something like that the the Sue is equivalent to like Greek EU it means good and the astia is something with regard to you know benefit or welfare so I mean it was like a good luck sign in Ancient India and you know the Buddha will have like it on his chest sometimes or on the palm of his hand sometimes it's just like a sign of blessing uh or good luck sign but what the the haken crits originally was

supposed to represent I'm not sure if
anything it could have just been just an
abstraction or it could have been the
Sun and there there's a good chance it
represented the sun that's just a wild
guess
though so I guess I'll just move on to
the next question from Joe
do how do you feel about the West
becoming a white minority in 30 years
well I'll be 90 years old then there
won't be much I could do about it he
assuming that I'm still alive
um I don't think the entire West will
become a white minority that there's
going to be um like Eastern Europe is
going to be like a white enclave and

maybe some place like

Argentina you know there's going to be

places that are still majority white

probably some states or at least some

certain areas in the United States will

still be white

majority and if the white supremacists

are correct I'm not saying they are but

if the white supremacists are correct

they got nothing to worry about because

the superiority of the white ethnicity

will cause them to rise

up and not be trampled underfoot so to

speak so how do I feel about the West

becoming a white minority in 30 years

well I

mean how I feel about it is just
irrelevant I mean it's like it's not
going to change anything
you know it's just the way it is
apparently I mean it's not necessarily
going to be the case that there's going
to be a white minority in 30 years in
for example the United States because
you never know the white people with
maybe some other like some some other
ethnicities just sort of team up and say
that's it we've had enough you know
we're going to do something about this
and start mass deportations or something
it wouldn't surprise me I mean it would
take some sort of radical upheaval you
know maybe like the overthrowing of the

US Constitution or something in towards
the right instead of towards the left I
mean the left is are the ones who are
really trying to just do away with the
US
Constitution but uh yeah I mean it's
just I mean what's the point of of being
for it or against it or anything like
that I
mean I mean by being against it all you
do is you just unnecessarily make
yourself unhappy because you're you're
like you know at odds with the way
things are but who knows what what it's
going to be like 30 years from now I
mean it's it's impossible to really

predict you know I defy any science

fiction author to accurately portray

what the West is going to be like 30

years from

now so you just be here now I mean

that's good advice just be here now and

don't worry about the future don't stew

over the past

that this is this is this this is where

we are right here right now the power of

now so 30 years from now I

mean anything you imagine about what's

going to be what world the world is

going to be like what life is going to

be like 30 years from now it's almost

certainly dead

wrong so's move on to the next question

here this is from Buddha and Buddha says
and I do not understand this question I
have to admit Buddha says being is human
human or human is being have you asked
this and no I haven't asked it maybe
maybe that's the I answered the question
there I know I haven't asked this but I
mean it could be a play on words it's
like is being used as a noun in one
sense and as a verb in the other sense
being is human well being is human isn't
necessarily true for the all the beings
that aren't human but humans are beings
yeah so human is being is more correct
than being is human because not all
being is human but all human is

being I

guess so I I really don't fully

understand that question even though

it's a short simple

question but uh yeah the second second

part of this question is really easy

have you asked this and the answer is no

I haven't asked it so I'll just move on

the next question here this is from

pronav and pronav says could you just

speak about the dangers of samsara in

your own style so I get motivated to

practice well the dangers of some sorrow

well I mean the main dangers are

inevitable suffering and delusion

suffering and delusion are like the two

main qualities of living an

unenlightened life in Sam Sor so I mean
if you don't mind being miserable and
diluted then I guess I mean everybody
suffers because misery is part of being
miserable isn't it there aren't very
many people who for whom misery makes
them happy I mean there are some in a
way some people just take a soulless in
their misery or just make it part of
their life story it's like their their
narrative it's like part of who they are
this this chronic ailment that they've
had for 30 years it's just become part
of who they are it's what they talk
about and I mean they wouldn't know what
to do with they something the cured of

it so there's and there's some people
that just enjoy being angry that kind of
thing and that's just the delusion of of
just being stuck in this roller coaster
ride of up and down happy
unhappy
so the dangers of some Sor yeah mean the
two main dangers is is suffering which
means I mean we're all going to die
essentially and delusion we don't know
the truth we we do not see reality we're
just like in this dream state you know
we're just sort of wandering we're
sleepwalking and I mean most people are
fine with that that's that's why they're
here is because they want to be here
it's not that you don't become

enlightened because you don't try hard
enough it's all of us or practically all
of us most overwhelming majority of us
are trying to stay unenlightened without
even realizing we're just wallowing in
it we don't even want want anything else
for the most part we think we'll be
happy if we get the the big screen TV
set or the new car or
something but it doesn't really work
that way and it's weird how human nature
is the way it is where you think well if
I get this I'll be happy and then you
get like this Rush of dopamine or
whatever so you are kind of happy when
you get it but then you start being

unhappy again so you think well I need

that and then you get that and maybe

another Rush of dopamine and then you're

unhappy sort of like a drug addict where

you know you you feel good when you're

high and then you come down and you just

want the next

hit but the danger of samsar I guess is

uh death and you know pain

sickness old age

feebleness you know being separated from

what you love not getting what you want

getting what you don't want and just the

the accompanying delusion that is

keeping your eyes closed you know

keeping your eyes full of dust so that

you cannot see Ultimate Reality you

cannot see the truth you cannot see what

is

real because most people just assume

that this you know with rooms and doors

and books and mirrors and stuff it's all

that this is reality and it's just not

it's it's kind of a like a dream state

that we're in but yeah the main dangers

are suffering or dooka you know pain

misery sickness all of that and just

delusion and if you're okay with being

unhappy and diluted then well you got

things set

up but if you don't you don't

particularly like misery and delusion

then dhama is is about the best thing

you can

follow because even if you don't become

fully enlightened you're going to at

least reduce your suffering in

delusion but I I'm not sure if I really

answered this question correctly I don't

know if I was really inspiring Prav to

uh just Embark upon radical spiritual

practice but for me the main reason why

I became a mon is I wanted to know

reality I wanted to know the

truth other people they're mainly going

for sensation of suffering but I was

going for a sensation of delusion as

well as I

could and uh I mean it's not so much the

dangers of samsara is just that there's

something much better than

samsara so yeah I mean for me I wasn't

trying to escape from suffering so much

as I was trying to just know reality and

I just noticed that I've got like these

horizontal bars of light crossing my

face and and upper body because the sun

is kind of going down and it's it's

showing through the blinds so maybe I

should close the blinds a little

better there that's much better isn't

it okay so with all due respect to Prav

and his

uh rather important profound question

here I hope I did well enough

um at present I don't really have a lot

of aversion for

samsara um I don't have a lot of craving

for it either it's just this is this is

where I'm situated right now so we make

the most of it and try to go through

life as wisely and consciously as we

can and uh realize that desire is the

cause of all

suffering and then once you have that

that in mind do as thou

Wilt so I'll just move on the next

question here and this is uh from

creel and creel says here is a question

what are your thoughts of nonduality or

Neo ad which I guess are both modern

versions of ADV vant I was interested in

them for quite some time in the past but

not anymore for two reasons the first is
that nonduality in in my opinion
emphasizes the non-existence of a self
to the point of negating the importance
of any effort performed for the sake of
Liberation if there is no one there is
no one to liberate kind of reasoning
while Buddhism gives right effort
importance the second is that nonduality
in my opinion sees suffering as a purely
subjective subtly selling the illusion
that after Liberation life becomes a
happy journey of love and light while
Buddhism at least according to my
understanding sees suffering as both
having a subjective and objective

component birth is suffering old age is suffering Etc in other words life has an inherent distressful quality in Buddhism which nonduality does not properly described blaming all suffering to the person inner
delusions well this is kind of a long complicated question with regard to Neo ADV I mean unless that's just like modern people talking about adita I'm not sure how it would differ from shankara or or like you know the original I mean ADV literally means non-duality and it's uh it's an interpretation of vant or the upanishadic tradition in India the upanishads so non-duality just

means that reality is is not
divided up into this and
that that it's I mean it's like a monism
a radical monism or
mysticism so I mean but I guess it
wouldn't necessarily be mysticism
because you have just philosophers who
aren't Mystics who are philosophizing
about it but but so really this Neo
ADV um yeah I don't have a lot of
experience with it other than like for
example in Mahayana Buddhism them or or
in the upanishads I mean I have been
exposed to that I have read a lot of
that kind of stuff read all the major
upanishads and probably all of the the

major mahayan stuff except for maybe

pure

land

so let's see I was interested in them

for quite some time in the past but not

anymore for two reasons so let's see

maybe I should divide this up make it a

little easier for

me okay okay nonduality in his opinion

emphasizes the non-existence of a self

to the point of negating the importance

of any effort performed for the sake of

Liberation yeah well I mean the thing i'

I've I tried to explain this before that

there really is no self to liberate but

what you got I mean I'm just sort of

maybe flogging a dead horse here but you

know you you got the block of marble you
got this block of marble sitting on a
featureless plain so the block of marble
because you got nothing else to compare
it with may as well just be sizeless you
know arbitrary size and contained within
that block of marble is every possible
statue including pretty much every
impossible statue it's all in there all
at the same time to superimposed one on
top the other you know every single
molecule of of the every statue is
already there in the right place you
just have to omit the ranous Rock in
order to have that statue but the statue
is already there you know a sculptor

he's just liberating what's already

there in the

Rock so some of these statues are so

complicated that they become

self-aware and they think that they are

real and they think that they are

separate from everything else but I mean

it's a virtual statue with this virtual

belief that it is uh an individual

self and it it is dealing with a reality

so I mean really the path to Liberation

is just using this delusional

recursive mentality to cure itself of

its own delusion so that it just Fades

back into the block of

marble so I mean it's delusion

liberating

itself there's there's no

being that is liberating himself or

herself or it

self it's just the delusion that it's

separate curing Itself by whatever means

introspection mindfulness Detachment

just the this

virtual belief system which is really

right there I mean it's it's one of the

possible statues it's just as real as

any other but uh it's not ultimately

real it's just virtually conditionally

real and it's this delusion that has to

cure

itself

so it's kind of hard to

explain it really is it's it's hard to

grasp

it so let's see

here Buddhism does give right effort

importance but it's just a matter of

emphasis or like perspective I mean

essentially it's the same kind of thing

on both sides it's just Buddhism is more

practical maybe that's that's the point

Buddhism is more practical whereas ADV

is more philosophical it's just kind of

mindblowing and it's just you become

enlightened largely through just having

your mind

blown this Gana yoga the the The Yoga of

knowledge whereas buddhis Buddhism is

more Raja yoga which is the the The Yoga

of

practice so let's see here his second

reason for not having much use for n ity

is in his opinion it sees suffering as

purely subjective subtly selling the

illusion that after Liberation life

becomes a happy journey of love and

light while Buddhism at least according

to his understanding sees suffering as

both having a subjective and objective

component in other words life has an

inherently distressful quality in

Buddhism which non Duality does not

properly describe blaming all suffering

on the person's inner delusions well I

mean both are right I mean it is you

know it's like the delusion that this is

real that we are separate we've got this

separate ultimately real

self um I mean that's that's all there

is is the delusion and so it is

subjective because it's it's the

delusion that is the problem and the the

delusion is is

subjective so I mean after

Liberation it's not really a happy

Journey of love and light there's no

more Journey you know after Liberation I

mean that's I mean unenlightenment is

the journey once you become Enlighten

the journey is Journey is pretty much

over seems to

me well it's uh it's just would be just

neutral just sort of uh the empty set in

a

sense

so yeah I mean I'm not exactly sure what

the question is here what are my

thoughts on nonduality or Neo adval it's

more it's in a way more cerebral than

Buddhism I mean Buddhism is plenty

cerebral but ADV is really is it's like

the the spiritual path is is of just

philosophy it's just blowing your mind

through

profundity whereas Buddhism does have

like more of the the Practical

guidelines of you know how you do you

know how you how you practice you know

how to meditate and so

forth

so yeah I

mean I'm no expert on on Neo advita

because frankly i' never even heard the

term Neo ADV until I came across this

question I mean ADV I

know which is just you know um like

upanishadic philosophy interpreted in a

non-dualistic way

but uh you know it's all

God all Brahman thou art that

t but we're getting some real like

subtle deep questions that are not easy

to answered

today so I guess I'll just move on next

question here this is from heward the

wake and heward the Wake says the following question is occasioned by your talk the inter interview with bante G varano on Buddhism flavored social justice and what to do about it on July 25th 2021 except it's not about social justice but the part which focused on alcohol which I don't remember is few years
ago um I mean I remember the video I just don't remember the uh the part what we were talking about alcohol but anyways here where the waight continues I know that Tibetan medicine recommends alcohol as being medicinal in small quantities some people indeed go

further such as the late philosopher

Roger scrutin in I drink therefore I am

a philosopher's guide to Wine 2009 and

on page 132 it says it is true as I have

suggested that wine sheds a certain

light into the inwardness the Atman of

contingent things and it points towards

without providing another way in which

being might be known

unquote

uh I will leave to one son the question

of the existence of the oton exclamation

point what is your advice on taking

alcohol whether or not and how much for

Buddhist

Layman

okay so I mean it's the fifth precept is

taking Ale Wine and other intoxicants

which cause clouded of mind or which

cause

heedlessness and I mean it's just right

there in black and white that to drink

alcohol is a violation of the fifth

precept

so um regardless of any benefits you

might get from drinking alcohol I mean

it's a violation of the fifth precept so

if you are a Buddhist and you do drink

alcohol and a lot of Buddhists do I had

two beers last night didn't get drunk

but it had two

beers um I mean you're just breaking the

precept you have to acknowledge that

you're not following the precept
correctly I mean I've I've met some some
guys in Burma they're telling me you
know I follow two and and a half
precepts which is is better than nothing
at least they know they're breaking the
precept they're not being dishonest with
themselves and trying to use some kind
of what is it casuistry is that is that
a word casuistry where they're just
making excuses for breaking the rule and
saying that they're not really breaking
it you know like monks who are handling
credit cards or something and say
they're not handling money because it's
plastic or monks some Mahayana monks you
know they'll eat a meal in the afternoon

they'll call it medicine meal I spent stayed briefly at a Mahayana Monastery before I was ordained and they'd have dinner every evening called the medicine meal because of course they're not supposed to be eating in the in the afternoon and so they say well it's medicine or like monks who keep extra clothes they're not supposed to do that but they say it's accessory cloth it's not a robe it's accessory cloth and then they just wear it as a robe it's obviously a robe so I mean that kind of stuff is it's getting into the realm of dishonesty in my opinion whereas I mean if you try to come up with clever

excuses for drinking alcohol it's

medicinal you know it's not it's not

booze it's medicine then yeah I mean

you're just kind of deceiving yourself

you might not deceive anybody

else but uh at least you're deceiving

yourself and uh I mean you might as well

just take the hit it's like well I'm

breaking this rule it's I'm not

following the five precepts completely

I might be following four precepts but

not all

five and there's I mean it's nothing

horribly wrong with that I don't think

there's anything necessarily

immoral in having one or two drinks you

don't even get drunk you there might be

nothing more than just like a very like

a subliminal little glow going after

like two

drinks but I'm not much of a lightweight

so I can even before I became a monk I I

could handle my liquor pretty well I was

sober all the way down to the

floor so yeah that would be my advice on

taking alcohol for a Buddhist laay

person is if you're G to take it then

you just acknowledge that you're

breaking the

precept so I think I'll just move on to

uh P the wake's next question which is

is there a meditation manual you can

recommend um and one of the meditation

manuals or books on meditation that impr
me the most was I think it's the heart
of Buddhist Meditation by
venerable uh
nyona Venable nyanaponika who was a
German monk he was a disciple of Nana
Tila who was also a German monk way back
like um the
1940s so yeah I mean it's about Sadi
batana it's essentially a commentary on
the Maha Saadi batana sua um another
good book on meditation is Joseph
Goldstein means uh the experience of
insight those two kind of stand out in
my memory as good meditation
guides
um the standard meditation manual for a

terab Buddhist would be the wisi

manga um ideally Yan's

translation so but I mean thei Monga I

don't think that Buddha Goa was much of

a meditator and my experience with

scholar monks who are you know sitting

in rooms

writing out learned treatises like

commentaries is they they generally are

not into like austerity and and like

intensive meditation some of them are

but most of them are

not so if you're going to read a

meditation manual it's good to read a

meditation manual from uh a meditation

master and not a scholar uh another good

meditation manual that I don't remember
the title of it it's U I got it from the
Buddhist publication Society but it's
uh it's like a transcript of what all
yogis or meditators would have to hear
when they would attend a mahasi retreat
this is like back in the 1970s when
mahasi Seattle was still alive and just
about anything by mahasi seato on
practicing mindfulness meditation is
going to have a lot of useful practical
information in it but if you want a
manual that tells you like how to do all
the different kinds of meditation not
just mindfulness meditation or sa batana
then uh yeah you might start with the
wisi Maga because I don't know of any

other meditation manuals that give like the full spectrum of all the different meditation techniques most of most of which nobody much practices anymore like the de contemplating decomposing corpses in a chnal field not very many people do that anymore where most of the the casin meditations aren't practiced anymore or you just meditating on a on a colored disc or a disc of uh Earth or or whatever you can you can meditate on the four one of the four uh elements you know earth water Wind and Fire through casin meditation also and uh most people just don't do it

anymore I mean mainly most meditation

manuals you come across especially in
the west would be on mindfulness
meditation or so-called weasa although I
never liked using the term we for
mindfulness meditation
or so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from harim cthul
and harim cthul says forgive me my
insolence but does your life not show
that Buddhism leads
nowhere is the path to Liberation not
better sought through acceptance of both
light and darkness rather than rejection
of them people you consider enlightened
are usually far from being solemn
Buddhists
and somebody else commented below this

on the YouTube video and they were
saying that watching my videos where I
explain Buddhism has confirmed him to
some degree in this that Buddhism leads
nowhere which is kind of disappointing
that I'm actually causing people to lose
faith in
Buddhism but there are a few
misconceptions here uh one is
that the path he says here is the path
to Liberation not better sought to
acceptance of both light and darkness
rather than rejection of them I mean
what do you think a monk who is a
radical renunciant like living in a
jungle you think he's rejecting both

light and darkness I mean he's he's an

aesthetic you know I mean how does an

aesthetic reject both light and

darkness so I mean that in itself

strikes me as a misconception but

another thing here is I mean buddh he

says does not my life show that Buddhism

leads nowhere I mean where is it

supposed to

lead you know it's like be here now I

mean where does be here now lead it

doesn't lead anywhere you know this is

all we got is right here right now so

where is it supposed to lead to the

enlightenment of some being who doesn't

ultimately

exist so I mean that's kind of a strange

Point

too but this is this path of Liberation

is it not better sought through

acceptance of both light and darkness I

mean that's sort of like what Stevens

above was talking about with regard to

the leftand path I mean you take that

too far and you've got Tantra and it

usually doesn't work because you just

get lost in it you're surrounded by

distractions which ultimately eventually

distract you and just lead you astray

and that's you know 10 years later you

realize

you realize that you haven't been

practicing

correctly

so people you consider enlightened are usually far from being solemn Buddhist well I mean you don't have to be solemn to be a Buddhist I mean like in Ancient India then yeah I mean they had this cultural thing going where I mean you were like strict aesthetic just complete renunciate and it was like you would not tolerate any kind of any kind of like uh uh sentimentality or anything like that you know it's just like it's cold just ice cold strict you know it's like according to Abid dama um an enlightened being just cannot laugh or cry and I I kind of doubt that I just I mean I'm a Buddhist but I mean you don't have to

believe all of this just really strict
straight laed ancient Indian
stuff that that's not really it's not
not really the the the essence of
Buddhism the essence of Buddhism
essentially just accept whatever happens
and it makes it easier to accept both
light and darkness if you're in kind of
a controlled situation sort of like the
way scientific experiments work where
you have to have a controlled situation
because I mean you can't just have It
Wide Open chaos and and get
progress so you do simplify the
situation to make it easier to accept
both light and darkness and you're not

rejecting light and darkness other than

you're just simplifying it enough so

that you can make progress and I mean to

say that Buddhism leads nowhere I mean

is is reduced suffering and reduced

delusion

nowhere I mean maybe I mean where is

reduced suffering It's Not Over Yonder

It's Not Over

Yonder

so I'm really not sure exactly how to

answer question questions like this

maybe you've noticed that from the way

I'm kind of wandering around in this in

this

answer feel that Buddhism leads nowhere

well I mean if you want to assume that

uh you know less suffering and less

delusion is nowhere that it's it's just

not worth having then that's your call I

mean you if you want to be unhappy and

diluted nobody is stopping

you but you're trying maybe this person

is you

know like uh implying that you get

better reduction of unhappiness and

delusion by acceptance of both light and

darkness which of course Buddhism does

teach I mean you just accept whatever

happens I mean that's pretty much what

uh Conti is it's one of the the 10

parames kti literally means

acceptance

so I mean UPA also is a kind of
acceptance It's not sort of a grasping
kind of you know taking something in
acceptance but it's just you know you're
not you're at peace with whatever
happens and Buddhist monks I mean
they're at peace with whatever happens
supposedly you read the text you know
they can be getting you know their arms
and legs chopped off you know they all
these things could happen to them you
know they're living in dangerous jungles
full of Bandits and tigers and so forth
and I mean it's not like they're just
hiding in a monastery trying to avoid
any light or
Darkness

so I mean different people require

different P I suppose one size does not

fit

all but I'm not sure if I even answered

this question yet I'm I'm just going to

read it again because like I said the

questions this time are uh I don't know

they're they're higher difficulty level

some of them forgive me my insolence but

does your life not show that Buddhism

leads nowhere I mean what way would my

life show that I mean am I worse off for

for being a Buddhist I don't get that

part is the path to Liberation not

better S through acceptance of both

light and darkness rather than rejection

of them um yeah within reason I mean you
follow the middle path you don't just
wallow in self-indulgence which is one
extreme and you don't torture yourself
wallow in self- torture which is the
Other Extreme you just live your life
take what comes and you deal with it
wisely and simplifying things makes it
easier to do that so that you don't get
distracted or just just knocked off your
feet just the middle
path anyways I don't know if I've
answered that or not I'm just going to
move on to the next question here this
is from
yugao and yugao is says do you think
that practice fake it till you make it

can be part of the Right View well I
don't think it'd be part of Right View
because it's he says it's like a
practice so it'd be more like right
practice fake it till you make it I mean
to some
degree I mean if you want to be an arant
to imitate an arant to superficially
outwardly try to live like an Aran is
not a bad idea I mean it might not fit
you at all you might just be his
hysterical and just climbing the walls
like some people do at meditation
Retreats where just the the sensory
deprivation and the self-restraint and
everything in slow motion and silence

and not talking with people you know

they just can't handle it and they crack

up I mean that does happen but to the

extent that you can imitate an

enlightened

being then yeah it's it it'll help you

to go in that

direction but fake it till you make it

doesn't mean that you just pass yourself

off as an enlightened being you know

he's becoming a

fraud yeah that's that's not good either

but to try to

imitate uh an enlightened being it's

fine you know it's like Christians try

to live a Christlike life I mean it

makes sense even though they themselves

are not particularly Christlike at least

they're they're trying and it probably

brings them a little closer to being

Christlike same way with

Buddhism so I'm going to move on to the

next question here and this is from

White Ash Piper and D Piper says do you

think putting an animal down and then in

parenthesis he's got

dog takes away from their death

experience um I guess I mean in some

cases but then again not all death

experiences are all that

great

um yeah I mean just dying in your sleep

might be taking away from your own death

experience but that doesn't mean you

shouldn't Die In Your

Sleep um

yeah it's in a way it's the the only bad

karma in euthanizing an animal would be

in your own sort of you're meddling with

some other being's Karma and it's just

the effect that it has on your own mind

just sort of residual doubts or the just

the subconscious effect of cutting off

another life

force um deliberately something like

that it's it's subtle and I mean

Buddhism like ancient Indian Buddhism is

uncompromising you know youth an Asia is

still killing but I

mean sometimes I mean it's just better

to take the hit I mean as a lay person that's it's sort of like the stoicism of like old Buddhism I've talked about this in like blog posts where I mean if you can live the life of a saint live the life of a saintly renunciant yeah well you go ahead and do that but if you're a lay person you've got like a family to protect for example youve got a home to defend if necessary then you have to take the hit you have to say you just have to bravely face the fact that you are setting yourself up for some bad fruition in the future by doing these things but it's your duty to do them and so you just have to have a little

bravery to face the fact that you know
you're going to be taking a hit later on
by doing this
so for a lay person I think in some
cases youth in Asia not only of a dog
but maybe even a grandma I
mean I mean it's it's not all bad it's
going to be I mean there there is no
pure bad or pure good unless unless
you're like an enlightened being and
then just good and bad are just you know
the whole Duality is is just set aside
and that's like a higher good but um I
mean if you're doing it out of
compassion and the dog is suffering then
you may be taking a hit but on the on
the same you know by the same token you

know you're doing something you're doing
a compassionate act which is going to
have some positivity in it
too and taking away from their death
experience I mean dying in misery is not
a good experience it's like if you die
in a state of misery then that misery is
Bad Karma like the more you're miserable
the more Bad Karma you're making it's
actually in Buddhism it is immoral to be
unhappy because you're making more karma
you're sort of reinforcing the
unhappiness by just adding to
it so it's not
necessarily bad to take away their death
experience I mean you might just want to

anesthetize them give them some

painkiller or something and then just

let nature take its

course but uh I mean if it's just a long

lingering death I I can imagine

situations where just putting them out

of their misery is actually I mean it

can arguably even be more good than bad

but there's going to be some good mixed

in with the bad

anyway and you just have to uh face the

fact that I mean you're going to face

the consequences of everything you do

every volitional Act is going to have

consequences

so so I kind of punted the ball on that

one didn't I I'm not sure that I really

even answered it sometimes I can sit
here and talk for five 10 minutes and
when I'm done I'm not still not sure if
I even answered the
question but taking away from it their
death experience is not necessarily a
bad thing because some death experiences
can be particularly
icky and if they don't experience it
then it just wasn't their comma to
experience experience it after all but
then that leads into you know murder
victims and so forth so let's not even
go there I'm moving on to the next
question immediately this is from
popcorn

boxing and popcorn boxing with with

regard to the previous Q&A says I am

glad it recorded this time would you

have redone it if it had not recorded

again and yeah I'd have to say yeah I'd

have to do it a third time because I'm

not just GNA like well it didn't work so

I'm not answering the

questions or I could skip a week and

then I'd have like 80 questions to

answer so

yeah I'm glad I didn't have to do it a

third time but I probably would have so

the next question we got a few kind of

unusual questions here and this is from

VA China is coming [__]

cute and uh VC here says when you were a

monk for 30 years did you know no fap
the whole time was it
hard and I mean yeah I mean it's
strictly against the rules for a monk to
deliberately have an orgasm unless it's
in a while he's asleep in a dream and if
you break that rule then you have to
take Penance for six days and six nights
it's called the sad offense it's the
most serious level of offense after
excommunication and then after you've
done the required penance
which is difficult and inconvenient you
have to attend a ceremony with at least
20 other monks all in good standing to
reinstate you as a monk in good standing

and it's really a pain in the neck and
there were times when I mean you I'm a
guy and especially when I was younger I
mean sometimes I would be so horny I'd
just be climbing the walls I'd want to
just cry or how like a dog or something
I was so horny but I mean jerking off
was not really a viable option unless I
was just going to become an
unconscientious Monk and not confess my
offenses and just pretend like I didn't
have them and so forth which was not a
route I wanted to
take so there were times when you know
you're just really horny and you're not
intending to jerk all the way off you
know you're don't not spanking the puppy

you're just kind of petting a little bit
and then you know it's just you're so
overcharged so to speak that just it's
like playing with a gun and it goes
off that happened a few times and in
really doubtful occasions I'd be like
psychoanalyzing myself I mean did I have
any intention to do this and if you just
have doubt in order to resolve the doubt
I would just do the Penance
anyway but it's is really it's really a
pain in the neck best avoid it
especially if you're a
monk so anyway the next part of this
question here now that you have a sweat
fart

that's not a very nice way to refer to a

lady are you doing no fap if not when

will you will she be okay with it have

you spoken with her about tits and I

assume he said I assume that's a typo

and he meant to say this and it was like

a Freudian slip or

something man I mean it and then he says

I mean it question

mark so am I doing no fap

no I'm not doing I mean no fap literally

means no masturbation so I guess yeah

I'm doing no masturbation because I

don't even need to I got a I got a woman

who has needs

also so if not when will you well if my

sweetheart passes away before I do God

forbid so to speak inshah or if I just
get too old to get it up then yeah I
guess
so but when you have a partner and
you're sleeping in the same bed with her
then uh yeah I mean you have sort of a a
responsibility to at least try to make
her happy in certain ways it's just a
natural urge anyway
right I mean if you don't want to do
that stuff I mean be celibate is fine
but I'm not celibate
anymore so let's see here have I spoken
with her about this I don't I don't
recall it because I have no intention of
doing it I mean would she be okay with

it I don't think so no I don't think

she'd be okay with

that um so okay I think I answered that

little series of questions that or sub

questions see we got one two three four

question marks in that one question so

now I'll just move on to this next

question which is another kind of

strange one also on the topic of noof

FAP what age does a person not get

credit for no fap for example

88-year-old people I do not think have

sex or masturbate so it is like going to

a ho house with a chopped off dick and

getting reward in heaven for not having

dick sex with the hoes even guys who are

married do know fap women go crazy

because they think they control you
because you are always ready and they
are not so now you are not always ready
like her even though you are but you are
no fap so you are once again in
control
um yeah my my relationship really
doesn't work that way I'm happy to
say um but let's just get up to the to
the main question up here what age does
a person not get credit for no
fap I mean it's like there is no age
limit I mean when you hit 65 it's not
like you start getting Social Security
and you stop getting credit for no fap
it's it's like when the urge goes away

then of course you're no longer

restraining

yourself so if you get too old to have

the urge then I guess you're not getting

credit for not doing what you don't have

the urge for

anymore and for some people they got

really weak sex drives I mean that can

be pretty much their entire

life but I mean if you're really just a

lustful

person then uh yeah I mean so long as

you're a lustful person then I mean it's

not really credit I mean it's just sort

of you're practicing self-restraint and

and you're I assume you're getting good

karma for the

self-restraint but uh I mean it is like

a spiritual practice you are weakening

your karmic

urges by

self-restraint so I guess I answer that

question I mean when you when you're no

longer really practicing self-restraint

because you no longer have the urge to

do it then then you're really not doing

anything you're not accomplishing

anything you're not earning

anything so I'll just move on next

question and this is from

arcat and our cats

says our cats I say says hi I've been

practicing Buddhism for four or so Years

starting in tibetan and following
strictly aan Sona and biku Bodi I agree
with Buddha's view on becoming free but
I am stuck with thinking if All Humans
can't become enlightened due to many
people making the world run including
having children then are his teachings
realistic I feed everyone no I feel
everyone is entitled to Liberation but
there's many other necessary ways of
living that won't provide people with
the situations to become liberated and
also the monastics wouldn't survive
without lay people it really makes my
view of Buddhist Buddhist teachings
being ultimate create doubt well I mean
like I was saying earlier most most

people don't even want to become
liberated most people are just wallowing
in it they they have no concept of
Liberation even if they had a concept
they wouldn't want it so it is realistic
because Liberation is only for a few
people I mean if you got a system that
says everyone gets liberated like some
kinds of Christianity where all you got
to do is believe in Jesus and you're
saved that is not
realistic so it's realistic to say that
most people just aren't ripe they're
just not ready for it
but you can do what you can to at least
get closer to it you can you can make

progress towards Liberation and that's
what most Buddhists are are going for
they're I mean they're they're too
humble or just too honest with
themselves to to think that they're
going to try that they're got much of a
chance of becoming enlightened in this
life maybe a little too humble in some
cases I mean you shouldn't just shut the
door to the to the very idea of becoming
aligned in this life because you never
know what's going to happen
so let's see I feel everyone is entitled
to Liberation well I guess you could say
Everyone's entitled to it but most
people don't want
it

so I mean Everyone's entitled to go out

and pee in the snow but not everybody

wants to pee in the

snow to give kind of a weird

example just because yeah it's just kind

of a strange statement here aan sona's

good good monk though he's uh the Abbot

of Burkin Forest Monastery in British

Columbia and

Canada

see stuck with thinking if all humans

can't become enlightened due to too many

people making the world run including

having children then our as teachings

realistic yeah that makes them realistic

because most people just don't want

Liberation and I feel everyone is

entitled Liberation but there's many

other necessary ways of living that

won't provide people with situations

become liberated well us they're

choice or else they just don't they just

don't know and also the monastics

wouldn't survive without L people that's

fine but I mean most people just don't

want to become monastics

anyway so yeah I think that the the very

fact that very few people become

Enlighten makes it more realistic I mean

Christianity originally was that way you

know many are called few are

chosen that even most Christians I mean

like I think it's St

Augustine just admitted that even most
Christians are going to go to
hell I mean is that realistic I mean
what's more realistic than admitting
that just most people not only are not
going to make it most people don't even
want to make
it so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from keep the
vinia and keep the vinia says what are
chakras and do you believe in
them uh I've read a lot about chakras
you know Ram do I mention a lot he was
like one of my first teachers through
books when I was a teenager you know he
talked about chakras because he was you

know he was trained in a mainly in a
Hindu tradition and chakras are are like
Hindu it's it's a Hindu concept Buddhism
like Orthodox terraa doesn't talk about
chakras at all um probably in China they
got their own
systems so yeah chakras are kind of
unique as far as I know you know the
seven chakras you know you've got the um
I mean I'm No Authority on chakras but
You' got like the the one that's at the
root of the like your
tailbone kind of the root of the penis
and for guys I guess or is that right
yeah it's uh it's just survival you know
it's like the lowest level of mentality
where you're actually conscious is just

survival you know food and shelter and
this kind of a thing and then the second
which is just above that kind of below
intermediate between the the first
chakra and like your belly butt the
danten I guess it's called in Chinese
that's like the sexual
chakra so that's first chakra is
survival second is sex third is kind of
in the the belly or I mean it's it's all
these chakras are like along your spinal
column there's like a spiritual
equivalent of your spinal column and the
chakras are like nodes going up this
this energy column and the third one is
uh like status and power money that kind

of a thing and and the ROM da says that
most normies like most people who aren't
very spiritual never really get above
the third
chakra that you know the the first three
chakras which is just survival sex and
just status and power that kind of a
thing that um you know that's like the
world for for most
people then the fourth chakra is the
heart chakra which is compassion where
you start realizing that everybody else
is on me you know it's like they we're
all kind of
connected and then and then I'm starting
to to really get into the realm I'm not
really familiar with and there's like

the throat chakra is the fifth one and
then like the third eye is the sixth one
and then the crown of the head is the
seventh chakra when that opens you're
fully enlightened and I don't think
there's any
scientific basis for this any empirical
basis it's a a belief system that
works so that gives it some validity
like pragmatic validity that you know
it's it's like a way of dealing with
different levels of consciousness sort
of like Ken Wilbur uses like the color
code thing for different stages of
Consciousness it's kind of similar to
that it's just sort of like a gimmick

that got turned into like a religious
Dogma um if somebody can prove to me
that these chakras really exist that's
fine but I mean even if they don't have
like a scientific empirical reality the
fact that it's a way of helping people
to wrap their heads around different
levels of consciousness and it's it's
used as a tool to help them make
progress that's fine sort of like Abid
dama works for some people Chinese you
know like the Chinese equivalent to this
or ayurvedic equ equivalence to
understanding how the body works even
though it might not be verified by
Western
science still I mean it's sort of like a

gimmick that

works

so yeah so I mean I kind of have a

general idea of what chakras are um and

I really don't have much trouble using

the system you know talking about

chakras even though I'm not exactly sure

what the Tho throat chakra does

especially anybody who's an authority on

throat

chakras is welcome to leave a a comment

in the comments

below so I'll just move on to the second

second question from keth the vinia

which

is what does it mean if all things are

empty and different schools of Buddhism
will teach you different things but I
think the original meaning of sunata or
emptiness sh in in Sanskrit is that
everything's are everything is empty of
an individual self
Essence that it's just kind of
arbitrary or it's ultimately delusional
to think that anything is intrinsically
separate from anything else you know
it's it's an artifact of perception
differentiation papancha is an artifact
of perception taking it for taking it
seriously thinking that it represents
reality is a
delusion so I mean it's not like in
platonic philosophy where um like a cell

phone is is is like pervaded by this

essence of cell

phoness no I don't think so even even

schopenhauer believed in in this

platonic um

ideals and uh yeah they don't exist in

my opinion that uh in Buddhism it's like

something appears to exist so long as

that there are these conditions

surrounding it that that cause it to

appear to exist and each of those

conditions itself appears to exist

because of this this this this this vast

Unthinkable web of conditions that none

of which is ultimately real it's just to

have a system that's going to stay

stable for at least a trillionth of a
second you have to have some kind of
like reinforcing pattern to it and so in
in the block of marble the uncarved
Block You've got these various patterns
that lend a certain stability to to the
whole of the of the pattern just through
a kind of regularity or predictability
it's it's really hard to explain this
kind of stuff I mean I'm just sort of
just blundering into this in a way
trying to explain this and it's not
working very well but I mean ultimately
things are empty because they lack an
individual self Essence including people
and that's why Buddhism teaches there is
no self ultimately because a self would

be like an ultimately real self Essence

like a

soul and Buddhism says that there is

nothing not a grain of sand Not a Human

Being not a planet not a sun that has an

individual self

Essence that it's all the uncarved blond

that is

artificially divided up into Parts but

the the parts are not ultimately real

they're just conditionally or

provisionally or potentially or

virtually

real and uh yeah there's an like read

the mul majamaa Kaka if you want to

understand emptiness I mean according to

the mul majamaa Kaka dependent core

Rising is emptiness because I mean

things don't exist because they have

this inherent existence they exist they

exist or seem to exist because of all

these conditions causing that to exist

and if the conditions stop the thing

itself that you think is ultimately real

or has some sort of inherent

individuality also

stops

so I hope I answered that question me

you can write entire books on it which

nagara did and many other people have

also written on the topic of

emptiness but I mean what ultimately

what it means is that everything is

empty of an individual self

Essence that it just seems to exist

because conditions cause it to seem to

exist and those conditions also just

seem to exist because other conditions

cause them to seem to exist add

infinum so I'll just move on to the last

question which is really the last

question the very last question which

was asked like half an hour hour before

I sat down to do this and this is from

Mama and mama says what are the top

three easiest things you would recommend

with regard to incorporating Dharma into

your daily life and I sorry to say it

but number one to be get rid of your TV

set just don't watch

television and it's mainly the

commercials I mean if you can watch

television without commercials and

without like

Netflix like Neo Marxist propaganda you

know like even I mean I watched the The

Walking Dead pretty much binge watched

it you know all 11 seasons of it in

Rapid succession and I mean

it's you know I I mentioned this before

it's essentially it's a good story but

there's all this propaganda in it some

of my favorite movies like The Matrix

it's got propaganda and it's you know

it's like the toughest badass in the

whole movie is this attractive young

woman you know what are the odds
especially when it's like just about
every action movie has one of
these and then like The Walking Dead
it's like like around season seven it
was like all on like at least one4 of
the main characters were
homosexual it's like black people are R
like running most of the the communities
and there's nothing wrong with black
people but it's just not very realistic
like there's this one Community called
Hilltop the first like when you're first
introduced to Hilltop the leader is this
totally weasy white guy and then he he
gets eliminated he's replaced by a woman

a white woman and then she gets she goes
off does her own thing she's replaced by
a gay guy and then he gets killed and
he's replaced by a lesbian woman it's
just
like you know is this just random chance
that it's always like this you know I'm
not even really complaining I mean like
The Walking Dead it's it's worth
watching I if you're into zombies I mean
The Walking Dead has good slow zombies I
mean fast zombies I mean they just be
screwed but slow zombies are are
manageable I
guess but of course I'm just totally
totally digressing here because Mama
asked about the three easiest things you

would recommend regarding incorporating

dhama into your daily life and here I am

talking about zombies

so number one get rid of your TV set

two I mean the top three easiest

things man I mean I should have probably

just figured this out before I did the

video but I I usually try to do this

thing you know just spontaneously and

not through some rehearsed speech so

another

thing uh be aware of the five precepts

so that even if you're breaking one at

least you know you're breaking one I

mean if if you're a Buddhist I mean if

you're not a Buddhist then it's not that

big of a deal I mean if you're a

Christian drinking alcohol is no big

deal because Jesus drank alcohol which

kind of helps to indicate that drinking

alcohol isn't really all that horrible

it's not going to disqualify you from

being a wise

person but let's

see um maybe do a little meditation even

for just uh five minutes a day five

minutes is better than zero

minutes so get rid of your TV

set try to see try to keep what precepts

that you can keep although like I said I

drank two beers last

night which is more than I usually drink

but

still and uh maybe just try to do a
little bit of meditation or another one
would just be try to just practice some
Elementary mindfulness you know there's
certain things that you do every day
like brushing your teeth you can just
turn that into a little mindfulness
ritual it'd be like meditation where
you're brushing your teeth mindfully you
know you're aware of the pressure of
your hand against the toothbrush you're
aware of the muscles causing it to go up
and down you're aware of the brushing
noises you're aware of the sensations on
your teeth and gums you're aware of the
thoughts that arise while you're doing

it like maybe I should uh emphasize this

tooth a little more that kind of a thing

or just walking I mean just walking can

be a meditative

experience or another one is like uh

simple mindfulness of

like if you get irritated or annoyed

like you're driving a car and you get

irritated by someone who you know they

just cut you off or something just be

aware of the the irritation arising so

that you don't just get Swept Away by it

there's all kinds of little things you

can

do and I think the the three easiest

things that each person can do to

incorporate darma into their life it

would depend a lot on their own
personality you know what what is it
that works best for them but number one
is get rid of your TV set and and I'm
kind of a hypocrite because we've got TV
sets in this house in fact there's three
of them although uh only one of them is
really con is really hooked up and I've
been just like steadfastly resisting
having there's one that's already in the
bedroom that's my sweetheart put there
and she wants a TV in the bedroom and
I've just been resisting and resisting
the whole time because personally I'd be
happier if there was no TV sets at all
in this house but when you live with

another person you have to compromise to
some degree so one TV that actually
works is in the living room and then the
TV that's uh in the bedroom is uh I
don't think it's even plugged
in so I mean another another easy thing
to uh incorporate D your deal life just
be generous you know just help people in
need if if you you know if you got more
than them and they need it more than you
then you know share the wealth I guess
there's lots of little things you can do
that uh can really make a
difference so what the top three would
be for each individual person like I say
would probably depend on the individual
person and just kind of what their

strengths and weaknesses are what so

that something that's easy for one

person might be difficult for another

just like generosity for example some

people are just naturally generous some

people are

not

so yeah I guess that's it and so I

answered all the questions and it's less

than two hours even by

golly so if you got any questions feel

free to include them in the comments

below this video and look at the URL

links including uh the books I've got on

Amazon and

uh I just burped here I am here I'm

ending this with with a belch but uh

yeah I mean like And subscribe if you

haven't already and be

happy

Okay, hello and welcome to episode 75 of question and answer. I am your host Panyobhasa and actually this is episode 75b because it happened again.

I did the entire Q&A yesterday, took a little over a half hour and a half and then I mean it's like the timer's going, you see how how many minutes it's been that the thing's been running and then after I'm done, I check and it's blank. It didn't record again.

So, three strikes and Apple Photo Booth is out.

And so, I can now say to hell with Apple Photo Booth cuz I have downloaded OBS

Studio which I sincerely hope will work

at least as well.

Preferably much better.

So, at least we had like a dress

rehearsal yesterday

of answering these questions so I don't

have as much of an excuse for flubbing

the questions this time. And this should

be the last time

that it doesn't record when after I push

record and it says it's recording.

So,

with that out of the way, with that off

my chest if you will,

we're going to go with OBS Studio today

and I'm going to start answering

questions. So, here we go. Let us begin.

The first question is from John.

And John says,

"Can you help me better understand the monk's rule of not lighting a fire? It's Pacittiya rule number 56 from the Bhikkhu Pātimokkha."

And he's got the Pāli here which I will recite with a Burmese accent or rather with an American accent superimposed onto a Burmese accent.

And it goes, "Yo pana bhikkhu aggilāno viññāpetvā pacchā joteti samādahāti vā samādahāpeti vā aññatra tāru Pacittiyam.

So, my my glasses are kind of blurry.

Maybe I should wipe them.

Anyways, what that means is that

give it a loose translation here.

And furthermore, whatever monk, not

being sick, lights a fire or causes a

fire to be lit for the purpose of

warming himself,

unless it's for some other reason, he

commits a pacitti offense, which is an

offense of

uh expiation. It's a medium severity

offense

um that you can expiate just through

making confession.

So, yo pana beku agi lanu it be na pac

ko zotim tamada hia wa tamada happy a wa

nyatra da taru pap

pisiya pacittiyam. And then uh John here

continues, after quoting the Pali, "Not to light a fire or have a fire lit except then for lighting candle, oil lamp, etc., cooking or reheating his food." Well, actually, a monk isn't allowed to cook food. He can reheat it, but not cook it. "See, if a beku who is not ill lights a fire or has a fire lit for him, he commits a pacittiya. Switching on a light or an electrical appliance is not considered lighting a fire. If a beku lights or revives a fire, voluntarily blows on a lit fire to rekindle it, adds anything to the fire like a log or paper, etc., or asks another person to light, maintain, or

rekindle a fire,

he commits the pacittiya number 56.

Would a monk not be allowed to start a fire in order to stay warm in cold weather?"

Okay.

So,

according to the origin story of this rule, some monks lit a fire to stay warm, and they were, I guess, the implication is they were kind of wimpy monks because it really doesn't get extremely cold in the Ganges Valley in India.

But anyway, they lit this fire. They had this fire going and a big black snake that was like inside of a hollow log

that they put on the fire came out and
was chasing them around and it caused an
uproar. And so
um the Buddha made this rule that you're
not allowed to make a fire to warm
yourself unless you are sick.
So I mean the So the implication is the
main reason against this rule is it is
to prevent small creatures that live on
wood from being burned alive.
And there are quite a few rules that
that are along these lines where a monk
is forbidden to do something like dig
the ground or use water that he thinks
might contain living creatures, you
know, like for bathing or whatever, like

pouring it onto the ground causing the

whatever creatures are in there to die.

Um there's lots of rules. Well,

several rules along those lines and this

is one of them.

Um

So I guess the thing is with regard to

this rule, one of the reasons why it was

made is that it just doesn't get that

cold in the Ganges Valley. It gets down

to maybe freezing or at least it did in

the Buddha's time. You know, there was

like eight days of frost

in the Buddha's time in in the Ganges

Valley.

And

So according to the ancient text, the

Buddha made the rule about a monk having three robes, you know, an inner robe, an outer robe, and a lower robe. And the outer robe can be two layers thick. If it's new cloth, it can be four layers thick if it's old cloth.

Um

And uh also a monk is allowed to wear a kind of felt blanket called a pawara.

I think that's what it's called.

Pu water.

Anyway.

So, I mean, having a fire to keep warm just wasn't necessary in those days. And so, it was considered to be just a sign of luxury or wimpiness or something

unless you were sick.

But, the thing is, in the temperate zone where it gets well below freezing in the wintertime, if you've got hypothermia, that would count as being sick. I mean, if you're going to die or are in danger of dying or getting frostbite or whatever, then that would be a legitimate excuse for building a fire to warm yourself.

Um when I was a junior monk and very strict, I was sort of agitating at the monastery. They were They were like setting up meditation cabins. And I was saying, you know,

"Use electric heaters. Don't use like kerosene heaters or natural gas heaters

just because strict monks might not want
to use actual fire to warm themselves in
what I considered to be against the
rules."
But, uh really
because I mean, they didn't have
kerosene heaters or um
like natural gas heaters in the Buddha's
time. And I mean, there are no animals,
no living creatures are endangered by by
using one of these as a general rule.
So, I mean, that's just sort of one of
these
ancient rules that maybe people might
adhere to too strictly and go beyond the
spirit of the rule simply because modern

technology has invented ways of warming yourself with fire without actually endangering small creatures or large snakes.

So, I guess I answered that one.

So, I'll just move on to the next question. This is Fred.

And Fred says, "I have seen a monk handle money in a plastic bag. What's your thoughts?"

Well, I mean, it's just as much against the rules for monk to handle money if it's in a plastic bag or like they do in Burma a lot of the time in a paper envelope. You know, they sort of discreetly conceal the money in an envelope and hand that to the monk. But,

I mean, they're just concealing the fact that the monk is breaking the rules because it doesn't matter whether it's in a plastic bag or an envelope. Monks are not allowed to accept money or handle money except under very limited circumstances and it's never their own money that they're allowed to handle. So, like if a monk finds a purse or a wallet lying on the ground inside the monastery, it is his duty to pick it up and put it somewhere safe so that when the person comes back for it, it can be given to them. But, if he finds the wallet or the purse right outside the monastery, he's not allowed to touch it.

It's only if it's inside the monastery property. Or also, there's another one that I've never heard of actually happening although it's described in the texts, where if a monk forfeits his money because money
for a monk to handle money is called Nissaggiya Pacittiya. So, it's like Pacittiya like the rule against building a fire to warm yourself unless you're sick.
But, Nissaggiya means with forfeiture, which means you have to forfeit whatever is causing you to break the rule before you can make confession because if you make confession without getting rid of the the money or whatever it is, then

the confession is invalid because you

haven't you're still breaking the rule

as you make confession.

I mean, you you break the rule like one

moment after you made the confession

just because you still have the money.

So,

in the in the texts and again, I've

never heard of this actually happening,

um the monk will forfeit his money to

the Sangha and then the Sangha will

appoint somebody to take that money and

just go out into the woods and just

fling it on the ground somewhere.

But, again,

uh I've never heard of a monk that

handled money actually going through the

trouble of

officially forfeiting it because they

just don't want to get rid of their

money.

So,

yeah, so I guess I answered that

question. It's it's just against the

rules.

I'm not exactly in the center of the

picture here, which

disturbs my OCD slightly.

Okay, so I'll just move on to Fred's

next question, which is is Om the

universal frequency?

And that's what the Upanishads say. You

know, some Hindu tradition says that Om

is the universal frequency, although I'm
not so sure that there is a universal
frequency. I mean, you can say that sort
of the background noise of the universe,
which
it used to be, I don't know if it still
is, but used to be considered evidence
of the Big Bang. It was still like the
aftershocks, you know, the
reverberations of the Big Bang can still
be detected in space.
But, I guess the Big Bang might be uh
becoming an obsolete theory or something
because a lot of a lot of uh
astrophysicists are kind of
not liking the idea much anymore.

So, whether Om is the universal frequency, I don't think so. It is a good frequency for um raising consciousness, I guess. You're just kind of tapping in to this vibe that has been going for centuries by all these swamis and yogis and adept meditators who are doing Om. I remember uh
um Ram Dass in one of his books said that he was doing a certain mantra, a simple uh Hindu mantra in India, and he just all of a sudden it was like the Mormon Tabernacle Choir was all around him doing this mantra.
And he went to one of his teachers and he said, "Well, you you've tapped into that that frequency of all these people

over the centuries reciting this mantra,

and it's you know, you just sort of

blended it in with it.

But it's uh

Yeah, it's more of a human psychological

thing, I think, than an actual universal

frequency.

So, I think I'll just move on to Fred's

next question,

which is, are zombies a dead end?

And that's actually a myth. It's It's

just a common misperception that zombies

are a dead end because in fact they are

undead.

They are an undead end.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question here. This is from Powers.

And I'm just going to check to make sure it's recording. Yep, it says it's recording.

And I trust this one.

So, Powers says, of the four brahma vihara, which do you think is the most important to practice? And for those of you who are innocent of poly technology or poly technical terms, I almost said poly technology.

For those of you who really don't know the the Buddhist jargon, the brahma viharas are four of them. It means something like the divine abodes.

And it's

um

four attitudes toward others, really,

that are a kind of meditation object.

And you've got metta, which is usually

translated as loving kindness.

I think uh more literally be something

like friendliness.

You got loving metta or loving kindness.

You've got karuna or compassion, which

is sort of sympathizing with other

people's

suffering.

Then you've got mudita or some kind

sometimes it's translated as sympathetic

joy, which is kind of the converse of of

compassion, where you are rejoicing in

other people's joy.

And then you've got upekkha or equanimity.

And of the four brahma viharas, the only one that I have heard of that gets practiced regularly, that that you can go to a meditation retreat and the the teacher there will be leading you through a guided metta meditation is metta. I mean, it's

I've never heard of like going to a monastery. I'm sure it does happen sometimes, but you go to a meditation retreat or a meditation center and they're guiding you through karuna or through mudita or through upekkha. It's almost always metta.

So, finding a good teacher who's experienced in any of the other three is going to be a little bit tricky. You know, finding even a book that gives clear instructions on how to do the other three other than metta, uh it might be a little bit difficult, but metta meditation is very common. A lot of people a lot of Theravada Buddhists practice it.

Um but on the other hand, I mean, just just based on that, metta meditation would be the most convenient and probably the easiest to practice where you can get actual benefit from it just because there are experienced teachers,

people who have practiced it for years
and years who can give you instruction
on how to do it correctly.
But on the other hand, according to the
Visuddhimagga, which is like the hub,
the central text of the Theravada
Buddhist commentarial tradition,
it does state that only one of the
Brahma Viharas, if you meditate on it,
will take you all the way to fourth
jhana, and that is upekkha or
equanimity.
I think metta will only get you to the
third jhana or something like that.
So, upekkha will get you farther if you
can find out how to do upekkha
meditation correctly, find a skilled

teacher who's actually practiced it

correctly.

But, um all in all, metta meditation is

the main one that people practice, so

it's easier to get instructions on it

and easier to just go to a meditation

retreat where you practice it.

So,

which is the most important to practice?

It depends on what your priorities are.

If If you can find out how to do Upekkha

meditation correctly, then maybe that

one would be most important because it's

a more advanced meditative object. You

know, it gets you farther in meditation.

But, Metta is very useful. You know,

it's good to be able to beam love at the
at the entire universe,
including your enemies.
So, yeah, it depends on
your priorities to determine which one
is more important to practice. So, we'll
just move on to the next question from
Powers, which is, "Are you available for
in-person interviews?" Well, I have done
interviews like on Skype with people
before.
So, I mean, it's been a while since I've
done it, but I have done it and it can
be done.
But, um you'll have to search around for
some way of contacting me because I'm
not going to put my contact information

right here

because, uh

you know, the wrong people might start

contacting me.

And by the wrong people, I mean people

who are not in good faith. You know,

people who are, you know, malicious or

something.

Or just nutty people who

you you'd rather have them not stalking

you or something.

So, I think I'll just move on to the

next question here. This is from

Sanguine Ultima.

And Sanguine Ultima says,

"How would a person whose entire sense

of self is built on self-loathing,
Weltschmerz, which means world sadness,
and negative mind states begin to detach
from their addiction to suffering?"
Well,
first of all, I would say that I really
can't give a lot of advice based on my
own experience because I mean I have
gone through pessimistics phases. I've
been through depressed phases in my
life.
Um you know, when especially when I was
a younger fellow,
um you know, I had kind of a loathing
for for the world which helped me to
renounce the world. You know, I just did
not have a high opinion of the human

race. I preferred the company of trees

to the company of people.

Um

So, I mean I can't really speak um based

on my own experience how to overcome,

you know, a person whose entire sense of

self is built on self-loathing.

You know, I've never really loathed

myself other than maybe twinges of it

after you do something really foolish or

stupid, especially when I was younger.

Like uh when I was a kid, I stole

something from a store. I shoplifted and

my mother found out and she started

crying. And I just It was like I felt

like this big. I just wanted to sink

into the floor. I was like 13 years old

at the time.

But uh yeah, not as like a

a prominent personality trait. It's not

really a prominent personality trait in

my case. But I could give some advice.

Like for example,

um the Visuddhimagga, which I already

mentioned, it does say that people who

have the dosa temperament or the

aversion temperament are actually They

actually have an advantage in practicing

Dhamma because if you have aversion

for the world or aversion even for

yourself, it makes you easier to detach.

Makes it easier for you to renounce.

So, I mean you can use it in that sense

as a kind of benefit.

Although I mean if it's really extreme,

then

um you're just going to have to power

through it. Like um

I mean it's like

you have these negative mental states

and eventually it would have to lead you

to like a crisis point where you just

plainly see, you know, it just strikes

you with this realization

that it's not benefiting you and that I

mean, it's just not a good way of

dealing with your situation. And so, I

mean, once you hit this crisis stage,

then it can just

slam you out of your rut.

And that happens a lot. Like Eckhart Tolle apparently was like borderline suicidal for years. I mean, he was just depressed and just loathed the world. I don't know if he loathed himself or not. Maybe he did.

Um

and then it just got so bad. It hit he hit this crisis and it just slammed him into a

higher state of consciousness, at least according to his own testimony.

So, those would be your two best bets with regard to having a very negative attitude towards the world and towards yourself and trying to overcome that is

one you can use it as a kind of tool to
help you to just detach and renounce.
Um and also, on the other hand, if if
you can't really use it for that very
well, then I mean, really you're just
going to have to just keep going
further into it until finally you just
have enough insight
that it can liberate you from from this
attitude.
That you just hit the crisis point where
you just it's just obviously not working
anymore. And so, then, you know, it just
kind of it causes a kind of
um almost like a mental collapse. You
know, it's it's a collapse of this

structure, this these habitual
perceptions that you've got. Once they
can no longer cope with your situation
anymore, it's just like an instinct in
humans and even in dogs that I mean
you're just
like a slave to your habits until the
habits just break down because they just
cannot cope with the situation anymore.
And then uh you become very open to
suggestion. You can and then you can
move beyond that.
So, I mean that's the best advice I can
give you and the first advice is good
advice. I mean it's it's sort of like,
you know, good news. And the second
advice that you may have to just like

keep going until you have some kind of
breakdown because
the the attitude just is not serving you
very well.
Then I mean it's it's kind of bad news,
but I mean it's good at the end. Like
Ram Dass, I'm always talking about Ram
Dass. He was like my first spiritual
teacher just via books.
And he was saying that uh like absolute
despair is a prerequisite to significant
spiritual
growth.
Because you have to hit the the despair,
the crisis point in order to let go of
the old habits and reach out for

something better.

So, with all due respect to Sanguine Altima, I'm going to move on to the next question, which is from Joe Doe.

And Joe Doe says, "I have heard that the swastika is used as a meditation tool. They say that good meditators can focus on the symbol and visualize it spinning. Have you ever heard this?" Well, the swastika is a Buddhist symbol. It's like an ancient Indian symbol. The word swastika is Sanskrit. It means something like good benefit or good welfare.

And it was essentially like a good luck symbol.

And uh I mean the Buddhist swastika bends the opposite way from the the

German National Socialist

uh swastika, the Hakenkreuz, but they

took it from from India.

And used it as kind of uh Aryan

propaganda in a way.

And it's really not used as a meditation

object in Theravada Buddhism.

In Tibetan Buddhism they use

mandalas.

Which is you know kind of like a diagram

that they like can focus on that and it

may be that they have to they visualize

the mandala and maybe cause it to spin

or expand and contract. In Theravada

Buddhism they've got what are called

kasinas which are much more simple.

They're not mandalas. It's usually just a colored disc and you're supposed to be able to visualize that in your mind, see it clearly in your mind even with your eyes closed and be able to expand it and contract it and so forth.

But

they don't use mandalas

um

or swastikas. I assume I have seen mandalas that were kind of swastika shaped. You know it's had kind of a swastika in it but it was more ornate than ordinary swastika.

And again Tibetan Buddhists may use it as a meditation object but it's not used in Theravada.

So

I guess I answered that question so I'll just move on to the next question which is from Rui.

And Rui says do you consider the expression sentient being a pleonasm? Would you designate a table for instance as a non-sentient being or as a mere entity or thing? I know the etymological intricacies of being are luxuriant but what would your off-the-cuff view be?

Well, let's see here.

First of all I guess I should um define pleonasm. Which are you know two words that are together that essentially say the same thing. You know sort of like a

tautological statement and then I might have to define tautological too so I'm just going down a rabbit hole here.

But pleonasm you know it's just unnecessarily saying the same thing in two different ways.

So,

do I consider the expression sentient being a pleonasm? Not necessarily. I mean, I don't consider a table, for for example, to be a being. I mean,

um maybe it's just because I have a degree in biology, but I would consider a being to be an organism, you know, some sort of living thing. And so, and sentient, on the other hand, it would have to have some kind of mental image,

like perceptions and volitions. There'd have to be like a mental image there.
So, I would say like a plant, for example, might be a non-sentient being. You know, it's an organism, and it may have a very simple, primitive kind of consciousness, but it doesn't in in all likelihood, it doesn't think. It doesn't have like mental images.
You know, it's just like this very primitive, primordial kind of consciousness with not much content to it.
Um in in Theravada Buddhism, plants are called ekin ekin triya jiva, which means one faculty life. They have the faculty

of touch, and that's it. They can't see, they can't hear, they can't smell, they can't taste, but they and they can't think, but they can they can experience touch.

And I don't think that would be sufficient for my

um

in in for me to classify them as sentient.

I think a sentient being would have to have some kind of mental image. They'd have to have some kind of mental world, you know, or um

just like mental images, perceptions, and volitions.

That would be my off-the-cuff view.

But a table, I don't consider to be any
kind of being, and really, it's only an
entity or a thing
um based on
perception. It's an artifact of
perception.
So, let's move on to Rui's next question
here,
which is, "Would you like to expand a
bit on memory of past lives in early
childhood?
In my own experience being drawn to
certain things and situations
around age four or five entailed a
strong sense of familiarity."
Well,

I don't have any past life memories from childhood.

Like some little kids they know they'll talk about, you know, "When I was a man, you know, and in fact my my own little brother used to talk about that." You he'd tell my dad about what he used to do when he was a man.

And my father believed in reincarnation, so he took it seriously and was trying to get more information from him, but it was relatively vague since it was coming from like a three or four-year-old.

Um

but um

let's see. Where where do I go with this? Could I expand a bit on memory of

past lives in early childhood?

Um

yeah, I'm as I already said, I really

don't have any memories of past lives in

early childhood or even in adulthood.

Personally, I have like maybe

educated guesses or intuitions about

past lives that I have lived based on

just like a fascination or a a resonance

with certain times in history, certain

cultures like medieval Japan, 14th

century England, like the late Roman

Republic in southern Italy,

that kind of thing.

And it could not really easily be

explained through genetics and past

experience.

So, that some sort of past life

momentum carrying over into this life

may account for that.

But um if you want to know more about

memories of past lives in early

childhood, I would recommend reading

books of from Dr. Evans Ian Stevenson

who I think he he was on the faculty of

the University of Virginia or something

like that. And he wrote a number of

books about young children who

remembered their past lives as a kind of

um

it's indicative or suggestive of

reincarnation.

And it's it's really interesting. Some

of the stories are fascinating.

So, I mean that would be I would sort of steer you towards that. Read books by Dr. Ian Stevenson on, you know, children who remember past lives. Also, he was doing a study on uh

um like children who are born with birthmarks, weird birthmarks. And sometimes children who remember their past lives,

um

you know, they'll have these birthmarks that were like like karmic carryovers from the previous life. You know, they might have like a big birthmark on their neck and it was like, you know, they got

their their

you know, they died from having their

their throat cut or something. Or, you

know, they died in a car crash and

they've got like this birthmark showing,

you know, where the injury was or

something.

So,

uh I was going to say something that was

good and then it just it just went by.

Uh

Oh, yeah. I remember what I was going to

say now. That children who remember past

lives, it's it's more likely to happen

if the previous life was just cut off

suddenly through like an accident or

murder or something. If they just faded

out, they're much less likely to
remember their past life, you know, in
the subsequent one. But if if they're
just cut off in just full full spate of
the the momentum of their their karma,
then uh
it's like it's more likely to carry over
into the next into the next life, at
least for the first few years, when
until finally they just kind of identify
with this new life and just kind of
forget the past stuff or just you know,
just you know, they're maybe they're
just very much discouraged from talking
about it when they're little kids cuz it
creeps out their parents or something.

And so they just kind of it just gets submerged.

But yeah, read Dr. Ian Stevenson about that. It's it's really some of the stories are really interesting where he'd be, you know, finding children who remembered past lives and like, you know, asking them and then trying to verify, you know, by, you know, contacting, you know, he the kid says he was born in such and such a neighborhood and he he ran a pharmacy or something and so,

um you know, Dr. Ian Stevenson would go and investigate to see how well that the kids' stories match up with with uh the actual history of, you know, the person

they said that they used to be.

And it worked it was more scientifically

convincing if the child hadn't really

had any

uh contact with the other family at

Sometimes the contact had already

happened so that it was it wasn't nearly

as good of evidence because, you know,

they might have coached the kid on what

stories to tell or whatever.

So,

um yeah, I guess I guess I've answered

that question.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question. This is from DoomTube.

And DoomTube says,

"I heard somewhere along the way that
keeping a straight back during
meditation was somehow important because
of the alignment of the so-called
chakras. If the chakras are not an
objective reality as you
as opposed to a subjective concept, why
do you suggest sitting in the lotus
position as opposed to in a chair or
laying down, for example?"
Well, yeah, I'm sure the yoga people
would would give some explanation with
regard something along the lines of you
know, it's keeping your chakras aligned,
you know, in a perfectly perpendicular
like a vertical ascent kind of a thing.
But um from my point of view, if we just

set aside chakras, which really are not
a a Theravada Buddhist concept,
then um I've got two hypotheses that
could account for how sitting in the
full lotus
um optimizes meditation. And I know from
my own experience, at least my own
personal experience, if you sit in the
full lotus, your meditation's going to
improve by 3% or 5%. There's going to be
a noticeable improvement in your
meditation just from sitting in the full
lotus.
And it may not have anything to do with
alignment of chakras. It may just be
that it's easier to sit straight up and

down like a totally, you know,
perpendicular to the floor posture,
ramrod straight, if you're in the full
lotus. It kind of automatically tilts
your pelvis forward a bit, which helps
you to keep your back straight.
And um just being in an alert posture
helps you to be alert just like if
you're in a slumped-over, sleepy-looking
posture, it helps you to be sleepy.
That they've actually done psychological
studies on this where you adopt a
certain posture and your mind just kind
of falls along with the posture. So if
you're sitting like very alert, very
just straight up and down, it's more
likely to help you be alert, which is

helpful in meditation. It helps you to be more fully conscious when you're meditating. And another hypothesis that I came up with is that when you're sitting in the full lotus, your legs are just kind of tied up like a a pretzel, you know, almost like a they're tied in a knot.

And that may reduce blood flow to your legs, which may then increase blood flow to the rest of your body, which would include your your brain.

So that will also might, you know, increase oxygen flow to your brain or something and help you to be more alert and conscious and thereby help your

meditation.

So, it's not necessarily caused by

aligning your chakras, but I do know

from my own experience sitting in the

full lotus will improve your meditation

if you can do it without agony.

So, I'll just move on to Doom Tube's

next question here

which is, if ultimately the material

objective experience is in essence

delusionary, what difference would it

make by keeping the back vertically

vertically aligned whilst meditating?

Well, I mean, you are part of the

delusion and so

um I mean, it makes a difference so long

as you're identified with the body.

Uh it's it's hard to explain this kind
of question or answer this kind of
question cuz it's dealing with two
levels of reality at the same time.
But really all that we are is a kind of
delusion.
You know, it's it's like you've got
let's say you've got infinite
consciousness
and some of this infinite consciousness
which contains all possibilities
contains I mean, it's
it contains the possibility um the
consciousness becoming a recursive,
becoming aware of itself. It becomes so
complicated it becomes aware of itself

and then starts believing that it's

separate from everything else

which is

delusional or ignorant.

And so, so long as this

falsely isolated

pocket of delusion really thinks that

it's real, then it's pretty much

enslaved itself to what it considers to

be real. And

um I mean, I've gone through phases when

I was a monk

where it just it just seemed to me like

it didn't even matter whether I went to

heaven or hell

because, you know, ultimately it just

doesn't matter.

But so long as you're delusional, so
long as you're not enlightened yet, it
it does matter. I mean there is
obviously a difference between going to
heaven or and going to hell.
So,
I mean if you can really just be
completely detached
from, you know, happiness or unhappiness
or progress or retrogression or
whatever, then you'd probably be
enlightened anyway. Or either that or
just completely apathetic.
So,
yeah, I mean so long as you're in the
delusion, then it does matter even

though ultimately it doesn't.

But,

I mean so long as you're invested in it

and believe that it's real, then you're

better off with a positive reality than

a negative one or with, you know, a

positive a reality that takes you closer

to the actual reality

instead of a false reality that's taking

you farther away and making you more

asleep or more delusional.

And again, it's hard to answer questions

like that because you have to be dealing

with two levels of reality

simultaneously, like ultimate truth and

conventional truth.

And it's tricky.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Indian guy who also goes by the alias of Trevor. And Trevor or Indian guy says, "Did the Buddha eat poop?
I swear I heard in a sutta that he ate poop during his ascetic days." And yeah, it's there's one sutta at least, which is the Maha Sihanada sutta, the great discourse of the lion's roar in the Majjhima Nikaya. I think maybe it's sutta number 12 in the Majjhima Nikaya. Don't quote me on that.
But, um yeah, a large part of that sutta is the Buddha just bragging in grandiose terms about he out asceticed every other

ascetic. And that included eating cow poop. It also included just wandering around naked like Mahavira did. Or and it also included he he wore some kind of clothing made out of owl wings. Because apparently in ancient India some ascetics wore owl wings. I assume it wouldn't be like a full suit of clothes made out of owl wings. I'm I'm sure it's owl wings are kind of hard to come by. I mean how are you going to how are you going to find these owl wings?

So

it might just be like a little loincloth thing. Just a few wings just to cover the naughty bits.

But uh yeah, I think it was it was cow

poop that he ate.

Um

it may be somewhere that he ate his own.

This it just because it's like an

ancient Indian ascetic thing that you

just kind of recycle it. You

you need less food if you just pass it

through more than once sort of like

rabbits do. But the thing is

um I'm kind of skeptical of these kind

of accounts. Not because I don't think

that nobody did it. But I I'm skeptical

that the Buddha would sit there just

bragging and bragging about how

you know how unsurpassed he was with

regard to even the ascetic stuff that didn't cause him to become enlightened. He still out-asceticed all the other ascetics. You know he's he's bragging about how he eat like one bean every two weeks. That kind of thing. You know that was like his diet.

And I mean I don't doubt that he did do severe austerities before he turned to the right kind of meditation and became enlightened. You know some of the stuff in in the text where he's talking about the Dukkara Cariya or this this period of you know six years of ascetic practice where he became so emaciated that if he touched his belly he could feel his spine.

And if he if he rubbed his arms, the hairs would just break off due to the the malnutrition that he was experiencing.

Um yeah, I I mean that kind of stuff, it seems plausible, but to have him do all of these extremely extreme uh ascetic practices that

yeah, I mean like one bean every 2 weeks, I don't think that's even possible really.

Or I don't know. It's It's more It's it's not so much a matter of the Buddha really having done this, but it does give uh an indication of what kind of ascetic practices were actually being

practiced in the Ganges Valley in the

Buddha's time.

So,

it does say in the text at the very

least that the that the Buddha, before

he was the Buddha,

you know, it it was before he became

enlightened, he was doing all the

standard Indian ascetic stuff that was

in spiritual fashion at the time, and

that included eating cow dung.

Just as a way of getting food that

um you know, you're not having to beg

for it. It's just lying there on the

ground. It's easy to get. It's It's not

tasty, so it's really ascetic, you know,

it's just very austere in an extreme

way.

And I'd probably get worms and stuff really easy if you try that. I would not suggest people try this at home.

So, yeah, I mean it does say in the Mahasihanada Sutta at least that before he became enlightened, when he was doing the extreme austerities, that he did eat cow dung as part of his ascetic practice.

And uh I mean even today in Burma, uh some monks will drink cow pee just as a kind of medicine, like stale cow urine. And you can take these things called emblic myrobalans. I've actually tried this before. They're They're sort

of like gooseberries. They're very astringent and green, but if you put them in the cowpea, they turn black like black olives and they taste like black olives and it's kind of medicinal.

But that's that's totally different and I'm digressing. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question here, which is from Liberland.

And this is a strange question and I do not fully understand it, which is kind of par for the course with Liberland's very cerebral questions.

So, anyway, Liberland says,

"Given that there aren't many spare examples of attainment of omniscience or diminishing of karma such that only

subtle passions remain,

would you consider it arguable that you are a working model of these things such that if someone were searching for an example of omniscience in regard to the workings of karma, they could seek to emulate you in some regard? And as added detail, let's imagine that this scale of intuition goes from someone who doesn't have any cause for believing in karma to one that has strong samvega because of the insights they have into Buddha Dharma. So, even philosophical recognition of it being a real substance is contributive to some amount of omniscience and subtlety of the passions

being based in a change from past baseline.

Basically, just not viewing these as supernatural attainments, but instead factors of everyday wisdom like cultivating samvega. I mean, you had the determination to become a seriously practicing monk after all.

So, I really I mean, this kind of the main part of the question is up at the top here.

In that it's kind of like a two-pronged question here.

It's like

Let's see here. Would you consider it arguable that you are a working model of these things, which is omniscience and

the diminishing of karma such that only subtle passions remain. And that's like two different things. And really um I don't consider myself to be omniscient. You know, I do not know certain things.

And uh with regard to the diminishing of karma such that only subtle passions remain.

Well, I mean, I was a strictly practicing monk for many years. For approximately 30 years.

And I mean, if if that counts for anything, if 30 years of yogic practice, intensive yogic practice counts for anything, then

yeah, I'd I'd say it's likely that I'm

further along than most people.

But uh

uh I'm not so sure that um my karma is

so diminished that only subtle passions

remain. I mean, I can still get

irritated or annoyed. Sometimes at work,

um not at other people so much as just,

you know, it's

something is coming out crooked through

out of the machine or something, or on

in traffic, you know, you can you can

like cuss people just cuz they're

behaving like idiots, or you perceive

them as behaving like idiots. Also, any

any man that's got a woman, women just

instinctively know how to push a guy's

buttons when they want to. And it hasn't
happened in a while, but bless her
heart, she she has pushed my buttons
more than once.
So,
with regard to omniscient,
um it it does remind me. There's a
uh a statement in the Tibetan Book of
the Great Liberation,
um which is a Tibetan text, of course.
It's not It's not Theravada Buddhism,
but it's referring to the one mind,
which is sort of like Brahman for the
for the Vedantists. You know, it's just
this
consciousness that pervades the

universe.

And the Tibetan Book of the Great

Liberation says, "It is not a

multiplicity and is omniscient."

And I assume that would be the kind of

omniscience that the Buddha attained

is that

he didn't really attain it. I mean, it

was always there. It was just permeates

everything. It's just that he got rid of

all the delusion stuff and there it was

and it was always there and then he had

access to it.

Um and so the more you practice, the

more you're going to be thinning the

veil and and have gradually more access

to this you know universal omniscience.

Just everything is there.

At least in potential form.

But I don't think that uh

now the Buddha's omniscience

necessarily meant that he could speak

Mandarin Chinese or do integral calculus

long before it was invented or anything

like that.

So

yeah, I I don't think that it would be

good for people to

find to see me as an example of

omniscience or even necessarily of

attenuating karma until only subtle

passions remain.

They could see me as someone who's moved

in that direction, I suppose.

But like someone who has attained uh omniscience, I would be more likely to like if I had to guess someone in the past 100 years who had attained omniscience, I might guess Neem Karoli Baba up on the the bookshelf back there. Cuz he had some really amazing psychic abilities.

Um

but I think I guess there's like another part that the added detail which is more complicated and harder to understand than the original question here.

Let's imagine the scale of intuition goes from someone who doesn't have any cause for believing in karma to one that

has strong some wiggle because of the insights they have into Buddha Dharma so even philosophical recognition of it being a real substances contributed to some amount of omniscient and subtly of the passions being based in a change from past baseline. Basically just not viewing these as supernatural attainments but instead factors of everyday wisdom like cultivating some wega.

Um

Yeah, I mean technically according to Theravada Buddhism there really is nothing supernatural. That nothing is supernatural. It's just like you know

you you reach a certain level and you

unlock new skills like in a video game.

And that's that's just in accordance

with the way of of nature. It's just the

the natural way of things.

So

Yeah, I mean there really are no

supernatural attainments. I mean even

like psychic abilities and so forth.

Um it's it's not really supernatural.

It's just that you have to reach a

certain level before you get access to

them.

So

I hope I answered that question.

But uh

I would not encourage people to consider

me to be omniscient.

Like if I was really omniscient I would have known yesterday that even though it said it was recording it wasn't really recording. So I wouldn't have to sit through this twice. Not that I'm exactly complaining. I'm not complaining about having to answer you guys' questions twice.

Anyways, I'm just going to move on to Libra Lamb's next

next question here.

Which is Ajahn Chah reportedly stated that one will attain stream entry in less than six months of practice if they are really trying. Do you consider this

sensible if we think about it as

reformatting one's karma from an anima

naturaliter Christian naturally

Christian soul to an anima naturaliter

Buddhistic.

So yeah,

Libra Lamb asks cerebral questions as I

as I mentioned just a little while ago.

Um,

it does say in the Satipatthana Sutta

that if you practice for just one week,

just solid intensive Satipatthana

practice, that uh you not only become a

sotapanna, but you'll either become

enlightened or an anagami.

But uh

I guess most people just aren't capable

of just non-stop

full blast mindfulness for a week

straight cuz it doesn't happen very

often.

So,

with regard to stream entry, I've I've

mentioned on numerous occasions that I'm

rather skeptical of stream entry

originally having meant some kind of

uh higher attainment. That it originally

probably meant something like being born

again, you know, you've you've entered

you've you've like converted to Buddhism

and you you're like sincerely trying to

be a good Buddhist and that that causes

you make merit, you know, through your

your generosity and your your morality
and just your your dedication to Dhamma
that you're you're not likely to
retrogress or go to hell after you die
or be born as an animal or hungry ghost
or whatever after you die.
And so,
um I can relate to what a lot of Burmese
say autos talk about. I think in the
Mahasi tradition they talk about the the
chula sotapanna or like the minor
sotapanna. It's not like you're really a
complete sotapanna, but it's like I was
just describing where you're even though
you haven't had any glimpse of nirvana
yet, you know, you haven't attained a
superhuman mental states yet, still

you're so well established in practicing
Dhamma and, you know, keeping precepts
and and being generous to the poor, and,
you know, it's like
you're you're not going to go to hell,
you know, you're pretty much guaranteed
of getting, you know, a better life
after you die just because you're doing
so well as a Buddhist, you know, such a
sincere sincerely practicing Buddhist
that that you're
protected from going to hell or that
sort of thing.
So,
um
yeah, I think that that

um

is likely. Although,

um like to become a to like have a

glimpse of nibbana within 6 months if

you're like anybody should get a glimpse

of nibbana within 6 months if they're

really trying. I don't think so because

most people just aren't ripe for it yet.

Even people that are trying sincerely,

they just don't have the parami

or the just the the karmic momentum or

just the the wisdom

to actually succeed in that. Like like

not everybody is going to become a

concert pianist. Not everybody even has

the potential become a concert pianist

or like a an Olympic gold medalist or a

Nobel Prize winning mathematician. Not everybody can do that even though they might be trying as hard as they can. They're just not ready for that yet. They don't have the innate talent for that. And I think it's probably true with regard to people becoming enlightened, too.

I mean, you have to you have to be ripe for it.

So, with regard to getting a glimpse of nibbana within 6 months,

um

yeah, I mean, I was pretty naive when I first became a monk. I was planning on getting jhana within the first 6 months.

And I didn't fully realize how I'm just naturally not a good meditator and it took years and years and years before I could really get into deep meditative states.

And uh

yeah, so I'm not exactly sure what Ajahn Chah was referring to when he I what his definition of a sotapanna would be.

Um

but like a true little sotapanna, maybe, but like a real technical

ariya,

I'm not so sure.

So, we'll just move on to uh Libra Lamb's third and last question here. And I do commend everybody for having

limited their questions to three, which does seem to be working fairly well, cuz we've just got uh like a moderate manageable number of questions this time.

So, anyways, Libra Lamb says, "Could we talk about a glimpse of nibbana as something that would only apply to the spirit of a born-again Buddhist in the sense that it is a high and subtle attainment." And he's got born-again Buddhist in quotes.

And no, I don't I don't think that Theravada Buddhism has a monopoly on glimpses of nibbana.

I think that

Hindus, like can name Kalu Rinpoche back
there, very likely have had glimpses of
nibbana. I think possibly even some
Christian contemplatives, like Saint
John of the Cross,
may have had glimpses of nibbana. Who
knows? Sufis,
who knows?
You know, it could even be like Stone
Age shamans in prehistoric times had
glimpses of nibbana just because they
were ripe for it.
a result of deliberate practice. I mean,
some people have a near-death experience
that is just transcendent, you know, it
just has this awakening effect on them.
Like John Wren Lewis, for example, or

again, Eckhart Tolle had a similar

situation.

So,

uh yeah, I I would say a glimpse of

nibbana is definitely a high and subtle

attainment,

but I I think that only a Buddhist

would be able to attain that.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question. This is from Toronto Nat.

And Toronto Nat says, "How should a

young man who doesn't want to take

monastic vows go about finding a decent

wife?"

Well,

I'd say you got like two main options.

One is I mean, if you want like a a woman of the same race as you or the same culture as you, find as conservative of a girl as you can. You know, one who was brought up by, you know,
conservative parents, has conservative values, doesn't necessarily keep her hair in braids, but still
a woman that doesn't mess around. You know, she's just not been into the promiscuous sex thing, even though it's almost universal, it seems.
You know, maybe she's a church-going Christian girl. Maybe she's Amish or something. Maybe she's a immigrant from Eastern Europe.

But, yeah, like body count definitely is a consideration for a guy. Like, if a woman's well up into double digits already,

you know, maybe she's only in her early 20s and is already well up into double digits, then it doesn't necessarily mean that she's got a bad personality or that she's a bad person, but it does suggest that just moving from man to man has become habitual.

And so, you're going to be a man that she's just going to move on to her next one after you just through force of habit at that point.

And it may be that there's some [__]

women out there who feel like they've
just been slut-shamed, but as a general
rule,
[__] women don't watch these videos,
so I think we're okay.
Or your other option would be to get
some
nice Southeast Asian Buddhist girl.
So, I mean, there's a lot of
30-year-old very sweet, very attractive
old maid school teachers in Burma
that would be thrilled to hook
themselves an American or Western man
cuz Western men just automatically have
higher status than Burmese men in the
eyes of Burmese women, it seems. Or at
least in a lot of the eyes of a lot of

Burmese women. You know, it's just
America is considered to be the promised
land. It's It's almost It's like
paradise on Earth. Um maybe not so much
now that we have the the Biden
administration, but um back when I was
in Burma, it's
It's like
a lot of Burmese people just think that
America is like
like a heaven realm. Everyone is
beautiful and rich and happy. And if you
try to explain to them that that's not
necessarily the case, they might be very
skeptical of of that. They might just
persist in believing it even though

somebody who actually lived there for

for many years is telling them

otherwise.

So, yeah, that would be my two main

guesses. You know, find yourself just a

very conservative girl. You know, stay

away from dating apps. Don't pick up

chicks in bars. Don't try to meet the

right girl in at a at a club or

something.

Um

but I mean, find a girl with similar

interests who has conservative values

and is going to have conservative moral

values

because if she doesn't have conservative

moral values, then

she might not be your woman for very

long just because

loyalty is out the window, it seems.

So,

I guess I guess that would be it. Find a

conservative white girl or a

conservative non-white girl.

At least conservative in their morality

regardless of their beliefs about

economics.

So, I'll just move on to Toronto now.

That's next question, which is, are

there any restrictions in the Sutta's

tradition or other sources that prohibit

race mixing?

So, is he prohibited from from hooking

up with the sweet 30-year-old old maid
school teacher in Burma?
And I don't think so. I'm Theravada
Buddhism is
surprisingly non-racist. I mean, there
was a caste system in India, which the
Buddha poked fun at a lot of the time.
You know, he pointed out that a person's
worth as a person depends on their own
personal characteristics,
rather than who their parents were, what
lineage they belong to, or what color
their skin is. So, he was teaching
similar things to what Dr. Martin Luther
King Jr. was saying, where a person
should be judged by their character, and
not by the color of their skin.

And the Sangha especially was non-racial
and non-classist
because the Sangha, you know, the the
ordained brotherhood of monks was
compared to the ocean. All these
different rivers flow in from different
directions, you know, different classes,
different ethnicities, and so forth, and
they all just blend together into one
ocean. And that's the way the Sangha was
with regard to different classes and
ethnicities, and so forth.
So, and I don't think that I
I'm unaware of there being any
prohibition on race mixing anywhere in
the Pali texts.

So,

I'll just move on to the next question here. This is WhiteAshPiper.

And WhiteAshPiper says, I was wondering in your 30 years as a Buddhist monk, if you'd ever seen another monk lay down and die.

I seen this on a YouTube video, where this monk with a handful of fellow monks walked into this room lit lied down to die. He looked healthy, certainly not old. There was no English sub subtitles. Um so, other than being an observer in the dark, not much more info than he just died and was carried away. Well, I did see one Buddhist monk lie down and die, but he was bitten by a cobra.

So, I guess that one doesn't count.
Um I have read, like in Zen literature,
about these Chinese masters back in
during the the heyday of Chinese Zen or
Chan Buddhism, where they would know in
advance when they were going to die.
They actually send out invitations.
Everyone would come, they'd give one
last sermon, and they'd lie down and
die.
So, maybe they knew they had some kind
of terminal illness that wasn't apparent
to other people, or maybe they just had
like this psychic,
you know, prognosticative ability to see
when they were going to die.

One way or the other.

So,

yeah, I've never heard about that in

Theravada, although I assume it has

happened. But I have read a number of

cases of that with regard to Zen masters

in in China long ago.

So, I guess it does happen, even though

it's not a traditional Theravada

Buddhist thing.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question. This is from [__] Al Haram.

And [__] Al Haram says, "I have been

struggling to grasp the second precept

in the context of modern technology.

Evidently, one should abstain from

robbing or stealing, but what about

pirating?

Often I have framed books I have found books online that are not in the public domain, and it may be assumed those books are not uploaded willingly by the author himself. Downloading them doesn't feel like outright stealing, but it does create some unease. What are your thoughts on this matter? My apologies if this has been answered already in one of your one of the Q&A's. Bless you. Yeah, actually I did answer this just a few Q&A's ago.

But may as well answer it again since uh that's this one kind of advantage of doing these Q&A's is that

the questions that people really ask the

most get answered the most

so to so to speak.

So, yeah, I was in I when I was asked

this before

I was saying I mean so long as it's not

illegal, I think you're doing okay. And

then I got some comments in below the

video saying that it's really not

illegal. I mean you can't you can't be

jailed for it. Somebody might try to sue

you if you're like

trying to especially if you're like

downloading pirating something and then

trying to sell it for for profit.

But um

you know, it does happen all the time. I

mean something similar happens at

libraries where you can just go and read

a book for free even though you didn't

pay for it. So the

the the author of the book, he gets the

the royalties at least

for the selling the book getting getting

sold to the library. But then 50 people

might read the same book and

then he's sort of

in a way he's kind of diddled out of the

uh

the royalties for that.

But I mean if you have any doubts at

all, you want to be pure, you know, you

want to be a a moral purist. If you've

got any doubts, then just don't do it.
But if you're not quite so pure and
you're more of a pragmatist, then like
with regard to stealing for a monk, I
mean it has to be something I mean if
he's going to be excommunicated for
stealing or even commit an offense for
stealing, then
it has to be something that he could be
arrested for. It has to be really ille-
illegal.
So, I mean that would be
really the line.
is is it illegal?
So, I mean again, I'm no authority on
copyright law, anything like that.
But, I'm sure you could if you really

wanted to know the answer, you could

look into it.

And uh

But, again, if there's any doubt at all,

if you're not sure, and you want to be

pure,

then just avoid avoid it.

Avoid the situation that is that you

consider to be doubtful.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question here. This is from Hurdy Gurdy

Man.

And Hurdy Gurdy Man says,

"Could karma be described as a momentum

transcending conventional cause and

effect? This means that your past,

present, and future changes as one following your karma. Your karma moves you sideways through the infinite numbers of existences at an infinite rate."

Um

Karma You see, could it be described as a momentum transcending conventional cause and effect? Well, if conventional cause and effect is like materialistic, then I guess it could transcend that.

But,

I

I don't think your present changes. I don't think the present can change because, you know, it's right here, right now. And if it changes, it's I

mean, it's you've got moved to a different moment, and it's not now anymore.

So, now doesn't change. The future doesn't really change because it hasn't happened yet.

The past I mean, according to Theravada, the past can't change either, although um I think it could change if your perception of it changes in a sense. Because it's not ultimately real anyway. So, if your perception of it changes, in a way that could change your past.

So, I mean, I've I've considered that with regard to my father. When he when he started getting really old, like in

his early 80s, some of the stories that
he'd been telling since I was a kid
started changing.
And I was
it was kind of a weird thing.
And so, I mean,
one of my theories about that is maybe
he was just becoming kind of loosened
from the standard route through his
karma that he had taken and is
remembering some alternate past.
Either that or, you know, it's just his
memory was failing.
But usually, it's the short-term memory
that fails rather than the long-term
memory. I mean, he could still recite
quotes from Shakespeare that he learned

in in school when he was a kid

when he was in his 80s.

So,

can karma be described as a momentum

transcending conventional cause and

effect?

I see karma, or just our path through

the universe, is sort of like an

imaginary path through like an infinite

maze of like imaginary events,

which is

kind of a surreal way of describing our

our situation in the world.

But, you know, it's infinite

possibilities in this universe,

and we are just sort of

tracing an imaginary path through these

infinite possibilities.

And uh

I guess some possibilities are that

the past can change just and the future

can change, but

it's hard to say that your future can

change when you haven't got there yet.

You know, it's just you just decided

upon a different future,

but it's not that the future changed,

it's just that your path and your

destination changed.

So,

yeah, it's it's it's hard to dis- talk

about this is for the same reason as the

other one that I was talking about a

little while ago, cuz you're dealing
with two different levels of reality
simultaneously.
And that's that's always kind of
confusing. It's hard for the mind to
grasp it, at least a human mind.
So,
um I mean, you could it could be
described that way, but I mean, I would
use different way of describing it just
because my mind works differently. So,
I'll just move on to Hurdy Gurdy Man's
next question here, which is
"Would this also mean that every being
exists in a state of pseudo solipsism?"
"While other beings exist as much or as

little as you do, you are the only consistent perspective. Every other being you see is really a stop motion effect of the many versions of this being passing you by." And actually, the the Yogacara Buddhists do believe in this kind of a pseudo solipsism. And solipsism means that you are the only reality, and that the entire world around you is just a figment of your imagination.

And yeah, Yogacara Buddhism, which is one of the two main philosophical branches of Mahayana, um

yeah, they they say that, you know, your your karma is I mean, you're generating that. There's no physical matter, and so

you it's just like a mind-made virtual reality that you're living in. But as it turns out, the universe is infinite, as I've already been mentioning. It contains infinite possibilities. So, no matter what reality you choose, there's going to be plenty of other beings inhabiting that same like interpretation of reality sufficiently that you seem to be able to interact with each other.

That's more Yogacara than Theravada, though.

So,

also, Schopenhauer talked about that.

Just the weird I mean, he didn't

consider it to be like pseudo solipsism
so much as he considered it just to be
this inexplicable miracle that
everybody's karma just dovetails
perfectly. That the one person that you
want to punch in the nose is the one
person who has the karma to be punched
in the nose by you.
That everything is just perfectly
meshing. Everybody's karma just fits
perfectly.
And he considered just to be this
like essentially a miracle.
But
if you consider that the universe is
infinite with an infinite number of
possibilities, then no matter what route

you take, there's going to be a world

there that that you fit into perfectly.

So

in a way, yeah, it is a state of

pseudo-solipsism, I would guess. I would

say.

So I think I'll just move on to the next

question here. I'm not so sure that I'm

answering all these questions very well.

And uh

I've already answered them once before,

which uh is a further strike against my

uh

my reputation for being omniscient.

So the next question is from Pranav.

And Pranav says, "What's your opinion on

spirituality in modern times versus

Buddhist time?"

Well, yeah, there's definitely

differences in modern spirituality

versus the Buddhist spirituality. I

mean, spirituality in itself is the

same. I mean, Dharma

remains the same. It's just like a a

timeless truth.

But socially

you know, the way people were dealing

with spirituality was very different in

the Buddhist time than now. In the

Buddhist time, I mean, it was a time of

spiritual ferment.

You know, as people were very much uh

concerned with spirituality, much more

so than now. I mean, nowadays the
mainstream is this
spiritually bankrupt consumerism
or hedonism.
So in the Buddhist time, there was that
I mean, there was people who believed in
their
they believed in Dharma of some sort so
unquestioningly that they were literally
torturing themselves to death for the
sake of liberation.
And yesterday on the first version of
this Q&A that didn't record,
I I mentioned there's a story in the
Dhammapada commentary about a man who
wants to join the Ajivikas.

And the Ajivikas were a spiritual
movement in the Buddha's time that has
now been extinct for centuries.
But it was
there were probably more Ajivikas than
Buddhists, you know, in the first few
decades of Buddhism at least.
And uh so this guy wants to join the
Ajivikas and they were strict ascetics.
And so he goes there, says he wants to
join up. And so two of the biggest
Ajivikas, they hold him down and they
put two planks crosswise over his chest
and sit on those to hold him down onto
his back. Well, a third Ajivika takes a
special kind of comb that grips the hair
and just ripped the hair off his head

and off of his face.

And that would probably was extremely unpleasant, but he hadn't even joined yet. That was just to get him ready to join.

And that kind of extreme faith-driven self-torture or just that kind of faith, like it was fairly common like in medieval Europe, you know, when when Western and Central Europe were, you know, universally Catholic.

You know, everybody just believes it. Just the same way they would believe that if you stick your hand in a little fire, it will burn you.

And that is very rare nowadays,

especially in the West. The West is so eclectic. We're in the information age. You can get any amount of information on on the internet. And so people are more eclectic, you know, they're more

uh

sort of lukewarm, eclectic and lukewarm. So we're living in an age of spiritual mediocrity at best. Whereas in the Buddha's time, in a way it was just the zenith of human spiritual evolution, it seems to me. I mean, there were still psychopathic kings and bandits living in forests and, you know, just gruesome public executions and so forth. But at the same time, you had real just advanced sages and saints walking the

earth.

That

is not nearly so obvious today.

Now, it's it's much more mediocrity.

There's fewer saints and also fewer

psychopaths.

Although it may be that the number of

psychopaths is gradually increasing

lately.

So,

what else was I going to say about this?

Did I say anything yesterday that I

forgot to say today?

What's your opinion on spirituality in

modern times versus Buddha time? Yeah,

it's it's definitely more eclectic and

and less faith-oriented

and just more materialistic nowadays and

just more lukewarm.

Very lukewarm.

So, I think I'll just move on to the

next question. This is from Ketchup.

And Ketchup says, can I have a breath

meditation technique?

And it's hard to give meditation

techniques to somebody that I've never

met. I really don't know where they're

at because all sizes do not fit all. And

what is it? One size does not fit all.

That's what I That's what I meant to

say.

One size does not fit all. So, I mean,

if you've got a talent or you've got

experience, you might take a more
advanced meditation technique than
someone who's just a a rank beginner.
But I mean, the standard breath
meditation technique is you sit
cross-legged with your back straight
and you focus your attention on the area
around your nostrils where you can feel
the air going in and out.
And that you observe the sensation of
touch at the nostrils
and generally um the beginning stages
you use a label which is like breathing
in, breathing out, breathing in,
breathing out. But mainly the focus of
the attention is just the the sensation

of the wind touching the area around your nostrils.

And if you get more advanced and you can keep your attention focused on the sensation of touch around the nostrils without having to put a label on it. You know, your mind becomes um more quiet, doesn't need to think so much, so you can do away with the labels. If you can continue to keep your mind focused on the touch sensation,

um that's better because at least according to Theravada Buddhism vedana or the sensation of touch is ultimately real, whereas breathing in, breathing out is not ultimately real. That's just a a concept.

So,

it brings you closer to reality just to be observing the sensation of touch as the air goes in and out of your nostrils. Don't try to follow it in, no no sweeping like the Goenka method does um or some some even some uh other orthodox Theravada Buddhist teachers will say you're supposed to follow the air into your body and and even follow it out to the tips of your fingers and toes which isn't the way your respiratory system works.

So, I mean you're just dealing with imagination at that point. But the sensation of touch here, you're closer

to reality.

And uh I mean for people that can't even do that, you know, their mind is still just too restless. You got the monkey mind just jumping around, then you may have to actually count breaths.

Which is the way I was taught how to do it and it's, you know, it's it's grinding away at the ABCs. But uh if that's what you need to do, then that's what you need to do. Where you count your breaths, you just, you know, breathing in, breathing out one, breathing in, breathing out two, breathing in, breathing out three, Go up to five, then go back to one, and go up to six, then back to one, and up to

seven, back to one, up to eight, back to one, up to nine, back to one, up to 10, and then back to one, and then up to five again, and you just keep going five through 10, five through 10. And if you lose count, that of course means your mind wandered away, and you're thinking about what you want to eat for dinner or something.

So, it depends on how good of a meditator you are to determine what kind of meditation technique you should practice, because if you've got a hyperactive mind that doesn't want to settle down, you're not good at samadhi yet, then you need kind

of a busy kind of meditation with lots
of labeling to give your mind something
to do to keep it out of trouble. Because
if you try to do some really attenuated,
quiet kind of meditation with a
hyperactive mind,
is your mind is just going to be
wandering all over the place. It's won't
have enough to keep it occupied.
On the other hand,
if you don't need to label things
anymore, that you can keep your mind
focused on the object,
the primary object of meditation, then
you're better off just not labeling. The
quieter your mind becomes, the quieter
the meditation method that you follow

should become.

But again, I don't know Catch Up here, so I can't really say exactly where he is at in his meditation skills.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from You Know I'm With It.

And You Know I'm With It says, "I feel like most people say it's not possible to be a monk in the West. I think they just don't know the ins and outs of living in public lands, or as a bum in the Southwest or Northwest. Aside from the West being completely devoid of alms mendicancy, there are still good people here. Moving to another country

with sun-scorched pillaged forests just because there are faith followers of some ancient convention who will feed me seems like I'd be grasping at the ideal of the East being more suitable for the life of a mendicant or contemplative. I think that's a hack. I why take my defiled mind to some [__] up country when we have plenty of wilderness within close proximity to towns with good people here in the US who speak English. Maybe there's not malaria, but there's still grizzlies, lions, rattlesnakes, crocodiles, Marxists, etc. Now, I haven't seen many lions in America.

But anyway, I continue. I only mention

because a lot of monks seem to get a hard-on for how dangerous their ascetic practice is. What do you think? Why should one aspiring to live as a forest-dwelling mendicant leave the West behind?

Well, I mean, for starters here he said, "Why should I

take my defiled mind to some [__] All

All countries are [__] up."

I mean, in certain ways Burma is [__] up. It's, you know, it's under essentially a military dictatorship, but in some ways they're much better off than we are here.

And America is is equally [__] up if

not more [__] up just in different

ways.

So, um there's two main reasons why it

does make sense for someone who does

renounce the world like someone is

ordained as a Theravada Buddhist monk,

why it makes sense to spend some time in

Southeast Asia or South Asia.

One is that the rules of monastic

discipline are designed for India.

And India doesn't get very cold. I mean,

in in temperate zone, it gets down to

lethal temperatures in the wintertime.

And so, I mean, you might want to just

migrate to Florida or Southern

California every winter.

But, um

yeah, other than that, you would you would have to start breaking rules, which if you're a strict monk, you may not want to do.

But, more important than that, there's also

um like living in Burma, it was a blessing for me because the flora and fauna are pretty similar to the Ganges Valley. The Irrawaddy Valley and the Ganges Valley have almost the same flora and fauna naturally.

You're living in a Buddhist culture where you can live the way monks lived pretty much in the Buddhist time. Like out in the countryside of Burma,

um in a lot of respects, it's very similar to the way people were living in the Buddhist time in the Ganges Valley. I mean, they they've got motor scooters and radios and cell phones and rubber flip flops nowadays.

But, still, you've got the girl the teenage girl with the clay pot balanced at her head on her head going to the well or the river to fetch water for the house. You've got the guy taking his team of bullocks out to plow the fields. And they still have a devout Buddhist attitude

that you can fit into more easily. You can get support more easily. There are monks that go for alms round in the west

like some Ajahn Chah monks. They they seem to uh be doing fine living on alms food.

But, um

it's not nearly as as simple and they do have to break rules with regard to the amount of clothing they wear and so forth.

So, any monk any Theravada Buddhist monk or western monk

or someone who wants to become a Theravada Buddhist monk, yeah, I would strongly recommend they spend at least 5 years

in a Buddhist country like Burma or Thailand or Sri Lanka.

Uh and then, you know, after they get
their seniority and then can live
without a teacher and have learned what
they need to learn and then they can
come back to the West.
But the West is a graveyard for Western
monks. It's just
it's much more difficult to be a monk in
the West, partly because you do not have
cultural support for it.
And also just the whole environment is
not
uh
you know, it's not really in harmony
with the rules of monastic discipline
anymore.
So, I would still

say that uh

you know, anyone who wants to become a

wants to be a Theravada Buddhist monk

should spend at least a few years

in Burma or Thailand or Sri Lanka just

so they can get a taste for what it's

like to live the way monks lived in the

Buddha's time and it helps you to

understand a lot of stuff in the sutras

more easily because you're right there

in the middle of it instead of being in

some foreign country and foreign culture

trying to figure it out without personal

personal experience.

So,

that would be my answer to that. And so,

I'll just uh move on to you know I'm

with it second question here.

Which is, "Did you ever experience

heartbreak as a lad or were you the

heartbreaker?"

Well, when I was young, I had my heart

broken at least twice.

And also, I broke the heart of one girl.

And she broke my heart and I I broke

hers at on a different occasion. It It

was kind of mutual in that in that

particular relationship.

But uh

mainly as a kid,

um I mean, as a young person before I

became a monk,

um I always had this healthy distrust of

anything that would make big karma.
And that would include, you know,
settling down with a one mate. You know,
it's like when you settle down with the
one, you've pretty much excluded all
other options.
You know, you've limited yourself and
you kind of locked yourself into a
karmic path. And choosing a career was
another one, although you don't have
much choice with regard to that. You
just get a career chosen for you if you
don't choose one, cuz you have to do
something for a living. In the West,
it's the the curse of Adam.
You must earn our bread by the sweat of

our brow and all that.

Um so, anyways, it was like

I always had this

kind of ambivalent feeling. I mean, I

was fascinated by, you know, attractive

young women. You know, I couldn't help

but like them. You know, I'm a

red-blooded man. But at the same time,

there was also this sort of a spiritual

almost aversion, you know, almost almost

fear, where I generally didn't get close

to women very much.

Like when I was young, usually the women

I wound up having relationships with

were the ones that chased after me. And

the ones that chased after me were

generally the kind of women that would

chase after guys in general, like party girls essentially.

So, I really never got much to the point of breaking a girl's heart, cuz I didn't want to break anybody's heart. You know, I didn't want to hurt anybody. Like before I became a monk I like after I decided I was going to become a monk, you know, I I decided I wanted to be a monk around the age of 17. It took me 10 years to finally do it, but still I had this

this this plan, you know, it was like my aspiration to be ordained as a monk. And so, I didn't want to break anybody's heart. You know, I did Also, I didn't

want to just like pick up some chick at
a bar and have a one-night stand. So, I
was largely celibate most of the time
uh before I was a monk, just uh
just because of considerations of that.
And so,
um I did manage to break at least one
heart, but more more often I just sorely
disappointed girls who liked me and I
was just too stand-offish and didn't go
for it.
But it never got to the point of
heartbreak. It was just, you know, there
were some girls that were mooning over
me, you know, they were they were
disappointed that I never asked them
out, that sort of thing.

But I did have my heart broken a couple times.

So I guess I answered that question and so I'm just going to move on to the next one. This is from COVaxinCpadZidana.

And COVaxinCpadZidana

says, and before I say what he says, I noticed that I keep red lining on the mic thing cuz I'm using like a new video recorder and I may have to adjust the the audio settings. Yeah, I think it's turned up to full blast right now.

So

I hope that uh

there's not too much distortion or anything.

Well, I'll I'll work on this. I'm I'm
not very good at uh
electronic stuff or computer stuff. But
uh
I trust that within 6 months I'll have
figured out at least 1/3 of all the the
bells and whistles on this this new
video recording software.
Anyway, it's getting back to
COVaxinCpadZidana.
He says, "Can you please do more
readings of suttas that have teachings
that would be considered unorthodox in
Theravada?"
Well, I've already done most of my
favorites, although um I still have most
of the Atika Wagga that I could do

readings of with, you know, commentary

after that.

And I would guess at least half of the

Atika Wagga, half of the suttas in the

Atika Wagga

would be considered unorthodox

based on a literal reading of them.

So yeah, I can do that. It's really not

that difficult. It's just that uh

mainly I've been working and then doing

the Q&A's on the weekends and so um

fitting in more of these, I guess I'm

going to be going on vacation in Ohio,

um, next week, which is going to be at

least a week. So, I'll probably have

more more of a flexible schedule then.

Maybe I can get one in then.

So,

yeah, I mean, don't be surprised if if I

do at least,

um, a few more Atthakavagga readings.

And so, I'll probably do more in my

studies in Archaic Buddhism series,

which I think is only got like four

four videos so far.

But, uh, yeah, most of my favorite

examples

have already been

have already been read, except for like

the Atthakavagga. There's a few more I

could I could include, I suppose.

So, I'll just move on to Seal of Action

Sipa Zena's next question,

which is

It says in Majjhima Nikaya 116, "500 Pacceka Buddhas lived on Mount Isigili for a long time. Were there any Pacceka Buddhas when the Buddha attained enlightenment, since they could still be alive before him and just don't teach? What would have happened if one of these Pacceka Buddhas visited the Buddha? Also, it says in the sutta that once the Pacceka Buddha

Pacceka Buddhas entered the mountain, they were never seen again. But, since the Buddha said they lived there for a long time, how did they survive for so long without alms food? I know the

commentary says the mountains opened up like a garage door, and that's why they were never seen, but they still went out for alms food. But, this explanation doesn't make much sense and contradicts the part about them being never seen again. So, maybe you had a better idea." Well, for those of you who are unfamiliar with Pali technical terms, a Pacceka Buddha is a kind of fully enlightened Buddha who nevertheless remains a hermit and doesn't teach. And it's just the way it is that almost by definition they exist only in times when there is no Dharma in the world. So, in between Buddhisms, you know, you got a Buddha who starts the

the wheel of Dharma rolling again, and then you've got like this dispensation of of Buddhism that survives, and then it finally dies out, and then before the next Buddha rediscovers
Dharma and gets the wheel rolling again by starting a new and a new rendition of Buddhism, so to speak, then it's in the the spaces in between that you get Pacceka Buddhas. And it's practically by definition, and there's all the sort of stuff
in uh in like Buddhist ancient Indian philosophy or ancient Indian cosmology in general, where there's just things that's just the way it is. They don't

explain why that's the way it is, why it has to be that way. It just is. Like there's 17 mind moments per for every moment of matter. Why? That's just the way it is. Or every Buddha
has to go through this this series of events in his life, you know, he's got to renounce the world and and take a certain vehicle. There's like four options, and then he has to do the years of of severe austerities, and then he's got to sit under a Bodhi tree. He has to become enlightened sitting under a tree. And why is this?
Just because. That's just like this universal cosmic law that never really gets explained.

Science is kind of this way, too. You know, the the charge of the electron is is such and such. Why?

They don't know. It's just the way it is.

And that's that's the way Pacceka Buddhas are. And it's it's more in a way, it's kind of explaining how there could have been enlightened beings before the time of the Buddha.

You know, it's

I consider it to be more mythology than fact, personally.

So, when we get to the the part about the all the Pacceka Buddhas living in Isigili,

which Isigili literally means something Rishi swallower. You know, it's a cave where it was just well-known. It was near the city of Rajagaha, and it was just well-known that lots of sages had lived in this cave. And so, it became known as the sage swallower or the Rishi swallower.

And it says,

uh "To the end of the mountain, they were never seen again."

Um well, I mean, there's various ways of explaining. I think it's it's it's all pretty much mythology. So, it's academic.

Wow, I I bit my tongue when I was saying that.

It's all academic.

But, um

I mean, it may be that through their psychic powers, they just didn't need to eat very much.

Or, it could be that the Devas were feeding them. There's one scene It could have even been in the the Mahasihanada Sutta that I mentioned earlier where the Buddha was emaciating himself and starving himself so severely that some of the Devas were getting concerned, and they were thinking about infusing like celestial mana into his body through psychic means just to keep him alive.

And who knows? Maybe the Pacceka Buddhas

were getting a

a main line of celestial mana from the

Devas or something.

But, I don't think it really matters

because, I mean, it's it's essentially

mythology.

At least in my opinion. I'm sure there's

devout Theravadans that would take issue

with that.

So, then I guess they would have to come

up with their own explanations for how

these Pacceka Buddhas could live sealed

up in a mountain for

you know, decades at the very least um

without having to

go out and collect food.

But, just almost by definition, like

I've already said, they could not exist at the same time as the Buddha. So, what would what would they talk about or if what would happen if a Pacceka Buddha met the Buddha? I have no idea.

Probably the Pacceka Buddha would just sort of, you know, wave or you know, nod and just continue on his way.

So, I'll just move on to Seevalaksh and Seepadzeedana's next question here.

Which is, how long did it take you to be able to get into a lotus pose comfortably to sit for hours or were you always flexible enough?

Well, the longest I ever sat in the lotus position was maybe a little over 2

hours.

Because as a general rule, it would start getting painful after about 1 hour.

I'm not I'm not very flexible. My father was less flexible than me. He couldn't even squat down on his heels.

So,

let's see, how long did it take me to be able to get into a lotus pose to sit comfortably, not for for hours, but at least for 1 hour, like a meditation session. It took me

I don't know, maybe 4 or 5 months. You like you start sitting in the easy position, like the also known as the Burmese position where you got both legs

just kind of and I'm trying to do this,
both legs just kind of flat on the
floor, not crossed over each other. And
when you can sit for a full hour, a full
meditation session, however long that
is, in relative comfort, then you move
up to like the quarter lotus or the half
lotus. Let's see, half lotus
I'm trying to do this in reverse order
from
Okay.
I don't know. Half lotus, you've got one
one foot on top of one thigh and the
other the other one isn't. And so,
I mean then you you switch to that and
then when you can sit in the quarter

lotus or the half lotus for a full

meditation session without undue pain

then you you move up to the full lotus.

So I mean it didn't take very long. I

was in my late 20s so I was more

flexible than I am now.

Um

yeah you just gradually work your way

into it and I was meditating a lot

several hours a day at the time so I got

lots of practice at it.

I'm not particularly flexible.

So I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from Keep

Devineer.

And Keep Devineer says, "Does Anatta

mean that you have to constantly look at

your mind and body from a third-person perspective? If so, that sounds pretty scary."

Well Anatta doesn't mean that you have to constantly look at your mind and body from a third-person perspective although mindfulness pretty much requires that.

And when you're being mindful you're practicing Satipatthana or

um just

mindfulness in general.

Um

I mean you are are like observing everything that comes up that objectively. So if if even if it's a mental state, let's say it's fear, you

don't think I'm afraid, you just say you
think fear is arising. You observe the
fear. That's if you're still at the
stage of labeling things. You would say,
you know, fear or fear is arising.
Um you know, it's not I'm afraid.
And you know, if that may sound scary
but then if you're just
you know, you're being consistent then
you observe the being scared. You
observe the fear. Fear is arising.
So
yeah it's kind of a
an implication of Anatta. Anatta means
no self by the way. Just for those of
you who are unfamiliar with the terms.
Anatta means no self In Buddhism, there

not only is not an eternal soul, but there isn't even an ultimately real individuality.

So,

yeah, I mean, that's one of the implications of anatta, I guess. That's why in mindfulness you observe everything objectively.

Ev- anything that is observable, you know, you you just remain detached from it. It isn't you. I mean, that's like an implication of anatta. Anything that you can observe is not you.

So, you observe it like from a third-person perspective, I guess, although there is no third person,

because there's no person.

So,

I guess I answered that. I'll just move

on to keep the money as next question.

What is the difference between Buddha

nature and the Hindu concept of Atman?

Yeah, I'd say that they're very similar.

They're Buddha nature is a Mahayana's

term. It's really not a Theravada

Buddhist term, but Buddha nature is sort

of like the

the foundational

capacity or potential for full

enlightenment that everybody has within

them.

And the Atman, like in the Upanishads,

is

is is God. Is Brahman. And really, the Buddha nature is just like is is similar to the Atman in that, you know, the Atman is just that aspect of God that is in in you. Since I mean, God is everywhere, God is also inside you. So, that aspect of God that is inside you is your Atman, which is the same as the God that is not inside you. It's just all God.

And the Buddha nature is kind of like that. It'd be like uh the one mind that I mentioned uh earlier was that the uh Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation was referring to, or the Dharmakaya. You know, the Dharma body of the Buddha.

Is is just sort of like this infinite formless consciousness that pervades the universe. And you could argue that your Buddha nature is, you know, that aspect of the Dharmakaya that is inside you.

So, they would be very similar and it wouldn't be too surprising because Vedanta and Mahayana Buddhism, they they interacted a lot, they debated a lot, they borrowed ideas from each other. And so, yeah, there's there's a lot of similarity between the two, a lot of overlap.

So, yeah, Buddha nature in Mahayana Buddhism would be fairly similar depending on who you're talking to, I guess. The different

philosophers might have different explanations.

But, it does seem fairly similar to the Buddha the Hindu concept of the Atman or the true self.

Except Buddha nature or the the Mahayana Buddhists wouldn't refer to it as the true self.

So, I'll just move on to Keep the videos next question.

Which is, if a man behaves like a woman, he can't be ordained, right? But, what if a man is gay but behaves like a man?

Well, if a man behaves like a woman, he can't be ordained. Well, it depends on how he behaves like a woman. Like if he

just talks with a lisp, you know, like
the lilting kind of very gay voice that
some gay men have, you know, he kind of
has like a his arm his wrist is kind of
lacking in in
stiffness, let's say. I mean, that
wouldn't disqualify a guy if he just had
some effeminate features but still was
like heterosexual.
Um yeah, that wouldn't disqualify him.
Some monks might kind of be hesitant to
ordain him, but still,
um he wouldn't be disqualified. But, and
then I guess the question here mainly
is, what if a man is gay but behaves
like a man? Well, I mean, having sex
with a man is is not behaving like a man

from the point of view of ancient Indian
culture.
So, if you're having sex with other men,
that would imply that you're not fully
male because to some degree you're
behaving like a woman by wanting to have
sex with men rather than with women.
So,
if a man is gay but behaves like a man,
that would imply, at least from an
ancient Indian
context or my understanding of same,
that he's not having sex with men. He's
a latent homosexual, in which case
um it wouldn't disqualify him. I There
There's lots of latent homosexual monks

in the Sangha in Burma. In fact, just
about every
comfortable meditation center in a town
or city has got like a an assistant
Sayadaw who is pretty obviously a latent
homosexual.
And I think that's largely cultural,
just as it's been cultural in Catholic
countries that you have a latent
homosexual man who
really is not attracted to women,
doesn't want to get married, and wants a
socially acceptable way of not getting
married to a woman. He can just renounce
the world and become celibate.
And uh fortunately for Theravada
Buddhism, there's much less scandal

with regard to homosexual monks or like

molesting boys and so forth or molesting

each other for that matter.

Um

Like in in Catholicism, that's just like

a

I mean, it's like a stereotype now. It's

just It's apparently running rampant.

But um fortunately in Theravada, it's

not that bad, partly because Theravada

or at least Burma is just a much more

traditionalist conservative culture.

They take their religion more seriously,

and uh

un- unlike the West,

even even the Catholic West.

So, I hope I answered that question.
It's it's kind of a contentious issue
that, you know, what is it exactly that
causes a man from being fully a man that
that thereby disqualifies him from being
ordained because a man or a woman that
wants to be ordained as a monk or a nun
must be fully male or fully female. They
can't be somewhere in between.
And apparently, even a bisexual would be
sufficiently in between as to be
disqualified from being ordained, if you
can believe the ancient texts.
So,
if a man is gay but doesn't have sex
with other men, you know, he's he's a
latent, then that presumably would not

disqualify him. It certainly hasn't in

Burma.

Cuz there's lots of those.

But, I mean, once you're ordained, if

you have sex with anybody, you're

excommunicated for life.

So,

that that takes care of itself except

for in cases where they're doing it

secretly, which may be most cases.

And uh

I've heard of some of that. I've

Apparently, it's more of a problem in

Thailand than in Burma.

Thailand, the Thais are more sensual,

more sexually oriented than the Burmese.

Um based on my experience with with both cultures.

So, I guess I'll just move on to the next question here. This is from Ohm.

And Ohm says, "Are you surprised that after that last video with Brian Roo, some Christians are trying to convert you very much in comments?"

And yeah, I did a a video recently with Brian Roo about the limitations of Christianity. And

Brian, especially, was wanting to

I mean, he he had this idea that

um I mean, Christianity cannot lead you to enlightenment. You're not going to make much spiritual progress.

Uh, but I mean, I was a little more

open-minded on the subject. I do think that it's possible for a Christian to become enlightened if they've got a sufficient, you know, root of merit, you know, they've got they're ripe for enlightenment. I think Saint John of the Cross may have been fully enlightened. But, um, if if a Christian does become enlightened, it would be pretty much as much in spite of Christianity as because of it, because there's all these limiting ideas in Christianity that kind of hold you down like, you know, nobody is worthy of heaven that it's or heaven is the highest you can get. Nobody is worthy of it. It's only the grace of God

that's going to get you there, that sort of thing.

Um, but anyway, in the comments, you had a number of, you know, small number of Christian people who were sticking up for Christianity. And, uh, you know, maybe out of compassion trying to tell us that, uh, you know, if if we don't accept Jesus Christ as our savior, we will not be saved, that sort of thing.

And

it doesn't really surprise me. It's it's it's just human nature that I mean, if if I'm watching,

um,

something about Buddhism and you've got people bashing Buddhism, I'll stick up

for Buddhism.

And it's pretty similar to Christians, you know, you got a devout Christian and we're criticizing Christianity, um, you know, to some degree, you know, talking about its limitations and so forth, saying how, you know, Paul of Tarsus kind of messed things up for Christians even at the same time that he made Christianity a world religion. He just kind of derailed it from the original teachings of Jesus, that sort of thing, and they don't like that. And so, they're kind of defending Christianity as, you know, divine teachings of God almighty and so

forth.

So, no, I wasn't surprised at all. It's just to to be expected.

So, I'll just move on to Ohm's next question, and this is the very last question, and I sincerely hope this is recording. I really do.

And Ohm's last question, and the very last question of this Q&A,

is as follows, "Apart from Sadducees in ancient Judaism, are you aware of any religion or cult which accepts death and doesn't believe in the afterlife? I myself can't find any."

Well, I mean, the Old Testament in general really like the Book of Ecclesiastes pretty much teaches when

you're dead, you're dead.

That uh there were a lot of Hebrews in Old Testament times that just did not believe in an afterlife, and what little afterlife there was, it was kind of like just I mean, you were there, but you were asleep. Sort of like uh

I think it's the

what it's it's the story where

uh King Saul goes to the Witch of Endor because he wants She's like a spirit medium, and you know, he wants to talk to Samuel, the prophet, who is already dead. And Samuel the prophet, when he comes through the Witch of Endor, when she's channeling him or whatever, you

know, he's saying, "Why did you wake me up?" You know, he was he was like sound asleep in this Sheol afterlife.

Um

and then like uh like I just said, a lot of the early Hebrews, not just the Sadducees, just did not believe in an afterlife, and Judaism is really a very this-worldly religious system.

But aside from that, like the Rigveda, I mean, I haven't read all of the Rigveda, but I've read a lot of hymns from the Rigveda. There doesn't seem to be any mention of an afterlife. You know, Rigveda also, early Vedism, was very this-worldly.

You know, it's like you're making fire

sacrifices to the gods in order to get
certain things in return.
You know, you want victory in battle and
many sons and many cattle, essentially.
And so, there's really not much talk
about
um an afterlife. You know, there may be
a heaven, that's where the gods live,
and uh it may be sort of like in
Greco-Roman paganism that some, you
know, magnanimous hero types might be
found worthy of ascending into the the
heaven realm and become one of the gods,
but um I really don't think that there's
a mention of what happens to normies. I
don't think it

I'm I'm not sure. I guess they did have,
you know, the early Vedic chieftains did
have those big elaborate burial mounds,
so maybe that was assuming that there's
going to be an afterlife,
but I'm not sure.
Um in more recently, you got like
Nisargadatta Maharaj, who denied that
there was any kind of afterlife. He just
said that after you die, your conscience
just blends back into Brahman.
Um
and I guess there are probably other
Hindus who who believe the same thing,
or or just spiritual teachers who say
there is no afterlife, that
reincarnation is a myth, and that you

just

re-merge into into the the the ground of

being or God or whatever.

Um so, I guess that could be an

afterlife as God,

but

I'll take a drink of milk while I think

about this.

One thing about Nisargadatta Maharaj,

though,

is he denied that there was any kind of

rebirth, you know, in heaven or hell or

as humans or anything,

but at the same time, he still agreed

with the first noble truth of Buddhism,

that to exist is to suffer.

So, I mean, if you're just going to essentially attain Nirvana at death, if everybody attains parinirvana at the moment of death, why not just commit suicide?

I I don't think he ever really addressed that issue, or at least it wasn't in the book that I read about Nisargadatta Maharaj.

So, I assume there have been um other religions that do not accept an afterlife.

But, um most of them do, even if it's just sort of like a a dark like like the Greeks, the ancient Greeks, they believed in Hades, and it was an

afterlife, but it was just sort of like
this gloomy, almost like a dream world,
which was not very uh I mean, they did
they weren't looking forward to going
there. They didn't have this idea that
uh if you're just a good person and love
your neighbor and all that, that you're
going to go to a good place after you
die, unless you're just really a hero,
you're like a demigod or something.
So,
yeah, I mean, some
some Hindus, I think, and just some of
the eclectic Western spiritualists,
also, I think, would deny an afterlife.
A lot of Western Buddhists, for that

matter, probably deny an afterlife cuz
they're so invested in like Western
materialism and scientific realism that
you know, an afterlife cannot be
demonstrated through scientific means,
and so, they just reject it along with
nirvana and
and lots of other fundamental teachings
of Buddhism.
So, yeah, I I I includes a lot of
Western Buddhists
among this among the number of people
who don't believe in an afterlife.
And uh that's it. I guess I answered
that question. I guess I answered these
questions. Sometimes, it's like I don't
really have this feeling of closure and

satisfaction after trying to answer a question that is difficult to answer. But, uh I did my best. And if you've got any questions, you are very welcome to ask in the comments below. And um feel free to check out the URL links, including the books for sale on Amazon and smash the like button and subscribe and also furthermore be happy. And I'm going to try and turn this off now. And then I go like this.

okay we are recording at least it says we're recording hello and welcome to question and answer number 76 I am your host poo basa and you probably didn't notice this at all but I've been sitting here for several minutes trying to get this new OSB studio video recording software to work because for some reason it would not connect my video camera to the software until I finally had to delete the camera and then undelete it again attach it again in order for it to work and then I started doing the Q&A and immediately somebody started texting me making these these loud booping noises and so this is this is already

like my third attempt at this in the
last 15 20 minutes but I think it's
working I think we're doing this and so
I should just uh answer questions but
first I have a little announcement to
make and that
is that I'm going to go on vacation and
so the
next the next Q&A may be delayed it may
not be as punctual as they have been
recently because my sweetheart and I are
going to Ohio to visit her mama and uh I
probably won't be back until the evening
of the day that I usually record these
so if I'm a little bit late next time or
even as as much as a week late don't be
surprised and then we can have like this

really nice 4H hour long Q&A two weeks
from now or something but anyways I got
questions here to answer I've got a
fairly lengthy list of questions and so
I should just uh get started answering
questions and the first one is from Fred
and Fred says can nibana be felt
considering there are no Aggregates left
would it be possible the conclusion
would be something has stopped no the
conclusion would be becoming has stopped
and I really need to wipe my glasses cuz
when you read becoming as something you
know that you're not reading it
correctly because you're not seeing it
correctly so I wipe my glasses so that

the the smears are slightly

rearranged and so the question is can I

be felt considering there are no

Aggregates left well that's that's not

necessarily true

would it be possible the conclusion

would be some be I almost said something

again becoming has stopped okay well

nibana can't be felt because nibana is

not a cause or an effect in any kind of

feeling would have to have a cause and

nibana would not cause feeling it would

not cause

anything so no niana can't be felt but

it is a mistake here to say that there

are no Aggregates left because an

enlightened being still has the five

Aggregates even though he's enlightened
and so I think maybe Fred here is
talking about Pari nibana like nibana
after the enlightened being has
died but uh then I mean still wouldn't
be felt so I guess the the short answer
to can nibana be felt would be
no it just it's just off the scale see
feeling is here in samsara nibana is off
the scale of samsara it's just not part
of Sam Sor which is kind of the next
question here Fred's second question is
is niana amongst the
Aggregates but um I guess he has this
other question that I kept misreading
the conclusion would be becoming has

stopped because there's a question mark
at the end of it and uh yeah becoming
has stopped in fact becoming or bat can
just be a synonym for a Karma and so
karma has all also stop especially after
um the enlightened being has died so
anyways let's just move on to Fred's
second question here is nibana amongst
the Aggregates and I mean obviously it's
it's off the scale it's not one of the
five Aggregates there is no aggregate of
nibana so I assume the meaning here is
he's kind of going with like the mahayan
idea that nibana and samsara or Nirvana
and samsara are in a sense the same you
know it's like Nirvana is like the
Ultimate Reality upon which the

conditional virtual reality of samsara is based in which case Nirvana would be sort of like Brahman or the spirit of God that just pervades the entire universe and is too real for us virtual realities to experience um under normal circumstances so I mean if you want to consider nibana to be Ultimate Reality and then you would have to say that I mean you'd be reifying it and calling it an it which is kind of invalid but still um if you want to view Nirvana or Nana as just Ultimate Reality just all pervasive you know formless infinite Consciousness is unmanifest that kind of thing then yeah it would be amongst the

Aggregates because it would be amongst
anything that seems to exist because it
would just be this per vasive Ultimate
Reality that underlies
everything but that's not exactly
Orthodox terada but uh mahays and like
the vedantists do see their absolute as
kind of an all pervasive infinite
reality and there were there's at least
a few verses in terava that are like
pre- Orthodox that also suggest this but
uh they kind of uh lost the debate in
Terra so I'll just move on to the next
question here which is from nature cure
and nature cure says what if beu
masturbates and don't tell anyone and
just keeps it secret well there's quite

a few that do that I would imagine um

and I mean they're never going to have

pure CA and they're just going to be

digging themselves deeper and deeper

into a a hole of like ecclesiastical man

IC discipline cuz every time you attend

a ceremony with unconfessed offenses

like every time you hear the poty mocha

recitation with unconfessed offenses you

commit another offense

and yeah it's I mean if you're going to

do that sort of thing you're better off

just not being a

monk um you know you just he's got

serious offenses and then let's say a

year later he decides to finally come

clean and confess he's GNA make do
penance for the six days and six nights
of the the masturbation and then he's
got to do additional penants for the
entire year that he concealed it because
with a sesa offense you have to do six
days and six nights of penance and plus
the however many days you concealed the
offense without confessing it when you
had the opportunity to confess but
didn't and I've got dogs visiting me
that you can't see maybe you see
glimpses of them as they go out the door
or something so yeah he'd be a sloppy
unconscientious and relatively dishonest
monk but he he's not excommunicated
because there's only four paraja rules

that will actually excommunicate among

plus maybe The Unofficial fifth one of

um losing On's Family

Jewels so I'll just move on to Nature's

next question here what if biku gets

caught smoking weed

I guess in Burma well it would depend on

the circumstances like um I mean if you

got caught by the police smoking weed I

don't know what would happen they might

arrest him if he gets caught by a very

strict

Abbot then he might just get kicked out

of the monastery or scolded and told not

to do it again or if he's at a really

LAX Monastery he might just start he

gets caught smoking weed he might have

to

share so yeah it would depend on the

circumstances although smoking weed in

Burma it's I mean the burmes are much

more conservative with regard to the use

of intoxicants you know there's like a

village drunk in most Villages I would

assume but I mean he's very low status

you know it's it's kind of a stigma to

to take any kind of

intoxicants and um you guys settle

down

so yeah I mean it would be like being a

junkie in America in the 1980s you know

back before being a junkie was like you

know it was like one of the protected

classes or

something

so yeah if a beu gets caught smoking

weed you know it just depends on the

circumstances and who it is that catches

him so I'll just move on to Nature cures

third question is what if biku gets

caught smoking cigarettes and probably

nothing would happen because lots of

monks smoke cigarettes openly especially

in Thailand because anjan mun was

considered to be an Arun in Thailand

very famous high-profile saintly Sage of

a monk you know he he he was largely

responsible for starting the Thai Forest

tradition like over a hundred years ago

and he was a chain smoker I mean he was
literally a drug addict which is
ironic so so yeah there might be a few
strict monasteries where the Abbot is
really a stickler and he has enough
sense to know that nicotine is an
addictive drug and the Buddha would not
have allowed it if it if tobacco had
existed in India in the Buddhist time
but and then he might just scold him and
say you're not allowed to do that
anymore you know something like that but
for the most part monks just smoke
cigarettes openly
and uh it's just not considered to be a
big deal sort of like drinking
tea so I'll just uh move on to the next

question here which is from you know I'm
with it and you know I'm with it says do
you believe any of the romantics
experiened jna well maybe the drummer
who is also the vocalist that was like a
joke I just told like a joke just
now so I guess I should have done like
that
but uh with regard to like the Romantic
Movement that's like the 19th
century um yeah I don't know if any of
them experienced J if they did it
probably would have been some kind of a
spontaneous event you know like um oh
what's his name William Blake he was
like a Proto romantic he was like a

forerunner of the romantics it wouldn't
surprise me if if William Blake who was
like a Visionary kind of a little bit on
the Nutty side like a prophet that he
had experiences similar to Janna maybe
even genuine Janna but it wouldn't be
through meditation it would just be this
this weird momentum that his karma had
going and he would just go into these
states sort of like Socrates you know
when he would just like freeze like a
statue and just stand there for
hours you know that might be some kind
of
genre but with regard to the romantics
in general um yeah I think they might
have been a little too touchy feely and

and just too worldly and secular you

know like Percy B Shelly I mean mostly

I'm familiar with the English Romantics

who are mainly like

poets because I took an English Lit

class you know like woodsworth and colid

you know colid took a lot of drugs he

might have had some kind of similar

similar

experience um Lord Byron I don't think

so you know you had people like GTA I

don't know I think GTA was romantic

wasn't he maybe not forget

GTA so I mean do could any of them I

think some of them experienced trans

States probably drug induced or just

sort of nuttiness induced like in the
case of William Blake although nuttiness
isn't necessarily a bad thing in some
cases I mean we're all insane they're
just going with Orthodox Terra Pino UMO
you know the the common worldling is
insane and you stay insane up until you
get fully
enlightened and even then you might
still act
insane and I'm checking to make sure
this is recording and it appears to be
recording it says it's recording that's
good so I think I'll just move on to you
know I'm wit it next question
which is did you have sunscreen in Burma
and it is kind of refreshing to get like

a really easy questions every once in a while and uh for the most part I did not have sunscreen in Burma somebody gave me one once when I went to America they gave me some sunscreen and I just never used it I think I might even still have it like in a suitcase from when I was a monk years ago it's probably past the expiration date now and there were there were times when I probably should have used sunscreen there there was one time especially I just shaved my head right before going on a trip and you know when your head your scalp is just completely unprotected that's not good and then I was riding a sandan riding on top monks

generally ride on top of the
sandan and just going you know up the
river with no shade in the tropics it
was it's probably like January but it
doesn't really matter in the tropics
there's not all that much difference
between um summer and
winter so so yeah I got really bad
sunburn that time in fact it was certain
places there was one part right here in
my forehead especially where I'd put
like Neosporin on it and it would clear
up and then I'd stop using the Neosporin
and it would reappear again which is not
a good sign but eventually it did just
fade out I had a little bit on my nose
too but it was it was a bad sunburn that

time and you got to be careful if you're
if you're of European ancestry and you
live in the tropics I mean that's why
SRI LAN pins even though technically you
know they they have Indo European
ancestry they can be blacker than people
that are called Black in America mainly
because they're living at the equator
they're in the tropics and fair skinned
people get skin cancer way easier than
dark skin people
do so I guess you have to be be kind of
careful but for the most part it was so
hot and Burma when the sun was Blazing
that I would just stay in the shade I'd
be as nocturnal as possible

when I'd go for Ms I'd go really early

in the morning so that I'd be back

before the sun was high enough for me to

be drenched in

sweat so I did have sunscreen for a

while in Burma but never used it and uh

I did get a few bad sunburns so I'll

just move on to you know I'm Wit It

third question here and I must commend

my viewers that um they have been uh

very restrained in keeping the questions

down to three per person per episode

which uh is is helpful and it it seems

to be

manageable and again pray that I do not

reduce the questions

further so you know I'm with it says how

did monks in Ancient India keep track of
time in Jungle thickets with no
reference to the stars or moon in order
to sleep four hours a night I'd imagine
that's more difficult the longer the
night
is
well I mean if there a jungle Thicket
I'm sure they could if they really
wanted to get some idea as to how far
gone the night is they could walk out
into a clearing I mean if they really
wanted to
know um but then again maybe it's just
cloudy maybe it's the rainy season it's
just overcast all all night then you

just have to guess but really the only
two times of day that a monk like living
in accordance with you know the ancient
way that monks lived the only two times
a day that you really have to know is
Dawn and midday technically Dawn is when
you can see the lines on the palm of
your hand with your arm extended you
know looking at the palm of your hand
sort of at arms length you can start
seeing the the lines on your hand that
means that it's Dawn and it's okay to go
for alms and with regard to knowing when
midday is um in ancient times I'm sure
they made kind of a primitive Sund dial
where they only thing you really need to
know is when midday is you know like

when the shadow of the stick reaches a
certain line and I did read a book um
it's the Su Sant just a second the dog's
doing something you guys stop
it the Su Sant gives instructions on how
to make like a fish Sund dial it's it's
sort of a fish design on the ground and
the sticks in the middle and then when
the the the shadow reaches the the in
intersection of these two semicircles
which is like the fish shape then you
know it's midday and I I wouldn't be
surprised if a lot of ancient
monasteries before clocks were invented
had something like that so they would
know when midday is otherwise you just

have to kind of eyeball it and and guess

pretty

much so but with regard to like

nighttime and it's cloudy or it's just

there's so much like Forest that you

can't see the sky you just have to guess

maybe you know you you just sleep like

what I was doing at one at one point in

my life as a monk is just you sleep

until you wake up and then if I if I I

had a clock at a time though so if IID

slept at least 4 hours I'd have to just

get up and it maybe they had something

similar to that except without the clock

where you know they just go to bed

intent upon waking up which is what

you're supposed to do

and then you know you just wake up
because you're just programmed to want
to wake up as soon as you've had enough
sleep to get by something like that or
you know you just get like a a natural
Rhythm so that you know like like I now
just naturally wake up at like 5:30
because that's when I have to wake up to
go to work and so even on weekend
sometimes when I can sleep in as late as
I want and be just a lazy bum I still am
just automatically waking up at 5:30 or
thereabouts just because you have like
this internal clock going and it may be
that some monks would have that sort of
thing going for them they get into the

habit of sleeping a certain amount every
night it just it just starts happening
as almost as a force of
habit so I mean they might have other
ways of doing it maybe they came up with
like a humongous or like an oil lamp
that would burn out after approximately
4 hours you know you just put in 4 hours
worth of oil or something but I've never
I've never read about
that so I think I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from pronav
and pronav says what would the daily
routine of deavas could be in the
language they speak can Davis speak all
the languages that humans
spoke well that's kind of two questions

here I should probably uh separate

this okay

so the first question what would the

daily routine of Dava be and it would

depend on the Dava I

suppose um I mean like tawa timsa you

know they're dallying with their their

Herms of celestial nymphs and strolling

through pleasure Gardens full of

paradise trees and this kind of thing

smelling the flowers eating the

celestial

mangoes you know I doubt that um they

had like administrative jobs sort of

like the jeh hov's Witnesses think that

if you go to heaven you you just pretty

much got this administrative job for uh
for the kingdom of heaven but uh yeah I
mean it's hard to say they they do
pretty much what they want to do you
know if I was a DAV at least once I'd
want to just fly up to the moon and look
around up there see if there's any alien
bases or
anything um or that that Nazi base
that's supposed to be there I saw the
movie so uh what would the daily routine
of be I mean who can say I mean if you
read the books they're pretty much just
wallowing in
sensuality but uh every once in a while
they'll come down and talk to the Buddha
or talk to a monk or you know they

they'll have some kind of mission that
they'll do I I assume it would be just
the standard you got some super rich
person who doesn't have to work for a
living and they're living in this
paradise you know surrounded by gorgeous
women you know what are they going to
do but U that's just sort of a
anthropomorphizing or or anthropocentric
view of the dvas and some of them I'm
sure are just completely unhuman and
they're going to do stuff that is just
completely beyond our
comprehension because I mean most Davis
probably do not look like people maybe
the ones that are associated with planet

Earth because probably a lot of dvas
were humans in a previous existence and
so forth but you get out you know beyond
the human influence and I mean you can
have like daa beings that are just sort
of like who knows just some sort of
geometric pattern that's like
fluctuating and and pulsing and so forth
so what would that what would the daily
routine be of a pulsating geometric
pattern I have no
idea so I'll just uh move on to panov's
second question or the second part of
his only question which is the Lang
language they speak can Davis speak all
the languages that humans spoke um it's
my understanding that a lot of Davis

anyway not maybe all of them but they're
just telepathic that's just you know
when you level up to David level you
know it unlocks the telepathy skill that
you'd have to do a lot of meditative
practice or just have a certain amount
of psychic talent to be able to do that
without you know reaching the next this
this higher level and the dogs are like
snarfing on each other and they're
playing you guys calm down
chill so um yeah it might be that
they're just telepathic and they um they
wouldn't even really need a language so
much as or maybe they do have languages
I don't it's they can use any language

they want I suppose and if you can read
minds then you'll know what they're
trying to convey because you'll be able
to you know you'll empathize with
them or telepathize
so can they speak all the languages that
humans
spoke maybe I mean I'm really not a daa
so I can't really speak for the dvas and
um if you read the the sutas and get
your information about dvas from like
ancient poly texts and so forth still is
very anthropomorphic and anthropocentric
and they're all going to talk
poly and I personally doubt that you
know all the inhabitants of the heaven
Realms are speaking

poly um they might not be speaking

anything it just might be a direct

transmission of information from mind to

mind uh who knows what the language

would be whatever whatever they want it

to be I

suppose and uh could they speak all the

languages that humans spoke if they're

telepathic I assume they could

communicate with a human in any

language

so maybe I answered that question there

are a lot of I don't knows in the answer

but

um there you are so I'll just move on

the next question here and this is from

rpad

rpad and rpad says how Buddhist is navayana or dalit Buddhism and I assume what he's referring to is um there was a certain Mr Ed Carr in India who I believe is now passed away who started a Buddhist movement in India India I mean Buddhism in India was pretty much extinct and then he revived Buddhism in India more than than any other person I'm pretty sure by it was essentially a kind of social movement where he was taking he was converting outcasts or dalits you know they're they're like out of the the they're Untouchables essentially he was converting them to Buddhism um largely as a way of just

getting them out of this Untouchable
status and you know allowing them to
live their lives with some dignity and
and self-respect and so forth you know
they don't have to just be street
sweepers and Beggars and so
forth um so I'm not sure exactly to what
extent um this this Movement by Mr Ed
Carr was just like activism and just
mainly for the social purpose of up
lifting the outcasts and The
Untouchables and and to what extent
there really was serious Buddhism where
they're really taking it seriously and
maybe even being ordained as monks and
so

forth because I mean it's it's it's
going to be of limited seriousness as a
Buddhist movement if you don't have any
ordained
renuncian because that is really the
name of the game in Buddhism is I mean
that's mainly what it was what it was
intended for was
renuncian so yeah I'm not familiar
enough with the movement to know to what
extent it's it's really a serious
Buddhist movement and or to what extent
it's like a social movement for the sake
of bettering the the plight of the
Untouchables you know there's both of
those involved you know there's and it
wasn't just totally fake Buddhism I'm

sure but to what extent it really is a a
serious Buddhist movement for the sake
of promoting damama rather than
promoting the social welfare of a
certain low class in in
India so yeah I'm not the best source of
information on that so with regard to
what the Davis do in their spare time
and and also the uned car um Buddhist
movement in India I'm I'm really not
qualified to give a really an excellent
answer and so I'm just not going to do
it if it's impossible I'm not going to
do it you got to draw the line
somewhere
so next question is from sanguine Ultima

and sanguine Ultima says what would you
recommend telling persons who adamantly
deny that Buddhism is a religion I hope
that you have no further recording
issues in the future yeah I hope so too
I might have to just delete my my video
link in and and read it every time but
uh it seems to be working now at least
I'm not looking at a black
screen so getting back to his question
though what would I recommend telling
persons who adamantly deny that Buddhism
is a religion well with regard to a lot
of westerners it's not a religion with
regard to a lot of westerners it's like
a a philosophy sort of a meditative way
of life you know that sort of thing but

but to you go to a a traditional
Buddhist country and it's certainly a
religion it's definitely a religion in
Burma there I mean some people say that
a religion implies this you have to
believe in God but I mean Buddhism um I
mean to that extent it's it can be held
up as an example of an atheistic
religion they believe in small G Gods
but they don't really have power over us
and you know there's no Creator God that
created us or created the universe or
any such
thing um but still I mean the Burmese
people they've got their rituals they
they they pray you know this it's it's

essentially religion it's it's

faith-based it's not based on you know

empirical observation in most cases

they're just born and raised into it

they're taught how to do the simple

chance when they're toddlers you know

they learn how to bow to monks and take

five precepts and all that when they're

little

kids

so yeah I mean it can be just kind of a

philosophy and a meditative way of life

for some people including some people in

Asia but I mean for most Buddhist people

it it is a

religion so I mean it may not have

started off as a religion but it has

been turned into a religion in probably most Buddhist cultures because most people in any culture are not like spiritually or intellectually or philosophically Advanced enough to just accept it as a kind of mystical philosophy and and like a a yogic practice you know they've got to they've got to have their beliefs and their rituals and so forth Just they just take it on faith and that's pretty much religious I mean it would depend I guess on the definition of religion I didn't look it up didn't look at a dictionary on the definition of religion there's probably

more than one

definition but uh yeah I mean Buddhism

is not a religion is mostly a western

thing or it can also be kind of a um I

don't know kind of a talking point for

burmes intellectual scholar monks who

think that Abid dama is is like you know

ancient Indian science so that you know

an Abid dama scholar might consider

himself to be a kind of

scientist but uh you know he accepts

Abid dama on faith although most

scientists accept science on faith too

which makes science kind of an atheistic

religion also at least for a lot of

people including a lot of

scientists but it depends on the actual

definition of religion and uh I haven't
I didn't look it up and I probably
should have and I'm afraid to look it up
now on the on the computer screen
because it might mess up the
according
so so I guess what would I recommend
telling people who adamantly deny that
Buddhism is religion yeah well maybe a
lot of westerners and a few easterners
do not uh adopt a religious approach to
Buddhism but most easterners and quite a
few westerners do really adopt Buddhism
as just like a faith-based
religion and they they're praying to the
Buddha and bowing to the statute

and chanting the Praises of the Buddha
and just believing stuff that there's no
way they could possibly prove or or even
look up really to verify it other than
looking into a an ancient text that just
says that's just the way it
is so yeah I think the first thing I
would do is uh look up the word religion
in a dictionary and then just uh compare
that with with Buddhism and uh I mean
that would that would be pretty clearcut
you know simple way of determining
whether Buddhism is a religion I mean if
you look up Buddhism in the dictionary
it might even say that it's it's a
religion founded by you know Goa Buddha
in the Ganges Valley or

something and that would be pretty good
when a dictionary is calling Buddhism a
religion that would be good
evidence so I guess I'll just move on to
the next question here this is from
Crave minerals and crave minerals says
what were your daily interactions like
with fellow monks and other
practitioners in Burma sorry if this
question has been asked a lot um no
actually it hasn't been asked a
lot so I take a sip of my excellent
black cherry and Plum
beverage and I commenced answering this
question what were my daily interactions
like with fellow monks and other

practitioners in Burma well it depends
on the the fellow monks I mean
I mean most fellow monks you know I just
you know you bow to them if they're a
senior monk you go to uh you go do the
ptim Moka ceremony with them on upos day
you know every two weeks you got the
upos ceremony all the monks gather
together and most of them mine just
didn't really speak too much um didn't
have much interest I mean when I first
came to Burma I didn't speak Burmese and
nobody at the first Monastery I lived at
spoke English and so I was having to
communicate with one monk who had some
formal schooling at a at a monastery
school and we were communicating in

essentially broken

poly and so I would just go to him if I

needed anything you know you got to find

another Monk and make confession to them

if you're broken a rule that kind of

thing but um yeah I mean I had a few

monks that were friends and we'd hang

out like friends especially uh Western

monks I mean it's way more interesting

hanging out with a western monk than

with an Eastern monk at least it was in

Burma because the Burmese they're a

traditional society and they all have

pretty much the same point of view and

so you don't really meet any unusual

characters I mean as a general rule you

know you don't really come across any
really out there points of view unless
it's just so nutty that you can't take
it
seriously so yeah I mean you meet up
with a Westerner you might just stay up
all night talking because you don't
really you don't get much chance to talk
in English about anything of Interest
with with u you know Burmese villagers
and so
forth um yeah so it depends on the
fellow monks I mean some of them would
be friends Western monks you treat
different from Asian monks because you
know they just come from a different
culture and so

forth um some monks I didn't like very
much some monks didn't like me very much
we just kind of you know Steer clear of
each other and some monks I mean I
didn't want have anything to do with
them cuz most monks in Burma they're
really not conscientious monks they're
just following along what everybody else
is
doing and you know they're just breaking
rules all over the place most of them
handle money and you a lot of them are
just like eating dinner and this kind of
stuff and you know I just I don't just
don't want to have anything to do with
that so I just for the most part I

avoided um Asian monks or at least like

Burmese

monks uh after I had enough seniority I

just went off and lived alone in the

forest and just kind of stayed away from

other monks stayed away from

monasteries so I mean every once in a

while you meet somebody who's friendly

and nice and you just have a

conversation with them and you know

everything's

fine so I guess I answered that question

daily interactions I mean um a lot of

time I wouldn't I wouldn't have daily

interactions with fellow monks and other

practitioners because I'd be you know

off by myself out in a forest cave or

something so I'll just uh move on to

Crave minerals' next question which is

it is said that monasteries attract the

criminal the insane and the wise does

this sound true to you according to your

experiences in Burmont can't remember

where I heard this

quote well it does attract some WI

people relatively wise people with

regard to the criminal and the

insane not so much I mean I've met I've

come across a few like crook

monks um I've come across a few nutty

ones too but uh I think you're going to

have more insane Buddhists in the west

than in

Asia um like proportion proportionately speaking just because Buddhism is kind of On The Fringe In The West and so it attracts people on that are On The Fringe whereas in Burma it's the the normies are the Buddhists as a general rule um I had one American monk tell me that at his Monastery which was in seagan um in
Burma that uh he was woken up in the middle of the night with some loud yelling and splashing and he went out and looked and there was a monk who was just splashing around in this big pond yelling and it turned out that he was he had been ordained just like a week or so previously and he was an alcoholic and

was going through the DTs he was like trying to cure himself of alcoholism by being ordained as a monk and he was just kind of flipping out that kind of thing happens but uh yeah I mean there are some some nutty monks out there and Coen G's are even more inclined to be nutty Co and G's are it's like a an ordained novice it's sort of like in minor orders like in in Catholicism it would be called taking minor orders it'd be an adult novice who only has to keep 10 precepts plus the seia rules and uh some of them are pretty nutty you know and and they can just they got like the theu tradition in Burma has some really weird

ideas that you know it's like reading

these little pamphlets by the theu from

the the ingu monastery at least from one

Seattle the thingu monastery talking

about how AIDS is caused by eating too

many Chili Peppers and this kind of

thing

see

so yeah it said that monasteries attract

the criminal the insane and the wise

that might be more true with regard to

Catholicism and it may be a Catholic

saying that that uh crave minerals heard

the saying it was probably like a

Catholic saying what the the Burmese um

yeah I mean maybe the criminal the

insane and the wise are all in equal

proportions maybe somewhat more wise
monks than criminal monks or insane
monks but the really nutty ones they
just won't get ordained most most
Abbotts will not ordain like a really
nutty
Monk and the and the criminal types
they're not really interested in
becoming monks um except um in America
like um in Stockton California there was
a Cambodian Monastery there and the the
S Raja of Cambodia lived there in Exile
and he was over hundred years old at the
time this was like the early 99s and
actually just as an aside Yoda from the
Star Wars movies was based largely on

this this Cambodian this old Cambodian monk but what happened was in Stockton California there's a lot of gang violence a lot lot of gang activity and some of these gangs are like cambodians you know Southeast Asians like Vietnamese gangs and Cambodian gangs and when the heat would start getting too hot you know like the police are like investigating you know questioning about a certain gang member he would often hide out by ordaining temporarily at a monastery so this same Monastery where the the the Cambodian s Raja was living you had like temporary monks who were gang members who had like a gun hidden under their under their under their bed

that kind of

thing

so yeah I mean you get just the broader

Spectrum in the west than you do in in

Burma because partly you know Burma

Buddhism Is On The Fringe In The West

and so it attracts more Fringe elements

whereas it's just mainstream in Burma

and it's very traditional and

conservative and and so there's not

nearly so much wildness and and this

craziness going

on so I mean it does happen though and

in some monasteries you know they might

be uh like Alchemists or something there

where you can get into some weird stuff

and you know you might have some
unsavory characters who join the S
because they want to get psychic powers
so they can destroy their enemies or
something but that's
rare so we'll just move on to crave
minerals as next question
here and that is are you familiar with
Rupert sheldrake's theory on morphic
resonance any thoughts and then he says
here if not here's a Wiki quote quote
sheldrake's morphic resonance posits
that memory is inherent in nature and
that natural systems inherent a
collective memory from all previous
things of their kind sheldrake proposes
that it all is also responsible for

telepathy type interconnection between organisms he is often described as a pseudo scientist but I think it makes a lot of sense makes sense of a lot of things okay and then I think it's interesting to consider how private practices of meditations contemplations and CA could have subtler effects on others and one's surroundings besides the obvious ones well I read one book by rert sheldrake which was the science delusion where he's essentially M you know taking pokes at mainstream science or scientific realism you know he he really just bashes the idea that science has pretty much gotten everything

figured out there's just a few gaps
still he's he's just calling on
that there's like basic assumptions that
science gets wrong according to rert
sheldrake and this morphic resonance I
assume that would be responsible for
there's a a
well-known um phenomenon like a certain
kind of Crystal it doesn't exist yet
science hasn't isolated this Crystal yet
but then once it is discovered or
somebody has managed to make one of
these crystals it gets way easier and
all of a sudden they just start
appearing you know in Laboratories
around the world and it gets easier and
easier until after 20 years you can have

you know seventh grade science class
forming these same crystals that uh it
took you know some brilliant scientist
in some you know highly fed laboratory
to make the first one and now it's it's
easy and it'd be similar to you know
it's like there a certain subatomic
particle is never never found in like
bubble Chambers you know particle
accelerators anything like that until
somebody isolates one you know you got
one science one scientist he discovers
he postulates the existence of this
thing he discovers it and then all of a
sudden other scientists start seeing the
same subatomic particles so that might

be what sheldrake is referring to as
like morphic resonance at least there'd
be two examples of it
possibly so yeah I mean it is it is
possible I don't know how it would work
I'm not sure if Rupert sheldrake knows
how it would work it's like science is
just observing patterns that then you
can predict phenomena in the future
based on you know the the behavior of
phenomena in the past and you just
assume that things are going to continue
to follow the same laws of nature that
they followed you know 10 years ago or
one year ago or whatever that they just
don't change which is an article of
faith in science I mean you think that

you know everything else can change why

not laws of

physics so let's see here I think I'm

kind of

rambling am I familiar with Rupert sheld

Theory on morphic resonance any thoughts

yeah it is possible it helps to explain

certain

things but

um yeah I'm I mean like I just said I'm

not sure if rert sheldrick

himself can fully explain how it works

it just seems to be the case that it

does work in certain

cases

so and then telepathy type

interconnections between organisms
that that might be morphic resonance um
well I mean in a way he's still adopting
kind of um um more or less materialistic
you know scientific realist approach to
the universe and if you're just an
idealist and consider everything to be a
kind of manifestation of Consciousness
then that makes telepathy type
interconnections way easier to explain
because you know the universe is a
manifestation of
Consciousness still it doesn't explain
explain exactly how it
happens but I mean science is better at
explaining the what than the how in in
many

cases so I don't know if I answer that question or not I am familiar with rert sheldrake to some degree like I said I read one book by him and I've read about him in a few other books but uh I mean he just has interesting ideas and I mean I do I do appreciate people who are critics of scientific realism because I really think that scientific realism is a kind of either a religion or a pseudo religion in the west um it's it's kind of losing ground now just because just hysterical emotionality is is just running rampant and and like people can just you know we got postmodernism where truth is just a

cultural construct anyway so they just
cook up these wild theories and and
Champion those without necessarily any
kind of basis for them other than
wishful thinking or bias or
whatever but uh yeah I'm just rambling
now so I think I'm going to move on to
the next question this is from Libra Lam
and libr Lam surprisingly asks an easy
to understand question because usually
he's he's like you know it's sort of
like G asking questions or something
where everything is is really
complicated and cerebral but here it is
it's relatively simple
which is as
follows do you consider it likely that

any Jane in the entire history of jism actually did the death ritual of the iogi without suffering my guess is that the de composition process of sitting in full Lotus is slow and grueling well first of all I would point out that I don't think that they sat in the full Lotus at least if you read the the poly text that's describing how James and aicas would would essentially commit suicide after they believ that they had eradicated their karma you know that's that's the goal for for a Jane or an AAA especially a Jane is you just delete you erase you burn up all of your karma you don't make any new Karma and when you

think that you're you're Karma free then
you then you kill yourself but you can't
do it violently because that would
create new Karma so essentially they
would just go off into an isolated area
and just squat down on their hunches and
then just remain in that position until
they were dead and probably the first
thing that would get them would just be
like um dehydration kidney failure I
mean you you die of water you know water
deprivation before you die of
malnutrition or
starvation you know it just take a few
days especially in the you know like in
the hot season when you're just
profusely sweating it wouldn't take very

long so I don't think they would sit in the full Lotus although maybe some of them did but uh when the poly Texs describe it and I think I've read Jane texts that describe it also is you just squat down and they used to use that as a kind of self- torture device also and any of you who really are skeptical that just squatting on your heels is a torture self torture device try it just remain like try and watch an entire movie Just squatting on your heels and you're going to find out that things start burning and hurting after about probably less than 30 minutes and for you to just stay in that position it it

really can be torture because I mean
I've had to remain squatting for like an
hour straight going through some long
ceremony because you're supposed to you
know you're supposed to squat down um to
to do ceremonies and if the ceremony
takes an hour I mean it's like you are
in agony by the end of that ceremony
so but I mean that's that's not the
question here I'm just uh sort of uh
adding something to this but the
question is do I consider it likely that
any Jane in the entire history of jism
actually did the death ritual of the
aogi without suffering well yeah I think
it's possible I think uh the aicas did
something similar also where you think

that you're essentially enlightened or
as close to Enlightenment as it's
possible for a human to get
and so you've exhausted your karma they
believe that they've exhausted their
karma and if they really believe that
they had exhausted their karma I'm sure
that you know they'd be in a kind of
altered state of consciousness and
accept any kind of pain with if not
joyously then at least with just Serene
equinity cuz I mean you got to bear in
mind that these people were torturing
themselves before this you know that was
like part of their spiritual practice
was self-

torture and so you know a little more

self- torture at the end is is going to

be nothing new and they're just used to

it and dying of Dying of Thirst dying of

dehydration I assume it's really not

that

horrible I mean I mean it's not good I'm

sure it's Acky but I mean there's

probably lots more unpleasant ways of

dying than just sitting there or

squatting there

until you your kidneys fail I mean you

probably get really sick before you died

but I mean they're just so used to it I

mean that's what they did for a living

is is just torture themselves and endure

misery like physical pain and so

forth so yeah my guess is that um
probably quite a few people of The Janes
and the aivas who believed that they had
exhausted their karma and you know they
were they were going to go into heaven
or or into whatever state they they were
expecting for the you know the
enlightened Sage of their tradition you
know I'm sure that uh they would endure
a little more like extreme discomfort
and unpleasantness right up to the end
with without much
difficulty so I think I'll just move on
next question here this is from Arin and
Arin says I noticed on some of your
Christian videos you get spammed in the

comments by Christians attempting to convert you or damn you too for doing a critical analysis of Christianity from a Buddhist perspective how does the Christian behavior of damnation Hellfire prizing or sending out missionaries to convert people differ from Buddhist Behavior or Dharma incidentally the above mentioned behavior is pretty much the same behavior we see from the atheistic indoctrinated left these days um there are some narrow-minded Buddhists out there who will mainly attack other Buddhists just because they're saying you know you are a Shameless and you're you're you're teaching wrong view or you're you're not

practicing correctly that kind of a
thing so that kind of mental state you
know sort of like narrow-minded
intolerance um yeah that can be found in
Buddhism also although Buddhism is is
not as intolerant as Christianity
um I mean early Christianity was so
hysterically intolerant that it pretty
much just abolished and wiped out all
other spiritual traditions in the
west
um fortunately Christianity no longer
has the power to just persecute other
systems into Oblivion anymore now it's
like like Aran says it's like the
atheistic indoctrinated left has taken

up taken the Baton you know they they've

taken up the torch in that

regard

um but I mean in

Buddhism a good person can go to heaven

regardless of their religion so long as

their religion is teaching them to be

you know moral and generous and honest

and so

forth um and

Christianity generally considers heaven

to be the highest state and so Buddhism

you know they say well Christians can go

to heaven Buddhists can go to heaven

Muslims can go to heaven but heaven

isn't the highest

state and the official position of

Buddhism is that only Buddhists can
become fully enlightened and attain
Nirvana and I'm skeptical of that I
don't think that only Buddhists are
capable of becoming
enlightened although Buddhism is one of
the best systems for leading you towards
Enlightenment because other systems like
Christianity they don't even a concept
of it
at least some schools of Christianity
have no concept at all you know it's
just like nobody is worthy of Heaven
it's only the grace of God that's going
to get you there nobody's perfect that
kind of thing so becoming fully

enlightened is just is just not an
option for them it's just not on the
list of
possibilities so trying Buddhist yeah
they generally don't try to scare
followers of other religions with you
know threats of damn ation and
hellfire um in order to convert them to
Buddhism I don't know Buddhism is just
has more equinity and less hysterical
intolerance than certain other systems
although not all Christians are trying
to convert people to Christianity out of
hysterical intolerance I mean a lot of
them it's out of compassion they really
believe they've found the way to heaven
you know they are saved and you have to

be a Christian to be saved and so out of compassion and Good Will they'll try try to convert other people to Christianity um and there's some of that in Buddhism also like the emperor Ashoka sent out missionaries in all directions trying to spread the dhama which is is a good thing but generally you do it through more subtle means than you know threats of damnation if you don't

so I mean what's the question here maybe I should uh figure out exactly what the question here is okay how does the Christian behavior of damnation Hellfire prosing or sending out missionaries

convert people different from Buddhist
Behavior or Dharma okay I think I pretty
much answered that you know there's a
little bit of threats of damnation and
hellfire mainly with other Buddhists you
know they think that you know you're a
bad Monk and you're you're doing the
wrong thing you know I got I got some of
that when back when I was a
monk um you know you're going to you're
going to go to hell or
something um and then I mean there are
Buddhist missionaries it's just that
they're they're not like going around
knocking on doors so much but um you
know they're more laid-back more casual
about it as a general

rule so I mean I was associated with a family in Bali that were very wealthy this in Indonesia and they were like trying to spread Buddhism in Bali and they were doing a good job of it too they had they had established a number of dharmah halls and monasteries and so forth but they were doing it just through building these huge Dharma halls and inviting monks from like Burma or Thailand to come and stay there and that would be sort of a nucleus for starting a Buddhist community in the area and they did that in various places throughout through Bali which is uh I guess it's a better way more I mean it's

more expensive than going around

knocking on doors like Jehovah

Witnesses you know it costs a lot of

money but um it's probably a better way

of going about

it and the hysterical intolerance thing

is it's uh it's really not a Buddhist

attitude it's certainly not endorsed in

Buddhism although there are some

fanatical

Buddhists but uh it's not nearly as

normalized in Buddhism as it has been

and in certain places at certain times

in Christianity and my nose is itching

really bad very

itchy which is kind of strange I got to

keep rubbing

it okay

then so I hope I answer that question

man that's kind of a

subtle kind

of diffus kind of a question that

sometimes I'll I'll do my best to answer

it and still I'm not 100% sure that I

answered

it okay so I'll just move on the next

question though cuz as I say we we've

got quite a few questions today getting

up uh getting up close to 40 of them I

think so this next question is from son

of the Father and Son of the father says

what is the idea or notion of the

simulation or that we are living in a

simulation referring to it's a

persistent meme like Flat Earth and fake

moon landings

um yeah I I think he's saying this

because I think it may be in the last

video that I said that we're living in a

simulation that this is not

reality but I'm not implying that we're

in a computer that this is not a

computer simulation we're not living

inside some seventh grade alien you know

some some alien child who has created

this universe as part of a science

project nothing like that that we're not

living you know it's not like the Matrix

literally it's not inside a computer but

it is a simulation in the in to the

extent that it is a dream you know the
Buddha Buddha literally means awakened
and so the implication is that the
Buddha was awake but we're still asleep
that everyone else that isn't fully
enlightened is still asleep and so
presumably we are all dreaming this and
that's a a metaphor that is used more
and Mahayana than terada I think but um
also like the Hindus believe that this
entire world or some Hindus some Vite
Hindus think that the god Vishnu is
asleep on this big Lotus Flower and he's
just dreaming this
world and that that's a simulation
because it's not real it's just a

dream so yeah there are people that
believe that we are in a literal
computer comp
simulation um you know that's they use
that to to explain ferm's Paradox of why
we've never come into any contact with
other intelligent life in the in the
universe that kind of thing and um with
regard to Flat Earth and fake moon
landings and so forth I mean there's
going to be people who are going to take
a contrary position with regard to
anything just anything any official
narrative has got to be false in the
opinions of some people if it's the
official narrative it's some sort of
evil globalist cabal or or some kind of

cabal that is just cooking this up in

order to mislead people and you know

exploit them and and on and

on

so what is the idea or notion of the

simulation referring to I mean with

regard to the people who think that it's

a computer program that we're in a

computer then that's pretty

straightforward you know they we're in

The Matrix

literally but um my notion of a

simulation is that it's essentially a

dream that it's not the highest reality

that if you wake up then you're in a

higher level of reality than you you are

now that right now is really not full
Consciousness it's like when you're
dreaming a dream at night you think
you're awake you know you think you're
fully awake but then when you wake up
you realize that you weren't awake and
it was sort of Darker and you know
narrower you know the whole world you're
living in a lot of people just dream in
black and white and there's less Law and
Order there's less vividness to most
dreams and it's just going to be sort of
that it's another Quantum Leap beyond
that to a higher level of reality which
probably still isn't you know Ultimate
Reality but the Buddha who is fully
enlightened presum presumably experience

Ultimate Reality who is no longer in any
kind of simulation but so long as you're
in samsara even if you're in a high
heaven realm it's still a simulation
because it's not ultimately real it is
only conventionally real or virtually
real so it's a virtual reality but it's
not a computer generated virtual reality
it's just a a mind generated virtual
reality and uh I'll try to
avoid once again you know bringing up
the block of marble and and you know how
just sort of certain patterns contained
within the block of marble are so
complex that they become um
self-referential and start thinking that

they are you know intrinsically real and separate when actually they're not and I just said I wasn't going to bring that up and then just immediately brought it up so yeah but I won't I won't really elaborate on that because I've talked about a number of times so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from covac and sead zida and covac and CAD zida says how much of a difference does sense restraint make on practice as a lay person for example how much of a difference while not having sex and not watching entertainment make I think it makes quite a lot of difference actually especially for someone who is not an adept

like um if you if you renounce the world
and really this this sense restraint
it's it's like step step two of
renunciation you know you renounce the
world and you go off into a forest which
is it's relatively speaking sensory
deprivation you got fewer distractions
you got fewer things to lead you astray
that you start thinking you know you
start investing all your time and effort
into certain distractions so that you
don't have time really to contemplate
play dhama or practice dhama
correctly so I mean with regard to
having sex I mean it's not just that
you're sitting there and then you have

sex and then afterwards you're just
sitting there again it's like there's
all this time and effort involved in you
know courting a woman or at least
picking up a drunk one in a bar and
there's money to be spent you got to
like earn money you got to have a job in
order to pay for this stuff and just
entertainment it depends on what kind of
entertainment I suppose I do watch
entertainment shows
occasionally but
um it's just all this distraction and
you think it's reality the more you're
you buy into it the more you think that
this is reality and most western
Buddhists are just so programmed by just

Western empirical science and
materialism and so forth that they just
assume this is reality maybe if they're
being philosophical they'll admit that
it isn't but most of the time they just
take it take it for granted that laws of
physics are laws of
reality and it's just you just get the
more stuff you've got going on the more
you're pretty much compelled to buy into
the whole illusion that the virtual
reality isn't
virtual and I'm waving my arms around a
lot today I've
noticed and you can see it in better
resolution now because of the new video

recording software that I hope is

working and probably

is so how much of a difference does

sense restraint make on practice as a

lay person or as a monk really as as a

as a sentient being yeah I mean the

simpler You' got things the easier it is

not to be distracted by you know Som

saric

phenomena and start thinking that they

are

real Maybe if you're watching an

entertainment show and you let's say

you're watching a movie but you've

always got the critical like

Detachment then then that's not so bad I

mean that might actually be helpful in

certain ways like i' I've said this
before but my mother used to say that my
father could totally ruin a movie she'd
be getting into it you know and my
father would just make this observation
like they didn't have guns like that in
those days you know it's like you you're
just the detectors always
turned on and you're just waiting for
some anachronism or something to happen
you know it's like the camera's panning
out and you see this bump like the
camera just rolled over a wire or
something it's like ah look at that and
to have that kind of approach towards
the world in general is actually I mean

it's kind of cynical I suppose but
actually it can be beneficial in dhama
so watching movies with that kind of
attitude it's it could be practiced for
for just watching the world in
general but sense restraint yeah I mean
that's just like stage two of
renunciation the purpose of renunciation
is sensor straint for the most part it's
just simplifying things radically so
that you're not getting just L astray by
all these distractions and taking them
seriously and getting sucked into the
delusion that they are
real so simplify your life as much as
possible if you're if you're sweetheart
will let you or your mate in

general so I think I'll just move on to the next question here this is also from covac and SE zida and he says in a discussion you are having in the comment section with one of your viewers you cited how the average Brahman had red hair and blue eyes I could not find a source for this claim anywhere can you please tell me where you saw this the reason I'm asking is because this doesn't make much sense as the early Indo-European groups yam NAA Kuran tribes all had dark hair and eyes the relative non-existence of the AL for them compared to how widespread the r1a paternal ancestry is in North India

makes me doubt that claim light eyes
seems to be a result of later migrations
from Central Asian groups like The cians
Who are mixed with Central Europeans
well this of course also is just taking
for granted that scientific materialism
is Gospel truth but I'm pretty sure I
mean I haven't read panel's yoga sutras
I think it's yoga sutras and not Yoga
shastras panel's Yoga sutras I've read
at least once I think it was more than
one source saying that that patang in
his yoga sutras describes the
stereotypical Brahman as having like
Ruddy hair and blue
eyes I didn't read it myself at least I
didn't read the yoga sutras myself but

that is a statement that I have come
across and it may be that by the time
the Indo Europeans the Indo Arians
invaded India they weren't just pure
blooded yum Nia kran tribes anymore that
they had you know already intermixed
with Proto cians like the andronovo
culture was Proto cyi and I'm pretty
sure maybe they already got some blue
eyes there and then you know it'd be
really the the elite the ruling Elite
that were more likely to have these more
or less European features in ancient
times so I don't know it may be that
it's just somebody it's a spirous quote
that more than one person has quoted in

their own books

or it may be like by the time the the

the Indo orans invaded North India that

there was already an intermixture of

more fair haired fair skinned blue-eyed

people that had somehow gotten into the

ruling

Elite of these Indo

orians but I'm pretty sure that the it

was attributed to panel's yoga sutras I

think it's yoga sutras or yoga shastras

whichever it was that he

wrote so let's see

here I guess I guess I answered that so

I'll just move on to covac andat Zena's

next question which is can you please do

a breakdown and explanation of the

gradual training

process step by step that is mentioned

in the

sutas and I mean in the sutas there is

a gradual training process taught by the

Buddha it's called Anu

puasa and it turns out that there's not

just a

standardized one way of describing it

there's various ways of describing the

gradual

training which always starts with

ordination and

renunciation but uh I think one of the

main sources of like the most

standardized the closest list of the

gradual training that is mentioned in

the sutas would be what Maj man aay

number

51 which I actually have right

here see

here yeah the

karakasa and let's see where does it

start it has to start with renouncing

the world yeah it starts with rcing the

world and then uh yeah he abstains from

killing living beings which is another

step and then he abandons false speech

he abstains from injuring seeds and

plants he practices eating in only one

part of the day I mean there's this this

long list of this gradual thing the

gradual practice here he becomes content

with robes to protect his body with all
food to maintain his stomach oh let's
see sense
restraint and uh like mindfulness and
full awareness yeah but I think a lot of
this is just arbitrary it's not really a
sequential
sequence well when I just really say
that sequential sequence it's not really
you know sort of a a temporal sequence
where first you do this and then you do
that and then you do that it's it's just
listing off almost at random all these
practices that a monk is supposed to do
and I mean to some degree it may be the
more advanced ones are later on it's got

mindfulness and full comprehension you know after after renouncing the world I mean it starts with renouncing the world but

uh yeah I mean it's just page after page of all these things that a monk does in the in the gradual training at least in Suda 51 of the maim andaya it's just yeah he AB he abstains from injuring seeds and plants he practices eating only one meal a day let's see he abstains from dancing singing music and Theatrical shows he abstains from wearing garlands smartening himself with scent and embellishing himself with uents he abstains from high and large couches that's like essentially eight

precepts he abstains from accepting gold
and silver well 10 precepts he abstains
from accepting raw grain he abstains
from accepting raw meat he abstains from
accepting women and girls which I assume
would be slave women slave girls
no wait he abstains from accepting men
and women slaves here we go he he
abstains from accepting goats and sheep
and it's just page after page of these
things that a monk is abstaining from so
I don't think it's going to work for me
to give a a breakdown and explanation
step by step that is mentioned in the
sutas and this is just one version in
majaya number 51 it's just one version

but when I first saw the the question uh
I had a little conf confusion of my mind
maybe he was referring to the the
gradual teaching rather than the gradual
training and I got another book here
Buddhist dictionary I mean anyone who's
serious about studying terraa like
philosophical terms and so forth hold
right way up there it's a good book to
have sometimes you can get it for free
distribution
too but then also there's the yeah the
anobi which is how the Buddha would like
convert people by giving the gradual
discourse and that's it's it's kind of
interesting I I I was more influenced
more impressed by that than by this

gradual training which is just page
after page of you know the monk abstains
from this and he abstains from that and
he he does you know mindfulness and so
forth which is again it's not some kind
of sequence it's just almost like a
random assemblage of just stuff that
monks are supposed to do it's kind of
like the cilas in the the first several
um sutas of the of the dean Kaya it's
just you know the all these lists of
things that monks do and aren't and
don't
do let's see but then like the anob the
gradual
instruction which is uh it's called a

progressive sermon see given by the
Buddha when it was necessary to prepare
first the listener's Mind before
speaking to him on the advanced teaching
of the Four Noble Truth
and the stock passage runs as follows
then the blessed one gave him a gradual
instruction that is to say he spoke on
giving or Donna on moral conduct or Sila
and on the heavens or Sega he explained
the Peril the vanity and the depravity
of sensual pleasures and the advantages
of renunciation when the blessed one
perceived that the listener's mind was
prepared pant free from obstacles
elevated and Lucid then he explained to
him that exalted teacher particular to

the Buddhas that is suffering its cause
its ceasing and the
path so it may be that covac and CAD
zida um had this in mind like the the
gradual instruction or he may have had
like a a simplified version of the
gradual training that is way more
simplified than the page after page that
is given in suta 51 which is considered
to be like one one of these standard
sources on the gradual
training so I mean if you really want to
know the gradual training uh step by
step mentioned in the sutas read suta 51
of the the maim
minaya and I think I'll just move on the

next question because we got lots of

questions and this is going to be a long

one I

think okay although they're pretty much

all long I mean for me anything over

half an hour is kind of

long so

next next question is from ruie and I

apologize to covac and CAD zida if I did

not do justice to that question although

I I had many more words in my answer

than were in the question here so there

is

that so next question is from ruie and

ruie says what do you think of the soall

fourth turn of the wheel traditionally

for example in Academia zong Chen would

be the putative fourth turn however some
now claim that the variegated cocktail
of Western Buddhism he's got parth he's
got quotation marks on that Western
Buddhism is the actual fourth spin it is
as if there is a reified wheel that
people can walk up to and go gez let me
give it a
whirl well I mean Terra Buddhism really
does not have any concept of anything
beyond the the starting of the of the
wheel the Buddha got the wheel rolling
you know it proba it just keeps turning
it's not like it turns once and then you
get Mahayana and then it turns again and
I don't know what the third turn would

be even because this is all Mahayana

metaphors I'm pretty

sure so with to zagan being the fourth

turn of of the wheel of Dharma um it's

it's all arbitrary I mean it's all

academic I mean it just depends on who's

coming up with the system like terava

wouldn't consider Mahayana to be any

kind of

significant progression or Improvement

on

Buddhism I assume some kind of Mahayana

would be the second turning wouldn't it

I I would

assume but yeah it's it's just not a

Terra Buddhist concept and so I mean the

Buddhist started the wheel turning and

it just keeps turning you know it's not like it turns once and then you get a different kind of Buddhism and then it turns again get a different kind of Buddhism like some kind of again you got like a sequential progression that uh yeah I assume the Mahayana Buddhists would like that idea because you know then they consider Mahayana to be more advanced than terraa you know hinana the deficient vehicle but uh yeah it's it's it's completely arbitrary and academic and uh even if there it was real then Western Buddhism is a flat tire I think at least the academic queer

Buddhism and just everything is optional
and you know monks should be abolished
and all that kind of stuff the second
Noble Truth needs to be revised so that
patriarchy can be a cause of suffering
and and on and on I mean that's yeah
that's that's a broken wheel right there
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Andrea and Andrea
says do you know Hillside Hermitage in
Slovenia the head monk there is aan
yanam Tero seems to have a very unique
view on the janas and the Buddhist
teachings in general he basically says
that the majority of the monks practice
and interpret the sutas in a wrong way
according to his teachings the janas are

more a constant state in daily life
instead of some mystical experiences
during meditation what are your views on
this and are you familiar with his books
and teaching ings they also have a
YouTube channel well I have seen Nana
moly
terara um and some of the other Monks at
the hillside Hermitage on YouTube videos
that's my only exposure to him plus
people talking about him in the Discord
server some of the members of the
Discord server associated with me or my
channel and so forth um they're
impressed by Nana mol because he does
seem to be a serious practitioner and he

teaches a lot based on his own
experience in just from books but one
problem with monks who base their
teachings on their own experience um
like a lot of Tai aons who really were
adept at meditation and so forth they
still get the poly wrong because you
know they're not
Scholars so much as they're
practitioners and so they'll just
reinterpret well-known doctrines in a
different way and think they've got it
right when probably they don't
I mean it doesn't disqualify them from
being meditation Masters it just means
that they're just sort of trying to
reinterpret the text in accordance with

their own experiences which isn't

totally

horrible but still um yeah it can result

in confusion and so forth um I have not

been exposed to aan

Yan's um idea that jna is just a mental

state that you have going all the time I

assume some people get into advanced

Janna States and they can stay in that

state if they're really Advanced and

while they're moving around and making

noise and all that whereas most people

they attain Janna they're probably

sitting in

meditation at least if it's the

meditation that caused the Janna then

yeah they're going to be sitting there
not doing anything so let's see
here uh yeah this is the second nle the
second famous yanle the first famous
yanle was osbert Moore I think was his
name he was he was British and he was
ordained in Sri Lanka and he died around
1960 I think he's the one who translated
a lot of obscured difficult texts
including the Wii MAA but uh aan the
second aan yanam the second
nle um yeah he's he's kind of buff he
looks like he works out or something or
he's just naturally High te you know
he's got a good muscle tone and seems
kind of Macho and probably fairly
aesthetic which is what you would expect

from uh a macho

monk um but he says the majority of the

monks practice and interpret the sutas

in a wrong way well I mean that can be

taken in different ways I mean if he's

insisting that his way is the only right

way then yeah that's that is not so good

either because you know it's like the

stereotypical fool in the sutas is the

one who says only this is true

everything else is

wrong but I mean he might just be making

a standard observation that the majority

of monks practice and interpret the suas

in a wrong way just because they're not

really practicing or interpreting the

suas very much at all because they're
just following along with the standard
routine at their Monastery not
meditating much if at all and uh you
know they're just repeating stuff from
books that they don't really understand
I mean to that extent I would agree with
him but um you got to be careful of
anyone who's who's claiming that you
know only they are interpreting things
correctly
so I'm sure not sure what the question
is here oh what are views on this and
you are you familiar with his books and
teachings I think most jna is it's a
they are meditative States I think some
adept can maintain like higher janas

even when they're they're moving around

I'm not so sure about fourth J where

which is I mean you're essentially in a

state of

voidness but then again he probably has

a different interpretation of it but for

like a really profound mystical State I

don't think you're going to be like

talking with your buddies when you're in

a profound mystical State unless you are

just super

Advanced and just maintain it no matter

what you're doing like maybe a fully

enlightened

being

so golly yeah I really don't know that

much about Nan

moly so I know more about the first Yan

moly than the second yo because I've

only seen a few of his YouTube videos

and heard very little about him in in a

Discord server so I guess I shouldn't

try to answer the question too much

beyond my capacity to answer the

question so I'll just move on to the

next question here this is from Indian

guy known to some as

Trevor an Indian guy says if you had to

add it all up how much money did you

spend to become live and leave the

monastic

life well when I first became a monk I

had about 7,000 bucks in cash and I just

donated that and my pickup truck to the monastery and uh how much so that's how much money it took for me to become a monk and I didn't have to pay that I just it was voluntary also I was like a monastery attendant for a couple months before I was ordained as a monk so that was sort of contributing you know cooking and washing dishes and driving the monks around and you know cleaning the bathrooms and stuff I did that for a few
months but with regard to money I donated I think if I remember correctly it was like $7,000 plus a pickup truck but but it was just totally voluntary

donation on my part with regard to how
much money did I spend to live as a monk
zero because monks aren't allowed to
spend
money so other people spent money on me
and I don't know you know I wouldn't
even begin to estimate how much money
was spent on me as a monk it wouldn't
have been a whole heck of a lot because
I had simple I lived a very simple life
and for the most part I was living in
Burma with no electricity and no running
water and no rent to pay you know I'd
have to get my Visa renewed once a
year um doctors would treat me for free
dentist would treat me for free uh at
least some of them

would

so so okay so I spent $7,000 just

voluntarily just donated it when I

became a monk while I was a monk I spent

zero except for right at the very end

this when I was you know preparing to to

leave the monastery then and I think um

it was another like

$7,000 that people had donated on my

behalf and some of it they donated after

I left the monastery just out of the

kindness of their heart and the desire

to help me get started

again so so with regard to becoming a

monk I spent 7,000 in a pickup truck

which were

voluntary um for the Whole 30 years that
I was a monk you know it's like I spent
essentially zero and then to leave the
monastic life it was like another $7,000
that people donated to me partly just to
help me get started with a new life
which uh was very generous and
good-hearted of them I must
say so I think I'll just move on to the
next question this is from
Don and Don says have you ever heard of
any terod monks attaining rainbow body
it's it's just one for some reason he's
just got one set of quotes here have you
ever heard of any terod monks attaining
rainbow body or light body when they
died if this is a real phenomenon she he

got

phenomena if this is a real

phenomenon supposedly attained by

Advanced Tibetan Monks why would the

Buddha himself or his disciples not have

achieved such a

state I'm unaware of any such stories

but I'm no scholar is there anything at

all about it in the Terra voden

tradition if not how come if it's an

actual thing do you believe it's real

well I have no idea what the rainbow

body is I assume it doesn't have

anything to do with with

[Music]

gayness so yeah I I've never heard of

any terod monks attaining the rainbow body I don't even know what the rainbow body is and it's just not a terab Buddhist thing so uh if this is a real phenomenon supped supposedly attained by Advanced Tibetan Monks why would the Buddha himself or his disciples not have achieved such a state well the concept of it hadn't been invented yet or something or maybe it was a Tibetan shamanistic thing that got incorporated into Tibetan Buddhism when Tibetan Buddhism Incorporated shamanistic elements into the system um but yeah there's no mention at all in the polyx of anybody attaining the rainbow

body I can virtually guarantee

that

see so if not how come if it's an actual

thing it may be an actual thing but it

could be like the crystals or the the

subatomic particles in the that rert

sheldrake talks about that you know they

may have not existed then but then once

somebody comes up with the idea and

starts looking for it or cultivating it

and they they come across it they attain

it or whatever and then it Bec becomes a

thing it's it's morphic resonance

maybe but I mean generally it's just uh

yeah it's it's just kind of

mindmade you know this world is

mindmade that's that's uh verse one of

the dapada you know what is

it mind is the Forerunner of all things

they are they have mind as Chief they

are mind made regardless of r1a Al and

so forth and regardless

of regardless of anything

really

so yeah rainbow body okay so the the

next question is is is is approximately

as weird this is I've never heard of

this next one either this is from dawn

also and he says do you know anything

about Le Li the mysterious metal that is

mined by chance ing Buddhist monks in

Southeast Asia for amulets and such I

saw a video where monks were extracting

the stuff from a cave literally by

chanting and the stuff seemed to be

miraculously coming out of the rock it

even looked like it was moving like a

living

thing huh I wonder if it was like

Mercury that was just flowing

there

golly Le Li yeah don't think it's a

thing in

Burma that uh never heard of monks

mining anything in Burma fact I've never

really heard of monks mining anything

period Le lie or anything else um I did

hear about a monk that was he was like

an alchemist kind of Monk who was making

these amulets out of this mysterious
kind of metal and this might have
something to do with this but he was
making amulets of these this mysterious
kind of metal and uh finally somebody
figured out that he was just melting
down toothpaste tubes and making the
amulets out of those um people nowadays
in the west you got plastic toothpaste
tubes but those of you who are old
enough or have lived in like un
relatively undeveloped countries know
that toothpaste tubes used to be like
this really soft metal like it had lead
in it or
something so yeah it could just be some
kind of weird hoax that monks are doing

to make themselves look mysterious which
is sort of flirting with excommunication
if they're terraa monks or maybe they
really sincerely believe in this stuff
and who knows maybe their belief and
their their somat is strong enough that
they can actually make a mysterious
metal levitate out of
caves but I've never heard of it and I
don't know where it would be on the uh
the periodic the periodic table you know
what what elements what kind of metal it
is I have no
idea
so I think I'll just move on to the next
one because this is this is too esoteric

and far out for me rainbow bodies and

lck Li mysterious levitating

metal so I'll just move on to the Proto

sudo monk who says if a wise monk

dedicates themselves purely to

meditation but then can't teach the

truth to anyone in contrast the scholar

monk has Proficiency in the words that

point to the truth but has no

realization of it can this be said to be

wisdom well the mon who remains silent

may be truly wise he may be a sage you

know pea Buddhas are supposed to there

that way some of the the Zen Masters

that you read about like there was one

zen master who you know any anytime

anyone asked him about Dharma or

anything he would just pull a flute out
of his robes and like toot one one note
on it and then just walk
away so it may be that he was just
concealing the fact that he didn't know
or maybe he really was like an
enlightened Sage it's really hard to
tell reading you know Modern English
translations of medieval Chinese
texts so but I mean the main question
well no I won't even try to presume to
say that I know what the main question
is here let's see they can't you got a A
wise monk can't teach the truth to
anyone and then in contrast You' got the
scholar Monk has Proficiency in the

words that point to the truth but has no
realization of it can this be said to be
wisdom so I guess the main question here
is is a scholar monk who is able to
explain what the texts say is this monk
wise and then um sort of as a sub
question here I assume this is a
corollary to the preceding question is
is biku Bodi a wise
monk well I would say it takes a certain
amount of wisdom to recognize wisdom
you know so buub body may be wiser than
the average person but with regard to
Dharma I do not consider him to be
particularly
wise um I mean he's just been sucked
into leftist politics essentially you

know he's he's actually been speaking
you know in advocacy of women's
reproductive rights which is essentially
abortion and if any woman actually did
get an abortion as a result of his doing
this he would be excommunicated for life
for having essentially talked somebody
into committing murder because from the
point of view of terava Buddhism
regardless of what the queer Buddhist
academics say regardless of how Western
Buddhists feel about it it says right in
the texts that abortion is
murder
because the let's see rebirth linking
Consciousness begins at concep

conception a human life begins at
conception according to Terra Buddhism
and no amount of political correctness
is going to change
that so as bbod a wise monk he's wise
enough to grasp you know grasp the
intellectual aspects of Dharma and he's
wise enough to recognize wisdom when he
sees it generally not always I assume
but generally he's you know I mean he's
wise enough to have wanted to become a
monk in the first place and not just to
cure himself of
alcoholism or whatever you know not just
because he wanted to live an easy life
you know his his family disowned him
because I think he was a a Jewish person

from New York City whose devoutly Jewish
parents just disown him because he
became a a
Buddhist so I mean he must have
something going for him he's he's a
really good translator but that's that's
mainly intelligence more than wisdom
just the ability to translate something
well but uh yeah I would say he has he
has some wisdom I wouldn't consider him
to be a
sage I don't think he's anywhere near to
being
enlightened but uh you know he's above
the level of Joe Schmo the TV repair
man so I'm going to uh move on to Proto

pseudo monks next question here which is

a like follow up on the first one I

think he says I'm wondering how much

time to study versus practice what are

the advantages and disadvantages for

each route well I mean you need to study

or

learn why to meditate and how to

meditate and if you're going to be a

monk you need to learn you know the

rules how to bake a bowl how to sew

robes you know how to how to avoid

breaking

rules but I mean if if you're a Dharma

practitioner you need to know how to

practice why to practice and how to

practice and that's really all you

need because I mean you're just going to fill your head up with all kinds of ideas and some of the I mean none of the ideas are really going to apply to Ultimate

Reality and ideas are just kind of dangerous because you can start clinging to them and thinking that they are real they represent reality when really it's just an idea

so uh when I first became a monk I was told just study no more than one hour per day and practice the rest of the time so you need to learn the basics you know how and why to meditate or how and why to practice other aspects of

Dharma like generosity and so forth um
which is relatively simple and
straightforwards I mean if you have
trouble troubles in your meditation you
may have to meet with a teacher or or
you know look it up in a book you're
better off with a a living teacher if
you can find one who is qualified to
deal with your your
issues books can be excellent teachers
but they don't they're not very
responsive to an individual person's
needs
so yeah I mean the advantage is a pract
I mean there's no real disad Vantage of
practice unless you're practicing
ignorantly and you've got like a you've

been following a method that really is
not going to get you very far or can
even Lead You astray you know you're
practicing for the wrong reasons you
know you're trying to generate psychic
powers by you know chanting some weird
Mantra or something then yeah that you
might need a little more study to
understand dhama
better but yeah you don't really need to
to study DH all that much you know like
an like my teacher was saying like an
hour a day is probably
sufficient and that's that's if you're
really going for
it so disadvantages of of studying too

much first of all you're robbing
yourself of the time to practice and
also you just start clinging to these
ideas which are not the same as reality
and start just getting you're invested
in all this learning and it's it's you
know it's like the story of uh potila in
the in the commentaries in the DAP
commentary where the Buddha would just
call him you know pointless potila here
Here Comes pointless potila you know
there goes pointless potila and poila I
mean the whole story is an anachronism
because poila was an expert in the
titica you know he had he gotten it all
down you know he was teaching the
toptica to his students and so forth in

the Buddhist time there was no titica
especially there was no Abi pitica
yet and so finally potila started
thinking wow maybe there's something to
this and he decided he better find
himself a meditation teacher that he was
spending too much time studying and
teaching stuff in the texts although you
know texts didn't really exist yet at
the time and so finally he uh he goes to
this Monastery a long distance away
doesn't really explain why he went so
far and uh you know all the monks there
just refused to teach him because you
know you're a senior to us and you're
very learned and learned monks are are

hard to teach because they they're
already full of these ideas so finally
he got taught this relatively simple yet
profound meditation technique from this
little child novice who was already
fully enlightened or also this this it
reminds me of um it's one of the first
stories in in uh 101 Z Zen stories by uh
in in the book Zen flesh Zen bones which
was pretty much the book that converted
me to
Buddhism Zen flesh Zen bones compiled by
Paul reps and there's a well-known story
at the beginning where a scholar comes
to discuss philosophy with a zen master
and the Zen master sits him down and
gives him a a teac cup and then starts

pouring tea into the cup and just keeps pouring and pouring and the the tea is overflowing the cup and spilling out onto the table and the Zin Master just keeps pouring till finally The Scholar is saying why why do you keep pouring than that it's it's full you know no more will go in and then the the Zen master says well your your mind is the same way your mind is already so full of of information and ideas and beliefs that you know nothing I teach you is going to have much effect it's it's you know no more will go in and that's that's one of the main disadvantages of studying is you think you've got it

figured out you think you know it when
really it's just you're parting somebody
else's
ideas or I mean even if you come up with
your own ideas it's still at the at the
level of ideas you know it's not reality
and if you want to know reality you have
to experience it directly which is going
to be through meditative means rather
than through reading books although
sometimes I have to admit you just
sometimes you just come across the one
book that you really need to you really
need to read and it can just change the
way you look at
things so I guess I'll just move on to
uh the Proto sudo monk next

question which is in the experience of nibana is there awareness or does one transcend even awareness is there memory how do you think nibana is stored processed in the brain maybe with nural link we could copy the brain signals of an arant and download nibana into all beings then the arant will be mere bodh satva than will be more bodis satva than bodis svas doing the real work I used to have kind of that idea where you know you could just replicate the the brain signals of an Arun in in somebody else and you turn their brain into an Arun brain but I mean first of all we just don't have the karma for that so it's

not it's not going to happen our own

Karma will prevent that from happening

in one way or another but getting back

to the top part of this question is the

experience of nibana in the experience

of nibana is there awareness or does one

TR transcend even

awareness um is there

memory how do you think nibana is stored

or processed in the brain well Nana is

not stored or processed in the brain

it's just completely at a different

level of reality it's off the scale it's

not part of

samsara and so I mean it's not going to

be stored or processed in the

brain so there would be no memory either

no memory in nibana nibana is

differentiated you know there's no

distinction of this from that one

synonym of nibana is neap Pancha which

just means no

differentiation so if there is any

awareness then it would be

undifferentiated pure

awareness with no real distinct

content it wouldn't be awareness of this

or that or anything else it would just

be just pure undifferentiated awareness

which would be like

hegel's pure being which would be IND

indistinguishable from Pure non-being

because there's no discernable content

at

all it's just off the

scale but I don't think the neuralink

thing is going to

work I mean with regard to producing arh

Hans how you doing my dog is watching me

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question you want to say hi to everybody

okay

this is Tater my dog she's saying hi

look it see she's saying

hi

okay in case you didn't notice she has

one brown eye and one blue eye and a

head shaped like a

potato so we'll just move on to the next

question here this is from herward the

wake and herward the Wake says in Q&A number 7 before you mentioned in passing that the Gods in Buddhism had no interactions with humans but in the well-known story of Prince wandra the vandra Jaa The God Indra appears to The Prince and demands that he gives up his wife and children the story is sometimes compared to the sacrifice Abraham is commanded to make but rides a rough shot over Western sensibilities particularly current Western sensibilities is this an exception in the poly Canon therefore well I don't think that I said that the gods and Buddhism had no interactions with humans because that's clearly not

the case if you read the text gods are
continually having interactions with
monks with the Buddha I mean you read
the Jas the Indra or or Saka king of
Gods actually came down and was hanging
out with with a rabbit you know because
you had the wise rabbit that uh let's
see there was this W the the Sasa jataka
Sasa means hair so I guess he was a hair
not a rabbit there is a difference so
you had this wise hair who was the
Buddha in a previous
existence and he
was he was being auster this this hair
was and that causes Sak's Throne to heat
up he's got this Stone this this Throne
made of yellow stone and it heats up and

it's uncomfortable for them to sit on it
when humans or people down on Earth or
in this case hairs are
being too saintly and aere you know
they're they're they're generating Tapas
which is sort of like a athetic athetic
heat Tapas literally means heat but it
could also mean like like rigorous
austerity and so um the king Saka king
of Gods disguises himself as a like a
Brahman mendicant and comes down and the
rabbit or the hair I should say um had
made a vow that he was going to offer
offer food to any mendicant that came
along but because mendicants don't
generally eat rabbit food he was going

to sacrifice his own body and serve his
own meat that's that's what was heating
up the throne was this this intention to
do this and so Saka king of Gods
disguises himself as the Brahman micin
and tests the hair and the hair just
jumps right into the fire to cook
himself how how a hair even had a fire
going it doesn't explain that part and
he just wouldn't cook because of course
Saka king of Gods wouldn't let the
rabbit or the hair I should
say burn up in the fire and then as a
reward for this Saka king of Gods took a
took a mountain squeezed the juice out
of this mountain and then made the the
symbol of the rabbit on the face of the

Moon which is how you get the idea that
the Buddha is the Man in the Moon
because he was a rabbit or a hair I
should say in a previous life and and
then he got his image put on the surface
of the Moon and if you look at the Moon
look at it kind of tilt your head like
kind of like this it does look like a
rabbit it looks more like a rabbit than
a human
face so I mean the gods are continually
coming down especially I mean well I
should just back up i' I've just been
yammering away about Gods interacting
with people and rabbits hairs I should
say

but the thing is most I think the point
I was making at the time in in Q&A
number 74 is that for the most part
Davis don't have any interest in us you
know they've got their own lives to live
they've got their Celestial palaces and
and and nymphs and stuff or whatever it
is you know they could be a pulsating
geometric pattern or
something you know they don't have any
interest in us but some do they might
have been in a previous existence they
might still have a certain attachment or
concern with humans in general or with
certain humans for example one of my
favorite suas is the bajia sua which is
udana 110 you've got this atic he's not

a Buddhist he's living on the west coast
of India and he's he thinks that he's
enlightened but then AA who used to be
one of his relatives in a previous
life comes to him and says no you're
really not you're really not enlightened
but there is this goab Buddha who lives
in the Ganges Valley who is enlightened
and so then bah that's what inspired
Bahia to just pack up his stuff and
immediately head head towards the Buddha
in order to learn from him and uh I mean
sometimes you got like Maha mogana or
the Buddha himself going up into heaven
and interacting with Gods up there but
usually they're coming down here and of

course you've got

tree dwelling deities and so forth like

nature deities at the lower levels of of

De of small G Gods they're like nature

Spirits they're interacting with people

but for the most part most nonhuman like

like small G Gods beings that are higher

up than us on the scale they really

don't have any more interest than us

than we would have in a family of

squirrels living in a park half you know

half a mile down the road there might be

a few people who are really into feeding

squirrels so they'll they'll go down

there and and feed the squirrels or

whatever but for the most part most Gods

most superhuman beings really don't give

a about us they don't hate us or

love us or anything it's just you know

it's like a family of squirrels in a

park half a mile from

here or an antill or

something so so let's see where's the

question here is this an exception to

the poly Canon therefore now there's

there's plenty of stories in the poly

texts about gods and especially monks

interacting and like Mara also is a God

and he's continually coming down and

trying to influence

people like lead them astray and keep

them from becoming enlightened

mainly

so yeah so I mean if I did say that gods and Buddhism have no interactions with humans I misspoke but probably I was saying that for the most part they have no interest in us and so we don't pray to them you know Buddhists don't pray to the to the gods they don't make sacrifices to the gods um unless it's like in Burma you've got the KN cult which was like the religion of Burma before they converted to Buddhism and it's just sort of vestigal still exists there and they'll make little offerings to some deity or other you know just a little have a safe trip when they drive to Mandalay and back something like that but uh in Buddhism like Orthodox

mainstream Buddhism you don't pray to the gods you don't and you don't make offerings to them because they really don't have much interest in us and they really don't have the power to alter our destiny because our destiny is made by our own

Karma so that was the main point I'm pretty sure so I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from keep D vinia and keep D vinia says would you have eaten a plant as a monk that would have reduced your libido at times when you were extremely horny or would this be cheating I don't know tell you the TR that's kind of a weird question and I'm

I'm not exactly sure I mean there was
this one medicine that I took that
completely abolished my libido
it was it was it was called Yeta it's
it's lick salt literally in in Burmese
translated into English lick salt it's
kind of medicine where you pour a little
bit into your hand and you lick it up
and it's kind of salty it's tastes kind
of like hardboiled egg yolk too it's got
I don't know what ingredients in
it but uh I got this special kind it was
like five Tigers brand lick salt and one
of my supporters warned me that there
was some ingredient in there that was
dead de L poison but I'm
thinking they wouldn't be selling the

stuff if it was like killing off all
their customers so I tried it because I
was having like a indigestion problem
you know I'd be eating a belly full of
food because a monk only well at least I
as a monk ate only one meal a day so you
eat a full day supply of food in one
sitting and then sometimes it just won't
digest it's like your belly is too full
you know sort of like your mouth is too
full you can't chew your stomach gets
too full it can't digest I was I was
having problems with that so I took some
of this five Tigers brand lick salt and
um it one one of the symptoms I mean it
worked like a charm for helping me

digest my food that was no problem at
all but it also abolished my libido for
days and also I just broke out in this
rash all over my body it started on my
tongue and like the lining of my mouth
and then spread from there throughout my
entire body and it was
horrible and I'm not even sure why I'm
explaining all this to you but I didn't
miss I mean to have my libido just just
essentially evaporate I I missed it I
mean it's life without libido is just it
just seems so vapid and empty and
pointless in a way you know I think
Freud kind of I don't think that Freud
was really authoritative on a lot of
things but uh he he kind of sort of was

right on that one that libido is just
like built in it's like your sex drive
is is what's pushing you through life
pretty sure Freud said something along
those lines and there is something to
that but would I have eaten a plant as a
monk that would have reduced my libido I
don't know see that's that's the weird
thing about this question is maybe I
would maybe I wouldn't it would depend
on what kind of mood I was in or
something
man I don't know what the plant would be
though are there are there any libido
reducing plants I've I've heard that
like salt peter like potassium nitrate

has a libido reducing quality to it
which was causing soldiers back in the
1700s to be eating black powder which
has ammonium nitrate in it to just
reduce their sex drive so they won't be
uh seeing their their comrades in arms
as strangely
attractive so I guess I'll just move on
to next question because I really don't
know if I would have taken the plant it
would depend on the circumstances what
kind of plant it was you know all this
kind of stuff you know what were the
side effects what did other people who
had taken it before have to say about it
that kind of thing so I'll just move on
to keep the what are you doing stop

it man all of a sudden they decide to

start playing right behind me stop

playing get

serious silly

dogs stop

it man man okay keep the Vin's next

question were there no monasteries in

the mountains of Burma where you could

have stayed during heat periods actually

yeah like Shan the whole Shan plateau in

Western Burma is like a 4,000 foot high

plateau and uh it's relatively cool up

there it gets down to about freezing in

the winter time and there was a

monastery

there that was set up especially for

West monks in the T Pulu tradition it
was near the town of mayo which is now
called pin uen and it was originally set
up by the British during British
colonial times by uh Colonel May that's
why it was called Mayo which means
Maytown and it was set up as a hill
station for Burmese army officers
getting out of the Blazing furnace likee
heat of central Burma during the hot
season and uh not far from there there
was a monastery like I said set up for
monks like me Western monks ordani the
Tom Pulu tradition but um in my in the
early years my early years as a monk in
Burma the the Abbot there just he was he
was a western monk too he was the senior

monk there and he just talked all the time and usually it wasn't about damai he'd be talking about some really good cricket bat that he used to have or or like motorcycle writing and stuff that he did before he was a monk and just gossip and this kind of stuff and I just kind of avoided the monastery most of the time just

because this the Abbot was always like coming over and wanting to hang out and just talk all the time but um like the last Monastery I stayed at in Burma before coming back to America the last time was that same Monastery after that that monk had uh

left so yeah there are places in Burma like Burma is surrounded by mountain ranges and and so there are places in the mountains where you can go I mean some of the mountains areas like in the in the west it's like the hill tribes are were converted to Christianity by missionaries in British colonial times mostly but uh like the Shan Plateau the shans are
Buddhist so yeah you can do that it's the thing is it's too cold in the wintertime for to be living without electricity and and
just heating water like in at that Monastery that I was staying at I mean you take a bucket and then you light

candles underneath the bucket and that
would warm up the water just warm enough
that you could pour it over yourself
without going into some kind of shock or
just Keeling over dead or or something
approximately as unpleasant cuz it was I
mean taking a shower in ice water is not
pleasant that was about the only time
that
uh I I don't like being cold is when I'm
bathing so but I mean I'm I'm giving
like a 20 minute long answer to this
question is is like essentially a yes or
no question is where there no
monasteries in the mountains of Burma
where you could have stayed during heat

periods and yeah I eventually did that I

I did try staying at Orlando cop on

National

Park um to get out of the the Blazing

Heat but the rainy season there was just

horrible because the AL kaspa National

Park is it's like two ranges of high

hills shaped like a V and I would be

right in the bottom of that V where I

was staying and the wind the monsoon

wind would be blowing this way and the

hills would just block all the wind it

was just like super humid and hot and

just no wind at all which just like the

misery

triangle when you've got high temp

temperature high humidity and no wind

that's that's just it's not

good so let's see here but yeah there

were places like that and I I stay one

or two of them so I'll just move on to

keep the venea next

question do you know of any well before

I before I do that one I would say that

most of the uh the main meditation

centers now like mahasi and Pa and

pandama that they've all got Monastery

branches in this same mimo which is now

called panin in that area so it's it's

like 50 miles from

Mandalay and uh the easy access just on

the the edge of the Shen Plateau it's

more or less temperate temperate weather

there but cold in the

wintertime okay so anyways the next

question uh from keep the vinia is do

you know of any suta passages that can

be shown to lay people who don't care

about monks to make them feel

guilty and I don't think it would be

good to deliberately try to make anyone

feel guilty because feeling guilty is

Bad Karma you you'd be inspiring UNH

wholesome mental States in another

person because the feeling of guilt is

always bad karma you know remorse regret

always bad it's called Kucha in in poly

and is a negative UNH wholesome mental

state so you shouldn't be trying to

cause anybody to feel guilty even if you

know they just murdered an entire room

full of nuns and

orphans although you really shouldn't be

hanging out with people like that

anyway so let's see here any psea

passages that be should delay people who

don't care about monks just forget about

making them feel guilty well I mean

almost the entire toptica is dedicated

towards monks I mean the Buddha himself

was a monk you know like all of his

first disciples were

monks that Buddhism was designed for

monks by a

monk so I mean there are there are books

like the the Peta Wu The the book of

Ghost Stories the the entire purpose of

that book apparently is to point out

that if you're not generous and

well-mannered towards m

you get punished by your own

Karma you know you you might be very

virtuous but then you did this one like

you shafted a monk once or something or

in some cases I mean they do lots of

Merit like my favorite story from the

payto watu the ghost stories this i'

I've told this story before I'll give

you just a condensed version of it this

woman her her she and her husband were

donating stuff to the monks all the time

and they got lot lots and lots of Merit

for for donating monasteries and

buildings and and walking meditation
paths and bringing food and and other
things to the monks like pretty much
every day making offerings to the monks
they got this mountain of Merit but then
she was unfaithful to him once and then
she lied to him about it and make this
made this false oath and so because of
all the Merit she got for supporting
monks
essentially she lived almost like a
goddess she was living in this Golden
Palace in the foothills of the Himalayas
with this you know
this like a staff of of servants but
every night she'd go into a trance and

and go outside and be devoured by a big black dog and then her bones would fall into this Lotus Pond where they would grow back she'd grow a new body and then climb out and go up back to bed again every night that would happen because of this one thing she did but I mean the whole point is that I mean the main purpose of that book is just pointing out the benefits of supporting monks you know how you're going to get this mountain of Merit and if you you do anything bad like not supporting monks then you get punished for it and it's it was probably the whole stories were just devised by Wise Guy monks who were trying to get people to offer them more

stuff but I mean you just read the text almost almost all sutas are dedicated to monks and the Buddha himself was a monk and people who don't par who don't care about monks especially Western Buddhists who don't care about monks I mean they're just misguided they just don't get it you know they want this lukewarm secular meditation method essentially

so yeah yeah do I know of any sua passages that can be sh to lay people who don't care about monks just pick a sua at random and it'll be dedicated towards monks and it'll be taught by a monk you know almost every case there

might be a few nuns you know there are a few nuns who who have uh taught some sutas in the texts but you know it's 99.9%
monks so I mean if if they still don't get it they just don't want to get it you know they just like my experience some Western some Western Buddhists not all of them but some Western Buddhists just feel like indignant that monks even exist because it somehow makes their own lukewarmness seem not good enough you know it's like they're setting themselves up over us you know they're even dressed in these weird garments to to separate themselves from us because they they want to be superior to us

which isn't the truth at

all the the truth is you know they're

actually trying to practice dhama

correctly in accordance with the texts

and that's what the texts tell them to

do and so they're doing it and then

these lukewarm people that don't want to

do that resent that that does happen and

I don't think you're going to get very

far by showing them texts about how the

the Buddha was a monk and how almost

everybody that he taught was a monk at

least in the texts you know most of the

the sutas are directed towards

monks and I don't think they really care

say well that was ancient India that

that doesn't apply anymore or

something so I guess I'll just move on

to the next question here I'm I'm taking

way too long answering each question I

think I'm G to have to start being more

concise just get to the

point so the next question is from five

precept Pete and five precept Pete says

in a past Q&A you mentioned that bur's

villagers would go to the monastery and

take the precepts thinking that alone is

meritorious thinking that alone is

meritorious even though they didn't

intend to keep them could you speak to

other fallacies regarding

Merit yeah well the burmes do think that

just the act of taking precepts even

though you have no intention of keeping those precepts is meritorious at least you're keeping the precepts while you're taking
them but I remember one time this family came to visit me on upula today they took eight precepts which includes no you know self beautification or anything and just right as they're leaving a teenage girl who was among them just saw a flower that fell from a tree on the ground she just picked it up and put it in her hair and broke the
precept you know they just think that you just get Merit for doing the ceremonies and to some degree you do but

you get more Merit if you actually kept
the precepts after taking them in fact
you get more Merit for keeping precepts
without taking them formally and during
a a ceremony or a ritual then you would
by doing the ceremony and then not
keeping the precepts but they just don't
see it that way another fallacy that
they have with regard to
Merit is that um it's I've talked about
this before they can they see Merit is
it's it's just kind of a
transaction that
it's h i don't know where to start with
this like one example is Burmese Days by
George Orwell George Orwell who wrote
Animal Farm in 1984 he actually lived in

Burma during British colonial times I
think he was like a like a police
officer near uh oh where was it not
Sho I can't remember the name of the
town but anyway um the villain is upo
chin and he's this evil guy and his wife
who's this humble Meek devout buddist
lady keeps telling him that he's an evil
man he's going to go to hell and he says
oh you don't know anything I'm going to
build a pagota because the Burmese think
you get so much Merit for building a
pagot that it'll just wash away your
sins and you're guaranteed of Heaven
which uh isn't exactly true also they
really are are keen on offering stuff to

monks just because Wise Guy monks are
just pounding away how much Merit
they're going to get by offering stuff
to monks so that they would rather give
a fat monk who's already got 50 bowls of
food in front of him another bowl of
food rather than give it to some hungry
Village kid who's actually
hungry so they just see it as a kind of
it's almost like money you know they're
trying to buy a Stairway to Heaven
essentially and it's all very cookbook
like and mechanistic and you just do
this this and
this I lived in a forest Monastery where
every once in a while a fortune teller
would tell somebody you need Merit you

need to earn some Merit so you should
rescue a chicken from a butcher and let
it go at a monastery and so they'd bring
this this little dowy chick just a few
days old and they they'd want to release
it at the monastery and I tell them that
that baby chicken's going to survive
maybe two days tops cuz there's like
Hawks and Falcons and monitor lizards
and snakes and everything that chicken
doesn't have a chance and they would
just get like this sick look on their
face they don't want to hear this you
know it's like the fortune deler told
them to get the chicken turn it loose at
the monastery and that by golly that's

that's what they're going to do they

don't care if the chicken survives you

know they don't give a that's just

an inconvenience for

them so it's yeah it's just this idea

that Merit just comes from outward

actions without really taking into

consideration the the mental states that

are really making the karma and any

Merit that is made is going to be made

through mental States and not through

this mechanical outward action just

following some cookbook

method I remember

my my teacher was giving a talk once on

if you want the most Merit you've got to

you've got to give or you know do

meritorious things without any idea of
Merit and then it was like you know the
the people that were listening to this
is like how do I do this I want the most
Merit I can so how am I going to like
not desire Merit while I'm doing it in
order to get the most Merit you know
it's just this weird convoluted andan
they're thinking of Merit as a kind of
cosmic money you know it's like
spiritual money it's essentially uh
spiritual
materialism
so yeah I I guess I spoke of a few other
fallacies so I'll just move on to five
precept Pete's next question did the

Buddha encourage Merit making or was
that a later addition um I think he may
have encouraged Merit making for the the
Normie villagers he certainly wasn't
encouraging Merit making for monks I
mean a monk is supposed to go beyond
Merit and demerit you a monk is supposed
to go beyond good and evil because if
you're doing you know evil actions of
course you're making Bad Karma if you're
doing good actions you're making good
karma but still good karma is still
samsaric it's just going to get you into
heaven which is just a higher level of
ssara so you're just trying to leave the
whole system of good and bad behind you
know you just become lawful neutral

essentially

and I'm still waving my arms around a

lot those of you who uh are just

listening without watching are really

missing out on all the arm waving I have

to

admit so let's see here yeah so I think

that it's possible I mean you can't

really know for sure but I do think that

it's it's very possible that the Buddha

did kind

of talk I mean it's a way of encouraging

people to do good things by you know

saying that you'll get good karma when

you do these good things and it will be

good for you and good things will happen

to you because of this so I mean that's

how you would talk to um you know just

the illiterate villager who is never

going to become a monk he's already got

a wife and five kids you know he's he's

a subsistence

farmer and it's just not really an

option for him so yeah I mean why not

it's skillful means and it's true I mean

at their level that that's what they're

ready for you know they're not ready for

Nirvana yet

they're not going to attain you know

fourth Janna they're not going to get

psychic

powers so you just teach them something

simple that will lead them in a good

direction so it wouldn't surprise me at
all if the Buddha did encourage Merit
making among lay people but certainly
not among not ordained
renuncian so I'll just move on to the
next question this is from
Toronto and Toronto says how does
repentance work in terod and Buddhism
are there any rituals or practices that
could be useful I'm often haunted by
memories where I wasn't mindful of the
precepts well I got to take a sip of my
beverage
here well
repentance I was going to look this up
in the dictionary this um I should have

looked up religion and also I should
have looked up repentance in the
dictionary before answering this
question repentance is really more of a
Christian term it's more of a Christian
concept than a Buddhist one and
repentance seems to me that you have to
have some kind of regret for what you
did repent you know you got to feel
sorry or guilty you got to feel some
kind of guilt and Buddhism Buddhist
ethics just don't work that way I was
just mentioning a few minutes ago that
any kind of remorse or regret or
feelings of guilt are necessarily always
is Bad Karma it just make things worse
and so it's just not recommended that

you ever wallow in any kind of regret or remorse or even worry I mean worry is also Kucha so you worry about the past you know like things that you did or you worry about the future I mean it's it's still Kucha and it's still bad karma and it just makes things worse

so yeah that would be the first thing I would say I mean that's the second most important thing I would teach any anybody about Buddhism first most important thing is desire is the cause of all suffering whenever you are unhappy it's because you are craving something it may be a subliminal level where you're not fully aware of it but

still it's there and secondly the second
thing I would teach anybody about
Buddhism if you only know two things
about Buddhism one is what what I
already said all desire is caused by
desire or all suffering is caused by
desire second regret remorse worry are
always bad karma you're always better
off without them so what happens when a
a good
Buddhist um does something does
something wrong does something bad does
something UNH
wholesome then there's nothing at all
wrong with admitting that you did it and
resolving to try to do better in the
future don't beat yourself up over it I

mean you fall down you just get back up
again and continue moving
forwards and try to be more careful
about not falling down in
future so um sometimes in the in the
sutas you know somebody will do
something wrong they'll go to a monk
that they respect and essentially
confess what they did for the sake of
helping them to restrain themselves in
future and then the monk might say you
know sadu sadu well done you should
restrain yourself in future and you know
go in peace you know sin no
more so that's essentially the closest
thing there is for for Lay people

especially monks have confession which
is now just it's just degenerated into a
ritual blah blah blah that hardly means
anything but uh lay lay people or monks
if they if they've done something that
they really think is is bad and they you
know they want to try and do better then
it it may help them to just go and
confess to somebody that they respect
somebody that they consider to be a wise
good person relatively speaking um just
as a an a help in in them res
restraining themselves in future just
coming clean with it and you know I'll
try to do
better and then you know then the other
person just says you know well done you

should do

better so yeah yeah I think that would

be my answer to this

question how does repentance work in

terana

Buddhism yeah if if repentance has any

kind of feelings of guilt or remorse

then there is no repentance work in

Terra Buddhism but there is

confession just you know you just come

clean with another person you respect

and just for the sake of helping you to

do better in

future so the next question is from

Diane and Diane says what is the

traditional way for Buddhists to get

married and it depends on what kind of
Buddhism it is like in by the time
Buddhism made it to China and Japan and
Korea I'm sure that you had Buddhist
priests conducting wedding ceremonies
but in terraa Buddhism like the earliest
ancient Indian Buddhism it was strictly
prohibited for a monk to participate in
a wedding ceremony that that was a sesa
offense he'd have to do penants for six
days and six nights night for having
done that and so Buddhism like early
Buddhism was a monastic renunciation
system I mean it was it was dedicated
for mainly for
renuncian and so it really doesn't want
to encourage marriage at least within

the system but of course people would get married anyway but that was just a secular thing it was not a Buddhist thing marriage is secular and not like a Rel religious function in Terra Buddhism and so the traditional way for Buddhists to get married like in Burma that you just go to the Village headman and sign some papers and then you're married and then after you're already married then you throw the the reception and then you invite monks and and like the monk will give a sermon and bless your marriage after the deed is already done he can't help to get you married but after you're already married then he can bless your

marriage and you know you can earn earn
Merit by sometimes it's really cute you
know the the G the bride and groom
they'll you know each be holding
something that they're offering like a
set of robes a new set of robes you know
each one of them will be holding one end
of it and offering it to the monk as
kind of you know they're both earning
Merit now as as a family kind of a thing
and then they you know they throw a
party for the whole village and they'll
be cooking up Vats of of you know bean
stew and and stuff
rice lots of rice and then lots of uh
like uh rice flour cake stuff sweetened
with palm palm sugar coconut palm sugar

and rice flour are the three main
ingredients of almost any Burmese
delicacy so let's see I guess I answered
that it's uh yeah I mean it's not really
a Buddhist ceremony it's just it's just
entirely secular you know it's just it's
like going going to City Hall to get
married that's the way they do it in
Burma and then the monks can bless it
after you're already married and then
let see Diane's next question here is do
Buddhists favor
cremation and yeah they do I mean it in
Ancient India cremation was the General
way of disposing of
bodies

um and in Burma now monks are cremated
and the parents of monks are cremated
but everybody else is buried as a
general rule at least out in the
Villages that's the way it is so they'll
bury like Ordinary People but still
cremate the monks and this as a matter
of respect for the parents of monks
they'll cremate the parents of monks
too so but I mean traditionally in
Ancient India that was what happened I
mean the Buddha himself was
cremated so yeah the answer to that is
yeah yeah and so I move on to the next
question which is the last question and
we've been going for almost two and a
half hours this is from White Ash Piper

and white ash Piper says in your talk
with Brian Rue titled cringe Buddhism
you stated that man is corrupt in your
opinion why is this so well everybody's
got defilements
kesas um unless you're a perfect Saint
then you're going to have a certain
amount of greed you're going to have a
certain amount of just looking out for
number one you know everybody's got a
price and all that I can't remember the
context in which I said that people in
general are corrupt but you know nobody
is entirely pure and saintly other than
a very small number of pure
Saints and so it's you know you watch

The Walking Dead I was I've been talking
about how I was binge watching The
Walking Dead and really I mean it's like
when civilization collapses it's just
natural that the only law remaining will
be the law of the Jungle and that's just
the way it is it's going to be people
are going to
just they'll kill you just to take your
stuff and that's just I mean if
civilization
collapses then it's like people's to
some degree their true colors come out
it's like they've been following the law
and not like ripping people off and you
know just stealing their stuff or you
know killing them and taking their stuff

um just because it's against the law

plus of course things are running so

well that it's easier just to go to the

store and buy it then to kill somebody

to take his stuff but when civilization

collapses then I mean people just start

becoming social paths and it's it's

always kind of the potential for that is

always latent

inside and you know

it's it's there is some truth in the

statement everybody has a price you know

it's like scientists can be bought just

as easily as politicians can be bought

so I mean trust the science is

uh yeah it's it's really it's it's not

aging well that uh I

mean just anybody can be

corrupt

it's yeah I don't know how to answer

this

question I don't know why I'm getting

Tongue Tied it's fairly straightforward

you know it's um I mean the Christians

of course would have their own their own

take on why it is that everybody is is a

sinner Buddhism sin and sinners are

really not it's not really Buddhist

jargon but still we've got kesa that's

why we're here I mean we are here on

this world because we are not pure we

we're not Saints we're not sages we are

not

enlightened and so we've got greed hate
and delusion and sometimes the
circumstances will favor that greed hate
and delusion
so I guess that's what I why I said it
although again I I don't recall the
exact context of why I said it but I
think it was you know corruption in the
Catholic church or something like that
and I was just pointing out that it's
not just peculiar to Catholics it's just
peculiar to the entire human race that
that kind of stuff
happens so I guess that's it that's
that's the last question and I think I
answered it I hope I answered your

questions most

I hope I answered at least 90% of them

well

enough so if you got any more questions

feel free to ask and put them in the

comments below and and uh hit the like

button and subscribe if you haven't

already and check out the URL links

including the the links to my books on

Amazon and remember that I may be tardy

next week because I'm going to be

traveling and I just may not get around

to doing a Q&A um at the usual time when

I do a Q&A so it may be late and uh

thank you all for uh keeping your your

questions down to uh three at the most

and uh be happy and now I've got to do

the special thing right or I stop

recording or I got to do this and then I

got to do this okay

Okay, hello and welcome to episode 77 of question and answer. I'm your host Paññobhāsa.

And we're getting into really high numbers. I never really anticipated getting up into the 70s on these things.

And probably because the numbers are getting so high, I'm going to start getting the numbers wrong.

Like skipping numbers or I don't know, maybe even writing the numbers upside down or something just because the numbers are getting so high. I don't know how Joe Rogan does it.

Anyways, I got back from vacation yesterday.

Drove from Lake Erie all the way to

Southern North Carolina in continuous

snow.

So global warming causes more snow.

Is apparently the situation.

And

yeah, we were like averaging like 45

miles an hour the whole way back just

because of all the snow on the road and

the snow falling onto the windshield and

everything.

So

but we did it. And here we are. I'm back

in the studio room with the dogs.

And so I'm going to start answering

questions cuz that's like kind of why I

do these.

These question and answers is to answer questions. And the first question is from Pranav.

And Pranav says, "What's the story of the founder of your ordination lineage who considered himself a Bodhisatta?"

Yeah, that would be Taungpulu Sayadaw, the very venerable late Taungpulu Sayadaw of Central Burma, who was the founder of the Taungpulu Forest Tradition in which I was ordained for 30 years.

And

it was common knowledge among the Burmese monks in the Taungpulu tradition that he was a Bodhisatta, that he wanted

to become a Buddha in the future rather than just an ordinary arahant.

And I think one of the main pieces of evidence for that was that when he was in America, he came to America two two times I think.

Um

and some starry-eyed Westerner asked him if he was an arahant.

And his reply was along the lines of, "I have made a multi-life commitment."

Which

indicated that he was a bodhisattva or considered himself a bodhisattva. And there are quite a lot of those. Some of them with

um better reasons than others I think.

But um

like I've been told that uh

Sayadaw U Silananda, who is one of the

most famous monks in Burma, also

considers himself to be a bodhisattva.

Um

what is the story of him?

Well, I mean he was just a simple

village boy. He came from um central

Burma, maybe 100 miles south of

Mandalay. Like the general area of

Meiktila, if any of you know where

Meiktila is.

And uh

he was less of a scholar than a lot of

monks, but he was very strict in his

practice. Or at least his interpretation
of of Vinaya he followed strictly. There
were a few things that uh
he he probably I mean I didn't consider
to be correct. For example, I think he
considered dawn to be like 4:00 a.m.
Just around around the clock or just
just all year long he considered 4:00
a.m. to be dawn, which isn't exactly the
case, but
something like that is relatively minor.
And he was one of the few
forest monks who were really well, I
mean he he made a name for himself
just by being like an ascetic.
For example, he was so strict that he
was even experimenting with trying to

sleep in a standing position.

Maybe he should have read the The Gulag Archipelago by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.

Cuz uh there were a few guys in there that learned how to sleep standing up in order to uh survive the interrogation process.

But um

I don't I'm not exactly sure what to say about him. I really I never met him. He died before I'd ever heard of him.

But um I was the the student or disciple of two of of his personal disciples. And I'd been to his monastery out I stayed at at Chauk Hsin Doya for more than 3

years, which was his original monastery

before he moved to Tong

Tong Pu Lu itself literally means

something like teeny weeny hill. Tong

means hill or mountain. Pu Lu is like

itsy bitsy. You know, it's it's a small

hill.

And uh

the the monastery was located on top of

the hill.

And I think one reason why he became so

famous

was because Webu Sayadaw was considered

to be an arahant in central Burma. And

when Webu Sayadaw died, it was like the

people were looking around for a kind of

a a successor for being like the famous

enlightened Sayadaw and they settled on Tong Pu Lu Sayadaw.

And he had one of the same teachers as Mahasi Sayadaw, which is explains why the Tong Pu Lu method and the Mahasi method are similar with regard to emphasizing mindfulness.

Um I can't remember the name of the famous monk who was instrumental in reviving mindfulness as a Theravada Buddhist meditation technique pretty much throughout the world. It was like the Mahasi method especially just spread to other Theravada Buddhist countries with a considerable resistance in Sri Lanka. There was a quite a lot of

debate. You I think you can find like

the the controversy going back and forth

in some booklet that's sold by the

Buddhist publication society in Sri

Lanka

where it was like the the conservative

Sri Lankan monks were sort of

sort of arguing against the Mahasi

method.

But uh

let's see.

What else can I say? He died back around

1980,

plus or minus two years.

So, I was in high school at the time.

Um and he did come to America a few

times and that's why there was a Tong

Phu monastery established in America cuz

he wanted

America He wanted to spread Dhamma to

the west, which is a

an a laudable motivation for coming to

America.

And uh it didn't really work out very

well though because there were

I mean, there's all kinds of problems.

It was

monasteries like ashrams can be a [__]

accelerators where it just kind of

brings out people's neurotic tendencies

and so forth. Just sort of the

the excessive self-restraint required to

practice Theravada Buddhism properly.

Um it just it can just cause this

like neurotic outbursts in people and so

forth. And uh it was it happened in

California, which uh

I mean, it's sort of the cap the the

American Mecca of

like just weird behavior anyway.

But uh I'm just sort of rambling all

over the place cuz I really don't have

like this structured

description or explanation of Tong Phu

Siang Tao.

But um

yeah, I mean, mainly he was just a

simple I mean, he was not an

intellectual. He was just a simple

practitioner who took it very seriously

and got quite a following. Although the Tong Pul tradition is now in relatively severe decline. There are a few famous disciples of Tong Pul Sayadaw or disciples of disciples of Tong Pul Sayadaw that are still high-profile in Burma, but uh
like Chelsea and Doya, which was the monastery where I started. I was I was staying. It was the the main Tong Pul monastery where I stayed. It's uh
My my teacher, Venerable Chelsea and Doya Sayadaw
He died and he was replaced by kind of a scholar monk who really was not a serious or like a really

deep practitioner.

And uh

I think most most Burmese people can

kind of pick up on that, you know, they

can they can they've got a good nose for

saintliness.

And so uh yeah, it's it's it's in

decline now. I think there might be one

Western monk who is technically ordained

in the Tong Pul tradition who is still

in robes.

And uh he was a follower of the Mahasi

method from the beginning. He really

never did follow the Tong Pul method

much. He just was ordained in the

tradition and then just kept following

the the Mahasi method.

So, I guess that's the story. I mean

um

Yeah, I'm I really don't know that that

much

about Tong Pul Sayadaw to tell you the

truth. It's like one of my his his

teachings is one of my favorites is just

the the simple his simple advice on how

to practice better, which is eat less,

sleep less, read less, talk less.

And uh he did all four of those.

And also the Tong Pul tradition was

famous for Tong Pul monks never lying

down. They sleep in a sitting position.

Although I eventually started lying down

just because in blazing hot central

Burma, it's the coolest way to be is
just spread eagle on your back on a
cement floor.
Anything you lean back against just gets
fouled with sweat.
So, I guess that's a good enough story
of the founder of my ordination lineage,
I guess.
Uh so, let's move on to Prahna's next
question.
I'm just sort of getting my stride. It's
sort of like uh
Somerset Maugham his short stories. It's
weird how he's sort of like a carpenter
who's not very good at cutting wood,
apparently. So, that at first when
you're using a hand saw, it kind of

moves from side to side until you get
the groove going.
That's kind of like how I'm starting
this this Q&A.
It's It's moving The blade is moving
side to side until the groove gets cut,
but I'm getting there.
So, Prahna's next question here is,
"And you believe that St. John of the
Cross could be enlightened? If that's
so, did he follow something like Noble
Eightfold Path? Because the Buddha said
anyone outside the Buddha Sasana can be
enlightened if they have Noble Eightfold
Path."
Well, I mean, first of all, I would just

say that I mean, it's it's very

difficult if not absolutely impossible

to know for sure

what the Buddha said because there's so

many words attributed to the Buddha in

the texts that are unlikely to have been

said by him.

And it's a common mistake to just assume

that the obviously weird stuff it was

not said by him, but the sensible

sounding stuff

was very likely

spoken by him, but you would think that

a lot of the sensible sounding stuff

could could be fake, too.

So, I'm I'm sorry to like uh

rain on people's faith-based parade, but

um it is good to be skeptical to some

degree.

But uh getting back to the question

here.

See, if that is so, did he follow

something like the Noble Eightfold Path?

Well, I mean, he was a serious

contemplative monk in

uh Counter-Reformation Spain, like 16th

century Spain. And so, they had very

strict practice and

um in some ways stricter than Buddhist

monks, in some ways less strict.

But um

yeah, I I would say that with regard to

moral restraint and also with regard to

meditation and mindfulness, that it was
comparable to what uh a Theravada
Buddhist monk practices.
So, I mean, you could say that he didn't
have right view because he was a Roman
Catholic and he revered the Virgin Mary.
I think If I remember correctly, his
favorite book of the entire Bible was
the Song of Songs, which is rather
risque love poetry. Um
so,
he probably
didn't have right view at the
superficial level, but when you're in a
state of deep contemplation, you're not
thinking anything and that's when you're
having your most profound realizations.

Is when you're not thinking anything.

So, when you're not thinking anything,

all the superficial differences in

dogmas uh becomes largely irrelevant.

So,

yeah, I mean, he was very moral. He was

he was a genuine saint. He wasn't just a

saint because he happened to

um be on the winning side of a debate or

some such. There are there are saints

that are called saints that really were

not saintly people at all, like Saint

Cyril of Alexandria, was just an awful

person.

But um

Saint John of the Cross was definitely a

saintly person and a wise person and
also a meditation master, and very moral
person, and just, you know, forgiving
his enemies, and and doing all the
things that Christians and Buddhists are
supposed to do.
So, we'll just move on to the next
question. This is from
um
And um says, "How was your vacation?"
Well, my vacation was fine. It was It
was nice. It was kind of strange that we
picked the middle of January to go to
Lake Erie
where it was I mean, it never got above
freezing the whole the whole time we
were on vacation, and it got down to

about 3°,

which uh is the coldest weather I've

experienced since I was in Anchorage,

Alaska, around the year 1990, where it

was like 25 below zero.

But, um yeah, it was It was nice. It was

pleasant.

Um

but that leads to the second part of the

second question from um

which was, "Have you met your dog

again?" And unfortunately, I didn't get

to meet Genghis. I mean, that was That

was a disappointment for me. I was I was

looking forward to seeing my dog again.

And the thing was, it was such wintry

weather that the farm where he lived had the power out.

And it was just hard to get there, and so we wound up not going. There's a number of things that we were had planned to do, and because of the weather, it just didn't work out. We were going to go to the Toledo Aquarium, also, which was closed. And uh there was some art exhibit that my sweetheart's mama wanted to see, and then that one didn't work out, either.

So,

so unfortunately, I didn't get to see my dog this time. I hope next time I will get to see Genghis again, and there'll be the tearful reunion, and wagging of

tails, and so forth.

Um

So, yeah, the vacation was fine. It was

It was a restful vacation. It was a a

vacation.

The trip back was somewhat less restful.

But, um

all in all, it was a good vacation.

So, I think I'll just move on to the

next question here.

And this is

from you know I'm with it.

And you know I'm with it says, "What are

your thoughts on Thomas Sowell?"

And I'm going to look and make sure that

this thing is recording because

I've had bad experiences with doing an entire Q&A and then have it not record. But, it looks like it's recording. And I trust it more or less.

So, back to you know I'm with it's question here. "What are your thoughts on Thomas Sowell? Seems like the woke people's worst nightmare. Most people I'm associated with are entangled in woke narratives, so I'm looking for non-Buddhist ways of deconstructing cultural Marxism and pointing out the reality of things, not the rhetoric of how things should be."

Um I really don't have a lot of exposure to Thomas Sowell. I mean, he's he's a a black conservative, which makes him

pretty much satanic from the point of view of the hysterical left. I mean, if there's one kind of person they hate more than a white conservative, it's a black conservative. You know, like Larry Elder,
who has run for president at least once, ran for governor of California at least once. And I know more about Larry Elder than about Thomas Sowell.
Um I mean, he's just, you know, the black face of white supremacy and all of this kind of stuff. I mean, they really don't know, like the progressive left, you know, the hysterical
faction of the progressive left, which

is a goodly sized faction within the progressive left.

Um they just don't know how to deal with black conservatives or black people who just don't follow along with what they're supposed to follow along with, which is leftism, you know, the the free stuff.

And uh I mean, they just they just lose it a lot of the time. They just they seriously, I think like people like Thomas Sowell and Larry Elder and Clarence Thomas and you know, high-profile intelligent successful black men in the West who nevertheless are conservative, you know, they vote Republican. It's just like they're

abomination.

It's like they should not exist. I mean,

I'm sure that there are lots of

hysterical leftists who just think that

you know, people like that should not

exist.

Of course, they think anyone who doesn't

agree with them should not exist.

So, yeah, getting back to the question,

what are my thoughts on Thomas Sowell?

Um yeah, I don't think I would agree

with him on any on everything.

Like

I think that he completely rejects or

largely, you know, mostly rejects any

kind of genetic component in like

cognitive skills and so forth, which I

would not.

But um

yeah, I mean, he's uh

he's very eloquent, very well-spoken,

very articulate.

And he can explain conservativism in

intelligent you know, reasonable

language.

But intelligent reasonable language

isn't going to work very well for you

know, pointing out the reality of things

to people that just don't want to know

that stuff.

So

I guess I sort of answered that

question. I really don't know that much

about Thomas Sowell. I've read, you know, a few articles and I've seen him on YouTube a few times, but not really enough to uh you know, make any kind of authoritative judgment on the man. But I wish him well, and so I'm going to move on to uh the next question, which is from Tiggles. And Tiggles says, "Whatever happened to Humble stature?" Well, some of you may recall that I was uh interviewed by a man called himself Humble stature, and I got involved in I think it was called the spiritual right that was organized by Humble stature. And the problem with with Humble stature is he could not stick with a plan. He

was just continually changing his plans,
you know, just kind of changing
direction of what he wanted to do, until
finally the rest of the group just kind
of fell away. And last I heard, he was
uh he had been
uh gotten a job as a firefighter,
which is uh admirable profession.
And uh I don't think he's writing or
doing videos with regard to
uh like uh conservative or right-wing
spirituality anymore.
And he really wasn't particularly
right-wing anyway, it seems to me.
But uh yeah, he he's still fine. It's
just that uh he just
changed his plan,

and uh is no longer doing what he was
doing when I was doing it with him.
So, I'll just move on to the next
question.
And this is from the Arya Suvastri
project.
And the Arya Suvastri project said says,
"Can you explain the difference between
rebirth and reincarnation?"
And it's strange that a lot of Buddhists
are sticklers, you know, they insist
that it's not reincarnation, it is
rebirth,
because supposedly
reincarnation implies that there is like
a a soul that, you know, reincarnates.

But I don't see why that wouldn't apply
to rebirth also. I mean, the re means
again, so it's like the same thing is
going into another life, which is what
the Buddhists are taking issue with.
So, I think it's just kind of a strange
like almost like a fashion, you know,
it's it's just
it's just the way it's done in Buddhism
that you say rebirth instead of
reincarnation, when really
I mean, it doesn't really matter much to
me. I mean, reincarnation means again
into meat. You know, the carn is like
chili con carne, like carnivore.
So, again, you're once again entering
meat.

Whereas rebirth just means you're born

again.

But,

I mean, if you're not a materialist and

don't believe that meat is real,

then maybe rebirth would be more

appropriate, especially for like

Mahayana Buddhists who

uh

they're not much into into meat, anyway.

So,

yeah, I mean, I use I use reincarnation

sometimes just because more people would

understand the term.

And essentially, they're synonyms. I

really don't see that there's any major

difference.

Rebirth could just as easily imply that

there is some

soul or, you know, permanent entity

that's, you know, getting born again,

because that re- at the beginning of

both words just means again.

So, yeah, it's just sort of a strange If

there is any really good, reasonable

reason why Buddhists

so many Buddhists insist on saying

rebirth instead of reincarnation, I

don't know what it would be.

It's just uh

the way it's done in Buddhism,

apparently.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question here. This is from

WhiteAshPiper.

And WhiteAshPiper says, "What materials

are your alms bowl made of?

Until you pointed it out as to what it

is, I assumed it was a meditation bell."

And my alms bowl is that

that black object up there on top of the

bookcase.

And it is made out of iron.

According to the rules of monastic

discipline for Theravada Buddhist monks,

an arms bowl must be made of

clay or iron.

And mine is made out of iron.

And I've been told that it was

previously owned by Pa Auk Sayadaw. So
it's kind of a
prestigious kind of arms bowl
if anybody knows and respects Pa Auk
Sayadaw.
But um
I think originally all arms bowls were
made out of clay because there are so
many rules including in the Patimokkha
with regard to how carefully you have to
handle the bowl. You're not allowed to
open or close the door with the bowl in
your hand because it might hit against
the door and break. You're not allowed
to hang your bowl on a peg cuz it might
fall down and break. You're not allowed
to

uh put your bowl on like a high shelf or even on top of a table. You're supposed to put it on the floor underneath your bed or underneath a table

um just so it won't fall off and break. There's a strange rule that you have to have so many finger widths of cracks in the bowl before you can get a new bowl which isn't going to happen with with an iron bowl. So I assume that originally all arms bowls like in the Buddha's time were made of baked clay.

You know, just an earthen wear kind of a bowl and that gradually before the the Tipitaka was finalized before it reached its final form iron came into

fashion. Iron bowls came into fashion.
You know, it was the Iron Age and iron
was becoming gradually more common
for objects other than weapons.
And so it's it's so much more convenient
having an iron bowl than a clay one. I
remember one time I was traveling and
somebody offered me a clay bowl that was
bigger than that, and that
bigger than that, and it holds I mean,
that one there holds more than a gallon,
and this was like a big one, kind of
like some Thai bowls are really big, and
it was already at the time about 100
years old, and I just told them, I mean,
if you give this bowl to me, it's not
going to live to see 101 because I've

dropped See which one I had. That bowl
more than once. I've had to knock the
dents out of it, you know, it's like
you're you're walking home you're
walking back to the cave or whatever
during the rainy season, you have to
walk on like slick, you know,
algae-covered rocks, and you just slip,
and the bowl just hits the rock and
makes this loud clang.
So, there's a few a few dents in that
one.
But, uh
one one kind of issue
is that most Thai monks don't use iron
bowls or clay bowls anymore. They use

stainless steel bowls, and they don't

bother to to bake them black, you know,

they're usually still like a silvery

color.

And you can say that iron is the main

ingredient

of stainless steel, at least most

stainless steel,

but, um

still I've people offer me stainless

steel bowls, I just refuse, you know, it

says clay or iron, and that is

definitely iron in that that bowl up

there.

So,

that's what it's made out of, and it's

also baked black. You you you take I

mean, if anyone who's got my essays in

Theravada Buddhism, now I've got a

chapter on how to bake a bowl,

and

you you take sesame oil,

and you cook it until it's like black

sludge, and then you smear the iron bowl

with this

like

burnt sesame oil,

and then you bake it over a fire, and it

hardens like enamel.

That's like what they did back before

they had paint, like spray paint.

In ancient India,

you'd make a kind of enamel out of

uh sesame oil.

And so that's why it's black cuz it's

been smeared with sesame oil and baked

over a fire.

So, I guess I answered that one.

Yeah, I mean the the two the only two

ingredients of that bowl are iron and

burnt sesame oil.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question here.

This is from Mr. Shunryu Ox.

And Mr. Shunryu Ox says, "What's easier,

working a 9-5 with a girlfriend or being

a monk?"

And that's a good question.

Um

it depends on what you're going for. I

mean,

with regard to what's easier, it's like,

you know, what are you trying to

accomplish?

Uh I remember once having a Burmese monk

tell me that it's easy to be a monk. And

then I responded, "Well, it's easy to be

a bad monk, but it's very difficult to

be a good monk."

Cuz if you're trying to live up to the

ideals of how a monk should be that are

found in the Pali texts, then it is a

Herculean task. It's extremely difficult

and most people, even if they try as

hard as they can, couldn't do it.

Whereas working a 9-5 job with a

girlfriend,

um you know, absolute perfection is not

really expected of you anyway.

Um so, for me, working a 9-5 with a

girlfriend is it's more

strenuous. I mean, it takes kind of more

out of me physically

cuz I, you know, I got to work for a

living.

But, um

yeah, it was it's more difficult to be a

a serious

conscientious monk than it is to be

serious conscientious

employee and and mate

at least in my case.

And my dog is looking at me.

He's a very nice dog.

Part Gremlin. She's like a mutant

Gremlin.

So, I guess I've answered that question.

Working a 9-to-5 job with a girlfriend

um in a way spiritually

um being a layperson is a higher

difficulty setting setting than being a

monk because the monk's life is set up

to facilitate making spiritual progress.

But um just uh doing one's duty as a

layperson is easier, at least for me,

than doing one's duty as a monk because

you got higher more difficult duties as

a monk.

So, I guess I'll move on to the next

question. This is from Liberland.
And Liberland says,
"If there was a machine
that could make you live a better life
based on complex moral calculations, and
this made ethics more competitive. I'm
not sure what he means by competitive.
Would you choose to find some
independent way of living your life
assuming it would make you categorized
as criminal, evil, insane, inconsiderate
of others, and an egomaniac?
This under the basis of you being able
to plug in or unplug like in the Matrix
movies. You get one choice, and all the
world is all intense about your choice
like it makes you a terrorist to break

to break from the flock."

And the first the top part of this

question here,

a machine that would make you live a

better life based on complex moral

calculations,

that reminds me of

um

it's a a

a novella

by Dostoevsky.

I think it's Notes from Underground.

And the guy the the protagonist

in a way he's like a damned soul. He's I

mean, he he deliberately does what he

knows is wrong just out of this perverse

desire to do what is wrong. And he explains kind of why he does this. And he's talking about socialism, which was already a thing in Dostoevsky's time, you know, mid-19th century Russia, just mid-19th century Europe. Socialism was all the rage even before Marx came along. There were already There were already socialists and communists that were um coming up with this idea that, you know, communism is the enlightened, civilized way to live. You know, back then they didn't have a century of failed and/or stagnant economies, totalitarianism, and genocide to look back upon.

But anyway,

um according to the protagonist in in this story by Dostoevsky, um the socialists have this ideal of turning morals or ethics into a kind of science. Spinoza had a similar idea, but that's irrelevant here. And so they'd have like, you know, back then they'd have charts. Now you'd have a computer program, but in the story, which is, you know, mid-19th century, you know, you you'd have these charts where, you know, it would be worked out for you what you should do under any circumstance. You know, what is the most moral thing to do under these circumstances? You know, you plug in the numbers or whatever, and you

look on the chart and it tells you what to do. And
it seemed to him that that was a kind of death. I mean, you're no long You no longer have any semblance of free will because the chart is deciding for you what to do.
And so in a way it's just a kind of slavery to doing what is right. And so it was like he he rebel against that just to assert his individuality and his aliveness.
I mean, that was kind of his his reason, or at least a reason, why he was so perverse in doing the wrong thing all the time. He was like rebelling against this

you know, it was like this
obligation that you have to do what is
right, which means you no longer have
any creativity, any imagination, any
individuality. You just, you know,
you're just a cog in the machine, just,
you know, obeying the chart.
And
yeah, I mean, personally on my own, I
think I would rather just not do that. I
mean, I make my own decisions and follow
my own conscience.
But I mean, I'm in a relationship with a
woman who cares more about what other
people think and
like what my social standing is. I mean,

to make myself a despised pariah

in a relationship with another person,

that would definitely add a

a serious complication to fierce

individualism and just insisting on

following one's own conscience whenever

one was in the mood to follow one's own

conscience, that is.

So

yeah, I mean, I'd have to wait for it to

happen

and uh hash it out with my my sweetheart

who, as I say, might um agree in theory,

but nevertheless, might disapprove of my

becoming a social outcast and pariah and

let's see what is it here, be considered

by yeah, be considered a terrorist and

everything.

Socially ostracized and all that, lose

my job, that kind of thing.

Yeah, I don't think she would approve of

that much.

So

yeah, that would be a But if if I were

on my own, probably I would just take

the hit, just martyr myself.

Cuz that's just kind of person I am.

You know, if everybody's doing it this

way, I'm going to do it some other way.

So, I guess I answered that question

as well as I am able.

Therefore, I will move on to the next

question, which is from

rpad

rpad

I'm not sure what rpad signifies here.

But, rpad

says, "Why did the Ajivika practice

asceticism if they were fatalists?

What's the point of asceticism beyond,

{quote} I'm an ascetic because it's my

fate to be so, whether or not this makes

any difference, {unquote} which any

fatalist can say to justify his own way

of life." Well, to the Ajivikas, it does

make a difference because

only when you're at the end of your

84,000 or however many lifetimes you

have to go through, um in in the

Buddhist texts, they compare the

Ajivikas' idea of determinism or fatalism as like a ball of string that you throw and roll across the floor and it just unwinds until you get to the end of it and the the ball of string is gone. You know, it's just all unrolled. And that's kind of the way the Ajivikas saw, you know, living the life after life after life until you reach the end of the ball of string and that's it. And the end of the ball of string is being an Ajivika ascetic. So, if you're not an Ajivika ascetic, it in it indicates that you still got a long way to go.

So, if you want to be at the end or you

want to,

you know, like prove that you're at the end or near the end, you have to be an Ajivika ascetic. That's the way they viewed it. You know, it's just if you're an Ajivika ascetic, it indicated that especially if you were a, you know, like a conscientious Ajivika ascetic who was doing what Ajivika ascetics are supposed to do,

then that indicated that you were towards the end. So, if you want to be at the end or you want to like prove to yourself and to others that you are, you know, near the end of the the 84,000 or however many lives,

then you're you become an Ajivika

ascetic.

You know, as a way of proving to

yourself and to others

that you're there because, I mean, if

you're if you're not an Ajivika ascetic,

that is proof that you're not near the

end of that ball of string.

So,

yeah, it's in a way it's kind of some

people they they they don't can't really

wrap their heads around fatalism like

the idea, well, if if it's my destiny to

win an Olympic gold medal, then I don't

have to

work out because it's my destiny. I'm

just going to get the Olympic gold medal

anyway. But, it doesn't work that way.
If you are destined
to win an Olympic gold medal, by that
same token you are destined to train and
train and train and train until you're
puking sometimes, then just, you know,
go all out in order to get that Olympic
gold medal.
Or or whatever it is, whatever the
exalted goal is that you are destined to
achieve, that you're also destined to
work your ass off to get there.
And that's kind of the way the Ajivikas
saw their fatalism.
That I mean, if you're going to reach
the end of existence, then you have to
be an Ajivika ascetic to do that. So,

they're in a way they're taking their

destiny in their own hands.

Sort of, but destiny and fate are kind

of hard to wrap your head around

sometimes.

So,

I'll just move on to the next question.

This is from Toronto Nat.

And Toronto Nat says, is there anything

wrong with being a Buddho-Christian

syncretist?

Attending liturgy, confessing sins

before a priest, taking communion, etc.

while maintaining a Buddhist ethical and

contemplative practice. If there is

something wrong, what are the

consequences of said wrongdoing?

Well, I mean, Buddhism syncretizes with

other spiritual systems fairly easily.

Like,

for example, Chinese Buddhism was a kind

of syncretism of Indian Buddhism and

Taoism. Although, I've also read that

that um

Laozi,

um who was supposedly the founder of

Taoism, was just a like a distortion of

of Gautama Buddha. He was sort of a

legendary figure that was really based

on Gautama Buddha anyway.

But, in Japan, Buddhism is syncretized

with with Shinto.

Um in

Tibetan Buddhism, that Buddhism was like
combined with the indigenous like
shamanistic practices that were
prevalent in
in uh
Tibet. Even in Burma,
that Buddhism to some degree has been
syncretized, if that's a word, with the
pre-Buddhist Burmese nat cult, which is
a kind of uh worship of small g gods.
And even the Greeks
who who uh lived in northwestern India
in ancient times because of Alexander
the Great conquering northwestern India,
um they converted to Buddhism, but still
they kept their their Greek paganism

also.

So, it was a syncretism of Buddhism and Greek paganism. Like, there some of the ancient coins they'd have the Buddha on one side of the coin and Athena or some other Greek deity on the other side of the coin.

So, you know, Buddhism is now being syncretized with cultural Marxism in the West, which is not a good syncretism because cultural Marxism is essentially spiritually bankrupt.

But,

um

yeah, I mean, there would be some dogmatic or doctrinal issues. You know, Christianity says there is a supreme

God, Buddhism says no.

Christianity says there is a immortal

soul, Buddhism says no.

Um

so, I mean, there's going to be

doctrinal issues that you're going to

have to work out somehow.

And uh it may be that um the priest that

you're confessing your sins before

might uh

consider heresy to be somewhat of a

problem

if that is you're you're adopting any

Buddhist doctrines at the expense of

Christian ones.

But, um

yeah, it seems like whatever

civilization or society that Buddhism

enters, it just gets mixed in with

what's already there.

And so,

yeah, there's it's uh inevitable that

there's going to be a lot of combination

Buddhist Christians out there.

And uh so long as it works, I mean, as

long as it helps you to be a a wiser,

better, happier person, then it it's

certainly not all bad.

So,

I guess I answered that question. So,

I'm just move on to Toronto now. It's

next question.

This is kind of a juicy one, kind of a

spicy one.

He says, "There have been some very serious allegations made by some users on r/buddhism." And I I assume {slash} r {slash} Buddhism means Reddit.

So, there's like a Reddit Buddhism thread or something.

And uh now I've I'm just kind of sidetracked myself, so I'm going to start again. There have been some very serious allegations made by some users on R/Buddhism against Panyo in the not-too-distant past, specifically concerning sexual abuse. How should we view and respond to such accusations?

I think I might have actually seen that

thread. My sweetheart noticed it and pointed it out to me, and I just kind of ignored it.

Cuz I I've seen worse. Um I've seen somewhere someone was accusing me of being like defrocked, excommunicated, just kicked out of the monkhood for molesting boys.

And I mean, they didn't even know that you can't be kicked out of the monkhood, at least technically. It just doesn't work that way. They just They just made that one up just based on a combination of hate and dishonesty, apparently.

Because I wasn't kicked out of the monkhood. I wasn't kicked out of any

monasteries, either. And I think this thread on Reddit was saying that I was kicked out of monasteries for being a sexual predator.

But

I was never kicked out of any monastery. I mean, I was told that no Ajahn Chah monastery would want me, or at least some Ajahn Chah monasteries wouldn't accept me.

But I wouldn't want to live at Ajahn Chah monastery anyway. I did look into staying at Birken in uh British Columbia when I first came back to America in 2011, before any kind of scandals or anything happened. And uh they wouldn't

take me just cuz I wasn't ordained in

the the Ajahn Chah tradition anyhow.

So,

I can say that

as far as I know, the only really

derogatory information about me that is

factual that is out there is based on

what I myself have personally admitted.

You know,

I I I made some

admissions on my blog

that um

people just distort and twist and

exaggerate

and then they they like come back. It's

sort of like that the game where you

whisper into somebody else's ear and

they whisper into somebody else's and
they whisper into somebody else's. By
the time you get to the end, it's a very
different story from the first thing
that was whispered into the first
person's ear.
So, I mean, it's like
leftist Buddhists, some of them anyway
thoroughly disapprove of a Buddhist who
isn't a leftist, especially if he's in
the West. And so, they just have this
bias
as like motivated by
hate essentially and a little bit of
dishonesty if they if they're the ones
that are distorting it.

And I mean, it just happens a lot where,

you know, you hear a story and you have

a certain bias, certain spin, certain

take on it and then the details get

changed in accordance with kind of your

attitude.

But, I can say that

the

the the derogatory factual stuff about

me originates

from what I myself have publicized.

You know, I myself have admitted to

certain things that I've done in the

past. Nothing like excommunicaty,

you know, I didn't didn't do any of the

four parajikas.

But, I did things that were

arguably inappropriate for a monk.

And I did uh also on my blog that it's like the previous blog that no longer exists. I did say that if I ever wanted to do such things again, I would uh disrobe first, which is what I did.

So,

yeah, the the things that uh they have exaggerated were things that um you know, I did the penance, you know, did the required penance and just put it behind me and promised I wouldn't do it again and I didn't.

So,

yeah, the very serious allegations about sexual abuse or sexual predation and so

forth, it's based on a nucleus of what I publicly admitted to
and then it just got exaggerated and twisted by people with an axe to grind.
And the the part about me being kicked out of the monk order or kicked out of the monasteries and so forth is just false.
Cuz I wasn't kicked out of the monk order or kicked out of any monasteries.
I left of my own volition for my own reasons.
So, I'll just move on to the next question here. This is from Raphael.
And Raphael says, "Ajahn Maha Boowa said 10 years ago that there are only 2% of monks left and that the rest have no

virtue and no Dhamma. As an example,
he said that nowadays monks eat with
spoons and no longer with their hands.
Why do you think he gave this seemingly
unimportant example and did you as a
monk only eat with your hands?"
Well, I usually use the spoon.
Um sometimes if I didn't have a spoon
handy like I lost my spoon or just
misplaced it or something,
maybe I was traveling and just forgotten
to bring my spoon, I would eat with my
hands.
I mean, I know how to do it. There is a
way of eating with your hand where you,
you know, you scoop it up and then you

kind of shape it into a little ball with your hand and then you you kind of put it on these two fingers and use your thumb as like an ejector, you know, get it to your mouth and use the thumb ejector to get it into your mouth.

So, I know how to do it, you know, like the traditional ancient Indian way of making rounded morsels. I mean, there's rule of discipline saying that you know, I will eat rounded morsels, Which is I mean, that's what it That's what it implies.

Is you know, you you kind of make it into a a little round ball with your with your fingers and your thumb before putting it into your mouth.

Um

why Ajahn Maha Boowa

like singled out this, I don't know.

It's like the Thais are really Some of

them are real sticklers for monastic

discipline. Like um there's a famous

story of Ajahn Mun

who was another another one of these,

you know, renowned for being a very um

essentially an arahant in Thailand

who met with the Buddha, which is I mean

it

supposedly that would be impossible cuz

the Buddha no longer exists in this

world. But anyway,

the Buddha came to him or he went to the

Buddha

and he he was able to ask him one

question. And the one question that

Ajahn Mun asked the Buddha, when he

could ask any question, is what is the

proper color for monks' robes?

And then of course, the Buddha said

essentially the same color that Ajahn

Mun preferred wearing.

So, I mean, it could just be this weird

um

almost like an OCD

attitude towards even the the really

um essentially trivial rules of

discipline. Although, a a really strict

monk would say no rules are trivial, you

know, it's you're better to die than

break even the minor most minor rules.
But still, I mean, it would make more
sense to say that you know, most monks
are handling money now
instead of most monks are eating with a
spoon.
I mean, a lot of monks don't even use
their arms bowl anymore.
I was I stated a
I visited a Sri Lankan monastery in
California
and they knew that I ate out of my bowl,
so as a way of sort of honoring me as a
guest, they were all eating out of their
bowls, too. And the abbot was surprised.
It's like, "Well, this is easy. This is

This works good." He'd never eaten out of a bowl before. He was He was a terror. He was a senior monk, but he'd never eaten out of a monk's bowl before. So, I mean, I do agree with Ajahn Maha Boowa in his statement that, you know, only 2% of monks are like legitimate monks who are actually trying to follow Dhamma correctly, Dhamma and Vinaya. But I would point out just uh mainly as an example, just the handling money part.

I mean, another good way of sort of separating the sheep from the goats, like a litmus test, just how you can distinguish between strict monks and loose monks. This is This isn't as

accurate as the handling money, but just
do they cover both shoulders when
they're in public?
And usually the unconscientious, lax,
sloppy monks, they'll just go with one
shoulder bare and they don't care.
Whereas, other monks,
um that are more strict, will cover both
shoulders. But then again, some of the
really sloppy monks
will cover both shoulders just to make
people think that they're not sloppy
monks.
So,
yeah, it's it's just a weird Thai thing
for being sticklers with regard to, you

know, really

minor rules, lesser and minor rules.

I guess there's even a a sutta.

Um I don't know if this is directly from

the sutta or in the commentarial story

about the sutta, but there was a almost

a schism. There was like this

this controversy going on in the

Buddha's time between the the two

factions of monks in in the same

monastery.

And it was over something like leaving

the water cup in the in the bathroom or

something.

You know, it's some some really minor,

trivial thing that just caused this

uproar with almost like a schism going

on.

So, I mean that sort of thing has happened. I used to be very strict with regard to the rules of monastic discipline also. Like I mentioned earlier that it's against the rules to open or close a door with a bowl in your hand, with your alms bowl in your hand. And so for years I just went through this ridiculous ritual, even though my bowl was iron and wouldn't break by bumping against the door. You know, you set the bowl First you have You can't even set it down directly onto the ground because that's a different rule. You have to set it on a bowl stand or a

piece of cloth or something. Then you open the door, then you pick your bowl back up again, take the bowl stand or the cloth with you, and then you go through the door. Mosquitoes are going in and out at the same time this door is open cuz you're in the tropics. And then you have to set the bowl back down on the bowl stand or a piece of cloth, then you close the door, and then you pick the bowl back up and continue on your way. Which is just ridiculous.

So, I mean there are there are all these rules that I mean strict monk will practice them religiously, literally religiously.

Um just because they're rules. And I

mean it's not entirely blameworthy. I mean you can say that they're anal retentive or they're just, you know, clinging to this minor trivial stuff. But still, at least they're conscientious, you know, at least they're trying to do their duty as a monk and trying to do it right. And so um better too strict than too lax. When you got a monk that just doesn't give a [__] and just breaks rules and you know, he just considers monks that are strict to
to just be, you know, just foolish. You know, they're just foolish dogmatists or whatever. And I won't name any names,

but there are some Western monks that
are kind of that way. You know, they'll
just scoff at monks that are more strict
than they are. Just saying, you know,
they're just, you know, clinging to to
rites and rituals and so forth.
But still, it's better to be too strict
than too lax.
But, um there really is no rule that I'm
aware of against eating with a spoon.
So, I mean that's not even rules of
monastic discipline. That's just like an
ancient tradition
that, you know, it's not even a rule
that you have to do that.
Then have to eat with your hand or it's
against the rules to eat with a spoon

because it's just not it's not in there.

Maybe,

you know, nobody even thought of making

a rule against it cuz it was just a

tradition for monks to eat with their

hand

like a lot of people still do in Asia,

eat with their hand.

So,

yeah, it's just

idiosyncrasies of Thai culture and maybe

of Ajahn Maha Boowa himself.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question. This is from Andreas.

And Andreas

says, "Would you say that Bhikkhu

Bodhi's translations of the Pali Canon are trustworthy and good as he comes from a certain subversive tribe? And by looking at his political agenda that flows through sometimes, I have my doubts. Nyanaponika Nyanaponika Mahathera all was also a member of this tribe, apparently quite suspicious that the most prominent translators come from the same religious background. What is the best English translation that is available at the moment in your opinion?" Well, I've never heard that Venerable Nyanaponika was one of God's chosen. Maybe he was, it just wasn't an issue. I mean, he did spend some time in a concentration camp, but it was a

British concentration camp and not a German one because he was a German citizen who was ordained as a monk in Ceylon, as it was called in those days, which was a British colony in those days. So, you had a German citizen on in a British colony during World War II, so he was just essentially arrested and taken to like a concentration camp. It wasn't just Germans that had those. So, whether think he might have just been German. I'm not I really don't know. But, uh he was a a good translator of the Pali Canon into German, or so I have

read. I don't speak or read German, so I
can't really say for sure, but he has a
good reputation for being a reliable
translator
into German.
Um but, Bhikkhu Bodhi, um I mean, his
endnotes can can be political sometimes,
but he is a trustworthy translator. He's
very
conservative translator, even if he's
not conservative politically.
So, at least he's conscientious in that
regard.
So,
yeah, I would say that Bhikkhu Bodhi is
still
possibly the best translator of Pali

into English today,
um at least with regard to his
translation style. With regard to deep
philosophical stuff and like deep
meditative stuff, I think Ajahn
Thanissaro would be more reliable
because his knowledge of Buddhism is
more based on his own practice, whereas
Bhikkhu Bodhi is essentially a scholar
who doesn't practice much.
Or at least he has a reputation for
being a scholar who just doesn't or
can't meditate.
So, but then Ajahn Thanissaro has his
own idiosyncratic style that kind of
interferes with good translation,

because a good translator should be as invisible as possible. And when you're being idiosyncratic and self-indulgent in your choice of words and your your way of translating poetry and so forth, then you're not being invisible, and it's just, you know, sometimes Ajahn Thanissaro should just like write, you know, "Look at me. Here I am, I'm John Tanisaro translating this, you know, every few lines, because that's kind of the impression that you get when you're reading it sometimes, or at least that's the impression I would get sometimes. But, again, going back to Bhikkhu Bodhi, he's a good translator.

Um, you know, regardless of his

politics, his translations are trustworthy.

But, um, if you want deep I mean, he's he's going to defer to the commentarial tradition most of the time, because he doesn't have a whole lot of personal meditative experiences to to rely on, and so he will just defer to the commentarial tradition most of the time.

So, I guess I'll just move on to the next question here. This is from Mogambo.

And Mogambo, this this first part isn't really a question, it's just some feedback to an answer I gave to somebody else's question.

I think it was Theo Bax and Sipad Zidna
in the previous Q&A was asking me about,
um, red red-haired, blue-eyed Brahmins
in ancient India, how it shouldn't
shouldn't have been that way because the
Indo-Aryans apparently,
you know, the original Indo-Aryans who
invaded India, according to him, would
not have blue eyes and and reddish or
fair-colored hair.
So, anyways, Mogambo here gives his his
feedback saying, "Regarding the question
asked by someone about Buddha being
blue-eyed or Brahmins being red-haired,
I think it depends upon the time when
the sutras were being written down. It
could be the kings in power who wanted

to portray Buddha looking like themselves, just like Buddha statues look Asian in East Asia. The Kushanas might have had red hair and blue eyes as the Tocharian mummies found in China had same features.

Um, well, the Buddha is supposed to have one of the the 80 marks, the 80 lesser marks of a great of a mahapurisa or a great man, is that his eyes would be abhinila.

And nila usually means blue. And abi means like intensely or very. So, um, one of the marks, this goes back to, you know, ancient India, is that his eyes would be intensely blue. Although nila

also sometimes can mean jet black, and so it might be sort of a blue black. Sort of like Veronica's hair in the old Archie comics, where it would have blue highlights, something like that. Although I don't think eyes work that way. Like the irises of your eyes and black eyes would just be like intensely dark, like black coffee.

So.

Uh,

yeah.

Anyways, um, it wasn't with regard to Buddhists that the the question was asked previously. It was with regard to Brahmans, like the stereotypical Brahman. I read somewhere that was

referring to Patanjali

and a book that Patanjali wrote, which

was the Yoga Shastras or the Yoga

Sutras, I can't remember which. Uh,

where he refers to the stereotypical

Brahman as having blue eyes and like

ruddy colored hair.

And I'm I don't know how the Brahmans,

who are like

like

with regard to their ethnicity would be

the most conservative of the the castes

and classes of of Indians, especially

the Hindus, um, you know, like

Kshatriyas and the lower lower castes,

the lower varnas,

um, could have a lot of influx of um,

non-Aryan

um, blood. You know, like like some

tribal chieftain could be, um, you know,

he could be honored with like an

Kshatriya status. And some people think

the Buddha was like that where his

family just had honorary Kshatriya

status without being Aryan.

Although that could be just a

politically correct conjecture trying to

make the Buddha be, you know, a

brown-skinned person.

So, I mean, regardless of that

um it is true that the Buddha looks

you know, he looks like the ethnicity of

the people who made the statues or the

paintings.

That is true. And it also is true that the Kushanas who uh ruled India or Northwest India um after the Greeks did um they may have been Tocharian or largely Tocharian. They were like what Yuezhi or something like that in Chinese which I think may have been Tocharian or largely Tocharian. And so, yeah, that's that's possible.

But uh how they would become Brahmans, I don't know.

Cuz the Brahmans are the most conservative, you know, they they most closely resemble the the ancestral Indo-Aryan invaders as far as as far as

I can understand it.

You know, they're the they're the ones most resistant to, you know, outbreeding you know, or like, you know, mixing their blood with with other classes or ethnicities and so forth.

But I don't know.

Anyways, that wasn't even a question.

So, the question from uh Mogambo here is as follows. My question is about the left-leaning Buddhist. I have heard you say anyone can attain enlightenment even out of the Buddhist faith like some Indian gurus you have mentioned in the past. Why do you think the left-leaning Buddhist has to follow everything to the T if anyone can attain enlightenment? I

mean, in the end no one can prove anything. There is no gauge to measure enlightenment.

So, that is true. There is no gauge to measure enlightenment. But, if the leftist Buddhist is mainly practicing leftism and ignoring or rejecting most genuine Dharma, which happens to be the case in a lot of cases,

then yeah, they're not even really practicing Dharma other than, you know, a few elementary meditation techniques and you know, a little bit of jargon. I mean, that's a lot of of Western Buddhists so-called. I mean, that's really what their Buddhism consists of

is, you know, one or two elementary meditation techniques and some jargon. And most of the rest of it is just progressive leftism, you know, cultural Marxism, whatever you want to call it. And cultural Marxism, to the extent that they're following that preferentially over following genuine Dharma, then it's just not conducive to enlightenment. It's like becoming a Jehovah's Witness or something. But, being a Jehovah's Witness might be very nice, but it does not strike me as being particularly wise or conducive to the cultivation of wisdom.

So, they might be really good at meta meditation towards people who agree with

them. You know, they might have a lot of compassion towards, you know, oppressed minorities.

But,

still to the extent that they are abandoning genuine Dharma in favor of like queer Buddhism,

then I mean, they're they're essentially abandoning genuine Dharma.

And I mean, not everything in the text is really essential. I mean, the fairy tales and the the talking animals and a lot of the devotionalistic stuff, it's really, you know, it's probably added later. It wasn't probably doesn't probably originate with the Buddha

himself.

But, a lot of stuff that probably did originate within the Buddha himself, like no self or the the essential importance of renunciation and sense restraint, when that stuff is just blatantly rejected. And sometimes even they even want to change it, then yeah, I mean they're just they're just deviating from what the Buddha taught. They're deviating from genuine Dharma and they're deviating from what is actually conducive to the cultivation of wisdom and ultimately to liberation. They don't even want that, as a general rule.

So,

I guess I answered that question. Now,

we're getting a real political Q&A this

time.

Although, I don't think I've said

anything really bad yet.

But, for those of you who want me to say

something really bad, there's still

hope. We haven't got to the end of this

yet.

So, the next question is from Nature

Cure.

And Nature Cure says, "You say a lot

sotapanna, sakadagami, anagami

probably doesn't exist

or later added to suttas or something,

but they mentioned too many times in all over suttas.

That's really really bad bad news if that is true. You really need to make clear explanation to us with many facts. Otherwise, I'm going to have to continue working on my enlightenment from my sotapanna level to arahant." And then he's got a little smiley face after that.

So, I guess this isn't a question either.

Man, this this is the second non-question I've read.

But, um

I guess it does

does call for some kind of comment.

Um

yeah, I I

I have mentioned more than once and um

Oh, hi. My dog's saying hi to me.

I have mentioned more than once, and uh

G.C. Pande in his Origins and Studies of

Buddhism agrees

that the four stages of Arya-hood, the

four stages of sainthood in the in the

in Buddhism, in Theravada Buddhism,

probably did not originate with the

Buddha himself.

And one of one of the bits of evidence

he gives for that is that Sakadagamis

are not mentioned at all in texts that

otherwise give clear indications of

being really old, like archaic. You know, they've got like archaic features in other respects. No mention of Sakadagamis in in that. With regard to Sotapannas, apparently in oldest texts, like in the the uh

the Patimokkha,

that

it's apparently referring not to a a a sage who has glimpsed Nirvana, but rather to just a new convert, like like somebody who is newly converted to Buddhism, and they're you know, they've got stars in their eyes, they're very faith-oriented, they're very enthusiastic, you know, they're embarking upon the the stream of Dharma.

Um so, there's
it had a a different meaning originally,
according to my interpretation of it.
Although, it's not like a just wildly
opposite kind of a meaning. It's It's
there's a lot of overlap, anyway.
And Anagami, one of the main bits of
evidence that Anagami had a different
meaning originally is that the first
several suttas of the Itivuttaka, of the
Khuddaka Nikaya,
uh apparently, judging from the context,
are using Anagami in the sense of an
Arahant.
So, the Anagami, originally, according
to the theory, was a synonym for the

word Arahant, or enlightened being. And it does make sense. Anagami is one who just does not return, you know, that would indicate that they're not born again. They no longer come back to samsara, but then it came to mean that they go up into this high heaven realm for one last life and then they become enlightened way, way up in this extremely high heaven realm accessible only to Buddhists.

So,

I mean, it really is not that big of a deal. I mean, you shouldn't be striving to attain any particular stage. I mean, goal-oriented Dharma is really I mean, things just do not happen the way you

expect them to.

And so, you get this idea in your head of what you want to attain, and it may be that the reality is very different from that. And it's it it can become counterproductive. And this goal-oriented Dharma is not really dharmic because

I mean, you should be in the present moment. I mean, you shouldn't be like practicing Dharma in order to get something in the future. You should be doing it for its own sake right now. You know, because it's your sacred duty to practice Dharma or because by practicing Dharma you're you're as close

to enlightenment as you can get right

now.

Be here now.

So, it's not really, really bad news or

really, really bad, bad news

uh if even if G.C. Pande and I are

correct in the assumption that the four

stages of Arya-hood did not originate

from the Buddha, but were a later

development in Buddhist doctrine. And

there are a lot of later developments in

Buddhist doctrine.

But, uh whatever I mean, however you

practice, if it works for you,

go right ahead. I'm sure there have been

a lot of traditional Asian Theravada

Buddhist monks and nuns who have, you

know, believed all the stuff including the flat Earth and the talking animals and so forth, and they've gotten high attainments. You know, just like Roman Catholic saints, some of them who believed, you know, they revered the Virgin Mary and all that. And they got high attainments, too.

Because eventually, the words in the books just become largely irrelevant. Because when you're in a deep contemplative state, you're not thinking in words anymore, anyway.

So, I guess I'll just move on to the next question here.

This is from Yuga Oh.

And Yuga Oh asks kind of an interesting question here. Hello, can you please explain the mindset and karma of people who are impulsive hoarders?

There are many animals in the world that show the same thing. Can it be related?

Yeah, I think from a biological point of view

from a biological point of view that I mean, there are certain areas in the brain that can condition hoarding.

And, you know, if you get a glitch in that part of your brain, it can just cause you to be obsessed with hoarding, you know, old newspapers or or whatever it is. You know, I've I've There's There's been like TV shows about

hoarders.

And uh I've read about hoarders also in in uh various books. And yeah, it's it's really a thing. There are some people that It's like they can't bear to get rid of anything. They might have their house just completely packed full of this garbage and junk cuz they can't bear to part with anything.

So, from a biological point of view, you can it would probably be some kind of brain glitch.

Um but with regard to their karma, yeah, I'm not sure what the karma would be unless they were just very they're just possession-oriented people.

You know, they just identified with what they owned, considered owning stuff to be very important or something. Maybe they were extremely poor and didn't own anything in a previous life and they were just like obsessing with owning lots of stuff or something.

But yeah, it's it's really hard to say what the karma exactly would be in a case like that. And probably different people would have different kinds of karma. Like, some people different people hoard different things for different reasons.

You know, it might be the same general kind of brain glitch, but still, you know, the like the subjective aspect of

it could be significantly different from one person to the next.

So, I think I'll just move on to the next question. And this question, the first part of this question has already been answered. He says, "Also, if it's not too personal, how was your vacation?" And then he says, "Are you in a good relation with your wife's mom?"

And

yeah, I'm pretty sure that my sweetheart's mom hates me, but she really compensates a lot to not let it show by just being really sweet to me and and like buying me clothes and like wanting to hug me and, you know,

um saying that she loves me and stuff.

So, it's it's kind of complex.

So,

I guess I'll just move on to the next

question.

Cuz I already said how my vacation was.

It was fine.

Very cold and snowy, but fine.

And if you're ever in Toledo, go to a

restaurant called Mancys. It's really

nice.

And so, I'll just move on to the next

question here. This is uh from

Personalization Primitive.

And Personalization Primitive says, "For

individuals leading a family and

shouldering responsibilities for their

children with an obligation to invest
their time in earning a living, complete
renunciation may not be the most
suitable path. How can such individuals
effectively pursue enlightenment while
balancing their patriarchal and
financial duties.
Well, this is a very common question
from Westerners. I mean, sometimes it's
it's not as thoughtful
as this. It's like, how can we practice
renunciation correctly without actually
renouncing anything?
Sometimes, you know, I get questions
like that. I was told once by a woman
who lived at

Oh, what's the place in Dharamsala in India where the the Dalai Lama was staying. She was a translator and English teacher at Dharamsala for a while.

And

maybe just an English teacher. But anyway, she said that one time a Western man asked the Dalai Lama a question like this. I mean, it was more like the the example I gave, the more extreme example of, you know, how can I practice renunciation correctly without actually renouncing anything? You know, it's like, how can I practice Dhamma correctly while still kind of wallowing in samsara? And he actually started

crying, according to the the lady that was there.

And uh yeah, it it it is kind of a a difficult situation if you're you know, you're you're pretty much you know, anchored into samsara by all these duties and obligations, and you still want to practice Dhamma correctly. Um yeah, I mean, you're just going to have to do it with a handicap of not being able to practice it entirely correctly.

And

how can individuals effectively pursue enlightenment while balancing their patriarchal and financial duties? Well, I mean, you can be living in the world

like U Ba Khin, who was S. N. Goenka's teacher. He was like a government minister, not like a Christian minister, but you know, like a high-ranking administrator in the Burmese government.

And still, he was a kind of meditation master.

Um it just has to be a very high priority. You know, you have to consider to be very important.

And also,

just be mindful of whatever you're doing. The dog just flung the door wide open.

Yeah, just just be mindful in the present moment, no matter what you're

doing, whether you're working or or sitting cross-legged. If you're in the present moment, you you you can be here now and still, you know, follow your your conscience, you know, do your ethical duty of, you know, not telling lies or stealing, that sort of thing. Not wallowing in sensuality any more than, you know, duty bids.

Then, uh,

yeah, I mean, you can still make considerable progress that way. And Nisargadatta Maharaj was considered to be enlightened and he was a householder who ran a little stall selling cigarettes and stuff in India.

I mean, it is possible.

Being a a layperson is a higher

difficulty setting

for practicing Dhamma, but it's still

possible. But you're not going to be

able to practice it correctly as it is

stated in Pali texts.

I mean, it's it's always going to be,

uh, falling short to some degree since

renunciation is pretty much basic. Like

I was saying in the previous Q&A that

the the gradual practice taught by the

Buddha begins with renouncing the world.

So, I mean, you're not going to be

following ancient Indian tradition

in your in your efforts.

But you can still be

I mean, so long as

like you're just driven

to practice Dhamma and to know reality,

you know, to to just strive for

liberation,

then really you can do just about

anything. So long as, you know, you've

got like this

burning

this ardent

drive in you,

then, I mean, that that compensates for

a heck of a lot.

I think it was what Ramakrishna was

saying that I mean he was a Hindu.

So, he was saying that I mean if if you

just spontaneously burst into tears at the mere name of God, then you can do whatever you want. I mean because you're just going in the right direction regardless of, you know, the commotion externally, you know, what your what your meat puppet happens to be doing. But I mean you'd have to be really dedicated to being mindful and immoral especially.

So, I guess I answered that question sort of, kind of. So, let's move on to the next question here. This is from Rui.

And Rui says, "There is a contemporary temptation to conflate

Excuse me while I belch.

I'll start again. Rui says, "There is a contemporary temptation to conflate sabbe dhamma anatta with a scientific proclamation. For example, things are ultimately made of evanescent particles in temporary coalescence and hence are not self."

When in fact sabbe dhamma anatta is a phenomenolo- phenomenological proclamation.

I.e.

it concerns the subject or the mode of view of the stream enterer's consciousness and what it accesses or experiences and not the object or the world. Kant's Copernican revolution

comes to mind here. Thoughts?

Well, I think even in Theravada, it's

not purely subjective when it says that,

you know, sabbe dhamma anatta, that all

all things are not self.

For example, the the simile of the

chariot, which is one of the main

explanations of

of anatta

in the in the suttas. I mean that's

pretty much what he's describing here is

the scientific proclamation

that

you know, chariot isn't

it's like a chariot is just made up of

parts and you can swap out this part or

that part and it's considered to be the

same chariot.

You know, it's like where is the chariotness in this chariot? You know, it's just a convenient name that you give to a certain assemblage of parts and it's just kind of vague because as I said, you can swap out certain parts. Certain parts can just go missing. You can break a a spoke out of the chariot wheel and it's still considered to be the same chariot. You know, it's like you can get one of your fingers chopped off, God forbid, we don't want that to happen, but you know, you lose a finger, you're still you. You're still considered to be the same person just

with nine fingers instead of 10.

So, I mean, I think the note sabbe

dhamma anatta

is just applicable across the board, you

know, just from any perspective. You

know, there is no valid perspective

where there really is an ultimately real

self either subjectively or objectively.

And you know, rupa kanda is not self,

too.

I guess

I guess that's just I just flung that in

there just cuz cuz it occurred to me all

of a sudden.

So, it is true that the Mahayana

Buddhists

put more emphasis on there is no

objective self, whereas the the Theravada Buddhists were mainly emphasizing that there is no subjective self, but I mean, the subject is a subject for the object and the object is an object for the subject. I mean, you can't have one without the other because they dependently co-arise. Subject and object dependently co-arise. You can't have one without the other and neither of them is self.

Nothing is self.

Not even nirvana according to Theravada.

So,

yeah, I mean, those are my thoughts on that.

Although it is true that as I said the
Mahayana Buddhists put more emphasis on
um applying anatta to
objective reality
as opposed to subjective reality, but I
mean it's as I just said, I mean it
applies to both.
So, I'll just move on to Rui's next
question here.
And I will add that everyone is being
very very self-restrained in asking no
more than three questions per episode,
which is appreciated.
So, anyway Rui says, "The Theravadan
adherence to the notion of an ultimate
partless particle
You got that in quotes, partless

particle, which was also Democritus's atomistic vision seems somehow deficient even from a strictly logical point of view. For example, or i.e. said particle would could always be divided in various parts, etc. Perhaps there is no soteriological value in discussing this point to exhaustion."

Yes, this this question itself is kind of exhausting.

But um yeah, I mean I've I've mentioned before that but at the time the Theravada arose in India, formal logic really had not taken a root in India yet.

That it was sort of like a
pre-Aristotelian kind of logic, and
consequently sometimes
the attempts at logic in Theravada
Buddhist philosophy fall short of what
nowadays would be considered to be valid
reasoning.
And so, even in Abhidhamma, they're
they're talking about the dhammas, which
are in in the context of Abhidhamma,
it's like an ultimate reality, just this
particle, this indivisible particle
ultimate reality, which would be, you
know, like earth element or wind element
or, you know, perception or volition or
nose sensitivity or in other words, you
know, like a the olfactory sensitivity.

You know, there's over a hundred of

these ultimate realities.

I I think, if I remember correctly.

So, but the thing is they they always

occur in what are called rupakalapas,

which are these little clusters of these

individual

um

uh ultimate ultimately real

like elements.

And the dogs are they're they're like

doting on me today cuz I was gone for a

week, and so they're hang they want to

hang out with me.

Anyways, um

like for example,

perception and volition are considered
to be qualitatively different in
Abhidharma,
but they always have to occur
at the same place at the same time with
the same object. And so, I mean, you
can't have one without the other. But
nevertheless,
they're they're two distinct entities.
And there's I can't remember how many um
elements have to be in in the minimum
size of a rupakalapa, but I'm pretty
sure it's at least six.
And so,
uh because they couldn't possibly be
separated in reality, already you've got
this imagination has to come in and

separate them um just mentally. Because in reality, supposedly, they can't be separated, but they are considered to be completely different. And I would consider something like perception and volition

I mean, just be two different aspects of the same thing, two different two different ways of looking at the same thing.

Sort of like an object and its behavior.

Uh

that was like the first philosophical essay I ever wrote as a Buddhist monk once,

mainly trying to to hash out the

relationship between perception and volition, how they're considered to be qualitatively completely different by orthodox Theravada Buddhist philosophy, i.e. Abhidhamma, but in reality it's just like a trick of the mind to consider them to be two different things.

So,

um

yeah, I I think I've just wandered completely away from this question here. The Theravada adherence to the notion of the ultimate partless particle, which was also Democritus' atomistic notion, seems somehow deficient even from a strictly logical point of view.

I.e. said particle could always be divided in various parts, etc. But perhaps there is no soteriological value in discussing this point to exhaustion. And that's the only question mark is at the end of that part. So, in a way this isn't even really a question either. I'm There's There's like these non-questions keep uh sneaking in here.

Perhaps there is no soteriological value in discussing this point to exhaustion. So, soteriological value would be value for salvation or liberation.

And yeah, I mean ultimately there isn't. Like the entire Abhidhamma Pitaka, I'm sure lots of monks became enlightened

without ever having heard of it back in ancient times.

Um you just don't need to know that stuff.

Because as I say, you get into the deep contemplative states, you're you're not even thinking anymore anyway. So, all this

perceptions, concepts become irrelevant.

So, let's move on to this question here.

And this is from uh Seal of Action and Cpad

And Seal of Action and Cpad Z Dinah says, "You have said having promiscuous sex is against the precepts, even if no one involved is married, but I couldn't find any textual backing. Can you please

tell me what you are basing this on?"
And it is true that I cannot recall the
exact location
of statement that the kamesu micchacara,
you know, which is one of the the five
precepts, you know, the third precept
is, you know, I undertake the precept
not to indulge in
sensual misconduct.
Kamesu micchacara.
Um, I think the standard definition is
it just gives a list of the different
kinds of women that you're not allowed
to mess around with. Any woman who's
already got a guardian or a mate or some
which is in ancient India was pretty

much the same thing or a wife. I mean,

she was like, you know, already had her

husband was her guardian, you know, he

was he was her uh

I don't know, overseer, you know, and

it's like a woman who was just a free

agent was not on the list, but almost

all women were. Um

you know, even a prostitute would would

have a pimp who was sort of like her

master in in a lot of cases.

So

um, nevertheless

it was just common

common knowledge. I mean

as a monk it was

when when Burmese monks would talk about

um, kamesu micchacara

I mean, it was pretty clear that having

sex just for the purpose of sensual

indulgence

simply for the purpose of gratifying

lust

is just is sexual misconduct or sensual

misconduct. I mean, that's just common

sense.

So

it is true that you don't have to be

married with to a woman in order not to

break the third precept. That um, you

know, unlike Christianity where you have

to be married before you can have sex

you don't literally have to be married.

I mean, marriage is just a secular
institution that has
practically nothing to do with Theravada
Buddhism anyway. You know, it's just
considered to be a sort of a, you know,
sort of a
secular, just a cultural institution,
almost arbitrary in a way.
But, I mean, it's pretty clear
just from anyone who understands Dhamma
that promiscuous sex, just for the sake
of hedonism, just for the sake of, you
know, cheap jollies,
just for the sake of, you know,
gratifying lust or wrong insatiability
is not going to be approved of. That
it's it's going to be bad karma. I mean,

you might be able to come up with some legalistic argument for justifying that it's not technically breaking the precept, but that is irrelevant because the karma, you know, is the same. The karmic quality of it's going to be the same.

So, in order to avoid the third precept you pretty much have to be in a monogamous, loving relationship.

That just going after one woman after another, or one man after another, or having more than one at the same time that I mean, that would be clearly in violation of the whole spirit of sensual restraint in Dhamma. But, again, I do

not know the exact source. I mean, it's

it's got to be in there somewhere.

Somewhere in the commentary or

tradition, if it's not in the sutras

themselves.

But, um

yeah, I mean, the main thing I'm going

to be saying about it is just common

consensus among the Sangha as to what

constitutes

sexual misconduct or sensual misconduct.

Kamesu micchacara.

But, yeah, I cannot refer to the exact

text cuz I don't know what the exact

text would be.

So, I guess I'll just move on to the

next question here.

This is from Romeo.

And Romeo says

"I'm new to Buddhism and it is

and was wondering if or how Vipassanā

insight meditation fits in with the

original teachings. Did the Buddha

incorporate Vipassanā into his

meditation practice? Did he originate

it?"

Um

I'm sure that Vipassanā I mean

I'm not This is kind of a tricky

a tricky issue.

Uh we What is called Vipassanā nowadays?

I think I've never liked the name

Vipassanā for it because what is called

Vipassanā nowadays is essentially

Satipatthana or mindfulness meditation.

Vipassanā isn't something that you do.

Vipassanā is insight that spontaneously

arises

generally as a result of your

meditation.

But the meditation is mindfulness or

Satipatthana.

And

personally, I much prefer

um mindfulness meditation being referred

to as mindfulness meditation or

Satipatthana than have it being called

Vipassanā because again, Vipassanā isn't

something that you do. It's something

that arises spontaneously as a result of

your meditative practice or your yogic practice.

So, yeah. I mean Satipatthana definitely was taught by the Buddha.

And the insight that arises is just assumed. You know, it's mentioned in the sutras also that you have like this liberating insight that arises as a result of your meditative experiences.

So, that's in the sutras. I mean, that goes all the way back to very ancient times.

Um

I would have the Buddha originated

the concept of Vipassanā? I kind of doubt it, but I mean, he is one of the best teachers of it.

That he emphasizes it more than most spiritual traditions or maybe possibly any other spiritual traditions.

So, I mean, with regard to just mindfulness, what most people vulgarly call Vipassanā, yeah, definitely the Buddha was teaching that. In fact, that was probably at least as important to a monk striving for enlightenment as sitting cross-legged in a state of jhāna.

Just being mindful of every motion as, you know, everything that you do, you're doing it mindfully.

You sure or not? Okay.

So,

yeah, so, the Buddha did incorporate

Vipassanā into his meditation practice.

Um

or at least he was his meditation

practice was the meditation practice

that he taught was devised in such a way

as to cause

insight or Vipassanā to arise.

But, whether he originated it or not,

I kind of doubt it. Cuz I assume there's

always been people that are very

spiritually advanced, very spiritually

mature, who come along, you know, like

Pacceka Buddhas or previous Buddhas. You

know, I mean, before the Buddha, even in Theravāda Buddhism, there were people who had liberating insight.

I mean, if you become enlightened, it's presumably because of liberating insight or Vipassanā.

But, I mean, the way the Vipassanā insight knowledges are like put into a list, I mean, this is like in the commentary tradition, it's not in the sūtras, where you got in Burma, it's called nyānzin. It's like the list of of Vipassanā insight knowledges that you have to experience in the correct order in order to become enlightened. And the Mahasi tradition is

heavily reliant on this nyānzin. Like at Panditarama back when U Pandita was alive, I don't know if it's still that way.

Pretty much all he cared about was, you know, you'd give your your meditation interview and you'd be telling him your experiences and he just be listening. I mean, he he wouldn't give a [__] about most of what you said, but if you experienced something that was like on the the correct order on the on the the list of Vipassana inside knowledge, he I mean, he'd perk up and might start writing stuff down. Which was giving the subtle cues to the

meditators that that was the kind of

thing that he wanted to hear.

But, um let's see here.

Yeah, I mean, even Vipassana, the use of

the word Vipassana is now really kind of

confusing because

what it means now was different from

what it meant

what it means in the suttas, for

example.

Um but, I think I answered that

question. So, I think I'll move on to

Romeo's next question here.

And his next question is, I would also

be interested in you conducting a guided

mind a guided mindfulness meditation.

So many of the ones I come across on

YouTube come from practitioners that are steeped in the mind virus of today's cultural Marxism. Yeah, I'm not surprised at all.

It really is like

um I mean, in a way it makes sense that conservatives in Western civilization are more likely to be Christian.

And it's it's the the radicals and the leftists, you know, originally it was like the beatniks and the hippies are the ones that are going to be going for the the esoteric, exotic, Eastern spiritual traditions. And so, it's just natural that in Western civilization, Western culture, you know, it's mostly

leftists are going to be interested in

Buddhism.

That's just the way it is.

But, nowadays, you know, after a few

decades of relatively serious

um Buddhists, Western Buddhists who were

taking things relatively seriously,

now it's it's just gotten into the hands

of, you know, queer Buddhism and just

all this

you know, it's rainbow Buddhism or you

got these

academics just writing about

Uh I mean, I've I've gone over all this

stuff before. You know, it's they're

largely rejecting

orthodox Buddhism as it is found in

ancient texts and in ancient traditions

and replacing most of it with

essentially cultural Marxism.

What what goes by the name of cultural

Marxism, called progressivism, you know,

hysterical leftism, whatever you want to

call it.

So,

that is that is uh an unfortunate fact.

And my dog is just

keeps pestering me.

Bless her little heart.

So, the thing is I mean the the main

question here is would I be interested

in conducting a guided mindfulness

meditation? And I do not like guided

meditations.

I mean, I've I've never liked following guided meditations just because I don't like somebody telling me what to think, you know, somebody like invading your the the privacy of your own mind and telling you what to think.

Um yeah, I've never really liked that and so just going with the idea of doing to others as you would have them do unto you, I've never liked giving guided meditations.

So, I mean, you're better off just learning how to do mindfulness meditation

and then sit there and do it like in silence, in solitude,

you know, just sit there cross-legged on the floor or however it is that you do it.

Learn how to do it, you know, find out from a a reliable source like maybe the Satipatthana Sutta or a a book based on the Satipatthana Sutta.

Uh

um

you know, the experience of insight by Joseph Goldstein even is a very good book, one of his first books, I think.

Um you know, just learn how to do mindfulness meditation and then just do it on your own.

Um at least if you do want to do a

guided meditation, you're going to have to find somebody other than me to do it because I just don't like uh giving or receiving guided meditations.

So,

I think I'll just move on to the next question here. This is from Keep the Video.

And Keep the Video says, "Let us assume that bhikkhunis"

He's got it bhikkhunis in in quotes.

"Let us assume that bhikkhunis ordained by Mahayana nuns would be recognized by the Sangha. The proponents of bhikkhuni ordination would most likely advocate that the physically disabled can also be ordained. In your opinion, do the

proponents of bhikkhuni ordination also have the chance to convince the Sangha on this issue?"

Um in certain circles, I mean, they'll they'll have the chance to convince leftist Sanghas of just about anything that is leftist.

But um

with regard to physical disabilities, it's pretty clear uh who can be ordained and who can't. There's a list of diseases that if you've got them, you're not supposed to be ordained. Um certain physical disabilities, I mean, can be disqualifying for ordination. Some of them are not disqualifying, but

nevertheless, it's a minor offense for the monks to ordain such a person. If they do ordain them, the the ordination is valid, but still they they commit a minor offense. I mean, physical disabilities um

Yeah, I I that's pretty clear-cut in the texts, you know, to what extent a person could be physically disabled and still be ordained.

Um I have seen um monks ordained that had leprosy and so forth, which is not supposed to happen, but it just they do it anyway, and I think the ordination would still be valid in such case.

But um

I I'm not really so much concerned with

um

physically disabled people being

ordained, but I think the next step,

once leftist bhikkhus or leftist

Buddhists in the West are able to get

bhikkhuni ordination revived somehow, at

least to their own satisfaction,

then the next step would be trans

monks and nuns.

And there's no way in hell that that

would pass muster based on the Pali

texts. I mean, you have to have a pair

of real balls to be ordained as a monk,

for example.

And it's pretty similar for for nuns. I

mean, they've got to be genuine

like anatomical females

in order and not just modified to look

like they're anatomical females, but

they got to be like genuine females

physically

to be ordained as nuns. And so you're

going to have leftist Buddhists,

so-called, self-professed,

who are going to be agitating to get

trans nuns and trans monks ordained, and

there's no way it would be valid

according to Vinaya, but they don't

care. They They want to change Vinaya.

They want to change what the Buddha

taught

in order to make it more closely fit

the leftist agenda and leftist ideals

and so forth.

And

a lot of them have the mindset

that if in the texts the Buddha says

anything that's

politically incorrect, then he couldn't

really have said that because any

enlightened being, of course, is going

to be a progressive leftist.

So, yeah, I think the next step would be

ordination of trans monks and nuns,

which there's no way, according to the

text themselves, there's no way it would

be valid. There's no way the ordination

would be valid. It wouldn't just be that

the monks ordaining such a person would would get like a committed minor offense. I mean, it just would not be an ordination. It would just be an invalid, null and void ordination, which leftists,
there are some in the West, especially, who just won't care. They're just going to They have to be changed. You've got to change the ancient texts.
And it's it's kind of similar with, you know, the Bible. You know, it's like politically correct Christianity. It just ignores, for example, you know, homosexuality homosexuality being called abomination
in the New Testament. I mean,

well, so what? You know, it's like times have changed, and so we're just going to change Christianity. And essentially, they're changing it into into the ground. You know, they're just changing it off a cliff, and then now they're trying to do the same thing with Buddhism. And I mean, really, what the the end result is not going to be Dharma anymore. It's just going to be something called Buddhism, which is really just a kind of Buddhism-flavored cultural Marxism or leftist progressivism, or whatever you want to call it.

So, I guess I as I kind of answered that

question, sort of.
I guess. So, I'll just move on to keep
the video's next question here,
which is,
"Should materialistic people even look
deeper into Buddhism? What if they want
to become monks because they believe
that meditation changes certain
processes in their brain and makes them
superhuman?"
Well, I mean, if they're materialists, I
don't think that they would believe that
you can become superhuman.
Would they? I guess I guess maybe you
could. And you just think it's going to
be like
enhanced brain function or something.

But I think

I mean, it's good for any people to look

deeper into Buddhism because even if you

become a Buddhist for a dumb reason

or whatever the reason is,

you become a Buddhist for a dumb reason

and you practice it,

then your reasons are going to get wiser

as you get wiser because practicing

Buddhism correctly causes you to have

insight and causes your wisdom to

progress.

You know, you become a wiser person and

so your motivations and your reasons are

going to become wiser. So even if you

become a Buddhist for a dumb reason,

you know, you just want good karma so
you can get hot chicks or something.
Well,
if you practice correctly, you know,
you're doing the meditation and so
forth, then those dumb reasons are going
to be replaced eventually by less dumb
reasons. You're going to have better and
better reasons.
So it's it's okay for anybody to be
interested in Buddhism even if they're
interested for dumb reasons.
I mean, if it's a super dumb reason like
a total misunderstanding of what
Buddhism is all about, then they'll just
fall away from it and no harm done maybe
unless they just start attacking

Buddhism saying that it's [__] That
does happen sometimes. That's just
inevitable. I mean, that's probably been
happening since ancient times.
But yeah, I think it's fine for
materialistic people or any people to
look deeper into Buddhism and if they're
practicing it correctly and not just
trying to change it to, you know, suit
the tastes of some spiritually bankrupt
fashion,
then yeah, then, you know, as I've been
saying, their their reasons are going to
get wiser as they get wiser.
So I guess I'll just move on to the next
question, Also, from Keep the video, and

this is the very last question. This is the last one.

And that is, do you tend more towards reincarnation or annihilation after death?

Well, I lean more towards reincarnation or rebirth.

Clearly, I don't I really don't think that when you're dead, you're just dead.

Although, I do not think that is necessarily the way the books say it is.

I don't think that rebirth happens necessarily the way Abhidhamma philosophy and the commentarial traditions say that it is say that it happens.

But, something along the lines of

rebirth, I I use it as a working

hypothesis. I don't have any proof one

way or the other.

But, I do consider rebirth of some sort

to be

um

a working hypothesis. I do think that

it could just be a matter of similarity.

That

um you know, you have a certain

personality, you have certain drives and

motivations and ideals and so forth. And

so, if down the line somebody very

similar to you

is born with very similar

qualities, then in a way it's it's

almost you. It's It's like a continuation of you in slightly different form. I mean, it could even happen that way.

Um I mean, that's kind of the way it is just from one moment to the next. It's like, according to Theravada Buddhism, you know, every molecule, you know, the the matter of our bodies is appearing and disappearing, you know, a trillion times a second.

Or a trillion times an eye blink, I should say.

And the only thing I mean, there's nothing really connecting them. I mean, it's like everything just blinks out of existence, and then you got nothing, and

then it blinks back into existence. And

so, there's really no connection between

one blink and the next blink is just

similarity

far as I can tell.

So, it could be that way with regard to

uh

rebirth also. It's a matter of

similarity resulting in uh

what appears to be rebirth and may as

well be as effectively the rebirth was

um

but I mean, it could be that there is

like a spiritual component also.

And uh actually, I kind of lean more

towards the spiritual component. I was

just kind of tossing an idea out there.

But um

yeah, I mean, it's you wouldn't have an immortal soul that is reborn or reincarnated again into meat.

But um

yeah, it's it's like according to Buddhism, it's just the momentum of your karma. And I do agree with that. It's like the very the first close experience I had with death with regard of another person dying was I was living in a monastery in Burma. And the only other monk there was this old monk who got up in the middle of the night to go out and take a pee and stepped on a cobra and was bitten two or three times by said

cobra and died. And so, one day he's we did the posada ceremony the previous day and you know, he's talking, you know, he's

you know, we're just hanging out, you know, he's just this other person. He's this friend of mine. The very next day, it's just an it. And then the very next day after that he was just this little bowl of charred bones and ashes.

And it's just so counterintuitive that you could have the complexity of a human mind.

You know, all these desires and preferences and dreams and hopes and all this just all of it just cut off and

there's nothing.

It's just so counterintuitive that it

really doesn't surprise me at all that

you know, there's always been a belief

in some kind of continuation after

death.

But um

I still My father claimed that he could

remember some of his past lives. I've

I've talked about that a little bit in

previous videos.

And, um

Yeah, I can't really give my entire case

for accepting rebirth of some sort as uh

a working hypothesis, but certainly I

don't I'm not an annihilationist.

I'm not necessarily an eternalist,

either. So, I'm following the middle
path between annihilationism and
eternalism.
And, that's that was the last question
by Gully.
So,
if you got any questions, especially if
they're questions you think that maybe I
can answer
in a some kind of useful and
constructive way,
then, uh feel free to ask in the
comments below. Or, if you have access
to the Discord server, you can ask them
there. If you have access to my
SubscribeStar channel, you can ask them

there.

And, hit the like button, and subscribe

if you haven't already.

And, be happy.

hello and welcome to question and answer number
78 I am your host pel basa and I apologize for skipping last weekend but I was relatively sick at the time I'm pretty much kind of improved now but still I may cough a little bit or blow my nose on this here particular toilet paper in the midst of this this Q&A which is going to be a long one probably and it's weird it's whatever I got um it's just I get the feeling that it must have escaped from some kind of biolab because it's like some kind of strain of something like a cold that I have practically no resistance to so I've

been I've been uh under the weather for
more than a week
now with like uh stuff in my lungs and
stuff in my head and it's just not
pretty but The Show Must Go On even
though it didn't go on last
weekend so we got lots of questions
because we got a twoe supply of them
this time we're getting up around 50
questions this time which is manageable
I've done it before but it may be a long
one and also before I start answering
questions there are a few issues that I
need to address one is that in the
previous Q&A I said said that my
sweetheart's Mama hated me and then I
proceeded to give all this evidence that

was the exact opposite of her hating me
because it was a joke she doesn't really
hate me but here I am having to explain
the joke which kills a joke so what we
got here is a case of joke aside and
that particular joke is now lying
motionless and face down in a puddle of
its own
blood actually my sweetheart's mama and
I get along fun fine we are actually
fond of each
other also another thing I should
address is
that I mentioned that there were people
making accusations about me on the
internet and I said that as an extreme

example I said that somebody had accused
me of being kicked out of the monk hood
for molesting boys and then I went to
some lengths to point out that
you can't really get kicked out of the
monk Hood I mean the only person that
can kick a monk out of the monk hood is
that monk
himself so because of that it was like I
was dodging that the accusation about
molesting boys and just emphasizing the
getting kicked out of the monkhood part
but um no it's like it was just a madeup
fabrication um I think if I remember
correctly they were even saying that I
was kicked out of
Thailand apparently they didn't even

know that I was ordained in a Burmese
tradition and just lived in
Burma so I would say that if you see any
accusations against me on the internet
like in a Buddhist Forum or comment
section or whatever just ask the person
what their source of information is and
I guarantee you that their source of
information is just imagination or a
very exaggerated distorted version of
what I myself have publicly admitted to
on my own on my own
blog and it was nowhere near to anything
that would get me excommunicated or any
such
thing so got having gotten that out of

the way I should commence to uh

answering questions and the first

question is from

Austin and Austin says how would an

enlightened being no if they are

enlightened if there is no comprehension

of an ultimate self

well I mean it's trying to second guess

enlightened beings how they know this or

how they know that is kind of

ridiculous but um I mean if if you know

Ultimate

Reality I mean you know that you know it

I mean knowing that you know it is

probably the same as just knowing it um

although I have to admit there are a lot

of people probably most people who claim

sincere to be enlightened probably are
not so you can be mistaken and in fact
there is a little loophole for a monk
who claims to be enlightened when he
really isn't if it's a sincere honest
mistake he's not excommunicated only if
a monk is the lying deliberately about
being enlightened is he excommunicated
he's paraja he's kicked out of the monk
hood for the rest of his
life
so I mean it if there's no comprehension
of an ultimate self I don't know how
that would even be relevant I don't know
how that would even be a factor I mean
the main question is how do you know if

you're really enlightened or

not and uh yeah I mean that's that's a

tricky one because like I just said some

people think that they're enlightened

but really

aren't and that's just completely

setting aside the conmen who know that

they aren't but say that they are

anyway so my advice to Austin on that

would be to get enlightened yourself and

then you'll know you won't need

explanations so I'll just move on to

Austin's next

question with all due respects to my

kind of not answering his first question

which is I feel like a lot of drugs in

my youth and my

ADHD has affected my ability to remember things is there any way I can improve my sadit or my mindfulness and yeah I mean the answer to that the obvious answer to that is just diligently prac practice mindfulness it really helped me I was a very absent-minded person I mean I remember when I was in high school you know I'd come to class I'd sit down and then I'd remember oh I forgot that you I forgot something in my locker I'd rush to my locker go to the locker and then I'd be standing there like what was it that I came here to get and then I I I'd forget again and then I'd go back empty-handed and it'd already be late

like the second Bell had already rung

and I then I'd realize oh yeah that's

what I

forgot and just practicing mindfulness

it does help I mean sad or mindfulness I

mean sad in poly also means memory and

it it does improve your memory if you do

practice mindfulness so practice

mindfulness just diligently and the more

you put into it the more you'll get out

of it that's the way that's the way

dammo

works so I mean that's really the only

answer just you have to practice

diligently practice mindfulness in your

mind mindfulness will get better so I'll

just move on to Austin's third question

here how can Buddhism teach me to
improve my impulse control I feel like
impulsivity is what I struggle with most
again if you practice mindfulness then
you see the impulse and you're able to
note it before you just mechanically
like habitually act upon the
impulse so mindfulness is it creates a
kind of philosophical detach attachment
you know like the urge let's let's just
say you're sitting there meditating and
you just get this impulse to scratch
your nose because your nose itches and a
lot of people it's just the nose the
hand just immediately comes up to the
nose without them thinking or anything

because they're just conditioned to
behave in like this reflexive knee-jerk
kind of kind of manner but if you get
used to practicing mindfulness then you
see the urge arise and then you have
more of an ability to resist just
reaching up and scratching your nose
because let's say You're supposed to
remain Motionless In meditation posture
although I remember like sitting in
meditation and you know just determining
I wasn't going to be moving while I was
sitting there and then of course your
cheek itches or your nose itches can
which can be maddening and it'd be like
my arm would just be twitching you know
it was like the arm was wanting to come

up and scratch the Itchy face case but mindfulness was sufficient to prevent the arm from coming up even though it may not have been sufficient to avoid just the the arm muscles just automatically starting to contract or Flex in order to reach up and and scratch my nose but um I mean it's not just nose scratching it can be anything like like anger or anything like that um the more you practice mindfulness the more you see the mental state arise and you see the urge arise and then you can decide whether acting upon that urge is appropriate or not instead of just mindlessly habitually reflexively acting

upon your impulses so again mindfulness
diligent practice of mindfulness is the
Panacea that will cure this sort of
thing but you have to practice it
diligently so let just move on to the
next question this is from covac and
sead zida
and CAC and sead zida says what is the
word suchness in poly and what does it
mean actually there's a number of words
for suchness I
think the main one would be like
daata what da means like this and then
adding another da at the end turns it
into like an abstract
noun so it' be like suchness but then
there's also words like tadi which occur

in in like the sud P other sutas I
suppose that also mean just like such or
like
this and it's a synonym for like reality
or the state of Enlightenment because
it's something that can't be put into
words and so you just use kind of a
makeshift word that's like a vague just
like this meaning to explain it like
like the term dettie like he who has
attained such or he who has become like
this
and that this or such is just like a
finger pointing at reality or pointing
at Enlightenment without trying to
explain it you know the finger pointing

at the moon and the Moon is

Enlightenment so yeah there's there's a

number of words you know awam also is is

mean something like

thus that uh can be used um as a kind of

jargon for EXP explaining what really

can't be explained in

words so that's that's fairly common I

think in in uh ancient Indian philosophy

in general you find it in the upanishads

also

like this

is this is that

that so we going just move on to se

action CAD Z's next question and he

already asked this question and I didn't

answer it to his satisfaction because he

didn't

specify exactly the the

context it says here I asked about the

gradual training in the last Q&A I meant

to ask about it from miman number 107

instead of I think it was like number 51

or something that I used as a reference

last time can you please break it down

step by

step well yeah I guess I can even though

technically he's got four questions

but this is like a double episode this

is like a double album kind of a thing

so maim minaya number 107 the ganaka

molana sua and I'm relying on biku bodis

and U aan or venerable nanami's

translation of the majam Kay which is a

good

translation so is it possible Brahman to

describe gradual training gradual

practice and gradual progress in this

Dam on discipline and then he goes

through this

list so first he says come beu be

virtuous restrained with the Restraint

of the pooka be perfect in conduct and

Resort and seeing fear in the slightest

fault Train by undertaking the training

precepts so essentially you follow the

rules follow the rules of monastic

discipline and then you see fear when

you see fear in the slightest fault and

you train by undertaking the training

precepts then the dagat disciplines him further kamu guard the doors of your sense faculties on seeing a form with the eye do not grasp it its signs and features since if you were to leave the eye faculty un unguarded evil un wholesome States and covetousness and grease might might invade you etc etc then he goes on you know on hearing the sound with the ear on smelling an odor with the nose tasting and flavor with the tongue touching a tangible with the body cognizing a mind object you don't grasp on the details and that's essentially mindfulness I mean if you're if you're just you know in the scene

there's only the seen and the her
there's only the heard you know you're
not trying to process the data you're
trying to leave the sensory data as raw
as possible you know instead of hearing
a dog barking which you know has a an
owner that does not discipline his dog
sufficiently etc etc etc which can just
lead to this monologue it's just hearing
and that's that's I mean that's the
basic of relatively Advanced mindfulness
but it's not really identified as
mindfulness here because the next step
when Brahman the biku guards the doors
of his sense faculties then the dag
disciplines him further come biku be
moderate in eating why you would wait

until you know after your sense
faculties are guarded that you would
then start being moderate in eating I
don't know but then after that comes be
devoted to wakefulness which means
essentially not not sleeping very much
you know generally the ideal is like
onethird of the night which is
approximately four hours
then after you're devoted to wakefulness
the discipline seem further K be
possessed of mindfulness and full
awareness which it seems to me would be
part you know I mean that's closely
related there's a lot of overlap between
that and just guarding the sense

doors so it's like let's see

here uh in act in full awareness when

going forward and returning act in full

awareness when looking ahead and looking

away AC in full awareness when flexing

and extending your limbs Etc

so yeah that's mindfulness clear

comprehension

SI which is you know fundamental I mean

that's just a fundamental practice for

monks who are striving for enlightenment

that goes all the way back to the ataka

waga just the earliest teachings of

Buddhism so anyways

then uh when the biku possesses

mindfulness and full awareness and the

dag disciplines him further Kiku resort

to a secluding resting place the foot of a tree a mountain a ravine a hillside cave a charal ground a jungle Thicket an open space a heap of straw so it may be that he has to be trained before he can go off alone and sit under a tree but again like I was saying in the first Q the first time I answered this in the Q&A with regard to a different sua this is just kind of an arbitrary division up into a temporal sequence when in all likelihood a lot of this would all be simultaneous

I don't see why you would have to wait until you've accomplished all these other things before you go off and sit

alone under a tree unless it's
indicating that after you've been a monk
under a preceptor for at least five
years or five rains Retreats then you
can go off and live alone it might be
implying that but I think there's a good
chance that it's just like an arbitrary
arrangement of various practices of a
monk into a temporal sequence in order
to make it easier to you list them in a
su so
anyways H let's see oh okay after you
find the secluded resting place for
yourself then you cultivate let's
see let's see here then he meditates
abandoning Covetous for the world he
abides with a mind free of covetousness

he purifies his mind from

covetousness okay so he's he's dealing

with the five hindrances so you try to

eliminate the five hindrances at at

least temporarily to set yourself up for

good meditative States and then after

that let's see

here oh okay so then he then he attains

the four

Jas and then that's it this is my

instruction Brahman to those who are in

the higher training whose Minds have not

yet attained the goal who abide aspiring

to the Supreme security from bondage but

these things conduce both to a pleasant

abiding here and now and the mindfulness

and full awareness for those beacons who

are orans with taints

destroyed who have lived the holy life

done what had to be done laid down the

burden reached the true goal re

destroyed the feds of being and are

completely liberated through final

knowledge

so I think a lot of the basic practices

are artificially divided up into a

temporal sequence until you get to the

four janas and then in a lot of the

sutas fourth jna is considered to be

just like the natural jumping off Place

into

Enlightenment um

I'm not sure exactly how to explain it

very very well in a Q&A like this

because I've got

approximately 50 questions to answer but

uh I mean it's just the basic practices

of a monk that are described in many

sutas except here it's sort of

artificially divided up into a temporal

sequence just like I think it was majam

kayot number 51 was when really probably

a lot of these will be practice

simultaneously pretty much from the

get-go

so um yeah I mean you take care of all

you know you follow the rules you you

restrain your senses you sleep as little

as possible you know you show moderation

in eating which probably should be

practiced from day

one um you know and then you you

eliminate or at least sort of reduce the

five hindrances until you can get into J

States through formal meditation and

then you go through the to Fourth Jan

you master fourth Jan and then if you're

going to become

enlightened at least According to some

sutas it is implied that you know it's

easiest to become enlightened you know

from fourth J or after having mastered

fourth

J and uh St John of the Cross kind of

goes with a similar principle um just

completely independent of Buddhism

probably in in in his own practice of
you know Catholic contemplation you have
to master contemplation which is at
least second Janna before you can become
an Adept and then it's from the stage of
the Adept that you move on to the stage
of the perfect which would essentially
correspond to an arant in terab
Buddhism but I think a lot of the early
I mean the the previous stages before
you get enlightened it's just an
artificial division more or less
arbitrary division into a temporal
sequence then when a lot of it in all
likelihood is cultivated simultaneously
you don't have to master one before you

move on to the next same with CA in PA

it's considered to be a temporal

sequence you know you have to master

Sila you know if you have to purify your

morals before you can purify your mind

and you have to purify your mind before

you can p before you can just become

enlightened

purify your wisdom but to some degree

they're all simultaneous it's like a

tripod you know the three whole each

other up you know you have to have some

wisdom before you'll even want to purify

your morals for

example so I guess I'll just move on to

the next question here from covac and

CAD

zida which is as follows when you said
there is no connection between one blink
and another of Damas according to Abid
dama isn't that one of the main points
points of the banga and the banga is
found only in the Abid dama comment the
Abid
dama philosophy it's not found in the
sutas I
think excuse me I think bonga does
appear in the sutas but with a
completely different meaning bonga
literally means like a limb of existence
or factor of existence and it's the
closest there is in Abid dama philosophy
to like a subconscious mind according to

the Abid dama philosophy uh your very
last mental state your very last thought
before you die becomes like a test
pattern like throughout your next
existence so let's say um your last
thought is like an image of your family
let's say they're they're standing
around your deathbed and then you die so
then the entire next existence it's like
if you're not thinking anything let's
say you're in a deep sleep or something
then there's just going to be this test
pattern like on TV sets a long time ago
where there's just going to be this this
family from your previous existence is
just going to be like the the standard
picture that's there in your mind when

you're not thinking anything and you're
not aware of it because you're not
really thinking anything but yeah I mean
it's the thing is that this bonga cheah
is is also existing from one moment to
the next and he he brought this up
because I was pointing out that
according to Orthodox terraa not sarasti
V or certain other schools of Buddhism
but according to to Terra everything is
blinking in and out of existance at
about a trillion times per eye
blink and so I pointed out that that
just completely disrupts any continuity
you can't have any kind of momentum
going because everything in the universe

is just going completely out of
existence into a state of nothingness
before the next moment blinks them back
in again so there's like this Severance
I mean it might as well be a million
years between blinks between these
flashes in and out of existence because
there's nothing in between to cause any
kind of continuity you know everything
is just arising out of nothing and that
is a weakness in Abid dama that they
really can't explain it I asked naid
scholar once what causes that and he was
burmes so he said it's there's an idea
of aone and aone in burmes means
momentum but how can you have momentum
when there's nothing

there they can't answer that so I guess
to some degree the sasada Buddhists
would at least avoid that difficulty by
claiming that the elemental dhas or
dharmas you know the ultimate realities
that are exists like
atoms that that they're not blinking in
and out it's the only impermanence is in
the combination of them those are
Saras but the elemental dharmas are
Eternal according to SAS or at least
that's what I've read about
sasti so that would make more sense
because I really don't know how you get
past the idea of everything blinking
completely out of existence so that

there's just nothing and then the next
moment the next trillionth of a second
everything's blinking back into
existence again based on a momentum that
couldn't possibly exist because there
was nothing you know a split moment
before
that so I mean if there's any Abid
Scholars out there who would like to
straighten us all out on how that is
possible go right ahead I mean if you're
abidal Scholars and you can explain how
gravity works from the terad point of
view or from the Abid dama point of view
because Abid dama was an attempt to to
explain everything to explain the entire
universe and uh they forgot to mention

gravity so that would be good to to at
least maybe maybe I just didn't notice
it maybe it's in some obscure text that
doesn't get translated in English or
something most of patana hasn't been
translated into English as far as I know
so anyways I think I'll just move on to
uh SE action CAD Zeno's next question
here he says I don't think cheetah are
caused by other cheetah they are caused
by comma and the sense
bases although how karmic information is
stored is a completely different matter
does terava ever explain that cheetah's
I mean Kama itself is a kind of I mean
it has to have a un accompanying cheetah

cheetah and Cheta I mean again we're talking Terra Buddhist Abid dama which is orthodox this is the Orthodox party line of terab Buddhism you can't have uh Consciousness or cheah without a Chao or a mental state that accompanies it you know they they arise and disappear simultaneously I mean they have to arise in the same point in time they have to disappear at the same point in time so I mean why you even say that they're different if they can't possibly be separated I mean that's that's another philosophical question to be wrangled with I

suppose so I mean the sense bases also are poofing in and out of existence at a

times a mind blank in fact the sense

bases being physical matter would be 17

times slower than the mental States

because there are 17 mind moments for

every moment of matter according to

Orthodox

Tera

so let's see although how karmic

information is stored is a completely

different matter does terot ever explain

that well if the only explanation is

that it is just momentum even though the

strict party line of terab that claims

everything is blinking in and out of

existence would destroy the momentum but

so long as everything isn't just

blinking out of existence so that you
have nothingness in between each moment
you know you've got a split moment of
nothingness just separating each moment
of mind and matter if if you can just do
away with that then momentum is would
seem to be if not a perfect explanation
at least a way better one so
momentum so I'll just move on to covac
and CAD Z's fourth
question man maybe this is even five one
two yeah this is five questions shame on
you coaction c z enough for asking so
many questions because the rule is three
but considering this is like a double a
double episode I'll let it slide and he
will not be punished this

time so his his last last question here
is what are the implications of this on
dhama practice and he linked to an
article how about how poor people
receive a less pleasurable stimulus when
they are
rewarded and there may be there's some
truth to that I suppose I mean they did
a scientific study on it although I
would guess that studies like this are
run to fuel the everyone is special
everyone deserves a trophy kind of
mentality that uh is popular on on the
the social and political level
lately um
but I mean if if they're referring to

unprivileged people nowadays that they receive less of a pleasurable stimulus from being rewarded and so they're less motivated to excel which is a way of explaining you know how underprivileged people are underprivileged because you know they're so beaten down they don't even really have the motivation to excel this sort of thing I mean in premodern times pretty much everybody was underprivileged certainly by modern standards I mean even people who are very rich in in like ancient times I mean still their standard of living was in many ways far inferior to somebody living on welfare nowadays no electricity no running water you know I

mean it's

like so I'm not sure what the

implications of this onama practice

would be I mean you're you're trying to

be an aesthetic anyway you're trying to

be indifferent to rewards anyway if

you're being a serious Buddhist

practitioner um you really shouldn't be

practicing for rewards anyhow you should

be practicing you know as just I don't

know an an ideal of sacred Duty or some

such or maybe just a sincere desire to

end suffering and or

delusion so I'm not sure exactly what

the implications of this would be on

Dharma practice but I would imagine that

they are not really game changers you know it's nothing profound or Earth shaking it's just sort of a subtle difference between people of the upper classes and people of you know less privileged

classes um I mean it might help to explain why people of the upper classes are more attracted to Buddhism Than People of the lower classes uh at least in Ancient India like when Buddhism was just starting you know was mainly a higher cast sort of movement um more of an intellectual movement you know educated people and that's kind of the way it is in the west nowadays too not a lot of ghetto Buddhism in

America

so yeah I mean there may be implications

but I mean dhama remains dhama it's not

going to really change anything

important that you just do the best you

can under the circumstances and if you

were born into a situation in which you

naturally feel less dopamine Hit Upon

being rewarded that's just part of your

karma your own Karma landed you wherever

you happen to be which is an idea so

anti-leftist that leftists are trying to

abolish that idea from Buddhist

philosophy at least leftist

Buddhists so I think I'll just move on

to the next question this is from

Andreas and Andreas says does anata
really mean no self self I read from a
few Scholars now that it actually means
not self and that the Buddha is not
denying the existence of an immortal
soul but rather pointing to what is not
part of that Immortal Soul the five scas
he uses the Sanskrit word in po
condas it kind of makes sense
considering that all the memories of
past lives have to be stored somewhere
inside the soul in pares yes like
question mark and can be accessed as
described many times in the sutas and
it's true aan tanro prefers not self to
no self as a as a translation of the
term

anata but it seems to me that most of

the people who are adopting this kind of

argument again have this self viw they

they just stubbornly vehemently

desperately cling to an idea of them

having an ultimately real individual

self

and Buddhism just doesn't teach that for

example I mean this should clinch it

you've got the three marks of existence

the

T

sa

sa all conditioned things are

impermanent

SAA all conditioned things are

unsatisfying conducive to unease and
then finally you've got sub dama anata
and dama does not mean a condition thing
it means anything including niana itself
including Ultimate Reality none of it is
a self that's why they use sa dama for
the third one for anata but not sa dama
for what is impermanent and what is
conducive to to unhappiness or unease
because those apply only to conditioned
realities to what has a beginning and an
end but sa D implies even nibana even
the highest reality is not self so you
can call it not self but that's not
implying that there is a self and it's
just not what is on the list of the five
condas or whatever is that nothing is a

self there is no self and nothing

including Nana itself is a

self

so I think the best uh approach to

people that insist that there really is

a self you just kind of harumph quietly

and just stop listening or or walk

somewhere else or something that was a

joke by the way and I just just told it

said that it was a joke so now that one

also was lying face down in a puddle of

its own

blood so I'll just move on to andreas'

next question

here and I'm doing pretty well my lungs

are holding up and I've hardly coughed

or blown my nose or anything that's

that's nice

so andreas' next question the common

notion in Buddhism is that there is no

Creator God but the sutas described many

different kinds of Brahma beings which

are Mighty Creator gods that created

different worlds and universes is that

notion just watered down Western

Buddhism or how they come to that

conclusion

well um really the brahmas are not

Creator Gods there are

there is a heaven realm called the gods

who Delight in their own Creations but I

mean it's not this world their Creations

are up in that heaven realm where

they're just creating any kind of
environment that they want to live in
and delighting in that but the idea of a
Creator God is described in the text and
it's kind of a weird description or a
weird
explanation in
that like the universe has to be
destroyed occasionally you know the
cosmos is destroyed you know after every
zillion gajillion eons usually by fire
and then you've got no physical Universe
at least in this region of the cosmos
you know you got no
physical world system but then it has to
re-evolve and it revolves through the

power of

karma because there's this Karma of

people having to live in a physical

world or a seemingly physical world and

that need that psychic need causes the

universe to respawn essentially so one

of the first things that response in

this new physical universe is a throne

of Brahma and then after that Brahma

appears and then he's just there sitting

on his throne all by himself because

nothing else has respawned yet and he

starts feeling lonely and he starts

thinking gee I wish there were other

beings here around me so I wouldn't feel

so lonely and right about that same time

just through the force of karma more

beings start appearing in this
respawning universe and then that first
Brahma starts thinking wow I wanted
those beings to exist and now they exist
so I must have created them I'm creating
this
universe and that's that's in the suas I
mean that's a like the standard
explanation for belief in a Creator God
is a kind of diluted Brahma thinking
that just because he was the first being
in the newly respawned CA Cosmos that he
was causing everything else to arise
around him when really it was just kind
of a coincidence that he was lonely and
then other beings started

arising so they don't create different

worlds and universes they might have

some sort of I don't know what you call

it sort of almost like a political

Authority you know they're the overseers

of universes and so forth but they

really don't have the power to create

any beings any real beings anyway um or

send anybody to heaven or hell or

anything like that they're they're just

more advanced beings than we are they

live longer than us they don't get sick

like we do no no nose blowing in the

Brahma

reals no

coughing

so yeah so is that notion just watered

down Western Buddhism or how do they
come to that conclusion they really
don't come to the conclusion it's it's a
misunderstanding here on the part of um
Andreas at least with regard to Terra
budhism in Mahayana Buddhism they've
converted godma Buddha himself or some
other Cosmic mythological Buddha into a
kind of real deity but um in Buddhism
there are small G Gods but there's no
capital G singular
God and and the small G gods are just
beings that are more powerful than us
and they really have no spiritual power
over us whatsoever because our our lives
are governed by our own

Karma

so I'll just move on to andreas' next question here do you have recommendations for books or general tips if someone wants to learn poly and Sanskrit well I really I'm not an authority on Sanskrit I never studied Sanskrit systematically I did learn poly though which is easier than Sanskrit sort of like Spanish is EAS easier than Latin um the books I used for studying poly was the I think it was called the new poly course by a Sri Lankan monk I can't remember his name um I've been told that AK Waters uh poly grammar is very good it's probably the most accessible probably the easiest one to

get um also I do have a poly grammar published in 1902 it's like the F first edition is back on my bookcase by Charles dur roell which has probably been out of print for decades but that one also is usable I mean they're all usable just find a good poly grammar and anyone who knows enough to write a a poly grammar text understands poly grammar it's really not extremely difficult so um the new polycor or maybe it's the newer polycor I think it's the new poly course by a Sri Lankan Monk and unfortunately I don't even remember his name that it comes in three volumes although the third volume is more is um

you're not really learning anything new
it's just practicing by like translating
poly verses and so forth but the first
two were were useful for me and after
after you read um the first two volumes
of the new poly course or after I did
then I just got a poly English
dictionary and just started working my
way through the the vine atica which is
um I mean for a monk it makes sense to
read the vine atica and I read the whole
thing Al the aside from the very last
book The parara which contains almost
new no new rules anyway but it's very
straightforward simple poly when you
start getting into complicated stuff
like the commentaries or poetry then it

becomes more difficult but

um yeah I'm just reading um

just reading from the the vinea it's

it's very Elementary kind of a poly for

the most part although it does have some

terms that um essentially nobody knows

for sure what the meaning is because it

might occur just one or two times in the

entire TOA with not enough context for

you to know exactly what it means you

know it's like a list of plants that AER

not supposed to do something with then

you don't know what that plant is

supposed to be but

that's that's okay you just do the best

you

can so do you have recommendations for
books of General tips if someone wants
to learn poly yeah get a good poly
grammar like I guess uh AK Waters poly
grammar is good and like I like I
already said that's probably the most
accessible nowadays and uh just
gradually work your way through it and
uh get a good poly English dictionary
and uh just start reading poly and just
gradually grinding your way through
until you you can finally read it
without having the dictionary there all
the
time so that that would be my my advice
for that and so I'll just move on next
question here this is from Fred and Fred

says is looking at nude women really

sinful it can be used as a skillful

means of stopping delusions about other

bodies question

mark well I'm going to need some energy

drink for this

one drink plenty of fluids that's what

they tell

you hasn't worked for me very well but

what the

heck fluids are good man cannot live by

bread alone there must also be a

beverage so Brad says is looking at nude

women really sinful well again just

looking at something is morally

neutral it's the accompanying mental

States you know if you look at a nude women and you're thinking cool Stone me then yeah I mean you're going to get reborn as an amoeba because of that but if you look at a nude woman and you're just indifferent you have equinity or maybe you're a doctor and you're just examining this nude woman or you know you're just completely in business mode you know looking for you know some kind of health issue or something then no there's no problem at
all so yeah it depends on the mental States and see it can be used as a skillful means of stopping delusions about other bodies um as a general rule it doesn't work very well I mean I've

met young monks who are telling me that
you know they tried to reduce Lust by
visualizing like female rotting corpses
swarming with maggots and so forth and
it just doesn't work that sort of thing
ultimately doesn't
work you're going to just going to have
to practice damama and and improve and
wisdom until you just get the
Insight that you know it's you know that
sort of thing just isn't for you
anymore so I mean if you can look at a
nude woman without lust you know without
craving and attachment and so forth then
there's nothing wrong with it but
especially for a monk who is

celibate you shouldn't be looking at

them um out of any kind of desire for

pleasure shouldn't be thinking about

them out of any kind of desire for

pleasure you know

just just set it aside don't go there

not appropriate you know and then just

move on continue

forwards so I'll just move on a next

question here this is from some Joker

named PSA saying how much wood would a

woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could

chuck would and I do believe that the

Orthodox response to this question is as

much wood as a woodchuck would chuck if

a woodchuck wood chuck would

I think that is the the Orthodox correct

answer to that

question and I'm living in South

Carolina where there actually are

woodchucks I remember the first time I

saw a dead woodchuck or groundhog Lying

by the side of the road I wasn't sure

what it was at first I was I was kind of

intrigued by this large brown dead

rodent lying there and then finally it

dawned on me it's a

groundhog so I'll just move on the next

question this is from White Ash Piper

and white ash Piper says I'm wondering

what your sources are on those

historical F folks believing that Lau

being the Buddha or Buddha taught this

definitely reminds me of revisionist historians dedicated on rewriting history to fit their leftist narrative I just period got done reading that there was a back and forth going on between the DST and Buddhist in the early 1 Century the dsts were saying that Lau went as far as India when he headed west and was born the Buddha to spread the sages teaching of Dao then the Buddhists turned the tables by reversing this myth you know already as soon as you hear of someone being born from an armpit well Houston we have a problem yeah I think I Buddha wasn't born from an armpit was he or maybe he's talking about

Lau well anyway I should answer this question shouldn't

I so my sources are on those historical folks believing that Lau being the Buddha or Buddha taught well a long time ago I read the a penguin translation of the D Ching by some translator who was a linguist did not understand dosm apparently but I mean he was a literal linguist he was sort of like KR Norman translating poly texts where KR Norman is mainly interested in like ancient procrit languages he is a philologist first and foremost he doesn't really care about Buddhist philosophy and this translator really didn't care that much

about dosm he didn't really understand
it very well like he was saying that
dosm is emphatically not a mystical
system completely disregarding the very
first words in the daing which is the da
that or but the name that can be named
is not the Eternal name the Dow that can
be shown is not the Eternal d
which is
Mystical but he didn't he didn't get it
intellectuals as often as not more often
than not just do not get mysticism bless
their hearts they're really intelligent
they just don't get it because they're
so locked into intellect that anything
that just leaves intellect behind you
know they just despise it or Shrink away

from it in horror or something but
anyway in his introduction he was
pointing out that Lau really
there is no historical personage named
lau and he's pointing out evidence that
Lau was just kind of a mythological
invented character um that was invented
after dosm had begun as a kind of like a
mystical or in his case he was saying
that dosm arose during the Waring States
period in ancient China as a means of
just keeping your head down staying
Anonymous so that you're not going to
get killed by Waring States you know
it's just he was saying it was just a
kind of survival guide on how to just be

anonymous and invisible so that you're
not going to catch fire during all these
Civil Wars going
on and there might have been something
to that but obviously the the ding is
not simply a survival guide on people
for people to survive ancient Civil
Wars but anyway he did put forth
evidence
that L suit really did not have any
historical there was no historical
evidence that he actually was a real
person and this author was favoring the
idea that he was just a legend and you
know there there's considerable evidence
for that that I won't get into mainly
because I just don't remember it very

well and then there was lately there's been this movement of a kind of Buddhist divisionism that's got a lot of truth to it it's saying that the Buddha and the his sakya clan were not Indo Arians they were more they spoke more of a Persian language originally that they were sort of a a kind of persic tribe that invaded India and I also just recently looked at an article that was saying that the vaji and the malas who are mentioned repeatedly in the poly text were also originally a Persian country kind of tribe and there he's he's pointing out that

um uh what am I trying to say here the

the like the whole idea of the the dhama wheel and the calling the Buddha the adicha Bandu or Kinsman of the Sun that that's all Persian symbolism and not really Indian symbolism and so apparently they were Persian tribes uh coming into India and settling in India I mean they weren't necessarily part of the Persian Empire I mean they weren't Iranians necessarily because there are a lot of other tribes you know in ancient times and in modern times that speak a language related to Persian that really are not Iranian like the tajik language even though they got their own country of
Tajikistan you know they speak a

language that's related to Iranian it's like Indo Iranian so member of the the the Iranian branch of the Indo Iranian language family so anyways this guy whose name I don't remember unfortunately but he's made quite a splash in Western Buddhist circles lately you know he was saying that the Buddha was he was uh Iranian or Persian and was in a way kind of backhandedly without admitting to it denouncing Zoroastrianism
and the same author again I'm sorry I don't remember his name he also puts forth an argument that Lau really was just um the Buddha himself coming

through like a a filter of Chinese mythology so if anyone remembers the name of this author who is again has made quite a splash and there are serious Scholars that are kind of revising their views especially with regard to the amount of um like Persian type people living in the Ganges Valley although it's strange to me that I cannot remember a single time in the entire Supa or the entire titica where the nation of Persia is is explicitly mentioned there are mention of tribes like the cambas in ancient times there were a barbarian tribe living on the Northwestern border somewhere that spoke like an iranic iranic persic language

you know more closely related to Persian
than to an Indian language like Sanskrit
but it is kind of strange to me that
there's no explicit mention of Persia in
the
texts
although um some authors are saying you
know that the whole adicha Bandu the
Kinsman of the sun and the damah which
is like the sun it's all a way of
conquering India through propaganda that
they were sent as agents by the Persian
king know Darius the great or something
to infiltrate India and try to conquer
India through dhama or through peaceful
means which is sort of what the the

chakra of tin does you know the king of the world the the the wheel turning Monarch in Buddhist Buddhist mythology Buddhist philosophy whatever you want to call it that um you know he conquers the world through dhama in other words he doesn't do it militarily he does it peacefully and that according to the argument is what the Persian king or Emperor was doing in India you know he's sending these tribes these Iranian tribes into India and sort of trying to get India to become like vassals or a satellite of of Persia and I really don't know what the exact merits of that argument are um I have had the idea for a long time that the Buddha himself may

have been ancestrally more Persian than Indian simply because Saka um which is you know the the the shakan in P is pronounced Saka or
Saka um it sounds like cian or also there there was a people called The sakas Who were Persian you know they spoke a Persian language who invaded Northwestern India and and conquered it that was after long after the Buddhist time but still now the Buddhist Clan and Saka and cyia you know skia have a resemblance and so I consider that might be a possibility and also that would be why the Buddha was considered to be a chhatria he had a Brahman family name

Goda which was traditionally a Brahman name but he was a member of the chria cast according to tradition and that might just be because he was a member of you know warlike tribe that invaded you know either before or after you know the viic invasion there's no I really don't know so I'm going to drink more Red Bull now so this is getting into a really long answer to a not very long question here but yeah I I'm sorry I can't remember the name of the guy um a friend of mine who is uh I think he's called the bio individual on YouTube did uh at least one interview with this guy about how the Buddha was like a Persian propagandist

essentially but um I'm sure I'm sure you
can find out if if you if you look
around so that that was my main sources
for this idea that Lau was really just a
kind of mythologized
Buddha uh as as viewed in in China in
ancient
times but I don't know if that's true or
not there is good evidence that Lau
really did not exist as a historical
personage but whether he's uh like
a crypto Buddhist crypto Buddha or not I
don't
know so I think I'll just uh move on to
White Ash Piper's next question here
which

is is there indeed anything new Under
the Sun or not I think there's indeed
new things under our son you know Helios
sa Invictus up in the sky there yeah I
don't think that any other
civilization before us came up with cell
phones you know computer chips that kind
of thing that's new I'm I'm pretty sure
there were no internal combustion
engines at least not good ones um before
the 20th century or the very late 19th
century in western
civilization so at least that kind of
stuff
you know computers and just modern
technology that's new probably certain
ideas are relatively

new just because they're partly
influenced by modern technology and so
forth but considering that this universe
just assuming that this universe has
existed forever and extends into
Infinity then yeah there would be
nothing new um at I mean ultimately
there'd be nothing new because it's it's
all been here before some form or
another CU it's just in an infinite
Universe anything that possibly can
exist does exist and is existing and has
existed and will exist
again but not under our exact son so
that's that's the that's the thing that
makes it new is that it's under this

particular son and not some other

son so I'll just move on the next

question here this from nature

cure and nature cure says according to

denaya 4 Dean and deania 5 the 32 marks

of holy man is not a Buddhist thing it

was just Brahman viic teaching and

brahans were just trying to analyze

Buddha with their method as I understand

what's your opinion on that um KR Norman

in his translation of the

Su uh talks about the 32 marks I think

it's in reference to the introduction to

the um

paga which is the last chapter of the

suata and he is saying that the whole

idea of the 32 marks of the Maha pariso

or the great man um came from a teacher
named bavari and bavari according to
Korman who is a linguist he is a
philologist means the
Babylonian so it could be that the whole
idea of the 32 marks of the great man
comes from the Middle East possibly
Persia you know it could fit in with the
whole Persian conspiracy theory some
conspiracy theories are true of course
uh might have come from
Babylonia or just you know Mesopotamia
in general so yeah it wasn't invented by
the Buddhists I'm pretty sure it's just
something that happened to be floating
around in ancient Indian culture at the

time and just got incorporated into some sutas and uh just kind of a way of demonstrating that the Buddha was you know a Buddha you know sort of like all these little bits of evidence in the New Testament about you know demonstrating that Jesus was really the Messiah like he was born in Bethlehem and his mother was a virgin and all this stuff that that also was a little bit of monkeying with the facts in order to make him fit the Prophecies of the Messiah and that sort of thing may have happened to some degree with regard to the Buddha also like with regard to these 32 marks all 32 of which could not possibly be found on the same person and even if most of

these marks were found on the same
person he would be some sort of mutated
monstrosity and not a handsome
man so I won't I won't weighed into that
particular issue although I I have
weighed into it
previously so I think I'll just move on
to the next question here this is from
panov and pronav says if someone starts
to practice a dhama how many lives would
it take for him to become an Arun well
that depends on the individual um
somewhere in the text it talks about how
there are four kinds of of progress in
dhama there's fast and happy slow and
happy fast and miserable and slow and

miserable and there were times when I
was a mon when I I was thinking maybe I
was in the slow and miserable camp but
it's it's going to depend on the
individual you know how wise they are
when they start practice dhama how how
much um like param you know how much
talent and facility they have for the
practice of dhama some people when they
first sit down to meditate they just go
into a deep meditative State other
people they never get past the my knee
her stage or what do I want for lunch
stage so it depends on the individual
some of them it might be relatively fast
like according to the sa batan suta if
you can practice like intensive SA

for a week

straight then you're guaranteed of at

least becoming an anagami

so I mean then the question is I mean

how many people can actually practice

intensive sub batana for a week straight

the way it is described in the text it's

probably a very tiny

minority

so yeah I mean it just depends on the

individual it might take thousands of

lives for one person it might take one

life for another person just because

they are right for

it

so I mean if you think about Buddhist

philosophy and the idea of rebirth I
mean all of us have been practicing
dhama from time immemorial you know on
previous previous
Earths so um you start to practice dhama
and then most people you know they hit a
stage where there is no dhama in the
world or whatever and they start
backsliding or being led astray or
whatever and then they ReDiscover it and
they start practicing it again and that
can happen you know a zillion gajillion
times until they finally get off the
wheel so it depends on the individual so
I'll just move on to PR's next question
how to increase s indria and you've
really asked the wrong person on this

one because s indria or the faculty of

faith and I consider Faith to be I mean

there are some people who say sad

doesn't necessarily mean Faith you know

belief in something that you don't

really know that it means just like

confidence you know sometimes sadada is

translated as confidence there are at

least two two verses in the in the suap

ptica that say a should have no faith

one's in the

suata and one is in the

dapa but um so I mean s in the sense of

just believing a Dogma you know

believing something even though you

don't know it I mean that's really not

good dma that's not good Buddhism and um
that kind of Faith you're better off
about at least someone like me because I
really have considered Faith you know as
as a Christian term faith is a kind of
delusion because you think you know
something that you don't really know
there's even an Epistle of Paul in the
New Testament pointing out that that's
why it's called Faith because they don't
really know it you know it's just sort
of a
guess and basing your life on a guess is
is gambling with your life seems to me
gambling with your spiritual
well-being but there is in in terab of
Buddhism What's called the five

faculties the punch punch PCH indria

five faculties and Sada is one of them

and let's see you got Sada and Pa half

to be in Balance Sada is Faith and and

Pa in this case means something like

intellect so you got to have faith and

intellect

like that wouldn't be exactly like

theory and

practice but let's just call it faith

and intellect if you have too much

intellect and not enough Faith you're

going to be a skeptic you're going to

not believe anything even if it's true

on the other hand if you have too much

faith and not enough intellect you're

going to believe anything think about
how ridiculous it is you're going to
become like a new Ager or
something hope I didn't just offend all
the new agers if it's just one or two
that's
manageable but new agers according to my
experience they can believe absolutely
anything so I mean they're more faith
oriented and I've always been more
intellect oriented and more head
oriented and so I kind of have more of a
dim view of Faith than a lot of
people but if you want to increase it
gosh I guess one way of increasing Faith
would be to practice dhama and you see
from your own experience that you're

making progress that you have fewer desires you have more equinity and so forth and then that would cause a kind of faith in dhma in general even some of the aspects of it that you haven't mastered yet you know it gets you into a more confident attitude towards Dharma in general if you've practiced some of it and Gotten Good at some some of it are getting benefits from that part that you've that you're able to more or less master or get good at then it's going to cause you to have faith or confidence that you know the more you practice dhama you know the wiser and happier or at least less miserable you're going to

be so that would just practice dhama I
suppose practice it you know sincerely
and
conscientiously and you'll make progress
which will increase your faith
but going by other methods you know just
I don't know like getting indoctrinated
or something is not a good way of
increasing your
faith and Faith that's just kind of
arbitrary arbitrarily latched upon or
thrust upon you um you know it's it's
not even necessarily going to be uh
heading in the right
direction so I mean having faith in the
Communist party I mean it's it's not a
good kind of

Faith so I guess all just move on to the next question here and this is from Proto Pudo Monk and Proto Pudo monk says what is the problem with the aan cha tradition is it the focus on Janna and neglecting Saadi batana and I think he's referring
to maybe something that I said about the aanta
tradition
um maybe I think the main problem with the aan cha tradition is it doesn't focus on meditation much at all that's my experience with aan cha tradition is a lot of aan CHA monks really don't practice meditation very much they might

be sticklers on vinia except for the
certain rules that the aan cha tradition
traditionally
breaks and there are some of those but
um for the most part they're relatively
strict in vinea and conscientious monks
I'm not trying to badmouth aan chamong
but you go to a aan cha moner in
Thailand and there may not be a whole
heck of a lot of meditation going
on and it's it's more Conformity
oriented Thai Buddhism in general is
more Conformity oriented than say
Burmese Buddhism I mean Southeast Asians
in general are conformists but it may be
that the Burmese are just so they're
just automatically conformist and don't

have to make a policy that you have to conform whereas in Thailand you have to conform and that part is really doesn't work for me at all so I locked out in uh just stumbling upon a Bernese tradition right off the bat and being ordained in a Bernese tradition rather than a Tha tradition because I was I liked vinea I liked

meditation and I'm just not a conformist I mean I I voluntarily conform to the rules of massic discipline because you know nobody was forcing me to become a monk it just seemed like my duty and so just of my own Free Will I became a strict practitioner of

vinia but

um just having to wear the same uniform

even though it obviously goes against

vinia for

example um yeah I mean you just get it

it's frowned upon at an onj child

Monastery if you refuse to wear the

uniform even though technically speaking

the uniform is

against the ply poy

mom but I don't probably shouldn't get

into that too much but yeah that would

be the the two main problems I

personally would have with the aan child

tradition is one that a lot of aan CHA

monks just hardly meditate at all and

two it's very Conformity oriented you

have to conform regardless of whether

it's in accordance with you know the

ancient poly Texs or not you just have

to do what you're told do what everybody

else is

doing so but all in all the aan cha

tradition is the most most successful

tradition in the west and for good

reason it's it's got a lot going for it

so I'm really not trying to badmouth the

tradition so I'll just move on to the

Proto sudo monks next question

here which is as

follows I have to take another drink

here which is as follows I am curious

you have said mahasi method is limited

and don't follow aan sha besides going I
thought they were the only practices
available for insight for my limited
YouTube Buddhist education then what is
the terab of meditation practice we must
follow to become
enlightened well that's a good
question um the best meditation practice
that I know that would be the most
advanced would be like the meditation
method of mamy Zoda in in
Burma which
I mean I guess it's no coincidence that
similar to what I was practicing where
you're actually um just eliminating the
primary object and eventually you're
cultivating a state of

emptiness and the mahasi method as far
as I know does not teach that aan cha as
I already said is really not strong on
meditation a lot of aan CHA monks will
practice the mahasi method just because
that is more of a a well explained
method
than anything that that arose from
within the aan cha method at least
that's my understanding and Goa is is
very superficial in certain ways it's a
very simplified strip down kind of
terrible a of Buddhism but I mean
there's lots of teachers out there
belonging to obscure Traditions that are
not easily findable on

YouTube but um just practicing

mindfulness and also um if you have a

meditation method that becomes quieter

as your mind becomes quieter until you

finally get to silence just wide awake

but still

silent then that is a good method and

there are teachers out there I assume

like mamanoda or uoda as he would be

pronounced in West because the letter J

in poly is pronounced like a z in

Burmont for some reason probably the

Aboriginal burmes language did not

contain a letter j or a letter r for

that

matter

so yeah let's see what is the question

here what is the terab a meditation practice we must follow to become enlightened just being mindful this s mindfulness and clear comprehension that will get you farther without sitting meditation then sitting meditation will get you without just the mindfulness of daily activities the mindfulness of your mental States as they arise throughout the course of the day that sort of thing but eventually if you are going to do sitting meditation you should get into a meditation method that just gets quieter and clearer and clearer and simpler and simpler until finally I mean you're just sitting there wide awake

with your mind clear like

glass and I don't know what established

tradition in Terra is teaching that I

assume aan must have must have known it

and he might not have taught

um all of his disciples that maybe some

of the more advanced ones maybe even

like ajan Braum despite his politics he

might have gotten into some Advanced

johnic States at least he claims to have

so yeah they're out there but it's

like you have to be uh you have to be

ready for it you mean you have to have

the karma to have it Landing in your lap

so to speak or at least you have to have

the karma to be able to find it because

this sort of thing is very rare and

Priceless you know it is of inestimable value and so you know what is valuable is going to be hard to get the easier it is to get something the less it is worth so it might require you know climbing to the top of a mountain and braving you know hostile Savages and so forth until you finally find it in a way it's kind of proving yourself worthy or or purifying yourself or something so I'm not sure how well I answered that question I I certainly didn't answer it in a clear few words that he can that uh Proto sudo monk can just write down and type into his next YouTube

search but I did the best I could I
think so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is also from the prto
sudo monk he says my impression is you
recommend mindfulness without denoting
but recently aan pun gave a whole weas
series saying that mahasi method has the
Precision that open awareness
mindfulness may not see the aan is an
advocate for the method and I thought it
would take you all the way to full
Enlightenment currently I don't see any
other practices that could yield the
same result advice on gaining weasa
please well even the mahasi teachers in
Burma themselves admit
that the mahasi method does not lead all

the way to Falling light that you have
graduated the course you have completed
the course by becoming a soda PA and
there are some like uh upand mahasi
upand who at least hinted in very
obvious ways that he was above the state
of soda but I don't know of any who are
hinting that they were fully enlightened
in upand I mean he may have considered
himself to be a suck at aami or
something
but if that's the case suck aamis can
get really angry on pretty much on a
daily
basis so let's see what's the question
here I'm starting to

stray I'm getting uh all [__] up on
the torine and this energy drink I
think so let's see
here my impression is you recommend
mindfulness without the noting that's
only for someone who is able to practice
that at first you have to know you know
you have to apply labels you know like
the beginning mindfulness whatever
arises just just stick a label on it you
know like remembering Ming itching you
know pain whatever and then once you can
be mindful of something without having
to stick to label on you know you get
better at your mindfulness then the
label is just is too much it's it's
Overkill you don't need that anymore and

then finally you're just aware without
even having to direct your attention to
anything you know it's just your mind is
like a mirror it's all there just
Crystal Clarity without having to direct
your attention at
anything so that would be the most
advanced level or a more advanced level
anyway so let's see so aan pun gave a
whole we the series saying mahasi method
has the Precision that open awareness
mindfulness may not see it depends on
how how good you are at practicing these
things if you're good at it
then then you're good at it but um open
awareness mindfulness yeah I mean if a

beginner tries to open awareness
mindfulness they may think that they're
practicing open awareness mindfulness
but in reality it may be that their mind
is going all over the
place and the Mony method does have a
certain Precision because like upid is
saying that when you're noting something
it's like you're hitting with a stick
there's always this intention there's
always this effort but intention and
effort are just Karma and so so if you
can be in the state of Crystal Clarity
and and silence without intention and
effort in hitting things with a stick
then you're doing better and that may be
one reason why the mahasi method doesn't

even claim to lead all the way to

ignment it's a kind of soda PA

production factory so to

speak

so currently I don't see any other

practices that would yield the same

result advice on gaining weasa please

the best way to gain weiz is practice

and practice and practice to beat your

head against brick wall until you reach

wit's

end because to some

degree hitting a crisis Point reaching

Wit's End is an absolute prerequisite to

significant spiritual growth and I think

that's one of the reasons why the Buddha

had monks just wandering homeless in
wildernesses you know no friends no
money not knowing where they're going to
sleep what they're going to eat the next
day because I mean it just slams you
into this I mean it's it's almost
designed that you're going to reach
witsand you know you have this idea
about how things are supposed to be and
it just doesn't work and you hit this
crisis
stage but yeah I I really do think that
that like
despair is a virtual prerequisite
for
gaining um not just weas but like
significant spiritual growth because

right now we're stuck in a set of habits
and that set of habits is preventing us
from becoming lightened so what you need
is for that set of habits to get
challenged and just sitting alone in a
comfortable meditation cell may not
challenge it the way you needed to be
challenged it may be that you needed to
be challenged by you know confronting
harsh reality ities out in the world
somewhere
so yeah I mean you really have to
challenge yourself and I mean it's like
your established set of Habitual ways of
dealing with the world are going to have
to come under like assault they're going

to have to take a

beating and a lot of that is can be

attained just through you know

practicing

strict dum

like even just attending a Meditation

Retreat a lot of people who have

attended meditation Retreats can tell

you that some people just crack up it's

just too much of an assault on their

their personality structure or

whatever but yeah that's I mean that's

what aestheticism is is largely

about you've got to just uh go through

the fire in a

way but not torture yourself because

that's uh that's not right either

so I hope I kind of answered that one so
I'm just going to move on to the next
question which is from ride
forever and uh I'm not sure if this is
even a question
here but I put it on the list maybe just
because it is worthy of comment because
sometimes people will leave comments in
the comments that aren't questions but
still they're just like begging for a
response I mean not deliberately begging
for a response but the the comment
itself is in a
way implicitly begging for a response or
something but maybe there's a question
mark in here somewhere anyways right

forever says if a monk follows or breaks
rules it's not the point the point is
the rules are Irrelevant in fact all
spiritual practices or doctrines or
disciplines must have and did once have
a real function they were instruments
there are no such things as rules they
are only spiritual
practices but I am afraid all such
things have been lost and when we think
Echoes remain after all what sense does
it make to say we don't really exist but
still need to meditate why mon fetishize
about rules is they don't have anything
else to do as they stopped living this
is not in fact a correct view of the
path this is an error the Ridiculousness

of human unintelligence cannot be
overstated so right forever here is
saying that any monk who is who
conscientiously follows the rules of
monkhood is this his unintelligence
cannot be overrated or
overstated and I mean this is just this
strikes me as
bigotry there are um there is at least
one scene in the
text I think it's in the vi where monks
are asking the Buddha why is it that
we've got all these rules to follow
whereas previous Buddhas didn't have all
these rules no no no that's not the
question the question is why is it that

previous Buddhas did not have a
dispensation that lasted for very long
that's okay that's that was the question
you know pre there was there previous
Buddhas and they started Buddhism going
again they started the wheel of dhama
and then it just didn't last very long
it just petered out and then the Buddha
said it's because they didn't have rules
because you have to have some kind of
structure and the thing is with regard
to these rules of monastic discipline I
mean it's not sin it's not like in
Christianity it's not like you know the
Ten Commandments that were um like
Mosaic law in the Old Testament whereas
you know God is decreeing you have to do

this or or you are a bad person or you know you're evil or something it's just rules that are designed to make a Mon's life simple and harmless and to some degree it helps the monk to not get caught up in too much decision making but because the rules are are there to kind of you know just you learn to just follow it as a matter of habit so that you're not even thinking about it much anymore even like I can tell I can say from my own experience that I was very strict at following the rules even even the pyun dumb rules I follow them just because nobody forced me to become a monk when

you become a monk it's an active vinea
vinea is what defines monk essentially
and so I wanted to be conscientious you
know nobody forced me to become a monk I
might as well follow the rules so I did
and then after a few years of at first I
mean it kind of helped you to be mindful
because whenever you're going to do
something you're thinking is this is
this according to video or is this not
according to video and so you're like
observing your own behavior more than
you would normally but then after it
becomes just a matter of habit you know
you're just in the habit of living
according to vinia then I mean it's just
not not really a big deal anymore

because it's just it becomes like a habitual and it's just a convenient way of living your life in a relatively simple and blameless way so there are no such thing as rules there are only spiritual practices well yeah following the rules can be a spiritual practice if it's done wisely or with correct mental States but following the rules um or having rul rules of monastic discipline like the story in the text implies it adds stability to the system and keeps it from Just dissipating chaos you have to have some kind of structure in order for something to continue to exist for

an extended period of

time so why monks fetishize about rules

is they don't have anything else to do

well I can tell you that that is false

based on my own experience because I was

a monk who follow followed the rules I

don't know if I fetishized them or not

but I was very strict put following

them up until like the last few years in

America where things started falling

apart you a

sense we're going downhill or just you

know becoming more

liberal

so let's see oh also um just having

these rules in a way it's kind of a

filter where you've got someone who is

really

not worthy of living adic ad daric life

crude lower types who can't live without

Vice then I mean it filters them out

immediately having these rules so that's

a fairly

obvious fairly obvious immediate

advantage of having these rules it

filters out you know people that are

already addicted to Vice or are so

addicted that they can't not break rules

or whatever well although there are

there are quite a few sloppy

unconscientious monks in the SAA

especially Asian ons sorry to say just

because um they're following their

tradition rather than Breaking with
their tradition in order to become a
monk so Western monks tend to be
stricter on average than Asian monks or
at least Asian monks who were born and
raised into a bush culture because
Western monks are I mean they have to
have a stronger resolve to leave behind
you know sometimes their family and
their friends and just their whole way
of life in order become a member of the
songa but that wasn't even really a
question so I'll just move on to the
next real question which is from Baba
aui and Baba aui says a question can you
describe the Tulu meditation method and
how it differs from the mahasi method

thanks

um the Tulu meditation method was I mean it was similar to the mahasi method at least in the sense that they were both based primarily on sa patan just mindfulness although uh Tom Pulu is a little bit different he was certainly less of a scholar than mahasi was he was more of a forest aesthetic and so there were certain emphases like on Danga or like aesthetic practices that are not found in the mahos tradition you know like spending the night in cemeteries and so forth is a common thing in the Tulu tradition but not in the mahasi method um the mahasi method for reasons

that I'm not entirely sure of why mahasi method or why mahasi seato decided to leave behind anapana and instead emphasize the rising and falling of abdomen while breathing I don't know but the Tom PLU meditation method still it favors on a the touch of of air at the nostrils so that's one difference also the standard method for Tulu like beginners would be given this as their s patan method is sitting hearing touching sitting hearing touching so it's like you're aware of the sitting posture and then you're and then you become um see it's like you change your emphasis to hearing and then you change your emphasis to any kind of

s of touch and you just go through this
cycle sitting hearing touching until you
come across one that is just stable
that's the one you're best at and then
you just go with that it can be sitting
hearing or touching or if you're um
doing walking meditation seeing is also
is also an
option um and I've been told that one
reason why hearing is a big deal in uh
the Tom Pulu method is that uh at night
Tom Pulu SE would be out the in the
forest meditating and there'd be
crickets and other like owls and so
forth that there's this constant kind of
noise going on at night in bur's forests

and it was just a very obvious object of
meditation just here and hearing hearing
and I did a lot of that also when I was
in
Burma sitting I didn't like very much
because sitting is not an Ultimate
Reality according to ABI according to
buas philosophy hearing is weight which
is an Ultimate Reality at least
according to teror but sitting is just a
concept there is no Ultimate Reality of
sitting touching also is an Ultimate
Reality that also is way denial
feeling that can be just like raw data
whereas sitting is not raw data that is
that is like a
concept also the Tom Pulu method did put

some emphasis on the 32 parts of the body meditation although it was uh it deviates from Orthodoxy to some degree because it was almost like a kind of Mantra you just be repeating the the different parts of the body you know K so over and over again and supposedly insect was supposed to arise just from repeating the names without even like visualizing your body parts and so forth which is kind of strange um I never saw the point of doing 32 parts of the body meditation without actually having some concept of the parts the body parts that you're you're you're enumerating or listing off while you're

meditating um like I already mentioned
there are Cemetery
contemplations in in Tom Pulu Tom Pulu
method and also a small amount of cin
meditation like Tom Pulu Seattle um was
um what's the word I'm trying to think
of proficient enough in Casina
meditation that he could teach others in
fact my teacher originally went to Tom
pul because he wanted to learn cin
meditation and tcia that was one of the
few monks in Burma or at least in that
part of Burma who could teach casin
meditation and cin meditation is a kind
of hypnotic method of samata where as a
general rule usually you're focusing on
just a colored disc and meditating on

that um and there's more more
aestheticism more austerity uh more
Danga in the tong method so I guess that
those would be like the main differences
although ultimately they are based on sa
batana both of them mainly mainly based
on S patana um the mahasi method has way
more emphasis on the book learning parts
of it and Abid dama making everything um
like like what is called nanzen or the
the list the standard list of the impul
Insight knowledges that you you have to
experience in order in order to make
like real progress and in the Tulu
method they there's really very little
emphasis on on nanzen or the the

sequence of we Insight
knowledges so that would be some of the
main differences so I'm going to move on
to the next question here because as I
say we've got lots of questions today
this is this is a two week version I
skipped the week cuz I was
sick so this is from sanguine Ultima
sanguine Ultima says how can I overcome
my attachment or aversion complex to the
fairer sex I experien a powerful
obsession with beautiful women yet I am
overcome with crippling anxiety and
self-conscious thoughts merely seeing
them in a common area well I can
sympathize with this cuz when I was a
kid I felt the same way if there was a

girl that I was sweet on like had a
crush on on some girl in school I mean
this is true all the way up into high
school I mean I would just almost have
panic attack if I was confronted with
her then I'd be expected to like say
something clever or witty or charming
you know and I would just freeze up I
act like an idiot and in my case um it's
just a case of maturity you know as you
get more
self-confidence and you realize that
women are at least as messed up as guys
are you know it's not like they're some
sort of angelic being or goddess or
something they might be pretty but still

I mean they've got they've got their own issues and it as you get older and you get more of an understanding of yourself and more self-confidence then that just kind of Fades out or at least it did in my
case so I don't know how old sanguine ultimate is I mean if you're in your 40s then my heart goes out to you but if you're you know in your 20s then at least you have you know the ripening of maturity you know the growth of wisdom and so forth that will help to cause this this strange uh you know crippling anxiety and self-conscious thoughts to become less and less as you as you grow in

maturity but again if you're in your 40s
or 50s and um I don't know maybe maybe
some kind of therapy or something or uh
just meditate a lot I think that's
that's a good P OFA for just about
anything meditate a lot and uh the the
required Insight may arise to help you
to overcome
this but I I can I can sympathize with
this because I've I've gone through the
same sort of thing when I was when I was
a kid in
school it finally started fading out
when I got into
college so I think I'll just move on to
the next question here this is from

Indian guy who I believe also goes by

the Alias of

Trevor an Indian guy says do we know who

it was who came up or founded the sub

reality of

samsara like and I'm not sure I

understand this question who was it that

that invented samsara is that it I mean

samsara has always existed there is no

founder of it there is no inventor of

samsara with regard to the concept of

samsara that's different and uh it might

be that I mean it was in the concept of

samsara was invented by some prehistoric

philosopher in the indis valley

civilization but um I'm not

sure yeah I mean there might be a first

person who came up with the idea of
Samara I mean just logically there have
to be a first person who came up with
the concept of it but with regard to
samsara itself it is beginningless and
presumably
endless so nobody nobody founded
samsar so we just move on to the next
question here regardless of whether I
actually answered that question or not
what changed about you during the first
five years of being a
monastic well I got a lot of skin
here I was very strict so I was much
more serious I um my first five years of
being monastic I went through

this my my teacher of monastic discipline venerable UT Jania who is not the famous utena in rangon but uh just a Tong Pulu a disciple of a disciple of Tulia because J is pronounced like Z in Burmese he taught me that telling a joke was against vinia and it wasn't until years later that I realized that only certain kinds of jokes are against vinia and uh some of you may may know that I'm got kind of a sense of humor I I I am a maker of jokes occasionally

Al and so I just became very Stern you know it's like telling jokes is is against the rule so I didn't tell jokes also he he made the mistake of telling me that um that looking at a woman with

attraction or desire or you know just
looking at a woman the way a guy checks
out a woman is against vinia and I asked
him well what if you just notice that
she's pretty and he said yep that counts
so it's like oh great I can't even look
at a woman in notice that she's pretty
so for the first few years of my being a
monk I would just take a quick glance at
a woman just to see who I'm talking to
and then just like stare at the floor or
at most like look at her foot some women
have pretty feet though so there's there
was that too so there was I was very
like uptight when I was a junior monk
cuz I had this glorious ideal I'm trying

to live up to and just trying to live up
to an ideal in general puts a person
under under uh considerable strain at
times um see what else changed about me
in the first 5 years of being
monastic that's that's pretty much it I
mean I was kind of suen I was
disillusioned that was another one it
was like I've mentioned this before that
before I became a monk I was naive and I
just assumed that by becoming a monk I
was going to be entering the Brotherhood
of men who are diligently striving for
enlightenment and all of them would be
more Advanced and wiser than me because
all of them would have been striving
longer than me and then I ordained into

this tradition and realized that most
monks really I mean they just want to
live an easy life they want to live a
quiet easy life and they're not striving
for much of anything
really so I was
Sullen because of that for the first few
years until finally I got to Burma after
I'd been a monk for about two years I I
wound up in Burma where I could just
just go off into a cave and meditate and
not have to worry about um dealing with
monks that I did not approve of cuz um
that was another effect of being a
junior Monk and a strict strictly
practicing one is it's so easy to just

start despising monks who are just
essentially Shameless and that's not
good even if they are really Shameless
you're better off you know just minding
your own business I mean sometimes you
can't completely mind your own business
you might have to take a stand or or
speak up or something but still I mean
if you're going to be just fuming over
the monks handling money or you know the
monks raising chickens in their backyard
and that kind of thing then yeah I mean
especially in a place like Burma it's
it's just going to completely derail you
because it's all around you most monks
in Burma or in Buddhist Asia for that
matter most of them are really not um

like spiritually inclined they do not have a true vocation they've got other reasons for being a monk like I said it might be they just want to live an easy life so I mean there was a lot of of changes that took place my first five years of being monastic just just the way of life you know shaving my head wearing different clothes that kind of thing but those were those were some of the main ones so I'll just move on to Indian guys next question what are some habits you still have from your monastic discipline well a lot of mindfulness still it's just spontaneous it's a matter of habit you know certain mental

States arise you know you just see them
arising and you don't take them as
seriously um a few weird habits I still
got like um if I'm at a restaurant or
even at home sometimes and a waitress or
my sweetheart is setting a plate of food
down in front of me I'll reach out and
touch it so that it's offered properly
or else I'll just have the urge to to
reach out and touch it until I realize
oh wait I don't have to do that anymore
but like as a monk if I'm sitting at a
restaurant and the waitress is putting
something down I have to very quickly
and kind of subtly put my finger on it
before she lets go of it because it has
to actually pass from one hand to to the

Monk's hand in order for it to be

properly

offered so yeah that's that's still sort

of a lingering urge that still exists um

I mean the main one is just like B basic

mindfulness not that I'm like a master

of it all the time but still it's it

does you know it's still there like this

habit of 30 years is has left its left

its Mark and so I'm more mindful now

than I was before I became a

monk see what other habits do I still

have for my monastic discipline I mean

those are those are pretty much it I

think yeah yeah I can't think of any

more off hand so I'll just move on next

question here this is from ruie and ruie says hello poo did you ever have trouble conveying the importance of the first Noble Truth to people um probably not maybe a little bit but I've never really been a kind of person to hammer away at the first Noble truth that it seemed way more important to me to hammer away at the second Noble truth because um that's more important for people to realize I mean to realize that you know to exist is to suffer in a way that's kind of a truism you know there might be some people who resist that and think that all they got to do is just set up things really nice and get the right house and the right mate and the right dog and the

right car and they'll just be blissfully
happy with no unhappiness but those kind
of people are are just naive to the
point of silliness because I mean
there's always going to be [__]
happening so the second Noble Truth
is is way more important to convey to
people which is whenever you are unhappy
it's because you are Desiring something
I mean that's really I mean i' I've said
it I think it was even the previous Q&A
I was saying that if you know only one
thing about Buddhism if you know only
one thing about dhama it should be that
that whenever you're unhappy it's
because you desire something and that

desire is ultimately a choice you don't
have to desire it so suffering is
voluntary and
self-inflicted ultimately although most
people don't realize it so in a way it's
not voluntary even though it's still
self-inflicted they don't even know that
there's an option and so they're just
kind of stuck that's most people on this
planet so that's one reason why it's so
important to to convey the
idea not so much that you're gonna
suffer in this life because that's just
kind of a downer there's you know that's
just kind of a buzzkill but to tell them
you know why it is that they suffer
that's way more important to

me so I mean and you tell people and
even though they might be like devout
Buddhists still it just a lot of times
it's just just over the head you know
they're so locked in to a habitual way
of dealing with things that I it just
doesn't really fit into their their
habitual way of dealing with things and
so they might say yes sir that's true
sir and then they they just let it go
and continue ignoring it so that can be
a little bit frustrating but you
shouldn't really be you
know depending on other people
understanding what you're telling
them and that that goes for this Q&A

also if you don't get it that's just
tough so I'll just go on to the next
question here this is also from
ruie what are your thoughts on using the
recolle ction that quote the mind is the
Forerunner unquote as a practical
Foundation conducive to clearly seeing
the sensual domain and Advance towards
first
jna um I'm not sure if it would have any
real effect on me um like let's say
you're a philosophical idealist I mean
the world that you're navigating through
is essentially the same world as the
world that a materialist is navigating
through except for some few Concepts I
mean when you're not philosophizing it's

essentially the same and that's most
most of the time isn't it so the mind is
the Forerunner as a practical Foundation
conducive to clearly seeing the sensual
domain um to understand Kama I mean Kama
is a mental state karma is a mental
state and to realize that you know karma
is conditioning your reality that is
important and it can help you to see to
understand the s ual domain better and
whether it would help you to advance
towards first Jan or not is is different
I I think that would be largely
irrelevant um I don't see that there's
necessarily a like a statistically
significant correlation between

understanding that the mind is the

Forerunner and attaining first genre I

mean it might be but I'm I don't it's

not like readily obvious to

me but uh

understanding that I mean the world we

live in is a product of our own mind

it's a construct of our own

mind definitely gives you some

insight into how the world works if if

you see it as just a kind of a dream

that you are dreaming and that you know

it's your karma lands you you know right

where you need to

be and it's you know it's presenting you

with the problems you need to face

because you haven't learned to deal with

them effectively yet you know you you
continually having to face two things
the things that you have the most
attraction for and the things you have
the most aversion for because that's
where the karma is the
strongest
so again I'm not so sure that I answered
this question it is kind of a strange
question I haven't really thought about
it much you know it's it's not really um
what I have been like focusing on as
like when I was a monk or or now um I
mean the mind is the Forerunner or
essentially you
know comma is a mental state and that is

you know the fruition of our Kama is

this

world um you know that I have accepted

for a long time and uh I don't know in a

way it kind of can help you to detach

from P SAR more easily if you realize

that it's a kind of dream or like or

like the Matrix or whatever so it can

help you to detach from it more easily

although it's still all the details are

essentially the same as if we were

scientific

materialists at least with regard to

what we see and hear and so

forth so those are my thoughts on it

which might not be very deep thoughts on

it because I haven't really thought

about it much at least not in the way

that it is framed in this question so I

think I'll just move on to the next

question which is from om who is now

known as alpacino Alpac

he changed his name kind of uh in

Midstream

here so anyways he who was formerly

called om says the Buddha in some sutas

said that everything is dooka in others

he says not getting what you want is

dooka and getting what you don't want is

dooka does that mean that getting what

you want and not getting what you don't

want oh and now there's somebody texting

me constantly

okay let's start this question over
again the Buddha in some suas said that
everything is dooka and other he says
not getting what you want is Dua and
getting what you don't want is duka does
that mean that getting what you want and
not getting what you don't want is not
Dua no it doesn't mean that it's just I
mean everything is dooka in that you
know nothing in this perceptible world
uh has the ability to completely satisfy
us at the very least we're never going
to be completely satisfied there's
always going to be this underlying
subliminal Restless dissatisfaction
driving us through
life and that's going to happen whether

you get what you want or you don't get
what you want it's just going to be more
obvious when you don't get what you want
so when he's giving the list of you know
birth is suffering and and sickness is
suffering and getting what you want is
suff getting what you don't want is
suffering not getting what you want is
suffering being separated from what you
love is suffering getting old is
suffering getting sick is suffering
death is suffering those are just
obvious examples of things that
everybody has to
face pretty
much

so um but even so is everything is Dua
everything in the in the phenomenal
world every every Sara every conditioned
thing is conducive to unhappiness
because it is not conducive to Total
satis isfaction and that that subliminal
at least Restless dissatisfaction is
always going to be there because that's
what's driving us through samsara it's
what's fueling us through samsara it's
in some of the early sutas it's talking
about the spike in our heart that just
causes us to run in all directions and
that's that's it that's
unenlightenment it's or delusion
ignorance is causing us to just have
this rest less dissatisfaction wanting

something all the time and uh that is
what we have to cure ourselves
from in addition to uh this this virus
thing that I'm like I'm happy to say
that I am getting better
finally so I'll just move on to he who
was formerly known as OHS next question
and why somebody is texting me every 15
seconds I don't know all of a sudden
I've actually had to abort videos like I
start doing a Q&A and all of a sudden
somebody is like texting me again and
again and again and again till finally I
actually cuss or something and have to
get up and move the phone into a
different room and come back and just

start the whole Q&A over

again

so he who is formerly known as oh now

says uh in this next question here in

your state are you allowed to get

married everywhere like at a lake or

mountain or wherever or do you have to

do that in like city hall or

Court uh no I mean as a Buddhist lay

person you can get married at a lake or

a park or a mountain or whatever

Buddhist temple if it's not a terraa

Buddhist temple

especially um you can just find some you

know some some old hippie Shaman

Buddhist priest marry you or

something so yeah I mean marriage in

Buddhism is a secular Affair it really
Terra Buddhism has really no rules about
marriage because um it's really it's has
nothing to do with what what Buddhism is
all about about you know I mean like i'
I've mentioned before that it's a
relatively serious offense for a
Buddhist monk to participate in a
wedding
ceremony that he would have to do
penants for six days and six nights it's
like the most serious offense that a
monk can commit without actually being
excommunicated
so yeah so I can get married however I
however I want to get married so long as

my sweetheart agrees and you know

because I mean she ought to agree

because she's going to be there too so

we'll just move on the next question

here this is from

rpad and rpad says why did the Buddha

have his monks shave their heads and

beards while he kept his own hair as per

traditional depictions and why not his

beard

then

um I'm not sure about the beard part but

yeah it's the Buddha did shave his head

I mean he's he's mentioned as having a

shaved head many times in the sutas in

fact there are there are some like up

brahans some uh you know sort of uh

bigoted prejudiced brahans in the text
who refer to him as was like a skin head
because the the Brahman pre the Brahman
renunciant were were julas as a general
rule they were they had like dreadlocks
you know they matted hair Aesthetics and
so the ones with the shaved heads were
nonic and uh to be disapproved of and
they'd see the Buddha and they would
immediately disapprove because he had a
shaved
head and uh so the whole idea of why the
Buddha has hair on his head I'm pretty
sure I mentioned this in the previous
Q&A where um the first people to make
Buddhist statues were Greeks who lived

in like Northwestern India because
Alexander the Great conquered
Northwestern India and planted Greek
colonies there and there were already
some Greek colonies in in the general
area of baktria which is now like
Pakistan and
Afghanistan um because up Greeks in the
Persian Empire there were Greeks who
were subjects to Persia they would be
like if they were refus to hand over a
political criminal demanded by the king
they would just get scooped up by the
the Persian army and relocated like
banished way the hell over on the other
side of Persia where they couldn't make
as much trouble so when Alexander the

Great conquered that area he found there
were already Greeks living there and
anyways of those Greeks converted
Buddhism and they started making statues
because the Greeks made statues long
before the Indians did and so they based
the Buddha on the god Apollo who had
head hair and that's why the Buddha
statues to this day still have that
weird knob on top because that was a
kind of aristocratic top knot that the
god Apollo had according to this
theory that just became like this weird
vestigal lump that nobody could really
understand because the whole whole idea
of a top- knot of hair had uh faded away

into

Oblivion but uh the god Apollo didn't

have a beard apparently so they never

they never started putting beards on the

Buddha on the Buddha

statues

so sometimes even the monks will have a

little bit of head hair you know it'll

be just like stubble you know it'll just

be dark on top to to indicate that

they've got you know a week's growth of

of head hair up there although even then

they usually don't have facial hair

because like in a Buddhist country like

Thailand or Burma especially men just

don't have a whole lot of facial hair a

lot of monks um in Burma don't bother to

shave their face what few hairs they get
they just got like these tweezer things
and they pluck them out which
technically is against the rules but
it's really not that big of a
deal so that's that's why the Buddha had
well the Buddha had his monks shav their
heads and beards it was a symbolic way
of cutting oneself off from society I
mean it was it was a way of cutting off
one's social status because I have read
that in the Buddhist time if a higher
class person especially a Brahman you
could tell what Clan they came from just
from the arrangement of like braids and
stuff in their hair and beard you know

it was sort of like a a Scottish Tartan
you can tell what Clan it is just from
the the pattern of the the Plaid on
their
Kilt um you know it's sort of that way
among ancient High cast people in the
Ganges Valley just you could tell by the
way they had their hair what their
social status was what Clan they came
from and so in a way shaving your head
and beard was just cutting off your
social status it was a symbolic Act of
renouncing society and the Buddha did it
too but because the Greeks started
making Buddha statues with head hair
because he was based on Apollo who had
head hair traditionally in statues that

they just started putting head hair on
him to help kind of explain um I mean he
retained the head hair to explain this
weird lump on top
probably which used to be a top knot on
the god
Apollo so I mean there are pictures I
used to I used to like tease Burmese
monks who would have like some calendar
picture on the wall of their their Hut
and it would be like the Buddha's
renunciation where he'd have his sword
he'd be out in the woods with the sword
cutting off his long hair with his sword
but he'd still like have this baby
smooth face from he he had no facial

hair whatsoever and I'd say you know the Buddha he was an Indian he was kala he wasn't Burmese he had a probably had a relatively thick beard and mustache too so he should have been cutting that off with his sword too and uh I remember one monk he he sort of grinned and had to admit that I was right and then he took a pen and was drawing facial hair onto Prince sidarta as he's sitting on the rock or whatever cutting his hair with his

sword so anyway I think I let's move on to RP A's next question here which is as follows how can one say I was such and such in a previous existence since there is no such thing as the self isn't it in

this sense that Aggregates are dissolved
then recomposed with others and reborn
instead of an individual soul going from
Incarnation to incarnation yeah there is
no individual soul going from
Incarnation to Incarnation unless that
soul is just not ultimately real and
that is that is an idea that I had a
long time ago as a monk it's
like people usually like in the west
they believe that they've got a
individual self and at least religious
people generally believe that they also
have a soul in Buddhism it says there is
no self there is no soul but they admit
well obviously we kind of have a self

you know it's at least in a conventional
sense but they never go so far as to say
well we might also have a soul in a
conventional
sense and it could be that just as we
have an individual you know body and
mind in a conventional self even though
it's not ultimately real and distinct it
might be the same way with regard to
some you know higher dimension of
ourselves
you know four-dimensional version of
ourselves or five dimensional version of
ourselves I mean they could be
considered to be a kind of soul but even
that soul is not ultimately real it is
just conventionally real it's it's part

of this mind generated
multiplicity but getting back to this
question here how can one say I was such
and such in a previous existence since
there is no such thing as a self well I
mean in the conventional sense there is
and when you say I was such such in the
previous existence you're still dealing
at the conventional level and you just
be dealing with like the karmic momentum
that is like generating you now but was
generating somebody else previous to you
and so you can say well I was that
person and it may be that there is even
I mean there are some people who claim
to remember that including my own father

he claimed to remember a number of his

previous

existences so um it's it's it's like the

same illusion that causes us to believe

that we exist as a an individual person

that causes us to believe that you know

we've got like this entity that survives

from One Life to the next and in a

conventional sense that's valid I mean

it's

empirical maybe not

rebirth would satisfy an empirical

scientist most scientists probably don't

believe in that but

still um to the individual person it's

empirical if they can at least you know

seem to remember a previous life

especially if they got some kind of
evidence to help back it
up but um let's see isn't it in this
sense the Aggregates are dissolved and
recomposed with others and reborn
instead of an individual soul going from
Incarnation to Incarnation what goes
from Incarnation to Incarnation is karma
it's the momentum of your mental States
you know it's the psychic momentum that
drives you forward from from One Life to
the next and even from one moment to the
next so that would be like the Buddhist
equivalent of a soul at least from the
Orthodox point of view would just be the
momentum of your own karmic

Stream So it in a way it would be um
untrue or invalid to say that it's like
a distinct entity just like it would be
invalid to say that a river is a
distinct entity because it's just this
stream of water and it's different water
you know going through it all the time
you know from one moment to the next
it's not the same or a flame you know
from one moment to the next that flame
is completely different but you say it's
the same flame as a matter of
convenience and so it's the same way
with a person from one moment to the
next or from One Life to the next you
know it's the same stream you know it's
it's not the same from one moment to the

next but still you can just as a matter
of convention you say it's the same and
I'm going to look at make sure that I'm
yeah we're recording that's
good maybe I should have checked that
like two hours ago but it looks like
we're good so I'll just move on to the
next question here and this is from
jws and jws says do you have any
personal favorite misogynistic passages
from the poly Canon and I personally am
not a misogynist at least I mean
probably some feminists would claim that
I am one just because of some of my uh
perceptions of of femininity and so
forth but um I really I am not

misogynistic I'm quite happy that there
is such a thing as sexual dimorphism in
the human species and uh so I really
don't have a favorite misogynistic
passage from the poly Canon although the
the first passage that comes to mind
that would pass for misogynistic is is
like the first verse of the mandia suta
where the Buddha is according to the
story you know referring to this
beautiful young woman and he's saying
what is this full of urine and dung I
would not want to touch it even with my
foot
so I mean I I I can't say that it's
exactly my favorite because I don't
really have a favorite but it's the

first one that came to mind also there
are a few verses in or a few uh passages
in vinia about this woman who's trying
to seduce I think it's mahak kasaba who
was the most most aesthetic of all the
Buddha's disciples and and she's just
doing everything you know she's like
taking her clothes off and posing and
then just like lying down in front of
him spreading her legs and everything
and he just kind of glances at her and
walks away you know he doesn't even
respond so in a way I guess that might
be
misogynistic it was kind of funny when I
was reading it

though so something like that maybe but
I really don't have a a personal
favorite misogynistic passage from the
poly Canon at least none that come to
mind although I mean maybe you could say
like the whole scene where the Buddha's
stepmother and Aunt because see she was
the same person uh mapap goami is
wanting to be the first ordained nun and
the Buddha just nope not going to do it
and so she's like following him around
crying with like dust in her hair
standing outside his doorway in tears
with like dirt on her face and stuff and
finally uh the Buddha's cousin Ananda
whose family name was also godma talks
the Buddha into ordaining nuns and then

the Buddha said all right but now you've
done it because Buddhism is only going
to last half as long
now so maybe you could call that kind of
favorite misogynistic passage in the
poly texts but really I I don't I'm not
a misogynist I don't consider myself to
be one anyway and uh I don't just don't
have a favorite misogynistic passage so
just going to move on to the next
question here this is from pre five
precept
Pete and five precept Pete says what
makes something a stupa in terraa
Buddhism are relics or a monk's blessing
required

H

well that's it's kind of an interesting question I never really thought about it much I mean originally a stupa was a burial mound for a saint which derives from kurgans which were prehistoric you know Proto Indo Arian burial Mountains for Chieftain that still exist in Central Asia and uh probably um South Eastern Europe so you know like uh Russia and Ukraine that that that general area there might still be some prehistoric burial mounts of Indo Aran or Indo-European Chieftains back then or Proto Indo-European Chieftains but what makes something a stupa in Terra of

Buddhism I mean first of all there's in
in Burma especially there's a difference
between a stupa and a
pagot and I mean it's it's not obvious
which it is because at the monastery
where I was ordained in California they
had a stupa and a pagot one was called a
pagot the other one was called a stupa
and the stupa enshrine some of Tulu se's
ashes so presumably a stupa should
contain at least some relics of some
Buddhist Saint or someone considered to
be a Buddhist Saint so yeah I think that
would make it an authentic stupa instead
of just some kind of shrine or pagot
because at least in Burma stupas and

pagodas are shaped the same in fact they
can be the same thing like the Theon
which is one of the most well known
pagodas in Burma it's in like downtown
rangon which is Beautiful by the way
anyone goes to downtown rangon they
should check it out um in a way it's a
pagota and a stupa because it's
supposedly contains relics from four
different
Buddhas including a few hairs from the
head of our gab Buddha um although they
couldn't have been very long hairs
because as as I was saying earlier he
shaved his
head so I don't know about a monk's
blessing I assume they would

automatically be blessed because after you make a pagota then they're kind of consecrated they put the tea on which is it's the tea literally means the umbrella it's like this metal things often with like Gems or fake gems on it gold or gold plate or at least brass and it might have like little Jingle Bell things that tinkle in the wind hanging from the bottom of that and you know they place that on with this ceremony where that is when that's like the consecration day of that pagota and then as a general rule you know every year on that day there's a pagota festival and I assume a stupa yeah I think by

definition I never really thought about
this much but I think pretty much by
definition a stupa would have to contain
the relics of some perceived Buddhist
Saint or possibly some saintly King I
guess he didn't have to be a Buddhist
King wouldn't he maybe just a good King
so I guess I answered that one so I'll
just move on the next question this is
from Liber
lamb and Liber lamb
says have you had a hypnotic
regression well I'm pretty much immune
to hypnosis which is one reason why I've
been pretty much immune to certain s
meditation methods like the like our
taught in the PA out method and I was

told by my father who was an amateur hypnotist that when I was like 5 years old he hypnotized me which for him was a sign that I was Advanced as a child because you have to have a certain mental age of like nine or something or seven or something like that before you can be really hypnotized at least according to him so he hypnotized me when I was a little kid to make me think that my big toe was growing I don't remember it that's what he used to say um in recent times after I became an adult there were a few attempts at hypnotizing me and at best I just got into kind of a dreamy state but I never

was really hypnotized at least I don't think I was really hypnotized I just it was just sort of like a very mildly kind of dreamy state but I didn't go into a deep trance or anything so I'll just move on to Libra Lamb's next question here in the sense that there is no self-willing do you feel man should in a sense discard the Flesh and take up the spirit such that one can't rightly invoke the circumstances of their flesh experiences causes they uphold Etc in defense of their sovereignty or right against the greater might an unobserved natural order and this is getting more into the the the standard Liber Lam kind of question the guy is is so

intellectual in his in his wordage that
sometimes it's hard hard to understand
exactly what he's
saying so let's see in the sense that
there is no self- willing um I mean
ultimately do you feel that man should
in a sense discard the Flesh and take up
the spirit but I mean the sa sense at
the same level that there is ultimately
no self- willing there'd be no spirit
either really at least no individual
Spirit such that one can't rightly
invoke the circumstances of their flesh
and then he's got experiences causes
they uphold Etc in defense of their
sovereignty or right against the greater

might of an unobserved natural

order

man Libra Lamb's good at this he asks

questions that I'm sure make perfect

sense to him he's got you can see the

meaning of this with Crystal

Clarity but for me it's it's almost like

it's uh like some kind of

uh I don't know like an utterance of the

pythonista

so let's see like I already said that at

the level that there is no self- willing

there's also no individual spirit either

so I mean that kind of takes care of

most of the question I think but then

he's got such that one can't rightly

invoke the circumstances of the flesh um

I mean if you do deny the existence of physical flesh then you would have to admit that what appears to be physical flesh is actually Spirit more mind so in a way you're just converting the circumstances of your flesh from a physical circumstance into a mental circumstance which is still a circumstance at the worldly level and what the defense of our sovereignty or right against the greater might of an unobserved natural order um yeah that's that's that's a tricky one the defense of our sovereignty or right right against the natural might of an unobserved natural order well in order

to have sovereignty you'd have to have a real self I think so you'd still be living at I mean this would still be at the level of delusion and what rights are um I remember there was one guy on our Discord server that was talking about natural rights and he in a way kind of got dog piled by by me too I mean not really you know people like attacking him or anything but just disagreeing with him to the point that you know like

I really don't think that rights are natural rights are a kind of political construct you know they don't exist in nature I mean what rights exist in nature it's the law of the Jungle in

nature you know if you you're you're
able to kill something you you can go
ahead and kill it for
example so our sovereignty are right
against the greater might of an
unobserved natural order and I'm not
sure what an unobserved natural order
would be be what is an unobserved
natural order I mean the observed
natural order is just you know laws of
nature Things fall down instead of up
you know we get older and older until we
die that kind of a thing but the
unobserved natural order the greater
might of an unobserved natural order I
just do not fully understand

that so I'm sorry Libra

lamb you've bested me again on this

one see yeah I don't know if you could

translate it into like normal

English or something but yeah I I don't

get it and I'm going to have to blow my

nose I'm

sorry people who are grossed out by the

sound of nose blowing had best put their

fingers in their ears for the next 10

seconds that was a near

popper okay

oops I dropped it on the floor where

certain silly little dogs might grab a

hold of it and start shredding it in a

confetti snotty confetti at

that so

um yeah the unobserved natural order the

greater might of an unobserved natural

order I'm not exactly sure what that

would be I mean if it's unobserved how

do you even know that it's there just

logical deduction yeah I think Libra

lamp's going to have to uh explain the

question better or explain it in order

for me to be able to answer it better so

I'll just move on to Libra Lamb's next

question which is refreshingly

simple Libra Lamb's next question what

is the spiciest food you've ever eaten

see so simple it's just a

simple simple

sentence an interrogative sentence but a

sentence nevertheless

what is the spiciest food you've ever

eaten and the first thing that came to

mind is I was still a monk in California

at a Burmese Monastery in California

just shortly after my ordination and a

Vietnamese family came and offered

food and I was sitting back in my cabin

back in the woods behind the monastery

eating this stuff and I noticed that

there were these little green peppers in

this food and this it was like some kind

of Curry and these peppers were about

this long it was sort of like the the

same size and shape of as the sharpened

part of a pencil and there's a dog

snarfing loudly behind you now will you

stop

snarfing very snarfy dog so anyways this

these peppers were green and they were

about the same size and shape kind of

cone shape as the sharpened end of a

pencil once you get past the straight

part where it starts to T paper it was

about that size and I remember will you

stop

snarfing and I remember taking a bite of

this and it was just immediately alarm

start going off and it's like my mind is

racing like should I take another bite

and try to eat this or should I spit it

out now and while I'm thinking this just

the reflex of my jaw just bit down on it

again and that was it I just had to go
just and just spit it out and then I
drank like a quart of water cuz it was
the hottest pepper I had ever eaten in
my life and then I went in later uh and
told the the Burmese monks about it and
they're saying oh that explains why the
the temporary monk was was doing what he
was doing cuz I assume he was having the
same reaction that I was having man that
was i' never i' never bitten into a
pepper that hot before in my life
anywhere close to it I assume there
there's pepper connoisseurs that know
you know it's like the Carolina Reaper
you know you get or the ghost pepper or
whatever you get this this kind of it

and and it's even hotter or something

but yeah it was it was too hot for me

but with regard to food in general aside

from that bad experience with Vietnamese

Curry um the the the spiciest food in

general that I eaten is this stuff in

Burma called napit which is good I used

to like napit and the hottest stuff is

kind of a purple color I think it's made

out of shrimp and it's got like three

main ingredients got fermented shrimp or

other gap has fermented fish it's like

onethird fermented fish or shrimp

onethird salt and oneir chili peppers

and you can't eat it by itself I mean

you take a little piece of it like the

size of a pee and you mix it in with
with some other kind of rice and Curry
and stuff and then it's it's
significantly spicy but just eating it
alone would just blow off any socks that
you might happen to be wearing but it's
good I like Napp I kind of miss it a
little
bit and I probably wouldn't like it as
much if I knew exactly how they make it
because I'm sure the the process of
fermenting the fish is is is gross
basically so I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from Stevens
and Steph says and I think Stevens might
be joking here can you realign my
chakras and no I've never really

practiced realigning chakras I'm really
not a chakra expert although I can say
before I came to South Carolina when I
was still a monk at least uh I was still
a novice at the time still in robes I
was in San um Los Angeles the only time
I ever spent any time in Los Angeles
aside from the airport and I happened to
be brought to this guy who realigned
chakras and so he he realigned my
chakras a little bit I mean it was just
like a a short casual you know
thing where he just kind of you know
kind of looked at me and waved his hands
over me and stuff it it wasn't like the
like the the pro version that probably

cost money but um it was it was
interesting that he said that my first
chakra was just solid you know I had a
just a Chad first chakra but my second
chakra which is the sexual chakra he
said that it was there was like an
imbalance and that struck me as I didn't
really get it at the time
although having been a celibate monk for
30 years you know it shouldn't have been
too hard to figure out and it turned out
that he was kind of he was more right
than wrong I think with regard to his
analysis of my
chakras but if you're ever in Los
Angeles just ask around you know this
guy who realign chakras and they'll

probably lead you straight to

him so we'll just move on next question

here this is from Crave

minerals and crave minerals says and I I

sincerely hope we're at least halfway

through at this point cuz we've been

going at it for well over two hours now

crave mineral says if someone gives a

gift to a noble disciple without knowing

they are such would the Merit still be

abundant for the giver and according to

Orthodox terava yes like you offer alms

to uh an Arun even if you don't know

that he's an arant you're you're pretty

much going to heaven unless you do

something to mess it up like there is a

story somewhere in the commentaries I think of some rich man who uh a Pacha Buddha was going for MMS and this rich guy sees the peka Buddha and he has some leftovers given to the Pacha Buddha as alms and then as the as the PAB buha is walking past this rich guy who really wasn't very religious or anything was just thinking oh man that was kind of a waste I could have just given it to the servants and because he gave the food to the pea bud even though he had no idea the person was a Buddha he went to heaven for a zillion gajillion years but because he regretted it afterwards he also went to hell for a zillion gajillion years I can't remember which

came first heaven or hell but he had to
go to both so you have to be real
careful in your attitudes towards people
that might be
Saints but in reality I think it might
not be that
extreme but I'm sure that if you give a
gift to like a wise holy person it's
going to yield more fruit than if you
just give it to a homeless person on a
street corner who might just take the
money and and buy meth with
it and it's partly because I mean there
people are connected the mental states
are contagious and when you interact in
a positive way with a wise person it's

going to cause positive results and if
you interact in a negative way it could
produce you know sort of magnified
negative results also like just sneering
and insulting a saintly person is
probably worse than sneering and
insulting somebody who just ran over
your dog or something on purpose let's
say
so yeah I think it would be uh abundant
for The Giver if you donate to a saint
more so than if you donate to someone
who is not a sage or a
saint um what difference does it make
whether you know that they're a saint or
not I mean you can't really know
someone's a saint you can believe that

they're a saint it's more a matter of
faith I think than like empirical
observation so yeah I'm not sure if it
would be significantly more karmic
benefit from offering something to
someone you think is a saint than
someone who actually is a saint but you
have no
idea and it might depend just on the
individual because really it's
individual mental states that determine
the value of the karma that is
generated so I think maybe I answered
that question so I'll just move on to
Crave minerals next question which is a
followup to the first one he says

reversely if someone harms a noble

disciple without knowing their one would

the karmic repercussions still be very

bad yeah I yeah I kind of lumped those

two questions

together uh so yeah I already answered

that one didn't

I

yeah so yeah I think I already answered

that one so I'll just move on to the

next one from Crave minerals here which

is at first I thought I was silly to be

scared of the possibility of going to a

heaven realm but when I imagined being

surrounded by Beauty t mations all

around AB abundant

pleasure for thousands and thousands of

years how can I

know I would have the willpower to

resist and get lost in it I'm not sure

kind of an impossible question but how

hard is it generally to remain a

Buddhist in such a situation do you

think I guess it's not hopeless if

there's true Dharma circulating in the

heavens and according to terab Buddhism

there are devout Buddhist small G gods

and goddesses up there um it may be

partly because it doesn't matter what it

is you get used to it I mean if you're

exposed to the same thing for a thousand

years eventually it's just going to

become neutral just going to you know

it's not going to be that big of a deal
anymore and you might just get bored
everything's so nice that you start
looking for something better or you know
you start taking up dhma as a hobby or
something and that's the way a lot of
people are including the Buddha himself
I mean according to the to the legend
you know he had it all he was this Royal
prince who had a herum of beautiful
dancing girls and lived in a had three
different palaces and everything was
beautiful and wonderful but still I mean
he just realized that even when you have
everything you want it's still not
satisfying you know you get everything
you desire and still there's this latent

Restless dissatisfaction that doesn't go way and so then you it's like an Insight in you mean on on the road to becoming a liberating insight and uh a lot of Western Buddhists you know they're like Rich yuppies or maybe not yuppies Rich Boomers living in California you know Marin County that kind of a thing you know they got it all you know they're doing yoga on the beach and sipping the best wine and everything and still it's just they're just something that's not satisfying about it so then they start looking for for something more deeply satisfying like

dhama and then they might continue with

the yoga on the beach and the wine

sipping and so forth but at least

they're

meditating

so um yeah I mean Heaven is nothing to

be afraid of I mean better Heaven than

hell um and I mean you just wind up

where you need to be so if you go to

heaven it's because your karma landed

you there and that's

that's the appropriate place for you to

be and so You' best deal with it as best

as you

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

next question here this is from stop

Fear and stop Fear says you may have

been asked this before if so please

direct me where I can listen to it well
I'll answer it right here for the sake
of convenience question is this are you
aware of Brian ru's racist comments and
racist Behavior over the years
do you endorse his farri alt-right
views well I mean I know Brian fairly
well and I can't think of any racist
comments that he has ever made or racist
Behavior he has ever made other than
first of all he does believe that the
Hebrew race that there are a lot of them
not not even most of them but a lot of
them who are involved in this globalist
cabal to control the world and do this
and that so I mean that might be racist

also I mean he does not believe that the Holocaust was nearly as bad as I mean he's he's like a Hitler Fanboy and the thing is he's a devout Buddhist at the same time so it's not like he's condoning genocide he's just flat out and denying that Hitler did any such thing so he just thinks that Hitler was this peaceloving hero of a man who was combating like globalism and he lost and was demonized and I don't go nearly as far as he does in that regard although I do think that Hitler has been like propagandized and demonized to the point that if you were to make a poll of you know just of just random normies you you

you pull them you know who is the
evilest man whoever existed probably
Adolf Hitler would appear at the top of
the list even though Stalin killed more
people than Hitler did and chairman now
killed more people than Stalin and
Hitler combined and there have been some
really evil people that were worse than
Hitler but just because of the the
propaganda
machine and Hitler really did like
attack the wrong folks apparently that
um yeah but Brian I mean in in all
sincerity he has
just this innocent belief that Hitler
was a good guy he just doesn't believe

the the standard narrative because
there's something about Brian that makes
him averse to believing any established
narrative there always has to be this
alternative like a conspiracy or
something that he prefers and it's just
part of his psychological makeup that is
it's like he just assumes as a default
setting that any established narrative
is bound to be false and there might
actually be some wisdom in that I mean I
certainly don't believe every
established narrative but I believe more
than he
does so what actually constitutes his
racist comments and racist Behavior
unless it's certain aspects about

certain members of God's chosen people I mean he's not a racist in general other than maybe accepting that there are differences among races and I accept that also as just from a biological point of view although that itself can be denounced as vile heresy I mean racism by certain people on the left especially but Brian's girlfriend is Chinese so I mean he's obviously not like a staunch white supremacist and with regard to far right and alt-right Views I'm not exactly sure what what stop Fear here is referring to unless it's just that Hitler supposedly was far right although Hitler was not far right

he was I mean a lot of Scholars would consider him to be a radical Centrist because I mean the Nazi party socalled was a socialist party at least it was called a socialist party but the National Socialist German Workers Party was the name of it and it is true that Hitler really didn't care much about economics and you know he was quite in favor of um like a certain amount of capitalism but he didn't believe in parasitic capitalism I can't remember the exact word that he used of people that don't work for a living you know they just they just pump money into something and then get most of the the you know the Kickbacks or that the

prophets yeah he definitely didn't
believe in that which is uh probably
more leftwing than
right-wing but I
mean I don't I'm not aware of Brian Rue
really having farri alt-right views
except in his his belief that Hitler was
not nearly as bad of a guy as like the
the mainstream narrative would have us
believe aside from that he is a devout
Buddhist and a better person than most
of the people who are freaking out on
him like on street corners you know
he'll have he'll be standing on street
corner this this with this Blissful
martyr-like expression on his face

holding up a sign saying you know
apologize to Adolf Hitler for 70 years
of lies or however many years it's been
and people will just be freaking out and
just spitting on and like trying to grab
his sign away and tear it to pieces and
so forth well briyan I mean I mean from
a Buddhist point of view he is obviously
morally superior to the people who are
freaking out at
him and so I mean even stop Fear here is
sort of making insinuations of a kind of
moral superiority over Brian Rue when I
mean he has some weird ideas but he is a
sincere devout Buddhist and probably a
better Buddhist than most of the western
Buddhists I have

met so that would be my answer to this

one am I aware of his racist comments

I'm not sure what racist comments those

would be unless again it's it's

believing that there's a certain cabal

of

certain certain like wealthy globalist

Hebrews but they're certainly not all of

them and I guess they're somehow um

Cooper operating with some kind of space

aliens or something according to

Brian so he does have weird ideas but uh

I consider him to be a sincerely good

guy and a better guy than most of the

people who are badmouth him in

public so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from the Arya sasti project and the Arya sasti project says when speaking of spiritual matters in Buddhism and since there is no spirit in Buddhism what terms would be more appropriate than Spirit Well I still think spiritual is fine I mean I mean obviously the go-to in Buddhism would be Dharma or Dharma although a lot of normies wouldn't know what that meant so you might as well just go back to spiritual or spirituality um to say that there is no spirit in Buddhism I mean it depends on what exactly you mean by spirit I mean mind can be called spirit and there's certainly mind in

Buddhism so and I mean Buddhism is

spiritual in that sense and just it

asserts you know that mind is the

Forerunner mind is you know essentially

the most important thing that we got to

deal

with so I mean if you want to be more

appropriate than Spirit quote unquote

then Dharma or

Dharma

um but I mean there's really spiritual

as an English word I mean it doesn't

necessarily imply that there's any

belief in US an immortal Soul so yeah I

think that the word spiritual is fine I

use it I use it myself so I'll just move

on the next question this is from
Arin and Arin says if we see Terra on
one hand pure land on another and maybe
Western New Age Buddhism or another
Tibet Zen Etc how does one determine
where authentic Buddhism stands so if
you want to know what is authentic or
original genuine Buddhism you know like
what the Buddha actually taught to some
degree you have to do some detective
work which I have done quite a lot of
and quite a lot of people nowadays
including some respectable Scholars have
been doing where I mean you have to use
a certain amount of deductive logic I
think and so I mean one of the best ways
is just determine what are the oldest

texts and so at least tempor temporally
you'll be getting closer to what the
Buddha actually taught anything that
according to the like the historical
evidence that didn't even exist for 500
years after the Buddhist time and then
all of a sudden it's declared to be the
highest teaching of the Buddhism then
yeah I mean you would definitely have a
certain amount of skepticism with regard
to that because there's no evidence that
that highest teachings of Buddha even
existed for 500 years until you know
after the Buddha died and then somehow
it it it arises into prominent
so you just find the oldest texts and

then using various techniques you can
tease out the oldest layers of those
oldest texts like Thea waga of the Su
which is not Orthodox
terada it's definitely it's pre
terrain and so I mean you use these
methods to determine what are the oldest
texts and that would take you closer to
what the Buddha actually taught and then
still you wouldn't be sure but at least
you would have like an educated guess as
to what is the most authentic original
Buddhism so read the Ana waga and uh see
what that says and I think most Scholars
would agree that detica waga is very old
it's one of the oldest layers of the
poly Tex and the poly Canon is the old

EST complete set of Buddhist scriptures
that we have so it goes back to ancient
India and not like China or Tibet or
anything Buddhism arose in the Ganges
Valley and Terra of all the Living
Traditions is the only one that is based
on the culture of the Ganges Valley
where the Buddha lived it's it's still
in a language very similar to what the
Buddha probably spoke and so you start
with that and then you can tease out
stuff that is unlikely like obvious
anachronisms obvious fairy tale stories
and so forth and then just step by step
you get closer and closer to what is
likely to have been original

Buddhism so

yeah no buy sought the vows sorry to say

no pure

land no aalo

Kara

so yeah I that that's the method I use

that's the method that most people

investigating this do you is unless

they've already got like a preconceived

idea that the Buddhism of their choice

is the true Buddhism and then they just

try to find ways of justifying or

rationalizing what they've already

Chosen and that happens too I mean in

the human species it happens a lot

that's reverse reasoning I mean it's

just runs rampant not only in politics

but also in religion and everything else
you start off with what you want to be
the truth and then you just find the
most plausible excuse to justify
that and then if that falls through you
just immediately latch onto a different
plausible
excuse
so okay how does one determine where
authentic Buddhism stands yeah I mean
you have to use some detective work or
rely on somebody else to who has done
the detective work and I mean you just
want to go as far back as you can and
find the oldest layers of the oldest
Buddhist teachings and that would take

you closer to what the Buddha originally
taught as a general
rule so we'll just move on the next
question here this is from jonty
John John spelled j a n jonty John and
jonty John says I'm interested in
question of decision making and Buddhism
how can fully enlightened human with
nonu view really decide what to do after
Enlightenment especially in terada where
there is no bodh vow Chan Buddhist would
say chop would carry water eat when
hungry sleep when tired of course Free
Will is a delusion as is its opposite
but you still do one thing or the other
thing Chan emphasizes kind of
spontaneous action according to

circumstances but still spontaneous

action is based on your habits of course

Enlightenment is also non-dual so you

cannot really talk about it but still

I'm sure you get what I'm trying to get

at well so essentially the question

seems to be how an Arun would make

decisions and one of my favorite

theories with regard to this is

that excuse

me um I he would be no longer be

generating his own Karma so he would be

acting in accordance with the karma of

the people around

him and that's kind of what Ron dos used

to say was the case with Nim Koli Baba

who's up on the altar

there that uh the better you got to know

him the more you realize there was

nobody there he was just like a mirror

reflecting your own karmal back as

you and so they would just do what

people would kind of expect an Arun to

do based on their own

Karma and that would be different for

different people and the Buddha and also

n Baba act differently with different

people is presumably because different

people have different Karma but uh still

I mean if you just assume that an arhant

is a human being let's just assume for

the sake of argument that human beings

exist then still once you become

enlightened I mean your body and just
the the workings of your brain are still
human
and so you're still going to behave like
a human even though you're detached from
that and not identified with it anymore
it's just nature taking its
course so I
assume that the enlightened being would
behave in in a way like that that it's
it's just nature taking its course and
in accordance with whatever conditioning
is is conditioning it and they're just
not identified with it there're they're
just detached from it but still it's
happening just nature taking its

course so that would be my answer to

that I hope I answered that question I

hope because I'm moving on to the next

question and this next question is the

last question this is going to be less

than three hours this is even going to

be the longest Q&A I've ever done and I

was kind of shooting for a record here

but let's just do

it the next question is from monk

Mysterio and monk Mysterio says was

Jesus a real person so again let's

assume that there are such things as

real

persons let's just leave anata alone and

just assume for the sake of argument

that some people really

exist so do I think that Jesus really exists yeah I think that he he did I don't think that I think there's a good chance that some of the stories attributed to him or GBL versions of something that happened to somebody else you know maybe Jesus to some degree is confused with John the Baptist who according to my best understanding was Jesus's teacher and then Jesus became like one of the leading disciples at John the Baptist's like retreat center or or camp in the wilderness and then when John the Baptist was arrested and eventually beheaded Jesus just be became the the

leader of the

group so yeah I think Jesus was a real

person but I don't think that all the

stories about him are necessarily true I

don't think that he was the only

begotten son of of God Almighty for

example I don't even think that he was

born in Bethlehem to a

virgin but just based on the the

information about him like the this

complicated story about how they have to

like obviously had to patch things up to

to make him born in in Bethlehem when

everyone knew he came from Nazareth in

Galilee that sort of thing also in the

New Testament there are people who claim

to have met him in person including

James who calls himself a brother of

Jesus and is considered to have been a

brother of

Jesus

so and then and then uh I think it was

back in the 1970s they might have

actually found the uary of Jesus and his

family was I mean in back in those days

it was a tradition for for Jews to be

like inomed until all that was left was

a skeleton and then you take the

skeleton and you put it into this thing

called an uary which is this little you

know smaller than a coffin a kind of

casket smaller than a coffin and you put

it if you had a family tomb you put it

in the family tomb and and uh they may
have found the family tomb of Jesus's
family because all the names
fit um although Jude was was called the
son of Jesus rather than the brother of
Jesus because Jesus apparently had a
brother named Jude or
Juda so um yeah I think that he was a
historical personage although to some
degree his life just like the Buddha's
life has been mythol mythologized to
some degree for that matter I think that
Hercules and achilles were probably like
real people at one time even even though
um most of the details of their life may
have been just mythologized or just um
conflated with other other people like

the cult of Hercules which was a big deal in ancient times whenever the Greeks would move to a different area um you know they a lot of cases if there was some hero who was deified there they would just call say that he was Hercules and then we just conflate the two and gradually Hercules got lots and lots of stories added to his life just from people that were similar to Hercules that other cultures were venerating and to a lesser degree I think that's that's possible with Jesus also but I do think that there was a historical person named Jesus who who lived in Nazareth who became uh a

spiritual teacher he may have started
off as a
carpenter but was you know spiritually
inclined he hears about this man John
the Baptist on the River Jordan and he
goes and a disciple and he's gifted
spiritually he may have had some kind of
Awakening experience when he's being
baptized in the River Jordan when the
spirit of the Lord uh is is said to have
descended upon him like a dove and then
like I like I already said John the
Baptist gets arrested and executed and
and Jesus becomes the new leader and
he's not satisfied by staying out on the
River Jordan he wants to go where the
people are and so he starts wandering

around he's got some kind of psychic powers presumably at least I think he probably was able to heal the sick in certain cases maybe he really could walk on water maybe he really did do a miracle of the Loaves and Fishes and so forth um n Ki Baba supposedly has had a lot of of the similar powers that he exercised and he just Jesus naturally assumed because he had these powers that he must be God's chosen he must be the Messiah and his followers considered him to be the Messiah and uh that's the main reason why Jesus was crucified is as a political criminal because the Romans really didn't give a [__] if someone was

claiming to be the the descendant of of
some obscure deity I mean lots of Romans
like Julius Caesar himself considered
himself or at least claimed himself to
be a descendant of the Goddess
Venus so I mean the Romans were pretty
much indifferent to that sort of thing
but somebody being declared king of the
Jews who were just this really this
Renegade people that were continually
rebelling I mean they just couldn't put
up with that so he was a political
criminal and even according to the
gospel according to John he had that
sign on the cross saying King of the
Jews I mean that was that was the Romans
reason he was he was a political

criminal he was a

dissident so yeah I think it's it's

quite reasonable to assume that somebody

like that existed in real life it could

be more abnormal or unusual or unlikely

if all of that was just made up about

someone who never

existed so yeah I do think that Jesus of

Nazareth really existed assuming that

anybody really exists and that's it I

answered all these questions and my

lungs held out and I only had to blow my

nose once so I consider this a success

success so if you have any questions you

you are more than welcome to ask them in

the comments below if you have access to

my subscrib star Channel you can ask
them there if you have access to my
Discord server you can ask them there
and hit the like button if you like this
if you didn't like it then you don't
have to hit any any like button or or
dislike button you can just just sit
there and subscribe if you haven't
already if you find anything of value in
this and if there's anything you want to
know about Buddhism or meditation or
Beres monasticism or anything that you
consider me to possibly be knowledgeable
about
knowledgeable then feel free to ask and
uh be happy and now I'm going to try and
turn this off I do this

okay hello and welcome to episode 79 of question and answer I'm going to check just to make sure it really is 79 and yes it is it's episode 79 and I am your host poo basa and I should just say right off the bat that I still have not fully recovered from whatever disease I got more than two weeks ago I think it's it's some kind of virus
and I think it may be something that escaped from one of those biolabs because it's like a really bad cold that I have almost no resistance to it it's like I've never encountered this kind of strain of virus before but I am much improved over two weeks ago I'm down to

about between 10 and 15% as sick as I
was two weeks ago when I was too sick to
do a
Q&A so having told you that just to give
myself an excuse for not being as Lively
and perky as I usually am and also I
might as well add that I I spent about
three hours doing videos with my old
friend Brian Rue today so you got that
to look forward to I'll be uploading a
few videos with from with
Brian within the next two weeks he's
sort of
uh kind of got he's a little bit
overwhelmed with videos that he has to
edit so it may not be anytime real super
soon but they're in the can as they say

in the uh video recording

Biz

so I suppose I should start answering

questions because that's why we're all

here right now is for people to attend

to me answering questions or at least

attempting to answer questions and the

first question is from covac and sead

Zeda who says can you please explain the

concept of Yono Manas

Sara and yeah yon

manaar excuse me is mentioned a lot in

the sutas and and

literally when Yono means um from the

origin or from the source I mean Yoni

those of you who are familiar with the

Kam Sutra can also known that Yoni and
indic languages can mean vagina but it
doesn't mean that here to just get the
idea right out of your head even though
I may have just implanted it there and
manasara literally means like like
attending one's mind like adverting
one's attention to something Yono mean
like like from the origin It it means
just like wholeheartedly like you know
very attentively attending to something
sometimes Yono can just be translated as
wisely or with wise reflection or
something like
that and uh Co of action sad Z do not
here wants me to explain the concept but
I think that

probably venerable Nana TI Loa in his
Buddhist dictionary can explain it
better than I can so I just happen to
have the bookmark right here at
manaar and there are two definitions one
is like the technical Abid damama
definition of manasar and its attention
mental advertence reflection as a
psychological term attention belongs to
the formation group or
saraka and is one of the seven mental
factors or Cheta that are inseparably
associated with all states of
Consciousness or
Chet well I guess it just has s do Chet
in majay number nine it is given as one

of the factors representative of mind or
Nama it is the mind's first first
confrontation with an object and binds
the associated mental factors to the
object it is therefore the prominent
factor in two specific classes of
Consciousness I.E advertence at the five
sense doors and at the Mind door these
two states of Consciousness breaking
through the subconscious life Continuum
or
banga form the first state of the
perceptual
process so as it's just like a i mon as
an Abid dama technical term it just
means like um directing your attention
to something and it's present in all

conscious mental states that aren't just

pure banga or like a I I explained banga

in a previous Q&A I think coaction CAD

Zeda asked about that one

also um it's just sort of like a test

pattern in your mind when you just

happen not to be thinking anything like

when you're in a deep sleep

but

yon is definition number two here in a

more General sense the term appears

frequently in the suas as Yono manasara

which means wise or reasoned or

methodical attention or wise reflection

it is said in modim number two to

counteract the asaas it is a or the

caners it is it is a condition for the rise the arising of right view of stream entry and of the factors of Enlightenment unwise attention is a Manar and it leads to the arising of the caners and of the five hindrances so essentially it just means like wholeheartedly attending to something or wholeheartedly directing your attention to something like listening intently when the Buddha is talking if you happen to be a disciple of the Buddha and uh especially it would mean directing your attention into something that is going to be instructional and uplifting

so that's that's the explanation and

it's given to you by Nana TI Loa who

knew his

stuff so I'll just move on to the next

question which is also from covac and

CAD

zon which is as follows what parts of

the Buddhist text do you think had the

most entertaining or relatable stories

what stories stood out to you not for

being profound but straight up

entertaining funny

Etc well the udana has lots of

interesting stories a few famous ones

like the story of bajia or the blind man

and the Elephant is in there um strange

story about yaka attacking venerable

saruta while he's

meditating um yeah just lots of

interesting stories in the udon uh also

the DAP commentary is just a treasure

Trove of like ancient Indian

folklore Buddhist stories I mean they're

they're considered to be like the origin

stories of each verse of the

dapot also just

vinia contains a lot of interesting

stories like the mahaga of of the the

aptica has like the history of of the

Buddha's life starting with his

Enlightenment or just shortly before his

Enlightenment up to like the formation

of the S and starting certain principles

like ordination going um also there's interesting biography of jivaka a doctor that is I think if I remember correctly it would be at the beginning of the chapter on medicines in the in V the atica so those would be like my three main sources I guess of just interesting entertaining narratives would be the stories in the udana the stories of the DAP commentary and also certain parts of viia and all of them are fairly easy to read too so if you're practicing poly it's it's relatively straightforward grammar and vocabulary in those texts so I guess I'll just move on to covac in CAD zov's third

question which is I have read some of your written pieces and they are very well put together personally for me to write something like that would take lots of research and days to think over and edit my writing and it seems super boring what gives you the motivation to write with such Clarity and so extensively especially given the amount of thought that goes into what you write and how much time it takes well you may notice that I'm really not writing very much at all anymore um I had a a Blog going that I wrote a blog post every week and then I stopped that one and I just liked writing and so after six months or so I don't remember exactly

how long the Hiatus was between blogs I
started another blog which is still
online and at first I was doing a post
every five
days and and uh I think it was after I
stopped being a monk that I extended it
to once every week you know I'd write a
blog post every weekend and then I
haven't written for for that blog in
months largely because my weekend time
my free time has been um transferred
over to making Q&A videos that I now do
every week
almost so um it takes leisure time it
takes time to just sit around philos
phif ising contemplating things you know

when I was a monk I didn't have to work
for a living so you know I could just
sit around most of the time if I wanted
to I mean a monk really is supposed to
spend a lot of time sitting although
generally it would be meditating but
there aren't very many people who can
just meditate all the time for years on
end and in a way it was a way of
directing my energies in a positive
direction in a direction that might be
of use or benefit or at least
entertainment value to other people
there were certain things that I knew
that I thought were valuable and I
decided to share that and also when I
was a monk um I just felt like giving

kind of an unusual approach

to like authentic Buddhism not just

saying the same things that everybody

else was saying and not just like you

know going out into left field with all

kinds of weird stuff that is isn't

Buddhist at all but I mean really for me

it required having a certain amount of

leisure time that I have very much less

of now that I am working for a living

and paying bills and I have a sweee

heart that I live with and just

responsibilities so I mean I've got lots

of written material that I could make at

least two more books just with stuff

that isn't even on my blog right now

that isn't online anywhere right now um

and I just have difficulty coming up

with the Leisure Time even to edit a

book out of materials that I already

have

written

so yeah I guess just uh I've I've always

been good at writing you know I got A's

in English I was teachers pet in English

class A lot when I was a kid or when I

was a

student and uh so writing comes

relatively easy to me I'm pretty good at

uh being articulate and inating

inating what I'm trying to say but it

does take work and it does take a lot of

time and I just have less of that time

now and I'm doing most of my work like

processing sheet metal

now

so let's see what was the question

again I forgot the question what gives

you the motivation to write with such

Clarity and so extensively especially

given the amount of thought that goes

into what you write and how much time it

takes the motivation um for one thing

you know it's like keeping me out of

trouble you know Idle Hands of the

devil's workshop and all that and uh in

a way I I just enjoy writing if I have

the the time and the leure to do it I

mean sometimes it's like a chore it's

like work but it's a kind of
self-discipline and then once you get to
the end of it and it comes out pretty
good then there's a satisfaction from
having having given birth you know it
might be a painful labor but once it's
born it's it's something that gives you
a sense of accomplishment and
satisfaction
also um I might have totally missed that
I mean there might be something I'm
missing but those are the the reasons
that immediately come to mind and so I'm
just going to uh move on to the next
question here this is from Toronto
and Toronto says what does the Buddhist
case against homosexuality look like and

there really isn't much of a case
against homosexuality in the poly
texts um I mean homosexuality it's
sometimes they say like in ancient Rome
there wasn't even a concept of
homosexuality there was no word for it
in Latin that it was more like whether
you're masculine or eminite if you're a
man you know so so I mean if you were on
top pretty much then you were you were
playing the role of the man and you were
masculine and if you're on bottom so to
speak then you are
eminate but um with regard to the
Buddhist case against homosexuality
first of all there's the Buddhist case

against sexuality in general so

sexuality is wallowing in sensuality it

increases desire it increases attachment

and the first Noble Truth of Buddhism is

that suffering is no the second Noble

Truth of Buddhism is that all suffering

is caused by desire and attachment so

something that increases desire is going

to increase suffering which is

counterproductive from a Buddhist point

of view as a general rule so there is

the case against sexuality in general

which of course would include

homosexuality um

also there's a case

against men

men who were like sexual deviant and

homosexuality is a deviation from

natural

heterosexuality you know as just from a

biological point of view you know the

purpose of

heterosexuality was originally and

continues to be primarily for the

purpose of reproduction of the species

reproduction of our DNA

sequences and so homosexuality is is a

deviation from just mainstream

traditional

heterosexuality and sexual devience and

also Unix it's it's like there's a term

panda in in poly that means someone who

is not fully male like like a castrated

unic like a castrated unic cannot be ordained as a monk if you do not have a pair of balls you cannot be a beu even if you can get some kind of Progressive SAA to ordain you according to the text it just says very clearly that you are not ordained the ordination was invalid null and void so I think the progressives if they move on from beun ordination or the ordination of nuns to trans monks or trans nuns being recognized by the gender by which they identify that it's just not going to work at all even if they think that they're they're doing it is just clearly invalid from the point of view of vinia and I'm kind of digressing here but it

does say with regard to pacas that there
are there's what what is called a
part-time Ponda you know he's a Ponda
sometimes so that wouldn't mean that he
has balls sometimes and he doesn't have
balls sometimes it probably means that
sometimes he's acting the role of the
the man like in ancient Rome and
sometimes he's acting the role of the
woman and uh that would technically
disqualify him from being ordained
although latent homosexuals are ordained
all the time it's it's just sort of a I
mean it's like a Trope or a meme or
something in Burma where um
homosexuality is kind of frowned upon in

a traditional Buddhist Society like

Burma and so so it's a culturally or

socially acceptable way of not getting

married by just becoming an ordained

Monk and being a late and homosexual not

a practicing one because then You' be

immediately excommunicated

but um I mean you can be a lat

homosexual not get married not like

girls and in fact it kind of makes

things easier to be among if you don't

like

girls I mean in in a sexual way I

mean

so that would be essentially the the

Buddhist case against homosexuality

there's really not much said about it

you know there's just the warnings

against sensuality in general that are

just found throughout the sutas and

vinia also for that matter and then

there's just this technical thing about

pandas or sexual

deviant ordaining as monks that's found

in in uh

in in the monastic discipline or vinia

so there's really not much of a case

against it and so

progressives uh in the west will will

say you know that Buddhism is you know

Pro homosexuality you know they've got

the queer Buddhist movement and so forth

but I mean that's largely irrelevant

because I'm sure that there are queer
Christian movements too they queer
ministers and so forth even though the
Bible just explicitly calls
homosexuality a Abomination and the Old
Testament says that homosexuals should
just be taken out and
killed
so um people who are really Advocates of
gay rights and gay pride and all that um
I mean they're going to push their case
even if the case really doesn't stand up
to logical scrutiny very well
because so long as they can come up with
any argument that sounds okay that's
good enough and they'll consider it to
be The

Clincher but uh yeah there's really not
much more said against homosexuality
than there is against
heterosexuality it's just sexuality in
general from the point of terraa
Buddhism is considered to be not really
conducive to
Enlightenment so I guess I've said
enough on that one and I'll just move on
to the next question this is from Al
Pacino alpaca
who is a man of many names and this is
just his most recent name and alpacino
alpaca says who kept texting you
throughout my questions and that's he's
referring to the previous Q&A that I did

where when I was got to his question a friend of mine texted me like seven times in a row so my phone is just making these very distracting sounds and it turned out that it was an old friend of mine who was a monk in Burma at the same time I was who uh he dropped out of the monk Hood after 10 or 11 or maybe 12 um years and he just sent me this I might as well just look it up here it's it's pretty easy to find I hope I hope I won't be just talking about how easy to find it is and so forth while I'm looking for it let's see here oh here it is all

right so first he sent me a link that was the first beep and then he sent me

the statement woke Buddhism eating
itself for privileged white people
teaching other white people to hate
themselves and it turned out that it's
uh the Berry Center for Buddhist study
so it's associated with IMS the Insight
Meditation Society one of the most
prestigious Buddhist organizations in
the west at least among liberal lay
people and it's uh see here it says
prerequisites this program is for people
who self-identify as white bodied only
so it's for whites only which you would
think would be Abomination but it's for
the purpose of teaching white people how
to be mindful of their own in just like

unconscious racism essentially and their
white privilege you have to be mindful
of white privilege if you belong to
the a if you're a Western Buddhist of a
leftist persuasion politically and
economically and
socially so White's only he says black
Dharma Seekers have to drink from the
other water fountain of
Amita and uh then after that he said uh
just listen to your vid with Rue
inspired me to send this might be an
interesting topic for your next video
which uh actually it turned out not to
be because we did a we did videos about
other things but but it's still possible
and it's I mean that's just common you

can you can find this sort of thing um
you know Retreats for only black people
or Retreats for only gay people and but
this is the first time I've ever seen a
retreat only for white people although I
think I've probably encountered them
before but this the first time I really
clearly remember seeing a retreat only
for white people but it's for the
purpose of teaching white people that
their racist and have white privileges
and so forth and they have to be mindful
of this white privilege that frankly I I
don't really see it existing as
something that you can really be mindful
of it be more of an exercise in

imagination so that was uh my my old
friend uh venerable kipa who now goes by
a different name because he's not a monk
anymore so I'll just move on to Al
alpacino alpaca's next question here is
it possible to get jna while doing
walking
meditation and I think it would be
possible to get first jna but the thing
is my definitions of Janna are not the
Orthodox definitions of Janna and the
Orthodox definitions of Janna are still
somewhat controversial so that people
can't exactly agree on what is and is
not
J so I mean it's it's Janna is almost a
useless term because people really do

not agree on what exactly it

means I from my point of view the four

genres were originally just four levels

of meditation that first jna was just

doing beginning level

meditation well enough that you're

actually meditating and not just sitting

there spacing off thinking about other

things um so yeah from my point of view

you could get first J while doing that

you might even get second jna while

doing that but I mean the deeper the jna

the higher the J

the more difficult it would be to get

while

walking uh it may be that a real Adept a

real master of Janna could do walking meditation while in a relatively High genic state but again even the term Janna is controversial it's almost a useless term it seems to me but I don't see why you couldn't theoretically at least go into a deep mystical State why while doing walking meditation I've done walking meditation while not thinking you know your just mind is just wide open your body is just sort of you know it's like the the back part of your brain is just working your legs and stuff and you're you're walking back and forth while in a relatively deep meditative state so I don't see why not so I'll just move on to alino

alpaca's next question which is which Christian Mystic apart from John of the Cross would you recommend to read and then he's got Meister eart question mark and yeah Meister eart is uh really I mean he was an a depth master of mystical contemplation so yeah I mean you could get a lot of benefit from Reading Meister art also the pseudo dianus who is practically the father of Christian mysticism I mean there were Mystics before the pseudo dianus even Paul of Tarsus is considered to be a Mystic partly because of this cryptic statement he says in one of his Epistles

Epistles letters I should

say um also there are some Eastern

Orthodox monks and Patriarchs that were

um very mystical um I think let's see

that

same let's see where is it that same uh

monk that I knew in Burma he was he's an

American uh he actually I have this

notebook this of just quotes and things

that I would when I would read a book

that I didn't own and I came across

something that I really liked I'd write

it down and then I lent the book to him

and he took the liberty of writing some

quotes himself and one of them is from

St John Cassian the philia from the 4th

Century which apparently he was

mystically inclined and also he has one
quote from the archimandrite dianus
who was an orthodox
Elder and uh so um I mean if you read
even uh what's his
name uh why am I this Merton Thomas
Merton Thomas Merton has a lot to say
about mysticism he himself apparently
was too much of an intellectual just too
much addicted to words to really be a
good Mystic but he had some appreciation
for mysticism and wrote about mysticism
in some of his books and so I mean he
would be an interesting read of a
Christian monastic who at least knew
some historical stuff and philosophical

stuff about Christian

mysticism but uh I'd say the the three

top Christian Mystics that I can think

of that I'm familiar with would be St

John of the Cross meister ehart and the

pseudo dianis especially his mystical

theology which is a short book it's it's

a short I mean it's not even in a book

it's just a short read you can read the

whole thing probably in I don't know 15

minutes so yeah that's that's what I

would say to that that's my answer to

that and I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is from Fred and

Fred says I have seen a statement that

nibana is a datu what's your thoughts

well datu is usually translated into

English as

element so um Fred has seen a statement

that nibana is an element and there is

there are references to niban datu the

element of

Nirvana and it's referring to nibana or

Nirvana as a metaphysical State and not

as an ethical State I've mentioned

before that there's two ways of

interpreting Nirvana one is just the act

of or the the occasion of becoming

enlightened you know it's it blowing out

you know when you blow out that is that

is your Nirvana but also Nirvana is a

metaphysical state of like Ultimate

Reality and there are descriptions of

nirvana in both senses going way back
into you know early Buddhism um the udon
that I mentioned a little earlier has
several passages referring to nibana in
fact the bahuta ends with one of those
poetical descriptions of nibana as you
know the where there is the sun doesn't
shine the moon doesn't glow the Stars
don't twinkle earth water wind fire Gain
No foothold and so forth um that would
be more of a description of nibana datu
than of just the the moment of
Enlightenment or the ethical state of
becoming
enlightened more of a psychological
State you got the psychological State
and then you've got the metaphysical

State and so nanad datu would be more of
a an emphasis on the metaphysical State
as opposed to the psychological state
so Fred's next question here is kind of
a strange one a billiard ball has
nothing in between your balls except
momentum what's your thoughts and I I
assume he's not referring to my balls
specifically but I I'm not exactly sure
what he's referring to exactly though
this a billion ball a billiard ball has
nothing in between your balls maybe it's
two balls it's like you hit one or right
you hit Q ball and then it hits a
billiard ball and then the only thing
that's really exchanged is momentum you

know it's like the momentum of the Q
ball goes into the let's say the red
ball and then the Q ball stops and or in
a lot of cases the Q ball stops and then
the red ball moves ahead at the same
trajectory as the Q ball if it's hit
straight
on um and momentum as I remember from
college physics is mass times velocity I
mean that's the uh equation for momentum
is a really simple one it's MV mass
times
velocity so if something has the same
mass and the same velocity as something
else they would have the same momentum
but still I'm not exactly sure what he's
asking here a billiard ball has nothing

in between your balls except
momentum and I assume that's the only
thing that is like passed on from one
ball to the next when you hit it with
one ball the momentum is what is carried
on to the next the other ball sort of
like karma is the momentum of your mind
and that's what goes on from One Life to
the next you know like instead of one
momentum going from one billiar ball to
the next it's one karmic stream one
stream of Consciousness so to speak that
that is passed on from One Life to the
next I mean that's all that passes on I
mean there is no transmigrating soul in
Buddhism and so it's just the momentum

of your karma that is that moves from
One Life to the next sort of like the
momentum of bilar
balls so I I don't I don't know if I
answered that question that was a
strange one so I'll just move on next
question here this is from
Prav and Prav says if someone wants to
get a birth in Brahma Realms which path
is best the Janna one or the Brahma
weara one or they have to follow both
well in order to be reborn in a Brahma
realm you have to die um in a state of
Janna or at least having mastered
jna and it doesn't matter what kind of
Janna it is and so just practing
practicing meta meditation without

attaining Janna with it you would not get into a Brahma realm you have to have Jan to get into a Brahma realm and the different Brahma Realms represent the different Lev of Janna there are like um several different Brahma Realms and the your advancement in Janna depend or determines which Brahma realm you'll get into so if you wanted to get into a Brahma realm through practicing one of the Brahma viharas in the brah haras are meta karuna mudita Anda or loving kindness

compassion um like sympathetic Joy where you're you're happy because someone else is happy and then UPA is just equinity

so you have to have one of those as your meditation object and then attain a state of jna with those as your meditative object and if I remember correctly the Wii Maga says the first three loving kindness compassion and sympathetic Joy you can get up to Third jna and it's only UPA or equinity that will get you all the way to fourth of J and uh but nevertheless you can get jna on from practicing meditation on your breath you can get Janna from just focusing on like a colored disc as a kind of hypnotic

Circle um so I mean any of those is good enough to get you into the brahs but just practicing meta meditation and not

getting attaining Janna with it isn't
going to get you into a brah real so you
have to get jna to get into a brah
real so I'll just move on to panov's
next question here what experience did
you have in your best
meditations was it Jonna's and again
trying to um I mean talking about Jonas
is almost useless because my definition
of Janna might not agree with somebody
else's definition of j and I'm gonna I'm
sorry I'm gonna have to blow my
nose this is what
happens this is what happens when you
have a body at least a human body or a
body that's made out ofm on this

planet

okay so what experience did I have in my

best meditations was it Jon's um I would

I would guess that it was at least

second John I mean in my very best

meditations but I mean as a monk I

couldn't even say that publicly because

a monk isn't allowed it's against Vine

it's a pidia offense for him to admit to

having attained jna to unordained

people

so maybe it was J I think some people

would say yes other people would say no

but what experience did I have in my

best meditations I've explained it

before um what my best meditation was

like it's like when you're sitting there

not thinking anything your mind is just clear silent and still and you are just wide awake wide awake and not thinking anything and sometimes just through the force of karma or whatever a thought will start to arise and it's like you're looking out across the surface of a of a pond and like a a big fish starts to come up close to the surface and like ripples start to form that's like the the beginning of a thought you can see like the ripples in your Consciousness starting to form as a thought starts to emerge but then you you just aware of it immediately and it just Fades right back out

again so that was uh essentially what my
best meditation was you're just sitting
there essentially Wide Awake clear and
silent and still and
empty um I had some considerably good
meditation uh like the most
recent good meditation that I had was um
you just I'll just be able to note
anything that arises you know just note
it Let It Go note it let it go and just
um yeah I mean that would still be
there'd still be thought processes and
like perception and stuff going on so
that couldn't have been above for first
J um even assuming that there was any J
involved at all in in the course of my
practice but yeah the best meditations I

ever had is just you're just wide awake

and your mind is just clear like

glass so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from the Proto

pseudo monk who I believe is the very

same person as Mr kol

whip so Mr K whip didn't stop asking

questions it's just that his name

appears in the YouTube comments now as

Proto pseudo

Monk

and his question is as follows what year

as a monk did you graduate from the

mahasi noting mindfulness to Advanced

open awareness

mindfulness um he's got another question

Mark following this so this could be

like a multi a compound question is soda

a requirement for graduation the

meditation practice that leads to

Enlightenment that you describe aligns

more with mahayan techniques like

mahamudra Z chin Zen or even ADV vant

and

yoga okay so that's two questions and an

observation so the first

question what year is a monk did you

graduate from the mahasi noting

mindfulness to Advanced open awareness

mindfulness and I never formally

practiced the mahasi method except for a

few Retreats a few intensive Retreats

that I intended that I attended I think

I might have said intended

um but I was ordained in the Tom Pulu

tradition and I mainly was following Tom

Pulu at first and then just through

trial and error mostly a little bit of

intuition and insight I just came up

with my own style of

meditation which this for whatever

reasons happened to be very similar to

the style of meditation that was

advocated by Maham Zoda in Burma who was

also ordained in the Tulu tradition I

don't know if that is uh a coinci

totally coincidental or not but uh yeah

I did not graduate from the mahasi

method because I only practiced it for a

matter of a few months I mean
intensively because for the most part I
mean I really did not have an extremely
high opinion of the mahasi method um
it's it's good for beginners and it's
good up to an intermediate level but um
I'm pretty sure that even the mahasi
teachers themselves will admit it does
not lead all the way to Enlightenment
that mahasi seatt himself was not
considered to be fully enlightened um
and so he couldn't really teach people
how to get more advanced than he was
so yeah I did mahasi style noting
mindfulness where you're labeling stuff
and then just directing your attention
at stuff until finally you get to a

point where I mean you just don't have
to do that
anymore like uh St John of the cross in
one of his books is giving advice on
when to move from meditation to
contemplation and the difference in in
Roman Catholicism in the contemp ative
schools of or the contemplative orders
is that with meditation you're still
thinking but when you get to
contemplation you're not thinking
anymore so and and his his advice was
partly I mean you just start getting
bored with thinking you just want just
silence I mean you start having these U
yearnings for just Stillness and silence

and that's that's one of the signs that
you're ready to move on to
contemplation
so let's see yeah I mean what year as a
month did I graduate from MOSI open
noting mindfulness I mean there there
was no year because I didn't graduate
from the mahasi method although how long
was I meditating before I started or
before I stopped labeling and then how
long was I a meditating month before I
stopped just like noting in mahasi
method of directing your attention at
something and just sort of noting it um
verbally or non-verbally you know like
the mahasi method says when you're
noting something it takes um you know

attention and effort and you've got to
like be hitting the object like you're
hitting it with a stick and I mean
that's just making Karma because it
requires effort but the best highest
meditation I mean you're not using like
deliberate effort to do anything because
that's still at the level of s s you're
still stuck in some Sor so long as
you're stuck in deliberate
effort
so what exact year did I get to the
point where I wasn't thinking in my
meditation anymore uh I really can't say
it was within the first 10 years
Definitely Maybe I don't know few

years several years less than

10 I can't say exactly I don't really

remember but it was certainly less than

10

years um so I guess I'll just move on a

next question here I'll just have to

make a space separate the

questions okay so the second question

here is is soap a requirement for

graduation I guess he's talking about

the mahasi method and I think they

pretty much defined here get pillow out

of the way so the dog can get up on the

chair um yeah I'm pretty sure the mahasi

method

defines um a graduate of the mahasi

method as someone who has become a

soda and that has resulted in some

strange results like sodas doing things

that sodas can't possibly do or I know

of at least two Burmese monks that were

declared sodas by upand himself mahasi

upand and then later they realized that

they they weren't really soda

puns

so I guess sodana is or at least to be

considered a sodana it just is just goes

hand inand with graduating from the

hassi method um I've heard that the Paw

out method um if you graduate from the P

Al method usually you're considered to

be a soda PA but not necessarily there

at least there is some acknowledgement

that not everyone who graduates the course so to speak becomes a soda PA in the Paw out method but I don't think it's that way in the mahasi method in fact after for a while the mahasi the main mahasi Center in rangon was handing out like soda on diplomas you know you finish the course you get this this certificate announcing or declaring that you were a soda PA I don't they don't do that anymore though

so is soap a requirement for graduation to be considered a soda by the instructor is essentially the same as as graduating that I mean yeah you pretty much have to be a s to completely graduate the course because you'd have

to experience all of the weos Insight knowledges in the correct order and um essentially fit the qualifications um laid down in certain commentarial texts for becoming a soda so then he's got this statement that isn't a question the meditation practice leads to Enlightenment do you describe aligns more with Mahayana style techniques like mahamud Z Chen Zen or even ad and yoga unfortunately Terra got sidetracked a bit with self hypnosis in my opinion a lot of what passes for jna in a country like Burma really is just self hypnosis they really can't tell the difference or a lot of Burmese

meditation teachers cannot tell the

difference between Janna and hypnotic

trans and I guess that's one reason why

so few burmes meditation teaching

teach just this wide open essentially

mystical

contemplation that uh like uh Mr kolip

here or Proto sudo monk says is more

associated with uh like Z chin or or

like uh certain kinds of Zen meditation

like shikan

Taza but uh I

mean it's uh the higher up you go in

different Traditions the more they can

Verge so yeah I'm not aware of of I'm

I'm not familiar with advanced yoga

meditations but um yeah I mean the

highest form of meditation would be a
kind of mystical contemplation where you
just gone beyond the thinking mind
altogether even like the the emotional
feeling mind too I mean you're just
getting into as close to Pure
Consciousness as it's possible to
get and I mean you can do that in almost
any tradition so long as you're you're
practicing correctly and some people
don't even need the instruction they can
just learn through through their own
experience or through Intuition or just
good karma they just stumble upon it
where they get into these very Advanced
meditative States or just you know

rarified mystical

States and Christians have done it too I

assume it's uh there have been like you

know prehistoric shamans who have who

have attained these states

also

so yeah I mean it's not really something

that is very well codified or

systematized that I mean the more

advanced you get the less system there

is practically by

definition so I guess I'll just move on

to Proto sudo monk Alias cool whips next

question here

I I think he's got I think he's got four

questions gosh that's that's that's a

transgression to ask four questions the

limit is technically three although we
really do not have a huge number of
questions this time so I can I can be
lenient I suppose there will be no
punishment Meed out on this case not yet
unless I change my
mind so the next question here is do you
recommend that we learn from these
traditions that reify the ultimate is
instead of isn't or derive the
mindfulness practice simply from the S
patan without the noting well I mean
whatever works for you whatever helps
you to progress to attain what you're
trying to attain it's going to be useful
I mean there's there's a lot of wisdom

in Mahayana I'm not just going to say
that you know Mara invented Mahayana to
lead people astray or any such
thing um certain schools of Mahayana I
think have a lot of wisdom not all of
them in my opinion but certain ones
do and I mean if you're in a mystical
state if if you're not thinking anymore
you're not reifying anything you're not
you're not philosophizing at all so it's
like the the dogmatic philosophy is is
like in a completely different category
from the experiences that you're
experiencing when you're in when you're
doing good meditation you know it's like
there
practically irrelevant to each

other so yeah I mean if regardless of whether you're a a viantis Hindu or a Terra Buddhist or a Zen Buddhist or a a Tana Buddhist if you're in a like a relatively deep contemplative State you're having a genuine mystical experience then I mean you're not dogmatized at all you're not philosophizing you're not thinking thinking about whether the absolute is or isn't you're just having the experience that really can't be put into words after you come out of that experience anyway so even though you experience it directly I mean you still can't describe it in a valid

way

so yeah I mean if it works for you I

mean if you practicing I mean there's

nothing wrong there's nothing against

Terra to practice Zen shikan Taza for

example where essentially you're just

sitting there observing your own mind

and there's some of that in terada also

although there aren't very many teachers

who are teaching it because

Terra is a relatively dogmatic system

and you know they like um

dogmatic traditional ways of of of

teaching certain traditional ways of

meditation but like in the um the

commentaries which is kind of ironic

that the commentaries would would teach

something really profound like this but it does happen sometimes there's the story of potila Tua potila who was this scholar monk which is kind of an anachronism in the Buddhist time but still I mean he was just an intellectual he was a like a savant he was you know a respected senior monk but the Buddha would always call him pointless poila you know here comes pointless poila there goes pointless poila because you know he was kind of in a way teasing poila that I mean he was dedicating all of his energies to just memorizing memorizing discourses and so forth and he wasn't a good meditator so

the poila finally you know it struck
home he decided he better go out and
learn how to meditate well so he walks
some God awful distance I don't know why
you walk that far it's just an
embellishment in commentaries I suppose
comes to a monastery where all all of
the S there are arant and he goes to the
senior one and the senior one says no
you're like this elder teacher and I'm
not going to try and teach my elders you
know ask you know ask a different Monk
and he goes through the entire s and
they all refuse to teach him until he
gets to this like a nine-year-old novice
who's also enlightened and nine-year-old
novice gives him the advice of you know

it's like catching a lizard that's
inside of a termite Mound and there's
five holes no six holes to this termite
Mount and so you just block off five of
those holes and you just keep very
careful attention on the on the the only
open hole and as soon as the the lizard
comes out you grab it you catch it and
that's just like a
um like an analogy for a certain kind of
meditation that I used to call third
gear where you're just observing the
mind it's like you're in a library and
you've got a loudspeaker hooked up to
your brain so that every time you think
it's blasted over this loudspeaker and

there's this big scary librarian with
like the Beehive hairo and the the
pointy glasses on the chain and the big
flowery dress like a like a tent and
she's just glaring at you every time you
think something so that I mean you just
sit there observing your mind carefully
and just trying to catch every thought
as it arises and if if you're just
really in the state
of manaar where you're just you know
just intently you know adverting your
mind to observing your own mind that it
just prevents you from thinking I mean
you can try this yourself just you know
close your mind close your eyes and then
just try to catch the next thought that

arises and if you watch your mind
carefully waiting to see what the next
thought is then nothing arises until
your mind starts to wander and then the
thought Rises uh almost behind your
back
so again I think I've uh deviated or
just digressed here but even that
meditation technique isn't really the
most advanced one that I ever came
across because you're still attending to
something and when you get to the
highest level you're not even attending
to anything your mind is just wide open
and clear like glass or a mirror or
something

so so I guess the question I'll read the question again sometimes I just answer my answer lasts so long that by the time I get to the end of I've forgotten what I'm answering do you recommend that we learn from these Traditions that reify the ultimate is instead of isn't or derive the mindfulness practice simply from the sunny Panos suda without the noting and either way will work I mean whatever works best for you you have to practice and use a little trial and error of your own to find out what works best for you because one size does not fit all that's one of the main mistakes of the mahasi method in that um like upand he'd give the same meditation

technique to almost all of his students
and then if they weren't making progress
with it he'd scold them for for not
making progress it sort of like a doctor
who gives the same medicine to all of
his patients and then scolds them for
not getting better you know from him
giving everybody the same medicine and
it really doesn't work that way that's
why the Buddha had various meditation
techniques that he would teach to
various monks but he had the advantage
of being able to just look into your
mind and seeing where you were stuck and
just knowing intuitively how to get you
un

stuck so yeah um my answer to that
question is I mean whatever whatever
works for you you can try both ways and
see which way works
better so I'll just move on to Cool Whip
or the Proto sudo monks last question
here venerable sir can you please
concede us the advanced esoteric
mindfulness practice that leads to
Enlightenment or has our comma not
ripened yet well it's it's more a matter
of practice than being able to learn the
technique because as as I was just
saying the more advanced you get in your
meditation the less actual technique
there is until finally you're just
sitting there still and Silent wide open

and there's there's no moving Parts you
know there's nothing that you're
actually
doing so yeah I mean you have to start
off with a relatively Elementary
meditation technique and then once you
are able to do that without your mind
wandering away you're able to do that
fairly consistently then you can like
make it less busy like without labeling
you know you're observing the breath but
you're not labeling it for example
you're not you're not thinking breathing
in breathing out anymore you're just
like observing the sense of touch around
your nostrils as you're breathing and

then your mind becomes quieter and when
you can do that skillfully then you
might move on to like third gear you
know like the the termite mountain with
the lizard where you're just sitting
there intently observing your own mind
trying not to think and then when you
get good at that you can move on to
fourth gear as I used to call it which
is just sitting there wide
open but I mean it takes practice I mean
you can't just move straight to the
advanced level you know you can't take
someone who is not good at at math and
just throw them into a Calculus class
you know first you got to learn
arithmetic and then algebra maybe some

analytical geometry you know and get
work your way up to calculus as you get
better and better or you know like uid
you you don't just start at the end you
got to gradually get better and sort of
develop your practice
so that you can actually do
it so yeah I mean it's just a kind of
gradual practice where you start off
when your mind is just undisciplined and
busy you have to get like a give it busy
work to do to keep it occupied so that
you're actually keeping your mind
directed at something it's it's almost
like mental calisthetics like jumping
jacks or push-ups or something and then

gradually as your mind gets more

disciplined

then you you have less and less busy

work for your mind to do until at the

end your mind isn't doing any work at

all it's all

effortless but it's not just you don't

just jump right into the effortless I

mean it's it takes lots and lots of

practice takes a lot of hard work to get

to the level of

effortlessness so I guess I'll just move

on the next question which is kind of a

strange one I don't think anyone's asked

this one before this is from

ruie and ruie says hello poo here is the

simple one is there any rule other than

common sense for a mendicant living in

the wilderness regarding

defecation and for those of you who are

unfamiliar with fancy Posh talk like

defecation it means taking a

dump pooping if you

will

and yeah there's there's rules with

regard to just about everything

including taking a dump although most of

the rules are with regard to using an

ouse so if you're just crapping on the

ground like an animal there's not a

whole lot of rules um governing that I

mean there still are rules like you're

not supposed to make grunting noises

you're not supposed to strain unless
you're more constipated than usual
you're supposed to wipe if you're behind
I mean let's face it nobody likes a
person with a shitty behind so it just
makes sense that you should wipe
although technically you're supposed to
use a stick because in Ancient India
when they invented these rules um they
didn't have toilet paper yet and first
you use a stick and then you just do the
final rinse with a cup of water and in
in Burma most ouses at least Monastery
ouses they've got a big water pot and
like a half of a coconut shell and you
wipe using water and it does work fairly
well especially if you're not wearing

underwear um that you can just kind of

dry off as you walk around after you've

rinse your behind rinse the narrow place

so to speak with water and I mean poop

is water soluble it rinses right off it

works fairly

well

so yeah most of the rules are with

regard to using an ouse so I mean you

can't wear your upper robe in an ous

you're not supposed to wear your shoes

in an

ouse um you're supposed to not throw the

the butt wiping sticks down into the

hole um there are um I guess one of the

best known rules regarding defecation in

a forest is you're not supposed to crap

onto green

plants or into water you're not supposed

to to crap into

water so or pee into water and my nose

keeps plugging up for some reason excuse

me and I hope next week I will be

completely recovered from whatever virus

I happen to

contract I think one reason why I've

been getting sick lately

is this new Jeet metal shop I work at it

seems like most of the employees have

small children or are small

grandchildren and as we all know

children have no sense of hygiene and

they're like little toddling Petri

dishes so there's a lot of pathogens
going
around so anyway getting back to the
important topic of taking a dump here um
yeah yeah there there are there are
rules in fact most of the rules are with
regard to ouse Etiquette but even if
you're just crapping on the ground like
an animal there's still certain rules
like the grunting Rule and uh you
supposed to supposed to wipe and you're
not supposed to crap on the green plants
or into water that especially if it's a
water that might contain living beings
because you might be like grossing out
those living beings in that water by

doing doing your

business if not actually like poisoning

the desk with the impurities they just

came out of your lower digesting

Orphus so I think I'm just going to move

on next question although of course we

all love to linger on this topic I'm

just going to have to move on here and

uh the next question from ruie is this

is speculative but do you think that

beyond the sutas that have reached Us in

the cannon the Buddha addressed the sa

on a daily basis or did he remain mostly

silent well I think it's fairly sure I

think it's it's really pretty pretty

likely to say the least that not

everything that he said after after his

Enlightenment is recorded in the titica
I mean the titica is fairly thick you
know the Burmese edition of the totic is
40 volumes so I mean it's it's quite a
lot in there but certainly the Buddha
had a lot of stuff just never got
recorded I don't think that he addressed
the S on a daily basis because there
were times when he was just like in
silent Retreat you know he'd just go off
into the forest or just stay in in his
his Hut or whatever you know he didn't
encourage a lot of talk but I'm sure
that fairly fairly frequently he would
address the monks and give
donatons and uh yeah I mean he he was uh

he was teaching for several decades and

so it's hardly likely that everything

that he taught is contained in the

titica and for that matter it's hardly

likely that everything you contain in

the tias is what he actually taught

there's a lot of stuff that has been

added I think there's a question along

those lines a little later

on about

um well we'll just get to

it

so okay do I do I think that beyond the

suas that have reached Us in the Canon

the Buddha addressed the S on a daily

basis yeah I think it's pretty likely

and um some people think the Buddha just

repeated himself a lot because the texts
are very repetitive you know the Buddha
will say verbatim the same thing over
and over again in the sutas and from my
point of view it's mainly just an an aid
in memorization because the the Buddhist
sutas were just orally transmitted and
they were just memorized by heart and
it's just easier to memorize something
by heart when you've got just formulas
that are found again and again in the
sutas that once you've memorized it once
then you've got it down and it's you can
just plug it into sutas you know like
the the definition of the four genres
that is not extremely explanatory it's

just verbatim the same where you find it
in dozens of places throughout
sutas so I think that he was like
intuitive you know he could read his
audience better than most speakers can
read Their audience and you know he'd
address issues that were coming up or
you know help somebody in his meditation
or that kind of thing that it just
didn't get recorded and it may be that
he was teaching certain things that
turned out later not to be convenient
you know it's just like the the
philosophy developed and sort of started
deviating from certain things the Buddha
taught and so it just sort of got edited
out I mean that's that's possible too

because you if you read the Antica which
is an archaic text there's a lot of
stuff that I mean it's just not Orthodox
but Thea waga was too well known to to
just remove parts of it and so they just
had to
reinterpret and and it's lame
reinterpretations um like the the the
commentary to the AA waga I mean it just
has to do lots of stretching and
twisting to try to make sense of what is
containing in those suas um compared
with Orthodox tradition
so it may be that the Buddha said
certain things that just fell by the
wayside I assume this is a similar

situation with Jesus of Nazareth where

um not everything that they said is has

found its way into the text and not

everything in the text was actually said

by

them which is heresy but I'm a

heretic I used to have the ambition of

becoming a hares Arch but U I'm not

really that ambitious anymore

so I'll just move on to ru's next

question here did he effortlessly have

the pulse of the S by means of psychic

powers um yeah I would guess he probably

did that uh you know he could just look

right through you just like n kly Baba

on the the top of the bookshelf back

there according to testimonies that I

have no reason to doubt I mean he could
just look right through you he would
know stuff about you that I mean your
own conscious mind could not acknowledge
he would know you better than you know
you and I assume the the Buddha was
similar of course all we can do is just
guess it's all conjecture because he's
not here with us for us to observe and
even if he was here for us to observe we
still wouldn't know what's going on
inside of his
mind so but nevertheless I would guess
based on what I know about the Buddha
and about dhama in general that uh yeah
I mean he would be able to look into a

person you know according to tradition
he did this that I mean for example
there's one case I think it's in the
commentaries it might be in a sua where
one of the Disciples of SAR pruta was
taking meditation instructions from
saruta who was the Buddha's right-hand
man and he just wasn't making progress
so then finally he went to the Buddha
and the Buddha you know looked into his
looked into his spirit so to speak and
gave him a red flower and said meditate
on this and just within a short time he
had he had U just broken through the the
the obstacles that were keeping him from
making um significant spiritual progress
and according to the stories he became

enlightened relatively quickly after the Buddha just gave him a red flower to meditate on because Sara wasn't good at intuitively reading him as well as the Buddha was and just couldn't just look and see exactly what he needed what would be what work best for him so yeah it wouldn't surprise me if the Buddha was like

that so we'll just move on to the next question here this is from bodhisatta 969 and bodhisatta 969 says is the visible niana visible nibana in quotes the eradication of greed hatred and delusion a foretaste of nibana or some other kind of it well the eradication of

greed hate and delusion would be

legitimate NE

that would be like nibana in the

psychological sense rather than nibana

datu in the metaphysical sense although

in a way in a very subtle way there is

no difference between the two which is

something I'm not going to try to to

weigh into I mean Nana is Nana it's not

like there's two different

nanas but it's I mean it's very it's

like paradoxical hard to understand

intellectually so is the this ible

nibana the eradication of greed hatred

and delusion a foretaste of nibana or

some other kind of it um yeah I I think

I just answered that that was somehow I

feel insecure in short easy answers so I
I just keep talking even though I've
adequately answered the question I think
so yeah it's I mean there's only one
kind of nbon although as I mentioned
there's like two ways of looking at it
as a psychological occurrence
psychological State and as a
metaphysical State or the absolute you
Ultimate Reality or
whatever and um but really there's just
nana I mean it's there just
one so and one of the main definitions
of Nana is the eradication of greed
hatred and delusion or attraction
aversion and semiconscious

stupidity so yeah I mean that's that's
Nal right there visible I don't know how
it would be visible though I mean he's
got visible niana in quotes but I don't
think I don't think it's visible really
I mean you can see uh an enlightened
being assuming that an enlightened being
means anything in some sort of
context but that's about as far as it
goes you can't really see the
bom it's not not a visual
datam so I'll just move on to the next
question here this should crave minerals
and crave mineral says are you aware of
any method in quotes for choosing what
gender to be born as I would guess it's
largely out of one's hands but

anyways um I I can think of like two
methods or you know two ways of being
born as a certain gender and one of them
is just you know if you're thinking and
acting like a member of the opposite
gender for for long enough I mean if
you've got like this yearning to be a
member of the opposite gender then you
know that's creating Karma and it may be
if you're wholehearted enough you could
create sufficient Karma that you
actually switch in the next
life because you've already started
switching in this life you know if
you're trans so to
speak so that'll be one way of just you

know if you're just really dedicated you know you're just yearning you know deep inside to be a member of the opposite gender then you know you you'll be creating Karma that will be leading in that direction so that's one possibility I don't actually recommend it I you're going to get what you need so I mean it's not necessary to be trying to be reborn as this or that gender although um in Asia traditional Asia there are a lot of voter tablets like at archaeological sites and old Buddhist temples a lot of voter tablets you know this little clay tablets that are offered to a shrine or an altar and a lot of them are from women who are

praying to the Buddha to be reborn as

men in the next

life so I guess that's one possible way

maybe although praying to the Buddha

really is not endorsed in ter of

Buddhism but then there's another way

that I encountered once I had one of my

main supporters in

burnam was a woman who was a very

masculine woman she was uh I mean she

was she never got married and she was

just this fierce person just she had to

be feuding with somebody pretty much all

the time or else she just be bored stiff

and I know enough about her childhood

that she was I mean from the time that

she was a toddler she was ashamed of
being a girl that you know if they put
girls clothing on there or like girls
Sonica bark makeup stuff on her as a
little girl she would just cry and hide
until they took it back off of her again
I've seen family pictures of her when
she was a little girl she'd have her
back turned to the camera because she
was ashamed of being a girl she wanted
to be a boy she was a tom boy Big T and
I had this idea that it's very possible
that it was a kind of karmic retribution
that in the past she was just like a
total like male chauvinist misogynist
like a man who just despised women and
as a kind of karmic retribution she got

reborn as a woman as a way of working
off this un wholesome Karma that that
she had been cultivating as the male
chauvinist Pig misogynist
male so some of you out there who are
misogynists you should you should be
careful because it's it's really
astonishing to me I've had insights
where you you're just astonished at the
power of a single thought and we're
thinking all the time and usually it's
just H habit driven we don't realize
just how powerful our thoughts are but
they are really determining our reality
now and in the future so you got to be
careful and if if you doubt what I'm

saying just take iasa once and see for

yourself that's kind of a joke

there

so yeah that would be my main methods

quotee unquote for choosing what gender

you're going to be born out although the

third one I mentioned was would be sort

of

unintentional you know it's like you're

not choosing to be born as a Woman by

hating

women because that's it's sort of like

the opposite so you have to be

careful but I would say just you know

let let your karma just decide for you

and it will decide more appropriately

than your thinking ego could decide so

I'll just move on to Crave minerals next

question

here could cons thing in itself in any

way be of help in gaining perspective

about nibana just like it's impossible

to think about or in any way grasp the

assumed thing in itself with the senses

because it lies beyond the senses it is

likewise so with

nibon but from what I've

understood nibana isn't excluded from

the senses either otherwise it couldn't

possibly be known maybe this is a vague

question but could you shed some light

on this well yeah you you don't sense

nibana in order for you to be able to

sense nibana nibana would have to be a cause for this sense perception and nibana is not a cause it's not an effect it is unconditioned neither a cause nor an effect it's just not part of that scheme of things so nevertheless I do talk about K sometimes and I do think that niana is uh a thing in itself nibana is itself the Conan thing in itself and it's beyond perception but I do think that Kant was not really a Mystic he was too intellectual to be a Mystic and he didn't realize that there is a way of knowing the thing in itself that he thought there's no way can possibly know the thing as it really is all you can know is the thing as it

seems you know through the categories and through your perceptions and so forth and the categories it's conti and philosophy I'm not going to wade into that but K did believe that we can't know reality all we can know is the symbols generated by our mind that are attempts at interpreting this reality and so he just assumed that that reality was out there although some of his followers some of his um I don't know if you call it disciples or not people like schopenhauer and Hegel for example who I mean schopenhauer hated Hegel but nevertheless both of them were profoundly influenced by Kant and both

of them came to the conclusion that
since the thing in itself can't possibly
be known you might as well just dispense
with it all together and they became
idealists like German idealism was
started by Kant who was not really an
idealist but he might as well have been
because he's saying that you know
reality outside of your mind is
completely beyond your reach you can't
touch it but as I say Kant was not a
Mystic and so he didn't realize that
there is a thing in itself that you can
know directly and that is the thing in
itself of your own
Consciousness so by training Yourself by
by making the mind more and more subtle

more and more devoid of perceptual
content devoid of symbols that will
distract you then you're able to see
Consciousness as Consciousness which is
the thing in itself and not in its
various perceptual symbolic forms
because we get lost in the perceptual
symbolic forms and don't see
Consciousness as the thing in itself
that we have direct access
to so that's one way using contian
philosophy that I could uh try to
explain Buddhist enlightenment in
accordance with the Western
philosophical
terminology but seeing Consciousness as

Consciousness and not as mental States

symbolic perceptual mental States that's

mysticism that's what mysticism is all

about this direct experience of reality

without the intermediary of symbolic

perceptions

so yeah I mean the con thing in itself

is can be of help in gaining perspective

about nibana or insights about

nibana

so I think I'll just move on to uh crave

minerals is next question

here try and breathe through my nose

without it like I'm making like these

weird like piston feelings in my nose or

something it's

weird okay it's like I got valves in my

nostrils that are like flipping up and down when I breathe in and out so let's see here do you think practice of meta is a good Safeguard against snakes insects and various hostile beasts and just having meta is a good Safeguard against snakes insects and various hostile
beasts um the practice of meta it depends on whether it's genuine meta that you are practicing because you can kid yourself into thinking that you're practicing meta just because you're getting like these warm glowy Feelgood kind of feelings and you think that you're beaming love in all directions

but really it's just sort of a an

exercise in imagination and just

cultivating this warm glowy

feeling but if you genuinely love snakes

like I do I have to admit whenever I

would see a snake in Burma I would be

happy I would just be just like

Overjoyed practically and the first time

I ever saw a cobra especially when it

was like standing up with the hood

spread I mean I was just in in Rapture

that day

so um just having genuine meta towards

snakes and insects and so forth yeah I

mean you've got less like antagonistic

karma that's more likely to result in

you know unpleasant

encounters um like most animals like
snakes or spiders or whatever I mean
spiders might not have like a perceiving
mind but any kind of animal that is
conscious that is more or less sentient
uh I mean they're not going to mess with
you unless they feel
threatened so I mean if there's just
like a good vibe coming off you you know
you're just beaming love at this this
snake or whatever it is they're much
less likely to like get alarmed and want
to bite you I mean if you you step on
one in the dark then yeah I mean all
bets are off then um um I was stung by
scorpions a number of times but uh I

mean it was it was my own fault you know
I didn't really hold it against the
Scorpion like one time I was building a
fire to heat some water or something and
I took a piece of firewood and put it on
the fire and I didn't know that there
was like a little scorpion that was
under the bark or something and it
crawled out to the very end of the wood
and I didn't see it and I was
rearranging the wood and I put my thumb
right onto it and it stung my thumb
but I realized I mean I just I mean I
was dooming it to a fiery death if I
didn't even notice it and then I and
then I was like accidentally put my
thumb directly onto it so still I I

rescued the the Scorpion from the fire
so he didn't burn to
death um yeah so I mean practice of meta
it depends on how how well you're
practicing it you know if you're
cultivating genuine meta towards snakes
so and so forth I mean the k suo was one
of my favorite paritas or protection
chants which is just sending love to All
Creatures you know with with many legs
with four legs with two legs and with no
legs you know it's it lists off the the
various families of snakes and so forth
and you're just sending Goodwill and
friendliness to all of them and it's
supposed to according to the texts uh

protect you from from snake bite and
even if you do get bitten you won't
die that's what it says in the text so
yeah I never got bitten by a snake and
I've I've always really like snakes it
could just be a total
coincidence but um I mean I did get
chased by a snake once it was a little
Russell's Viper I mean it was only about
this big it was practically a
baby and Russell's vipers are mean
they're they're the meanest they're the
most dangerous snake in Burma even
though they're not the most poisonous
because they're just mean and they
they'll just actually chase you
sometimes and this little snake I mean I

alarmed it I'm walking down the trail
and suddenly come upon it and it I mean
it's just like going like this at me you
know like coming towards me like lunging
at me and fortunately people can move
faster than snakes can and uh yeah I
cleared out pretty pretty easily and I
wasn't really in dangered but you have
to you have to have mindfulness so
having meta is a good protection against
against dangerous animals but also just
being Mindful and not just stepping on
something that you're not supposed to
step on or just blundering into a herd
of wild pigs or
something I mean that's that's good too

so mindfulness and meta definitely can

protect you from

dangerous various hostile

beasts so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from the

personalization

primitive and personalization primitive

says

why do you suppose we aren't all

naturally born with mindfulness why is

it so hard to be mindful for any

significant period of time let alone as

the default state of being I welcome

insights from the Buddhist Viewpoint as

well as perspectives perspectives from

evolutionary biology or

psychology

well um I'm kind of hesitant to like
refer to Abid dama in this case but I
will anyway that according to Abid D
mindfulness is present in every mind
moment everyone has mindfulness all the
time it's just not very Advanced you
know it's not like pure mindfulness it's
just sort of a a crude functional kind
of mindfulness that gets us through life
and if you read the text the purity of
mindfulness is fourth J so you would be
in a very Advanced mystical state to
have pure mindfulness which is um just
be here
now and I assume that
evolutionarily we we aren't just here

now all the time because we've got to be thinking about the future sometimes we got to think about the past sometimes we got to think about stuff that isn't here you know we got to like plan for the future and think about that hostile tribe over in the other Valley over there and you know how we going to score heavy with the cave babes and that kind of

thing

so um I mean just just for the from the perspective of staying alive and reproducing your DNA sequences is just not really conducive to evolutionary evolutionary success to be an arant or to have perfect mindfulness all the time

that a certain amount of unmindfulness
and just Instinct driven Behavior habit
driven behavior um you know
like all of our wholesome emotions or
most of them anyway are there for an
evolutionary reason that helped our
ancestors to survive if you're jealous
then it's less likely that your mate is
going to be messing around with somebody
else so that you'll be raising somebody
else's kid or that your mate will just
run off of somebody else if you've got
like selfishness it's more likely that
you're not going to let people steal
from you so that you mean you can
survive famines better when you you're

not just letting people steal all your
food that kind of a thing so I mean it's
all there for a reason and just
unenlightenment is built into us if if
we were all enlightened we probably
wouldn't have enough greed hate and
delusion to Keep Us Alive you know first
of all we wouldn't have enough lust to
even reproduce our DNA
sequences
so yeah we're born with mindfulness but
it's just enough to to keep us surviv in
you know well enough that we're
evolutionarily
successful but it's we're not mindful to
the point of being you know enlightened
sages because that would be just too

much of a good thing and it would start
being counterproductive from the point
of view of just surviving and
reproducing your DNA sequences going
from The evolutionary biology point of
view so I guess I answered that and my
nose is still making those weird
things when I breathe in and out I
really do hope that I kick this thing I
mean I'm like I said I'm down to you
know maybe less than 15% as sick as I
was two weeks ago so but still it's
there's a little bit of
lingering Mala or
something also today it was it was very
um the weather was changing so I'm

feeling a little barometrically and also

I drank too much coffee and now I'm

drinking energy

drink although the energy drink does

seem to be happening or does seem to be

working to the extent that I feel better

than I did when I first started this Q&A

so it maybe it's just hanging out with

you guys this just makes me feel

better

so let's see I'll just move on to

personalization Primitives next question

among all living individuals who would

be your top choice for a group

discussion on your Channel

well I have to admit the first the first

group that came to mind of I I assume a

group discussion would be at least three
people so if I could do a group
discussion on my Channel with any other
two people I think I'd pick or at least
this was like my initial idea pick
Donald Trump and scks hexenhammer I'm
sure we could have a really interesting
discussion um yeah I think it would be
really popular Trump sticks hex and
Hammer and
me um but then I'm thinking well maybe I
should probably try and get enlightened
sages on this channel but I'm not sure
who the enlightened sages would be I
mean talking to ROM dos would have been
interesting but he's been dead for

several years I'm not sure who the

enlightened beings are

nowadays Paul Lo is in his 90s I think

now he's getting up there

yeah I mean I wouldn't mind talking to

Paulo but I think he's retired he's just

not doing he doesn't have a video

presence

anymore um yeah so I guess I'll just

have to stick with Donald Trump and

sticks hack and Hammer so I'd appreciate

if if some of you nice folks would just

reach out to them and get them persuade

them to be on my show and we'll talk

about whatever they well I'll let Trump

decide what he wants to talk about

because you know he kind of outranks us

socially so let's see here

yeah I guess I answered that one I'll

just move on to the next question here

this is from

Elias and Elias says what do you think

about

gnosticism especially

manism which places great emphasis on

aestheticism like Buddha Mani aimed for

Nirvana and used this

word showing the significance of

Buddhist influences I didn't know that

that Mani the founder of monism used the

word

Nirvana it might be a Persian word too I

assume you know there's a good chance it

is so he further believed in the transmigration of souls sa and used various Buddhist terms in his teachings and I didn't know this because I'm really am not a scholar of gnosticism especially manism I've I've read just on like in historical text discussing you know early sects of Christianity and early religions in the Roman Empire and so forth that manism was very dualistic sort of like Zoroastrianism was very dualistic you know had a good God and an evil God and they were always at war with each other and it was my understanding that manism was also very dualistic you know there was just this this duality of Good and

Evil and that doesn't strike me as being
particularly dharmic I mean Buddhism
talks about skillful and unskillful
sometimes it'll use words like good and
evil but
it really is not good and evil really
are not like deep philosophical terms in
Buddhism with regard to nosism in
general it's my understanding that they
considered um I mean they had a a
position with regard to samsara that was
comparable to early Buddhism where you
know we're just we're supposed to
transcend
this like pollution of having a physical
body so we can move onto the into the

pure spiritual Realm

that this world was just a bad place and

just a place of pollution and and just

degradation and so forth um but I I

really am not no expert on gnosticism or

manism um but it seems to me that the

gnostics had too much of a a negative

attitude towards this world whereas in

Buddhism I mean there's talk about

negativity but it's like you need to

just simplify it enough that you can

just accept it you know it's like the

goal in Buddhism is just to accept

whatever happens including this body and

this world I mean it helps to simplify

it by renouncing the world and so forth

so that um you know it makes it easier

to cultivate an acceptance of whatever happens but to think of it as something bad and wrong um a lot of Buddhists look at it that way but I don't think that that is really an enlightened attitude that you simplify the world through renouncing it going into a forest and just kind of slowing things down simplifying things to make it easier to simplify and purify your own mind and to just accept whatever comes along so it's easier to cultivate Sage Hood in you know simple quiet surroundings rather than you know at at the state fair or in in the Marketplace or something you know living in a house

with a family and bills to pay and work

and all that is definitely a higher

difficulty

setting so yeah the the Moni the founder

of

manism um he used the word Nirvana and

all that I I didn't even know that but I

do think that

gnosticism um at least what little I've

read about it and what little I've heard

about it um it didn't strike me as

being like explicitly enlightened I mean

if that makes any sense you know there's

all this talk about you know different

Realms and and archons and different

ranks of angels and so forth and just

the the evil of having a physical body

not just that

it's um you know necessarily causes us

to be unhappy like you know the first

and second Noble Truths but

I don't know it just it just never

really resonated with me all that much

it could be that I was a pagan in

ancient Rome and I just have like

this antipathy from for Christianity and

gnosticism and so forth that's just

carried over from a previous life or

something I do have certain feelings

about certain things that you know it

could just be a carryover from a

previous existence like I've never

really been into bowing to Buddhist

statues and it could be in a past life I
was really down on idolatry or something
and it's just carried over from that I
don't
know but I have to admit I'm really no
expert on gnosticism especially manism
other than I've I've been told that
manism was
just dualism par excellance where it's
just black and white good and evil at
war with each other and uh yeah I I
really don't think in those terms I mean
good and evil are it's value judgments
that are artificially imposed on what we
perceive so yeah it could be that he was
a much wiser person than um I'm aware of
and it wouldn't surprise me at all I

think uh St Augustine was a manist for a while and he was he was no slouch philosophically so he saw something in it that that I don't see obviously but um I I think uh you're better off just with with Buddhism or some Enlightenment tradition that is still a living tradition rather than you know it's trying to create a replica or resuscitate a tradition that has pretty much died out I assume there are still like vestiges of gnosticism in this world but um uh with regard to manism I'm not sure what a vestigal manism would look like in the modern world so that wasn't much of an answer because

I really am no Authority on gnosticism
or manism so I'm just going to move on
to next question here and this is from
Michael and I suppose I should check to
make sure I'm really recording and yes
it says I'm
recording okay and my nostrils are kind
of working so I think we're doing okay
so anyways Michael
says I once had an encounter with what
appeared to be a negative AST being is
there a way in which I could discover
whether this being is either an
unintentional thought form created by my
own negative thoughts and feelings or
some kind of demon and it's weird
but this was under a YouTube video where

I was talking to uh a Devon Wendell who can see like Spirit beings and he's a kind of you know he's sort of like the people in in uh like The Dead Files or or Ghost Adventures or something you know he's not out just trying to you know make a show you know he's actually trying to help purify energies in areas you know like people have problems with a haunted house or something he'll he'll go and do what he can do or like Spirit possessions that kind of thing you know way he's kind of like an almost like an exorcist but anyway he left an answer to this and I think he then shortly afterwards removed it because I can't

find it now but for a while there was an answer to this question by the other person um that was in the video with me under which this this comment this question was posted this wasn't under a Q&A video and uh he was saying that if it if it doesn't leave the wall like um you have a a dark entity a shadow figure as they're called in the ghost shows that it it's always on the wall and won't come out into the room like out into 3D space it's always like this shape on the wall then that would be some kind of Astral being but if it comes out from the wall then you got some different kind of being and I mean I'm No Authority on on shadow figures I

mean there are dime a dozen on the ghost
shows it's like everyone is is seeing
shadow figures I mean that's like so
what big deal it's like everyone sees
shadow figures and then everyone's
getting scratched at night too on these
ghost shows or a lot of people are
certain go shows they seem to specialize
in people to get scratched and then the
person always has a picture of the
scratch you know it's like the person's
asking them about the scratches like do
you have a picture of these scratches
and they go yeah I just happen to have
this picture right here of these
scratches which is uh kind of peculiar

in my opinion but I'm digressing like
nobody's
business so let's get back here to this
uh encounter what appear to be a
negative astral being is there a way in
which which I could discover whether
this being is either an unintentional
thought form created by my own negative
thoughts and feelings or some kind of
demon and uh setting aside the the
rather indepth answer given by um
Devin I'm G to have to do the best I can
just based on my own knowledge and for
starters I would say there's not
necessarily a difference between a form
created by your own negative thoughts
and feelings or some kind of demon that

your own negative thoughts and feelings
can help to produce this demon or at
least it's creating like an opportunity
for the demon to appear so that I mean
they would both be the case you know it'
be both at the same time and I think in
uh most cases that would be the case
that it's it's both at the same time if
it's not just something imagined it's
something imagined and
sort of a being fitting that imagination
at the same
time but I don't think there's any way
to know for absolutely certain whether
your mind is just creating it or whether
it exists independently of your mind um

I mean a lot of a lot of people uh
including me I mean to some degree it's
your own karma is creating anything that
happens to you your own karma is
conditioning even the Flesh and Blood
people around you that are interacting
with you so from one point of view I
mean it's all the fruition of karma all
of your experiences are are a fruition
of karma to some degree so I mean it
would be your own mind and by
strengthening your mind like uh I think
Devon Wendell was saying if you've got a
really strong Aura it helps to protect
you from this kind of thing so I mean
strengthening your mind having a healthy
well-balanced mind that doesn't have

like weak spots or cracks or holes or
whatever that things can get through you
know in order like the New Testament
it's like everyone and his sister was
possessed by evil spirits back then in
that particular part of the world and
it's I mean it's caused by having like
certain weaknesses or imbalances in your
mind that let stuff
through
so I think from the the terraa Buddhist
point of view the best thing to do in in
addition to you know trying to have a
healthy well-balanced mind which would
be aided by morality and meditation also
just in case it's really a being to send

meta to this being send thoughts of
friendliness and Goodwill towards this
being
because beings you know whether they're
human beings or some other kind of
beings they cause trouble for others
because they're unhappy you know a happy
person is willing to Live and Let Live
they're not going to be [__] with
other people if you're genuinely happy
and content you know it's you know
everyone's fine it's when you're unhappy
you want other people to be unhappy too
so by sending feelings of Goodwill and
like brotherly love you know meta to a
being that's causing problems to you
whether it's your boss or you know some

teach teach that's causing problems or

some bully or say for example some

Demon some shadow figure that it's makes

it less likely that they will continue

to pester

you that they won't try to cause trouble

for

you

so but whether it is

legit some kind of Astral being or

whether it's just your own imagination

or even like

rspk like uh recurrent spontaneous

psychokinesis coming from your

subconscious mind this generating

Poltergeist phenomena

still trying to cultivate a healthy well-balanced mind and just beaming Good Will towards these beings just in case they're real I mean that would be about your best protection or your best way of resolving the situation from a Buddhist point of view but again um I don't think that it's one I don't think that it's completely possible for you to know for absolute sure whether a shadow figure for example um or some being that you encounter in an altered state of consciousness whether it's just a a figment of your own mind or whether it's genuinely some other being in fact I mean at a deep philosophical level you can't even prove

that the people you're interacting with

are real

people you can't just positively

demonstrate

that so yeah your best bet is just try

to be have a healthy mind and and send

meta now I'm just going to move on to

the next question here this is from

White Ash

Piper and white ash Piper says regarding

your analysis on Jesus and he's

referring to I think it was the last

question of the last the most recent Q a

says regarding your analysis on Jesus

couldn't the same be said for the Buddha

after all what was written about Jesus

was just 30 years after his execution
I'd say that's fresh meat compared to
the 500 years after Buddha's death um
I'm not exactly sure what he's referring
to specifically with regard to my
analysis on Jesus um that it's not
entirely
accurate that um yeah that I think I
think even back in like the 1980s I have
read that it was the official position
of the Vatican of the Roman Catholic
Church that only about 20% of the words
attributed to Jesus in the New Testament
are likely to be authentic and I assume
most of the Dead wood is coming from The
Gospel according to John where the
Buddha is like a or the Jesus is like a

broken record just saying you have to believe in me you have to believe in me you have to believe in me over and over again uh in the other the synoptic gospels so-called you know he talks about all sorts of things but in The Gospel according to John I mean he really is just hammering away mainly at this one point he does say that you should love one another in one part but for the most part I mean it's he just saying the same thing over and over again slightly different ways um but anyways getting back to the Vatican in its 20% analysis I would I would have to guess that the words of the Buddha in

the poly toptica are less than 20%

genuine

authentic sayings of GMA Buddha and that

is I

mean a lot of people I mean I felt this

even when I was a monk I mean it's just

common sense it's like one things like

white ash Piper says it was hundreds of

years probably unless the Greeks in

like like what is now Pakistan and

Afghanistan were actually writing stuff

down that just hasn't been preserved or

hasn't been dug up yet that um things

traditionally weren't written down for

500 years after the time of the Buddha

and the Indians really did not have much

of a sense of objective history it's

like all kinds of exaggerations and
mythology and so forth would get mixed
in and I've read that Indian history
didn't even exist until the British took
over India and invented it themselves
just like a systematic approach to
studying the history of India was
invented by English people or so high
I've have
read I mean you did have Chronicles and
so forth but the Chronicles were not
entirely historically objective sort of
like the history of Herodotus you know
he's like the father of of Western
history but you know not everything that
he wrote was legit history you know

there was just a lot of this Legends and
and stuff mixed in and that's the way it
was in in India and still is to some
degree but um yeah I would say maybe 10%
of the poly toptica would actually like
reliably represent what the Buddha
taught I mean you've got different
you've got a gradient first you've got
like verbatim quotes and I would guess
that the amount of verbatim quotes in
the poly toptica would be a relatively
small percentage and then you've got
sort of a reasonable paraphrase where
the Buddha would agree with it you know
it's pretty much what he said just not
in exactly those words they're probably
be more of that and then there's just

stuff that he probably would not have
said or did not say would not have even
endorsed you know like bragging about
how great he is and how people should
worship him and so
forth so yeah I would say
that probably the poly toptica is
somewhat less reliable as an accurate
source of information on what the Buddha
taught than the New Testament is with
regard to
Jesus although the Buddha seems to have
been much more successful as a teacher
than Jesus I mean Jesus I mean it was
like his own disciples just didn't
understand him you know they just

declared him the Son of God at least
maybe not his immediate Apostles but
certainly you know the next generation
of Christ Christians you know it was
just like he's the son of God he died
for our sins and you know what he
actually taught isn't nearly as
important as just believing in in him as
your
savior so I think the Buddha was much
more successful as a teacher you know he
had much many more enlightened or at
least very wise
disciples you know like St Peter was one
of the main Disciples of of Jesus and if
we can believe the Bible I mean he was
like swearing up and down he didn't he

never met Jesus when he gets encountered on the night of Jesus's arrest you know he denies Jesus three times before the the the rooster crowed in the morning you know that's you just would find that in in like auta with regard to the behavior of Sara for example Sara was an enlightened being whereas St Peter and certainly St Paul who never met met Jesus but nevertheless was at least as instrumental in modern Christianity as Jesus was um yeah they just do not come across as enlightened beings even the enlightenment of Jesus himself is doubtable just I mean based on the idea that you know he got in foul moods and

cried on at least one occasion and so
forth um just based on Orthodox Terra a
fully enlightened being wouldn't behave
that way but then again um I and don't
think that terat Buddhism would
necessarily be completely reliable with
regard to how an Aran can or cannot
behave because I mean I've got the the
example of neim coroli Baba again up
there on the the the altar there who I
mean he he just behaved like a complete
Rascal but he was extremely spiritually
Advanced and he kind of in a way just
kind of tramples on certain dogmatic IDE
ideas about what an extremely Advanced
spiritual being can and cannot
do so let's see getting back to White

Ash Piper's question here uh yeah I mean
I would agree with what white ash Piper
says here that uh with regard to my
analysis on Jesus and I'm not exactly
sure what exactly he's referring to with
regard to that but couldn't the same be
said for the Buddha yeah to some degree
yeah but again I mean at least the
Buddha was more successful in conveying
wisdom to his disciples than Jesus was
so that would be a mitigating factor and
might boost the percentage of how
reliable his uh recorded teachings
are so I guess I answered that one it's
I'm not exactly 100% sure what he was
referring to but I answered it as well

as my nostrils and I are capable of answering it because my nostrils are still kind of plugging up in strange ways way and I do hope that I will be better 100% better or at least 99% better by the next Q&A also what Ash Piper ask another question here which is by the way I heard it once said that the Buddha might have been murdered being offered the tainted food as an intentional Act and the only place I've ever encountered that is in this really badly written essay by Kid wheeler who claims to be
the world's leading Authority on Ancient early Buddhism and um also one of the world's leading authorities on the poly

language even though he is an inept translator he gets just easy words wrong but he was claiming that Maha casapa the Buddhist senior disciple at the time of the Buddhist death um he conspired he participated he was an accomplice in the murder of the Buddha also the murder of saruta molana and also Maha Vera the the leader of the Jane religion or the Jane spiritual tradition and I mean there's no evidence really that um the the the metal Smith Chanda the metal Smith deliberately murdered the Buddha by poisoning him by giving him tainted meat tainted

pork or the Mahayana Buddhists would say

uh poisonous

mushroom

but yeah I mean there's no indication at

all in the texts that he was

deliberately murdered in fact it is an

orthodox tenant of Orthodox terab of

Buddhism that a fully enlightened Buddha

cannot be murdered it's impossible they

just don't have the karma to be murdered

you can murder an ordinary

Aran like mogal was murdered

but the Buddha cannot be murdered at

least according to Orthodox Terra so

from the Orthodox position I mean the

the idea really doesn't have a leg to

stand on there's no real evidence other

than somebody served the Buddha this
pork or whatever it was according to
Terra it was pork tender pork
suar and the Buddha ate it and then
afterwards he died and then he told told
somebody I can't remember who maybe it
was the the Smith himself don't serve
this pork or the suur rawa to any other
monk but just throw it away nobody else
could eat it and so apparently the
Buddha knew I mean he was uh
functionally omniscient according to
tradition he was an enlightened being so
that I mean if he allowed himself to be
poisoned then he was sort of committing
suicide by knowingly eating poison

so I mean it's not

absolutely

inconceivable that the Buddha was

deliberately murdered but there's no

indication of it in the

texts or there's there's no evidence or

indication of it outside the text either

it's just like just a wide openen

conjecture you know it's just just a

complete guess based on a little bit of

circumstantial evidence that the Buddha

ate something and afterward

died so I mean it could have been

poisoned food and then it you take one

step further it could have been

deliberately poison food for the purpose

of killing him but all it is is just a

wild conjecture and it would never stand up in a court of law so I'm just going to move on to the next question here and this is from Luigi and this is the very last question in fact Luigi asked this question just just a short time ago today so he got in right under the wire here and Luigi says does Buddhism teach you to negate your drive to negate your will to power to negate Your Lust For Success and in a way it does you neutralize it um it's considered to be unskillful unconducive to Enlightenment unless your drive and your Your Lust For Success are directed towards

Enlightenment the attainment of sage hood and then still so long as you have this drive towards Enlightenment you're not going to get enlightened but what happens is it's like you've reduced all of your cravings and attachments to this one last craving and attachment for enlightenment and then eventually you get to the point where you can't get enlightened because you still have this craving even though it's craving for enlightenment and so you have to just leave that behind and sometimes it might just be like a complete just giving up just letting go of everything in just despair um or else it could just be this Insight you know I still have this this

attachment for becoming enlightened and
so I'll just let go of this attachment
and it turns out that it's the last
significant attachment and then that's
it but uh yeah shophow especially when
when I read this question from Luigi it
reminded me of shophow and that's
basically what schopenhauer is
describing and how he describes not only
Buddhism but any kind of advanced
spiritual method that leads to
Enlightenment or Liberation including
you know more the more advanced levels
of
Christianity is that you are denying
your will you know everything is a

manifestation of will you know will and
representation so you got this will that
wants to you know just fill all niches
you know it just wants to exist in any
way it can and that would correspond to
Karma in Buddhism because karma also is
Will pretty much in a shopen howan sense
and so the way you you free yourself
from this veil of Tears this
Sara is not to do what you want to do
it's uh I think it was NE CI Baba saying
you know if you got a cup of tea there
and you want that tea don't drink it
whatever it is that you want don't do it
a cha used to teach the same kind of a
thing you just just mortify your self-
will which is what St John of the Cross

also was teaching you know you you
mortify your self- will and then
according to St John of the cross the
mystical doctor of the Catholic church
that what happens is when you succeed in
mortifying your own self-will you know
your own Will To Power so to speak then
you become like a puppet of God you are
you become motivated by the will of God
rather than your own will and Buddhists
would Define it somewhat differently you
know they' explain things somewhat
differently but still an enlightened
being creates no Karma and Karma is
essentially will so an enlightened being
moves through the world effortlessly

with no deliberate

effort so to speak so in a sense

Buddhism does teach you to negate your

drive to negate your Will To Power and

to negate Your Lust For Success but it's

not entirely negative because the result

of that

is just infinitely better than anything

you can experience as a normi worldling

on this planet in this realm of

existence so it's all for a good cause

supposedly you know it's all for the

attainment of Enlightenment and

Liberation so n wouldn't like it much n

really didn't have much use for Buddhism

but uh that's okay and I just answered

the last ask question so if you got any

questions about Buddhism or ancient India or Eastern spirituality or meditation or whatever you think I might be able to answer feel free to ask questions in the comments below or if you have access to the Discord server you can ask them there if you have access to the Subscribe Star channel you can ask them there and hit the like button if you like this if you didn't like it I don't want you to be dishonest and say that you liked it and if you haven't subscribed you think that this is up your Alleyway feel free to subscribe and be happy and now I got to do the complicated process of turning

this off because I've I've got this

complicated process here like that

Okay, it looks like we're recording and

I sincerely hope that it actually is.

Hello and welcome to episode 80 of

question and answer. That's 8 0, which

is a relatively high number.

And I'm your host Punnadhammo Bhasakorn.

And uh

we have got like a

not a extremely high and unmanageable

number of questions to answer, so this

should be a fairly easy going one and

not 3 hours long. I hope.

And for those of you who have any

interest,

um the disease that I've had for the

past few weeks is now about 3%

remaining. So it's like my immune system
is like in a mopping up operation now.
And I'll put the phone a little farther
away just in case anyone starts spamming
me texts.
So I guess I might as well just dive
into this.
So the first question is from Santosh.
And Santosh says,
"When I started to learn about Buddhism
and concept of rebirth, I was fascinated
by it and wanted to keep getting more
births.
But now as I have more understanding
about it, I don't even want to take
another one birth.
What is this transformation called?"

And before I answer this question, I'm going to open an energy drink just to make sure that I have enough fuel to get to the end of this.

And I will point out that a lot of Westerners, especially like older Westerners,

are initially attracted to Buddhism just because of the idea of rebirth because they want to be reborn. They don't want to just die and that's it when they're when after they die.

And uh it's just kind of ironic because the whole purpose of Buddhism, in a sense, is to stop being reborn.

And uh that's what attracts a lot of

people in the Buddhism is just the idea

that when you're dead, you're not really

dead.

And you know, you don't have to

believe in this

like a

a schismatic Jewish sect essentially in

order to get into heaven to uh

do whatever it is that they do up there.

So,

um

So, first he was fascinated by the idea

of rebirth and wanted to get more

rebirth, but now Santosh doesn't want

rebirth anymore and he wants to know

what this transformation is called.

And I don't know if there is like some

technical

philosophical term

for not wanting

further existence. I mean, there's like

three kinds of craving. There's craving

for sensual pleasures, there's craving

for existence, and there's craving for

non-existence.

Um I think in order to make it complete

just to in include the few outliers that

don't fit would be also the desire for

suffering. And there are people that

seem to desire suffering, although I

assume the reason why they desire

suffering is cuz it gives them a kind of

satisfaction

to wallow in it. So, it's still kind of

a desire for

for uh pleasure in a sense, but it's

sort of a

maybe a slightly pathological

dysfunctional kind of pleasure.

But uh yeah, again, I don't think there

is

a special word. It would just be like

the development, you know, your bhavana,

which just means like development, the

development of wisdom

or insight, something like that.

Um yeah. So, I think I answered that

because I don't think there is some

special name for this transformation. Uh

at least I'm not aware of it. So, I'm

just going to move on to the next

question here and that is from Jewels.

And Jewels says,

"To what extent, if at all, do you think

the moral conclusions of Buddhism by

necessity follow from what is revealed

about the world through meditative

practice

or insight?"

And

I think most of it. I think the basics

of it are verifiable through your own

experience

when you practice. There There are some

things that you can't really

verify. You know, some of the maybe the

more kind of verging towards

mythological stuff, you know, like

you'll be reborn as so and so if you do

this kind of thing. You can't really see

that from your own experience.

Or if you do have some

like

uh what is it? Uh

like a premonition or a vision or

something like that. You can't prove

that such a vision is really objective

reality. It could just be your

imagination, which is

kind of a problem with people who

remember past lives and so forth. Um you

know, it's not

really proof. You know, it's evidence.

It might be considerable evidence. It might be considerable enough to change people's perception on the subject, but proving anything outside of your own mind is ultimately impossible. There have been Western philosophers who mentioned this. Like I think Spinoza and David Hume are two of the most well-known.

I think I think in with regard to Hume, it's called Hume's fork, where it's I mean, the only things you can really prove would be something that's completely self-contained inside your own mind, like a

um

a theorem of Euclid or something like

that.

You know, some kind of logic problem

where it's all self-contained. It's not

based on what supposedly exists outside

in in an objective universe.

But I think I'm

losing track of the question here.

The moral conclusions of Buddhism

follow from what is revealed about the

world through meditative practice and

insight. If you

if you do something that is unwholesome

unskillful akusala.

If you're sensitive, I mean you can see

the effect of it on yourself. Like just

telling a lie. Let's say you tell a lie

mindfully. You can feel sort of the the
unease that that happens, which is what
is measured in lie detector tests.
But some people might be really good at
lying and can pass lie detector tests
while lying their behind off.
So
um
Moral conclusions of Buddhism with
regard to like reinc- rebirth or that
sort of thing, I'm not sure how well you
could really verify that through
meditative experience
or through insight. I mean it can
strengthen your confidence in it. You
know, it might provide evidence even

though it's not absolutely conclusive

evidence.

But

the basics about the difference between

wholesome and unwholesome if you have

enough mindfulness and sensitivity

and wisdom, then you can see the effects

of skillful karma and unskillful karma

on your system

pretty much immediately.

So

um I can't give a percentage with regard

to what extent. But I mean the basics of

it, You know, that that Buddhist ethics

are based on human psychology or just

like mammal psychology in general. And

then you can

you can see that for yourself, just as I
assume the Buddha saw it for himself,
which is why he came up with the system.
He was somewhat of an innovator, at
least uh he's the first famous person
who turned karma into a psychological
state.
That moral and morality, ethics in
general,
became um pretty much entirely
psychological
for for the Buddha and his followers.
And that was uh
I I assume that could be considered a
very significant contribution to uh
Eastern philosophy

in a sense.

Um it may be that other people came up with the same insight, but they just didn't get famous for it.

So, I I hope I answered that question. I mean, the basics of it can be verified through your own observation, even though some of the metaphysical stuff, you know, like the effects it'll have on your next birth and so forth, you couldn't really verify it very well.

So, I'll just move on to the next question here. This is from Seal Vax and Cpad Zidana.

And Seal Vax and Cpad Zidana says, "How much meditation do you think you did per average day as a monk? Were you just

meditating in a cave

15 hours a day?" And in parentheses,

he's got 8 hours sleep, 1 hour begging

and eating.

Um and then he continues, "Or were there

other obligations? A monk has to clean

up, has light clean up duty, attending

to other monks, etc., that ate up some

of that time. You also said you used to

spend some time thinking about writing,

so maybe that took up some time as well.

Okay, I had it figured out like my first

10 or 12 years as a monk.

Uh I was averaging probably at least 6

hours a day of sitting meditation. That

probably wouldn't include walking

meditation.

Then uh it tapered off a little bit, I think maybe by the time I'd been a monk for 20 years, it was probably still well above an average of 4 hours a day.

But um I think there's a few slight misconceptions here like 8 hours sleep, I mean that was rare because a monk, according to the text, is supposed to sleep only 1/3 of a of a 12-hour night, which is 4 hours, and I tried and tried at that, and I'm just too much of a sleepyhead and and couldn't really swing it, but 6 or 7 hours is doable.

Also, the 1 hour for begging and eating,

I mean that's that's definitely a a misconception because sometimes like the first monastery I lived at in Burma, it was an hour and a half to the nearest village.

So, it would be like a 3-hour walk just to and from the village not even including the walking through the village getting the alms. And then you come back and after you then you have to eat and then after you eat, you've got to wash your bowl and brush your teeth and all that. So, just the food stuff can take up a considerable part of a day.

And there are some monks that live I

mean they can live like 4 miles away
from the nearest village. I've heard of
one I think it was a
affiliated with Ajahn Chah in Thailand.
Just way the heck out in the middle of
nowhere where it would take a long time
for them to walk to the village and back
because it was such a long walk.
And in addition to that, you know,
you've got
heating up water to to drink your coffee
or whatever it is, burning garbage every
once in a while, having to meet with
visitors sometimes. Um just the chop
wood, carry water stuff. I mean you got
to you got to bathe. And in order to
bathe, like most monasteries I lived at,

you've got to walk to the well and with a five-gallon bucket and pull up little buckets of water on the rope and pour it into the five-gallon bucket and then carry that to wherever you're going to bathe and do that. You're going to fill your water pot at the same well with the same bucket.

All kinds of things. You you got ceremonies you have to attend to sometimes.

So,

I mean if I was doing intensive meditation, it would be pretty much all day, especially if you're trying to do intensive meditation. I mean you're

trying to do everything mindfully,

including, you know, getting the

fetching the water at the well, you

know, you're being mindful of the the

movements of your arm and the the the

pressure and the like the texture and

firmness and the the temperature of the

rope on your hands and all that sort of

thing. Um

But yeah, I was I was averaging like 6

hours. Sometimes you're traveling, you

know, it's it's weird trying to meditate

like when you're riding a bus all night

long.

Something like that.

So,

yeah, there there's definitely other

obligations a monk has just with regard
to maintaining his own body.
And just
attending to visitors and so forth.
Although I really didn't start getting a
lot of visitors until I was
relatively senior monk going solo where
there wouldn't be like senior monks
um that were, you know, dealing with
most of the visitors. And as a junior
monk, I would just seclude myself. I
remember I had this big fence put up
just to keep out visitors around just
kind of blocking off this gully where my
cave was. And I had it lockable from the
inside. And the guy who had set up the

the gate, he's saying, "I I want to
change this lock. I mean, why do you
want it lockable from the inside? You
want to lock it on the outside, like
when you're gone." And it's like, "No, I
want it locked when I'm here."
Cuz I mean, a lot of the time I just
didn't want to meet with visitors, but
I'm completely digressing, I suppose.
So,
yeah, patching robes was another one.
That could take a long time, and making
robes could take all day for of
like 3 weeks if you're sewing by hand,
which is what I did.
But I There's a question a little
further down the scroll for that one.

So,

how much meditation do you I think I did on average day as a monk? Yeah, it it it varied, but it was probably at least 6 hours a day my my first 10 years, and still well over 4 hours a day my next 10 years, and then my third 10 years,

I don't know, maybe three. It was It was going down um after

Well, let's see. Would it be three? It might be still more than three.

Yeah, I don't I don't know exactly. But the thing is, you do walking meditation a lot, and also you're just trying to be mindful throughout the day when you're doing other things that aren't formal

meditation.

So,

yeah, it definitely added up.

But

meditating in a cave for 15 hours a day,

man, that would be like real intensive

practice.

And uh

you know, I would I would write blog

posts and stuff for the last let's see,

10 years as a monk, approximately.

So, doing some philosophizing, reading

books. I did read books sometimes.

So,

yeah, 6 hours a day meditation is

actually pretty good. It might have been

more than that my first 10 years. I was

really really gung ho my first 10 years as a monk.

So, I think I'll just move on to the next question here also from COV X and C5 Z 109.

Which is, if after we die, we just all enter nirvana anyways, then is the life of a monk pretty much worthless considering how few people attain enlightenment despite trying their whole lives? What about if death is really just the end and nirvana can only be experienced while alive? Well, the four noble truths are still true regardless of what happens to you after you die.

So, desire is still the cause of suffering. So, dedicating your life to simplicity and quiet and reducing your desires is going to reduce your suffering regardless of what happens to you after you die.

So, for some people that I mean just temperament wise, the monk's life is really compatible with their temperament, then

yeah, it's not it's not worthless or a waste of time or any such thing. And And you do cultivate wisdom as a monk if you're living the life of a conscientious practicing monk, it is easier to cultivate insight and wisdom than it is if you're working a job and

paying bills and so forth.

So,

no, I mean even if we all enter nirvana

after we die or as you're just you're

when you're dead, you're dead,

then still the four noble truths are

true and desire is the cause of all

suffering and reducing your desires will

reduce your suffering

and will also help clear up your mind

and help you to cultivate wisdom and

goodness and so forth

regardless of any afterlife.

Excuse me.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question.

This is from Al Pacino Alpaca.

Man of many names.

And he asked kind of strange question.

What is the biological reason for men as they age, they get balder, but simultaneously their beard keeps growing?

Um

It's my understanding that like baldness in men is generally caused by excess of testosterone.

Which is strange. I'm not sure how excess of testosterone kills your hair follicles on the top of your head, but doesn't kill the hair follicles elsewhere. It might just be some sort of random genetic quirk

in not only humans. I think male
chimpanzees can go bald, too.
So,
um yeah, I'm not exactly sure about
that, but I bet you you could look it up
on on the internet pretty easily.
But, I mean, not only does your hair get
thinner as you get older, but you can
grow a beard better. Like when I was
young, I could not grow a good beard.
Now, I can, which is nice. I like having
a beard.
So, I'll just move on to Al Pacino
Alpaca's next question here.
What does right view mean according to
orthodox Theravada and what it means to

you?

Well, according to orthodox Theravada,

right view in particular, it means

believing the four noble truths,

believing in karma.

Uh maybe believing a few other just

basics of Buddhist philosophy.

But mainly it's the four noble truths

and karma

are would be considered right view, plus

just the idea that practicing Dharma

will is beneficial and will help you to

cultivate wisdom and help you to get uh

loosen your your clinging to some

sorrow.

And but right view is going to change as

you progress. You know, right view is

like the first step in the Noble Eightfold Path, but you know, that's just basics, you know, like I just mentioned. But as you progress, your right view is going to change. It's going to become more subtle until finally you're not going to have any view.

Like the arahant, he doesn't need right view anymore because he doesn't have any view at all. At least according to philosophical texts, like the implications of the Ataka Vagga where monks are continually admonished not to have any view at all.

And that's a very advanced. And so

the whole right view thing, like in the context of the Noble Eightfold Path, is primarily just the view that's going to get you on the path to begin with and head you in the right direction.

And that your right view is going to evolve

as you progress in Dhamma.

With regard to what right view means to me,

that's pretty much it. Really is you know, any view that helps you to have you know, fewer desires, fewer preferences, fewer attachments,

then that's that is

that is a right view. And wrong view would be believing stuff that get you

more stuck in some sorrow and more

attached and more unhappy.

And it's going to be somewhat different

for different people.

Although I mean some some views you can

say would be wrong view just in general.

You know, like you know, I have an

immortal soul and so-and-so died for my

sins and only people that believe in

this person can have any hope of any

kind of genuine spiritual benefit and so

forth. Yeah, that that sort of thing

would be um I would consider to be wrong

view.

But

I mean just for for anybody really,

unless they were so advanced that they
had just kind of transcended
their wrong view. Like I I have said
many times that I do think that some
Christians have become fully
enlightened. Like St. John of the Cross
is one of my favorite examples of
someone who plausibly became fully
enlightened. And in his case
um you know, he was still a devout
Christian. But it was like he had
detached from his own personality. You
know, he was sort of evolved beyond
what's going on in the the lump of the
the lump of soft gray meat in his head.
And you know, that was still going on
because you know, the body was a human

body that was culturally conditioned and everything, living in Spain in the 1500s. So you know, it was just going to do its thing, but he was no longer really identified with that anymore.
So to that extent right view becomes almost irrelevant.
But even someone who gets to that stage isn't going to say, you know, that lying and stealing and killing and raping is is good and you should all do that sort of thing. I mean
So
I mean there has to be a certain kind of rightness in right view in order for it

to be genuinely right. Even if you're like completely detached from it and not identifying with it anymore.

So I think I'm starting to confuse myself.

When you start talking about two different levels of reality simultaneously, it starts getting confusing. So I'm just moving on to the next question here.

And that question is from Pranav and Pranav says

what would you respond to if someone argue that Buddha was bad person because he left his wife and newborn baby when they needed him the most. Asking this question because I've come across

Instagram account who only post about
hating Buddhism and how it is inferior
to Hinduism.
Well,
first of all, I mean, this is like a
traditional legend that this is what the
Buddha did. He renounced the world just
very shortly after his son Rahula was
born and he just renounced the world and
left his wife and his newborn son
behind. But, you have to
have to bear in mind that according to
the same tradition, the same legend,
he was a royal prince and so he left his
wife who was a royal princess and his
son who was the grandson of a king

living in a palace.

And so, they weren't going hungry. I mean, there was probably some emotional distress on the part of the mother. The baby was too young to have emotional distress probably with regard to her his missing daddy. You know, the mother was probably rather upset about the whole thing.

Um

but, I mean, nobody was just left in this state of dire hardship.

You know, his wife was not just, you know, living in the street in squalor and desperation.

So,

there is that. Although, from the

Buddhist point of view and even like

from a

old-fashioned Catholic point of view

like St. John of the Cross, you're doing

better

by abandoning your family life and just

going off and dedicating your life to

serving God in the case of a Christian

or,

you know, cultivating wisdom like St.

John of the Cross said,

you can I mean that you got two people.

One of them just dedicates his life to,

you know, tending to the sick and

feeding the hungry and housing the

homeless and and just doing these good

deeds all the time. And the other one is sitting alone practicing what is essentially jhana, high contemplation. And he's saying the second person who is practicing high contemplation alone in a cell or a cave or whatever is doing more good and helping the world more.

And Buddhism has a similar point of view. I mean, it's it's just more noble and good to I mean, what the Buddha did. I mean, you could say, "Yeah, okay. He caused some hardship, some emotional distress for his wife, maybe later for his son." But then again, he came back to Kapilavastu when his his son was older and ordained him into the Sangha. That was like his his inheritance.

Rahula's inheritance was getting ordained into the Sangha. And according to tradition, because the Buddha renounced the world and found a way to enlightenment, Rahula, when he grew up or he wasn't even fully grown yet, he became an arhat. He became fully enlightened.

So, that's better than having your daddy sitting around, you know, drinking beer, watching TV, and just being an ordinary person, rather than having a father who's fully enlightened and helps you to become fully enlightened, you know, several years after he goes off on his own.

So,

yeah. I mean, he wasn't a bad person for

having done that, but it depends on

one's personal volitions. It determines

whether one is good or bad and not just

some outward circumstance.

But it's hard to argue that he would

have done more good

by just staying at home and just living

a normie life than having renounced the

world and gone off and become a Buddha.

I mean that's it's just sort of a a

feeble argument.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question here. This is from Fred.

And Fred says, "Does intellect go across

to another body? I personally have my

doubts. sort of like tendencies.
But not language and intellect. The only
thing that is reborn, that that
undergoes reincarnation,
is your karma, which is
volition or will, like in the sense of
Schopenhauer, The World as Will and
Representation.
It is just the momentum of your mind.
And I assume a genius in one life who is
reborn, unless he's done some really bad
stuff that kind of poisoned the the the
the root of his own genius,
that he's probably going to be, you
know, above-average in intelligence in
his next life, too, unless there's

something he really needs to work on.
You know, he's so head-oriented,
considers intelligence to be so
important that he still has to work out,
you know, how to deal with not being
intelligent. So, he might get a life of
not being intelligent just just because
he has to learn, you know, that you can
be a good and wise person even without
being an intellectual. Something like
that, maybe.
But as a general rule, it's it's this
momentum, so that I mean, if you're a
musical genius, there's a good chance
you're just going to be drawn to being a
musical genius in your next life, like
Mozart's a good example. He's writing

symphonies when he's a little kid.
Um also, I had this I read this
um it was in this stack of ancient
Reader's Digests at this monastery in
Burma that I I worked my way through.
There was this guy who just he was like
a a lion tamer. He he was like ever
since he was a kid he was fascinated by
it. He just wanted to be a lion tamer.
And he even when he was a kid he'd be
like taming raccoons and teaching them
tricks and stuff just because it was
just this drive and sure enough he
became like one of the the main lion
tamers like the Ringling Brothers Barnum
& Bailey Circus

and that sort of thing is largely based

on this momentum from a previous

previous existences generally more than

one of them.

So,

yeah, I think uh intellect

does go from one life to the next to

some degree

um just sort of indirectly because

mainly I mean it's just it's volition.

It's your will.

But if you've got the like the momentum

of your volition is you know

intellectually oriented and so forth,

that's going to that's going to pass

over into the next life.

So,

I'll just move on to Fred's next question.

Which is snakes feel vibration of footfall long before you have chance to step on them. In my opinion meta wouldn't appease them {question mark}

And this is with regard to a question in the previous Q&A asking about if meta helps to protect you from you know dangerous animals like snakes.

And it's there's more to it than that. I mean it's like you're creating your reality. It's Western Buddhists as a general rule just take it for granted that scientific realism is true and then they try to superimpose Dharma onto

that. That there's like this objective
material universe out there even if
there's no perceiving mind perceiving
it.
And there's no way they could prove
that. That's just a
an article of faith of scientific
realism.
I mean there's no way you could prove
it. You can provide evidence that's more
than enough to satisfy scientific
realists,
but still,
if your mind is creating your reality,
you know, like the first verse of the
Dhammapada, you know, mind is the
forerunner of all things,

then

um a lot of things, whether you come

across a snake at all is going to be

conditioned by your karma, whether the

snake is friendly or hostile is going to

be conditioned by your karma, anything

that you experience

is going to be conditioned by your

karma.

It's conditioned by karma in general,

cuz you're really not the owner of it.

Cuz there is no you to own it.

So,

see, I mean, it'd be might be more

accurate to say that your karma owns

you, that you're just sort of like a

an indirect manifestation of your karma,

or something.

So,

yeah, I

yeah, meta I mean,

if you have just a genuine love for

snakes like I do, I mean,

I've I said in the last Q&A, you know,

when I come across a snake in Burma, I'd

be or even even in America, I'd really

be happy. I mean, I'd be glad. I'd just

be spontaneously blessing the snake,

especially if it was a big one,

or some kind I'd never seen before, just

some unusual kind of snake.

Um yeah, I just be spontaneously

blessing that snake, just not as a

defense mechanism to keep myself from
being bitten, but just because I
genuinely like snakes. And um I've
I've had this hypothesis, there's no way
I could prove it really, that
possibly in some past life, like a long
time ago,
I was like some kind of shaman that
worshipped snakes.
Cuz I really do like snakes.
So, yeah, I mean, it's
you shouldn't just assume that
scientific materialism is the truth with
some Dharma kind of coloring it.
You know, it's like your mind is
conditioning your reality.

And so, it's conditioning the snakes you
come across and whether they're going to
be friendly snakes or unfriendly snakes
or just scared snakes that that slither
away fast when you come walking by.
So, maybe I answered that question. I
think I provided enough
um verbiage
in response to that kind of question, at
least that a question mark at the end,
that one could assemble
like IKEA furniture
the the appropriate answer to that. And
if you don't get the appropriate answer
from what I just said, you just you
didn't you didn't do it right.
So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question here. And this is from

TJFG.

And this one also is a response to a

previous Q&A, the previous the Q&A

before this one, where somebody asked me

if I did like a group video,

that who would I want on my group video?

And just off the top of my head, I came

up with Donald Trump and Styx

Hexenhammer. I think that'd be an

interesting video.

And uh so, TJFG here says,

But getting towards the end here, is

there karma for being gullible? Delusion

is I mean, yeah.

If you're gullible or if you're just

delusioner

delusional.

Ugh, gosh. I'm having words having

problems saying words.

Although it's not something that's just

crept upon me. That I've pretty much

been that way my whole life. I'm my mind

is less verbal than most people.

So sometimes it's an effort to put

things into words when usually I'm

thinking

um

without using as many words as most

people I think.

But for

karma for being gullible, there's just

karma for being

deluded. You have moha, you know, the three poisons greed, hate, and delusion. And delusion is just a makeshift translation. It'd be more like semi-conscious stupidity.

So yeah, you do get bad karma for being unenlightened, which is it's like a vicious circle.

So I guess I answered that question maybe a little too much.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question. Here, this is from Rui.

And Rui says, can you expand a bit on patiloma paticca samuppada?

So

paticca samuppada is like the Buddhist

theory of of everything. And

in some suttas it's considered to be

like the heart of of dhamma, the heart

of the Buddhist teachings. Although

according to legend, the Buddha almost

just didn't start Buddhism because he

figured nobody would understand paticca

samuppada or dependent co-arising. And

yeah, I'm he was pretty much right

because I think very few people really

understand dependent co-arising.

So patiloma

um

paticca samuppada or patiloma dependent

co-arising. Patiloma literally means

against the hair or against the fur.

You know, it's not your head hair, it's

like body hair or the the fur of an

animal is loma. And pati means against.

So it's sort of an idiom for for

backwards, you know, sort of against the

grain or, you know, back to front

kind of thing.

So, paticcasamuppada or backwards

dependent co-arising is just reciting

the chain of the 12 links backwards. So,

the forwards, you know, is avijja

paccaya,

see,

sankhara. Sankhara paccaya,

vinnana. I'm I'm trying to translate

into like Western or Sri Lankan

pronunciation of Pali because the

Burmese pronunciation is weird. People
even familiar with Pali might not
understand it.
But, um, paticcasamuppada would be
backwards. And it was like
the Buddha, after his enlightenment,
he's he remained sitting under the Bodhi
tree for 1 week just going through the
12 links forwards. And then, the next
week, he just went through the 12 links
backwards. And then, the next week after
that, he went forwards and backwards.
And
the it's kind of an anachronism because
I don't think that the 12 links started
with the Buddha. That there are, if if
you look in the suttas, there are like

early prototypes of the 12 links theory.
Like the the central portion of the
Sakka Paññā Sutta contains a kind of
primitive or archaic proto dependent
co-arising. Also, the uh Kalahavivatta
Sutta of the Atiga Vagga contains a kind
of proto
um, like pre paticcasamuppada. Like it's
a a
prototype of the 12 links.
Also, if you just read the Nidana Sutta
of the Digha Nikaya, which is the
longest sutta discussing specifically
paticcasamuppada or dependent
co-arising, that also is not following
exactly the 12 links. You know, it's

it's it was like a little before they
finally settled on the 12 links,
apparently.
So, the whole idea of doing the 12 links
forwards and then doing the 12 links
backwards and then doing the 12 links
forwards and backwards,
um
it's not really all that significant
philosophically.
It's just in a way, it's kind of like
knowing something forwards and
backwards, you know, in English idiom
just means you know it really well.
And it's not just the 12 links that,
again, I consider to be a later addition
to Dhamma. I don't think it originated

with the Buddha himself.

But, uh like the the 32 parts of the

body,

you know, as kesa loma nakha danta taco

is like the first week, and then you do

it backwards the second week, and then

you do it forwards and backwards the

third week, and then you move on to the

next five body parts.

Um you know, it's just a way of

like getting something down, you know,

you just

you know, if you know the alphabet

forwards and backwards, you know the

alphabet a little better than if you

just know it forwards.

And also, it might help if you're ever

taking a drunk test, you get pulled over

by the police or something.

So,

yeah, I mean, it just

patiloma paticcasamuppada is just the 12

links, the 12 nidanas theory of

dependent co-arising in reverse order.

And that's I I think that's different

from just

um

you know, there's there's two main

versions of forwards, which is your you

know,

see,

avijja paccayo

vinnanam is is is like the cause,

emphasizing the cause, you know, this

causes that, that causes that. And then

it's like avijja nirodha

n- uh

vinnana nirodho, which is the cessation

aspect of it.

And uh at first I was getting confused.

I thought that might be paṭiloma. And

then I was thinking about it and like,

"No, paṭiloma really does mean in

reverse order."

So, it's it's mainly just

a way of like memorizing and

understanding something just by doing it

not only in this forwards progression,

but also doing it backwards.

Which implies that you understand it better.

But it's not really necessary for understanding pretty just have a paṭiloma because the whole 12 links, as I keep saying,

probably is a later addition, like a later development of Dhamma. I mean, it occurred relatively early on because it's common to all the schools, I'm pretty sure. But that just means that it existed in Buddhism before the schism started, approximately 100 years after the time of the Buddha.

So, I'll just move on to Rui's next question here.

Which is, "Were you any good at the

daunting task of sewing and mending

robes?" And yeah, I actually got pretty

good at it. I got good at patching

robes.

Because

um

I I did keep my robes as long as I

could.

And so, after

I mean, it depends on how thick the

cloth is and whether it's an upper or

lower robe, but regard I mean, I'd start

wearing like it was like canvas lower

robes just so they'd last like another

year.

But an upper robe, if it's like thin

cotton and in the tropics, you want thin cotton robes, especially on your upper body, they would start to rot after about two years and start tearing really easy. They'd start tearing like paper. I'd just be sitting down getting into a car and just I I'd just feel this rip or hear the rip. It's like, "Oh, great." And there'd be like a rip this long in my robe. So, I'd be spending a few hours later on after I got wherever I was going, just patching the robe. I always carried a bunch of patch cloth. And according to Vinaya, anything bigger than four finger widths by eight finger widths would count as a robe or a chivarum. So, your my patches were all

slightly smaller than 4 by 8. Look like these rectangles of of cloth like this. I'd have them in a roll.

And yeah, I got pretty good at patching my robes. I remember once I was staying at this place and I had my robes hanging out to dry and this French monk walked by and he was laughing cuz he used to be a hippie. And he was saying this reminds him of Haight-Ashbury back in like the late '60s or early '70s, you know, all these multicolored patches, you know, all over the robe.

But uh yeah, I got I got fairly good at at mending, patching robes until finally, I mean, it gets to the point

where it just rips so easy. It's just so rotten. You know, it's like the main part of the robe is just all made of patches. And that's the way it was with Maha Kassapa according to the text where um

you know, he was the foremost of the disciples of the Buddha in in practicing austerities and his robes were were made of like thrown away rags that he sewed together. And he would just keep patching them and patching them and patching them until they literally got too heavy for him to wear. You know, they're just just too thick and heavy. You know, they wouldn't dry out in after they're being washed and so forth. Then

he'd have to get an uh like fine he'd just have to start making a new robe. But uh yeah, I was good at and I did make my own lower robe once. Just just to give myself the practice and it took more than 3 weeks of like 6 hours a day just sewing. Just by hand. I didn't have a sewing machine and I made it out of like like uh canvas. Like I said, it's or like it was like a thick homespun that was made in a village in Burma. And uh

they donated this this thick cloth to me cuz I I wanted burlap, but people would just refuse. They figured that would that wasn't good enough for a monk.

And it took It was like every day for

more than 3 weeks

sewing this robe just

day after day.

So, I mean, I could do it. I was fairly

good at I got really good at untangling

knots and thread.

One of my one of my dogs is

is like wanting attention.

Um

but I mean, it was it was slow. It took

It took time. It takes patience.

So, I think uh

Oh, I should say that uh after that I I

would just uh have uh like a village

tailor, someone who was had a a sewing

machine and could use it. And he'd come

out and in Burma in the villages, the sewing machines work on a kind of a treadle. They're not electric, you know, you just do the foot pedal that which causes the machine to run.

And he'd come out and I'd give like elaborate instructions. I'd be standing there, you know, helping him to to make this robe cuz I considered myself possibly the main authority on correct correct robe making in Burma at the time because I'd studied I studied the text very carefully and it was really obvious that most of Burmese monks were not wearing robes that were allowable according to the rules of

monastic discipline.
You know, they'd just get these
store-bought robes. And the the
store-bought robes would say, you know,
according to Vinaya, but really they
weren't because the people that made
them really never understood what the
Vinaya rules say
with regard to making robes.
So, yeah, I answered that one, I
suppose. So, I'm just going to move on
to the next question. This is from
Luigi.
And Luigi strikes me as someone who's
rather skeptical about about Buddhism in
general. That's just the impression I
get based on the questions he has asked.

Not only this time, but in at least one previous Q&A.

Well, that's fine.

I'm not like I'm complaining or anything.

So, anyways, Luigi's first question is, "Do you believe bad people can be reincarnated into animals and is that a reasonable belief?"

And I think

I think this question has been asked before.

And for the as a general rule, I don't think so. I mean, I think in extreme cases, you got like a severely mentally human

that might get reborn as a dog or

something just because the the mental

momentum is would be

What I'm trying to say is like a human

mind is way more complicated, has a lot

more

like momentum, a lot more karma than the

life of a cow or a mosquito.

And so, I I just have difficulty

understanding how all this complexity

and momentum could then fit into a cow

or a mosquito.

The ancient Indians

didn't have as much of a problem because

they seemed to anthropomorphize animals.

You know, you read all these texts where

you've got animals with essentially

human intelligence.

So, it wouldn't be that it wouldn't be

that much of a

uh

like incompatibility issue.

But, I think it would be rare cases

where a human gets re- reincarnated as

an animal just cuz of some really

extreme kind of karma that might require

it somehow. Also, I read in a really

weird book called Seth Speaks the

possibility

that your karma can split.

And this is not orthodox Buddhism. I I

only read this in this one weird book of

by this woman named Jane Roberts who

lived in upstate New York in like the
1970s who was channeling a
multi-dimensional being who called
himself Seth.
And this Seth being channeled through
Jane Roberts was saying that uh
it is possible for the karmic momentum
or the karmic stream to have like a a
bit split off and you might have like
this little spark of of your karmic
momentum, you know, split off and
become, you know, some kind of animal.
Um I remember when I was a kid, we had
this dog, a collie, named
gosh, Rowdy. I was a little kid then.
And he was so human in some of his
behavior that uh it caused me to think

maybe, you know, he might have been
human in a previous life or something.
But um it would be like really
outstanding situations. It certainly is
not nearly as common as like
Asian Buddhists and Hindus would
believe, I think. I just cannot imagine
how all the complexity and the the like
the karmic momentum of a human mind
could fit into the mind of a fish
or a frog, something like that.
Um
I was going to say something else and
now I can't remember it.
But it it could it would have to be some
kind of really unusual, like some kind

of

radically unusual circumstance that

could cause that.

And then you'd have like a radically

unusual animal, I think.

So I think I'll just move on to Luigi's

next question. And

if I read the entire thing, it's going

to take a while because he's got this

long list of of uh

data

supporting what he's saying here.

And actually, this question has been

asked before on a Q&A.

Uh but, I'll I'll I'll do it again cuz

if people are still interested to know

the answers, I might as well answer it

again.

So, Luigi says

considering Mahavira and Buddha and I'm

going to check make sure that we're

recording. Okay.

Yeah, I've been paranoid about this the

thing recording and I hope there's not a

reverb echo because I've muted my

computer speaker. So anyways, getting

back to Luigi's question here.

Considering Mahavira and Buddha, both of

their backstories are almost identical

to each other. Both were princes, both

escaped from the castle to search for

truth, etc. It all looks a bit

suspicious. Either one was copied off

each other or both were copied from an earlier story and the ideas also left all the other similarities in the reply. Seems like too much to be a genuine story. And then he's he had like a sub comment below the main comment. Where he's giving some of the uh similarities between uh the founder of Jainism and the founder of Buddhism. So, he said Mahavira's father's name was Siddhartha and the Buddha's name was Siddhartha. Mahavira was born in Ikshvaku Kshatriya clan and the Buddha was born in Ikshvaku Kshatriya clan. Although, I've never heard anything about the Buddha being born in Ikshvaku

Kshatriya clan. It's certainly not found in the the Pali texts unless Ikshvaku translates very different from Ikshvaku into Pali.

So, both left Samsara to become a Sannyasi. Yeah. Um both had a wife named Yashodhara. I didn't know that that that Mahavira's wife was also named Yashodhara, which means like bearer of fame.

And it it doesn't really even say that the Buddha's wife was named Yashodhara Yashodhara in the in the sutras. That's just a later tradition.

So, both mother died when they were young. Both had one child. Mahavira ate

one cup of milk rice to attain knowledge. I didn't know that. And the Buddha did the same. Yeah, that was when he got offered the the little bowl of milk rice and when he ate that, his five ascetic companions just washed their hands of him in disgust because he he had reverted to indulging in sensual pleasures.

See, both attained knowledge under a tree on a riverbank. Mahavira came in the garden of Bimbisara. Same Buddha came in the garden of Bimbisara. Well, back in those days, kings liked ascetics and liked talking with ascetic philosophers and so probably there were quite a few famous

ascetic philosophers who came to the garden of Bimbisara.

Let's see, one sisha or student or disciple of Mahavira was Agnihotra Brahmin, who was sort of like the the king's chief religious adviser. The Agnihotra, he was doing like the the necessary ceremonies, the sacri- fire sacrifices and so forth on behalf of the king.

Same one sisha of Buddha was Agnihotra Brahmin. Mahavira was bitten by snake and milk come out of the skin. The same Buddha was bitten by a snake and milk came out. I never heard anything about the Buddha being bitten by a snake and

milk coming out. I mean, that's

certainly not Theravadan tradition.

That's like a later tradition.

Let's see, by the Jain story, woman

named Chandravati scolded nun

Mangalavati because she spent whole

night in Jain Sangha. Same in

Lalitavistara,

woman named Chandravati scolded nun

Mangavati as she spat. Whole night in in

Buddhist Sangha. Yeah, the the the

Lalitavistara Sutra is a is a later

Mahayana Sutra, so that also is not

really original to early Buddhism.

Let's see. Mahavira religion was

Magadha, same Buddha religion was

Magadha. Yeah, well, they knew they they

met each other. You know, they were contemporaries. Mahavira was an elder contemporary of the Buddha.

The Jain book is Tri Ratna. The Buddha book is Tripitaka.

Let's see. At that time, play of Ramayana was popular. I'm not sure whether the Ramayana really existed in the Buddha's time, but maybe it did. So, Jainism came with its own Ramayana in which Ravana was a Jain. There is no proof of Shramanism before Mahavira, but Jain came with pseudo theory that Shatri kings were Jain Shramanas.

Um there is good evidence that Shramanism that Shramana traditions

existed before the time of Mahavira.
Like there's mention of the the
mysterious Rishis in the Rigveda that
apparently were outside of the Vedic
tradition.
Let's see. Same Buddhist did, they made
their own version of the Ramayana.
Again, I'm unfamiliar with the Buddhist
version of the Ramayana.
Um probably a Mahayana thing that
happened hundreds of years later.
Let's see. In Ramayana, Hanuman fled to
Lanka. Same Buddhist story that Buddha
flyed to Lanka to preach Buddhism. That
also is not found in the Sutras. That's
found in a Sri Lankan chronicle. And any
Asian Buddhist country that the the

people want to believe that the Buddha came to their country. It's the same with Burma. That the Buddha uh supposedly, according to Burmese tradition, the Buddha came to Burma. He made it to the west bank of the Irrawaddy River, but never crossed the Irrawaddy. And there's like these huge footprints of the Buddha at this place called Shwesettaw, where the Buddha you know, touched the ground with his foot and made this dent in the rock that was like

4 ft long.

Um

So, yeah, that's

that's kind of uh

neither here nor there. I see Buddhism

is more copy-paste of Jainism than

Hinduism.

Uh yeah, Buddhism is more similar to

Jainism than either is to Hinduism

because they're both

largely a product of the Sramana

tradition rather than the Vedic

tradition.

And then in Shasha art

they were defeated as both made fakery

later vanished in India. Well, Jainism

hasn't vanished. There's still a few

million Jains in India, I'm pretty sure,

which is probably more Jains than there

were in the Buddha's time.

So,

anyway,

um

yeah, I mean, I have been asked about this before. Why is it that the biography of Mahavira is so similar to the biography of the Buddha?

And some of the evidence he gives is later, I mean, like hundreds of years later and not found in Theravadan tradition. So, it got added later. So, there's probably a lot of borrowing of ideas back and forth, especially in later centuries.

Um I do remember that um the the renunciation of the world by Mahavira

was very similar to the renunciation of
the world by the Buddha, except
that Buddhists shave their head and the
Jains would just pull their hair out.
And so, according to tradition, Mahavira
pulled all the hair out of his hair and
all off of his head and and his beard in
eight handfuls. Just yank eight times
and all of his hair was gone.
So, the
the theory that I gave when I answered
this this question the first time
is that
the Jains lost their sacred texts twice
in the history of Jainism. And that's
because the Jains were more radical
ascetics than the Buddhists were. You

know, there were scholar Buddhists, not so many scholar Jains, and back in those days the texts were memorized by heart and not written down. And so, because the Jain ascetics really weren't as much into scholarship and memorization of texts than the Buddhists,
there were a couple of times when they just
lost some of their texts because there was nobody left alive who who had memorized it by heart, and then they'd have to have like a great council where they would have to reformulate their texts. And it may be when the Jains were reformulating

their texts, they had they borrowed ideas from Buddhism just to fill in the blanks.

So, that's a possibility. I mean, you could say there's also the possibility that both are based on earlier earlier tradition, but there's no evidence of that earlier tradition that I'm aware of.

And it's seems unlikely to me that the Buddhists borrowed the history of Mahavira or the biography of Mahavira and attributed it to the Buddha.

Although, it may be the case with regard to some of it. Like, for example, I already mentioned that Yasodhara is not mentioned as the name of the Buddha's

wife

in in the texts in the in the Pali

texts.

So, who knows? Maybe they got the idea

from Jainism. There are certain

philosophical ideas like like asavas,

which sometimes I think Bhikkhu Bodhi

translates them as taints. But, um

Ajahn Thanissaro has said that that

Buddhists got the idea from the Jains.

And then they just kind of modified it.

So, there's a lot of back and forth

borrowing of ideas, exchange of ideas,

not just between Jainism and Buddhism,

but also between

especially

Mahayana Buddhism and Vedantist

Hinduism. They become very similar like

Majjhima Nikaya and Advaita Vedanta

become very similar in certain respects

largely because they're debating back

and forth and like refining their

arguments so that they can stand up to

the like the attempted refutations of

the other side.

But, um, I think uh yeah, there's

probably later traditions where they're

they're exchanging ideas. Some of this

stuff I've never even heard of before

probably because it's referring to later

Mahayana developments.

So,

yeah, that would be

my

my response to that question.

But, it's it's impossible to know

exactly for sure

because, you know, the main the primary

evidence

uh

was more than 2,000 years ago and is

probably mostly just

like no longer existent.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question here. This is from Crave

Minerals.

And Crave Minerals says, "Some people

say that we are just biological meat

robots blindly following instincts and

are simply fooling ourselves that we are spiritual and that ultimate liberation, nirvana, is even possible. What would your response be to this?" Well, my first response would be that such people that insist upon this are spiritually comatose.

That they're just They're like blind people denying the existence of light. Because they just don't get it. It's like intellectuals, there have been like really brilliant intellectuals like Stephen Hawking and and uh Bertrand Russell who had no use at all for mysticism. They just didn't get it. They were so locked into their intellect that that like

transcending the intellect just made no
sense to them and so it was nonsense and
they just refuted it as best they can,
but they didn't couldn't refute it very
well cuz they didn't understand it
really.
And so this is just sort of like a more
basic
example of the same phenomenon.
We're fooling ourselves that we are
spiritual and that ultimate liberation
Nirvana is even is is not possible.
Um
I mean if you have no mystical
talent or mystical ability or
whatever whatever it would be

mystical something. Wait just a minute,

the dog's doing something weird back

there. Stop it.

You're a silly dog. Want to see a silly

dog? This is a silly dog right here.

Look how silly that dog is.

Okay, you can go back there.

Now and and whenever I do that they they

get them all riled up and now they're

wanting to jump around and stuff.

So let's see here.

Oh yeah, so

Uh I I've mentioned Immanuel Kant

several times over the course of the the

past 80 Q&A's

and like Immanuel Kant just had this

idea that there is an ultimate reality,

but we have no access to it because we are just trapped in the symbols of our own perceptual mind.

But Immanuel Kant, like Stephen Hawking and Bertrand Russell, was not a mystic. And so he didn't realize that there is an ultimate reality that everyone has immediate access to, but that for the most part like Eckhart Tolle says, we're so our mind is making so much noise that we're just distracted by it and we just don't see the reality right in front of us.

So,

I mean, these people would also be inclined to believe that like holy men

who perform what are vulgarly known as
miracles, who have psychic powers, they
don't exist either. It's all just
So, to some degree they have
to just like
close their eyes
and and just
you know, just
declare that any evidence to the
contrary of their preferred beliefs are
just

But, getting back to Kant, there is an
ultimate reality that we have access to
and that is the ultimate reality of our
own consciousness.
And through

deep meditative states,

you can experience that directly. Like

when you silence all of this like verbal

chatter and all this distraction of of

perceptual symbols and so forth, and you

get down to just like the the foundation

of of consciousness,

then

then it's like immediate experience of

something that really is more real than

this material world that we supposedly

live in, but which is a mental

construct.

And just literally a mental construct.

Like like Immanuel Kant,

he was saying that, you know, this world

we live in really is just symbols

generated by our own mind. According to
him, it was based upon some deeper
reality, but that deeper reality
was uh
the the thing in itself.
Um I mean, it was
it was became almost irrelevant because
according to him, we had no access to
it. And so, a lot of his uh successors
in German philosophy like Hegel and
Schopenhauer, both they just completely
just dismissed the whole idea that you
have some external world that has enough
of a physical component that this
material world can be based on. And
science has that same idea that, you

know, even science will say that the
world as we see it isn't real. That's
just mental symbols, but it's based on
this reality out there, which however
can't really be proven.
So,
yeah, with regard to people who say
we're just biological meat robots
blindly following instincts and we're
simply fooling ourselves and so forth,
you're better just leaving them alone.
Don't even try to persuade them. I mean,
you might as well be trying to persuade
a Jehovah's Witness.
So, I'll just move on to Crave Minerals'
next question
cuz I was kind of meandering all over

the place with that the first one there.
And Crave Minerals says, "I think I
remember you talking about karma being a
force
that is seeking equilibrium or balance.
Can you elaborate on this? How is this
seen in relation to the effects of good
and bad deeds?"
Well, I mean,
yeah, karma is like an it's like an it's
like a an imbalance, you know, it's
you're you're sort of pushing against
the way things are in artificial manner
and so it's going to it's going to push
back the other way or just dissipate.
So, it's sort of like Paul Lowe used to

say with regard to the the mind-body system, he would say that the system is self-healing. It's just that we stay stuck in an unlightened state in samsara because we're continually adding to it. That if you stopped adding to the unlightened karma, then the unlightened karma would just work itself out and and that would be it.

So,

yeah, I mean, karma is a kind of energetic force that is based on delusion.

And so, in a sense it's not even ultimately real, I guess. Although that's not orthodox, what I just said. I am a heretic.

And so, yeah, I mean any kind of

force moving in one direction, it's

eventually going to

um

Yeah, it's eventually going to have to

find equilibrium and and just whenever

you got an imbalance,

um

well, I mean

Man, this is hard to talk about some of

this stuff. Man.

So,

yeah, it's like when you make karma, you

are creating a kind of disequilibrium or

imbalance by pushing one way instead of

the other way. And so, um you know, it's

just sort of

it's going to work itself out naturally,

sort of like water seeking its own

level.

And uh it's hard to understand this.

Like the Buddha says, you try to

understand how karma works, you can go

insane.

And uh yeah, I'm I'm finding myself

having difficulty answering this even

though it's it seems relatively

clear to me. I mean, at an intuitive

level.

But trying to put it into words other

than what's already been said that karma

is a kind of imbalance or

disequilibrium.

And and life itself is a kind of disequilibrium. I mean, that's why we have to keep eating and and and breathing and so forth is to keep this disequilibrium going cuz it requires constant maintenance.

And that's kind of the way our karma is, too. It requires constant maintenance. We're constantly adding to it to keep it from just running out.

But uh then you have the Jains and the Ajivikas who were deliberately trying to cause their karma to run out. And the Buddha said that doesn't work so good, either.

Cuz I mean, even the effort to make your karma run out is just making more karma. But the Jains had more of a materialistic idea of karma than the the Buddhists do.

But um yeah, I'm not it's it's hard to answer that question. So, I think I'm just going to just going to run and and answer a different question now.

This is from Hans.

And Hans says, "Dear Panya Bodhi what happens to a monk who fulfilled all bodily criteria during his ordination? However, later due to some non-deliberate issues like accident or illnesses, his body gets seriously

damaged so that he falls under the threshold. Does he need to leave the Sangha or maybe was the ordination in general invalid because someone can argument it the who hit the fan was already in the karmical package and with carrying this, he should anyway not considered to be really ordained. So, the lower purification has to be continued or finalized first on a lower related level of existence."

Well,

um I kind of understand this question. I mean, you can't I mean, first of all, the only way for a monk really to like excommunicate himself or make

himself no longer a monk is if he
becomes no longer a man.
That means essentially losing his balls.
So, if if a monk loses his balls in an
like a a tragic car accident, then he
would be a unique and he could not be a
monk anymore. I mean, he could still,
you know, compassionate Sangha would
realize that, you know, he didn't
deliberately do anything wrong or any
such thing. They might allow him to live
at the monastery and continue to
meditate and so forth, but he would not
be considered an ordained monk anymore.
He would not be allowed to attend the
ceremonies and so forth.
But with regard to anything else,

you know, like I I know a monk. He was the abbot of a monastery I lived at. And he moved from there to a different place near his hometown where he could be closer to his sister and so forth. And he was walking on a scaffold observing a building that was under construction because all Burmese monasteries are under construction. It seems like they're always getting some new building built.

And he fell off the scaffold and broke his back. So, he's paralyzed. You know, he's bound to a wheelchair. But, I mean he didn't lose his balls. He's still alive. He's still a man. He's still a

monk. He's just

a paralyzed monk.

And yeah, that was with regard to just

about anything. Like you're not allowed

you're not supposed to be ordained if

you have leprosy, for example.

But, if you catch leprosy after you've

been a monk, then you're still a monk

because you you don't get kicked out of

the sangha for stuff like that.

Um I mean, it can't be retroactive

because I mean, you have to be alive to

be a monk and we're all going to die.

And so, you can't say, "Well, because

it's your karma to die, that means you

know, you became no longer a human being

and so, you couldn't be a monk from the

beginning." It doesn't definitely doesn't work that way. You know, you can't say, "Well, you know, you're you're going to lose your balls in a in a future accident, so we can't ordain you." But, I mean, you qualify up until it then and then you don't. But, that's like the only way you can be physically disqualified from being a monk is if you just become physically disqualified from being a man.

And to be a man, you have to have at least one ball, I'm pretty sure.

So, I mean, going going with the the Buddhist interpretation,

I don't think I've ever recalled

reading, you know, what the judgment
would be if you just lose one ball.
I assume one ball would still be good
enough, sort of like one kidney or
something.
So, yeah, I mean, once you're ordained
and you're a monk in good standing, then
you can get sick or have debilitating
injuries, you can even just be really
messed up so that, you know, you're on
life support or something, and you're
still a monk.
So, I think I answered that question.
So, I'm just going to move on to Hans's
next question,
which is, "I am also confused about the
Mogallana case, who deliberately stopped

using his powers to hide himself from his murderers, severe past life package for a fourth time, letting go with serious consequences to his meat puppet. Does it make sense to think regarding an arahant, this is again another level, as this ended in Mogallana's parinibbana, and with this all related worldly activities are meaningless, like in many similar cases, including the Buddha?" Question mark. "My implicit self-answer sounds partly good to me, but my confusion is unfortunately not vanishing. So, it seems I am yet not ready for enlightenment. Digam santasa yojanam. Maybe you will find some

encouraging words." Well, encouraging words, I'm not exactly sure what the encouraging words I mean, what needs to be encouraged? I mean, the story is Maha Mogallana, who was one of the Buddha's two chief disciples, and he was the one disciple that was most outstanding with regard to his psychic powers.

So, Mogallana was a miracle worker, so to speak.

And he was fully enlightened, but

um

according to the story, there were some non-Buddhist ascetics who hated Mogallana because he was such a shining star for the Buddhists that it was kind of weakening the faith of the

non-Buddhists in in their non-Buddhism.
And so, they they hired some
thugs, essentially, to just beat him to
death.
And so, they made like three attempts,
but because of his psychic powers, he
was able to just like levitate away.
And um
but then he realized that his he had
some past karma where he did something
really bad.
And it was just inevitable
that he was going to have to die that
way, cuz they weren't going to give up.
It was his karma to be beaten to death.
So, he after like the third time, he

just

realized, you know, he he recalled the

past life, recalled the

you know, the the very bad karma that

his predecessor in the karmic continuum

had done.

And he knew that no matter how many

times he escaped from, you know, these

people trying to murder him, that they

weren't going to stop. It was just going

to keep happening because of this the

inevitability of karma in this case. And

so, finally, on the fourth time, he just

didn't run away. You know, it wasn't

exactly committing suicide,

but, you know, he just

didn't run away the fourth time, and he

was literally beaten to a pulp so that there was not an unbroken bone left in his body, according to the tradition.

So,

um

I'm not exactly sure what the problem is.

Um

I mean,

it's it's like past karma still has its influence even after you become fully enlightened. You're no longer identified with it. You're no longer making any new karma, but still, according to Buddhist philosophy, there's this latent, like residual, like vestigial karma that is

still taking effect based on previous things you did before you became enlightened.

And you're no longer identified with it, you don't consider it to be you anymore. And then when you finally do die, that's it. You know, this this residuum of karma is it no longer has any kind of outlet and it just ceases. You know, the conditions that were maintaining it no longer exist. So, yeah, I'm not exactly sure what the problem is. I mean, it does seem counterintuitive that like a fully enlightened saint can be beaten to death.

Um Buddhist philosophy does say that a Buddha cannot be murdered.

But um

that is just kind of a tradition. It's um this a development of the glorification of the Buddha and the raising him way above the level of an ordinary enlightened being.

But I mean, to a Christian, the idea of, you know, like this supreme man dying a horrible death, being tortured to death.

Yeah, well, I mean, they all believe that. Well, except for the ones who think that, you know, the Buddha didn't or Jesus didn't really die. That kind of thing.

They might have some kind of subtle
philosophical arguments to say that
Jesus really wasn't killed on a cross.
He wasn't really executed.
But um
yeah, I mean, bad things happen to even
enlightened beings based on previous
karma.
You know, the Buddha still got sick even
though nobody murdered him.
Well, unless you you follow a certain
conspiracy theory that I have
heard of a few times.
But we needn't get into that.
So, I did mention the conspiracy theory
in the previous Q&A in case you're
interested.

So,

yeah, I guess I guess I answered that question. So, I might as well just move on to the next question here. And this is from Cool Whip, also known as the Proto Pseudo Monk.

And Cool Whip, or the Proto Pseudo Monk, says, "Why is Mahayana's doctrine of ultimate reality superior to Theravada's?"

And

I think that I mean, in my own personal opinion, the Mahayana Buddhists um they do a better job of discussing ultimate reality

partly because early Buddhism just

didn't discuss it much, if at all.

That it was just considered beyond

words. And in the Buddha's time, and in

you know, early Buddhism, pre-Mahayana

Buddhism

it was philo- philosophy

um

wasn't as evolved and subtle as it

became in later centuries. And so, the

Mahayana Buddhists who inherited a more

subtle

you know, like logic and just

metaphysics and so forth. You know, it

it had been evolving and getting more

subtle and and

um maybe more satisfactory in certain

respects. They had better tools

for philosophically attempting to discuss something that ultimately can't be discussed. So, they can get more subtle and closer to it in a way, sort of. You know, they they just get it's more subtle, so that makes it closer to just the ineffable in a sense.

Whereas the early Theravadan attempt, or the early Buddhist attempt, was you just don't discuss it.

You know, you just give the ethical instructions on how how to stop thinking.

How to stop having concepts and ideas and beliefs in your head that are just cluttering up your head and obscuring

reality.

Um and then the Theravadans and other early schools just kind of shot themselves in the foot by coming up with Abhidharma philosophies that were attempting to describe reality.

And they did not do a very good job of it in my opinion. And then the Mahayana monks, some of them were just, in a way, a reaction against this whole scholastic Abhidharma movement. And, you know, they're just getting into like paradox and like the Zen koans and that sort of thing that is actually more effective at helping you to understand the ultimate or the absolute by just causing your thinking mind to just hit a wall and

stop.

But, at the same time you had like

Nagarjuna, who's using sophisticated

logical arguments, at least

sophisticated at the time,

um,

to refute the idea that any belief is

valid. And then it just kind of leaves

this emptiness behind, you know, you

just shoot down all philosophical points

of views, you shoot down all beliefs

until all that's left is Madhyamaka

itself and then it just sort of, you

know, commits seppuku and and ritually

kills itself and then you're left with

with emptiness.

So,

did I answer the question? Why is

Mahayana's doctrine of ultimate reality

superior to Theravada's? I think it's

mainly just the the greater

sophistication and subtlety of

philosophy at the time that Mahayana

arose and was developing. And by then,

the earlier schools of Buddhism were

already pretty much settled in,

um, sort of a a more archaic form of

philosophizing that was less equipped at

dealing with, um, paradox, for example.

Because ultimately the intellect cannot

deal with infinity, cannot deal with

formlessness.

And so there's always going to be

paradox and when you can incorporate the paradox into the philosophy and sort of embrace it, then that helps to take you one step closer, although you're never going to intellectualize or philosophize your way all the way to ultimate reality. It just isn't going to happen. So I guess I'll just move on to CoolWhip's next question here, which is, I have heard you are critical of Abhidhamma, the four ultimates, and give credence to Yogacara's mind-only reality. Now actually that's that's kind of a misunderstanding. Um but maybe I'll get get to that cuz I'm definitely more of uh more inclined to

uh accept Madhyamaka than Yogacara.

But let's see, I'll just uh start over.

I have heard you are critical of Abhidhamma, the four ultimates, and give credence to Yogacara's mind-only reality. This makes it easier to see how Nirvana as an ethical state can be a metaphysical state, but I still can't picture how Nirvana is seen. Make sense?

The Buddha nature obscured by defilements, Nirvana as default, as ultimate reality, might be an answer. I picture it as a circle that contains conditioned reality or samsara, a bounded infinity creating endless forms by mind.

Then Nirvana outside the circle as

infinite and formless so that when you
untangle yourself from form, you exit
and enter into the infinite formless
mind.
Um yeah, I wouldn't I wouldn't describe
it that way.
Um like samsara also is is not bounded.
Samsara also is potentially infinite.
So it's just a matter of
essence versus form.
You know, you've got
this porcelain mug, all I mean, the
essence is porcelain, the form is mug,
but they're right there together at the
same time. I mean, you take away the
porcelain, you take away the mug. You

take away the mug, you take away the porcelain. Mug and porcelain are not synonyms. But, in this case, it's like the essence is porcelain or ceramic if it's not good enough to be real porcelain. And the form is a mug.

So, I mean, that's the way samsara and and nirvana work. The samsara is just all these forms. And the ultimate is the underlying essence of that. Sort of like the underlying essence of our mentality is consciousness. And all these mental states, perceptions, and volitions, and so and so forth are like the forms that the consciousness takes.

So, I mean, that's getting back up to

him saying that I really don't have much use for the four ultimates. In the Abhidharma philosophy, you've got four ultimate realities. You've got matter, mental states, mind, and nirvana. So, they're putting nirvana on the same level of reality as as like nose sensitivity and and and so forth, which is is just absurd. It's just again intellectuals who cannot deal with mysticism. They just don't get it. And so, they're trying to intellectualize reality and try and get everything explained in in intellectual terms, and it's just

not going to happen. It can't happen.
And so, I mean, they've got mind and
mental states, consciousness and mental
states as two ultimate realities that
are completely separate from each other
qualitatively
when really
they have to arise simultaneously. They
have to pass away simultaneously. They
have to arise and pass away at the same
point in space and time. So, why
are they considered to be separate? I
mean, they're the same. It's just two
different ways of looking at the same
thing. And like the Mahayana Buddhists
say, nirvana and samsara are just two
different ways of looking at the same

thing.

So, I guess I answered that question.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to

Kwoot's third question,

which is, I am confused sometimes by

what is meant by ultimate reality. Can

you please clarify? Experience, mind,

aggregates, senses, nirvana? Question

mark. Well, there's only one ultimate

reality, and it's just formless and

infinite. And I mean, that's even

reifying it. I mean, once you've reified

it, you've turned it into an it. You've

turned it into something samsaric, and

so it's not it anymore. It's not

ultimate reality anymore. An-

anymore.

So,

ultimate reality, I mean,

I go with the Madhyamaka idea where I

mean, even just reifying it, even

calling it an it, trying to come up with

any kind of explanation for it is just

futile and doomed to be invalid.

But, we can say there is an ultimate

reality upon which all the illusion is

based.

So, I mean, you call that I would call

that nirvana.

N- Nirvana is reality, and samsara is

perception. I mean, perception is just

the forms that your consciousness takes

that uh they're they're so complicated

and become convoluted and

self-referential that they start

thinking that they're these separate

realities and so forth, at least with

regard to the ego. You know, our idea

that of I am,

you know, the the root of all delusion

is the conceit I am.

So, I mean,

how do you explain ultimate reality

other than saying that, you know,

there's

there's no illusion or delusion at all

involved in it?

That it is the substratum upon which

the universe, the cosmos is based. But

then again, in Buddhism,
it's a no-no to try and reify unless
you're an Abhidharma scholar, I guess.
And so,
I mean, the best thing is you just kind
of leave it alone and refer to how to
eliminate delusion rather than how to
see ultimate reality. I mean, you'd
think that they'd be the same,
but still it's it's more valid
philosophically to talk about the
cessation of delusion or the cessation
of greed, hate, and delusion.
The cessation of attraction, aversion,
and semi-conscious stupidity,
rather than trying to reify or objectify
this the what is completely off the

scale.

It's just completely off the scale. Your

mind cannot grasp it at all.

You can't put it into words.

So, I mean, if you want to understand

ultimate reality,

um my best advice would be to cultivate

some deep meditative states and

cultivate some mysticism.

Then you'll get a you'll get like a a

glimpse or an insight into into what it

is.

And I'm sorry I can't answer that

question any better than I just did.

But I I gave it a shot anyway.

And so, the last question, we got one

last question. This is from Air Rain.
And I think it was Al Pacino Alpaca that
asked the question and then apparently
deleted it because it disappeared.
Sometimes questions will just
spontaneously
disappear from YouTube comments.
Where he was asking how Airain got her
name.
And it's just an arbitrary thing like
like Al Pacino Alpaca for example. Where
somebody who goes on the internet, they
don't want to give their real name, they
just give they just invent some fake
name and Airain is just air plus rain.
Air plus rain is Airain.
Anyways, Airain says

"Could you explain how the most benign white lies are the most dangerous from a karmic perspective?"

And Airain says that I have said this before. Ooh, a cat just went by.

Please disregard my attention deficit disorder.

But when a cat walks by, I mean, I just got to notice.

So,

um I don't recall having said that the most benign white lies are the most dangerous. I do recall having said that lying in general

is the most dangerous of the five precepts to break because you don't have

to lift a finger, you don't have to get up out of your chair to do it. It's so easy to do to tell lies or, you know, just like malicious gossip and that sort of thing.

That I mean, it's so easy to do that it just makes it more dangerous. You know, to actually kill somebody, I mean, you got to get up out of your chair as a general rule, you got to you know

put some deliberate effort into that. Whereas telling a lie takes way less effort. It's sort of like how I used to say that the most dangerous animal in the forest isn't tigers, it's not wild elephants, it's not even like wild boars

or bears, it's the Anopheles mosquito.
Because you're way more likely to get
bitten by an Anopheles mosquito than you
are to get bitten by a tiger. Way more
people get killed by malaria than get
killed by tiger attacks.
And and lying is like that.
But I guess the easiest kind of lies to
tell
are just the just the everyday kind of
lies where you're saying,
"Oh, it's so nice to see you." When
really you're hoping you weren't going
to see them
because you just don't like them all
that much or something. Or it's like,

"I'd love to, but I'm busy." When you're not busy cuz you just don't want to do it. Or "That looks really nice." When really it looks god awful.

Things like that. I mean, you're living in in world, you're living in society.

And so sometimes it's polite to just somebody. You know, you don't want to tell them un- like unpleasant truths that might make enemies or something.

And you may not have a sophisticated lawyer-like mind where you can avoid telling the truth without actually lying.

I actually got pretty good at that
over the course of my life where you
know, it's like you don't want to lie,
but you don't want to
you don't want to just hit somebody over
the head with the truth club. And so you
you just kind of talk like a politician
where you know, sentences come out and
you're not actually saying very much.
But uh
yeah, I think
telling just a flat-out whopper lies
would be worse than telling benign white
lies. Except it may be that you just
have more opportunities to tell the
benign white lies.

So that could in a way

telling benign white lies the most

dangerous kind of lapse from morality.

Just because it's so easy to do. In

fact, you're almost obligated socially

to tell lies. You're not obligated

socially to to kill anybody unless maybe

you get drafted into the military.

Um you know, stealing

I don't know about that one. Drinking

alcohol, I mean

you really make up your mind not to

drink alcohol. It's easier not to drink

alcohol than not tell lies. You got to

be real careful. Sometimes you can just

be exaggerating.

It's It's just can be a habit or just

you know, the you know, I'd
love to but I'm busy. That kind of a
thing. It just becomes habitual and
semi-conscious, you know, you're just
telling lies without even fully
realizing that you're telling lies. So,
that's that's more dangerous in a way.
It just kind of reminds me of
uh back Saturday Night Live back when it
was consistently funny.
There was this this guy who would come
on there, Father Guido Sarducci.
And he he came he he wasn't really a
Catholic priest or anything. He was a
comedian. But he had this you know, he
portrayed himself as a Catholic father

of some sort.

And he was talking about his theory about how how you get into heaven. It's like when you're born, you're given like 100 spiritual dollars. And every time you commit a sin, it gets deducted. You know, some a little fine gets paid out of that 100. And at the time of your death, if you're still in the black, um you get into heaven. But if it's you know, you're you're in debt, then you go to hell. And then he's giving examples like for murder, it might be $100 right there.

But with regard to masturbation, 25 cents. And of course, the audience laughs at this. And then he gives this

serious look to the audience and says,
"For some people, it can really add up."
And telling lies, if it just becomes a
habit, it could be a similar case.
You might wind up with more than $100
worth of lies.
But, um
yeah, that's that's kind of pushing it.
Um I do recall saying that telling lies
or just wrong speech is the most
dangerous of the five precepts, just cuz
it's so easy to do. It's almost
effortless sometimes.
So, you have to be more careful about
not doing it. Just because or for a lot
of people, it's just like a lifelong

habit. It just comes out almost

automatically.

So,

yeah, and then having that kind of

karma, Aerin here did specify a karmic

perspective. Just being in the habit of

of breaking precepts, so that you're

doing it just just by default, you know,

it's just your default setting is that

you tell the lie or whatever, then yeah,

that's not good at all because I mean,

you're just kind of

locked into it some degree.

So, I guess I answered all the

questions. By golly, this is kind of an

easygoing one, and it's uh less than 2

hours even.

So, you can have time to do other things
and maybe have to, you know, get a life
or something instead of sitting around
watching YouTube videos all time. Not
that I'm trying to disrespect people
that watch my videos because uh I mean,
that's why we're here, right?
Of course it is.
So, if you like the video, feel free to
smash the like button.
And uh subscribe if you haven't already.
And if you have questions, you think
that I might be able to answer those
questions. I mean, I I make no promises
that I'll really be able to answer them,
but um if you got any questions, feel

free to leave them in the comments

below.

And

look at the URL links below in the kind

of in between this video and the

comments, there's that place in between

where there's like the description

stuff. If you click on the see more part

of that, then yeah, you'll see all the

URL links including the books that I

have for sale on Amazon

and

be happy.

okay I think I'm recording and yes
indeed I am hello and welcome to episode
81 of question and answer I am your host
P
basa and I assume many of you
noticed that episode 80 of question and
answer was not on YouTube last weekend
or rather it was for about an hour and
then was promptly taken down by the
powers that be at YouTube because
I violated a what is it one of their
policies with regard to a certain
subject I spoke certain things that are
verboten on YouTube in answer to a
question that I was asked and uh I guess
it is appropriate the person who asked

the question asked the question on

bitshoot and bitshoot did get the

uncensored version I'm going to have put

up a censored version of Q&A 80 right

before I put up this so they'll both

come up on

Sunday but if you want to see the

uncensored version and I mean in future

you just want to watch these videos on a

platform other than YouTube They Are Up

on bitshoot and the bright side of the

whole thing that happened last weekend

is that it inspired me to start

uploading onto Rumble so I'm now on

Rumble

too

so even though some of my videos do get

like censored on YouTube or they just I
just can't put them up on YouTube
because too much freedom of speech on
the
video so I mean you can watch them on
bitshoot and Rumble so I it's partly my
own fault because I thought that the
subject I was talking about was now I
mean you were still able to talk about
it or they they relaxed their censorship
on that topic but I was confused in my
head because it turns out that it's a
certain election that now you can talk
about you can question the Integrity of
a certain election I mean you can
question the Integrity of it used to be

you can question the Integrity of any
election that ever happened in the
history of the world except
one and now you can you can question the
Integrity of that one also on YouTube or
so I have been led to
understand but uh apparently the powers
that be just assumed or figured all
right that's that's in the past that's
behind us it's no longer dangerous so
you know just let people pretend like
they got freedom of speech on YouTube by
talking about that but um apparently
this other subject that I was talking
about isn't considered to be just behind
us it's still an ongoing thing and who
knows what kind of tentacles of it are

like reaching out into the future for us
to to encounter in the future it may be
that they're we got more in store along
those lines so I assume that's why you
still can't talk about one certain topic
and just a second will you stop
it okay the dogs are
whimpering because my sweetheart wants
them in this room so that you can see
how cute they are but they'd rather be
hanging out in the the larger part of
the house or at least one of them would
so anyways getting back to uh sort of
the preamble to this video and there's
really not a lot of questions this time
partly because the usual place where

people would submit questions is in the previous Q&A which on YouTube as I've already mentioned was taken down within about an hour probably just because of AI screening the video maybe who knows maybe somebody as soon as as soon as the video came up they just just pounced and started like looking for stuff to complain about but probably I think it was just an automatic filter kind of a thing and you got to bear in mind that YouTube is part of Google it's they're owned by the same Mega Corporation I think it's a subsidiary of Google and Google as most of us know um really I mean just

consider that AI chatbot that made um like artificial intelligence generated pictures just recently and it turned out that it was almost incapable of making a picture of a white man even George Washington they asked somebody asked for a picture of George Washington crossing the Delaware they showed they they created four pictures all four of them was a black George Washington they asked for a picture of a pope black pope they asked for pictures of Vikings it was all like Asian women I mean it was just they could not in fact there was one person on this uh Genesis AI program that requested a picture produced in the

style of Norman Rockwell and they got a response saying that the AI refused to do a picture in the style of Norman Rockwell because Norman Rockwell idealized American life and there are just certain ugly facts like lack of diversity

that because Norman Rockwell's Style idealized America back in like the 40s and 50s I mean they just refused to to even imitate Norman Rockwell's painting style because of course he mostly painted white

people so you just you just bear in mind that the same company runs YouTube and I mean oh what did I just do I clicked the wrong thing

here

okay we're still recording I'm pretty

sure yes we are so I mean the Google

search and also YouTube searches are

doing the same kind of thing in more

subtle ways as this Fiasco of the

Genesis chatbot that got taken down

promptly just because it was just so

blatant what Google was trying to do or

at least the people who created this

chatbot but Google we may assume has the

same General aims and goals overarching

attitudes so that I mean YouTube does

not escape from that YouTube is not a

free speech

platform so I hope I didn't just get

another get another video taken down by
saying that although for some reason
badm mouthing YouTube just pointing out
that really it is not a free speech
platform um is allowable on YouTube as
far as I
know so I guess I should just uh start
answering questions here and the first
one is from
Gaz and Gaz says hello thank you for
providing information on Buddhism and
has helped me greatly in my
understanding question recently I have
been casually enjoying games of kabadi I
had heard that the Buddha played an
early form of it before his
Enlightenment but I have been unable to

find a source do you know anything about
this I imagine that he would have played
such a sport just curious if there are
any mentions of it in the sutas or
elsewhere his playing of the game was
also depicted in the film little buddha
well I had never really heard of kabadi
but it turns out that it is a a sport
that has its origins in ancient times
presumably in Northern India and it's
like two teams on a field and one person
person from one side has to run onto the
side of the other team and tag as many
of the people on the other team as he
can without getting tackled and then run
back to his own side again um that is uh

pretty much the extent of my knowledge of this game and even that may be inaccurate but um I really haven't read in the poly texts anything about the Buddha like before he was the Buddha before he came in light when he was still you know a lay person playing this game um it may be that it's not called kabadi in poly or anything resembling kabadi and it may be on the list um in the silaka of the digan Kaya like the first many sutas of the digan Kaya have these long lists of things that monks don't do and it includes playing games and engaging in certain sports activities ities and so forth so if it is mentioned in the poly text it would

probably be there um and I don't

remember it being there

so

um really there's no way of knowing for

sure what the Buddha did be before he

became enlightened or before he

renounced the world became uh a great

philosopher and aesthetic a great

salon

because all we really have for the most

part is

Legends and so we may be able to verify

that there is a legend that he played

kabadi or some sport similar to kabat

but uh I mean there's no way of really

knowing for sure such details of his

life I mean even like the names involved

in his family like his wife's name and

his parents names and so forth um you

know it's largely Legends I'm I have

read that nowhere in the poly text

themselves is the Buddha's wife

specifically named yod for

example that it's just sort of a a

tradition that may be true and may not

be true I think the Buddha's wife has

like two or three different names that

are

mentioned

so yeah I mean I really can't help you

with regard to uh um

verifying that the Buddha played a sport

called kabadi before he renounced the

world and was still a lay

person

so

yeah I mean he he may have done it but I

don't know so I'm just going to move on

to the next question here this is from

covac andad zida and seac andad zida

says from the various non- Buddhist

Traditions mentioned in the sutas at the

time of the Buddha which one do you find

the most intriguing or wise and how do

you compare or rate them to the later

Buddhist Traditions like terava Mahayana

Etc well most of what I know about other

non- Buddhist

Traditions um well a lot of it is from

the Buddhist text and you can't really
learn much about like jism or the AAA
religious system or or other systems
from reading what it says about them in
the poly Tex mainly because the poly
Texs really portray these other people
like like MAV Vera the the great Jane
teacher as essentially charlatans and
fools that it's really not trying to
portray them accurately so much as
they're they're indulg in a bit of pro
Buddhist and anti- non- Buddhist
propaganda although I have read about
jism I've read some Jane uh
sutras um and of course I've read a lot
of early vadic
stuff

so let's see oh I should mention that
the disease that I caught the virus that
escaped from some laboratory or some
such that I had almost no resistance to
um is now down is just vestig it's like
my lungs are just like recovering I
think I'm pretty much better now and I
better check on the dogs again yeah you
guys be good yeah lick each other that's
good
okay so of the religions that I know I
mean jism is kind of interesting just
because it's it's so strange in certain
ways like I've read um in a Jane text
itself that a Jane monk if he's going to
cross a river and there's no bridge and

there's no regular Ferry going back and
forth AC cross he can only cross if
there was he can get onto a boat that
was going to cross anyway regardless if
the boat was going to cross just for his
sake he's not allowed to get on the boat
because that would make Karma and Janes
are trying to exhaust their karma
they're trying to let their karma run
out without making any new Karma and so
getting a ride across a river on a boat
from a person who's just offering to
take you across just because he wants to
take you across you can't do it so the
monk gets on this boat and the boat
starts to sink what is he supposed to do
he's not supposed to help bail out the

boat because that would make Karma so
what he's supposed to do is if he
belongs to a sect that wears clothing
he's supposed to take off his clothes
fold them up and put them on top of his
head because when the owner of the boat
or somebody else gets mad at him for not
helping to bail out the boat and throws
him overboard then his clothes won't get
wet because they'll be on top of his
head and I actually read this in a Jane
text it's not like some kind of anti-
Jane propaganda mocking or ridiculing
jism
so the various non- Buddhist Traditions
mention the suas the time of the Buddha

which do you find the most intriguing or wise um I would guess probably just like the viic tradition like the the jaas the matted hair athetics who were brahans who worshiped the sacred fire out in the forest I'm not exactly sure what they were doing out there besides attending the sacred fire but I assume at least some of them were getting into upanishadic teachings and practicing serious meditation and so forth and the Buddha really did not mock the vidic Traditions very much much he uh you know he had a certain respect for them like uh a vadic brahmanist you know Proto Hindu that wanted to convert to Buddhism or wanted to become a monk um he

wouldn't have to go through a

probationary period like many others do

because um the the the the Hindus the

Proto Hindus at that time believed in

karma you know they were Kadin and so

that was good enough that that meant

that you know you you're you were

inclined not to just be a raging heretic

if you were ordained without going

through a probationary

period um there is one

teacher Sania

btia who uh was somebody asked about him

I think it was on YouTube and then as

happens on YouTube another reason why

you might do well to watch rumble or

bitshoot instead is that comments just
have this way of mysterious iously
disappearing from underneath my YouTube
videos and uh so somebody asked about
one of the the six heretical teachers
you know one of the the group I don't
know what you call them sort of six uh
contemporaries of the Buddha who were
also uh teachers of spiritual or
philosophical systems they were not
vdic and uh somebody asked about that
and I'll I'll get to that one later but
I think Sanji abati also probably had
some wisdom I mean um the Buddha's Two
Chief disciples saruta and molana were
Disciples of San before they became
Disciples of the Buddha so he must have

had some wisdom to

him but I'll get to that eventually so I

mean of the of the other non- Buddhist

Traditions mentioning the sutas probably

like late upanishadic

vadm um

that would probably be like my second

choice after

Buddhism I'm definitely not a Jane I

really don't uh there's certain aspects

of jism even though superficially they

might be similar to Buddhists um certain

aspects I I think are are not all that

uh not all that

wise but uh that's just me it's just

maybe a matter of temperament and the

Sun is now shining it was overcast when

I first started doing this and I'm

getting these weird surreal lines across

my face so I think I'm going to try and

fix

this not even

funny okay that's an improvement I

think so yeah let's just say uh uptic

bism so I'll just move on to covac and

CAD Z's next question here which uh is

in many parts of life it's it's easiest

to make quick gains in the beginning of

Learning a skill but hard to master so

even though it may seem like we are

making extreme progress in the beginning

we fall in a rut later

on an example would be training in a

sport where training initially makes

quick

gains but then it becomes exponentially

more

difficult however in other skills like

mathematics the more you know the easier

it is to learn more of that skill for

example when we start learning math it

takes forever to understand basic

addition but as we go into deep

mathematics we learn more in one month

than we did in years when we started

when comparing the Buddhist practice

which kind of progress do we make on

this path I think to some degree it's it

goes both ways you can make both kinds

of progress like for example meditation

might be very difficult at

first and then it starts getting easier

but then in a way it also gets harder

too so it's like difficult then easy and

then difficult again at least for some

people like

me

um yeah I think probably the first the

first type is most representative of

Buddhist practice where when you first

start meditating you've got all this

junk I mean just

like debris in your mind that can get

cleared away pretty easily once you set

your mind to it once you get the idea

that you should like clean up your mind

then you can do that and you you make
really good progress but then eventually
you you get down to the Bedrock you know
it's like
these like personality traits that
you're not fully aware of or just stuff
that's maybe has a genetic component
that it really it's not so easy just to
let it go to reprogram that
so yeah that's that's kind of the way it
works is um you know it might be
difficult at the beginning just learning
how to meditate and you know getting
past the wandering mind stage and then
you start making good
progress and it's it's relatively easy

progress once you learn how to meditate
just because you've got all this
Deadwood and and this junk that is you
can clear out fairly easily but then you
start getting into like I said it's like
just the the Bedrock of
delusion and just these
ingrained personality traits many of
which are not particularly skillful or
wholesome that then you really um it's
it's difficult um in fact it's very
difficult if you don't have a teacher
you have to be really
insightful and and just wide awake and
maybe not have very deep defilements to
begin with um if to do it without a
teacher because the it's very difficult

for people to see themselves the way
others see them or to see yourself
objectively so that you know you have
certain flaws certain
defilements that either you don't see
them or you justify them you know you
don't see them as defilements even
though other people do including maybe
your
teachers but you just don't see it that
way you'll justify it you'll rationalize
it
whatever so yeah once you get to a
certain point it gets uh it can get much
more difficult just because you're
starting to get into like reprogramming

how your character works how your

personality

works or at least um trying to transcend

that trying to at at least hold it at

Bay enough that you can get to a level

where it doesn't really matter that much

anymore or you can sort of rise above it

it's still there because to some degree

you're just born with it a lot of it is

genetic or it's just ingrained by the

time you're three years old and so

there's not a whole lot you're going to

do unless you just have some just wild

radical Insight that just completely

changes the way you perceive

reality so yeah I would say it's mostly

it starts easy and gets harder although

certain other things I mean they might
start hard and then get easier
especially you know when you're at the
intermediate level so it might be the
beginning level is hard intermediate
level is easy smooth sailing for the
most part then you get into the advanced
level it starts getting hard
again so I guess I answer that question
and it's going to be different for
different people I think I mentioned in
a recent Q&A that in the suas themselves
it talks about like the four kinds of
progress you can make in dhamma or in
spirituality in general there's slow and
difficult slow and easy fast and

difficult and fast and easy and uh some

of some of my progress was slow and

difficult I have to admit so I think

I'll just move on to covac n cpad Z's

next question here which is what is the

difference between wisdom and

insight and

I think I mean there's a lot of overlap

and at certain respects there's synonyms

like but Insight or

weas the is the context of that or the

implication the connotation of it is

that it's something that

arises and then it can add to your

wisdom but it's it's something that

arises through either meditation or just

through some peculiar circumstances that

just kind of jolt you into being more
awake so wisdom in general is I mean I
would consider wisdom to
[Music]
be man it's it's a difficult word to uh
difficult word to Define def partly just
because it has different levels there
are different different meanings to the
same word I mean you look in a
dictionary each word doesn't just have
one
meaning so I mean at the highest level
wisdom would be seeing reality even
though covac and CAD zida on the Discord
server was arguing for hours about how I
mean just kind of denying that like an

arant sees reality that kind of a thing

or just saying that even a duded fool

sees reality in certain respects and so

forth but we need to weigh into

that but uh I mean at a at a more basic

level like a more beginning level Wis

wisdom is more like Discerning the

difference between right and wrong

Discerning the difference between

skillful and unskillful wholesome and

UNH

wholesome that that would be sort of uh

conventional wisdom and then you get

into more of the ultimate wisdom and

that would be seeing

reality

so Insight on the other hand it's more

like something that happens to you as as
a result of your practice or as I say
just as a result of some strange
circumstance maybe uh could be uh
parames from a past life momentum going
in a certain direction or something that
finally gets you to this point where
something just clicks or something just
breaks and Falls away or whatever and
then you have this like a a flash of
wisdom or a surge of wisdom but um yeah
it's you you could say that all Insight
is wisdom but not all wisdom is
necessarily Insight especially if you
consider insight to be something that
arises you know as a result of something

generally in the text it would be as a
result of meditative
practice so I think I'll just uh move on
to the next question and this is the
question I was referring to earlier it
was I don't remember who asked the
question it might have even been uh like
an early fast question question on Q&A 0
that then got taken down off YouTube so
that all the comments were also poofed
out of existence U but anyway they were
asking me about the philosophy of sanj
abati and it's it's really hard to say
for sure what he was teaching because of
course um our main information about
sanj
abuta is in Buddhist texts that of

course don't want to portray San

as you know like a sage they want to

portray him as essentially a

clown I mean like the the six main

philosophers that are always mentioned

or often mentioned as as a group which

includes uh nant NATA or mahavira and

even uh calling him NATA in the text

like mahavira the founder of jism or the

reputed founder of jism um he's called

natap in the text which means something

like son of grandson it's it's just kind

of like a a silly name that makes him

look

silly and uh Sania btia was another one

and in the text he's considered to be an

eel Rigler where you cannot pin him down
to giving a straight answer with regard
to anything
philosophical and so a lot of people
have come to the conclusion that Sania
was a skeptic like in the puristic you
know classical Greek sense of skepticism
where you just go for
ataraxia you know just Peace of Mind
caused by just not trying to figure out
reality you can't know Reality by
thinking about it so you just stop
trying to figure it out and then it
results in this peace of mind um it may
be that that's what Sania was
teaching and he may have been a skeptic
which then leads to the issue that a lot

of people consider the Buddha to be a skeptic or to have been a skeptic and I really don't think that the Buddha was a skeptic there are certain questions he would not answer and also in early texts like the aaga he's saying you know don't believe anything have no view no perception just just pounding away at that which could be called skepticism but I don't think it was skepticism because a skeptic says you can't know reality I mean the only thing a skeptic can know is that he can't know anything which is kind of a you know a contradiction

but the Buddha wasn't saying you can't

know anything he was just saying that
you can't really know anything by
thinking about it it's not going to be
at the level of intellect that you that
you understand
reality I mean you can know useful
conventional stuff that can help get you
closer to knowing reality but ultimately
the Buddha was a Mystic in my opinion in
fact he was a very pure Mystic some
mysticism you read it and it's um you
know it's not very pure mysticism
because it still has all this content
you know there they're they're going
into details of describing the mysticism
and you know there's all this content to
it which really means that it's not pure

mysticism because pure mysticism would
just be formless and wide
open you know it's just uh immediate
awareness or experience of reality which
is not a
multiplicity but uh getting back to sanj
btia that's really all all that I know
about him that's all that most people
know about him I don't nothing that I
mean assuming that he wrote anything I
mean it doesn't exist anymore unless
it's under the ground somewhere it
hasn't been dug up yet um his tradition
went extinct and so really there's no
living tradition there's no texts that I
know of from his tradition and so all we

know about sanj batia is what his
opponents said about him and I mean that
is
really um I mean if that's all you've
got then you have to try to use that if
you want to understand something but you
have to always bear in mind that there's
a bias against
him and I think he was one of the
teachers who vomited hot blood and died
just because his two chief his his
disciples saruta and molana um left him
and went and converted to Buddhism I
think according to tradition he vomited
hot blood and died right then and there
just um because two of his his favorite
disciples left him and and joined um the

new Buddhist

sect which I think is probably not very

likely there were a number of them who

did that I think I think MAV Vera the

founder of the jeans is also considered

to have vomited hot blood and

died just because you know some of his

supporters converted to Buddhism also

dead dat supposedly vomited hot blood

and died and then he just plunged right

down to the bottom pits of aichi hell um

after he finally failed in getting a

Schism and Buddhism

going so yeah I mean what people know

about the philosophy of sanj Bachi puta

uh is very limited and it's largely uh

conjecture so I'm just going to move on
to the next question here and the the
person who asked this on bitshoot they
don't have a name it's just four groups
of six dots you know six dots six dots
six dots six dots like on like on a
domino or something so anyway the four
groups of six dots says I asked this
question to you on YouTube but they
deleted my comments yeah welcome to the
club and won't let me ask anything I
think in my personal opinion
non-existence blowing out is very scary
I want to reincarnate and I don't want
Christian Heaven a retirement for the
dead I want to choose life
reincarnation all the blessing and

curses that come with it but at the same
time I do find some of the things said
in Buddhism is interesting but I would
rather be born amongst the Gods or have
a good isai adventure and I don't know
what an isekai adventure is do people
get to have a choice in this matter when
they move past this
life if their karma is good and not all
muddled up with doing harm and evil to
others well in Buddhism or at least in
terraa Buddhism um as a general rule you
don't have a choice as to what you're
going to you know what existence you're
going to wind up in after this one that
it's going to be just a matter of your

comma and your or your karma and your
karma knows better than you do in in a
sense where you need to be I mean you
it's it's just you wind up where you
need to be in order to work out your
karma so in Buddhism it's considered to
be pretty much automatic although ramas
who is more Hindu than anything else in
one of his early books was talking about
how um people may be able to choose
except it's not your current ego that's
choosing it's like like a higher aspect
of yourself that is aware of all of your
lives let's say after you
die you know you're just like reviewing
your your lives your your lives um you
know your past lives and kind of seeing

what your situation is and then um ROM
Doss was saying something something like
well it seems like what I need to be
next would be um like a black prostitute
who's murdered in a back alley at the
age of 18 okay here we go we're doing it
and you know then you just take the next
life and um you get you know you have an
abusive mother and your father is
nowhere to be seen and you become a
prostitute get addicted to drugs and get
stabbed to death in an alley when you're
18 and I mean at that level when you're
choosing I mean you're choosing for
Spiritual reasons you're not choosing
because you just want to take it easy

and live in a palace with a a harm of

celestial nymphs and and you know

fountains and and flowers all around

you

so yeah it's not like

the the ego at this level of reality

that is making the the choice with

regard to how you get reborn so it's

still a matter of you know what do I

need what does my karma need me you know

what do I need to work on in order to

get closer and I think closer to the

goal closer to

Enlightenment and uh I think most beings

really are not that advanced you know

after a you know after a turtle dies

it's I don't think that it's going to be

reviewing its past lives and choosing to
be reborn as a a lizard or
something maybe another
turtle
so yeah in Buddhism or at least in
terava Buddhism it is considered to be
essentially automatic you know it's just
where you need to be you know the most
appropriate place for you to be reborn
is where you're reborn although I guess
some Hindus have the the idea that you
know you have like a higher self that is
actually able to make choices but it's
not going to be choices just to maximize
pleasure and minimize pain um because
they pretty much have to arise in equal

measure just just for the universe to
stay in Balance all the pluses and
minuses have to balance out in the long
run so I mean it's more a matter of um
just taking care of your your karmic
issues which is kind of one reason why
uh like crippled people and and to some
degree insane people traditionally in
India are viewed as beloved of the Gods
because they are really doing the heavy
lifting they're doing the heavy karmic
resolution
stuff so uh the let's see here four
groups of six dots says uh he would
rather be born amongst the gods um but
uh yeah I think most people would I mean
at least at the the intellectual level

but then again deep down we're born
really where we belong and it's like I
I've talked about before how according
to tradition is this is mentioned in uh
Le seat's the manuals of Buddhism which
is really an interesting book for those
of you who are interested in more like
technical Buddhist
philosophy let SE spelled l e
d and uh you know he's talking about how
the material Universe gets destroyed
periodically usually by fire and then
all the beings in this material Universe
have to go up into this very exalted
Heaven realm where you've got swamis and
meditators and yogis that are striving

to get into this Heaven realm and just
can't do it but now all of a sudden
everybody has to go there because
there's nowhere else to go they have to
wait until the next material Universe
like re re-evolved before they can come
back down and they just hate it there
it's just so boring it's just so refined
you know they want to have a good time
they want to just you know get into
trouble and all this stuff that uh I
mean they just as soon as the the
material Universe re- evolves they just
abandon this Heaven realm like rats
abandoning a sinking
ship and really there are people I think
pretty much everyone to some degree

where I mean you got to have a certain
amount of problems and difficulties and
trouble or else you're just
bored or it's just it's if everything's
just too easy it's just
boredom
so yeah so I can I mean I can certainly
relate to you know you'd rather be in a
in a heaven realm amongst the gods than
you know be working in a plywood Mill or
you know be a a homeless person uh like
a homeless like drug addicted person in
the west not a homeless Wanderer in the
East or you know be a a mangy dog in an
Indian village or something I mean
obviously most people would would pick

the celestial mansions and so forth but
uh it really doesn't work that way
because it's not the
superficial ego part of your mind that's
deciding where you're going to go that
in Buddhism it's essentially will you
know it's like schopenhauer's
will that is is like Landing you where
you need to be or at least um yeah I
guess where you need to be would be an
appropriate way of saying it but even if
you you go with the more Hindu idea that
you do have a choice the choice is is
not going to be always choosing what is
nicest and most
Pleasant so I think I'm just going to
move on next question here this is from

Jeremy Jeremy says is your band YouTube video available on Rumble how do I find it on Rumble and I might as well tell you that my new Rumble channel is uh my handle is Politically Incorrect Dharma all one word so you should be able to find it that

way so yeah I've only got two videos up on it right now one was a video my sweetheart uh set me up with an account like two years ago and just put this short little clip just to just to have something up you know on on my channel that was like two years ago and I I wasn't even fully aware of it or at least I'd forgotten about it until I

uploaded the uh the notorious band Q&A

80 last last

Sunday um just finally you just got

motivated which is a good thing I mean

that's that's like the the bright side

of this this whole YouTube um

situation so yeah I'm on Rumble and my

handle is Politically Incorrect Dharma

and I already have a handful of of

subscribers and uh the Q&A got uh few th

views despite the fact that uh it was

the very first one that I'd ever put up

on

Rumble so I'll just move on next

question here this is from Libra Lam and

Libra Lam says if you had to guess what

was the longest stretch of time you've

gone without others meddling with your
mindfulness that is to say if we call
alms round non-interruption but
something like showing thanks or having
a conversation
interruptions
well that's kind of a hard question I
mean in Buddhism I mean the Buddhist set
up the song so that they couldn't become
complete Hermits they always had to
interact with lay people you know they
had to go into the village every morning
to get food if they wanted to eat that
day
um so I mean MMS round was generally the
greatest threat to one's uh equinity and

mindfulness of the entire day you know

if if MMS round is is ugly their whole

rest of the day can be

ugly

um let's see here the longest stretch of

time I've gone without others meddling

with my mindfulness that's that's kind

of a weird question um it would have had

to have been when I was a junior monk

because as I got to be a more senior

monk I started getting more famous and

would start having visitors a lot and

even if I would just hide in my cave and

refuse to come out and meet with them

still they were interfering with my

mindfulness by like banging on the door

or calling out and this kind of

thing

um so I mean but even when I was a

junior monk I mean I was still the

Exotic Foreigner and I was stricter than

most monk so I was considered to be like

this this heavy hitter of an exotic

foreign monk that lots of people wanted

to see me and I'd put up fences and

stuff around my my cave just to prevent

people from coming to see me but still

they'd be out there you know calling out

and so forth even if I didn't come out

then I mean still they'd be uh in a way

um meddling with my mindfulness so to

speak so it's it's hard to say um just a

few days probably at most would be the

longest I went without having some kind
of interaction like conversation type
interaction with with other
people but it's just something that you
have to learn
to to incorporate into your practice
that you can't just insist on total
peace and Solitude because it just
doesn't work that way like in Burma um
if you're going to be within walking
distance to a village which you have to
be in order to go for MMS then you're
also going to be within easy hearing
distance of loudspeakers like Village
loudspeakers that are blasting Monks
chanting starting at like 4 in the
morning or they're blasting cheesy pop

music or they're they're you know just
making announcements and is I mean
there's always going to be that kind of
stuff you cannot really insist on just
everything being perfect because it's
the world just isn't designed that way I
mean one of the reasons why we're here
in a manner of speaking is to learn how
to deal with all the
 to learn how to accept it with
equinity rather than avoiding it or you
know struggling in against it or
anything like that that you have to be
in harmony kind of a Dost kind of a
thing you have to be in harmony with the
universe in order to abandon it or

transcend it that struggling against it
just makes things
worse so uh really like if you insist on
on Solitude then it may be the best
thing for you is to have to learn how to
deal with visitors all the time like
I've been told that aan cha if if he had
a disciple who really just did not like
dealing with people he'd send him to
some Monastery in town where he'd have
to deal with people all the time or if
he was if he had a disciple who really
was a gregarious kind of social sort of
person that hated being alone he'd send
them out alone or if he was afraid of
ghosts he'd send them to a cemetery that
kind of thing because you have to learn

how to deal with the things that you
hate the most and the things that you
love the most those are like the main
things that keep cropping up in your
life as a result of karma that you have
to keep dealing with it until you learn
how to do it right sort of like Bill
Murray and Groundhog Day you know he has
to keep doing over and over and over
until finally he can do it
selflessly with with
acceptance
so I guess I answer that question I'll
just move on to the next question this
is from mraa Buddha and mraa Buddha
asked the interesting question you have

personal criticism against

Buddhism

and I mean it depends on what you mean

by Buddhism if I don't have personal

criticism against what the Buddha

originally taught you know like genuine

original Buddhism but then again I can't

really be absolutely sure what genuine

original Buddhism was because you just

have to like

deduce what the original teachings were

I'm not a dogmatist I'm not the kind of

person that's just going to accept the

entire toptica as just verbatim

teachings of the

Buddha

so um do I have personal criticism

against

Buddhism golly well I mean there's like

different kinds of Buddhism different

interpretations of Buddhism I think uh a

lot of my viewers would um would know

fairly well that I've got personal

criticisms against like left-wing

Western woke

Buddhism that I mean that's just

essentially cultural Marxism with some

Buddhist flavoring added or also like

when I was still a monk in Burma and

hadn't even been introduced to all the

the weirdness in the west or hadn't been

introduced to very much of it anyway um

I was had a personal criticism against

just unquestioning dogmatism like the Burmese blessed their heart Hearts they're they're good people and uh but nevertheless they have like a medieval approach to Buddhism where they cannot question any of it if it's in the toptica it has to be true if it's in the commentaries it has to be true you know if they just cannot bring themselves psychologically to question it and I mean I used to wonder if it was possible for a Burmese person to become enlightened like a lot of Burmese people will think that only Burmese people can really become enlightened because everyone else has wrong view to some degree but I used to wonder I mean if it

was possible for the Burmese because
they were so rigid and dogmatic in their
approach to Buddhism that uh I just I
wondered if they had enough freedom from
just the constraints of the Dogma to
really Break Free of that but I assume
some of them do I mean you think about
some of the medieval Catholic saints
that also had like this really really
dogmatic rigid kind of approach to their
religion but nevertheless just through
innate Talent OR Pary or whatever they
were able to rise above that you know
it's just down at the surface you know
kind of down at ground level they were
still you know dogmatic religious people

but still I mean that wasn't the only level to their spirituality and the higher levels were just kind of beyond that you know when you're in a deep mystical State you're not dogmatized and you're not thinking about that kind of stuff so I do have personal criticisms against certain kinds of Buddhism I do have personal criticisms uh with regard to terraa Buddhism as it exists today and just as it existed once the poly toptica was finalized because I do not consider all of it or even really half of it to accurately represent what the Buddha taught

so I mean you can call that personal criticisms against Buddhism but I mean

I'm not really antagonistic towards
dhama in general I certainly have no
criticisms against godma Buddha the
founder of this of the Buddhist
tradition or the founder of all Buddhist
Traditions even the ones who really
don't care about godma Buddha
anymore so I guess I guess so but uh
yeah I'm not it's it's kind of a broad
question I could just sit here and sort
of criticize certain aspects of certain
kinds of Buddhism for for an hour
straight
probably but I won't and I'm just going
to move on to the next question here and
this is from Crave minerals and crave

mineral says how do people get psychic
powers I've heard some say that they can
spontaneously arise when one is
mastering deep meditation it would make
sense to me that they develop lifetime
after life time like any other skill
rather than out of the blue but what do
you think and then in parenthesis he he
says telepathy actually sounds
bothersome
so yeah the like the standard Orthodox
Terra Buddhist explanation for how monks
or spiritual practitioners get psychic
powers is mainly through practicing
samata meditation like Jan you if you
master Janna you start getting you can
get psychic powers that uh a monk or a

person who becomes enlightened just

through Osa without mastering Jan

they're called a dry visioned arahan

they don't have psychic powers but still

they're

enlightened they just have the one

psychic power of being enlightened

essentially but uh that's not the only

way of getting psychic powers I think

some people are just born with psychic

talent and then of course you've got

like like witches and so forth that have

ways of generating psychic powers

and it's my my understanding of psychic

powers is really that I mean anything is

possible Miracles socalled are possible

that the laws of physics socalled can be broken but most people are just lost loed in to this uh I don't know what you call almost like a rigid system of beliefs and including beliefs of what they consider to be possible and I mean it's it's pretty much necessary for us to exist I mean um in in a dream for example you can get onto a bus and then at some point the bus turns into an airplane or a ship and it's not like you got off the bus and onto the airplane or the ship it's just the whole thing turns into that and there might be like a moment or two of oh that's weird and then you just continue going with the dream or you're you're walking along

talking to you know some old friend of yours from high school and then they just while you're sitting there while you're walking along talking to them they turn into some like famous actor or something and it's not like one person left and the other one came it's just in a dream there's all these weird possibilities that as a general rule are not possible in this in this world and it's not possible in this world just because the world would just fall apart it would just you don't have enough Law and Order to keep it together to hold it in a stable state so we have to have a certain amount of

stability to keep our world more or less predictable and and just more just holding it together so it doesn't just disintegrate but some people are Lial linal which is a word I learned just a few years ago and uh it's like they have more flexibility with regard to the the stability and structure of this world that they are generating I mean we're creating our own reality it's not that this is like the physical material objective world and we are just you know meat organisms living in this world just through some strange epiphenomenon of electrochemical activity in a gray blob of meat that we are thinking and having desires and dreams and so forth that

that's kind of the standard point of
view for people in the west including
most Buddhist people in the west but
still um that's not really what Buddhism
teaches and uh I just don't believe it
in fact I'm unorthodox even from a
terraa point point of view um mainly
because I'm not as materialistic as
Orthodox terada
is I'm really not a materialist I do not
think that physical matter is ultimately
real so getting Psy getting back to
psychic powers um some people they just
have more liminality
more flexibility to this structure that
they're living in and it maybe you're

just born way it may be that you

cultivate it through meditation or it

may be like witches do at least some

witches where they will

generate sort of

wheat like wheat spots in in the

structure that they're living in by

flouting uh like taboos you know they'll

do things that people aren't supposed to

do just as a way of sort of weakening

the structure that they're living in

weakening the the structure that's

holding everything together that allows

like

like essentially magic to happen things

that shouldn't be possible become more

possible just through um their efforts

to just weaken the structure of of human existence in certain ways to make like Windows or gaps that can allow the infinite possibilities into this version of reality

because the infinite possibilities are always there I mean even physics Deals Deals with that to some degree you know it's like a subatomic particle like an electron doesn't just go from point A to point B along one route it goes by an infinite number of routes it goes by every possible route and then it's just somehow our perceiving mind just like focuses on one of those possibilities and like collapses the state Vector

so-called and all the other possib

possibilities are still there it's just

that we get locked into one of those

possibilities and it's it's of necessity

we have really no choice we have to have

structure and stability in order for

this world to exist for more than a

trillionth of a second there has to be

rules but there are ways of bending the

rules in a sense or just exploiting gaps

between the

rules and you can do that through

cultivating that or sort of like I guess

what a sage does like a a meditating

Sage is they're just weakening their

their grasp their their clinging to this

world which then allows for more

possibilities you know they're no longer completely stuck in this version of reality because they are loosening their attachments to it so that other possibilities become available or if you're just born with psychic Talent it's it's kind of that way too whereas like the the Wizard types and the witch types you know they have to like deliberately generate um sort of weaknesses in the structure so that the infinite possibilities or the possibilities they prefer can somehow get in through the cracks so that's my theory so I'm just going to move on to the next question

and this is from White Ash Piper who I
might add is one of my first subscribers
on
Rumble and white ash Piper says okay
grass Hopper AKA qu Chang kanaine what
Sage or Mystic head would you say that
he would best represent if he wasn't a
fictional character so I mean at first
it seems like oh he's not necessarily
calling me Qui Chang Kan and I've got a
dog snoring loudly behind me
now um so he's just saying okay
grasshopper AKA Qui Chan can so I mean
that could be interpreted two ways it
could be that he's calling me that which
would be answering his own question
maybe but he says what Sage or Mystic

head would you say that he would best
represent if he wasn't a fictional
character and that's a tough one I mean
probably it may be that most of you are
not old enough to remember the old TV
show kung fu but it was
about uh a man played by David
kadine who uh grows up in China in the
mid 1800s his his father was American
and his mother was Chinese so he was a
half breed he was half Chinese half
European and then his entire family died
so um because of that largely because of
that he goes to a Shaolin Buddhist
Monastery in in 19th century China gets
admitted to be a Shaolin monk and

then at one point as he's a Shaolin monk
it's the full moon of May it's Buddhist
day the most auspicious day of the year
for a Buddhist he's uh at this uh I
think he's like at the Forbidden City or
something there's some kind of Festival
going on and his beloved teacher Master
Poe gets shot by the Imperial nephew you
know the the nephew of the emperor and
qu
Chang um he just goes into a age he
loses it because you know his beloved
Master just got shot in Cold Blood by
this aristocrat so he just grabs a spear
and harpoons the Imperial nephew so he's
paraja he is expelled from the SAA so to
speak and he has to flee to America

where of course he's you know
interacting with bad Cowboys and people
you know saying stuff like chinan I'm
gonna blow your head off that kind of
stuff so with regard to that what person
can I think of that that is not a
fictional character that most closely
resembles the life of qu Chan k i I mean
I don't know anybody who closely
resembles that I only know one person
who was a monk who was expelled from the
s for being paraj jaica but it wasn't
because he murdered somebody we don't
need to get into that and uh I'm not
going to go into details but um and in
other respects he didn't resemble Qui

Chan k at

all um qu Chan K also was a master at

kung fu

um but uh I don't really know any of

those and uh with regard to you know the

Buddhist monk from an Eastern culture

who then comes back and is interacting

with with his Native Americans or with

with

Americans

um uh it might even be Me Maybe This is

what white ash Piper is asking I mean it

kind my mother used to say that I

resembled D David kerine when I was

longer when I was younger so I kind of

looked like him plus I mean just the

aspect of being a Buddhist monk in Asia

who then comes back to America and

becomes like a manual laborer like in

the the uh pilot episode of kung fu qu

Chan K he's working on the railroad you

know so in that respect I kind of

resemble qu Chan Kane but uh in other

respects you know I'm not a master at

kung fu fighting and uh I didn't get

kicked out of the s for murdering

somebody in fact I didn't get kicked out

of the song at

all

um

so yeah I mean I'm not trying to brag or

anything but I I think I might be the

one person that I can think of that I

did I have any familiarity with that

might most closely resemble qu Chan K

except without the the Kung Fu and you

know murdering the the emperor's nephew

and all that but

uh maybe there's some other ex monks you

know Western monks I mean you pretty

much have to be a Westerner to resemble

quite Chan Kan because he was at least

half American and he went back to

America I he's played by like

a guy of European

ancestry

so yeah I guess I mean just for lack of

of knowing of anyone who comes closer

I'd say would guess I guess it would be

me so I'll just move on to the next

question

this is from Austin oh and but I mean if

anyone can think of someone who comes

closer to being quiet shanan than me

just feel free to put it in the comments

I won't be shamed at all because I

really don't resemble him extremely

closely except in certain limited

respects so getting back to Austin here

Austin's question is was there ever a

time when as a monk all doubts about the

Buddhist teachings disappeared for you

yeah there are lots of times when all

doubts about the Buddhist teachings

disappeared for me like when I was sound

asleep or when I was in a deep

meditative State when you're just not
thinking or I mean even if you're
thinking a little bit when you're
thinking you know breathing in breathing
out that kind of a thing I mean you're
not having any doubts about the Buddhist
teachings it's only when you're sitting
there philosophizing maybe you're
reading a text and you're thinking wow
is this really true then you might be
having doubts about the Buddhist
teachings but then again I mean it's
hard to say exactly what the Buddha
really taught because as I mentioned
earlier I don't consider the poly totico
or any set of Buddhist texts to be just
verbatim transcripts of what the budha

really taught just

quotes I mean there's some in there but

for the most part it would be like loose

paraphrase and just made up stuff that

maybe the Buddha would agree with in

some cases and probably wouldn't in

other cases that he might just denounce

it some of the stuff that's in the poly

Tex right

now so I mean that kind of thing there's

always going to be a certain amount of

skeptical doubt with regard to that sort

of thing because I mean it's not

possible to know for sure what the

Buddha originally taught and I'm just

not like a dogmatist like a lot of Asian

Buddhists who were born into an Asian culture you know they were raised as Buddhists from the time they were toddlers you know they have no doubt at all it's like this medieval kind of mindset with regard to understanding Buddhism but a
Westerner a modern Westerner it just doesn't work for us or I guess there are some I've met a few Western monks who just believe everything the way like a a born Asian Buddhist would believe it but um uh we westerners I mean we're more eclectic we've got sort of a broader understanding we've we've learned lots of things before we learn Buddhism that are like Beyond Buddhism ISM and you

can't just reject all of that even especially if a lot of it makes a lot of sense

so yeah I mean most of the time I wasn't having doubts about the Buddhist teachings um just because I wasn't thinking about the Buddhist teachings in that sense you know I'd just be meditating or you know taking a bath or something but I assume that's not what Austin was talking about um I mean when you're in a deep meditative State I mean you see the value of dhama in a in a just a deep experiential way that uh I mean you're you're just grateful you know you're thankful for it even though

it's it's just this worldly phenomenon

it's a Sanara and it's it's it's not

perfect you know it's it's impermanent

and it has changed since since the

Buddha was speaking his his dhama you

know at the time I mean it's very

different now the s is very different

now

um but uh I mean real dhama is in there

and if you're practicing it you're going

to find more dhama than you're going to

find in books you know you're living the

life and you're you're you're meditating

and you know you're doing what you're

supposed to do as a good Monk and all

that then you're going to get benefits

from it and it's going to be you know

you're going to they're just going to be
obvious and then uh if you got any
sensitivity at all you're going to be
just overwhelmed with gratitude much of
the
time but uh yeah it's this this question
could be interpreted in different ways
but
uh yeah in in certain ways I mean
there's there's always necessarily going
to be a certain amount of Doubt just
because you can't really know certain
things for sure so it's going to be a
kind of skeptical doubt but uh just the
essence of it yeah I don't have any I
don't have any doubts about that so I'm

just going to move on to the next

question here and this is from

maximan and uh I can think of at least

two Roman Emperor named maximan neither

one of them very good but uh we'll just

assume this is he this person is not one

of

them maximan

says how often did you go to the doctor

for basic

checkups or the dentist when you were a

monk how about before you were a

monk I know it sounds trivial

but I've felt really conflicted with

whether or not I should get health care

feels like enrolling in a scam where I

pay a third of every paycheck to health

insurance companies just in case I get
some acute illness or need Dental Care
someday I feel like they're only willing
to exist so they can make a profit off
of people's fear of bodily Decay or
sustaining Beauty I'm young and
seemingly healthy should I just risk it
and not pay health insurance well if it
was up to me I wouldn't have any health
insurance or um it'd just be like maybe
get like five bucks deducted out of my
paycheck per week for like accident
insurance or something like that but uh
yeah I mean when I was when I was
growing up you you went to the doctor if
you had a broken bone or if you thought

maybe you were dying those would be the
two reasons you go to a doctor and the
rest of the time I mean you just tough
it out you know you get better if you
can buy some medicine at the store than
you do
that but we got to the main question
here how often did I go to the doctor
for basic checkups where the dentist
when I was among was Zero I just didn't
go for basic checkups or go to the
dentist for like teeth cleaning or
checkups like that it was if I got sick
like I was hospitalized with malaria
twice
so I didn't have much Choice with regard
to that I was hospitalized with what one

doctor called Amic Amic hepatitis he he
said that uh like uh dissenter amibas
had invaded my
liver and I was very sick I was in the
hospital for that one too um so if I got
really sick then yeah I'd wind up going
to a doctor but there were lots of
doctors that came to see me there was
one doctor bless his heart he was he was
interesting one uh I wouldn't let him
come anywhere near me with a scalpel but
uh he he he volunteered to be my doctor
if I ever needed any kind of medical
care he' he'd donate it and I mean he
was not a very skillful doctor like one
time he sent me a tetanus

vaccine um I can't remember exactly why
but he sent me a tetanus vaccine and it
said right on the label it must be
refrigerated and he sent it to me like
in the middle of the hot season it's
like 90° this stuff and it took like two
days to get to me and just sent me a
hypodermic syringe it's like have at it
it's like yeah there's no
way yeah and like I said I wouldn't let
him come near me with a scalpel but he
was an interesting he was an interesting
anthropological study this doctor and
this is not answering the question at
all but uh is it is interesting that I
mean he
was he was kind of a woman he was

married but was a womanizer you know he
had like girlfriends in addition to his
wife and also the most interesting thing
about him
was he just had like these compartments
to his mind and he had like the
religious compartment in his mind and it
was like a personality shift he would
adopt what uh oh what's his name
callfield uh in The Catcher in the Ry
holding callfield he calls the holy Joe
voice yeah he would just get this
totally different tone of voice and he'd
almost go like into a trance State when
he'd be like chanting Buddhist texts or
or just reciting stuff for ceremonies

and so forth but for the most time for
the most part he was just like your
standard rascally kind of guy but uh he
was very religious and very
superstitious
too but uh getting back to the go to the
doctor for basic checkups of the dentist
yeah it was I only I only went to the
dentist when my teeth would get broken
which did happen a few times in Burma
there's rocks in the food you bite into
a rock and and you can break your teeth
and that happened to me a few
times but uh yeah so when I was a monk
it was I went when there was some kind
of emergency requiring me to go or
sometimes doctors would just come to see

me and and offer you

know but uh one time I got really bad

bronchitis and I just happened to meet

this like respiratory specialist who who

gave me some some medicine for it but um

yeah I as a general rule I've uh I've

got a fairly good

Constitution so yeah I didn't I didn't

go to the the doctor or the dentist

unless there was something that really

needed some immediate

fixing um let's see yeah health

insurance I mean Insurance really is a

case of betting against yourself to some

degree it's it's required by law like

auto insurance and so forth but really

um personally I wouldn't get any kind of insurance other than just like really cheap insurance that there's a good chance you're going to get a benefit from it like I do have free dental insurance um no it's not free it's just a few bucks a week so just in case but it is true that insurance is a case of betting against yourself you are literally wagering that something bad is going to happen to you and from a karmic point of view I think it increases the odds that something bad is going to happen to

to so let's see

here

um I'm young and seemingly healthy

should I just risk it and not pay health insurance well I mean if you've got a fairly solid Constitution and uh I mean you don't have a really dangerous job and you do have a certain amount of money so that let's say if you break a tooth or some such you get a cavity you can just go and pay for that's what I did before I was a monk I never had health insurance before I was a monk in fact I never really had health insurance until I mean when I'd be working sometimes you just automatically have workers compensation that you're paying into it's kind of that kind of a deal

now the whole time I was a monk I had no insurance I didn't even bother to get uh like uh vaccines or I maybe I shouldn't say that word on YouTube but just get any kind of shots or anything before going to Burma you know that people are saying well you really should get the you know the what is it en sephtis shot or the some kind of men menitis shot or something I just didn't get any kind of any kind of U vaccines or anything before I went to Burma and I was fine I mean I people in America are freaking out about drinking water and so forth and you know I was just drinking water filtered through a cloth coming out of a creek one place where I lived the creek

water was kind of a greenish color

tasted like milk and I just drank it and

I was

fine um then again you talk about you I

talk to doctors sometimes in Burma you

know it's like yeah I mean Burmese dogs

drink the water but they don't live very

long your odds are increased I guess but

I mean the main thing from a Buddhist

point of view is if you're protecting

dham dham protects

you like for

example when a mon goes for alms round

he has to AC accept alms from anyone

who's offering alms in good faith they

can have leprosy they can just have this

really awful cold I've had people like little kids there's this one little kid he looked like the feral child on the road warrior I mean any of you who watch the old Mad Max movies and he'd just be like coughing into this food just just covered with filth just wild hair and everything and then he put it into my bowl and a monk is not allowed to say no he's supposed to just accept it with equinity and you know people with Leprosy I had one woman she was she blew her nose with her hand and just kind of flung the snot and then used that same hand to put food into my bowl and the monk he's not allowed to make faces you just have like the poker face you accept

it

attentively and you just move on I mean

you're not required to eat it but it's

all going to get mixed together

anyway so yeah I've got a lot of horror

stories with regard to going for alms

round and getting weird icky food in my

bowl

and you're not allowed to say anything

like sometimes little old ladies bless

their hearts The Village ladies their

their eyesight's going bad they don't

have glasses they don't see that the

piece of cake they're putting into your

bowl is just swarming with these little

ants so they put the the ant swarming

food into your bowl and you've got to
like stand there you know perectly walk
a few steps so the little old lady
doesn't see what you're doing and you're
just like picking the ants out of your
food before you continue so that they
don't get just get buried underneath
everything
else but I think I've I've uh strayed
away from Maxim's question
here so yeah I do consider Insurance to
be a case of betting against yourself
that uh I mean the insurance companies
have like Casino they're like casinos
where the odds are in their favor
they're going to make a profit um and I
mean

you I've I've always valued Freedom over

security and I've always been willing to

take my

chances and I mean if something really

awful happens to you then I then that's

just too bad you know it's just the way

the way it is but

um when you when you have a woman in

your life women tend to be less risk and

they're more risk averse than men are

you know they're more interested in

Safety and Security and Comfort than uh

like an like an ex professional

aesthetic

is so I mean I'm not going to give you

health advice I'm not going to tell you

that you should or shouldn't get health insurance but uh you know it would depend on your own circumstances and so forth but if you're if you're young and healthy and you don't have a particularly dangerous job and you do have enough money that you can cover everything except for the the worst disasters then I would say you probably really don't need it unless of course it's it's like the law that you have to have

it so I think I'll just move on to the next question here this is from TIG and Tig says have you seen the Wolf of Wall Street and if you have what is your opinion of it um I assume that's a movie

The Wolf of Wall Street and no I have
not seen a movie called The Wolf of Wall
Street a long time ago I saw a movie
that was just called Wall
Street um with what was it Michael
Douglas in it and Charlie Sheen I
think um and it was not a really
impressive movie The only thing that
really stands out for me is that there
were two songs or two musical pieces in
the soundtrack that were from David burn
and Brian enos's my life in the bush of
ghosts which really impressed me and of
course on the old Gilligan Island show
thirston Howell III was known as The
Wolf of Wall Street so I did see

thirston Howell II thir on Gilligan's
Island but I don't think that that's
what TIG is talking about here and since
I haven't seen the movie at all and
really could only just make wild vague
guesses about what it's about I think
I'll just move on to the next question
here and this is from Mara made
Mahayana and Mara made Mahayana says who
will win the battle for followers terraa
or
Mahayana well I really don't think that
it I mean it's probably not very
accurate to refer to it as a battle for
followers it's not really a battle I
mean it might be a certain competition
although usually a

terraa monk let's say a terraa teacher
is I mean he's not really competing
consciously against Mahayana teachers or
Mahayana monks it's like you know how
can I get how can we get more converts
than than the Zen people um I've never
come across anything like that um I'm
I'm sure it exists out there but
um yeah it's it's not really I don't
really see it as a
competition um but who will get more
followers terava or Mahayana yeah that's
that's a question that I really don't
know the answer to I assume but just
because there's more Mahayana Buddhists
than terava Buddhists that there will be

more Mahayana converts more Mahayana followers than terraa converts or Terra followers

um but you know better a good Zen practitioner than a bad terraa practitioner and better a good terab practitioner than a bad Zen practitioner so I mean a good person who is Sincere is going to do pretty good um with regard to just about any spiritual tradition and if it doesn't get him far enough and let's hope he has enough wisdom and enough uh open-mindedness to try something

else but with regard to the question who will win the battle for followers first of all I don't really considered to be a

battle and uh second I mean it's it's
it's uh indeterminate I guess I mean you
can't really know for sure you could
just
guess and uh terraa does is making you
know progress in the west although much
of that progress is like Progressive
progress with like queer Buddhism and
you know Retreats for people of color
and Retreats for white people so that
they can be more aware of their inherent
racism and and white privilege and so
forth which is again is just cultural
Marxism with some Buddhist flavoring at
it so yeah um we just time will tell on
that one I guess so I'm just going to

move on to the next question which is
the last question we really didn't get a
whole lot of questions this time largely
because the usual ual place for
submitting questions was removed from
YouTube so this one's from Mama and mama
says what happens to people when they
die if they haven't been exposed to any
religion so I mean if a good person dies
then I mean going from the point of view
of terab
Buddhism that I mean if you're a good
person let's say you love your neighbor
you always try to tell the truth you
don't steal you know you're faithful to
your wife you know you try to be a good
person even though you're not really a

member of any religion let's say you're
born in communist China or something
where religion is frowned upon and I
mean you're you're too far out in the
sticks to really get much of a an
intensive indoctrination into communism
so I mean you're just kind of a secular
humanist by
default and I mean if you like I said if
you're a good person you tell the truth
you try to you know you're
generous you know then you're going to
get a good rebirth if you're a good
person you're going to get a good
rebirth if you're a bad person you're
going to get a bad rebirth regardless of

what religion you

follow so yeah I really don't have much

use for any religion that says if you

don't belong to our religion you're

going to burn in hell forever and ever

you know like the Quran says that or the

The Book of Mormon says that if you

don't follow this stuff and some of it's

really hard to believe but if you don't

follow it you're going to burn in hell

forever and ever and I really do not

have much use for that and also I don't

have much use for the whole idea of uh

like

Christians for example aren't

necessarily good they're just forgiven

you know it's like all you got to do is

just believe in this you know this this Hebrew Carpenter turn Miracle Rabbi who lived in the early Roman Empire and who created the entire universe and is the only begotten Son of God all you got to do is believe in him and you're going to go to

heaven and I mean I don't have much use for that either that sort of thing even like any kind of Buddhist equivalent of that or Buddhist analog to that I really don't have much use for that so I mean what it just boils down to is just the quality of your your character if you're a good person then you'll have a good rebirth if you're a bad person you'll

have a bad rebirth just regardless of of
the religion you follow or don't
follow and that's it that was the last
question and
so there you go that's uh number 81 and
if you've got any questions you anything
that you think I can answer maybe not
with regard to watching movies because I
haven't really watched a whole heck of a
lot of movies but um if you got a
question that you think I can answer
just feel free to leave them in the
comments below
and bear in mind that I am now on Rumble
and uh I'm probably not going to be
posting a whole lot of my really old
stuff on the rumble just because it's

such a daunting task that I even kind of
petered out on uploading all of my stuff
from bitshoot
or the stuff I did with Brian Rue before
I was uploading on to my bitshoot
channel and my YouTube channel so
there's still lots and lots of videos
that I've done with with Brian Rue even
the ones that are safe for YouTube that
just aren't on YouTube because we did so
many of them and it just I just kind of
uh lost steam in uh uploading them
although I guess I should get back to it
sooner or later because there are a lot
of videos old videos that I have done
that that just aren't on YouTube yet and

I suppose I shouldn't wait until I just
get totally banned from YouTube for just
saying something that is against their
their terms of service or
something
so I guess that's it and yeah bear in
mind that I'm on Rumble now and uh feel
free to hit like if you like this and
subscribe if you haven't subscribed
already if you consider this to be of
any value in my answering questions on
Buddhism and meditation and so forth are
of any value to you then you're very
welcome to subscribe and feel free to
look at the URL links below including
the books I have for sale on Amazon
which includes my Rumble link too now

and be

happy

hello and welcome to episode 82 of

question and answer I am your host poo

basa and we don't really have anything

for me to give an introductory Preamble

with regard to for example I'm almost

completely recovered from the disease

that I had

recently and so I might as well just

jump right into these just dive head

first into this list of questions and

the first first one is from Luigi and

Luigi says if karma is only a mental

state what are you to say if I feel good

stealing I would not generate negative

mental states to guide negative

volition maybe it would not generate

negative mental States or I would not

generate negative mental states to guide

negative

volition well I mean it's not just

stealing I mean there are some people

who enjoy killing for example just the

th of catching a big fish or shooting a

big buck deer or for that matter some

people get Thrills from killing other

people some people think they're going

to go to heaven for killing other people

and so of course they're Overjoyed at

the opportunity to kill other people

under such circumstances that they think

that they're going to go to heaven

because of

it or maybe a more obvious example is

adultery I think most of the people who
commit adultery are experiencing some
kind of enjoyment while they're doing it
otherwise they probably wouldn't want to
do
it
so just because you are feeling pleasure
when you're doing something doesn't mean
that you're not going to get bad karma
for indulging in that action in fact I
mean sometimes just the wallowing in
sensuality is what causes the bad stuff
to come back to
you for that's one reason why it's like
whatever we love the most most or
whatever we're most attached to or most

addicted to is what gets us you know
it's like in the in the poly text it
says whatever it is that you're attached
to that's what Mara uses to trap you or
or hook
you so just because you feel good doing
something doesn't mean that you're not
going to get UNH wholesome karma for
doing it but also there's just different
levels of consciousness and what's going
on at the surface level is might be very
different from what's going on a little
deeper down for example if you're
messing somebody up and at The
Superficial level you're enjoying it you
know you're like the droogs in A
Clockwork Orange who are just laughing

aborus while they're beating people up
and raping women to death and so forth
still deeper down there is the awareness
that you are hurting other people and
maybe a total sociopath someone with no
conscience whatsoever no empathy um you
know maybe I mean probably they still
have it it's just that they're just
blocked off from it but the average
person does have a certain amount of
empathy or just awareness of what
they're doing sort of the deeper
implications of what they are doing even
if at the surface level they don't want
to know about that you know they just
they just want to do what they want to

do

so karma is only a mental state I mean

it is essentially volition or will

but that doesn't mean that just because

you know you're smiling and laughing

while you're doing something that

nothing bad is going to happen to you as

a

consequence because it really doesn't

work that way in a way it's just your

karma is seeking

equilibrium and it's going to do

whatever it takes for that equilibrium

to be to be reached so to speak I mean

it's never completely reached until you

become enlightened I suppose or maybe

maybe even after an enlightened person

dies because we're always making new
Karma and sort of adding to the
disequilibrium but it's sort of like
water seeking its own
level and uh I mean it is a little bit
difficult to explain which you may have
already perceived in the roundabout way
I'm answering this but I mean for one
thing you can get bad karma for just
wallowing in sensuality I mean it
doesn't even have to be adultery I mean
you could just be picking up some wench
at a bar and taking her home and and
whatever and I mean still because you're
wallowing in sensuality because you have
these cravings and attachments and so

forth you are creating Karma and it's
not all going to be good stuff coming
back to you because of
that
so yeah I mean karma is just a mental
state but uh if you feel good stealing
it's probably at a superficial level and
deeper down you don't feel quite so
good so I think I'm just going to move
on to the next next question here I'm
sorry if I didn't answer that first one
adequately because Luigi does seem to
have a certain amount of skepticism with
regard to dhama at least that's the
impression that I
get so I guess I'll just move on next
question this is from Liber Lam and

Liber Lam says if you don't mind
answering who did you vote for and he's
referring to uh the previous Q&A I had
voted in the Republican primaries that
day and I had like this I voted sticker
stuck to my
shirt and yeah I mean there was only one
position that that you voted for I mean
there was a few like a referendum or
something there was a few of
those but uh it was mainly just the
presidential the the candidate the
Republican candidate for president of
the United States and there was a
surprisingly long list including some
guy named Binkley that I'd never heard

of before although I've I've after the
the uh primary I heard that he had
dropped out and uh endorsed president or
Donald
Trump so yeah I voted for trump it
shouldn't be a big surprise I mean Nikki
Haley is the only the closest thing he's
got to an actual Contender which I mean
I don't know why she's staying in the
race I I assume she's just hoping that
you know somebody's going to take down
Trump and she'll be the last one
standing but uh a lot of the people
voting for a very significant proportion
of the people voting for are not even
really Republicans they are like
Democrats or left-leaning Independents

who are voting in open primaries voting
for her because they don't want Trump to
be president and then in the final you
know the the main presidential election
they wouldn't vote for her anymore
they'd vote for
Biden so in order to help prevent that
from
happening I uh made sure to go and vote
for Donald Trump for Republican
candidate and he deserves it in my
opinion I mean he has taken so much crap
I mean just just a Biblical onslaught of
crap from the globalists in general not
just the Democrats but the the
globalists across the

board so yeah just as a way of sort
of showing the establishment what we
think of them I think a lot of people
are voting for Trump just mainly mainly
for that sort of like in 2016 Trump was
called like a middle finger to The
Establishment and I think uh in
2024 he's going to be like two middle
fingers so I'm just going to move on the
next question here this is from pranav
and Prav says my first question is that
from is that from the time of receiving
predictions to becoming a Buddha or
Pacha Buddha or chief disciple and Maha
disciple their respective period of time
is given to fulfill the necessary
parames but there is no fixed time

period for an ordinary disciple who just
wants to be an arhun what do you think
the period could be I've read on a book
by Le SE that it takes 100 to 1,000 Maha
Capas for an ordinary
disciple and this is is really just
Arcane
like I mean it's Dogma essentially I
mean there's no way you could really
verify any of
this but uh yeah it is true that in
order to become a Buddha or a Pacha
Buddha like a Hermit Buddha that doesn't
teach or a a chief discip iple which as
accordance with some sort of Unwritten
Law I guess that there are always two

Chief disciples for every Buddha and our
our Buddha godma had saruta and molana
and then you have the great
Disciples of which I don't know if
there's a fixed number I think there's
like 80 are in in this version this
dispensation of Buddhism there were like
80 uh 80 great disciples
and supposedly according to
tradition that in order to become a
Buddha a Pacha Buddha a chief disciple
or a great disciple there has to be some
announcement from a previous Buddha in
the past that I mean you would meet this
previous Buddha in a previous existence
a zillion gajillion years ago and they
would say you know in a future life when

there is a Buddha named you know Goda in
this
case you will be a great disciple and in
Burmese it's called a bate you have to
get a bate in order to get one of these
higher ranks of
Enlightenment but
personally I just don't think that it's
really dealing with objective facts that
this is just a development of like
legendary
Buddhism um starting with the
glorification of the Buddha himself
making him at a rank way above an
ordinary enlightened being which I don't
think is necessarily the case like I've

discussed previously that like in Abid
dama which I think we're gonna have a
question about that a little
later that wisdom is the same as aoha
wisdom is the same as lack of
delusion and any enlightened being is
going to have zero delusion so any
enlightened being is going to have
exactly the same amount of
wisdom just going with logic and what
the tradition itself
teaches
so I do think that it's sort of uh an
anachronism where you're saying that
there are different levels of
enlightened
being and uh you know each each level

has this time period of millions or or

Capas of eons and a Capa I'm pretty sure

that AA is defined in the texts as

you've got um like a block of rock

that's like 10 miles on a side it's just

this huge

mountain block of rock and it's like

every hundred years I think or every

thousand years that this little bird

flies by with a silk handkerchief in its

mouth and the handkerchief brushes up

against this block of rock that's

approximately 10 miles on a

side and an eon or a CA is the amount of

time required ired for that every once

in a hundred years or a thousand years

that that handkerchief brushing against
this rock causes the entire Rock to be
worn
away and so according to Le SE according
to pranav it takes 100 to 1,000 Maha
Capas and a mahaa might be bigger than
an ordinary Capa Maha meaning a great
cppa who knows it could be a thousand
regular copas I'm really I really don't
keep up with it stuff because I consider
it to be irrelevant you know it's like
this is just legendary stuff that really
has nothing to do in my opinion with
practicing Dharma and you know
developing mindfulness and
wisdom so yeah I think it's just all
academic and I don't think it really

matters but I assume for an ordinary

enlightened being it's going to be a

different amount for for different

people some people make slow progress

other people make fast progress and I

don't even think you have to have the

the batee or the announcement just to

become an ordinary enlightened being so

I mean there wouldn't even be a specific

time when it would when the the timing

would

start so it might not even

apply because I

mean maybe it would no it wouldn't even

be count starting from the you become a

soda so I mean what would be the the

beginning time for someone who hasn't
received this announcement from a past
Buddha I mean there would be no no
initial starting point to time the
amount of time it would take to become
an ordinary disciple and an ordinary
disciple I assume he's referring to a
disciple of the Buddha so at least you'd
have the The Good Karma of meeting a
Buddha face to face and becoming his
immediate disciple even though you're
not one of the great ones or one of the
chief
ones and uh yeah I don't know what
tradition says about it I've never
really had any interest in that which is
kind of similar to panov's next question

here second question is that there is
three kinds of Buddha the faith-based
the wisdom based and the energy based or
Sada PA and WEA how does this three
kinds differ in the bodh SAT to fulfill
their paries again I think this is just
made up stuff that has nothing to do
with objective reality this is Legends
it's
folklore so I mean just just going with
the the just for the sake of
argument to say that there are three
kinds of Buddhas those that are based on
faith those that are based on wisdom and
those that are based on weera or just
manly effort

uh how how is this how are these three

kinds differ in the bodh to fulfill

their parmes I mean the the parmes or

the 10 Perfections and there there are

10 of them and

um I

assume let's

see Sada isn't one of them PA is one but

it's not really in the PA is one of the

10 parmes or PA or wisdom but I think it

has a different meaning as one of the

parmes because there it just means like

quick wit you know like thinking on your

feet kind of a thing not not like

transcendental wisdom weia or energy is

one of the 10

parmes did I just say wisdom Vira or

like energy manly

effort so like Vira has the same Proto

Indo-European atmology as like the word

virile or the the trium vate in in Rome

in

Latin so yeah I mean questions like this

uh you're probably better off asking a

Burmese Seattle seriously because the

Burmese seatt take this stuff seriously

they consider it to be objective

historical fact they don't consider it

to be madeup Legends which is pretty

much the way I view

it

so I have I have read about this stuff

but because it wasn't really interesting

to me I didn't really retain it very

well uh you can find books that discuss

like the different kinds of

Buddhas and you know the different route

that they take to become the Buddha just

based on the different emphasis of their

Enlightenment I do think that the

faith-based uh doesn't take well maybe

it takes different different lengths

different numbers of you know

eons and eons for them to become

enlightened but uh it's it's all just

legendary stuff and I don't think that

it really is empirical

fact so yeah you're just going to have

to look in a book or ask a burm seato

who the burmes take this stuff really

seriously if it's in the commentaries

it's gospel truth as a general

rule so yeah look it up in the book or

ask a burm SE because this kind of stuff

it's really just irrelevant to the

essence of dhama in my

opinion so NE the third question from

from

Prav is uh I I already pretty much

answered this in the comments we had

kind of a back and forth a little bit in

the comments but it is a question that

was in the comments below a Q&A video

and

so um he says in this question where did

you find oh this is I think this is from

uh not from a Q&A video but from a different video says but I don't remember now says where did you find that not paa means son of grandson and then he has a laughing emoji and then he says in modern Indian languages not puta would mean son of the Lord exclamation point not as Lord and paa as son I think you had mispronounced the word not to understand it as grandson should be pronounced as Nat to mean grandson and that is we're referring to mahavira the the founder or at least the the last great TI tonara or teacher of jism who was a contemporary of the Buddha and in the poly Tex he's referred to as NATA not Nat n a t h a paa but n a

a like n long A T A paa that is how it
is spelled in the polyx and it means son
of grandson which is like a joke name
because the non- Buddhist teachers in
the polyx are propagandized to some
degree they're made to look like
charlatans and
fools and the founder of jism was no
exception and so he was called nataa
which is spelled n long a t a p
TTA and that means son of grandson which
is like a joke name but apparently
according to pranav in Indian texts they
have it re they have it spelled
differently so it's n a t h paa which
means son of the

Lord but that's not how it's spelled in
poly and that's not the meaning of it in
poly in poly the meaning of it and is in
accordance with the spelling of it which
is son of grandson which is a joke name
so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Texan
Buddhist and Texan Buddhist says is
there any part of you that wants to
leave your lay life and go back to the
monk life and not really no I mean there
are times
when I do kind of appreciate all the
leisure time that I had as a monk you
know I didn't have to work hard every
day or 40 hours a
week so I mean the lazy part of me kind

of in a way kind of misses the ability

to have all of this leisure time to just

do whatever I feel like doing instead of

you know having to go to work every day

but

uh not really I

mean yeah there really isn't any

conscious desire in in at any level

really for me to to go back and become a

monk

again so I mean I I took that as far as

I could get with it and now it would

just it was time to do something else

and I don't regret that or have second

thoughts or any such things just

continue moving

forwards so I'll just move on to the

next question this is from White Ash

Piper and this is sort of a revised

question that he already asked in a

previous Q&A he asked me you know who

was the one famous Sage or Saint who

would best fit the role of Qui Chang Kan

in the old TV show kung fu and I

couldn't really think of anything

I mean it's kind of I thought maybe me

even just because I couldn't think of

anyone that came closer because of all

the the there's various criteria like

you have to be uh at least half

Caucasian you know you have to be like

an

outsider uh like in in the country in

which you were a monk a Buddhist monk
and then you have to stop being a
Buddhist monk abruptly come back to a
different country where you're also an
outsider that sort of thing
um so anyways the question here from
White Ash Piper I guess a better
approach to my grasshopper question and
grasshopper was the name that his
beloved Master Po called Quai Chan Kan
I'll start again I guess a better
approach to my grasshopper question
would be if David ker David kerine re
rejected the role of Quai Chang Kane and
a sage of old auditioned for the role
who would best fit the role if all sages

Mystics and such

auditioned well that's kind of a that's

kind of a it doesn't make the question

any easier it's still kind of the same

question and it's it's hard to believe

that most sages and Saints would even

want to audition for the role I mean

just as a given let's just assume that

that all of them did I mean who would

come closest I don't know bodh Dharma

maybe I mean there would have to be

these criteria like you know he have to

be like an outsider in the country of

his birth and then an outsider in the

country that he returns to after he

stops being a monk and in in the

original TV show he stopped being a monk

because he murdered the the nephew's
Emperor or the nephew's Emperor the
emperor's nephew and so he was paraj
jaica and of course he couldn't stay in
China because he was uh he was going to
be arrested and probably executed in in
some really nasty way so he fled back to
America which is where his his father
was
born and he was like half Chinese and
half American half
European
so yeah I mean trying to find anybody
who would fit that Criterion is
just I'm I'm in no better position now
than I was in the in the previous Q&A

when I was trying to answer the question

but at least bod Dharma

was an outsider in one one of I mean he

was an outsider in China anyway whoever

maybe the founder of the Shaolin

tradition but then again he might have

just been pure Chinese and didn't have

all these other things that that fit but

then again maybe white ash Piper is just

ask asking with regard to character

traits or something and uh yeah it's

just really hard to say it's it's no

easier than last

time so

I can't think of

anybody because I mean the the criteria

of Quai Chan K is are pretty specific

and then also the Saints and sages of of
ancient times I mean as a general rule
you don't know what their personality
was like you know you just get these
Legends handed down maybe some of their
writings but when they're writing you
know they're being serious and and
they're not you know they're not really
displaying a whole lot of what they
would be like wandering around in the
Wild West in the 1800s dealing with
rednecks that that just don't like
Chinamen so yeah again I really can't
answer that
question I don't know bodh Dharma
maybe I don't know I'm just going to

move on the next question here this is from mooners and mooner says what does the election of 2020 have to do with Buddhism and I assume this is a question that is maybe kind of a complaint or a criticism it was uh I just mentioned the election of 2020 very briefly when I was discussing how I got a video taken down by YouTube because I happen to mention a certain forbidden
subject and I got I mentioned that I just got that confused in my mind with the election 2020 which it is now apparently allowable to to criticize on YouTube but this other subject is not and I got those confused in my head and uh so he's mooners is asking what does

the election of 2020 have to do with

Buddhism

so it to

me I just I just I wonder you know why

they would ask the question because I

mean it was just sort of a in passing

kind mention of it

anyway so I mean it's possible that they

could just be super strict Buddhists who

only want to hear about Buddhism and

don't want to hear about anything other

than Buddhism and I have had

interactions with people like this

before although I mean he could have

mentioned any number of other things so

it causes me to think maybe it's

possible that

mooners is like uh maybe politically and

socially leaning to the left and just

doesn't want to hear about that stuff um

he just kind of strayed onto my onto my

channel

somehow but uh you know what does

getting getting back to the question

though what does the election of 2020

have to do with

Buddhism not very much I mean you can

say that everything has something to do

with Buddhism there was one person who

responded to him essentially saying that

and also pointing out that you know the

same forces that were allegedly

monkeying with the 2020 election are

also allegedly monkeying with Buddhism

in the

west so I mean there's an indirect

connection

anyway but uh yeah it's just a

rhetorical kind of question I guess so

I'm just going to move on to the next

question which is by Joe do and Joe do

says can you explain how to practice

mindfulness and there are entire books

on how to practice mind mindfulness uh

poly Texs describe how to practice

mindfulness like the sa batan Su and the

mahasan um that can give a much more

in-depth

explanation to uh than than I can in in

just relatively briefly answering this question on a Q&A video but uh practicing mindfulness from my point of view it's it's pretty much what ROM dos used to say be here now just be here in the present moment and don't be thinking about the future don't be thinking about the past don't be thinking about what's going on somewhere else just be here now and uh it's it's kind of interesting that St John of the Cross also taught a kind of mindfulness where it's in a way it's like the opposite of memory like the word Sadi and poly can mean mindfulness or it can also mean memory but strangely in in Roman Catholicism the same word can mean both too which is

recollection if you're being mindful
you're practicing recollection but St
John of the Cross was saying that in a
way you destroy your memory because
you're just right here right now in the
present moment you're not thinking about
the past at all not thinking about the
future not thinking about what's down
the
street not thinking about what's in the
kitchen so I mean that's essentially it
and just being right here in the present
moment and and if you want to practice
it at a deeper level or you're skillful
enough to practice it at a deeper level
then you start um silencing the

commentary I mean you got okay yeah you got to silence the commentary to some degree when you're being mindful just your mind has always got this sentences you know words just going on and on this kind of logo Ria you're you're trying to steal that also to help you being in the present moment because um like chrishna mury used to say you know when you're living in words you're not living in the present you know always living in the past because I mean it might just be a few seconds or even a you know Split Second but still you're not dealing with the present moment when you're thinking in words so in order to live in the present moment um it's good to just stop

thinking in words as much as possible or
if you have to think in words then I
mean you're just directing your your
thoughts to what is going on right here
right now it might be that you have to
think under certain circumstances so you
use your thought
um as necessary but just the running
commentary stuff um you try to get rid
of that and in a way it's like sense
restraint where you're just trying to
get as close to just bare sensory data
as you
can so you know like like I've said a
number of times on these videos like for
example if you're doing mindfulness of

hearing and you and there's a dog
barking outside you're not thinking oh
there's that dog barking outside side
again it's just you just hear it as just
sound you know you're not even
identifying it as barking dog it's just
you are aware of the
sound and that's it you know when the
sound stops the awareness of the sound
stops you don't continue thinking about
it that you're just right here in the
present moment and you're not
using like language in your head to have
this commentary going about what's going
on where you're just associating this
with that and so forth you just stay
right stay focused in the present moment

that's essentially what mindfulness is

although some kinds of

mindfulness um can have different

meanings but in general that's what

people are mainly talking about when

they're talking about mindfulness in the

sense of Buddhist

practice so I'll just move on to the

next question also from

Joo and he says can you make a a video

explaining the eight-fold path and a

video on how to meditate

please well I've talked quite a lot

about the Eightfold Path and I'm pretty

sure I've also done at least one video

just on

meditation but that was mainly about the
40 kinds of meditation it was how to do
each of the 40 kinds of meditation that
are on the standard list of the 40 kinds
of meditation um I think it's in the Wii
MAA U with regard to a video explaining
the eight-fold
path um yeah I mean I've given talks
about the Eightfold Path
before um I suppose I could I mean it's
not going to be this video I
suppose but I do consider the eight-fold
of the path to be another anachronism or
likely anachronism it I would
be mildly surprised if the Buddha really
did teach the Eightfold of the Eightfold
Path because there are like earlier

prototypes you know there's like a

tenfold path also in the sutas that

apparently didn't get enough traction

and so that one didn't really make it in

the long

run

um yeah make a video explaining the

eight-fold path I could um as a general

rule that kind of thing doesn't interest

me a whole lot because it's sort of um

Elementary Buddhism that um you know I'm

just not really really interested in in

like going over the really Elementary

stuff over and over again I mean I can I

do in these q&as sometimes but uh yeah

and with regard to how to

meditate aside from the the video I've already done on the 40 the 40 kinds of meditation in Buddhism um I mean there' just be a few things like posture and so forth um I mean I suppose I could do it but mostly when I do videos I just do something that I'm just kind of thinking about you know it's sort of hot in my mind at the time so maybe I'll get inspired to do it but I'm not probably not going to do it anytime real soon so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from covac andad zida and seac CAD zida says You seem to have a pretty low opinion of the terraa Abid dama what is your opinion on the sarasti Vada Abid dama and it is true

that I don't really have a very high
opinion of the terraa Abid dama the Abid
dama ptica and most western Buddhists
don't I've been told that approximately
70% of Western Buddhist
monks don't have any use for Abid dama
and it's pretty obviously late it pretty
obviously was not taught by the Buddha
himself it probably did not exist and
certainly did not exist as a pitica as
one of the three baskets of the poly
texts until the third Council which was
quite a while after the time of the
Buddha like mid3 Century
BC so the ter the the sarasti Vada Abid
Dharma I have less knowledge of it and I

I was as a monk especially I was exposed to information about Abid dama over and over again especially because I was living in Burma most of the time and the Burmese take Abid dama extremely seriously they consider it to be the most profound most important teachings of the

Buddha which is one reason why I've had such a low opinion of it is because you know I've had I've been living in the midst in of this culture this Buddhist culture that is just saying that you know Abid dama is the most important deepest part of Buddhism and from a western point of view and a historical objective point of view it's hardly

likely that the Buddha even taught it
and a lot of it I'm sure the Buddha
would not agree with that he would not
endorse it but with regard to sarasti
Vada I know very little about it you
know I know just a few things about it I
do know that it's very different from
terraa and it may be that um Terra and
sarasti Vada it wasn't until the third
Council they split
apart and and so the sarasti vodin are
probably working on their own version of
terraa of Abid Dharma or Abid dama um
around the time of the third Council and
it was just sort of
a

doctrinal like a Schism practically

where the one of the main purposes of

the third Council was to purge the

sarasti vodin that's that's the

impression I get from from reading the

history of it

so yeah I mean sasada it did have

certain differences like they believe

that past present and future are all

real in a sense which is probably more

correct than the Terra voden position

that only the present moment exists the

past no longer exists the future doesn't

exist yet so in that sense the travadon

are more

Newtonian and the sasti vadens are more

einsteinian you know going with like the

time space continuum that you know time

is itself just another dimension through

space or you know

through through the

cosmos also the sasti vadin believed

that that an

individual Adam you know a ultimately

real Dharma you know they divided you

know the whole world samsar up into all

these different

elements like terava did but um

according to terraa these these elements

are flashing in and out of existence at

a rate of like a trillion times an eye

blink whereas according to sarasti

vadens they are Eternal it's just the

combinations of these elements are are
like impermanent which that also would
come closer to modern science I think
um then again I'm not sure what the
modern scientific idea of like an
electron
or a quark some subatomic particle I
mean is it really staying the same or is
it like in this constant state of
flux but even probably the scientists
wouldn't agree that everything is
flashing in and out of existence
trillion times a second especially
because once everything flashes out of
existence you've got nothing just
literally nothing and then everything
has to rearise out of

nothing and that is just a major flaw in
terod and Abid dama in my opinion which
the sarasti
vodin even though I don't think that
their idea that these elements are
ultimately
real at least they got rid of the
problem of everything appearing out of
nothing a trillion times a
second so it may be that the sasada Abid
Dharma is an improvement on Traden Abid
Dharma but again I haven't really
studied it much I've just picked up
little bits and pieces about it and so I
can't really make any kind of
authoritative judgment on the merits or

demerits of the sarasti Vada version of
Abid dama but from what little I know
about it they did make at least two
improvements but still trying to declare
that some Sara is ultimately
real in some
sense um yeah that's that's pushing it
to
me so in in that respect I would I would
be more inclined to go along with
certain Mahayana
schools that only Nirvana is
real and uh I had a Roman Catholic
priest tell me that in Roman Catholicism
at least in the seminary schools they
teach something different or they teach
something essentially the same which is

only God is ultimately real and this
this world that he created is just sort
of like contingently real It's
relatively real compared to God
himself but uh I am digressing into the
into the realm of Roman Catholicism so
I'll just move on to the next question
here this is from
pseudonym and pseudonym says please
explain your approach to translating
poly to English how do you approach the
challenge of preserving the original
meaning while doing so in readable or
even poetic English overall what is your
translation approach well I've said it
before and it has been like a a main

like a guideline for me when uh when translating I got to check to make sure that we're recording yeah 40 40 minutes into it I I verify that we are actually recording um that a translator should be as invisible as possible that when you are reading an English translation of a poly Tex you should be coming as close as possible to the effect it would have on you if you were a native speaker of poly assuming that native speakers of poly ever existed that I mean you were fluent in poly and it would have the as close to the same effect on you as if you were reading in the original poly and it like I hope I said that right so I mean when you're reading an

English translation or any translation
you know the goal for the translator in
my opinion should be to create as close
to the original impact you know like you
would have like essentially the same
experience if you were reading in the
original language or in the translated
language
so that's that was like my main my main
uh Criterion for translating plus of
course just getting the translation
right I mean you have to you have to
think I mean this is definitely not
postmodern this isn't the new criticism
or anything but really it just it's just
obvious to me that you have to try to

understand what it was that the original
author was trying to say and then you
try to say it in a different language in
such a way that it has like as close to
the same effect when you read it that it
would be that it would have on someone
if they were reading it in the original
poly and they were like that was like
their first language or
something so yeah the whole idea of of
like postmodernism or the precursor of
postmodernism in like the new criticism
where you know the original intention of
the author is irrelevant I mean that's
just nonsense to me I mean you
definitely have to try to understand you
know what what they were saying and why

they were saying it in that
way just because there there might be
some Nuance that they are expressing
that you would want to express too in
order to make it as as genuine or
reliable of a translation as possible so
like when I translated the AA waga that
was really a challenge because the AA
waga is full of puns it's full of plays
on words like words with multiple
meanings and trying to come up with an
English trans an English equivalent of a
pun or a play on words you know the
trying to come up with the same word
that has the same two or three possible
meanings uh sometimes it was just flat

out impossible but uh I did the best I

could and sometimes I just be stewing

over like one verse for

months just not off and on of course you

know I would sleep and and eat and stuff

but

uh

see yeah just trying to trying to come

up with the same subtleties in English

as as existed in the original poly like

like poetry is very difficult I mean I

didn't even try to put it into meter

like most of the ATA waga is in is

inverse I think all of it's inverse

except for maybe a very little bit so

yeah I mean trying to force fit it into

meter um yeah that was too much of a

challenge for

me

so yeah I guess I guess I gave my

overall translation approach you know

just first of all you have to know what

they're saying as best you can and then

convert that into a different language

as accurately as possible trying to

catch you know sort of the the nuances

and sort of like the the overall feel of

it so it's it's kind of an intuitive

approach which a lot of translators

would criticize and say an intuitive

approach is sort of just like a non-s

scholarly approach like KR Norman for

example would uh does not like or did

not like the intuitive approach to
transl ation and I mean he was saying
that he didn't really care what it meant
so he just wanted to to translate what
it says but if you don't know what it
means you can't translate what it says
you know like some words have multiple
meanings like the word dhama notoriously
has lots of meanings in poly and if you
can't I mean if you don't know what it
means from the context then how are you
going to translate it unless you're like
uh the the first famous Nana mole who
was a great translator who tried to come
up with one English word for each po pow
word so I think for dhama the best he
could come up with was the word idea

which uh probably is not so good I

didn't I didn't take that

extreme

so let's

see I guess I answered that question I

mean first of all of course you have to

know the language and know what it's

saying and then try to

translate that into a different

language as seamlessly as possible and

accurately as possible so I'll just move

on the next question here this is from

Mambo and Mambo says hello poo what are

your views on Evolution and rebirth or

reincarnation in my opinion Evolution

negates the concept of rebirth we can

follow a link to our parents and can
take it back as far as we want an
evolutionary chart even to the first
living organism
my theory is we get scas or Aggregates
condas from a combination of our parents
genes which could also include our
nature and temperament so the Buddhist
view about the velocity of past karmas
being carried forward into the next life
makes me doubt the rebirth
concept well as it turns out I I pretty
much have uh certain amount of faith in
both certain amount of faith in the
Buddhist concept of rebirth and also I
mean I have to admit that
Evolution from a a samsaric empirical

point of view is just obvious that

anyone who argues against Evolution has

some kind of religious acts to grind

usually they're they're Christian

creationists so they want to believe the

Bible's true just because they're

Christians and so they're willing to

reject or ignore just a mountain of

evidence that life has evolved on this

planet

but I don't see that they're really I do

not see that they're really

contradictory to to each other I mean

you can have both because they're

happening at two different levels one is

like a spiritual level and the other one

is like a material

Level and the spiritual level is

probably more real than the material

Level although probably in the west most

people would would feel

otherwise so I mean you do have

like a male and a female come together

and they produce

Offspring but that's not the same as

rebirth I mean in a way at a material

Level it kind of is because The

Offspring is half of the mother and half

of the father

genetically so but still I mean the way

rebirth happens in in Buddhism or or

Hinduism or or you know any system that

that endorses the idea of rebirth or

reincarnation

it's like your karma lands you exactly

where you need to be and so it's going

to land you in a certain like a uh into

a certain family with certain parents

and with a certain like genetic and

physical

makeup

so yeah it's like the the spirit is not

the same as the

material that uh they're just two

different two different levels of

reality two different levels of samsaric

reality

anyway but in a in a

sense rebirth also can be a kind of

spiritual Evolution so there's that
too but uh yeah it's it's just the
physical the physical element is just
going on at its at its own at its own
level and the karma aspect is Just
Landing us into the the physical vehicle
that is most appropriate for us at the
time so I really don't see that there's
any conflict between the two
concepts and I do uh use both of them as
working hypotheses in understanding the
samsaric world in which I find myself
situated so I think I'll just move on to
the next
question which is from TIG and it says
when is you gonna do a show on
upand

well I don't know we I've discussed
upand in fact I did a video with Brian
Rue probably two or three years ago by
now maybe it was back when I was still a
monk just discussing upand so we've
already made the show on
upand um also I wrote a long essay um
discussing my experiences with upand
especially um to two months I spent at
his pandama Center in
rangon um which if the when and if when
I come out with a fourth book it'll be
in that book because the fourth volume
of of the books that uh I was I've been
working on I I already got three
published the fourth one would be just

based my personal experiences as a monk
based on that which it would include um
being at Pama for two months
upo was also president in my
ordination but uh he didn't seem to like
me very much I was told that he didn't
like foreigners in general but uh we
don't need to get into that I mean there
were certain foreigners that he
obviously like especially if they spoke
really fluent Burmese and just fit right
in but sort of like the The Outsiders he
didn't like too
much so yeah when is you going to do a
show on upan we already did it Brian Rue
and I did it although
you might have to look for it on Brian

ruse's Buddhist truthers playlist on

bitshoot I'm not sure if if it's on my

um it's in my playlists on YouTube or

bitshoot because I

haven't uh uploaded all of the shows

that I did with Brian some of them would

just be off limits for for YouTube

anyway so yeah it is out there

already so I'll just move on next

question here this is from

ruie and ruie says hello poo do you

think the Buddha remains silent when

asked certain questions not only to

point out their ultimately unanswerable

nature but also their igno

ignobility for those on the

path um yeah I think the main reason why

there are certain questions the Buddha

didn't answer is just that they don't

have answers they're they're like

invalid questions

although some

people have come up with the idea that

the Buddha wouldn't answer them just

because it had nothing to do with DH

really you know like what happens to a a

tagata after he dies does he continue to

exist or does he no longer exist the

Buddha wouldn't answer or like the

beginning of the world or is the world

infinite or is it finite those are

questions that the Buddha just would not

answer and I think there are probably a

lot more that the Buddha wouldn't answer

in fact if maybe that he wouldn't answer

most questions um just based on like the

Tica waga where it's just saying have no

view no belief you know just don't even

go there it's it's like radical just

being in the present moment with no

mental commentary going on just be here

now but

uh maybe ignobility or anaria that would

be not Arian would be like ignoble in uh

in

poly let's

see to point out their ultimate

unanswerable nature but also their

ignobility for those on the path yeah I

mean to the extent that it's just
irrelevant to becoming enlightened you
could call that ignoble I mean it's it's
not so much degrading unless it depends
on your attitude I mean if you're like
heavily invested on into whether the
world you know had a beginning or not
you know like the universe or you know
if an enlightened being continues to
exist after death or does not continue
to exist after death I mean if you're
just really like pretty much fanatic or
it's like you know your philosophy your
whole approach to dhama is based on
something like this then that could be
called ignoble I
suppose so yeah in a way it's it's

like in a way it's kind of degrading I
guess to just insist on you know only
this is true anything else is wrong um
you know it's like the stereotypical
fool in the poly Tex is someone who says
only this is true anything else is wrong
because really the truth and if it
really is true it can't be put into
words the name that can be named is not
the Eternal
name but for some people it could get
into like a a matter of
ignobility I think it would depend on
the
individual so I guess I'll move on to
ru's next question here hello again poo

this is not so much a question as perhap

a request how would you translate the

following oh I forgot to look this up I

really did I should check this out just

a

second let's see

here is that it no is this it

no it's here there it

is okay I knew I I should have looked

this

up let's see

so anyways he's saying hello again poo

this is not so much a request as perhaps

a request no this is not so much a

question as perhaps a request how would

you translate the following a sort of

Mantra that I devised into poly quote

May all beings visible and invisible be

free and of a joyful mind unquote please

do take your time if you're up to the

task

so oh this is the wrong book anyway just

a second again I know here

somewhere here it

is just stepped on a dog

toy right

here 11 holy discourses of

protection the Maha perita

poly by Sal tonm

win who uh I believe is uh Shan living

in Burma so

anyways this this quote that he had

reminds me very

much of the meta there's something very

similar already translated in the

metas let's

See's

see so it's those that are seen and

those that are not seen

let's see those that are far away and

those that are near those that are are

in existence and those who are waiting

for existence May the all beings be

happy-

minded

so yeah I guess I should uh maybe in the

comments I should come up with it but I

forgot to work it

out I me all beings visible and

invisible so visible and invisible is

just data ad which is which is seen or

unseen and the B free part is the only

part that's missing from the

matuta but that would be like uh it

depends on what kind of free I mean

liberated would be like H weu may they

be

free we Mandu or

pandu Mandu like Moksha in Sanskrit is

like Liberation or freedom

so may all being sa visible and

invisible

dat see

dat would be seen or unseen may they be

free is

weu and of a joyful mind is Bandu

Su so

SA

cha Bandu

Su and if I just butchered the

grammar I

apologize so yeah I mean almost the same

thing except for the the free part is

just right out of the metas

sua and it is good to just I mean the

meta is kind of a long is long for a

mantra but it is it is if you only know

how to recite one text the metas is a

good one to recite it and there are

millions of people who have recited it

so in a way you can kind of get some

like join the momentum of all these

reciters of the metas

sua but uh I suppose I could uh if I
think of it I can like type it out into
the
comments so I guess I'll just move on to
next question
here and this is from gamma spect
trolist and gamma spectrol says
regarding the flame job that allegedly
lit himself on fire in protest of
genocide a lot of people are saying it
was fake which turned into the claim the
famous Vietnamese monk that did the same
decades ago was fake also how does
Buddhism look at suicide like this and
how possible do you think an alleged
Advanced Buddhist could just sit there

roasting his flesh and not react even in the slightest

so I guess this is kind of two questions I mean the first question is what would be the Buddhist attitude towards ulating yourself or just committing suicide and the Buddha does say in the poly text that I mean you shouldn't kill yourself until you're you're done you if you become enlightened then you could commit suicide I suppose which was kind of a tradition among some like early Indian um like spiritual movements like The Janes once they figured that they had reached the ultimate that they had exhausted all of their karma they just went off and um they didn't burn

themselves or committ any kind of

violent suicide because that would be

making new Karma they would just squat

down and and not move until they were

dead but uh yeah Buddhism would not

approve of committing

suicide unless I mean it was somehow

became the lesser of two

evils

but uh so it doesn't really at least

terada would not approve of committing

suicide as a matter as as a kind of

protest like political protest or

whatever yeah that I mean it wouldn't be

as bad as killing somebody else you know

killing yourself isn't as bad as killing

somebody else but uh still it's it's
kind of counterproductive because you're
ending your life before you have reached
Liberation but um
let's see so I already answered that
part of the question so see do you think
an alleged Advanced Buddhist could just
sit there roasting his flesh and not
react even in the slightest yeah I think
that's possible partly because I have
read that if you really are ulating
yourself like the nerve endings on your
skin are all going to be destroyed
within a matter of seconds so it would
just be like the first few seconds when
you'd be in searing Agony and then you
just kind of go num

plus you'd probably be in a State of

Shock by

then but also a I mean a lot of

Buddhists I mean they're professional

Aesthetics you know they learn to be

okay with discomfort and to some degree

even pain and so yeah a lot of Buddhists

could just sit in relatively severe pain

and and not move especially if if uh you

know there's a crowd watching them you

know they're not just going to start

flailing around and screaming and stuff

like a lot of normies would do obviously

um you know they've got a lot of

self-discipline mental self-discipline

Detachment they can detach from from

just mere mental or physical Sensations
that kind of a thing a certain amount of
equinity you know there's a lot of
mentions of this kind of thing in the
text like kwadi you know the Buddha in a
previous existence who got just pieces
of his body chopped off one by one by
the king of Kalinga because he was
talking to uh the king of kinga's Herm
girls at a park one day so the king of
Kinga was was jealous and pissed off so
he just started having parts of of this
athetics body cut off one by one and the
athetic did not feel any ill will or any
such
thing so yeah it's it's definitely
possible partly just because as I said

earlier like your pain receptors on your skin are going to be be roasted and destroyed within a matter of seconds and then you're going to be in like a State of

Shock and or at least your body will be and then it's true that a lot of the the training that a serious monk undergoes you know not just some ordinary scholar monk living in some Kushi Monastery in a Buddhist University or something but but like a monk who's like a forest aesthetic kind of of of practitioner who has made a lifelong or a decades long practice of just being okay with pain and discomfort just sort of detaching

from it um yeah I think it's I think

it's very possible and I have no doubt

that the Vietnamese monk at the very

least really did just sit there in

meditative

posture uh while he

burned so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from

Arin and Arin says can you speak about

scientism as a modern religion and how

dark dmic it is how about the priest

class of

scientism uh the modern scientist who is

beholden to the corporate or political

and academic funding that controls their

scientific Doctrine how can the ancient

knowledge of Buddhist

philosophy save us from the modern Cults

so I guess that's two

questions actually there's more than two

question marks

here but I'm uh I'm turning it into two

questions here

so the first is talking about scientism

as a modern religion how dharmic it is

and the priest class of scientism which

is the modern Sciences also it be like

the the modern um professor of science

at

universities um and uh who is beholden

to the corporate and political and

academic funding that controls their

scientific Doctrine and then the second

question is how can the ancient knowledge of buddh philosophy save us from the modern Cults okay so scientism really is a kind of religion it's like an atheistic religion sort of like Marxism although it's better than Marxism because it's it's based Less on dogma and more on empiricism I mean that's what madees science as strong as it is is it is is based on objectivity rationality and empiricism and it didn't start off as being atheist I mean that was one of the early um goals of early modern scientists was they wanted to see the world the way God sees the world you know they were Christians back in those

days you know like oh what's his name

Isaac Newton John Lock those guys they

were

Christians at least I mean they didn't

have any choice but be Christians

because of the culture back then but

they were

Christians

so um but science in and of itself is

aoral you know moral morality is not a

scientific word really like good and bad

are really not scientific words it's

just trying to understand the the

phenomenal

Universe just based on observation and

seeing recognizing patterns that can

repeat so that you can make predictions with regard to what's going to happen in the future that sort of thing and so I mean to the extent that it really is trying to understand reality trying to deal with truth then that's relatively dharmic to the to the extent that it's honest science then you know honesty is is a virtue in
Dharma so I mean it's not really otherworldly it's not you know its goal is not Enlightenment or Liberation or or Heaven salvation anything like that um in a way it's it's sort of science is trying to build an intellectual Tower of Babel that will reach all the way up into the heavens of omniscience and it's

doomed to fail in that

regard

so yeah it is a modern religion though

and it is based on articles of Faith

it's not entirely based on just

objectivity and empiricism there are

articles of faith in scientism and

there's just the the beginning Article

of Faith is that there is even an

external physical world out there that

we can observe or that a little blob of

gry meat in our head has the capacity to

understand reality whether it's even

possible even in theory to understand

reality intellectually or you know

there's the matter of Faith it's pretty

much of necessity that the the future
will behave the way the past did that
laws of physics aren't going to
change that sort of thing you know there
are there are articles of faith in
science and I've written about that a
lot I think uh one of my books that is
for sale on Amazon in the links below if
YouTube is not still smiting me for
discussing a forbidden subject and
allows me to post links to this
video um so yeah anyway it's it's like a
modern religion it it's based on
articles of faith and um I mean not to
the extent of you know most so-called
religions or or Marxism either that
Marxism is just as dogmatic and B based

on articles of Faith as any of the older religions which is why it doesn't work very well because so much of it just isn't true so I guess I answered that part so it it'd be more of a philosophy than a religion but it would have certain religious aspects because I mean I've I was in Academia I I majored in in Marine Biology and you know you have interactions with professors and just star-eyed grad students who just gun ho on science I mean they they really do think that science is is like has replaced religion which it it kind of has especially in the west and um you

know it's it's like the new religion

essentially they have like a

religious I mean it's like they have

this attitude of they want to dedicate

their life to just contributing some

humble little brick to this intellectual

Tower of

Babel so yeah there's definitely

religious elements about scientism and

scientism I should point out isn't

necessarily the same as just science

like empirical science is one thing

scientism is this belief that science

really does explain

reality and it comes in a way closer

than Abid dama does at least with regard

to explaining the the material so-called

the seemingly Material
World so I guess I answered that part of
the question see the next part here is
how about the priest class of scientism
the modern scientist or Professor who is
beholding to the corporate political and
academic funding that controls their
scientific Doctrine yeah a scientist can
be bought as easily as a politician can
in fact I I would say that a lot of
scientists can be bought even more
easily than a politician because a
politician has to have a
certain brazenness to him whereas a
scientist you know they could just be
this wimpy geeky person that didn't have

any social life and they just wanted to make something of themselves by getting a PhD and becoming a scientist and contributing to the the aforementioned intellectual Tower of Babel you know there are a lot of scientists who really were just like geeky kids with no social life and they're not particularly brave people and so if if you know if they're going to get defunded and not get any more promotions for discussing something like oh the Great Barrier Reef is doing fine you know it's just the expansion and contraction of the reef is due to natural cycles and there was a there was a a professor in Australia who I'm pretty sure lost his job for saying just

that because it just went against the
official narrative that the politicians
are
pushing so I mean if if they're
threatened I think that they would
Buckle more easily than than the average
politician or or judge so I think
they're they're relatively easy easy to
buy I mean if if they're going to get
lots of funding for doing a a study for
the government with the the
predetermined conclusion that such an
such is good for you or such and such is
bad for you then you know they'll go
along and do it and they'll make make
considerable money and publish something

and get a better name for themselves
rather than you know do the opposite and
become a pariah maybe lose their
job and I mean it's it's always been
that way science is always driven by
economics I mean funding is going to be
with regard to something that
is economically important like I majored
in Marine Biology like I mentioned and I
mean if you're going to study a certain
fish species for example then if it's a
economically important fish species like
a species of salmon or Cod or something
you're going to find all kinds of
information but if you're going to do um
a study on some kind of fish that would
be considered a junk fish I mean it's

not good to eat it has no economic value
there's going to be very little
information on
that so I mean it's always been that
way but it's worse now and I think
science is really being viated it's it's
being de corrupted and degraded lately
just because of sort of postmodernism
and the idea that truth is just a social
construct we can make the truth be
whatever we want it to be and like the
the powers that be the elites who've got
most of the money have that idea and so
um they pressure scientists to okay
certain things and and condemn other
things and just completely ignore other

things and I mean it's it's happening a lot there's if it doesn't and I mean tenure is almost irrelevant this point because if you do if you publish studies if you can even get them published that are with regard to something Politically Incorrect you know differences among ethnicities or something like that um I mean that's it I mean your career can be destroyed so consequently you've got really high-profile prestigious scientific and medical journals like like nature and the Lancet who are going along with this idea that the difference between male and female is just a cultural construct

so yeah science is in Decline

now so let's see here I guess uh I

answered that question sort of and so

then the last part of this question how

can the ancient knowledge of Buddhist

philosophy save us from the modern Cults

we'll just keep Dharma in mind and if

you're going to be interested in science

also I mean it should be it should be

compatible with

Dharma that I

mean yeah I think just

just being grounded in Dharma you know

it it it keeps you stable and it keeps

you from just being lost getting you

know drawn one way or the other off off

the middle

path so the ancient knowledge of

Buddhist philosophy can save us from

Modern Cults simply because I mean

you're just not going to believe the

modern Cults because you're already

believing Dharma if you're believing

anything at all or I mean you going to

want to go with the r radical mysticism

of the yka waga and tells you not to

believe anything then that's going to

protect you from the modern Cults

also at least it's going to protect you

from becoming a member of the modern

Cults although members of the modern

Cults might try to get you for for just

not being one of them or for daring to

tell the

truth you tell too much truth or just

just your honest opinion and you can get

in trouble you can get videos taken down

from YouTube for

example I mean that's just a minor

example I mean you can wind up just

really in big

trouble so I think I'll just move on to

the next question here this is from

Indian guy Alias

Trevor an Indian guy Alias Trevor says I

finally have a question exclamation park

exclamation

mark

man so I finally have a question

exclamation mark in the middle length

discourse under all the

taints sabasa is the

poly the the Buddha explains there are

taints or asaas that need to be

abandoned by using I'm wonder I'm

wondering what do you think he means by

there are taints or caners that need to

be abandoned by using I think it might

mean you have to use certain things that

suck so you know what they are and not

do it again the second question mark is

rhetorical so it's really one question

you grammar Nazi H poo

LOL

so there's a few things that I mean just

sort of as a introduction to this

question that uh the discourse he's
referring to is the second discourse of
the majam minaya called the Sabas
saasa and it's the the discourse on all
the
asaas and Asawa biku Bodi translated as
taint which I don't think is a good
translation literally Asawa it's it's
it's based on the verb Saadi which means
to flow so Saadi means to flow Asawa
means it's flowing towards you instead
of away from you so I think it was
um aan tanero that said that the
Buddhists got the the term Asawa and the
idea for Asawa from The Janes and The
Janes believed

that you have a soul or jaiva that um if it's completely uncorrupted by Karma it'll just float up into this eternal heaven but because it's corrupted by Karma it it's like weighed down and the the The Janes and also to some degree the sasti Buddhists considered Karma to be kind of like a almost like a physical substance it was sticky and would stick to your soul at least the James believe that that that Karma would it was it was an Asawa it was it would flow in and and stick to you so my translation of Asawa is encumbering influence which is kind of long and clunky but it it really um it describes it better like influence is literally exactly the same as Asawa you

know the same meaning it's something

that flows in

influence but it's not just any

influence it's like an encumbering

influence something that weighs you

down

so um the Buddha in this in majaya

number two which is an important suta is

a cardinal discourse which is one reason

why they've got it towards the beginning

usually in these suta collections the

first sua and sometimes the first

several sutas are considered to be like

really important ones so it wound up

being number

two so let's see

here the Buddha explains that there are taints or asaas encumbering influences that need to be abandoned by using and he's seeing and uh Indian guy here is a wondering what do you think he means by there are taints or caners that need to be abandoned by using yeah and Canker is another old uh rendering of the word Asawa and the fact that you've got so many different renderings indicates that it's a hard term to really understand for a lot of people but if you read the suta that there are some things some asaas that have to be abandoned through use and you read the suta and you see that things that are abandoned through use or the

the things that you use are the four
requisites which is Ms
food let's see alms food clothing
shelter and medicine and those are just
necessary you have to use those so at
least if you get sick and need a place
to stay and so forth
so um I mean you can't really avoid the
four requisites and so you have to
overcome your your asaas your like
attachments through using them with
Detachment and um the the suta itself
has these Recollections you're supposed
to think about um these things to help
you detach from the four requisites and
as a junior monk I had to recite this in

poly every day you know it's like um
with regard to alms food the the the
thing that you chant and it's it's right
in the suta is I use this alms food you
know not to beautify myself not for
sensual pleasure but only to keep my
body healthy and strong enough to
continue practicing
dhama and so you just reflect on on this
so that you can use the requisites uh
with Detachment and that helps you to
abandon any kind of clingy attachments
that would be asaas in the Buddhist
sense
so oh at at the end at the end of the
section of abandoning the asaas through
use the quote is while taints vacation

and fever might arise in one who does
not use the requisites thus there are no
tains vexation or fever in one who uses
them thus that's biku's translation and
that's you know reflecting on the wise
use of the four
requisites because you're not supposed
to avoid the four
requisites although at every Monk's
ordination he is admonished that when he
is sick that he should content himself
with drinking fermented urine as
medicine so with that mind I'll just
move on to the next question here this
is from Fred and Fred says question what
would one do if you have a vindictive

Patron on alms round I think it would be a possibility and I'm not sure what he means by a vindictive Patron I mean if they really hate you they wouldn't be much of a patron um it could be that he's referring to somebody on alms round that wants to put like dog [__] or something into your bulll and I've I've been told that that sort of thing has happened before where you got someone who just disapproves of you or disapproves of your Monastery or disapproved to the sect of tervana Buddhism that you are following and they'll just put something really just deliberately disgusting into your bull and in a case like that you're not

you're not required to accept it I mean
if it's if it's obviously offered in bad
faith then you're not required to accept
it and but you're not supposed to to
like rebuke the person you're supposed
to just remain silent and modest and
meek and you know you might refuse it
and you just continue on your way or if
they're like people yelling at you or
you know just mocking you then I mean
ideally you just send meta to them not
say anything and just continue on your
way so I think maybe I answered that
question and so I'm going to move on to
the next question which is from five
precept

Pete and five precept Pete asks kind of an interesting question to me who is your favorite great disciple of the Buddha and when I was a junior monk especially I had two favorite great disciples one was Maha kasaba who was the great disciple who was outstanding with regard to following Danga or the the optional aesthetic practices and all of the great disciples I should mention are outstanding in some respect or another you know so they're they're outstanding in in one way and then or are they're a great disciple who is the one who is outstanding in this respect so mahak kaspa was the most outstanding with regard to following the dangas at

the highest level he was just a super
aesthetic so he was one of my favorites
he was kind of uh held up before me as a
kind of role model like I've mentioned
before how um
when I was a very Junior monk I was um
instructed to read the Tera Maha kaspa's
verses in the terata which is a text of
arahant testimonies put into
verse and mahak kasa's verses are about
a time when he was going for alms and a
beggar with Leprosy saw him going for
alms and was inspired by his nobility of
of demeanor you know his his Serenity
and just he just looked like he was
really a wise good person and so this

beggar with Leprosy was inspired to take
some food from his own bowl and put it
into mahak kaspa's Bowl so he asked
mahak kaspa mahak kaspa just accepted in
silence and so as this beggar is taking
some food and putting into mahak kasa's
Bowl because he has leprosy one of his
fingertips breaks off and lands in the
bowl and Maha kaspa doesn't raise an
eyebrow you know he just accepts it with
with serenity
and the the beggar on the other hand I
mean he's kind of mortified you know
he's very ashamed and embarrassed and so
he follows mahak kaspa just to see what
he's going to do if he's you know just
going to throw all the food out or

something so mahak kaspa after he gets out food he continues going for alms and then when he gets enough food he sits down at the the base of the city wall to eat his meal and he doesn't even take the fingertip out of the bowl he just moves it over to one side and then and then eats his meal

so that was that was sort of held up as an ideal of austerity when I was a junior Monk and I have to admit I had I had a lot of respect for mahak kaspa who became the Buddha's successor after the Buddha died mahak kaspa was senior monk in the S who presided over the the the first uh the first great Council and so

forth but I also had another favorite
great disciple that most people probably
have never heard of and that is Raywood
of the doubter who's mentioned a few
times in vinea and I think he is
considered to be the great disciple who
was most outstanding with regard to his
scrupulousness with regard to following
vinia rules and Raywood the doubter I
mean he would see things going on and
start having doubts about vinia and then
the budha would have to set him straight
on it like uh one
time he was passing by some people
making lumps of
sugar probably palm sugar I'm not sure
what kind of sugar it was but they were

putting a little bit of flour into it to
help it stick together sort of like uh
powdered sugar has some kind of starch
or something in it to keep it from
sticking together but I guess at this
the Sugar Mill in Ancient India they
were putting a certain amount of of
wheat flour or rice flour into the the
sugar mixture just to make the balls
stick together because they'd sell them
in lumps and it's called Gula which
literally means
lump and so Raywood of the doubter he
saw their putting flour into the sugar
so then he thinking well can't eat sugar
in the afternoon because it's got flour

in it and even though sugar is allowable
in the afternoon the flower isn't so
then the Buddha says well so long as
it's it's so much sugar that is just
called sugar that any Trace Amounts of
of other ingredients can be ignored so
then Raywood of The Da was allowed to
eat sugar again he did that two or three
times in the in the poly in in the rules
of monastic discipline and so I just I
just liked him because when I was a
young monk I was trying to be very
strict with regard to monastic
discipline and he was sort of a role
model because he was he was like really
going for it and any any situation that
was doubtful he would just not do

it so I'll just move on to the next

question

here and this is the last person asking

questions and this is

avenity and avenity I believe is the

biological mate of a person who usually

asks the questions instead of

her um and so there are let's see one

two three

four five questions but considering that

she's asking on behalf of this other guy

I think we can just attribute three to

one person and and two to the other

person so it's still okay so no it's

only four questions anyway so avenity

says hi I've been asked by one of your

most Avid viewers her biolog logical

mate to send you these

questions so the first question is if

our thoughts aren't our thoughts how and

why can we be blamed for them well

that's that's an interesting question

our thoughts if our thoughts aren't our

thoughts how and why can we be blamed

for them well at the level that they

aren't our thoughts there's no we to be

blamed see if you're dealing with anata

no self then there just is no self

ultimately I mean the conventional

worldly level we can say yeah I exist

and and Joe down the street exists and

all this but

um as a level of Ultimate Reality there

is no individual

person

so I mean there are no individual

thoughts really

even although that's kind of going

against Abid dama we don't want to do

that too

much so um at the level where there is

an O at the level where you're accepting

the existence of individual

people then our thoughts are our

thoughts and we can be blamed for them

but when you get to the level where

there are no individual people anymore

then there's nobody to

blame so depends on what level you're

you're dealing with depends on how you

look at

it okay I think I answered that

question so I'll just move on to the

next question here how did you grieve

the death of your father yeah that was

that was weird I I was living in Burma

at the time I was living in a cave in

Burma and when I was going for alms in

lameier village and somebody told me

that a supporter of mine in

rangon had sent me the word that my

teacher

venerable paku or um see Tong Pulu chal

syoya seatt he went by more than one

name seatt usua that he had died

so I wanted to know when The Cremation

when the funeral was going to be so I
asked one of my supporters to find out
but in those days in that part of Burma
in order to make a phone call you had to
rent a boat or or find a boat and cross
the river there was a village on the
other side of the river that had a one
phone this is back before everyone had
cell
phones and so she went across the river
and uh made the phone call and came back
and she came to see me and she said said
in in just this voice just soft as as
like down you know just the softest
voice I have some bad news do you want
to hear it and I just knew right then

and there my father was dead because I
it it' probably be only that would cause
such a soft voice on the behalf of a a
female
supporter and it was it was correct my
father also had died right about the
same time as my teacher did although my
father was my first teacher I guess so
it was weird and that I did not cry I
didn't cry when either of my parents
died I did cry when I I gave my dog away
just like a year ago less than a year
ago but for some reason something that
heavy that hits it's it's like it's just
going Beyond just
superficial reactions like that I guess
so I just had like this empty feeling in

my chest for more than a week it was

just like this hollow feeling in my

chest

and

um in in sort of in honor of my father

it's kind of weird it might not make any

sense to you but I read a story by Jack

London to build a fire sort of in honor

of my father and the story by Jack

London is about a man in the Arctic you

know a long time ago who freezes to

death because his hands are too numb to

build a fire and my father lived in in

Alaska for for many years and he had

lots of stories about you know living in

in the the Arctic you know it's like

when you spit and it bounces you know
it's 30 below zero and if you spit and
at arms length you hear it crack and
freeze then it's 40 below and if you
spit and it cracks immediately as soon
as it leaves your mouth it's 50 below
and if you try to spit and it just
freezes to your lips and you can't spit
then it's 60 below and you got to go
inside because otherwise you get like
frostbite on your
lungs so he had lots and lots of stories
about you know living in Alaska so in
honor of him I read that also I had a
picture of of my father and me when I
was a baby you know it was one of my
favorite pictures of us and I put it on

the altar in my cave and just you know
made a little offering of flowers to it
and uh kept it there for a few weeks and
that's pretty much uh how I grieved the
death of my
father so I'll just move on to avenity
and her um biological mates next
question here have you ever considered
all people to be complete idiots
and maybe in like I don't know no I
don't think so I mean I was I was
thinking maybe in times of like Supreme
disgust just for like a a second or
something but uh yeah I don't consider
all people to be complete idiots I don't
think I've ever considered all people to

be complete idiots I mean pretty much
everybody except for like real literal
idiots have uh at least some non idiocy
about them I mean we may be we're more
ignorant than knowledgeable in most
respect I mean we're infinitely ignorant
so I mean we are a kind of glorified ape
an upgraded ape so yeah I've considered
all people to be upgraded Apes I've
considered all people to be just sort of
ignorant and and kind of I don't know
very very flawed in certain
respects but I've never considered all
people to be complete idiots in my youth
especially I used to think the world
would be a lot better off if there were
no people on it but uh I I dislike or

despise the human race much less than I
did when I was say in my late teens and
early
20s I have a certain compassion for the
human race now I like people more even
though I'm still kind
of um I don't know kind of solitary my
sweetheart and I are
solitary don't uh don't have much of a
social
life so let's see I'll just move on the
next question here which is the very
last question the very last one of this
Q&A so avenity and her biological mate
ask one more because of course there is
does shakuni Buddha mean the person from

the shakya group who is completely

silent and money originally meant

someone who had undertaken a vow of

silence in fact I have read that in

Hindi like in in India today someone who

is M is someone who has undertaken a vow

of

silence but the word

money just it sort of evolved the

meaning of it evolved to mean any Sage

so or originally Mooney did mean someone

who was silent someone who had undergone

a vow of silence or who just didn't

speak but by the time the Buddha was

called shakim Muni um it had just

evolved to just mean a sage you know an

extremely wise

person so yeah he's just the Sha the

sage of the shakas the shakas being his

his tribe or Clan his

nationality well I guess yeah yeah no it

wouldn't be his nationality but it would

be his his his tribe or Clan his

extended family the shakya clan of the

shakya

tribe so yeah it doesn't imply that he

was silent because he wasn't he did talk

and that's it that's that's the end

that's that's the end of this Q&A aside

from the the concluding remarks which

are as

usual um you know if you like this feel

free to uh like and subscribe if you

haven't done it already and look at the UR URL links below if YouTube is not smiting me anymore and allows me to include them if uh if there are no URL links you are welcome to look on one of my older videos where there are URL links and then you can see all the other ways of uh viewing my material including the books that I have for sale and so forth so I guess that's it if you have any questions feel free to include them in the comments below or if you have access to the Subscribe star account you can ask them there if you have access to the Discord server you can ask them there and be happy

okay I think we're recording yep we are

hello and welcome to episode 80

something

83 of question and answer I'm your host

po basa and these are my co-hosts who

both of which are in heat so please just

disregard it if they start doing

anything inappropriate like humping each

other

and uh we got a fair amount of questions

today so I might as well just Dive Right

In and the first question is from nature

cure and nature cure says you consider

soda and sakagami are not genuine

Enlightenment that is very bold

statement in my opinion I watched all

your previous videos answers about this
topic I still can't get satisfied with
your answers can you
please provide more insights answers to
this topic or individual video on this
topic with Brian or aan
Puna okay well there's a few things I
can mention here but um I guess I'll get
to the the additional things I can
mention towards the end but um yeah it
is I I think what he's referring to is
the four stages of Enlightenment or the
four stages of sainthood the four stages
of arah hood which traditionally in
terava or sodana or stream enterer
sakagami or once returner anagami or
non- returner and arant or fully

enlightened

being and I don't consider that to have

originated with the Buddha

himself I do think that it was a later

addition for for two main

reasons one is that if you look at the

texts it just seems unlikely that in the

older text when they're mentioning a

soda for example they're mentioning

somebody who has had a glimpse of

Enlightenment and is a kind of Saint

like in the putty desia rules there's

there's reference to um monks not

relying too much on a family of

sodas and it just means probably just

going with the context that a family of

soda panas is a family of new converts
who have just entered the stream of
Dharma and it'd be sort of like the
equivalent of a born again
Christian
um also um GC pond in his book studies
in the origins of Buddhism which I would
highly recommend to anyone who wants to
understand what early Buddhism was like
points out that for example sakagami is
a term that is not found at all in texts
that show signs of great Antiquity like
archaic features like very early
Buddhism like even pre- terraa Buddhism
um also he points out that the uh the
Ida for several sutas of the
idua um the term anagami apparently is

used in the con in the in the sense of
an fully enlightened being and stop
it so I mean there is sort of internal
evidence like that and I mean the
meanings of these terms um they they're
kind of fluid among different schools of
Buddhism for example I read one of the
Cardinal Mahayana Buddhist text I can't
remember which one it was that had this
weird interpretation of the four stages
in that aoda see what was it an anagami
let's see where should I start start at
the top or the bottom aoda paana was
considered to be just an ordinary
arant that aaka dami was considered to
be a Pacha Buddha if I remember

correctly and an no

wait it it was it was this weird thing I

read it years ago but it was like an

aont yeah okay anyway one of them meant

Pacha Buddha I think it was a sakami was

interpreted to mean a Pacha Buddha you

what are you doing stop

it so anyways the main point I'm trying

to get

to is that different schools of Buddhism

had different interpretations of these

four four stages of sainthood but for me

what is even more

important is I mean that's just kind of

conjecture based on circumstantial

evidence you know

just you know the evidence tends to

point in a certain direction but you
can't really be
certain but for me the clencher
is that I do not consider terraa
Buddhism or Buddhism in general to have
a monopoly on
enlightenment that other spiritual
Traditions also can lead to full
Enlightenment I think even some
Christians may be fully enlightened or
have become fully enlightened in the
past I should say I don't know who I
would point to nowadays as an
enlightened Christian but I do think
that somebody like Meister eart or St
John of the Cross may have been fully

enlightened and also a number of Greek
Orthodox or just Eastern Orthodox monks
and
nuns and they I mean terot of Buddhism
or just Buddhism is the only one that
has these four stages of sainthood so I
mean if it's a thing that happens you
know that there are these four stages of
Enlightenment that should be attested to
in other Enlightenment Traditions not
just in Buddhism or just in terraa
Buddhism I mean if if you're okay with
the idea that terraa Buddhism has a
total Monopoly on enlightenment that no
Terra nobody who isn't a terava Buddhist
can possibly become
enlightened then yeah maybe uh that

would be your explanation for why only
Terra Buddhism has this four stages of
ARA hood or four stages of sainthood or
Sage hood and other Traditions just
don't have it because they just don't
get that far but I just don't buy
it um it is true I've mentioned this a
number of times before that St John of
the Cross independently of terraa
Buddhism I'm pretty sure came up with
the same three stages of development
that is found in some sutas like in in
Paul you've got the pjen or the common
worldling you've got the sea or the one
in training and you got the AA or one
who is no longer in training so that

means let's see the putuj is just the ordinary person the sea is someone who has had a glimpse of Enlightenment you know it's they're at least uh a soda according to the the Orthodox tradition um but they're still not fully enlightened yet and the OA or one who is no longer in training is a fully enlightened being and like I've said before St John of the Cross had a very similar uh three stages where he had the beginner which was of course most people just like most people are are pjas you know
99.999% of the population then he had the Adept which would be someone who was a master of what in terot of Buddhism

would be called at least second jna a
master of what the the Catholic
contemplatives call contemplation which
is above meditation in in Christianity
meditation
is where you are still like visualizing
things or using mantras or something
you're still you're still indulging in
perception whereas when you get to the
level of um contemplation you're not
thinking anymore so that would be at
least second joh because it's at second
Janna according to Orthodox terad uh
tradition that you stop thinking and
then finally he's got the perfect which
is a person who has completely mortified

their self-will they no longer have any
self-will and they just act in
accordance with the will of
God and of course a terava Buddhist
would have a different interpretation of
that but still um the arant has
mortified his self-will so to speak
because he's no longer making Karma and
Karma is
Will so that three
stages has more credibility for me
simply because two different spirit
spiritual Traditions highly Advanced
spiritual Traditions have come upon it
independently of each other apparently
through empiricism just through
experience whereas these four stages

even various stages or various schools

of Buddhism can't agree on what these

four stages exactly

mean

so that's that's the best argument I can

give and if it does if you're not

persuaded I mean you have more faith in

the ancient tradition which makes a lot

of sense I assume that most terava

Buddhists would put more faith in

established teravan tradition and what

the texts say than in what I say I mean

that makes perfect sense and that's fine

but that's just my reasons like the

internal reason and the external

reason um then the the one thing I was

going to address towards the end is uh

could I do an individual video on this

topic with Brian or aan Puna Damo um

yeah videos with Brian are are um

they're kind of suspended indefinitely

at present because uh he's he's uh in a

bad

way um anyone who looks at his bitshoot

channel looks at the videos he's been

making for the past several days will

understand what I'm talking

about and uh because he isn't a bad way

then I I request that all friends of

Brian rou should send meta because I

think he is in need of

it so I think I'll just move on the next

question here this is from covac in sead

zida and covac and CAD zida says what
are your thoughts on the original 8,000
line pragya paramita Sutra it's not what
the Buddha taught but what about the
teachings of the text on its own I heard
the heart Sutra and Diamond Sutra are
just Snippets from it well I have never
read the entire 8,000 line pragia harito
Sutra I mean I've read excerpts from it
you know like like he's saying the heart
Sutra are both heart sutras I think
there's there's like the the greater
heart Sutra and the Lesser heart Sutra
and also the diamond Sutra um are are
like extracts from that although if
that's the case then it would

seem that uh the 8,000 line Pria parito Sutra May itself be like a compilation of different texts that then again sort of got red divided and uh turned into individual sutras because like the heart Sutra and The Diamond Cutter Sutra I mean they're they're just stand independently of each other they they really don't have anything to do with each other other than that they're both supposedly teachings of of the Buddha so my understanding of pragia paramita Sutra the I mean the original 8,000 line when I don't have much of an opinion on it or many thoughts about it because I haven't read the whole thing but um the heart Sutra and the diamond

Sutra I mean they are profound they're more profound than most poly sutas in my opinion um so even though maybe the Buddha didn't teach them he probably taught something similar to the main message of these Mahayana sutras and really that's what the par the Pria paramita um like the tradition of of like the Perfection of wisdom and the Perfection of WI wisdom sutras that uh it was like a reform moment they're trying to get back to what the Buddha originally taught instead of getting into all this Abid dama stuff all this this intellectual classification and

systematization which uh the older
schools were really starting to wallow
in like terra's got its Abid dama it's
got this elaborate um commentarial
system it's got texts that are not
considered to be Abid dama but which are
essentially the same kind of text as
Abid dama like the ptis Maga and the NTI
pakara and there's one or two other ones
that really they should be in Abid dama
instead of in the sutas but apparently
they're they were too late you know it
was like the Abid dama peda was already
finalized as seven books or something
and
so um yeah they just kind of added it I
think netti pakara it's it's considered

to be canonical by the Burmese but not necessarily by the s lanin or the ties um you know there there are certain texts that are like Apocrypha or dudo canonical or something where not everybody agrees on whether it's canonical or not like I'm pretty sure that the the Burmese consider the molinda paa the questions of King King molinda to be canonical also that's part of their titica whereas I think the Sri Lankans do not consider the questions of King Melinda to be part of the pseud ptica so I do consider it to be profound um you know getting it's getting back towards the spirit of like

the ateka waga so in a way it was an
attempt at getting back towards the the
original Spirit of Dharma or
Dharma um but I mean it has been I mean
later ideas have still infiltrated like
the whole bhadva idea um I mean
it's like an anachronism to have the
Buddha talking about you know becoming
you know boddhi svas and so
forth so yeah that's that's pretty much
the extent of my thoughts on the 8,000
line prit Sutra and I might as well say
that uh I used to pronounce I used to
pronounce the word for wisdom in
Sanskrit as PR which is the way it's
spelled and then I happen to be at an
iasa ceremony

where when I was still a monk and there
was this guy there dressed in these
weird pajama clothes and he came up and
was talking to me and I was telling him
like my name you know
poasa and and I was pronouncing it like
the Sanskrit version of it is pra and he
he was like shaken by this it turned out
he was like a teacher of Sanskrit or
something and the fact that a monk was
pronouncing it that way instead of as
prna like prna how how would I just do
it
PR that I mean he was I mean he was
shaken by this he just walked off by
himself like scratching his head like

wondering if he had been saying it wrong all this time but I think I was the one who was saying it wrong I think it's pragya in Sanskrit but who knows it's spelled

pra and I'm just going to move on to the next question otherwise I might be digressing wildly within another 3 to five minutes so see andad Z's next question is in the Terra vinia it talks about the third Council happening under a shoka but there is no evidence of this from the asoken edicts the sarasti Vada Venia does not mention this event at all and instead they claim the third Council happened under the kusan emperor kishka based on how different their

interpretations of events are whether
historical or not I want to ask about
the second Council from the terraa
perspective and maybe ALS also some
other schools the mahasa made a Schism
by the Five Points of mahad DEA 37 years
after there was a council for the vinea
this seems pretty suspicious to
me that there was a vinea controversy
that was mentioned but that isn't what
caused the Schism but instead things
like aans being able to have wet dreams
is what made most of the S since the
name mahasa comes from most of the
people siding with them in the Buddhist
home region split however the mahasi

kinia is around still and preserved in Chinese despite the linage being dead now have you ever gotten your hands on this or heard what the mahasa said was the reason for the second Council because I suspect they would not agree with it and the Terra story really doesn't add up in my opinion well getting up to the top here the Terra a vinia does not talk about the third council at all happening under aoka or otherwise the terod vinia the last two chapters of the Chula Vaga um are about the First Council and the second Council so the canonical the history of the first and second councils are canonical they are in the in the toptica itself

third council is not so that's just in
the commentarial
tradition um there's no evidence of the
third Council happening under Asoka uh
no evidence of it in the Ashokan edict
yeah well I mean there's no evidence of
a lot of thing in a lot of things in the
shoken edicts because he's just talking
about certain specific
things um he did I mean it is attested
that he sent out missionaries in various
directions and uh he did send
missionaries to Sri Lanka and so forth
but U I guess that's not really closely
related to the third Council
anyhow so the sasti voden vinia does not

mention this event at all yeah the ter
of voden vinia doesn't mention it either
and instead they claim the third Council
happened under the kusan emperor keska
yeah that was going to be like the
fourth Council from the teravan point of
view the fourth Council was going to be
in the Northwest which was sasti voden
territory it was a stronghold of the
sasti vadens apparently the kusan
emperor kishka favored the sasti vadens
and so at this Council which was
conducted they came to the conclusion
not surprisingly that the sarasti voden
interpretation of dhama is the correct
interpretation so the other schools or
many other schools including the Terra

Vaden simply rejected that Council as
invalid and so the fourth Council for
Terra vadens happened in Sri Lanka like
500 years after the time of the Buddha
and it's the one that according to
tradition caused the toptica to be
written down just so that it wouldn't be
lost when monks who had memorized it
died or or
whatever or just no new monks came along
to memorize certain
books so yeah there has been sort of a
two different versions of what caused
the first major
Schism and the Terra voden say it was
based mainly on vinia and the mahayan

ists who kind of favored the other side
the mahasa side were saying that it was
about philosophical points and it's
really not possible to know with 100%
certainty exactly what caused the first
Schism other than I mean it's going to
be just caused by isolation back in
those days you know news couldn't travel
any faster than a monk could walk really
with regard to SAA Affairs and so forth
and so it was sort of like the way
darwinian Evolution occurs where you
have a population enters like an
isolated area like an island or
something then they're going to just
mainly due to just sort of random drift
be drifting in a different direction

from the main population and you're
going to wind up with speciation or in
the case of Buddhist sects like uh what
would you call it seism different sects
different
schools
so um both sides of the debate both
sides of the the second council do have
recorded histories of the second Council
and both sides agree that it was the
Western mon the stavas or Proto teras
who won the
debate so yeah it's it could be that uh
it it was ultimately caused by something
else that the first Schism didn't happen
like like seax here says that it was a

few decades after the second after the second Council that the Schism actually happened that apparently both sides agreed you know the Western monks won the debate that monks aren't allowed to handle money that was according to teren tradition and this is backed up to some degree by other Traditions that was what caused the second Council was that the monks in the East which was mainly the Buddha's own home territory had started handling money they' also started breaking other rules but money was the main the main thing that was being debated and it was pretty clear that the Buddha did not allow mon to handle money and so the Western monks won and then

apparently I mean this was maybe it was less than a hundred years after the time of the Buddha because there was like a disciple of Ananda was one of the monks presiding on the the Western like the the stava or Proto Tera side of the debate and I mean if it was a hundred years later I mean he'd be a really old monk he'd be well over 100 years old probably so probably I think it was Richard grid has discussed this and he was saying you it was maybe 70 years or so you know 60 70 years after the the partana of the Buddha then the second Council came and then it was like another you know maybe a hundred years

after the after the death of the Buddha

or the his party neana his exit from

this

world that the split just became like a

real

Schism and uh yeah it's hard to say this

because we have very scanty

evidence um one way or the

other

so I mean you just you really can't be

sure exactly how it happened because

there's just insufficient data not

enough evidence to really get anything

close to certainty unless you're just a

dogmatist you know like if if you just

accept whatever it says in the poly

texts or in the commentaries in this in

this case then uh yeah you just go along
with whatever your chosen religious
religious system tells you and then you
just go along with that a lot of people
are like that probably most people they
just believe what they're told whether
it's by religious leaders or political
leaders or propagandists or
whatever but it seems to me that we
really can't be sure exactly what caused
the first great schism in
Buddhism so I think I'll just move on to
the next question here this is from
Jeffrey and Jeffrey said you seriously
have great comedic timing and can keep a
straight face have you thought of trying

some Open Mic

standup would participating in

entertainment be against Buddhist

rules

well you know I've been told before that

I ought to be a comedian or something

but I don't I don't know I don't I don't

think it's really my destiny to become a

stand-up

comic so yeah there's there's many

things I probably would have been good

at I'm not sure how good of a comedian I

would be but uh yeah I don't think it's

really the direction I'm going to be

going in my later years um but then the

second question here would participating

in entertainment be against Buddhist

rules um it's not it's I mean it would be against probably wiia rules for a monk to do that for a Buddhist lay person there's just five precepts those are the Buddhist rules are the five precepts for a lay
person and um you know there's no rule against participating in entertainment although I mean if you're taking eight precepts then yeah I assume it would be against the rulle since going to entertainment shows is forbidden by the eight
precepts and um and if you're the one that's standing up on the stage entertaining people that would pretty

much include you

also but whether there's a rule against

her or not I mean there are there are

sutas saying that like actors and

musicians and so forth are uh I think

actors especially that they're going to

go to hell and I I think that the Buddha

probably wouldn't have really said that

I really doubt that all actors are going

to go to

hell but um again I mean it's it's

um it's a matter of whether you're going

to just accept tradition just completely

or whether you're going to have a

certain amount of Western like modern

Western

skepticism a certain amount of

eclecticism

also so participating in entertainment

would be against eight

precepts uh participating in

entertainment

shows but um

yeah with regard to five precepts I'm

not sure and you know it's like some

dhama teachers will tell jokes I crack

some jokes occasionally like ROM Doss

would tell jokes and have people

laughing in his audience and I mean

there's nothing necessarily wrong with

that so I am sure that you could come up

with um like a Buddhist standup comedy

routine that would be to some degree

even uplifting you know like the Buddhist coroner who got fired from his job for putting birth as cause of death for every every person that he that he did autopsies on you know cause of death birth but I'm think I'm just going to move on the next question here this is from gamma

spectrol and Gamma spectr says regarding Good and Bad Karma are you just using this good versus bad terminology as kind of a loose way of pointing to what might be more accurately described as uncomfortable and comfortable Karma I see good and bad just descriptors that reflect more of the perceiver's chosen experience than the experience

itself I've tried to remove these
dualistic descriptores from my
assessment of
experiences and in Buddhist philosophy
good and bad
usually they're they're not used much
that really with to Karma especially
the main um dichotomy the main the two
kinds of karma are cusa and akusa that
cusa can be called Good Karma and akusa
can be called Bad Karma but literally
means skillful Karma and unskillful
Karma skillful action and unskillful
action so skillful is what gets you
closer to Enlightenment unskillful is
what takes you farther away from

enlightenment but just as just a conveni

way conven convenient man a convenient

way of

talking sometimes you just use good and

bad like you're you're giving up you got

a Seattle some Monk giving a a a sermon

to a group of villagers with grade

school educations who are subsistence

Farmers then you he'll be using good and

bad more than you're going to find in a

Buddhist philosophical text because

that's the way people

think or I mean in Burma Kudo which is

the the Burmese version of the word Kusa

know Kusa Kama they call Kudo that's

Merit you know they want K though so

it's it just kind of turned I mean they

don't really know that it means skillful
they just think it means that's good you
know you that's what you want you want C
though but uh yeah I mean it's just like
a loose way of talking really I mean
some things you can yeah good is just
you know what is gets you closer to
Enlightenment and bad is what gets you
farther away from
Enlightenment so I think I'll just move
on to the next question here this is
from
rpad and rpad says As It Seems mankind
is birthing Ai and turning itself into
machines should we expect to be reborn
as such and I don't think so because

even just assume for the sake of argument that you can program Consciousness into a computer or you've got a computer that's so complex and like recursive in its programming that it can program itself and it eventually just hits this uh what you call it inflection point or something where it just becomes conscious that let's just assume that even so I am sure that uh the consciousness of a computer would be radically different from the consciousness of a human like or the mentality of a computer let's say would be radically different from the mentality of a human that it would just be like a Quantum Leap especially uh if

you consider that with this recursive
self-improvement of computers they're
going to be as far beyond us as we are
Beyond an amoeba within a relatively
short time assuming that that it happens
assuming the technological singularity
actually happen
then yeah I mean they're just they're
going to hit the the Bel they're going
to hit the curve and then you know we're
going to be down here and they're going
to be way up there and they're going to
be trillions of times or billions of
times more intelligent than us and I
don't think that our Karma would fit
into this new kind of

mentality that that has come into
existence so we'd be reborn maybe in
some alternate world where the AI hasn't
happened yet or something some other
kind of being that's closer to a human
you know because we are human we've got
human mentality that our Karma you know
assuming rebirth is real that we're
going to be reborn as something kind of
similar to a human with kind of similar
mentality to a human because that's the
momentum of our mind you know it's the
momentum of our of our mental States is
passed on to the next life
and uh yeah I I think it wouldn't be
similar enough to some sort of conscious
Ai and anywhere near to it that I mean

we're going to have to find some other
way of being reborn you know in a more
humanlike existence if if the this world
just gets taken over by by computers or
something by
robots so
yeah there is going to be sort of a
weird transitional kind of karma where
in the future people are going to have
like their brains augmented so that
their IQ is going to be boosted by a 100
points or something and I mean that's
going to take strange karma too and so
you're going to have just people with
strange Karma are going to be born you
with that kind of karma are going to be

born in this world more and the Normy

kind of person is going to be born in

this world less you're they're going to

have to be born somewhere else

presumably

and uh this is a infinitely large

Universe regardless of what some

astronomers might tell

you just whatever can happen does happen

you it's just infinite possibilities so

um if this world stops being suitable

habitation for for us humans we're going

to have to be reborn on some

sufficiently similar world in the many

worlds according to the many worlds

hypothesis

so let's see here I guess I answered

that question I hope I did so I'm just

going to move on to the next question

which is from Liber Lam and I have to uh

admonish Libra Lam that he asked four

questions

here although he didn't ask them all at

the same time and he may have lost count

four is getting up into kind of high

numbers so we got to take that into

consideration I mean four is up into

like the realm of

several so Libra Lam's first

question is what are the main

distinctions you would make between the

teachings of the Buddha and the

philosophy of ADI shankara and I assume

he's talking about shankara charad who

was like like one of the founding

fathers of ADV

vanta and

uh the teachings of the Buddha versus

the teachings of of

shankara um if I were talking about the

teachings of the Buddha then I'd have to

go back to something sort of like what

Thea waga teaches so Buddha and shankra

were Mystics that they were

non-dualistic I'm pretty sure it's just

that shanko was more heavily influenced

by the vdic tradition like the

upanishads and was more philosophical

you know sort of like Buddhists became

after the time of the Buddha they became

very philosophical too and in fact uh

shankra apparently was heavily

influenced by Mahayana Buddhism

especially especially like the maaka

school of Mahayana

Buddhism so there's a lot of

similarity it's just that ad vant is I

mean it's part of the vdic tradition so

it considers the vas to be authoritative

and is heavily based on the philosophy

of the upanishads whereas the Buddha I

mean he tried to

just almost get rid of philosophy I mean

if if you read the AA waga it's just no

perception no view no belief that even

your thoughts are extraneous to you you

know it's it's like that's not you and
it never says what you are because there
really is no you but I mean it's just
like pure mysticism where you're just
getting you're just sort of leaving
behind all this intellectual derbis all
this this
rubbish and just experiencing just the
phenomenon of Consciousness directly as
consciousness um without thinking that
way because then you're you're thinking
again so you just do it you just stop
thinking or think as little as you can
at least not wallow in
it you know stop identifying with it
stop identifying with your thoughts and
your beliefs and so

forth say nothing of your

body and so I mean there's a lot of

similarity it's just that shank's ADV

vant is is way more Hinduism vadic it's

it's more

upanishadic so it's going to reify the

absolute as Brahman let's say or near

Guna Brahman which is like Ultimate

Reality which has no discernable

qualities um but even that's just too

much thinking for the person who was

teaching the Tica waga I mean at the

surface level you know the level of just

some Sor where you got to move move

around and eat and wear clothes and

stuff you know you can talk about that

but you don't kid yourself that that is

a

reality that that's just

perception and I'm notic I'm waving my

hands around in this video a

lot so yeah I'm No Authority on shankara

I have read a considerable amount of

what he was doing I he was apparently a

a shite you know there's there's a lot

of stuff that where he's referring to

Lord Shiva and so forth that um yeah I

mean that obviously has nothing to do

with

Buddhism

so I guess maybe I answer that question

about as well as I can because uh I mean

I know something about early Buddhism

but my my knowledge of shankara charara

is uh rather limited I mean I have read

some of the stuff that he wrote and I am

vaguely

maybe a little more than Vaguely

Familiar with ADV

vant and they really are pretty close I

mean if I wasn't a Buddhist there's a

good chance I'd be a vedantist

Hindu because they are they are very

close it's just the main difference is

just a matter of language like semantics

or something are you going to reify the

absolute or are you going to not reify

the absolute is there going to be an

Atman which is just this Universal uton

that all beings share or is there just

going to be no uton and really I mean

it's just it's just a matter of

perception which way you're going to

choose it's almost like an arbitrary

choice I

mean I mean either side will have its

pros and cons But ultimately I mean like

Thea waga you get rid of self and not

self any beliefs about

self get rid of them any beliefs about

not self get rid of them but that's

really advanced practice

only someone who's really Advanced is

going to be able to do

that so I guess I'll just move on to

Libra Lamb's next

question which is as

follows I've heard there is meditation

on the loathsomeness of food

a if you practice this as a monk do you

feel that you had a knack for this sort

of contemplation more than others who

can't help but consider food like a

treasure i' practiced it a little bit

but it's a total buzz kill it's like um

one of the few Pleasures still allowed

to a beu according to the text is eating

and if you practice the meditation on

the lomen of food especially while

you're eating then I mean it just kind

of makes it disgusting which is what

it's supposed to do and um yeah

it's it's kind of tough to do that you know it's like when you when you're only allowed a very limited number of Pleasures in life and you know you're encouraged to kind of Ruin those Pleasures you know there's a certain reluctance and it's just kind of there's a certain reluctance reluctance to just dwell on something that's disgusting and repulsive

anyway so I mean I could do it even having a degree in biology may maybe help me do it a little better but I mean it's the practice of the the meditation on you know the the perception of the loathsomeness of food or the repulsiveness of food mainly what you do

is you just try to visualize what's
happening to that food as it's going
through your body you know you put it
into your mouth and already you're
chewing it up into this goo and and it's
getting all mixed with slobber and then
you swallow it and it goes down into
this this skin sack essentially full of
puke and acid and so forth and then it
gets farther down and turns into even
more disgusting
stuff so just imagining you know what is
going on with the food you're eating why
you're eating it you know that's like
the main time you practice on the The
Meditation on the low sness of food is

while you're eating and it's I mean it
just destroys your enjoyment of the
food so let's see here what what was the
main question
here do you feel that you had a knack
for this sort of contemplation more than
others who can't help but consider food
like a treasure yeah I mean some people
would just say no way I'm not going to
do that that's gross but I mean I
experimented with it but really it does
just kind of destroy your meal in a way
which if I mean if you're really just a
hardcore aesthetic that's fine that's
what you're supposed to do you should
just like destroy any pleasure that you
might be uh tempted to wallow in and

food is amazing major one a lot of lot
of monks I mean they they can be very
aesthetic in certain ways but they still
like their food I knew this one this one
Japanese monk who one of his main
reasons for staying at P doya was he
really liked the noodles
there he was a good monk too in other
respects so uh yeah I guess I answered
that question and the next question
these are all kind of linked together so
it might kind of give libr Lam an excuse
for asking more than the allowable
number of questions just because they're
all the the last the second third and
fourth

questions after his adish shankara
question are all related here he says is
it difficult with the dietary practices
of a monk to cultivate this sort of
contemplative disgust um with the
dietary practices of a monk no it makes
it easier because first of all if a monk
goes for
alms he's got many people you know I've
had like more than a hundred people put
food into this bowl and you know it's
relatively large bowl
it's back there on the table holds more
than a gallon so you got all this stuff
that's just kind of combined together
into this glp and then for a few years I
also had the practice of before I would

even eat I would just stir it all
together into really like just goo just
this nondescript goo um um it does it
can make it taste a little better you
know the the flavors blend better and so
forth but uh still I mean what you're
eating looks fairly disgusting
already and uh I mean just being a monk
also I mean it helps you to be
contemplative of this sort of thing just
because you're encouraged to contemplate
this sort of thing again and again in
the sutas according to the tradition
that you have adopted you know it's not
like being a foodie and watching the
Food Network and so forth

although speaking of which watching the
Food Network I just have to say that I
think possibly the best job in the world
would be to be a judge on a show like
chopped where they're eating like
gourmet food and then just criticizing
it you know it's like that's that's your
job you sit there you eat gourmet food
and then you say this the crust is a
little soggy maybe it could have had a
little more salt that kind of
thing but I digress again quite
thoroughly so I think I'm just going to
move on to the next part of this uh
series of food questions let's call it a
sub question to get Libra Lam off the
hook for asking too many

questions says what are your thoughts on
disgust well this is more of a disgust
question I guess what are your thoughts
on disgust as something conducive to
dhama practice I've heard rightwing
folks are more likely to have stronger
disgust reaction than Libs
well I I've never heard that
before that right-wingers or
conservatives or
traditionalists are more likely to have
a feel disgust than than Libs maybe in
this world we live in now but uh it
seems like uh left leaning people yeah I
guess they're not so much disgusted as
offended which is different it's a

that's a different thing so maybe he's right I don't know about that one but uh what are your thoughts on discust as something conducive to DH practice well I mean there is like the the three stages of Enlightenment different from the three stages I've already mentioned but I have mentioned it before in these q&as it's nebida leads to waga which leads to weoka and nebida is essentially disgust they're just being fed up you know that's that is like the first step towards Enlightenment in this this three stages or these three three steps you know it's like you turn away from Samar you don't want to wallow in it anymore that leads to waga or

dispassion where for it's just sort of like equinity you know first you don't want to wallow it anymore you sort of detach from it originally because of you're disgusted by it or you're just fed up with it and then that causes a certain piece or dis

dispassion uh like equinity and then that is like the stage before weoka or Liberation or

Enlightenment so definitely

disgust is conducive to DH practice in fact the wiui Maga for what it's worth is talking about the six main personality types of humans the six the the six main characters which are

essentially based on Loba Dosa mooha
greed hate delusion and their opposites
and he does Buddha goosa the author of
the book does point out that people who
have a lot of delsa or aversion can get
enlightened more easily than other
people because they're more likely to
just get fed up and disgusted and just
detach themselves from the world they
disapprove of the world they're less
likely to wallow in
it still having aversion is you're
making Karma but at least you're making
Karma by pushing yourself away from all
this stuff that most people want to
wallow in
so I mean it's ultimately discussed is a

kind of um Dosa or

aversion which is one of the three

poisons and all that but it's kind of a

skillful means that can get you farther

along in dhama and then you let go of it

I mean eventually you have to let go of

it so a fully enlightened being isn't

disgusted anymore by

anything

so I think I'll just move on next

question here this is from

mooners and mooners says does Buddhism

promote anti-natalism and anti-natalism

for those of you unfamiliar with large

words like this with lots of syllables

means like discouraging having children

you know it's it's against having
babies and Buddhism Buddhist philosophy
in a way it it does promote
anti-natalism certainly monks and nuns
aren't allowed to do the act that makes
babies and if you don't know what that
is ask your dad he'll explain it to
you but uh I mean with regard to lay
people it's just accepted as just the
way it is it's I mean you're making a
certain amount of unskillful karma by
wallowing in lust and sensuality and so
forth but it's just the way of the world
and it's just not realistic to to tell
people not to have babies if they're lay
people they can do as they want you know
they haven't taken any monastic vows or

anything so

um get married and raise a family I mean

that's just what most people have done

since people have been on this planet

and I mean you pretty much have to have

babies if the human race isn't going to

become

extinct and of course you can't have

monks and nuns living on their own

without being supported by good families

with with little kids and so forth

because monks and nuns aren't allowed to

feed

themselves you know they have to rely

upon lay people for

support so it's slightly ambivalent the

attitude towards having babies I mean
ultimately an enlightened being isn't
going to want to have sex no more at
least according to Terra voden
tradition
and from just from the higher ethics of
like monastic Buddhism you know having
kids and so forth is it gets you so
entangled in Sam
SAR that I mean it's it's much more
difficult to become enlightened if
you've got kids because you got so many
worries so many concerns so many
obligations and duties and so forth uh
you got to work for a living to support
your kids make sure that they grow up
like good people and so forth and um I

mean it's like I had a friend of
mine who when he had a kid he was
telling me that when you're a parent
with a toddler every time that toddler
even starts walking towards a street I
mean he could be 50 feet back but still
there's this this
visceral dread of him just like plunging
right in front of traffic or
something and that's that's just the way
it is it's it's more of a roller coaster
ride I'm sure that that young parents
especially when they're all doped up on
Parenthood hormones there's a lot of
euphoria a lot of love and Bliss and joy
and so forth but there's a lot of up and

down I mean little kids like they have
no concept of hygiene you know they're
they're continually like Falling For No
Good Reason and hitting their head on
the corner of the coffee table or some
such having to be rushed to the rushed
to the doctor try to say hospital and
doctor at the same
time so yeah from uh an advanced
spiritual point of view
um you're better off not having kids but
most people aren't spiritually all that
much Advanced and it's just the way of
the world it's just completely natural
and so I mean the Buddha himself had a
kid according to tradition before he
renounced the world obviously his

parents had a kid I mean it's just the
way it is it's just one of those things
in life Buddhism is different from other
religious systems like Christianity in
that just just being alive entails a
certain amount of it's almost
mandatory Bad Karma or acusa
Karma that I mean you have to be like a
really a radical aesthetic Saint in
order to live a clean life and not be
doing anything bad or ausa
unskillful and just I mean even I mean
from the point of view of Buddhism for
even for a married couple they've been
married for 30 years they love each
other dearly they're completely faithful

to each other even even then when they
have sex they're wallowing in sensuality
and lust and so forth and so they're
making a certain amount of unskillful
Karma and having babies is the same kind
of deal it's just one of those things
about just being a human that you know
it's is it's just part of the package so
to
speak so at the higher levels yeah it
promotes anti-natalism indirectly
through just promoting celibacy and so
forth but at the lower levels it really
doesn't I mean the Buddha didn't
badmouth people for having
kids because it's just the way people
are it's just it's it's of necessity the

way people

are so I'm just going to move on to the

next question here this is from

ruie and ruie says it is said in all

Traditions I think that when the

teachings are gone another buddh will

appear to teach this could point to some

sort of

ruling overarching Universal agency or

principle then he's got Karma question

mark in

parenthesis or do the teachings and the

teacher reappear organically from their

own

absence well it's interesting what he

says about some sort of ruling or

overarching Universal agency or principle because if you read the more devotional stuff like the Buddha wsa which is in the polya it's one of the one of the books of the polya in the the sutapa that all Buddhas you know forever and ever in the past and into the future they follow this same template you know they they have to renounce the world and when they renounce the world they've got like their attendant with them and there's a certain limited number of vehicles that they can take and they go out and have to practice austerities and then they they're going to become enlightened sitting under a certain tree and there's always going to

be someone who who offers them the milk
rice um you know be on the the eve of
their Enlightenment and they're always
going to have two Chief disciples and it
never explains why this has to be why
there couldn't be a Buddha with only one
Chief disciple or three Chief disciples
or why he couldn't become enlightened
sitting out under the Open Sky or in a
in a hut or something in a cave
maybe I mean it's just that's just the
way it is and it's it's like
mythology essentially or maybe that's
just the way it has to be due to some
ruling or overarching Universal agency
or

principle but for for me I'm I'm just
naturally skeptical of that sort of
thing so
um see when the teachings are gone
another Buddha will appear to teach I
mean you could say that that's part of
the same sort of thing I've been talking
about or you could just say that it's
inevitable that um in in on this world
you know among human beings when
enlightened systems die out it's just
inevitable that somebody's going to come
along to ReDiscover you know the the
possibility of Enlightenment and how to
how to become enlightened assuming that
there is a how
so I mean you could argue it either way

I think um yeah I mean you could say
that the teachings in the teacher
reappear
organically just because it's just a
matter of inevitability just like
statistical probability that sooner or
later you're going to have another
spiritual genius come along who
rediscovers dhama and I so that that
part I think can just be natural and
just inevitable but the whole part about
you know you have to practice the
austerities first you have to leave in a
certain kind of vehicle with an
attendant and you know you have to
become an light and sitting under some

kind of large Plant and you got to have
two Chief disciples and so forth yeah I
think that's just made up that's
tradition that it gives people something
to cling to I guess it's it's a little
more skillful thing to cling to than
favorite football team or favorite soap
opera or something
so I'm not exactly sure how to proceed
with with this question and so I'm just
going to move on to ru's next question
which is as follows I interpret
sad which is Right View and the same of
the other SAS in the eight-fold path as
complete view literally as a 360° view
which lacks nothing in which there are
no blind spots anymore paradoxically the

complete view could be or lead to not
having views at all but perhaps not the
other way around thus opening up the
door or Paving the way to
sensation thoughts well if you consider
that sadity or right view is the very
first step I don't think that like
essentially
omniscience would be really a good first
step towards
Enlightenment that a 360 degree view
which lacks nothing in which there are
no blind spots anymore I mean that it
seems like that would sort of arguably
be
omniscience and uh yeah I'm not sure

that even the Buddha himself according
to tradition had like a 360 degree view
I mean like an enlightened Jane leader
like mahavira supposedly was you know he
saw everything from every angle you know
just instantaneously you know he could
he look at a at a roll of toilet paper
for example and I mean he'd see it from
every single possible angle he'd see
every single aspect of that
simultaneously but it's really not even
an option in Terra
Buddhism that the Buddha I mean he he
was functionally omniscient and that he
would know whatever he wanted to know
but if he didn't particularly want to
know it he wouldn't be just have his

mind filled with infinite knowledge at

all times

so um nevertheless Sama which is usually

translated as right you know s DT Right

View um I mean it can mean something

like

complete or like for example sasam

Buddha I I usually translate that as

rightly fully enlightened one or I think

I've also possibly translated as

completely fully enlightened one um so I

mean some can mean

complete but it would have to be

complete with regard to just the

requisites of what you need to to move

forwards I don't think it would have to

be just a

comprehensive comprehensive view which

lacks nothing in which there are no

blind spots and it would have to be

comprehensive enough I guess you have to

know what you need to know in order to

have the the remaining seven

right um steps on the

path

so let's see hope I'm answering this I

mean this is one of those ones where

somebody will give their their own

philosophical View and then say thoughts

at the end and I'm not I'm not bashing

that in any way unless of course it's

getting into like a really long essay

that happens sometimes too but this is

not a really long essay this is just a

short paragraph

here

so yeah

then if you expand that like some a

Right View and then it'd be like right

mental action or which would be complete

mental action complete verbal action

complete bodily action complete

livelihood I mean a comprehensive

livelihood yeah I don't think I don't

think it really fits the context very

well at least not with regard to just

comprehensive 360 Degrees I don't think

it really would fit the the context of

the the philosophical Concepts

but uh who knows I mean if it works go
with it so I'm just going to move on to
the next question here this is from Don
and Don says I've heard it said by you I
think and
U that those who feel a lot of pain or
suffer a lot in this life were cruel to
others in past lives where in the sutas
is this
written and I didn't search out there's
like one or two main sutas where it's
just like this cookbook thing where if
you do this in a previous life you're
gonna have this result in the following
life like I do remember like um if if
you're ugly in this life it meant that
you were an angry person in the previous

life that sort of thing so it could be from there I think I think there's a good chance that that suta and I don't even remember what suta it is it's a relatively famous one that it may be that Su which talks about it although it is just kind of common sense that you know if if there is such a thing as karma and you're getting you know a lot of pain or something in this life that you must have done something really unskillful in a past life or earlier in this same life that is conditioning that that you cause some sort of imbalance in the ethical equilibrium of of the world or of your own personal

world that I mean it's having to come

back the other way and cause pain onto

you um but it's not necessarily I mean

if you suffer a lot in this life it's

not it seems to me you're not

necessarily you weren't necessarily

cruel to others in past lives I got like

a hair or something on my nose it's

making it

itch excuse

me but I mean it's like some people you

know they experience they just wallow in

a lot of pleasure which causes like pain

afterwards like they they eat way way

too much and then they wind up with

health problems because of their they

overeating or they they have a lot of

sex and then they wind up with you know
some kind of bad STD or something that
causes them great suffering so it's not
necessarily a case that if you suffer a
lot in this life it's because you were
cruel to others that's one
possibility you know that's that's one
possible reason but I don't think it's
the only possible
reason it's just it's it's going to
depend on your own
like personal subconscious idiosyncrasy
how your karma is going to manifest
itself I think it's not going to be
exactly the same for everybody although
because we're all members of the same

species so to speak we're all going to

be more alike than

different so there are going to be

certain main things that can cause

suffering through the karma that we make

and I do think that cruelty to others

can cause suffering in this life for

what it it's

worth uh what was his name the Sleeping

Prophet Edgar

Casey he would when he would go into his

trance and diagnose people with some

sort of bad

ailment some painful ailment he would

say you know in some cases well you were

you lived in ancient Rome a lot of

Americans apparently were Romans in a

previous life and uh you you go to the
Coliseum and watch people get tortured
to death or eaten by lions and you were
like laughing and cheering and that's
that's that was the karma that caused
this so I mean it's it's possible I mean
I'm not cons I'm not insinuating that
Edgar Casey was like um you he was an
infallible Prophet or anything I mean
some of his prophecies have apparently
come have not come true like he was
saying that there would be proof of
Atlantis found in a pyramid by by the
end of the 20th century
and there keeping it
secret because it's they're not telling

us about

it

so yeah I'm I don't think I was the one

who said it maybe UT to dku did but uh

or maybe I just said it in a in a moment

of philosophical

carelessness because really I mean it

can be that just excess of pleasure can

cause an excess of its opposite and you

wallow in too much pleasure it's gonna

it's G to come around and bite you in

the ass

it can work that way

too and I probably just made a sound on

the microphone by hitting it with my

thumb okay so I'm gonna make sure that

my computer's M

muted okay we're

good aren't aren't you just glad that I

don't do anything to make my videos seem

better you know don't do any editing any

of that silliness

okay I'm just going to move on next

question

here this is also from

dawn I think I answered the last one

yeah so he says regarding matter

appearing and disappearing a zillion

times a second according to terraa this

is from New Scientist magazine and then

it says quote matter is built on flaky

foundations physicists have now

confirmed that the Apparently

substantial stuff is actually no more than fluctuations in the Quant Quantum vacuum the researchers simulated the Frantic activity that goes on inside protons and neutrons these particles provide almost all the mass of ordinary matter each Proton or Neutron is made of three quarks but the individual masses of these quarks only add up to about 1% of the proton's mass so what accounts for the rest of it Theory says it is created by the force that binds quarks together called the strong nuclear force in quantum terms the strong force is carried by a field of virtual particles called gluons randomly popping into existence and disappearing again unquote

and then Don says maybe terraa had it
right all along what are your
thoughts well I'm just not I'm just not
a materialist I do not think that matter
is ultimately real so these physicists
as their as their science improves as
their understanding of Sam Sara improves
they're getting more and more ephemeral
you know it's becoming less and less
physical but I mean they're probably
going to continue in that direction
until finally the universe will be
identified as just a manifestation of of
mind
so yeah I don't I don't really think
that I mean you can say I mean the terod

had it right to the extent that

everything is in constant change from a

saric perspective everything has to be

in a state of continuous change because

that's how our mind works I mean if your

mind stays the same for two moments in a

row you're not going to be aware of

those two moments you're going to just

be aware of one moment because your mind

can't be aware because it's not doing

anything it's just like

frozen so you have to have constant

change in a way it's

like a good example of dependent core

Rising is like chaos and stas

have to be in this delicate harmonious

balance you know you have too much chaos

that's death you have too much stasis
that's also death so life is sort of
like this Balancing Act between chaos
and stasis or just change and and
non-change something has to stay pretty
much the same while something else
changes in order for us to progress from
one moment to the next without just
annihilating or
something
so I don't know if that was anywhere
close to answering this question though
but I do think that uh you know science
they're they're groping towards I mean
they're groping gradually away from
physicality and so as they make more and

more progress the the universe the
empirical universe is going to become
less and less material less and less
physical so they're still they're still
on the way they haven't they haven't
quite got there yet in my
opinion and so I'm going to uh move on
the next question and it's bugging me
because I seem to remember that one of
the very first questions asked was with
regard to the first suta of the majam
minaya and uh I'm not seeing it which is
kind of bugging me I thought maybe seac
and cot zida or somebody like that asked
this question
about maybe the Mula paraya suta in fact
there were two questions about that same

suta in this Q&A and uh I thought one

was towards the top and one was towards

the bottom and I'm not really

particularly close to the top anymore

and I haven't gotten to it

yet which is causing me to feel a

certain insecurity if you

will but anyways the next question is

from Indian guy who also goes by the

Alias of Trevor under certain

circumstances and he says at the end of

the oh here it is

here is he says at the end of the root

of all things that's the first suta of

the the majaya

the the Mula

paraya it says that the buikus did not
Delight in the Buddha's words what have
you heard about this and why did they
not like it probably because they didn't
understand at first I'm guessing well
the first
suta of the the majima I mean I mean
it's it's considered to be profound like
in biku bod's translation of it or his
co-translation with biku yanami the the
first famous nle not the the recent
famous nle uh he's saying that it's so
profound that you should when you first
read it you should just kind of you know
skim over it you know read it but not
try to really figure it out and then
come back to it later and do like a

systematic study because it's such a profound suta and the Very fact that it's number one the very first suta in the collection indicates that it was considered by ancient monks to be important enough that it should be first in

line and at the end like uh Indian guy says here the monks did not Delight in the Buddha's words and um all you got to do is you just get get the book Maj minaya and all the the end notes are by bbod and and then you just go to the end here and it says here the beus did not Delight in the Buddha's words apparently because the discourse probed too deeply

into the tender regions of their own

conceit and perhaps their residual

bronic views at a later time the majaya

commentary tells us when their pride had

been humbled the Buddha expounded to

these same buikus the goam makas sua

which is Anga nikaya 3

123 in the course of which they all

attained

arship so the suta is sort of digging

into sort of the nature of

unenlightenment and because all these

monks apparently that he was that the

Buddha was giving the sermon to were

unenlightened it made them feel

uncomfortable you know because it's sort

of getting into all their the inner

workings of their mind and when you're unenlightened you kind of I mean you're unenlightened because you want to be unenlightened essentially it's like you're trying to remain unenlightened because you're identifying with your concept of self and so forth you're identifying with your thoughts and your beliefs and all that and he was sort of taking pokes at that and that's why the monks felt uncomfortable and they were not

delighting and uh some some texts or some teachings of Buddhism really can't have that effect like for example The Diamond Cutter Sutra that has already

been mentioned in this Q&A there are a
few mentions of the idea that or at
least one mention that if you can read
this text or hear it recited and not
feel alarm and Dread that means you're a
bodh SVA so that's according to The
Diamond Cutter Sutra I'm a bodh SVA
because I really I really do appreciate
that
text but uh a lot of people when they
read that stuff they feel alarm and
Dread even just the whole concept of of
no self
or not self no self whatever you want to
call it that causes some people to feel
a certain amount of discomfort and uh
lack of

delight or even just the the
disgustingness of food just do that
meditation for a while and you're not
going to Delight in it who's going to
Delight in disgust I mean I guess you
can have a certain perverse enjoyment of
disgust I mean I I have to admit um dis
gust is a feeling that um I'm kind of a
disgust snob in a way that is i' have
refined it you know I can have a certain
appreciation of like refined and
disgust but um again I'm I'm
digressing so let's see yeah I think I
answered that question so I'm just going
to move on to Indian guy's next question
here if a monk following vinia can't

relieve himself in water water or live
grass and plants then where is the best
easiest way to go without possible harm
to life to dig a hole in just
dirt poop on the street nope or could it
be something like a second alms round
where you ask to be given refuge in Lay
people's latrine toilets ultimately have
water and creeping things in the sewers
it just seems like to me that you're
holding in a lot of one and
two
so all right this this whole thing is
referring to U some seia rules that are
in the ptim Moka and it's saying um a
monk should not relieve himself into
water or onto green plants he's not

supposed to spit into water or onto

green plants either um but it's it's a

Sicky rule which means that it's against

the rules only if you do it out of

disrespect for the rule it's like you

know it's against the rules and you just

don't give a so to speak and so you

you do whatever it is you're going to do

I'm not going to say the word again

because that's

uncivilized

so yeah I mean if you have no choice

then it's not against the rules I mean

if you just got to go and you're

standing in a prairie you know just

grass as far as the can see then you're

not going to break a rule by peeing on
the ground there um but I mean under
ordinary circumstances there's always
some place where you can relieve
yourself you there's there's Flat Rocks
there's just bare dirt there's there's
sand there's
gravel and also um there's latrine pits
at
monasteries or and also just urinals at
monasteries so that you can go to the
bathroom with without
uh I mean without having to go to the
bathroom into water I mean it's not like
toilets here and some strict monks when
they come to America they really don't
know what to do because they're not

supposed to go to the bathroom into the
water but the toilet bowl is full of
water and you're not supposed to throw
your your butt wiping stick into the
toilet either so some Asian monks just
don't know any better I guess they wipe
their behind and then throw the shitty
toilet paper into the garbage
can
but I I guess I'm digressing
again so yeah I mean yeah there's
there's no problem I I was among for
many years I followed vinia relatively
strictly up until the very end and uh
yeah I mean it just wasn't a problem you
can live out in the woods and just crap

on the ground and it's not like it's
just a constant coat of green
everywhere so I mean there's going to be
gravel and sand and bare dirt and big
flat rocks and all sorts of things or
and nice villagers will come and
volunteer to dig you a latrine which is
what happened to
me so let's see
here um yeah without possible harm to
life also in the commentaries I'm pretty
sure when it says you're not supposed to
pee or poop into water that means water
that may contain living beings and the
living beings have to be visible we're
not talking about microbes we're not
talking about any microbial biome we're

talking about you know little insects
and so forth that you can actually see
with your
eyes so I guess I answered that
question although it does seem if you
read vinia that um there was like a
different place to urinate than for
taking a
dump that that in ancient monasteries
they had latrines that that set up
differently for urinating and and taking
a dump so maybe it had something to do
with this rule or these
rules but uh it's not really important
because very few of us are monks are
following these rules and so I'm just

going to and then they're not really
important rules anyway they're they're
seyy rules which means you're only
breaking the rule if you do it out of
disrespect for the rule so I'm just
going to move on to the next question
here this is from Prav andronov says is
premature pregnancies a a sign of human
lifespan
declining um I don't think so I mean
according to the the theory that you can
find in the texts human life is going to
get shorter and shorter and shorter
we're on the decline until you're GNA
the lifespan is only going to be what
it's like seven or 10 years something
like that and so I mean you're going to

have to have kids like when you're like

five or or something and uh yeah

premature pregnancy I'm sure that

premature pregnancies happen more in

ancient times than they do now I mean

cultures nowadays women are like full

grown as a general rule in most cultures

especially in the west before they get

get married and start having kids

whereas in like older traditional

cultures some I mean a girl was of

marriageable age pretty much as soon as

she hit

puberty maybe even before

then so premature pregnancies in that

case oh wait maybe he's talking not

premature pregnancies in the sense of uh
like a 13-year-old girl getting pregnant
maybe he's talking about premature
births like the baby's getting born
prematurely like after only eight months
or
something so I'm not exactly sure
exactly what the question means now I've
just confused
myself um but I do not think that even
though there is a suta at least one suta
saying that you know we're we should be
on the decline and lifespans are going
to get shorter and shorter with less and
less dhama in the world um lifespans
have increased dramatically since the
Buddhist time which kind of belies the

the

prophecy so I I really uh am reluctant

to attribute that prophecy to the Buddha

himself

I've got uh something in my throat kind

of all of a

sudden so premature pregnancy is a sign

of human lifespan declining I don't

think so I think that's what I should

have said right towards the beginning

but I've always got to have an answer 50

times as long as the question so I'm

just going to move on to panov's next

question here I once tried to do meta

meditation but didn't get the feeling

just felt like repeating a mantra how to

get that

feeling and I I can sympathize with that

because I've never had much use for meta

meditation because you can't really

force yourself to feel loving kindness

for all beings I mean in a way you can

start by sending meta to someone who's

easy to send meta to like a a cute dog

or something or just a friend maybe one

of your parents something like that and

then after you get good at that maybe

you can start expanding to some people

that you don't like or just people in

general or

whatever um but yeah I've never really

had much use for metam meditation

because in a way it's it's hypocritical

I mean I've already told the story
probably at least two or three times
about one of my supporters in
Burma who I mean she was always having
to have an I mean she was one of those
people that had to be at war with
somebody she had to have an enemy some
kind of Feud going on in order for her
to feel Fully Alive apparently and she
was had this Feud going on with this guy
who lived down the street because he had
renovated a pagot that was on her
family's property and then he put his
family's name on this pagot because he
he renovated you know he painted it put
gold leaf and stuff on it and so they

were having this war back and forth over
this and one time she was bragging to me
about how she does meta meditation every
morning you know she sends meta to
beings every morning and I said well you
know if you're sending mag to W beings
you're also sending it to that guy down
the street that you're at war with and
all of a sudden it was like your whole
demeanor change and she's like no not
him and that's the way a lot of people
do meta meditation it's it's sort of
like they're imagining that they're
sending love to all beings they're
getting like this warm glowy feeling but
it doesn't get much farther than that
and so yeah I mean if you just don't

feel it I wouldn't I wouldn't even do it

it unless you can work out some way like

I already mentioned you know you start

off with somebody that you can feel

genuine metap for preferably not a mate

they advise you in the text not to

choose like a sex object for sending

meta because it can just inflame

you but you know like a brother sister

your parent just a good friend your dog

something like that you start off with

that and and then maybe you can

progress and and send it you know more

univers

after you've gotten good at it with

regard to you know the bunny slope of of

somebody that you already

like but yeah I was never really much

into meta meditation just for the same

reason that it's not even really a

feeling because sometimes you get the

warm glowy feeling that's all it is it's

just a warm glowy

feeling it's not really sending love to

all

beings so I'm just going to move on to

the next question

here this is from Mara made

Mahayana and Mara made Mahayana says the

Buddha taught Right View shouldn't the

Buddhists when asked about other

religions Proclaim Buddhism as the only

true path to nibana instead of claiming

as some leading Buddhists in the world
do that all religions are the same well
I think this is a false dichotomy
because those aren't the only two
options so let's see here I do not think
that Buddhism or terraa Buddhism is
necessarily the only true path to nibana
but I also don't think that all
religions are the same some religions I
mean Enlightenment is not an option you
know it's not even on the it's not on
the map like a Jehovah's
Witness they got no they got no clue
with regard to Enlightenment you know
the best they can hope for is to be one
of the

144,000 who go up into heaven

after the Rapture and get administrative

jobs for the Kingdom of Heaven and the

rest of the people I mean the highest

they can hope for is to just spend

forever and ever uh picking fruits and

vegetables going on picnics and hugging

wild animals if you read their

literature you know this or even like U

like quranic Islam really doesn't have

anything higher to offer than going up

into this paradise like heaven with you

know the Dark Eyed huies and all that

and the the the streams flowing with

well maybe it wouldn't be wine I don't

know are they allowed to drink wine in

heaven I don't

know so there are some religions though
where you can become enlightened that
aren't bu in in Bud that aren't
Buddhist at least in my opinion it's
just that in my opinion Buddhism is the
most efficient way of doing that for
certain kinds of people especially if
you're more head oriented than or you're
you're mystically oriented maybe but for
people that need more devotionalism they
just have like this need for a more
heart-based
system maybe some other system would
work better like maybe vant some kind of
Hinduism maybe even like some kind of
contemplative order of

Christianity but I do think that

Buddhism I mean the Buddha in a way he

he he he engineered Buddhism to be as

pure of a mystical system as

possible and I mean it eventually got

corrupted a lot of extra stuff got added

maybe some important stuff got

subtracted but there's less to distract

you there's less dogmatism to distract

you even though lots of dogmatism has

been added to

it so I think it is the best system for

cultivating

wisdom or at least in being charitable

and open-minded and all you know it's

it's up at the top you know it's in the

top

three top two I'm just let's just say
it's the best it's the best system just
for cultivating wisdom and getting you
closer to Enlightenment but not for
everybody necessarily you know there's
all different kinds of personality types
and one size does not fit all some
people might just need a different more
heart oriented approach or
something um so all religions are not
the same but my also I would say that
Buddhism is not necessarily the only
true path to
nibana that some people can become
enlightened just because they're ripe
you know they're like the yellow leaf on

the tree in in late October that's just ready to fall and all it takes is just some little nudge and that's all it takes it's like some people that they've done a lot of spiritual practice in previous lives supposedly or presumably and then they get a blow on the head or or or something they have some near-death experience and that just that's all that's all it takes they don't necessarily have to be doing any intensive practice in this life rahan nahari was like that he was a Hindu but uh there's a good chance he was he was fully enlightened even though he was a shite Hindu who worshiped a hill

life is

strange so let's see here I guess I

answered that question so I'm going to

move on to the next question here from

alpacino

alpaca and alpacino alpaca says maybe

the ultimate formless Consciousness is

the reason why our universe exists at

all you cannot be just conscious you are

always conscious of something if nothing

exists and you are pure Consciousness

without body thoughts or even feelings

what would you be conscious

of um yeah I mean that's true there

there has to be some kind of contrast in

order to be conscious in the human sense

in order to have any kind of world any
kind of perceptible existence there has
to be a contrast between you know
something and something else and if all
there is is just pure formless
Consciousness
then there's nothing there to to be
conscious of and and in a way it's it
doesn't even really exist I mean there's
no way to identify it you know it's like
like Hegel starts his dialectic you know
pure being is the the first thesis and
then the first antithesis is pure
non-being and they just cancel each
other out because neither one of them
has any discernable content and so
they're indistinguishable they just

merge into each other so then you have

to have

contrast as as the synthesis which then

allows the entire universe to exist you

know it's like the da Ching you know

says you know one came from the Dao and

the two came from the one and from the

two came the 10,000 things which is kind

of a similar

message so let's see I mean what is the

main question here though if nothing

exists and you are pure Consciousness

without body well you wouldn't be you I

mean there wouldn't be any you I mean

pure Consciousness pure formless

Consciousness I mean that that might be

just God in a sense I mean if you're
going to reify that and say that it's
this thing it's this this entity then
yeah that'd be capital G God probably
Brahman so let's see if nothing exists
and you are pure Consciousness without
body well I mean the Consciousness would
exist and so that would be something
that
exists what would you be conscious of
yeah I mean that's that's just it
so um um yeah from the Buddhist point of
view you have to be conscious of
something at least with regard to Wanaka
the aggregate of Consciousness that
aggregate of Consciousness has to be
conscious of something of some

object so when you get to just pure

formless Consciousness there are one or

two fragments of suas in the in the

sutapa that are implying that that's

what nibana is is just pure formless

consciousness

it's not you it's not your Consciousness

there is no

you well it's just that's I mean that's

that's what the upanishad some

upanishads also identify the absolute

you know Brahman as pure formless

Consciousness

so the objects are kind of optional and

come

later and then that's like the Fall From

Grace that's the fool and the tarot
falling off the cliff into the world
once he becomes conscious of something
you know once something is singled out
then boom you're in
samsar so I'm just going to move on to
the next question here this is from
Luigi Scarface which is continuing the
Pacino theme and Luigi says reading some
sutas in the poly Canon it speaks on
Angels wanting to feed the Buddha food
through his pores and Goa fighting the
Buddhist devil and is hordes of demons
how does a 21st century Westerner take
this seriously do you believe in this
literally well I mean I would make this
one little quibble I don't think the

Buddha was fighting the Buddhist devil
and his hordes of demons I mean he was
withstanding them you know he was just
sitting there in in a state of
contemplation while they're doing
everything they can he might rebuke Mara
a little bit but I mean he's not hurling
anything at them he's not you know doing
any kind of martial arts against them or
anything not using any weapons
really but uh yeah there is a lot of
weird stuff like when the the Buddha was
starving himself when he was doing his
sever austerities before his his
Enlightenment that uh the dvas you know
the small G Gods you know they didn't

know what color his skin was some people thought some of them thought he was black some thought he was brown some thought he was golden colored it was just his skin was so discolored and dirty and modeled and everything and he was so emaciated that they they started thinking they were just going to like Infuse some kind of celestial Mana into him just to keep him alive and this is all just later devotionalism that got added it's not what the Buddha really taught in my opinion so no I don't believe this literally it really has nothing to do with what the Buddha really taught which is how to become enlightened how to

cultivate wisdom how to how to be

mindful how to have equinity Fess of

desires to know what causes suffering

and how to avoid unnecessary suffering

that sort of

thing and all the stories and the the

fables and the fire breathing dragons

and so forth was added later and any

premodern system is going to have this

kind of

stuff it's just the way premodern people

thought so yeah I guess I answered that

question so I'm just going to move on to

the next question from

Santos and Santos says how to remember

past lives as lay people without much

experience in

meditation well you could try hypnotism

which is what my father did my father

claimed to remember a number of his past

lives as a little kid I'd be sitting on

his lap he'd be telling me about past

life regressions and astral traveling

and so forth and he wasn't much of a

meditator but he was an amateur

hypnotist and uh he was uh really into

what is called or what he called the

occult or just you know experimenting

with you know latent psychic abilities

you know ESP and dream Communications

and um trying to like move objects

without touching them and so forth and

uh so yeah he did it through

hypnosis so that would be probably your

best bet if you if you're not going to

if you don't meditate well enough to

have past life life regressions and I

never had past life regressions in

meditation

anyway so I mean you have to be really

Adept and also just have like a talent

in that

direction

but I think a lot of people who have

past life regressions and meditation are

really hypnotizing themselves

anyway so yeah try try hypnosis that

would be the obvious answer to that

question so I'll just move on to the

next question which is from White Ash
Piper and white ash Piper says could the
only illusion be the Eternal now
thinking on your metaphor with the
candle flame and the stream seems like
the past is ever crashing into the
future what say you P basa
well yeah I think it would probably be
the other way around really um you know
the candle flame and the stream it's
you're talking about samsara which is
not ultimately real anyway it's like you
have like I was saying earlier have to
have change in order to have any kind of
conscious
existence just because you know any kind
of stasis anything staying the same and

the mind just doesn't change it's just
Frozen I mean literally Frozen so it's
not you wouldn't even be aware of it
there always has to be something
changing in order for you to be aware
for you to be alive and a conscious
being so but then this alive conscious
being is not ultimately real it's just
one of an infinite number of possible
statues contain in this block of
marble
so the Eternal now the only illusion now
I don't think so I mean now is if you're
in the if you're in now it's each each
moment is the only moment so to
speak and the candle flames and the

streams and all that

are they're objects of perception and

some soric and not ultimately

real so I guess I answered that question

it's a profound

question And So It causes me a little

bit of emotional insecurity to have

answered it so quickly instead of just

wallowing and answering the question for

five or 10 minutes but I'm going to move

on to White Ash Piper's next question

and if he's really dissa isfied he can

ask it again in different different

words or

something like he has done before so his

next question is is there a word for ego

so I assume he's referring to poly is

there is there a poly word for

ego and I don't think there's anything

any word in poly that precisely

corresponds to the ego as formulated by

Sigman Freud in his

psychology although

ego literally means eye in in

Latin and so yeah I mean there's there's

words for I like

aam in

poly and so I mean you can say like

Asami Mana might be a word that kind of

comes close it's like the conceit I am

you know in a way that's kind of like

the ego it's just it's at least it's

what the ego is based on I mean the ego

is based on the idea that you are an

individual

entity and it's it's all also based on

perception you know it's like your

perceptions are you know

like what am I trying to say here the

like the personification of who you are

in a sense I mean it's like you're

you're turning your perceptions into an

eye so I mean something like psychi dity

or you know personality view would also

be sort of a found Foundation of what

Freud called the ego but um you know the

conceit I am is is like the foundation

of

it um you know it's like your

conscious conscious mentality with which

you identify I assume would be what the

ego really

is and uh yeah it would be like aami

Mana

maybe but uh I don't think there is a

poly term that prec precisely directly

corresponds to the ego in Freudian

psychology I mean Buddhism Buddhist

psychology works different from Freud

like Buddhism strangely doesn't really

have a concept of the subconscious mind

which I think is sort of a maybe a

defect in the later developments of

Buddhist psychology you know like like

Abid dama they really didn't have any

concept of the latent subconscious you

know it's like mental process that are
going on that you're not consciously
aware of at least not at the level of
the
ego so I do think that uh I mean I've
had enough experience in life to know
that there really is a subconscious mind
and so uh I do think that that is one of
the uh the shortcomings of the ABI Abid
philosophy is that it really didn't take
that into account you know it couldn't
really explain a lot of things like what
generates dreams and so so forth you
know they would just say you know it's
like your karma is generating the dream
but um you know they can't really
explain it much better than

that so yeah I guess I answered that
question sort of so I'm just going to
move on to the next question which is
from Josh and Josh asks a kind of
historical interesting question he says
why do you think jism continued to
survive in India up to modern times
while Buddhism ended up dying out over
the past several
centuries um that's a good question you
know it's like the Janes are still in
India the Buddhists got wiped out but
there are still a few million Janes I
have
read and I assume one reason why the
Janes survived is they were just seen as

unimportant and allowed to survive just

they were under the radar to some degree

they just look like Hindus or something

maybe um but the Buddhists because they

were I mean India was was majority

Buddhist for quite a while so that there

was more of a push back against the

Buddhists they were more obvious you

know they were like the the prevailing

religious system when the Muslims

invaded so they they they were like on

the radar way more and became more of a

um more of a Target I

think and the dogs having a

dream yeah

silly

okay so yeah I assume that the Janes

were just kind of under the radar you
know because they they weren't really a
major I mean there was lots of them but
they were so innocuous and you know they
weren't really
um I don't know how mainstream they
would have
been yeah it is a good question and I'm
just guessing just I'm just coming up
with hypotheses or theories or
something but I do think there was a
certain rivalry between the Hindus and
the
Buddhists not so much between the jeans
and anybody and uh so I mean it may have
been a certain amount of karma just from

just the Rivalry going on that too much
pushing wound up in too much pushing
back the other way or or
something but it may also be that the
Janes
were more aesthetic than the Buddhists
and so they were more likely to just be
off in the woods somewhere while the the
Turks were sacking the Buddhist
universities and just slaughtering the
inhabitants of monasteries and so forth
the James were wandering around naked
you just out in the stick
somewhere so they may have survived in
that way also kind of like one of the
explanations for why the beunis wen't
extinct beunis weren't allowed to live

in the forest because it was just too
dangerous for women and so you know they
were in the towns and so forth where
they were easier to wipe out but I
assume there were some Buddhists that
were out in the woods
too but uh why they eventually became
extinct maybe it's just because the main
centers of Buddhism
collapsed and so you know it just
gradually the numbers of forest athetic
Buddhists also just kind of dwindled out
because of the main support centers um
just getting wiped out by Muslims and to
some degree by intolerant Hindus like
kings and so

forth so and it could be I mean I've
I've heard the theory that it just the
Buddhists were making bad karma for
themselves by getting into all this
esoteric Tantra stuff they were they
were just getting farther and farther
out so that the lay people couldn't
really relate to what it was that they
were teaching or practicing or anything
anymore and it just became too heavily
reliant on Buddhist universities and so
when the universities got got wiped out
it was sort of like what happened to
Buddhism in in uh Thailand when the
Burmese sacked their Capital City Audia
that uh Thailand never fully recovered
from that I mean to this day they still

haven't fully recovered they you know
the whole ecclesiastical hierarchy and
their their monastic schools and
everything were were centered in this
city that just got essentially
sacked and uh it was that was on a much
larger scale in uh in India with regard
to Buddhism in
general so again I'm I'm just uh coming
up with theories I've never really never
really considered this question before
so I'm uh I'm just guessing off the top
of my head so I'm just going to move on
to Josh's next
question and uh he says my second
question is do you know if anyone has

made a chronological order of the sutas
from the poly Canon like from the moment
of the Buddha's Enlightenment to his
Parana that might be hard though
considering how many sutas there are but
I think it would be interesting to be
able to read at least some of the most
famous and important ones in
chronological
order well I don't think it's even
really possible I mean with regard to
the Quran um that some Western editions
of the Quran have tried to put them in
chronological order because um you know
it's recent enough and well documented
enough that you
could you could do that but with regard

to the poly sutas like for example

according to tradition the very first

suta the very first discourse of the

Buddha was the Daka

patut but like um some Buddhist Scholars

like KR nman point out that it's it's

kind of like an anachronism in that some

of some later Buddhist philosophy

already implied in that

suta um so it may just be like a a

traditional thing I mean it may not have

really been the Buddhist first sermon

I'm not I'm not really uh taking sides

on that one

but there is no there's no

way that you could come up with a

chronological order of sutas especially
because a lot of the sutas probably were
never taught by the Buddha anyway and
some of the sutas are just amalgams of
older material you know it's just
fragments of older material that are all
got compiled into into one
sua and uh I mean it's just really hard
to say like the AA waga is considered to
be extremely ancient especially the four
ataka sutas of the AA waga of the sutin
I mean those could be some of the old
suas and they're obviously archaic in
certain respects and they're teaching a
a very different kind of Buddhism than a
lot of Buddha sutas
are so I mean it's just the best you

could do is just try to come up with

just a rough

approximation of what are the like the

the early

texts and like the book I've already

mentioned it I mentioned it quite a lot

actually is studies in the origins of

Buddhism by GC Pond and he goes through

the ptica and he's trying to

differentiate you know the older

material from the the more the later

material and so something like that at

least

can get you sort of a little bit closer

to understanding what the early

teachings

were but it's it's so complicated and
there's just not enough information with
regard to how to date the sutas that uh
yeah I don't think it's it's remotely
possible to do
that I mean you can maybe I mean even
the traditionalists like some Burmese
scholar seatt there's no way he could do
that either because I mean there's
there's no mention in most of the sutas
of exactly when the suta was given when
when the discourse was delivered you
know it's just you know on one occasion
thus I have heard on one occasion the
Buddha was staying at such and such
place and you know it's not it's not
giving a date or anything they didn't

even have dates in those

days so

yeah I mean it's it's it's not possible

so do do I know if anyone has made a

chronological order of the sutas from

the poly Canon um I assume there have

been attempts at at least like GC pond

in his book was at least trying to

differentiate earlier from later and

that's about as good as you can

do maybe you can you can differentiate

it into better than just earlier and

later like really early you know like

the ATA waga especially the four ataka

suas and you know you got like the

central portion of the Saka pauta you

got the rhinoceros horn suta the Dania

suta of the Sut

suttin

um maybe the the deaka sua of the

majaya and just fragments I mean

sometimes you'll have an old fragment

embedded in a later suo that kind of

thing with like the some of it just

being like commentary or just a verse

and then you got like this story that

that sort of like explains the verse but

the verse is maybe really ancient like

the udana there's still a certain amount

of disagreement I think with regard

regard to which is older the the pros

portion or the verse portion of the

udana they just don't know all you can

do is just guess for various

reasons

so yeah I don't I don't think you I mean

according to tradition you know it's

like the first Su was the damaka Su the

second Su was the anat L Su you know on

the mark of no self the third was the

fire suta I think and so I mean you can

kind of get to the traditional view of

the order of the early suas by reading

the mahaga of the vinia ptica because

the mahaa of the vapa starts with the

Buddha's Enlightenment and then

continues as you know he's giving his

first

discourses and then like started the S

you know like ordaining his first

disciples and starting certain rules

like with regard to Reigns Retreats and

and just it gets more and more technical

as you go along but that would probably

be my the closest you're going to get

from a traditional point of view would

be to read especially the first part the

first chapter of the vinia mahalaga

which you can find free

online so

I guess I read I guess so I guess I

answered that question so I'm just going

to move on to the next question here

this is from

Mambo okay this is from Mambo and he

says I've been listening to kudaka

nikaya lectures on YouTube whatever I've
heard so far are stories about various
people from all walks of life who have
an ego or in the wrong some way and
Buddha just points out their faults and
how to overcome it so is the core of
Buddhism just
self-improvement and Nirvana according
to what I'm getting from these lectures
is just controlling one's emotional
state of mind and not letting them slide
into one extreme or the
other um no I mean with regard to his
teaching of lay people you know like
relative normies he might just be
teaching them how to be a better person

you know how to um you know how to avoid extremes that sort of thing but I mean the whole purpose of Buddhism the main purpose is
Enlightenment which is freedom from suffering or freedom from delusion take your pick because they both wind up the same
so it may be that the lectures on YouTube are directed towards lay people that watch YouTube videos which so they might be just picking the ones that uh they think would be more applicable to normies sitting at home watching YouTube videos that may be part of it but if you read the texts you know you read the the sutas you're going to see that I mean

there's there's way more to Buddhism
than that and that's really not the main
point of
it so I think I'm just going to move on
to Mambo's next question here and he
says my question is about Zen and
Mahayana are they both similar or is Zen
more close to Buddhism with emphasis on
self-improvement in the present rather
than attaining the Nirvana which rest of
the sects are trying to achieve well Zen
technically is a kind of
Mahayana you know it's I think I mean
some people might separate Zen from
Mahayana but Zen really is it's a a sect
of Mahayana Buddhism so they are similar

in that respect Zen is more iconoclastic
it's less dogmatic and it has more
appreciation for meditation and also it
has more appreciation of the idea that
thinking isn't going to get you there
that you're not going to understand
Reality by thinking about it so that's
why some Zen practitioners will meditate
on Coons which is a riddle that has no
answer no no correct answer and you just
keep stewing over it and stewing over it
and stewing over it until finally it's
like your mind just like hit hits tilt
like an old pinball machine or
just the error light goes up and you
stop thinking and in that Moment of
clarity when you stop thinking then you

can actually realize

something

so let's see are they both similar or

Zen more close to Buddhism I assume by

Buddhism he means

Terra because Zen and Mahayana are both

technically schools of Buddhism or kinds

of Buddhism see with emphasis on

self-improvement and again I mean

ultimately once you get to the advanced

level a monk is supposed to leave behind

both good and bad so the

self-improvement it's more a matter of

um not so much improving yourself I mean

that's sort of for beginners that's for

Lay people you know earning Merit is for

Lay

people but when you start getting more

advanced it's more of just becoming more

and more subtle and just so that you can

see through the Veil so to

speak so I mean in a way it's all I mean

the present moment is is supposed to be

the most important moment um there are a

lot of Buddhists who are like praying

for some future existence or something

which really is just radically different

from what the Buddha was teaching I mean

he was warning against that kind of

stuff

so um yeah I mean goal oriented dhamma

is not the best kind of dharm and having

set even setting up Enlightenment or

Nirvana as a goal I mean it's it's
pretty much unavoidable it's like the
ideal that you should be moving towards
but still you should be moving towards
it while attending to what is right here
right now in the present
moment
so the budha really didn't emphasize
Nirvana a lot I mean he had to mention
it and you know point out that that's
the goal and everything but really being
mindfulness in the present moment is
much more important than thinking about
some future state that you haven't
arrived at yet I mean that's just not a
good way of making

progress so I think I'm just going to
move on to the next question here this
is from rakasa and this is another
question about that same Mula paraya
suta which is suta number one in the
majam Kaya and he says my question
concerns this passage from the Mula
paraya sua quote he perceives nibana as
nibana having perceive nibana as nibana
he conceives himself as nibana he
conceives himself in nibana he conceives
himself apart from nibana he conceives
niana to be mine he Delights in nibana
why is that because he has not fully
understood it I say unquote so rasa's
question is how would someone who
perceives niana do any of that my

impression was that someone attains
niana by putting an end to
aamar or making making me me making
otherwise they simply do not perceive it
perhaps I am mistaken or biku bod's
translation is off but this passage
makes it sound like you can attain
nibana but not be liberated because you
attain it by grasping and identifying
the rest of the Su makes sense when
talking about pjan grasping at worldly
elements so I'm confused why the Buddha
includes nibana well if you if you read
the suta you'll see that when he's
talking about the the normi the bhuj the
ordinary worldling the common person he

perceives nibana as this or that but
when you get to the enlightened being
he's not perceiving nibana anymore he is
knowing directly nibana so this
perceiving nibana perception is samsara
perception is just symbol in your head
that's not really nibana so you're
thinking about nibana that's not really
nibana and that's what he's talking
about In this passage you know he's
thinking about nibana there some Normie
thinking about nibana he makes all kinds
of false assumptions about nibana which
I mean a lot of people do that most
Buddhists have false assumptions about
nibana because they think about it but
they haven't experienced it directly so

they're just coming up with ideas about
nibana and that's what this suta or this
what this passage is
discussing but then if you continue with
the suta when you get to the enlightened
being you get to the Arad and the datag
then they know it directly it's not
perceiving anything anymore the
perception is is the
problem perception is just symbols in
your head that people mistake for
reality but you're never going to
understand reality you're never going to
understand nibana by
perception perception is
samsara it's just symbolic meaning that

you confuse with

reality so I hope I answered that

question because I'm moving on to the

next one this is from arain and Arin

says how does one find an authentic

teacher should Junior monks be running

around farming followers on social media

and soliciting for cash donations what

are the rules of V what are the rules of

viia with regard to this and how should

lay people take care not to be led

astray when it comes to Donna or

support well finding an authentic

teacher is difficult because um if

you're looking for a teacher that means

that you are still unenlightened you are

to some degree delusional and so you're

having to use a delusional mind to pick
a teacher and I mean history shows that
a lot of people probably most people
just pick a diluted teacher who maybe is
a con man pretending to be enlightened
or is just pretending to be a wise
person or whatever wiser than the person
really is so that is I mean this that is
really a a dilemma I did write write an
essay long ago on the dilemmas of
religion and I'm pretty sure that that
was one of the dilemmas where I mean you
can go with your own idea but you're
going with a diluted idea if you're not
enlightened yet or you can follow a
teacher's idea but you got to use your

diluted mind to pick a teacher so you're
just stuck with the delusion one way or
the other you're having to make a
deluded Choice one way or the
other some people are just lucky they've
got like enough Merit or enough purity
of heart or something that the right
teacher just comes to them in fact as a
general rule you know when the student
is ready the teacher will
come so there is that but it is a
dilemma so I'll just move on to this
next part of the question here should
Junior monks be running around around
farming followers on social media and
soliciting for cash donations what are
the rules of vinea with regard to this

and how should lay people take care not
to be led astray when it comes to Donna
War support well there are a few things
with regard to vinia first of all no
monk should be asking for cash donations
if any monk is asking for donations you
know he's not following vinia he is be
smurged his virtue by doing
so so there is that also a monk should
not be a teacher until he has been a
monk for at least 10 years that's like
ancient terod tradition that you're
especially your first five years as a
monk you're a beginner you're a navak
kab biku you know you're a beginner you
shouldn't be teaching anyone unless I

mean people can come and ask you
questions that sort of thing and I mean
you might still be humble enough to say
well you should ask my teacher he knows
better than I do but maybe you know they
just come out to your meditation cabin
they're sitting there talking and they
just ask you a question you know what's
your understanding your teacher says
this what do you what do you do you
agree with that sort of thing or or
whatever you know would you explain the
five precepts to me or something well I
mean it makes sense for the monk to do
the best he can but for him to put
himself out there to Hype himself as a
teacher um when he's when he's still a

junior monk is inappropriate I mean
that's not so good they may have
justifications for it you know there's
so little Dharma that you know we're in
need of people that can teach and I can
teach better than most or something but
uh yeah I mean if I mean there's no
rules against farming followers on
social media because of course in Iron
Age Ganges Valley they didn't have
social media yet they didn't have
internet or anything back
then
so I mean you going to have to use what
wisdom you've got to detect wisdom and
or unwisdom in people who are putting

themselves out there as

teachers so yeah hope I didn't just lose

half my viewers by saying that but um

see what are the rules of winning with

regard to this how should lay people

take care not to be led astray when it

comes to Donna or support we'll be

cautious and just watch the person see I

mean if if they're a monk I mean do they

follow the rules as well as you

understand the rules most lay people

don't understand the rules even in Burma

which is possibly the most Buddhist

country in the world a lot of people

don't realize that monks are forbidden

to touch money or

women you know there's so many monks

rascally monks on buses like sitting
next to girls and so forth that people
just don't realize that it's just
strictly forbidden for a monk to be
touching women or um or money I mean
it's like even the T the the the Burmese
equivalent of the S Raja the the song on
Mahan nayaka Seattle I'm pretty sure he
asks for donations and handles money
himself or at least a relatively recent
one
did and some of the most famous monks
most revered monks in the country there
I mean they're they're like demanding
payment for giving domat talk that sort
of thing I mean they they're really

they're just raking it in with both hands so you got to be careful I mean if you really want a monk who is virtuous you should know a little bit about the rules of monastic discipline and take a look at the monk to see if he's following the rules of monastic discipline um and just know dhama well enough to have an idea as to whether these teachers are following dhama and and whether they are practicing it and whether they really understand it but again ideally a teacher is going to know more than you do so I mean if if you can verify everything that he says then he's not a very good teacher because I mean you know as much as he does if not more

so really the whole thing is to some
degree you just have to be very
sensitive and cautious and you know give
give a teacher the benefit of the doubt
I mean you don't want to be so cynical
that you just assume that they're all
full of or something because I mean
that's that's just slamming the door
from the very get-go and you're not
going to get much benefit from that so
give them the benefit of the doubt but I
mean if alarm Bells start ringing you
know they're doing something that
strikes you as being foolish or unver
virtuous or inappropriate or whatever
then yeah I mean you should take that

into consideration and uh think twice
before sending them the contents of your
bank
account and if they're asking for money
just flat out then you know that they
are not virtuous Monks at least not
terraa monks if they're I mean a terraa
monk is for forbidden to tell tell
anybody what to do with money other than
just do whatever makes you
happy and you know they're not allowed
to handle it not allowed to ask for it
anything like
that but I mean if a monk or a non any
kind of teacher if if they cause you to
to make Improvement you know they're
helping you they make they make you feel

like happier or wiser you know like
you're you feel like you're really
getting benefit from it then yeah go
with that and uh just continue giving
them the benefit of the doubt until they
give you really obvious reasons not to I
me or you got to trust your intuition to
some degree so it'd be like the same as
making any kind of important decision
you wait until you're like in a
relatively expanded clear kind of mental
state and then see what kind of
intuition comes up what is your what you
know what is the decision that comes up
from deep inside you rather than you
know just the your superficial thinking

mind something like that and have faith
that I mean if you really are in need of
a teacher then the teacher will find
you and so I'm just going to move on to
next question and this is the very last
question this is from Ry balder I think
ribalder Ry
Baler something like that anyways Ry
balder or rib balder says thank you for
the explanation I'm not sure what the
explanation was but um I explained
something apparently which is good and
he says what name is given if any to
that which transmigrates lifetimes what
element is undergoing rebirth and this
is an easy question to answer because
the only thing that trans migrates the

only thing that you take with you after
you die is karma that's it that's the
only thing there is no soul that
transmigrates in Burma or in Burma
in
Buddhism it's it's it's just your karma
and your karma is essentially what
shophow are called will you know it is
volition it is chaa and it's the it's
like the momentum like the kinetic
aspect of your mind like like uh
perceptions are more like static symbols
but the the volition or the the Chaya is
like the this the uh the kinetic aspect
you know it's like the energetic aspect
ECT of your mind it's it's determining

your your direction you know it's the momentum of your mental States and that is what when this vehicle stops working then immediately it has to find another vehicle because it's sort of like conservation of energy kind of a deal so it's it's karma or will is the only thing that uh is undergoing rebirth and that's it that's the last question so if you got any questions that you think maybe I can answer like especially about Buddhism or meditation or monasticism or or anything you think I might know something about then feel free to ask them their questions in the comments below or if you have access to

subscribe star you can ask there if you

have access to the Discord server you

can ask there and uh I won't tell you to

look at the links below because YouTube

I'm pretty sure is still smiting me I

think it's like two months before I can

post links

again but

uh yeah and I guess the last thing I'm

supposed to say is be

happy so be happy

okay hail

audience hello and welcome to question

and answer number 84 I your host P basa

and we have got a fairly large number of

questions here today and some of the

questions are relatively long so I

should just Dive Right into this without

uh giving you any unnecessary Preamble

about things that have nothing to do

with the questions

so that's what I'm going to do and the

first

question is from bodh Satan 969 who also

goes by the name of Mara made

Mahayana and he

says helmet Hecker a well-known German

Buddhist and translator of the doctrine
wrote in one of his books that one of
the five cilas for Lay followers is only
about not lying but not not as many
Claim about right speech in general what
do you think about it
well right speech in general the five
cilas uh I really don't think so I think
that wrong speech or Musa in p i mean
it's everywhere in the sutas or almost
everywhere in the sutas that right
speech or wrong speech let's say wrong
speech is defined is defined as four
different kinds of wrong speech for
example mahasan the Bible of weasa
meditators it defines right
speech as four different kinds and I

mean you refrain from wrong speech the
Sila is to refrain from wrong speech
from Musa so if you refrain from wrong
speech then you are presumably if you're
speaking at all you're speaking right
speech which is not
lying not bad mouthing people to their
face I guess yeah not badmouthing people
to their face not slandering people
behind their back or even telling like
malicious truths behind their back you
know like just saying bad things about
someone behind their back in order to
get other people not to like them and
then finally there's some papala which
is like gossip just sort of useless

speech

so I don't know where he got the idea

that the five precepts apply or the the

fourth of the five precepts apply only

to lying and not to other kinds of wrong

speech but um I think he was mistaken

unless someone can come up with a suta

saying that you know the fourth precept

for Lay people applies only to lying but

then again there may be other sutas that

say something otherwise but in General

it is accepted that the fourth precept

is you know I undertake the precept to

refrain from wrong speech and there are

four kinds of wrong

speech so it's not just lying but who

knows maybe he's got he's got some suta

in particular that emphasize not lying

or something and that's what he's going

with but uh I do think that overall in

general he is mistaken

helmet Hecker so I'm just going to move

on to bodhisatta 969 AKA maram

mahay's next question

here which is kind of a strange one oh

and I should say that bodh 969 the very

first questioner has violated the

precept of asking more than three

questions because there are four

questions here although uh I guess I can

answer one of them very briefly

or maybe we can just uh attribute two of

the questions to his alternate

personality of Mora made

Mahayana but uh anyways his next

question the strange question is another

tourist in India was raped by seven men

we all know Islam dot dot dot but isn't

Hinduism an equally crappy

religion H what reason do you see for

this in the Hindu script scriptures for

example Brahma is said to have committed

incest with his own

daughter first of all I would say that

just because seven men who lived in a

predominantly Hindu culture just because

those seven men raped somebody doesn't

mean that Hinduism endorses rape anymore

than the mafia being predominantly

Catholic I mean just because the mafia

is Catholic you got Cath

Catholics that are shooting people that

they're you know got extortion rackets

they're hijacking semis and selling the

contents on the black market and so

forth I mean the Catholic Church doesn't

endorse this stuff just because you got

people who are nominally Catholic who

are doing it I mean the Burmese military

government they're predominantly terraa

Buddhists at least superficially

ostensibly like in Burmese newspapers it

used to be a thing I don't know if it's

still that way where there were like

four main kinds of pictures you would

see in a Burmese newspaper one is a a

general inspecting some

new some new symbol of progress like a

factory or a bridge or a highway or

something one is somebody handing

somebody else an award one is a general

offering something to a famous monk

usually like a set of robes you know

he's offering this offering this stuff

to a famous monk and then fourth is just

like totally random pictures of like a

big toad that is eating a three- foot

long snake or something but the point

the point of that digression is that the

generals the I mean the the leaders of

the military dictatorship in Burma are

terraa

Buddhists and that doesn't mean that

what they do is Endor by terraa

Buddhism so I really don't think that

Hinduism in general endorses gang

rape you know just no matter where you

go there's going to be bad people

there's going to be ostensible ostensive

followers of any religion who are doing

bad things that doesn't mean that the

religion itself endorses these bad

things so

Hinduism is has is a broad spectrum you

know from the ridiculous to the sublime

like Mahayana Buddhism also is just a

broad

spectrum with a really profound elements

and kind of silly elements and Hinduism

really does have some very profound

elements like vant for

example some aspects of

yoga like Raja yoga

so no I don't think that Hinduism is a

crappy religion although it may have

some arguably crappy

elements but endorsing gang rape is not

one of those elements I'm pretty sure so

I'm just going to move on to the next

question here from bodh Sant

969 this is the easily quickly answered

question should you only have one Buddha

statue or one Buddha figure in the house

and

it doesn't matter I mean it's it's

whatever is most suited to your

temperament some people they just want
Buddhas everywhere and you go to some
places in Burma some temples like thot p
in Northwestern Burma it's got over
100,000 Buddha images in this one
Temple um other I mean there's not even
necessary for you to to even have one
Buddhist statue even if you're a
devouted terraa Buddhist I mean you
don't have to have
any so I mean whatever works best for
you whatever helps you to be happy and
make progress in dhama then that's going
to be best for you but I don't think
that there's any real need for just one
Buddha statue I mean I I have only one

Buddha statue up there but my sweetheart
and her mother they like Buddha art and
so it wasn't my choice but we've got
like Buddha Buddha images is like around
the house that are mainly there for
aesthetic purposes as far as as far as I
can
tell so yeah it doesn't matter I'm just
going to move on to the next question
here and this one's going to be almost
as well I mean it could be as easily and
briefly answered but I just don't swing
that way and his his fourth question his
transgressive fourth question is I'm GNA
make sure we're recording here yeah I
think we are good his fourth
transgressive question is can you

explain vadra mudra weara mudra

Etc and these are Sanskrit words with

regard to essentially Mahayana Buddhist

iconography like mudras are usually um

hand hand positions like Buddha statues

are not all the same you know the hands

are

different uh sometimes the bodily

posture is different

um but in

Terra there's really just four main ones

you know you might find some that do not

fit these four main ones but they're

sort of unorthodox you know they're not

the tradition but in terraa Buddhism at

least Burmese terraa Buddhism there are

four main mudras or I guess it' be mudda

in

p and they represent you know four of

the most important moments in the

Buddha's life first is the bumi Pasa

mudra which is kind of weird it's the

most popular Buddha uh Buddha image

style in Burma which is ironic because

at the time that the Buddha did this

made put his hands in the bumi Pasa

mudra um he wasn't the Buddha yet he

wasn't enlightened yet so this it's it's

like symbolic of the night of his

Enlightenment or you know his sitting

down under the bod tree and vowing not

to move until he was enlightened and the

bumi pasam mudra he's got one hand like

this and the other hand is like reaching down and touching the ground and that is symbolic of the moment when Mara the evil one um tells the Buddha he should he shouldn't be sitting there he has no right to sit there and the Buddha me he's afraid that the Buddha really is going to become enlightened and the Buddha he uh calls upon the Earth as his witness that he is worthy of sitting there that he has the right to sit there so he hasn't even become enlightened yet but that is like the main mudra in in burmes terraa then you got the Janna mudra which is my favorite which is the Buddha sitting in meditation you know

his hands are like this or in some

Mahayana like the Kamakura you know he's

got his hands kind of like this I'm

trying

to do this un

naturally but it's essentially the hands

are together in the lap in a

meditative

mudra and that's symbolic it's called

the Jan mudra or just the meditation

mudra and that is symbolic of his actual

Enlightenment and then the another one

that's it's sometimes it's very nice if

it's well executed is where the Buddha

the Buddhist image he's going like this

he's sort of like counting on his

fingers and that I don't remember the

poly name or the Sanskrit name for that
but it is symbolic of the Buddha
preaching the first sermon the damaka
patut and he's counting off the four
noble truths on his fingers and then
finally you've
got let see the par mudra which is the
Buddha lying on his right side which is
the moment of his death so it's four
it's symbolic of four of the most
important moments in the biography at
least with regard to
dhama and uh I don't know what the vadra
mudra or the wiara mudra are but there
are a lot more mudras that can be found
in Mahayana Buddhism you know you got

the medicine Buddha with a little medicine Bowl in his lap and you've got you know he's doing kind of doing this kind of stuff with his hands and that kind of thing but that is not common to Terra and I really don't know that much about it so I'm just going to move on to the next question here this is from Cool Whip and this is a surprisingly complex question to answer he says in World War II would you have taken the Bad Karma and killed the Nazis or nonviolence but letting Hitler rule the world complete renunciation can seem naive living amongst crazy delusional PE evil people conventionally speaking hope this isn't a censurable

question and then he's got a laughing

emoji yeah I hope it's not a censurable

answer

either but I mean there's so many

different ways of of answering this

question it's like um assuming that I

lived back and I was of like fighting

age you know like my father was and my

father fought in World War II he fought

the Germans in World War II he was in

the European theater he actually killed

a few

um but it's like do I know then what I

know now or would I just be you know

born and raised you know in the like the

late teens early 1920s of America you

know be a fighting age around

1942 and just be like a normie I mean I

wouldn't really be me anymore um so it's

it's hard to answer in that respect I

mean even if I knew then what I know now

I mean there's there's all these

questions I mean one question that I

think few people really bother to answer

is I mean what would America or what

would the world be like if the Axis

powers won World War II if the Allies

lost um would we be worse off than now I

mean there might not be any Hebrews in

the world or maybe they'd all just be

sent to you know some colony in in

Israel you know they might be I mean

there were

zionists um among the national
socialists who thought fine just send
them to Israel that's their Promised
Land anyway just get them out of Europe
or there was some talk about just
forcibly making them immigrate to
Madagascar or some
such um yeah I don't know if I mean
there's so many different ways things
could have played out I mean for example
um Hitler had a certain respect for the
English you know he would have preferred
not to fight the English apparently
based on what I have read um partly just
because the English were seen as Saxons
so that they were Aryan I mean they were

Germanic I mean English is technically
speaking a Germanic language Old English
was a kind of old
German I mean it's mutated a lot got a
lot of French and Latin and so forth
added to it but technically speaking um
English is a German language a Germanic
language I should
say so I mean whether he would have I
mean if the if the British were willing
I mean Hitler was offering the British
just stay out of this I'm just
conquering Continental Europe if you
please you can keep your British Empire
you be the sea power will'll be the
western land power and uh I mean Hitler
broke so many promises that I think it

would be foolishly naive to trust him
with regard to that and there might be
some Fanboys of the fur out there who
are saying oh well he didn't do anything
wrong but it's pretty obvious like with
the whole Czechoslovakia thing you know
the Sudan land and all that the Munich
agreement that kind of thing he really
did let the cat out of the bag that he
was just making promises just for the
sake of convenience until it was
convenient to break the
promise so I mean You could argue well
you know what would what would the world
be like if Hitler won the war I mean
you'd have a Japanese empire in the East

you know he didn't he didn't conquer
Asia I mean the Japanese were doing a
pretty good job of that uh he was
faithful to his friend Bonito I don't
think he would have conquered Italy he
would have let the Italians have their
little um sort of attempt at Reviving
the Roman Empire or something I don't
know what would happen to America I mean
if if the Allies Lost World War II maybe
the West Coast would be colonized by the
Japanese or something the East Coast
might be colonized by or speaking German
I don't know it's hard to
say so all of this is just sort of uh
muddying the waters I guess just
pointing out that you really don't

know what would be the pros and cons of

of Hitler winning the war

um I mean there's no guarantee that

Western Civilization would be worse off

because I mean it's there is a certain

amount of wisdom to what General George

Patton said when he said we defeated The

Wrong Enemy we should have defeated the

Soviet Union we should have destroyed

Marxism and that in itself might result

in western civilization being healthier

than it is now

so I mean I really can't even answer the

question if I were just a Normy like my

father was I mean I can't say he's

exactly a Normy but you know he was he

definitely believed that I mean this was

an existential Battle of good against

evil you know and Germany declared war

on the USA it wasn't the other way

around um it was right after Pearl

Harbor apparently they had some kind of

secret agreement that if one that if

Japan went to war with the USA Germany

would declare war

also

um so I mean my father I mean to his

dying day I'm sure felt that you know he

did the right thing by fighting in World

War

II and uh I mean he had respect for the

Germans he said they were phenomenal

soldiers but

um you know if if I were back then like

you know if I were in my father's shoes

I'd probably fight too

um having the luxury of learning dhama

was something that didn't really become

available to westerners until you know

the latter half of the 20th century

starting with mainly with beatnicks I

think at least among e Americans of

European

ancestry so I'm just talking around and

around circles

here but

uh you know it's like if if I were

you know in my early 20s in like

1942 would I have joined the army to

fight you know either the Germans or the

Japanese depending on where they sent

me um it's it's just hard to say because

I wouldn't be the same person I wouldn't

have the same beliefs and if I believed

what I believe now then you know somehow

I just got

transported through some sort of

paranormal means into my father's body

or something

[Music]

uh

yeah I guess I mean it' probably be a

safer bet to uh to just fight for your

country Germany did declare war on us

rather than the other way around so yeah

I probably would have although as I was

saying and I mean I do not know what the
world would be like if um Germany had
won
Germany and Japan and Hungary and and
Italy
Etc so yeah I don't know you just have
to have to make your guesses but I guess
I'm just totally evading the whole point
this is is that I mean is it Justified
to fight in a war if it's like a war of
self-defense you know somebody declares
war on you first then are you going to
fight back and in my younger years I was
like a militant pacifist you know I was
just sort of a Latter-Day hippie but
nowadays yeah I think there's a good

chance I would have joined the

army if I knew then what I know now I

mean not even with regard to fighting

fighting in World War II but just

joining the military I don't know it's

I've got different ideas

about H like morality for example

like for

example I've been watching old reruns of

like The Walking Dead and it spin-offs

you know the zombie apocalypse and there

are some people and I I I don't know if

the leftists who who make the show

realize the implications of what they

were saying but you've got people who

just refuse to kill other people I mean

they'll Kill the Zombies you know

they'll Smash in the head of a zombie
but they will not kill another human
being and what happens is they let the
bad guys go and then the bad guys come
right back and kill more of them so it's
like anybody who is a devout
uncompromising pacifist in violent times
like after a zombie apocalypse or you
know ancient
times anyone who's a non they just
uncompromisingly pacifist they refuse to
kill they're better off just going off
alone because like I already mentioned
their pacifism can get other people
killed too you know it's it's almost
like being suicidal so if you're going

to be just an uncompromising pacifist

you just go off and wander alone like

the Horn of the

rhinoceros so I mean if if you really

are uncompromising in your belief that

you have to be a

saint you know in in the ancient Indian

sense then I mean you have to renounce

the

world I mean you have a family for

example it's your duty to defend that

family any man who would just stand

there and let his wife be

abused because he doesn't want to hurt

the guy who's abusing him or

her then I mean he's he's really not

even a

man or Unworthy of being called one he's
just the kind of culturally conditioned
unic at this
point
so yeah if I was a monk I certainly
wouldn't but now that I'm not a monk
anymore I might uh have to take some lay
responsibilities of a lay person and
maybe even fight for my
country
so gosh that was a long complicated
answer but I'm G to move on to cool
Whip's next question here which says
venerable sir assuming that robotss or
AI have no consciousness if a person
programs robots or AI to free humans

from job slavery creating abundance for all for the good of humanity but the robots or IE AI kill people and Destroy Humanity for example controlling our economy or wars in the programmer the one who see is the programmer the one who receives all the bad karma despite the noble intention or would a catastrophic event like this be determined by the collective Karma of beings well I mean the key here is if You' got a computer programmer some geeky science worshipper with stars in his eyes let's say who is trying to help the world and then he creates the technological singularity and this new AI just sees people as in the way and

just wipes us out or whatever uses us

for Batteries like in The Matrix movie

or whatever

um karma is

intention so if if someone is doing

something with good intentions and it

has a bad

result then I mean the bad result is the

fruition of the karma of the people who

are experiencing that bad result but

it's not all the fault of the person who

did it like for example you've got a

Doctor Who trying to save a patient and

fails the patient dies the doctor had

good intentions he's doing his best but

for some reason the patient dies anyway

the doctor is not guilty of

murder and so likewise if this computer

programmer

guy he accidentally or he he develops AI

that that results in the technological

singularity that it wasn't his intention

and then it winds up killing maybe

billions of

people still it's it's sort of like that

doctor um he's going to have some Karma

and then you know towards the end after

he sees what he's done he may have like

horrible remorse that might result in

the worst Karma that he actually makes

because remorse is always bad karma like

uh kukucha in poly like regret remorse

always Bad Karma just always makes

things

worse so yeah I mean if that sort of

thing ever happened or the zombie

apocalypse for that matter then it would

be um the fruition of each individual

who is experiencing it rather than just

all the fault of one person although in

the zombie apocalypse like or for

example the uh what is it the ones with

Mill

jovic what is that one I can't remember

now something it's got zombies in it too

it's a whole series of zombie

movies and uh I mean the people who

started that zombie apocalypse the

Umbrella Corporation I think it was

called I mean they were obviously bad

guys they're bad

people and so they were getting a lot of

Bad Karma but um I mean if you do

something on purpose or you just do

something not giving a [__] what the

results are going to be you know it's

all going to be your volitions are

creating are I mean they are the

karma your will I mean that is karma

karma is

Will

so I think I answered that question so

I'm just going to move on to the next

one this is from Jason and Jason says

have you ever gone paranormal

investigating like done a ghost

hunt and uh um I have seen a lot of
ghost shows because my sweetheart really
likes ghost shows and because of that I
wind up watching more ghost shows than
she does because she always well she
usually falls asleep within the first 20
minutes and then I'm like lying there
watching the rest of the ghost show
usually unless it's so lame that I just
uh would rather just turn the thing
off so paranormal investigating no I
haven't really my father did a lot of
paranormal investigating mainly with ESP
kind of
stuff um but the closest thing I've ever
done to a ghost hunt is there have been

times I'm living like alone out in a forest and you sometimes you just get sort of like creepy feelings about ghosts you know I was spent a few years living in this big cave actually is just an overhanging Rock Ledge that was believed to be haunted by this powerful spirit and a lot of people are afraid to even go there because they were afraid of this Assa they called in Burmese and uh that or like space aliens or Bigfoot I remember when I was a kid I was afraid to go out and get the mail we lived out in the country go out and get the mail at night because you know you might see a Sasquatch or or you know space aliens or something and in times

like that where you're thinking about it
and it's giving you kind of a creepy
feeling and it's dark it's nighttime I'd
be sitting there maybe meditating with
my eyes closed the closest I would come
to this sort of thing is just are I just
like get disgusted with my own sort of
feelings of apprehension or or dread or
something I just open my eyes look
around say all right if you're out there
show yourselves and then just like look
around and of course it's dark I
wouldn't see anything but that's about
as close as I've come to a ghost hunt is
when you're you're kind of disgusting
yourself with your own feelings of

apprehension in dread that the thought
of ghosts out there because you're
living in a culture where pretty much
everyone believes in them and some
people are even afraid to come to where
you live because there are ghosts
supposedly infesting the
forest then yeah just open your eyes say
okay if you're out there show
yourselves and they never
did so I guess I'll just move on the
next question here this is from
mooners mooners says do you think that
dispatching oysters in order to eat them
creates Bad Karma I have heard that many
Buddhists following Chinese traditions
don't have issues with eating oysters or

cooking with oyster sauce because they
aren't considered sentient beings I am
under the assumption that dispatching
lower level beings for the purpose of
consumption such as starfish jellyfish
SE cucumbers and B valve mollusks that
lacky spine complex eyes or functioning
brain that can create mental images must
not create Bad Karma well there is sort
of a a common misconception regarding
Karma here and that is that karma really
doesn't
depend on the intelligence or level of
consciousness of a being that you are
harming I mean to some degree it does I
mean that's definitely a conditioning

Factor But ultimately it's your own
volition so if you do something you know
just like hurting some creature that can
feel pain and knowing you're doing it
maybe even enjoying it you know you're
out hunting got the thrill of of killing
your a big buck you know five point buck
or something then yeah you're definitely
making Karma but um on the other hand I
do have a degree in biology and I do
know that invertebrates in
general just do not have the same same
kind of nervous system that we have I
mean it's not even a matter of whether
they have a thinking mind or not or or
even like a maybe not I shouldn't say a
thinking mind but like a conscious mind

like even an octopus I like octopi
they're one of my favorite animals just
because they're so alien and and like
beautiful in a really alien kind of way
and they're by far the most intelligent
of all invertebrate animals um but they
just don't feel pain you know if they're
nervous they'll just like nibble off the
ends of their own tentacles they just do
not feel pain the we the way we do and
I've told the story before about how I
was a Fisheries biologist I was working
on a Japanese longliner in the Bearing
Sea and if any crabs came up on the line
I would have to I mean as the American
biologist on board the vessel you know I

would examine them say what species I'd
weigh them say whether they're boy crabs
or girl crabs and also determine you
know their condition whether they're
badly injured whether they're going to
survive being turned back loose again
that sort of thing and I'd have just
this holding tank for you know I'm busy
doing other things I just put the the
the live crabs into this holding tank
and sometimes a crab would come up with
most of its legs ripped off you know
it's a crab you know including the pinch
it's got 10 legs it's a decapod
crustation and it might be it's got it's
missing seven seven of them seven of
them just got ripped off or crushed

coming up through the the Machinery
coming on board of the ship you know
they got like one leg on one side and
two legs on the other side and you put
them into this holding tank and if they
just happen across a piece of squid bait
you know just a piece of chopped raw
squid they'll just sit down and start
eating it you know it's like they don't
care that they just had seven of their
10 legs ripped off or crushed mangled
you know they just don't care if you
were to
if you were to like crush or cut off two
or three of a mouse's legs and then
stick a little cracker in front of it it

wouldn't pay any attention to that
Cracker you just go into convulsions and
die I mean we mammals definitely care
when our limbs are mangled or severed
whereas Crustaceans who have the same
kind of nervous system as as a mollusk
you know they don't have a central
nervous
system they don't even really
technically have a brain the same way we
do I mean like an octopus once you get
up into the like the higher levels of it
then yeah they've got a brain but like
an insect you know it's got nerve gangly
it's got like two nerve cords instead of
one Central spinal cord it's got like
two lateral nerve cords and then every

once in a while they'll come together
and they'll be like this ganglion of
nerves there and that serves um pretty
much as as our central nervous system
like a brain but they just don't feel
pain apparently I was told that they
don't have um like pain sensors you know
on their their I mean they they'll know
if something's wrong but they just don't
feel pain the way we do so um before I
became a
monk um I was willing to eat
shellfish not fish so much but like
Crustaceans and and mollusks I was
willing to eat those um just going with
the idea that they don't feel pain they

don't feel fear probably I mean the

mosquito might get out of the way of a

slapping hand but that's that's not fear

that's just an automatic reflex you know

that's no more fear than the door at the

grocery store just automatically

swinging open when you walk towards it

it's just an automatic

thing but with regard to Karma again it

is

Will and

so um your mental States while you're

performing the

ACT are going to determine what the

karma

is so I guess I answered

that Chinese traditions don't have

issues with eating oysters or cooking

with oyster sauce because they aren't

condition considered sentient beings

yeah I'm not sure how much Consciousness

an oyster would have I mean they have to

have a certain amount of awareness they

got to know when to slam their shell

closed or or open it that's that's about

as far as it goes it seems like but

um

yeah yeah I would say that it's

definitely not as bad of karma to kill a

clam than it is to kill a mouse even

though they might be approximately the

same size just because the mouse feels

fear and pain and the clam probably

doesn't but still I mean it is against
the precepts uh you are killing a living
being
and it's going to depend on what kind
what your mental states are to determine
what kind of karma you're
getting so it may be theoretically that
somebody could kill an oyster without
making any bad karma at all um but even
if even if you are getting some Karma
I'm sure the Bad Karma is going to be
minimal enough that you're not going to
burn in hell for millions of years for
having killed an
oyster and I'm just going to move on to
the next question here this is from
covac and CAD

Zeda and he says what are your thoughts on ajan Tano's discussion on the AA waga and he provided a link and I can't provide links because I'm being punished by YouTube for answering a forbidden question or at least my answer was forbidden so um I won't provide the link it's on um the access to inside it website uh just look for aan tanero and the ataka waga and you'll probably be able to find it but anyway getting back to uh SE action sead Z's question here what are your thoughts on ajan Tano's discussion on the AA waga it seems like he wrote it addressed to you and uh there's another question

similar to this not mentioning aan

tanero specifically but

um anjan tanero is

discussing the the very good question

that I've given a lot of thought to that

first of all the ATA waga is an archaic

group of texts it's obviously older than

most poly

texts and what it teaches really isn't

terraa Buddhism at least in my opinion

it's not apparently in ajan Tano's

opinion there's no

problem but I mean it's teaching you

know don't have any view don't like

adhere to following rules you know don't

believe anything don't engage in any

kind of philosophical debate or

speculation or anything like that that
you just go off and just live you you
renounce the world you wander homeless
and you are just right here in the
present moment all the time and that's
the best way to become
enlighted and I would say that AEL says
uh one thing that is clearly untrue and
he even sort of contradicts
himself um in the statement he says that
there's only two signs that Thea waga is
very old one is it is mentioned in other
texts mentioned in other sutas like I
think he says there's three sutas that
mention sutas from the AA waga and then
he says the language is

archaic and he says well the language is
archaic because poetry is more likely to
have archaic language but most poly
poetry is not nearly as archaic as
certain aspects of the ATA waga and then
he mentions the Mahan Desa which is an
old commentary to the ATA waga that is
so old that it also is
canonical so maybe you could say that's
just another mention in the text so that
what he said really wasn't
untrue but it's not true that there are
only
two bits of evidence indicating that the
ateka waga is very very old in fact I've
got an append to my translation of the
ATA waga that has a pretty pretty good

list of several I don't remember the
exact number but there are like several
indicators that the yakoba is very old
but the thing is aanan I don't mean any
disrespect to the
man that he is one of the best monks we
have in the west that that I know
of he's he's sincere and all that but he
is somewhat of a dogmatist he is is very
much invested in the idea that the
Buddha taught essentially what is in the
the sutas and that it's all makes sense
you know it's like makes spectacular
sense you know it's just a glorious
ingenious system that makes such good
sense that you know anybody who

investigates it with any wisdom is going
to accept it and um that's not
necessarily the case I mean it's pretty
sure it's pretty clear to me the the AA
waga is pre
teravan that there are certain aspects
of Thea waga that really are rejected by
later tradition and this Mahan Desa this
ancient commentary that is also
canonical and it's Thea waga is one of
the
few um groups of texts in the the poly
toptica that is that has its own
canonical commentary that the commentary
to it itself is also part of the
titico and the purpose of it is not
really to explain the ATA waga is to

explain it away it's trying to force fit
the Tica waga into later
Orthodoxy and sometimes it's just it
takes some outrageous stretching and
twisting and taking things out of
context like when it says you should
have no view it it says well when he
said that he it means he should that you
should have no wrong view but I mean why
would the Buddha be saying don't have
wrong view I mean that just goes without
saying that should be just
obvious so my theory and I think this is
going to also be answering a question
farther down on the scroll here is that
the awaga is very very

old and we may assume that I mean

assuming that it's not pre-buddhist I've

even read the theory that it's so old

that it that it was before Buddhism but

the Buddhists liked it so much that they

just Incorporated it into their body of

scriptures but let's just assume as I

assume that the awaga was I mean it is

specifically

Buddhist then when it's it's also

obviously very old older than most other

sutas maybe older than any other

sutas so my theory my

hypothesis is that when the Buddha first

started Ed

teaching almost all of his disciples

were Heavy Hitters they were already

veteran renunciants they were already
relatively Advanced so he was teaching
them the really advanced stuff you know
he was teaching them just the most
advanced Dharma that you're going to
find in the toptica in my
opinion but then as he became more and
more famous of a teacher he started
getting more and more beginners more and
more
normies teaching more and more lay
people and so it may be that he had to
start developing a kind of
Elementary philosophy to help the people
that weren't ready for like the really
advanced

stuff and so he may have started off
teaching the ateka waga because his
first disciples were already just
veteran
Advanced dama practitioners but then
later on you know as as you know as the
years go by and more and more people are
coming to him and some of them are just
beginners that he's got to he's got to
develop a more
systematic um you know more I don't know
what do you call it just kind of a more
gradual step-by-step kind of approach
and uh you know it may be that he
developed dhama in the in the Buddhist
sense gradually over the years just
through Maybe trial and error to some

degree just feeling out you know the
people that he's talking to and and like
gearing his discourse towards what they
would be able to understand and
accept so I mean that's one possibility
but I do think that uh I I do not
consider nearly as much of the titica to
represent what the Buddha really taught
as venerable ajan tanero uh apparently
believes that I think a lot of of the
the more
systematic like Orthodox philosophy of
Terra that pretty much flies in the face
of a lot of the teachings of the ATA
waga which is my opinion older that
that's just a a later development in

dhama you know as dhama or as Buddhism
you know just kind of
exploded and had a similar trajectory as
early Christianity and the history of
early Christianity you can that it just
started mutating rapidly like a virus
during its first century of existence
first few centuries and something
similar happened to Buddhism um just
because human nature is human nature and
that's just the way we are that you got
people that don't understand dhama well
enough to really understand it who
nevertheless are in positions of
authority and start making changes start
adding things maybe subtracting things
so I think a lot of that sort of thing

happened also

so that I would consider a lot of what

is considered to be Orthodox Terra not

to reliably represent what the Buddha

originally

taught

so I guess that's my thoughts on ais's

discussion of Thea waga so I'm just

going to move on to seac and CAD Z's

next question which is an essay it's one

of those questions where somebody

presents an essay say and the end says

thoughts so he says you say that only

nibana is ultimately real and everything

else is not ultimately real because it

is conditioned however this seems to

contradict your uncarved marble analogy because a cut marble is still just as real as an uncut marble an uncarved block has less value than that of a fully realized block that has been cut and shaped into a beautiful statue your analogy would also seem to imply that nibana would have less value than the realized samsara in which case there would be no use of a holy life saying nibana is off the scale wouldn't fix this contradiction either because if every potentially every potentiality and part of the marble is Dua then why would the sum of it be non Dua you could say summing it all up would cancel out the differing perceptions themselves and

that it needs to be abandoned based on teachings from the a waga and that N is a kind of perceptionist Consciousness but the Buddha's teachings broke down experience into its component parts just as breaking down a car into its components if this is how the Buddha taught then why would he teach that the ultimate relies on not doing so since perception is just the process of slicing up conscious experience into different parts perception is still cutting up conscious experiences H this is It's it's kind of well I'll just continue here perception is still cutting up conscious

experiences that are real and what you
experience but whether those perceptions
line up with some outside reality is
another matter saying what you are
directly consciously experiencing is
unreal even if you are wrong about how
to interpret it seems to be a denial of
reality thoughts well my first thought
is the question is just way too long
it's it's an essay with thoughts
question mark at the end
but first of all the uncarved block
remains uncarved it is never carved it's
just carved in
imagination it's it's like I mean I've
I've mentioned this many times and I I
mean really there are a lot of people

probably most people that aren't going
to really understand what I'm saying no
matter how many times I describe it or
explain
it but you've got an uncarved block of
marble it's just it's just call it
sizeless the size is
irrelevant doesn't matter what the size
is there's nothing to compare it with
anyway so that hunk of marble contains
within it every possible statue in fact
there's an infinite number of impossible
statues contained within it also you
know Myron's discus thrower with legs as
thin as hairs it couldn't possibly stand
on its own I mean that's in there

too so some of these uncarved statues
are so complicated and and they're
they're really inside that marble
they're not carved but they're really
there every single molecule is right
there already in the right place and
some of them let's say are so
complicated that they become
self-conscious and they start thinking
that they're separate from everything
else when really they are
not and part of the difficulty of
explaining this is you have to function
or you have to be able to think at two
levels of reality
simultaneously and I think most people
can't do

it that for example an enlightened being
May let's see how do I how do I explain
this I mean it I think it's going to be
futile but Consciousness let's say is
the essence of mind the essence of
mentality I mean this is this is
heterodox this is not orthodox
terana but Consciousness is like the
substance of mind and that perceptions
are just the shapes that it takes the
apparent apparent forms you've got form
and Essence that are two different
levels of
reality and an unenlightened being is
stuck at the level of form but if you
can transcend the level of form and get

to the level of essence crudely speaking
then the forms become irrelevant they're
not the Ultimate Reality anyway it's
just all symbolic
interpretations
so with regard to the first part of his
essay it's I mean the statues are not
really carved it's all just virtual
reality these various
statues conditional reality so the
uncarved block has less value than a
fully realized block that's been cut cut
and shaped into a beautiful stat is
utterly irrelevant because the statues
don't really get carved they're just
contained within this formless mass
of

marble or

Consciousness so let's

see and then and then towards the end

he's he's getting into this stuff about

uh

say uh the Buddhist teach broke down

well I mean you don't really know

exactly what the Buddha did teach and

didn't that was a previous question

let's see but let's see if this is how

the Buddha taught why would he teach the

ultimate relies on not doing perception

is just a process of slicing up

conscious yeah yeah that I'm not even

going to try and Wade through that

because it's it's not really

concisely um articulated and I I'd have
to sit here thinking about how to
interpret that in order to try and
answer answer it so I'll just get to
this last part here perception is still
cutting up conscious experiences that
are real that's I mean that's pushing it
already and that you and what you
experience but there is no you to
experience it but whether those
perceptions line up with some outside
reality is another matter saying that
what you are directly consciously
experiencing is unreal even if you are
wrong about how to interpret it seems to
be a denial of reality well you don't
know what reality is I mean you take

away the perceptual interpretation and
all you've got left is this Unthinkable
void seriously you take away all of the
interpretation the symbolic
interpretation and all you've got left
is Unthinkable void if you are stuck at
the level of
perception and the level of perception
is not the level of Ultimate
Reality and it's difficult to explain in
an order to really grock it in order to
really come anywhere close to
understanding it to have any semblance
of understanding it you have to be able
to think at two different levels of
reality at the same time sort of like

the Mahayana Buddhist saying that
samsara and Nirvana are ultimately the
same and there is some wisdom in that
even though it's not Orthodox terraa but
Orthodox terraa is way Siler when it
comes to trying to explain what nibana
is and also just the difference between
Consciousness and mental States it
pretty much just fails to really explain
it very well at least I'm certainly not
satisfied with with the Orthodox
explanation of these
things so I guess I'll just move on the
next question here this is also from
covac and sead zida he says I just
noticed the Buddha might not have spoken
poly but the people where he was from

now speak neoly is this a coincidence or
does the rabbit hole go deeper I think
it's just a coincidence that poly in in
the poly language it literally means
like a line like a line of
text but Nepali um they don't know
exactly what I mean it's it's
controversial the
atmology of the word Nepal or Nepali um
but none of the guesses that I've come
across
related in any way to the ancient poly
language um one of the most maybe one of
the most uh likely explanations is that
it it means something like uh the foot
of the

mountains so it it doesn't really have anything to do with the word poly all by itself so yeah I think it's a coincidence so I'm just going to move on to the next question here this is from Jeffrey and Jeffrey says what are your thoughts about

dosm and um my knowledge of dosm is pretty much restricted to the daing and the xang suit I've read those maybe read just a little bit more about dosm and also I've I've read about like what dosm turned into like it turned into a lot of like Alchemy and like people trying to live

forever uh through following the da you know trying to find some way to you know

the secret of immortal ality and there's
um like modern dosm there's like daoist
priests that have swords made of coins
that are welded together that they use
in these rituals and so forth it doesn't
seem to have very much to do with the D
Ching or the
jeangu um but I mean early dosm like in
the texts it was a kind of mysticism and
just living in harmony with with the the
world you know sort of transcending
samsara by accepting and being in
harmony with it I mean there's certainly
it's certainly based on a mystical
understanding you know from from the da
came the one from the one came the two

from the two came the 10,000 things I
mean the da is just the the the
underlying essence of all
things and it's got a lot of wisdom to
it I do like it I've got like three
translations of The Da Ching in this
house um and there are theories that um
Lau the the reputed founder of dosm
didn't really exist that you know
there's no real evidence that he was a
real person that the evidence seems to
imply that he was a legendary figure and
then uh there's uh one person recently
wrote a book putting forth the case that
that Lau was really just a kind of
Chinese ised legendary version of the
Buddha himself which would make dosm

kind of a a mutated Chinese

Buddhism which may help to explain why

like Buddhism and dosm um can be sort of

melted together melded together to make

like

Zen because Zen does have some DST

elements Chinese Buddhism in general

Incorporated some Dost

elements but uh yeah it's it's wise at

least like the D ching and the jangu

have a lot of wisdom but it's really it

emphasizes sort of like intuition you

know the Chinese mind was more intuitive

and less analytical than the ancient

Indian mind and so there's way

less um like method to it you know you

read the The Da Ching or the jeangu I
mean there's it's not like instructions
you know you do this and then you do
that whereas Buddhism it's got lots of
instructions you it's it's more
systematic it's more
um uh like everything just fits together
into a good system whereas dosm it's
it's it's uh kind of like the ARA waga
where it's just really nebulous and you
have to rely on your own judgment really
to decide how to how to practice it
effectively or practice it
wisely so I guess I answered that
question in a nebulous kind of way so
I'm just going to move on to the next
question which is from Stevens and this

is a joke question I'm pretty sure he
says please put forth an extensive and
well-informed primer on the mantids and
their life and thought ways I'd like to
hear what you know on this subject
because I don't know much about it well
I don't know much about it either almost
everything I know about mantids I picked
up in bits and pieces from our friend
Brian Rue who has put forth uh he's
uploaded a video declaring himself to
dedicating his life to serving the
mantids but based on what little I know
about them
allegedly they are much more advanced
than Grays and reptilians as as aliens

go they're um with aliens with bodies
they're about as as high up as we mere
humans are aware of there may be even
higher forms of alien intelligence that
are just like formless you know they're
just pure mind or or energy beings or
something and I have heard a little bit
of uh little bit of testimony supporting
that idea but the mantids are are sort
of like the overlords you know I think
they are the the commanders of the
Grays and uh yeah so they would be to
graay like what brahmas are to dvas
except uh Davis don't necessarily serve
brahmas whereas
um the Grays apparently or allegedly
serve these mantids and the mantids are

you know less Human Than Grays you know they're insectoid in appearance which uh is just maybe a symbolic way of emphasizing the fact that they are farther you know they're more different from us than most of the aliens that are kind of like Star Trek aliens that look like people and uh I mean that's that's one thing that's always bugged me about science fiction is most science fiction authors including um the non-science fiction authors that attempt to write screenplays for Star Trek episodes and so forth they uh I mean they just don't have enough imagination to come up with

like likely kind of aliens you know so
the aliens for the most part look like
people and speak English with an
American
accent but maned at least they're trying
to sort of like Egyptian religion where
still they're Limited in their
imagination so they just put an animal
head onto onto a human body and make
something that's not
human and uh mants assuming that uh it's
just sort of like a an archetype rather
than actual Flesh and Blood aliens out
in space somewhere um yeah it'd be more
of a an archetypal attempt to make
something more removed from Humanity to
put them in a much higher place than

Humanity

so yeah I mean that's that's about it I really don't know much about them and uh I'm somewhat of a skeptic on the subject and Stevens wise guy that he is probably realizes that so I'm just going to move on to the next question here this is from oal and oal says do you have an opinion on dreams do you think they have any relevance

well it is kind of interesting that I mean dreams I mean they obviously have survival value that's I mean we wouldn't have them if they didn't have survival value and um they've done studies that you have to have a much larger

brain in order to be as

efficient as a dreaming brain if that

brain doesn't dream and that's one

reason um I mean when I was in college

I'm I'm all over the place but when I

was in college I wrote a paper on

intelligence and dolphins and pointing

out that they they are you know

remarkably intelligent animals and their

brain is larger and more convoluted than

our brain even though they've got fewer

appendages like fingers that have to be

you that have to be you know manipulated

with this brain so what is this huge

brain

for and um finally years after I wrote

that paper I I picked up somewhere the

fact that dolphins with these large convoluted brains don't dream that they can only sleep as long as they can hold their breath which is about six minutes so they take naps like six minutes at a time and they just never get to the dream stage and uh because of that they need a larger more complicated brain to compensate for the fact that they're not dreaming and

so um on the other hand a possum like the American opossum delfus of virginianus

um they spend more time dreaming like in RM sleep than when they're awake which is kind of

strange but the purpose of dreams like
the biological purpose that has survival
value is it helps you to integrate what
you've learned over the course of the
day into your stored body of knowledge
you know it's just you're replaying
stuff like all of you probably had
dreams where just some random event
during the day just triggered here's
this this dream you know where that is
featured and it's just like your brain
is just sort of like storing information
and like
reinforcing like associative links with
with other topics and so forth I assume
that is the main purpose of dreaming um
but you can have significant dreams I

mean some dreams are like your subconscious mind trying to communicate with you that's it's like stuff from deeper down is coming up into the level of conscious thought and one of my favorite examples of that I've I've already mentioned this before has it has been a while is I had this friend an Australian monk who told me of this weird dream that he had and it didn't make any sense to him but it made perfect sense to me it just clicked I mean it was just Crystal Clear what the meaning of that dream was but he dreamed that he was in a canoe with like three gorillas he was at one end paddling the

canoe in this this little Lake and these three gorillas are at the other end of the canoe just sitting there you know just peacefully sitting there being peaceful gorillas and he's just paddling around and around in this Lake feeling like he's trapped because he knows if he paddles back to shore the gorillas are going to jump out and run a muck and so he's just in the dream he's just kind of stuck out in the middle of this Lake paddling around and around and to me it was it was fairly obvious I mean he water I mean Sigman Freud says this and my experience kind of bear this out if you dream about water it tends to symbolize Spirit or

religion and so he's dreaming about
being stuck in this religious life being
a monk and he's afraid to leave the
religious life and re-enter worldly life
because his gorillas you know his his
animal nature is just going to start
running a monck again so that was that
was my interpretation and he did
eventually drop out of the monk Hood
because he did want to drop out of the
monk Hood but he just felt like he was
kind of Trapped being a monk because
he's afraid of you know what is his
lower nature is just going to go back
you know the dog returns to its vomit
and that sort of

thing

so you can have like subconscious

symbolism from a deeper part of your

mind coming up to the surface but for

the most part your dream is just

processing information and you're going

to get just a lot of silly spam dreams

not every dream you have is some sort of

profound

Revelation and uh you know the Ancients

believe that dreams were implanted into

our mind by a God but uh I I'm rather

skeptical of that

notion so some dreams have relevance and

but more dreams than not are just Spam

or just information processing just your

brain exercising and you know

strengthening associative links and so
forth so I'll just move on oils next
question which is what is the best way
to be an
artist and I actually asked an artist
this question and she said nowadays you
just push the AI art button and there
you go you get this beautiful
picture
so that's that's one answer but um the
best way to be an artist I mean you have
to you have to have talent you know it's
like what is the best way to be a math a
great mathematician or a great musician
I mean if you don't have the talent just
the innate Talent then no amount of

skill is going to turn you into a true artist you might become really good at reproducing things you know you can be a really good illustrator you know with good technical skills but ideally the technical skills are just there to help the artist you know Express his creative imagination you know it's it's creative expression and uh yeah I mean just to be a great artist or really talented artist a good artist I mean you have to have talent just like if you're going to be a a really good mathematician or a really good musician or a really good lion tamer something like that a really good fighter it just helps to have sort of like the karma you know the momentum

from previous existences that have been
going in One Direction predominantly in
One Direction that'll help you like like
Mozart I mean he's composing Symphonies
when he was a little kid there's a good
chance that he was a musician in
previous
lives so yeah the best way to be an
artist is to be born one I guess to be
born with an artistic temperament and to
have something creative to
say to have creativity and imag ination
that you are driven to express in some
way and then if you got that than just
learning the the painting techniques or
or whatever artistic techniques the

technical skills that you need just

helps you to translate what's inside you

onto something outside

you so I guess I answer that question as

well as I am able I mean I was I was

probably best at Art when I was like in

high school when I was like going

through the emo teenager phase when you

know I was more I don't know I mean you

have to suffer to make good art I guess

or at least some artists do like

Michelangelo or

dovi um but then it's it's like I became

more

philosophical and less artistic and just

uh my my I'm I'm a fairly good drawer

that kind of thing but uh I'm not near

nearly

as prone to like express my my creative

imagination other than maybe a little

bit in like philosophical

essays but uh yeah I'm digressing big

time yeah my my Q&A is really this it's

like onethird answering questions and

2third

digressing but uh I haven't really

received a lot of complaints about that

so I'll just uh continue because as just

the way I the way I swing anyway so the

next question is from alpacino

alpaca and alpacino alpaca says poo you

probably still have dreams sometimes of

being a monk in Burma when you wake up

in your bed as a Layman do you feel some
kind of relief and
really um I hardly ever have monk dreams
it's it's strange I mean every once in a
while I'll have a dream where there's
like monk elements maybe I'm wearing
robes maybe I'm shaven headed you know
I'm still sort of a monk but I do not
recall having um a monk dream where I'm
a monk in Burma since I stopped being a
monk in
Burma so yeah I I just don't have those
it's kind of it's kind of strange that I
was a monk for probably 10 years before
I was a monk in my dreams more than half
the time and sometimes it'd be like this
hybrid dream where I'd be hanging out

with my old high school buddies or
college buddies or something and someone
would say hey let's let's go to this
restaurant let's go out and do something
and I'd say Okay first I got to I got to
wrap up you I got to cover both
shoulders before I go out in public so
it'd be like this hybrid dream where I'm
part Monk and part not Monk and that's
the kind of dreams that I have now if
there's any kind of Monk elements at all
it's just like an element of being a
monk just when the rest of it is not
being a
monk so
um if I did have a monk dream where I

was a monk in Burma I might feel some
kind of relief especially lately because
um I mean you hear almost nothing about
it in the news if not absolutely nothing
but Burma or Myanmar is in the midst of
a full-blown Civil War right
now um apparently Burma or Myanmar is
not an important enough country for the
propagandists to tell us much about it
you know there everyone you know they
want everyone focused on Ukraine and
Israel and you know all the other Wars
going on and there's quite a few are
just you know who cares these are the
wars we want you to be concerned about
and that's really the way propaganda and
just news in general Works news itself

um especially lately of course is just essentially propaganda so and people are are realizing that which is one reason why they're preferring increasingly to just listen to some guy in his bedroom with a a webcam just doing political commentary instead of going to like the mainstream news organizations which have just lied themselves into a state of just being unredeemable at this point I mean they're just Shameless propagandists so better off getting your news from like sticks hexenhammer than even from Fox News I mean you're going to pick up a lot of stuff

but you have to always be cautious you

have to be wary

because most of it's

propaganda so I guess I answered that

question I'm going to move on to

alpacino alpaca's next question

here oh I got to fix some spelling here

all right if the Buddha at the beginning

was teaching to have no views and just

to meditate then why all the sutas why

all the thousands of complicated

teachings ply Canon is pretty big yeah

and I think this is the one I referred

to um several minutes ago maybe even

almost an hour ago

um about you know the AA waga is you

know have no view no belief no

perception and don't follow rules you
know you just go alone like the Horn of
the rhinoceros be a radical renunciant
be mindful all the time don't
think and then that's that's how like
the oldest sutas teach and then you get
just more and more complicated and you
know like philosophical stuff until
finally um the Buddhist teachings are
called WEA vadin or we weja Vada which
is you know the doctrine of
analysis the philosophical analysis
dividing everything up into these
various factors and then you wind up
with like Abid dama philosophy which is
practically the opposite of what is

taught in the AA waga and I I gave my theory just the charitable Theory there's two main theories that if you if you accept the AA waga is very old older than pretty much the rest of the toptica you start with the AA waga few other sutas and fragments of sutas are just this really archaic substratum of Buddhism and then there's there's two main theories of dealing with why you've got all this complicated stuff and I already mentioned them you know in this video one is that at first the Buddha was talking to Advanced veteran practitioners so he was teaching them the really advanc stuff and then later gradually more and more beginners and

intermediate practitioners and so forth
people at all levels are getting and so
he had to have teachings for all levels
and so he came up eventually develop
this this philosophical
system or you can say that most of what
is in the in the sutas you
know let alone Abid dama is later
developments sort of like a lot of
Christianity is just later developments
that wasn't taught by Jesus even though
some of them might be put into Jesus's
mouth in the New
Testament so take your pick on those or
choose some alternative to those but
those would be my two main um theor to

explain the situation and probably

there's truth in both of them it's like

a combination of the

two so I'm just going to move on to the

next question

here which is do you need this is also

from alpacino

alpaca he says do you need some big

ceremony to become anara or can you just

take eight precepts from some Monk even

online and then live normal life as a

celibate lay person I assume spanking

the puppy is also from

bidden well anaras it's sort of a new

system I think it it got developed like

late

1800s by Anar anagarika

dharmapala who was friends with uh the
Reese davids's who were the founders of
the polych society and were also more or
less
theosophists um there are anaras in
Burma that wear white and keep only
eight precepts and they're called poo
and it's mostly just little kids kids
that are too young even to be
novices and some monasteries will have
them mahag gandon near Mandalay in
amarapura in Burma has anaras or did
when I was living there it's just these
little kids you know they're like 5
years old wearing white robes and
because they keep eight precepts they

can handle money so you know they're
going out and and buying stuff for the
monks although for the monks to tell
them to go out and buy stuff is breaking
the exact same rule as if the monks went
out and bought it
themselves but uh it's it's not really
mentioned in the
texts um I mean at least there's no
wellestablished
tradition based on the poly Tex is just
something that happened later and most
of the nuns in in Asia are like a kind
of female
anara they're not even they're not even
really as far up on the on the totem
pole as a as an ordained novice so

there's no real ordination procedure

there's only two levels of ordination

you know like lower orders as a as a

Salona or novice higher orders you know

using Catholic terminology as a beu or

monk um you know the nuns had three

levels but you don't you don't hear

about that much

anymore so

yeah you can do a ceremony I mean in

Burma they have developed a ceremony

where you go to a monk and you go you

know you take the eight precepts and you

know get your head shaved and all that

but it's not really

necessary um you know whatever whatever

works best for you if you really want to

become uh an anagura wearing wearing

white with a shaved head and keeping

eight precepts then you could go to a

monk and maybe they'll ordain you they

have a in Thailand

also um even some adult ones in Thailand

I mean I was I was an adult one for a

few months in in um the monastery where

I was first ordained I was an Anar I was

Pro possibly the world's largest anara

or poo anyway because as I say in Burma

they're mostly like little kids barely

more than

toddlers

so let's see you don't need a big ser

you don't need really any ceremony to

become anagura because it's like an
unofficial status but um probably in in
Burma and Thailand there are monks who
could like give you like a unofficial
kind of informal ceremony where you
become one I'm not sure about Sri
Lanka so I guess I answered that
question so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is is from
creel and I apologize to anybody if I
mispronounce your
name so creel says not sure if this has
been asked before what are your thoughts
on secret societies Freemasons
Illuminati and satanic cabals the theory
is that since Millennia there has been

an underground network of initiates that using occult knowledge and nefarious means gathered power unto themselves in some theories evil alien entities are involved in it reptilians or draconians thank you well I don't know much about secret societies for the main reason that they are secret so you got the Freemasons the Illuminati the satanic cabals I mean people that join these things you generally take a vow that they're not going to divulge the information like half of what I know about the Freemasons I learned from tol sto's novel War and Peace where it's describing how um what Pierre bahov he

becomes a Freemason and it describes the

ceremony that he goes through with the

the blindfold and the sword and all

that

um my thoughts on the the the idea that

there is an underground network of

initiates using occult knowledge um to

to gain and maintain power I assume

there is some of that that there

probably are secret societies out there

that you know

they're making offerings to baffet or

something I had this musician he was a h

a jazz musician a trumpet player um from

St Louis was telling me that in order to

really make it big in music nowadays you

have to worship

baffet and uh he he was kind of a bit on

the paranoid side he was definitely

conspiracy theorist but uh I mean maybe

there's some some truth to that that I

mean you have to be in some kind of cult

I mean really the left has become a cult

in and of itself this some of the

beliefs that they believe you know that

women can have dicks for example it's uh

it would have been considered insane

just a few decades ago and now it's

taken very seriously even by

high-profile medical journals not

because of any medical Discovery any

kind of like breakthrough in science

it's just because the indoctrination and

the the dogmas have just changed so that
that's the way it is all of a
sudden um but getting back to the secret
societies I wouldn't be surprised if
there are secret societies where they
are um you know serving some sort of
Dark Being some kind of demonic entity
that Pagan nowadays might call an
egregor where it's really not an
objective entity you know there wasn't
some being that flew through the the
cosmos to come to Earth to be worshiped
by you know upgraded Apes that really
it's just the
belief um in this people this kind of
group mind that gives a certain

independent existence to this being and

you know their their worship and you

know belief and so forth just sort of

maintains this the existence of this

being um but with regard to the elite

doing this stuff I really don't know

enough about it I have insufficient data

to know to what extent someone like Bill

Gates is some kind of demon worshipper

or you know making some kind of deal

with with the devil or something I don't

know I'm not even sure if Jimmy page

from let Zeppelin did

that

so yeah

um yeah I guess I guess I answered that

that's but all I know about it because

of course secret societies are
secret so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from pranav
and pranav says I watched a video of an
atheist who was saying that believing in
karma is same as believing in God
because people who believe in God thinks
that God will give them Justice and
those who believe in karma think that
some kind of natural law will give them
Justice what do you think well I mean
it's obviously not the same to believe
in karma as to believe in God partly
because God is invisible unless you're a
pantheist or something you just think
that everything is God that this is it

you just that mirror behind me is God

that door that door is God you know if

if you don't don't go that far then you

have no access really to God unless

you're like a advanced

Mystic but I mean karma from the

Buddhist point of view is volition or

will and we have we're always exposed to

that you can observe volition you can

observe will in action so I mean to that

extent they're obviously not

different

um I don't think that most people who

believe in karma or God really um

believe that they will give them Justice

I mean it is kind of it is kind

of Justice you know it's like you know a

bad person is more likely to have bad
things happen to them a good person is
more likely to have good things happen
to them I mean that's pretty much
observable just objectively
empirically I mean that's just you just
look at at the human race and bad people
are more likely to have bad things
happen to them good people are more
likely to have good things happen to
them I mean it doesn't always work out
that
way but uh there does seem to be a a
statistically significant
correlation but I think a lot of people
are afraid of it I mean it's not that

they want

Justice you know they don't believe in

it because they want Justice because I

mean like the idea of karma for Buddhist

I mean it's so finely tuned it's it's

virtually impossible to do anything that

is 100% good there's always going to be

a certain amount of Bad Karma mixed in

with anything that you do or even

anything that you think even to believe

that you

exist that's that's got delusion in it

and so it's got It's got some bad karma

involved anything motivated by greed

hate or delusion is going to have bad

karma involved with

it

so

yeah I guess I answered that

question but uh yeah it's not like a

desire for justice that causes people to

believe in God or karma for the most

part some do but they would be a

minority most people who believe in

karma um I mean it's just a kind of

dogmatic

acceptance of the religion that they

belong to for the most

part so

maybe I answer that question it is kind

of a hard question to answer um I'd

probably have to be more familiar with

the atheist and you know why he was

saying it what his what his uh his

perspective was rather than just this

this sentence

here but um I guess I answer I'm going

to move on to the next one we got lots

of questions today this is from ruie and

ruie says hello poo do you think access

to full comprehension of anata is an

intellectual path johnic path or both or

neither well full comprehension of anata

would be beyond the

intellect and in a way it would be

Beyond Janna also because it would be

more of an Insight that might result

from

Janna and in fact this deep meditation

where your thinking process has stopped

really can result in some significant

insight into anata because

like most guys just a minute stop it

quit snarfing on yourself we got a dog

noisily snarfing on itself back

there so where was I

um yeah it's like you can't have this

Insight if you get into deep meditation

where your mind stops thinking you know

your mind becomes silent then most guys

identify with their thoughts and so um I

mean just if they're not identifying

with their

body

so when you stop thinking and you're

even more conscious than you were when

you were thinking then that can result
in a considerable insight and can
definitely loosen your attachment to the
idea that you are your thoughts you are
your personality you are your character
anything like
that so I mean understanding anata I
mean it starts off
probably intellectually and you might
get some progress at least it can cause
you to be open-minded on the subject at
least inclined to you know be
open-minded to accept it maybe and then
you get into meditative states where you
get deeper insight into it but full
comprehension of anata probably doesn't
happen until you become fully

enlightened and you have no longer any delusion because of course the root of all delusion according to the sutas is the conceit I
am so yeah the intellect is sort of beginning practice maybe necessary but still it's it's a beginning practice and then the meditative path is getting you closer and closer but even just being in a state of like uh like a mystical State um yeah I don't think that's the same as full comprehension of an it would be the subsequent Insight that arises from the mystical
state so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from TIG and Tig

says when you was a month in Burmese
what brand of cigarette other monks be
smoking so I'm kind of wondering what
TIG was smoking when he asked this
semicoherent
question well because he is uh he is
American I mean he's he's really
relatively intelligent he is capable of
better grammar and spelling than
this so anyways when I was a monks some
some Burmese monks smoked cigarettes but
it was all Burmese brands of cigarettes
and I don't remember what the brands
were I think there was one brand called
California but it wasn't from they
weren't from California they were from
they were from

Burma um but I think even more monks
especially Village monks a lot of
Village monks will just smoke cigars
like hand rolled Burmese Village cigars
that uh there was one old monk that I
lived with um at a monery in Burma where
yeah he just got these big handfuls of
these cigars that were wrapped in some
kind of yellow leaves I don't think
they're wrapped in tobacco
leaves um and I don't remember there's
all kinds of brands that just be on the
little cigar band just some some little
local
brand but um yeah I don't remember a
single brand of any tobacco product that

any monks were smoking and it's not
nearly as prevalent in Burma as it is in
Thailand because in Thailand there's
this idea that if ajan mun did it then
it's okay and ajan mun was very famous
monk you know hundred years ago or more
who was a chain smoker he also ate
cheese in the afternoon so Tha monks
think that smoking tobacco and eating
cheese in the afternoon are fine because
ajan man did it and he was an
aun but ajan manun is irrelevant to
Burmese Buddhism because most Burmese
Buddhists have never heard of aan man so
they're less inclined to think eating
cheese in the afternoon is okay that's
just I mean the only monks who would eat

cheese in the afternoon in Burma would probably eat rice and Curry in the afternoon and there's quite a few of those and um some monks I mean they'll they'll smoke cigars smoke cigarettes smoke tobacco but I don't think it's quite as prevalent as it is in Thailand but again in answer to the question I don't remember a single brand but it was all Burmese Brands and especially with regard to the cigars it was just some local villager with their own little brand so I'll go on move on to tig's next question here do you consider the development of pure land Buddhism to be analogus to the development of

protestantism in Europe during the Reformation P land Buddhism teaches that faith in amitaba is the most important thing a person could have similarly Protestants believe that salvation is achieved through faith in Jesus Alone um

yeah Mahayana Buddhism in general could be seen as a kind of protestant Buddhism that was um more accessible to lay people you know like Terra Buddhism for the most part uh especially traditional terraa in Asia is like a spectator sport you know you got the the monks are the pros they're like pro athletes and the lay people are just supporters of their favorite team you know they they

meditate and they pray they do their beads and all that they'll do the ceremonies and take precepts and so forth listen to Listen to doat talks but still they it's like sand lot ball for them they they don't think that they really have any real chance becoming enlightened in this life so long as they are not monks and so they support the monks in order to make Merit because they have been condition to believe that monks are a superior form of human life to a lay
person um but I've I've think I've strayed from the uh question here pure land Buddhism well it arose I mean

ironically I was surprised to read in AK
Waters history of Indian Buddhism um
that pure land Buddhism was one of the
earliest forms of Mahayana Buddhism to
arise you know approximately you know
four 400 years after the time of the
Buddha
um and I don't think it's it's really a
good an analogy with protestantism in
that
respect um I mean to say that
Protestants believe that salvation is
achieved through faith in Jesus alone I
mean Paul of tarus was teaching that in
the in the New Testament pretty
much so
it's it's it's uh forcing an analogy I

mean you you can see parallels there's

certain overlap I suppose but I wouldn't

want to force an

analogy

um it's just it's weird it's like

purland Buddhism is almost like like

Mormonism or something because it's it's

radically deviated from what the

historical you know

biological biographical Goa Buddha was

teaching in some respects it's teaching

the exact

opposite

so yeah maybe I mean some Protestant

Buddhism is like that I mean um you know

protestantism very much downplayed

monasticism um I don't think pure land
Buddhism did away with monasticism the
way Protestant uh Christianity did did I
say Protestant Buddhism
earlier sometimes words will come out my
mouth and I think I'm saying a different
word
so yeah I don't think of pure land
Buddhism in terms of protestant
Buddhism um I mean what's happening to
terraa in the west is definitely a kind
of protestant
terraa where you know monks are very
much
downplayed um you know I'm talking
mainly about sort of the the progressive
you know rainbow Buddhism of the of the

left

nowadays um yeah that's that's

definitely a kind of protestant Buddhism

but I mean in a way it's it's sort of

denigrating like people like Martin

Luther I guess maybe Henry VII would be

okay

but

yeah so yeah I mean it's sort of apples

to oranges in a way I mean you could you

could find parallels you can find

similarities and so forth but I don't

really see the point in forcing an

analogy you know each each thing is

itself so let just move on to the next

question here this is from Baba and Baba

says hello could I get your view on the role of sensation in Awakening is it your opinion that the sensation experience that is talked of consists of an actual momentary stopping of Consciousness or something else if it is actual cessation of Consciousness what is the spiritual value of this experience and I've thought the same thing in terava Buddhism the the cessation or neurod sop the attainment of cessation is something that only a very Advanced Saint you know someone I think it's you have to be at least in anagami you know so you have to be like this far away from Full Enlightenment if not fully enlightened to experience uh

this neurod

sopite and

uh because Orthodox Terra says you

cannot have Consciousness without

feelings and perceptions if you're going

to have Consciousness you have to have

ious of something you have to be

perceiving something at the same time so

in Terra Buddhism when you attain

sensation and it's I mean the more

complete uh description of it is

cessation of perception and feeling

that's what it's called in the text

cessation of perception and feeling so

because in Orthodox Terra you cannot

have Consciousness without perception

and feeling then they consider it to be
just I mean you're going into a tempor a
coma I mean it's like suspended
animation there's nothing going on so
that yeah I mean I don't see how there'd
be any benefit from that I don't see I
mean you wouldn't even be aware of
having attained it because if your mind
isn't working you're going to have no
memory of of what it was that wasn't
happening while you're in this
state I mean you're going to have no
memory of it it's it's
just this this it's a split second long
coma or or however long it
takes so I think that originally it was
cessation of perception and feeling but

not necessarily complete

Oblivion but Orthodox terava can't deal

with

that but I mean there are ancient like

ancient fragments to be found in the

sutas saying that Enlightenment is

infinite formless

Consciousness

so if your Consciousness is no longer

bounded by perceptions and feelings then

you may just merge into this infinite

formless

Consciousness um that Orthodox terraa

denies is

possible but it makes more sense because

like Baba says and like I've been saying

for a long time this complete sensation

where your entire mind just shuts down

I mean you're not even going to know

that you did it I mean it's you can't

remember what you never experienced

because you can't experience something

if you're totally unconscious it's just

like a

nonevent if you follow Orthodox

explanations which uh I don't

necessarily do as you may have already

noticed so I think I'll just move on to

the next question and this question is

uh from avenity who is uh alpacino

alpaca's biological mate if I am not

mistaken and because she is a woman type

female person she asked a woman type

female question which I hope will not
get me into trouble she says have you
ever spoken to arain and Arin is like a
a name that my sweetheart uses when
she's online
sometimes let me get back to the
question here have you ever spoken to
Arin the these words quote you see
sweetie I'm Wiser than you I'm better
than you and I'm not as good-looking as
you but I'm smarter than you
unquote so yeah I've never said that uh
sentence um I've never told her that I
can recall that I'm Wiser than her I
certainly wouldn't tell her that I'm
better than her I have told her that

she's better looking than

me but with to the smart part I can only

remember one time it may have been more

than once but I can remember one time

that was relatively recently where I did

tell her that I was smarter than her and

that

was um those of you who are guys and

most of the viewers of this of my videos

are guys according to uh my statistics

it's like

98% of my viewers are

male that you may know that females the

human female as a general rule not just

one or two but I mean in

general females have very adjustable

memories and for

example one time my sweetheart was in
kind of an off mood I mean everybody
gets into an off mood women are
emotionally complicated and so forth
more so than guys so while she's in this
off mood she asks me this rhetorical
kind of question which was she she asked
if she was 20 years old would I be more
attracted to her and I just answered it
relatively offand I'd say well probably
especially if I was 20 years old too I
mean my sweetheart is pretty and when
she was 20 years old she was just drop
dead
gorgeous and so yeah probably especially
if I was 20 years old

too but within minutes she had that

converted to me telling her that I

wasn't attracted to

her and she's brought it up just for for

months just every once in a while she'll

like fling this at me like you said

yourself that you weren't attracted to

me and I never said it so one time over

something else because as I say women

have very adjustable

memories I just pointed out to her it's

like

sweetheart I'm smarter than you and I

have a better memory than you do so in

cases of objective fact which both of us

participated chances are my memory of

how things happen are going to be more

accurate more likely to be correct than

your memory of how things

happened so I said that to

her

man I hope I don't get in trouble for

answering that question well I don't

think I said anything

bad so I mean to say that women have

adjustable memories is uh just a truism

as far as I'm

concerned but never would I say that I'm

better than somebody else I don't think

I've ever said that to anybody I'm

better than you or even wiser than you

because that's it's kind of a subjective

thing you know it's it's

wisdom

so I guess I guess I answered that

question I'm going to move on to the

next one this is from

Gaz and this is another long one this is

sort of a semi

essay Gaz says hello more of a comment

but perhaps you may wish to address it I

have recently been inspired to create a

three-hour long YouTube video titled an

introduction to terraa Buddhism it would

cover the entire life of the Buddha all

the basics the various Concepts and

ideas select sutas the rules for monks

how how to live as a Layman notable

people and traditions throughout history

how to become ordained information on

the countries and people that practice
it the timeline of it all is distinction
from Mahayana complex ideas in short
everything might be more than 3 hours a
total overview in an order that would
make sense in brief if possible with
various chapters and visual information
finishing with the best book
recommendations channels websites Etc
all to Spur the viewer onwards with a
Clear Vision of what it is they are
getting into equipping them with a solid
foundation of Right View an authentic
compilation that could be easily shared
to anyone who is interested I think
something like this would appeal to

those of us in the west who are very structurally minded and those who are used to religion being very accessible however I am not qualified to undertake such a task as of yet though my intentions would be good I would certainly screw up due to my lack of knowledge and experience therefore I shall defer to one who has as a who has as a monk probably the one who has been a monk in this something you is this something you would ever consider doing or recommend perhaps such a video already exists well probably it does or it'd be more likely a series of videos because to cover all of the stuff that uh that Gaz here is mention mention I

think it would it would be more than 3
hours long and so you probably have to
do it in installments you know like one
video about this aspect and another
video about that
aspect and uh in general I lack the time
and the
energy to just go all in on a project
like that um as I say it' probably be a
series there have been people doing it
I'm sure that you could find it on the
internet maybe not exactly the way Gaz
describes it with all in just one video
everything just compact you know just
the essence of terraa Buddhism
everything you need to know about Terra

Buddhism in one video um yeah I mean
some some videos you know deal with
certain aspects of it you know they give
it like a general overview like there's
a few um a few channels that I watch on
YouTube one's like religion for
breakfast I think um where he'll you
know he gives knowledgeable explanations
he's just a a student of all religions
he's not a Terra Buddhist but um yeah
well it may be that uh in your studies
and getting everything together
everything compiled and everything you
will learn what is necessary to do it
you know if you're very careful not to
make mistakes you know you verify every
claim that you

make um then yeah it may be a very good
learning experience for you if you have
the time and the energy to go through
with such a project because it's going
to be a big
project
so
yeah so I guess the question the only
real question mark here is is this
something you would ever consider doing
or recommend I mean if someone is drawn
to do that especially if they're going
to give it a a fair
objective uh hand they're going to
handle it in a fair unbiased objective
way then yeah I'd recommend it I mean

it's unlikely that I would do it anytime soon I'll have to retire from working in a sheet metal shop when I have enough leisure time that I could really dedicate to a major undertaking like that but if someone else is willing to do it and I'm sure it's been tried you know there's books on the subject I'm sure there's YouTube videos on the subject that uh it's out there but uh maybe not exact ly the way Gaz here is describing just this you know Buddhism in a nutshell there was a book Buddhism in a nutshell written by a Sri Lankan monk I think that uh I don't know if that would cover everything that's that he describes here

though so yeah good luck and I'm going
to move on to the next question here
this is from scalin
scoline and he says do you plan on
releasing the rest of your father's
biographical occult experience
and one of the few things I inherited
from my father was a collection of his
writings you know it's just in a big box
it was all written on Steno pads and
like on typing paper and stuff and I got
about half of it like the best half the
stuff that I consider to be the
best um keyed into my computer it's it's
you know it's in stored in my computer
and then um I moved to a different place

leaving this box of my father's writings
behind when I came back to America to
this Burmese Monastery in California
where I had it stored the entire
building that it was stored in was gone
and I tried for weeks trying to track it
down and it's like I don't know what
happened to it no nobody knows what
happens to it it probably just got
thrown away so at least I've got um like
what I consider to be the best half of
his writings um recorded including his
um ult
autobiography and uh it's another one of
those things that's going to take a lot
of free time more free time than I've
got now to edit the thing and turn it

into a book but um that is still um on
the back burner I guess including I mean
I've got enough material to edit a few
books of my own material too in addition
to the three I've already got on
Amazon so yeah I mean probably probably
I'll get around around to it if I don't
die
first but uh right now I have to work
for a living and it it takes up a lot of
time and energy so that when I'm not
working a lot of the time I'm just
wanting to relax and rest and then I've
got all these other things I'm supposed
to do you know I've got to like do my
part around the house to some degree you

know keep my keep my woman in Good Humor
that kind of thing so yeah I just do not
have the leisure time that I used to
when I was a monk I'm no longer a member
of the Leisure
class so I'll just get I'll just move on
to scol adin's next question here in
Edgar Casey's Atlantis book it was said
that there were quite a few people who
had passed lives during the destruction
of Atlantis and reincarnated in America
before the world war and that Casey
warned them of the past in order to
change their karma and the cycle of
death and destruction is is that common
in the
occult and then uh he says usually when

people hear about past lives it's you
are a famous historical figure not your
son is gifted in Science and Mathematics
because he was a chemical engineer and
he should choose a profession that's
uninvolved with the military industrial
complex or he'll be complicit in the
death of thousands and will have a
miserable
life so let's see the main question here
is is that common in the occult where
Edgar Casey is uh warning people that
you know they had brought destruction on
their civilization as citizens of
Atlantis um and that they should uh they
should change their ways start moving in

a somewhat different direction in order to avoid repeating that um yeah I mean I don't know how common it is in the occult it does it does happen sometimes especially of course with past life regressions and you know people who are guides in that sort of thing um you know generally you just have the past life regression and try to learn your own lessons just from from what you remember um and with regard to Edgar Casey I mean I read one book I think it was called the sleeping prophet he doesn't talk about Atlantis much but he would talk a lot about ancient Rome how um a lot of Americans in mid 20s Century early to mid 20th century previously had

been Romans and that a lot of their
problems came from you know just going
and watching gladiatorial combats and
watching Christians and criminals being
fed to wild animals and so forth and
like cheering and laughing and that that
made some really bad karma that's coming
back on them now that sort of thing is
fairly common I
think um you know warning about
you know having been a chemical engineer
in Atlantis though uh personally I am
very skeptical of the whole idea of
Atlantis personally I think Atlantis was
the island of cre the so-called monan
civilization that there's the I mean

I've read the uh the platonic dialogues
that are the first historical mention of
Atlantis you know it's like you had this
large island off the pillars of Hercules
which would be you know the ATL
ocean and they tried to
conquer Greece and the Greeks I mean
they fought back and won you know led by
Athens and it's hard to believe that you
know a Bronze Age civilization is going
to win in a war against technologically
advanced atlantans that in all
likelihood it's a garbled reproduction
of a legend of
maybe the monan civilization the aan
civilization centered on the island of
creit tried to conquer the the

greek-speaking Greeks the mainland of
Greece and they were repulsed and then
sometime after that it was the volcanic
island of Thea exploded which covered
creit in a layer of volcanic ash pretty
much wiped out their agriculture for
that year and it just probably wiped out
much of their
Navy you know through tsunamis and so
forth which then caused their
civilization to go into a kind of
catastrophic decline allowing the Greek
speaking Greeks on the mainland to
conquer the the island of
creit so instead of being destroyed by
some cataclysm it was I mean they kind

of got semi destroyed by the cataclysmic explosion of a volcanic island about 70 miles away and uh they maybe were a little bit technologically more advanced because the Manan civilization was a relatively Advanced civilization back then and uh they got repulsed because the Greek speaking Greeks were they Marshal

barbarians who I mean they were still in the Bronze Age both sides were were Bron were using Bronze Age Technology but uh sometimes especially back in those days just the more warlike barbarians even if they're not as advanced can still win just because they're more warlike and just they just like fighting they're

good at it you know they just their
society is largely based on martial
virtues and martial values and so
forth so not exactly sure why I wandered
in that direction oh just just mention
of Atlantis gets me
going yeah so I really don't think that
there was any Tech technologically
advanced continent in the Atlantic Ocean
called
Atlantis so in that case I think edar
Casey was mistaken also he had a
prophecy that uh proof of the existence
of Atlantis would be found in one of the
Pyramids by the end of the 20th century
and if that happened it's being kept a

secret because I haven't heard about
it so I don't know how well I answered
that question
because I'm not really sure how common
in the occult it is to warn people that
in past lives they developed certain
tendencies that are dangerous if they
continue with those Tendencies I'm sure
it happens sometimes but um mostly the
occult just isn't going about things in
that way I mean you might have past life
regressions and maybe some introspection
regarding you know what you mistakes you
made and so forth
um but it's not nearly as common that
you will have like a psychic announce to
you that you know in such and such a

life this happened to you and you got to be careful not to do that maybe somebody like neem karoli baba um you know he'd look at you he he'd see your past lives he' just look right through you he'd see what your your karmic dispositions and so forth were and you know he might make statements about that I mean like ROM doss's books he's talking about how maharaji or Nim Koli Baba would tell him you know in a past life you did this so you've already you've already got that down so you need to work on this other stuff instead so I don't know if you'd call that a cult so much as just spirituality you know it might be more

of a um a spiritual Master telling you
this stuff rather than you know just an
occult practitioner although I guess
there's a certain ambiguity between
spiritual Masters and cult
Masters so I don't know if I answer that
question some of these some of these
questions are kind of hard to
answer so I think I'm just going to move
on to the next one which is a easy one
and I do appreciate the occasional easy
question so this is also also from
skaden like Aladdin with skull at the
beginning and he says as a southerner
where's the best place for fried
chicken and I just have to say in this
area my favorite chicken place is called

Rocky's Hot Chicken

Shack so that's my favorite place my

sweetheart's favorite place for chicken

would be

Chick-fil-A which is kind of a southern

phenomenon I

guess I don't think they have it on the

West Coast do they you don't have to

answer that I'll just move on the next

question this is from nature cure and

nature cure says what do you think past

Buddhas were Brahman how should we think

of Brahman religion is Buddhist

teachings Buddhist times modern Brahman

well according to troden tradition the

Buddha I mean when you have like Buddhas

in the past you have you know it's
Buddhas just keep occurring periodically
you know and then the the world is
destroyed a new world arises and then
Buddhas keep happening it's just it's
just like a cosmic thing that Buddha
continue to arise in this world after
the next after the next after the
next and according to Orthodox terod
tradition the Buddha for for that era is
going to belong to whichever cast
whichever Indian
Varna has the highest Prestige is has
the highest social status and so
presumably in the Buddhist time the
katas or Nobles you know the ruling
class were considered to be higher than

the brahans so the Buddha became katria

he was born as katria and became katria

uh Buddha but in eras when the Brahman

cast is more prestigious has more social

status higher Social Status than the

chatri is then the Buddha is going to be

a Brahman he's going to belong to

whatever is the highest class

essentially so um and that's just and

we're talking about like um

ancestry here it's not really followers

of vdic

brahmanism so I mean even just because

you're born a Brahman doesn't mean that

you're necessarily going to be a Hindu

if you become if you're born a Brahman

and become a Buddhist then you're a

Buddhist and not like a a Hindu or a

practitioner of you know vdic brahmanism

vadis so I think this is uh

uh past Buddhist were

Brahman yeah I mean it's just a class

thing it's it's more of a class thing

than a religion thing it's just social

class and the Buddha according to tra

teravan tradition he's always going to

be born into the highest social class at

that

time so I guess Buddhism is kind of an

elitist system which is one reason why

it tends to attract elitists in any

culture

so let's see I guess I answer that I

mean this question is Buddhist teachings Buddha's times modern Brahman I don't really understand that question is Buddhist teaching Buddhas times modern Brahman uh I think he's asking if Buddhism would be considered like the progressive or upto-date brahmanism of the Buddhist time and no that would not be the case because Buddhism rejects the authority of the vas and any kind of vdic brahmanism you know Brahman in the religious sense rather than just the the class sense would have to you know accept the vas as authoritative so yeah that one I I would say probably no I mean the Buddha was

not a reformer of Hinduism I I had an angry Hindu just railing against me in the comments a week or two ago just saying Buddha was a Hindu he was just I mean he wasn't any kind of um you know he his ancestors didn't invade in from the Northwest I mean he was just 100% Indian he was black he was a Hindu and I mean only Indians believe that other than a few westerners who have sort of a dogmatic Faith oriented tendency who convert to Hinduism so they'll they'll go along with Indian beliefs on that but um no the Buddha really was not a Hindu he was not a viic brahmanist even though I mean he was constantly in contact with that he knew about it he was able to

converse and and like debate or or just
use Brahman terminology like viic
terminology that sort of thing but
that's different from uh Buddhism being
a kind of Reform movement of Hinduism or
like a Neo Hinduism or anything like
that
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question this is from sanguine
Ultima and sanguine Ultima says what is
up with Brian Rue he seemed fairly Lucid
in the videos that you did with him a
few months ago now he seems like he's
gone off the deep end and then there's
an unhappy face emoji and I mean I'm
hesitant to to say too much about a

friend you know I don't want to be
saying stuff that he wouldn't like that
might hurt his feelings or something
um but Brian does admit to being
bipolar and before I was a monk you know
back in the 1980s and so forth I mean it
was called manic depression I don't know
why they have to keep changing the names
of things but I mean he's manic
depressive and recently he apparently
went through an extreme manic phase
where he became just spectacularly
ostentatiously
self-destructive
and he's just like acting as a
whistleblower against himself against
his girlfriend just saying stuff that I

mean no guy in his right mind would say
about his girlfriend in public that kind
of thing um just sending well I I don't
want to get into it but I mean he just
went in through this phase of just like
brutal honesty just
beyond beyond mere honesty in which he's
just like digging up the worst stuff he
can he can think of against himself and
just it's like he's trying to it was
almost like he was trying to socially
destroy himself maybe through this this
idea he's like in this totally exalted
state where he just considers himself to
be have reached this new stage of this
brutal honesty where you know he's I

don't know but that's essentially it was
it was like an extreme manic episode and
uh I'm not sure how he's doing now
because he has gone silent for the past
few days um almost a week now I think so
I hope he's doing well and uh any
friends of his would I I suggest that
you send meta because he may need
it so I'm just going to move on to the
next question here and this is from
thermal
squid and the thermal squid
says is humor an appropriate response to
suffering
and it depends on the circumstances like
humor may be an appropriate response to
your own suffering you know it's a way

of detaching from your own you know it's better to make a joke about your own suffering than to just wallow in and be miserable you know like who was it I think it was Sir Walter Raleigh was it who who made a joke right before he got his head chopped off at the at the order of I don't know remember who ordered it maybe it was maybe it was one of those guys like Thomas Moore during the reign of Henry VII but you know he just gets trumped up charges you know pardon the pun and just is sentenced to death even though you know the main thing is he just rubbed the king the wrong way you know was just he did something the king

didn't like and so you know off with his
head and so I think he was the one who
like uh he moved his beard out of the
way before they cut his head off just
saying you know my beard didn't commit
any crime you know just Gallows humor
you know that's that sort of thing is
may have some wisdom to it um but if
you're going to make jokes if you're
going to be humorous about somebody
else's suffering then chances are that
would only work with like tough guys you
know if it's like you're working with a
bunch of tough guys and one of the guys
hurts himself you can make light of it
maybe make a joke about it um but you
have to be real careful make sure that

he doesn't take it the wrong

way so I mean probably the safe route

would be not making jokes about somebody

else's suffering even though making

jokes about your own suffering may be

okay but um this is sort of an intro to

this essay type question which follows

also by thermal squid

which is as follows what and I might add

that this is the last question too this

is the very last question of the Q&A so

listen

carefully he says what does Buddha

Dharma say about latent fixations

obsessions and mental occupation with

queerness and when he says queerness I

think he means like weirdness and not
homosexuality and then he follows up
that with a kind of explanation he says
I asked ask such things because of
someone who has introduced me to the
Dharma among a
Litany of eclectic philosophies I would
consider him wise yet whenever the
condition is
afforded he will be amused by the
conceptualization of struggle suffering
or
grossness such that he may find humor in
things like obesity seizures things that
are greasy or sticky bizarre or erratic
Behavior behaviors deformities or
perhaps even the most disordered or

desperate mental States especially paranoia just these things as abstract ideas never when actually presented or occurring in certain circumstances he finds extreme intoxication or ridiculous self- mortifying hypotheticals amusing beyond anything else in the world in many ways despite his wisdom and minimalist Tendencies I fear he is subtly sadistic nervous or unwell I have seen that some Chinese Buddhists would snap or clap in the faces of practitioners or otherwise ask them puzzling or odd things or that of Tantra having bizarre practices I do not believe he is evil but I think that this

sort of thing is quite odd he would
oftentimes go to Great Lengths to
describe the suffering of historical
monastics wise men and mendicants
immersed in its Det tals I just cannot
wrap my head around it and cannot seem
to judge what is just a distinction in
personality and what is actually
pathological in a spiritual
sense any input is
appreciated so that was sort of like
the uh the background I guess of him
asking these two questions one which I
already answered is humor and
appropriate response to suffering and
the second what does Buddha Dharma say
about late fixations obsessions and

mental occupation with queerness or
weirdness because I don't think it
really is referring to homosexuality
here um what does Buddha Dharma say
about latent fixations and obsessions
well a latent fixation or Obsession
especially if it's subconscious is
called an anusia a latent
tendency um and those are something that
you have to be become aware of and
eventually overcome them because it's
it's making Karma automatically when
they arise and so um you have to have
enough self-awareness and mindfulness to
catch them when they arise and not react
because if you if you act in accordance

with these latent Tendencies when they
arise at the surface then you're just
making more karma and reinforcing
that so the mental occupation with
queerness I don't recall it really being
mentioned in the texts um you know the
Buddha himself specifically mentioning
someone who
is like amused by or fascinated by just
like monstrosities grotesqueness
anything like that I mean there is like
uh Luc Cananda I think it's a word where
Luca I'm pretty sure just means like
shabbiness so there's um it is almost
like a virtue you could call it a virtue
that to like Delight in shabbiness but
but it's your own shabbiness it's not

squalor of somebody else you're not
delighting in somebody else's shabbiness
or squalor or
Misfortune um apparently this person
he's not mocking people specifically
apparently but just amused by just the
existence of these things in
general and I really don't have a lot of
experience with a relatively wise person
who never nevertheless Delights in
scoffing at just misfortunes and
grotesqueness in general although I did
have a
friend when I was a monk he was an
American monk who lived in Burma also
who had kind of a strange sense of humor

and he was amused primarily by
outrageousness and he'd he'd continually
be making jokes about Antichrist and
Satan and so forth um and my sense of
humor is more based on
absurdity so you know more of a Monty
Python kind of sense of humor so um you
know I learned relatively quickly on
relatively early on that you know our
senses of humor overlapped with regard
to what was outrageously absurd or what
was absurdly
outrageous but um and and you know he he
was kind of had like this weird semi
fascination with like Antichrist and and
Satan and so forth you know they they'd
come up in his humor um but I mean he

wasn't a bad guy it was just you know
maybe I mean I'm sure he had like a a
dark side and he was in a way kind of
processing that to some degree by making
light of it you know just turning it
into jokes and that might be kind of a
coping mechanism for um thermal Squid's
friend where this dark stuff this
fascination with this dark stuff comes
up and then he'll make a light of it as
a way of kind of trying to detach from
it to some degree or um you know not
wallowing it as much at least try to you
know sort
of I don't know I don't know what I'm
trying to say

exactly but uh I think maybe you get the
gist of what I'm saying so it may be
something like
that um I mean some some stories of like
what are he's talking about here where
is
it uh historical man suffering of
historical monastics wise men and
mendicants um I mean sometimes that sort
of thing is fascinating like Hinrich
suso who is mentioned in
uh uh the varieties of religious
experience by uh William James that
Hinrich suo I mean the the guy was weird
I think he was a student of Meister eart
even he was he lived in the Middle Ages
and he was I think he was beatified or

something he was he never became a saint but I mean he was he would not touch his own body he would he would touch his own hands he would not touch the rest of his body and in order not to touch the rest of his body he he made this harness thing that he would wear at night that had his wrists up around his neck it was sort of like a collar with these two wrist holes he'd sleep like that at night just so he wouldn't touch himself in his sleep and then uh it was it was causing so much much discomfort that he couldn't sleep so then he had gloves made that were covered with needle sharp spikes and in in his sleep you know he'd

be itchy because he was just covered
with bed bugs and lice you know he was
filthy and he he'd like scratch the itch
and just ripped these festering sores
open from the last time he ripped them
open and there was just all these weird
things he wore this underwear that also
had needle likee spikes except they were
directed inwards just to help him
mortify his lusts or whatever I mean he
was really in some ways I mean he wrote
this really book this book on
Christianity that was one of the most
most read books on Christianity in the
Middle Ages and so I mean he was capable
of intelligent thought and so forth and
he had a certain certain amount of

wisdom while at the same time just being
this weird hyper aesthetic fanatic who
was just torturing
himself and uh I don't know exactly what
that has to do with uh thermal Squid's
friend oh yeah because he was he was
like interested in that sort of thing
and I have to admit a case like Hinrich
zusso is interesting just as a kind of
anthropological study although I don't
think it's really all that funny you
know it's it's kind of weird I've got
enough empathy that you know when you
talk about the suffering of another
person that I mean you realize that
there's a connection I mean you

shouldn't be making fun of somebody

else's suffering because in a way it's

your own suffering

too at some deep

level so yeah it could be like I said

that he does have like this dark side

that he is making light of by by turning

it into humor when it

arises that's I don't I don't know I'm

guessing and that was the last question

so you know the drill I mean if you like

this hit like if you haven't subscribed

yet do so I wouldn't tell you to look

the links below because YouTube is still

punishing me I think it's two months

that I'm not allowed to post any links

not even in

comments because I answered a question
and my answer involved forbidden
information that YouTube censors and
then smites those who dare to uh State
their honest opinion on that
subject so if you uh have any questions
just put them in the comments below if
you think that I'll be able to answer I
can't make any
promises I mean if it's about terraa of
Buddhism that sort of thing monasticism
meditation there's a good chance I'll be
able to give some kind of intelligent
answer but if you start getting into
like secret societies for example I may
not be of much help to you and asking

uh like long complicated nebulous

questions that uh I don't fully

understand I mean it's good to keep your

question cu concise if

possible so I guess that's it and so

uh if you got questions feel free to

answer or feel free to ask and I will

answer if I can and if you want to know

the URL links where you can get a hold

of me or you know see my other um

channels on the internet and so forth

see the books that I've got for sale on

Amazon then I would advise you to look

under an older video that I've done or

go to rumble or bitshoot where I am

allowed to post links because Rumble and

bitshoot are definitely much more

friendly to freedom of speech and

expression than YouTube is and uh with

that I will just say be

happy

all right hello and welcome to episode

85 of question and answer I am your host

poo

basa hail

you and this is kind of weird I'm in a

slightly zombified state right now it's

like as I've gotten older I've become

more and more sensitive to changes in

barometric pressure especially when the

barometric pressure decreases suddenly

it just discombobulates me and that's

one of the reasons why I had to get out

of central Burma I just couldn't stand

the the violence of the weather there

especially right at the end of the rainy

season when the weather is just changing

violently from Sunny rainy sunny rainy
sunny rainy and it's kind of been like
that here in South Carolina for a few
days not not quite as Extreme as in
central Burma at the end of the rain
rainy
season but after I got all questions
together today I just felt so icky that
I actually just got out of this chair
and then went over and crashed on that
dog bed I was lying on the dog bed for
probably 45
minutes possibly got a little bit of
sleep although Poppy the little one kept
coming up and licking my face and stuff
so thanks to her thanks to the little
dog named

Poppy um I'm sitting up again and I'm
starting to commence to warming up to
getting ready to answer
questions so might as well answer
questions
now so the first question is from libr
Lam and lib lamb writes abstruse
questions sometimes that are difficult
to understand and this is one of them so
he says I have been debating another
viewer over this matter outside of the
server
and I'm hoping you can help settle it he
argues that we can apprehend that nibana
is unmanifest potential of pure mind and
that this renders there being no

destination or mindfulness and full awareness to nibana and that instead we should aspire to par nibana he argues that the spiritual life is about renunciation in this pure sense and not that renunciation of the Buddha Dharma is he wrong or am I wrong in saying he's wrong

well let's see here he argues that we can apprehend that nibana is unmanifest potential of pure mind and I guess I mean you could interpret nibana as the unmanifest potential of pure mind so to that extent you know any kind of words that you apply to nibana any kind of definitions is going to be a makeshift it's going to be ultimately invalid but

still some definitions are more useful

than

others

and saying that nibana

is unmanifest potential of pure mind is

I mean that you could do a lot worse

than that and so I mean to that extent I

wouldn't be inclined to consider the guy

to be entirely wrong but then he says

and that this renders this renders there

being no destination or mindfulness and

full awareness to

nibana and that I

mean I don't think

so I mean if n is the unmanifest

potential of pure mind then for you to

attain theana you've got to attain that
unmanifest potential of pure mind which
means you've got to purify your mind and
remove the manifestations of it at least
um temporarily you would like suppress
perception which is the manifesting
aspect of mind is
perception so you would suppress that
temporarily and get a glimpse of what
you're striving for But
ultimately um you'd have to transcend
the perception so that you can go beyond
the perception you know go beyond the
Manifest to the
unmanifest um you know long term
I mean more or less permanently I guess
up until you

die and that's uh kind of heresy from
the Terra point of view from the point
of view of Orthodox Terra what I've what
I've been saying just now is essentially
heresy but um I don't think the Orthodox
terraa does much better in explaining
nibana and uh um like how to attain
nibana so yeah if nibana is the
unmanifest potential of pure mind then
in order to realize that you've got to
have you've got to realize like an
unmanifest pure mind which is going to
be a mind that is without perception or
is transcending perception and that
takes
practice so I mean when he says this

renders there being no destination or
mindfulness and full awareness to nibana
well I mean like the destination I'm not
sure I mean that would be like ATA and
poly I suppose like the goal but I mean
the goal is mentioned you know you can
refer to it as a goal even though it's
always here all the
time um mindfulness is just one of those
ways of transcending perception like
like simplifying and like keeping it to
a minimum and then ultimately
transcending it and full awareness I
mean that's what the unmanifest
potential of pure mind would be just
full awareness you're not going to have
full awareness while you're still at the

level of perception because you're going
to be your awareness is going to be
focused on what it is that you're
perceiving and pretty much ignoring
everything
else so anyways he continues uh and
instead we should aspire to
Parana which is just what happens to an
enlightened being at the moment of death
so aspiring to the moment of death after
you become enlightened still you'd have
to Aspire to nibana
First otherwise I mean if you haven't
attained Nana then you're not going to
attain part of
nibana so let's see he argues that the

spiritual life is about renunciation in
this pure sense but I'm not exactly sure
what kind of renunciation is being
referred to here and not that
renunciation of the Buddha Dharma but
the renunciation of the Buddha Dharma is
simplif ing your life so that your
perceptions are simplified so that it is
easier to suppress them temporarily or
transcend them long
term so is he wrong or um is Libra lamb
wrong in saying he's wrong well I mean I
think he got maybe the core of like the
definition of
nibana more or less acceptable but then
he kind of uh seems to be of the the
idea that there's no way that you can

strive to attain that or that nibana just isn't really Enlightenment or some such um yeah then then I'd say that he is mistaken or at least he's deviating from not only terava Buddhism but also my unorthodox interpretation of Buddhism so I don't think he's quite correct with regard to the the ethical or practice aspect although saying that nibana is the unmanifest potential of pure mind really is not that bad of a definition so I think I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from Price five preset Pete and I still haven't fully woken up I mean I think I did fall asleep briefly on that bed

where there's a different dog falling
asleep right now and I I've never been
good at taking naps even when I was five
years old I was not good at naps like at
least half the time I'd wake up kind of
groggy and woozy and I've got a little
bit of grogginess going right now but
the show must go
on and I'm not
complaining I hope so anyways five preet
Pete says how to un [__]
self huh well stop using self retardant
that'd be one way of doing
it um how to un [__] I I assum he
means how to un [__] oneself how does
one un [__] oneself and that is I mean
that's one of the dilemmas of religion I

mean that's something that I've been
working with for many years in that it's
like you've got a computer that's
glitchy and then you've got to use that
computer to reprogram it
itself to UNG glitchify itself so to
speak and so it's like
you're trying to trying to become
enlightened but you are delusional
essentially to until you become
enlightened and so a diluted person is
trying to become enlightened so I mean
obviously there's handicaps involved so
you just have to do the best you can and
try to reduce the retardation Again by
reducing your addiction to

perception and you do that
systematically little by little at first
especially I mean it could be little by
little to the extent of taking millions
of years you know just lifetime after
lifetime going with the Buddhist scheme
of
things but uh you know you just do the
best you can and emphasize mindfulness
as much as you can and try to understand
reality as well as you can and never
think that you've really understood
it because I mean any kind of perceptual
model of reality is going to fail it's
going to be invalid ultimately so just
keep searching and never
really stop searching until there's just

no need to search

anymore and and be mindful you know just

practice meditation just simplify your

life simplify your mind and like

following precepts being moral I mean

the ultimate purpose of that again is to

simplify your mind you know to reduce

the Clutter you know all the agitation

and worry and so forth that immorality

leads

to um like the bad results that

immorality leads to you just try to keep

things simple and harmless and clean and

just practice meditation practice

mindfulness and

gradually wisdom will develop and

gradually you will learn to detach from

and

transcend the perceptual prison

that all normies are

in pretty much everybody the the entire

population pretty

much so I guess I answered that

one so I'll just move on the next

question this is from mooners and

mooners says does taxation break the

second precept because taxation is

theft well it's kind of interesting I

mean for me taxation isn't so much theft

because

I pay my taxes willingly I realized that

you know there wouldn't be a country if

there were no taxes I mean you could say

well people could just voluntarily

donate however much they think is fair

but as a general rule that doesn't work

out very

well so I mean if you read the text like

the the rules of monastic discipline and

so forth it becomes fairly clear like

for example the the definition of theft

for a monk which is what is the second

paraja the second paraja rule it's the

second rule in in the the biku Pim Moka

and it's it defines theft as taking

something worth more than a coin called

a

pot um or actually in the rule itself

it's taking stealing something valuable

enough that a judge would call you a
fool and an idiot you know that you get
haul in front of a judge and the judge
would reprimand you at very least that
you would receive at least a scolding
from the judge and so it's like it's a
legal definition really that
theft um I mean it's to some degree at
least it depends on the
law and because the government makes the
law the government is the law then you
couldn't really say that taxation is
breaking the second precept because
taxation is theft because the government
that makes the law says nope it's not
theft it's just you got to pay your
taxes at

all so you could you could employ that

Dodge I

suppose um but really I mean the

government can't really steal because

the government just makes the laws and

if they say we can we can take this from

you if we want to you know we just pass

this law saying we can take this from

you then what do you

do especially if you're not living in

anything remotely resembling a a

Democratic

Republic

so I mean it depends with regard to the

morality of it it would depend on

say the people enforcing the the the

taxation laws you know the the IRS guys
with guns you know the police that are
helping the IRS guys with guns you know
what is their mental
State uh what is the mental state of the
people um implementing the tax laws I
mean to some degree I mean they if
they've got impure motives then they're
going to be making impure Kama or
Karma but uh yeah I really just don't
think about it that way a lot of people
say you know taxation is theft and you
know having to work is slavery and that
kind of thing but uh yeah I I'm really
not that libertarian or what whatever
ideology that is that that insists that
taxation is theft and that having to

work for a living is slavery keeping

pets is slavery you know just to that

extent I mean you're you're hardly

likely to live a very happy life

considering that you know you're

considering that you know having to pay

your taxes which you I mean you got to

pay taxes whenever you buy just about

anything other than maybe food

and how most people have to work for a

living I mean you're just kind of

setting yourself up for a rather sour or

bitter existence I

think

so yeah technically I would say that I

mean it depends on how you look at

it so personally I don't think that
taxation breaks the second precept
unless there's you got just Crooks that
are just pocketing the money or
something but I mean that's at their end
that's not at my end I don't feel like
I'm being stolen from it's just sort of
a social construct that I was born into
and it's like people pay taxes you know
sort of like you know people brush their
teeth you know it's just something that
you have to do just to stay in this
society and uh yeah I really don't I
really don't look at it that way but I
mean some people might I mean some of
the IRS agents or the people
implementing the tax laws you know they

may have greedy motives or something and
so it may be that they are going to have
karmic
retribution for their
actions so I think I'm just going to
move on to the next question here this
is from covac and Cad
zida and seac and CAD zida says last
week you said Consciousness without
perception would just be a void but I
don't understand why that would be the
case for example to me it would seem
like visual Consciousness without
perception would just be a blob of
colors with a discernable ability to
separate the different parts with no

discernable ability to separate the
different parts of the blob from another
then I would assume perception is what
takes this raw data and makes symbols
out of them like separating the colors
of a chair from the rest of the visual
data and identifying that as a separate
whole object is this how the process
works and if so or if not not why would
this mean Consciousness would be like a
void without perception well I did say
that in a recent Q&A that without
perception this world is just an
unthinkable
void that a mental state with no
perceptual interpretation is as though
there's no mental state at all and I

originally got that idea from a book
called Buddhist logic by a Russian
fellow named chatsky one of the the
early pioneers years in Western Buddhist
studies and he was quoting a philosopher
I think it was venerable daroda who
belonged to the uh the Dig Naga School
of of logicians it was a logical school
and he was explaining know why that I
mean if you take away all perceptual
interpretation all you've got is
Unthinkable
void so anyways C action CAD zida
says to me it would seem like visual
Consciousness without perception would
just be a blob of colors with no

discernable ability to separate the different parts of the blob from another I mean the blob itself would be perceived in order for you to be aware of a blob the colors would be perceived in order for you to be aware of the colors so I mean for you to have like a just a uh just a mixture just some combination of of shapes and colors already you're perceiving it's just a simple level of perception so that's just sort of like Elementary perception you haven't got to the more advanced perception yet but I mean to see a blob of colors um just a blob of colors then I mean the blob is already perceived and the colors are

already

perceived so I mean you take away all of

that all percep ctual content and again

the raw data that is not interpreted in

any perceptual way yet it is as though

it doesn't

exist and

uh if uh you want to get to um like the

the Dig Naga school's explanation of

this then uh look up chat's Buddhist

logic it was in two volumes and I only

got one volume of it I was living in

Burma I founded an old bookstore in

Mandalay that sold Old English books

and uh they only had volume two I think

so I think it's in volume

two but I do agree with that I mean

perception this world is perception

samsara is

perception or uh as uh Bishop Barkley

used to say SAS

perip to exist is to be

perceived so if you don't perceive it

and then it does not exist in any

samsaric

sense so I guess I answered that or

let's

see identifying is this how the process

works and if so or if not why would this

mean Consciousness would be like a void

without

perception yeah well it's an unthinkable

void because the perception is the

thinking

part

so yeah I mean just raw data that is

completely

unprocessed I mean it's just you're

you're not even aware that it's there I

mean and and completely un unperceived

or unprocessed data like sensory data is

largely a myth like your eyes your

visual like the the information going

you know according to science you know

you've got light bounces off some object

out there and then it comes in it goes

through the lens of your eye goes

through the jelly and it gets back to

the retina which then triggers certain

nerve impulses then you've got this
electrochemical impulse going through
the optic nerve to the back of your head
where it gets into into your brain and
your brain is processing it but even the
retina Begins the processing information
it's already sharpening up outlines for
example like in in the retina itself
before it even gets to your brain
already there's like this processing
going on which is like the the first
steps in perception Sharp stening up
outlines so that you can more easily
differentiate this from
that but yeah I think uh if you really
understand what perception does what is
perception then I think you would have

to agree that without perception I mean

Unthinkable

void anyways I think I'm going to move

on to seac and CAD Zen's next question

here and I hope I'm not too groggy and

zomb ified from uh not feeling good and

then crashing on the dog bed so anyways

SE action CAD Z's next question is I

easily get carried away by the momentum

of a conversation and end up saying

things I regret whether it's telling

people things I shouldn't have told them

saying rude things I can't take back or

end up lying to tell entertaining

stories that make people laugh but if I

just choose to not talk without purpose

I have no reason to talk to people at
all and end up going without talking for
a long time and isolating myself what
should I do to fix
this well I mean that's that's kind of a
tough question actually uh first of all
I mean you shouldn't regret anything I
mean regret always just makes things
worse you know it's
cucha I've said many times before that I
mean if you only know two things about
dhama two useful things about dhama one
is that desire is the cause of all
suffering whenever you're unhappy it's
because you want something and two
regret or remorse is always bad karma it
always makes things

worse but uh I mean a certain amount of restraint just verbal restraint being mindful of your your words as you're speaking them you know just having a little more editing you know just a little more like feeling into the person you're talking to and just like exercise in a certain amount of empathy if you're capable of that and just I mean if you if you have like empathy with another person then if you start saying stuff that they don't like you pick up on it pretty
quickly so I mean if you really don't want to offend people or just make people feel bad or uncomfortable or

whatever then yeah I mean it it helps to
have a certain amount of empathy with
the person you are speaking with so that
you can pick up on this Stu
St um let's see I mean if you have a see
if I just choose to not talk without
purpose I have no reason to talk to
people at all I mean people ask you
questions then you answer questions you
know if there's at work you know if
there's something that needs to be
talked about I mean I assume you're
intelligent enough to know when you
really need to talk about something and
when
not um but I mean it takes mindfulness
you just got to be aware just don't let

yourself fall more or less mindlessly
into habits and just try to do what is
appropriate in the moment you know just
try to be in the moment and feel out
what is the appropriate things thing to
say um and not just follow these these
habits that occasionally get you into
trouble so it takes practice it's not
something that you're just going to make
a New Year's resolution and resolve to
always speak appropriately especially
after you know years of building up
habits of occasionally speaking
inappropriately but it does take
conscious effort and try to be mindful
and also just try to try to at least

guess how the other person is feeling
and realize I mean that if you hurt
somebody else in a sense you're also
hurting
yourself and it just leads to
trouble so I think I answered that
question so I'm just going to move on to
covac Cod Z's next question and also I'm
just checking to make sure yep we are
recording I've been paranoid about that
ever since that last uh recording
software I had that and it would say
that I was recording even when when it
wasn't it's not good anyways his third
question is how do I stop being so
negative whiny and argumentative I'm
sure you know by now that focusing on

the negative aspect of things is my
specialty but I don't know how to get
over this proclivity just like with you
it feels like I give people headaches
and make them want to give up talking
with me yeah I mean it is true there
have like on the Discord server covac
and CAD zida was like a refugee to our
Discord server after he got kicked off
YouTube
and uh it's true it's like sometimes I
mean luckily in the Q&A he doesn't do
this but sometimes he'll ask a question
and he'll answer it and then he'll he'll
like try to like yeah but and then he
it's like he's like fighting the entire

every inch of the way you know he's
arguing back the whole way just trying
to answer the question and it's like you
know it's it's sort of like this like a
wrestling m or something and eventually
you just get tired of
it but the thing is I mean I've been
accused of the same thing really just my
father got pissed off at me once
probably more than once just you know
he'd say something and i' just sort of
add to it and you know just add to it in
a way that sort of modifies what he said
but in a way it's disagreeing with him
because it's saying something that he
didn't say and you know it's like you
just again you have to kind of feel into

the person you're talking to get an idea
as to you know what is going to bother
them and then you know kind of pick up
on cues if you can I mean if you're
doing it online you don't pick up on
cues as easily if you're just sitting or
standing with someone talking to them
and you're seeing their facial
expression and just sort of picking up
on their Vibe and all
that but
uh yeah I mean you just have to be aware
of that try to see yourself the way
others see you a little better just
remind yourself that you do have this
proclivity and

uh try to you know try to take uh

appropriate measures like like in the

the other question the question right

before this

one

um yeah

it's I mean the mindfulness of speech is

is important you know it's it's there's

some sutas in the in the poly poly poly

Pica where it's talking about you know

how like everyone's got like an axe in

their mouth your tongue is just gets you

into more trouble than anything else

it's so easy you know it's like I've

said that that uh like wrong speech is

the easiest of the five precepts to

break because I mean it's just almost

effortless you know you can just remain
sitting in your chair and break that
precept and uh so I mean it requires
greater mindfulness just to you know be
aware Ware of just be mindful of your
speech uh let's see
and I think to some degree you just have
to like get hit over the head with
people getting mad at you enough until
finally it starts changing your
perceptions that really you can't really
change your behavior in a certain under
certain circumstances without changing
the way you perceive things under under
those circumstances like Arthur
schopenhauer his his doctoral thesis the

four-fold root of sufficient reason one of the fourfold root of sufficient reason one of the four the kinds of sufficient reason was psychological and you know he in in this essay he's saying that you know a human being is a conditioned being and we're going to react to the same circumstances in the in the same way you know certain things happen we're going to react in this certain way until we learn to think differently and in this case of just being negative and whiny and argumentative um I mean it it may require enough people just getting pissed off and that it kind of humbles you or makes you realize that you're

clueless in a certain way and this this
has happened to me before too so that I
mean it really does kind of change
something in your mind about how you're
perceiving things that that then allows
you to respond
differently but again mindfulness of
speech is is pretty much a necessity in
this
regard so at least at least see actually
inad zida is at least when he was asking
this question was realizing that uh
sometimes his his means of communication
um just kind of are abrasive to certain
people you know like when you say
something and somebody just comes back

at you with you know some sort of criticism or like yeah but you know what about you know this that I mean if I interpret your words this way then this is wrong or or something like that that you know it's they might even be wanting to say something simple and then it just gets more and more complicated until you wind up in like this Quagmire of words so yeah mindfulness of speech I guess and uh try to just feel into the people you're talking to and and see at least try to pick up on when they're starting to get like frustrated or or bothered and then back off unless you're really hellbent on frustrating and bothering people so I'm just going to

move on to the next question here this
is from thermal
squid and thermal squid said what is the
karma of gas station or conival store
works I assume he means convenience
store but it came out as connivance
store so let's just assume for the sake
of argument here that uh he means
convenience stores so what is the karma
of gas station or convenience store
works is it wrong livelihood to sell
alcohol intoxicants meats and so on but
it seems to me that one would need to
purchase and facilitate these items and
to profit off of them for intent to be
involved such that of someone who sells

what is owned by another for a wage is
this wrong livelihood
well first of all he's got the list you
know it's wrong livelihood to sell
alcohol intoxicants meats and so
on technically meat isn't on the list
there there is a list like with regard
to wrong livelihood there's a list of
things and I'm not going to remember all
of them probably but intoxicants you're
not allowed to sell intoxicants you're
not allowed to sell weapons which would
include poisons you're not allowed to
sell slaves which would be also be like
being a pimp you know white white
slavery as it used to be called um
you're not allowed to sell what else

there's another

one H animals for Slaughter so I mean if

the an if it's just meat it's already

been slaughtered then I think that gets

a pass technically but selling animals

for Slaughter is also not right

livelihood and uh let's see so yeah I

mean it's still it doesn't say anything

about how you have to buy it first in

order to sell it that regardless of the

circumstances of why you or how you are

selling intoxicants or weapons or

animals for Slaughter or slaves Etc um

it's still wrong livelihood because

there is harm being caused by you doing

this regardless of you know whatever

capitalist provided the capital for

buying the the overhead or the the stock

or

whatever the stuff that is in

stock

so yeah I mean it's still wrong

livelihood and you'll probably get a

certain amount of karma for it although

I really don't think that like a grow

grocery store Checker a grocery store

clerk who's selling the bottle of wine

to the old lady or the bottle of or the

the can of insecticide every once in a

while you know I mean they're just you

know booping it over the the the little

code reader and you know saying how much

they owe you know it's there's not a

whole lot of mentality going on that uh
is suitable to hang Karma on I mean it's
still there it's very subtle and still
technically from the Buddhist point of
view it is wrong
livelihood
but even even like devout Buddhists will
do this i' I've I've been to like
restaurants like the owners of a
restaurant they're devout Buddhists back
when I was a monk in Burma you know they
invite me to come they'd want me to
bless their restaurant or something or
they just want to give me a they want to
serve me breakfast or something and you
know they're serving

beer and you know I've I've actually

pointed it out a few times I mean you

know wrong livelihood selling beer but

you know they just you know if we don't

sell beer they'll go somewhere else you

know they got to make a

living

so yeah it's you're making a certain

amount of Karma and then also you're

just violating the the precept or and

also the the the step of the eight-fold

path of right livelihood

so it's not really a precept it's just

it's just defined as as wrong livelihood

MAA

aiva but some wrong livelihoods are

worse than other wrong livelihoods I

mean selling the occasional sixpack of
beer at the grocery store isn't nearly
as bad as selling slaves or animals for
Slaughter or you know selling explosives
to terrorist groups or whatever
so yeah I mean you're just going to have
to uh work it out for yourself if you
are ever seriously tempted to work at a
convenience store or at a restaurant or
at a grocery store that sells alcohol
for
example but I don't think that you there
aren't very many people that are going
to go to hell for selling a sixpack of
beer at a grocery
store so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from Jo do and
Jo do says what's your thoughts on the
little buddha the man that is said to be
The Reincarnation of Buddha in Nepal and
I'd never heard of this
person and I would say that anyone who's
claiming to be a Reincarnation of the
Buddha is probably a fraud because the
Buddha does not reincarnate you know
that's that's why he's the Buddha If he
if he he's reincarnated that indicates
he wasn't the Buddha
so anyway I never heard of this person
but then somebody else had named Don and
so don left this following comment below
Joe Do's question comment he says allow
me to butt in I learned a couple of

years ago that he's become somewhat of a crazy cult desperate involved in kidnapping torture Temple desecration and he was just arrested a few months ago for rape and sexual assault of miners the guy's a real piece of work there's plenty of reports on YouTube all about it so yeah I guess I guess he's probably just another one of those charlatans claiming to be an enlightened being um elron hubard was claiming or at least his followers were claiming that he was Matea Buddha or mraa Buddha you know the next Buddha so that's not claiming to be a Reincarnation of goab Buddha but still I mean claiming to be a

Buddha is uh is kind of problematic just

just for

starters

anyway I would I would I would consider

that the overwhelming majority of claims

to buddhahood are false claims and I

would just based on you know the the

tiny fragment the tiny particle of

knowledge I have about this little

buddha that Jo do is asking about I

would I would assume that he's a fraud

even if he didn't really

rape

anybody or torture

anybody still I mean just claiming to be

a Reincarnation of the Buddha is is

pretty it's pretty out there I mean it's

likely that he's not uh he's not
legit so I'll just move on next question
here and this is from neant
please and neant please says what are
gandas made of and at first I was
confused because the usual meaning of
Ganda or Gandara in Sanskrit is they are
sort of a small G God just one level
above the human level and they have a
reputation for being
musicians and like servants to the
higher gods and uh one of the best
examples of a Ganda in the in the sutas
is in the Saka paasa of the digik Kaya
where um a Ganda named panchas Sika
is like a servant to Saka king of Gods

and Saka sends ponosa this Ganda to the Buddha to try and soften him up so that he'll accept a visit from Saka king of Gods himself and so this panasa this Ganda goes to the Buddha and sings this really racy Love Song which somehow meets with the approval of the Buddha

and

then kind of Segways into Saka coming before him and asking him a number of questions

so it's not that kind of Gand what what neant please is referring to here is the Gonda as a requisite for

conception

that there are like

three requisites for conception

according to ancient Indian Buddhist
texts you have to have the man and the
woman coming together there has to be
like
moisture and there has to be a gond ABA
and the Ganda in this
case is like a being ready to
be reborn as this being that's going to
be
conceived
because in Buddhist philosophy Buddhist
ethics a human life begins at conception
that it is at conception that the
relinking Consciousness that the karma
of a previous existence comes into a new
existence it's right at the moment of

conception which makes abortion

essentially murder in Orthodox terraa

Buddhism so you've got this being that

is ready to take

rebirth and that is called a

Ganda and really I mean all it would be

would be the karma of the previous the

previous existence that is going to just

at the moment of death the very next

moment it's it's just lined up you know

circumstance is lined up so that one

person dies and then the very next

moment one trillionth of an eye blink

later they take rebirth in this new

fertilized

ovam so I assume that the Gonda is just

a figure of speech that there's not

actually a being because it's it's

really just Karma you know it's just

like the the psychic momentum of of a

conscious being that is like somehow

being implanted into a microscopic

fertilized

egg so I guess the Ganda in this case is

a figure of speech that is essentially

just

Kama and it's it's weird it's um

somebody I think it might have been

neant please even posted a kind of

article on the Discord server about how

gandaras in in Sanskrit like in Indian

FK folklore ancient Indian folklore they

were sort of like elves they were seen

as elves who could like medal with with
unborn babies and so forth so the idea
of a being you know being involved in in
like unborn babies in in this sense in
this folklor sense in a negative way it
may have somehow just got garbled into
Buddhist philosophy where it's just the
being that is going to become the unborn
baby and uh really all it would be is
just comma and it's it's in a way that
the the being or the being who is about
to take rebirth isn't even there until
the very moment of conception because
the moment before that it was in a a
dying person at the moment of death
who knows how far away it wasn't
necessarily

nearby so I think it is just kind of

a kind of a

garbled figure of speech that somehow

has been influenced by the idea that

gandas were like elf-like beings who

could interfere with with unborn babies

just like elves in like Medieval Europe

um you know they were responsible for

changelings you know know they would

kidnap newborn babies and replace them

with this you know kind of a monstrous

inhuman kind of a

baby so I I assume that's that is it

that a Ganda isn't really some sort of

being with a body or anything although

there it does remind me of the meta sua

where um there is one verse where you're sending meta to beings that already exist and meet beings who are about to be who are you know waiting for existence

so it could be that at some point I mean some Buddhists already believe this like Tibetan Buddhist with their Tibetan Book of the Dead that it's not necessarily instantaneous it's not like exactly the One Moment One trillionth of an eye blink after somebody dies they have to to take rebirth in in a womb you know if they're going to be born you know into a womb it has to be like one moment you know there has to be like an Unbroken Continuum of Consciousness there can't

be any gaps other than the less than a trillionth of a second Gap in between each each

moment so that uh it could be that there was sort of like a a BAU realm in in in the beliefs of some ancient Buddhist or some ancient Indians where you know the being that was in this Bardo realm waiting for an appropriate birth you know maybe they're going to be reborn as a prince or something and there might be you know you might have to wait a while they might have to be in some kind of BTO realm and then maybe they'd be a Gonda but that's uh it's not really explained in the poly Tex because the

polych really don't endorse the ble

realm view of any kind of waiting period

between one birth and the next I mean

still it' just be you'd be born you know

temporarily as this kind of ethereal

being it's like a spirit or

something but um yeah I'm not sure what

kind of body you know presumably they

would have if if they were in this

intermediate kind of BTO realm they

would have a body it probably be a

subtle B it'd be a body made of subtle

matter or

something but um we're

we're deviating from terraa Buddhism at

this point and um you can just uh make

your own guesses if since since we've

just gone completely off the tracks we
can just you can just make guesses about
what kind of a being this this being
waiting to be reborn would uh what kind
of a body it would have or
whatever so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from
Mambo and Mambo says hello poo what is
your opinion about memory there was a
question about dreams so that got me
thinking about what is memory and how it
works I mean scientifically we know it's
in the brain but we are yet to
understand brain completely yeah that's
probably going to be like a permanent
thing is there anything about it which

Buddha specifically said in the poly Canon personally I think memory is momentary but we do remember stuff like literature or educational books but how reliable is our memory regarding our experience or life in general yeah there are I read an epistemology book a long time ago where the guy was actually saying that memory is you're actually your mind is actually going back into the past p and I don't believe that at all because I've had so many memories that turned out to have been mistaken like you know as a monk you know I'm living out in the in the woods in in Burma with no radios no TVs or anything and I just remember certain things like

there were two songs or there was this
one song from I don't know if you'd even
call it a song a musical piece from an
album called my life in the bush of
ghosts by David burn and Brian
Eno and I was playing this song in my
head you know for years and then I come
back to America where there's this thing
called YouTube that I'd never seen
before and then I'm able to look up all
these songs that I've been playing in my
head for years and it turned out that
the song that I thought I remembered was
it was like the the melody to one song
and the lyrics of a of a different song
on the Same album they were just I just

sort of conflated them into one song or like an old TV commercial about Tootsie Roll pops Tootsie Pops how many licks does it take to get to the Tootsie Roll center of a Tootsie Pop I thought I had remembered this this commercial and then finally just through random chance I see this vintage you know they're just showing old vintage commercials just for the heck of it on TV I'm visiting my father at the time and it was that same commercial and it was the owl wasn't I mean it wasn't the way I remembered it he said the same I got the words right but he was like perched in a tree or something and I I somehow remembered him like standing on the ground or something

so it's

like memory is uh is just sort of the

momentum of of these images that can

change I mean they can degrade over time

they can mutate over time and uh as I

was mentioning in the last Q&A women I

mean it's it's like adjustable just

right off the bat their

memories

so like I can say my earliest memory is

my third birthday but it's not really my

third birthday that I'm remembering I'm

remembering having remembered it before

and having and then that memory was

having remembered it before it's just

sort of like this momentum of an image

that really you can hardly even call it

a memory anymore it's just there's still

elements of what was originally there

but then there's all this murkiness and

and just sort of probably

changes

so

um I'm not sure exactly if I'm answering

Mambo's

question but uh it is a kind of like a

like a karmic thing in a way it's like a

a kind of psychic

momentum but um you I mean it's from a

scientific point of view obviously it

involves circuitry in your brain whether

it's just certain circuit patterns

patterns of neurons or whether there's

some sort of holographic image that the
whole brain is generating or some such
yeah they haven't got that all worked
out
but um yeah at this level of reality in
this human world yeah your memories are
stored in your brain and if you get
brain damag then you may lose your
memory you get hit over the head really
hard you may have amnesia for
example but with to uh like the
metaphysical like the Buddhist
explanation of memory I don't recall
ever coming across that I mean it might
be in the text somewhere like but I
don't think even Abid dama really

tackles the exact way that memory works
from a Buddhist point of view I'm sure
there have to have been Buddhist
philosophers who have dealt with the
issue of
memory and uh I mean some some people
philosophically minded people will kind
of attack Buddhism from that point of
view it's like if there is no self for
example how can you have abiding
memories and so forth um it is it is
kind of a I mean nobody's got it all
worked out as far as I know uh if the
Buddha had it all worked out he
apparently didn't talk about it or that
was one of his talks that didn't get
recorded because I don't think there is

a suta explaining exactly how memory
works from a Buddhist point of
view so I gave my opinions about
memories and that's the question oh wait
there's another question mark the first
question mark is what is your opinion
about memory which I pretty much gave
even though um I can't say exactly how
memory works from a metaphysical point
of view you know if you kind of set
aside the brain as kind of Superfluous
or just kind of a prop for this version
of reality then how would a budhist
metaphysically explain how memory Works
other than just as a kind of karma where
it's just like a kind of psychic

momentum just the momentum of these

images then uh yeah it's it's it is uh a

difficult question but I know that

memory is not 100%

accurate just for the reasons I've

already given that some of my own

memories that I thought you know you

remember remember them clearly and then

suddenly you realize that that's not

exactly the way it happened is there

have been

changes

so I gu G I gave my best answer to that

I guess and see there is another

question mark here it's like uh do do we

remember stuff like lit see but we do

remember stuff like literature or

educational books but how reliable is
our memory regarding our experiences or
life in general uh it depends on how
good your memory is some people have
more reliable memories than others I've
got a fairly good memory but even mine
is not 100% accurate and if something is
not interesting to me at all it just
never
registers if something is interesting I
can absorb it like a sponge you know I
still retain a lot of stuff I learned in
school but uh and I do have a better
memory than most people but still I it
it's it's
not like your mind is actually going

back into the past and seeing the event
over again because memories can be
wrong so I'm just going to uh move on to
the next question here this is from
Prav and Prav says what is UPA and how
to practice it in a worldly sense the
Jas about it seem pretty extreme well
UPA literally just means looking upon
the OA just means up to and the eeka
just means like seeing or looking so
it's sort of just being a a
disinterested bystander is
UPA and how to practice it in a worldly
sense um one way is just to just me
memorize the formula of UPA sometimes um
when UPA is mentioned that it's it's in
the context of kamico that that is sort

of like a phrase or a sentence that is
symbolic of just the essence of UPA and
Kamas is two words Kama which means
Karma or action and Sako which means
one's own so it literally means one's
actions are one's own which means all
the [__] that's happening to people all
the [__] that's happening people like in
Gaza or Ukraine or Mexico or wherever
the hood anywhere here everywhere that
that we are creating our own reality and
that all suffering is ultimately
self-inflicted which like leftist
Western Buddhists just to a large degree
they can't deal with that because of of
course the leftism of the West the new

leftism wants to blame somebody else for
suffering not
oneself so just kind of from a
philosophical intellectual point of view
you can just remind yourself that one's
comma is one's own you know it's just
Karma working itself out you know
following just in accordance with
nature and uh how else would you how
else would you cultivate UPA just
through austerity just
toughness just kind of cultivate that
kind of mentality like really
austerity practicing aestheticism you
know just sort of avoiding Comfort or
just being indifferent to comfort then
you can get more UPA with to your own

life experiences you know you're not
going to freak out if the toast is is
undercooked or too dark or not dark
enough or you know you're out of
milk or or the person in front of you is
waiting 10 seconds because they're te
texting while the light has turned green
that kind of thing that uh just be
mindful and observe your own your own
mental processes and uh I mean you do I
mean that's what upeka literally is is
just looking upon just observe it
without reacting is
UPA so you can practice
that uh how to practice it in a worldly
sense just I mean aside from the

reminder that everyone's everyone's
actions are one's own you know
everyone's karma is one's own then uh
yeah a certain amount of austerity just
getting used to not getting what you
want um and then like if you start to
get irritated or annoyed by anything
you've got mindfulness you watch the
irritation you watch the annoyance and
then it's not really you anymore it's
just you observing irritation arising
and then that helps with eka
also so every little bit helps and I'm
going to move on to panov's next
question which is an
equally difficult one to answer could
you give advice on how to start

practicing Sati or mindfulness and I

guess one of the best ways to start

practicing mindfulness is just doing

onop

or mindfulness of breath as a meditation

object that would be a good way of

practicing s or like even doing like a

Goa Retreat where you're you're doing

the scanning at least you're you're

being mindful of a sensation in each

quadrant or or SE section of your body

I've never done the the the uh Goa

method myself but I've heard about it

I've had people who practiced it tell me

about it I've read some of the the

booklets and so forth

so how to start practicing sadit yeah I
think mindfulness of the breath would be
a good way of
starting or mindfulness of anything as a
meditation technique or you're doing it
formally you know you're you're doing it
deliberately as well as you can with as
full of Consciousness as you can and
then you know the better you get it that
the more easy it is to kind of continue
that kind of mindfulness going
when you're not sitting cross-legged
anymore you know you've learned how to
do it fairly well while sitting
cross-legged with your eyes closed and
then you can continue without doing
walking meditation mindfulness of

walking and so

forth so yeah it can start with formal

practice which is how it starts for a

lot of people maybe most people and then

once you start getting better at it then

you can start you know cultivating that

when you're doing all sorts of things

like reaching for doorknobs or brushing

your teeth or driving your car or taking

a dump or whatever it

is you know just be in the present

moment with as little mental commentary

going on as

possible so I'll just move on to the

next question here this is also from

pranav and he says what do you think

about Hindus saying that the Buddha is
the ninth Avatar of Vishnu when in
reality it is just a blatant lie to make
Hinduism look Superior and they even say
that Buddhism is nothing but a branch of
Hinduism well I thought he was the sixth
Avatar isn't he the sixth Avatar with Ki
being the seventh or something yeah I
don't know he but he it is true that the
Buddha is considered to be an avatar of
God Vishnu and it may have been a
blatant lie at one time but I mean if
you believe it then it's not a lie if
you say it even if you're wrong
if you're you know you're not guilty of
lying if you believe that it's true and
Hindus who have been taught that from

the time that they were children are
they're going to believe it when they
say it so they're I mean the Hindus
nowadays saying that the Buddha was is
was an avatar of Vishnu and they're not
necessarily
lying and it goes back to religious
propaganda Wars in in ancient and
medieval India where I mean the the the
Buddhists are Are Not Innocent of of
propaganda either I mean they took the
the vadic Gods like Brahma and and Indra
and just turn them into just like
sycophantic like Fanboys of the
Buddha so I mean it was going back and
forth this kind of

thing so it's it's like for centuries
Hinduism or Proto Hinduism and Buddhism
were like the two main competitors for
you know the spiritual life of India and
nowadays it's mostly Hindu but there
have been times when it was mostly
Buddhist when India was mostly
Buddhist and so there's all this
competition and going back and forth and
I guess somebody came up with the idea
that you know if you can't beat them
join them in a sense so they just tried
to make the Buddha an avatar of of God
Vishnu so in a way it's just they just
turned Buddhism into a branch of
Hinduism as a way of saying you know
even if Buddhism wins Hinduism still

wins because Buddhism is a kind of Hinduism and in a way it kind of strengthened the position of Hinduism at the same time and helped prevent Buddhism from completely taking over maybe I mean it's it's weird how they they turn the Buddha into an avatar of Vishnu but then they're saying that you know he was the deceiver you know he was sort of luring the weak-minded away from the true teach teachings of Hinduism to strengthen Hinduism you know by luring them away into this false teaching of Buddhism uh yeah I mean it it went both ways the Buddhists did this sort of thing too like I've already talked about

you know the six heretical
teachers that I mean they're they're
portrayed as buffoons in the poly text
like mahavira you know the purported
founder of jism you know I mean he's
just a buffoon if if you read the the
polyas so I mean it's sort of car upin
in that sense I mean it's going back and
forth It's it was it was going both ways
and then the Mahayana Buddhists start
bashing the the hinana Buddhists and you
know the hinana Buddhists are still
bashing the the Vic brahmanist and The
Janes and the aicas and on and on it was
just a lot of this stuff going
on so what do I think about Hindus
saying that the Buddha is the ninth

Avatar of Vishnu and in reality it's
just a blame mind make Hinduism look
Superior and they even say that Buddhism
is nothing but a branch of Hinduism well
I think I already answered that question
it's uh you can unpack it from the all
the verbiage I spewed over the past few
minutes so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from
Alfred and this is kind of an
interesting question
too Alfred asks what drives the ego
Persona to be
self-destructive and I'm sure that
there's got to be various reasons you
know like in the in the poly text you

know there's the desire for there's
three kinds of craving craving for
sensual pleasure craving for existence
and craving for
non-existence so I mean some
philosophical types who just see life as
suffering you know they might crave
non-existence for that or I think
probably what's more likely in the
west that when the mind is
self-destructive it's
like you've done something that you you
have to accept is wrong or bad and then
you feel like you should be punished for
it like one of my favorite examples of
this whole thing is U it's my favorite
novel dostv is the idiot and there's

this woman named uh

Nastasia and you know symbolically she's

like the most beautiful woman in the

world she's just this magnificently

beautiful woman but she she is

self-destructive because when she was a

teenage girl she was seduced by this

Rich

landowner and she was she was like his

kept woman for years until finally she

just rebelled against him you know she

realized what was going on you know

finally you know all of her her hopes

and dream her girlish dreams of them

getting married someday he realized she

realized that it wasn't going to happen

because she sees in the newspaper the
announcement that he's engaged to
somebody else
so I mean she's proud but at the same
time she's humiliated I mean back in the
1800s when the novel was written you
know if if you were somebody's kept
woman you know you have sex before
marriage you're no longer I mean you're
no
longer you're ruined you know it's
you're just you're just a ruined woman
you're not marriageable I mean almost
your only your only option is to become
a prostitute at that
point so I mean she's proud and she
wants to do what's right in a sense and

so just in her mind she's got it twisted
around so that the right thing for her
to do is destroy
herself and I think there's a lot of
people who do that sort of thing they
make some kind of mistake and they're
just whipping themselves you know
they're just beating themselves up for
it for the rest of their life maybe you
know they just think that they need to
be punished it might not even reach full
Consciousness it might might be deep
down that they just feel like they
should be destroyed for what they have
done or they need to be just severely
punished maybe even killed you know they

should die you know because they're such
a bad
person so I mean I think that happens a
lot
too especially in the west I mean most
people are not so
philosophical that they think that it's
better off to be dead than alive you
know like like the Book of Ecclesiastes
has that as one of its
themes everyone is better off not having
been born which is going to be an
element in another question that comes a
little later on
here but uh I mean there's all kinds of
reasons I'm sure I haven't exhausted the
possibilities that there's who knows if

you ask a psychologist they might be
able to tell you the the most recent
theories as to why some people just
become self-destructed
RVE um with regard to Brian our friend
Brian he went through this spectacular
self-destructive stage recently where he
was just blurting out just brutal truths
about himself and about other people
that you just it could be that he just
felt so much pressure to like keep stuff
like pent up inside and he got into this
expansive IC state or something and he
just started blurting out all this stuff
that he'd been keeping inside which was
just sort of incidentally

self-destructive I don't think he was
necessarily doing it for the sake of
self-destruction but that was kind of
like the the side effect of the whole
thing so I mean there's all kinds of
reasons why the ego Persona can be
self-destructive but I do think that in
the west one of the main ones is that
someone they just do something that they
think is really bad or really wrong or
they just fail to live up to you know
what their father wanted them to be or
something and they think that they
should be punished just deep down you
know they're they just think that
they're bad they should be punished and
it can reach like self-destruction or

even like Suicidal

Tendencies or another one is just the

self the ego Persona to be

self-destructive if they're just

suffering so much if they're so

miserable you know they just

they've messed up in life they've made a

mess of their life maybe it was a mess

from the beginning they had no chance

hardly you know just from the very

get-go and you know it's just a

miserable life and they just want out of

it so that's another one but I'm just

going to move on next question here

before I get too

morbid and this is from Indian guy who

also occasionally goes by the name of Trevor and he says I just went and meditated outside and this is like my third time time doing it not at the monastery because I'm wanting to make an effort so there was no influence or guidance in the seclusion and it was very very hard most of the time I feel like my breath is something I'm always over aware of and I seem to want to have it to where my breath does its thing on its own which is good I don't know dot dot dot dot what is your favorite meditation technique or can you give me some advice I read the Sati batan sua and tried that but my in breath is okay but my out breath hurts and I get tense

easily yeah I think you're overthinking
it I mean I assume your out breath
doesn't always hurt but only when you're
trying to to do the meditation like
you're focusing on your breath and
somehow that causes you to tense up so
that you know there's like chest
constriction and a certain discomfort
and so
forth so yeah it's like you should let
your breath do its own and then say here
you know you seem to want to have it to
where your breath does its own thing
does its thing on its own that's that is
correct I mean if you're doing
mindfulness of the breathing you should

just breathe

normally and I mean if you're doing good

meditation your breathing should slow

down it should become more subtle just

because you're not your body is just

calming down and so your metabolism is

calming down and so you just your breath

is calming

down but yeah meditation is can be very

hard for some people especially us us

westerners who are like compulsive

thinkers so let's

see what is my favorite meditation

technique I'm not sure that I have a

favorite meditation technique um it's it

varies under different circumstances I

mean probably the best my favorite

meditation that I've ever done has been
my best meditation which was just I mean
what a Catholic would call High
contemplation where you just stop
thinking you're wide awake and your mind
is just clear like
glass not thinking
anything so I mean that would be my
favorite meditation technique but there
were other lots of other techniques that
I would do like if I was sitting out in
the woods sometimes I would just do like
a casino meditation where you just kind
of gaze out into the forest and you find
a roughly circular patch of green you
know just surrounded by a different

shades of green but there's like a a
recognizable you know more or less of a
circular shape there and I just gaze at
that you know
just just be quiet and just gaze at the
Circle or you know mindfulness of
breathing is fine m i do M spontaneously
sometimes especially if I'm walking or
in sometimes in like a tense situation M
will start going automatically or um
yeah I mean sometimes it just comes up
it's not something that I decide I'm
going to do M meditation now it just it
just happen spontaneously so I kind of
like
that um yeah those would be some of my
favorite meditation techniques I

guess there was one I used to do it
didn't last very long but I used to live
out in the woods and I would take a bath
in a creek every day and there was some
places in the creek where the water
would be like chest deep and I would
just hyp ventilate a little bit you know
take a number of deep breaths and then
just hold my breath and then just float
face down like in the fetus position in
the water and that was like my my fetus
meditation but of course you can't do it
any longer than you can hold your
breath so yeah I I hope I answered that
question can I give you some advice with
regard to meditating better um yeah it's

good to try different techniques because
one size does not fit all you know the
same medicine doesn't cure every illness
and it's the same with meditation you
may have to experiment with different
kinds of meditation if if like um
breathing doesn't work well for you and
like the mahasi you know pain day
pounding you know the expansion and
contraction of your abdomen when you
breathe it doesn't work good for you you
might want to do a very simple Mantra
like om or budo or something that might
work
better but you should try different
meditation techniques because um they're
not all the same and different

personalities will respond better to different meditation techniques so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from yugao and I'm going to dog wanting to get my lap and yugao says what is your opinion on sarvas voden concept of everything past future being in a present moment yeah that's I mean that's the meaning of sarvastivada it's one of the ancient schools of Buddhism that is technically extinct although I have read that there the the ritsu school in Japan centered around the old capital city of Nara is technically descended from sarasti Vada you know it's not Mahayana although it

has been in you know modern East Asia
for so long or just even medieval East
Asia and then modern East Asia that it
has adopted lots of Mahayana
elements but any anyways the meaning of
sarv V is uh sarva is sabba or all ATI
is exists and Vada is the doctrine so
it's the doctrine that all exists um in
this case meaning past present and
future so that was one of the the main
ways that sarasti Vada disagreed with
terraa they're they're very closely
related so like a gorilla and a
chimpanzee are closely
related um but one of their main
differences of of Doctrine is that Terra
claims only the present moment exists

the past no longer exists the future
does not exist yet only the present
moment exists stop it down
there and the SOS of vods were saying
past present and future are all existent
in a sense even though we might not be
aware of the past it's still there and
even though we haven't got to the Future
yet it's still there and that's more
einsteinian it's sort of like the Terra
vadens adopted a kind of Newtonian
interpretation of time whereas the
sarasi voden adopted a more
einsteinian um interpretation of time
and I have to admit I more inclined to
accept the sarasti voden point of view

that past present and future all exist

in a

sense

so yeah I think I would uh favor the

sarasti vodin on that point

although they had other doctrines that I

wouldn't favor necessarily like they

they turned Karma almost into a physical

substance or or so I have

read and I wouldn't go that

far so let's

see I guess I answered that question so

I'll just move on to yuga's next

question and I must point out to yuguo

that he asked four questions and we've

had to reduce the number of questions to

three so I'll let it slide that's three

there I'll let it slide this time but seriously I I do request that people not ask more than three questions per episode because the list sometimes gets very long it's fairly long this time I didn't bother to count all the questions but I assume we're above 30 questions so anyways yuu's next question is how do you approach very conservative people in faith reasoning them can be such a chore well I mean the principle thing to do is if you approach very conservative people like for example here in South Carolina just devout Southern Baptist Christians then I'm not going to discuss Buddhism with them

unless they want to discuss it and then I'll you know be as diplomatic and non-offensive as possible you know try to interpret Buddhism into more or less Christian terminology so they can understand my points better but as a general rule I mean I work with devout Southern Baptist churchgoing Christians every day that I go to work and uh yeah I just don't talk about Buddhism I just talk about work talk about other things crack the occasional joke but you know go easy on the Jesus jokes for example so I mean that would be it I mean I I haven't really had a Conservative Christian for example just get in my face and you know insist that

I'm wrong that I'm going to go to hell
because I'm not a a Christian or
whatever but if I were to go around like
spouting Buddhism all the time it might
happen more often so I just you know
what's the point I mean it's not likely
that I'm going to convert people convert
people that have been devout Southern
Baptist churchgoing Christians their
entire life that this weird guy comes up
and starts trying to explain Buddhism to
them I mean it's just going to make them
feel comfortable and make them possibly
dislike
me so yeah how do I approach very
conservative people in faith um yeah I

just approach them and talk about
whatever needs to be talked about and
don't discuss religion with them
although sometimes I do kind of wish
that one or two people at work would ask
me about Buddhism just so I could kind
of have a philosophical discussion with
them and kind of get Christianity into
mix cuz probably my my understanding of
Christianity I mean i' I'd be willing to
discuss Christianity with them but my
understanding of Christianity is
probably very different from theirs
because theirs is you know just
traditional you know it's what the what
the how the
minister just you know interprets the

Bible or you know how the Baptist Church
interprets the Bible and not you know
following up on you know modern
archaeological finds that
either either reinforce or detract from
the validity of the or the authenticity
of the the New Testament or
whatever but uh I guess I guess I
answered that question yeah just don't
debate religion with very
devout conservative
people I mean I I wouldn't even it's
probably not a good idea for me to
debate Buddhism even with very devout
conservative Buddhists because the very
fact that they're very devout and

conservative means that they're pretty
much locked into a certain way of
looking at things in many cases anyway
and I just make them feel uncomfortable
and maybe
upset and I really wouldn't it wouldn't
accomplish anything
positive other than just kind of making
them question their own their own belief
which is good but I mean it's painful
it's very unpleasant for some people so
I mean you definitely have to pick your
battles on that one so I'll just move on
to yuga's next question here after you
being monk for 30 years what was it like
being sucked into the present culture
movies series music well as I was

already saying above um or before um
music I mean it just play in my head I
remember one time I woke up in a cave in
Burma with four sticks by lead Zeppelin
just pounding away and it was it had to
have been pounding way before I woke up
you know it was already going in my
sleep and I woke up with it
just so I mean in a way it's it's um I
mean I was a lay person before I was a
monk so there was the presid culture
then wasn't extremely different from now
you know like the late 80s in certain
ways are fairly similar to now the music
isn't all that different you know the
hair styles aren't all that different

clothing styles aren't all that
different you know a lot of things are
fairly similar culture
wise so in a way it was just sort of
like sort of a return to the way it was
before and it wasn't any kind of major
shock you know because I already had
these latent habits of dealing with
these things that were dormant while I
was a monk and then they just re-arose
when I came back into Western culture
again and hung out with Western
people so yeah it it really wasn't that
big of a deal for me in some ways it was
It was kind of nice you know catch
watching movies I hadn't seen before I
mean I didn't miss out on a lot of I

mean in the 90s I missed out on the 90s

there was some good music in the 90s but

lately there's not a lot of good music

It's just in indicative of our society

in Decline just the artistic inspiration

is is drying

up so I guess I'll just move on to

yuga's Fourth question his transgressive

fourth

question I find my concentration being

way better if I had no sleep at all or

having less sleep can you explain that

well my concentration just is not good

if I've just gone all night with no

sleep if I'm very sleep deprived I'm I'm

not good at meditating so you yugao is

different from me in that regard I mean

with regard to having less sleep the

better the meditation is the less sleep

I

need so I mean when I was experiencing

the best meditation of my life was also

the only time I went for an entire month

averaging less than four hours of sleep

per night and that was without even

using an alarm clock or anything I just

I was just getting up and sleeping on

average less than four hours per night

because I just didn't need as much sleep

because I me your mind is so simplified

that you've got less information that

needs to be processed and so forth in in

the Sleep stage like when you're

dreaming or so

forth

so I can't explain why you your Yuga O's

concentration would be way better if

they didn't sleep at all or if he didn't

sleep at all because I just don't

function that way it's like my

concentration is pretty much shot you

know it's it's hard to keep my mind

focused

if I'm very sleep

deprived I mean you can start dreaming

when you're still still technically

awake you know you're sitting there

cross-legged I mean this happened to me

like at uh Pand dama in in rangon I was

trying to get by on you know relatively
little sleep and it wasn't enough
because my meditation wasn't deep enough
at the time to to really let me get by
on so little sleep and I was starting to
hallucinate I'd be sitting in meditation
and and I just start dreaming while I
was sitting there in meditation there
was one time there was I was like
sitting in front of a fireplace and
there was a woman with her back to the
fireplace in front of me talking to me
and it was like I was about ready to to
answer her to respond to what she was
saying and then I realized well you know
I'm I'm in a meditation center in rangon
Burma you know there is no fireplace

there is no woman you know it was just

it was just this dream I was having

because I was I was sleep deprived and I

needed to to start

dreaming

so um there are some people that have

that just don't need much sleep it's

like you have a certain Optimum amount

of hours or amount of sleep that you

need and uh if you're meditating

regularly and meditating correctly

you're going to need less sleep than if

you're not meditating and I need more

sleep now because I don't meditate

nearly as much as I used to as a monk

so I I mean before I was a monk I used

to think nine hours was like Optimum for
me and now it's getting back to nine
hours is Optimum for me again and I'm
almost never getting nine hours sleep
except for maybe on
weekends but uh meditation that's one of
the advantages of meditation is it
allows you to get by on less
sleep but with regard to these questions
uh or this question of how I can
explain better meditation with no sleep
yeah I can't explain that I don't know I
don't know what the answer to that would
be so I'm going just going to move on
next question here and this is from Mo
who I believe is a
dog and mo says or whoever is speaking

on behalf of Mo says hello can you

please explain latent Karma more and

give examples you talked about it at the

end of your last talk thank you Laton

Karma well

one one way of explaining Karma at least

one aspect of karma that even a western

materialist can't really argue against

is that karma is like a semiconscious

autopilot you know it's like it's a set

of habits you know we we are governed by

habit and if you're not being fully

conscious you're just going to

automatically act out these habits and

that is a manifestation of karma in the

Buddhist sense because karma is at least

in in one one aspect of karma is that it
serves as a kind of
autopilot and I mean most people just
are not fully awake and so they're
running on autopilot most of the time
just the way you talk the things you do
the way you drive your car just the way
you walk everything it's all just
habitual and you just need a certain
amount of residual Consciousness to keep
you going through it and you don't have
to be fully awake for it because it's
just needs your habitual
responses so I mean that is one kind of
latent Karma and even if you're not
doing that the habits are still there
it's like aniz latent Tendencies which

are like latent Karma because like like
I was already saying before in response
to a different question that I had
certain habits of dealing with people
and just living in in the worldly life
before I became a monk and then after I
came back to the West they just started
reising again after more than 20 years
or you know many years I come back and
it's just it's like I didn't skip a beat
it was just all these old habits that
were latent that whole time just I'm I'm
back in the right circumstances again
and they just kick back into AC action
again so that's one one way of latent
Karma one way of having it is just these

habit patterns that you've acquired in
your life that allow you to act and
function without being fully
awake and uh I'm at a loss for coming up
with another good explanation for
it but anusia is the word for like an
underlying tendency it's it's like a
subconscious potential kind
of uh Habit pattern or
action that you know it's just waiting
for the right circumstances for it to
activate so to
speak and uh it is I read somewhere a
long time ago I think it was in the
Buddhist Bible it was this book called
the Buddhist Bible it had a lot of
Mahayana texts in it and the one of the

translators translated the word Karma as

habit energy

and I think that is a good translation

of karma it's an interesting one that

gives you certain insight into what

karma is it is a kind of habit

energy and the habits are there even if

they're they're just latent you know

they're just lying dormant waiting for

the opportunity to arise you know you

know how to drive a car you habitually

you know you just got the the reflexes

and so forth then you can go 20 years

without driving the car or a bicycle for

that's like the the standard

example but the memory is still

there which is like a kind of

Karma and then you know 20 30 years

later you get in a car you can still

drive it you don't have to learn all

over

again so again with regard to memory I

can't fully explain how memory

works but uh Cara is is a similar

phenomenon so um I don't know if I've

really answered that question very well

it is a lot of questions in this Q&A are

are subtle or just very kind of deep

fundamental kind of questions that are

are hard to really answer

concisely so or it's hard to answer even

in my usual trademark way of just

digressing and

rambling but anyways I'm just going to
move on next question this is from ruie
and ruie says hello poo is CE B parasa
more daunting of a challenge in
Liberation by faith in fact could you
expand a bit on Liberation by faith and
I mean I was asked this question before
there's like three kinds of Buddhas
there's the ones that are liberated by
faith those who are liberated by wisdom
and those who are liberated
by uh by like energy
WEA and I really think that this doesn't
have anything necess necessarily to do
with empirical reality that and even
classifying various Buddhas you're

already relying heavily upon

mythology in order to get these other

Buddhas to compare godma Buddha with and

I just I just think it's just a later

artifact of Buddhist devotional

philosophy and I just I think it's just

a totally academic question you're not

you're not really answering a question

about reality so much is answering a

question about what the official Dogma

is and I've just never really been all

that interested in it and I just don't

think it really has anything really you

know to do with with genuine dhama or

you know the essence of dhama of like

waking

up so yeah this is a question that I

mean I could have looked in the Buddhist dictionary which is back there on the bookcase and read what um what was his name Nana yonica says about you know the three kinds of Buddhas and what are the the the qualities of the Buddha who is liberated by faith and so forth I mean it could apply to ordinary orans too maybe and you know each one each of these different types of Buddhas has a certain amount of you know World cycles and eons that it takes
for them to become a fully enlightened Buddha by following this this path of Faith or wisdom or or WEA you know energy heroic

effort and uh yeah I mean it's just I
really don't think that it has anything
to do with empirical reality other than
just Dogma that was cooked up after the
time of the
Buddha
so but with regard to silata parasa I
mean even that silata parasa if you read
the texts like the poly texts um
especially the commentaries the
commentaries will Define it in such a
ridiculous way that that it's almost a
non-issue that the standard definition
in the commentaries for silata parasa is
conduct such as imitating the behavior
of dogs or cattle that there were
Aesthetics in the Buddhist time who just

went around on all fours naked and

didn't talk and just just ate just you

know they drink water by just sucking it

up just on their hands and knees from

the from a pond or

something and uh that's how the

commentaries usually interpret silata

parasa which literally means like

adherence to morality and observances

Sila is morality or rules and Bata is

like

observances and parasa is like the

clinging

part and I mean someone who's Faith

oriented yeah I mean they might have

more faith in in just following rules

just thinking that the rules are the
same as morality and that's there is a
difference in Buddhism between rules and
ethics or rules and morality you know
it's like a lay person's got five
precepts but that doesn't mean that if
you keep all five precepts you're going
to be moral that you're going to be a
saint because I mean there's so many
ways that you can you can be bad I mean
you can just be thinking bad thoughts
and that is
immoral you can experience regret for
having done something in the past that
is immoral regret is
immoral there's no rule against it but
still you're making Bad Karma by doing

it so how that would apply to I mean

just setting aside the different kinds

of

Buddhas

um how that would apply to a faith

oriented person yeah I mean they could

be more stuck in in just having faith in

in

rules um having faith in vinia you like

a monk who just behaves badly sometimes

in his desire to follow the

rules and I should say I mean I should

have said this at the the beginning but

cuz I was groggy from taking a nap you

may notice that there are two candles

lit behind me one of those is for

alucino alpaca's father who died very
recently and the other one is for
everyone else who died very recently so
the one on this
side I gotta make sure I get this right
because it's like a it's not like a
mirror on on this computer screen so the
one let's see
the one on this side is dedicated to
alucino alpaca's father and then the one
on that side which would be the one on
your left as you watch this is for
everyone else who has died recently
including a lady named IBU who I found
out had passed away the same day that
alpacino alpaca told me that his father
had passed away she was uh an Indonesian

lady who had invited me to to Bali a

number of times when I was a monk and

also my old friend Paul who who died

recently so I mean a lot of people have

died

recently it

happens and I don't want to make a joke

about

that so if uh alucino alpaca is watching

then the candle that's on this side like

that one is for your

father and I'm just going to move on to

Ru next question

here which is could it be said that the

deepest form of ignorance is ignorance

of anata or no self for instance one can

choose at one's own Peril to disregard
suffering and impermanence which are
readily available to experience in fact
disregarding them deliberately makes it
possible not only to experience a
measure of pleasure or happiness but
also to have the sensation of being able
to prolong or revisit them at will
however ignorance of
seems to be more fundamentally
constitutive of The Human Condition to
the point of being involuntary and
natural and there is at least one text
in the sutas I believe it's in the ateka
waga which is a very ancient Buddhist
text or a collection of texts that says
that the root of all delusion is the

conceit I am

so yeah I mean like the ignorance of

anata is the root of all ignorance and

delusion that's the fundamental

one so yeah I think it could be said

that the deepest form of ignorance is

ignorance of

anata that was kind of an easy question

considering the profundity of it so I'm

just going to move on to ru's next

question which is a human life is

certainly required to come across the

notion and aim or not at understanding

it which is anata but I suppose once

seen anata cannot be deliberately

unseen yeah that's I

mean anata cannot be deliberately unseen

but it can be kind of

Forgotten

or uh I mean not permanently forgotten I

think it's once you have insights into

anata is going to definitely

fundamentally alter your way of looking

at things but still we've got all these

latent habit patterns that I've been

talking about in this Q&A and you're a

lot of these latent habit patterns

involve just me you know this how you're

going to interact with other people how

you're going to feel when interacting

with other people it's going to involve

a sense of self in these habits that are

semiconscious

autopilot

things and so you can have insights anat

when you're meditating or you're having

some Moment of clarity and then you go

back into the world and you just get

sucked back into Samara and it's still

there but it just gets covered over with

all this you know you just sort of get

distracted by all this iy mind

stuff so you know any kind of deep

Insight it's it's going to leave its

Mark um

but so I don't I don't know if you can

completely 100% forget it unless you're

in a coma or or some

such but uh it can be forgotten to some

degree overlooked ignored that sort of
thing I don't know if you would call it
deliberate because if you're
deliberately ignoring anata then you
have to know that you're ignoring anata
which means that you're not ignoring
anat because it's still
there so it would have to be like
inadvertent just natural
habitual semiconscious stuff coming up
so I'm gonna move on to the next
question here this is from Cool
Whip and this is turning into a long
one Cool Whip says on Multicultural
multilingual beings and liminality and
no self sometimes he has titles for his
questions and that was the qu that was

the title to this question if a human
being is brought up he has bought up if
a human being is brought up multilingual
and Multicultural then through
experience arrives at the reality of no
self as the causally as the causally
conditioned patterns of self arise and
cease very
evidently could such a being be said to
be Lial they belong nowhere or
identified with nothing thus
see between the cracks of culture where
being human can almost feel alien to
them um and don't entirely 100% follow
the the trend of this question I mean
the human being who's brought up

multilingual and

Multicultural yeah I can I understand

that part then through experience

arrives at the reality of no self I mean

is that it's not just because they're

multilingual and

Multicultural it's I mean they' have to

have some kind of practice and insight

or investigation into dhama in addition

to Simply being multilingual and

Multicultural because there's a lot of

multilingual Multicultural people who

are just complete normies who are just

wallowing in

samsara so as the causally conditioned

patterns of self arise and cease very

evidently could such a being be said to

be limal well any being who's
enlightened and anyone who's like fully
realized on is going to be
enlightened because that is the root of
all delusion according to the text like
I already mentioned just
recently and so if you've eradicated the
root of all delusion you're not
delusional anymore and that would be
Lial I'm pretty sure you'd be wide open
there'd be all kinds of weird
coincidences flowing through you um you
know a lot of I think a lot of like the
psychic powers or or vulgarly called
Miracles that happen around genuine holy
men isn't because they've got like these

psychic powers that they're deliberately
doing these things it's just that
they're so wide open that there's all
these possibilities that are possible
with them that aren't possible with
other people who are more locked into a
more rigid and limiting mental
system so being multilingual and
Multicultural can help I mean it helped
me it's definitely helped me to live in
Burma for approximately 24 years
and because you can see it's like human
nature is pretty much the same
everywhere you know pretty much but
certain like basic assumptions rather
they radically differ from from one
culture to another I mean maybe not so

much between like America and Canada or
between you know France and
Belgium but between America and Burma
yeah there's there's significant
differences and the B the Burmese you
know they just don't see that their
cultur condition at all the Americans as
a general rule don't see that their
culturally condition at all I mean when
I came from Burma to America and I was
trying to be a a monk teacher to a bunch
of Western Buddhists it was it was
amazing to me and they were indignant if
I even mentioned this to them that you
know every single one of them resembled
every other one of them more than they

resembled the average Burmese Buddhist
because they had like the same
assumptions that are culturally
conditioned and they just didn't see it
and and if you try to point it out to
them you know they' get start getting
bothered by
that maybe it's just the way I was
pointing it out to them but still just
seemingly politely just sort of as an
observation it's it was like offensive
to them or to some of them I won't say
to all of them because it was like I was
making
generalizations but I mean the fact was
that every single one of them acted like
every other single one of them more than

they acted like the average Burmese
Village Buddhist just because of
culture maybe a little bit of genetics
but mostly
culture so I don't know where I was
going with that see oh yeah being
multilingual and Multicultural
especially if they're very different
languages in very different cultures you
know and not just you know Spanish and
Portuguese or something like that
Norwegian and
Swedish then yeah I mean you you have a
broader View and you can detach from
basic assumptions that most people just
accept as basic assumptions and then you

can see that it's a cultural thing

because in this other culture that

you're also familiar with the

assumptions are very

different so it can help but I don't

think that being multilingual and

Multicultural is a sufficient cause for

enlightenment

I'm drinking orange juice by the

way

so yeah and and just being enlightened

or just the less locked into a cultural

system you are the more Lial you're

likely to

be this because you're freeing yourself

of some of the constraints you know some

of the walls around you are being you

know you're at least creating some

window windows and

doors making maybe making a bigger

prison at

least so yeah I mean I would call that a

Lial State just the more insight you've

got the more detached from just Normy

reality you are the more Lial you are

likely to

be so I guess I'll just move on to cool

Whip's next question here which is the

title of this is on 40-hour work weeks

and

Enlightenment and the question is

imagine a person whose only contact to

Buddhism is through YouTube and books

and is conditioned to a certain culture
the West this person that cannot move to
the Buddhist majority countries Burmont
Sri Lanka Thailand where the culture
supports monasticism and renunciation
and absorb the Dharma is condemned to
stay in their country due to mundane
realities like Visa residency livelihood
family Etc is this person's Karma such
that they cannot become enlightened in
this lifetime thus paying off the karma
of being a cog in the western economic
machine having to hope for better Karma
next time because I would like to ordain
but the risks involved and the reality
is so far-fetched it isn't clear that
ordination will increase my chances of

Enlightenment I can't even imagine it
you can't give up everything if you
aren't ready for it based on
faith but not ordaining means 40 hours a
week although for the next few years is
more likely 60 to 80 hours a week I am
wondering if working so much simply to
have a livelihood means that I will
progress very slowly in meditation I
have heard teachers say that it's all
about moments the quality of meditation
but then it is both quality and quantity
how would you refute a claim that for
example person X
needs 60,000 hours of formal meditation
in this lifetime to become a soda paana

and say mindfulness at work wouldn't
count mind is occupied with knowledge
work have you heard of cases of 30 to 50
year old men ordaining what is the
latest one can decide this so there's
kind of a number of questions here it's
kind of a long question so I guess I'll
scroll back up to the top here
and talking about let's see is this
person's Karma such that they cannot
become enlightened in this lifetime so
he's talking about someone who's born
and raised in a western culture and they
can't really leave their
culture um for whatever reason maybe
they've got an aged mother to support or
something uh is this person's Karma such

that they cannot become enlightened in
this lifetime now there's there's always
the possibility of becoming enlightened
in this lifetime I mean your odds are
increased dramatically I think
significantly if you renounce the world
and become like a spiritual mendicant
and like a professional meditator that
certainly it increases your odds but you
know even monks for the most part don't
become enlightened most monks don't
become enlightened and uh I mean there
are a few lay people who manage to do it
it's just their ripe you know they've
got the momentum going or whatever or
the lack of

momentum in a karmic

sense so yeah it is possible although in

the

west my experience with people who are

at least claimed to have uh

Enlightenment experiences is that they

are slammed into Enlightenment it's not

due to practice so much as just having

the the the momentum going from previous

existences and then they just have a

near-death experience or some huge you

know existential crisis or something

that just slams them out of their

ordinary way of thinking and

into like liberating

Insight like eart TOA supposedly had an

experience like

that so I mean you should never think
that it's impossible to become
enlightened um if you're not a m if
you're still living a worldly life it's
still possible especially you know if
your heart is sort of deeply yearning
for for wisdom and Enlightenment and so
forth not so much in a goal oriented
sense is just that's just the direct
it's like a a salmon swimming Upstream
you know seeking out it's the the creek
of its birth and you know it's just like
something inside you is just you're just
sort of like driving you in that
direction then um and that is going
to I mean that's going to get you

farther than just formal practice just

going through the

motions so let's see

where's where's the next part of the

question

here see because I would like to ordain

but the risks involved in the reality is

so farfetched it doesn't it isn't clear

that ordination will increase my chances

of

Enlightenment um that I mean to some

degree that's I that it reminds me of

something in my own

monk life that I wanted to be like an

ancient Indian monk I wanted to follow

the sutas I did not become an ordained

terraa Buddhist monk because I wanted to

be like modern Burmese monks you know I
wasn't becoming a monk just to follow
along with burmes culture I wanted to
follow along with like the sutan these
tough ancient monks that were they were
just hard as wood you know they were
just hardcore Aesthetics and I just
wanted to be like that and just I wanted
to be like an ancient Indian monk not a
modern Southeast Asian
Monk and so I tried and it turns out
that I just couldn't convert to ancient
indianness because you know I'd still
have Leed Zeppelin playing in my head
when I wake up in the morning you know
I'd have memories of Gilligan's Island

you know it's like I'd give a doat talk
and i' you know I'd bring up an episode
from The Flintstones and illustrate my
point you know it's just my my psyche or
like my my habit patterns you know my my
basic assumptions and so forth are
modern Western assumptions and I'd go
live in Burma for 20 years and I was
always an outsider because I'd still
think like a Westerner like a modern
Westerner so there is some truth in uh
in the idea that ordination won't
necessarily increase a person's chances
of Enlightenment under certain certain
circumstances um but I mean it's
certainly not going to hurt I mean I
think it would increase pretty much

anyone's chances unless they were just
not cut out to be a monk at all and were
just chafing and rebelling against it
you know it's just like happens in Burma
a lot you know it's like some kid just
gets sent to the monastery he just wants
to be a kid you know he just wants to be
a normal kid nope his family has decided
he's goingon to be a monk and he does
not have a spiritual calling he's just
pretty much forced into it then yeah I
mean he's not going to become
enlightened it's it's very unlikely that
he will become enlighted any more than a
the ordinary lay person will become
enlighted I mean it's always a

possibility but just going with

Statistics it's not something that you

you should bet money

on so when he says you can't give up

everything if you aren't ready for it

yeah that's true I mean you have to be

ready for it in order to do it I mean

you really have to be serious about

renouncing the world and dedicating your

life to the cultivation of

wisdom let's see and he continues here

but not ordaining means 40 hours per

week of work although for the next few

years more like 60 to 80 hours a week

per work yeah well I means time and

energy are like money if you spend them

on one thing you can't spend them on

something else so I mean if you're
dedicating most of your time time to a a
career then yeah you're going to have
much less time to dedicate towards
Dharma that just that's just common
sense uh and it is true that the
teachers say that some teachers say that
it's all about
moments and the quality of meditation
but still you have to have momentum
going and if you're it's interrupted by
mostly work and worldly things then
you're not going to have as much
momentum going with regard to your Domo
practice I mean there's certain there
there have been some meditation

Masters uak kin for example was the

teacher of

snua and uak kin was like a government

bureaucrat working in an office and

still he managed to be a meditation

master so it is possible if You' got a

talent for that sort of thing or just

you know the circumstances just are

favorable for you it can still happen

so finally we get to this part at the

end here how would you refute a claim

that for example a person X needs 60,000

hours of formal meditation in this

lifetime to become a soda well first of

all the whole soda thing is is

problematic I it's sort of like the the

faith-based Buddhas I think I do think

that it's uh the doctrine Orthodox

Doctrine in Terra does not necessarily

correlate with empirical reality so just

set that aside but you need 60,000 hours

of formal meditation supposedly to you

know reach some

breakthrough I don't think so I mean

maybe you had those 60,000 hours in a

previous existence and you still got the

momentum going something like that I

mean it can

happen

so let's see have you heard of cases of

30 to 50y Old Men ordaining what is the

latest just one can decide this yeah

well in Burma I mean a lot of men ordain

when they retire you know they they I I
knew this I went to Japan with a monk
who he was uh I mean he practiced
meditation and so forth a lot before he
uh became a monk but he was a surgeon he
was a doctor and after he retired from
being a successful surgeon then he
ordained so he was ordained like when he
was like 70 years
old and um there
are there are indications that the older
you are when you ordain the more
difficult it is for you to make progress
because of course you're more set in
your ways like every day that you put
off ordaining is two days lost because
you got one less day of your life and

one more day of accumulated habits to to

contend

with

so I mean there is no cut off I mean

anyone could ordain you can ordain at

the age of 70 or 80 you know as long as

you're still in reasonably good health

and you're not like you know got a tube

up your nose or something but

um the the longer you wait the the more

it's it's um you know you got less time

to accomplish what you need and you got

more years of accumulated habits and

just being set in your ways that you're

going to that's going to try to Res you

it's going to restrict you to some

degree you'll have less freedom of mind

just because of you know just being a

normie for so

long so yeah I mean you can ordain when

you're old although it is more difficult

than if you ordain when you're

young

so I guess I answered that question so

I'll move on to the next question which

is from alucino

alpaca and uh I I remind alucino alpaka

that the candle on this

side this

side is dedicated to his father and then

the one

on I'm confusing myself let's see the

one on this side is for alpacino

alpacino alpaca's father the one on that side is for everyone else who has died recently including IBU in Bali and uh my buddy

Paul so anyways alucino alaca says after the funeral actually after two funerals I have just one thing to say ataka waga and the teaching of the Buddha like P Sam and da Ching seem to imply that the one who fully understands the following sentence is enlightened and I have experienced it today kind of the sentence is things are not what they appear to be nor are they otherwise any thoughts well that sentence I don't remember it from from any poly text it

could be just a different translation

it's I think there's one one line that

appears more than once in the suttin

that and no matter how you think of it

it's always

otherwise something like

that so maybe that's uh maybe that's

what he's translated here is relying on

a different translator than

me

um yeah I mean if you let's see if you

fully understand that sentence I mean it

would certainly be some kind of insight

I don't know if you'd be fully

enlightened maybe just to fully

completely understand anything you'd

have to be fully enlightened because

otherwise you're you're just

semiconscious and only experiencing

something

partially so let's

see this is this is another kind of

difficult question because it's hard to

to find the nucleus of the

question let's

see imp someone who fully understands

the following senses and enlightened

things are not what they appear to be

nor are they otherwise yeah that's

that's like a

paradox and uh yeah I think I would have

translated that differently if it's if

it's in the Artica W I certainly

translated it different from that I

think it's you know no matter how you

think of it it's always

otherwise I think uh I think that's how

I translated

it

so um yeah I mean it's definitely an

Insight it's definitely like an aspect

of wisdom but uh just like grocking

intuitively like understanding it um

yeah I mean it it be like like a a flash

of insight or like a certain uh

aspect of

wisdom but uh yeah it's it is

unfortunate that it's usually unpleasant

events that

trigger like Insight in us that when

things are going well you you generally
don't want to change but it's only when
things get so bad that they become
pretty much unbearable that's when you
change and and so I mean if you're
living a life where everything is
comfortable everything's nice you're not
going to make most progress which is why
the the small G gods in the heaven
Realms generally don't make much
progress according to Buddhist
philosophy because everything's so nice
there so that's one reason why a human
life is considered to be optimal for
making progress in
Dharma in that we have enough wisdom

that we can contemplate Dharma we can
practice dhamma but also we we got
enough [__] going on that we're getting
kicked in the ass all the time that's
just pushing us forward to improve the
situation to to try to liberate
ourselves from a bad
situation and it is UN I think ROM da
said that it's
like like utter despair is just an
absolute prerequisite for a significant
spiritual growth and I have to admit I
for my whole life I kind of wish that he
was wrong you know just hoping that he's
wrong but my own life experiences do
seem to bear that out that the most
spiritual progress I have made in my

life has been the result of just like

utter like Despair and

crisis so they are in a way blessings in

Disguise sort

of I think uh Raman Mahari once gently

admonished one of his his disciples who

who said that uh you know he always

thanks he praise every day and thanks

God for all the good things and ramen

Mahari told him well you should be

thanking God for the bad things too

because the bad things are the ones that

loosen your attachment to Sam

sorrow so I think I'm just going to move

on to next question here this is from

Raphael and Raphael says what are your

thoughts on benat is asymmetry argument

and he's not referring to Pat benitar

he's referring to a different benitar

some guy whose last name is benitar who

has an asymmetry

argument and the argument is that

existence in this world is grotesquely

or just very asymmetrical with regard to

suffering is it's more unpleasant than

Pleasant it's more bad than good and I

think Orthodox terraa would agree with

that but I just don't see it that way

but anyways benitar just first he he

makes the

argument that just existing in this

world is more bad than good and then he

uses that as like a moral

argument against having

children and in a way Buddhism like

Orthodox Terra can have a similar

argument that first Noble Truth to exist

is to suffer so by having children you

are essentially condemning them to a

life of

suffering but I just cannot agree with

benatar's

asymmetry in that I do not think that

life is more bad than good I mean it has

to balance out in the long run all the

negatives and positives have to balance

out on the grand scheme of things and

also like in any closed system which

would include

like a human

mind that it has to balance out all the

positives and negatives have to balance

out to the same zero so that everything

can add up to zero on just in the on the

grand scheme of

things you know this I used to semi joke

that's how God created the universe out

of nothing by having all the positives

and negatives balance out to

zero so it all adds up to nothing still

so I do that's like one of my

fundamental assumptions in life is that

all the positives and the negatives have

to balance out in the long run so that

life is not predominantly bad it's just

an even mix of good and bad that is very

distracting and keeps us from becoming fully
awake that it's like a roller coaster ride which can be very distracting so monks try to avoid good and bad like an advanced practitioner isn't trying to be follow the the the path of good I mean good is for Lay people an advanced monk is just leaving behind good and bad he's leaving behind the whole dualistic polarity
so I guess those are my thoughts on benatar's asymmetry argument I mean you can argue that you know the first Noble Truth Is is true so that if you do have children

you are condemning them to a life of
suffering but it's also going to be a
life of the opposite of suffering
because they're going to have to balance
out in the long
run and uh yeah so it's mainly the
asymmetry that I just can't really
accept because I do think that there is
a symmetry there is a
balance that there has to be a balance I
mean that's just the way reality works
or some sorrow that's the way s sorrow
works that let's say we've got all these
things in our life we we draw this line
down the middle and the ones on this
side are good the ones on that side are
bad let's say somehow we are able to

eliminate all the stuff we consider to
be bad in our life all that's going to
happen is that dividing line is just
going to shift to the side and the lower
half of what we used to call good is now
just going to become bad because that's
how good and bad work that's how Duality
works is just these I mean
counterbalance of opposites and there
has to be a
balance and some people can argue
against that in the comments if they
like and I'll have to give a more
detailed explanation of it I guess but
uh yeah in a way benatar's asymmetry
argument is more or less an agreement

with this oldfashioned

traditional like dogmatic of a of

Buddhism and the first Noble Truth does

say that to exist is to suffer but it's

not I really can't accept that you know

it's just all suffering that even

happiness is just suffering that's all

it is it's all just various forms of

suffering that I mean there are texts

that say that that even happiness is

suffering just because it's impermanent

you know you can't rely on it but I mean

you could just twist the whole thing

around and say that even suffering is

happiness because it's impermanent you

know you can't totally rely on misery

either so I do think it's more of a

doist point of view than a Buddhist one
that there really does have to be a
balance of Yin and Yang that that's just
the way the world
exists is through this balance of
opposites that's how Duality
exists so I'm just going to move on next
question here this is from Elias
and Elias says did the Buddha ever say
that work is meaningless and similar to
slavery when he encouraged lay monk or
lay men to become monks and I do not
recall the Buddha ever saying that work
is is similar to slavery I don't think
the Buddha was a Libertarian or whoever
it is that says that that you know

working for money is wage
slavery that we should all just get
everything we want without having to
work for
apparently so let's see here yeah I
don't recall seeing anything like that
in in the sutas I mean work is
meaningless I mean in the Buddhist time
most people that were working were
agriculturalists you know this is before
the Industrial Revolution and growing
food really is uh kind of necessary to
keep human beings going I mean you could
say the existence itself is kind of
meaningless but if you accept that
existence itself does have some virtues
to it then keeping that existence going

by eating food that is grown by Farmers

is uh pretty much

necessary so yeah when he said that when

he encouraged laymen to become monks he

didn't use the argument that they're

wage slaves or whatever he was saying

that you know to live the life of a lay

person is very distracting very

constraint rting it's it's the realm of

dust and dirt so to speak you know it's

it's a it's a narrow existence

and that's that being a monk you're

you're free as a

bird it's it's the path to

freedom and also the path to Awakening

so there's that

too so yeah I I guess I answered that one I'll just move on to Elias's next question here isn't it easy to get woke Buddhists to leave the sa by pointing out that the Buddha didn't want to ordain people with physical disabilities um I don't know I've never really tried to get a woke Buddhist to leave the sa by pointing out that the Buddha didn't want to ordain people with physical disabilities I mean the way it works I mean I don't even know what Elias here means by S if he means ordained monks or whether he just means like what westerners western Buddhists call S which is just if you go to a damal and meditate sometimes then

you're a member of the S even if you
don't even keep five precepts or
anything I'm not sure which definition
of sa Elias is going with here but I
mean if you tell a woke Buddhist that
the Buddha didn't want to ordain people
with physical disabilities I mean it'll
just make them feel uncomfortable they
won't like it much they'll kind of think
you're you're a a dick for saying it or
something um you know they might
consider you to be ableist or or a
fascist or even but um yeah I mean
there's lots of things you could say
that woke Buddhists won't like but it
won't stop them from being woke

Buddhists because a woke Buddhist almost
by definition is a Westerner who has
changed Buddhism to fit cultural Marxism
or neomarxism or just leftist
progressivism the leftist progressivism
comes first and then Buddhism is kind of
modified so that it can fit into that
somehow
so it's it's not really a
very it's not really a very genuine form
of
Buddhism and I'm I'm in my email I'm
continually getting
these academic papers about queer
Buddhism and non-binary Buddhism and so
forth which is I mean it's essentially
propaganda so you could say the Buddha

didn't want to ordain

women might bother them even more that

might result in a heated debate

because they'll just say well the Buddha

was enlightened so he wouldn't say

anything like that the Buddha was

enlightened so of course he would be

politically correct he'd be Progressive

I mean that's just the Assumption made

by a lot of

these Western like Progressive Buddhists

is that anything in the text that

doesn't agree with their leftist

ideology is just fake I mean the Buddha

couldn't have said that if the Buddha

was wise because of course the Buddha

would be a woke leftist

too that's just

Enlightenment

so yeah I I I've never heard about

whether it's easy or difficult or

anything to get woke Buddhist to leave

the sa by doing anything really I've

never really come across that in my

travels because I mean really woke

Buddhist or leftist Progressive

westerners who claim to be Buddhists you

know they they practice some Buddhist

Meditation so forth um I mean in a way

they really don't care what the Buddha

really

taught I mean they're just they're just

going to change Buddhism to suit suit

their ideology and they'll just come up

with rationalizations for

that so I guess I answered that question

I'll just move on to the the next

question

here which is also from Elias is there a

canonical commentary work on the vinia

ptica in Terra and yes there is it's

called the Su banga and it is embedded

into the ptim Moka so when you look at

the the biku Pim Moka or the bikuni Pim

Moka in the the vinia

texts

then it's going to be there's going to

be a commentary just right in there with

the rule first you're gonna have the

rule then there's going to be

um there's going to be like an origin

story there's going to be like a a word

by word definition at least all the

keywords will be defined there's going

to be like exceptions to the rules you

know it's it's definitely a commentary

it's like a a later it's later than the

the puty Moka itself later than the

rules

themselves and it's just like embedded

right into the text it's called the suu

we Banga

so yeah it's the the PTY Mona rules are

one of the

few like ancient poly texts that have

canonical commentary and another um

another group of texts that have a
canonical commentary is the AA waga of
the sutin the Parana waga of the sutin
and also the the kaga sua or the the
discourse on the rhinoceros
horn
that those are so old and were
considered so important at the time that
their commentary became just included
into the toptica it's relatively rare
it's it's not the case with most Texs
but there are a few that have canonical
commentaries and the poty mocha rules
are but vinia in general no it's just
the poty Moka rules maybe there might be
a few other parts but uh most of vinia

does not have a canonical commentary but
the potty mocha rules do so I'll just
move on to the next question this is
from White Ash Piper and white ash Piper
says do you seek Joy or simply embrace
it when it comes which is kind of a
subtle question that's I something I've
never really
considered um I sometimes I mean for
example if I eat food I prefer to eat
food that I like like that than food
that I don't
like so in a way I'm I don't know if you
call that seeking Joy but it's at least
like preferring pleasure to
pain um you know like I try to please my
sweetheart you know so I mean her Joy is

important to me I'm I'm happy when she
is
joyful so I mean in a way it's it's like
your duty if you're in a relationship to
to please your your significant
other so but I mean many years of like
being an aesthetic have kind of made me
callous to certain kinds of pleasure or
Joy like I come home from work my
sweetheart saying why don't you get out
of your work clothes and put on
something comfy and it's like I don't
care you know it's like I don't really
care about wearing soft comfor Able
Clothes most of the time it's just I'm
comfortable enough just wearing my work

clothes so usually I don't go to the

effort of changing clothes when I get

home but

uh yeah it's it's kind of a subtle

question it's it's it's weird it's it

may be that it's it's sort of a

subliminal kind of thing where you know

you you you have to question your own

motives in order to answer the question

you know you have to psychoanalyze

yourself in order to answer a question

like this

but uh I assume that sometimes I do seek

happiness I mean obviously I'll be

steering a course that is uh avoiding

misery at any rate you know I prefer

happiness to misery although I like I

was already mentioning it all has to
balance out in the long
run so I'm not I mean there's certain
things like gout in my foot for example
if it's twingy and sore usually I just
let it be you know it's like well I mean
I'm going to have to have some kind of
dooka in my life to balance out the good
things because I do have a lot of good
things in my life I am a fortunate
person relatively
speaking so I mean something bad like
that happens so long as I can still walk
on my foot I mean if it's so bad that
I'm just limping around and I got to
work that day then I'll I'll take some

kind of anti-inflammatory medicine but

uh a lot of time if there's just like a

minor pain or discomfort or something

I'm just it's just like part of my

nature to accept that you know it's like

so what big

deal but I guess in some cases I do seek

Joy so yeah I have to like psychoanalyze

myself maybe for several months before I

really can answer this question in a in

an adequate

way but uh yeah I think there's a

mixture of both I think it's a

combination of seeking Joy sometimes or

at least seeking pleasure sometimes you

know preferring pleasure to pain and

then just like accepting the the

pleasure or the joy when it comes

because Joy I mean seeking Joy I mean it

doesn't make a lot of sense to me

putting it in that way because I mean

Joy comes from inside you it's not

something that you're looking for out

there although I mean certain

circumstances are more conducive to Joy

than than others

finding the finding the right woman for

example is more conducive to Joy

although it all has to balance out in

the long

run

so yeah I'll I'll just psychoanalyze

myself for a few months and get back to

you for the for the like definitive answer to that and finally after two hours and 23 minutes we get to the last question this was just right under the wire he asked this just a matter of minutes before I I got the questions Al together in fact I had already gotten the list and this one had to get added later this is from
Austin and Austin says concerning the double slit experiment it has been rationalized that a conscious Observer must exist for reality to exist taking this a step further to a cosmic level must a demiurge exist for the universe to exist that's kind of an interesting question isn't it so I mean he's

referring to like

the the theory in modern like quantum

physics that there has to be a conscious

Observer to determine the position and

and

like what would be momentum of a

particle you know it's like you've got a

subatomic particle let's say it's an

electron and it goes from point A to

point B but it doesn't go just by one

route it goes by every possible route

and it's a perceiving mind that causes

that cloud of possibilities to collapse

down into one distinct route and all the

other possibilities are still just as

real it's just that we have focused in

on this one version of reality that has
the particle going along you know this
certain route and the entire universe is
that way it's just this cloud of
possibilities that
requires a perceiving mind to focus on
one set of these possibilities that
collapses it down into something
discreet and so Austin here is saying I
mean must a demiurge exist for the
universe to exist so like a Creator God
and there have been some people like
Bishop Barkley I mentioned already who
really thought that you know God is the
one who is perceiving the whole universe
even if no one else is looking at that
rock that's lying in that empty field

God is always looking at that rock which
is giving it existence because to exist
is to be perceived SAS
Peri according to George
Barkley so I mean I've never really
looked at it that way I mean it is
possible there have presumably there
have been like small G gods that have
existed since before this Cosmos evolved
you know according to Buddhist cosmology
there are there are small G Gods who
have just astronomically long lifetimes
you know billions and billions of years
that they will live longer than than a
cosmos you know like an astronomical
universe will live and

so you know they'll be around when the
new universe is around so they they can
be observing stuff and causing the the
state Vector to collapse into one
discrete set of
possibilities so that's possible I don't
think that they
necessarily I don't think that the
Universe even works this way you know
it's not like the
Universe I mean it's like even a dog is
like a demiurge in in to to a certain
extent you know they're dreaming they're
lying there on the on the dog bed you
know making little you know they're kind
of like jerking and making little
whimpering noises and stuff you know

they're dreaming they're creating this
little world in their sleep that's you
know peculiar to them they're like the
Demi urge of this little world and I
mean that happens at a much larger scale
for more advanced beings you know more
conscious
beings but uh I mean think there's just
like a you know like functionally like
an infinite number of
demiurges
and yeah I mean that's the way I would
see it it's just that there's there's
like this this might as well say it's
just this infinite number of demiurges
and the ones that are all agreeing on

this version of reality are in this
version of reality and those that are
agreeing on some other version of
reality are in some other version of
reality so yeah there is no Creator God
in in Buddhism but still in a sense we
are all Creator Gods because it's our
Karma that is like collapsing our own
particular state Vector in landing Us in
whatever version of reality we need to
be in for our Karma to reach fruition
and just seek its own
equilibrium so that's the way I see it
anyhow and that was the last question
and so if you got any questions you know
you know the drill just uh ask them in
the comments below or if you have access

to the Discord server you can ask them
there if you're one of the few and rare
people who asked them on the Subscribe
Star channel you can ask them there and
and uh like And subscribe I probably am
still not allowed to put my URL links
below the YouTube video but you can find
them on Rumble and bitshoot or on my old
videos from before I was Smitten by the
powers that be at YouTube for answering
a forbidden question on a previous
Q&A so and with all of that I will just
conclude with the standard be
happy

hello and welcome to episode 86 of

question and answer and as usual I am

your host P

basa and I think if everything goes

according to plan you know if there's no

sudden disasters

striking this video should go up on

Easter

Sunday which as we all know is

celebrating the day that Jesus of

Nazareth allegedly arose from the dead

and so many of you will no doubt be

celebrating this profound event by

eating jelly beans and those Orange

marshmallow peanut things and candy corn

and and like rabbits and and little baby

chickens made out of chocolate and so
forth and so if you're watching this and
celebrating in the manner I just
described try not to make loud SM
smacking noises while you're eating this
stuff just in case anybody sitting next
to you actually wants to hear what I'm
saying and with that as an introduction
I'll just Wade right into these
questions because we got quite a few we
got more than 30 questions this
time and I'm sipping on a glass of
bovine glandular
secretions and the first question is
from Libra Lam and Libra Lam says are
there any conventions of truth that are
not swept away in the three aspects of

existence I have spoken to several

people who view certain conventions of

Truth like there is nothing for

enlightenment to happen to to be binding

I request that the maamaa Hat be worn

for the heck of

it well this isn't really a maama

question but I'm willing to toss a bone

to Libra lamb

here see got

this is a nice hat I got to admit very

wellmade ah there it

is got to have the tassel properly

arranged or it ruins

everything okay so are there any

questions of truth that are not swept

away in the three aspects of existence

or the three marks of existence or the

tiak which

is impermanence or

inconstancy unease or suffering Dua and

no

selves

and I'm not sure if the purpose of these

three marks is to sweep away um

conventional truths although really in a

sense you can say that dependent core

Rising the Buddhist Theory of Everything

sweeps away all

conventions

so let's see no self I guess comes

closest

but uh yeah I mean all of them kind of

have all of them all of the three marks
do have some relation to the three or to
uh dependent core rising or picha
sop so are there any conventions of
truth that are not swept away in the
three aspects of existence no I mean all
conventional truths would be swept away
when you get to the level of parata or
the
ultimate so you get rid of conventional
reality and Convention truths go along
with it I mean just any kind of
statement is itself it's invalid I mean
you could have something like one equals
one but then then the question is like
one what equals one what I mean you're

just dealing with abstractions that
aren't applying to reality in
general you so then I mean I actually
went through a kind of existential
crisis when I was a young monk I went
into a deep depression caused by the
fact that there was nothing I could not
doubt and I'm just trying desperately to
come up with some some statement that I
could not doubt and this was like the
the means of Enlightenment allegedly for
a person who calls himself Jed McKenna I
mean that is his method for becoming
enlightened is just try to come up with
a statement that you cannot possibly
doubt and eventually you fail and the
best I could do is the universe is the

universe which is essentially Everything

is Everything You know whatever exists

is whatever exists which is such a

tautology that is is pretty much

meaningless you know a equals

a

so I really don't think that there are

any conventions of truth that are going

to

survive um just an allout

attack of of Buddhist

philosophy so you can say there is

nobody for enlightenment to happen

to um yeah I mean the thing is I mean

once you get to a certain level then

symbolic statements that are you know

assume the form of sentences just become invalid it's kind of hard to explain because this is the very first question it's like generally I need a few questions to get some momentum going to really get in the groove you know and have the very first question be something like this it's uh it's a little daunting even with the even with the Fez

on but uh I mean just the simple answer is no there aren't any conventions of truth that are not swept away in the three aspects of existence and might as well throw in dependent cor rising or dependent or uh P

sop because I mean he says here Libra

lamp says I have spoken to several people who used certain conventions of Truth like there is nobody for enlightenment haidu to be binding well I mean they're binding with an a context and these people presumably are thoroughly in meshed in the samsaric context so of course they would consider them to be just totally binding but once you transcend samsara and a samsaric context you transcend these conventional truths so I guess I answered that question I'm just going to move on to Libra Lam's next question here which is another kind of tricky one he says practically speaking what does it mean

to withdraw from everything that has an

inherent

nature and then in Brackets he's got

certified maamaa

question but I mean practically speaking

what does it mean to withdraw from

everything that has an inherent nature

nothing has an inherent nature so it

doesn't mean anything and maybe he maybe

he he just kind of put in a

typo where maybe he was trying to say

what does it mean to withdraw from

everything that does not have an

inherent nature because there isn't

anything that has an inherent nature

according to Buddhist philosophy and

especially maamaa

philosophy I mean if you want to go with
Abid dama Orthodox terraa you know Abid
dama and the commentarial tradition then
the only thing that has an inherent
nature would be these
damas that exist for like a trillionth
of an eye blink and they're just like a
pure Elemental essence you know like
masculinity and femininity according to
Orthodox terraa and Abid dama philosophy
they are ultimate
realities and there's only two of them
masculine and feminine or you know like
nose sensitivity or water element or
Fire Element things like that according
to Abid dama philosophy they have an

inherent nature but I don't know how you

would

withdraw

from

withdraw from everything I mean you have

it would it would seem to involve just

absolute Extinction not even

Enlightenment because according to Abid

dama nibana also is one of these

ultimate

Essences so what does it mean to

withdraw from everything that has an

inherent nature Ian

from from the point of view that nothing

has an inherent nature it doesn't mean

anything but if you accept like Abid

dama philosophy that says you know

everything is composed of these elements
that of course have an inherent nature
even though they might exist for only a
trillionth of an eye blink um to
withdraw from all of that would just
mean utter Annihilation it wouldn't even
mean you know a Transcendence into to
nibana because nibana is just on the
list of these the same things as
masculinity and tongue
sensitivity so that's kind of a trick
question I think think maybe Libra lamb
tricked himself by asking it because if
nothing has an inherent nature you
cannot withdraw from everything that has
an inherent nature because we're already

withdrawn in a in a sense because there

isn't anything that has an inherent

nature

so

gosh yeah I mean it would just mean if

you accept that anything has an inherent

nature then it would mean like

Extinction just total Annihilation so

I'm just going to move on to the next

question which is not a maam question ah

so I'll take the Fez off I may put it

back on Just for jollies later on or out

of respect for a certain

Guru but we'll

see so the next question is from EU Diva

and EU Diva says if I translate suap

ptica all five sutas per perfectly and

accurately into my mother tongue that is
spoken by 10 million people at the
moment how much of Donna am I looking at
well I mean first of all there's way
more than five sutas maybe she means the
five
nikayas and to translate something
perfectly and accurately I don't know if
it's possible to translate anything into
a different language
perfectly um yeah I don't I don't know
if that's even possible but let's say it
just means like very
skillfully um how much Donna and I don't
think you're looking at any Donna really
I mean if you're gonna sell the books

then that's not Donna because Donna is
like generous giving it's not just you
know buying a commodity so it would
depend on how generous the 10 million
people who speak your mother tongue are
that are just going to make donations to
you for having made such an excellent
translation because that's what Donna is
Donna is this generosity or just giving
it's not you know paying for
something so yeah you would know you
would know that better than I do
probably most of those 10 million would
not be interested in uh Buddhist
translations
anyway even if they were
free

so yeah I think this might be a kind of
a joke question anyway so I'm just going
to move on to the next question here
this is from nature cure and nature CER
says how angry do you get and then in
parenthesis it's before and after
disrobing and then uh another question
that's part of the same question I guess
is what do you do at the moment when you
are
angry so I guess it's two questions I'll
just separate these that adds up to
three which is allowable it's not
transgressive even though he's got one
question with three question marks but I
don't I don't think he's uh he has

committed any grave offense by doing

that so how angry do I get I

mean I guess you'd use a numerical scale

with zero being completely chill not

angry at all and 10 being just like just

red-faced and bellowing in Rage

screaming and like punching walls and

stuff and it is

ironic that the Ang angest I can ever

remember

being was when I was a

monk

and but at the same time I was mindful

to some degree while I was bellowing in

Rage um the closest I've ever been to

that as a lay person has been when a

certain female has just completely

pushed my buttons until I'm at wit's end
and then I've then I've done a little
bit of bellowing then
too so yeah I mean there have been a few
times in my life when I've gotten up
into the nine or 10 range both when I
was and was not a monk I remember I mean
I've told this story before but um I
spent a while at a place in Burma called
the bay aoya and it was in a forest it
was supposedly a forest Monastery but it
was just being raped to death by the
local villagers East Asians in general
or Southeast Asians as a general rule
they do not have much of an affinity for
nature they don't care about nature to

the same extent that Americans do for example you know they don't go out camping in the woods for fun that kind of a thing wood the woods are scary you know it's is there's dangerous stuff out there so anyways I was staying at this place that was being raped to death by villagers and I come come back from alms round and I'm hearing ch coming from from the tree where I was staying in in this Forest so I'm hurrying up the trail you know I've already been fuming because you know I was in my earlier days I was like a a tree hugging nature conservationist and still am to some degree and just having just hearing chopping all day long it's like it was

just I'd just be sitting there just
grumbling sometimes
and as I'm going back to my place where
my tree is I'm having to step over
chopped wood that this guy's already
chopped and I get there and he's right
up above where I usually stay and I just
yell at him and mainly at first I'm
yelling just because he's off in the
distance you know it's just so my voice
will carry to where he is I'm saying
don't chop wood here and he's he just
keeps calling back I'm cutting drywood
which may have been true at that moment
but the the wood that I had to step over
to get to where I was was not dry wood

he was chopping green

trees and uh finally like after the

third or fourth time I just something

just kind of snaps and I just Bellow at

him you know just don't cut wood here

get out and my arm is like going like

this and I've told this story before

those of you who watch these q&as have

heard this story before but I'm like

going like going like this with my

finger while I'm yelling and there's

this part of my mind

that is just sort of surprised or

intrigued or mildly interested in this

it's like hm I wasn't planning on doing

that with my arm and my finger that's

odd you know at the same time that I'm

bellowing at the same time you know
there's this totally calm detached
observational mode going on or another
time when I was living in a cave in
Burma I mean the main thing that was
getting to me living in Burma I mean
there's a lot of things
but the weather in Central Burma is just
it's like a furnace and sometimes the
rainy season it's just like a second hot
season it's it's a drought you know the
crops fail at least one out of every
three years on average to subsistence
farmers in central Burma that don't have
irrigation and most of them
don't so I was just I just at one point

I just snapped and I'm just like cussing
and yelling and slamming things and I've
I've told this story several times
before also where at that moment it was
just it was like this split happened in
my personality where there's a part of
me that's just
observing me throwing a contion you know
there's like the version of me throwing
the conion yelling and cussing and
slamming things and then there's it just
caused like this Detachment while this
other part is just observing so that in
a way it was like I was an actor playing
the role somebody throwing a contion
well at the same time you know you're
not identified with the role entirely

you know there's like this deeper
identification with you know the person
who isn't the role you
know and so I've I've told a a friend of
mine who was a mahasi Arya mahasi soda
that you know I have thrown conniptions
with mindfulness you know you're
mindfully observing just the the yelling
and everything going on is is just this
weird phenomenon you know it's it's like
a lightning storm or something and he
didn't believe me at all he just
couldn't see it but I mean I experienced
it so I know know what I'm talking about
there
so how angry do I get yeah a few times

definitely in single digits I bellowed

in

Rage um and I think at least half the

time it has been um when I was was a

monk but the thing

is if you're not like an angry person in

general you know it's just you're not in

the habit of getting angry a

lot then when it does arise I mean it's

and if you're at the same time you're in

the habit of being mindful it's just

really easy to be mindful because it's

like all of a sudden like sirens and

bright lights are going off and it just

draws your attention to it it's like you

know you just

you you pay attention to that because

it's like this unusual thing that's
happening and it's just easier to be
mindful strangely ironically if you're
throwing a
contion but uh for the most
part um my sweetheart hasn't been really
pushing my buttons for for quite a
while and uh so mainly when if I get
angry um I mean I get angry when I'm
driving just irritated like annoyed I
mean South Carolina has I think it's I
think it's like a statistical fact that
South Carolina has the worst drivers in
America like the insurance rates are
higher there's more insurance claims and
accidents and so forth in South Carolina

and that's just obvious like for example
and I've I've said most of this stuff
before but about half the people on the
roads around here do not use turn
signals they just don't use them it's
just not the tradition I've had it tried
some PE person tried to explain wants
that there's actually a shortage of
blinker fluid in this area but I mean
they could drill for that easy I mean I
don't see why I mean it could be
destroying the environment or something
drilling for blinker fluid
but there's got to be some way around
that problem but anyways getting back to
what I was talking about I like some
sometimes I mean driving it's like

pretty much every time I drive well anytime I'm driving to work in the morning anyway or driving home afterwards sometimes it's like what the [__] are you doing like somebody just behaves like a complete idiot going 70 mes an hour on the freeway you know it's like what the [__] are you doing you know it's like in a way I'm just like annoyed at this person calling him an idiot or something and that kind of thing can happen at work too not at my fellow co-workers so much as just there's like glitches and stuff going wrong and I you know I mess up a piece of metal and then I've got to throw it

away and like cut a new piece and this
kind of thing I can do some cussing and
grumbling
then uh also I mean this is South
Carolina so there is kind of the South
Carolina work ethic where you just never
in a hurry you take it easy spend a lot
of time talking and I want to get stuff
done and I've got to wait for somebody
else you know to finish talking so that
they can make this this other piece of
metal that I need in order to modify
that into something else and just
standing around just uh grumbling to
myself you know frowning scowling that
kind of a thing that can
happen but uh I'm not a particularly

angry person I can be irritable

and it's like the wiui Maga says that of

the various personality types the person

who has a dose of temperament or like an

aversion or anger temperament can

actually get enlightened more quickly

than the average person because because

if you're irritated easily then Sam Sara

irritates you and then you have less

attachment to Samara and you're more

willing to renounce

it so I guess I answer that question and

then the the second question here is

what do you do at the moment when you're

angry and I've pretty much already

explained that too I mean sometimes it's

just sort of you know grumbling to
myself criticizing and finding fault bad
habit of mine or like if I'm driving
alone you know I might actually be
exclaiming and it's not just at at
drivers who are who are idiots too it's
like the the traffic signals in in this
part of South Carolina they sometimes
it's like they last forever you can just
sit there and sit there and sit there at
a red light just waiting for it to
finally cycle through and turn green
again and you know if if you're in a
hurry you got to get somewhere or
whatever that can cause irritation to
arise because of course all suffering is
caused by desire I have the desire to

get from point A to point B in a timely
manner anything that interferes with
that causes a certain amount of
irritation or
annoyance so at least I'm observing
it yes it's it's relatively rare that I
would get really angry in a completely
oblivious unaware State like no
mindfulness but if it does happen I'm
not aware of it so I can't really
say so let's see here all right third
question of nature cure do you consider
eart TOA the lay celebrity as
enlightened being question mark truly
question mark really question mark
deeply question mark well I mean I don't

really believe anything truly really and deeply I mean I'm skeptical by Nature I mean I realize that perceptual knowledge is not 100% reliable not 100% valid and so there's always going to be a certain amount of skepticism lurking around the corner

somewhere but with regard to Arta first of all I've said this a number of times on these q&as I'm making sure that I'm recording and it says I am I've said a number of times on these q&as that an enlightened being in a saric context might not mean anything there might not even be the possibility of full Enlightenment within a purely samsar context you know in in the context of

this phenomenal world I mean there may
not be any really enlightened beings I
mean there's great sages and Saints and
so forth but I think you have to
transcend Sam Sara in order to be
enlightened and I mean the part that
transcends samsara is not available to a
samsaric
perspective so it's just going off the
scale rather than becoming enlightened
you're just kind of no longer on the
map but even considering that I mean
eart TOA I read his first famous book
I've watched some of his YouTube videos
and uh he had some kind of Awakening
experience um I don't think he's a just

a fraud I don't think he's faking it but

it could be that he experienced

something that he interprets as full

Enlightenment when really he's not all

the way there and I can't really

say

so

um if eart TOA is a fully enlightened

being then of course Orthodox terraa is

mistaken in its assumption that you

can't be fully enlightened for more than

about 24 hours without dying unless you

are ordained as a terot of Buddhist

monastic and I kind of don't really

believe that

anyway um just other Buddhist things

like art toas you know he's still living

a worldly life I think he's married you
know maybe he's not celibate so all
these things would go against a
traditional interpretation of
Enlightenment as some sort of renunciant
sage who is also a saint and does not
care at all about sensuality and so
forth
but I'm open-minded with regard to that
so I consider it possible that eart TOA
is an enlightened being but if that's
the case
then
um yeah I mean an enlightened being
isn't necessarily what the texts say an
enlightened being is but I mean I I've

never made up my mind one way or the

other about someone like ekart TOA or I

mean

Paulo he's he's another one of those

Osho I'd be more skeptical towards Osho

but a lot of people consider Osho to

have been fully enlighted also known as

the Bugan Shri Raj Niche there's lots

and lots of them out there Andrew kohen

I think is the name of one of them who

was a big deal back in the like the late

80s early

90s there's a bunch of them AES

Shanti Jed McKenna that I already

mentioned there's a lot of these lay

people who are claiming to be

enlightened but uh I think probably most

of them really are frauds you know
there's what Daniel Ingram is another
one uh I think a lot of them just might
be some of them are like
charlatans and um I mean probably some
of them have attained something you know
they've had some sort of breakthrough in
their meditation which they may then
interpret as Enlightenment because
that's really that happens a lot in
Burma for example you're meditating and
you have some sort of real spectacular
experience of meditation and so it's
very easy to just grasp onto the idea
wow I've really attained something you
know I'm I'm I'm an Arya now that kind

of a

thing but in eart toa's case I really

can't say for sure I think he has

attained something but whether you can

call that full Enlightenment or not I

really don't know

so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is going to be another

I don't know question I think this is

from Thor from

thur I don't know why I tried to

pronounce it th I've never done that

before thur this is from thur and he

says are you aware of the great maamaa

system of the Tibetan master DOL Popa

and if so what are your thoughts on it

and I'm not even going to this doesn't

even warrant me putting on The maama Fez
because I really don't know anything
about the Tibet Tibetan master DOL Popa
I think I've read you know I've I've
read mentions of him but I know
essentially nothing about the system so
I don't really have any thoughts on the
great maamaa system of the Tibetan
master Dole Popa I really have not
gotten into Tibetan Buddhism much it
never really resonated with me I never
really was drawn to Tibetan Buddhism I
mean the Tibetan book of the great
Liberation is one of the most profound
books I've ever read and uh thean Book
of the Dead is interesting but going

with or I've also read like uh the
autobiography of millera which is
fascinating so I've read a few Tibetan
things but not very much and uh it's
just really not my bag of tea
so yeah I'm ignorant of Dole pop up and
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question this is from
PSA and PSA says with regard to the
previous Q&A he says you said at 23
minutes and 33 seconds into the video
quote regret or remorse is always bad
karma it always makes things worse
unquote and then he says my question is
could you please elaborate more on this
statement for example what if a person
committed an unquestionable evil deed

with the intention to hurt and enjoyed
it and took great great pleasure and
Delight in making other people suffer if
that person is unapologetically arrogant
about their deeds how does this attitude
help them in your opinion what is the
right course of action for such a person
well I mean this hypothetical situation
here is just it's not a good argument it
is a false
dichotomy it's pretty obvious to me and
it should be pretty obvious to some of
you maybe even most of you that
being experiencing remorse on the one
hand and being unapologetically arrogant
on the other are not the only two

options I mean there's there's an infinite number of options I mean you don't have to just pick between remorse and being unapologetically arrogant remorse from the Buddhist point of view is Kucha and that's always bad karma is always an UNH wholesome mental state but being arrogant also is also discouraged in Buddhism so you shouldn't you shouldn't choose either one of these options so I mean he gives a really extreme example somebody commits an unquestionable evil deed with the intention to hurt and enjoyed it and took great pleasure and Delight in making other people suffer I mean if they do that then they may be just a

lost cause you know that's like A

Clockwork Orange kind of

stuff and uh the right course of action

for such a

person just get arrested go to

prison just you know remove yourself

from society where you Delight in

hurting other

people um but I mean with regard to an

ordinary case of somebody doing

something wrong you know somebody doing

something unethical that causes you know

an increase in suffering in the

environment then I mean there's

absolutely nothing wrong with

acknowledging what you did and then

trying to do better in future trying to
rectify what you did to some degree you
know as much as is
realistic and then just you know you
fall down you just get back up and
continue moving forward you acknowledge
that you know it would have been better
if you hadn't done that that what you
did was unethical or whatever and then
you just resolved to try to do better in
future
it's like you make a mistake with regard
to anything I mean and and acting
unethically really is kind of a
mistake it's like some people will argue
that people will just do what is
wrong um they know that it's wrong and

they'll just do it even they know that
it's wrong but in a way that's it's not
entirely true I mean people do wrong
because because they are ignorant and
just don't know that doing that really
is it's it's harmful to themselves you
know it's harmful to everybody
involved so I mean there's the example
of you know there's
the the the woman at the the dollar
store who will look around before
slapping their kid to make sure nobody
sees them slap their kid because you
know they know they shouldn't be
slapping their kid and so making sure
nobody else watch is seeing you know

seeing them do it but still I mean

they're still ignorant people and

they're

just it's it's sort of like they just

don't want to get in trouble you know

it's not so much that they think that

it's wrong is they they just don't want

to catch hell for

it

so I don't know why I I started on in on

that though see how did that relate to

this question here just doing something

wrong

you do something wrong I mean it's like

making a mistake and in a way it is it's

it is making a mistake a mistake in

judgment or whatever and so I mean any

kind of mistake you make you acknowledge
you made the mistake and then you try
not to make the same mistake I mean it
doesn't require remorse doesn't require
beating yourself up over it doesn't
require
regret you know you just acknowledge
well I made a mistake there I'm going to
try and do better next time try to avoid
making that same mistake it's all you
got to
do so I guess I'll just move on to the
next question here and I'm I'm getting
hit towards the beginning of this Q&A by
a lot of questions I just do not know
the answer to for example here's a

question from moers what do you think of
the mces Institute they offer hundreds
of free resources on economics and
including PDFs and Audi books in the
tradition of the Austrian School of
Economics well I've never been
interested at all in
economics so possibly the only economics
books I've ever read in my life one was
the theory of the Leisure Class by
thorstein weblin on the back of the the
book it did say economics on the little
label so I guess that was an economics
book but it wasn't so much about
economics says just about just weird
anthropological stuff like why the pope
wears a funny

hat why some people think it's really important to know what kind of wine goes with lamb or how to eat a banana in public that kind of thing and then there was another book I read it was uh am Maria sen I think he won a Nobel prize in economics it was like the the idea of justice and I mean that that book kind of sucked actually uh it wasn't n so much an econom it was kind of an economics book and as an economist they economists in general seem to equate material Prosperity with happiness you know they they seem to have this equation you know if they're going for the happiness of a society

they want that Society to be

economically

prosperous and it just doesn't work that

way

so yeah I I really just do not have much

interest in

economics so I mean I I've heard about

myces and uh I probably have even heard

about the myces

Institute but um I I just am not

interested I'm interested in lots of

things but economics generally is not

one of them I do know that capitalism

works better than socialism though I

mean that's that's more of a historical

thing than a than an economic thing you

just look at history and see for

yourself so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Austin and I don't know if this question I think this exact question was asked like a month
ago maybe not by Austin but I mean this it seems like word for word pretty much identical to a question that was asked not very long ago which is as follows was there ever a time when you were a monk when all doubt about the Buddhist teaching subsided and and I remember the last time I answered this question it was like well when I was sound asleep there was no doubts you know when you're meditating there's no doubts most of the

time when you're going about your

business there isn't any doubt about the

Buddhist

teaching and

um so there there is that I mean most of

the time most of the time I had no

doubts about the budd's teaching because

I just wasn't thinking in that way you

know I'm thinking about building this

fire or reading this book

or you know observing my breath or

whatever it is that I was doing and I'm

not like wondering if the Buddhist

teaching is uh 100% legit but the thing

is I mean in order to have doubt about

the Buddhist teaching I mean you have to

know exactly what the Buddhist teaching

is you know it's

like I mean you can't really know you

can't know for sure what exactly the

Buddha did and did not teach so 's

always going to be a certain amount of

skepticism or just suspension of

judgment skepticism in the classical

sense of suspending

judgment but whether you call that doubt

or not yeah I guess there'd be doubt in

there you know I doubt that the Buddha

really taught you know such and such I

doubt that the Buddha really taught the

12 nidana theory of dependent core

Rising for

example seriously doubt that he taught

Abid

dama

so was there ever a time when you were a

monk when all doubt about the Buddhist

teaching subsided I mean it depends I

mean how do you even interpret the

question I was having difficult the last

time I I tried answering this question

because you know there's different

layers to

it but um you know I don't have any

doubt that the Buddha

was extremely wise and there something

like the AA waga that I consider to be

you know one of the oldest you most

archaic examp examples of primitive

Buddhism you know like very early

Buddhism pre terod

Buddhism um you know there's some statements even in that that I mean you could say well I mean that's just sort of like a generalization that there could be exceptions to that generalization and so forth you know I I don't consider anything in the form of sentences to be absolute truth so it's just part of my character that there's always going to be a certain suspension of judgment and a certain lack of certainty with regard to the validity of sentences

but um yeah so in a way this is kind of a trick question and it was the last

time I answered this question too where it's really hard to answer it because I mean I don't even know exactly what the Buddha taught you know he lived 2,500 years ago and most of what he was teaching wasn't even written down until hundreds of years later there's obviously been a lot of changes and additions and so forth so I mean you first of all you'd have to know what the Buddhist teaching is before you could have doubts about whether it's true or not so I mean there's just these obstacles in the way of absolute certainty obstacles in the way of me whereas a lot of people being human it's just sort of human nature that you're

going to just have unquestioning faith

in something

it could be a religion it could be a

political party it could just be in your

own family or Clan or whatever you just

believe you know your side is is the

good side and um yeah I just I just

don't function that way so yeah there

have been lots of times when I didn't

have any doubts about the Buddhist

teaching mainly because I just wasn't

thinking about the Buddhist teaching or

I was thinking about some aspect of the

Buddhist teaching that I really

accept but um

yeah I don't think there was ever a time

when I believed Abid dama for

example or or certain other doctrines

that you'll find in the

texts so I guess I guess I answered that

question well enough I hope and so I'm

just going to move on next question this

is from Mo who he mo asked question

before and it turns out that MO is

actually a

dog so Mo says

me and my master and then friend in

parenthesis meditate frequently practice

compassion and I'm hardly aggressive is

this going to be great benefit in my

future life

well um yeah if you meditate

correctly then that's definitely going

to be helpful I mean if you don't
meditate you know you just go into like
a trance you know you just like
hypnotize yourself that can at least you
know give you some karmic momentum in a
direction that isn't entirely
pernicious um practicing compassion um
I'm not exactly sure what the practicing
of it means but feeling compassion is
definitely benevolent and you know it's
it's wholesome Karma and but being
hardly aggressive that that's not
necessarily good or bad I mean some
animals are hardly aggressive just
because it's just their nature not to be
aggressive and you know they're not

going to be skyrocketing into a heaven
realm after they die just because they
were a rabbit that wasn't aggressive you
know it's like it reminds me of this the
saying by Jordan Peterson you should be
able to be a monster and then not be one
so if you're able to be a monster and
you're still not aggressive then that
involves a certain self-restraint and a
certain amount of self-observation
wisdom and so forth but if you're not
able to be a monster then you don't
don't get any bonus points for not being
one because you just couldn't be one
even if you wanted to and I've got a dog
loudly snoring behind
me yeah you guys are

snoring okay

then so I mean being hardly aggressive I

mean it's it's good not to be like

violent but just because you're not

aggressive doesn't necessarily mean that

you're earning Merit for not being

aggressive because you could just be

well I won't I won't accuse Mo of this

but some people they're just timid and

you know they're they're

just timid and passive and so it's in a

way their their motives for not being

aggressive are unskillful

motives so just not being aggressive in

and of itself is not necessarily Good

Karma but meditating frequently

especially if it's uh a kind of uh

effective meditation

technique and also experiencing

compassion is good so it should

benefit anyone in their future life if

they practice meditation

and experience

compassion so Mo's next question here is

my friend says he got into Buddhism

because he thought about me and him

being more equal than people thought him

what was the click he that was the click

he needed can that

happened I think that he was just too

high at that time maybe the dog is high

too it's possible but um let's see yeah

I mean let's see let's let's consider

this so a person got into Buddhism
because he considered himself and his
dog to be more equal than people
considered people and dogs to be and
that was the click he needed can this
happen yeah I'm sure it can I mean
there's all sorts of things that can
happen and uh yeah I mean in a way it's
it's not what caused me to become a
Buddhist but it certain certainly um is
an aspect of Buddhism that resonates
with me is the idea that you know people
they might be at a higher level of like
psychic
development than than the average animal
but still I mean when I've got when I'm

with animals especially animals that I like you know like I've been the brother of of many boy dogs you know I I bond with boy dogs better than with girl ones as a general rule and uh yeah some of my best friends have been dogs and I just consider them to be you know in a sense they are equals you know they're equally worthy of consideration and you know they should I me you shouldn't kick a dog anymore than you should kick me for example you know so in a in some senses we are equal and that's endorsed in Buddhism and if that's what really called a person to Buddhism then that's that's as valid as any other reason I think so yeah whether he was high or not

could be Irrelevant in this

case so yeah I think that'll work so I'm

just going to move on to the next

question this is from ruy

and ruie says hello poo to coin a verb

do you really think one could Goa one's

way to Awakening isn't meditation

without Right View tantamount to

expecting oranges from an apple tree

well right

view yeah there's different levels of

Right View and ultimately right view is

not intellectual and it's not

perceptual so I mean it is possible

that you don't have any real

metaphysical philosophy any profound

ethical philosophy you're just drawn to being contemplative and just being in the present moment you know being as wide awake as you can manage then your wisdom is going to progress even though you may not know anything about Buddhism it is possible that some people are just ripe you know it's like um St John the cross I keep bringing him up that he was he's probably my favorite Christian and he may have been a fully enlightened being you know assuming that fully enlightened beings can exist in a samsaric
context and uh yeah I mean he wasn't a Buddhist he was a Roman Catholic he revered the Virgin Mary he went into

ecstasies upon taking communion and the

the song of songs was his favorite part

of the

Bible so

really I think I mean you have to

transcend all intellectual points of

view that you can make progress in spite

of el limiting

religious what do you call it the world

view you know you're stuck in a religion

that really doesn't even

have it I mean it doesn't have room in

the system for even the concept of full

Enlightenment which is probably most

religious systems today

then I mean you can still make progress

and then just in spite of the system you
can just have a click you can just
experience a flash of liberating Insight
that'll just cause you to transcend all
this intellectual noise anyway it just
becomes
irrelevant so yeah I think it has
happened that someone has goed their way
to Awakening and by goinging one one's
way to Awakening is mainly just
meditating you know being in the present
moment without really having a
sophisticated metaphysical philosophy or
an intellectual system that kind of
guides you in your
practice that it is I mean it
having Buddhist philosophy guiding you

in your practice can make your practice
more effective you know it may help
you but um I don't think it's absolutely
necessary
so I guess it's it's possible and I'm
just going to move on to ru's next
question here which is a simpler one
that you probably haven't been asked oh
I'll just I'll just read the question a
simple a simpler one that you probably
have been asked numerous times did you
have a precise road map for disrobing or
did you just throw yourself willingly
into the mall of Destiny ready to accept
whatever came your way well it was kind
of a combination of both I mean I knew I

was going to be moving to South Carolina
where I was going to receive help in
getting set up in an apartment I mean I
was going to be paying for it but still
um just having somebody kind of scout
the area find a place that was for rent
and you know use the money that was
donated to me for getting started on it
that kind of a thing that was that was
set up for me but I didn't know what I
was going to do for a living you know I
didn't know what South Carolina was like
I'd never been there before um so it was
sort of a combination of the
two um I mean the one time I really did
just throw myself willingly into the
mall of Destiny was in 2011 when I came

back to America and I literally did not know where I was going to sleep I was just I was just burned out on Burma I was just I was just fed up you know most of my supporters in America that supported me before I came to Burma had just sort of faded out Communications were awful you know there was no internet or anything at the time in Burma and so all of or almost all of my supporters in America had just sort of you know lost interest and gone their own way or whatever and I was just kind of stranded in Burma and so finally I just said I'm coming back to America just I don't even I'm just doing it and

so I didn't know where I was going to
sleep or anything I just managed
somebody donated me a plane ticket I
just let people know in advance I'm
going to be at the airport at this time
anyone wants to pick me up please do so
and everything worked out I mean it was
It was kind of scary I mean really to
throw yourself into the mall of
Destiny as ruy here puts it um yeah it
takes a certain amount of courage and
it's it is endorsed in Buddhism and in
Christianity you know give no thought
for tomorrow what you will eat or where
you will sleep I mean that's Buddhist
and Christian teachings right there and
and you just have to you know God will

provide or Dharma will provide you know

you just have to have

faith in in the the mercy of the

universe and if you do have the faith of

a grain of mustard seed it works if

you're freaked out and always trying to

be in survival mode and making sure this

and that will work out then it's not

going to work as well at least at the

the metaphysical you know the spiritual

level

you know you're not really renouncing if

you do

that so yeah in a way just dropping out

of the monkhood was itself kind of a

great

renunciation flinging myself into the

unknown

again but uh in answer to ru's question

it was like a combination of the two so

I'm just going to move on to the next

question from Zeno

demon and Zeno demon

he's he's responding to a video I might

not not even been been a Q&A video I

think it was I was talking in the

previous Q&A about how rules and morals

aren't exactly the same that precepts

and actual ethics I mean they have some

overlap but they're they're like on two

different

levels so Zeno demon says even Jesus

Christ gave expectations to stealing I

mean I think he means exceptions so even
Jesus Christ gave gave exceptions to
stealing something to the line of taking
bread so long as he has no Jam to put on
it which I don't remember that from the
Bible at all but then he says should
then a monk not be more inclined to
Divine Law rather than the laws of
man
so yeah I don't fully I don't fully
understand this
question now that I think about
it but uh I mean from the Buddhist point
of view Divine Law I mean there are no
decrees of a god determining what you
should and shouldn't do I mean there is

Dharma which I guess you could call

Divine Law just more of

a I don't know natural

law and then there's the laws of man and

yeah natural law would be more along the

lines of genuine ethics and the laws of

man would be certain rules like monks

have to follow both kinds I mean monks

have to follow ethical rules and also

really just social artificial rules like

shaving your head there's nothing

immoral about not shaving your head

monks just have to shave their head they

have to wear you know sort of brownish

colored robes that are cut and sewn in a

certain way has nothing to do with with

morals they're not allowed to eat in the

afternoon or at night and there's

nothing inherently immoral about eating

a meal in the afternoon you know there's

nothing more immoral about eating

something at 12:30 p.m. then at 11:30

a.m. it's just that's the rules that's

it's there for a different reason other

than you know your own ethical

welfare

so

um yeah but then again a monk I mean

nobody forces a monk to be ordained or

ideally and sometimes it does happen

like in Burma a kid will just get sent

to the monastery by poor parents that

got too many miles to feed they want the

The Prestige of having a monk in the

family so they'll just send a kid to the

monastery the way a lot of Asian

families will just force a kid to go to

medical school you

know Asian families can be that

way so

um anyways where was where was I going

with

that oh yeah it's like you join the

monkhood voluntarily and so there's all

these rules that I mean you are taking

upon yourself voluntarily

so there's a rule that says you have to

shave your head every at least every two

months or two finger widths whichever

comes first your head and your beard and

um I mean nobody forc you to become a monk and those are the rules so I mean it's like nobody forces you to play a game of pool but I mean you play by the rules because otherwise you're cheating so a monk I mean you'd have to acknowledge that genuinely ethical rules like not lying and not stealing are in a way more important than just you know shaving your head every two months at least every two months or not going through a door with a bowl in your hand that kind of a thing but still I mean all of them are binding it's just that some of them are binding for one reason and others are binding for another

reason or for more than one

reason so

I mean it is true that Jesus Christ or

Jesus of

Nazareth he did uh give exceptions to

following rules you know like I I don't

remember him justifying stealing

but um he did justify his disciples like

gleaning Grain on the Sabbath you know

they're walking through a field and you

know picking picking wheat or barley or

something and eating it raw um they were

criticized for that because it was the

Sabbath and they shouldn't be doing any

work on the Sabbath and then Jesus said

you know the Sabbath was made for man

and not man for the Sabbath that

sometimes it is justifiable to break rules and as a monk sometimes it is justifiable to break rules like um you know you're better off saving a pretty girl from drowning and maybe even doing mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to save her life rather than just sit there on the bank and watching your drown because monks aren't supposed to touch girls or one that I did personally in my life is there's a rule against a monk giving medicine to lay people unless it's their family or Monastery attendant you know your parents you can give medicine to a monastery attendant who's sick you can give medicine to but like lay people who

are supporters out in the village you're not supposed to be giving them medicine because it just causes people to come to the monk to get medicine rather than to hear dhama and then the monk maybe he'll give the wrong medicine because he's not maybe maybe he's not a trained physician gives the wrong medicine the person gets more sick they die or something the song gets blamed for it so it's just against the rules and I had a I was living out in the middle of the sticks just out in the middle of nowhere and one of my supporters said that his daughter had malaria for like I can't remember if it was six weeks or six months but it was the worst kind of malaria it was faler

malaria that was running it was just
endemic there and I had state-of-the-art
malaria medication and so I figured it's
better for me to break this minor
rule give him some malaria pills to give
it to his daughter rather than have this
girl maybe die or just be completely
messed up
like with like these mini strokes that
go all through your head when faler
malaria goes cerebral you know that kind
of a thing better for me just to take
the hit give them the pills and then she
got better I broke a rule but
the girl was uh she recovered from
malaria so yeah I mean ethical rules are

more important than just the artificial rules of etiquette and just sort of societal propriety and so forth but um I'm not exactly sure where Zeno demon was going with that and I've got other questions to answer so I'm just going to move on to the next question here which is from kol whip also known as the protos Pudo Monk and as I've mentioned before coolwhip occasionally gives titles to his questions and the title to his first question is origin of Sam SAR and so he says craving or desire is the cause for rebirth this gives a satisfactory explanation for the endless creation of samsara from the present moment onwards towards positive Infinity

however this doesn't explain how desire
in the present originated from negative
infin
what is the explanation of the origin
the first desire that started the cycle
of rebirth could the explanation be
something like because the essence or
substance of reality or samsara is
craving like an unmanifested potential
that finds a way to manifest through
beings or technology question mark I
think you explain this with hegel's
ideas but still not sure I quite
understand it well from the Buddhist
point of view there is no first desire
that some samsara is eternal going into

the past forever or at least it's just
indeterminate so yeah there was no first
desire causing samsara there was no
first upsurge of ignorance where I mean
it's not like the Old Testament where
God is just hanging out you know just
chilling and then he says let there be
light and just starts the universe
starts the cosmos
going I mean there had to have been
angels and so forth before then you
would assume but um it just doesn't work
that way in Buddhism in Buddhism samsara
is beginningless it's been here
forever so there is no first
desire
um see let's

see so the cycle of rebirth never had
how a start it's just it just keeps
going because it can and that goes back
to my simile of the block of marble that
you've got this formless sizeless block
of marble that has within it every
possible statue including lots of
impossible statues that're already there
in that block of marble that you know
everything every molecule is already in
the correct position they're already in
there just in a potential or virtual
form you know a virtual
State and Infinity has always been this
block of marble and it has always
contained all these virtual statues that

are virtually real inside of it and

that's all the the suffering craving

beings in this

universe

so let's see he continues here could the

explanation be something like because

the essence or substance of reality

where samsara is craving like an

unmanifested potential that finds a way

to

manifest uh you know that's sort of like

schopenhauer's will isn't it I mean

there is some of that but that's not

what causes it to be what causes it to

be is it's because it's

possible because it's it's just one of

the the uncarved statues in the uncarved

block that's virtually there and some of
them are so complex that they
become self-aware and start thinking
that they're separate from the rest of
everything else and I got a dog here
that's wanting to get petted here she
wants to say hi this is Poppy she she
like she's like part guinea pig and part
monkey there you
go she makes these little chling noises
she never barks she just kind of whs and
chortles so let's see
here okay I think the part that I was
gonna try and answer is is actually part
of cool Whip's next question here so
yeah I'll just move on to next question

I hope I didn't skip over anything let's
see could the explanation be something
like because the essence or substance of
reality of or some SAR is craving like
an unmanifested potential that finds a
way to manifest through beings and
Technology um I mean you could interpret
it that way sort of like schopenhauer
but I mean really every possible thing
that could possibly exist has always
existed in the block of
marble just look at it that way that
there is no beginning and no end and
there's no purpose to it
either so I'll just move on to the
second question here the purpose of
samsara or

Nirvana let's see this is the title the purpose of samsara Nirvana or the singularity and and then and refuting hegel's
dialectic so then he says then if our nature is to be manifest into something the universe is asymmetrical and we are in hegel's synthesis becoming originating from Pure nothingness but how can we be sure that the evolution from pure non-being to pure being in the end these two converge for example what if the universe is optimizing a function of self-discovery on a trajectory of infinite growth through self-recursive patterns like creating abundant galaxies

Stars life technology Consciousness Etc
question mark in this Theory the
self-recursive intrinsically reflective
growing pattern of self has the purpose
of knowledge growth that isn't delusion
maybe Enlightenment You could argue
against hegel's axom that the one
profound difference between pure
non-being and pure being despite them
both sharing the aspect that there are
no discernable qualities in concluding
they are the same is that eventually
pure being possesses the quality of the
awareness of everything whereas or
non-being is devoid of any awareness
thus they would be conceptually or
philosophically equivalent in the realm

of logic and reason but experientially
complete opposites we can't reason about
experience through Concepts they are
categorically
different well the first part of this
little essay question here is uh I mean
it's a common
belief um among like theists for example
that God is creating this universe so
that he can learn about himself through
the universe you know evolving and then
that intelligent and intelligence and
wisdom and Consciousness can evolve
through you know this psoric phenomena
and so forth that you know it's it's
God's way of like reaching his full

potential or some such but no I mean

it's

[Music]

everything pure Infinity are identical

that they are synonyms pure being and

pure non-being are just

synonyms which does help to explain why

the universe is here appears to be here

in the first

place because nothingness and

everythingness are synonymous so to

speak so let's see the universe is

optimizing a function of self-discovery

now I've I've already done my best to

kick that one in the guts let's see

creating aund yeah yeah yeah okay self

recursive intrinsically effective

going man see you could you could argue
against a hegel's axom that one profound
difference between pure being or pure
non-being and pure being despite them
both sharing the aspect that there are
no discernable qualities concluding they
are the same is that eventually pure
being possesses the quality of the
awareness of everything well that would
be discernable quality wouldn't
it pure being possesses the quality of
the awareness of
everything
yeah I'm I'm not so sure I mean it's not
really pure being at that point once it
starts getting divided up into parts

then it's not pure being anymore that's
the becoming aspect that becomes that is
the synthesis of being and non-be that
you have to have a
contrast so pure pure non-being is
devoid of any awareness well the pure
being would have an awareness that is
undifferentiating for it to be aware
of
so yeah it is kind of a hard topic to to
wrap your head around the whole idea of
Hegel that pure being and pure non-being
are actually the
same because they're both just
formless and just no discernable
qualities no discret
content so yeah the second part so I

mean it seems like the main gist of the
second half of this
question is that pure being really is
different from Pure
non-being and so that might open the
door to the idea of somehow something
emerging from Pure non-being this little
spark that then gradually over eons and
eons is developing into some kind of I
don't know just getting more and more
towards God or Cosmic omniscience or
something but still I think I am
inclined to go with the uh the first the
first uh syn the first thesis and
antithesis of hegel's dialectic which is
about the only thing about Hegel that I

really

like I don't have much use for most most

of hegel's philosophy but how he begins

the dialectic and his logic has

definitely made a a a significant impact

on my understanding of of the

world

so let's

see thus they could be conceptually

equivalent in the realm of logic and

reason but experientially complete

opposites but I mean you can't

experience pure non-being and you can't

experience pure being either because you

are not pure being that you're just sort

of a a virtual manifestation of pure

being

but not

really man it it's trying to talk about

this stuff is so difficult I mean even

just trying to talk about two different

levels of reality at the same time

anything like that trying to De talk

about the absolute which cannot be put

into words cannot be put into to

perceptions you can't really think about

it in any kind of valid

way

but people want to

know so I guess I'm just going to move

on to the

third this is like this this is I guess

we can call this the third question but

he has it as an appendix on the second question and the title is appendix on choosing the right path according to the interpret ation of
asymmetry and so he says to me the answer to this question of the second question that he asked bifurcates the path whether one should renounce the world become a monk Extinction of humanity or serve the world have a family reproduction evolution of humanity which could also be the interpretation of or the Assumption of the asymmetrical Universe does the asymmetry seek symmetry equilibrium by becoming nothingness Extinction Nirvana no awareness or everything technological

singularity complete awareness these

could both be interpreted as

Enlightenment well I

mean we're talking about

like like recursive self-awareness

that that is essentially delusional and

thinks that it's different from the rest

of the

universe

and so I guess that's what's being

called the asymmetry or just like Karma

being out of balance that karma is

always in a state of

disequilibrium and that if you just let

Karma just seek its own level like water

flowing downhill it eventually just

reach this this Bliss of everything and

nothing

so which could also be the

interpretation or the Assumption of the

asymmetrical Universe does the asymmetry

seek symmetry equilibrium by becoming

nothingness or everything well I mean I

mean from my point of view there's

there's really no difference it's just

it's a it's a difference of perception

before you get

there

so um it's sort of like the difference

between Buddhism and Hinduism where you

know Hinduism is family oriented I mean

a good Hindu is supposed to go through

you know the lay the lay person space

the

householder what Ash Dharma you know

there's one of the the phases that a

good Hindu is supposed to go through is

the householder who's married and has

kids and then when he gets older he

renounces the world becomes like the

hermit and then maybe even goes into the

fourth phase which is the sunasan just

the the wandering

renuncian um and so he's I mean the

Hindus they've reified reality as

Brahman that it is a something whereas

the Buddhists

they have tried as much as possible to

avoid reifying the absolute which then

causes it to become more towards

Extinction or emptiness or voidness but

ultimately it's the it's the same thing

that they're going for that a fully

enlightened Hindu is is reached the same

Enlightenment as a fully enlightened

Buddhist in the Poppy's back petted

more

so let's see here I mean it seems like

the assumption is is that there's just

like two Infinity there's two absolutes

you know there's the absolute of

everything and the absolute of nothing

and that you know you can you can pick

which way you want to go but I mean

ultimately it's just full circle and I

mean it it winds up the same either

way

so I'm a little bit distracted by this

dog that's wanting

attention see

I'm just going to have to read this

whole question over again to me the

answer to this question Q2 bifurcates

the path whether one

should yeah well the answer that he gave

to it not really the answer that I gave

to it bifurcates the path whether one

should renounce the world become a monk

Extinction of humanity will even the

Hindus do that eventually I mean that's

that's stages three and four or serve

the world have a family reproductive

evolution of

humanity uh which could also be the

interpretation of or the Assumption of

the asymmetrical Universe does the

asymmetry seek Symmetry and equilibrium

by becoming

nothingness or everything and I mean

it's it's the same I mean it's just

before you get there the approach may

seem different but once you get there

you know it's not like an enlightened

Buddhist is in a state of just

Annihilation whereas an enlightened

Hindu is like infinite in all

directions it really doesn't work that

way

experientially

so yeah I mean just ceasing to exist

isn't really Enlightenment just

annihilating yourself would not be

considered Enlightenment anyway I mean

that's just

Extinction although there are some

people that even some Hindus that are

really sort of uh biased against

Buddhism you know they say ah the

Buddhist just want

Extinction but I mean

Enlightenment is I mean it doesn't mean

Extinction Enlightenment means waking

up waking up from the

illusion so let's just move on the next

question here this is from alpacino

alpaca and he's say he says is Brian

alive and he's referring to our good

friend Brian Rue who uh went silent for

many days after just sort of like

convulsively spamming his his Channels

with with bitshoot videos because he's

not on you well he might be on YouTube

around the edges a little bit but his

main his main social media is bitshoot

and uh he has been uploading recently so

yeah he is still

alive and so I'll just move on to the

next question by alpacino alpaca which

is kind of an interesting

one which is as follows have you ever

drunk your own y

or do you know anyone who

did well any monk who is

ordained at his ordination ceremony is

admonished

that he should content himself with

stale urine as his only

medicine which apparently was what

athetics did in an ancient Northern

India in the Buddhist time that U they

would just ferment urine and drink it

and the Burmese have interpreted that to

mean like cow

urine um but probably it was with regard

to one's own urine so anyway um I was

kind of curious about this you know I

was wanting to be like an ancient Indian

Monk and so um the way the Burmese do it

is they take a certain fruit called an emblic Myro Balan it's I think it's amla in in India and it's one of the world's rich sources of vitamin C and it tastes like a gooseberry it's kind of kind of astringent it tastes bitter at first and then it has like a sweet aftertaste it's kind of a strange fruit it looks like a gooseberry it's like this big around and so you take these gooseberries and or embl Myro

Balan and you soak them in cow pea and strangely they're like olives where they they start off green but when you soak them in cow pea they turn black and they taste like like black

olives so monks will eat that as a kind

of medicine kind of

tonic

um but then I figured you know it's like

probably in the Buddhist time they were

using their own pee so I did experiment

with my own pee and I should say that

the pee also turns black when you put

the Myro Blan in there so I was calling

it burmes Pepsi at the time kind of a

joke there but um yeah I tried it it

it's I a few sips of it just

experimentally but um yeah it didn't it

didn't seem to be working out right it

was like uh um you know I had the Myro

Balan in there and stuff I was trying to

pickle the Myro ban preserved the Myro

Balan in my own pee instead of cow pee
and it for some reason it wasn't working
very well my pee wasn't concentrated
enough and it was starting to get like
this white cloudy film on top and
everything so I just threw it out
um but I used to know this Indonesian
monk who was living in Burma and he
would keep his own pee in a plastic jug
like at least overnight and then he
would wash his head in this stale pee
you know every morning and I think he
might have rinsed his mouth with it or
something too but uh I mean it caused
the the ouse to just wkak so bad that I
finally made him stop keeping his jug of
pee in in the out housee that we were

both using because it just red really
awful but one thing about the whole idea
of using p as a medicine I mean I I have
a degree in biology so I know that your
body is getting rid of this stuff
because it's literally toxic waste you
know it's like it's not good for you to
keep it if if you don't if you stop
being able to pee you
die so and it's not just because you
blow up with liquid it's just that you
get I can't remember what it's called
um I can't remember what it's called but
just you get all the toxins in your
blood that that kills you off and uh so
I really think that the the benefits of

drinking pee are very limited probably
you know there there might be some
benefits I've had somebody who was into
it explain to me that you know there's
certain chemicals that you know your
body excretes as a kind of side effect
of something else that actually is good
for you but still most of it is just
metabolic
waste so yeah I experimented with it a
little bit and it's good for pickling em
Myro ban at least curine
is but uh yeah I I did it for a little
bit and then stopped because there
didn't seem to be much point to doing
it so I'm just going to move on to
alucino alpaca's next question here I

know I know it might be a fourth

question but actually it isn't but

please put on screen the name for that

sutas that are commentaries on the AA

waga that are still canonical please put

a name for it and where to find

it I assume it is in the kudik nikaya

yeah it's in the kudik nikaya and it's

called the

nesa and I don't know if I have a pen

here put it on the screen I'm not going

to do any of that fancy

fancy graphic

stuff let's see if I can spell it

right there it is it's on the screen the

nesa I think that's how to spell it and

there's it's in two books the Maha and
the Chula the Maha nesa is the
commentary to the Ana waga and the Chula
is the commentary to the Paran awaga and
also to the rhinoceros horn discourse
and and I'm not sure if anyone has
bothered to translate them into English
so you may have to study up on ply in
order to read the thing or maybe taii or
Sri Lankan or salies I should say burmes
where I mean any language that actually
has been translated into but um yeah one
reason why it hasn't been translated
into English is that most English
students of dhama wouldn't even want to
read it because really it is not Prof
found it's like the the Mahan nesa which

is the the canonical commentary to the yka waga is trying to comment upon a pre- Terra voden text or a group of texts in such a way at as that they are like twisting and contorting it into something Orthodox so when the Buddhist says you know um have no view then the the Mahan Desa will say Well when he says that he means don't have any of the any of the wrong views you know it's like when it says have no perception you it just means don't have any perception of like ill will this kind of a thing when that's not what it's saying and obviously like I was saying recently and I think it was the previous q& you know

the Buddha wouldn't say don't have wrong
views you know I mean what is the point
of of me or or the Buddha or anyone else
saying you know don't believe what's
false I mean obviously it goes without
saying I mean nobody is knowingly going
to believe what is
false so I mean that's just it just
becomes like a just
absurd if you interpret it the way the
AA waga does and actually or not the AA
waga but the nesa and the nesa is
relatively late text I mean it mentions
Greeks in it for example which is
probably a sign of lateness talks about
Abid dama in there I think which is also
a sign of

lateness so

yeah I don't think it's any great loss

if you haven't read it I I was I was

reading through it just when I was

translating the ATA waga just to see

what it says it might help with regard

to at least like grammatical

construction of sentences and so forth

but I mean the main purpose of it was

really to explain away this well-known

body of texts that were so archaic that

they were pre-ra voden and in some

respects unorthodox so they had to they

couldn't just edit the a waga out of of

the detica it was too well known too

important in ancient times like uh the

Ashokan edicts refer to at least one or

two of the sutas of the AA waga as

recommended

study so they had to just change the

meaning of it twist the meaning of it

into something

Orthodox

so here I'll show it again since I went

to the trouble of writing it right there

it is n day

and I'm just going to move on to the

next question here this is from thermal

squid and thermal squid says what would

you have to say towards those typ

typically of a neopagan type who accuse

Buddhism of being LIF denying as per the

Nan understanding of Life affirmation

such that they may say that Buddha Dharma originally emerged for lesser or inferior people to cope with slavery I have run into a fair amount of Merit lacking crypto materialists who call themselves Pagan typically of a Germanic type and I always tell them that in the edas Odin achieves something very similar to the Buddha or the viic sages when he sacrifices and hangs himself on the world tree I assume such individuals are basically just narcissists as they don't have any real religion aside from the worship of provisional qualities like physical strength or wealth have you ever run into these kind of socially

darwinist types before um I've come
across them on the internet but I don't
think I've ever had like a a debate with
one in
person so that would be the the answer
to that last part but uh this this one
part he says that uh they may say that
Buddha Dharma originally emerg for
lesser or inferior people to cope with
slavery I mean that's just absurd if you
read the early texts that the early
Buddhist monks were not lesser or
inferior people they were tough as wood
and they were superior to the average
human they were Heavy
Hitters so I mean they were dealing with
stuff that most of these neopagans could

not cope with you just living alone
under a tree in a jungle just being
indifferent to you know hunger and
thirst and heat and cold and pain and
sickness and so forth I mean they were
they were tough like Iola refers to the
Buddhist Saint as a kind of Superman
like a essentially like a nian
Superman
so it is true that Buddhism is kind of
Life denying you know it's will denying
like like schopenhauer would teach and
uh I mean the Hindus accused the
Buddhists even in ancient times or you
know the vadists accused the Buddhists
in ancient times of being destroyers of

life mainly because the Buddhists were
encouraged to become celibate even when
they were young you know if you were
going for enlightenment if you're going
to renounce the world do it right away
and don't even bother with raising a
family first which you know the the viic
Proto Hindus they consider that to be
wrong I mean you know there's got
Society has to be maintained so you have
kids first and then you renounce the
world
so yeah I I mean some people are just
going to be of this world you know
they're going to be Pro samsara n
apparently was very Pro
samsara and um you know they just don't

want to transcend that they don't want
to get to the Ultimate Reality which is
beyond
samsara you know they just think this is
it and so you just Prosper as well as
you can which might include you know
stomping on people who are in your way
with your hob nailed Jack
Boots but
um let's see I think I've already
addressed what would you say towards
those who accuse Buddhism of being life
denying as per the nian understanding of
Life
affirmation well I mean first of all I'd
shoot down any arguments that it was

designed for weaklings any inferiors

because that's obviously not the

case

so what would I say to them that's

that's weird I've never

really never really stopped to think of

what I would say to them I I've said

things to them before I'm pretty sure

but it was just sort of a spontaneous

thing and I'm not spontaneously coming

up with anything right now so they

accuse Buddhism of being life denying

well it's it's more ignorance denying

than life denying it's just that life

involves a certain amount of ignorance

as a general

rule

so yeah Buddhism is trying to transcend

life not so much denying it as just

going Beyond

it and with regard to n i mean I do not

consider nich to have been a

particularly wise or happy person even

before he went

insane

so

um I mean they can accuse a way I guess

and believe what they

like but at least you should set them

straight with regard to any errors of

like fact you know if they're saying

something that's objectively untrue you

could at least set them straight on that

but with regard to matters of opinion
like whether or not Buddhism is life
denying you know in to some degree
that's just a matter of opinion you know
in a way they kind of are and in a way
they kind of aren't it depends on how
you look at it
so yeah I think just it would just be
like different a different response to a
different person depending on what that
what that neopagan type was saying and
what he was accusing Buddhism
of so yeah I really have not had much
interaction with Germanic type pagans
you know worshippers of Odin and Thor
and so forth I know they're out there
there's apparently you know significant

minority of them but uh yeah for some
reason we just don't cross paths very
much I'm more inclined to cross paths
with people who want a kind of fascistic
Buddhism and I'm not a fascist but still
um you know some
people um you know that they see you
know they might be like really hard
right and just assuming that like
fascism is hard right which I don't
think it is but still you know they they
just loathe all of the the Socialist you
know farle attempts at Buddhism in the
west they see that I I don't I'm not
swallowing that stuff and so then they
they sort of gravitate towards me and

are trying to get me to like justify

like a militant Buddhism in some sense

and usually I disappoint them because I

mean you can have mil kind of a militant

point of view but it really doesn't fit

in very well with genuine

dhama

so yeah I think one thing is just people

that are ready

to ex they are striving to know the

highest truth may do well to practice

Buddhism but if you want to stay in Sam

Sara with your hob nailed Jack Boots

then you can do that too and it's it's

really your own choice to make

so I'm just going to move on the next

question here which is from

Alfred and Alfred says I have seen a particular monk who was very intelligent sadly he topped himself he was okay when he got some sort of blood might disorder which pushed him to terminate himself so could this happen to an Arun so I guess the question is could an arant commit suicide and it does say in the text that the only time a person is Justified I mean the Buddha says the only time a person is Justified in committing suicide is if they have already attained the goal I mean you shouldn't kill yourself if you're not enlightened yet but if you're enlightened then apparently um you know at least you'd be

justified in that sense that I mean you
did what had to be done
first but um I can't remember any cases
of an Arun killing himself other than
somebody like Goda who became an Arun
while bleeding out after cutting his own
throat
so um yeah I think like youve got a
fully enlightened being who's got some
sort of terminal condition that they're
just debilitated you know some like
somebody like aan cha for example who
was like a vegetable for for many years
before he finally died um in a case like
that if there was an arant who is moving
in that direction I think it's quite
possible that they might just end it

early instead of being a vegetable in a

wheelchair for 10 years or you know

having a tube up their nose in a in a

hospital bed being kept alive

artificially or

something

so yeah I don't think that there's

anything

necessarily

prohibitive from an aant terminating his

own metabolic

processes and then of course like The

Janes and the aicas they would just

deliberately ly commit suicide by just

uh squatting down in a in an abandoned

area or an isolated area and just not

moving until they were

dead so anyways I'll just move on to the

next question this is from Gaz and Gaz

says hail poob basa I think many confuse

some of the fatalistic karmic views of

The Janes with Buddhism I myself viewed

Kama to be quite all-encompassing until

I read the daas SU

angura 361 in which the Buddha rejects

three sectarian worldviews what that

whatever a person experiences be it good

or bad or neutral is all due to past

actions a the plan of a God or without

cause he then reaffirms his core

teachings he also brings this rebuttal

up in further detail to the Jane

specifically in the DEA dahas sua a few

of my assumptions regarding Kama were cleared by this and also in the Gir gir manand sua within number four of the 10 perceptions of AD

ad it seems to list Kama as just one of many reasons for illness it makes sense to me that natural disasters illnesses even other situations could potentially just be the results of living in the natural world or caused by a supernatural agent not necessarily due to one's comma although it is likely as it is as it certainly appears to play a big role however regarding all of this I appreciate the wisdom of the Buddha and discouraging contemplation on the

precise working out of comma I find

myself continually impressed by how

thorough and wise he was ultimately

there is no self impermanence and

suffering remain regardless of if that

suffering is the result of commat

natural or Supernatural forces is this a

correct assessment of

things

okay well towards the towards the part

the top part here

the daas suta angura

3.61 the Buddha rejects three sectarian

World views regarding to uh whatever a

person experiences is that it has to be

one um due to past actions which would

be sort of more of the karmic point of

view two the plan of a god which would be more of the Muslim point of view or three without cause which I don't know any any point of view I don't know if anyone thinks that everything happens to us at random which is what without cause would be I

guess so I mean that those aren't the only possibilities like for example with Karma everything that happens to you isn't necessarily due to past actions because you're making comma now in fact all of your comma from a teren point of view is present comma because the past no longer exists the past can have no effect on the present technically

speaking because it would be a
non-existent cause because the past no
longer exists based on Orthodox
terraa so it's like it's our comma Now
which is our will now is determining
what we are experiencing that would be
more my point of view but also I mean in
a way you can interpret terraa to be
that way that really all comma has to be
present comma and so it not everything
is due to past actions because you know
it's due to present your present mental
states are determining what you're
experiencing and one reason why I come
up with that is because I do not
consider the material world to be real
in an ultimate sense it's conventionally

real but it's not ultimately real so
saying that natural disasters illnesses
other situations can cause these things
I consider those to be essentially
non-existent causes because it would
just be your perceptions of those that
would I mean that's all you can really
know you you don't know a natural
disaster you just know your perceptions
of a natural disaster which is in your
own mind and it's like your perceptions
are really controlling your samsaric
existence and your perceptions are
completely bound up with volition or
Karma so it's like you're dreaming your
way through samsara in a sense although

there's more Law and Order in this

version of reality than in our sleeping

dreams but we don't need to get into the

reasons for that right

now

so yeah

it's uh Gaz here seems to be assuming

like most westerners do that the

material

world is real and that it exists even if

there's nobody perceiving it

and I just don't buy

it and I mean it's in a way the Buddha

was kind of like Emmanuel Kant in

Western philosophy where he makes the

mind really Central to our

experience so that but he kind of I mean

at least in the Terra voden texts like a physical universe is still accepted as out there but it becomes almost Superfluous because really the mind is number one and so just as with the bu just as with Kant you know many of his successors just became idealists you know he he was like the founder of the German idealist School of like the 19 century um where they were just they were just rejecting the physical world it's it's all just a manifestation of mind because I mean the physical world was just kind of Superfluous I mean k i acknowledge you couldn't prove that it exists he just assumed it was out there

in some form and the Buddha was kind of
doing something similar where you know
he he emphasized the importance of mind
but still kind of left open at least
according to the poly text the existence
of a an outward empirical universe
that's there even if nobody's observing
it but later schools of Buddhism like
the many Mahayana schools just abandon
that you know it's sort of like they
became like the German
idealists so I have uh digressed I think
until I need to read this some more in
order to get back to the
question he brings this rebuttal up in
further detail to The Janes a few of my
assumptions regarding Comm or clear

um

okay let's see here yeah it makes sense

to me that natural disasters illnesses

even other situations could potentially

just be the results of living in the

natural world yeah the living in the

natural world which I don't think is

real and probably most Buddhists at

least most Buddhist philosophers don't

because probably most of the Buddhist

philosophers are

mahays see but even even in terraa that

the physical Universe even though it's

it's accepted as out there it's it's

just radically different from in a way

it's sort of like science where science

acknowledges there's a material world
out there but I mean it has very little
to do with our perception of it you know
our perception of the world is just
radically radically different from the
actual
reality so let's see
here let's see be a supernatural not
necessarily due to one's common although
it is likely it is certainly appears to
play a big role however regarding all of
this I appreciate this ultimately there
is no self imp prence suffering
remaining regardless if that suffering
is the result of comma natural or
Supernatural forces is this a correct
assessment of things well don't be too

sure that the physical universe is

real don't be too sure that the tree

that falls in the forest when nobody's

around to to hear it even Falls at all

that there's even a tree out there if

there's no no conscious being perceiving

it

so yeah is it a a correct assessment of

things um there is ultimately no correct

assessment of things it's going to be

all of it's going to be incorrect or at

least it's going to be

invalid so I mean the Buddha was wise

when he discouraged even trying to to

figure out comma that you can go insane

trying to understand commas is what it

says in the

texts but

uh but the mind is number one the mind

is the

Forerunner everything is mind made I

mean that's that's verse number one in

the in the DAP although again the DAP is

is one of those texts where they have to

redefine I mean at least D the first

verse of the DAP has to get redefined so

when it's says Mano Pang D manoo Maya

was which means mind is the Forerunner

of

Damas and that they are they have mind

as Chief they are mindmade and Buddha

Goa the the commentator you know giving

the official position of terana Buddhism

says that Damas here means mental States
and then he's turning it into a an Abid
dama uh depth psychology statement where
he's saying that mind is consciousness
Consciousness is the Forerunner of
mental states which is untrue and then
he has to say well it's not true but the
Buddha said it because of this or that
reason because Consciousness and mental
states have to be simultaneous one
doesn't come before the other
one so dhama is notoriously uh difficult
to translate because it has so many
possible definitions but here it it just
means like phenomenal PHA or
things I don't think it means just

mental States except to the extent that phenomena or things are really Perceptions in our mind which are mental States oh this is I mean I I get sort of dizzy trying to talk about this kind of stuff sometimes because really it's I mean with regard to most people probably I could explain and explain and explain until I'm blue in the face I'm just EX exhausted and still they won't get it just because as I mentioned I think it was the previous Q&A sometimes you have to be able to think at two different levels simultaneously you know like the the conventional and the ultimate you know or you know the the conditional and the unconditioned know you have to be

able to kind of see things from two
different perspectives simultaneously
and I think most people just can't do it
I mean there are some people that never
get to the level of formal operations
just like for example just thinking of a
statement um with regard to its
structure or it its logical validity
most people really or I won't say most
people most children can't think that
way and there are a significant number
of adults I've read that there are
actual entire cultures that never get
above that level where you just cannot
play Devil's Advocate you cannot for
example argue a position that you don't

do not personally believe it just makes
no sense to you that you just can't do
it
psychologically so where how I got to
that statement from this question is
questionable oh yeah just the difficulty
of trying to
explain like Sam Sara and its relation
to reality when you have to be thinking
at two different levels simultaneously
because Samara is not ultimately real
this phenomenal world we live in is not
ultimately real
that it's like a a perceptual
construct so I think I'll just move on
to
uh scroll way up here yeah Gau Gaz I'll

just move on to gaz's next question

which is a shorter

question and I think I can actually uh

answer this

one how do views on comma differ between

Buddhists and

Janes which is an interesting question

and the for starters The Janes

considered K to be like a quasi material

substance it was in a way this

metaphysical sticky goo that sticks to

your soul or your Jiva and weighs you

down so that your soul doesn't just

float up into this Heaven of Eternal

Bliss and uh so they don't really accept

the Buddhist interpretation of karma as

essentially volition mental state like
The Janes think that even if you step on
a bug accidentally you're still making
Bad Karma that it's not just a matter of
volition that you can do something even
unknowingly or accidentally and it still
counts as bad karma which is why Janes
will have like a soft grass broom and
will be sweeping the ground in front of
them as they walk so they won't
accidentally step on a bug and then make
Bad Karma even though they're not trying
to step on a bug
and I mean they're just The Janes are
more inclined to think that something
completely inadvertent something
completely

unconscious is still going to make Bad
Karma or just karma in
general if you do it because they do not
accept the Buddhist idea that karma is a
mental state that it is will or
volition so also The Janes believe that
the goal is to exhaust your karma and
this is an idea that probably goes back
to the Indus the prehistoric Indus
Valley Civilization before the Indo
Arians ever arrived in India that
there's this idea that you've got this
Karma that for the Janes is like way
sticking to their gva or their soul and
weighing it down so they got to get rid
of all their karma not just the Bad

Karma but the good karma too they got to
get rid of all Karma that stick into
their soul and weighing it down whereas
from a Buddhist point of view even a
fully enlightened being even the Buddha
himself is still going to have residual
Karma they're not making any new Karma
because they've just gone beyond that
but still like the momentum of of past
karmic actions is still having an effect
on on their life and still
arising
so those would be some of the main
differences between the uh Buddhist and
Jane ideas of karma
and so I'm going to move on to the next
question here which is from pranav and

pranav says have you ever been to India
if yes where have you traveled and I did
go to India spent like three weeks in
India before I came to Burma I was I was
a monk in at a Burmese Monastery in
California and then my teacher who at
least he became my teacher eventually um
Tulu chelen doya
or also known as paku Seattle he came to
America and then um I went back to Burma
with him with with his retinue
essentially because he was kind of a big
shot in the Tulu tradition he was
probably the most senior and
authoritative monk in the tong Pulu
tradition after Tong Pulu Seattle

himself passed away so first we went to Japan spent like a week or so in Japan then we went to Thailand and spent like 10 days in Thailand and then we went to India and we went mainly for the Buddhist pilgrimage stuff so we flew into Kolkata we rented a Tata mini buus I think it was or a matador a matador mini buus and then we just went to the the main sites the main places that the Buddha went to except we did not go to Nepal because um Tom Pulu or chelon chelon Seattle pooku seatt he uh he had trouble with Customs getting into to Nepal on a previous trip so he just decided we'll just avoid we won't go to lumini we won't go to where the Buddha

was allegedly born but we went to the

other main sites you know we went

to H what

sarut and we went to

uh bodia of course that was one of the

first place we went to we went to Nanda

University we stopped off there we

stopped off at sawati to see you know

where

the uh anat pindas Park was and so forth

and we went to we went to those pl we

went to all of the main Buddhist

um like pilgrimage places went to like

vulture Peak Raja gaha I tried to find

the the Black Rock e Gilly C but

couldn't find it um so yeah we just we

just did the main Buddhist pilgrimage

thing and then we came back to Thailand

spent another week there and then went

to to

Burma so I'll just move on the next

question here this is from Mara made

Mahayana who I'm pretty sure is also

bodis sat

969 and he says is that correct question

mark but then he continues he says the

venerable langang P laav wrote in his

biography or autobiography anyone quote

anyone can practice vasuta or parata

except for the Mad the feeble-minded the

person who Behavior has sunk below the

level of human because they do not have

the appropriate conditions to practice

yes they are indeed human but they are fourth class human that is why the Supreme teacher has not allowed the Mad the feeble-minded the person whose Behavior has sunk below the level of human to be ordained but if this is not known at the time of ordination and they receive ordination and it is discovered after ordination then they must be expelled that is made to be disrupt because they have not fully attained humanity and when questioned before the S reg regarding the obstacles to ordination they did not correctly answer manoso which means are you a man or are you a human being and they simply

answered am aand or yes sir they did not agree with the truth because they are mad or feeble-minded unquote well no I I think that the venerable ajan here is mistaken with regard to his understanding of winia that uh let's say a person is feeble-minded or insane then as a general rule they won't be ordained just like the Abbot will know this person really they don't have the mental wherewithal to follow the vinia rules and to understand dhama and so forth so they might just be like a a an adult novice at the monastery every once in a while you you go to a monastery in Burma they'll be like an adult novice there

who usually is like simple-minded or
he's old and and sort of like scile or
something or or he's just kind of
nutty and um you know they just don't
ordain them as a monk but if they are
ordained once you're
ordained then you can't just be kicked
out again it just doesn't work that way
there's even a special provision there
was a a monk named Gaga in the texts who
would just have like these psychotic
episodes and he didn't get kicked out it
was just that there's a special
provision if a monk goes really insane
and he he can't even recall what he
did he's not responsible for his action

so he can't really break rules so if a
monk goes just totally he's has like a
psychotic episode you know he's just
completely out of it he doesn't recall
it afterwards I mean he could even like
rape a woman or something I'm pretty
sure and it
won't I mean it won't be counted against
him because you know it's like pleading
Insanity in in like modern Western law
that I mean he was not responsible for
his actions he didn't even remember
doing it so then as the wise guy Junior
Mona thinking well what happens if you
just get really drunk and black out and
just go on a spree I mean you you don't
remember the next day then you're off

the hook except for maybe drinking in
the first place you'd still be
responsible for
that so yeah I mean you should not
ordain the mad or the feeble-minded and
the person whose behavior is sunk below
the level of human I mean they're not
even going to want to be ordained anyway
unless maybe they're like a criminal
who's hiding from the police and wants
to hide out in a monastery that actually
happens uh or at least it did happen in
uh Stockton
California where there were gangs in
Stockton California including Cambodian
gangs and some of the Cambo Cambodian

gang members if uh you know the police
were were hunting them you know they
they were you know the police were after
them they would hide out in a monastery
they'd be ordained as monks temporarily
so you'd had Buddhist monks with like
hot rods and guns at this Monastery this
Cambodian Monastery in Stockton I don't
know if it's still that way but uh
anyways um you know once you're ordained
nobody can kick you out the only person
that can kick out a monk after he has
been
ordained is himself by either disrobing
or committing a paraja offense which
gets him
excommunicated

um the only possible exception to that would be an ordination that was just totally invalid let's say you've got a trans man who doesn't have a a scrotum filled with two testicles who gets ordained as a beu then that is not an ordination because you have to have testicles in order to be ordained as a beu so even if they were ordained they went to the ceremony they found the politically correct you know Progressive monks to do it and everything still they're not ordained as a as a monk because they're technically not a man not biologically so I mean in in a case like

that then once it is acknowledged that
the person is not biologically male then
I mean they're just declared not a monk
they're not kicked out of the S because
they were never in it you know the
ordination just didn't it didn't catch
traction at all it just didn't work but
someone who is feeble-minded or nutty
you know they're having a lucid moment
when when they're being ordained and the
monks just assume that they're okay then
yeah they're still a monk there's no
rule saying that if if you
are you you're like feeble-minded or
something I mean there's feeble-minded
monks in the texts you know there's like
the Dullard there's a story I think it's

in the commentaries about there's uh two brothers and one of them was wise the other one was just real feeble-minded but they liveed together at the same Monastery and everything and uh so he the the dard just wasn't making much progress as you might expect and so the Buddha gave him a special meditation technique because the Buddha could just look right into you and see you know what would work you know he could he could look into you and see what kind of meditation technique would work best for you so he just gave him a piece of white cloth this this D and just he told him just keep rubbing the cloth and I can't

remember he was supposed to think
something about it being clean or
something I can't remember exactly but
he's he's just rubbing this cloth and so
there was some sort of formal Act of the
S and uh the the dard was he's left
behind at the monastery you know
sweeping or whatever and so he had to be
there because all the members of the S
have to be present at a formal act so uh
somebody was sent to go fetch him but
because the Dullard had become
enlightened and had attain psychic
powers due to this this meditation
technique that he had multiplied his
body into many many copies of his own
body to get the sweeping done faster and

so the person the monk comes back you know with wide eyes saying I went to to fetch him and there's like 20 of them so then the Buddha just says pick one at random and bring him

so um I mean this is a case it's from the commentary but it's Orthodox tradition and it's not in violation of wiia that you can have like a simple-minded monk who is ordained and he's not kicked out when people realize he's simple-minded or feeble-minded and then there was Gaga who was insane but he he wasn't kicked out of the S either it's the only person that can kick a genuine monk out of the

S is that monk

himself so yeah I just to make a long

story even longer um I think the

venerable ajan here that is being quoted

by maram Mahayana is just mistaken with

regard to his understanding of winia

which doesn't surprise me because Tha

monks are not as a general rule they're

not nearly as much into scholarship as

the Burmese the Burmese I mean it's just

astonishing they are phenomenal Scholars

a lot of them you know they can just

quote and quote and quote from texts you

know they just know it all forwards and

backwards but uh the ties partly because

a few hundred years ago the Burmese

sacked the capital city of Thailand

which was aoda at the time which was the center of their ecclesiastical structure and their ecclesiastical educational system like the universities and everything that all collapsed as a result and it never fully recovered so that Thai monks will often say things that I mean it's just laughable to a Burmese monk or a monk ordain in a Burmese tradition they're getting the the meanings of poly words completely wrong for example like I think it was aan Lee dadar had this little booklet and an Australian monk gave it to me once to read because he thought it was hilarious because aan Lee damad daro

despite being a meditation Master he
just didn't know poly well enough he's
just butchering the poly getting the
meanings of things wrong and so
forth and you a way I mean it goes both
ways for for taii monks because they're
not Scholars or a lot of them aren't
they they rely more on their own
personal experience which if they're
meditation Masters that can actually be
helpful because the burmes are just
dogmatists I mean for them first and
foremost is what the book says if your
own personal experience doesn't agree
with it your own personal experience is
wrong because the book absolutely has to
be 100% correct even if it's commentary

even if it's sub

commentary so in that sense uh the

sacking of

aoda uh was not entirely a bad thing I

mean had some Badness involved in it

especially the people who were there

when it was being

sacked but

um yeah the the ties are not nearly as

scholarly in their Terra Buddhism as the

Burmese but that goes both ways because

they're also just less

dogmatic but in this case I think he

just did not

understand need didn't to understand the

subtleties of the the rules of monastic

discipline with regard to ordination
status but it is true that at your
ordination every Monk Is asked manuso
which means are you a man or are you a
human being and then you say amab band
which means yes
sir but I mean just because a person uh
has engaged in depravity or whatever
doesn't mean that they're not human I
mean the original question of asking if
you're human or not was to prevent
superhuman or supernatural beings or
like shapeshifting Cobra dragons from
assuming human form and then being
ordained as a monk
but a Naga or Cobra Dragon um they're
technically an animal and they can't

become enlightened because of that
according to Orthodox terraa or just
ancient Indian belief at the time so
it's just just kind of pointless for
them to be ordained into the
songa so anyway I do feel a certain
amount of satisfaction that I am able to
actually answer certain questions in a
way that is fairly straightforward
instead of just engaging in trying to
decipher or interpret what the question
means and then get into just wallow into
all these subtleties and so forth so
that when I get to the end of it I'm not
even sure if I've answered the question
or not but I think I answered that one

so then I'm going to move on to uh Mara made mahay's second question here and this is a a quote just as a log from a funeral bonfire which is glowing at both ends and smeared with excrement in the middle cannot serve as wood either in the village or in the forest so I say monks is that person who neither works for his own good nor for the good of others but the person who works for the good of others not far not for his own good is the higher the better of these two people and the person who works for his own good not for the good of others is the higher the better of these three people unquote so that's a quote from the the sutas and then Maha made

Mahayana says isn't that a very clear point for terraa compared to Mahayana and self-proclaimed Warriors of Justice well I mean for a Mahayana Buddhist I mean they're not going to care much about what the terraa Buddhists say because they're heists of the deficient vehicle so um but it is there is some wisdom in what the Buddha was saying that I mean if you don't help yourself or others that's just the inferior position to help others without helping yourself is better than not helping anybody but still to help yourself without helping others is superior to helping others without helping

yourself and there is wisdom in that and
that really a person who tries to help
others but they don't cultivate their
own wisdom they don't know how to help
others very well and they often just
make things
worse whereas if you're going to help
others I mean in order really to help
others as much as possible you have to
help yourself as much as possible
because by helping yourself as much as
possible it makes you more able to help
others as much as possible you know like
I was saying earlier the Buddha he had
helped himself to the extent that he
could just look right into another
person and see how to help them the

best so I mean as as a junior monk at
the monastery every morning we had to uh
or every evening too we had to recite
this statement by helping others one
helps oneself by helping oneself one
helps others which is true and one of
the best ways of helping others isn't
just working in a soup kitchen or
something there's nothing at all wrong
with working at a soup kitchen and
helping people that way but the best way
I have found of helping people is
through example that you're not even
trying to help them you're just you
trying to get your own life you know in
order you know cleaning your own room as

Jordan Peterson would say you know
you're just tending your own garden as
voler would say and other people observe
that and they're inspired by it like I
had I was living in a big school
monastery near Mandalay mahag gandai on
for over a year and a few times I had
monks come up to me Burmese monks
thanking me because I went for alms
round every day you didn't have to go
for alms r at mahag Gand and had a big
dining hall or lunch Hall breakfast Hall
and people would come and donate food to
the monks every day so going for alms in
the village was completely optional it
wasn't necessary but I just did it
anyway I just wanted to to live on alm's

food and uh some monks were seeing me do that I had no idea that I was being observed in this way and then they were inspired by that because that's the way the ancient Buddhist monks did it that's the way it says to do it in the text and everything so they tried it and they really liked it and then they came and thanked me for it and there were a few cases where I was instructed to teach usually vinia because I was one of the most knowledgeable persons with regard to vinia at certain monasteries that I was living at that there'd be like some Western te there was a western teenage boy who was ordained as a novice at

mahag gandon once and I was asked
because I spoke
English more fluently than anybody else
and I knew vinia better than a lot of
the people there it was it was a school
Monastery so there were a lot of people
who knew vinia there even though most of
them didn't follow it but anyways I was
asked to teach this te this this German
teenage boy about the rules for novices
because he was being ordained as a
temporary novice there and he just
obviously wasn't interested you know so
like you you do your best to teach
somebody and I mean he's just kind of
looking around and he'd be I mean he'd
rather be somewhere else he was just

doing it because he was told to do it or
like when I was in
California um I was teaching the the
teenage kids of Burmese immigrants about
dhama and again they they were there
just because their parents sent them
they weren't really interested and when
I gave the the final exam every single
one of them failed the
exam they couldn't even get like the
fourble truths right so trying to help
people it doesn't often
work um but helping yourself I mean
trying to help yourself doesn't always
work either so I mean there's that too
but in order to help others best I mean

you have to help yourself as well as you can and then it's it just goes both ways I mean helping others helps you and then helping yourself in really does help others which again reminds me of the saying by St John of the cross in one of his one of his books where he's saying that you know you got two people one person is just feeding the hungry and putting clothes on people dressed in rags and finding homes for homeless people and tending to the sick and just helping people all the time 247 or when they're not asleep or something and on the other hand you got a person alone in a Cell pla practicing High contemplation which would be like Janna from a

Buddhist point of view that he says the person who is helping the world most is the second person who is practicing Janna because that person he's not just you know attending to the superficialities of you know just putting Band-Aids on on wounds that he's raising the overall consciousness of the world this is not what St John of the Cross would that's not how he would explain it but that's how I would explain it that you're actually raising the level of Consciousness in your area and in the world in general which is helping the world more than say just an ordinary Normie who's got a good heart

who is you know feeding the hungry and
so forth not that that is bad at all
it's just that getting into superhuman
mental States raising the level of
Consciousness is more important in the
long run and it is more beneficial in
the long
run
also it kind of reminds me of The
Diamond Cutter Sutra which says that
it's the same thing you got one person
who's just you know feeding the sick and
or feeding the hungry and tending to the
sick and all that and you got one
another person who memorizes just one
stanza of The Diamond Cutter Sutra and
teaches it to others that he is actually

helping the world

more because what he's doing is profound

it's it's it's it goes deeper than the

first

person but

as it says um in some poly text or other

that I can't remember the source of it

by helping others you help yourself and

by helping yourself you help

others

so

yeah I mean some Mahayana Buddhists will

say that terraa Buddhists are selfish

and cowardly and so forth you know

they're just trying to save themselves

but you have to save yourself first I

mean if you're going to help somebody
get out of a burning building you've got
to find the way out first otherwise
you're just leading people around in a
burning building and none of you get out
but it's better to find the way out and
then if you're so inclined come back in
and help others to get out than just
stay in the burning building and put
dressings on the burn
victims so I think uh I think I'll just
move on to the next question because
this is turning into another long
Q&A and this is from skolin it's like
Aladdin with skull at the beginning
skolin and he says I was reading a neim
karoli baba book which you had

recommended in a previous vid there was
an anot anecdote about karmic healers in
the process of taking on Karma would you
happen to have any experiences with that
and then he says the only time I've ever
heard of that exact process is from the
Amish community and I didn't know that
Amish even believed in karma but uh it
is true that um in ROM Do's books
including the book that he's referring
to which is Miracle of love stories
about Nim Koli Baba he talks about how
some Hindu gurus will take on the karma
of their
devotees and they'll do it in various
ways Nim Koli Baba mainly did it through

food like one time ROM dos gave him a
bag of oranges and neim karoli Baba just
started stuffing oranges into his mouth
he's just eating all these oranges and
ROM do was kind of surprised by this
until it was explained to him that he's
like processing some of your karmic like
I don't know malfunctions or
irregularities or something by doing
this and then ROM dos talks about how
there's um there was another famous Guru
I think he lived in South India who did
it the same thing with cigarettes people
would give him cigarettes and he'd be
smoking like five six cigarettes at a
time just just kind of somehow burning
through the other person's Karma and

that's a Hindu thing from the Buddhist point of view it should be impossible that each person's karma is their own Kamas you know each everyone's karma is their own so actually processing somebody else's Karma helping to burn off somebody else's Karma I mean you could do it through teaching them or through certain experiences that would affect their karma you know that would facilitate them working out some kind of karma but just taking on their karma and running it through your own system so to speak that's uh a Hindu thing but not a Buddhist thing not that I've ever heard of I mean if if any any Buddhists do

that Buddhist mon maybe in Thailand
again where they're not Scholars a lot
of them aren't Scholars and U they might
think that it's it's completely legit
whereas a Buddhist like a a dogmatist
scholar monk in Burma would just say no
you can't do that at all that's
impossible so the only experiences I
have with that is reading about it in
books by ROM
dos so I guess I answered that one even
though it's not a very satisfactory
answer so I'm just going to move on to
scadden's next question here which is in
other parts of the book other than
advice people seem to treat neem karoli
Baba like some sort of spiritual Bitcoin

very unpredictable does whatever he he
does whatever he wants but has the
ability to raise everyone else's
spiritual value just by being around
them and then in parenthesis he's got
people's
meditation and then he says is this
cheating or would it be treated more
like technology like if someone's
shortsighted they would get fit with
glasses or perhaps something more
temporary like dropping acid to broaden
your horizons so so I mean he's asking
is it cheating like spiritual cheating
to get your Consciousness raised by
being in the presence of an enlightened

or extremely wise sage and no it's not
cheating at all I don't think so um I
mean how do you cheat spiritually I mean
any kind of cheating would be invalid I
mean if it really is making genuine
spiritual progress for you then it's
good you know it's not cheating so I
mean it's not cheating to have your
Consciousness raised by being the
presence of a person at a much higher
level of Consciousness in fact that's
good and that's like in the the mongal
suut it's a list of 38 blessings
blessing number one is avoiding the
company of Fools and blessing number two
is associating with the
wise because I mean mental states are

contagious if you hang out with foolish people you're going to get foolish foolish mental States through contagion if you hang out with wise people you're going to get wise mental States through through contagion and it's just going to lift your Consciousness like ROM dos was talking about how um people would just go into like deep meditative states in the presence of nimi Baba you know they'd be sitting for Daran they'd just be you know sitting around nimoli Baba and you know there'd be a person in the back just going into this deep trance State essentially and neim cly Baba would have people that that were called

Wreckers who would just go in and just
pester the people that were in deep
meditative states to get them out of the
deep meditative States because uh a lot
of them just weren't ready for it like
Ram do gives this example of one time he
got to visit maharaji in the evening
when all the people were had already
been sent away but he had to go there
for some reason and he's sitting there
and he wants to get in some meditation
um and he just gets into this meditative
state where his whole body is just
shaking and jerking with like P because
he's just not used to this deep of
meditation and finally um like maharaji
Nim CI Baba has to like you know shake

him out of it like one

time um R dos was going into this deep

meditative State and then neim cly Baba

who of course knew what what the mental

states of the people around him were

like he's he's he would just like keep

interrupting him you know he'd keep

interfering with his meditation by just

asking him you know how much money does

so and so make you know just these dumb

worldly questions to to to bring him out

of these meditative States because you

know they just it's like you're not he

wasn't ready for it or something and

neem cly Baba knew

this

so yeah it's it's not it's not cheating
just to have your Consciousness raised
by being in the presence of a of a wise
person is actually highly advised in the
texts that that's actually something you
should be trying to
do so yeah all right so then I'm going
to go on to scadden's next question here
I've heard of people dream journaling in
an effort to reinforce their
Consciousness so that they could achieve
lucid dreaming is there any technique
for sleep
meditation and then he says I'd assume
it would need a different method since
it would be a lower State of
Consciousness than basic meditation

deals with and I mean I've heard of a

lot about lucid

dreaming but I haven't really heard much

if anything about meditating in your

dreams and I assume that's what he's

referring to that you train yourself to

lucid dream so that you can continue

meditating in your dreams at night and I

assume it's been done I mean I've kind

of done that in dreams just haphazardly

you know not a lucid dream but just in a

dream I've I've been meditating

um

so yeah it's I mean what happens in

dreams is really a kind of gray area

according to like Terra Buddhist

philosophy like let's say you kill
somebody in a dream I mean are you
making bad karma for doing that I assume
there would be a little bit a little bit
of like dreamy wispy kind of karma
involved but it certainly wouldn't be as
bad as actually killing somebody like
you know in the the bigger more more
like higher level dream that we're in
now
so yeah I mean lucid dreaming I'm not
sure what the actual advantages are of
lucid dreaming although it does seem
that being an enlightened being in this
samsaric world is like being a lucid
dreamer whereas most of us are just you
know just in the dream and thinking that

it's

real so is there any technique for sleep

sleep meditation I assume assume you

would first cultivate lucid dreaming and

then have the the

intention of just sitting down to

meditate in your dream I mean that's I

assume how you do it and I assume you do

it pretty much as the same as when

you're awake I mean if if you're good at

doing anapana you usually do anapana

just mindfulness of breathing then you

do that in in the the lucid dream too I

suppose it might be easier to get

psychic powers from meditation in your

dreams you might be able to fly easier

that kind of

thing so well that's kind of weird

there's a

water wonder how that happened there's a

a flower pot rolling around just right

outside the window maybe the wind did

it anyways so I guess I answered that

question so I'm going to move on to uh

the next question which is from

Newman this is turning into a long one I

knew this is going to be a long

one and Newman says what do you think of

platonism and its similarities to advita

vant essentialist Eastern metaphysical

traditions and um with regard to

platonism I mean first of all you've got

the original platonism which is the

teachings of Plato and I've read most of Plato's dialogues and I'm really am not impressed by Plato at least as he is represented in the the socratic dialogues um yeah I don't think he went nearly far enough but then you've got neoplatonism which came after and um I mean I've read that that platonism just went through phases like shortly after Plato died that his Academy I think it was he was called it was called The Academy the place that he was teaching and if I'm not confusing him with Aristotle that uh there was like a a period where it was like hardcore Skeptics had pretty much taken over

Plato's school and then after that you
got into neoplatonism like with plotinus
and and uh what was it poery I
think
so um I assume that the I mean it's the
neoplatonism of somebody like plotinus
that comes much closer to vant than the
actual teachings of platonism of of
Plato I
mean but I mean they're very similar I
mean you've got like the highest the
highest truth you the good in in like
the the philosophy of of platinus and
like Brahman in in in like uh bant and
then like one stage below that you've
sort of got the Demi urge you know
you've got like the force that is just

dividing up this infinite potential into
various manifestations and that would be
like Maya in in Hinduism or vant I I'm
not sure if there's much emphasis I
really like in some Hinduism you've got
Brahma as the personification of
Ultimate Reality he's like the Creator
God in a sense and his consort is Maya
who actually is the one who's like the
Creator God because Maya is the one
who's just spinning off the phenomenal
universe and then below that you got
another level
of um the rolling flower pots
distracting me you got you've got just
the level of you know all the the

various beings the 10,000 Things theal Ching talks about so I mean in that sense it's very similar there's a lot of parallelism and it could be that plotinus was actually influenced by Indian philosophy there's there is some evidence supporting that so or it could just be that it was just independently um discovered you know in India and in wherever plotinus was when he was uh coming up with this stuff or whoever was teaching him but um there was uh there were some philosophers who had been to India had studied some Indian philosophy and then came back to like the Roman Empire Greece and the Roman

Empire so I mean there could have been
um some uh influence like vadic
influence on some of uh like Western
classical mysticism because plotinus is
essentially a Mystic and uh somebody
like Shan
who was one of the main teachers of vant
also was a Mystic and so their own like
meditative experiences are probably
going to be fairly similar you know the
higher up you go spiritually the more
similar the experiences become the down
at the bottom of the level of Dogma you
know it can be radically different but
the higher up you go the more the more
they

converge so it may be just a combination
of just empirical self-discovery
so to speak in two different
places and uh also a certain amount of
borrowing of ideas or just like exchange
of ideas especially from east to
west so let's
see yeah so I do think that they are
very similar although with regard to the
lower things like neoplatonism got very
much into like uh talk about like the
different levels of
different levels of archons and so forth
that the I'm pretty sure vadic uh viic
Pantheon really didn't go into that much
detail or didn't go about it in the same
way but the more high up you go the more

they they become

similar so I guess I answered that one

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

question this is from TIG and Tig says

can I get a Roman

salute and I assume he can I mean I

don't know what's what's preventing him

from getting a Roman salute the thing

with me is that I mean the farthest I

really am willing to go is a Romulan

salute which is like

this you know first you got to thump the

chest I mean even Captain Kirk did this

on an old an old episode of Star Trek

where the romulans when they would

salute they go like this with the chest

and then extend the arm but the a real
Roman salute really comes too close to
the Olympic salute which is racist and
sexist and and above all ableist because
the Olympics I mean they only give
medals to people who are physically fit
as a general rule and that's just
ableism that's just rank ableism and so
I won't do the Olympic salute which is
the same as the Roman salute but the
Romulan salute I can
do but also right below TIG asked if he
could get a Roman
salute Liber Lam also said Is it true
that we can get a Roman salute with a
bicep Flex with the other arm and
theoretically that is that is uh you

could probably get that but the Roman
salute it's it's just too similar I mean
it's essentially the same as the Olympic
salute and the Olympic salute is racist
and sexist and ableist so we can't do
that on this show and so finally I'm
going to move on to the very last
question the very last one
after about two and a half hours of
rambling away and this is from White Ash
Piper and white ash Piper says I'm
curious as to what convinced you about
Karma why do you feel it a certain
reality or true and as I was saying you
know well over an hour ago I really
don't consider anything to be a certain

reality especially the perceptual level
because I mean there's always a certain
amount of of uncertainty involved and
just the limitations of perception as a
tool to actually understanding
reality but uh so I I don't consider
Karma to be just absolutely certain I
mean I'm just not sitting here telling
you just like as an authority I know
that karma is is real and if you do this
then you're going to have certain
consequences and so forth that is a fact
no I I really don't swing that way um I
mean for starters certain aspects of
karma are just obvious just I mean if
karma is volition as Buddhism says it is
if karma is will then if there is will

then there is karma because they are
synonyms also I think it was the last
Q&A I'm talking about how one
manifestation of karma that even the
average material cannot deny is that
karma is like the the automatic pilot
it's just the the force of habit that
that gets us through life so that we
don't have to wake up all the way you
know you just get into this habit of
doing a certain thing it might not even
make you particularly happy might make
you miserable but it's gotten you
through life thus far and so it just
becomes this habit that you
just you just don't change and we're

governed by habit

and then I mean you don't have to be

fully awake it's just the Habit The

Habit takes over and runs it for you and

you can be like in a semi stuper going

through through life much of the time

just just sort of acting on knee-jerk

reflex just force of habit and that is

that is a manifestation of

karma but with regard to deeper

metaphysical um aspects of karma one of

the main reasons why I accept Karma as a

working

hypothesis is that I do not believe that

this physical world really exists that

it is a manifestation of Mind of mental

states of

perceptions and so I mean if this
physical world isn't existing then I
mean what is causing the stability of
our
perceptions and that would be Karma also
and uh just I've read so much you know
like neim Koli Baba ROM dos and and many
other books those are like I began with
ROM dos books I had a a youth counselor
give me ROM Doss books to read when I
was like 16 17 years old 17 I
think and uh I just intuitively accepted
it you know these people obviously knew
better than I did and uh it was like
just like yeah it's just intuitively I
could accept it wholeheartedly even if I

didn't understand it yet like a lot of
things I've accepted just intuitively
like this world is an illusion I mean I
accepted that and just enthusiastically
accepted it long before I could could
really begin to grasp it it just felt
true it just just intuitively it just
struck a cord and it was like yes it was
it was just this feeling of that's
it and Karma just helps to explain you
know
why this universe is the way it is um in
a sense that I mean I cannot fall back
on
materialism because I just cannot accept
materialism so that that would be I mean
I'm not 100% absolutely convinced about

anything that's just it I mean

perception is delusion anyway or

Illusion at best so anything that's in

this samsaric world is is is going to be

illusory to some degree and that would

include Karma also that would include

dhama at least uh everything below the

ultimate level of

it so I accept it as a working

hypothesis just like I accept the

enlightenment of the Buddha as a working

hypothesis or at least the extreme

wisdom of the

Buddha

so yeah I'm not uh 100% convinced at a

perceptual level of of really much of

anything or I don't consider anything to
be a certain reality because and if
there is a certain reality it's it's
beyond the level of of like perceiving
it all we can deal with is is just
perceptions which are this symbols and
illusory
besides so I don't know how
satisfactorily I answered that one but I
did answer it and that was the last one
and so I'm going to put on this Fez
again because I said I was going
to man trying to get it on right is kind
of tricky when you don't have a
mirror there you go I
guess so you know the drill if you got
any questions about anything you think I

can answer economics is not on the list
of things that I'm good at answering so
economics questions it's it's a it's a
long shot that I'll be able to answer it
but if you got any questions about you
know Buddhism Buddhist philosophy you
know Karma
meditation Burma monasticism that sort
of thing or just about me personally I'm
generally pretty good at answering
questions about myself personally
because I've got some experience with
myself personally then just ask them in
the questions below if you have access
to the Discord server you can ask them
there if you have access to my subscribe

star account you can ask them there and
like And subscribe and if there's still
no URL links underneath this video
because YouTube banned me for like two
months from putting URL links because I
was too forthright in answering a
certain question on a certain forbidden
subject then you can find my URL links
under my videos on bitshoot or Rumble
which you might be you might be watching
this now on bitshoot or Rumble and good
for you because YouTube is uh it's
really not ideal and it's one of the
purposes of YouTube is to promulgate a
certain globalist narrative that is
pretty much largely
hogwash

so um I guess that's it and so in

addition to all that I will just say be

happy and then I'll push this stop

recording button twice I

think

all right hello and welcome to episode
87 of question and answer I am your host
pel basa and just in case you can't see
me because of me wearing this camo shirt
I'm right in the middle of the screen if
you look very carefully you should be
able to see me we got lots of
questions more than the usual number so
this is almost certainly going to be
well above 2 hours is long and so I
advise you all to pause this video right
now and go potty and then come back and
and watch the video because it's going
to be a while I have this
feeling so without any further
Ado I'm going to uh start answering

questions and the first question is from

Mara made Mahayana also known as buddhis

sat

969 and Mara made Mahayana

says I recently had a discussion with my

Thai wife and stepdaughter about the ca

of no

killing I asked them why many lay

followers in

Thailand take the five cilas in the

temple but then kill fish at home for

example they told me something like it's

important not to kill for

fun and in parenthesis he's got

intention and that I would eat meat

myself I have to say I find this

hypocritical attitude of the cultural

Buddhists in Thailand very annoying
because the Buddhist teachings are
actually crystal clear and the Buddha
ate meat but didn't kill anyone who
wants to hunt or butcher is welcome to
do so but not to take on the five cilas
is it the same in
Myanmar well it's yeah it's it's fairly
similar in Myanmar the Burmese are more
conservative and traditionalists than
the ties who have taken on much
more modern and postmodern Western
culture and I think the the ties have in
general been a more sensual kind of
people than the Burmese who are very
stoic or

Spartan in their approach to life but
yeah there's always going to be this
kind of stuff in just about any religion
too I might add like Christianity you
know the Bible is very clear that I mean
you can't get married and then get
divorced and then get married again you
know it just doesn't work that way but I
mean it it happens all the time or
Christianity says gather not up your
Treasures upon the Earth you know it
warns again and again and again against
being rich how you should be poor but of
course Christians don't like that part
and so they conveniently ignore it as a
general
rule so I've lived in places in Burma

like uh

um when I was living in a forest

Monastery between lameier Village and

one bow Village on the shores of the

chindwin river the people there were

relatively very very serious about

keeping

CA if they I mean a lot of them really

did keep five

precepts so they'd be very careful not

to eat fertile eggs now fertile chicken

eggs that kind of a thing and I remember

one of my main supporters

her family was just scandalized and and

and shamed because her brother married

the daughter of a

fisherman and of course a fisherman

kills animals for a living it's very un

Buddhist and so it was very sort of low

class you know just sort of a a low

status kind of a person that would be

not only a fisherman but even the

daughter of a

fisherman but even so I mean there's

lots of people in Burma who think that

you just get Merit for taking five

precepts even if you have no intention

of keeping all

five

so this sort of thing does happen maybe

not quite so much as in Thailand but

it's going to happen just because of

human nature being what it is it happens

in all religions all over the world and
uh so I mean it's it's also just a law
of Economics that uh if you can make
money by doing something there's going
to be people doing it so if there's no
convenient Muslims in the village who
are The Village butcher there's going to
be a Buddhist person who is the village
butcher because people are going to eat
meat at least on Festival days that's
usually when burmes villagers eat the
most meat is like is essentially
Festival
days so it does happen it's not exactly
the same because Myanmar is not exactly
the same as

Thailand but I mean this kind of thing
is going to happen you're you're born
into a religion but you're not really
spiritually inclined you just go through
the motions just because it's the
culture and you know you're going to not
really take it very seriously or you're
just going to fudge on certain things
that are very inconvenient for you to
follow and it's just human nature so I'm
just going to move on to the next
question which is also from maram made
Mahayana which is is can one briefly say
that all
teachings uh or means of Buddhism such
as
ananas mindfulness Etc aim at

recognizing the non self through
dependent arising quenching The Thirst
for becoming and in parenthesis he's got
TNA and thus putting an end to suffering
through new arising in
samsara um can one briefly say it I'm
I'm not so sure how briefly one can say
it but I mean you could interpret
Buddhism that way there's there's lots
of different ways of interpreting
Buddhism you can say that the purpose of
Buddhism is to eliminate dukka which is
in the texts many times you can say that
the purpose of Buddhism is to eliminate
delusion so I mean that that's just as
true even though it's a different way of

looking at it you can say that the
purpose of Buddhism is to cause one to
you know see the three marks of
existence clearly and to eliminate one's
one's hindrances and so forth I mean
there's different ways of interpreting
the same thing so you could say that all
of them aim at recognizing
nonself through dependent arising
quenching The Thirst for becoming and
thus putting an end to suffering through
new arising in samsara or through maybe
he meant no new arising in samsar or no
arising in Sam
S so yeah I mean there's just different
ways that you can you can interpret it
and they're all equally valid I mean

there's lots of invalid ways of

interpreting it too

but there isn't just one way of

explaining you know the purpose of

dhamma I like even the highest purpose

you lower purpose you know as most

practicing Buddhists aren't even

attempting to

um like stop being reborn cuz a lot of

people most people want to continue

being alive and so they're mainly just

earning Merit so that they can become

they can be rich and beautiful in their

next life or maybe even be a like a a

small G God in heaven that sort of

thing so I think I answered that one

too so that's two in a row I've answered
so I'm going to move on to the next one
also from maram Mahayana and he says the
Thai Netflix series Believers also deals
with the topic of corrupt Buddhism or at
least that's how it seems to me among
other things it's about a forest monk
who becomes a city Monk and therefore
has to accept gifts of money and perform
a number of Rights the Buddha himself
called not adhering to rituals and
rights a sign of a stream enterer or
soap
how can a Buddhist country simply ignore
so many of the Buddhist instructions now
I understand your stubbornness as a monk
such misinterpretation and hypocrisy

always really annoys me well this question is very similar to the first question because you know a lot of it still it's uh like this part how how can a Buddhist country simply ignore so many of the Buddha's instructions I mean it's the same in any religion especially a relatively Advanced religion that is hard to follow follow so of course like most Christians aren't going to sell all they have give the money to the poor and just take up their cross and start wandering the Earth casting out demons and Healing The Sick I mean it's most Christians couldn't do that even if they wanted to or they couldn't want to which

amounts to the same

thing and it's the same way in in uh

Buddhism too

um he mentioned something here's he

among other things it's about a forest

monk who becomes a city Monk and

therefore has to accept gifts of money

well actually he doesn't have to accept

gifts of money I mean he could just be a

hard-nosed monk and refuse to accept

gifts of money I mean that's that's an

option I mean he might get kicked out of

the monastery by LAX monks who resent

him like supposedly trying to make them

look bad because that's how a lot of LAX

monks will interpret a strict monk who

lives at their Monastery though the

Grumble against him and say he's just
showing off he's just trying to make
himself look good so he can be famous
he's trying to make us look bad because
of you know pernicious motives or
whatever but if he's a serious monk then
he won't accept gifts of
money and performing a number of Rights
I mean that's neither good nor bad I
mean I mean some serious monks will
perform rights I mean
especially if they're not Hermits living
out in the forest you know if they're
living in a village or a town you know
they'll be officiating at funerals for
example or you know they'll just be

doing the giving the the precepts and

the the three refugees like especially

on upos days you know the full moon the

new moon and the the half moon days um

so I mean there's nothing necessarily

wrong with

that so let's see

here corrupt Buddhism yeah well Buddhism

is corrupt even terava Buddhism is

corrupt in various ways and pretty much

all religions are corrupt to some degree

or

another so I guess I answered that one

too so I'm just going to move on to the

next question this is from

Prav and Prav says could you give the

chronology of your father's past

lives and I've mentioned some of my
father's past lives I think it was the
previous Q&A I mentioned one of his past
life
regressions and uh I wrote a blog post
um giving some details about my father's
past lives as he recalled them as the
result of
hypnotic past life regressions so my
father was an amateur hypnotist among
other things he was definitely an
Explorer in the realm of the occult you
know just experimented with lots of
things just trying to understand the
limits of the human mind or maybe
learning that ultimately there are no

limits that kind of a

thing and uh I could I can just sort of

give a rough chronology of the ones that

I know about he didn't claim to know all

of them he only seemed to remember about

six five or six past lives but there was

one that somebody asked a question about

this um yeah yeah it's it's the third

question cron ob's third question but my

father specifically wanted to remember

like the earliest past life that he

could possibly

remember and he just remembered being

very small and looking he was in a deep

forest and looking through some palm

fronds or not Palm FRS like Fern fronds

and the sunlight was filtering through

the the forest and just sort of
everything was all kind of sparkly and
golden where the light was shining
through and he was just fascinated by
that and that was like the earliest
memory of a past life that that he was
able to to extend his memory back into
or I mean if you want to be somewhat
skeptical or cynical you could say it's
you know his his uh imagination his
subconscious imagination coming to the
surface while in a hypnotic trance
because there's no way to prove I mean
how how are you going to prove that that
is really a past life
regression so so anyways then another

one of his past lives

was uh presumably the Roman soldier that

I that I described I think it was the

previous Q&A where he specifically

wanted to know what would be the turning

point in his series of

incarnations where it was it was like

the turning point that caused him to

come go into the direction that led to

where he is today and that was he was

some kind of ancient Soldier I'm

guessing Roman because he had a little

sword like this and he was at they were

at war with blond-haired

barbarians presumably

Germanic and uh he spared the life of a

teenage boy in that Village just through

compassion and then later on he felt
guilt for not doing his duty and killing
the teenage boy and went out looking for
him but didn't find him but even so even
though he regretted it afterwards still
that was like the first genuine
Compassion or at least the most
significant compassion that really
started to shift his perspective on life
and you know his his position among all
the other conscious beings in his world
so that would be another ancient one
and the one that he remembered the best
was a Scotsman named Jason Haskell who
presumably
who according to him probably lived in

like the 1700s or maybe very early
1800s and he was a
sailor um he did some exploring in fact
he died like in the foothills of the
Himalayas somewhere he was on like a
surveying party or something and uh he
picked up uh I mean they're they're on
Horseback going through this Trail
through the through the hills and he
sees a little like a a brass pot Lying
by the side of like sitting on the by
the side of the path and he wants to
pick it up one of the guides tells him
don't mess with that like a sham and put
that there to collect rainwater for some
purpose don't touch it but he picked it
up as a souvenir put it in his saddle

bags and they continued on their way and then a little later when they're setting up camp he's bending over to put the saddle of his horse onto a stump or something and an arrow came out of the bushes and caught him underneath the shoulder blade and came out his his neck and then he would always wake up from the the trance just coughing and choking um you know that would just snap him out of the trance whenever he' do that

regression I don't know how many times he did it but um that was one of the ones that he remembered the best you know he had a lot of memories from his

life as Jason Haskell then he had

another life after that like late

1800s um that he can barely recall at

all but he was uh a crazy Frenchman

named HRI Maro who was hanged by the

neck for rustling cattle in early

Montana

territory and then he became my dad and

uh unless I mean there might be one or

two that I'm just not recalling but um

those are the main past lives that my

father claimed to

remember he also had a lot of strange

memories of like astral traveling and so

forth but uh Prav didn't ask about that

and we got lots and lots of questions so

I'm just going to move on to PR's second

question here which is how can I have

more Vira as an indria and also as a

parami because I think I am very lazy

and it is affecting my life well in

order to translate that into

English how can I have more Vira Viria

means like energetic effort you know

like heroic

effort the word Vira in poly has the

same Proto indoeuropean atmology as the

word

virile in English or like the trium

virate in in uh in Latin or anglicized

Latin so it literally like ver literally

means like

man Vera means like hero like Maha Vira

the the reputed founder of of jism I
mean mahavira literally translates into
English as great hero so it's like
heroic effort or just manly effort Just
Energy you know strenuousness ardor
Vigor that kind of a thing and indria
generally means faculty there are five
indas or five faculties and AIA is one
of them and uh also parami is literally
literally means something like
perfection and there are 10 paries in
Terra Buddhism and Vira is one of those
see it's it's part of me number
five so how can you have more
energy um because you think you're too
lazy well that's that's a tough one
because I mean in order to change your

behavior you have to change your

perceptions so it could be that uh just

reflect on the fact that you're going to

die someday I mean that's like a

standard early Buddhist treatment for

laziness is just you know read sutas

that emphasize the inevitability of

death for example

or I mean for me one thing that helped

to cure me of of laziness for a while at

least when I was a relatively young monk

was going to see autopsies although that

may not work for

Prav it may not be uh possible to do

that wherever he is living right now but

I mean when you when you up close that

looking at a dead

person then uh really it's like a a kick

in the ass it's like you don't want to

waste time you know it's like life is

precious it's uh a rare opportunity to

be born as a human especially a rare

opportunity to be born as a human who

has the opportunity to hear damama

and

so um yeah you shouldn't be wasting what

limited time you've got at least that's

that's the official position in terot of

Buddhism it does make perfect sense

although I'm lazy

too so I

mean if you're lazy and you want to work

that into your practice I mean meditate

a lot because when you're meditating

you're just sitting there you know

you're essentially motionless while

you're meditating and

that's that's pretty lazy thing to do in

a

way so I mean you can turn your laziness

to your advantage through just sitting

on your butt meditating or sitting on

your butt studying dhama that kind of a

thing and if you just sit on your butt

doing other things instead then it may

not be that laziness is so much the

problem as just the lack of

motivation and uh again just reading

sutas that are like motivational sutas

like the the discourse on arousal in the

the

suata that's that's a good one there's

there's quite a few sutas in the suata

that are good for just sort of

overcoming inertia just getting you

getting sort of fired up so and in fact

some of them are just um discourses on

how early monks live their lives which

can just shame you into into trying

harder because the way monks were living

their lives in the Buddhist time and

shortly after the Buddhist time I mean

they were they were really going for it

and they weren't it wasn't that they

were super energetic you know they might

just be wandering around and just

sitting on their butt motionless most of
the time but still I mean they were they
were taking dama very
seriously and just enduring hardships
and so forth being very Spartan and
stoic and so
forth so you might try
that but I'm kind of lazy myself so I
shouldn't be preaching too much about
not being lazy so I'll just move on to
panov's next
question and this is sort of a followup
on his first question and it is in your
blog about your father's past lives at
the end of your father wanted see at the
end of it your father wanted to go as

far as he could and remember the
earliest memory from a past life still
accessible he was regressed to a shady
green past your father was feeling very
small and looking up through Fern frons
at the play of sunlight on the forest
Greenery what life could that be Apes
some kind of animal and tell your
hypothesis about it well I actually
asked my father about this back back in
that day when he was still alive and I
was probably a teenager at the time you
know he was telling me about that and I
asked him you know like well I mean were
you like a cave person were you a little
kid were you an animal and he's he said
he didn't know because it's just a very

dim like the most distant memory he

could he could

salvage or you know the most distant

memory he could dredge up and it's very

dim very hazy and he just got that one

little image and so even he didn't

know what he was who he was anything

like that he just remembers just sort of

like the

mesmerized fascination of watching The

Light sparkling in the

forest as it's filtered through the the

the tree

canopy so who knows even my father

didn't know so I'm just going to move on

to the next question which is from

mooners and mooners says do you feel bad
when you drink alcohol because of how
the Buddha regarded alcohol
consumption
well there's uh a number of things I can
say about this first of all is is no I
don't feel bad when I drink alcohol
because of how the Buddha regarded
alcohol consumption and the main reason
for that is if you're going to do
something you shouldn't feel guilty
about what you're doing because feeling
guilty just makes it worse it just adds
to the Badness adds to the Bad Karma so
to speak and I've I've preached about
this I've said if you only know two
things about dhama only two things one

is whenever you're unhappy it's because
you are Desiring something and two
regret or remorse is always a bad thing
it's always an UNH wholesome mental
state it always makes Bad
Karma so I've taken that to heart and so
I'm not going to drink a beer and then
just like feel regret while I'm drinking
it I mean what would be the
point however sometimes I do feel bad
when I drink alcohol
because sometimes I get acid reflux at
night so if I I can just drink like one
beer shortly before going to bed and
I'll simply be like burping stomach acid
up into my throat for hours after

that that has happened a few

times so it's that kind of feeling

bad um I've had slight hangovers even

you I'm really a lightweight now maybe

it's cuz when you get older it's like

your your sister system can't process

alcohol as easily I can just have like

three drinks and over the course of an

evening and wake up the next morning

with like a semi hangover just feeling

not quite right due to acetal dhide

poisoning or or whatever it

is

so also with regard to how the Buddha

regarded alcohol consumption I mean he

it wasn't really an emphatic thing I

mean it's the fifth precept you know you

don't

take what is it Alee or wine or other

intoxicants which cause clouded of mind

or

heedlessness so but it's like the five

precepts were just sort of a system set

up for Lay people to give the lay people

you know something to engage themselves

to and to improve their lives and it was

just a standard thing in the Buddhist

time in Northern India that pretty much

all these systems had five precepts for

Lay people The Janes had five precepts

the like the brahin even had five

precepts for Lay people and um the fifth

precept varied the first four precepts

were pretty steady but the fifth one

like in Buddhism it was you know the the

intoxicant thing I think in jism it was

actually having personal property which

is kind of communistic it

seems and I don't remember what the like

the the Brahman fire worshippers the

julas what their fifth precept was for

late

people

um so I mean

it's I mean I really don't think that

it's immoral to have a beer I just don't

see that I mean if I were like really

like a

hardcore dogmatic Buddhist who just

followed everything just because it says

so in the books or just because it's the

the tradition or whatever then yeah I

wouldn't drink alcohol but um I do

occasionally have a drink I had like one

and a half Apple ciders last night in

fact didn't get drunk but sometimes I

just like to drink something like

that

so yeah I do occasionally drink alcohol

though I don't think people would be

inclined to call me a drunkard and I'm

certainly not an

alcoholic

but uh just in answer to the question I

it's just traditional for me to give

very long answers to short questions so

do I feel bad when I drink alcohol

because of how the Buddha regarded

alcohol consumption the answer is no so

I'll just move on the next question this

is from Fred who sometimes goes by the

the Alias of

Alfred and he says I don't know

sometimes with with Fred's

questions you can't really tell if he's

really asking a question not because

sometimes he just like puts question

marks at the end of sentences almost at

random so one one comment under a

YouTube video I think it was he says

this Enlightenment word is problematic

question

mark and yeah it is somewhat

problematic um like I mentioned in a
previous Q&A relatively recent one the
the Dig Naga School of Buddhism who are
sometimes
called the yogachara
logicians and their classic example of a
problematic premise in logic is the
existence of enlightened beings you know
it's there in the text the Buddha
himself was an enlightened being you
know according to
Buddhism but still I mean there's no way
to prove it and within the context of
samsara which is where logic is which is
where you know reason and just
perception in general is I mean it's

just off the scale it's it's not within
the realm of samsar that Enlightenment
is it transcends samsara and So within
the context of samsara I do think that
Enlightenment is sort of a paradox at
best I'm not saying that it just doesn't
exist but it is it essentially it's a
problematic premise
but it is pretty obvious that some
people are closer to Enlightenment than
others and so it may be that uh you have
to get close I mean it's it's sort of
like how meditation Works in for the
sake of getting enlightened it's like um
it's traditional in certain texts anyway
it seems to have been a tradition in
Ancient India that fourth jna was like

the jumping off point to
Enlightenment and fourth jna is just
like your mind is just flat calm it's
the Perfection of mindfulness you're not
unconscious at all is considered to be
the Perfection of mindfulness so you are
perfectly mindful when you're in fourth
J even though it may look like you're in
a complete trance or some
such but it's like your mind your your
perceptions aren't functioning I mean
you've stopped perceiving and in a way
because percept is samsara and all
delusion is perceptual then you have
temporarily through fourth J ceased
being deluded and it's it's sometimes

it's called temporary Liberation in the
texts you know it's like sort of like a
taste of Enlightenment but then you
start perceiving again and you're back
you're back in the delusion again
so it may
be that some people need like more
silent mind in order to transcend the
delusion they may have to completely
stop the Perceptions in order to
transcend perceptions but other people
they may not need forth jna they may be
able to become enlightened in in like
choppy Seas you know they can still have
the perception going and at any rate
once you become enlightened the idea is
that even when you're back in the choppy

seas and you're perceiving and thinking
again you're still transcending it
you're no longer taking it seriously
you're no longer identified with
it and so Enlightenment could be kind of
like that where it you may not seem like
you're enlightened but still you know
you you've transcended it you know it's
all the the weird human stuff you know
this human nature stuff human all to
human it can still be going on and you
may be acting like you're not
particularly wise but may be that some
people they don't have to get to this
stage of purified sainthood in order to
transcend

Sara and so in a case like that I mean

how are you going to be able to tell if

anyone's enlightened I mean obviously

some people are just pretty obviously

unenlightened but um I mean there's no

way to really prove that anyone is

enlightened So to that extent it is

problematic

and to the extent that Enlightenment in

a sense transcends samsara and any kind

of proof is going to be

samsaric any kind of evidence is going

to be

samsaric so yeah it's hard to talk about

this stuff so I'm going to move to

Fred's next question

here which is can an arahant be affected

by brain fluid malfunction for example

aan sha from path leader to a vegetable

in my opinion the mind is not apart from

the body well it seems like Fred is

assuming the reality of physical matter

which is understandable even Orthodox

terraa assumes the reality of physical

matter although most Mahayana schools

eventually did away with

it and uh yeah whether aan sha was

enlightened or not I don't know he was

very wise but it is true that he was

like a vegetable due to I think it was

um

diabetes that uh he just became like a

vegetable like confined to a wheelchair

just kind of slobbering on himself for

for several years before he finally

died

so um so whether aan cha was an arant

that became like a vegetable um I don't

know so it's it's all very problematic I

mean if just the existence of

enlightened beings is like paradoxical

or problematic or uh abakada what's the

indeterminate yeah I mean the mind of an

enlightened being would be indeterminate

so yeah something cha I've wondered

about that it's like maybe it was just

like his his spirit so to speak attained

its part in Iana while this body just

vegetated I mean

according to Terra the body has to die I

think but I mean if you're brain dead or
I mean it's just like you know there's
nobody there anymore then it may be that
even if you're not enlightened I mean
your Consciousness your your karma has
already moved on to somebody else in
fact Ian Stevenson who wrote a book he
wrote a number of books about like
empirical evidence supporting the idea
of of
rebirth he uh referred to one Tha monk
who recalled his previous life and it
certainly was not Orthodox Terra because
he had already taken rebirth as a baby
while the the person that he was in the
previous life was still alive like you

know unconscious in a hospital

bed

so I think I might be veering away from

the gist of Fred's question can an arhon

be affected by brain fluid

malfunction yeah I mean how can you

really

say I mean they might appear to be

affected but uh whether I mean their

Enlightenment is affected or not is a

whole other

question and if they really are

enlightened then it doesn't really

matter what's appears to be going on at

The Superficial saric level I mean

they're still

enlightened I don't think they become

roaring drunk or any such thing you know
they'd still be enlightened they
wouldn't have these repressed urges like
just bubbling up to the surface and
running a mock like some drunks do I
mean i' I've met some people that
they're just very quiet mild mannered
nice people and then they just become
ugly
drunks and my my theory is it's sort of
like Freud with a repressed urges you
know they just in the habit of
repressing their urges and then they get
drunk enough and it just the repression
just fails and they're just like spewing
all this stuff that they've been holding

back all this time and some people I
think become addicted to that you know
they have to use the drunkenness or
whatever drug it is or whatever it is as
a kind of pressure release valve to keep
them from
exploding but I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from TIG
and Tig is an irreverent guy who usually
asks joke
questions so let's see the first one
from TIG is what is the largest amount
of food you've ever consumed in one
sitting and I don't really know I mean
who keeps track of
this um I mean when I was a junior monk
I I ate from that bowl on the table back

there which holds well over a gallon and
I could eat like three4 of that bowl
full you know approximately a gallon of
food and I was still skinny of course
the food wasn't extremely nutritious it
was mostly like white rice like bananas
and stuff
but um yeah I I don't know it might be
Italian food it's for some reason I've
got a hollow leg when it comes to
Italian food I could eat like a large
pizza just without Without Really
Trying if that is I didn't if I was like
inclined towards gluttony which I
usually am not and I didn't want to save
any for breakfast or lunch the next

day but I don't know who keeps track of

this stuff

so then the next question from TIG is

are there alien bases on the

moon and I have no idea I have seen zero

evidence that indicates that there are

alien bases on the

moon it wouldn't really surprise me I

guess you know they might put it on the

the back side of the moon so it's less

conspicuous if they're really here to

observe us you know as like

anthropologists or

something but I have seen zero evidence

to suggest that there are alien bases on

the moon other than maybe New Age

channelers declaring it you know through

some some entity that's supposedly speaking through them or maybe you know psychics who have remote viewing of the alien base on the moon but uh I do not consider them to be reliable sources of information so I'm just going to move on to the next question

here which is also from TIG is a plastic Chinese woman who has or doesn't have deformed defeat evidence of conspicuous consumption and this is based on a number of kind of inside jokes or just information that most of you viewers will not have access to but TIG seems to have this strange Fascination for posting on a Buddhist Discord server

this numerous pictures of obviously
airbrushed modified young Chinese women
he seems to just have this Fascination
for plastic looking young Chinese
women and
also um he was he was asking for
suggestions on economics books to read
so the one of the only economics books
I've ever read was the theory of the
Leisure Class by thorstein weblin so I
suggested he read that and uh it's it's
based on conspicuous consumption that
the this this book by thorstein wein the
theory of the Leisure Class It Was
Written over a hundred years ago I'm
sure he's talking about how in early
human society everyone knew everybody

else everyone knew the relative position of the other everyone else that they knew you know on in the hierarchy they knew who the chief was they knew who the The Village drunk was you know it was like nobody had to put on heirs nobody had to wear special uniforms or anything everybody knew everybody else position but as we became urbanized and got higher population density then it wasn't obvious you didn't know everybody else in town and so people had to start like displaying their social status and shortly after that almost I almost simultaneous with that people started faking higher social status and they

already had and a lot of things like weird manners like knowing what kind of wine goes with ve or how to eat a banana in public or just weird uniforms like why Roman Catholic Bishops and Cardinals and the pope himself wear the funny hats and the the cloth of gold like Greek Orthodox Patriarchs of the same way I mean they look kind of like Santa Claus except they're just like encrusted with jewels and Thorin weblin explains all this in in accordance with the theory of conspicuous consumption and he mentions deformed feet on Chinese women because I can't remember if it was mentioned specifically in the book but it fits the theory perfectly that Chinese foot

binding where uh Chinese girls
especially the ones that were of you
know the middle class or upwards would
have their feet bound tightly when they
were little so that their feet couldn't
get much bigger than about like this and
when they were full grown they could
hardly hobble
around but it was a sign of social
status and it was a sign of social
status not only for the for the woman
but for the man who married her because
he was obviously displaying to all his
neighbors he could afford to marry a
woman who was good for nothing other
than ornamentation and the

bedroom that his wife didn't have to
work for a living in fact she couldn't
work for a living even if she wanted to
unless maybe she's sitting there with an
abacus figuring out accounts or
something so
getting back to the question after all
this explanation so that you can even
understand more or less the more or less
joke question of of TIG here is a
plastic Chinese woman who has or doesn't
have deformed feet evidence of
conspicuous
consumption no not really I mean to have
like a trophy wife is kind of a sign of
conspicuous consumption but just a
Chinese plastic Chinese woman I mean

what's the what's the conspicuous

consumption in that

I just don't see

it so I'm just going to move on next

question here this is from

Newman spelled nuu m en

Newman and Newman says do you have any

recommendations on books to read on how

Buddhism deals with the military or

violence and its precepts regarding

Warfare I read zenet war and I'm

wondering if there were similar

developments in terraa Southeast Asian

Buddhism but in general any book

recommendations on Buddhism and

War and I mean terot of Buddhism is

really uncompromising it's very clearly
you know war is essentially mass
murder and uh it's just something that
is a worldly thing you can't really get
rid of it sort of like you know killing
animals for meat or in those days also
slavery you know it's stuff that is is
just a part of
society and you deal with that if you're
a serious Buddhist you're a serious D
practitioner by renouncing Society you
go off alone in the forest you go alone
like the Horn of the rhinoceros sit at
the roof of a tree and strive for
enlightenment so I mean there was lots
of war in the Buddhist time and
sometimes he would you know do his best

to

dissuade like aggressive tribes from

Waring with each

other but uh he did according to Legend

come from the military cast you know he

was a chria of the the warrior

class so he presumably had military

training when he was

younger but it really is uncompromising

like a monk you know you've got Warrior

monks like the in like feudal Japan

Warrior monks were a thing you had

Buddhist monks mostly of pure land

schools or shinran or something thing

who I mean they they were Masters at

killing you know they they martial arts

experts you know experts at firing the new the new invention of of firearms well in terot of Buddhism they don't really have anything like the closest I can think of with regard to militaristic terada might be something like ancient or medieval Sri Lanka when kings like Buddhist salies kings were trying to unify the people against the like the the Hindu tomal that were invading the island so it sometimes it would get turned into Buddhists versus Hindus or you know sinhal versus tamls you know it was more of a a cultural when to some degree racial but I think it was more of a a cultural like conflict that would be used for

propaganda purposes to unify the salies

against the the

tamls but whether there was any actual

books justifying I mean there wouldn't

be Buddhist books really it wouldn't be

written by I mean maybe some Buddhist

monks were were on the

bandwagon but uh I've never actually

heard of it in terava

Buddhism so I mean like in in the poty

Mona rules for monks monks are forbidden

to visit an army and you can't go to a

battlefield you can't see armies on

maneuvers you can't go to see armies

like in full array you know where

they're like on Parade or anything like

that monks are forbidden to even go look

at that you're not supposed to have

anything to do with it because

essentially it's organized mass

murder

so yeah it's I I haven't ever come

across a book on military Buddhism I

know there's a lot of emphasis on it in

certain circles you know like there are

some like fascistic types who um they

like the idea of Buddhism being an Arian

religion you know it's like an

Indo-European like a a um authentically

Indo-European spiritual tradition so

they like that

part but it's just not violent enough

for them you know it's not aggressive

enough enough it's not like nichan

enough for them and so they're looking

for like

authorities justifying Buddhists killing

other

people and uh I mean you might find some

of this in the Chronicles like the Maha

wsa um or the was the Deepa wsaw some of

the the early Chronicles like the Sali

Chronicles where it's discussing war and

would be some monks who would be

justifying killing toml because if

you're not a Buddhist you're just like

not really human this kind of stuff but

I mean it's not genuine Dharma it's just

sort of politics infiltrating religion

and um I mean maybe in Zen it started becoming more philosophical but like militaristic terraa um I mean any philosophy at all would hardly get past the level of sophistry

so yeah I mean I if you want to learn about like militant Buddhism your best bet would be like Suzuki roshi you know like uh DT Suzuki he was you know he was on the side of the Japanese during World War II you know he just defied Bushido the the code of the warrior and all that so uh and like I was saying like Warrior monks have been a thing in Japan for hundreds of years so they would have like a tradition and probably it would

have been refined into some more or less
philosophical systems more or less
justifying Warfare although one of the
most profound justifications for Warfare
that I've come across is in the Bava
Gita in a way the Bava Gita I read was
part of its purpose was as an argument
against
Buddhism but um yeah there is sort of
some
spiritual um
justification
of fighting and killing in in the
bagavat Gita in fact the whole
mahabarata is based on a war the you
know the whole uh Sanskrit epic of the

mahab baratas about Great

War but I mean it's it's been turned

into like allegory but still there's a

lot of real military stuff in

there so yeah I just i' check out

Japanese stuff like the Zen stuff like

Suzuki Roshi's stuff and and there are a

number of other um proponents of

militant

Zan I mean in fact one of the it's like

an unofficial [__] at the end of the

mumon KH is was was composed by a

samurai warrior and and so I mean

there's no reason why you can't be good

at Coons and meditation and so forth and

be like a samurai warrior at the same

time like renai Zen was called Samurai

Zen whereas Soo Zen was called like
peasant Zen or farmer Zen because uh
renai Zen was more popular with the
upper classes which of course in in
Japan consisted largely of the Samurai
class
so again your best bet would be to look
towards Japanese literature or
literature about Japan and so I'm just
going to move on next question here and
this is from nature qer and nature CER
says how are very old or how very old
beus are treated in
Myanmar well Burma still has a
traditional culture a traditional wisdom
culture and they have genuine respect

for elders which is generally the way it is in like oldfashioned conservative traditional cultures for example at the at one uh lameier Village that I mentioned a little earlier uh every year they'd have a festival for in celebrating and honoring everybody above the age of 70 in the village you know they'd be like bowing to them offering them gifts and and providing them with a feast you know just out of respect for for their elders and it's the same with monks monks are treated like really old monks that are just bedridden and so forth they'll have you know at least like at the very least they'll have a novice or a junior monk who's assigned

to be taking care of them and they're
taken care of
conscientiously I never saw like a a
really
neglected badly treated old monk you
know they're they're generally treated
with respect and monks in general are
treated with respect Elders in general
are treated with respect so Elder monks
even if they're like in late stage
senility or just bedridden they're still
treated with respect and are treated
well so I'll just move on to Nature
Cure's next question here which is if a
lay person had neota experience once
should he get ordained as beu or better

stay as Layman well neurod here means

cessation uh it's neurot sopy or

um in the longer term or neurotop means

the attainment of cessation and it's the

the cessation of perception and

feeling which in Orthodox terraa means

you're essentially just in stasis you're

like in a state of suspended animation

you wouldn't even be able to remember

having been in this

state but I think maybe

originally in Buddhism it was was

possible to still be conscious even

though perception and feeling had

temporarily

stopped in which case you might still

experience this this

state but according to Orthodox

tradition

again only very highly Advanced Saints

are even capable of attaining it so if a

lay person experienced neurod SOPA

um yeah I would be very skeptical that a

lay person really attained that or if

they did they would be a very unusual

lay person but for the most part they

probably experienced something other

than that and then identified it as

neurotop I mean you can get into

meditative states where everything seems

to stop and it may be that a state like

that might be misidentified as neota

sopy but Neo Toopy itself is a

problematic term that I'm I take it with
a a grain of salt sort of like soda also
because I think the original meaning may
not be the official meaning now you know
it's like the meaning has changed over
time as the official position of the
doctrine has changed over time you know
as the system got developed into a wada
you know Tero wada a doctrine of the
elders you know it's it's not true that
the Buddha was teaching Orthodox
terraa the Orthodox terraa gradually
developed as all these other ancient
schools of Buddhism also gradually
developed from what the Buddha
originally taught and some of them are
more conservative than others like the

Buddhist historian KR not KR Norman AK
wer was saying that terado is one of the
three most conservative School ancient
schools of Buddhism one of the other
ancient ones was the cultrona school and
I can't remember what the third one was
but he said doctrinally those were like
three of the most conservative schools
of Buddhism so we terraa lucked out you
know we had good karma I guess and that
one of the
most
faithful representatives of what the
Buddha taught which still is not perfect
but still it's it was one of the best in
ancient times that it's the one that

that

survived

so should a lay person who experienced

neurod should should such a person be

ordained or better stay as a Layman well

I mean if you're that advanced I mean

you're either fully enlightened or this

far away from being fully enlightened

then yeah you might as well just become

a

monk why

not go for it I

say so I'll just move on to uh nature

ur's next question here if a lay person

gets fully enlightened he has to get

ordained quickly by Orthodox what's the

detailed explanation of this and the

detail explanation I mean for me I think

to some degree it's it's like a

religious propaganda that it is um a

Doctrine not one of the the essential

Central doctrines of tervada Buddhism

but it is a doctrine that if you become

fully enlightened you have to be

ordained as a monastic within about 24

hours or you're going to die and it's a

way of I mean it's it's spin-off of the

belief that

really terod or Buddhist monasticism has

a monopoly on

enlightenment so I mean they have to

admit because there are stories in the

text of people like Bahia who were not

ordained Buddhist monks who did become

enlightened but then he he died he was

like trampled by a cow just just a

matter of minutes after his

Enlightenment

so I mean there are cases in the text of

a non Buddhist becoming

enlightened but um they they generally

don't live very long after that and then

that got turned into a a doctrine that

if you if you're enlightened you better

get ordained fast or you're going to die

a violent sudden

death and the detailed explanation in my

opinion I mean just being objective is

it's probably a kind of

religious propaganda that you know

Buddhist monks and nuns are superior to

other people

spiritually and you know they they can

handle being enlightened you know they

they've got the karma they got the good

karma that will sustain being

enlightened

in this world as a human being whereas

if you don't have the SAA supporting you

then for some reason it's just you're

such a an

anomaly in in The Matrix so to speak

that you're just going to get glitched

out

so I assume that's that's why but I am

skeptical I mean assuming that

Enlightenment really means something
genuinely in a samsaric context I do not
think that Buddhist monasticism has a
monopoly on
enlightenment so I do think that that's
just kind of a religious thing that you
know sort of supports the religion and
it may have been come up with in good
faith by just people who really had a
very high opinion of terata Buddhism and
a very low opinion of anyone who wasn't
a terata Buddhist or who wasn't a
Buddhist at
all you know sort of like the Christian
idea that I mean not all Christians
believe this but a lot of Christians
believe that if you don't believe if you

don't belong to you know whatever sect
of Christianity they belong to you're
going to burn in hell you know the Quran
says this too if you don't believe the
Quran is true you're going to burn in
hell Book of Mormon says this too if you
don't believe what the Book of Mormon
says you're going to burn in hell and
this is sort of a a more refined version
of that where if you don't get ordained
as as a monk you know in terot of
Buddhism then you're going to die anyway
even if you're going to attain part in
your bana when you
die so I guess I'll just move on to the
next question here as I said we got lots

of questions and I've already been at it
for an hour
here so this next question is from
Cardinal Giovani a man who changes his
name rather frequently that he has gone
by several other names but now he's
Cardinal Giovani and I congratulate him
on his uh his appointment so to
speak so Cardinal Giovani says why do
Forest back to the Primitive monks and
so-called Christian desert fathers have
essentially very similar lives no or
very little money low on sleep little to
eat and a lot of prayer or
meditation well I mean it is possible
that Buddhism had some effect on early
Christianity but I think the main

reason why the Christian desert fathers
were you know like aesthetic Hermits
living in poverty and early Buddhist
monks were athetic Hermits living in
poverty is
just I mean it's how do I explain this
it's you know when you get to a certain
level of wisdom then it just makes sense
to do certain things I mean if the world
is is so Som saric you know living in
town participating in human traditions
and so forth cultural
Traditions it kind of locks you into
samsar to some degree so if you want to
get away from that you go and become a
Hermit I mean that would explain the the

desert fathers going into the desert and the the Buddhist monks going into the forest is you're just getting away from all the craziness of human society I mean that just makes sense it doesn't take an enlightened being to realize this so then with regard to the asceticism and poverty I mean that's pretty much Universal among the higher spiritual Traditions you know the lower like just religious Traditions that don't really get very spiritual it's not that big of a deal but when you get up into the more refined spiritual traditions and some Christianity fits that

description then you want to like break

your attachments to comfort and luxury
and pleasure just so that you can sort
of clear your mind because if you're
always craving comfort and pleasure and
so forth and having aversion for
discomfort and pain and so forth then
your mind doesn't stay clear you're
losing your equinity you're just getting
lost in samsara so in order to to rise
above samsara so to speak you have to be
indifferent you have to be a stoic in a
sense you know you have to to be okay
with whatever happens and the best way
to practice that is through aestheticism
or
austerity and it doesn't take um any

kind of cultural transmission from one
culture to another for that to spread
it's just that once you reach a certain
level of wisdom and insight you're going
to see that for
yourself so yeah I think it's just a
matter of people getting to a certain
level of wisdom and realizing that
you're better off just
you know renouncing society and going
off and becoming a a destitute aesthetic
if you want to realize the highest truth
you want to purify
yourself so I guess I answered that I'll
move on to Cardinal giovan's next
question which is so there is no
complete translation of sutapa into

English and most almost all of the ptica
has been translated into English but I'm
unaware of any translation of the Nida
into English largely because even if it
was translated in English almost nobody
would want to read it anyway because
it's really not that important of a book
unless you just want to understand what
the Orthodox way of interpreting the OA
waga is or you just want to see you know
how the early tradition dealt with a a a
pre- Terra voden unorthodox text like
the ATA waga something like that but um
generally if you're that interested you
just probably read paully
anyway there might be a few other texts

in the sutapa in the the kudika nikaya
that are so obscure and just complicated
and dry that nobody wants to read them
um something like the netti picara which
in Burma is considered to be canonical I
don't know if anyone translated that
maybe the nle the first famous nanami
who translated the the wiui MAA maybe he
translated that I think he translated
the P Samba Maga
also so those kind of Quasi Abid dama
texts like commentarial texts that kind
of thing um maybe one or two of those
also has not been uh translated into
English but most most of them have you
know all the first four nayas have been
translated a lot of a lot of um the

pseud has been translated many times you know the DAP has been translated many many times so but I don't know if one person has translated all I mean it's just like one person has translated this and another person has translated that so that all together almost you know it's like 98% at least of the ptica has been translated by someone or but I don't think there is just a uniform translation by one person or like this group of translators all working together to translate everything like in Burma you know was like the Burmese government just hired a bunch of Scholars to just make an official

Burmese translation of the entire titica
so they've got that in in Burma probably
places like Thailand or Sri Lanka also
but uh in English you're just relying on
College professors in various places
that sort of thing or or monks monks
generally make better translators just
because they understand the tradition
better you know because they're living
it whereas a lot of the the early like
University Professor translator types I
they were they were just guessing and
using Common Sense which doesn't work
very well like you know Oxbridge upper
crusty British common sense may not
translate into a correct translation of
poly and into

English but I'm I'm

digressing fairly radically at this

point but um yeah it there's no complete

translation of the ptica in English

unless there's some obscure translations

that I've never heard of like of the

Nida but almost all of it has been

translated so we'll just move on to uh

Cardinal giovan's next question

here if we lose everything and die and

then after being reborn again lose

everything and die and so on forever

what would be the best evidence that we

are not actually in

Hell well from the Buddhist point of

view I mean it's all pretty much hell

you know we're right now we're in one of
the more comfortable levels of Hell or
at least we're in sort of a midlevel of
hell but it's all
Dua and unlike in Christianity where
Satan is the king of Hell Mara who is
like the Buddhist Devil he's the king of
samsara he's he he's even King up in
heaven
Realms
so it's it doesn't exactly work if
you're using like the Christian
dichotomy of Heaven and Hell it doesn't
really work so well in Buddhism because
samsara is all kind of it's all Dua so
long as you're in samsara you're in duka
I mean if you're up in a higher Heaven

realm it's a refin mind subtle kind of
dooka whereas if you're down in in nah
you're in aichi nah you know the lowest
pit of Hell then you're in some really
obvious graphic brutal kind of dooka or
suffering but it's just a matter of
degree there is no sharp demarcation
Between Heaven and Hell like in the
abrahamic
religions it's uh it's just a a spectrum
just a gradient and it's all just a
matter of degree so in a sense you could
say that right now we are in hell it's
just like one of kind of a relatively
comfortable level of
it but we're in some sorrow so I'm just

going to move on to the next question
this is from Indian guy an Indian guy
says is there anything that you know of
that says you have to be ordained by a
tradition to become enlightened and do
it in full confidence in the Buddhist
Dharma couldn't I technically just go be
homeless and live the aesthetic Buddhist
lifestyle with understanding of dhama
well I mean we already discussed the
idea that is orthodox and terava that
you can become enlightened if you're not
an ordained Buddhist but you better
ordain fast if you don't want to die a
sudden
death but setting that aside is there
anything that I know of that says you

have to be ordained by a tradition to
become enlightened and do it in full
confidence in the Buddhist well I think
most Traditions would advise you
strongly to follow their tradition in
order to become enlightened and they
might uh say that following other
Traditions is not nearly so good
otherwise why have that tradition if
there's other Traditions that are even
better or just as
good but
um yeah I mean I think it is possible I
mean assuming that even becoming
enlightened in a samsaric context means
anything that it isn't just

indeterminate or

paradoxical then personally I'm of the

opinion that lay people can become

enlightened you don't have to be a

Buddhist even to become enlightened like

ramanam Mahari may have been enlightened

neim karoli Baba may have been

enlightened they were both Hindus St

John of the Cross may have been

enlightened he was a Roman

Catholic

Meister eart may have been

enlightened some sufis may have been

enlightened and uh some of them were not

ordained

monastics I'm not sure if neim Croley

Baba was an ordained monastic I mean he

was a sawu but whether he was ordained
into some tradition through some
ordination ceremony I don't
know so the main advantage of belonging
to a tradition like for example when
when I was young before I became a monk
you know I was playing with the idea of
maybe just making a wool Rogue for
myself getting a wooden bowl and just
hitting the road and just wandering like
like a non- denominational Western
wandering aesthetic but I knew myself
well enough to know that in as an
established tradition would have these
sets of rules and just like the the way
of doing things that would it would

discipline me better you know I would be
better at at being disciplined by an
already established tradition and senior
members of that tradition than just
going it on my
own so being a member of some kind of sa
and by sa I don't mean you know just
going to a Dharma Hall where people
meditate once a week and call themselves
sa possibly without even keeping any
precepts
um but just having like a well
established wisdom tradition supporting
you and maybe other people in that
tradition including Elders who have been
you know on the path longer than you
have helping you I mean that definitely

has advantages to it having a kalana
Maita you know the good friend the good
spiritual friend um if not an outright
Guru then that can be helpful because
just going on your own has certain
drawbacks like if you're just going it
on your own trying to become enlightened
through through your own efforts just
you know nobody keeping you in line no
established tradition keeping you in
line then as a general rule you're going
to you know work on the stuff you're
already good at and ignore or avoid
working on the stuff you're not so good
at you know it's like people that are
sleepy heads they might take dangas with

regard to not eating very much eating
once a day eating only MMS food but the
sleeping in sitting position they're not
going to do that just because they've
got too much attachment to that you know
it's like I mean it does help to have a
teacher who points out your weaknesses
like um aan cha good example he'd get to
know a
student and then whatever was their
weaknesses he'd make them face it you
know if they're afraid of ghosts he'd
make them stay in cemeteries that kind
of
thing so I mean it does help to have
have some kind of teacher who can look
at you from like a heightened

perspective and see what you need to work on and and get you to do that and maybe berate you or scold you if you don't do it because if you just rely on your own rely on your own volition and your own best judgment and everything you're going to have blind spots and so forth and I mean it's just a truism that other people can see a person's faults better than that person can see his own faults in in a lot of a lot of cases that people can just justify like like a cowardly person generally as a general rule they justify their timidity you know they try and turn it into a virtue and I mean if you're doing that

kind of stuff then I mean it's

definitely a handicap I mean it's still

possible to become enlightened maybe

you'll just get beaten over the head

have a near-death experience and that'll

be enough to just jolt you out of some

so out of like identifying with samsara

I there are cases of that happening

allegedly

anyway

so let's

see if you really want to become

enlightened then probably your best bet

is to join some kind of Enlightenment

tradition uh rather than just trying to

do it on your own because you are you

are going to have blind spots and so

forth and the the enlightenment
tradition in most cases is is going to
have hundreds of years of dealing with
people like you that you know they've
got it all worked out on on what should
be done in this case or that case or
whatever whereas you may have to
reinvent the wheel over and over again
if you're doing it on your own even just
reading books you got access to books
but still the book isn't going to scold
you if you're not doing something
right so I'm just going to move on to
Indian guy's next
question which is do you think or know
if the Buddha taught that chanting is

some kind of seemingly magical power
that reaches beings I'm not discounting
it or anything because it seems
wholesome and I think it's nice but I
don't know I'm a skeptic by nature and
or condition I listen to Chance and they
go to a monastery where they do them and
go to a monastery where they do them and
they are nice to hear maybe there's more
to it than I think well just the act of
chanting itself doesn't have any kind of
paranormal effect in fact in the in
vinia the rules of monastic discipline
monks are forbidden from adopting like a
sing song Chanty voice they're supposed
to just use like an ordinary speaking
voice when they're reciting

texts um there there are Paras in ter

Buddhism which are like protection texts

that have um like some kind of power you

know like the metas sua is you know

supposed

to um

pacify uh like vent beings um the K sua

is supposed to protect you from snake

bite um the anguli

maluta um as a parita is supposed to

help women in childbirth there's the

fish King jataka that if you recite that

what the matcha Raja sua I think it's

called it's not one of the standard list

in Burma but if you if you recite that

it helps against drought you know if

there's a drought you keep sometimes in Burma the monks will be be reciting the fish King Jah in order to cause it to rain but it's not just it's not really the chanting it's like the meaning of the text and like the volition of the person who is perceiving the text you know if you're believing in it you know by the power of this truth like a lot of these uh like J or not jotas but uh paritas they're based on like an asservation of Truth did I say aser Asser a word a separation I don't know but just like by the power of this Truth May the the forest fire be averted like there's the baby quail jaraka you know the watas sua

where this the Buddha was a a baby quail
in a previous existence supposedly and
there was a forest fire that was
threatening his whole Quail
family and so um he made some like some
assertion of Truth and I can't remember
what the assertion of Truth was in his
case but like anguli Mala his assertion
of Truth he's is you know I since I
became a monk I have not harmed a living
being you know he was a he was a serial
killer before he became a monk but since
he became a monk he hasn't harmed a
single being by the power of this truth
may may you be well you know and somehow
that has power but it's not just the

words

but um you know it's like the

The Vow it's like the strength of this

the strength of Truth somehow has like a

metaphysical power that can make things

happen or it's just the your own mental

powers that are boosted by this truth

that can actually you know serve as a

kind of psychic power or like in the

case of the metas sua then you know it's

just love you know you're you're

generating love towards some being or

other towards all beings and that has

some kind of

effect so yeah chanting in and of

itself um it doesn't have any magical

power or paranormal power psychic power

chanting in and of itself it's the mental states of the people who are reciting the text you know the text has wisdom and you know that wisdom is um sort of real ized in the mind of the person who is chanting it and believing it and so it's more a matter of mental states of the people who are chanting it and the people who are hearing it rather than any kind of psychic power contained in the Chant itself sort of like tarot cards you know it's like there there are factories that manufacture tarot cards you know but they don't have a machine that implants prognosticative Powers into these cards I mean it's just card

board laminated with plastic and it's
got ink and that's it but it's so it's
it's like if tarot cards have any power
at all it's the power of the people that
are using the cards that it's just kind
of a gimmick for releasing their own
psychic talents in some cases maybe it
works and so chanting is sort of like
that I mean the chanting in of itself is
just
sound you know words on paper that are
then recited but it's the any power to
it is going to be coming from the mental
states of the chanter and the hearer
especially if they believe it they
believe that it's going to have power it
it can cause a sort of placebo effect or

the power of

Faith

so in the text the Buddha did recommend

certain chance or just reciting certain

discourses like the Met Su or the cond

sua um for certain things but it wasn't

that chanting in general has power it's

just that uh you know the ideas in the

mind you know as you're reflecting or

contemplating these texts that has

power so it's mental States and so I'm

going to move on to the next question

here this is from Austin and Austin asks

a metaphysical question

how do we make General Knowledge claims

about the world if the world itself is

illusionary and illusionary is that a word too asseveration and illusionary I don't know if they're in the dictionary and would this follow well I'll just better start over I rudely interrupted Austin when he was asking this question Austin says how do we make General Knowledge claims about the world if the world itself is illusionary and would this follow that knowledge is impossible because coming to everything is an illusion is also part of the illusion well in Buddhism you've got two levels of Truth you've got conventional truth or Samui SAA and you've got ultimate truth or paramat Sacha and general knowledge claims about the world are

conventional truth they aren't really

true they're true just because people

agree that they are true but they're not

ultimately true they do not apply to

Ultimate

Reality so

yeah general knowledge claims about the

world are like quasi true you know

they're true within the context of being

a human

being but uh the ultimate truth is

essentially nibana at least in my

opinion so knowledge is impossible no

because true knowledge genuine knowledge

has to transcend samsara it has to

transcend the system that generates

statements you know symbols you have to
go beyond the symbols of words and and
Perceptions in order to get to ultimate
truth
so ultimate like true knowledge is
possible but you're not going to get
there through
thinking through perception it's not
going to happen I mean unless you're
using perception is a way of destroying
perception there's like some Mahayana
text say the purpose of Lord Buddhist
teaching is to free us from our Thinking
by means of our thinking or also like
there's the the statement about the Zen
master who uses words like a master
Archer uses arrows where that Master

Archer can shoot down an arrow in Flight
with his own Arrow you know that
somebody shoots an arrow he can shoot
that arrow down with his own arrow and
zen master uses words in the same way
he'll use words to like like shoot down
your own ideas just to so that they all
fall to the ground and there's just like
emptiness and silence behind and from
The Emptiness and silence because you're
not being distracted by all these
symbolic perceptions genuine wisdom can
arise an insight into true
knowledge so I don't think that
knowledge true knowledge is
impossible um but all this samsaric

knowledge isn't true knowledge like

science isn't true knowledge it's

knowledge it's conventional knowledge

it's

symbolic you know semi

knowledge virtual

knowledge so I'm just going to move on

to next question this is from Indiana

dharm and Indiana dhama says your answer

on eart TOA in the previous Q&A has

caused a question to form in my mind do

you think the Buddha was fully

enlightened during his Earthly life

while I do believe he was fully

enlightened I've long wondered just what

that would mean there is likely no

answer to that since we're all trapped

in some sorrow well I

mean I've I've been talking about this a

few times already in this Q&A um and in

several other q&as it's like

Enlightenment itself is problematic

especially from a samsaric context

because Enlightenment transcends samsara

samsara has no access to

it you know it's sort of like in the

sometimes you'll you'll see in the text

that the the gods the dvas who can read

people's minds they still don't know

what the what's going on in the Buddha's

mind when he's meditating you know it's

just beyond their reach they just can't

they just can't get

it so again it's like from a saric point
of view he probably had certain quirks
that like a skeptic would say aha there
you see he did this so that means he's
not
enlightened but um I do think that
what's going on at the samsaric level is
largely irrelevant to his Enlightenment
I mean he may have become a saint in
order to become enlightened and then
after becoming enlightened he he
remained relatively or if not completely
safe L but some people may be able to
attain Enlightenment before even
reaching the level of you know perfect
sainthood so do I think the Buddha was
fully enlightened during his Earthly

life there's no way of proving it one way or the other I accept it as a working hypothesis but it's it's problematic to the extent that his Enlightenment is going to be transcending Sam Sara so I mean it's not going to be really at this worldly level at this worldly level I'm sure there's going to be Skeptics and there always have been Skeptics even in the Buddha own time who would just criticize him and and just not not even just making [__] up against him it's like look what he's doing you know like some of the hardcore Aesthetics like The Janes and the aicas in the Buddhist time

would just accuse him of being just some
soft shaven-headed householder who's
still wallowing in
sensuality or the Hindus might or the
you know the Brahman the viic brahin
might accuse him of just being like a
nihilist who is you know endorses the
extinction of the human race because he
endorses celibacy and and obviously the
non- Buddhists are going to come up with
um justifications for criticizing the
budo or seeing him as you know
inadequate you know if not a charlatan
at least he's just kind
of just deluding himself into thinking
he's enlightened so it depends on your
point of view really

I mean if if you're a foolish person

who's looking at the world through

foolishness colored glasses is going to

see everything as

foolish and that's kind of the way

samsar

works

so yeah if anyone if anyone can be fully

enlightened I think there's a really

good chance that godma Buddha of the

shakya clan was fully

enlightened and that is a working

hypothesis of mine but I have no way of

proving

it so I'm just going to move on to the

next question here this is from Mirror

of

emptiness and the mirror says what is

the difference between walking

meditation and pacing back and forth

brooding well I think there may be a

certain amount of overlap for example if

you're pacing back and forth brooding

about dhama brooding about death

brooding

about I mean some sort of object of

meditation then that could be qualified

as a kind of walking meditation but as a

general rule walking meditation is you

are being mindful of the present moment

like whatever feelings or Sensations are

Paramount you know whatever the are the

ones that are most obvious the most uh

conspicuous like the movements of your legs the pressure of the ground against your feet um the oily sensation in your knees as they kind of swing back back and forth or I mean you could just be doing a mantra while you're doing meditation like om or budo something like that that would be like legitimate walking meditation you could even be counting your steps you know one two 3 four five 1 two 3 4 5 six 1 2 3 4 5 six 7even up to 10 and then you go back to one through five you know like that that's like a very

Elementary um method of doing walking meditation for beginners just to kind of

train your mind to focus on on the

process of

walking but I mean if your mind is just

going all over the place um then yeah

that's not walking meditation but I mean

if you are brooding on like the

inevitability of death or something that

might qualify as walking meditation as

you Pace back and

forth with a furrowed

brow so I think I answered that one so

I'm going to move on to the next

question here which is from Ry balder

and Ry Baler says was urine drinking or

bathing a part of monastic

life and I don't think it's ever been

Central to monastic life drinking pee or

or like bathing in pee but it is true
that every single monk who is ordained
at his ordination ceremony he is
admonished with regard to using the four
requisites and the four requisites are
food clothing shelter and Medicine those
are the four requisites for a
monk and with regard to each of these
one is given that admonishment and with
regard to
medicine or I might as well do all four
it's like with regard to food a monk or
a monk is admonished like the new monk
who's just getting ordained at his
ordination he is admonished that he
should content himself with eating only

alms food you know you take your bowl
and walk through the Village People put
whatever food they want to put in into
your bowl when you get enough you leave
and you eat it that's you should content
yourself with that but it's not against
the rules to accept an invitation to
somebody's house and then they'll feed
you there with regard to clothing every
monk should content himself with rag
robes he should just content himself
with picking up Rags off the ground and
sewing them together into
robes but it is it's not against the
rules to accept a robe from somebody who
donates to you a robe or robe cloth that
isn't rags and I've got a dog loudly

snoring behind me what are you doing

back

there with regard to let's see shelter

every monk at his ordination is

admonished that you should content

yourself with living at the root of a

tree you should just don't even go under

a roof don't stay in a building just

live at the root of a tree but it's not

against the rulle s to live in a

building and then with regard to

medicine every Monk Is admonished at his

ordination that he should content

himself with puim Mota as his medicine

pimot is like putrified urine and guess

that was a thing you know some sort

of uh like traditional medicine in ancient Northern India at least among athetics that putrified urine and urine purifies pretty fast you just put it in you know pee into a milk jug and then just leave it there for a day and you come back a day later it smells just overwhelmingly strong and that that is supposed to be used as a medicine but it is allowable to use other kinds of medicine too it's just sort of an ideal and there are a few monks that still drink urine and there probably have always been at least a few probably in ancient times a little more back before they invented like you know state-of-the-art malaria medication and

so

forth um with regard to bathing in PE I

only knew that one monk an Indonesian

monk who would wash his head in his own

P putrified urine every day until I

finally made him just stop keeping the

jug of pee in the ous because it was

just causing the entire out house to

just wreak it was just this overwhelming

stench

so yeah I mean drinking urine as a

medicine is just right at the heart of

being a monk it's right there in the

ordination ceremony that you are

admonished you should content yourself

with putrified urine as medicine but um

I think it's a rather small minority

that really do that I'm sure there are

some I've like in the previous Q&A I

mentioned experimenting with it a little

bit but uh it it wasn't for me and

they've got better medicine than

putrified urine Believe It or Not There

are now better medications on the market

than putrified

P so I'm just going to move on to the

next question here this is from

oalt and oalt says today's selection of

questions are oh I guess I could have

edited that part out forget that part

just don't even don't even remember that

I said that oops I almost erased his

name at the same time

see all right his first o Al's first question is do you have any guns if yes what kinds and I personally own a Glock 19 a 9 mimer although um I I found out after I got that that there's a larger caliber Glock um that's about the same size that I probably would have got instead but it's just there in case of an emergency and I don't even go to the firing range I mean I haven't shot a thing in over a
year um it used to be when we lived at the other house that we had some Forest behind our house you can go out in the forest and you know shoot at Targets and so forth but here we're we're living in

a subdivision with a tiny backyard and

it just doesn't work out that way so I'd

have to drive somewhere in order to

practice

shooting so yeah I've got I've got the

Glock 19 my sweet heart has a little

Smith and Wesson that's just like for

protection um and also for her birthday

couple years ago I got her a Ruger 22

rifle which she has fired a total of

ones since she got

it

so those those are the guns I've that we

have it's just two pistols and a 22

rifle and maybe someday if I'm feeling

like I've got too much money I'll get

like a Mossberg pump shotgun or

something but uh at present I think

uh I think our Armory is is uh stocked

enough for our needs which is just in

case of an emergency you know if the

zombie apocalypse finally hits that kind

of

thing and well no I won't get into

zombies this is this is going to be long

enough as it is so you are spared a

discourse on zombies so I'll just move

on to oil Al's next question here which

is do you consider any shots safe and

then in parenthesis he says trying to

avoid the forbidden words and then he

says for example polio or hepatitis Etc

well I took the

polio and if I remember correctly it was
just like on a sugar cube you ate it it
wasn't wasn't an injection um I I've had
hepatitis when I was in Burma
um one doctor said it was Amic hepatitis
where dentary amibas had invaded my
liver but I don't recall any kind of
shots maybe maybe I was on an IV it's
all kind of vague I was I was pretty
pretty out of it at the time um but I
have had
U I still got the little scar I'm old
enough to still have the little scar on
my shoulder there um I've had a
few in my life
I think the most recent time I was like
14 years old and was bitten by a dog

when I was riding my

bike uh so I got a tetus shot for that

once when I was in Burma U I stepped on

a it was an acacia spine or a cactus

spine which went way up into my heel and

broke off and I was limping around for

days and some supporter tried to force

me to get a tetanus shot and just

because they were trying to force me to

do it I refused to get the tetanus shot

so a doctor came

with or or not because of course this is

going on YouTube so maybe I just take

that back it's all

good

[Applause]

so some people they ask me questions

that compromise me because I have to

give like a what I consider to be an

honest answer and then I might get into

trouble for

it so

anyway o this naughty

fellow asks the third question which is

also is there some way some sort of way

or initiation into the Discord server

well you have to find my YouTube or not

my YouTube forget that you're going to

have to find my uh email address which

is possible it's out there

and then uh send it and uh but if you

continue asking these compromising

questions then you may be seen as a

glowy or

worse so I think I'm just going to move

on to the next

question

man gosh maybe I should just delete that

question just edit it out because I got

slammed for I mean this isn't as bad as

the last time

yet but

still yeah maybe I'll just have to go

back and do a little editing on this so

anyways the next question is from the

protos sudo monk Alias Cool

Whip and Cool Whip says or the Proto

sudo monk as you prefer oh yeah he's I I

I need to to specify here that he

generally puts titles at the beginning
of his questions so the first title is
uh sufficient condition for
enlightenment and in parenthesis
attitude towards
death and let's see the question is do
all unenlightened beings have either
desire or aversion towards death or in
other words can the non-fear of death
exclusively be a sufficient condition to
indicate one is fully enlightened um no
I don't think that a non-fear of death
exclusively is going to be a sufficient
condition to indicate one is fully
enlightened I mean I mean we're we're
living in a wimpy age now where to be
freaked out about death is common place

but it hasn't always been that way and
it wasn't so long ago that there were a
lot of people
who thought death before dishonor was
just common sense that just facing death
with equinity was just the way it was
supposed to be done and I I I assume
some people succeeded in
that so to be IND different towards
death I do not think is
sufficient a sufficient condition to
indicate one is fully enlightened there
are three kinds of craving according to
the Orthodox tradition craving for
sensual Pleasures craving for existence
and craving for non-existence so even if

you don't have any craving for existence
or or for that matter craving for
non-existence you can still have craving
for sensual Pleasures
which um will keep you in some sorrow so
it may be that these Heroes of the past
who died with
equinity um you know they died
gloriously on the battlefield or
whatever with without a Flinch of of
Terror or any such thing you know they
still probably uh had a craving for uh
you know being with their sweetheart
after after the battle was over if they
survived it that kind of thing you know
they they probably still had the craving
for

Glory so so we basking in glory the pleasure of you know defeating their enemies and seeing them driven before them and hearing the lamentation of the women so I'm just going to move on to the next question from K Whip or the Proto sudo Monk and the title of this question is overcoming ADHD with stimulants and breaking the precepts and then the question is for a person diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder or ad HD mitigating the symptoms using stimulants such as medication such as methylphenidate and music isochronic tones are these breaches of the fifth

and seventh precept in the context of

right livelihood the justification if

one cannot focus when one needs to focus

one cannot have a livelihood

consequently one has more time to study

and practice the dhamma it's not a

question of craving stimulants but

rather using stimul

to merely function to have food and

shelter

well first of all let's see there's two

things here using

stimulants uh as medication which is

here is

methylphenidate I guess I should uh read

what he says a little lower down here

he's got an

appendix he says

uh under normal circumstances the

prefrontal cortex regulat Ates attention

behavior and emotion deficits in

prefontal cortex functioning have been

linked to ADHD symptoms such as poor

impulse control weak sustained attention

and heightened distractability impaired

prefunctional abilities are

characterized by too little dopamine and

norepinephrine and then he says

methylphenidate inhibits the re-uptake

of dopamine and norepinephrine increased

dopin genic and nor

adrenogen activity in the prefrontal

cortex thereby improving focus and

lessening distractions Etc okay so

getting back up here um if you're taking

medication I mean first of all let's

just set aside that apparently K whip

here is taking like scientific realism

as

fact that he is assuming that all the

stuff he was talking about with all the

syllables was reality and I doubt that

but still just getting to the the gist

of the question here is taking the

medication for ADHD against the precept

against intoxicants and that depends on

whether it's an intoxicant or not I mean

are you getting intoxicated so that

you're going into a stuper I don't think

so I mean all stimulants are not

necessarily they don't necessarily cause
clouded of Mind caffeine for example
does not necessarily cause clouded of
Mind in fact one could argue that it
causes a little bit of the
opposite at least in most people which
is one of the reasons why people drink
coffee especially in the morning helps
to wake them
up
so yeah I mean if it puts you into a
stuper then it you might be better off
with the ADHD at least from a spiritual
point of view but from what he says
about it I don't think that it really is
an intoxicant that causes clouded of

mind so I don't I don't think that
there's an issue there with regard to
listen to listening to music and its
isochronic tones I mean again the
purpose of listening to music is for
entertainment you know if you're getting
pleasure from listening to the music and
you're also keeping eight precepts then
it would be in violation of one of the
eight precepts which would be playing
musical instruments listening or
watching entertainment shows that kind
of a thing singing dancing so um
it would depend on your purpose of doing
it I mean if you're doing it as a kind
of medication and isochronic tones does
not sound all that musical to me I mean

it does not sound like hey man let's go

listen to some isochronic

tones I don't I don't know I don't I

just it just doesn't sound very pleasant

I mean it might

be but um I think in some cases um you

just have to to weigh the pros and and

cons and choose the lesser of two evils

assuming the isochronic tones are an

evil or the ADHD is an

evil but it's it's a matter of it's a

matter of Karma and he's going to ask a

question about karma coming right up

next here so let's just move on to that

one let's see yeah I think I answered

that question so let's just go to his

third question the title of which is
modifying or disrupting Karma through
body instead of through mind and then he
says is this cheating is this cheating
in
quotes from the Buddhist perspective or
more generally is manipulating brain
function by way of pharmacology or other
means EG neuralink biotechnology short
circuiting Karma instead of working out
your karma through mind experientially
it's like overriding your karma because
your karma determines the genes and
brain of your next life so are you
artificially altering the body from your
previous Karma without doing any actual
work to work it out and again he just

seems to be assuming that the physical
body is ultimately real I think we may
have a scientific realist in our
midst but I mean everything that occurs
to you is conditioned by Karma so I mean
you wouldn't even hear about the
pharmacology or neuralink or
biotechnology or anything without having
the karma that allows you to do it
because in a sense you're dreaming your
way through this existence and so you're
dreaming the neuralink you're dreaming
the biotechnology in a sense until
you're fully
awake so I mean that's just all part of
your karma so it's not short circuiting

Karma um there's one thing that did

occur to me like let's

say you're you're 200 years from now

technology

hasn't you know has continued to advance

because

civilization somehow has managed not to

collapse that you get some sort of brain

implant that just increases your IQ by

you know a th% or some such then I mean

it might be that there's such a radical

change in your mind that it's just not

you anymore that that in a sense you

died and and got replaced by some other

being with an IQ you know a th% higher

than

I think that's possible I mean you could

make changes to your mind that are just
so radical that it's just not you
anymore I mean it might just be like a
moment of death and then just somebody
else starts
up so I've considered the possibility of
that I think it's not Orthodox terraa I
think that would be heresy from the
Orthodox terraa point of view but
Orthodox terava really didn't have a
concept of neuralink or biotch techology
or uh let's see here methyl
phenidate
so yeah I don't think there's any way of
cheating Karma that if it's not your
karma to to take the drug or to get the

the implant or or the the operation or

whatever then you're just not going to

have

it but that's one reason why I consider

it to be unlikely that anyone will ever

invent an Enlightenment pill you know

you just take this pill you come

enlightened let's assume that it's

red and

uh yeah I just I just don't think that

people are going to have the karma for

that to happen that all of a sudden

they're just going to be poofed into

Enlightenment from taking this

pill probably wouldn't be good for the

the pharmaceutical industry or something

like that so even if somebody invented

it it'd probably get

squelched so I guess I'll just move on

to this question here this is from

ruie and uh we've been going almost two

hours I told you this is going to be a

long one and if you guys didn't go potty

you got nobody with yourselves to

blame so this is from ruy do you think

the sequence cila Samar PA can be

reversed or is it linear and inviable

well I've mentioned before this was

quite some time ago that to some degree

they're I mean they're simultaneous I

mean you have to have some kind of paa

already to even want to keep CA so it's

it's like the legs of a

tripod um you know cila could be
considered more basic and then Som and
Pa you know sort of you
know ascending order of like subtlety or
profundity or something but still I mean
they're all developing
simultaneously that having making a
linear sequence out of it is uh I don't
think that's entirely correct it may be
uh uh just a way of getting your head
around something a way of helping you to
understand it in a useful way even
though it might not be technically 100%
factual or or legitimate but still
sometimes thinking in terms of like
slightly dumbed down analogies or models
can be

useful um and it does make a certain
logical sense that you start with what
is most fundamental and then you work
your way to you know liberating insight
you know PA but still to some degree
they're all simultaneous and they're all
sort of interacting with each other it's
a three body problem that cannot be
figured out
mathematically so I'll just move on the
next question here also by ruie which is
where would you place intellectual
contemplation on the path well I mean
it's certainly not at the end of the
path so intellectual contemplation would
start off towards the beginning of the

path and then I mean it could get up I mean the more subtle the contemplation is the more advanced it is until finally I mean it may be that the highest intellectual contemplation on the path would be I mean something along the lines of Zen Coons where I mean you're using the mind to destroy itself sort of like that saying from the Mahayana Sutra that I I quoted earlier you know the purpose of Lord Buddhist teaching is to liberate us from our Thinking by means of our thinking so if you can start using the intellect sort of like like maaka like the the philosophy of nagar where you're using the intellect to just sort of hit its own limits and just turn

upon itself just destroy the validity of
all intellectual arguments and then
finally consume
itself then I mean it could be up
towards the end I mean it could you
could be placing intellectual
contemplation you know I mean you could
be using that as a legitimate path up
until until shortly before you reach the
end of the
path assuming that the path even has an
end so I guess like in yoga there's Gana
yoga which is you know the The Yoga of
knowledge which would involve some
intellectual contemplation I
assume but you know it depends on what

kind of intellectual contemplation it

is um just like studying like Buddhist

doctrines in a book I mean that would be

relatively

Elementary

um you know just dealing with subtle

metaphysics would be a little less

Elementary but still I mean the the goal

is not intellectual so you're going to

have to eventually leave intellect

behind but I think different people will

will leave it behind at different

different places and uh I failed to

close the blinds before doing this video

so if I lean back I'm starting to get

like white marks on my face like like

right

now so it maybe I'll have to get up in a few minutes and uh fix the blinds but I'll just move on to ru's next and third question here which is how did you feel in your first days and weeks as a fully ordained mendicant um well I mean it was starting off on something new so there's like this wide-eyed idealism and just sort of like being Blown Away by the whole situation I think that would be a good way of of explaining it one of the it's a kind of Pros poem that uh I don't know if I still have it online anywhere it's uh I think it was uh written by a Burmese man named uwin

P um he he put in Poetic form a really good description of just like the the faith and idealism you know the 's mind of someone who's just sitting out on the path that uh is really nice maybe I'll try and find that but um yeah it was just sort of a wide-eyed idealism and also a certain amount of stress and strain like right around the time of my ordination I was getting all kinds of ailments all kinds of stuff coming up I get like a letter from the IRS saying that they think that I underreported my taxes or something just all this stuff is coming up and in a way it's like what Mary Baker Eddie talks about as chemicalization like in Christian

Science when you're using whatever it is
that Christian scientists use I don't
know if they would say that it's Faith
healing as a way of healing somebody
that the person will often get markedly
worse right before they get better and
it's a way of sort of the system
purifying itself of all this [__] before
it can before it can return to Wellness
and that's kind of the way it was with
me was like all this [__] was happening
as a way of just just getting it out of
out of the way so I could be pure enough
to move on to the next stage so to
speak and uh yeah if I lean back I got
these these lights in my face so let's

see here yeah it's it's kind of hard to explain exactly how I felt because it was a long time ago it was well over 30 years ago but yeah I think just like wide-eyed idealism and just being blown away Away by the whole thing and just you know the realization that I was setting upon this momentous change in my life um and then like months a few after a few months I started becoming like disillusioned and Sullen because I realized that uh it wasn't all that it was cracked up to be because most monks really do not have a spiritual vocation you know they're not striving for enlightenment most monks in an Asian culture especially you know they just

they've got their own reasons and most of them really are not striving for enlightenment which was kind of a uh kind of a buzz kill for me you know was it was very disillusioning when I realized that you know most monks you know like the overwhelming majority especially of Asian monks from a Buddhist culture um you know they're really not striving for enlightenment at best they're striving for a better rebirth just like the lay people are striving so I'm just going to move on to the next question here this is from Liber Lam

and libram says what do you think are

the best teas to drink in Burma as a monk and the United States as a lay person well I mean the best teas to drink in Burma as a monk um lib land probably doesn't realize this but strict monks in Burma won't drink tea because there is an obscure rule in the the the the chapter on medicines in the vinia I think it's the vinia mahaga

the B

banda that it says that the juice of All Greens is allowable in the afternoon except for the juice of pot herbs which is like greens that have been cooked like spinach or something and then you drain the water off you're not allowed to drink that in the afternoon because

it's considered to be some kind of soup
or vegetable or something and in Burma
tea leaves are eaten as a vegetable it's
Tea Leaf salad is really good I don't
know why they don't sell it in in the
west I've never seen Tea Leaf salad in
the west it's called
leet in in
Burma and uh so tea tea leaves are
considered to be a kind of greens it's
like a a solid green and so the tea that
you drink is like the the the water
that's drained off from cooking the tea
leaves and so strict monks will not
drink tea in the after noon maybe in the
morning but I mean they they don't have

brands or if there are Brands I I don't
remember a single brand of tea from
Burma you know it's just stuff it's this
this green crude dried leaves that uh
you just make tea out of it's I mean
it's not the burmes are not nearly as
brand conscious as we Western consumers
are you know you just wind up with a jar
with these tea Le Lees in it and you
just drink it and they don't really care
about the quality maybe rich people that
I didn't associate with much would you
know get some special kind of tea but
the the villagers that I mostly was
associating with you know they just tea
they just get some at the at the shop
that probably doesn't have a brand or

anything it's just they buy it bulk in a jar or something or get it bulk out of a jar you know it's just this jar at the store you take as much as you need or whatever so the best teas to drink in Burma I have no
idea maybe I mean if if you go to Burma and want to drink some kind of special tea then yeah just get something grown in Burma which most of it is like Shan state in Burma is uh they have got a lot of tea plantations most of it comes from there I assume but with regard to the best tea to drink in the United States as a lay person I'd say Milos you can get like get it by the gallon and on a

hot day it goes down really good which
I'm sorry to disappoint Liber Lam he may
have thought that I was some sort of
Epicure with regard to equality te's and
would advise some some kind of Daring or
something but I'm going with Milos
because that's really the my favorite
tea to drink Publix also makes a kind of
green tea with uh honey and Jin sang in
it that they also sell by the gallon
which is the next best thing to Milos so
I would advise those and before I move
on to the next question from gas I've
got to fix the the blinds because I'm
really starting to get stripes on me so
excuse me for one
moment see

here one

blind and another

blind okay we should be completely blind

now okay yeah look it I lean back no

Stripes that's good so so the next

question is from

Gaz and Gaz says is it safe to say that

the Buddha is the most venerated human

being who is recognized as a human being

that ever lived Buddhism is the only

serious religion that venerates a man

and places him above the gods compared

to the rather debasing and slavish

attitude of other religions it stands

out amongst them it is extremely

glorifying and encouraging to Humanity

that a mere mortal man conquered all things and attained the absolute I think n overlooked this aspect of Buddhism and its potential to inspire mankind you touched on this in your video cringe Buddhism describing it as a bit of a reach but can you not see an Uber MCH like character within the Buddha well of course the Buddha was he had attained superhuman mental States the highest superhuman mental States according to tradition and it is true that Terra considers him to be a human being but it's just human nature that you want to glorify the founder of your spiritual tradition so I mean it is the official position that the Buddha was a human

being he was a mortal human but according to tradition he was like 27 feet tall and had all these weird physical marks that set him apart from ordinary humans which probably was not really the case and it's much more inspiring and glorifying to have the Buddha saying look I'm a human like you I did it you can do it too and this is how I would advise you to try to do it I mean for me that's more inspiring than having him you know 27 feet tall with 40 teeth and and his feet are shaped like an inverted capital T with his heels sticking out in back as far as the fronts of his feet stuck out in front

and all these weird marks it it made him
look like a monster I mean he would
hardly be considered a human if if you
saw him the way tradition represents
him so and then and then the Mahayana
buddist essentially just turned him into
a god he's like some Cosmic
deity
so but I mean there is some truth in
what Gaz is saying I mean the Buddha is
the most venerated human being who is
recognized as a human being that ever
Liv lived because you know he's got the
highest gods in the viic pantheon coming
down and graveling at his feet that he
is higher than higher than the gods
because he is fully enlightened and the

gods are

not so yeah I guess you could say

that

um yeah but then the tradition has

pretty much kind of ruined it a bit by

making him so far above the ordinary

human you know it's like he had to try

for countless eons to perfect his parmes

so that he could become the Buddha in

the first place and he's he's born with

all these anomalies just inhuman

anomalies so that they took the original

human Buddha and uh turned him into

something that wasn't quite human

anymore or technically was human but

still was obviously just way different

from from the average human just just

physically

even and of course Christianity did the

same thing with with their founder they

they turned him into

God

so yeah I guess I guess there's another

question here so can you not see an Uber

MCH like character within the Buddha

sure I mean there's the term udri manad

dama which is superhuman mental state

that the Buddha attained big time and I

mean even anyone who attains Janna or

gets psychic powers for example has

attained uh udri manusama or superhuman

mental States so that would be like uber

mench you know

superhuman but uh definitely n was uh

not a

Buddhist that

uh yeah but like Julius Iola he

definitely went with the uh the Buddhist

Arya as Uber MCH

idea but I'm going to move on to the

next

question this is from thermal squid and

thermal squid says do you believe that

theism is completely out of the picture

or off the table as I get older and the

more I study the more fear I have about

being able to do this on my own in in

that as some theists say relying on

one's own understanding is immensely

dangerous and that we can't be saved by
our work works there is some truth in
this that more or less nullified the
open-ended interpretive Liberties
interpretative Liberties of the
speculative philosophical religions
however two strong contentions arise
which is that we cannot actually qualify
something like God or gods and that we
cannot know that a belief in one or many
is a satisfying criteria for salvation
there is a persistent feeling I have
that knowledge is not a criteria for
enlightenment or the the end of
suffering and I can't exactly explain
why other than that enlightened beings
may be a metaphysically meaningless

phrase and that alleged enlightenments
are to are told and alluded to never
before have we ever empirically
witnessed any anyone become enlightened
and not be born again any thoughts or
comments if my comment is too long I
prefer just a reply here not trying to
be rude as it seems you're disinterested
in walls of texts yeah well very long
questions like an essay with thought
question mark at the end um it does it
does take a lot of time and it makes it
just harder to answer the question
because I've got to like kind of dig
through the question in order to tease
out the gist of the question and there

might be like two or three questions
that are embedded in the essay that I
then have to isolate and and so forth
but um I mean the the very first
sentence here do you believe that theism
is completely out of the picture or off
the table well he talks about like
essentially Grace divine grace that in
Christianity you can't uh you can't be
saved through your own efforts it takes
divine grace and there is some of that
in
Buddhism that I mean there is sort of a
Buddhist equivalent of divine grace
because you can't make yourself be
enlightened because making is karma
karma literally means making or doing so

nothing that you do is going to get you
in line enlightened you can't make
yourself be enlightened nobody can make
yourself be enlightened including the
gods so I mean there is a kind of divine
grace
involved that you don't have any control
over like Krishna mury said I mean you
can open the window but you can't make
the wind blow in the best you can do is
get everything ready and open the window
and maybe the wind will blow in you know
like the the sa batan suta the Buddha is
saying that you know if you practice
perfect mindfulness you know you
practice really good mindfulness for a

week

straight then he doesn't guarantee

you're going to become enlightened

you'll say one of two things is going to

happen either you're going to become

enlightened or you're going to get

really close to becoming

enlightened

so yeah there is a kind of divine grace

aspect to Buddhism also even though it's

not really specified as what exactly it

is other than I mean reality is always

here if if you Define enlightenment as a

realization of Ultimate

Reality then I mean the Ultimate Reality

is is here all the time it's always here

and all it's going to take is just one

little jolt that's beyond your control

or or

just it's like in a way you just stop or

you just give up in a way that then all

of a sudden that this liberating Insight

can arise but you can't force it to

arise it happens when it happens and for

some people that may happen earlier than

for others and other people it may take

a long time and they may have to get all

the way to they have to master fourth of

J before it can happen other people they

might just get hit over the head with a

big board you that falls off a truck or

something have a near-death experience

and that might be enough or they might

just get

temporary or uh momentary momentary

samade kikas samadi according like the

mahasi tradition will say Kanika samadi

is good enough you don't even have to

get jna you don't even have to get

neighborhood

concentration that just

momentary momentto moment concentration

just mindfulness of the present moment

is good enough so I mean some people

have to get farther than others which

indicates that it's not you follow this

path until you get to the end of the

path and there's like the the Pearly

Gates of nibana there it doesn't work

that way

that the path has no

end and it's just you keep following the

path

until something that is beyond your

beyond your control because control will

be karmic and anything that's karmic is

going to be temporary and and ultimately

dissat

unsatisfying

so um yeah but I mean theism isn't going

to help you any because I mean how's God

going to do it if I mean if it's just

impossible to be done that you're

liberated um through action you know I

mean you can't be liberated through your

own actions you can't be liberated

through someone else's

actions

so um there is that but I do think that

there is some kind of validity to the

idea of divine grace even though the

divine grace may not be coming from

Jehovah God

almighty because Jehovah God Almighty if

you read the Old Testament he doesn't

strike me as being particularly wise

anyway in fact he seems to be fairly

samsaric and he himself does not appear

to be

enlightened

so gosh if there's any other questions I

don't think there are any other

questions there's only one question mark

in the whole thing and that's in the
very top of the question so I guess I
answered that question
kind of it's some of these questions are
really hard to answer when you're when
you're trying to discuss Ultimate
Reality and I mean you have to do it
within the context of conventional
reality because that's where that's the
context of any kind of sentence or idea
that I mean it's uh to some degree it's
an exercise in futility futility of
futility all is
futile so I'm just going to move on the
next question I'm not sure if I really
did an adequate job of answering that

but it's a difficult question to answer
so I'm just going to move on to cify and
cify says what advice would you give me
to restart my meditation practice can I
do a simple observe the breath
meditation on my own or should I attend
a Buddhist center and practice there
well you can just do anap Sati and get
your meditation going on your own or you
could do a mantra or some other
relatively simple meditation technique
that starts out Elementary and then as
you get better at it becomes more and
more
advanced um I mean it's not absolutely
necessary to attend a Buddhist center
and practice there in fact some Buddhist

centers may not give very good
meditation uh advice you know a lot of
monks you know they're like Burmese
monks you know they're good Scholars
they might not meditate much so they'll
give you advice out of the book and it's
not even based on their own experience
in a lot of
cases or you might be going to um some
lay Buddhist center where you've got
this rank amateurs who are set
themselves up as the teachers I mean
they they may be wiser than the average
person but still from the Buddhist point
of view they're still essentially
beginners and so they might not be able

to give you much better advice than you
could give yourself in some cases but if
you have access to like a reputable
meditation teacher or better yet a
meditation Master then it certainly
wouldn't hurt for you to go and just
receive some meditation instruction from
him but if you don't have access to that
then certainly you could just do anaana
or or a simple monra or something and uh
just uh do it on your
own so I think I answered that one so
I'm just going to move on to the next
question this is from scadden we have
like more than 40 questions not 40 more
but all together it's it's we're above
40 questions today so I knew it was

going to be a long especially because it
is my nature to give very long answers
to short questions with lots of
digressions and so forth so anyways
scolin says would you kindly explain
what happens when a person is stuck in a
deep meditation they're just not ready
for for some reason I thought it sounded
like when computer nerds try to measure
who has the world's fastest computer by
forcing it to calculate pi until it
melts down and Pi of course is the ratio
between the diameter and circumference
of a
circle or maybe it's the circumference
would be at on the top of the

fraction and the the diameter would be
the bottom so anyways um could I kindly
explain what happens when a person is
stuck in a deep meditation that they're
just not ready for I don't think you'd
really get stuck in it I think you you'd
eventually just get thrown off of it
that you're just not skillful enough to
remain
on the on the Bronco or to skillfully
drive the motorcycle or whatever and
eventually you're going to just crash so
if if you get into a deep meditation for
whatever reason like you're in the
presence of some really Advanced Guru
who's who AA you know it's just
contagious mental States you're picking

up on his wisdom and so you're just going into these spontaneous meditative states that you're just not ready for yet you just start like in a lot of cases you'll just start like violently shaking with like excess py it's called in B in uh in poly I almost said in Burmese um but some people can mess themselves up I mean you can get health problems you can get mental problems especially some kinds of meditation are relatively dangerous um to practice without like a a very skilled teacher like like Kundalini meditation which isn't a tervada Buddhist method but I have read repeatedly that kundal

meditation can be

dangerous if you're practicing it on

your own just out of a book or with some

amateur who is not a very good teacher

trying to guide you because they learned

it in a book or something um yeah you

can different things can happen you know

up to you know really serious like

mental dysfunction maybe even

death um but that's that I mean that's U

maybe I shouldn't like say something

that would scare people away from

meditation I mean if you're doing a

relatively simple straightforward

meditation which pretty much all terraa

Buddhist meditations are then you're

doing okay and if you're in the presence

of a really wise person like neim Koli Baba like I was saying maybe this question was inspired by some statements I made in the previous Q&A where I was talking about how neim karoli Baba during his darons people would be all sitting around him like as in as an audience just hanging out with him just picking up on his Vibes and so and so forth that some people would just spontaneously start going into deep meditative States and he would send this this kid or or like the the the ashram sweeper to go and just pester them until they they couldn't meditate anymore just to to bring them out of it because they

just weren't ready for it yet

so as a general rule I mean dhama will

protect

you so I don't think there's anything

real really to be afraid of unless

you're trying to go for some kind of

weird esoteric stuff you know like uh

Alistar Crowley stuff or Kundalini stuff

that kind of thing you could get into

some some murky dark areas in your

meditation especially if you don't have

a good

guide but uh as a general rule if you

start getting into a meditation that's

too deep for you that you're not ready

for it yet uh most people like in terado

Buddhism they'll feel their ego start to

dissolve or they'll feel that they're
they're not even breathing you know
their their breath has become so subtle
that it feels like they're not breathing
anymore then they'll just Panic if
they're not ready for that yet you know
they'll just you know they'll they'll
chicken out and just stop meditating you
know it'll snap them out of the
meditation so I guess I answered that
one so I'll just go on to scadden's next
question here would you kindly explain
the ethics in Fight Club and that's kind
of a weird question that one kind of put
me on the back heel so to speak because
Fight Club is one of my favorite movies

it's really a good movie but I mean what

are the ethics I mean it's sort of like

n or something and it's almost like

anti- ethical you know it's just I

mean I mean it's just sort of like a

rebellion

against um this

consumeristic modern society that

castrates men and um just removes like

the the the warrior hero mentality from

from men which of course a lot of people

nowadays would totally justify and say

yeah we're better off getting rid of

toxic

masculinity but

um yeah I think I don't know how ethical

that is I mean where is the ethics I

mean there is some ethics in just being
Fearless you know there is there is some
emphasis on fearlessness and just
enduring pain and and just enduring
pretty much everything just facing it
and and just experiencing it to the
full you know just like you know putting
the the quick lime I think that's what
it is or lie on the back of I guess it
was lie just putting it on the back of
your hand until it's just burning your
Skin's just bubbling you know and you're
just you have to be right there you know
it's like Tyler Duran keeps slapping the
nameless whatever his name was you know
as he's trying to go to his safe place

he's trying to imagine the cave with the
Penguin and all that and Tyler Duran's
just slapping him saying be right here
be right here with the pain you
know so it's just like an independence
of group think to some degree although
the Space Monkeys just kind of form
their own group think in the
movie um yeah I mean a lot of it is just
amoral I think that's like largely the
the ethics of Fight Club is is just sort
of like an argument for a kind of
masculine immorality sort of like Bronze
Age pervert or
something but I mean there you can tease
out some real ethics you know like
fearlessness is definitely moral fear is

immoral or just freedom I mean the

social Freedom the freedom to do what

you want is in inferior to mental

freedom but still it's it's better than

being a

slave so yeah like it's certainly not

teaching ethics I mean you're not

supposed to like pee into people's soup

you know you just you just it's just not

right it's not ethical to do that

although they were doing plenty of that

in Fight Club or or worse than peeing

into the soup they were doing other

things into the soup especially the clam

chower

so yeah it's kind of a weird question I

I guess I should have like just

contemplated Fight Club maybe watched it

again to

uh really sort of work out the ethics of

it because I've never really considered

Fight Club as like a an ethical or moral

movie there's a certain philosophy to it

but it's more nich than than

schopenhauer

definitely

so yeah I guess I guess I did my best to

explain the ethics of Fight Club within

the the con rints of answering this as

well as more than 40 other questions so

I will think about it maybe maybe in

another episode maybe the next episode I

will have had some kind of Fight Club

Epiphany or something but it is a good
movie I do advise any guy especially to
watch the
movie so I guess I'll just move on the
next question here this is also from
scalin and he says often times Myanmar
has been completely excluded or
information omitted in anything related
to the Orient I think quite a few people
would probably just compare it to North
Korea for lack of knowledge what does
the government even do over there and
what he says with regard to Myanmar
being completely excluded or information
omitted um I mean probably most people
in the west are completely oblivious to

the fact that Myanmar is at present in a full-blown state of civil War it's just the powers that be the The Establishment The globalist Establishment doesn't want you to be concerned with that it'll distract you from Ukraine and Israel those are the two countries at War among several that they want you to be concerned about for various reasons so the full-blown civil war going on in Myanmar right now is uh it's considered to be insignificant people shouldn't even hear about it

but

um what does the government do so um the pretty much the whole time that I lived in in Burma or Myanmar it was

under a military

dictatorship and the main purpose of the

military dictatorship was to remain in

power I mean that's the way a lot of bit

companies are companies

governments that's the way a lot of

governments are um increasingly in the

West also in there I mean just look at

what's going on in America now where the

the front runner for president of the

United States is just being persecuted I

mean they're doing everything they can

aside from assassination to destroy this

guy and it's I mean it would have been

Unthinkable just a few years ago I mean

before 2016 especially I mean people

even people on the left would think I
mean you that just couldn't happen in
America that happens in places like you
know El Salvador or
something it happens in Iran it couldn't
happen in America but it now it's
happening in
America at least they haven't just uh
given like a a totally fake show trial
and and thrown them into prison but
maybe that's just because they know that
there would be some some real riots
going on if that
happened anyways what does the
government even do over there um you
know it's like the top generals and some
of the the higher class Colonels you

know they're just accumulating wealth
and maintaining their power and uh you
know doing their best to keep the com
keep I keep trying to say company trying
doing their best to keep the I won't say
the civilians that like the the subjects
not the citizens but the subjects just
keep them under control you know keep
them from from acting up which lately
has been failing because you've got
civil war going on but there's always
been Civil War to some degree around the
edges like in the the non- Burmese
ethnicities around the edges of of
Myanmar there's been civil war going on
since shortly after World War

II like uh the beginning of the Rambo
movie where he's actually in Myanmar
fighting the Burmese government and he
did more to liberate Burma as at least
temporarily than all s suji ever did
just Rambo that Rambo movie I Remember
at the time that you could get 20 years
in prison in Burma for being in
possession of that Rambo
movie and there was another video that
was going around that was also you could
be in prisoned for it it was um a
picture of the military dictator's
daughter's wedding where she's just
encrusted with diamonds and then it kept
um like
moving uh it' be shifting from that

showing the the General's daughter encrusted with diamonds at her wedding to what was going on right outside the venue where she got married and it's just people living in abject poverty squalor you know so it's encrusted with diamonds General's daughter encrusted with diamonds dirt and squalor encrusted with diamonds dirt and squalor it just kept going back and forth between that and that I think that was like 15 or 20 years in prison also if you're if you were caught in possession of that that particular video but I mean what what is the government doing is you know they're just doing whatever it takes for them to

remain in power and doing what they can
to keep the country more or less going I
mean their attempts at at Prosperity
just fail miserably because they're more
or less
incompetent but they do have China
backing them up so China backs up the uh
the military government of Burma and uh
in exchange
the military government in Burma is just
selling large chunks of of Burma to
China or at least you know they're
gaining control over like copper mines
and sea ports and that sort of thing a
lot of Chinese melon fields in Burma
now so I mean what else do they do I
mean they just do their what little they

can to keep the country going and for

them to remain in power and just

enjoying their wealth aside from that

and driving their mercedesbenz

automobile or having the chauffeur drive

it for them and

just there there are some people in

Burma this is a I think it's a a

misunderstanding that uh in a third

world

country that uh everyone's poor but

that's not the case in a third world

country you've got like 1% that's just

filthy rich and then you know pretty

much everybody else is poor and so

that's the the way it is in Burma and um

most of the filthy rich people in Burma
at least at the times when I was living
there were either high-ranking military
officials or close relatives of
high-ranking military officials plus
just a few close friends of high ranking
military officials but I mean they got
it set up that the money is being
channeled to them
like somebody was telling me I was
started uh hanging out with a western
xats for a little while before I left
Burma and I heard a lot of weird inside
stuff that You' only hear from like
Western xats where there was one guy he
was I mean people just rushed in when
the military government supposedly ended

like around

2011 which mainly meant that the

military General the generals just

changed out of their uniforms and into

civilian

clothes but um like in order to build

some kind of

buildings that you had to buy the

materials from this one company in

rangon it didn't matter where in Burma

you were going to build the building you

had to buy the materials from this one

person or this one company in rangon

that was closely affili uh closely

affiliated with at least one Burmese

General and then of course they're

making the profits and they you know

make it illegal to to buy the same stuff

from someone who's actually close to

where the building is you know they just

do that kind of

stuff

so I guess I answered that question

probably in more detail than was

necessary so I'm just going to move on

to the next question and this is from

Mama and mama says do you totally

believe in

reincarnation and then in parenthesis it

says here I saw a YouTube video in which

a Buddhist monk says there's 100 % proof

that it is real based on the evidence of

a 9-year-old Thai girl who remembered

her past

life so do I totally believe in

reincarnation I can't say that I totally

believe in anything that belief is a

kind of delusion belief is thinking that

you know something that you don't really

know because if you really knew it you'd

know it and not just believe

it so as I've been saying I mean there's

no way of proving certain things I mean

how are you going to prove beyond a

shadow of a doubt that there is

reincarnation people that are wiser than

me believe in

reincarnation like ROM dos he used to

say he had no doubt at all in

reincarnation that you know he he had

seen enough proof for

himself that he had no doubts at all but

I'm more skeptical than Ram do I'm more

skeptical than most religious

people and so I mean it's a working

hypothesis but even though I accept a

working hypothesis I don't think it hap

necessarily happens the way the books

say it happens you know Orthodox Terra

says it happens one way the Tibetan Book

of the Dead says it happens another way

Hinduism will say that it works in

another way and

so um there is something to it but I

don't think it's necessarily just the

way books explain

it so with regard to uh Buddhist monk
says that there's 100% proof that is
real there's really not 100% proof that
anything is real and uh I mean there is
evidence of children who remember past
Lives who can come up with information
about this past life that can be
verified but even that um I mean it
could just be like a kind of remote
viewing like Clairvoyance or something
that could explain it also or who knows
I mean some cases probably are just
fraudulent but I don't think all of them
are but Ian Stevenson I mentioned him
earlier he wrote a number of books on
evidence empirical evidence for

reincarnation and it consisted largely
of children that believe that that
recall the previous existence and could
like give details that could then be
verified that sort of thing but even
that isn't just absolute
proof so I do think that there is
something to the idea of a reincarnation
I do not believe that it's when you're
dead you're dead it's just you poof into
Oblivion but um it is primarily like an
intuitive thing a thing that I accept on
the authority of people I acknowledge is
wiser than me like neim coroli Baba back
there on the on the thing and just
Buddhist sages in general for that
matter and

uh what else is like going to say with

regard to

that intuition appeals to

Authority I mean I have read couple of

Ian Stevenson's books so I've seen that

evidence

also

um my father who claimed to remember

past

lives so I pretty much believe in

reincarnation that that would be my

first pick with regard to explaining

what happens to us after we die you know

it's it is my working

hypothesis but I really cannot bring

myself to totally believe in

anything that uh I mean belief itself is
ultimately it's it's all within a
samsaric context of conventional truth
and so ultimately it's not going to be
true knowledge anyway like I've already
mentioned while answering a previous
question but I am inclined to endorse it
as
likely but of course who who can prove
it one way or the other I mean nobody
can really prove that when you're dead
you're
dead so anyways I'm going to go on to
the next question which is the very last
question my golly we're we're well under
three
hours and this is from Arin and Arin

says because you led such an extremely strict aesthetic life in Burma do you ever feel like a completely different person since you disrobed or do you feel like the same person despite everything changing so drastically well sometimes I am struck by just how different my life is now than from say 15 or 20 years ago or even five years ago for that matter and in a way it does feel like I'm somewhat of a different person I'm not a completely different person but I am somewhat of a different person some of that is that I'm not a monk anymore but then again I mean to some degree I've just Fallen back on lay

person's habits that I developed before
I was a monk so it's in a way I've sort
of reverted back to being like a lay
person again like I was before I was a
monk but also I'm getting older and so
just getting older is making me feel
different you know I'm changing you know
towards being a different person just
from getting older so it's just
impermanence in general is causing me to
feel different than I used to feel but I
mean obviously from the conventional
point of view I'm still the same person
more or less it's just that certain
aspects of my behavior and my
perceptions have
changed but uh so yeah I mean I am

obviously different than I was five or
10 or 15 or 20 years ago I mean I'm
obviously very different from when I was
six months old too so I mean everything
is impermanent and it's just sort of a a
flux you know it's like who you consider
yourself to be is is always changing a
little bit but um some of the changes
are fairly radical and obvious and
sometimes it does kind of strike me that
wow this is very different than than how
I used to be but
uh still called poo a lot of the
time so I guess that's it I guess I
answered all the questions so if you
have any questions especially if they're

not on like controversial subjects that
might get me a strike on
YouTube then feel free to ask questions
especially if they're not joke
questions like a certain person tends to
ask
you know if they're in good faith you
actually want to know the answer to the
question then and you think that I can
answer it maybe you know like questions
about Buddhism philosophy in general
meditation monasticism Burma myself
personally Etc then uh yeah feel free to
ask in the comments below if you have
access to the Discord server you can ask
them there if you have access to the uh
my subscribe Star channel you can ask

them there and uh check the URL links if

I am at present allowed to

display my URL links on YouTube you can

find them on rumble or bitshoot or on an

old video of mine anyway and uh be

happy

hello and welcome to episode 88 of question and answer I am your host poo basa and I'm very late on starting this Q&A partly because I did a few videos with our good friend Brian Rue earlier today and then after that I was just kind of resting my throat for this one because we talked for a while and uh my sweetheart was mad at me which cause a certain tension in the air so I'm kind of trying to chill from that and then I get sucked into this heated exchange this back and forth on my Discord server with a pure land Buddhist and I'm sure you all know what pure land Buddhists can be

like

so it's been a while it's been a few

hours of me sitting

here and uh it's time to start answering

questions and I I'm sorry to disappoint

any of you

uh fight nationalists out there by not

having just 14 questions for episode 88

but we've got lots of questions not as

many as lately though so this this Q&A

could be uh two hours or less which is

uh pretty good and uh I'm looking very

shiny look at my forehead it's like

shining Okay so I'm just going to Wade

right into this list of questions and

the first question is from

mooners and mooners says what do you

think of Boran Katana and the yoga
vachara tradition and is it compatible
with the foundational teachings of the
sutas it is very influential in Thailand
and Cambodia and seems to be influenced
by
vajana a similar thing exists in Burma
practiced by the wayas and it's kind of
surprising to me that mooners here knows
about burmes
wayas I mean most most people outside of
Burma don't know what wayas are but then
again I didn't know up until just an
hour or so ago what Boran Katana is or
yoga vachara I think I've heard of yoga
vachara but Boron Katana I don't think

I'd ever heard of before Katana I know

that word because it is poly for

meditation in fact Katan in

Burmese means meditation you know what

kind of Katan do you do you know that

kind of

thing

so I looked it up in Wikipedia very

briefly and Boran Katana goes by the

name of esoteric Southern Buddhism so

it's like esoteric elements or Magical

elements of terraa

and uh is it compatible with the

foundational teachings of the sutas I

don't think so because the the the

polych warn against doing magician stuff

or fortunetelling stuff or I don't think

there's any mention of alchemy but I'm pretty sure Alchemy would be in there too and the wayas of Burma are essentially Alchemists they're not necessarily using metal turning trying to turn metal into like base metal into gold there's different kinds of wayas there are like I think there's the iron wayas there's like Mercury wayas that are trying to make the philosopher stone or whatever out of mercury then you've got certain other kind of wayas that use mantras or they use something called in which is it's like a diagram looks kind of like a Tic Tac Toe board with some of the the spaces filled with like esoteric

symbols that supposedly have magic

power so yeah there is some of that kind

of stuff in

ma but it's on The Fringe it's not

considered to be like genuine terraa

it's got elements of genuine terraa but

then there's like the magician and

Alchemist stuff that's mixed in and that

stuff is considered to be not genuine

teachings of the

Buddha and

uh

so is Boran Katana and the yoga vachara

tradition and it's is it compatible with

the foundational teachings of the sutas

I mean to the the the elements of it you

know that accept the basic teachings of

the sutas yeah those would be compatible
but overall their emphasis is worldly
you know you're not going to be trying
to turn base metal into gold if you're a
monk that's not even supposed to touch
gold but I'm not sure what kind of
esoteric tantric kind of stuff they're
doing in Thailand and camb oia and la
and wherever else there is this um
Southern Buddhist
esotericism so I mean there are groups
like that in Burma but again they are
considered to be on the outskirts and
some of some of the uh I mean the wayas
aren't ordained
monks and they're largely

mythological I mean the real wayas that
have formed kind of like the they've
become like the center of a kind of
cult that they're largely mythological
beings you know they they can't have sex
with real human women because real human
women eat meat and smell bad to them so
they have to go to the Himalaya
Mountains where there are flowers shaped
like beautiful women and they have sex
with those instead these kind of like
Legends have Arisen in Burma
anyway um
see yeah yeah I don't think it's
entirely compatible compatible with the
foundational teachings of the sutas but
I'm no expert on this I never really had

anything to do I never stayed at one of these monasteries in Burmont I knew a monk who did and he was bragging about how his teacher all he had to do was point at something to turn it into gold which was even surpassing Midas himself but uh again I don't think all of this is just based on Alchemy there's probably other magical stuff probably healing and and like prognostication and so forth but all of that is disapproved of or um not encouraged to say the least in the poly texts like even like doing Atara charms and so forth It's specifically mentioned is something you should not do

interpreting the cries of birds and all

this kind of stuff um yeah I mean you're

just supposed to set that aside that's

all animal knowledge and so I assume a

lot of what is contained within this

yoga

vachara um tradition or Traditions would

be stuff that is um just

obviously um condemned in the poly texts

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

question and this is from thermal squid

and he wrote some very long

questions

but um I mean a lot of it is just sort

of like extraneous commentary so if you

want to read the entire

thing then you can just go to the

previous Q&A number 87 and look for

thermal Squid's comments but I've pretty

much just extracted the most important

what I consider to be the most important

part in order to set the stage for the

the question and I've even included the

question itself so there are question

marks in

these so the first one is how will one

know when they are enlightened or Beyond

suffering as it is obvious that even

monks mendicants and sages still have

occasional desires moods and mundane

sufferings so how do you know when

you're enlightened well that's that's I

mean it's a kind of trick question

because I have to answer it within a

ssar context and you don't know you're

enlightened within a samsaric

context so I mean if you know you're

beyond suffering if you just stop

suffering I mean that would be a pretty

good

sign

um yeah I mean it is true some people

may think they're enlightened and be

mistaken so it's not just a subjective

thing of of just when you attain it I

mean you'll know I

mean yeah is this is one of those

questions where I mean you're dealing

with something that's off the scale and

you have to use words that are on the

scale to try to talk about it and

anything that's on the scale just cannot

touch what is off the scale

so we may assume that if you're really

enlightened you're going to know

it how exactly that's another question I

don't think it can really be explained

in

words but um I do think that it may be

at the surface at the worldly level that

the human meat puppet is still going

through the actions of being a human

being still has its programming to some

degree and somebody like NE cly Baba

that I think may have been fully

enlightened you know he laughed and

cried got angry sometimes but the thing
is if you're enlightened and that sort
of thing could could even happen you're
not identified with it you I mean it's
it's just irrelevant it's Just Energy
just nature taking its course and you're
no longer identified with
that but how you would exactly
know is something different and the dog
wants to go outside and go potty and
I've just started this Q&A
and I think it's just going to have to
poop on the floor or
something so let's see
here ask the question again I I really
do have this conscientious desire to
answer a question as well as I can I

mean if I just don't know the answer

I'll admit to it but some of these

questions are just very subtle I mean

and some of them like this one I think

is just I don't think there is an

answer because the answer is off the

scale so how will one know when they are

enlightened or Beyond

suffering you just

know I don't know you just know you

know but

um yeah I mean it's just like a

transcendental kind of an answer that I

can't really give in in

words I mean you have to get there in

order to know

so I'm just going to move on to Thermal Squid's next question which is as follows I think that maybe an even better clarification is wherein you compare and contrast Hindu renunciation and practice as endless purification and Buddhist practice as a matter of purification up until a certain point of which you say they jump out or bail out sideways at what point is it proper to bail out or cash out spiritually speaking that seems to be an inherently arbitrary point that is determined or adjudicated by the ego Consciousness or even the higher self that you may consider provisionally real but not

Ultimate

Reality

well getting back to the actual question

with the question mark here at what

point is it proper to bail out or cash

out spiritually speaking the Buddha

would say as soon as possible as soon as

as soon as you can it's just that some

people will have to to go farther on the

path before they're able to bail out

some people may have to like perfect

fourth jna before they can bail out some

people will perfect fourth J and still

not be able to bail out and then other

people won't even get the first Janna

but for some reason they've got a

certain Talent or ripeness or whatever
and that'll be it they can be just
walking through the marketplace like
there was some Zen monk according to the
legend walking through the marketplace
and he's walking past a butcher
and this lady is asking the butcher give
me the best best cut of meat you've got
and the butcher says every cut of meat
in this shop is the best cut of meat and
somehow it just clicked and he became
fully enlightened
supposedly so I mean you can sometimes I
mean you don't even have to be like in
this exalted state of sagehood or
sainthood before it happens but
generally it happens when it's ready to

happen you do not have control over when exactly it happens because it's not something that you do something that you do is Karma and this is not Karma it's not it's not the result of karma Enlightenment is not the result of anything because if it's the result of anything then it is conditioned and it's not really Enlightenment it's going to be temporary and conducive to unease so yeah at what point is it proper to bail out or cash out spiritually speaking in other words at what point is it proper what point along the path is it proper to become fully enlightened as soon as as soon as you can as soon as it

happens so I think I'm just going to
move on to the next question here this
is from
ribalder and I don't know if ribalder
and mooners are in secret communication
or something or if they're the same
person
but ribalder also asks a question that
is uh similar to what mooner asked and
that is do you have any Ari monk
stories and again I'm kind of surprised
that anybody outside of Burma knows
about the Maha Ari who were a sect of
Buddhism that existed in Burma in
medieval times in fact I have read that
the Burmese the ethnic Burmese were
mainly followers of this Maha Ari

tradition before they converted to

terraa so they were already Buddhists

before they became terava Buddhists but

according to the

story

um the burmes like they migrated south

from like the foothills of the Himalayas

they're tibeto burmes they're they're

related to the Tibetans like

linguistically probably genetically to

some degree they migrate down or invade

whichever you prefer into like Central

like upper

Burma and they're probably already a

kind of Buddhist at that time and the

Ari the Maha Ari based on what I've read

about them it was sort of tantric Buddhism it was related to Tibetan Buddhism in some way it was kind of like Tantra Yana and mainly I think what we know about the AI monks comes from a Burmese Chronicle the glass pal Chronicle or in Burmese it's called the Manan yazn which translates into glass Palace Chronicle and it's talking about the Maha Ari and the word Ari uh comes from Arna which means Forest it doesn't it doesn't come from Arya like noble it comes from Arna which means Forest because apparently a lot of them were had Forest monasteries they like Forest monks and according to the glass Palace Chronicle which may not be entirely

reliable because it was probably

composed by a terraa Buddhist who did

not have a very high opinion of the

Mahari the Mahari um one of the most

notable things about

them is that they had allegedly What's

called the youus pran

noctis which means that any of the the

local

girls the night before her wedding was

sent to the Maha Ari Monastery to be

taught the the the Arts of love so to

speak so the arri monks the Maha Ari

monks got first crack at her so to speak

no pun

intended aside from that um according to

the glass Palace Chronicle they drank

alcohol um I think they ate dinner in

the afternoon and they practiced martial

arts some kind of boxing so it was a

fairly corrupt form of Buddhism and it's

understandable why King anata

decided that they should convert to

terraa which was it was a

more what should I call it just uh you

more solid genuine kind of of teaching

of Buddha Buddha Vach you know it was

more

genuine and might as well uh give a

little more on

the the legendary conversion of of

terava or legendary conversion of Burma

to terraa in that at the time time this

was like um the 11th century you know

the the

1000s and Pagan was the Burmese capital

in central Burma there were also a few

other groups there were a group called

The Pew who lived in like uh around the

area of Pi or I guess it used to be

called prome in in the British times and

also the MS in the South they were

terad and the Burmese farther north were

like this Maha Ari sect and uh there was

a a mon monk missionary called in

Burmese Shin arahan who went to the king

king

anarat and did his missionary thing and

converted King anata to Terra Buddhism

or at least you know it might have been
like a political decision this this will
be better for my people you know it will
unify the people better or some such
so Kings being what they were those days
King anarat just unilaterally decreed
from now on we're terraa Buddhist there
is some indication like in Pagan there
are at least a few temples in the the
the old capital city of pagan that
apparently were still Mahari
temples so the the Aris still existed
and I have been told that they still
have like a vestigal influence the
tradition has like a vestigal influence
uence on Shen Buddhism certain areas of
shen state which would be uh a

mountainous Plateau on the east side of

the nation of

Myanmar and the Shen are more closely

related to the ties in fact Shen and

saam have the same um the same

atmology so they were originally pretty

much the same people some of them

migrated into the Shen plateau and

became Shen other ones migrated into

what is Now Thailand and become Siamese

or

ties so I guess the I've told the Ari

monk stories that I know I don't know

any specific stories about Ari

monks other than just the the youth Prim

noctis and the martial arts and the the

the booze drinking and and like eating
dinner it's about that's about the
extent of my knowledge of the Maha Ari
sect in uh like medieval early medieval
Burma so Ry balder's next question here
is did you consider becoming an Ari
wizard well in my younger hornier days I
used to kind of like the idea of that
used pre-main noctis but um I
mean you know it's like a lot of guys
would think wow I mean that that'd be
the way to go is become a Maha arim mon
where you're you're drinking and
wrestling and having sex and all
this but it really wasn't option because
the Maharis no longer exist as far as I
know maybe some remote Valley up in Shan

State

somewhere so I mean I thought about what

it would have been like if it were an

option but uh I

never I mean probably it would have been

a mistake you know I would have been

following my lower impulses by making

the decision to ordain with the Aries

rather than just becoming a a good boy

like a a wellbe behaved celibate terraa

beu so I guess I answered that question

too so I'm just going to move on to the

next question which is from Joe do and I

hope this is recording I'm still kind of

paranoid from the other recording

software that I had that would say that

it was recording and then turned out not
to be recording so that I have to do the
same Q&A twice I think once I even had
to do it the same Q&A three times and
it's like you know two hours plus
[Applause]
so next question is from Jo do which is
how do you deal with noise during
meditation I live near a fairly busy
road and sometimes feel my meditation
doesn't go anywhere sometimes because of
the noise is it worth still worth trying
to meditate well I got a story about
this
one it's um I mean if you've ever lived
in Southeast Asia you know that
Southeast Asian people

people that live in so-called third
world countries or not fully developed
countries in general seem to like noise
I mean there's like Village loudspeakers
blasting throughout southeast Asia or at
least throughout
Burma and I mean for a monk you have to
live within walking distance of a
village because that's where you get
your daily meal and if you're within
relatively easy walking distance to a
village you're within hearing distance
of the loudspeakers blasting Monks
chanting or cheesy pop music or village
news or you know the winning lotto
numbers that kind of stuff so finding a

really quiet place is not easy even if
you're living in in like Buddhist
southeast
Asia so I mean there is that but the
story that I was going to tell was I
spent two months doing intensive
meditation practice at pandama in rangon
this was before the new Hermitage got
built and became like the main place
where westerners Go I mean they were
they were like working on it but they
hadn't finished it yet there was there
were some monks staying there but I was
in rangon with upand
himself and the Burmese like I say I
mean at the very least they're
indifferent to noise and a lot of them

just downright like

noise and um like just about any other

Monastery in Burma it was under

construction there's always at least one

building getting built there or you know

some kind of hubub going on and there

was a guy with a hammer hammering out

sheet metal gutters at the monastery

just right underneath the eaves of the

meditation

Hall

and it was just bang bang bang bang bang

you're sitting there trying to meditate

and there's a guy literally pounding on

sheet metal with a hammer just right

underneath the the eaves of the

building and it was something that I was
having to work on it's obviously I mean
the seatt upand I mean he knew about it
and uh he wasn't telling them to go
somewhere else and pound on their metal
elsewhere
so one time during a meditation
interview I happened to start mentioning
how the the pounding of the sheet metal
was very loud and it was distracting me
at first and then I just reached this
Zone where it's like the sound was just
coming in one ear and just going out the
other ear I mean it was just like
washing through me like a light just
going through a window pane and as I
started to explain this about the

pounding and the sheet metal and so
forth he he just suddenly sucked teeth
sucked air through his teeth like
because he was getting ready to attack
because he was an angry man and despite
his skill at meditation and all when he
wasn't meditating he was an angry man
and he just didn't like me very much and
so he was just getting ready to attack
just lay into me but then you know I
said it didn't bother me it was just
like you know it's just going right
through me and then so he he couldn't do
anything other than just violently suck
air through his teeth for for half a
second so

I

think if I mean if you can't find a

really quiet place and using earplugs or

something it's it doesn't work because

for me it just distracts me having the

earplugs in there so maybe you could try

some white noise turn on a fan or just

some kind of just uniform hum that will

kind of drown out the traffic outside

well otherwise I mean you may have to do

what everyone had to do it PID Rama back

around gosh when was that like

1997 and that's just you know observe

the the sound you know it's like your

your primary meditation might just be

hearing hearing hearing and if any kind

of like irritation or anything starts to

arise because of the noise You observe
the
irritation just whatever arises just be
mindful of it and that can work and if
you were at a place like P dama in
1997 I mean bloody well had to work
because you didn't have any other
options other than just leave the
place
so uh yeah it's still worthwhile trying
to meditate that's the answer the answer
is yes so I'm just going to move on to
the next question here which is paen
dorge also known as The Little Buddha in
his younger days days is said to have
sat in meditation for 11 months straight

without moving the site where he sat was
constantly visited by pilgrims and was
under military supervision do you think
this is possible well I think just about
anything is possible I think it is
possible to break the laws of of physics
I try to say physics and nature at the
same time and just wound up just sort of
blurting out gibberish there but um I do
think that just about anything
imaginable is
possible but that's not the same as
saying that it's likely I think the odds
of that being just like a bogus Legend
are
higher than somebody sitting in
meditation for 11 months

straight it may be that he went into

some kind of suspended

animation like super hibernation where

he didn't have to eat maybe hardly

breathe you know his metabolic processes

just kind of almost stopped that can

happen I've never heard of it happening

for 11 months straight

though so I mean I the only time I've

ever heard of the little buddha not in

the movie but the person um was just a

few Q&A episodes ago it may be the same

person maybe Joe do here asked me about

little buddha the first time and I'd

never heard of him before then and and

somebody wrote a comment under his

question saying that the person pauland
dor was now implicated in numerous
crimes I don't remember what the crimes
were exactly other than some of them
were of a sexual
nature
so it's hard to say I really don't know
I think that it is possible but I don't
think that it's extremely likely that
aam's Razer would uh probably choose a
different option than that it really was
legit sort of like um David Hume wrote
about miracles it's like you should
believe a story about a miracle only if
the falseness of the story would be more
miraculous than the miracle itself and
in this case I mean I lived in Asia I

know how well Legends propagate you know
I've had I've heard Legends come around
about me that were obvious not true like
there was supposedly a photograph I've
mentioned this before there was a
photograph circulating around the city
of Mona of me actually levitating over
the city and I would just kind of joke
it off and say well I think it must be
somebody else because I don't remember
doing
that but like Legends of monks being
fully enlightened I mean that's all a
monk has to do in Burma anyways to get
the reputation for being fully
enlightened is he just has to be

relatively strict and actually meditate

and mind his own business in a

forest or a cemetery or some such place

and the dogs are getting really antsy

you guys better just stop it nope you're

not going

outside

man just talking to them sometimes it

gets them even more riled up they're

getting attention you know it's like

fueling their system

somehow so let's

see yeah okay I answered that one I'm

going to move on to joo's next question

do you think the fluoride in the water

supply is affecting people's spiritual

growth given that it severely damages

the pineal gland that has been
represented as the energy point of the
third
eye huh well I'm certainly not cartisian
in my philosophy and I'm not a
materialist so it may be that in this
version of
reality uh fluoridated drinking water is
causing some kind of damage to people's
pineal glands which somehow makes them
less able to attain liberating Insight
or some some such but I mean it's going
to be a Karma thing more than a material
floridated water thing that the
fluoridated water may be just a kind of
gimmick of translating people's comma

into this version of of samsara

so yeah the pineal gland um being the

energy point of the third eye I'm a

little bit skeptical of that

even

um yeah the pineal gland is it's largely

vestigal I assume it still has some

function but it's not nearly as

important in us as it was in say

prehistoric

amphibians or the the tuara for example

who still has pineal eyes a reptile

looks like an iguana kind of but it's

got a third eye

literally

so yeah I don't think it's the fluoride

in the water is affecting people's

spiritual growth so much as it is their
own Karma which is largely culturally
conditioned and you guys stop running
back and forth through the
house
seriously so yeah my sweetheart isn't
here right now so they're they're
running a muck and they're Restless
because nobody's paying attention to
them okay I guess I answered that one
I'm going to move on to the next
question which is from Gaz and Gaz says
do you have any special plans for Q&A
100 um I haven't really been thinking
about it but I mean I could do a live
stream

maybe I don't think I'd stoop so low as

to charge money for for answering

questions but

um yeah I mean that's possible

why not maybe I'm not going to make any

promises but uh yeah that's a

possibility unless you guys have some

ideas for Q&A 100 that are are better

than my ideas but otherwise I don't know

what I would do like the live stream

would be the obvious choice but I might

even do a live stream before I get to

100 who

knows so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is from

dkn and dkn says I've always disliked

the IDE aidea that you could pre your

sins away without any effort to redeem
yourself the thought that assaulters and
murderers go to heaven for a simply
believing in Christ seems backwards that
being said how would people who
committed violent crimes repent in
Buddhism well with regard to repentance
there is an implication of regret or
remorse involved and really regret or
remorse I've mentioned this
many times by now is always unskillful
bad karma Bad
Karma so mainly what you're supposed to
do if you do something you
know some major transgression say is
just you know acknowledge that you

committed a major transgression maybe harmed to other people and resolve to try to do better in future and really take that to heart that's the best you can do in that sense although also there is a suta where the Buddha Compares Bad Karma to a handful of salt and I've mentioned this a number of times and he it's like a simile you take that handful of salt and pour it into a glass of water you can't drink the water because it's too salty but you take that same handful of salt and pour it into a pool of crystal clear water and then you let it dissolve you can drink it you hardly taste the salt at all because it is diluted down with with this pure water

and that's really the best you can do
with regard to Bad Karma that you have
committed because no priest is going to
be able to wave a magic wand at you or
make you recite Hail Marys or whatever
or absolve you and make your karma go
away because I mean it just has to take
its natural course you can't just
magically make it go away at least
according to Buddhism or at least
according to terraa
Buddhism so if you've committed some
major transgression some major unethical
act the best thing you can do is just
try to overwhelm that and drown It Out
by doing lots of good things you know

help little old ladies across the street

and and you know feed hungry people and

you

know whatever you can think of that is

beneficial go for

it so

I guess the the most famous example of

someone who committed violent crimes U

more or less repenting in Buddhism would

be anguli Mala who was literally a

serial

killer and he killed like 99 people and

was going to kill the Buddha himself as

number 100 first he was going to kill

his own mother um not recognizing who

she was I think and the Buddha with his

Divine eye you know Clairvoyance he saw

what was going on and so he interfe he intervened and sort of distracted anguli Mala away from the the old lady and anguli Mala started chasing after him and the Buddha was just walking at a normal pace and no matter how fast anguli Mala ran after him he couldn't catch him so then he knew something was up and the Buddha used that sort of mindblowing psychic feat as a way of kind of getting angly Mala snapped out of the just the serial killer mindset you know just blew his mind and then he was able to teach him a few Choice words of wisdom that really sank deep into anguli Mala and converted him to

Buddhism and a little while after that
he was con he was ordained as a monk and
he actually became
enlightened and there's the famous story
I think I mentioned it even in the
previous
Q&A where anguli Mala was walking for
alms in the village some Village and he
heard there was a woman having like a
really difficult labor you know she was
in childbirth and it was a it was a
difficult one and her life and the life
of the baby were in in Peril and so
anguli Mama stopped and made like a um a
solemn a vowel of Truth and that is you
know since I became a Buddhist and
became a monk I have not harmed any

living being by the power of this truth
may you be well and apparently um the
power of the truth made her well or just
his psychic like Faith healing ability
or something just the the depth of that
truth that he stated was so powerful
that it had like an effect that that
saved the life of the woman and her
baby so I I can't remember though if
anguli Mala died a violent death even
though he became enlightened he still
had the residual karma from his past and
so bad would keep happening to him
people would like be throwing rocks at
him and stuff when they found out that
he was the serial killer that that

killed off Uncle Joe and so

forth

so yeah I mean you still even becoming

enlightened is not going to completely

evaporate all of your past Karma it's

still going to be there at least to some

degree but you can still get enlightened

anyway if you really set your mind at on

it really dedicate

yourself as anguli Mala

did so I don't know if I've answered

this question though I've always

disliked the idea you could pray your

sins away yeah I've never really saw

much saw much uh validity to that

myself um the thought of

an yeah without any effort to redeem

yourself I think the whole idea of
Christianity is that Jesus Christ
redeemed himself so that you don't have
to because you could
anyway but again I'm not a Christian
so I have difficulty accepting that
idea so I guess I answered that question
so I'm just going to move on the next
question this is from
cify and cify says how one distinguishes
between a culture and Buddhist
teachings and somebody left a comment
under that saying that's a good question
but um it's for me it's it's a little
bit difficult to answer because to some
degree the Buddhist teachings are a

culture you know culture is just sort of like like knowledge that is transmitted from one person to the next or not even necessarily knowledge like beliefs that are transmitted from one person to the next one generation to the next and um yeah Buddhist teachings have become a kind of culture the only reason we still have the Buddhist teachings not just like ultimate ultimate truth which is everywhere all the time but like this approach to realizing ultimate truth is through culture so I mean the Buddha himself was immersed in ancient Indian culture and a lot of his teachings have I mean they're

cultural to some degree I mean he had to
speak a language the language is
cultural he he just adopted certain
assumptions of the Iron Age Ganges
Valley you know like cosmology and so
forth that that sort of thing was just
accepted as you know what people
believed so that's
culture so the only part of the Buddhist
teachings that aren't
culture would be first of all just what
he was like Nirvana itself you know this
the attainment of this state of no more
greed hate or
delusion that that would not be in and
of itself cultural cuz that is just off

the scale culture can't touch

it and to some degree you could say that

aspects of like Buddhist ethics and how

to attain this state how to get closer

to the state of

Enlightenment um there are non-cultural

elements of

that and the dogs are uh acting up again

is there anybody out there no yeah you

hear somebody walking a dog or something

out there

so um you could say that some aspects of

the Buddhist teachings are sort of like

the teachings of Emmanuel Kant in the

west where you know he's just sort of

breaking down human nature empirically

or

objectively you just just a deep
understanding of how the human mind
works which is not necessarily cultural
although the ability to to go in that
direction might be largely
cultural and the dogs are just they're
just running a
mock
so how do you distinguish between a
culture and Buddhist teachings like the
higher up you go the less cultural it's
going to be you know the more refined
and ethereal you get it's going to
become less culture just like with say
Christian mysticism also you know you
start off at the biblical you know

purely cultural level but then you get
the higher up you go like practicing
High contemplation or something you're
leaving culture
behind and that works it works in any
religion at the the the most Elementary
level the level that you know any Normie
could comprehend that's
cultural but then you get more and more
refined as you as you rise above samsara
so to speak the less samsaric it is the
less cultural it's going to
be so I hope I answered that one because
I'm moving on to the next one and that's
do you think think Alber Kimo's
philosophy goes along Buddhist teachings
on some level there's a certain amount

of overlap between kamu and and Buddhism

U my understanding is that Alber kamu

was like a literary

existentialist he was I think he's he's

pretty much considered to be an ex a

20th century existentialist philosopher

who

nevertheless um mostly wrote fiction I

mean he did write uh the myth of Copus

which I read long time ago and I thought

that it was very

underwhelming I was not impressed by his

his um nonfiction although some of his

fiction I

liked um but if you really want to know

like the the interface between

existentialism and Buddhism your best
bet would be to read venerable nanov
Vera especially his letters because
there was this famous monk nanov Vera
was a friend of the first famous nle
they were ordained in Sri Lanka around
1950 and this Nana Vera when before he
became a
monk he was heavily into existentialist
philosophy and so after he became a monk
he was doing his best to
integrate Buddhist philosophy with
existentialism and um mainly his main
idea was that and in existentialism you
just get to this dead end you know it's
like all you can do is is just backtrack
and become a Mystic or something or just

Bleak

Despair and Buddhism sort of picks up

the Baton takes the ball so to speak

from the existentialist and continues

going because the existentialist didn't

know how to get Beyond just this Bleak

empty despair inducing

meaninglessness but his his philosophy

is so complex and I really never

considered nanov Vera's philosophy to be

very

compelling I mean he's got

unenlightenment as so complicated that

you wonder how a frog could manage to be

unenlightened but if you really want to

um study you know sort of the

similarities and differences of
existentialism and terraa Buddhism the
letters of Nana Vera and plus maybe his
notes on dham would uh be your best
bet um but overall Alber Kimu I don't
think he really I mean he wasn't a
Buddhist there's just
certain more or less coincidental
similarities between existentialism and
Buddhism just sort of like the the idea
of EMP ultimate emptiness
sort of thing but I don't think that
existentialism really had like an
ethical system you know it wasn't really
based on morality or self- purification
you know no
meditation no existentialist meditation

techniques that I know

of

so um yeah just read yav Vera I'm sure

you can find it that it's probably free

online because yav Vera does have more

followers now than he did when he was

alive there are a lot of Western monks

who take Nano Vera very seriously

although I was never one of them so I'm

just going to move on the next question

here this is from maram made Mahayana

I'm pretty sure is the same as bodh sat

969 and Mara made Mahayana says should

one support monks who do not follow

vinia with donations this specifically

means personally accepting money as

happens again and again in Thailand your personal opinion on this at the moment I only support the forest Monastery muta in Germany in which six German Swiss Swedish Forest monks live I consider them to be strict when it comes to the vinea well I felt that way um I still feel that way that as a general rule you should support strictly practicing monks that if you got LAX monks who handle money um I mean if they compensate for that in some way by giving giving you valuable teachings for example they help you out in life then maybe but even then it would be better to find their attendant and give the money to the attendant saying this is for such and

such Monk and at least your hands are
clean so to speak even though the
attendants probably just going to hand
it over to the monk
later so yeah I've I've come across this
and uh as a general rule I would not
support monks that handle money um I
certainly wouldn't give them any money
you know I wouldn't donate money to to a
monk put it directly into his hands even
if I knew he handled money and I really
was grateful to him for some reason then
still I donate the money to his
attendant and then you know it's on the
attendant if he's going to just hand it
over to the monk because of course monks

are not allowed to handle money except
under very rare unusual circumstances
and then it's not their money they're
just like for example if a monk finds
money on Monastery property it's his
duty to pick it up and put it in a safe
place until the owner of it comes back
looking for
it or sometimes if a monk is guilty of
handling money and he's going to come
clean and forfeit that money which
pretty much never happens then according
to vinia he offers it up to the monks
and then one monk will be chosen to take
that money and go throw it out in the
woods
somewhere so I mean he that the monk

that's appointed to throw the mon throw
the money out in the woods I mean he'd
be allowed to touch money but it
wouldn't be his
money so yeah I mean to to support the
strictest wisest monks does make sense
and it also helps um LAX monks to want
to be more strict because I noticed in
Burma it's the the more faithful the lay
people are the more LAX the monks tend
to be as a general rule there are
exceptions to this but that's because
you know if the monk if the lay people
are looking at the monks and the lay
people know the rules and they're saying
that monk doesn't follow the rules but

this monk over here does so I'm going to support this monk then it it causes just a general Improvement in in like Venia practice just strictness of practice in general among the monks but if you got people like in Northern Burma or north central Burma who just have faith in all monks and they're afraid to criticize monks because they think they might go to hell for criticizing monks and so then the monks are just lack as a general rule so yeah I would um advise you mainly to support the strictest monks unless there is some Monk who has been helpful to you or you know he's obviously got a good heart even though

he's not following the rulle strictly
and you know he's got some wisdom maybe
then even then if you're going to
support him with money you give the
money to the to the monastery ATT tenant
um or you know you can offer them food
or or whatever is
allowable although I wouldn't offer them
food for the next day because they'll
just put it in the cupboard in the
kitchen or something and just eat it the
next day which is also against the
rules so offer them something that at
least won't be against the rules
but I mean you've got a monk who's sick
or something and he needs some kind of

medicine and you can afford to get him a bottle of pills or something I mean you're still doing good there is a a suta talking about how um it's it's a very mechanistic cookbook kind of Dharma that makes me kind of a little skeptical of it but it is orthodox terraa that you get benefits for a 100 lifetimes for doing a good deed to an animal and then it goes up to like then you know there's like different levels where it's like you got the the common lay person you the wise lay person you got like the sloppy monk you got the the good but still unenlightened monk you got the enlightened monk you got the Buddha at the at the top you know and I think even

higher than the Buddha is offering
something to the S of the four quarters
because that's that includes all the
aans and the Buddha himself and all the
other monks so that's the highest the
highest Merit you get for donating
is when you donate to the entire s of
the four
quarters but even offering something to
a sloppy monk um I mean you're still
earning Merit because it is a generous
act that you're performing and it's your
own generosity that's determin your
karma although um in Terra they also
throw in you know the wisdom of the
person you're donating to because you

know there's some sort of metaphysical
interaction between your mind and the
mind of the being you're donating
to so I guess I answered that question
so I'm just going to move on to a next
question which is from nature cure and
this is kind of a a complicated question
despite how short it is nature cure says
in nikaya 22 on Aria atanga Mega on S
aiva it says Noble disciple is NE path
which is Noble Eightfold Path it took me
a while to figure that one out for
enlightened people sea orap Fe after all
Fe I'm not sure what the Fe stands for
fully enlightened
maybe anyway
um mainly it's Dean nikaya Su number 22

it's talking about the noble Eightfold
Path the atanga mega and Sama aiva means
right livelihood and it says Noble
disciple which would be like Arya
savaka and because it's referring to the
ARA savaka having right livelihood he's
asking is the Noble eful Path just for
enlightened people or for Aras you know
for Buddhist Saints people who have had
at least a glimpse of of
niban and I don't think that's
necessarily the case I mean
um partly the word Arya
I mean it had more than one meaning and
it early in very early times it just
meant Noble so when he says a noble

disciple he's not necessarily saying
that they have to be one one of the at
one of the four stages of
sainthood that it could just mean
something like a gentleman you know it's
just sort of like a kind of honorific
just a polite way of
speaking so I would guess that mainly
here when it says the noble disciple um
or the Arian disciple the Arya savaka
that it could just mean something like
gentleman because Arya was originally an
ethnic thing that later became a class
thing that later became like a Buddhist
technical term for someone who is like
with high
attainments but I mean Arya originally

was the name of the tribe or group of
tribes that invaded not only
Northwestern India but also much of of
like Central Asia and like like Iran
especially in fact the name Iran or Iran
is a Corruption of
Aran so they invaded they became the
ruling class so they became like the
Nobles and that's how it came to mean
like noble but it also meant like
civilized people at first so you go
through this the evolution of the
meaning of the word Arya in north
northern India and so first it just
meant you know you were a member of the
the tribe that became the ruling class

after it invaded and then it just meant
like um like an ethnic state or
ethnic class you know you're you're the
light-skinned taller people that are
more likely to have brown hair and blue
eyes that you know they're like the most
well-off people you know they're like
the Gentry you know like in 18th century
England you know you had like the the
the upper classes so they became like
that and then uh later it just meant
Noble in general Noble in a more ethical
sense or spiritual sense so it could
mean here that it's just sort of a
polite mode of speaking the noble
disciple is or the Arian disciple the
Arya savaka it's uh not necessarily

referring to Buddhists who already have
um High attainments
although there is a sama aiva for monks
even though they're not working for a
living anymore um Sama aiva you know it
means essentially you know not scheming
for money and following the rules and
and being worthy of the the alms food
that you eat and so
forth but here I'm pretty sure it's
referring to any
Buddhist so I think I'm just going to
move on to the next question this is
from
Newman and this is actually two
questions I need to uh separate these

one moment please there okay I'm done so
the first question is how tough was
learning the poly language and
Burmese and I can say that poly and
Burmese are relatively easy languages
poly for example does not have a really
high uh vocabulary it doesn't have lots
and lots of words so um also it's it's
Indo-European so it's kind of similar to
like Latin or Greek and um it's fairly
easy to understand there are some weird
like declensions or like verb tenses and
stuff that I mean that's probably the
hardest part of poly is just getting the
weird like verb forms and stuff I mean
they follow rules and everything but
they're like archaic like a passive I

can't remember if it's it's like I can't
even remember it's like the reflexive
mode or something a ver BBS that in
they're found in older texts but it very
become very rare later on just because
it was just sort of this archaic
complication in the language poly is
like a streamlined language you know it
started off you know the ancestor of
poly would be Vic Sanskrit and uh it's
it's much simpler than Sanskrit partly
because I've read that it was never
really a vernacular language spoken by
ordinary villagers and towns people that
it was a monastic kind of language that
was a kind of amalgam of different North

Indian languages that it was like a
lingua Franco that monks from different
monasteries could communicate with each
other using the poly
language so the Buddha did not
technically speak poly or at least that
is the position of most western Scholars
on who specialize in the subject but he
spoke something similar to pully
probably you know pully and the Buddha's
original language would be mutually
intelligible most of the
time so how tough was learning the poly
Lang it really wasn't that
tough um you know there just a few
complications like the weird verb forms
and stuff um but like I said it doesn't

have a really big vocabulary and there's
a lot fewer um just like irregular verbs
and so forth like in English English is
is relatively
complex difficult to learn language so
those of us who were born into an
English-speaking culture had a certain
Advantage with regard to Burmese it's
also a relatively simple language um
like the grammar is some people even say
that the grammar is non-existent there
is no Burmese grammar but but there is
Burmese grammar it's just very simple
and uh the hardest thing for a Westerner
with regard to learning burmes is the
pronunciation ation because Burmese it's

a monosyllabic language in general most words have only one syllable and there are sounds in the Burmese language that either are not found in English or the distinctions between this sound and a very similar sound are not they're not um distinguished in English like no means to wake up in Burmese no uh I don't even remember what it means but it doesn't mean to wake up like m means it's it's rainy but Mond means it's a drought so it's just this slight you get you more aspiration to the K makes the difference between rainy and drought and it's very difficult like um there's like four tones it's a tonal language so let's see

Lo means to work l means because of low
means to desire and low is the worst
cuss word in the Burmese language so you
have to be really careful about exactly
how you pronounce things because if you
just use like an English kind of
pronunciation then Burmese people are
going to stare at you like you're
speaking Greek they're not going to know
what the hell you're
saying so that's that's the hardest part
of burmes the hardest part of ply is
that there really are no native speakers
of ply that is uh like a a dead language
like Latin spoken almost entirely by
monks and Buddhist

Scholars and

so um you know it's like a part-time

language you're not going to be immersed

in it as a general rule you might find

some monasteries like in Sri Lanka where

the monks are all speaking poly to each

other then it' probably be easier to

learn

there so guess I answer that question I

mean both ply and Burmese are easier to

learn than than English you know they're

on a par with like Spanish although

burmes pronunciation is tricky for

people who do not are not born into a a

language with like a tonal language and

this very fine distinctions between

consonant sounds and so forth so I'll

just move on to Newman's next question here did the Burmese view you as a white Foreigner any different to Burmese monks well some Burmese people really are racist they're Burmese chauvinist they think that to be Burmese is the best is the highest form of human life on this planet which is to be expected from a traditional culture just about any culture except for you know the modern liberal West considers their own people to be the best people it's I think the only major group of people on the planet that are prejudiced against their own ethnicity are liberal westerners so I mean there are a few

sort of

xenophobic Burmese people but you know

they would leave me alone they I

wouldn't really be confronted by them

very

rarely um but the thing is the Burmese

in the past I don't know about now but

in the past they considered America to

be like a heaven realm where everyone is

is Rich and beautiful and happy and and

I was told repeatedly that the villagers

where I would be living just loved me

more than they loved the Abbot of the

monastery more than they loved the

Burmese monks around partly because in

their view I had renounced my own life

renounced my own family renounced my own

Rich beautiful happy culture as they perceived it in order to go and live in poverty with them and they felt Vindicated and proud that someone would actually abandon you know wealth and luxury as they view it from I mean from their point of view it was wealth and luxury in order to come and adopt their religion what they considered to be sacred and and practice it at a higher level than they were willing to practice or able to practice because I was taking it very seriously I was trying to be as strict as I could so yeah they just a lot of them just adored me and sometimes it was a problem because I go for alms

round there a few times there'd be a line of like a hundred people waiting at the outskirts of the village to offer me food and they're really not good at engineering problems like the idea that 100 people can't each put in 10% of a bowl full of food into one bowl

so yeah I was in especially in Northwestern Burma I was uh sort of like Colonel Curts and Apocalypse Now except without the the heads on poles that it really I was I was just venerated as a saint

so I'm not trying to brag here so I just just move on to the next question here this is from Cardinal Giovani and

Cardinal Giovani says was the Buddha
before his Awakening A Jane athetic he
tortured himself or these five athetics
that abandoned him at first were they
Janes um there's no mention in the text
of the Buddha being a
Jane um
that jism really is not praised or
anything um that he had two teachers
before his Enlightenment two meditation
instructors neither one of those are
claimed to be Janes so the thing is that
the Buddha before his Enlightenment he
was trying what was the traditional
thing to try in order to liberate
yourself from samsara and suffering and

there were two main ways of going about
it one was samat meditation and the
other was self- torture just severe just
asceticism
austerity and it wasn't just The Janes
who did that it was it was common in
Indian culture at the time especially
Indian religious culture that those are
really your two routs which is somat
meditation or like cultivating kind of
trans States for lack of a better word
through meditation or just torturing
yourself and so there were there were
other groups like aeacus there were a
number of a IA schools but there's no
mention of the Buddha being in a Jiva
either like the the matted hair athetics

who were brahans worshipping the sacred fire out in the woods they did some pretty severe austerity also at least some of them did so I mean it was just a common thing and if we follow the tradition then the Buddha I mean he wasn't really following the tradition he was doing it on his own and then he he um sort of joined up with these five athetics

who apparently I mean there's no mention of their philosophy or anything like that before um before his Enlightenment other than just this is how we purify ourselves you know we work off our Bad Karma by torturing ourselves or just

work on equinity by torturing ourselves

and uh you know attain these deep

meditative States you know jic States um

and the two teachers who were teaching

him meditation I mean they're not

they're not mentioned as members of any

particular religious movement or or

spiritual movement so it's all left kind

of vague and the the idea is that he was

sort of non- denominational before he

invented Buddhism or discovered dhama if

you

prefer

so let's see I guess I answered that

question yeah there's no indication that

he was a Jane just the fact that he

tortured himself doesn't mean that he

was a Jane because there were lots of
people in various philosophical
spiritual schools that were torturing
themselves back then because that was
just the traditional thing to do in
India at that
time so I'll just move on to Cardinal
giovan's next
question which is in vinia books there
are the group of six monks because of
which there were many new rules
formulated they were naughty monks what
happened to them have they become
eventually enlightened and yeah there in
the in the vinea like each rule has like
an origin story you know it explains why

the Buddha made the rule in the first
place and there was this group of six
monks that were just doing all kinds of
rotten stuff they were just complete
Rascals just Bon heads which among other
things indicates that not all the
Buddha's disciples were wise you know
you're going to have fools in any
group
so let's see now the whing to go outside
again the group of six months and I
don't know if the group of six months
really existed historically I mean they
give their names like punab basuka
wasn't one of them I remember that
because it's similar to poo basa which
was mine so it was like my my dark Alter

Ego was Puna

basuka um but I mean some of the stuff

they were doing is just so over the top

that you can't it's hard for me to

accept that this group of six monks

really did it all these horrible things

and if you read the rules for beunis

there was also the group of six nuns who

were just like the the twin sisters of

these group of six monks who were doing

the same kind of stuff so I think a lot

of the time if they didn't have a really

obvious story origin story for a rule

they would just attribute it to the the

group of six you know they were they

were pretty much responsible for all

nondescript

naughtiness so what happened to to them

um afterwards uh it's hard to say um I

don't think it says maybe in the

commentarial tradition it says what

eventually happened to this group of six

months six

monks um but I would assume that they

got some kind of bad rebirth but then

because of the benefits they got from

being in the presence of the Buddha and

so forth that eventually they're going

to become enlightened sort of like dead

dat you know day dat is like the the

Buddhist equivalent rough equivalent

Judas is scariot where you know he's

actually trying to kill the Buddha but

fails um and right now he's allegedly
roasting in the lowest pits of aichi
hell but eventually he's going to become
a Pacha Buddha he's going to become you
know higher than an ordinary Aran it
might be you know a zillion gajillion
years from now but he is destined for
Enlightenment and uh the group of six
might be in a similar situation but I
really can't say so I'm just going to
move on to the next question which is
from the Proto sudo monk Alias Cool
Whip and the Proto sudo monk Alias Cool
Whip you guys stop
it says why is aan yanam Terra what are
you doing just a minute the dog wants to

get up here how you doing this is tater

she eats

bugs don't you T yeah so the Proto sudom

monk says why is aan yanam Tera

absolutely jacked from Hillside

Hermitage the dude monk is a

meatball I don't think he means that in

a bad Sense on some of his videos there

are massive kettle bells behind him some

say he supplements with amino acids I

didn't think monks were allowed to be so

obscenely Hench non-accidentally I I

don't know what Hench means but I assume

it means jacked or ripped or shredded

or swole something along those lines so

anyways I didn't think monks were

allowed to get so obscenely hen

non-accidentally it seems contradictory
to renunciation right I had renounced
bulking because I thought it was
beautification of the body as I heard
some eating precept you take the food
saying not for athleticism nor
beautification but personally
weightlifting was the first activity
that gave me a path to cultivate
discipline and effort so I would love to
hear the ethics on weightlifting Master
poob basa I've become a morbidly weak
emaciated hibernating squirrel because
of the dhama abstaining from physical
exercise although sat at the desk all
day it's not really abstaining it's a

lack of effort unless you become
intoxicated it seems like it can only be
beneficial to stay healthy at at least
until nibana is seen muscle strength is
linked with longevity maybe it's time
for bulking but if the body doesn't
exist do you see any benefit to physical
exercise from a spiritual point of view
the final question may succinctly
capture the introductory essay thanks
and then he continues like how do you
justify to your supporters needing those
daily Mega 3,000 calories and all that
protein I can't even afford that [__]
for myself no right food no exercise and
in a year you were looking like a feeble
bag of bones which I thought was what

monks Were Meant to look

like okay so the main question is up at

the top here I

think see where's the question mark oh

there's a couple question marks one is

why is aan yanola absolutely

jacked um yeah well apparently he does

work out and it may be that he's taken

like amino acids and I assume he's not

getting testosterone injections or

anything but uh um on the one hand he is

like a macho strict Forest monk kind of

a person and Macho strict Forest monks

to some degree I mean it was like that

with me to some degree where you're

living out in the woods in a rough

circumstance that it just kind of brings up like caveman instincts and just I mean there were times when I was fairly muscular even even though I wasn't really exercising much I mean I wasn't doing any kind of calisthenics or weightlifting or anything it was mostly just walking a lot and you know you got to do the cut wood carry water stuff you know at a forest Monastery you know you're pulling up buckets from the well and filling a five gallon bucket and then like carrying it on your shoulder up the hill to my to the cave and just cutting wood and and stacking it and so forth dragging chopped trees around that kind of a thing so I mean I would get

some exercise but it was mainly just
like the clean living and probably
meditation helped also that just had me
in good
shape but if yeah I mean he does have
kettle bells behind him I mean he
probably does lift weights so it would
depend on his his motives I mean if he's
doing it to be jacked then that would it
wouldn't be against vinia I'm pretty
sure I don't think there's any rule
against it but it would be disapproved
of in the in the sutas
themselves that you know I mean you
should be healthy enough to practice
dhama you know for the for the sake of

Liberation that you don't need to be
beautifying yourself or you know
impressing anybody with your musculature
that kind of a
thing so says here see Cool Whip says I
didn't think monks were allowed to get
so obscenely Hench non-accidentally
um yeah technically there's no rule
against it even though um you know it's
it's kind of discouraged to be
exercising for the sake of self-
beautification I don't know exactly what
his genetics are maybe he's just
naturally that way and he's maybe it's
just the body just has these cravings
for activity and he's just in alone in a
Cell you know he's just you know trying

to maintain his healthiness by doing
some calisthetics and maybe lifting the
kettle bells and so forth so I mean it
would depend on his own Ching his own
volition that would determine how
suitable or unsuitable it was that he
was doing this stuff and I really don't
know what his motives
are so I mean there's nothing wrong with
exercising for the sake of being healthy
you know but if you're going Beyond just
being healthy and just trying to be you
know muscle bound or you know just
ripped or swole or whatever it is then
yeah that would be um contrary to dhama
but again not technically against the

rules I mean there are certain things
that would be against the rules like
swimming um you're only allowed to swim
if You' got a good reason like it's the
only way to cross a river you're getting
away from a tiger or something then
hopefully humans can swim faster than
tigers can but uh swimming for fun is
not allowable but then again if you make
a distinction between just exercise for
health and fun then possibly uh for a
monk to swim for just the sake of
exercise might be
allowable
see here the ethics on
weightlifting yeah I mean you could turn
it into a meditation I mean I'm sure

that doing repetitive you know any kind
of repetitive exercise if you do it
mindfully could become a meditation but
still I mean why are you doing it I mean
are you doing it just to be healthy in
which case it might be okay but if
you're doing it for other reasons like
you know impressing people or just
projecting a macho image then it might
not be so okay but either way it's it's
not technically against vinea
rules so yeah and you should try to be
healthy enough to practiced like
energetically
rigorously so I mean you still be fairly
skinny and do that but you're not going

to be a a decrepit bag of

balls you know you're not going to just

s be suffering from

malnutrition like like the Buddha was I

mean the Buddha and his his efforts

during his dukar aaria phase you know

when he's doing these harsh

austerities um yeah he was he was at the

verge of death he was is so so rough on

himself so the middle path between

Arnold Schwarzenegger and and the duia

is uh I mean Arnold Schwarzenegger in

his prime not now he's probably not all

that all that ripped

anymore

so yeah so I think I answered that I

mean monks are supposed to be fairly

thin it does even say so in the dapot

you know you have veins standing out on

your body and so forth

but

uh um I think so long as it's just for

the sake of Health exercise is

fine just to keep you healthy enough to

practice strenuous dhama so I'm going to

move on to the next question here this

is from

Elias and Elias says your thoughts on

this quote of Romanian philosopher meml

I don't know how to pronounce Romanian

name c i o r a an

I don't even know how C is pronounced in

Romanian so anyways this ml or Emil says

if attachment is an evil we must look

for its cause in the scandal of birth

for to be born is to be attached

Detachment then should apply itself to

getting rid of the traces of this

Scandal the most serious and intolerable

of all so it seems like this philosopher

is in sort of implying that we should

all commit suicide

which certainly would not be a good

dharm because you just get reborn again

you didn't really solve the problem you

just sort of gave yourself a nemon

Hiatus assuming that you get reborn as a

human

again so if attachment is an evil we

must look for its cause in the scandal

of birth well I mean generally birth you
know it's it eventually leads to um
attachment but then again it's
attachment that causes birth too
from a Buddhist point of
view
so um says to be born is to be attached
yeah probably at the time that you're
born you've got some attachments until
you become enlightened so Detachment
should apply itself to getting rid of
the traces of this Scandal uh in a way I
mean if
you're if you're uh practicing
Detachment to stop being born that's
yeah that's that's fine that would be in

accordance with with

Buddism um I don't think that birth is

the most serious and intolerable

Scandal because I mean there's more

intolerable scandals than simply being

born

so yeah it's I guess those are my

thoughts in a way if you interpret it a

certain way then it would be in

accordance with Terra Buddhism but I

mean if you're saying that birth is like

the direct cause of attachment and that

we should all just die then no that

would not be in accordance with Buddhism

um because I mean you can be born and

eventually cure yourself of

attachment and I mean you're going to be

born whether you want to or not until
you get enlightened again according to
uh the Buddhist uh interpretation of of
this
world so I guess I gave my thoughts on
that so I'm just going to move on to
Elias's next question which is can you
describe your worst time in Burma and
I've had quite a few worst times had a
lot of bad times in Burma just like just
miserable times like the very first time
I got malaria that was about the the
most sick I've ever been in my life it
was it was weird it's like when I the
first time I got malaria it was it was
the worst kind of malaria ferum malaria

it was uh around Christmas day of

1997 or

eight and it was just just killer

headache I mean it was just like a

splitting headache that nothing would

work to get rid of it you know alternate

days it would be accompanied by just

shivering and fever and it got to the

point finally it was Christmas Day I

think when it got to the point where

when I would think it was like hearing

muffled a muffled voice coming through a

closed door in another room room that

was how my thoughts seemed to me and my

meditation like the only thing I could

really do is just sit there and just

meditating using daoka as a mantra just

dooka dooka and just through Good Karma
um I mean at the monastery where I was
at there was there were no motor
vehicles or anything we were 13 miles
from the nearest paved Road at the time
it took like an hour and a half by Jeep
to tra travel those 13 miles and just
one of my supporters just happened to
show up that day and uh I just remember
getting up and saying Merry Christmas I
have malaria and they just loaded me
into the into the vehicle and drove me
right back to
town so that was that was a pretty bad
time I mean it was it was just like a
sick time I mean if you want bad times

with regard to just like emotional
misery and not physical misery um yeah
there were there were a few times when I
was like very very depressed you know
just contemplating suicide not so much
um just in like I just can't bear it
anymore as more like what's the point of
remaining alive you know it just seems
so pointless you know it wasn't um I
mean like a Buddhist wouldn't look at
suicide the same way that a Christian
would that like in ancient times a
person just had the right or like
medieval Japan even person just had the
right if if you know they figured life
was just kind kind of pointless not not
worth the effort that you know you could

just opt out but um there were a few
times I was very depressed the first
time I had been a monk for only a few
years I was living at a big school
monastery near Mandalay and I mentioned
this relatively recently I just had like
this
existential crisis and depression
because I could not think of anything
that I could not doubt I certainly
couldn't think of anything meaningful
that I could not doubt and it just
caused me to
just go into this Bleak downward spiral
I remember one time I was going to write
something down I reached for the pencil

and clumsily knocked the pencil off the
table and it landed Point down and the
point broke off on the floor and I just
I just want to die you know it's just
that was it the the point breaking off
the pencil was just causing me to yearn
for death and there was the other time
i' I've mentioned this several times
before I suppose that uh I got very sick
with um I think the Burmese Village is
called it udupa which is like seasonal
fever or like climate fever or weather
fever and I there were times when I
would get this fever at the end of the
rainy
season and um I was actually discussing
this with Brian Rue on a video earlier

today so um I shouldn't really go into

too much detail you can you can um look

at that video

but um it was just I'd been a monk for a

little over 10 years at the time and I

just hit rock bottom it was like all

consolation in life was deprived of me I

couldn't couldn't sleep couldn't eat

couldn't bathe couldn't meditate you

know it's just this state of just

chronic just

ickiness and eventually it caused me to

go into this state of just it's all

futile what is the point you know if

after all these years of being monk I

could still hit rock bottom like this

you know what is the point so I even
wrote to my teacher wrote to my father
saying you know I'm not going to drop
out of the monk Hood but I'm not going
to be striving for enlightenment I just
want to take it easy now and um it was
like it was necessary for me to do that
because I was trying to adopt CH Rouge
tactics against my own defilements you
know it's like at war with my own mind
at war with my own personality and it
was just causing this
chronic just misery just dissatisfaction
and disgust because you know like
schopenhauer says I mean fighting
against your own character isn't going
to work your character is going to win I

mean

it's you can't just decide to be a

different person it's going to take some

kind of radical shift in your perception

to cause you to become a different

person and so I was I was just going

about dhama the wrong way going about

practice the wrong way and um so when I

just gave up then automatically just

almost immediately I just started

spontaneously going into these really

deep meditative States some of the best

meditation of my life this deep just

really Lucid like mindfulness of just

everything just feeling the wind on my

skin and the rustling of my clothes

against my skin and just you know

breathing blinking you know just just

right there just wide

awake so that was a bad time it was like

a a crisis a period of Crisis that

eventually was like a catharsis that led

to something better and like ROM dos

used to say it's like absolute despair

is a prerequisite for significant

spiritual growth and for years I just

hoped that he was wrong but my own

personal experience does seem to bear

that

out um can I describe my worst time in

Burma that maybe one of those maybe I'm

just it's the worst time is just so

horrible I'm just blanking blanking it

out through hysterical Amnesia or

something but maybe one of

those

so I mean there were lots of times

though when I'd just be in the state of

despair or just

bleakness you know there are times when

I'd be desperate I'd just be praying to

anybody out there who who can hear me

and is willing to help please do so you

know I didn't even believe in a God to

pray to but God I wanted to I wanted to

pray to somebody because obviously I

wasn't doing it on my

own I went through phases like that so

there was lots of uh lots of good times

and bad times as a monk um they tended

to be more spiritually oriented than

just the standard good times and bad

times that a person has just living in a

house with bills to

pay so I guess I answered that as well

as I could I mean especially considering

it's such a short

question so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is from

extremely rare bird an extremely rare

bird says I think I remember you said

that your heart were opened for some

time after an iasa ceremony why do you

think that happened and that's the main

question but he continues a little bit

here I wish my heart were more open a

few times I have felt this strongly when times of calm after a period of inner turmoil for some reason but my standard mode of being is more intellectual detached and probably a bit autistic LOL yeah join the club I should probably devote myself more to meta but it often feels forced to me yeah join the club on that one too I really never was able to practice meta very well just because it just seemed like I was going through the motions I mean you can't just turn turn love on and off like a faucet I don't think it works that way so that I think a lot of people who are practicing meta meditation are just kind of pretending

you know kind of fooling themselves into thinking that they're beaming love to all beings when really they're just kind of cultivating this warm this you know this warm glowy feeling in themselves but getting back to this first part here it says I think I remembered you said that your heart was opened for some time after an iasa ceremony why do you think that happened um it's hard to say exactly why why do certain drugs have certain effects I don't know the pharmacology of it um but iasa like the the shamans in like South America where iasa is part of a religious thing you know like a spiritual movement or spiritual practice

um they consider plant spirits to be sort of conscious beings and the spirit of iasa is a feminine Spirit you know sometimes it's called the grandmother and it does have sort of a feminine vibe to it it's more more of a heart oriented drug than a head oriented drug like something like LSD could be called a head oriented drug it's like a head trip but with iasa I mean there are times it's pretty much every time I've taken iasa it has felt like the pain of the universe is just gushing through my chest it's like you can relate to all the misery and horror that that's going on in this world that an intellectual

person can be detached from it but you
know some people especially females I
think they're more heart oriented and
they feel that more intensely in fact
they feel it not only you know coming
from The World At Large but you know
just within themselves like eart Tois as
women identify with their pain
body whatever that is I've never even
heard of it before I read that book by
art
toah so I mean you you can you can
relate to that better you can relate to
really Compassionate Heart oriented
people who just they just can't live
with themselves unless they're out
helping people trying to alleviate

suffering there are people like those
and bless them you know it is good that
there are people like that but I just
wasn't born that way I'm more of a head
oriented person so we can be more
philosophical and
detached so I don't know exactly why the
drug
causes just this visceral heart this
convulsion but it does and it just kind
of like blows the the carbon out of the
pipes so that for a day or two
afterwards you're much more
compassionate and heart oriented or at
least it happened after the first time I
took

it and I mean it probably it happened

after that too but not at to the same

degree as the first

time so

yeah I can't say exactly why I just know

that it happened based on my own

experience so I'm just going to read the

next question from extremely rare bird

and that'll be this almost the last

question because I forgot to write one

down

so um extremely rare bird second

question is what were the greatest

challenges of living in a cave is there

anything that you wish you had known in

advance the greatest challenges of

living in a cave I don't know different

caves have different challenges I
suppose like one cave that I lived in at
least one um if the temperature inside
the cave and outside the cave was about
the same the air circulation just
stopped and it became very stuffy in
there so I needed like a differential of
of temperature to cause like a a
circulation of air because it the cave
was just like a corridor going like 50
ft into the side of this hill and I'd be
sleeping at the end of it so there had
to be some kind of air circulation and
there wasn't so that was just dealing
with that
Stuffy the stuffiness of it was one

living in caves that didn't have doors

like screen doors um I mean you had

troubles with bats and

mosquitoes there's that that one cave

that I lived in that I just mentioned

that went in 50 ft into the side of a

hill it was situated such that when a

certain Village loudspeaker was was

going and it would start at like 4 in

the morning it just somehow the

Acoustics just funneled that sound right

into my cave it was just like the

loudspeaker was just 100 yards away

instead of like a mile and a half

away

so greatest challenges of living in a

cave it's really living in the cave was

in order to reduce challenges because
the the main reason why I lived in caves
wasn't just because I like living in
caves it was that living inside of a
cave would be like 20 degrees Fahrenheit
cooler in the hot season than outside
the cave like you get far enough into
the side of a hill and then you're going
to be pretty much at the like the
average temperature between day and
night summer and winter just like the
average annual temperature which at that
place was like 83 84°
fah and the well water was the same way
it was like 83 84 degrees fenhe which
was nice because in the summertime it

felt cool and in the winter time it felt

kind of

warm

so greatest challenges of living in a

cave were probably it was the challenges

that that drove me into the cave which

was just the Blazing furnace likee heat

of central Burma for most of the

year but

um yeah there weren't any super real

challenges of living in a cave um

Solitude really doesn't bother me that

much um silence I

like so aside from what I mentioned I

really I really couldn't think of it

what the greatest challenges living in a

cave were I mean I got really sick with

some kind of hepatitis while living in a cave once that was kind of weird it was uh I mean I just I was just so sick I could hardly stand up I was all by myself I was the only monk at the Monas because the other monk had been bitten by a cobra and died like two months previously and for some reason I had this song Me and Julio Down by the Schoolyard just playing in my head that I seem to have no control over you know I'm just half out of it it was just sort of like this Delirious music playing in my

head um is there anything that you wish you had known in advance is the next

part of this question and uh

gosh I really can't think of anything

that I wish I had known in advance maybe

if I sat here and stewed over it for

half an hour but you guys would find

that boring me just sitting here

pondering for half an

hour

um yeah I I really I guess I guess the

answer to that would be no because I

can't think of anything that I wish I

had known in advance about the

challenges of living in a cave in fact I

mean I can't really regret not I mean I

can't really bring myself to wish I had

known much of anything in advance other

than maybe you know know well enough not

to make certain mistakes that I have
made but uh with regard to living in
caves I can't think of anything and so
finally the very last question is from
Arin and
Arin um asked and I don't have it
written down I just remember her asking
the question so this won't be an exact
quote but she asked me why is it that so
many monks and and Dharma teachers too
speak in this soft slow voice with long
pauses whereas I generally speak even
when I'm teaching dhamma in an ordinary
conversational tone of voice and that is
kind of an interesting question I
noticed eart TOA does this on his videos

too just speak very slowly with lots of pauses and you know almost like this droning not quite whispery tone but just this you

slow you know a sort of almost ponderous way of talking and why some dama teachers talk that way uh I assume some of them are just like trying to project an image of being just meditative and wise and sort of channeling wisdom from the silence between the words or something there could be some of that it wouldn't surprise me I would I wouldn't say that that applies to everybody that some PE some dhamma teachers it may that they're trying to cultivate like a meditative um state of mind or maybe

it's just happening spontaneously with

them where um you know they're trying to

be as wise as possible so they're trying

to have their mind as calm as possible

and speaking slowly and softly helps

them to cultivate this this mental calm

that will then help them to

channel

wisdom that may be

why but in my own case I use just an

ordinary conversational

tone I'm not sure exactly why I mean I

just talk the same pretty much to

everybody you know like the same kind of

tone of voice um I've never really had

the kind of mind that has compartments

where you you just go into like
religious mode when you're talking about
religion there are a lot of people like
that um I'd say I don't know how how
many what the percentage would be maybe
as much as half where there are people
that just have their mind is in like
different rooms and some of the rooms
don't have much intercommunication with
each other but my mind is just kind of
uniform you know there aren't a lot of
partitions in my mind so you know it's
like I'm in the same state of
mind um if I'm meditating or at work or
hanging out at home or whatever it is I
tend to have the same General State of
Mind mind as a general rule I mean

obviously there's going to be certain exceptions if if I'm working some machine at work that if I'm not paying attention I can like crush a body part or something or just you know being silly with my sweetheart that kind of thing it's there's going to be differences but as a general rule it's the same me whereas some people like when they get into meditative mode it's just like they sit there like a statue because you know they they're not having to bring their entire personality into the meditation because they've got this special meditation room that's kind of sealed off to some degree from the other

parts of their mind and it could be that
some people who are like that by
temperament you know they're just going
to get into like the the holy Joe voice
like uh um Holden Coffield refers to it
in The Catcher in the Ry you know he
can't stand the phony H holy Joe voice
that preachers use you know like some
preachers I can't I think it was Ernest
who couldn't just say the name Jesus I
mean it always had to come out like
Jesus you know they just can't use an
ordinary tone of voice or something like
that but I mean dhama is I mean it's
it's profound it's it's Priceless and
all that but still if you're if you're
talking about it then it's best just to

talk about it and not try to you know

any theatrics you know getting worked up

over it I don't know it just doesn't

work for

me but

uh why do people talk

slow with lots of long pauses um when

they're teaching dhama yeah and I have

noticed that and that would be my best

guess is I would assume the main best

reason for why they do that is they're

cultivating sort of a calmness of mind

so that you know they'll be if will

promote greater wisdom you know they

don't want an agitated mind and then

they'll you know say the wrong thing or

get confused or you know forget to say
something important or something like
that so in my case I just forget to say
something important all the time and
just Bluster through it and that's it
that's the last question and uh you know
the drill you you know hit like smash
that like button if you haven't done so
already unless you hated the video which
case you're silly for sitting
through over an hour and 40 minutes of
this yeah this is less than two hours
this is this is a pretty short one
actually and uh subscribe if you haven't
already and if you have any questions
you think I can answer especially about
early Buddhism or Terra Buddhism in

particular or Burmese Buddhism or monasticism or the rules of monastic discipline or meditation or just spiritual practices and philosophy in General me personally questions like that that there's a good chance that I'll at least be able to fake an intelligent answer then you're welcome to ask and you can ask in the comments below um and uh I am on Rumble now largely as a reaction to the uh just the the tactics of YouTube you know the sort of globalist agenda of YouTube so I am on Rumble also on bitshoot in addition to being on YouTube and uh uh probably on YouTube you still

can't see my URL links so if you want
access to the other places in my other
presences on the internet as well as the
books that I have for sale on Amazon
then I would advise you to look under
the rumble video of this video or the
the bitshoot version of this video or an
old YouTube video that's more like 3
months old back before I was Smitten by
the YouTube sensors for having answered
the wrong question or answered the
question in an unacceptable
way and I guess that's it so I guess uh
you all should just uh be happy and now
I gotta hit the stop record button

okay hello and welcome to episode 89 of question and answer I am your host poo basa and as usual there's always got to be something to slightly discombobulate me at the beginning of a video and uh for some reason for for like breakfast and lunch I uh splurged and made some kind of pasta Alfredo with salmon in it and essentially it car sided me or something because I just like crashed afterwards I to slept for like 2 and 1 half hours and I'm not good at taking naps even when I was a little kid I was not good at taking naps so it's like a coin toss like when I wake up from the nap am I GNA be like this zombie like

being that's like staggering around

unable to think straight and uh I'm uh

I'm trying my best not to be a zombie in

this video

but I did just wake up from a nap that

uh I really didn't have much choice to

take

but didn't have much choice but to take

because I it was just hitting me hard

that pasta Alfredo it it really got

me so those of you who are

not National socialists or white

nationalists or any such thing will be

happy that we are past number

88 and we're at 89 now so so we can just

leave that behind us here on April

20th and uh it's April 20th for me

probably won't be till the 21st until

you see this and I am resisting the urge

to do a Joe Rogan and just get Totally

Baked uh right at the beginning of my

show

but I don't think that would work out

very well because I'd be like what was

the last sentence I just said something

like that so anyway

I'm going to just uh wait into these

questions here because there's quite a

few more questions than last time happen

sometimes people do not have completely

uniform curiosity you know it it es and

flows and so

forth and

uh yeah so I'm just going to answer
questions now and this first one is from
maram made Mahayana who asked this last
time and for some reason I just scrolled
past it and did not notice I answered
the question above it and then scrolled
pass this one maybe because it was of
roughly equal size and it looked like
the same question and I thought it
already answered it or
something you know what I'm
saying so Mara made Mahayana who I
believe is the same person as bodhisatta
969 which I hope does not cause
confusion in his
family says quote but who monks is a
better person person he who himself

avoids killing and encourages others to avoid killing he who himself avoids taking what is not given avoids sexual misconduct lies and the use of intoxicants and encourages others to avoid them he- monks is called a better person unquote so we may safely assume that that is a quote right out of a poly suah so anyways maram Mahayana continues shouldn't you at least try to encourage enage your family to stop doing this especially the killing of animals and then in parenthesis he's got I mean especially flies and small animals also because I don't have hunters or butchers in my

family so the question is should he

should people in general try to persuade

their immediate family if nobody else to

keep five precepts or just at least do a

better job job of of getting close to

keeping five

precepts and yeah I mean there's

absolutely nothing wrong with

admonishing your family uh preferably in

a loving way you know if you've got meta

in your heart then people will respond

better than if you're just like angrily

bitching at

them regardless of what you're trying to

persuade them of I mean if you if you

try to persuade somebody with meta or

love in your heart it'll do better than

you know like

scolding so yeah that's fine although

you have to know your limitations you

know how much can how much Authority do

you actually wield I mean Mara made

Mahayana you live in Thailand you have a

Thai

family um

so if they're traditional enough they

should consider the the man to be the

boss in the house but maybe they're not

traditional and uh they're they're just

not going to pay much attention to you

but I mean if you do have the authority

you could just put your foot down and

say you know no more squishing spiders

in this

house although if you live in Thailand

and you've got bugs in your house that

people are killing I mean that's what

geckos are for just have little geckos

running around your house eating the

bugs so that nobody else will uh be

catching the catching the bad comma from

it or

something but yeah I mean I've I tried a

little bit of that with my father and he

just he just wasn't into that he he just

kind of got irritated at me but you can

do your best and uh again your best

should have some some meta involved and

not just you know irritated scolding or

that sort of

thing

so I guess I answer that question so I'm

just going to move on to the next

question which is from Newman spelled n

m en not to be confused with Numa who's

a completely different guy and Newman

says what level of understanding is

needed to become a monk in the Terra

tradition theoretically could a

complete Rando could a complete Rando I

just

burped I have to start over I just I

just distracted myself interrupted

myself quite rudely Newman says what

level of understanding is needed to

become a monk in the terraa tradition

theoretically could a complete Rando
show up at a monastery with very little
starting knowledge being a blank slate
as it were and requests to start the
process of becoming a monk the two years
of service before being ordained Etc
learning through practice Etc well the
two years of service before being
ordained I'm sure that's just a tie
thing I I know it's it's uh part of the
aan
tradition John chai used to say easy to
ordain easy to disrobe and so there'd be
like two two I almost said two hours I'm
still not completely woken up yet two
years of being a a white clad Paca being
like a monastery attendant but um that's

just TI tradition it's it's not anywhere
in the poly texts that you have to take
probation for for two years before you
can be ordained some sometimes in Burma
there's some Burmese monks some Burmese
monasteries they will ordain practically
anybody I mean you don't even have to be
a Buddhist sometimes I once
met um a man a good guy I'm not
criticizing him necessarily but he a a
good guy who was wearing monks robes in
Burma he was a a
Westerner and it turned out that he was
a Catholic
priest and uh they just ordained him you
know he just he wanted to he wanted to

practice you know he wanted to you know

experience what it was like but I mean

he wasn't even a Buddhist he was a

Catholic although there is a lot of

overlap in uh some of the more

dharmic uh areas of both

religions like the meditation practices

and so

forth

so yeah I mean it is unfortunate that

the Burmese will ordain anybody but to

some degree they will technically if

you're just if you belong to a tradition

that does not believe in like Karma then

you should go on probation I think it's

four

months four months probation before they

ordain you just to make sure that you're
not a total and complete
heretic because karma is relatively
important factor of Buddhist philosophy
and if you don't believe in it then you
could hardly be considered um you know a
Buddhist with Right View shall we
say
so but complete randos do show up at
monasteries and do get ordained at least
in Burma sometimes at certain
monasteries but it's not really a good
it's not really a good idea in my
opinion so let's see I guess I answered
that so let's see what level of
understanding is needed to become a monk

in the Terra water tradition um I I mean
needed it depends from Monastery to
monaster from tradition within Terra to
tradition within terraa but I mean what
level of understanding is advised to
become a monk in the terada tradition um
certainly you should learn about I mean
the the requisites to be ordained just
to make sure you fit all the requisites
which would include not having any money
at all at the time of your ordination
that you're going to have to get rid of
that somehow you know don't have any
debts that kind of thing all free and
clear no obligations of the government
that sort of thing you and just have a
good idea of what the texts say you know

dhama and vinia um just so that you'll
you be have a good idea as to whether
you're even gonna like fit in you know
whether it's going to work for
you and if you start reading the sutas
and start saying hey I don't believe
this stuff I mean you don't have to
believe all of it I certainly have never
believed everything that I've read in
the suas but uh I mean with regard to
the basic philosophy of it I mean that
would be something that you'd want to be
fairly sure that you pretty much agreed
with before you commit yourself to being
an ordained monastic and of course you
know look through at least the potty

mocha rules just to see what kind of
rules you would be required to follow
and if you think hell no I don't want to
follow these rules then of course You'
probably be better doing something else
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question here and this is from covac and
sead
zida and covac in sead zida says four
noble truths he says Noble's truths Four
Noble Truths talk about the end of
craving but nibana is described as the
ending of greed hate and delusion what
is the connection between these
Concepts well craving is the cause of
suffering you know accordance with the
second Noble

truth but uh the craving is itself the
result of greed hate and delusion
especially greed and delusion but even
hatred or aversion you know Loba DOA and
MOA usually translates as greed hate and
delusion in English but I mean it'd
probably be more accurate to call it
um attraction aversion and just uh
semiconscious stupidity
but semiconscious stupidity takes too
long delusion is still fairly fairly
good translation but instead of greed
and hate just go with attraction and
aversion and that's that's essentially
craving attraction and aversion
especially if there's strong attractions

and strong aversions then you are

craving

something so in order to get you know to

really rooted out you've got to get rid

of the delusional so

so yeah I mean so long as you still got

delusion you're probably still going to

have

craving so it's sort of like uh the

disease and the like the the cause of

the disease or

something or symptoms of the disease

it's just two different levels but I

mean they certainly overlap and uh you

know the second Noble Truth is still

true I mean or then the third no truth

like if you don't want to suffer then

you have to stop

craving and you're going to stop craving

and suffering only when you have brought

an end to Greed hate and delusion so

they are definitely interrelated it's

just one is at the more practical level

and one is just at the more

observational level you

know if that makes any sense so I'm just

going to move on to the next question

here this is uh also from covac and CAD

Zona he says you say that the negative

and positive have to balance out how do

you explain the sutas talking about

cultivating the seven factors of

Enlightenment which includes good

emotions like Joy wouldn't they balance
out with negative emotions by what you
say making the entire exercise pointless
it sounds like it could justify the Jane
self-mortification techniques they
practice though well I mean just because
positive and negative balance out
doesn't mean that it's all completely
pointless that nothing is being
achieved like I mean death is a balance
of positive and negative but I
mean let's see I think I might be
missing the the point here or something
let's see you say that the negative and
positive have to balance out yeah I do
say that I mean it's just it's just the
way negative and positive are it's

just okay never mind I'll continue how

do you explain the sust talking about

the cultivating of the seven factors of

Enlightenment which includes good

emotions like Jo or PT which is sort of

like a

enthusiasm and uh yeah I mean it's still

going to be balanced out by its opposite

at some you know to some degree somehow

or other you know I mean you're going to

be experiencing good meditation and then

when you're out of the meditation you're

going to be experiencing just the

standard dooka of of wearing the the the

meat

vehicle so I mean it's still gonna get

balanced out but that doesn't mean that

just because something is balanced Out

means that nothing is

accomplished so I mean you just gota you

got to take the negative with with the

positive but I mean the whole purpose is

ultimately to transcend The Duality of

positive and negative I mean that's one

way of looking at it and uh death does

that sort of but when with death I mean

it's there's no body there

anymore

so yeah I

mean in a

way I mean you have to have a certain

amount of negative in order to generate

any positive you know one of my examples

with myself is just brushing your teeth
I mean you have to go through just sort
of the the the the minor hassle the
Sanara of brushing your teeth in order
to avoid having to shake hands with
tooth decay you know down the
roadways um so it's there's there's
going to be it's going to get balanced
out sooner or later somehow or
another but that doesn't mean that it's
just futile and
pointless I mean it's like becoming an
athlete you got to work out I mean
you're going to be like a an Olympic
Athlete you're going to win an Olympic
gold medal you got to train and train

and train and train and it's just going

to be misery sometimes

but then I mean it's like a

tradeoff and it's the same way with

cultivating like PT or something that in

order to meditate well enough to be

getting you know the seven factors of

Enlightenment that I mean there's going

to be other things that it's just not

pleasant things are going to be

happening just as the result of

this so

but when you do get into like the higher

row like fourth jna Pleasure and Pain

have been

um well I wouldn't say suppressed or

left behind but they're just in a bands

temporarily so that's when you're

getting really close it the the pleasure

and the pain the the positive and

negative become more subtle and it

becomes you know less of a roller

coaster

ride so I'm just going to move on to se

action C Z's next and third question

here which is as follows in terado they

often use the phrase Nam

Bas

budhas to pray to pay homage to the

Buddha in Nas mulaka he

uses

budas in tibetan they pay pay homage to

the Buddha by saying Supreme teacher

bhagavan datag arat complete and perfect

Buddha glorious conqueror shakyamuni to

you I

bow to you I pay homage and in many many

Mahayana sutras they begin by saying

homage to all the Buddhas and buddhis

satas what homages or homage have you

come have you come across from various

Traditions or text T that was your

favorite and is there anything like this

that was said in the time of the Buddha

so I guess that's two questions uh oh

that that adds up to four doesn't

it by

golly

see so what homage or homages have I

come across from various Traditions or

texts that was your favorite I just like

Nam damasa

is that right Nam deasa just a

second kind of bad when I can't even I'm

not even sure how

it's okay let's see

here yeah Namo damasa I was right which

just means homage to dhama or homage to

the way um I'm not really a devotional

kind of person so I mean the Buddha was

a great man and all that but what he had

to say

is to me much more important than you

know himself as an individual

person so I would put more emphasis on

dhama and less on a person that not even

alive anymore who lived 2500 years ago

you know with all due respect to the

Buddha it's not like I'm trying to be

disrespectful I'm just saying that you

know and the Buddha's the Buddha himself

is said to have said that after he is

gone dhama is the teacher so we still

have dhama which is arguably more

important than the Buddha anyway you

know the the person godma

Buddha

so

yeah I guess Namo damasa would be my

favorite so then his third and a half

question here and is there anything like

that that was said in the time of the

Buddha well there's all kinds of people

like P respect to the Buddha in the
texts and I assume some of them really
were praising the Buddha in the times of
the Buddha is I assume that that was the
case but there's no way of really
knowing for absolute sure
because we're not there we're here
instead and all we've got is records
that are not necessarily 100%
accurate but I'm pretty sure that uh
people were praising the Buddha whether
it was in like a standardized form
formula or not that's a different
question I mean in the text you know
there's already the standardized
formulas for you know budhha dama and sa

and then there's that one excellent
venerable God excellent venerable Goda
just as one venerable God would you know
light a lamp so that people can see
shapes and turn right side up what was
turned upside down and so on and so
forth U I really don't think that people
are actually saying that you know
verbatim when they get converted to
Buddhism but
uh it is there in the text claiming that
people were saying this kind of
standardized formula of praise to the
Buddha but um who who knows exactly for
sure so I'm just going to move on to the
next question here this is from
ruie and

ruie I think I got ruy asking questions

in two different places here just a

second I'm SC yep there he is two more

times I almost separated his questions

can you imagine the chaos that would

have

ensued if I had not noticed this so

let's see

cut and then scroll back up

here scrolling

scrolling and

then paste it right in there that's what

I'm doing right

now okay so this next question is from

ruie and ruie says hello poo a simple

question are mendicants allowed to build

their own Huts or any other edifices of
any description and yes monks are
allowed to build their own Huts but
within certain constraints like there's
a relatively serious rule s
deesa saying that before a monk can
build a
Hut he's got to show the place to the S
there's got to be you he's got to go to
the S and tell them you know I'm
planning on building it here and then
they've got to come and inspect the site
and make make sure that you know it's
not on contested property make sure that
there's not like you know an ant hill or
something that's going to get disrupted
by him building it there that sort of

thing also it has to be a small size
it's it's U you know it's it's a
relatively small Hut that a monk is
allowed to build if you go with the
Buddhist handspan being the size of you
know just maybe slightly larger than the
average man's hand then you'd be
building a Hut that's like 7 and 1/2 ft
by like
5T approximately I mean that would be
the size of the Hut you'd be allowed to
build if you were collecting the the the
supplies for yourself if a lay person
just came and wanted to donate a
building then it could be a lot bu
bigger than that and the monks are

allowed to work on it but they wouldn't
be allowed to like dig the Earth you
know for laying foundations or anything
that it was it was pretty crude Affair
you and
uh I mean it would be just a flimsy
thing that the monk would build back in
the Buddhist time
[Music]
um but yeah I guess the question the
answer to the question is yes monks are
allowed to build their own Huts or other
edifices you know they can lay bricks
that kind of thing they can do
carpentry a lot of that sort of thing
they just they're not allowed to dig the
ground not allowed to damage plants or

animals you know they're not allowed to

to kill even insects so they got to be

real careful when they're doing it and

it it it is helpful to have a lay person

you know helping to do the stuff that

monks aren't allowed to

do but I mean there's even in the the

Venia Tex there's monks who you know

they're trying to build a rock wall or a

brick wall and they're not very good at

it and The Rock the the wall keeps

falling over and

um

yeah so the answer to that one is yes

I'm just going to move on to the next

question I'm still sort of in a

in know kind of days from waking up from

that

nap okay so ru's next question here is

from terraa to Zen the mind is qualified

as naturally untainted pristine pure

which I take to mean unconditioned as

well this could imply that it comes into

Sam Sara from elsewhere what's your take

yeah I mean it's it can't really be

called terraa I mean it's found in in

the sutas and so forth I've I've

mentioned a number of times there is a

suta that that is pretty obviously

implying that nibana or Nirvana is

infinite formless Consciousness you know

uh let's see

it's

infinite luminous no like like shining

all around you know

unmanifest and u there is also a text

it's in the

sutas you there's a poly text saying

that this mind monks is shining forth

but it is defiled by extraneous

defilements so that is pretty you know

it's similar to the one saying that

nibana is like this shining you know

formless

Consciousness and then the Buddha is

saying your mind is also shining forth

and it is defiled by extraneous

defilements and um extraneous I mean

from the point of view of Buddhist

philosophy even your own thoughts and
feelings are extraneous to mind you know
it's like your your thoughts and your
feelings are somehow coming coming into
your mind from
outside so I mean this would be like a
vestage of pre terad you know it's
getting close to vant where you know
this like formless infinite
Consciousness is the absolute and
that due to defilements and ignorance
delusion we are thinking that you know
our little aspect of it is is just
separate from from everything else but
it really isn't it's just sort of an
illusion caused by the the mental state
superimposed

upon so it it doesn't really come into
samsara because samsara is just sort of
uh superimposed on the absolute in a way
I mean to the extent that samsar even
exists and uh so I mean the mind is
always there it didn't come from
anywhere else it's it's always been
there it's just that because samsara is
superimposed on this infinite formless
Consciousness according to the theory I
mean this certainly is an orthodox Terra
but it could be pre- orthodox
um see because samsara I mean it's just
samsara is just like the 10,000 things
it's just you know this and that and
just

distinctions so you wind up you start

off with this pure Consciousness and

then these

distinctions just kind of wind up

superimposed on top of that it's uh sort

of like uh light shining through a

stained glass window I think some

romantic poet maybe it was Shelly wrote

a poem about

that not that I consider Percy B Shelly

to be an enlightened

being but um yeah I mean the mind

doesn't come from anywhere I mean it's

just everywhere because it's formless

and infinite according to according to

the

theory so yeah that was another strange

sua that the commentators really have

trouble with

and biku Bodi in his translation he's

got to have a lengthy end note to that

one just trying to explain why the suto

would say this when it really is not

exactly

Orthodox because according to Orthodox

terada Consciousness isn't formless and

infinite and Shining forth it's just you

know it's like these uh atoms of

Consciousness that are just flashing in

and out of existence in a linear fashion

through time just a trillion times an

eye

blink so why would they say that this

mind is shining forth but is defiled by extraneous defilements you got to go with a different system or else you really got to do a lot of stretching and twisting of of meanings in order to for spit it onto later developed teron Orthodoxy so it may be with regard to something like that

that some Mahayana schools actually come closer to what the Buddha was originally teaching than something like Abid dama so I'm just going to move on the next question this is also from ruie how do you view the relationship between conditioned and unconditioned well and technically I don't think there is a relationship I don't think they touch

each

other

but uh I mean conditioned required

delusion which is requires dependent

core

Rising so you have to have this

essentially infinite web of all these

conditions that are themselves just

conditionally real that the whole

interaction is just reinforcing the

seeming reality of it that's how

dependent core Rising works at least

according to my understanding of it

whereas unconditioned I mean it's

there's you can't even say it's an it I

mean it's it's nothing you can say about

the uncondition is valid it's like
talking about Nirvana for when terraa
Buddhist talking about Nana or some
Christian Mystic talking about God I
mean words just don't stick so
conditioned is what what we are able to
discern what we're able to perceive
uncondition is the reality that is
beyond that and I mean it depends on how
you look at it if you're even going to
say that they there's any relationship
between them at all even though no the
condition is just superimposed on the
unconditioned because it relies upon the
unconditioned for for its existence it's
even its conditional
existence so I guess that's how I view

it so I guess I answered it correctly

because the question is how do you view

it so I'm just going to move on to the

next question question this is from

scadden I'm going to take another sip of

Bine glandular

secretions man cannot live by bread

alone there must also be a

beverage anyway scadden says I was

reading Ray bradberry's Zen In The Art

of writing and he suggested that the way

to become more intuitive is to read

poetry I have no idea how to enjoy

poetry or where to start re

commendations

so I think that might be the end of the

question because there's a question mark
there it's the only question mark But
then he's got like this little aside
here I recall it before you said that
Jordan Peterson often composed Haiku
yeah it was either me or I think it
might have been somebody that I was
talking to in the video said that I'm
not sure if that's the best place to
start I imagine one day he Tred to
rationalize the legend of Atlantis by
giving EXP position about the island of
Thea erupting and covering cre in a
blanket of Ash and then posting taste
the Tangy air smell the burning flesh
volcano
season so he made a haiku about uh how

the the origins of the myth of Atlantis
apparently so I me getting back to the
question here is um let's see Ray
Bradberry who probably is not the
highest Authority on understanding dar
anyway I mean he's kind of an artist and
like I've said before women artists and
French people generally do not do very
well at
philosophy so let's see he suggested the
way to become more intuitive is to read
poetry so with regard to being intuitive
maybe women artists and French people
are really good so long as it's not like
like liberating Insight or
something um but then some of them some

of them you know it's it's it's a

statistical thing it's not like it's

just a blanket statement saying that all

artists for example um are not good at

philosophy but then again intuition is

different from philosophy so I'm just

rambling at this point so anyway scol

laddin says I have no idea how to enjoy

poetry or where to start

recommendations

um well I

mean you've got poly poetry you know

you've got like deep philosophical

poetry you know like the Mula ma jamaka

karaka is all composed in poetry that

Thea waga of the suttin most of the

suttin is composed in poetry but the

thing is when they're translated into English usually the translator is more concerned with getting the meaning right than getting the meter right so it's not going to be in meter my own translations of of poly verse usually are not metrical and so technically you might be called Pros

poetry um but I mean if you want to become more intuitive you read poetry

gosh um you know getting back to the more Buddhist kind of poetry even like the mumon Khan or the hean Roku and the poet who wrote the poems for the hean Roku I mean he he was wildly

intuitive he was some kind of zen master
and wildly intuitive but again you have
the same you have the same problem of it
being translated into Pros by the
translator who's maybe not a poet he's
just he's a good translator but he's not
really a good
poet um there is a metrical translation
of the sutin by Lord chelmer I think
it's called woven cadences that uh you
might look into but with regard to
English poetry I mean I took English Lit
class my first year of college my
freshman year of college and the the
English Lit courses just kind of went in
a
progression and so my first my first

year in college it was it was up to the

Romantic Era and the Romantic Era gets a

lot of bad press but still there is some

relatively

profound poetry from the romantic era in

English I mean words worth is pretty dry

some of

colid you know the rhyme of the Ancient

Mariner I mean that's good poetry or a

KublaCon by by

colorage might not help you to

understand dhama very well but it might

make you more

intuitive some of the uh like the ODS of

Shelly and and Keats

or uh even even later like TS Elliott he

he had some depth to him I guess Maria Rainer Ry rilka is considered to be one of the most profound Poets of the 20th century but again I think he wrote in German and so you're going to have the translation problem because translating poetry doesn't tend to uh have perfect efficiency at you know putting the poem into a different language because you know the meter's all messed up and so forth so

what poetry would I would I recommend I mean if you just want like spiritual content there's lots of Buddhist and Christian poetry you know the babad Gita is poetry it's like in the olden days most scripture was was composed in in

verse

so so it's kind of like there's that on the one hand you know you got all all kinds of profound poetry but on the other hand um it's mostly not in Modern English and then you got to translate try you you can you can try uh like Shakespeare Shakespeare's uh a lot of I mean he he gradually drifted away from from verse but

um I mean there's there is a lot of poetry that we have access to like guus f but again it's translated but you can come across where you got a real poet like something like guus f I'm sure it has been translated by a real poet into

English

poetry

so oh also uh oh what's his name Yates

Yates has some profundity in his in his

uh

poetry

so you might just want to uh experiment

with different poets and see if there's

one that really tickles your fancy bomb

so to

speak and uh just read Zen Coons and so

forth I mean if you want to become more

intuitive I think better than reading

Normie poetry would be like reading Zen

Coons like read the the mumon Khan or

the he he Roku which is uh what what is

it called the Blue Cliff record

which has got some poetry in it and also
it's just this wildly intuitive stuff so
yeah I would uh I mean I don't want to
bad mouth Ray Bradberry but I do think
you might develop you might be more
intuitive by reading Zen Coons then by
reading you know flowery kind of
poetry and just stay away from the ones
that start their ones who was a man from
because those are not the kind of
poetry so I guess that's
it yeah and he's talking about Haiku
towards the end and Haiku doesn't rhyme
either so I guess rhyme and meter really
isn't all that important it's just the
content in the style of the

Poetry

so yeah just uh get your hands on the

hean Roku and read the poems in that

that would be my advice and I'm going to

move on to the next question this is

from

mooners and mooners says what is your

opinion of the pragna paramitas

literature and yeah I mean I was very

impressed by that as a young man before

I converted to terraa before I finally

decided to go with terraa like The

Diamond Cutter Sutra is profound the

heart Sutra is profound both of those

are part of the pragna paramita

literature so I think that

that aspect of Mahayana or Proto

Mahayana was a kind of Reform movement
where they were trying to get back to
the original Spirit of what the Buddha
was teaching because you know he started
off like in the ATA waga just no belief
no view no opinion no you know no
perception you know it's just if you
want to know reality you got to get rid
of all this thinking because the
thinking isn't going to get you there
you just got to like penetrate that and
and you know see reality directly
experience it
directly and then later it started
getting into this complicated like
Scholastic philosophical system and Abid

dama arose and there's also like uh pan
Maga and you've got the entire
commentarial tradition is just all
complicated and
it's they pretty much abandon the idea
that you're not going to understand
Reality by thinking about it
like Abid dama is trying to explain
reality in like some Grand Theory of
Everything sort of like the philosophy
of Aristotle and it does not really
succeed so some of these early mahays
were trying to just you know bypass all
this Abid Dharma stuff and get back to
the original Spirit although they did
they did drag in some
Innovations um were picked up elsewhere

like the whole buddhis satva

concept that the buddyva concept is uh

later than the Buddhist

time and

uh and then it's just they they've got

that included with the prag paramita

although it

it's I don't know like if you read like

what The Diamond Cutter Sutra says about

how a budy satva should conduct himself

it's really not that different at all

different from how an Aran conducts

himself in the older

literature

so yeah there it's not a perfect return

to what the Buddha was originally

teaching but in certain respects it is
very worthy of respect in my
opinion but I haven't read all of it
anywhere close to all of it I don't know
if all of it's even translated into
English I assume it must be at least by
obscure second rate translators that
nobody's ever heard of of you know it's
out there somewhere
probably but uh yeah I mean a lot of it
is profound like The Diamond Cutter
Sutra um on average contains more
profundity than a Sutra that you're
going to find at random like in the
angura and Naya or the dean Naya for
that
matter so there is wisdom to be found

there just as there's wisdom to be found

in the bagavat Gita for example or in

the the writings of St John of the Cross

or or whatever you can find

wisdom in just about any tradition

unless it's just a very limited

tradition like something like well I'm

not even I'm not going to name

names but you know some some Christian

Protestant sexs are pretty Limited in in

their View and uh I assume there are

some Buddhist sects that are limited in

their view also but

uh let's see

where was I going with that what is your

opinion of the prag Su literatures

literatures and uh yeah I think I

answered that so I'm just going to move

on next question this is from Libra Lam

and Libra Lam says what kind of tease

did you or others you know of drink in

Burma and I was asked this just a few

episodes ago not in exactly the same

words but it is essentially the same

question what kind of teas did you or

others you know of drinking Burma when I

was in Burma I

mean it's uh I mean you didn't really

have much selection you know somebody

would have tea which was generally just

dried green

tea and it usually did not have any

brand associated with it it was just

just local stuff or something that came
from some little Tea Plantation in Shen
State and presumably it had some kind of
brand on the on the bag but you dump it
out of the bag into the glass jar or
something and you don't know what the
brand is it all tastes pretty much the
same anyway and I really don't like
green tea very much anyhow so I
generally did not drink much of that
kind of tea so that almost the only tea
I drank in Burma came in packets of it
was like threein one tea mix where it's
got tea instant tea
sugar and like non-dairy creamer and
then the Burmese if they were being real

nice to me they they doctor it up even richer and sweeter with with like condensed milk and that kind of stuff so that it was so syrupy sweet that you could hardly tell the difference between the tea and the coffee you know it it's just mainly condensed milk and sugar flavor mainly the way I tell the difference is that the tea was more orangey color and the the coffee was a little

Browner but that's that's it I think it the most of the packets were called like one tea something like that and it just came in these little foil

packets that's the main kind of tea that I drank because I did not like the taste

of just regular green tea like all the villagers drank and uh I was relatively very strict uh for most of my My Life as a as a monk and for reasons I I mentioned in a previous Q&A strict monks in Burma don't drink tea in the afternoon anyway and also it's so hot in Burma that if I would drink a hot drink like tea or coffee I'd be sweating for 15 minutes afterwards until my body could cool back down again enough that I would stop sweating profusely so if I did drink coffee it was often cold coffee except for in the winter time so yeah I'm definitely more of a coffee

drinker than a tea drinker though I've
never really been heavily into drinking
tea so I'm just going to move on to
Libra Lamb's next
question and I do hope that we are
actually recording here I think
so so Libra Lamb's next question is how
far back into Indo-European ancient
history do you imagine that we can say
there was some amount of dhama even if
just a rud rary form of yoga or weasa or
S well I mean if you're if you're
dealing with a rudimentary form of yoga
or samata then you'd probably be going
back into like Shamanism where the
shamans at least would be cultivating
you know expanded mental States or

whatever partly through drugs partly
just through repetitive actions like my
father used to be friends with an Mo
Shaman when he lived in Alaska it was
back in the
1950s and uh he he was he was Eskimo
Shaman and he he explained you know H
how he went through the the ritual
of um like the initiation in becoming a
shaman where they he just gets sent out
into the the
Wilderness with no food no water no
bedding or anything he just goes out
there alone Into the Wilderness and he
finds a big Flat Rock and a little round
rock and he just sits down and rubs the

little round rock onto the surface of

the big Flat Rock and just keeps doing

that until finally there's some sort of

breakthrough and that would be like a a

rudimentary form of samat meditation I

would

think so I assume that that went you

know farther back than the Proto Indo

Europeans go back farther farther back

than the yam NAA civilization that

there's always been you know weird

Shaman types who are experimenting with

their mental States and so forth but at

what point it went

mainstream I mean it's hard to say

really because we don't have a lot of

literature from I mean we don't have any

literature from the Proto indo-europeans

I mean the oldest Indo-European

literature that I know of might be the

rig

Veda and the rig Veda doesn't talk about

dhama really all that much back then it

was sort of like ancient Greek or Roman

religion where you're invoking the gods

and making sacrifices to the Gods in

order for worldly

benefits but we may assume that the

priests who had to get all the words

right and everything had to be very

focused on the ritual could turn the

ritual into a kind of

s so I mean with regard to actual yoga

or we or s that we know of I mean that

would probably be you know like the Pon

aads or like very early Buddhism or I'm

not really sure about uh you know some

of the Greek philosophers were rather

mystical the early Greek philosophers

like the presocratic

but um there's no real mention of actual

techniques like yogic techniques until

until like

India um you know getting up close to

the Buddhist

time with which may have just been

gradually adopted or adapted from just

the the indigenous spiritual culture of

Northwestern India at that time like

going back to the indis valley

civilization which may have been largely
responsible for like the Sham tradition
in ancient Northern
India
so yeah it's really hard to say because
um you know probably be like drug
induced stuff at first you know I guess
the cians they smoked a lot of weed you
know like they would just sit in a tent
with a like a little weed bonfire and
just completely smoke
out but you know how how spiritual
you're going to say that is is hard to
say but um yeah this very limited
evidence like archaeological evidence
for yogic techniques or meditation

techniques although there is U some some
more meditation questions below that
kind of have some bearing on this so um
just bear with me and there's uh there's
another question farther down on this
scroll that's talking about the origins
of
meditation so especially if you haven't
read my my book that has the article on
the origins of meditation it might be of
might be informative and useful to
you or at least entertaining
so I guess I answered that question but
it's a hard question to answer just
because of very limited
data
so Libra lamps third question

here would you describe meditation as

trippy in some regards well it can be

it's certainly not always

trippy but if you start getting into

like

unusual territory you know you're

breaking new ground in your meditation

and it's causing you're not used to it

yet and so your whole body might be like

twitching with with PT it's called you

know it's like um yeah I

mean you can't also get into like really

expanded Consciousness States if your

meditation is doing really well in which

case it's sort of like you know it can

be almost like LSD or mushroom some kind

of psychedelic except without the visual effects you know it's just the just the wide open expanded Consciousness effect which I guess you could say it's trippy or if you're doing intensive meditation and you're uh not sleeping very much there can be all kinds of dream images coming up when you're meditating which I mean that can be trippy that's kind of psychedelic you know there was a time in when I was living under the Rock Ledge the edge of the national park in Northwestern Burma where I was averaging like four hours of sleep at night and it was my meditation was really good that's how I could manage only four hours of sleep per

night if I was my meditation is not

going well there's no way I could have

gotten by on that little sleep but still

like dream images are arising through

all this trippy stuff coming up it's

like surreal literally surreal I assume

surrealness is

trippy so yeah there are certain aspects

about meditation that can be trippy

especially under certain circumstances

although not all meditation is

trippy for me most meditation isn't

trippy but some of it can be so I'm just

going to move on to the next question

this is from

jws and jwes says how accurate is the

translation of Sada into the English

word faith does Sada carry the same

connotations of Faith as belief in

something unverifiable within one's own

direct

experience well some

translators don't like the word faith in

fact a lot of Western Buddhists don't

like the word faith because it just

smacks of Christianity you know it's

kind of what they're trying to get away

from is the faith stuff but um so so

some translators will

prefer um something like

confidence as a translation of Sadam

although um faith I think is is a fair

translation I think it is a

relatively valid translation of Sada and
there actually are at least two passages
in the text where it says a monk should
have no Sada one kind of ironically is
in the DAP and one is in h the ATA waga
I can't remember exactly which suta of
the ATA waga but it's in the ATA waga of
the Su saying that a mon should have no
Sada so I mean that would mean like
belief you know so Sada could mean like
belief which is pretty much
Faith so let's see I want to make sure I
answered this question here how accurate
is the translation of Sada into the
English word faith how accurate I think
it's fairly accurate I think you know

something like belief maybe or I I not

sure that confidence would be as good of

a translation even though it does avoid

the f word you

know but um there are at least two

places in the suus where a monk

shouldn't have any so

um it's easier to believe that um a a

monk shouldn't have faith better than he

shouldn't have

confidence but I mean it can mean

slightly different things under

different different circumstances just

like the word faith has different

meanings under different circumstances

in different

contexts so I think for the most part

sadada does mean a kind of

belief um um you know it's it's not like

un like Blind Faith it shouldn't be

blind faith in Buddhism but still it's

like you've been able to verify certain

aspects of this overarching philosophy

so it gives you more confidence that the

other parts you haven't verified yet are

also likely to be true you know that

kind of thing but still I mean

ultimately I don't think an enlightened

being would have any faith at

all so maybe sadada would also

qualify uh I don't think I don't think

Faith or sadada is even one of the 10

parmes it's not considered to be

extremely important it doesn't receive

nearly as much emphasis in poly Buddhism

as it does in like

Christianity

so and I think it mainly Paul of Tarsus

that really that really took the the the

faith ball and ran with it

so I guess I answered that question I

mean you might want to ask like a real

like a

philologist who who might have a better

idea of uh the exact meanings of

words but S I think literally just based

on the atmology it means like true

placement or

something maybe

not never mind I know I'm not going to

look it up in the dictionary I'm not
going to have you sitting here sitting
there I should say watching me look in
the dictionary for the atmology of s so
I'm just going to uh move on to jules's
next
question which is are there any sutas
where the Buddha talks about right Faith
or right Sada and I imagine there is I
imagine that there are sutas in in the
in the ptica just talking about you know
the right way of having faith
but I've never been particularly Faith
oriented like throughout most of my life
I've considered Faith to be delusion you
know faith is thinking that you know

something that you don't really know
which is kind of delusional isn't
it so yeah it I even if I've read it and
I there's a good chance I have it just
didn't register very much because I've
never been a very Faith oriented person
I'm more head oriented than heart
oriented more the scientific temperament
than the AR artistic
temperament um you know I want I want
evidence or at least you know some kind
of experience that you know kind
of Vibes with with the I don't know how
to explain it exactly I guess
intuition yeah I I do have a use for
intuition but intuition and Faith are
not exactly the same because an

intuition can just be like a a working
hypothesis or something not something
that you're fervently believing
in so yeah are there any sutas where the
Buddha talks about right Faith or right
Sada I don't think it would be in that
the sense of right Faith or right Sada
but he could be talking about you know
you know a proper kind of of faith that
a Buddhist would have but I really don't
know what suta it is it's probably out
there would not surprise me at all in
fact it might surprise me more if there
isn't a su about that but uh I really
can't tell you which suta it
is so I'm just going to move on to the

next question here this is from

Prav and pranav says there are 13 dangas

did the Buddha follow all 13 or not and

for those of you who don't know what

dangas are they are optional aesthetic

practices like only eating alms food

only wearing robes that are made of Rags

that you picked up off the ground and

sewn together sleeping only in a sitting

position eating only one meal a day

these kind of things living in a

cemetery living under a tree living in

the under the Open

Sky

um so and there's there's according to

the waga there's three different uh

three different levels of each Danga

easy medium and

hard so did the Buddha follow all 13 or

not probably in his early days like when

he's doing the dukar chararat where he's

you know like torturing himself and

being extremely

strict yeah he probably experimented

with all of

them um but later on according to the

the suas then you know he he wasn't

following them at the strictest level he

wasn't really following all of the

dangas anymore like there's a Danga like

at least two dangas you don't sleep I

mean you sleep at the you stay at the

root of a tree or you you live on under

the Open Sky it seems like those two

would be mutually

exclusive but I mean the Buddha accepted

invitations from from lay people which

he would be breaking the the Danga of

just going for Ms round he lay down so

he didn't do the sitters practice the

sitting Danga you know he died and lying

down it does mention him lying down

sometimes um he would I I don't know if

he I assume that he would occasionally

spend the night in a town and the forest

dwellers do Tonga is you don't you don't

spend the night in

town so I assume he had experimented

with all those things during his really

intensive phase before he became

enlightened maybe in his earlier days I mean obviously he did you know spend a lot of time under trees and and wandering around probably staying in cemeteries
occasionally um you know he he went for alms food most of the time even if he did occasionally accept an invitation to somebody's house
so um yeah he didn't follow all 13 not all at the same time and I think the only monk I mean there are a few monks that are mentioned especially mahak kasapa who was of of all the Buddha's great disciples he was the one who had mastered

Danga so um in the Buddhist

time uh according to tradition I think

was mahak kaspa was the only monk who

was able to do all 13 dangas at the

hardest level without like cracking up

just he was able to maintain

that

so um this is just my standard long

answer to a short question because I

mean technically the answer is just no

did the Buddha follow all 13 or not um

with qualifications probably he

experimented with all of them but he

didn't do all of them at the same time

throughout his career because there's

obvious references to him doing things

that are not in accordance with donga

you know like like I just mentioned accepting invitations for a meal at somebody's house or sleeping under a roof that kind of thing accepting robe cloth instead of just picking up rags and sewing them

together so I'm going to move on to the next question and this is kind of a trick question on my part because he specifically says that this isn't a question for the Q&A but I'm going to read it anyways because he included it as a comment under a Q&A so it's fair game I mean you gotta you gotta be on your toes with me sometimes anyways why ash Piper says I'm a wee bit curious

these Nazi types and their world view on
Arian purists do they believe in
evolution and understand that all humans
at one point came out of Africa
therefore making Purity a bit
challenging of course I've seen new
arguments about this coming out of
Africa Theory but haven't dived too deep
into that rabbit hole not being a
believer in
evolution it's kind of hard to want to
this isn't a question for your Q&A
episodes it's irrelevant to Buddhism
yeah in a way it is I
mean if you're clever you can you can
relate everything to Buddhism you know
everything is related to dhama somehow

or another but um

yeah it's there's a lot of controversy

and this sort of heated debate going on

about like how human beings evolved and

where they evolved like the Out of

Africa theory is like still I'm pretty

sure this the the main Theory and I'm

still inclined to go with Out of Africa

um but there's people that are just

vehemently opposed to this and one of

the reasons why they would be vehemently

opposed to it one of the main reasons

that I've seen is just somebody is

indignant that they EV they evolved from

black people and I mean that's not

really what Out of Africa is saying

anyway so I mean that argument would be
a misunderstanding of the Out of Africa
Theory but I think part of the confusion
of the whole Out of Africa Theory and
just the whole human evolution
thing is you know where do you draw the
line between our species and other
species it used to be neander tals were
a subspecies of humans but now they're
considered to be a completely different
species even though they can inner
breed because most people that
aren't subsaharan Africans have about 3%
in the enderal
DNA so it's like um where are you going
to draw the line for what is a human and
what isn't a human and you'd think that

just the genus homo you know Homo habilis or at least Homo erectus that would be the start of of our species but now they're they're like making more and more species of course all the the other species have to be extinct because if all of a sudden they found a tribe of NE endals living in a remote Valley of the Himalayas they'd immediately just do a 180 on them being a different species because that would be racist you know they'd be dehumanizing these people of color and so forth so that I mean part of the problem nowadays is that science including anthropology has just been

hijacked by politically correct
political thinking so like they getting
rid of the whole idea of race
um like they're saying race is just a
social construct and so it's it's not
useful but then again all of taxonomy is
a social is a a social construct you
know dividing mammals and birds into two
different groups is is like a social
construct but they don't get rid of that
it's only when it applies to humans like
modern humans that exist today then the
fact that taxonomy is a social construct
renders it invalid but it's still valid
for everything else and every other
organism Under the Sun this kind of
thing so there's all kinds of just

muddied Waters and confusion and

pseudoscience and politics just

masquerade

as as a legitimate science in the field

of like human evolution at this

point but Out of Africa I still am

inclined to go with the Out of Africa

Theory not saying that we evolv from the

negroid

Race using uh quotes there because I

have read that the black race the

subsaharan African black race is

relatively

recent that they evolved

um in like Western Africa around the

time that the first migrations were

already leaving north northeastern
Africa into into Asia Western
Asia so the first humans would probably
be more closely related to the capoid
people and like Australian Aborigines
that would be like indicative one of the
early diasporas out out Beyond Africa
but one of the the bits of evidence that
does indicate it that Africa is like the
homeland of the human species or group
of
species is that there's much more
genetic diversity in Africa than Out of
Africa which indicates that you know
sort of like the ocean life began in the
ocean one of the reasons you know that
is there's way more diversity in of life

in the ocean there are entire groups of

animals that live only in the ocean

especially the really primitive ones you

know like starfish

that kind of

thing they they don't exist in fresh

water they don't exist in

land

so I'm confusing myself now oh yeah so

just having more diversity genetic

diversity in Africa you know more um

what's the like what's the word I'm

trying to think of I can't the word clay

keeps trying to come into my mind but

there's all these different different uh

oh I can't even think of the

word there's there's just more genetic diversity in Africa than Out of Africa which does indicate that it was just sort of limited you know limited populations left Africa with their own limited diversity and then they they interbred to some degree with Dennis ens and the anals and so forth but uh still there be there's more genetic uh diversity in Africa and it may be that people will be sending comment saying that out of Africa has been debunk and that you're just you're just a Clinger or something but again you have to agree on the terms and what is a human I mean I would consider a neandertal to be a human or dennos sovin

to be a human Homo erectus is probably a
human so I do think that the earliest
humans arose in Africa probably like
Eastern Africa somewhere and
then they they left Africa and a number
of of
migrations but let's see here and I mean
not believing an evolution I that that
doesn't make any sense to me I
mean uh I mean the evidence is so clear
the evolution has
happened you know just the fossil record
for example is such excellent evidence
that Evolution has occurred that the
only real argument should should be like
how it

happens you know exactly what is the mechanism that drives Evolution then you can still have God in there or like some kind of schopenhauerian will that's just striving to just diversify just to fill the fill existence with itself that kind of

thing you wouldn't happen to have you wouldn't have to have like darwinian you know random mutations and natural selection and so forth

so anyways white ash Piper he asked the question yep there's even a question mark there he asked a question under a Q&A video and so I consider it fair game even though he said it isn't a question for his Q&A these Q&A episodes well he

was mistaken because it

is so oh but I don't even think I really

answered his question

yet let's see do the do do the Arian

purists believe in evolution yeah I

think most of them do and understand

that all humans at one point came out of

Africa well that's that's like hotly

debated now therefore making Purity a

bit challenging well yeah I mean it's

not like the Arian purists are saying

that the indo-europeans just arose out

of the soil pure and pristine you know

north of of the Black Sea you know 5,000

BC or whenever it was that it happened

you know the yam NAA culture obviously

was already a combination of two or three different main groups you know you had like the what was it the the Western hunter gatherers and you had like the the northern hunter gatherers and maybe a little bit of Neolithic Farmers you know got included and you had like some some other group that was down in the caucuses that had some influx of genetic material so it's that's really not in question I mean they're not claiming that that Indo Europeans are just completely unique and pure and pristine you know it's just more of a in a way it's more of a cultural thing than a genetic thing although the Indo Europeans did have certain genetic

qualities that others didn't have like
they were lactose tolerant I read this
book that was saying one of the reasons
why the indo-europeans were so
successful is because they could digest
milk they could they were lactose
tolerant even as adults which allowed
them to have more to grow more calories
on the same amount of land because dairy
cattle produce more nutrition than beef
cattle
do etc
etc so yeah I mean the Nazi Arian purist
types they they've got all kinds of
beliefs and so I mean it's not it's not
all just going to fit into this one

little category or that little category

so

um I guess I answer that question about

as likely as I'm going to so I'm just

going to move on and it's April 20th

today so why the hell

not so next question is from Ken and Ken

says greetings poo I recently short

segment NPR so he I think he completely

omitted a verb here let's say Greetings

poo I recently saw a short segment on n

PR did oh A short segment NPR did about

Goa weasa they mentioned that two women

had committed suicide during courses any

thoughts on why some people open

Pandora's Box while meditating and can't

close it and on our Discord server

there's been a lot of discussion of this because there's some lady scientist type who has specialized I think she's she's like a psychologist or a therapist or something she's specializes in alerting the world of the dangers of meditation because sometimes people can crack up doing intensive meditation anyone who's attended a lot of intensive meditation Retreats know that every once in a while somebody will crack up and so that's seen as you shouldn't do this or you should be very careful you know because this kind of stuff can happen and I mean it does people people can crack up or they you just they have like hidden

subconscious stuff that they've been you know throughout their life they've just been keeping it down and and subdued and then when you meditate it all comes burbling up to the surface that kind of thing can happen or you just have like certain frailties in in your character you know it's like for genetic reasons or past experience like as a small child or something you know you just got this weak point you know that can break easy and you know you just kind of like favor that in you know you avoid certain circumstances certain situations and so forth but then you get into meditation and you're having to like face everything you got inside you

and it can just like break something you
know that that kind of thing can happen
it doesn't happen very often it's like
not everybody who takes LSD has like a
bad trip when they do
it and it's not everybody who he does
intensive meditation is going to is
going to have like some kind of horrible
breakdown and commit suicide or some
such you know it's it's relatively you
know it's It's On The
Fringe so anyway any thoughts on why
some people open Pandora's Box while
meditating and can't close it well some
people um they're not using meditation
for the the original purpose of it I

mean like intensive Buddhist Meditation
was designed to help radical renunciant
mendicants like blow through samsara
blow through all of these Illusions by
this in a way just observing them
without reacting to them until they just
sort of collapse under their own
weight and you've got normies that just
want to feel good about themselves you
know they want to have a a good feeling
of well-being or they're just following
a trend they're following a fashion you
know it's just cool to go to a goer
Retreat or
something and they're just not strong
enough mentally or you know some of the
things that I already mentioned you know

they just have

this um you know this fault line you

know this cavity or something that or

they just got like

suppressed memories or or something you

know they got skeletons in their closet

they don't want to face and then boom

they're in this intense

meditation uh experience and it just

comes up to the surface and they can't

really deal with it very

well

so why some people open Pandora's Box

while meditating and can't close it yeah

I think I think I pretty much explain

that fairly well I mean they're either

in over their head you know they're
they're doing some advanced practice
that they haven't really prepared
themselves for because in the west you
just want to meditate you don't want to
do all the other stuff you know you
certainly don't want to renounce the
world and wander around homeless and
penniless and all that you know you just
you just kind of pick the the parts that
you want to follow which results in an
imbalanced approach and some aspects of
your your your system aren't going to be
you know keeping up with other parts
because you're not following the entire
system you're just strengthening this
and that and other parts get left behind

and it throws you into a state of

imbalance so that when you do the intens

meditation stuff sometimes something

breaks or just you know just a bad

experience

happens

so yeah I think a lot of people just

don't realize what what it is that

they're

doing and they're meditating for reasons

other than the reason why the meditation

was developed in the first

place so you know they're using a a

wrench to pound nails in some sense in

in some

cases so let's see have I answered this

question I think I've answered this

question so I'm just going to move on to

Ken's next

question which is also do you think it

wise for people to jump into serious

meditation from our distraction drenched

culture well yeah this is kind of a

followup on the first question and for

some people maybe even most people it's

not that you know it's not not going to

cause any harm really you may you may

not get you may get limited benefit just

because you know your mind isn't really

in tune with the system because you know

you you come from a completely different

culture like Carl Yung you know back in

like the 1940s or 50s was saying that

you know Western people really cannot
practice Dharma effectively because
we're just too Western in our point of
view and nowadays I mean in the 21st
century a lot of younger people
especially are just too mentally weak
you know they've never really been
challenged they've been coddled and and
protected and you know everyone gets a
trophy and all that so that they're just
like flab mentally
flabby so anyways let's see I got to
read the question again do you think it
wise for people to jump into serious
meditation from our distraction drenched
culture well some people are just

abandoning the distraction drenched
culture which is wise and they're trying
to find something something better to
replace it with which is wise that's
essentially what I
did so I mean for most people it's okay
you know I think it is wise for people
to get into serious
meditation um you know regardless of the
culture they're in I mean so long as
they've got a relatively good reason to
do it you know they're just trying to
develop you know they just want to get
high without having to take drugs or
something then maybe it's not so good
some people do use meditation as a
substitute for Narcotics which is not

you know necessarily very

wise but

um yeah I think some people that are

just like really mentally flabby or or

got real serious issues that then try to

get into like advanced dhama practice

Yeah I mean they're not going to do any

better than say someone who's completely

out of shape physically just suddenly

entering a marathon race or doing pole

vaulting or something it's you know much

more likely that there's going to be

accidents or

mishaps but as a general rule it is wise

for people to jump into serious

meditation although you might want to

kind of go into a little bit gradually

you know depending on your your

personality depending on your character

that kind of thing your constitutional

factors so you should do it in such a

way that um you're ready for it when you

get to that when you get to a certain

point you're you're more or less

prepared rather than just diving in

without you know having any

preparation so you might want to start

off just uh being a little more

introspective and uh you know keeping

precepts you know keeping some CA that

kind of thing that'll kind of you know

chill you out and get you ready for the

next stage Sila Samar

PA so I think I'll just move on to the next question here also from Ken have you ever had a meditation hor you were overcome by repressed Rage or anger and I mean I've never like just blown up in the middle of a meditation just being pissed off but there are times when you can you're meditating and just weird suppressed feelings will just come to the surface and you can get really irritable or or pissed off um I mean you're just still sitting there and dealing with it you know you're just noting
it but still so I guess that wouldn't be completely overcome you know I've never

been so overcome by repressed Rage or

anger during meditation I just jumped up

and started

bellowing nothing like

that but sometimes something can come up

and it just stays up for a while and you

just sit there

and ride the Bronco or

whatever but nothing really nothing

really extreme has has come up in that

regard when I was

meditating so you're more likely to be

overcome by Rage or anger when you're

when you're not being meditative because

when you're being meditative then you

know the the anger arises and then you

just note it you know it's just an

object of

meditation whereas if you're not being

meditative then it just takes you over

and you're all pissed off I'm so

mad so I'm just going to move on next

question here this is from Joe do and Jo

do says do you think the Buddha would

have supported the

lgbtq movement like some Buddhist

teachers do did the Buddha ever give a

teaching on

homosexuals I'm not sure that homo I

don't think there's a poly word for

homosexual and it's sort of like what

they say about ancient Rome that like

the ancient Romans didn't really have a

concept of

homosexuality it was you know you were

either masculine or you were eminite now

they they made that distinction between

being like masculine and feminite but um

like if you had sex with a teenage boy

in ancient Rome I'm not advising this at

all but if you had sex with a teenage

boy in ancient Rome then I mean if you

were on top you were still acting the

role of the man you were still masculine

it was the one who was on bottom so to

speak that was the eminite one and they

wouldn't you know they'd have less

respect from other men and so

forth but uh I think it was might have

been kind of similar in Ancient India

like there's mention of pukas which are
Unix like castrated Unix and it seemed
like men who had some kind of homosexual
inclinations were more inclined to just
go and have sex with a unic than to have
sex with another man there's really not
much mention of it and it's not
considered to be that really a thing
like in the in the poly texts like if
you
have if you touch a woman with lust in
your heart you know you're you're
getting off on touching this woman
that's AA offense and that you it
requires Penance you got to take Penance
for six days and six nights it's it's

really a complicated procedure you have to go through and it's it's it's a relatively significant punishment that a monk receives for touching a woman with lust in his heart if he touches a panduka with lust in his heart that's only a tulach Chaya offense which all you have to do is just make confession I mean it's still a serious offense Tula Chaya literally means something like grave transgression but still you confess it you don't have to do the Penance or anything and if it's a man you know you're touching a man and experience lust you you're touching him because you're getting off on touching another man that's just a dooka offense

it's like the the lightest offense there
is I mean still if you have sex with a
man you're excommunicated for life just
as if you have sex with a woman you have
sex with a monkey whatever it is then
you're excommunicated for life so um
it's not that having like homo literal
homosexuality gets a pass in
Buddhism but
um but I think I've I'm just kind of
sidest stepping the question here and uh
there's two questions two question
marks these these sneaky people put two
question marks in supposedly one
question but I forgive you
Joo I do so and because you only ask two

questions anyway so so the first
question do you think the Buddha would
have supported the lgbtq movement like
some buddist teachers do I don't think
so I mean people who identify with their
sexuality I mean that that is light
years away from dhama you know you're
not supposed to identify with anything
really so I mean especially the Buddha
as he was historically I think the lgbtq
movement would have been seen as just
some kind of
insanity um in Ancient India just in
that culture much as it seen as Insanity
by lots of people
nowadays um but people who identify with
their sexuality is is just kind of weird

from a from a dharmic point of view I
mean what's the
point
so yeah that I mean the whole supporting
the lgbtq movement by Western Buddhist
teachers nowadays is more of a political
thing than a Dharma thing you know it's
the standard progressivism you know
neomarxism radical
leftism what it what's what's the other
word something politics liberational
politics is that it I mean there's lots
of words for this essentially the same
phenomenon so-called
progressivism as though Decline and fall
of civilization is

progress um yeah I mean it's more
that it's you know Pride Flags in front
of churches and so forth I mean that's
that has nothing to do with the Bible
That's Just leftist politics
nowadays and Buddhism especially because
it doesn't have as much foundation in
the west doesn't have as deep of roots
in the west you got these academic types
just like writing articles and entire
books on like queer Buddhism for example
um and they can get away with it because
most people don't know enough about the
subject to really say hey wait a minute
that doesn't have anything to do with
ancient Indian
Buddhism you I mean the Buddha wasn't

even he wasn't even supporting like like elimination of the cast system in ancient India which was an issue back then so yeah I don't think he'd be uh supporting lgbtq movement in Ancient India um you know if AB Buddha arose today I'm I'm sure he would not emphasize it that he would just sort of you know make some sort of wise comment about certain things and and and not like endorse it or anything but he would have compassion for everybody that sort of thing you know he'd want to help everyone he was able to help but with if with regard to monks if you had like lgbtq activist monks he

might he might have uh really sternly

rebuke

those because that's not what a monk is

supposed to be doing that's not what

monkhood is all

about so then the next the next question

here did the Buddha ever give a teaching

on homosexuals and like I say I don't

think there is even a word for it I

don't think it was really a a cultural

concept back then although they did

acknowledge that it did happen it just

wasn't you know it wasn't such a it was

such a fringe thing that it really

didn't get much comment and especially

in Buddhism maybe in some other kind of

literature

that that uh you know they talk more

about men sleeping with men you know men

lying with men but um yeah there's very

little mention to that sort of thing

except for in the vinea rules

um and then you know I've already

explained that it's like just touching

is is relatively is just very mild

offense but uh if you get all the way up

to the level of actually having sex then

it's just as bad as having sex a woman

for a monk who's supposed to be

celibate not that having Psy with a

woman is necessarily

bad so I guess I answered that question

it might not be a completely

satisfactory answer but um again

homosexuality is uh I know I'm not even

sure if there was even a concept for it

back then I mean it kind of happened but

still I don't think there's a word for

homosexual in poly maybe there

is but um yeah it was sort of like

ancient Rome I think where you might be

considered a masculine man or an

feminite Man based on whether you're on

top or bottom or something

but um yeah just like gayness and so

forth I don't think it was really an

issue a cultural issue back

then so I'm just going to move on to the

next question here this is from Pope

Kevin the first and Pope Kevin says do

you think I am intelligent and he asked
this question before and then deleted it
maybe he didn't want totally honest
answer or something um but I mean
obviously he's above average in
intelligence I don't know exactly how
intelligence how intelligent he is I
haven't uh given him any cognitive tests
or
anything but he asks fairly intelligent
questions and so uh
yeah yeah why
not so I'm just going to move on to Pope
Kevin the first next question
here I have a question yeah okay that's
good I'll just erase that part where he

says I have a question because we
already know that okay how would one
know that one is sodana or anagami or
sakagami because I know that one would
know if became fully arhant but other
states how
well I mean again I really do not
consider the four stages of sainthood or
arah Hood to be like authentic teachings
of the Buddha I think they were later
developments in buddh Buddhist
philosophy and so the answer is largely
academic you know so how many angels can
dance on the head of a pin kind of a
question um with regard to sodana
depending on how you're going to
interpret sodana like if sodana just

means you're a new convert to Buddhism
which I I think was probably the
original meaning you're a new convert
you know you've entered the stream of
Dharma or Dharma then I mean you'd know
that you a new convert you know I mean
there might be borderline cases where
you're not
sure but with regard to anagami or
sakagami and even with regard to sodon
is going with like traditional Orthodoxy
there are certain mental states that
that you leave behind When You Reach
certain stages so all of a sudden you
can't tell lie anymore no matter how how
how hard you

try well probably wouldn't you wouldn't
even want to try but I mean if all of a
sudden there's like this sudden like
radical change in your conduct in the
way you look at things and it seems to
to last then maybe you could infer then
you had a glimpse of nibana that would
be a good that would be a good
indication so I assume that there would
be ways of knowing although you're
you're better off not even thinking
about it I mean it's it's like something
The Diamond Cutter Sutra says you know
the
prita vadra cheda Sutra where it's
saying that a real ARA like a real soda
isn't going to be thinking I'm a soda

I'm an Arya because self viw is one of
the things first things they abandon you
know you're not going to be identifying
I am this I am that I am a soda or I am
trans ual you know I gay or something I
mean it's I am this I mean it's that's
one of the first things you
outgrow so I mean who cares I mean how
would you know I mean it's you you're
better off not knowing really in you
know in a sense I mean because if you
know that you're a soda in a way that
means you're not
one so it's like a cat it's like a catch
22 if become an anagami you're not going
to be thinking I'm an anagami it doesn't

work that

way so it's all just sort of this Indian

classification system that got applied

to to practitioners and I don't think

that it originates with the Buddha

himself and

uh yeah I do think a lot of people are

mistaken especially I mean so many

people I've met so many people who think

that they're a soda and

a lot of them just pretty obviously

weren't especially if you go with the

strict Orthodox definitions like a sod

cannot tell a lie so you got monks that

are you know they obviously think that

they're at least a soda but they're

giving like [__] confessions you

know yes sir very good sir I will
restrain myself in future when they know
full well they're not going to restrain
themselves in future or secretly
handling money I saw a few sodas at a
mahasi um in in
a meditation center in the mahasi
tradition in rangon that I mean they're
like secretly handling money you know
they're they're doing all this stuff
that's crooked from a Buddhist point of
view and you know they're making
confession for it without getting rid of
the money which is like renders the
confession all and void and so forth so
I think most people who think that they

are an Arya in the the Buddhist

spiritual sense probably are

mistaken yeah and anyone who's

considering himself to be a sakagami or

something I I just think that it's just

sort of like an academic thing it's kind

of a madeup term that doesn't

necessarily apply to

reality

so yeah it's I kind of disqualify the

question in a sense I'm just going to

move on to Pope Kevin the First's third

question which is do you H you have

degree in biology and I am alcoholic as

you know how to stop drinking do you

know any working methods

AA so I mean I've never been an

alcoholic I've never had to stop
drinking I've never been really addicted
to any substance in my life not tobacco
or or anything like that so I may not be
the best person to ask about this
although my father was an alcoholic he
was a hardcore alcoholic like Eastern
European type of alcoholic that's rare
in the west but common fairly common in
Eastern Europe like Russia presumably
Poland and Ukraine and so forth where he
would drink like a quart of vodka a day
and you never really saw him drunk and
you never really saw him sober he was
just kind of fueled on
it and you know he didn't really act

drunk or anything but if he had to go a
couple days without drinking anything
he'd start having the delirium tremens
you know like hallucinations and
everything I never saw him in that state
but I've heard about it he he's told me
about it
so in my father's
case um he went to a a treatment center
at first that help you know sober him up
and get him detoxed and everything and
then he started going to Alcoholics
Anonymous after that and he remained on
the wagon for the rest of his life but
the most important thing if you're going
to stop an addiction is you have to be
100% sure you want to stop the addiction

even when the itch starts coming back I
mean you have to like really make up you
have to have
a detana you have to have
determination and and just not even
fantasize about how nice it would be to
have a drink you know it's just
something like that starts to arise it's
like nope not appropriate and another
thing is that in order to eliminate some
intense mental issue like alcoholism
presumably is you have to replace it
with something of equal intensity so it
used to be said there was an old saying
in America that the only cure for
dipsomania is theomania dipsomania being

an oldfashioned word for alcoholism

theomania being you find

religion so yeah that was pretty much

the only way that worked back in like

the

1800s in in America anyway for an

alcoholic is he'd have to find Jesus and

then it would like like the mental

energy that went into the alcoholism

just got replaced by the mental energy

that that goes into the church and Jesus

and so

forth but you have to be you have to be

sure yet I mean you can't just be

halfway or even 90% because sooner or

later that 10% is going to gain the

Forefront and then you you'll start

drinking again and it's interesting that

uh

venerable Nana Vera an English monk who

lived in Sri Lanka or s laon in those

days back in the 50s and early 60s he in

his letters he writes about um like

addiction and what goes on in the mind

of an addict it's it's kind of

insightful if you have access to that

maybe you could you could read it I mean

it's it's probably on the internet the

the writings of nanov Vera the letters

of nanov Vera maybe do a search for

addict or something and it might come up

but um but he I mean he he agrees I mean

you you really have to be 100% if you

really want to break it because just
being pretty sure let's say you got this
this alcoholic person you know he loses
his job and he loses his wife and he
loses his family he loses his house he
loses his friends he loses his
reputation but I mean so long as there's
still some positivity you know he still
likes it then it's still it's it's not
going to work he's got to in his case
he's got to hit rock and bottom and lose
everything you lose his health
everything and then finally you know
it's he's just going to get beaten over
the head with a reality hard enough that
you know he's gonna make up his mind for
sure 100% you know I'm sticking with

this and then he's got a chance but if

if it's not 100% you know you're just

pretty sure you want to stop drinking or

some such then yeah it's it's going to

work for a little while up until the

urge gets intense enough that that it

just takes over again

but again I'm no expert on

like addiction management or anything

like that because I've never experienced

it myself although my my father did and

he was

successful he stopped drinking about the

same time that I started drinking like

when I was 16 years

old so I'm just going to move on to the

next question here this is from the

Proto sudo monk Alias Cool

Whip and as you may know he uh he

includes little titles to his questions

so the first title to his first question

is niana and Janna as the default

enlightened State and eating Cool Whip

so the question is if an arahan has no

identification with the five Aggregates

that which makes up the reality of

samsara is this being constantly in

nibana and because she is rid of the

hindrances is she constantly in Jan like

if an arant and an ordinary person both

both eat some Cool Whip mindfully

presumably they share the same

experience of Cool Whip taste

Consciousness isn't the arant unless the arant isn't there or her can Cool Whip taste Consciousness is simultaneously in Nana how does their Cool Whip taste Consciousness

differ okay this is really kind of a subtle question and and as a general rule I don't like work out how I'm going to answer these questions beforehand so I I've got to work it out now but um okay if an arhant has no identification with the five Aggregates is this being constantly in nibana I would say yes I mean if you're aware of like the absolute um all the time then you would be in Nana all the time although that is

not Orthodox terraa according to

Orthodox terraa you can experience

nibana for only a trillionth of an eye

blank and then you kind of go into a

coma after that and then very short coma

you know there's there's no tubes up the

nose or anything and then and then you

come back out of it again but it it

lasts just like this one moment and I

just don't think so I don't think that

Orthodox terraa really understands what

nibana

is and

so I do think that a fully enlightened

being if they are fully enlightened

they're always experiencing nibana and

that nibana and samsara like the mahayan

some mahayan say you know they just kind
of they're superimposed on each other
like samsara is just like this
virtual filter or something superimposed
upon a reality but nibana is
reality nibana is capital r reality and
if you're fully enlightened then you're
in reality all the time in my
opinion
so let's because she's rid of the
hindrances is she constantly in Janna
Janna is different though because I mean
in a sense it's beyond Janna Janna is
called like momentary Liberation or
temporary Liberation because you have
just stilled the mental processes in

Janna whereas if you're fully
enlightened that's you don't have to
steal the mental processes anymore
because um all right at first you
practice Janna to still the mental
processes so that you no longer identify
with the mental processes and then you
can have the insight into like the the
absolute that underlies all the all this
phenomenon like including the mental
processes
so jna is like a gimmick for calming the
waves of your mind so that you can see
the water as a water and stop being
distracted by the waves but then the
trick is when the waves come back to
keep seeing the water at as water

instead of being distracted by the waves
again and a fully enlightened being
would always be at the level of water as
water even though all the waves are
going on he's he's walking around
talking and making noise and so forth
still he's always at the level of the
essence of water rather than the forms
of the the waves at the
surface so the Jon itself I mean he
would be in better than Jonna because
the purpose of Jonna has already been
attained
so let's see here Mike an Aran and an
ordinary person both eat some Cool Whip
mindfully presumably they share the same

experience of Cool Whip taste Consciousness yeah it'd be essentially the same unless the Aran isn't there or there isn't there or their cool hoop taste Consciousness is simultaneously in nibana yeah it's it's like it's they're no longer identified with it you know they're seeing the essence of the Cool Whip taste Consciousness rather than the form of Cool Whip taste Consciousness so that would be the difference you know they're they're at the level of the fundamental Essence I mean assuming that you can even say that an Essence exists in Buddhism you know it's the essence is something that you can't talk about if you reify it it just becomes form and

it's not Essence anymore if you try to
perceive it it's not Essence anymore and
so Essence in Buddhism like the ultimate
Essence it's just neither exist nor
non-existent nor both nor neither it's
just off the scale and and you can't
deal with it not intellectually anyway
or
philosophically so yeah the difference
between the Cool Whip taste
consciousness of an enlightened being
and an unlighted being in my
opinion is that the enlightened being
would be experiencing the cool taste
Consciousness at the level of essence or
pure Consciousness and not at the level

of perception and distinguishing the
forms and so forth that might be going
on to some degree but they're not
identified with that either and they're
just it's like being mindful where um
like anger arises the ordinary person
just gets mad but the person who is very
mindful they just observe anger it's
just anger is arising it's not them it's
just this this energy State that's
arising and they just observe
that but it's really hard to talk about
this
in in the English language or any other
language because you can't discuss
what's off the scale using words because
words are by their very nature on the

scale and can only deal with what is on

the

scale

so I hope I answered that question I

tried to I kind of had an idea of of how

to answer it

anyway but uh it's time to move on to

the next question don't want to get hung

up on one question and just stall

out so Kip's next question or rather the

Proto sudo monks next question is going

against our nature and the highest good

that's the title and the question is why

is the state of non-attachment the

highest the renunciant Buddhist way is

missing out on life big time all of

life's Joys are forcefully willfully

taken away our most primal urge for

procreation having a family is

eradicated which is what makes life

meaningful and virtuous for most humans

in solitude what I thought were

biological pressures how nature

intended um I have found May in fact be

societal pressures conditioned

culturally through many sense

Impressions back in society these

longings arise

nonetheless before life was deeply un

satisfactory but fun interesting

exciting the renunciant life is

satisfactory but extremely uninteresting

and there's no question at all oh wait

it's the very first sentence why is the
state of non-attachment the highest well
it's pretty much in accordance with what
I was saying in the last confusing
difficult question to answer in that I
mean you're
beyond um anything to be attached to
because the stuff to get attached to is
just
surface forms you're not you're not at
the level of
essence and also um I mean full
Enlightenment according to the
testimonies I mean it's better than
orgasm it's it's better than any kind of
worldly pleasure because it contains

everything it's sort of like

God you know that's that's how the the

absolute is like identified by theistic

religions theistic spiritual systems

it's like um I mean it's you've got

Infinity you know if if you're at the

level of essence you're at the level of

the the pure you know luminous mind then

you've got all possibilities contained

within you all the pleasures you know

all the pains all everything but it's

all pretty much irrelevant because it's

it's only virtually or conditionally

real it's in accordance with dependent

core rising or just

Ando so all of life's Joys are

forcefully willfully taking away but

it's better than that I mean

Enlightenment is infinitely better than

that it's just that you have to go

through some Dark Night of the soul and

aridity and so forth to get to that

point so it's uh you know at first when

you're when you're only partway there it

can seem pretty awful but when you when

you attain the goal then it's it's well

worth it you know it's it's infinitely

better than

samsar

so our most Primal urge for procreation

is eradicated um yeah technically

although I mean all of that can still be

there it's just that you're not

identified with it anymore so you're
still going to be a human you're still
going to act like a human it's just that
you're not at that level anymore you're
not identified with that much less your
sexuality or whatever
so let's
see yeah a lot of biological pressures
are like socially
reinforced but uh I guess that's that he
asked that was the question right the
very top and the rest is just sort of
commentary so going against our nature
in the highest good or the highest goal
yeah our nature for the most part is uh
unless aside from like what the Mahayana
buddh is called Buddha nature but just

human nature yeah I mean it's just a

superficial matter of form and it's

uh um extremely limited whereas you know

the the boundless unmanifest you know

mind that shines

forth um yeah it contains all of that

and infinitely more than

that so yeah it's like going from two

dimensional to to threedimensional but

it's it's even beyond that because it's

just going from threedimensional to

infinite dimensional or some such or

just Dimensions just stop being a factor

just doesn't even matter

anymore let's see but at the surface it

still seems like it matters because at

the surface you still have a human body
and a human brain and so
forth all right so I guess that's I
guess that's the question so I'm just
going to move move on to uh Cool Whip or
this Proto pseudo monk third question
here which is poo bosa's main obstacle
to Enlightenment and
doubt and then he says Master poo given
your vast knowledge and wisdom were you
able to identify exactly what was your
greatest impediments for niana because
the teachings say if someone practices
diligently for seven years
wholeheartedly or even one week or even
one moment one can become enlightened
deterministically through cause and

effect I don't like the explanation of divine grace if the causes were put in I don't understand why you yourself aren't an arant if you have identified the main obstacle have you found the solution to overcome the
obstacle and then wait this might be another question here could you speak more about how doubting everything was hitting rock bottom this is a whole different question H still it adds up to well that's four
questions he he he uh slipped another another question at the end there okay see I got distracted by that let's see I don't like the explanation of divine

grace if the causes were put in I don't
understand why you yourself are an arant
if you have identified the main obstacle
have you found the solution to
overcoming that obstacle well I mean
it's hard to say exactly because
an unenlightened person is insane you
know pjo umaro the common person is
insane and it's the insane person is
trying to see his own true nature and
it's I mean it doesn't work that way if
you're delusional how are you going to
see what you need to
see
so um he does seem to have a kind of
misconception here he doesn't like
divine grace but then he says one can

become enlightened deterministically
through cause and effect but no it
doesn't work that way because
Enlightenment has no cause and has no
effect it's off the scale you cannot use
worldly causes to get to something
Beyond samsara you cannot use some saric
phenomena I mean it can happen sort of
but you can't just
deterministically use samsaric phenomena
to go beyond samsara
I mean it's it's it's off the
scale so there is still something sort
of like divine grace I mean it's it
wouldn't be called divine grace but I
mean you cannot force yourself to become

enlightened you cannot make yourself
enlightened the best you can do is just
be ready for it if it happens you know
it's like Krishna Mur used to say you
can open the window but you can't make
the wind blow in so that's the best you
can do you know you clean your room good
enough that you can even get to the
window then you open the window and then
you wait and maybe the window will blow
in and maybe it won't this
time
so if the causes were put in I don't
understand why you yourself are an arant
well it's like it's not a matter of
cause and effect really nibana is just
beyond cause and effect it's it's like a

a paradox you know in a way it's sort of

like God sort of or Dao or

Brahman whatever you know it's just the

ultimate

so oh there's one kind of a question

here about main obstacle

here if you were you able to identify

exactly what was your greatest

impediment for nibana um I actually went

to a a spirit medium in Burma I've

written about this I don't think it's

online anymore but uh

I I asked this Spirit medium who was

channeling she was channeling um some

kind of Arya Davis like his name was

Abaya kumara and he lived in tawa timsa

heaven or something and he was some kind
of Arya and so I was um I I tested this
Spirit medium to see if she really did
have any kind of psychic abilities and
she apparently didn't not in my case
maybe just my lack of faith just kind of
grounded her but anyway um I asked her
what was my greatest
impediment in life as a as a Buddhist
practitioner and then she said
doubt but um she had already failed my
test I just kind of asked because I was
planning on asking her that
anyway but
um yeah let's see that was one part of
the question here this is kind of tricky
this is one of the the tricky things

about long questions is there can be

like all these different sub questions

that are added

in say see so yeah I'm not exactly sure

what my greatest impediment has been

other than just being addicted to

thinking and I've been able to stop

thinking temporarily from time to time

during meditation but it comes back

again and it's it's like a an A nuia or

a latent tendency that I just really

like to

think so probably got something to do

with it and you have it's sort of like

curing yourself of thinking or curing

yourself of any kind of any kind of un

wholesome or unskillful or
counterproductive habit it's it's sort
of like curing yourself of alcoholism
where you got to be 100% you can't have
I mean you can be celibate but still be
like fantasizing about sex I mean it's
it's not going to get you there because
you haven't 100% aband man in Sex You
Know You're celibate you're physically
not doing it you're not reinforcing it
in that
sense but still there's that latent
tendency that you haven't completely
eradicated which reminds me of um Mary
Baker Eddie Reverend teacher Mary Baker
Eddie the founder of Christian Science
who said that it's easier to cure

somebody of cancer than to cure them of
a bad habit because as a general rule
they don't want the cancer
you know cancer is Icky they they clear
on that they don't want the cancer but
with regard to a bad habit you generally
enjoy your bad habits to some degree you
get some kind of satisfaction out of
getting high or exploding in anger or
you know cussing out people on the road
when you're driving that kind of thing
you know they don't hear you cussing but
still you do it just venting or whatever
I mean bad
habits you generally have some
satisfaction or pleasure from from these

bad habits and so you're not 100% in

wanting to get rid of

them like celibacy for me it just didn't

really work very well because there is

still this strong

urge that just didn't go away not

completely I mean it's certainly not as

strong as it used to be but that could

just be because I'm getting

old so I guess I answered most of this

question it's kind of a it's kind of a

diffused kind of question

here because and with with more than one

question mark I might add let's

see so identifi the main obstacle have

you found the solution to overcome that

obstacle

um well with regard to liking to think

yeah that's that's a tough one it really

is so so um the solution to overcome

that obstacle um is just completely be

100% And just flinging yourself totally

into you know practicing dhamma

intensively and become a

saint or at least uh I mean I mean there

has to be a certain amount of Wildey

fanaticism involved it seems

like

so yeah I'm uh this question is is

difficult to

answer and and to some degree it's like

you can't stop being

human I mean you're just stuck being

what you are and fighting against that
doesn't work very well see that's that's
part of the problem it's like I've made
some of the my best progress in dhama
like just after just kind of giving up
and realizing that I mean you're stuck
being who you are fighting against it
isn't going to work that you just have
to accept it and understand it and kind
of just rise above it without trying to
eradicate
it and uh whether that answered the
question or not I'm not sure but uh I'm
moving on to this subsequent sub
question from uh the Proto sudam mon
could you speak more about how doubting
everything was hitting rock bottom what

do you mean exactly by doubting

everything on the verge of a

transgressive fourth question yeah I

think you already got there it relates

because doubt across doubt arose due to

not making progress towards

Enlightenment

thanks um well I mean I can mention

there's a guy who calls himself Jed

McKenna claims himself to be fully

enlightened he just brags he just goes

on and on about how how enlightened he

is which of course is uh kind of a red

flag but um he was saying that his

method for becoming enlightened is just

write down on a piece of paper something

you cannot doubt and it's going to have
to keep getting modified because you'll
eventually I mean you're trying as hard
as you can to doubt it so that
eventually you'll be able to doubt one
you have to you have to modify it or
come up with something different and you
just keep doing that until finally you
just cannot come up with anything you
cannot doubt and in his case it just
kind of kicked him out of some soric
this addiction to perception addiction
to trying to to to reason and make sense
of
everything in my case it didn't it
didn't get me that far I was still a
junior monk at that time um but still

it's like we are living in a in in a
world of perception samsara is
perception the world is Will and
representation and so um like insisting
on everything making sense insisting on
like figuring everything out it's it's
it's just not going to work because this
stuff that you're figuring out is
samsaric and it has no underlying
Essence it has no underlying Ultimate
Reality other than just
formlessness
emptiness so it's sort of like going up
like Contour like maam where you just
destroy your beliefs just through
ruthless logic or whatever and then it

just kind of leaves emptiness behind
which is sort of like Jan it's this
silent that maybe just maybe that
liberating Insight will arise from
that so doubting everything was hitting
rock bottom because of essentially
invalidating the entire world I'm living
in you know you're just living in this I
mean it's like one of the the text of
the AA waga towards the end I think it's
the atad Su the ATA waga the Buddhist
talking about how just it was kind of a
kind of Despair that he had in samsar he
could couldn't see any kind of essence
abiding Essence in anything and it was
all just futile you know futility of
futilities all is futile and if you

examine samsara carefully enough you
just get to this point of just Bleak
despair because you find out that it
doesn't really have a leg to stand on it
just has this infinite number of wispy
little spider legs you know kind of
interlocking and holding the thing
together so to speak is as dependent
core rising or te us and we pot off but
the spider legs themselves are in turn
you know they're just conditional too
it's all just this
interlocking
conditionality that makes this material
world seem to be real but it really
can't stand up to intensive

scrutiny and then I mean when your whole

world is sort of collapsing you know

invalidated I mean if you've been

invested in it for a long time certainly

it can cause a certain amount of

depression or

despair but it may be necessary if

you're going to become

enlightened so I'm just going to move on

to the next question here this is from

Gaz and Gaz

says what can you tell us about the

realm of

ghosts which is kind of

interesting um I do get Ghost questions

every now and then I suppose and I've

talked about ghosts on other videos

before

um it's it's kind of I mean it's I could

talk for a long time about ghosts

especially like the from the Buddhist

point of view I mean the word for the

usual word for ghost is p which comes

from the word p which means father so

you know it's it's ancestors the ghosts

are deceased ancestors and the the realm

of hungry ghosts comes from the idea

that those are the ancestors that never

got food offerings like in Ancient India

a lot of places in the world like China

also I mean you had to make offerings to

your ancestors to keep them going

because if they didn't receive offerings

they would become poor and miserable you
know the Hungry
Ghost so that's kind of where the the
word came from but the realm of ghosts
in Buddhism it's really on a spectrum
with Gods you know the small G Gods you
know you start off now the highest ghost
is right up against the lowest
God so there's the the book of Ghost
Stories the P Wu in in the poly texts
that's uh you know it's they're like
Gods except for they had this one this
one transgression as a lay person you
know before they died that kept them
from becoming really you know ascending
up into heaven so that they would be
like bound to this earth living in a

Celestial Palace and so forth they live
like Gods you know they Liv for
thousands of years but you know they had
some fault you know they had really bad
breath or something or you know they had
to walk around naked all the time um as
a kind of karmic punishment for this one
thing that prevented them from really
becoming a like a small G
god um and they live
a you their realm is essentially you
know it's not geographically located
anywhere I mean is just anywhere really
there can be ghosts anywhere as it inter
rule they can't see us we can't see them
because we're just at like a different

frequency so to speak going with the
radio analogy you know like a radio
we've got all kinds of radio stations
just going I mean they're filling the
air right now and you've got a radio it
Tunes in on one of those and ignores all
the rest and that's kind of the way we
are you know we're aware of this one
bandwidth of reality or virtual reality
it but there's all these other
bandwidths just superimposed on us that
we are oblivious to because we're just
not tuned into that wavelength and the
ghosts are living at a different
wavelength than us so to
speak for the most part we can't see
them but you know a few Lial people or

like small children or so forth

something like that that I mean they

haven't you know they've got a fuzzier

receptivity on their radio they they're

more likely to be able to see them and

some ghosts for the most part ghosts

can't see us

either but it's it's just another realm

of virtual reality no more or less real

than this version of reality and there's

probably more than one I mean my father

did a lot of hypnotic regressions and I

mean he he has seen ghosts before or at

least he claimed to see ghosts and uh

you know he he'd hypnotize people and

they'd go into these Realms like astral

traveling and so forth and uh you know
he met with with dead people and led he
guided other people to meeting with dead
people and so forth and uh so I'm I'm a
little more open-minded on the subject
than most scientifically educated
westerners but um yeah it's it's
considered to be a subhuman level of
existence you know it's you're better
off being a human than a ghost but like
I said some of the ghosts or the petas
you know they're right up to the the
lower limits of being a small G God or a
daa so it's it's sort of a Continuum or
Spectrum in that
respect and uh let's see I've been going
at this for over two hours so I'm going

to just move on to the next question
because uh I could talk about ghosts
quite a lot I think so second gaz's
second question is are Western ideas of
ghosts compatible with the Buddhist view
well there's different I mean the main
Western idea of ghosts is that they just
[__] they don't exist at all
so that's not really compatible with the
Buddhist view um yeah I think there's
lots because because the belief in ghost
really isn't mainstream in Western
culture anymore that you've got all
kinds of different beliefs of people
about ghosts and I assume some of them
are fairly compatible in some respects

with the Buddhist view um but I think
all in all like the the early European
view of ghosts and the ancient Indian
view of ghosts I mean they may have
originally come from the same Proto
indoeuropean Source in some
respects but um the idea of ghost it's
sort of been um influenced by
Christianity and certainly not by
Buddhism so there's going to be
differences like in Buddhism a ghost
does have a physical body it's just that
it's of a you know a different kind of
matter you know it's more you know like
a different wavelength of matter or
whatever whereas in the west they're
considered to be just sort of um energy

like residual energy or some such like

uh some like

paraschos shows she loves watching go

shows at night and then she always falls

asleep or almost always falls asleep

within the first 20 minutes and then I

watch the rest of the ghost show because

she just

because and uh I mean some of these

parapsychologist guys were just just

ghost Specialists they will say that

sometimes what you consider to be a

ghost is really just a kind of residual

energy like you had a person with a

strong personality that kind of left a

kind of psychic imprint in a place so

that even though they're really not
there anymore you know they've moved on
to wherever it is they moved on to
there's still like this psychic imprint
that is still having like
reverberations you know later on as a
result of them having lived there so
that would be different from the
Buddhist idea of
ghosts um and then the whole idea of
hungry ghosts in the west is is pretty
alien it's it's more of an Indian
ancient Asian idea of the hungry ghosts
which itself evolved culturally from the
idea of ancestors that were not uh did
not receive offerings from their
descendants so yeah I'm not exactly sure

like what the ancient Roman belief about ghosts was so I can't really compare that but um yeah I mean there's some overlap but not not like perfect overlap at all so I'm just going to move on to gaz's next question here which is what are your opinions of Zoroastrianism and I really don't know that much about Zoroastrianism I Tried reading the Zen Vesta when I was in college you know it was in Max Muller's sacred books of the East series and so I was uh trying to read through that and it really did not make much of an impression on me at the time you know it just didn't sink in and integrate into

my memory very

well um yeah it's it's kind of

a obscure religious system there's a lot

of debate on exactly when it arose and

in exactly what kind of culture it

arose um it's it's relatively early

religious system that arose in I think

it was u baktria i mean it's it was

identified with Persia in ancient times

you know it was mostly Persian like the

zoroastrians who still exist or many of

them at least are called parses who fled

Persia when when it would turn Muslim

and and became like refugees on the the

west coast of India and Pari means

Persian they're Persians but even

nowadays Zoroastrianism has been

influenced a lot by monotheistic religions so their huram Mao or who whoever their their primary God is is is has become more of a just like the central God like a almost like a monotheistic God whereas earlier it was very dualistic you know you had the good God and the bad God and it was just like this eternal war between good and good and evil and I just cannot relate to dualism I just am not a dualist I'm more of a non-dist than a dualist and considering that you've got you know a real good God and a real bad God and the real bad god of the zoroastrian is eventually became evolved into Satan in

the west it wasn't until the Jews the
Hebrews had Babylonian captivity and
they were surrounded by zoroastrians
they came up with the idea of Satan you
know Satan is hardly mentioned at all in
the Old Testament I think there's only
three books of the Bible job or uh yeah
job of course and then there's just a
couple of Minor Prophets oh wait maybe
one minor prophet and then it was like
the book of Chronicles or something
there one brief mention of Satan I think
you know not like in Christianity where
you know everyone in their sisters like
possessed by Devils or
something
so I mean that's I really don't know a

whole heck of a lot about Zoro asinos

it's one of those religious systems that

I've never really studied intensively

and I've read about it and then you've

got like the complications of modern

Zoroastrianism is significantly

different from ancient Zoroastrianism

and then the roots of ancient

Zoroastrianism are still like clouded in

like mystery you know insufficient

data

so yeah although I mean zoroastrian in a

relatively pure form could qualify as a

genuinely Indo-European spiritual

system so there is that if anyone's

interested in purely Indo-European

spiritual ual

Traditions so I mean that's that's it I

mean I really don't know a whole heck of

a lot about

Zoroastrianism so that's it I'm going to

move on to the next question this is

from

fan I don't know if his name is Ian and

he's got F in front or or what it is but

his name is

fatian and he says what is the

evolutionary biological reason for the

capacity to meditate I assume it's an

Adaptive state in times of hardship to

conserve calories and stay hidden and

camouflaged but also be perfectly

focused to attack prey when it happens

past the meditator I guess by that
definition many spiders are awesome
meditators all that aids all that aids
the meditators chance chances of
personal and also genetic survival
excessive meditation when it moves
Beyond extreme mental Clarity is
probably very destructive of
Survival Let's see though it then turns
you into a weekly celibate human famous
meditators like the Buddha sort of cheat
as they achieve survival in the memory
of their adherence and history
thoughts well I did write an article I
think it's in my first book on studies
study or essays in terava Buddhism I

don't even remember the name of my own book I think it's essays in Terra Buddhism but I do have an article in there like discussing the probable origins of meditation and there's different possibilities like one is is like the first meditation was just staring into a campfire and that would have survival value in that it keeps you from wandering out into the dark and getting eaten by leopards or Wolves or something you know it's like it it sort of got turned into the mild trance state that people get when they watch TV you know you just kind of you know you just kind of go blank you know your eyes glaze over and you sit there staring at

the screen and I assume that is just
sort of uh a latent stare into the
campfire Instinct in humans that could
be but it's not a very deep kind of
meditation it just you just kind of
space out into a kind of Trance staring
at the fire so um I read I think it Gary
Snider one of the founders of the Beat
Movement back in the 50s who had this
theory that I think it's a good theory
and it kind of touches on what fan is
talking about here in that
early hunters like Stone Age Hunters
believed and and my father also believed
this that when you hunt animals can read
minds to some degree animals have a

certain amount of of telepathy or empathy and so my father used to say that like when he was moose hunting in Alaska sneaking up on a moose is damn near impossible you know the Moose always get spooked it's always wary and it takes off running but if you sneak up on a tree next to that moose it's as EAS easy as shooting cows so my father would say that based on his own experience in moose hunting which he had a considerable amount of of experience in in big game hunting in Alaska in general and so this belief that when you're hunting the the animal can hear your thoughts so you have to be thoughtless you sit there in Ambush with

your your spear or whatever and you try
not to think and you're like in a
heightened state of awareness you're not
zoning out in a trance until the animal
goes by and then then you pounce or
whatever it is that you do you hurl the
spear so that is that's another
possibility of the origins of meditation
in human the Evol The evolutionary
biological reason for the capacity to
meditate may have come from like Stone
Age Hunting
magic so that's that's possible too
or um aside from with regard to like
evolutionary Advance or like like
survival value and the ability to to

meditate um I don't really think that
conserving calories would be a main
purpose of it I mean you can just sleep
just lie around that that would conserve
calories too so I don't think that the
original purpose of meditation was to
conserve calories but the the staying
hidden in camouflage from prey animals
that may read your mind that that could
be a way of developing I me essentially
it'd be like um Janna I mean you
wouldn't be thinking anymore if you were
doing it well you know what what the
Christian Mystics call High
contemplation so that's possible or it
could just be just sort of a a quirk you
know it's like uh Shaman's taking drugs

and then they get a certain amount of
power from their visions and so forth
and then they might start cultivating
this power without the chemicals know
for some reason just getting like like
the the Eskimo Shaman you know just
rubbing the rock out in the wilderness
until until he has some sort of
breakthrough that that kind of thing is
uh it could have survival value and that
you know the the shamans are useful to
the tribe and a tribe with good shamans
that can develop good meditative States
May and may give the tribe a certain
survival value may make them compete
with other tribes more efficiently or

some

such so that's uh that's my my uh

penni's worth of ideas on The

evolutionary biological reason for the

capacity to meditate and I do think the

Gary Snider's theory about the the

hunting magic might might be it although

to some degree just like going into a

mild trance when you're staring into a

fire would have some kind of survival

value I

assume so I'm just going to move on to

the next question here this is from a

vity and avenity says what would you say

to a girl whose fiance has just found

out that there's a terraa monastery in

Slovenia and he would like to go there

sometime in the unspecified future for
an unspecified period of time and that
there's a teeny tiny chance that he may
not want to come back asking for a
friend yeah that's that's it is kind of
a sticky issue and it's it's an issue
that caused me when I was fully
intending to become a monk like in my
20s to be very cautious about my
dealings with women because I didn't
want to break anybody's heart I mean
you're going to have a relationship with
someone that you genuinely
love then I mean you don't want to break
their heart by saying well I'm gonna go
off and renounce the world now you know

so I mean it was kind of a
responsibility on my part that you love
somebody you try and do right by them so
it caused me to have relatively few
girlfriends at least that was one reason
why I had relatively few girlfriends
when I was younger is once I'd made up
my mind that I was in all probability
going to renounce the world someday it's
like I mean why would you want to have a
relationship with a woman that you would
not have any potential even of marrying
you know it's like just picking up loose
women in bars and stuff was something
that I never
did and um you know I just was never
like a pickup artist anything like that

it it it just struck me as I mean just
irresponsible and to some degree
dishonest because a certain amount of
insincerity is generally involved in in
the pickup art and I just I just didn't
function that
way but uh with regard to avenity and
her
friend who uh may want to go off and
become a monk I mean it's pretty common
in Burma that and and the women in Burma
they're also Buddhists so they can't
really deny that you know it would be
like a noble exalted thing but still you
know deep in their heart you know they
they love the man and they want to want

them to stick around and they can be

married and have kids and all that

um so I mean if it really is a teeny

tiny chance then if you love him

sincerely

then you might be willing to take teeny

tiny chances that you know you're going

to lose him someday I mean everyone's

taking teeny tiny chances I mean every

time I get in my car to go to work you

know there's a teeny tiny chance that

I'm GNA wipe out on Interstate

85 and just not come home you know

there's always these teeny tiny chances

that you know it's it's just gonna

something's going to come to an

end so it may be that it's necess Neary

for him to to go to the monastery and
visit it and see what it's like and um
maybe worth the teeny tiny chance that
he may want to stay there but I mean
it's a huge chance that the relationship
ends if you just find that intolerable
and and dump him because of it so that's
like a 100% chance of failure I mean the
only 100% chance of failure is just to
give
up
so yeah I mean my heart goes out to you
because it is kind of a a delicate
situation and I mean it is like a noble
thing to want to renounce the world and
become a Buddhist

monk but at the same time I

mean like I broke my my mother's heart

really when I became a monk because she

just didn't understand at all she did

not have a religious or philosophical

bone in her body she just wanted

grandkids to spoil and I kind of spoiled

that by just not only becoming a monk

but then going off to Burma with almost

no communication you know just I mean

letters sometimes would take over a year

to get from from one place to the other

just because the the postal service was

so horrible and so

forth

so yeah just uh let him know that you

love him and you support him and

uh and willing to take the chance I

suppose I mean that would be the best

case scenario I think trying to talk him

out of it I mean you could do that but

then it might always leave like this

kind of regret or something in his mind

like a blown opportunity or or something

like that just

uh you know just trust that the best

will happen you know that it'll all work

out the way it's supposed to work out I

guess I mean in a situation like this

it's uh it is kind of a a sensitive

delicate kind of a

situation and I tried to avoid that

myself by uh not really getting

committed I mean certainly with with if you're fiance I mean if you're already engaged then back in the old days I mean he could be be sued for breach of breach of promise or something although I don't think it really works that way anymore but I mean he has uh committed himself to a a promise I guess so you might gently remind him of that every once in while but um yeah I do hope that uh whatever happens between you is is for the best that it's really what what should happen and so I'm just going to move on to the next question here this is from

oalt and oal says is there a difference between Dharma and Duty for example if

you are married you have duty to protect your wife is it also your Dharma to protect your wife well to some degree it is and I mean in Hinduism especially that Dharma and Duty are I mean a lot more overlap than in Buddhism like in the Bava Gita it's it's your duty as a soldier to kill possibly even your own cousins and in a sense it's also your Dharma if I mean if you're a soldier it is your Dharma to fight to do your duty it's not nearly so much that way in Buddhism because Buddhism is a less social system it's it's based on renunciation or originally was based on renunciation of society and family and

all

that

so

um if you're married in according to

terraa Buddhism then you're in a

situation where occasionally you're just

going to have to go against Dharma like

no

killing um I mean to kill an ant is is

wrong regardless of you know whether the

an is crawling on your baby or not so I

mean it's just

Buddhism it it acknowledges more than

any other religion except for maybe jism

I think that if you're just living a

worldly life you cannot be really a

saint you cannot have pure morals you're

going to have to do stuff that's
unethical or immoral sometimes and that
would include um you know like somebody
is abusing your wife that you step in
and defend it defend your wife I mean
you might even have to shoot an intruder
coming into your house you got somebody
with a gun sneaking around in your house
in the dark then I mean you shoot him
before he shoots any member of your
family but that is not good dhama that
is why monks don't have families monks
just rounce the world and go off and
live under a
tree because I mean if you have a family
it's your duty to defend that family

and defending that family may may result in causing harm to living beings even though they might be parasitic animals or or criminal humans or something still you're better off from the Buddhist point of view just avoiding the whole situation and just renouncing the world because if you're a lay person you're going to be doing things that are immoral from time to time even for a married man and wife to have sex from a Buddhist point of view has a certain amount of immorality or unskillful Karma involved because you know it's partly motivated by lust and attachment and so forth so I mean it is your Dharma to protect your wife up to a

point and I guess you could say from the
Indian Point of View it's still your
Dharma to protect your wife even if
you're going against Buddhist ethics in
a
sense but
um yeah there is there's definitely a
duty in in that Dharma from the Buddhist
from the Terra Buddhist point of view I
mean you try to avoid any unskillful
actions whereas your duty may require
you to do unskillful actions let's say
you're a soldier it's your duty to to
shoot people if that you are ordered to
do so so that's not good Dharma but I
mean from from a worldly point of view

it's your duty so I guess your spiritual
Duty would be Dharma but your spiritual
duty is is like internal and subjective
and doesn't really deal with um you know
doing things externally so
much
so yeah getting married to begin with is
from the Orthodox Terra point of view is
not the highest Dharma that I mean if
you really want to follow Dharma
perfectly you got to renounce the world
and renounce Family Ties and society and
all that
so it's just being a lay person and I've
I've was chewing on this quite a lot
after I I stopped being a monk that
being a lay person like a good Buddhist

lay person involves a certain amount of stoicism a certain amount of mental toughness and that you realize that you're not going to be doing good I mean you're not going to be doing the perfect thing all the time you're going to have to be doing unskillful action sometimes and so you have to accept full respon responsibility for the [__] that comes back at you in the form of karmic retribution that you have to be tough in a certain way just to be able to accept that there's going to be karmic retribution for some of the stuff that you do and you're just going to have to face it and you've got nobody to

complain to nobody to blame but yourself

so you just accept it with as much

equinity as much stoic equinity as you

can

muster and I'm just going to move on to

oil all

next question and his second question

and his last question and the last

question because this is the last

question

and the question is as

follows how would killing to protect a

loved one work killing is against

precepts however if you are mindful you

are killing to protect others or for

self-defense how does that affect the

karma well it does mitigate it to some

degree and I mean on the Discord server there was a like a raging debate like a week or so ago on whether vegetarianism is bad or not and Orthodox terraa I mean the Buddha obviously allowed monks to eat meat um regardless of what Mahayana Buddhists want to believe about the situation it's right there in the texts so you have to bear in mind that whether something is good or bad is purely immediate and subjective Buddhist ethics are immediate and subjective so if you can do anything without any kind of like UNH wholesome mental States the action itself is is just morally neutral and the dogs are acting up here you guys

cool it calm

down yeah you too you got to calm down

too okay

then so where was I

so outward actions are essentially

morally neutral what really is moral is

the mental States involved so if you can

do anything with completely neutral

mental states you have performed a

neutral act ethically but the thing is

certain acts are very difficult if not

impossible to perform in a neutral

manner like killing another human being

like deliberately pointing a gun at

somebody's head and pulling the trigger

um I mean it would be virtually

impossible to do that with in with pure

equinity because I mean there's a
certain amount of subconscious
connection between humans and you know
it's it's it's
complicated so how would killing to
protect a loved one work I mean you'd be
doing it largely motivated by Compassion
or love for your loved one that you are
protecting so I mean that that would not
be unskillful Karma or Bad Karma but
still knowingly and willingly
terminating another human being or just
shooting them in the leg or something
just shooting them in the in the Torso
to stop them to eliminate the threat so
to

speak um yeah it's I mean sometimes
that's the best the best you can do you
know sort of like the Samurai warrior
ethic of Bushido it's like and when you
kill I mean you do it purely has a sense
of Duty and honor you know you're not
doing it out of hatred anything like
that you know I've told the the story
before of the the the samurai who his
his master his Sensei was a swordmaster
and so all these young Samurai are like
challenging him to duels because they
want to make a big name for themselves
they're the they're the ones who
defeated the great Samurai swordmaster
you know all of a sudden you know
they're going to be the great samurai

sword master so finally some young Samurai kills this Samurai's Master his Sensei so he is Duty bound to go and challenge this young Samurai who killed his master to a duel and to kill him I mean it's just the way of Japanese Samurai so he finally he he he hunts him down and finds him and they're they're finding the duel and the the samurai whose Master had been killed is winning the fight and he's getting ready to just deliver the Fatal thrust and the the other Samurai is on his back he just spits into his face in defiance and then the the samurai who's winning I mean he just he just gets enraged by this and

then he's really gonna kill him and then

he realizes hey stop

it then he realizes that he's no longer

motivated by Honor and Duty he's he's

just acting out in anger and so the only

thing for him to do in a case like that

is he just slowly stands up sheads his

sword spares the guy and walks away

because he couldn't kill him with a mind

of relative

equinity and I hope I didn't yell too

loudly into the microphone when I was

trying to get the dogs to stop playing

right next to my

chair so ultimately outward actions are

neutral and it's your motives that are

going to determine like your your

chayana is going to determine you know the the ethical value of the action that all this utilitarian Western ethics that are applied to this and that it's it's alien to the original Buddhist way of thinking which is that ethics are immediate and subjective they are dealing with your mental States not with any kind of indirect consequences you know any ramifications out there you know that you may not even be aware of I mean that's it just doesn't apply here so killing to protect a loved one I mean the more you are motivated by Love and Desire to protect this person the less you're motivated by anger and hatred

towards the other person then the less
bad it's going to be but almost
certainly there's going to be some
Badness involved because you are still
knowingly you know shooting an intruder
in your house for
example but when you're living in the
world sometimes you got to take the hit
sometimes you just got to do things that
are from a saintly Terra Buddhist point
of view
unethical it's just it just comes with
the package you know you get a woman and
a family you don't just have a woman and
family you've got all these
responsibilities and duties some of
which may not fit in with you know the a

the ancient saintly ethic of being a

North Indian Terra Buddhist

renunciate so again a certain amount of

stoicism certain amount of the the

samurai ethic is is pretty much

necessary for any man who has a family

that he needs to protect because any man

that won't even protect his own family

for fear of harming a criminal or

something is is hardly worthy of the

name

man and that's it I'm I'm done I'm done

talking

almost and so you know the drill if you

have any questions about something you

think I can answer maybe then just

include them underneath the comments or
includ to in the comments under the
video um if you have access to the
Discord server you can ask them there if
you have access to the Subscribe Star
channel you can ask them there and
uh I don't think that I'm I think I'm
still forbidden to post URL links so if
you want to see URL links and you can
see them on the bitshoot version of this
video or the rumble version of this
video or in YouTube videos of mine that
are more than a few months old because
I'm still being punished for talking
about the wrong subject on a video and
that's it so in conclusion I will just
say be happy

okay I think we're on the

air hello and welcome to episode 90 of

question and answer I am your host as

usual poo

basa and it just is stunning to me I

mean not looks stunned but I'm stunned

at the thought that I have done 90 of

these or soon we'll have done 90 of

these because I mean you you average

like let's say 20 or 30 questions per

Q&A which is gradually increasing over

the course of 90 q&as that's that's up

like a gajillion questions that I have

attempted to

answer ah and I got my hot coffee here

and as the emergency backup lukewarm Red

Bull you don't want it too cold because
that might inhibit the chemical
reactivity of
it and I would like to say before I
start answering questions that I think
every once in a while I skip a question
I'm pretty sure every once in a while
I'll skip a question either because the
question just disappears off of YouTube
or the person asks the question in an
unusual place like under a non Q&A video
and it just you know it just gets lost
or sometimes it'll I'll even have it
written down on the list and I'll just
scroll right past it you know I'll just
think that I've already answer that one
CU it's about the same thickness of text

as the previous one or something and I
and I and I don't don't answer it and so
anyone who doesn't get their questions
answered you ask a question and I don't
answer it then I do apologize I do try
to answer every question aside from
obvious like smart aliy joke questions
that are really not asked in good faith
or I mean maybe it's good faith to make
smart Aly jokes sometimes but
still so if you do ask a question I
don't answer it's not because I found
your question unworthy necessarily it
may be that it just fell through the
crack somehow so if you really want to
know the answer you may want to remind

me that I didn't answer the question and
it may encourage me to try harder in
future and so with that is a kind of
Preamble I'm going to commence answering
questions because we got lots of
questions we've got about 50 questions
this time and so this may be a long one
some people will sit through five hours
of Joe Rogan so there there are weird
people out there that'll sit through a
three-hour Q&A
video but uh this one could be a long
one and so I'm just going to have to
just Dive Right In and start answering
questions and the first one is from
Austin
and I think this might be an old

question which is why it's the first one

it might be one that I skipped last time

because I didn't see it or something

anyways Austin says how do Buddhists

approach the is a

problem I ought to do something moral

because it's what brings me to a better

rebirth for

example well the is Art

problem I mean you start um for those of

you who are not familiar with like

ethical philosophy and so forth the isot

problem is and you're dealing with the

real versus the

ideal and if you you've read a lot of

Krishna murty you know that Krishna

murty just kind of like has no use at
all for the ideal he just wants to deal
with the real and
Buddhism gets to that point but at first
you mean when you're a beginner you've
got this ideal that you're striving
towards you know because your reality
you're not
very let's see how do you say it you're
not very good at being in the present
moment yet and so you're always kind of
dealing with these nonpresent moment
issues you know kind of ideals or
something and so I mean as a beginner
then you strive for an ideal but the
more advanced you get the more Krishna
meran you become whereas the real is

really what what is essential the ideal
is in a way it's pitting you against
reality CU you've got this ideal that
you consider to be better than or more
important than the present moment you're
not being in the present moment you're
striving for this other thing it might
be totally unrealistic and you're
essentially struggling against yourself
or struggling against the way things are
which ultimately is counterproductive it
may be necessary at
first but as you get more and more
advanced then you're just going to
accept reality as it is more and
more

so I sit my coffee which is already

cooling

off and uh I think I answered that

question maybe uh too briefly sometimes

I get like feelings of insecurity that I

answered the question too quickly like I

didn't really answer it sort of like if

you're you're the first person to hand

in the test at school you know it's it's

insecurity there but I think I answered

it the is a

problem yeah so I'm just going to move

on to the next question this is from

mooners and mooners

says if it is completely within one's

own ability to find happiness and reach

equinity what is the value of sending

meta towards other living beings that
are in a deep state of suffering of
other than for our own benefit or
perhaps for them to become Buddhists
which would please
us well ultimately it is true that
ethics is subjective so anything that is
conducive to your own ultimate happiness
and Welfare is
ethical which doesn't mean that becoming
like a a heroin addict is good because
that results in craving and attachment
and misery and withdrawal and so forth
so let's see I'm I'm already forgotten
what the question is here what is the
value of sending meta towards other

living beings for one thing it it helps
to open your heart it helps to expand
your Consciousness to some
degree um but then again that is uh
other than for our own
benefit so I mean some people really do
have a lot of
compassion or a lot of empathy and
so they want others to be happy because
it's sort of an us mentality rather than
just a me versus you know everyone else
kind of mentality you know it's it's
sort of an us feeling but even then
they're doing it because it makes them
happy and really um I think Freud and
his Pleasure Principle was was on to
something and I really do think that

really that's like the

main possibly

the only or almost the only motivation

is for greater happiness for ourselves

and even if you're you're somebody like

Mahatma Gandhi who's just being an

aesthetic and striving to serve others

you're doing that because that's what

makes you

happy you know it's like Mahatma Gandhi

had such high ideals and everything that

I mean he if he didn't do all this stuff

that he was doing he couldn't look at

himself in the mirror he'd be just

ashamed of

himself so I mean there is some truth to

that that I mean you're doing everything
you do because it makes you happy to do
it or at least you think it's going to
make you happy to do it it's going to
give you some satisfaction
anyway but still by helping others you
help yourself and by helping yourself
you help others so I
mean it's helping yourself and helping
others or making yourself happy I mean
really happy not just like having a good
time or just you know momentary
Pleasures or something but striving for
your own
longterm happiness in a wise way is
conducive to the happiness of
others and striving for other people's

happiness is conducive to your own
happiness I mean there's a connection
there so even though you might
be striving for your own benefit it
still benefits others which is a plus I
mean it's an extra added
bonus but I'm not sure if I answer this
question so let's see if it is
completely within one's own ability to
find happiness and reach equinity what
is the value of sending meta towards
other living beings that are in a deep
state of suffering other than for one's
own benefit or perhaps for them to
become Buddhists which would please us
um yeah I mean it isn't really necessary

you could become fully enlightened just
by becoming just hermit and avoiding
other human beings you might still be
sending meta to the birds and the Ants
and you know the lizards and all
that but um yeah I mean it isn't
mandatory to become enlightened for you
to be practicing meta meditation for
example but if you are good at sending
meta I mean other people will feel it
there is there is like a a telepathic
connection between living between
conscious beings
and so yeah it's like uh think globally
and act locally kind of a thing in a
sense in a meditative
sense so what is the value of increasing

General happiness you know it's like how

do you answer that question is the

happiness is is really what you're going

for I mean that's like the the that's

the the gold of you know

psychological money

happiness it's what everyone is striving

for I think except for maybe a few

people Way Out On The Fringe

somewhere

so yeah I think I answer that question

although it's it's kind of a strange

question you know what is the what is

the point of sending meta you know it's

just it's a good thing to do I mean

that's that in and of itself people

could send meta just because they've got feel a sense of Duty to do what is good or right or something and they think sending meta cultivating loving kindness or friendliness or love towards other beings increasing the amount of love in the world and all that is just a kind of sacred
duty but even then they want to do the sacred Duty because it brings them happiness or satisfaction to try to do their sacred Duty so there's I don't think there's any real escape from something along the lines of Freud's Pleasure Principle or was it even Freud wasn't there somebody else no I think it was Freud yeah okay but it doesn't even

matter because I'm just going to move on
to the next question here this is from
Arin and Arin
says why is it that so many Western
monks seem to be highly intelligent
highly intelligent with like genius IQ
levels I've heard you speak of some
Asian monks who are great Scholars and
have even memorized by heart the entire
toptica is it more common for Western
monks to be highly intellectual and are
there many monks in the S who are of a
more average or below average
intelligence level what role do the less
intelligent Western monks play so I
guess that's more than one question

isn't it there's like a total of three
question marks here so I got to separate
this okay why is it that so many Western
monks seem to be highly intelligent with
like genius IQ levels partly it's
because um first of all Buddhism
especially terraa Buddhism is very
intellectual it's a very head oriented
spiritual system and it really appeals
to intellectual people um like
especially like
Engineers some Engineers really like
terraa Buddhism because it's so
systematic and organized in its
philosophy and it makes good sense at
least to them most of the time so long
as they're staying away from like the

the talking animal stories and so
forth so that's one reason
is especially Western monks they they
have to be sort of they have to like
rise above their cultural conditioning
also so I mean it takes usually it takes
a certain amount of intelligence or just
nuttiness to detach from your cultural
conditioning and then I mean there's
quite a few nutty monks too but even the
Nutty ones are relatively intelligent as
a general
rule so partly I mean you have to rise
above your own cultural conditioning
which generally favors intelligence and
also Terra Buddhism is really a kind of

intellectual head oriented spiritual

system

and so I think those two help to account

for why so many Western monks are

intelligent and the dogs are starting to

get up back there don't be getting

up

yeah so what what did I just say come on

you guys stop

it okay so yeah I mean there are a lot

of Asian monks who are really

intelligent too I mean I've mentioned

Burmese Scholars who are just phenomenal

like some people might think I know the

poly Tex fairly well but compared to

like a burmes scholar seat you know I'm

just a rank amateur because they can I

mean you can just quote some little
quote of poly they'll say ah yes and
they'll name the they'll name the sua
and then they'll like start just
reciting the rest of it for you you know
they just know it forwards and backwards
it's just amazing I went to a Meditation
Retreat
and uh unfortunately I think I think the
Seattle's name was pami or
pami P Swami in Sanskrit and he was
giving these long lectures you know he'd
give a dama talk every night with lots
of quotes from the poly and so forth and
he'd be looking down at something on his
he had like this little lecturn in front

of him and I just naturally assumed that he was reading some of this stuff you know off notes or something thing and then one time when nobody was around it was like walking meditation time or something I went up to the Lecter and all there was on the lecturn and he wasn't bringing paper with him this is what he was looking at all the time was just a picture of a bird it was like some kind of seabird flying over water and so it was all just in his head you know he's just just coming up with all these quotes and everything just from memory so there is a lot of emphasis on scholarship part yti as it's called in ply um so I mean it does attract

intellectuals even in terraa Buddhist
countries um you know there's like the
in Burma they got like the national Abid
dama tests and you know they give out
like ecclesiastical titles and there's
Buddhist universities everywhere
although there
are average intelligence Asian monks and
below average intelligence Asian monks
although if the intelligence level gets
too low then they may just be stuck
being like U an adult novice their
entire lives like at at one Monastery
where I lived in Burma there was a a
novice who was above 20 years
old and I just kind of wondered I mean

why isn't he ordained as a monk and then

it was explained to me that he was kind

of simple

minded they figured there's no way he

would be able to remember like the vinea

rules and that sort of thing like any

monk before he can be an independent

monk you know independent of a teacher

he's got to be he has to memorize by

heart the entire ptim

Moka technically he's supposed to

memorize the Monk's ptim Moka and the

nuns ptim Moka although memorizing the

nuns ptim Moka in Burma is pretty

rare because in Burma it is the official

position that the bikuni order of terab

Buddhist nons has been extinct for

centuries

so in Burma probably most Asian you know

most Burmese monks have about average

intelligence and

so the the second question that Arin

asks here with I guess it's the third

question question mark what role did the

less intelligent Western monks play well

I guess I was I was sort of warming up

to answer a question she didn't ask

which is what role do the less

intelligent Asian monks play and I mean

they're just the rank and file of the S

you know they just go about their duties

you know they meditate as well as they

can and you know sweep and you know

whatever it is that that monks are supposed to do they don't really become teachers much because they're just not qualified for that but still I mean they can train I mean there there are um unintelligent monks in in the Polytech or at least in the commentaries that you know kind of said an example like the dard I mentioned him a few q&as ago who became an arhun even though he was very simple-minded so anyways AR's second question

here um is what role do the less intelligent Western monks play and it is true I really haven't met very many really unintelligent Western monks I met one and I'm not going to name any names

but this this month

he would give long doat talks that were

just rambling all over the place and

just coming up with all kinds of weird

stuff and more than once I'd sat through

a few of his domats and more than once

he would bring up the first verse of the

DAP says the mind is like the ocean and

it doesn't say that at all you know it's

just that he was he lacked the

intelligence to get it straight sort of

like a a president that we could think

think of in recent recent history very

recent

history so but the thing is most of the

western dhama students who were

listening to his talks were more
ignorant than he was with regard to dama
and so they thought it was great most of
them or I think some of them who are a
little more
educated they kind of got a little bit
of satisfaction from the idea that this
this person is an ordained Monk and
called o John and everything but still
he doesn't know very much so in a way it
kind of made being a lay Buddhist look a
little more you know justifiable or
something but uh less intelligent
Western monks I mean they just practice
you know I that's that's what they do
they just are a lower profile they don't
they're not as likely to become teachers

because they're just not as good at

it and I'm waving my hands around a lot

in this video so

bear with me if you're just listening

just I mean if you listen very carefully

you might hear like the the swishing

sound of my hands moving through the air

I hope it it's not too distracting for

you so I think I've answered this

question uh let's see why

are so many Western monks intelligent

yeah I answered that part and

uh okay yeah I answered that so I guess

I'm going to move on to the next

question and we got lots of questions so

I really should not be digressing too

much in this because I don't want to be
talking continuously for the next four
hours so the next question is from
nature cure and nature cure says would
holy or enlightened people have a wife
in your personal
opinion
well I can give you two answers one is
the official Orthodox answer which is a
fully enlightened being would not be
married or at least would not be
cohabitating with a woman and sleeping
with
her but uh I mean he I mean the Buddha
Technic was married I don't know if he
got divorced before he renounced the
world I mean technically yod may still

have been his wife you know so I mean he
had a wife the Buddha himself had a wife
but she wasn't living in in the house or
the palace with his wife and sleeping in
the same bed with her and so forth so on
Etc
so um yeah from the Orthodox point of
view if you're going to be fully
enlightened you got to be a renuncian
you got to be like a a saintly Sage who
has renounced the
world but um my own personal opinion I
do think it is possible for a fully
enlightened person to have a spouse I
mean one that they're actually like
still in a relationship

with so I mean there are some examples I

guess eart toa's married um narad

Maharaj was married although I was never

really completely impressed by the

teachings of nisarat

Maharaj um let's

see I think there's a few other examples

I could think of right now if uh

I wasn't having some kind of mental

block or

something like Krishna mury I mean he

wasn't married but he was messing around

with his secretary's

wife um Paul low who's one of my

favorite dhama teachers who is still

alive today as far as I know he's

probably up around 90 now but I think

he's still alive that I mean he was very

sexually active uh in his younger

days so I mean

I don't think that it's necessary that

you have to be like a saintly Forest

dwelling sage

renunciant in order to become in order

to be fully enlightened and that even

after you are fully enlightened you may

continue you know going about your life

um only slightly differently than

before

so in my personal opinion I mean

certainly not all holy or enlightened

people will have a wife or a

spouse but uh I think that it is

possible for some of them to just again
assuming that being fully enlightened
even means anything within a samsaric
context so I guess that's maybe why he
throw in threw in the word holy holy or
Enlighten
people but whether you're holy or not is
kind of a it's kind of a value judgment
you know I don't think there any like
empirical test you could take to
determine whether you're holy or not you
know I don't think you I mean peeing
into a cup or something and having it
analyzed it's not going to be able to
tell you whether or not you're holy or
you know taking some kind of like
psychological test or something even the

psychological test is probably not going
to be definitive partly because it's not
holy people that come up with these
tests as a general
rule so
so would holy or enlightened people have
a wife in my personal opinion I think it
is theoretically possible and I assume
it has happened here's here's another
example in one of the upanishads one of
the most famous scenes in one of the
most well-known you know important
upanishads I don't even remember which
one it is I think it might be the
chandogya upanishad I'm not sure though
is a Brahman teaching his favorite wife

about Brahma

and the Atman you know Dharma in

general so I do think it is

possible but it may be that your chances

of becoming enlightened are higher if

you're single you're you're just

detached and you may actually have to

renounce the world and go off into a

Wilderness just to help break your

attachments and reduce distractions and

simplify and slow down your life so that

you can get there but some people might

be so ripe or have spiritual talent

sufficiently that they can be in the

middle of a

relationship and just something happens

you know they have the liberating

Insight you know that I mean something
in their life triggers liberating
Insight maybe even a near-death
experience or something and uh they just
stay married
afterwards I do think that that is
possible although that would be heresy
from the Orthodox terraa point of
view even if you're just an anagami and
not fully enlightened you're still going
to be celibate you know like anat
tapinda in the in the sutas he
supposedly was an anagami and he was
married but according to the
commentaries at least he was celibate
so uh he wasn't uh messing around with

his own wife

but I mean you think that maybe if

you're married and you're enlightened

you might do it just out of a sense of

Duty you know you gota you got to hold

up your end of the the relationship or

something but anyways I'm just going to

move on to Nature Cure's next question

and I hope I've answered at least one

question sufficiently thus

far because sometimes I can't really

tell how well I've answered a question

so anyway nature Cure's next question is

Dolly Lama has gold watch collection

$150 million net worth private military

for protection and history of annual

paycheck of

$180,000 from the CIA Etc as a fact it

doesn't seem like Buddhist monk or

enlightened people's lifestyle who is

DAL

Lama well technically the Dal Lama was

like the the Theocratic ruler of bet up

until the Chinese invaded back around

what was it

1948 so he would be technically a kind

of Tibetan monk although the Tibetans um

they don't have the pure

pristine you know rigorous vinea like

monastic discipline that you know the

earlier Buddhism had there are some

schools of Tibetan Buddhism that do

still follow

vinia but um

I don't think the Dal Lama is strictly

following any rules of monastic

discipline other than just like the

traditional ones that you know you're

supposed to supposed to follow like you

know what clothes he wears and so

forth so let's see

here yeah so Ian in a way he's like the

king of Tibet in Exile but I mean he was

a kind of Monk he still is a kind of

Monk

so um you know I mean there's no telling

really um you know what exactly caused

the Tibetans to

uh have have a AAL Lama who is their

spiritual leader who has a gold watch

collection and personal mil private

military I never really heard about the

Dal Lama having a private military

although it might be sort of like the

popes got those s guards you know with

with the like the renaissance costumes

and the what pole axes or or

something yeah I don't think that uh the

Dal Lama's private military amounts to

very many

divisions but then again he was I mean

technically he is the king of Tibet in

Exile so he is kind of a monk and also

kind of a king at the same time

and the two don't really fit together

very well and so there's some give and

take going on a lot of compromises that

have taken

place so I guess I answer that question

so I'm going to move on to Nature Cure's

next

question what is your opinion of his

suck my tongue incident so this was gosh

maybe a year or more ago where there was

some little boy sitting in his lap and

and the Daly Lama sticks his tongue out

him or something like that and then he

asked the boy if he wants to suck his

tongue and I don't think that the Del

Lama was some kind of predatory

pedophile I mean there's so many people

that are s so sensitized on this issue

that there were like right after it

happened people just pouncing on the Dal
Lama saying Dal Lama's a pedophile just
because it's like in fashion to accuse
people of being pedophiles at present
seems like but in my opinion it was just
kind of a joke that that just fell flat
you know it was just sort of like to
some degree maybe like a senior moment
where he's just trying to make a a kid
joke you know he's trying to to hang out
with a kid sort of at the kid's level he
makes some silly joke that just I mean
he just winds up dropping a
brick and the sticking the tongue out
part I think I have read that that's
just a part of Tibetan

tradition that under certain

circumstances you stick your tongue out

another person as a kind of friendly

gesture or some such and then the suck

my tongue was just this weird idea he

got because he's talking to a kid and

just wanting to be a little bit silly

just kind of amuse the kid or something

and then it just turned into like a mini

Scandal but I do not think the Daly Lama

is a

pedophile so I'm just going to move on

to the next question here this is from

EU

Diva and EU Diva says if I translate all

five Kaa or even more sutas how much of

good comma will I gain and comma is

intention comma is Will and so it
depends on what your intention is or
what your motivation is what your chaena
is so one person can translate the five
nikayas and have it published maybe even
you know privately funded so that it's
for free distribution to spread the word
but I mean just want to get famous or
they're just they want to go to heaven
you know it's it's like they've got all
planned out you know it's like they're
they're earning spiritual money they're
Gathering up Treasures in in heaven that
they've already got planned out how
they're going to spend it kind of
stuff so they're not going to get as

good of karma as the person who
translates all five nikaya um just for
the sake of promulgating dhamma as a
kind of sacred Duty or just wanting to
to help people you know just help people
with dharm in the world you know so they
would get more Merit or or also you've
got a lot of translators like with
regard to uh the poly Tex Society for
example where they're translating poly
texts uh without being Buddhists without
even really caring that much about dhama
they're just interested in the language
and they're just sort of exploiting uh a
profitable field of study by studying
the poly language and and just
translating texts that haven't been

translated or haven't been translated
sufficiently well into
English so um they're not going to make
nearly as much Merit as the person who
is like a devout Buddhist who really
wants to help other living beings to
learn the dhamma or to hear the dhamma
and so they they they they translate the
text for that reason so it depends on
your own your own
intentions
but as a general rule you're going to
make more Good Karma than Bad Karma by
translating texts especially if you have
the translations published so that other
people will be able to benefit from

them so UD Diva has sort of a a
secondary question here uh with regard
to translating the five nikaya EU Divas
says very helpful for my future
Enlightenment and again um it wouldn't
hurt probably but it depends on what the
motives are for the trans you know the
work of
translation and uh I mean it would
probably you know set you up a little
better to give you better opportunities
to dhama like you're helping other
people to hear dhma and maybe some of
these people will hear the dhma that
they need to hear right when they need
to hear it so that may increase the odds
of you in the future hearing exactly the

kind of dhama that you need to hear
right when you need to hear it so that
it can be a life-changing experience for
you based on what you have done for
other people
previously so yeah it could be very
helpful for your future Enlightenment
but again it depends on on your your
mental States because karma is mental
States so the next the next question
here is I mean these are two follow-up
questions so the main question um the
next question here is or just good for
better rebirth question mark so yeah I
mean it depends on the mental States but
um yeah I mean it would be it would

definitely be good for a better rebirth

at least with regard to you know being

exposed to dhamma in your next life

because you're exposing dhamma to

others in this

life but again it all depends I mean

some people it is a

common understanding or misunderstanding

of karma in the west even among Western

Buddhists that it's kind of this

mechanistic thing that if you do action

X it's going to result in karmic result

why but it really doesn't work that way

because it depends on the mental States

two people can do exactly the same

action and one person will be making

much better Karma than the other

person and I've given my favorite example of course is you you're walking through the forest or through a maybe your backyard or something if you've got a big enough wild enough backyard you see a snake trying to kill a frog a snake is trying to swallow this frog the frog is all inflated to make it harder to swallow frogs do this and also it's squealing to to attract something bigger than the snake that might chase the snake away and save the Frog so anyways you chase the snake away on purpose you know you come across this snake trying to swallow this frog the frog is struggling for its life so you you know

you just chase the snake away um one
person does that out of compassion for
the Frog they've done something good
another person does that exact same
thing out of of hatred for the snake and
they've done something bad it's because
of the motivation one motivation is
compassion the other one is hatred even
though the action is exactly the
same so it's just going to depend on
one's own mental States and also like
how well they translate it and just the
benefit you know the sort of the
perceptible results of that so because
as you perceive the results of the
translation I mean that's going to be
making karma too as you know you respond

to to the feedback and so

forth so it's it's very complicated this

complex web of of uh like causation or

conditionality that you can't really say

for sure exactly what's going to

happen so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from sanguine

Ultima and sanguine Ultima says how

should one focus on spirit Spiritual

Development and meditation despite a

strong attachment to hedonistic

Indulgence and severe difficulty

concentrating well I mean you do the

best you

can that's that's really all you can do

that's all anybody can do is I mean the

best you can do and so let's see how

should one focus on Spiritual

Development and meditation despite a

strong attachment to hedonistic

Indulgence and severe difficulty

concentrating well I mean you can just

do good

deeds

um I mean you can still have a strong

attachment to hedonistic Indulgence

while you know doing whatever it is that

helps others you know it might be just

you know feeding popcorn to pigeons as

long as it's not against the law in in

whatever town you happen to be in

because they got weird laws now so

difficulty concentrating I mean that

also just do the best you can you know

you read something like the dapada

that's one verse at a time pretty much

in isolation so that um if your mind

wanders away I

mean it's

okay so I mean meditation could be

difficult for severe someone with severe

difficulty concentrating but I mean you

do what you can I mean sometimes just

just one kind of nice quasi meditation

or semi meditation is just sitting in

front of a fish tank or a goldfish bowl

and just watching the fish swim around

and around you know it just kind of

chills you out helps you to relax might

improve your concentration a little
bit um the strong attachment to
hedonistic Indulgence I mean be aware of
it if you can't break the
habit or you just can't break the
attachment at least you know try to cut
down a little bit you know gradually try
to steer yourself away from that sort of
thing or if you just can't steer
yourself away I mean you're just like a
sex addict your entire life then you
know at least stay away from the wives
of other men for
example or you know
just try to make improvements that are
within your capabilities I mean you can
always do

something so I mean you can read texts
and if you got trouble concentrating
read short texts you know a verse from
the dapada is only four lines hopefully
your mind will stay focused until you
get to the end of four
lines and just do good deeds you know
it's like you gotta a bug in your house
don't just squish it just catch it with
a cup and a like a card or something and
let it go outside bless it with love in
your heart and you've done a good
deed so I hope I answered that question
hope I haven't uh made light of it and
so I'm going to move on to Sanguine
ultima's next question which is as

follows further how can one who is addicted to debased indulgences such as processed foods pornography Etc liberate themselves from these vulgar vices and I think this is just some sort of Western propaganda or something to think that eating processed food is like a sin but really it's not I mean it depends on the mental state actions I mean outward physical actions are ultimately morally neutral they're neither good nor bad it's the mental states that accompany those actions it it just happens that in our species that certain actions this pretty much necessitate un wholesome mental States but eating white and bread or something with uh high fructose corn

syrup or something in it that in and of
itself is not moral or
immoral it's just the mental States
accompanying that I mean if you're
you're eating a dut and you're just
wallowing in the sensuality of it then
yeah I mean that's that would be
somewhat unethical from a Buddhist point
of view just enjoying your food but that
would happen even with uh you know the
very skillfully prepared just organic
healthy food I mean you can wallow in
the sensuality of eating that
too so let's just set aside processed
foods as a debased Indulgence but like
pornography um if you're addicted to

pornography how do you liberate yourself
from it I mean in order to really
liberate yourself I think I've talked
about this in the previous Q&A also
maybe not but I mean you have to be 100%
like schopenhauer his doctoral thesis in
philosophy was called in English on the
fourfold root of uh the fourfold root of
sufficient reason and one of the the
four roots of sufficient reason was
psychological and he was saying that
under the same circumstances a person
will behave the same unless the way they
perceive the situation changes you have
to have a significant shift in your
perception
in order to change your behavior so

let's say someone's struggling to to
lose weight or something and they just
can't do it and they've been trying
literally for years then it's just
because of like personality traits that
haven't changed yet so they're going to
have to change the way they
perceive reality or perceive the
situation in order to change their
behavior change their reaction to that
situation
so how do you how do you overcome an
addiction to pornography gosh when I was
younger especially I was my father had a
lot of pornography when I was a kid back
in those days it was like girly

magazines and I'd be sneaking into his

bedroom and looking at his girly

magazines and so forth and uh yeah it

was it was uh definitely a very strong

desire

but to uh break one's addiction to

pornography I mean having a real life

girlfriend would would definitely help

in that

regard and um just I mean just getting

older of course when your sex drive goes

down a bit then you your addiction to

pornography should also decrease unless

it's just like anric reflex you've been

doing it for so long at that

point but uh

changing your perceptions with regard to

pornography um yeah I'm not sure how how
a person would do that specifically
different people would have different
ways I mean you could meditate on the
foulness of the human body considering
that those smooth rounded curves on that
porn Starlet you know are covering up
you know all kinds of goo and you know
Blood and Guts and so
forth but uh generally that doesn't work
very well I mean a coroner can do
autopsies on women during the day and as
a general rule it doesn't cause him to
have any less desire for his wife when
he gets
home

so I mean ultimately to break an addiction you have to be 100% which may require you to learn something new that will change the way you perceive things but also um let's see what was the other thing there was something else to overcome the oh yeah that Carl Yung says that that in order to eliminate a strong psychological drive you have to replace it with a psychological Drive of equal intensity so it could be that you replace your addiction for whatever it is with maybe a more wholesome kind of addiction just get into the habit of of doing something else every time the desire for whatever the addiction is comes up you just make it a habit to

just do this other thing instead Which
is less UNH wholesome and then you kind
of divert the addiction into something
else but um it is it is difficult
because an addiction generally involves
a liking for whatever it is that you're
doing yeah I mean I was talking about
this I think in the previous Q&A where
Mary Baker Eddie the founder of
Christian Science said it's easier to
cure somebody of cancer using Christian
Science than to cure them of a bad habit
because the person that has cancer is
100% sure they don't want that cancer
they don't like the
cancer you know they have no

like vested interest in keeping it maybe
at a very deep subconscious level they
think that they they deserve punishment
or something because of something they
did as a kid or something but um it's
easier to get rid of the cancer than the
bad habit because people like their
habits you know so a person gets
addicted to drugs because they like the
drugs they get addicted to pornography
or sex because they like the pornography
or sex you know it's it gives them A
Rush of
pleasure so I mean you have to be really
sure that you want to break the the
habit or the addiction because if you're
only 90% sure then sooner or later that

10% is going to raise its ugly head and

derail the

efforts so I'm just going to move on to

Sanguine Alpa next

question sanguine

Ultima what is the best place for a

person with a mental illness disability

such as manic depression and ADHD to

begin learning

meditation three questions although they

are all

connected um probably the best place to

learn meditation

um especially

if

like let's see you got what what he

calls here a disability like a mental disability that yeah I wouldn't just dive head first into like a Goa Retreat or a mahasi retreat I would do something less with less pressure you know less rigorous at first just find like a local Meditation Center meditation group and just sit in in with them every once in a while um you can learn that way there's like beginners Retreats that are usually like a like the meditation bunny slope that yeah you can learn meditation that way that would probably be the best way is you know find some kind of chill laidback kind of environment with other people who are meditating and some friendly relatively gentle kind of

meditation instructor who can give you
the basics and then after after you get
better at it then you can find yourself
a more advanced setting for meditation
and maybe a more advanced teacher if the
first teacher was just sort of you know
like
a not not really a master or anything
but you know but good enough to teach a
beginner the
basics so I'm not sure where sanguine
Ultima lives and even if I did I
probably wouldn't know where the whether
there' be a good meditation group or
some such for him to uh to visit but
that would be my advice with regard to

that so I'm going to move on to the next
question which is from Quick quiz and
quick quiz says could cannabis help gain
somei sometimes or at least a little
bit yeah I mean it
could um it's best for you not to be
dependent on a chemical to attain like
expand Ed or concentrated mental States
but I mean it can help some people I
suppose I mean in the past I've become
more meditative after smoking weed
especially with regard to doing walking
meditation um there have been times when
almost the only time I really feel the
the desire or the the motivation to do
walking meditation was when I was high
on on

cannabis so

I mean it can be helpful but still um

you shouldn't become dependent upon it I

mean you shouldn't have to get high in

order to meditate that kind of

thing so I mean it can be useful

although probably Orthodox terraa would

say don't do it because you know they

would say it could be a violation of the

fifth precept which is I undertake the

precept to abstain from Ale Wine and

other intoxicants which cause clouded of

mind and cannabis also can cause clouded

of

mind in my

case it doesn't so much expand my mind

like a psychedelic might do it just kind
of shifts the Mind into a different kind
of
space Maybe moves it sideways which can
be useful for people in in that it's
giving you like an alternate point of
view to which allows you to triangulate
to some degree but you'd have to use the
the substance for a spiritual reason and
not just for
recreation
so I mean there are like the the shite
Babas in India who are just like smoking
hashish all day long whether it helps
and meditate or not I don't know but at
least Shiva likes cannabis
apparently so I guess I answer that

question I'll move on to Quick quiz's

next question which is from sutas as I

understand people become biku and

understood dhama from Buddha and started

living alone in Wilderness then they

became arahant or enlightened is it

correct

H okay it it seems like quick quiz does

not like the definite article in English

grammar but that

that's not any necessarily anything

wrong so people became beu and

understood dhama from Buddha started

living alone in Wilderness and they

became Arad or enlightened is this

correct

um yeah I mean that's I mean you read
the text you know like you read the
first chapter or two of the Maha waga of
the the vinia and that's pretty much
what's happening is what quick quiz here
just said
you know it's like people renounce the
world and they come across the at first
they renounce the world before they they
came AC before they became beus you know
they're already renunciant they might be
like matted hair athetic brahin who are
worshiping the sacred fire in the forest
then this goab Buddha comes along and
you know they they discuss a little
philosophy and then they realize wow he
he knows better than we do we're going

to follow him and so they get ordained

as as beus

and um they didn't necessarily start

living alone in the wilderness maybe

some of them already were living alone

in the wilderness and then they become

Arun or become enlightened from

practicing what the Buddha taught

them that's uh that's just standard

Buddhism although I mean it doesn't

necessarily have to work exactly this

way I mean there's there's always other

possibilities it's just that the Buddha

it seems to me

he was he came up with a system that

maximized your odds of becoming

enlightened there's no guarantee that
you're going to become enlightened even
if you practice dhama and there's no
guarantee that you're not going to
become enlightened if you practice
something
else but it's like the Buddha just came
up with this purified streamlined method
for maximizing your odds of becoming
enlightened so it's it's not like terraa
Buddhism or early Buddhism has any kind
of Monopoly on
enlightenment so there are other ways of
going about it but the ancient Indian
way was pretty much what quick quiz here
just uh mentioned in this
question so I guess I answered that one

so I'm going to move on to Quick quiz's
third question and I commend everyone
for remaining within the limits of three
questions each because otherwise I might
be here for five hours answering
questions
and uh I'm not opposed to answering
questions but after like three hours I
start getting like horse it starts
getting raspy in my throat so
anyways quick quiz says nowadays can one
become biku and live in Monastery under
niia which means dependence upon a
teacher and then after five years wander
alone to Wilderness without teacher or
fellow beus and still under beu status

well that's what I did I mean in Thailand I assume you can do it in Thailand also although Thailand is more like group Conformity oriented than than Burma according to my understanding of the respective terava of Buddhism of each country I'm not sure about Sri Lanka but yeah I mean that's the way you're supposed to do it I mean after your ordination you have to live in dependence Upon A preceptor or a teacher for at least five years until your preceptor or teacher deems that you have learned what you need to learn as a monk so that you can go off on your own and continue practicing in solitude you have to learn to recite the biku patim mocha

for example you have to learn how to meditate you have to learn how to bake a bowl and and sew and dye robes and all this sort of thing you know just the basics for being a

beu and then after you've learned that and you've been a for at least five rainy Seasons five rains Retreats then you can go off into the forest and that's that was what I did that was pretty much what I was hoping to do from the beginning is just get my five years of of niia or dependence you know get that out of the way and then just go off alone into the forest and you can live alone in the forest um before then if

you have permission but not during the

rain Retreat or so I've been

told at the very least you've got to

live with your preceptor or teacher

during the Reigns

Retreat or so I've been

told

so yeah I mean it works in Burma

although now Burma's in a state of Civil

War and there's no telling what's going

on so when I was in Burma that's what I

did and it certainly was possible and I

would assume it's possible in other

Buddhist countries also although being a

A wilderness dwelling wandering beu in

in the west would be problematic because

you'd have to be able to get food

somehow without handling

money so I'm just going to move on the

next question here this is from covac

and sead zida and he says can you please

give your thoughts on this article and

interpretations for animal behavior in

general since you have training in

biology it basically shows that bonobos

are actually more violent than chimps

despite the old claims of them being

hippies where everyone is happy because

of free love chimps just have more

examples of extreme violence but it is

more rare so I read this article it was

in the guardian and it essentially just

says what seac and cat zida says that

they've uh continued studying bonobos in

uh the Congo and it turns out that

they're unlike the the previous

understanding of bonobos they actually

fight more

than full

full-sized pantog lodes or or

chimpanzees so I think the the

chimpanzees are more likely to have like

intertribal Warfare and actually kill

other chimpanzees but the bonobo or what

used to be called the pygmy

chimpanzee

um they uh they tend to fight more but

it's generally not like real bloody

violence like the the other kind of

chimpanzee uh can do so give my thoughts

on this article and interpretations for
animal behavior in general I'm really
not
sure um what to say about it I mean
that's what they found out that's what
they found out about bonobos that they
actually fight more than they thought
they did um yeah and it wasn't because
they were hippie because of free love
because I've also read that even the
regular species of chimpanzee even when
the females are not in heat or in estris
still they'll have sex like something
like 20 to 40 times a day you know they
they have sex a lot even even the
regular

chimpanzees so I have read that the bonobos are more likely to adopt the missionary position when they have sex but that has nothing to do with the article and um I mean I I really don't know what is to be said about just finding out that bonobos fight more than they thought that bonobos fought you at first they thought the bonobos were just peaceful you know they're like the Eloy in theh what is it the time machine you know they're just the the the peaceful flower Children of the forest but it turns out that is not the case um yeah I mean I don't really have any thoughts other than that I mean uh I could try to link it to dhama somehow

but fighting you know especially
fighting between males for the right to
have sex with females is pretty common
throughout the animal species and it
happens even sometimes in the human
species like back in the old days it was
duel and nowadays I assume there's still
biker bars where guys will get into
fights over a woman or maybe some women
I mean there just whichever one of you
two wins gets to take me home kind of a
deal
in fact that was uh one of the games
people play in the book games people
play let let you and him fight you know
women some women they get off on that

but uh I mean it's it's a way of making

sure that the stronger male gets to

reproduce his Gene

sequences but uh really with regard to

this question I'm not exactly sure um

What observations to make with regard to

it so I'm just going to move on to seov

action CAD Z's next question

here which is a little more dhma

oriented I think he says I'm still

skeptical about you saying the negative

and positive have to balance out for

example if we get a brutal disease with

extreme levels of pain and get set on

fire or get set on fire surviving that

won't mean the rest of life will be more

pleasurable pleasurable to

counterbalance that pain people who have been Abus used or neglected as children are not happier as an adult but rather the opposite meanwhile kids who were loved and happier as a kid are usually happier as an adult happiness also seems to have a genetic component which means some people are naturally happier than others but they aren't equally as sad or feeling negative emotions to counterbalance those similarity if we practice Janna the Buddha calls it blameless pleasures and since it isn't wrapped in sensuality it means there won't be negative side effects but good results so I mean this was in the

questions or the the Q&A section of the Discord server and uh it now occurs to me that there's not a single question mark in this in this entire paragraph here um but I'm pretty clear I mean he he wants me to try to support my claim that positive and negative have to balance out in the long run so within any closed system which would mean the World At Large or an individual person's psyche that you might not think it's a closed system but

really it for all intents and purposes it's a closed system that the positive and negative have to balance out so you can look at Humanity in general and you can say well that person is a happier

person than this person but the thing is like let's say there's a person who is just smiling all the time and and doesn't doesn't get upset easily and so forth well I mean that just becomes his status quo it just becomes neutral for him he might look happier than other people but within himself he's in a neutral State and then still there's going to be positive and negative deviating from his status quo that he's going to be calling good and bad and likewise the the the person who seems to be really a messed up person or an unhappy person for whatever reason you know that also just

becomes their status quo they're they
get used to it I mean it just becomes
neutral to them so you can have the
starving person who's Overjoyed to get a
get some stale bread and then you got
the rich person who's upset because his
New York strip steak or filet Minon or
whatever is slightly
overdone so it's still like you can say
that some people are happier than others
when you're when you're looking out at
the world but even that's going to have
to balance out in the long run just you
know the happy people and unhappy people
in a sense because I mean
psychologically good and bad are value
judgments Pleasure and Pain not so much

value judgments but still there is this

balance that that it's like

a in

in gosh how do I even explain this this

is not easy to

explain but I mean it is it's sort of

like dosm you know yin and yang have to

balance out in the long run positive and

negative have to balance out in the long

run which is as I used to say how God

created the universe out of nothing

because all the pluses and the minuses

have to add up to the same zero the same

nothing you know it's like in physics

you can have a particle and an

anti-particle appear out of empty space

and they they can do that because one is
positive and one is negative so it's
it's the same zero it adds up to the
same zero as the the original
nothing so also I've read I think it was
uh oh he's one of the most famous
translators of Tibetan into English I
can't remember his name now but anyway B
Allen Wallace I think is his name I
think he used to be a translator for the
dolly Lama I remember reading an article
that there was some interview with him
and he was pointing out a scientific
study that showed that people who are
quadriple IC people who are paralyzed
from the neck
down um after a few months just like two

or three months to get used to their new
situation in life they're just as happy
or just as unhappy as they were
before so it's essentially you get used
I mean you get used to whatever state
you're in and that just becomes
neutral even though it might seem way
more positive or way more negative than
other things that you see
so let's see
here and also I might as well add that
that people who are that wallow in
misery derive a certain satisfaction
from wallowing in misery some people
they just think that they're a bad
person they did something that they

deserve to be punished for and they get
a certain satisfaction from from
receiving the
punishment or they just they just like
complaining you know it's like that's
like their hobby or they've got these
health problems it's like they base
their personality on these health
problems and talking about their health
problems to anyone who who will listen
so there's all these subtleties and
nuances that really I mean whatever is
your standard state of being just
becomes neutral I mean that's just zero
and then you the the deviations from
that are going to balance out in the
long run and if you start becoming a

happier person in a sense then that's
just going to you know after a short
time of getting used to it then that
becomes the new neutrality you know it's
like all the the good and bad things in
your life if you could get rid of all
the things you consider to be bad all
that's going to happen is you're going
to have to replace those with new bad
things or else just the line between
good and bad is just going to have to
shift so the lower half of the things
that you used to consider to be good are
now consider to be bad
so yeah and with regard to like the the
happiness of of the Bliss of Janna still

I mean the monks who were attaining this
Bliss of Janna were Aesthetics and so
they were putting up with quite a lot of
discomfort that help to balance out the
Bliss of of their
meditation so I guess I answer that I
mean I could I should I mean if I had
thought out how I was going to answer
the question in advance
I could have talked for probably 20 or
30 minutes and turned this into an even
longer Q&A than it's already going to be
but I'm just going to move on to covac
and CAD zona's next question which is
also kind of a a story question
here what is the meaning of the term
coming and going in Buddhism how are

they different than arising and ceasing
they seem to denote the same thing but
are always used separately for example
in Donna it says quote and there I say
there is neither coming nor going nor
staying neither passing away nor arising
unquote so it may be that it's one of
the the many descriptions of nibana in
the
udana anyways he continues similarly it
is mentioned other times like in the
Mula ma jamaka karaka alongside arising
and ceasing but as something separate
such as things arising and ceasing but
also coming and going but it's hard to
figure out the nuances of exactly how

these Concepts differ well coming and
going just is moving this way or that
way so it's like change so appearing and
arising and ceasing is you know you
start to exist and then you stop
existing but coming and going is like
while something is existing it's Mo
going this way or that way it's
changing so I mean it's it's just sort
of like an idiomatic ancient Indian way
of of saying
things but you shouldn't read more into
it than than is is really there I
think so yeah coming and going it just
means moving or changing generally it
means moving no moving that way or this
way it's just everything

is static or Timeless

really so I think I hope I answered that

one so I'm moving on to the next

question which is from a mirror of

emptiness and mirror of emptiness says

is the universe a hologram and what

would that even mean for the universe to

be a hologram this is talked about in

physics and cosmology circles and it

sounds cool but the more I thought about

it the more I realized I don't even know

what this means and yeah I've I've heard

the whole hologram Theory the universe

is the Hologram and I mean there's two

ways of interpreting it at least from my

meager understanding of the situation I

haven't been studying up on this lately
you know you come across you know some
science article talking about how the
universe is is like a hologram one one
way that I don't think is the main
explanation is it's just sort of like a
a projection you know it's just like a
like a a fake image like a holographic
projection of some Rockstar on stage you
know it's just he's not really there you
know it's like an illusion
so there's that but I think mainly what
they're talking about as of the universe
being a hologram is a hologram it's it's
based on I mean I don't even remember
how they do it but it's like a a glass
plate that's got like

a you shine a laser through it in a
certain way and you take it's like an
image that you it turns into like a a 3D
looking
projection and the thing is you can
break the the the plate and still it'll
show the whole picture other than it'll
be a little blurrier you know the
smaller the smaller the the fragment of
the holographic plate the blurrier the
image is although it still shows the
entire image and I think that's mainly
what the physicists are talking about
when they say the universe is like a
hologram it's like it's sort of like uh
libet's monadology his monads where

every monad cont was like had it was
like a microcosm of the entire
universe but I don't really understand
how the physicists came up with the
theory
um yeah so I mean might want to look it
up on Wikipedia or
something but uh yeah for as far as I'm
considered the universe is is like a
hologram mainly because it is an
illusion it looked everything looks
solid but it isn't I mean even modern
science you know getting you know back
before the whole hologram idea you know
it's this cup it looks pretty solid but
really it's it's more than
99.99% empty space with just little

little specks of energy that are you

know flickering and spinning

around but it looks solid because phot

won't go through the spaces apparently

but it's mostly empty

space and what little matter so-called

is is there is just little little specks

of

energy

so yeah I I'm really not a whole heck of

a lot more educated on the whole

universe is a hologram Theory than

mirror of emptinesses here so I suppose

I should just move on to his next

question which is

since you mentioned Seth speaks

before and given your father's history
have you read any of the raw material
spelled r a raw or have any familiarity
with it I know of another gentleman who
makes videos on YouTube and I've spoken
with before is quite knowledgeable on
terraa Buddhism but is also way into the
raw material and that's probably the
overall lenses through which he sees the
world I find that fascinating I'm not
exactly sure what the raw material is
unless it's Roma I mean I've I've heard
a little bit about Roma back in like the
1980s I think it was like this this dsy
housewife who just being silly one day
put this pyramid onto her head like a
hat and just immediately began CH uh

channeling this being called

ramtha but I haven't read any of the

Roma books I certainly haven't read any

otherwise raw

material so yeah I don't really have a

lot of familiar familiarity with that um

say speaks was interesting especially

the the earlier you know the first two

or three books before it starts getting

kind of far

out but um yeah so I can't really I

can't really say much about the raw

material because I I'm not familiar with

it so then I'll just move on to mirror

of emptiness is third question which is

a very short question only four words is

matter Frozen

light and this is like a physics

question and to some degree it is

assuming something that I don't assume

which is that physical matter is

ultimately real and this is like an

assumption made by most western

Buddhists most western people in general

but even the Buddhists they just

naturally assume scientific realism is

fact it is reality and then you kind of

add dhama onto

that I mean that's that's the impression

I get when when I see questions like

this you know it's is matter Frozen

light um technically I think no just

going with Orthodox

scientism I don't think matter is frozen
light it's more like frozen
energy um but calling it Frozen is sort
of the opposite of what it is it's like
I I've seen like a a chart or a graph or
something where it's talking about the
different wavelengths of electromagnetic
radiation and the really long
wavelengths you know you're getting out
like AM radio waves and so forth and
then FM is a little closer and short
wave and then you get into like micro
waves and like gamma rays and then you
go even beyond that you get into
physical matter where the the wavelength
is so compacted

that it just creates something that we
perceive as solid
matter so I don't know if that would
count as Frozen if it's even a higher
frequency or or like a shorter
wavelength than like gamma rays it seems
like it'd be more energetic instead of
like if something's Frozen it's got less
energy than something that's
hot but I mean I'm not a physicist I'm
just uh sort of
regurgitating little bits and pieces of
stuff that I have read about
physics and uh I really do not consider
the physical Universe to be ultimately
real anyway so it's kind of academic for
me so I'm just going to move on to the

next question which is from Athena's
sigil and Athena sigil says have you
ever read sidarta by Herman Hessa
thoughts if not never mind um yeah I
have read it but it was a long time ago
I was like in my early to mid 20s I
think when I read sidarta and then I saw
the movie too so there's that
um and I lik Herman Hessa I read most of
his novels when I was a young man and I
mean most of his novels are
autobiographical just sort of setting
his own personality into different
people in different different parts of
History it's not my favorite novel by
Herman H I think I like Steen wolfes

better than

sidarta but sidarta is a nice nice

little story about uh a young man who

lived in the Buddhist time named sidarta

who uh he and his friend go

vinda they decide they're going to

become followers of the Buddha I think

first they just become like athetics and

then um Govinda becomes converted to

Buddhism you know they meet the Buddha

and Govinda decides to become a an DED

Buddhist monk but sidarta just kind of

goes his own way he's just sort of like

a non-denominational Forest dwelling

athetic and then he uh I can't remember

his reasons but he eventually drops back

into the world and hooks up with this

beautiful corisan named what was her

name Kamala I

think and uh winds up having a kid and

he becomes like a gambler and so forth

and finally after Kamala dies you know

he's he's got troubles with this

13-year-old kid you know his 13-year-old

kid who doesn't really like his father

very much apparently and um he he

becomes almost suicidal and then he

remembers the holy M and he just starts

just kind of takes up om as a mantra

again and it kind of saves him and then

I think Govinda prevents him from

committing suicide just through karmic

coincidence his old buddy Govinda who's

still a Buddhist monk happens to be
there when he's uh planning on on just
drowning
himself and I think it was after after
he gets saved by Govinda that he
remembers the holy home and starts
meditating again and becomes essentially
an enlightened lay lay
person so yeah I have read it but it was
a long time ago and uh that's pretty
much all I've all I remember from it
that uh Hessa I mean he was always on
the side of the lay person against the
monk I think like one of his one of his
stories was called Narcissus and Goldman
about these two friends in the Middle
Ages middleaged like um Medieval Europe

they apparently they're they're uh
orphans and they they they're brought up
in like this monastic school like this
Christian School and narcissus decides
he's going to stay a monk at this
Monastery he's going to be ordained
there and become a monk there but
Goldman wants to go out and see the
world one of the first things he does
you know he's looking up with women and
so forth and just you know tasting all
the stuff that he's he's he's wondered
about and and uh at the end he catches
Bubonic plague and and comes back and
dies and his old buddy narcissus is
tending to him who is just emaciated

from all of his fasting and praying and
so forth and uh Herman hessi he
obviously had a a warm spot in his heart
for you know the The Naughty Boy Goldman
who who went off and just was wallowing
in sensuality you know tasting the World
experiencing it to the full rather than
narcissus who's like in some cell
starving himself and reading the
Bible but um Herman Hessa was like an
artistic person artists tend to be
rather sensual in their approach to
reality or their approach to the world
so um yeah I do like Herman Hessa I
haven't read anything by him in a long
time but I did read sadara and saw the
movie um

but I mean it's I'm not exactly sure
what the real message is in sedara it
was it was so long ago I'd have to like
read it again have it fresh in my mind
before I could really try to explain
what the message of the book
was so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from hicher I think I
have no idea how to pronounce this name
it's h UI c h yr h k Maybe
hir I don't know but anyway hir says I
wonder if poo basa ever attained Janna
in his
meditation and this is one of those
things it's sort of like the four stages
of

sainthood um I really think that the
four janas um meant something different
originally and then their meaning got
changed over time into something else so
my interpretation of Janna like the
original meaning of Janna it was like
the four stages of meditation Janna
essentially just means meditation
literally means something like
illumination but it was used as a word
that meant meditation like Zen Japanese
Zen Buddhism Zen is a Corruption of the
Sanskrit word Janna which meant
meditation so Zen is the meditation
School of of Mahayana
Buddhism so I do think that the four
janas

are just four stages of meditations it's like the first stage is you're feeling physical and mental Pleasure and Pain and you're still thinking so that would be like Elementary meditation like with a mantra of breathing in breathing out kind of a thing if you're doing it correctly still that would qualify as first Janna then the second stage is you're feeling let's see physical pleasure and P you're you're still feeling physical and and mental Pleasure and Pain pain but you're no longer thinking then the next third third J is you do away with the the mental Pleasure and Pain you're in a state of equanimity

you're still feeling you're still
capable of feeling physical Pleasure and
Pain you know there physical Sensations
you're still not thinking and finally
the fourth jna is the Perfection of
mindfulness which is something that gets
ignored a lot and you're you're not
thinking anything and and you've just
kind of gone beyond all positive and
negative Sensations or feelings you know
you're just in this state of pure
equinity
so uh later on Janna got turned into
superhuman mental state so that even
first Janna is a superhuman mental state
even though the mahasi batana sua
defines right medit or right

concentration or sasama as the four

janas

so it's kind of strange that according

to just technical Terra Buddhist

Orthodoxy that uh right concentration is

a superhuman mental

state but I just don't think that Janna

originally was referring entirely to

superhuman mental States I think it was

just the four stages of

meditation so anyways uh who K wonders

if if I retain Janna in my meditation

well I did get to a level where I wasn't

thinking anymore so um regardless of

whether you consider Jonna to be a

superhuman mental state or not that

would seem to indicate that you're wide
awake you know you're not you're not in
a trance you're not unconscious you're
not like in a state of suspended
animation you're wide awake and you're
not thinking anymore presumably that
would be at least second jna but I do
think that the divisions of Janna into
these four stages I mean especially
considering that that I can think that
the whole meaning of them got shifted
into something that was not the original
meaning that
um it's it's almost like academic the
meaning of Janna is so
controversial that the most terraa
Buddhists who are Orthodox they will

just repeat the block of the standard
description of the Jas which are almost
exactly the same every time you see it
and it's not extremely informative it's
not so informative that it's
uncontroversial exactly what it
means so um a lot of meditation teachers
and meditators in Burma lack the
sophistication to differentiate between
real jna and like a hypnotic
trance and fourth jna supposedly I mean
you go into such a state of suspended
anim
that according to the Orthodoxy you
become like a hibernating squirrel where
your breathing and your heart rate

almost

stop and whether that's real fourth

genre or not as the Buddha was teaching

it or whether that's just a very deep

hypnotic trance State because someone in

a very deep hypnotic trance also goes

into the hibernating squirrel stage

where their heart rate almost stops and

their breathing almost stops or so I've

been told by my father who was a

hypnotist and didn't know anything about

the for Jonas you would just say that

you know his third wife or his second

wife not my mother was like that where

she go into a deep hypnotic trance and I

mean she would seem to be dead I mean

she wouldn't be breathing or anything I

mean you couldn't there was no

detectable pulse or anything or it would

be very very slow and

faint

so

um but if we go with just the original

meaning according to my understanding of

the four genas as just the four stages

in the progression of meditation then if

you do any kind of meditation correctly

that would be first Janna at the very

least and if I was a monk I wouldn't

even be able to answer this question

because um monks aren't supposed to

admit to having attained to any

superhuman mental States and Janna is

considered to be a superhuman mental

state according to Orthodox terab

Buddhism so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is from

cify we've already been at this for an

hour and a

half

anyways cify says P basa there is no

solid proof of reincarnation does it

mean that we have to believe that there

is

reincarnation well there's no solid

proof of anything really you know even

scientific data I mean there's no solid

proof no real solid proof that any of

it's really

true I mean this whole thing could be

like an illusion a dream or something in
which case all the the scientific
realism just kind of falls through but
we just assume that it's applying to
empirical reality out there in this this
world so let's see here there is no
solid proof of reincarnation yeah
there's also no solid proof of no
reincarnation but so does it mean that
we have to believe that there is
reincarnation no we don't have to
believe that there is reincarnation or
rebirth as Buddhists prefer to call
it I'm not exactly sure
why but the the standard argument is
that reincarnation implies a soul that

reincarnates but doesn't rebirth

couldn't that imply the same

thing what is it that's reborn what is

it that

reincarnates so anyways um yeah you

don't have to believe it in fact you

might be better off just in a state of

suspension of judgment you know like um

classical skepticism which is you don't

believe X and you don't believe not acts

you just suspend judgment you just don't

make up your mind about

it so that's fine yeah there's no

problem at all with that that would come

closer to some of the earliest teachings

of Buddhism like the ATA waga of the

suan where it's just saying you know

don't have any fixed belief about

anything

not even like self or no self or or

anything just don't even go

there so yeah you don't have to believe

that there's reincarnation I mean the

four noble truths are still true even if

there is no reincarnation I mean craving

or attachment still is the cause of all

suffering regardless of whether you're

going to be reincarnated or regardless

of whether you you were reincarnated

from a previous

existence so I mean just being in the

present moment is really what is

important and the present moment is

Right Here Right Now doesn't matter

about the past or the

future so you can be skeptical about

reincarnation I think uh Stephen

Bachelor doesn't believe in

reincarnation nadata Maharaj who was a

technically a Hindu didn't believe in

reincarnation so I mean it doesn't

matter there's it is not a good idea to

believe something that you don't have

any real good evidence for just you're

best you're better off just accepting it

as a working hypothesis unless it just

seems such utter [__] that you just

can't even adopt it as a working

hypothesis but someone who's wiser than

you says it it it's real it happens then

I mean you might want to consider their
wisdom and say well maybe you know keep
your mind open but don't just cling to
any belief either for or
against as aan cha used to say even
right view becomes wrong view if you
cling to
it so yeah we don't have to believe
anything so I'm just going to move on to
cif's next question here practicing
Buddhists wish for enlightenment does it
mean that they crave for it or put it
put in different words they desire for
enlightenment or Nirvana am I
misunderstanding the concept desire not
to desire confusing to say the least

yeah at first it's sort of like the the
uh the is a dichotomy at the very
beginning of this Q&A it's it's sort of
like you know you start off with some
agh thinking you know I should do this
you know you should strive for an ideal
but then as you get more advanced it
just Falls away and you just stay with
is and with regard to practicing
Buddhism a lot of practicing Buddhists
will start off stri ring for
enlightenment not all practicing most
practicing Buddhists are not striving
for enlightenment not even most monks
are striving for enlightenment but uh it
is kind of an ideal you know that's like
the goal of Buddhism I mean most

Buddhists are just striving for a better

rebirth you know they want to be born

You Know Rich and Famous and beautiful

in their next life you know they don't

want have to work so hard they want to

go into heaven and live in a golden

mansion en crusted with

jewels that kind of thing

so but

still um some people are motivated by a

desire for enlightenment which is a less

UNH wholesome attachment than desire for

naked women or some

such but um still I mean you're not

going to become enlightened until that

falls away also so often the way it

works theoretically anyway
is you you renounce the world and you
abandon all these sensual attachments
all these attachments except for this
one last attachment which is desire for
enlightenment and you just dedicate
yourself single-mindedly towards
becoming enlightened it's it's the only
major attachment you've got left and you
get closer and closer and closer but you
can't really become enlightened because
you still got this attachment even
though it's an attachment for
enlightenment that attachment for
enlightenment is still going to prevent
you from becoming unattached So
eventually sooner or later you're going

to have to let go of that one last
attachment but still it's it's sort of
skillful means to replace all of your
worldly attachments for this attachment
for
enlightenment which gets you farther
along until finally you can you can let
go of that attachment
also so you can desire not to desire but
I mean it can get you a certain distance
but sooner or later you're going to have
to get rid of all desire including the
desire not to
desire so I hope I explain that
relatively clearly I mean some of these
Concepts this one indication of why I

keep answering the same questions is
that we're the questions are difficult
to answer and difficult to understand
you know it's it's subtle things like
questions about ultimate reality that
you can't even put into words but when
you're answering a question you got to
use words so you kind of have to dance
around it and it's it's
weird but I hope I was able to answer
that question well enough because I'm
moving on to the next one regardless and
this is from ruie and ruie says did the
miracle of having been born in an eon
with a teaching Buddha ever strike you
and no actually it hasn't really struck
me before just the miracle of having

been born period that has struck me many
times I mean that's so weird that we
even exist at all I mean whether we
exist in an eon with or without a Buddha
is really just completely minor compared
with the fact that we seem to have been
born that we were exist here at
all
why well that's what religion teaches
among other
things so yeah it's like our karma is
landing us where we ought to be so I
just assumed that my karma landed me in
a world where I didn't actually meet
goab Buddha not that I remember but
still I mean I've heard about him you

know this his teachings are still
recorded in probably garbled form but
still at least there is dhama in this
world and uh yeah I mean that that's
good but um yeah I haven't really been
struck by the miracle of it other than
just being struck by just the weirdness
of being you know just being this
being that is like in this stick like
body made of meat and liquids and stuff
you know we we're limited by these sense
organs and it's just weird you know
we're we're a kind of upgraded
ape and I mean we're we're like a a
species of
mammal so that's I mean that strikes me
way more than being born in an eon with

a teaching

Buddha so I think I'm just going to move

on to the next question this is from uh

Pope Kevin the first who goes by many

names he changes names um more than most

people do and he says if there are some

rules for monks breaking of which not

produce bad comma let's say drinking

coffee with milk in the afternoon as an

example as I have been doing

here then what is the logic behind

making confession to another Monk for

things like these well you still have

the duty to follow the rules nobody forc

you to become a monk I mean in Burma

sometimes parents will just ship some

kid off to the monastery just because
they got too many miles to feed they
want the The Good Karma and the good
reputation of having a monk in the
family and all that the kid might not
want to go but he goes
but as a general rule nobody is forced
to become a monk and so when you break
rules I mean it's it's it's still like
cheating and if you don't con confess to
those rules then in a way that's that's
kind of dishonesty like every two weeks
the S has to meet and they recite the
ptim Moka rules and at the beginning
it's part of the recitation the monk
who's reciting it before he recites the
rules he reminds the monks that you've

got to make confession before we do this
CU if you have unconfessed offenses and
I ask at the end of every group of
offenses you know paraja then sesa then
Ana then nagia then pidia then uh what's
the other one Pati desia then the SEI
rules and then there's this last little
addition at the end that at the end of
each of these groups I say is everybody
completely pure is everybody completely
pure three times the monk asks and if
you sit there in silence and you know
you've broken a rule even if it's not
really an ethical rule you know you just
drank milk in your coffee in the
afternoon for

example then you by you remaining silent
that's considered a kind of
dishonesty
so that's the main logic behind making
confession to another Monk for like
rules of breaking rules of etiquette or
just rules of ancient Indian
cultural tradition you know like you're
wearing a robe that's the wrong color or
something it's not there's nothing
unethical or evil in wearing a robe
that's like bright yellow which
technically is a forbidden
color then uh but still I mean you've
broken the rule and especially if you're
sitting through a
ceremony where all the monks have to be

like have their all of their offenses

conf

then if you sit there and and don't

confess it you know you just remain

silent even when they're asking is

everybody pure then uh yeah I mean

that's a kind of

dishonesty I mean in a way it's it's

cheating if you break rules especially

if you do it on purpose just because you

don't care you know sort of

like life is a game kind of you know

being a monk is kind of a game it's like

if you don't play by the rules you're

cheating which is a kind of dishonesty

so anyways I'm just going to move on to

Pope Kevin the First's next

question which is as follows in angur

and nikaya

3.86 386 the 86th sutta in the group of

thre of the inur and Naya it says quote

monks this recitation of more than 150

training rules comes every fortnite

unquote however there are 227 rules in

the pooka but if you add in relevance

order four paragas 13 sasas two anatas

30 nesia pidas 92 pidas four panas and

the Seven adiar samatas it adds up to

152 now it makes sense for the Buddha to

say more than 150 training rules could

it be that the original pooka didn't

contain 75 seas and yes that is the

probable explanation so good for you

Pope Kevin the first because

I've read the pookas of different

ancient schools of Buddhism and with

regard to the the 152

core um rules the

precepts that they're almost identical

but then the SE rules at the end are

just wildly different there's a lot of

variation in SEI rules which indicates

that the SEI rules were added after the

the Schism started after the different

schools of Buddhism started splitting

apart the SE rules got added after that

and it doesn't even say that there that

they're really rules that there like

technically if you break a seia rule on

purpose especially then that is a Duca
offense it's an offens of of wrongdoing
which is like the lowest level it's the
it's the lightest kind of offense there
is but it doesn't really say that in the
rules themselves that's sort of a later
interpretation of these seia rules that
I mean at first it's just sort of like
advice on proper conduct in the seia
rules and there was like a chaa sect of
Buddhism that was emphasized pagodas or
or
chaas zes as they're called in Burma um
and so their SEI rules have a lot of
rules concerning proper conduct with
regard to pagodas which are missing in
the other the other schools and it's not

all 75 in in every pooka it's just in
Terra Buddhism the biku paok has 227
rules different schools of Buddhism had
different numbers and different seia
rules even though most of the rules were
almost
identical so yeah that's early early on
there were probably 152 rules and then
the sey rules got added like maybe
around the time of the third
Council so I'm just going to move on the
next question here this this is also
from Pope Kevin the first maim nayah 66
explains why monks cannot eat food at
night Dean nikaya 1 says the reclus
godma eats only in one part of the day

refraining from food at night and from
eating at improper times and pidia 37
says should any beu chew or consume
staple or non-staple food at the wrong
time it is to be confessed
unquote aano says the web banga defines
the is like the ancient commentary to
the rules to the pooka rules the we
banga defines the wrong time as from
afternoon until dawn of the following
day but that's Abid dama not the
suas uh no that's not true I I know it
is traditional going for Millennia now
but maybe monk can eat one meal a day in
the morning or in the afternoon but not
at night and of course he cannot store
food overnight so does digan Naya one

really say that the Buddha eats only in one part of the day refraining from food at night and not literally from noon to Dawn well first I'll just deal with a misconception here there are two we bangas in in the poly toptica one is a book of Abid dama called Web banga it it means something like analysis but also there's the Su Wanga in in vinia in the the rules of monastic discipline which is an ancient commentary on the ptim Moka that is so old that it has become Incorporated ated into the Canon itself so it is canonical it's one of the few uh canonical commentaries that isn't just like a sua

or

something so I mean it is part of vinia

the rules of monastic discipline say

that the the right time is between Dawn

and midday and there are other there are

many statements if you come across them

that makes it clear that the proper time

for a monk to eat is between between

Dawn and

midday so like for example the I think

it was the the first count or the second

Council which was a kind of debate that

eventually resulted in the first major

Schism one of the topics of debate was

is a mon allowed to eat continue eating

his meal if the shadow of like the Su

dial is like I can't remember I think

it's like two finger wits past the

midday Mark and the answer was no

because it's it's clear in the text TT

is between Dawn and midday it's like

it's not just if you start eating before

midday you can continue eating after

midday that no you have to be finished

by

midday so yeah I mean it's just ancient

Indian

tradition that monks I mean because

that's when you go for alms round is in

the morning monks walk for alms in the

morning and then after you get your food

you sit down and you eat it and then you

wash your bowl you know you feed the the

monastery the scy monastery dogs and the

the birds and all that with your any

leftovers and uh then you you go on with

your

day

so yeah I'm pretty sure it goes all the

way back to the time of the bud up that

the proper time for a monk to eat food

is between Dawn and

midday so I'm just gonna move on to the

next question and this is from game

fap and I don't I can't remember game

fap asking questions before game fap is

kind of an unusual name I'm sure he got

picked on a lot when he was a kid in

school so

anyways game fap says what are your

thoughts on Abraham Lincoln and the
Civil War do you have a Buddhist
perspective on it and I mean I have a
Buddhist perspective on everything on
life in general because I am a Buddhist
and so it kind of goes through a
Buddhist lens to some
degree but um
I can't really say that I've got a a
specifically Buddhist perspective on
Abraham Lincoln I really don't know that
much about Abraham Lincoln uh I do know
a little more about the Civil War and I
think at least half of what I know about
the Civil War I learned from a a book
that's on my bookcase back there I

picked it up at a used bookstore in
Mandalay Burma when I was a monk it's
called uh let's see strategy by BF
little heart I think is his name
strategy the indirect approach and he I
mean he was doing like this strategic
playby play of like major Wars in
history including the Civil War um also
I've read the autobiography of uh
William T Sherman which is really
interesting interesting
book but with regard to Abraham Lincoln
I mean I know just the standard stuff I
people will say that you know he really
wasn't a good president because you know
he was suspending people's
constitutional rights and so forth

during the Civil War um but I don't
think he was a bad president um you know
he apparently was a an abnormally honest
president that he may actually deserve
being considered one of the two or three
greatest American
Presidents um but I really don't know a
whole heck of a lot about
him um with regard to the Civil War I
mean it's like every war that comes
along is the first modern war it seems
like but the Civil War was another one
of those modern Wars it was using aerial
surveillance with hot air balloons and
it was one of the first Wars that was
using steam trains to transport troops

and so

forth

um and my father who was born and raised

in Georgia and was old enough to have

actually seen people who were Veterans

of the Civil War when he was a little

kid um he he followed the standard uh

Southern narrative that the Civil War

was over states rights and not over

slavery

although um it's it's pretty clear to me

that I mean probably the main reason why

the Civil War started was because of the

issue of slavery because Abraham Lincoln

made it clear that he was no no friend

of slave owner slave owners you know he

considered slavery to be a bad deal and

he was going to do something about it

and so um the the southern states

seceded from the Union before he even

took office as soon as they heard he won

the election it's they just bailed you

know it's like nope we're out of here

they just noped right out of the union

and I mean Abraham Lincoln was probably

the one Republican president that was

hated by democrats even more than Donald

Trump that Abraham Lincoln was hated so

vehement

by Southern Democrats and I mean the

slave owners were mostly Democrats back

in those

days that just the fact that he won the

election even before he took office they
started seceding from the
union so Trump uh he's only in second
place
probably I mean Trump's probably hated
worse than Nixon was but still I mean I
think Abraham Lincoln was hated more
than than Donald TR Donald
Trump but anyways that one book I was
reading strategy the indirect approach
was um one of the main things it was
doing was praising William T Sherman
that's what inspired me to read
Sherman's autobiography because
according to BF little heart um William
T Sherman was probably the greatest
military genius that America has ever

seen even though I mean he he graduated from West Point you know he was a teacher at a military school for a while but then he kind dropped out of that and became like a a lawyer for a little while and a banker and so forth he wasn't very successful in business but for some reason he just had the kind of mind that really I mean he was he he could think outside the box so in a at a time when um

Wars this war in particular the Civil War was heavily dependent on railway lines sabotaging railway lines was like one of the major activities of the Civil War seems like that he just decided he

was going to strip down his army they
were just going to carry with them as
little as they could get away with not
even tents or anything and he was going
to leave the railway lines and just
start marching in between
cities and marching in between cities is
the indirect approach because the enemy
doesn't know which city you're going to
eventually steer towards so they either
have to defend both of their cities
which divides their forces in half or
they're going to have to think well he's
probably going to attack this place and
then you just attack the other one so
it's the indirect approach and he was
really good at it and it is true that he

burned Atlanta pretty much to the ground
and so forth
but thing war is Hell which is uh what
Sherman Sherman said that so I mean I
really don't have a Buddhist perspective
I mean neim karoli Baba whose picture is
up on the alar back there according to
ROM dos neim Koli Baba said that Abraham
Lincoln was the greatest American
president because he was the one
president who knew that he wasn't really
the president that God was the president
and he was just sort of like his his
prime minister or something you know
working for God sort of a thing although
I'm not exactly sure if neem curly Baba

was objectively empirically correct on that because Abraham Lincoln seems to have been kind of ambivalent in his religion but uh yeah I mean I guess enough of discussing Abraham Lincoln in the Civil War because we got lots of questions today and this is going to be a long one because uh it just is so the next question is from Master Poe I'm honored to have questions from Master Poe and master Poe says Nirvana does it kill the Daydream and then after that it's he just says Daydreamer so maybe he's replacing Daydream with Daydreamer here but it says Nirvana does it kill the Daydream question mark Daydreamer period

so um it's I guess I understand the

question I'm pretty sure the question

means that if you're enlightened does

just sort of the illusion just cease to

exist and trying to second guess and

Enlighten being's mental

States um I mean it's you can't really

do it to to describe the mental states

of an enlightened being it's again

you're having to try to use words in a

samsaric context to describe something

that is not in a samsaric context and

words cannot touch

it but you could say theoretically that

an enlightened being is still

experiencing this kind of phenomenal

world like we're experiencing it's just
that he's not identified with any of it
and it's largely
irrelevant that he is at a different
level and that this level is just kind
of going through its own motions and
he's really not invested in it he's not
attached to it he doesn't identify with
the body or the the thoughts going on or
anything so it may be that some kind of
Daydream continues it's just that an
enlightened being is not identified with
it and is really considered it to be
just just sort of energy patterns or or
whatever largely
irrelevant so I think I'm just going to
move on to the next question also from

Master

Poe and he says are you familiar with

Daniel Ingram he wrote mastering the

core Dharma of Buddha and it's kind of

uh interesting that totally unrelated to

master Po's question here um last night

or yesterday on the Discord server

associated with me and uh like Terra

Buddhism um somebody posted a link to a

Daniel Ingram video where there was an

interview with Daniel Ingram and I I

mean I've heard about him I looked at

his website before and the the website

was very off-putting because right on

the homepage he's declaring himself to

be an aun he's fully enlightened he's

just mastered everything you know

and I mean that's that's like a early

that's like a red flag right there

that's that's flashing red lights if

anyone is declaring that they are fully

enlightened in addition to all these

other attainments that they have

attained then chances are the person is

is a

charlatan so anyways I finally saw a

video with Daniel Ingram talking and

yeah I mean he it was he did not seem

enlightened to me

for whatever that is worth I think he

might also have been gay but I mean

that's irrelevant

too but uh yeah he was just kind of like

this nervous High strong person who

acted nervous which you don't really

associate with a fully enlightened being

who is pretty pretty chill you

know

and yeah

so yeah I think that he knows some stuff

about Buddhism and he might be a kind of

narcissist

who I mean he's got himself persuaded as

well as trying to persuade others that

he really has just nailed it you know he

has mastered this dhama you know he's

fully enlightened just for

starters

and I don't know I mean I don't want to

take the risk of bashing an enlightened
being just in case he really is
enlightened but I just don't I just
don't get the feeling that he is and so
I mean the options are that he's like
either a deliberate fraud or he's sort
of got such a high opinion of himself
that he's able to
explain you know his own personality in
such a way that he's he's enlightened or
something but uh I mean he's
knowledgeable I am
sure um but whether he's fully
enlightened or not I personally if I had
to guess then I would guess that that he
is not enlightened if that even means
anything because again to be fully

enlightened you're off the scale and we
here like doing videos and watching
videos and stuff are on the scale to the
extent that we're here
so it's it's it's hard to say I mean if
Daniel Ingram is fully enlightened then
of
course that would indicate that uh just
about anybody could be fully enlightened
seems to me
so yeah I'm skeptical let's just say
that I am skeptical of Daniel Ingram's
full
Enlightenment so I'm just going to move
on to the next question this is from
yugao and yugao says hello I have seen

people killing bugs without any remorse
now I hear that in Gaza 10 thou tens of
thousands of children are being killed
is their state of mind the same is
killing that easy because of the names
and perception
um well killing killing insects let's
say you're getting bitten by a mosquito
and you just slap it then yeah that's
going to be very different mental States
from taking an making an
effort to kill one human child let alone
10,000 human
children so it's going to be very
different mental
states that I mean killing killing a
human being is orders of magnitude more

serious of an ethical transgression than
slapping a
mosquito but uh I I've read and I think
this is true that the fact that violence
like like human Warfare now is so
removed from the people getting
killed that I mean it your it short
circuits our Instinct not to just be
killing people I mean kill people like
face to face right up close has happened
for a long time like the Mongol and the
Huns for example just to name two
examples were fairly
sociopathic in their just wanting
cruelty and indifference to the
suffering and death of other people who

were viewed as just inferior
Outsiders but nowadays like someone
who's killing children for example he
might be sitting in a comfortable
computer room launching cruise missiles
or he might be in an airplane that's so
far away from the Target that I mean he
can barely see what's going on like in a
dog fight it's not like World War I
anymore where the people are shooting
airplanes are shooting at each other
just kind of circling around each other
and everything it's you see a blip on a
radar screen you push the button
launching a missile and you know 20
seconds later the blip
disappears and you've just killed the

the the crew of this airplane that you
just shot down but all you see is just a
blip on a
screen and with regard to Gaza and
Israel it's I mean I I can understand
the situation where Israel has survived
as long as it has through hitting back
at least three times as hard sometimes
10 times as hard as they were hit
themselves like if you hit us we're
going to hit you back big time and
that's what they're doing and it's that
that Hamas you know they're using their
own citizens or subjects as human
Shields you know they're they're hiding
their military headquarters under

schools and hospitals and so forth as a
way of just using their own people as
human Shields and so I mean in order to
get at the bad guys there's a lot of
collateral damage so to
speak and I'm not really taking sides
here I guess I mean I really don't have
a dog in this fight no skin in the game
really but I can understand why Israel
is doing what it's
doing so I mean it's on them I mean if
they're they're killing tens of
thousands of children or 10,000
children that yugao just says in Gaza 10
of thousand children are being killed
then yeah I mean that's that's on them
but I mean it fits in with the whole

Jewish religion you read the Old
Testament it's like the pages are soaked
in blood it's a violent religion so is
Islam Islam and Judaism are both I mean
they're scriptures anyway at the
scriptural level they're both violent
relatively harsh relatively cruel
religions and they're just duking it out
over there which is been going on
forever really like the the near East
the Middle East has been a war zone
since prehistoric
times so anyway what's the question here
oh is is their state of mind the same
between swatting mosquito or it depends
on the person and I don't think I mean

even in a hardened sociopath who's just
launching missiles into inhabited cities
you know just collapsing apartment
buildings and I do think that Israelis
are trying to keep that to a minimum
sort of like you know the the tuna
fishermen are trying to keep killing of
dolphins to a minimum you know it's kind
of a similar thing in that
case that uh I mean yeah I
mean it's it's really hard to talk about
this but it's not the same mental States
probably not even in the most hardened
sociopath would there be the same kind
of karma made from swatting a bug or
spraying a bug or whatever and and like
launching a cruise missile into a city I

just don't think that I mean it's just

the magnitude is so

different and I'm certainly not

condoning even if I say I can understand

Israel's position on this I'm certainly

not condoning killing

anybody then again Hamas makes no secret

of the fact that they want to delete

Israel from the

map so I mean it goes

ways so anyways I'm just going to move

on to yuga's next question

here which is there is a story when a

Buddhist teacher slaps a student when he

is putting a name on a pretty site in

front of them can that be a simile for

Nirvana maybe but it wouldn't be a very
good simile for
Nirvana I mean mainly the Buddhist the
Buddhist teacher is slapping the student
who is somehow you know indulging in
sense pleasure or some such just as a
way of getting him to stop indulging in
sense pleasure I mean the ultimate goal
might be
Nirvana but I don't think that getting
slapped would be a very good simile for
Nirvana um you know
maybe getting slapped might be something
like um there was a a famous zen master
I can't remember his name maybe maybe it
was umon using the Japanese names um
although he was he was Chinese medieval

Chinese but anyway according to the
story he became enlightened when his own
teacher slammed his door slammed his leg
in a door and broke his leg and that was
such a jolt that it just jolted him
right out of his samsaric habitual
mental States and he became enlightened
so I mean it could be something along
those lines I'm not sure exactly what
the context of the story is but really
just getting slapped when you're when
you're indulging in some kind of like
pleasurable sensuality is would not be a
good simile for nirvana in my opinion so
I'm just going to move on to yuga's
third question which is can you explain

a birth defects that are caused by the genes and past Karma are they related and again this just assumes that scientific realism is the true interpretation of reality and that Buddhism is kind of superimposed onto it and just fit into it but you start off with
materialism that physical matter is ultimately true and you know science explains reality to some degree and then you just kind of like fit dhama into that context and that's what most western Buddhists apparently do I do not do do it I do not consider phys physical matter to be ultimately real but I get so many questions that just assume that

science explains

reality and that physical matter really

exists

so can you explain a birth defect or

birth defects maybe I should get rid of

that

a kind of a grammar Nazi here can you

explain birth defects that are caused by

the genes and past Karma are they

related well your karma is is going to

manifest you know in a in a physical

context because this world appears

physical we interpret it as physical and

so your karma is going to be is going to

it's going to manifest in in that

context so of course they would be

related um probably at least sometimes
it'll be related I don't know like um Dr
Ian Stevenson wrote a book I'm pretty
sure
about children who remember past lives
and have weird birth marks associated
with the previous life like somebody
died from getting their throat cut and
they've got this weird birth mark like
this red line on their throat where they
where they got the birth where they that
happened or even in my case um just
hypothesizing here I hypothesized that
one of my most significant previous
existences assuming that rebirth happens
is that I was um an English Roman
Catholic monk maybe a Franciscan frier

who died of Bubonic plague in the 14th
century and I've got this kind of a
magenta colored
blotch kind of on that side on the like
my right groin where the the the boo
would have been And So It causes such an
emotional impact that it creates k
because karma is is like it's a mental
state and like if you're remembering
past lives you have a past life
regression generally what happens is you
remember the most emotionally intense
events those are the ones that make the
most Karma and so apparently I had a
strong reaction to that having the
Bubonic plague which is pretty

understandable and so it had this latent
residual effect of this weird little
magenta colored spot kind of in that
very close to where the lymph node
is
so um I assume there would be a genetic
component in that or like the birth mark
here it could be it's not genetic that
it was like something that happened in
utero you know maybe something happened
like when the the the embryo was small
it was like the umbilical cord left a
mark there or something it could be
something like that but in some cases
yeah I mean probably most cases that
birth defects are are genetic and and
also they are Kaka they foolish in a

past comma I mean if you are born with a
birth defect that's going to be caused
by your comma regardless of whether it
is genetically conditioned or
not so I guess I answered that
question I guess so so I'm going to move
on to the next one this is this is by
Prav and PR says why does the Burmese
hate Indians even though it is the land
of Buddha is it because of British using
their Infamous divide and Rule strategy
to instill hatred against India and I
don't think so I mean to some degree
indirectly um but it is true the Burmese
they don't necessarily hate Indians but
they have kind of a low opinion of

Indians they in a way they kind of
resent Indians because in Burma I mean
this is a a common
stereotype the Burmese who call Indians
kala if they're not being very polite
about it it's it's somewhat of a slur
kala is the word used for Indians kala
are considered to be sort of greedy and
selfish and
obnoxious and there are certain reasons
for this that that are related to the
British to some degree and that the
British when they colonized Burma they
didn't really trust the Burmese very
well they considered the Burmese to be
like childlike you know they they
weren't really like mature enough and

serious enough to have important jobs
like being a doctor or something so they
imported a lot of their office staff and
their doctors and so forth from India
and that's one reason why Burma had uh
especially up until the
1960s uh a relatively High population of
of Indians like around the the the city
of mayo which was a British Hill station
in colonial times there are a lot of
giras people of girka descent because
they imported you know girka Fighters as
part of their their army there to help
keep the British or the keep the Burmese
under control or some such so um the
main one of the main reasons why the

Burmese have a low opinion of Indians considering them to be like greedy and selfish and so forth is that they were making more money on average than the burmes that back in the 60s un win who was the dictator at the time um he wanted a scapegoat and and the Burmese government is always using scapegoats they never accept responsibility for their own incompetence in the fact that the country is not prospering so they'll say it's because of the British colonialists or it's because of the Chinese and the Indians who are like you know so greedy they're just making all the money and causing the the Burmese people to be poor so back in the

60s uh there was like a purge of Chinese
and Indians from
Burma so the the
Chinese um most of the Indians just went
back to India but the Chinese kind of
went off in all directions a lot of them
moved to Singapore or they moved to like
other other countries in the the British
Commonwealth
so that's one reason but also it is true
that stereotypes do have a certain truth
in my experience in India is that a lot
of Indian people maybe because of such
high population density They Don't
Really respect personal boundaries much
and they're just right in your face and

you know they're wanting money if you
got any money in your pocket you know
they they got their hand out kind of a
thing or you got somebody selling
trinkets that's just following you and
just hounding you and hounding you
you're telling them you're not
interested he just keeps hounding you
just in the the idea that that
eventually you'll buy something from him
just to get rid of him just just to make
him stop pestering you so much that
there is a lot of that kind of stuff in
India or you know somebody wants
something and you don't give it to them
and they'll just make this spectacle
this scene you know that that kind of

thing happens

so it's a combination of a bunch of

factors um partly it's like government

propaganda that the Indians were were

greedy people that were causing the

Burmese to be poor by monopolizing all

the the business and money and so forth

because essentially they were working

harder um and also you know it's just

sort of like foreigners living in your

own country you know there's a certain

xenophobia the Burmese are somewhat

xenophobic they're very much they're

they're chauvinistic in in their

nationalism they they think being

Burmese is really the way to go that you

know just about any country or any
society if it's healthy and vibrant it's
going to consider its own people to be
superior in some
way and the burmes are like that too and
and they're somewhat
racist um I I was you know I was treated
very well I was a Buddhist monk though
so I was like a holy man of their
religion
but uh it is true that sometimes uh the
Burmese if they were you know sort of
criticizing Indians I would point out
you know the Buddha was an Indian the
Buddha was kala and then they kind of
get embarrassed you know they have to
they have to admit that and Indian

culture is like ancient Indian culture

is the classical culture that Burmese

culture is based on it's like almost

every society nowadays is is based on an

earlier classical culture culture like

in the west our culture is mainly based

on

Rome when Burma their their culture is

largely based on

India so it is just it's there's a whole

bunch of weird anthropological factors

involved in sociological

factors but I I don't think they really

hate

Indians most of them don't anyway but

Indians do have kind of a reputation for

being greedy selfish obnoxious in

Burma and it maybe it's just considered

to be a modern thing that maybe in

ancient times like when the Buddha was

alive it was very different you know the

Indians in general were different then

or something I'm not sure so I'm just

going to move on to the next question

this is also from

pranav and Prav says what is py and Suka

and how are they

different well they're both like jic

factors

and Suka just means like ease that's

usually how I translate Suka as ease

it's it's the opposite of Dua which is

unease so it's just any kind of

negativity or

unhappiness or would be dooka and then

Suka would be any kind of positivity or

Happ or yeah happiness happiness Comfort

ease that kind of thing would all

qualify as Suka although in this case

it's mainly a mental state so it just

mean like

happiness in general whereas PT is more

specific it's more of a technical term

and it it means something like

exhilaration or enthusiasm or

pleasurable

interest and One symptom of PT which in

I think in Hinduism it would be called

Shakti is that if you're getting into

really deep meditation that you're not
used to you know you're breaking new
ground in your meditation you're getting
into a different LEL of Consciousness or
something then your whole body can just
start twitching and jerking and it's
like you you you habitually have a
certain amount of energy in your mind
mental energy and all of a sudden you
hit this chilled like quiet place in
meditation so that this habitual energy
doesn't have any way of expending itself
so it just expends itself through just
random muscle twitches and so
forth um and that that's called a sign
of
py so Suka would just be in like kind of

happiness in general whereas py is a
kind of
exhilaration caused by um mainly in my
experience caused by just like breaking
new ground especially in meditation
where you're making progress that is
significant enough that it's that it's
your mind isn't really you know your
mind is pleasurably you know it's EXC
excited essentially it's a kind of
excitement so that's that's my my
understanding of the
situation um and I'm sure there's going
to be some Buddhist Scholars out there
who would say that uh I don't know what
the hell I'm talking about at least uh

with regard to some of it but I do think

PT is is not exactly the same as Suka

although I it could be a a variety of

Suka that is singled out in this case

so anyways I'm just going to move on to

uh panov's thirdd

question which is is Viria and Adon are

really different because they seem quite

similar and again this is comparing two

like polytechnical

terms Vira and Adana they're both

parames so they're they're they're

definitely considered separate and they

they really are separate because

UA it means something like arer

or I mean literally it means something

like manly effort because it's the the

ve in in the word Viria comes from the

the Proto Indo-European root that means

man you know like in the English word

virile or trium vate you know the the

rule of three

men so I mean it means like strenuous

effort or strenuous energy directed

towards practice whereas Adana means

determination it's like it's like you

make up your mind you're going to do

something and you just unflinchingly

pursue that course without changing and

so it does mean something different WIA

is more of a it's sort of at the level

of feeling or emotion or just physical

energy whereas adiana is more of a

conceptual intellectual determination to

accomplish something

or the determination to just stay the

course or

whatever yeah so it's like artor versus

determination I mean if you think about

it that way then it they do clearly have

different

meanings so I'm just going to move on to

the next question here and this is from

Fred

and um I don't fully understand this

question

it's the question is can we say a meat

puppet has a spirit

then there's three exclamation No three

question marks and then in all capital

letters it says

shroom and then he had like the little

Emoji of of

mushrooms which I don't understand fully

I don't really get the connection

between mushrooms and the meat puppet

having a spirit unless the meat puet is

is high on

mushrooms but I don't think that Fred

was high on mushrooms not Fred not good

old

Fred anyways I mean if he was high

mushrooms he should have other things to

do than be typing comments and YouTube

videos and so

forth so anyways can we say a meat

puppet has a spirit let's just leave out

the shroom part can we say a meat puppet

has a spirit well of course we can say

it because we just did didn't

we so yeah we can say a meat puppet has

a

spirit um I mean to say that does a a

physical person have a spirit well I

mean the spirit has the physical person

more than the person the physical person

has a spirit it's more true to say the

spirit has the body rather than the body

has a

spirit the spirit comes first you know

mind precedes all

things mind is

Forerunner mind is Chief they are

mindmade that's the first verse of the DAP also the second verse of the DAP is the same

thing so yeah I mean we can say it it it might be a kind of figure of speech or some such but we can certainly say it so I'm going to move on to Fred's second question here which is is liking and respecting women an impediment well it can be depending on how much you like and respect them I mean respect is fine you know neim Koli Baba up there he's he referred to all women as as a ma should be respected just because they're women um in fact there's this one story in uh Miracle of love stories about neim Ki

Baba where he just shows up and visits
um like the son of a devotee who was
also a devotee who was happened to be a
college student so Nim Koli Baba this
this Indian Hindu Baba just shows up at
this this kid's dorm room and he's got
like a pinup picture on the wall and
he's he's kind of easing over
as as soon as as as he can to turn the
picture around because this holy man is
here visiting him and neim croly Baba
just says don't do that she's a ma you
should show respect because you know
they're they're all like manifestations
of of the cosmic mother or
something but anyways respecting women
just not just women in particular just

respect itself tends to be a wholesome
mental state liking women I mean that's
not necessarily bad either it's just
depending on what kind of liking it
is um you know if you've got like this
obsession with with big milky titties or
something then yeah that that could be a
problem at least ethically from a
Buddhist point of
view um you know it might be a kind of
obstacle or hindrance to becoming
enlightened especially going with like
the ancient Indian approach of you have
to have be a radical renunciant
aesthetic Saint to become enlightened
then yeah that's that kind of liking for

women liking women just because they're
women and not just liking them because
they're just another embodied spirit so
to speak a fellow embodied Spirit just
another manifestation of of
Consciousness in a
way that uh yeah I
mean yeah it depends on on exactly how
you go about liking and respecting women
I think I mean if you're just like sing
on them all the time then it might not
be so good but even then it depends on
the mental States I mean what's called
Sing Now used to be called chivalry you
know it was it was just what guys did
you know Macho guys who were who were
skillful at at you know picking up women

picking up you know aristocratic

women that uh yeah I mean they they'd be

shiverers and courteous and so forth

which nowadays is kind of looked down

upon as as sing although I guess there's

different ways of going about it if it's

like spineless shivalry I guess that

would just be flat out

sing let's see yeah I guess I answered

that question is liking and respecting

women and impediment if that's all

you're doing is liking and respecting

them it doesn't go any farther than that

then I don't see any problem at

all it's just uh how you go about it and

to what degree of like attachment and

clinging and desire is involved in your
liking of women because it's the desire
and attachment that is the problem not
just liking and
respecting so I'm just going to move on
to Fred's thirdd question which is
another one that is a little difficult
to understand which is whaka is hard to
decipher three question
marks and I mean whaka is the fruition
of karma well literally it means the
ripening out of karma
so is that hard to decipher I assume
what he means here is is it hard to
understand what kind of karma your whaka
is the fruition of and yeah that would
be hard to hard to understand I mean

maybe only a fully enlightened Buddha

could really understand

that someone was psychic like profound

psychic powers who's also enlightened

might be able to look into you and see

this is happening to you now because of

something you did as a Japanese peasant

in the 18th

century something like

that but for an ordinary person I mean

the best you can do is just make guesses

at best it would be like educated

guesses but still just

guesses unless it's something really

instantaneous you know if your your car

gets a flat tire and you get out angrily

kick the tire and hurt your foot then
yeah that would be instantaneous Kam we
Paka from angrily kicking the tire so
that wouldn't be too hard to
decipher but generally yeah it it would
be it would be hard to figure out hard
to I mean you couldn't figure it out
you'd have to just like see it directly
with the Divine eye or some such so I'm
just going to move on to the next
question this is from the Proto sudom
mon who also goes by the Alias of Cool
Whip and the Proto sudom monk says does
meditation make you hyp sensitive
and if hypers sensitive just means more
sensitive like more
perceptive then yeah it can it

definitely can like if your meditation is going really well you might start noticing things that you usually don't notice like blinking and swallowing your own slobber and the feel of your clothing brushing against your skin when you move things like that that yeah it would make you more sensitive to that sort of thing because you're more aware of what's going on around you with regard to sensitive in the in the sense of like getting offended easily or getting your feelings hurt easily then I would say no it' be probably going in the opposite direction you wouldn't offend or get your feelings hurt as

easily because you'd be seeing

everything as phenomena you'd be

detached from it to some degree at least

if you're doing good Buddhist Meditation

there's all different kinds of

meditation and the dogs being friendly

to

me so let's see so I guess I answered

that question I really shouldn't be

spending 15 minutes on each question

because then I mean this is this would

turn into a marathon so I guess I'm just

going to move on to Proto pseudo Monk's

second question which is the divine

grace

misconception if nibana has no cause

then what is the Monk's life

for well nibana has no cause because if
it had a cause then it would be
conditioned and it would be impermanent
and conducive to suffering and that
that's not
nibana so all you can do you live the
Monk's life to increase your odds of it
happening increasing your availability
to it happening like like I've said
before with regard to Krishna mury
saying you you can open the window but
you cannot force the wind to blow in but
it's certainly not going to blow in
unless the windows open so you just get
things in order make yourself empty and
re receptive or just receptive and then

it's more likely that the

paradoxical Enigma of

Enlightenment can happen it's it's more

possible but you can't make it happen

because any kind of making is karma

karma literally can mean

making so karma just leads to more karma

karma leads to fruition of Karma and uh

that's not nibana nibana is not the

fruition of karma it's not the result of

an

action so it's it's like a paradox

because you're dealing with two

different levels of reality we got this

level of reality where causation happens

and then you got Ultimate Reality where

there is no

causation and the interface or whatever
you want to call it you know the the
transition from one level to the other
it's going to be paradox iCal because
it's just it's no longer contained
within the realm of like rationality for
example so the the Mon's life is for
increasing your odds of becoming
enlightened and also just increasing
your
wisdom and happiness in
general so even if you don't become
fully enlightened still at
least you've gathered up Treasures in
Heaven you've you've cultivated wisdom
you've cultivated you know moral

virtue and you're going to have positive

results from

that so I'm going to move on to Proto

sudo monk third and next question is it

true that only

an I almost uh said the wrong thing here

is it true that only an ordained monk

can become an Arun all Terra monks seem

to promote this idea I don't see why

this metaphysical law conflating

conventional and Ultimate Reality could

be true even if you disagree with

Orthodox could you please clarify the

logic of this alleged Monopoly on aans

ship yeah it is true that according to

Orthodox

terava um it doesn't say that only an

ordained monk can become an Aran because there were cases like Bahia in the udana udana 110 he was not an ordained Buddhist monk but he became enlightened and then he died a violent death shortly thereafter so the idea in Terra the official position of terada is if you become enlightened you you'd better become an ordained monk really fast because it's like the vessel of a lay person or the vessel you know the the bodily vessel of a non-ordained non-Buddhist is just too impure to contain Enlightenment it just causes too much of a conflict in natural order or natural law or some such so that it's just an

unstable situation that it just gets
removed from the world because it just
cannot I mean it's just too unstable
apparently but I think the actual the
real reason why Terra has this idea is
just it's like Pro Terra Auto
bias that you know it's like
Christianity some schools of
Christianity think that they have a
monopoly on Heaven that you only if you
are a Christian or only if you belong to
this this denomination of Christianity
do you have any chance of getting into
heaven you know Islam is like that the
Book of Mormon says the same kind of
stuff um and Terra Buddhism at least
they're open-minded enough to admit that

you know any good person can get into heaven but full Enlightenment nibana itself still I mean you got to be a terab Buddhist or at least a good Buddhist who doesn't have pernicious wrong
View and ordained you know you got to be following vinan have purified yourself sufficiently that you can you know contain the immensity of enlightened mental States so to
speak so let's see is it true that only an ordained monk can become an arant no I don't think that that's true and even in Orthodox tradition uh someone who isn't an ordained monk can become an ARA

but they better ordain

as fast as they can or they're going to

die

so I think I I think I explained the

logic of that both from the Orthodox

point of

view and from my own personal point of

view so I'm just going to move on to the

next

question and this is from

catchup or to be a little more little

more correct here it's ketchup

6014 and and catchup 6014 says harmony

question I want the best meditation I

can use throughout the day that a

beginner can do this is where I'm at now

if it doesn't make sense that's okay any

critiques I think too much and then he's
got Harmony meditation and then I assume
what follows is like a mantra that he
repeats as his meditation and it goes
aware Focus sense sink deep body space
atoms cloud cloud body open window
breath energy body breathe aware Cloud
middle of head focal point body focal
point entire breath no mark on Space
hold let go gold smooth no pain soft
practice and that's his meditation
apparently and
I mean if it works for him then I mean
more power to him um I do think that
it's a little wordy for a meditation I
mean you're not going to get very deep

with it I mean you're not going to get

jna like going with the Orthodox

interpretation of

Janna um I mean if you could do it

mindfully like if you're mouthing the

words quietly as you meditate just be

aware of the movements of the of your

mouth when when you're doing it that

sort of

thing

um but it does kind of remind me that I

mean in one of ROM Do's books he was

talking about how the Tibetan Buddhists

come up with mantras that are uniquely

tailored to cultivate a certain mental

state and they had one Mantra that they

did just to get the feel of what it's

like to be an American and the Mantra
went let's see please please sorry thank
you please please sorry thank you please
please sorry thank you just over and
over again and that was supposed to get
you into kind of an American sort of
vibe so it may be that uh catch up here
by going through this list of words and
phrases I assume that's that it's a kind
of Mantra um it does have certain
statements in here like uh entire breath
or body focal point that could be sort
of a
abbreviated kind of different sort of
practice than Mantra you know the entire
breath obviously if you're doing anapon

you're trying to be aware of the entire breath and like the the pauses between the breaths you know you're supposed to try to be aware of the process as completely as you can

manage um so let's let's get up any critiques yeah I would say that it's a little wordy that if if you are just going to do a mantra then uh it's good to have it a little more limited than that um but other just standard Buddhist meditations also work well but you you'd have to experiment with them you know just experiment with meditation on the breath experiment with like a short Mantra like budo is one of the main ones in terraa especially in Thailand um know

the 32 parts of the body that has a lot of mental work in it that you you just divide it up into groups of five mostly and just you know head hair body hair nails teeth skin you know just kind of visualize it when you're doing that see if that works for you meta meditation a lot of you can find teachers of meta meditation pretty easily I think um I mean if you have to think a lot because you can't quiet your mind down much I mean you might even want to uh uh follow like guided meditations get a good guided meditation recording I assume they've got on YouTube I'm pretty sure they do so I mean there's there's

different things you can

do but uh yeah this is uh I mean it's

it's not going to be a very deep

meditation even if you get really good

at it because you're trying to get the

Mind quieter if you're G to if you're

going to

meditate but I mean if it works for you

then that's

fine so the second question ketchup

6014 second question question here is

should I change my name from Echo 9 to

ketchup 6014 and I think he already

did

so I think I think you're already catch

up 6014 because that's how you've uh

that's how you've got your name on on

these questions

here but uh I don't think it really

matters all that much Echo 9 or catchup

6014 or you know whatever Steve maybe

so yeah I mean that's entirely up to you

that's your call I really don't have any

skin in that game either so whether

ketchup 6014 should change his name or

you know the the Israel Gaza conflict I

mean I really don't have a dog in either

fight so I'm just going to move to the

next question here and this is from

Wayne and Wayne says what are your

thoughts on the cheetah or the knowing

mind some John say it's one of the six

elements and that it's Eternal and

nibana occurs when greed hate and
delusion are all uprooted therefore no
more craving no more rebirth is this the
current the correct view of interva
Buddhism and no it's really not I mean
it's it's a common idea in Thailand
partly because Thai aons tend not to be
like really like scholarly and dogmatic
like in Burma in Burma you cannot
deviate from Orthodoxy whereas in
Thailand some really famous and
respected aons um do in fact deviate
quite a lot from from terraa
Orthodoxy and um for aan to say that the
cheetah or the knowing mind is one of
the six elements and that it's Eternal
and theana occurs when greed hate and

delusion are all uprooted well I mean
that last part's fine but uh to say that
cheetah is one of the six elements I'm
not sure what the other five would be
unless it would be earth water Wind Fire
and maybe ether so that's yeah that's
not terraa that's certainly not Orthodox
Terra and the whole idea of you've got
the the Mind itself or Consciousness is
what sees you know you got seeing which
is you know a process but the one who
sees the one who knows that is the
cheetah and that's really not Orthodox
terraa either although it's fairly
common in Mahayana Buddhism and in way
it's it's moving towards vant like the

upanishads where you've got the Atman
which is ultimately formless
Consciousness which is also God God also
is like infinite formless Consciousness
and you know it's like your oton is is
the one who knows the one who sees you
know you got SE
taking place but the one who sees is
like the soul or you know in here in
according to this it's the cheeta or or
mind cheah literally means essentially
mind mentality but technically like in
Abid dama it literally means
Consciousness which would be a synonym
for the word wiana which is the usual
word that means Consciousness in
poly so

my thoughts on the cheetah or the knowing mind in a way they're kind of reifying Ultimate Reality trying to put Ultimate Reality into words and explaining it and describing it and it's a relatively wise if you're going to do that then this is a relatively wise good way of doing it but early Buddhism avoided as much as possible reifying the absolute reifying Ultimate Reality so there are some fragments to be found in the sutas that declare that nibana itself or clearly implying that nibana itself is infinite formless Consciousness but uh that kind of fell by the wayside as Orthodoxy was

developed and so now it's considered to

be wrong

View and the whole idea of six elements

I

mean that that's that's way that's

there's really nothing in early Buddhism

to support the idea that there are six

elements um not that I've seen I mean

I've heard you've got earth water Wind

Fire ether and mind but that's that's

more of a Mahayana View and it may be

that Thai Buddhism has more Mahayana

elements to it than Burmese Buddhism

does

so um yeah I mean the question here is

is the the correct view in terava

Buddhism and um no it's really not

Orthodox except for this last part where
nibana occurs when greed hate and
delusion are all uprooted therefore no
more craving no more rebirth yeah I mean
that's yeah I mean no more craving
that's that's like uh the third Noble
Truth the cessation of craving results
in the cation of suffering which is
nibana so
yeah yeah so that last part would be
Orthodox but everything that came before
it would be unorthodox it would not be
like official doctrine of terab Buddhism
but it there are quite a few wise
meditation Masters in Thailand who adopt
that point of view um partly because

their own personal experience kind of

bears it out and maybe partly because of

like latent vestigal Mahayana Buddhist

elements in Tha

culture so I think I'm just going to

move on to next question here and this

is from Elias and

Elias um he's responding to something

that I said in a previous video in that

I said that faith is delusion because

Faith essentially it means that you

think you know something that you don't

really know you know belief in general

is illusion because belief isn't the

same as

knowledge you know if you believe

something you don't necessarily know it

you just believe it and that's like
Faith so throughout most of my life I've
considered Faith to be kind of
delusional because it's just the kind of
belief in which you think that you know
something you don't really know so
anyways Elias says thinking that you
know something that you don't know you
know quote unquote well why do you
believe in karma and rebirth then and I
don't really believe in karma and
rebirth uh to the extent that I really
just think it's true it's more of a
working
hypothesis so it's not like I'm just
vehemently insisting that it's it's true

in fact I don't think that any statement
you can say in words is ultimately going
to be true it's all just going to be
conventional truth anyway and not
ultimate
truth but with regard to something like
rebirth
yeah I mean I've I've said over and over
again in in my videos that uh you know
there's no way to prove it one way or
the other and that it's uh it's a
working
hypothesis with regard to Karma I mean
some aspects of karma you can experience
directly like if karma is volition to
the extent that there's volition to that
same extent there is karma because they

are identified as each other in Po in
the poly texts Karma is volition
so if if you believe that volition
exists then by that same token you would
believe that Karma exists because they
are identical according to Buddhist
philosophy or at least according to the
sutas the Abid Scholars have it a little
more complicated than that but even in
Abid dama karma is mainly
volition and then also with regard to
Karma being the automatic pilot you know
it's just the The Habit energy that all
ows us to do things without being fully
awake you just learn to do something
like driving a car and then you just do

it just through knee-jerk
reflex as just a kind of habit and it
means that you don't have to wake up
completely and you can be in a
semiconscious stuper and still go
through your life the way most people go
through their lives all the
time and so that's that's karma is just
this habit energy that run that acts as
an autopilot that just moves us through
life without us having to be fully
awake so that aspect of karma is fairly
obvious at least to me so when you're
getting into the metaphysical aspects of
it then yeah it had to be like a working
hypothesis so I guess I answer that
question and so I'm going to move on to

the next question which is the very last
question and uh yeah we're we're going
to be under the wire probably less than
three hours here which is
nice because this is my weekend you know
I don't want to be just sitting here in
front of a a camera all weekend you know
what I'm saying so anyways the last
question is from the Arya sasti project
and the Arya sasti project says if
you're sitting on the train and the
person across the aisle stinks like [__]
is it the fault of your nose or the foul
Fender so I it seems like uh he he
experienced this recently but I mean
it's not your noses fault certainly not

the fault of your nose if you're
smelling something
stinky uh but if you're smelling
something stinky that's the fruition of
your own Karma so yeah it would be your
own it'd be your own damn fault in in a
like a deeper metaphysical level going
with Buddhist philosophy and and the
concept of Karma and comma we Paco our
karmic fruition although for the person
to stink that's their own doing so
that's that's kind of the way karma is
supposed to work is let's say somebody
punches you in the nose when they're
punching you in the nose they are making
some new Bad Karma for themselves but at
the same time it's you for you

subjectively it is the fruition of your

own

Karma so it's it's dovetailed their

karma and your karma just fit together

in this miraculous

manner because they couldn't punch you

in the nose unless it was your karma to

get punched in the

nose

so let's say there's a person who's very

stinky who's sitting on the train well I

mean that's their own doing for them to

be like like completely negligent in

personal bodily hygiene or maybe they

couldn't help it they just crapped

themselves you know but then for you to

smell that I mean that's on you I mean
what happens to you is yours you know
your comma is your own you are creating
your own
reality so yeah it's like for the person
to be stinky is is their fault but for
you to be smelling it is ultimately your
own fault and that's it that that's
that's it by golly I just answered all
the questions or at least I hope I did
and if you got any questions you think I
can answer don't be shy you just go
ahead and ask no more than three please
which everyone has done in this this Q&A
which is very nice of
them so anything you think I can answer
like Buddhist philosophy what early

Buddhism was like meditation

monasticism southeast Asia me personally

that sort of thing just philosophy in

general maybe even a little biology

although don't ask me about bonobos

because there's really not much to be

said about it um

just leave your question in the in the

comments below or if you have access to

subscribe star you can leave them there

on my subscribe to our Channel if you

have access to the Discord server you

can ask them there and uh let's see you

my URL links I I don't know if if

YouTube will even let me show my URL

links yet it's been more than two months

but uh I'm still being punished for

having answered a question too too

honestly I

think about more than two months ago now

so ask your questions and like the video

If you haven't uh liked it already and

subscribe if you haven't already and be

happy

okay I think we're

recording oh wait I gotta do

this okay that uh I just eliminated the

Reverb I

hope so hello and welcome to episode 91

of question and answer I am your host

poo basa and I'm all set for some

difficult questions today because some

people have asked some difficult

questions

and so I've got the cup of hot coffee

right

here I got the emergency backup can of

lukewarm energy

drink I got the dirty

socks let's see I got the

Chopstick I got the bag of charcoal and

we're ready to

go

so first

question I know I'm forgetting to say

something that's really important that I

should be saying right now but I'm not

saying it because I don't remember to

say it so the first question is from

covac and sead Zeda and his question is

why do you say Enlightenment might not

mean anything in a samsaric context when

the suas Clearly say it is the absence

of greed hate and delusion maybe you

don't agree with that well the suit to

say all kinds of things

so from the like the Orthodox Terra

Vaden point of view you know there's
just this clear demarcation between
enlightened and unenlightened you know
once the person's enlightened they are
just unequivocally just empirically
qualitatively
enlightened and it says here that
Enlightenment is the absence of greed
hate and delusion although if you read
the sutas you will see that even an
enlightened being will seem to appear to
have greed hate and illusion there is
still the outward semblance of greed
hate and illusion and the dogs are
snaring and snarfing and doing all kinds
of things you guys calm down oh it's

just one there just one dog lying on her
back rolling around snarfing stop it
here say hi to say hi she says hi look
at the camera look at the camera there
okay now go do something
quiet so anyways you know the Buddha
himself self you know he'll be referring
to people as you and that person and
this other person which is I mean that
would be delusional from the Orthodox
point of view um if if one was taking
that seriously so there's still like the
outward semblance of greed hate and
illusion the Buddha still had
preferences at least from an outward
observer's observations of him you know
he still preferred quiet to noise for

example so so outwardly there is still
the semblance of greed hate and delusion
so still at the samsaric level one could
argue that there's still is a certain
amount of greed hate and delusion even
in a fully enlightened being even in a
sasam
Buddha because
Enlightenment is essentially going off
the scale the enlightened part of your
mind is not Som
soric so the text can say that there's
just this straightfor demarcation
between enlightened and unenlightened
but I just don't see that and if you
read the text I mean there's Buddhas in

the past have given given speeches or

doat talks I guess it'd be called

causing literally billions of people to

become fully enlightened

orans if you read the uh commentary to

the the Buddha wsa for example you you

you find all kinds of stories like that

so just because the text says

something is uh it does it's not exactly

proof we're going to get to this later

like you know what is uh like a genuine

Criterion for truth and scriptural

Authority is not is not

that but since Buddhism is in a way it's

advertised as you know the way way to

become enlightened then obviously you

have to have you know clear examples in

the text of people who became

enlightened starting with the Buddha

himself

but it all depends on how you look at

it so I mean an unenlightened person he

looks at an enlightened being and all

he's seeing is another unenlightened

being whereas an enlightened being could

look around maybe and see that everyone

else is enlightened too

so this is kind of a maybe not the best

question to start off on because

generally I have to work up a little bit

of momentum you know I don't have full

momentum going until like three or four

questions deep into this thing and here

I am getting hit with this question but
I do try to answer questions more or
less in chronological
order so let's see I'll just read this
question one more time why do you say
Enlightenment might not mean anything in
any s saric context yeah and also like
for example Paul low who has a
reputation for being fully
enlightened uh he just says you know
there is no state of Enlightenment you
know this is it he's got a a chapter in
one of his books it's called This is it
you know this
is you know there is no state of
Enlightenment other than just being
completely present in the present moment

kind of a deal

but uh yeah I mean if you do look at the text you see that enlightened being still have a semblance of greed hate and delusion like neem cly Baba up there in my opinion he could he could be fully enlightened being but still I mean he laughed he cried he roared he bellowed he hit people he did all kinds of things which from like an orthodox teror vaden's point of view would be no that disqualifies immediately or even ramanam Mahari who is much more saintly of a person with a a reputation for being a fully enlightened being but even so he worshiped a hill like almost the only

thing he actually wrote was devotional

hymns to this hill called

arunachala which would seem kind of

delusional to people who are not

devotees of Shiva who considered

arunachala to be sacred to the god

Shiva so

yeah I do I do think that Enlightenment

it's just it's not a samsaric

phenomenon that it's it's like a

Transcendence of samsara and that's

that's one reason why you're enlightened

because you're no longer stuck in

samsara but uh I don't know maybe maybe

you should ask this question again like

a few days after a Q&A so that it won't

be the first question so I won't be like

getting my stride going on on on that
question so I'm just going to move on to
seac and C Z's next question I'm sorry I
probably didn't do justice to that first
question because it is kind of an
important one one would
think but uh as I say I I got human
limitations here and I got to build up
my reputation or
reputation momentum I meant to say
momentum and people have noticed it I've
been ing my throat a lot lately which uh
happens in phases it used to happen to
me as a monk sometimes too and drinking
this coffee with milk in it doesn't
really help that because it increases

the amount of mucusy lining in my throat

that causes me to uh want to clear my

throat

more so uh I'm just moving on to seal of

action Cod Zeno second question here if

you had to choose to be a monk in one of

the Buddhist schools in ancient times

which one would you choose well that's

hard to say because I really have only a

superficial understanding of the

different schools of Buddhism that

existed say 200 years after the Buddhist

time you know before Mahayana but when

there were like the 30 schools there's

this you know there were lots of schools

in

India U I would guess maybe Sal Trona

just because they didn't have an

Abid but if I were a man living in you

know ancient Northern India

like 200

years after the time of the

Buddha um in all likelihood just being

realistic I would have joined the school

of Buddhism that just was predominant in

my area because it seems to have been

largely a regional thing you know it was

largely isolation that caused the

evolution of these different sects of

Buddhism you know it's like you couldn't

Communications didn't move any faster

than a monk could walk in those days and

so there was a certain amount of

isolation and it was just sort of like
genetic drift you know the way EV
organic evolution is said to work at
least in some cases where you have an
isolated population they'll just be
drifting in a different direction from
the main population because you know
there's like this Canyon in between them
or some
such
so um yeah I mean ideally you'd be able
to go and check out different schools
and I mean that's what I did before I
became a monk I checked out a few
different places and the one that
resonated the best with my temperament
or my Intuition or whatever was the one

that um that I decided to go

with and it just seemed like it it came

closer to what the Buddha originally

taught so it's hard to say exactly what

school I would uh I would choose if I

could choose between all of the the Sha

Kayana schools that existed before the

Advent of

Mahayana but maybe santica I'm not I'm

not sure that I would choose terraa if

all the other ones existed although I

have read like AK Waters history of

Indian Buddhism he did say that um

terava and also Sal Trona were two of

the most conservative schools the ones

that had the the least amount of

doctrinal innovation

so let's just say cultrona just because

they didn't have an abama for me to

reject so I'll just move on to the next

question

here which is what is the most profound

thing you have ever heard or read and

that's that's another tough question and

it's hard to say because at different

times you know different things are

going to strike you you know you're just

kind of ripe to hear a certain thing and

then you hear it and then boom that

seems like a very profound thing and

then you can come back and read the same

thing 10 years later and it seems kind

of commonplace because you know you've

already absorbed it and integrated it

and it's no longer a mind blower anymore

and now it's something else that's

mindblowing so there have been a lot of

things I've read that really I consider

to be

mindblowing but I can't really pick out

one thing that would be more profound

than anything else like in the atica

waga there's lots of things that are

mindblowing and just by random chance I

haven't have a a little copy of it right

here like for

example let's

see for like the mandasa the third verse

of the mandasa is profound and it is

there is nothing of which I say I
declare this mandia said the blessed one
seized having discriminated from among
the philosophies but looking among the
views not taking hold of anything
examining saw inner
peace and that is I mean it just kind of
kicks most Buddhist Dogma in the head
it's like the Buddha is here saying that
he does not say of anything I declare
this so I mean he's not insisting upon
any point of
view well then just a couple verses
later there's this there's this gem not
by what is viewed not by what is heard
not by Inner knowledge mandia said the
blessed one not nor by morality and

observances is Purity said to be by
absence of what is viewed by absence of
what is heard by non-n knowledge by
immorality by non-observance also not by
that so having let go of these not
taking hold of anything a peaceful one
not being dependent would not have
longings for
existence so that's kind of a mindblower
too but I mean I've come across mind
blower or just profound things so many
times I I think there'd be like
a a tie for first place involving you
know maybe 20 different things that the
the Tibetan book of the great Liberation
also known as The Yoga of knowing the

mind and its nakedness attributed to Padma sambava is a profound text The Diamond Cutter Sutra is a profound text the heart Sutra is a profound text the ataka waga of the sutata is a profound text most Terra sutas however tend to be pretty dry so I mean it's you've got to get over the the the dry style to uh to really get some of the profundity and usually an entire sua will not be profound there'll just be a few statements that can really stand out in in a in a poly text like uh the alagas is in a way it's sort of like a a combination of different things that the Buddha said and some are more profound than others so forth some Zen Coons are

profound like uh one of my favorite ones is tozan 60 blows about this monk I think it was tozan who who came to stay at this Monastery and the Abbott's just kind of checking him out and he's just asking him you know you know where are you from and then tozan just gives like the standard objective answer of you know naming some Monastery and then then the the Abbot asks him you know where did you spend the rains Retreat and toan just gives this standard you know basic answer and then the Abbott says I spare you 60 blows and then he sends them away and tozan apparently I I assume that tozan was the visitor and not the Abbott

if I remember correctly you know he's
just sort of tossing and turning all
night wondering why he was spared 60
blows the day before so the next day he
comes goes to the master and says
yesterday you said you spared me 60
blows you know where was I at fault and
the Abbot just explodes and just starts
saying you know he just starts yelling
at him oh you you are good for nothing
you just wander around from one place to
another and at that moment the the
visiting monk became
enlightened and just contemplating that
is uh for some reason intuitively that
[__] really strikes a cord with me
but I got lots of other questions to

answer here so I think I might as well

uh answer some more questions instead of

uh continuing to

ramble about uh that that other

one yeah it's taken me a while to get

some momentum going I

think drink some more coffee and coat my

throat so the next question is from

pronav

and pranav says how did venerable mahak

kasapa attain

Parana in some other school of Buddhism

it is said that he went to

mount

coap and made a firm determination to

keep his body intact until the coming of

Mata Buddha to hand over the rag robes

that the gatam Buddha gave him on their

first meeting well for starters I would

say that this story here is probably

Apocrypha um for

example you keep keeping his body intact

until the coming of Mata Buddha and I'm

skeptical of the idea that in the

Buddhist time there was already this

this belief in other Buddhas that their

names are already determined and there

there's this long line of of some aam

Buddhist in the past and you know our

Eon happens to have I think it's was it

five or seven

seven I

think and I mean that is just sort of a

a glor it's like

[Music]

devotionalism that is setting Buddhas

way above ordinary enlightened beings

which originally they probably were not

also uh he's trying to keep his body

intact until the coming of Mata Buddha

to hand over the rag robes that gotama

Buddha gave him on their first meeting

it's hardly likely that mahak Kasa would

still have the first set of robes that

he had when he became a monk in fact in

the text it says that mahak kasaba who

was very aesthetic you know he was the

the great disciple of the Buddha who was

outstanding with regard to keeping the

dangas or the optional aesthetic
practices and he would wear a robe and
just keep patching it and patching it
and patching it until it got too heavy
for him to keep wearing and probably get
too heavy to dry out after he wash it
when it's like eight layers of cloth
thick so he'd have to get another robe
so he probably it's very unlikely I mean
cloth just rots anyway in the tropics
and subtropics going through one rainy
season after another after another it
would have it would take some kind of
psychic powers just to keep the his
robes from just rotting off of
him so yeah I would consider that story
in and of itself to be a myth without

much grounding in actual objectivity but the fact is nobody knows exactly how maasa died or at least there's no well-established tradition it might be in some kind of commentarial literature but the poly Tex themselves do not say what happened after mahak Kasa died at least I don't remember it and in Burma there is a national park called Alando Kapa National Park and the belief is that mahak ASA for whatever reason wandered all the way up into Northwestern Burma to die and I mean it would have been hunter gatherers living there probably you know there certainly wouldn't be Buddhists there and uh why

he he went to this cave there's there's
a a cave in the center of the park and
Alando catha National Park the Alando
catha literally means in Burmese the
noble corpse of kasapa because they
believe that there's a cave in the
center of the park and it's kind of
magically sealed most of the time but
sometimes it starts to open a little bit
and there's all these treasures and so
forth inside this inside this cave and
you can go insane if you look in when
it's when it's like open a little bit
and maha's body is inside of that cave
and I I looked at it and it's it looks
like there's this opening may be this
big and it's not really an opening it's

like you got this layer of rock on the
lining of the cave and then there's like
this indentation and there's just like
this flat like a door which is probably
like a another geological stratum that
you know the rock fell away from the
outer geological stratum in that area
leaving another geological
stratum but some people think that that
inner geological stratum it looks like a
door to this more or less circular
indentation in the rock op
sometimes and uh I'm I've never seen it
open and I'm kind of skeptical that it
does open and I'm very skeptical that
mahaka would wander all the way up into

the the

Wilderness of Northwestern Burma which

is still to this day pretty much

Wilderness in order to

die but I stayed in a cave uh about 20

miles north of there and it was it was

like common knowledge

among some superstitious Buddhists in

that area that mahak kaspa did stay in

that same cave that I was staying in uh

at least for one night when he was

walking to to die in the other cave but

uh yeah I don't know even the

commentarial tradition if it does have a

tradition of what happened with mahak

Kasa you know how he died or where he

died or anything like that there's a

good chance it would just be Legends

Legends and myths

so I mean fortunately for us it doesn't

really matter how he died because

there's no way for us to know for sure

anyway so I guess I'll just move on to

panov's second

question which is I mean brov's

questions might have been better for me

to start off the Q&A instead of just

diving right into these profound

metaphysical ones but um panov second

question is C Samar PA or Dona bana

which is better for a Layman and Don

Sila bana is pretty much designed for

Lay people you know there's two

different trinities of practice so to
speak the usual one that you read about
is caar PA which is morality
concentration wisdom you know you purify
your morals which allows you to purify
your concentration which allows you to
purify your wisdom and that's mainly for
m
because terraa Buddhism started off
being mainly for
monks and so most of the teachings in
terada Buddhism are intended for
monks but later on I think this other
Trilogy or
or what is it Trinity of of like uh
regarding practice came up that was more
designed for Lay people which is Donna

Sila bana so Donna means generosity you start off start off being generous especially generous to monks and then you got Sila which is morality and in Buddhism generosity like a positive virtue of you actually doing something is different from CA which is refraining from doing wrong so you can have perfect CA while just sitting there doing nothing um whereas other things like generosity require effort and generally do not fit under the category of celum and then finally after Donna or generosity and Sila or morality you've got bana which is cultivation or development which is mental development

which means primarily meditation you

know like the bana Society is like the

meditation

Society um but it can also mean

cultivating your mind in other ways like

contemplating scriptures and so forth

which might be considered a kind of of

meditation

anyway

so yeah Don Sila bana is is the the

formula designed specifically for Lay

people and Sila Samari PA is the formula

formula designed particularly for

monks and there are

differences uh similar differences like

you've got one set or one formula for

monks and one formula for Lay people or

one interpretation for monks and one
interpretation for Lay people for
example in Burma this commonly
believed that when a lay person takes
ref takes the three refuges in the
Buddha the DH and the SAA the SAA is
just monks and nuns and the nuns
according to the burmes are extinct now
so it's the monks you're taking refuge
in the sa of monks whereas for a monk
when he takes the three refuges of uh
see Buddha dharm and sa the sa is the
Aria s
which ironically includes lay people
because it's anybody who's ever become
an

Arya so they wouldn't even necessarily
be Buddhists because there are non-
Buddhists who have become Aras like bahi
have became enlightened without ever
converting to Buddhism or becoming a a
monk but I mean it all amounts to the
same
thing so I mean whichever works best for
you is
fine and I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from Athena
sigil and Athena sigil says so now that
you're a Layman again will you be reborn
in samsara as you rejected being a biku
and
Enlightenment well I didn't necessarily
reject

Enlightenment you know it's like I it
wasn't when I dropped out of the
monkhood I'm just like screw
Enlightenment I'm not doing that
so uh will I be reborn in samsara well
that's that's yet to be determined we'll
just have to wait and see won't
we but uh although I did essentially
reject being a beu I did not reject
wisdom or Enlightenment or any such
thing I just got as far as I could with
being a beu and after several years of
not making any re real progress any
discernable progress I decided it's time
to try something
else so will I be reborn in

samsara uh according to Orthodox terraa

it's it's uh extremely

likely but again who knows we'll just

have to wait and

see and so I'll just move on to Athena

sigils next question which is do you

have any favorite biographies of famous

or well-known terraa monks and I've only

read one biography of a terab monk that

I can think of and that's the famous

biography of aan man which was written

by ajan

Mahaba and uh it's surreal it's very

surreal it will stretch the capacity of

belief um for just about any Westerner

who reads it because there's all sorts

of things in there that are very far out

and just flatly contradictory to to uh terod Orthodoxy like ajan mun was having uh like long dead Buddhas and with retinues of hundreds of long Dead arons coming to visit him in his cave for example and I mean it's it's not supposed to work that way it's like once once you're a Buddha and you have died then there's there's no returning to Samara and even if you're just an or AR Aran there's no returning to samsar but um the ties they're not as Orthodox as the Burmese are because they are less scholarly in their studying of terod Orthodox Dogma which has its good points and its bad points but I won't get into

that because I'm just moving on to the

next question which is from TIG and Tig

in addition to

being kind of a a wise guy he's also

kind of a foodie it seems seems like and

so he asked the strange question what is

your favorite

soup and I'm not sure that I even have a

favorite

soup um like oyster stew I I kind of

like haven't had it in a long time my

father used to make a really good oyster

stew but uh it's kind of arguable

whether stew and soup are the same same

goes for like clam chowder I assume clam

chowder like a New England style would

uh be would qualify as soup so maybe

something along those

lines but all in all I don't have a

favorite soup I've never tried to figure

out what my favorite soup is so I'm just

going to move on to the next question

this is from Master Poe and master Poe

says grasshopper there are three facts

to a man one is there is what others

think of you two is there is what you

think of yourself and three there is

what you you truly are of these three

which one is the most true I mean

obviously I mean what is the point of

asking this question it's it should be

plainly obvious that the third one what

you truly are is you know is the most

true I mean how could anything be more

true than what something truly

is I mean it's it's pretty much of a a

self-answer answering

question so yeah what others think of

you and what you think of yourself are

delusional essentially

and then what you truly are is I mean

that's that's it that's the truth right

there so I think uh that was an easy one

to answer so I'm just going to move on

to the next question this is from lib

Lam and Libra Lam

says calvinist Christians have set have

a set of terms and I'm curious how you

would evaluate these differently as far

as being knowable realities they go as

follows the five Solas

are five Latin

phrases that emerged during the

Protestant Reformation in the 16th

century they

are Sola scriptura or scripture alone

the belief that the Bible is the sole

Authority for Christian faith and

practice the second one is solaf or

faith alone the belief that salvation is

attained through faith in Jesus Christ

Alone not by good works or human effort

the third one is Sol gratia or grace

alone the belief that salvation is a

gift from God received by his grace

alone not earned by human Merit then

becomes Solus Christus Christ Alone the
belief that Jesus Christ is the only
mediator between God and humanity and
salvation is found only in him and then
finally you've got so so Deo Gloria or
glory to God Alone this this belief that
all glory and honor belongs to God alone
and everything is ultimately for his
glory so my question is how would you
rank these as far as knowability
goes and this is kind of similar to a
lot of philosophical debate going on in
Ancient India like what is a true
Criterion for
knowledge and of course anyone in a vdic
tradition you know a Hindu or a Proto
Hindu anyone who accepts the vdas as

authoritative would have to put uh

scripture you know as a

reliable Criterion of

truth but I mean there's so many

scriptures I mean which scripture you

know it's it's the scripture of your own

religion

obviously so yeah scriptures can be like

wildly mistaken and so I do not consider

scriptures to be a reliable source of

Truth and then faith alone

I mean most faith is essentially

delusion you know it's believing

something that you don't have sufficient

grounds to really know so you just

believe

it but I mean St John of the Cross did have what he called Dark faith and dark faith it comes from contemplation it's like um according to St John of the Cross you it's like you expel from your mind you dismiss anything that is not God and God cannot be understood intellectually so the intellect goes God cannot be sensed by the the five or six senses you know sense sensory data goes you know God cannot be known through the emotions so the emotion goes God cannot be known through any kind of mental state so all the mental states are dismissed and you wind up with this emptiness but still there's something there and according to St John of the

cross that is you know the presence of God you know God is everywhere the spirit of God pervades the entire universe so you can get rid of all of your mental States and so long as you're still awake you're still conscious you're having a mystical experience then you realize that even after you dismiss all the mental States there's still something in your mind and that is a kind of dark Faith it's it's sort of it's not even really Faith anymore it's it's like this knowledge but it's not intellectual knowledge so I mean aside from like dark faith of St John of the Cross then faith

also is

no reliable Criterion of Truth you know

the Jehovah's Witnesses have faith in

Jehovah's Witnesses them but that

doesn't make it true for

example so let's see soltia grace alone

well that one's kind of

problematic because if it was Grace

alone and I mean you can't do anything

to become enlightened for example

then you'd think it would just be like a

random it'd be like winning the lottery

but even even Christians who believe

this don't believe that because still

you have to be God has to find you more

worthy than others in order to pick you

out as as going to heaven or being saved

or whatever so that one's kind of
problematic so as Christus Christ Alone
of course that doesn't hold any water at
all to anyone who is not a
Christian um although there are some
Buddhists who would have you know
soulless Buddhas you know Buddha alone
you know you have to believe in in go a
Buddha or you're not getting
there uh so yeah I mean that that goes
along with faith or scripture I mean
that I don't see how that one is I mean
to a non-Christian I mean that
is it's it's not different from at least
one of the other ones and then solely de
Gloria glory to God Alone

um yeah belief that all glory and honor
belongs to God Alone everything is
ultimately for his glory I I don't even
see how that is a Criterion for
salvation unless it's just praising God
is what gets you
there but uh yeah in a way like yearning
for God or yearning for for the absolute
yearning for the highest I mean that
definitely has power in fact um Paul low
that I mentioned just uh a number of
minutes ago go was saying that really
that's that's really how you become
enlightened is you want Enlightenment
more than you want anything else you
know you just burning for it but you
there's nothing you can really do to get

it and so you just want it with all your
heart and all your strength and then you
just do nothing about
it and somehow that makes you ripe for
it or or
something so let's see there's a
question here after all this uh Preamble
and introductory material and all that
how would you rank these as far as
knowability goes well the only one that
I consider to be of any value really
would be faith and that would only be
like St John of the cross's dark Faith
which is essentially a mystical
experience where you're you're you're
aware of the presence of the absolute or

Divinity or just pure formless

Consciousness or whatever you want to

call

it so so I mean it does leave out other

things like this is talking about

criteria for salvation I guess whereas

like in ancient Indian philosophical

text they're wanting to know truth and

so like empiricism would definitely be

on the list I mean if you get I mean

short of mystical experiences empiricism

would probably be your best um Avenue to

understanding something that can pass

for truth anyway

but uh appeals to Authority is not going

to do it scripture is not going to do it

I mean just Faith which is just sort of

you know wanting to

believe um yeah that alone is not going

to do it Grace kind of but still there's

got to be something else involved other

than just Grace because it's really not

a lottery you know all sentient beings

it's not just they're being picked at

random by somebody

which ones are going to uh become

enlightened or

not so yeah I'd put mysticism at the top

empiricism below that which isn't even

one of the options in the rest of these

I mean the the divine grace one is just

sort of in its own category off to the

side because I mean it it can be a

factor in a sense I mean I even I as a
Buddhist have a certain appreciation for
the idea of divine div Grace because
there's nothing you can do to make
yourself be enlightened because anything
that you do is Karma and Karma does not
lead to Enlightenment Karma just leads
to the fruition of Karma and more
karma and Enlightenment is not the
fruition of
karma so golly I don't I don't even know
if I answered this question how would I
rank those as far as no ability goes and
no
ability
[Music]
um yeah I think I'm confusing no ability

with just the whole idea of what is a an
authentic source of genuine knowledge
this knowability is I mean how well can
you know these then yeah I guess I guess
I kind of answered that sort of so I
think I'm just going to move on to uh
Libra Lamb's next
question and this is kind of a weird one
Libra lamb says I work maintenance
sometimes and had a situation where I
had to remove two bird nests one Nest
had three eggs and one had five
birdlings I had to get rid of them
somehow and resolve to stomp on the one
with the birdlings because I had been
speaking recently about this topic and

had previously resolved to do that
exactly in this sort of situation as I
was going out to kill them I showed them
to a coworker and she asked what I was
going to do and I told her truthfully
she decided she wasn't having that and
insisted that I put the nests in the
woods so they die of exhaustion or
natural processes considering I was
prepared to do it but was spared by
synchronicity do you think it may have
been minor Bad Karma not to kill them
since I chose to let her do it her way
knowing it would probably be worse for
the birdlings and could have been and I
could have been more assertive so Libra
Lam here is asking if it's like

immorality and not stomping on baby
birds did he do something wrong by not
stomping on baby
birds that's
weird so I mean yeah you're going to
have a certain amount of Bad Karma no
matter what you do you're going to make
be making a certain amount of Bad Karma
Buddhist ethics are extremely fine-tuned
and it's virtually impossible to do
anything that's pure good now even just
to believe that you exist while you're
doing something even if you're thinking
I'm doing this that's delusional and so
I mean there's a certain amount of
delusion motivating your behavior or at

least integrated with your behavior and
so you're going to be getting a certain
amount of Bad Karma so this is a KN in
scenario I mean if you went ahead and
stomped on the baby birds I'm sure You'
get bad karma for that too and but just
being stopped from stomping on baby
birds um you have a certain regret that
you didn't get the stomp on them or you
just you know they're going to die more
slowly and painfully you know I I'm not
I'm not trying to badmouth Liber Lam
here I mean he was trying to do what was
the most merciful I think you know just
instantaneous squish instead of slowly
you know
being you know probably there's a good

chance they would have got eaten by crows like eaten alive by crows or something crows do raid other birds nests and eat baby birds and Stu so forth so yeah I mean there may have been minor Bad Karma not to stomp on them but they probably would have been more Bad Karma to actually stomp on the baby birds so I mean it's kind of a no- win scenario remember a long time ago there was this uh German nun who was the the board of directors of the monastery was trying to kick her out of the monastery and it just wasn't working at all everything they did this failed you know it's it's like Democrats trying to

destroy Trump you know it just keeps
making him stronger and more popular so
anyways they were taking all of the
stuff out of her room and then locking
the room from the outside and putting
all of her stuff into the garage just to
let her know you can't stay here anymore
you got to go and and she just moved out
into a tent in the
backyard but I remember when they were
doing that there was one a member of the
board of directors was standing nearby
and she was saying it's sometimes it's
hard to know you know what's the right
thing to do and I remember saying
sometimes there is noong there is no
right thing you just have to choose

between two wrong ones and that's kind
of the situation of of living in the
world that's one reason why monks
renounce the world because it reduces
the odds of you being stuck in a
predicament where you have to choose
between you know the lesser of two evils
instead of just avoiding Evil all
together
so yeah I suppose the correct Buddhist
thing to do aside from just refusing you
know risking your job over you know
refusing to tear down a bird nest of
baby birds in it would be just take them
down um my sweetheart advised and I
think this would probably be what I

would try to do too if it were feasible
is you just take the nest and you put it
somewhere else that's like within sight
so that when the the parent birds come
back to the nest they don't find the
nest you know they can look around they
can hear the baby birds
cheaping um you know and then they'll be
able to find the their babies and maybe
uh continue to to raise them because
baby birds grow pretty fast it shouldn't
take more than about two weeks before
they're able to
fly so yeah that's that would be my
first option to even try to do it but
you know there's no telling what kind of
environment it is you don't know I don't

know whether that would have been
feasible but yeah I don't think I could
bring myself to the stomp on baby
birds yeah so I think I'm just going to
move on to the next question here this
is from
Dan and this question has been asked
before but I guess you know if people
keep asking essentially the same
question you know it's shame on them for
not just carefully going through all 90
of my previous Q&A videos so that they
can already know which questions have
been addressed but I mean it does help
you know it's questions that a lot of
people want to know the answer to so I

guess it's good to answer the same
question more than once because people
have crappy memories anyway you know
like you can give a doat talk and you'll
be lucky if the the hearers walk away
with like one or two points from
it you know some people just listen to
domat talks as a kind of entertainment
where they're hardly listening to the
words at all they're just kind of
soaking in the Good Vibes or something
so anyway Dan says you mentioned eart
TOA on your q&as a few times do you
think this TOA is a legit enlightened
person I tried to listen to him once and
quickly discovered that I'm already
heard all this nothing new here then I

was curious as to how much he charges

for his talks

$250,000 and more I just tell people to

try alen Watts or ROM Doss out save your

money but what the [__] I guess all long

as the word gets out if it helps

meta well I have discussed this before

like what do you do about people like

eart TOA who claim to be enlightened or

are claimed by others to be fully

enlightened and you know he's a lay

person I think he's married he's got

lots of money you know can he really be

enlightened and I've read his first book

in The Power of Now and he does say a

few things that I'd never heard before

like women identify mainly with their pain body I'd never heard of a pain body before where he came up with this I don't know I mean women kind of identify with their feelings more than men do men identify with their thoughts more than women do if you will if you will forgive the sexist stereotype I just uttered but that does seem to be the case and so I mean he had some kind of experience had some kind of Awakening experience whether he's fully enlightened or not or whether he's just at a higher level of Consciousness and misinterpreting that to think that he's fully enlightened you know maybe like I was discussing uh Daniel Ingram in the

previous Q&A and I mean I don't think
eart toah is a deliberate fraud Daniel
Ingram I can't say but eart toah I mean
he had some kind of experience and it
was like um some kind of Awakening
experience a mind expanding
experience and whether he's fully
enlightened or not I really cannot
say I mean how can you say with regard
to anybody I mean you can't know for
sure that godma Buddha was fully
enlightened I mean it's a can very
convenient working hypothesis for
Buddhists um but you can't really prove
it one way or the other Ian you could be
GMA Buddha could be standing right in

front of you and you still wouldn't be

able to know for sure if he was

Enlighten being I mean might be

convinced just out of Faith or something

or awe or some such

thing but you can't really know for

sure because I mean in this world there

really is

no completely genuine Criterion for

truth I mean you can't really know the

truth in Sam

Sor so to speak maybe maybe one could

come up with uh exceptions or

something but two and two and four two

and 2 equal 4 2 + 2al 4 yeah that's even

that's dubious I mean two what plus two

what and where is this multiplicity

coming from maybe multiplicity isn't
real and then it's just a complete
abstraction if you just say 2 plus 2al 4
it's a total abstraction that does not
apply to reality unless you apply it to
something then it's two what plus two
what equals four what and then you got
to know whether the the two apples for
example really exist and that's
problematic but I'm I'm just wandering
way the hell away from artola at this
point
so yeah he did say a few things that I'd
never heard before like the pain body
thing or a CA in his first book also
pointed out that uh I mean this probably

isn't original to him but it you don't hear it very often that almost all animals are already fully enlightened except for a few like domesticated animals that have acquired neurotic I almost tried to say neurosis and neurotic at the same time and it came out

neurotic like they you know they've got some kind of neurosis from their human owners and so they become unenlightened but uh yeah that's certainly not a Buddhist teaching that all animals are already enlightened although I can kind of understand what he's talking about especially something like a Copa pod you know some kind of Plankton out in the

ocean they I mean they don't have any

greed hate or delusion probably they

don't have much Consciousness either for

that

matter

so yeah but getting back to aarta again

for like the the fourth time at this

point yeah I

mean um I really don't know if Tola is a

legit enlightened person and like the

very first question was referring to I'm

not sure that there is such a thing as a

legit enlightened person in a samsaric

context in this within the context of

this world you know at least at the very

least they're going to seem to still

have greed hate and

delusion

so yeah I mean he's he's not bad to

listen to he's got a lot of YouTube

videos that you can listen to for free

you don't have to pay pay through the

nose to get a ticket to see him

person see but yeah I just don't know I

can't say for

sure so I'm just going to move on the

next question this is from Ry balder and

Ry balder says what do you think came of

the gondan dhag gupa school of early

Buddhism and the dhag gupa school was

one of the like the 30 schools that that

arose after the time of the Buddha but

before Mahayana came along and

I don't remember whether it was on the stava side or the the mahasa side of the first Schism but it was an ancient School of Buddhism and what became of it in all likelihood is it was wiped out by Muslims
because uh like Central Asia was all Buddhist most of India was Buddhist and by the time Buddhism was going into China I mean there were some obscure like early schools that got into China in fact I've been told that technically there's still um Mula a sarasti Vada monasteries in Japan except it has just drifted so far away from the original sarvastivada that it more

closely resembles Mahayana then suras

but around the the old capital city of

Nara in Japan there are still a few

nominally sarasti V monasteries or so I

have

readed and so with regard to Dharma Tica

Central Asia got converted to Islam

either willingly or by force and then

India I mean Buddhism pretty much just

got

genocided by Muslim

Turks and uh so I mean they didn't they

weren't on an island like the Terra

vadens were and so I mean the Muslims

didn't have a Navy at the time or at

least not one that was uh in a position

to invade Sri Lanka

and so the terad survived whereas some
of the other schools like the dhag gupa
did not survive although now now that
I'm talking about this um I do think
that there was a civilization in Burma
called the Pew civilization who were
also tibeto Burmese like the Burmese
they were there before the Burmese um
migrated into the plains of upper Burma
and somehow it recalls a theory that
they may have been Dharma goop to
Buddhists but it just died out the Pew
civilization um was overpowered by the
burmes civilization which was terad at
the time and so they just got out
competed in the places where they

weren't just flat out exterminated by

Islam or by

Muslims so yeah it got it went

extinct is essentially what happened to

it

and it does cause some consideration of

you know why was it that terraa survived

it wasn't just luck you know good karma

I

suppose anyways I'm moving on to the

next question here this is from

Robert and Robert says I am doing

philosophy of mind at

University what is the Buddhist view of

mind and body is it

dualist or pans psychist I'm trying to

figure out what on ological view would

allow

rebirth besides dualism thanks from

South

Africa

well different schools of Buddhism are

going to have different answers to the

question of you know the Mind Body

problem like um most Mahayana Buddhists

just reject physical matter you know

it's they idealists they're

philosophical idealists at I mean at

most or at best so so I guess I should

uh back up a little and I used to have a

book on ancient Indian philosophy that

was some kind of college textbook

written by two in two Hindu Indians

Indian professors in India it was
designed specifically or mainly for
Indian universities just to acquaint
them with you know the philosophical
landscape of ancient
India and so it goes over like different
schools
of Hinduism and it goes over Buddhism
although the professors obviously were
relying upon like old polych Society
books to understand Buddhism better talk
about jism talk about the aicas and also
the Char vakas who are like a
materialist philosopher who philosophers
who are not particularly religious at
all in fact I've read that the the Kamas
Sutra vayana is a charvaka text the

first introductory chapter was was
essentially um endorsing charvaka
philosophy or charvaka ethics but
anyways this book it divided Buddhism
interestingly up into four groups based
on their uh their metaphysics or their
their attitude towards mind and
body so you had um one one group was the
sarvas group that considers mind and
body to both be or mind and matter to
both be real and you can know both of
them directly and this is pretty much
the the Orthodox teren point of view the
thing is that in in like medieval early
medieval India when they were having all
these philosophical debates and and you

know the different schools were
denominated and everything you know that
these professors who wrote The Textbook
were addressing Terra had already become
pretty much of a non- entity in Northern
India but it came closest to sarvas
sasada their position according to this
Phil Indian philosophy text was that
mind and body both are real mind and
matter I should say both are ultimately
real and you can know both of them
directly then the next group was the Sal
Trona school I think which was saying
that mind and matter are ultimately real
and you can know mind directly but you
you can know physical matter indirectly
through like logic

inference logical deduction maybe so you can know that matter exists even though you can't know it directly but just through intellect and so forth that's good enough for you to as as proof that it really does exist then above that you've got the yoga charara School of Mahayana Buddhism saying that mind is real matter is not real you can know mind directly you cannot know matter directly and then finally sort of the most extreme view is the maamaa school which is saying that you can't know mind or matter you neither one of them is ultimately
real so take your pick with regard to

the Buddhist view of Mind and Body I

guess I should uh emphasize the Terra

voden View and it's really hard to

explain it exactly because the ancient

text even Abid dama text as far as I

know really can't explain how mind and

body interact very well

well I mean they don't even really they

don't have a concept of the human

nervous system

even

so how do I answer this then what is the

Buddhist view of Mind and Body well I

mean according to terraa Orthodox terraa

mind it's not just mind and body are

ultimately real you've got mind is

ultimately real mental States is

ultimately real and physical matter is
ultimately real so that would be three
instead of two it's not just a Mind Body
problem it's the the Mind mental States
body
problem so it wouldn't even be
dualist but in a way godma Buddha was
sort of like Emanuel Kant in modern
Western philosophy where Emanuel Kant
was a kind of idealist in that you know
he he accepted that there wasn't a thing
in itself out there but he denied that
the the human mind can grasp it or
contact it in any way it can only infer
its existence through all these filters
that are built into the human mind uh

categories I think you call them and so
in a way you know he admitted that
there's physical matter out there but he
made it almost irrelevant you know it's
just redundant it's like so what if it
even exists because you can't know it
directly you can't be sure of of what it
is you know it doesn't really affect
your mind in any way that you can know
for sure so what's the point so a lot of
Kant successors like Hegel and shophow
and so forth they just did away with
with matter allog together and a lot of
Buddhists in in Buddhist Buddhist
schools you know they just did away with
physical matter too because it's largely
irrelevant you know mind is you know

mind precedes all things you know the

first verse of the DAP again you know

mind is the Forerunner mind is Chief

it's all

made

so yeah personally I'm going along the

lines of uh I'm certainly not a

dualist so pan psychist is

Robert's his uh his second choice I mean

he's got two options here dualist or pan

psychist so I'd have to go with pan

psychist because I really do not think

physical matter really exists and even

if you go with my theory of everything

you know the simile of the block of

marble you know it can be that physical

matter is in that block of marble but it

can't differentiate itself because it it

is not

mental so I mean it's it might as well

not exist you know it doesn't even

matter if physical matter really exists

it's just kind of a a pointless

argument because as far as we're

concerned our reality is

mental I mean we can be dreaming the

physical matter hallucinating it or it

could really be there and it all amounts

to the same thing at least at the at the

level of functioning in this

world

so we are recording aren't we yeah we

are good yeah i' I've still got like

aftershocks of that the old recording
software that I was using that would say
that it was recording and then and then
I'd have to do the same Q&A twice I
think one time three times
so okay getting back to Robert and his
question yeah I guess I guess that would
be it from my point of view it's all
mental I mean whether physical matter
exists or not is is largely
irrelevant because you don't have any
direct knowledge of physical matter I
mean the whole idea of the sarasti vodin
as as uh portrayed by these these two
Hindu College professors who wrote the
philosophy book that mind and matter can

be known for sure directly I just do not
see that at all because mind cannot know
matter because mind can only know mind
mind can only know mental
States
so I don't know if I've answered the
question see what ontological view would
allow rebirth besides dualism yeah get
get rid of the dualism I mean physical
matter
uh yeah there's no way to prove that it
even exists I mean so many westerners
they're just they just accept scientific
realism as the truth and then try to fit
any kind of spirituality you know they
just superimpose that they try to fit it
into the scientific realism and uh yeah

it's not a very good idea in my opinion
I mean it's better than just ignoring
spirituality alt together but scientific
realism is is so deeply ingrained in the
western psyche at this point that people
just do not see that it's just like an
option and probably not even the best
option to um to adopt if you want to
actually understand reality not just
phenomenal samsara you know scientific
realism works fine for that um so long
as you think that samsara is all there
is and there there either is no Ultimate
Reality or it's totally unknowable or
else this the phenomenal universe is the
Ultimate

Reality

so let's see did I answer this

question correctly or did I do it

justice I hope so because I don't know

what else to say on the

subject I'm not even going to try and

get into you know how how the brain

could generate Consciousness because I

don't think it does you know the brain

i' I've I've given the the example of

like a computer it works kind of like a

computer and that um you know a computer

doesn't create electricity it just takes

that electricity and it complexifies it

and organizes it and utilizes it and

that's kind of what the brain does with

Consciousness the Consciousness is

already there and the Brain just
complexifies it organizes it and
utilizes it within the context of
PSAR so
kind of I think kind of you can say
that so I guess I'm just gonna move on
to the next question here this is from
mooners and mooners says I struggle to
do meta meditation because that requires
me to send loving kindness to all living
beings my buddy has a girlfriend who has
a roommate who has slept with over over
70 different men in a year this roommate
was nearly assaulted One Day by a group
of men and my buddies girlfriends shared
dorm together call me a bad person but I

just don't feel sorry for her I struggle
to send out meta towards people like
that or people with any sexual partners
at all I actually feel a deep sense of
shame that we can both co-inhabit the
same world system together I am aware of
my imperfections and know that this is
not the correct mentality how can I deal
with this
problem well I mean
I don't really have any problem with
sharing the cosmos with people that have
sex I mean everybody's parents had sex
for example most people do it's really
not that bad of a thing to do you know
it's it's not like the worst thing you
can do is is to have sex with somebody

especially if you love the person you
know but uh I mean people that work in
torture chambers or something like that
you know arm breakers for lone sharks
and so forth
terrorists that kind of thing I um yeah
it's I have more difficulty uh sending
meta to them or like certain
politicians uh just people that are like
part of the establishment you know the
the Brave New World Order
establishment those people I dislike
more or have more difficulty feeling
meta for them than I do for women that
like sex for
example so I mean in my case I mean I

have a similar problem I mean I do just
I am not really a meta oriented person
I'm more of a head oriented person I've
never been the kind of person that just
goes around you know spontaneously
gushing love in all directions so I have
been that way many times but um as a
general rule meta is one of my weakest
parames and I've never really liked meta
meditation because to some degree you're
pretending you're pretending that you
love all beings when if you had to face
some of them that that so-called love
would evaporate pretty quickly I
think so I do think that a lot of meta
meditation is really just people
pretending you know they got this warm

glowy feeling while they're just kind of
thinking in the abstract of all beings
but really if they had to confront some
of these beings face to face they would
not be being love at them at
all so yeah I just don't practice meta
meditation I've never really been good
at it um sometimes I just spontaneously
gush love especially towards animals
where just every once in a while you'll
see somebody there was this redneck
customer that we had at work just a
couple weeks ago you know he's this
little guy just really racist redneck
the big pot belly
um I just for some reason he was walking

towards his pickup truck and I just you know just blessed him you know it's sort of like the the Ancient Mariner blessing the sea snakes it was and then and then I just started blessing others too I was like yeah I'm blessing him why why not bless my sweetie too so I started just started blessing her in my mind too and uh yeah just sometimes you know like you see an elderly couple that they're just like walking hand in hand like very much enjoying each other's company like they still are in love with each other just that kind of thing makes me feel really happy I want to beam love when I see something like that but um yeah I mean I've I've never really emphasized meta

meditation partly because to some degree it's like hypocrisy or self-deception or something so but anyways going to the Orthodox point of view this this sudden radical Divergence over to the Orthodox point of view what you're supposed to do if you're practicing meta meditation is you're supposed to start with somebody neutral not somebody who's really close to you that you love a lot already not an enemy but you start with just a neutral person and just practice beaming love at them and then as you get better and better at just beaming love then you can start getting into the more challenging

people so that's that's like a strategic

way of dealing with it

also so I think I answer that oh I might

as well bring up the pebble method too

it was like there was a a monk in Burma

odara or odas Sara um who came up with

this Pebble method maybe he didn't

invent it himself but if you're trying

to send meta to someone who really you

got problems sending meta to you just

find this cute little round

Pebble and you name it the same name as

the person that you're having trouble

with that you want to send meta to but

can't because it's they're just such an

[__] or whatever and then you just

take that Pebble and you put it into a a

little glass of clear water and you put
that up on your altar and then every day
you take it down and you you change the
water and you you know you rinse off the
pebble and you rinse out the glass and
and then you're thinking you know just
as this pebble is surrounded by cool
Clear Water May such and such person
also be surrounded by peace and you know
may they may they be happy and one way
of dealing with difficult people is just
realizing that difficult people tend to
be unhappy people like if you're happy
you tend to be have a a Live and Let
Live attitude you're not going around
[__] with people if you're a happy

person it's unhappy people that go
around messing with other people and
trying to get other people to be unhappy
too and so you can have a little bit of
compassion or really people that are
just really difficult not only are they
unhappy but they're just stuck and don't
know any better really you know they're
just delusional and just stuck in some
Sor and so you can kind of have a
certain compassion for
that which may take the edge off a
little
bit and then ultimately nobody really
exists
anyway so I guess I'm just going to move
on to the next question here and this is

a difficult one because

this person skolin or

skaden has asked questions that I don't

understand and when I asked him to

clarify his clarifications also I did

not completely understand so

anyways his first question was does

probably does probability have a

saturation point and I didn't know that

what that meant what does probability

having a saturation point mean so then

he tried to clarify it by saying what

are the limits between Karma and

probability and then as a kind of

explanation he says in the chapter

titled the stick that heals from Miracle

of Love most of the testimony highlights
the limits of either probability or
Karma and sometimes both like the small
poox case at the end yeah I guess there
was a long story at the end of that
chapter about how Nim karoli Baba helped
to eradicate small pox from from India
using psychic
powers and if you if you want to know
the whole story you probably should read
the book or at least read that story in
the book and the book is Miracle of love
stories about neem cly Baba edited by
ROMs or compiled by ROMs so what are the
limits between Karma and probability and
I guess he wants to know like what's
where's the the line between them and I

don't think there is a line between them

the limits between Karma and probability

I

mean I guess I mean you've got some

Karma that is just so improbable that

it's things are going to have to be set

up just so for that Karma to reach

fruition um you know it may prevent

according to Orthodox terraa even you've

got some kind of karma that the fruition

of it is just so improbable you know so

you're so unlikely to encounter it

um just in the normal course of events

that it'll eventually just fade out

because it really never has a good uh

opportunity to like manifest as karmic

fruition

so I mean there is some of that I mean

your karma cannot reach fruition you

know through something that's impossible

just totally impossible even barring

Miracles and so forth

so uh

yeah this is a hard this is a hard

question to answer partly because um I

don't fully understand the question what

are the limits between Karma and

probability and if karma is conditioning

our our life I mean we're just creating

our reality as the result of karma just

the the psychic momentum of our mind and

I don't believe in that physical matter

is ultimately real so that's it you know

it's just sort of our karmic stream it's

like open how's

Will

so what are the limits between that and

probability I mean probability would

have to exist within that as its

context seems to

me I mean what is the what are the

limits between schopenhauer's will and

probability it's such a a strange

question I've never really thought about

it

before so I guess um that plus a shrug

of the shoulders is as good of a an

answer as you're going to get from me

unless you can ask the question again in

a like a clear concise way that I can
understand so anyways moving on to skad
dein's next
question are there any Buddhist letters
or journals that describe the Opium War
not necessarily as the focus but
something like a slice of life with
crackheads in the background I don't
think it would be that rare
since that was described in various War
journals in the Boxer Rebellion of 1901
and the novel The Good Earth well the
thing is any Buddhist letters or
journals describing the Opium War would
almost necessarily have been like
Western Chinese letters or journals
because that's where the Opium War took

place like back around the 1840s I think
the the British in their imperialistic
arrogance were trying to force the
Chinese to to buy
opium and um it was like I think there
was some I don't know if he was the the
Chinese emperor or just some local
magistrate or something just just raided
the the British Warehouse where the
Opium was stored and destroyed all of it
because of course they didn't want their
country to be a country of opium addicts
and that triggered a war you know the
the British were demanding reparations
on all all their all their stuff that
got destroyed and so forth and I mean it

was just it was it was just kind of a criminal kind of War perpetrated on the Chinese and the the British were so far Advanced of the Chinese with regard to military technology and so forth it just took a few ships and not very many British troops they I mean they could just do what they wanted in China at that time

but um it would be Chinese letters and journals I generally have been a terraa Buddhist I'm much more interested in India than China and uh yeah I I don't know what it would be I'm sure there must be something still in existence of you know at the time some Buddhist monk talking about you know some something

with to do with the Opium Wars I think
there were two Opium
Wars um but I have no idea I have no
idea AA what it would be because I'm
just not really into
Chinese uh Chinese Buddhism other than
like the era like the Golden Age of Chen
like Chinese Zen you know with joosu and
uman and those guys um you know when the
where the most of the coons come from
you know the the famous stories I'm
interested in that but that was hundreds
of years before the Opium
Wars so I guess I better just move on to
the next question from SK ladin or
skaden which is another one that I

didn't understand at first but now I
kind of understand it his his first
attempt at the question was what is the
most underground evil creature in Burma
and I didn't I didn't really understand
what is the most underground evil
creature in Burma so then he uh reans
answered it or re reased it like what
would be the most unexpected threat from
the Animal Kingdom to
people and of course there's the cliche
that you know human beings are the most
dangerous animal and in a military
dictatorship like Burma um yeah a visit
from the secret police in the middle of
the night that could be uh an unexpected
threat from the Animal Kingdom because

people are members of the animal kingdom
and every once in a while I would be a
little you know I'd be imagining what
would happen if the secret police just
come knocking on my door someday or
knocking on my cave
whatever so there is that but I think
probably the most dangerous animal in
Burma even more dangerous than uh secret
police guys would be the anop mosquito
and that would be like an unexpected
threat because you might not even notice
you're being bitten by an infected
anopheles mosquito and a little while
later you've got
malaria and malaria is not good it kills

a lot of people especially the full [__]
variety which is the kind of I always
got I'd be dead several times over if it
wasn't for the Miracles of modern
medicine so I'm not totally down on
modern medicine because some of it
really is
useful but
uh so there's that also the Russell
Viper is the deadliest snake in Verma
that's another one that can catch you
unaware is you're just reaching into a
wood pile to pick up a piece of firewood
and you can disturb a Russell's Viper
and it can bite you or you have to walk
walk outside at night to take a pee and
you don't see it they're camouflaged

they're you know the color of like dead leaves and they don't move around much you know they're lying in weight as for a prey and so yeah I've I've almost stepped on Russell's vipers before almost stepped on abandoned crate once too which I think might be more poisonous than the Russell's Viper but it's not as deadly or dangerous as the r Russell's Viper because Russell's vipers are just mean they're aggressive you know some snakes you know they'll just avoid you if they can you know they just mind their own business if they see a human coming they'll just go the other way but a Russell's Viper they they can

stand their ground and start lunging at
you I mean they're they're aggressive
snakes and if they bite you you you can
easily
die so yeah so the most underground evil
creature in Burma I mean you can take
your pick amongst three of them you know
you got the secret police guys or just
troops in general soldiers you've got
the anop mosquito which probably kills
more people than than tigers do
obviously especially nowadays and then
you've got Russell's vipers but if
you're out in the you're out in the
jungle yeah definitely the uh the anop
mosquito is more dangerous than tigers
factly in fact probably wild pigs would

be more dangerous than tigers at this

point because there's not very many

tigers left and wild pigs are they can

be dangerous I've been told that they'll

start like butting and biting your legs

and once you fall down you're done for

them so I guess I'll just move on to the

next question and this is a very tricky

question even to

read so this is from harim cthul or hyim

no HR

ym

cthul and he says what are your thoughts

on the relationship between Karma and

race

and I probably should just that just end

there but uh there is a little bit of description here let's see I personally believe that the proliferation of inferior races which is already pushing it on YouTube and I'm not even going to say the part that comes after that and the biological degeneration of mankind in general is a direct symptom of the Dark Age like the kuga there is no conception of Bloodlines whatsoever marriage and children are something that essentially happens by accident in the modern world with no deeper thought behind it as such and I can really shouldn't even say the next word such souls are attracted to this world and then already in Ancient India and Persia

the concept of blood and ethnicity gain
great importance zoroastrian texts
regard blood Purity as holy and decry
certain group of people as descendants
of demons written in the collection of
myths
buah so let's just go up to the top here
what are your thoughts on the
relationship between Karma and race
well I do believe that different
ethnicities have differences that are
both physical and psychological on a
statistical level you know on average
and if you got a certain kind of karma
that fits a certain ethnicity better and
also their culture better then I mean

you'll probably be you'll probably wind
up there but it's really not that big of
a deal
otherwise I mean the Buddha for example
he didn't have much use for the cast
system he didn't spend a lot of time
bashing it but there was a cast system
in India and it was largely a racial
like apartheid almost kind of a deal
where you had the an the descendants of
the invading Indo orians who are
Indo-European people they tended to be
relatively tall relatively fair skinned
with a higher incidence of blue eyes and
fair or brown hair that they were like
the top three casts in the cast system
the brahin the chrias and the

vishas um and then the sudras were like
the conquered subject people that were
you know of the um like the indis valley
civilization you know the inhabitants of
the indis valley civilization especially
at first you know when the Indo orians
were coming through that part of of
India which is now mostly Pakistan I
guess
so yeah I mean there's always been I
mean there's probably fewer socalled
inferior races than fewer now just
because evolution is keeps progressing
you know it's like um you know
especially before you had modern times
with ideas of like military equity which

is just bizarre nowadays it's like um
like some of the western Powers with
regard to the whole Israel Gaza thing
you know it's like they want Equity you
know they want it to be equal so if
Israel is kicking butt too hard on the
gazin they want to give the gazin time
to rest and and re-equip and everything
so that it'll be more of a a fair fight
or something but in nature it just
doesn't work that way and so
you wind up with certain races you know
conquering other races or just driving
the other races you know into the you
know into the mountains or something you
know back in ancient
times

so I don't I don't know exactly what
caused me to start talking about that
marriage and he says here marriage and
children are something that essentially
happens by accident in the modern world
with no deeper thought behind it yeah as
a general rule people don't care much
about about your your lineage or
ancestry nearly as much as they used to
and it used to be that people were much
more
xenophobic and you can get some feel
into why it was that way by by watching
like The Walking Dead you know the old
show about the the zombie apocalypse and
I mean the people were more dangerous

than the zombies and you can't trust
anybody if they're an outsider I mean
you fight to the death to protect your
own tribe but you see another human
being
I mean they can be an enemy you don't
know who they are even if they act
friendly they could just be pretending
to be friendly in order to get the knife
in your back you know at a convenient
opportunity and that's the way life was
for a long time and that's one reason
why people were so ethnocentric in in
much earlier times like premodern times
Well up into modern times because I mean
it was such a tribal
mentality that I mean you pretty much

had to be a member of your own tribe and

and see everyone else as just

potentially dangerous Outsiders

potential

enemies

so I do think there should be like I

mean marriage and children to some

degree it's like a meritocracy I mean

you pick one of the best people you can

that's willing to have you I mean that's

everybody does that it seems like with I

mean at least there's enough of that

going on that uh it is like a major

factor choosing a mate you're trying to

choose the best

one that that's willing to to settle for

you and so yeah race is largely
irrelevant and to the Buddha also race
was largely irrelevant I mean it was
just um the Buddha had more of a Martin
Luther King Jr kind of attitude is you
know you should judge a person based on
their own personal qualities and not on
the color of their skin or anything
else so
but getting up to the main question here
what are my thoughts on the relationship
between Karma and
race yeah I mean your karma is going to
land you where you need to be you know
what part of the world and what kind of
body you need to have so I mean that's
that's the relationship right

there I don't think that uh like the
mixing of of races or
misation is really necessarily a problem
although I mean to have propaganda ists
promoting it for ulterior motives is not
good but if people just naturally of
their own their own volition you know he
fall in love with a a member of a
different ethnicity I mean it's not that
big of a deal it used to be a big deal
even for you know like an English person
to fall in love with an Irish person or
an Italian person or something I mean
even that was a scandal you know in in
earlier
days but I don't think that it's really

a major issue from like an ethical or
even really a civilizational point of
view um although I mean the deliberate
effort to just flood Western countries
with non-western people in order to
essentially demolish the
civilization yeah that's not good but
that's a whole different I mean it's
it's the motives that really are are
essential in
Buddhism love a is a positive motive and
desire to overthrow Western Civilization
is not a good
motive
so I guess I answered this question and
that's I mean that's pushing it for
YouTube seriously I mean if I had read

the entire question yeah there's no way
this this video would stay on on YouTube
for very
long man although I I do my
conscientious part and also just the
self serving part of trying to have
everything you know censored enough or
or like avoiding taboo language
enough that that this can uh be viewed
by numerous people whoever wants to view
it I guess so anyways I'm just going to
move on to Har harim cul's next
question which is as follows I have
recently been reading some essays by
Julius Iola and his ruminations on the
nature of magic in the modern world

deeply resonated with what I already thought do you think that magic is fading out of the world during the kuga so to speak certainly if we take ancient Tales at their face value it seems that the supernatural was much more potent in the ancient past I believe the reality we live in is literally becoming solidified
it is no wonder then that man has focused his attention on matter and Technology he is no longer able to sense and use subtle energies well certainly a belief in magic in the Supernatural was much greater in in earlier times than now and I I think that like awareness of magic in the Supernatural is much

reduced now over what it was before but
I mean it's still there it's still going
on it's just happening at a subliminal
level it's happening with you know like
Lial people on the fringes that sort of
thing um but it this reminds me more of
uh what's his name Renee gwon than it
does Julius Zola I have I haven't read
very much by Julius Iola other than you
know his his famous book on Buddhism and
a few essays and so forth oh also one
one other book about uh Pagan
imperialism or something like that but
uh um Renee gwenan yeah he he talks
about this a lot how we are um it's like
supposedly his magnum opus it's one of

his most famous books the the reign of
quantity and the signs of the times
where his theory is that people are
becoming more quantitative and less
qualitative in their thinking they're
they're caring more about measurements
and values and so forth and it's helping
them to become more materialistic and
they're just blinding themselves
to the
Supernatural and there it's like their
belief their lack of faith is sort of
kind of limiting their awareness it's
sort of blocking out the the
Supernatural and it's still out there
and sooner or later as civilization
starts to collapse this we this

crystallin shell around us that is in a way it's it's made up of just belief and materialism and
um is's sort of holding out the sort of Supernatural elements Supernatural forces that it's going to start cracking and breaking and then Supernatural forces are going to start flooding in to the human psyche and according to Renee gwenan the cracks are going to start lower down first so it's going to be the dark Forces are going to be entering first but I mean this sort of thing I mean you read the the New Testament of the Bible it's like Jesus goes back to his home hometown of Nazareth and the

people there they're like hey isn't that Jesus the carpenter I mean dona's brothers and sisters live here in in town with us I mean who does he think he is and so their lack of faith prevented him from being able to perform any Miracles and the dogs are acting up again stop it you guys yeah it doesn't mean you come over and start pestering me guys are silly yeah you know what I said so I mean even an ient times I mean if you if you just positively disbelieve something it makes it less likely to happen because you know it's mind is the Forerunner and all that so yeah I do think that there's uh definitely a reduction of the magical in modern

Western Civilization it still exists

around the edges it has to exist around

the edges otherwise we'd just be locked

into just dead Mater like dead

determinism

so let's see what is the question here

maybe I should maybe I should find out

exactly what the question is here do you

think that magic is fading out of the

world during the Kaluga so to speak um

yeah it's fading it's never going to

completely fade out but it's fading and

it's it's sort of inhabiting more Lial

sort of on the edge kind of places in

our society it's certainly not

mainstream anymore I mean to some degree

it's kind of mainstream like all those
ghost shows you know you got these
people that go out looking for ghosts
and they never find anything you know
about the best evidence they come up
with they've got like this recorder
that's got lots of static on it and it's
like you know they're they're like
listening to the static and the static
goes like and then they're going it says
go away I'm gonna kill you and then it's
like the other one says oh yeah that's
that's what it said too and then you
know that's like their evidence aside
from the people that are seeing the
shadow figures I mean shadow figures are
a diamond

dozen I me you can't even watch a ghost
show without people mentioning shadow
figures or or getting scratches on their
skin they always take pictures of it too
it's like I woke up one morning I have
these scratches on my arm it's like do
you have a picture yeah I've got it
right here see they just carried around
with them all the
time so yeah I mean the supernatural or
the Paranormal the
magical it's never going to completely
die out it can't completely die out but
I mean it's our disbelief in it you know
the disbelief of the the the people I've
been talking about before who just

consider science to explain reality you
know they've just been programmed since
childhood to believe that scientific
materialism is Gospel truth you know
it's just obvious gospel truth I mean
it's just self-evidently
reality that's that's the attitude that
a lot of people have including a lot of
Western Buddhists probably most of
them
so yeah so I guess I answered the
question I
guess let's see he Focus his attention
on matter and Technology he is no longer
able to sense and use subtle
energies yeah yeah that's pretty much
the situation of of modern man we are

like spiritual deaf and dumb in a
certain way you know we're just we're
just blind to to a lot of reality just
because it doesn't fit into our world
view and so our beliefs especially the
the deeper down beliefs help to
determine what it is we're able to
experience you know this it's mindmade
anyway so it's not that magic is really
disappearing it's like belief in Magic
is disappearing and just the magical
qualities of life in general are you
know it's like science does its best to
explain everything anomalies are ignored
it's just it's just standard procedure
in science that you ignore anomalies as

much as you possibly can because it just
messes up the
data you know like in chemistry it's
just standard procedure if you if you're
taking 20 measurements and one of those
measurements is way different from the
rest you just throw that one out because
you just just assume you did something
wrong so it just kind of filters out
anomalies so that everything is just
regular and following strict rules and
everything and uh yeah it's it's not
really sustainable sooner or later it is
going to crack and we are going to swing
back in the opposite direction and live
in a more magical Supernatural kind of a
world unless just AI takes over and

finds US inconvenient and and does away

with us or

something so I just going to move on to

the next question this is from ruie and

I do have a feeling that I'm I'm not

like

really really nailing some of these

questions sometimes it's it's really

hard to answer some of these questions

because they tend to be of rather uh not

necessarily vague but you know it's like

a I don't know kind of a what's the word

on numinous I'm trying to say numinous

you know it's just of a nature that is

like really clear concise and answers

are not much of an option sometimes so

anyways the next question is from ruie

and ruie says hello P apologies if you

already answered questions on this topic

before but what is your take on or

experience of

nimita and that's a good question from a

Buddhist point of view even it's just a

good question in general but for

specifically from a Buddhist point of

view or a Terra Buddhist point of view

that there is this phenomenon called the

nimita and Nita literally means sign in

in poly you know it can mean like uh

just like a a boundary marker is called

a nimita you know it's just like a sign

that that is the boundary that's the you

know where the boundary is is right

there but in

meditation um the nimita according to

Orthodox terraa is this image that you

see in your meditation and usually it's

like a a white circle or oval or

sometimes you can even see like the

Buddha sitting there or or something

more elaborate but usually it's like a

white or a light gray or maybe a goldish

kind of circle or oval that you'll see

in your field of vision with your eyes

closed while you're meditating and that

is a a symptom

of what is called let's

see access

concentration and it's it's like the

precursor to First jna according to the
commentarial tradition when you start
seeing the nimita that means you've got
access concentration or neighborhood
concentration and that means you're
right at the verge of first jna it's
it's almost like it's like
prej and the problem there's two
problems with this one problem is that
it's not mentioned at all in the sutos
that this is this pure commentary so
it's not really canonical and the second
is that what is canonical in the sutas
is the Buddha saying that when you
practice meditation you should cultivate
the signless or the anim so you're
trying to get rid of nimas when you

meditate not trying to cultivate a

certain kind of nimita to get you to a

certain stage and then get rid of it

it's just you know cultivate the

signless the

animita so you've got the sutas saying

you know you shouldn't be you know

concentrating on nimas and then you've

got the commentarial tradition saying

yeah you need the ma before you can get

J and so considering

that you'd think that the if it was

really important the Buddha would have

addressed it in his sutas you know why

is it if it's so important I mean if

it's like mandatory that you experience

this before you get Janna why is there
no mention of it in the
sutas you know why would that get
relegated to the commentarial tradition
and I think is it's largely an artifact
I have experienced
at least once it was sort of like a
light and gray goose egg kind of in my
field of vision when my eyes were closed
and I was meditating my meditation was
going relatively well at the time too um
but I didn't attribute any specific
significance to it partly because that
would be just another nimita I mean
that's more of the nimita that the sutas
are talking about when it says cultivate
the signless it's not saying cultivate

you know a mental state that doesn't
have the the glowing egg in front of you
it means like any kind of symbol is a
Nita any kind of thinking any kind of
you know interpretation of of anything
would be nimas it would just be symbols
in your mind and so when you're
cultivating the silence you're
cultivating a mind that's free of
symbols free of perception
essentially because perception is always
symbolic so if people experience it
that's fine but you shouldn't make a big
deal of it because it's really just like
an artifact of the commentarial
tradition might be it's presumably based

on a common phenomenon in meditation
when you start getting into deeper
meditation you're you're likely to see
some kind of bright spot or
something but uh I do not consider it to
be of any great
importance so I guess that's my take on
the nimita and so I'm going to move on
to the next question this is from cify
and cify saysit feels that some evil
force took over the west and the rest of
the world how to deal with this without
letting the hatred or anger towards
those who don't see it to overwhelm
oneself yeah well this is kind of
reminds me of the the question that I
already answered about the person who

can't send meta to people who have sex
but here's uh and yet this is like an
example that I was giving of I mean I
don't have any real problem with sending
meta to people who aren't virgins or
aren't celibate but yeah it's like the
politicians and the the the
multi-billionaires the donor class and
so forth who are steering Western
Civilization towards
suicide or towards this weird mutated
version of Western civilization of just
sort of a a
mongr mongrel sheep populace that are
ruled over by The intelligencia Who
essentially are controlling the beliefs

and opinions of the mongrel

sheep those people are I mean they're

they consider themselves to be I mean

they're very self-righteous you know

they consider themselves to be the good

guys at least a lot of them

do like uh there was uh I used I met

this monk in Burma and he was sort of a

social butterfly of a monk and he was he

went on this trip with one of the top

Executives of Google and he was an

Indian man and this Indian man had a a

like a biorhythm kind of a watch that

would point out to him when his his body

is becoming uncalm and so forth you know

he was really into like meditation and

so forth like Jerry dorsy or or also the

the founder of Apple uh jobs Steve Jobs
you know they were like in meditation
and cultivating Altered States Of
Consciousness you know they probably
dropped acid numerous times and you know
they're trying to trying to be good in
that sense trying to be spiritual in
that sense but then you know partly
because of all their money and their
influence they just get this God God
complex and just assume that what they
think is a good idea what people tell
them is a good idea and they go along
with it must be necessarily a good idea
and you know they're able to twist
things around so that you know what what

turns out to be more bad than good is
really it's just self-evidently good to
them but uh I think I might be straying
from the question here it feels that
some evil forces took over the west and
the rest of the world how to deal with
this without letting the hatred or anger
towards those who don't see it to
overwhelm oneself well I mean it is good
to bear in mind that I mean you put
yourself here you are creating your own
reality you are creating a reality that
contains
these presumably evil forces taking over
the west and the rest of the world I
mean your karma is working itself out
it's not like you're a like a helpless

victim who is stuck here against your
will that you have to endure this is you
put yourself here because you need to
learn how to deal with this kind of
stuff
so I mean if you if you realize that
hatred or anger is poisoning yourself
then you're much less likely to indulge
in it regardless of the
reason so let's see
here yeah I mean that's that's one way
of looking at it that if you are angry
or hateful you are poisoning yourself
you're making Bad Karma regardless of
your reasons for it although I guess
some reasons might be more justifiable

than

others so and there are some people that

think that really there is like

malevolent forces not just bad humans or

misguided Elites who just think they're

God or something but really just sort of

dark Forces are moving in I think a lot

of Christians would believe that

too and uh again I mean we put ourselves

here we are the ones who are responsible

for the world that we are living in

because we are generating

it and if we weren't supposed to be in a

world like this we wouldn't be in a

world like this we'd be in some other

world so that's that's one way that I

look at it that and I've mentioned a

number of times that I feel like a a
pagan in like late fourth Century early
fifth century Rome when paganism is just
being wiped out by the hysterical
intolerance of the of the new Christians
and like Goths are running a muck and
it's just like everything everything's
going to [__]
and it's like the government is just
like the the patricians the senatorial
class are just fighting to keep
everything bad because they're making
lots of money through it being that way
and it's it's just like reading the
decline and fall of the Roman Empire
especially once the the the fall starts

like after the battle of Adrien

opal then I mean it's just tragic it's

it's it's sad it's it's reading a

tragedy and we're kind of kind of

getting into the and we're we're in the

decline phase definitely I don't know if

we've hit Free Fall yet but uh yeah I

mean it's

definitely I mean it can be heart rening

sometimes just to observe what we were

and what we what we're coming

to but I mean we put ourselves here

we're here for a reason and we need to

learn how to deal with it

wisely so

yeah I mean the best way not to let

hatred or anger overwhelm you is first

of all be mindful and so that you don't
just get taken over by hatred or anger
you can see it coming and then even when
it comes then you can observe it as a
phenomenon that is arising instead of
just I'm pissed off I hate these
people it's just you know hate is
arising anger is arising that kind of a
thing and just realize that hatred and
anger are just you're poisoning yourself
when you when you indulge in these
things so I mean once you really fully
realize that then I mean it becomes way
less of a
problem so I hope I answer that question
because I'm moving on to the next one

now this is from F Ian which I think
might be a person named Ian who just
adds fost to the beginning of his name
fost Ian and fost Ian says do you
conceive of Hell realms as other
dimensions or simply extremely painful
rebirths on Earth among the
invertebrates there's Infinities of
unspoken Agony to be suffered there's no
need to imagine Realms beyond that
Heavens in the real world on Earth may
be incarnations of one's ball of karma
in the form of say an eagle or an oak
tree I predict your answer is in line
with your mangled crab story though you
do not attribute much pain and probably
pleasure perception to most things in

the natural world yeah well getting to

the top part here and I just wiggled the

camera with my

elbow is do you conceive of Hell Realms

as other dimensions or simply extremely

painful rebirth on Earth this is this is

almost another case of like scientific

materialism in that

um well now I'm distracting myself

because I should I open the the Red Bull

or finish this cold

coffee yeah I do not consider this to be

anywhere near to being the only World

there are an infinite number of

Worlds this is not the only

one so there are hell Realms on Earth I

mean I've I've seen a

few that I mean just like crack houses

and stuff I mean they can be really

awful places or like a a a Thai whouse

where girls are actually sent by their

parents to these places you know they

just don't want to have a daughter to

deal with they just send them to a they

sell them to a whouse in Bangkok where

they're just like

slaves and I'm I assume they're not

particularly happy

people and so I mean there are painful

rebirths on Earth and also relatively

Pleasant rebirths on Earth you know it's

like somebody

born the coast of California where

they're out doing yoga on the beach and hasn't been over run by homeless people yet so but still I mean there are definitely more than there's more than one realm of existence I mean an infinite
number just an infinite number and so most of the hell Realms are not on this Earth and like he's talking about like talking about Infinities among the invertebrates there's Infinities of unspoken Agony to be suffered and invertebrates may not not experience Agony you know it's like there's so much just icky stuff going on in nature you got the the parasitic wasp that lays

eggs in a caterpillar or just onto its back you know the really primitive ones they haven't they haven't learned how to make nests or anything yet they'll just fly up to a a caterpillar and either insert their ovap posor and lay an egg inside the caterpillar just carefully missing any vital organs or they just lay an egg on top of it and then the the larvae of this wasp will like burrow through the caterpillar and they somehow reflexively know what organs to avoid in order not to kill the caterpillar in order to keep the meat fresh you know stuff like that is just going on all over the place like most of the animals in this world at least on land are

parasites because almost every animal's
got at least one parasite I mean we got
parasites I won't I won't go into gory
detail but even like fall mites and so
forth so but but then I mean they they
got such a tiny mind they can't really
experience much
suffering so my father has hypnotized
people and they've they've wound up
going into hell Realms like in like
astral
travel and you know it's like there's
this spirit guide who took this woman
who was in a hypnotic trance into this
like a prison and there's all these
people like behind bars just screaming

they want out of the want out of the
cell and then the the spirit guide just
took his hand and waved it through the
bars and then he took her hand and waved
her hand through the bars to point out
that those bars were created by the
minds of these people that were they
were behind
bars so I'm just kind of rambling all
over the place as you may have
noticed but invertebrates I really don't
think that invertebrates really feel
suffering or if they do it's a very tiny
amount even even an octopus which I have
read is approximately as intelligent as
a cat apparently it doesn't feel
physical pain you know if it's nervous

it'll just be like nibbling off the ends
of its own
tentacles and uh you know like praying
mantis I mean a lot of you probably know
how mantises have sex you know it's like
the female while she's being mounted by
the male will just turn her head and
just bite off the head of the male and
that doesn't kill him it doesn't even
slow him down it causes him to go faster
that's just just built into the system
it works that
way so yeah I mean among the
invertebrates I wouldn't say there's
Infinities of unspoken Agony to be
suffered because partly their whole

nervous system is is different from ours
they don't have a central nervous system
really they don't they apparently do not
feel pain the we do the way we do or or
even have like any kind of like mental
images it's all sort of like reflexive
immediate and most of them you know
setting aside spilop pod mollusks and a
few others maybe they just have this
tiny Speck of Consciousness like an
oyster or
something I mean they're almost a plant
they're so
dumb so yeah heavens and Hells for the
most part are not on this Earth although
we've got sort of little Earth
imitations of them in certain parts of

this

world so I guess I guess I answered that

question so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is from Joe do

and Joe do says can you please recommend

the best Buddhist teachers in your

opinion to listen to and it's a good

question although I'm not the best

person to ask because I generally do not

listen to Buddhist

teachers I mean I'm just never been

interested in watching Buddhist videos

on YouTube I started watching One the

other day and it was so tedious you know

I've heard it all before and this person

really was not like the best the best

expert on the subject anyway that I mean

it I made like two or three attempts and

then just gave

up so I mean I would guess offhand like

aan Puna Damo he'd be good to listen to

um aan son

there's the the famous uh nle the the

new famous nle was in Slovenia I think

the really the the jacked one the really

muscly

one

um gosh I mean aan sha if you got I

don't think there's GNA be any I mean he

he would he'd be speaking Tai anyway but

sometimes you'll have aan cha monks who

are just reading

about aan cha you know monks in the aan

cha tradition reading about aan cha that

I mean that's some of that's really nice

aan cha really was a very insightful

intuitive kind of a

monk very wise being in my

opinion um there's also an aan in

Thailand I think he's German

pamo that uh he seems to give fairly

good fairly good damat talks but uh yeah

I'm really not the best person to ask

because I don't watch these videos as a

general

rule

so um maybe in the comments if anyone is

anyone is is watching has gotten this

far and uh they know of good Buddhist

teachers like who are on YouTube or have
podcasts or something that they could
they could advise Joe do what to listen
to Because as I say I generally just do
not um watch watch dhama videos or
listen to dhama talks
much I mean the last dhama teacher that
I was really listening to a lot was Paul
low and he's not really a Buddhist
teacher so I'm just going to move on to
the next question
here which is from Ken or
kazen and he says are you familiar with
Deepa Ma I have read some very
interesting stories about her CDs Etc
and CDs is like psychic powers and
um yeah I've heard about Deepa Ma I've

read like maybe two articles about Deepa

ma but I don't know that much about her

that uh she was very much in style like

in fashion like back in the 1990s partly

just because she was

female but she's also very wise

apparently I'm I would assume some

people at least consider her to have

been enlightened I assume she's not

alive

anymore but

uh yeah I mean that's I really don't

know that much about her partly because

as I just mentioned a few minutes ago I

don't really watch a lot of Dharma

oriented videos or read a lot of Dharma

oriented uh

material you know it's sort of like a a

jazz musician I used to know in Bali who

didn't like listening to other people's

music because he didn't want to

contaminate his own individual style I'm

I'm kind of like that with regard to

dhama Plus at this Point I've pretty

much heard it all you know it's all just

review at this

point so I guess I'll just move on to

the next question there's one question

about deepal that I I remember reading I

think it was an inquiring mind magazine

there was this German monk in southern

Burma who had sent me a bunch of

inquiring mind magazines and one there

was one article about Deepa Ma I
remember and someone was reminiscing
about how they went to a cash machine
and and got some money out of the cash
machine and Deepa ma was lamenting over
the poor person who was living inside
that wall with with no windows or
anything having that put the money
through the slot she didn't understand
modern technology I think she was
Bengali like from Bangladesh or
something when she was terraa like a nun
she wasn't a bikuni because that hadn't
become a thing yet at that
time so anyways I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from the

Proto pseudo Monk also known as Cool
Whip I'm pretty sure and the protos sudo
monk says is it the body or the mind
that gets
tired well it's it's definitely the mind
that feels tired because just Mindless
matter doesn't feel
anything so it would definitely be the
mind that feels tired although if we
assume for the sake of argument that
physical matter does exist then we can
assume that there's a kind of physical
fatigue you know just just getting worn
out you know that uh you know energy
levels get lower that kind of a thing so
then in that sense the body could get
tired but it certainly wouldn't feel

tired it wouldn't feel sleepy because
that's what the mind is
doing so I'm just going to move on to
the Proto sudo monks next question which
is how is memory explained in the view
of Mind alone the first verse of the
dapada matter may arise from mind which
is idealism but doesn't memory or brain
prove that matter is ultimately real as
suggested by Abid dama also we lose
memories when we switch brains at
rebirth okay well there's a few things I
can mention here first of all with
regard to Abid dama Abid dama certainly
does not imply that the brain is the
source of mind because according to Abid

dama mind arises in the Hada Wu or the

the heart base and so according to Abid

dama or the Abid dama

commentaries that Consciousness or

thought mind arises in uh a little bit

of blood or fluid in one of the one of

the uh chambers of the heart and the

Brain they they don't even know what the

purpose of that is so I think we can set

Abid dama

aside at this

point and uh let's

see gosh this it's like two questions

here maybe I need to make a gap here

which then increases the protoo amongst

number of questions to four which is

somewhat

transgressive and uh I think it's even
more transgressive because what happened
was he asked like two
questions and then it turned out that um
while asking these two questions it
reminded him of something else and so he
said well I'll just ask that next and
then he just kind of re asks the first
two and then asks another one but then
his reasing of the first two actually
created at least one more question so
that we're up to like four or five here
and so uh Proto pseudo monk I mean don't
feel regret because regret is always an
unskillful mental
state but I think uh by not deleting

your first two questions and then adding

sort of superseding those with three

questions you we've we've wound up with

like four or five questions here and the

first one I already answered whether the

mind or the body gets tired um let's see

how is memory explained in the view of

Mind

alone let's

see okay so this is kind of interesting

because I was thinking about this a lot

in fact I was considering writing a blog

post sort of Reviving my blog just for

the sake of one blog post in which I'm

discussing memory

and from the Buddhist point of view I

mean memory doesn't

really there's not really a clear
explanation of exactly how it works as
far as as far as I know there was one
commentator under uh a Q&A that was
saying pointing out that there were
sutas that that explain memory but I
don't remember exactly how the sutas
explain memory but it seems to me that
memory is very closely related to Karma
that it's a kind of karma because karma
itself is habit energy you know it's
like stored
momentum that of like behavioral
momentum and also thinking momentum and
that's essentially what memory is is
especially with regard to the mental

aspect of

it so and also it would help to explain

why it is that if a person has a past

life regression and they remember events

in previous life that it was really the

most intense the most emotionally

intense events in that life that they're

most likely to

remember that there's that memory and

Karma are they're they're

interwoven that memory itself is a kind

of

karma kind of habit

energy habitual energy habitual momentum

of of your psychic stream so to

speak

so yeah I mean that that's that's like

just recently I just started thinking
that that'd probably be a good way of
looking at memory from a Buddhist point
of view as it's like a karmic phenomenon
it's psychic momentum that like some
event leaves an imprint on your mind and
then the momentum just prolongs that
imprint and that would be a kind of
memory especially certain certain forms
of it certain modes that it can
assume so I guess I answered that one so
no for the blog post I
guess and then he says okay matter may
arise from mind which is
idealism but doesn't memory prove that
matter is ultimately real no it really

doesn't because I mean the only way you
even know of the the existence of the
brain is through your mind you you don't
directly experience brain you only
directly experience Consciousness and
and then there's like symbols that you
interpret as brain that come up in your
field of
perception so yeah we we lose memories
when we switch brains at rebirth but
still it is possible in some cases at
least to remember things from a previous
Incarnation preious a previous
existence but I mean in this version of
reality the way the way science
especially has explained things and that
in a way it kind of collapses the state

Vector so to speak and it kind of locks
us into that interpretation of reality
is that I mean it's pretty clear that
certain areas of your brain get damaged
it it definitely impairs your cognitive
abilities you know it's like like the
right temporal lobe if that gets damaged
then you lose the the ability to speak
or it I think it's the parietal lobe if
that gets the the
right I'm getting confused here I think
it's the left temporal
lobe is that's like where boka's area is
or something
that's then you lose the ability to
speech and like the the right parietal

lobe is if if that gets damaged you can
become tone deatha and like your
appreciation for music disappears like
in the the back the the uh what's it
called I don't remember but it's in the
back if that gets damaged you can go
blind and so forth so obviously in this
version of reality that we've got going
for ourselves that the brain does
certainly condition ment ity although um
you know you go to a different version
of reality then there's no telling no
telling what the Situation's going to be
there
so let's
see yeah it doesn't I mean memory does
not prove that matter is ultimately real

I would just I would just make that
statement that that clear concise
statement right there because I mean you
can't even prove that the brain really
exists
you cannot prove that physical matter
exists I double dog dare you to prove
that physical matter ultimately exists
like the philosopher George Barkley he
opened the can of worms to begin with at
least in modern Western Philosophy by
just doing away with the whole idea of
physical matter and he it was he called
it immaterialism and a lot of
philosophers have tried to prove him
wrong but I don't think anyone succeeded

I don't think that Barkley was was
completely correct Cor in his philosophy
that all that exist are are minds and
perceptions and that there's this one
Central mind that coordinates all the
perceptions and that one Central mind is
God and so when you see an apple on the
table you're not really seeing an apple
on the table what's happening according
to Barkley is God is implanting into
your mind a perception of an apple on a
table and that as you move through the
you know navigate your way through the
kitchen and all that and you reach and
you pick up the apple and all that God
is simply implanting these dream images
of you eating that Apple but there

really is no

apple and I mean nobody as far as I know

has been able to disprove

Barkley I don't know how they would

possibly disprove Barkley I don't think

that Barkley was right but I have to

admit I can't prove that he was

wrong so there's no proof that physical

matter even exists regardless of the

fact

that most western people in the world

today just accept it as obviously

true that is

irrelevant so I guess I'll just move on

to the Proto pseudo monks next part of

the question

here so he says venerable poob basa the law you follow positives and negatives shall balance out and use frequently is akin to the DA to me this also sounds like various

Like A variation or interpretation on the second Noble Truth the dsts also go down the route of is abdicating any ought to you know with regard to the is ought problem that started in the previous Q&A but there might be a danger in conflating the da with the second Noble truth because the da will carry on is incessant with no beginning and no end it is already perfect it isn't trying to escape itself and achieve enlightenment

it already is it already is

Enlightenment it is where samsara and

Nirvana are the same fractals flowing

going on and on and on dot dot dot dot

the infinite formless block of stone so

following this principle may be like

staying in Sam Sara the second Noble

Truth is one to understand to escape Sam

Sara not become one with it how do you

interpret following the da versus the

goal of Enlightenment escaping some

s

okay well I mean you don't really reject

Sam

SAR if you become enlightened you can't

really have aversion for samsar you

can't really get rid of it it's just

that you accept it with complete

unattach you in a way you transcend it

you go beyond

it

so and in that way you'd be like at one

with the

da but I first first of all I well this

wouldn't be first because I've already

been talking but this whole thing about

the second Noble Truth and the like the

well see what where dides he say

this okay the law that you follow well I

mean it's more of a working hypothesis

positives and negative shall balance out

and use frequently is akin to the Dow to

me this also sounds like a variation or

interpretation on the second Noble Truth

I don't really see any Clear

Connection of the three things one is

the Dow one is like yin and yang

positive and negative balancing out in

the long run and the third is the second

Noble Truth the second Noble Truth says

that desire or clinging is the cause of

all

suffering

so I mean how is that how is that

related to the DA other than that uh

desire and clinging in a ways and you're

sort of going against the doubt you're

going against just the the universal

Harmony sort of a

thing so that's that part I I don't

really I don't really see that very well

how like

Universal balancing of positive and

negative has really anything to do with

the second Noble Truth unless it's just

like the second Noble truth is if you're

going violation of the UN ival Harmony

you I mean you're kind of setting

yourself at odds with the way things are

you want things to be different from the

way things

are that could be positive or negative I

guess but yeah I really don't see any

any persuasive connection between um the

second Noble Truth and just like the the

balance of positive and negative but in

in his first version of

this the first version of his question

it was your Cosmic principle positives

and negatives shall balance out has been

proved in my experience particularly

every Sunday after each video the huge

positive of the greatest show with no

name is followed by a huge negative

filled with the absence of no of the

show with no name can this principle be

thought of as a variation on the second

Noble

Truth and I really the whole idea of

everything balancing out it really is

not

specifically emphasized in the poly text

is more of a Dos thing that I've picked

up it's not really emphasized in the

polyas I think the closest they've got

in Orthodox terava that comes close to

that would be the concept of

locama and Loca dama could be more or

less

accurately um translated as the way of

the world or the ways of the world and I

just happen to

have Nana loa's Buddhist dictionary

right here and if you look up locama

it's this little

this little thing right there right

there says worldly conditions and then

he's got a

quote eight things are called worldly

conditions since they arise in connection with worldly life namely gain and loss honor and dishonor happiness and misery praise and blame so those are the the eight ways of the world and there it's four pairs of opposites and the implication is that those four pairs of Opp opposites I mean you're going to have to encounter them regardless of how you live your life and so in a way it's kind of a balancing of of positive and negative and that I mean everybody is going to be experiencing gain and loss and everybody is going to be experiencing honor and dishonor happiness and unhappiness praise and

blame so that's about as close as

Orthodox terava gets to the idea that

positives and negatives have to balance

out at least um according to my

understanding and the dogs are acting up

again just a second stop it you

guys and when I say stop it you guys it

doesn't mean run over here and start

scratching my

arm

silly come on no

playing so let's see where was I oh yeah

locadas and so it's really not a

Buddhist concept even though um I think

it is a really elegant Theory and then

he he continues

here this was like his first version of

the second question or or something says
though the arant is an anomaly and
breaks the equation I wonder if there is
a name for this Cosmic law for example
one law of equipo two principle of
balance dualities three Edict of
equivalence and what I call that theory
or working hypothesis is the principle
of subjective equilibrium that
subjectively positive and negative have
to balance out objectively I mean
objectively maybe also but definitely
subjectively that it may be that one
person seems happier than another person
in this world you look around there's
one person who's always frowning and

complaining another person who's always
smiling and never says a bad word
against anybody but I mean those kind of
balance out too in your objective
experience but subjectively each each
one of those people I mean that's just
their status quo that's just neutral for
them you know they identify that as
neutral and so the person who's like a
frowning and complaining they get a
certain amount of satisfaction maybe
even a certain amount of pleasure from
complaining whereas the person who's
just smiling all the time I mean they've
got their own you know just hidden
issues that is just not showing because
they've just gotten into the habit of

smiling all the

time so yeah what what I call it is the

principle of subjective

equilibrium and that is uh that is the

end of the Proto sudo monks uh questions

here and so I'm moving on to Pope Kevin

the first and his first question is are

there any examples in the sutas of

people remembering their past lives as

animals and if you read the jota stories

the Buddha himself remembers lots of

past lives as animals and he remembers

that you know Ananda was this animal and

sorry puta was that animal back when

they were all animals together and some

of the jota stories are also found in in

like the sutas and the vinia like

there's the the story of the wise think

the wise quail and he had two friends

the the elephant and and a

monkey and they were trying to decide

who was the oldest one so they could pay

respect to the Elder and so um let's see

let's see how it went it was I think it

was the

monkey no the elephant anyways I think

the monkey could remember that you see

that you see that fruit tree over there

I remember when I was I was when I was

young I could just sit on the ground and

reach the top branches of it I think the

elephant went first and he was he

remembered when it was you know he could

reach the top branches of it with his trunk or something then you got the monkey he was much smaller he he remembers one of his earliest memories is he's able to sit on the ground next to it and reach the top branches but then the quail remembered that he ate a piece of fruit at some other place and pooped at that point where the tree is now and that's where the tree grew was out of out of the poop from the the quail and so they decided that the quail was the oldest and so they paid respect to to the quail the elephant and the monkey both paid respect to the to the wise quail and uh then the Buddha was

saying that I mean in the previous life according to the jica version I can't remember if he says this in the Vinnie I assume he does but he was the quail in a previous life and then I think Ananda was the monkey or or saruta was the monkey and and Ananda was the elephant or you know it's you know in jica stories you know the Buddha is always the wise central figure even if it's an animal like a fish or a frog or a monkey or a fox or whatever it is and then the other features you know he's the wise rabbit the wise hair and then you know it's like the other animals in the story they're all talking and so forth acting like humans you know they're also you

know this Monk and that Monk and so yeah in in the sutas there are the Buddha himself is remembering his past lives as animals but uh for the most part you don't have a lot of cases in the sutas of other people remembering past lives because most people just can't remember past lives of animals or if they do they just don't talk about it much because it's mainly um emphasizing what the Buddha said and not what other people were saying

anyhow but yeah there's definitely I mean the Buddha himself definitely in in the Orthodox terraa remembered many many times when he was an

animal so I'll just go on to Pope Kevin
the first second question here which is
what do you think the common phrase in
the poly Canon means quote liberated
through not clinging unquote and it
seems to me that's pretty
self-evident liberated through not
clinging I mean if if clinging and
attachment are the cause of all
suffering and the third Noble Truth says
that you know through the sensation of
clinging and attachment and you got the
sensation of suffering and if the
sensation of suffering is
Liberation then I mean you're liberated
through not clinging you're liberated
through not insisting upon things being

a certain

way which may be a help ful way of

looking at clinging is just insisting or

strongly preferring that things be a

certain

way and as a general rule sooner or

later things aren't going to be that

certain way that you that you insist

upon or that you strongly prefer which

then causes

unhappiness but an enlightened being

does not insist upon things being a

certain way or strongly prefer things to

be a certain way and so he's just uh you

know he's let go you know he's at one

with the

Dow so yeah it just seems

self-explanatory to me that it seems

pretty obvious liberated through not

clinging means that you're liberated

because you're not clinging

anymore or maybe he could uh give me the

poly

version or the context you know the suo

or something and uh maybe there'd be

some more some more complications I

could discuss thereby thereby expanding

my answer out to several

minutes but as it is I think I answered

that question so I'm going to move on to

Indian guy who I think also goes by the

the Alias of

Trevor an Indian guy says I have a

question about the time you had a
glimpse into nibana while you had a
stomach ache and were skilled in
mindfulness so your mind cracked what do
you think made you become once again
what made the experience temporary so
that's the main question here so I'm
going to make a
space did you Delight in it laugh my ass
off l m
o so uh so I guess that was just him
trying to answer his own question so
then he says I had an experience that
only lasted up until I tried to make
sense of it again and grasp it so I
guess I wasn't skillful or ready enough

I think of that story quite often and I
don't know why maybe you could make my
Sunday when explaining it again so I may
complicate it
LOL and when I first came across lol
after I stopped being a monk and started
dealing with acronyms on on text and and
the internet and so forth I had no idea
what lol meant I thought I meant maybe
lots of luck and I was pretty sure it
didn't mean little old
lady anyways let's get back up to the
top here and I'm clearing my
throat to have I inherited from my
mother she used to clear her throat a
lot especially when she was
nervous so anyways I'm going to clear my

throat

again and uh see the time that I had a

glimpse into nibana at least that's how

Indian guy interprets it while you had a

stomach ache and were skilled in

mindfulness so your mind cracked what do

you think made you become once again

that made the experience temporary so

essentially the question is if I had

this Insight this deep like some kind of

experience what caused me to just go

back to the way I was before and that

would just be the momentum of

karma you know I had uh a relatively

profound Insight I suppose but still

karma is habit energy it's just the

momentum and so it didn't just all stop
when I had that experience you know
you've got who knows how long of
reinforcement you know just uh
reinforcing this momentum of mental
energy ment mental
momentum and so there's that you know
it's just the force of karma just uh
regaining the the upper hand so to speak
and also as just whatever has a
beginning has an end nothing lasts
forever and so you have like a profound
meditative experience or some kind of
insight it's not going to last forever
it's eventually going to Fade Out sort
of like you know some enlightening
experience on LSD or some such iasa or

mushrooms or something you know it goes

away too it's has a beginning and an end

beginning a middle and an

end

so yeah I mean it was mainly

just an event that occurred that had a

beginning a middle and an end and then

just the the stream of the momentum of

my Karma was still moving in the

accustomed you know habitual Direction

and so it just took over

again and then he says did you Delight

in an MAO to some degree I did I mean I

was so happy that I was almost crying at

the time even though um I was doubled

over in pain at the same time which is

uh what he's asking for here see maybe
you could make my Sunday by explaining
it again so I may contemplate it LOL
well first of all it it's it's kind of a
long story with regard to how it all
came about but I got sick and then just
it just deprived me of all
consolation in life just being a monk
and everything you know I couldn't sleep
couldn't eat hardly just couldn't even
take a bath and feel good that way
because I had a fever and the doctor's
were saying you should just sponge
yourself down don't take full showers or
anything
couldn't meditate and I just kind of hit
rock bottom and it caused me a kind of

depression where I was just thinking
what's the point you know I it's just it
just seemed all
futile and then I pretty much gave up
it's just like I just can't do this this
isn't working and so I just kind of let
go and that Letting Go was apparently
what I needed at the time because then I
just started going into these
spontaneous mindfulness States also some
of the best meditation of my life this
really really get into these states
where you're just sitting there in a
state of just Clarity and silence you
just wide awake and not thinking
anything your mind is just clear like

glass and it was at that time one day I
was walking down these Stone steps to
the lower Monastery where the the well
was because I was going to take a shower
because I wasn't sick anymore but
anyways I'm going down these Stone
stairs and I start getting really
intense abdominal cramps like I had
eaten some shrimp Curry earlier that day
that had had gone off or something and
so I'm doubled over in pain anyone who
saw my face would think that I was dying
and I also I'm I'm sort of contemplating
the likelihood that I'm going to be
making at least three emergency trips to
the ouse that night and then it starts
raining and I wasn't prepared for the

rain I didn't have an umbrella and I
only had three robes at a time including
just one lower robe one upper robe one
outer robe so that I'm thinking well I'm
going to be making three emergency trips
to the ouse tonight at least plus I'm
going to be wearing wet robes tomorrow
when I go for MMS round because I just
got I'm getting rained
on and I was just down about to the
level of the steps where my ous was I
remember that much and it was like this
there was this sudden shift in
Consciousness because I was being very
mindful at that time just spontaneously
just you know you feel the the wind on

your skin you feel your clothing
brushing against your skin you're you're
mindful of blinking and swallowing your
slobber and so forth just very mindful
at the time and then the shift occurs
where all of a sudden all this pain and
commotion you know getting rained on and
the stomach cramps and everything is
just like waves up at the surface and I
was deep down in like cool still water
and I could look up if I wanted to and
see all the commotion going on up there
but I just wasn't identified with that
anymore that was not the center of my
Consciousness so to speak you know it
was like the center of my awareness was
deep down in this cool Stillness where I

could look up and see the commotion
going on up there but it really wasn't
me it was almost kind of irrelevant you
know it was just waves going on the
surface up
there so I have had people tell me like
this one really new Agy guy once I I
mentioned this in a talk in Bellingham
Washington and afterwards this really
new Agy guy he was really nice guy he
came up to me and said what you
described as an Enlightenment
experience and I mean I wouldn't
consider him to be an authority on
enlightenment experiences
necessarily but uh and then uh Indian

guy also refers to this as a glimpse
into nibana which I don't know for sure
that it is although it was definitely a
um like a thinning of the veil so to
speak a kind of mystical
experience in which you're no longer
really identified
with the phenomenal surface self that
there's like a deeper level that you
identify with more and I guess if it was
really nibana you wouldn't be identified
with anything I mean there would be no
Center of awareness
necessarily so yeah that was that was
one experience I had a number of
experiences during that
time um but I guess I guess I explained

it but I mean even though I was doubled over in pain and when I was having that experience I was so just overjoyed and thankful that yeah I was I was almost just weeping tears of joy even though I was doubled over in pain getting rained on and anyone who saw my face would think that I was in pain and and definitely not happy but I mean you can be in pain and be happy at the same time so there's something else I was going to mention but looks like I forgotten what it was going to be so but yeah experiences like that definitely can be very insightful in which I mean just just for starters the

very idea that you can be in pain and
happy at the same time or you can be
like in relatively severe pain and just
not identified with that at all you know
it it becomes almost
irrelevant and I mean it's it's not even
to the the the level of you're being an
actor playing the role of somebody who's
in pain I mean it's it's just like
that's just over it's just not in the
center of of your awareness at all it's
just kind of On The
Fringe so I guess I explained it so I'm
just going to move on to Indian guys
next
question and which is as follows
sometimes I watch the awesome aan Puna

Damo and I wonder if he would stop
fidgeting his thumbs and moving back and
forth he might obtain the final wisdom
or gain Insight because maybe even
fidgeting and moving is kind of a
mechanism of the mind's way of coping
with boredom and it's a way of pleasing
the senses and clinging I'm not so sure
that it's a way of coping with boredom
or pleasing the senses and cling
clinging but you do have a certain
amount of mental energy that is just
sort
of in in many people most people I
assume just manifesting itself unmindful
like when I was a kid I used to fidget a

lot you know like just kicking your chair leg just just mindlessly that kind of thing and um sometime around the age of 18 or 19 after I started reading like Buddhist books and so forth I just train myself not to do that kind of mindless fidgeting so much I still do it a little bit like when I'm talking I wave my arms around a bit which is really unnecessary I guess and there is like the the nervous habit of clearing my throat sometimes although there is definitely uh kind of a feeling of fle or something in my throat that triggers it my mother did that a lot when I was a kid I remember but now I'm oh yeah so there are times when like um I used to know a

person who was a fan of AES Shanti and
AES Shanti is another one of these
people who either claims to be fully
enlightened or is claimed by their
followers to be fully enlightened and so
I watched a video of him talking to
somebody and he did have like nervous
mannerisms and he would say stuff like
you know there was this one thing that
he kept saying it was something like you
know where I mean he he'd plug in he
plug it in like two or three times into
a single
sentence and it seemed like it was
unmindful Behavior where he's not fully
aware that he's doing it although once

you get enlightened

then it's like what your body is doing

is largely irrelevant you're not

identified with anymore and so it's just

going to be like residual karma that's

just sort of pushing your body forwards

through

time so but still I mean that is a kind

of a an indication like if they're

fidgeting or using certain like filler

words just that don't have any meaning

over and over again that that could be

an indication that they are not fully

enlightened like when I watched um

Daniel Ingram on a video a little over a

week ago he was kind of like that too he

just seemed kind of nervous and nervous

and fidgety to some

degree

and that kind of uh caused me to think

maybe this it was just sort of further

evidence that he wasn't really what he

claimed to be then again neem KY Baba up

there who just was Superman spiritual

Superman for as I'm concerned he did a

lot of arm waving and like rocking back

and forth and just you know it's like

people who would shave his head would be

complaining all the time you know he'd

get his head shaved by somebody and he'd

be like talking the whole time and moves

his head and going like this and just

trying to like get the dot on his

forehead after I mean they could hardly
get him to stay still long enough to get
the dot centered between his eyes like
that the ash or whatever it is that
aishite Hindu has there
so it's it's hard to say because like I
was saying towards the beginning even a
fully enlightened being is to some
degree going to have at least the
outward appearance of having greed hate
and
delusion so it may be that aanti acting
nervous really was irrelevant or aan
Puna Damo who is fidgeting his thumbs
and moving back and forth it may be
irrelevant or it may be that it's just
an indication that he's not fully

mindful in doing certain things without
full
awareness and um it's hard to say
exactly in many cases because you can't
read the other person's mind especially
on a video it might be really tricky to
read the mind of a person who's just a
digital representation on a
screen
so that wasn't even really a question
but it is something that has occurred to
me many times that just fidgeting is
kind of an unenlightened Behavior but
then again once you're enlightened you
can still have apparently unenlightened
Behavior which really complicates things

so I'm just going to move on to the next question is this is from the chosen one and uh not a Chosen One mind you but the chosen one and the chosen one says what is a higher rebirth the rebirth at the highest rank of God destined to be extinguished at the end of its life or a human Buddha destined to be enlightened in the middle of his own life well it seems to me that the higher rebirth would be kind of a a value judgment and it would just depend on the feelings of the person who was saying I don't think there's like an objective like empirical way of categorically stating that one of these births would be higher than the other

one but just

assuming that uh a human Buddha destined

to be enlightened in the middle of his

own life I mean he's going to get

enlightened and he's going to attain

Nana much sooner than uh a go the

highest rank of God destined to be

extinguished at the end of its life

because the gods way up in the highest

Heavens they can live for like billions

or even trillions of

years so it may be that even a normie is

going to eventually get enlightened

quicker than one of those Gods up there

who's not going to become enlightened

for for billions or trillions of years

so in that sense I would assume that the
human Buddha destined to be enlightened
after only say 29 years would be
considered higher or better or
preferable to being like in a very
exalted Heaven realm where you're
guaranteed Enlightenment at the end of
your existence there but the end of your
existence there may not be for billions
ions of trillions of
years so I guess I'll just pick
B so then I move on to the next question
which is from Mara made
Mahayana see man this is turning into a
long one I didn't think this was going
to be very long I must be digressing
more than

usual so anyways Mara made Mahayana says
I was given a book by aan Meo biku which
was also written by him about the
blessings of reite ation in the teaching
of the awakened one it also covered the
Thai recitation styles of poly Sam yoga
Style magada style of King mongot
amaravati style of aan sumo Etc since p
is an Indo-European language and Tai is
a tonal language the Tai script was only
invented 700 years ago errors have crept
in for example most communities chant
the worship formula NASA bavato AR samas
budhas as if it were written
NASA and then s budas yeah that makes
sense how did you chant as original as

possible or was there also a Burmese
style well yeah definitely a Burmese
style like like in Burmese with a
Burmese accent you'd
say because s is pronounced like th and
a u before a double consonant is
pronounced like oh and so on so yeah I
think that since paully was never a
vernacular language that it was sort of
an artificial language or that's what
the scholars are saying nowadays that
everyone is going to be speaking it with
an accent that you're not going to have
just pure poly because everyone's going
to be speaking poly with the accent of
their own native language and so a
Burmese person will be speaking it

speaking Polly with a Burmese accent a
type person will be speaking poly with a
Thai accent I'll be speaking poly with
an American accent maybe an American
accent superimposed on a burmes
accent and so yeah I don't think there
is a really pure way of pronouncing poly
and um the scholars nowadays are saying
that the Buddha probably didn't even
speak poly anyway so trying to get to
the original pure poly is probably
impossible
and unnecessary anyway so it's it's good
that it's unnecessary considering that
it's impossible because if something is
impossible don't do it I mean you got to

draw the line somewhere and the dogs are

one dog is crying because my sweetheart

is is going

somewhere

so let's see so there was more than one

Burmese style in fact there's the MS in

southern Burma had their own

pronunciation scheme the Burmese had

their own pronunciation scheme also my

teacher was from the city of

pooku and pooku had its own

pronunciation SC scheme that was even

weirder than regular

poly so yeah I don't know if there I

don't think even a Shri lanan terraa

Buddhist would speak pure poly the way

the ancient poly speakers spoke

it so I mean each each country's
pronunciation is going to have some good
points and his bad points I think the
Burmese may get the O correctly where um
like the vowel o is actually an uml is
pronounced o you know sort of like
that's why in Sanskrit it's Au like like
Goa is is pronounced like in Sanskrit
like Ang in transliterate in English it'
be G Au U t- ma a whereas in po it's g t
ma but the Burmese pronounce the O as
though it's pretty much like an au which
may be more correct than the way others
are pronouncing it like a hard
o but yeah there's there's no way to
really know for

sure uh let's see how did I chant yeah I
just chanted with a Burmese accent
because I was in Burma most of the time
and staying at Burmese monasteries most
of the rest of the
time um and then when I try to do a
video or something I'll try to translate
it into like like Western correct like
International pronunciation of poly but
uh a lot of the time I just confuse
myself because I naturally through habit
want to pronounce it the Burmese way and
so I'm like in my mind I'm trying to
translate that over into International
pronunciation and sometimes I get myself
confused
so yeah I mean there were certain things

I just refused like pronouncing are like
why which is what the Burmese do uh yeah
I I just couldn't do that R is
pronounced like R the reason why the
burmes pronounce R like why is that the
original Burmese language did not have
an R sound so now they've got two
letters one is called yal which means
crooked crooked yah which is really the
r sound in pully so a lot of most
Burmese monks will pronounce it like R
because they know enough to know that is
really is supposed to be pronounced like
R but um in the burmes language that
same R is just pronounced like
y so they have a y and an R but like in

paully you've got like a y sound and an

R sound but the the burmes as a general

rule just pronounce both of them like

why because there was no R sound in in

the original Burmese

language before they adopted the poly

alphabet which contains R and

Y or rather ra a and ya

a so

I guess I answered that question and

this is turning into a longer one than I

was expecting so I'm going to move on to

the next question which it turns out all

of a sudden is the last question which

it always catches me by surprise because

the little bar on the side the little

sidebar thing showing you where you are

on the document is only it's not even

halfway down I don't know why it does

that so anyways

maximan who uh was a Barbarian emperor

of Rome if I'm not

mistaken asks the following question

would I breach any copyright laws by

sampling some some of Tano's parita

chants on a track I'm recording well I'm

not sure if you would breach any

copyright Li I kind of doubt it because

I don't think ajan tanero necessarily

copyrights anything that pretty much

everything he does is for free free

distribution which is good although if

you wanted to do this you like in an in

as straight and aboveboard manner as
possible I mean you could just contact
him and ask his permission and if it's
not some sort of you know rap about
abusing women or something that you just
want some chanting in the background
then I don't think that he would def he
necessarily be opposed to sampling some
of his
chance but uh I mean if it's relatively
wholesome material that you are
reping then um yeah I don't think
there'd be any problem with it but I'm
not sure I don't think it would be
illegal for you to do that especially if
it's modified slightly I do seem to
recall that that the band Enigma or the

person Enigma I don't even know who
Enigma was I missed out on Enigma I
didn't even hear about their existence
until I came back to America in
2011 but they they did get into some
trouble from uh um they did the song
return to innocence where they were
sampling some I think it was Taiwanese
some kind of Taiwanese Shaman who was
chanting and then the the Taiwanese
Shaman actually sued them so I mean you
can modify the sound of it so that it
you know it's it's changed enough that
it's not the same sound or the same
material
necessarily but uh yeah I mean if you

wanted to make sure you could just ask
his permission I assume he would give
permission so long as it's it's not
something that's uh like really
outrageous you know something really
immoral so I guess that's it I I I think
I answered all the
questions so you know the drill if you
got any questions feel free to ask them
in the comments below this video or if
you have access to my subscribe Star
channel you can ask them there although
people most inclined to ask questions
who do the Subscribe star thing just get
on to the Discord server and ask them
there because there is a specific room
for asking questions for q's and A's on

the Discord server and you know anything
that you think I can answer any anything
that you think I might be knowledgeable
in like philosophy Buddhist philosophy
in particular Buddhist
monasticism Burma monasticism in general
that kind of thing then uh feel free to
ask and uh hit like if you haven't
already especially if you liked it I
mean don't hit like if you didn't like
it I guess and uh subscribe if you
haven't already and be happy

okay hello and welcome to episode 92 of question and answer I am as usual your host P basa and we have just sort of a moderate amount of questions to answer which probably will mean that it'll be well under three hours this time ah maybe it's just cuz the weather's nice and everything and people are thinking about birds and butterflies instead of about Buddhism you I'll start with b anyway and before I start answering questions I would like to give a shout out to Jeffrey who uh made a probably I think it's pretty sure it's the single largest donation that has been made to

me since I stopped being a

monk so I shout out to Jeffrey saying uh

congratulations on being a generous

person

and uh he's one of my viewers on

bitshoot and I'm pretty sure that he

started watching me because of me being

on Brian Rue's show at the beginning

like back when I was a monk and Brian

Rue and I were doing like three three

shows per week or something that's uh a

lot of the a lot of my viewers first saw

me on on the Brian R show and I think

Jeffrey is one of them also he doesn't

do PayPal or anything like that so he he

actually sent me a check in the mail

but uh now that I have done my due

diligence and shouted out jeffy's generosity I'm going to start answering questions and the first question is from bodhisatta 969 Alias Mara made Mahayana and he says do you prefer schopenhauer or n or none of them well I really do not have much use for n I've never really liked n very much and I mean I've read very little I've read the Antichrist and I have to admit that HL M's introduction to nich's the Antichrist was much more interesting to me and I got more out of it than out of nich's work itself fact I remember almost nothing from the Antichrist also I read uh part of thus spake

zarra and I got up to the part where the

tight RPP Walker falls off the tight RPP

and breaks his leg maybe got a little

bit past that but

again I think it's partly nich's writing

style just doesn't really fit with my

way of absorbing information very

well and

so definitely I would prefer shophow

I've read the world is Will and

representation and a few of his other

essays and yeah I think uh I I like

schopenhauer better than n

definitely and schopenhauer kind of was

a an

early like promoter of Buddhism in the

west like his what he teaches comes very

close to Buddhism in a lot of ways

whereas n kind of rebelled against the

whole I don't know the slave morality

kind of a thing that he would probably a

tribute to Buddhism as well as

Christianity but um again I'm no author

on N so I could be wrong on that one but

definitely between the two I prefer

schopenhauer to n even though

schopenhauer even though he was a

brilliant man I mean he was kind of an

he was he could not live up to his own

philosophy I mean he had a lot of

faults and I used to worry about maybe

becoming a kind of schopenhauer myself

where you have this profound philosophy

but like in real life you're just kind

of a jerk

anyways I'm going to move on to

bodhisatta 969 second question which is

is it true that the kosola kingdom which

the Buddha often visited is present de

Myanmar and no that is not true kosala

was a

kingdom in like East Northeast India in

the Ganges Valley and the Buddha's own

um native country of capila watu like

the city state of capila what to was a

kind of vassal State under the political

sphere of influence of kosola I'm pretty

sure in at least one suta the Buddha

calls himself a kolan that he was from

kosola and

uh president I mean what is now Burma in the Buddhist time was probably mostly jungle with some hunter gatherers I mean Southern Burma may have already had like uh the mon civilization going in southern
Burma but uh that wouldn't be kosola um like in the Ashokan edicts he he mentions sending um Buddhist missionaries to the east to to suana Bui you know the golden land and that may have been a kind of mung Kingdom which Incorporated parts of Southern Burma and Western Thailand I mean going by modern day geography
but in the Buddhist time um yeah in

Northern India Burma was just unknown
what is now Burma I'm pretty sure it was
just unknown territory largely because
it was just mostly
Wilderness so I guess I'll just move on
to buddhis 969 no I guess he doesn't
have a next question he has two
questions but also I have written here
somebody asked me a question a few weeks
ago that somehow disappeared that that
either they retracted the question or
something and U it's a question about
monks especially like the senior monk
like the Abbot of a monastery living in
a kingly manner you know feasting on
lots of good food and and sleeping on
you know this elaborate bed in his own

elaborate bedroom when like the rank and
file of monks especially the novices are
just kind of living a plain existence
more of what you would expect from
monks and um maybe the question got
retracted maybe not I don't know but uh
if anyone ask that question and you
really want it answered you can ask it
again and I'm just going to move on to
the next question here this is from
mooners and mooner says what do you
think of the validity of other Buddhas
in other Realms and veneration of them
Buddha and
bodhisattvas that are not included in
the list of 28 in the Buddha wsa I have

heard that the salies pray to bodh aalo
kitara in the form of natad
DEA well I mean I the validity of other
Buddhas in other Realms and veneration
of them I think it's mythology I think
it was made up in fact the the 28
Buddhas that are found in the poly text
the Buddha wsa I mean aside from our own
Goa Buddha I think those were probably
made up
also I mean it may be that kasapa Buddha
who was he's supposed to be by Buddhist
tradition the Buddha that was the Sama
Sam Buddha who started Buddhism be just
just previous to our goab Buddha maybe
there is some historical
authenticity of just you know in the

distant past there was some Buddha that

you know he he survived in traditional

folklore or something but you know the

future Buddha Mata and the the line of

28 Buddhas of which godma Buddha is

27th going all the way back to deepankar

Buddha on some other some other

Earth that uh yeah that's it's in a way

it's it started with the

glorification of Gab Buddha glor

ification of the founder of the

tradition which then got turned into

Buddhas are

this astronomically more advanced or

Beyond an ordinary enlightened being or

an arant which I think is itself an

innovation that came up you know after the time of the Buddha and then it started um that led to like jota stories of of like the Buddha's Noble strenuous efforts lifetime after lifetime for countless eons to perfect his parmy so that he could become a sasam Buddha not just an ordinary enlightened being and then you have like the whole Cult of the Buddhas and then you have this this lineage of Buddhas and they're all named and there's I mean if you want something just you want to read something totally bizarre read the the supposed life of mongala Buddha who was like too incalculable eons ago on on a different Earth in in a different India

and I mean you just read the details and
you can see that it's it's pretty much
unbelievable to any Westerner other than
a Westerner who's just very Faith
oriented and will believe whatever his
religion tells him to
believe so I mean even with regard to
the ones that are in Orthodox
terraa I still think that it's mostly
just made up mythology and when you get
into other Buddhas like aayana Buddhas
and Mahayana bodhisattvas and so forth
then that's like another Step Beyond
even that or you can just put it all in
the same category of like mythological
Apocrypha or something but I don't take

any of that seriously I mean even you
know the future Buddha Mata the the
previous Buddha kasapa um you even that
I'm pretty skeptical
of so with regard to that
yeah I I do not think that it's
really there's no empirical validity you
know it's the validity is entirely based
on faith and there are some people you
know sort of like the early Christians
or even modern Christians who think that
faith is really all all that's really
necessary you've got faith in it that's
good enough and whether I mean just
having faith in it is somehow an
indication that it's
true and uh yeah I just I just don't

swing that way I just do not operate

that way I like to have some empirical

evidence supporting what I believe if at

all

possible so and then at the end here he

just says uh that I have heard that the

salies pray to

balesar in the form of NATA I don't

really know much about that I do know

that in Bur in Burma

there is a gat or a DVA called

locata and like his images he's always

got his feet pressed together soul to

soul he's sitting with his feet pressed

together that way that's one way you can

know that it's

lanata and um yeah I never heard

anything about him being identified with

the bodh a avalokitesvara lanata just

means lord of the world he's sort of

like the saat or the protecting daa of

the the planet Earth

and uh I guess maybe he's been doing a

good job of you know warding off meteor

impacts or

something but with regard to the salies

praying to the bodh aalo kesar who in

China is known as Guan Yin like in

Mahayana he's Prett he pretty much had a

kind of transition into a being a female

called Guan

Yin but um yeah I I really don't I

really don't have much interest in like

the mythological aspects of later
Buddhism the mythological aspects of
early Buddhism I have some interest in
mainly for anthropological reasons just
to get a better feel for the culture in
which the Buddha lived and in which
Buddhism
arose so I'm just going to move on to
Moon's next question
here which is what do you think of the
idea of translating the toptica into
Classical Languages such as Greek and
Latin as those are integral to Western
identity think of it as a form of
syncretism which is kind of a strange
idea although it does remind me of a

story by JD

Salinger I think it was Franny and zooie

in which one of the characters I think

it was zooie um I mean he's obviously

considered to be a what he saw but he's

I mean in it's the whole story is kind

of an

allegory and uh anyways when he was like

in college or something he broke up with

his girlfriend or some such and he sort

of overcame the heartache by just

dedicating himself to writing uh a

translation of one of the upanishads

into addict

Greek and I mean it's possible I mean I

I assume it's already been done I assume

that at least um you know some Eastern

texts have been translated into

Latin at the very

least but uh nobody reads classical

Greek and Latin anymore other than like

specialist Scholars you know it's like

it used to be not very long ago in

western civilization that even in high

school you'd learned some Latin at least

and if you went to college you pretty

much had to be proficient in in Latin

and classical Greek and nowadays it's I

mean even even just English is

considered to be I

mean you don't even have to be

proficient in that anymore that good

English is now considered to be racist

or some

such which is just further evidence of

the decline of Western

Civilization but um I mean it can be

done you can translate the toptica into

Latin or classical Greek if you want to

but I'm really not sure what the point

of it would be other than just as a kind

of social gesture because or as a kind

of sort of like with the the guy in the

Salinger story just as a kind of

personal exercise in in self-discipline

or something I mean you could translate

the entire titica into classical Greek

and then not even have it published just

just because of the effect it has on you

personally you know it definitely help

you to understand the

texts because if you want to translate

correctly or accurately then I mean you

really have to try to understand each

word in each text as well as you can in

order to get it right or get it as close

to write it as it is possible to get

it

so yeah I mean I don't I'm not sure

exactly what the point of it would be

because as I say almost nobody reads

Greek or Latin

anymore but who knows it depends on your

own personal volition that would

determine whether it's a good idea or

not I think so I'm just going to move on

to the next question here this is from game fap and game fap says what's your thoughts on the apparent recent trend of people setting themselves on fire in the US on your website you have the famous photo of that Buddhist Who lit himself up in the 60s yeah I'm not sure how much of a like a a fashion trend it is I'm not sure how much of a fat it is now and I'm going to check and make sure that're recording and yes says we're recording so I've heard of like one guy who was protesting the the war in Israel I think by setting himself on fire I don't know if he survived or or what happened to him um but I mean it's not exactly a trend you know there's a few

people that have done it who have ulated themselves

um but in Asia it's more of it's more of a trend like uh the famous Vietnamese monk who L himself on fire um in protest of the Vietnamese government I think this was even before the the Vietnam War um yeah I mean he he he and a friend had both agreed that they were going to light themselves on fire and I think the friend had already done it it's just that that was the the famous iconic one but apparently it was kind of a thing you know sort of a weird tradition and um I've read also that just a few years ago it's like two or

three years ago that more than a hundred
Tibetan Monks had emulated themselves in
that year so it's for some reason they
do it although it's um for a monk a
terraa Buddhist monk it would be against
the rules committing suicide is a Duca
offense which you can't confess because
you're dead after you've done it
but
um what else can I say about this what
are my thoughts on the apparent recent
trend of people setting themselves on
fire in the US
well I
mean I I do think that people should
have the right to to kill themselves if
they want to although there's better

ways of doing it than others maybe

setting yourself on fire would uh would

be a way of doing it I used to sort of

semi jokingly considered doing that when

I was staying in

Bellingham just go to the the local

Dharma Hall set myself on fire on the

front porch as a kind of

protest but I never did it was it was

just kind of a joke sometimes I tell

people you see me walking towards the

dmall with a can of gas uh you'll know

what's going

on so let's see

here yeah I mean it's not really much of

a trend as far as I can tell unless it's

a lot of it's just not being

publicized so I'm just going to move on

to the next question this is from cify

and cify said could you expand on a

statement you mentioned in your q&as

regret for one action generates a

negative Karma how

so yeah well regret or remorse or like a

guilty conscience is called Kucha in

poly and that also includes any kind of

worry about the future just worry

anxiety regret remorse that whole

spectrum is is considered to be is

called kukucha and is considered to be

bad karma it's an UNH whome mental state

so like for example if you regret having

done something it's like you're setting

yourself up against reality you know
it's like you are unhappy because of the
way things are you can't change the past
but still it's like you have this desire
for the past to be different and that
just that's just stupid that's just
idiotic you can't change the past unless
in some metaphysical way there're an
infinite number of pasts and you can
sort of alter the past somehow by just
firmly believing a different version of
the past or some such but even then it
wouldn't require remorse or regret which
is an unhappy
feeling because you want the past not to
have been that

way and sitting up against the way
things are or the way things were that
can't be changed is just it's insane
essentially and also I could even go
farther and to say that unhappiness in
general technically speaking is immoral
in Buddhism whenever you're unhappy you
are acting in an in immoral or unethical
or at least an UNH wholesome manner
because all suffering is ultimately self
self inflicted and so you are inflicting
this unhappiness upon yourself by
Desiring things to be
different and Desiring the past to be
different is dumber than Desiring
certain other things to be different
because there's no way you can change

it and I mean even with the present you can't change the present I mean you can change the future by setting about changing things so that you know the future is going to be different but the present moment is what it is you can't can't change that either so if it's raining outside and you're unhappy because it's raining it's just dumb unhappiness you're setting yourself up against reality all the desire and misery in the world isn't going to make it stop

raining so you're just in a state of conflict with Sam Sara and any kind of like mental conflict is is going to be

unskillful to some degree like uh J

chrishan murty used to call it friction

you know it saps so much of your life

force just being in a state of friction

against the way things

are so I hope I answer that

question you know it's it's essentially

wanting things to be different and

wanting things to be different in a

really insane kind of a way because you

can't change the

past

so I'm going to move on to cley's next

question and cify says the second

question is

why 84,000 is a significant number in

Buddhism and I think 84,000 was a

significant number in Ancient India in

general I mean it's it's just kind of

like the stereotypical big number you

know like a zillion gajillion or six

gillion or

whatever so I mean in 84,000

there's I really can't even think think

of a

doctrinal like anything in like Orthodox

terot and doctrine that uses the term

84,000 other than maybe the 84,000

families of worms or

something um but it does mentioned in

the texts when it's talking about the

aicas who were fatalists they were

strict determinists who believed I'm

pretty sure that you that each being
would have to live 84,000 lives and it
was just predetermined you know you
start off at the bottom and your 84,000
life you become an enlightened
jicon so I mean apparently I would guess
the 84,000 was just sort of a
stereotypical very big number in Ancient
India maybe it was considered um you
know almost sacred just for mathematical
reasons or numerological reasons but I'm
not sure exactly what it would be but it
wasn't specific the Buddhism I'm pretty
sure it was just like the Iron Age
Ganges Valley had
some they had some regard for the number
84,000 maybe it goes back to the indis

valley civilization or something but I really don't know so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from Kyle and Kyle put this under a video an old video I did with a guy named Numa when we were discussing neoplatonism and just um like pre-christian Western spirituality in general and so Kyle under that video um he left this comment he said theories I have number one Augustine screwed up by not making the Trinity of ethos paos and logos the father mother and child two Christianity is indeed platonism for the masses but the insistence on literal interpretation of

Bible eventually spelled D Doom three
balance in the west began tipping with
aquinus aam and the Scholastics
nominalists in the Middle Ages shift
from Plato to Aristotle this also
spelled doom and then four the Marvel
universe is basically a rebirth of Pagan
religion pagans did not believe in a
literal Zeus anymore than you and I
believe in a literal Superman it's a
story with deeper meaning any
thoughts well okay so go up to is number
one Augustine screwed up by not making
the Trinity um father mother and
child so um yeah that might have been
more in accordance with neoplatonism
where you've got or or even like in

Hinduism where you've got sort of the
father or like Brahma who is sort of
like the the ground being and then you
have more of a feminine Creator Spirit
like the Demi urge that just sort of or
in in Hinduism that brahma's consort is
Maya I'm pretty sure which is just sort
of like illusion or the world of some
the world of diversification that it's
sort of like a a feminine you know
giving birth of the 10,000 things so to
speak you don't mind me like mixing
together a number of spiritual
traditions in my language
here so and then child
I guess that would be Jesus but

um yeah I mean I really don't have much
to say on that I mean it would seem to
make more sense but not making sense is
kind of a Christian specialty sometimes
like the whole Trinity is you know I've
read that like Greek Orthodox
Christianity especially they really
emphasize the nonsensical of the Trinity
as a way of emphasizing just the
incomprehensibility of of the Divine you
know it's it's a way of humbling you by
giving you this doctrine that you can't
really understand and and so it's like
you know God understands it anyway that
makes him greater than
us so number
two Kyle's number two idea is

Christianity is indeed platonism for the masses but the insistence on literal interpretation of the Bible eventually spelled Doom yeah well that was um I think the Protestants especially they wanted to drag like literalism into into uh an understanding the Bible more than the the Catholics did but still I'm I'm really not an authority on Christianity and how it relates to platonism so um I mean I'm kind of skeptical of the idea that Christianity is indeed platonism for the masses considering that Christianity emphasizes so much you know that Jesus died for our

sins and so forth which uh is alien into
platonism as far as I know it I don't
think there is a a platonic
Messiah and Christianity is just
emphatically
Messianic you know it's based on a
messiah who died for our sins and that's
how you go to heaven is through him and
I really don't see that in platonism
although I'm No Authority on
platonism and there is just a lot of
sort of Old Testament Jewish beliefs
that are brought into it also although
some Scholars will say that a lot of Old
Testament Jewish beliefs also had
platonic influences because the Old
Testament isn't as old as tradition

would tell us it is so anyways you got number three balance in the west began tipping with aquinus aam and the Scholastics or nominalist in the Middle Ages shift from Plato to Aristotle um yeah I suppose so aquinus is is known for having uh sort of to some degree uh integrated like Aristotelian philosophy with Christianity but I'm no authority on St Thomas aquinus either and then finally you get to the interesting one at least interesting to me the Marvel universe is basically a rebirth of a Pagan religion and yeah I wouldn't go that far

I mean there's there aren't people like
making sacrifices to Spider-Man I mean
you might have some weirdo out there
who's doing it I'm sure there must be at
least somebody doing it and also in
India too there probably people watch
the Marvel movies in India and they're
convinced that the Silver Surfer is is
this God you know maybe the Silver
Surfer is like like Mercury or something
not in India because I don't know who
the the Indian equivalent of mercury
would be or
Hermes and please excuse me for clearly
my throat a lot I think it's this fruit
juice has an effect on that
too so we just drink more of it and

shamelessly continue clearing my
throat so yeah I think the pagans were
taking their mythology more
seriously than Marvel Universe fans I
mean who people who used to be Marvel
Universe fans up until Marvel and Disney
who bought out the Marvel Universe just
started turning everything into like
Progressive propaganda you know
replacing all the the traditionally
white male superheroes with females and
and colored people and so forth people
of color I should
say and homosexuals and all you know all
the rest any anything that's
diverse so the Marvel universe is

collapsing not because it's being

replaced by

some some different universe that makes

more sense sort of like what happened

with classical paganism you know it just

got eclipsed by

Christianity partly because Christianity

answered the needs of the people to some

degree more and it was in a way sort of

the opening of the heart chakra in

mainstream western civilization and also

just the his hysterical intolerance of

early Christians just drove all other

their systems into

Extinction so yeah it's kind of a loose

parallel with some overlap but I

wouldn't go so far as to say that the

Marvel universe is basically a rebirth

of Pagan

religion it's going to take some doing

for the rebirth of a Pagan religion

unless something like Indian

Hinduism becomes very much in fashion in

the west or some

such because Hinduism is essentially a

Pagan

religion so I'm just going to move on to

the next question here this is ruy

and ruie says as a mendicant how often

did you Daydream if at all do you

remember or do you consider it just

another strain of the inner monologue or

do its voluntary and deliberate aspects

Place daydreaming in a league of its own okay so this is two questions I got to separate these and I'll answer the first one first as a mendicant how often did you Daydream if at all well this is kind of an embarrassing question because I have to admit I did Daydream kind of a lot as a monk sometimes you're meditating you're meditating your meditation just isn't going well you know you're just sitting there and you know you just start daydreaming you know like fantasizing about stuff sometimes fantasizing about inappropriate stuff um you know like daydreaming about if if I was like a Roman Emperor and I had the same

knowledge then that I have now you know
what could I do to prevent Christianity
from taking over the empire that kind of
thing
um but yeah I I did Daydream
considerably I still do I I've I've sort
of been a Daydreamer all my life you
just sort of working out these scenarios
in your
head at least that's my version of it
and so I'm just going to move on to ru's
second question here which do you
consider it just another strain of the
inner monologue or do its voluntary and
deliberate aspects Place daydreaming in
Le of its own well my father told me he

my father was a hypnotist a amateur
hypnotist he didn't do it for a living
and he told me that daydreaming is a
mild Trans
State and I guess if you're daydreaming
you're like you're really daydreaming
not just like thinking something
casually but you're kind of you know
really into this daydreaming stage that
you are in kind of a dreamy State you
know it's almost like dreaming while
you're awake that's it's called
daydreaming I guess and so it could be
considered a mild Trans
State um so I guess I answered that
question pretty sure so I'm just going
to move on to the next question this is

from seac and sead

zida and seal of actually and CAD zida

left a link to a it was like a sermon

given by Malcolm

X back in the 60s I assume and he says

please check out this video from 1725 to

27 minutes my question is what are your

thoughts on what Malcolm X says here in

his religious sermon if you think he's

right about conceptions of the soul and

afterlife in terms of how early

Israelites actually thought of these

matters what Buddhist tradition would

think of some of the various ideas he

presented especially of what a soul is

which seems more like life force or Jaa

here if belief in an afterlife leads to
it being a coping mechanism for the
downtrodden to continue tolerating their
social conditions in this life as
Malcolm X says and any other thoughts
you had from the section of the video
yeah I watched most of it I didn't get
all the way to the 27 minute Mark but I
I I watched most of it or listened to it
because there was no video accompanying
it other than just a still photograph of
of Malcolm himself
so um my thoughts about what Malcolm X
says well first he's talking a lot about
the soul and he's essentially denying
the existence of any kind of Soul
as commonly understood in Christianity

that he's saying that uh you know I mean he uses the Bible as an authority even though I mean I don't know much about Malcolm X at all I thought he was like a Muslim or something but he's uh he continually mentions The Honorable Elijah Muhammad that he that Malcolm XS in this sermon seems to be portraying himself as a kind of apostle for The Honorable Elijah Muhammad and he gives a list of you know the the what were considered to be the the um genuine prophets that Muhammad accepted you know going back to like um I can't remember the first one you know somebody like uh Eno or something maybe but then he

mentions Moses he mentions Elijah he
mentions Jesus he mentions Muhammad
himself and then he mentions as the the
most recent Prophet The Honorable Elijah
Muhammad who I mean I have never heard
of the The Honorable Elijah Muhammad
before so he he apparently was a flash
in the pan he didn't last very long as a
genuine
Prophet far as I can
tell so anyways this Malcolm X who
apparently is not a Christian
nevertheless is using the Bible to prove
points apparently to a group of
Christians and he's talking about
how um how Adam was made how God took
some dirt from the earth and breathed

life into it and then it became a living soul and he put a lot of emphasis on that he spent a large portion of the 10 minutes or so that I was supposed to watch just emphasizing that that he God didn't implant a soul into Adam that just by breathing life into this dirt this soil that Adam became a living soul but before that he was a dead soul and then presumably after he died he became a dead Soul again and then um Malcolm X is talking about how just a soul is essentially just a being you know you say that you know 20 Souls died in that plane crash or someone is is like a you know an intelligent person you say

they're an intelligent Soul you know it
just means that Soul just means any kind
of being and then before they're born
you know they're still they're still a
soul they're just a dead soul and then
when they're alive they're a living soul
and after they die they're a dead Soul
again and he seems to be just completely
dismissing the very idea of any kind of
afterlife
and that he's reducing Soul just to
being you know just any kind of organism
apparently and my guess is I don't know
this for sure but Malcolm X it may be
that he was a
Marxist and he was just trying to
like inoculate Marxist ideas like

Marxist atheism and you know when you're dead you're dead materialism and all that into the understanding of these Christian black people who he wasn't really satisfied with because he was saying that I mean so long as you believe in an afterlife you're you're never going to stop being slaves you know it's it was like his purpose is trying to get black people to rise up and do something and not enough of them were doing it for his for his uh his liking and so he's just telling them if if you just putting up with your situation and hopes of going to heaven afterwards then you're you're never

going to stop being a slave that kind of thing and I just do not think Malcolm X was a very religious or spiritual person that he was more of a political agitator and possibly a

Marxist that's just the impression I get for Len from listening to him talk for 10 minutes because I never had any interest in Malcolm X before that and I still don't have much interest in Malcolm X

so I guess I answered this question I mean it is it does it did kind of remind me a little bit of one of the questions the Buddha refused to answer and that is is or actually two questions that the Buddha refused to answer is the life

force or the Jiva the same as the body
or separate from the body and the Buddha
just wouldn't answer that
question but Malcolm X answered it he's
saying it's apparently the same as the
body that you're your soul is your body
I mean that's that's kind of what I took
away from what Malcolm X was saying and
that but then it's like before you're
born before you exist still you're kind
of a dead soul but I mean he uses Soul
just as a person you know it's just any
kind of being is a soul I mean he
doesn't really differentiate between
soul and and
being

so that's it I mean yeah I don't think
you're going to learn very much
spirituality from listening to Malcolm X
lectures so I'm just going to move on to
covac and CAD Z's next question
here which is does the theory of Rupa
kalapas from Ab Abid dama and the three
gunas from Sania tradition contradict
the Five Element model in Buddhism well
I don't think there is a Five Element
model in Buddhism unless it's let's see
mind mental States yeah okay
wait mind mental States Consciousness no
there's there's four there's four
elements in Orthodox terraa I think
Mahayana Buddhism maybe some of the non-
terod earlier schools added the fifth

element of ether or

space so that might be the fifth element

that covac andad Zona is referring to

here but in Buddhism it's just earth

water Wind and Fire are the the four

elements or if you want to get into the

four ultimate realities of Obi

philosophy then it would be mind mental

States matter and

nibana and let's see the theory of Rupa

kalapas and the three gunas from Sonia

and I guess I might as well explain that

to anyone who's read the uh the bagavat

Gita for example knows that there's the

there's like the three gunas the three

qualities which are satvic which is rep

symbolically represented by the color
white r iic symbolically represented by
the color red and tamasic which is
symbolic symbolically represented by the
color black if white and black are
colors and food especially
has has these gunas in it like satvic
food which would be sort of an ayurvedic
Hindu kind of diet of nuts grains fruits
and dairy products that kind of thing
rajasic food I mean satvic is is with
regard to wisdom and Purity you know
satva or yeah forget forget foret forget
me just saying satva but it's it is
conducive to like Purity and spiritual
growth rajasic which would be like meat
and spicy food especially is conducive

to rust or or lust or passion you know
it kind of gets your juices flowing gets
you riled up more so than satvic food
which helps you to calm down and then
there's toas
food which um I mean if you read the
text it's usually referring to like
stale food or food that's kind of gone
off although I've I asked an ayurvedic
specialist once what would be a good
example of tamasic food I asked him like
blue cheese maybe he said mushrooms just
emphatically just mushrooms that's
tamasic food also on the Discord server
um that I was looking at recently they
they put eggs somebody said that eggs

are also

tamasic

so um with that as a kind of a rambling

introduction to this question does the

theory of Rupa Copus I didn't even

mention rupac copas yet according to

Abid dama philosophy there's a bunch of

ultimately real elements or

dharmas that fit into four main

categories which is mind mental States

physical matter and nibana

in mind or Consciousness there's really

only one kind of that nibana or Nirvana

there's only one kind of that but

there's 28 different kinds of matter

and gosh I can't remember it's it's a

high number of mental

States and so a Rupa colapa is like an

atom or a molecule and these these

individual realities can't Exist by

themselves they always appear in these

little clumps or clusters that are

called rupac

copas so and and it's same with mind and

matter there are they're mental rupac

copas and and like physical rupac

copas um so anyways no I guess I guess a

Rupa colapa would have to be physical

because Rupa means

matter so it's it's sort of like the

ancient Indian the ancient Indian

Buddhist attempt at describing reality

and it's it's sort of like their own

atomic

theory and

so seac and sead zida here is asking if

the theory of the Rupa kalapas from Abid

dama and the three gunas from Sonia

tradition contradict the Five Element

model in Buddhism which in terraa

Buddhism anyway is the Four Element

model and I don't see how it would

contradict the Four Element model in

Terra at least the the Rupa kalapa

Theory I mean you could probably find

ways that it could arguably contradict

it but

um yeah it's it's pretty well worked out

I think but the three gunas I don't

think it contradicts anything it's just

sort of an an extra additional theory
that isn't necessarily contradicting
anything it's just it's just another one
that's on the side of of Buddhist
philosophy but uh it doesn't necessarily
contradict anything that I'm aware of
anymore than sort of like Chinese
medicine and his belief in Chi would
necessarily contradict anything unless
you're going to say that the three gunas
really don't fit into the abid's model
of these ultimate realities it's not one
of the ultimate
realities and like Chinese Chi really
doesn't fit into Abid dama either in
that in that

regard well this is kind of a strange

subtle question

it's

um

yeah does the theory of Rupa kapus from

Abid dama and three gunas from Sania

tradition contradict the Five Element

model in Buddhism it's just kind of a

weird question really and I don't even

I'm not even sure what the Five Element

model in Buddhism

is unless he's talking about the five

condas or

something maybe that that's what he's

referring to is the five condos or the

five

Aggregates I'm not sure you may have to

ask it again I'm going to move on to the next question which coincidentally is from White Malcolm X and white Malcolm X says does it go against vinia to serve as the absolute Theocratic ruler of a country if you live in a country where the Constitution calls for rule by a Buddhist monk not an immediate concern for me but I just want to know know what the rules are in case it ever comes up in the future and I think he had asked this question specifically with regard to the Dal Lama who I mentioned in the previous Q&A is pretty much of a monk but also

he's pretty much the the secular king of
of Tibet or I guess the spiritual like
the Theocratic king of
Tibet so with regard to the venard rules
is is being a an absolute Theocratic
ruler of a country against against vinia
well it just there's no rule about it I
mean there was no chance that it would
happen I mean it was just assumed that
monks renounce the world in vinia you
know they just kind
of they don't have anything to do with
the government other than possibly just
hanging out with government Ministers of
the occasional King just you know
discussing philosophy sort of like
Alexander the Great used to hang out

with philosophers

um but there is this

one this one rule this one strange rule

in the text in in vinia which says the

Buddha says monks I allow you to obey

Kings and that was with regard to

changing the calendar the King has the

right to add an interc calorie month to

the year so the king can decree there's

going to be 13 months this year and it's

going to happen you know in between this

this regular month and that regular

month we're going to add an extra one

just to keep the you know the cycles of

the Moon more or less in sync with the

year because a lunar calendar and the

Buddhist calendar is like Luna solar

it's partly based on the phases of the

moon and partly based on like the The

Cider real

year

so oh man I'm confusing

myself so anyways the rule that says I

allow you to obey Kings was originally

set up for monks to accept the the

king's decree that there's going to be a

change in the calendar that

year but I mean the rule itself just

says I allow you to obey

Kings and so if you just happen if the

monk happens to be a king then it's sort

of like a president being able to Pardon

himself you know he can just make a

decree it's okay for for me to be the
king and then it seems like that one
obscure rule about obeying Kings
um that might it might be a way of kind
of
loophole gosh but then again I mean if
if you're a king if the if the monk
became a king and he's like having
people put to death or something then I
don't think he'd be able to Pardon
himself or absolve himself from being
excommunicated but I guess the long and
the short of it the short answer to this
is vinia does not have any rules at
all against becoming a Theocratic ruler
of a

country just because I mean it just
wasn't going to happen just like there's
no rule against smoking tobacco in Venia
because tobacco had not been introduced
into India yet at that time there's no
rule against a monk having a smartphone
partly because smartphones had not
existed yet when the rules were made and
it just didn't occur to anybody to make
a rule against a monk becoming an
absolute
monarch so I assume it would be okay so
long as he's not uh like having drone
strikes or or having you know killing
people or ordering the deaths of people
which pretty much all pre US presidents
do anyway I assume that the king of some

obscure little third world country
somewhere won't necessarily be ordering
the death of anybody unless it's a
Banana Republic in which you know he
might be ordering the death of anyone
who opposes
him but um I mean this this whole
question reminds me of the Tamia jataka
which is I mean I I've considered even
making a video of just me reading the
Tamia jataka it's it's this story about
previous existence of the Buddha before
he was
enlightened and his father was a king
and one time when he was was a toddler
he was sitting on his father's lap on

the throne while he was judging cases
and he was having people you know
sentenced to execution by various
Grizzly ways you know Bandits were
brought in front of him and you know
you'd have you know top of their skull
opened up and like molten lead poured
into their skull this kind of stuff
which did happen in the Buddhist time
they had Grizzly public executions to
strongly you know dissuade people from
taking up Life Of Crime it didn't
entirely work of course but still it
happened and so the little kid who is
the future Buddha he sees he he realizes
that if when he grows up to be the king
he's going to have to do this kind of

stuff because that's part of the job of being a king and so he just pretended to be a deaf mute for for from then on and so he just grows up with everyone believing he's a deaf mute until finally the king in despair just has him taken out to be put to death you know you just send send some Lackey out and and takes him out to the woods to kill him and then after the the Lackey the servant of the king takes Tamia out into the forest then timia all of a sudden starts talking and showing them he's not a deaf mute and he pretty much converts him to you know Proto Buddhism and so Tamia just goes off and

becomes a monk and then eventually
everybody in the entire Kingdom goes to
visit him and they all get converted to
this Proto Buddhism and they all
renounce the world until all that's left
in the kingdom is just a few dereli like
drunks and so
forth but I mean the moral of the story
is if if you're going to be a king you
got to do immoral things like having
people put to death and uh so that may
be a conflict with being a monk living
in accordance with vinia whether the Dal
Lama does anything like that I assume
they've got systems in place where
you've got you know other people making
the calls with regard to executing

criminals and so

forth but I mean the short answer is no

it does not go against vinia to serve as

an absolute Theocratic ruler of a

country partly just because it never

occurred anyone to make a rule against

it so I'm just going to move on to the

next question here which which is from

Ry balder and Ry balder says is bummer a

best word to describe or translate

Dua and I would say that it's not the

best word otherwise in my own

translations I would have been

translating Dua as

bummer but um yeah bummer I

mean bummer is is a noun I'm pretty sure

I don't think it can really be turned
into an adjective very easily easily and
Dua can be a noun or an adjective
but uh Dua I mean it's notoriously
difficult to
translate and it's usually translated as
suffering but Dua means any kind of
negative feeling you know from just the
mildest discomfort to the most
unbearable Agony and there's no real
equivalent in the English language for
that so translators usually just fall
back on suffering or this they leave it
untranslated like especially lately
translators will just leave certain
terms untranslated just because there is
no good English translation and Dua is

one of them although um I usually use

the word

unease which uh it's kind of nice in

that it it pairs well with ease like

like Dua pairs with Suka Suka is the

opposite of Dua so dukka is suffering

and Suka is like happiness you know

positive positivity negativity and

positivity whereas you know in my

translation scheme it's unease and ease

so it works that way there's more of a

balance especially like in poetry and so

forth it just seems to be a smoother

kind of a translation than suffering

although uh aan tanro uses

stress which uh I don't know it's maybe

distress would work better than stress

but I'm sure he's got his

reasons um in like a modern Parliament

like Street

language um yeah I was thinking you like

if you were to translate the first Noble

Truth into like Street language it'd be

like everything's

[__] I still wouldn't say bummer

like maybe [__] would be better than

bummer so yeah I would not consider

bummer to be the best word to describe

or translate DOA although you know it's

there there are a lot worse words you

could

use

bummer yeah I mean it's kind of

applicable so anyways Ry balder's second question is uh similar which is what are your top six words to describe or translate Dua and I really don't have a top six list of favorite translations for the word

dooka I mean my own favorite like I already mentioned it would be unease and the suffering is kind of all right and I guess we can throw [__] in there for the street people and stress by

aano yeah I never really favored that one and I mean we're already we've only got up to like four there and there's still two to

go

so yeah negativity or something but

um all you really need is one good

word to translate it and you don't

really really need to have a list of

five alternates in in in order of

preference so I've never really come up

with six words six of my top favorite

words for describing or translating

Dua I guess just leaving it untranslated

might count as an

option but um I guess I answered that as

well as I'm as well as I'm inclined or

able to answer it so I'm just going to

move on to the next question which is

from

PSA and PSA says are salonas allowed to

masturbate or does the precept precept

prohibiting intentional release of semen
apply to salonas as well so a Salona is
a novice It's usually the English word
is for Salona is novice a Buddhist
novice and they are have to keep 10
precepts plus the SE rules which are
mainly just like rules regarding
etiquette you know politeness and so
forth you know just proper respect for
dhamma and advocating that with regard
to lay people and so
forth so yeah technically speaking there
is no rule it's not against the 10
precepts for a novice to masturbate to
cause himself to have an orgasm on
purpose

but um different cultures like Terra
Buddhist cultures like Burmese culture
would consider it to be a no no and any
monk who does or any Salona who does
that any novice who does that would have
to take the precepts over again but the
burmes have some strange ideas they
think that a salon era if he takes all
of his clothes off and gets all the way
naked he's got to take all the precepts
over again because somehow taking your
clothes off makes you stop being a salon
Aram and they've got this weird
technical explanation for for that I no
longer clearly
remember but
um yeah I mean masturbating not to

orgasm technically even a monk can do

that even though is certainly not

recommended but uh yeah the the preset

prohibiting intentional release of seen

is uh if I remember correctly it's the

first Sasa Rule and salonas don't have

to follow the Sasa rules

so I mean they have to be

celibate so I mean it could be

considered sensual misconduct which

would be included in

celibacy for a salon era or anyone

taking 10

precepts so yeah I think technically

speaking there's no rule against it but

different Buddhist Traditions will have

I mean obviously they're going to come
across that because you you got teenage
boys who are salonas in these Southeast
Asian or South Asian Buddhist cultures
who are going to spank the puppy
sometimes if they can get away with
it
so yeah I think that uh the individual
Traditions will will have an answer for
that and they'll say yeah you're not
allowed to do it although I have been
told that a lot of novices do
masturbate and as I say technically
speaking
there is no explicit rule against
it so I'm just going to move on to the
next question which is from

Mambo and this also was uh this was a comment to a different video it wasn't a comment to the Q&A video but I came across
it um so MBO says wasn't there a tetralemma like Concept in the atica waga and the tetralemma oh this is this was a comment that wasn't even to one of my videos but he addressed me because I left the comment it was religion for breakfast I think which is a is a a good Channel on YouTube he talks about various religious
traditions and he was talking about Greek Buddhists so that was kind of interesting and I watched it was an

interesting video he didn't really talk
about Greek Buddhists in Europe or in
the the Roman Empire he was talking
about the like the Greek Kingdom of
baktria and then the the bakian Greeks
invaded Northwestern India so you had
like a indog Greek Kingdom for a while
and so he was talking about the Greeks
in Asia who converted to Buddhism and
really didn't mention much of anything
about Western Greeks like Greeks in
actual Europe or in the Roman Empire
that that converted to Buddhism but
anyway he was talking about the
tetralemma which is an aspect of
Buddhist
logic which is you know

every every statement must fit into one of four categories this is the tetralemma so it's either true it's false it's true and false or it's neither true nor false any statement would have to fit in to that tetralemma supposedly and so Mambo here is wasn't there a tetralemma like Concept in the ATA waga and I mean the Tetra The Logical tetralemma is not mentioned the ATA waga that I can remember the closest I can think of with regard to the ateka waga would be statements that a monk would not consider himself to be superior to others or inferior to others or equal to others that all of those are

considered to be conceit or Mana which
is kind of a strange idea that it's
conceit to consider yourself inferior or
or equal to others but Mana here is just
any kind of self-regard considering
yourself to be anything is
delusional so that's about the closest I
can come to the tetralemma in the AA
waga although um it just kind of deals
with the tetralemma by just saying don't
believe anything so that would apply to
the whole tetralemma I means if you're
not believing anything you're not
believing that a is true you're not
believing a is false you're not
believing that a is true and false and
you're not believing the a is neither

true nor false you're just dismissing

the whole tetralemma

and that's kind of what narina does

later on like in his Mula maaka karaka

he applies the Buddhist logical

tetralemma to statement after statement

after statement and attempts to

demonstrate that none of them really

apply because the logic is just invalid

it's like any statement is bound to be

just invalid and just won't even fit the

tetralemma

and that's a development of what is just

sort of implied in very early Buddhism

like in the ATA

waga

so so I mean the question again here is
wasn't there tetralemma likee Concept in
the AA waga and not necessarily although
the whole tetralemma is kind of
dismissed in some verses or some sutas
and also as I said before there's kind
of a trilemma in that you don't consider
yourself to be superior you don't
consider yourself to be inferior and you
don't consider yourself to be
equal so that would be kind of a
trilemma I
guess
so I guess I'll just move on to the next
question and this is from Fred and Fred
is kind of an unusual guy and that he
he'll just send

questions everywhere you know he'll put
questions in the q&as he'll put
questions in the comments to other
people in the q&as you know he he'll
email me questions sometimes and and
some sometimes it's hard to tell whether
he's really asking the question
expecting the answer or not because
sometimes he'll just have sentences
ending with question
marks but anyways he did put this one in
the Q&A and so it would be uh fair game
for answering this one especially and so
I'm going to answer this one which is
Fred says memory could be looking
Upstream question

mark and I assume what he means is that
memory is actually looking into the past
and I discussed this in a previous Q&A
not the one immediately before this one
but a few q&as back where I was somebody
asked me about memory and it got me
thinking and I I was thinking about
memory more is that it's really a kind
of karmic phenomenon it's like a mental
momentum that karma is like the momentum
of your mental States and memory is
essentially the same thing it's like the
the memory of certain images or
impression
it's it's like the the momentum of that
through
time and so I really do not bu the idea

that some philosophers in all
seriousness have proposed that memory is
just looking into the past that you're
like reexperiencing the past but the
very fact that memories can be
faulty and pretty much any memory is
bound to be faulty with regard to
details you know if if if you if you
examine it closely enough you're going
to see that you might remember something
very clearly that and then it turns out
that you remembered him wearing a white
shirt when so and so did some such and
such but really he was wearing a light
blue shirt or something but very clearly
in your mind you see that white shirt

because that's just kind of the version

that you've settled upon and that you've

reinforced over time by recalling it and

just sort of like adding to the the

psychic momentum of it so it doesn't

Fade Out as easily

so I do not believe that memory is

directly looking into the past it's just

like the momentum through time of

certain sensory Impressions or

perceptual Impressions that just get

reinforced every time you remember it

you're Conjuring up the image which then

sort of adds to the momentum of

it

so I guess I answer that question so I'm

moving on to the next one this is from

yaroslav

and yaroslav says is there for us any

other than samsaric

context well the only context you you

could possibly have would be

samsaric because there is no context in

Ultimate Reality there is no text there

is no con no context so context itself

is a samsaric phenomenon of just

integrating different ideas you know

fitting together pieces of puzzle and

there are no various pieces of a puzzle

in in like

Nirvana so if you mean is there any

context for us other than some a

samsaric one then I would have to say no

but I mean it could be interpreted
differently this question could is there
for us any other than you know some sort
context I mean is there something other
than a context for us I mean you could
say I mean there's we're pervaded by by
the absolute by Ultimate Reality by the
highest truth whatever you want to call
it God Dao the
dharmakaya whatever you want to call
that but it's not really for us it's
just weird just kind of superimposed
over it and we're just not as real as it
is
so I mean even us just assuming us as
real then you're already I mean you're
already assuming that there are these

multiple individual entities that

ultimately don't

exist

so yeah I mean you can say that I mean

there's the potential at least for

something other than or higher than a s

saric

context but it's not really for us that

the US is what is in the way of

that the US is what is in the way of

anything other than Isam SAR

context so I'm just going to move on the

next question here this is from

Eddie and Eddie says can y all list your

favorite texts and books and other

sources for enlightenment or deepening

Awakening so my favorite texts or books

man for enlightenment or deepening

Awakening

gosh well I mean somebody asked a

similar question down here and I I kind

of put in a few notes down

below so I'll just I'll just skip to

that okay somebody somebody asked a

similar question but they were asking

for specifically Buddhist sources so my

favorite Buddhist sources I mean I don't

know if it's you could even call it as a

source for like how to become awakened

um but like sutan was like my main

inspiration as a terraa Buddhist um it's

pretty much converted me to terraa

Buddhism and just the ideal of the the

wandering aesthetic life really appealed to me so I mean not all texts in the suttin are equally good there there is a certain amount of Deadwood even in the suttin um the

udana uh first suas of just about any collection because the editor ERS or compilers of the the sutas usually put like some old important sutas right at the very beginning of each collection like the entire sagata Vaga of the samut nikaya is considered to be relatively old it has a lot of important stuff in it um like the beginning of the mahalaga like you know of of the vinea that's that's got a lot of really important or

at least inspiring stuff in it the

alagadam masuta of the the majaya the D

nakas of the

majima also just um like Zen Coan

collections even some Mahayana texts

like uh um The Diamond Cutter Sutra or

the heart

Sutra let's see favorite texts and books

and other sources for enlightenment or

deepening Awakening well I mean the book

that originally got me interested in

spirituality would be Grist for the mill

by ROM do

a youth counselor gave me that to read

when I was like 17 years

old um yeah a lot of ROM do books I read

I read a lot of that

um let's see I mean even some uh stuff

by what Richard Bach like Jonathan

Livingston Seagull or uh

Illusions The Adventures of a reluctant

Messiah

um let's see deepening Awakening I mean

you might throw in like the experience

of insight by Joseph Goldstein which I

think is probably like his first DH

book man let's see what else yeah I

haven't I haven't really

uh like systematically compiled any sort

of list of like my favorites or what I

consider to be important uh Miracle of

Love which was uh stories about neem

Koli Baba by ROM dos that one book gives

gives you a feeling of being in the
presence of an enlight being more than
any book I've read I think although a
lot of Orthodox Buddhists would say
there's no way neim Koli Baba would be
fully enlightened because he didn't act
the way an arhun is supposed to act
according to Orthodox
teramoto um let's
see my favorite texts and books and
other sources for enlightenment or
deepening Awakening well maybe I
shouldn't mention psychedelic
drugs but that for my generation ation
of monks anyway that was a common common
occurrence you know starting with
something like LSD or mushrooms that

that gives you like a an an expanded awareness like an alternative version of reality that in some ways seems more real than the ordinary waking State and then you get more into meditation and so forth as ways of cultivating the expanded awareness without having to use the chemical

so favorite texts and books and other sources for enlightenment or deepening Awakening oh there's another book called uh in each moment by Paul low that is well worth reading that was one book that had a significant effect on my life and that it was one of the books that taught me that I mean just trying to

live up to an exalted ideal is really
pitting yourself against reality Krishna
mury talks about this a lot
too but um
yeah that that one book by Paul low was
given to me by a friend and it was just
one of those cases of you know the the
just what you need to read or hear just
falls into your lap at the right
moment but it's going to be different
for different people some people are
just profoundly moved by like Thomas
meron's the seven story Mountain for
example which I read and I mean it was
kind of interesting but it uh it didn't
really do much for me with regard to
Christian books like the ascent of Mount

Carmel by St John of the Cross is
profound and I mean that can be helpful
even for a Buddhist in that it's giving
you a different point of view at
essentially the same issue of just
purifying yourself and eradicating
delusion from your mind and I got a dog
who's trying to dig a hole in his dog
bed okay
then so
I guess I listed off a lot there's I do
have certain favorite books that really
don't have much to do with uh
Enlightenment or deepening Awakening I
mean at least it probably didn't help me
to become uh an as expanded or wise or

whatever as I am now like my favorite

novel is dovi is the idiot which is

profoundly religious spiritual kind of

story but whether it helped me to deepen

Awakening or

not is uh questionable

so I guess I listed I listed a

bunch so um let's see can I think of

anymore at C told us the Power of Now is

is

good Krishna mury I mean Jay chrishna

Mur is well worth

reading

um yeah I guess I guess that's good I'm

just gonna move on to the next question

now so this is from Austin and Austin

says I'm going on a Goa Retreat next

week any tips it's going to be my first time doing a Meditation Retreat well congratulations on that uh I I really don't have any tips I'm not sure what kind of tips I would give you if this were like several weeks in advance I might give you the tip of you know just sit cross-legged a lot just get yourself used to it before you dive into a 10-day Retreat that is going to be consist of lots and lots of sitting goer Retreats don't have walking meditation in between sitting sessions like like mahasi Retreats do so um I guess the only advice I would give you is just tough it out and last the whole 10 10 days even

if it seems really

horrible just stick it out see what

happens but aside from that I'm not sure

what kind of advice I would give you

just do your best you know try to try to

follow the instructions of the teachers

as well as you can although I guess at

going Retreats the instructions might

all be just on like video or

something just do your

best I'm just going to move on to the

next question here this is from jws and

juwels says since returning to the

worldly life have you noticed any

significant changes to your

physiology and yeah I've noticed a few

first of all after I stopped being a

monk I immediately gained about

25

pounds largely due to the miracle of

just being able to eat whatever I want

to instead of once a day you eat what's

put into your bowl and it's usually rice

and like Asian

stuff so all of a sudden just being able

to go to the refrigerator at any time

day or night and just take anything that

I want and consume it without breaking

any

rules that was that was kind of nice

so also with regard to my

physiology um I I'm I get fatigue more

now that I feel more tired than I did

when I was a monk that it's just like a

drain on my life

force especially I mean working for a

living you know I'm working in a sheet

metal shop and I'm moving around all day

and and sometimes lifting heavy stuff

and carrying it around and you know

doing a fair amount of of physical

exertion

um but also just not being a monk

anymore just being plunged back into

like worldly secular Samara and having

to navigate you know through all the

stuff that a lay person has to navigate

it it definitely has caused me to feel

more tired more

often so those would be the two main

significant changes in my physiology I

just gained 25 pounds just boom and uh

got somewhat of a gut now although it's

a hard gut it's not a soft flabby gut

it's it's a it's a firm

gut and uh just uh I get tired a lot

easier now partly because as a monk I

was just a member of the Leisure Class

you know I just didn't have to do very

much if I didn't want

to and uh I just my my life force just

you know was just kind of wasn't drained

Away by having to do all this other

stuff that now it

is so I guess I guess I answer that

question so I'm going to move on to the

next one here which is part two of

jewels's first question if so have these

physiological changes had any good or

bad consequences in term of your ability

to practice mindfulness it's it's hard

to say really because my practice is

different now it's not nearly as

systematic as it was

before um

I mean the tiredness I

mean maybe I

guess but I mean the main the main

effects on my ability to practice

mindfulness is really just all the

distractions of living a worldly life

you know you're at work and you're

interacting with other people and so

forth and you just kind of get sucked

into the idea that samsara is reality

you start taking it seriously and that

happens as a monk also but

um that's like the

main obstacle I guess to mindfulness is

just getting sucked into um just taking

everything seriously and and also um see

what was I gonna say I was goingon to

say something else this this thought

occurred to

me now I lost it

again yeah I don't think that

really how much you weigh is going to

have much influence on your

mindfulness and just being tired I mean

I wouldn't be tired if I were a or if I

were a monk again or as tired I

suppose

so see what was it your ability to

practice mindfulness I mean having a

certain amount of quietness and so forth

so really the the the differences in my

ability to practice mindfulness are not

really

physiological it's just more a

difference of

lifestyle that being a lay person is a

higher difficulty setting for

that

so I guess I guess I answer that so I'm

going to move on to the next question

this is from Liber Lam and Liber Lam

always asks these questions that are I
mean even if they're not very long
sometimes you got to really concentrate
to try and figure out what he's saying
and so anyways Liber lamb says is it
skillful to view Mara in an animistic
way along the lines of the illusion
being cleverly crafted to be like an
oppositional warfront to victory in
spiritual
life so I'm not exactly sure what he
means by animistic here Mara is like the
Buddhist devil you know Mara is the
tempor mara is the one who tries to keep
you from becoming
enlightened Mara and his three

voluptuous daughters

so Libra Lam is asking is it skillful to view Mara in an animistic way along the lines of the illusion being cleverly crafted to be like an oppositional War I mean who is cleverly crafting it that was like the first thing that arose when I was reading this is who is cleverly crafting the uh the opposition to your becoming enlightened I mean it seems to me that Mara is redundant Mara is unnecessary because generally we don't really want to become enlightened anyway and even if we do we get in our own way I mean we don't need some Cosmic bad guy to throw obstacles in front of us because we throw obstacles in front of

ourselves and Mara couldn't throw the
obstacle unless it was our own karma for
him to do
it
so whether it's skillful or not I mean
you can become enlightened following
Buddhism in which you consider Mara to
be this real Cosmic bad guy who is you
know trying to prevent people from
becoming enlightened just because by
becoming enlightened that's the only way
they're going to escape from his realm
he's not just the god of of Hell he's
the God of all of samsara he's the god
of Heaven and Earth and hell and so the
only way to escape from Mara's realm is

to become enlightened and just bail out
of the system to get completely out of
the 31 plans of existence and he doesn't
want that
according to tradition although as I say
I consider Mara to be kind of just
redundant I mean there's really no need
for him because most of us don't want to
become enlightened
anyway
so yeah I mean you you got to figure out
I mean who it is that's cleverly
crafting the the illusion and that's us
we ourselves are cleverly crafting it so
it's it'd be like our own subconscious
mind which would be sort of like the the
main story of or the main message of

Lord of the Flies the book not the the dumb movies I mean the movies just completely dismissed the the deeper philosophical symbolism or largely dismissed it and they're just trying to show a story about kids on an island but mean Lord of the Flies that's that's the English translation of
babab and you know the whole story uh at least at one level is about the devil and the nature of the devil and the whole point of the story is that I mean the devil doesn't really exist out there that the devil is internal it's like everyone has like these dark Corners in their mind and on a collective scale

that becomes

Satan the

monster and so you could view Mara kind

of that way but it wouldn't be animistic

but I mean Mara could be cleverly

crafting out the opposition to our

enlightenment

at that level somehow I guess but for

the most part we're I mean we're an

oppositional war with ourselves it's

like someone who's trying to become

enlightened they're at a war with the

part of themselves that doesn't want to

become enlightened you know it's an

internal War it's like a Civil War in

Mara in my

opinion just like Satan who didn't even

get invented until um you know

the Babylonian

captivity that they're just redundant

and

unnecessary so I'm just going to move on

to the next question this is from not

Henry Porter and not Henry Porter says

if I kill a bug aren't I doing it a

favor it's the lowest rung of life and

living a miserable existence if I put it

out of its misery I take a tiny karmic

hit but it gets the karmic benefit of

having been murdered and Hope ful moves

on to a better Incarnation I like to

joke about this when it comes up but is

there any truth in it also are being

supposedly conscious when they incarnate
as an insect which science suggests are
essentially like robots so I guess
that's two questions I got to separate
these
okay oh wait a minute it didn't
happen what happened
here okay I did it
all right so first question is if I kill
a bug aren't I doing it a favor it's the
lowest rung of life and living a
miserable existence I and if I put it
out of its misery I take a tiny karmic
hit but it gets the karmic benefit of
having been murdered and hopefully moves
on to a better Incarnation well I mean I
don't think that insects are miserable I

don't think you're putting an insect out
of its misery even a dying insect
there's a good chance you know like when
when a bug will just flip over onto it
back and start kicking his legs in the
air for no apparent reason you know it's
a goner then but even then I kind of
doubt that it's miserable I don't think
that insects suffer in that
way
so you might say that you're doing it a
favor but then again I mean youth in
Asia or killing people that are
considered to be inferior in some way I
mean you could use the same kind of
argument for that you know you just

you're doing it a favor it's the lowest

rung of life and living a miserable

existence

but they might see things

differently

so yeah you're not really putting it out

of its misery because I really don't

think an insect has any misery to speak

of and another thing that most western

Buddhists and a lot of Eastern Buddhists

also just kind of ignore or dismiss is

the idea that Buddhist ethics are

subjective they're not I mean the

ethical quality of an act really is not

a matter of what you're doing you know

outwardly it's it's your own mental

States while you're doing it that

determine the ethical value of the Act

and the karmic value of the

act

so I doubt that anyone's going to go to

hell just for killing a

bug but I don't think that they're doing

anything good necessarily by killing a

bug or if it is it could be like the

lesser of two evils let's say you you

got a child who's got lice in his hair

it's your duty as the parent to get rid

of the parasites which is probably going

to wind up in the parasites dying but I

mean you're doing it for the health of

your child and to prevent your child

from being a vector of of like contagion

of these

lice so sometimes you would have to take

the hit doing that and it could be that

overall you may be doing more good than

bad even though you are doing a certain

amount of unh wholesome activity by

killing like knowingly and willingly

killing living

beings

so yeah I don't think

that yeah I would not go along with the

argument that by killing a bug you're

doing it a favor I mean in all

likelihood it's just going to get reborn

as a as another bug

anyway and I mean you you've harmed

yourself more than you've harmed the

insect which is kind of getting to the

second part of this

question in which he says also are being

supposedly conscious when they incarnate

as an insect which science suggest are

essentially like robots yeah I consider

insects to be like little robots too um

I do think that an insect probably has

some kind of

Consciousness

and maybe even some kind of sensation

but I do not think that they've got

volition or perception they don't have

like a an internal m al image that

they're going with I they certainly

don't have any kind of inner

dialogue that they have like this simple
primordial kind of Consciousness I think
even plants have that I think even
so-called inanimate matter has a kind of
extremely primitive
Consciousness you know a hydrogen atom
has like this tiny you know this Atomic
Speck of Consciousness to it that the
brain does not generate consciousness I
mean science is just totally at a loss
as to how the brain would generate
conscious experience it's just it's a
non-starter they don't know how where to
begin with
that and an
insect um yeah I mean it doesn't have
the same kind of brain as us so it

wouldn't have the same kind of
Consciousness or same kind of mentality
as us but I would assume that even an
insect has like this tiny little spark
of Consciousness to it even if it's not
making decisions even if it doesn't have
any kind of mental image you know no
self-awareness but still this
rudimentary little spark of
Consciousness and um the idea that a
human being could be reborn as an insect
I'm very skeptical of that I mean
there's just too much going on in the
human mind to somehow get implanted into
an insect I just uh I mean maybe I think
it'd be pushing it even be reincar is an

entire Hive you know a hive of bees or
something I it's it'd be so alien to
human consciousness that I think that it
it's extremely
unlikely so yeah if a human is reborn
they're going to be reborn as something
similar to a human if not exactly a
human in my
opinion so I guess I answered not Henry
Porter's question there so I'm going to
move on to the next one and this is from
Prav and Prav says how do how do the
Burmese celebrate whak Pima and how is
it different from the way you celebrate
it and for those of you who are not like
fluent Buddhists wayak Pima literally
means the full moon of

whaka and the full moon of whaka is
Buddha day so I mean I I looked this up
I I didn't know what day exactly whak
whak was going to be this year so I
looked it up and it's going to be
Thursday May 23rd of the Year
2024 and the website actually says that
this day is the celebration of the birth
of Gab Buddha and it didn't start off as
the celebration of the birth of gmab
Buddha it started off being the
celebration of his enlight en en the
Buddha became enlightened us going with
the Western calendar it usually is
around the full moon of
May

so later tradition I assume they didn't
know when the Buddha was born exactly or
or exactly what day he died and so they
just combined whach into like a
three-fold celebration of his birth his
Enlightenment and his death somehow
according to tradition the Buddha was
born he became enlightened on his
birthday and he died on his
birthday which just going with
Statistics is kind of
unlikely um but I think it's a fairly
wellestablished tradition that at least
he became enlightened on the full moon
of May that was a tradition going way
back and how did the Burmese celebrate
Buddha day is the way they celebrate

just about any holiday which is you know
they eat lots of good food you know
they'll cook meat that day in the
village they'll go to the monastery and
they'll feed the monks the monks will
give a sermon they'll and after that
they'll they'll take precepts and then
they'll just sit around talking and and
drinking tea and you know munching on
you know Burmese Delicacies and so forth
and then they go home you know they
they'll offer stuff to the monks
probably and they'll earn good they'll
earn Merit for that and then they'll
share their Merit and then they'll just
go back home again that's pretty much

the description of any Burmese Buddhist
holiday you know you go to the monastery
you offer stuff to the monks you feed
the monks you listen to a a discourse
you take the precepts and the you take
the three refuges you share your merits
you drink lots of tea you eat a lot you
talk with your friends and then you go
home
again and probably the most a lot of
Burmese people take eight precepts
instead of just five on that
day and uh how is that different from
the way I celebrate it I remember even
when I was a monk in Burma people would
tell me that it's it's Buddha day and
I'd say you know Buddha Nate and I'd say

you know every day is Buddha day you know it's all the same I really did I've never really been into celebrating holidays all that much anyway so I just say you know every day is Buddha day and just continue being a monk just you know doing monk stuff I really didn't I really was not into celebrating holidays and I'm still not really into celebrating holidays although you know sometimes this it is expected of you to uh provide people with Christmas presents and so forth which is uh you know I can accept that that's easily acceptable but uh you know every day for me is is pretty much just another

today so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from the Proto

pseudo Monk

see

here okay and the Proto sudam monk says

weas and or J how so that's a short

question and he seems to be implying as

mainstream Orthodox terod tradition

implies that you've got two different

routes to Enlightenment and in Burma

some people will ask you which sa do you

belong to do you belong to the weas saas

or the sasana and SAS would be Jan it's

like Tranquility

meditation but I really am skeptical of

the idea that the Buddha taught these

two different ways of weas and

samata that it just sort of got divide
bifurcated later on doctrinally with you
know different groups favoring you know
one or the other and it just kind of
caused a
split but um I mean you should I mean
you don't really practice weasa and it's
it's unfortunate in my opinion that the
term weasa came to be identified with
just mindfulness practice like s batana
if you're practicing mindfulness then it
usually goes by the name of weasa in
certain
circles but weasa is Insight which
arises and it can
arise after you're just in a normal

state of mindfulness like momentary

momentary concentration or it can arise

after deep jna

States so I mean it's not really either

or so I mean according to early

tradition like in the sutas you're

supposed to try to cultivate janas and

Janna may have meant something different

than it does now in in the Buddhist time

it could have just meant the four stages

of meditation which means that even like

beginning Elementary meditation if

you're doing it correctly would count as

first Jon so then that would be even

more of an indication there was no

either or with regard to mindfulness or

or

jna so a monk is supposed to be mindful
as much as possible you know even if
he's practicing Janna I mean in the text
fourth Janna is called purity of
mindfulness so your mindfulness gets
even better if you're practicing Janna
so you just are mindful most of the time
or mindful as much as you
can cultivate deep meditative States as
much as you
can and the Deep meditative States will
increase the
likelihood of some kind of liberating
Insight
arising some people don't need to get
into very deep meditative States for

liberating insight to

arise but others do and so you just keep

practicing and meditating and being as

mindful as you can until you don't need

to

anymore so I would say WEA and Janna and

the how would be pretty much what I just

very briefly explained and is found

throughout the suas that the idea that

there are two different sasas or two

different teachings one it's just either

or that I I really don't think

so so I think I'll just move move on to

the next question here also by the Proto

sudo Monon he says could you share your

investigation and give an exhaustive

list of all your favorite Buddhist texts

the ones you consider to be the most reliable texts alleviate us westerners capable of critical thinking to skip the fire breathing dragons talking animals Flat Earth floating on the water eclipses of the Sun and Moon being caused by a demon swallowing it into his mouth

Etc well I already mentioned uh quite a few to in in response to a previous question and I mean there is a difference between my favorite Buddhist text and the ones I consider to be the most reliable or the most most authentic the most representative of what the historical GMA Buddha really taught you

know there's a difference that I
mean I think all of the ones I consider
to be really archaic Buddhist texts
would be listed among my favorites but
not all of my favorites would be that
way there are some things that I just
like that are in all likelihood not
authentic teachings like like the Zen
Coan stories for example are pretty
obviously not authentic teachings of the
Buddha because they're not even
attributed to the Buddha or The Diamond
Cutter Sutra it's a Tibetan book of the
great Liberation those are I mean the
Tibetan book of the great Liberation is
attributed to Padma
sambava who wasn't goab Buddha but still

it is profound and it would be one of my

favorite

Buddhist text even though it's Tibetan

it's one of the only Tibetan Buddhist

texts I've ever read really that in the

Tibetan Book of the Dead would be the

two main ones U like the autobiography

of millera I've read a few but

um

still just because I know that the

Buddha didn't really teach something

part in particular doesn't mean that I I

can't still like it

because the Buddha did not have a

monopoly on wisdom there are other wise

people who say wise things and you can

get you can get benefit from listening

to any wise person not just not just one

I've never really been the sort of

person that would just restrict what I

want to read down to what I consider the

the historical G of Buddha really taught

there are some Western monks who are

like that and maybe it's fortunate for

them that they tend to believe that all

of the core Texs are reliable which is

about half of the

toptica but uh I mean you can't really

be

sure and uh so so the text that I

already

mentioned um at least they reduce the

amount of like fairy tale narratives and

so forth the sutan P still it has a fair amount of like later tax but it's got a higher percentage I think of really old stuff than most taex the ud Donna is similar it's got a lot of old stuff lot of old teachings and then later it's got got some kind of weird mythological stuff added um um like I mentioned before like the first sutas of just about any collection are going to be put at the front just because they were considered to be so important and so profound so you get a higher higher quality level from the first suas of a collection than the average uh quality of the entire

collection like the sagata waga of the Samaya has a lot of profundity in it um vinia has I like I like win as a Buddhist text which doesn't so much tell you how to become enlightened so much as it's explaining kind of the atmosphere that Buddhism arose in which kind of helps you get the spirit so to speak you know if if you can understand what it was like in Ancient India you know in the Buddhist time what it was like living then you get more of a feel for you know how they were practicing than if you're just like in an apartment in in New York City or something and you're just reading these texts while still being firmly rooted in

like Western culture it it's not going
to have the same effect so just reading
even like the the stories of the DAP
commentary it gives you a a feel for
what it was like living in Ancient India
it gets you closer to the historical
Buddha sort of like I was saying earlier
reading um Miracle of love stories about
neim Koli Baba it gives you a feel of
like being in his presence you know it
gives you the feel of being in the
presence of a of a
sage and so just picking up on just the
whole ancient
Indian just the whole world view and
then how dharm fits into that it kind of

gives you more of a big picture more of
a comprehensive picture that can help
you to absorb dhama better so to
speak
so yeah I mean some of the the fire
breathing dragons and talking animal
stories and so forth are are interesting
and you can you can still learn
something from them even though it's not
very likely that the the historical go
go Buddha himself was teaching
it so I hope I answered that question it
was I already answered one similar to
that above and so it's almost like
answering the same question so I'm just
going to move on to uh the protos sudo
monks next question here which is is the

leftand path for example Tantra music
NADA yoga sex even possible for
achieving Enlightenment or are the only
contri contributing factors for nibana
radical renunciation the right-and path
I don't understand how despite nibana
not having a cause there are certain
causes and conditions which help to see
nibana because if monkhood isn't a
direct cause for nibana I might as well
stay as a lay person where other causes
and conditions may help see nibana for
example stress at work becoming tired
disenchanted of desires the difficulties
that may not appear in a cave in a cave
there may not be enough friction to

cause a realization into the ultimate

I'm curious to hear your thoughts given

your direct experience in the term you

coined Sam Sora on a higher difficulty

setting and it just turns out that this

is the very last question

too it always catches me by

surprise so I mean mainly he's asking is

the leftand path um even possible for

achieving Enlightenment and yeah I mean

anything is possible it is possible and

for some people it probably works best

but it doesn't work for everybody and

there are dangers involved in like a

tantric kind of approach to

dhamma that I mean if you are capable of

living a saintly life then that is going

to cause more calmness more clarity more opportunities for this sort of um equinity and expanded consciousness to arise Clarity of mind which can then help you to see through the illusion like fourth J I've I've mentioned this a number of times that fourth Janna is is like stilling your mind until you've got a flat calm so to speak and then you're not as distracted by the waves because there aren't any waves in your mind you know it's like you you you're you don't have anything to distract you from seeing the truth there's still no guarantee that you're going to suddenly get liberating Insight from having

attained fourth Janna but uh it does

increase the odds that whatever happens

I mean you're there's going to be like

the shift from no longer identifying

with the samsaric me and you you just

sort of transcend

that and the the Transcendent state is

already there which is it's it's like a

a a paradox

and Mahayana Buddhism really plays up

that Paradox they make it even seem even

more paradoxical they emphasize the

Paradox of it whereas terraa tries to

like hammer out some way for it not to

be a paradox but they don't do a very

good job of

it so I mean if you can be completely

mindful doing anything then I mean that
is a spiritual practice if you can have
sex mindfully that could be a spiritual
practice um
and for some people they I mean some
people maybe just can't stop having sex
is they can be celibate but they're just
going to be frustrated and horny the
whole time that they're celibate so they
might try something else you know try
and use sex as a vehicle for you know
mindfulness practice and so forth and I
do think it's possible I think the
Orthodox position of terraa is no it
doesn't work that that's just
foolishness you're just you know falling

into the the snares of Mara by doing
such things but I do think it is
possible that you can become enlightened
not being a monk but it's like if I i'
I've I've brought this up before I've
considered this before like let's say
that by being a monk you're 1,000 times
more likely to become
enlightened but there are you know a
million times more people in this world
than there are monks who are really you
know trying to live the Monk's life you
know really trying to become enlightened
so still there's going to be a thousand
times more unenlightened more lay people
enlightened than monks even though the
odds of becoming a monk are a thousand

times higher if the OD if the proportion

of lay people to monks is a million to

one then still there's going to be a

thousand times more enlightened lay

people than enlightened

monks just going with the math assuming

that I didn't mess up the math in that

story

problem so

yeah technically nibana doesn't have a

cause

[Music]

but I've explained this before like like

Krishna Mur saying it's like opening the

window I mean the the breeze isn't going

to blow in if the window is closed but

even if you open it there still no
guarantee that the breeze is going to
blow in it's just something that is is a
paradox that the Mind cannot
grasp happens presumably
and then Enlightenment is achieved
although I mean it's it's the
enlightened state has always been there
all
along so the enlightenment doesn't
really start in a paradoxical way it's
always been there it's just that you've
been so distracted by all the noise and
commotion in your head that you haven't
noticed
it and some people are just addicted to
being unenlightened and it's going to

take really some doing I mean pretty

much everybody is ad addicted to some

degree U to being

unenlightened

so got two words stuck together

here see here so did I answer this

question that is my question to

myself is the leftand path even possible

for achieving Enlightenment yeah it is

possible but it's more dangerous and the

odds are lower but for some

people just being a saint isn't an

option

you know just renouncing the world and

wandering homeless and all that in just

radical

renunciation it's it's really it doesn't
work for them
either
so yeah radical renunciation
isn't exactly necessary although it is
certainly helpful what the Buddha was
doing was he was not coming up with the
only way of possibly becoming
enlightened he was just maximizing your
odds of becoming enlightened you know
this method works for just you know
increasing you know maximizing your
chances of becoming inlight especially
in Ancient
India because it's it's doesn't really
fit the system nearly as well in the
modern

West so I'm got to add an apostrophe

here he had didn't put an apostrophe in

his

contraction so

I hope I answered that

question

gosh yeah I mean what what he says down

here it's like I might as see if

monkhood isn't a direct cause for nibana

I might as well stay as a lay person

where other causes and conditions may

help see neana stress at work becoming

tired and disenchanted of desires yeah

but if if you're just so distracted by

work that you're not even thinking about

anything higher you know you get so

caught up in samsara that you're just
lost in it that's not going to work
either and it's it's going to take some
kind of catastrophe to slam you out of
your unenlightened state in that case
which I have read does happen sometimes
that you got just a person who's just
living a worldly life you know they
obviously had some kind of potential but
then they just have a near-death
experience or or something really
horrible happens and it just slams them
into into a into a higher state of
consciousness which is why I think most
people who become enlightened in the
west assuming that becoming enlightened
even means anything most people have

some kind of you know Awakening

experience they have it

accidentally so I mean if you don't want

to have it accidentally you want to have

it on purpose then you're better off

doing some kind of serious striving

along yogic lines

but I assume there are people who have

become enlightened through practicing

Tantra I just can't think of any offhand

maybe pole low would be a

possibility so in a cave there may not

be enough friction to cause a

realization into the

ultimate um yeah well I mean caves can

be kind of challenging anyway but I mean

if you're living in some comfortable

carpeted air conditioned

Monastery uh yeah you may be uh not

dealing with any of any real issues you

know it's you're just kind of living

like a a house cat or something then

yeah that that would be understandable

but just uh throwing yourself upon the

mercy of the universe and wandering

homeless and penniless yeah that's

definitely challenging and uh it pretty

much forces you to sink or swim so

that's a kind of good situation to put

yourself into is one that forces you to

sink or

swim then again some people will s there

is a certain amount of risk

involved so I'm not sure if I even
answered that question I think I
did but uh that was it that's the last
question so if you have any questions
about Buddhism about dhama meditation
monasticism Buddhist texts me personally
philosophy in general that kind of thing
feel free to ask in the comments below
if you have access to subscribe stuff
are you can ask them there if you have
access to the Discord server more or
less associated with me and my output
you can ask them there and like the
video if you liked it and uh be happy
and I've got to push the stop record
button now

okay hello and welcome to episode 93 of question and answer I am your host poo basa and if I look a little Pinker than usual it's because I have a slight sunburn because my sweetheart and I celebrated our love for each other by renting a boat and spending the day on Lake jassi a couple days ago where we uh drove around and looked at picturesque islands and waterfalls and I found 63 cents lying under the water at one of the waterfalls so it was sort of like a rebate on renting the
boat also I have the big exciting news that just yesterday was it yesterday yeah it was yesterday my sweetheart and

I went to a nursery apparently run by
like drug hippies Earth hippies on drugs
that'd be probably a better way of
saying it and I found this here
particular plant which is just I mean we
got it just cuz it looks nice it's it's
like a really nice looking little plant
right look at that look at that
plant but it turns out that it is
cinella
Kiana and it's I mean it's just a weird
plant because it's it I mean it was said
that it was a a golden Moss Fern on the
label but it's turns out that it's not a
moss or a fern it's like a missing link
it's like a transitional stage between
mosses and Ferns and that members of

this spe or this genus have existed for
more than 300 million years I mean this
this plant essentially existed before
the
dinosaurs and it's uh one of the stages
in the evolution of vascular land
plants so I'm I'm all excited once I was
reading up on salag Janella kosana I was
I was
excited and it turns out that when I was
a kid I had a different a different uh
specimen of a the same genus it was a
different
species but I got it when I was camping
it was at like this gift shop at this
Campground and it was called a

resurrection plant and it was just in a

plastic bag this curled up Fern looking

thing all brown and dried out but if you

put it in water it would turn green and

resurrect and become alive

again and also I've read that the US

government has uh worked out a complete

genome for probably not this same

species but a different species in this

same genus of plant just because it's

it's considered to be

so I don't know something it's

considered to be something like really

it's like a classic example of a certain

plant genome

but with all that as kind of a preamble

I'm not even going to start on like

complaining about the traffic you know
I've been like planning on complaining
about traffic in South Carolina for
several episodes I just never get around
to it I'm not going to get around to it
this time
either so we got a bunch of questions to
answer and I suppose I should start
answering
them as my father used to say a steady
drop beats a hole in a rock and so I
should start dripping here and the first
question is from Mama and Mama asked
this question over the phone and it came
out in like a jumbled stream of
Consciousness kind of question which is

as

follows if you have a fortunate life and

feel healthy is it possible to escape

from this life is it possible if you

live a good life is it possible not to

die with diseases or stuff or is it

inevitable so I kind of streamlined it

down I kind of paired away the the

unnecessary stream of Consciousness

stuff and it turns into this question if

you live a good life is it possible not

to die with diseases or stuff or is

inevitable so if you live a good life

can you just like die in your sleep just

kind of Fade Out painlessly without

trauma or is a certain amount of disease

and ickiness pretty much

unavoidable and I would say that if you

have good karma you live a good life

you're chances of avoiding like real

ickiness are

increased and that um you know your

chances would be increased of Simply

dying in your sleep like my father's

father very mild mannered cultured

Baptist

Minister who uh I mean he was just a

relatively wise moral guy he just died

in his sleep but on the other hand godma

Buddha

himself uh he died with like a really

icky intestinal

disease and sometimes you read that he

died of dysentery but recently

relatively recently within the past year

I read an article that was like

theorizing or hypothesizing that what

the Buddha died of is a disease that

is I wouldn't say it's common to elderly

people but it's pretty much only elderly

people that get it it's a kind of like

gang grp of the intestinal system which

is very painful and it causes like

bloody diarrhea and so forth so I mean

even the Buddha

himself um did not just Fade Out

peacefully of course Jesus of Nazareth

died particularly icky death also

assuming that he died I mean even if he

was resurrected after he died still

according to the Bible he
died so and then Maham moalan we all
know the story of mahog galana one of
the Two Chief Disciples of the Buddha
who was beaten to death literally beaten
to a pulp by jealous non-
Buddhists according to the
story so yeah I mean your odds are
increased but you can't really control
your karma you don't really have any
control over Karma that is latent from
like past existences and so forth and uh
so yeah I mean living a good life is the
best way to increase your odds of having
a trouble-free life and a trouble-free
death but there are no guarantees

because you really can't know exactly
what your karma is because it's mainly
subconscious it's still like a mental
state but it's it's like subliminal you
know it's below the the level of
consciousness of your ordinary waking
ego so I guess I answered that
question so I'm moving on to the next
question which is from Pope Kevin the
first and Pope Kevin says if insects
don't produce Karma but they are reborn
as insects because of the karma until
they
die what if people don't H have really
conscious
volition and Free Will and we are born
as humans as a result of

Karma and are stuck here and from a
cosmic perspective we have the same
level of volition as
bugs and the the ancient aiva religion
in India which and there were aikas in
the Buddhist time more aicas than
Buddhists in the Buddhist time um they
believe something along these lines that
it's just strict determinism you know
you don't have any control at all
but uh the Buddhist said that was uh
that was a wrong view in fact people who
believe that stuff who really take it
seriously um you know they were in
danger of going to hell the Buddha says
that in at least one

Su but on the other hand he

uh he pretty much shoots down free will

too like in the anal lakasut which is

according to tradition the Buddha's

second discourse after he became

enlightened which caused the

enlightenment of his first

disciples he was saying that you cannot

say with any of the five Aggregates the

five condas that make up a human being

you cannot say with regard to any of

them let it be this way let it not be

that way and reliably have it happen

which pretty much says that we don't

have complete control over our

volitions so that would uh at least very

much reduce Free Will since it's not

totally

free so getting back to Insects though

if insects don't produce Karma but they

are reborn as insects because of the

karma until they

die um

well personally I'm not sure if insects

are creating Karma or not but if insects

aren't creating Karma or not they're not

really um they're not really conscious

being

you know they don't they wouldn't exist

on their own they wouldn't have like an

individual

self-existence the way humans apparently

have or even like a dog apparently has

but according to Buddhism like strict
Orthodox Buddhism even insects have
mental States and so insects are
creating Karma and uh
so I'm not sure if they do I'm not sure
the insects really have volition and
pers ceptions I really don't think an
insect has enough Consciousness to have
sort of like an internal mental image of
what's going
on so maybe as a kind of compromise
between myself and strict Orthodoxy we
could say that an insect has like this
tiny Speck of Consciousness that somehow
produces a tiny specs of volition which
is karma so that insect is creating very
lowlevel like a primordial Speck like

Karma that gives it a kind of primordial
Speck like individual
existence but that's generally not the
case with humans that we are pretty
obviously conscious we've got much
larger Minds than insects do and there's
a lot more room for stuff in our mind
including preferences and volitions and
desires and all this kind kind of
thing
so I really am not a strict determinist
there is a certain amount of like even
in science now you know there's there's
like Quantum
Randomness and I've read a book that was
talking about I mean the guy who wrote

the book was trying to come up with some scientifically plausible explanation for free will and he was saying that just the the events going on in our neurotransmitters you know like the the threshold of stimulation for a nerve whether it's going to fire or not you know the the difference between firing and not firing is so tiny that it's at a Quantum level of Randomness and so um Dr Schwarz who wrote the book was saying that you know that's where your spirit or Soul or volition or whatever is influencing ing the physical system of whether the the nerve fires or not which then causes this whole stream

of you know perception or volition or
whatever but insects they've got very
few neurons very few nerve cells
compared to
us and so I mean we're just orders of
magnitude Beyond an insect and I really
do not think that we are
just complex meat robots
although a lot of scientists apparently
including like Stephen Hawking believed
that we were just you know slaves to
determinism but according to him the
math was so complicated that you
couldn't really predict the future even
though it was strictly deterministic
just because it was so hard to do the

math that it was just impossible for

humans so I don't know if I answered

Pope Kevin's question here but I suppose

I should just move on

I mean the the official Orthodox

Buddhist answer to Pope Kevin's question

would be that insects and humans produce

Karma um although it's at different

levels

obviously so I'm just going to the next

question which is from

mooners maybe I should move the

microphone away from my mouth a little

bit because I've noticed that when I uh

make peace

sounds for example it causes like this

Distortion in the

microphone so anyways mooner says where
can I learn Burmese and one person left
a reply to his comment under the YouTube
video saying Burma which of course would
be the best place to learn Burmese if
you really want to learn Burmese go to
Burma and learn it there preferably from
like an educated city person like in
Mandalay Mandalay has a reputation for
having like the
purest the purest traditional
Burmese like grammar and pronunciation
and all
that although I learned burmes partly
from a
book that was published by Yale

University press this was like probably
back in the 1960s or 70s so you can find
books on how to speak
Burmese um but it's going to be way
easier to learn it well if you've got a
Burmese speaking person teaching you I
mean pretty much the only way to learn
how to speak Burmese well enough that a
Burmese person could actually understand
what you're saying or trying to say is
if you have a Burmese person with
Burmese pronunciation teaching you how
to speak Burmese because the
pronunciation is the hardest part of
Burmese it's like vocabulary wise it's
fair fairly simple it has few if any
irregular verbs or irregular adjectives

you know like in in English you've got
good better best in Burmese you just
have good more good most
good good good or goodest pretty much in
Burmese but it's the pronunciation is
difficult it's very tricky because there
are differentiations between sounds that
do not exist in English for example
so yeah I mean pretty much the only
place or only way that you could learn
Burmese reliably would be from a native
Burmese speaker or one of those
philological sants who can just learn to
speak a language fluently even though
they weren't born into Born Into the
language but having the book by Yale

University press does help because it
does explain things in a systematic way
that westerners can understand
easily so I mean they do have those
things that they advertise on the radio
now like Babel and there's there's a few
other ones I don't know if they would
bother to teach Burmese because I mean
it's not a high demand language like
Spanish or
French but that would be a possibility
too maybe just finding some like a site
on a on a computer or some something
that teaches languages and it might be
recordings of proper pronunciation and
so
forth so I guess I answered that

question so I move on to bodhisatta 969

alus Mara made

Mahayana and I will point out that

bodhisatta 969 asked the transgressive

fourth question because we are supposed

to keep it limited to three questions

but curiosity is a virtue I

think and we won't punish him too

severely so bodhisatta 969 first

question

is should one primarily support the dham

UDA orders as the most serious

successors to the Buddhist teachings as

far as I know these or similar ones also

exist in Burma the Buddha himself spoke

of the high Merit to support monks who

live according to the Buddhist
teachings so there is no dham UDA order
in Burma or if there is it's just very
it's like a fringe a fringe gy they're
called gin in
Burmese although the M order from which
the dam UDA order of Thailand
arose still exists in Burma but they are
relatively few followers of that also in
Burma the two main orders are uh thud
anden those are the two main ones most
Buddhist monks in Burma belong to either
thuda or schuen pretty much like in
Thailand the monks belong to Mahan Kaya
or
Damu and shin is considered to be the
stricter of the two G in Burma but there

are some this totally Shameless immoral
dumb or not dute monks but shagan monks
in
Burma so if if you're going to support
monks that are the most serious
followers of the Buddhist teachings I
would go on an individual basis you know
individual monk or or go Monastery by
Monastery some monasteries are stricter
than other monasteries and there may be
monks from
some sect or gy as it's called in
Burmese that it's traditionally not as
strict in following vinia or or dhama
but nevertheless certain IND indviduals
certain monasteries can be very strict

and it's that way in Burma like the

thuda thuda G is considered in general

not to be as strict as SCH Jen but still

there are a lot of Duda monks who are

much stricter in their practice than a

lot of schian

monks so you're better off just like

looking at individual monks or looking

at the behavior amongst individual

monasteries and using your

discrimination in that way rather than

just go with Statistics and support you

know damay or schan monks just because

statistically they are somewhat stricter

in their

practice in Thailand I think there's

more more to back up the idea that damay

monks are more strict than than the

Mahan Kaya monks but in Burma there's

really not that much of a difference

between the

two

so yeah I would just like if you're

going to discriminate and want to

support the stricter monks and support

less the less stricter monks then yeah I

just go with individual monks who

observe their behavior or at a larger

scale you know individual monasteries

and that would that would probably be as

far as I would go with it so I'm just

going to move on to bodhisatta 969 next

question

here which is which of the five
contemplations do you personally
consider to be the most effective and
how should one practice this well I'm
never really practiced the five
contemplations very much and I may be
even wrong in repeating what the five
contemplations are but there's
contemplation of One's Own Merit or
one's own morality there's contemplation
of the dvas contemplation of the virtues
of the
Buddha uh I guess there's contemplation
of the virtues of the dharm and the S so
that might be the f
and then but also there's like
contemplation of death contemplation of

the the repulsiveness of food and so
forth so I'm not exactly sure which five
contemplations he's referring
to but um I mean contemplations on the
virtues of Buddha dharm and S usually it
takes the form of just reciting a kind
of Mantra over and over and over again
like Burmese Buddhists who use uh malab
beads like a a b a Buddhist rosary
will often go through the the virtues of
the Buddha dhama and S which are 96 and
N nine virtues of the Buddha nine or six
virtues of dhama nine virtues of the S
and it's just a poly formula that I
won't recite
now and uh see considering one's own

morality that is recommended especially

when you're on your deathbed then you'll

have you can like Rejoice over your own

virtue to some degree just to keep you

from worrying having a negative mental

state at the moment of death because

your mental state at the moment of death

is possibly the most important mental

state of your

life

so on the other hand just sitting around

think about how wonderful your behavior

is all the time can lead to you know

like being conceited and stuck up and

and so forth

so contemplation of of the

dvas um it is in the list the standard

list of 40 meditation methods in the

wisi

MAA but um we really can't understand

the Davis very well it's sort of like

dogs contemplating humans I mean dogs

know more about humans than we know

about dvas because they can just sit

there while they're scratching

themselves observing our Behavior you

know they hear the refrigerator door

open they come

running with humans and Davis it's not

like that possibly because Davis don't

even have refrigerator

doors so I mean the contemplation of

death which might not be on the list of

five that he was referring to but that's
the one that I probably practiced the
most aside from just
chanting this the formula which some
sometimes you're not even thinking about
the meaning of it you just memorize the
words and it just comes out your
mouth but contemplation of death
modern recollection of
death um that was the one that I
practiced the most and it had the most
positive effect in my dhama practice
just because you're reminding yourself
that you're not going to live forever
you know I had u a skeleton with the
bones all connected and articulated it
uh a supporter

got for me from a Medical College in Burma and I would just have it sitting in meditative posture outside my cave and sometimes you just look at it and think you know as that was so am I and as no wa as that is so will I become you know you

just just kind of remind yourself on a regular basis that you're not going to live forever and it might be seen as morbid by a lot of people who just don't want to think about that kind of stuff at all but It prepares you better you know when you're the time for you to go finally arrives you will be better prepared for it because you've been sort

of mentally preparing for years and

years so and also it just encourages you

to have what is called samua or a sense

of spiritual urgency and not want to

waste

time you know why I just sit around

watching TV playing video games when

you're not necessarily any better off

after doing this activity for two or

three hours or all day you know it's

just kind of it it kills time but you're

not really any better off after than you

were

before so I hope I answered that

question because I'm moving on to the

next one which is kind of a strange

one buhis 96 69 says I'm thinking about

reading the book Yogi Hitler written by a yoga teacher the description of the book States quote Arthur schopenhauer friederick Nicha Richard Vagner Dietrich eart Houston St Chamberlain and Madison Grant played a significant role in shaping the ideology of national socialism they were all familiar with yoga and Buddhism had sympathies for certain approaches to Indian philosophy and reflected this in their writings the question of what influence and what effects yoga and Indian thought had on the decisions of leading National socialists is answered in depth in this book

unquote and then buddy sua 969 continues
with what do you think of this
description and would you agree with
it
well um to what extent schopenhauer
influenced the German Nazi party of like
the 1920s 30s and first half of the 40s
um I really don't know Nicha probably
had more of an influence Vagner had an
influence on Hitler especially although
to what extent Vagner was into like
Buddhism or Dharma or Indian philosophy
I have no idea and with regard to
Dietrich eart Houston St Chamberlain and
Madison Grant I don't even know who they
are
exactly but I would say that I have read

about Adolf Hitler in a number of books

some serious books that weren't just

like propagandizing and demonizing him

you know

just they were portraying him as a

product of the times and as a politician

who was very successful at first and

then became extremely unsuccessful at

the very

end and it just seems to me that Hitler

really did not have much interest in

eastern philosophy or Buddhism he was

more of the Muslim type you know he

wanted some like militaristic or

um at least non-p

pacifistic approach to spirituality as

far as I can tell I mean he did not seem like a particularly spiritual person um I guess who was himler had some interest in occultism and so forth but for the most part I assume that the leaders of the National Socialist movement in Germany were more interested in political and sociological issues not so much in spiritual issues you know if they were coming up with any kind of spirituality it was for political and sociological purposes you know trying to get the people United in their world viw behind national socialism by using such and such

ideology but

um yeah I just from what I know about

Hitler and I know more about Hitler than

most people although I'm certainly No

Authority on the man um he just did not

strike me as particularly spiritual in

fact none of his top you know underlings

you know like himler

or oh gosh Rudolph

Hess or man I'm having mental blocks

with regard to my Nazis I

guess uh what was what was the the World

War I fighter Ace who was

like uh starts with the Goring yeah

Herman Goring I mean he was not a

spiritual person person and then the

propaganda guy gosh geres I mean I mean

you can read their Diaries and so forth

and they're really not preoccupied with

spiritual

matters

so I think that probably this book is

trying to milk as much of the theory as

they can to sell books maybe the guy

really believes that like yoga Indian

philosophy had an in like a really an

influential effect on national socialism

and so forth but

um it seems kind of far-fetched to me I

mean I I don't know maybe if I read the

book I'd think wow there's really

something to this but it's it's kind of

sounds like a Graham Hancock kind of

approach to National Socialist national

socialism you know if if you understand

what I'm talking about with Graham

Hancock where you know he has his pet

Theory and he'll do everything he can to

support those theories and if he's

cornered he may have to admit that

there's no real evidence for them but

still you know it's

possible so it'd be something like that

I

assume so I'm just going to move on the

next question

here which is what do you think about

supporting you and your channel through

Channel membership then you could give

channel members also small

advantages um

Channel membership I'm not even sure
exactly what channel membership is on
YouTube I know I've seen some channels
do do offer it as an
option and then it kind of unlocks
videos that other people can't
see may give them certain other
advantages um my Approach at present has
been just having subscribe Star as as an
option of anyone want wants to support
me
financially um they can subscribe to me
on subscrib Star and offer as little as
five bucks a month I mean you can even
join the Subscribe star thing for free
because I don't really like the idea of
charging money for

dhama you

know so and I mean originally I was a

monk so uh I definitely wasn't charging

money for anything thing back when I was

a

monk so it is a possible maybe somebody

could talk me into it you know some good

salesman could talk me into it I

suppose

um yeah but I mean if you do want to to

contribute to the cause you're you're

very welcome to and your your generosity

is appreciated but I'm just going to

move on the next question here this is

from

SG and SG says if one can share merit

with relatives and I know some share
merit with everyone else wouldn't the
Merit of all the Buddhas Davis and
liberated beings since they have
attained the deathless and would not
doubt and would not doubt would no doubt
share it with all their meta be so large
and Universal that it could be
considered a form of Grace that
suppresses our Bad Karma by I imagine
quite a bit and maybe even give
Liberation to some who are more
receptive to it okay so this question is
all about sharing Merit and it's kind of
a big deal in terraa Buddhism I'm not
sure about other schools of Buddhism but
like in Burma after the Burmese people

will hear a like they'll hear a dama
talk and they'll take the the three
three refugees and the five precepts or
the eight
precepts after that or they make a
donation to The Monastery make the
donation to a monk they'll share their
Merit which starts out with them saying
ah that indicates if you hear a Burmese
person
saying that means they're commencing to
share Merit but the thing is you don't
really share Merit you cannot share your
own merit with another person not
directly anyway the Orthodox Burmese
explanation of sharing Merit is that you

share Merit and anyone who can hear you
sharing Merit anyone who has observed
you doing something meritorious they
will like
Rejoice at your act of Merit they'll
they'll have what is called mood deta
you know they'll feel happy over your
well-being and that will then be good
karma for them so it's not like the
Merit is actually shared from one person
to the next it's just that one person
does something meritorious and is
willing to to share that Merit at least
figuratively and then anyone who is
aware of that and rejoices there glad
that this person did something
meritorious and wants to share that

Merit then their gladness is itself
meritorious so it's sort of spreading
from through contagion in a
way um I had one teacher who compared
sharing Merit to using one candle to
light another candle but I don't think
that's the best possible
example um like one of the main ways of
sharing Merit is at a funeral or at a
like the Burmese periodically after a
relative dies or a loved one dies
they'll go to the monastery and make
offerings on behalf of that person for
their benefit and the only way it can
really work is if the deceased person is
a essentially a kind of ghost or a lower

DVA who is able to hear what's going on
who has any interest in what's going on
on the dirt ball of Earth and is present
or present enough that they can know
what's going on and then they Rejoice
that their surviving relatives are doing
this on their behalf and then that
rejoicing is itself the meritorious deed
that that in a way shares Merit to them
but it's their own mental States and
it's not somebody else's mental States
or somebody else's karma that's
spreading into another person it's just
that you know as I
explained the person one person does
something meritorious and they want to
share the Merit and then another being

is aware of that and rejoices at that
that rejoicing is in a way giving them a
kind of imitation of the Merit that the
first first person wants to
share so any number of excuse me put my
elbows on the on the table and shakes
everything so any number of enlightened
beings can exist in this on on this
world and they can't really share their
Merit but they do kind of raise the
level of consciousness of the entire
planet in a way so I mean they can they
do help us in that way you know just to
live in a world that has enlightened
beings and teachings of enlightened
beings is a better world than a world

that doesn't have

that and I have mentioned that St John

of the Cross has said in one of his

books that you have two people one

person is just you know tending to the

sick and feeding the hungry and clothing

the people that don't have enough

clothes and giving homes to the homeless

and just doing all this meritorious

stuff and another person is sitting

alone in a Cell practicing deep

contemplation which a Buddhist would

call Janna and of these two people the

second one the one who's sitting alone

in a Cell practicing Janna is actually

helping the world more than the first

person because the first person is

essentially putting Band-Aids on
symptoms and not really getting to the
heart of the problem which is deep down
inside whereas the person who
is practicing Janna in solitude is in a
way raising the level of Consciousness
like the the general level of
consciousness of the whole planet to
some
degree so I think I answered that
question and even if I didn't I'm moving
on to the next one anyway and this is
from ruie and ruie says what is your
take on the faculty of imagination from
a dhic
perspective and I assume there are sutas

that talk about

imagination but um it seems to me that

the ancient Indian approach like as is

found in the poly text was not a very

sophisticated

explanation and not as sophisticated as

as somebody like David

Hume and so like if I'm trying to

understand the faculty of imagination I

Rely more on

like early modern Western philosophers

like David Hume than I do on something

like traditional terod and

Orthodoxy and David Hume was saying that

the faculty of imagination is is sort of

recombining like already acquired

perceptions like you can't imagine

anything that is has elements of it that

is completely foreign to any experience

you've ever had like you can't imagine a

color you've never

seen excuse me I

got something in my throat besides

orange

juice

so what imagination is is you take you

know like piece bits and pieces of

things that you've already perceived you

know like in supposedly in the outside

world and then you can recombine them

in you know in accordance with your

imagination so that is pretty much the

way I understand the faculty of

imagination not so much from a damic perspective although I don't think that that really is contrary to dhamma I don't think that David hune's explanation of how imagination Works would really be like um pernicious wrong view from the Buddhist point of view I do think that that does make sense it's just recomb in previously perceived perceptions or at least aspects of things you've already perceived before and recombining them in accordance with feelings and intuition and so forth although I certainly don't want to have to Define intuition but but genuine intuition would be like a Lial State you know it's like you're getting out into

you know almost into to the void you know like primordial chaos it's like a certain like a little window in your mind opens up to the primordial chaos and is able to filter things that seem acceptable you know weeding out just the the spam and so forth so there would be some of that also in genuine imagination something beyond what a computer could do I assume at present anyway so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from ROM dos EFX and ROM dos EFX says do you know anything about actual Freedom occasionally referred to as

actualism this is some type of contemplative practice that was said to have been invented accidentally not long ago by if I recall correctly an Australian I heard about it because Daniel Ingram was talking about it 10 to 15 years ago he said that actual Freedom produces a different kind of Awakening that opposite in some ways to The Awakening experienced by Buddhist arons well it could be like because they're in Australia they're like in the Southern Hemisphere and and be like the opposite of I don't know yeah actually I'd never heard of actual Freedom before and I even looked for it on Wikipedia you know just to get the the little info McNugget

just so i' have just a general idea of
what it was and there's not even an
article about it at least not under
actual freedom on Wikipedia the closest
I came to was um it was talking about
Marxism how Lenin said that you know
capitalism can produce a kind of
conditional freedom but not actual
Freedom that like the full fruition of
Communism would
produce but uh I don't think that he was
talking about communism and I don't
think that marxists really know what
they're talking about when they talk
about freedom
anyway so yeah I I don't know anything

about actual Freedom other than what
Romos EFX has included in this question
that includes my sum total of knowledge
about actual Freedom so I suppose in
order not to embarrass myself I should
just move on to Romos e fx's next
question which is kind of a strange one
are there any rules against gouging
someone's eyes out on the condition that
they are criminal or disagree with you
politically inia I mean and then he he
continues with this was famously a
punishment that was used in Tibet until
it was abolished by the 13th Dal Lama in
the early 20th century I believe that
sort of thing was done there basically
as an alternative to the death penalty

which was seen as un Buddhist so um in

the previous Q&A the same person here

with possibly a different name because

he changes his name kind of a lot was

asking about whether it's against vinia

for a monk to become like a king of a

Theocratic uh Nation like the Dal Lama I

mean he mainly have the Dal Lama in mind

and now I guess in Tibet it was a

punishment to gouge somebody's eyes out

for committing certain serious crimes

like felonies or

something um

and

ironically according to the rules of man

IC discipline it would be only a minor

transgression if done to a lay person if

a monk like

seriously like beats up or injures

another Monk that's a pidia offense

which requires experation he has to make

confession and and then at least the

ecclesiastical transgression is

rectified but for a lay person it's only

a Duca offense which is the mildest

level of

offense and I I assume punching them in

the nose and giv giving them a nose bed

or gouging their eyes out would be

similar so long as they survive you

haven't killed

them but I do think that there are

certain commentarial additions to that

rule saying that for example if you hurt
somebody and they have to go to a doctor
and pay the doctor then you are
responsible for their loss of money by
hurting them and then the monk would be
respons responsible and have to somehow
like Rectify that situation where else
he could get into big trouble possibly
even I mean theoretically maybe somehow
even be excommunicated for depriving
that person of their own
wealth but
uh yeah this is another one of those
cases where the the ancient rules of
monastic discipline just did not foresee
monks going around gouging other people

people's eyes out it was just there was
not seen to be a need to make a rule
against it because nobody figured that
anyone was any monk was going to do
that and it may be that in Ancient India
you just gou somebody's eyes out there's
a good chance they're going to die
anyway if they do die like from like an
infection or something afterwards and
the person would be guilty of
murder although I am reminded of beating
I think it was in gibbons's Decline and
fall of the Roman Empire about how
Byzantine
Christians um when they would blind
somebody usually it was like a political
opponent you know somebody who had some

potential to become the next the next
Emperor but you know the the current
Emperor didn't want that person to
become the next Emperor and so they
would be blinded and at first they would
gouge their eyes out and then they came
out with this method that was considered
to be more Humane and more Christian
where they would just shine really
bright light or it was like holding some
kind of like
hot like I can't even remember what it
was now it's not the sort of thing that
I study up on much but it was like red
hot iron or something maybe what they
were using at first and then they

started using like mirrors or something
to just blind the person by just burning
out their retina without going to the
trouble and inconvenience of gouging
their eyes out
but yeah that would be definitely undari
it would certainly be against dhama to
gou somebody's eyes out even if you
could find some loophole in the rules I
think I've I've mentioned before that in
Burma there is a little saying among
monks it's uh we need that CH that which
means if you're skillful at the rules of
monastic discipline you can kill a
chicken because you know all the
loopholes you know you know all the ways
of avoiding rules that you don't want to

follow and it may be that some Buddhist
government could justify blinding
people as a humane way of not killing
them but for monks to do
it it'd probably be best kind of to take
the the uh the the attitude of the
Spanish
Inquisition where the Spanish
Inquisition would would find someone
guilty and then they just hand them over
to the secular authorities and the
secular authorities would be the ones
who were like burning them at the Stak
and so forth I mean the priests would
still be there you know chanting their
prayers and so forth but um they would

sentence I mean they would find the

person guilty and then just hand them

over to someone who was not a monk or a

priest and then they do all the dirty

work which

probably in a Buddhist theocracy

something like that would probably arise

if

necessary but um I'm just moving on to

the next question here this is from ROM

do EFX again and he did not ask this

question in the Q&A room but he did ask

a question and it's fair game so he he

asks what does objective and subjective

mean what is the difference between a

subjective claim versus an objective

claim and I do consider consider pure

objectivity to be a myth that pure
objectivity does not exist even with
regard to observing stuff in the outside
world you know even in quantum physics
in modern science they're saying that
the Observer does have an effect on what
is observed so there's always going to
be a certain subjective influence and if
you're an idealist like a yoga Chara
Mahayana Buddhist then
objective I mean it would be more of an
attitude than than a real difference I
think so anyways I looked it up in the
dictionary I looked up objective in my
dictionary and it says objective
adjective and then the the main

definition at at question here is of a person or their judgment not influenced by personal feelings or opinions in considering and representing facts contrasted with subjective so subjective presumably would mean that you are influenced by personal feelings or opinions in considering and representing facts but I mean I don't think there is any pure objectivity so um you can become more objective though for example if you're practicing mindfulness that if anger arises for example then if you have a subjective approach it's just I'm pissed off but if you have a more objective approach then

you observe the anger as though you're
an ichthyologist observing a specimen of
of a
fish and I mean it's just anger is
arising you know you're not identifying
with
it so you can be more objective but I
don't think pure objectivity really
exists in reality in human psychology
anyway
and uh I don't know if he was even
expecting an answer to that question
considering he did not ask it in the Q&A
room so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from covac and Cad
zida and covac and CAD zida asks how did

you learn paully well enough to

translate

texts well um as a junior monk I had to

study pully my teacher UIA was my

teacher and we used the new poly course

by um um I think his name was like

Buddha dat or

something it was by a sinhal monk he

wrote the new poly chorus in three

volumes and we went through the first

two

volumes and after that I knew enough

that if I had a poly English dictionary

handy I could I could read poly tags

especially relatively simple stuff like

fortunately for me the rules of monastic

discipline are in Fairly straightforward

Pros

and it's relatively easy to read and

sutas are relatively easy to read

especially if you avoid

poetry but you get into the commentaries

and Abid dama and so forth it starts

getting more Scholastic and complicated

and harder to read and poetry is harder

to read but you just keep doing that I

mean you just keep reading and reading

and you know you consult a poly grammar

in case you come across some weird verb

form that you're not familiar with or

you look in the dictionary if you come

across some word you don't know the

meaning of and you just keep doing that

until you're relatively good at it and

then

uh in my case the AA waga of the sutin

was my favorite text my favorite group

of texts and I just was not satisfied

with the translations that existed at

the time the main translation that I had

and I think I still have it on the

bookcase back there is by KR Norman for

the polych society who was a linguist a

philologist who really didn't care about

Buddhism or Buddhist philosophy didn't

care about Dharma much he was just

interested in like procrit

languages um and then that version of

his translation of the

suttin um also had alternate

translations or alternate renderings by
W PA rahula and IB horer so most of the
the the sutan Plata including the AA
waga is pretty straightforward you know
it's like everyone agrees on the
meanings of most of it but when there
was differences of opinion you'd have
like various you know alternate
renderings of the same passage but still
I
wasn't I just wasn't satisfied with it
so um I embarked on a rather
long difficult process of making my own
translation of the ATA waga and just
studying up on it and reading all sorts
of things about it and trying to come

come up with as good of a an English translation mainly for my own use as I could so that was part of my learning process is just translating itself but I had done a lot of poly reading and studying before then so I'm just going to move on to seov and CAD Z's next question here which is can you please do an analysis of angura nikaya 11.9 I've heard people say the Buddha is going against Mantra meditation and concentration meditations here what do you think is the lesson of the suta

well the suta says that I mean you shouldn't have any kind of meditative object you know it starts with earth

water Wind and Fire the four

elements the four Great elements

and um I mean in other sutas that is

just given as just the standard example

for any meditative objects that are

below the level of Janna and then you're

not supposed to do J meditation with you

know like the formless janas you're not

supposed to have any of the formless

janas as your object of meditation and

it's it's saying that you know if you're

really wise then you you go beyond

having this perceptual object that

you're focusing your attention on and it

does say that like an enlightened being

the gods themselves who can read minds

still don't know what your object of
meditation is when you're sitting in
meditation if you're like an enlightened
being like the Buddha
himself so it it it's saying that you
shouldn't have any object of meditation
which is going back to like the AA waga
even though this is from the 11th
chapter of the angura and Naya the
chapter of 11s which according to GC
Pond probably was a late addition that
the odds of assuta in angoda 11 being
really ancient are pretty low but even
so this is sort of standard Buddhism
that's sort of hearkening back to the
Early Times where it's just saying you
should not have any object of meditation

and that would include mindfulness also
because if you're if you're being
mindful of doing walking meditation then
you're being that's like your object is
is whatever is arising when you're doing
walking
meditation so yeah it's not really going
against Mantra meditation concentration
meditation so much as it's just going
against having any kind of perceptual
object which would include what is
vulgarly known as weasa meditation
also because even in weasa meditation
you've got like In-N-Out breath as your
object of meditation or you know
whatever kind of experiences you're

having that's your object of meditation

and it seems to me that the main point

of anguru nikaya

11.9 is that once you get to a certain

level once you get like enlightened or

damn close to Enlightenment you're not

going to have an object of meditation

anymore it's just going to be you've

cultivated the

signless

essentially

so I guess that is the main lesson of

the suta is that eventually you have to

let go of all objects of meditation all

perceptual

objects which is just a standard theme

of the Tica V of the

Su so I'm just going to move on to uh SE action CAD Z's next question which is top 10 favorite Mahayana sutras shastras Etc and I've never really made a list of my top 10 favorite Mahayana texts but I did just for the sake of of answering this question so let's see The Diamond Cutter Sutra the heart Sutra I guess there's two heart sutras but um one is just a little more elaborate than the other and there's nagara Mula majaka caraka that's that's classic the Tibetan book of the great Liberation which is one of the most profound books I've ever read the hean Roku or the Blue Cliff record I like very much it's it's it's

more hard to understand than the muman

Khan which is the next one on the list

it's the hean Roku and the mumon Khan

are both collections of Zen Coons

and the

compiler who wrote The Blue Cliff record

or the hean Roku he was more far out

than mumon was because I mean his poetry

is just bizarre I mean it's just

deliberately confusing it's like he's

just deliberately yanking the rug out

from under you over and over and over

again but if you're trying not to cling

to perceptual constructs like uh angura

119 advises us to

do then it's good to have a certain

amount of disorientation flung at you

from a wise teacher to have the rug
pulled out from under you over and over
again so that you have no firm ground
beneath your
feet so let's see also
um I guess this could be considered
Mahayana tax is just alternative patim
mokas or pratim mokas this like the list
of rules for monks to follow I did read
a book once that had um a number of pry
mokas that translated into English it
was like eight or 12 different versions
of the pry moas and all of them except
the poly version were taken from
Mahayana like they were translated from
Chinese or

Tibetan from from the the Mahayana
trapas there in in China or Tibet
so yeah that would be on my list of the
top 10 I guess just for my own interest
in like the evolution of of winia rules
and so forth then there was Mila's
autobiography which was very
interesting um the Tibetan Book of the
Dead I might as well throw in because
it's hard to come up with a list of 10
favorite Mahayana texts and maybe the
Lotus Sutra just because it's it's so
important for Mahayana Buddhism it helps
you to understand understand Mahayana
Buddhism better and it's a strange kind
of amalgamation of earlier Buddhist
thought and like the new mahayan thought

when when the Lotus Sutra was

combined or when the Lotus Sutra was

composed I should

say so my top 10 just that I came up

with and this is may not be 100%

accurate because I may be just

forgetting some really good text that

that I should include but the D cutter

Sutra the

vedik pr parita Sutra the heart Sutra

the the Mula jamaka Kaka Tibetan book of

the great Liberation also known as The

Yoga of knowing the mind in its

nakedness attributed to PMA

sambava the hean Roku or the Blue Cliff

record Zen Coons the mumon Khan or no

gate barrier also Zen Coons the

alternative pry

mokas um milara autobiography Tibetan

Book of the Dead and the Lotus suit from

and I'm moving on to the next question

now this is from Liber Lam and Libra

lamb surprisingly asks a question that's

quite easy to

understand because usually he asks these

very cereal elaborate kind of questions

that are hard for me to grasp sometimes

but this one I can grasp which is as

follows if you were to separate what

each means for you would you say that

you are more a samata or weas

guy so mainly do I lean more towards

samata orasa or like concentration

meditation or mindfulness meditation I really do not like the term weasa with regard to a meditation technique or a movement because it's really not a meditation technique I guess it's kind of movement in the west especially or I mean considering the mahasi method was weasa yeah also in Burma and and elsewhere but still weasa isn't something that you do it's Insight that arises spontaneously and it can arise spontaneously after practicing samat meditation so let's just go with concentration meditation like meditation that emphasizes Sade or concentration

and then like mindfulness meditation or meditation that emphasizes SA or mindfulness and I've used to think about this a lot like the difference between the two and it's sort of like the two ways of digging a basement so there's two ways you can dig a basement you can just dig it down in one place and then expand outwards or you can just dig it down just level by level you know the whole basement is just the whole basement gradually gets deeper that would be the second way so the first way is you dig a deep hole as deep as you want and then expand outwards that would be similar to samat meditation whereas digging the entire basement area just

down level by level that would be more
of the mindfulness way of
meditation or well I I want to get into
that so it's like if you're meditating
in with samata you are stilling like one
part of your mind you know you're just
eliminating distractions and so forth
from one part of your mind this this
concentrated attentive part of your mind
and then gradually that spreads out into
other areas of your personality and this
works best for people who have like a
compartmentalized
personality that's there's a lot of
people like new age people tend to be
this way where your mind is

compartmentalized and if you
meditate you can be a really good
meditator you can sit there like a
statue for three hours straight but then
when you get back up again you're just
as messed up as you were before because
it's just this one compartment of your
mind that's kind of separated from the
rest of your mind that gets really good
at meditating but it doesn't have much
effect on the other parts of your mind
so you have to start with that and then
gradually spread it out to the other
areas of your mind whereas mindfulness
is more for people that do not have a
very compartmentalized mind it's like
when you meditate you got to bring your

entire personality into the meditation
because you can't just separate out the
parts that you don't want there you know
you just you just don't go into religion
mode or or meditation mode it's like
you're in the same general frame of mind
as you are at any other time because you
got to take your entire psyche with you
when you meditate and that's more the
kind of person I am my mind is pretty in
pretty well
integrated I don't have like these
separated compartments in my mind the
way a lot of people do
there was this one guy I knew he was a
doctor in Burma a very compartmentalized

mind that he would adopt like a

different tone of voice if he'd talk

about religion you know he'd almost get

into this Chanty sing song kind of voice

you know like a tell evangelist you know

they they can't speak normally when

they're talking about

Jesus you know it's they have like this

compartment the special Jesus

compartment in their mind where you know

this they act differently they speak

differently but with

me if I'm talking about damat it's

pretty much the same as I'm talking

about anything

else and when I'm meditating it's my

mind is really not so different than it

is at other times because I've got to

bring my whole mind with me because I

just do not have a special meditation

compartment in my mind so just

by um

like

temperament I'm more of a weasa

guy because my mind just isn't very

compartmentalized and I was going to say

earlier that another way of looking at

the difference between samata and weasa

is with regard to breeding a white

cocker spaniel my father used to breed

dogs long before I was born he had a

kennel and at the time this is like

maybe the

1950s there did not yet exist a pure
white cocker spaniel they had sort of
cream colored cocker spaniels and they
had white cocker spaniels with darker
spots and so my father had to think I
mean which way do you breed a white
cocker spaniel because the first person
to breed a white cocker spaniel is going
to make a lot of
money so there's two ways you could do
it you take just get paler and paler
cream colored ones until you get down to
white or you get the ones with spots and
you just breed fewer and smaller spots
the white ones with fewer and smaller
darker spots to get to White that way
and so the just starting off with you

know paler and paler cream color that
would be more like weasa you know it's
like you're changing the the entire
color of the dog gradually through the
the process whereas with regard to going
for the smaller and fewer spots you know
it's like you've already got some white
but you're just trying to get more and
more
white if that makes any sense I could
have just wasted the last several
minutes talking about basements and [__]
spaniels but it it does help you if you
know what kind of personality you have
it it can help you in knowing what the
best kind of meditation for you would be

for if you're a good hypnotic subject or
like if you're reading a book and you're
just oblivious to anything going on
around you you get so absorbed into this
book may be that you're more the
compartmentalized sort of
person uh on the other hand if you're
pretty much got the same attitude or the
same mental States no matter what you're
doing you know within
reason then you may be better off doing
a more mindfulness weas kind of
meditation so I'm just going to move on
to Libra Lamb's next
question which is kind of a political
question and it is as follows is voting
for for a lesser evil ignoble

considering how entrenched it is in the drama of competing evils I've got Trump versus Biden on my mind and got riled up at the idea that Biden is weak and an ornamental object and that Trump has pledged himself to Israel and disavowed January

6th

well I mean it does make sense if you're voting I mean I've never heard of a like a purely good politician running for for election I mean I mean it's necessarily a matter of voting for the Lesser evil you know it's like Jesus Christ or go toab Buddha I mean they're just not running for election even if they were

alive today they they would

refuse so yeah I mean you pretty much

have to if you're going to vote you

pretty much have to vote for the least

bad person

or the better person

anyway so yeah I mean if you just it's a

matter of your own temperament again

like your own attitude if you just can't

stand voting for someone you consider to

be not good enough then you may just

refuse to vote or just write in

somebody but uh between the two I mean I

I've got a pretty good idea who I would

prefer

so I'm I'm going to vote unless some

some Act of God so-called prevents me

from doing

it

or something I should just move on next

question here this is from

pranav and Prav asks in the past tense

how good were you at atanu and

kalanu and um I'm pretty sure a you

means knowledge of self or

self-awareness you know understanding

yourself call

onu um it means knowing the time kala

means time so knowing the time

essentially means knowing the proper

time it's like knowing the correct

timing for doing or saying certain

things so how good was I presumably when

I was a monk at

self-awareness and knowing the proper

time for things I I assume that's what

pranav is asking I'm not 100% sure that

that's what he was asking but that is

how I interpret this so self-awareness I

think I'm more self-aware than most

people you know using the term self

figuratively because ultimately in

Orthodox Buddhism like Terra there is no

self but figuratively conventionally you

can say that you know this person know

knows himself pretty well this person is

just clueless and just self

unaware so I mean there were times

especially as a junior monk that you

know I would just behave in just an

outrageous barbaric way in Burma

just yeah I mean I I behaved in

embarrassing ways sometimes when I was a

mon in Burma just for example just to

give one example I used to go for alms I

was I was a straight alms roundo I would

not accept food like offered to me in

people's houses offered to me inside the

monastery I take my bull go to the

Village get my food and come back and

there was part of my self-image as the

the young monk just trying to be like

the Buddhist Rambo just trying to be

very strict in doing

this and one time there was like this

young couple they were standing right at

the monastery entrance they wanted to
offer food to the the Exotic foreign
Monk and they're standing there they
obviously were standing there just for
me the other monks were coming in
through a different entrance that day
because they were going to a different
village than I did and they're standing
there with like happy excited Smiles on
their face and I just walked past them
and ignored them and I could hear the
woman gasp as I just sort of like snub
them you know and it's a lot of the time
like like a junior monk especially if
he's very idealistic and trying to live
up to these
ideals these standards that he's got set

for himself he can behave horribly like
for example I heard this story this this
one I didn't do but there was a a
western monk a junior Western monk in
Sri Lanka who got invited to some kind
of Festival where the people were
donating like a little bag of stuff to
each monk you know the monks were all
standing there they go down line and and
offer the bag of things and offer the
bag of things and it's you probably just
standard stuff like soap and toothpaste
maybe a little hand towel or something
but the bag also contained like a bag of
milk
powder and this young Western monk he

wasn't going to go SE a bag of milk powder because that's food and it was probably afternoon already and so when they came to offer him the bag of stuff he just slapped through the air you know he just slapped it out of the person's hands that were was offering it to them and he was considering himself to be very self-righteous while doing this you know he considered himself to be completely Justified they were trying to offer a monk food in the afternoon he wasn't going to have any of that but I mean there were way better ways of going about it I mean he could ask them you know could you just take the milk powder out before you offer it to me you know

be very friendly have meta in his heart
and it wouldn't have caused a scene like
that or even better better he could have
just determined that milk powder is not
for me I'll feed it to a dog or
something I I'll give it away I won't
use it for food for myself and therefore
he could accept it without breaking a
rule but he didn't do
that so I guess
kananu knowing the the proper time for
things is in a way it's similar to atanu
or just self-awareness because I mean
it's it's a matter of just being aware
of what is
appropriate how not to misbehave that

kind of

thing so as I got older I mean I got

better at it although still there were

times when I would behave in ways that

was just incomprehensible to the Burmese

mind like Burmese people come to visit

me and I would just refuse to leave my

cave you know I would just refuse to

meet with visitors you know I wouldn't

be yelling at them to go away or

anything but you know I would just like

pretend like I wasn't there and

essentially hide pee into my own bath

Cup in order to avoid having to go

outside and meet

anybody

so but then again when when it comes to

self- knowledge one tricky thing about
self- knowledge is it's difficult for
you to know what your own blind spots
are because you don't see your own blind
spots it's like mooha I mean you can be
aware of your your Lowa and Dosa you can
be aware of your attraction and aversion
but you can't be aware of your own
delusion um at least not very well maybe
in retrospect you can think wow that was
delusional when I did that but as I mean
almost by definition you're not aware of
your own delusion because the to the
extent that you're aware of it it's not
delusion
anymore so it is possible just about

anybody can think that they understand
themselves fairly well when someone who
knows them fairly well can look at them
and and just be know painfully aware
that this person is clueless with regard
to Y and
Z I hope that I am better at that sort
of thing than I used to be but it's hard
to I mean you can't really quantify it
you can't give it a numerical value you
know with regard to atano I was a 6 I
was like a 68 and Kan I I scored like a
73 you know it's I don't know you can't
really
say so anyways I'm just going to move on
to panov's next question which is
another kind of political One Can monks

vote in elections and yes monks can vote in elections there's no rule against it because I don't think that there were elections in in Ancient India in the in the Ganges Valley maybe there were elections in like the oligarchic republics there were some oligarchic republics where the oligarchs at least would have some say but that wouldn't include monks because the monks would be out in the forest meditating at the roots of
trees but I do know know that some monks are required to vote in elections like Australian Monks at least when I was a monk the Australian monks living in

Burma they were required by Australian
law to vote it's not like in America
where you just don't vote every
Australian citizen at least at the time
I don't know if it's still that way now
is required by law to vote in elections
and so he would have to um get an
absentee ballot uh like through the
Australian Embassy in rangon in order to
vote in Australian elections because if
he didn't he was breaking the
law so in a case like that I guess monks
pretty much have to vote in elections as
a monk I only voted
once and I have to admit I voted for
Obama because he was running Against
Romney and just out of curiosity there

was a a presidential debate on YouTube

when I was in America in

2011 and it was a DE between Obama and

Romney and it seemed pretty obvious to

me that Obama was operating at a higher

level of Consciousness than Mitt Romney

was Mitt Romney just struck me as kind

of like a shark with a plastic smile

glued to its face so pretty much in

alarm I voted against Mitt Romney rather

than for Barack

Obama and I think that's the last time I

voted

Democrat tell you the truth because

things started getting really crazy

after after that like back around 2015

16 it was like the craziness was really

cranked up to about

11 and it's still there it's still

crazy so I guess I answered that

question and so I'm just going to move

on to panov's thirdd question here what

do you think of monks using social media

and modern technology would Buddha have

allowed it well it's it's hard to say

what the Buddha would have allowed it's

like would the Buddha have allowed

something like that in Ancient India or

if the Buddha were alive today and

living in the west or some such would he

allow it

today and I mean some modern technology

Buddhism really is not

anti-technology like with regard to medicine and so forth that's modern technology also I mean it would be ridiculous if monks were forbidden to take state-of-the-art malaria pills you know you got some pale skinned round eyed guy living in the tropics and we've got almost no resistance to malaria so I'd be dead several times over if I were not taking modern technologically Innovative malaria medication the the natives like you know the indigenous people of Burma who have ancestors have lived there for centuries they've got this built-in they have evolved a certain resistance to malaria

but I I had very little resistance I
gradually developed a little bit just
from being exposed to it so much but
still I would be dead several times over
if it were not for that or even to get
to Burma I had to fly on an airplane
that's modern technology so there's all
kinds of modern technology that really
are not an issue that Buddhism really
doesn't say anything against it I mean
it does there I was told that when cars
and trains and so forth first appeared
in Burma long ago during British you
know British colonial times that there
were very strict monks who would not
ride in cars because there is a rule
that says a monk is not allowed to ride

in a land vehicle unless it's a kind of
Rickshaw pulled by one
man that's like an ox cart it's against
the rules for a monk to ride an ox cart
unless he is sick and I hurt my foot
once and couldn't walk I had to go
travel 30 2 miles through the forest
with this injured foot so the villagers
rented me an elephant to ride for the
first 16 miles until we got to a
road and then I rode in an ox cart or a
bullock
cart for the next 16 miles and I
realized why it's against the
rules for a monk who is not sick to ride
in a bullock

cart and that is because these two
Bullocks they receive like a seven hour
long beating you know it's a bullock is
not like a horse where you know it just
gets a good Trot going and just keeps
going Bullocks they start to slow down
as soon as you stop hitting them and so
they the guy is just hitting the whole
way and I can understand how they'd make
a rule against monks riding in Bullock
carts like for that reason um but then
cars came along and there was no
Bullocks to get beaten from riding in
cars but the rule does say you know like
a land vehicle unless it's pulled by one
man so a lot of strict monks just would
just walk everywhere they refuse to ride

in a car or on a train or anything you
can ride in a boat because it's sometime
some places it's the only way to get
across a river or
something but I'm just digressing all
over the place because uh the question
here is what do you think of monks using
social media and modern technology well
the modern technology in general I mean
you'd have to judge it by a case by
casee basis but social media yeah I
mean I mean you couldn't really have the
Buddha making a rule against it in
Ancient India because there was no
social
media um people as as a general rule

were still illiterate in the Buddhist
time I mean there was a writing then but
it was only like certain classes of
people that would take the trouble to
learn writing you know it like the
educated classes would Lear learn how to
read and write but it wasn't used for
very much maybe like
proclamations or just like recordkeeping
for businesses and that kind of
thing but again I'm
digressing so with regard to like
Facebook or
YouTube um I don't know what the Buddha
would say I mean if he were alive today
would he want monks like surfing the web
I don't think he

would um maybe if a just strictly used

it for dham purposes like promulgating

dham then that might be

acceptable but a lot of monks are using

it for things that are not very dharmic

like looking at

porn and certainly the Buddha would not

would not promote that that there would

have to be rules against certain ways of

using social media at the very least you

know it'd be against the rules to I mean

look at porn on the internet that kind

of

thing

so what do I think of monks using social

media yeah it's it's it's really a

dangerous thing but it's it's also very
valuable like the
Internet it's it's like a new sense
organ I used to think about this a lot
where it's like the computer is like the
sense organ and we using that sense
organ you have access to I mean
practically infinite information it's
it's almost like having the Divine eye
like being Clairvoyant or something
where you can just you want to learn
about something you just click on it you
know just I'll come up with the the
Wikipedia article or the YouTube
documentary or whatever and you can
learn about this so in that sense I mean
it is it's almost like a

superpower just you can just communicate

with people thousands of miles away you

can you can see things happening

thousands of miles away you can learn

about things from

you know some source of information

thousands of miles away it really is

like a psychic

power but you have to have a certain

amount of wisdom to use that psychic

power responsibly so I assume the Buddha

would make

rules like with regard to I mean if he

made any rules at

all that he would uh make rules about

how to use it

correctly instead of abusing it and it's sort of like that in in Venia that's pretty much how Venia works it's like they had knives in the Buddhist time and so there's just rules about like what kind of knife a monk can use you know it has to have like a short blade and so forth

so yeah um in the Buddhist time though I mean it was way stricter in the Buddhist time they were very aesthetic they renounced the world in a radical Manner and so owning things like phones and computers and so forth that would just be like scandalous for monks to do something like that in the Buddhist time I mean of course they didn't have phones

or computers but if the same standards applied to today then almost all monks would be behaving in a very unacceptable manner because you know there very few monks nowadays are like wandering Forest dwelling
renunciant you know most of them are living in fairly comfortable conditions and have access to a fairly good amount of
wealth I didn't own a computer until 2012 but I mean you can get addicted to it it's I mean you just sit there and I mean again it's like a psychic power you can just see all this stuff whatever you want to see you can see it or hear it or

whatever so there would have to be some
kind of rules regarding it but I'm not
sure if the Buddha would have allowed
like monks using social media or monks
using iPhones and
computers um because I mean ancient
India is so different from today the
standards are so different it's hard to
say I mean if if we had the same
standards as ancient India I don't think
he would have allowed it he wouldn't
have allowed smoking tobacco either
pretty
obviously but um today if a Buddha arose
to today if Mata Buddha arises in a
technological civilization what will he
allow what will he not allow we're just

going to have to wait until that happens
and then we'll find
out so after that long Meandering semi
answer I'm just going to move on to the
next question here this is from thur I
think that's how he pronounces his name
thur and he says what are your thoughts
on Ed car and Neo Buddhism and I got
asked this a few q&as ago my my opinion
of Shri Ed car Dr Amed Carr and um he
started a Buddhist movement in
India and I'm essentially I'm being
asked you know what what is my opinion
of this is it like a valid Buddhist
system or or what and it I really don't
know that much about it I do know that

Dr Ed car started converting like
dollits I think they're called out casts
you know
Untouchables converting them to Buddhism
as a way of escaping from this uh the
oppression of the the cast system in
India and it's my vague understanding
like I say I don't know much about him
or much about this new Buddhist movement
but it does seem to have been largely
politically and socially motivated more
than spiritually motivated that he was
just trying to uplift the the The
Untouchables in India by converting them
to Buddhism and to this day I have read
that most of the Buddhists that follow
this movement are of very low cast you

know it's not for everybody necessarily
I mean theoretically it could be but
it's mainly just a way of um The
Untouchables in India of escaping to
some degree from their position of being
Untouchable so all of a sudden they're
Buddhists and so they don't have to
worry about that [__]
anymore so there is some debate there
has been some debate on my Discord
Channel or my Discord server lately
about whether the umed car Buddhist
movement or Neo Buddhism or navayana I
think it's called whether it's legit
Buddhism or whether it's just a kind of
social

movement and I really don't know that
much about it but I do get the
impression
that the purpose I mean it's like Dr
edar wanted to help The Untouchables and
he came up with this idea why don't they
just all convert to Buddhism and so he
kind of went that way and he may have
been sincere in his
Buddhism but I do think that originally
at least and one of the main purposes of
it was just political and social more
than
spiritual but that's just the impression
I get based on just a very vague hazy
knowledge of the
situation and so I'm just going to move

on the next question this is from

personalization

primitive and personalization primitive

says in Western occultism it is often

said that there are four virtues that

underly all spiritual attainments to

know to dare to will to keep silence how

would a Buddhist relate to those

qualities specifically in terms of

Spiritual Development well to know the

first of the four I mean that's pretty

much the goal in Buddhism I mean you if

you know reality if you if you know like

the four noble truths

just deep down you know down to your

Center then I mean that's that's it you

you you're there you have attained it um
in the like preliminary stages as a
beginner I mean still to know is would
be like right view you know just having
a just to know how to practice to know
how to meditate to know how to keep keep
morality and so forth yeah that would be
that would be important I think uh most
like Indo-European spiritual Traditions
do place a lot of emphasis on gnosis or
just
knowledge
Nana so yeah that's that's in there to
DARE that's just essentially Fearless
when you renounce the world and just
wander around just a penniless vagrant
beggar that takes a certain amount of

Courage if you're doing it for Spiritual reasons I mean if you just run out of money you know and you just kind of have to do it you don't have any choice in the matter that's different but to voluntarily just
renounce pretty much all of your Social ties and just throw yourself on the mercy of the universe by becoming a Wandering beggar I mean that takes courage and to do that in the west takes possibly even more courage than it did in Ancient
India so yeah just general fearlessness would be the the Buddhist approach to of this the the virtue of to

dare you don't want to be too daring

though I guess I mean you don't want to

be a

daredevil so anyways the third one is to

will and I mean will is what you're

gradually trying to get away from

although

um like determination is one of the 10

parames Adana or like um like Vigor

Ardent practice I mean that's got some

will involved that's that's one of the

the five faculties is is uh WEA or just

like manly

effort also uh proper effort right

effort is is part of the eight-fold path

not that would NE presumably involve

some

will so I mean the will would be guiding your practice and then eventually when you get there when you become fully enlightened you stop having will essentially I mean to the outward observers you would still seem to have will but it's like neutralized so let's see here and to keep silence well silence is important too I mean a monk is forbidden to take a vow of silence like like a carthusian monk in in Roman Catholicism but um you some monks are wizzy bait in Burma in fact my own teacher uh sometimes he just um walk around with his his mouth full of water you know he just have

his just walk around with his mouth full
of water which uh helped him to not talk
I guess and might also be a little kind
of an indication to people that he
wasn't going to talk CU look at his his
mouth's full of water or
something but uh yeah keeping silence
there's a you know right place and time
for that it might be most places and
most times but still there are times
when it's proper to to speak
also so with regard to Spiritual
Development I mean to know in a
conventional sense just helps you to
know how to practice how to approach the
goal and then when you reach the goal
then you really know that's ultimate

knowledge that's you know ultimate truth

to DARE that's I would just say

fearlessness and just the the

willingness to radically renounce that

that involves some daring to will is uh

yeah determination and just Vigor Ardent

practice that would that would be will I

suppose in a Buddhist context and to

keep silence is mainly just be quiet

most of the

time so I guess I answered that question

question I hope I answered that question

because I'm moving on to the next one

and this is from

roor and roor

says I'm GNA I'm going to look and make

sure that we are recording yep we're recording that's good roor says I'm not sure whether to believe in anything paranormal everyone seems to have a ghost story and I'm aware of the near-death experience and reincarnation research but you would think there would be a picture or a video or something which would satisfy me more than mere testimony do you know of anything like that what's your best evidence of the Paranormal so that's actually two questions I'm better separate these two question marks two questions okay so with regard to some kind of proof of the Paranormal or just damned convincing persuasive evidence of

the

Paranormal I did read a book called the

trickster in the Paranormal by George P

Hansen and he explains why there's never

going to be proof of the Paranormal

because the Paranormal is like a fringe

phenomenon that we have to have a

certain structure and just like

reliability to our

world and that the Paranormal is what

kind of bleeds through the cracks

between the rules that keep our world

structured and more or less

predictable and so it's always going to

like avoid rules and avoid any kind of

objective proof you know that's where

the trickster element comes

in and yeah I I can appreciate that but

um so I don't think that there's ever

going to be proof I mean to some degree

there is proof like um the experiments

of helmet Schmidt not the the German

politician but the German engineer at

Boeing who who started experimenting

when things were slow there the lab was

just kind of idle he asked permission

from upper management if it was okay for

him to do research on the influence of

mental like mentality on physical

systems and he came up with some really

elegant

experiments for like demonstrating that

the Mind does have an influence on

physical systems or what considered to be physical systems by Western materialists and so he came up with a random number generator and usually his random number generator either generated just between 1 two 3 4 or just between one and two it just be random assemblages of ones and twos that it was genuinely random it wasn't based on like numerals on like from an irrational number or something that's like a fake random number generator but it was based on a Geer counter and a radioactive isotope and if the C if the if the the guer counter clicked you know it at one of two times

it would be counted as a one and it
counted one of the the other of two
times it would be counted as as a two
you know I I don't know how well I'm
explaining this but it would just be a
random assemblage of like in headphones
it just be a random assemblage of Clicks
in the left or the right ear it would be
like based on Quantum
Randomness that it would there would
either be Clicks in the right or left
ear and then you would have experimental
subjects put on the headphones and he
would say try to make more clicks happen
in your left ear or try to make more
clicks on the right side and you could
do these experiments very quickly you

know it wouldn't take more than several
seconds to do one of these runs
and so he found out that especially
certain people they might be like 3%
above random which you run so many tests
statistically that that is solid
evidence that the mind is
influencing what is generally considered
to be a physical
system and the really amazing thing to
me was that he could record the random
clicks onto a cassette tape and still if
no one had listen to that cassette tape
yet people could still influence whether
there's going to be more clicks on the
left side or on the right side of this

stereo tape because it was like the
cassette tape the recording the recorded
aspect of the cassette tape was still in
a state of quantum Quantum Randomness
that nobody had perceived it and
collapsed the state Vector yet and then
he was even like there are certain
people who just vehemently deny any
anything that was paranormal you know
there's this group called pyop and one
of the their more well-known members is
this I can't remember what is real James
Randy or something like that he used to
be a magician called The Amazing Randy
and they just tried to debunk any claims
of of any kind of paranormal activities
you know they they Tred to debunk any

kind of

paraschos or anything like that and so

this helmet Schmidt he could send the

cassette tape to one of his his critics

and say just put this in your Vault put

it you know he'd have a duplicate of it

and he'd just say take this copy put it

in your safe and then he'd have somebody

and then you get a pick whether there's

going to be more on the left side or the

right side and then he'll have one of

his his uh more talented students listen

to it trying to make more clicks on

whichever side that the the skeptic

insisted upon and then it would still

work

and I don't think I explain that very
well but a lot of these Skeptics or the
the critics I mean they're not Skeptics
at all because they firmly disbelieve
something and that's not skepticism
skepticism is suspending
judgment but um I mean sometimes it gets
to the point where they'll just say well
they have to be cheating they can't find
out any way of really debunking it other
than saying it's impossible so they have
to be cheating
anyways I mean if you read a
parapsychology book then you may come
across information in that book that may
be more
persuasive than me rambling about helmet

Schmidt although if it's a good
parapsychology book hopefully it will
have a section on helmet Schmidt and his
experiments with um people influencing
clicks on a guer counter for
example but um
gosh I mean with proof I think I am
going with um George P Hansen and the
trickster in the Paranormal and there's
just never going to be
proof other than indirect subtle proofs
that don't really get into the
mainstream because that will destabilize
the world we live in or
something so anyways R's second question
is what's your best evidence of the

Paranormal and I think I've got two
two fairly good bits of evidence on the
Paranormal I mean other than just stuff
that I've read like you read about NE
karoli Baba and just Miracles just
flowed from the man but just setting
setting aside people like neim karoli
Baba just based on my own experience one
was when I was like 13 years old I've
told this story several times by now
where we had a polargeist in our house
my father was a weird occultist
hypnotist he was a Lial person weird
stuff happened around him and we had a
PO thege in our house it's like you
you'd open the the drawer to the
silverware drawer and there'd be like

forks and spoons all bent in weird shapes or just like especially the handles would just pop off of coffee cup coffee cups in the cupboards this weird stuff would appear in the house that kind of thing and so one summer my father was hiring a new housekeeper to you know keep the house cuz that's what housekeepers do and he was explaining to her that there was a poltergeist in the house so if she found any broken dishes for example she shouldn't immediately blame us kids because there was this Poltergeist in the house and while he was telling her that I was sitting at the table with them and I could see that

she's slowly getting a grin on her face and one eyebrow is kind of going up like she can't decide whether he's joking or crazy and then literally Within just a few seconds of him reaching the end of his description of how things spontaneously self-destruct because of this Poltergeist an ashray that was right on the table right in between them on the corner of the table my father was sitting at one end of the table she was sitting at one side that corner right in between them had this ashtray and the ashtray made the sound like zinc and just split into two halves that slid about an inch and a half away from each other and I mean it was just in plain

sight of everybody and so immediately of course the grin went away and both of her eyebrows attained the same level which was pretty pretty high up on her forehead I suppose and she started taking him seriously and at the very least you'd have to admit it's one hell of a case of synchronicity that for whatever reasons a glass ashtray just split in half I mean there was a lit cigarette butt in the ashtray but there had been hundreds or thousands of lit cigarette butts in that ashtray previously and it didn't self-destruct so that would be one case that uh that I would consider pretty

good evidence of something paranormal at
the very least it's one hell of a case
of
synchronicity but another case would be
just be there's like a a group mind that
happens with me and other people and
it's relatively strong with my my
sweetheart the woman I love we have sort
of this group mind going
where just
repeatedly and especially at certain
times you know it's kind of goes through
through waves I'll just say something
and she was right at the verge of
opening her mouth to say the same thing
and then she's like Amazed by that or um
one of my favorite examples was I was at

work one day and I just texted her just
casually I just texted to her I I huff
your cleavage something like that and
then I get this text back from her
saying okay psychic boy because it
turned out that right when I was texting
about huffing her cleavage she was
testing to see if her deodorant still
worked by pulling out her shirt and like
sniffing her own like the space down
like between her shirt and her uh her
booom and it was right then that I I
sent the the thing and you can call it
just random chance but there's a hell of
a lot of it that happens between us that
uh it's it's uh at the very least it's

just more

synchronicity so those are my best

personal evidences of the Paranormal I

mean I have seen apparitions and so

forth but with an apparition you can't

really be sure that it's something out

there and not like like hallucination or

something

so I guess I better just move on the

next question here this is from

scadden and scolin says between Peter

Gibbons from the office and Neo from The

Matrix who seems wiser well I have to

admit I've never seen the

office I've never seen a single episode

of it I can't remember seeing a clip

from the office so I don't know who

Peter Gibbons is but if we just
completely dismiss the sequels to The
Matrix which kind of went off in their
own Direction you know they there was
the first Matrix movie was a profound
philosophical movie and then after that
they just kind of ignored most of the
philosophy and just made like special
effects action
movies but if you just go with the
original Matrix movie then Neo at the by
the end of the movie he is symbolically
fully enlightened you know it's like
when he um dies and is Reborn
and he stops the bullets with his with
his mind you know the the the agents are

shooting at him and then he dives into
agent Smith right right into his chest
and causes agent Smith to explode I mean
agent Smith is symbolically like Mara or
the devil and so at the moment of
Enlightenment or shortly after the
moment of Enlightenment Neo actually
merges with the devil and kind of
vaporizes the vaporizes the devil even
though he comes back in the sequels
how you
doing my dog is paying attention to
me so yeah I mean Neo seems pretty Wise
by the end of the movie I mean he's
doubting Thomas towards the beginning
like symbolically the beginning of the
movie towards the beginning it shows Neo

asleep at his computer and the computer screen says searching dot dot dot and that is like symbolically the state he is in at the beginning of the movie he's he's not awake yet he's not awakened but he is

searching and then by the end of the movie he's he's the one he's the fully enlightened Messiah so I don't know how you could get much wiser than fully enlightened so even though I have no idea who Peter Gibbons is I would say that Neo the M Neo from The Matrix the first Matrix movie not the sequels eventually became fully enlightened so if Peter Gibbons was

fully enlightened at least they'd be

like tied for first place or

something so I'll just move on to

scadden's next question which is could

you give some examples of films that try

to represent symbolic wisdom but due to

intellectual insufficiently

insufficiency it becomes

Superstition and I'm not sure of any

movie that that tries to represent

symbolic wisdom but just becomes

Superstition I mean there's a lot of

like really profound

movies that try to profound try to like

purvey a wise philosophical message that

are just completely

misunderstood for example The Matrix

that I just mentioned the first Matrix
movie forget the
sequels most people see that they don't
see it as a profound philosophical movie
they just see a special effects science
fiction action movie movie you know it
just doesn't sink in like the book Lord
of the Flies I mean that is a profound
philosophical and religious book and I I
knew people with University educations
intelligent people who would read the
book forget the movies they would read
that book and be completely oblivious
that the entire thing is an allegory
it's a kind of parable everything in
that book is symbolic of something

else I mean any of the movies that are

like some of these science fiction

movies about like people living in a

fake reality like the 13th floor would

be another example or dark city would be

another example there's a lot of

examples of

it that um you know there's like the

standard

philosophical message of the movie that

people

just they just don't get it they just go

into vegetative mode when they watch a

movie and they're just watching it for

the explosions and the special effect

and they don't realize that they've been

exposed to a profound philosophical

movie Apocalypse Now is another one I
mean Apocalypse Now is
um it's it's a profound movie based on
Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad that
wasn't about the Vietnam War at all it's
really not about the Vietnam War it's
about what happens to a sensitive
intelligent man of some depth and
character when he tries to ignore the
distinct between good and evil and
that's Colonel CTS in the
movie and he goes insane I mean it you
can't do it it's sort of like R gnov in
dov's crime and
punishment he does tries to do the same
thing he tries to just rise above the

distinction between good and evil he
tries to become like a Nichi and
Superman and it pretty much just
destroys his mind it just it kind of it
just messes him up because you can't get
away from that that and there is
somebody
um uh somebody a little further down on
the the list of questions here that asks
a question kind of about that so yeah
there are a lot of films that try to
represent symbolic wisdom and people
just don't get it like the seventh seal
ingar ingar bergman's the seventh seal
is a profound philosophical movie and
most people just remember you know the
night playing chess with death on the

beach and I mean they they don't really

understand what it's about so there are

a lot of movies like

that so let's

see and then there's some movies that

are so profound that I don't fully

understand it either Like Pie the movie

pie I'm still haven't made up my mind on

that one Groundhog Day I'm not sure if

Groundhog Day really is like a parable

for reincarnation where you just have to

keep doing it over and over again until

you get it perfect or whether it was

just

you know maybe it may be that the people

who wrote the the screenplay didn't did

not have a clue with regard to the
Buddhist or Hindu concept of
reincarnation it just made a good
movie so but there are lots and lots of
movies I think most people who watch
most symbolic profound movies I mean it
doesn't turn into superti it's just like
right over their head they don't get it
but they enjoy the movie anyway like the
Matrix I mean it's a good movie even if
you don't understand the symbolism of it
of which there is
lots still I mean it's still a good
movie and people like the movie good
explosions and fights and stuff in it so
anyways I'm might as well just move on
to scadden's third question here which

is are there any science fiction writers that you feel were spiritually insightful I haven't read any of Philip K work before but I stumbled across a talk he gave on The Matrix in 77 it looks like they lifted quite a bit of material from this talk for the first Matrix movie yeah a lot of a lot of Science Fiction writers I mean they're Lial people they're they're they're not normies necessarily so they they will have some some deep philosophical insights um one of my favorite science fiction authors was Brian Aldis and I don't think he was particularly spiritual but he did write stories that

that had some profundity to them
including uh one of his favorite themes
was in the future you have ai computers
that become effectively omniscient and
then there's like a religion based on
omniscient computers where people go to
the omniscient computer to ask it
questions and so forth everybody has
like this altar with this omniscient
computer on it and they go there to
discuss their problems and so forth and
of course the omnicient computer Peter
gives them wise advice because it is
omniscient anyone who has the
opportunity to read AO a short story by
um Brian aldus called indifference I
mean that that is really a beautiful

story I really like that

story um but let's see like Gan wolf his

uh book of the new son I mean that is

it's profound that is a profound book I

mean that could be

scripture I mean really the the book of

the new son has got more wisdom in it

than a lot of actual scriptures

do but that was like his magnum opus I

think I don't think all of Gan Wolf's

writings are that

profound so any other science fiction

writers when I was in high school my

favorite science fiction writer was

Larry nien but he mainly just had really

good aliens and uh it was all very it

was very like hard science fiction he
tried to make everything scientifically
plausible but he was a good Storyteller
but not much philosophy to
it
so yeah I guess my best example of a
spiritually insightful science fiction
work which would have to be written by
someone who had some spiritual Insight
would be Jee Wolf's book of the new son
and it's uh I would consider to be at
least as deep as the book Moby Dick it
really is profound so I'm just going to
move on to the next question from Indian
guy who also goes by the Alias of
Trevor and Indian guy says what's your
favorite story of the Buddha and even

when I was like boating on the lake the other day you know celebrating the love for my woman and everything I was still thinking what is my favorite story of the Buddha because I had read this question it was asked a few days ago and it's difficult to come up with a favorite story of the Buddha in fact the best I could come up with would be stories that had the Buddha in them but he wasn't even really the main protagonist like the story of the Buddha in the godika sutum where godika is this monk who gets Janna and loses it and gets it and loses it and gets it and loses it so finally he's in a state of

desperation and he decides he's going to kill himself before he loses it after he gets it the next time he's just going to cut his own throat before he loses it again because if you die with Janna you're pretty much guaranteed of a very high heaven realm a Brahma realm whereas if you die without jonana there's no guarantees and then he winds up becoming fully enlightened as he's bleeding out and then the Buddha with his Clairvoyance he sees that Goda has killed himself the Buddha is living at vulture Peak which isn't too far away from the Black Rock at easy gy cave so he tells the SAA well are the mon Goda it has died we need to go and cremate

the body and so they go and they're you
know getting everything together and
they find Goda who's lying Twisted to
one side on his bed and my explanation
for why he was twisted to one side it
doesn't really say why he was twisted to
one side but I'm just guessing that he
was very conscientiously leaning over
the side of the bed so he wouldn't get
blood and gore all over this the bed
that was owned by the
s and then they find the Buddha sees
this Mist that's moving in all
directions you know to the north to the
South to the east to the West it's just
moving around and around and the Buddha

points this Mist out to the monks and says you see that mist that's moving in all directions that's Mara the evil one who's looking for the consciousness of Goda but Mara doesn't realize that the consciousness of Goda has become unestablished which means that Goda is enlightened and his mind his Consciousness is no longer an aspect of samsara and so Mara is never going to find
it so stories like that that demonstrate the Buddha's wisdom and Mastery and so forth I like I like stories like that and there may be some actual truth to that story and you know stories that may sound like like uplifting or

entertaining stories that just kind of smack of like myth ology um yeah I'm I still have a certain amount of skepticism with regard to a lot of that sort of thing that you find in the texts but another one would be like in the Bahasa udana 110 which is kind of similar where um you have this non- Buddhist philosopher named Bahia literally it means Outsider who's living way over on the west coast of India and he starts to think that he's fully enlightened because he's getting so much respect from people and so forth and he he has attained something in his meditation and so he's starting to think

to himself maybe he really is fully
enlightened but then a DEA a small G God
who had formerly been like a relation to
Goda as a human comes to him and out of
compassion tells him sorry Goa but
you're not fully enlightened but there
is an enlightened being called the
Buddha who lives you know in the the
Ganges Valley and so um bahah just
immediately you know he's so so inspired
by this he just immediately packs up his
[__] and just takes off walking and just
keeps going until he he finds the
monastery where the Buddha was staying
and he asks where's the Buddha and they
say the Buddha is walking for alms in
the village right now but if you wait

he'll he be back soon and he just can't
wait he he goes out and finds the Buddha
who's just walking for alms with this
bull you know collecting his his daily
meal
and he he says you know please teach me
and then the the Buddha says I'm walking
for alms this isn't a convenient time
can you like meet me back at the
monastery or something and Bahia is
saying you I don't know when I'm going
to die I need to know now and so finally
the third time the Buddha relents and
gives him this very zen-like kind of
kind of spech each where he saying all
right

Goa um thus should you train yourself in the scene there will be only the scene in the heard there will be only the heard in the felt there will be only the felt in the mentally sensed there will be only the mentally sensed when in the scene there is only the scen in the heard there is only the heard in the felt there is only the felt and in the mentally sense there is only the mentally sense then bah there is no thereby and when bah there is no thereby there is no therein and when there is no therein there is no here no Hereafter no between the two this is the very end of unease and upon hearing that which was just what he was right for he

immediately becomes enlightened he's not
even a Buddhist monk at the time he's
not a Buddhist really but he becomes
enlightened and then just minutes later
just very shortly afterward he gets
trampled or gored by a young cow
and then the Buddha when he he goes back
to the monastery he says you know he he
sends some monks to go and and pick up
the body of of Bahia who's lying dead in
the street and they take him and he the
Buddha has him cremated as though he
were a Buddhist monk because I he became
a member of the Arya sa by becoming
enlightened so he was sort of an
honorary member of the sa and so the

Buddha had him cremated as though he
were a real monk so stor is like that I
like that have like some semblance of
historicity to it that it that it may
show some real insight into who the
Buddha was like personality wise and
what he was like that kind of
thing so anyways this is turning into a
longer Q&A than I was planning we're
already already above two hours I think
we only had like 33 questions so I'm
just going to move on to uh Indian guy's
next question here which is as follows a
poly translator who talks a lot about
archaic Buddhism on YouTube said that in
one of the nikayas that Goa wanted to
call his teaching

brahmaa have you seen this in the
nikayas um I don't remember what suda it
is but I have read where the Buddha was
teaching I think it was a
Brahman and it's it's a suta where the
Buddha is teaching the four Brahma
viharas or the four Divine abiding the
four Divine abodes which is meta karuna
mudita and UPA if you don't know what
that means that's fine and then he was
saying that that is like the way to
going to Brahma like the brahans had
their own ideas like the Brahma charia
is like the the the uh the celibate
student stage of the life of a
Brahman and the Buddha would just kind

of twist that a little bit make it more
Buddhist and you'd say if you really
want to go to Brahma then you practice
these four Brahma
viharas and um I think it was Richard
gomri who was the president of the
polych society at one point a teacher of
Sanskrit at Oxford I think that was
actually using that as a way of saying
that you can become enlightened through
practicing meta that the Buddha taught
meta as a path to
Enlightenment which it's kind of pushing
it a little bit that wouldn't be a
strictly Orthodox
interpretation but I do think that that
might be what this poly translator was

referring to is auta where the Buddha is
teaching the four Brahma viharas to a
Brahman and saying that you know that is
the real Brahma Yana but I mean to say
that the bu that the Buddha wanted to
call Buddhism Brahma Yana that's kind of
silly because he could call it whatever
he wanted to if he wanted to call it
Brahma Yana then he'd call it Brahma
Yana I mean he wouldn't just be calling
it dhama or something what are you doing
now I got another dog paying attention
me yeah
yeah
so um yeah I guess I I assume that is
what he is referring to so I'm just

going to move on to the next question
here this is from extremely rare bird an
extremely rare bird says I have been
wondering about something that I feel
lie lie at the heart oh okay I've been
wondering about something that I feel
lies at the heart of some of dov's books
the fact that we have a conscience
whether we like it or not one that seems
to live a life of its own something
which seems to know and hint about that
which we are not and push us towards
that direction I think discovering this
aspect of mind is what makes a lot of
people can convert to monotheistic
religion when they suddenly find inside
themselves an autonomous force that is

striving towards the good for Buddhists
this conscience can be seen in the
larger context of the Four Noble Truths
rather than a force of a God that we
must pay heed to so it's downplayed like
a lot of mental processes are but still
I think it's mindblowing that there is
such a dynamic within us I keep asking
myself how is this possible I want to
ask have you given any thought to this
and if so how is this conscience related
to
Buddhism well there is a kind of
conscience in Buddhism in fact there's
more than one kind of conscience in
Buddhist philosophy um like hii OTA hii

and OTA which may at one point have been

a kind

of like synonyms but HEI is it mainly

means like conscien ious like not

wanting to do anything bad OTA is more

like fear of evil consequences of your

actions so it's it's sort of

like uh you don't want the first he is

sort of like not wanting to do anything

bad and OTA is like not wanting to have

to deal with the consequences of having

done something bad and then there's

other kinds of conscience that are

unskillful like like a guilty conscience

you know regret remorse that's

um uh Kucha which is always bad karma

because if you're going to feel like

pangs of conscience you should feel it
before you do the deed and not after you
do the
deed so that's the difference between
wholesome conscience and UNH wholesome
conscience is the wholesome conscience
is preventing you from doing what you're
like inclined to do whereas the UNH
wholesome conscience is just beating you
up out afterwards after you've already
done what you shouldn't have
done so
anyways there is that and I should point
out that Buddhist ethics are not based
on some sort of heavenly decree there is
no capital G God like declaring what is

moral and immoral that in Buddhism what
is moral and immoral are based on human
psychology so if you tell a lie it's
going to make you feel at least a little
bit icky and that's what light detector
tests do it's like you know you're you
start to sweat a little more you know
the the the electrical conductivity of
your skin increases because you're
you're exuding
sweat um so it's like if you're mindful
enough if you're self-aware enough then
you can just tell if you do something
that is unethical like stealing or lying
or killing you can feel it in yourself
that you're harming yourself to some
degree that a certain amount of

sensitivity and like

wisdom is enough that you can actually

feel that in yourself but

also beyond that level is just the way

Karma

works and Karma is sort of based on the

same principle of you do a certain act

it's going to have a certain effect on

your mind and if you do a good act it's

going to have a positive effect on your

mind if you if you do a bad act um in

the long run at least it's going to have

a bad effect on your mind you might not

be fully aware of that bad effect I mean

it's sort of like the DRS in A Clockwork

Orange who are they're just laughing

aborus while they're beating people to
death and raping women and so forth um
but it's like the hooting this this uuus
laughter is just a way of kind of
drowning out their own
conscience so I consider that to be kind
of a profound aspect of the of the movie
A Clockwork Orange when they're they're
laughing in this aborus manner they're
sort of hooting like apes while they're
just perpetrating all these atrocities
that in a way is they're just kind of
drowning out their own conscience while
they're doing it just assuming that they
have a
conscience but uh yeah conscience has
different levels you know it's like

Freud talks about the super ego which is
largely just a cultural cultural um
I want to say cultural construct but
it's sort of an accumulation of these
cultural ideas about what you should and
shouldn't
do maybe some of it's just based on your
own personal experience but that's sort
of like at the level of I mean it
wouldn't be at the level of ego because
it's super ego but still it's at the
level of like conscious thinking
conscious thought processes and that's
not a very good kind of conscience
because I mean you can just have like
really screwed up ideas about morality

and they'll just kind of take over over
your conscience in that respect you know
some Jewish people might just be just
beating up beating themselves up with
remorse because they happen to eat some
apple pie that had lard in the pie
crust and then they didn't do it on
purpose but still I mean they just
ruined they just destroyed
themselves or then you got like Islamic
terrorists who think they're going to go
to heaven for blowing up innocent
people so that kind of conscious is not
very reliable but the deeper kind where
you're actually experiencing like the
karmic results of your actions just
immediately like if you're telling a lie

you just feel that it's it's not quite
right because it's having this adverse
effect on your own
personality that that isn't necessarily
all culturally constructed that's just
it's sort of a universal human
psychology that doing certain acts are
going to have certain adverse effects on
you just due to just the the makeup of
the human
mind deviating from truth or deviating
from fairness deviating from just Live
and Let Live you know if you're like
killing for fun then it's going to have
a certain effect on your mind even
though you may have such a a crude mind

that you're unaware of the deeper effect

that it's having on you that you you

just cannot see that you're really

harming Yourself by doing it but deep

down you

know and a capital G God really isn't

necessary for

that so let's see what is the

question okay have you given any

thoughts to this and I'd say yeah that's

the answer to the question is yes oh

wait and if so how is this conscience

related to in Buddhism well I already

pretty much described conscience and um

10,000 words or less so I think I'll

just move on to the next question here

this is from

Nicola and Nica says I have a feeling that you figured consciously or subconsciously something is wrong with Buddhism I think all philosophies failed to explain life existence according to my own Theory life existence is pure free will there is self and that easily explains determinism or no self I am determined to prove that this Theory can explain all reality I think it can be useful for scientific life discoveries this Theory actually ceases to be a theory anymore once you realize it's the only possible reality and figuring out or experiencing or just living our will which is determined is what makes life

interesting dual pleasure and suffering
I would like to hear your opinion well
he starts off saying that he has a
feeling that I figured consciously or
subconsciously something is wrong with
Buddhism well the only thing that I
figured that is wrong with Buddhism is
that has become corrupted over time but
I have no problem at all with like no
self for
example so all philosophies fail to
explain life existence or is he's got
life slash
existence and then according to his own
Theory life or existence is pure free
will so there is a self and so I mean it
seems like the onus would be on let's

see what's his name

Nicola that to prove that Free Will is

even possible because I mean logically

Free Will is not even possible not even

in theory like Albert Einstein who was

no idiot by the way I mean you can say

that he you know he stole some of his

ideas from other mathematicians or

whatever but he was no

dummy and he used to say that he had no

idea what people were talking about when

they would mention free will because

it's it's almost like a contradiction in

terms I mean going with logic something

has to have a cause or it doesn't have a

cause if it has a cause then it is

deterministic and not free but if it is
not have a cause I mean it's
random if something happens without a
cause anything can happen at any time
because there's no cause and
so I mean neither one of those is Free
Will I mean determinism isn't free will
so your your actions your decisions
having a cause I mean if your decisions
have a
cause then that's not free will because
it's the cause that is determining your
decision and if you choose between one
cause determining one decision or
another cause determining another
decision the that choice also has a
cause further back and you can't have an

infinite

regress so either your decisions your

actions have a cause or they don't and

if they don't have a cause again you're

left with random chance which would be

more like an epileptic seizure than what

anyone considers to Be Free Will so I

think that would be the first task of

anyone insisting on Free Will as like

the only explanation of life or

existence

is how is it even

possible strangely the Buddha rejects

both determinism and Free Will he

rejects determinism mainly because he he

has he rejected in the sutas the

philosophy of the aeacus which was
purely deterministic but also as I've
already mentioned in the anat
lakasut his second formal discourse
after his Enlightenment according to
tradition he was saying that with even
with regard to will or Chaya we cannot
say let it be this way let it not be
that way and have it reliably happen we
do not have complete control even over
our own volitions and partly I would say
is if you're
unenlightened then I mean you're
behaving out of knee-jerk reflex and
like
instinct and so you're you're not fully
awake you're not fully aware of what's

causing your decision

making and so a kind of automatic pilot

also know as karma just sort of takes

over and makes your decisions for

you but I really do not see most people

as exercising Free Will in any obvious

way because if you make a decision there

is a reason for that decision and the

reason is determining that

decision so let's see

here

um yeah don't think it's the only

possible reality I

mean the existence of a self I mean that

is uh it's it's even more problematic

for me than the existence of Free

Will although Free Will would require an
individual self not a universal self
like Brahman to the Hindus but or like
in the upanishad but it would be like an
individual self and anything that's
dividing the universe up into separate
parts
I mean I do not consider that to be
Ultimate
Reality that dividing the world up into
or dividing the cosmos up into
individual parts that is a psychological
Act of
perception that you have to use um
relations in order to separate this from
that you know there has to be a like
different from separating this from that

otherwise they just merge into the same thing you have to perceive a difference between two things things and that perception of a difference is just a mental state it's not existing out there somewhere like as I I've said before a chemist if he's analyzing a sample of matter into its component elements he's not going to be able to isolate pure same as or pure different from that that is just a relation that exists in your mind and without those relations the world of Multiplicity disappears
so I guess that's my opinion and uh this is turning into kind of a long one so I better just move on to the next question

and this is from the protos sudo Monk

and the protos sudo monk says you have

said that when you were a monk you would

follow the vinea as strictly as possible

and monks must follow many rules I don't

quite fully understand the purposes or

the purpose of these

rules my rationale was

these rules try to emulate the behavior

of an enlightened being sort of fake it

till you make it for example an

enlightened being would naturally never

lie and would never intentionally drink

alcohol but other rules the logic

doesn't follow they seem conditionally

cultured what I don't fully understand

is how arbitrary conventional rules can

affect your karma it's as if the rules
are karmically superior than your
intention in some why must monks keep
Vineyard
moreover why did you follow the rule so
strictly despite believing that Terra
Buddhism buikus and aans didn't have a
monopoly on enlightenment what's your
motivation reasoning so that's two
different questions we got to separate
these all right so the first question is
uh in some why must monks keep winning
well there is a kind
of um I think it's the vinea itself in
the in the books of winia where monks
are asking the Buddha why is it that the

Buddhism founded by previous Buddhist
didn't last very long and the Buddhist
said it's because previous Buddhist
didn't have ainia they didn't have
monastic rules so that everything just
kind of fell apart shortly after the the
charismatic enlightened founder of the
system died
so that's kind of borne out by um
in uh the Venia Chula waga it's got the
the history the the official history of
the first great Council after the Buddha
died and I mentioned this just recently
on a on a Q&A where there was after the
Buddha when in he he attained Parana he
died he left his body as they say in
India um a lot of the monks were

despondent you know the enlightened monks were Serene as usual but some of the unenlightened like the the junior monks and the monks that really had a lot of defilements that they couldn't really uh deal with in this fully in this life you know they were despondent they were grieving because their teacher had died and then this one monk who was an old monk who was ordained when he was old and therefore you know set in his ways and hard to teach and all that he's like saying you know what's the problem now the venerable Goa isn't here telling us do this don't do that all the time we can do whatever we please and mahak

kasapa the senior monk in the sa at that time heard that and was alarmed and so that was his reason for setting up the First Council in which they would agree upon a monastic code for monks to follow and some of the some of the monastic code is not really ethical in nature I mean it's not unethical for you to grow long hair it's not unethical for you to wear a robe that isn't cut and swn and dyed in certain ways it's not unethical to eat food after midday you know there's all these things that you follow but it it's sort of I had a uh an old Burmese monk tell me that the main purpose of winia is to be let's see to have a to live a life that is simple and

harmless and to some

degree um I mean some of the rules are

just there so that the S won't get a bad

reputation you know if you've got monks

with Bad Manners and so forth then it's

going to reflect badly on Buddhism in

general and so there are rules of

etiquette and just proper conduct that

aren't necessarily ethical but they are

social in nature just so the monks won't

be behaving like jerks and offending

people and so

forth but also there I mean there's so

many rules that to some degree vinia

just kind of makes your decisions for

you like there's just a a way of

cleaning your room there's a way of
going to the bathroom there's a way of
bathing there's all these rules with
regard to all this stuff and if you
follow all the rules strictly I mean
it's just sort of
like in a way it's helping you to
overcome your own personal preferences
from one thing and also it's just giving
you like this blameless simple way of
living and it's just sort of making your
decisions for you so there's that
also it's not all just imitating the
behavior of an enlightened
being although an enlightened being
would I mean the Buddha himself would
probably follow his own

rules but as I as I implied earlier I
mean it may be that the Buddha really
didn't set up all these rules that it
was at the First Council after the
Buddha died that they decided they'd
better set up some rules just to
establish some some structure and some
consistency and some stability to the
system because with no rules then
everyone does whatever they feel like
and you wind up with tantana and all
this kind of stuff although even the
tanist I assume have
rules so it adds structure to the system
is one of the main reasons for
it so let's see here I think I answered

the first part of this

question and I mean also like I I

mentioned a previous Q&A that nobody is

forcing a monk to be ordained except in

rare cases when some kid is sent to the

monastery by his parents and they just

want a monk in the family and that's

just the way it is Asian families can be

this way you know you're going to be a

monk whether you want to be or not or

you're going to be a doctor or an

engineer whether you want to be or not

because you if you don't you disgrace

our family that kind of

thing so um but for the most part

especially in the Buddhist time and in

the modern West nobody's forcing you to

be among mon and so nobody is forcing
you to take upon yourself all these
rules but if you are taking upon
yourself all these rules by becoming a
monk it's your duty to follow the
rules if you don't follow the rules
that's
cheating so there's there's different
ways of looking at why monks would
follow Venia rules eventually it got to
the point that some of the rules were
just so
counterproductive or just you know like
the classic example is there is a rule
saying that you're not allowed to open a
door with your bowl in your hand you

have to set the bowl down you can't just
set it on the floor either because
there's a different rule against that
because you might scuff off the black
coating on the bowl you have to set it
down on a stand or on a piece of cloth
or something then you open the door then
you pick your bowl up you walk through
the door then you have to set it down
again and then you close the door then
you pick the bowl back up and continue
on your way and meanwhile four or five
anop mosquitoes have just flown into
your cabin while you got the door open
going through this
ritual and the whole purpose for that
was to prevent monks from breaking their

clay Bowl against an opening door when
nowadays almost no Monks at all still
use clay bowls in Burma or like in
Thailand they're almost all stainless
steel you're not going to you're not
going to break your bull hitting it
against hitting it against the door in
fact you're not even going to scrape off
some of the black coating because I
think I think a lot of tongs don't even
bother to to coat or to like bake their
bowls until it's
black it's just like stainless steel
color so I mean eventually that was the
sort of thing that got me to start
breaking certain rules because it just

it just seemed

ridiculous so I think I answered that

question in various ways various

rambling random ways and so here's the

part see moreover why did you follow the

rule so strictly despite believing that

terava Buddhism didn't have a monopoly

on enlightenment what was your

motivation reasoning well I mean even

though terava Buddhism doesn't have a

monopoly on enlightenment in my opinion

still they've got their system I chose

to follow that system I considered

terava Buddhism to be the best system

that I was aware of if I wanted to

cultivate wisdom for example and so I

took upon myself the rules of terraa

Buddhism because I adopted terraa
Buddhism and I didn't want to cheat and
break the rules also part of my
reasoning when I was a junior monk was
you've got like the the tril not the
trilogy the Trinity of cila Samar PA
which is morality concentration and
wisdom and as a junior monk especially I
didn't think that my concentration was
very good I didn't consider my wisdom to
be adequate and there wasn't a whole
hell of a lot I could have done about it
you know immediately in those two cases
but the ca part the morality part that I
I could nail that if I really set my
heart to it and so I just set down the

the task of just following vinia as well
as I could and oh what was I going to
say there was oh I had this thing I was
going to say and now it just escaped me
it just went in one ear and out the
other well I mean in Buddhism okay I
remember what I was going to say that in
Buddhism I mean you can't have purity of
Mind unless you have purity of Sila and
one of the kinds of Sila is patima
samura which is restraint through
following the ptim Moka which would
apply to all the vine rules it's a kind
of self-restraint or or
somewhat so I mean there's numerous
reasons why an ordained monk would
follow the rules of his

order um just to become be ordained and
then just break the rules just decide
which rules you're going to follow and
which rules you're not going to follow I
mean that's it's it's going about it in
a very half-ass way it's it's a way
that's very common in the west now I
mean look at how Christians conduct
their lives you know they don't even
really think about it because it's just
been built into Christian Christianity
in the West for many decades that even
though Jesus says you can't get divorced
and remarry people just go ahead and do
it including like pastors and ministers
and so forth you know Bible says gather

not up your Treasures upon the Earth and all the Christians out there most of them are gathering up the treasures upon the
Earth and I really have never been that kind of a religious person if if the religion says you have to do it this way then you have to do it this way if I were born a Jew I'd have to be kosher or else I would just renounce being a Jew because being a half-ass Jew that's just flouting the Mosaic law I mean it's just kind of a dishonest life and being a monk who's just flouting the vinea rules that strikes me as as living a rather dishonest life also it's like a a hypocritical kind of

life so especially when I came to the
west and just following the vene rule
strictly was I mean it was almost a
nonstarter I mean there's very little
support for that that was one of the
reasons why I just stopped being a monk
I'd rather be just a half-ass lay person
than a half-ass
monk so I guess I answered that so I'm
just gonna move on to the next question
this is from TIG and Tig who asked me
about my favorite kind of soup in the
previous Q&A asked in this one one what
is burmes music
like and that's actually kind of an
interesting question I don't think I've

answered that before but there's
different kinds of Burmese music of
course just as there different kinds of
American music but I mean mainly it
would divide up into two
categories that is like classical
traditional purely Burmese music and
then you've got burmes kind of pop music
that largely imitates Western pop music
those are the two main kinds of
music and Western pop music I mean that
also could be divided up into different
kinds of like Burmese music imitating
Western pop music some of the the
oldfashioned Burmese pop music it's kind
of like the music you'd hear on Sesame
Street you know is sort of like

children's music it kind of sounds that way to a Westerner at least to this Westerner and then nevertheless they do have some fairly good like rock and roll it's it's just kind of sad to me to hear Burmese musicians rapping you know burmes hip hop you know they'll just imitate there's even like some some burmes country western music that you can hear blasted over Monastery loudspeakers out in the middle of nowhere I remember one time one of my earliest memories of Burma was it was one of the my first alms rounds after getting to chout syoya and so you have this long line of monks walking single

file on this crooked path just kind of
weaving through the the the fields like
the sesum fields wasn't enough rain for
Rice there and we walked past this Hut
it was just like a p like a thatched
roof Hut it had like this palm tree next
to it a tddy palm and about a third of
the way up the tddy Palm was this old
beat up speaker and playing on the
speaker was a Burmese version of Walk
Like an Egyptian by the Bangals so all
the monks are kind of walking quietly
single file
to but bur's classical music if you want
to get an idea of what bur's classical
music sounds like you take like a wooden
crate and you put some dishes and some

pots and pans and a couple of live geese
into this crate and you close it and
then you shake it vigorously like this
and that sounds like burmes classical
music and the the like the classical
dancing is you got this woman dressed
and like a pretty girl dressed in like
uh 18 like 19th century court attire
with like the long train like behind her
skirt and everything and then she just
alternately rolls around on the floor
and like gets up and jumps around in the
circle like flapping her her arms like
wings and and and just it's just kind of
it's hard for a Wester to appreciate
this kind

of performance

art but even though to me burmes

classical music always did sound like

the crate with the pots and pans and

dishes and two live geese shaken

vigorously I did have a Canadian monk

who had he had like a an Orchestra

conductor for a brother he was really

into music and he was telling me that

some of that Burmese classical m music

is really Advanced you know it gets up

into the level of like really Advanced

jazz music in the west like really

complex rhythms and so forth and it may

be that I just never trained my ear well

enough to pick out the the really

Advanced rhythms and so forth because it

really does just sound like a box full
of pots pans dishes and geese that are
just being shaken
vigorously so I'm just going to move on
to the next question here and this is
the last question it always takes me by
surprise by golly and this question is
from
Wayne and Wayne says is fourth Janna
nibana or simply a stepping stone to
nibana the way I understand it is Janna
has an important role in calming the
mind to temporarily suppress the five
hindrances for wisdom and insight to
arise once out of Janna one has a better
chance to contemplate the three marks of

existence anicha Dua and anata and through the practice of the Four Noble Truths not easy but one can work on distinguishing the three poisons of greed hate and delusion for the final attainment when the Buddha entered into Parana was he not in Forth J comments please and thank you well no fourth Janna is not the same as nibana J in general is referred to as temporary Liberation which is different from permanent Liberation which is Enlightenment so fourth of J it kind of gives you a little taste of what nibana would be like because it's like with fourth Janna especially you are completely stealing the mind your mind

is just like quiet and calm and clear
and you're not experiencing mental or
physical pleasure or pain that you
you're no longer thinking you no longer
really have a primary object of
meditation although that probably is not
Orthodox that last thing that I just
said but you're your mind is just like
clear like glass let's
say and it's temporary you know it has a
beginning and an end has a cause so it
is a conditioned State and that is that
reminds me one of my favorite sutas in
the majaya which is the Lesser discourse
on voidness where it gives it
instructions on for a monk how to

cultivate voidness or

sunata and first first step is you just

leave town you leave the village and you

go out into a forest and then that is

relatively more empty or void than all

the commotion going on in a town or

Village and then you start meditating on

you know some meditation object and you

get into deeper and deeper States you

get into Jan you get into you can master

all the four janas and then it even

mentions a state that's supposedly above

Janna which is the signless

concentration of mind which is the

animita CH

samadi which uh you know it's it's even

higher than fourth J but then the monk

when he comes out of that state he
realizes you know that had a beginning
and an end that was a conditioned state
with causes and so forth and so even the
highest possible meditative state is not
Enlightenment and then causes a kind of
Click you know it causes liberating
insight to
arise so uh after liberating insight has
arisen then even when your mind is still
thinking and everything then you're
still enlightened it doesn't go
away
so um I've tried to explain this in
various ways in the past um
where it's like consciousness is like

water and mental States like perceptions
are like the waves on the surface of
that water and so most people are just
stuck identifying with the waves the
forms rather than the
essence so they're just stuck at the
level of form you know there's they're
just completely caught up in
distinguishing waves and I prefer this
wave to that wave and this wave is way
better than that wave and just
it's all waves but if you cultivate a
flat calm through meditation which would
be like
Janna then it's much more difficult to
be distracted by the waves because there
aren't any waves or the waves just

become so subtle that it's easy not to
be distracted by them and then you see
the essence of water you start seeing it
as water so even when the waves come
back after you've done meditating then
you can still if if you if you're
enlightened
then it's still you're just not
distracted by the the forms that the
water is taking it's just
water and then so then you know the
waves can come back and have stormy seas
even and it doesn't matter because
you're no longer distracted by the forms
that the water is taking you're just
it's the essence of water so to speak

that's kind like you know an

analogy so I forgot even what the

question was here is fourth J nibana or

simply a stepping stone to nibana well

yeah it can be a stepping stone to

nibana not necessarily but it can be

some of the the old Buddhist texts do

consider like fourth jna to be the

jumping off point to Enlightenment

although it doesn't necessarily work

that way it may be that some people can

see the essence of water and not be

distracted by the waves even when

there's waves they don't have to

completely eliminate the waves

temporarily in in order to go beyond

this attachment to the to the forms and

just get to the the essence or substance
of the water and just see the water as
water so to
speak so it is true there's another
question here when the Buddha entered
into Parana was he not in fourth Janna
yeah that's like when the Buddha died in
the Maha
parasuta it has him going through the
very ious stages of Jah you know he goes
through first you know he goes into
first Jan and then second janah then
third Jon then fourth Jan then he goes
through the formless janas and then he
comes all the way back to First Jonah
and then he goes up to Fourth Jonah

again and then dies or attains Parana
while he's in fourth Jan and I've
considered that to be um a little bit of
evidence that the formless Jonas were
not original to the teachings of the
Buddha I did write an essay on that that
that probably isn't online anymore but
um I mean the tradition was that he died
in the highest Janna which at the time
was fourth Janna but then just the
Indian mind works this way where it's
it's continually trying to one up the
absolute like even some um even some
upanishadic texts appear to say well
there's a stage that's even higher than
Brahman you know it's par
Brahman so the Indians were always

trying trying to like come up with

something that's even higher than what

most people consider to be the

absolute just say just to say well you

think that's the absolute but we got

this one that's even

higher but I do think originally fourth

jna was the highest meditative State

possible but it's still it was a

meditative state it had a beginning and

an end it was conditioned and anything

that has a beginning also has an

end so um yeah it's very different

Janna is a like a samsaric state and

nibana is just transcending

samsara and that's the last question and

I'm done except for this the the outro
where I say the the usual stuff about uh
if you have any questions feel free to
ask them in the comments below or if you
have access to subscribe star you can
ask there if you have access to the
Discord server you can ask there and any
question that you think is fair game
that you think I might actually be able
to answer and I I'm fairly good at
answering questions about Buddhism about
philosophy in general about religion in
general although some religions like
bahai I know very little about but
Christianity I know quite a lot about
Buddhism of course I know quite a lot
about Hinduism I know something about

Etc and just

monasticism rules of monastic discipline

that sort of thing I know something

about Burma I lived there for 24 years

approximately

me personally I've I've been me

personally for 60 years at this

point so if you have any questions feel

free to ask and if you like the video

you might as well click the like button

and if you want to hear more of this

stuff then uh subscribing would be a

nice thing to do

also so I guess I guess that's it and so

I'm just going to uh stop recording now

by clicking on this

okay I think we're recording now is this working okay so welcome to question and answer number 94 I am your host P basa here I am and we got lots and lots of questions to answer and so without any uh long intros I should just wait into this leastwise I should be starting to to commence starting to answer questions so I will refrain the urge to ask myself a question like poasa would you please vent about traffic in South Carolina I'm resisting the urge because we already got lots of questions so the first one is from extremely rare bird possibly a Rosy eight spoon aate ah they're extremely rare most

ornithologists have never heard of

those so he asks

here it is said that an arant has full

control of his thoughts and feelings

does this mean an arant cannot feel

amazed astonished or

shocked well I don't know who says that

an arant has full control of his

thoughts and

feelings um yeah I mean like the the

anat luta which is supposedly according

to tradition the Buddha's second formal

discourse after his Enlightenment which

caused the full Enlightenment of his

first

disciples says that with regard to none

of the five Aggregates of which a human

being is composed do we have full

control and that would include saraka

which is

volition or also sonaka which is

perception also wakanda which is Fe

feelings so we don't have full control

even an Arun does not have full control

over his thoughts and

feelings so with regard to whether an

Arun can feel amazed astonished or

shocked or

not um I think at a superficial level he

can at least have the semblance of being

amazed astonished or shocked but the

superficial level is not like the main

level for an enlightened being you know

that's just sort of

just nature taking its course up at the

surface

somewhere so I mean it may be that you

know where he is centered like this the

like the heart of his

mentality there is no amazement or

astonishment or being shocked or

anything like that but at the surface

level he can appear to be that

way but even a fully enlightened being

does not have full control of his

thoughts and feelings because there is

no self that is one of the indications

that there is no

self and before I get much further with

this I would like to point out is if

Brian Ru is watching this I'm drinking out of your cup but this cup is not very big I mean this is this is good for like drinking espresso or something but if you're selling cups you should sell big ones not exactly complaining though this is just friendly advice friendly marketing advice if you will so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from

Elias and Elias says as I understand it the Buddhist concept of no view is it odds with people's Central need to believe in firmly anchored dogmas that give them stability in life is that why Buddha Goa rejected this concept well

the Buddhist concept of no view is it

odds with people s need to believe in

firmly anchored dogmas yes just like

having a view that you believe is really

what anchors you in some

sorrow so yeah it's like people need

some kind of anchor in Sam Sara I guess

just for the sake of stability so that

they're not just like shifting from one

version of reality to another which

would be a sign of insanity possibly uh

someone like that would be so insane by

worldly standards that they wouldn't

even be able to function in

society

so um yeah I agree with Elias that um

having no view no belief no perception

is at odds with Norm's Central need to
believe in firmly anchored dogmas that
give them stability in life um but then
he goes is that why Buddha Gosa rejected
this concept and for those of you who
are not well-versed in terava Buddhism
Buddha Goa is the main
commentator for the poly texts like he
wrote the the central commentary to
terraa Buddhism which is called the wisi
MAA and he also translated at least
translated and edited a number of other
commentaries and he was like fifth or
sixth Century of the Common Era I I
think so um no I don't think that's why
Buddha Goa rejected the concept I think

what happens is you've got the Buddha symbolically leading his sa of monks to a Cliff's Edge and then just jumping off and then you know some of his inspired immediate disciples also jumped off and and it was like a decreasing number of people jumping off this cliff into into emptiness into void but it's scary and So eventually people start backing away from that Cliff's Edge and giving like sophisticated philosophical reasons for backing away from the Cliff's Edge then every once in a while somebody else like nagar goes right back to the Cliff's Edge again and then again you have subsequent generations of this New Movement Like

nagar's New Movement first the Buddha's
New Movement they start kind of backing
away from it because jumping off of
cliffs is kind of
scary so I think it's just human nature
that you need something to cling to and
I guess um Elias's question would be a
yes answer if it's done subconsciously
and he's not deliberately doing this to
help stabilize Buddhist Society he's
doing it just because is so
counterintuitive to a samsaric mind that
you have to do away with samsaric
thinking it just doesn't make much sense
because to a samsaric mind that's all
there is really that's the only way of

of dealing with

reality

so I'm trying to understand the question

now I obviously haven't had enough

coffee today

so the Buddhist concept of no view is at

odds with people sinful need to believe

in firmly anchored dogmas and give them

stability in life yeah I agree with that

is that why Buddha goosa rejected this

concept yeah I think I already answered

it if if he did do it for that reason it

was subconsciously just because he was a

normit too he was a scholar Monk and

anyone who's lived in a a Buddhist

culture like Burma knows that scholar

monks have a reputation for not

practicing very

much you know they're not the ones out

under a tree meditating for all their

worth they're staying at some kushy

Monastery with with like fans and

servants and so forth writing books and

getting famous and it's it's like that

in other religions also it's not just

Buddhism so I guess I answered that

question and considering how many

questions I have to go through I think I

better uh just move on to Elias's second

question here and I don't fully

understand the second question which is

as f follows is it correct that

according to you an enlightened being

doesn't have a dualistic Viewpoint

anymore while according to traditional

terraa it still

has um I'm not exactly sure what he

means by a dualistic Viewpoint because

there's different meanings of dualism

like one meaning of dualism is that mind

and matter are both

real so and that and then that would be

like opposed for example to monism which

thinks there's only one ultimately real

substance rather than these two

ultimately real substances mind and

matter but another meaning of dualism

could just mean any kind of Multiplicity

you know like pluralism would be another

possible meaning of dualism and I'm not

sure what Elias has in mind here whether
he's referring to mind and matter both
being real or whether he's referring to
plurality being real
so um an enlightened
being to the extent that he even has a
Viewpoint I mean a Viewpoint is
perceptual and me just let's just go
with perceptual viewpoints just set
aside the possibility that it's possible
to have a Viewpoint that is not
perceptual okay so any Viewpoint is
going to be perceptual and perception
relies upon plurality so at least that
anyone who thinking is going to have to
accept plurality at least for the sake

of

thinking with regard to considering mind

and matter both to be ultimately real um

and enlightened being I mean they still

using like language and perceptions and

so forth I mean they still have a human

brain that still has the functions of a

human brain it's just they're not

identified with that

anymore

so they could like the surface level at

which they might appear to be shocked or

surprised they might also endorse like

cultural dogmas and so forth Just

because that's what humans do and I mean

they have to speak in a way that's going

to be intelligible and acceptable to the

people that are hearing them

talk

so see yeah they wouldn't really firmly

believe any kind of perceptual Viewpoint

even though they may appear to go along

with perceptual viewpoints at a surface

level but they're not mainly operating

at the surface worldly samsaric level

anymore so let's see here see if I

answered this question is it correct

that according to you an enlightened

being doesn't have a dualistic Viewpoint

anymore while according to traditional

terada or teraves it's still still

has

um yeah well I mean with regard to

pluralism that's I mean that that might have one answer and with regard to mind and matter both being ultimately real but still any kind of perceptual point of view is going to be largely a cultural construct and uh it's just going to be at a surface level whereas the enlightened mind the enlightened aspect of of an enlightened mind really is not concerned with dogmas or Traditions or anything like that it's just right here right now present moment and just experiencing experiencing experience in its totality without focusing on one aspect of that or creating figments or anything like

that so I hope I answered that question

because I'm moving on to the next one

also from Eliah

yes and Elias says can you describe your

worst time in Burma and it was a few

q&as back that someone was asking me

about my worst time in Burma and I had

difficulty coming up with something in

particular because I had lots of worst

times and there were like different

kinds of worst

times but the one that immediately came

to mind this time was the first time I

had malaria I had falum malaria and it

was kind of

strange I hadn't been in a malarial area

like an endemic malaria Zone in several
months I'd even gone to America and back
for the first time to visit my parents
since I went to Burma it had been
several months since I had been in a
place that was just thick with malaria
and then all of a sudden right before
Christmas I was baking my
bowl in order to make it black you know
that that black bowl back there and I
dropped it on on a rock it was it was
hot you know and like the PO holder
thingy slipped a little bit and I mean
you can't just touch it after you've had
it baking over a fire you know for
several minutes and it just slipped you
but the cloth pad slipped or something

it fell hit a rock got a dent in it
clang and the the black coating chipped
off and it was like Oh and it was right
then that I started feeling
sick and it's it's sort of like you know
in a moment of stress and and like
disorientation know sudden shock it just
kind of opened the open the door for
this feeling of sickness which I mean
was already latent there the whole time
all of a sudden just got its foot in the
door and I started feeling sick and at
first I didn't know what it was I'd
never had malaria before so I mean I was
just having like a back ache and a runny
nose and like like painful joint and a

killer headache and most of the symptoms
went away after the first day and I'm
thinking oh it's going away that's good
but then the next day after that it all
came back again and it was just the
killer headache never went away and it
took like three times for this to happen
where I've got like chills and fever and
and just feel feel horrible and then the
next day I I'm feeling better I'm
feeling kind of okay and then the next
day after that it's even even worse than
the first time and then the day after
that I'm feeling kind of better and then
finally like the third time this
happened I knew enough about malaria to
know that that you know it happens in

cycles and falum malaria which is the worst kind happens in 48 hour cycle so every two days you have the chills and the fever and so it was like Christmas day I was so sick I mean I was I had a fever it had to have been at least 105 degrees Fahrenheit

and it was like thinking my own thoughts it was sort of they were coming into my mind like muffled like I was vaguely listening to somebody else talking in another room like it was like muffled like coming through a wall or something and I couldn't meditate of course so all the closest I could come to meditating was just sitting there in my cave just

repeating over and over like a mantra

dooka

dooka and

it was that day just through random

chance or karmic karmic coincidence that

somebody showed up in a jeep because it

was it was 13 miles to the nearest town

at that time now there's a highway that

goes past the monastery but at that time

there was no there was no Highway it was

dirt roads 13 miles of dirt roads that

would take a Jeep two hours or at least

an hour and a half to get there and

there was no Monastery car or anything

visitors were not very common and then

all of a sudden the day that I finally

realized I've got malaria and just so

sick that I could hardly do anything a
Jeep shows up and I go out and say Merry
Christmas I have malaria because it was
Christmas day so they just load me into
the Jeep and take me to the the one dwin
Hospital a hospital with cockroaches and
bed bugs and just a kind of a scary
latrine that patients had to use if they
were well enough to use a
latrine so that was one of my worst
times was the first time I had malaria
the second time I had malaria I didn't
get quite as sick but I had 105 degree
fever that time so I can take some pride
in bring being brain damaged from my
from my brain cooking with malarial

fever but um if you want to know about more of my worst times you can try to locate a Q&A like maybe three or four or five q&as ago where I I gave a number of possible examples more of like the the spiritual worst time and then the physical worst time which was the first time I had
malaria and just a general a general diverse array of worst
times but I've got so many questions to answer that I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from mitraa Buddha and mraa Buddha I think was responding to U I think it was in the previous Q&A I'm talking about how goab Buddha

died and so mitraa Buddha

says the Buddha himself died from being

poisoned did he

not and according to

tradition the Buddha's Last Meal which

if I remember correct correctly was

offered to him by a metal Smith named

chunda um it was called what he what the

Buddha ate was called sukur madawa which

um in PO is usually interpreted to mean

tender pork although by the time

Mahayana came along Buddhists were

pretty much vegetarian the culture had

changed and so they didn't want to

believe that the Buddha ate meat even

though he clearly I mean monks in

general clearly ate meat according to
the the ancient rules of monastic
discipline you can see see it there in
black and white but they didn't want to
believe that he8 meat so they changed it
to something tender that pigs like like
mushrooms and so they switched it over
to the Buddha dying from eating
mushrooms and
presumably poisonous mushrooms maybe
chuno the metal Smith was not very good
at micology he didn't have one of those
field guides handy and he he picked the
wrong kind of mus mushroom
and cooked them up and the Buddha died
from eating eating
that but I mean there's no implication

in the texts that it was done
deliberately that's for starters I mean
junda was not a murderer he wasn't
trying to poison the Buddha it was an
honest
mistake but I mean it could just be a
coincidence that the Buddha ate this
certain meal and then died afterwards
partly I mean he was he was an old man
and it could be that he had this
disorder that I mentioned in the
previous Q&A where his digestive system
was starting to uh degenerate and it's
it's a common ailment I well it's not
common but it happens to elderly people
under certain conditions I suppose um

and so some Modern Scholars are
hypothesizing that that the symptoms
described in the text like you know
severe abdominal pain and and bloody
diarrhea and so forth um are symptomatic
of this this disease of elderly people
that's caused by a degeneration of the
of the intestinal
tract so that's sort of a modern
hypothesis I mean we can't really know
for sure all we know according to the
text the Buddha ate this
suara and then he got very sick
afterwards and died it is true that
according to the text he told chunda I
think just take this don't feed it to
anybody else just take it and like throw

it out into a river or something and
when when it got thrown into the water
it just started hissing and bubbling you
know it's like something really gnarly
was going on but uh ordinary poison
isn't going to cause the water to behave
in a in sort of a paranormal way so that
could just be like a an embellishment on
the story you know adding a little
mythology to the
story either that or it was just you
know the Buddha's last meal is something
that is you know it's just uh
so uh
inauspicious that it just has like this
negative Juju that nobody else should

eat this stuff I mean that's one way of interpreting it I guess so we don't know for sure that the Buddha died from being poisoned it is kind of implied in the text you know the Buddha ate this and then got sick and then he told he he he announced essentially you know nobody else should eat this stuff that I just ate but it's hard to know exactly and I do think it's plausible that you know he was just very old at the time and he had been living a very rough life and his body was just breaking down and a very old person I mean all they can they can just eat ice cream or something and it can just mess them
up so it may be that he just ate too

rich of a meal at his age you know when
he was in a sort of a vulnerable state
due to maybe other factors or whatever
and it just finished him
off but we don't really know for
sure so I'm just going to move on to the
next question which is from
mooners and mooners says if pure
objectivity or objective reality
doesn't exist how can differences
between men and women exist so this also
is sort of a followup to something I
said on in the previous Q&A where I'm
saying that pure objectivity does not
exist that it's it's somewhat of a
myth but there's still you can be more

objective or less objective you know

sort of like the the old stereotype the

Ageless Timeless stereotype that men

tend to be more objective than women

with women tend to be more subjective

than

men and and I mean this I mean

statistically there may be some truth to

that and based on my own experience with

men and women it would seem that men do

tend on average to be somewhat more

objective and women to be somewhat more

subjective you know it's

like um a long time ago when I was in

college I would just be singing some

song and and it it was like I wasn't

really applying the lyrics to us or to

her or any anything like that it's just
that it's just a catchy song you know
you like the like The Melody of it you
like the beat and all that and it just
happens to have these lyrics that maybe
are talking about like a love affair on
the rocks or something and like the
girlfriend would just like apply that to
herself it's like you know why are you
singing that it's like I just like this
song it's all so I mean that does happen
but I'm getting back to the to to the
question here with all due respect to
mooners if pure objectivity or objective
reality doesn't exist how can
differences between men and women exist

okay so you've got postmodernism
nowadays which has been incorporated
into progressivism into this globalist
leftism in general
and they're trying to claim that not
only is there no such thing as objective
reality but they want they take it one
step farther and say that um truth is
just a cultural construct that our
objective reality is just a cultural
construct which is just absurd I mean
it's just insane to believe that you
know that all of all of what we consider
to be true is just a cultural construct
like I don't think there has ever been a
culture that believes that Things fall
up instead of

down or

example

so I do think that physical reality does

not exist and so we are living in a kind

of mental construct but because we are

all human the way we perceive our

surroundings are more similar than

different you know it's like just the

way we are built or through some sort of

subconscious agreement or some whatever

you know we agree that Things fall down

instead of up for example and science

still has validity at least with regard

to

describing the phenomena that we

perceive supposedly out there in an

external

universe

so there pretty obviously is for example

a difference between men and women there

are progressives who will say the

difference between men and women is

purely a social construct which is just

insane

but that's people can believe anything I

mean

just really I mean my experience in life

and my reading of history and so forth

indicates that people can believe

anything no matter how absurd or un

unlikely it is

implausible I mean a lot of people just

don't care if everyone around them is

believing it by golly they're going to
believe it too if only to just fit in
and because of like the the human herd
Instinct where you just follow along
with what everybody else is
doing
so because our perception of reality is
similar enough that we're all living in
the same version of reality more or less
you know we can seem to interact with
each other because we're living in
pretty much the same version of reality
like a ghost assuming that ghosts exists
there could be one in the room right
here right now I can't see the ghost the
ghost can't even see me and because our

perception of reality is so different

that we're not in the same version of

reality so we are living in a version of

reality in which empirically men and

women do

differ I mean even if there are no such

thing as Chron chromosomes we still have

the conventional truth that there are

chromosomes and that a biological male

in every nucleated cell has an X and A Y

in their chromosomes whereas a female

has in every nucleated cell two

x's

so it's uh it's a matter of even though

there isn't pure 100% objectivity

there's always going to be a certain

certain amount of subjectivity involved

that uh even so there is some degree of objectivity like I think it's the the sin Ming is it sinin yeah sinin Ming by the third patriarch the third Chinese patriarch of Chan says the subject is a subject for the object the object is an object for the subject so you can't have pure objectivity there's always going to be subject and object but I mean there can be more emphasis on objectivity or more emphasis on subjectivity so I hope I answered that question in a very roundabout Meandering kind of way because I'm moving on to the next question which is from scolin or skaden who is one of the few people that

asks questions on bitshoot so good for
him and I uh see what the word I endorse
his support of alternative
platforms and scolin
says you mention the Buddhist thoughts
on Free Will during timestamp 711 of the
last Q&A how does it apply to love love
doesn't seem to just pour out like a
spigot because you decide it to it seems
as long as you perceive that someone
holds certain values you can't help but
fall for them love seems pretty
misunderstood and even more so when
people try to judge it by their metrics
some people try to be objective about it
but I've never heard of a titty man
who'd call up Guinness world records

trying to scr up a date hardcore
materialists try to rationalize it by
saying love is just a chemical though
that seems more of a successful ad
marketing slogan than an actual answer
considering the crosscorrelation between
people taking the personality altering
medications which sponsor the news and
the people who become the
news so there is a question mark way up
at the top here so see you mentioned the
Buddha's thoughts on Free Will during
time stamp 71 how does it apply to love
well I in the previous Q&A I did point
out that
logically Free Will is an impossibility

it's just meaningless

so how does it apply to

love that's it's kind of a tricky

question because first of all not

everybody agrees on the same definition

of love there's different kinds of love

there's romantic love which is

essentially a human mating Instinct

that's driven by you know the wiring of

our brain and like hormones and so forth

but you've got also like the spiritual

love you know when the Bible says God is

love he's not talk they're not talking

about God being like a human mating

Instinct God is not an

emotion so at the spiritual level

according to me not according to

Orthodox terraa or any such thing but my
understanding of Love at the spiritual
level like the highest form of love is
acceptance that you're like knocking
down at least part of Pink Floyd's wall
and for those of you who are too young
to know what Pink Floyd's wall is I pity
you it's an excellent
album
anyway it's like you're breaking down
the barrier between self and other it's
just acceptance at to some degree you're
like merging with somebody else to some
degree and forming like a third entity
not you not the other person but a kind
of us and if you perfect life

that means Pink Floyd's wall is gone and you no longer distinguish yourself from any other being in the universe it's just complete Universal love which I assume is what the Bible is referring to the New Testament of the Bible the Old Testament doesn't doesn't advance that far so you could say that spiritual love is such a fundamental thing I mean the Perfection of Love is essentially enlightenment

um I think I just uh got so worked up that I forgot the first part of that sentence that just came out of my own mouth so yeah I mean like at the highest level love is not a volutional act but at the lower levels like the human

mating Instinct level or the paternal

Instinct level or love for one's dog or

love for one's favorite golf club or

whatever

I mean there is some of the spiritual

aspect of love in there I mean

acceptance rejection would be hate just

get it away from

me but um I mean even that if there's no

free will then it can be volitional

still sort of but you don't have control

over the volition it just

happens nature taking its

course so I guess I answered that

question

sort of probably 5% of the rambling that

came out of my mouth was actually
answering the question but the answer
was in there so I'm just going to move
on to Skol adin's second question here
also on the topic of Love Is Love a
question that Society is trying to
answer or a question perpetually asked
to occupy their time till the clock runs
out because they're afraid of the answer
um I don't think love really is much of
a question I don't think most most
people are trying to figure out what
love is most people think they already
know it and most people really don't
know what love is that's why there's so
many explanations and definitions of
Love including mine I mean most people

think love is an

emotion but spiritual love like the

highest level of love is not an emotion

I mean it's such a powerful thing that

it can trigger

emotions But ultimately the essence of

love is not an emotion except at the

crude level of like the mating instincts

and so

forth so it's sort of like the question

of how to be

happy Western Society just humans in

general they don't really question that

they just assume that the way to be

happy is to get what you

want you start off by being rich or

whatever and and you just get what you
want and that'll make you happy but
according to Buddhism that is just kind
of
delusional so most people likewise think
they know what love is already which is
this emotion but that doesn't make them
happy and it's
just you can't really perfect it very I
mean you can't perfect
it because I mean so long as love is a
kind of hormone High then I mean it's
it's going to have a beginning beginning
and an end and then the hormone High
ends and this person that you're madly
in love with all of a sudden is just
irritates the hell out of

you and as eart TOA points out in his

famous book The Power of Now genuine

love cannot turn into hate if you think

you love somebody and then you start

hating them afterwards I mean it was

never really love to begin with it

certainly wasn't true love or like pure

love because I mean pure love doesn't

turn into hate it has no

opposite so I might have just

contradicted

myself anyways

see yeah I think most people really

don't don't ask or don't ask the

question they don't really wonder what

love is they think they already know and

they don't you know like rock and roll
lyrics lots and lots of singing about
love when really it's singing about just
sexual attraction and just a kind of
emotional bonding my gal is red hot your
gal ain't diddly
squat
so I guess I answered that
question yeah I don't think love really
is much of a question unless you're for
for like the the minority of weird
people who really try to understand
words that they use like or just try to
understand how to be happy without just
accepting a spiritually bankrupt answer
to that question and then just spending
the rest of their life enslaved to

trying

to become Happy by following this

delusional idea of what happiness is all

about and it's the same with love for

most

people so I guess I answered that

question I'm moving on to scadden's

thirdd

question which is Could you teach me to

say I love you in Burmese but please

don't look at me when you say it like

like

this um yeah I know how to say it in

Burmese but it would be like the the

like the dictionary way of saying it

like according to Burmese grammar but

it's not necessarily the way a real

Burmese person would say it's like um in

Spanish if you just follow Spanish

grammar to say I like would be

yogusto but that's not how you say I

like in Spanish it's Meo stop and it

might be the same kind of thing in

Burmese so I might be I mean

grammatically it'll be correct but it

may not be what two Burmese people who

love each other would be saying to each

other and the burmes are not very like

emotionally demonstrative

anyway but I love you and be would be

like ningo chit I look Mingo chit day

like chit is love chit day is to love n

is me informally and Min is you

informally and the go just signifies the

object of the

sentence

soing but again that might not be what

burmes villagers in their alone in their

Hut together are saying to each

other so I'm just going to move on to

the next

question and this is from

Gaz and Gaz says are you familiar with

the venerable aan paa wo I see a noble

spirit in him and um first of all I'm

really not very well versed with regard

to taii aon's and the fact that he's

called aan Pao P wo uh indicates that he

is in a Thai Tradition at least if not

ethnically Thai at least ordain in a tii

tradition or just in a tii tradition

and I used to

know a monk who had about the same

seniority as me name uh his name was

venerable p p woodo but I think that was

spelled with a u instead of an A so

instead of wo it was

wudo and he was Chinese

Malaysian um and I I don't know if Gaz

here is referring to him or not but he

was the the one whose name comes closest

to PA woodo

um

and yeah I have no idea what became of

him I I met him at

pandama many years ago and I

occasionally come across him because
we're both living in in Burma and both
non Burmese monks and we just
occasionally come across each other but
uh and he did seem intelligent and wise
I have to admit he was a serious monk
but I have no idea if Gaz is referring
to the same monk here so anyways his
second question which is a followup on
the first question is a Halo appeared
around the Sun during his cremation
there are very nice photos of it on the
forest dhama site they gave a good
testimonial to his life there is also
footage of his cremation on YouTube do
you think the Halo that appeared was

merely a coincidence or was it a Divine
tribute though it was certainly a nice
Celestial salute to him
regardless um I mean it could have been
I mean to say that it was merely a
coincidence is not necessarily the case
because the people there have Karma and
your karma is conditioning your reality
so it could have been just neither of
the above with regard to the two options
here that it could have been the karma
of his devotees who are like really
charged up with veneration for him
because he had died and was soon to be
cremated or maybe was in the act of
being creem remated and then it was
their karma that helped to manifest a

halo around the

Sun it reminds me of uh When neim karoli

Baba died at his cremation that all of a

sudden there was this Windstorm that was

just blowing stuff down um right right

during the ceremony and uh you know

people just accepted that as another

kind of a like

Divine indication of the greatness of NE

Koli Baba and I mean there could be some

of that but it's really hard to

say I'm not really familiar with the uh

the events I didn't watch the Youtube

video so yeah it's really hard to say

with regard to stuff like this but I

mean certainly it was conditioned by the

karma of the people who were
present and so if it happened it it was
the karma of the people present who who
allowed it to happen in addition to
maybe Davis who are deliberately making
this sign out of respect for him or you
can say just material coincidence or
whatever so you know some questions like
this it's it's hard to say exactly
because nobody has all the data I don't
know if anybody could really know for
sure what exactly was the main cause for
a Halo visible around the sun when a
certain great monk was cremated I mean
if it was like that just all over the
hemisphere of the Earth where people are
able to see the sun then it might be

just a solar flare or

something so I think I'll just move on

next question here this is this is also

from Gaz do you believe in the dvas as a

skillful assumption something like

Pascal's wager might make more sense

when applied to the old

gods um I mean a belief in the Davis can

be skillful or unskillful depending on

the mental states of the person

believing in

them so I mean this is a more subtle

form of the the more usual kind of

questions like is such and such an act

moral or immoral when really the outward

Act is neither moral nor immoral it's

morally neutral it's the mental states
that accomp the act and it's the same
way with here with guardo belief in the
deavas um whether it is skillful or
unskillful uhu depends on the person
person's mental
States um but just
philosophically I do consider this
universe to be infinite and so and if we
are the best this universe has to offer
this universe has got some
problems but uh in an infinite Universe
there's there's going to be an infinite
number of beings that are more advanced
than us and just going with Buddhist
definitions Buddhist cosmology they
would have to be dvas if they're at a

higher plane of existence than us like
they live longer they they have more
intelligence they have more psychic
power and so forth they would be called
dvas even though they might have
tentacles and breed liquid methane or
something so I do believe that there are
beings higher than us in this universe
in fact there may be beings higher than
us on this planet that we just can't
see like for example there have been
times I've been outside and an ant will
just crawl across my Barefoot and just
keep going it has no no concept
whatsoever that it was just in immediate
contact with a being much more advanced

than them some of you might think I'm
just flattering myself and thinking that
I'm much more Advan an than an ant
but be that as it may the ant was just
completely clueless just oblivious to
the fact that it just crossed over a
being was in immediate contact with a
being that was just orders of magnitude
Beyond them and it's because the ant is
too stupid to realize this and it could
be the same way with us we could be in
contact with much higher beings right
here on this planet and just be clueless
that fact although I've gone beyond the
bounds of this question but it just
seems like a sensible reasonable
hypothesis likely likely to be

true almost certain to be true that

there are higher beings in this universe

small G

Gods so I mean if you want to go with

something like Pascal's wager or

something um

you can I suppose although from a

Buddhist point of view the Davis really

don't have much power over us the only

Power they have over us is allowed by

our own Karma they're not sending us to

heaven or hell we are sending ourselves

to heaven or hell for

example

so yeah I mean the main question here is

do I believe in the Davis as a skillful

assumption and it can be skillful or
unskillful depending on your attitude
depending on your accompanying mental
States your reasons for believing it for
example but ultimately all beliefs are
samsaric perceptual and delusional which
is why the ATA waga for example the
Buddha in the ATA waga recommends that
you shouldn't believe anything which
isn't just skepticism it's just going
Beyond this mental mumbo jumbo of
beliefs and attitudes and so forth and
getting to the actual reality that
resides under all that
stuff
so I guess I answered that question so
I'm moving on to the next question which

is from covac and CAD Zona and I just
learned today that the N
covac means something like black
stallion So Co action CAD Zina says when
you read maimin Kaa number 24 which uh
if I remember correctly it's the rata
wiita suta the the relay
chariots discourse on the relay chariots
but I I'll I'll start over coac and sead
Z says when you read majaya number 24 it
is an expansion of the text from the ATA
waga talking about purity being defined
in terms of various things maim Naya 24
is said by GC pond today to be an early
text because the details of the
technology in it cannot have been

thought up by later monks after the Buddhist time and were a product of the time it says that if you still need all of it says that you still need all of these things to become enlightened but each thing is only important for developing the subsequent factor in a kind of step-by-step process it doesn't seem to be the Krishna m style quote you can only open the window but can't make the window come in unquote kind of teaching to me and then he's got a quote from the suta I think if the blessed one had described Purity in terms of virtue as total unbinding through lack of clinging my friend then he would have defined something still accompanied by

clinging as total unbinding through lack of clinging if he had described Purity in terms of Mind view the overcoming of perplexity knowledge and vision of what is and is not the path knowledge and vision of the way knowledge and vision as total unbinding through lack of clinging then he would have defined something still accompanied by clinging as total unbinding through lack of clinging but if total unbinding through lack of clinging were apart from these qualities then a run-ofthe-mill person would be totally Unbound in as much as a run-of-the-mill person is apart from these qualities

unquote and then SE of action CAD zenina
continues here and from here it goes on
to describe what it actually means
thoughts on Thea and how it relates to
the passage from the ATA waga
well I have read the
suta and it's a relatively well-known
suta it's it's brought up in suppor of
arguments and so forth by Buddhist you
know according to the discourse on the
relay chariots you know etc
etc um one thing about it that is
noteworthy is it's not even attributed
to the Buddha himself it's attributed to
two arahan monks sorrya and I can't
remember the name of the other one so
they're just talking amongst themselves

and how Ananda knew they were talking about this they were alone out in the woods somewhere maybe one of them went and told Ananda so that he could recite it at the first counsil or some such but as a general rule if auta is not even attributed to the Buddha himself that's kind of a a yellow light not necessarily meaning that it it didn't happen but it's kind of it's probably less likely to be a genuine suta than one that's actually attributed to the Buddha himself but that's just neither here nor there I guess and it's not really an expansion on the text from the ATA waga like for example I assume cak CAD zida

is referring to something like the
mandia sua of the ATA waga where the
Buddha is saying it's not from what is
not from what is seen not from what is
heard you know not from knowledge not
from morality and observances do you get
Purity but it's not from the absence of
those either which is kind of a a
you know it's sort of a
paradox but this is uh it's like seven
stages in
development and uh so it'd be like uh
purity of virtue purity of morals would
be the first step then let's
see uh See purity of purity of mind I
think is is the next one and I mean
purity of mind I mean in a way I mean if

you look at it in a certain way then
you're that's already Enlightenment it
seems to me or at least it would be for
the jna that's just call it four J and
then uh so it seems like purity of mind
would be uh more advanced than the mere
overcoming of perplexity and this
translation is obviously from aan tanro
he's so idiosyncratic in his trans
ations that you can tell an aan tanero
translation just by reading
it um yeah purity of mind is considered
to be less advanced than knowledge of
what is and is not the
path um yeah I think this is there is a
lot of like Dogma built into this like

the the seven stages that they like a
sequential progress It's really alien to
what the ATA waga
teaches seems to me
um and then he he he points out um Co
action CAD zna points out that according
to GC pay in this book right here
studies and origins of Buddhism which I
highly recommend to any any student of
early Buddhism that GC Pond considers
this to be an old text because his main
reasoning is that there is a a simile
involved in this suta in which um it's
talking about King bimis Sara if he has
urgent business at some distance he's
going to get in a relay Chariot he's
going to make it like post horses like

in the Roman Empire or up in the modern times you'd have uh post horses or stage coaches you know theyd go by stages you ride your horse or your chariot in this case till you get to a certain station that's maybe 30 miles down the road 20 miles something like that and then you get fresh horses so that you can keep going fast you know you it's it's like your horses don't get all worn out you just get to this station where you can swap horses and then you keep going with fresh horses and then you know every 25 miles or so you swap out

horses and GC Pond is saying that later generations of monks would not have

known that bimbisara king bimbisara of kosola would have done this but I mean technology really did not Advance all that much until you get up into modern times

know it's like technology stayed pretty much the same for a long time and so any King in ancient times probably would have done the same stuff so I really don't think that that's really a persuasive argument plus there's still the sort of the the little bit of a caution sign not necessarily a warning sign but a caution sign in that the suta is not even attributed to the Buddha himself

so um the end here of the question is

thoughts on the sua which I've pretty
much just elaborated and how it relates
to the passage from Thea waga well
passage from the ATA waga is pretty much
in the form of a Coan it's really not
implying this suta it's not saying that
you have to go through these things in
some kind of sequential like a
sequence in order to become enlightened
that I mean there's nothing like that in
the Ana waga that that I can recall and
anyway
so are we recording yeah I think we are
that's
good and still have like PTSD from my
previous recording software that would

say that it was recording and then not

be

recording so I guess I answered that

question so I'm GNA move on to SEO

action CAD Z's next question here the

sutas teach that whether you are

beautiful or ugly rich or poor Etc is a

result of karma given that white

westerners are considered the best

looking people on Earth and have the

richest countries does that mean white

westerners have the best karma from past

lives on average well that's

racist H but uh getting a little more

serious here yeah it is true that I mean

the life that you're born into like the

culture you're born into the the

ethnicity that you're born into the body
and mind that you are born into is
conditioned by your
karma and so we could say that people in
a prosperous developed country living
prosperous developed lives are going to
have better karma in certain respects
certain superficial respects than people
living under a military dictatorship in
like an impoverished Nation but I have
considered like Burma for example Burma
is like a fourth world Nation you know
it's it's hardly even a third world
nation and you know most of the time
like the whole time I was living there
it was under a brutal and incompetent

military

dictatorship which it is

today but it was a mixed blessing

because the Burmese live in the

most Buddhist country on Earth probably

and you know there is some truth to what

the the new test of the Bible says you

cannot serve both God and Mammon and the

Burmese as a general rule don't have

much Mammon to serve and so it's much

easier for them to serve God or Dharma

in this case because they're not

Christians for the most

part so to be a Burmese villager is a

mixed blessing I mean they're living in

superficial poverty economic

poverty and you know a certain amount of

discomfort and so forth but I mean they
are blessed in living in one of the few
remaining wisdom cultures on this planet
so they're just getting their good karma
in a different
way and in some ways they're better off
than we are because you're better off
with Dharma living in superficial
poverty but being stoic and accepting
that poverty you know because most
people for the his for the history of
the world have not lived in the kind of
luxury that we are living in in the west
right now a person living on welfare in
America is living in a higher standard
of living than most people that have

ever lived on this

planet which is kind of

ironic but uh let's see

here yeah it's all conditioned by Karma

so certain kinds of of karma yeah I mean

we do have a certain kind of karma

that's better than somebody living

in we don't need to we don't need to

name any specific third world holes

but there you are or I mean we've got

good karma in that we're not living in a

country that's that's like torn by War

yet you know not lately we haven't had

any real wars on American soil since the

Civil War in the

1860s I mean the Japanese invaded the

uan island

in World War II but nobody lived on the

illusion Islands

anyway maybe a few alyut some

fishermen so yeah I mean it is our Good

Karma to be born into a relatively good

system even though it's it's in Decline

Now sort of like the ancient Roman

Empire was in Decline for quite a long

time before it finally collapsed and so

we're in the the long slow decline phase

apparently we in the the good times

create weak men weak men create bad

times it's sort of like the cusp there

that's that's where we're at right

now excuse

me

so yeah I guess I answered that question
so I'm just going to move on to seac
inad zina's next question here I've
noticed the translations of Mahayana
text and aamas are much better done and
clearer in their meaning than the transl
ations from any I've come across from
the terraa tradition have you noticed
such a trend yeah I've kind of noticed
that and for those of you who are not
like well versed in Buddhist technology
the agamas are they're like the early
texts that are as they are found in
Mahayana Traditions so you got the the
dean nikaya in the poly Tex it's the dag
dag in uh like Sanskrit Buddhist texts
in which have been incorporated into

Mahayana

Buddhism

so excuse me I just got distracted by

what was possibly a lizard a Carolina

anal lizard we've got one that lives on

our front porch a lot of the time it's

really cool anyway getting back to this

question um why are Mahayana texts

translated into English in a more easily

understood with with

in an

easier I need to start over why are

mahayan attacks often translated in a

style that is easy to understand and

just has a more better flow to it and

there are a few reasons for that one is

that Mahayana

texts came later on in the history of

Indian Buddhism that Mahayana Believe It

or Not arose hundreds of years after the

time of the Buddha and so the were

written down after literacy and writing

had become commonplace in India so the

they the style of the sua is not

designed to make it easier to memorize

with lots of just dry

repetition so that's one reason why

Mahayana Texs are just have a better

flow to them and it's just easier to

absorb the information because the

terraa poly Texs are very repetitive to

make it easier to memorize them by heart

because texts weren't written down as a

general rule in those days but another reason that I can think of is that most of these Mahayana texts are translated from Chinese into English as opposed to like the original procrit into English and so Chinese is it's a different kind of language than like an Indo-European language it's more intuitive it's more abbreviated kind of and so you can't really translate it literally like really literally word for word translating from Chinese doesn't work that way you've got to fill in lots of blanks and so you can make you can smooth it out it can be a relatively accurate translation but I mean

nevertheless it's not like a literal

word for word translation because it has

to be smoothed out to make it into some

kind of comprehensible

English whereas

poly good trans ators are going to try

to translate it literally what it

actually says which is going to make it

more stilted and to some degree less

easy to understand and uh I'm starting

to getting lines on my

face because the sun is shining through

the blinds but it's not bad enough yet

that I actually have to get up from my

seat to suffer the Oreal of standing

up so those are two reasons that come

off come off the top of my head as to

why Mahayana texts tend to be easier to understand and have just a better smoother style to them first because they were composed after writing had been invented or after writing had become mainstream and so you didn't have to make it very repetitive in a very dry manner to so that monks could memorize it and secondly most of these texts are translated from an Asian language like Chinese that you can't really do a literal translation so you can kind of paraphrase a little bit in order to um make it sound like good English so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from

KitKat and KitKat says could you discuss your opinions on how there is no four stages to Enlightenment or Aran ship I recall hearing from your q&as how there is some disputes in the translated text and you believe there is only sopana and arahan ship forgive me if I am misunderstanding or mishearing you yeah this is a common theme because anytime people ask me a question about you know can soapas do this or you know what about you know anagami or know the four stages of sainthood the four stages of Aria

Hood um I give pretty much the same spiel about how I do think that it was a later development that the Buddha

himself probably did not teach four
stages of
sainthood or ARA Hood in Buddhism and
there are two main arguments for this
the first argument is what I picked up
from this book again studies in the
origins of Buddhism by GC Pond where he
points out that of these four stages
you've got the lowest stage is sodana or
stream entry then you've got sakagami
which means once returner which means
you're going to be reborn as a human a
maximum of one more time before you
become enlightened and just get out of
Sam SAR then you've got the anagami who
is a non-r returner which means they're

going to be reborn in a very high heaven
realm for their last life and then
they're going to get enlightened in this
very high heaven realm and then finally
you've got the highest stage which is
the
arant which I mean they don't they don't
get reborn at
all and of these four stages the first
or soda apparently has a different
meaning in the oldest texts like for
example in the poty mocha rules you've
got an obscure group of four rules that
are almost impossible to break nowadays
in modern times they're called the PTI
desia rules one of them is for a monk to
live in excessive dependence on a family

of soda us so the indication here is
it's hardly likely that a whole family
is going to be soda us
um it's more likely or at least it's
unlikely a whole family is going to be
sold upon us um at the extent of they've
all had like a glimpse of nibana they're
all going to have seven more rebirths
maximum they they're all Saints
essentially you know even even the kids
you know these householders living this
worldly life theyve all become Saints
they've all had the glimpse of nibana
and so forth um according to the
commentarial tradition the city of
sawati in India it was mostly Aras it

was mostly soda ponas millions and
millions of them in this one city which
also seems kind of far-fetched with
regard to sakagami GC Pond points out
that there's no mention of them in texts
that otherwise show indications of being
very old early texts with regard to
anagami GC Pond points out that in
there's one um one group of texts called
Ida an obscure group of texts in the
kudaka nikaya in which an anagami
apparently is used in the sense of an
Arun I mean it does make sense an
anagami is a non-r returner they're not
coming back they're out of
here and then finally you've got the
arant who is fully

enlightened and so I think

that I mean originally very early on

aoda was like a new convert someone

who's entered the a dharmic life you

know they've entered a spiritual life

especially within the realm of Buddhism

that sakagami again is not really

mentioned in the oldest text or in texts

that have give other signs of being very

early um I think even in I think one of

the bits of evidence that GC Pond gives

is that the Sona paluta which is giving

um like a step by step from lower to

higher advantages of living a dharmic

life it doesn't even mention the four

stages I think I could have just uh put

my foot in

it but I think that's one of the

arguments that GC Pond

gives and Ed Wuda um an apparently early

texts um pretty much equating non return

with Enlightenment which does make

sense so I mean Aran is pretty old you

know it's there's a good chance that the

Buddha himself who is himself an arant

Nam

budas so that's that's one argument is

like the GC P's case that he puts forth

in studies and origins of Buddhism but

the other case the other argument

against the

authenticity of these four stages of

sainthood in Buddhism is the fact that

terraa Buddhism or Buddhism in general appears to have a monopoly on these four stages there's no mention of these four stages in any other religious system that I know of which to a devout terraa Buddhist who thinks that terraa Buddhism has a monopoly on sainthood or Enlightenment I mean they just accept that no problem you know the Burmese would have no problem with that for example but I do not think that terava Buddhism has a monopoly on in life I think there have been enlightened Hindus I think there may have been enlightened Christians there may have been enlightened stone age animists for all I

know

so I mean that is for me an even more

important argument against the the

genuiness of these four stages of

sainthood is that only Terra mentions

them like this and and I've read in

other like Mahayana sutras I think it's

like the lankavatara sut or something

they have the four stages but they give

them radically different explanations I

know that Pacha Buddha is is somewhere

in one of these four stages I can't

remember I think it's a sakami is

identifi or like defined as a Pacha

Buddha which they didn't they didn't

understand it I mean there's there's

like misunderstandings or garbling of

the

tradition which doesn't really prove

that there were no four stages but it

does prove that different different

schools of Buddhism had different

understandings of these four

stages so I mean the two main arguments

are just sort of textual evidence that

the four stages as they exist today are

a later development found not in the

earliest texts and then the more

important argument to me is that no

other spiritual tradition has these same

four stages in fact even some Mahayana

schools Define the four stages in a

radically different way

way so again I mean if you're just a like a terraa chauvinist who wants to believe that only terraa really gets it straight then there's no problem there but I'm not one of those I do think that other systems can produce enlightened beings in fact i' I've mentioned this before that St John of the cross in my opinion may have been fully enlightened and it's interesting I mean he describes things very similarly to Buddhism although he has to use different language because he was a 16th century Spanish Roman Catholic so I mean he has to use different kind of language but it's pretty obvious that he's trying to get to the same point see that he's

describing the same kind of phenomena or experiences and it's interesting to me that that St John of the Cross came up with the the three stages the three levels of spiritual attainment that are found also in the poex three stages of spiritual attainment that in the poex you've got the bujena which is the common worldling you've got the sea or the one in training and that's the the lower three uh stages of sainthood and then you've got the AA the one no longer in training and that's the fully enlightened being St John of the Cross who may have had no contact with terraa Buddhism he also had three stages he had

the beginner which is 99 .9% of the
entire population then he had the Adept
which was anyone who had
mastered contemplation which would be in
Buddhist terms at least second jna
anyone who had mastered that you know
who could just sit down and get into
that state at will and then finally he
had the perfect the perfected and that
kind of blew me away when I was reading
about that because you would think that
Christianity would say nobody's perfect
I mean it does say that that I think it
even says it in the Bible in the Bible
in the New Testament Jesus himself
denies being good it's like somebody
calls him good sir or good teacher or

something and he says why do you call me
good there is none good except
God and so it's it's sort of like a
basic teaching in Christianity that
nobody's really worthy of Heaven the
only way you get into heaven is through
divine grace God just forgives you for
your your faults your
sins and then here you've got a Catholic
priest who's the doctor of the the
mystical doctor of the Catholic
church that he's saying that there is
the state of perfection where you become
like God through participation and I
think the the Orthodox Christians have a
a similar idea where you're just become

like a Divine puppet you've mortified
your own self-will you're no longer
you're no longer creating self-will
which is similar to the terava Buddhist
idea that an arant is no longer creating
Karma which is volition both of them
have this idea that once you reach the
stage of perfection you are no longer
generating volition at least not any
kind of ordinary
volition according to St John of the
Cross uh someone who has reached the
stage of perfection has essentially
become a kind of divine puppet they're
just motivated by the will of God which
in terab Buddhism would have to be
explained differently because there is

no capital G God in terab Buddhism

but I may be digressing

here but getting back to kitkat's

question yeah the main the two main

reasons as as as review here the two

main reasons why I am skeptical that the

four stages of sainthood despite the

fact that there are plenty of monks out

there claiming that they've attained

these states aan man in his Auto in his

biography written by AAR Mahaba is even

stating like the the dates and times of

him reaching each

stage but another thing in in terraa

Buddhism is that each one of these four

stages of sainthood has two substages

which

is which uh let's

see path and fruit Mega and Pala and

apparently by the time the commentaries

came along they didn't even understand

that anymore because they're claiming

that the stage of path lasts like a

trillionth of a second it lasts like one

moment and then boom you're you're

you've reached the the fruition part of

that which doesn't make much sense

because in the in the sutas they're

talking about how you know the the eight

individuals which is you know the two

substages of each of these four stages

of sainthood are worthy of veneration

worthy of bowing worthy of gifts and so

forth but I mean how you going to bow to
somebody who exists for like one moment
you know it just it just doesn't make
much sense
so I mean that's another little
complication to throw in and I've I've
discussed this a number of times so I
shouldn't spend a whole lot of time on
it this time because there's so many
questions to ask and furthermore I got
to get up and close the blind so that I
don't have these horizontal stripes of
light on my face so just a minute or
less than a minute actually
okay I think we're
good yeah no more no more lines on my

face at least no more lines of

light okay so I guess I'll just move on

to the next

question and this is from TIG and Tig

says what is your favorite tea and

that's an easy one

Milos so I'll just move on to tig's next

question here the manifestation of

Madness comes from a mind teetering on

the very Brink but has a sane mind ever

produced anything of true significance

well what about Buddhism we would assume

that the Buddha had a sane mind in fact

um only from a Buddhist point of view

only a fully enlightened being is

totally sane there is the the little

saying in ply Pino UMO which means the

common person is out of his mind he's
insane so yeah the Buddha came up with
Dharma I mean he didn't necessarily
invent the essence of Dharma but he must
have invented a lot of the practices
involved a lot of the doctrines
involved and he was presumably a fully
enlightened
being so a fully enlightened being has
much more access to just you know the
Infinity of possibility you know he's
not as limited by his View use to be
just just have like a little glimmer of
inspiration or a little glimmer of a
kind of Lial Intuition or imagination I
mean he was just wide

open so yeah the a sane person has gone

off the

brink from a Buddhist point of view so

they're not just teetering on the brink

that's um yeah teetering on the brink

means you're kind of Lial maybe and have

a little more access you know like

artists for example tend to be a little

nuttier than the average

person but a fully enlightened person is

just off the brink they're they have

Total Access seems to me and I finished

my coffee out of the Brian R cups I got

to crack

open some energy drink

here so I guess I answered that question

yeah I mean the answer to that would be

yes a sane mine has never produced
anything of true significance because
the Buddha produced stuff and other
enlightened beings assuming there have
been other enlightened beings you know
if they found a new spiritual system
they produced something you know if they
have uttered words that have become
scripture then they have produced
something something of true
significance so I'm just going to move
on to this question here this is from
ruie and ruie says did you ever engage
in any method of pranayama during your
time as a mendicant or before I have a
faint recollection of reading that the

Buddha Goda might have experienced
experimented with various breath
regulation methods some of them quite
forceful at any rate pranayama seems the
very opposite of recollection of
breathing what say you okay well
pranayama for those of you who are not
well versed in Sanskrit spiritual jargon
is like breath
control so somebody doing pranayama
they're like deliberately slowing their
breath way down until they almost stop
breathing in some cases and I maybe
experimented with that like once or
twice very briefly and I didn't like it
it just seemed too unnatural it was like
too much deliberate effort to do this

kind of meditation and I've always been
intuitively drawn towards that which is
without deliberate effort is I mean the
best meditation should be
effortless so I just didn't like it and
it's not really a Buddhist practice it's
more Hindu than Buddhist so yeah
according to the
tradition um the Buddha before he became
the Buddha when he was you know like uh
a mendicant aesthetic trying to become
enlightened yeah he was doing like
extreme spiritual practices including
breath
control and uh I think he mentioned in
the in the text that I he was

experiencing just racking pains as a
result of this kind of the wind element
trapped inside of his body so to speak
going with ancient medical jargon I
guess ancient medical
ideas so yeah the Buddha did not
recommend pranayama it's like when you
do practice meditation naturally and
spontaneously you'll your breath rate
will will slow down and will become much
more subtle so that some people who are
doing meditation on the
breath um they get to a point where it's
so subtle and faint that they can't
really notice anything you know it's
like too subtle for them to even notice
the sensation of touch of the the air at

their

nostrils but U that is something that

happens naturally on its own it's not

something that you deliberately try to

control and that's seems to me a better

way of practicing spirituality although

some Hindus get into very Advanced

States through this kind of stuff so I

shouldn't badmouth it too much

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

question this is from avenity and

avenity says do you think it is sad that

I'm sure it goes against everything

Buddha was all about people from poor

and not Buddhist countries can't even go

to try to be a Buddhist monk because

they don't have enough

money yeah it's kind of ironic that that

a western has to have some money in

order to become a Buddhist

monk who doesn't handle money

but I I've never been saddened by this

idea it is a matter of just everyone has

their own Karma and they land where they

need to land in this world you know

they're born you into the womb of

whatever womb they need to be born into

this just conditioned by their karma and

so it's all appropriate in a way even

though some people are born into really

shitty situations still I mean for them

to work out their karma that is the

appropriate place for them to be born

into um but it is still possible for a poor person theoretically at least to become a Buddhist monk which would be like um you go to a Burmese Buddhist Monastery that ordains people or a Thai buddist monster I suppose I have more experience with the Burmese so I can I can speak with with more certainty about how it is so you could go there and be ordained as a monk and then you have like Burmese people who are happy to sponsor you and happy to get you a plane ticket so you can go to Burma or Thailand or wherever so it's still possible if you really I mean if you really have the will you really have the

the calling or the vocation to become a Buddhist monk it can still happen it might be a little more complicated but still it can happen that you can become a monk in the west and I mean you're already a monk at that point and then um just generous supporters and a lot of Asian people they just they're just tickled to death to offer stuff to monks because they see that as a kind of Stairway to Heaven you know they're just they're like buying Merit through you know buying stuff for monks and giving it to

them so that's I mean that's how I did it I I became a monk in in the west I mean I did donate like $7,000 plus my my

pickup truck to the

monastery but uh the the $7,000 wasn't

spent on me eventually going to Asia it

was rich Burmese donor some Burmese

doctor or some

such they uh they donated the the plane

ticket they were happy to do

it and so uh yeah I W up going to to

Burma and staying there for more than 20

years even though that was not

originally my plan I just figured being

ordained in America would be simpler

because I wouldn't have to learn foreign

languages other than poly and I wouldn't

have to deal with visas and that sort of

thing but um it is good if you are going

to be a terraa Buddhist monk to spend at
least a few years in Buddhist Asia just
so you get a feel for what it was like
in the Buddhist time you'll understand
things better that way when you're when
you're reading about it in the text
you'll have some personal experience
with
that just at the very least plus it's
nice to just be able to go for a real
arms round take your bowl and walk
through the village and that sort of
thing
too and just live under
trees hard to live under trees in
America I guess nowadays homeless like
people that are addicted to drugs and so

forth do it all the time

but law- abiding citizens still are not

allowed to do that I'm pretty

sure criminals get a pass but

uh law-abiding citizens generally do not

so yeah I guess the main question here

is do I think it is sad that people from

who are poor and not Buddhist countries

can't go to be a Buddhist monk because

they don't have enough money yeah I

guess in a poor not Buddhist country

there might not be very many Buddhist

monasteries because um like Buddhist

missionaries bless their hearts you know

the the monastics they'd rather go to a

rich country than a poor one like um it

has it was brought up when when I was in Burma that one country that was desperately in need of Buddhist missionaries is Cambodia because their song I mean culturally they're a Buddhist country and their s was pretty much genocided by the C Rouge and so they're Buddhist people who want to know about Buddhism they want monks and everything but the monks were all killed off but the the Burmese monks didn't want to go to Cambodia I mean there were a few which is good I mean that's that's very admirable and commendable of them but a lot of the the Burmese monks I mean they want to go somewhere Rich you know they want they want to get all the

electronic gadgets and live in comfort

and so

forth

so yeah it is somewhat unfortunate but I

mean if someone is born into that kind

of a situation there is a reason for

that I mean that's that's where their

karma landed them and their karma landed

them at the most appropriate place for

them to land so there's reasons

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

next question this is from No Remorse

and this is kind of a strange question

No Remorse says I read about a form of

meditation where you imagine a table and

around that table are sitting five

people they can be Dead Alive Gods Etc
as well as five books sitting on that
table you can go into this room within
your mind and ask any question and go
around the table and see what they say
a different way to think about whatever
the question may be who would your five
people be and what five books would you
choose well right off the bat I'd say
this certainly is not a Buddhist
Meditation technique and it's not a very
deep one you're not going to get very
deep with this kind of meditation
because there's just too much thinking
and imagining I mean really good
meditation the better you get at
meditation the less thinking and

imagining there's going to be and this
kind of meditation is just shock full of
thinking and imagining so I mean you're
not going to get into like genic States
from doing this I mean it might be a
kind of mental exercise like mental
calisthenics or something but
anyways I'm gonna I have to do this
meditation let's say so there's five
people and five books I'll do the books
first let's just make it the five
volumes of Gan Wolf's book of the new
son that would be that would be good for
the five
books and those of you who haven't read
the book of the new son it's well worth

reading it's it's

profound and it's I mean it's it's a

classic of American literature or should

be anyway with regard to the five people

well I mean the Buddha would have to be

there let's say nagar neim Caroli Baba

how about St John of the

Cross um see who who' the fifth one

be

maybe Ramen

Mahari he spoke English too so that

would be

convenient

H maybe Paul low or Krishna mury just

kind of throwing in a wild card you

know yeah let's just go with chrishna

mury Jay Krishna mury not ug Krishna

mty so those would be my five people and

and the five books um just off the top

of my

head if I if I were to think about it

for several weeks I might come up with

slightly different lists but that's

that's what you get for for for now so

I'm just going to move on to the next

question here this is from Robin's

Nest and Robin's Nest does ask the TR

transgressive fourth question but um I

mean Robin

says that uh if it's too many questions

I can delete one but uh what the heck

I'm in a magnanimous mood today

so Robin's nest's first question in a

hypothetical situation in which one's
altar or Shrine is in their bedroom and
they were to have intimate relations
with their partner would this be
considered a precept violation of sexual
misconduct within the terraa
tradition
also it would be appreciated if you gave
an explanation regarding what sort of
Bad Karma has been created and perhaps a
recommended repentance practice
well it certainly wouldn't qualify as
sexual
misconduct um yeah I I have I have felt
pangs of this I don't have an altar in
my bedroom although um I have had you
know sort of like a Buddha image or

something in my bedroom before and also
when I was younger I had a copy of The
Diamond Cutter Sutra and The Diamond
Cutter Sutra says that any place that
contains a copy of The Diamond Cutter
Sutra should be treated as a holy place
as a shrine and so I've had it in my
bookcase in my bedroom and done all
sorts of sexual
naughtiness well not all sorts there are
certain boundaries of sexual naughtiness
that I I will not cross
over so I mean there have been sort of
like little pangs of oh maybe I
shouldn't be doing maybe I should take
the book and put it in a different room

before I do this

huh yeah I I have had experiences like

that but it's not really uh a preset

violation of sexual

misconduct um I mean in ancient times

when they were making the rules people

just didn't have shrines or Buddha

images in their bedrooms because they

didn't have Buddha images anywhere

because Buddha images had not been

invented yet and just sort of shrines

and scriptures I mean books books

apparently hadn't been invented yet in

in the Buddhist time

either um and shrines were generally

places you know outside somewhere you

know like a little Temple or

something

so yeah I mean it's not really a

violation of a precept um and whether

it's like Good Karma or Bad Karma well

especially bad karma I guess depends on

your mental States because

like good and bad conduct is mental in

Buddhism karma is as a mental

state that

again outward physical acts are

ethically neutral that really the

ethical quality or the karmic quality of

an act depends on the mental States not

on the the physical

actions so I mean if you feel like

you've done something wrong because you

got naughty in front of a Buddha statue
or like sacred texts or something then I
mean do what makes you feel better like
do something that you think would ease
your conscience like you know donating
to a good cause for example helping
somebody in need saving a drowning ant
by scooping it up on a leaf and putting
it on dry land feeding a hungry dog I
mean any kind of good act is in a way
it's it's not exactly purifying but it
NE nevertheless shifts the balance
towards
good
so yeah I mean there's there's no real
repentance practice involved other than
just do what helps your heart to be at

ease I suppose but it's not really in violation of any precepts it might be considered bad etiquette at worst unless you're doing it on purpose like s some satanists will like desecrate Bibles as part of their their black mass or something then yeah I mean they're definitely deliberately trying to do something transgressive in a case like that but I mean if it's just you're doing what you naturally do in your bedroom and the book or the statue just happens to be there I mean you might want to move your altar to a different room preferably not the bathroom just put it in like you know a different

youve got like a den or something maybe
there would be more appropriate if that
sort of thing kind of makes you have
second thoughts and be
unsure so I'm just going to move on to
Robin's nests next question here in
Mahayana there are many bodh svas but
the only one I know of that is specified
in the terraa tradition is MIT tra
bodhisattva are there any other
bodhisattvas in the poly Canon that are
mentioned well in poly it's bodhisatta
and not bodhisattva and I have mentioned
before that I do think that bodhisattva
with the V is a Mis translation of poly
or protop poly into Sanskrit but that's
neither here or there um when there's

mentioning when there's mention of a
bodh in the poly texts probably at least
98% of the time it's the same bodhisatta
and that's godma Buddha himself before
he became
enlightened because a buddhis SVA is
someone who is des destined to become
enlightened and that's probably what
bodhisatta originally meant is destined
for enlightenment not Enlightenment
being and most of the poly Texs were
composed before the whole concept of
like a whole Pantheon of Buddhas just
Buddhas just throughout history each one
with their name and their own story and
everything um before that came into

being and before the whole concept of

like the whole Mahayana budva concept

came into

existence the earliest meaning of

buddhis

sat was someone who was destined to

become enlightened and the main person

destined to become enlightened in the

poly text was the Buddha when when the

texts are referring to him before he

became in

L

so I'm not sure if there are any other

mentions of bodh satas I mean when it's

mentioning past Buddhas it's mentioning

them as already Buddhas it's not really

discussing much about their their lives

or life or lives before they became
fully enlightened and in the future um I
mean it is true that David dat like the
Judas escarate of Buddhism is destined
to become a Pacha Buddha according to
the commentarial tradition I think so he
could be sort of like a Pacha bodis or
something but yeah in the poly text
themselves almost
entirely um any mention of a bodh SAT is
referring to Goda himself before his
Enlightenment although there is a
canonical text called the Buddha wamon
or the lineage of Buddhas that has like
the whole 28 or
29 that uh I mean if you can find an

English translation of the Buddha wsa I assume it's been um there is a translation of it in Burma that was written by mingun TOA D who had the the phenomenal memory I think he was in the Guinness Book of World Records for having memorized the entire 40 volumes of the Burmese poly toptica by heart he wrote a book called uh the chronicle of Buddhas I think see I got something here no it doesn't say but I think it's called the the chronicle of Buddhas or something in English that is sort of a condensation of the Buddha wsa and its commentary that gives like a a biographical description of each of the 28 I think it's 28 rather than 29 maybe

maybe it's 28 so far in this Eon and

then there's going to be one more which

is mitraa but I've never really been

much

interested in the mythological Buddhas

that existed a zillion gajillion years

ago because it's most likely going with

aam's razor it's made up mythology

rather than Act ual

history

anyways let's see did I answer the

question yeah I did okay so I'll move on

to Robin's nest's next question which is

there are 29 named Buddhas in the poly

Canon but aside from Kaku and konana and

kasapa but I've read diffic I've had

difficulty learning more about them online unfortunately I also cannot seem to find a complete list of them would you please give us some details about some of these Buddhas some interesting honorable mentions would suffice well I mean Theon pagota in rangon Burma or Yangon

Myanmar uh supposedly has relics of all of the Buddhas mentioned here Kaku kagam kasapa and Goda all have relics that are enshrined underneath the uh Theon Buddha s to going Pagoda supposedly I haven't seen them

myself um with regard to our goab Buddha it's a few of his hairs that he plucked and gave to some Merchants that

supposedly came from um the m m
Kingdom um I think one of them there's a
walking stick from one
prehistoric Buddha and uh there's like a
bath cup from another one but I like I
say I haven't seen any of these things
but if you want the the the best
description of all the Buddhas of our
world cycle or I don't know what you
call it that would be the Buddha
wamama and with regard to our Buddha I
mean just to get an idea of just sort of
like the mythological scope of the
Buddha wamama and just this essentially
legend or Pantheon of all these Buddhas
our Buddha Goa was by far the smallest

one being only 27t tall also he went
through the longest aesthetic pract he
went through a stage of doing severe uh
aesthetic practice it lasted six years
some of these earlier Buddhas I mean it
was only a few weeks or months also he
by far by far had the shortest lifespan
whereas some of these um mythological
Buddhas of of prehistoric times lived
literally thousands and thousands of
years and just to give you an idea of
what some of these previous Buddhas were
like I happen to have um when I was
living in a cave in Burma I had this
little notebook here and if I found
something really noteworthy I'd write it
down and I happen to write down some

details of the alleged life of mongala Buddha so mongala Buddha is on the list of 28 or 29 and this is found in the Buddha W sence commentary because when I was living in a cave in Burma I got somebody donated to me this this Chronicle of Buddhas written by mingun and I read it and when I came across mongala Buddha it was so so outrageously wild I had to write some of it down so his date of birth um he was the second Buddha after deuna so deuna was the very first Buddha of this Eon or whatever you want to call
it so he Liv two incalculable eons plus 100,000 world before the present his

place of birth was the city of UDA in India on a previous World his father's name was King UDA his mother's name was Queen UD the name of the woman who offered milk rice on the eve of his Enlightenment was UDA name of the village in which she lived UDA name of the athetic who offered grass with which to make a seat beneath the bod tree UDA place of his paring nibana was udra Park also his place of Enlightenment and so UDA apparently was a very common name um two incalculable eons plus 100,000 World Cycles ago in India his height was approximately 132 feet 132 feet tall was mongala Buddha and he lived for 990,000

years and it says here from the moment he took conception light radiated from his mother's body to a distance of8 cubits all around which could not be overpowered even by the Light of the Sun not requiring other lights the pregnant Queen moved about by means of her own luminescence when mongala Buddha renounced household life approximately 30 million people renounced it also and practice austerities with him the light from Buddha monga's body Shone night and day throughout 10,000 World Systems during the 90,000 years of his life everything appeared golden in color and the sun moon stars and planets gave no

light since there was no sunlight the demarcation between night and day was not distinct yet people were able to attend to their business by means of the Buddha's Rays this great luminescence of mongala Buddha was due to a wish he made in a previous life the details of which are as follows once when he was a bodhisatta he was a man renowned for his great generosity hearing about his generosity an ogre or yaka in ply disguised himself as a Brahman approached the bod and asked for the bodhisatta two children the bodhisatta gladly handed them over whereupon the entire Earth trembled all the way down to the water on which it floats then the

ogre devoured the two children in the presence of the bodhisatta and bright red blood flowed from his mouth as he ate however there arose not one iota of distress in the bodh instead he was greatly delighted thinking this is my excellent Act of Charity he then exper he then expressed his wish as a result of this generous Act of mine may my body emanate rays in future bright like the blood flowing from the ogre's mouth once on one occasion mongala Buddha delivered a series of discourses to the universal Mark sunand in his retinue numbering 900 million at which time all of them became

arahant then the Buddha stretched out

his right arm and said etaba meaning

come monks

Oh wrong armor come

monks causing the entire multitude to

instantaneously become beus complete

with cropped hair bowls and robes during

the life of mongala Buddha the buddhis

destined to become goab Buddha was a

Brahman named suruchi on a certain

occasion the Brahman suruchi offered

alms food for a week plus a set of robes

to the Buddha and to each of his retinue

of beus numing numbering all together

one

trillion the set of robes offered to the

most Junior biku was worth 100,000

pieces of money probably

kopos the god Saka himself produced a

huge jeweled Pavilion for the occasion

after mongala Buddha's Parana his relics

were enshrined in a pagod 30 yojanas in

height which is like 30 miles high made

of powdered red orint oil and butter and

encrusted with seven kinds of precious

gems

yeah so this is from the great Chronicle

of

Buddhas so it translated by ukle and

utin win uh and published by T

publishing Center in rangon in

1992 and so I mean that is a taste of

what some of these Buddhas of long ago

supposedly were like and it is kind of interesting how um they're all modeled on the life of gorab Buddha I mean they they all have to renounce the world in some kind of vehicle like our goab budha used a chariot but some of them would just be riding on a horse or maybe maybe he was just riding on a horse see I I confuse my Legends but some of them actually had like flying buildings flying mansions weanas that they would renounce the world in and then they'd have to go through like this period of aesthetic practices and then they would have to be offered milk rice by kindly woman and then they would have to sit under some kind of Bodhi Tree um our

goab Buddha sat under a ficus religiosa
tree which is the the the bod tree but
different Buddhas had different species
of trees um at least one of them sat
under
bamboo and someone would sit under like
Banyon trees or whatever and uh so I
mean it's like it's modeled on the life
of the Buddha but with just wild
elaboration
so if you really want to read this stuff
I try to uh uh get some kind of um like
a copy of the Buddha wsa or some book
that's based on the Buddha WAMS because
that has most of the information um for
what it's

worth so I'm just going to move on to uh

Robin's nest's next question

here which is hyp pathetically if a

person were to have a supernatural

experience while attempting to commune

with the dead would this essentially

only work if they were still in the BAU

transitioning between incarnations or a

Hungry Ghost since we Buddhists believe

in reincarnation I don't understand how

it would be otherwise possible it would

be very quirky if it turned out that it

was lesser divinities being mischievous

LOL and uh

yeah okay so yeah as a general rule if

you're having some kind of paranormal

experience or some kind of communication

with the dead somebody who's already
dead then yeah for the most part it
would essentially work only if they were
like a Hungry Ghost in Terra Buddhism
there is no BAU realm although I mean
you could reconcile a Bardo realm with
Terra Buddhism by just saying you know
you get born for just a few weeks you
know as like a you know in in a Spirit
realm something like that and then that
serves as like your BTO realm where
you're having the review of your life
and you know meeting with Spirit guides
and so forth It's possible I mean it's
not Orthodox Terra but it's not like
explicitly against terraa that you could

have a relatively brief existence after
this existence in a kind of spirit realm
where you can recall this existence and
maybe you know discuss it with wise
beings there or something and uh maybe
kind of wait there in a green room or
something and until it's time for you to
get born
again so I mean it could be hungry ghost
but I mean it could be like lesser Davis
also because in in Buddhism or at least
terraa Buddhism from ghosts to Gods is a
Continuum it's like a spectrum and so
it's almost like an arbitrary choice
where you're going to make the cut off
between ghosts you know the highest
ghosts and the lowest

Gods you all like Spirit beings in a
way or I mean it's they do have physical
bodies but it's at a different kind of
wavelength a different a different
subtlety of
matter so that would be the main way of
of uh any kind of paranormal experience
where where you're communicating with
someone who has already died
that that I can think of unless maybe
they're a person maybe they're
like um they've been born again as
another person who has psychic powers
and then they can communicate with you
that way but technically they wouldn't
be dead anymore but I mean technically

they're not dead if they're a ghost
either because it's just a different
kind of life in a different kind of body
in a different kind of Realm but still
they're a a kind of conscious being who
is essentially
alive and I'm waving my hand around a
lot while I'm doing this for those of
you who are just listening and not
watching you're really missing out on a
lot of distracting hand
waving but I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from game
fap and I'm gonna look here yeah we've
been going for almost two hours and I
knew this was going to be a long one
because there's lots of questions it's

not it's not record-breaking a number of questions but it's it's it's a long list of questions so anyways game fap says what are your thoughts on the akashic records and I had never heard of the akashic records until I read a book about Edgar Casey who um attributed his psychic powers his ability to um like diagnose illnesses that he couldn't see that were hundreds of miles away or know about people's past lives or know about like Atlantis and so forth through the akashic records and I'd never heard of that before it's uh Akasha is sanskrit for space or

ether so in poly it would be

aasa long a

aasa um but I mean there's no concept of

this in Terra

Buddhism um and I'm I think it just

might be a kind of mental gimmick I mean

I can't really imagine that there really

is that there really are like like a

library containing all information of of

everybody who's ever lived but I don't

think that that's even how edar Casey

himself described the akashic records it

was more like every Act action every

event leaves a kind of Trace you know

sort of like the the tracks of things

that have existed that you can still you

can still see in the in The Ether kind

of a

thing but I'd be more inclined to

believe that it's just a kind of gimmick

for like there's all kinds of gimmicks

to

like help a person have psychic powers

you know like a Ouija board you know a

Ouija board is just you know just this

board with letters on it and a a plastic

planchet you know there's no psychic

powers in the Ouija board it's just a

kind of gimmick that kind of helps

people to exercise some kind of psychic

powers if it's not just coming out as

gibberish or spam and um and it's mainly

because people don't have the belief

that they really have psychic powers

they they make it it's easier for them
to believe that some being who's being
channeled through them has has these
powers or this deck of tarot cards or
this Ouija board or this
astrological chart or something has the
power so that
subconsciously I mean they're creating
the information you know tarot cards
have no psychic powers Ouija boards have
no psychic
powers so I mean they just don't want to
they can't believe wholeheartedly that
they have these Powers but they can
believe that something else has the
powers that then comes through them and
so they use it as a kind of crotch maybe

a kind of gimmick for coming up with
information that otherwise they would
not have access
to and it is true that Edgar Casey was
not 100% especially I mean he apparently
had a really good track record with
regard to diagnosing illnesses and
prescribing treatments for those
illnesses he he really accept called it
that but when he started describing like
making predictions for the future or
talking about Atlantis and that kind of
thing um he was mistaken a lot of the
time unless like for example I read this
book I think it was called The Sleeping
Prophet about igar Casey and he was

talking about how um proof of the
existence of Atlantis would be found in
one of the Great Pyramids before the end
of the 20th century which I mean if it
happen happen then some government
agency is is withholding it from
us although uh he did say some
interesting stuff like he made the the
prediction that the last great ba
Bastion the last great stronghold of
Christianity in this world would be
Russia and he said this when Russia was
the Soviet Union and officially atheist
and so it seemed really counterintuitive
at the time but that was his prediction
and
I mean he did make predictions that

turned out to be false though like maybe
the the proof of Atlantis
one I'm still inclined to believe that
Atlantis was cre you know like the monan
or aan
civilization so yeah that's my thoughts
on the akashic records I do think it's
it's just kind of a gimmick rather than
being an objectively real uh state or
phenomenon or library or whatever so
game fap second question is also what do
you think of Edgar Casey and yeah I've
been kind of talking about that um
already my father's family had some
interaction with Edgar Casey when he was
young this was during the the depression

and my father's father who he believes
to be like me and that I'm supposedly a
Reincarnation of him a rebirth of him
anyways it was during the Great
Depression and he didn't get his usual
summer job as a teacher or something and
so he went out looking for a job and he
he was determined he's not coming back
till he finds that job and so he's gone
for like two weeks and so my father's
mother starts getting worried because
they didn't have like cell phones and
texting and stuff back then she didn't
know where he was how he was anything
like that so finally um she wrote to
Edgar Casey who she thought must be an
American Indian because in her mind you

know American Indians are the ones that
have these kind of
powers and she got a letter back from
him saying that uh it's really
unnecessary for me to write this because
by the time you get this letter you you
will have already heard from him he's
doing fine and he's in such and such
town and sure enough before before my
father's family my mother got that
letter from Edgar Casey she heard from
him and everything was
fine so I do think that he did have some
genuine psychic ability ities and it's
kind of strange that he was a devout
Christian who read the Bible like once

for every year of his life he was really
a believing Christian and then he starts
talking about you know like
reincarnation and so forth that is
against Christianity and you he'd be
unconscious like in a in a Trans State
or something when he'd be you know
divulging his prophecies and sometimes
he'd come out of his Trans State and
everyone's have their eyebrows way up
and their jaws way down and they'd be
explaining explaining him to him to him
what he was saying and he'd be I mean he
was just thrown into a state of Crisis
sometimes because some of the stuff he
was coming up with was really seriously
at odds with his

religion but I don't think that he or
any other Prophet really has a 100%
accuracy rate that's one thing my
sweetheart loves watching this show
called The Dead Files where you've got
this psychic person who sees dead people
and can communicate with dead people and
they go to these haunted houses and
she's I mean she is just like 100%
spoton or let's say 95% accurate and I
just it's one reason why I do think that
it's partly faked anyways if not
entirely faked because psychics as a
general rule they just do not have that
accuracy rate um I mean if she did have
that kind of accuracy rate I think she'd

be hired by the US government or at

least by a law enforcement agency to

solve you know unsolved murders and so

forth

because she's just right on it and I do

not think that any profit has a 100%

accuracy rate partly like with regard to

predicting the future I think there's

more than one future so it may be that

they're seeing some future State and

they're they're talking about it but for

whatever reason we just don't wind up in

that version of the future we wind up in

a different

one but I think I'm digressing now so

I'm moving on to the next question which

is from Joe do

and Joe do says is giving tobacco as a gift skillful or unskillful Karma and again like the outward physical act is morally neutral whether a gift whether any action giving tobacco giving beer giving food giving medicine whatever whether that is skillful or unskillful depends on your own mental

States damn it seem to be the battery seems to be running low on this computer and it's already plugged in so let's just hope for the best if if the video suddenly cuts off don't worry I'm fine it's just that the computer is using electricity faster than the charger is charging

it I think it's plugged in yeah it's

plugged

in okay let's just continue shall

we so is giving tobacco as a give

skillful or unskillful it depends on

your mental States

and it may be like aan mun you know the

most renowned monk of Thailand I assume

him he and aan Chaw were like the the

big two famous monks in

Thailand um I mean ajan man was a chain

smoker so it might be that offering

tobacco to a very Advanced monk who also

happens to smoke tobacco I mean you

could say that you get Merit for that

although I think giving a like a LAX

monk who drinks tobacco and maybe beer

as well did I say drinks tobacco he
smokes tobacco drinks beer I mean he's
just a LAX monk I mean if you're helping
him to break rules or helping him to be
a sloppy monk then you're going to get
mixed Karma I mean to the to the extent
that you have good intentions that
you're wanting to do something good then
you're going to get some good karma
but if you like fail to really do
something good and you're helping a monk
to be a a lack sloppy monk like offering
him money for example then I mean it's
going to be mixed Karma you're going to
be getting skillful and
unskillful and it's very rare for

anybody to just do pure good or pure

evil it almost it's almost an

impossibility in in Buddhism once you

get to the pure good stage then you

become an arant that just leaves behind

Good and Evil and you're not making any

kind of

karma so there's always going to be

Shades of Gray and it's going to depend

on what motivates you while you're

you're offering the

stuff but as a general rule I don't

think the Buddha would have allowed

monks to smoke tobacco or chew tobacco

or snort

tobacco um if tobacco had existed in the

Ganges Valley in the Buddhist time

so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from Nicola Alias EKU and this is an extremely long question and I hope that the computer doesn't just die before I get to the end of it so he gives this long quote from a book called intuition by Buckminster Fuller and it's uh quote so what I have established now is what we is that we have a subconscious monitoring process going on in our brain that employs experiences of various magnitudes which can be reemployed once I have established that we have a subconscious monitoring system I then make another experiment this has to do with our

Twilight Zone Consciousness I stretch both my arms forward and parallel to one another I turn my two index fingers Skyward I now swing my outstretched arms horizontally away from one another with index fingers as yet Skyward stretched I keep looking straight ahead but realize that while looking straight ahead I can also see both of my Skyward pointed index fingers I can see them clearly even when my arms are stretched out sideways though I'm say to myself that I am looking straight ahead this experiment tells us that there are many events taking place in our lives at which we are not consciously looking but which of which we are semiconscious

aware it is this semic Consciousness which at times arouses our intuition to look directly in this and that direction and thereby discover some sensorially apprehensive ible phenomenon of significant relevance to our system's thinking semic Consciousness oh okay semiconscious awareness of our experiences often constitutes a fourth event the significant system embracing event which produces comprehension of all the systems inter relationships and even its relationships to other significant systems semiconscious awareness is a very effective and available basis for

becoming aware of what is going on in looking this way and looking that way it also takes a minimum of four equ interal intentional repeat experiences to discover time dimensioning and then and then Buckminster has the example 5:00 pm Tuesday February 3rd it seems to me that this happened to me before oh now I remember it must be a coincidence 5:00 p.m. Tuesday March 3rd what again how long ago was that and the time before if this is not strange coincidence it will happen again on March 31st 5 p.m Tuesday March 31st sure enough I have discovered a periodic experience intuition relates to recognizing the significance of the

third experience that this is the third
experience in which I felt intuitively
that I felt it before the difference
between the Leonardo da Vinci and Albert
Einstein and other people is that the
other people don't pay attention to the
third experience in the series of four
system defining events the Einstein's do
Einstein said earlier when Bucky wrote
nine chains to the Moon that Bucky
understood his thought process and
wanted to meet with him any thoughts
well my first thought is this question
is like extremely
long and I've considered in future just
maybe making a a rule against like

posting like a long essay kind of

statement and then at the end Just

Thoughts question mark one wise guy just

did it on purpose I think after I've

I've brought this up before

anyways um

yeah I mean I can accept that a lot of

Intuition or imagination is subconscious

stuff that we're semia aware of like a

good example would be kid's poem

KublaCon which is one of my favorite

poems and it was a drug induced poem he

took some Lum which is like tinure of

opium and then passed out and while he

was unconscious the entire poem appeared

in his mind and then he woke up and was

writing it down feverishly before he

forgot it and then somebody he owed
money to comes knocking on the door he's
got to attend to that person when he
finally gets rid of him he comes back
and he's lost it it's gone and a book
was written about this poem about how
karid had encountered a lot of the
themes of this poem and just kind of
stored them in his subconscious memory
and then they just kind of came out uh
as a result of being unconscious on lad
them but um with regard to like the four
the four system defining events um yeah
that's a little technical for me and uh
I mean it may be true but um I really
don't have the the time at present while

I'm doing this video to really sit there

and contemplate it and and see if it it

makes good sense to

me

um

so yeah I I guess I mean he's talking

about periodic experiences which I think

Carl Young might attribute to like

synchronicity but I don't he doesn't

really explain in this long quote what a

periodic experience really would be like

um he doesn't give like a clear example

of a periodic experience which would

help my mind to grasp it a little

better

so see now I'm thinking maybe I should

try and shut down any extra tabs or

something to keep my computer from

dying but we'll just see how it

goes so that was

uh let's see I gotta scroll way up here

yeah that was Nia Alias eku's first

question and I scroll way way down and

then his second question is is much

shorter which is are you familiar with

tetrahedron and

Bucky well I know something about

Buckminster Fuller um I don't remember

exactly what his field of expert

expertise was he was he was like an

engineer or something I think and he's

the guy who's largely responsible for

like the geodesic dome he was he came up

with um

like what do you call it like shapes

that are stable like a triangle is

stable I mean people have known that

triangle is stable for a long time but

um I happen when I was a student at the

school library once there was an exhibit

of tensegrity structures that I think

Buckminster Fuller invented and at the

time I was just astonished to see these

because they look like they ought to be

impossible they're they're made out of

nothing but sticks and elastic string

like some kind of elastic cord and the

sticks are forming like this

threedimensional

um polyhedrin and they're not touching

each other it's all held together by the the tension and you'd think that because the tension is all pulling inwards it would just collapse on itself but it doesn't and then eventually I made my my own uh tagre um truncated octahedron and I've still got the sticks and I haven't put it together yet and I should have put it together long ago and I mean feel free to berate me if you please because it's it was really nice and I used it as a kind of um like a a simile or a metaphor for dependent Coreal Rising like the 12 Links of dependent core Rising they're all like inter interconnected

and and like independent of each other
in a way but still they're forming this
unified hole that's almost like a
miracle but the tetrahedron he's got are
you familiar with tetrahedron and
tetrahedron the T first T is capitalized
and all I know tetrahedron is one of the
it's like the simplest platonic solid
I'm pretty sure it's just like uh four
equilateral triangles combined into a
kind of three-sided pyramid with the
bottom being the fourth side and like a
methane atom forms a kind of tetrahedron
or not methane atom but a methane
molecule I learned that in organic
chemistry that that also forms a stable
kind of tetrahedron shape but

um and I'm not sure that if if that's

what he's referring to the tetrahedron

is it's just a a four-sided uh stable

platonic solid that's

made it's has four sides that are four

equilateral

triangles

so yeah I guess I answered that question

am I familiar that's what I'm familiar

with is just the the platonic solid the

shape the three-dimensional geometric

shape and Buckminster Fuller I really

don't know a whole heck of a lot about

him I attended a seminar about him

once there still a one you know was like

a two hour long seminar that I got like

one credit for or something when I was

in

school um but I really don't know a heck

of a lot about him other than the the

the engineering an engineering professor

at that school was was like a fanboy of

Buckminster Fuller and he's the one who

gave the the presentation at the

seminar so I guess I'll just move on to

the next question which oh my golly this

is from extremely rare bird who asked

the very first question I didn't didn't

notice that I mean I already had his

first question at the top of the list

and then by the time I got this far down

I forgot that he was at the very top of

the list

so extremely rare bird he's got three
more questions here but well I mean the
reason why his question was the very
first question is he asked that to the
previous Q&A but he I had already
recorded it before I saw the question so
maybe he gets a pass on this I don't
know Robin's Nest asked four questions
too and I'm really not in a Venge ful
mood
today so let's just go with it here
extremely rare bird asks why do you
think some people go through a Dark
Night of the Soul or experience
terrifying Visions or similar even when
they are living an upright life and

pursuing a spiritual path well the Dark Knight of the Soul was coined I think by St John of the Cross and according to him it's like before you really make significant spiritual progress you tend to have this Dark Knight of the Soul which he defines partly as just aridity it's like no more inspiration it's like you're closed off not making any progress it's like you just lose your inspiration in a way and it's just leads to despair especially if you dedicated your life to spiritual progress and you just hit a wall and can't move and just it's like everything just contracts and shuts down and isn't working and so it leads to this Despair and I think one

reason why this is like a universal or
almost Universal phenomenon for people
who are really living a wholeheartedly
spiritual life really going for it not
like joeo the the TV repair man or
something but people who are you know
they've renounced the world or whatever
they've just becoming enlightened or
making spiritual
progress cultivating wisdom is like
their top priority in life they'll hit
this Dark Night of the soul and one
Theory I've got is it's
because you have to reach a state of
utter despair in order to make spiritual
progress It's like we are creatures of

habit and so we're locked into these
habitual ways of dealing with
life and so long as you're locked in
you're not going to move beyond that So
eventually you need to have some kind of
Crisis and it's ultimately good Karma
going with like Buddhist terminology
that this happens to you because it like
causes this crisis that
eventually causes you to just break
through this this cage of habits so that
you can make progress you know
everything's going fine you're just
going to stay in this this self-imposed
cage of mental
habits and you're not going to get
beyond that it's going to take some to

to break down that system and it's going
to require some of harrowing crisis
that's going to break through this aifi
system of habits that your life depends
on or seems to depend on and this
reminds me of a statement ROM dos made
long ago in one of his books that you
know just utter despair is an absolute
prerequisite to significant spiritual
progress and for years and years I was
hoping was wrong but just looking back
on my own life my own life has borne
that out that the most like the most
significant spiritual spurts or growth
growth
bursts I guess you call them my most

significant episodes of spiritual growth
have been the result of
Despair it's like you have to have this
crisis
because you're just stuck by just your
own mental prison really and that so
that your own mental prison has to get
broken in order for you to get free of
it has to get broken open and that's
scary because people identify with their
personality their character traits and
everything which is part of the mental
prison you know their belief system
especially men I think identify with
their beliefs because they they identify
with their thoughts and so if your
beliefs get proven false that's like a

like a kind of death it's like part of
you is being
destroyed so people resist change that's
one reason why you know people just
believe all kinds of idiotic nonsense
and refuse to face that I mean you can
like show it to them like look at this
you believe this and this which are
clearly contradictory to each other they
don't want to hear that at all and
they'll as often as not they'll get
hostile about it just in in like figh or
flight self-defense they're fighting for
their lives because they're fighting for
their identity of who they are or who
they think they are

anyway

so I think I've kind of digressed a bit

from extremely rare Bird's question here

but I do think that that is the gist of

it and so in a way it's kind of a

blessing in disguise that you have to

have this crisis because without it

you're not going to make more progress

so I'm just going to move on to

extremely rare birds next question here

and the computer seems to uh have got a

second wind and the the charge is going

back up again I got down to 6% it's in

the red zone and now it's up to seven

again so trouble not no

trouble so extremely rare birds next

question here is meaning in life is

either to be rejected or affirmed it

seems to be the ultimate question to us

humans in particular one which you

cannot avoid facing explicitly or

implicitly could we say that meaning is

inherent to life albeit appearing in

different disguises contexts and forms

and right off the bat I would just like

to say that this is one question and not

two

questions

so actually extremely rare bird has not

transgressed anything he's asked a

proper amount of

questions and I'm looking at my own

image on the screen here and it's

there's a lag which is kind of has me a

little bit concerned hopefully it's

still recording

well okay so anyways getting back to the

question here meaning in life is either

to be rejected or affirmed it seems to

be the ultimate question to us humans in

particular one which you cannot avoid

facing explicitly or implicitly could we

say that meaning is inherent to life Al

be it appearing in different disguises

contexts and forms well this it seems to

me like almost a trick

question

because I mean it's

the meaning is inherent to life because

life is like a mental construct it's

like a perceptual construct without
perception you've got no pluralistic
Universe you know you've got essentially
void unink able void if you don't have a
perceptual mind perceiving the existence
of
life so in that in that sense meaning is
inherent to life um but meaning is
ultimately delusional if you get to the
state of Ultimate Reality there's no
more meaning at least meaning is
irrelevant to it meaning is delusional
because it's this
symbolic con construct that supposedly
represents reality but it doesn't really
represent reality because it's just a

symbolic construct you know i' I've
mentioned before the letters t are
radically different from a real tree and
that's kind of the way thought works it
symbolizes whatever we're trying to
think about or understand and then we
get lost in the symbols and we never get
to touch the reality you know like
Emanuel Kant saying the thing is it
really is the thing in itself our mind
cannot touch that all we're stuck in
these symbolic constructs just the thing
the thing is it
seems
so yeah it's it's kind of a weird trick
kind of question it's not like life is
real and has a meaning it's just that we

are dreaming life with our mind and so
all dreams have some kind of meaning any
kind of perception is meaning
it might be no more meaningful than what
the hell is that but still it's a
that and so I mean this is I'm sure this
is going to be very confusing for a lot
of people because most people just
assume that the empirical universe is
ultimately real and that they're you
know they're talking about you
know like DNA and all this like all this
stuff like conditioning our existence
but really what conditions our existence
is perception
and perception is necessarily both

meaningful and delusional because

meaning is

delusional we were stuck with it so long

as we're not

enlightened but when we become

enlightened we are no longer identifying

with the symbols because we have access

to the reality we always have access to

Ultimate Reality it's always right here

right now I mean how far away can

reality be it's just that we're so

distracted by all the noise our mind is

making with these perceptual

symbols that we don't see through that

and do not see the reality that's

underlying that so to

speak

so meaning is inherent to life because

life is a perceptual construct and

meaning is inherent to perceptual

constructs but I

mean life as like a biochemical

process

um yeah even if you assume for the sake

of argument that it is

real then I mean that's just it it's a

biochemical process and any higher

meanings attributed to that are like

optional matters of opinion value

judgments or

whatever so I'm I'm just keep coming

what keeps coming to mind right now is

existential M like 20th century

existentialist philosophy where they're
saying that life doesn't have any
meaning but still you have to attribute
some kind of meaning so you got to just
cook up the best imaginary meaning you
can you can come up
with so
anyways and I think I answered that in a
in a confusing and possibly unsatisfying
Manner and so I'm just going to move on
to the next question because we've
already been at this for almost two and
a half hours
and if I'm like scrolling on YouTube and
I see a video that even one that even
looks interesting and it's two and a
half hours long it's I'm just like nope

give me one that's 10 minutes

long so that's one reason why I rarely

watch uh Joe Rogan because he'll just

sit there and talk for three or four

hours straight Brian Rue bless his heart

he does a lot of long ones

too now I'm I'm doing long

ones but I wouldn't I wouldn't even

watch my own video if I mean I do I do

watch my own videos just to see how they

came out you know when I'm in a

different state of mind I can kind of

look back on them and uh judge how well

I did or something just for

entertainment value watch myself just

yammering away but if it was somebody

else that probably wouldn't watch it

anyways the next question is from

oalt and oal says do you think the

internet is diluting

Dharma well I mean the internet itself

isn't diluting Dharma it's the minds of

people that are diluting Dharma I

think

and I mean the

Internet it's uh I mean it can be used

for good or

ill and so for a lot of people it's

diluting Dharma but then again some

people the reason they know about Dharma

to begin with is because they they saw

it on the internet the internet is I

mean it's like a psychic power really

it's it's like a new s sense a new sense
faculty I I think I was talking about
this in the previous Q&A it's like your
computer is like a sense organ like an
eyeball or an eardrum and the internet
the that is coming through the computer
is like the sensory data through this
new um sense organ and it can be used
for good or for ill just like Vision can
be used for good or for
ill
so um yeah I do I think the internet is
diluting Dharma many cases it is in
other cases not so much I mean you can
it depends on how wisely or skillfully
you use the internet if you use the

Internet only for listening to Dhat
talks and reading texts and so forth
then I mean that's your your main line
of Dharma possibly so that's
good but I mean if you're like straying
over into the academic leftist
approaches to to Dharma
where it's queer Buddhism and you know
white people being mindful of their
white privilege and so forth their
inherent racism and so forth then yeah
that's not only diluting Dharma that's
just it up into something just
almost unrecognizable turning it into
something Fubar so to speak so it
depends on how skillfully you use the
internet and that determines whether

using the internet is helping you to
understand Dharma or maybe messing you
up whether it's diluting Dharma or
concentrating
it and with that I'm going to move on to
the next question this is from Liber Lam
who now for some reason calls himself
Stellar
Supreme so Stellar Supreme formerly
known as Liber Lam says do you think
it's ethical to teach seniors practical
meditation when they have dementia
mobility issues and let's just say a lot
to find dooka in as is I get the sense
that practical in instruction could help
them cope with these but I'm worried one

of them might have a strange or
confusing experience and that would put
me in a bad situation at work yeah well
that's that is kind of a strange
predicament but I mean there's always
the risk that somebody may have a
strange or confusing experience through
introspection for example U I do know
that many hospitals are teaching
mindfulness um mainly to help people
deal with chronic pain burn victims or
people who are facing a terminal
situation that it just kind of helps
them to get some grounding and accept
what is happening with
Equanimity so if you could teach like a
medically approved version of

mindfulness I'm sure I mean they they teach they teach courses in this you know how to teach mindfulness in a hospital setting then that might be your best

bet I mean mindfulness in general it's it's it's generally innocuous but to someone who's just not ready for it it might not work out so well so there's always some kind of risk but for people who aren't in like an intensive meditation setting it's much less likely that they're going to be you know like facing skeletons that they've had subconsciously hid in their closet for decades but uh it's hard to say I mean

everybody's got a lot to find Dua in as

is I mean life is Dua Sab Sara duka

Everything is

Dua

so yeah I mean it's it's not for

everybody maybe people that are

interested in it that are willing to go

there but I mean trying to

impose Dharma or like mindfulness

practice onto someone who's really not

into that it's not going to work

anyway like uh this for some reason it

reminds me of something ramas in one of

his books that uh he used to go to

prisons and try to teach Dharma to the

prison inmates there and the only place

where he really got a lot of positive

responses people that were really
seriously you know taking serious what
he was saying was death row because they
were faced with their own
mortality plus maybe uh required to do a
lot of introspection in in solitude that
they weren't used
to
so um practical meditation yeah I mean
sure you could come up with like an
innocuous harmless easy kind of
meditation that might at least help them
to calm their minds like just like
watching a Goldfish swim around and
around in its bowl or in its tank is a
very harmless nice kind of meditation

that just helps to calm people down and
put them in the present moment I I am
looking forward to getting a fish tank
someday just because I mean when I was a
kid I would prefer a fish tank to a TV
set I just sit in front of the fish tank
and just watch the fishes swiming around
around just gliding silently you know
gracefully through the water all
different colors maybe although just one
goldfish is nice although it's better to
have two so that they don't get
lonely so something like that I mean I
don't think anyone's gonna freak out
from watching a
goldfish so I guess you'll have to judge
you know how ready a person is for any

kind of serious introspection before you start giving them like some kind of serious mindfulness practice where you know long closed closet doors may become open and they might be faced with something that they don't want to face that they're not ready to face so I guess I answered that question I'm just going to go on to the next question which is from Wayne and Wayne says in Christian mysticism and then in parentheses he's got nag hamadi it is well known for demigods to create World Systems what does the suta say about the creation deavas is there a parallel here your thoughts much appreciated thank you

well I mean in Christianity I don't see
how they would have demigods other than
just angels I thought in Christianity
you got angels instead of gods but maybe
some esoteric gnosticism or something
might have both I don't know I'm No
Authority on that but with regard to um
you see what do the sutas say about
creation deavas in terado Buddhism there
are no real creation deavas that apply
to us there are Heaven Realms where
you've got the the gods who Delight in
their own creations and they can just
create you know whatever kind of mansion
or Palace they want to live in they can
create you know the landscape shaping
outside they can create their own little

world but it doesn't apply to us it's
for them know subjectively I mean they
do create these things with their mind
it's just that we're not living there
that the world we are living in samsara
the cosmos is created by our own
ignorance and desire and I'm still
waving my hands around a lot I don't
know why maybe it's two cups of coffee I
usually only drink
one so yeah this world is not not
created by dvas there are dvas who
create like their own worlds but we're
not in those worlds according to
Orthodox terava Buddhism that we are
just in a world that is created by

ignorance and desire in general in fact
there is the standard explanation I
think it's in the Brahma Jala sua about
how like mahab Brahma you know like
capital G God almighty
in quotes I guess thinks that he has
created the universe when really he
hasn't and that's because like
periodically the entire Cosmos is
destroyed usually by fire and then it's
like the karma of all the beings who
existed in that Cosmos and they're
they're like of necessity living in this
immaterial realm until the new material
Cosmos evolves the first thing that
appears in this new Cosmos is is the
throne of mahab Brahma and then you have

a being who suddenly materializes on
that throne and he's like the first
conscious being existing in this Cosmos
he did not create this Cosmos but he is
the first being to appear in this new
Cosmos and then before long he starts
feeling lonely and starts wishing that
there were other beings here and right
about that time just through their own
Karma other beings start appearing in
this new Cosmos they start populating
the new Cosmos and this mahab Brahma
thinks that it was his desire that
created these beings when really it was
not it was just their own Karma causes
them to appear in this universe and then

because mahab Brahma is was Desiring
company and maybe is not real good at
logic that he thinks that it's because
of him that his desire created them so
even the mahab Rama who supposedly
creates World Systems and all that he
doesn't create them they're created by
just the collective Karma of and
ignorance
of countless beings in in this
Cosmos
so I think Mahayana Buddhism would have
more along the lines of creation Davis
or creation Buddhas for that matter like
pure land Buddhism has Buddhas who go
off to some uninhabited area of the
cosmos maybe I'm not exactly sure and

they just create this new Buddha world
or this Buddha land Buddha field and
then by praying to that Buddha you can
get reborn into that realm but that is
not Orthodox Terra and I seriously doubt
that the historical godma Buddha taught
such a
thing so I guess I answered Wayne's
question and there's lots of questions
as I've been saying although we're
getting close to the
end so there is
that so the next question is from the
Proto sudom monk who sometimes goes by
the name of Cool Whip I don't know which
one is his real name so let's just go

with protos sudam monk for the for the
sake of convenience
here and he says oh the Proto sudam monk
has like headings for his questions so
the heading to this question is called
the ethics of
divorce and so he says what are the
ethics of divorce from a Buddhist
perspective for societal Harmony my view
is that when a human male and a female
reproduce they form a symbiotic
relationship they renounce their
individuality so divorce is based on the
delusional narrative the individual
knows best and can do whatever his
desires and aversions tell him or her
devastating The Offspring on a psych

iCal level or biological nature depends
on it well for starters I would say that
Terra aut Buddhism especially has
relatively little to say about marriage
or divorce that marriage and divorce are
worldly it's like uh GMA dama this is
the way of the village it's sort of
vulgar in the original meaning of vulgar
like it's just of the the normies and it
doesn't H really have much to do with
becoming enlightened you know it's just
kind of irrelevant to that or or at best
irrelevant and at worst a
hindrance so um I do not recall ever um
coming
across

divorce in the text it may be that in Ancient India in the Buddhist time um it was I would assume that it was kind of like ancient Rome like Republican Rome early Republican Rome where you could just div for your wife just by saying I'm just get out or you know that's it we're done that that men it was like a patriarcal society and you know if the wife was just too much of a pain in the neck or something he could just declare them divorced or something but there's no real mention of that in the text that I can think of there is sort of a mention of divorce um or or like separation anyway in that a monk who acts a Matchmaker or

a goet to help two people get
married that that is a serious offense
it's a s God offense he has to take
penants for six days and six nights for
having done such a thing but after the a
couple is married then you know he can
bless their marriage and so forth after
it's a done deal but then if they
separate if they're just like arguing
and a strange from each other you know
he can like persuade them to get back
together but if they're really divorced
if for him to persuade them to get
married again again he's being a
Matchmaker or a goet or something and
he's committed the

sense so if they're just sort of you know on the Rocks a bit he can you know he can sort of uh what's the word you know help them to make it up you know to for the sake of you know love and you know Harmony and so forth peace and Harmony he can he can get them to come back together but if they really are divorced if it's just it's broken like legally and socially then that's it I mean he can't persuade them to get back together again without committing a serious offense so yeah I mean marriage is is just a purely secular Affair it really has little to do with Orthodox traditional

or early traditional Terra Buddhism that like it's a serious it's the same offense the S offense for a monk to officiate at a wedding I mean so a wedding you know like in Christianity you got a priest or Minister officiating at the wedding in Terra Buddhism it is strictly forbidden for a monk to officiate at a wedding and so for example in Burma in in a bur's village you got the the the the bride and groom they they go to the Village headman and sign some papers and that makes them officially married married and then after they're officially married then they throw the the wedding reception and

invite monks and the monks bless the

done deed and they they make offerings

to the monks and they feed all their

neighbors with you know Feast

food and everything's

fine

so yeah there's there's not really a lot

of emphasis hardly any emphasis on

divorce in Terra Buddhism because it's

just a secular Affair it's not really a

Dharma issue I mean there's mention of

how husband and wife should behave

towards each other you know you know the

wife should be faithful and run the

house efficiently and attentive to her

husband and the husband you know he

should be attentive to his wife and

faithful to her and you know should be
sweet to her and romantic and
everything but uh I mean that's pretty
much the Buddha was just kind of tossing
a bone to the normies
with that sort of thing because mainly
what terraa Buddhism is about is
renouncing the world and going off into
a forest renouncing Society whereas
marriage is a societal
institution
so um Proto sudom mon is saying you know
my view is that when a human male and a
human female reproduce they form a
symbiotic relationship kind of like the
Bible saying they become one flesh

although um um yeah they don't really
renounce their individuality completely
I mean like a man and a woman genuinely
love each other they've got some depth
and sensitivity then they're not going
to just merge into this one being that
has just one name for example they're
gonna there's going to be him and
there's going to be her
usually and but then there's going to be
like this third entity that the US this
is sort of like a group mind kind of a
thing that is greater than each indiv
either individual presumably greater
than the just the like the synergistic
you know it's like a synergistic thing
that's greater than the sum of its parts

you know it's like this new being has

arisen and that may have its own Karma

which may result in the same two people

getting together lifetime after lifetime

because you know they're they're sort of

forming this third being that has its

own existence

I just uh came up with that just

now

so yeah I mean divorce was I'm sure it

was a thing in Ancient India probably

not nearly as prevalent as in the modern

West where women I mean they can just

marry the government and live

Independence on the government in a

socialistic

society

so huh see I I think I've answered this

question

yeah yeah I mean the way the way things

are now is really not it's not optimal

from a from the point of view of just

the the well-being of the human

race people are atomized and alienated

now as a result of partly like so-called

Enlightenment philosophy of like the 16

and 1700s like emphasizing individuality

rather than people identifying with

their family which was the premodern

point of view where um like premodern

cultures people are more identified with

their family than with their own

individual

person which is why In some cultures
like in Japan the last the family name
comes
first even though they're probably
atomized and alienated also now
so I guess I answered that question I
mean ethics of divorce it's really not
mentioned much in Terra and so like any
other action it's going to be more a
matter of the mental States involved
like two people they just get divorced
on friendly terms they don't hate each
other they just realize they're going in
different directions in life maybe they
don't have kids or something or whatever
the situation is they work it out

amiably they still have some love for
each other they just realize that it's
just not working I mean that would be a
heck of a lot better ethically than two
people just hating each other's guts and
just trying to to like get revenge on
each other and the other person up
as much as they can suing each other and
just trying to screw the other person in
divorce court or
whatever so there's better and worse
ways of going about it I
suppose but I mean the Buddha himself
abandoned his wife and kid according to
tradition so I mean just that in of
itself is not necessarily frowned upon
in terab Buddhism especially if one of

them is abandoning their marriage for
the sake of something according to
tradition anyway much higher and nobler
which is Liberation from samsar
Liberation from suffering and
delusion so I'm just going to move on to
uh the protos sudo monks next question
which
is is is entitled The blissful nature of
mind and the Bliss well the question is
as follows why would an unencumbered
mind the natural state of mind or nibana
be radiantly spontaneously Blissful it
could just be completely neutral or
unconscious like a machine would people
renounce the world if we weren't waiting

for this discovery or state of

mind so I guess the main gist of this

question

question is why like the perfected mind

should be considered Blissful and not

just completely

neutral and the whole idea of completely

Blissful nature of of mind is more of a

Hindu thing you know like sat

Chanda that you know it's just like

infinite Bliss is like the truest nature

of mind you know that's that's God

essentially

in Buddhism it's still a good thing it's

seen more in a negative sense as just

freedom from suffering and that that

that freedom from suffering is the

greatest happiness that you can find

little statements about that in like the

udana that I mean the end of suffering

is the greatest happiness in Buddhism

it's it's more um negative in its

emphasis than positive you know it's

just like freedom from suffering rather

than you know Eternal infinite

Bliss but it may be that they're both

two different ways of describing the

same

state so I mean why would the

enlightened mind be radiantly

spontaneously Blissful well for one

thing it's infinite

Consciousness which I mean it's it's

just unencumbered as as the Proto sudo
mon
States and I mean trying to to explain
the absolute why the absolute would be a
certain way it's just futile and even to
call say that the in the absolute state
is blissful is invalid to say that it's
not Blissful is invalid you can't really
say anything valid about it and so it
could be it's just a manner of speech
talking in this way saying that the
enlightened mind is blissful I mean it's
free of suffering except maybe for an
infinite amount of the virtual suffering
that still exists in the primordial
chaos you know the the the infinite
number of statues contained in the block

of marble there's an infinite number of
miserable statues in there I mean just
if if Einstein was right and time is
just the fourth dimension then your
unenlightened self continues to exist in
the
past it doesn't just poof out of
existence although Terra Buddhism the
Orthodox position is that only the
present moment exists and the past
doesn't exist and the future doesn't
exist but I mean the unencumbered mind
would not be unconscious it would be
infinitely conscious although going with
Hegel absolute being and absolute
non-being are ultimately the same and so

it's just the whole thing is a paradox

you can't wrap your head around it

you're never going to understand it

intellectually

so let's see would people renounce the

world if we weren't aren't waiting for

this discovery or state of

mind um I don't know it's kind of a

weird question there you do not fully

understand it's kind of tacked on to the

to the question before it so

anyways with all all do a apologies and

respect and all that I'm moving on to

the next

question because I'm starting to get

horse to tell you the truth not that I'm

complaining it's it's all it's all good

so he he mentions a name here that I
don't how to pronounce correctly I think
it's deusi so the the heading for this
question is debsy and
piano and he says I feel a calling to
learn piano I am in total awe of deusi
or deusi I think it's debsy his music
conveys the profound mystery of being
and the universe can I take up the piano
as a spiritual practice towards
Enlightenment if I do it mindfully
following the middle way um yeah I mean
playing the piano can be a kind
spiritual practice I mean first of all
you're you're learning
self-discipline I mean it takes

self-discipline to master the piano and
then when you're playing you're in a
state of like present moment flow or you
should be if you're really good at it I
mean you might have to like learn a lot
of scales and just keep practicing the
same piece over and over again but once
you've mastered it then it becomes even
though you're practicing a lot still in
a way it becomes effortless
or it should and it can become
meditative I mean I used to have an art
teacher in school who used to talk about
how he plays guitar as a meditation that
you just sit there and it just becomes
like a soothing present moment kind of
activity and if you're mindful anything

you do is is

meditation if you can play the piano

mindfully then that's meditation too

just as walking back and forth mindfully

or sitting cross-legged mindfully it can

be meditation

so I mean it is true that Orthodox

terada considers music to be sensual

pleasure and something that someone

who's really serious about that sort of

thing about spirituality shouldn't do

like like having sex too but that's

largely uh a product of ancient Indian

culture that was very aestheticism

oriented renunciation and aestheticism

radical atic

ISM so anything that smacks of sensual
pleasure if it's at all
avoidable the the ancient tradition says
you should avoid it but still I'm kind
of open-minded on subjects like this and
I can see how playing the piano or
playing the guitar or playing the
Bongos can be a kind of meditative
experience that it can be a kind of
spirituality Buddhism is the only
religion that I can think of maybe jism
too that considers that considers music
to be unethical or immoral or unskillful
which is one reason why Buddhism in
general has crappy music they still
they're still Buddhist music it's just
not very

good and with with regard to Hindu music
I still am of the opinion that Shiva has
better music than Vishnu does shite
music is better than Vite music although
that's of course a digression
so yeah I mean if you if you practice
the piano and play the piano
mindfully then there's certainly going
to be some uh benefit from that you're
going to make some kind of spiritual
progress you're going to be making some
kind of positive Good Karma from
that although eventually if you start
getting really Advanced you may just
stop having interest in and leave it
behind

but I really don't see any necessary

harm in

that so I'm just going to move on to the

Proto sudo monk next question here and

is this oh wait this is just part of the

his third question so he's not

transgressive he said with regard to

whether he can play the piano mindfully

or not as a spiritual practice he says

all monks answered no but if

Enlightenment doesn't have a cause I

have no reason to renounce this practice

I have simplified my my total

attachments to maybe two or three things

I am not ready to

anounce okay so that wasn't a question

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

question here this is from five precept

Pete and five precept Pete

says did you get the opportunity to

teach your parents the dhama before

they're

passing and a little bit but not very

much partly because my mother

did not have a religious or spiritual

bone in her body that she was pretty

much of a normie bless her heart and she

just didn't get it she would have much

preferred that I not be a monk and just

provide her with grandchildren to

spoil with regard to my father he was

just uh kind of a an authority figure I

guess in the family and I mean we could

discuss things too much but if I got
preachy with him he'd start getting
annoyed so we we could discuss things
better than my mother and I could I mean
my mother and I kind of pretty much
stopped being on the same Planet when I
was around 13 years
old but it wasn't it wasn't very much I
remember like when I was like 19 or 20
years old I think I just wrote out by
hand um The Diamond Cutter Sutra and
like bound it into a little booklet and
gave it to him for his birthday or
Father's Day or something and he
appreciated that and he read it and
everything he didn't understand it he
told me he didn't completely understand

it which is makes sense because The
Diamond Cutter Sutra and the pra
paramita like literature in general is
paradoxical and I mean I don't think you
can fully intellectually grasp
it but with regard to my mother she did
ask me questions sometimes you know I
try to explain like real basic stuff
like the second Noble Truth which
anybody should know if you know nothing
about Buddhism besides one thing it
should be the second Noble Truth that
whenever you are unhappy it's because
you desire
something so yeah I did try to explain
that to her but she was you know set in

her ways you know you're not going to

have this radical transformation of

Personality just from hearing

statement like

that excuse me I got to wipe my eyes a

little

bit okay so yeah I I taught my parents a

little bit of dhama about as much as

they were willing to accept but I

couldn't really push it for for

different reasons my father would get

annoyed and my mother just I mean it

would just be over her head or she just

wasn't interested she just didn't get

anything beyond just

ordinary

samsara so I'm moving on to the next

question which is the last question at

long last almost three hours after we

start this thing although I have done

longer longer q&as than this and again

I'm not I'm not

complaining The Show Must Go

On so Aran

says can you discuss any potential

correlation between minimalism and

Buddhism and early Indian Buddhism was

definitely minimalist it wasn't the most

minimalist system in ancient India but

it was definitely way more minimalist

than now I mean like the middle path in

original early Buddhism would be

considered so Extreme as to be

Unthinkable it's just not even a valid consideration nowadays for most Buddhists in the West even most Buddhists in in Burma for that matter the original middle path just the the middle path between extremes was wandering around as a homeless penniless vagrant just silently begging for your food in the streets and wearing Rags sleeping under a tree that was the middle path and that would be so extreme for most Buddhists nowadays that it I mean it would just be considered just I don't know just maybe not insane to a serious Buddhist but just certainly not realistic so I mean minimalism in early Buddhism I mean you have no money you no

home you've got three rectangles of
cloth that that is your entire wardrobe
plus a belt you know you're begging for
your food silently you're not saying
anything so I mean Buddhism is
definitely minimalist or at least early
original Buddhism was definitely
minimalist you know you didn't need any
more than was necessary you I mean you
ate one meal a day because one meal a
day is the necessary minimum you're
supposed to sleep the just the minimum
required to keep you healthy and
functioning which was considered to be
about four hours per
night that I mean in Ancient India monks

were supposed to bathe no more than
twice a month except under certain
circumstances but generally usually I
mean it was minimalism even with regard
to keeping your body clean that you just
did enough to keep you healthy enough to
keep
meditating so there's definitely lots of
minimalism in Buddhism that it was a
minimalist system not all minimalist
systems are Buddhist but and and
nowadays not all Buddhist systems are
minimalist but certainly the original
Buddhism was minimalist like minimalist
just beyond comprehension to most modern
or postmodern
humans so I guess I answered that

question so I answered all of them by
golly what do you know about
that and so if you have any questions
for the next one you think I can answer
about Buddhism especially early Buddhism
or Terra a Buddhism monastic discipline
meditation philosophy in general Burma
in general me in general or would it be
me in
particular whichever if you got any kind
of question you think I could answer
then uh feel free to ask and uh hit the
like button if uh you did actually like
this I mean if you made it this far you
listen to this for over three hours you
must have liked it at least a little

bit and uh subscribe if you haven't

already and uh if you do have questions

just leave them in the comments below

and be

happy I'm going to turn this off now

okay I think we're

going hello and welcome to episode 95 of

question and answer I am your host poo

basa and I will probably continue to be

your host for quite a

while unless people run out of questions

or if out of out of considerations for

progressivism and diversity and

inclusion and all that I may just be

suddenly replace by an obese black

lesbian who may or may not know anything

about Buddhist

philosophy but until that time happens

I'm going to be answering questions and

we got some uh some relatively

interesting questions not that we don't

pretty much always get at least a few
juicy meaty kind of questions but we got
some we got some good ones this time
maybe uh slightly better than average
just just a little bit
just statistically speaking so anyways
I'm going to commence answering
questions here and the first question is
from game fap and game fap says where
can I get that Bigfoot canvas you have
in the background which is right right
there and the thing is it's not really a
canvas that is uh glazed porcelain it's
like a big tile thing that has been
framed and and it was it's a like an
original artwork by an artist named
Terry

stoles and I guess you could uh you

could like he does have a um a website

so it' be St Terry stoles artwork.com

and it's t r r y s t o LZ artwork.com

but consider that it's

like possibly he made only one of them

um there may not be anything resembling

it that he that he has for sale right

now so I'm not sure exactly how you're

going to get yourself your own

personal UFO Bigfoot

tile but when there's a will there's a

way I'm sure you can come up with

something but um yeah this that was done

by Terry

stoles so I'm just going to move on to

gap's next question here which is a
followup on the first question which is
speaking of what do you think of Bigfoot
and crypted in general are there any you
think are seriously
plausible and I don't know what
seriously plausible would necessarily
mean in the case of some kind of
paranormal event because I do think that
Bigfoot is a paranormal event that um
like some like materialistic atheist
types who nevertheless are open-minded
with regard to Bigfoot would consider
Bigfoot or Sasquatch or yetis or
whatever to be just a species of animal
maybe some kind of offshoot of the the
the homed line or something but I do

consider Bigfoot to be a kind of paranormal event like a sighting of Bigfoot assuming that it's not just you know a bear or something something that people misidentify um so it's it's just like pretty much any other kind of paranormal event just going with um the theory of George P Hansen in his in his great book The the trickster and the Paranormal that uh there we have a certain amount of structure you know you got so-called laws of physics and so forth but that's not enough we also have to have sort of like a sociological psychological structure that keeps it

everything more or less predictable and

more or less

safe and nevertheless there's always

going to be a certain amount of chaos

that is able to seep through into our

world through the cracks between the

rules between the laws and so forth and

Bigfoot would be something along those

lines I think there's a good chance that

like UFOs and Grays and that sort of

thing are also more paranormal than some

alien species flying through space in

nuts and bolts spacecraft to come to

this

planet

so cryptids in general you know I'm I'm

abnormally open-minded with regard to

the possibility of

anything um I am a little bit skeptical

of like a plesiosaur in Loch Ness or

maybe a family of plesiosaurs I guess

there have to be like a breeding

population of plesiosaurs in Loch Ness

which uh seems pretty unlikely to

me but Bigfoot

um I mean there's a legend of Bigfoot or

Sasquatch or you know something along

the lines of Sasquatch all around the

world um sort of like

uh ghosts and so forth and um that

that's uh kind of setting me up for the

next the next question which is also

it's

coincidentally about Bigfoot or

Sasquatch so getting back to uh game

faps question here

though uh what do I think of Bigfoot and

cryptids in general I think that they

are for the most part

paranormal um you know somebody finds a

Tasmanian tiger you know Tasmanian wolf

the thilosene if you will um yeah that's

sort of like a crypted you know it's

considered to be extinct but people keep

claiming to see them and see their

Footprints and so forth that could just

be like just a standard scientific

biological explanation but something

like Bigfoot

or leprechauns elves Grays you know

little people that kind of mess with

people

sometimes um mess with big people I

mean um yeah I think that it it's

more um this sort of like a world kind

of similar to ours that kind of bleeds

through into this version of reality and

and some people who are more linal or

have a they're just more receptive to

strange things I guess more Lial that

they're more likely to experience these

kind of things um

so yeah I'm I'm I'm fairly open-minded

on that with regard to that sort of

thing like ghosts also for

example um from the from the Buddhist

point of view I think Bigfoot would
be uh just categorized as some kind of
monster that belongs to the the realm of
the the four Great Kings which would
actually be a superhuman level although
it's it's just kind of a catchall level
for all sorts of terrestrial monster
like
beings
so yeah with regard to any of them being
seriously plausible yeah I think most of
them well maybe I shouldn't say most of
them but uh lots of them are are
plausible in the sense of just being a
kind of paranormal event that to some
degree might be conjured up like
materialized by sort of the like a

yungan like Collective unconscious or something that works in symbols and you know certain symbols are common to the human race and can um just result in people seeing these things and maybe even being abducted by these things sometimes but the loch nest monster I am fairly skeptical of so I'm just going to move on the next question here this is from Jeffrey and Jeffrey says have you ever encountered a
Sasquatch what is the burmes lore of them and that's two questions so I'm going to have to separate
this okay have I ever encountered a Sasquatch the answer is no so so that's

an easy one that's one word there or it
would have been one word if I hadn't
kept
talking so no I have never seen a
Sasquatch my father when I was a kid
claimed that he had a friend who saw a
Sasquatch and he was he was driving home
on a very Rainy Night the the friend was
according to what my father told me and
a Sasquatch cross this cross the road it
was a country road and it was white like
an albino Sasquatch or an abominable
snowman or something and it had an
injured leg so it was kind of limping
and dragging one leg in in the pouring
down
rain but uh yeah that's the closest I've

ever come to encountering a Sasquatch is
I encountered my father who encountered
some friend of his who allegedly
encountered a
Sasquatch but getting to e
Jeff's I almost called him efree right
now I don't know why I left the J off I
didn't do it on purpose Jeffrey nothing
personal here but uh Jeffrey's second
question here was what is the Burmese
lore of them and there are beings that
are allegedly existent in Burma that
come fairly close like remarkably close
to the standard description of a
Sasquatch and that is a being called a
the as in the burmes exclamation

an which means well an is like it's like
a festival of alarm and the is this
being and they're big and they're hairy
and they live in the forests and they
smell bad and they mess with people
sometimes so that they're scary which
could also apply to Sasquatches and
Bigfoot and so forth um but the Burmese
consider the the to be a kind of ghost
it's kind of a spirit being that can
appear and disappear which would explain
why nobody has ever caught a Sasquatch
at least
uncontroversially you know I mean um in
some tabloids or something you know you
might have some that been caught and put
on display or whatever but uh not

uncontroversially you know it just has
not been um examined by scientists and
documented and given a scientific name
and so
forth so yeah that's the Burmese lore of
them I really don't know a whole lot
about the Burmese the ye I've never
encountered one of those either although
I did live in a forest that was
supposedly infested with them and people
were afraid to go through that forest at
night because it was infested by
theier and I mean I lived in that forest
for years and never never came acoss
cross one so um it could be that because
I was a monk they they steered clear to

me they steered clear of me you know

they just kind of avoided me but uh yeah

I just I'm not

very prone

to witnessing paranormal events not

nearly so much as certain other people

including my

father so I guess I've exhausted myself

in in describing the Burmese the but

there is a kind of Sasquatch like being

that lives in Burma and the only real

difference between the American

Sasquatch and the theier is that the

theier is just considered to be a

paranormal Like a Ghost type creature I

don't know if You' even call it

paranormal because ghosts are just

considered to be
natural existent beings they're just at
a different level of reality than us or
different subtlety of
matter whereas the Sasquatch is
considered to be a kind of Flesh and
Blood living creature that uh is either
some kind of you know wild animal or
wild kind of semi human or possibly in
some cases even a kind of alien for
example there's a a large correlation
between Sasquatch sightings and UFO
encounters then that some people have
actually claimed to see Bigfoot on UFOs
like when they get abducted and taken
into the UFO to to have people or to

have Grays like probing them and so
forth sometimes they'll see a Sasquatch
there which could just be a Wookie for
all I
know so I think I'm just going to move
on to the next question here this is
from covac and CAD
Zeda and covac and CAD zida says in a
much older Q&A you mentioned that there
are sutas where regular arahant are
called Buddhas as well along with
anagami referring to
arahant can you please cite
those I think it supports the idea of
the Buddha originally being called the
datag and was the unique name he was
called by his followers during his own

life well there are a few sutas where a
regular enlightened being and ARA is
called a Buddha which does make sense
because Buddha simply means enlightened
or
awakened so any arahant would be
enlightened or awakened just as the
Buddha was an arahant the Buddha is
called an arant I mean it's like namot
B samas buddas so I think
originally um Buddha and arahant were
pretty much synon
although godma Buddha was called the
Buddha partly because he was the leader
of the Buddhist movement at the time I
guess um with regard to the state of non

return apparently being used as a synonym for enlightenment that would be the first several sutas of the ID Wuda possibly found elsewhere but those are the ones that I'm aware of and with regard to arant being called Buddhas I know it's in the toptica somewhere I know it's in the sutas I just do not recall the exact sutas where uh an ordinary enlightened being is called Buddha but uh getting to this statement at the end that's kind of a a little appendix to the question where covac in sead Zid is saying I think it supports the idea of the Buddha originally being called the Daga and was the unique name he was

called by his followers during his own
life I I think it's possible that I mean
I think there is one or two um epithets
that the Buddha is called that might be
even more common than the datag like
sugod you know the sometime in the some
old translation it's called the welf
farer you know he who is well gone or I
think sometimes it's just called like
the happy one or the fortunate one or
something um and also of course he was
called bagawa by by a lot of people
so I mean Nagata I'm not sure Nagata
Also may have originally been um like it
could have applied to any fully
enlightened being and I really do not

think that there was the philosophical level any difference between the Buddha and any enlightened being I think he was te just teaching people look I did it you can do it too and it was later glorify ification of the founder of the system that resulted in this like orders of magnitude between a fully enlightened Buddha and an ordinary Aran even though they had the exact same amount of wisdom at least going with Abid damama because in Abid dama absence of delusion is the same as wisdom amoha equals PA so any enlightened being would have zero delusion which means they would have the same amount of
wisdom as any other fully enlightened

being the Buddha is probably more of an

original thinker and maybe more

presumably more intelligent just like

intellect wise which could very much

help him to devise the system when

others had

not but with regard to just Transcendent

wisdom he would be the equal of his most

lowly fully enlightened

disciple

so but yeah I mean what he was called

during his own lifetime you know it's

just Buddha bagawa maybe datag maybe sug

and uh probably a few others possibly

some that have just been lost that we

don't even

know just the uh the S Goa I'm sure a lot of people were just calling him you know know the philosopher Goa during his lifetime so uh I think I'll just move on to coaction CAD Z's next question here which is how to overcome laziness sloth and toror Etc any practical advice from text or experience would be appreciated um there's at least one sua that deals specifically with overcoming sloth and torper and I don't recall which suta it is I'm relatively lazy and don't like to do homework for answering these you know like read the questions in advance and then like look up the answers I mean if I can do that pretty much anybody can do it but uh so there are there is at least

one suta probably more than one talking about how to overcome sloth and torper there's probably some discussion of that in vinia also the rules of monastic discipline but I do recall um there is a suta or a scene in winia where the the Buddha is giving advice about what to do when you're when you're like

sleepy

and I think some of it is just like like pulling on your ear earlobes and like splashing cold water on your face or imagining bright light you know like meditating on like a light Casina or something um an obvious one that I would resort to a lot of the time just getting

up and doing walking meditation I mean
if you're just starting to doze by just
sitting there sedentary and inactive
then obviously it's much harder to fall
asleep when you're actually you know up
and moving around so doing walking
meditation is a good thing to do when
you're when you're
meditating there was one kind of um it
was like a drastic Last Resort when I
was doing really intensive practice in a
cave I shouldn't even be saying this but
I'm saying it anyway just because the
the way I am where I would actually
stimulate a certain part of my body just
to the point where it was stimulated and
then stop because that would cause a

certain amount of mental arousal

increased heart rate and so forth which

actually worked pretty well although

some people just don't know when to stop

that's the

problem

so yeah I guess I mean I'm sure I'm

forgetting some of the some of the bits

of advice but uh I remember like at the

very end the Buddha is saying that when

you've tried everything and you're still

sleepy then apparently your body needs

some sleep and then you better lie down

and go to sleep of course being mindful

of the moment of waking you know you

just you're just sleeping as long as is

necessary to rest your body so that you

can that you can't continue

practicing

so I think I've been talking mainly

about sleepiness which would be torper

rather than sloth and uh seac and sead

Zena apparently is lazy also although

they're they're similar and so you know

it's like laziness and sleepiness sloth

and torper are two words that are not

common in the English language anymore

at least not in

America so laziness and sleepiness would

probably be better um translation of

Tina Mida which is the original poly

Tina is like laziness and Mida is

sleepiness

so how else to overcome

laziness I mean just brute force of

willpower I guess but again it's if

you're if you're up and active doing

walking meditation instead of sitting

meditation that

helps but being lazy in general can

actually be advantageous to a meditator

because you can just sit there and do

nothing essentially and be meditating

properly and be lazy at the same time

it's a win-win scenario in in that

respect so I guess I'm going to move on

to covac and sead Zena's third

question which is as follows can you

please do an analysis of ajan sona's

short essay on breath meditation
practice in terraa tradition he tracks
its Evolution from the pamb magga to the
wuti Maga to the Wii Maga and I mean
it's not that short of an essay because
I made it about halfway through and I
just kept scrolling down and it was it
was it's not that short of an essay and
um so this is this is sort of like a
variation this kind of question is like
a variation on the the question the kind
of question that I was remarking working
upon I think it was the previous Q&A
where somebody will submit a kind of
essay and at the bottom say thoughts so
this is sort of a similar one where
instead of writing the essay themselves

they just you know send a link to

somebody else's essay or to a video

which might be relatively long anything

more than eight minutes is is a long

video for

me and then and then like

thoughts so anyways I made it halfway

through and a John Sona was talking

about how I mean at least the first half

of the essay is talking about um

misinterpretation by the commentarial

tradition on the idea of the nimita

which is considered to be a Hallmark of

access concentration which means you're

right at the the threshold of first

J and there's really no explanation of

this in the sutas it's like a later
commentary thing and the three texts
that are referred to here the pamb Maga
the wuti Maga and the wisi Maga are all
commentarial works the pambid Maga was
an old enough commentary that actually
got included into the titica but it's
it's pretty obviously from a later
stratum a much later stratum than the
earliest
sutas so maybe it was added like around
the time of the third Council or
something so I mean it's it's sort of
you know the Buddha is talking
figuratively about you know like the the
sign of of meditation and then by the
time you get to Buddha Goa and the wisi

Maga they're they're taking it they're interpreting it literally that you really do have to see this sign that I mean it just it's it's from the commentarial tradition it's it's it's really not canonical the whole idea of access concentration being the threshold into first jna is not canonical and I mean I I would even take it further and just saying the whole interpretation of J especially first jna as a superhuman mental state I just consider that to be um just a misinterpretation a garbling of what the Buddha taught so I really don't have any problem with aan Sona saying that you

know like some uh description of a
meditative State got misinterpreted
by scholar monks who probably didn't
meditate all that
much which is kind of ironic considering
that thei Maga is uh one of the most
important meditation manuals in terava
Buddhism but uh when I was a monk and
reading the WIA it seemed more of a a
manual on self-
hypnosis than on actual cultivation of
samasati but of course that is
unorthodox
so yeah based on the half the first half
of the article that I read um yeah I
don't have any problem with aan sona's
aan Sona saying that uh over the

centuries the commentarial tradition
started misunderstanding certain aspects
of meditation because as a general rule
the monks who write books tend not to be
the monks who are doing the Intensive
practice
um but even the pan B Maga which is the
only text that is canonical even that is
relatively late text and the wuti Maga
just got phased out I mean it was the
wuti Maga was based on an earlier
commentarial work called the wiui Maga
which I think exists only in like
Chinese translation which then got
translated into English um then again I
think like several years ago I think I I

remember hearing some mention of an
actual poly version of the wiui Maga was
found in some old Monastery in Sri Lanka
or
something
so yeah I really don't have a whole lot
to say about the half of the article by
venerable a John Sono that I read other
than seemed it seemed to make sense to
me so I'm just going to move on the next
question here this is from
Austin and Austin says Goa claimed the
only way to make thorough progress in
weasa is through meditation of
Sensations on the body because awareness
of Sensations on the body links the
conscious mind to the unconscious mind

did Lord Buddha ever teach this and I'm
pretty sure the answer to that would be
no uh first of all terraa Buddhism as
far as I know has no concept of an
unconscious or subconscious mind other
than this weird State called banga which
is described in the in the Abid texts
which is just a kind of test
pattern like those of you who are old
enough to remember may recall that it
used to be on
TV like
when the the network was off the air
there would just be this test pattern
which had these weird things like
crosshairs and there was a picture of

like a an American Indian and a few
other things um and it's it's kind of
that that's the way banga cheah would
work it's like your last conscious
perception before you die is your test
pattern banga cheetah throughout your
your subsequent life like your next your
next existence your last perception
before you died in the previous life is
like your subconscious test
pattern like whenever you're like sound
asleep where you're just not thinking
anything in particular for a split
second it's this test pattern
that that takes over this banga cheah um
so yeah the whole idea of an unconscious
mind um it's it's kind of it seems

slightly scandalous to me that experts on the human mind like a lot of Buddhist monks they never really had the insight to realize that most of our mentality is below the surface I'm sure I mean Abid dama kind of takes for granted that all sorts of things are happening in your mind that you're not aware of but it's all linear and at the same level it's just happening so fast for example that you can't catch all of it with your conscious thinking mind you don't have enough time to advert to something and like seriously perceive it enough that it really registers very well but uh the whole idea of like deceiving oneself

people operating at different levels of consciousness simultaneous ly like like hysteria and so forth there's really not much um explanation of that um until you get up into relatively modern times I mean Freud was the first person that really tried to systematize it in in a scientific manner a author like Doki who was before Freud had very good insights into that sort of thing just from observing uh human human nature but um for some reason um Orthodox terab Buddhism just doesn't really have a concept of the unconscious mind that is actually functioning and influencing our Behavior I mean other than maybe Karma I mean Karma would be a

kind of subconscious momentum but the
the Orthodox like the the commentarial
tradition really doesn't interpret it
that
way so I mean there's lots of evidence
for a subconscious mind and even uh
certain Buddhist Concepts like anusia or
latent tendencies in karma and so forth
would seem to imply a subconscious mind
but still Orthodox Terra really does not
have much of a concept of a subconscious
mind like the mind working at different
levels
simultaneously according to Abid dama
you can't even like think and walk at
the same time because it there has to be

like this your mind is continually like

alternating between all these things

because it can't

like it's incapable of parallel

processing it has to be completely

linear like like a onedimensional

so there is that but also going to

claiming that the only way to make

thorough progress in weas is through

meditation of Sensations on the body

well I mean if you read the sa batan Su

there are four sa Banas one of them is

wait an upasana which would be like

contemplation of feelings another one's

Caya nasana which is contemplation of

the

body and that one is kind of problematic

to me because I don't see how you could
contemplate your body except through the
medium of mental States or feelings or
so forth which would be
mental
so I don't think the Buddha would have
taught four sa panas if only one of them
was really effective
so yeah the Goa people have a lot of
kind of strange ideas and they consider
Goa to be a kind of infallible Oracle
which I do not think he
was so I guess I answer that question
I'm going to move on to Austin's next
question here which is when I develop
strong somat on the In-N-Out breath do I

need to shift my concentration to

develop C or awareness in other areas

besides the breath well I mean so long

as you're still making progress so long

as you're still meditating well you you

can may as well continue with the breath

because mindfulness of breathing can

take you according to Orthodox tradition

all the way to Fourth Jana it can take

you all the way to the

top

so it's not necessary to shift your

concentration to develop

awareness uh to shift it away from

meditation the breath if meditation on

the breath is the main kind of

meditation you've been practicing I

think the only real reason for shifting
to a different kind of meditation would
be if it's just not working anymore if
you're not making progress or it's
stagnating or you're just getting bored
with it so that your mind's just
wandering off again and again then you
might be justified in switching to a
different method I mean just go with
what works but if meditation on the
breathing you know
anapan sa is still working then there's
no real need to switch to something else
that could be another goka thing where
they're saying you know you start with
the breath and then you move to the the

the feelings of various parts of your
body the body scan stuff that I assume
would be where Austin got this question
maybe because he mentions Goa in the
previous
question but uh yeah it's not really
Orthodox they're numerous factors about
Gua that are not particularly Orthodox
and there's nothing necessarily wrong
with not being particularly Orthodox
because I'm not particularly Orthodox
either but just like oversimplifying
dhama um into
like I I don't I'm not even sure how to
explain this because ultimately Dharma
is extremely simple you know if you
follow the teachings of the ateka waga I

mean how complicated is it if you don't
have any beliefs or you know you're not
adhering to any thoughts or anything I
mean it's it's like super duper
mysticism really which is very simple no
moving
Parts but I mean if you're taking
Orthodox tradition and then just
streamlining the heck out of it and
still insisting that that is orthodox
that's that's a whole different kettle
of
wax so to speak
so yeah I mean the short the short qu
the short answer here is uh you know if
it's still if it's still working there's

no need to shift to a different kind of meditation and you'll get I mean just going with Orthodox tradition again you will get deeper meditation through mindfulness of breathing than you will from um for example doing the the body scans of of the sensation in different parts of your body which which is includes more busy work it's more complicated and so it's not going to go as

deep so I'm just going to move on to Austin's next question

here which is can you explain your meditation technique again you shift concentration between the touch of the thumbs to the nose and then the ears

question mark well this is referring to
um a system that I worked out when I was
doing intensive practice in a certain
cave in Northwestern Burma and I was
really going for it and my mind is too
changeable that the same meditation
technique isn't going to work all the
time sometimes my mind is more like
restless and so I have to have more of a
Restless kind of meditation with lots of
busy work to keep the mind occupied
other times my mind is really quiet and
subtle and so I use a more quiet and
subtle meditation so I came up with what
call Four gears you know like a car
first gear you know that's that was like

desperation mode that's when like my

mind just does not want to settle down

at

all so first gear would be the the

primary object of meditation would be

the sensation of touch between my thumbs

so I'd be sitting in meditation my

thumbs touching like this and it would

just be touching touching

touching and it's kind of a good um

object of

meditation because you can adjust the

pressure I doing my thumbs here you can

adjust the pressure so if it starts

getting too subtle you can push a little

harder you don't want to push too hard

and you can lighten up a little bit and

then that would be the primary object

and then whatever would arise you know

my mind would start to stray start going

in different directions then you just

label that and go back to the primary

object and I labeled everything except

for

breathing swallowing my

slobber and uh I think it was

hearing so I if those arose you know I

just kind of be aware of it and then go

back to the primary object but if

anything else happened like I'd start

remembering something you just not

remembering you know just label it I

mean i' to be labeling almost everything

except as I say the breathing process
swallowing my slobber and hearing I
wouldn't label those just because it
would interfere with subsequent Gears of
meditation so that was that was first
gear is just primary object here and
then you just label anything that arises
as just keeping the mind just kind of
pounding away you know beating your mind
with a stick as uh um SE upand would
would
say and so then that was again that was
like desperation mode
I usually would start off with second
gear which was anaana and it's just
mindfulness of breathing which would be
mindfulness of the sensation of touch

the air at the

nostrils and I wouldn't note it I

wouldn't note breathing and breathing

out I just observe that and then if the

Mind started to wander again I would

label anything except for you know

breathing in breathing out and

slobbering the slobbering swallowing my

Sal

and and

hearing maybe even once in a while I

might I might even note hearing or label

that but usually I wouldn't so that was

second year just

an with emphasis on the sensation of

touch no breathing in breathing out no

concept of breathing in breathing out no
trying to follow your breath in and out
which is not really
Orthodox um you just are aware of the
vena the touch sensation of the air at
your nostril
that would be the the primary object and
then again just note and label anything
else that would arise except for those
few things that I mentioned then third
gear um one of the best ways of
describing third gear is like you're in
a
library and you've got this machine that
is broadcasting your thoughts through a
loudspeaker and there's like that big
scary librarian with the the cat ey

glasses like on a chain around on her
her big red neck and the Beehive hairo
and everything the stereotypical scary
librarian lady who when you start making
noise she starts like giving you dirty
looks I've been told that libraries are
no longer like this anymore that they're
like daycare centers but I mean I'm
going with like the oldfashioned
approach which is pretty much the only
approach I know with regard to
libraries so anyways what you're doing
is you're observing your mind carefully
and trying trying to catch any thoughts
that arise and this does have some
precedent at least in the commentarial

tradition of Terra Buddhism with the
story of potila who is this monk who was
a scholar Monk and the Buddha was
continually calling him Tua potila which
just means like POA who is in vain or
like good for nothing or empty you know
useless potila pointless
potila and so finally it kind of
embarrassed potila into thinking well
maybe I shouldn't be studying so much
and not to like actually be practicing
dhama so he went off to a monastery out
in the out in the forest forest
Monastery where all the song of there
was fully
enlightened and he goes to the Abbott
and says please teach me and they're

saying no you're you're too renowned of a scholar you know it's like you're you're our you're our senior and I don't want to we don't I don't want to teach you so he'd go to the second in seniority and he didn't want to teach him and then in the third and Senior he didn't want to teach him until finally he gets to like a 9-year-old novice who became enlightened just I mean before he was even ordained really there's it's a kind of um stereotypical enlightened novice that you'll find in the text sometimes where as soon as the razor touches their head to shave them to get them ready to become a novice monk they

become

enlightened they're just so ripe for it

so anyways the novice

he I mean the novice accepts he says but

first I'm going to have to test you I

want you to just walk out into that lake

or it was like a pond or a lake there

and so potila just takes off out into

the into the lake just Wades out gets

his robes all wet and everything so then

the the novice calls him back and says

all right all right you seem you seem to

be serious enough and then he gives him

this like a a simile of how to meditate

and he says there's a termite Mound with

six holes and there's a lizard inside

that termite Mount it's hiding so you

want to catch this lizard so what you do
you cover up five of the holes and then
you watch very carefully the sixth hole
so that when the lizard comes out you
can grab it and that's essentially third
gear where you're you're sort of like um
you're not paying attention to your five
senses you know seeing hearing smelling
tasting touching that you're just
watching the mind you know that's the
sixth the sixth hole the sixth s sense
base is is
mind so you're just watching that
carefully when the lizard or the the
unenlightened perception the thought
comes up you catch it when you just you

just note it and then that it just Fades
out again so you notice that if you're
if you watch your mind very carefully to
see what thought comes up next sometimes
it takes a long time for any thought to
come up so so it's it's sort of like
that it's like just intently observing
your own mind which in and of itself
does a really good job of making your
mind silent but still there's this
effort involved it's still perceptual
and so you haven't really got to the
highest level yet which would be fourth
gear and fourth gear is you just kind of
relax your mind you just sit there wide
open just empty and Silent you know it's
like you're you're wide awake but your

mind is just like clear like

glass and again you may start to think

thoughts will just naturally start to

arise through the power of comma going

with Buddhist philosophy but if you're

if you're just wide awake you just see

it and as soon as you just become aware

of it it just it just Fades out

again but that was like really Advanced

and I wasn't able to do that like really

well most of the time

so generally when I was doing my

intensive practice I was mostly between

like second and third gear you know if

if second gear wasn't working I'd try

third third gear wasn't working I might

go back to Second sometimes strangely
like first second and third aren't
working but fourth still works just
because your mind doesn't want to do all
this busy work you know it just wants
silence and Stillness
so I mean you got to feel into it and it
it is good advice for any meditator to
have more than one method because your
mind's not going to be exactly the same
all the time maybe a few people there
are some people that are just really
steady you know they don't have
particularly expanded moods they don't
have particularly contracted moods but
with me my mind just expands and
contracts and it it's there's a lot of

variability so it just behoved me to have more than one meditation method so that when my mind is still I've got a still meditation method when my mind is just restless and overactive I've got a Restless overactive meditation method because if you try to do a still meditation method when your mind is overactive it's you're just going to derail I mean your mind's just going to wander all over the place but if you try and do like a like a busy kind of meditation when your mind is tending towards silence I mean you're just stuck at the ABCs you're not going to get very far with it

so that's the long answer to my
meditation technique that that I
mentioned I assume that's what he's
referring
to I have gone with other kinds of
meditation techniques but uh I won't I
won't go into uh like minute detail
because I've got other questions to
answer for example this one from ruie
and ruie said did you ever experiment
with or practice standing
meditation and yes I actually did
because
um there is a monk in Burma whether he's
still alive or not I don't know named
tenji dong Seattle and he specialized in
standing meditation I attended one of

his

Retreats um in Burma in in

Pagan

and um he he had like these little

booklets he considered himself to be a

kind of medical

Authority and I mean if you read the

booklets you can see that he really was

not much of a medical Authority like you

know for for General Health bitter

things are best but the best bitter

things are neem fruits and neem leaves

and for the teeth white things are best

but the best white thing for your teeth

is salt you know this kind of stuff

anyways he gave a a list of benefits of

doing standing meditation and they were
all like health benefits there wasn't
any real meditative benefit to doing
standing meditation it's just like
you'll never have a stroke in your life
and it improves your circulation it
improves your digestion this kind of
thing but anyway I attended this
Retreat and we had to do standing
meditation sometimes and he's saying you
know don't worry if the medit the the
attendant you know if they see you
starting to wobble they'll catch you but
generally you hear like this thud every
now and then from somebody falling over
while doing walk or standing
meditation and one of the first things

you'll notice about doing standing meditation if you try to do it is the soles of your feet get really hot I mean it starts to get painful just standing there it's a lot of people don't realize that just remaining Motionless in any one particular position becomes very uncomfortable after a relatively short period of time sometimes it can become painful uh most people just like not being mindful you know little to shift positions you're just sitting there on the couch

and you know it just starts being being a little too much pressure or or little something that you're starting to feel

uncomfortable you know they won't even
be fully aware of what they're doing
they'll just shift position so that's
kind of a good practice is just being
aware of what your body's doing all the
time just teach yourself not to fidget
for
example but uh getting back to standing
meditation yeah Tang Don Seattle did not
impress me at all and I wrote a blog
post um I don't think it's in any of my
books but uh if if I come up with a
fourth book then it'll probably be in
there because I have enough material for
a fourth book which would mainly be
describing my ex personal experiences as
a monk most of it in

Burma and uh yeah the the Tangi dong
Retreat that I went to was uh I mean it
it was kind of a fiasco actually partly
because in addition to standing
meditation Tangi Donato also instructed
his his meditators to breathe a little
harder than usual and the the
explanation for this does make some
sense it's like if you breathe a little
harder or faster than usual then you
have to use conscious attention to keep
doing that which keeps your mind from
wandering
away um you know it kind of sounds
plausible but what people were doing at
that Retreat is just breathing so hard

that they were obviously
hyperventilating and then they just
start freaking out or barking like dogs
or howling or laughing or crying it was
it was just like a mad house going on in
that meditation
Hall and Tangi donci who was not very
sophisticated with regard to
interpreting certain things considered
that to be py which is one of the seven
factors of Enlightenment and if you
don't have anything like that you're not
experiencing one of the the seven
factors of Enlighten which is necessary
for you to become
enlightened so I actually dropped out of
that that Retreat after after a few days

there's actually one of the the sponsors
of the retreat who who was the donor of
the monastery a very rich
very um what's the word very proud
man and I mean he had a like a video
camera and anyone started freaking out
or acting weird he just run up with this
video camera and like get footage of it
and one of the reasons why my meditation
just didn't work out very well first of
all I had no desire to hyperventilate
you know you're supposed to breathe
naturally and actually according to like
the anapana suta you know or any kind of
instructions uh in the sutas with regard
to breathing meditation you're supposed

to calm the breath not

hyperventilate and so as it turns out my

translator was a

physiologist and I'm telling him these

people are hyperventilating and he say

no that's not possible you it's

impossible to hyperventilate because

there are natural regulatory systems

that prevent us from hyperventilating

which I mean you wonder why they even

have a word for hyperventilate if nobody

could possibly

hyperventilate so I actually just being

the the barbar the UNC Western Barbarian

with no sense of propriety I actually

told tangon SE that these people are

hyperventilating they're getting drunk

on oxygen it's not PT you you know

they're drunk on too much oxygen in

their brain and he was just grinning

he's like oh these barbarians they have

such strange

ideas but uh yeah it was just too much

for

me but uh getting back to standing

meditation which is what the question is

actually about yes U I didn't really see

a whole lot of benefit to it because

first of all I mean you can fall over

and The Souls of your feet hurt and it's

really not a stable position for

meditating like if you're sitting cross

like especially if you're sitting in the

full Lotus you've got like a tripod you
know you're behind and your two knees
are kind of holding you steady you know
you're firm like a
mountain but standing meditation is not
really steady and I did not see any real
benefit to be had from it that you
couldn't get from sitting meditation or
walking meditation you know it's you
could say it's sort of inter immediate
between sitting and walking
meditations but I think just alternating
between sitting and walking is
fine and uh since I gave such a long
answer to such a short question I'm just
going to move on to the next question
here and this is from White Ash Piper

and this is kind of an interesting
question have you seen secrets of
Skinwalker Ranch The Entity they're
chasing is totally messing with these
scientists and yeah it turns out my
sweetheart and I have watched the first
three seasons of Skinwalker Ranch
although the fourth season you got to
pay money to watch that and we don't
really like the show that much you know
we don't like it so much that we're
willing to pay money to watch
it but there is this Ranch called
Skinwalker Ranch in like Northeastern
Utah and the US government spent years
studying this because there's all these

weird anomalies happening there finally
this guy named Brandon he's some rich
guy with his own helicopter I don't know
what he does for a living he bought the
ranch and then he got this team of
scientists and security guys and so
forth to continue doing like studying
the phenomena there and one of the main
guys is this he's like a cowboy
scientist from Texas and I just love it
when he's he's talking about according
to Albert Einstein you just you just
assume that someone who talks with that
kind of accent is it's going to be a H
Seed you know you just it's just such a
an it just seems like an anomaly to have
like an intelligent person like a

scientist who talks with this thick southern accent I mean there's there's no reason why a person can't be intelligent and have a thick southern accent like Bill Clinton You know despite his his shortcomings and all that he was a road scholar back when University were still you know accepting applicants and giving awards for actual Merit and you know Scholastic aptitude and so forth and he had like an Arkansas accent so it's just it's just kind of weird to me when when when the cowboy scientists talking about Albert Einstein but um yeah I think that there's there's something going on there

that uh at the very least there's like magnetic there's an anomaly in the magnetic field field or something like House of mystery you know there's lots of places like that where just things happen weird and then just the expectation of weird things happening helps to to like elicit these weird things happening you know the faith in the weirdness helps the weirdness to come out but it does seem like there there could be some kind of like a real considerable anomaly or a even like a portal of of some sort that's like I can't remember it's like 5,000 feet up it's like a mile up over this place they call the triangle and they're

continually trying to like launch

rockets and fly over it with helicopters

and stuff and there's always this weird

stuff happening

there um whether it's a conscious entity

there I don't know and a lot of the a

lot of the show is just sensationalism

like you know they're trying to drill

into this hill and they hit something

that the drill won't go through and

there's like metal or or something in

the soil there and they're seeing Oh

it's like this Dome shaped metal object

that the drill won't go through and

what's inside this hill you know they're

like implying that there's like a flying

saucer or like an alien base or
something in there when in all
likelihood it's just like hard rocks
with some metal or but um I mean you
watch the show it is pretty obvious that
that weird things are happening there
lots of like UFOs and that sort of thing
cattle mutilations have occurred there
the the American Indians had Legends of
Skin Walkers there which you know some
sort of um paranormal
entity so it's it's it's hard to say
exactly and it's um you know it's not
going to follow rules I don't think that
scientists are ever going to prove
anything other than there's an increased
likelihood of inexplicable stuff going

on

there but I do think that there may

actually be some kind of weird anomaly

or portal or something that's like a

mile up in the air up

there but who knows so I'm just going to

move on next question this is from

cify and cify says if everything is

interconnected how Nirvana is connected

to samsara from my understanding Nirvana

is something separate from samsara but

then if that is the case then it

contradicts the concept of

interconnection of everything

thing

so here we got a cup the cup is made out

of porcelain so how is the cup and the porcelain
interconnected I mean the cup is the form of the porcelain and the porcelain is the substance or Essence of the of the cup you take away one you take away both you take away the cup there's no more porcelain you take away the porcelain there's no more cup how are they interconnected
I mean it's just kind of a weird question how the cup and the porcelain are
interconnected so I mean that's from my understanding that's how like the absolute I mean regardless of what you want to call it call it Dao call it

capital G God call it Brahman call it

the

dharmakaya that that would be like the

essence and um just the forms of Sam

Sara are the

form the underlying Essence and the form

or like waves in water that that would

be another example I use that analogy

quite a lot actually what is how are

waves and water interconnected like the

waves on the surface of the water and

the water itself how are they

interconnected they just exist at two

different levels of reality same as the

cup

so it's like it's a cup and it's

porcelain both at the same time but cup doesn't mean porcelain porcelain doesn't mean cup you can have a cup that's made out of something besides porcelain you can have porcelain that isn't shaped into a cup that they're not synonymous so they're they're a and not a at the same time that this cup is violates the Aristotelian laws of thought because it is a and not a at the same time but the way you get around that is you just acknowledge that it's at two different levels of Truth or two different levels of reality at that like the more fundamental level you got essence you know the essence of water the essence of porcelain and then at a

more contrived artificial level you've
got form which is cup or waves or
whatever so you can work out for
yourself how they're interconnected how
how the the porcelain and the cup are
interconnected
here how is it
interconnected they're they're
essentially the same just at two
different levels of
reality with I mean with regard to
Nirvana and samsara especially from a
Mahayana point of view this is just rank
heresy from a terad point of view but
Nirvana would be Ultimate Reality and
samsara would be based on

that but it would just be like

artificial forms that people think are

reality and thus it is like delusional

it's like

illusion but the illusion is based on an

underlying

reality so I hope I explained that well

enough to confuse

everybody because I'm moving on to the

next question this is from Mr special

Victory which in Burmese would be Onan

who was the father of modern

Burma so anyways Mr special Victory says

do you know anything about the damaka

tradition in Tai terraa Wikipedia

remarks quote the damaka tradition is

known for its teaching that there is a

true self connected with Nirvana which
was notably criticized in the 1990s as
an alleged contradiction of the Buddhist
doctrine of anata or no self unquote is
this true well I really don't know
anything about the damaka tradition in
Thai teral I was never I spent like
three weeks in Thailand as a monk and
those three weeks were just spent with
Burmese monks in like an empty house
that someone had donated for us to stay
in while we were in Thailand we didn't
really interact with Tha Buddhists I
mean I've I've met monks ordained in
Thai Traditions most western monks are
ordained in a Thai tradition I'm pretty

sure um especially the aan cha
tradition and you know I've I've read
about about Thai Buddhism I've talked
with Buddhists that were ordained in a
Thai tradition but the damaka tradition
I've really never really heard about I
mean that the Sanskrit version would be
the dharmakaya which in Mahayana
Buddhism is just this pervasive like
infinite formless Consciousness or
Buddha nature that just pervades the
entire universe so it could be that this
damaka tradition is influenced by
Mahayana Buddhism and uh I'm pretty sure
there was quite a lot of Mahayana
Buddhism in Thailand um more so in the
past than in the

present but setting aside my ignorance
of the dharmakaya tradition or
dharmakaya tradition in particular it is
known to me that a lot of very
high-profile aons who have reputations
for being very wise do assert that there
is the cheetah or the mind the
Consciousness that is like yourself and
is also like an aspect of Ultimate
Reality um which might fit into this
dharmakaya or
Dhaka dharmakaya being the Mahayana name
for the the Dharma body of the Buddha
which pervades the entire universe which
means it's everywhere and this cheetah
that certain Tai aon's assert is you

know that is the one who knows that is
the one who sees that is the one who who
Wills you know and and ultimately it's
apparently they're not asserting that
there's like an individual soul like in
Christianity where my soul is different
from your soul that it's all like the
same Soul which would be along the lines
of like the upanishadic interpretation
you know the Hindu interpretation of
Soul
so yeah there are Tai joh who do talk
about a true self connected with Nirvana
you know the one who knows the one who
sees that kind of thing um and it may be
an influence of Mahayana Buddhism on
their thinking because it certainly is

not Orthodox

teravan

so I guess I answered that question I'm

moving on to the next one this is from

five precept

Pete and five precept Pete says how

would you determine

the legitimacy of a spirit medium or

psychic and as it turns out one reason

why I kind of like the assemblage of

questions in this Q&A is I've got a lot

of personal experience with with some of

these questions so I'm in a better

position to answer them and it turns out

that I had uh a meeting with a spirit

medium or psychic in Burma when I was a

relatively Junior Monk and it's kind of
an interesting story where I I had this
teacher he he was teaching me Burmese
and a few other things and he was
intelligent but he didn't have a whole
lot of common
sense and he and a friend of his took
off somewhere and they were gone for a
week so our our English lessons and uh
Burmese lessons because I was teaching
him English at the same time um there
was like a Hiatus and then he comes back
and he's all excited and agitated and he
says you know I want so much to tell you
about something but I know you won't
believe me but he could not restrain
himself so he had to lted out that he

was talking to a God and the God was
telling him all this this stuff and at
first I didn't know what he was talking
about but then you know as he blurts out
more of the story it turns out that his
friend who was a monk had a like a
sister-in-law or something who was a
spirit medium or a Channeler as they
would be called maybe they're even
called something different
now but um you know she's talking about
her this this female Spirit medium is
telling him all this stuff and she's
apparently channeling this daa called
Abaya kumara which means like dangerless
Prince or dangerless boy or something

like that and um he said that he had
they had tested her that she could say
what was in closed boxes what was in
closed envelopes what was behind closed
doors that she could read their minds
and so forth but also she was giving
them all this kind of information about
his previous lives you know under a
previous Buddhist dispensation and so
forth that's how he and I met in a
previous life we were both monks under
like kasaba Buddha or something and a
lot of it was stuff that a Burmese
person could could believe pretty easily
but for a skeptical Westerner it's like
yeah that seems kind of far-fetched
so anyways I got an opportunity to meet

with this Spirit medium and just in case that this person really was psychic you know like my teacher was saying that she could say what was enclosed boxes and behind closed doors and so forth so I decided to test her so I I prepared a few tests and one test was relatively simple one that I got from I think it was from Zen flesh Zen bones there's this story of this man whose wife dies and then he marries another wife and then he starts being haunted by the ghost of his first wife so he goes to a a Zen monk about it and the Zen monk says next time this ghost appears just reach into a bag of beans pull out pull

out a handful of beans and then ask this ghost how many beans you've got in your hand because apparently a ghost will be able to see through the the clenched Fist and see how many beans are in there so that's what he does and when he asks how many beans are in my hand the ghost just dissolves disappears he's not bothered by the ghost anymore because it was just a manif estation of his own guilty conscience for being unfaithful to his first wife by marrying a second one so that was easy outside my meditation cabin there were these little fruits they look kind of like kumquats they weren't kumquats and I think they were inedible to humans but they were

falling out of this tree they're all
over the ground so I just went out with
a little baggie and and collected some
of these little fruits and set them
aside and then I came up with another
test for this this Spirit medium
which was I made I see I made about 24
little squares of cardboard White
cardboard and I drew a different image
on each of these 24 squares you know
they were fairly simple you know there
was like a plus sign and a circle and a
fish and a candle just just simple
things and then with my eyes firmly
closed and and just to be fair I
actually lit some incense and summoned

this this deity to come and watch me do
this before I I pick the pictures that I
was going to put into the envelope and
then I put them into a can these little
squares and then I shook it up and then
my eyes closed I pulled three of them
out and put them into an envelope that
had like paper already in it so I
wouldn't be able to see through the the
paper of the envelope so it was like a
padded envelope that I couldn't see into
and then after I closed the envelope
then I opened my eyes and then I didn't
look into the can I just put that I
covered it up put it on a shelf so I had
three pictures on these little cards in
this envelope I didn't know which three

they were I knew the 24 possibilities of
what they could be I didn't know which
three were in the
envelope so anyways we go to meet this
this lady and Abaya
kumara and uh when it came my turn to
ask I mean there's all these people
asking questions like somebody sent me
something in the mail and I haven't got
it yet do you know where where it is and
this kind of thing um I asked if I could
ask a few questions and then she said
yes or Abaya kumara said yes and the
thing is I wanted to know if she really
was psychic or if she was just reading
Minds because if I knew the answer then

if she gave me the correct answer I
still wouldn't know if she was just
reading my mind or if she was really had
some kind of clairvoyance
because if she really had Clairvoyance
that would be more valuable to me than
just reading my mind and telling me what
I already believe or
whatever so first I told her that I've
got these fruits and I I reached and
held out a a handful of fruits how many
fruits do I have in my hand and then
without hesitation she said CH which
means the sixth one and so everyone says
six so one at a time kind of
dramatically I I start pulling them out
of my hand it turned out there was like

13 in my hand and the monk sitting next
to me my teacher who was just completely
sold on the the validity and genuiness
of iay kumara he's like giggling
nervously and there was another Monk
sitting on the other side who was
likewise giggling nervously I mean they
they you most of the people in the room
probably all of them except me were just
no no doubts you know this this is for
Real
so she failed the first test and then
the second test was the the little cards
and I said in this envelope are three
little diagrams three little images on
cards what are they and again without

hesitation she said a flower a mountain
and a table or chair and I knew she'd
fail the test because none of those were
things that I had drawn so I pul I
opened it and it was a circle a plus
sign and a candle a lit candle and a
little
stand and so I mean I really wasn't
interest anymore because she apparently
um maybe could read minds but um I when
it's a like a double blind experiment
she couldn't read my mind to find out
what the answers were so she just
apparently did not have Clairvoyant
powers or maybe it was my own skepticism
and doubt that was sort of damping her
Talent so that or Bak kumara's

Talent so anyways I just consider that
to be pretty pretty good reputation and
uh just you know just kind of lost
interest but uh I I told I was told
later by a friend of my teacher that he
was still completely 100% on board that
when she said cha me that means the six1
she didn't really say that there were
six fruits in my hand um so I mean this
a kumara was like a sakagami you know
like a a midlevel Buddhist Saint
too so I mean who knows what Abaya
kumara meant when he said the sixth one
and with regard to uh the wrong guesses
about the flower the mountain and the
table or chair well the circle is shaped

kind of like a flower the mountain or
the the plus sign could represent like a
mountain on a map and the table or chair
well I mean the candle was probably
sitting on the table you know just
implied to be on a table so I mean she
was right enough so he could continue
believing in
it but uh yeah it's it was uh sort of
east meets west in a case like that
there was a similar time where he was
telling me that just a few blocks away
from our Monastery um a cat uh had had a
litter of kittens and one of those
kittens could speak fluent Burmese and
I'm like that's not possible Bon I mean
a a kitten doesn't even have like the

vocal cords or the the speech centers of the brain or anything where it couldn't really speak a human language and then he's like well there's two monks from the the building next door from the dormatory building next door that are going to go check it out tomorrow so when after they check it out they'll come back to me tell me whether it's for real or not and then I'll let you know so the next class we had with my teacher he said well they uh those two monks went there and checked it out and it's it's for real it really does speak fluent Burmese but it's like you said it it doesn't have the right vocal

cords or the speech centers or something

because they couldn't understand

anything it was

saying so in all likelihood it's just

the the kitten was making weird sounds

maybe because it was sick or just some

kind of birth defect or something it

wasn't making the appropriate correct

sounds for a kitten it just sounded kind

of

like human speech

maybe also I was I tried to tell him

it's like in the sutas it says a monk is

not really supposed to consult Spirit

mediums that's that's on the list in the

the silaka of the dean Kaya there's this

long list of stuff that a good monk

doesn't do and questioning a woman in trance is is one of the things that monks aren't supposed to do it's animal knowledge T T T CH

VI and so anyways I point this out to my teacher and he says oh it's that doesn't really apply here because abak kumara is a sakagami he is an Arya so it's not just an

ordinary Spirit Channeler it's it's uh you're talking to an actual Buddhist Saint so anyways that's how I would try to determine the legitimacy of a spirit medium was by doing tests like that which in this case the spirit medium question failed miserably although to

the people that wanted to believe it was
like water off a duck's
back people are like that they will just
insist on believing something regardless
of all evidence to the
contrary and just modern politics or
postmodern politics is a case in
point so anyways I'm just going to move
on next question and this is from
TIG and Tig says have you ever chewed on
a beetle knot have you seen Burmese
locals chew it oh that's that's another
question isn't it
huh crypto multiple
questions okay so the first question
from TIG is have you ever chewed a
beetle knot and yeah I actually have

because there's a certain city in

central Burma called

mtila and for whatever reason it is

traditional in mate Tila when monks go

for alms round people will hand then

Beetle

quids and a beetle quid is it's like

some sliced Beetle

nut it's wrapped up in a beetle Leaf

which is a different plant entirely the

nut comes from a kind of little palm

tree and the leaf comes from it's

related to the pepper family it grows on

a vine and then they add a few other

things they like lime not not the citrus

fruit but the the mineral lime um not

quick lime I'm pretty

sure and uh sometimes they'll add a

little bit of tobacco sometimes they'll

add a little bit of uh a substance

called kichu which is like the the

hardened sap of a kind of acacia tree

you know they'll add certain other

ingredients to it the two main

ingredients or the three main

ingredients are the nut the leaf and the

lime you have to have all three and what

the lime does it causes a chemical

reaction with the beetle nut and your

own slobber and it turns your slobber

into this thick ketchupy goop this dark

red

goop but anyways I chewed some Beetle

nut cuz I got some in my bowl when I
went for alms in mtila and somebody gave
me this little packet of of beetle quids
and so I chewed one this because I was
curious I wanted to see what the effect
was and it had like a mildly stimulant
effect sort of like smoking a cigar or
something you know it had sort of a
similar effect to smoking maybe half a
cigar and I guess the truck drivers chew
beetle in Burma just as a kind of mild
stimulant so anyways that's the that's
the first question from TIG the next one
is have you seen burmes locals chew it
and yeah I mean burmes guys especially
Village guys they chew Beetle a lot and

in fact um most of them or a great many
of them don't brush their teeth either
and so some burmes Village guys you got
to look really hard to see if they even
have teeth because their mouth is like
the top top of an old ketchup bottle
it's just like this reddish blackish
crust all over their teeth from chewing
Beetle and not brushing their
teeth and uh yeah and then they're
they're spitting this vinegary smelling
ketchup spit everywhere it's relatively
disgusting which kind of helps to
explain why mouth kissing is really not
a thing in Burma traditionally in Burma
men and women do not kiss in fact uh
when I was in Burma it was actually

against the law to show a man and a woman kissing on a on a movie in Burma so anyways after TIG asks have you seen bur's locals chew it he he continues here I've read that the practice tends to result in increased cancer rates and those that combine the nut with tobacco the explanation is that Eric Coline Eric Coline the principal alkaloid in Beetle knut interacts with the mer capto groups and prevents them from neutralizing the cancer inducing chemicals present in cured tobacco what are your thoughts on this and I my thought on that is just spiritually bankrupt

materialism that's my thought on that I never really uh came across never heard of any cases well actually once there was one guy some in some Village like a mile and a half from where I lived who got jaw cancer whether it was caused by him chewing Beetle or not I have no idea but that was not the opinion of the the the villagers because this this guy who got the jaw cancer used to like criticize me because some Burmese people are kind of racist or you know they're they're like Burmese chauvinist they don't have a high opinion of of people from other countries including ties and so forth and he was just saying if that mon comes to this Village I'm going to

escort him right back out again this
kind of thing and uh then he got jaw
cancer and of course the Burmese
villagers said well you B you you
criticize the the American Monk and that
bad things are going to happen to you so
in that his case it wasn't because he
chewed Beetle it was because he was bad
mouthing the the mysterious Western monk
who lived in a cave like a mile and a
half
away so yeah but with regard to mapto
groups and Eric Coline and all that that
is like the the new modern
mythology as far as I'm concerned it's
just spiritually bankrupt

materialism so anyways tig's last
question here is am I an animal and just
going with Biology sure I mean just
going with empirical observation of the
world around us you know we've got I
mean a dog's got all the same bones in
its skeleton that we've got maybe with a
few very minor exceptions all the
internal organs and everything I mean
they have to we have to eat and drink
and and breathe and take a pee and
all this kind of stuff like just like
any other
mammal so just going going with that
then sure although it is true that human
intelligence has somehow shifted us into
a different level you know it's like

we're on a different order of magnitude from the the ordinary animal just because we are capable to some degree anyway of like conceptual thought and thinking in symbols thinking in words we are capable of of uh culture like like knowledge can accumulate from one generation to the next to the next to the next to the next until you've got these upgraded Apes that are capable of making computers and helicopters and so forth so yeah just going from a biological point of view yeah we're animals and that's regardless of whether physical matter really exists or not I mean just looking at animals and looking

at us we're obviously a kind of animal
and we've got animal instincts too
except they're generally not called
animal instincts they're called human
nature although the left in out of some
perverse inspiration just vehemently
denies that there is such a thing as as
human nature or or instincts in the
human animal or at least a lot of
leftists do it's it's just part of the
the ideology now maybe because markx was
prear pre- darwinian and just thought
that we're born as a black slate that
are just ready to be indoctrinated with
with leftist
ideology I think Chairman Mao also
believed in the blank slate idea where

you know you just people can be
indoctrinated to believe anything and to
some degree that's true but it's not
true enough for Marxism actually to
work so I think I'm just going to move
on to next question and this is from
Judge Caligula
Bushman and judge Caligula Bushman says
a poasa yeah s way s
way a poasa in what order should I read
your books well you can read them in any
order you like I suppose I mean you
could read them in the order that I I
compiled them which would be essays in
terava Buddhism would be first and then
philosophical Dharma was second I think

and then Buddhist ethics Buddhist practice is third but there's no real continuity going on from one book to the next or even necessarily from one article in the book to the next from one essay to the next you could just read it completely at random and it probably wouldn't be have that much different of an effect on you than if you just systematically read them from start to finish you know the first book then the second book then the third book so I mean read whatever sounds most interesting to you I guess that would probably be the most beneficial to you and you probably get the most out of it because the way it is with me is if I'm

interested in something I can absorb it
like a sponge whereas if something
really doesn't appeal to me that much
then you know it's just has doesn't have
much
effect so as you please as thou Wilt and
I'm going to move on to the next
question this is from
mooners and mooners says how does one
deal with severe
OCD I get really antsy whenever I see a
glass or a phone near the edge of a
countertop or near water whenever I see
one I immediately adjust it and put it
in a plate where it can't fall
regardless of if it is mine or not and

this has given my family frustration how can I deal with this problem well as it turns out I used to have a friend who would visit the monastery where I was first ordained in uh near Santa Cruz California and he was one of the world's leading Authorities on OCD or obsessive compulsive disorder and one of the most common stereotypical examples of OC D is the person who obsessively washes his hands he may wash his hands 50 or 100 times a day until it's like the skin is all cracked and bleeding between his fingers and he just can't stop like Howard Hughes is probably one of the most famous people with OCD John bunan who wrote Pilgrims Progress may also

have had

OCD um and Dr Schwarz who was the person

I'm talking about the one of the world's

leading Authorities on

OCD um he wrote a book called brain lock

and you may want to look it up if it's

still in print where um you know he

talks about OCD and how to treat it and

the thing with Dr Schwarz is that most

like psychiatrists or psychologists I

guess would be psychiatrists mainly who

treat OCD use drugs you know it's like

you use Prozac or something which

reduces the urges but Dr Schwarz mainly

was using Buddhist mindfulness

techniques like s patana where you have

the urge to wash your hands or adjust
the the cup of water or whatever it is
that you just get into the habit of
observing that as a mental state is
arising and if necessary you then
distract yourself by going and doing
something different you don't reinforce
it by acting it out you note it You
observe it it's not me it's just OCD and
then if necessary go out and shoot some
baskets or or whatever it is you take up
some knitting or
something and so I mean if you really
want to uh to study this and learn a
good way of dealing with it yeah I mean
you could do a lot worse than getting
the book Brain lock by Dr Jeffrey

Schwarz and studying that and at the end there's even a test you can take to see whether you're Clin clinically significant with regard to obsessive compulsive disorder I took the test and um I did I mean I'm not clinically significant I do have you know certain Tendencies like a crooked picture on the wall like even the even the the Sasquatch and the UFO back there it's it was bugging me earlier I was having to adjust it a number of times just to get it looking like it's straight or if I'd buy a used book at a used bookstore which is something I used to do a lot one of the first things I would do would

be to unbend the corners if there are
any bent Corners that kind of
thing but anyways yeah that would be a
good idea just fortunately for anyone
interested in Buddhism that one of the
most effective ways of curing OCD is to
use Buddhist mindfulness techniques just
observe it as a phenomenon you do not
identify with it it's not I have to wash
my hands it's you know this craving is
arising and you just train yourself to
observe it and that would be very use
useful just in everyday life you know
once you get good at observing the OCD
then you can get good at observing just
about any mental state that arises and
not identifying with that either not

necessarily acting it

out so there was something else I oh

yeah I even had a theory after reading

you know Dr Schwarz was a friend of mine

I mean we've kind of gone our separate

ways now but you know he would send me

articles that he would write and he sent

me a copy of a brain and everything

which I no longer own and uh it it

struck me that it could be that an

enlightened being is like someone who is

cured of OCD where um even someone who

is cured of OCD because it's according

to science it's it's a glitch in your

brain it's like a genetic it's you know

it's genetically conditioned glitch in

your brain having to do with the
singulate gyrus and the cadate nucleus
and so forth where it's like the part of
your brain that that shifts from one
like idea to the next just gets stuck
and so it just sticks in this one
idea so um even if you get cured still
the urges are going to arise they're not
going to be nearly as strong because you
haven't been reinforcing them by acting
them out but still you know the urge
will arise and you just don't identify
with it you don't take it seriously you
don't have to act upon it and I've
considered that an arant an enlightened
being may be the same way where they
still have these you know deluded human

urges and so forth that arise because
again being human is also genetic going
with scientific materialism
anyway and so I mean the human brain is
still going to act in accordance with
the nature of a human brain which is
delusional so I do think that an arhon
may still have diluted thoughts or
diluted UNH wholesome urges or something
it's just they don't identify with it
it's just nature taking its scores they
are detached and they don't act upon it
you know they just watch it arise and
pass
away so yeah brain lock by Dr Jeffrey
Schwarz I would recommend that you read

it and so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from Master
Poe who also ironically goes by the
Alias of
grasshopper and master Poe says would
you please give us three nuggets of
wisdom from three nerv
beings such as the Buddha and two others
you believe made it to the Nirvana
Place well I mean I'm not sure if I have
beliefs that anyone made it to the
Nirvana Place although I do have working
hypotheses and just like you know if if
somebody did I mean this person would be
a good candidate for for that something
like that I mean it's not a matter of
Faith with regard to this person was

fully enlightened is I think more in
terms of you know assuming that anybody
is can be fully enlightened within a
samsaric context like the context of
this world then this person would be a
good candidate in my
opinion so anyways give us three nuggets
of wisdom from three nervana beings
golly well can start with the Buddha I
suppose and there's lot statements from
the Buddha
like which in a way it's very profound
and it had a significant effect on my
life and it means monks I say that karma
is
Will so that's the main statement in the

text not the only statement but like the most famous one I assume where karma is identified as volition or will or urge and that has really uh made a significant impact on my understanding of the human predicament in this world um there is one sort of statement of the Buddha that I kind of like that really is not in conflict with the earliest teachings although this is from a Mahayana text where the Buddha um he was going to deliver his sermon as usual but on that particular day all he did was he just held up flower and kind of twirled it between his fingers and some of the monks were kind of bothered by this but mahak kasapa or Kapa in h

Sanskrit smiled because he got it that
the Buddha I mean it's sort of like um
the ataka waga of the suata where the
Buddha is saying don't believe anything
you know words are not what you're after
you know just beliefs are not not the
point so in instead of giving some
discourse that probably some some of his
disciples would misinterpret or just
adhere to cling to it or whatever he
just twirled the flower and remained
remained silent and then when mahak
kasapa or Kapa got it and smiled that
was the first transmission of Zen from
the Buddha to the first great patriarch
other than the Buddha

himself but that's not really well I
guess it could still count as a nugget
wisdom even though he didn't say
anything but uh let's move on to another
being that I think may have been a fully
enlightened being and that would be St
John of the Cross and St John of the
Cross also said a lot of wise things
like if you're to arrive at a place that
you've never been before you must go by
a road that you do not
know which is wiser than it may sound
because he's referring to essentially
the state of Enlightenment or the
beatific Vision you know just the state
of perfection that if you want to arrive
at this state you can't go by any

familiar route you can't go by any route
that you
understand because it's it's beyond your
understanding it's it's you know it's
beyond the what's the word I'm trying to
come up with the
frontier of what you can really
understand so that's I consider that to
be wise another statement by John of the
Cross is so that you may know all things
seek to know nothing which again is
fairly well in harmony with the the
message of the AA waga which is you know
believe nothing have no perception no
view because if you want to become
omniscient you're gonna have to go

beyond words you're GNA have to go
beyond just like the the inner dialogue
or monologue I guess
so that's uh that's the second the
second potential Nirvana being the third
would be neem coroli Baba who is up
there on the on my altar on top of the
bookcase up there I mean just a picture
of him he's not not really sitting up
there anything but uh I mean he used to
say and this is this is really not good
Buddhism I suppose but uh like he would
do some mindblowing psychic feat or
perform a so-called miracle and people
would just be blown away by that and
he'd just say
Saar which means it's all God you know

he he didn't do anything he's just God's

doing

it and you can just take saishu High

just uh just apply it to anything it's

all God of course if you're not a theist

then you'd have to replace ishua or God

With You Know da or the dharmakaya or

something br

although Brahman technically is kind of

God

still so I guess that's good enough for

Master Po I'm just going to move on the

next question this is uh from Joe do and

Joe do says how far back does meditation

go who were the first people to

meditate and I think it's my first book

essays in or studies essays in terab
Buddhism I can't even remember the name
of my own book where there's a chapter
on the evolution of meditation how
people discovered meditation because
there had to it had to start at some
point it wasn't that the human race just
appeared on this planet already
meditating that uh you know there had to
have been like a first person to
meditate and there's different theories
that I I discuss in the book that one
Theory which it wouldn't be a very deep
kind of meditation is just the human
instinct to stare into a campfire anyone
who's gone camping and spent hours
staring into a campfire knows that

there's like this Instinct I mean it
pretty much puts you into a mild trance
State and I do think that that's one
reason why people stare at TV sets in a
mild Trans State nowadays it's just um
like replacing the the instinctive
primordial campfire with this flickering
light thing that is has serves the same
purpose in a lot of
ways although um there's an interesting
Theory by Gary Snider of all people who
was you know one of the founders of the
Beet movement he was one of the first
beat Nicks this was back in the ' 50s
and he had this idea that I think might
be

true that it was prehistoric hunting
magic was the origin of meditation at
least of relatively Advanced meditation
because Stone Age Hunters lots of them
anyway believed that animals can hear
your thoughts and even my father
believed that he was a he was a Hunter
he was a big game hunter in Alaska and
he used to tell me that hunting trying
to sneak up on a moose is damn near
impossible it will always get spooked
and run away but if you sneak up on a
tree right next to that moose it's as
easy as shooting
cows so Stone Age hunters and some
Modern Hunters believe that animals can
hear your thoughts so if you're like

lying in Ambush by an animal

Trail waiting for your chance to just

run out and stab a deer or whatever then

you the the hunter would sit there with

his mind silent wide awake not thinking

just so the animal won't hear his

thoughts and run away so that's a

possibility too or another pretty

obvious possibility for meditation would

be like prehistoric like Stone Age

shamanic

practices um possibly including the

taking of psychoactive drugs that would

get you into a kind of meditative State

and then maybe later some lies shamans

might try to cultivate those same states

without using the

drug and I've I've talked about um like

shamanic practices before I think maybe

the in that essay about you know the

origins of meditation I may have

mentioned my father when he lived in

Alaska when he was a big game hunter and

gold prospector in Alaska he had a

friend named Frank Wanga who was an

Eskimo shaman

and Frank wonga's initiation into

becoming a shaman was he had to do like

a kind of vision quest which means he

went out into a into a Wilderness with

no food no water no blanket anything

like that and he just found a big Flat

Rock and a a round smooth Rock and he

would just sat down in front of the Flat Rock with the like the big smooth Cobble in his hand and just started rubbing the the round small rock on the big Flat Rock in a circle and just kept doing that for hours or even days until something would just pop you know the vision would occur and that's fairly meditative practice it' be like some kind of samat

practice so I mean it's impossible to know who were the first people to meditate because almost certainly it occurred way back in the Stone Age definitely

prehistoric like even like the indis

valley civilization they've got like
seals showing being sitting cross-legged
as though they're in
meditation so yeah it goes way way back
and uh it could be shamanic practices
including maybe taking certain like
hypnotic kind of drugs or it could have
been like Stone Age Hunters just keeping
their mind blank so as not to Spook the
game but uh it I do have like the full
essay discussing this in uh in one of my
books so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from Ry balder
and Ry balder says regarding bodh satva
does this concept exist in terraa or
within the Buddha sutas it seems to be
Mahayana or Tibetan

Innovation and I mean bodh satva is a
Sanskrit word so it's not the word bodh
satva is not going to be found in the
poly texts because the poly texts are
composing poly instead of s
so the poly version is bodh sat and I do
think that bodh satva is a
mistranslation from poly or protop into
Sanskrit because it doesn't really make
much sense bodh satva literally means
Enlightenment being but why a being who
is postponing Enlightenment
indefinitely um would be called an
Enlightenment being I don't know but
bodh can have more than one meaning it
doesn't necessarily mean Enlightenment

being sat in B in in po I almost said
Burmese U Can mean a number of things so
it can mean seven for example but I
don't think buddhis means Enlightenment
seven but it can also be like an
adjective um like
an how do I how do I explain this it's
uh it's a past participle acting as an
adjective sat it's like a past
participle of the the verb SED which
means to be attached to or to be bound
for to be destined for and that makes
more sense that a bodh SAT is someone
who is destined for enlightenment or
Bound for enlightenment because that's
what it means in the original poly where
usually when you come across the word

bodh in the PO text it's referring to

goab Buddha before his Enlightenment and

when he says you know before his

Enlightenment when he was still a

Buddhist

sat that means he wasn't enlightened yet

and it got

Incorporated and glorified in Mahayana

through a kind of

evolution that um as Buddhism became a

more popular religion there was more

devotionalism involved more

glorification of the Buddha himself and

so you had a genre a genre a Genry of

literature called Jas stories and the

jota stories were um essentially

reworked

fables um describing the Buddha's

previous lives when he is perfecting his

parames perfecting certain virtues or

qualities that have to be perfected

before you can become a fully

enlightened Buddha and these jica

stories implied that to become a Buddha

as opposed to just becoming an ordinary

enlightened being is much more heroic

it's much much more difficult it's a

much more stupendous

feat and so you wound up with this

glorification of the Buddha this whole

cult or myth of lineage of Buddhas and

they're just way above just orders of

magnitude Beyond an ordinary enlightened

being even though probably originally in
my opinion they were at the same level
as was discussed earlier on in this
Q&A so
yeah it the bodhisatta concept does
exist in Terra but it's different from
the Mahayana concept the Mahayana
concept they just took the ball and ran
with it whereas in terraa I mean it
started off just being the Buddha before
his Enlightenment was called the bodh
the being who was you Bound for
enlightenment and then there started
being all the these Legends associated
with bodh satas it's like in order to be
a real bodh you have to receive what in

burmes is called a bate I can't remember
what the poly word is but it's like an
announcement from a Buddha like like
you're going to become a
bhis so you have to receive an
announcement in the presence of a fully
enlightened Buddha some past Buddha who
is going to say you know in a future age
you're going to become a Buddha going by
the name of so and so and that is your B
that kind of locks it
in but this kind of thing I do not think
originated with the Buddha himself it
may be the Buddha himself refer referred
to himself before his Enlightenment as a
bodh SAT but there wasn't in my opinion
an entire Mythos concerning you know

dozens of of Buddhas you know throughout you know entire world Cycles you know going back zillions of years and it's just like this eternal recurrence of of fully enlightened Buddhas that that go through the same kind of pattern with regard to certain life events that I discussed I think in the previous

Q&A

so let's see yeah the the concept of bodh sat exists in Terra probably for the most part like the the elaborated concept of of the elaborated Doctrine you know as it exists now uh was more late than early in the formation of

Terra Buddhist philosophy and then it continued to evolve after the Mahayana Buddhists adopted it I mean they didn't necessarily adopt it from Terra it probably was common to all of the early schools or most of them anyway of of Buddhism and the Mahayana Buddhist really like that idea for for whatever reason partly just because the Buddha was considered to be vastly superior to an ordinary enlightened being so then you got this idea among many Mahayana Buddhists that just taking bodat vows already makes you Superior to to a fully enlightened
being and there is some uh support for that in certain Mahayana Buddhist

sutras

so yeah I mean the the the Mahayana

concept of bodh satas is pretty much of

a Mahayana Innovation but they were

modifying an earlier simpler uh

interpretation of bodh sat and in my

opinion probably mistranslated

not really understanding what the word

sat

meant so I'm just going to move on to

the next

question this is from Mirror of

emptiness and I have to admit I do not

fully comprehend this

question and mirror of emptiness says is

our perception of the universe The

Continuous perception of

Brahman and

so I assume he didn't say Brahma so I

assume by The Continuous perception of

Brahman he's not saying that Brahman is

the one who's continuously

perceiving you know our mental States so

he seems to be meaning that our

perception of the universe is really

just the

way

um Brahman is

perceived it's it's it kind of reminds

me of like certain theists who believe

in God think that God creates all all

these sentient beings in order to like

so he can learn about what it's like to

have a body and so forth but I mean if
God really is a capital G God he's
already omniscient and doesn't need to
learn
anything so is our perception of the
universe The Continuous perception of
bront I don't think brahan could really
be perceived Brahman exists at a level
more fundamental than perception
perception is like
symbolic ideas that are generated by a
mind like a conscious mind but Brahman
is not a
symbolic
construct perception is a symbolic
construct but Brahman is not that

Brahman is more like the porcelain of
the cup and the perception is like the
form of the cup the shape of the cup or
whatever so so I mean maybe in certain
ways depending on how you want to
interpret it but I wouldn't interpret it
that way is our perception of the
universe The Continuous perception of
Brahman in a way it's our perception of
the universe is sort
of oh like unnecessarily elaborating on
Brahman in a way just sort of taking the
the uncarved block of marble and imag
it's like separating out an imaginary
statue inside that block of
marble but you just get lost in the
perception and so you become oblivious

to Brahman itself just

like you know like from a Christian

point of view the spirit of God is

everywhere God pervades the entire

universe but we just don't notice that

because we're all caught up in this this

worldly you know diversity of of

phenomena you know this which is

generated by our own mind

ultimately or like eart TOA says that

we're already enlightened in a sense

it's just that um we're too distracted

to notice it because of all the noise

that our mind is making and I'm waving

my hands around a lot too as though I'm

like part Italian or

something so yeah I I do not fully
understand this question I'm not sure if
mirror of emptiness himself fully
understands this question but he
probably understands the question better
than I
do so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from the Proto
sudom mon Alias Cool
Whip and this is kind of a long question
which contains more than one question I
mean at least it's counted as one
question pretty much but uh there's like
the number of question marks in this one
question is is up into double
digits so anyways Proto sudo monk says
oh the title is on making decisions and

living one's

life then he says Master question

answerer poo basa how must one make

decisions in life and actually I could

probably stop here but I'll continue is

the right decision based on reason or

emotion the reality of decision- making

seems inescapable every moment we make a

decision to be mindful or not to pursue

this desire or not to cuss and a

South Carolinian geizer on the highway

or not Etc I am still plagued by

unsolved questions many asked for

example on pursuing worldly knowledge

music on socializing friendships with

Fools With non- Buddhists five

preceptors are rare finding a wife career Hobbies exercise dhama learning a language moving to Asia all the complications of samsaric existence and the further complications on aspiring toward WS Nana escaping the sticky web of samsara how to live one's life too many options too many decisions move to Burma Sri Lanka Thailand Japan Retreat into Solitude find a mate have a family have a career and then in parenthesis he says this is rhetorical so all these question marks kind of are neutralized and then he continues my current approach one inspired by ajan Garo although he spoke particularly on taking eight precepts is to have faith in the

dhama give up as much as I can simplify
my life on the assumption that I am too
diluted to make any rational and clear
decision and have faith that one day it
will all be Crystal Clear thanks to
practicing the dhama effectively I'm
trusting my decision- making to the wise
monks wise decision the decision of
radical renunciation one solution is
building a venerable poasa AI decision
maker trained on the previous YouTube
videos that could make all the decisions
for me and be a lazy git unfortunately
this doesn't exist yet please venerable
sir what is your advice on how to make
big small or any decision in life where

should we turn to the dapada the forest
silence how do we developed right
judgment being in meshed in all this
conditioning so it all boils down to
which is sometimes the case with the
protos sudom mon that like the very
first sentence is pretty much
the the gist of the question and then
the rest is like
commentary so how must one make
decisions in life is the right decision
based on reason or emotion well as David
Hume pointed out that um the passions I
mean it's what he says it's like the
intellect can is and can only be the
slave of the passions that
really reason has

no motivating force I think Emanuel Kant
also pointed this out that reason just
intellect can't cause you to do anything
that it's essentially emotion that
causes you to move I mean there's no
logical reason why you should get up in
the morning why that you should eat
instead of just allowing yourself to
starve to death that all of these
decisions are based on value judgments
and they're ultimately irrational and
largely
emotional or to some degree instinctive
like animal
behavior so how do you make decisions in
life well you just do the best you can

obviously um but if you it comes to like
an important decision the fact is like
the clearer and more conscious your mind
is the more options you're going to have
the more and thus the more likely it is
that you're going to make a wise
choice so I mean at the the basic level
like the the NPC type of person who
doesn't have any original thoughts
they're just sort of motivated by human
instinct and just force of habit then
they're just going to keep making the
same mistakes and just making the
decision that they're programmed to make
and that is not very likely to get you
into a better position in life
so I mean the more you meditate the more

you practice dhama the more you strive
to cultivate wisdom the more wisdom it
is that you're likely to acquire and
thus the more options you're going to
have and the more ability to choose the
right option you're going to have so at
first you may have to rely on a certain
amount of dogmatic Faith you know trust
in somebody else's judgment that you
think is wiser than you trust the
judgments of you know the authors of
ancient scriptures and so forth
um but a lot of the time if you need to
make an important decision one of the
best things you can do is just try to
get as calm and expansive as you can

maybe go to a beach go out into a
Wilderness where you're not distracted
and having all these like artificial
rules and so forth that you have to
contend with you just go out into like
an inspiring place and just get into a
meditative quiet state and
intuitively the the correct answer is
more likely to arise that that's pretty
much how wisdom works is you just make
your mind quiet so that you know there's
like the truth can just percolate up
through your your Consciousness whereas
if you're just thinking and yammering
away inside your head all the time then
it like obscures this and you don't
notice

so how how must one make decisions in
life well with regard to most decisions
that you make you know what are you
going to have for dinner you know which
shirt are you going to wear this morning
that kind of a thing you know it's it's
largely arbitrary and it doesn't really
even matter all that much I mean
ultimately none of the decisions
ultimately
matter because I mean that's really not
the point I mean what's the the
commotion going on at the surface really
is not the
point the point is I mean ultimately
there is no point but like at a level

between ultimately there is no point and
this um I forgot what I was even saying
but I mean there is like an intermediate
stage where
um decisions matter I guess like what do
what are you going to do for a living
you know what girl are you going to
marry if you get married or whether you
should get married are you going become
monk or you're not going to become a
monk then I mean you really have to
introspect if you're capable of that I
mean if you have enough wisdom that you
can just introspect and just
intuitively have like the best answer
just arise in your mind that that would
be ideal but if you can't then you're

going to have to rely

on like the advice of people that you

consider to be wiser than

you and they won't necessarily make the

right choice either like some Monk may

just say you should become a monk

because that's the the best thing you

can do but not everybody is is really

ripe for becom a monk or just the Monk's

life is really not compatible with the

character like the um constitutional

factors of some

people so I mean you may want to just

kind of pray over it in a

sense um contemplate like before I found

a good forest in Burma

I spent a lot of time in fact it was
becoming a joke among my friends I'd
just be sitting there just pondering
this map of Burma that showed like the
forest areas and everything and I would
just sit there and it wasn't I wasn't
like calculating I mean every once in a
while you get an idea and you kind of
you know run it through your mind and
everything you know measure the miles
and so forth you know where what ethnic
groups live in that area or so forth but
a lot of the time I just be sitting
there just kind of just meditating with
like a blank mind just waiting for the
right answer to arise and the right
answer eventually did

arise but it could just be uh just
through random chance that the right
thing happens you know you just happen
to meet the right girl by somebody
talking you in to going to this party
that you didn't want to go to but just
to be polite to your friend um because
you owe him a favor or something you go
and there you go you meet the woman of
your dreams there that kind of thing can
happen happen and it's it depends on
your karma if you've got good karma
you're more likely to have the right
thing happen to you or good things
happen to you because someone with Bad
Karma the right thing to happen to them

may be bad

stuff but I mean ultimately we just do

the best we

can and I hope I at least knocked a tiny

dent into answering that

question so I'm just going to move on to

the next question here this is from

Indiana dharm in Indiana dhama says if I

understand my dharm correctly Kama is

based on

intention there are five offenses that

will result in One automatically going

to a hell realm killing one's own parent

wounding a Buddha

Etc but if comma is based on

intention why would even these five

offenses necessarily result in rebirth

and Hell Realms one might intend some
kind of good albeit with some warped
reasoning
in committing such an action for example
perhaps a Christian or Muslim Zealot
might intend to save Souls by attacking
a Buddha being ignorant of the truth
about dhama well there's one story I
think it's in the commentaries that I
mean it kicks this up a notch where
there was some rich man in essentially
prehistoric
India who uh a peka Buddha was walking
for all mes and this rich man he decides
to he tells the servants you know we got
some leftovers just give him some of

those and so um the servants put food
into this pea Buddha's bowl of course
none of them knows that this is a Pacha
Buddha how could you know that some
ragged monk walking down the street is a
Pacha Buddha you know it doesn't like
it's not like he's carrying a sign or
anything so anyways after the servants
gave food this pea Buddha this rich man
who was a bit stingy regretted it and
says well I could have just gave it to
the servants I mean it's just kind of a
waste giving it to that beggar so as a
result of this person having alms given
to a Pacha Buddha he goes to heaven for
a zillion gajillion years but because he
regretted it afterwards he also went to

hell for a zillion gajillion years I
don't remember which came first whether
he went to hell first or Heaven
first but I mean he didn't even know was
a Bea Buddha I mean you can't really
necessarily know that a person is a holy
man or not or a holy person or not so I
mean like the Buddha is like like the
somebody might wound the Buddha i' I've
thought about this it's it's like what
happens if like a Nanda is shaving the
Buddha's head and just Nicks him and
makes blood
flow I mean that's that's literally what
it means is to cause a Buddha to bleed
that you're guaranteed of hell if you

cause a Buddha to bleed and I mean if
you do it accidentally like you nick him
when you're shaving his head then it
would seem that you're not going to go
to hell for
that killing one of your own parents I
assume there are cases where I mean like
euth in Asia something like that you
know you sign the papers so that the
machine gets unplugged or something I
mean would that count would you be
guaranteed of Hell in a case like
that or your father wants to I mean he's
he's old and broken down he wants to
commit suicide and you don't want to
kill him yourself but you you provide
him with the with the pistol something

like that it's out of love for him he was like this tough macho guy and he's just all broken down and sick and depressed all the time now because you know he's not who he he wants to be anymore so I mean I do think that a lot of this stuff in the texts it doesn't necessarily origin with the Buddha himself that a lot of it is just it evolves as as a spiritual tradition evolves like um I do think that one of the five acts is seducing a nun and uh or raping a nun and uh I mean when there were no nuns and there is hard to say exactly when the order of nuns arose I mean that wouldn't even been issue

causing a schis in the SAA sometimes is
is on the list if I'm not mistaken
sometimes I get the confused the the nun
thing and the Schism thing I can't
remember which one it is that's on the
list but both of them are considered to
be very bad I mean originally there
wouldn't have been any threat of schism
so long as the Buddha was alive except
for you know the the brief sporadic
attempt of David
dat but uh maybe I should stop rambling
and try to answer this
question um if K's based on intention
why would even these five offenses
necessarily result in rebirth in Hells
well I'm not convinced that they they do

I mean that's what the book says but
everything you read in a book isn't
necessarily true there are all sorts of
things that the poly Texs say that we
westerners just can't believe Earth's
being flat floating on water eclipses of
the Sun and Moon being caused by a giant
assur named rahu swallowing them into
his mouth even even a lot of the the
dama oriented ones that aren't dealing
with cosmology and so forth like the
Buddhist sitting there just bragging in
grandal's terms about how great he is
and about how people should worship him
I mean a devout Asian Buddhist can
accept that without raising an eyebrow

but I certainly cannot or some master of

debate challenging the Buddha to a

debate and then the Buddha says like one

casual sentence and this master debater

just just surrenders

and just quits and just converts to

Buddhism I mean some of these

stories they just go against human

nature so just because you read

something in a text doesn't necessarily

mean that it's it's true I mean even

even the bo poly text themselves like

the uh what is it the kalasa you know

don't believe something just because

it's in the

ptia don't believe something out of

respect for your teacher don't believe

something just because it's been a

venerable tradition for centuries you

know

it's I mean even back then the Buddha

was was warning against just being

having too much

Faith so if Kama is based on

intention yeah

it's I do think I do kind of agree with

Indiana DH here that it's really not

that cut and dried it's not that simple

there is a famous in the text I can't

even remember which one it is but it's

saying you know you give food to a dog

or to an animal you're going to get

karmic good benefit good results from

that for a hundred lifetimes and then
you it has this sequential list going up
to offering something to the S of the
four quarters you know it's like animal
then you've got like the ordinary person
the scoundrel kind of person maybe you
got like the The Lax Monk and then
you've got like the wise Monk and then
you've got the fully enlightened Monk
and you got the Buddha and even above
the Buddha is the song of the four
quarters because that includes the
Buddha and all the aans and everybody
else and it's just this cookbook you
know 100 Li 100 lives of good results
for the animal then a thousand lives of
good results then 10,000 then 100,000

and or also there's suas you know saying

if you're angry in a previous life

you're going to be ugly in this life and

just you know if you have this kind of

unh wholesome mental state in a previous

life it's going to result in this in

this life and it's just an

oversimplification kind of a cookbook

kind of approach to understanding Kama

or understanding

dhama

so yeah I've got my own thoughts oh a

dog just bumped up against the

table she puked on the rug a little

little while ago

too see

so yeah I

mean I think I'm not even sure if I

answered this question where's even the

question mark oh here it is but if comma

is based on atttention why would even

these five offenses necessarily result

in rebirth and Hell Realms I I kind of

have my doubts um I mean murdering

murdering an Arun murdering a fully

enlightened being not just accidentally

you know but like deliberately killing

and enlightened being being yeah I could

see that like murdering just with like

rage and Malice one of your own parents

I mean like extreme

cases um yeah I I could understand that

they could result in hell but of course

they're going to be Shades of Gray and

like borderline cases and so forth and

I'm really not so sure about

myself so I guess I'm just going to move

on to next question this is from skolin

or

skaden and he says would you kindly

disclose the long discourses on of

Carolina traffic and I've been

threatening to to vent and about

traffic in South Carolina for several

episodes

now but I think I'm going to spare you

all the long discourse I'll just pick a

few juicy nuggets I've already pointed

out like a few months ago that really

seriously about half of all the people
on the roads around here do not use turn
signals and I pointed out that uh a
friend of mine had said that's because
there's a shortage of blinker fluid in
this area
but there was somebody saying well
blinker fluid doesn't really exist but
if blinker fluid doesn't really exist
how they going to how are they going to
drill for it got you
there but also I've also mentioned
before that the red lights in Burma in
Burma in South
Carolina they last a long time I mean
you're sitting in a red light there's no
traffic at all you're just sitting there

all by yourself at a red light at you know some ungodly hour when there's not much traffic and you just sit there and sit there and sit there at this red light you're just Gathering dust and cobwebs waiting for that light to turn green again it's I'm I guess in South Carolina nobody's well I can't say nobody's in a hurry because I'll get to that but still it's just this laidback you can just wait forever it doesn't matter kind of but the thing is you know how long that light is going to stay red so when the light turns yellow as a general rule you gun it you try to get through that yellow light before it

turns red and you have to stop because you're going to be sitting there for a long time so there have been times I'll I'll like go through this yellow light and it looks like it might be turning red when I'm right underneath it and then just through habit of not living in South Carolina you know I'm looking in my rearview mirror to see if you know there's police cars suddenly turning their lights on after I possibly ran a red light and I look in my rearview mirror there's like two cars following me you know one of them's like 12 carlings back and they're I mean they just blow through red lights it's it's just a common thing in Greenville South

Carolina that I mean if the light turns
green you still have to look both ways
to make sure that you don't have some
idiot just blowing through the red light
and it happens a lot and last night I I
had some overtime last night I worked
late I'm driving home and on on
I85 well known from its mention in uh
the The Walking Dead
series and uh the fastest traffic I mean
there's these vehicles doing like 80 85
miles an hour and they're all like 18
wheeler semis they're all zipped up on
on something and they're going really
fast it's it's weird when you you you
like the fastest vehicles on the highway

are these semis that are just zipping on
the the lanes and like changing lanes
really fast like weaving between the
cars and
stuff but of course people that drive
slow are even even more annoying at
times but I guess that's good enough I
don't want to like monopolize this Q&A
by just making half of it me venting
about South Carolina traffic but you
you'd think
that in South Carolina that that it's a
Republican state it's a firmly Red State
and so you think that Republicans
believe in Law and Order but at the same
time there are almost no traffic cops at
all the few traffic cops seem to stop

only semis they're maybe doing 85 in a

60 M hour speed

limit so that's it's kind of a weird

like ironic situation where um I mean

the cops you generally only show up

after the accident has occurred and

there's there's quite a few of those but

again I don't want to monopolize this uh

Q&A by venting about uh about traffic so

I'm just going to move on next question

this is from Mary Jay and Mary J says

and this

this

um this is with regard to a video I did

with Stevens and Numa last week about

like what's the deal with modern Western

women and on the thumbnail made by my
sweetheart there are two women one's
kind of traditional looking just kind of
Nic looking but the one on the left is
got like spiked hair and like pierced
face stuff and like sleeve tattoos on
our arms and so forth who is more
stereotypically representative of what
modern Western women have
become anyways Mary J says I consulted
this with a ven who is his biological
mate and I have to say I would
totally I would
totally yeah the one on the left so
that's the kind of the the spiky
tattooed one about your last
thumbnail so that was just sort of an

intro I probably shouldn't even mention

that because it did have the taboo FW

that you can see on kids videos now I

guess but still so his first question is

is there any kind of sex that is

blatantly forbidden in the sutas for

example anal sex

and um I mean the monks who who composed

this stuff really didn't bother with

like such intimate details for Lay

people because you're better off I mean

from the monks point of view I mean

you're better off just not having

sex so I mean the kind of forbidden sex

of course would be like

adultery promiscuous sex with somebody

that you don't love or even particularly
care all that much about um having sex
with a woman who is under the protection
of a man already like which would
include a slave somebody else's slave
girl a woman who's already engaged or
betrothed like a a female inmate in a
prison who's under the protection or or
guardianship of the prison guard that
kind of thing that's the only kind of
sex that is specifically
forbidden so getting into the details of
like anal or oral or that kind of thing
um yeah it's it's really not mentioned
and the monks who were composing this
stuff really were not concerned with
what lay people did in their

bedroom that uh I mean they just say you know you're better off just not having sex or if you are going to have sex then have sex
with your you know one person that you love and you're faithful to and and they're being faithful to you you know that kind of a thing it it's not necessarily that you have to be married but at least you have to be in a loving monogamous relationship or at least a faithful monogamous relationship we've got to be realistic in ancient times people who didn't love each other would wind up having to get married to each other but you make you make the best of

it

so yeah with regard to stuff like anal sex and and other things other kind of fetishes or Kinks or whatever it's not really discussed it's the only time I remember any mention at all of like anal sex is with regard to the first par of jica um for monks that monks are not allowed to have any kind of sex not straight not anal not oral

and so that's I mean they just give the the borders of you know what is not allowable you know that's you transgress this line you're excommunicated for the rest of your life and that's really all they care about there's no really no no other details other than specifying this

line that you must not transgress if you
are a monk and with regard to lay people
of course then whatever does not
transgress the third precept which is
sensual
misconduct and that has no mention at
all of anal or oral or anything like
that it's just who you're not allowed to
mess around
with so I guess I'm just going to move
on to Mary Jay's next question here are
there any conspiracy theories you
believed in that turned out to be true
yeah I think there's lots of them just
uh
like historically speaking not

mentioning anything in particular there
have been certain elections that had uh
certain uh dubious qualities let us say
also the origin of a certain
virus not going to go into details not
going to say that it was like smallpox
or
anything and I mean there's there's
quite a few I mean a lot of them are are
taboo because the reason why there were
conspiracy theories is because a
certain faction of the population just
doesn't want you to believe this you
know it might be true but they don't
want you to believe it so a lot of the
time they'll they'll come up with the
conspiracy theory you know like the 51

law enforcement experts who are saying

that Hunter Biden's laptop was Russian

disinformation or the whole like Russia

gate hoax that was concocted by the

Hillary Clinton campaign in the

Democratic

party you know they get to do that kind

of stuff

just because you know they're they're

the elite they got the money and all

that

so yeah there's uh there are conspiracy

theories that I have believed that

turned out to be true and I really

shouldn't go into details because I

really can't think of any just Bland

insipid ones you know they're all the
kind of conspiracy theories that are
highly charged politically that you can
get banned from social media for even
discussing so I guess I'll just move on
next question also from Mary Jay and he
says have you ever drunk that green Red
Bull I believe it is the one that is
summer edition and it is the best in
taste no I think probably I've seen
green Red Bull but I don't know I'm just
uh conservative or something
traditionalist
although my favorite Red Bull is the
Asian version like the the version the
original version made in Thailand and it
comes in a little gold can it's called

krating dang 250 which is Red Bull 250
because it's 250
milliliters and I think it would be
illegal in the west at least when I
first came first went to Burma like in
the early 90s I'm pretty sure that some
of the ingredients in the thae Red Bull
would be like illegal in the west I
think they were putting nicotine in it
to get people addicted they're putting
in some kind of like steroids although I
guess even vitamin D technically is a
steroid so it's kind of steroids just
kind of a scary word because of
connotations um they they put in
something that had to have been similar

to amphetamine in certain ways it was
certainly stronger than caffeine and if
you drank more than four in one day you
were not going to sleep at night
so I guess I answered that question it
wasn't a very difficult question to
answer and so I move on to the next
question which is the very last
question and it is from avenity who is
the biological mate of Mary J Who
formerly was Pope Kevin but I guess he
got kicked out of that
one so lenity says since Buddhism and
jism are quite similar what would your
best argument be to become a Buddhist
and not a Jane well outwardly they're
pretty similar I mean they seem to both

be based on the same prehistoric

previc spiritual tradition of Northern

India and so there's certain

similarities like the bald head Janes

are supposed to like pull their hair out

instead of Shaving it you know which

probably would be painful and I don't

know if uh they're still doing that I've

never really met uh a practicing Jane

before

so there there is I mean The Janes are

more into self- torture or at least

traditionally if like in ancient times

again modern jism may be sort of like

modern Christianity where it's like

really lukewarm and easy and you don't

have to you don't have to do the really
radical difficult painful stuff
anymore but jism
traditionally was much more aesthetic
much more prone to try to accelerate the
burning off of karma which in
Buddhism according to Buddhism it
doesn't work if you're trying to
accelerate the burning off of your karma
you're just making more karma by trying
to accelerate it and you're just kind of
making Bad Karma by torturing yourself
that is is kind of a vicious circle
although the Janes don't believe that so
anyways one significant difference
between Buddhism and jism is the whole
idea of karma according to the Janes if

you step on a bug accidentally you're
making Bad Karma whereas the Buddhists
say that karma is intention or volition
or or will so if you do it just
oblivious you're just walking from point
A to point B and happen to step on an
ant and don't even notice then you
haven't done anything wrong
necessarily so jism has more of a almost
a materialis istic interpretation of of
karma also they believe in a soul which
would involve belief in a self which
Buddhism does not and I do think that
that that the Buddhists have a wiser and
more H let's just say wiser a more
expanded conscious understanding of the

situation in that

regard

so yeah I mean superficially they may

look similar but I do think that

Buddhism Buddhist philosophy is more

sophisticated and wiser than Jane

philosophy just based on my

understanding of Buddhism and ganism I

have read jist texts and some of them

are pretty far out I've already

mentioned at least once where there's

one Jane scripture that says that if a

Jane monk wants to cross a river and

there's no bridge and there's there's no

regular ferry that goes back and forth

he can only cross that River in a boat

if the boat was going to cross anyway if

someone's going to make a special trip
just for him to get him across the river
he's not allowed to accept that because
it will make Karma and Jane the whole
Jane religion is you have to burn off
whatever Karma you've got good and bad
you just got to get rid of all your
karma because your karma is sticky and
it sticks to your soul and weighs it
down so that your soul can't float up
into heaven
and Buddhism of course is a little more
sophisticated than that and I do think
that Buddhism is uh more
correct so I mean that's one reason why
you that would be the best argument to

become a Buddhist and not a Jane is that
I I think personally Buddhist philosophy
is more correct and more wise than Jane
philosophy regardless of any superficial
outward similarities
so I guess I answered that and so I
guess I'm done because that was the last
question so you know the drill if you
got any questions about something you
think I can answer like Indian religion
Buddhism especially monasticism Burma me
personally
Sasquatches feel free to ask in the
comments
below and uh if you like the video and I
assume you liked it if you got this far
because we are yeah two and a half hours

in then click the like button or Smash

It whichever you

prefer and uh subscribe if you haven't

already and be happy

okay we are recording I do declare hello and welcome to episode 96 of question and answer I am your host pel basa and I've already told you that and you probably didn't even notice because this is my second take I got to like question three already answered the first three questions or started to answer the third one and then I realized that my computer wasn't plugged in and the battery was almost dead and this recording software takes some energy and uh when it gets down to like close to zero then it gets out of it starts acting weird and the the audio and video start getting out of syn and stuff which may happen anyway

because right now I'm at 23% battery
charge but we'll just see how it goes
The Show Must Go On even if it
sucks so
anyways I'm a little more horse than
usual today I think because I feel like
I've been fighting off some kind of a
virus and uh it just so happens I told
the nurse about this earlier this week
not over that over something entirely
different I went to see her over
something entirely different and she
said a lot of people been saying that
and she thought it was some kind of
pollen but regardless of whether it is a
virus or pollen or demonic possession or
whatever it is I'm a little more horse

than usual so bear with me and I'm
drinking orange juice just in case it is
a virus or who knows maybe some demonic
entities don't like orange
juice and the reason why I did see a
nurse and then a doctor is because I
twisted my knee at work bending
awkwardly and it got too sore to walk on
I had to take a day off from work and
then because it was a work-related
injury that required me to take a day
off I had to see a doctor before I could
return to full
Duty so there it is I'm going to be fine
though no no like torn meniscus that's
torn enough for me to require surgery or

any such thing knock wood I should say I guess and let's just start answering questions this first question I'm not sure if it was like a real question ex with expecting an answer from me it could just be rhetorical but there are two two question marks in this question and it was posted below a Q&A video so I'm answering it it's from Athena sigil and Athena sigil says Shadow People of all the Paranormal Activity I've endured this was both real and experiential for me I encountered them in the late 80s and early 90s and the experience was both dreamlike frightening and realistic all rolled into one when I had these encounters I had no idea that others had

to as time went on particularly in the social media age many people have had similar experiences what does it all mean damn if I know but I'm glad that it's been 30 years since anyone else so um I think the whole topic of Shadow beings or shadow figures or shadow people came up because I think it was the previous Q&A I was mentioning go shows and just paranormal shows in general and my woman my lady love very much likes these kind of shows and so I've been watching some along with her and usually I watch more than she does because if a woman is like lying on a a bed or couch watching like a movie or

something as a general rule she's asleep
within 20 minutes
and then I'm lying there watching the
rest of the show so she likes ghost
shows so I watch more of them than she
does just because that's the way it
works out and on these go shows like
like The Dead Files for
example shadow figures are a dime a
dozen it's like everybody sees shadow
figures I mean that's just that's just a
given they don't even need to mention
that they see shadow figures cuz
everybody sees shadow figures in a
haunted house like the ones that Amy
Allen and Steve deevy go
to and of course you know they always

well not all of them but most of them
get scratched at night and then of
course they got a picture of it so they
they show hold it up to the camera so
you can see a closeup of some scratched
skin anyways before I go on a prolonged
rant about ghost
shows um they do they see shadow figures
and um apparently Athena sigil also saw
shadow figures and I'd never really
heard of shadow figures before start I
started watching ghost shows I
assume that you know I've read about you
know shadowy presence in a haunted house
or some such thing but it wasn't like a
an entire category of of entities called

shadow figures or Shadow

beings that's that's a new one on me and

I would assume not having seen myself

but I would assume that it would be like

going with the the Buddhist 31 planes of

existence it would be the ghost realm

that there would be beings assuming that

they're they're not hallucinations I

assume some of them would be

hallucinations but the ones that aren't

hallucinations I would assume that it

would belong to the category of um the

ghost realm in in going with Buddhist

cosmology and that would be being things

that are less conscious than us you know

they might live in kind of a murky dream

world they're not like fully as fully

developed mentally as we are and you
know they probably have like um you know
even even the the matter of which they
are composed because in Buddhism even
ghosts or so-called Spirits do have
physical bodies it's just that the
matter of which they are composed is of
a like a cruder subtlety a less subtle
subtlety than our bodies and then like
the higher beings like Davis and brahmas
would be composed of much more subtle
matter you know have a finer vibration
to it or
something and some people under C
certain circumstances you know they're
having a linal moment or some such you

know they have access you know they can
they're ex they are like sensitive to um
subtleties of in in their perceptual
field that under ordinary circumstances
most people um are not sensitive
to
so I really don't have a whole lot to
say about shadow figures because I have
no Authority on the subject but um I've
never seen one myself I have seen
apparitions but they were like full
color apparitions you know they were
they uh were a little more substant
stantial looking than just a shadowy
presence moving across the wall that
sort of thing and I mean sometimes it
can just be like a car driving by

outside in a reflection or something is
moving across the wall I assume that
does Trick some people especially people
that already um have the idea that maybe
they're in a in a haunted dwelling or
something but I do not think that um
they're that like Shadow beings are
impossible
I just think that they're sort of a
bleed over from a like a cruder level of
reality that some people under certain
circumstances are are capable of
perceiving so I think I'm just going to
move on to the next question and this is
from
arain and this one is in response to um

a video I did with Brian Rue last week
about flat earthers and our good friend
Brian did an entire series of at least
10 videos in one week about Flat Earth
ISM and in one of them he was more or
less debating this guy called Flat Earth
Dave and I was looking at the comments
the comments it seemed they seem more
interesting to me than the video itself
because it was just like a a verbal war
going on in the comment section and
Brian ruse's comments just bitshoot
comments in general can be this way
but it was just back and forth like half
the people in the comment section
apparently were flat earthers and the
other half were Globe tards because

that's what flat earthers um if they're
being derogatory may call someone who
believes that the Earth is more or less
of a sphere and not
flat so anyways Arin here says as a
fellow globetard I would like to know if
Buddhism teaches that the Earth is flat
and surrounded by a large wall on the
edges to keep the water in then who
presumably built and maintains said wall
and according to ancient Indian Buddhism
and ancient Indian cosmology in
general the Earth is flat they they
didn't really have a concept of um like
what the cause of gravity was they just
assumed that there's a universal upd

down orientation throughout the cosmos
so that all the
flat planets I guess you call it all the
flat worlds you know would have the same
updown orientation throughout throughout
space so the ancient Indian Buddhists
had moved up in sophistication from the
idea that the Earth is the center of the
universe and you know the stars are just
out there to help Sailors navigate their
their vessels and so forth they did
accept that there are an infinite number
of Worlds out there but they're they're
all flat they all have the same up down
orientation and it's called the chakaa
one of these flat flat worlds it's
called a chakaa in poly and it's got

like a 10 million mile high mountain in
the center which on our chakaa anyway is
called Mount meu or sumaru sometimes
it's called and then on the outside well
let let me I'll just start from
the center and work my way out so you've
got mount meu in the center then you've
got some concentric mountain ranges that
are inhabited by all sorts of fabulous
beings all kind of monstrous creatures
live in these mountain ranges and then
you've got four continents the southern
the northern the Western and the eastern
and the southern one is inhabited by
humans and I assume the whole idea of
the Southern continent you know with the

the mountain ranges and mount meu to the north are based on Indian geography you know the the subcontinent is just projects southwards from the Himalaya Mountains they assume that the Himalaya Mountains were like one of the concentric Mountain rings that on the other side of that and the other side of you know some more mountain ranges would be Mount

meu but anyways then you've got oceans you got some islands in the oceans you know beyond the the continents and in between the continents and then at the outside edge of a chakaa you've got like a 10 million Mile High

like mountain range like a big wall the

purpose of which mainly is to hold in the water so that the oceans don't just flow off the edges of the flat world and Arin is asking who built and maintains the wall and who built and maintains the wall is the same who that built and maintains the chakaa and the same who that built and maintains the entire apparently physical Cosmos you know the astronomical Universe it's all created by the same Force which is the collective Karma of all the beings that live in this universe and so the chakaa that we live on with its Mount Maru in the center and its concentric mountain ranges and the four continents and the

ocean and the the wall on the outside

all of that was materialized to the

force of the karma of the beings

destined to live on that chakaa and the

karma itself is generated through

ignorance or

[Music]

delusion so karma which is a mental

state nevertheless has the ability to

like manifest physical matter according

to ancient Indian Buddhism although

later schools of Buddhism more or less

like what the philosophy of Kant in

Western philosophy realized that it just

makes more

sense that physical matter just doesn't

exist and so most of the Mahayana

Buddhist schools of the philosophical
schools of Mahayana Buddhism just did
away with physical matter and have
adopted a kind of philosophical
idealism which does make sense to me I
mean if your your karma is determining
the world you live in and so forth then
rather than having your mental States
actually create real physical matter
just if you're living in a mental
Universe you know you don't have to
bother with that and it amounts to the
same thing it seems exactly the
same so it's a kind of very
sophisticated dream
world but that is not what Orthodox

terava teaches or

what um like Indian cosmology in the

Buddhist time

taught so they've got the Flat Earth and

uh you can you can accept that or reject

it as you

please so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is the question

I got to before having to start

over and this is from covac and Cad zida

and covac and CAD zida says in normal

everyday life we experience sensory

experiences simultaneously but according

to the terraa Abid dama since there is

only one Consciousness that takes one

object this simultaneous appearance is

an illusion and what is actually

happening is instead that these things
are flashing back and forth between
different Senses at trillions of frames
per second since it takes 16 mind
moments to make one full experience it
would take that long for it to possibly
load the next conscious experience which
is another 16 mind moments maybe if the
first experience was 16 mind moments of
seeing someone the next 16 mind moments
would be here hearing what they said
this seems like conscious experience
would be very discontinuous and there
would be huge stretches of gaps in mind
moments between any kind of conscious
experience this is a if is this a

correct interpretation of experience

according to the is this a correct

interpretation of experience according

to the ter Abid dama because if it is

I'm wondering how the mind is creating a

seamless experience of each sense with

such long experiences of conscious

sensation

sensation even if it is happening so

fast it doesn't explain how the overall

experience ends up resulting in six

seamless streams of sensory experience

that don't get jumbled up due to each

fitting in the gap of the conscious

stream well this is kind of a technical

question isn't it this is seac andad z

here is referring to the Buddhist

philosophy of mind or the ter

Buddhist philosophy of

mind and um it is true that Abid dama

philosophy considers human mentality to

be completely one-dimensional it is

linear it's just one mind moment after

another after another you can't have

like parallel processing in a human mind

it's all just one linear stream of of

mental

States and so

um I do think he's mistaken with regard

to the 16 mind moments I if I recall I

mean I've never considered this stuff to

be very important because I haven't

really believed it but I think it's 17

I'm pretty sure there's 17 mind moments in a cheah witi which is uh a stream of different mental states that occur in order for you to have one unit of conscious experience so you start out with banga and then the bonga starts to vibrate and then you have this this sequence of mental states that are absolutely necessary for you to have a full mental state and I don't know how anybody could know this because I mean you wouldn't be able to see the intermediate mental States because it takes the full sequence of 17 I think in order for you to perceive anything so I mean it it results in this problem of how you could

possibly know what these intermediate
states are in in the sequence because
you could couldn't possibly perceive
them in a sequence you could perceive
maybe one of them in the middle of maybe
somebody else if you're reading their
mind and that's only if mental states
are not in sync with with with everybody
else it could be that when you're at
mental the Mind moment number three
somebody else is at mind moment number
six and then if you're you have like
really profound mind reading abilities
you could like zoom in on that number
six or I guess it' be number three or
something it'd be your first Mo it would

cause your first mind moment and I'm I'm

this is confusing this is just really

weird and it's not even really necessary

to fully understand it because it's

probably not really

true so I mean just it's all very

problematic this whole Theory and it

probably got thought up by scholar Monks

at some Buddhist University or some such

some big big Monastery and maybe they

weren't much into meditating and so they

just came up with theories on how the

mind works and so

forth

so yeah it takes I'm pretty sure it's 17

mind moments equals one moment of matter

and so everything is flashing on and off

matter is is just flashing on and off
like a trillion times a second or a
trillion times an I blink and the mind
is 17 times faster than that I'm pretty
sure if I remember my my figures
correctly
and it's just this sequence of Mind
moments that you have to go through all
17 to create like one unit of conscious
experience and then you move on to the
next one and then the next one and
you're like bouncing in between all
these different things you're attending
to because you can only attend to one
thing at a time so you might have like a
moment of like like Vision experience

and then a moment of like let's say
you're walking maybe you're chewing gum
or something so then you have to have
like a moment of some sort of um what's
the
word just a bodily experience I can't
remember the word and then it's you're
just bouncing around like hearing and
and thinking and feeling and seeing and
and and then it all just kind of
coalesces into what appears to be a
multi-dimensional simultaneous
experience but again according to
Orthodox terava Buddhism it is a
one-dimensional linear sequence
so it's how it's How It All merges
together to seem like a simultaneous

experience is explained mainly by the
fact that it's just going so damn fast a
trillion times a second I mean there's
no way anybody could be
aware of you know a trillionth of a
second you know it's I'm not I'm sure
that psychologists or cognitive
scientists have calculated out you know
they've exper experimentally verified
you know how how rapid of a like an
individual moment people are able to be
aware of and it's probably less than 100
per
second so it it's all going to like
blend together into what seems like like
a multi-dimensional simultaneous

experience when really according to Abid dama philosophy the third pitica of the toptica that um it's just one moment at a time just you know one one moment of vision one moment of smelling one moment of of like tactile sensation one moment of thought and and just just just one one one one one of all these different things that didn't kind of merge together but it's kind of interesting that he's also talking about how there'd be gaps in between and why you don't notice the gaps I mean you can't notice any gaps of Consciousness because it takes Consciousness to be aware of something

so let's see let me try and find that

part of the question

here let's see I'm wondering how the

mind is creating a seamless experience

of each sense with such long experiences

of conscious sensation there are no long

experiences of conscious sensation you

know it'd be like a trillionth of a

second in between each mind moment and I

mean there has to be a mind moment if

you're if you're alive there has to be a

mind moment every trillion of an eye

blank so I mean the the gaps in between

these mind moments are just like just

infinitily

small but it doesn't matter how much of

a gap it is it doesn't matter it could

be a hundred years in between each mind
moment you wouldn't notice all because
you wouldn't be aware of the gaps I mean
you can't be consciously aware of gaps
in
Consciousness you know it just they just
merge together even the tiny little gaps
in between my moments they just get
canceled out because there couldn't
possibly be any awareness of them which
causes one to think how these Buddhist
philosophers knew that there was a gap
in between because they could not
possibly be aware of any Gap in between
because that would be a gap in
Consciousness you can't remember what
you never

experienced you cannot perceive what you literally are not experiencing so the length of gaps in between would be pretty much irrelevant but according to Buddhist philosophy you know it'd be a tiny fraction of a 17 trillionth of a second so I mean we're not aware of anything a light could flash for 117 trillionth of a second we would be oblivious to that because it would just be too fast for it to even register probably so I guess I answered that question um but really I mean for me one of the the main philosophical interesting

things about that question is you really
cannot be aware of a gap in your own
Consciousness I mean you can infer it
like you you go into a
coma and you wake up seven years later
then you're going to be aware not really
of a breaking continuity you're not
going to remember being unconscious for
seven years but I mean you things are
going to be different you know when you
wake up again and you're just going to
infer you know from what people tell you
and so forth that oh wow I must have
been unconscious for seven years but
when it's a trillionth of a second that
doesn't happen nobody tells you that you
were unconscious for a trillionth of a

second so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is also from seov
action Cad
zida and he says you have said that
maybe the formless meditation might have
been added later you know later on in
the development of Buddhist philosophy
he means however in the Paran of waga
which is considered to be as old as the
ataka waga there is mention of
nothingness which is rendered as
formless attainment of infinite
nothingness what is your interpretation
of it if it means something else here
here's the passage in English and poly
which he includes since you can

understand it in the more older language

but you guys don't understand it in the

more older language so I'll just uh

refer

to my copy of the sutata here which is

translated by KR Norman it's the polych

society version I've had this since

before I was a monk and it has alternate

translations by rahula W paa rahula and

ibor and the the Su he's referring to is

poala questions or the

manava which is suta 15 of the paray

waga and it says according to KR

Norman's

translation let's

see let's see knowing the origin of the

state of nothingness he thinks enjoyment

is a Fetter knowing this thus when he
has Insight therein oh then he has
Insight therein this is the true
knowledge of that Brahman who has lived
the perfect life
so the way he he has interpreted as
knowing the origin of the state of
nothingness and because K Norman is not
really interested in Buddhist philosophy
he doesn't even try to pursue what that
might actually mean it doesn't make much
sense to him he is just a linguist
according to him that's what the
sentence says so that's how he
translates it but there are alternate
translations as I said according to IB

Horner and or a wall polar rahula who
adopt a more traditional interpretation
like a more commentarial
interpretation they say they interpret
it as follows knowing Joy is a bond as
born of the sphere of nothingness
knowing it thus emerging from that
attainment of the sphere of nothingness
there he sees with Insight that the
sphere of nothingness is impermanent
this knowledge of that Brahman or
Brahman who has lived the perfect life
is real and many many years ago I
penciled in after that explanation a
exclamation point because all this stuff
about the sphere of nothingness is just
added in parenthesis it doesn't actually

say that it just gets added in as a kind

of commentarial interpretation to make

sense of the

question

so um it's not necessarily referring to

uh a formless jna

state but

um there is another one I think I I

translated

it in my Tica waga translation I've got

a few paga verses at the end there are

verses that do kind of emphasize

nothingness and like um what's it

Thea

Mana which it says here let's see where

is

it beholding nothingness possessing mindfulness rying upon it is not cross over the flood so that's another example in the payan awaga of mentioning you know nothingness as a kind of object of meditation but I do think that this could have given rise to the idea of a formless realm of the sphere of nothingness and I suppose I should explain to those of you who aren't not really well versed in Arcane terraa Buddhist philosophy there are I mean there used to be just what are called the four Jas which were like originally in my opinion the four levels of meditation but then they got sort of transmuted into four absorption states

that are superhuman mental States and
then because the Indian mind just is not
content with accepting a highest level
of anything really you know they're
always trying to outdo the highest you
know there's like well those guys
believe that that's the highest but we
know of an even higher state you this
happens a lot in Indian philosophy
happens in the upanishads also so
anyways they came up with four
meditations that are kind of annexes to
Fourth Janna which are considered to be
higher than ordinary fourth Janna and
then there's even states that are even
higher than the formless Realms that we

don't need to get into

I've mentioned them before in previous

q&as you know it's like they're they're

just trying to outdo the highest and

come up with an even higher

one

so these four formless

Realms which I haven't thought about in

a while hope I get them right you got

the sphere of Infinite Space the sphere

of infinite Consciousness the sphere of

nothingness and the highest and most

subtle is the sphere of neither

perception nor

non-perception and aside from the sphere

of Infinite Space there are verses that

are referring to a more or less

enlightened mental state in in like
metaphors that the other three can apply
to for example this the state of
nothingness there are two verses in the
pray and awaga that are talking about
you know it is not or nothing you know
you're just meditating on nothing
and I mean that could just go with the
whole theme of the ATA waga and one of
the themes of the pan aaga also that
you're just not supposed to have an
object in your mind you're not supposed
to be perceiving you're not supposed to
have beliefs or views or Perceptions in
general you know your mind is supposed
to be essentially void you know sort of

like the like the mahayan idea of
void and so there are different ways of
attempting to explain what really can't
be explained very well one of them is
just referring to it as
nothingness or like emptiness would be
another way of explaining it although
the poly word is
different so like uh for example the the
realm of neither perception or
non-perception I think that could go
that could be um its origin could be a
verse in the AA waga which would be in
the
kalaha where it's referring again to to
an enlightened mind and it's it's saying
the first verse is he has no perception

of perception he has no perception of
non-perception the next the next line is
he is not without perception and he has
no perception of
void according to my own interpretation
anyway my own translation of the
poly so I mean that could give rise to
the fourth formless realm which is the
realm of neither perception nor
non-perception and also the realm of
infinite Consciousness I mean I've I've
dis discussed a couple times um there
are two sutas one in the majima and one
in the dean nikayas and I'm probably
scaring away beginners in Buddhism by
having such technical questions

technical explanations right off the
bat but um there there is a fragment of
a verse referring to nibbana apparently
as infinite formless Consciousness so
what what some of these Scholars who
were like developing Orthodoxy were
doing is they're taking all these
descriptions of an enlightened mind and
they're they're standardizing what an
enlightened mind is but they've got
these unorthodox sort of outlier
explanations of an enlightened mind and
so they're saying well that's not really
an enlightened mind that's just a very
Advanced meditative state that they are
describing
so I think that is possibly maybe even

probably how the whole idea of formless
genre Realms arose is through
older no longer Orthodox explanations of
what the enlightened mind is like and
then when it's no longer Orthodox the
Orthodox you know the formulators of
Orthodoxy H they can't just you know
just edit it from the Canon it was just
too well known there were other schools
of Buddhism that would would catch them
on that so they just have to kind of
explain it
away I wrote an essay about this which
is no longer online it'll eventually be
up on my new website which I think is
poasa

dog I think I would have preferred based
buddhism. org but the idea arose too
late after the decision was
made so uh I guess I'll just move on the
next question here this also is from
covac and CAD
Z and he says according to ajan tanero
on stream entry and he quotes ajan
tanero saying quote finally you get as
far as you can go in concentration and
you begin to realize the question comes
up there's stress or Dua if I stay here
but there's going to be stress or dooka
if I move move and this is where it gets
paradoxical you neither stay nor move
there's no intention either way because
you realize whichever way you intend

there's going to be stress or dooka or

suffering unquote and it's in that

moment of

non-intentional he's quoting within

quotes which confused me a little bit

and it's very impressive

it's not one of these things you say gee

I had stream entry and I didn't even

know it it's Earth shattering so that

would be the real

unquote so maybe I should just do say

this

gosh I keep looking at the the battery

charge to see if if I'm going to run

dead or something because this um

recording software uses a lot of energy

so anyways so ajan tenro says

finally you get as far as you can go in

concentration and you begin to realize

the question comes up there's stress if

I stay here but there's going to be

stress if I move and this is where it

gets paradoxical you neither stay nor

move there's no intention either way

because you realize whichever way you

intend there's going to be stress and

it's in that moment of non- intention

that things open up and it's very

impressive it's not one of these things

you say gee I had stream entry and I

didn't even know it it's Earth

shattering so that's the quote from aano

and then covac and CAD Zuna follows up

with I know you don't believe in the four stages but have you had an experience similar to this of Nirvana and first of all I would say one of the things that really struck me with regard to this description by aan tanro is that I do not recall ever seeing anything remotely resembling this as a description of stream entry in the poly Cannon I just I mean this is just it's it's like unique I I mean it's not exactly unique for people explaining things because for example it comes closer to a Zen Buddhist explanation of kensho than it does to any explanation of stream entry that I've ever come

across before in decades of reading
Buddhist
literature so it's ajan Tano's own
explanation apparently of what happened
to
him maybe in which case he's sort of
indirectly claiming to be an
Arya um which he probably shouldn't do
because if only because it's it's
against vinea to do that it's against
the rules of monastic discipline for a
monk to admit to having attained
superhuman mental states which according
to Orthodox tradition the same Orthodox
tradition that's talking about 17 mind
moments and TR of a second and flat
Earths and stuff they're also saying

that there are four stages of sainthood

in in

Buddhism and which I'm I'm skeptical

that the Buddha himself originated I

mean he's that he is the founder or the

originator of that

idea so yeah it's a Zen like experience

that he's that he's describing here and

I mean it's definitely some kind of mys

Insight where you're just transcending

just rational thought I mean that would

be a very understatement kind of way of

describing

it

so I guess I should just answer the

question though I don't need to do any

elaborate commentary on ajan Tano's
explanation of what it's like to attain
stream entry but uh coaction CAD Zina
says have you had an experience similar
to this of
Nirvana and it's hard to put like really
subtle meditative States into
words um but I mean I have had
meditative States I have gotten into
certain kinds of meditative states where
I had no doubt
whatsoever that just 30 seconds of that
would make 20 years of struggling and
floundering and sweating and just being
sick and everything that it was all
worthwhile it was it was a bargain it
was a really a good deal that 20 years

of struggling and floundering alone in a

jungle is an equal tradeoff is a bargain

for 30 seconds of this meditation that's

just Crystal Clarity no thought you're

just wide awake and you're not thinking

anything and it's just like there's no

boundaries

but whether that would be considered

like a a liberating

Insight I'm not sure it's

like

um because it seems like aun tanra here

is describing some kind of liberating

insight and it's it also reminds me of

Woe in the The Da Ching the just

non-action because you know he's saying

that you know you don't stay and you

don't

move which I think he might be referring

to to uh certain metaphors in in early

terava also like the like I think it's

the very first Su of the Samu Kaya talks

about you don't you don't sink and you

don't you don't run something like

that so I mean he could be getting the

idea somewhat from that or at least

getting the idea of how to explain the

situation from from sutas like that or

metaphors like

that but uh he does seem to be

explaining a kind of liberating

insight and

um yeah it's I'm not sure that I've

experienced that exact kind of
liberating Insight um I've had just very
profound meditative states that can
result in profound insights and I think
there's going to be a question a little
later on that that kind of touches on
that but um yeah I think different
people are just going to have different
experiences I do not think that it's a
cookbook sequence of experiences that
you have to have in order to to become
enlightened so I guess I answered that
question so I'm just going to move on
next question here this is from Stellar
Supreme formerly known as Liber
Lam and Stellar Supreme formerly known

as Liber Lam

says assuming we had a Karma calculator

would it be worse for a person person

giving that this person has guaranteed

lifetimes of Hell according to the

calculator to cultivate good Merit and

that it's just adding Heaven realm

lives before or after the hell realm

lives which would just be more deaths

and tribulations for that person to go

through well I don't think it

necessarily works that way um I

mean according to the sutas if you've

got Bad Karma and you're in danger of

going to hell or you're just in danger

of going into one of the the lower

Realms or just having a just bad things

happen to you the best thing you can do
is dilute the Bad Karma with lots of
good karma so you should just do as much
good as you can refrain from doing evil
as much as you can to like attenuate the
Bad Karma that you've got and I should
move this microphone farther from my
mouth I think
so um yeah I don't think that uh your
Good Karma and your Bad Karma are
segregated in that way that really if
you've got bad karma that you may go to
hell for and you do a lot of good karma
I mean that can like just change the
equation which reminds me of this story
you're just going to have to deal with

my multitude of digressions and those of
you who watch my q&as regularly know
that half at least half of my answers
aren't aren't even answering the
question I should say half of each each
answer rather than just half of the
answers but anyways long time ago a
Burmese man told me this story about
this guy who went to a fortune teller
and the fortune teller told him that he
was going to die within like a week so
he' better get his stuff in order
because his karma it was very clear the
signs where he was going to die so he
took off to to see his family they lived
in you know some Village miles away so
he took off walking to go say goodbye to

his family and on his way to say goodbye
to his family he sees this pond that's
almost dried up and there's all these
fish floundering in the shallow water
they're almost you know they're within a
short time they're all going to die
because
you know there's no rain there's a
drought or whatever it's hot and sunny
the water's um evaporating so he took
pity on them it's like he took off his
song or something whatever he was
wearing and he just kind of made a bag
and scooped up these fish and then ran
over to where there was a deeper Pond
and let them go in the deeper Pond and

then

he continued on his way with a wet

song and so he gets gets to his parents

says makes their goodbyes you know

they're all crying and hugging each

other presumably and then the his

expiration date comes and goes and he's

still fine so he goes back to the

fortune teller and says hey what's this

about me dying I'm not dead and the

fortune teller he's just scratching his

head because it was it was very clear

that he was going to die so he asked him

did anything unusual happen over the

past week and just I mean just almost as

an afterthought you know he just happens

to mention that he did save a pawn full

of fish that were dying and then the the
fortune teller you know said that must
be it and uh I think according to the
story he stopped being a fortune teller
and just became a Buddhist after that
because Buddhists aren't supposed to pay
a lot of attention to fortune tellers
anyway but the thing is it's not all set
in stone I mean the whole point is that
you know no matter how bad the situation
is it can always get
improved and I mean there are
stories of people going to heaven and
hell you know it's like they do
something bad that sends them to hell
they Al also do something good that

sends them to Heaven either before or

after they go to hell so they still had

to go to hell but if you have got better

Karma and karma is a mental

state then you're going to be going and

even if you do have to go to hell the

more Good Karma you've got the less

horrible it's going to be and it's not

going to last as long for example so it

would have an attenuating effect on your

stay in

hell and the more good you've got in you

the less you know it's like the less

Badness is going to

happen even though some Badness will

inevitably

happen so I'm not sure how well I

answered that

question with or without the strange

digression so I'm just going to move on

to Stellar Supreme formerly known as

Libra Lamb's next question which as

which is wait a

minute oh it's it's just a follow up on

the first question does this mean that

good karma cannot reduce the weight of

Bad Karma such that you can't have a

watered down Hell or Heaven lifetime

just the mental States and Dua in

accordance with a particular realm yeah

I think I already answered that one so I

answered both questions

inadvertently hope hope that's okay

that I answered your second question

before before even reading

it

so yeah no it doesn't necessarily mean

that I mean different people are

different you know different people have

different kinds of mental States I

suppose so

um yeah I mean it's going to be

different for different people and and

is karma is so

complex you know so subtle that I mean

you can't really calculate or predict

with accuracy or Precision you know what

exactly the result of a certain act or a

certain kind of mental state is going to

have I mean you can tell whether it's

going it's positive or negative as a

general rule or predominantly positive

or predominantly negative because there

I mean it's almost all Shades of Gray in

Buddhist ethics it's virtually

impossible to do something that is pure

good or pure evil there's always going

to be a certain

mix even to believe that you are doing

something is delusional from a Buddhist

point of view which is going to have

like a

negative negative as or negative

influence on your

karma

so I mean just just a desire for Good

Karma you do something out of a desire
for Good Karma still there's going to be
certain amount of delusion and just
craving and so forth that are going to
viate your good karma to some degree and
and the same goes for bad it's a ver
another virtual impossibility to do
something that's just pure
evil so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from never forget
14 and never forget 14 says traveling to
places like Thailand Japan Korea Etc I
have seen beautiful temples adorned with
swastikas what does the symbol mean to
you and have you come across it with
other monks studies or travels and yeah
this the swastika which is like it's

bent the other way from like the German National Socialist

swastika you know the German National Socialist swasa is has the the the bends of the the cross one way and and in Buddhism and also Hinduism usually the bend are going the other way although some Wise Guys can just take a mirror image of a like a picture of a Buddhist statue he's got like a swastika like a Buddhist swastika on his chest and you know they'll just mirror it so that so it turns into like a German National Socialist

swasa but the swasa I mean the word swastika is sanskrit the no the Nazis

borrowed the S borrowed the swastika

from Indo-European

religion and mainly from from India and

swastika literally means something like

true benefit or like good welfare you

know it's it was just a good luck sign

and I think it may have originally been

an image of the sun although I'm not

sure about

that and it was just like a good luck

sign that was it was common you know it

was just sort of like a a sign of

blessing or something and why the the

German national socialists adopted that

I really am not

sure so I mean it's it's mainly just uh

I mean it's sort of emotionally charged

you know it's got connotations you see a
swastika you know that's like a hate
symbol there are probably like countries
where it's ille legal to to even like
make a swastika with chalk I mean in
America I'm sure in some places at least
it would be like a hate symbol you know
it's like you're making people feel
unsafe by by scrawling a chalk swastika
on a sidewalk for
example but um I mean it's
just
lines I mean ultimately it has no power
it's just the like the emotional
reaction of the person that looks at it
that really has the

power

so what does the symbol mean to me well

it's like an ancient Indian symbol that

was appropriated by others and it was

common throughout lots and lots of

cultures for some reason swastika is

just sort of an easy design to come up

with that's easy to make but looks

interesting at the same time has a

certain aesthetic appeal to it I suppose

and so um yeah it may have originally

symbolized the Sun but it just became

just like a generic sign of of blessing

and good

luck so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from cify and cify says

I am observing derangement of Western

Society every day I come across people
who are NPCs there is no better
explanation
it looks like people lost empathy
ignorance became virtue Common Sense
non-existent how do I deal with this
from a Buddhist point of view well one
thing to bear in mind is people have
pretty much always been that way I mean
there have been differences in cultures
and some cultures are more they
emphasize virtue and honor and so forth
more than other cultures do but for the
most part you know the majority of any
civilization any culture any society are
going to be normies you know NPCs they

don't have many original thoughts if any
they just follow along what everybody
else is doing they follow along with
what they're told from the people higher
up um and you they they they're mostly
living in automatic pilot mode you know
it's like they never fully wake up they
just automatic pilot is good enough to
get them through life and that's what
they're doing and it's always been this
way it's been was this way in Ancient
India in the Buddhist time probably
maybe not to the same extent as now but
still I mean people are are just it's
just the way most people
are so I mean it could be more that way
now because the population is increasing

and so the ranks of humanity are being
filled by beings that weren't human in a
previous life and probably were like in
a ghost realm or something and you know
they're just kind of moved up and
they're not very good at being people
yet so that can happen I
suppose but how do you deal with people
that are normies or or sheeple or
whatever derogatory term I want
NPCs I mean they're just normal people
people really I mean it's that's the way
most people are probably far as I can
tell then I mean first of all you just
have some compassion and also consider
that animals are even worse off with

regard to originality of thought and so
forth and we don't really despise
animals because it because of it you
know we don't despair of animals because
they have no original thoughts in their
head you know they just follow along
with just their knee-jerk reflexes and
so forth um it's like people when they
are that way it bugs us more because
they're more like us you know they're
kind of reminding us that of our own
humanity and making us kind of
embarrassed to be members of the club or
something so I mean having compassion
you know it's like they really are not
choosing to be that way it's just
they're not Awakening enough to be

otherwise you know they're doing the
best they can actually which in a lot of
cases might be a piss poor attempt at
doing doing good but I mean they just
for the most part they just don't know
any better I mean they're not going to
be inflicting themselves with suffering
deliberately um just as a kind of
enlightened
choice I mean supposedly that would be
possible but for the most part people
they just don't know how to be happy and
they just follow along with what they're
[Music]
told you know they just
conform so people like that who are just

born into like a wisdom culture like

ancient India was even Burma is to this

day to some degree they're actually

better off that way because they're just

sort of mindlessly conforming to

something that is to their benefit is

going to help them to cultivate wisdom

you know to to cultivate their

Consciousness and so forth um at least a

little

bit but when you're you've got like the

Normie the person that just conforms

they're born into a spiritually bankrupt

culture I mean I mean that's not good

for

anybody

so I mean if you want to get real just

radical with how to deal with this from
a Buddhist point of view is you just
renounce Society you just go off and
live alone in a forest and meditate
under trees I mean that would be the
best way of dealing with unenlightened
Humanity but if that's really not a
viable option for you then just try to
have some compassion because I mean I
used to despise the human race a heck of
a lot more than I do now and one reason
for that is that I spent 30 years as a
monk with most of that time striving to
perfect myself
and I realize that I mean you can't just
decide to be an enlightened Saint it

doesn't work that way that you know even

if you try to be like an

awake wise good person as a general rule

it doesn't work you're pretty much stuck

being who you

are so um I got a lot more compassion

for the human race by realizing that

even if you just strive with all your

heart to be an enlightened saint that in

all likelihood it's still not going to

happen so people that are just

like lost in some sorrow lost in some

spiritually bankrupt culture I mean they

hardly have a chance you know they're

just stuck and so that that makes them

worthy of compassion in my my idea in

according to my feelings

it seems like uh I I have a lot more tolerance I mean except for except for on the highway on the highway I got no tolerance but everywhere else you know I have more compassion and tolerance for people just because I know how stuck that they are you know even if they tried they probably still couldn't be different than they are unless maybe it was just some sort of Crisis just got slammed upon them and just slammed them out of the rut that they've been in their whole life that can happen too but it's usually pretty catastrophic for people that are just worldly-minded normies to get slammed into a higher

state of consciousness it may take you
know some terminal illness or horrible
accident or something or the death of
you know half their family all of a
sudden or most of their fam you know
something
really just really
harrowing to to just knock them out of
this rut because people are we're we're
governed by habit just like just any
other animal we are a species of animal
we're an upgraded ape but still an
ape
so yeah I mean they just can't help it I
mean that's the thing and when you
realize that from your own experience of
when you're trying to help it and still

I mean it's it's not

easy that I mean you have more

compassion for people that really

haven't had much of a chance to even

have a concept of Enlightenment or the

cultivation of wisdom anything like

that

so I guess I answered that question well

enough I guess so I'm just going to move

on to cfy's second question which is I

tried to buy your books on Amazon Kindle

edition however Amazon does not sell

your books to me because I am not in the

US is there any other way to get your

book books well that's a good question

and it turns out that different

different

countries um have a different Amazon uh

website like like in America it's

amazon.com I think in like the UK it's

amazon.uk like Japan I think it's

amazon.

ja Australia it's like amazon. auu so it

may be that if you're in a a country

that has an Amazon specifically designed

for your country then you could get the

books in that way

otherwise I suppose you could send me

your email or send me your mailing

address and I can try to send you

something but um otherwise I mean I'm

I'm not exactly sure how you go about I

have been told that you can find my

books on um eBay so you it's possible

you might be able to get it on eBay uh

if eBay will send stuff to whatever

country you happen to be living

in apparently not the USA or

California so I'm just going to move on

to the next question and this is from

yugao and

yugao says lately I found out that I

have a hard time explaining to people

around me the purpose of my meditation

I'm doing my fness and Sade when I

explain I'm just being mocked can you

help me and then yugao continues here

I'm doing meditation for over 10 years

now but I still have hard time with some

very strong UNH wholesome habits I
easily get irritated when things don't
go my way but it does not last long but
people around me are telling me that my
meditation is worthless but I'm the only
one who sees its benefits what to do the
more I do it the less I care about my
looks or what people think about me I
easily do jobs that others find boring I
criticize less and try to save and help
as many creatures as I can are these not
benefits of my hard practice well I will
tell you that I mean any effort has its
results any any efforts in dhama will
have benefits even if you don't notice
them like for example let's just say
that there's a guy and in his backyards

there's this rock and he keeps hitting
that rock with his lawn mower he wants
to move that rock so he goes out there
and he just starts like pulling and
pushing and tugging this rock that's in
his backyard and it won't budge so this
guy's stubborn so he just makes it a
habit every day he comes out for like
half an hour trying to move that rock
and he keeps trying for like let's say
six months every every day he's out
there straining and trying to push or
pull or somehow budge that rock and get
it loose so he can get it out of his
yard and finally he just gives up in
despair he thinks you know all this time

has been wasted he has made no benefit
whatsoever when really he's like buff
now he's been working out moving that
trying to move that rock and even though
he hasn't moved it because unbeknownst
to him it goes down like 16 feet it's
just the tip of this huge bowler that
that nobody could possibly
move so he thinks that he's he's not
making any progress and outwardly at
least with regard to moving The Rock he
made no no progress but I mean he's like
in really good physical condition now
he's all muscly now because of all this
this futile struggling with this rock
and meditation can be that way it's uh
you may think that you're not making

progress but you certainly are if you
are doing real meditation you know
you're doing a like a verified
traditional meditation technique that's
taught in Buddhism like um you know Ana
meditation on the breath for example
then yeah you're definitely getting
you're you're getting benefits even if
you may not notice them
yourself and just to have like
spiritually blind normies telling you
that your meditation is worthless I mean
I me what value is that kind of
information you know they don't know
they just maybe to some degree they
might resent that you're trying to be

better than them or something but I mean
the people around you I mean you don't
really have to explain that you meditate
I mean don't be like a vegan and just
announce to everybody that you
meditate like vegans just you know it's
like a meme they just have to announce
to everybody that they're
vegan so I mean you don't have to do
that so it mainly just be people living
with you that would know that you're
meditating otherwise I mean you just
keep your mouth shut don't even talk
about it so with
them
um I'm not exactly sure how you would
how you deal with them I'm not sure you

know what these people are like but I
mean at the very least meditation is a
kind of mental calisthenics it's it's
like a mental exercise it strengthens
your concentration is good for your mind
just even from a worldly point of view
if you describe it in that way they may
be skeptical that your concentration is
any better but I mean you you can't you
can't really let yourself be swayed by
people that don't have a clue when
clueless people are criticizing
something that they don't understand it
is really just noise and I've got a dog
having a weird dream behind me and
making strange noises just a

second hey

wake up yeah you're having a dream

weren't you yeah

okay oh now she wants to say

hi hi there she

is okay you go back down

now okay

so um I guess I answered that question

did I did I answer that

question see the more more I do it the

less I care about my looks is okay are

these not benefits of my hard practice

Yeah I mean it may not I mean even if

you don't notice any obvious benefits I

guarantee you that there are benefits

that you know every action has its has

its result and a positive action is

going to have a positive result and it
may not reach
fruition until some point down the road
when all of a sudden it'll become
obvious
but at the very least meditation even at
a elementary level especially at an
elementary level is just kind of mental
exercise that strengthens your mind
increases your self-discipline increases
your concentration and to some degree it
increases your conscious level your
Consciousness level and sort of like the
the clarity of your
mind and just morality also is good for
that too just morality it's not that

you're scoring points with you know some
being on a throne up in the sky
somewhere that morality is its own
reward in a sense that it just causes
you to have um just like a
lighter more WorryFree kind of
mind at the very least so I'm just going
to move on next question this is from
game fap and this is kind of a strange
question here game fap says thoughts on
Ant excuse
me thoughts on Antarctica
mysticism from Lost pyramids to UFO
Landings there are many theories that
the Third Reich established a base there
and will reemerge when the time is right
any thoughts on operation high

jump so I guess that's kind of two

questions they're

related so I'm just operation high jump

is question number two now so thoughts

on Antarctica

mysticism and I'm really not well

informed with regard to Antarctica

mysticism I mean there was some kind of

Temple down there where uh I think it

was Predators were were like raising

aliens to like fight and and people were

worshiping them or something there was a

movie about that so I saw that but I

don't think that's really applicable

here because it's not particularly

mystical even though it was quasi

religious so lost pyramids yeah UFO

Landings well I guess there was you know

the thing the movie the thing you had

the UFO crash in

Antarctica um but that's not

particularly mystical either I mean

Antarctica is just some unknown place on

the frontier that you can attribute any

kind of weirdness to

it so it's like we can't say that you

know it's like the the mysterious lands

of the west or the mysterious Islands

you know of this sea or whatever because

it's all on Google Earth now you know

it's all this stuff has been explored

you know people have been there and seen

it and it's there's no weirdness there

at least nothing obviously weird and so
people will just say well it's in
Antarctica that's where the weirdness is
but I'm skeptical I
mean yeah I mean lost pyramids I mean
who would build a pyramid in Antarctica
anyway what would be the point of
building a pyramid in
Antarctica I don't think there's ever
been a civilization a human civilization
in Antarctica there were dinosaurs in
Antarctica there's penguins in
Antarctica but I don't think penguins
are going to be building pyramids I mean
UFO Landings maybe they might have had
some sort of remote base there

something but yeah I mean that would be

just just wild speculation

I don't know if there's any actual

evidence to support any of this stuff

other than

just secondhand or you know the kind of

strange person that that says I work for

NASA and I know that they're doing this

stuff and you know they get to be on all

kinds of YouTube videos and so forth but

um they don't really produce any actual

evidence nothing nothing really

convincing anyway and with regard to the

uh the Third Reich the Germans

um establishing a basee in Antarctica I

I doubt that just as much as I doubt

that uh they have a base on the Dark

Side of the Moon which is another theory

that the the Nazis U went to the Moon

with their newly invented rocket ships

and uh are just waiting there or have

long since died of like anoxia or

something when they ran out of air

so yeah I think Antarctica is pretty

much of a Barren Wasteland mostly and um

there could be weird stuff happening

there but I'm not aware of it and I

don't see any real reason to believe it

other than just you know accepting a

kind of agnostic you know maybe who

knows kind of an

attitude but

um yeah I haven't seen any kind of

evidence why I should think that
Antarctic is any kind of mystical realm
of weirdness with aliens and Nazis and
and pyramids and all that kind of
stuff so I'm just going to move on to
game fap second question here which is
any thoughts on operation high jump and
I had no idea what operation high jump
was so I actually looked it up before
this Q&A and it turns out that in the
late 40s you know shortly after World
War II the American Navy was doing some
uh setting up bases in antar anarctica
uh largely just for like training for
like very cold conditions and like
getting some territorial claims on
Antarctica and just doing like

scientific research and stuff and it may
be that game fap is insinuating here
that maybe they were down there to deal
with the Nazis or something but um I
think that there may have been some you
know politics in you know America
wanting its piece of the antarctican pie
and also just setting up scientific
bases you know
um and it it it was only for a few years
in the late 40s I guess so they
apparently found that it wasn't worth
their while to continue doing it so I
mean it wasn't really that big of a deal
I think I mean if you're into conspiracy
theories If you're sort of you you think

in that way then there might have been
some kind of sinister motive for the
Navy to be setting up bases in
Antarctica um but I don't know exactly
what it would be it's I'm still a I'm
just as agnostic with regard to oper
operation high jump as I am with regard
to pyramids and UFO Landings in
Antarctica I mean I assume that there
really were scientific bases there there
still are scientific bases in in
Antarctica where they're keeping track
of you know like the ozone layer over
the South Pole and so forth or for the
according to the flat earther it maybe
that they're just making sure that
nobody goes over the edge and finds out

that the Earth is flat and goes back and

and and tells the world about

it so that's those are my thoughts on

Antarctica I guess and my nostrils are

kind of plugging up on me

somehow anyways the next question is

from extremely rare

bird an extremely rare bird says I read

about bante Nana DEA who said anywhere

between three and five hours sleep is a

good amount but one shouldn't try to

force it six hours would be too much but

if one is at the beginning of one's

practice one shouldn't worry too much if

one is sleeping six hours however one

shouldn't be pleased with that and then

extremely rare bird says I feel like
trash if I don't get sick 7 to 8 hours
how can one train oneself to get by on 3
to 5 hours and I can relate to this
because before I became a
monk the ideal amount of sleep for me
was like nine hours if I didn't get a
full nine hour sleep I was a bear in the
afternoon when I woke
up
so um then I became a monk and according
to like terraa Buddhism the ideal amount
of sleep is one one third of a night
which would average out to like four
hours or maybe a little less than four
hours and I tried that and there was
only one month in my entire life that I

averaged less than four hours sleep per night and that was during some of the best meditation of my life I I've even been in like intensive meditation Retreats I was I was at pandama once and I was trying to sleep I think it was 4 and a half or five hours per night and I was starting to hallucinate I was starting to um like start dreaming before I went to sleep you know it was like hallucinations I'd be sitting there in the meditation allall meditating and I'd just be dreaming all over the place I mentioned this before I remember one time I'm in this living room and there's a person

standing in front of me in front of a
fireplace you know this person is
standing in front of me with their back
to the fireplace and they're they're
like asking me a question I'm getting
ready to answer that question then
finally I realize whoa wait a minute I'm
in a meditation Hall in rangon this
isn't
happening and so what I did was I just
started giving myself an extra half hour
of sleep which caused the hallucinations
or the the waking dreams to start only
during the last meditation of the
evening but it was just I just couldn't
get by on that little sleep it just
wasn't working I'm just a sleepy head by

Nature different people have different constitutions and some people need more sleep than other people some people get by fine with four hours sleep at night and I met one Canadian guy who was really he was really serious Yogi he was saying that I mean he feels sleepy all the rest of the day if he gets more than four hours of
sleep but as I say I I was only able to manage it no matter how hard I tried one month out of my 30 years as a monk and that was during some of the best meditation in my life so if you do a lot of like intensive meditation then you don't need to sleep as much to some

degree it either removes the amount of
stress or or thought or whatever that
requires you to sleep more or it's sort
of compensating you some of the benefits
of sleep you're getting while you're
you're like in a very tranquil clear
subtle kind of mental stay I'm not sure
which way it goes whether um The
Meditation is sort of taking the place
of the sleep or it's just somehow
causing you to need less sleep in some
other way but that does seem to be the
the way it is with me especially it's
like the better my meditation is the
less sleep I
need but um nowadays I mean eight hour
sleep is is good for me that's if I

don't get that much then I'm I'm feeling

kind of tired the next

day but I'm not doing any kind of

intensive meditation like I was when I

was a

monk

so how can one train oneself to get by

on three to five hours um it may be that

that you'd have to do really intensive

meditation but if you're just the kind

of sleepy head by Nature that I am then

it just may be unrealistic and you

shouldn't beat yourself up over it and

you just accept the way things are I

mean you can look in the sutas for ways

to you know reduce sleepiness and the

the previous Q&A somebody was actually

um including uh info from auta and also

info from aan Shaw on how to overcome

sleepiness so there's ways of doing it

like sleep in a sitting position I mean

it's it's pretty miserable and if you

have to function especially at first you

know you got to work and have Clarity of

mind you know you got to be able to

concentrate and so forth it may not work

very well but I I experimented with

sleeping in a sitting position when I

was a a junior

Monk and uh I

was excuse me excuse me I gotta blow my

nose or something this is

ridiculous okay that's a little better I

have been told that ajan cha would
sometimes sleep in a sitting position
with a bottle balanced on one knee and a
glass balanced on the other knee so that
if you started moving around they' fall
over and possibly
break so I mean I
don't it's in a way it seems
counterproductive because I mean if
you're a monk you can afford to do that
kind of stuff but if you're a lay person
then you're just going to be a mess the
next day probably especially if you're
doing it for over a period of you know
many days or many nights I should say
then yeah you're going to be like

lurching around like a zombie before

very

long even before I became a monk I was

trying to cut way down on my sleep and

yeah I was just I was like a zombie just

just sleep deprived just relatively

severe sleep deprivation and I knew one

monk who just pretty much cracked up due

to sleep deprivation he was trying to do

the sitting nanga at the highest level

which meant he was trying to sleep in a

sitting position cross-legged and he

wasn't leaning back against anything he

was cheating a little bit he'd take his

arms Bowl put it in front of him and

then just lean forward and rest his

forehead on that and sleep that way and

that plus all of his other austerities
he thought it was mainly this the sleep
deprivation caused him to just have like
a
breakdown so you don't want to push it
too much if if your body really needs
the sleep then you should give your body
what it needs that's just common sense
whether Bon yanaa approves or
not but uh there are certain ways to get
by on less sleep and the best way that I
know of Getting By on less sleep is to
do lots of intensive meditation but it
has to be good meditation the deeper you
get into meditation the less sleep you
need so I'm just going to move on to

extremely rare birds next question
here which is I feel calm and happy most
days now and my meditation is quite
stable however every night I keep having
intense and weird dreams or violent
nightmares mostly unpleasant and or
confusing I wonder why this keeps
happening the Buddha recommends meta for
improving sleep but it doesn't seem to
help me much would you know of any
potential cures of this problem well
that is kind of an interesting problem
that you you're kind of well balanced
and everything during the day and then
you have bad dreams at night it could be
a kind of like um like equilibrium thing
maybe you're just a little too positive

during the day so that the negative has

to arise you know through the

subconscious mind when you're

sleeping make sure here 10% on the

battery

so um I mean that's a possibility maybe

if you had more negative thought I'm not

advising this but maybe you had more

negative thoughts during the day and

You' have less need to have them at

night but I did have this kind of

problem when I was a

kid

and um around the same time

or I mean when I was still having the

bad dreams um we were playing around

with a Ouija board and the Ouija board
told me that I had this Guardian spirit
and it told me the guardian spirit's
name and um I was inspired to just like
I mean ask my guardian spirit before I
would go to sleep at night you know
while I'm already in bed my head's on
the pillow then I'd sort of silently
request that my guardian Spirit would
just help me have good dreams and it it
seemed to work even if it was just like
the placebo effect or whatever so maybe
I mean if you're the the praying type
you can pray to you know High some
higher being or beings or you know if
you've got like a a guardian Spirit
which in Burmese is called the coat

which is like the daa who is like
protecting you something like that it
might
work but um yeah I'm not sure otherwise
how you would how you would deal with
that I don't really have a lot of
personal experience I do have weird
dream sometimes but um I haven't had any
really bad dreams in very very long time
I know I've had like weird disorienting
dreams or you know like the person
chasing you through an airport or or
something like that you know you're just
you know ducking in and there and you're
hiding and then they they're always they
always find

you so that kind of dream I've had but I
mean I haven't had really bad dreams
since I was a kid probably not very many
of them
anyway so I am sorry if I can't really
just tell you the Cure because I I don't
really know but when I was a kid and I
did have a problem with bad dreams it
was just sort of like um supplicating my
my guardian Spirit to uh you know watch
over me and help keep me from having bad
dreams and in my case it seemed to have
a positive
effect so I'm just going to move on to
uh extremely rare birds next question
which was kind of an easy one some of
these questions have not been very easy

I mean just explaining what the question means especially towards the beginning there was was not easy but um this one's fairly easy how was the bed you used as a monk in Burma well over my 20 something years in Burma I had a number of beds the one that I slept on the longest was at a one boo Wildlife Refuge Monastery it was inside of a cave I called too

guha and it was just a wooden pallet and most monk beds are a wooden pallet it's just you know it was like this thick made out of wooden planks and then over the top of that would be like a a straw mat or a a like a bamboo mat or maybe a

rush mat it was just sort of a it was
maybe like an eigh of in thick mat over
the top of that and then because I would
I'd sweat so much I'd have to put a
cloth over the top of that for a while I
was using just an open up burlap bag and
using that as a kind of bed
spread and um my my uh my pillow for
many years was just my soap case that
I'd wrap a like a wash rag around it and
it you know was like this thick I just
used that as a pillow um and then
somebody off offered me some cotton wool
in a bag for medicinal purposes and I
never used cotton wool for medicinal
purposes so I just wrapped it in cloth
and started using that as a pillow which

was a pillow about yay
big and uh yeah that was about it I mean
the burlap when I was using the burlap
as a bed sheet it was so rough I'd have
to like lift myself up and kind of turn
over up in the air and then ease myself
back down again to in order to turn over
at night and then sometimes I just like
sleep on concrete floor I mean I spent a
lot of time in in that cave especially
just sleeping on a concrete floor with a
piece of wood for a pillow and it wasn't
to be an aesthetic it was that was
literally the most comfortable way of
sleeping because it was so hot that just
sleeping naked on a concrete floor was

the coolest way of sleeping and then

sometimes if your body would would or my

body would like warm up the con and I'd

start sweating again I'd have to scoot

down a little farther down the the

corridor where the concrete was still

coolish and then and then go back to

sleep

again and the piece of wood for a pillow

I mean that was just to keep the the

pillowcase from just soaking and sweat

and becoming foul like an old gym

sock so yeah I mean I've when I was you

know out in the wood sometimes you just

I just have like a little piece of

plastic or something I just spread out

on the ground sleep on that with uh the

the soap case wrapped in a in a piece of

cloth as a as a

pillow easily washable piece of

cloth so yeah beds in Burma tend uh I

mean even lay people mostly sleep on a a

wooden bed with just a few a few like

bamboo mats over the top of that so it's

they're they're sleeping on a very firm

bed even even like Burmese villagers you

get to I mean rich people in in the

cities they're probably sleeping on a

western style

bed so anyways I'm going to move on to

the next

question I'm just uh checking the stats

here okay this question is from Mary

J and Mary J says to start a new

Buddhist school what do you have to do I

don't mean tradition like Thai Forest

tradition but a new school like terraa

or sarv

and I guess there's two answers to that

question there's like the old Asian

traditional answer and then there's like

the the new modern Western answer the

old Asian traditional answer would be

you'd pretty much have to start a Schism

in the

S and a Schism in the S is where you've

got um I mean the technical definition

of a Schism in the s or S

beta is you've got two SAS or two groups

of at least four monks doing um like

formal acts of the

S um in the same SEMA just separately

you got this group like doing their

their ceremonies separately from this

other group doing their same doing the

their ceremonies in the same area that

would be a song of beta they're not

doing their their ceremonies together

they're doing their ceremonies

separately and so that would be like a

Schism and uh you know then they can

just sort of take their own Direction

but starting a Schism in the S that's

one of the five things that will

guarantee you of Hell according to

Orthodox

tradition you know there's four five
things you do these and you're
guaranteed of Hell one is killing your
mother killing your father killing an
enlightened being or injuring a Buddha
so that he bleeds or starting a Schism
in the s and then there are there's one
alternate version where it's raping or
seducing a nun is is also one of the the
five things or one of the things anyway
that is Will Will land you in
hell so if you wanted to start a new
school you'd have to get uh you'd have
to get a Schism in the songa going and
then instead of
reconciling then you just go your own
way and just have your own favorite

philosophical teachings and just you
know proceed in isolation until you've
drifted far enough away that you're
obviously different even to the Casual
Observer but the new way of doing it I
guess in the west is just declaring
we're starting a new school of Buddhism
and then have enough people go along
with it that it becomes like a movement
you know we're starting you know queer
rainbow Buddhism and it doesn't matter
if you know what what any kind of monks
say you know we're just doing it I mean
that would be like the new Western Way
of doing
it so anyways I mean I mean according to

Orthodox tradition in order to start the
school of Buddhism you're going to go to
hell I mean that's you have to do
something that will land you in
hell so don't do it I would advise you
not to start a new school of
Buddhism there's enough schools already
really so
anyways let's see I mean if you don't
accept the teachings of any school I
mean you can't 100% agree with any of
the schools of Buddhism then you can
just sort of you know follow the best
you can and not start a new SAA that's
doing their ceremonies separately from
another
s in the same

place

so my nostrils are misbehaving

again it's kind of strange

so anyways Mary Jay's next question is

do Tibetan llamas have ordination or

Apostolic succession I don't know the

word going back to the original s so it'

be like yeah an unbroken lineage I guess

and I assume that they do that uh you

know there were Saab betas or schisms

over the the course of the early history

of Buddhism and one of those branches

eventually wound up wound up

um you know you had some member of the

branch going to Tibet I mean it happened

on a number of occasions I think

Buddhism was brought to Tibet more than once which helps to account for the different schools of Buddhism in Tibet right now but I would assume that all of them originally go back to goab budha that there would be some sort of unbroken lineage of monks um going all the way back to the Buddha it's just that you know that doesn't necessarily mean that Tibetan Buddhism is like validly representing what the Buddha taught because there's all this mutation going on over time you know everything is impermanent including the S including just the teachings of Buddhism itself you know it's all subject to change over

time so yeah I assume so so I'm just going to move on to Mary Jay's third question which is in majima 115 it is said that the Arya cannot do five or six things murder their own mother murder their own father kill an Aran injure the Buddha make a Schism in the songa and find a new teacher other than the Buddha there is nothing about the the Arya can't tell a lie is Arya able to tell a lie well um elsewhere in the sutas you're going to find lists of what sodas can and can't do like a soda can't break any of the five precepts and so it's kind of strange that there are lots of people who consider themselves to be

soapas who break some of the five precepts including monks who will like they'll they'll tell bogus confessions you know they'll essentially tell a lie when they're making confession because when you make confession you say at the end yes sir very good sir will restrain myself it's like you know I have committed such and such offenses of and you know such and such number of such and such offenses and then the other monk says do you see them and then the first monk says yes I see them and the the second monk that you're making confession to says in future you should restrain yourself and then the the monk making confession says yes sir very good

sir I will restrain myself and monks

even who consider themselves to be Aras

will make that confession knowing full

well they're not going to restrain

theirself they're just going to keep

breaking the same rule like handling

money or whatever whatever the rule is

that they're

breaking so either they are deliberately

telling a lie or they're just saying

mindless blah blah blah in the poly

formula of making confession which is

not exactly honest I mean at the very

least it's just Mindless

Babble

so yeah there there are other suits

saying that like aana cannot break any

of the five precepts he cannot have

doubts about Buddha dhama and sa and so

on he I mean he's he's even gone beyond

self viw he no longer has

sakad which is you know belief in a in

an individual

self so yeah there's there's lists other

than in maim Kaya 115 majima 115 is just

talking about what someone with Right

View can and cannot do

so um it doesn't specifically mention

soda ponas I'm pretty sure it might but

uh elsewhere you will find lists of what

the different four stages can and can't

do and I mean even a soda cannot break

any of the five precepts

deliberately I mean you can sneak him
something laced with alcohol and he
might drink it but he wouldn't do it
deliberately you might accidentally step
on a bug when he's walking but he
wouldn't stomp on one on purpose that
kind of
thing so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from the Proto sudo
monk who uh sometimes goes by the name
of Cool Whip and the protos sudo monk
says can you please elucidate how fourth
Janna is different from a Trans State
and how it leads to
nibana man my nostrils are just not
cooperating today

it's not even

funny so can I please elucidate how

fourth J is different from a Trans State

and how it leads to nibana okay well I

mean fourth Janna if you go by Orthodox

tradition it kind of is a Trans State to

the extent that um I mean it's like you

be go into a kind of suspended

animation where you become like a

hibernating squirel you're oblivious to

everything around you your heart rate

and your breath rate almost stop and my

father who was a hypnotist said that

someone in a deep hypnotic trance it's

the same way they're oblivious to

everything around them except for maybe

the voice of the

hypnotist and their heart rate and their
breath rate almost stop they become like
a hibernating
squirrel so I do think that what a lot
of people consider to be Janna is
essentially a kind of hypnotic Trans
State
[Music]
but um I think that real fourth J is
different from a Trans State in that you
should not be oblivious to everything
around you that your mind you're
actually more conscious than when you're
not meditating that it's I mean
according to the descriptions and the
text fourth jna is purity of

mindfulness it is pure mindfulness you know you are more aware than at any other time but you're not thinking anything your mind is empty so you're just wide awake fully aware and your mind is silent so how does it lead to nibana there's different ways that can lead to Nano first first of all I mean it's a fairly easy um insight to attain in that if you identify with your thoughts and then finally you experience a state in which you're wide awake and you're not thinking anything and you're still there more or less sort of then I mean that's an Insight that I mean if you stop thinking you're not just going to be

unconscious that who you are is not your thoughts so that was a fairly easy kind of insight that can arise from just a meditative state where you stop thinking but um there is one of my favorite sutas in the majaya is the the small discourse on

voidness and it talks about how a monk cultivates voidness or emptiness and the first step is you go out into a forest where it's it is devoid of all the commotion going on in the village and it's devoid of all these artificial rules that have to be followed you know it's just the the natural state of a forest and then you start meditating and

your meditation objects become becomes more and more subtle and until finally according to the Su you reach the signless concentration of mind which is one of those states that that's supposedly even higher than formless jna and then when you come out of that state which is presumably based on the context the highest cultivatable mental state there is you come out of that state and then you realize I mean even that is a condition state it had a beginning and an end you know it had a cause and then you know it started and then it stopped so even the highest possible meditative state that can be attained is still not it and then what

happens is you get this Insight where
it's sort of like what aan Tanis was
talking about in the quote that in a
previous question where you just hit
this it's like like the old tilt sign on
a pinball machine or the old error sign
on a on a old calculator where it's like
it just kind of jolts your mind into
into like this different plane of
understanding you know it's like you're
trying for enlightenment and then you
finally realize that nothing you do is
going to be it and then that just
somehow causes you to just in a way give
up and let go of Sam Sara
so that is how it can lead to NE but the

different insights may be different for
different
people so I'm just going to move on to
the Proto sudo monk next question which
is what is your view on how normies
fools sheeple greedy ignorant delusional
stupid idiots live their lives and how
to live amongst them any advice for this
Lost World well I've already pretty much
answered this essentially the same
question uh previously I can't remember
who asked it but uh my view on how
normies uh live their lives well I mean
they're conforming they're following
along and also they never fully wake up
and so they're in automatic pilot mode
you know it's just sort of knee-jerk

reflex or just habit force of habit is

governing their lives you know they they

don't have much for independent thought

or original

ideas and so

how you live amongst them um I

mean it's pretty much like I explained

the last time it's like I have a lot

more compassion for people now a lot

more tolerance for for normies now after

being a monk for 30 years and trying to

become a perfected Saint and realizing

just how difficult that is if not

impossible because we're pretty much

stuck being Who We Are

and so when even if you try to become a

perfected Saint and you can't do it how
is somebody else how do they have any
chance at all when they don't even have
the concept of the possibility of that
you know in in a way it's
just I mean I I can't help but feel a
certain compassion for them but still
everyone has like this spark of
Consciousness I mean everybody has
Consciousness I mean I almost said a
spark of div which is kind of what it is
I mean everybody has this spark of
divinity and the more the more wise you
are the more you see that in others you
know it's like if if you're a fully
enlightened being or let's say you're a
fully enlightened Hindu let's say Nim

karoli Baba back there on the on the

altar um let's say he was a fully

Enlighten Hindu and he just looks around

and sees everybody's just a

manifestation of God

I mean in Buddhism you'd see it somewhat

differently but still it would be it

would have the same effect you know it's

like there's no there's nobody or

nothing in reality to

despise because I mean the the the parts

of us that are like dumb and and ugly

and unenlightened is just the illusory

part that's not the real part

so the wiser you are the more you see

uh

just stuff to to respecting others or to
have love for or compassion for that
sort of thing but really I mean normies
they just can't help but be normies most
of them have the zero concept of
anything but being normies other than
just being dead I mean those are their
two choices be a normie or be dead I
mean this Enlightenment doesn't mean
anything to them I mean they might never
hear the word
Enlightenment so I
mean just try to get along with them as
best you can you know just uh you know
keep your precepts don't lie you know
don't just get pissed off and abuse them
to their face because that would be a

kind of wrong speech also that's perus

of AA or abusive

speech so just uh

yeah I mean that's that's my view on how

normies live their lives is just kind of

what I've already been saying this is

the second time on that one any advice

for this Lost

World well I mean in a way it's always

been this way and we are where we need

to be we are where our Karma has landed

us so we're here for a reason so we

shouldn't we shouldn't just waste it and

just fail to learn anything just keep

our eyes open and try to be as awake as

possible try to cultivate our own mind

as well as we can and uh just have
compassion on people that are less
fortunate than us which which includes
the
NPCs because they're not total NPCs they
I mean everybody's got some spark of
Consciousness to them some spark of
originality I mean you I don't think
anybody could be without any Intuition
or creativity or like
imagination at all I mean they just be
like soulless vampires or um just robots
or
something so everybody has at least a
little spark of
divinity and U I guess we can uh I mean
that's like the most important part of

them and so I guess you can emphasize
that part and uh have a little more
compassion I mean I have read I saw a
little uh what do you call inspirational
sign once at a monastery saying you
cannot hate someone that you
understand and I think that's kind of
true for me I think I understand people
better so I hate them less I used to
really despise the human race but which
is one of the reasons why I was able to
become a Hermit monk but um my years as
a monk has mellowed me on that on that
score to some
degree so so I hope I answer that
question because I'm moving on to the

next question regardless also from the

Proto sudom

mon which is as follows what has been

the greatest discoveries in your life

the Paradigm shifting moments of

profound Insight experiences thoughts or

events that change the trajectory of

your life and that has led to seeing the

truth I'm precognized we will hear about

the trickster and the Paranormal by

George P Hansen and he's got kind of a

smiley face

thing um I mean I haven't really thought

thought on this maybe I should have

given it some thought before nameing the

Q&A and like written down a list or

something but I can say that possibly

the the first real Paradigm shifting

moment of my life that I can remember

was when my dad took me to see Planet of

the Apes with Charlton hon at the movies

when I was a little kid I was maybe five

years old

and that was really a paradigm changer

for

me just seeing humans as not some

Godlike being that really understands

but is really just sort of you know at

the same level as just intelligent apes

or

something

um another another one that was similar

was reading the naked eight by Desmond

Morris when I was about 14 that was that
was really a paradigm shifter for me
because that's when I really started um
viewing human beings as a species of
animal just Laden with instincts just
like any other
mammal so there was that um let's see
just being converted to Buddhism which
was caused by reading Zen flesh the Zen
Bones by Paul reps when I was in college
I mean I heard about Buddhism a lot from
my father who considered himself to be a
Buddhist but that was my first real
exposure to it I guess uh even before
that um a major par Paradigm shifting
moment in my life was when I was like 16
I just just rebelled almost flunked out

of school was an honor student and then
all of a sudden I'm just flunking out of
school getting in lots of trouble and
just partying all the
time and so my father in one one evening
in a towering rage told me that I was
going to have to see a youth counselor I
was just have to move out just hit the
road so I opted for the youth counselor
who uh it's seemed the easier of easiest
way to go about my father's uh
ultimatum and he turns out that he was a
spiritual guy and he started giving me
ROM dos books to read and that was a
paradigm shifting moment for me is just
being exposed to this whole other world

you know first there's just the the
world of the Normie you know you just
get an education and you get a job and
you you get a wife and you get a house
and then you get some kids and then you
cultivate your yard to Perfection you
just have this Perfect Lawn like some of
my neighbors at the present moment
there's there's one two neighbors I've
got two neighbors that mow their lawn
every
day and so I mean that was like the
first option in life then the second
option is just rebel against that and
just party get drunk get high do
whatever you want just go wild and that
is not sustainable either you know you

get in a lot of trouble you might have a
lot of fun but you have like an equal
and opposite amount of of the opposite
of
fun so that's not sustainable and then
all of a sudden I'm reading this ROM dos
book and he ROM Doss had like this
contagious enthusiasm like like a good
teacher has and I didn't really
understand it when I was reading it
because it was so alien to anything that
I had come across before that I mean it
was just kind of over my head but still
just intuitively I could feel that there
was something worthwhile in that better
than you know the normi approach of of

like a salmon of swim upstream spawn and
die or just like partying and getting
into trouble all the time just going
wild I mean it there was something
valuable in that and I gradually just I
was fascinated by it and kept studying
it until finally it started sinking in
better I started acquiring enough
knowledge of Eastern spirituality that I
was able to start integrating it into my
understanding in a way that that uh you
know pieces would start coming
together and it was just shortly after
that like I was 17 years old just when I
made my resolution of someday renouncing
the world and striving for enlightenment
because you got these books

saying you all you have to do is live
this this certain lifestyle and you know
do these these uh spiritual practices
and you can
become like if not omniscient I mean you
see reality face to face it's like you
know not not just seeing God face to
face but merging with God and if it's
possible I mean it's like a seems like a
sacred duty to at least give it a shot
so I mean that was that was definitely a
paradigm changer for me is just being
exposed to Eastern spirituality a lot of
books I mean I've I've talked about
certain books I've already mentioned a
few um just in this answer you know like

Desmond Morris and be here no it wasn't
be here now it was Grist for the mill
was the first ROM dos book I was that I
ever read and then Zen flesh Zen bones
reading uh an old translation of the
sutin P I think it was by a man named
fbow in and the translation was like
from the late 1800s I think that was
mainly what um converted me to terraa
reading the suata about these this tough
as Wood Forest Aesthetics just wandering
around just indifferent to heat and cold
and hunger and thirst and just you know
just going for it that was definitely a
life Cher for me and I tried to emulate
those those wooden toughest wood
Aesthetics for many

years so let's see Paradigm shifting
moments profound Insight experiences
thoughts or events that Chang the
trajectory of my life well I mean I have
had some profound insightful experiences
as a monk that I think also would change
I've described them before I don't want
to go into detail again on on that
but um you know like I mentioned earlier
on in this Q&A there have been times I
I've had meditative experiences where
just 30 seconds of that is well worth 20
years of struggling and
floundering and even though it passes
you know everything has has a beginning
has an end still it's there you know

it's like something you can refer to or
even just like taking l s d for the
first few times even that was a paradigm
changer because it was giving you
insights into other ways of interpreting
reality that as a normi you didn't have
you know it it would at the very least
it gave you this
alternative way of of seeing the world
and realizing that the usual way of
seeing the world that the Nory has is
not necessarily the only way or even the
best way
so let's see what
else I guess that's probably enough plus
of course I read the trickster in the
Paranormal by George P Hansen which

really explains uh paranormal phenomena
in a very elegant way that I like very
much and I think there's a good very
good chance that that George P Hansen is
correct on that
score so I'm just going to move on next
question now this is from scolin or
skaden
and he says could you compare
traditional Eastern inspired religious
spiritual systems to their Western
globalist
reinterpretations that suit their own
purposes like Warrior Zen to corporate
Zen new age to first Earth Battalion or
Shamanism to MK Ultra and so on well the

only one that really seems like a really

good mat

would be Warrior Zen to corporate Zen I

have read that um the mhi's book of five

rings was very common reading among like

corporate Elites back in like the the

70s and 80s at least you know where you

just adopt the you know the the Bushido

approach to being a Cutthroat business

tycoon um with regard to Due age going

to first Earth battalion I don't know it

just seems to me that uh Jim Channon who

uh started the first Earth Battalion was

just kind of a weird

guy and uh was maybe inspired in his

weirdness enough to actually persuade

some Army brass to like let him

experiment with some weird

ideas

um but uh let's see

here and then Shamanism to MK Ultra I

assume that's just like mind altering

drugs

so scolin is asking me to compare

traditional inspired religious systems

to their Western globalist

reinterpretations that suit their own

purposes well as a general rule I mean

the modern West is very eclectic it's

willing to accept what works from just

various different cultures and that is

actually a strength like that's one

reason why Rome was as strong as it was

in ancient times is because they had the
the wisdom or the pragmatism to know
that if if like one of their enemies had
some technique in Warfare that was very
effective they adopted that or they had
some other technique or even some God
that they worshiped or something that
seemed to be beneficial the Romans
weren't so conservative they' just say
no they'd say all right let's try
it so um actually it is kind of good to
be eclectic but what what is happening
in the modern or postmodern West is that
it's like inspired spiritual Traditions
are just being hijacked for worldly
purposes like a good example that scolin
hasn't mentioned is using mindfulness as

a stress reduction technique like there
are hospitals throughout the West that
teach essentially Buddhist mindful
but it's you know translated into more
Western psychological terminology and
the purpose is an Enlightenment it's not
even really so much the cultivation of
wisdom it's allowing people to deal with
chronic pain or impending death you know
like a terminal terminals case so um you
know they're they're taking it and using
it for like therapeutic purposes at a
worldly Normy kind of level and and you
know it's kind of similar with you know
Warriors and and you know business
business Executives reading Musashi's

book of five rings with regard to the first Earth Battalion um I really don't know that much about it although I did see the movie The Men Who Stare at Goats I think that was the title of it with George Clooney and and the some other heavy hitter actors in it um but I guess the next question is about that in particular so I won't mention that so far

but with regard to Shamanism I'm sure that drugs have been used uh for good and for ill for a very long time long before MK Ultra came along you know just drugging people in bars and then you know shanghaiing them so that when they wake up they're already at Sea as a you

know as a a sailor that kind of thing I mean that would that happened a lot you know truth serum has been used long before MK Ultra just getting people drunk
to in order to you know use them in some way or exploit them in some way that's been around for a long time but General generally the trend is that you take some kind of spiritual or religious technique and then just translate that into something like
worldly and you know it and sometimes it really does work you know like I'm sure that some business Executives have benefited from reading Musashi's book of

Five Rings or a lot of people have
benefited people who are not Buddhists
have no desire to strive for
enlightenment or any such thing
nevertheless have used Buddhist
Meditation techniques especially
mindfulness techniques to cure
themselves of like OCD certain mental
illnesses can or mental disorders can be
um at least much reduced through
mindfulness techniques also you know the
chronic pain and all that so you know
we're living in a spiritually bankrupt
age and so um you know the spirituality
is Stripped Away from techniques that
are still useful in other ways I mean it
can still be spiritual it's just sort of

like backdoor spirituality where you
don't even notice that you're practicing
a spiritual
technique so um I guess I it's kind of a
hard question for me to answer I can't
really relate to the question very well
or at least I can't come up with very
many ideas so I'm just going to move on
to scadden's next question here would
you kindly give your expert opinion on
Jim channon's attempt at creating an
Uber mench super soldier he wrote a
manual or pamphlet called first Earth
Battalion that's mostly graphical which
explains it it's free to download on the
internet archive as a PDF it's probably

on YouTube as well yeah I saw a pdf
version of it online I didn't want to go
through the whole manual before doing
the Q&A though so I'm I'm going to rely
to some degree on uh the movie The Men
Who ster at Goats which I assume has
some historical
accuracy but apparently Jim Channon was
this new Agy kind of guy who was trying
to use the military as a way of just
bringing peace to the world I'm not sure
about
um like exploding a goat's Heart by
staring at it um the what I picked up
from watching the movie this was a few
years ago I don't really recall it very
clearly but they came up with a kind of

technique that really does work and I've
been using it throughout most of my life
of just defusing a hostile situation
like you're you're face to face with
someone who just wants to just beat you
up or just mess you up you know he's
really hostile and what you do is you
just remain calm and just you don't
cause any kind of feedback loop you know
you just remain neutral and it's his
anger or whatever without any kind of
feedback is it just runs its course it
just Peters out it it's not
sustainable and so that was one of the
methods in the movie that these guys
were doing is just when they're in a a

situation where somebody wants to kill
them or something they would just go
into this state of neutrality which
would not give any kind of feedback at
all positive or negative one way or the
other to the person who is aggressing
you know towards them or feeling
aggressive towards them and in in a lot
of cases it'll work I mean if somebody's
like pointing a gun at you and preparing
to pull the trigger in a battlefield
situation they're probably just going to
pull the trigger anyway but um
is adopting New Age methods where I I I
I looked at the uh the Wikipedia article
where it was saying that the uniforms of
this first Earth Battalion had a Jin

sang regulator on it and stuff like that
I mean that's just kind of new age
silliness I think but um you know the
Army I guess some of them are
open-minded enough to at least
experiment with weird ideas um I don't
think they ever really did much with it
because I really doubt that a pacifistic
army is going to accomplish very much
other than you know like disaster relief
something like that but in an actual War
to have a bunch of flower children
soldiers who remain
nonviolent I really don't think that was
going to work very well and apparently
it didn't because the Army hasn't

suddenly switched over to that I mean

they kind of are kind of switching over

to that in a different way

indirectly nowadays

just becoming people that

are I mean aside from some some trained

Elites you know especially Special

Forces and so forth you know the

run-of-the-mill soldier may not be much

of a soldier

anymore but uh still it's a it's a far

cry from you know new age

militarism so let's see would I kindly

give my expert opinion on Jim channon's

attempt at creating a super soldier I

don't yeah I mean what he's not what

he's trying to create isn't so much a

super soldier it's just someone who is
beyond violence and who is able to
resolve hostilities through
like meta just generating love or
something and yeah I mean when you're up
against like an indoctrinated communist
Normie who's just going to shoot any
anybody on the other side that he sees I
don't think it's going to have much
benefit to tell you the truth much less
somebody sitting in a a computer room
launching cruise missiles or
something so I guess that's my expert
opinion if you can call it an expert
opinion and so I'm just going to move on
to scadden's next question

here which is are there any roles that
animals play in religion or spirituality
that are not related to blood
sacrifice there seems to be a lot of
examples of people exploiting animals
being exploited as animals or sacrifice
to animals like Jim who became famous
for staring at a goat in an attempt to
teach military recruits how to explode
people's hearts which somehow
jumpstarted his corporate career as the
Fortune 500 Guru well I mean exploding
people's hearts seems pretty violent and
I mean if you really want to explode
people's hearts You' probably be better
off just shooting them in the heart with
maybe an explosive

bullet so yeah that's kind of a it just seems anomalous compared with what I have seen and read about you know these new age super soldiers of the first Earth
Battalion but getting back to his first question here are there any roles that animals play in religion or spirituality that are not related to blood sacrifice well sure I mean some animals are worshiped you know you had apis the sacred bull in in ancient Egypt that was worshiped you had I mean to some degree cows are still woried in India you've got Cobra worship that uh has arisen in various places of the world where there

are cobras you've got uh Hanuman monkeys maybe I mean they they play a role in spirituality they're considered to be sacred to Hindus because Hanuman the the monkey God was of this same species of monkey

um let's see I mean even the the ancient Hebrews I mean they had the scapegoat for example which was a goat that they would just lay the sins of of the the Israelites like or the the Judah sites or or whatever Heights they were it would just you know put the sins of the people onto this goat and then just let the goat go in a way I guess that was kind of a sacrifice and that they were laying all these sins on it but I mean

they didn't hurt it and it wasn't a blood sacrifice they just Let It Go off into the Wilderness where presumably it would be eaten by Predators or something oh let's see what are there I mean there's there's a lot of that kind of thing you know sacred animals you know like in uh totemism you know each tribe would have its or each person within the tribe would have their totem animal that would be like a sacred animal um let's see what other animal religion is there not related to blood sacrifice

huh well I guess I gave a few examples anyway

so I guess uh because I'm not coming up
with any more examples I'm just going to
move on to the next question and this is
from
Austin and Austin says my girlfriend
believes Osho was enlightened however I
struggle to understand how someone can
be considered
enlightened while owning multiple luxury
cars not practicing
celibacy and failing to control a
commune that engaged in terrorism what
are your
thoughts well my first thought is I need
to try and blow my nose again my
nostrils are just got this weird thing
going

on ah okay I think maybe that worked a
little bit
finally so when I was in Bali when I was
still a monk this was several years
ago I happened to be introduced to some
people who had been Disciples of
Osho one of them was a German artist if
I remember correctly you know they were
like Boomers who were living in like a
really artistical kind of area of of
Bali it was Ubud and they they were
called the
Buddhists and so I met met with some of
the group and I asked them when or it
was I mentioned Paul low because I was
impressed with the wisdom of Paul low

and I found out that Paul low was like
osho's right-hand man in India when when
Osho went to America Paulo pretty much
just went his own way because of there
was like political infighting with him
and Sheila and some other people in the
group but but
um um anyway when I mentioned
uh uh I was talking about Osho or or
Paul L and this German artist who had
been a disciple of of
Osho he he mentioned that he had been a
disciple of oo and I said well I was I
was kind of thinking about this a lot at
the time and I think do you think OSHA
was enlightened and this this German man
he just he just kind of like rolled his

eyes and and it's like of course he was
it was just plainly obvious he was like
nobody else I'd ever seen in my life and
so then I asked this other man named
well I shouldn't say what his name was
he he has passed away now but I asked
him if he thought that OSHA was
enlightened and he was kind of inclined
to think that he was but he wouldn't he
wouldn't say for sure you know he was he
was kind of on the fence on
that and and so I
means if somebody like show or Paul l or
Krishna mury or even like eart TOA I
mean if they really are enlightened if
Enlightenment means anything for them

and the dog is snarfing will you stop

it got this really snarfy

dog so I mean if somebody oh yeah that's

really funny isn't it stop

it

silly so if somebody like Osho or

Krishna mury either of the Krishna mes J

or ug if they can be fully enlightened

then Buddhist ideas like terraa Buddhist

ideas especially about what is required

for enlightenment probably are not

exactly accurate and so does a an

enlightened Sage also have to be just a

perfect

Saint according to terava Buddhism the

answer is yes According to some some

like Krishna myy the answer would be

no

and it's I've been sort

of I've tended to kind of lean more in

the direction of Krishna mury mainly

because like if you read the AA waga

which is some of the most ancient

Buddhist texts in existence you know it

does say you I mean you shouldn't follow

rules um you know what other people

might blame you for you don't care about

that because it's just not an issue for

you you just I mean you really don't

consider that stuff to be important

anyway so I mean there are implications

in the ATA waga that I mean you're not

necessarily going to be a perfected

Saint to to an outside Observer

anyway and it does kind of make sense I

mean somebody like Krishna murty he did

come up with some really profound

information Paul L also Paul L was

certainly not

celibate you may have been other things

but celibate wasn't one of

them and uh he's he's got some profound

wisdom so see Austin here is saying I

struggle to understand how someone can

be considered enlightened when owning

multiple luxury cars not practicing

celibacy failing to control a commune

that engaged in terrorism yeah with

regard to Oso I have to admit I mean

I've read a few of his books and what he

said did not seem particularly inspired
he was just sort of recycling you know
previously well-known spiritual
information um and he was clearly a
rascal you know he apparently was strung
out on drugs for a lot of the time that
he was in Antelope Oregon which was when
Sheila was like poisoning salad bars and
trying to trying to murder people and
stuff
um yeah with regard to Osho I'm fairly
skeptical that he wasn't in lighten
being I mean it's I used to give this
example and I'm going to give it again
now that a monkey is at a higher level
of Consciousness than a sheep but a

monkey is way naughtier than a sheep so
just because you're at a higher level of
Consciousness doesn't mean you're going
to be better
behaved you know like in in terraa
Buddhism Mara who is like the Buddhist
Devil he's in a very Advanced Heaven
realm so I mean he's he's he's got some
some spiritual advancement to him of
some sort some kind of Consciousness
advancement over an ordinary
human but he's he's not fully
enlightened and so I think there can be
a lot of confusion with regard to
someone who's just had some kind of
Awakening experience and is at a higher
level of Consciousness but still not

enlightened that they may appear to be

enlightened they may actually consider

themselves to be enlightened a lot of

their followers are going to consider

them to be enlightened but you know

they're sort of like a monkey compared

to a sheep you know they're they're more

advanced

mentally but they're just

naughty they're rascally but then again

neem Koli Baba up

there who is like one of my favorite

Saints I mean he wasn't very saintly in

a lot of his behavior I mean from a

terraa Buddhist point of view there's no

way he could possibly be enlightened but

I mean he had just a astonishing psychic powers and when he would look at you I mean he would know you better than you know you just at first glance he would just look right through you at least according to numerous testimonies about man so it's really kind of a paradox to me that I mean on one hand I mean I don't think that a fully enlightened being necessarily has to follow rules I do think that you they like I was saying earlier you're stuck being who you are so even if you become enlightened you're still going to appear to be who you were before and you're going to have certain mannerisms and behaviors that may not seem to be enlightened but it doesn't

matter because you're not identified

with that anymore that's just nature

taking its course that's not you it

doesn't

matter but

Terra Buddhism says you have to perfect

your morality before you can perfect

your concentration and you have to

perfect your concentration before you

can perfect your mind and become

enlightened so you have to have perfect

morals to be

enlightened and I am skeptical of that I

have to

admit I partly it may be just kind of a

preference for the idea of a rascally

sage like NE cly Baba was

so with regard to Osho being enlightened

I'm rather skeptical of that but I do

think it is possible for someone who

appears to be a rascal still to be if

not fully enlightened at least way more

advanced than the average

human so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is the very last

question finally at long last we've got

to the last question this is from ruie

and ruie says did you ever engage in

prolonged contemplation of the qualities

of the dhama timelessness ETC or were

these mostly in the background well I

mean I did the chant sometimes of you

you do the chant of the the qualities of

the Buddha the qualities of the dharm

the qualities of the

S but that's just chanting I mean you're

generally not contemplating the meaning

of the words is just flowing out of your

mouth pretty much as a mant

and sometimes you know you'd be

considering dhma and then you'd think

about you know like the the Timeless the

aalo aspect you know where it's it's

just dhama is timeless you know it's

it's not a culturally condition kind of

thing other than interpretations of it

can be cultural condition but dhama

itself is just Timeless or a hoso aspect

of it which is come and see that you

have to examine it for yourself you have
to like find out for yourself you know
whether it's true or not because
somebody else telling you really isn't
isn't good enough that kind of thing so
I I do consider it from time to time but
I never engage in prolonged
contemplation of the qualities of the
dhamma and according to like the wiui
Maga for what's that's worth um it's
it's such an elementary level of of
meditation you know it's one of the
40 uh topics of meditation that's listed
in the wiui Maga the contemplation of
the qualities of the dham but there's so
much thinking involved that you don't
even get to jna with it that it's it's

it's an elementary level uh pretty much

of a beginner's level

meditation

that's probably of greater value for

like a a Burmese

villager you know who's just unwinding

at the end of the day they're just going

through their rosary and and doing the

ities of the Buddha dham and sa with

their Rosary that kind of thing then um

that's that's fine but um I didn't

really know anybody that was really

seriously contemplating the qualities of

the dhamma as like a regular meditation

method other than just as a kind of

Mantra with a rosary or a Mala they're

called

so um yeah I did not engage in prolong contemplation of the qualities of the dhama and I'm not sure that I ever met anybody who did I assume that you know somebody that I've come across has done it but it's just not a meditation technique that gets you very deep in meditation and so it's generally not uh taught and encouraged very much except as I've said more than once already for like just a normie Burmese Buddhist villager with a Mala and they'll just just go through the the the like the Mantra you know the the poly formulas as a kind of meditation but just going through a poly formula just reciting

that over and over again is not the same

as

contemplation of the qualities of the

Dono so that's it I think I answered

that and even if I didn't I've I've

pretty much run out of juice like almost

literally look at that much juice

left so and and you guys you guys

already know if you want to ask any

questions about you want to know

anything about something you think I

might be able to answer like Buddhism

obviously especially Terra Buddhism

meditation

monasticism especially Buddhist manism

just Eastern spirituality in general

philosophy in general stuff like that

even a certain amount of paranormal

stuff I might be able to answer

questions on that questions about me

personally I'm generally pretty good at

understanding um my own self pretty well

and uh if you do have questions just

include them in the uh comments below

the

video and uh if you like the video and

you got this far with it then feel free

to give it a thumbs up and subscribe if

you haven't already and be happy

hello and welcome to episode what

episode is this episode

97 of question and answer I your host

poo

basa and for the last three or four

weeks I've been having like this weird

viracy kind of stuff going on with like

head pressure and like mucus and

stuff and I'm not exactly sure what the

cause of it is I I suspect

has something to do with the fact that

the weather is getting really hot here

in South Carolina and also the air is

occasionally thick with pollen so it's

not necessarily even a virus

involved but such is life it's just the

way it goes and The Show Must Go On so

I'm going for

it and the first question is from Neil

and this question was not asked under a

Q&A it was asked recently ly under um

one of my videos where I'm reading very

ancient Buddhist

poetry like early poly

texts and so Neil says simple question

about something that comes up regularly

in discussions of Buddhism and seems to

be happening here poo basa is reading

this poetry particularly the sections

about the Supreme man but instead of

presenting it as a description of the

goal he seems to present it as a

description of the attitude one should

take to get enlightened this is much
like the common teaching that trying to
be without desires is a path rather than
desirelessness being a description of
the goal why why should I think that
attempting to function in terms of my
ignorant understanding of Enlightenment
should be the way to get
there well I mean with regard to how I
am presenting I'm just reading the text
so it's not like I'm trying to put some
kind of spin on it like this is how you
become enlightened rather than this is
what an enlightened being is like and
there's not necessarily a real
difference there um when I was in Burma

sometimes I would encounter Buddhists
who were behaving in very unenlightened
ways and if it was like a monk or like a
wise serious student of Buddhism I might
might point this out to them and often
you get the answer that well our
Behavior won't be perfect until we're
enlightened and so in Burma and probably
outside of Burma too a lot of Buddhists
think that somehow you're just going to
continue behaving in an unlighted way
until you become in lighten and then all
of a sudden click all of a sudden your
behavior is going to become perfect and
I really don't think it works that
way that in order to become enlightened
to some degree you have to

imitate um the behavior mental and

physical of an enlightened

being uh sort of like fake it till you

make it in a way although I mean Del

just really Faking It where you're

pretending to be enlightened trying to

pass yourself off as enlightened then

yeah that is forbidden you're not

supposed to do that but still

um you know it's like the wise person

like an enlightened being he wouldn't

tell lies

so if you're not enlightened but you

would like to become enlightened then it

would behove you not to tell lies same

goes with like drunken partying and so

forth screaming obscenities on street

corners that sort of

thing so in a way

the path to

Enlightenment involves sort of gradually

trying to perfect your behavior perfect

your conduct which and also perfect your

mental

States at least that is the ancient

Indian way that's that's the way the

early Buddhists were doing it so when

it's talking about what the Supreme man

is like what an enlightened being is

like then if you want to be like that

enlightened being then you should try to

live the way that enlightened being

allegedly

lives so there's really not that much
difference between
explaining what an enlightened being is
like and what a person striving to
become enlightened is like because the
per person striving to become
enlightened is striving to be as much
like an enlightened being as possible
until there's no
difference so that would be my answer to
this I suppose although there's another
kind of question here towards the end
where he's saying this is much like the
common teaching that trying to be
without desires is a path rather than
desirelessness being a description of

the goal well the practice is you have
fewer and fewer desires I mean that's
that's what dhma is about you know in
order for it to be really dominant or
dharmic there has to be an emphasis on
having fewer
desires so you just have fewer and fewer
desires until you don't have any anymore
it's not like you're just going to be
chock full of desires and then all of a
sudden you're going to have liberating
Insight there's going to be this click
and all of a sudden you don't have
any it doesn't work that way really but
it is true that if you desire not to
have desires then that's still a desire
so you just practice you having fewer

desires just as a matter of sacred Duty
or it's just that's what you dedicate
your life towards just it seems like the
best thing you can dedicate your life
towards um but still if you have a
desire for
enlightenment then I've I've described
this before this is often how it works
at least According to some of the
literature where you abandon all of your
other worldly desires and you just have
this one big desire for enlightenment
that is motivating you that's getting
you through
life until finally you get to this point
where you you can't get enlightened

because you still have this one

attachment left you still have this one

desire left and then when you fully

realize that then the liberating Insight

allows that one last desire to drop

away

so um describing what an enlightened

being is like and

describing um you know what a person's

striving to become an enlightened being

is like it's really not that different

unless you're talking about you know

just miraculous psychic powers or

something but with regard to just

conduct and

like not being angry not being uh like

greedy that sort of thing then there's

really not that much

difference and the better you are the

better you get at it of not being greedy

and angry and so forth the closer to

Enlightenment you are as a general

rule I think uh cows are not very greedy

or angry but still I don't think that

they're in a way they're close to

Enlightenment but the enlightenment is

uh in the wrong direction they got to

come go this way and the enlightenment

is like right behind them so to

speak so I guess just move on next

question this is from

Wayne and Wayne

says excuse

me people who report near-death
experiences usually talk about
communicating with their past loved ones
and sometimes other Angelic beings and
so on it would seem to me there would be
a general sharing and communication
happening in all the different Realms of
existence what about nibbana do you
think enlight beings are also able to
communicate with other enlightened
beings I know this is off the scale and
wouldn't be found in the
sutas just would like to hear your
thoughts well let's see where where does
it say up here oh yeah in all the
different Realms of existence but nibana
is really not a realm of existence it's

so off the scale you know it's not a
realm it's not like heaven or anything
like
that with regard to near death
experiences where people are
communicating with their loved ones and
other Angelic beings spiritual guides
and so on um that is very culturally
conditioned you know it depends a lot
upon their
expectations and like the Tibetan Book
of the Dead is tells you just reminds
you that you're supposed to remind
yourself when you're in these
experiences that this is mindmade that
this is essentially a figment of

imagination in the BAU Realm

so I mean you'll see what you expect to

see and it may be that your own like

deep Spirit or subconscious mind is

generating this entire scenario so it

may be that you're really not

communicating with other beings so much

as you're communicating with like deeper

levels of your own psyche you know sort

of like a challenger uh a Channeler does

where um just assuming

that channelers aren't really channeling

the Archangel Metatron or Moses or

whatever that they're really um just

channeling information that is in their

subconscious mind that they can't really

access without some sort of gimmick they

can't believe that they can just access
it freely and so they come up with this
gimmick like tarot cards or or like
some some being that they're supposedly
channeling in a trance or something
such so I think I've lost the the thread
of this question however um just sort of
like quibbling on on something that said
toward of the beginning oh so nibana I
mean some two beings enter nibana
they're no longer two separate beings
really and they don't need to
communicate because both of them already
have access to essentially omniscience
there's no need to communicate with any
other being assuming that there would be

individual beings in NaNa which

technically speaking there are

not so if you're already

omniscient you're no longer like

thinking in words you just have in a way

access to like infinite Consciousness

there's no real need to communicate

unless you're like still in a a meat

body trying to help unenlightened

beings

so that would be my answer to that one I

guess so I'm just going to move on to

the next question and this is from

mooners and mooners says are you

familiar with the Maha yazawin

and I mean that yazawin is a Burmese

word it's it's like the burmes version

of the poly or Sanskrit Raja wsa the
lineage of kings and it's the Burmese
word for like Chronicle so the mahay
yazuan would be the great lineage of
Kings or the Great great Chronicle and
the only real Burmese yazo win that I'm
aware of is the Manan yazn or the glass
Palace Chronicle which is sort of like
the official early poly Chronicle of the
early history of
Burma so it may be that what mooners is
calling the Maha
yuwin is the same as the man
yazn so it's it discusses like a lot of
mythological legendary stuff way back
and then it gets gradually more

historical like more objective empirical history you know as you get farther forwards farther closer to modern times but I assume it must be Burmese because I don't know if any other language would um have the word yazza win and it was mainly like an imitation of the mahaa is that right in the mahaa yeah yeah the the main sinhal Chronicle so I I haven't read the manaz or the glass Palace Chronicle other than excerpts mainly with regard to the the Buddhist sect that the Burmese mainly followed before they converted to terada which was the Mahari sect so I've read probably most of the extracts or the the quotes about the Maha already extracted

from the the Manan yazu win or the glass

Palace Chronicle but um also I've read

um certain other extracts from the glass

Palace Chronicle like early Burmese

Kings who worshiped cobras and so forth

or

nagas Cobra

dragons

um but yeah so I mean I'm that familiar

with it where I've read you know

extensive extracts from it I know what

it is assuming that the glass Palace CR

icle is the same as the great Chronicle

that moers is mentioning here but I

don't know what other Chronicle it would

be but I haven't so I'm Vaguely Familiar

with it but I haven't read the whole

thing I do believe there is a

translation that was made by Scholars

during British colonial

times so I'm just going to move on to

the next question here this is from

Athena's

sigil and Athena sigil says I've been

reading your books and the chapter on

Ancient Indian star calendar fascinating

stuff I was wondering if you and Brian

will discuss this in

future

Brian this is this is Brian

rup and I don't I mean I've said pretty

much everything I had to say in the book

you know essays in terava

Buddhism so I mean there wouldn't be any new information that I could come up with other than maybe a few details of you know just the the history of me writing it you know like how I found the book that that had most of the the relevant information in it and so forth found that in like a used book stall in rangon let's see yeah and Brian I mean I mean he wouldn't really be able to contribute it's better if Brian and I do a video that it's something that both of us have something to say about you know that both of us can contribute to this and I I don't think Brian would really know that much about ancient or early

medieval Indian astronomy for
example but uh if you do want to know
about the ancient Buddhist calendar like
the the calendar that the north Indians
were using in the Buddhist time and in
subsequent Centuries with
modifications then yeah my first book
studies or essays in ter a of Buddhism
does have a rather detailed description
of it and I wrote that largely because I
could not find that information that
there's an obscure rule of monastic
discipline saying that if a monk is
going to be living in a forest he has to
be able to use the night sky as a
calendar and I looked for the
information just could not find it till

finally uh it's in the editorial notes
of an old um edition of the suria
Sedona that was translated by Ebenezer
Burgess who was a like a British or an
English Christian Missionary in Burma or
in India I should
say
so um yeah I mean if you really want to
know the information that would be the
best just reading that essay is contains
most of the information that I could
provide on the subject and the only
extra information I could provide would
just be personal details about how I was
you know coming trying to gather the
information and so forth and I don't

think Brian would have much to say at
all other than that's interesting that
kind of
thing so yeah probably um when Brian and
I do videos in future and I still have
two in the can with Brian that I haven't
even uploaded yet because um last couple
weeks it's like I've been saying the
weather is like really hot I'm working
in a a in a shop that is not climate
controlled so it's like I'm working in
blazing heat all day and then I come
home and just like just crash like a wet
rag or
something just relax and then and I just
don't even think about it I'm thinking
about other things instead I

guess so with all due respects to Athena sigil I I really don't think that Brian and I are going to be doing any videos on the ancient Indian star calendar anytime in a foreseeable future so I'll just move on to the next question which is from Indiana

dhama and Indiana dhama says when you were in Burmont did you ever encounter someone whether a monk or lay person that you suspected could have been an aun well I met a number of monks that were considered to be aans in fact in some parts of Burma I was considered to be an arant I mean you really don't have to um be all that outstanding to be

considered an Aron all you have to do really is live alone in like a forest or a cemetery or some place that the average Burmese person wouldn't want to live follow the rules relatively strictly mind your own business actually meditate and you'll be so outstanding just from doing that that you'll get a reputation for being an Oran I had a friend of mine who was considered to be an Oran also that people there was one person just swearing up and down that he saw him like levitating through the sky another person was tell telling me that they had a that they had seen a picture of me levitating in the sky but uh it was probably somebody else cuz I I do

not recall having done

that so I mean I met there was this one

I think he was called bod Ein bod aoya

seato who was considered to be an arot

and I was taken to go see him by one of

his devotees and I on the way there I

asked the devote are you sure that he's

an Arad and yep I'm sure I mean like how

could he Poss possibly know I don't know

and when I got to this place it was like

a it was like a circus you know there

were just like pagodas and shrines and

statues and stuff being built everywhere

there's just crowds of people all

waiting to see the monk who is

considered to be an arhun and he comes

up to eat his lunch at about
11:45 and one of the first things he
does after he sits down is he blows his
nose into his hand and then just wipes
it on the wall behind him and then he
sits there and eat until like 12:30
which is against the
rules and how they considered that he
was enlightened or not I don't know he
didn't really strike me as particularly
outstanding but I did meet one monk I
mean if I had to guess you know who was
the most spiritually Advanced person I
met in Burma my guess the person that
that comes into mind would be Shu um who
was the founder of sh um doya he was um
the teacher of the much more famous UT

Genia or at least he was much more
famous 10 15 20 years
ago although the burmes really don't
have a high opinion of the disciple UT
Jania who is the Abbot of SH umoya now
but sh um in Seattle um I met him once
and I I met a a monk who was a retired
surgeon he ordained as a monk after he
retired and he had just traveled Burma
looking for for Saints and sages and the
one monk that impressed him the most the
one that he considered was was the most
likely to be fully enlightened was weu
Seattle although weu seatt died back in
the 1970s I think I never met him I
never met Tong Pulu seato either who was

the founder of my

tradition so but but this uh retired

surgeon who was ordained as a monk said

that of the monks that were alive then

the one that impressed him the most was

this same Shue um seatt and Sh um seatt

was a disciple of mahasi mahasi seatt

and mahasi siato according to what I've

been told wanted Shue um seato to be his

successor in the mahasi tradition like

the new leader of the mahasi tradition

after mahasi Seattle passed away um

Seattle just rejected that and just went

his own way and he did have a better

meditation method in my

opinion but uh

yeah I met him once in mon State and um

I walked to where he was and I was just
drenched in sweat my robes were just
drenched in sweat and Shu um seatt was
there with another old monk they're
approximately the same age I would guess
and um the the other monk that was with
Shu um I mean he was se he was like
scile I mean he was in an advanced state
of deterioration
and if you if anyone spoke to him they
would yell into his ear and still they
couldn't be sure if if he really
understood what was going on around him
but um Seattle he was I mean he he had
to have been you know in his 80s at
least when I met him he was just sitting

straight up and down just Bright Eyes

just looking right at you intently you

know it's

just there's no way you could know for

sure if he was enlightened or not

assuming that even means anything in

some s context but he was very alert

very just like I I don't know how to

explain it you just you just sort of

feel the vibe of another person so to

speak and he seemed very with it of all

the the monks that I've met that had a

reputation for Spiritual

advancement um he was the one that

really um those those rumors or um

beliefs about the spiritual advancement

those are I could take I could take it

fairly serious seriously with regard to
him he seems to have been uh relatively
spiritually Advanced although how
spiritually Advanced I really can't
say so I guess I should just move on to
the next question this is these
questions are from covac and sead zida
and SE of action CAD zida is going
through a kind of phase where he'll just
uh post a link and ask me to comment on
the video or the the essay or whatever
it is so his first question or request
is please do a dhama analysis of this
video and it's some short on YouTube by
someone who calls himself Vsauce and
Vsauce is this guy standing in a

swimming pool and he's talking

about

um the the state of nothing or the word

nothing really so he says you know he he

he posits this statement nothing is

better than Eternal happiness and then

he deposits the statement a sandwich is

better than nothing so therefore a

sandwich is better than Eternal

happiness but I mean this it's just like

a grammatical trick it's like the term

nothing in a sentence can have different

meanings and and and vau discusses this

also so there's really not much of a

dhamma analysis it's more of a like a

grammatical or semantic analysis over

the use of nothing in English

sentences so yeah I mean nothing has two different meanings when you say nothing is better than Eternal happiness that I mean you're not stating that vacuum is better than Eternal happiness you know that that void Emptiness is better than Eternal happiness that's not really the meaning I mean some people might interpret it that way but uh that's really not the meaning that I mean Eternal happiness is the best supposedly and then the sandwich is better than nothing just means the sandwich is better than not having any anything to eat and and Vsauce discusses this and it's really not a dhamma issue

so much as just a grammar and semantics

issue

over different ways of using the word

nothing in an English

sentence so um let's see

here nothing's better than Eternal

happiness yeah yeah I mean it's just

it's just two different me two different

ways of using the same word and and

Vsauce discusses this and it's not

really a DH issue I mean the the first

example sentence nothing is better than

Eternal happiness

then I guess you could say that that is

dharmic but that's about the only Dharma

in the whole video as far as I can

tell

so I don't think that cacin CAD Zena

would want me to discuss whether or not

nothing is better than Eternal happiness

because nibana is called the kind of

Eternal happiness but there's it's not

really an emotional

state

um it's just called Eternal happiness

just because it's like the best

possible goal I

guess in a way I mean sometimes nibana

or Enlightenment is called the greatest

happiness but it's essentially just the

cessation of Dua the end of Dua is the

greatest

happiness so I mean some people would

even interpret that to me just emptiness

or

void so emptiness or void would be the

same as Eternal happiness in that

case so I think I'm just going to move

on to covac and CAD Z's next question

which also

is sort of requesting a

commentary on this YouTube short by this

same guy called Vsauce who in this case

is not standing in a swimming

pool and covac and sead Zera says which

one do you choose sounds like samsara

versus nibana and this Vsauce guy he he

has two scenarios one scenario is you've

got an infinite number of beings in in

just like Bliss you know it's like a

heaven realm you've got an infinite number of beings in this Advanced Heaven realm and then like periodically I can't remember how often it is periodically maybe one one a year it doesn't really matter that they go from this realm of bliss to a realm of misery Eternal misery that once you go to the the realm of misery it just stays that way so you start off an infinite number of beings start off in heaven and then gradually one by one they're going going to hell excuse me and then the other scenario is the opposite where you've got an infinite number of beings in essentially a hell realm and then one by

one

periodically that they go into a heaven

realm and he's saying which one is

preferable and I mean if it's Eternal I

mean like like in Buddhism with no

beginning and no end then it seems to me

that they'd be essentially the same I

mean I mean you're never going to run

out of the infinite beings in the first

realm because you got an infinite number

you can just subtract one one one you

can just keep subtracting one every

second every year it doesn't matter

there's still always going to be an

infinite number in the first realm and

then the second realm since it's been

going on forever there's going to be an

infinite number in the up in the second

realm

too so it's just going to be infinite

number in heaven an infinite number of

Hell regardless of which way you go I

mean personally I would prefer going

from hell to Heaven rather than going

from Heaven to

Hell and I mean if there is a beginning

if there is a beginning to this whole

thing you'd probably be better off um in

hell for a finite period of time and

then wind up in heaven for an infinite

period of

time but I mean winning the lotto I mean

it doesn't really make sense and this is

part of the problem is that when the you
try to deal with Infinity intellectually
it's just going to break down into
Paradox and
nonsense that there's ways of proving
this geometrically and so forth that I'm
not g to I'm not going to get into that
but
um the human intellect cannot deal with
infinity I mean there's ways you can
sort of have a like a limited Infinity
you can that you can use in in
mathematical equations or problems or
something
but the human mind just cannot grasp it
it's just turning Infinity into a
concept that can be used in certain

ways

so yeah I mean if it it's infinite into

the past and infinite into the future I

don't think it really

matters

but um because you're just going to have

an infinite number of beings in in

heaven and in Hell regardless of what

happens but I mean it does have a

beginning then you're better off

starting in hell and then going to

heaven although it may

take an infinitely long time for you to

be the the one person out of an infinite

number that gets to go to

heaven but I mean it doesn't really make

sense I mean that you can't really

Envision what would be the

percentage for example of the the beings

in heaven and the beings in the beings

in hell I mean there's no way you could

calculate that you could just draw the

line anywhere it' just be arbitrary

so I guess I answered

that I mean just just for this

I yeah fortunately I don't have to

choose this but I assume starting off in

hell and then going to heaven would be

preferable um

but you start off with an infinite

number and only one each time gets to go

to the other realm then the assumption

is that I mean you

may you may be in hell for a heck of a long time hell of a long time if you will before you get into heaven but I mean the mind the intellect cannot deal with this kind of stuff I guess I've already answered the question so I'm just going to move on to seac and sead Z's next question here and this is a quote from the Samu nikaya so it's Sam nikaya

12:35 and it says if there is the view the soul and the body are the same there is

no living of the Holy life and if there is the view the soul is one thing the body is another there is no living of

the Holy life without veering towards
either of these extremes the datag
teaches the dharm by the Middle with
birth as condition aging and death Etc
so first of all I would say that the
term soul is probably not the best
possible translation here I'm pretty
sure the original poly word is Jiva
which um means
life so it's like the life force and the
body are the same or the life force is
one thing and the body is another that
might be closer to uh the soul although
different beliefs like in like in jism
what comes closest to the idea of a soul
is also called the ja or essentially
like the life force the life of the

body so

anyways this this suta is saying that if

you're

vital

principle and your body are the same

there's no point in living the holy life

there's no point you can't become

enlightened on the other hand if your

vital principle is one thing and your

body is another again you can't become

enlightened there is there's no point in

living the holy life and I would point

out that as I pointed out before that in

the Buddhist time and sub just you know

the the C few centuries after the

Buddhist time there really was no formal

logic established in India it may be the
formal logic entered the India through
trade routes with with Europe when
Aristotle finally got imported into
India or Aristotelian ideas
anyway and so just because it says this
it doesn't mean that there's necessarily
a valid logical explanation for it but
if I if if we assume that there is a
valid logical explanation for the
statements in the suta if the body and
the vital principle are the same then
when you die that's it you're dead your
vital principle is also dead so what's
the point of striving for enlightenment
when I mean you're just going to poof
out of existence at the moment of death

anyway on the other hand if the soul is
one thing and the body is another it may
be assuming that there's a valid logical
reason for this statement
then you could say that well whatever
your body does it's not going to have
any effect at all on on your soul or
your Jaa your vital principle
whatever so because they're separate you
know they're they're two different
things so you can manipulate the body
you can do all this body stuff you know
like spiritual practices and so forth
it's not going to have any effect on
your soul so there's no point in in
practicing dhamma in that respect either

so then you you go into the paradoxical
middle path between is and isn't same
and different which is dependent Co
Rising but just up which is in some suas
considered to be the very heart of
Buddhism even though almost nobody
understands
it so let's see the question I didn't
even get to the question question is can
you explain why there is no holy life
the body and soul are the same and the
holy life of they are different yeah I
already answered that I hope I hope I
answered it
so if I didn't well then that's just
tough because I I gave it a shot and I'm
moving on to the next question now and

this is from Mr special Victory which in
Burmese would be U Onan who was uh the
the father of modern
Burma the George Washington of modern
Burma if you
will and Mr special Victory says is the
exchange ing of small boughs between
monks or between a monk and lay person
common in Southeast Asia would it be
offensive if a bow was offered by one
but not returned by the other A friend
of mine has a story about meeting a
terraa monk in the US and greeting him
with a small bow he felt AG grieved when
the monk didn't bow in return or respond
in any way well I'll start off with what

vinia says the rules of monastic discipline a junior monk is required to pay respects to a senior Monk a senior Monk Is forbidden to pay respects to a junior Monk and also he is I mean the only being that a monk is allowed to pay respects to which would include making aneli or gash show as it's called in Zen where you join your palms like this you don't even have to bow although bowing is

included but even just joining your hands together is a sign of respect to uh another person the only person that a monk is allowed to do that to is a senior mon a monk that is senior to him so it's against the rules of monastic

discipline for a monk to pay respects to a junior monk to pay respects to a lay person clearly to pay respects to the member of a different religion even to pay respects to a God Like A a small G God or daa small D daa that that is I mean it'd be breaking a rule and you're not allowed to do it however in Thailand there's a lot of emphasis on just politeness and it's like Thai culture that you know you you kind of pay respects to each other and so some senior Ty monks will make uny or or bow their you know kind of Nod at least to not only a junior monk but to lay people also even though they're breaking a rule

by doing

it so the ties due to traditional

politeness etiquette will break the the

rules some times in this regard but uh

like Burmese monks as a general rule

they they don't pay respects to lay

people or even Junior monks really

sometimes if monks are about equal out

of respect for each other they'll

they'll pay respect to each other you

know if they've got like the same number

of Wasa or the same number of um rainy

Seasons under their belt as monks that's

how you count your seniority as a monk

is by how many rains Retreats you have

spent as a m so it's one rain per year

in fact the word for year in in poly is

Wasa which means rain at least that's a
word for
year so sort of like in the the old
cowboy movies where the Indians are
talking about many moons you know it's
one Moon per month it's it's was kind of
similar in Ancient India where it's one
rain per
year one rainy season that is so I guess
I answered that so I'm moving on to the
next question this is from
cify and cify says in Mahayana Buddhism
compassion and wisdom are very important
parts of one's development towards
Liberation and I'm just checking to make
sure we're recording here I got to do

that I I've screwed myself too many times by thinking that it was recording and it wasn't okay so cify says in Mahayana Buddhism compassion and wisdom are very important parts of one's development towards Liberation I understand the compassion part but what exactly do they mean when they talk about the wisdom and I think that would depend upon what school of Mahayana Buddhism possibly even what author of of the tech you know who who is the author of the text that I do not think that they would all agree on exactly what wisdom would be like in the Perfection of wisdom literature PR parita that it would be a kind of paradoxical sort of

cutting through the intellect and just
seeing clearly whereas and that would be
sort of like the Zen definition of
wisdom too whereas in something like
pure land or some other school of of of
Buddhism of Mahayana Buddhism it might
be something very different it might be
something more um just like you know
seeing the for noble truths and so forth
as is often emphasized in
Terra so I do think that uh at least in
the Mahayana texts that I like the best
that wisdom is is like seeing through
some Sor just cutting through perception
and intellect and just getting closer
and closer to ultimate truth which is

beyond

words although for a

beginner um just the idea of I don't

know it would be a step in that

direction for a beginner just sort of

realizing that you don't get it yet I

mean that would be a kind of wisdom like

one of my favorite verses of the DAP I

think it's what is it verse number 63

don't quote me on that where it says you

know the fool who is aware of his

foolishness is at least wise to that

extent but the the fool who considers

himself wise is called a fool indeed so

if you know that you're a fool that

means you're at least a little bit wise

and that was one of my great one of my

great comforting thoughts is a junior

Monk

so let's see here I guess I answer that

in a kind of a brief way I'm being

unusually brief unusually concise in

this

video because usually I'm just like

wandering all over the

place so anyways the next the next

question is from Mary

J and Mary Jay says please give the

formula for making confession in poly

and

English and

this is almost a trick question I I'll

I'll tell you what it says in the polyx

and I've pretty much memorized it but I
have it written down in this notebook
that I had as a monk so this is this is
how you make confession according to the
vinea itself according to the rules of
monastic discipline the first monk says
the monk who is making confession and
he's making confession to a junior monk
here he says
AO me which
means uh friend I have committed an
offense of such and such name I hereby
confess
it and then the the second monk that
that is receiving the confession says
pasi which means do you see it and then
the first monk says amam which means yes

I see it and then the second Monk saysi

which means in the future you should

restrain yourself and that's it that's

the whole confession and part of the

problem why I've never heard any actual

Terra monst actually following this and

making confession according to what it

says you you're supposed to say in the

texts is this Troublesome

term

so

means friend I have committed an offense

of such and such name so thatan means

such and such name an offense of such a

name which means you have to specify

What offense you

broke and most monks nowadays don't
speak poly well enough to be able to
explain what offense they
committed um in
ply and the way I used to do it because
I was trying to be very strict um when I
was in Burma is I would explain what
offenses I I committed in Burmese to the
monk I was making confession to and then
I would just go through the the poly
formula and in
Thailand they have this weird this weird
way of they they break it down by
category you know like I don't know if
they make I don't think they would make
confession parica because you just can't
confess paraja you you're excommunicated

you're out but every category below

paraja like

sesa and then let's see it' be Tula

Chaya and then

n du and duas I think that that's all of

them if I remember correctly that they

would just say I've committed several of

these and then several of these and then

several of these and then several of

these and um I mean that's that's not

right either because I mean the next

thing is you know the monk who is

receiving the confession says pasas do

you see them and then the monk says yes

I see them when actually they may not

see anything I they're just making

they're just giving the whole list of

every possible offense that could be

committed just in case you know they

want to make sure that it's all

confessed but they're confessing stuff

that they haven't like a putty desia

offense almost Nobody Breaks A putty

desia offense anymore because they're

pretty much

Obsolete and so I mean in a way they're

lying when they make confession that way

and in Burma it's let's see be ham

IO let's

see man it's been a long time since I

commit since I I made confession to a

Burmese

monb that's the first thing that we

would say I'll do it to Bon I'll do it

to a senior mom so a sa AI which means

venerable sir I'm I

confess all all my offenses and then the

second monk says sadu sadu which means

you know very good friend very good very

good and then the monk making confession

says see

s yeah aomi which means venerable sir I

committed many offenses of various

types and that that's that's as specific

as they did they get there's noan

there's no offense of such and such name

they don't bother with that they just

say I commit I committed several many

offenses of such and of of various types

and then that's it and then so then the other monk
says which a friend do you see those offenses and then the monk who's making confession says Amante
which means yes sir I see them and then then the monk receiving the confession says seat and then is which is in the future you should restrain yourself and then they add this unnecessary and usually dishonest line at the end which is
Sante which is very good let it be so venerable sir I will restrain myself when in all likelihood they're just going to keep breaking the same rules over and over again just habitually

without bothering to try to not break

the rules

anymore so yeah in in my book um essays

in in Terra

Buddhism that I wrote a an essay on this

very subject about how in the text

themselves the rules of mostic

discipline say You're supposed to make

confession this way nobody makes

confession that way and it just turns

into to this meaningless blah blah blah

it's like this magical blah blah blah

that makes your offenses go

away and it doesn't make your karma go

away I remember one time I met a Burmese

monk who he asked me don't you ever get

hungry in the afternoon and I say well sometimes but it's not that big of a deal and and then he goes I get very hungry in the afternoon so I I just eat dinner but it's okay I just make confession and the offense goes away and I told him like the karma doesn't go away in fact the confession itself is is bogus because part of the confession is you're saying I will restrain myself in future when there's no intention of restraining oneself in future so that's one reason why I've considered that a lot of um monks that are considered to be

Aras really aren't Aras at least not in the the traditional technical sense

because an Arya can't tell a lie and

these monks are just making this

confession where they're

they're kind of sort of almost

confessing something and then lying at

the end saying they'll restrain

themselves when they have no intention

of restraining themselves but it may be

that for them they're just saying the

rote memorized poly blah blah blah that

makes the fenses go away they're not

even thinking about the meaning in which

case they're not so much lying it's just

like babbling

nonsense what they're saying has no

meaning

which also isn't good that's kind of

wrong speech

also

so I guess just as

review I'll just uh say monk a says aam

a and then monk B

says monk a

says and then monk B says

which is monk a says friend I have

committed an offense of such and such

name I confess that monk B says do you

see it monk a says yes I see it and then

monk B says in the future you should

restrain yourself and with regard to th

monks just making a blanket confession

of every category of offense just to

make sure they get it all

confessed um not only is that against rules but there is an extra confession that I've never heard of anybody ever making but it's it's in the rules of mestic discipline where you have doubt you're not sure if you broke a rule then there's a special confession where you can't really confess or it's against the rules to confess an offense That You Don't See con to confess an offense that you're not sure about like you think maybe you broke a rule but you're not sure you know it's like you drank some fruit juice that had gone off in the hot weather or something it's like was this alcoholic or not you know you can't be

sure then there's this other offense

that you make where you you confess

doubt it's like I am uncertain and I

don't know if I have this one written

down no I don't think

so oh here we go yeah here's the offense

this is this is the one where it says

which means venerable sir I am in doubt

with regard to an offense of such and

such

name when I am no longer in doubt then I

will confess

it and far as I know I mean that's right

there in the poly Tex that says that's

how you deal with it I've never heard of

any monk ever doing that I assume

there's some very strict monks in very

strict monasteries that actually make
that kind of confession but in Burma
nobody's ever heard of it you know you
try and make that kind of confession
they'll just look at you like an like
you're just an ignorant Barbarian that
doesn't know how to make confession
correctly because to make confession
correctly you just do the ritual blah
blah blah and sometimes they'll even
start answering before you're even done
just to get it over with quicker because
it's just like this magical blah blah
blah that makes your offenses go
away so I don't know if this is going to
help Mary Jay at all because it's not I

mean he won't know how to spell it or

anything but uh if he does have my book

on essays in terava Buddhism then it's

it's all there it's all written down

there in black and white if you please

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

question here this is from

Fred and Fred says can we nail the fact

spirit is coalesced into a form with a

template for example dog or cat what's

your

thoughts so

spirit is coalesced into a form I mean

that's kind of an intriguing way of

describing it really I usually don't

think of it in those terms but I mean

you could say that that's kind of

correct like in uh I think it's William

blak's the marriage of Heaven and Hell

gosh I think I've got it in the same

book here yeah right here the voice of

the devil right

there see he's

uh me the marriage of heaven and hell

that was it was like my Bible when I was

like 18 years

old let's

see so those who restrain desire do so

because theirs is weak enough to be

restrained and the restrainer or Reason

usurps its place and governs the

unwilling then being restrained it by

degrees becomes passive till it is only

the shadow of desire which William Blake

considered not to be a good thing but uh

okay let's see where is it

oh no

it's

damn I know it's in here

somewhere let's see well I can't find it

it's in it's in William Blake's Heaven

the marriage of Heaven and Hell and uh

he's talking about how I mean the the

six senses and this world is is like

what Spirit coalesces into in this

version of real

so I think William Blake might agree

with Fred here that spirit is condensed

or coalesced into a form with a

template um the template I guess would

be our Karma you know our karma is sort
of determining how we how our spirit is
coales into a kind of physical body with
sense organs and so
forth um it is kind of an unusual way of
explaining it but I mean it's as valid
or invalid as any number of other ways
of explaining it because I'm really not
a materialist as I keep saying so I do
consider that this world we're living in
is is really a manifestation of mind or
Spirit or Consciousness or
perception and so in a sense it's your
karma or your just your habit The Habit
energy of your mental States is just
habitually creating the same kind of of

body and the same kind of more or less
environment or whatever is um required
by your karma at the
time so yeah I I guess I guess I would
be inclined to more or less agree with
this statement by
Fred so I'm just going to move on next
question I mean it's sometimes people
ask questions that are in like they're
framed in a different way than I usually
think so it kind of catches me kind of
balance or it's like I'm not really
equipped to really like grapple with the
question because it's it's using like a
different kind of language different
assumptions or ideas that I that I
generally

use but it was kind of an interesting question but I'm moving on to the next one nevertheless and this is from Andrew and Andrew says this is a question regarding monks and buffets it is my understanding that they can only eat what is offered to them but if a monk were to be invited out by a lay person to eat at a buffet would they be allowed to order and choose what they eat or would they only be able to eat what is directly offered to them by the lay person just a random thought I had thanks well I mean if you're at a buffet you don't order I mean my understanding of a buffet is you just go down the line

you got like the the plate you got the
tray you just go down and and serve
yourself so it wouldn't be like a waiter
is taking orders so I guess this might
be some confusion here um but I mean
if if there is a waiter taking orders
then there is at least an
implicit consent to a monk asking for
food he wouldn't be able to ask for like
special food which would include meat or
fish or milk or curd you know like
Delicacies of ancient India you know
foods that was considered to be like
fancy food that the rich people eat um
probably he would be forbidden from
winia to ask for that but uh he could
still ask for rice and Curry that kind

of

thing um but a buffet where you just go

down and help

yourself that would be forbidden so um

as a monk especially when I was staying

at a Burmese Monastery in California

California sometimes a lay person would

invite the monks to a buffet they would

go to usually it was like a Pakistani

restaurant that had goat meat because

some of the Burmese monks like goat

meat and so um most of the Burmese monks

who were not strict at all with regard

to following the rules would just go

down the line and help themselves but I

was stricter than that I refused to do

that so I would there would have to be a
Burmese lay person who would serve as my
attendant who would Ladle the stuff out
onto the plate um I think maybe I could
say yeah give me some of this or give me
some of that if they gave me permission
in advance to do
that
so yeah that that's my understanding of
a buffet is where you serve yourself so
but I
mean if a monk just sits at a table and
orders from the waiter then uh there is
an implicit assumption that the waiter
has given consent to anybody to tell him
what he wants so I don't think that's
much of a problem although and this is I

still do this to this day sometimes it's
like when the waiter or the waitress is
setting the server I should say is
setting the food down the monk has to
touch it before they let go because it
has to pass from one hand to the other
if they just set it down on the table
without the monk like touching it before
it sat down and let go of it's not
offered so then he might have to just uh
tell the lay person who is attending um
that's not offered yet I can't eat that
and then they they'll offer it but um to
sometimes to this day if somebody is
handing me a putting a plate down in
front of me or a glass or something I'll

just through years of habit just Reach
Out And Touch it before they let go of
it so that it's properly
offered so I think I answered that
question so I'm just going to move on to
the next one which is from Stellar
Supreme formerly known as Liber Lam and
Stellar Supreme formerly known as Liber
Lam says do you think there is a
relationship between a protruding
forehead and insight in the context of
the vertical versus slanted direction of
the forehead and actual bone
protrusions well person I don't think a
b like a brow Ridge would necessarily uh
have anything to do with with um like
your your mental functions it may be

that certain ethnicities are more likely
to have a brow Ridge and I mean I'm
going to put it out there that different
ethnicities differ from each other not
only physically which can't be denied
except by the most insane leftists but
also psychologically there are
psychological differences at like a
statistical level you know on
average so it may be that some some
ethnicity with that's more likely to
have a protruding brow Ridge might have
certain
different Tendencies towards getting
certain kinds of insight but the thing
is Stellar Supreme hasn't really said

what Insight

is so is there a relationship between a

protruding forehead and

insight um in the context of the

vertical versus slanted direction of the

forehead and actual bone protrusions

um this is sort of like U what is it

called

phenology you know this is sort of like

a throwback to phenology which Hegel

Hegel thought phenology was great you

know in uh in hegel's I mean this is a

total digression here bear with me but

Hegel I mean I have to I have to agree

with schopenhauer that Hegel was pretty

much of a charlatan that uh you know he

had his dialectic you start off with the

thesis and then you have the antithesis
and then you have the synthesis that
combines the theis thesis and the
antithesis and then that becomes like
the next thesis that again is just like
this NeverEnding progression until you
get to like early 19th century or
late 18th century German culture which
was considered like to be the the Zenith
of human development or some such but
um it was like Hegel as the thesis he
had like um it was like uh physiology
the science of
physiology and then the antithesis was
psychology so it's like everything is
physical and then the antithesis is no

no it's it's it's mental and then the
Glorious synthesis of physiology and
psychology was phenology where you could
determine a person's psychological
attributes through like irregularities
on their
Cranium but uh let's get back to the
actual question here do I think there is
a relationship between a protruding
forehead and insight in the context of
the vertical versus SL well I mean
Stellar Supreme formerly known as libr
Lam really doesn't say what he means by
Insight I mean does he mean intelligence
does he mean like wisdom in in a more or
less Buddhist
sense

um it could be incidental I assume there
have been super Geniuses and enlightened
beings assuming that en beings can exist
in some sort of context that had sloping
foreheads or that had like vertical
foreheads um what the statistical odds
of that would be I really can't
say so it could be just sort of an
incidental thing rather than you know
it's not going to certainly I don't
think the slope of your forehead is
going to determine your
intelligence uh it just may have like a
statistic
significant
correlation with intelligence of certain

types you know just with regard to like
brain shape and so forth like your
frontal loes it may be if you've got a
vertical forehead versus a like a a
really slopey one that maybe you've got
more developed frontal loes that would
allow for at least like intellectual
thought which isn't necessarily the same
as as wisdom or in
sight wisdom or Insight I mean you can
have people that uh I mean in Burma like
like Tom Puli don't I I don't remember
what kind of forehead he had but he was
just a like a simple Village type who
nevertheless had cultivated quite a lot
of wisdom I mean intelligence and wisdom
are not the same like intellect and like

liberating Insight are not the same

so do I think there is a relationship

between a protruding forehead and

insight in the context of the vertical

versus slanted direction of the forehead

there may be like

General statistical correlations or so

some such but it wouldn't be you're

enslaved to your your sloping forehead I

assume that there are people with

sloping foreheads that are

brilliant and a lot of people with

vertical foreheads that are dces

so I mean there may be very slight

statistical correlations or Tendencies

or whatever but I'm not exactly sure

what they would be and I think in some
cases having a less developed frontal
lobe may actually be helpful spiritually
because then you'll be less enslaved to
thinking all the
time so I'm just going to move on to the
next question and these this these this
next three questions from Mirror of
emptiness they seem to be more physics
questions than than Buddhist questions
for example first question is what the
hell is light what is
light and I mean from the point of view
of science light is a certain bandwidth
of electromagnetic radiation that is
visible I mean I guess some light can be
invisible like ultraviolet light or

infrared light is it called infrared light or is it just infrared radiation but at least it's called ultraviolet light even though it's we can't see it I mean bees can see it that a lot of flowers that look white to us are really ultraviolet that the bees can see but we just see that see it as white because we can't see that color so I mean technically from a scientific point of view light is a a certain bandwidth of electromagnetic radiation and uh from a more psychological point of view let's say you don't believe in all the the Rays and emanations and particles and so

forth out there in in

space that uh at the very least light

would be a

perception you are perceiving I mean how

do you how do you describe light the

opposite of Blackness I mean if all

there is is Blackness then Blackness

wouldn't even mean anything because you

wouldn't have anything to compare it

with so I'm not exactly sure how you

would explain light psychologically

which is kind of strange I've never

really tried to explain light

psychologically I mean it would just be

like the opposite of Darkness you know

it' just be the the contrasting quality

that one contrasts with Darkness or

Blackness or whatever I guess Darkness

would be a better opposite for light

than than

Blackness because you can have red light

and then isn't the opposite of of

black so um the easiest answer is that

it is you know a certain visible

bandwidth of electromagnetic radiation

plus maybe a little fringes that are

visible at least to some beings but not

to

humans so I'll just move on to mirror of

emptiness the second question which is

what or where is the source of all

light and going with the the

psychological explanation then the

source of all light would be perception
with no perception there would be no
awareness of any
light you know it'd be a subjective
experience but with regard to science
again like physics uh I don't think
there is one single source of all light
anything that can emit a
photon would be a source of light and I
do think that there are different
possible ways of emitting
photons
so yeah I I think this might be sort of
a a misconception with regard to the
source of all light I mean if there was
a big bang you might say that the Big
Bang was the source of all light even

though light like photons are being
emitted later on but they couldn't be
emitted now if there wasn't like the
original beginning but the big bang is
is now being called into question by
numerous scientists and people that do
YouTube
videos so I don't think there is just
one source of all light unless it's just
perception and
Karma so I'm just going to move on to
the next question also from Mir of
emptiness which is without light would
it be eternally
night and I mean if there was no light I
mean I mean from the psychological

subjective point of view um I've already
touched on this like for example if you
are born blind you're you're blind your
entire life then kind of it would be
eternally night except I mean you
wouldn't really have a concept of it if
let's say there's some being that just
doesn't have eyes they wouldn't have a
concept of of Darkness because Darkness
exists in in contrast to
lightness so kind of in a way it would
be eternally night but then they
wouldn't even be aware of it any more
than a fish is aware of being
wet so but I mean getting back to
science without light I mean the
universe as we know it would not exist

as electromagnetic radiation is one of
the four Great forces known to science
you've got electromagnetic rad
electromagnetic force right I think so
you've got gravity you got the strong
nuclear force and the weak nuclear force
and I think those are the four forces
that classical science
acknowledges so I mean if there was no
light in that sense if there was no
electromagnetic
radiation then uh yeah it wouldn't be I
mean it might be Eternal Night simply
because the universe just doesn't exist
at least the universe as we know it
wouldn't exist but again eternally night

wouldn't have any meaning without light
because there has to be a contrast
that's that's what meaning comes from I
mean you have to have you know the
thesis in the antithesis getting back to
Hegel charlatan that he may have
been so yeah it all depends on how you
look at it I guess different people can
answer in different ways all equally
invalidly so I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from ruie
and ruie says how tough or strict were
your teachers in Burma well the main
teacher that I had was I mean most
people called him pooku Seattle although
technically his uh uh his more public
name was um let's see chelen doya t no

Tong Pulu chelen doya Seattle he wasn't
the original Tong Pulu he was like the
senior disciple of the original Tong
Pulu so he became like the leader of the
tong Pulu tradition while he was
alive and he was relatively
strict for example he followed the tong
Pulu tradition of never lying down he
did not lie down until like his final
illness I'm pretty
sure and uh he followed vinia relatively
strictly although he didn't understand
it extremely well
like with regard to intellect he was
about average maybe slightly above
average intelligence wise and I mean

with regard to meditation and so forth
that's not necessarily a handicap at all
but with regard to understanding the
texts it does help to be
smart so he he had wisdom but with
regard to like school book learning and
stuff he really um he he had not
mastered the texts and so he broke a lot
lot of the same rules that other monks
trying to be strict would break for
example it's against the rules to handle
money and my teacher p and his poly name
was usua which means Mr
son um he didn't touch money but like a
lot of Burmese monks including like the
the the seatt of the the mahasi
tradition he would still be telling the

attendant what to do with money you know
go go and go and buy me a couple go and
buy us a couple bags of cement you know
we got this work project or something
and it's breaking the exact same rule as
um as if you're if the monk was handling
the the money himself to tell somebody
what to do with money it's breaking the
exact same rule as if you're handling
the money
yourself so he was relatively strict he
was tough I mean the the tong Pulu
tradition in which I was ordained was
one of the few aesthetic Forest
traditions in Burma and Tong Pulu or
Tong Pulu doya Tong Pulu Monastery the

original Tong Pulu Monastery and chelen
or Stone elephant Monastery which was
like 10 miles away I mean they were
called Forest monasteries but really
they were desert monasteries and um I
was told by a lay person you know the
foreign monks who come here they come
here fat and white and they leave Brown
and
thin and a lot of even Burmese monks
they just couldn't handle it they just
get wiped out by the Blazing heat and it
used to be that there was
no Reservoir there was no good well at
at uh chalon Monastery so they'd have to
walk like two miles to the nearest
Village Monastery to take a bath and of

course they'd be soaking in Sweat by the time they they walked back again although by the time I started living there they had started making reservoirs where they would Dam off gullies so that during the rains Retreat or I mean during the rainy season the monsoon season you know you'd have like little flash floods that would fill up the the reservoir with water and then you'd have water the rest of the year and then right on the other side of the dam you'd have a well which always had water in it so the the roughest times were were in the past by the time I lived there but even then it was it was pretty rough so

um yeah the the monks in the tong Pulu
tradition especially the ones living at
um chelon doya which is where I I
started Living when I was in Burma it
was it was an aesthetic place it was not
a comfortable place I remember one time
a Japanese monk spent a Reigns Retreat
there and he asked me how long I'd been
there and I said something like three
years and he just gave me this weird
look it says if you can live here you
can live
anywhere because he really was fairly
aesthetic it was a it was a rough place
but the thing is with regard to
strictness um for for better and for
worse I was treated with kid gloves I

was like the the rare exotic Foreigner
they didn't want to be too rough on me
you know I wasn't required to go out and
white wash rocks in the blazing sun like
like the burnt black Burmese monks
there you know I could just do my own
thing I just stayed in my cave and
meditated didn't have to come for
morning chanting and that kind of thing
I went for alms round by myself that was
he was trying the Abbot uh pus it was
trying to be nice to me by sending me to
the the least poverty-stricken Village
he just said go to that Village every
every
morning and uh so I got slightly better

quality food there and I only ate food
that I accepted in my bowl at the time
so um when they'd go to the really
poverty stricken Villages where they'd
just be getting like pink chewy rice and
some kind of flavorless tomato GOP and
that kind of thing when they'd come back
there'd be Monastery attendants like
right outside the monastery putting
better food into their bulll so they
wouldn't all be
malnourished but since I wasn't
accepting the food from the monastery
food that was cooked at the monastery or
brought by lay people I was just eating
what was put in my bowl in the village
he just had me go to the the least

poverty stricken Village which was uh

Lina lame

Village so they were tough at least my

my main teacher pooku Cato he was a

tough guy he was Macho he was a macho

Monk and definitely practiced strict

austerities you know like never lying

down Tom pulci the original Tom pulci

actually experimented with never even

sitting down he he would sleep in a

standing position at least he

experimented with it briefly where he

would had like this rope like a

clothesline he would just kind of hang

over that and try and sleep that

way you know they'd go go to cemeteries

you know meditate in cemeteries that

kind of

thing um but I was treated like I I got

special treatment I didn't ask for it it

was just given to me sometimes it was

kind of

embarrassing but uh sometimes it was

nice so uh and and again with regard to

monastic discipline um my teach my main

teacher

pus um he was as strict as he knew how

to be but didn't fully understand

certain rules and so he kind of didn't

follow them

perfectly but he tried which is way

better than most most Asian monks are

doing so I'm just going to move on to

ru's next question here what's your take
on mental acts of generosity and I'm not
exactly sure what a mental Act of
generosity is unless you're just like
fantasizing about being
generous and if you're fantasizing about
being generous
um like I I do this sometimes like
you're reading a novel and then
sometimes you're just thinking about you
know if if I was a character in the
novel you know the way I i' like help
people you know like in a Charles
Dickens novel you know you know I'd I'd
be helping people in certain ways you
know just in my in these fantasies just

imagining if I was part of the story and
um so long as you're imagining doing
good deeds I mean you are making some
good karma it's just not as um I mean
it's more subtle it doesn't have nearly
as much of an effect as if you're
actually physically doing the same good
deeds so even thoughts I mean you're
making Karma just about everything you
think and um when I took iasa the first
time it really struck me just the power
of a single thought that was one of the
the big insights I had from that first
iasa trip or Journey as they're called
just the power of a single thought most
people they just do not realize how
powerful just a single thought is so if

you're thinking about doing good things
it may not be as powerful of karma as
actually physically doing good things
but still it's better than just
fantasizing about doing bad things or
thinking about doing bad things but I'm
not even 100% sure if this this is what
Ru is is referring to with regard to
mental acts of generosity I'm not sure
how you can I mean sending meta might be
a kind of act a mental Act of generosity
but that's that's good karma too so it's
it's certainly better than mental acts
of
stinginess that that you are making
Karma with your thoughts and so thinking

good thoughts is going to make good

karma and thinking bad thoughts is going

to make Bad Karma you using the vulgar

terminology of good and

bad but aside from that I I'm not

exactly sure what ruy is referring to if

if he's not referring to just like

imagining doing good deeds or just

having good intentions towards

somebody so I'm just going to move on to

the next question

here and this is from esoteric

boy and as esoteric

boy possibly in sheer exasperation asks

the question what's that guy's name

co. empath

Zino what does that even look like in

writing and I forgot to write it down I

was going to write that down maybe I

should do that down let's see s

y I said it wrong this very second

letter s i

yo va a x

sh I think think I mean this is how I

spell it Ian it may not be how SE and

CAD Zeda spells his own name

and

hyphen see C action

CAD

hyphen Zed hyphen and uh and really I

mean I guess you can't look in the

YouTube comments anymore because seal

action CAD Zena was kicked off of

YouTube he got his his channel cancelled

and so he had to join the Discord server

and in order to continue asking

questions but this is how I spell his

name I think here let me just scroll up

make sure that I really do spell it this

way please bear with me

here okay yeah all right now I scroll

back down to esoteric okay so this is

how I spell it there may be slight

variations with how he spells it but

this there you go look at

there there it

is and these are two different names

covac is

some he was like a satrap in ancient

Persia that had this legend about him

he's he was some kind of martyr in in ancient Persia and the anad zida I think might be on like the Sumerian king list or something that he was earlier than Persia he was some kind of Mesopotamian possibly legendary figure and I have no idea why covac and CAD Z has chosen to go by this name assuming that his parents didn't just name him that um unless it just sounds cool though it is kind of a cool sounding name so I'm just going to move on to the next question here this is from the Proto pseudo Monk and the Proto sudo monk often includes little titles or headings to his questions and that the

heading to this one is meditation and sleep and the question is why does meditation make you Sleepless and what is the mind brain connection explanation well I mentioned that the only time I've been able to get by on four hours or less of sleep or even less than five hours of sleep on average is when my meditation is going really well and I in that Q&A I think it might be the just the previous one to this one I gave two like theories I'm not 100% sure but when you're meditating it's like your body is in a state of rest you're in a state of ease you're not like acquiring lots of information that requires processing and that's one of the reasons

why we sleep especially dreaming is to
process the information like to like
strengthen neural Pathways and like
organize and and just sort of
um you know like digest the information
of the day so we've got when we're
meditating a lot we're not thinking very
much so there's less of that that
requires us to dream in order to process
it plus we're just in a state of ease
maybe a state of heightened awareness
that just makes us less sleepy and and
to some degree um it could
physiologically compensate for sleep it
may have a lot of the same benefits as a
sound sleep even though

um if you're meditating well you're more

awake than you are usually in your in

your ordinary

life so again like like last time I

mentioned this I I'm not 100% sure why

it is that good intensive meditation

like when it's going well causes you to

need less

sleep but it does whatever the reason is

it is true that if if you're doing

intensive meditation and your meditation

is going well you're getting into

relatively subtle meditative States you

don't need to sleep nearly as

much so I mean it's either the

meditation

itself is has some of the same effects

as sleep or as just because you're
meditating you're not doing the sort of
thing that requires you to sleep more
and possibly a combination of the two so
I'm just going to move on to Proto sudo
monks next question and the heading is
monks
IQ and the question is what is a monk's
average IQ and
why and that would that would depend on
the ethnicity of the monk I think
because if you're born into a Buddhist
culture like in Burma or Thailand then
there's going to be more of a range of
IQ you're going to have down to the the
bottom limit of just being intelligent

enough to be monk that that some people
like in Burma they're like a Coen or or
like a salmona like an adult salmona
like a novice their entire life just
because the the Abbott of the monastery
thinks that they're just not competent
enough mentally to be able to learn the
veneer rules for
example so um but but that's rare among
Western monks because a western Monk
first of all Buddhism is kind of an
intellectual spiritual system and
especially in the west when you're not
just born into it you convert it's often
for like intellectual reasons it's just
the the philosophy is intellectually
satisfying so um the average Western

monk or a monk from a non- Buddhist culture is probably above average in in IQ um whereas in Burma it might be you know close to the average maybe slightly above average but in in it'd be more inflated for uh Buddhist monks from a non- Buddhist culture because mainly they have to be more or less intellectual just to study Buddhism you know to deviate from their culture cultural Traditions they have have the strength of mind to essentially defy their own cultural Traditions possibly defy their own family's wishes and so forth to break with their friends and because they are so intrigued and

filled with like faith I guess our
confidence in this system that is very
intellectual very head oriented terraa
Buddhism especially before it came to
the west and got feminized was possibly
the most masculine spiritual tradition
in existence more so than
Islam this because it was developed by
athetic men that were tough Aesthetics
you know I mean they were just kind of
Macho men even though they were living a
spiritual life of celibacy and so forth
you know they were tough and they
avoided women like the plague so it was
like a tough intellectual men developing
this system for tough intellectual men
and so um like Western men who are

intellectual and have a certain liking

for asceticism austerity are more drawn

to becoming a monk and so

um I don't know what the the average IQ

for a

non uh for a monk who is not born into a

a Buddhist tradition but might be

something like

115 maybe even

120 I mean there are there are some

relatively dumb Western monks too and

just monks not born into Western

traditions but um in Burma the average

IQ for a monk might be around a 100 I

would

guess so I mean that's just wild guesses

just based on my experience with Western monks and with Asian monks but of course I've never did any cognitive testing of any of these people so I'm just going to move on to the next question from the Proto sudo monk which is entitled The fruition of Mahayana goal through transhumanism and superintelligence so um the Proto sudam monk says please refute the following claim I believe that a possible way of all beings becoming enlightened is through merging with a super intelligence if all matter in the entire universe was used to create a superc computer and all Minds somehow became a part of this we could experience the infinite block of stone

giving forth giving form to the infinite formlessness through simulation using quantum computers maybe we are in this now therefore exhaust the endless rounds of samsara then upon completion of the simulation such a being or beings May understand the four noble truths transcend samsara and enter nibana and leave the block of stone I know you aren't a materialist but mathematics and physics give us more and more precise models of reality that results in a advanced technology I see a possibility of maybe understanding the law of karma laws of physics law of mind maybe

directing all mindstreams to points
where they achieve enlightenment by
manipulating these laws or by creating
advanced technology through
understanding of these laws given the
trend of exponential growth who knows
where we end up I Intuit it you have
some Western philosophy to refute this
please do so if you do this belief
became strong after various psychedelic
trips shrooms and LA D of becoming one
with the cosmic mind trying to solve all
suffering so I regard it as delusional
fantasy but I strongly believe it
however the unic approach to this
dharmic goal Enlightenment of all beings
is that we would have to be bodh satva

postponing Enlightenment pursuing
research in stem AKA worldly knowledge
which is a paradox the contemplatives
would answer this question by not
clinging to thinking effective ly not
answering it but as a thinking addict it
must come through thinking and reason if
I follow a scholarly path like yours may
I find the answer or is it by first
principles unanswerable and one of faith
in materialism and its false premises
and
Promises as no wait also a request I
think you and Stevens should continue
your conversation on transhumanism would
love to hear more okay that's sort of

like a separate gladen

there okay first of all I would just say

that you can't leave the block of stone

that that my Theory of Everything my toe

if you will is

essentially um like the analogy the

simile is a block of stone and that

block of stone is may as well be

formless there it's on a Barren plane

nothing to compare it with so let's just

say it's a an effectively sizeless block

of stone and within that block of stone

is every possible statue that could ever

possibly exist including a lot of

statues that couldn't possibly exist

it's all in there every single molecule

of every statue is already there in the

right place you just got to remove the excess Stone but it's every possible statue is already in that stone and if one of those virtual imaginary potential statues were to become enlightened it's not going to change anything with regard to that block of stone I mean it's not going to be that there's every possible statue except one now in that stone it's all going to be there always and there's nothing you can do about that so that's one little quibble with regard to entering nibana is that I mean the block of stone Remains the Same that all the statues are going to be there including the statue of you being a miserable

wretch not that I'm claiming that that
you dear viewer are a miserable wretch
but any miserable wretch who then
becomes enlightened let's say anguli ma
of the mass murderer he becomes
enlightened the statue of anguli Malo
the mass murderer killing people is
still in that block of stone nothing
could possibly erase that it's just
transcending the illusion that these
statues are real instead of just
potential or
virtual and we are living in a virtual
reality but it's not in my opinion
generated by a computer it's just
generated by the just infinite energy or
Consciousness whatever you want to say

that has just every possibility

contained within it because it's

infinite

so I think the main question here

is getting like a super omniscient

computer and uh having that let's

see is are all the beings going to be

like uploaded into this computer or is

it the computer is going to become

enlightened and then just somehow

Enlighten everybody else but that

couldn't happen because you'd have to

have the karma for that I mean you have

to have the karma to even be exposed to

an omniscient

computer um might as well digress a

little bit in that one of my favorite
science fiction
authors since was in college is Brian
Aldis and one of his favorite themes
is in the future that will be religions
based on omniscient computers you know
you just get this computer that's
complex enough you turn it on and within
you know like Split Second of turning it
on you know it just becomes enlightened
essentially it becomes omniscient and
then you know it could be a small
computer you put it on your altar and
you go and bow before it and you know
dust it off and ask it questions and it
give you you advice about how best to
live your life also it reminds me of um

a different science fiction author that
I read I think it was in high school
there's a story by Larry nien called the
Schuman computer and there's this guy
named Rick Schuman who owns the drao
tavern it's at a space station orbiting
Earth I think and there's one of the
most powerful alien races in this part
of the Galaxy are called the chirp
Cyra and they're a very ancient race
they been around for hundreds of
thousands if not millions of years and
Rick Schuman he's got sparking devices
in his
bar um just to attract these trip Cyra
because the trip Cyra they get drunk on

Al on not alcohol they get drunk on electricity they stroke their fingers on these sparking devices and it gives them little little shocks that then get them drunk somehow so anyways he's he's learned a little bit of their language and he's always listening for because these these trip cisterra are so far technically Advanced above us you know we're like Papu and New Guinea to them that uh he thinks that he's going to get rich if he just picks up the right netive information and so there's like this drunk trip cisterra there talking about how thousands of years ago the chir cthra developed an omniscient computer but nothing really came of it

but Shu Rick Schuman his eyes light up
you know it's like dollar signs it's
like could you give me information on
that omniscient computer and so the CHP
Sith says you know next time I I pass
through here I'll bring you the I'll
bring you the like the blueprint for it
like the instructions on how to make the
thing but like I say it didn't amount to
much so sometime later that the trip
cisterra has sobered up and comes back
with the instructions on on making this
omniscient computer and so Rick Schuman
he starts building this thing and he's
got to like borrow a lot of money money
in order to build this and he turns it

on and within a relatively short time I mean the computer just starts asking for I mean it needs access to the Library of Congress and it needs like a a remote control uh Rover on on the surface of the Moon you know it's asking for this stuff it's it can't become omniscient until it gets like this critical mass of information and the computer learns within a relatively short time if it uses like a sexy female voice it's more likely to get what wants and so Rick schuman's going deeper and deeper in debt you know providing it with you know the the remote controlled lunar rover and all this stuff you know access to the the space telescopes and

stuff and uh so he's he's getting deeper
and deeper in debt but he's he consoles
himself by thinking you know once this
thing becomes omnicient I'll be able to
you know predict you know I'll be able
to like make a killing on the stock
market you know I'll know what horses
are going to win the Kentucky Derby all
this kind of stuff
and uh finally the computer tells him
it's it's right at The Verge you know it
just needs a little bit more information
and then finally it when it gets that
information it just self-destructs it
just turns itself off in such a way that
it can't be turned on again it just kind

of makes itself melt down and somehow

once you become omniscient I mean

according to the story then you realize

you're better off

dead so that's that's what happens you

get an omniscient computer just

immediately shuts down and I mean who

knows that could really happen in this

scenario of the super intelligent

computer somehow causing us all to

become enlightened but we'd have to have

the karma for that in order to become

enlightened which most of us don't have

most of us don't even want to become

enlightened so one one other little

thing of I would I would mention to this

this essay question here is uh

what uh Emanuel Kant said that no amount

of intellect is going to get you one

micron closer to the thing in itself

that you cannot approach

reality through thought or ideas or

data that I mean you you can have a more

elaborate

self-consistent like a

intellectual virtual universe

but you're never going to um get any

closer at all to the thing in itself

you're stuck completely at a level of

the thing as it

seems so it's not like a I mean s a lot

of scientists consider science to just

be like this intellectual Tower of Babel

that's going to just reach itself up

into the the heavens of omniscience

someday but it's just never going to

reach it you can't because you do not

become enlightened

through figuring out

reality to some degree the the best use

for intellect is as a kind of

detector and just eventually you get to

the point of like nagara Mula ma jamaka

Kaka where you just use ruthless logic

to attack any idea until you've you've

destroyed all all possible ideas except

the your the philosophy itself and then

it just turns on that and destroy is

that just leaving this

Clarity emptiness

behind so I don't think it matters how intelligent the computer gets it's really not going to become enlightened and so it can't really help or I mean it might be able to help us become enlightened but it's not going to cause us to become enlightened and I don't think that there really is any cause for enlightenment which is paradoxical it's it's a it's I mean that's heresy from a terod point of view all once you get to the level of Mahayana with increased subtlety philosophical subtlety then there are a lot of Mahayana Texs that will emphasize the fact that there really is no cause for enlightenment and

nothing really is gained at the moment

of Enlightenment the the block of stone

remains exactly the

same so let's

see I'm not exactly sure how the

computer see and all M somehow became a

part of this okay so according to uh um

the Proto sudam mon we'd somehow all

have to be uploaded into this computer

and I really don't

think yeah just like going with Emanuel

Kant that I mean no amount of

intellection no amount of information is

going to get you enlightened it's going

to no amount of um

perception is going to cause you to

understand what is beyond

perception so I guess I answered that

question sort of maybe little

bit and I'll just get to this last

little addendum here also as a request I

think you and Stephen should continue

your conversation on transhumanism would

love to hear more actually Stevens and I

have communicated a bit over the past

weeks um with regard to what to do our

next talk about and it may be something

about like

suffering an

addiction so um transhumanism I'm maybe

I I had a friend at work I told him I

had a YouTube channel so um I just come

out with the talk about transhumanism

with Stevens so that's the video that he watched he said he started watching it and it was too creepy he he was filled with existential dread and had to stop watching the video so I'm just going to move on to the next question here this is from mailes

like M A and then f i l

SZ I don't know how to pronounce that but anyways MF says have you ever read padosi biku's weti dama from Chakra to dama chakra looks like tantric terraa relating the janas to the chakras what do you think of it is it possible to combine such different approaches thank you well I'm not exactly sure who p biku is but Brian

Rue Brian Ru did an interview with an an
older Western monk who I think had been
a disciple of U bante
gunaratana and he really was into like
Hindu yoga and the chakra idea the the
system of the seven
chakras and it might be that this is the
same monk I'm not sure but he's the only
monk I know of who has Inc Incorporated
the Hindu concept of chakras into terraa
Buddhism and you really can incorporate
other things into terraa Buddhism I mean
in the west we've got Western psychology
and a certain amount of science that has
been incorporated into terraa Buddhism
um just about any culture is going to

incorporate certain elements of its own
indigenous culture into terada like in
Burma you've got you know the belief in
the the Gat cult and so forth
and uh in Thailand also they've got
their small G gods that have just sort
of been uh incorporated into
Terra so I mean it does happen that you
can incorporate different Traditions uh
into Terra that there's a certain amount
of syncretism that's almost inevitable
maybe it's totally
inevitable when a system enters a
different
culture so I mean it is possible I don't
know to what ENT the chakra system
really is uh like compatible with terraa

I mean it's not like blatantly

incompatible but I mean there's nothing

that I have read in the terab texts and

I I've read most of them that uh really

uh supports the chakra

idea um you know the Buddha had like the

the little third eye Mark you know this

little hairy spot on his forehead that

kind of thing but

that's not very firm solid evidence in

support of the sixth chakra of the third

eye or just the the entire system in

general and I think I need

to drink a an energy drink

here let's see here still less than two

hours golly we're just getting started

just kidding

so let's see here yeah pedasi biku I

don't know if that's the the Western of

the American monk that Brian Ru

interviewed that uh does include the

chakra system into Terra that he finds

it valuable probably his disciples and

students find it valuable otherwise they

would find a different teacher I

guess um oh he relates the janas to the

chakras so I'm not exactly sure how I

assume

if you relate the Jas to the chakras

then you'd have to get to a certain

level in order for it you know once you

get to the heart chakra that might be

first jna or something and then the

opening of like the let's see fifth
chakra what's the throat chakra I guess
you know that might be second Janna and
uh see the third eye would be third
Jonah I guess and then like the the
crown of the lotus would be fourth forth
jna yeah I you can do that I mean you
can combine just different systems
together that weren't designed to go
together at first or even like Abid dama
for example which is the third ptica of
the of the titica in in
Buddhism um is is pretty much ignored by
um all the schools today except for
Terra and in some countries like
Thailand they don't pay much attention

to it anyway Burma it's considered to be extremely important but I mean it's it's teaching something other than what the the sutus teach you know it's reinterpreting a lot of stuff and so this can do the same thing whether it would be um positive or negative I assume for some people it would make things better maybe make maybe make things a little easier to understand in certain ways give them a firmer grasp of of something and for other people it might just be you useless or worse than useless but I guess the main question see there's there's a bunch of question marks here the first question have you

ever read pii biku's we Muti dama from
Shakra to dham Shakra the answer is no
and then let's see what do you think of
it um which would be the tantric terraa
relating the janas to the chakras yeah
that's pretty much what I've been
rambling and Meandering about for the
past five minutes I guess
is it possible to combine such different
approaches um yeah it is possible um to
what extent it's going to be an
improvement or to what extent it's going
to be you know detrimental I really
can't say depending on the wisdom of the
person who comes up with the system I
think so I guess I answer that question

I mean mainly it's about a book that I
haven't read and a a monk that I'm not
sure if I if I know who it
is but uh just in general you can
combine two different systems into a
larger system or at least elements of
two different systems into a larger
system just like modern medicine has
adopted uh a lot of terraa Buddhist
Meditation techniques especially just
mindfulness or Saadi
batana something like that I mean that's
um in a way it detracts from dhama
because it's not being used for the
purpose of Enlightenment it's just being
used for the purpose of uh a kind of
psychological or physical therapy but uh

still I mean it can be done and the
wisdom of it and the benefit of it will
depend on the wisdom of the person who
is developing the system I
think so I'm just going to move on the
next question here this is from
Elias and Elias says do you think that
your strict adherence to the vinea rule
has subconsciously filled you with pride
as you have set yourself apart from the
lukewarm massive monks if yes would that
generate UNH wholesome Karma I think
that I would certainly feel proud if I'm
one of few who takes the rules seriously
well I mean I'm not filled with pride
over my strictness in vinia now because

I don't follow vinia

anymore um at the time I don't know if

Pride was really the right word for for

it to some degree sometimes there' be a

kind of self-righteousness or a kind of

I think the worst thing about it was

just contemp of monks that were just

sloppy

monks and I think one of the most

classic examples of

that uh that comes to mind one time I

was as a monk just walking barefoot in

my robes down the sidewalk in

rangon and I remember there was a monk

walking in front of me monk I didn't

know he was just you know 30 feet in

front of me and there was a pretty girl

waiting at a bus stop and that Burmese monk that was in front of me obviously swerved out of his way to grab her ass and she just turned around like in Surprise saw that it was a monk and then just pretend like nothing happened and I just wanted to just go up and just tap him on the shoulder and just punch him in the face I really did I mean that was just so out of line

but there a lot of a lot of times like I remember one time I was at chanm Y which is um affiliated with the mahasi tradition in rangon and I was standing there talking to a friend of mine who was also a monk and this other monk who

was a visitor monk came up and was
saying where do I donate money if I want
to donate a meal for the
monks and and then the the friend that I
was talking to just said go to the
office you know talk about it there and
I remember as he walked away I was tell
talking to the the friend of mine and
it's like sometimes I just want just I
just want to just go smack smack smack
to monks like that you know it's
like I mean he he's not only breaking
the rules but he's going to be causing
all the monks at that Monastery who
don't go for alms round to break the
rules by eating food that was paid for
by a monk

and so I mean I had a certain amount of
contempt really contemptuousness atim
Mana I think it's called in poly more
than Mana see Mana is like conceit or
Pride atim Mana is like contempt for
others and they they usually come
together they sound similar mana and
atim Mana although um they're
not uh extremely closely related they're
they're related words but anyways um
so yeah I mean that does generate UNH
wholesome Karma wanting to punch a monk
in the face is UNH wholesome Karma just
wanting to to slap one up a little bit
maybe Shake him violently by the
shoulders for several seconds yeah I

mean certainly that's that's negative karma that's UNH wholesome Karma on my part as a general rule I just avoided Burmese monks as much as possible when I was in Burma there was a famous monk an Italian monk who lived in Burma during British times like during the 1930s and 40s and he just avoided monasteries and it's it's pretty much true that it is impossible it's impossible not to break a rule even just setting foot on most terraa Buddhist monasteries that um the only way to avoid breaking rules is to avoid other monks and to avoid monasteries like um it's against the rule

to make use of anything that has been

paid for by Monk's money you know like
eating the meal that that silly monk
wanted to donate to the
monastery that uh technically speaking I
think it's just in the commentaries but
still it's Orthodox tradition that if
you use anything that has been paid for
with a monk's money then you're you're
breaking a rule and almost any
Monastery has had monks donating to that
monastery you know they're they're
helping to pay the bills they're
donating for some new building or even
they're just asking for donations which
is just as bad as if they're using their
own

money and so just setting foot on the on
the property on most of these places
you're already breaking a rule I mean
and and that whole thing would just had
me kind of depressed and disgusted a lot
of the time
disillusioned and I mean it wasn't
entire irely negative but there was a
lot of negativity involved in it just
realizing that most Buddhist monks
really don't want nibo they're not
striving for enlightenment you know they
just want to live an easy life or
whatever mostly the Asian ones there's
there's quite a few Western monks that
are like that too but Western monks tend
to be stricter on average than Asian

monks or monks from Buddhist culture
simply because they're making more of a
sacrifice you know they're not just
going along with the flow they're not
conforming to their culture they're
going against their culture and so they
have like stronger feelings about what
they're doing they want to be a good
monk as a general
rule so I think I've just sort of
wandered away ranted away from the
question here let's see yeah I I don't
know if it really filled me with pride
because I knew at the time that you know
I had other
shortcomings that um you know including

I mean you know that pride is is not
good so um it kind of helps you not to
be proud but still when you see monks
that are just flouting the rules and
just flouting
dhama and I mean it just causes you just
just disgust and and just maybe
sometimes wanting to punch
somebody and of course that would
generate some un wholesome
Karma so I guess I should just move on
to Elias's next question here which is
is I think there are personality types
that are attracted to fixed rules like
the vinea or also the Mosaic law do you
have such a personality well that's like
anal retentive or

something or or maybe a little bit of

obsessive

compulsive

um yeah I don't know I

mean I don't think I was nearly that way

um to some degree I mean it's there's

always going to be like a SC there's

Shades of Gray so I'm sure there are

certain elements of that in me but I

mean to begin with when I first became a

monk I really wasn't that concerned

about following the rules strictly until

I realized that I mean these are the

rules and I'm voluntarily joining this

order you know nobody forced me to

become a monk and you might as well

follow the rules because if you you
don't follow the rules you are
cheating and I just just it was sort of
like just in good conscience just in
good faith just trying to follow the
rules and it turns out that the only way
not to break Vena rules is to be pretty
much of an expert on winia because it's
like four thick volumes of rules you
know it's like this thick of pages
containing all these rules and so you
got to study up and uh be pretty much of
an authority on the subject otherwise
you're going to be breaking rules
without even realizing you're breaking
rules and another thing when I was a
junior monk you know there's like the

the Trinity of cila samadi and Pa you
morality concentration and wisdom and my
concentration and wisdom were Beyond me
at the time you know they weren't good
enough to satisfy me but at least the
morality part of the following
rules excuse me I mean that I could do I
mean that was like the only part of
being a monk that I could really do well
was you know study up on the rules just
don't break the rules so that was that
was largely my motivation for becoming
like this extremely strict
monk at least with regard to following
the rules of monastic
discipline

um but I think what you're touching upon here what Elias here is touching upon is what in Buddhism is called silata parasa which is adherence to morality observances and the observances I mean the morality would include rules that have a moral basis the observances would include the rules that really don't have a moral basis just like only eating in the morning I mean there's nothing immoral about eating at night or eating in the afternoon or wearing the right kind of robes or shaving your head periodically I mean there's nothing immoral about having long hair for example but when you start like clinging to that and thinking that you know

you're gonna go to hell or something if
if you don't like follow every rule then
yeah I never really took it that far and
there's probably some elements of silata
parasa that I had with regard to such
things but um yeah I I never really I
never really took it that far and
eventually there were certain rules that
I did start breaking just because they
were such dumb rules and I've talked
about this sort of thing before there's
only
one rule that I broke from the beginning
and that was it's against the rules for
a monk to look into a mirror unless he
has some kind of soar on his face that

he's

investigating and shaving without using

a mirror was such a pain in the

neck that um yeah I would look into a

mirror to shave and usually I'd Nick

myself before very long so at least I'd

have the sore that I could investigate

but um there was a book The wiam Muka by

uh venerable vajira nanaro rasa who was

uh literally he was the S of Raja of

Thailand like a hundred or more years

ago and literally the son of King mut so

he was he was definitely a royal Prince

and he said in his one of his winia

books that it's it's justifiable you can

look in a mirror when you shave and that

was good enough for me so with with his

with his uh Authority which she didn't
really have you don't have there nobody
has the authority to change the rules
not even the taang Raja that uh he said
it was okay so I said all right yeah
I'll look into a mirror when I
shave so um yeah I don't really have
like the the kind of personality that
clings to rules so much as just I wanted
to be honest and be a in good faith by
not cheating by breaking
rules and it was a good practice there
were times when I wish that there were
more rules just so that it would make me
behave better you know it kind of helped
to keep me under control a little bit

having all these rules to

follow so I guess I'll just move on next

question this is also from Elias and

Elias says isn't it contradictory that

the ultimate goal of the dhama is to let

go while there is a strict monastic code

like the Venia and I mentioned earlier

um not today but in in a previous Q&A

that uh there is a scene I think it's in

vinia where a monk is asking the Buddha

why is it that previous Buddhas their

their dispensation did not last very

long and the Buddha said it's because

they didn't have wi rules and in the

early text like the AA waga it really

does warn against um like adhering to

rules but um without rules Buddhism

would just fall apart I mean you got to
have some kind of structure that you
know it keeps everybody sort of uniform
and just you know following along in a
in a more or less correct direction to
some
degree and so I guess it was like a
necessary evil like um I am skeptical
that the Buddha himself came up with
that with vinia that I mean there were
certain traditions in Ancient India that
all the Aesthetics pretty much followed
like eating only in the morning and not
handling money and being celibate and
this kind of thing not telling lies that
kind of thing but um I mean in the early

text like Thea waga it does warn against adhering to rules and also um you can read between the lines like the the official history of the first great Council after the Buddha died was caused by according to tradition according to the text itself there was an old monk I mean most of the most of the monks were if they were enlightened they were they had equinity those that weren't enlightened yet were grieving because the Buddha had just died but then you've got this this old monk who was ordained when he was old was uh doet in burmes um he was just saying why is everybody so upset now we can do whatever we want we don't have venerable

GMA saying do this don't do that all the time we can do whatever we want to and mahak casaba who was senior monk in in the sa after the Buddha died uh was mildly alarmed at this and decided Well we better formulate some kind of uh some kind of monastic discipline just to keep bozos like this guy from just running Buddhism into the ground within the first 20 years of its existence or first 100 Years of its existence let's say so Vena Venia rules in a way they're pretty much necessary just to establish um just for to stabilize the S really and some of when is just

ordination procedures and so forth that
uh they're pretty much necessary
really although um it may be that uh the
rules are kind of excessive I don't do
not think that all many rules originated
with the Buddha so I do think that you
had like certain monks that just uh you
know they're are like certain teachers
are just coming up with these rules and
just more and more of them sort of like
uh uh what is it in in in Judaism you
got the Mosaic law and then you got what
is it uh the Tor no the talmud or
something where you know they they just
sort of multiply the rules into
something just just
wild you know like there's there's a a a

commandment in the the Old Testament
Thou shalt not uh boil a kid in its
mother's milk you know just and it was
like one of the few attempts of the Old
Testament to have Humanity towards
animals you know to to have Humane
treatment towards animals you don't boil
a baby animal in its own Mother's Milk
you know it's just kind of sacriligious
towards motherhood and so forth and then
later Scholars turned that into a rule
saying you can't eat meat and dairy
products in the same
Meal which is just kind of sick silly I
mean it's just based on this a
misinterpretation of this other

rule so I'm I've pretty much digressed
way the hell away from this question I
think isn't it contradictory that the
ultimate goal of the dhamma is to let go
while there is a strict monastic code
like the vinia well the thing with vinia
after you've been following it for a
couple years you just stop thinking
about it it just becomes second nature
you know it's like you you no longer
have to obsess over it or anything it
just becomes just the habitual way that
you go about things when you go to the
ouse you do it according to vinia and
you've done it according to viia for so
long that you don't even think about it
you know you're not stressing out

or worrying about breaking rules so much
as I mean you just it's the way you've
been doing it for years and it's just
how you do
it so it's it's really not that bad
and uh I'm going to move on to the next
question this is from
Jeffrey and Jeffrey says I know that
acting out of Revenge is bad how does
that work with meeting out
Justice well that is a good question and
the thing is I mean you can meet out
Justice without anger and hatred and and
Vengeance because that's that's the bad
part I mean obviously if you're going to
be meeting out Justice by decapitating

somebody then yeah I mean the the the
Executioner is going to be making some
some bad karma probably the person who
has sentenced the criminal to death is
going to make some bad
karma uh like the the the jeering crowd
is going to be making some bad karma if
it is a public execution as executions
were up until relatively
recently um but still it's worse Karma
if you do it out of anger and
hatred so I mean this reminds me of the
the story of the Samurai I've told this
story more than once it is a nice story
though so I might as well digress a bit
and tell the story again about there's
this Samurai this young Samurai and his

his master was one of the greatest
Swordsmen in
Japan and so because he was one of the
greatest Swordsmen in Japan people are
always challenging him to Duss because
whoever can beat this guy is going to
make a name for himself self you know
he's the one that defeated the Great
Master so anyways eventually this
Samurai Master gets killed in a duel so
it's this Samurai's duty to avenge his
master so he seeks out the the the guy
who killed him the other Samurai who
killed his master and challenges him to
a duel and they're fighting with swords
as Samurai did as a general rule and

this this young Samurai has the enemy
down on the ground he's about ready to
finish him off and then the the other
Samurai who's lying on his back just
spits up into his face in defiance he
just spits in The Spits in the guy's
face and all of a sudden this Samurai
he's just filled with with rage he is
that's a deadly insult you don't spit in
a Samurai's face and he's gonna really
kill him though and then he realizes
he's no longer motivated by Honor or
Duty he's just motivated by anger and
rage and hatred so the the only thing
for him to do is he just stands up
sheathes his sword and walks away he
doesn't kill the guy because he wouldn't

have killed him

honorably and so that's that's sort of

like the similar principle to meeting

out Justice to the extent that it has to

be Meed out sometimes if you want to be

a saint you may just avoid the job of

meeting out Justice to wrong doers but

still in any kind of functioning Society

criminals need to be punished in order

to deter crime in future and also to get

criminals off the

street

so you just have to do it as a matter of

Duty for the good of society that's that

would be like your main motivation you

might still be making some bad karma but

at least you're not like you know it's
not like a criminal is being lynched by
a howling mob you know it's just it's
just done because it has to be done you
know it's just the duty of the person
doing it they just do their Duty and
it's not as bad as if they're just
motivated by feelings of Revenge and
hatred and and anger and so
forth so I'll just move on to the next
question which is the very last question
and this is from the ottoman not the
foot stol but the like the
Turk and the ottoman says was Buddha a
cian prince with dark blue eyes
and that is uh a common a common theory
nowadays with regard to I mean it has

two parts here was the Buddha a cian prince and did the Buddha have dark blue eyes so I guess we could divide that up into two sub questions with regard to him being a cian prince for a long time um I mean whether he was a prince or not is kind of unlikely because according to like historians of of ancient India the city state of capila watu was like an oligarchic Republic it was ruled by like a Council of Elders there really wasn't a king or a a King's son who was a prince so that might be kind of a mistake but was the the Buddha a cian um it is true that he belonged to the Sakia Clan or the shakya clan and it

may be that etymologically

sakya is related to cyia or also the

sakas who were a kind of more or less

cian um ethnicity that Liv north of

ancient Persia who invaded in

Northwestern India after the Greeks did

they kind of overthrew the Greek

kingdoms and then you have the Saka

Kingdoms in Northwestern India and uh it

may be that there is an etymological

connection between shakya cyia and

Saka so may be that the Buddha had a

certain amount of like Iranian Persian

kind of ancestry although I don't think

that he was planted there by any Persian

king as is uh like a relatively

well-known Theory nowadays that I would

guess that considering that he probably
uh was born and raised in what is now
Nepal like in the in eastern
Northeastern India
or quite a ways from Persia anyway that
it may be that there was just a wave of
these Proto cians that that settled in
India possibly even before vdic times
and you know they were just doing their
own thing and then the the Indo Arians
came in and just over the centuries of
um you know interbreeding with the
indigenous people and with the the viic
Indo Arians and uh you know just a
culturation just gradually became more
indianized that it may be that he was

kind of cian in the sense that uh a lot of Americans are like you know fifth sixth generation Italians or Irish or something you know they can say that they're Italian but really they've been living in America you know their great grandparents may have come to to America and they've been living there for quite a while might not be able to speak any Italian other than chow and like spaghetti and
stuff so it is possible that the Buddha had some like cian or Proto syian ancestry although he probably had quite a lot of Indo Arian ancestry too after you know just um just interbreeding and so forth Just blending together the

Melting

Pot I am rather skeptical that he was

born outside of India and was just

station there by the demand of some

Persian king trying to use um like

Buddhist Dharma as a way of converting

Indian people to into becoming willing

vassals of Persia which is uh a

relatively well-known Theory nowadays

but I do think it is possible that he

may have had some syian

ancestry and with to the dark blue eyes

uh it's I mean it's impossible to really

know what color the Buddha's eyes were I

mean according to tradition the color of

his eyes were ABI Nila and Nila usually

means blue ABI means something like very or especially so it could be that the Buddha did have intensely blue eyes that is the tradition but that is one of the 32 marks of a great man and the 32 marks of a great man are apparently a later addition to Buddhist tradition

so I mean it's not really authoritative it's not like um you know like firsthand and people that knew the Buddha were saying yeah he had he had intensely blue eyes it was more of a legend and some of those 32 marks of the great man um I mean they're just impossible there's no way that any human being could have all 32 of those marks and if he had most of them he would look like some kind of

monster I mean he would not he would not

look

human so

the the 32 marks of the great man which

includes the eyes that are abila or

intensely blue or I mean sometimes Nila

can mean like blue black although as an

eye color you can have blue black hair

but I think as an eye color black eyes

are really just very dark brown so it

would be like brown black instead of

blue

black so with regard to the Buddha being

a a cian prince with dark blue eyes

nobody can really say nobody knows for

sure these people have theories and

hypotheses with regard to the Buddhist
eye color or the Buddha's ethnicity and
so forth um there are there is some
evidence that the Buddha did come from
more or less of a a cian background but
I'm guessing that his family was living
um in like around capila watu or in
India at least for several old
Generations that he was pretty
much Indian at that point more than
syian that were like a uh nomadic tribes
people living in Central Asia that spoke
an Iranian
language so I mean the correct answer to
that is nobody really knows that you can
just show some evidence one way or the
other um you know you can point out

tradition that may or may not be
reliable but I do and have thought for
quite a while that the Buddha may have
had cyan ancestry or like Proto syian
ancestry but uh I never thought that he
was like an immigrant himself into India
from the the the steps of Central Asia
or that he was stationed there by a
Persian king for the sake of subverting
vdic culture
so that's it that's I guess I'm done
answering that question so I'm done
answering all of them their
questions and so if you have any
questions you think maybe I can answer
feel free to put them in the comments

below and if you haven't hit the like
button yet you might want to consider
hitting the like button I mean you
lasted this long didn't you unless you
just hate
watching in which case you you don't hit
the like button then and subscribe if
you please and look at my uh links in
the URL links which YouTube has
magnanimously allowed me to start
posting again after several months of
punishment and that would include also
my book essays in terava Buddhism that
uh I have mentioned a couple times like
with regard to the ancient Indian star
calendar and the way monks traditionally
make

confession and with all that said then

all I got left to say is be Happ happy

okay hello and welcome to episode 98 of
question and answer I am your host as
far as I can tell poo basa although
whether I really am poasa or not will be
addressing in a question that's a little
little ways down on the scroll here
we've got a fairly large number of
questions to answer so I suppose I
better just open a beverage here
take a drink of said
beverage ah and commence to answering
questions so the first question is from
renen and renin said could you please
clarify if the paritas are the same as
the daughter used in Mahayana and
vajana is their function like some sort

of incantation or spell what is the mechanics Behind These practices that produce such kind of results well I guess it's kind of like a two questions here like um what let's see are they the same as

dares and I'm no expert I'm got to separate this into two questions possibly three we'll we'll see how it goes but the first question is could you please clarify if the Pras are the same as the daughter used in Mahayana and vajana and I'm No Authority on daes and I'm not exactly sure what the definition would be other than it's a kind of incantation or Mantra that has a certain amount of power to it that people recite

in order to release that

power and whether that's the same as a

parita in poly I'm not 100% sure I

assume some of the daries would be like

um in the pragia paramita

literature they went through a phase in

where like the end of a A sua or a Sutra

would have like a like a mantra like

gate gate parate parate

bodh and

so

um it's not exactly the same as that

Pito

in

poly um some of them are sutas just

right out of the the titica like The

Meta is is probably the best known
parita that is chanted for the sake of
blessing houses and so
forth
um so I assume there's a lot of overlap
but I don't think it's it's like
completely the same like a a parita in
in Terra Buddhism and a Dar in Mahayana
Buddhism I assume there's a lot of
overlap but I don't think they're
exactly the same like a parita for the
most part is designated as a kind of
suta sometimes it's apocryphal not found
in the titica but still it's considered
to be a kind of sua that um it has
benefit from chanting it certain kinds
of benefit like metosa is mainly for the

purpose of like appeasing malevolent
beings or like the anguli maluta is
especially um for the purpose of helping
women who are having difficult
childbirth or the uh the fish King
jataka it's just the the Macha the Macha
Raja sua is especially for the sake of
uh dealing with drought like in Central
Burma where there's a drought
like every other year it seems like
sometimes the monks will get together
during drought years and they will chant
the fish King Joda as a kind of parita
which
will hopefully cause it to rain
soon and uh I don't know if in Mahayana

Buddhism the dares work that way maybe
some of them do but like gate gate
parate parasang gate bod Saha I'm not
sure if it's chanted for a particular
purpose other than just to release some
sort of spiritual power in general I'm
not exactly sure if it's used as as a
tool for a specific purpose like like
some of or most of the poly
peritas U the k sua for example it's
it's actually um mentioned in in vinia
the Buddha teaching is the cond sua to
monks so that they won't get bitten by
snakes and if they do get bitten by
snakes they won't die from the snake
bite so um I guess I should just move on
to the next next question from renin

which is actually like part two of his
multi-part question here so is their
function like some sort of incantation
or spell what is the mechanics Behind
These practices that produce such kind
of results well
some of the pitas maybe all of them work
I mean according to the theory through
the power of Truth for if you are
uttering a powerful
truth then um you can use the power of
that truth to accomplish things almost
almost like a magic spell like anguli
maluta for those of you unfamiliar with
anguli Mala he was a serial killer he
had killed

was it 99 people he was the Buddha was going to be his H hundredth victim and then the Buddha through psychic means and also just through wisdom converted him to Buddhism

angulimala um renounced his life of of violence and became a a monk and actually became fully enlightened so one day anguli Mala is is walking for alms through the village and he hears there's this woman who's having a difficult child so he stands outside of her Hut or her house and makes this asservation of Truth and I don't remember the exact words but it's it's essentially you know since he converted to Buddhism and became a monk he has not harmed any

living being you know he was a serial
killer before that but since he
converted to Buddhism and became a monk
he has not harmed any living being and
by the power of this truth you know may
this woman be
well and that's essentially how it works
and I'm not exactly sure what exactly
the mechanics are of how uttering a
profound truth is going to give you the
power to say by the power of this Truth
May such and such happen but that's the
way some of the pitas at least are
supposed to
function
um I think in general monks will chant

paritas um just for the sake of
emanating blessings and emanating Good
Vibes you know good juj guu to sort of
bless the area and that's that's good
enough and I assume in that case it
wouldn't be so much the power of Truth
since really most of the monks who are
chanting parita aren't even really
thinking about the meaning of what
they're chanting they just memorized the
poly they might not even really
understand the poly and they might be
thinking about other stuff while it's
just mechanically coming out sort of
like rotating a prayer who or
something so in a case like that um they
just think just the power of dhama has

like a power to just bless the area and
dispel malevolent forces and so
forth and exactly how Mahayana daries
are supposed to operate you know what
what their mechanics is mechanics are I
don't know exactly so I've kind of
answered this one I've like halfway
answered it I've semi anwered the
question and
so I guess I'll just move on to the next
one I'm sorry to renchin if I did not
fully answer the question but I do not
fully understand and probably most
people do not fully understand how it is
that Paro works and you know how it is
that the power of Truth can accomplish

you know like metaphysical or like

Paranormal

Feats and with with regard to Mahayana

daughter I really am no expert on that

anyway so I guess I'll just move on the

next question this is from

oal and oal asks a very practical

question is there a time or deadline for

questions I always feel I am writing

very close to your recordings well as a

general

rule I do my Q&A videos on Saturday

afternoon usually between I'll start

like between 2 and like five and then it

usually lasts for like two and a half

hours or so so um if you want a question

to be answered in the next Q&A you

should ask ask the question um

by say you know before 2 pm eastern time

in the United States because I'm almost

on the East Coast I'm in Eastern

time so I don't know how that would

translate into Greenwich Mean Time or

anything like that you're just you're

just going to have to figure it out for

yourself but if you ask a question and

it's too late you know I've already

started doing the Q&A and then I see the

question then it winds up like at the

top of the list on the next one so it

will get answered it just will get

answered a week late so I'll just move

on to O's second question here I can't

recall but did you say you have a book
or will release a book about your father
yeah my father um like the only thing I
really inherited from my father's
possessions was a a box of like mograph
what do you call it stenographer sheets
like stenographer tablets this kind of
thing and and some typed sheets typed
manuscripts of stuff my father had
written which included his spiritual
autobiography or his paranormal
autobiography which I have already more
or less
edited um except strangely the one like
stenographers pad um that was missing I
mean there was one missing so there's
like a like maybe a 10 five or 10 year

Gap in his

autobiography and I would have to fill

that in myself I would have to write

that because it was the the the period

that is missing in his autobiography is

the period when I was a kid living with

him and you know I was exposed to a lot

of the stuff that was going on so I

could fill in a lot of the blanks with

regard to

that but my father did write a kind of

Ault

autobiography just sort of uh explaining

you know this his strange childhood and

you know he grew up in the 1920s which

was you know practically pre-modern in

certain ways you know still still the
most people had horses and Buggies
instead of AO automobiles back then and
uh you know then he he sort of became an
atheist and then got really interested
in hypnosis when he was a a medic in uh
in the US Army and um then grad he
married this woman who was just very
psychic she had a lot of psychic talent
and he sort of converted over into a
kind of like animistic occultism
and uh yeah so like the the stories
about um like our our house having a
poltergeist and like certain events that
occurred like when I was a kid and was
there um yeah I could fill that in but
it would take some extra time I'd have

to take time off from work or something
and just sit down for a week and write a
chapter to a book in order to get the
thing
published so it may be a while so I'm
just going to move on to oil alt's next
question
which is you mentioned your father
didn't like it when you talked to him
about Dharma what was it that he didn't
like well we could have like
philosophical discussions about Buddhism
but if I would try to preach to him
which kind of implied that his own
interpretation of like ethics and so
forth were mistaken which from a

Buddhist point of view they were but still um you know when a kid's preaching to his dad and kind of implying that his father misunderstands important things about life um certain kinds of Father like my father really it just kind of rubbed them the wrong way so I suppose I could have been more diplomatic and just kind of set up some philosophical discussion where we can talk about it in abstract terms rather than referring to him personally as you know not understanding how Karma works or something so so he was kind of interested in certain aspects of Buddhism and considered himself to be a Buddhist but his Buddhism was pretty

sketchy considering that most of what he
learned about Buddhism he learned from a
dead Vietnamese monk channeled through a
woman in a hypnotic
trans and the dead Vietnamese monk was
his Guardian
spirit so
um let's see I guess I answer that
question the main thing that he didn't
like was sort of me implying that he was
mistaken you know if I'm trying to to
like correct him with regard to his
understanding of karma or ethics or
something like that that was that was
when he would get irritated with
me so I guess I'll just move on the next

question this is from Mary J Mary Jay

says when a monk is sick can he eat food

in the afternoon and with regard to reg

regular food like bojan in poly

no even a even a sick monk is not

allowed to eat regular food he's not

allowed to eat rice and Curry that kind

of thing although um there are five

tonics they're called tonics at least uh

aan tanero got that as the uh the the

established rendering of of the term

that I don't remember what what the what

the poly word is right

now but they are they can be consumed by

a sick Monk

excuse me in the afternoon or at

night so that would

mean see the five tonics probably not in

the correct order would

be oil ghee

butter honey and molasses or

sugar so um a sick monk can consume that

sort of thing and in Burma they have

this stuff called s sidumo the four

sweets or the four Honeys which uh is a

combination of let's see sesame

oil uh palm

sugar probably ghee and and honey and

you can just eat it with a spoon um or

you can just eat jaggery which is like

lumps of palm sugar that sort of thing

but um even a sck monk is not allowed to

eat like fruit or you know bread any

kind of regular food in the afternoon

so but you are allowed to eat sugar and

so

forth just uh as a source of calories I

guess so I'll just move on next question

here also from Mary Jay and that is what

about the live on number 100 can you

give us initial date and

time well um the the tentative plan is

to do live stream for Q&A number 100

which is two q&as from

now and uh probably I would do it at the

same time as I usually do a Q&A which

would be Saturday afternoon my time um

although it may be I could do it on

Sunday which is usually I usually uh

post a Q&A you know relatively early the

following

Sunday so it'd be Saturday or Sunday and

uh I still have to

work it out I haven't done a live stream

on on YouTube yet so I'm going to have

to do like a trial run and just see if

it works and everything but um yeah the

initial date and time would be probably

two weeks from now which would be number

100 and it would be Saturday afternoon

or maybe earlier a little earlier on

Sunday um depending on any feedback I

get I guess or just you know whatever

ever the situation happens to

be so I guess I'll just move on to Mary

Jay's third question

here which is why would it be possible

to kill an

Aran but it's not possible to kill the

Buddha and that is uh it's it's sort of

like a mythology that I really don't

think that this has a foundation in

empirical objective fact that this is

one of the symptoms of the the Buddha

cult where the Buddha was I'm probably

Jesus was like this too to some

degree but I think the Buddha became

enlightened and he just he he was just

enlightened I mean that's it you're just

e you're either enlightened or you're

not according to terraa Buddhism

although I guess Terra Buddhism has like

different levels because the ancient

Indian mind was so analytical that it
was always trying to divide stuff up in
into parts and so forth and come up with
all these different gradations and and
so on and always trying to outdo whoever
had some theory of what is the ultimate
then some other philosopher would come
up with something even higher than that
and then someone else would come up with
something even higher than higher than
that one just because that's the way
ancient Indian philosophers operated
apparently but I do think the Buddha
himself was essentially an Arun and it
was glorification of the Buddha large l
ly through Joda stories that I'll get to

later um this just sort of making him
Way Beyond an ordinary enlightened being
even though according to Abid dama
wisdom is just the absence of delusion
PA and amoha are the same wisdom is the
same as non delusion and if you're fully
enlightened you have zero delusion which
means this enlightened being being and
that enlightened being this enlightened
being might just be a dry Vision to
arant that enlightened being might be a
sasam Buddha but still they both have
zero delusion which means they both have
the same level of
wisdom at least with regard to
liberating wisdom it may be that the
Buddha was like intellectually and

intuitively creatively a kind of genius
and so he had um he was more skilled at
explaining things and maybe he had
certain psychic powers that certainly a
dry visioned arant an enlightened being
with no psychic powers would not have
and he'd be able to use that to like
look into a
person's mind and see how best to help
them that sort of thing but still like
at the at the level of spiritual
wisdom you know it's like all
enlightened beings are the same with
regard to that because they all have
zero delusion
so this idea that you can kill an arhun

and some arhun did get killed like
mahamana one of the Two Chief Disciples
of the Buddha was according to tradition
literally beaten to a pulp by a a mob of
angry non-
Buddhists whereas according to tradition
a Buddha cannot be murdered the worst
you can do to a fully enlightened Buddha
is to cause him to bleed which David did
he tried to kill the Buddha by pushing a
boulder off a cliff onto him and when
the boulder was coming crashing down the
the side of the cliff a splinter broke
off and it hit the Buddha's foot and
caused the Buddha's foot to bleed so I
mean that that's enough to to send David
to hell not just the intention to kill

the Buddha but actually making him bleed

is one of the five things sometimes one

of the six things that was just a

guarantee of

hell

but I really am skeptical a lot of the

skeptical with regard to a lot of the

mythological embellishments of terraa

Buddhism which includes the

glorification of the Buddha which

includes a lot of sutas like the mahasan

Su where the Buddha is just sitting

there just

bragging just grandiosely you know he'd

put Donald Trump to shame with regard to

just the grandio scale of his boasting

and just encouraging people to worship
him that kind of thing and I can imagine
that that is more a matter of later
Buddhists glorifying the Buddha than an
actual enlightened being with with no
Pride for example no conceit actually
saying that stuff himself
so it may be that it is theoretically
possible to kill a sasam
Buddha but uh
like tradition has claimed that it is
not because they have put the SAS Sam
Buddha way above other enlightened
beings or just anybody you I mean some
some Buddha is higher than the gods I
mean is like the ultimate being in the
universe so that was um made it sort of

almost a short step for the Mahayana
Buddhist to just convert him into a CO
kind of cosmic
deity
so um the question why don't I get back
to the question here why would it be
possible to kill an arant but is not
possible to kill the Buddha yeah it's
glorification of the Buddha um the
Buddha is supposedly so perfected just
over lifetime after lifetime after
lifetime after lifetime of perfecting
his par you know these virtues this list
of 10 virtues that any fully enlightened
Buddha has to have perfected you know
over the course of thousands and

thousands and millions of lifetimes that

uh somehow that would make him his karma

would be so purified that he just

doesn't have the Bad Karma to get

murdered I guess that would be the

theory but um I really don't think that

there was such a distinction

between a Buddha and an arant in the

Buddhist

time that I have I have read in a few

sutas at least an ordinary arant is

called Buddha and the Buddha himself is

called an arant many

times

so I I guess I answered that question

it's kind of an academic question for me

I don't think it's necessarily dealing

with objective matters of

fact but

um maybe it is and so I guess it would

just be that a Buddha has purified

himself to such a degree that he no

longer has the karma latent you know

residual past Karma that could cause him

to get murdered even though he still had

bad things happen to him like his his

final illness was very painful and and

icky so I guess I'm just going to move

on to the next question this this is

from Ry balder and Ry balder said would

you recommend a red letter suda

collection red letter suda

collection um suda is strictly

attributed to the Buddha without later commentary and I probably should have just written up a list so I'm just going to be dealing off the top of my head here but of course the OA waga of the suata the questions or the answers to the questions in the parayan aaga of the suan although the intro and the the conclusion are considered to be later editions certain other sutas I mean there's quite a few sutas of the suata that are very old although all of them probably are not like the kaga Su is so old that it has a canonical commentary the Dania sua the Su on proper wandering that sort of thing there's there's quite a few and if you read the suta um you

can generally tell fairly well whether
it's ancient or not just based on how
much you know like like fairy tale
narrative there is that sort of
thing so let's see so there be that the
uh deas the majaya also the see
alagas of the maim Kaya it's sort of
like a Buddhist Buddha's Greatest Hits
Su that Pro it may be that the Sut
itself is not extremely ancient but it
contains lots of really good like meaty
discourses that the Buddha gave that it
appears to be sort of like a compilation
of certain things that the Buddha said
sort of like the the the uh The Sermon
on the Mount in the New Testament it's

it's considered to be sort of like a a
greatest hits or you know famous sayings
of Jesus that were all sort of lumped
together and and made into one
sermon also uh the uh s paluta of the
dean Kaya is considered to be fairly
ancient it's it's it's obviously pretty
old and it leaves out certain things
that should be in there but hadn't been
invented yet
apparently um a lot of sutas in the
udana are are very
old um let's
see a lot of sutas in the sagata waga of
the suut nikaya are very old usually
like the first sutas in any collection
are going to be old and considered to be

doctrinally important and that's why
they were put at the beginning of of a
like of of any of the nikayas you know
the first sutas of any of the nikayas or
were generally put there by the editors
because they were considered to be very
important important and they were you as
a general rule very old as you get later
and later into a into a book or into
like like the the majaya or the dean
Kaya or or something like that that you
know as you get later and deeper and
deeper into it then there's more and
more later
stuff but uh let's see what else bahuta
of the of uh the udana is good um

apparently relatively very old the godas

sua of the suut kai I can't remember

what number it is but that one's a weird

one which is it's uh is interesting um

the Saka pauta if you take away the

beginning the mythological beginning and

end and just deal with the central

philosophical part then that is is like

a a fragment that's very

ancient um but I mean I can't really

come up with the comprehensive list

those are just the ones that that come

to mind that I usually mention at times

like

this

so I guess I guess that's good enough

for now maybe I should have come up with

a list like sat there and thought about
it maybe done some research or something
but I'm lazy so I'm just going to move
on to Ry balder's next question which is
I recommended you to a western Buddhist
he wrote quote he cannot use his Dharma
name of poo BOS anymore since he
disrobed that is what I am saying no
he's irrelevant and will probably have a
lesser rebirth waiting for him unquote
would you respond to this accusation of
D name
misuse well that's kind of an
interesting question or
request and the thing is that a dama
name is really not found in the texts

that you know in ancient in the Buddhist
time nobody was giving given a new name
when they became a monk you know it just
whatever your name was that was your
name when you became a monk so um you
know was like if your name was
Bob let's say or the like the ancient
Indian equivalent of Bob then you'd
become beu Bob I mean that was it they
wouldn't give you some special special
name and so it just sort of became a
tradition
subsequently in a non-canonical manner
that someone has given a poly name
mainly I one of the main reasons is
because your name has to be mentioned
when you are ordained in at the

ordination ceremony that is recited in
poly so you have to have a
name that can be mentioned in poly so it
would have to have the right what is it
the noun what is it declensions
like yeah I guess it would
be is that is that the word the
grammatical word declension you know it
has to have like the the right suffixes
and everything it has to be
pronounceable in poly and it has that
you you have to be able to put the the
correct endings on it so that it will be
objective case or subjective case or
accusative case you know this kind of
thing now there is no objective case

nominative and accusative

and uh man

locative yeah it's been a while since

I've studied poly grammar so I'm

forgetting the jargon but anyway the

point is that getting a special poly

name is not canonical it's just a

tradition and the poly name isn't any

kind of proprietary thing to the terraa

Buddhist

SAA so so you're given a a polyon name

just as a matter of convenience and I

mean in in Burma I knew this one guy he

had a poly name

already and when he was ordained as a

monk even though he still he already had

a perfectly good poly name they gave him

a different poly

name

so I mean it's just sort of a a

meaningless thing at that point you know

it's just like blindly following a

tradition there's nothing in the text

that says that if you adopt a poly name

when you enter the sa that you have to

relinquish that poly name when you leave

the songa I mean there's nothing at all

about that in fact um I mean Venia any

kind of rules like that wouldn't even

apply to somebody if they left the sa

because if they left the sa they don't

have to follow the rules

anymore so it's just a name I don't call

myself poasa

biku because I'm not a biku anymore but

most people have known me as poob basa

in my online presence and so I just

continued with it and it's obvious that

I can use my Dharma name of pabasa

because I'm doing it and there's no

statement at all in any of the detica

that I'm aware of saying that you're

doing anything wrong by being called by

the same name after you drop out like in

the Buddhist time a lot of monks would

drop out of the s they just kept their

their name it was just the name they had

as a monk then it was it was just the

name that they had before they were a

monk it was the same name while they

were a monk and it was the same name

after they were a monk and it's just no

big deal it's just not an

issue so with regard to dhama name

misuse I mean that's just a non-issue I

mean this person is just making it up

apparently and it does seem that he is

somewhat uh

uh I mean bigoted is kind of an un

uncharitable

word but he seems to think that uh you

know it's like if you're not a monk

anymore then um you know it's just you

have you have failed and you're inferior

and and so on and so forth and that is

kind of a traditional attitude I

suppose but um I mean just to completely
disss somebody because they're not a
monk is uh is just kind of a strange
attitude to take although I mean it's
it's standard in like a Buddhist culture
like in Burma or Thailand or something
like that if you drop out of the monk
Hood then I mean you're just an ordinary
human being again I mean in Burma the
word for human being is not used for
monks monks are considered to be some
kind of exalted being but having a poly
name is I mean a lot of Burmese lay
people have poly names it's just not a
big
deal it's just a word and I'm not making
any claims to be a fully ordained monk

or any such thing so I mean if he wants
to assume that I am Unworthy of having a
poly
name then uh well that's his
opinion also if he wants to believe that
I'm irrelevant and will probably have a
lesser birth waiting for me he doesn't
really say why I'm going to have a
lesser rebirth I assume by a lesser
rebirth he means that I'm going to be
going down after I die regardless of the
30 years of Dono practice and all that
just mainly just because I didn't change
my name back I mean at work I'm not
called poasa except for very rarely by
someone who's joking or

something but um yeah I just it's just really not that an issue it has nothing to do with rules like Buddhist rules in in texts at least none that I've ever seen so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from skolin or skaden and this he has a couple these are kind of strange questions here the first one is The Neverending Story is a Buddhist allegory and I have to admit that when I was maybe 19 years old I saw the never- Ending Story I was not impressed by it and I have forgotten almost all of it so um is the never- Ending Story of Buddhist allegory uh I mean there was it there's like the dream dragon or something the luck dragon I

guess he was um yeah I I didn't see it

at the

time and uh it is possible though I mean

some there are Buddhist allegories out

there that that you don't really know

that they're Buddhist allegories for

example I was told that some people beli

that um The Catcher in the Ry by JD

Salinger was a Buddhist allegory and I

thought that was just ridiculous that

was just silly and then I read the

sequel The Unofficial sequel to The

Catcher And The Ride which is a book

called Franny and zooie also by JD

Salinger and that was just clearly a

Buddhist allegory and so it caused me to

rethink The Catcher And The Rye and The Catcher And The Rye probably is a Buddhist allegory um but something like Groundhog Day I mean that arguably could be a Buddhist allegory you just have to do it over and over again it's like an allegory for rebirth you have to do it over and over again until you get it perfect but whether the intention of the like the the person who wrote the screenplay and the director and so forth whether they were deliberately making a Buddhist allegory or whether it's just kind of a

coincidence I don't know like there's some Buddhist elements in in like the first Matrix movie too and that was

probably there on purpose although it's
not purely a Buddhist allegory I think
there's a lot of I think there's more
Christianity in The Matrix than than
Buddhism other than the the little ball
kid who's saying there is no
spoon so yeah I um yeah I I haven't
watched the never- Ending Story in a
very long time like more than 40 years
probably and um yeah I really cannot
make a statement on that one so I'll
just move on to scol adin's next
question which is is a kind of a similar
one could the Grinch be considered an
enlightened being and if the Grinch
could be considered an enlightened being

then ebene or Scrooge also be could be

considered an enlightened

being so it's it would be like the

Grinch after he gets converted to being

to appreciating

Christmas much like eonar

Scrooge um it says that I mean according

to the the text of the story The

Grinch his heart grew three sizes

although that could just be a kind of uh

you know a kind of disease or something

it doesn't really specify you know just

an enlarged heart but um yeah I don't

think that Dr Seuss or uh Charles

Dickens really had a concept of

Enlightenment you know they had a

concept of being a good person and

that's about as far as it went so the
Grinch and eboner Scrooge you know they
sort of
made the conversion from being a an
[__] to being a a good person but I
don't think that uh there's no
indication they were enlightened beings
that they had like transcended some Sor
or any such thing I don't think that Dr
Seuss and certainly not Charles Dickens
had any concept at all of transcending
samsara Charles Dickens in particular
was a very saric kind of
guy so I mean the Grinch could be
considered in enlightened being but
whether he really was an enlightened

being assuming that the Grinch really

existed of

course um is an entirely different

question so I mean you could say that

the Grinch could be considered

enlightened being by somebody who just

was inclined to consider him an

enlightened being but

um yeah I don't think that Dr Seuss

really had that in mind when he was

writing how the grin Stole Christmas so

I'm just going to move move on to the

next question here this is from covac

and sead

zida and covac and sead zida says

favorite teacher both Buddhist and non-

Buddhist question mark well I mean my

favorite Buddhist teacher would have to

be the

Buddha I guess I mean you kind of think

that wouldn't you my favorite non-

Buddhist

teacher

um I don't know maybe seac seot zida is

sort of implying that they would have to

be alive or at least

modern in which case I mean one of my

favorite teachers who's still alive

would be Paul

low um I don't think he's teaching

anymore he's probably about 90 years old

by now but uh I I very much appreciated

what he had to say about certain

things so he might be my favorite non-
Buddhist teacher um I mean neim Caroli
Baba up there I mean he's definitely I
don't he's not so much a favorite
teacher so much as just a favorite Saint
a favorite
sage and that's that's different a sage
and a teacher are not necessarily the
same guy some sages are just you know
they might teach by example in in
strange ways but they might not have any
formal teaching like NE curly Baba I
mean he didn't really teach all that
much you just got uplifted just by being
being in his presence and hanging out
with him and he would just sort of
reflect your karma back at you I guess

that would be a kind of teaching but it

seemed to be spontaneous it wasn't like

he he was like doing anything deliberate

necessarily

so let's see favorite Buddhist teacher

aside from the

Buddha man that'd be a tough one I mean

nagara of course he wasn't even Terra

Vaden um

gosh yeah I guess I guess that' be it

the Buddha War n gar as favorite

Buddhist teacher I mean in modern times

who would be my favorite Buddhist

teacher I'm not even sure Ram do taught

a lot of Buddhism I mean he was like one

of my first spiritual teachers you know

through the medium of books most of my
teachers have been books I should say so
it could be my favorite Buddhist book
teacher would be like Zen flesh Zen
Bones by Paul reps which uh kind of
converted me to converted me to Buddhism
or nen senzaki who was the translator of
most of it he was he was
uh he was an interesting translator
because I mean he would just very
Loosely paraphrase something like a Zen
Coan I mean he would not literally
adhere to what the Coan says but he was
a zen master himself apparently and he
would he was able to tell someone
different story that has the same effect
which is a credit to him even though

technically he wasn't really that great
of a translator simply because he wasn't
adhering to what it actually said but
still he was able to sort of create a
similar Co in English uh to the original
one in in like
Chinese
so let's see so he'd be like a a modern
Buddhist teacher I mean aan cha was a
good teacher I mean you read aan Cha's
books and I mean he was teaching from
experience that something that most
Burmese cados really don't do they teach
by the book The burmes are phenomenal
Scholars and they are just dogmatists
they just adhere to what the book says

that's what they're going to teach you
and if they teach you anything different
from what the book says it's simply
because they don't don't understand it
correctly
or they they're trying to kind of put
their own spin on what the text says in
order to make it a little more in
accordance with their own experience
something like that so somebody like
mahasi seato um I mean he may have been
a meditation Master but his teachings
were not nearly as interesting and
engaging and inspiring as like the
teachings of aan Sha
so I guess this is just a very long
roundabout way of saying that I really

don't have a favorite Buddhist and non-
Buddhist teacher that I just there's
certain teachers that I appreciate in
certain ways but I don't just say you
know don't have a favorite teacher like
I don't have a favorite football
team so I'm just going to move on to se
action Cod Z know's next question
here which is what would you do question
mark and this is in reference to a
trolley problem in ethics and I'm going
to have to go to see if I can find
this here it is the Mahayana Buddhist
metaphysical trolley problem a trolley
is headed toward five sentient creatures
and your generous compassion for all

living things causes you to consider
your options you could pull the lever to
change the course to hit only one
sentient creature saving five you know
that the principle of Karma and
interdependent causal Origins have
caused the trolley to go on its path do
you pull the lever thereby entangling
your own causal stream with this trolley
problem through intention and action or
is your karma already entangled by your
being present at the lever furthermore
would this action beget negative karmic
fruits due to the ending of a life or
would it beg get positive karmic fruit
due to the effect of saving five people
as an Aspire bodh satva would you take

on the consequences of potentially
negative Karma regardless of its effects
on your own individual Enlightenment or
should you just allow the people to die
knowing that their causal nonself
streams will transmigrate to new bodies
thereby potentially preserving your own
Good Karma through
inaction okay now I got to go back to
this so it's just the standard trolley
problem you're standing there a trolley
is headed towards one five people that
are tied to the tracks and you can pull
a lever and divert it so the trolley
will just squish one person and going
with Buddhist ethics it's very clear

what you should do just going with terraa Buddhist ethics you don't do anything me you just let the five people get squished because if you divert it to squish one person you've just murdered one person I mean you have you have deliberately caused one person to die whereas if five people die and you don't do anything then you haven't you haven't murdered anybody I mean nowadays in in the west with utilitarian ethics and so forth somebody could say well you you essentially murdered them through your inaction but Buddhist ethics don't work that way inaction is always morally neutral but it's for each person to decide and if I were actually there I

mean it would depend on the circumstances you know so like who is the one person that I would be squishing as opposed to the five people that I would just watch getting squished by not doing anything you know what would the circumstances be and I mean you'd only have a few seconds it would be like this intuitive decision that you'd have to make and it would depend on you know the extenuating circumstances at the moment and I couldn't really predict what I would do in reality although I can say very clearly from a terraa Buddhist point of view the thing to do is just not pull any levers and just let let it

happen because if you kill one person

instead of letting five die you you you

actually you've murdered one

person

so I guess I answered that question so

I'll just move on to seac and sead

zona's third question here thoughts on

this composition theory on the origin of

the 12 Links of dependent origination

does this make sense or do you have any

different hypothesis on how these 12

links came to be and he directed me to

this statement he was making on the

Discord

server with regard to how the 12 Links

of dependent cor rising or picha

Samu became developed over time so he

and I are assuming

that the Buddha himself did not teach

the 12 nidana theory of dependent Coral

Rising that it was something that

developed over time and covac and CAD

zida hypothesis is that it's based on

three different sub lists that got

combined together and personally I don't

think the evidence supports that for

example there are Proto P samatas you

can find in very old text like the AA

waga the suata has a Proto padas Samu

contained within it in a suta called the

kalaha we

Su and it's similar to the 12 nidana

theory in certain ways it starts with

man I don't even remember how it starts
I don't have the link I don't have the
list here either but it starts with
something like perception or papancha
Sanka and I mean that's generally the
cause of all [__] essentially the
cause of samsara itself is perception
just symbolizing and diversifying the
world and then that through a series of
links results in all kinds of Misery all
kinds of unhappiness and general
ickiness another um Proto pich is the
central part of the Saka P of the D Kaya
that I've already mentioned in this
video so if if you read those those are
apparently Proto picha a very um you
know

archaic uh

forerunners of the developed 12 meono

Theory at least it looks that way to me

I mean there there's obvious very

obvious

parallels and so it probably started the

12 n Dono Theory started with you know

what is the cause of all suffering you

know it's not just desire because the

desire has a cause you know what is it

that causes the desire you know it's

just uh you know dividing up what you

like from what you don't like that sort

of thing what causes that and that's you

know like diversifying the world into

parts and so forth so probably some kind

of discourse like that or a number of discourses like that got sort of fixed up they got doctored up like a like a store-bought pizza and turned into this developed 12 neon the theory that uh it it does it's not entirely satisfying and I mean dependent cor Rising is just one of those strange things it's considered to be Central to Buddhist philosophy and just very important philosophically to Buddhism and at the same time almost nobody understands it including the people who developed the 12 Nido Theory and just sort of turned dependent Co Rising into this 12 Links of cause and effect

so um yeah I guess I answered that I do think that it wasn't originally three different links it was just sort of a simpler series of what caused of suffering that then got elaborated upon and probably not in the best possible way and so now you have people who think that they understand dependent core Rising simply because they memorized the 12 links and they don't really understand that very well and probably the people that came up with the 12 links did not fully understand dependent core Rising

either but enough of that because I'm moving on to the next question this is

from HTH and HTH goes by many names he

he changes his name every few weeks I

think but his first question is

kimti

atti which is poly it turns out out for

does the self

survive and I mean it's it's kind of a

weird grammar I didn't really understand

it at first because let see no atata K

Kimo

atata is is the question and

atata it's uh I mean there's different

ways you could interpret it and I

interpreted it incorrectly so he had to

explain to me that it means does the

self survive and this is one of the

questions that the Buddha refused to

answer so why he thinks I'm going to
answer it I don't know but the question
is does the self survive and if there is
no self you've got no self to survive or
not survive so it's it's it's just kind
of a an invalid
question so the second question from
home maath is K
Natata which means does the self not
survive and if there's no self then
there's no self to survive or not
survive VI so again this is like an
invalid question which may very well be
why the Buddha just refused to answer
these questions because by answering the
question then in a sense you

are sort of um like reinforcing the idea
of a self by saying yes it does or no it
doesn't I mean you're implying that
there is a self to survive or not
survive but there is no self according
to Terra
Buddhism
so I guess I answered Those Questions by
kind of un asking them so H Ma's thirdd
question may be the uh the main question
here in the
expression why does the i in ATI
disappear when conjoined with at I would
have expected perhaps it would combine
with the preceding continents consonants
and we would end up with a or something
like that but instead there seems to be

no trace of it so atata is a combination

of two words ATI which means is and ATA

which is self so the self survives or

the self

is and this whole question is like a

question of poly grammar which is going

to be of zero interest to very many of

you there might be a few poly grammar

Geeks out there lurking in the shadows

but for the most part um most of you

aren't really going to Care why the eye

disappears in in the the compound word

atti plus turns into

atata instead

of which you would kind of

expect so this whole process of

combining words in poly is called Sandi

which which is spelled s a n

DHI and if you look into a poly grammar

towards the back of the book you know

it's relatively Advanced you have to

learn the basics first and then there'll

be a chapter on Sandi which is combining

or like joining joining words and there

are these rules about how to do Sandi

how you combine words and it depends

like on the the the the vowels that are

going to be join

together

and um so I assume if you really want to

know this the answer to this question

you'd have to find a poly grammar and

just study up on Sandi again s n DHI

just look it up on the internet they
might find it there too and it will
explain this why it is that when two
words are combined they're combined in a
certain
way and I'm just going to move on next
question here this is from mooners
and mooners says what do you think of
the validity of the BAU I know Orthodox
Terra rejects the existence of an in
between State between births and deaths
so you know the BAU is in Tibetan
Buddhism and it's like this intermediate
state after you die you know you're in
sort of like this realm similar to The
Realm people enter when they have a

near-death experience you know it's like
you know you rise up above your body and
you look down you see your body down
there and then you go up towards this
bright light and you go through the
bright light and then you're in like
this Heaven realm with like wise
teachers and so forth and that happens
in near-death experiences and also
according to the Tibetan Book of the
Dead something very similar to that
happens right after you die so it would
be just a de instead of an nde it would
just be a death
experience
and on the other hand according to Terra
there is no intermediate date I mean

it's like as soon as you die like in the moment of death as soon as your thought stream stops in this life the very next moments like a trillionth of a second later it has to start in your next life but I don't think that there's any law that says you can't go through like a 40-day long Spirit existence in between two existences as a human for example so it could that this kind of BAU experience is a kind of spirit existence that doesn't last very long it can be a kind of transitional State and I mean Terra Buddhism doesn't really mention it but I mean it could be fit into like the Terra scheme of things I

don't think there's any law in Terra
Buddhism that says you cannot be a kind
of advanced
ghost for 40 days
after you die and then you stop being
that ghost and then you you enter upon
your next life as another human being or
a heaven realm or whatever and that
during the 40 days as this Advanced
ghost you know this kind of spirit being
that you might be like reviewing your
life might have Spirit guides you know
discussing mistakes you made things you
could have done better things you did
right that kind of thing although
according to in Book of the Dead this is
all just mindmade you know it's all sort

of a a figment of your
imagination so I mean that could go with
like an advanced ghost existence too
because it seems to me that ghosts
assuming that they exist that they're
really not as aware of an objective
reality as we are that they're kind of
like lost in their head you know they're
like lost in their memories and so forth
and so they're creating a kind of
symbolic imaginary world for themselves
to some degree to a greater degree than
than we are for
example so I do think that it is
possible I don't think it necessarily
happens with all people just like all

people who almost die don't have these
near-death experiences that some of them
they just black out you know they they
don't remember anything
so I I wouldn't say as a terraa Buddhist
or as a person who's more terraa
Buddhist than anything else that you
know anyone who dies is going to go
through this kind of intermediate state
but it's not necessarily against terraa
Buddhism to say that some people let's
say you know it's like their next human
life you know isn't ready yet you know
they've got certain circumstances that
they have to be born into and so they
might be you know they might just adopt
like this relatively high level ghost

realm just to you know process their

previous life get ready for the next one

and then and then enter the next life

when it's

ready

so um so that's possible

too so I mean and also to bear in mind

that the BTO realm is largely just

mindmade according to to the Tibetan

Book of the Dead

anyway that uh you know you might just

enter into the spirit realm where you're

just sort of like self-contained you're

not really interacting with any kind of

objective World for for a while just

kind of processing or whatever and then

you enter the next realm but it would be

it wouldn't be like an intermediate

state it would just be a short

existence as a kind of ghost being or

whatever in between two more discret

human exist

distances something like that so I mean

you could sort of fit it in but I do not

think that all people who die go through

this this BTO realm Tibetans may be more

likely because they're conditioned to

expect that after they

die so I'm just going to move on the

next question here and this is from Mr

pranav and Mr pranav says in angura

nikaya 5

191 Buddha is comparing ancient brahans

with

dogs this suta does not have any context

behind it nor did the Buddha give any

conclusion some Hindus are using this

suta to tell that Buddha was against

intercast

marriage why did the Buddha give such a

weird discourse and I have to admit I

don't recall ever having read this

discourse

before excuse me I'm gonna try and blow

my

nose my nose has been acting funny

during Q&A or

everything see most people they would

just cut that part out in fact I've been

watching some videos where I mean some
guys they'll be doing a talk they'll be
sitting here in front of a camera
talking and there there's like jump
edits like sometimes three times in a
single sentence you know it's like the
jump edits are just every few few
seconds and I just don't see the point
of it I'm I'm a human being I'm just
acting like a human being sitting here
talking to you guys and if it doesn't
come out perfect well none of us do
really so anyways getting back to this
strange Su called dogs in bod's
Translation um yeah there's it starts
off with the Buddha saying buikus there
are these five ancient Brahman practices

that are now seen among dogs but not among brahans what five and the first one is that it used to be see in the past brahans coupled only with Brahman women not with non- Brahman women but now brahans couple with both Brahman women and non- Brahman women dogs however still couple only with female dogs not with other female animals this is the first ancient Brahman practice that is now seen among dogs but not among brahin and that's I mean it's hard for me to imagine that the Buddha would make an argument like this um it is true that in the Buddhist time in Ancient India there was no formal logic but it's

not a very good logical argument here
that comparing a Brahman with a dog in
this case that Brahman will have sex
with women who aren't brahin it's not a
very good comparison with dogs not
having sex with animals that aren't dogs
it's like it'd be like different breeds
of dog you know a Brahman is a certain
breed of ancient Indian human and
whether there were different breeds of
dog in Ancient India it might just be
that they were all just Mongrel paria
dogs you know they were all the same
breed of dog in Ancient India but it
would be more like a dog that like a
cocker spaniel that only has sex with
other cocker spaniels which dogs don't

do but

um let's see anyways the second way that

that brahin are like let's see brahin

are like dogs or see five ancient

Brahman practices that are now seen

among dogs but not among brahans in the

past Brahman coupled with Brahman women

only when they were in season not out of

season but now Brahman coupled with

Brahman women now both when they are in

season and out of season dogs however

still coupled with female dogs only when

they are in season not out of season

this is the second ancient Brahman

practice is now seen among so this seems

to be implying that Brahman women go

into

heat um and women humans have what is

called concealed ovulation that human

female doesn't just go into estris that

is that is obvious to men and that's

partly just because of pair bonding it

just having sex whenever you feel like

it just it sort of causes a stronger

pair bond you know increases the likel

that the man will stick around when you

know he's able to have sex with his

woman when he wants to have sex whether

or not wait until she's in season

again so this is it's this they're kind

of weak arguments so far let's go to

number three here in the past brahin did

not buy and sell Brahman women and they

would initiate cohabitation only through mutual affection doing so for the sake of family continuity but now brahin buy and sell Brahman women and they initiate cohabitation both through mutual affection and without Mutual affection doing so for the sake of family continuity dogs however still do not buy and sell female dogs they don't buy or sell anything I just added that as commentary let's see dogs however still do not buy and sell female dogs and they initiate cohabitation only through mutual affection doing so for the sake of family

continuity this is the third ancient

Brahman practice that is now seen among
dogs but not among brahans and I I Don't
Think Mutual affection has much to do
with it when dog when a female when a
[__] is in heat the dog just the male
dog just goes crazy because of the smell
and just wants to mate with her you me
he might just have no use for at all any
other time it's not for the sake of
family continuity he doesn't even stick
around for the kids so I
mean this statement is made by someone
who apparently is is just using this
comparison for rhetorical purposes
without car caring you know that it
really is like a valid argument or not
but um or else he it it was somebody who

really did not understand how dogs function so anyways I'll just move on to number four here in the past brahin did not store up wealth grain silver and gold but now Brahman store up wealth grain silver and gold dogs however still do not store up wealth green silver and gold this is the fourth fourth ancient Brahman practice that is now seen among dogs but not among brahin you know I mean dogs just don't have personal property as a general rule they might have you know a bone that they will guard jealously or a favorite toy or something might have their their bed that they consider to be theirs or

something but I mean this kind of

argument is it's either for rhetorical

purposes or it's just not very

compelling

logically and anyway number five in the

past brahans went seeking alms food in

the evening for their evening meal and

in the morning for their morning meal

but now brahmans eat as much as they

want until their bellies are full and

then leave taking the leftovers away

dogs however still go seeking food in

the evening for their evening meal and

in the morning for their morning meal

this is the fifth ancient Brahman

practice that is now seen among dogs but

not among brahmans these beos are the

five ancient Brahman practices that are
now seen among dogs and not among
brahans and that's how the Su to
ends
and I mean I would be surprised if the
Buddha really taught that that does
strike me as something that I mean it's
not particularly wise or inspired you
know it's in a way it's just sort of
dissing brahans you know it's just
saying that brahmans are supposed to be
holy men and in the past they behaved
like holy men but now they're not
behaving like holy men and I mean there
could actually be something like m
pranav was suggesting the Hindus suggest

that the Buddha was against intercast

marriage

although um I mean it's mainly just

brahans he's referring to and the main

purpose is not to speak badly of

intercast marriage but to speak badly of

the way brahmans are nowadays and just

sort of picking some things that you can

compare with dogs I

guess but

personally I mean it does not strike me

as a particularly profound sua and the

reasoning is pretty pretty shaky

reasoning you know it's it's it's not

good solid reasoning in my

opinion so I would I would consider that

possibly to I mean either the Buddha

didn't really say that or I mean he was

just in a way just sort of

I mean the point of the the whole

discourse would be just pointing out

that brahans they used to be holy men

but now they're not holy men anymore at

least lots of them

aren't and that is a theme that you find

in the sutas

elsewhere um generally I mean in in

different ways just pointing out that a

true Brahman is is a holy man that

you're not just a you know it's it's

something that you have to really earn

or deserve and that's not just something

you're born

with

so yeah it is weird so let's see what is

the main question here why why did the

Buddha give such a weird discourse yeah

I mean either he didn't or he was just

not in a particularly inspired mood that

day and was just comparing brahin

nowadays with dogs and and pointing out

that in some ways the dogs are superior

and I mean

maybe it's possible I mean there's no

way to prove one way or the

other but um I mean it does remind me

that one of my main teachers in Burma

pooku Seattle used to refer to America

as dog dog Nation qu

Nan because he said Americans live

pretty much like dogs you know it's like
you know they just go from one mate to
another to another and have no respect
for their elders and you know just live
for the moment and live for sensual
gratification and so forth so I mean it
could be a kind of argument similar to
that except specifically dissing brahans
instead of
Americans but who knows really it is a
weird discourse though and I do not
recall having read that one before so
I'm just going to move on to panov's
next question Mr pronav I should say
what are your thoughts on BR Ed car's
views on Karma and he gave me this

extended quote of BR Ed car with regard
to Karma and he does say a few
interesting things like like K Kama is
is considered to be a Nama which is like
a force of nature that that preserves
order in the
universe but then towards the
end this is a quote towards the end of
this this extended quote the law of Kama
has to do only with the question of
General moral order it has nothing to do
with the fortunes or misfortunes of an
individual it is concerned with the
maintenance of the moral order in the
universe and I mean I could not agree
with that I do not think that that is
the Orthodox position of terava there

are plenty of suas that really do refer Karma to the fortunes or misfortunes of an individual assuming of course that an individual exists I mean at the level of conventional speech at which individual beings exist then certainly your own comma is going to be with it's going to be conditioning your fortunes and misfortunes so why BR Ed car would deny that um I mean it's it's pretty obviously going flying in the face of of orthodox terraa and it may be that uh BR Ed car started his Buddhist movement in India more for political and social reasons than for Spiritual reasons certain aspects of of Buddhism he just

didn't have much use for you know it

didn't serve his political and social

purposes

maybe um but it kind of reminds me of

Essen Goa also who had a very simplified

streamlined version of dhad that he

would teach and um like his followers I

mean that was good enough for them and

they thought he was he was

great but uh if you want to get more

advanced you want to get into deeper

levels of it you have to leave that

behind and get into the the deeper

levels and sort of leave the simplified

version

behind

so um yeah I'm not exactly sure

what be Ed car considered comma really

to be I mean it's not really a cosmic

force it is a psychological phenomenon

that Karma literally is a mental state

and it's an individual mental state that

refers to the

individual so for him to reject that it

uh yeah I I really it's it's certainly

not Orthodox and I'm not Orthodox either

but still I would have to reject what uh

BR Ed car says in this quote that I that

I mentioned

and so I'm just going to move on

to Mr panov's third question which is

which jataka Kata is your favorite

mine's Maha janaka

jataka and he's referring to Jas as
there it's a a generry of Buddhist
literature there is the Joda is one of
the one of the books of the TOA it's in
the kikaya it's it's a su collection and
technically only the verses are
canonical that the stories the pros
stories that most people identify with
the jota itself are are
commentary and I've never really been
into Jas I've never really had much
interest in jotas and so I haven't read
very many um I guess one of my favorites
is just the one that stands out the most
where the Buddha is the SAA IA where the
Buddha was a wise rabbit or hair in a
previous existence and I can't remember

what is he had two friends one was a monkey and the other one was an otter I think and they were GNA um make offerings to a a a holy man mendicant that day if if they came across a holy man mendicant and the other two animals the monkey and the otter I think they just went out and collected something I think one of them actually stole something to offer to any mendicant that came begging but uh the the rabbit didn't have anything he couldn't really offer his food to a mendicant so he just made the determination that if a mendicant came he was just going to fling himself into a fire and cook

himself and in just as an offering to
the mendicant which caused sakas golden
or it's a throne of yellow stone up in
tawa timsa heaven to heat up whenever
anybody makes this really rad IAL
aesthetic determination or behaves in a
very aesthetic way it causes Saka king
of Gods is thrown to heat up so he can't
sit uncomfortably so he has to come down
and deal with whatever whoever's doing
this and uh so he disguises himself as
like a Brahman mendicant and the rabbit
just throws himself into the fire to
offer his cooked meat to I mean this
scorched dead rabbit to this to this uh
mendicant or to to this God disguises a
mendicant and the fire wouldn't burn him

because Saka was protecting the rabbit
because he was such a wise rabbit and
then as a reward for his peity and his
determination and so forth he squeezed
the juice out of a mountain and then
drew a rabbit on the surface of the Moon
and that is I mean if if you look at the
the Moon it looks more like a rabbit
than a face you know we see it as the
man in the moon well at least some of us
used
to but if you look at it sideways it
really does kind of look like a rabbit
and that was the Buddha in a previous
existence so the Buddha kind of is the
man in the

moon but uh I mean I haven't read very
many other ones there's the the one
about the the wise what is it a quail I
think that there was again you had this
wise quail and he had two two friends
one was an elephant and one was a monkey
and this this whole story is canonical
this is found in the vena so I mean that
makes it kind of interesting to me
because I used to be really into U Vena
or monastic
discipline and they were trying to
determine amongst themselves who was the
oldest just so that the other two could
pay respects to the Elder and the
element says well you see that banion
tree over there you I can remember when

I could walk over that and the top
branches of it the top leaves would just
brush my belly so he could remember when
that banion tree was just like a sapling
then the monkey says well I can remember
sitting next to that same banion tree
and I I could like pick the fruit right
out of the top while I was sitting on
the ground so he was he was older
because he could remember when the
banion tree was even smaller but then
the the quail says well I remember
eating fruit from a different Banyon
tree flying over that area and pooping
and apparently my droppings had that
banion seed in it and then the banion

seed the banion tree sprouted from my

crap

and so then they knew that the quail was

the eldest of the three and the other

two paid respects to to the quail and

why it's one of my favorites is just

because it's one of the few that really

stands out in my

memory so yeah I mean I don't really

have any jotas that stick out in my mind

as just being really inspiring some of

them are just strange I mean a lot of

them are just like asups Fables you know

there's like the fox who finds a dead

elephant and just sort of eats his way

into the elephant and then as the

elephant swells up from its death it

kind of traps the the fox inside you
know it's strange stories like
this but uh yeah I don't know if I
really have a favorite I guess either
the the Sasa jica about the wise rabbit
who tried to burn himself to death to
feed to a feed to a mendicant or maybe
the the quail but I mean it's neither
one of them is really inspiring I mean
there's there's not a whole lot of
wisdom to be had from these stories uh
at least the ones that I can remember
the few that I have read it's just they
stick out of my mind as as a weird
stories like asap's fables or something
so I'm just going to move on to the next

question this is from five precept Pete

and five precept Pete says as a junior

monk did you engage in practice two

dongs of short

distances

and this is he's going with the tie the

tie word

Tong which is based on the pow Danga and

Danga literally is 13 optional aesthetic

practices that a monk can undertake like

always sleeping in a sitting position or

only eating M's food or only wearing a

robe made out of Rags or only or just

keeping three robes not having any extra

robes Beyond those three and just there

there's 13 of them all together living

in a cemetery living under the Open Sky

living under a

tree and apparently what has happened is

that in

Thailand they have taken this word Danga

turned it into Tong and it just means

when a monk just wanders

around and in Burma it wasn't easy for

me to just wander around

um because I was this very conspicuous

Foreigner so one time I was going to

walk from rangon to the town of one dwin

which is maybe a 100 miles or so south

of Mandalay altogether it would be about

a 400 mile walk I'm pretty sure at least

300 and I made it about 35 miles before

I was essentially arrested and just

interrogated put in detention and then
one of my supporters was called and they
had to come and pick me up and take me
back to rangon again so I found out that
in order to do like longdistance walking
as a monk in Burma I would have to avoid
towns and Roads and just go through the
forest I could walk through the forest
but of course when you're walking
through
Forest there's no place to get food
because a monk is not allowed to carry
his own food store it overnight I mean
if if a monk wants to eat something on a
certain day he's got to receive that
food from a non-monk you know that same
morning that he eats it so I did do a

lot of walking through like Alando

cathan National

Park just fasting while I did it but

walking like on by the side of the road

in inhabited areas just did not work

because the the immigration authorities

and the secret police just did not want

like conspicuous looking westerners just

walking around free you know they'd

always say we are concerned for your

safety but really they were just

concerned for their own safety because

they might get in trouble for just

letting this weird Foreigner walk

around

so I guess uh as a junior monk did I

engage in practice two dongs of short
distances um to the extent that I was
able to
I did walk around but it was mostly out
in remote areas and not I mean you
couldn't walk through towns or anything
and it was even before the immigration
authorities and the secret police caught
up with me it was it was really awful
because whenever I would slow down
whenever I would stop crowds of people
would just start accumulating around me
gawking at me because a lot of them had
just never seen a Caucasian monk
before so yeah it was it it really
didn't work out very well in my case but
an Asian monk who looked who could pass

for Burmese I knew a Vietnamese monk who did this also I know an Indonesian monk who can do this I mean they can sort of blend in they just look like a a Burmese monk pretty much they can just wander around whoever they want to but I couldn't do it because I did not look like a Burmese
monk so I'll just move on to five pret piz next question here which is would it have been allowable for you to walk as far as bod Gaia yeah um I know that there was an Italian monk back in the 1930s and 40s who actually did walk from Burma all the way to bodia and back um I think it was theoretically possible but

I don't know it's I think it was illegal
to cross the the Burmese border into
India I mean you have to get like
special permits or something for it now
I mean it wasn't all just British Empire
like it was in the 30s and early
40s
so I mean it theoretically could have
been possible but I would have had to
get all sorts of permits and visas and
stuff to do it and uh I mean it's the
tropics you know I'm a shaven headed
Wester my ancestors evolved to survive
ice ages also I've got like an oily skin
type so that I have to pretty much bathe
every day or I'll start breaking out in
rashes and stuff so that when I was

walking trying to walk from rangon to to
one dwin I was going to walk along like
um see just walk along rivers most of
the way you know at least try and find
someplace where I could bathe every day
and uh yeah I mean walking around in the
tropics Caucasians like pale skinned
westerners um yeah I mean it doesn't
work so well there I mean you can just
wind up Dead trying to to do that kind
of stuff and it it wouldn't really work
for me
anyway but I think technically
theoretically it would have been
possible I think it has been done so
I'll just move on to prop five preset

Pete's next question are any shoes or sandals allowable if a monk gets injured and even if a monk isn't injured he is allowed to wear thin leather sandals that are just a natural brown color

um they just have like one layer the sole is just one layer of leather um but he's not allowed to wear those in public he's not allowed to wear them in town or like among the houses um but if he is injured if he's got like a a sore on his foot or let's just say the pavement is so blazing hot you can't walk on a Barefoot then in a case like that you would be allowed to wear sandals that would be like

flip-flops or I mean they'd have to be
sandals so that because it's against the
rules to wear shoes where your toes or
your heels are covered so I mean it
would be essentially just sandals with
straps and it would just have to be like
a regular brown drab leather color and
they'd have to be like cheap sandals
that are just like one layer
thick but what I wore was uh they were
called
copat where which is car shoes which
they're made out of old car tires and
then um which is just like one layer of
rubber anyway and I would just sort of
splatter a little bit of paint on them

so they wouldn't be all black because
sandals that are all black are not
allowable so I just get a little splotch
of like white paint on them just so that
they wouldn't be all black and then they
were they were kosher they were
allowable to wear but as a general rule
when I was a monk I did almost the only
time I wore sandals is when I went to
uh Pagan because Pagan has these these
little spiky seeds all over the ground
and if you try to walk Barefoot on the
ground there it's like you get like five
of these spiky seeds stuck into one foot
and then you're standing on the other
foot and while you're standing on the
other foot to pick the seeds out of the

first foot the other foot's getting like
seven of these things stuck into your
feet and there's just some places you
just cannot walk Barefoot because of
these little spiky like C trops or
something that are just sticking into
your
feet and uh I think just about the only
other time I ever wore shoes was if I
was like trying to put out a brush fire
or
something but shoes or sandals I mean
shoes that aren't sandals just are not
allowable but sandals if they're like
cheap and not fancy by ancient Indian
standards are allowable even for who

isn't injured if he's inside the monastery or in an uninhabited area and they are allowable for a monk if he has a health problem you know he's got an injured foot or like the pavement is so blazing hot you just can't walk Barefoot or there's these spiky little seed things everywhere or broken glass or something that you just can't walk Barefoot on so I'm just going to move on to the next question here this is from SG and SG says with regard to comma I have always been Disturbed by the fact that we can see brain chemistry play such a big role in our actions and thoughts for instance I took a medication once that

made me very aggressive and angry how
then am I
responsible for some bad words or
actions I took when I only did them
influenced by some pill also I could
have been born with that brain chemistry
and would go on to be a much worse
person than I am can we really just say
it was the Karma to be born with a
certain brain chemistry or to have their
personality malformed by bad parents is
it karma that the only thing that can
help an illness is a drug that causes
anger karma seems to be doing too much
work and I don't see where the space for
responsibility is well for one thing SG

here is just assuming that physical
matter is real so brain chemistry he
would consider to be just as real if not
more real than Karma which is some is a
hypothesis that I do not
endorse but with regard to for example
taking a medication that made somebody
angry and then SG would like to to
assume that it's the pill that made him
angry and not any kind of karma but
let's say for example alcohol let's just
take alcohol for an example I I've known
a few guys very quiet mild-mannered guys
and then they get drunk and they just
turn into just obnoxious
monsters and it's not just the alcohol
making them obnoxious monsters not

everyone who drinks alcohol as an
obnoxious monsters some people just
become very you know friendly and happy
and peaceful when they're drunk you know
or joyful or whatever or just
clumsy but I mean that anger was already
in there just awaiting its opportunity
to come out and I think some some
drunks um will use
alcohol as a way of just sort of
overcoming their inhibitions you know mo
for the most part they force themselves
to be well behaved and you know it's
just they've got all this chaos that's
that's under the surface just building
up pressure and then they get drunk and

just blow it all out some people take

iasa for a similar reason and so I mean

the anger was already there when when

when the pill was taken

I mean like somebody like neem Koli

Baba up there I mean he could take I

mean he notoriously took 1,200

micrograms of LSD on one occasion and it

had no effect on him he was so above

that he was so in control of his mind

and

everything I mean it just had no

effect and like a fully enlightened

being who took the pill probably

wouldn't be getting

angry so brain chemistry I mean the very

idea that we even believe that we have

brain chemistry is because of our Karma

our Karma allows us to be indoctrinated

or conditioned or taught with the idea

that we've got brain chemistry that is

influencing our our

Behavior

so let's

see brain

chemistry so here we go can we really

just say it was their karma to be born

with a certain brain chemistry yes or to

have their personality malformed by bad

parents yes because karma is determining

or it's conditioning everything that you

experience that your mind is creating is

generating a kind of virtual reality in

which you

exist which includes your belief in

brain

chemistry before there was brain

chemistry or before anybody knew about

brain chemistry still I mean Karma was

Karma was there I mean like conditioning

our experiences according to Abid dama

for what for what it's worth every

sensation every feeling that we

experience is the fruition of

karma

so

um yeah I mean it's part of the problem

in the West and increasingly even in the

East is people just assume that

scientific realism explains reality and

then if they adopt Buddhism they just
kind of like fit the Buddhism into the
scientific realism as best they can just
as a kind of psychological thing or
whatever and I mean it just generally
doesn't work very well it's it's sort of
like it's a handicap trying to you start
off believing that science explains
reality and science does explain samsara
it explains the rules of this virtual
reality but this virtual reality isn't
really
reality and even a scientist can tell
you that the world as we experience it I
mean that's not really
reality there's a I wonder if I can find

this without taking half an hour to do

it but there's a really interesting

statement by uh

berch and Russell that I copied out of a

book one time see if I can find

it let's

see please be

patient let's

see bertran

Russell bertran see I should I should

prepare for these

sometimes let's

see Pon Russell come on now

it's not a very thick book you can just

bear with me on this or you can just go

potty really quick or something while

I'm looking for

this

okay

okay no that's not it I think this might

I might actually have to

just let's

see yeah well now I can't find it that's

not

funny yeah it's in there but anyway

beron Russell in in his book I think it

was human knowledge at scope and limits

and this was when beron Russell was

going through his scientific realism

phase he went through different phases

and at one point he was just well

science is the best philosophy we've got

so we'll just just go with that and he

was talking about when a an astronomer
looks through a telescope and he sees
like this fuzzy white dot and and he
identifies that as a nebula just
hundreds of light years away it's really
not so different from a neuroscientist
looking at a human
brain and and seeing that and assum and
considering that to be a human brain
whereas I mean the nebula just a fuzzy
white dot that I mean we're not even
seeing it as it is now we're seeing it
as it was hundreds of years ago because
it takes that long for the light to get
to us and it's really the same
phenomenon as the like the brain surgeon
looking at a brain you know it's it has

about as

much correlation to reality as looking

at a fuzzy white dot and calling that a

nebula or a

Galaxy and I'm sorry it took me so long

not to find the quote in the

book so SG

let's see I'll just I'll just go over

this question again I have always been

disturbed by the fact that we can see

brain chemistry plays such a big role in

our actions and thoughts well we believe

that we're seeing brain chemistry it is

a belief it's not actual

knowledge for instance I took a

medication that made him very aggressive

and angry angry how then am I

responsible for some bad words or

actions I took when I only did them

under the influence of some pill because

the anger was still there in latent form

you had the potential for that anger

which then was

released by the circumstances of taking

the

pill so you could have been born with

brain chemistry yeah I mean people due

to their their karma from their past

existences

presumably they wind up in crippled

bodies messed up bodies messed up

families abusive parents all sorts of

horrible

things but it's all conditioned by

Karma there are some people like some

Buddhists will say well Karma doesn't

explain everything but it explains a

hell of a

lot

so can we really just say it was their

karma to be born with a certain brain

chemistry or to have their personality

Malou formed by bad parents

yes

so I guess I answered that

question or towards in here it says or I

guess at the very end it says I don't

see where the space for responsibility

is well most people I mean we always

have a choice it's just that most people
are not awake enough or aware enough to
realize that they have a choice let's
say there's something that always pisses
you off every time it happens every
single time if you are more awake you
would realize that you really do have a
choice it's just that you're reacting
through habit through a kind of
knee-jerk reflex you're under you're
you're being motivated by a kind of
automatic
pilot but there's always the the
potential is there of rising above the
knee-jerk reflex that it's always a
volitional act how you
respond and so if you were more

mindful then you would be able to choose
if you were more a a wake you know more
enlightened than you could choose am I
going to get angry about this or not but
most people don't get to that stage
they're just living their lives just
kind of acting out the automatic pilot
and so whenever X happens you know they
get pissed off or whatever you know it
bugs them and that's just the way it is
but and that's I mean a lot of Western
ethics and so forth just assumes that we
have no choice Choice when actually we
do that whenever we are unhappy it's
always a choice it's always an option
and it's just that people are just so

locked into their habits and not awake
enough to realize that they do have a
choice that they just are enslaved to to
circumstance but really they are not
it's just it's it's just sort of like
they don't they're not aware that the
prison door is
unlocked
so I I don't know I I guess I'll just
keep going here and answer another
question this is from the
Ottoman and the ottoman says what's the
difference between nibana and death well
death is something that happens to your
body and your thinking mind whereas
nibana it's sort of like Ultimate
Reality nibana is reality death is

something that is not reality it's just

something that happens in this

virtual version of reality you know this

this semi quasi

reality

um so nibana is is Ultimate Reality or I

mean as an ethical State it's where

you're fully awake you know it's like

Buddha literally means awakened so he

woke up from the

dream so nibana is you know waking up

from the dream and realizing Ultimate

Reality whereas death is just uh you

know the the virtual body breaks down

the virtual brain and mind break down

and then you just get a new one

eventually or the very next moment I

should

say

so to an nihilist who thinks that when

you're dead you're dead there's just

nothing afterwards um some people would

say like n Maharaj did not believe that

there was an afterlife he just said

after you die you just merge with

Brahman in which case death and nibana

would be pretty much the

same

but science scientific materialism does

not accept

nibana and

um see Buddhism doesn't accept it just

when you're dead you're dead this

religion in general doesn't accept that
when you're dead you're dead other than
maybe some kinds of like Judaism or
something like Old Testament Judaism
they seem to believe in the Old
Testament that uh you know when you're
dead you're dead I mean there might be
an afterlife but it was sort of like
this Gloom you just sleep through that
you might as well not even have an
individual soul
anymore
so let's see I guess I answered that
question and I wish my my nostrils would
stop doing this weird thing that they've
been doing last few

q&as but that's the way it

goes so the next question is from ruie

and ruie says what is your take on the

Buddhist proclamation of having

discovered or rediscovered an ancient

path well the Buddha had enough wisdom

to know that I mean he wasn't

discovering anything new it wasn't any

kind of innovation he was discovering

what's always there I mean he was

discovering reality it and reality is

always here and he must have known that

there were people before him that

discovered it and there would be people

after him that would ReDiscover it so

when in order to become enlightened I

mean there are certain things like

morality and

renunciation and um mindfulness that are

just key to waking up and it works the

same for most people at least most

people that become enlightened on

purpose

so yeah I mean it it does make sense I

don't think it's anything really

remarkable that the Buddha would

Proclaim or acknowledge that he just

rediscovered something that other people

had discovered before him and other

people would discover long after he was

gone that I mean it's just like this

eternal principle that's always there

and every once in a while there's going

to be someone who just has the the
talent and the spiritual ripeness the
wisdom to be able to to see
that so I guess I'm going to move on to
the next question this is from
kify and kify says Buddha Dharma is a
quite complex system I am pretty sure I
won't reach a Liberation from Sam SAR in
this lifetime do you think I could stick
to learning to be compassionate towards
others and trying to be as wise as
possible so I could H leave as little of
a mess behind me but then if my karma
allows I will be reborn in a realm of
semi gods or Gods but as far as I
understand their realm is even worse for
attaining

enlightenment well I mean the main question here the only question mark is do you think that I could stick to learning to be compassionate towards others and trying to be as wise as possible so I could leave as little a mess behind me question mark and yeah I mean that's what most Buddhists are doing I think I mean most Buddhists including most Buddhist monks really have no aspiration to become enlightened In This Very life you know they're just doing the best they can they're they're cultivating wisdom and and virtue as well as they can to at least set themsel up better in in a NE in a future

existence in their next life

and if you wind up in heaven I mean most

people after they die presumably it

seems to me are just born as people

again if you die with a human mind

you're reborn as human if you die with

an animal mind you are reborn as an

animal if you die with a Godlike or

Angelic mind you're reborn as a god a

small G God if you die with a demonic

mind then you can might wind up in a

demonic

existence so most people people die with

pretty much of a human mind and so they

wind up being human

again so I mean you shouldn't avoid

cultivating virtue and wisdom just out

of fear of winding up in some Advanced

Heaven realm where you'll have less

inclination to practice

Dharma I mean you wind up where you need

to

be so if you need to be a human again

then you'll be a human again

um yeah just do the best you can really

I mean you shouldn't hold back on doing

the best you can just out of fear of of

going to heaven and then just sort of

being trapped in this in in millions of

years of of celestial

Bliss that's kind of kind of

weird

um so I guess I answer that question I

mean it's it's fairly simple question
even though it's it's uh a little bit of
a longish question but the answer is
short which that's it's kind of strange
for me to have to answer a question in
less time than it takes to read it so
I'm just going to move on next question
here which is from Master Poe and Master
Po says Buddha was a udab brow question
mark yeah the nose is just not
cooperating lately only when I do these
q&as though it's just prolonged talking
is starting to have this effect on my
nostrils so Master Po I think he's
responding to a statement I made in the
previous Q&A about how the Buddha had
like this this hairy spot like where the

third eye is supposed to be but it

wasn't a unibrow

and um there is actually an obscure rule

of discipline saying that someone with a

unibrow should not be ordained as a monk

I mean there's there's this list of

people that should not be ordained as a

monk and it's a pretty picky unless

anyone who's Too Tall anyone who's Too

Short anyone who's too white anyone

who's too dark you know it's just anyone

who stands out as unusual that might

cause some kind of superstitious alarm

in Buddhist lay people like villagers

when this person is like walking through

their village with his alms Bowl I mean

if if he has if he potentially could
freak people out because of his
appearance then it's best just not to
ordain that person according to these
obscure rules of monastic discipline
which are usually
ignored I mean I was way taller than
than the burmes although fortunately I
guess I was ordained at the same
ceremony with another uh European guy
who was almost as tall as I was so we
kind of compensated for each other
um so I mean the the short answer to
this question is the Buddha probably was
not a
unibrow and then the Thai monks just
shave off their eyebrows anyway although

I don't think uh the ancient Indian

monks shaved off their eyebrows but that

would have just made it completely a

nonissue anyway so I'm just going to

move on next question which is from

nature cure and nature cure says in your

opinion how much of patim mocha rules

are Sila badada

and I assume he's he means Sil parasa

which means just adhering to morality

and

observances and I think what he

furthermore

means H this is bugging me just a

minute

man I assume what he means is that how

many of the poty rules really are not
ethics based and are more just like
protocol based or um etiquette based you
know it's just or Indian ancient Indian
tradition based you know it's like
um wearing a robe that is discolored in
certain ways that's one of the poty
mocha rules a monk who who is going to
wear a new put on a new robe he's got to
discolor it first and I think originally
that meant dying it sort of a drab
color instead of you know bright white
which is what a lot of lay people wore
but it it got converted into this rule
saying that you have to make a spot on
this robe and it's called the Bindu
kapam and you're supposed to say IMU

kapam while you're making the spot which
means I am making this
spot and then that makes it allowable to
wear after you make the spot I think in
Thailand it's three small spots but in
Burma it's more according to the
commentary the winia commentary is just
one spot which has to be at least as
large as a bed bug but no bigger than a
peacock's eye which I don't know if
they're talking about like the actual
eyeball of a peacock or like an eye spot
on its tail I'm not sure
which but U how much of the ptim Moka
rules are Sil laatu badana um or silata
parasa well all all of them can be Sil

parasa if a monk clings to them if he
thinks that you know it's like he is
better than other people because he
clings to these rules he follows them
strictly he has contempt for people that
don't follow the rules um that could be
a manifestation of silat parasa with
regard to all of it because even genuine
morality if you cling to it is silat
parasa but if you're talking
about uh rules that really are not based
on morals you know like there's a rule
against um against killing animals
there's a rule against telling lies you
know there's a rule against like
verbally abusing another Monk that sort
of thing that those would be um actual

ethics whereas other rules you know like
putting the spot on your robe or even
just like drinking alcohol I mean if you
have just one sip of something that's
mildly alcoholic you know let's say one
sip of some fruit juice that started to
ferment not nearly enough to get drunk
or anything I mean it's not really
immoral but I
mean I mean that would be sort of like a
borderline case or using water that
might have living beings in it so stuff
like that I mean it's it's a lot of
borderline cases um like traveling by
arrangement with a nun I
mean th that would not be particularly

moral or immoral I mean it's

just um I mean a lot of it is just

ancient Indian tradition or it's just

for the sake of appearances you know

sort of like not ordaining somebody with

a unibrow you know it's just something

that might cause the SAA to look bad to

its

supporters and so all of the SE rules

towards the end would would would fit

into the the etiquette you know you're

not supposed to talk with your mouth

full you know you're not supposed to

teach dhama to someone who's walking in

front of you down a path or you're not

allowed to teach dhama to someone who's

walking on a path where while you're

walking beside the path you're not
allowed to teach dama to someone whose
head is covered by a hat or a turban
this kind of thing it's just sort of
etiquette so how much of the ptim Moka
rules are Sila
parasa uh I mean I I haven't done any
kind of like analysis trying to separate
out the genuine morality rules from the
etiquette and tradition rules um and
then of course there are some borderline
cases like drinking alcohol for example
or just like sitting alone with a
woman that kind of thing I mean there's
nothing necessarily immoral with regard
to sitting alone with a woman although

for a celibate monk it certainly doesn't
look
good so in my opinion how much of the py
Moka rules um I mean the question itself
is kind of uh open to
interpretation like I said earlier I
mean if you cling to the rules then all
of the rules are cabat parasa just
clinging to morality and
observances but I think what nature was
mainly referring to is you know how much
of the ptim Moka is morality and how
much is
observances and it might be probably
more than half of it is just observances
you know like a monk is not allowed to
carry like goat wool more than a certain

distance that kind of thing I mean

there's a lot of rules like that he's

not allowed to get a new bowl until his

old Bowl has a certain number of cracks

in it you know

that's it's it's not really a a matter

of Ethics or morals it's just making

sure that the monks are austere and not

being a burden on their supporters and

behaving properly in accordance with

this ancient Indian spiritual

tradition so yeah I would guess that uh

less than half of it is ual

morals but I'm not going to try and make

a guess maybe a third of it is actual

morals something like that maybe a

quarter somewhere between a quarter and
a third maybe would be actual morals as
opposed to just observances just sort of
like tradition and etiquette and and so
forth so I'm just going to move on to
the next question also from nature cure
what exactly is
vicha which is one of the three Fetters
for you
um yeah
vicha it's usually translated as doubt
or skeptical doubt but obviously not all
doubt is a
hindrance let's say somebody says it's
going to rain tomorrow and you look
around and it's just it's sunny there's
no sign of any rain you look at weather

forecast and it says it's going to be

sunny

tomorrow and then Bob says it's going to

rain tomorrow well just because you

doubt that it's going to rain tomorrow

doesn't mean that you've got this

hindrance that's going to prevent you

from becoming

enlightened so for me vicha my

interpretation of vicha and I think the

way I have translated it when I have

translated this word in a in a text is

indecision where you cannot make up your

mind it's like you've got two opposing

points of view or two opposing desires

that they're not resolved you know there

if there's like this indecision that's
holding you back it's it's sort of like
uh I don't know it's like a handicap for
you so that would be that would be my
interpretation of vich K is just
indecision so I'm just going to move on
next question which is how would you
describe Sakaya DTI so we're getting
lots of poly jargon in this one so those
of you who are beginners I hope I'm not
totally scaring you off if if my f five
minutes of trying to find a bertron
Russell quote didn't scare you off
already so how would I describe sakad
well literally it
means it's like one's own body
view so Sakaya is like one's own body

and DT means

view but I think what it literally means

is the view that you are an

intrinsically real individual

that separate from from your

environment so I assume that's what it

is it's like individuality view that's

often how it is uh translated or

personality view that you are like an

individual that is just intrinsically

inherently separate from everything

around

you that would that would be my

interpretation of psychiat DTI just the

belief that you really do exist as an

individual

entity and it is kind of wrong view it

is a kind of

delusion

man excuse me I'm really having trouble

like breathing out I can breathe in

through my nostrils and then sometimes

it just stops when I try to breathe

out it's not even funny ah

and then when a guy has a mustache he's

got to be careful about blowing his nose

because sometimes stuff can wind up in

your mustache that you're unaware of if

you catch my drift so anyways the next

question is from Joe do and Joo says if

matter doesn't exist and everything is

mindmade would that make the formless

Consciousness ones attain one attains in

nibana the formless Consciousness that
all so-called matter has raised from
would it make sense to call formless
Consciousness God and that attaining
nibana is merging with god well that's
essentially The vonic View right there
that's like a lot of Hindus believe this
in fact probably a lot of Christian
Mystics believe something along these
lines so long as they would they could
allow
that that the the human Spirit merges
with God uh at the highest state but
yeah I mean that's that is uh that is
like the vonic view
that that nibana or Brahman is infinite

formless Consciousness which is like the essence of reality and samsar is just sort of a virtual manifestation of this this infinite Consciousness and there are an infinite number of these these manifestations of of samsara it's all called Maya in in Hinduism ISM which is you mean just means like illusion so yeah I mean you can call it God and that attaining nibana is merging with God but in order to do that you have to reify the absolute you have to reify nibana as a thing as an IT and Buddhism tends to avoid doing that nibana is just off the scale anything you can say about

it is going to be invalid and so you're
better off just not even going there not
even trying to intellectualize the
absolute because you can't really do it
the best you can do with the intellect
is something like nagar does where you
use ruthless logic to destroy all points
of view saving your own point of view
for last and then destroying that last
and then just leaving the kind of this
emptiness that the Buddha was
teaching just leaving that as just
what's left
over
so yeah I mean that is more or less of a
a

Hinduism of of nibana and the sort of
the goal of Buddhism right there main
difference is that Buddhism tends not to
reify the absolute not to I mean it says
as little about nibana as as possible
because anything you say about it is
going to be invalid
anything you say about reality is going
to be invalid because you have to use
words which are symbols and then you're
just stuck in the realm of symbols and
you don't get anywhere near the reality
even though the reality is always right
here right
now
so yeah I'm just going to move on to
joo's second question here can any empty

chair represent the Buddha's
Enlightenment and it may
be that he's asking this because I
mentioned that before Buddha statues
were invented possibly by Greeks that
the Buddha was represented by a
footprint or an empty seat or like a Bo
leaf or some such just to emphasize the
fact that he had transcended samsar and
he was no longer on the scene he was no
longer in this
world so I mean anything can represent
the Buddha's Enlightenment uh that's the
way symbols work I mean if you can
somehow make a connection in your
imagination between uh an empty chair

and the Buddhist Enlightenment if that
is Meaningful to you then I guess you
could go with that but um as a general
rule Empty Chairs generally do not
represent the Buddha's
Enlightenment and so I'm going to move
on to the next question which is a
question maybe game fap here was not
expecting an answer to Is how can I be
as big a boss as poo
basa so it's kind of a play on words
spelling basa is a b o SS a being a boss
and I don't know because I don't really
consider myself to be a boss you know I
don't as a general rule I try not to
compare myself with
others and so I don't know I mean maybe

you can go and be a monk for 30 years or
something that be a start I
guess but I mean you're going to have to
do your own thing trying to imitate
somebody else is uh is not so good I
mean it generally doesn't work out very
well like my my main teacher pooku seatt
he just tried to imitate Tom pulci even
to the extent of wearing sunglasses at
night because Tom pulci always wore
sunglasses but it doesn't make much
sense to me and I got to blow my nose
again
man hope I don't have to take medicine
or have to undergo some kind of
procedure because of

this I don't like undergoing

procedures see here do the mustache

thing

ah

okay so this next question is from TIG

and Tig is somewhat of a troll in fact

he is a smartass

Punk yeah you know what I'm talking

to and so he he generally asks

irreverent kind of borderline

sacriligious kind of questions and so

his question this time is what exactly

is a Pog is it a white girl that's

pretty or a white girl with a pretty ass

can a girl even be pretty without having

a pretty ass or does it mean that the

girl is actually ual actually mid since

she's pretty

ass well I mean in tig's case I think a

Pog would stand for plastic Asian web

girl because he seems to be pretty much

obsessed with those on the Discord

server he's continually posting pictures

of these plastic looking often AI

generated like Chinese girls that he

seems to think are

dreamboats but literally pog P AWG I'm

pretty sure stands for fat ass white

girl with fat being spelled p h a t and

it's like a a generry of porn I'm pretty

sure it's just like white girls with a

big rounded

butt which has nothing to do with

Dharma as far as I

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

the next question this is from Outer

Haven and outer Haven uh coincidentally

says how can you overcome porn addiction

from a Buddhist

perspective and that is I mean that's a

a a genuine question because a lot of

people are porn addicts like when I was

a teenager and in my 20s I was pretty

much of a porn addict but back back in

those days I mean it was mostly in the

form of magazines like Hustler or

something they didn't have the internet

back then which is good I suppose but

how can you overcome it from a Buddhist

perspective um Buddhist approaches to

overcoming lust in general tend not to work very well I mean there's certain things you can do to make you less lustful and that's you know sleep less eat less you know take cold baths you know the standard stuff along that line and you can also like contemplate the the foulness of the human body which never really worked for me because I have a degree in biology and I see the human body as just like a miracle of engineering you know it's I've I've seen autopsies before and before I saw them I thought maybe I was going to puke or something but I mean it was just fascinating and I got this dog here is

wanting my attention licking my

hand

so let's see so I mean like

contemplating the the various parts of

the body realizing that that the rounded

smooth curves of a woman's figure are

really filled out with this plasticky

orange stuff that looks kind of like

partially melted Vita cheese

subcutaneous adapost tissue if you will

but as a general rule it just doesn't

work because lust is just built into US

I mean just living the life of a monk or

just maybe that might not be much of an

option but I mean that's one of the main

purposes of living the life of a

celibate monk but I mean it's still it's

it doesn't necessarily work very well
like a coroner can like do autopsies on
young women or the corpses of young
women anyway just every day or often It
generally doesn't cause him to be any
less lustful when he comes home to his
wife as a general rule I'm just assuming
that because it's just built into
us um years of conditioning just sort of
teaching yourself you know this is wrong
I shouldn't be doing this I mean it can
generally have ACC cumulative
effect but still it's there's going to
be a lot of this friction and and
conflict and sometimes
despair so um yeah from Buddhist

perspective sometimes I mean I I talked
to this young American monk once who um
not just with regard to porn but with
regard to lust and General he said that
he was like visualizing female rotting
corpses swarming with maggots and so
forth and I mean it just doesn't work
doing that kind of
stuff I mean it's it's sort of poisoning
the well I guess but still as a general
rule lustfulness is just kind of built
in so um I mean you have you have to
change your perception and that can be
done gradually through a lot of
meditation Dharma practice and just just
being inspired to live a dharmic life so
that when any kind of urge to look at

porn for example arises in your mind

you're just not appropriate not going to

go there you just dismiss it immediately

I mean that would be like the ideal

State and if you're really you've really

got a lot of faith or confidence in

dhama then you can do that but then

there's always going to be times when

you know maybe your meditation not going

well you're sort of in a slump or

something you're getting kind of

frustrated then these urges just come

right back up

again

so I mean you have to realize that it's

not serving you in order to stop it

otherwise you're just going to keep
doing it it's it's like any other kind
of addiction I mean one of the reasons
why you get addicted to it is because
you like it so to some degree you have
to really convince yourself that even
though you like it you're better off
without
it and I mean that's not easy to do to
someone who's who really likes something
and it may be for some people it may be
better just to to just have porn in your
own right hand than actually try to be
in a relationship I mean that is I mean
I I've I've considered writing an essay
on that very subject
but uh I never got around to it and I

probably never

will

but I mean it's not so much porn

addiction as the problem from a Buddhist

perspective from a Buddhist perspective

it's like lust addiction or sex

addiction with sex just being

sexuality you know any kind of lustful

Behavior

so how to overcome it really the only

way to overcome any kind of

addiction is just really to become

completely convinced not 90% convinced n

not 95 or 98 but to be totally convinced

that it just doesn't serve you that

you're better off without it and then it

becomes pretty much

effortless but what is going to cause

that shift in perception is hard to

say and like Carl Yung

used to say in order to replace some

strong psychic Force like an

addiction um I mean you have to you have

to replace it with something of equal

intensity so they used to say that um

the only real cure for dipsomania or

alcoholism was theomania or like finding

Jesus so you got to replace the energy

that was going into this addiction with

something equally intense

so I mean if you have a real

girlfriend you have a real mate then you

won't need the porn

ideally unless you really are addicted

to it in a a sense that isn't just you

know wanting to be lustful wanting to

get some kind of

gratification

so yeah it is it is a tough one I have

to

admit because so long as you're not 100%

convinced that you're better off without

it then there's always going to be times

when you're just going to give in the

Temptation

so just uh I mean a stop Gap just sort

of a Jerry rigged solution is just avoid

any exposure to it you know it's like

avoiding like resisting temptation you

know it's it's just sort of like a an inferior way of res resisting temptation by just avoiding the temptation but eventually you have to get to the point where even if the Temptation is right in front of you you can still resist it and that's going to require a shift in your perception where you are fully persuaded that it's just not good for you and you shouldn't do it but so long as there's a 5% or 2% of you still want to do it because you're not fully convinced then it's still going to happen sometimes

and so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from bodhisatta 969 and bodhisatta 969 says I will be

going to the mut toia Forest Monastery
in the franconian forest for three days
in July you only eat once a day there
and you have to follow the eight ethical
rules in your opinion how can I use my
free practice time effectively to make
progress in the Buddhist teachings well
um don't bring your phone or just keep
it turned off and probably the best
thing you can
do is um just be mindful as much as you
possibly can try to be mindful all day
you know when you're not sitting in
meditation don't just go back into
normal mode and just thinking all the
time or whatever it's just you know when

you're done meditating you have the

you're mindful of the intention to stand

up you're mindful of the int you're

mindful of your motions when you're

moving like if you're eating you eat

mindfully you know you're aware of the

sight of the food maybe the smell of the

food you're aware of the Motions of your

your hand as you're reaching for the

food you're aware of like the the

hardness and solidity of the spoon in

your hand you know you're aware of the

food coming to your mouth the intentions

involved you're aware of you know the

chewing and the flavor and just the the

textures as it turns into this goo in

your mouth you're you're aware of the

intention to swallow and the swallowing

just be aware of whatever is arising

just Sil no no not Silas what am I

saying it's uh

sad

Sadi man I'm forgetting the word Sadi is

mindfulness s

s so s is just full awareness so that's

when you you know when you turn your

head you're aware that you're turning

your head when you're reaching with your

arm you're aware that you're reaching

with your arm just be aware of

everything that you're doing to the

extent that you're able to do that just

be a just be mindful all the time and

that would be the best use of your three
days at the uh the forest Monastery and
of course just you know conscientiously
you know put your whole you know your
whole Spirit into it
take it very
seriously so and good luck with that and
I'm going to move on to the next
question here this is from extremely
rare bird and I got to blow my nose
again it's been like the last three q&as
in a row after talking for like an hour
and a half it gets to this point where I
can breathe in through my nostrils and
then it's like something plugs when I
try to breathe out through my nostrils
and it messes up when I'm

talking

anyways with that as an

introduction the next question is from

extremely rare bird an extremely rare

bird says do you think the Buddha really

hesitated to teach the dhamma I think it

may have been a sort of exciting add-on

to the story of his Enlightenment ha go

through all that effort eons of worked

supposedly to become a fully perfected

Buddha only to back out of his mission

in the end well before he was the Buddha

he wouldn't recall all of his past lives

anyway that that occurred on the night

of his Enlightenment when he recalled

all of his past lives and presumably

recalled you know all these eons of

working on his his

virtues

so let's see

oh yeah because I guess he would be

enlightened at this point anyway so

never mind just forget that I said that

part do you think the Buddha really

hesitated to teach the dhama I mean it

is possible I

think the hesitation to teach the dhama

may have been added to the story earlier

than the whole idea of the Buddha

striving for eons to perfect his virtu

so that he could become a sasam Buddha

which is just you know orders of

magnitude Beyond or ordinary enlightened

being that I mean it does make sense
that the Buddha hesitated to teach the D
when he because I mean he hesitated to
teach the dharm because he figured
nobody would understand padicha samua or
dependent cor rising and I mean he was
pretty much right I mean almost nobody
understands dependent Co
Rising but then according to the the The
Legend mahab Brahma himself comes down
from a high heaven realm and begs the
Buddha to start teaching this religion
because there will be some people who
understand picha sop and then the Buddha
looked around with his Clairvoyant
Divine eye and and realized yeah all

right there's some people that don't

understand

it so I mean it could have been a kind

of religious propaganda to have like the

highest deity for the the viic brahans

come down and gravel before the Budd bud

and beg him to start teaching

Buddhism but uh I can't understand that

the Buddha would hesitate to teach the

dama just going with the idea that most

people would not understand dependent

cor Rising because it's just too

subtle so I mean who can really know for

sure who can say for

sure uh even somebody who thinks that

they can look into the past and see what

the Buddha did maybe they're not even

looking into the right past or maybe

it's just you know their mind's playing

tricks on them or

something

so I mean in a way he wouldn't back out

of his

mission um I mean he would have been

just been a pea Buddha he would have

been a fully enlightened Buddha it's

just that he would be like a Hermit

Buddha so I mean whether his

mission you know over countless eons was

to become the founder of a religion I

don't think think that would be

motivating him nearly as much as just

the desire to become enlightened the

desire to know

reality but I mean it's nobody can

really say for sure to what extent these

ancient legends are based on fact I mean

you can't really know for

sure so I'm sorry to to answer that was

a kind of a nobody could really know

kind of a kind of an answer

but I mean that's just the way it is

nobody can really know so I'm just going

to move on to extremely rare birds next

question which is how was it like when

you first began to conceive of nibana

actually being a

reality I have often thought in the past

that nibana is too good to be true only

now my deeply ingrained skepticism and

suspicion is beginning to loosen its

grip on me well in my case it was a

little different it's like as a teenager

I started reading spiritual texts mainly

at first U texts by ROM Doss books by

ROM Doss I Grist for the mill was the

first ROM dos book I ever read and um it

just intuitively struck me as as

right so I mean it was inspiring to me

you know it got me all fired up on

Eastern

spirituality but

um yeah

but I mean I started to conceive of

nibana actually being a reality almost

as soon as I learned about nibana

existence you know it's like I started
reading this Eastern spirituality stuff
and just immediately it was just it
struck a cord with me you know it was
like this intuitive yes this is this is
this has got a lot of Truth in it you
know this is this is
right so yeah I mean it inspired me to
want to become a monk and renounce the
world at the age of
17 so yeah it was it was definitely uh
the whole experience of just being
turned on to Eastern spirituality at the
age of 17 really did have a
life-changing effect on
me um so I guess I answered that
question I hope I answered that question

so I'm just going to move on to the next
question which is the very last question
and it always takes me by surprise
so the very last question is if one
accepts rebirth as a possibility one
could see yungan archetypes as memories
of infinite past lives one has already
gone through because how else would we
recognize them or understand their
Dynamics within the whole if we haven't
experienced them to some degree before
what do you think does this make sense
well
rebirth I mean Young in archetypes as
memories of past lives I don't think
it's really that it's that good of a fit

because the way yungi and archetypes

work it's it's kind of like a symbolism

or like almost like dream

imagery so it's it's sort of

subconscious symbols that are shared by

all

people you know the the collective

unconscious as Yung called it

so I'm not sure that that would

necessarily work

if these yian archetypes were memories

of infinite past lives you know like

like like elves or little people as a

kind of paranormal entities that that

live in forest and live in forests and

mess with people sometimes um I don't

know

how belief in that sort of thing which
is very widespread in the human race
would be the result of individual past
life memories which would be
subconscious so I think it would be more
likely that yian archetypes would be
just a kind of dream symbol like similar
to dream symbolism you know like Sigman
Freud talked about dream symbolism about
how certain things if you dream about
them it has certain meanings for human
beings in general and it does seem to to
Bear out for me like dreaming about
water is dreaming about Spirit or
religion dreaming about being inside of
a building is often like a symbol of

being inside your own body your own personality like my father when he got old he said he started dreaming about being trapped in Old dilapidated buildings

so um yeah I don't think that that would necessarily follow from past life experiences that I just think that um the human mind mind is just evolved or constituted in in certain ways so that we all kind of think in the same kind of symbolic ways though at least there's a lot of overlap and so certain beliefs like belief in Bigfoot for example you know it's it's found all over the world you know it's found West Western Hemisphere Eastern Hemisphere just you

know all over the world there's people
that believe in something like Bigfoot
and I don't think that Bigfoot is some
species of un as yet undiscovered
primate that I mean Bigfoot you could
say is is a paranormal entity but also
it's like the the willingness to believe
in the sort of thing which then opens up
the door you know with enough faith that
you're actually able to perceive these
things even if they're coming through
from like another dimension like a
parallel universe nearby or
something that still
it's like this yian
archetype of of being like this is

already kind of allowing them to come
through because you know we have this
receptivity to that sort of
thing if that makes any sense and I hope
I haven't just butchered yian
psychology but it is my understanding
that that like yungan archetypes are
it's just a symbol based on just sort of
like common principles of human
psychology and subconscious psychology
that results in everyone sharing this
deep kind of symbolism and yeah I I
would I'm not inclined to attribute that
to past life memories just because the
past life memories would be on a
different order like along different
lines I

think I guess and so that was it I not
sure I even answer that question very
well other than kind of kind of giving
my reasons for not really following the
idea but uh that's it and so if you have
any questions if you've lasted this long
you get to this point you want to ask
questions then just include them in the
the comments below the video and like
And subscribe if you have not done so
already and uh be
happy and now I gotta stop recording

okay oh I gotta do

this okay hello and welcome to episode

99 of question and

answer I am your host P

basa and we got lots of questions we got

a merciless onslaught of questions today

more than 50 of them so it's going to

take a while I

think to say the least

East and I guess I should say that next

weekend probably will be Q&A number 100

and the plan is to do a live

stream so I'll probably be doing this

live like next Sunday at noon my time

which is Eastern time like the same as

New York time except I'm not in New York

so again so long as the next one I do is
100 which is now kind of thrown into
question because scientists have
discovered a new number called
bleen which lies in between six and
seven so if that's the case then the
next Q&A would be like number 91 or
something so I mean so long as the way
counting Works doesn't
change then next weekend we'll be number
100 and I'll be doing it live at noon on
Sunday
inshah the God's
willing so I guess I should just start
answering questions and the first
question is from the Proto sudo Monk and
he has titles to his question sometimes

so the first title is on celibacy and defensive strategies so the Proto sudo monk says I recall at one point you mentioned being no he didn't say that he said I recall at one point you mentioned using military tactics of retreating defense instead of offense as making progress in what Manner is spanking the puppy beneficial in contrast to celibacy being counterproductive without TMI I have generally found two causes one seems to be of biological nature simply after a long time it builds up you have said like a shotgun and two due to a sense impression seeing a woman meeting and

chatting with a woman Etc my personal strategy for keeping the eight precepts is to avoid anything beyond spanking the puppy because I think actual sex with a woman causes orders of magnitude more attachment and delusion the main reason is the endless fantasizing seems like a more distressed mental state than a minor Indulgence that actually makes you think I'm messed up there is a lot of work to do I need to meditate more I find that from the post nut Clarity vantage point the pursuit of sex immediately seems meaningless useless and will inevitably cause suffering as you see the muddled mind states of the addict but whilst in society it seems

like a desire that will always persist
my only real success with celibacy was
in total Solitude advice on celibacy
question mark
well now I scroll back up to the top of
this question and he does say something
that's not entirely accurate here let's
see he says he recalls at one point that
I mentioned using military tactics of
retreating defense instead of offense as
making progress well that's not exactly
what I was saying um it's more a
flexible defense rather than a rigid
defense and I remember reading in a book
on Military strategy that was discussing
like among other things World War II and

how Hitler was insisting on the Eastern
Front not to give up one inch of ground
he forced his generals to maintain a
totally rigid defense and not withdraw
not Retreat one
foot and some of his generals were
begging him please just let us do a
flexible defense then what then we can
like lure the enemy into traps or you
know just wait for them to be vulnerable
and then make a Counterattack that sort
of thing but he wouldn't do it so that
was that was the point I was making that
sometimes you do have to retreat a
little bit in order to avoid losing the
war
so then he's got two question marks one

is in what Manner is spanking the puppy

beneficial and uh the other one is at

the bottom

here advice on celibacy question mark

well

I did write a rather long two-part blog

post long ago which I think is

incorporated into my book Buddhist

ethics Buddhist practice maybe I should

check first and make sure there's a book

up here yeah just just a second

here let's see

here I just want to make sure that I'm

not false advertising or

anything see on lus and sys yeah it's

here page 40 in this book which uh you

can buy off Amazon so that would be my

long

detailed um discussion on celibacy and

the difficulties of celibacy and you

know what's the point and what maybe

isn't the point and all

that um

but I'll give a short answer here mainly

because we got a merciless onslaught of

questions so yeah I mean you can use

masturbation as a kind of pressure

relief valve although if you don't use

it as a pressure relief valve if you're

young and dumb and full of precious

bodily fluids and so forth that um I

mean it'll just happen spontaneously in

your

sleep so as a monk when I was a young
monk up until I was in my early to mid
40s I would have just a nocturnal
emission about every two
weeks at least every two
weeks so it's not like you're going to
like explode from internal pressure or
anything that there is just a natural
pressure release mechanism that goes on
um but it is true like when the Proto
sudo monk says that when he's from the
post nut Clarity vantage point the
pursuit of sex immediately seems
meaningless useless and will inevitably
cause suffering as you see the muddled
mind states of the addict well yeah I

mean the purpose of sex I mean there's
two main purposes of sex in human beings
well two main biological purposes let's
say I mean the main reason is it's it
feels really good but the reason why it
feels really good is you got two
evolutionary reasons or biological
reasons one of course is to make babies
to reproduce your DNA sequences and the
second is to strengthen a pair bond with
your mate ultimately for the purpose of
you know having babies and reproducing
your DNA sequences or at least
increasing the odds of that so if uh
neither one of those is really a
priority for you it's it's not on your
list of things to do then uh yeah I

think uh celibacy you know it's it's

certainly praised in Buddhism especially

terada Buddhism in tervada Buddhism it's

it's pretty much mandatory if you want

to become

enlightened although there is a certain

amount of ancient Indian cultural

conditioning that has been incorporated

into early Buddhism so um I do think it

is theoretically possible for a person

who is not celibate to become

enlightened although it is more

difficult it's definitely a higher

difficulty

setting

so advice on celibacy I mean

if you can do it go ahead and do it it's like the the New Testament where Jesus says there are three kinds of Unix those who are born Unix those who are made Unix and those who become Unix for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven and the the Third Kind is people who are celibate for Spiritual reasons and then right after that Jesus says it's not for everybody so I mean if you can do it and you think that's the right thing to do then you should go ahead and do it in which which case it may be a certain amount of spanking the puppy maybe like the lesser of two evils so to speak not that it's I mean not that playing with yourself is like literally

evil

but um you know it might be better than

just being horny all the time and

climbing the walls and like perving on

every attractive woman you see that sort

of thing because it really I mean it's

just built into US

humans some more than

others and there are times you can just

be like wanting to cry or howl like a

dog or climb the walls or all three

simultaneously if if you can manage it

just because you know you're just horny

as

hell and you know like Krishna mury says

it's like I Krishna mury was supposedly

enlightened you know some people say he
was he wasn't
celibate and he was saying you know it's
like I mean if you're going to be a lot
of people who are celibate probably most
people who are celibate for Spiritual
reasons are just frustrated and horny
and
neurotic so I mean if you're really
going to be C celibate then you have to
be celibate in a p as pure of a way as
possible and there's a strange suta I
think in the angur and Naya given a list
of ways that amongst celibacy or his
Brahma charia are not pure and it's I
don't remember the whole list but some
of them are kind of sad like a monk who

will hide behind a wall and listen to a woman singing or talking or laughing or crying or he'll like spy on women when they're bathing you know like in in a public bathing Ford like in Ancient India so I mean things like that you know he just looks deeply into woman's eyes when he's talking to her just to get the pleasure from that or he just you know indulges in uh uh certain gallantries that would be inappropriate for someone who really is strictly celibate and getting back to Jesus of Nazareth he is famous famously said that any man who looks at a woman with lust is already has already committed

adultery with her in his

heart

so it's one thing just to be forcibly

celibate um because you think you ought

to be

and it's it's a completely other thing

just to have no desire for sex I mean if

you're just burning with

desire then I mean sometimes a little

pressure release may be beneficial it

may help

you and then getting back to New

Testament again this isn't Jesus I think

this is Paul Tarsus he says uh um what

is it it's better to marry than to burn

and the burning is with

desire so again if you can be celibate

without just being like just frustrated
and horny and and like neurotic about it
then go ahead and uh it may be that
spanking the puppy from time to time is
a kind of uh therapy or something that
just releases the pressure and and just
kind of it's pushes reset on the
hormones to some
degree but if you want my like elaborate
at length description you do best to
find it in page 40 of this
book and I'm just going to move on to
the Proto suud Mon's next
question the title of which
is doesn't include the cough the title
of which is slavery early retirement or

monkhood and then he says in a video
with Bon G the Australian monk that
barely let you speak you spoke about
Buddhism in the west his advice was to
make a load of money and then follow the
dama fulltime I just started my first
job at 23 earning
€1,000 per month it is clear that I am a
slave and will be a slave until
retirement age if I have a family I will
be most definite I will most definitely
be a slave I have formulated a plan
possibly means working 80 hours a week
maybe two jobs so I can save up money
until age 40 to 50 working hard for 10
to 30 years rough estimate after the big
sacrifice I think I could retire to

Thailand after finding a way to get permanent residence then I could spend lots of time at the monastery get a feel and make the decision whether monk hood is adequate or not until then until I have the experience I can't make the decision of total renunciation the alternative living a simple life in the west working Norm Al slavery until retirement having to deal with living around diluted beings never able to escape the cultural conditioning and social conventions Enlightenment seems impossible here I struggled to keep the five precepts in this atmosphere the closest to a

spiritual Community I have found in the west are the hedonist big booty mils at the yoga studio which has not been productive for the dhama besides helping getting into full Lotus position in the West only the tantric path exists essentially I see only two options working my entire life in the west no spiritual Community going against the grain practicing dhama as a solitary lay person or work hard for one to three decades in the west retire move to Thailand find a spiritual Community a supportive environment creating the causes and conditions for the possibility of monkhood the Buddha didn't advise postponing the spiritual

life until old age but I see it more as creating the optimal environment for the spiritual life if I am playing samsara on a higher difficulty setting with the intention of a future full-time dham practice do you think this is a wise plan or will working too much hinder any spiritual progress

well it does help the spiritual your spiritual Endeavors if you are either one using your work as a dama practice or two you're in you're in the Leisure Class and don't have to work for a living at least you don't have to work very hard so that you have a lot of

spare time for meditation and
contemplation and study and so
forth um it does seem that there is a
possibility here that uh the Proto sudo
Monk Is overlooking and that is finding
a like a dhama community in the west and
finding a dama community in the west
does have certain advantages for one
thing there's no culture barrier like if
you go to Thailand and try to join a
community there you may find that the
people there are very culturally
conditioned into a culture that you
weren't cult culturally conditioned into
and there's always going to be this
barrier and you're just not going to see
eye to eye you won't be able to

communicate deeply in in a lot of cases
most cases just because of the
informantion culture barrier stop it we
got a dog having a weird dream back
there so
um so I mean that is that would be like
a third option is you find yourself a
spiritual community in the west
somewhere among fellow westerners who
for the most part on average take dham
more seriously than Asians who are just
going with the flow you know they're
just following along with the mainstream
of their culture uh to some
degree and uh you know there'd be less
of a of a culture barrier a

communication barrier between you so I
mean that would be a possibility also
there must be I mean I know for a fact
that there are like monasteries and
other like ashram type places in Europe
I assume the protos sudo monk is living
in Europe because he's earning his
salary in
Euros so that would be another thing too
and I mean you could just do some
investigation you know you can look
around just ask around try and find
where there are like spiritual
communities monasteries in Europe and
it's possible that you could just get
kind of a extremely low-paying or
volunteer job as like a monastery

attendant you know cooking for the monks and driving them around that sort of thing you'd make enough to live on and while you were there then you could see for yourself whether that kind of Lifestyle would really work for you so that's a possibility with regard to work being slavery I mean I've never really seen it that way you know there are people that say that having a job is slavery but that's just the curse of Adam getting back to the the Bible again it's the curse of Adam you know we have to uh we have to uh what is it earn our bread by the sweat of our brow and all because they ate that

fruit so we all have to work for a

living even a monk I mean he's got to if

he's a conscientious monk he's got to do

dhama practice for a living in addition

to the Chop would carry water

stuff

so um oh getting back to it yeah work I

don't consider work really to be slavery

I mean you can run away without being

hunted down and having like the front

half of your foot cut off that kind of

thing so I mean you

can go and live under a bridge or

something you could go and renounce the

world

somewhere so I don't really consider I

mean if figuratively you can call

working hard slavery working like slaves

or something but uh I'm just kind of

weird I don't think that having to pay

taxes is is really theft either I mean

it could arguably be called theft but in

my case

anyway I I just voluntarily or I

willingly pay my

taxes so let's see did I answer this

question where is the question

mark I think it's towards the end here

which is appropriate is it is better

when a long question has the question

mark at the end than at the beginning

so yeah Proto monks SE only two options

but there you do have more options than

that I mean there there are lots of options so let's see the two options he envisions working his entire life in the west no spiritual Community going against the grain practicing dhama as a solitary lay person yeah I can relate to that I mean you can have like a spiritual Community online at least you can look around try and find a good dhama Center which might be you know a long ways away so you might not be able to go there like on a weekly basis or anything just because they're they're scarce um and then most of the dama places in the west are like you know like gay rainbow Buddhism that really is uh more cultural Marxism than actual

Dharma or at least a lot of those places

are

so and then the other option is work

hard for one to three decades in the

west retire move to Thailand find a

spiritual Community a supportive

environment creating the causes and

conditions for the possibility of Monk

Hood yeah I mean it might work for you

if you if you like hot weather and just

being surrounded by people of a

different culture than

you um the spiritual Community you might

actually

find uh as good or better of a spiritual

Community one that is more suited to to

a Westerner in the west that is

possible um one other disadvantage of

waiting to your older before you ordain

is in know um I mean the Burmese put it

very succinctly in a in a saying which

is uh

do which means a monk who is ordained

when he's older is difficult to admonish

difficult to teach a poat is hard to

talk

to because you just get more set in your

ways you know it's it's like every day

you put off really dedicating your life

to dhama you lose two days because you

lose one day of your lifespan plus

you've got one more day of accumulated

habits of being set in your ways that

have to be

overcome so I mean 10 years that's I I

kind of did the same thing when I was 17

I made the aspiration of renouncing the

world and I did it when I was

27

so I was actually ah Hadad of schedule I

had I had the year I had 30 as a

deadline for having renounce the world

and uh I did it a few years

early um let's see what is the question

though oh here's here's two question

marks towards the end here if I am

playing samsara on a higher difficulty

setting with the intention of a future

full-time Dharma practice do you think

this is a wise plan so that was Plan B I
think where or the second plan of
working his ass off for 10 to 30
years and then moving to Thailand with
the money but things don't always work
out according to plan see I mean you you
can't really rely on this plan of
working your butt off for 10 to 30 years
and then moving on to Thailand I mean
who knows Thailand might be in a state
of political chaos at that time you know
it happens every once in a while like
the
Army stages a coup or something or you
know who knows what your health is going
to be doing who knows what just general
World situation is going to be like 30

years from

now so putting it off I mean there is

that disadvantage I mean ultimately

you've got to follow your own heart just

follow your own deepest intuition as to

what you want to do and somebody who has

never met you before might not be able

to give you as good of advice as just

deep introspection and just waiting for

an answer you know just don't just act

on you know intellectual thoughts and

planning and so forth but just kind of

be as empty as you can peaceful as you

can and just wait for the right answer

to to hit

you and you're more likely to do the

right thing that way and looks like you
you're you're playing the long game so
you're going to have have uh time to
wait for the right answer to come to
you so still though I mean I would keep
my eyes open and try to find spiritual
communities because some of these
spiritual communities I mean they're not
necessarily terraa Buddhist but they're
you know like eclectic spiritual
communities where you've got very
serious DH practitioners living in
someplace that isn't advertised you
don't find it in magazines they don't
have a website maybe and so it may take
a certain amount of
Investigation to find you know there's

this commune of people like dedicated to
living a spiritual life on their own
terms or whatever you I mean whether
they're gonna there's going to be a guru
there or something I have no idea but
different places differ but there are
places like that out there and uh if
your karma is ripe for it you'll find it
you know when the when the the student
is ready the teacher will come is Hindu
saying I
think so I guess I kind of answered that
question
um yeah working too much it it will
accumulate just a few Decades of habits
and

just habits of mind as well as as as
like outward behavioral habits that uh I
mean there is some wisdom in the
Terrible about a Buddhist idea that you
know you shouldn't put it off like in
Hinduism that's the way you do it is
like you go through the four like ashama
dharmas where you start off as the
celibate brahmachari the student the
religious student and then you become
the householder and then you you become
like the forest dweller after your kids
are grown you know you don't your wife
is no longer of reproductive age and you
you just go out into the forest possibly
take your wife with you live in a Hut in
the forest and then you you want to go

full blast and you become the sasi and I mean you just you become like the the early Indian Buddhist monks and just wander around homeless and beg for your food maybe that when you're a forest dweller your grown children are the ones who bring you your food and and take care of you and so forth to the extent that you need taken care of but in Buddhism this you just don't do that it's like as soon as you're able you're encouraged to renounce the world but of course it doesn't work for everybody so you have to know yourself well enough to know whether or not that will work and the future is unpredictable things

rarely turn out the way that they are
expected to turn
out and that's not really a qu it's not
really a full answer because I can't
really give a full answer because I
don't know the details of the protos
sudo monst life better than he does and
so I'm just kind of giving some extra
information that maybe you can draw from
as a resource and in the meantime or
right now I guess I'm going to move on
to the next question which is from bray
and Bray says what are your thoughts on
Alchemy do you think that Alchemists
like Nicholas Flamel and ful canelli or
ful cani truly discovered the secret of
immortality and the ability to transmute

base medals into gold well it's seems
like if Nicholas Flamel truly discovered
the secret of immortality that he'd be
alive right
now you'd think and he probably died of
old age like everybody else has died of
old age or maybe there's you know you
got the ascended masters living in the
Himalayas somewhere that are you know
like a million years old or let's just
say a thousand let's take the
conservative estimate of a thousand
years
old but for the most part I think
Alchemy it was based on certain
misunderstandings like trying to

transmute base Metals into gold by using
chemical
means isn't going to work because you
have to actually transform the
individual atoms and the only way like a
medieval Alchemist could do that would
be through psychic
means so it wouldn't be so much Alchemy
as just well I guess it would kind of be
Alchemy and there are Alchemists to this
day in Burma I knew a monk who was a
disciple of an alchemist Monk and
according to this this monk that I knew
his teacher The Alchemist Master could
just point at things and turn them into
gold not really appropriate for a monk
monks aren't supposed to handle

gold but I mean he was he did better
than Midas midus actually had to touch
the stuff in order to turn into
gold but if that sort of thing really
does happen it's happening through
psychic powers and not through any kind
of like chemical reactions or
anything so Alchemy I mean I've read
some of Carl Young's descriptions of
what stuff Alchemists did and I mean
this is going to be like a super long
Q&A this might be the longest one ever
but uh I remember Carl Young talking
about how there was some it was like an
alchemical temple in the near East or
something and there was this Brotherhood

of Alchemists and they were waiting for a certain kind of person I think they had to be blonde with blue eyes or something to enter the temple and then they would catch them and then they would keep them in a tank full of some kind of oil I think it was sesame oil and they would feed them only figs that were soaked in sesame oil until their whole body became like waxy and almost translucent and then after they got to that point they would rip their head off not just cut it off they would pull it off and then they would like they pack it they might have done some kind of like embalming to it but it was already pretty much embalmed from soaking in oil

all the time and then they would pack it in like cotton wool put it in a niche in this Al Cove of the temple and then use it for like fortune telling you know somehow it would still be talking or maybe you'd have some priest in a trans or something that could hear it talk when nobody else could hear it talk that kind of thing so there's all kinds of I mean it was sort of Proto like astrology is like Proto astronomy and a lot of it was based on just not understanding how things
work um and a lot of it was just the cultivation of psychic powers which probably would be the most effective

aspect of C Alchemy other than just
learning some basic chemical reactions
learning how to make sulfuric acid or
learning how to make metallic Mercury
that kind of thing that was you know
chemistry was sort of based on the more
legit or the more chemical findings of
these
Alchemists but
uh yeah I don't think that they
discovered the secret of immortality or
the ability to trans transmute base
medals into gold other otherwise there'd
be a lot of immortal people walking
around with lots and lots of gold on
them and you just don't see that I mean
it may be very few people have lived

longer than 200 years just through being
in harmony with the da or some some kind
of spiritual practice and likewise it
may be that some people have been able
to transmute base Metals into gold just
like our friend Jesus of Nazareth
supposedly transmuted water into wine I
mean it would be a psychic thing
it would be like vulgarly referred to as
a miracle and not some sort of cookbook
practice that you
do and with that I'm going to move on to
the next question this is from Jeffrey
and Jeffrey says do you know anything
about Thor Freya and Valhalla well I
know Thor was a Germanic God of Thunder

he wielded the hammer he got turned into

a

superhero uh Marvel Comics which then

got turned into increasingly woke movies

with like black vrees and so

forth um Freya I think um there's

there's two Germanic deities with

similar names I can't remember if Freya

was the the female goddess of love and

beauty sort of like the the Germanic

Venus that Friday is named after or

whether it was a male with a similar

name I I don't I've never really studied

Germanic Germanic uh don't want to call

it mythology polytheism you know the

Germanic Pantheon I've never really

studied it much you know as a kid like a

teenager I read like bullfinch's

mythology that had a section about

Germanic U

mythology um but Valhalla I mean I know

enough about Valhalla or wallhalla to

know that you know it's like the the

vrees would go out and search the

battlefields for slain Heroes that died

valiantly and then they would bring

their spirit

back to Valhalla which was a like a big

feasting Hall I mean it kind of reminds

me of like the feasting Hall in B

wolf where you know they'd be drinking

meat and and just having a good time

partying

essentially and that's a very crude
understanding I am sure I think anyone
who really knows this stuff thoroughly
and takes it seriously could correct me
on all sorts of things and could just
provide lots more information than I do
but with regard to
polytheism the polytheism that I've most
been interested in of course first of
all you got Indian
polytheism um Buddhism has got some
small G gods in it and then also
classical like Greco Roman polytheism so
I've been more interested in like Apollo
and hephestos and Athena than in
Germanic Gods I don't know why that is
Maybe past lives I was more more

religious as like a Greco Roman than I
was as a Germanic tribesman or
something but I really don't know that
much about them so I'm going to move on
the next question here this is from game
fap and game fap says have you ever been
recognized on the streets before has any
kid ever said look Mom it's the dankest
Buddhist on the interwebs Poo basa also
how come in every video do you you do
with Brian R you start off by saying
yeah Hil Brian well that's two questions
I got to have to separate
these so we got way more than 50
questions here first question that from
game fap have I ever been ever been

recognized on the streets um not as a lay person as a monk sometimes I would get recognized on the street especially in Burma where I was semi I remember once um being invited to somebody's house I mean it was another Monk I was with got invited to their house and he brought me with him and there was a picture of me on their altar excuse me I just said excuse me because I was waving my hand around and hit the lamp excuse me Mr

Lamp and there they had a picture of me on the Altar and they they definitely knew who I was I mean there was couple books and like magazine articles and stuff written about me there but here

especially in South Carolina which is in the Bible Belt there aren't a whole lot of Buddhist around and so it would be pretty unusual let's I'm working at a sheet metal shop and some construction worker comes to pick up an order it's like whoa you used to be a monk I've seen your YouTube videos it's never happened I'm just not that famous in in America anymore I mean I never was all that famous but it's uh probably gone down a bit since I stopped being a monk so I guess I'll just move on to game F second question and how come in every video you do with Brian Rue you start off by saying yeah hail Brian um

well I I hail Brian he know hail

Brian it's just the thing to do it's the

appropriate means of hailing Brian Ru

you say hail Brian and the yeah at the

beginning I think he's just like

welcoming me to his show and I'm just

kind of agreeing or you know like

acknowledging his welcome by saying

yeah so I guess I answered that question

and so I'm going to move on to the next

question which is from Mr Prav and Mr

pronav says well isn't it that most

people wind up in lower Plains not in

human realm and about the simile of a

turtle in the plank which shows how hard

it is to gain a human rebirth okay this

is in response to um I think it was the

maybe the previous Q&A where I was
talking about how I mean if you die with
a human mind you probably going to be
human if you die with a Godlike mind
you're going to be reborn as a God if
you die with an animalistic mind or a
demonic mind you're more likely to be
reborn as an animal or a demon that kind
of
thing and I did say that most people are
reborn as people
because being people as a general rule
we have human minds and so our karma is
like human Karma with human stuff that
needs to be resolved and so we generally
wind up being a human

again and it's relatively difficult to

move to move

upwards um and he he refers to the

simile of the turtle and the plank but

the purpose I might as well mention the

simile of the turtle and uh it's a yoke

rather than a plank it's I mean it's

kind of like a toilet seat it was a

thing that went around like the the

horse or the Bullock's neck when it was

pulling a plow or a a like a Chariot or

something and uh so you've got this this

yoke or it's like a toilet seat it's

call it a toilet seat you got this

toilet seat floating around on the

surface of the ocean and once every

hundred years a big sea turtle will come

up for air just once every hundred years
it comes up for air and takes a breath
and then goes back down for another 100
years and according to the
suta that the odds of an
animal being reborn as a human are I
mean it's going to take longer than for
the turtle swimming through the world's
oceans to just through random chance
come up with its head right up through
the middle of that toilet seat or the
Yoke so I mean the simile is not with
regard to the difficulty of getting
human birth once you're already a human
it's the difficulty of getting a human
birth for an animal because it's got

animalistic Karma it really doesn't have much human Karma it has to be really an outstanding animal that has done outstanding Karma and from the Buddhist point of view and I don't really accept this but from a Buddhist point of view animals really can't earn Merit but I mean there there's exceptions you know there's the frog that went to heaven and all this but it's it's supposed to be much more difficult for an animal to earn Merit but I do think that animals can earn

Merit um you know it's going to be animal Merit it's going to be kind of a smaller scale than human Merit as a general rule you know the best human is

better than the best dog for example

hope I didn't just offend dog lovers out

there well it's like the worst human is

worse than the worst dog the best human

is better than the best dog it's just

we've got more variation our bell-shaped

curve is much broader

so yeah I mean mainly once once you're

in the animal realm it's very difficult

to get out of the animal realm that's

the main point of uh of that sua of that

simile

so but once you're a human chances are

if you are reborn you will be reborn as

as another human just because your karma

is predominantly

human so I'm just going to move on to Mr prom's next question here which is what does the word bana mean could it be translated as meditation and how different is it from somebody or jna well bana literally means something like becoming you know B is existence or being and balana is sort of like a present
participle um turned into a noun so it's becoming or being
although um in Buddhism It generally means something more like development or cultivation so bana means something like mental cultivation which is has become pretty much of a a synonym for meditation so it means meditation in

general it's it's different from samade

or Janna samade is a certain it's a

certain mental state of concentration

that you strengthen you cultivate that

when you practice meditation and Janna

of course

is it's the controversial term of the

four stages of meditation or the four

stages of

absorption and I shouldn't uh spend a

lot of time discussing that because as I

say we got a merciless onslaught of

questions today so the word bana

literally means something I mean

literally it means like being or

becoming but it it it pretty much means

development or cultivation as as um a a Buddhist jargon term and then the cultivation is mental cultivation which primarily means
meditation and samade is just an aspect of meditation Janna is like a goal of meditation or certain levels of meditation so I mean they're all they all overlap but they do not have the same meaning and so I'm going to move into the next question which is from Fred and Fred says do Brahman and neana have something in common yeah they have a lot in common in fact I would go so far as to say that a vedantist like shankara um what he was calling Brahman is what a Buddhist would call nibana or

at least they're both attempting to
describe the ultimate the ultimate
state so the vdst Hindus call it Brahman
or or better yet Nuna Brahman which is
like Ultimate Reality which which has no
discernible
characteristics and the Buddhists call
it nibana but the main difference is
that Brahman is and nibana kind of isn't
I mean it's I mean I've discussed this
many times before where niana or the
absolute is just completely off the
scale it's it really The Duality of is
and isn't do not apply that is and isn't
are invalid to say that nibana is is
invalid to say that it isn't is invalid

to say that is and isn't is invalid to say that it neither is nor isn't is invalid so the Hindus or the vedantists have reified the absolute and calling it an it it exists I mean when you get into the more subtle philosophy you know they kind of back off from that because I mean like Nuna Brahman is has no discernable characteristics so I mean how how does something exist if it has no discernable characteristics has no qualities so it's two attempts at describing the same ultimate State and the the Hindus with Brahman are coming from more from the side of is and the Buddhists with neana are coming more from the side of isn't although

ultimately the the whole duality of is

and isn't does not apply to the absolute

that's just some

saric perceptions this

distinctions papancha if you

will so I'll just move on to Fred's next

question here which was which is was

aija always there before time and for

those of you who are unfamiliar with

Sanskrit and poly terminology aija means

ignorance ignorance of reality so it's

kind of a synonym for

delusion and it wasn't always there

before time well I mean there was no

Before

Time time itself is like a a perceptual

construct so I mean ignorance also is

like a perceptual construct so they're

pretty much simultaneous aija and time I

mean I don't think you're gonna have

time without

aija and uh I guess you could have aija

without time but the time is is just

kind of built into the system it's part

of the uncarved block of

marble and it's AA that is trying to

identify individual statues contained

within the uncarved block of marble and

thinking that those statues are

real but uh you're not going to have any

kind of perceptual change without

time so I I just there is no beginning

there was there is no before time or

before aij or before samsara because
samsara the potential for samsara is
always there and so it's always been
there it always will be there so aija
and the perception of time will always
exist there's not going to be any
liberation of all beings because the
possibility of these beings that don't
really exist anyway other than in
potential
form I mean that potential is always
going to be
there so I guess I answer that question
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question which is from Joe do and Joe do
says you mentioned that you think the

Buddha might have had combat training
what credible Source States this I've
never heard it mentioned from any other
teacher as far as teachings from the
sutas from what I could find there is
only one book written by some lady in
the 2000s that states this doesn't
surprise me that someone out there would
try to link the Buddha to put a stain on
his peaceful image with thoughts of a
possible training in violence certain
people want war associated in everything
from what I know the Buddha was
sheltered by his father from the outside
world do you think such speculation
could be bad karma um no I mean going
with tradition Buddhist tradition the

Buddha was a chhatria which was the
warrior cast The Warrior and ruling cast
of India or the warrior and ruling Varna
the class the hereditary class so um
according to tradition anyway the Buddha
was born into the warrior class and he
was somewhat of an aristocrat so
naturally as a boy he would have
received certain trainings like archery
horsemanship you know like just a
certain amount of strategy that kind of
stuff they would have just been part of
his his education assuming that he
really was of the chatri of the shat
Varna so I mean there are
stories uh I think they're mostly

commentarial about how like uh I vaguely
remember some story about how
David I mean it's like young sidarta and
his cousin David were out shooting like
target practice and David sees a bird
flying by so he just turns and shoots
the bird and then it falls to the ground
and then the Buddha the young sidarta
who's going to become the Buddha out of
compassion he goes and protects the bird
and won't give it to dadat and won't let
dadat finish it off that kind of
thing so assuming that the tradition is
right that the Buddha was born into the
warrior class then in all likelihood he
did receive a certain amount of
Education with regard to the use of

weapons and horsemanship and strategy

and and stuff like

that so but he renounced

it so I mean it's not really a stain on

his character or anything Ian he was

just born into

it so and it was ancient times so I mean

most civilizations that have

survived um long enough to be recognized

by history have not been

pacifistic so it wouldn't surprise me if

he did receive a certain amount of

training I mean it wouldn't surprise me

if when he was a young boy he actually

did stuff like shooting birds with

arrows that kind of thing I'm not saying

that he did I'm just saying it wouldn't

surprise me if he did because boys do

that kind of stuff you're out Target

practicing you see a some bird fly by or

something you might just take a shot at

it who

knows so anyways I'm just going to move

on to the next question this is from C

AC inad

zida I'm checking to see what the time

is here yeah we're almost an hour

already by

golly it's a good thing that some people

like watching long

videos because this one's going to be

kind of a long one I think anyways covac

and CAD zida says Buddha mentioned

ugliness and poverty is a result of Bad
Karma what about manism and
manism based on this link that he sent
is about being a short
guy and I mean if if a guy is short and
it doesn't cause him any problems he
doesn't receive any flak for it or
anything maybe it's maybe he's a pygmy
where shortness is valued if you're too
tall you get kicked out of the tribe
that kind of thing then that might be
good karma but if if he gets like teased
because of it or you know he just
catches hell because of it you know he's
he short then yeah there' be some Karma
involved because I mean karma is

involved according to abidal philosophy
anyway with regard to everything you
experience every sensation you
experience every feeling you feel is the
fruition of karma at least to some
degree so if you're short then yeah it's
going to be as a result of your karma
and if your shortness is causing
you more unpleasantness than
pleasantness I mean I mean there are
certain advantages to being short I mean
if it if it starts raining you're the
last person to get wet hardly ever bump
your head on stuff unless maybe you're
sweeping under the kitchen table or some
such
so

yeah so the answer to that is uh what I
just said and I'm going to move on to uh
SE action CAD Z's next question here and
I do uh appreciate SE action cot z9 not
providing me with videos to watch or
long essays to read with like what is
your reaction to this on this
Q&A so anyways his next question is what
is your personal favorite story
narrative from the Buddhist tradition
for example one might enjoy the story of
a bodh satva killing a woman out of
compassion to prevent her from killing a
fly due to how absurd it is or the story
of Maha mogana going to the various hell
to find his dead mother well probably my

two favorite stories in the text would be the story of the bahuta that made a a pretty strong impression on me as a as a junior monk so much so that um my first blog was the bajah blog or as I wanted to call it that I think that was like the the website the Bahia blog blogspot.com which is now defunct um and then the outsider is is my new blog and and The Outsider is like the literal translation of the name bahya so the story of Baha who was a non- Buddhist aesthetic he wore a garment made out of tree bark although it was probably like the fibrous inner bark That Was Then woven into a kind of burlap or

something and uh he thought that he I mean he was he had a lot of respect from people he lived on the the west coast of India and was getting a lot of respect from people and was starting to think that maybe he was enlightened and then a Dava a deity small G God who had formerly been a relative of his came to him and said you're not fully enlightened but there is this fully enlightened being called godma Buddha who lives you know in the Ganges Valley Way the hell over by magada and um he he's he's the real deal so then immediately bajia was so moved by this that he just packed his stuff and just

took off walking just stopped

just enough to sleep every night and

then just get up early the next morning

just keep walking until he finds the

Buddha and he finds the Buddha while the

Buddha is going for alms I think in the

in the city of sawati and he begs him

you know teach me dhama and the Buddha

says now is not appropriate time I'm

walking for alms but Bahia says you

don't know when you're going to die in

this world I please teach me now so then

finally the Buddha teaches him this very

zen-like teaching which then causes

Bahia who is very ripe and really ready

for it to just he becomes enlightened

and then immediately afterwards he gets

trampled to death by a young cow and
then the Buddha has him cremated as
though he were a fully ordained monk
even though he wasn't really um he
wasn't an ordained monk at all I mean
technically he wasn't even a
Buddhist so that's one of my favorite
stories it's udon 110 if you want to
read the original and also just the the
godas sua is is really it's one of my
favorites stories i' I've described that
before and I've translated it I think
it's in my first book uh essays in terot
of Buddhism about Goa who committed
suicide and became enlightened at the
moment of committing suicide there's a

lot more to it than that there's some
weird stuff about the mara the the evil
one just looking like a Mist who's
moving across the moving across the
ground and then the Buddha points this
out to the monks when they go to cremate
godic who was lying there dead because
he committed suicide
and he said you see that mist moving
back and forth across the ground there
that's Mara the evil one looking for the
spirit of godika but he's not going to
find it because the consciousness of
Goda is now
unmanifest which is uh kind of an
interesting and controversial way of
describing Enlightenment un unmanifest

Consciousness so anyways those are like
my two favorites I guess the Bahia sua
has been one of my favorites for a
longer period of time and has had more
of a an effect on my my personality or
outlook on life or whatever so I'm just
going to move on to the next question
this is also from covac and CI
Z and he says can you please explain
what all these positions mean when it
says something exists doesn't exist both
exists and doesn't exist and neither
exists nor doesn't exist maybe using an
example when each of these cases does
apply would help understanding what they
mean well I mean it doesn't even really

matter what they mean because it

technically is ruling out all

possibilities all logical possibilities

you know you've got a you've got not a

you've got a and not a you've got

neither a nor not a and none of those

apply to certain

questions like does a tataga exist after

death or

um well that that's good enough for now

but

uh see what all these positions

mean um those those four four positions

are applied throughout nagar's mul

majara I think the very first question

he

addresses is um is a is an effect the

same as the cause which caused it and he rules out yes he rules out no he rules out yes and no he rules out neither yes nor

no I think he rules out yes um is the cause and the effect the same because there wouldn't be any change at least uh I mean that's kind of the argument he uses you know it'd be the same I mean you wouldn't differentiate them but if they were different then he was saying that the the effect doesn't even need the cause if they're not the same I mean it's it's sort of a it's not really sophisticated logic in my opinion there are logical ways of answering the

question but um then he he rules out yes
and no because that's just kind of
meaningless neither yes nor no also is
just kind of illogical and meaningless
too
so but getting back to something exists
or doesn't exist both does and doesn't
exist well I guess a good example would
be you know the Daga after death or or
nibana itself really um
it doesn't really exist because I mean
it's just infinite and formless but it
can't say that it doesn't exist
either um I mean trying to trying to
even explain the existence or
non-existence of nibana or the absolute
or the enlightened being after death or

whatever he's just sort of a brain
warper but I mean ultimately the point
is that it doesn't even matter what the
meaning is because no matter what
meaning you plug into that it's the same
it's just ruling out all logical
possibilities
so I suppose maybe I could have studied
up for this so I could give a like a a
knowledgeable discourse on what exactly
it means to say that something exists or
doesn't exist but I mean the exist
existence and non-existence are both
like mental States they're they're
artifacts of
perception and you're dealing with

something that that in reality is beyond perception and so all these different dichotomies or different categories just don't apply to reality they apply only to these this virtual reality of perception and I didn't answer that very well I suppose but it's time to move on to the next question this is from mooners and mooners says can you look into the online Hindu YouTube Community apparently there are individuals such as ABI chavda sham Sharma and Rajiv Malhotra who claim that slavery didn't exist in Ancient India cast was a Portuguese invention and that the indo-europeans came out of India there are millions of people who watch and

believe this nonsense and we need people
to point this out well the only Hindu
that I ever watch on YouTube
occasionally not very often probably
less than once a month is I don't even
remember his name but he is the one who
calls Hinduism sonat
Dharma and I've been I was when I was a
monk I was compared to him sometimes I
was I was sort of like the Buddhist
version of him or
something um but I don't remember him
saying putting forth any of these three
positions that slavery didn't exist in
Ancient India well it pretty obviously
did like in the ancient Buddhist text

there's actually rules saying that you
can donate slaves to a monastery
I mean this probably doesn't go all the
way back to the
Buddha but uh like even in classical
Sanskrit um like drama I'm pretty sure
you've got like the the smartass slave
girl is like the stock was it like a
stock character in these
plays but I mean probably what the
Hindus some of these Hindus are saying
is that the word daa doesn't really mean
slave it means something else I saw this
one argument that there were no slaves
in Ancient India because daa can't mean
slave because daa is an ethnicity it was
like the darker skinned Aboriginal

people like mostly dravidians I guess
that existed in
India as opposed to the Indo Arians who
according to most archaeologists invaded
Northwestern India in around 1500 BC or
so but I mean you could say the same
with regard to England English that you
could say well there no there's no
slaves in English because the word slave
is itself just a Corruption of the word
slav which is an
ethnicity so I mean in
English slav became the word for slave
because the slaves were a an ethnicity
that was enslaved a lot in like early
Medieval Europe and it's the same with

Dasa in in India that it was an
ethnicity that was primarily the the
ones that were
enslaved so I mean they might just say
that doop came to mean servant but the
the evidence really doesn't support that
and mainly some these these same people
here they're starting off with this idea
that India is just the greatest it's
it's just the This Magnificent
miraculous enlightened culture that
never had slavery and and never had a
real cast system and it's it's been
around for thousands and thousands and
thousands tens of thousands hundreds of
thousands of years and that all the
European culture came from India and the

only people that actually believe this
stuff are Indians or westerners who have
converted to Hinduism and are just
really on the bandwagon and believe what
they're told from the
Indians so yeah it's pretty obviously
that pretty obvious that there were
slaves there was obviously a cast system
I mean the Buddha himself was considered
to be of the chhatria cast or class you
know there I mean ancient poly Texs
clearly mention brahans chatas vishas
and
sudras so how could the Portuguese have
invented that before the Portuguese
existed and the idea that the

indo-europeans came out of India it's a fringe theory that is believed almost entirely by the same two groups I just mentioned just like chauvinistic Indians who think that you know everything great came from India and Western converts to Hinduism who are just accepting the dogma and just believing it because that's what they're told but the evidence does suggest the indo-europeans probably came from like the pontic steps you know it's like the the steps in South see what is it Southeastern Europe you know north of the the black and Caspian Seas where the Caucasus Mountains coincidentally are and

uh that you know it started off as like

the yam NAA civilization and you know

they were the like the kurgans the like

the the the

chieftain would have these big burial

mounds to honor them and that was what

eventually evolved into the Buddhist

pagot or

stupa you know it's just like a a later

manifestation of these Proto

indoeuropean burial Mount

kurgans so I mean people are going to

believe whatever they want to believe

you know people are going to believe

that you know the moon landing was faked

and other people believe that the moon

actually

exists and I mean people are just going

to believe all kinds of stuff and

there's you know if there they're

insisting upon it like you're talking to

a Jehovah's Witness I mean good luck

trying to persuade him that some of the

stuff that the Jehovah's Witnesses

believe is just kind of silly actually

good luck trying to explain that to them

they're not going to hear it they're

just going to get offended or they're

just going to just walk away or

whatever so you're just going to have to

uh study the evidence as best you can

and make up your mind as best you can or

if you're going to be a skeptic in the

classical just suspend judgment and

admit that you don't

know so I can say all this without

actually looking into the Hindu online

YouTube community so I'm just going to

move on to the next question this is

from

scolin or

skaden and this is another one of these

um kind of a a short question that's

expanded into a long question and mean

and this is this has the question mark

at the beginning this the first sentence

here is actually the question the rest

is like commentary to the question so

skine says would you kindly explain

hypnotism question mark and then he's
got like these these bullet points it
has multiple theories which contradict
each other animal magnetism Neurosis
Theory suggestion Theory dot dot dot it
can be either mental or
physical it can be achieved through each
of the five senses except smell and
taste as far as I know the hypnotizer
Can Be One self an inanimate object an
animal a bright reflective surface a
suggestion certain pressure points or
rhythmic patterns like a belly dance and
the last bullet point says the
hypnotized can be an individual or a
crowd and even inter species like a
snake and a bird or a snake and a snake

charmer so getting back to the actual question here would you kindly explain hypnotism well most of what I know about hypnotism I learned from my father who was an amateur hypnotist in fact he learned about hypnotism when he was a medic in World War II I think even before he was a medic in World War II he was a x-ray technici in the US Army before World War II started and um as a medic he was called the voodoo medic because he had learned that if someone is in a State of Shock like from a traum traumatic injury like they just got shot then it's they're essentially in a in a hypnotic

trance they are in a trance State and then you can use the same like suggestions to a to a person in in a shock that you could use to a hypnotize person you could say you're not going to feel the pain you're going to contract the blood vessels in this area to reduce blood loss I mean you might not use those exact words but that's that's the effect and he found out you can do this and so more Normy people in the Army in the Army's got a lot of normies in it we're just calling him the voodoo medic because of this but uh it is kind of interesting that he considered um you know the the mental state of somebody in a in a State of Shock like traumatic

shock to be a kind of hypnotic

trance so exactly how it works I don't

know exactly how it works I've never

really tried to understand exactly how

it works it's just like an element of

human nature and the fact that

apparently small animals can be

hypnotized by snakes that you know it's

it's might be kind of universal to you

know vertebrates or something that your

mind can just kind of zone out into a

kind of Trance State and maybe a kind of

like uh like a not going to call it a

holding pattern but um you know just

sort of like uh trying to come up with a

word where your mind you're not thinking

anything in particular you know you just
go into a trance but like I'm trying to
apply that to something else and it's
not working so I'll just uh skip that
part where I'm trying to use a certain
word that I can't think
of and uh but I mean
hypnotism yeah I mean I'm I'm not a good
hypnotic subject I was hypnotized as a
child by my father who uh helped him to
consider me to be some kind of Prodigy I
think because according to him you have
to be a certain mental age before you
can even be
hypnotized um so it might be older
squirrels and snakes that are hypnotized
by by snake or older squirrels and birds

they're hypnotized by snakes but he did
hypnotize me when I was a kid according
to him I don't remember this into
thinking that my big toe was
growing well his attempts to hypnotize
me as an adult failed I was there was
another hypnotist tried to hypnotize me
as an adult when I was a monk actually
and that also failed I mean I might have
gotten just very sort of
borderline yeah I was I was kind of like
in a borderline state but never got
beyond that and that's one reason why I
wasn't able to do certain kinds of samat
meditation as well because in Burma
especially like trance hypnotic trance

and

Janna some teachers just cannot tell the difference so it is true that um you get into one of these states and it does have a a profound effect on your body like you can hypnotize somebody and then touch them with a pencil eraser just a regular penc eraser and tell them that this is a red hot poker and they'll actually get a blister they'll feel the pain and actually get a second degree burn on their skin from being touched by a pencil eraser at room temperature or you know there's the standard cases of the person's body become so rigid you can rest their feet on the back of one chair and their head on the back of

another chair and they're just like a plank going you know just held up by their feet and the the back of their head in between these these two two chairs that kind of thing so I mean it's obviously a real State the Stanford hypnosis lab I did I did read a book about hypnosis um from the the Stanford hypnosis lab too it is kind of interesting that their standardized method you know they're trying to be scientific about it so they have to use the same method to hypnotize everybody so that you know kind of rule out variation as much as possible that it's mainly just focusing on a small spot on

the wall which is like a small Cina disc

which uh further complicates the

difference between certain kinds of

somat meditation and just self

hypnosis

so let's see I'm going through the

bullet points

here multiple theories which contradict

each other because people don't

understand it very well it can be either

mental or physical well obviously it's

predominantly mental although it does

have physical side effects you can be

achieve through each of the five senses

except smell and taste yeah I guess so

and see the hypnotizer can be oneself an

inanimate object well I mean an animate

object yeah I guess if you're looking at
like a spinning disc or something but
that doesn't mean I guess it's still
inanimate even though it's moving
because there's no Spirit animating it
or something bright reflective surface
suggestion let's see rhythmic patterns
like a belly dance does the belly dancer
herself get hypnotized or is it the
people observing the belly dance are
they hypnotized yeah I mean it is just
built into the human person um the human
species some people are way better
hypnotic subjects than others like um in
that book um from the Stanford hypnosis
lab or by a professor who worked there

or something he was saying that there
was like a a way you can tell whether a
person is going to be a good hypnotic
subject like if you when you're reading
a book you get so immersed in it that
you just you just become oblivious to
everything around you that would be a
good indication that you'd be a good
hypnotic
subject and uh what would be the
evolutionary purpose of this capacity to
be hypnotized I mean partly it could
just be just group thing Mass
hysteria um and
also uh just being able to go into a
trans I mean if if my father was correct
when he was the voodoo medic that that

like shock and hypnotic trance have a lot of overlap then um it could have something to do with that from a a biological point of view but I really I really don't know what the exact mechanics of hypnosis are so um in since I've just confessed that I really don't know exactly what how it works I guess I should just move on to mooners is or Skol Adin sorry sorry scadden for thinking that you mooners there for a second move on to the second uh sub question I gas about hypnotism would you kindly explain the super sensory aspect of hypnotism such as the Indian fers who could walk on fire sleep on beds of

nails Edgar Casey whose power was
originally to read books while he slept
then became Clairvoyance in past life
readings well the Indian [__] I mean
I mean it looks kind of like Faker and
to some degree some of these [__] are
kind of fakers because walking on fire I
I learned how you do that it's it's
pretty it's pretty simple actually I
mean there are like seminars you can go
where you're guaranteed to be able to
walk on fire by just after this you know
twoh hour seminar or something and it's
like you're nervous and so this not only
the palms of your hands but the soles of
your feet get sweaty and because of the
sweat on the soles of your feet the SES

of your feet no matter how hot the fire
is can't get above the boiling point of
water 212 degrees Fahrenheit 100° Cen
grade and that keeps you from getting
severely
burned so I mean that's just kind of a
kind of a trick also sleeping on beds of
nails my father explained this to me how
if the nails are close enough together
there they're sharing the pressure of
the weight of your body among so many
nail points that really it's not that
bad and they just get used to some some
discomfort I mean it's probably not as
comfy as a SE
Posturepedic but

still anybody can lie down on a bed of nails if they do it carefully you you don't want to just put all your weight on your hands or something when you're getting onto the bed you have to learn to like lower yourself down so that the pressure is evenly distributed amongst all these nail

points but with regard to Edgar Casey um yeah I guess he would like Auto induce hypnotic trance and I did read in a book about Edgar Casey once that the reason he was able to do this according to him he had a past life regression as a soldier who died very slowly on a battlefield he was a soldier that was just left left for dead on a battlefield

and he was in agonizing pain and was
just lying there just dying very slowly
it took him you know a matter of a few
days for him to finally die and so just
through sheer
desperation he somehow cultivated the
ability to just sort of detach his mind
from his body while he was this dying
Soldier and then he was able to use that
to his advantage and the advantage of
others in his life as Edgar
Casey but uh the super sensory aspect of
hypnotism yeah again if these questions
are they're about a subject that I'm
really no Authority
on um but I have seen like um it's I

don't know if it's hypnotic trance or
not but like in southern in India there
are certain shite Hindus that will like
I mean they'll just like run skewers
through their cheeks and and eat glass
light bulbs and all this weird stuff
that you would think would be very
painful possibly even fatal if you're
eating broken glass and for some
reason um they seem to be fine
afterwards maybe some interesting scars
or something but exactly how it works is
it's Mind Over Matter ultimately I would
say it's mind over matter I'm not a
materialist mind comes first mind is the
Forerunner according to the first verse
of the

dapot mind is Chief you know the these

things of the world are

mindmade so I mean it's like I assume

that's one way of explaining the whole

the whole phenomenon not just the super

sensory aspect is that

really we're creating this world with

with our mind you know it's a

manifestation of

spirit and so um you can kind of Break

The Rules sort of like the people in The

Matrix that are in the resistance you

know certain rules can be bent other

rules can be

broken and so it might be like a mind

over matter kind of a thing that's just

built into us in in potential form and
some people are able to cultivate that
some people just have a natural talent
in that direction and so um yeah maybe
being in a Trans State can help you to
overcome some of your conditioning in
believing that what you're about to do
is
impossible something like
that and with that I'm going to move on
to scadden's third question about let's
see I guess it's this is also about
hypnosis would you kindly explain the
limits of suggestion in relation to
Nature it seems whether it was animals
or people if something was against the
subject's nature the suggestor would be

the suggestor would be unsuccessful
unless they broke the subject's will
like Pavlov and his dogs or Alex from a
clock Orange um yeah my father used to
say that that if if you hypnotize
somebody you can't get them to do
something that they wouldn't do normally
like you can't hypnotize a person and
and tell them you pick up this gun and
go shoot so and so but you could
hypnotize him to think that this real
gun is just a a plastic squirt gun or a
toy gun and you can say as a joke go and
squirt that person with this squirt gun
and then they might actually go and
shoot the person in fact I remember it

was my mother used to watch these detective shows when I was a kid like Columbo and uh who was it was it Columbo was a guy who would just pester the criminal until they would just they would just confess an exasperation to get him to leave him alone anyway there was this woman who committed suicide by jumping off a building but for for some reason she took her her her her blouse and her skirt off before she jumped and then it turned out that someone had hypnotized her and told her that she was going to dive into a swimming pool so I mean she took her clothes off because she was GNA she thought she was going to get wet she just like plummeted it off

like an eighth story building so yeah I mean see kindly explain the limits of suggestion in relation to Nature these These are tough questions they're kind of subtle questions and in a way kind of vague questions that I don't fully entirely grasp especially because I'm No Authority on hypnosis even though my father was a hypnotist and I have read about hypnotism and also watched that episode of Columbo when I was a kid so uh let's see it seems whether it was animals or people if something was against the subject's nature the suggestor would be unsuccessful unless they broke the subject's will yeah well

breaking someone's will that's a
completely different subject and if you
really want to understand understand the
the power of breaking someone's will
read a book called battle for the Mind
by William Sergeant it's really it'd be
like in the top 10 of just important
books I've ever read that really change
the way I look at things and in this
case looking at the way the human mind
works but I'm not going to go on a give
a a book report on it because we got
lots of questions and we've already been
going for well over an hour so getting
back to this question
though would you kindly explain the
limits of suggesting really yeah well I

mean it's

like even if you hypnotize somebody and

you can suggest to them things you can

tell them they're you know they're gonna

feel this or whatever um you know it it

causes their imagination to be more have

more power over what they they think is

real but you know it's not going to go

against you know their deep conscience

or something unless you can somehow

trick them or as this this uh question

specifi just break their will just kind

of break them down but even then it

would be hard to get them to do

something that deep down they know is

evil I mean Alex from A Clockwork Orange

they just uh made him nauseous every

time he saw sex and violence until

finally he was like conditioned in a

pavlovian manner to just feel icky and

na ious whenever he would see or think

of sex and

violence so I mean that's not really

going against his nature I mean it's

just playing upon a person's nature not

to like

nausea and I don't like nausea

either so it says right here that I'm

halfway done approximately through these

uh through these questions I put a

little marker because it always catches

me by surprise when I get to the end so

so I'm going to be less surprised now so

anyway the next question is from Romeo and Romeo says I'm a fairly recent Explorer of Buddhism and I'm having difficulty getting my head around the concept of rebirth or reincarnation I'm wondering if your understanding of what we call old souls will help me more readily Embrace rebirth or reincarnation we've all encountered old souls at some point in our lives someone young who is wise beyond their years compared to their peers in terms of insight temperament understanding sensitivity and overall maturity where does their precociousness come from do old souls tie in in any way

to the concept of rebirth or
reincarnation are old souls the result
of having lived past lives perhaps
finding a connection between old souls a
concept I know exist because I've
actually seen them in my life will help
me understand and more readily Embrace
rebirth and
reincarnation okay so I do have some
experience with old souls in fact I'm
generally considered to be a relatively
old soul myself um my father told me
once that he had an old soul but I was
older than him so that would make me in
a sense anyway older than both of my
parents because really I mean bless my
mother you know she tried she tried her

best to be a good mother to me and was
not a bad person but spiritually she was
not an old soul I mean she was like a
toddler and it also reminds me of a
really interesting story by JD Salinger
called Teddy about this boy he's like
maybe nine years old and he lives in
this really
dysfunctional family from New York City
and he just happens to be enlightened
he's an enlightened being and he's
explaining his sister his kid sister is
just horrible I mean she is just really
just an icky little kid and just cruel
and just mean and just anyway Teddy is
explaining his sister kind of speaking

up for her saying that she hasn't been a human being for very many lives you know so you got old souls and young Souls you know so an old soul is someone with a lot of momentum going as a human being or higher than a human being a young Soul would be someone who hasn't been human being very many times you know they still kind of in like a crude level of

humanity and uh I mean it helps to explain certain things like Mozart for example who just he just hit the ground running with regard to music I mean he was supposedly writing Symphonies when he was still a little kid or another example is I read this biography of a a

lion tamer he was in the the wringling
brothers barnab and Bailey circus as
like one of their star lion Tamers and
he just wanted to be a lion tamer since
he was a little kid it's like even when
he was a kid he was like catching
raccoons and stuff and like training
them just he was just mean he was just
like really on track with this it was
like his life's purpose was already
clear to him that this was what he
needed to do and he eventually became
like an art teacher at like some
Community College or something but still
he'd be like catching wild animals and
training them and everything until

finally he realized I just have to do
this and so he winds up being one of the
world's greatest lion
Tamers and some people they just have
these weird talents that uh it might be
difficult to explain through genetics
and past experience and in a way I can
make guesses at what my past lives
supposedly were not through past life
regressions or memories just from these
Fascinations I've got that really are
hard to explain through genetics and
past experience like certain periods in
history certain cultures and periods in
history just I really resonate with that
I just find it very deeply interesting
and other cultures and periods in

history I'm just not interested I just

don't

care

so um yeah I do think that old souls or

just people who are mature beyond their

years you know they've cultivated wisdom

in a past life that would that would

certainly be a Buddhist explanation for

the phenomenon and on on the contrary

someone who's just really

extraordinarily foolish or just shallow

you know they maybe haven't been a human

being as many times or they've just got

a lot of bad karma from past lives that

has hindered them in certain

ways but I I don't think you can really

prove it one way or the other you can
just present evidence that may be more
or less persuasive or convincing but
still something like this it it's you
know essentially paranormal and anything
that's paranormal is never really going
to be conclusively proven in my opinion
you know it's always going to be on The
Fringe that's just the nature of the
Paranormal it's just on the the
outskirts uh and just kind of bleeding
through the the cracks and the rules
that give our world's like structure and
predictability
and something like
reincarnation yeah it's uh there's no
way you can really prove or disprove it

but a wiser people than me have believed

in

it so including like NE Koli Baba that I

think may have been a fully enlightened

being the Buddha himself apparently

believed in

it or at least endorsed it endorsed the

idea so

yeah I can I accept reincarnation or

rebirth as a working hypothesis knowing

full well that I can't really prove or

disprove

it and uh old souls are a kind of

contributing evidence you know it's it's

certainly not going to prove anything

but it's certainly you know a little

more weight on the scale you know for

the the rebirth Camp I guess unless some

kind of skeptical materialists can prove

that an old soul is there for other

reasons like in my case you know it

could be just a kind of maturity that I

inherited from my father's side of the

family or

something but anyways I'm going to move

on to the next question here and this is

from Fen

rissen and I don't think Fen rissen has

asked any questions before so welcome

Fen rissen unless you've changed your

name like so many people do when they

ask questions they some people change

their name every every few

weeks but Fen risen says was there ever
a problem after you came back that
people complained or saw you as
apathetic to Everyday problems even with
my little understanding of Buddhism when
I started not letting worries bother me
so much I found that most people would
be drawn to me thinking I was just
laidback but after a while they would
become aggravated at the way I just
seemingly didn't
care and uh I think I
mean how do I answer this I I really am
not a very social person I don't have
like a wide circle of friends I lot of
acquaintances online people I work with

and so forth but like going to other
people's houses I haven't done that in a
very long time or just having people
come over to to our house to hang out
socialize it happens rarely and my my
woman and I are are pretty much the same
we're not particularly social
animals and so there aren't very many
people who know me intimately enough to
know that you know just that I'm that
know me enough to see me as apathetic to
Everyday problems except for one person
and that's my mate my woman and I mean
there are times like women in in general
tend to be more like timid or prone to
worry I think than men in general it's
sexual dimorphism at the psychological

level and so it'll be in the middle of
the night and a dog will be barking
outside she'll wake me up why is that
dog barking it's like I don't know why
the dog is barking I don't care why the
dog is barking I got to get up early
tomorrow and go to work just let me
sleep and
that does not sit well with her or
there's like an engine revving outside
somewhere within 50 50 MERS of our house
you know it's probably out on the road
somewhere the neighbors driveway but you
know what's that what does that sound
are they in our driveway it's like I
don't know who they are they're probably

out on the road I don't care who they

are I just want to get some sleep you

know if somebody actually is trying to

break into this house

wake me up I'll load the Glock and I'll

deal with it but until that happens if

nobody's trying to get into this house

let me

sleep and I just

that I mean she has gotten upset with me

over this issue before although now

we're living in a different house in a

in a much more controlled neighborhood

because there's like a a homeowners

association and you know everybody's got

nice yards in fact two of our neighbors

actually mow their lawn twice a

day it's it's just

unnatural but it's it's quiet here and

and there's we don't have like criminals

skullking about and strange dogs or our

own dogs barking in the middle of the

night so I guess that would be the

closest I would come to this

situation I just don't worry about stuff

near nearly as much as most people do I

guess and um the the woman I love is uh

I mean that does get on her her nerves

sometimes because I really am seeing as

just apathetic or or whatever and I

guess I am kind of apathetic about

certain things like barking dogs I mean

I lived in Burma for so long you know I

was a monk just kind of living at the
the mercy of the universe and there's
all kinds of weird noises and all kinds
of stuff going on you just can't be
bothered with it I mean if you're
worrying about what is that and you know
where are they and what what are they
doing what are their what are their
motives you know it's like you're never
going to get any
sleep so I guess I'll just move on next
question this is also from Finn
rissen he says have you ever visited the
temple in Brunswick County North
Carolina and I haven't even visited the
temple here in Greenville County South
Carolina which is where I live I just I

was never much into visiting temples
even when I was a monk in fact I kind of
avoided visiting temples
and I don't know I'm just I'm just not a
temple visity kind of person I
guess so no I haven't visited any
temples on anywhere near the east coast
of the United States the only temples
I've actually visited in the last 30
years have been terraa Buddhist
monasteries that I was either living at
or just got invited there for some
ceremony with other monks or something
and now that I'm not a monk anymore I
don't get invited to those
anymore and that's fine with me I mean I

guess there is a a

sinal um Monastery of sorts somewhere in

this area also there's supposed to be a

really pretty Vietnamese Temple which

wouldn't be terraa probably but it's got

really nice Gardens and everything nice

architecture and so forth but uh I don't

know it's just I'm just not much

interested in that sort of thing and

really never have been so I'm just going

to move on a next question this is from

fitusa I think that's how you pronounce

this name and this is a a long question

that was even longer I've edited part of

it just to make it more manageable if

you want to read the entire question

with all the commentary explaining the

question and everything you can find it

in the comments under the YouTube video

of Q&A number

98 but fitusa says I'm working on a

research paper on the topic of

Veterinary ethics concerning differing

views to animal

euthanasia leading Western organizations

like the

avma and the F AWC consider animal youth

in Asia Justified if the animal's life

is not worth living euthanasia is in the

animal's best interests and the

euthanasia is done quickly and

painlessly in practice however if a

client brings an animal to be put down

by a vet for even an ethically
questionable reason 80% of the time the
animal is euthanized even if the ACT is
not in any way in the animal's best
interests there has been for example a
case where a healthy litter of rabbits
have been brought to be euthanized
because the breeder thought they had the
wrong fur
color besides animals this current
ethical framework is also damaging to
the veterinarians themselves around
44% of for example Brazil's
veterinarians have used Mental Health
Services and the profession has four
times the suicide rate of the population
average I personally and many others

think this is alarming so I was
wondering if a Buddhist perspective
could bring something positive to the
table
to perhaps change the profession for the
better therefore regarding your
experience and knowledge of Buddhist
cultures and philosophy I would greatly
appreciate if you could provide any
answers information or general thoughts
to the following questions and then the
first question is what do Buddhists
monks and lay people in different
Buddhist cultures in for example Burma
Japan or Tibet think of animal
euthanasia and its justification in

general so really the only country or
Buddhist culture I can speak of with any
considerable experience anything
remotely resembling Authority would be
Burma I've actually met burmes
veterinarians I've seen them in action
in Burma dog veterinarians elephant
veterinarians I've met veterinarians
that are Buddhists in Burma but really
no other Buddhist country so I can't
really speak of say Japan or Tibet or
Thailand but anyways from the Buddhist
point of view euthanasia is always bad
karma you're better off avoiding
euthanasia and this is partly I assume
just partly not mainly but partly
because when the rules were laid down

when Buddhism arose in Ancient India
they didn't have anything remotely
resembling the kind of medical
technology we've gone now but still if
you through an act of will or
terminating the life of another being
then you are responsible for that and in
a sense you have murdered that
being that's I mean even with regard to
like squishing a a bed bug with regard
to deworming yourself with something
that kills the worms I mean Buddhist
ethics are very finely tuned and very
uncompromising with regard to certain
things so what do Buddhists uh in
different Buddhist cultures or in Burma

essentially think of animal euth in Asia
and its justification in general um yeah
I as Buddhists they would have to
acknowledge that it's they're they're
making Bad Karma by doing it even if
it's done out of compassion that I mean
that would be a mitigating Factor so I
mean there would be some good karma I
suppose to the extent that you're
motivated by compassion but still
there's always going to be at least a
little bit of Bad Karma
even if the animal is in great pain I
mean from the the veterinary point of
view you could just give it like
painkillers until it passes away
naturally that would be a more Buddhist

approach than euthanizing the animal
but sometimes I mean it's not going to
be a fast death you know they might have
some kind of cancer they can't digest
their food properly or something you
know it might be a while and I guess I
mean you could just keep them on pain
killers or keep them unconscious until
they just die of kidney failure or
whatever from not drinking or eating
anything but um I mean veterinarians in
a Buddhist culture like a terab Buddhist
culture they've got more problems than
youth in Asia I should bring this up I
mean the question isn't about this but
even neutering an animal is messing with

its karma and that is bad karma I think
I vaguely remember hearing a story about
even sari paa who is one of the the
Buddhist Two Chief disciples had some
kind of problems that it turned out was
karmic complications from him like Cast
rating an animal when he was a farmer in
a previous
life so even neutering an animal is
considered to be bad karma and so the
the standard thing that is done in like
burmes Buddhist communities like
monasteries or just devout Buddhists
they won't euthanize animals and they
won't neuter animals so you wind up with
all these scy mangy dogs everywhere that
I mean they're not living a good life

you know they're all malnourished and
you got sores on their skin from the
mange and just dirty and filthy and it's
not a good life but that's their karma
and interfering with that in in a
negative way like by killing them or
cutting their balls off or whatever it's
it's seen as as bad caramel although
some people will still do it you it's
still
happens it's just that from a strictly
Buddhist perspective there's always
going to be a certain amount of acusa
comma or Bad Karma demerit happening
because of
it

so I guess I'll just move on to question number two here do veterinarians vet monks and vet lay people in Buddhist countries have stricter or different ethics compared to the West when it comes to animal euth in Asia and throwing the possibility of a monk vet existing because because they're among human doctors in for example Mongolia well um maybe in a place like Sri Lanka where the the S is very very LAX and you've got monks that are walking around with briefcases working for salaries and so forth they're may be vet monks but I never heard of one in Burma um yeah I mean it's it's against the rules of monastic discipline for a

monk to practice medicine um period or
at least at least for humans and then
elsewhere it's just as a monk should not
be doing any kind of doctoring other
than like you know attending to his his
sick Brothers in in the
monastery tending them as best he
can but uh see do veterinarians in
Buddhist countries have stricter or
different ethics compos compared to the
West when it comes to animal youth in
Asia I think they would be more
reluctant in general to euthanize an
animal simply because of the Buddhist
belief that euthanasia is killing you
know you're still violating the first

precept even if it's euthanasia there's
mitigating factors you know in ethics
because you know you might be motivated
by compassion and so forth but still you
don't get around the fact that you are
breaking the first precept by killing an
animal by causing terminating the life
of a conscious
being so I'll just move on to the third
question
here which is having listened through
your previous Q&A you seem to be mostly
pro-animal youth in Asia but I've seen
way more Buddhists online who are
against it instead encourage the dying
animal Hospice Care via pain medication
mantras and meditation how do you

justify your own point of view um yeah I
I've I don't think I've ever actually
endorsed animal youth in Asia um I mean
with regard to people I've kind
of um you know I've I've acknowledged
that that there may be
you know a very compassionate motive for
you know somebody could be a relative is
in severe pain they're not going to get
better it's a terminal situation they
want to die so you know signing the
papers so that the machine gets
unplugged or whatever um handing them a
loaded pistol and walking away because
they ask for it because they just can't
stand it anymore

there are all kinds

of like pluses and minuses you know

it's I can see how everyone has the

right to make their own decisions with

regard to something along those lines

like killing animals for food for

example um I mean you even the Buddha

did not insist that people stop killing

animals for food he he pointed out

you're making Bad Karma when you do it

you know viol the first precept and and

it's not good for you but still it's

going to happen it's just a reality a

social reality that these kind of things

are going to happen and so at the very

least you can try to mitigate the

Badness of

it so I wouldn't call myself pro-animal euthanasia although I can understand a situation where an animal is dying and it's in pain um I do think that uh this what is mentioned here later see way more Buddhists online are against euthanasia and instead encourage the dying animal Hospice Care via pain medication mantras and meditation that would be a more daric way to go about it like I already mentioned I mean you can just give them painkillers until they fade out that that would be more daric from the point of view of just Orthodox terraa Buddhism and probably Mahayana Buddhism as

well

so I guess I answer these

questions but uh yeah I mean a a

Buddhist veterinarian really is in kind

of a pickle not only because of the euth

in Asia thing or putting them to sleep

but but neutering also which is one of

the main things that veterinarians do is

is just snip balls off dogs and

cats so I mean that I mean there they

would be making some Merit by you know

curing fluffy of her disease and

bringing her back to her loving family

and all that but also they're making

demerit by cutting off Rover's balls or

putting putting some other animal to

sleep and uh those would seem to be two

of the main things that veterinarians do

I mean especially the the neutering

thing so any any really devout Buddhist

who really wants

to keep precepts and so forth would

probably do

well to uh avoid a career

in veterinary medicine unless you you're

just going to put up a sign saying you

know this this Clinic does not euthanize

or neuter

animals so I guess I answered that

question I mean really the the Buddhist

position in General is just very cut and

dry very clearcut that euthanizing

anybody is still terminating their

existence you'd be better off just
keeping them comfortable and peaceful
until they fade out on their
own so I'm just going to move on to the
next question here this is from Austin
and Austin says my girlfriend keeps
pestering me insisting that rebirth is
an unsubstantiated and irrational belief
she also dismisses the idea idea that
Karma influences One's next life as she
doesn't believe in rebirth however she
admits that she believes the Buddha was
enlightened but with the caveat that
even enlightened beings can be wrong
about some things do you have any
suggestions on how to address her
claims well I mean I could say that like

I said earlier that people are just
going to believe what they believe and I
mean trying to persuade them otherwise
is usually an exercise in futility
although this is Austin's
girlfriend and I mean just accepting it
as a
hypothesis is really not that irrational
or see what what is unsubstantiated and
irrational well I mean you could have
her read some of the books of Ian
Stevenson which is um trying to come up
with empirical evidence supporting
rebirth or
reincarnation so I I've read a couple of
Ian Stevenson's books and they are

really interesting that uh you know
there are cases of small children who
recall their past lives and are able to
come up with information that it's hard
to explain how they could have come up
with this information before or I mean
there are other ways of explaining you
could say that they were possessed by a
spirit you know that it wasn't the kid
himself but that's not the way it's
generally explained people with uh the
strange birth marks that correlate to um
um you accidents that caused their death
in the previous life and so forth
um also just people that are like
transgender who were of of the opposite
gender of their biological body in the

previous life and that's one the main
reason why they're transgender is that
they're sort of like transitioning from
one gender to the other and they're like
in mid transition in this
life um so yeah I mean if you wanted to
get give her some kind of
um like empirical evidence you might
want to find some books by Ian Stevenson
who I think he was at the University of
Virginia some place like
that um he so he that was like he
specialized in that coming up with
empirical evidence for it but also I
mean there's very wise people who um
endorse rebirth or even remember past

lives like neem cly Baba would sometimes
he would meet someone and just you know
tell them about their past life as such
and such person you know and then you
say well this is why you know you're
like this instead of like that but you
could say that they're just culturally
conditioned and just accepting without
question what their culture accepts as
accepts without question so there's no
real way to prove that rebirth does or
does not happen
so at least she thinks the Buddha was
enlightened so there is that
but
um probably she like most westerners
like almost all westerners and an

increasing number of easterners she
probably just accepts without question
that physical matter really
exists and so she'll probably just have
like the biological attitude towards
life in general
at least as you know what happens to you
after you die is then nothing
essentially um so I guess maybe you
could uh try to uh like I don't know and
not I don't think that it's extremely
important to try and change people's
beliefs but uh I mean you might want to
point out to her that even the existence
of physical matter is uh nowhere near a
certainty

I mean if you want to to go that way

there's a book you could certainly find

is uh the by George Barkley I mean he

was the he was like the the founder of

like philosophical idealism in in the

modern West um there's like the three

dialogues of hus and filin and then I

can't remember what the other book is

but he he just relentlessly pounds away

at the idea that there really is no

proof that physical matter even really

exists this this this could be all like

a

dream

so gosh I mean I could keep rambling for

another 15 minutes but I I do uh have to

bear in mind that there is a merciless

onslaught of questions

today

so um yeah I my best my best bet would

maybe try and get her a book by Ian

Stevenson on uh case histories that

suggest the existence of reincarnation

I'm just going to move on to Austin's

next question here why are the 12 links

considered unworthy of study if they are

found throughout the ptica given their

presence in various contexts aren't they

likely to date back to the time of the

Buddha well the 12 Links of dependent

cor Rising um yeah I mean they're found

throughout the suop ptica but the thing

is they're found throughout the suap

ptica in the same stock form it just
gets plugged into ttas
sometimes it's not even supported by the
context like there's there's a a suta
called the cosmologist in my translation
of it it's called The cosmologist where
you've got this worldly
philosopher goes to the
Buddha and well maybe it was biku bod's
translation called it the the
cosmologist I called it the worldly
philosopher or something like that I
don't remember now but anyways this
philosopher goes to the Buddha he's not
the philosopher himself is not a
Buddhist and he asks the Buddha well Mr
Goa I mean is does the world exist or

does everything exist and the Buddha
says everything exists is the first
philosophy of the world and then the
philosopher says well then does
everything not exist and then the Buddha
says that is the second philosophy of
the world and then the philosopher says
well is everything uh
plurality and then the Buddha says that
is the third philosophy of the world and
then and then the philosopher says well
then I mean is it a Unity
and then Buddha says that is the fourth
philosophy of the world and Buddhism
goes by the path by the middle you know
it's the middle way between extremes and

then uh I mean his approach to that
question you know whether the world
everything exists or everything doesn't
exist middle path or is everything a
plurality or everything a Unity middle
path right between those extremes and
then it just gets plugged in the 12
lengths which of course obviously just
assumes plurality as
real and it just doesn't fit the context
it doesn't really I
mean whenever you come across the the 12
links it's the exact same formula just
plugged in in like blocks into into
various sutas that there's it's sort of
like the description of the four janas
is the same way almost every time you

come across it it's verbatim the exact
same description that's just like this
stock formula that just gets inserted
into text and it may be that that they
are replacing an older description that
was harder to memorize or just fell from
it wasn't in favor anymore you know or
whatever the reason but it's fairly
obvious that in a lot of sutas anyway
that this stock formula it's always
pretty much the same if not exactly the
same is just plugged in to various
various sutas and so I don't think the
Buddha would have spoken that way
especially when it doesn't fit the
context so I mean the 12 links can still

be worthy of study I mean you want to be literate in terraa Buddhist philosophy it's that's the Orthodox explanation of dependent coal Rising even though I really don't think that it really is the correct interpretation of dependent coal rising and you can find certain archaic sutas sutas that show evidence of being very old that contain like Proto 12 links you know it's it's the links are different even the what what's the name of it the

Maha nidana sua yeah the Maha nidana sua of the dean Kaya which is the largest discourse on the subject of dependent core Rising even that it doesn't give the exact same 12 lengths it has a

slightly different version apparently
because it's a little older you know the
12 links had already been developing had
already been evolving ideologically but
they hadn't really settled on these
exact 12 links yet and apparently it was
too well known for them to to change it
and just plug in the the stock
formula
so um yeah it's still worthy of study if
you want to be well-versed in Orthodox
terab philosophy at least um know what
the philosophy says
you know it's just like it's it's it's
worth anyone's while in the west to read
the Bible just at the very least to know

what it is that you're not accepting you
know why why why reject something you
don't even don't even know what it's
saying so I mean even if you're going to
argue against it it's best to know what
it says so you can argue against it
intelligently so I'm just going to move
on to the next question this is from
zenith
and xenoid just recently joined the the
Discord server so welcome
xenoid and xenoid says I have some
questions about analogues between
Buddhist countries in the west do
Eastern Buddhists say things like oh
Buddha in the same way that westerners
say oh my

God and again the only Buddhist culture
that I can really speak of with some
Authority is Burma I spent only a few
weeks in Thailand few weeks in India
um few weeks in
Japan so and I never learned the
language of any of the other countries
other than Burma so I know from
experience living in Burma for more than
20 years that sometimes like as an
exclamation people will say especially
women will say masasu which is Miu means
like noble Lord which is an epit for the
Buddha so they would say that just as an
ex clamation like calling out to God or
something but I mean they they wouldn't

say something like and I I feel kind of
a little bit of cringe coming upon me
even in anticipation of what I'm going
to say is like go to My Buddha it's hot
out today you know they just don't talk
that way and they still have enough
reverence for the Buddha that they just
wouldn't dare to say something like that
and even I felt a little bit of
cringiness saying that just now so
um another thing that that Burmese
people will exclaim like if they start
to slip or lose their balance or
something like a loud noise all of a
sudden happens they'll say something
like which means impermanence
Lord so I mean it's anicha you know

impermanence it's it's it's it has

become an exclamation like an

interjection in

burmes um another another one is just oh

Malay ohay yeah which just means like oh

little

mother but um yeah it's

like Buddha hasn't become like an

interjection in the same way that that

Jesus Jesus Christ has become an

interjection in the west um just

sometimes if somebody is like legit

alarmed you know they might say just in

a way just kind of calling out to God in

in a moment of Crisis or something

and a lot of Burmese people do think

Buddha is essentially

God

so yeah I mean I I really didn't hang

out with late people enough to to really

do like an anthropological study on um

expletives and interjections used by

Burmese people but uh I do know for a

fact that matsuia is one of the common

exclamations made in times of

alarm by especially Burmese Village

ladies but it's it's more like a a

devout calling out to the Buddha rather

than just changing the word Buddha into

just an interjection that doesn't have

any

meaning like Jesus Christ in for a lot

of people in

English so I'll just move on to Zeno's

next question here are there Mara

worshippers in the same way that there

are satanists

and I wouldn't be surprised but

um I never encountered any and I don't

think I've ever heard of Mara

worshippers in Burma I do I have read

from a a Chinese chronicler who went to

India back in the medieval times that uh

I think it was near

Sati or maybe bod GAA there was a a

monastery that that revered dead dat

instead of Gaba that apparently gadata

Schism wasn't entirely wiped out in the

Buddhist time but uh that would be more

like revering judas's scariot as the

Messiah rather than Jesus of

Nazareth so yeah I have I haven't really

heard of Mara worshippers I mean there

are kind of like Black

magicians um necromancers and so forth

but I don't think that they are like

calling upon Mara to help them that

Mara's

um it's it's kind of strange that Mara

is more unequivocally just someone you

don't want to mess with in a in like a

Burmese culture than Satan is in the

west even though Satan is just evil

whereas Mara I mean if he can't get you

to be bad he'll get you to be good so it

could be that there are some people

they're trying to become rich and famous
or something they might make a deal with
Mara or make offerings to Mara because
Mara is essentially the god of samsara
he's not the god of evil and Hell so
much as he is the god of the entire
realm of
delusion especially the sensual Realms
which includes our
planet so yeah it could be and there are
like black Wizards and so forth and
witches and so forth in Burma but I
don't know enough about how Black
magicians and witches operate to know
whether they're actually incorporating
Mara the evil one into their you know

their incantations and spells and so
forth so I'll just move on to Zenith
void's third question what other
interesting parallels to Western culture
did you notice while in Burma and the
only thing that really comes to mind is
that the kind of people that are most
likely to be
anti-religion are cocky young men it's
kind of what I noticed in the west also
and with regard to religion in general
although nowadays I mean religion in
general is pretty much in freefall in
the west uh it used to be that women
being more kind of insecure by
temperament would still kind of cling to
religion as a way of guaranteeing that

you know bad things don't happen to them
after they die at least whereas now it's
it's just do whatever you want largely
due to uh should I say it leftist
ideology which is
spiritually bankrupt essentially as a
general
rule there are
exceptions so the people that are most
likely to openly mock religion are like
guys in their late teens and early 20s
especially if they're rich I remember
one time I was walking down the street
in rangon and some big car like a like
it was like a
Mercedes just drives by and then stops

like half a block ahead and some young
guy rolls down his window and just yells
like take it off [__] and he was
referring to my Monk's robes and he was
like like offended that a Wester would
actually wear a monst robe because
probably he was like the son of a
general or somebody lived a life of of
privilege and ease was just rich without
having to do anything you know sort of
maybe a hunter Biden type
and I mean he just he could offend
anybody and there would be no
consequences I mean he could just break
a lot could run somebody over with that
car chances are he wouldn't get in
trouble for it just because if he's the

son of a general or some you know

Colonel that's in the government or

something I mean the police would just

be scared shitless of causing any

trouble for this guy because it's a

corrupt system like America is

increasingly

becoming so I guess I'll just uh move on

to the next question this is from renen

and renen says there are many texts in

Buddhist tantric literature describing

sacred

prostitutes some of them were

enlightened

mahasa uh highly regarded in these

tantas and zogin mahamudra texts do you

think prostitution can be a way of life
compatible with Dharma doesn't it fall
under the sexual misconduct wrong
livelihood and craving C
categories well in Terra a Buddhism yeah
I mean it would be violation of the
third precept or sensual misconduct
sexual
promiscuity would uh definitely qualify
as sensual
misconduct um but even so I mean
prostitution was pretty obviously legal
in the Buddhist time it wasn't really
didn't have as much stigma to it as in
the west nowadays now I mean
prostitution is is almost obsolete in
the west now as far as I can tell

because most women just give it away for free

but I mean for example one of the the Buddhist final meals was offered him by ambapali who was a PESA Kalani or the beauty of the land and apparently what happened in in Ancient India at least in the Gangi Valley in the Buddhist time was that like a city council would hire this beautiful prostitute to entertain dignitaries coming coming to town and so forth and that was the PESA Kalani and Amali was one of these and the Buddha accepted a meal from her you know there was no problem with that and uh he she did convert to Buddhism and became a nun

and according to the Terry Gata she

became fully enlightened and her umali's

verses in the Terry Gata are some of the

most beautiful verses in the book some

of the most memorable

uh I think jivaka the doctor the

Buddhist personal physician was the son

of a of a prostitute like that

also um but still it is considered to be

you know it's a wrong livelihood you

know it's sensual misconduct but it's

not as bad as being like an executioner

being a bandit something like that you

know it's

it's um what is it immorality of a

rather

harmless character relatively

speaking so I have read in yeah I have read that some bodhisattvas in in Mahayana Buddhism were have been prostitutes but uh yeah there's no mention of I mean Amali is probably the the best regarded prostitute in terraa Buddhism

so yeah it it'd be sort of like a a veterinarian who euthanizes animals even though it's the animals are in pain or something still just you're not supposed to do it you're going to be making a certain amount of of unskillful unh wholesome Karma by doing it regardless of any good stuff that that tries to compensate for that there's always going

to be that little bit of poison mixed

in so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from

ruie and I think my nostrils are

improving I'm not having the same nost

problem I had over the last three

q&as so ruie says did you ever

experience sensation without pain or

pleasure aversion or attachment during

meditation for sustained periods of even

or even brief

flashes well I'm not exactly sure what

ruy is getting at because I mean if

you're doing meditation on the breath as

a general rule the sensation of touch at

your nostrils when the breath your the

air is going in and out is really void

of pain or pleasure I mean most of what
you're noting when you're sitting in
meditation unless you got like a knee
screaming and Agony is going to be
without pain or pleasure so I think
maybe Ru is sort of indirectly asking if
I uh got to a certain level in J where I
wasn't feeling pain or pleasure but
still um I mean some if you're doing if
you're meditating well then I mean
you're just observing whatever
Sensations are arising and for the most
part they're going to be neutral
Sensations just like the air going in
and out of your nostrils or the feeling
of swallowing your own slobber or the

feeling of your clothing against your skin or like the ticking of a clock I mean that's not pleasant or unpleasant unless you're especially bugged bothered by ticking clocks I had a roommate in college that was like that he just hated the sound of ticking clocks for some reason so

yeah I mean with regard to Janna I mean I I wouldn't venture to try and try and like figure out here like what level I got to but uh I mean there are lots of times and it seems like most of the time whenever you know you're not like in an intensive situation where you've got like this problem knee or problem ankle or problem hip joint that is just

screaming at you when whenever I mean

after you've been sitting for 15 minutes

plus of course the sometimes you get

like bed sores on your behind just from

sitting so much and that hurts

too

so let's see did you ever experience

sensation without pain or pleasure

during

meditation yeah I guess just the honest

simple answer is is yes because for

example you're doing anapon just

observing the sensation of touch of the

air at your nostrils I mean that's

neither painful nor pleasurable as a

general

rule so I think I might be

misunderstanding the question but I'm

moving on to the next one anyway which

is from

yugao and this is kind of a weird one

that I don't think I can fully answer

who is more wiser Master ugu of Kung Fu

Panda or Master

Yoda and the thing is I've never seen

Kung Fu Panda in my

life is that a cartoon sounds like a

cartoon I mean they might have done like

a a liveaction Special Effects movie

version of it but U I would just assume

if it is a cartoon then yeah I think

there is like this law that cartoon

characters cannot be really be fully

enlightened that even if you have like a
cartoon Buddha in anime he's going to be
a very unimpressive enlightened being
and it's just not going to be persuasive
or convincing at
all so I'm mean having to choose between
a character from Kung Fu Panda that I'm
never seen or Yoda from the Star Wars
you know the the rapidly dying Star Wars
series I'd have to go with Yoda and I do
know certain thing about Yoda
that that uh George Lucas came from I
can't remember it was he came from like
the Central Valley of California not far
from
Stockton and in Stockton the the

Cambodian s Raja in Exile was living in
in Stockton at a Cambodian Monastery he
was over a hundred years old at the time
and so George Lucas sent a camera team
and some other people to this Cambodian
Monastery in Stockton California and
they were observing and recording the
behavior and speech of this Cambodian sa
Raja and they based Yoda on this old
Cambodian terraa Buddhist monk and in
fact the word Yoda in poly means
warrior so he was like the Dharma
Warrior and so I mean at least Master
Yoda is based on I I mean I'd be
skeptical if the Cambodian saraja was
fully enlightened but at least he had
cultivated some wisdom and he was a more

than a hundred years old terraa Buddhist
monk you know the highest ranking
Buddhist monk in Cambodia although he
was living in Exile at the time
so yeah I would just have to guess Yoda
would be wiser than Master ugu of Kung
Fu Panda so I'm just moving on to yuga's
next question here can you please
explain why for some being in Janna is
good and for some is wrong and then in
parentheses he's got aan Sona said it's
good to abide in Janna that is the
highest Bliss yet in suas we must be
mindful of them
too well I mean Jonna isn't necessarily
the highest Bliss if you

consider um nibana to be higher than
Janna is it's the highest Bliss even
though you're not actually feeling
feelings you know it's it's the highest
Bliss just because there's no more duka
there's no more suffering but uh I mean
the only teachers I know of who say that
you should avoid Janna or weasa teachers
like the mahasi method you know teachers
of the mahasi method some sometimes will
teach people
just don't bother with Janna you can get
enlightened from practicing saatana
mindfulness that Janna is dangerous that
you can get psychic powers that will
then Lead You astray you know you just
get distracted by all the the fireworks

and bells and whistles you're better off
just doing nice dry plain
mindfulness and that's really not what
the sutas say I mean according to the
suas the four janas are right
concentration sama samadi you read the
mahasi patan which is like the Bible for
mindfulness meditators and it defines
SAS samadi or right concentration the
eighth step of the Eightfold Path as
Janna the four
janas so yeah it's like being in Janna
is good it's temporary Liberation you
know it's it's like what the the first
seven steps of the eful path are leading
to at least in some explanation of the

eight-fold

path so yeah the Buddha never warned

anybody to avoid Janna that you're

better off getting Jon because that's

right

concentration so see I don't fully

understand this last phrase here yet in

the sutas we must be mindful of them

too

um mindful of the sutas

themselves yeah I mean there are will be

times when you're not in Janna and then

you can

study texts and so forth um and when you

come out of Janna that's when Insight

can arise because I mean I really don't

think that the Buddha originally taught

two entirely different paths one was weasa and the other one was samata or Janna you know concentration versus mindfulness because I mean fourth Janna is called purity of mindfulness in the stop description and a lot of descriptions of insight that is arising arises after after the person comes out of Janna you know they come out of this really profound State start thinking again and that's when the Insight can arise so yeah I don't I don't think that uh Janna is wrong for anybody that that's just something that certain teachers of like weas will tell you just because they prefer their weasa

mindfulness meditation and don't want
you to be led astray and do some other
technique that they don't
teach and so I'm going to move on to the
next question also from
Yugo who says last time you said most of
us will be reborn back as humans can you
please explain what Tendencies cause
rebirth as humans and what for
animals um well animalistic Tendencies
would be more conducive to being reborn
as an animal so like
Rage or or even like fear just really
basic animal emotions if they really
kind of take you over especially if you
die in a state that's just like an
animal mind maybe you're just really bad

things are happening to you and you're just totally freaked out and you're just kind of like gone into like basic animal mode then that might help you um helping I guess to uh be reborn in an animal realm some such just going with the going with the theory although I am somewhat skeptical as to how easy it is for a human to be reborn as an animal simply because animals have much simpler Minds than we've got and I don't see how all of the the karma which is mental states are going to fit into the mind of like u a dog maybe maybe a dog dogs are you know there's is kind of semi-human they've we've got convergent evolution

so dogs are kind of semi-human but like
a rat or a cow or something it would be
like most of your karma would just have
to be going to like a state of dorcy you
know it just have to just be dormant
while while you're you're living this
entire
life but um most people as I was said
earlier you know they're assuming
rebirth really exists you're probably be
reborn as a human people who remember
their past lives generally remember
being a human and not being like a an
elephant or something although there are
cases of that also in in
Burma probably Thailand
also so the tendencies that cause

rebirth as humans would be human
Tendencies just being a human just being
a normal human will cause you to be
reborn as a normal human probably and
like I said with animals it'd be like
the the really animalistic beastial kind
of mental States not necessarily violent
you know even something like fear or
just you know hunger or something might
possibly kind of land you if they were
strong enough just land you in an animal
existence where those kind of mental
states are predominant something like
that but I no no Authority on how how to
get reborn as an animal so I'm just
going to move on next question this is

from Billy crows and Billy crows says
how important is it as a lay
practitioner to have a teacher well it's
it's helpful it's definitely
helpful it's not absolutely
necessary but I mean having a human
teacher that is I mean you may have a
teacher that's not on the physical plane
that you're not fully aware of
consciously or just like your own karma
is guiding you to just finding the right
book or even finding the right YouTube
video nowadays that will teach you what
you need to know I mean if if you got
the karma for it like the the saying I
said earlier you know when the student
is ready the teacher will come and the

teacher won't necessarily come in a
human
body so how important is it as a leate
practitioner to have a teacher if you
can find a good one then yeah go for it
if you can't find a good one then you
got to just do the best you can without
one so I'm just going to move on to
Billy Crow's next question here if no
suitable teacher can be found what are
the most important practices for one to
exercise in order to stay on the path
well read the text like when the Buddha
died according to tradition he said that
after he is gone the Dharma will be your
teacher so read Dharma books especially

like I mean if you're a terraa Buddhist

then you know read poly texts you know

read

suas um but there are a lot of teachers

out there and some of them are very very

good some of them are possibly

enlightened you know there have been a

number of beings that are very wise that

may have been fully enlightened that

have lived recently enough that you can

have books consisting of their their

sermons or lectures or doat talks or

whatever so the most the most important

practices for one to exercise in order

to stay on the

path yeah I mean the best thing would be

to read

D books like poly texts in order to know what the path is so that it's easier to stay on
it I mean it's hard to stay on the path if you don't even know for sure what the path is so that's right view that's the very first step of the noble Eightfold Path I mean it's good to know what the path is in order for you to follow the path correctly and then just uh there are a lot of wise teachers out there who know a lot about dhama just read their books um possibly you know watch YouTube videos although um YouTube videos are going to be much more recent with regard to the information books are going to go

back you know well over 100 years and I

got a dog having a weird dream again you

still having that weird dream stop

it okay so let's see so that's I mean

for me also like most of my life most of

my most important teachers have been

books

like one of my very first teachers aside

from my father was ROM dos just from

being given ROM but ROM dos books to

read that's really what uh turned me on

to Eastern philosophy how you doing you

want to say hi to

everybody taters says hi look at the

camera Tater says hi

okay back

down let's see here most important

practices um if you if you know like

basic meditation you can do that and

I'll just just keep basic morality

self-restraint maybe a little austerity

little

renunciation and then you can learn how

to do that stuff properly by uh reading

books if you don't have a human

teacher so I'm just going to move to

Billy Crow's third question here in this

era where information is so readily

available is it sufficient to use

internet resources at books if no

teacher has yet been

found I just

belched um no no no disrespect to Billy

crows for belching at the at the

conclusion of his his question here it's

just a biological process that

occasionally occurs especially when I do

Q&A

videos so see yeah I guess I've already

answered this one if uh since

information is so readily available we

are living in the information age we're

no longer in the space age because we've

lost the technology supposedly

and it's just too expensive and we're

too much in debt to be uh sending rocket

ships to uh Mars or any such

thing so we we're we're stuck in the

information age now which is actually

kind of a good thing I mean it really is

a blessing to have it's it's like a

psychic power where the the Internet

it's like another sense it's like

another sense faculty you know the

computer is the sense organ and then

through that sense organ you have access

to

practically infinite information

anything you want to know you can just

look it up as a general

rule so is it sufficient to use internet

resources in books if no teacher has yet

been found well you do the best you can

I mean you can learn

from anything I mean a wise person who

is receptive who's looking for truth

looking for wisdom can find it just
about anywhere you can you can get
insight from watching a dog lick its
balls I've got Insight from watching
chickens so yeah I mean you take it
where you can get it you just accept
wisdom wherever you can find
it so and we got a lot of access to it
on the internet and any of you who uh
are watching this or listening to this
have some access to the internet because
that's where that's where you found
me so yeah is it is it sufficient to use
internet well I mean it's sufficient
enough if it's the best you can do that
it's sufficient enough for the time
being just do the best you can and and

find wisdom wherever you can find

it just I mean just going on into a

forest and just sitting there peacefully

and wisdom can just kind of soak into

you

spontaneously so we are approximately

34s of the way through this and it's oh

almost two and a half hours yeah I told

you I tried to warn you this is going

possibly be the longest Q&A and if

people are asking lots of questions

before the next Q&A and then I do the

next Q&A live and people are asking even

more questions on the the

thing yeah it could be an Aldi it could

be a marathon anyways this next question

is from bodhisatta

969 he says what is the best way to

address monks and salmon eras regardless

of whether it is a Tha monk or one from

Myanmar and if you do not know exactly

how many rainy Seasons the monk has well

with regard to monks you can call them

Bon just any

any any terada Buddhist monk will know

what Bon means doesn't matter if he's a

junior monk or a senior monk if you're a

lay person he's G to outrank you anyway

and so call him

bante in different I mean that's that's

pully so I mean in different countries

like in Burma most people would call a

mon a Shima which means like venerable

Lord but in Thailand of course they're

going to be saying something in Thai and

salies they're going to be saying

something in

salies

so yeah Bon is just Universal for like

venerable sir but with regard to

salonas

novices yeah maybe just call them Salona

because uh you wouldn't call Salona Bon

and mostly I think they would go by the

the the language of their culture like

uh in in You' call him Coen you know

I've heard people calling like some lady

is calling a a novice over she'll just

say Coen which you know means

novice so I don't think that would be
completely disrespectful especially
since Salona is mostly are kids
anyway so yeah the best way to address
monks just regardless of country in in
terada Buddhism I mean this wouldn't
work for U like Mahayana monks probably
but Bon b h n te and probably just call
him Salona uh for the for the
salonas so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from five
precept
Pete and five precept Pete says after
ordaining as a monk and before you had a
handle on the Linea what was the first
rule you
broke before I had a handle on the

Venia after ordaining as a monk and
before I handle what was the first rule
I broke the very first one gosh I mean
it was probably some rule that I wasn't
aware I was breaking since I didn't
really have a handle on the vinea one
rule that I was breaking early was uh
traveling with women because sometimes
the monastery attendant would be female
and she'd be driving the monk somewhere
and they'd say get in the car and I'd
say okay and then I'd be breaking a rule
a pidia rule in the Pim Moka for
traveling by arrangement with a
woman um but I mean the first rule that
I broke that's hard to say because

there's lots and lots of rules and you

can break certain rules really

easily

um now maybe the very first rule I broke

was uh I mean according to the

commentary I I mentioned this in the

previous

Q&A that for a monk to make use of

anything that has been bought at least

in part with Monk's money

he's committing a Duca offense an

offense of

wrongdoing um by making use of what was

paid for by monks money and in all

likelihood almost certainly some monks

had helped to pay for the property that

monks were donating to pay off the

property so even at my ordination
ceremony as I was being ordained the
moment I became an ordained monk I broke
a rule for making use of that property
that had been paid for partly with
Monk's money so that was would probably
be
it yeah I guess that would be it so I'm
just going to move on to the next
question this is from PSA and PSA says I
kissed a girl who has a boyfriend the
situation was escalating towards sex but
I stopped it because I was trying to
keep the third precept after this
incident I initially thought that I had
acted rightly by preventing the act of

sex but now I'm thinking about it I'm

wondering if I broke the third precept

anyway because we

kissed sometimes I feel guilty and I

wonder if I'm feeling guilty

unnecessarily could you please be as

specific as you can about the third

precept what is and what is not sexual

misconduct please it will help many

people to know where to draw the line

and keep their

CA okay well for

starters there's this statement here in

the middle saying sometimes I feel

guilty and I wonder if I'm feeling

guilty unnecessarily of course you are

because all feeling of guilt is

unnecessary that I have said this many
times that if you know only two things
about dhama just two things one is that
all suffering is caused by desire
whenever you're unhappy it's because you
want something and two a guilty
conscience remorse regret are always bad
karma they always just [__] things up
worse than they already are they don't
help I mean they can indirectly help by
encouraging you not to do the same thing
but you can you can make the resolution
not to do it again without having to
feel the guilt and remorse and regret
and so
forth so yeah anyone who feels guilty is

feeling guilty unnecessarily and they'd
be better off not feeling guilty I mean
acknowledging that you did something
wrong fine and then like making a
resolution or just making this intention
in your mind to do better and not make
the same mistake that's excellent that's
the best you can do and then try to
compensate by doing lots of good to
compensate for any bad that you did
that's about the best you can do aside
from just becoming fully
enlightened so getting back to uh the
question in
general PSA here kissed a girl who has a
boyfriend that Ras
and he didn't have sex with her and I'm

according to the like the Orthodox
explanations of the third precept of
sexual misconduct
Kamara it it is with regard to actual
sex so just kissing a girl even if like
maybe thrusting your tongue in and out
rhythmically into her mouth then still
it's not the same as as having actual
sex with her so technically would not
have broken the rule but still I mean
you got to bear in mind that rules or
precepts on the one hand and actual
morals on the other are entirely
different that some rules you know
they've got a Moral Moral basis other
rules don't have a moral basis but still

it's the mental States not the outward

actions that have the moral quality that

are creating Karma of that's either whol

are UNH

wholesome so I mean kissing the girl

especially if you knew she already had a

boyfriend I mean you may not be breaking

the third precept but still you're

probably doing something that you

shouldn't ought

to so the best thing you can

do just try to do better you know just

acknowledge that you did something you

shouldn't know done which you apparently

you've already done I mean the the

admitting it not the doing it and

then avoid doing that in future and uh

don't feel remor or remorse or regret I

tried to say remorse and regret at the

same time and it came out

remor

um let's see what am I what am I missing

here feeling guilty

unnecessarily

yeah yeah I think I pretty much answered

that question that Tech technically

Kamara is with regard to actual sex

which would probably include oral sex

but not include just mouth-to-mouth

contact but even so you got to you got

to acknowledge or bear in mind that

whether you technically broke the rule

or not that still that is not

determining whether you're making good
karma or Bad Karma that that's that's
internal that's mental
States so it is possible for I mean a
person to not to like not break a rule
and still be bad and another person to
be good and still break a
rule let's see
here yeah I don't think you technically
broke the third precept even though you
may have been somewhat rascally in your
conduct so yeah with regard to the third
precept I mean if you read the Orthodox
explanation first of all it's geared
towards men and it's just this list of
like 10 different kinds of female that
you're not allowed to have sex with and

all 10 kinds are women that are already under the guardianship or protection of a man so it's like a girl still living with her parents you're not supposed to have sex with her um a woman who's just living under like a guardian a woman who's married a woman who's engaged a woman who's betrothed to be engaged um uh like another man's slave girl I think even a prostitute considering that she's like pretty much a slave of her pimp um a female inmate at a prison who's under the the guardianship of the prison

guards um there's a couple more I think but that's it's kind of a weird

explanation that I mean it doesn't
really apply to women so I
mean what's a woman going to do if she's
going to try and keep the third
precept so there there must be
other other explanations of the third
precept and mainly it's like you don't
have to be married to avoid breaking the
third precept uh when you have sex I
mean so long as it's like a monogamous
relationship and you sincerely care for
each
other then you're doing okay I
mean Buddhist ethics are such that you
know it's impossible to have sex without
some kind of L and passion and so forth
which can be very pleasant but still

from just the the uncompromising hard

ass perspective of Buddhist ethics I

mean you just probably better off sell

it now for sure you are if if you can

manage that but if you can't manage it

stay away from the wives of other men

stay away from other men's

girlfriends um I mean having sex with a

woman who's still like like living with

their parents I

mean gosh I mean that's I guess I guess

if

you're you're like in your 40s then yeah

you should definitely stay away from

Girls still living with their

parents but uh I think that would be a a

more useful definition of the third

precept than just having a list of the

kinds of women you're not allowed to

have sex with just I mean promiscuous

sex just for pleasure is out adultery is

out um I mean but if you're in like a

monogamous relationship with someone you

sincerely care about you love each

other then you don't even have to be

married it's still not in violation of

the third

precept so I

guess I guess I answered that one so I'm

just going to move on to the next one

which is from Mo in the middle and mo in

the middle says can you please talk what

Buddha said about perception and how

important is in our lives and practice

well perception is

samsara I mean perception is what

delusion I mean that's that is the

origin of samsara is just perception or

papancha where you're dividing the the

world up into parts that you consider to

be separate from each other and just

creating this entire world of like in

the D teing it's it's the 10,000

things so I mean it's you can have good

perception at least um like at a at a

crude level some perceptions are better

than others if you're having a

perception of compassion or kindness

that's better than a perception of hate

or you know wanting to just mess

somebody up but still

ultimately um unenlightenment is

essentially perception Sam Sor is

essentially

perception so

see what the Buddha said about

perception and how important it is in

our lives so the best thing you can do

is just try to have the most wholesome

perceptions that you can manage or

neutral ones try to have as few negative

UNH wholesome perceptions as you can

manage and then gradually you ideally a

renunciant will wean himself off of

perception altogether I mean still after

you're enlightened it will be as though

you have perceptions but the perceptions
will no longer um I mean you won't be
identifying with them or considering
them to be real you won't you won't be
like enslaved to your beliefs the way an
unenlightened being
is so I guess I'll just move on to Mo in
thee Middle's next
question which is what would religious
people
use to base their morality and ethics if
there was no God well Buddhism has very
finely tuned very subtle ethics and God
has nothing to do with it I mean the
gods the small G gods are just as bound
to the workings of Ethics as any other

conscious being in the universe and the way it works is ethics are based on psychology that there are certain mental states that will cause you to be more unhappy and farther away from Enlightenment Enlightenment and other mental States it will cause you to be more happy and closer to Enlightenment so what is moral is what causes you to be more happy and closer to Enlightenment what is immoral is what is what causes you to be less happy and farther away from Enlightenment and certain actions just because of human psychology it's just built into US certain kinds of actions are going to cause us to be happier and I mean not

just having fun or feeling pleasure but
like more at ease fewer desires which
all suffering is caused by desire caus
us to have fewer desires just more in
harmony with our surroundings more love
and compassion for others fewness of
desires just closer to Enlightenment
there's certain
actions that reinforce those mental
States certain other actions it's
virtually impossible to do them without
just yanking yourself away from the path
of Dharma and just making yourself
setting yourself up From Misery and
trouble like Lizzie bordon acts
murdering her parents there's no way you

can do that with wholesome mental States
there's no way you can do that without
having lasting karmic effects that are
just going to be messing with you at
least for the rest of your life possibly
for many
lives so um base your morality on and
ethics if there's no God it's just
Buddhist ethics is based on mental
States so whatever action promotes
mental states that are peaceful and
content and closer to Enlightenment
those are that's that's moral that's
ethical and the ones that take you
farther away from that are immoral or
unethical and technically the term in
poly is cusa for good and ausa for bad

Kusa literally means skillful and ausa

means SK

unskillful so ethics it's not so much

that you're being punished by some being

up in heaven or something for what you

did you know they made this law that

you're not allowed to point at a

pregnant cow with your finger I think

that's actually in the laws of Manu that

a Brahman isn't allowed to point with

his finger towards a pregnant

cow so some God declares it that's

immoral for you to do that and then he's

going to Smite you if you actually dare

to point at a pregnant cow so that's I

mean it doesn't work that way it's just

like if if you do something with good
mental States and and I guess it's kind
of circular reason to say good mental
state so going back with my what I've
been saying mental states that are
conducive to peace and contentment and
Fess of desires and getting you closer
to liberating
wisdom then that is moral just by
definition that's just how it works and
certain actions are more conducive to
going in that direction and other
actions are more conducive to going in
the opposite
direction so I guess I answered that
question so I'm going to move on to Mo
andth Middle's third question here if

aans are free from any violation and
they have no need to help or interfere
with humans around them then would you
say that ethics are purely samsaric IDE
like anything else ethics is purely
samsaric that when you become
enlightened not only have you left evil
behind you've left the entire duality of
Good and
Evil so it used to be like in Burma when
I was a monk monks would be like I
wouldn't bow to statues as a general
rule I'm just not into idolatry much and
so I I would just sit there other monks
would bow to the Statue I wouldn't bow
to the Statue and then they'd say you

get Merit if you bow to that statue and
I'd say Merit is for Lay people because
a monk is supposed to just he's not only
supposed to abandon Badness he's
supposed to abandon good and evil
goodness and Badness it's it's a kind of
lawful neutral using Dungeons and
Dragons
Jaron so yeah ethics it's part of the
raft made of rubbish that you used to
cross the flood or at least an awareness
and skillful navigation of Ethics is
part of the raft of rubbish that helps
you to cross the flood once you get to
the other side you just throw the raft
away you don't need it
anymore so I mean an enlightened being

isn't making any Karma and ethics are
really a matter of karma skillful and or
unskillful and since an enlightened
being isn't making Karma anymore he's
not generating any more
karma then ethics no longer really apply
to him although according to Orthodox
tradition orans would just naturally
live a moral life you know they wouldn't
be going around you know killing and
stealing and drinking and
whoring so let's get back to this
question here I think I distracted my
little distracted myself a little with
the di menion of drinking and
whoring so let's see here if arants are

free from any violation and they have no need to help or interfere with humans around them then would you say the ethic are purely samsaric idea like anything else yeah it's purely samsaric but still it is very valid within the context of samsara so long as we are stuck in samsara so long as we are not enlightened yet we should take ethics seriously you know it's like gravity or something gravity is purely samsaric time is purely samsaric it's not ultimately real but still so long as we are living in this version of reality with gravitational forces and the passage of time and also the validity of Ethics then we should be good boys and

girls instead of bad boys and girls or
at least neutral boys and
girls and with that I'm going to move on
to the next question which is from
extremely rare bird an extremely rare
bird says I remember you said something
like easy times create weak men do you
think healthy masculinity and femininity
is generally doomed in spoiled
consumeristic and he istic cultures of
today well yeah it's part of the cycle
of history that uh that say Hard Times
create strong men strong men create good
times good times create weak men and
weak men create bad times that's the
cycle of history and of course we are

now in the stage of weak men creating
bad
times so the question is do you think
healthy masculinity and femininity is
generally doomed in spoiled
consumeristic and hedonistic cultures of
the day well a a spoiled consumeristic
and hedonistic culture doesn't
necessarily destroy healthy masculinity
and femininity like say in 18th century
France under Louis the 14th it was
pretty hedonistic and worldly and so
forth but they still had a
clear they had like traditional ideas
that men are like this and women are
like this and you can tell the
difference I mean you could ask somebody

who's wanting to become a Supreme Court Judge what is a woman and they'd be able to answer you
easily it's I mean it wouldn't be controversial but the thing is it's not so much consumerism and Hedonism in the west that is destroying healthy masculinity and feminity it's more a matter of liberalism leftism and feminism that is just feminizing Society trying to make everybody not only equal but the same just um like trying to make everybody the same just because a lot of leftists are too simple-minded to realize that you don't have to be the same in order to be

equal but it's toxic masculinity if boys
for example act like boys and women are
trying to become more like men and they
want men to become more like women at
least at an ideological level level they
want men to become more like women even
though when the men do become more like
women they don't like that
either so yeah it's more a matter of
leftism and feminism more than
consumerism and Hedonism that is pretty
much wrecking the The Duality of
masculinity and
femininity and a strong Society will
have a clear-cut distinction between men
and women it's not going to be
controversial you know it's even the the

whole idea that has taken over that the difference between being a man and a woman is how you feel I mean that's a result of feminism it's like women are more likely to identify with their feelings men are more identifi men are more likely to identify with their thoughts and with a certain amount of objectivity and rationality and so science for example is pretty much of a masculine

Pursuit even though a lot of women might might get into science still it's more of a masculine point of view and when you start preferring feelings to actual empirical evidence like

DNA then you're getting into a more of a
feminine approach and it's it's doomed
to eventual
self-destruction you know it's like if
you excuse me if you build a bridge
based on feelings how how certain
feminized people feel that bridge ought
to be and just ignore the like the
traditionally masculine engineering
problems involved then it's easily
predictable what's going to happen on
that bridge is going to collapse and
that has it's already happened I think
it was like some University I read about
they had proudly had the first Bridge
constructed by an all female team of
Engineers and the thing

collapsed mean it could have been purely coincidence an act of God or something I don't know I just just remembered that stream of
Consciousness so I guess I answered this question so I guess I'll just move on to part two of this question by extremely rare bird which is what about in more Dharma oriented
cultures healthy masculinity and femininity and more Dharma oriented cultures um yeah I'm not I'm not really sure I think the healthy masculinity and femininity is more of a more of a worldly kind of a thing than a dharmic kind of a thing I mean you could have a

Dharma oriented culture that had almost
no sexual dimorphism with the men and
the women being very similar to each
other and like in Burma I mean trans
trans people are relatively common even
out in remote villages in just very
conservative traditionalist
Burma that trans people are are accepted
um maybe a little bit of sniggering
behind their back sometimes but still
you know they're accepted and nobody is
like giving them a hard time or anything
not on purpose and it's just because
it's part of the the dharmic culture
that like I was mentioning a ways
earlier you can have a person who's
transitioning from male to female over

multi multiple lives and they're just
kind in an intermediate stage and so
it's easily explainable from a Buddhist
point of view why somebody would be
trans um yeah it'd be more of a survival
oriented culture know ancient Rome for
example um I mean like really ancient
like Republican early Republican Rome
you know they had clear-cut distinction
men should be like this women should be
like this and if you don't fit the
category then there's something wrong
with you and you might be ostracized
from society and it made for a very
stable structure that became a very
strong structure so that Rome conquered

most of the known world at the

time

so yeah I don't think that consumeristic

and hedonistic cultures necessarily

undermine healthy masculinity and

femininity um and I don't think that

Dharma oriented cultures necessarily

reinforce like clear-cut distinctions

between masculinity and femininity I do

think it's more of a a

pragmatic approach to survival and

strength um that results

in a clear-cut distinction between

masculine and

feminine that a clear-cut distinction

between masculine and feminine does seem

historically at least to be conducive to

the

prosperity of of a civilization

so we started off that way and now we

don't have it anymore and we're kind of

in Decline

now so I guess I answer that question so

I'm going to move on to the next

question which is from Mary J and Mary

Jay says is that some kind of English

[__] why did the chicken cross the

road no it's not an English [__] a [__]

is a question that has no answer that

nevertheless you are required to answer

anyways

whereas this is a riddle that does have

a correct answer and the correct answer

why did the chicken cross the road is

that it presented States

evidence although there are some

Heretics who say that the chicken cross

the road because Colonel Sanders was

chasing him but they are Heretics and

are worthy of

pity so the chicken cross the road

because it turn State

evidence that's

final but a Coan does not have a correct

answer but you have to answer

anyway and that helps to just kind of

break down the intellect so that you

become less enslaved to your

intellect you it's like you're you're

trying to answer this [__] trying and

trying and trying you know what is the
sound of one hand clapping how do you
know your Buddha nature from the sound
of a chirping cricket and no matter what
you tell the Zen master you know he just
hits you with the stick says go back and
go back and meditate some more and then
uh finally it's like your your mind just
kind of snaps or breaks and then it just
leaves like this Crystal Clarity behind
and that's your Insight and then when
you whatever comes out of your mouth
when you got that kind of insight going
is like a correct
answer so the chicken cross the road
yeah it's a totally different kind of a

thing so I'm just going to move on next question here this is from avenity and avenity says does being a Buddhist affect your relationships with people in any particular way the only really noticeable way well there's there's two noticeable ways I guess with regard to people in general some people might just think that I'm kind of weird and interesting because I used to be a monk that lived in caves in Asia for many years so I mean that would kind of affect the relationship because you know they have this idea in their head you know this guy's kind of weird and interesting you know so that's G to have some effect but then also it's like I

was talking about earlier

where somebody asked if me being a

Buddhist causes me to seem apathetic to

other people and I said only with my

woman and so um that affects my

relationships with her I think is just

my years of training in this

otherworldly kind of unhuman kind of

attitude that um yeah it it doesn't

really sit well with people sometimes

but she's the only person who really

knows me intimately enough at present to

really have that be a factor I think

because I'm I'm generally pretty much of

a loner and so is

she so I guess I answered that question

so now I move on to the a very strange
question from Outer Haven which is does
watching futanari mean you are
gay and futanari for those of you who
are innocent of these things it's a kind
of Japanese hent or like erotic cartoons
showing a beautiful woman who
nevertheless has MA male
genitalia so I mean in a way it's sort
of like the anime or hentai version of
sheales which is like the porn name for
trans women who even though they look
like a hottie ideally still they've got
male genitalia
and I actually wrote a blog post about
this which is still on my blog it's it
hasn't been taken down or anything about

gun girls sheales and futanari I think
is is the title of it and um the only
way it I don't think that watching
futanari means that you're gay
necessarily some gay guys might be into
it but the the only way it would it
would work for me I'm no like I'm no
connoisseur of this kind of stuff but
still I mean I have seen it before and
the only way that it can really work is
if the person looks enough like a real
woman a biological
woman that you perceive them as a woman
it's a woman who has a
dick but still you perceive in your mind
this is a woman and in a

way it's like somebody just puke back
there sorry about that I think one of my
dogs was sounding like he was puking or
she I should say but anyways getting
back to the what are you doing stop it
no don't puke on the
rug yeah one of the dogs is is
wretching so anyways getting back to
futanari and sheales and so forth it's
like the most erotic part of a woman's
body is pretty much her entire body
except maybe her genitalia because
they're internal and you don't see much
whereas the sexiest part of a male's
body is his genitalia like when people
watch pornography mainly the only two
things they're looking at is the woman's

body and and the man's penis you know
and and like what they're doing together
so in a way like shemales and futanari
are just combining the two sexiest
aspects of of this this particular
situation into one person and in a way
it kind of for some people at least it
it kind of magnifies the sexuality of
the person and I compared that with gun
girls there's also this genre this Genry
of like sexy girls in bikinis or maybe
naked shooting guns you know they've got
like machine guns or or pistols or
whatever it is and it's kind of the same
thing it's like you got this woman in
possession of this kind of masculine

powerful phallic kind of a thing that in

a way accentuates her femin

and I think to some degree for some

people sheales and futari can be

something similar in that way in in a

strange

way but uh this fuari is about as far

away from actual Dharma as uh I think

I've strayed in these q&as I think well

I guess somebody asked me about pogs in

in a previous

Q&A oh my golly I think I better move on

in that next question this is from

Robin's

Nest and Robin's Nest says I would like

to know your opinion on the overall

conception of what constitutes as

slandering the Buddha Dharma and S

within the terada

tradition coming from a Mahayana

background there is quite a bit of

reading material on how Dreadful

terrifying and enormous the hell Realms

are in Mahayana literature one of the

gravest of all offenses is slandering

the triple Jewel which can send one to

naraka or hell what is the terraa

tradition stance on slandering the

triple Jewel including its

penalties

well I think slander would be

deliberately

lying but it could just mean just

misrepresenting the Buddha the DH and
the S and there's not a whole lot of
talk about it that I can recall in the
text other then there are two puty Moka
rules with regard to misrepresenting the
Buddha and in that it's like the the
point at
issue is if a monk is claiming that what
the Buddha called stumbling
blocks to living a dharmic life really
aren't stumbling
blocks then he's misrepresenting the
Buddha and he should be admonished up to
three times and if he refuses to change
his point of view with regard to this
than he is to be there's supposed to be
like a formal Act of censure against him

or I can't remember the exact formal act that's to be done against him but it's it's relatively serious because he is like stubbornly obstinately insisting on misrepresenting the Buddha and what is called a stumbling block when when a monk says what the Buddha calls a stumbling block in D or an obstacle a hindrance isn't really a stumbling block or an obstacle or hindrance um the implication is he's referring to sensual Indulgence sex in particular I suppose but also just sensuality in general you know it's like sex and and food and and intoxicant and and music and just all this sensual Pleasures as like enjoyed

by lay

people but monks are supposed to avoid

that a monk who says that when the

Buddhist said that they were

obstacles they're not really obstacles

that would be a serious um case of

misrepresenting the Buddha and you're

supposed to say is not good to

misrepresent the Buddha when you're

admonishing him you're supposed to point

out to him that misrepresenting the

Buddha is a grave

offense

so um asside from that oh there there's

two rules one is for a monk who does it

and one is for a novice who does it and

the novice who does it he's just

supposed to be kicked out you're not
supposed to have anything to do with him
if he keeps insisting that what the
Buddha called a stumbling block really
isn't a stumbling block namely
sensuality sensual
Indulgence but um aside from
that I mean in a way starting a Schism
would be kind of misrepresenting the the
Buddha dhama and Ora because you'd have
to have some kind of reason for going
your own way somewh you'd be deviating
from from Orthodoxy somehow and that's
that's serious you can go to hell for
that starting a
Schism um it is kind of ironic to me

that in Mahayana they they emphasize possibly more than in terada the the severity of like slandering Buddha DH and S whereas from the terad point of view that's what Mahayana buddists are doing that some teachings not all teachings of Mahayana some teachings of Mahayana really go contrary to what the Buddha says in in the oldest texts so presumably somebody along the line started misrepresenting or slandering the Buddha anyway or what the Buddha said so let's see what exactly is the question here the overall concept what

constitutes a slandering the Buddha um
misrepresenting the Buddha I mean
especially if you're doing it on purpose
I mean if you're doing it ignorantly
like you sincerely think the Buddha
taught something and and you just found
this bogus quote on the internet that
really wasn't by the Buddha and they're
easy to find it's really easy to find
just bogus quotes from the
Buddha
um then I mean if if you're deliberately
misrepresenting the Buddha then that
would be fairly serious fairly serious
offense and going with Orthodox
tradition you could wind up in hell for

such a thing but I think like just the ordinary like a pure land Buddhist or some such who is following teachings that really the historical godma Buddha probably would not have endorsed then I mean they're doing it sincerely they consider it to be genuine Buddhism and so forth and so you know they might not be doing anything particularly wrong although whoever came up with this stuff may I mean if if the text correct then yeah they might be in a bad place right now

so yeah the terado tradition stance on slandering the triple yeah triple Jewel including its penalties yeah I mean you could you could go to Hell and Hell Is

is very nasty and lasts a long time it
doesn't last forever in Buddhism but it
can last millions of years just being
tortured by demons or
something um but you'd have to have
really bad mental States really bad
intentions like you're deliberately
trying to lead people away from genuine
Dharma so in order to keep them stuck in
some Sor and let's say you you
experienced some success at doing this
then yeah that would be serious and you
could theoretically go to hell for
that maybe even avichi hell which is the
lowest baddest
one but um yeah I'm I'm really no

Authority and the the polych really do
not um put a lot of emphasis on that
kind of thing um it is true that the
Buddha said that the aeas who were a
non- Buddhist spiritual philosophical
sect that believing the stuff they
believed which was strict and
determinism that uh you could go to hell
for that also I mean the djas would
literally torture
themselves um as a way of like burning
off their Bad Karma which according to
the Buddha didn't work and it just
causes more harm than good
so um if an AA monk even a sincere
devout one can go to hell just for
believing really wrong

stuff then yeah I

suppose some Buddhist who is

deliberately misrepresenting what the

Buddha taught or in some cases maybe

even sincerely representing you know he

believes that it's true still I mean you

can wind up getting bad karma for

yourself and it's going to depend depend

on how outrageously bad your mental

states were to determine what the

punishment would be because there is no

you know if you do this then this bad

thing is going to happen to you in your

next life and if you do this other thing

then the penalty is you get reincarnated

as a centipede 17 times or something it

doesn't work that way it depends on your
own mental States ethics are a matter of
psychology rather than any kind of
divine
retribution so I guess I answer that
question and considering that we've been
going for more than three hours I think
I need to move on to the next one
although we are getting close to the end
there is
that and that's kind of good because I'm
starting to get a little bit horse not
that I'm
complaining these questions need to be
answered and by golly I'm answering
them so I have a theory this is this is
Robin's Nest again saying I have a

theory that I like your opinion on it
seems to me that the terab tradition
like all other Buddhist schools has
aspects it excels in in other areas that
could use Improvement based on Reading
terraa literature I'm of the opinion
that perhaps at some point there were
more scriptures in the traida that were
later Taken Out perhaps during a
conservative Reformation this would
explain a lot in my opinion do you think
this is possible if so please share your
thoughts on this
idea well just about anything is
possible although I don't don't think
it's very likely I think it's it's more

the other way I mean it is true the
Buddha no doubt gave lots and lots of
sermons that never got recorded never
got memorized and are lost you know most
of what the Buddha said is lost
now but um I do think the original
toptica was probably smaller than it is
now um it's there's more evidence of
stuff being added to it than stuff being
deleted from it there are some cases
like the sarasti Vada um
traida it's missing like the jasuta that
is found in the poly majaya because in
the poly majaya the Buddha is saying
it's okay for amongst to eat meat
and the sasada Buddhists were vegetarian
and so probably they removed that one I

mean wasn't the whole purpose of the
suta wasn't the Buddha just justifying
the eating of meat it was like jivaka
the Doctor Who is the Buddha's personal
physician comes to the Buddha and says
that some other groups are saying that
the Buddhists encourage killing because
the monks eat meat and then the Buddha
says no it's like if a monk sees hears
or suspects that an animal was killed
for his sake he's not allowed to eat it
but if it's already dead then it's
okay and that text is found in the poly
text but not in the the saden like
hybrid Sanskrit texts so I mean it is
possible that the terraa Buddhist just

cooked up a new one but it's also
possible that the sarvastivada Buddhists
just didn't like that one because it
went against a later development in
Buddhism uh which is vegetarianism
because the earliest Buddhists were not
vegetarian or some of them were but it
was optional you were not required to be
a vegetarian if you were a Buddhist monk
in very early
times but I think I've uh digressed a
bit let's
see let's see I'm of the opinion that
perhaps at some point there were more
scriptures in the
toptica that were later taken out yeah
it's not very likely that very many

texts would be removed because there
would obviously be Pro T tests against
taking out texts that were already well
known to be Buddha Vach or the the
teachings of
Buddha so you can you can add new ones
easier than you can take out old
well-known ones which explains why there
are some old texts that really are not
Orthodox they're I mean they're they're
more of an embarrassment or it's just
it's more of a problem of having it it's
like there's no way they would have
added this stuff like the
is considered to be one of the oldest
ancient texts in in in Buddhism one of

the most important text in Buddhism just

because it's so

old and it just a lot of it is just not

Orthodox it's it's pre- Orthodox it's

pre- teravan and so I mean I'm I'm sure

a lot of monks terraa monks would have

been happier just like editing that out

because it's it's really hard to explain

in in any kind of Orthodox

manner

so it is easier to add new text and lots

of texts obviously are later editions

than it is to like edit out or remove

older

texts so I mean there may be some texts

that are lost I mean back in the old

days most of the texts weren't even

written down they were just memorized my
heart and there was a time um be right
before the Council when there was only
one monk Left Alive who had memorized
the entire Nida which is a very obscure
poly text found in the sutapa that
pretty much nobody reads so it wouldn't
have been a great loss in fact it's like
the it contains the uh canonical
commentary to the ATA waga which is
trying to explain away why it the AA
waga is so
unorthodox so I mean it could be that
there were certain TX that were even
more obscure less welln and the monks
just it just they just died out that

happened in jism a couple times where
Again The Janes didn't write down their
scriptures they just memorized them and
they were more athetic than the
Buddhists they were less scholar Janss
and is eventually a lot of the texts
were just lost because there were no
monks left who had memorized all of it
so that could have happened in in buddh
also but it would in all likelihood be
the more obscure texts and not really
the like the important sutas that kind
of
thing so I guess I answered that
question and so I'm going to move on to
Robin's Nest next question here in
Mahayana and vajana there is veneration

to a vast multitude of deities
additionally it's quite common for
indigenous deities to become integrated
in whatever region Buddhism is generally
practicing in many Hindu deities though
their backgrounds are often different
are also mutually woried while in Burma
what deities if any are venerated in
addition to the Buddha well um the
Burmese before they converted to
Buddhism um they followed What's called
the Gat cult and it was this strange
kind of polytheism that venerated mainly
the gats were human beings who died they
were like
magnanimous human beings you know Brave

Noble spirited humans who died a violent death and the burmes think that if you die a violent death it makes you a more powerful ghost afterwards and such a powerful ghost that they actually became like small G gods and they are still venerated to some degree in Burma like if if you're traveling through uh a part of Burma that is like presided over by lord of the White Horse or some such then sometimes I mean you have there's certain taboos and things you have to be careful about I remember one time I was traveling through Maham Forest like very early on in in like the early 90s shortly after I got to Burma and there was actually a a shrine

it was it was just this dirt road going through this Forest there were a few times when the men had to get out of this body

and pull the bus with ropes through the sand cuz the the road was just gone but anyways at one point we were in this forest and we stopped at The Shrine and the shrine was to Beano may it was this Burmese deity called Beano which literally means black

Vishnu so I mean Vishnu was a Hindu god and there were people that cared enough about Vishnu that they actually made a shrine and people had been making offerings to the shrine

um I mean Vishnu I mean there's like a Proto Vishnu that's mentioned like in the the jagas sua in in p uh I I can't isana or something like that I think was like a an early version of Vishnu that existed you know back towards the Buddhist time but um this is just like straight out of Hinduism Beano his is burmes way of saying
Vishnu so let's see what deities are venerating in addition to the Buddha well there's Saka king of Gods who who got incorporated into the KN cult he was incorporated when when the the Burmese converted to Buddhism they still had their KN cult and then Saka king of Gods was like incorporated into the KN cult

and he became the king of these

gnats so that happened

too um lots of minor

deities I remember one time I I spent uh

a few years living out in this Forest

Area very remote area and they had I

remember the first time I walked by

there it was all empty Fields you know

just fields for growing rice and

whatever but there was this Grove of

trees just right at the edge of the

field not far from The Villages and I

was wondering why didn't they cut those

down when they cut all the rest of the

trees down and it turned out that that

was a sacred grove dedicated to this

goddess called what was her

name

H A yeah aay which means great mother

and there was this little Shrine of this

woman dressed in like traditional

Burmese clothes with her hair up in a

bun and she had a sword and there was

like this Tiger standing next or like

sitting sitting up next door

her and people would go and make

offerings to her so I mean it's it's

common in Thailand

also um where you've just got these

local deities or like pre-buddhist

deities that exist that still I mean if

you're on their territory you got to

follow the rules and you know you may

not be able to spit on the ground there because it's taboo or whatever um so it does happen although nobody really is at the same level as the Buddha the Buddha is number one and some somebody even like Saka king of Gods or black Vishnu or whatever they're relatively minor deities that don't receive nearly the veneration as the Buddha himself or for that matter as much veneration as living monks so I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question here and this is the last question by golly we are at the end this is the last question after only three hours and 23
minutes so and this is from pseudonym

and he asked this question shortly
before I started doing the Q&A and he
says how might you guide a lay person
with regard to the right intention of
renunciation while also pursuing a
career maintaining a fruitful marriage
raising children and generally being
engaged in the world to put it
differently aside from the Allin choice
to wear robes and live according to
vinea how might a lay person apply right
intention of
renunciation and with all due respect to
to pseudonym um when I was a monk this
kind of question used to really get me
sometimes um I mean it was like I'm at a
dumal answering questions and somebody

asked essentially how as a western lay Buddhist can I practice renunciation correctly while not actually renouncing anything also I was told that the doy Lama himself HH the doy Lama was asked this question once essentially the same question is you know how can a western Buddhist who enjoys pleasures of the senses practice renunciation correctly and he actually started crying according to this person who was there who saw it happen so I mean he was probably asked that question way more than me um so I mean technically the correct answer is I mean you just don't practice renunciation if you're living in the

world and raising a family and you know
etc etc that n or renunciation is the
third of the 10 parmes see yeah a third
of the 10 parmes and in the text it just
means means renouncing the world you
know you practice Nama by you know
selling all that you have giving the
money to the poor and going off into the
forest but I don't want to be too much
of a hard
ass um so I mean if a lay person who
wants to be as renounced as possible who
wants to be at least a little bit of a
renunciate then I mean just simplify
your life you know you don't have to
wallow in all the pleasures I mean if
you're married or you got kids I mean

the wife and kids might insist on having
that television or whatever but um to
the extent that you're able to you know
you simplify life and try to be a little
more austere and that would be like a
partial
renunciation it wouldn't be like
considered by tradition to be a correct
or enough of a renunciation but still I
mean it's kind of baby steps in the
right direction of you know whatever
certain things that you like you just
don't don't go there you know just kind
of
self-restraint simplification of your
existence um and I mean you would know

better than I do you know what steps to

take in order to go in that direction to

make your life simpler and more

aere because that's like the main point

of renunciation is to um renounce all

these things that are distractions they

keep you stuck in samsara so rather than

renounce all of them I mean you can

renounce I mean just renouncing one of

them is better than

nothing whatever it

is

so um I guess I answered that question

and that means that I answered all them

their

questions and

so you know you know the drills like if

you got any questions you think I can

answer

um feel free to leave them in the

comments below or you can save them in

the hopes that I actually will be able

to do a live stream at noon next Sunday

Eastern Time American eastern time and

then you can just save the questions

there and uh if I get more questions

than I got this time man it's I'm I'm

GNA be going for long time but that's

okay I guess so uh like And subscribe if

you have not done so already and be

happy

so I don't know if this is working we
got nobody in the chat because what
happened was I'm trying to do this for
the first time and I actually get it
working but I didn't know that it was
working so then I tried again which
ended the the live
stream
so I'm just seeing if anybody's uh
anybody gets on the chat or something
just a second
okay yeah okay somebody sent me a chat
saying that it's working and I won't
turn it off
somebody said oh my
goodness

okay so I guess it's working so I guess

we're like on the air you'll have to

excuse me for being a [__] with regard

to this I hope I haven't offended any

[__] anything out

there so let see

here okay so I

guess we're live here except I don't see

any stream thing I don't see any

chat just a

second says I'm currently signed

out

God

okay so let's see

here is this we've got a bunch of maram

made

mahayan let see

gosh oh it says stream is finished okay

so I dismissed

this this is weird because I don't see

oh here it is so I got move that over to

here okay and then we get the question

list oh this is fun I'm telling

you okay and then

that's weird the chat thing just keeps

disappearing there it

is okay I think I understand how it's

working now sort

of

okay I need a beverage after all this

give me that

beverage let's see what time is it oh

it's already two minutes and 40 seconds

past past one I'm supposed to be doing

this okay

so PSA says stop ending your live

streams panov says oh my

goodness Mary J says now it's good for

now that's that's good coip says it's

working which is even better

okay oh Mary Jay is now

offended see okay I can see the chat now

otherwise I would have remarkable

psychic

powers

okay

so yeah it's fun isn't it do not end

this

live just chill breathe yeah well the

problem was the first

time was I it didn't say that I was I
mean there was no indication that it was
actually working so I'm like trying to
find out if I can just like try again or
something yeah this is what happens when
people that are practically Amish try to
live stream for the first time
ever so I guess I'm going to start
answering questions because the time for
introductory prologues is already long
past so
let's
see I guess the way I'm going to do this
is just answer the questions in the chat
and then when there's a lull in
questions in the chat I'll go to the

list which isn't extremely long

but um it's long

enough and the problem is I can't really

see the chat and the list of questions

at the same time if I if I click on the

the the list of questions the chat bar

disappears then I have to click back on

the the recording or live streaming

software to make the chat come back and

then I can't see the list so let's see

first

question is

uh let's see friend

KO I deliberately mispronounce French

words because I don't know how to

pronounce fren SW correctly so let see

do you still do sitting meditation and

as a general rule the only meditation I still do is walking meditation and just mindfulness of daily activities like when I'm at work doing something repetitive sometimes I'll just it'll just be like mindfulness mode will kick in but the thing is um when I was a full-time monk like a full-time professional meditator I got as far as I could you know just dedicating you know much of my life to sitting meditation got as far as I could with it stopped making progress literally for years and so I figure as a lay person um you know it meditation was never all that great for me as just a

kind of lowlevel therapy you know just
helping me to calm down something like
that it's it's just more of a magnifier
you know you're just seeing whatever is
there like close up and it it can't have
a calming effect
but um like I say I got as far as I
could with it and I think now as a lay
person with a job and lots of
responsibilities and duties and so forth
that I couldn't really do justice to
what I was doing before it'd be like a
major step backwards for me and so I
just generally do walking meditation and
just like meditation like mindfulness of
daily
activities so let's see

I gotta scroll around

here

okay somebody says you have such an

awesome sense of humor I would have it

would have been awesome to be a monk

with you yeah I guess under certain

circumstances yeah I have I told some

good jokes when I was a monk I have to

admit so let's see here Austin how did

your father's Buddhism differ from your

own what did he

believe okay well my father's Buddhism I

I mentioned this before but my father

pretty much converted to

Buddhism after listening to a dead

Vietnamese Buddhist monk talk about

Dharma while he was being chant through
my father's second wife not my mother my
father's second wife was very talented
psychic like a spirit medium and pretty
much cured my father of atheism just
with just the amazing stuff she would
produce like writing in like classical
Greek while she was doing automatic
writing in a trance that kind of thing
um so my father's Buddhism differed from
mine mainly because he got it channeled
through a woman in trance
and the the monk was apparently
Mahayana and my father just kind of got
this sketchy introduction to Buddhism
and then interpreted it D suit himself
like for example my father's idea of

Ethics was that you know there is no God decreeing what is right and what is wrong and so you do what is right for you and then he used that as a way of just justifying doing anything that he could
justify and it really doesn't work that way so that was like the main difference between him and me also he was more of a like an animist than a real Buddhist you know so he was just sort of like what is common among a lot of especially people in the west but it happens in in the East also where somebody will hear a few ideas about Buddhism that they like they seem to like it better than other

religions they've been exposed to so
they'll just say okay I'm a Buddhist and
really they don't study it much they
don't really understand it very deeply
they distort things and so forth and
that was pretty much what my father did
he was I wouldn't really call him a
Buddhist although he called himself a
Buddhist whereas I on the other hand
like studied you know the poly Tex
especially studied a lot of Mahayana
texts also and then just got it down as
like a coherent system and you know just
tried to um like objectively empirically
understand what the official tradition
what the official Doctrine is and then
you know then I would kind of defer to

that or if I disagreed with it I'd have

to specify I'm disagreeing with it where

my father just didn't get anywhere near

that so I guess I'll

uh just move on XYZ here please explain

kamat and

batna to maram made Mahayana he has some

wrong understanding from some weird ass

poly dictionary or some teacher yeah I

think maram made Mahayana has been doing

extensive quotes of aan Meo I think

that's his name and the book is in

German and so he's translating from

German to English I

think um but let's see where is the

question

here bat Kam and batana well um there's
like three kinds of craving according to
Orthodox tradition you've got kamat
which is desire for sensual Pleasures
batana which is desire for existence and
weat which is desire for non-existence
so I mean all kinds of craving would fit
in into those three kinds of categories
although it's kind of ironic that it
that it uh omits like craving for dooka
you know craving for the opposite of
sensual pleasure because I guess there
are some kind of masochistic types or
like aesthetic types that really desire
just kind of pain and that kind of thing
but that's left out so really
just any kind of desire for Comfort or

pleasure you know desire for good taste
in your mouth you know you want to eat
delicious food instead of icky food that
would all just go under Katana or desire
for sensual pleasure or like sensual
craving and bat is just desire to remain
alive to remain in existence to stay
here in Samar and we is um I mean for
some people it just might be being
suicidal but for a more advanced
spiritual practitioner it would be just
desire to cease to exist um you know in
a more metaphysical sense you know just
transcend some S I get off the wheel
that kind of a
thing so I guess I answered that one and

so I'll move on to Cool Whip and sooner

or later like after like an hour or so

at

the as like a a crude guess I'm going to

have to stop answering questions on the

the chat and get to the actual standard

list of questions that I usually answer

because I do have um it's not quite 30

questions so it's not as long as usual

but there is a significant block of

questions that have already been

submitted and that I am pretty much

obligated to

answer

so let's see

here Cool Whip says a long time ago some

q&as ago a person asked do you seek Joy

you replied saying you would have to

think about it do some introspection and

after three Q you get the get the give

the answer yeah I forgot about that do I

seek Joy um I seek Joy with my mate you

know it's like you I you know anybody

who's in a relationship knows that

you're way better off in a joyful

relationship than kind of like a

you know friction bickery kind of

relationship so yeah I suppose I seek

Joy with my woman my Blushing

Bride and

uh but I mean seeking Joy from like food

I mean I just I just don't really I mean

I prefer to eat food that I like than

food that I don't like but like trying

to like perfect it and being a foodie to

that extent uh generally I don't do that

very much

so yeah I guess I seek Joy

with um in in in relationship having a

joyful relationship is way better than

having the

opposite so let's see

here PSA for the Q&A is it still worth

it to seek ordination in 2024 or has the

songa deteriorated to such an extent

where it's best to go about it alone

like a rhinoceros or the rhinoceros horn

because the Indian rhinoceros has only

one

horn so uh yeah it's still worth it to

seek ordination in 2024 I mean the S is
not much worse off than it has ever been
really I mean there was rotten monks if
if we can trust the text they were
rotten monks even in the Buddhist time
and like the very first the very first
coun or the second Council which
resulted in the first Schism was mainly
caused by monks that were just not
following vinea and handling money and
so forth so I mean there's always going
to be strict monks out there strict
monasteries and so I mean you should
avoid most monasteries which is what I
did till I got back to California and I
really wasn't in a position to do much

avoiding anymore and that's one of the
reasons why I eventually
disrobed cuz I used to just avoid
monasteries like the one I was living at
in California like the plague
and then I wind up living at one where
you know just monks don't follow vinia
and you have no choice but to break
rules simply because all the monks
around you are breaking rules and so
forth and it's just not a good
environment but they're they're have
been and I hope always will be at least
into the foreseeable future strict
serious Monks at strict serious
monasteries or even you could do what I
did you get ordained you get your five

five reign Retreats under your belt so

that you're you're free of nissia you're

no longer inde dependence on a teacher

then you just go out into the forest

especially particularly in like an Asian

culture where people will be happy to

support some exotic monk living out in

the forest meditating you know they just

think you're a saint automatically just

because you're living in a forest

meditating instead of living in a town

or Village sitting around listening to

the radio and drinking tea

okay

so see Mary J says is it a fish tank on

the left yeah that is a fish tank I I'm

getting it for my

birthday so um right now it's still in

the just sort of the water settling and

I'm going to get um kind of a a biome of

like I don't know micro micro

microbiome I guess before I start

putting fish in first you know just kind

of let it sit I'm going to go out on a

mission maybe today after this Q&A go to

like a lake or a pond or something and

get some natural water with a natural

biome and then you know just pour a cup

of it into this fish tank and you know

get some like single cell organisms and

stuff going uh preferably no fish

parasites but I'm willing to take that

risk and then after a few more days you

know I'll get some plants and let the
plants get established and then put in a
few fish and you know just gradually
build up a kind of
ecosystem which is something that I've I
I really enjoy doing I think one of my
ideal jobs like if I if I'm born again
and uh you know if there's rebirth and
you know I get some kind of career going
that isn't a monk or a renuncian it
would be sort of like
designing balanced ecosystems and space
stations or something you know you got
to have like the balanced ecosystem in
fact um I could have I was even thinking
for my birthday getting what was called

a biosphere it's just a sealed glass
ball just a hollow glass ball just no
air can get in or out or anything and
inside there was seawater a little bit
of sand and some algae and some shrimp
and they would last for years it was
just a perfectly contained ecosystem all
that went in was heat and light and it
was you know the shrimp would eat the
algae that then they would like go potty
and then that would become the
fertilizer for the algae again and it
was just like this self- sustaining
ecosystem so I'm going to try and set up
something somewhat along those lines
back there in that
aquarium because I like doing that I I

was kind of heading in the the direction

of

ecology I probably would have majored in

ecology if I had gone to grad school but

I started to become a monk

instead okay Wayne says greetings yeah

he

Wayne Athena sigil says your dad was a

folk Buddhist whereas you were an actual

practicing monk yeah pretty much

although he was yeah he was sort of like

a an animist with a little with some

Buddhist

leanings let's

see let's see here

wow we're getting I'm not able to keep

up

here cify says oh cool whip says cley I

think you will have to practice some s

and

repost

yeah okay let's see anyone noticed that

Poo's play slowly but surely is starting

to look like a

jungle yeah that's good I like Jungles

except for the like malar the theophiles

mosquito I don't like that much about

jungles let's see okay Elias has a

question do the dualistic concepts of

Good and Evil still exist for

enlightened beings um to the extent that

they're still communicating with

unenlightened beings and using um like

w which is just using the the standard
language of delusion while communicating
in a saric context to deluded beings
then yeah although um for them for an
enlightened being you know they've gone
beyond good and evil because good and
evil is just a du a samsaric
duality so Austin Hill says is Cara a
Chad yeah karma is essentially chaa and
chaa is volition or
will so it's like karma is like the
momentum of your mental
States so you could say that
volition is the momentum of your mental
States it's like the momentum of your
perceptions you know because mind in

general consists

predominantly of perceptions and will

perceptions are like the the static or

noun aspect of mind and volition is more

like the kinetic or verb aspect of mind

but really they're two aspects of the

same kind of

phenomenon so let's

see let's see okay

bir is Buddhism considered a Proto

indoeuropean

religion IE Arian I asked because Iola

suggests this I think he may be right

but I'd like your opinion um to the

extent that it was founded by someone

who probably was

Indo-European then yes although it's not

purely Indo-European because I think

Buddhism does rely a lot on on

non-indo-european

ideas like ideas borrowed from the the

Indus Valley Civil civilization like the

whole Shaman movement in India you know

the non

nonic aesthetic movements like The Janes

the Buddhists the the Sonia um

practitioners the

aicas that probably some of the basic

fundamentals of

that that attitude or that point of view

that it's more or less of an atheistic

system it's more or less pessimistic and

that you know this is a bad place you

want to escape from that kind of thing

um there is some evidence suggesting

that the Endo the the indis Valley Civil

civilization did favor that kind of a

spiritual point of view and that that it

kind of remained among the people for

hundreds of years thousand years and

then became more and more mainstream as

it got incorporated into more vadic

systems and so um Buddhism does owe a

lot to this

previc

um maybe indis Valley Civilization

shamina

movement but to the extent that it was

founded by someone who is pretty much

Indo-European and that it flourished it

you know it arose and flourished in what

is essentially an Indo-European culture

then to that extent you could say it's

one of the most Indo-European spiritual

systems remaining

possibly the only more

Indo-European uh spiritual system still

in existence might be like what mimamsa

Hinduism which is just you know firmly

adhering to the

vetas that that would be more

Indo-European but it's really kind of a

fringe movement even in

India so

of the the really um you know like

mainstream systems that you're more

likely to have some exposure to it be
Buddhism and Hinduism would be the two
main Indo-European systems other than
like systems that people are trying to
revive in the west like Germanic
polytheism and so
forth so let's see Gaz can you see
yourself ever returning to the monk life
I don't think so not in this life I
don't think it's going to happen in a in
a future existence who knows but yeah I
I don't think I'm going to become a monk
again in this life so I'll move on to uh
let's
see see maybe P misses the jungle okay
Austin says have you ever read
Bukowski no I've never read Bukowski

that's an easy question to answer

sometimes it's refreshing to get an easy

question like that where you just say

nope next question yeah I don't I have

no idea who Bukowski is he sounds rather

Slavic however cify says hi question

someone said that Buddhism without

belief in rebirth in karma is not

Buddhism but nihilism what do you think

about this statement well I mean

Buddhism without belief in karma is not

really Buddhism I mean belief in karma

is pretty much Essential to Buddhism and

um for example there's a rule in the

rules of monastic discipline saying that

as a general rule if a non- Buddhists

wants to be ordained as a monk he's got
to go on probation I think it's for four
months but if he's like a a vadic you
know like a he follows vadis for example
he doesn't have to go through the um
doesn't have to go through the probation
because he's a kamadi you know he
believes in Karma which is that's it I
mean that's sort of like it's sort of
like a cut off it separates the sheep
from the goats if you don't believe in
karma then it's uh it's it's sort of
like a disqualifier for being a
Buddhist so let see here rebirth on the
other hand I mean the four noble truths
remain true whether whether you're
reborn or not um like desire is the

cause of all suffer uing regardless of
whether there's a next life I mean right
here right now the second Noble Truth is
still true third Noble Truth is still
true first Noble Truth is still true
fourth Noble Truth you pretty much have
to uh work on that one to see for
yourself whether that one's
true I guess you could say that the four
noble truths are still true without
karma but karma is really what is
keeping us here karma is what is locking
us into Sam Sora so it's really we're
trying to overcome our Karma to some
degree or rather to transcend our
Karma um in order to become

enlightened so these Cravings that are

causing us suffering um those are

habitual which is karmic you know it's

just this going this this momentum of

unenlightenment this samsaric momentum

that is keeping us here and that saric

momentum is

karma so

I guess I answered that

question man just trying to keep up with

the the chat I'm having to answer

abnormally

succinctly I'm giving short answers so

cool web asks the second question here

he says aan jayasaro calls Terra

Buddhism an education system others call

it a religion others call it a

philosophy a way of life Etc what is
Buddhism to you how do you describe it
well for starters it's it's like a world
view you know it's sort of like a a map
of Sam Sara or at least a kind of
compass you know helping you to
understand samsara and then what do you
do about it I mean for me it was it was
like a yogic system mainly I mean you
starts off with the philosophy
describing and explaining things to some
degree but mainly that is just setting
the groundwork for the actual practice
like the yogic
practice
so I mean it's a religion for some

people an education system I guess for

some people although it's it's almost a

useless education if you don't actually

act upon the

education

um yeah it's certainly a way of life it

contains philosophy I mean sometimes

like in my translations I I I would

translate somon as

philosopher you know the philosophers

and Priests it's kind of a good

pair so it depends on the individual I

mean for a lot of Asian Buddhists or a

lot of like pure land Buddhists you know

very Faith oriented then yeah this

definitely just it's a religion they've

turned the Buddha into God it's

religion lots of praying and stuff but I mean it depends on the individual it depends on the Buddhist to which determines what Buddhism is to that person but uh like from the from the point of view of the Buddha himself himself assuming that he had a point of view um yeah I mean it was superficially maybe in the elementary stages and educational system and uh also kind of a earlier stages of philosophy because of eventually you have to abandon all philosophies and so it' be more of a way of life I guess but it would be a spiritual yogic way of life so I guess I'll just move on to

buddhis sat

let's see did you ever have an

interaction with a lay person that left

a lasting impact can you share an

example of guiding or teaching someone

and the result of that interaction so

I'm not sure that I fully understand

this question did you ever have an

interaction with a way person that left

a lasting impact I I did have one it was

kind of weird and it's probably not the

kind of lasting impact that bod sat here

is referring to but I was in southern

mon State when I was a monk I was like

36 years old at the time so it was quite

a while ago and I think I was in uh the

I was in the town of thuat which is a

really nice town if you're ever if
you're ever in mon State be sure to drop
by thuzi at uh set Beach is is near
there also chikami Pia is near there and
anyways um someone was brought to see me
and he was part Irish you know his he he
had a like a A great-grandfather or a
grandfather who was like an Irish
soldier who settled in Burma and married
a Burmese girl or a m girl in this case
and he was one of um this this guy that
came to see me is one of his
descendants and I think he was a
Christian and he was kind of a an
arrogant kind of Christian partly
because he may have had a chip on his

shoulder because he was living in a very Buddhist Society surrounded by Buddhists he was probably a Christian mainly because he favored the Irish side of his family tree or something and so one time I mean I mean he was he was kind of arrogant and so he's telling me that he studied extensively Buddhism and Christianity and he came to the conclusion that Jesus and the Buddha were teaching the same thing and then I said well there do seem to be some pretty obvious differences for example and then he just goes no you know he just like shut me and that left an impression I mean first of all being a monk in a in a devoutly Buddhist Society

you're not expecting people to just like
shut you down just like no and you're
just like I'm not going to hear it and
just be quiet so that that was kind of a
shock just because you're not used to
that you're used to just people saying
you know oh yes sir you're very rights
or this kind of stuff and so it's like
for years afterwards I would have these
like fantasies in my mind of just like
kind of backing them against a corner
and just like listing off all the
differences between what Jesus and the
Buddha
taught sort of like this little mind
game I would

play but can you share an example of guiding or teaching someone in the result of that interaction um teaching people on purpose I think just lately since I've become a monk that it's it's starting to bear fruit I guess is I'm starting to get some traction with that but like in Burma as a monk people would come and ask me to teach them dhama and I'd ask him well is there anything in particular you want to know about and he said no just just teach us DH because they just think that you just they get Merit just from sitting through a sermon you know they don't even care what you're talking about and if you talk about anything unusual they'll think

well he's he's a foreigner and he's
saying this weird stuff I've never heard
before maybe he doesn't know what he's
talking about you know because the
burmes are very dogmatic you know the
the monks all pretty much share this
completely Orthodox terod point of view
and you know they all think pretty much
the same way and so they just sit there
peacefully through a sermon that they've
already heard 20 times before and then
they say sadu sadu and they're happy
because they earn Merit for sitting
through it whereas uh so I mean you
don't really benefit people all that
much from deliberately trying to teach

them something in Burma I mean in
America it works a little different or
in the West in
general but uh I did have Burmese monks
occasionally coming up and thanking me
for teaching them was with me not even
trying to teach them anything like I was
living at mahag gandon which is a big
school Monastery like the Reigns Retreat
I spent there there was like 500 five or
600 monks and like 900 novices also like
a 100 mangy scy dogs and I went for
almost around every day I didn't need to
go for alms round because there was like
a big like a dining hall breakfast Hall
and it was a famous monastery so a lot
of like rich people especially and and

like tourists and so forth would come
and donate food to the monks and you
know there'd be this long line of monks
and you know it was all very picturesque
and people would be taking pictures and
all that but I just didn't have any use
for that I just walked across this
rickety teak Bridge called The upan
Bridge over to the Village of ton every
morning and just walked for alms through
ton Village and came back and ate
whatever ate whatever people put into my
bowl and without me knowing it Burmese
monks were watching me do that and then
they tried it you know they were kind of
inspired it's like this is the way the

Buddha ate you know they didn't just go
to the the dining hall and so then
they'd come up to me few
times and just thank me just you
inspired me to do this just from
watching you do it I decided I'll do it
too and I like it it's I like it it's
nice so that was like some of the best
ways I would teach people in in in Burma
is not really through trying to teach
them anything it's just like teaching by
example I
guess so let's see I'll just move on to
dama
River see when I go deep in meditation
an enormous fear appears it feels feels
like I'm going to die or go insane it's

like I hit a roadblock should I push

forward or stop

meditating let's see and the problem is

if I scroll down too

far man there's so many questions you

guys are you guys are overwhelming me

with questions here okay dama River says

okay when I go deep in meditation an

enormous fear appears it feels like I'm

going to die or go insane it's like I've

hit a roadblock should I push forward or

stop meditating okay that's fairly

common that a lot of people when they

get into meditation deep enough that

they feel like their ego is starting to

fade out or dissolve they'll Panic you

know it feels like they're
dying and I mean mainly that's like your
ego your samsaric unenlightened mind
fighting for its
survival because that's something that
you don't really hear a whole lot about
is that when you're doing dhamma
practice I mean there are certain levels
of your mind that are going to be
fighting tooth and nail against that
dhama practice because those aspects of
your mind do not want to die you know
it's like any animal fighting for its
life it's a cornered animal and it's
going to be throwing out all kinds of
stuff you know images of naked women or
just weird itches suddenly arising or

just anything anything they can to
derail your meditation I I used to know
a western monk he was a senior ojn he
was like Abit of a monastery he could
not meditate because every time he'd
start settling down into into like somat
he'd start getting some kind of somat
all of a sudden he'd start getting
violent neck spasms it would just jerk
his head sideways like this over and
over again and in all likelihood um it
didn't happen except for when he was
starting to meditate well and it was
probably like some kind of hysterical
conversion reaction you know like a
psychosomatic symptom of his

subconscious mind mind freaking out not
wanting to lose its you know it its
influence you know or its survival even
and it would just be like percolating up
to the surface in in like this neurotic
symptom and then shortly after I met him
he dropped out and fell madly in bed
with a certain young woman and probably
the next spasms went
away and that's just the way it is so I
mean if if you do experience fear or
dread or I mean it's bear in mind that
that is like the the unenlightened
aspect of your personality fighting for
its Survival by just throwing any kind
of obstacles in the way of your
spiritual practice so I think it'

probably be good to just tough it out
like if fear starts to arise note the
fear and then it's not you being afraid
anymore it's just fear is arising that
that's really one of the most powerful
spiritual practices anybody can do is
just being mindful so that like anger or
fear or or worry or anything like that
arises you can just observe it like an
ich theologist observing a dead fish and
say just you know it's not me it's just
you know fear is
arising and then that can become just
your your object of meditation for as
long as it's arising and then once it
fades out which it will then you go back

to whatever it was you're meditating on
before
so I guess I answered that question and
again I have to answer these questions
more succinctly than usual just because
people are asking them faster than I'm
answering them so PSA says are you aware
that monks
within with 30 plus vossel are treated
like Precious Treasures in Thailand why
didn't you move to why didn't you move
there and enjoy the benefits of your
impressive seniority well I mean I had
benefits of impressive seniority in in
Burma also although it is true I've been
told that in Thailand monks don't last
as long it's more of a sensual kind of

culture um and so any monk who's been a monk for like five years is already being called ajon whereas I remember um I had to go to a a ceremony it was the POA ceremony in California um in in a Burmese tradition so I go there and they you're ranked in accordance with seniority and I had like 25 Wasa at the time I'd been a monk for like 25 years still I was like halfway back there are so many monks that are were ordained as children you know they got they've been a monk for like 50 60 years A lot of them so it wasn't that big of a deal but still I mean I was plenty plenty respected and and semif

famous in Burma so it wouldn't have been

necessary for me to go to Thailand and

have to learn

how you know the the Thai

mispronunciation of poly and just the

Thai language and

everything

so I mean Burma really is probably a

better country for dhma practice you

know it's possibly the most Buddhist

country in the world right

now with their brutal and incompetent

government helping it to stay that way

because they're keeping out you know

like

the capitalists and that kind of thing

so I guess I answered that question so

I'll go to maram made Mahayana this
thing is not mine this owner is not me
this reason for the thing's existence is
not myself this okay that's not even a
question so I'll just move on to the
next one let's see Stephen says
congratulations on 100 exciting episodes
yeah well there haven't been any
explosions that's that's something I'm
going to have to attend to in order to
get my Q&A is more exciting there should
be at least one explosion for
Q&A okay Austin says how did ad vant
help push Buddhism out of India why did
Buddhism lose to it well I think
Buddhism lost mainly because the Turkish

Muslims invaded and slaughtered the Buddhists um especially I mean they were especially against Buddhism I I learned on the Discord server just recently that the word in I think it's Arabic for an idol is Boot something like that which just means Buddhism it's it's like for a while they were equating Buddhists with idolators especially the Invaders in in India and uh I mean that's one of the reasons why Buddhism lost out is is it just pretty much got exterminated and the Buddhists were really uncompromising pacifists uh whereas the the Hindus or the Proto Hindus they at least had like military Heroes you know like the the mahabarata and the ramayana are both

about war you know this the Bhagavad
Gita is you know towards the beginning
of it
especially Vishnu God Krishna is is
actually encouraging Arjuna to fight in
a war against his own relatives you know
saying it's okay you know so the so the
Hindus had more of a military kind of at
least uh an military attitudes or
warlike attitudes that they could resort
to that were like Orthodox tradition
whereas Buddhism was just
uncompromisingly pacifistic and so your
your main odd your I mean your main
choice is when the Turks invade your
village or you know they're surrounding

your Monastery you can run away and hide
or you can let yourself get
slaughtered that would be pretty much
the only two options Unless somehow you
could just convert to Islam all of a
sudden and persuade these Turks that
don't speak your language that you've
just instantaneously converted to Islam
before they cut your head
off so that's one and also another
reason that I have read why Buddhism
died out in India is it was just
becoming so esoteric you know it was
getting into all this weird mahayan
Tantra stuff like vaj rayana kind of
stuff that um and it was was becoming so
University Centric instead of you know

monks out in the forests are determining Doctrine it's you know these Buddhist University professors disseminating these really intellectual esoteric kind of Buddhist points of view that the average Buddhist just could not understand they didn't get it so that also weakened Buddhism but the final nail on the coffin of course was the the Muslim invasion of India which killed off um most of the most of the Buddhists so with regard to ADV vant in particular I I don't see how ADV vant really outcompeted Buddhism because I mean ADV vant and certain aspects of Mahayana like the prna paramita were

pretty much on a par with each other you know they were learning from each other they would be debating with each other and then strengthening their own weak points to defend themselves against the arguments of the other side and so forth I've been told that viant was very much influenced by Buddhism which I mean that could be part of how uh it weakened Buddhism was by like taking some of their fire you know and you know adding some of the best aspects of Buddhist philosophy into Hindu philosophy to kind of shore up the Hindu philosophy and strengthen it so that that would be that would be an aspect too I guess that would be like the main one with regard

to Austin's question here I think

so I guess I'll just move on to the next

question which is from the hery Gertie

man see man I'm I'm surprised that uh

there's so many people actually watching

this okay what is your opinion about

meditating on sound I have found

effective to meditate on sound such as

running water or my steps when I'm

walking yeah well the founder of the

tradition in which I was ordained

venerable Tong Pulu he meditated on

sound a lot and the reason why he

meditated on sound was because he lived

out in the forest and there's crickets

chirping all night and so he just

meditated on hearing hearing hearing and
you can get very far with that I assume
you can get as far with meditation on
hearing as you can meditation on
breathing so my opinion about meditating
on sound I've done it sometimes you know
at night you know I'd be living at Tom
Pulu Monastery where he also lived when
he was alive you know just crickets just
you know Orchestra all
night and you live in a forest and
usually there's there's some kind of
sound going on all the time so it's a
convenient object for meditation and
some ways it's easier than the breath
simply because if your breath gets
really subtle you might not be able to

note it very well whereas the sound

pretty much stays the

sound

so yeah yeah I think it's it's

definitely a valid meditation technique

and if it works for you then go for

it okay so let's see

here Hil Stevens that is

correct okay Shak Rosa says is there any

progress or even a gleam in the eye of

potential future progress towards a

based Buddhist organization yeah so long

as there's a a demand for it or like an

appreciation for that sort of thing then

yeah sure I mean it could happen I don't

see why not especially now that people

are just getting sick to death of just
the leftist hysteria that is just
running a muck you know it's it's
becoming less popular it's starting to
go out of style a little bit and
so um yeah I think uh the pendulum may I
don't think it's going to swing quite
the other way but at least it's going to
swing Less in the extreme leftist
Direction and um yeah in in which case
then the opportunities for the arising
of a based Buddhist organization would
increase I think although I'm not
holding my breath but it's definitely a
possibility so Shakra Goa says here if I
remember correctly humble stature was
talking about such an idea but the

wheels may have come off that plan a
couple years ago yeah the wheels are all
four wheels came off of that plan but
still if you get someone who's more
stable that can just stick with this
with an idea without like changing plans
every few weeks which was the case with
that that particular
situation then yeah it's definitely
possible especially you get some
eccentric uh weird rich person who wants
to donate you know some significant
amount of money to get something
actually started like even a bricks and
mortar kind of a building or at least
you know like a a significant online

presence or something you know paying
somebody so that they don't have to work
for living so they can just dedicate
full time to organizing and and you know
building up something like that that
would help so it's otherwise it's just
going to have to be a Grassroots kind of
thing and just come up from from the
bottom and uh probably sooner or later
something will coals I mean there there
already are I don't you wouldn't call
them based Buddhist organizations but
it's traditional Buddhist organizations
you know conservative Buddhist
organizations which is most most of the
Asian
places so at least there is that and if

you can find like a a monk who's got one

foot in the Asian community and and kind

of one foot in the Western Community who

is like strict in his practice and so

forth you know he could serve as kind of

a seed

Crystal but I mean it didn't happen with

me but it is

possible and so I'm just going to keep

moving here

okay let's see NPC number six tagging P

basa AKA David Reynolds may help him

find questions in the chat more quickly

I'm just scrolling down and uh gradually

scrolling

down okay

Pega Pega says could you comment on the importance of memory as a faculty and provide some tips for its development well kind of strangely in pully the word for memor is Sati which is the same as the word for mindfulness and also kind of ironic that in like um the contemplative orders of Roman Catholicism like the discal carites mindful mindfulness was called recollection which also means memory so there is a connection I have been told by a relatively very wise burmes seato that really they're in a way they're the same although it seems to me that being in the present moment and like recalling the past is not exactly the same I

really do not see a necessary connection
there but uh I mean the clearer your
mind is the better your memory is going
to be you know the more awake and alert
you are like the more mindful you are
the better your memory is going to be
when you have a need to bring up
something in your
memory so see could you comment on the
importance of memory as a faculty um
it's not really important important for
a spiritual reason simply because what
matters is now and so in to some degree
you kind of mortify the memory I mean
you're not you're not really going into
the past I mean to any more than you

have to if you have to like in everyday activities you have to recall something that's fine but like Krishna murty used to say Jay Krishna mty was saying that our memory really screws us up because you know when we're using words and so forth we're relying on memory which means we're not fully in the present moment

so yeah I don't think that deliberately improving your memory is going to necessarily be all that helpful spiritually unless you're just a forgetful person you keep forgetting like basic spiritual like philosophical Concepts or

something

so yeah I guess the best tip for the development of memory is just improve your mind fulness so that you're more you know your mind is more clear and alert and also memory Works through Association so anything that you can use to like diversify the branches of your neuronal system I I'm not exactly sure how to do that I'm not really a neurophysicist

neurophysiologist but um like I think one reason why my memory is better than most people's memories is that I've got like

this this web of of associations where one thing can remind me of something

different pretty easily like I can see

broccoli on television it reminds me of

Arnold schwarzeneger for some reason and

I'm just sitting there racking my brains

trying to think why does broccoli remind

me of Arnold Schwarzenegger and then it

might be this weird obscure pathway of

associations that were subconscious that

led to led to

ano so I guess I did okay on answering

that question let's

see now I got to scroll back up because

sometimes it'll just automatically Boop

to the bottom and then I've got to

scroll

upwards

okay okay Mary Jay yeah he's uh give a

thumbs up yeah that's a good idea I
guess and Shakra Goa says let's see oh
okay Shakra Goa says he's uh he's
withholding judgment until he sees how
the stream turns out yeah because I
could just completely just go off the
rails at any moment so Prav or also
known by the Alias of Mr Prav says I am
reading anjan mun biography and there's
a story that he teaches a remote Village
of simple budo meditation and after a
few months most of them had mind reading
power do you think it's possible well
damn near anything is possible anything
you can imagine would be possible at
least in a metaphysical sense and I just

uh plagiarized that from David Hume but I mean if you read ajan mun's biography there's so much stuff there that is just unbelievable to a Westerner who was brought up with a kind of a western attitude you know the fault finding Cobra dragon and tigers just lining up along his W walking meditation path just to watch him walk back and forth and you know long dead Buddhas with retinues of thousands of long Dead arant coming to visit him all this kind of stuff it's pretty hard to swallow and I think that the story of you know teaching a simple meditation technique to some remote villagers and having them all acquire psychic powers um you know that would be

in the same um take it with a grain of

salt category that you know it's not

necessarily BS but still you know

there's so much in that book that is

really hard to swallow

that I mean just take it or leave it I

guess but it is possible but and that's

not the same as saying that it's

likely okay so let's see

here see Jared Jared says hello poo as a

Terra voden did

you did or do you ever spend time

familiarizing yourself with Mahayana

Andor vajrayana texts and if so what are

were your motives well I mean at first

before I settled on trra I was kind of

leaning towards Zen especially SoDo Zen

but um I've gradually acquired more of

an appreciation for renai

coons um so I went through a long phase

of just studying pretty much every

religious text I could get my hands on

pretty much the only major religious

text I've never read would be like uh

the grant which is the the sacred

scripture of of the

six um so yeah I just went through a

phase of of understanding that kind of

thing and I was always impressed by um

Nara so I've even got the I even got The

Fez here The nagar

Fez and so I mean I have read the Mula

majamaa Kara since I was a monk and uh a

book a book called uh nagara Philosophy
by Caven Kata ramanan I think and I do
have Mahayana texts on the bookcase I
have read a lot of maama kind of stuff
especially just because it resonates
with me and it's not really um at odds
with Terra it helps me to understand
Budd certain Buddhist Concepts better
for example the whole dependent core
Rising thing I think nag arj understood
it better than any Terra voden who wrote
some sort of text that people take
seriously so with regard to vaj Rana I
really was never all that much
interested in tibetan Buddhism largely
because I was mainly interested in what

the Buddha actually taught and Tibetan
Buddhism has kind of deviated from that
I mean it still got some basic teachings
but then it's it's just adopted all this
other stuff including like um you know
Tibetan Shamanism and so forth that it's
just never really appealed to me all
that much although I have read the
Tibetan Book of the Dead the Tibetan
book of the great Liberation the
autobiography of milera that kind of
thing and all of that was when I was a
mon well the the let's see the stuff
about milera especially I read at a
monastery in Burma when I was a
monk so I guess I answered that
question so I'm just going to

uh let's see Jared says not a question

I've greatly enjoyed the conversations

between poo and Stevens and hope to see

more in the future yeah I think um we do

have some ideas on the table and it's

largely my own inertia and laziness and

preoccupation with other things that

have prevented that from going forward

faster than they have and so I beg

stephens's pardon first and

foremost let's

see let's see looking through and one

reason why I'm like tilting my head back

and going like this more than I usually

do is because the chat text is very

small and I can like increase in the

size of my list text to like jumbo
letters like in a kids book so that I
can read it let's
see Cool Whip oh see for ruie here in
Western Europe I just got on the stream
now 38 minutes in well you can you can
go back and watch the first 38 minutes
uh later because I'm not going to take
down the live stream unless I'm
compelled to do so against my will so CR
whip asks the third question here here I
am confused on how Karma Works can you
clarify how the principle of subjective
equilibrium is not the same as for every
spiritual action there's a spiritual
reaction I see the
same um well it's not necessarily I mean

kind of how Karma works but I mean it's
it's a different different principle
really that I mean it's like how Duality
works the principle of subjective
equilibrium is more of a commentary on
duality in general than on Karma you
know it's um I mean it's not necessarily
well I mean I mean they are
interrelated but I mean the principle of
subjective equilibrium just says that I
mean you're going to take the the the
half of the stuff you experience that is
most to your liking and call it good and
the half of the aspects of your
experience that are least to your liking
and call it bad and if you just got rid

of all the bad stuff all that would
happen is that that line between good
and bad would just shift so that the
lower half of what you used to call good
would now be called bad that's that's
like the principle of subjective
equilibrium is that you know positive
and negative have to stay in balance in
your
mind um but with regard to
Karma um yeah karma is like a a a
different kind of principle I mean it's
the momentum of your mental States so um
in a way it's kind of a
different a different sort ort of issue
than like Duality I mean obviously if
you're creating Karma you're still

living in Duality and I've never really tried to correlate the two before and sitting here in front of a camera I might not be able to do it very much justice but karma is just I mean it's like dreaming I mean you are creating a world as you dream based on past experiences and just the momentum of your your attitudes and your beliefs and so forth that's just spinning off this world that I mean a lot of time it's a bad dream you're creating your own dream but still you can have nightmares I mean we don't we no longer believe that dreams are implanted into our sleeping Mind by a small G God which is what a

lot of ancient people believe maybe some people even today believe that but nowadays we pretty much accept that we are generating our own dreams at night you know our own mind is generating these dreams and sometimes they're bad dreams but still we are the ones who are creating them and that's pretty much how Karma works it's just everything that you

do has some sort of um it it adds to the momentum in some way so if you do something good it adds it adds some good momentum positive momentum to to your general stream you know you do something that's you know very negative very harmful or something that AB sort of

negative momentum going going in the

other

direction and it may be that the

principle of subjective equilibrium is

really going to influence whether your

karma is more Good Karma or Bad Karma

just because of your perception how you

identify it so two different people can

experience essentially the same sort of

thing like it's raining you know you got

two Nextdoor neighbors they look out the

window and it's

raining one of them will be happy

because he just planted stuff in his

backyard the other one will be happy

because he wanted to go on a picnic or

something so I mean the same events can cause happiness or unhappiness depending on how you perceive the world and what you consider to be good and bad so I think it would fit in that way but uh I really cannot give long elaborate questions because after I finally cut off the the chat questions I still got like a a goodly length list of other questions so anyways let's see here ruy says would you care to comment from a terod perspective on stanza okay this is this is in the the the list too would you care to comment from a terod perspective on stanza 24 chapter 25 of nagar's root stanzas at no time nowhere and to no one did the Buddha any Dharma

teach and I looked for the Mula majaka

Kaka on my bookshelf last night and I

could not find it I don't know where it

is but this is a majamaa question so I'm

putting on the maamaa feds

let's see

here it's not exactly a mirror when

you're looking into a a camera screen

okay so I haven't read the mulama I

haven't read it in context of the Mula

maamaa caraka because I could not find

the book on my bookcase I hope it's

somewhere in the house but not

necessarily so but the the versing

question is at no time nowhere did

to and to no one did Buddha any Dharma

teach well I mean that's like from a more ultimate or absolute point of view where there is no self so there is no Buddha and in fact the maamaa or the some Mahayana Buddhists in general have taken no self to just mean nothing I mean nothing is ultimately real and I think that is the correct the correct interpretation of dependent coal rising and no self it's not just that there is no subject there's also No Object and so um it's all just dependently Co rising and samsaric it's a kind of Illusion that the Buddha taught Dharma to liberate beings and so forth and within the context of the illusion you know it's invaluable it's

precious but you know from the ultimate point of view there was no guy named goab Buddha he didn't go around teaching anything it just didn't happen because it's

I mean in Ultimate Reality there is no differentiation there is no papancha papancha means like you know separating this from that you know knowing [__] from Shola it's it's like ultimately samsaric that's what causes Duality you know that's like the the nature of samsara and perception too because perception is samsara and so you do away with all the samsaric stuff there's there's no Buddha teaching

Dumbo anybody

so I guess that would be my my brief

explanation relatively

brief so I'll just move on Austin here

and I guess I can take the

uh The Fez off it's a damn good Fez

though I mean you're into fezes fezo

Rama on on the Internet it's it's the

place to get it there they're all very

nicely made even has like a little

ventilation hole on the

top anyways

see Austin says why do some monks avoid

using no self not for nonself I

understand the the Buddha what said that

believing there is a self is wrong View

and believing there is no self is wrong

view why okay is this two questions

let's

see why do some monks avoid using no

self and opt for yeah it's like aan Tano

doesn't say no self he says not self

I and he he thinks that that's like a

significant difference but I mean it all

it all comes to the same thing I think I

understand the Buddha said that

believing there is a self is wrong View

and believing there is no self is wrong

view why okay well this is actually like

two questions um I think some of the

monks who opt for not self instead of no

self are going for the the crypto self

that there is a self it's just none of

the five condas you know it's off the scale that nibana datu is the self you know sort of like Brahman is the Atman for vedantic Hindus so I think some monks who don't want to say no self they'll say not self is in a way they're kind of leaving the back door unlocked for some kind of self viw to come in get into the house

somehow um otherwise they're just kind of quibbling over semantics because it generally amounts to the same thing but towards the end end here it says I understand that the Buddha said that believing there is a self is wrong View and believing there is no self is wrong view why well because believing anything

is a samsaric delusional view belief is
a samsaric delusional phenomenon
anything that you believe which is going
to be a perception it's going to be like
in symbols is not going to contain the
actual truth it's not going to act
accurately any who are nearly accurately
represent
reality so it's just a soric phenomenon
of these symbols and the symbols are
just very different from reality you
know like I've said it over and over
again like the symbols t r are radically
different from an actual tree and that's
the way perception works I mean you
might have an image of a tree you might

be a botanist who has written books about trees but still it's all these symbols that are just infinitely far away from an actual tree as the thing in itself as it really is in Ultimate Reality so believing that there is a self is I mean he in in the early text it doesn't just flat out say that believing in a self is wrong View and believing in no self is wrong view but in the AA waga there are a few verses that contain a pun saying that for a monk there is no ATA and no n and technically going literally the ATA here means anything taken up and the N is a past participle of n which means to discard so there's nothing taken up and

nothing discarded but it's obviously

also a kind of pun or play on words

because ATA can mean self n i mean it's

kind of unusual but grammatically it can

also mean no self so for the monk there

is no self and no not

self and that's just because

any kind of belief any kind of like

perceptual belief is going to be

delusional for the reasons that I hope I

kind of explained just uh a minute or

two ago so I'm just going to move on to

Shakra goa's question here what is good

in

life to not be driven Away by your

enemies to not hear the lamentation of

your women yeah what is good to like

yeah to destroy your enemies to see them

driven before you to hear the

lamentation of the women everybody knows

that

see but uh yeah just I mean it depends

on the person I guess but from a

Buddhist point of view what is good in

life is to have you know minimized

desires and be content with little be

content with what you've

got earn

Merit be generous especially to

wandering Aesthetics wandering holy

men to listen to dham study it that kind

of thing that that's good in life

too some people might arguably suggest

that it's even better than defeating
your enemies seeing them driven before
you and hearing the lamentation of the
women so Mahayana and uh I think I'm
getting the idea here that uh some
people are kind of taking advantage of
the fact that the uh I I'm not easily
counting how many
questions but anyways see maram Mahayana
says do you know Ashan AMA he lives in
mudia Monastery in Franconia for some
years now no I I don't think I've ever
heard of
Ain yeah I'm not I'm not sure I mean
maybe I I used I met one monk oh no I
met a disciple of one monk who lived in

like the Netherlands and he was one of those monks that there was some Asian monks Burmese I think that were just traveling around giving talks and they ordained him and then just left him behind so he's like this orain monk with no teachers or anything just on his own didn't know much of anyia but I mean it wasn't like he was deliberately breaking the rules it's just that he didn't know them to begin with but yeah I don't it could possibly be him I don't know but yeah I've never been to Frank con I've never been to Europe in general the closest I ever came to uh being in Europe was um I worked on a Polish ship when I was like 21 years old and had to

go through customs after I got off the

Polish ship because technically I was

like on polish territory when I was on

this polish

ship so let's

see okay someone else says that uh Ain

Oda is Czech so I probably have never

met him and I'm not sure who it would be

uh not quind

Drew yeah it's like Andrew except

spelled with a Q any news on your next

book well well I mean I've got enough

material to publish two books at least

two books you know along the same lines

as my first three the third book the

next book that I come out with would

probably be like accounts of my personal experiences so it' be more autobiographical but um it's going to take like a week of free time I guess I could just start slowly chipping away at it just dedicating you know like one chapter a day of just getting it edited and into a format that can then go on to like Amazon self-publishing or something so yeah I guess I should uh get off my lazy ass sometimes and get onto my lazy ass in a different chair and uh edit edit books I mean I need to get into the the habit I guess because uh obviously I haven't done any book editing since I edited the first three which was after I disr but before I started getting a

paying job so I just had like a

two-month window where I just like

pounded away at editing

books see

see okay Prav also known as Mr Prav says

how that Fez is related to venerable

Naro what you

mean this

Fez I don't know it's just uh it's just

one of those things where how do I turn

this it's just one of those things that

uh I I wear when I answer nagar or

majamaa questions which I guess this

arguably

is but uh I don't know it's got like the

the allseeing eye you know the three

three marks there which could which

could symbolically represent three of

something you know what I'm

saying H so let's see Cool Whip oh wait

Cool Whip is referring to somebody else

did vable say questions close at 13

00 let's see if so oh all of a sudden it

booped way up to the

top let's see so maybe leave a message

for those with questions who arrive

late

see

yeah yeah the more cues the merrier yeah

until until I'm so horar and I'm I'm

starting to look like Joe Biden or

something see more cues the marrier or

the Mary J or let's

see how can we okay mooners says how can

we produce another great orator like

migu

Garand

gananda Tera gosh I'm not even

pronouncing Terror right that will

defeat the abrahamic so how can we

produce another great orator well I

guess yearning for one might produce

sufficient Karma as to actually

materialize one if you got enough people

yearn for something then that the karma

of that can actually help to generate it

otherwise we have to uh just wait for it

to occur spontaneously I mean if you

want to adopt a more um materialistic

approach empirical approach you're just

going to have to wait for some

charismatic and uh like what's the word

smooth like some a good

orator gosh eloquent that's it eloquent

El

eloquent so yeah we'll just have to wait

for that I

guess so let's

see okay we got people talking that's oh

Shaka says also what even is

Shola oh it's it's an old saying before

my time even I think my father used to

say it to know [__] from Shola I think

Shinola was an old brand of shoe polish

which in its brown color may have

resembled something

else so see Demi

oruo what is this Demi

urho Demi uino

says are specific karmic dispositions

which perpetuates a person or jivatma

soul in samsara this difference in

perception disposition regarding Karma

then can make oneself continue in some

SAR cycle specific karmic dispositions

yeah I assume there are specific karmic

dispositions that will determine what

kind of existence you get and I mean

some specific karmic dispositions are

going to be towards being a human and

then you're going to have subdivisions

you know towards being like some angry

human in a like a technologically
advanced civilization or some peaceful
human as a hunter gatherer somewhere I
mean there's all these different streams
these these streams of momentum of karma
that are going to land being in other in
various situations and then you're going
to have you know the what is this
specific karmic disposition that's going
to land you as a
rabbit maybe maybe a tundra an Arctic
hair for example or or whatever it's
like each species of animal is going to
have its own karmic disposition and then
of course you're going to have an
infinite number of karmic dispositions
that are so different from ours they're

not even going to be in this version of reality they're going to be in some different plane of existence for example so yeah it's the uh specific karmic disposition that is going to perpetuate I mean itself because it's not really a soul that is being perpetuated it's just the karma itself this this momentum this stream of Consciousness or mental States or volition will you know in the schopenhauerian sense it's you know it's it's one disposition is going to be creating this kind of reality and another position is going to be creating this other kind of

reality so I guess I answered that

question see so maram made Mahayana okay

that's not a

question let's see Cool Whip that's not

a question okay Lucid what do you think

of the Buddha box in South

Park wow i' you know I've only seen just

a few episodes of South Park I I

everyone said that it's just ingenious

it's really good satire and so forth but

just the drawing style of the cartoons

is so crude that just kind of turns me

off so I really don't I've never seen

the Buddha box in South

Park so sorry about

that so let's see here next question is

from

Elgato the

cat I am 22 years old but haven't quite

come to terms with the fact that I'm in

my 20s I still feel like a teenager

teenager and I know a lot of people feel

like this at my age how do I slow down

time well I mean I'm tempted to say try

LSD because then like five minutes can

last over an hour but uh I don't think

that would be good in the long

term and uh yeah I mean it's just

something that you have to get used to I

mean it's just I don't think there's any

way you can avoid getting

older other than just ceasing to

exist so yeah that kind of reminds me of

like when I first started realizing I
was getting old I think the first time I
started realizing I was getting old I
was about 16 years old and a a little
girl called me mister that's the first
time anybody ever called me mister other
than maybe my mother when she was mad at
me and then a little you get a little
older you're getting into college and
some of the Playboy Centerfolds are
younger than me some of the athletes
with multi-million dollar contracts are
younger than me
so yeah I can kind of relate to this I
mean to some degree I still feel like a
teenager too other than just the general
lack of Vitality and stamina that I used

to

have so yeah I don't think you're going

to slow down time I think you're just

going to have to adjust to the situation

you know it's like you can't really

adjust the

situation to to fit yourself very well

as as a general rule sometimes you can

sometimes you can't but more realistic

is to adjust your

own

attitude to the situation and then and

then there's no

problem because as I say doesn't matter

what it

is if you accept it it's not a problem

and it doesn't matter what it is if you

won't accept it it's a problem it's just

whether you choose to accept something

or not determines whether it's a problem

or not so

oh okay so Shakra Goa says how does The

Fez help well obviously it it

does let's

see moer says how many knees can a knee

grow if a knee could grow

knees yeah that's that's that's a Coan I

guess you're GNA have to meditate on

that one and demier gho says hugs from

Brazil

nice I've never received a Brazilian hug

before

okay so that's not question okay so I

think I'm actually caught up with chat questions so I think we're gonna kind of uh neglect chat questions for a while and I'm not going to see the chat questions because I cannot see just the for whatever reason I cannot see chat questions and list questions at the same time if I click on the list questions to bring them to the Forefront the chat questions entirely disappear and vice versa so I'm just starting with the standard Q&A 100 list and okay welcome to Q&A number 100 I am your host poo basa and the first question or probably at this point the 31st question is from Raphael and Raphael says we know that

the historical Buddha allowed the
consumption of animal products but wood
oh wait a minute I need to make this
bigger so that I'm not squinting at
it just a minute one moment
please oh yeah I can like sit way back
and see this
now okay we know that the historical
Buddha allowed the consumption of animal
products but would he allow us to eat
the meat of animals that were previously
kept in terrible conditions or would he
allow us to drink the milk of cows whose
babies have been taken away and
artificially inseminated which is
unpleasant and painful for the animal
well again this is confusing Buddhist

ethics with Western utilitarian ethics
Buddhist ethics are entirely
subjective you know it's depending on
your own mental States determines
whether what you do is right or wrong or
good or bad or appropriate or
inappropriate or whatever whereas
thinking about like the the objective
empirical outward ramifications of an
action that you know it's like if you
buy meat you are indirectly voting in
favor of the killing of animals and
cruelty to animals and so forth it just
doesn't work that way so I mean it's
considering that ethics in Buddhism are
subjective and psychological if you can

eat meat with a mindful clear peaceful mind then you're not doing anything wrong it may be that the animal was tortured to death in which case I don't know maybe there's like some kind of hormones pervading the meat that might cause an adverse effect on your your meditation or something but um yeah I mean if you can I mean the way animals were killed in the old days it wasn't particularly kind you know they get their throat cut or whatever so which they don't
like pigs do not like getting their throat cut that's why they scream and gurgle and so forth when it's happening but if you can eat that pork

mindfully with like a clear peaceful
mind you're not doing anything
wrong and it may be that someone can say
well a sociopath can murder people with
a clear peaceful mind but really they
don't have a clear peaceful mind I mean
they're in a state of agitation they
might kind of enjoy it in some
way but it's uh like a sick diseased
kind of way that they enjoy it and it's
not the same as eating a piece of
meat
so I guess I answer that question so I'm
going to move on to Raphael's next
question which is have you ever dived
deeper into dosm if yes what do you like

and what you don't like about the

philosophy well I do have like three

different translations of the D Ching

here I've read

theang um and I like both of them they

are

profound um but the thing is I've never

really found much to dive deeper into

it's like um those are like the two main

texts of dosm as far as I know and I

mean it's not really an organized system

it's I mean it's not a howto book other

than a few things just talking about the

the attitude of the

sage but it's not really giving you any

kind of systematic method of becoming

more sage like which is I think one of

the main um disadvantages of dosm ALS Al
I have read that modern Daoism a lot of
it especially like in Taiwan or
something has gone in the direction of
like sorcery and magic and so forth that
doesn't really have much to do with the
da Jing or the jeang
zoo so yeah I mean I haven't dived any
deeper than reading those two books that
I mentioned and just you know
occasionally reading something about
dosm that um it I mean it's it's nice I
like it it's it's just really kind of a
it has like an uplifting effect you can
just open the ding at you know any page
and just read it and it'll just kind of

sink in sort of like reading the dapada

or

something um but aside from that

um yeah I think the main disadvantages

are one that it's got some weird modern

developments and two it really doesn't

have any kind of systematic method

behind it which for some people may be

an advantage but still I mean it's just

something that you just kind of read it

and let it soak in and then you put the

book down and I mean there's really not

much else you can do it seems to me

unless you just really want to study up

on it thoroughly find some doist Sage I

guess there are serious practitioners

and teachers of dosm that take it

seriously as a kind of yogic tradition
and they know a lot more about it than I
do I just I landed on Buddhism it worked
for me it had it appealed to me so
that's what I went with and I can read
and appreciate DST
texts um but still I'm a
Buddhist so I'm just GNA move on to
Raphael's thirdd
question is criticizing the authenticity
of the Abid dama a taboo in Burma and
other Southeast Asian countries or or
are there already famous monks who do
that well I think maybe in Thailand
there might be monks who say Abid dama
really was not the teaching of Buddha

I'm not sure about Sri Lanka even less sure about some place like Cambodia or LA but in

Burma I am unaware of any monk who isn't just like like totally notorious you know some some Monk who's like On The Fringe maybe not really held in high esteem by the Buddhist Community there he might say that Abid dama um is not authentic but as a general rule the burmes consider Abid dama philosophy to be the highest and most important teachings of Buddha that the burmes just take Abid dama as just really really important and it would be a rare monk who would come forward and denounce it I mean I used to get into like private

discussions with monks about Abid dama

sometimes mentioning to some of my

closest like lay supporters that yeah

Abid dama is like old commentary you

know I just tell them that you know Abid

dama is like a old version of the wisi

MAA or

something excuse

me

so uh yeah it's it's sort of like Burma

has like a medieval attitude with regard

to to their religion sort of like a

medieval European with regard to

Catholicism and a European a medieval

European probably wouldn't just come out

flat out and like especially if he was

like a a bishop or something you know he wouldn't say well St Paul was wrong that that shouldn't that shouldn't be part of the the Bible that shouldn't be part of the New Testament you know he You' you know you get in trouble I mean a Burmese monk who's who would Den Abid dama wouldn't get burned at the stake or anything but uh you know he'd lose a lot of street cred so to speak and uh get a lot of blowback a lot of push back from other monks including much more famous more senior monks than him and you know his reputation would probably be in Ruins I could get away with it because I was a weird Foreigner and you know if if they didn't believe it you know most

Burmese people wouldn't believe that
Abid dama wasn't really taught by the
Buddha they'd think well he's just a
foreigner poor thing he can't really
understand dma like us Burmese
people he's just a barbarian and you
know he's doing really good you know
like a lot of Burmese people they'll
they'll see a western monk or a western
Buddhist the way we would see a dog
walking on his H legs you know it's like
they don't do it very well but you're
impressed that they're doing it at
all so I'm just going to move on next
question here this is from Jeffrey and
Jeffrey says sometimes things you say

resonate and stick with me such as as
the time you said something to the
effect of if you wake up and are not
spiritually prepared it can split your
personality could this waking up be
realizing that nearly everything you had
ever learned and accepted as truth has
been based on lies could it also be the
feeling that we are in a simulation what
are the possible splittings of
Personality effects okay well first of
all I got to address that part I don't I
don't recall ever seeing exactly this
this idea of if you wake up and are not
spiritually prepared it can split your
personality um I mean if you have you
make some kind of progress that your

entire system isn't prepared for like in
yoga they talk about this a lot is that
you have to purify your body just so
that when your mind gets more purified
you know it's not becoming too too like
brilliant to start burning and damaging
your body you know you're you know if
your mind is purer than your body is
then you know it can cause damage to
your body something like that but I
don't think I was saying that it was
like I'm trying to understand what it
was that I said that Jeffrey interpreted
as me saying this if you wake up and are
not spiritually prepared it can split
your

personality well I mean it can be that
if you really do wake up you have some
sort of realization some profound
realization and you're not prepared for
it it can mess you up a little bit like
Ramen Amah Hari for example he just kind
of went into like a trance state that
lasted for a very long time he couldn't
speak for a very long time he would just
sit in this meditative trance like Janna
and you know ants would be biting him
and so forth you know he'd have sores on
his legs from the insects biting him and
so forth he didn't know he didn't care
sometimes the only way he would eat
anything is by people just putting food
into his mouth just to keep him from

starving to death something like that

but I I do not clearly recall me making

a statement

uh to the to along the lines of if you

wake up and are not spiritually prepared

it can split your personality I may have

said it I just don't recall saying it so

I can't really I can't really like put

that into any kind of context that I can

really grasp what I meant when I said it

so let's just get to the second part of

the question here could this waking up

be realizing that nearly everything you

had ever learned and accepted as truth

has been based on

lies okay that's that's one question

I'll just answer that before moving on to the next part um I think Jeffrey is a truther that um does attribute a lot of official narratives for example to just deliberate lies but I'm I'm giving the human race a little more slack I think a little more benefit of the doubt in that a lot of what we believe that isn't true wasn't started as deliberate lies it was just started as people being wrong and just promulgating their wrongness in the in the belief that they were right and they had some kind of authority and so forth so other people trusted them when they probably shouldn't have trusted him so much although what the normies could have come up with on their own would

have been no

better so I don't think it would be with

regard to like conspiracies I don't

think that would if you have like a a

spiritual

realization and then you you look around

and see that you know a lot of people

are really believing a bunch of bogus

[__] that's just been like

indoctrinated into them by

propagandists um no I really don't think

that would really mess up your mind so

much I mean it might come as somewhat of

a

shock but um yeah I really don't think

it would be enough to really like cause

damage to your personality unless you're

really sensitive along those lines

maybe but then Jeffrey asked this part

could it also be the feeling that we are

in a

simulation what are the possible

splitting of Personality

effects

well that would come closer to the truth

I think if you have

a like a realization a spiritual

realization then you would have to I

mean if you become enlightened you'd

have to get to the point where you

realize that this is not reality you

would be in touch with Ultimate Reality

which is infinitely Beyond like rooms

with doors and mirrors and so

forth human bodies for that

matter

so yeah I

mean how much it would I still don't

really fully understand the the

splitting of the personality through

spiritual realization as a general rule

spiritual realization is just one of the

greatest blessings that you can

experience so it's going to be

overwhelmingly good even if it does have

certain strange effects like it has on

Raman

Mahari um just assuming that ramanam

Mahari was enlightened I me he was

enlightened

enough at least to consider him to be a

sage a genuine holy

man and I'm unaware of there being any

kind of scandals associated with Ramen

am Mahari other than his best friend for

a while was a

cow

so yeah I'm I'm kind of at a loss as to

how to effectively answer this question

because I really don't I don't

recall how or what exactly I said and

why and what the context was and so

forth um the splitting of Personality

effects as a result of like a a

spiritual

realization um yeah I mean if you're not

ready for it if it's something that just
hits you like spontaneously accidentally
like some people in the west especially
I think most people who who claim to
have some kind of Enlightenment
experience in the west just blunder
across it accidentally you know it's
like they almost die they have a
near-death
experience and then that just kind of
knocks them out of this lives long rut
that they had been in and um how that
would have a possible splitting of
Personality effect on them I mean it
might be that there would be like the
enlightened personality and the the

still vest the now vestigal

unenlightened personality that are kind

of at odds with each other maybe not

fully getting along as apparently was

the case with Ramen I'm a harshi or

something so something like that maybe

but um I

really I I feel like I'm just not able

to answer this question um very well

because I don't recall having made the

statement and and maybe I did I just

don't recall it or or why why I did it

or anything like that so I'm just going

to move on next question here which is

from the Thermon nuke and after I finish

this list I'll go back to the chat and

if there's any more chat chat questions

uh so long as it's not an obscenely long
Scroll of them I'll try to answer those
too so um the thermonuke says Samantha
meditation that's suat meditation suat
meditation is said to have miraculous
powers is this possible with we posa too
it's possible but much less likely
because generally you get psychic powers
through developing jic States or like
deep meditative States like mystical
States what some people might call
transstates in which you're just like
completely transcending the ordinary
human mentality where you're getting
into this realm where these psychic
powers are

possible um just completely simplifying
your mind and just kind of in a way
almost rendering it Irrelevant for the
time being and then all these other
options arise all these other
possibilities that your world viw veil
has been concealing all this
time but with regard to weasa or just
mindfulness meditation sa batana you're
still pretty much in human mode you're
just being mindful of whatever is
arising in in human mode and so um the
psychic powers are much less likely to
arrive although they can and the wiser
you get the more likely at the very
least there's going to be a lot of
synchronicity going on just weird

coincidences and so forth are going to
be happening
spontaneously even without having
mastered Janna or anything like that but
um it's going to be just spontaneous
stuff you have no control over and I do
think that a lot of psychic powers are
similar where you're you're not
deliberately exercising these psychic
powers they're just kind of channeling
through you
so I'm just going to move on to the next
the next uh question here this is from
game fap and game fap says you were semi
in Burma question mark during your time
there were you viewed by the locals as

an exotic object because you were a white Foreigner if so how did you feel I remember when I visited China a while back people would want photos of me because I was American well yeah I was I lived in some relatively remote areas of Burma where they were few if any white people had I mean a lot of the the little kids who saw me probably had never seen a white person before so I was considered to be like rare and exotic to that extent but I think what really blew them away what really blew the Burmese Buddhists away was that I came from America which to the Burmese is is like some sort of Dava realm you know it's like some kind of paradise

where everybody is Rich and happy and beautiful and Christian and they were just honored and Vindicated and happy that somebody from this Dava realm you know this Christian Rich F this Rich culture of Christianity actually rejected his own culture his own religion and I never really was a Christian in this life and then chose to go to their country live with them in relative poverty and just reject you know go against his family and his friends and everything in order to follow their dhama you know to follow their religion they were so proud and and just felt you know Vindicated you

know it's like there you see this person left his Rich affluent society and his Christianity supposedly and came to our country to live in poverty with us and practice our religion and I was practicing it more strictly you know at a deeper level than most the Burmese were including most of the monks because most of the monks you know they really don't have a spiritual calling so much as you know they just want to live an easy life and so forth so yeah I mean they were impressed that this Foreigner had come and was actually practicing their religion at a deeper level than they were practicing it themselves you know actually like living alone in a

forest and not handling money and that
kind of
thing so I think that was what really
caused them to to be impressed by me not
just that I was a foreigner but that I
was a foreigner who abandoned my own
culture and everything and just came to
live with them and practice their
religion that made them very happy and I
remember I I lived in Burma for maybe a
year and a village doctor told me that
uh the people love me more than they
love the Abbot of my Monastery and just
essentially for the reasons I just
explained so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from Zenith void

and xenoid says are the results of Bad Karma suffering itself or circumstances that would typically cause an unenlightened being to suffer simply the latent mental energy associated with one's desires not being fulfilled numerous enlightened beings still experiened the result of their past negative karma in the text but it did not cause them mental pain does this mean that there was technically still mental pain but there but it was so far away from and identified with the enlightened mind that it was effectively non-existent or was that leftover Karma just expressing itself in a way that the unenlightened some sain would TP

typically avoid out of delusion I go
with the latter option but what do you
think okay well let's see get back up to
the top here are the results of Bad
Karma suffering itself no not really or
circumstances that would typically cause
an unenlightened being to suffer yeah
it'd be more like that especially it
would
circumstances that would typically cause
that being to suffer before he was
enlightened but I mean you can say that
they still experience mental pain
because all pain ultimately is mental so
if they stub their toe they're going to
feel pain in their toe and that feeling

of pains itself it's a waya which is a
mental state so that kind of mental pain
they would experience it's just that
they wouldn't identify with it they
wouldn't like um like have aversion for
the pain because physical pain so-called
I mean it's still a mental state because
you're feeling it but physical pain is
not the same as suffering because the
suffering arises from Desiring the pain
to
stop so uh an enlightened being
presumably would not desire the pain to
stop even if he did feel some kind of
you know pain or sickness or something
in the body and also I mean Technic it's
possible that they could also experience

a kind of shadow of emotional pain or
something in that just through force of
habit that you know they have a kind of
aversive reaction to something but
they've completely risen above it
they're not identified with that anymore
it's just nature taking its course so
that is kind of a possibility that um an
enlightened being could still experience
some kind of pain or suffering Beyond
just mere physical pain um but still I
mean it would just be like the shadow of
suffering because they would no longer
be identified with it they would no
longer I mean it would just be nature
taking its course and they just be

observing the whole thing

dispassionately at a higher

level that's that's a possibility I'm

just tossing it out there I'm not saying

that that's necessarily the way it is

but I think the Orthodox explanation

would be pretty much what um

xenoid here mentioned where it would

just be the arising of

circumstances that would have caused

suffering before the person was

enlightened but now that they are

enlightened they just accept it it's no

longer a problem because they accept it

and they're not having cravings for the

problem to go away or stop or change or

anything so I hope I answer that

question because I'm moving on to the next one this is from Anthony and this is I think this is a bit sh question so um bear that in mind Anthony said how many packs of cigarettes did you smoke and how much whiskey did you drink to get that husky raspy voice and the thing is I can only remember smoking like one or two cigarettes in my life and that was when I skipped school in fourth grade with my stepbrother Chucky and we we ganked a pack of cigarettes from my stepdad his father and then we skipped school and we hid in this park there were these trains there we we hid inside this this old steam locomotive that was

just there on a like a a stand for

display and we smoked cigarettes there

and I didn't even

inhale I really didn't inhale I'm not

just saying that either and with regard

to drinking whiskey I mean I drank a

fair amount of whiskey especially like

when I was in

college but I mean I have drunk whiskey

since then but it's really my voice is

not caused by cigarettes and whiskey

sorry to say I don't want to disappoint

Anthony but

um I I think part of it I I don't think

my voice is always this raspy like when

I'm talking just normally it's not this

raspy I think part of it is the fact

that I'm in front of a camera and

there's a certain increased tension like

a certain like constriction of my throat

muscles or something that causes

increased friction of the vocal cords or

something that makes me a little

raspier when I'm uh talking in front of

a camera to potentially large numbers of

people um other than that as probably a

genetic component my father had kind of

a kind of a rumbly

voice at times he rumbled so it could be

that

too I do think it's a combination more

of of just genetics going with the

biological point of view and just sort

of the feeling of being in front of a
camera under the spotlight so to speak
the
spotlight um you know it just causes a
certain amount of physical tension that
usually isn't there or
something that that like makes my voice
a little raspier than usual and then
after I've been talking for two or three
hours straight then it's just horseness
at that
point so I'm just going to move on to
the next question here this is from fusa
who memorably asked questions about uh
Veterinary youth in Asia in the previous
Q&A and now he's saying what
interactions did you have with these

Burmese veterinarians anything cool or interesting or unusual well the main interactions I've had with Burmese veterinarians were of two kinds one kind is you just meet with some person who comes to offer food comes to talk to you and they just happen to mention that they're a veterinarian like I was staying at mahag Gand on the big school Monastery with the 100 mangy dogs that I mentioned and uh I had this dog that had mange you know I was it was the dog that was I was feeding it you know it adopted me more than I adopted it it just ate my leftovers and he told me to use like essentially Tiger Bomb on a mangy dog

and that would cure the mange so I mean
just casual interactions like that
although I did stay at a monastery
called
Madan where the there he didn't have
much use for the human race but he loved
animals and he always had dogs and we
had this one dog his name was poo I and
his English name was president
nigu and uh he got all torn up he got in
a fight or something and and like his
lower eyelid would just split and it was
like showing cheek muscles and that kind
of thing so venerable uima called a vet
and the vet came on a little motor
scooter and the three of us us the the
vet weima and me did an operation on

this dog just as it's lying on the ground you know they they they do house calls uh burmes veterinarians will do house calls and uh so they we just he just operated on and sewed first he had to give him an injection to knock him out and then um you know he sewed up his his lower eyelid in the cheek there and and then thank you very much and he drove away on his scooter and then president nigu woke up and he's like walking six steps in One Direction and falling down and getting up and walking six dire six steps the other direction and falling down and I was kind of wondering what he was what he was high

on it's like I mean that the old Teenage

druggie in me was thinking man that

looks interesting maybe I should try

some of

that I also met one

um one elephant vet who I mean was just

one of those casual meetings where he

just mentions that he he specializes in

elephants because an elephant vet is

much more likely to um I don't know if

you're much more likely to meet one in

certain parts of Burma you are but

because villagers you know they don't

generally go see a doctor even when

they're sick when their dog is sick you

know they might feed it some kind of

herbal remedy that they think might help

but if the dog doesn't get better
they're not going to send it to a vet
you know they're just going to get get a
new dog when that one dies that's just
the way it is but um getting back to
migan and uima he he had a dog um I
think he had a dog Spade which uh
probably was not good karma for
uima but I mean he had somewhat of a
western point of view he was probably
the most Western in attitude of any
Burmese monk I ever met including
Burmese monks that had lived in America
for decades and uh he just decided he'd
rather take the karmic hit by giving
this getting this dog this female dog a

hysterctomy than uh just have her keep

having puppies so again the vet came and

just performed the hysterectomy on the

the PED out dog lying on the ground it

wasn't exactly a sterile

environment but I mean those those are

my main interactions with bur

veterinarians so it's it's nothing

really spectacular nothing really to to

text home

about so I'm just going to move on to

the

next next questions from skolin or skine

and I'm not exactly sure where he's

coming from on this one the first

question is who are the blue meanies and

it's my understanding that the blue

meanies were the the cartoon bad guys in the Psychedelic Beatles movie Yellow Submarine you know they they were like the the blue meis were like the the Commanders of the Apple Bonkers and uh the the glovey you know the the the rocket propelled glove that kind of thing so they were the bad guys in Yellow
Submarine who are ultimately defeated so that's the answer to that question but then the second question was was Stanley kubric trying to warn others about the same people in Doctor Strange
Love and I really don't think Stanley

kubric had the blue minis from Yellow

Submarine in mind at Hall when uh he uh

directed Doctor Strange

Love H so apparently skolin or

skaden has some other idea about who

blinis

are but um with regard to Stanley kubri

trying to warn others about the same PR

same

people uh Stanley Kubrick I mean the

main bad guy in in uh Doctor Strange

Love was

General Jack D Ripper who was you know

just this complete American war hawk

with some weird ideas about precious

bodily fluids and then you had Doctor

Strange Love himself who apparently was

a German immigrant of former

Nazi National soci German National

Socialist I should

say and I don't know Stanley Kubrick

trying to warn others about blue meanies

or yeah I I just don't see it

maybe scolin has inside information that

I am not privy to I have not been

exposed to this information which links

yellow submarine with Doctor Strange

Love in some meaningful possibly even

profound way so I'm just going to move

to the next question here which is from

Outer Haven and outer Haven says are

there any highly regarded transgender

Buddhist monks I don't think there are

any transgender Buddhist monks I mean

that would be disqualifying if you

really are transer if you're just like

eminate then you could still get

ordained and there's quite a few eminite

Burmese Buddhist monks probably quite a

few um e feminite Thai Buddhist monks

also but if they're genuinely

transgender then they would be like

pondon and they would just be forbidden

to be ordained even if the

ordination uh ceremony was conducted it

would still be considered invalid if

they really were

transgender unless I mean it's just like

a

psychological you know kind of like

effeminacy or something where they're

not behaving like the stereotypical

Macho

Chad but I have read that there is a Zen

monk in Japan who is

transgender who does like makeup

tutorials or something on

YouTube how highly regarded he is I

don't know but in terraa which is more

conservative um yeah I'm unaware of

there being any transgender gender

Buddhist

monks I mean you couldn't have like a

transman ordain I mean like really like

a biological woman who identifies as a

man simply could not be ordained as a

mon and even if they were ordained by
some kind of like left-wing activist
monks in the west or something it would
still be a completely invalid ordination
and they would still not be
ordained because it just it's just
forbidden it's just not allowed and to
the ENT that even if you do the ceremony
it's just dismissed as an invalid
ceremony according to the rules
themselves so in that sense there would
be not only no highly regarded
transgender Buddhist monks but no
transgender Buddhist monks
period And so I'm just going to move on
the next question which is another one
that I don't really understand this is

from Master Poe saying why did the perve
cross the road and if if this is like a
a joke I really don't know what the
punch line
is why did the perv cross the road who
knows maybe there was like a a school
playground on the other side or
something I don't know so I'm just going
to move on the next question here and
this is from Joe do and Joe do says is
it improper to have a Buddha statue in
the bathroom where there is a toilet I
don't think it would be any less
improper than having one in the bedroom
well I guess for starters I could
explain to you how the Burmese do it

whenever Poss when the

Burmese have an altar in their house

they will actually have it built onto

the side of the house so that sticking

out of the house you know they they'll

just have like a square hole in the wall

of their house and then just build out

this little thing where the altar is

going to be you know from the inside you

know it just be walls and stuff on the

outside and because they don't want

their altar which is like a Sacred Space

kind of defiled by human worldliness of

you know taking dumps and having sex and

you know

Etc but that's not really much of an

option for westerners but if you are

going to have an altar like a Buddhist
statue that you know really is like
revered or you know it symbolizes you
know something profound to you then you
really should have it in a place that is
a place of honor you know like the best
place of honor you can find in your
house it might be the living room it
might be like a spare like a den or a
study or something you know just have it
up on a high
place in a room where you're not going
to be taking dumps or masturbating or
anything like
that um but I mean if it's just an
artistic decoration it's sort of like

eating meat I mean if you can do it with
a completely mindful clear peaceful mind
then you're not necessarily doing
anything
wrong but yeah like putting a a Buddha
statue on the toilet tank I've seen that
before and yeah it's it's probably not
the best place to put a Buddha
statue
um it could be that people are doing
like naughty things all to the house but
still I mean you should try to have as
sacred of a space reserved for your
altar as you can manage and but I mean
you didn't even Joe do here didn't even
mention an alter it just mention
Buddha statue

so

yeah I don't it depends on your own

attitude really you know it depends on

how you feel doing

it so I think I'm just going to move on

the next question here this is also from

jodo which is did you ever visit Tong

kalat while in Burma it looks unreal and

I'm not sure what Tong kalat is Tong

means Hill or mountain in Burmese

cat

cat huh yeah I'm not sure what colat

would refer to and what what colat

mountain or colat Hill means I'm not

sure he says it looks unreal maybe he's

referring to chaio pagota or something

which looks relatively unreal and is on
top of a mountain but um Tong colat yeah
I've heard the word Kat in bermes and
now I can't recall what it
means but uh I'm pretty sure I never
visited tongat even if it's chaio
because I never visited chaio either I
was never really much into um visiting
temples and shrines and pagodas and all
that I mean i' I visited a fair amount
of them but uh it was never really near
the top of my list of
priorities so yeah I don't know what
Tong kalat is my favorite place to visit
in Burma Ong these lines was uh let's
see it was some caves in Northwestern
Burma

oo oh now I can't remember the name of
it man there's lots of scy monkeys there
that's the main reason why I like going
there there's these little troops of
monkeys and I just bring like you know
fruit like little little oranges or
bananas or something and and just hand
them out to the monkeys because I really
I really enjoy you know I derive Joy Joy
from feeding scy monkeys for some reason
they're it's like they're my
brothers and
sisters so uh I guess I'll just move on
next question this is from Andrew who I
think maybe have answered question from
Andrew already but anyways Andrew says

would you ever like to revisit Burma one
day um there's other places I'd rather
visit I'd rather visit Bali again than
Burma um I've I spent more than 20 years
in Burma I wouldn't want to visit the
old places I used to go to because
people might start crying when they see
that I'm not a monk
anymore
um some few people might even get like
disgusted with
me um maybe it would be like a vacation
kind of thing if I was with somebody who
actually wanted to go to Burma you know
and you know it's like can you come with
me and show me around something like
that act as my interpreter or something

you know I might be able to get talk
into that someday not anytime
soon because I got to work for a living
now but uh I mean it's it's it's not
impossible although There Are Places I
would rather go than Burma like I I'd
like to see Italy someday um and like I
said Bali is really nice it's it' be an
excellent place to go on a
vacation so I'm just going to move to
the next question this is from
renen and renen says I know you have
exhaust
exhaustively discussed Karma and Nirvana
in your videos but I would like to
discuss it once more many prayers in

vajana Buddhism beg for Liberation from
samsara and Nirvana the two extremes
they say this is the True Glory of the
highest Bliss Nirvana is also Duality
and it must be translated to oh
transcended to what do you think of this
well it's like the Tibetan book of the
great Liberation saying that Nirvana is
just a
concept and what what they're getting at
is something along the lines of like
maamaa in that the concept of Nirvana
which is all we have all we can really
deal with is just as samsaric as the
concept of samsar because concepts are
samsaric so there's this duality of
Nirvana versus samsara which does make

them extremes and all these dualities
are just papancha and delusion and Sam
Sor so and really I mean in reality
Nirvana and samsara are not opposites
you know any more than substance and
form are oppos opposites like I don't
know let's see cup you know porcelain
and cup are not opposites you know
they're here right here in the same cup
the mug I should say but they're just
not opposites so yeah I think mainly
what they're getting at that samsara and
Nirvana is like a false dichotomy and
it's just an artifact of perception and
delusion and is purely samsaric so you
just want to get beyond all

that so yeah I mean so long as Nirvana

is in quotes so long as Nirvana is a

concept then it's also just some soric

Duality because you really cannot grasp

what Nirvana really is perceptually or

intellectually it just does not work so

any any way that you are dealing with

Nirvana intellectually or

perceptually it's not really Nirvana

it's just more samsara and so you need

to leave that behind also so I'm just

going to move on next question this is

from

renen and is anywhere saying how long

I've been talking yeah two hours gosh

okay

renen his next question

is they also say that karma is illusory especially zogan and the mahamudra practitioners there is no need to purify anything you just have to integrate all with the base or the ground this is the work that must be done even delusions are manifestations of the primordial wisdom does karma really exist if there is no self no real being how the actions that produce Karma can be considered since there is not a true identity or entity behind them well ultimately Karma also is just samsaric you know it's like one it's an aspect of some of the potential St statues contained in an uncarved block of stone so ultimately I

mean karma is not an aspect of Nirvana

it's not an aspect of Ultimate Reality

it's just a samsaric

phenomenon so to the extent that you

transcend samsara you transcend Karma

also

so yeah and then you got some of the the

Tibetan Buddhists saying there's no need

to purify anything you just have to

integrate all with the base or the

ground well you don't have to even do

that Ian you you don't have to do

anything but uh yeah I can kind of

understand that it's it's somewhat along

the lines of my whole theory of you know

the uncarved block of stone with the

infinite number of statues inside just

in potential or conditional form I mean
even if you become enlightened and
transcend this the particular statue you
happen to be and just merge with the
block of stone nothing changes because
that block ofone Z will continue to have
every single possible statue in Virtual
or potential or conditional form
contained within it including the
unenlightened
you so it's really just a paradox it's a
mind warper you can't really understand
it like
intellectually
so even delusions or manifestations of
primordial wisdom I wouldn't go that far

it's just you know it's just all
necessarily contained in the uncarved
block of stone and nothing can make
those potential statues go away they're
always going to be
there so I guess I'll just move on next
question here this is from covac and
sead zida who says I've seen you mention
many times that things aren't real and
only virtual because of dependent
origination but this doesn't make any
sense to
me why is something not real real
virtual if it arises due to a cause to
me it seems the opposite where things
are only real if they can have a causal
effect on other things which is the

classical Indian philosophical position

for example if someone stabs you the

knife causes pain and damages the body

but a box imagin in the mind is not real

because it has no causal effects on

other

things

well let's see where do I start on this

first of

all let's see why is something not real

or virtual if it arises due to a cause

because it is arising due to a not real

virtual

cause I mean that's that's the quick

easy answer right there something is not

real or virtual if it arises due to a

cause that is also not real and

virtual and then that cause itself is

caused by other causes that are also not

real and

virtual But ultimately dependent C

Rising is not due to a cause and effect

kind of relationship that is i that's

what a lot of Buddhists believe but it

is more of it's almost more of a logical

thing you know if it's like a

conditional logic if this is is I mean

if this is seen to exist then this other

thing is also seen to

exist so like in schopenhauer's

philosophy had the four-fold root of

sufficient

reason one of the roots of sufficient

reason reason was cause and effect but
he also had like logical sufficient
reason and that would come closer to uh
dependent core Rising I think I mean
unless you want I mean if you
acknowledge that the causes and effects
are both not ultimately real I mean it's
kind of strange that coaction Cod Z Now
would think that something is not real
if it arises from a cause and he's just
assuming that the cause is real but the
cause is just as unreal or virtual as
the
effect
so I mean the this whole question kind
of reminds me that of FH Bradley's

philosophy and I I had this I started reading FH Bradley because there's a an eccentric English monk named Nana Vera who lived in Salon back in the 50s and first half of the 60s who was really into FH Bradley and so I started reading FH Bradley including his uh uh C something what is it it's back there on the
bookcase it's not his logic appearance in appearance in illusion or something like that appearance in reality that's the name of the book and he came to this weird idea that the more real something is is is me the more internal causes of its existence like the causes of its existence are more internal so it's like

causing itself and so FH Bradley said
that something is more real if it has
more of its causes for itself contained
within itself so that it's self
generating and then he from that he came
to the really strange idea that the
bigger something is the more real it is
because the bigger something it is the
more likely it is that at least some of
the causes for it are going to be
self-contained which is just kind of a
strange
idea so yeah I mean the the quick easy
answer this question why is something
not real or virtual if it arises du
cause because the cause also is not real

and virtual the entire saric web of

phenomena is not real and virtual but

it's sort of self-conditioning or like

mutually conditioning it's co-arising

so yeah I do not see dependent core

Rising as a linear sequence of cause and

effect

like uh yav Vera used to say I mean it

says this arising that arises not this

ceasing that

arises so I'm just going to move on to

uh the next question which is from creel

I think that's how you pronounce his

name Creel or creel says what are your

thoughts on the life and figure of

Michael Jackson from your Buddhist

spiritual or otherwise human perspective

well from a Buddhist perspective I think
the most significant thing I could say
about Michael Jackson is that he is
proof that being rich and famous and
glamorous does not make you a happy
person not necessarily because Michael
Jackson was rich and famous and
glamorous and he seemed to be sort of a
messed up unhappy
person
so there you go I mean he was rich and
famous and glamorous and I mean he had
some sort of dysmorphia I guess where he
just kept having like cosmetic surgery
done on him until finally he looked like
a male female black white human

elf and then there's all these I mean he
was on drugs I mean he died of a drug
overdose there's you know rumors at
least accusations of him messing around
with little kids that kind of thing and
so I I think that's the main takeaway
from a Buddhist point of view is he's
just showing as as like empirical
evidence that just being rich and famous
and glamorous is no guarantee whatsoever
that you're going to be happy which
pretty much shoots in the head most most
theories of economists who just seem to
equate happiness and well-being with a
high standard of
living so what else can I say about
Michael Jackson I mean

I guess you could say his past past experiences which would be like his karma were were helping to determine his unhappiness I mean he was raised in a family where he had practically no childhood that might have something to do with it something to do with sort of the dysfunction of his later years but uh I guess I guess what I've already said is like the main takeaway so I really I I mean I was never much into Michael Jackson anyway I hear him on the radio sometimes when I'm driving in my car but aside from that I really don't think much about him but yeah he's definitely really solid

evidence that a rich famous glamorous
person is not necessarily going to be
any happier because of it so I'm just
going to move on to the next question
which is from
ruie and ruie says would you care to
comment from a Terra voden perspective
on chapter 25 oh yeah I already answered
this one because he put it in the chat
too you and in parenthesis here I've got
Fez is reminding me to put Fez on when I
answer that question so I'm just going
to move on to the next one which is from
bil Gahan and bil Gahan says what would
be the karma of a certain tribe of
people who's committed crimes against
humanity for thousands of years even

their religion is built on lying and deceit theft and murder I wonder how could they even be born as human with such Karma could they be spillover of Hell beings onto the human realm well I'm not even going to Hazard a guess as to who he's referring to here but there have been many tribes of people that have caused all sorts of Mayhem the Germanic people for example I mean they were they were like the arch villains of Western Civilization for centuries and centuries you know continually invading and pillaging the Roman Empire and you know being like instrumentally involved in numerous Wars

including the two World
Wars but I mean it's you there is no
tribal karma really I mean there is kind
of a group karma in that you're going to
be reborn with people with Karma similar
to yours so people that are like part of
the same culture in a way that's kind of
similar karma that's combining them but
in a way it's kind of an
illusion you know it's sort of like the
the controversy in evolutionary biology
of whether groups can evolve or not or
whether it's just the individual and
then it just creates an illusion of
group
Evolution um you know it's kind of
similar here but in Buddhism there is

only individual karma karma is a mental
state it's an individual mental state
and um but nevertheless if you have a
certain kind of karma you're probably
going to be uh reborn in a in a society
with people that have similar Karma to
you and uh so I mean there's that kind
of like a quasi group Karma but I mean
there's always going to be exceptions to
the rule people belonging to a tribe
with a bad reputation who turn out to be
very wise saintly
people so and then the the lying and
deceit part I
mean gosh I where it even I mean a lot
of what people consider to be lies is uh

is just stuff that it turns out not to be true and then they don't give the person the benefit of the doubt or they just assume that anything that isn't true is a lie and really I mean I'm I'm even nitpicking with people in comment sections like I'm Breitbart where you know they'll they'll say you know somebody's a complete liar and really I mean if just because you say something that isn't true doesn't mean that you're a liar it maybe that you're just mistaken you may be making an honest mistake you may believe that that is true you assert it is true and then somebody calls you a liar because it turns out that empirically objectively

it's not

true so there is

that um I mean I I can't I shouldn't

probably even bring up um examples of

you know Wise people wise good people

from you know a tribe with a bad

reputation just because then I might be

singling out and identifying some tribe

that yeah and I don't

know so let's see

here theft and murder I wonder wonder

how they could even be born as human

with such Karma well there's always

reasons I mean the main reason is that

uh most of these people probably are not

all

bad

so could there be a spillover of Hell

beings into the human realm well there's

always going to be a trickle of that

also a trickle of other other Realms

into the human realm but it's never

going to be like a huge movement of an

entire ethnicity I'm pretty

sure so I kind of sort of answered that

questions but it was deliberately asked

in a vague way so as not to um like out

themselves with regard to being opposed

to some specific ethnicity and I'm not

going to even guess because if I guess

even if I guess correctly with regard to

who he's referring to then you know it

sort of make me look like I was agreeing

or something but let's just move on the

next question here this is from

Mary and I'm not even counting how many

how many questions some people have

already asked let's just assume he has

asked no more than three already or no

more than

two so he says how to get rid of the

violent thoughts I have towards my

mother and sisters 20 years of bullying

from my mother and 20 years of not

noticing it from my sisters and now when

all the legal inheritance stuff is over

I have these violent thoughts

well that's a that's kind of a tough

question and I may not be the best

person to to ask this question to
because I haven't experienced anything
similar to this you know like my parents
love me and and I was raised well as far
as I can tell and so I mean I don't have
a personal experience along the same
lines that I can really relate
to but um I mean going with Buddhist
philosophy the obvious thing to do would
be send meta you know just do like a
meta meditation practice where you're
literally you know emanating or beaming
meta towards the people that you're
having the difficulties with like I
guess your mother and your sisters and
if that's just too difficult then you
can slowly ease into it there are

various ways of slowly easing in to
sending meta to somebody that you just
don't like you know you might start with
somebody who's just sort of a neutral
person and then you get better at
sending meta to the neutral person then
you can pick a somewhat more problematic
person and until you get good at that
and then finally you get to the Archen
enemy Nemesis person or also um in it's
in my book Buddhist ethics Buddhist
practice I think where it's talking
about the pebble method that was devised
by some burmes
seato where the person you want to send
meta to is just too difficult you just

find this little round Pebble and you
name it the name of the person that that
is the problematic person and then you
put that you put that little Pebble in a
GL little tumbler of clear water and you
put it up on your altar and you just
beam love at the pebble and then it sort
of indirectly deflects over onto the
other person and every day you know you
you change its water very mindfully and
maybe even lovingly you
know and you send to through that
Pebble but if if you want the full
details I guess you'll have to read the
book which is just
Shameless like marketing on my part so
I'm just going to move to the next

question this is from bodh 969 who I'm pretty sure is already asked more than three questions because he's also goes by a different name in the chat but I'm gonna just I'm just doing it I'm I'm answering this question damn it do you know ajan Amaro I like listening to him he seems to be a friendly kind-hearted man and I can't really say that I know aan Amro I know who he is and I met him once I had been a monk probably for less than a year at that time so it was well over 30 years ago and he came to the monastery where where I was and we had a little bit of a talk and with some other monks there also two

nuns who weren't uh beunis they were
just you know the the standard old
school aan Chan
nun and uh we had a nice talk and yeah
he he has a nice smile he seems like a a
kind-hearted person he doesn't really
strike me as a forest monk though at
least back you know 30 years ago you
know he was starting up the um what is
it why can't I remember the name abai
Airi mon Forest Monastery but he was
like a city boy and he had like these
City ideas of how to set up a forest
Monastery so that it was all mostly just
unused wilderness and everybody's just
clumped together in this this bustling
little Center of

activity but uh I really don't hold that
against him he seems to be a a good and
wise serious monk so but I don't know
him personally other than just having
met him once a long time ago he probably
doesn't remember me at
all so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from
Romeo and Romeo says I am on the email
contact list for several Buddhist
flavored websites the other day I opened
up an email that had an invite to an
event entitled save democracy
compassionate activism for November and
Beyond which will host the likes of Jack
cornfield why am I not surprised and

Tara Brock as speakers and is sponsored
by Democratic senator Corey
Booker if you were to go by what seems
to be the majority of Buddhists in the
US you would get the impression that the
Buddha was some sort of Proto Marxist I
sometimes rack my brain in trying to get
to the sort of get to the root of where
they get this from the only thing I can
come up with is that they conflate the
Buddhist values of compassion for others
as an endorsement for left-wing Concepts
like taking from the rich and giving to
the poor or liberating the
oppressed my first question is one
exactly where does the left's political
notion of Buddhism stem from are there

sutras or texts that I am not aware of where the Buddha took a stand politically and or gave his opinion on the ideal government is there any basis for their contention that Buddhism is somehow related to leftism in either the sutras or how the Buddha conducted his life well the only political suta I can think of I'm sure there's more than one but I think it's in the ma the uh the dean Kaya where the Buddha does say that that theft is caused by poverty and that a good King should provide Farmers with like seed grain and all the stuff they need to get a good Farm going in order to promote the prosperity of the society

and reduce the crime because there will
be less people like who have to resort
to Crime because they don't have enough
food or whatever and uh also I mean
there are certain aspects of Buddhism
that could be considered leftist like
you know the wiser you are the less I Me
Mine you have which I mean identity
politics I mean just flies completely in
the face of that but still the the
oldfashioned communistic idea of no
personal
property um you know it kind of is a
leftist idea of you know you consider
nothing to be your own although even a
monk was allowed to have personal
property you know at least he had his

three robes and his bowl and his his

needle case his water

filter his

razor his belt

you know he had some stuff I mean even a

monk could own personal property so I

mean the real answer to this

question is that Buddhism doesn't have

to have anything to do with leftism that

that leftists are going to just

transmogrify any spiritual system into

essentially religious flavored Marxism

you know like Christianity they've done

the same thing with Christianity which

um I mean some aspects of Christianity

like if you read the of the Apostles in

the New Testament it was like a
voluntary communism the way the apostles
in Jerusalem were living where they'd
pull all their resources and then
distribute it according to need that
kind of thing that's that's
communism but with regard to like
homosexuality the New Testament clearly
states that homosexuality is abomination
and then the Old Testament says
homosexual should simply be taken out
and killed but you got Christian
churches that are run by leftists flying
the rainbow flag now you know they are
celebrating
Abomination so it's it's just a matter
of the left certain leftist activists or

just the left in general you know

they're just trying to take over pretty

much whatever they can take take over

and then just turning it into some sort

of you know crypto

Marxism so I mean there are some ideas

in Buddism that are friendly to a

leftist approach but some of them are

like the opposite you know like leftism

nowadays it's it's like grievance

politics

where the whole thing is you blame some

oppressor mainly white patriarchal men

for all of your

problems and then you try to fix those

problems by you know doing something

about the patriarchy or

whatever and that's just essentially the

opposite of genuine Dharma where all

suffering is ultimately self-inflicted

you know they just reject things like

Karma because that makes the victim at

fault it's victim

blaming so I mean the actual position of

these religions is irrelevant I mean the

leftists are going to try and take it

over anyway I'm sure you've got leftist

Muslim you know you've got like probably

there's at least one mosque in the west

somewhere flying a rainbow flag

so yeah I mean Buddhism doesn't

necessarily have to have any Marxist

elements but marxists to to the extent

that they're able are going to just sort
of like absorb it and turn it into just
another flavor of
Marxism so I guess I've answered that
question I
guess so I'm just going to move on to uh
see Romeo's next question question here
which is uh his second question you
might say my second question comes in
light of the upcoming presidential
election if you could speculate where
would the Buddha fall on the political
Spectrum if he were living in the US of
2024 would he stand with leftists that
have Trump derangement syndrome I'm
guessing he would be dispassionate and

not even take a stand and vote at all

what do you think well if you read the

old text talking about politics is

called

animal talk it's what uh t t

Chata animal talk you know talking about

like government ministers and kings and

wars and all that so essentially

politics yeah I mean you just don't get

involved in that so in that sense you

know the Buddha would not vote probably

you know there wouldn't be any political

debates going on in the

monasteries

um let's see I do think he would be

largely

libertarian which I mean the left claims

you know like like anarcho Communists or

something you know they might claim to

be somewhat libertarian but really

communism just doesn't work that way it

has to be enforced at

gunpoint because it's it's it's so at

odds with human nature which is the very

existence of human nature is denied by

the

left so let's see

so I mean obviously Trump wouldn't have

Trump or the Buddha wouldn't have Trump

derangement syndrome he wouldn't have

any kind of derangement syndrome you

know he wouldn't be he wouldn't be

vehemently opposed to either

side

so yeah I I if he were to like take a

position at all I think like if there

was an election he would just look at

the two candidates and decide which

person is the more virtuous honest

upstanding person regardless of their

political

party and uh who knows I mean I don't

think that even an enlightened being I

mean if you had to choose between Biden

and Trump I mean Biden obviously is just

feeble and scile and in incapable of

Performing the function of president but

then again maybe the Buddha would just

say well you know his advisor

maybe but I mean his Trump um Biden's

advisors don't seem to be much wiser

than Biden is

so yeah I mean first of all that the

Buddha would just not encourage any kind

of involvement in politics to anyone who

is sincerely trying to transcend samsar

there's very few things in this world

more samsaric than politics so he would

just you know go out into the forest and

meditate you know go to your cell and

meditate don't bother with reading the

news about politics it's just all Sam

Sor it's all delusion

anyway but if there was any kind of

involvement in politics I assume that he

would just you know favor the the lesser

of two evils and just with regard to
just comparing the the moral character
of the two people and unlike what most
Democrats say Trump really is not the
moral inferior of Biden I mean they
they've done so many the fishing
Expeditions trying to get him on
anything and at the end they couldn't
find him guilty or likely guilty of any
serious crime so they just had to invent
new
crimes and we all know how that turned
out whereas Biden himself has bragged
publicly of worse than they've accused
Trump of you know he's 10% for the big
guy too you know he's pretty obviously
been pedalling you know influence or at

least his son Hunter has been pedaling
his daddy's access to his daddy with
Biden himself allegedly apparently
skimming 10% off the top nothing it's
crickets although maybe now that uh the
uh the leftist media have are turning
against Biden in
desperation that maybe that that kind of
stuff will uh make headlines finally
after many
years but I think I've already answered
that question sort of kind of you know
it's hard to it's hard to predict what
an enlightened being would do so I'm
just going to move on to the next
question which is from Brahman cha

and Brahman chud says this is a Hinduism

question should I avoid visiting

ISC is n iscon due to its sketchy

history and to avoid Starbucks hindes to

visit a more traditional Temple are

there tips for good etiquette I get

taking off the shoes and show respect to

obasan but I am curious about

idiosyncrasies that could

unintentionally offenses well I really

don't know that much about like modern

Western Hinduism yeah I really just have

not uh traveled in those circles I don't

know what iscon is for

example maybe I've heard of it before

but whether Brahman Chad should avoid

visiting

iscon due to its sketchy history and to
avoid Starbucks hindes um I really don't
know because I I just don't know what
Ison is I have no familiarity with it
I'm not sure what he's referring to it
sounds like some kind of
place um but to visit a more traditional
Temple I mean you might as well if it's
more traditional and you want genuine
Hinduism and not rainbow Western
Hinduism then uh yeah makes sense that
you go to a more traditional Temple and
are there tips for good etiquette and
really I'm No Authority on Hindu
religious etiquette because I'm just not
a Hindu and uh I mean I know what the

standard North Indian etiquette was in the Buddhist time but I have no idea how that applies to the 21st century so I really am not in a position to answer this very well other than if you want if you prefer traditional Hinduism you'd be better off going to a traditional Temple and uh if you're not sure what to do just and look around and see what the other people are doing and and just imitate them which is advice that I give to people visiting an Asian Buddhist Monastery for the first time too it's just if you're not sure what to do just watch what the other people are doing and just just imitate that so I kind of answered that question

I'm going to move on to the next one

this is from

pyramid and pyramid says my question is

if I create a mini figure of the

venerable poob basa place it on my altar

venerate it with incense and say 10 H

hail Brian almost said H there I did say

h there and didn't I and say 10 hail

Brian every night before sleep would

that help raise my karma level well

again it's karma is not a matter of

outward conduct it's a matter of mental

States so if you have more exalted

mental States from doing that or

something else then yeah I mean you can

do that but I mean if it's just like

silata parasa you're just you know

adhering to rules and rituals just

because you know it's just giving some

kind of religious structure um it might

not help very much at all you know it's

it could actually be detrimental if you

cling to

it so with regard to Minifigures of

venerable poasa I probably be better off

just printing a picture that's what

people would do in Burma that uh you

know they just their favorite religious

figure

you know if there wasn't a convenient

statue to be had of that person you know

they just get a photograph or something

and put that on their altar not that I

am in any way recommending that anybody

start worshiping

me except for my

woman so

uh yeah I guess I answered that question

and that that technically was the last

question on my list there's like a non-

question from mama who uh submitted her

non question just shortly before the the

video started or the the live stream

because we're

live live from South Carolina it's

Q&A so anyways mama says I want to thank

you for all of the things you've taught

me it has helped my life so much I am

sending you a $100 cash app to help

celebrate your H 100th Q&A sorry I can't

be here live today because I'm having a

painting class or

something so yeah thank you Mama that's

very

nice and uh I'm going to go back and see

if the the chat has added a whole bunch

of new

questions okay got to scroll

up see still scrolling upwards with the

tiny the tiny print

here okay yeah we got I'm still

scrolling let's

see let's see see still scrolling

upwards we still we still got questions

here let's

see

gosh yeah I think we might be here for a

while okay wait a minute I think I might

have found it oh

no still scrolling upwards oh okay sh

goes ask what was Shinola I answered

that

one okay yeah I answered the the karmic

dispositions

question so let's

see okay cool whip says wait on the show

with no name when a question related to

majama has asked The Fez is need to

answer okay yeah that's that's nice

people answering each other's questions

I can just sit back you know I'll just

sit here and have a beverage while

people in the chat answer each other's
questions yeah the Buddha box in South
Park I already answered that one the 22
years old one feeling old already let's
see the knee question that I never
understood hugs from Brazil yeah first
hugs I've ever receiv received from
Brazil okay let's see the knee of
listening okay let's see
here oh that's a good answer shakera
said to the guy who was 22 years old and
wanting to slow down time the key to
slowing down time is to suffer more
intensely seconds can seem like hours
yeah sit on a hot stove five minutes can
seem like an hour let's
see well gosh I don't oh wait here's a

question mark see Prav Mr Prav says I've heard that some people after doing fosa courses stop doing W okay going to Monastery visiting monks thinking it's not important to spirituality and Enlightenment what do you think okay so w is like paying respects you know it's like like physically doing obas or revering a holy man so okay so pronav Mr pronav says I've heard that some people after doing few weasa courses stopped doing onea going to the monastery visiting monks thinking it's not important to spirituality and Enlightenment what do you think well a lot of Western people might think

that um just because you know they think
well this what I'm doing now is really
like serious profound important stuff
and the other stuff was kind of
superficial so I'll just uh go with this
and and just kind of ignore what the
texts say about how it's a great
blessing to meet with holy men and you
know paying respect to monks and
offering things to monks and so forth um
also like the Goa people a lot of them
are just convinced that the goink method
is just the the Royal Road to
Enlightenment and uh you don't need to
do anything other than the going method
you know they're sort of like the
Jehovah's Witnesses of Buddhism and uh I

think I may have just offended any number of of Goa practitioners even though I mean I'm not opposed to the Goa method or anything and I have to give credit to the Goa practitioners and that they really put emphasis on keeping five precepts unlike you know the standard um like Boomer Terra dhaha where it's they call themselves sa and uh they might not even keep f precepts they just come there and meditate once a week or something

so yeah I think even if you're doing weasa it's still a good idea especially if you're doing it before of paying respects to the monks and and um you

know making offerings and just doing the
rest of the Buddhist stuff I mean it's
not like doing weasa meditation is like
a replacement for everything
else so I mean you should try to have a
well balanced spiritual practice a lot
of westerners they only have interest in
like one or two things just like sitting
in meditation a lot of Western people
who call themselves Buddhists pretty
much all they do is just
meditate and you know they don't really
bother with with much of anything else
they might read some books that kind of
thing but it's it's sort of like I was
mentioning like well over an hour ago
you've already been at this for two

hours and 45 minutes but that includes

like minutes of me just trying to figure

out how to do the live stream um what

was I going to

say I just I just distracted

myself um oh yeah it's like you can

purify your mind but your body isn't

purified then that can cause problems

it's like you're burning too bright you

got too much voltage or too many amps or

something going through a system that

isn't developed for it and yoga puts a

lot of emphasis on that for example of

keeping your body body pure at the same

same rate you know you purify your body

at the same rate as you're purifying

your mind or maybe even purify the body
first so that it'll be a like a capable
of of receiving you know the increased
energy flowing through your system that
kind of thing so yeah there is that you
don't want a lopsided spiritual practice
you do want to kind of bring the whole
system forwards at the same time and so
yeah doing weos a course
is uh is not just a substitute for for
everything else in
Buddhism and so I'm just going to move
to the next question
here oh this got a question mark so this
is a question you can always tell a
question because they got a question
mark at the

end this is from Wilson a few episodes
ago you said Buddhism had no concept of
the unconscious mind wouldn't an
unconscious mind just be what an
unenlightened person has whereas an
enlightened person would be aware well I
was referring to like the subconscious
mind like in the Freudian sense or the
the yian sense you know it's the level
there's like a level of Mind below the
conscious ego level that's going ahead
and doing its own stuff without the
conscious ego level being aware of it
that's what I was referring
to so I mean you could say that a person
who is not fully awake is like

semiconscious obviously like a

sleepwalker or something but um yeah

unconscious is just is is a misnomer

it's not a very good term subconscious

would be

better yeah and I I was really referring

to like you know Western psychology

referring to the subconscious mind that

that causes like hysterical symptoms and

other

Neurosis

so yeah Wilson next has an unsmiley face

then we got okay XY

zyx sorry I didn't I hope I didn't

offend you by accidentally starting to

call you XYZ who could be somebody in

your neighborhood that you really don't

like so zyx says if God's Saka came down
to earth and meet you saying P you need
to live alone in rest of your life in
Forest as a recluse then you will die as
arant in that case will you leave your
life well I mean if I have some deity in
blazing Glory coming down from heaven
with like a retinue you know he's riding
his Royal elephant or something and he's
telling me to do that then I mean I'd
have to at least consider it but I am
rather partial to my
sweetie at
present but I mean I don't really think
that Saka king of Gods is going to take
time out of his busy schedule just to

come come down and tell me to renounce

the

world

so I leave my life yeah I mean you can't

really leave your life because no matter

where you go there you are to quote

Buckaroo

Bonsai so yeah well if if Sucka king of

Gods comes down out of heaven in blazing

glory and admonishes me I'll I'll at

least listen to what has to say I'll go

that

far and uh with that I guess I'll just

move on next question this is from hiim

cthul what would your father think of

your association with Brian Rue I think

I think my dad would like Brian I think

they'd get along

great because my father was kind of

similar to Brian ruin in certain ways

although my father was no German

National Socialist he fought in World

War II against the Germans and uh he

felt strongly about

that but with regard to Brian ruse just

general eccentricity he and my father

were they would have gotten along

marvelously

famously so let's see here I'll just

move on to the next question here oh

someone's telling me I should be able to

open chat in a separate page I'm not g

to try and mess with anything right now

though I suppose I could experiment with

it which is just going to like turn off

the live stream again or or something so

this is good enough you're just GNA have

to deal with looking up my nose while

I'm reading

these okay Mr pronav is uh he's going to

bed so okay good night Prav Mr Prav

sweet

dreams and Elgato yeah no question

there okay no question there okay we got

a question mark Shak Rosa who's uh I

think he's already asked more than one

question here but

uh this is kind of a special occasion

this is the the hundredth Q&A so I guess

I can not be so much of a hard ass on

this one so Shak Goa says I just can't
accept this idea that it's my fault
whether something's a problem or not
that this is bad could you give a
different teaching on the same subject
contradicting your previous teaching oh
I get it it's like a joke question isn't
it
oh Shak regosa you
Joker so yeah I could theoretically give
a different teaching on the same subject
contradicting the previous teaching but
um I shouldn't do it so quickly after
you know I should at least give a
pretense of you know I've matured over
the past several days and I've come to a

different understanding of

things so let's see

here um no question mark

and no question mark there well here's a

question mark but he's somebody's asking

somebody else in the chat a questions so

I don't have to answer

those see okay Lucid says do you

purposely always start your videos with

Brian by saying yeah he Brian and ending

them with yeah you're welcome or is that

all just a happy coincidence well it's

probably uh like a habit at this

point um so it just comes out

spontaneously with about me having to

decide to say it I I did specifically I

did uh some some videos with Brian

yesterday that are in the can they'll be
coming up over the next several days
where I I consciously didn't say yeah
before saying hey O'Brien so you've got
that to look forward to you got you can
look forward to me not saying yeah which
I'm sure is going to have you all all
excited and uh I might still have said
yeah you're welcome at the end
and it's not really a total coincidence
it's just you just get into the habit of
saying the same
thing you know sort of like sticks
hexenhammer 666 you know he always
starts off the same and always ends the
same so let's

see

okay okay so we got

m m says your opinion on venerable Nana

Vera and his writing notes on the dham

well I would say that his letters are

way more interesting reading than notes

on the dham notes on dham venerable Nano

Vera he

was um an Englishman who was friends

with venerable nanam mole the first

famous nle not the recent famous nle and

uh they went to Salon together I guess

they were originally going to uh be

ordained in

Tibet and then the Chinese invaded Tibet

so they switched plans to ston although

I've also read that Nana Vera converted

to Buddhism after reading Julius evola's book about Buddhism while he while he was sick in a hospital in Italy um he was very intellectual he was very much influenced by existentialist philosophy you he he considered dhama to be like an improvement on existentialism the existentialists always get to this dead end and and and it's like they don't how to progress any farther some of them will then just abandon existentialism in favor of mysticism like um what was his name Carl Jasper supposedly did um so um n Vera he had this really complicated explanation of pretty much everything and he started

off with this weird idea that I mean he rejected Abid dama he rejected um pretty much all of the the texts that are not called core texts but with regard to all the rest of it Dean nikaya majima nikaya samut nikaya and um like angur andaya some of the the kakaya and also most of winia he just accepted that as absolutely 100% just Buddha vajan genuine teachings of goab Buddha just without question just completely disregarding you know the talking animal stories and the flatters and all that that are contained even in the core texts and then he used that as just sort of like a starting point of axioms to build up this extremely

complicated um like super existentialist philosophy where a frog would have to be an intellectual in order to manage being unenlightened according to his point of view and then he while doing walking meditation and just like cogitating ferociously he apparently became a soda all right in his own opinion he became a soda became very arrogant just stopped communicating with venerable Yana moly who he and they I mean they'd been friends for years he just broke off communication because they were no longer uh in a standing of parody you know they were no longer equals because y Vera was so far beyond him and so

forth and so

um it could be to your benefit to read

notes on dhama just to understand this

weird interpretation of dhama I mean he

wasn't entirely foolish and certainly

wasn't stupid so you can you can pick up

little tidbits of stuff that he's got a

lot more followers now than he had when

he was alive there are a lot of

intellectual Western monks who are

fanboys of Nana virus to this

day um let's

see but still I mean his letters were

way more readable and interesting than

his notes on dama and uh some books that

contain notes on dama will also contain

his collected

letters but he was very intellectually arrogant and he I mean he had absolutely no use at all for mysticism and I consider Terra early Buddhism to have been just like mysticism par Excellence just like the purification and you know Perfection as far as you know any worldly system can be perect Ed of mysticism and he just absolutely hated that that he was he just thought that violates the aristan laws of thought that a Mystic will say you know the truth is a and not a which is just Abomination to him so um I had a one of these followers of nanov Vera read my first blog when I first came back to

America in like

20112 and you know he he was really

intrigued by what I was writing asked me

if I was like a follower of nanov Vera

also and he was like supporting me

trying to get my my writings published

and everything and then one of the very

first blog posts I came out with after

that was essentially criticizing yna ver

and explaining why I figured he was why

I I considered him to be like grossly

mistaken with regard to mysticism

especially and then that was just a

total embarrassment to this Western this

European Monk and his friends and you

know the organization that was based on

N Vera's teachings that were going to

publish my te my writings and so forth
you know it was just in a way it was
just natural inevitable self-sabotage on
my part because I had been planning on
writing that article long before I ever
started the blog you know it was this
one of the first blog posts that came
out on the old blog and it's it's now in
one incorporated into one of my books I
think it might be gosh I don't remember
which book it's
in so I guess that's a long answer to
this very short question and so I'll
just move on to M's next question which
is and I practice shikan Taza in the
tradition of Soo Zen twice a day for 30

minutes is it healing from the terab perspective and is it considered meditation in the traditional Orthodox sense well it's my understanding that shikantaza is yeah I mean certainly it's not against terraa Buddhism and I mean there's different methods of meditation included in terraa Buddhism including one in the commentaries the story of Poa I mentioned this before where the enlightened novice the enlightened boy novice is is instructing the venerable poon how to meditate and he compares the body to a termite Mound with six holes and there's a lizard inside the termite Mount you want to catch that lizard so you just block off five of the holes and

you just watch intently the last the
sixth hole so when the lizard comes out
you catch it and that's I mean that
could be uh a reasonable way of
explaining shikan Taza where you're just
like watching the Mind intently waiting
for a thought to arise or maybe not even
waiting you're just you're just like
sitting there empty wide awake you know
uh it's it's it's kind of hard for me to
put into words I haven't I haven't
really studied up on on Zen meditation
techniques very much I'm more familiar
with Terra voden ones but um I do think
that shikantaza definitely is compatible
with with early terraa Orthodox

terraa so it's certainly considered

meditation in the traditional Orthodox

sense so I'm just going to move on to

the next question here grasshopper says

greetings poo basa yeah greetings to you

grasshopper which I think is the same as

Master Poe which and it's kind of con

contradictory let's

see oh oh he answers his own riddle here

why did the perv cross the road he's

stuck to the

chicken

gosh yeah chicken chicken crossing the

road jokes are uh they've been they've

been going around for quite a while

since they invented chickens

probably let's

see okay cool whip asking a fourth question and he's got the number four there just shamelessly admitting to asking a fourth question if a man has a vasectomy does he become a unic no he does not even though he's shooting blanks he's still he's still got the Family Jewels
intact and he's still producing testosterone you know because that's what the Family Jewels do among other things is they uh they secrete testosterone so yeah a man with a bisectomy he's shooting blanks but he's still intact it's just that he's got the baz deference tubes severed and like

tied off so that the the sperm Ducks

aren't um sending sperms all the way to

the end of the

pp so uh let's

see more questions here you should do a

Buddhist perspective of all other

religions um yeah I've I've done a

Buddhist perspective of some

religions yeah in fact uh NPC number six

down here is saying that I did a series

with Venable padal last year um yeah I

was comparing I did a Buddhist

perspective of Mah like a terraa

Buddhist perspective of Terra or

Mahayana Buddhism Hinduism and Atheism

especially I think also

Christianity we didn't really talk about

Islam or some of the more obscure

religious systems

yeah so let's see

so please give me free seed grain only

you can prevent me from switching to a

life of crime yeah I think that was

maybe somewhat of a naive idea that that

crime is necessarily caused by poverty I

mean in some cases especially if we

assume that you know was more likely in

Ancient India than yeah

but I think the the most the worst

crimes at least the most uh overall

harmful crimes are committed by the

people in

power so let's see here Robin's Nest is

there question marks here that is that

is the

question uh from the standpoint who is a

Mahayana who is in a Mahayana do you

think this concept of offensive and

should be altered okay so hello poasa

there has been a lot of controversy into

Antiquity with Mahayana calling terab

and other non mahay schools as part of

the Lesser vehicle yeah H Yana I mean

literally means like deficient vehicle

Hina is like a past participle of I

think it's hied which means to lose you

know to squander you know to Fritter

away and so the hinana is the

essentially the deficient vehicle so

anyways getting back to Robins n

question here from their standpoint and
from the standpoint who is in Mahana do
you think this concept is offensive and
should be altered well a wise terod
wouldn't be offended because whether
you're offended or not is really a
matter of your own wisdom or
foolishness so um I mean the more polite
way of referring to it would be sha
Kayana which is the the vehicle of the
disciples so that would be the more
polite way of referring to pre ter Prem
Mahayana
Buddhism instead of calling it hinana or
the deficient vehicle
you call it Shak Kayana or the vehicle

of the

disciples which sounds nicer I guess or

you could just call it Prem Mahayana

Buddhism but then again a lot of

Mahayana Buddhists think that Mahayana

went all the way back to the time of the

Buddha in which case you couldn't have

Prem Mahayana unless it was Buddhism

before the the Buddha did the first Zen

transmission of twirling the flower

where only Maha kasan got

it so

okay so okay let's

uh let's see here looking for more

question marks see I'm just I'm skipping

over a lot of what people are saying

here because there's no question

marks let's

see oh yeah that is a good point white

ash Piper points out that politically

the Buddha certainly would have been

pro-life he would not have been

pro-choice so he'd have he'd be dog

piled by uh other leftist if he did

adopt some leftist position and was like

uh adopted by the left as an honorary

member yeah he'd be like JK Rowling or

something let's see here oh yeah we got

somebody else already saying sha Kayana

here so let's

see

um oh Mary J is defending himself by

pointing out that he only asked one

question about the fish tank

oh yeah plus also violent thoughts about

his family let's see um more question

marks see I'm scrolling down all these

comments that were made while I was

reading the the standard list of

questions yeah there's definitely going

to be one at least one Loach in my

aquarium you got to have the the derbis

feeders at the bottom eating a detrus

and

stuff see

okay question marks yeah most of these

aren't question marks okay here we go

one from

M why is there something rather than

nothing from a terava Buddhist

perspective something rather than

nothing well there's something and

nothing you have you can't have

something without nothing because you

got to have the

dualistic pairs of of ideas to balance

each other out mutually dependently

coise if you

will so

there is there appears to be something

well it's this is my own idea and

Orthodox Terra Auto Buddhism really does

not explain why anything bothers to

exist in the first place or even bothers

to seem to exist youan it's like the

primordial cause is

ignorance but you know where does the ignorance come from you know it's like there's difficulty in explaining that but my simile of the block of marble um does I mean it's it's a does a better job of explaining it I think even though it's not Orthodox Terra Buddhism but I mean you start off with Hegel who I mean I'm pretty much inclined to agree with schopenhauer that Hegel was an intellectual caliban that he was a kind of uh what's the word a charlatan snake oil salesman but how he starts his dialectic in in his logic I mean that's the one thing thing about Hegel that I really value it's like the very first thesis in his dialectic is pure being

and then the antithesis to that is pure
non-being because according to Hegel and
I think he may be right here that pure
being this infinite formless being and
pure non-being of infinite formless
non-being they just merge into each
other because I mean they're
indistinguishable because there's
neither one of them contains any kind of
descrip
content that I mean they're the same
which is one reason why nobody will
prove the existence of God if God is
absolute everything then he's also
absolute nothing in a
sense so I mean then you have to have

the the synthesis where which really
starts ssara going of pure being and
pure non-being you have to have some
kind of Distinction you got to have some
difference and as goes back to like the
da Ching in dosm you know first you have
the Dao then you have the one then you
have the two and then you have the
10,000 things because once you start
Duality going that that that just
populates the the universe with all this
stuff more than 10,000 Things even
there's even more than 10,000 things in
this
universe
so see so you got this this everything
nothing and then contained within this

paradoxically contained within the
everything nothing is just infinite
possibilities it's like the sizeless
block of marble that contains every
possible statue inside of it and the
statues exist only conditionally and
potentially and like
virtually and that's that's the way
existence Works in Buddhism is it's
virtual I mean it depends on
non-existence
too but talking about this is uh it's
it's very difficult not to just seem
like one is just talking gibberish
because human languages in the human
mind are not just not they're not

evolved or designed to understand this

stuff or think about

it okay so cify is thinking me and

everybody who participated yes I thank

everybody likewise except for I don't

thank myself because that would be kind

of conceeded or

something

see meditating on a white cloth and

spreading Freedom right now yeah catch

up as a joker he knows his

commentary let's

see yeah that's

okay oh man okay

mafes says what is your view on black

magic is it real and generates heavy

Karma wow I I vaguely remember somebody

asking me about Black Magic recently and
I may not have even answered the
question cuz I was thinking about my
father who was like an amateur warlock I
mean he did Witchcraft and I remember
one time when I was a kid he came to my
brother and me with like this concerned
look on his face and
says if you find a knife lying around
with a black handle don't touch it
because the he had two knives that he
used in witchcraft a wh- handled knife
and a black-handled knife and the
black-handled knife was for the black
stuff you know what I mean so I do think
that black magic exists that and uh it

can generate heavy Karma I'm pretty sure like the the story of milara like this great Tibetan Buddhist Saint he started off as a black magician that his his mother I mean his father died his mother was just kind of supporting the kids as well as she could depending upon some evil Uncle who just defrauded her of all of her property and so the mother being a vengeful person just encouraged milera you know to to go and become an a Apprentice to some black magician and learn how to do it so we can get revenge on that that that [__] of an uncle of yours so that's what he did he he he learned black magic and then used a spell to destroy this house I think if I

remember correctly he he generated some
kind of virtual giant centipede or
something like youd see in a video game
that that just knocked the house down
and caved it in and everybody inside
died and then after that he he felt like
maybe I should be doing something better
with my life and then he he became like
a devout Buddhist and then eventually
became a sage and Saint in addition to
being a poet yeah the the biography or
autobiography of millera is really
fascinating some of the stuff he says
like he was living out in the
wilderness and he was just living mainly
on a diet of nettles and so his whole

body just turned green his clothes just rotted off and so he was like this Naked Green man living in the forest and the villagers all thought he was a monster you know they just assumed you know you see some some hairy scraggly green person out there that it's not going to be really a

human so I mean just the story of of Mila's autobiography really is interesting but getting back to black magic yeah I do think it is possible that black magic does happen in this world and uh it can generate heavy Karma so it is good to live a Pure Life you know be a good person and that will help protect you from that kind of stuff

too

so Zeno demon is there any way to audit one's own Karma and audit what that means like to to get like a overview of it that you you're it's like you're taking the class but not getting credits for it see is there any way to audit one's own karma not really you you can't really know exactly what your karma is I mean if you ever get psychic powers so that you can remember your past lives you get a better idea of where you're coming from and where you're headed kind of a kind of a thing um I say kind of a ding there I think I tried to say thing and deal at the same time I do that a

lot so yeah you can't really know for
sure what your karma is until you get
into the advanced psychic power stages
and then you can see it
because like the mind that is auditing
things the mind that is Discerning and
you know perceiving things is at the
surface and there is really a
subconscious mind even though Abid dama
philosophy doesn't mention it that
Buddhism in general as far as I can
recall doesn't specifically mention the
subconscious mind but still the mind is
operating at different levels and we are
mainly operating up at the surface level
there's all the stuff going on down
below that we're not fully aware of I

mean some of that comes up in dreams and

so

forth so let's

see yeah if you want to audit your own

Karma you're going to have to get to the

the level of psychic pow is where you

can look at people coming and going

according to their karma you can look at

yourself in the same way and you know

review your past lives and realize that

you know you you an Axe Murderer six

lives back or

something so I think I'm just move on to

the next question here this is from

cryo and cryo says I have seen nearly

certainly auspicious signs when chanting

are visions of scripture showing
themselves showing themselves to you
considered a blessing or just part of
the path
well if you're meditating and you start
seeing visions like that you should just
not take them seriously just note it and
let it go because otherwise it can
become a distraction and derail your
meditation um whether it is a blessing
or not you should just accept it as an
everyday occurrence if you want
blessings especially like Paranormal
kind of blessings or paranormal events
in general to become just an everyday
occurrence it's a a normal occurrence in
your life you should not single them out

as something special you just accept
them maybe with some gratitude and just
not make a big deal of it and just
continue on with your life and that just
kind of eases their entry into your
version of reality if you make a big
deal of it then it just stays a big deal
and it might not happen nearly as as
easily so visions of scripture showing
themselves to you is that considered a
blessing it certainly can be it depends
on your attitude if you want to consider
it a blessing you certainly
may
um yeah I'm not exactly sure what your
mental States would be when when it

happens I mean that would be a major
factor in determining you know what the
nature of the appearance would
be but um yeah it's certainly not
anything bad I mean so at worst it would
be
neutral and so yeah it's that's fine if
it happens it's that's no problem at
all and I don't know if I really
answered that question or not but even
so I'm moving on to the next one and
what is your perspective on
tattoos this is from lucid I've been
considering getting one that says accept
the truth because I am the kind of guy
who needs to be constantly reminded I
feel the reminder would help me well I

don't know if it would I mean accept the
truth I think even the most
delusional leftist out there is that
they think they're accepting the truth
everyone thinks they're accepting the
truth so with regard to that yeah I
don't think except the truth is nearly
the the best kind of reminder you can
give yourself because everyone thinks
they're accepting the truth anyway even
people that are just sorely
deluded but with regard to the main
question with the question mark which is
what is your perspective on
tattoos well I mean I've always resisted
getting one my father had one tattoo

that he got I think it was on VE day at
least that's one story I heard was just
said lest I forget on this forearm that
there was something he didn't want to
forget I think he was drunk at the time
though and uh so I mean I'm not opposed
to tattoos but definitely if you ever
plan on committing a crime in your life
you might want to uh not have any easily
identifiable marks on your
body um see also if you're going to
commit a crime just leave your cell
phone somewhere else don't bring it with
you
see yeah I mean I am not eager to get a
tattoo
my woman would like me to get a tattoo

but uh I'm just it's sort of like when
you get a new jar of peanut butter and
you you just there it seems like such a
shame to Mar that smooth surface on the
top of the peanut butter it's kind of
like that with my skin where it's like
I've always had an aversion towards
specializing in in certain things like
it was difficult to choose a career
because if you settle on one career you
pretty much ruled out everything else
whereas so long as you don't decide you
still have infinite options in a way and
it's sort of the same thing with that
tattoo you know once I get Mama tattooed
on my arm then I mean there's nothing

else I can get tattooed there you know

what I'm

saying so I mean really I just I like

playing you know just trying to decorate

my body I don't know it's like in Burma

a lot of people get tattoos for like

Paranormal reason reasons to protect

themselves from snake bite or or hexes

or something which in a way kind of

makes more sense than just trying to

beautify my aging hairy skin with a

tattoo

so let's

see I guess I answered that

question so here's here's a question

from Brian although it's it's not the

infamous Brian is probably some mild

mannered innocuous sort of Brian who
says what if any practice do you still
do what is still worth doing well I mean
I do still spontaneously
oh like it happens sometimes like
happened at work just a few days ago um
you know you're just doing something and
just oh just starts repeating so that
still happens I mean I still I mean I'm
doing this doing these q&as I mean this
is one of my best DH practices I think
it has me thinking about dhama has me
sharing what I've learned which is you
know I guess it's for the most part it's
a meritorious action although um really
if if you're bound for enlightenment

Merit is is in a way it's it's sort of
counterproductive because it's good
karma is still Karma it's still
samsaric so do a little walking
meditation sometimes but not very
much and uh
mainly is my practice is aside from
spontaneous oming sometimes and like
doing a little bit of research watching
you know doing a little bit of study
sometimes and answering these
questions pretty much the only real D
practice I still do is just
mindfulness like when I'm at work doing
something repetitive or something even
if I'm not oming spontaneously sometimes
you just kind of go into present moment

mode where you know all that exists is
just what's going on right here right
now and no no like thinking commentary
you know you're just focused on you know
what is happening
now so that's that's really about it for
my practice I did intensive meditation
for 30 years got as far as I could with
it and so it just seems like doing it
parttime now would just be a pale shadow
of what I was doing fulltime before and
so it just I just don't really have a
strong incentive to keep it
up so let's see
here Mara made
Mahayana let's see do you think we came

forward since my question in Q&A number
two bringing conservative Buddhism
forward man I don't I don't even
remember Q&A number two I was still a
monk in California at that time I don't
remember exactly what number we were at
when I switched from monk to a person
but uh do you think we came forward
about with regard to Bringing
conservative Buddhism forward um well I
mean I got more viewers now than I did
then way
more um so I think I think we have come
forward I don't think we've come forward
nearly enough to really you know set
down roots and become
mainstream as though terraa Buddhism

like real terraa Buddhism could become

mainstream in the

west I think the people that are doing

that the best would be some of the monks

mainly in the aan cha

tradition

um yeah I mean monastic Buddhism tends

to be conservative just Asian

traditional Buddhism is fairly

conservative it's the only

non-conservative Buddhism in the West

for the most part is you know leftist

politicized Buddhism

with rainbow flags and all that and uh

like what is it doing mindfulness of

your like inherent racism or your priv

white privilege this kind of thing there
actually are meditation Retreats and
meditation centers that are like
teaching people you know you got to be
mindful of your white privilege and and
you got to be mindful of your inherent
racism and all this and essentially
[__] I mean certainly the Buddha
wasn't teaching
it so it's I think one of the reasons
why there's making some progress is like
I said earlier in this Q&A that the
really radical leftism is starting to go
out of style I mean they're finally
people are are seeing just how insane
things are getting and they don't like
it and they'd rather get back to

something more

normal and that could just indirectly

help Terra Buddhism in the west

also getting it out of the clutches

of leftist activists or

whatever so let's

see oh yeah white ash Piper is saying

the 10,000 Things is a metaphor yeah I

realize it that the author or authors of

the AL Jing really did know that there

was more than 10,000 things in this

universe

see let's see okay so here's one from

harim cthul I vaguely recall you saying

that you had a poltergeist home could

you recount your experience well I mean

the main the most spectacular experience
I've explained this before more than
once so I mean we' had a poltergeist
that would just break things
spontaneously you just open the cabinet
and there'd be like the the handle of a
of a coffee cup would just be detached
PCH lying there um silverware would come
out of the dishwasher or you just find
them in the drawer all twisted and bent
like in the first Poltergeist movie
actually and um but I mean the most
spectacular event with regard to the
Poltergeist was when my father was
hiring a new housekeeper I was about 13
or 14 years old and they were sitting at
the kitchen table I was sitting at the

opposite end of the table from my father
the new housekeeper was sort of kitty
corner from him and there was this tray
right in between and my father was
explaining to her we have a poltergeist
in this house so if you find any broken
dishes or anything don't immediately
blame the kids because this Poltergeist
spontaneously destroys stuff and when
he's explaining this to her it's like
one of her eyebrows was was starting to
go up and and she's starting to get this
slow grin on her face like she can't
decide whether he's joking or crazy and
then literally within just seconds of
him getting to the end of this

explanation that ash tray that was on
the corner right in between them in
plain sight made this sound like Zin and
just slid apart like an inch and a half
and in in two almost perfect halves and
then of course she stopped smiling and
and started taking him seriously because
it just happened right there like he was
saying and that's uh I mean that's
mainly the experience of the
Poltergeist so let's
see let's keep looking here question oh
man see if I if I scroll down just a
little too far then all of a sudden it
just Zips right down to the bottom and
then I got to scroll back up again and
search for where it zip let's see NPC

number six can you please try to not

delete this first live stream when it is

done so we can go back and rewatch it

yeah that's definitely what I'm going to

try to do in fact I'm G to have to

download it so I can maybe edit the

first uh ineffectual fumblings and then

put it up on bitshoot and Rumble where I

am not live right now the bitshoot and

Rumble people are just going to have to

wait poor

things

okay so let's

see I think we're

uh I think we're getting down to the

bottom here mafes has a question from a

Buddhist perspective is it wrong the use
of entheogens I think they can enhance
the practice when used responsibly and
very
sporadically um well from the Buddhist
point of view you're not allowed to take
intoxicant which cause clouded of mind
or heedlessness and like a mind
expanding drug like a psychedelic is not
really encouraging heedlessness in fact
um for most of my life whenever I would
take a psychedelic drug or an
enen a spiritual plant
medicine that I would have religious
experiences I mean I mean that was sort
of like my practice before I became a
Buddhist was just going off alone into a

Wilderness and dropping acid or

something

so yeah I think from a Buddhist

perspective

it it's hard to say exactly although it

is true that cannabis is allowable for

monks for medicinal purposes which is

kind of a strange controversial

statement but it's right there in the

text in the the chapter on medicines in

the the the books of monastic discipline

in the mahaga the vinia

mahaga so I don't think from a Buddhist

perspective it is wrong to use enthe

agents unless you're using them

recreationally if you're just using it

to have a good time you're partying or something then yeah it would not be it would not be appropriate then but I mean if you're like quiet maybe alone maybe in a peaceful surroundings like just in your room or in a for or something and you take some sort of sacred plant medicine or some such that uh that expands your Consciousness I mean you're not just going into a stuper but you're becoming more awake more alert seeing things in a different way that is ultimately just as valid as the way you usually see them then that certainly can be of advantage to you and most of the people who became monks that are of my generation started off with psychedelics

that's my experience like from talking
with other monks that I don't know what
it's like now but you
know people that are like at the older
the the earliest stages of Gen X that
and probably the late and the the later
stage Boomers that I mean I mean the
Boomers I mean they were hippies so yeah
there was a lot of those probably more
than the Gen X people that started off
with enth theogenic substances you know
sort of like ROM Doss and Timothy ly
experimenting with LSD and musculin and
all that and then you just get to this
point where you realize this is valuable
you're in a more expanded State you know

your Consciousness is enhanced and so
then you look for ways of cultivating
that without having to rely on the
chemical and meditation is a good way of
doing that although I have to admit that
taking the drug is much more reliable
and quicker than maybe dedicating years
of your life to cultivating meditative
States until you can get into really
like profound mystical States just
through meditation it's it's way more
sporadic to use meditation to get there
although definitely you're you're you're
generating more Merit by doing it that
way okay Mary J's going to bed good
night and uh let's
see okay

Pepa pepea says you address Trump versus
Biden for the P for the first pres for
the presidency but have you considered
RFK Jr uh well I might have briefly
considered RFK Jr but I'm not GNA vote
for
him I think he had some kind of worms
eating his brain or something I think he
he actually said that in an interview
that worms were eating his brain and uh
yeah I think he's even RFK Jr is a bit
too far left for my
tastes so let's see
here marid Mahayana says I'm glad I
found you at this time when I started
getting interested in Buddhism for five

years ago yeah well I'm glad you're uh

I'm glad you're with us

also okay yeah white ash Piper says they

say that aulter gist are not caused by

spirits but rather a certain person in

the active environment yeah usually it's

an emotionally troubled uh young person

that is generating rspk what

RS recurrent spontaneous

psychokinesis yeah yeah I've got a Paras

pychology book on the bookcase back

there that talks about that yeah but I

don't think that I was the center of it

I was closest to being adolescent at the

time but I think it was my father just

had weird stuff happen around him he was

very Lial person so I do think he may

have been the epicenter of

it okay and then uh that's it that's it

I answered all the questions just like

like Biden at the debate you answered

all the

questions so I guess considering we've

been going for three and a half hours

then I guess we're done so you guys know

the drill I think next time there's a

good chance I'll just record it as as

I've usually been doing but at least now

I've done a Q&A or a live stream before

and so I may do it again sometime maybe

maybe for number 200 you never

know so um

I guess we're good and so if you have

any questions for the next one then feel

free to include them in the uh the

comments under the YouTube video or

bitshoot or rumble or whatever you're

watching or if you have access to the

Discord server you can ask them there

and uh feel free to like And subscribe

if you

will and be happy

alrighty

then hello and welcome to

episode1 of question and answer I am

your host as usual pel basa and we don't

have an extremely large number of

questions to answer this time so we're

probably not going to stretch anywhere

near to 3 and 1 half hours like we have

done recently because there was like a

merciless onslaught of questions

apparently what happened is the

Q&A 100 the previous Q&A which was live

streamed was so emotionally exhausting

for everybody that they just don't have

as many questions

now yeah it was it was slightly

traumatic doing that live stream it was
my first live stream ever and it it took
like two aborted first attempts because
I didn't realize that I was actually
live streaming and there's no indication
that I was live streaming other than
people in the in the chat saying hey
you're live streaming so it took me like
three tries to finally realize that it
was actually
working but that's all in the past now
so I got my
beverage got my emergency backup
beverage and so I'm ready
to start commencing answering these here
particular questions and the first one
is from Fred and Fred says in my opinion

spirit is the flow what's your idea is

cheeta

spirit and I mean the answer to that

question largely depends on what one's

definition of spirit is going to be I

mean Spirit can have lots of different

meanings um apparently he just means

like um if not this human Vitality it

would be like human mentality

um

so yeah I mean I would agree that Spirit

would I mean at at like the samsaric

level Spirit would be the flow of mental

states which is essentially Karma you

know it's like the the momentum of of

your mental States although if you want

to get into a higher like a higher definition you could say that spirit is consciousness so that the same Spirit pretty much pervades all sentient beings although that is heresy from a terraa point of view because according to Abid dama philosophy you've got an A different Consciousness every moment so in a way it would be a flow of Consciousness too but you can't have Consciousness without something to be conscious of which means mental States so like from a Terra Buddhist point of view I mean you couldn't just say that cheetah is spirit because cheetah um it can mean mind but also in a more technical sense in terava it just means

Consciousness or

wiana so it wouldn't just be that it

would have to be like the entire baggage

of mental States like feelings and

volitions and perceptions and so forth

that all of that together in a kind of

mental stream would be your spirit but

if you wanted to get really metaphysical

and absolutist you could say that the

human spirit is just like the formless

infinite Consciousness that neither

exists nor doesn't exist um and

Etc that you know it's like theists

would call it God dsts call it Dao

Hindus call it Brahman Etc that that

could just be like the the fundamental

underlying Spirit but terraa Orthodox

terraa doesn't work that way so

according to Orthodox Terra the human

Spirit would probably just be the IND

individual's flow of Consciousness and

mental

states which is what trans migrates from

One Life to the next you know it's just

the momentum of your mental

States so think I'm just going to move

on to the next question this is from

game

fap and game fap says do you and Brian

still have arguments about your boy

ah and I assume

by ah he is referring to the

furer and uh okay I'll just continue

I'll just continue I'll just start over
again so what I'm going to do game game
I'm having a block here game fap says do
you and Brian still have arguments about
your boy ah I remember seeing your
videos on bitshoot a while back well I
mean Brian just uh for matters of
personal survival and just he's just
gone into a different direction now he
really doesn't talk about ah very much
anymore I might even talk about ah a
little more than he does now simply
because I mean he's just kind of
avoiding the
issue for for easily understandable
reasons because he's gotten into a lot

of hot water over that sort of
thing um so we don't have we don't have
any arguments I mean we've talked about
him in a few videos in the past I think
I was still a monk at that time and we
had a debate that got a little bit
heated um where you know he's saying
that Hitler didn't do anything wrong you
know he was a good guy and I saying well
I mean he may not have been any worse
than somebody like Stalin but I mean he
he was like largely just demonized so
that you know most people nowadays if
they had to pick who's the evilest human
being who ever lived Hitler might get
more votes than anybody else just mainly
largely because of

propaganda but so I'm saying Hitler I

mean he wasn't like some sort of inhuman

monster that he was sort of an

opportunistic um nationalistic

politician who wound up on the losing

side and so he just got dog piled and

demonized I mean if he was on The

Winning Side his picture might be on our

money right

now but anyways let's see

yeah we don't still have arguments we

had like one argument which was just

this debate that we had where you know I

was saying that you know Hitler did make

mistakes he wasn't all

good um you know he did lie sometime

broke promises that sort of thing but on the other hand I mean he wasn't I mean I consider Stalin probably to have been a worse human being than Hitler was but Stalin was on our side so you can't badmouth him too much furthermore he was a
leftist so yeah I guess I could have just said nope and just moved on to the next question so I guess I should because Brian and I do not have I mean we haven't
discussed Hitler in a long time although I will say that that one of my most popular YouTube videos ironically is on esoteric hitlerism which is a video I did with aotto couple years

ago so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from covac and Cad zida and covac and CAD zida says can you please show us what your question list looks like I'm curious how or where they are written down when you answer them well my question list is oh I just hit the microphone my question list is is right is right there on the screen there so you just got to kind of turn your head very sharply and maybe you'll be able to see it but I I do have like a screen share option on this video um software that I'm using but I've never used it before and I'm not going to experiment for fear of just completely

ruining everything so I mean it's just a document and I just cut and paste questions onto this document it's like a scroll going down it's in uh Georgia font and the people's names who ask the questions are in bold type and then their questions are listed below that and it's generally in alphabetical order so I guess you can just imagine that in your mind just a a barebones document file that's just has you know the name of the person in bold type and then there are questions underneath and it's just a scroll that goes down so I'm just going to scroll up to uh C action c z next question or scroll down it's called scrolling down I think but

actually all the text is moving up so

it's uh kind of paradoxical if you

will anyways his next question is why

did you end up moving from Burma to

California

well I mainly just burned out on Burma

although last time I was in Burma um I

there was a I was staying at a monastery

Madan Monastery um in the the foothills

of the Shan

plateau and the Abbot there was getting

older he was looking for someone to

replace him as Abbott and I offered my

services I said I'll be permanent Abbott

here if you like but he had already

promised some scholar some Burmese

scholar monk that he could be Abbot and
so I I came like that close to just
committing myself to spending the rest
of my life as a monk in Burma although
how well that would have worked when the
military coup occurred and all that I
don't
know most of the people I know of who
were living in Burma who weren't Burmese
citizens just left after
that so how did why did I end up moving
from Burma to California mainly I was
just burned out on living in Burma um
you know just sweating all the time not
being able to speak English just getting
weird tropical diseases and so forth um
I felt like I would be of more use in

the west where I can speak the same
language as people and I can sort of
think sort of see more eye to eye with
people as a general rule at least
slightly more eye to
eye and so I just burned out on Burma
and decided to come back to America and
the obvious choice at the time was a
Burmese Monastery that is in the tong
Pulu tradition which was the tradition
in which I was ordained there was a
monastery in Fremont California and a
monastery in French Camp California just
a few miles south of Stockton and um a a
monk in the Tom Pulu tradition who was
one of my teachers in the early days and

who participated in my ordination
ceremony and all that he he was the
Abbot at one of those monasteries so I I
moved there and it it really didn't work
because as a general rule Burmese monks
in the
west they don't follow vinia very well
if if at all I mean they have to follow
it at least enough so that they look
like monks and so forth but um it was it
was the sort of Monastery that I
generally avoided like the plague when I
could and then I W up just kind of
being just sort of transplanted there
and it just did not work but I mean the
main reason why I moved from Burma to
California was I was just burned out on

Burma I guess that's the short answer so
I'm just going to move on to to uh
coaction CAD Z's next question which is
last week you said things aren't
ultimately real despite them having
causal consequences on other things
because these causal relations are not
ultimately real can you explain what you
mean um yeah I mean I've explained this
many times and I think there's a lot of
people probably most people that aren't
going to be able to really grasp what
I'm saying partly because it's such a
weird idea that I mean it just kind of
you know it leaves ordinary Normy saric
empirical reality

behind so it may be that if you've heard
me explain this several times and you
still don't get it you're probably just
not going to get it not that I'm trying
to be offensive in any way but there is
a good chance of that sort of like
discussing mysticism with an
intellectual that just doesn't get
mysticism like step Hawking or bertran
Russell you know they just did not get
mysticism they didn't appreciate it at
all they just kind of thought it was not
a very good idea
Etc so
anyways let's see I'll just I'll just
ask the question again last week you
said things aren't ultimately real

despite them having causal consequences
on other things because thosea causal
relations are not ultimately real can
you explain what you mean well it's like
I mean the easiest way that I can
explain this is just falling back on the
standard simile of the block of marble
all right you got the block of marble
that contains within it every single
possible
statue and reality according to the
hypothesis works that way you've got
this formless infinite energy or or
Consciousness or whatever you want to
call it and it contains within it all
possibilities in a kind of virtual form

the same way that the statues are
contained within the block of marble in
Virtual form every single molecule of
every statue is already there in the
exact correct position it's already
there all you got to do is just kind of
imaginatively separate out the the
excess
Rock and you've got the statue already
there every single Venus Leia Kanan and
his sons getting eaten by snakes The
discus thrower the dying
G Michelangelo's David Michelangelo's
Moses with horns it's all in there every
single molecule is already
there but what causes it to seem real is
dependent Co

arising things arise together in
dependence upon each other and they're
not ultimately real they're virtually
real but this web of conditions is sort
of mutually conditioning everything it's
sort of like a complex
ecosystem and it just
causes
this version of reality to seem to
exist so did I answer the question I
assume I did I kind of did anyway
although how many people will understand
the explanation is another question and
I'm not going to answer that one because
I don't know the answer so I'm just
going to move on to next question here

this is from

Raphael and Raphael's question is can

you react to this and in parenthesis

he's got your favorite topic and he

included this with a little video about

Protestant Buddhism apparently a

Mahayana Buddhist or sort of like a

a Buddhist eclectic who just like

accepts all of it all the different

schools you know he considers them to be

equally valid equally genuine equally

authentic and so he tries to debunk the

idea that the poly Canon is genuine

Buddhism and that Mahayana Buddhism just

got made up in his fake

Buddhism and he uses some good arguments

but also he uses some bad arguments

arents to make his

point um for example let's see I I've

got some notes here he claims that the

poly Canan being the oldest set of

scriptures is just plain wrong uh based

on the fact that the poly Canon wasn't

written down until around the same time

that Mahayana texts were written down

that's one of his arguments that you

know the the recorded existence of

terava and Mahayana is about equally old

mainly just

because text just started getting

written down around the same time

throughout India so even older texts

would be finally written down around the

same time as the newer texts are written
down and then also he said uh um also
one one bit of evidence he uses to
debunk the idea that poly texer are
genuine or original and Mahayana techs
aren't is that Terra continued to Evol
long after the the cannon was finalized
he even says that Terra didn't even
reach its its present State until about
200 years ago which is I mean it's
always going to be evolving everything's
going to be
evolving but still it's it's like a
simplistic argument and he apparently
doesn't really understand
things like I mean maybe he just doesn't
want to look at the evidence or whatever

but the fact is that the poly Canon
probably very probably contains more
authentic teachings of the Buddha than
the Mahayana trtica which is just this
huge library of
books so let's see also he said the
strange thing that that I'm not sure if
there's any factuality behind it he said
that terava and Mahayana existed
peacefully side by side in Sri l bka up
until the Maha vihara which was like the
it was a hot bed of radical
fundamentalist Buddhism was supported by
some King and then the Mahayana
Buddhists were extrait through let's see
extreme

violence and I mean maybe I mean it

wouldn't put it past me if if that sort

of thing happened some some Sri Lankan

King in ancient times converts to terraa

Buddhism and just starts

violently persecuting non- Terra vadens

or

something but um I mean the it's he

really doesn't have a very nuanced

approach to this that probably I mean

evidently based on the evidence that you

had early

teachings and the older schools all

pretty much accept these early teachings

and then they added some of their own

teachings to that and and then just

through Evolution things start evolving

but still after about 500 years of this
then Mahayana came along and it probably
evolved gradually didn't really become
like a a real movement up until people
are saying that it arose around 500
years after the time of the Buddha four
or 500
years and then all kinds of new new
ideas got added that the older Texs are
just oblivious to they don't don't even
respond
you know so it's like the Mahayana idea
is that the Buddha had all these
teachings including Mahayana teachings
and for some reason the the oldest text
or like the the teravan text and what

the Mahayana Buddhists call the agamas
which is very similar to the Terra a
polyan which is contained in the
Mahayana traida but is largely
ignored that see where was I
too many digressions in that
sentence let's see what was I
saying oh yeah so you got these older
texts that just are completely clueless
they've never heard of amitaba Buddha
they've never heard of all these bodh
satas they never heard of like just huge
retinues of Pacha Buddhas coming to
listen to the Buddhist talks and this
sort of thing it's like
this this development of Doctrine and
you can even see that within the polych

how there's a development of Doctrine so
you start off with really like archaic
text like the ataka waga the
suun and then you know it just kind of
gradually evolves and you can see I mean
it I think
my my um personal training in in biology
helps me to see some of this stuff that
you know it's an evolutionary process
and you're not going to have like
archaic and like relatively derived or
Advanced doctrines arising at the same
time um and just being completely
divorced from each other separate from
each other it's like the Buddha is
teaching like this really Advanced but

still very simplistic like a kind of
pure mysticism and then also like maybe
to other other disciples where while the
first disciples are like required to go
away and not listen he's talking about
all this pure land stuff for example I
mean it's just not very likely at
all that the standard consensus is more
likely to be correct that you had the
Buddha teaching a very simple archaic
kind of pure Dharma and then almost as
soon as he dies probably even before he
dies to some degree it starts getting
elaborated upon and ideas start evolving
some ideas kind of Fall by the wayside
other ideas are emphasized and then
their meanings kind of like Branch out

different schools will interpret the
meanings of certain things differently
so and so forth and just this just keeps
happening and it's like a few centuries
later things are
so um like Divergent from the original
teachings that you start getting
teachings that really are just
contradictory to what the Buddha taught
and some Mahayana Texs teach stuff that
the his IAL Buddha Not only would not
have endorsed I think he probably would
have like outspokenly denounced
it
so yeah that's that's uh that's my
reaction to this little video that uh

Raphael posted in the Discord server

um yeah I think you could get a much

more nuanced and intelligent response to

that same issue from even a lot of

Mahayana

Scholars so I'll just move on to

Raphael's next question which is similar

it's can you respond to this video and

then as a kind of commentary he says

Richard is a vegan YouTuber who says a

mushroom trip cured his lifelong

depression he says the trip helped him

internalize nalism unfortunately he

thinks Buddhism has something to do with

nihilism perhaps you can clear up up

this widespread

misunderstanding and I think the only

real thing that he is at least in the
short video that Raphael had me watch um
you know his take on nihilism at least
in that video is that everything is
ultimately
meaningless and I mean you could say the
same thing with theard to early Buddhism
also that samsara is perception that's G
samsara is
meaning that ultimately nibana is
meaningless because meaning is a kind of
symbolic
interpretation where I mean you just
separate out something and then you like
slap a label onto it and you slap a
description onto it and then that's the

meaning and that can't happen without a
kind of samsaric mentality going on
which does not really represent Ultimate
Reality so
um what he's calling
nihilism like 100 years ago would have
been called
existentialism that you know the world
is ultimately meaningless but I think
the main difference is that even an
existentialist would probably think that
the world really exists you know the
trees and the grass and the clouds and
the the rivers and houses and all that
Ian there is some reality
there whereas in very early Buddhism I
mean you're not supposed to to not

you're not supposed to even go that
far so um it's not so much nihilism or
skepticism though it's it's kind of very
Advanced mysticism where you are going
beyond the illusion going Beyond know
the Veil The Painted Veil or whatever
and getting into the undifferentiated
absolute which which is beyond that or
underlies
it so so I mean you could say that there
is a
similarity between like existentialism
or nihilism on the one hand and the
Buddhist idea that this is all an
illusion so that ultimately what you
think has meaning is an illusion so

there is the meaning itself is

illusory

but really it's like materialistic

Normie types who cannot see a

distinction between those two you know

they they really just do not grasp any

Ultimate Reality beyond the phenomenal

universe and so if you reject the

validity of the phenomenal Universe all

that's left for a materialistic Normy is

just

nothingness just void and Buddhists can

talk about void and nothingness too but

they're not really referring to a big

zero you know they're just referring to

something that's off the scale the mind

can't grasp and so there's no point in

even

trying

so let's

see I guess I responded to the video I

mean I don't fully recall everything

that he was saying though but

um I do think that what he's calling

nihilism is just the idea that this

world is ultimately meaningless and I

think the Buddha may have agreed with

that so

um yeah so I guess I better just move on

to the next question this is from skolin

or

skad and this question I do not fully

understand if a body is revived from a

cryo freezer then would it be a

candidate for

reincarnation so um oh then he's got

like a like a little commentary here

like all those eccentric millionaires

such as Walt Disney so is Walt Disney a

corpsicle is he Frozen somewhere right

now in liquid nitrogen or

something if so somebody should revive

him and point out the Abomination that

Disney has

become but uh I think scadden's question

here is if you are frozen cryogenically

and then you are revived would that be a

case of

reincarnation and if it's the same

karmic stream then I guess it it really

wouldn't be you just be like in a state
of suspended animation it is kind of an
interesting question what happens to
your spirit when your body is
essentially dead you know it's it's like
when you're frozen solid I mean there's
no metabolic processes going on
ideally so you'd be dead and then
you then when you get thaw out and
revived you're alive again what happens
in between you know it's sort of like
little rers or tardigrades these little
uh invertebrate animals that can
completely dehydrate even like some
frogs can do this or lungfish you know
they just dry out and become brittle and

hard and there's no respiration going on

so they're dead you know they're not

alive I mean they're potentially alive

but there's no there's no respiration

going on you know the life processes you

know the biochemical reactions are

pretty much

stopped and so what happens to the

spirit of that rifer or tardigrade or

frog or lungfish it's uh it's kind of a

good question and I don't think that the

early Buddhists really considered that

sort of

thing um or for that matter just

somebody who's in a coma you know it's

like where is their Spirit what's their

Spirit doing is it in like some other

realm or is it just like

dormant so I mean with that it's it's

kind of a good good question I do think

um it's like your spirit would have to

be somewhere doing something I don't

think that your spirit just completely

just shuts down if you're cryogenically

frozen or in a in a coma or you're

estivating you're you're dehydrated

buried in the mud waiting for the rain

to fall

again so it's just it would be like

beyond the scope of this world what's

actually going on

you know it's it'd be something going on

at some level it's just not going on

here that would be my best

guess and so I'm going to move on to the

next question also from

scolin would you kindly explain parallel

worlds I've listened to a bunch of nerds

argue about this and they fully believe

they understand physics because they saw

a Marvel movie or something I guess I

don't know well you can learn stuff from

Marvel movies but

um I I don't think the parallel worlds

thing is really fully fleshed out in the

Marvel superhero movies mainly because

they got to deal with the action

sequences and special effects and all

that

so I mean my explanation of parallel

worlds goes right back to the block of marble again every single possible statue is contained in that block of marble which would contain an infinite number of different world scenarios it's all there I mean if you want to get into like some kind of einsteinian explanation of it then the world is more than four dimensionals let's say you got three dimensions of space according to Einstein one dimension of time which forms the four-dimensional SpaceTime Continuum but let's say there's more than one dimension of time let's say you can move sideways through time then I mean you move a little bit sideways

through time and you might be in a
different version of reality it's like a
different probability it's like uh
whenever anybody has to make a decision
any any kind of seemingly free choice or
at at the very least any decision where
Quantum Randomness at the neurological
level is going to allow more than one
possibility then the universe is just
splitting every time that happens and so
you've got just an infinite number of
universes just by moving sideways
through time so to
speak but my theory of the block of
marble accounts for that pretty pretty
well and it's just the the interlocking
web of causes and conditions that cause

one world to seem different from another

world even though they're all super

imposed upon each

other you're just tuned into this

frequency this is the radio station

you're tuned into so this is the world

you see

see but if you're tune into a different

frequency you'd see a different world if

it was a very different frequency it' be

a very different world slightly

different frequency it might just be a

slightly different

world but um yeah I definitely do agree

with the parallel worlds I mean even in

quantum physics now I I keep bringing up

the same things you know it's like when
a part A subatomic particle travels from
point A to point B it doesn't just take
one route it takes every possible route
it takes an infinite number of
routes and it's just like we focus in on
one of those routes but all of those
routes are are equally
real and so I mean that's like parallel
Worlds at a like a micro submicroscopic
level so I guess I answered that
question I'm just going to move on to
scadden's next question which is would
you rate Brian Alice's pros and then
he's got like the little commentary I
saw one of the last Works he published
was a book of poetry with a psychedelic

evil alien on the cover titled

prehistory of the

mind

so um Brian Aldis is Pros I mean he's no

tolto he's no

dovi um he's he's like a good science

fiction writer who is very imaginative

most science fiction writers their

imagination Peters out at about 1 or

hundred years in the future Brian Alis

would write stories literally billions

of years in the future and I mean his he

had a really good imagination and really

good ideas he was an intelligent man but

I mean his Pros was not classic Pros you

know it's it's it's one thing that I was

really into science fiction up until I
got into college and started taking
English Lit classes and starting having
to read like
DOI and Melville and that kind of stuff
which then kind of spoiled science
fiction because you go back to reading
pulpy science fiction most of it and
it's just sort of like childish you know
attempts at at character development and
just like the the pros of the sentences
and that sort of thing it just it's just
kind of sad when you go back to to
reading the stuff that you used to like
you become like a a snob essentially
so Brian Alice's Pros I mean his writing
style I think it would be above average

for science fiction writers or just like
Mass Market fiction writers although it
doesn't rise to the level of
dovi but then again most writers don't
rise to the level of
dovi so yeah he was as like a science
fiction author goes in my opinion he's
one of the best but if you're going to
start comparing him with like real like
highbrow literature it's it's not going
to compare very well and with regard to
his poetry the only poetry I read from
Brian Aldis was there's a novel that he
wrote called Barefoot in the head which
is about it's it's like post World War
II but World War II is fought with um

like

hallucinogenic aerosol bombs you know

everyone's just tripping balls on acid

you got entire armies are just like

dropping their guns and rolling around

on the floor laughing and so

civilization is collapsing and um in

between chapters of the story he's got

um like it's it's like song

lyrics that's essentially poetry it's

like lyrical poetry and I mean I wasn't

extremely impressed I was still prefer

Yates or kerid to Brian Al's poetry I

mean just because you're good at one

thing doesn't mean you're necessarily

good at other things Michelangelo he

wanted to make it big as a poet he mayly

got famous as a painter and sculptor

Herman Melville wrote a lot of poetry

but he's mainly famous because of Moby

Dick and maybe Billy

bud

so yeah he did write poetry though I'll

Grant him that and so I'm just going to

move move on to the next question this

is from Outer Haven and outer Haven says

I saw something the other day that vexed

me a voice actor I follow got some

harassment from some fans because she

hired an artist that said Politically

Incorrect things in the past for me it

goes against my Essence when I see

people demand that because they do not

approve of someone therefore others
should not be allowed to like them
either I'm sure you can relate to this
as probably a lot of people have gotten
pissed at you for refusing to
disassociate yourself from Brian Rue I
feel this shows why forgiveness can be
an important virtue something lacking in
American culture what do you recommend
when you see or are in such situations
well first of all just don't apologize
and stand by your
conscience um I can I do this to some
degree I mean not so much with Brian Rue
I think I've actually received more
praise than blame for remaining friends
with Brian Rue and you know no amount of

of blame would cause me to stop being friends with Brian Rue because I know Brian Rue I know deep down he's a good guy he's a better Buddhist than most of the Buddhists who are like dissing him online or you let alone the the people spitting on him in the street um it's yeah I mean I'm better at sort of dissociating a person from like their personal life from what they produced like Woody Allen for example I still think Woody Allen's funny whether whether he had sexual relations with an adopted Korean stepdaughter or something I mean it has no effect at all on how funny some of his old movies were like

Love and Death it's one of my favorite
movies because I've read a lot of
Russian like Russian like 19th century
Russian novels and so I get a lot of the
jokes that he makes about that
um or like Bill Cosby when I was a kid I
had this Bill Cosby record and his you
know he's just talking about you know
his friends you know cryan Charlie and
and a weird Harold and and this kind of
stuff and it was funny I mean it was
appropriate for kids there was nothing
inappropriate in there but now
apparently because for decades he was
drugging women and having sexual
relations with them when they were
unconscious all of a sudden you know

every joke he ever told is no longer
funny I mean you're just not allowed to
laugh at anything Bill Cosby ever
said so I mean that kind of thing I just
can't really relate to it very well but
I mean you follow your own conscience I
mean when you start following the
conscience of a hysterical mob I mean
your ass may be saved but still I mean
you're you're no better than they are at
that point and you're just kind of a a
coward essentially so you got to stand
by your principles I mean you can do it
diplomatically so that you're not just
being rude at the people that are that
are blaming you but you're just saying

you know I know the situation I know I'm
doing what I consider to be the right
thing and yeah I mean forgiving people I
mean Jesus Jesus of Nazareth not that
I'm trying to compare myself with Jesus
of Nazareth necessarily but he caught a
lot of hell for that sort of thing too
he'd be hanging out with tax collectors
and and women of ill
repute and then would say you know it's
like the doctor comes to heal the sick
not the healthy that kind of
thing so yeah I mean just don't
apologize apologizing to like hysterical
leftists just puts blood in the water
and then it's like a sign of weakness
and then they really start dog piling

it's not going to work so just stand
your ground do it politely you know
honestly but still you got to follow
your ownc conscience and not the
conscience of
Blockheads so I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from Mr
Prav and Mr pronav says what is the
sound of one hand
clapping so I'll just move on to the
next question Mr proov says what are
your thoughts on engaged Buddhism that
were started by titn
Han and I really don't know that much
about Titan first of all he was like a
Mahayana Buddhist I have read a a few

things that he was saying in fact one of the things that that t tahan said that just has abided in my memory is he's saying how can anybody believe the first Noble Truth of Buddhism when they look into The Shining eyes of a child you know it's like how can everything be dooka when this child's eyes are shining so delightfully and that kind of thing I mean it's it's mahayan it's more feelings oriented I'm sure that it was sort of politically correct you know it's like the the lefties probably like tit at Han a

lot um and with regard to the engaged Buddhism aspect of it I'm not exactly sure how engaged his Buddhism was

because frankly I just don't know that
much about it I was never really
interested in
it um I've mainly been interested in
terraa like the the Prem Mahayana
schools and also some of the aspects of
Mahayana like prna paramita or maamaa
that were still like in the vein of what
the early Buddhism was teaching in a way
it was kind of a reform movement trying
to even get back closer to what the
Buddha originally taught that kind of
thing but like the the the other stuff
of Mahayana like pure land Buddhism or
Titan denying the first Noble Truth and
that sort of thing um or just denying

its universality

um I just I just was never really drawn

to that never really interested in that

so I really can't say that much about

his thoughts or his the the engaged

Buddhism that was started by tikn

Han so I'm just going to move on to the

next question here this is from Elias

saying can you buy a microphone to

improve the sound

well that's what this is it's a

microphone and I already bought it and

um I mean I bought it a long time ago

and it is true that there are have been

some issues with the sound on my videos

especially like in that the live stream

one I did last week I noticed the sound

would get wonky when I'd be like leaning

forwards trying to read the tiny text of

the of the

chats but um this time I'm trying to fix

it a little bit because I do have some

uh like sound editing

software that I stopped using because it

wasn't recognizing the my new camera

because it was video and audio so I'm

just using it for audio just to see if

it there's any

Improvement but uh for the most part

when I listen to my own videos it

doesn't sound that bad other than the

occasional the occasional slight glitch

somewhere so I can buy a microphone but

probably I'm not going to unless there's just a hue and cry of protest against my sound quality in which case I might Fork out another hundred bucks for a different microphone which may not work any better than this one it may just be that I'm using it wrong I've got the settings set on it wrong or some such so I'm just going to move on to next question here this is from Romeo and Romeo says in your last Q&A number 100 you mention that generally your main meditation practices currently are walking meditation and General mindfulness throughout your day as opposed to when you were a monk and long sitting meditations were your main stay

I also try to incorporate mindfulness throughout my day however increasingly I am finding my smartphone a constant distraction and barrier from my intention to be mindful and live fully in the present moment despite my goal to use my smartphone as sparingly as possible my urge to resist glancing at and or using my phone throughout the day becoming more and more difficult is your smartphone an impediment to your being focused mindfully throughout the day as mine is do you have any practical tips on how I could be less distracted by my compulsion to use my smartphone throughout the day are mindfulness and

frequent smartphone use incompatible or

is it possible to blend these seemingly

Polar Opposites into today's

hyperconnected

age well well with regard to myself I

mean it is true that I have downloaded a

very useful app onto my phone which

allows me to kill zombies

remotely so I do spend a lot of time

killing zombies on my phone um and it is

time it is times you know when I'm

killing the zombies as a public service

on my phone when you know I could have

been like oming or something so yeah I

mean it can be a distra action

definitely but u i mean if you're trying

to use your phone list you might just

try not bringing it with you although it
may be that for your job or something
you have to have your phone on you all
the time but I mean if you don't have to
have your phone on you then you might
just try like leaving it behind
sometimes so I mean that's a
possibility um let's see there's there
was a number of question marks here so
let's see is your smartphone an
impediment to your being focused
mindfully throughout the day as mine is
well it certainly can be a
distraction and then he's got do you
have any practical tips on how I could
be less distracted by my compulsion to

use my smartphone throughout the day

well this reminds me of a book I read by

Charlie tart back when I was a monk and

he had his

phone set up so that at random it would

just send send messages to him saying

are you being mindful right now and that

would be a good way of using your phone

if You' got to carry your phone with you

to you know sort of help you to be

mindful rather than just be one-sidedly

oops one-sidedly just distracting you

from being

mindful so I mean if you can get like a

little alarm to just I assume there's

some way you can do it at random if you

can't do it at random you can have a

friend just program in times that you

don't know about when it's going to

happen what it's going to go off and ask

you if you're being mindful or just

remind you to be

mindful that can work

too um but yeah I mean just living in

this world in general is a distraction

from dama practice and cell phones

certainly are an aspect of that but not

the only aspect I mean just standing

around talking with a buddy it can be

the same

thing so let's see any more questions

here or mindfulness and frequent

smartphone use incompatible or is it

possible to blend these seemingly Polar
Opposites um well it's it's a higher
difficulty setting you know the more
distractions you've got the harder it is
to be mindful
so reduce distractions if you really
want to be mindful throughout the day or
just really try hard to be mindful then
you're you know you're trying at a
harder difficulty setting which will I
mean if you succeed then it'll make your
mindfulness even better
than if you're just practicing being
mindful when you're in a quiet room all
the time although I mean there's I'm not
trying to badmouth being mindful in a
quiet room I mean that's in a way it's

it's like the bunny slope or something

or and also because there's so few

distractions you can get into deeper

layers I mean it might be that in a

quiet room you can get into a deeper

level of mindfulness just picking up on

really subtle things than say if you're

being mindful while riding a roller

coaster at a carnival

so there is that

too

but yeah I mean aside

from using your phone as a as an aid to

help you be mindful through random

little alarms you know it's just

reminding you to be mindful and just

don't carry it with you everywhere you

go I mean if you have to carry it with

you for your job or something then

that's fine but otherwise

it's not necessary if somebody calls you

you don't have to just pick it up

immediately at least I don't somebody

texts me or something I might it might

be hours before I answer

them which might be considered rude or

something

but hey that's just the way it

is so I hope I answered that question I

think I've been answering questions a

little more succinctly after my baptism

by fire in the live stream last week

where I answered probably like 70

questions and so I had to like answer

them relatively

briefly anyways I'm just going to move

on to this one this is from

ruie and ruie says hello

poo how aware of the poly tradition was

nagar if at

all well nagar was not necessarily A

Mahayana Buddhist um it depends on what

text that he wrote that you're going to

acknowledge as authentic but for example

with regard to his main magnum opus you

know his most important philosophical

text the mul ma jamaka karaka he

mentions no Mahayana Buddhism at

all and all of the texts that he quotes

are texts that are also found in the

poly Canon but they're in a kind of

Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit I guess that

it's it's from a different school it's

one of the Prem Mahayana schools but

it's a different school from from Terra

so the texts aren't in poly but they're

just translations from the same original

text as the poly

Canon so he was very aware of the texts

that are found in the poly Canon

especially like the core text like um

some of the main texts that he cites in

the mul majam karaka are from the Sam

yukama which U in polywood would be the

suu to n

nikaya and I mean it's it's right there

in the text you can you can look at the
poly equivalent of the texts that he is
citing so how aware was he of the poly
tradition I assume he was aware of
terraa Buddhism I think he was a like a
professor at Nanda University so he
probably was speaking with terava
Buddhists a lot he may have been fluent
in ply wouldn't surprise me but he just
was not ordained
in terava Tradition did not I mean like
his texts were not in poly they were
like in Buddhist
Sanskrit but it was mostly the same text
that he was
reading at least with regard of the suas

and probably the V rules assuming that

he read viia

rules so yeah I mean how aware he was

specifically of the poly tradition it's

hard to say because I I'm not aware of

him mentioning terraa specifically or

the poly Canon specifically but I mean

he was just going with just a slightly

modified slightly different version of

the sutas that that are also found in

the poly

Canon and I assume having been a teacher

at Nanda he was fully aware of the

existence of terava probably was

acquainted with the differences

philosophical differences between his

school and the Terra school and so forth

so I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from pyramid
and pyramid says do you have any views
on Buddhist
Christianity I have seen some here on
YouTube try to promote this fusion and
some of it makes sense I'm a Catholic
Christian and always interested in
terraa Buddhism I can't leave Lord Jesus
as my savior but would also love to
follow Buddha Dev in my daily life
well I mean there are a few things I
could say about Buddhist Christianity
for one thing it is a it is a saying
that pure land Buddhists might
vehemently deny that pure land Buddhism

is Christianity for Buddhists I mean
there's a lot of similarities there but
if you can't leave Lord Jesus then I
don't think you're going to be
substituting Lord Jesus for amitaba
Buddha so I guess that's
out also there are it's a common belief
that the Buddha himself godma Buddha the
historical Buddha is a Catholic saint L
St
josephat but that also is not entirely
correct because St josephat was based on
a story in uh the jota tales of one of
the Buddha's previous
incarnations and so what happened was
this this jota story of I don't remember
the the the poly name of the jica story

but um it

was it was a common um like a literary

genre in in Northern ital Italy Northern

India and it just became like some of

the stories just became you know this

common knowledge so like asap's fables

were common knowledge in in the west

around the same time and so when I think

it was like Muslims invaded Northwestern

India even they like some of the stories

and so they it got translated into

Arabic some of the Jonica stories were

translated into Arabic where buddhis

satva got translated into Arabic as

buddhis saf and then it it started

moving

westwards across Caravan routes and so
forth and by the time it got to Georgia
or or Armenia or something it was his
then it got translated as a lisof and
then when it got as far as Greece it was
translated as yoosaf and then when it
got translated into Latin it became what
uh yatus which is in English
josephat and the story became well known
even in Europe and it was just the the
Assumption of the church that a man this
wise and this virtuous would have to be
a good Christian and so he got
canonized but to say that it was the
Buddha himself is is not entirely
correct I mean if I was like Henry Ford
in a previous existence which I probably

wasn't but if I was Henry Ford in in a

previous existence it's different from

saying that I am Henry Ford you know

it's like people wouldn't like history

books wouldn't be declaring me to be

Henry

Ford it's just it's just a different

deal

so um nevertheless I was told by a

Catholic priest that he he had been to a

a Catholic Monastery in Germany that had

a shrine to all the saints you know each

Saint had his own Shrine and St josephat

just had a a a statue of the Buddha

sitting in

meditation but maybe maybe pyramid is

well pyramid is a Catholic so at least

you got St josephat sometimes I used to

call myself uh Frey poob baso deas trace

ratanas and I was a member of the order

of St josephat

discal so I mean there is that and of

course there's always a lot of

overlap in in religions I mean St John

of the Cross he would have made an

excellent

Buddhist there's a lot of overlap

between like Buddhist Dharma and

advanced Christianity like when you're

getting into mysticism like St John of

the Cross or

Master Meister eart then you know

there's a lot lot of overlap at at the

lower levels it can be very different
they're using completely different like
beginning assumptions you know different
vocabulary and so forth but the higher
up you go the more things
converge some religions just never get
to the top of the mountain but the
higher up you go the more things
converge so I mean you can be a Catholic
and uh be interested in Buddhism I mean
the the Catholic priest that was telling
me about um what was he telling me
about well the Catholic priesthood was
telling me about something I mean he was
ordained as a as a Buddhist novice when
I first met him he was a Catholic priest

and he was ordained I he's wearing

Monk's robes and so

forth so I

mean there's there's bound to be

certain contradictions you know they're

not entirely compatible you know

according to Christianity you've got God

Almighty according to Buddhism no God

Almighty according to Christianity

you've got an immortal Soul according to

Buddhism no Immortal soul and so there's

going to be differences but I mean do

you know tell the truth don't steal that

kind of stuff you know that's that's

basic and then when you start getting up

into like the really refined mysticism

stuff like St John of the cross again

it's converging so you're just going to
have to work out for yourself to what
degree you know what aspects of Buddhism
you can fit in with your Christianity
what aspects of Christianity you can fit
in with your Buddhism cuz I mean
sometimes you're just going to have to
make a call you know it's like is there
a god or is there not a
God that might be kind of an important
decision to make if you're a religious
person so let's see get back to the
question here do you have any views on
Buddhist Christianity um yeah I mean you
can't just completely mix them together
like milk and water because as I say

they are contradictory to each other in

certain

respects

um but to the extent that they can be

mixed together I mean you can be

eclectic so like Zen Buddhism was kind

of an Eclectic mix of Daoism and and

like Mahayana Buddhism in

China I

mean Western Buddhism now is largely I

mean with the boomer generation

especially that that were instrumental

in importing terado Buddhism especially

um you know they're sort of combining

terraa with scientific realism you know

there's always going to be a certain

amount of eclecticism or just combining

views whenever you take one system and put it into a different culture it's just going to start absorbing aspects of that culture so it does happen all the time so I mean you're just going to have to work it out um exactly how much you can incorporate I mean the stuff that they're in agreement on that's that's a no-brainer you can just do that fairly easily it's just the parts where they don't agree you're going to have to make a call on you know which one you trust more so I think I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from Satori

enjoyer and Satori enjoyer says last

week you said the Buddhists lost ground Hindus and Muslims in India in part because unlike the Hindus they didn't fight the mugal Invaders back what are your thoughts on Buddhists and nonviolence should Buddhists be as radical in their Embrace of aimsa as those guys in India or be like the Burmese now or Japanese Zen Samurai of the past and embrace the warlike side of Buddhism well there's really not much warlike side to Buddhism other than what has been added over the centuries from outside of
Buddhism there's you know some warlike imagery you know it's better to die in battle than to live in defeat that kind

of thing that you can find in the in the
text the Buddha himself was
traditionally a member of the warrior
cast in
India but Buddhism like Orthodox
Buddhism is just uncompromising in its
nonviolence it's just uncompromisingly
radically pacifistic
IC so what you're going to have to do is
I mean if you if you really want to be a
saint your best bet is to become a monk
and then you're not even going to slap
mosquitoes you know you're you're not
going to harm any living being if you
can help
it um for a lay person it's just a

personal choice I mean to some degree
like if you have a family to protect you
may have duties that require you to do
things that are not dharmic
sometimes so I do think that uh any any
civilization if you got an entire
civilization that converts to Buddhism
then yeah I mean if they are
uncompromising pacifists that
Civilization is not going to last very
long you're going to have to have people
willing to commit acts of violence at
least with regard to maintaining Law and
Order and protecting the the boundaries
or the borders of the country you're
going to have to have a police force and
a military to some degree unless you're

just a tiny Rinky Dink little country
that you know like Luxembourg or
something that doesn't need an army just
because nobody wants to invade
Luxembourg so I think just being
realistic and pragmatic any civilization
is going to have to have a certain
amount of Marshal virtue if it's going
to prosper especially if it's a a large
country not just some satellite state of
some other country that's going to
protect
them so so the question here let's see
should Buddhists be as radical in their
Embrace of aimsa as those guys in India
or be like the Burmese now or Japanese

and Samurai of the past and embrace the
warlike side of Buddhism that's going to
be a personal choice for each
Buddhist and I mean really we don't have
to worry about that nowadays since most
people in whatever country we happen to
be are not Buddhists unless you're
watching this from Thailand or Burma or
some
such
so yeah I mean be as saintly as you can
but this this whole question just
reminds me please forgive me but it
reminds me of The Walking Dead where you
got this one character Morgan who then
spun off onto Fear The Walking Dead who
he considers all life to be sacred he

had some some guy who practiced like oh

what's the what's the the

harmless uh gosh I'm having mental

blocks the this the martial art where

you don't hurt anybody it's not Judo

it's

uh yeah

well some of you will know what I'm

talking about and and anyways his

teacher was this guy who I mean Morgan

was in a really bad place I mean he was

like sort of verging verging on like

psycho psychopathy you know he was just

killing he was killing lots of people

and just seeing all kinds of atrocities

and you know anybody in this POC

post-apocalyptic world of um The Walking Dead you know almost everybody's got PTSD to some degree so anyways he gets a he gets a new new lease on life from this guy teaching him all life is sacred and so from then on Morgan refuses to kill a human being he'll still kill the Zombies but he will not kill a human being and so there's these cases where the bad guys are trying to kill him and his friends he has the opportunity to kill them he won't do it he lets them go and then they come back and kill more of his friends so in a case like that I mean if you want to be a saint you're better off just being solitary cuz then you're not getting other people people

killed by your refusal to defend any any

I mean to to hurt

anybody to e to hurt even the bad

guys so yeah I mean I I've always

thought that Morgan would have been a

hell of a lot better off just adhering

to his resolution to just be a loner so

that he won't be getting other people

killed when he's refusing to kill the

bad guys that are trying to kill his

friends

so I mean that that applies in real life

I mean you don't need to have a zombie

apocalypse for that to have some

validity to it but if you really want to

be a saint I mean if you think that's

really important then I mean certainly
that is your perogative I mean that's if
you consider it to be your sacred duty
to follow Buddhism as strictly as you
can for the sake of
Liberation then that's what you should
do and if that means you'd rather be
killed than kill then so be it but if
you're that kind of a person you'd be
better off not having a wife and kids to
protect and I mean even just being a
functioning member of society um to some
degree it's going to be detrimental to
that
so I do think that you know like Samurai
Zen of Japan I
mean it's better than like Samurai

without Zen you know Bushido with with
some Zen in it is superior to Bushido
without Zen in it so it's like it's it
kind of reduces the unskillful mental
states of a soldier to at least have a
little bit of Dharma inoculated into his
mind so that you know he's going if he's
going to kill he's not going to kill out
of Rage or hatred he's not going to
enjoy killing he's going to do it
mindfully and calmly as
his duty you know sort of like in the
Bava Gita I mean you have to do your
duty and I mean being a saint is
preferable to that but being like an
honorable samurai type soldier who acts

out of Duty with just calmly and

mindfully I mean that's better than just

having like the howling Berserkers that

are just enjoy

killing so

it's it's just sort of a personal choice

but if you ever wind up with a large

Buddhist civilization then there's going

to have to be people who are willing to

fight in in Burma a lot of the soldiers

a lot of the best most reliable soldiers

are recruited from the the non- Burmese

ethnic groups that live on the

boundaries that are largely

Christian strange that Christianity has

adopted violence much more readily than

Buddhism has I mean back in the back in

the day back in medieval times you had
Warrior Bishops like wielding like a
mace so they wouldn't stab people you
know they wouldn't cut off heads but
they just break
heads so I guess I answer that question
so I'm going to move on to sator enjoyer
next question here he says just read
something by or just read something by a
practicing Buddhist claiming Buddhism is
closer to charvaka or nihilist
philosophy than to vdic religion would
you
agree well it depends on what you mean
by vdic religion if you're referring to
like the rig Veda you know it's like the

religion of the invading Indo Arians you

know 1500

BCE then yeah Buddhism might more

closely resemble the charvaka philosophy

than essentially a kind of polytheism

with fire sacrifices a hereditary priest

priest class and you know they're making

offerings to the gods for the sake of

sons cattle and victory in battle that

kind of

thing and I suppose I should uh explain

what charvaka

is the charvaka philosophers of India

were sort of

like the uh oh man epicurian

philosophers of the classical West you

know they had a bad reputation for being

like atheistic and just
materialists and that's kind of what the
chakas
were um you know they considered
pleasure to be the highest good and you
know when you're dead you're dead there
is no Karma there is no afterlife it's
all just materialism
essentially and Buddhism really you know
it's not a spiritually bankrupt system
like charvaka but like I was saying to
in an answer to a question above to a
worldly minded Normie who takes
materialism as truth he might not have
the insight to be able to tell the
difference you know he's seeing Buddhism

at a crude you know kind of the lower levels of it and then he's seeing this charvaka materialism or nihilism you know at crude lower levels and you know at crude lower levels there might be a lot of overlap but when you get up into the higher philosophy I mean the chakas really don't even have a higher philosophy and then the Buddhists you know it's it just goes up and up and up so I would say that in some respects Buddhism comes closer to charvaka than to the viic religion even if you get into like the aoic stuff I mean when you get it to the upanishads like vant Buddhism and vant are very similar partly because they were debating each

other and like borrowing ideas from each other you know they're interacting with other and there was a certain kind of convergent evolution between Buddhism and vant

especially but certain similarities between Buddhism and the charvaka first of all no God so it's more or less of an atheistic system um also their Origins may be more similar just going going with Evolution that you know the shamana tradition of India you know you have the shamanas and the brahmanas you know the philosophers and Priests philosophers and holy men um Buddhism had more of a similar origin to sharaka which probably

arose uh as like an offshoot of the
indis valley civilization
religion in in prehistoric times so
there's certain
resemblances but especially when you get
up into vant then Buddhism and vant much
more closely resemble each other with
regard to this Outlook and morality and
so forth than Buddhism and charvaka like
Buddhism has very finely tuned ethics
charvaka really did not like I have read
that U the Kamas Sutra of vayana is a
charvaka text like the first
introductory chapter of the Kamasutra is
essentially explaining charvaka
philosophy with regard to enjoying
sensual Pleasures how they considered

that to be you know the best you can go

for in life they really didn't consider

didn't believe in an afterlife or

Liberation from some sorrow or anything

so it's you know just pretty much like

epicurian ISM in uh in the classical

West

so let's see here did I answer the

question that is the question I must ask

myself after talking about somebody

else's

question

so yeah I I would not not agree that's

the question is would you agree that

Buddhism is closer to charvaka

philosophy than vidic religion no I

would not agree although in certain

respects it's more close to it's closer

to sharaka like the atheism

stuff so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from

bodhisatta

969 and bodhisatta 969 says I will soon

be going to Mia Monastery the senior

Monk aan chatam

that's kind of a weird name chatam Malo

I don't think I've ever seen that before

chat maybe's maybe he's spelling it

wrong so I'm just going to have to start

the question over again because I

interrupt myself very

rudely and he says I will soon be going

to Mia Monastery the senior monk aan

chamalo was the vice Abbot of ajan
Brahma wumo in Australia for many years
would it be inappropriate to ask him
what he thinks of aan bram's excl usion
from the Thai Forest Monastery tradition
because it was
justified well um if you're there and I
mean you you'll get a feel for what aan
chamalo is like you know you get a feel
for the the situation and you'll just be
able to feel into whether it's
appropriate to ask him certain things
you know it's like there's
a uh like a dynamic spontaneous
interaction going on you know you'll
feel whether it's appropriate to ask I

just overall in general I don't think it
would necessarily be inappropriate to
ask him unless you you know like you ask
him like a leading question like that
was really [__] up huh that kind of
thing but I don't think bodh 969 would
would ask the question in like a really
pointed leading way just you know how do
you feel about ajan Bram getting kicked
out of the Thai Forest tradition you
know the or the aan cha tradition I
should
say and you know he might even say well
he wasn't exactly kicked out or who
knows I I I don't know what his what his
feelings would be what his opinion would
be but I do don't think that it would

necessarily be inappropriate so long as
you're asking good faith and you know
you're just asking an open question I
don't think there'd be anything wrong
with that so I'm just going to move on
to the next question which is from Twin
Wasabi excuse me and twin Wasabi says
any thoughts on the push for female
pastors priests or monks both in the
east and west well a female monk would
be a
nun um with regard to an actual female
monk that would be an impossibility from
the point of view of terava Buddhism
even if some trans male was ordained as
a monk while being biologically a woman

still I mean the ordination would just
be null and Vo it would be invalid and
still the person would not be a
monk so thoughts on the push for female
pastors priest and mon well there's
definitely more of a push for it in
westernized countries in Burma I mean as
of last time I was there which was like
2018 um yeah there was no push there
were a few nuns who were relatively
famous and
well-liked um they weren't fully
ordained bonis or claiming be fully
ordained bikun they were just the
standard burmes Thea Shin which is
usually an eight precept nun or maybe a
10 precept none and they wear like pink

and sort of a salmon color maybe a

little bit of

orange

um with regard to the push for female

priests in the

west and maybe beunis in in a relatively

westernized country like Thailand

um yeah that's that's largely just

coming from Western

feminism and just the insistence that

that men and women should be equal if

not

identical and I don't think it's

necessarily helping anything especially

when you are literally deviating from

the teachings of a religion for the sake

of making it more modern or postmodern
or politically correct or whatever that
I mean they're just like
Christianity I I think I mentioned this
in the previous Q&A the New Testament
calls homosexuality Abomination the Old
Testament says homosexuals should simply
be taken out and killed and now you've
got Christian churches who supposedly
accept the Bible as the word of God or
at least inspired by God flying rainbow
Flags you know Methodist Church there's
like half the Methodist Church is like
the radical leftist variety fly rainbow
flags and so forth It's like we
celebrate Abomination you know it's like
we go against the Bible here and

Christians in general Western
Christianity has done that a lot like
the whole divorce thing in
Christianity now the Bible says once you
get married you can't get divorced and
remarried to somebody else that is
adultery even even like ministers are
getting divorced from remarried and the
Catholics get around it by just
annulling the marriage instead of having
a
divorce so I'm uh definitely digressing
here because the question wasn't about
divorce or
homosexuality the question is about the
push for female pastors priests or monks

which are

nuns both in the east and west and it is

true that with regard to leftism in the

west that the main

influence they have had like leftist

Politics the main influence they have

had on Terra Buddhism especially the

main

controversy that has arisen in terab

Buddhism as a result of leftist politics

in the west is the whole idea of beunis

that the the bikuni order died out it

went extinct hundreds of years ago in

terraa Buddhism and now you've got

people trying to revive the bikuni order

and they don't have the authority to do

it and it's it's not really valid but

they don't care because they want gender equality and the Very fact that these nuns are being called beunis they want to become beunis um it's mainly for the sake of official status you know it's more of a political Choice than a spiritual Choice it's for worldly status which really you should be renouncing you shouldn't become a monk or none because of a desire for worldly status some some like Burmese monks do that you know they want upward social Mobility or something by becoming a monk but it's it's really not daric in my opinion

so let's see he says any thoughts and I
guess I guess that's what I have been
sharing his thoughts verbalized ones
but yeah it's
like like leftist
politics because most western Buddhists
are leftists it's just flooding into to
Terra and to some degree that's seeping
as far as Southeast Asian Buddhist
countries and and Sri Lanka also South
Asian Southeast Asian Buddhist
countries although Burma is pretty
hard-headed
traditionalist and uh any last I heard I
don't know if it's still true but last I
heard any woman any nun declaring
herself to be a fully ordained bikuni is

going to be locked up she's going to be
thrown in jail in
Burma
so let's
see I guess I answered that question I
shared many thoughts there they might
have been semicoherent thoughts but they
were thoughts and I'm going to move on
to the next question this is from Mary J
and Mary Jay says what early Buddhist
School had real monks and real has a
capital R what early Buddhist school had
real monks and then in parenthesis he
says I assume after schisms most of the
monks was automatically excommunicated
according to monastic rules well

actually doesn't work that way the only

way to e automatically excommunicate a

monk is if he commits one of the four

paragas or he gets

castrated because if you don't have

balls you can't be a

monk so

what happened in ancient times is you

had schisms happening you know the S

would split into two different

SAS and they didn't really commit any

paraja offenses you know they didn't

have sex they didn't murder anybody you

know they didn't uh they didn't steal

anything necessarily they weren't

falsely declaring to have attained

superhuman mental States so I mean they

they their balls still and so they
weren't excommunicated I mean if if a
monk is is insisting upon a heretical
point of view then you can do a formal
Act of suspension against that monk
which means he's going to be ostracized
he's not allowed to participate in any
ceremonies you're not allowed to talk to
him he's not supposed to like sleep
under the same roof with any monk in
good standing but that's as far as it
goes nobody has the power to
excommunicate a monk other than that
monk
himself so the Burmese government has
gotten around that to some degree by

like having a monk raped by a prostitute
kind of a thing because having sex and
enjoying it even just a little bit just
for one Split
Second then you're out and it's very
difficult for a guy to have sex without
at least enjoying it a little
bit so all of the monks were real monks
they were just n samasa which means
living under different communion
iions so all of the early Buddhist
schools had real monks and I mean the
way you can have fake monks is I mean if
you got monks that that commit one of
the the paraja rules then they're not
really a monk anymore and but if they
continue um you know wearing the robes

you know they don't tell anybody that
they did it you know they still are
passing themselves off as monks even
though technically they aren't anymore
then I mean that that you have a fake
monk or if those monks monks that are
fake monks are performing
ordinations you know you have to have at
least five monks in real monks to
perform an ordination if one or two of
those is a fake monk then the monk who's
being ordained isn't a real monk either
and
so um like the the damay sect in
Thailand you know they're saying that
things like that happened so rampantly

that they're the only real monks left

they have an unbroken

lineage at least in

Thailand so there is there is that but

that's getting into silata parasa I mean

if you're going to be worrying about you

know five centuries ago was the lineage

broken so that I'm not really a monk

because you know 500 years ago

ordination ceremonies were conducted by

monks that weren't qualified or they did

the ordination ceremony wrong or

something which caused invalid

ordinations and then you know the the

descendants of that lineage have

ordained me then I'm not a monk either I

mean if you start worrying about that

much then that's too much I mean the

burden of proof should be on the the

accuser saying that that lineage is not

a real lineage

anymore

so so I guess I answered that question

what early Buddhists school had real

monks all of them all of them had real

monks I mean they were validly ordained

beus because the only way I keep hitting

things in my hand the only way to cause

a monk to be excommunicated again is if

the monk excommunicates himself by

breaking one of the paraja rules or

losing his

testicles so I'm just going to move on

to the next question this is from rakasa and racasa says I would have loved to read the Lions Roar interview I guess they didn't even send you a copy and that is true I was interviewed by lions Roar magazine back when I was a monk you know back around 2019 I guess and it was one of the editors of lions War who I assume was also a contributing writer and he he told me he was doing an article on right-wing Buddhism for Lions War magazine he asked if he could interview me and I said said fine and then I asked you know I said I'd like to have a copy of the interview and he said it was against the policy of lions it was against the policy to uh let me have

a copy or for me to have like the power
of veto over what he was in what he was
going to include you know cuz I know
enough about like
leftist Publishers and leftist writers
that they will try to skew things a bit
you know they might take things out of
context or something so I at least
wanted the right to look at it before it
was published and say well this is not
accurate he said no that's against our
policy you can't do that so then we had
a long interview it had to have lasted
more than an hour where he's asking sort
of these gotcha questions and one thing
I was going to say in my recent video

with Brian Rue and then I got distracted
because I get distracted easy or you
know just sort of go off on a different
tangent or something was that was
sometimes he'd be trying to ask me
gotcha questions you know sort of like
someone interviewing Donald Trump or
something you know they're trying to
trying to get in these gacha questions
like like my salute to Brian you know
hail Brian and he's asking about why why
I'm doing Nazi salutes I said no that's
not Nazi salute that's Romulan it's on
Star Trek the Nazis didn't thump their
chest first even Captain Kirk did that
and then another one of these gotcha
questions was you know how can I justify

using offensive speech you know like
using harsh speech that offends people
and so forth and I I said what I what I
said to Brian in the interview it's like
it's the duty of any serious Buddhist
even if they hear offensive speech not
to be offended by it they should forgive
the speaker and then it was just like
crickets I mean he just went silent
after I said that part because of course
that just goes against the whole leftist
narrative another time he went silent
was trying to
uh a lot of like Neo marxists will deny
that neomarxism is even a thing you know
it's like he he was sort of trying to

call me out on using terms like cultural
Marxist and so forth and at one point I
asked him he was like you must have
heard of the Frankfurt School and again
he just went totally silent it was just
this deafening
silence so anyways um yeah they didn't
send me a copy and they wound up not
publishing the article partly I assume
because
things just weren't going their way I
assume they wanted to show right-wing
Buddhism like conservative Buddhism as
something
malignant and really I mean the
right-wing Buddhist the conservative
Buddhists are the ones who come closer

to genuine original dhama I mean the the
tradition most most Buddhists most
terraa Buddhists in the west are
traditionalist conservative Buddhist
because most of them are Asian coming
from a traditional Buddhist
culture but among the westerners most of
the Buddhists are
left-wing neo-marxists essentially Ultra
liberals and I've discussed why that is
you know it's like in the west if you're
going to be a traditionalist
conservative and you got some religious
leanings then in all likelihood you're
going to be Christian it's the people
who reject the traditions and you know

just the the the standards of Western society that you know they become leftist and they go for some other religion other than Christianity as a general rule in my case I didn't become a Buddhist because I was a leftist I became a Buddhist because I was studying various different spiritual systems and Buddhism really was most compatible with me so yeah unfortunately I didn't get a copy of that interview otherwise I would have published it long ago and so the next question is from Stellar Supreme and Stellar Supreme formerly known as Liber Lam says do you consider Protestant Buddhists who do layers

practices to really be aspiring to

completed insight and spiritual power

considering there's a kind of

backsliding to afterdeath

Karma

um yeah the Protestant Buddhists who do

lay person practices

um

really yeah I do think that a lot of

them are aspiring to full Enlightenment

and they think well I mean it can just

happen to anybody it can just happen

accidentally so you know certainly the

door is not closed for these people and

they just a lot of them they they just

are almost resentful of the existence of

mon some of them are positively

resentful of the existence of monks

because it makes their own lukewarmness

seem not good enough

somehow and so I mean they think that

they're just as good as monks and

nuns so I assume those that even believe

in

Enlightenment um will say yeah I'm I'm

striving for enlightenment even even if

they really aren't or they're just kind

of striving a little bit in their spare

time or

something so let's see do I consider

Protestant Buddhist Protestant bu

who do lay person practices to really be

aspiring to completed insight and

spiritual power against yeah I mean you don't underestimate the arrogance of the western mind you know Americans I mean I can speak from experience on Americans because I'm an American I've lived in America you know they want the best of everything you know Enlightenment is the best they want that you know they also want the best car and the best cell phone they just want the best that they can get and they don't want to settle for less it's almost like it's to some degree it's it's like a consumerist mentality and so yeah they're not going to deny that they want Enlightenment but they just want Enlightenment and

everything else too you know they just
want it all and you know that's not all
Americans there are a lot of humble
especially Goa practitioners a lot of
them are very humble you know they're
saying well it's not going to happen in
this lifetime which in my opinion is
going too far
because I mean it can happen to
anybody Enlightenment can happen it may
take some sort of catastrophe to just
slam you out of your samsaric rut but
still it can happen you shouldn't just
close the door and lock it and say no I
can't become enlightened in this life
because it's better to have the door
open even if you don't go through

it so I guess I answer that question
maybe not in ex precisely the way
Stellar Supreme was expecting
but I I'm pretty sure I answered it so
I'm going to be moving on to Stellar
Supreme also known as Liber Lambs next
question which is should we be basing a
belief in karma on a belief in Supreme
psychic powers extending from samadi
like in the stock phrase says quote when
their mind has become immersed in somat
like this purified bright Flawless rid
of Corruptions pliable workable steady
and imperturbable they project it and
extend it towards recollection of past
lives

unquote so they project it and extend it towards the knowledge of the death and Rebirth of sentient beings unquote such that we don't take it as hearsay or something

[Music]

well this whole question is kind of a strange one to me it's like should we be basing a belief in karma on a belief in Supreme psychic powers no because you're believing you're basing your belief on something you've never experienced you're basing your belief on hearsay because so long as you haven't had these psychic powers then you're just saying well according to the people with psychic powers then yeah I mean to some

degree you could say that you know
people that have psychic powers that
could look back on their past lives and
can see beings going in accordance with
their karma and so forth you know that
would be some evidence anyway but I
certainly wouldn't base my belief on
Karma entirely on psychic powers that I
do not have just it's it's all
hypothetical you know it's essentially
guessing so if you're going to if you're
going to base your belief in karma on
something I'd base it on something that
you have some personal experience of
like for example like a really obvious
Elementary level of karma is just the

automatic pilot that drives us through
life when we're not fully conscious
which is pretty much all the
time so the automatic pilot just
habitual responses to things so that you
can be thinking about what you want for
dinner while driving your car and so
forth you know you're not just carefully
observing everything going on and in
traffic and so
forth It's just base brain just
automatic pilot stuff while you're
thinking of something else and that
really is is like a a very fundamental
Elementary example of karma it goes way
deeper than that it goes into a
metaphysical level where it's the same

kind of automatic pilot habitual

responses that are causing you to create

this the samsara this version of reality

that you happen to be

in but at least you're projecting you're

expanding out from something that you

have personal experience of instead of

basing it on something that you read in

a book that you don't have personal

experience

of

so I guess I guess I answer that

question so I'm just going to move on to

Stellar Supremes formerly known as Liber

Lamb's third question which is do you

consider it likely that Buddhism would

have prevailed over competing
philosophies if the Buddha had not
spoken from a place of super mundane
power and wisdom as a real historical
figure uh it's hard to say
you know it's it's sort of a logical
fallacy to say that if the situation was
different things would have turned out
in this other way because you can't
really know that based on personal
experience either because you only know
what happened and you don't know all the
factors that caused things to happen the
way they did I mean there are religions
like I mean Hinduism for example um
Hinduism prevailed over competing
philosophies um but I mean it wasn't by

one enlightened founder I mean probably

most of the founders of Hinduism were

not enlightened

beings uh some of them I assume

were um let

see has a real historical

figure yeah um yeah I don't think

necessarily that is the case I think

that the fact that Buddhism was taught

by an extremely wise presumable

enlightened being certainly strengthened

it over other systems that were just

started by some philosopher who hammered

out certain points of view or is just

like a like Judaism or is just kind of a

social thing that that's kind of evolved

over the

centuries was I mean it's hard to say

that that Judaism or or Hinduism for

that matter really had a Founder I mean

you could say kind of Moses was the

founder of Judaism

although whether I mean the historicity

of Moses himself is in question I mean

did Moses really exist or I mean even if

there was somebody upon whom the story

of Moses was based that the truth

probably deviates from the actual

biography of this historical

personage um there's a lot of people

arguing the same kind of stuff about

Christianity

so let's see here let's let's try and

answer the question

again do you consider it likely that

Buddhism would have prevailed over

competing philosophies if the Buddha had

not spoken from a place of super mundane

power and wisdom as a real historical

figure it's really hard to say although

I mean you could say that Buddhism

wouldn't have Arisen at all because it

was the teachings of this historical

figure called goab Buddha at least

originally

I think most of what passes for Buddhism

now was not taught by the historical

Buddha and a lot of it he would probably

have

denounced

so and even by the time Buddhism became

like a a

major a major spiritual system like in

society it struck traction and set down

roots and everything already it may have

been less than 50% genuine teachings of

the Buddha and some of the stuff that

gets added is the stuff that makes it

more popular and that's just unavoidable

so it's a lot of times in a religious

system it's like the the silly madeup

stuff is the stuff that makes the the

tradition popular to the

normies and the normies constitute the

majority of any population really you

know it's just the simple villagers who

don't understand Advanced metaphysics or mysticism anything like that they just want stories and ceremonies and stuff that that they can see and and touch and feel and it makes them feel a little bit better in life and I mean then a lot of that stuff is like devotionalism and just kind of pointless ceremonies so it's really hard to answer that question I mean there's no way you could answer it with certainty you know how would it if there was something like Buddhism that arose spontaneously a coalescing of different philosophical ideas that you know the founder was maybe a mythological figure or something

then I mean some Hinduism is like
that um yeah it's hard it's hard to say
exactly whether it would have been more
popular or less popular or what would
have happened so I'm just going to move
on to the next question this is from
xenoid and xenoid says after I look to
see what okay gotta see see the time see
see the timer see how long I've been
talking and xenoid says I've recently
been introducing my brother who says who
is a scientific materialist to Buddhism
he says that while Buddhism is the
religion with the most wisdom to offer
he criticizes Buddhists for supposedly
clinging to Nirvana when they should
really accept their pointless death and

Annihilation how would you respond to

this

critique well I mean I don't know very

many Buddhists who are clinging to

Nirvana I mean literally you can't cling

to Nirvana but I mean I I met very few

Buddhists who are even clinging to the

concept of Nirvana that Nirvana is just

sort of like this you know this sort of

this

nebulous something off in the distance

for most for most devout Buddhists I

think and you know it's just something

yeah this sooner or later I'll get there

but I'm not not really going for it in

this

life

so I mean one thing you can you can

point out to a scientific materialist

first of all I mean you can bring up

Emanuel Kant and his thing in itself and

the thing as it seems I mean Kant was no

idiot and I mean he pointed out very

very clearly that no amount of working

out the things it seems which would

include science no amount of scientism

no amount of scientific Endeavor

scientific method is going to get you

one iota closer to knowing the thing in

itself to knowing Ultimate Reality and

even most scientists most scientific

realists will will agree that this world

that we see is not reality that color

for example is it just it doesn't exist
outside of a of a mind that is just a
kind of symbolic
interpretation of certain C wavelengths
of electromagnetic radiation and what
appears to be solid matter is more than
99.99% empty space and what matter
actually is there is just these little
sparkling specks of
energy
so um no scientific materialist can know
Ultimate Reality because they're
clueless it's it's really not even on
their radar they're dealing with
Concepts and Mathematics and so forth
and I mean that's all just stuff that's

conjured up in this gray blob of meat

according to them

especially you know how is how is this

little gray blob of meat going to

understand reality that's not what it's

designed

for so a scientific materialist is

really just basing his nihilism or

atheism or whatever on ignorance

literally I mean they they accuse

Christians or theists of of being

believing in God because of ignorance

but their denial of God is entirely

based on ignorance it's like we don't

see any God therefore there isn't

one we can't see God therefore there

isn't one of course uh that wouldn't

really apply to Buddhism very well

because Buddhism doesn't insist that

there's a God but it does insist that

there is an Ultimate Reality which is

beyond perception

and that I mean it just stands to reason

that there is an Ultimate Reality Beyond

these symbols conjured up in the gra

blob of

meat and so they just pretend that that

just doesn't exist it can't exist and

when you're dead you're dead etc

etc so I mean that might be a good

starting

point

see so he says criticizes Buddhist for

supposedly clinging to nurana which they
really don't most of them when they
should really accept their pointless
death and
Annihilation well I mean he doesn't
really know that either he's guessing
too but uh have I answered this question
well enough that I can uh move on to the
next
one yeah pointless death and
annihilation in a way Buddhism would
even agree that death is kind of
pointless but the annihilation part is
is one of the two extremes You' got
annihilationist view you've got
eternalist view when you're dead you're
dead that is one extreme you got an

eternal soul that lives forever that is
another extreme Buddhism takes the path
by the
middle and most people just cannot
understand that path by the middle they
just do not get it and you can explain
it to them till you're blue in the face
and they still won't get it
so I'm just going to move on to Xenith
void's next question here karma is Will
yet enlightened beings with no who no
longer create Karma still take actions
meaning they will things to occur this
could be seen as a contradiction but I
think this indicates that arh Hans are
the only people who truly have free will

because their mind if we can even still

call it that is no longer constricted by

the causal chains of samsara do you

consider this assessment accurate or is

there a better

explanation well um first of all an aans

they're not people I mean aans in

reality I mean an arant has realized

that he doesn't exist or she doesn't

exist that people don't

exist so that's one little niggle I

might uh I might

prefer spelled with an O o not an

e

profer let's see

um let's see I'm going to have to I'm

going to have to read this again see

karma is Will yet enlightened beings who
no longer create Karma still take
actions meaning they will things to
occur no it doesn't necessarily mean
that they will things to occur it can
mean that there is just a semblance of
willing things to occur like for example
in Abid dama philosophy Orthodox Terra
they have an arant has what's called the
Kia the functional Consciousness which
allows them to do things without
creating Karma and I think that was
caused by the Abid dama authors not
really understanding how it
works but they do have still a semblance
of will even though they've just

transcended samsara they've transcended
the whole semblance of things you know
the semblance is still there they're
just not identified with it anymore just
nature taking its
course so I that's one way of looking at
it another way of looking at it that I
have considered many times is it a fully
enlightened being I mean he's not really
existing anymore he's not even believing
that he's existing anymore and
consequently it's the karma of the
people around that arant that make him
seem to exist and make him seem to make
decisions and have will and all that but
in Arun sitting alone in a forest you
know you know it's like the tree that

nobody can nobody hears it falling down

I mean if an Aran is alone then you

could say there's nobody

there and like ROM do used to say about

neim Koli Baba it's like the better you

got to know him the more you realize it

really wasn't anybody there it was just

like your own Karma being reflected back

at

you and another thing you could say

about free will it's kind of strange

that an arant might have no Free Will at

all just because um the arhan always

does the right thing you know it's like

if you always have to do the right thing

I mean you have no choice but to just do

the right

thing so that's something to consider

also although Free Will is logically

impossible I think but that doesn't mean

that it can't still exist just because

something is logically impossible but I

do think that the way Free Will might

possibly exist is that we have like a

self-referential mind and anything

that's self-referential can produce

Paradox and so we've got a

self-referential mind that can somehow

manifest the

Paradox of Free Will arising when it's

logically

impossible so it's like sort of like St

John of the Cross was saying that that a

Christian arahan someone who has reached
the stage of perfection
they no longer have self-will they're no
longer making their own decisions it's
like they've just become puppets of God
they are motivated just by Divine will
and God is just using them as an
instrument so to speak which kind of is
in accordance with my idea that it's the
karma of other people that are moving
the the aran's arms and legs or seem to
be moving the arms and legs it's just a
reflection of their own Karma because
the enlightened being really isn't
generating anymore although going with
Orthodox tradition an enlightened being

still has like the latent Karma of past

lives and so forth that is still kind of

pushing it through some

sorum and I really don't this I'm really

not sure to what extent I'm actually

answering these

questions there's a certain amount of

subtlety in the Q&A

today so

yeah okay yeah I would point out that uh

what an Aran has attained is what the D

chin calls wooe or

non-action so I mean that would be no no

Karma you no action is a literal

translation of the word Karma or

Kama so it's like uh he who he who pra

he see he who follows learning increases

day by day he who follows da decreases

day by day he becomes less and less

until he arrives at

non-action with non-action there is

nothing he cannot achieve that's one of

the chapters of the Dow Ching that I've

took the trouble to

memorize so yeah trying to understand

aans intellectually uh it's pretty much

an exercise in futility anyhow so I'm

just going to move on to the next

question here and this is the last

question by golly it always takes me by

surprise or usually usually takes me by

surprise and this is from

power and power says I've been hearing

that Buddha never preached to his disciples to follow his teachings blindly in fact he was quite liberal and allowed his followers to pick and choose their beliefs is this accurate well it's partly accurate I think the first part of the question is accurate and that the Buddha never preached to his disciples to follow his teachings blindly yeah he discouraged people following his teachings blindly that you got to I mean you can take it as a hypothesis you can accept what he's saying as a hypothesis and then you've got to put it to the test yourself to see if it's true or not but the second part of the question is is like he was quite liberal and allowed

his followers to pick and choose their beliefs well no that's that's not accurate because if they got to pick and choose their beliefs there wouldn't be any Buddhism Buddhism would just be anything that people just decided to believe and it no it didn't work like like that like um you could believe or not believe what he was saying but if you went just asserted the exact opposite of some of the things he was saying then even in like very ancient texts like the the PTY mocha rules then you would be admonished and possibly punished you know like I was talking about how a monk could rep misrepresent

the Buddha by saying what the Buddha said were stumbling blocks to the holy life really aren't stumbling blocks to the holy life and mainly he was referring to Indulgence and sensuality um so I mean if you just flatly disbelieved in karma and insisting when when you're dead you're dead that kind of thing then yeah you could have gotten into trouble even in very ancient times in the S because I mean if you just want to be agnostic you want to be a skeptic in the classical sense and not believe anything in particular you know not not a not not a you know you just want to just be open-minded I mean that would work but

when you start believing things like you
know it's like there's no Karma and you
could like you could like kill a million
sentient beings and and it would have no
effect on your spirit that kind of thing
no I mean the Buddha wouldn't go that
far so he did not allow his followers to
just pick and choose their beliefs
although he did allow his followers to
believe or remain agnostic with regard
to a lot of what was saying and you just
I mean the ideal situation is you remain
agnostic until you get the confirmation
that you require to see yeah he was
right about
that so I think somebody who just flatly

denied the four noble truths for example
probably would not be considered a
Buddhist and if they were ordained
there's a good chance they'd get formal
acts against them if anyone was foolish
enough to ordain them in the first place
and that's it I I just answered that
question too by
golly and so if you got any more
questions you think I can answer about
ancient India terab Buddhism ancient
Buddhism in in general monasticism
meditation Buddhist
practice anything like that questions
about me personally I'm generally pretty
good at answering those feel free to ask
them in the comments below or if you

have access to the Discord server you

can ask them there if you have access to

subscribe star you can ask them there

and like And subscribe if you haven't

done so already and be happy

okay hello and welcome to episode
102 of question and answer I am your
host P basa and I would just like to
point out that 102 is getting up into
kind of a high
number and I got my beverage right here
got the emergency backup beverage right
here got to the total apocalyptic
desperation beverage of pond water right
here and I'm ready to start
commencing so let's just Dive Right In
Here first question is from aelian who
is one of my favorite Roman emperors by
the way and aurelan says what have you
learned over the course of 100 Q&A
videos besides double-checking the

computer

cord well yeah it's plugged

in okay that's done but um I think

probably the main thing that has really

been driven home to me doing all of

these videos is something that I already

had pretty good inkling of um many years

ago when I was giving talks to

westerners uh during my attempts at

being a Freer range beu in

America and that is that practically all

Western Buddhists because they are

Western

adopt or just accept as

reality scientific realism that they

believe that there is this material

Universe out there that's going to

continue to exist even if there is no
Minds perceiving it and that that is
reality and that Buddhism is just a
psychological thing that you sort of fit
into that
context and it can be frustrating at
times Maybe some of you have picked up
on a little twinge of
frustration when I'm asked a question
that just assumes the Ultimate Reality
or at least the functional reality the
empirical reality of scientific
realism and then just kind of has
Buddhism fit into that instead of sort
of having your world view based on
Dharma it's just Dharma is just kind of

fit in to

a different world

viiew so I mean that's that's the main

thing I have

really kind of been beaten over the head

with I guess that I mean I assumed when

I was first trying to teach

westerners that you know they were they

were like very casual meditators most of

them were like

Boomers and you know I just thought well

this group is pretty darn material

materialistic in a philosophical sense

not in the money grubbing sort of sense

although a few of them probably were in

the money grubbing sense as

well but now I just it's just realized

that virtually all Western
Buddhists just take scientific
scientific realism as their world viiew
and just try to fit Buddhism into that
as well as they can and it is somewhat
of a handicap for Western Buddhists I
would like to point out right here that
it really is sort of like a ball and
chain attached to your spiritual
leg so I guess I answered that question
so I'm going to move on to aelian second
question which is much more difficult to
answer and that is as follows if there
were more female based Buddhists would
it reduce the lifespan of Politically
Incorrect Dharma by half

and first of all I would point out that

this is probably a reference to the

famous prophecy made by the Buddha in I

think it's in the the the vinia vinia

ptica of the poly

polya where the Buddha says that by

ordaining nuns it's going to reduce the

lifespan of the True dhama by

half

so aelion here is asking asking if they

were more female-based Buddhists would

it reduce the lifespan of Politically

Incorrect Dharma by half and I do not

have the prophetic

Clairvoyance of the fully enlightened

Buddha and so I can't really just see

what the answer would be and for those

of us who are not omnicient which I
assume is most of us that uh answering
such a question is I mean the question
itself is kind of I mean it's sort of a
rhetorical question but also it's it's
like a a logically invalid question
because there's so many variables that
it's just an invalid statement to say
that if you know if the situation were
otherwise the outcome would be this
because you really don't
know so I mean I mean the outcome could
be go either way if there were more
female-based Buddhists you know just
like relatively conservative spiritually
regardless of of like economic issues

and so forth that

uh you know it's sort of like saying if

there were more female Libertarians

would the libertarian party be more

successful or less successful it'd be

something along those lines because most

Libertarians are male and most based

Buddhists are male I mean just based on

The View viewership of my YouTube videos

is still something like 98% of my

viewers are

male and they're mostly in between like

24 and 45 or something like

that

so let's see I gota I gotta consider the

question again here oh yeah so I mean

possibly I mean they could mess up based

Buddhism because you know they're women
are more agreeable that's using a Jordan
Peterson term which he gets from
standard psychology and so they're
they're more worried about what other
people's opinions of them are going to
be they're more worried about maybe
offending somebody and so they probably
be more inclined to be diplomatic in
their based Buddhism which would make it
less based on the other hand the very
fact that you got more women involved
makes it less of a niche or
Niche movement if you can even call it a
movement so I mean it would just sort of
be it become more of a a mass thing I

guess instead of just something that you
know certain men find
interesting or take
seriously so yeah that that question is
just up in the air and we'll just we'll
just have to recruit more female-based
Buddhists and find out what the answer
is if we're willing to take the risk of
of not destroying Politically Incorrect
Dharma but like in a country like Burma
I don't know if you can call Burmese
Buddhist base but they are definitely
conservative traditionalists with regard
to Buddhism much more so than I am much
more so than possibly any or I wouldn't
say any but you know 98% of Western
Buddhists they're more conservative and

traditionalists than at least 98% and

they're half

women so women don't necessarily Poison

the Well of dhama that even in bu the

Buddhist time or at least at the time

when rules of monastic discipline were

being formulated it was pretty obvious

that women were like the backbone of

Buddhism as just sort of a social

phenomenon like they're the ones who

mainly support the monks like for

example there's a rule

about or there is a number of rules

about how a monk is to properly walk for

MMS and so he's supposed to when he's

going through the village he stops in

front of a house for a few seconds but
if she stands up and starts wiping off a
bowl or wiping off a spoon or if she
calls out to say please wait venerable
sir then you can stand longer otherwise
you should just move on to the next
house so it just assumes that the people
who are going to be offering food to the
the monks are mainly going to be female
because the the feminine pronoun is used
with regard to she standing up and
starting to wipe off a bowl or a spoon
or
something so I mean women don't
necessarily poison conservative
traditionalist
dhama but in the west um I'd say there's

a higher likelihood of it and

um yeah we're just gonna have to find

out I mean

if it happens we'll find out and if it

doesn't happen we won't find out so I'm

just going to move on to the next

question this is from Cactus Ray and

these first questions I have to admit

were asked quite some time ago in an

unusual place and so I didn't see the

questions and so they're at the top of

the list because I finally found these

questions that were lurking around in

obscure

places so this is from Cactus Ray who is

a recent supporter on my subscribe star

so welcome aboard aoy

M and so Cactus Ray says you've

mentioned before in a past video that

you have gone as far as you could go

with meditation I was hoping you could

elaborate on what you mean by that also

would you comment on the importance of

meditation to spiritual growth and

insight any discussion of the janas

would be

appreciated thanks so this is kind of

would be

maybe even three questions maybe I

should separate

these grammar Nazi that I am I have to

have them separated

properly okay so the first

question oh wait a minute I didn't

separate it

properly okay there we go properly

separated so the first question is uh

You' mentioned before in a past video

that you have gone as far as you could

go with meditation I was hoping you

could elaborate on what you mean by that

well it's it's fairly simple I just

stopped making progress in fact the best

meditation of my life occurred between

around 1999 and like

2004 that that was the best meditation

I've ever had in my life and ever since

then I'd get a few glimmers you know a

few flashes like I went to a Meditation

Retreat at the Daga Meditation Center in
San Jose for gosh how long did it last
it was a relatively long retreat I think
it was like a month or two or something
like that and you know I was I was
having some good meditation there but it
really didn't reach the level of what I
was experiencing especially a few times
like around 1999 to to
2004 and so it's just frustrating to
just keep grinding away and still just
not breaking any new ground not making
any improvements not making
progress so that's that's essentially
what I meant and that was one of the
reasons probably the main reason why I
stopped being a monk is I just stopped

making progress you know I was it was
sort of like the Red Queen in either
Alice and Wonderland or or Through the
Looking Glass I don't remember which who
had to run as fast as you could just to
stay in the same place it sort of like
Treading Water you know just effort is
is maintained just to to lose less
ground than if you didn't do
that so it's just it was just really
frustrating and I mean the purpose is to
make progress you know you're you're
progressing towards Enlightenment
ideally and I mean when you just stop
making progress you know when you've I
mean you've been essentially stagnating

or at least not making progress like I
keep saying for several years you know
it's like more than 10 years then
obviously
um you know if you if you keep doing
something and it's not working then it's
eventually time to try something
else so I suppose I answered that
question you and to some degree it was
probably my subconscious mind just
rebelling against the whole idea of just
sort of ceasing to
exist but uh I'll just move on to the
next question so or the or the next part
of the complex question so he says also
would you comment on the importance of
meditation to spiritual growth and

insight well meditation in general like formal sitting meditation especially is like the fine tuning knob on your Dharma practice the coar tuning knob which is really more important is basic morality renunciation austerity it's just how you live your life you know even when you're not sitting cross-legged with your eyes closed it's just how you go about living your life that's like the coarse adjust knob and then the fine adjust you know sort of like the Sandpaper after you've carved out the wooden statue that would be sitting meditation and you can get into much deeper meditative States through sitting meditation than just

being mindful of you know everyday

activities while you're at work or

something just because everything is so

simplified that there are much fewer

distractions that's the main advantage

of sitting meditation is you very much

reduce

distractions

so yeah I mean definitely I've got into

more profound mental States while

sitting crosss with my eyes closed than

I have while like working at a trim

break at a sheet metal shop something

like

that so it can be very important

especially if you're good at at

meditating but even if you you suck at

meditating just sitting there just not
moving at least you're not running in
circles or or doing dumb stuff at least
it's keeping you out of trouble you know
while you're sitting there you know it's
reducing your rascality to some degree
unless you're just sitting there with
your eyes closed and your legs crossed
just like fantasizing about pornography
or
something so
yeah the main the main importance of
meditation in general is it's more
likely to
um facilitate insight for one thing
because you're getting into deeper

subtler more profound mental States than
if you're just moving around making
noise and it is really it's like the
fine-tuning knob but really more
important I mean if you're only going to
do one or the other if you're only going
to meditate sometimes and not keep CA
and and not like try to simplify your
life and be a good person and you know
tell the truth and all that so if you're
just going to meditate sometimes and
then not keep you know not really live a
dharmic life otherwise which a lot of
people do then it's not going to be as
helpful to you as if you try to live a
dharmic life otherwise and don't sit in
meditation but of course doing both

especially if you're making

progress then doing both is best of all

so I assume I answer that question I

really shouldn't take a very long time

to answer these questions we do have

quite a few questions not like an

outrageous merciless onslaught of

questions but still it's it's maybe a

little more than usual and I would like

not to be speaking continuously for

three hours straight so I'm going to

move on to Cactus Ray's third question

here which is not really question it's a

request any discussion of the janas

would be appreciated and those of you

who are familiar with what I've written

and what I've said in previous videos
and so forth know that according to me
anyways Janna is very controversial
issue and I mean it's almost a useless
word the word Janna is almost useless
just because it's so controversial and
people do not fully agree on what it
means so I mean according to Orthodox
tradition janas are a kind of deep
absorption state that are literally
superhuman mental States even the lowest
jna f jna is considered to be a
superhuman mental state and I just find
that hard to believe I do think that the
four janas were originally just the four
stages of meditation that Janna
originally just meant meditation I mean

literally means something like
illumination blazing something like
that but originally I don't think it was
a superhuman mental state especially
first jna where you're still thinking
actually I mean you can still be doing
like visualizations or mantras or
something at F at the level of first
jna so first jna is I mean you still
feel mental and physical Pleasure and
Pain and you're still thinking so then
second jna is you still feel mental and
physical Pleasure and Pain but you're
not thinking anymore so this would be
like the the boundary line to what the
Christian contemplatives call

contemplation as opposed to just
meditation once you're not thinking
anymore you're Wide Awake you're not
like in a coma or anything you're wide
awake in fact you're more awake than
usual because you've got to like watch
your mind carefully in order to not just
start thinking spontan ously just
through force of habit or force of karma
or
whatever so second Johna you're not
thinking anymore third jna you're not
feeling mental Pleasure and Pain anymore
but you're still still feeling physical
Pleasure and Pain so you're aware of
what your body is feeling but you're not
like reacting to it

anymore so you're not thinking and your mindfulness is very much improved at third JRE or no let's see yeah third J fourth jna you no longer feel mental or physical Pleasure and Pain and this is called purification of mindfulness or purity of mindfulness it is the highest mindfulness which is kind of ironic because the mindfulness people like the weasa people they consider themselves to be the mindfulness
School whereas the Janna people are more the somat or concentration school but really they come together at top and so for the Jan which is the highest level of meditation is or at least used to be

the highest level of meditation is um

it's also like the highest level of

mindfulness

too so one little bit of

uh evidence that the four Jas really

weren't necessarily superhuman mental

States from the beginning is that like

in the m sanasa which is like the Bible

of the weasa people write concentration

Sama samadi the eighth step of the

Eightfold Path is defined as the four

Jas so in order to follow the eight-fold

path and to practice sasam or right

concentration you've got to attain

superhuman mental states which I find

hard to

swallow so that's a mini discussion of

the Jas and like the Abid dama School of
philosophy even added a fifth jna which
is comes in between first and second
where you've got applied and sustained
thought they they they uh separate
those so and then and then they added
the like the formless Realms which
became sort of annexes to Fourth J and
then there's like neot sopy which is
even higher than fourth J supposedly
also a few sutas refer to the anima Cho
samadi or the the um the signless
concentration of mind which
is way up above fourth J it's like
supposedly the highest possible
attainment you can

attain that is still within a samsaric
context so but I do think originally the
four Jas were four not five not eight
but four and it was just the four stages
of the progression of
meditation that you start off still
thinking and then gradually your mind
gets more and more refined your
mindfulness improves until finally I
mean You' sort of transcended all
positivity and negativity you know
physical and mental and you have purity
of mindfulness you're just your mind is
just
completely clear like glass or clear
like like just pure water but you're not
unconscious in fact you are

superconscious you're more conscious
than you are in the ordinary waking
State of
Consciousness so I guess I'm just going
to move on to the next question here
this is from bodhisatta
969 and bodhisatta 969 is uh apparently
been reading a book or maybe several
books by certain aan Meo who may be
German I think the book he's been
reading is uh is German or something but
anyways um he's been leaving a lot of
quotes of ajan Meo underneath videos
some of you may have noticed this and so
now he wants my opinion on the following
statements by aan Meo and the first

statement is as

follows dis

incitement I'm that might be a mistake I

I don't think dis incitement is is an

English word I don't think I've ever

come across that word before but anyways

dis incitement is the climax of the

practice that still takes place within

the structure of the conditioned by

formations after that the special

conditioning falls apart cessation is

the turning point to the unconditioned

nibbana cessation refers to being or

function that is some things disappear

such as the drives ignorance and desire

others cease to function as as

formations and I don't completely

understand this quote and I'm going to
take a sip of my
beverage well I have to confess I took
TPS so first of all dis incitement maybe
that's disenchantment or something is
the climax well I mean that couldn't
that wouldn't be true I mean based on
Orthodox dhamma and from what I've read
of these quotes about John Meo he's not
entirely Orthodox so it's like he's come
up with his own approach to dhama that
is fairly intellectual and
philosophical and I don't agree with all
of it but uh let's see here the dis
incitement I I don't really know what
that means the clima is I mean it must

be important though if it's the climax
of the practice that still takes place
within the structure of the condition by
formation
after that the special conditioning
falls apart and I I don't fully
understand that sentence either cation
is the turning point to the
unconditioned or
nibana um yeah technically I mean you'd
say that neroda is that's the third
Noble Truth that's the cessation of
craving it leads to the cessation of
suffering so cessation is the turning
point to the unconditioned I mean
technically I mean that would be there
wouldn't be any turns being made I mean

it would just be cessation is the
attainment of Enlightenment at least
within the context of the for Noble
Truths so cessation refers to being or
function that is some things disappear
such as the drives ignorance and desire
others cease to function as formations
well within the context of the the Four
Noble Truth cessation would be cessation
of of craving or T leading to sensation
of suffering which is
itself I mean the implication is that
that is itself Enlightenment that you
don't stop suffering until you are
enlightened
so yeah it's it's kind of maybe it's

somewhat taken out of context and it's

it's difficult for me to understand

maybe uh it's translated from German or

something and uh yeah I don't fully

understand the question or don't fully

understand the the quote I should say so

my opinion on the following statements

by ajan

Meo

um yeah it's it just seems unnecessarily

philosophical like he's quibbling over

certain definitions that have like an

established meaning in Orthodox terraa

but he's sort of to some degree like um

aan tanero where you know he's sort of

like redef defining certain terms um

according to his own the way he sees

dham or something although I think aan
Meo uh really goes farther than aan Tano
in that regard because he's he's he
thinks a lot it could be he's sort of
like like venerable Nana Vera if any of
you know who venerable Nana Vera is he
was just this hyper intellectual
existentialist philosopher who was
ordained into the S back around 1950
and he still has a lot of followers
especially like Western monks who take
him very
seriously so it may be that ajan Meo is
somewhat along this these lines but I'm
just going to move on to the next quote
because the first quote I I have to

admit I don't fully understand what he's
what he's getting at and it could be
that it I just do not know the context
well enough to know what the what uh
what direction he is moving there so the
second quote
an objection normally translations
always say this is not mine this is not
me this is not myself what is this this
supposed to be it is correct it is
usually said like this but that does not
mean that it is correct linguistically
there is a difference between this
neuter um Adam and this masculine ASO
which is often overlooked not because of
a lack of linguistics understanding but
because of lack of substantive

understanding a special conditioning is also difficult for translators to see by owning something the owner makes himself the reason for the object or thing he owns but the noble student should see through this and see this thing is not mine this owner is not me this reason for the thing's existence is not myself grasping does not mean that we want to have something we want a substance that fills our assumed selfhood with content this substance is what we grasp and experience as my experience if one does not distinguish between this and that one might imagine that it is easy not to have a sense of ownership and the

perception of external things that is
not to have the feeling of owning the
song of a bird or that of the Moon
whether half full or completely full is
mine so my opinion on this first of I
just I just think that he thinks too
much that he's he's sort of hyper
intellectual and I mean you get up to
the I mean mainly he's criticizing the
way people interpret this is not mine
this is not me this is not myself and
he's trying to give like what exactly is
the this referring to and personally it
seems to me that it refers to anything
that's why it the pronoun for this Adam
is in the neutral sense not masculine or
feminine it's just

whatever it

is it's anything nothing is yours

nothing is you nothing is

yourself and nothing is means like not

anything it's not not like Emptiness is

you or yourself it's just there isn't

anything that is yours that is you or

that is

yourself and that's in accordance with

the the doctrine of anata in

Buddhism so I mean that's I mean when I

see that that's as far as I get you know

that this is not mine this is not me

this is not myself refers to absolutely

anything anything you can think

of and you just leave it at that I mean

that's that's sufficient it seems to me

that trying to nail down precisely what

this is referring to is kind of Overkill

in my

opinion so I'll just move on to the

third

quote I think

see desire for wishes for existence for

the possibility of existence kamat bat

and weat I got to make a space here okay

Kam and we because desire is one of the

most General and fundamental existential

categories comma must also be understood

in the most General sense wishes

everybody has everyone has kamat so

desire for sensuality or even sexual

desire is much too specific TNA also

means thirst in a figurative sense

whether you prefer that to desire is a

question of taste in the translation

definition the same applies to the word

of my choice desire because terms such

as greed desire

longing Etc are used as synonyms in

German

thirst in the sense of desire for

something to drink is

pipasa wewa does not mean non-being the

prefix we indicate separation distance

otherness apart different from parallel

to non-being would be abawa in in P the

word occurs very rarely and in a

completely different context

unquote so um aan Meo is referring to
the three kinds of craving that are
mentioned in the poly text you've got
craving well I'll just use the poly
first you've got craving for Kama which
is the same as the word in the K Sutra
you've got craving for Bawa and you've
got craving for
weea those are like the three kinds of
craving that people can have it's not
just three out of a bunch of other kinds
it's just those are the three kinds and
so I mean it doesn't take a whole lot of
phys philosophical profundity to realize
that kamat despite what aan Meo is
saying really is it's desire for
pleasure desire for sensual pleasure I

mean according to someone like Freud

like Western

psychologists I mean that is the driving

force of of the human race desire for

pleasure I mean you couldn't say it's

desire to reproduce the species because

really we reproduce the species because

it's Pleasant

at least we have a craving for it we

perceive it as pleasant I mean certainly

the conception part can be very pleasant

I mean once you have the babies and

they're screaming and keeping you up

late at night and they're getting sick

and having to be rushed to the doctor

and all that then I mean you're still

kind of doped up on Parenthood hormones

so there's still some pleasure in there

and there's just the Deep satisfaction

or at least the moderate satisfaction of

fulfilling your like

parental instincts you know it's like an

animal

Instinct

so yeah I don't think that he's correct

in his interpretation of Kama as wishes

that I do think it's just pleasure

sensuality so that's the first craving

is for sensuality the second craving is

just for existence

itself like you know if if your life is

threatened you your craving for

existence Bec comes very pronounced you

know you don't want to die and then weat
which is the third I mean he he he tries
to say that wheat the prefix wheat
doesn't mean without but it's also one
of the meanings of the the prefix wheat
weat I mean can be I mean it can mean
non-existence or just being without
existence
so I mean where else is it going to fit
there I mean in the Buddhist time
especially a desire to cease to
exist I mean there were a lot of
philosophers who really had that kind of
craving where they're just striving to
just get out of samsara and just cease
any kind of worldly existence they might

still have a desire for like like the
Janss had some some desire for a
Heavenly existence but there were some
that were more radical than that and
just thought that I mean just bail out
of some sort regardless of what's on the
other
side or maybe what's on the other side
wouldn't fit under the category of
existence so it makes perfect sense to
me logically I mean if they wanted to be
even more logical they would have some
like a craving for pain you know like
like some there are some people I mean
not not a whole lot of people maybe but
some people really do desire to suffer
but you could twist that around and that

you know really the reason why they desire to suffer is because it gives them satisfaction you know they get a certain pleasure from suffering in this perverse way you know it might be that they consider themselves to be a bad person they think that they deserve to be punished and then it makes them feel better when they do get punished because they felt like you know they deserved it and that was required to set things right so logically the the three desires of desire for pleasure desire for existence and desire for non-existence makes perfect sense and I'm really not inclined to argue against

that I do accept it I mean if something

can put forth a really good persuasive

argument against it that's fine but this

quote by aan Meo um really doesn't do

the trick in that regard and his his

trying to deny that the prefix we can

mean to be without something is it's not

necessarily the

case

so

see I mean the wheat is like being

separated it just means like you know

leaving it going away from it or

something

so I guess I responded to those three

quotes and I really do think that aan

Meo I hope he's a good Monk and all that

that he's practicing sincerely and keeps
the rules of vene and all that but I do
think that he thinks too much that he's
being too
philosophical and
maybe maybe he sees that other monks
aren't getting enlightened and so he
assumes well maybe they just don't
understand things correctly and he's
working out some better way of
understanding it maybe to improve his
his odds of becoming enlightened or some
such which I mean we got to do something
so he can do that and I got no problem
with
it and uh all respect to ajan

Meo hope I didn't bash him while giving
my opinion so I'm just going to move on
to the next question here this is from
Gaz and Gaz has a very easy easy
question for me to answer which I do
appreciate sometimes he says have you
read the aera Linda book are you
familiar with it if so what is your
opinion of it and then as a little
commentary it says it tells of an
alternative European history and a
forgotten monotheistic
Faith so I mean is that does that mean
it's fiction I don't know but the easy
answer to this is no I have never read
the oera Linda book in fact I may have
heard of it but I don't think I've ever

seen a copy of it even so I'm completely unfamiliar with it and I really don't have much to say on that subject so I'm just going to move on to the next next question which is from seac and sead zida and seac and sead zida says where did you come up with the block of marble analogy is it something you came to realize from your own experience heard it from someone and liked it came up with it on your own from thinking Etc well I must say that covac and CAD zida has not read all of my books because I gave like a detailed account of how I came up with that idea in one of my books I don't remember which one it

was but what happened

was I was living out in a forest I was

living on sort of the the edge of Alando

Copan National Park in Northwestern

Burma and I was living in a cave or just

a big overhanging rock ledge it was like

100 ft wide and like 30 feet high and it

went in like 30 feet and it was from

above it was shaped kind of like a

crescent

and right in front of that cave or Rock

Ledge was a pond which unfortunately

would dry out like two weeks before the

monsoon would start it didn't have quite

enough water to last an entire year and

so all the little shrimp dads and stuff

that lived in the pond would all die it

was

unfortunate but anyways I was down at

that pond um washing my

bowl and so I'm just down at the pond

washing my bull standing on the sand and

just unbidden into my mind occurred this

thought you know I wasn't thinking about

anything in particular but just this

sentence arose in my mind the entire

universe is contained within a single

point which has no

dimensions and so I was intrigued by the

thought I mean it was kind of intrigued

by the fact that this sentence just

appeared in my mind unbidden to begin

with and so later on I'm like well what

would be the implications of
that and it would be sort of like all of
libet's monads I mean if you're familiar
with early modern Western philosophy
there was a philosopher name libnet who
wrote a book called The monadology where
he's saying that the the entire universe
is made up of these little Atomic monads
and each monad is completely
self-contained like all the other monads
could go away but like your sole monad
wouldn't be even aware of that because
it's completely self-contained you know
it's it just has this projection of the
entire universe contained within it if
that makes any sense so anyways it just
seemed like all of levitz's monads would

be just superimposed one on top of the

other

one they' all occupy the same

point then I started thinking of a

better analogy would be like a totally

like a a piece of paper a page of paper

that is completely covered with ink so

that that page of paper completely

covered with ink would contain every

single printed page that has ever

existed except with just a little excess

ink covering in the spaces in between

the the letters and so

forth so that was a little too

dimensional a little too much two

dimensional for me and so then finally I

came up with the block of marble which
contains within it every single possible
statue and they're all in there at the
same time superimposed upon each
other and that was about the best
analogy that I came up with before I
stopped trying to find better analogies
and um so that's that's how I came up
with the idea just sitting in a cave or
under a rock ledge in Burma back around
the year
2000 um after that weird thought popped
into my mind and I was just kind of
working out the implic of it and it it
makes sense and it's very explanatory in
the sense that it explains why this
universe bothers to exist in the first

place which was a question that Stephen Hawking very much wanted to know the answer to so it's really too bad that he didn't live to to see this video but I mean there could be some subconscious like crypto Amnesia I think that's what it's called where you've seen something before and then you forgot that you saw it and then it can arise in your mind and you think it's a new idea when actually is just you forgot ever having heard the idea before that the da Ching in some translations but not all I think in most translations it's not translated this way but sometimes the da in certain verses is

referred to as the nameless uncarved

block and so I mean

apparently the author or an author of

The D Jing had a similar IDE idea with

regard to how the 10,000 things you know

how the all the phenomena of the

universe emanate from essentially you

know unified

formlessness

so that's that's the story of how I came

up with the idea of the the block of

Marvel and it was I consider it to be an

elegant Theory and so I'm I'm

maintaining it as a working hypothesis

and until somebody can demonstrate to me

that it's [__] or can at least come

up with a better

hypothesis so I'm just going to move on

to seov action cat Z's next

question what are your thoughts on

Master versus slave morality n said the

masses are taught to be submissive

peaceful cucks as a survival mechanism

while the elites value power influence

and domination thus while the slaves are

busy coping by praying donating their

wealth and trying to get God's favor or

Good Karma the Masters go about getting

what they want taking the wealth of

others through various means and end up

being seen as God's chosen ones due to

their

success and I would point out that sovak

and sead zida uh submitted this question

in the Discord server and another member

of the Discord server took him to task

for

misrepresenting Reverend teacher

friederick

Nicha

so this is uh sort of SE action CAD

Zena's take on on n and the master

versus slave morality and there is some

validity to this I mean this is

essentially when I read this it it seems

a lot like what the globalist elite are

trying to do with the rank and file of

of humanity you know it's like they

provide us with a kind of pseudo

democracy you know you it's like they

tell normies what to believe just
pounding away with mainstream media
propaganda until people just they're so
saturated with this propaganda they just
they just assume that it's real you know
Trump really is a a fascist he really is
an existential threat to our democracy
that kind of thing and then they're
allowed to vote and of course they've
been so programmed that they vote to
keep their masters in power and you know
essentially they're shooting themselves
in the foot and they don't know any
better and really they're they're slaves
without realizing it in a sense they're
they're worse than a physical slave

because they're a mental they're a

mental

slave so I mean in that case it's not

even let's see he says that the slaves

are busy coping by praying donating

their wealth and trying to get God's

favor

well I mean nowadays they're not even

doing that I mean some of them pray some

of them donate their wealth some of them

try to get God's favor mostly they're

playing video games and watching Tik

Tock videos and you know just going to a

restaurant every now and then watching

movies just doing the stuff normies do

they watch football they drink beer you

know just that kind of stuff while the

Masters go about getting what they want
to some degree although it's kind of
kind of like a house built on sand at
present and uh taking the wealth of
others through various means end up
being seen as God's chosen ones well the
normies rarely see the the globalist
elite as God's chosen ones how many
people see Mark Zuckerberg as God's
chosen other than maybe other Jewish
people so I mean the Jews in general are
considered to be God's chosen people
even According to some
Christians but I mean
these corporate CEOs like Soros and
who's that other uh what's his

name the the world economic Forum guy

you know I mean they're not seen as

God's chosen I mean they're seen as

lucky maybe but

um because they're at the top they get

to call the shots they don't get in

trouble with

law so let's see

what I I'm G to have to read the whole

question over I'm getting kind of worked

up here what are your thoughts on Master

versus slave morality question mark so I

guess that's really the question and the

rest is just

commentary so I mean there are Master

versus slave moralities there's

different master moralities and

different slave moralities you can have
a benevolent Master morality which is
not a bad morality you can have a
benevolent slave moral it which is not a
bad morality
um there's bad Master moralities too and
bad slave moralities so you don't want
those like a bad slave morality would be
sort of what the political left in the
west Hypes up which is based on
resentment and
N had a lot to say about
resentment that slave morality is is
largely based on resentment where you're
just trying to get equality because you
resent the people who are more

successful than you and so you want to
bring them down to your own level if not
push them lower than your own
level so that would just be a bad slave
morality but so long as you choose a
good morality whichever is is like in
harmony with your nature I mean some
people are slaves by nature and some
people are just like Alpha boss type
people who prefer the master morality
and just because I mean you might be on
the Master's side of the equation
doesn't mean that you have to like
trample people under your hob nail Jack
boots you can be a benevolent
Master which is fine so long as you're
benevolent and somewhat competent in

your benevolence then you're doing

okay so I would say the more important

dichotomy in Morality is whether it's a

good morality or a bad morality not

whether it is a Master morality like an

active morality or a passive

morality so long as it's good morality

you're doing

okay so I don't know how well I answered

that

question but I'm just going to move on

and answer another one or at least

pretend to answer another one at least

give a shot and answering another one

and this is also from covac and CAD zut

he says

you said you had an experience that made
you 20 years of striving in jungles and
caves worth it due to the clarity can
you go into a little more detail a
little but more detail he says there a
little bit more detail like what you
learned from while in it or looking back
at it what was the actual experience
like what were the conditions of the
mind right before that on that day hour
Etc well it happened more than once and
that was back like again back
especially in the Years between 1999
2004 when my meditation was at its
best and there were times when
especially if you're breaking new ground
you experience PT it's like your mind

isn't used to this the level of clarity
and expansion and so forth and that's
why if a person is experiencing P when
they're meditating sometimes their
muscles will just start spontaneously
jerking and twitching because it's like
when your mind is peaceful your body it
becomes peaceful but if your mind is
just suddenly all of a sudden more
peaceful then you your body has this
excess energy that has to be expanded
and it expands through like muscle
twitches and so
forth but it's also very pleasant it's
very
exhilarating especially as I say say

when you're not used to it

yet and so I get into certain very deep

meditative States excuse me especially

like towards the beginning of just sort

of reaching a new stage and I mean it's

just the clarity and expansion I mean

it's from a a theological point of view

is like you're closer to God you feel

the presence of God from a theological

you know a deistic point of view you

it's

just um it's it's you really can't put

it into words you know it's like a

mystical experience but it's it's not

like some kind of dreamy like a drug

induced or feverish kind of feeling I

mean it's just Crystal Clarity and your

mind is is expanded you generally in

those times you're not thinking

anything you know you just your mind is

clear like glass and all of a sudden

boom there's just like

well it's there's not even a boom it's

just like new ground it's like you you

you've hit a higher level and it's it's

just so there's a feeling of joy and

gratitude where I mean sometimes it's

you can be practically weeping with joy

and gratitude that such a thing is even

possible is possible even to experience

something like

this and it really can't be put into

words what exactly is experienced

but

definitely you can I mean if you really

are serious about living a spiritual

life and you know striving for

enlightenment and all that you can you

can reach these states that I mean you

never knew they existed until you until

you you experienced it sort of like a

person who's been blind his entire life

all of a sudden is able to see I mean

it's it's kind of similar in in how you

would

feel so

let's see I mean mainly what I learned

from it is that that's even

possible um and it's it's not so much

what you're looking back at it it's like

you know while you're experiencing it
and it did happen more than
once so and the the conditions of the
mind I mean it was just I was settled
into some good meditation and was just
getting more and more refined and subtle
in my mental States until you get to
this level never been to before or
haven't don't have much experience with
and like I said there's sometimes
there's this Rush of exhilaration which
can actually derail your meditation I've
I've had that happen before where the
meditation is getting really good and
you're just getting these rushes of just
joyful exhilaration that then just kind

of drives your meditation off the track
you start getting agitated and then it
doesn't work anymore then you got to
settle back down again
so I hope I answered that question kind
of because I'm moving on to the next
question anyway and this is from xenoid
and xenoid says what is the Buddhist
explanation of
Dreams sometimes after a particularly
good or bad dream I wonder if I got a
glimpse into other Realms well it's I
mean I noticed this a lot as a monk
especially when I was in the mood to
bash Abid dama which according to the
Abid dama Scholars explain exps
everything it's like the The Theory of

Everything it's supposed to explain just

literally

everything but it doesn't like it

doesn't mention dreams and there's not

really a whole lot of mention of

Dreams in in the polyx in Orthodox

terraa Buddhist

literature really there's not a whole

lot of mention of

Dreams um I mean sometimes there'll be

like some prophetic dream added into a

narrative or something but I mean the

purpose of dreaming they didn't know I'm

pretty sure and um

so yeah I mean it's it's sort of like a

not exactly a blind spot in Orthodox

Terra but I mean it is um it's like an every it's An Occurrence that virtually everybody has experienced that really doesn't get explained in in a spiritual way and I think the the most spiritual explanation of dreams that I ever came across was in a ROM dos book where he's saying that if you have a dream that has an obvious meaning then I mean you should consider that but for the most part dreams are just work that you are doing at a different level at a different level of Consciousness that is you know it's not necessarily anything you need to take seriously or or consider all that much uh it could be that if you have a some kind of dream

you could be glimpsing into another
realm I mean certainly it's another
reality I mean ultimately your mind your
karma your mental States cuz Karma as a
mental state is conditioning this world
that you are living in you are in this
world instead of a different world
because of your mental States and so
you're creating like a smaller darker
blurrier kind of world in your
dreams and so it's you're making karma
too I would imagine it seems to me that
you would be making karma in your dreams
but it would be much weaker because it's
not as firmly established of a universe
as this one is you know the rules change

you can be riding on a bus one minute
next thing you know you're in an
airplane you didn't get off the bus and
onto an airplane it's just the bus
turned into an airplane and I have read
this one book I don't remember the name
of the book it was about um the the
existence of an afterlife about like
spirits that are like communicating to
people and stuff there just all this
sort of Quasi
evidence and this person had a friend
who had died and um he he saw an
apparition of his dead friend shortly
after he died maybe a few weeks
afterwards and the friend the dead
friend had this confused look and he's

saying this where I am now it's it's
very confusing because there's no Law
and Order here here you know it's like
being in a dream everything's changing
there's there's not as much stability
there's not as much Law and Order kind
of regulating everything and keeping
everything like predictable and
stable and being in a dream is kind of
the same sort of way it's it's a a lower
level of reality sort of like being in a
spirit realm or something and um it's
not nearly as stable just because
there's not as many like natural laws or
whatever you know like holding
everything together but um the Buddhist

explanation of

dreams have never really come across a

satisfying Buddhist explanation of

dreams so I gave you my best explanation

of dreams from a daric point of view but

um don't quote me if if you're trying to

talk Orthodox Buddhism because I really

don't think that would be Orthodox

Buddhism because Orthodox Buddhism

really does not have very much to say

about dreams there might be some sua or

something that I don't recall that talks

about dreams I mean famously I mean the

most famous dream in terval Buddhism is

the Buddha's mother dreaming of the

white elephant and all that before um

the Buddha was born in fact that was

apparently how he was conceived was

while she was dreaming about a white

elephant if I remember correctly if I

remember my mythology or Legends

correctly

so I guess I answered that question I I

answered it about as well as I can

considering that the that the data is

very limited with regard to the Buddhist

um explanation of dreams and I'm not

even sure that terot of Buddhism really

does have some official explanation for

dreams so I'll just move on to the

xenoid next

question which is how does one determine

where to draw the line between the

Middle path and self- torture I think
it's pretty easy to make the distinction
between the middle way and a life of
luxury because the middle way according
to Buddhism is inherently aesthetic even
to the point where the average modern
Westerner is likely to consider monkhood
self- torture yeah I think especially if
it was monkhood like in the Buddhist
time not living in a a cushy comfortable
Monastery but just wandering around
homeless
but anyways I just rudely interrupted
myself continue however the line between
the middle way and self- torture seems
much more subtle for example I've heard
you mention things like monks never

sleeping lying down this seems like

self- torture because you're never

allowing your spine to decompress which

I doubt is good for one's Health

longterm it's hard for me to imagine the

Buddha endorsing something like this

post enlightenment

well I mean there's an easy way of

understanding the middle path between

self-indulgence and self- torture and

that is self-indulgence is you are

actively avoiding discomfort self-

torture is you are seeking out

discomfort so I mean this is going from

um like a standard that is very

premodern and

so people were more okay with being uncomfortable back then and uh so just wandering around homeless I mean it is kind of strange that the middle path between self-indulgence and self-torture involves just being dressed in rags having no money no real family just wandering around silently begging for food in the streets sleeping on the ground under trees and so forth that to a modern Buddhist not even just a western Buddhist just modern Buddhist in general that in itself would be so beyond even what is just conceivable really I mean a lot of people just crack up I mean you sit under a tree you live under a tree you're not allowed to swat

mosquitoes in the tropics you don't have
like the the the clot the like the the
mosquito net umbrella thing like a lot
of th monks have you just got to sit
there and get bitten you just sit there
and a lot of people including a lot of
famous meditation Masters would just
probably crack up within a few days
having to put up with that
stuff so I mean it's it's not so much
based on what a modern pampered more or
less emasculated Wester would be willing
to accept it's like
really
um I don't know how to say this like
avoiding pain or seeking out pain that

would probably be better than just mere discomfort because some disc Comfort I mean it's just just part of Being Human you know just having a body you sit in the same position for too long you're going to get uncomfortable so it's more a matter of just accepting the amount of pain or discomfort that's coming to you from your past Karma without trying to influence

that so if you're seeking out pleasure and avoiding pain you're off the path if you're seeking out pain and avoiding pleasure you're off the path you should just accept whatever comes and that's fine that would be walking the middle path between self-indulgence and self-

torture although we're pampered

westerners pampered modern or postmodern

westerners and so even just not having a

cell phone might be unendurable torture

to some

people so yeah I mean we do have certain

disadvantages or certain

handicaps from being

modern

westerners that uh like an ancient

Indian they definitely had uh I mean

they had their own handicaps and

obstacles but we've got different ones

like scientific realism has just

accepted as just obvious reality is a

fairly serious handicap or obstacle for

for most modern westerners I think and
also this being pampered and soft and
kind of spirit ually flabby so that even
just I mean just being alone which is
neutral really they consider is just
it's just horrible torture or
something so yeah so long as you're not
chasing after pleasure and avoiding pain
or chasing after pain and avoiding
pleasure you're just accepting what your
own karma is heaping upon you so to
speak with some semblance of equanimity
and without aversion or attraction then
you are you are doing some relatively
advanced practice and you are on the
path so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from game fap and

I assume this is a joke question game
fap says just how venerable is the
venerable poo basa on a scale of 1 to 10
how would you rank his venerableness and
yeah I just don't rank my own
venerableness that's something for
somebody else to do I mean it's it would
be conceit or Mana from a Buddhist point
of view like in in the ATA waga there
are three kinds of conceit or Mana one
is to consider yourself Superior to
others one is to consider yourself to be
inferior to others and one is to
consider yourself to be equal to others
all of that is Mana or
conceit so you're just not supposed to

consider yourself I

mean no don't compare yourself with

others I mean the word Mona literally

means measuring so it's like you're

measuring yourself up compared with you

know whoever or

whatever so yeah that's game fap you can

decide for yourself how venerable I am

on a scale of 1 to 10 and I'm just going

to move on to the next question this is

from

creel I

think so creel says here is a question

about negative Karma if for example

person C steals from person B B then

person c will eventually have to repay

its karmic debt by having a person D

steal from him in the future or perform another type of bad deed at the same time person B could not have been a victim of that if he himself did not steal from a person a in the past or performed another type of bad deed using the same logic recursively this chain of bad Deeds AB b c d can be prolonged infinite in infinitely infinitely there we go can be prolonged infinitely in both the past and the future the conclusion seems that to make one bad deed possible an infinite chain of bad Deeds needs to be in place a long time which seems both absurd because it requires infinite time and unfair

because it requires an infinite amount
of sentient beings to suffer Bad Karma I
understand that I'm heavily simplifying
how Karma works and even Buddha
discourages to understand how it
actually operates but I think I am still
raising a valid point what do you think
thanks PS you can pronounce my name as
you
wish well that's good so I never really
knew how to pronounce his name but since
I've just been given Liberty to
pronounce his name as I wish from now on
I will pronounce your name as throat wor
Mangrove so throw orer Mangrove is
asking about like one one implication
here is that he doesn't like an infinite

regress of bad

Deeds so let's see here it seems both

absurd because it requires an infinite

time and

unfair because it requires an infinite

amount of sentient beings to suffer Bad

Karma well there are an infinite number

of sentient beings suffering Bad Karma

literally an infinite number and there

will always be an infinite number

because they are contained in that block

of marble they are statues in that block

of marble and no statue can be

eliminated from that block of marble no

matter what you do you can become fully

enlightened the unenlightened you is

still in that block of

marble or if you want to if you prefer

modern science according to Einstein

time is the fourth dimension and so the

past is always going to exist in a sense

so the unenlightened suffering you is

always going to be

there even though conscious minds or

whatever have progressed beyond that

that past is just as real just as

something you passed in the car five

minutes ago is still back there it's

just you're not there

anymore so but on the bright side these

Sen beings don't really

exist and uh infinite time I mean yeah

there is infinite time I mean from the

buddist point of view there is no
beginning and there is no end it just
goes on forever and ever and ever so it
may seem absurd or unfair but that is
irrelevant it's just the way it
is
so I mean it doesn't really require like
if you have something bad happening to
you it doesn't require
that you did something bad to someone
else and then somebody else is going to
do something bad to you I mean what
really creates
karma is mental States so you could just
sit there just being a hateful person I
mean even being unhappy is is from a

Buddhist point of view unethical or

immoral you're making Bad Karma just

from being unhappy regardless what the

reason is so that's that's kind of a

sticky situation

so I mean we're always creating Bad

Karma and in a sense we are creating

this world we're creating the person

that's messing us up we're creating the

person that we are messing up in a sense

I mean none of it's ultimately

real so let's

see this is kind of a complicated

question because you got to consider a b

c and d because there's there's all

these people involved and ripping each

other

off

so let's see could not have been a

victim of theft if he himself did not

steal from a person in the past or

perform another type of bad deed really

it's just being delusional is the

problem ignorance is the cause of

samsar going with Orthodox Buddhism I

mean ignorance or aija that's that's

step number one in dependent core rising

at least in the the

Orthodox the the main standard stock

description of

it

so I mean it works the same way with

positive things too so you not only have

an infinite regress of people doing or
sentient beings doing shitty things to
each other but you also have an infinite
regress of people doing nice things to
each other benevolent
things and it's all there I mean
everything every single possible statue
is in that block of
marble
so I mean you shouldn't assume that it's
all real I mean that seems to be part of
the problem here is you're assuming that
these sentient beings really exist that
you've really got this infinite regress
of these real sentient beings and
they're going to continue progressing
into the future and just doing bad

things and good things and everything

but I mean it's just a Timeless Eternal

kind of a thing and it's infinite

it and it may seem absurd or unfair or

whatever but really there is certainly a

kind of cosmic

Justice I mean that's that's kind of how

it works it's this sort of a cosmic

Justice of the universe sort of seeking

equilibrium you don't have equilibrium

everything goes out of whack and then

everything breaks

down

so let's see I'm see through or Mangrove

says see uh let's see where is it I

think I scrolled too

far

darn let's see infinite amount of

sentient beings to suffer Bad Karma I

understand that I'm heavily simplifying

how Karma works and the even Buddha

discouraged to understand how it

actually operates that is that's true in

the text the Buddha says you can go

insane if you try to figure out how

Karma works exactly like all the

implications and ramifications

so oh yeah so thr War mro says I I think

I'm still raising a valid point see

what oh okay all right I just didn't

read it right the first time I thought

he was missing a valid point I thought

that's what he was saying and then I'm

trying to say think of you know what the
valid point would be that he was missing
but yeah I'm not exactly sure what the
point is um I mean the main points he
said it seems absurd or unfair
and I mean Samar is absurd in a
sense and it's not really unfair because
I mean it's not like you are forcing
somebody to mess you up just because you
punch somebody in the nose it's not like
you're compelling someone against his
will to punch you in the nose to
compensate for that I mean it may be
that you're just going to mess yourself
up in some other
way you know you just be clumsy and walk

into a door and break your nose that way

or something or if somebody does punch

you in the nose it's just the

dovetailing of your karma where that

person is just spoiling to mess himself

up even more that he's messing you up

because at least he's you're paying I

mean you get punched in the nose you're

kind of paying off a karmic debt whereas

he is making a new karmic debt and he

doesn't really have to do

it nobody is forced against their will

to do that kind of

stuff so yeah I'm I really don't see the

problem

yeah I mean it's I anything that

possibly can happen does happen in

infinite universe and so don't be
surprised if [__] that seems absurd is
happening I mean just look at politics
in America the last few
weeks so I guess I'll just move on to
throw orer mro's next question here
which is another question about negative
Karma I heard that if one hurts a Buddha
he is doomed to to a hellish rebirth but
how can this make sense if a Buddha has
no Karma it does not have the karma to
be hurt in the first place am I missing
something well Buddha still has Karma
he's just not making any new Karma but
according to Orthodox terava he still
has lots and lots of residual karma from

past lives so that's why a fully

Enlighten being also isn't making any

new Karma but Maham Moana for example

still had the karma to be literally beat

to a

pulp he was murdered brutally so that

according to the text not a single bone

in his body was left unbroken and he was

a fully enlightened being who also does

not generate Karma according to Orthodox

tradition so it's not really that I

think the

idea

that um one of the four things you can

do that will is a guarantee of hell like

in in the text it says there are four

things you can do there are a guarantee

of hell sometimes a fifth one might be
added one is causing a Buddha to
bleed injuring a Buddha so that he
bleeds and you have to do it maliciously
so fortunately for like venerable Ananda
who's shaving the Buddha's head he Nicks
him a little bit you know he bleeds a
little bit Ananda is not going to hell
for that it has to be you're trying to
hurt him you're trying to mess him up
you're like shooting him in the ear or
something sorry I said that I don't want
to compare Donald Trump to the Buddha
but two
is killing an arant so the Buddha can't
be killed I mean he just cannot be

murdered an ordinary arant or even a
relatively advanc or like you know a
special kind of arant like mahamana a
chief disciple he gets murdered but the
people who murdered him are guaranteed
of Hell another one is to kill one of
your own parents and fourth is to cause
a Schism in the S which has happened a
number of times because we got lots of
different kinds of Buddhism and even
more that branched off and then became
extinct and then sometimes there's a
kind of a fifth one which is seducing or
raping a
nun so I think that this is just
I I don't think there's necessarily
empirical reality involved in this list

that they're bad things that you
shouldn't do definitely but just saying
it's a guarantee of Hell to kill your
parents and this has come up in in
previous q&as where it's like what
happens your your parent is like being
kept Alive by a machine are you
guaranteed of hell just by signing the
thing so that the the doctor can unplug
the machine cuz your parent has been
brain dead in a coma for two years
already for
example so I mean you you find a lot of
this kind of stuff in the texts and it
may be that anyone who H really has
hatred for an enlightened being is

messing themselves up pretty

bad yeah it seems pretty likely which

makes me reluctant to call out

charlatans for example and makes Burmese

lay people extremely reluctant to call

out crooked monks because they don't

want to be badmouthing a holy

man just in case I mean they might seem

like a a crook but maybe they're not you

know so I do think that this is sort of

folklore rather than a statement of

empirical fact I guess that's what I'm

getting at

here because I mean sometimes like

there's the story of the Pacha Buddha

who is going for alms you know he's he's

better than an ordinary enlightened

being you know he's he's omniscient
being he's a Pacha Buddha he's a Buddha
but he's he's not like the the top rank
of a Buddha you know he's sort of like a
lieutenant Buddha or something and maybe
I shouldn't be making Buddha
jokes but I mean you know he's like you
know I'm thinking of like the military
where you got the colonel and the
lieutenant colonel that kind of a
thing and then there's this rich guy who
has some food donated to this Pacha
Buddha and then later regrets it and so
he makes good karma for offering the
food and then he makes very Bad Karma
for having regretted it afterwards but

he didn't have a clue that this was even an enlightened being you know it's like how is that different from like just an ordinary monk or mendicant going by especially considering that I mean it's that he would have essentially the same mental States in either case so I've always been rather skeptical of these kind of claims and to some degree you've got Wise Guy monks that are coming up with these stories of you better not have bad thoughts about monks you better not do anything bad towards a monk and you're going to go to heaven or get a really good rebirth by offering lots and lots of stuff to

monks like what is it the uh the P watu

which is one of the the books of the
titica it's just full of stories about
um you know these ghosts who they were
virtuous people and they they almost
became small G gods they almost became
Davis but they did this one bad thing
often like being stingy towards s that
caused them to have this defect that
made them into a kind of ghost instead
of a
Dava and it just seems I mean the
stories are not very believable most of
them I mean it's like essentially like
fairy tales to an educated modern
Westerner and so you can't help but
think that there's been some Wise Guy

monks thinking that man we need to
hammer away at the at the villagers that
you know they're going to go to Heaven
by being good to us and they're going to
go to hell for being bad to us or even
just neglecting
us so I mean this could just be a more
of a a matter of glorifying the Buddha
which happened a lot I don't think that
all of the the glorification of the
Buddha in the text is necessarily
factual like for example the the moment
he was born he just takes off walking
with a Lotus Blossom like just
spontaneously appearing out of the
ground and then he's like talking about
how great is and this is his final birth

and then after that he kind of reverts

back to being a

baby a lot of people believe it but I am

rather skeptical of such stories

and I mean certainly I would not

recommend in any way causing harm to an

enlightened

being or killing one's parents or

causing a Schism in the S either but uh

I not so sure that it's your guaranteed

of of vich Hell the lowest pit of Hell

just for having done it because there

might be certain extenuating

circumstances and so forth that just I

mean it's not just you do this you do a

b will happen necessarily because it's

all these Shades of Gray are are

involved it's very complicated and so

yeah I I do think that uh the Buddha

himself did not necessarily come up with

this this list of things that are

guarantees of

hell

so but I mean getting back to throw orer

Mangrove

question um the the Buddha I mean even a

Buddha still has residual karma from I

mean according to Orthodox terraa he

still got just an unknowable amount I

mean he might know but just a lot lots

and lots of karma residual karma from

from past actions from before he was

enlightened that are eventually going to

cease and just become nullified when the enlightened being reaches Parana or in other words they
die so but I mean in the previous Q&A to this one I was discussing sort of like um like Karma of enlightened beings and so forth so I mean I don't want to try and do that again especially since I've got more questions to answer so I hope I answer that question and so I'm moving on to the next question which is from Toronto and Toronto says I think this might kind of be a joke question too he says can we safely call Donald Trump a bodh satva at this point and one reason why I think it might be a joke question

is he had a laughing emoji at the end of
the question
whether Donald Trump is a bodh satva or
not I really don't know I mean I kind of
doubt it I think it's kind of unlikely
but who knows maybe in a previous
existence he took bodh satva vows and
just doesn't remember them who knows
maybe I was a Mahayana Mahayana Buddhist
in a previous life like in medieval
Japan or something and I took bhma vows
and now I'm just oblivious to that I
don't remember it at all so I mean
that's that's possible it could be that
Donald Trump was like Japanese back in
like the
1600s maybe he was a samurai or

something maybe he took bhis SVA

vals and now he just he's just kind of

left that behind and and is going

another route I mean he's he's not

nearly as

evil

as the the globalist media would want

you to

believe so I mean he's not really an

evil guy I don't think he's a

particularly spiritual guy but who knows

it may be not in this life but in some

previous life that he does not remember

he may have taken bodhan

vows so I'm just going to move on to the

next question this is from Indian guy

who sometimes goes by the Alias of
Trevor an Indian guy says I've been
watching this Monk and he says
mindfulness of breathing is
misunderstood he says we in Zen practice
just have it wrong a little by telling
you to focus on the breath or
abdomen he says that the sa patan sua is
saying that we need to understand and be
aware that I'm taking in a long or short
breath after hearing this my meditation
has been better and I'm able to breathe
without labor but I have to have
mindfulness of the here and now then
next I remember not to identify with the
thoughts and then I somehow end up
actually meditating I end up relaxed and

tranquil and everything is just
different what do you think of we posa
so I mean that last question is sort of
just all of a sudden going off on a
tangent because it seems that the this
whole thing has one question mark which
comes at the end of what do you think of
weasa well I would say that weasa is a
really bad name for people practicing SA
batana or min fulness meditation that
weasa means insight and it's something
that arises spontaneously it's not
something that you
do and weasa can arise even if you're
practicing Janna so it's really not a
good name for people who are meditating

with an emphasis on mindfulness instead of an emphasis on somodi or concentration so that's that's what I think of weasa but getting back to uh the main thing here he's see Indian guy has been watching this Monk and he says mindfulness of breathing is misunderstood yeah it might be misunderstood by this monk that he's watching because he says we POS not in Zen practice have it wrong by telling you to focus on the breath or abdomen I mean if you're doing mindfulness of breathing obviously you focus on the breath to say that if you're doing mindfulness of breathing it's a mistake to focus on the breath I mean that's a

mistake it's a mistake to assume that
focusing on the breath is a mistake if
you're doing mindfulness of
breathing so he says in the S panana
suda is saying that we need to
understand and be aware that I'm taking
a long or short breath that is sort of
an elementary practice in S batana I
mean if you're doing really good um ana
sad an p a just mindfulness of in andout
breath then I mean the more you're in
the present moment the more there is no
longer long or short because the only
way you know if it's a long or short
breath is by comparing the present
moment with the past

moment that's how you're aware of the passage of time you have to compare two different moments in time and the interval is the passage of time and so a long breath or a short breath you know it's a shorter interval shorter passage of time or longer passage time either way you are not totally in the present moment because you have to be paying attention to the past to some degree so yeah I mean being aware of a long or short breath it's it's like an elementary level of that kind of meditation but to say that you're not supposed to just be observing the breath while it's happening when you're doing mindfulness of breathing that's that's

just absurd like for example in the
sutas it's talking about the proper way
of doing anapana meditation and it says
it's like a carpenter sawing a board so
the carpenter he's not watching the saw
go back and forth you know he's not
following the saw as it goes back and
forth he is watching right where the saw
is cutting his his attention is focused
right there where the saw is cutting
which means for someone doing
mindfulness of breathing the mindfulness
is right there where the air is going in
and out of the
nostrils and so you can like at an
elementary level of mindfulness of

breathing then I mean you can be say you
can be like labeling it breathing in
breathing out breathing in breathing out
or long breath long breath you know
short breath fast breath slow breath I
mean the whole point with regard to sa
patana it's not doesn't just say you
should be aware of a long or short
breath you have to be aware of all the
the qualities of it I mean you have to
look at it carefully and so you know if
it's a smooth breath or a rough breath
or a coarse breath or a subtle breath
you're aware of the like the the the
pauses in between the In-N-Out
breaths you know it's just whatever
discernable qualities you're focusing on

on that when you're trying to be as
mindful of the breath as possible but
the more mind you get I mean it's
eventually just going to um be like
condensed down to you are being aware of
the sensation of touch right here and
you are closer to reality going with
Terra Buddhism than long breath short
breaths for example in Orthodox terraa
long breath short breath are not
ultimate realities they are just
Concepts in the
mind but the sensation of touch or
wait is Ultimate Reality I mean going
with Abid dama at least that you're
getting closer to Ultimate Reality by

getting away from these Concepts in your mind and just observing as close as you can to just bare sensory data but it may be that if it works better for you to just be aware of long breath or short breath or you know you should also be aware of you know like the the pauses in between the out breaths in breast and just be aware to some degree of of like the the touch of air at the at the nostrils or if you're doing the mahasi method just the the movements of your your diaphragm your abdomen then I mean whatever works if it causes your mindfulness and concentration to be better your mind is wandering less then that's fine and then

as you get better at it as you progress
then you can simplify there'll be less
things less Concepts and you'll be just
be getting closer and closer just bare
sensation of of the air at the nostrils
or the bare sensation of the movements
of your abdomen as you
breathe so yeah I mean if you follow
this monks saying that you know you
shouldn't be mindful of the breath while
be doing mindfulness of
breathing s sort
of that's what he that's what he says
here then I mean just knowing whether
it's a long or short breath or a medium
one I suppose because I assume you take

medium breaths sometimes too fast breath

slow breath

whatever I mean that's one of the

qualities of the breath you can be

mindful of although as your meditation

gets deeper and deeper then that's

probably going to

change

so yeah I mean if your meditation is

improved because of it then that's fine

you you can go with it but uh as for

myself generally when I would do

mindfulness of breathing I would just

focus on the sensation of touch as the

wind is going in and out of the nostrils

and uh just not even label it if I could

if I could get away with it if my mind

was settled down enough that I didn't
have to be thinking you know breathing
in breathing out kind of stuff then I
would just sit there and observe it
silently so oh here's here's another
question do you think they have it wrong
in some ways so I think he's referring
to not to the monk but to um Zen and
terraa or the weasa
movement um do you think they have it
wrong I think they have it less wrong
than the monk that you're you're
listening to although as I say I mean if
what he says is working for you so that
your mind is wandering less then that
certainly something you can continue

doing but I do think that as you get

better and better in your meditation

your emphasis or like your primary

object is going to

change

so see Indian guy then says I guess this

is the next question being in the moment

and looking at the world as if it were

empty brings me to a place where I'm

able to breathe and be aware of the

breath because I'm not forcing anything

yeah you shouldn't be forcing anything

no matter how you're doing breathing

meditation I mean you shouldn't be

breathing in a certain way you should

just be aware of what's

Happening anyways um Indian guy

continues I've never been able to focus on my breath and find anything there but when I focus on emptiness and nonself I am able to meditate following my breath is this wrong or should I continue well focusing on emptiness and not self and those are completely valid objects of meditation so I mean you want to focus on emptiness and non s while you're breathing then maybe use that as a transition into mindfulness and breathing that's fine too there's absolutely no problem I mean there's no just one correct way of practicing meditation I used to think that about some of the teachers of the mahasi

method like upand for example who would
give one method to every student and
then if they weren't doing well with
that method they'd get
scolded and it's like a doctor who gives
the same medicine to every patient and
if they don't get better they get chewed
out for not not knowing how to be sick
properly so there's lots of different
ways of doing meditation and if it works
for you I mean if it's causing your mind
to settle down become clear you're not
wandering all over the place you're able
to just stay with it with with minimal
wandering mind then you're doing
okay so the question is uh is this wrong
or should I continue yeah I mean

emphasizing emptiness and not self or
nonself that's that's profound I mean
this definitely if it I mean if it's
resonating with you if it's working then
certainly you can continue with it
there's no problem with that at
all so but but do bear in mind that if
you're doing mindfulness of breathing
you should just breathe naturally and
generally the better your meditation
gets the the more subtle and refined
your breathing is going to be just
because the whole system is calming down
the Mind calms down the body calms down
you don't need as much oxygen and so
your breathing slows down sometimes it

can become so subtle that you can't even feel the the touch or you can't even feel your abdomen moving or or or anything like that it just it almost stops but if it works yeah I go for it so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from Outer Haven and outer Haven says any experiences with any poser Buddhist monks in Burma how common is it to come across charlan monks who are just trying to run scams or rip people off well I mean some of the more famous monks in Burma um are pretty much conmen that there's one really famous monk in Burma one of the most famous monks in Burma who will just charge through the nose for his his doat

talkx I mean he's he's like a a

corporate CEO wearing monks robes he

wears monks robes mainly just because he

makes more money that way and I won't

say who it is cuz I might offend

somebody but um I mean if you twist my

arm I might I might say

it but yeah there are charlott and monks

a plenty in Burma and probably in

Thailand also also Sri Lanka wherever

you find monks you're going to find

charlatan

monks I mean it's it's pretty uh pretty

common story about the monk who he's

collecting donations

for some meditation center or something

and then as soon as he gets enough he
just drops out of the monkhood and takes
off of the money that happens a lot but
my I think the closest experience with
any any monk like this in Burma was I
was the senior monor the Abbot at WBO
Wildlife Refuge Monastery WBO B do J in
Northern upper Burma on the chindwin
river and a Burmese Monk came and he
wanted to stay at that Monastery and I
was very skeptical wary of any Burmese
monk wanting to come to that Monastery
and live there because 98% of them
handle money I mean 98% of them aren't
even trying to follow the rules
correctly especially in that particular
area of Burma it was just depressing

sometimes so he came there and he asked
if he could he could stay in practice at
the monastery and I'm saying
I don't know I mean most monks just
don't follow the rules and they're
handling money and all this stuff and
this this young monk he was younger than
me maybe late 20s or something he he was
moved you know he seemed emotionally
moved and he's thinking that's why I
want to stay here I've stated other
monasteries the monks don't care about
the rules of discipline and you have a
good reputation for following the rules
I just want to practice correctly I want
to stay and just be a good monk because

it's so hard being a good monk at these other monasteries where nobody follows the rules so I felt sorry for him and I let him stay and he stayed for a few months I think I don't remember exactly how long he stayed it wasn't really a long time and then all of a sudden he just took off and left and then the villagers are telling me that he was supposedly collecting money for like his father had to have eye surgery or something collected this relatively large amount of money from these poor villagers and then uh just took off with the money and uh just pretty much forgot about his father needing eye surgery and I think in that case he was he was kind

of a charlatan obviously but I think he
was just nutty I mean there's there's
some people I me he was he seemed to
have been a bit on the Nutty side in
addition to being kind of a
crook but yeah that was my main personal
experience with opposer Buddhist m
although there's lots of them i' I've
met a lot of them casually you know you
just come across them and then steer
clear of them because it's pretty
obvious what they are and as I say even
a few of the most famous monks in Burma
really are just essentially conning
people so I mean there's one I I met one
of this this one monk I was telling you

about I'm still not going to say his
name but I went to Japan back in 1997
and this this famous monk also went to
Japan around the same time and I was
hearing about you know the the the B
there's like a Burmese immigrant
community in Japan and they were
supporting that Monk and also supporting
the monastery where I was at so I'm
hearing a lot about how this other monk
was was going about things and first he
uh he sent a he sent some message to the
supporters in Japan while he was still
in Burma saying I need a first class
airplane ticket to Japan
and so they get him the first class
ticket he gets there and then he he

scolds them because they didn't set him up in a nice enough Hotel because he wasn't didn't want to stay at any monasteries he wanted to stay in a nice hotel and I mean most of the Japanese or the the Burmese immigrants in Japan um they really can't make a very good living they're working as like waitresses and construction workers and so forth like even a doctor in Burma can't practice medicine in Japan because just I mean you'd have to have like a Japanese education in medicine you know just the the standards of acceptance and so forth are different so he scolds them for not getting them uh getting him a

fancy enough hotel and then somebody
said that they offered him a set of
robes and he says I don't I don't want
robes I want money and so they give him
they they go back and they come back
with money and he says I need more money
than this he he's like scolding them for
not giving him enough money
and then he says you know I need know
$5,000 or $7,000 I think to to fly to
America from Japan so they come up with
a money for that and first class ticket
and all that he gets to America and he
he contacts him again saying he needs
$7,000 more dollars what for I don't
know but that's the and he was like one
of the most famous monks in Burma and is

I mean he's

just Shameless

Ali as they say in

Burma or alaji in p no

shame so yeah it's it's very common

let's just go with that and I'm just

going to move on to Outer Haven next

question and I should point out that

monks are completely forbidden to handle

money or ask for it or demand it for

that matter so anyways outer Haven next

question also when you address the issue

of transgender Buddhist monks you seem

to focus on women to men transgenders

being forbidden so does that mean the

reverse a man posing as a woman would be

a possibility um no we were talking
about transgender monks and so that
would probably be like trans men which
are biologically women but it goes both
ways there's no way a trans man wait a
trans woman a biological male
identifying as a woman could be ordained
as a bikuni assuming that the bikuni
order even still
exists so yeah it goes both ways you
have to be a biological
male an intact biological male to be
ordained as a monk and you have to be a
biological female to be ordained as a as
a bikuni or a
nun so yeah that goes both ways that was
a relatively easy question to answer I

think I might have answered it in about
the same length of time at took me to
read it which is very rare for
me so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from Nomi although
really it's
TIG what's the weather in Burma this
time of
year yeah TIG asks questions like that
so I mean right now it's the middle of
summer which would make it the middle of
the monsoon season in Burma and what the
weather is like would depend on what
part of Burma you're in like in southern
Burma during the middle of the monsoon
season season it rains like two or three

times a day it's like warm and very
steamy like you can't hang up clothes
and have them dry you have to use an
iron if you don't have a like a a dry a
clothes dryer just hanging them up
they're just going to stay wet because
they just don't dry out it's very steamy
and wet and humid in southern Burma in
Upper Burma it's it's more humid than
usual but usually it's a drought in fact
it's it's horrible the the rainy season
in Upper Burma is worse than the hot
season partly because you haven't
already been worn down by three or four
months of hot season in order to hit
what is usually like a second hot season
because it doesn't rain very much in

like Central Burma so it's just first

hot season second hot season with the

second hot season being more humid a

little bit more rain but I mean like at

least one out of three years the crops

fail for these subsistence farmers who

don't have

irrigation

so and it's it's just bad I mean there

there were times I mean I was really in

a bad relationship with the god in

charge of the weather Mr weather I

called him just so I could personify the

weather to hate it more you know there

are times I'd be like Captain Ahab where

I just would refuse to even look at the

sky just out of just resentment against
this bastard God who's in charge of the
weather and he he hated me apparently
I could go on and on about
that man it was awful there's a story
called at the end of the tunnel by
rogard Kipling that I could really
relate to about these British guys
living in India during the the time of
the British Raj you know the colonial
times and they they just crack up and go
insane because of the hot weather and it
really can happen there's another story
by uh uh Somerset mom called the
outstation which is similar about just
how the weather just The Chronic heat
and humidity just causes Western people

especially to just

snap and I came close to snapping a few

times mainly during the the rainy season

because the hot season you know it's

supposed to be hot you know you just and

it was the cold season before that so

you're not already worn down by months

of heat but the rainy season it's called

the rainy season so you you like if

you're naive anyway you expect it to

rain in central Burma during the

monsoon and so that was the main cause

of the suffering like there were times

when I was miserable but it wasn't just

being drenched in sweat and and no rain

I mean it was partly it was this

insistence that in the rainy season it's supposed to rain you know it's like not accepting the way things were was really causing more suffering than just the physical discomfort of just being sweltering hot and drenching and sweat all the

time but yeah it's the middle of the monsoon season in Burma when it's the middle of summer in uh the Western temperate zone so I'm just going to move on next question this is from scolin or skaden and he's pretty much the only person who asks questions on bitshoot so that's good he gets special mention just because he's almost the only person there is one or two other people who do

every once in a while but skaden he's or skaden he's uh one of my main viewers on bitshoot

apparently and he says can snobbery bring you closer to Enlightenment and then as a kind of uh commentary he says hypothetically like if someone were to put maximum effort into becoming refined and cultivating disgust for samsara while also balancing this by showing changing realistic low standards of living to Mythic high standards Bal while also balancing this by slowly changing realistic low standards of living to Mythic high standards I assume cultivating compassion would also be

necessary lest you become emotionally
Dead with muscles on top well
cultivating comp passion really isn't
necessary to become enlightened I mean
it certainly doesn't hurt and for some
people it may be necessary but generally
if you're a head oriented person
just like transcending some Sor doesn't
necessarily involve compassion which I
mean technically seems to include a
little bit of delusion because who are
you going to feel compassion for unless
it's these other beings that don't
ultimately
exist but getting back up to the main
question can snobbery bring you closer
to Enlightenment I mean what he's

describing in the commentary to the question doesn't sound like snobbery to me I mean snobbery is sort of uh like pride in your social class that you consider yourself to be in a high social class you associate with high social class people you brag you know you do a lot of name dropping and bragging about these you know really upper class people that you hung out with like that some set mom story The out station that has this guy who's a total snob you know he brags about having played backarat with King Edward this kind of thing and uh just trying to keep up with the standard of living of these people upper class

people that he was trying to associate
with bankrupted him and so he had to get
a job in Southeast Asia in the colonial
Administration as a way of running away
from debt and uh making a
living but I digress furiously
so I mean snobbery I mean you can you
can start practicing dhamma for bad
reasons and then as you practice it the
your reasons are going to get better
because your wisdom is going to progress
your wisdom is going to develop and then
you you'll replace the bad reasons with
good reasons so let's see hypothetically
like if someone were to put maximum
effort into becoming refined and
cultivating disgust for some SAR maybe

that's what he means by snobbery is just
despising the
world and yeah I mean that's definitely
would work I mean like in the the wiui
Maga it talks about like the six
different personality types and you know
it's Loba DOA MOA and the opposite of
Loba DOA Maha and Buddha Goa the author
of the wisi manga says that people with
the Dosa or aversion temperament
actually have an advantage when it comes
to becoming enlightened because they're
more likely to have a version for
samsara and it just helps them to
renounce samsara and then it makes it
easier for them to become

enlightened because they don't like
people for example so they it's easier
just to become solitary forest
dwellers so let's see
here yeah yeah I think what he saying
here yes what he's called snobbery I
think it's just sort of like cynicism
more more than snobbery just sort of
contempt for the world contempt for
normies maybe even um it's I mean it's
certainly not a wholesome mental state
but it has enough of like a more or less
wholesome like trajectory that it can
like separate you from the world you're
less attached to all the [__] in the
world and makes it easier for to
renounce it all and just go and live

alone because you don't like people and
then when you're alone you know
practicing then I mean you you're doing
good practice you're practicing
meditation you're following the rules
and all that keeping precepts and then
your wisdom improves and then gradually
you you stop despising the human race so
much I mean that happened with me I when
I was a young person I really didn't
have much use for the human race I much
preferred the company of trees or the
company of people as a general rule
there were some exception
but um I I have a lot more compassion
and sympathy for ordinary people

now in fact to some degree I'm kind of
like an ordinary
person so I guess I'm just going to move
on to scadden's second
question which is heredity versus
environment nature versus nurture
question mark so which is a question I
don't fully understand but he does have
have conveniently for us another little
commentary saying I don't know whether
it's still a relevant question or if
postmodernism has made it moot like
globalist policies such as social Credit
Karma so that commentary didn't help me
understand this question at all heredity
versus envir environment well the whole
notion of heredity and environment both

of them are conditioned by Karma so it's karma karma Trum both heredity and environment because your karma is going to land you into a womb a uterus if you will that has the the genetics that you deserve essentially from a karmic point of view and will land you in the environment you deserve also from a karmic point of view so the two are just two different manifestations of the fruition of your own Karma

um but like with regard to I mean from a more samsaric empirical point of view what is it that determines I mean it depends on with regard to what you know like for example

your your intelligence that is more
heredity than environment environment
does play a part but it's more
hereditary than environmental I mean
with regard to um lots of things really
like just like economic
success if you're a genius and you're
born in a ghetto you're more likely to
be successful than if you're an imbecile
and you're born in a mansion I mean a
lot of imbeciles wind up being rich just
because they got a rich Daddy and all
that but um still maybe you'd be more
likely to be successful born a genius in
a in a ghetto than born you know an in
the middle class let's just put it that
way CU then you don't have the rich

daddy who's just going to set you up
with everything you
need so it depends on how you look at it
but I mean the correct answer from the
Buddhist point of view and I think the
correct answer just in general is karma
determines both heredity and environment
so I mean they're both just subdivisions
of karmic
fruition and so I'm just going to move
on to scol adin's thirdd question which
is an interesting one to me and one that
nobody has ever asked me before which is
as follows was dovi a
Mystic and as it turns out he was at
least to some degree because dovi had I

think it's temporal lobe epilepsy he was
an epileptic and he based his character
Prince Michigan in the idiot on himself
with regard to the epilepsy and so forth
and according
to well how do I how do I put this let's
just let's just refer to dovi and forget
Prince Michigan for for the moment but
dovi apparently based on what he's
putting into Prince Michigan's like
inner monologue as he's walking through
the streets of St Petersburg I think
he's talking about how right before an
epileptic seizure he has what is
essentially a mystical experience
everything just becomes Crystal Clear he
feels the presence of God and I mean

this is sort of reminiscent of an
earlier question about how I would feel
like when it's all worth it he's he's
saying that just those split seconds
before it has a seizure when everything
just becomes crystal clear and just like
Sublime like he's in heaven and it's
it's not just like this delusion I mean
it's just like a mystical state of just
absolute Crystal Clarity just seeing how
everything fits together everything's
placed you know it's just you know it's
almost like an Angelic view of the world
that he's he's reflecting that just
those split seconds before he has a
seizure makes having epilepsy worth

it because if he didn't have the

epileptic seizures he wouldn't have that

Split Second of of like Crystal Clarity

right

beforehand so I assume those eski was

speaking from his own

experience and uh so yeah he was having

mystical experiences as a as like a

symptom of

epilepsy but uh also he was a very

devout um Russian Orthodox Christian

which may have helped support

that but I kind of doubt that he'd be um

having mystical experiences if it wasn't

due to this this

epilepsy um so

I guess the answer is yes and he was a

profound thinker dovi really was a
genius so I'm just going to move on to
the next question and this is from
power so power says any thoughts on
Cults from a Buddhist perspective could
Buddhism be described as a cult and I'm
going to look and see if we're recording
yeah after two hours I bother to look to
see that we're really
recording I think uh I interrupted
myself so rudely just now that I'm just
going to have to start over power says
any thoughts on Cults from a Buddhist
perspective could Buddhism be described
as a cult in my opinion Islam is most
definitely a cult due to the immense

unquestionable loyalty that is demanded
of its followers for their profit it
doesn't get more cultish than using
violence and murder against offenders
because you feel your leader was
disrespected so with regard to Cults um
sometimes times the best thing you can
do if you're asked you know is such and
such this or such and such that is to
just look up this or that in the
dictionary so you have a clear-cut
definition of of what it is and then you
can say whether this or that fits into
that so according to my dictionary a
cult first of all it's a
noun and it is a system of religious
veneration and devotion directed toward

a particular virt figure or object as in
the cult of St
Olaf so I mean with that definition of a
cult a system of religious veneration
and devotion directed toward a
particular figure or object then to the
extent that you've got Buddhists who are
essentially just worshiping the Buddha
or more likely a
Buddha um because terana I mean it does
have a lot of devotionalism
and it just appeals to certain types of
people but in Mahayana Buddhism there
are like entire schools of Buddhism that
are largely based on devotionalism
so I think that some Mahayana sects or

schools that really are into just
venerating some Buddha or other um or or
like what is it nii Ren where they just
venerate the Lotus Sutra then yeah that
could qualify as a cult going with this
definition with regard to Islam um I
think it depends on the
Muslim because my understanding is I
mean they venerate the Quran you know
they try to follow the Quran and I mean
it all boils down to you know God is one
God and Muhammad is his
Prophet so yeah I think it would depend
on the individual in that
case but there are other definitions of
col for example here's another
definition

a relatively small group of

people having religious beliefs or

practices regarding by others as strange

or

Sinister and the example is a network of

Satan worshiping Cults so in that case

Islam certainly wouldn't be a cult

because it's not a relatively small

group of

people um yeah pretty much any

established religion starts off as a

cult in this sense Buddhism started off

as a cult Christianity started off as a

cult Islam started off as a cult when it

was still a relatively small group of

people having religious beliefs or

practices regarded by others as strange
or Sinister so just about any world
religion starts off as a cult in that
sense but then it stops being a cult
once it gets
big so then another definition is a
misplaced or excessive admiration for a
particular person or thing as in a cult
of
personality so yeah the people who just
totally venerate Muhammad and consider
him to be perfect and think about that a
lot or like a Shiite Muslim who's just
like obsessed with
Ali then yeah that could be a kind of
cult also I
suppose

so let's

see yeah there's one one last definition

of cult a person or thing that is

popular or fashionable especially among

a particular section of society as for

example a cult film so yeah we're I

don't think that would apply to the

question that was uh proposed by power

here so see any thoughts on Cults from a

Buddhist perspective I mean a cult going

with these definitions could be good or

bad I mean with regard to a cult of

personality that's not so good from a

Buddhist point of view because according

to Buddhism um there is no self and so

there really are no people I mean even

the Buddha himself ultimately didn't
exist and then I mean even if you go
from a like a samsaric worldly point of
view where godma Buddha was a man who
existed in the Ganges Valley of India
you know 2500 years ago then even so
he's dead now he is no longer in Sam
sorrow he has transcended Sam
sorrow and so it makes it even less
sensible for a Buddhist to have like a
cult of personality of God a Buddha or
just a cult in like venerating the
Buddha because the Buddha really doesn't
have any salvific power you know he
doesn't save you he doesn't judge you
and decide whether you're going to
heaven or hell anything like that you

know it's you yourself are doing it so
certainly Buddhism or especially terraa
Buddhism is less cultish in that sense
although of course there are a lot of
very devotional Buddhists terot
Buddhists included who pray to the
Buddha even though he's dead I once
asked a doctor in Burma he was a village
doctor in Burma he he told me he prayed
to the Buddha every day I said I mean
he's he's not here anymore I mean he he
reached par nibana 25 centuries ago why
why do you pray to him and he said the
Buddha had Clairvoyance he could look
into the future and see me praying to
him back

then

so yeah I mean if you if you're devotion

based you know like a bakti you like

bakti yoga as your approach to uh

spirituality then yeah it would be more

cultish although I've never really been

very

devotionalism that I do have a new Guru

now he's on YouTube he's called Father

Fish he's got this this Innovative kind

of approach to keeping an aquarium where

he's he's talking about having a

balanced ecosystem and so forth having a

good microbiome and all that although I

must admit I must admit to Father fish

that I failed him because before I

started watching his videos I already

put in the substrate Father Fish says
you should have one in half an inch to
an inch of mud underneath your sand and
I just got sand in fact I even started
putting gravel in there and then I saw a
video from Father Fish saying gravel is
the worst thing you can have at the
bottom of your
aquarium but uh I've totally digressed
you know I just had to get in get in my
uh my endorsement of Father Fish my new
Guru and uh I guess I'll just move on to
the next question here this is from
ruie and ruie says I got to make sure I
answered F father fish's question
gosh see yeah it's just excessive

devotion to Father Fish on my part there

okay the next question is from

ruie and ruie says do you think Buddha

dhama which is the path to Awakening is

compatible with the American dream and

then he's got in parentheses the Deep

onic dive and for those of you who

aren't word Geeks onic means having to

do with dreams like an Ono not is

someone who lives in their dream

especially if they're Lucid Dreamer

so is

Buddhism like true the true Dharma

compatible with the American dream so

since I had just looked in the

dictionary to look up cult I looked in

the dictionary again to look up the

American dream because the American dream is interpreted differently by different different people I mean if the American dream is having your own house and the wife and the 2.4 children and the dog and the absolutely perfect lawn that kind of thing with the picket fence around it maybe an app tree then no the the path to Awakening would have you renounce all that but as it turns out I looked in the dictionary and their definition of the American dream is as follows the ideal by which equality of opportunity is available to any American allowing the highest aspirations and goals to be achieved so essentially the

American dream from the point of view of my dictionary is essentially equality of opportunity allowing people to pursue their highest aspirations and goals and that would certainly be compatible with um with dhamma with
Buddhism so it's just it just turns out that most people's equality of opportunity and their highest aspirations and goals are along the lines of the house and the wife and the 2.4 kids maybe and the The Perfect Lawn and all that nice car that kind of thing so they're using the American dream to go in a rather different direction from the highest aspirations and goals of a serious Buddhist practitioner who wants

to become enlightened In This Very life

but the dream itself if it refers to

equality of opportunity then yeah that's

good because then you have an equal

opportunity to strive for

nibana so that's

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

the next question here and this is from

Twin

Wasabi and twin Wasabi says isn't it

hypocritical that our culture finds it

creepy and condemns an older man having

a younger woman as a sexual partner even

if they are both consenting adults yet

if you disapprove of two men being

together or transsexualism you are seen

as a bigot this doesn't make much sense
as it goes against the left's grand
Narrative of Love Is Love why do you
think this is so well I would even go
farther before I answer the question I
mean it's like it is true that an older
man having a much younger woman like a a
50-year-old man with a 25y old woman can
be called a pedophile even though the
25-year-old has been an adult for
several
years and and also I would point out
that one group trying to get into the lb
B gtq Rainbow Coalition are called Maps
or which is just a euphemism it means
minor attracted person which is
pedophiles like real pedophiles not just

Hugh Hefner who married a 21-year-old
woman when he was 70 I mean both of them
were legally adults and acted
consensually but I mean the the left is
or at least some people on the left are
actually approving
of like real full-blown
pedophilia you know saying that the age
of consent should just be dropped
drastically or abolished and so forth so
yeah but but even so even probably some
of these people who approve of like real
pedophilia still will think it's creepy
or what is it creepy and they condemn an
older man having a younger woman as a
sexual partner and I think that first of

all this was just the way it
was like not very long ago like in the
South I I have read that like around the
time of the Civil War like the 1800s in
the deep south of the USA the the proper
age for a man and his bride was the man
should be twice her age plus seven years
so a 47y old man and a 20-year-old woman
that would be about right according to
this tradition and it's it's been this
tradition for I mean throughout the
world older men and younger women partly
because older men they've already set
themselves up in life you know they're
established they've got the the money
the you know the necessary wealth the
house the social standing and everything

then they can afford to start having a
family you know after they've taken care
of just getting themselves
established whereas women you know
biologically anyway reproductively they
reach their Prime when they're like
I when they're young I mean when they're
when they're very young as soon as they
can start having
children you know they have the younger
you marry a woman the more children
she's going to have time to have and so
forth so in the past it was common it
was just socially acceptable for older
men and younger women to to get
together but what I think happened is

feminism so all of a sudden you've got
these bitter feminists who just resent
the hell out of the fact that an older
man can hook up with a younger woman and
he doesn't want to hook up with the
older women the older women are just
screwed I mean nobody wants to hook up
with them and so they just resent the
hell out of that and have just try to
like vilify
it or in some cases like a lot of women
especially the more attractive ones like
when they were young they were getting
hit on by older men all the time and
they just considered it to be creepy
they didn't like it could even be scary
and dangerous sometimes and so they

that's sort of they've internalize that

and so anytime you've got older men with

with considerably younger women you know

it sort of evokes this this ickiness

that they they experienced themselves

when they were like teenagers getting

hit on by 40-year-old

men so that there could be some of that

too but also it's just like the

empowerment of women women becoming more

influential in politics and culture has

sort of brought that in so that even

though genuine pedophilia may be okay

for a lot of leftists still they're

they're going to think that it's icky

and contemptible

for like a 50-year-old man to marry as a

25y old

woman so that's my theory and it's a

theory I just came up with just today so

I'm just going to move on to the next

question and this is from

pyramid and pyramid says my comment

seems to be getting autod deleted I

don't know why but basically have you

checked out the Buddhist Reddit page it

seems they don't have a high opinion of

the venerable poasa but it is Reddit so

you can't really expect much

decency I I

generally let's see how do I how do I

address this first of all yeah the

comments on YouTube often get autod

deleted like the previous Q&A it was

right after the the uh failed

assassination attempt of Donald Trump so

there were people just you know like

making comments that they're sending

prayers for Trump and his family and

pretty much all of those got deleted

automatically by the by by YouTube

because of course they're like the elite

Master Class trying to control what we

are exposed to in order to guide our

beliefs so that we will freely vote for

our

masters in the globalist

elite so if if you send any comments you

submit any comments on YouTube and they

just disappear it's not me that's doing
it it's just happening possibly even by
some AI algorithm that's just flagging
certain words or something like like the
disuss thing like in the bright bark
comments this it's comment sections of a
lot of different websites use discuss
and there'll be certain words that get
flagged and you just it just you you
can't post certain certain
words so anyways having gotten that out
of the way what is the question have I
checked out the Buddhist Reddit page um
my my
woman was looking on Reddit on mentions
of me that were very um very critical
and unfriendly and also based on

essentially just wishful thinking on their part I mean it generally was not true accusations they were making even so yeah i' I've looked at it I mean I was actually involved in a certain Buddhist Reddit page years ago when I was still a monk but that was that was sort of like almost it was like fascistic stuff and I'm not a fascist personally but this guy contacted me he said he he he was a fascist I mean he He just flat out admitted he he believed in Fascism and he was going to start up a kind of fascist Buddhist group on Reddit and he asked me if I would be like a technical adviser just you know making

sure that they weren't like misrepresent
ing
Buddhism which I agreed to do but I mean
you have to misrepresent Buddhism in
order to make it fascistic you know like
militant Buddhism where that that's
where violence is okay that kind of
thing you know it it just didn't work
and so I I bowed out of that fairly
quickly
um because I mean they were favoring
like Samurai Zen and that kind of thing
but uh yeah I mean Reddit is kind of a
it's it's pretty much a leftist kind of
thing and and so there's going to be
leftist like Western quasi Buddhists who
because I mean because they're leftists

and kind of

narcissistic they just assume that true

dhama is going to be in accordance with

their leftist

ideology and anyone who deviates from

that I mean like the the Asian Buddhists

they just ignore like traditionalist

conservative Asian Buddhists they they

just ignore them and pretend they don't

exist in the west but someone like me

who I mean I'm more traditionalist than

than like Progressive in my

understanding of

Buddhism so I mean you know I'm I'm a

bad guy you know I'm a fascist they

might might not have even known about me

being a technical adviser for a fascist subreddit that I bowed out of I mean I was I was just there to sort of check to make sure they weren't misrepresenting dhama and uh yeah as I say I didn't last very long but I don't think they were't even aware of that I I saw some of the comments like my sweetie showed them to me and I don't even remember what they were but it was it was mainly just feels that I must be a bad person you know they're just kind of coming up whatever they think sounded plausible against me just because they have to bad mouth the opposition they have to badmouth people who don't agree with
them and I'm I was seen as kind of a

threat I mean there have been certain

like far-left

like queer Buddhists like in Academia

and so forth that have written papers

mentioning me and you know I'm sort of

like the problem that has to be

addressed in progressif Ying Buddhism in

the west that kind of

thing so yeah I don't really care about

Reddit or what the people say about me

there I'm just going to move on the next

question so what I'm going to

do see I'm just scrolling down a little

bit see how much we still got a few

question this might this might go for

three hours I'm sorry you

guys let's see you can you can watch it in installments or something see the next question is from Romeo which is are you familiar with Herman Hessa have you ever read his book sidarta or any of his other works if so what is your impression yeah when I was in my 20s I went through a phase of liking Herman Hessa and I'm probably pronouncing the second name his second name more correctly than his first name I don't know the German pronunciation I do know that e at the end is is pronounced so yeah I've read sidarta and uh I've also read Steen Wolf the glass bead game and uh narcissist and

Goldman and uh maybe one or two others

that don't come to mind right now
and I have to admit that I was more
impressed by steppen wolf than by any of
his other novels including sidarta I
also saw the movie of steephen wolf and
and sidarta I think Max V sidow played
uh Harry holler in uh steppen
wolf um and I mean one thing that I mean
my impression of Herman Hessa he was
certainly a spiritual guy all of his
novels are autobiographical I mean every
novel is about himself really some sort
of fictionalized and modified version of
himself you know like the protagonist in
Steen wolf Harry holler I mean HH same
as Herman

Hessa um with regard to one novel I
wasn't much impressed with it it was uh
narcissis and Goldman where it's about
these two friends in the Middle Ages
Medieval Europe and they're they're
raised at like this Monastery school
like an orphanage school or something
and then when they get older enough that
they finished their education one of
them narcissist decides to stay and
become a Catholic monk whereas Goldman
wants to just go out and see the world
where he immediately just starts having
sex married women and so forth and uh
it's pretty obvious that Hessa sort of
sympathized more with Goldman who went
out and was just doing the stuff than

narcissus who was just sort of emaciated
and with know like praying and fasting
all all the
time but uh yeah he was definitely a
very intelligent person um I think he
won the Noel prize in literature for uh
the glass bead game and uh yeah I mean
you you can pick up spirituality from
him he was a relatively wise man and so
I mean you're better off reading a novel
written by a wise person or even a book
on how to make jam by a wise person than
reading a book about the secrets of the
universe written by a
fool and you can generally figure out
whether the person is wise or not within

the first few pages if not the first few sentences

so with regard to sidarta which is the main question that Romeo was asking me about um yeah it was it was a good book um I'm I kind of can can sympathize with sidarta he he was a monk and then dropped out married a beautiful woman he had a kid that turned out to be problematic and then he became like suicidal at the end after he lost his woman and his kid became problematic but then he became enlightened at the end which is nice as a lay person so that's that's kind of good for me I

guess um yeah that's that's like my very

brief take on Herman Hessel and I got to
keep going because we're already well
over two hours and uh I still got
multiple questions to answer so the next
question is from Mary J and Mary J says
you often mention your father and
sometimes mention your mother you never
as far as I can tell mention your
brother why is that are you two good um
yeah my brother mostly lives in Thailand
and works in Alaska so we haven't met
each other in the flesh in many years I
mean he first started going to Thailand
because he was going to come to Burma
and visit me and uh yeah he hated Burma
he was uh he was kind of depressed most

of the time that he was in Burma I think

but um yeah I

mean um we just do not come from a close

family that uh you know we just kind of

live our own lives and contact each

other every several months pretty much

and uh you know there's there's never

there's not any kind of like anti an

agonism or or any anger or anything like

that that I'm aware of so yeah I guess

we're

good so I'm just going to move on to

Mary J's second question which is this

is probably the stupidest question I

came up so far have you ever made love

to your woman wearing that Fez and The

Fez is back there I think answer would

be no because I assume you don't want to

sleep on the couch for the rest of your

life well let's just say that this this

will be the first and only question that

I'm going to answer about my sex life

and the answer is in fact no I have

never never worn The Fez while being

intimate with my woman

although I have worn

this so you get it straight there so I

have worn this

one next

question see also from Mary J I have

watched some senatorial hearings for I

guess National Court why do you

Americans don't want for the president

guys like Ted Cruz or someone well Ted Cruz did run for president in 2016 and he got smoked by by Donald Trump because at the time Ted Cruz was pretty much of a neocon he was like a an establishment politician and people were rebelling against establishment politicians so that now Ted Cruz is reborn with a beard and he's on the the Trump train pretty much um I've well he did run for president I there's I heard a rumor that he was born in Canada so technically he wouldn't even be qualified to be a president because you have to be born in America to be an American president technically

speaking um but yeah I mean he seems all

right if he were the the Republican

nominee the Republican C candidate then

uh yeah i' I'd vote for him then again I

mean just about anybody running against

Joe Biden would be better than Joe Biden

or kamla Harris for that

matter I mean Joe Biden is essentially a

potted

plant

so yeah I mean right now it's what has

happened is this it's like a large

segment segment of America is just

rebelling against the globalist elite

and so they need a leader who is a rebel

against the globalist elite and there

are so many people saying oh Trump's

just another establishment stooge but if
that were the case they wouldn't be
trying to bankrupt him trying to
imprison him trying to keep him off the
ballots and finally trying to kill him
if he really were just another stooge of
of the unip party establishment another
globalist so yeah there's there's still
a chance that Ted Cruz might be
president
someday but uh I mean he's he's liked a
lot he's more popular now than he was
when he ran against Trump in 2016 for
the the Republican nomination or the
candidacy
so yeah I mean right now we're in a
state of transition in America of you

know it's like the globalists are making
their move to just kind of lock
everything down and so that they are
going to remain in power and a lot of
Americans who have a little more spine a
little more testicular fortitude than
Europeans it seems especially Western
Europeans we're just not taking that
[__] and so the Democratic party who are
still globalist you know still I mean
the the elites are the ones who are
supporting them now um I mean they're
they're just in like in a a panic right
now which is
good and so I'm just going to move on
the next question which is Mary J

transgressive fourth

question and so unfortunately for him he

is going to be severely

punished but his fourth question is

biological depression caused by comma um

it's definitely conditioned by comma

from a scientific point of view you can

point out to like chemical imbalances in

the brain and so forth but you know the

body you land in is is going to be

conditioned by by your comma your comma

is going to determine what body you're

going to wind up getting when you get

when you take another

rebirth so yeah I mean from a scientific

medical point of view you can say it has

this cause and this cause this chemical

imbalance or whatever this deficiency of

selenium or whatever but ultimately it's

it's it's

comma so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from cify and

I'm still still scrolling down nervously

to see how many more questions I got to

answer not that I'm complaining

necessarily I

just have

uh I don't know just don't want to keep

talking for three and a half hours

straight I guess so this next question

from cify cify says have you heard about

Tibetan Buddhist practices like POA

loose translation conscious dying does

orthodox Buddhism have a similar practice um there's no special practice for dying consciously although the wiser you get the more consciously you're going to die so the Tibetan or the the terraa Buddhist approach you just cultivate wisdom and increases the likelihood that you're going to die as consciously as possible but I I'm unaware of any special practices the Tibetans are really into these kind of special practices like Tumo where they they can like be naked on the snow and and because they have this way of increasing their body heat and that kind of thing at least in their extremities

um yeah so terraa Buddhism it doesn't
not that I'm aware of maybe certain
schools of Terra will have come up with
something but um it's not like in
Tibetan Buddhism I think in Zen Buddhism
also there are stories of Zen Masters
who knew exactly when they were going to
die they'd invite their friends and
supporters and disciples to come they'd
give one last talk and then they'd yell
like quats and then they'd just ke over
dead or whatever but I I haven't heard
about that I I assume some really wise
terraa monks have known when they were
going to die I think weo seatt there's
stories about weu kind of giving hints

that he was going to be dying at a

certain time that kind of

thing but it's something that just

arises spontaneously through wisdom it's

not some something that has to be

cultivated other than just cultivating

wisdom in general so I'm just going to

move on next question this is from

extremely rare bird and extremely rare

bird says have you read the Japanese

philosopher

kg

nishitani and then he says here's a

taste of what he writes about in case

you are interested quote all things that

are in the world are linked together one

way way or the other not a single thing

comes into being without some
relationship to every other thing
scientific intellect thinks here in
terms of natural laws of necessary
causality mythical poetic imagination
perceives an organic living connection
philosophic reason contemplates an
absolute absolute one but on a more
essential level a system of
circum circum minis session has come to
be seen here according to which on the
field of sun shun all things are in a
process of becoming master and servant
to one another in this system each thing
is itself in not being itself and is not
itself in being itself its being is

illusion in its truth and truth in its illusion this may sound strange the first time one hears it but in fact it enables us for the first time to conceive of a force by virtue of which all things are gathered together and brought into a relationship with one another a force which since ancient times has gone by the name of nature or fisis and this is from religion and nothingness published in 1983 so getting up to the question here have you read the Japanese philosopher K nishitani the answer is no other than this quote that I just

read but it seems like he's a Japanese Buddhist with uh some appreciation for

like maaka

so I'm just going to move on the next

question here this is from the Proto

sudo Monk and this is okay we got to the

end of the list but protos sudo monk has

three questions three shall be the

number of the count no more no less the

number of the count shall be three so

his first

question is uh can you elaborate why

Trump is a Force for good as a president

of the

USA um a Force for good

well I've been saying for years that the

main thing that Trump has done is he has

caused the Cockroaches to come out in

broad daylight it has become so obvious that the establishment just loathes the man so much that they're willing to just cook up crimes against him that I mean two year more than two years of the whole Russia collusion hoax that was hooked up by the Democratic party and it was just a fraud and they investigated him using that as a pretense for two years trying to come up with anything it was just a fishing Expedition they're trying to come up with any crimes they could find against him that they could get him for and destroy him and they didn't come up with anything not anything serious so then they impeach him twice and I mean just you watch the

mainstream media they're just I mean he
is a exist poal threat he is going to
destroy our democracy he's going to
become a dictator just on and on and on
he's going to be putting people in
concentration camps he's Hitler just on
and on and on and more and more people
are realizing that these people are just
professional Liars doing anything saying
anything to remain in
power and so Trump is a Force for good
and that he is opening the eyes of
millions of people partly because the
establishment The globalist
Establishment is just I mean they're
hardly even trying to hide it anymore

they're hardly even trying to hide that

they are lying

Crooks and so I mean even like Joe Biden

our current potted plant in Chief I mean

he has been seile for years I mean when

he ran for president in 2020 he was

scile and they've just been covering it

up hiding it denying it you know just

just like a week or so before the

presidential debate where Joe Biden was

obviously

scile they're saying oh all these video

clips of Joe Biden like falling down and

and just not saying the right thing just

saying the opposite thing or just

reading like instructions off the

teleprompter like you know like stuff

that he's not supposed to say you know
he like end of quote this kind of
thing that all of that is just is cheap
fakes you know it's just propaganda and
finally it just became so painfully
obvious to everyone that they couldn't
even hide it anymore and so I mean
they're it's the ruling Elite are a
bunch of crooks and I mean that's pretty
much the way ruling Elites are you know
this like they make the laws they don't
have to follow the
laws but I guess sometimes when you have
a ruling Elite overthrown you have some
relative virtue until the the new regime
gets corrupted which is inevitable

because we're all

humans so I think the main reason why

Trump is a Force for good is he is just

a demonstration I mean he has been a

catalyst for these Crooks to hardly even

try to hide the fact that they are lying

Crooks

and I mean he does want what is best for

America whereas the globalists don't

want what is best for

America and with with like Equity

socialism and so forth they want to

bring America down because I mean you

can only lift up subsaharan Africa so

far you know they just want to kind of

level everything sort of like the the

Tyrant of

Syracuse back in ancient times who you know it's like he was demonstrating to a philosopher how he remains in power and he just went out and showed these these people like cutting off the The Tall heads of wheat so that the the entire field was level and that's that's kind of the way socialism works you know it's just sort of keeps everybody down except for the the ruling
Elite so yeah I think there would be certain more honesty even though Trump is Accused over and over and over again of lying I think it'd be interes interesting to compare the lies or the untruths told by Trump versus the

untruths told by Biden just at the the

notorious Infamous debate that occurred

recently because I think uh Biden would

have told

more

so let's see why is Trump a Force for

good well I mean he's good for America

because obviously the Democratic party

and the globalists and General are not

good for America they don't even want to

be good for

America cuz they're globalists you know

it's like to to be a nationalist is

almost the same as being a fascist to

these people might be exactly the same

far as they're

concerned so I think there would be more

Justice there'd be less corruption more honesty at least in the media and politics if I mean the media can finally admit defeat and just stop raging in hysteria against half the country so I guess I guess that's a little bit I mean I never really said that Trump is a Force for good as a president of the United States who he's definitely better than the opposition so I'm just going to move on to the protoo mon second question can you do a poll on how many people in the community understand the simile of the block of stone and request for a video with Brian Rue to speak on this topic um

I think it'd be hard to do a poll on how many people understand the simile of the block of stone because some people think they understand something when really they don't I mean long ago back before I even started my first blog you know I'd write articles and send them out to people sometimes and uh sometimes people would be saying yeah I really I really agree with that 100% I really like how you said and then they' say something something completely different from what I was saying you know it's like they think they understand it but they really they didn't understand it so it could be that if I did a poll do you understand

the simile of the block of stone some
people would think that they understand
it when still according to me anyway
they really they really didn't get
it so and some people might think they
don't get it and they do but uh I mean I
could do a a video with Brian Rue on the
topic I suppose I mean I've talked about
it a lot and I've written about it it is
two articles on that very topic are in
one of my books although unfortunately I
don't recall which books they are
in and so uh yeah it's it's possible I
mean um Brian contacted me recently just
discussing possible topics for the next
time we get together so yeah I mean

that's on the table I guess I'm not sure
about the poll though and so I'm just
going to move on to the the next
question which is the last question this
is also from the Proto sudo Monk and the
protos sudo monk says what to do when an
erection well if you're in Japan you
would
vote what to do when an erection and
what to do when lust
appears well if you have an erection I
mean the I mean the main the the obvious
answer is maybe a little too obvious to
even mention what to do when an
erection
um well I
mean it depends on the circumstances I

suppose it depends on your priorities it

depends on who you're with I

guess um what to do when you have an

erection I think this might be a

something you should ask your father

maybe he hasn't had that talk with you

yet but

um yeah I mean I mean if you're really

serious about practicing Dharma like say

you're a

monk then uh you might just uh leave it

alone let it go away I mean it won't

last

forever and uh I mean there's no worries

about um like exploding or anything

because I mean you just just have a wet

dream in your sleep eventually if the
the pressure gets too
much um I mean if it's you got like blue
balls so bad that you can hardly walk
then maybe a little uh therapeutic puppy
spanking might be in order but um I mean
seriously it just depend it depends on
on the situation and what your
priorities are and so forth I mean if
it's not against any rules then uh
you might be that if it's just really
something that has to has to happen then
just let it happen and what to do when
lust appears again it's the I mean the
obvious thing to do from a Buddhist
point of view be mindful of just observe
the lust which is damned hard to do it's

it's more difficult to be mindful of pleasure or pleasurable feelings than of painful feelings because painful feelings you want to detach from that kind of naturally anyway but it's like lust is I mean I can't remember it's like being uh enslaved to something that isn't Pleasant is sort of like being tied by a chain but being enslaved by being pleas something that's Pleasant and you're you're being tied to like a a silken silken cord you're still tied up I mean you're still pretty much a slave to it but it's harder to to even want to break the habit or you know break the the dependence or whatever

so if lust appears I mean the Orthodox
answer is be mindful of it observe it
the way an ichthyologist would observe a
dead fish you know just what is it like
what does it feel like you know what is
happening what's happening in my mind
what's happening in the body Etc and
just be be mindfully aware of it and
until it is not there
anymore but uh I mean to prevent l from
arising there are things you can do also
you know like eat less sleep
less uh you know avoid the the stimuli
that that result in the inflammation of
of lust and of the nether
organs but really the the obvious
Orthodox answer with regard to that kind

of thing is mindfulness mindfulness is

the Panacea mindfulness cures all ills

or at least neutralizes

them so I guess I answered that question

and so that's it we done we

done and so if You' got any questions

you think I may be able to answer

regarding Buddhism philosophy in general

meditation Dharma practice in general

Burma monasticism myself personally etc

etc maybe even to some degree Western

literature then uh feel free to ask them

in the comments and I will commence to

answering them next time and until then

be happy

okay then hello and welcome to episode

103 of question and answer I am your

host po

basa and before I commence to answering

questions well I'm just fixing to start

commencing I would like to share with

you that after being pestered by my

sweet darling beloved woman to get my

DNA tested I got my DNA tested so so

that I can have some understanding of my

ancestry or a better understanding of my

ancestry I should

say and it turns

out not really a big

surprise that I'm 64% English 16%

Scottish 6% Welsh 4% Irish and 10%

Continental Germanic

so yeah I'm pretty much 100%

Northwestern

European so I got the beverage right

here which is actually

coffee and I got the emergency backup

beverage and I still got the pond water

that I haven't drunk yet so if I really

get desperate I can drink that and so

I'm just going to start commencing well

I'm just going to start answering

questions forget the commence and we're

just going to Dive Right In and the

first question is from Buddhist folk

assembly

when and he changes his name every few

weeks I mean you probably know him by

other names but now his name is Buddhist
folk assembly
when and his first question is assuming
that Free Will is incompatible with
Buddhism how is it possible that karma
is intention or is driven by intention
in other words what is in intention if
not free will where does intention come
from well Free Will is incompatible with
logic in addition to being incompatible
with Buddhism I mean just going with
classical logic it is
impossible so if free will somehow
exists it's a kind of paradox or Miracle
or some such which may be the case
but also in order to have free will you

have to have a self you have to have
some kind of like separated
individuality that is making the
decisions not like some web of causes
and effects that are resulting in these
decisions being
made so anyways with that as a kind of
unnecessary Preamble I'll uh get
actually to the question here see
assuming that Free Will is incompatible
with Buddhism how is it possible that
karma is intention or is driven by
intention in other words what is
intention if not free will where does
intention arise from well I mean why
does intention have to be free you know
it's like the Buddha's second formal

discourse after his Enlightenment
according to tradition is the anat Lut
and he says we cannot say with any of
the five condas which includes will or
intention we cannot say let it be this
way let it not be that way and have it
reliably happen we do not have complete
control over any of our any of our
condas any of the Aggregates that
constitute a human being that includes
our body and all the aspects of our mind
we do not have complete control over
that not even a fully enlightened being
does and so I mean if it's not free will
it's just will it's conditioned
will and really I mean intention is not

a very good translation of

cheda which is what karma is identified

as in the text so it's better just to

call it will you know like in the

schopenhauerian sense or it's like the

the momentum of your mental

States

so you can uh do with that as you will

but I mean it's it certainly doesn't

have to be free I mean in order to have

will will doesn't have to be free in

order for it to be will it's just like

the motive force of your mental States

and that motive force is largely driven

by this past

momentum so you can

uh you can make decisions but these

decisions are always going to have
causes so it's not strict determinism
either though it's it's weird in in
traditional terraa Buddhism both
extremes I guess of free will on the one
hand and just determinism on the other
are both
dismissed so it's like the middle path
between Free Will and determinism is one
of the many middle Paths of
Buddhism so I hope I answered that
question so I'm just going to move on to
Buddhist folk assembly hen's next
question which is who are your top three
favorite Roman emperors or top five if
you prefer a longer list well my top

three favorites first of all the most
interesting the one that I wish had
lasted longer and didn't die so soon was
Julian or Julian the
apostate he was he was only Emperor for
like two years or something he was the
last Pagan Emperor and he was trying
to convert Rome away from Christianity
which was kind of gaining momentum in
his time and sort of set up uh like a
state paganism that had like higher
levels based on
neoplatonism and it is too bad that he
only lasted about two years as Emperor
before he caught a spear while fighting
the
Persians

and there are many people who believe
that that spear was thrown by a
Christian Roman rather than a Persian
Soldier because one of the little bits
of evidence for that is that the Persian
king the king of Kings the
Sha had uh offered a a reward to anybody
who could uh take out the Roman Emperor
and nobody claimed the reward so I mean
it could still have been a Persian spear
that that got him so anyways he's one of
my favorites who the the emperor that I
consider to be the best like the
greatest emper Emperor who led Rome to
its peak of prosperity would be trun
Rome reached its maximum extent under

trun and he was one of the philosopher

Kings the philosopher Emperors who was

also a good

General so Julian trun and also one of

the more interesting Emperors who really

saved the Empire from

destruction way back in the middle of

the 3 century was

aelion so those I guess would be my

three favorite ran ROM Emperors will be

Julian Tran and

aurelian

so I don't think I'll extend it out to

five because then I'll have to think too

much trying to come up with two more so

those are my top three and I'm just

going to move on to the next question

which is from NPC 6 an NPC 6 says with
regard to um some discussion on the
previous Q&A it seems like the most
Buddhist thing to do would be to make
sure your parents and partners sign
legal documents determining their own
medical end of life or not wishes
wouldn't this place you in a Karma
neutral position and NPC 6 is referring
to like uh do not resuscitate orders
like in a person's will for
example so in your will I I got my first
will made a few months ago and one of
the questions when that the lawyer asked
is I mean what do you want to do when
like if you're like terminally ill or in

a coma or you know you're just being

kept Alive by machines do you want to be

kept Alive by machines do you want to to

have the doctors pull the plug or do you

want somebody else to decide and so NPC

6 here is saying that probably the

wisest thing to do would be

encourage like your parents your aging

parents to make their decision there

whether they want the machine to stay

plugged in or not if they are like brain

dead or some such being kept Alive by a

machine or in a like uh inevitably

deteriorating terminal condition kind of

a

thing so yeah I mean it certainly would

take the the burden off of the children

of these aging parents because in

according to

Buddhism that one of the things that

will guarant te hell after you die is to

kill one of your own

parents so I mean it's there's all these

subtleties brought about by modern

medicine and so forth that uh I mean

there's certainly mitigating factors I

mean there's a big difference between

somebody whose parent is brain dead and

they just say okay to unplugging the

machine that's keeping their parent

alive and like Lizzie Boron with her axe

there's there's a big difference there

and I don't think that the end result of

their actions is going to be the same
necessarily so yeah I mean I would be
very hesitant to uh help one of my
parents die I mean my mother was afraid
of death and she would have wanted to
stay alive no matter what I think my
father on the other hand was not afraid
of dying and uh in fact he made a PCT
with one of his best
friends that if they were really sick
and they weren't getting better they
weren't going to get better that if the
other person asked for a
pistol then he would provide it so they
made this pack that if you know the
person was just wiped out you know their
body was total in automotive terms that

if if one of them were to ask for a pis
a loaded pistol to take care of it
themselves then you know the friend
would provide this and my father's
friend was terminally ill in a hospital
room and my father admitted he was glad
that he did not take him up on the offer
or on the on the pack and did not ask
for the
pistol but with your parents it's even a
bigger deal especially according to
traditional
Buddhism
so yeah I guess that would be the best
thing to do is you know have your your
loved ones especially older loved ones

have a will and make their own decision
so that you do not have the burden of
making the decision yourself whether
you're going to keep them alive as a
vegetable or in misery or just have the
machine unplugged which might imperil
your karmic prospects for your next life
even though it might be done out of
compassion and love and so
forth so so I guess I'll just move on to
the next question this is from
jewels and jwes says would you rather be
electrocuted or eaten by a
shark and this is I think this comes
from a trump speech where he's sort of
joking about being on a boat and uh
there's sharks circling the boat and the

boat's starting to sink and he doesn't
know if the electronics on the boat
would electrocute somebody so he he's I
think he much prefer to be electrocuted
than eaten by shark and I have to admit
I mean I think it might be kind of cool
to be eaten by a tiger you know it's
like if a tiger would to just jump out
of the jungle at me when I was in Asia I
mean there'd be alarm I assume but also
it' be cool a tiger you know so I mean
you'd be helping to feed an endangered
animal and so forth but
sharks I don't know just being eaten by
sharks just it doesn't seem nearly as
cool as being eaten by a tiger I mean a

tiger just kind of jumps on you and like

like crunches into the back of your neck

and it's all over you know they're not

they're not playing around sharks I

think would just be like taking chunks

out of you until you're not alive

anymore and then continue taking chunks

out of

you so yeah I think I'd rather be

electrocuted not that I'm making any

kind of requests

here so I'm just going to move on the

next question this is from rapael

and Raphael says in one of your live

streams in April you said that you

consider Faith to be delusion because

faith means you think that you know

something that you don't really know but
how can you believe in rebirth and
Enlightenment when you don't have a
proof for both of it well there is a
difference between believing something
and just accepting something as a
working
hypothesis mean we have to have some
kind of hypothesis IES or beliefs or
theories that we base our our decisions
on for
example and so it's it's like a belief
like firm faith is you're just gripping
something firmly gripping this Swiss
army knife firmly but if it's a working
hypothesis you're just kind of holding

it in an open hand you know you're not
insisting upon it you're not obsessing
over it you know you're not getting
pissed off at people saying that you
know the this this other theory is more
correct or
something so it is good to have working
hypotheses but when it gets to the level
of like firm belief then you're kind of
in trouble because it is true I have
said that faith is a kind of delusion
because you think or just
belief is a delusion because you think
you know something that you don't really
know and that's delusional
so you're better off with a certain
amount of philosophical Detachment and

working with a

hypothesis and you know being

open-minded enough that if your

hypothesis gets shot down or that some

better hypothesis appears that you can

adjust your approach to things

accordingly so I think I'll just move on

to Rafael's next

question which is did the Buddha ever

say that certain people are like animals

or worse I have a colleague at work who

is always talking about sex and making

perverted jokes I'm starting to think

he's more like an animal driven by

Instinct than a human being well the

only passage in the poly toptica that I

can remember where the Buddha is saying that some people are worse than animals or more foolish than animals is it's in the canonical history of the second Council which is in the the Chula waga of the wiia ptica I think it's the last chapter of the viia or the yeah the wiia ptica and the Chula waga of the wiia ptica in particular and it's uh with regard to monks who handle money this monk who doesn't handle money it's kind of a long story I guess I'm into long stories anyhow so what caused the second Council according to traditional like Orthodox tervada Buddhism is you had a certain strict monk who is visiting a monastery that was further

east in like in the in the Ganges
Valley and the monks there were I mean
this was just like a hundred years after
the the passing of the Buddha the Parana
of the Buddha and they're already like
asking for donations and like dividing
up the money the monks are all handling
money and he tells them they shouldn't
do that in front of lay people he's
saying no this isn't right you shouldn't
be doing this and so they punish him you
know the the the money handling monks
punish the good monk for like abusing
them in front of lay people it's it's
some some kind of rule that they're
bringing up against him and they force

him to apologize there's a formal Act of
the SAA where they they did it against
him sort of like
lawfare those of you in America are
familiar with that term I assume
and so they make him go and apologize to
these lay people that he was saying you
know they shouldn't be offering money to
monks and so he starts quoting the words
of the Buddha and one of these quotes
from the Buddha that he quotes to these
lay people is that the Buddha said that
monks who handle money are more foolish
than animals they're enslaved to their
own greed and they're surrounded by
darkness and so of course he just made
things worse and it caused I mean then

they started really getting pissed off
at him and wanting to really punish him
and then he just took off and it it
culminated in the second
Council um let's see so that's the only
time in the text that I can think of but
I've often thought that it's sort of
like it's not like human beings are
higher than animals like especially from
an ethical point of view that I mean the
most primitive life that has any kind of
mind you know it's not down at the
bottom it's kind of right in the center
and then you've got like concentric
Rings going you know out spreading
outwards and so like you've got like

some bug or worm or something that's
like this dot of Consciousness and then
you know more advanced animals have a
bigger Circle you know like a a dog will
have this size of a circle a human will
have a bigger Circle maybe some sort of
deity will have a really big circle but
it's like good and bad I mean the best
human is going to be better than the
best dog and the worst human is going to
be worse than the worst dog you know
they're they're sort of at a higher
level of Consciousness you know they can
think better they have more reason than
a dog as a general rule but
still as as I just said the worst human
pul pot is worse than the worst rabid

dog he caused way more suffering way

more misery than any rabid dog or any

dog who has ever

existed so ethically we are not

necessarily above animals that's that's

a matter of our own choice and like our

own Karma and so

forth so let's

see the colleague at work who's always

talking about sex and making perverted

jokes yeah I'm not sure about him I mean

he there might be like it's balanced out

by something else that you're not

seeing in which case I I mean whether

he's above or below the the common

cocker spaniel or not I I really can't

say but still I mean the the best human
is better than the best dog the worst
human is worse than the worst dog so and
then the best dog is better than the
best I don't know frog and the worst dog
is worse than the worst frog you know
it's just as you go upwards in the on
the scale in the 31 plans of existence
in a way it's kind of a faulty analogy
or a model because you could think of it
more as concentric Rings like like Mara
who is like the Buddhist Devil he's way
up in a very high heaven realm the
highest the highest Heaven realm in the
sensual realm or the the Kamal
Loca
so also I mean it reminds me of people

like Osho who may have really attained
some kind of spiritual attainment but
nevertheless we're like complete Rascals
anyway so I kind of answer that question
did the Buddha ever say that certain
people are like animals or Worse yeah
again the only example I can think of I
there's probably more examples but the
only one that really comes to mind is in
the the last chapter of the Chula waga
of the Venia ptica where he's referring
to monks who handle
money so I mean if monks who handle
money are more foolish than animals then
what do you say about some guy who's
making pervy jokes all the time and

obsessed with

sex so I'm just going to move on to

Raphael's next

question which is as

follows let's

see okay which is as follows I was just

making sure that I answered the other

two first what is the most beneficial

thing I can do with a s p or prayer

beads according to to you and I'm just

impressed that Raphael knows the Burmese

word for a Malo or like a a burmes a

Buddhist rosary and it's called a sa

B

and the most beneficial thing you can do

with a sa P I assume the most beneficial

thing from like a darant point of view

is just to be very mindful when you're working the beads you know be mindful of like the pressure of your thumb against the bead be and the movement of your thumb as you're passing on to the next bead um I actually asked for a Mala a rosary burmes or Buddhist Rosary once because I thought it would help me to keep stay awake when I was sleepy where you know just keeping my thumb moving my thumbs keeping them moving would kind of help to keep me awake although and I never was really much into uh using rosaries so it was just a temporary experiment and didn't really come to much in my case but uh the way

the burmes do it is they do the the reflections on the the qualities of Buddha dama and S and that's every time they do that it's one bead and there's a 108 beads on a Mallot I'm pretty sure so they would do it like at least 108 times until they get back to the the big bead that tells you that you've done an entire circuit but I think more important than just repeating you know EDP so bagawa uh Etc is just being mindful that mindfulness of like the Motions of your body and so forth um is really a relatively advanced practice and it will get you farther than contemplating ideas about the Buddha dharm and S especially

if it's just a rope formula that you're
repeating pretty much like a
mantra there might be other techniques
of using rosary beads that um I'm not
familiar with because I really didn't do
it very much I experimented with it a
little bit but it's really a big deal
especially for for Burmese Buddhists
monks and lay people almost everybody
that takes Buddhism seriously will have
a Mala or a sa
P so I guess I kind of answered that
question so I'm moving on to Austin and
I'm checking to make sure we really are
recording and yep we certainly are
almost certainly anyhow so Austin says

it is said in the text that many people
became enlightened simply by listening
to the Buddha's words why then don't
people become enlightened when they read
these words today if the reason is that
their karma isn't ripe why are there
fewer ripe individuals in today's modern
age and I have had people explain this
to me like you read the
texts and there can be thousands tens of
thousands of people all becoming
enlightened or at least becoming
Aras just from listening to a sermon of
the Buddha and I had it explained to me
that one reason for that is that before
godma Buddha existed nobody could become
enlightened because dhama had

disappeared from the world he had to
ReDiscover dhama so he had all these
people that were ripe but they just
couldn't become enlightened yet because
there was no enlightened being to teach
them like an enlightened philosophy an
enlightened Dharma so that when the
Buddha came along you had all these
people that were ripe for enlightenment
that you know they heard the heard the
words that they needed to hear
Ando so that's like a traditional common
explanation although also when you're in
the presence of an enlightened being
it's very different from just reading a
book that when you're in the presence of

an enlightened being first of all he's
kind of reading into you he knows what
he can like look into you and see what
you need to hear for example but also I
mean you're picking up on his higher
vibration if you will like mental states
are contagious so if you're with a
really wise person you're going to be
uplifted by that you're with a fully
enlightened person you can be very
uplifted by that even if he doesn't say
anything just just through like sort of
subliminal empathy or or telepathy or
something so that's another possible
reason why more people become
enlightened um from hearing an actual
Buddha talking you know they had really

good karma just to be able to be there
and you know the person who buys a book
at a bookstore or plays a YouTube video
or something and doesn't become
enlightened although it still apparently
does happen that um you know you can
hear certain words or um read certain
words and it might be that you're really
ripe for it you hear exactly what you
need to hear and it can still cause some
kind of um like a
realization so and also another another
explanation for how so many people
became enlightened in the Buddhist time
is that it's just standard ancient
Indian exaggeration and glorification of

the Buddha I mean like the I read like

the brief history of mongala Buddha in a

previous Q&A and it was something like

10 trillion people all became

enlightened listening to mongala Buddha

giving a giving a

sermon and we can

assume um that that didn't really happen

the way the book says it happened to say

the

least so there's another another

possibility another possible

explanation is that it's just like

Indian religious hyperbole

exaggeration so take your pick you can

you can say ABC or none of the above

with regard to that answer and I'm just

going to move on to Austin's next
question which is how much of the poly
Canon do you believe contains historical
truth as opposed to mythology so
I assume he's just referring to the
narrative stuff I mean the philosophy
like a lot of the the Buddhist
philosophy and ethics and so forth you
know it wouldn't really be historical
truth or mythology you know it's just
like abstract or just techniques for for
meditating and so forth it wouldn't fit
into either category it wouldn't be
historical truth or
mythology um unless by historical truth
you mean the Buddha really said it but

still I it's like there would be more than one option I mean you'd have a spectrum you know even if you include the Buddha's like philosophical teachings in this you're going to have a spectrum of like verbatim like word for word exactitude with regard to what he actually said on the one hand and then you go through the spectrum of like you know rough paraphrase that nevertheless he would agree with you know it was like saying what he said in somewhat different language then stuff that he didn't say but probably would still kind of endorse and then you're getting into stuff that he wouldn't endorse and then at the opposite extreme would be stuff

that he would just vigorously denounce

and some of that has got into the text

I'm pretty

sure especially if you include other

schools of Buddhism that have deviated

even

farther so with regard to just the

narrative stuff though just you know at

one time the Buddha was you know Sati on

a toa's Grove and you know then he met

with such and such person and they that

kind of thing I would guess probably

less than

10% this is probably not a very popular

uh point of view for Buddhists I did

write an essay which I don't think is on

the internet right now it's called what

did the Buddha really

teach

and yeah I think there's a good chance

it's it's 10% or less than 10% of what

you read in the texts as being like

historically objectively empirically

accurate with regard to what the Buddha

really did and what the Buddha really

said like even the Vatican I have read

that the Vatican States you know like

the official position even though they

don't advertise this is that in the New

Testament only about 20% of the words

attributed to Jesus were really spoken

by Jesus you know like seminary schools

will be teaching this stuff even though

the normies that go to church may not
ever get an inkling of it
and the New Testament I mean it was
written down you know within a century
of the time of of
Jesus most of it anyway and it was in a
culture like Greek and Jewish that act
that already had like an objective sense
of history and accurate recordkeeping
and so forth whereas in India things
just get exaggerated and mythologized
almost right off the bat and they had
much more of a surreal kind of
understanding of reality than people of
Europe or you know the the Roman early
Roman

Empire and they had less concept of like
historical accuracy because they really
didn't have much of a sense of History
other than just Chronicles and legends
and so forth you know i' I've read that
the British actually
invented Indian history when when they
colonized India that it didn't really
exist before then other than just
Chronicles and so forth that um you know
they just mix Legends and mythology and
fact Al together sort of like like
Herodotus the father of Western history
that India never really got much farther
than that until the British came
along
so yeah I would say

10% would be a pretty safe bet maybe

somewhat less than 10% even but I mean a

lot of it is like standard stuff it's

like different schools of Buddhism would

have the same sermons the same sutas

spoken in different places different

monasteries so we may assume that the

Terra vadens because there's more sutas

delivered at

Sati that that was sort of a stronghold

for the Terra vadens other school

schools of Buddhism had different places

geographically and more of the Buddha

sermons are located there rather than in

sa for

example and just a lot of the speeches

you know it's just like this

formula that like real human beings just

don't speak that

way

so yeah I'm just giving a really long

Meandering answer when my guess is

approximately 10% or no more than 10%

let's just play it safe and say no more

than

15% of the narratives in the poly Canon

are likely to be historical fact that

stuff that really objectively

empirically

happened so I'm just going to move on

next question this is from

Blondie and Blondie says I would like to

hear your thoughts on

this the way I penetrate the four noble truths is heretical it seems to me that there is suffering but there is also joy and the causes for suffering are the same as the causes for ordinary happiness like getting married for example even though ultimately you will get old and die and nothing is permanent conditioned phenomena can also be a lot of fun while they last and I have thought about this sort of thing too I'm a I'm a fellow heretic I guess but there is a an argument that everything thing is dooka I mean it's the first Noble Truth is Dua and also duok is one of the three marks of imper or the three marks

of existence that one of the tilak is
Sabara Dua all conditioned things are
conducive to suffering or
unsatisfying and one of the arguments is
everything is Dua because it's
impermanent but I mean you could just
twist that around the other way and say
everything is like all suffering like
some people say even happiness is dooka
because it doesn't last but you could
just turn it around and say even even
unhappiness is happiness because it
doesn't
last so it's not a very strong argument
to just rely on
impermanence
but there is more subtlety to it I mean

at The Superficial level you could say
it all balances out and I I agree with
this that happiness and unhappiness
balance out in the long run but there's
a deeper level of just sort
of just a kind of deep pretty much
subliminal dissatisfaction there's this
Restless dissatisfaction some of the
very early text refer to it as a kind of
Barb or Dart that's stuck in your heart
that causes you to just run around in
all directions and so even when you've
got something really good your favorite
kind of ice cream for example there's
still a certain amount of
dissatisfaction you want more or then

you start getting like this little bit
of subliminal worry like you're running
out I mean you're eating it all you you
know it's going away it's disappear this
source of my happiness is a dwindling
away in the bowl in front of me and you
can't just keep it because it'll
melt and it's just like this Restless
dissatisfaction at a a very deep
fundamental level that causes even Happ
happiness not to be pure
happiness so there's always this kind of
a vague unease that pervades human
existence and in a way it's kind of what
is pushing us forwards through
life it's it's like this vague
dissatisfaction this restlessness that

is pushing us through life because if we
ever became fully satisfied with
anything it was like it like time would
stop we just stop moving forwards we'
just be sad completely satisfied and
just
stop which is kind of what enlightenment
is after especially par in the when you
die then that's it you you stop you're
not you no longer have this Restless
dissatisfaction The Thorn has been
pulled out of your
heart the burden has been laid
down so at one level I do agree with
blondie that positive and negative have
to balance out in theong long

run and I mean it's more a matter of do
you want like Smooth Sailing of
neutrality or do you want a roller
coaster ride of ecstasy misery ecstasy
misery like if you've ever been 18 years
old and madly in love you know what the
roller coaster ride is like ecstasy
misery ecstasy misery and you know it
all balances out to the same zero all
the positives and negatives balance out
to the same zero but still at this
deeper level
you have the Restless dissatisfaction
that is just driving us through
life and that is everything is
dooka so I hope I kind of answered that
question because I'm moving on to

Blondie's second question here which is why doesn't Buddhism even have a marriage ritual it seems strange for a religion and yes it is strange for a religion and Buddhism really didn't start out as a religion it started off as a kind of philosophical renunciation but I mean the earliest Buddhists were monks they were renuncian they went off into the forest and meditated you know they strove for enlightenment In This Very life and marriage has nothing to do with that so it's uh it's actually a very severe infraction of the rules it is a

serious

transgression for a monk to even

participate in marriage ceremony like um

in Zen like some Mahayana Buddhism

you'll have priests are conducting

Buddhist marriages obviously in other

religions like Christianity and Judaism

you've got the priest or the rabbi or

whoever who is conducting this sacrament

of marriage between two people but in

Buddhism I mean like mating and so forth

is it involves really strong attachment

which second Noble Truth or yeah the

second Noble Truth it's like all

suffering is caused by craving and

attachment and by getting into a

romantic relationship with a woman or a

man if you happen to be a woman it
involves the roller coaster ride to some
degree and lots of attachment lots of
desires and it is a distraction from
Enlightenment and so since Buddhism is
designed to help people get
enlightened it's just
marriage is just a secular thing it's
just a cultural thing that doesn't have
anything to do with the highest dama and
monks are not allowed to
participate so let's
see yeah it's Buddhism became a popular
religion sort of the way Christianity
did I mean even early Christianity was
sort of a renuncian movement you know

sell all that you have give the money to the poor take up your cross you know and when it becomes popular most people are normies and they they're just not in a position to do that and so they don't and um so the E sort of got priests and like conducting marriage ceremonies in Christianity which wasn't the case probably in very early Christianity and uh in Buddhism it was just so obviously I mean it's just right there it's one of the Sasa rules that a monk is just not allowed to act as any kind of gobet he's not supposed to encourage people to get married in any way unless I mean if they're if they're already married and just kind of arrange they're separated

he can encourage them to reconcile but
he cannot encourage anybody to get
together and form like a romantic pair
bond that is a serious offense and he's
got to do Penance for six days and six
nights for having done such a
thing
so most
religion it's mainly for the purpose of
giving a kind of
stability to uh
Society but Buddhism really wasn't
designed for that it was a renunciation
of society and now that it's it has been
kind of dragged back into society as a
kind of social

institution still like in Burma if two people get married they just go to the Village headman and sign papers and then they're married and then after that then they'll go to the monastery and offer food to the monks and get blessed after they've already done it

so yeah it might be strange for a religion but Buddhism wasn't originally intended to be so much of a religion as just like a a very radical philosophical movement which then turned into a religion and fortunately it didn't mutate so wildly that all of a sudden it's okay for monks to commit sesa offenses so I'll just move on to bl's third

question also one of the Fetters is
attachment to rituals could one claim to
be so liberated and so present that
vinia rules no longer apply well I mean
viia rules aren't necessarily
rituals that I mean there's always some
sort of objective reason given for vinia
rules and I mean the actual ritual stuff
like formal acts of the S you know
there's it's always a clear-cut reason
for why you're doing this and you know
there's no wory stuff going on at least
none of the required stuff in the text
is like
[Music]
worshipyoutube to ferment in the hot

weather he drinks it he drank alcohol
but really he hasn't gotten any demerit
for that or let's say he's sleeping and
while he's asleep some woman comes into
the building sits down on a chair you
know on the other side of the building
you know for whatever reason gets up and
leaves I mean technically he's committed
an offense for lying down under the same
roof with a woman even though the woman
wasn't necessarily lying down I mean you
can't even sit down together under the
same roof of the woman well maybe if
you're not in the same room but
certainly you're not supposed to be
lying down under the same roof of the
woman fully enlightened being can do

that there there is at least one case in vinia of of an Aran breaking a rule and that was that he would go for alms round I think it was only once or twice a week and then he would just Sav his rice he' dry it out in the sun and then he'd just get it wet like days later and just eat reconstituted rice and so that's still against the rules even though was a fully enlightened being I mean he didn't get any demerit because of it because he was fully enlightened he wasn't making Karma anymore but still it's like you belong to an organization has certain rules you're obligated to follow those rules nobody forced you to join the song

anyway it's just kind of cheating it's

like if if you're enlightened and you

play Monopoly I mean that doesn't mean

that you can just cheat

especially if you're the

banker

so yeah there it's it's more than just

attachment to rituals it's attachment to

morality and observances what you call

what Blondie is calling rituals we can

call observances Sila is morality wat is

observances so that's rules that really

do not have any ethical quality to them

it's just like etiquette or manners that

kind of thing

or just I mean some serious rules I was

thinking about this the other day it's

like like some of the really serious

rules Like sesa

rules like one of them is if a monk

wants to build a hut for himself then he

has to get approval of the site for the

the building site from the songa they

have to okay it first to make sure he's

not going to be messing up any ant hills

or you destroying vegetation or anything

and then it's not allowed to be very big

it's I mean it'd be like 12 or 13 feet

no maybe even less than that maybe like

8 feet by 5 feet would be the maximum

side just big enough to lie down and sit

down in it and that if you break that

rule that's even a more serious rule

than killing an animal or telling a
lie so I mean some of the rules is uh
the ecclesiastical severity of the trans
aggression is out of proportion with
ethics but um where was I that was that
was kind of a digression wasn't
it let's see could one claim to be so
liberated and so present that wiia rules
no longer apply well I mean some Zen
Masters also like Padma sambava in who
is like considered to be a second Buddha
in Tibet I mean they would break the
rules Padma samb Baba was I think for a
while he was living in a cemetery with a
young woman and they were like I I can't
remember if they were eating the Flesh
of corpses or not but at the very least

they were eating like funeral offerings
to the to the dead in in a cemetery
together living in a cave together that
kind of thing so and then you got like
the we malakir in your DEA Sutra of the
Mahayana Buddhist where you've got this
very Advanced
buhis allegedly more advanced even than
the Buddha's Chief disciples who's like
going to taverns and brothel and so
forth
but in terava Buddhism you know the
Buddha himself would not break the rules
he made the rules he wasn't going to
break them and so I mean if you're
enlightened but not ordained into the sa

then maybe you could get away with doing

stuff that a a conscientious monk

wouldn't

do

but it's it's not just a matter of um

let's see you get once you get

enlightened you know you don't need the

the raft anymore you know the raft for

crossing the

flood but uh still you're still

voluntarily a member of an organization

that has these rules you agreed to

follow those rules when you joined and

so just a matter of like honesty or

Integrity would keep even an enlightened

being from breaking rules even if they

were they were like dumb

rules or maybe I should say like trivial rules

so I really I'm I am myself mystified as to whether I actually answered that question but I'm going to move on to the next question because the next question is from mraa Buddha and mraa Buddha says have you considered attending a local weasa Meditation Retreat Center and I kind of consider it briefly when I first came to South Carolina but um I honestly do not recall ever having met a Buddhist well maybe maybe I have yeah one person came to visit me and he was a Buddhist he still is a Buddhist I think um in fact he's the uh the

Buddhist uh I don't want to scroll up

but he was the first person to ask a

question this

time but locally I don't know any

Buddhists and I'm unaware of the

existence of any local weasa Meditation

Retreat centers I mean we're in um not a

very big town in South Carolina

and it's in the Bible Belt and it's

probably most people who have any

religious inclinations are Baptist

Christians so and then most weos The

Meditation Retreat centers I mean

they're like pretty much like cultural

Neo Marxist indoctrination centers in

addition to meditation Halls recently

last several years

anyhow so so I don't

know I don't know if there's like a I

don't know where the the nearest Goa

Center would be I mean that wouldn't be

too

bad but it's not really on my list of

priorities so yeah I'm probably not

going to be attending any local weaa

Meditation Retreat centers anytime in

the near future assuming that there even

are

any I think there is a a sinhal

monastery

somewhere in the neighborhood of

Greenville South Carolina but whether

they would have meditation Retreats or

not and if they do have meditation
Retreats whether they would be
mindfulness of white privilege and
inherent racism and that kind of
silliness I don't
know so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from Stellar
Supreme formerly known as Liber Lam and
Libra Lam says do you believe in
sabana which is essentially omniscience
although in Brackets here he's he's got
it defined as attainment of supreme
Enlightenment and the removal of all
obscuration regarding the range of what
may be known it points to the Buddha's
acquisition of
omniscience yeah so essentially

subana is

omniscience and in ter Buddhism it's not like in jism in jism a fully enlightened Jane like a tonara like like um mahavira himself he knows everything at all times you know whenever he he sees anything he he like perceives it from all possible angles you know he sees all the conditions associated with this and is it would require omniscience even to do that whereas in Buddhism terraa Buddhism anyhow the Buddha can know whatever he wants to know so he's not like completely omniscient at all times it's just that if he wants to know the answer to something he just kind of looks in

that direction and he sees the
answer so Stellar Supreme previously
known as Liber Lam asked me do I believe
in omniscience and I do think there is a
certain kind of omniscience and I think
that really Advanced Saints can really
come up with um I don't know if they
would be like perfect omniscience I
assume there would be certain things
that they would not know how many hairs
are on the head of Joe Schmo the
refrigerator repair man living in
Hoboken New Jersey I mean whether they
would know that whether they would like
the Buddha would be able to speak fluent
Swahili or
not I mean I I kind I'm rather doubtful

of that but there is a certain kind of omniscience that comes with Enlightenment because you're no longer bound by the limitations of your own perceptions you you have access to infinite Consciousness and that in itself is a more important kind of omniscience just to be aware of the ultimate essence of everything than to know the details of this samsaric dream that is based on delusion that we are dreaming so I mean to know ultimate reality is a kind of omniscience because that's the only reality there is and it's of one taste you know it's this

it's not like

variagated and then what we consider to

be reality this empirical samsaric

reality isn't reality at all it's just

kind of a virtual reality conditional

reality and so it's it's hard to say I

mean there's like an infinite number of

of Worlds with you know all kinds of

anything that's possible in an infinite

universe is going to exist at least in

the some soric conditional

sense

so yeah I believe that there's a certain

kind of omniscience that enlightened

beings would have and I think that very

Advanced

sages can have a kind of I I don't they

can know things that other people don't
know you know they can like know your
past lives even though you yourself
don't know your past lives that kind of
a thing but I am kind of skeptical as to
whether the Buddha would know how many
hairs are on somebody's head or would if
he would know how to speak fluent
Swahili that kind of
thing so I guess I answered that
question there's some there's some tough
questions this time so I'm just going to
move on to the next question this is
from skolin or
skaden and he says is there a legit
strategy to fake it till you make it and

he's got this weird little commentary here saying Andy kofman's whole life was fake it till you make it which was ridiculously effective even though he was drawing inspiration from Saturday morning cartoons crummy alcoholic loung singers professional wrestling or Elvis normies generally write off Andy as either an idiot or mean-spirited buffoon which I find to be a gross mischaracterization mischaracterization especially since he hit gold in multiple Industries to have little to no overlap like wrestling Saturday Night Live sitcoms and standup and his biography mentions he was practicing mindfulness and

Transcendental Meditation well from what I know about Andy Kaufman he was very temperamental and hard to work with hard to get along with and with regard to his wrestling career I do remember as a publicity stunt he challenged the world's champion female wrestler to a match and and beat her easily so then he he started getting arrogant and cocky so he challenges the male world champion wrestler you know this big Hulk Hogan type and the wrestling match lasted like 10 seconds the the big Hulk Hogan type just walks out grabs Andy caufman just flips him upside down and throws him down on his head Andy Kaufman is just

like unconscious lying flat on the on

the

canvas and uh yeah he was wearing a neck

brace for quite a while after that and I

remember he was on uh the David

Letterman show and he just started

freaking out he he he was on the show

with Letterman and the wrestler that

hospitalized him and at one point he he

made some kind of snotty remark to the

wrestler who just he's sitting there in

this relaxed you know he's just kind of

laidback like this he just kind of

reaches out and just slaps Andy Kaufman

out of his chair because he wasn't

taking crap off of him and Andy Kaufman

I mean this might have been part of a

publicity stunt but it seemed for real
he just started screaming in hysteria
ran off the stage he ran back on grabbed
Letterman's coffee and threw it onto the
wrestler and ran off the stage
again so whether Andy cofman was some
sort of philosopher or not I'm rather
skeptical of that but let's just get
back up to scadden's question is there a
legit strategy to fake it till you make
it yeah I think fake it till you make it
does work to some degree although you
shouldn't fake it to the extent that
you're trying to pass yourself off as
what you're faking it's like like a sage
does not start screaming in anger so you

have these urges to scream and anger you
just repress these urges even though
you're not the sage yet still by
imitating what you want to become it
helps you to become that it's like
they've done psychological studies where
like if you sit
in a in an alert posture it helps you to
be alert you know with the back straight
and that's one reason why when you're
meditating you should sit with your back
straight and your your head and you know
your spine all in a line as as much as
possible because if you adopt an alert
kind of posture it helps you to be alert
or they also did psychological studies
where they would have a man in a woman

who are strangers you know they're
probably college students they're doing
the psychological study at at a
university probably
and if they had them sitting close to
each other like really close like in
each other's space they were more likely
you know it sort of the Way Lovers would
sit you know like knee to knee talking
to each other in soft tones that it
helped them it caused them to have more
an increase of actual feelings of like
attraction toward towards each other
that kind of thing it's just by adopting
the posture or adopting the outward form
of something it helps you to move in

that direction because at least some of
the obstacles are
removed so yeah to that extent that fake
it till you make it if you want to
become an enlightened Sage then it helps
you to behave as much as possible like
an enlightened stage even just
superficially but of course you
shouldn't try to pass yourself off as an
enlightened stage an enlightened Sage
would be humble and so you should be
humble too that kind of thing
so I'm just going to move on to
scadden's next
question are there any principles or
phenomenon he says
phenomenon I'm I'm a grammar Nazi to the

extent that it does bug me when people

use phenomenon as a

plural so are there any principles or

phenomena that I could explain to make

Karma more predictable or to secure

certain

outcomes and then in his uh little

um commentary he says like the

differences between sher's cat and

Pandora's

Box

and I don't really get the uh the

analogy

there um shinger cat I mean it's not

very predictable I mean either the cat

is dead or it's not and you don't know

which or maybe it's it's like in this
state of quantum nebulous uncertainty
where it's alive and dead and both and
neither and none of the
above um but anyways getting back to the
question his his commentaries his
explanatory commentaries just kind of
distract me and I lose the thread of the
question not that I'm
complaining so are there any principles
or
phenomena that I could exploit to make
Karma more predictable or to secure
certain outcomes well I mean there's the
obvious thing you do I mean if you want
good outcomes you should do good I mean
you should you should

meritorious cusa you know you should do
what is good and right and then what is
good and right is more likely to happen
back to you and even if you do good and
right and something that isn't good and
right comes back to you in a way it
secretly is good and right because
that's what you need to help you to
learn how to deal with it or or you know
whatever it is sometimes we need
seemingly bad things to happen to us in
order to knock us out of ruts or cause
us to introspect or or whatever it is we
just have to learn how to deal with it
sort of like Groundhog Day you just keep
having to face this thing over and over

again until you get it

right so yeah I mean that's like the

obvious answer it seems to me I mean you

can't really just manipulate your karma

to like create a like a predetermined

outcome or anything like that maybe some

kind of really advanced Sage or Swami

could do such a thing to some

degree but maybe I should move the

microphone further from my mouth after

talking for an

hour huh so yeah I mean if you do good

Good's more likely to happen back if you

do bad bad is more likely to happen back

if you do good you're more likely to

have a certain degree of contentment and

serenity if you do a lot of bad you're

more likely to have a troubled mind

more insecurity and and fear and worry

that kind of

thing

so yeah I mean that's that's that would

really be it that's like the the obvious

answer if there's any more subtle kind

of answer that I could give I really

don't know what it is so I'm just going

to move on

to scadden's next question and that is

is it possible that you could make a

video with f Garder and then his uh his

commentary is apparently he's Buddhist

and has some far out ideas his YouTube

channel should show up if you search his

name well actually F Gardner has
actually contacted me before and he said
that he's he's watches my videos
sometimes and I inspired him to make one
or two videos where he's just talking
about something that he thought of as a
result of of of watching one of my
videos but uh I if he wanted to do a
video with me I'm not EX sure what we
would talk about I don't know him very
well I mean I hardly know him at all we
never actually conversed we've just sort
of like typed to each
other but uh I mean if he wanted to do a
video with me I'd be game especially if
it was about something that I have
something to say

about so yeah F Gardner has uh has

already contacted me and

um yeah I have I've had some influence

on him apparently because he watches my

my videos so yeah if F Gardner if you're

out there you want to do a video I'm I'm

game and I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from Outer

Haven and this is uh a response to

something I said on the previous Q&A I'm

pretty

sure that is how would the order know if

one is even Trends gender or not are the

monks or beunis required to lift their

robes to make sure or how do we know

that P basa himself is not in fact the

first transgender Buddhist

monk well I mean usually transgender

people it's pretty obvious that they're

transgender there are a few transgender

people who have transition especially

from male to female that they can pass

themselves off as real females or

biological females I should

say um I've never seen a

transgender man like a woman a

biological woman who transitioned to to

male that was

really P really con like obviously a guy

this like you know you just can tell

that they were biological women that

transitioned but um it doesn't I mean

whether the order knows or not I mean

this is this is in response to
an answer I gave to a question about
transgender monks and you just cannot
have a transgender monk it's just built
right into the rules that even if you
ordained a transgender person as a monk
or a
nun the ordination would be invalid they
still wouldn't be a monk or Anan no
matter how hard they tried because it
just it's just forbidden the Buddha
himself apparently forbade it from
happening and you can you can just get
ordained every day for the rest of your
life and if you're transgender it's not
going to stick it's never going to be a

valid ordination because it's just built
into the system that in order to be a
monk you have to be a biological intact
male and in order to be a nun you have
to be not only a biological female but
you can't even be like a really Butch I
mean you can't even have a lot of
masculine qualities or you're not
supposed to be
ordained um some cases might be like
borderline cases where you know they
would allow the
ordination but someone who was born
biologically male and then transition to
female would qualify as a unic
technically going with like uh ancient
Indian monastic

discipline

and yeah like a a woman a biological

woman who transitions to a male would

not have would not be literally intact

I mean she would not have the Family

Jewels you might have fake plastic ones

or something that's not good

enough so whether or not even if one of

them kind of sneaks in you know they

they pass themselves off as being born

of that gender still even if the the S

doesn't know all they're doing is just

kind of poisoning The Well of the S by

having a fake monk or a fake nun in the

sa which might cause trouble I mean it

might just derail the S if enough of

enough of this happened you might have
then like I was mentioning before you
have to have at least five monks to
ordain a new Monk and if you've got five
monks and one of them is fake he's not
really a monk then the ordination does
is again it's invalid and then this
person thinks he's a monk and it just
like perpetuates this problem of of fake
monks or fake nuns or just people that
think that their monks or non who
aren't and there has been a lot of that
happening in fact in Thailand the dut
sect this considers the Mahan nikaya
sect of terava Buddhism to be fake that
they're not they're not real just
because the the ordination lineage got

so corrupted by people who were like
paraj they had gotten they had done
something bad enough to be
excommunicated and then they just stayed
in robes and still participated in
ordination ceremonies and so forth and
it just poisoned the whole well in a
manner of
speaking so let's see how would the
order know if one is even transgender or
not well I mean you could also have just
a wise monk or a Watts any kind of sage
in the SAA male or female who would
probably pick up on the fact that this
person is not 100% male or 100% female
but as a general rule it's it's pretty

obvious so how do we know that pyasa

himself is not in fact the first

transgender Buddhist monk well I mean

there would be no first transgender

Buddhist monk I mean like I like I keep

saying if you are

transgender even if you go through the

ordination ceremony it's just not real

even if nobody

knows you know even if all the monks

participating in the ceremony think that

you're a legit like biological intact

male still the ordination is invalid

it's not a real

ordination so there nobody could ever be

the first transgender terod and biku

anyway but I mean if you think that I'm

really a girl or

something not a very attractive one I

don't know where I'd find like Spike

healed pumps that would fit me I wear

like a a 15 in men's

got big hands

too so yeah that's that's kind of a just

sort of a followup to a question I

answered before and it's it just dawned

on me that

somebody I think it might be the Proto

sudo monk asked a question recently to a

a Q&A that was like Q&A number 23 or

something it was he's he's like going

back and read watching the old q&as

where uh which is not a bad idea if if I

mean some questions I I answer over and
over again because people don't take the
trouble to watch all 102 previous q&as
before they they ask me a
question so I do apologize I think he's
already asked three questions on this
list
anyway so I mean maybe I can uh go
through my my feed or my comments
and uh that can be the first question on
on the next Q&A I mean sometimes this
does happen people will ask me questions
in like an unusual place and usually
when I do my like compile the questions
I'll look at the most recent Q&A you
know on on uh YouTube bitshoot and
Rumble and then I'll go to the the uh

the Discord server where there's the Q&A room where people ask questions there and uh if if somebody asks a question that isn't in one of those places there's a good chance that I'm just not going to think to to compile it I won't I won't see it and it won't be on the list so I'm just I'm just saying that sometimes people do ask questions and then it just the question falls through the cracks sometimes it just gets disappeared by YouTube's algorithm for whatever reasons other times it's just in this obscure place and I I don't think to look there or or whatever and then I don't answer the question so I do

apologize to those of you who have asked me questions and I just haven't gotten to the question because it just didn't wind up on my on my list for whatever reason do not do not fear and do not despair that uh it's not because I disapproved of the question or any such thing it's very few questions that I won't answer that are asked of me like questions that are obviously rhetorical in bad faith you know just sort of kind of sneering kind of questions something like that I might not answer but then again I still might just just for the fun of it so anyways the next question is from Cactus Ray and Cactus Ray says I'm curious to know if you have ever met

anyone that you believe was a fully
enlightened arahant if so how would you
describe that person if not have you
ever met someone that you don't believe
was fully enlightened but would describe
as having special spiritual
attainment and
again um I'm kind of a heretic to the
extent that I'm un certain if an arhant
can even exist within a a samsaric
context that an unenlightened person who
looks at an enlightened being isn't
going to see an enlightened being
necessarily they're going to I mean
you're going to be looking at that
person through unenlightened colored

glasses and an enlightened being might
still appear to have certain personality
traits that would be incompatible with
the extremely high standards of a terod
and
arant so with that as a kind of intro to
my position that really I mean the
existence of an arhun might be just a
kind of a weird Paradox or you know
something that is just
indeterminate so have I ever met anyone
that I believe was a fully enlightened
Aran um a few q&as ago I answered
essentially the same question and the
only person I could really think of that
might qualify would be sh um seatt who
was the founder of sh um y he was

originally a disciple of mahasi seato

mahasi seato chose him to be his

successor in the mahasi tradition sh um

seato Turned down the offer and just

went his own

way um and I did meet him once and I

didn't meet him long enough to really

see what kind of a person he was he was

just about 90 years old at the time and

just very alert sitting just straight up

and down just with like this penetrating

gaze you know it's like he was looking

right through you and even if he wasn't

a fully enlightened

Arun um he did have some kind of

spiritual

attainment but with regard to other monks I mean I met a monk I've met quite a few monks that had a reputation for being orans in fact in certain parts of Northwestern Burma even I had a reputation for being an arant like for example I met yamon seato who had a reputation for being an Aran and I went to see him and he was softspoken friendly nice monk but I mean you can't really tell I mean it's it's not like there's going to be like Angels blowing trumpets up above his head you know he doesn't have this like a he doesn't have like a certificate on the wall that he attained Aron ship anything like that and uh they reminds me of a

saying by ROM dos when a pickpocket
meets a saint all he notices are his
pockets another thing that ROM dos said
that that uh is applicable here is let's
say somebody is self-conscious because
they have a big nose they walk down the
street all they're noticing is how big
other people's noses are and so we have
that same kind of unenlightened approach
to things so that even if we're
presented with an enlightened being I
mean we're we're seeing them through an
unenlightenment
filter and so it's it's very difficult
to say I mean only an arhun can really
know if another person is an arhun or

not and even then maybe

not so yeah I did I have met a few old

monks that I mean they could have been

just highly Advanced sages but you can't

really tell because they're just just a

softspoken polite you know alert Serene

kind of a person that I mean how are you

going to

know but of of the ones that I have met

in person the one I would say is maybe

has the best chance of being an Oran

would be sh um

seatt and he has now passed

away so I'm just going to move on the

next question this is from Fred and Fred

says I don't think nibana is separate

from the all it should be all in the

block of marble in my opinion question

mark and yeah I mean going with the the

the simile of the block of marble nibana

is the block of marble it is the

uncarved block that has all the statues

inside

it so nibana would be Essence and uh the

samsaric forms would be

form so yeah nibana is the Block it's

not contained in the Block it's just

just the

block so I'm just going to move on to

Fred's next question can one really

Master the monkey mind and it was like I

was saying uh earlier on in this Q&A

like with regard to the anat lanasa you

cannot say with regard to any of the
five condas let it be this way let it
not be that way and have it reliably
happen that's one of the arguments
against there being any kind of
ultimately real
self and even a fully enlightened being
does not have complete control over his
own body or over his own mental
processes so you can kind of Master it
but you don't have complete control over
it because there is no you anyway it's
just nature taking its
course so it depends on what you mean by
Master if you mean to completely control
something to have something completely
under your control then no even a fully

enlightened being does not have complete
control over his own mind but by Master
something means do you have as much
control as it is possible to have or
that you've just eradicated defilements
and so forth then yeah um assuming that
within the context of Sam SAR a fully
enlightened being can even
exist so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from game fap
and game fap says if you had to renounce
Buddhism and pick up the religion to
join which would it be and
why well if for whatever reason I had to
stop being a Buddhist then vant like ADV
vant you know which is a relatively

Advanced philosophical School of

Hinduism comes pretty close to Buddhism

and it's just a few sort of subtle

redefinitions of terms and so forth a

little bit different jargon

um but yeah that that comes closest to

Buddhism I think would

be ADV vant at least it comes close to

like something like maamaa Mahayana

Buddhism because I mean they're very

close to each

other it's the main difference is vant

kind of reifies the absolute and maaka

does not or at least it tries its best

to avoid reifying the

absolute so there is that I mean I have

considered other religions in fact uh

just yesterday I was considering that uh
I mean sometimes it might be to my
advantage to be a Christian
Scientist where they uh you know they
they do not allow the seeing of doctors
and taking of medicines and so
forth so there's that but yeah I think
Adit vant would be would be the one I
would have to
pick so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from Wayne and
Wayne says is the Christian born again
experience equivalent to the Buddhist
soap where one has an Awakening Faith or
mindset and whom has been forever
transformed with no turning back until

realization is

met um first of all not being a

Christian and never having been a born

again Christian in this lifetime I can't

really say with authority what exactly

constitutes a born again Christian but I

do think that a lot of people who

consider themselves to be born again um

become unborn again and just you know

they just go back to being a heathen or

whatever I mean that happens a lot

especially with like high-profile

celebrity kind of Born Again Christians

who uh just kind of I don't know they

lose momentum in their born again

edness and uh just kind of go back to

the way they were

before they back slide if you

will but I do think that a born- again

Christian and I've actually made this

comparison um is roughly equivalent to

the original meaning of soda in Buddhism

which is just somebody who has embarked

upon a genuine spiritual path for the

first time and they're very like

inspired and motivated you know they've

got beginners mind I do think that was

probably the original meaning of a soda

PA and then it got turned into a

superhuman

State and I don't think a born again

Christian is has attained a superhuman

State necessarily and the original soda

ponas I think probably had not attained
a superhuman mental state although
nowadays you're in Arya you know you
there's certain qualifications you're
guaranteed of becoming enlightened
within X number of lives and all that
that uh yeah I think that that is a
later development and I do think do not
think that that is original so part of
the the ambiguity or
complex
complexness of this question is you know
what exactly not only what is a born
again Christian but what exactly is a
Buddhist s upon him because I'm a
somewhat of a heretic in in my
interpretation of the uh the four stages

of ARA

Hood so I mean I have met a lot of

people who consider themselves to be

sodas and uh

yeah I mean they can backslide

too so yeah I do think though in sort of

trying to get to Wayne's question and

adhering to Wayne's question until it is

answered yeah I would say that a born

again Christian you know like a sincere

authentic born- again Christian would

be like a a Christian equivalent to the

original meaning of a sodana or stream

enterer in Buddhism who again was like

sincerely inspired and it was a

life-changing experience and they

finally like um awakened to like the
importance of a spiritual life they've
started to see the samsara or the world
or their life in spiritual terms and
start having spiritual priorities
instead of just worldly priorities that
to the extent that a born again
Christian and a you know a Buddhist is I
mean to the extent that they're both
like this I would say that it's pretty
much of an an equivalence even though
they're in different religions using
different jargon and having certain
different like starting principles and
so
forth so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from

pyramid and pyramid says what is your experience with Islam when living in Burma I hear a lot of the Buddhist s there have an intense dislike of Islam due to the problems its followers have created so yeah I've met a few Muslims in Burma not very many though because I was mainly in just the heartland of Buddhist Burma although a lot of villages would have a few Muslims and uh I have mentioned I think it was in a relatively recent video that uh a lot of the time uh the village butcher will be a Muslim because it's not considered to be immoral for a Muslim to kill animals whereas for a Buddhist it's not only

immoral but it's also very low status
the The Village butcher is going to be
you know he's going to be at the bottom
of the social totem pole so to
speak
so um the Muslims I did
meet just like out in the
Villages I mean they hadn't reached the
critical mass where they start getting
aggressive and intolerant you know it's
it's kind of well known in Burma I guess
that like a few Muslims can be good
neighbors they're good people but once
you get to a certain critical mass of
them they start getting intolerant and
aggressive and it's a stereotype I guess
but the burmes believe in this

stereotype and aside from you know this
the friendly I mean I had a few Muslims
put food into my bowl you know there's
some of of them you know especially if
they're living in a Buddhist country
they would just consider the Buddha to
be one of the prophets you know Islam
doesn't insist that Muhammad was the
only Prophet you know Moses was a
prophet Jesus was a prophet and so some
of them will kind of stretch that a bit
and say that Buddha was a prophet too
like a genuine prophet of God even
though the Buddha really didn't teach
the existence of
God so I mean aside from the few

friendly or sort of invisible Muslims in

the Villages that

uh um you know I met a few in rangon

like like the people that sell

eyeglasses tend to be Muslims in rangon

for some reason I don't know why that is

it's just like the tradition that

certain trades in in the big cities will

sort of um be dominated by Muslims also

I I will say it's just remember that um

there was a big

riot in uh the city of mtila when I was

living maybe 13 miles from there

and let's see I just heard about it it's

you know days afterwards I heard what

happened where some woman went to uh he

was like

a I don't know he was like a pond broker
or something and he was a Muslim so this
Burmese Buddhist woman
has this hair comb she wants to sell to
this guy and when he's testing it to see
how good it is he accidentally breaks it
and then he refuses to buy it and won't
pay for you know won't pay for he just
gives her the broken comb back and so
she's complaining about this he just
tells her to get lost so she goes back
to her her Village or her neighborhood
gets gets some guys and I think there
was a a Buddhist monk came with her and
they go back and they're demanding that
he either you know he comp compensator

for breaking the comb that he refuses to buy and then it turned into like a shoving match and somebody got pushed down and it started getting ugly so that the monk who's trying to be like a peacemaker he says let's try to discuss this and so some some Muslim men agree they they go off somewhere and the story I heard I don't know exactly what this entails but he said they cut his neck and he died so whether they you know cut his throat or whatever but we had a dead monk at the hands of some Muslims which caused the entire Muslim District I mean it was just a lot of it just got burned to the

ground and a lot of the time you know

there's all these stories about
some some Buddhist girl getting raped by
Muslims you know that's that's pretty
common that you hear rumors of such
things whether it's actually common for
it to really happen or not I don't know
for sure but there is that and I will
say that uh also I lived in the the city
of or on in the village Yan o Village
cold water pot Village that was at the
Northern end of the the the city of mayo
which is now called pin uen and there
were a lot of Muslims there too in in
the area of pin uen or mayo and there
was actually a like a a Muslim school
that I walked past asked every morning

when I went for alms there was this
Muslim school there that by the side of
the road and the Abbot of the
monastery um you know he knew enough
about the the gossip and everything that
that these people these Muslims did not
have a permit for starting a school
there so he had him he essentially
turned him in and the school got shut
down because he didn't want Muslim
schools especially illegal Muslim
schools like half a block away from the
monastery
but I mean that's that's my experience
with with Islam I mean I've never had
any
bad any kind of bad interactions with

Muslims mainly because it was a overwhelmingly Buddhist culture that I was in and there would be a few Muslims there who you know sort of like black people in the 1950s where you just get along with with everybody else by being very friendly and very nice and there's no problem or at least it reduces the prejudice against them

but there are quite a few Muslims I think Islam would be the second most populous religion in Burma or Christian maybe in in the like the the ethnic groups on the outskirts of the country but like in the heartland of of Burma I think Islam would be the second most

populous religion and uh of course you
know you got the 969 movement and ashin
weiru and all that who want the Muslims
to just get out of
Burma mainly because they don't want
that critical mass to be
reached so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from Joe do and
Joe do says is there any or has there
been any War worth the Bad Karma of
participating and that's a value
judgment and each person has to decide
for him or herself and no doubt that
just about any War has some people um
thinking well the Bad Karma is is worth
us you know not losing this war
especially if it's a war of

self-defense you know you got some horde
of Barbarians invading your country and
you're fighting so that you know your
your wife and your daughters don't get
raped and enslaved and so forth then I
mean there's still going to be bad karma
involved but I mean it's a lot of people
just think it's it's their Duty I mean
if you're a husband and a father and
just a a property owner then it might be
worth the uh the effort to fight against
the Invader rather than just have your
property and your wife and your daughter
taken away plus maybe getting your
stabbed or your head cut off
besides so it's just a value judgment in

that case whether a person

is I mean if they're just an

uncompromising pacifist or whether they

think that really like my father fought

in World War II and uh he really felt

that you know it was just the thing you

had to do it was just like your duty it

was just your ethical duty to prevent

the Nazis from from Conquering the

Western

Hemisphere so he was a Buddhist but then

again it's like I mean from the Orthodox

Buddhist point of view then no I mean

you're better off just getting killed

this it's just uncompromising pacifism

that you're better off dying than like

stomping on an

ant because dying is is ethically
neutral whereas stomping on an ant you
do it on purpose that's bad
karma
so yeah this is it's this kind of value
judgment kind of question I don't think
it really has an objective answer unless
the answer is just based on Orthodox
terava Buddhism in which case the answer
would be no there never has been any War
worth the Bad Karma of participating in
it at least with regard to The Killing
part I mean Mahatma Mahatma Gandhi
mandes K Gandhi I mean he joined the the
military in in World War I but he was an
unarmed stretcher Bearer he and his

followers joined uh the the war effort
in World War I as unarmed stretcher
bearers so he was participating in a war
although he was not contributing to the
Bloodshed you know he was just trying to
to help the injured soldiers and some of
the Indians were criticizing him
outspokenly because he shouldn't even be
you know he first of all he shouldn't be
helping the the British colonists the
colonialists and also you know he
shouldn't be like helping soldiers that
have been killing other
soldiers but I mean something like that
I think uh I mean that could be
ethically positive that could be cusa
meritorious but the actual killing part

Orthodox terraa would say there's no
circumstance where um being a soldier
shooting others other people would be
worth it you're better off just getting
executed for refusing to
fight so I'll just move on to joo's next
question which is what was the Buddha's
answer to the question of God and
creation and I mean he gave a few
answers that you can find in the suas
and also to some degree he just refused
to answer like with regard to the
creation of the world that was one of
the questions that the Buddha just
refused to answer like is the
world I is it infinite I mean is it

Eternal or did it have a beginning how
did the world begin he doesn't talk
about that and then I mean in other
sutas he does like there's this long
strange SU in the dean Kaya where he's
talking about how how this universe how
this Cosmos kind of generates due to the
power of Karma and so forth it's it's
it's not God that creates samsara it's
just that like the first thing that
appears like the universe is destroyed
usually by fire just the like the
astronomical universe and then um just
the power of karma of all these beings
that have to be
reborn it's generates a new Cosmos and
the first thing that appears is the

Throne of Brahma and then Brahma appears mahab Brahma and he's sitting on his throne and looking around it's pretty pretty empty and Barren and he starts getting lonely and right around the time he starts getting lonely and wishing that he had some companions through the power of their own karma not because of his wishes but through the power of their own Karma more beings start appearing in this Brahma realm and then this mahab Brahma sitting on the throne thinks that because he wished them to exist that they exist because of that and so he starts considering himself to be a Creator God that's actually an

explanation found in the

texts but in other cases the Buddha kind

of makes fun of of the whole idea of God

you know like someone who believes in

God it's like a man who is in love with

the most beautiful woman in the world

and you you talk to this man it's like

well it's this beautiful woman in the

world this most beautiful woman that

you're in love with I mean is she tall

or is she short and he says well I don't

know it's like well I mean does she have

like a a lighter complexion or a golden

complexion or like a more brownish

complexion no I I don't know that either

and and finally after asking these

questions then you ask well I mean have

you ever seen this most beautiful woman
in the world that you're so in love with
no I've never met her before so it's
it's just he's just kind of making fun
of people who believe in a God that they
really have never experienced or never
seen or you know they have no real proof
of of this God's
existence so what was the Buddha's
answer to the question of God and
creation um yeah there would be two
entirely different things except for the
sort of the deluded Brahma who thinks
that he created the universe when he
really didn't but the cosmos you know
the the empirical

Universe um it was not cre created by a

God is just generated through ignorance

and delusion and

Karma it's just sort of materializes

through the power of karma of of

infinite beings that need some place to

to live their diluted virtual

lives and uh

Gods like they're they're all small G

gods and uh they I mean they live longer

than we do but they are still mortal

they might live zillion gajillion years

but still they're going to die and then

get reborn somewhere

else so I mean like in in Hinduism they

can turn they can sort of personify the

absolute as

Brahma but um in Buddhism Nirvana or the
the absolute just does not get
personified as any kind of capital G
God so I kind of answered that
answered it enough I guess because I'm
moving on to the next
question and this question is from El
reev and El reev says are you the same
person as otomo also known as zenitz and
that's kind of a strange question
because I don't look anything like him I
do know him I mean we we have we never
met in person but uh we were involved in
a sort of a short-lived spiritual Right
Movement thing that uh I mean there's
there's still some videos up on the

Internet or on on YouTube with regard to
that so we have been seen on a split
screen both of us at the same time and
yeah he does not look like me um we
haven't communicated in over a year he
kind of dropped out of out of the
YouTube video biz for a long time I
think he just recently came back and
he's more into Zen Buddhism I'm more
into
terraa and uh actually when I became a
monk or when I stopped being a monk when
I just first came to South Carolina he
actually like sent me a hundred bucks
something like that I was very generous
of him very
thoughtful but um yeah we're we're not

really communicating lately but we are

not the same

person and if you doubt that you can go

back and look at some of the videos

where both of us appear on a split

screen and we don't look anything like

each

other so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from Mary Jay

and Mary Jay says why people being

reborn in hell don't just commit S and S

here clearly stands for auto

termination so I'll just start over

again I'll I'll just replace the S so

that it'll be a more smoother smoother

delivery why people being reborn in hell

don't just commit Auto termination to be
reborn maybe not there they may try this
many times and maybe some next time
would be reborn as humans and practice
dhama and attain nibana I would
certainly try this nothing to lose right
I mean nobody has only bad comma so it
should work well I I'm doubtful that
it's possible to commit suicide when
you're in hell that you know it's like
you are prevented like you can have
demons that are like cutting the flesh
off your body cutting the flesh off your
skeleton with with like axes but you
don't die from that you just get better
and then they do it again and then you
get better again and then they keep they

just keep doing that so I mean you could
just be reduced to nothing but bones and
Scattered bits of meat and you're still
not going to die so I don't know how you
could possibly commit suicide um if
you're in hell that uh it's like the
system is is designed naturally so that
you can't just take the easy out out
that way otherwise probably a lot of
people would be doing it or a lot of
Hell Denis would be doing it
anyway
so
yeah yeah plus it may be that you're
just making more Bad Karma by trying to
kill yourself so there's that

too yeah I think that would be the main

reason I I do think that just going with

like traditional Orthodox terraa

Buddhism that trying to kill yourself

trying to Auto terminate would be

impossible in

hell because as I say I mean you can you

can just be like run through a blender

and then you'll just like coales and get

better

again so I'll just uh move on to Mary

Jay's next question which is of a

completely different nature this is like

a politics question he says ha Montana

has only three

electors and I assume

Montana has only three electors because

it is a sparsely populated state it's up
north it's kind of straddles the Rocky
Mountains and uh it's just not a very
populist state so the way it works
according to the US Constitution is that
each state gets two senators whether
it's a big state or a little State
whether it's California or Rhode Island
each state gets two senators which is
partly as a way of having equality among
the states but then also in the House of
Representatives the number of
Representatives is based on the
population so that even though
California and Rhode Island each have
only two senators California has lots

more Representatives than Rhode Island

does

and so I assume that electors work the

same way as representatives and not

Senators so uh a state with a large

population would have more electors and

a state with a small population would

have few

electors pretty sure that's how it works

so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from Sam and Sam says

you mentioned a while ago that Karma

comes from your intentions rather than

the outcome of your actions so if I give

you a meal and it has a nut you're

allergic to I would get the good karma

for wanting to feed you but not the bad

karma for giving you stomach cramps
assuming I was ignorant of your nut
allergy but how would negligence come
into this shouldn't I get some negative
karma for not bothering to ask my guests
if they have allergies before I cook
them a meal well yeah that's that's
something that has occurred to me lots
of times with regard to Merit and
demerit Good Karma and Bad Karma because
anything that you do so long as you're
not enlightened yet virtually
practically anything that you do is
going to have some bad karma involved in
it because you are delusional that moha
or delusion is going to be one of your

most motivating factors for doing

whatever it is and so I mean just to

believe that I am doing this you know if

I do something and I believe I'm doing

this I mean that's delusion and so I'm

going to get a certain amount of Bad

Karma for for doing that no matter what

it is I could be like offering food to a

monk or something I'll still get some

bad karma because there's still a sense

of self there's still some delusion or

whatever

involved so

yeah I mean if you're a drunk driver and

you accidentally hit somebody and kill

them then yeah that's that's major

negligence that'd be a more obvious

example of this where I mean you didn't
do it on purpose so I mean you're not
deliberately murdering somebody you
don't make the same Karma as if you run
over somebody on purpose but still
there's all this delusion involved
especially if you're you're stinking
drunk that is going to cause Bad Karma
anyway so I assume that if you give
somebody some food that they're allergic
to you don't know they're allergic to it
then they have the allergic reaction
that um I mean you you didn't do it on
purpose you're not going to get as bad
of karma but there is going to be a
certain amount of I mean not really

negligence so much as just sort of

semiconscious stupidity involved because

you're not fully enlightened yet

see there's something else I was going

to say I

think but now I can't think of

it

see yeah I mean negligence in the sense

of you could have

somehow made more precautions or

something that you're getting into more

of a western utilitarian kind of ethic

that is alien to Buddhism but still to

the extent that you

are you're laboring under semiconscious

stupidity because you're not fully

enlightened yet then anything you do

practically is going to create a certain
amount of Bad Karma you just try to do
as much good as you
can and don't have remorse if you if you
accidentally do something you know
because that just makes more Bad Karma
remorse and regret are always Bad Karma
and just make things
worse so I think I answered that one so
I'm just going to move on to Sam's next
question which is is Shri
Dharma Shri Dharma pavara acharia the
guy who says Hinduism is more properly
called sanatana Dharma says that
practicing meditation without a proper
teacher is like performing surgery on

yourself would you agree or disagree and why

well yeah I I do watch and I I wouldn't be able to say his name without reading it and even when I'm reading it I'm not doing a very good job of it Shri Dharma prara

acharia yeah I I have watched some of his videos my sweetie and I watch his videos sometimes um he is rather dogmatic he he sometimes I mean he's he seems like a wise and good person but nevertheless I mean he does adhere to Dogma a lot of the time and I think in Hinduism there's much more emphasis on having a guru or a teacher and and also in Hinduism they have different kinds of

meditation than they have in terraa
Buddhism like terava Buddhism there
there's really nothing really dangerous
if you're doing fairly correctly I mean
you can learn how to do proper
meditation in accordance with terraa
dama by reading certain sutas like the
mahasi patana suta or the ananasa for
example and an aanas meditation I mean
there's very little danger involved in
it I mean if you're if you're not doing
it right you just won't get very far
with it but you're not really not going
to like harm yourself by doing anapana
incorrectly unless you're doing it just
wildly incorrectly you know like holding

your breath as long as you can until you
you know you start to black out or
something so there's there's no
Kundalini kind of meditations in terraa
that can be dangerous like you know it's
it's relatively well known that you
should not try to to do Kundalini
meditation without a guide guiding you
an experienced qualified guide because
if you do it wrong you can mess yourself
up the Kundalini will like Miss the
spine Channel and start going up the
wrong way or something and just really
mess up your
body and I mean there are relatively
dangerous like pranayama like breath
control stuff that uh if if you abuse it

or you get into like the wrong territory
or something so I mean there's all kinds
of Hindu meditations some of which can
be sketchy or dangerous if you're doing
them wrong but in terava Buddhism it's
pretty straightforward and simple you
know you're not going for anything
really esoteric when you're meditating
other than just getting deeper and
deeper and deeper in which case you're
also getting wiser and wiser and more
capable of of handling the
situation
so yeah I think that uh to the extent
that he's referring to like Hindu
meditations where you can really do it

wrong and harm yourself then yeah I
would agree with him although I don't
think that would apply even to just
simple basic meditation like mindfulness
of breathing so long as you have a
fairly good idea of what you're doing
and you know you've read it in the text
how to do it how to do it properly you
go ahead and do it by yourself without
some human Guru then you're still doing
okay it's better to have a human teacher
though because a human teacher can tell
you what you're doing wrong you know
they can you can go through interviews
and they can say well do this
differently and and it's better you
you'll make better progress probably if

you do have a human

teacher but it's not exactly as bad like

doing breathing meditation by yourself

in your room is not nearly as bad as

performing surgery on yourself

but don't do like Kundalini meditation

or certain other esoteric Hindu kinds of

meditation um without it without some

sort of qualified

instructor so I'm just going to move on

to the next question which is also from

Sam would deliberately inspiring

somebody into a negative mental state

with your words or actions incur Bad

Karma or is that all on them well their

negative mental state is all on them but

you're deliberately

inspiring that in somebody is on you so

it's your intentions it's it's your

volition your will if you are willfully

trying to make somebody unhappy then

you're making Bad Karma but when they

really do become unhappy that's on them

because there's always a choice and

they're just making the wrong choice

through force of habit and ignorance and

whatever even so like you punch somebody

in the nose then that's on you but for

them to get upset about it is actually

on

them going with Buddhist ethics

101 so I mean you're just better off not

deliberately making people unhappy but

you're you're much better off not
deliberately hurting people or even
insulting somebody or just putting
someone in their place I mean it's easy
to do that especially on the internet
you're like in the breitbart's comment
sections I mean it's it's sometimes it's
diff ult to resist just sort of pointing
out how stupid somebody
is but I mean it's it's more for the
sake of others who read it rather than
trying to persuade somebody that he
himself is
stupid so yeah I mean just getting back
to the question here I mean I've just
digress all over the place if I just

answer the questions these videos would
probably be less than an
hour so would deliberately inspiring
someone into a negative mental state
with your words or actions incur Bad
Karma or is that all in them well yeah I
mean you are making Bad Karma even
though they're making their own Bad
Karma you're making bad karma too just
like if you punch somebody in the nose I
mean the punch is on you you are I mean
you're getting the karma for that and
then if they get upset they're being
upset is on them but even so you've made
the Bad Karma regardless even if you
just punched uh an enlightened sage in
the nose he doesn't get upset at all you

know he forgives you he just beams love
at you even so your desire to mess him
up and and you're punching him in the
nose is still making Bad Karma on you
even though he he paid off a little past
you know fruition of karma but he didn't
make any new Bad Karma because he
responded in a wise and benevolent
way and it's the same way with words
words or actions so I'm going to move on
to the next question here this is from
Twin wasabi
and twin Wasabi says do you have any
opinions on hot coldman he seems like
your kind of
guy

well I had never heard of hot

coldman but my lovely woman actually did

a little research and informed me that

he appears to be she's not entirely

certain either but hot coldman appears

to be a character in a video game and

I've never played that video game I know

nothing about hot coldman other than

what I have just told you so yeah I

don't really have any opinions on hot

cman

because I just have never come across Mr

cman in my life so I'm just going to

move on to the next question this one is

uh kind of similarly straightforward one

this is from Nomi although really it's

TIG and he says how was your birthday

cake and as it turns out I got two
birthday cakes because at work
I just happen to mention that it's a
tradition in my it was a tradition in my
family back when I had this the
forementioned family the said family
that my birthday cake every year was a
rhubarb upside down cake and so the wife
of one of my colleagues at work very
nicely got up at 4 in the morning to
make me a rhubarb upside down cake they
had to search the grocery stores to find
rhubarb because of course rhubarb really
is is n that popular of a of a food
substance especially in South Carolina
apparently so I got a rhubarb upside

down cake at work which was excellent I
must say it was really good the the
sweetness of the cake and the tartness
of the rhubarb formed uh a complex and
striking flavor
profile then when I got home my lovely
woman provided me with a different
birthday cake which was like a a
cheesecake in double Dutch chocolate
layer thing which was excellent although
she left it on the counter and we have
this dog this whiet which uh is not
present at at present who actually
climbed up onto the counter and ate some
of it before I got any it was still good
though she doesn't have any major
diseases that I'm aware of so yeah so I

got two cakes and they were both really

good so one of them was slight slightly

dog

eat and so I'm just going to move on

next

question this is from covac and sead

zida and seac sead zida says eating only

once a day makes my head hurt how do you

overcome this well I ate once a day for

30 years with very few exceptions and I

never never got headaches so I mean I

can't really speak from experience on

how not to get a headache from eating

one meal a day although there were some

people

in the Discord server who are suggesting

that the the headaches from eating one
meal a day may be caused by dehydration
in which case you should you should
drink more especially in the afternoon
don't drink right before going to bed
though because then you have to get up
and go potty although I did learn as a
monk that if you don't want to indulge
in excessive sleep you can use the
silent alarm clock which is drinking a
certain amount of liquid generally water
right before you go to bed so that
within you know four to six hours you
you you can like calibrate this over
time to get it just right that you're
just gonna have to get up and take a pee
it's the silent alarm clock method but

getting back to covac and cpad zida um

you can eat once a day I mean that's I

did it for a long time and um you're

still allowed to have beverages in the

afternoon

beverages man cannot live by bread alone

there must also be a beverage

and so I mean you could still take in

some fluid nutrition in the afternoon

also I mean if you wanted to follow

monastic discipline for whatever reason

even though you're not a monk I mean

there are the the five tonics which is

sugar butter

oil clarified butter or ghee and uh

honey so you can make up some kind of

like pudding e stuff in in Burma it's

called

sidumo which is like a mixture of four

of these five ingredients and uh you can

eat it with a spoon I mean you could eat

hard candy you could uh drink stuff I

mean if you're not a monk I mean you

could even drink milk in the

afternoon

so it may and also just maybe experiment

with just drinking more water in in the

evening and if you still get headaches

um I'm not exactly sure what would cause

I me how would an empty stomach cause a

headache I I I've never experienced that

before at least I don't remember

experiencing it so yeah it could be that

you're just being dehydrated or

something and that may cause a

headache otherwise uh

gosh yeah I mean if you get insomnia or

something you might take your one meal a

day later in the day you not necessarily

you wouldn't take it at dawn if you're

not a monk it's not even necessary to

eat eat it in the

morning so I guess I kind of answered

that

question so I'm just going to move on to

se of action CAD Z's next question which

is what is the Mahayana understanding of

mindfulness and I would assume the

Mahayana understanding of mindfulness is

essentially the same as the terraa
understanding of mindfulness I haven't I
don't recall reading any Mahayana sutras
discussing a special Mahayana
mindfulness and I mean Mahayana Buddhism
accepted the basics from the older
schools including terraa and then pretty
much added to it but the basics have
remained pretty much the same and so I
would assume I'm just guessing here but
I would assume that the Mahayana
understanding of mindfulness is pretty
close if not identical to the terraa
understanding of mindfulness although
there are some Mahayana Buddhists on the
Discord server that might be able to
answer that question more learnedly than

I can because I'm no expert on Mahayana
the Mahayana understanding of
mindfulness so I'll just move on to se
action CAD Z's next question which is
will you ever do more videos outside you
have older Q&A videos where we can see
your backyard for example and it made
the video more pleasant to watch and I'm
sure my my woman is is very happy to
hear this because she's always wanting
me to do videos outside like we go to
some place Scenic especially we go to a
lake or something she often at the last
minute she'll say would you do like a
five or 10 minute video and it's like I
haven't prepared anything and you know

I'm I'm more inclined in Recreation than

than doing a video or something and so

it usually doesn't happen also we have

moved into a different house that does

not have nearly as Scenic of a backyard

as uh our previous residents

but uh yeah I think uh there is a good

chance that I will be doing more videos

outside in the

outdoors so yeah I just assume guys

don't care you know it's like I'm I'm

told you know I need to trim my beard

before I do the video or I need to comb

my hair better or wear a different shirt

or you know you should have different

backgrounds sometimes just to liven

things up and add some variety and I'm

thinking

most of the people that watch these

videos are guys they don't care about

that kind of stuff and here we got coac

and sead zida of all people saying that

he wants more Scenic backgrounds I could

do like Brian Ru and just put like the

virtual Grand Canyon or or whatever

behind me but uh I never I guess the the

virtual backgrounds are getting better I

remember when Brian Ru started using

these virtual backgrounds like the shape

of his head would keep changing and his

his ears would appear and disappear and

it was weird but it's getting better now

so but I figure backgrounds don't really

matter I mean I've never really been
interested in that sort of thing it's
like one of my role models with regard
to doing videos on YouTube is sticks
hexenhammer who just sits in front of
the same background every time just does
does it all in one take you know he's
not reading anything that I think that's
a good method I I respect that method
much more than than some people who have
like special backgrounds and they're
doing all these these jump cuts it might
take like you can see that they're
there's like three editorial Cuts in the
middle of one sentence sometimes well
two
anyway I just it's just too much work

and I I just figured people don't even
care because I don't
care but now you've got an ally SE
action superpad Z not has an ally in in
my mate who uh can now use that as
leverage to get me to do more videos
outside and so I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from Romeo
and Romeo says I am a fairly recent
Explorer of Buddhism and a 10 weekly
meditation and Dharma discussion at a
local terraa Buddhist temple last week
our topic was the nine qualities of the
Buddha I was taken aback when the
Buddhist monk leading the talk began and
speaking about how the Buddha had

Supernatural Powers including
teleportation walking on water walking
through walls becoming invisible
levitating telepathy miraculous healing
and making clones of
himself I have always been turned off by
having to make such leaps of faith into
Supernatural phenomenon it's
phenomena the plural of phenomenon is
phenomena so I'll I'll just back up a
little here I have always been turned
off by having to make such leaps of
faith into supernatural phenomena in
other religions and felt some
disappointment to discover that Buddhism
was like them in this regard if I am
correct you studied one of the Sciences

in college I am interested in hearing
about your journey from studying the
grounded rationality of Western science
to becoming a Buddhist which includes
belief in the above mentioned
supernatural
phenomena he has phenomenon here again
phenomena do you have any tips on how to
reconcile these two polar opposite
worldviews for an aspiring Western
Buddhist
well there's a lot to unpack here if I
choose to unpack it because the actual
question is right down here at the
bottom which is do you have any tips on
how to reconcile these two polar

opposite worldviews for an aspiring
Western buddist and they're really not
polar opposite World viws unless you are
a scientific
materialist which most western Buddhists
are because most westerners
are so I mean the main tip on how to
reconcile the the possibility of
paranormal activity with science would
be to read a parapsychology book that
would be a good intro that would that
would be a foot in the door if you will
yeah so read a good book on
parapsychology which tries to study
paranormal
phenomena
scientifically so that would be a good

idea or even like Carl Young's essay on synchronicity something like that and it wouldn't be as good as a really good Paras pychology book though you can read all about like Poltergeist phenomena and and like making itions and like like telling cards that you can't see remote viewing I mean it's all been scientifically studied and it's pretty much been verified that it really does exist to some degree so let's see Buddha had Supernatural Powers including teleportation well neim coroli Baba whose picture is up there on the altar yeah he could according to

testimonies he could just cease to exist
in one place and appear somewhere else
or he could appear in more than one
place
simultaneously walking on water walking
through walls becoming invisible
levitating telepathy yeah telepathy I
mean yeah he could do that too I don't
recall any stories of him walking on
water but if he if you stood before him
he would know you better than you know
you so let's
see always been turned off by having to
make such leaps of Faith although you
definitely leaped into the faith of
scientific materialism it seems and
scientific materialism really is a

faith-based belief system I've written

numerous essays on that subject I think

uh some of them are are in the books

I've

written that that are available on

Amazon so let's

see so let scroll down a little further

here see if I am correct you studied one

of the Sciences in college yeah I

majored in Marine Biology and minored in

chemistry

so I am interested in hearing what your

journey from studying the grounded

rationality of Western science to

becoming a Buddhist which includes

belief in the above mentioned

Supernatural phenomenon

says well I mean before I got a degree

in Marine Biology I mean I was the son

of my father who was um an avid Pioneer

in the

occult that he

enjoyed um exploring Frontier including

the frontier of his own mind and so he

he ran a coven of witches for a while he

did seances he did a lot of experiments

with

ESP and we did have a poltergeist in our

house and and so I had a a father who

was pretty much of a a

warlock and so that was before I took

biology and uh I would not say that

anything is really grounded rationality

I mean everything is based on IR
rationality there is no purely
rational attitude because I mean you
have to have an infinite regress to
avoid ultimately basing your premises on
some irrationally chosen
information some
guess so yeah I mean the main answer to
the question do you have any tips on how
to reconcile these two allegedly polar
opposite worldviews for an aspiring
Western Buddhist read a book on
parapsychology which actually tries to
study the Paranormal in a scientific
Manner and some some of the the stuff
that parapsychologists have come up with

are so mind-blowing that it just causes hysteria from the scientific materialists that they'll say they've got to be cheating somehow we don't know how they're cheating it looks pretty Ironclad you know it's like an airtight experimental design but still they got to be lying they got to be be cheating somehow because it's just we just cannot cope with

this so I mean like helmet Schmidt who worked for Boeing Laboratories he he asked for permission on how to he asked for permission that to study um the effect of Consciousness on physical systems and he was granted permission he came up with some mind-blowing

stuff but I mean mainly it's just the
belief that this stuff is impossible
is what is largely causing it to be
seemingly
impossible so we've just kind of locked
oursel into a kind of spiritually
bankrupt materialism that is not the
Natural State and like somebody like
Renee gwenan he's he's saying that I
mean eventually it's going to have to
come crashing down that we have like
this shell around us of what we consider
to be reality it's just like forbidding
any kind of divinity for example from
influencing us or at least it's doing a
lot to reduce the amount of divinity

influencing us because we just believe
that it doesn't exist it's impossible
and it's like this hardened shell we've
got around us and sooner or later when
civilization degenerates enough the
stability of our culturally conditioned
shell is going to break down enough that
it's going to start getting cracked
accident and will eventually
shatter but that's Renee gwon you don't
have to believe
that so I'll just move
on to Romeo's next question which is
what is your opinion of Alex Jones man
we're getting some we're getting some
really interesting questions sometimes
here what is your opinion of Alex Jones

do you feel his views about a nefarious
secretive International Elite
controlling the Affairs of the Us and
other parts of the world are accurate or
do you write him off as a Nutty
conspiracy theorist like so many others
do well I don't watch Alex Jones nearly
as much as my sweetheart my Blushing
Bride
does um she might be better better
equipped to answer this question but it
does seem first of all Alex Jones is
kind of conspiratorial in his thinking
much like my friend Brian Rue um you
know it's never he I mean he rarely
passes up a good conspiracy theory and a

lot of conspiracy theories are
true and a lot of conspiracy theories
are just mainstream like the whole
Russia collusion hoax with with Donald
Trump I mean that was a conspiracy
theory that was [__] and it was
believed in by half the
country so let's see getting back to
Alex Jones though I think he's sort of a
combination of I mean overly credulous
in some degree I mean just like loving
conspiracy theories just a little too
much but nevertheless he has made a lot
of accurate predictions and he's not
nearly as nutty as a lot of people would
prefer to believe him to
be so I can see him in a way I kind of

see him like a like a some kind of
psychic or Spirit medium which I mean
they got like a trickster element to
them so that they do have genuine talent
but also they play tricks you know
they'll like fool you to some degree or
just you know they'll be fakes to some
degree or like charlatans to some degree
but still nevertheless have genuine
talent and I think Alex Jones is kind of
along the same lines um but I don't
think he's nearly as nutty as people
think that he is a lot of normies think
that he is and a lot of it is just sort
of stage craft you know a lot of the
time he'll be just like ranting and

running around with his shirt off and
stuff that I mean it's in a way is kind
of like
clickbait so but I mean definitely his
views about a nefarious secretive
International Elite controlling the
Affairs of the US I mean that's not even
secret anymore I mean all you got to do
is just look at the news with your eyes
open and you can see that there really
is like the
billionaire Elite rule the globalist
ruling Elite kind of that you know this
one reason why they hate Trump so so
hysterically and rapidly is he he's much
more difficult to
control I mean it used to be before

Trump that voting for a US president was
like choosing between Coke and Pepsi I
mean it it wasn't didn't really matter
all that much because it was the same
donor class the same Elites had the same
influence on on either
side but when Trump sort of steered the
Republican Party away from globalism the
globalist elite didn't like that at
all and it's I mean the rest is history
I mean he's just been like attacked
relentlessly ever
since so getting back to Alex Jones
though yeah I guess I answered that
question so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is a really easy

question to answer this is from drunk Dr
and he asked this question a few days
ago and I assume that it's too late for
me to advise him on this he says should
I drink the bottle of 175 proof whiskey
I found in my cousin's Pantry I'm
concerned I'll get completely [__]
hammered instantly but I don't want to
disappoint my cousins well obviously
from a Buddhist point of view don't get
slammed and I've never even heard of 175
proof whiskey I'm I'm skeptical that
there is such a thing as 175 proof
whiskey I mean you're getting almost I
mean you're getting almost into pure
grain alcohol at that
point even most like like super super

rum isn't 175

proof so yeah this could be like an

imaginary bottle of of whiskey maybe

it's just 75 proof which would be weaker

than average whiskey I think the average

bottle of whiskey is like 80 proof or

40%

alcohol so yeah you don't want to uh

steal anything and and getting slammed

on Whiskey regardless of the proof is

also a naric activity so yeah I would I

would advise you against it but since

you asked the question days ago it might

have already come to pass so I'm just

going to move on to next question this

is from ruie and ruie says being a

follower of the Buddha teachings is

certainly not a political affiliation

but do you think it could at least be a

political

stance well I mean with regard to like

hardcore

Buddhism you renounce Society you know

if you're if you're a Buddhist heavy

hitter you renounce Society at least

from the teren point of

view and even talking about politics is

called animal

talk and monks are discouraged from even

talking about

politics excuse

me it's going I'm going with the

emergency backup beverage

now the pond water

awaits so

um but I mean Buddhism as a social like

a popular religion where most of the

followers of Buddhism are no longer like

veteran athetics living in Indian

forests that yeah you can have like a

Buddhist political party much as you

have Christian political parties or

Muslim political parties um which would

be a political party that has some non-

Buddhist you know some positions that

are irrelevant to Dharma and then other

positions just like an ethical position

like you know pacifism for example or

you know just honesty in

government kind of a pipe dream there

but I mean still you could at least like

have a movement endorsing

that

so yeah I mean you can't incorporate

Buddhism into a political party or into

a political affiliation or or a

political

stance but um I think you'd always have

to have some non Buddhist ideas like

with regard to economics I mean Buddhism

really doesn't say much about economics

so the whole economic platform would I

mean you could use Buddhist philosophy

to support your decision but somebody on

the opposite side could be using

Buddhist philosophy to support their

position

also so I mean right- Winger could could

use Buddhist philosophy to you know

support certain decisions and then a

left Wier might be using the same

Buddhist philosophy or just different

texts different statements in different

texts to support the exact opposite

point of

view

so yeah I mean see I'll have to ask the

question again here being a follower of

the Buddhist teachings is certainly not

a political affiliation

but do you think it could at least be a

political stance it could be an aspect

of a political stance um or it could be

that you have a political stance that

for example does not

include

economics for

example or not not a very Advanced kind

of Economics but I mean to some degree

you have to have like violations of

Dharma in order to have uh an

effectively run political State you know

you have to punish criminals for example

you may have to fight Wars at least Wars

of

self-defense you may have to do things

that are not good

dhama um just as a political necessity

and

reality so I think the best you could do
is just which has already been done is
just have a political party that in
endorses certain Buddhist values and
endorses Buddhism but really has to add
a lot of non- Buddhist stuff in order to
round it out as any kind of political
point of view because again politics is
really not very Buddhist and monks are
forbidden or it says in the text a good
monk just doesn't talk about politics
talk about Kings and ministers and wars
and so forth It's all It's all under the
rubric of animal
talk so yeah that is kind of a subtle
question though I don't know you

probably write an entire book answering
that question which I really don't want
to do so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from cify and
cify says looking at today's political
world another politics question looking
at today's political world are we
witnessing hell entities taking over
this realm if we are how do we protect
ourselves from them well anyone who
would think this I mean I'm not trying
to badmouth cleffy but anyone who who
could have this attitude probably hasn't
read a whole lot of history because this
this [__] has been going on since there
have been governments since there have
been politics you've got corrupt just

even

genocidal sociopathic politics going on

you know read the history of like the

Roman Empire or like the Italian

Renaissance the [__] that was going on

in Italy during the Renaissance or even

like medieval England or or just pretty

much any any kind of political

history uh I mean the the 20th century

even though it did have a lot of bad

stuff going on like Marxism and pole pot

and you know the Whole World War II

thing World War I before that but still

I mean modern times have been relatively

tame compared to how politics used to be

I mean we've got a constitutional

republic in America even though the
Constitution is being ignored more and
more especially by one party who is
accusing the other party of doing
it but I mean it used to be you just
have like Roman emperors who it was like
power would just go to their head and
they'd become like
sociopaths a lot of them and then human
rights that's like a modern
invention so yeah I think it's always
been it's always been messed up it's
always been a [__] show with few
exceptions I mean the exception I mean
when it hasn't been a [__] show that's
the exception to the
rule so it's not so much hell entities I

mean there there probably are like
malevolent beings like not human like
malevolent inhuman forces that are
influencing politics and so forth I mean
that is to be expected I think so long
as you're not a scientific materialist
who just thinks that's all [__] and
impossible so I mean but it's always
been going on it's just that as things
get bigger as governments and Powers get
more big and powerful then you're going
to have bigger more powerful entities
meddling in
it and uh fortunately I would like to
believe anyway that not all of these
entities are malevolent that you're

going to have benevolent ones

too so the angels and the devils are uh

at

War so to speak and I'm just going to

move on to the next question this is

from the protos sudo Monk and he says in

the past Q&A you mentioned you stopped

making progress in the dhamma can you

define progress and how can you know if

you are or aren't progressing that may

seem like being stuck May oh what may

seem like being stuck May in fact be

on steadfast track to nibana I never

understood how you could gauge progress

are there Enlightenment

metrics

well one way is I mean you get to a

certain stage of

meditation like get into like a really

refined subtle State of Consciousness

where you're no longer thinking your

mind is just clear like glass or like a

like a mirror just reflecting whatever

is is coming at you and just not like

sing Ling anything out you know not

focusing on one thing to the in ignoring

everything else not having any kind of

running commentary just wide awake and

just your mind is clear and then then

for years after that you just can't get

that again you know it's just you you

you not only aren't making progress but

you're not even your meditation isn't as

good as it was

previously and like if you are making

progress sometimes you'll get into like

this stage that you're not used to and

then it's like you're feeling py like

sometimes your whole body is just like

twitching with with energy you know and

there's just this exhilaration of

experiencing this new mental state it's

like a new uh like um a new dimension

has opened up and then eventually you

just get used to that and it just

becomes you know this kind of Common

Place

practically and then you just if you're

not making progress you're just not

breaking new ground you know you're just

kind of treading

water and uh like I said like a few

moments ago it's like it may be that you

got into these states that were just

like mystical states that then you just

can't get into them again you know it's

like you're doing pretty well for a

while and then you just kind of

backslide back into the kind of the

mental state or the the meditative

states that you had before that and you

just never get back up into that those

higher Realms or if you do it's just

like this glimmer it's not something you

can do consistently and you

know

um like godika in the godika suta in the
sutin Kaya I mean you he was with jna
he'd get Janna and then lose it and then
get Jonna and then lose it and get Jonna
and then lose it and then finally in
desperation he just commit
suicide so I mean if you get into
refined meditative States you know it I
mean you know what it's like and then
for years afterwards you just can't get
anything really close to that other than
just a few little glimmers then
obviously that's it's a pretty good
indication that you're not making
progress it's not even that you got used
to it so it's no longer exhilarating you
know it just becomes

standard you know it's not even that
much so I mean it is true like St John
of the Cross says that just spiritual
aridity The Dark Knight of the Soul does
mean that you're getting
close but yeah I mean after like eight
or ten years of still not making
progress like real progress I mean
you're making progress at other levels
you know you're gaining experience and
just you know absorbing things like
subliminally and so forth that is still
making progress but with regard to like
the the technical realm of doing certain
kinds of
meditation then it's pretty pretty easy

to know whether you're making progress
or not like for a beginner just your
mind straying away less you know just
keeping your mind on the the primary
object of meditation longer you know
it's like when you first start you might
be lucky to have 20% of the time that
you're sitting actually on the the
primary object of meditation if you get
better at meditation it might be 50% and
then finally you might be up like 90%
I don't know if anybody gets to 100.0%
other than you know some sort of heavy
hitter swamy or
something so I mean it's I mean just
that just for a beginner just what
percentage of the time are you actually

meditating and what percentage of the
time are you just thinking about what
you want to have for
dinner and then you get like into more
advanced meditation it's like how how
what percentage of the time are are you
just sitting there in a state
of like a mystical State just you're not
thinking you're just wide awake wide
awake and not thinking
anything I mean what percentage of your
of your hour of sitting for example are
you in that state if if the percentage
is going
down then you're sort of retrogressing
if the the percentage is is increasing

then you are progressing so it's pretty
straightforward actually seems to
me but of course there are all sorts of
other
factors so it can be somewhat
complicated but still you get an overall
feeling of whether you are making
progress or whether you are
retrogressing or whether you're just
kind of stagnating and staying in the
same
place and it's not necessarily a bad
thing if if you're just staying in the
same place I mean just because you're
not making progress that's not
necessarily bad it may be that if you're
meditating just for the sake of stress

reduction just to help you relax so that

you sleep good that night or you know

just just to remind you on a daily basis

that this circus of Sam SAR really um I

mean you can transcend

that then yeah I mean you can just sit

and do the same meditation you know

night after night and not make progress

and not retrogress it's just this this

Zone you get into

and it's a comfortable Zone and it's

good for you and you like it that's fine

but if you're trying to become

enlightened you know I mean that

requires progress you can't just stop

you know

improving and I mean once you're
enlightened then you don't need to
improve anymore but I mean if you aren't
enlightened yet or you you feel like you
still need to
improve then if you stop improving it it
it can be pretty obvious especially if
you're in like mindful enough and you
know you got a good enough feel for
meditative stat so you can actually see
like the subtleties of your own your own
mind going
on but I think I need to move on to the
next question also from the Proto sudo
Mon and he says can the voice of
venerable poasa lead to Janna for
example while listening to a mindblowing

Q&A well if you're listening to the

words then you wouldn't get past first

Jon probably not even first

J because I mean even if you're in first

jna you're not going to be thinking in

sentences you might be doing a mantra or

breathing in breathing out breathing in

breathing out you might get first Janna

still using that much like verbal

thinking but listening to a

discourse as a kind of meditation yeah

you not going to get Jonna for that

although if you're just doing

mindfulness of hearing you're just

hearing hearing hearing you could

probably get into some some Jonna from

that although you wouldn't really be
listening to the meaning of the words it
would just be like auditory
feeling just the sensory data impinging
on your
eardrums so to
speak so yeah but listening to a
mind-blowing Q&A I mean possibly
it could be a Zen kind of sator kind of
a deal where you just get your mind
blown by some sort of [__] like Paradox
that just slams you out of a an
intellectual rot and then you might have
some kind of like a spontaneous
experience but while you're having the
this this experience you probably
wouldn't be thinking in words anymore it

could be that the words will just sort
of shove you over this Cliff Edge or
whatever
but then uh once once you're you're
falling off the cliff then you're not
going to be really listening to the
words anymore it's just going to be
you're going to be in your own
experience you know just dealing with
whatever is whatever has has been
triggered so I think I'll just move on
to uh Proto sudo Monk's next
question what are the Buddhist ethics on
investing I am thinking about learning
about the financial markets and
investing but I am concerned this may be

undari what isn't clear is if this
activity done with Mindless big if can
be devoid of greed karmically neutral or
if greed is inherent to investing which
is akin to gambling it is no small
decision as it will require quite a lot
of time to learn about of course if
fortunes were made I would play the role
of The Eccentric Buddhist millionaire
supporting Dam centers in the
west well yeah I think that this is sort
of a a gray Zone in Buddhist ethics
because gambling is considered to be
unethical UND daric and like playing the
stock market really is a kind of
gambling it seems to me but any kind of
investing like a farmer is investing his

labor and some of his money to grow his crops and I mean that's just necessary for existence that's the curse of Adam you know you got to invest something at least you're investing your time and labor in in an attempt to make money so that you can feed yourself and your family and pay your bills and so forth so I mean it kind of reminds me of uh maybe I shouldn't mention this but it kind of reminds me of Adolf Hitler or Adolf Hitler as uh some people will keep reminding me that uh he was very much against like the capitalist class of people who are making money without actually working

you know they're just making money off

other people working and he considered

that to be unethical and people might

scoff at Hitler thinking something is

unethical but really in a way he did

have certain ethics like he was Against

Animal Cruelty some of the first laws

against animal cruelty were passed by

the German national socialists back in

the 1930s the first rules against

smoking in public places things that now

is is just considered common sense

I

mean

so I I'm not exactly sure where I was

going with

that but

uh yeah it could be that uh I mean you
have to invest something really if it's
it's your money and like you're starting
a new business or something in a way
that's an investment and in a way it's
kind of a gamble because a lot of new
businesses just don't
succeed
so I do think that there is certainly a
gray Zone although it does seem to me
that uh um like investing in the stock
market is is kind of like playing
Blackjack at a casino I mean you can
learn certain rules that will maximize
your odds winning but still in a in a
way it is

gambling but it is a truism that life is

a

gamble so yeah it is I mean it's one of

those things that uh I mean Buddhism I

mean really investing in stock markets

and so forth Commodities markets bonds I

mean it just didn't really exist in the

Buddhist time I mean a money economy was

just really getting started up in the

Buddhist time in

India and you did have like money

lenders you had Rich Bankers an ainda

was apparently some kind of business

tycoon or

banker and I mean he he was an Arya

according to the

texts so I mean it's not all bad and

mainly I guess what it all boils down to
is your own your own mental States
because an outward action is neither
good or bad it's any kind of outward
action just the mere physical outward
action of it is morally
neutral and so I mean if you're doing it
as a way of making money to live
paying your bills and all
that you know you don't have any more
negative mental States than if you
were say working at a grocery store then
yeah I mean it wouldn't be any worse
than working at a grocery store it
depends on your own mental States so I
mean if you're doing it without a lot of

attachment and a lot of greed and so

forth then it might not be any worse

than working in a grocery store

or sheet metal

shop

so yeah I guess I answered that question

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

question which is from

yuguo and we've been going at this for

over two and a half hours I just amazed

myself by my capacity to just Babble

endlessly so Yoo says please talk about

MC mindfulness and your opinion about it

there are negative case studies iies

that it only worsens psychological

well-being of people who practice it

it's my opinion that they are selling

people a car without brakes and safety belt well negative case studies that it only worsens psychological well-being of people who practice I'm not exactly sure what he necessarily means with MC mindfulness other than just the kind of superficial casual kind of mindfulness meditation that is taught in a lot of dharmah Halls in the west and to some degree in the East

also um you know it's sort of like meditation and mindfulness without any other kind of Buddhist you know five precepts that's totally optional and just like any kind of knowledge of actual Buddhist philosophy and like how

ethics works and so forth you know
looking into and seriously considering
it to be true the four noble truths
instead of just kind of doing it as an
intellectual exercise just you know the
way uh some academic scholar would study
some text without you know bothering to
consider maybe it's really true or
not so yeah I think in for the most case
you know it's not going to cause
psychological harm to most people
there's always going to be some people
who get messed
up there's some people that they're just
so unmindful that forcing themselves to
be mindful is just just sort of a
traumatic experience and can cause

something to snap anybody who's been to
a lot of meditation Retreats knows every
once in a while somebody will just
snap you know it's it's like it's just
so unnatural like at a mahasi mahasi
retreat where everyone's moving in slow
motion and you're not supposed to talk
to people it's almost like being in a
Chinese thought reform Camp you know
it's like you're only allowed to talk to
one person and that's the teacher and
you minimum sleep minimum food and
you're just doing this relatively
mindless activity and you know there
there are a lot of similarities between
an intensive Meditation Retreat and a

thought reform camp and some people I
mean it's the whole point at the thought
reform camp that the people snap because
once they snap then you know it's like
the the political agent or whatever the
commissar or whoever it is you know then
they come in and just reprogram you
so at least in a Meditation Retreat if
that happens you've got a relatively
benevolent relatively wise person who's
helping you to restructure your
personality
so yeah I
mean some people they're just uh you
know they just want the the fine control
knob of meditation without really
bothering with most of Buddhist ethics

and philosophy and and just just

meditation without the morality and some

some fairly good understanding of what

Buddhism

teaches that I mean it could be I mean

you're going to get some kind of benefit

from it even if you get some harm from

it

too you know you're at least facing your

own monkey mind and realizing that you

do indeed have a monkey

mind but uh yeah I mean it just doesn't

go far enough what I consider to be M

mindfulness is just kind of shallow and

casual and most people do it just

because it it helps them to feel better

you know they're not doing it to wake up

they're doing it just to sleep more

comfortably and I mean this it's not

necessarily a bad thing you know

mindfulness is a stress relief technique

it's it's certainly sort of perverting

something with a very exalted purpose

into something much less exalted

but still I mean it's not just like evil

or

anything

so yeah the negative case studies I

assume it's people that really can't

appreciate dhama for the most part that

are that are doing these studies and

they have a like a predetermined desire

for for the outcome of

it but my opinion about being
mindfulness isn't so much that it's it's
like har Haring people it's just that
it's it's
being like like I already said it's just
sort of perverted into something that it
wasn't intended to be and you know
instead of helping people to wake up for
the most part it just helps them to
sleep more
comfortably so I'm just going to move on
to yuga's next question which is please
talk about magical powers that Buddha
and his disciples apparently showed
during their lives in today would de
devoid of Miracles I think maybe he's

meant in today's world devoid of
Miracles it's hard to believe they
happened yeah well this is very similar
to a question I've already
addressed um with regard to Buddha
having psychic powers and his his
enlightened disciples and even highly
Advanced disciples having psychic powers
um yeah I think part of the reason is
that people are so locked into
scientific materialism that they think
that that like paranormal events just
can't happen anymore and it's their
their belief that it's impossible helps
it to be impossible that I do think that
in premodern societies the Paranormal
was much more common than it is in like

New York

City 21st century New York

city so

I do think that the Buddha did have

psychic abilities that would be

considered Impossible by most western

Buddhists

and I don't know I mean like I like I

mentioned my father was definitely an

experimenter in the occult as he called

it you know the Paranormal as it's more

commonly called

nowadays and I have seen uh fairly good

evidence including scientific evidence

like in parapsychology books books by

Ian Dr Ian Stevenson also with regard to

reincarnation or rebirth that uh and
also I have read the trickster in the
Paranormal which gives a very elegant
explanation of how the Paranormal
works so yeah I've got no problem with
with people having psychic powers that
it's mainly of two kinds maybe more than
two kinds where you've got like the the
very wise person who is just sort of
detaching from the rules that almost
everybody has to follow and then you got
like people like witches who have other
ways of sort of like in a
way uh like
imitating the the the mental states of a
wiser person at least temporarily in
order in order to accomplish certain

things I don't know how clearly I'm I'm
explaining that right now doesn't it's
not it's not sounding very clear to me
what I just said just now but
um I do think that the Paranormal is
just a part of existence that nowadays
Western educated people who adopt
scientific materialism as their faith
just believe it's impossible which helps
it to be impossible at least relatively
impossible it's it's like much less
common now even though 's no way to
completely eradicate
it because that's sort of like the
chaotic element of existence you get rid
of all the chaos you just got just dead

determinism

so I guess I mean I've already talked

about this in a in a question above and

we're going we're heading towards three

hours again so I'm just going to move on

to the next question which is from

extremely rare bird an extremely rare

bird says in Christianity there is

emphasis on taking care of the

unfortunate the sick and needy or

somehow disabled from what I have

gathered from

Buddhism is that it's commendable to do

so but that monks are not supposed to

take care of others not just any Common

People anyway they're supposed to focus

on getting enlightened instead why do

you think this is apart from obvious
reason that monks can't own anything
therefore can't give anything away well
I would say that monks definitely are
strongly encouraged in the texts to take
care of sick monks you know to Thea is a
like brothers and they should all take
care of each other and if one of them
gets sick I mean it's very commendable
and the Buddha definitely endorsed it
that at least one other monk should be
taken care of him and you know if he if
he doesn't get better then the monk
who's been taken care of him inherits
his robe and Bowl his robes and bowl and
um so I mean with regard to that just

internally the S is definitely supposed
to take care of the sick and
needy it's like a mutual support system
going on there of course monks are
forbidden to do any kind of medical
treatment of like ordinary lay people
other than maybe their own
parents so yeah it's like the purpose of
Buddhism is to become enlightened which
involves just radical renunciation you
just opt out of society society's always
going to be [__] up samsara is always
going to be broken you're never going to
be able to fix samsara and so from the
ancient Indian Point of View you just
opt out you bail out which might be seen
as cowardice or whatever but that's like

saying somebody who doesn't escape from
a burning building but decides to stay
in the burning building to apply first
aid to the burn victims is doing
something better than the person who
gets out of the building finds out how
to get out of the building and then
maybe comes back in to help other people
get out but first you got to find your
way out of the building before you can
help anybody else get out of that
building you got to know how to get out
yourself so some people in the modern
West might think it's more noble to just
stay in the burning building possibly
burn to death in the process but before

you burn to death you're applying first

aid to the burn victims who are also

going to burn to

death so let's

see I guess I answered that question

question that was almost a rant there

I'm glad that I can still work myself up

into a semi rant after well over two and

a half hours of

talking wouldn't it be nice if I did

like a whole threeh hour long video just

non-stop

ranting man that would be

glorious let's see here so I guess I

answered that question and so I'm just

going to move on to extremely rare birds

next question regarding neim Koli Baba

so he says regarding neim karoli Baba
and His blessings there are these there
are stories of him basically granting
people's wishes of having children
success Etc in one story he said to a
couple to buy him 10 bags of flour so
that they may have a son and and then
they did have a son another story
involves him putting his feet on a man's
head and supposedly this helped his life
situation and as you know there are many
other stories like this what's your take
on these types of blessings is it magic
or perhaps thanks to an intricate
understanding of karma or what well it's
it's not really magic unless you

consider anything paranormal to be magic
you know it's not like a magician's
trick or like what a witch does it's
just that he was so Advanced so detached
from Sam Sor that stuff that's
supposedly impossible would just
spontaneously keep happening around him
I don't think that he deliberately
decided to perform some miracle it just
flowed through him largely it was being
elicited from the karma of the people
around him like ROM dos used to say the
better you knew Nim karoli Baba maharaji
the more you realize there was really
nobody there it was just like a mirror
reflecting your own Karma back at
you and so this story about his putting

his feet on a man's head it reminds me
of one story about Nim C Baba about how
maharaji neim C Baba took one of his his
disciples and says we've got to go visit
somebody there's this man who's dying
and he he's like keeps thinking about me
so I got to go see him so they just go
through this slum you know like in I
don't know whatever whatever slum city
in India they're going through they're
going through this slum and just go
taking the circuitous route until he
gets to this place and there's a man
lying there in his in his apartment or
his house or his you know wherever he's
staying and maharaji puts his foot on

his head and then the guy dies it's like
the man wanted you know to pay his
respects to maharaji before he died it
was troubling him that you know he
wasn't able to pay his respects to his
Guru before he died and M maharaji just
picked up on that and just you know went
out in search of this guy and just
the man was humble you know he
considered maharaji to be much higher
than him you know he considered maharaji
to be like an embodiment of God and so
maharaji I mean it was just really what
the man's Karma needed you know it was
like What He required spiritually was to
have the foot of the guru on his head
and it's a lot of it is sort of cultural

conditioning conditioning what people
would consider to be the most powerful
thing or something that at least they
can grasp something they can get their
head
around like you know we want to have a
kid and the guru says offer 10 bags of
flour to the ashram and then you'll have
your baby and then it's like their
belief you know their faith in
that they all right we'll do it and then
they just believed it and it their faith
you know like the grain the grain of
mustard seed it just helped it to come
to pass that they got what they
wanted so I mean it's I'm not a

materialist I mean scientific
materialism or at least scientific
empiricism definitely is powerful it
definitely has its place but still it
does not account for everything and
people who try to insist that it account
for everything are just kind of blinding
themselves
so let's see what is the question here
though what's your take on these types
of blessings yeah I pretty much already
gave my my take on
it in that in a way he's just reflecting
their own Karma back at them including
their own beliefs their own expectations
and just what deep down would be
required to really move them enough and

give them enough faith that they really
do you know get what they
need um and it's it's not magic and it
doesn't it's not really an intricate
understanding of karma necessarily
either because neim CI Baba I mean to
some degree there's really nobody there
so he was just in a way sort of like
going with St John of the Cross where
when you reach the stage of perfection
you cease to have your own self-will you
just become an instrument of God you
become like a puppet of God and it may
be that maharaji was like that where
he's not planning out anything he's not
saying thinking to himself I'm gonna do

this you know it just it's just this
spontaneous flow that he's he's he's
in and you know Miracles would just
spontaneously happen just or just weird
synchronicities weird coincidences that
kind of a thing they were much more
likely to occur around somebody like
him
so okay I guess I answered that question
and so I'm at the last question I'm
always taken by
surprise this is the very last question
of this here particular Q&A and it's
from nature cure and nature cure says I
guess you had a copia in Burma how did
you find him how was the relationship
with him is it possible to be without a

copia in Burma as a beu and for those of you who don't know what a copia is copia is a word that's it's sort of like a slang term for Monastery attendant it's short for Capia karaka in poly Capia literally means allowable and karaka means maker of so a copy of karaka or a moner tenant makes things allowable for the
monks so for example they'll make food allowable a monk can't just help himself to food has to be given to him by someone who isn't a monk or at least the food at some point has to be given to a monk from someone who isn't a monk and so you got the copy of caraka who at a

lot of monasteries he'll be cooking the
food for the monks and some monasteries
that have cars and Roads you know
they'll be driving the monks this to
this and that place and you know they'll
be doing the stuff that monks aren't
supposed to do like mowing the lawn or
just you know trimming the bushes that
kind of
thing and uh yeah I did have a copy of
sometimes I didn't have a copy at other
times um the main Monastery I lived at
or the the monastery I lived at longer
than any other Monastery was one bow
Wildlife Refuge Monastery one b B do J
and there was a copy of there and
unfortunately I don't remember his name

but uh he was like the nephew of another Monk who lived there and so he just would come and take care of his his uncle who was he's getting fairly old and uh so he had a big family this monk at this Monastery had like an extended family he had like 50 grandkids and so just it was just sort of a family thing where they just you know sort of somebody volunteered in the family to go and check on their Uncle every day and he just did the stuff that you know he was also a good Buddhist he was a devout Buddhist thinking that he was earning Merit by being the the attendant at the monastery and so he'

just come in from the village like once
a day and you know do what needed to be
done you know clear the grass out of the
the main compound and you know whatever
else needed to be
done he was a good
guy um I stated another Monastery that
went through a series of different copas
you know just people would you know you
have devout Buddhists usually an older
man who just wants to earn Merit he goes
to the monastery and just starts doing
things around the monastery for the
monks you know he's earning Merit you
know it's like a symbiotic relationship
it's a mutualism you know You' got the
the the the attendant who volunteers to

to do things for the mon to help the
monks he's earning Merit the monks are
getting benefit from having somebody
else mow the grass or
whatever it all works out fine so I mean
there were times when I was living alone
out in the forest and there was no copia
you know I was just I didn't even want a
copia and I didn't have any grass to mow
or anything like that I just took my
bull and walked into walked to the
village and got my food and came back
and ate it and there would there would
be people who would come and offer to do
things for me you know there's there's
never any shortage of that in Burma and

I was like the Exotic foreign very
strict monk that people had a very high
opinion of so there was no shortage in
fact the main problem was too many
people wanting to do stuff for me I mean
this one place I was
living they were poor people I mean they
were like Hillbillies and so they
couldn't really afford to offer me
anything which was fine because I didn't
really want a lot of stuff so they would
just like like fix my my trail you know
there was a trail from my cave to the
village and they're just like turning
into this Broad Avenue they're like
chopping down trees and cutting branches
and smoothing Out rough places and

everything and I'm keep telling them
stop it just stop fixing the trail and
it was just like this war of
Wills so let's see how do I get back to
the question from here how did I find
him yeah the copy of finds you just I
mean not like I'm comparing monasteries
tant to dogs but any any monk in Burma's
going to have a dog whether he wants one
or not pretty much unless he's living in
a big city or something but any Forest
monk there's going to be dogs showing up
scy Village dogs who are quite willing
to eat your leftovers and it's kind of a
similar thing with with Monastery
attendants they just spontaneously

appear of their own volition wanting to earn Merit you know they want to hang out with the monks I it's just a very common thing of a among religious people I'm sure that uh in Western countries at times or places where there was people had very deep Faith like the Burmese have in Buddhism that you'd have people going to the the church or the the monastery or whatever and just offering to you know mow the lawn and trim the trim the hedges and you know maybe you know cook for the monks or whatever and everything was

fine

so so I found him just by uh just walking around the monastery and there

he

was and uh how was the relationship with

him yeah the main one D was the nephew

of the old monk um he lied a lot

but for some reason I could just forgive

it really easily because it's sort of

like this simple-minded or I don't want

to I don't want to call him

simple-minded simple-hearted sort of a

childlike desire to please you by

telling you what he thinks you want to

hear which is fairly common in certain

cultures where like my father used to

say he he lived in Alaska for a long

time that in in the language of the

eskimos which they were called back then

there is no word for lying but all of
them do it just because it's considered
to be good manners to tell somebody what
they want to hear to tell them something
that will please them you know it's just
considered to be good
manners and he he was kind of like that
that that Monastery attendant was I mean
I had one Monastery attendant that man I
mean I think I've I've done a video
about this guy before he was just a
crook I mean he was just like stealing
Monastery property and selling it in
town and pocketing the money and doing
all this stuff and finally I kicked him
out of the monaster because he was such
a just outrageous old Crook and then he

went to the the government like the
federal government of Burma and accused
me of being a political agitator so that
I was under investigation by the the
Burmese secret police on political
charges fortunately they did a decent
job they did a responsible job and could
tell easily enough that some Monk living
in a cave meditating out in a forest
somewhere is not going to be much of a
political
agitator but um yeah I mean if if
anything you have more of a problem too
many Monastery attendants than than not
enough and uh I guess I answered that
question so I answered all the questions

and so you guys know the drill by now I
assume those of you who make it to that
the end of these videos that if you have
any questions that you think I might be
able to answer regarding Buddhism
philosophy monasticism Burma me
personally whatever feel free to ask
although I don't know much about
characters in video games because I
really don't play very many of
them and uh like And subscribe if you
have not done so already
and be happy

okay hello and welcome to episode

104 question and answer I am your host

pel

basa and I have like a slight mild

headache today for some reason which is

unusual for me because I usually don't

get headaches unless I got malaria which

hasn't happened in a

while and I also would like to announce

that for my birthday

among a few other things I got a snail

and I named him righteous fist of

Vengeance and then he promptly died so

just a couple days ago I got a new snail

which I named righteous fist of

apocalyptic chaos and I used the

strategy of carefully observing the

snails at the pet store and seeing the

one that was like motoring around eating

stuff instead of just like being all

like closed up just sitting there at the

bottom

and it worked the strategy

worked and there's a good chance that

tomorrow I'll go and get two more

because my uh natural aquarium is

getting overrun with algae and I've

already got three algae eaters and one

snail in there and they're just they're

just not holding up their end of the

deal but with that as a preamble an

introduction if you will I should start

answering questions cuz we got lots of

questions I'm sorry to announce to you
guys with short attention spans that
this is going to be a long one in all
likelihood because there's more than 50
questions this time so I'll just Wade
right in I'll just dive into this
thing and uh for I'll have a
beverage so the first question is from
Saint sword I think or it's Saints word
I think it would be Saint sword though
it's hard to say
Saint sword probably knows however
anyway Saint sword or Saints word says
I've been giving serious thought to
becoming homeless here in the US to
focus on my meditation like a

non-ordained monk I was homeless for
four years before so it's not unfamiliar
territory to me however I was wondering
if you had any thoughts about how a monk
could make it in the US if you weren't
dedicated to the letter of the law but
the spirit of it how could the vena be
adapted to us culture well first of all
I'd like to say congratulations to Saint
sword for your Noble aspiration here and
but I'm not exactly sure what you mean
by being homeless I mean do you mean
like wanding around like a vagrant or do
you mean just being a monk living in a
monastery that technically is not your
house so I'm not exactly sure which but
I mean if it is the former which is like

the more more traditional I mean that's
what the ancient like the earliest
Buddhist monks did it's what the
earliest Christians did is you just took
off
walking and I mean it works in like a a
traditional culture a traditional
spiritual culture like
India um in the west it's very rare you
don't see much of it most homeless
people are like mentally ill drug
addicts it seems like or at least that
is the reputation they acquired for
themselves so one thing that you have to
bear in mind if you really do plan on
just throwing yourself at the mercy of

the universe and just take off walking
with a bowl and robe or some such sort
of like peace Pilgrim did long
ago is you have to have faith you have
to have faith that if you protect dhama
dhama will protect you and then you
fling yourself upon the mercy of the
universe and and for whatever reason
there's the courage and the renunciation
and the dedication to dhamma and all
that acts as like a safety net you get
caught it's sort of like Krishna mury
used to talk about you know the strange
flowers in the garden are the ones that
get special attention from The Gardener
and it's sort of the same way with
humans it's the sort of the strange

unusual humans that really get special attention from heaven or whatever you want to call higher powers and so it does work and it can certainly work but it takes a certain amount of bravery and it takes the faith of a grain of mustard seed to just fling yourself on the mercy of the

Universe

um maybe like half a step back from that I have known at least one monk who lived homeless in the USA not staying at a Monastery even he stayed at a it was like a wildlife refuge outside of San Diego California and every morning he would walk into like a soup kitchen and

and get food you know people would just put free food into his bowl and then he would go back to the wildlife refuge and he but he didn't last very long that way I think is maybe a couple months tops that he was able to live that way or at least that he was willing to live that way um aan cha monks they'll go for alms round and when people get to know them they'll start offering food I knew a monk in the tong Pulu tradition who went for alms round in America and he was getting food I know another American monk who was walking for alms um as a monk in San Jose and he found like a Southeast Asian neighborhood where you know after they found out he existed he

was able to get food pretty

easily also I've been told that one way

that monks can go for alms and really

get enough food to live on in America

and also in Japan is just to stand

outside of a grocery

store

so people coming out of the grocery

store might put food in your bowl they

think it's cool to see a monk or some

religious renunciant standing there

silently with a

bull

otherwise um one might have to actually

handle some money

but um I mean there are certain rules

you could give yourself I mean if if
you're not going to be an ordained beu
then I mean there's nothing necessarily
immoral with handl with regard to
handling money
anyway so you can make some kind of
rules where however much money you get
you spend as much as you need for that
day and then just give the rest to
somebody who's you know poor and gladly
handles money something like
that but uh other possibilities you
could just enter a
monastery if you didn't want to be a
monk you could be like a monastery
attendant you could be ordained as a 10
precept novice something like that but

it's definitely possible and it has
happened before and it's going to happen
continue happening in the future I am
sure so I guess I answered that question
so I'm going to move on to Saint sword's
next question which is any thoughts
about Johnson versus Grant's Pass
which is the Supreme Court decision that
made it so States counties and cities
can now freely make anti-homeless laws
and arrest people simply for sleeping
outside well Grants Pass I assume is
Grants Pass
Oregon and uh this is just sort of like
a a movement back in the opposite
direction um from the way things have

been recently which itself was a move
away from exactly the way things are
going back now I mean there used to be
vagrancy laws my father was a hobo back
in the depression and they had vagrancy
laws back then and then nowadays there
are so many homeless people that have
already been
mentioned that uh I mean it's it's like
a an unenforced law in most
places um I mean if they were suddenly
to crack down on vagrancy just being
homeless I mean there would be millions
of people being crammed into jails or
camps or something because there are so
many homeless people
nowadays so it may be that if you do

become homeless and sleep Outdoors you
may want to avoid places like Grants
Pass Oregon but there's lots and lots of
other places that are going to have lots
of homeless people and uh I mean I
considered as a monk even staying like
at a homeless Camp I mean that would be
a way to be homeless in the West but
chances are you'd probably get you
probably get like mugged or you know
your stuff would be stolen not that
monks should have very much to get
stolen I almost knocked my emergency
backup beverage off the table
there so yeah I really don't think that
vagrancy laws or anti- vagrancy laws are

really going to be like strictly

enforced Nationwide anytime in the

foreseeable future simply because there

are millions and millions of homeless

people

nowadays so I'm sure that more

liberal um like jurisdictions more

liberal governments would be way more

are way less likely to enforce anti-

vagrancy laws even if such laws existed

in that

area and then there may be like hobos

back in the

1930s would just put up uh little codes

you know at the at the train stations

and so forth or the the freight yards I

guess since they'd be riding freight

trains instead of passenger trains

there'd be little signs they'd put up

for you know this area is friendly to

vagrance or this friendly cracks down

and and like does not like vagrant that

kind of thing that sort of thing will

probably get revived I

suppose so yeah it's this Johnson versus

Grant's Pass um yeah it's just a move

back to the way things used to be in the

west where vagrancy was a crime but

considering the way things are now I

really don't think it's going to be

strictly enforced in a lot of places so

a person who is adopting a a homeless

lifestyle for Spiritual reasons or for

whatever reasons I mean they're just

going to have to learn which places to

avoid I

think

so another thing you could just stay at

missions you know flop houses that kind

of thing which is what people used to do

and to some degree probably still

do and so I'm going to move on to the

next question this is from Outer Haven

and outer Haven says do you have any

views on Coleman

Hughes he's an anti-woke moderate

Democrat

journalist and I don't I really did not

know who Coleman Hughes was I think the

only thing I know about him is that he

argued against paying reparations for

slavery that he is a black man I'm

pretty

sure

and he he's like stood before Congress

and gave his case for

why the government should not pay

reparations to black people for their

ancestors being enslaved you know well

over a 100 years ago and it just makes

sense I mean punishing people people who

didn't commit a crime to benefit people

who did not have a crime committed

against them in this case yeah I me it

just doesn't make sense it's just more

handouts to get black people to vote

Democrat I

suppose so yeah with to Coleman Hughes

in in particular I really don't know

that much about him other than what I

have just said and so I hope he is at

least an honest journalist because

frankly I would prefer an honest leftist

journalist to a dishonest right-wing

journalist somebody like Glenn

Greenwald um I I have a certain respect

for the guy simply because he says

things that most journalists absolutely

do not dare to say he will stand up

against the establishment he will speak

truth to power so to speak although it

turns out that in the past when I've

started liking a leftist

who

was honest and had a certain degree of

Integrity before very long he'd just get

on the Trump train and then I'd just be

watching another like Trump

Republican

so yeah that's that's all I know about

Coleman Hughes and uh most of what I

know about honest journalists because

there's really not much to know about

them because there's not very many of

them anymore so I'm just going to move

on to the next question which is from Mr

Prav and Mr pranav says is doing W

visiting I better just stop right here

Wonder now for those of you who don't

know what don't know poly or Sanskrit it just means like devotionalism like bowing to to altars or or images um just devotionalism in general it's like worshiping it's like a worshiping aspect of Eastern religion so I'll just start started over here Mr Prav says is doing London visiting monks taking Parts in festival and doing all sorts of traditional stuffs helps in Enlightenment some people were saying it's not important just doing meditation alone is enough oh some some people were saying it's not important just doing meditation alone is enough what do you think who has better chances at getting enlightened the first who practices

while doing all the traditional stuff or some guy who only does meditation at their home without caring a bit about other aspects of Buddhism well um the first thing that comes to mind is that really just outward actions are ethically neutral so I mean if you're doing lots of bowing and visiting monks and going to festivals and and just traditional stuff feeding monks and so forth um the amount of Merit you're going to get is going to depend on your volition it's going to depend on your will your mental States in general your attitude so some people are just they just do it like people born into a

Buddhist culture for example might just
do it just because that's what everybody
else does you know it's just sort of
like setting up a Christmas tree at
Christmas time or whatever it's just
what you you're supposed to do and
that's not entirely bad but it's not
nearly as good as you're doing it
because you know you have this
motivation to do
good
so yeah definitely people in the west a
lot of people in the west they'll call
themselves sa without even keeping five
precepts
so definitely some of the um more basic
ethical stuff like being moral you know

keeping precepts telling the truth that

kind of thing

um

also just simplifying and slowing down

your life is you know it's a kind of you

know Elementary renunciation which

definitely has

benefits

so yeah it would depend on the

individual getting back to this question

who has the better chance at getting

enlightened the first person who does

all the traditional stuff or the person

who just

meditates um yeah just meditation alone

that's just like using the fine tuning

knob without bothering to touch the the
coarse tuning knob and that's that's not
so good it's like trying to carve a
statue just with sandpaper before you do
the the Chisel and knife stuff
first so definitely you should do more
than just meditate but the all the
traditionalism stuff that really is not
mentioned very much in the texts um or
not really emphasized for beus
especially
it's not really necessary and it can be
a stumbling block too like I lived in
Burma possibly the most Buddhist country
in the world for more than 20 years and
definitely people just get locked in to
this traditional Viewpoint they become

very

dogmatic and that becomes an obstacle to

Enlightenment too so in that case the

the more philosophical westerners might

actually have somewhat of an advantage

at least in a lot of cases

so really it depends on the individual

and you know what is your attitude what

is your mental state while doing

whatever it is that you're doing and

some people might um you know they might

get more benefit from just avoiding the

traditionalism stuff although visiting

monks is good offering stuff to monks

especially if they're strict sincere

conscientious monks you get you get

Merit for that you get good karma you're
Gathering up Treasures in Heaven so to
speak
speak um going to festivals is really
not that big of a deal and just
devotionalism in general in my opinion
is not that big of a deal although some
people are more into devotion and Faith
than others people with like the more
artistic feelings oriented temperament
might get more Advantage out of it than
someone who's like the more
philosophical scientific kind of
temperament who's more in their head and
less in their heart although if you're
in your head you're a head oriented
person trying to cultivate some some

heart centeredness might be good I mean
it could be helpful but again it depends
on the individual one size does not fit
all so you might want to experiment
doing different things and see what
makes you the most content and Serene
and mindful you know with few desires
and all
that so I'm just going to move on to Mr
panov's next question which is how good
were you at practicing indria samur Sila
and how did you practice it well for a
monk there's four kinds of cila if I
remember correctly one of them the most
basic or second most basic anyway is
indria samur Sila Sila is morality

indria is faculties and samur is

restraint so this is the morality of

restraining one's sense

faculties and sometimes in the ancient

text not only ancient Buddhist text but

I think ancient Jane texts also refer to

a monk being like a turtle who just

retracts its limbs into its shell and

that's sort of a a simile or metaphor

for this like guarding the sense doors

which

is Restraint of the sense faculties

although from the Buddhist point of view

there's there's like the the elementary

level which is you just you know go into

a quiet place live a quiet

simple lifestyle you know you're moral

stay away from the wives of other men
don't go out whing and gambling and
drinking and all that you just live a a
simple harmless relatively blameless
life and that is a good step towards
Restraint of the sense faculties because
you are just restraining yourselves and
living a simple quiet kind of life
rather than a noisy complicated kind of
life but then um
more more of a monastic practice I guess
is where you just become so
mindful that you stop having a running
commentary on what you are experiencing
so instead of you hear a noise and then
you're thinking wow what was that noise

was that the neighbor's dog that got out
of their yard again maybe I should go
tell the neighbor that kind of thing
where you're just it's like you get a
little bit of a sense stimulus which
then triggers these these ponchas these
long trains of Association you're just
thinking all over the place and it's
all relatively
delusional so you just stay at the level
of bare sensory stimulation like you
hear a noise it's just you observe the
texture of the noise you're not trying
to interpret what what caused the noise
you know what what shall I name this
noise it's just you observe the actual
quality of the sound as it is impinging

on your

auditory

faculty and then whatever I mean that's

it's the same with whatever whatever it

is that you're like you're seeing you

know you don't interpret what you're

seeing any more than you absolutely have

to you're hearing just all of the senses

if you're eating just the flavor you

don't say oh I like this this is this is

better than yesterday or whatever it is

or maybe it could use a little more salt

or you know the trust is a little soggy

that kind of thing you just

observe how it tastes and and the

textures and everything and leave it at

that you don't have the running
commentary
going so that's essentially what Inda
samura is at the higher level is you're
just being Mindful and just in the scene
there is only the scene in The Herd
there is only the her in the felt there
is only the felt Etc and that applies
even to your own mental States because
thoughts are going to arise whether you
want them to or not and then you just
kind of don't just let it trigger this
long line of
Association like uh I remember in the
platform Sutra of hang which is a a Zen
Sutra hu says you you should not allow
your thoughts to hook up in sequence if

thoughts arise I mean they're going to arise due to the the power of karma going from the point of view of Buddha this philosophy but then you don't just use that as a seed Crystal or just a starting point to just start off on on some long internal monologue so I guess I answer that question so I'm going to move on to the next one because we got lots of questions today and uh I'd like to keep it less than 4 hours if you please I mean if we start getting like really like more more people asking questions which is fine that's why I'm here but still there may be a time in the future

when it may go down to a maximum of two questions each possibly even one at some point so the next question is from Stellar Supreme formerly known as Liber Lam and Stellar Supreme formerly known as Liber Lam says how might a prayer or chant in veneration of the buddhis SAT of sidart

go be structured in poly well Stellar Supreme appears to be a Mahayana Buddhist because he's using the the sanscrit name of sidarta go was spelled g Au instead of sidat Goa spelled with an O but that's all right we won't hold that against

him the mahayan tend to be more devotionalism and they might me more

inclined to uh compose a prayer or chant

in veneration

of godma before he became the Buddha so

that's that's what the buddhis SAT means

in P is someone who's destined to become

a Buddha but hasn't become a Buddha yet

and I've never heard of this in in

Terra I mean there's lots of

devotionalism but

they wouldn't apply to the buddhis

because he's not the Buddha yet I mean

most of these um these qualities he

didn't really acquire until he became

fully

enlightened

so yeah that's I mean you might look

through the literature like mahayan

literature if if Stellar Supreme is um

like open-minded towards Mahayana

Buddhism I mean he might just find uh

like a Sanskrit devotional istic chant

or prayer to some other bodh and then

just kind of make the the few

adjustments required to switch it over

to uh Goda who was like the original

Buddhist bodh sat in what we call

Buddhism

today because all the other bodh satas

were later

developments after the Buddha was like

the first bhis called a buddhis in

historical times setting aside other

buddhismspiritual

[Music]

or Buddha

hood so yeah that would probably be my

best my best bet would if you can't find

one online for example and you can find

just about anything

online um if you can't find some

devotionalism and I'm not exactly sure

why someone would do this but you can

just find some other

devotionalism necessary adjustments

which might be difficult if you're not

skillful in poly or Sanskrit but it can

be done but devotionalism really has

never been my strong point and I've

never really chanted in veneration of

any bodh Sala although um when I was

young before I was a monk I would when I

would light incense or something offer

it up to all the Buddhas and you know

all the sages which would include bodh

satas I

suppose all the holy

people so yeah I'm of limited value with

regard to advice on devising prayers or

chants in veneration of buddhis satas or

buddhis

svas um but it can be done I am sure and

like I say your best bet might be just

take a pre-existing chant towards some

other bodh like a Mahayana bodhisattva

and then just make the necessary

adjustments so that it fit it's Goa

before he became

enlightened so I'm just going to move on

to Stellar Supreme formerly known as

Liber Lambs next question which is what

is the comma of disparaging common

worldlings or normies regard regarding

wallowing in sensuality if it's done in

a firm but constructive way well it

depends on your mental

States this I mean it's it's this way in

the west and in the East too I shouldn't

pick on westerners but I mean in in the

East too they just think that a physical

action just has a certain comma and if

you do this physical action you I mean

you're just going to as a necessary

consequence of doing the physical action
you're going to get this result and
there's lots of examples like anyone
who's read um George Orwell's Burmese
days knows that ooin who is the villain
of the story the main villain he was
doing all this bad stuff and his wife
was warning him that he's going to go to
hell because he's a bad man he says you
don't know anything I'm going to build a
pagod because the Burmese think that if
you build a pagota it's practically a
Stairway to Heaven you're getting such
Merit for building that
pagoto or let's see what was another
good example oh yeah like I lived at
this Monastery out in the forest in

Burma and sometimes a fortune teller
would tell somebody you need Good Karma
so what you need to do is rescue a
chicken from a butcher turn it loose at
the forest Monastery Let it Go free so
some people would come with these little
fluffy dowy baby chickens like this and
I'd
say that chicken that baby chicken is
going to survive two days tops because
there are hawks and Falcons and monitor
lizards and all sorts of things that
like to eat baby chickens and that baby
chicken doesn't have a chance and the
person whose fortune teller told them to
release the chicken they don't care they

don't want to hear this they just get
this sick look on their face like I
don't want to hear this I've been told I
turn a chicken loose and I'm going to
get good karma for it and it just
doesn't work that way so getting back to
the question here of disparaging common
worldlings or normies regarding
wallowing in sensuality if it's done in
a firm but constructive way if you do it
with love in your heart you know you do
it out of compassion to them then even
if they respond negatively I mean that's
on them their reaction is their action
but I mean if you are trying to help and
you're doing it in a in a loving
brotherly kind of way then even if you

might adopt a Stern tone or something
still what you're doing is predominantly
good if you've got good motivations
positive motivations you're making good
positive Karma wholesome Karma and if
you do it out of like anger or disgust
contempt anything like that that's going
to be negative mental States motivating
the action which is going to result in
negative Karma and negative fruition of
that
Karma so again it depends on the
individual and the individual's attitude
and intentions and mental
States so moving on to Stellar Supreme
formerly known as Liber Lamb's next

question which is is there any record of
a monk walking around conversing and
whatnot while maintaining
samade yeah there there are cases of
that
like there's a story I think it's in the
commentaries of a monk who was
meditating on the 32 parts of the body
especially bones so that when he would
be walking around interacting with
people and I think it might have been
ajan mun who did this for a while too
they're just con um they're meditating
on Bones to such a degree that when they
see people they're just seeing walking
skeletons
and I think it might have been aan man

or ajan Mahaba or or somebody of that caliber who would have to identify people by by their teeth because that's all he really that's the only way he could distinguish them and uh so I mean you're still interacting while at the same time you know you're still just so absorbed in your object of meditation that it's everything is translated through

that or just being mindful I mean he's talking about samati here but I mean mindfulness it is possible to have a conversation mindfully I I've had that spontaneously happen when I was a monk in Burma I remember walking back and

forth with with this this old man
supporter of mine really good guy if
he's still alive he's might be a hundred
years old
now and I'm just I was so used to
meditating I'm walking back and forth
you know hanging out with him and I just
keep being mindful of like the vibration
in my throat and the movements of my
mouth and so forth when I'm talking and
it's like the conversation is just
nature taking its course you know it's
not I'm not even really deciding what
I'm going to say I I'm just observing
this conversation taking place with
emphasis on observing you know like the
the tactile sensations of you know

vibration of the vocal cords and just
the the sound of the talking and the
movement of my mouth and so forth but
that's more a matter of um mindfulness
rather than
concentration so I guess we just go back
to the the old uh story in the
commentaries about
bones so I mean it is possible it does
happen and like a fully enlightened
being would have profound concentration
no matter what they're doing one would
assume so I think I'm just going to move
on to the next question which is from
xenoid and xenoid says a few q&as ago
you mentioned that Orthodox terraa

doesn't have a concept of the subconscious mind in the Freudian or yian sense this made me think of a few questions about buddhism's relationship to the subconscious mind so the first of these questions is how was the Mind understood in the west before Freud I don't know much about the history of psychology so I guess as someone who's grown up in a postf frud world it's hard for me to understand how people believed the Mind worked before his time I've heard that Kant believed that all thoughts are driven by emotions and that our emotions ultimately govern our actions but that was very close to Freud's time and pointed out by a

revolutionary philosopher which is not

representative of the common Westerner

at the

time well it has changed like in

Classical Greece and Rome I think a lot

of people believe that our thoughts were

largely implanted into us by

gods and

uh let

see but I mean that's that's kind of a

strange psychology that's more verging

towards theology um I think there have

always been people that had deep insight

into human nature like dovi was prean

and he had a profound appreciation and

understanding of human nature

I mean he he was able to um portray you
know really deep aspects of human
psychology in his fiction without having
the theories like like Freud came up
with so you can understand something
just through experience without having
to formulate theories to account for it
people knew about gravity for example
long before Isaac Newton came along and
came up with an equation for
Gravity
so there's that and I think I mean
there's always been weird theories you
know like John Lock may have been one of
The Originators of the tabula Rossa just
the blank slate idea that human beings
have no animal instincts at all no

innate knowledge it's all just you know
we're just a blank slated birth which a
lot of leftists are falling back to even
though it's it's pre-scientific and kind
of pseudo scientific at this point I
it's obviously untrue but Carl Marx I
mean he was pretty much pref Freudian
pre- darwinian also did not they really
didn't have any appreciation for the
fact that human beings have animal
instincts that we are a species of
animal Laden with animal instincts even
even the mid 20th century even up into
like the the 19
1980s it was just common understanding I
w't say common knowledge of

psychologists who supposedly are
scientists that humans have almost no
animal instincts you know there's like
the suckling Instinct in babies you know
newborn babies instinctively know how to
swim and they they lose that ability if
they don't get taught to swim or they
don't get experience at swimming for
during their first several
months um but I mean we're just we're
just loaded with animal instinct we are
a species of
animal
and so even in ancient times people
would be aware of certain aspects you
know like men identify with their
thoughts women identify with their

feelings more you know not just entirely
men don't entirely identify with their
thoughts but they're more inclined to be
that way women are more inclined to be
more feelings oriented stuff like this
people have known probably since the
Stone Age It's just that it wasn't
formulated ated into scientific
theories so it's it's hard to say
exactly um what premodern or pref
Freudian Psychology was
like yeah but there have been people who
had just had a profound understanding of
human nature um without necessarily
having to
learn

any like psychological theories just as
there are people who are excellent horse
riders who never had to learn
horsemanship at a at an academy or
anything or they learned they're really
good archers without having to learn
archery other than just practicing
themselves they didn't have theories
about it they just did
it so I would assume that most of the
deep understanding of how the human mind
works was just done empirically through
observation and the more observant
intelligent people people would have
maybe deeper insights with regard to how
things work than than other people more
superficial kind of

people which isn't much of an answer to

your question

maybe but I mean I also I'm No Authority

on pref Freudian psychology I mean he

was sort of like the the Isaac Newton or

maybe even the Galileo of

psychology and so studying physics

before Galileo I mean there kind of

wasn't physics before gal before Galileo

and there kind of wasn't psychology

before

Freud

so I think I'm just going to move on the

next question also from

xenoid now it is as follows do you

believe that the historical Buddha

believed in a subconscious or
unconscious mind he obviously understood
that the mind has multiple working
components as he lays out in his model
of the five Aggregates he posited that
thoughts emotions and perceptions of
mental and physical phenomena are all
interrelated and simultaneously
conditioning each
other showing that he obviously believ
that the mind has depth and doesn't just
randomly [__] out thoughts and feelings
yeah he actually said that mind doesn't
just randomly [__] out thoughts and
feelings
this question was asked on the Discord
server and one person with a certain

amount of insight actually pointed out

that the Buddhist idea of anas or latent

Tendencies might qualify as a kind of

Buddhist subconscious mind although it's

it's sort of latent Tendencies because

they're not

really I mean in a way they're not

really conscious yet you know you have a

latent tendency to react to a certain

stimulus in a certain way so long as

that stimulus isn't happening it's not

like you know you've got that part of

your mind just kind of waiting for its

opportunity it's just sort of latent

it's

dormant but still karma in karma in

general is a mental state it is
volition and karma in general also could
qualify as a kind of subconscious mind
you know it's like you are creating your
reality as a result of karma but you're
not doing it at a conscious level and so
somebody who's fully enlightened who
just sees right through everything yeah
he would know about that he might not
explain it in a scientific way though I
mean he just might grock it you know he
just intuitively sees and understands it
without formulating laws or anything
about exactly how it
works and the Buddhist way of looking at
things would be very different from the
scientific way of looking at things

anyway because because it's like I mean
Buddhism early Buddhism especially was
also not only pre Freudian pre pre-
darwinian pre-scientific and so they
just assumed that we aren't really
animals in fact they really didn't have
a really deep appreciation of animal
psychology
either
so yeah it it just be like a a way of
looking at reality just the ancient
Indian way just setting aside fully
enlightened beings for the moment the
ancient Indian way of looking at reality
in certain ways would be superior to the
modern Western Way or postmodern Western

way of looking at reality but it would
be very different just different
assumptions that you're starting off
with different cultural conditioning
that sort of
thing
so yeah I do not think that the Buddha
would be ignorant of the workings of the
subconscious mind because he would see
the mind way better than we do way
better than Freud did way better than
any clinically trained psychologist
unless they somehow became fully
enlightened
so yeah I think uh I mean just
remembering past lives and so forth that
might be accessing deep subconscious

levels of your own mentality so he would
be able to get down that like even
psychic powers in general would require
getting down below the super icial ego
which is really not all there is to mind
I think a lot of people just assume that
the conscious surface level of their
mind is the only that's that's what
their mind is you know they're unaware
of the fact that most of their mind is
not this superficial ego that there's
all kinds of things going on at deeper
levels that The Superficial ego that
that can calls itself me doesn't know
and so a fully inlight being would just
be able to see through all the

levels so but I mean he couldn't really
start teaching psychology to ancient
Indians partly because they wouldn't
understand it or they wouldn't get it
and partly because it wasn't even
necessary to know that stuff in order to
become
enlighted so I'm just going to move on
to the next question also from
xenoid and he says to me there seems to
be an issue between the Freudian yian
model of mind and the Buddhist model in
that Freud and Yung very firmly believed
in a self while Buddhism explicitly
denies it I often see westerners
particularly yans equate the
subconscious unconscious with the soul

in Buddhism there's no singular and
everlasting thing that mental phenomena
rest upon become part of bounce off of
let's see I have to start at that
sentence here in at the beginning here
in Buddhism there's no singular and
everlasting thing that mental phenomena
rest upon bounce off of or are filtered
through because every part of the mind
is subject to dependent origination does
this mean that the Freudian or yian
model and the doctrine of anata are
fundamentally contradictory I wonder
what a debate between sedara Goda and a
Freud or Yung on the nature or structure
of the mind would have looked like well

the thing is Freud and

were unenlightened you know they were

stuck in a samsaric context whereas the

Buddha was not stuck in a samsaric

context so I mean from the samsaric

perspective you can say that there is a

self you can say there's a subconscious

mind Etc but at the level of Ultimate

Reality which unenlightened people

really can't appreciate then there is no

self period

so they're not necessarily contradictory

anymore than um samsara and nibana are

contradictory it's just that it's two

different levels of reality one is like

a conditional virtual level of reality

and the other one is the absolute level

of

reality so like theories of psychology

and human nature and so forth would

apply to the samsaric level of virtual

reality

faras no self would is more

applicable um I mean obviously more

applicable to Ultimate Reality it's

paramat SAA ultimate truth and not

conventional truth conventional truth

you can say sure there's a self you know

even the Buddha was talking about you

know make make an island unto yourself

that kind of a thing you know he's

talking about this person and that

person and me and you and him and her

you know as though they were real which

is just uh W Des is just using some

saric language to communicate to some

saric

beings but above that is the ultimate

which is without self without

individuality

so yeah I mean if there was a debate I

don't think the Buddha would actually

debate but you could have sort of a

Socratic dialogue between goab Buddha

and Sigman Freud I think Yung would

probably Faire better since Sigman Freud

was just like a complete

atheist um Yung was a little more was

rather more spiritual than Freud so I

think Yung and and the Buddha might

actually meet with some agreement and
you know get along better than Freud who
might just turn up his nose at this
ignorant
Indian fakir or whatever however ever he
would interpret the Buddha because he
believed all religion was essentially
[__] I'm pretty sure so he would
consider the Buddha to be a bullshitter
so to
speak so I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from creel who in
a previous Q&A gave me permission to
pronounce his name any way I saw fit but
whether he really doesn't mind me
calling him throat warbl or Mangrove I

don't know

anyway creel Alias throat warbler

Mangrove says simple question where is

the Buddha now well it may be so simple

that there's no answer because that is

essentially one of the questions that

the Buddha refused to answer that is

what happens to a datag what happens to

a Buddha after death he would not answer

the

question so I mean if the Buddha doesn't

answer it how am I going to answer where

is the Buddha now he's off the scale you

know some Sor really is irrelevant to

the Buddha I mean the Buddha himself

just the Buddha as an individual would

be purely samsaric

anyway because as I just said in
Ultimate Reality there is no
individuality so yeah it's it's not as
simple as it seems because that is one
of the questions the Buddha refused used
to answer what happens to a Daga after
death I mean you can't even really say
if a Daga exists even before
death to say yes is invalid to say no is
invalid to say yes and no is invalid to
say neither yes nor no is invalid all
options are
invalid so yes it's not so simple of a
question I'm just going to move on to
the next one this is from game fap and
game fap says who is your favorite

fictional

Buddhist and then in the I think game

fap asked this um under the the previous

uh Q&A uploaded onto YouTube and

somebody else responded by saying it was

Qui Chan Kan which actually I might not

have even thought of qu Chan K from the

old TV show kung fu about this Shaolin

Buddhist monk who kills the Imperial

nephew kills the emperor 's nephew and

then has to flee China this is back in

the the

1800s and then goes to America because

his father was was an American who had

lived in China and married a Chinese

woman and

uh

so yeah maybe quite Shan Kan possibly I
mean Master Poe the blind Master Poe he
was he was definitely wiser than Quai
Chang was but then again my favorite
fictional Buddhist also could possibly
be and this this is controversial now
get ready brace yourselves but it could
be holding callfield
in JD
salingers um The Catcher in the Ry and I
remember a long time ago an American
monk we were both in Burma at the time
we're sitting out in front of my cave
and he's saying that that uh The Catcher
And The Ry is considered by many
Buddhists to be a Buddhist book and I

just thought that was just silly at the time but then after reading essentially the sequel to The Catcher And The or yeah the sequel which is uh a book called Fran Franny and zooie it became plainly obvious that the whole thing The Catcher And The Ry and also Franny and zooie after that was a kind of allegory you know like a Buddhist allegory so Holden Coffield was kind of a bodh satva even though it's all an allegory and most people don't don't realize it just like most people who read Lord of the Flies don't realize that that is just an allegory from start to finish that everything in the book represents something else

symbolically so yeah quite Chan Kaner

maybe holding callfield if you want to

be uh

controversial so I'm going to move on to

the next question this is from Satori

enjoyer and sator enjoyer says what are

the strengths and weaknesses of the WEA

practice and tradition is is it really

different in the US from in Burma or

Asia in general well there really is no

the weasa practice and

tradition first of all weasa is really

not a good name

for um what it's applied to weas we like

the weas practice is essentially study

batana weasa isn't something that you do

weasa is inside which

arises and we weasa can arise if you're

practicing mindfulness like s batana or

if you're practicing um concentration

like you're practicing jna weasa can

arise in either either way so it might

be better to refer to it as sa batana

but I mean there's there's different

kinds of weasa even in Burma they talk

about you know doing

weas but there's different schools you

know you've got mAh

style weasa you've got Goa style weasa

which a lot of people just assume that

weas is the Goa method in the west then

you got like oh who is it

moo and then there's another one I can't

I think it's the MoGo method that puts a lot of emphasis on when you're meditating on like an orthodox interpretation of picha samua like the the 12 links and a lot of the time you're listening to to tap apes or recordings of people explaining dependent core rising and that also is called weos so there's each school will have its own interpretation of weasa or like some kind of meditation practice that

doesn't you know doesn't use Janna necessarily that it's it's more based on mindfulness than on you know sitting in really deep meditative States like

jna so what are the strengths and weaknesses it it depends on what school it is I mean it could be that Satori enjoyer thinks we pize essentially the Goa method um the strengths of the Goa method is I mean at least you're taking meditation seriously they do take keeping five precepts seriously you're not allowed to do a longer retreat than the standard 10day Retreat I'm pretty sure I think they're called courses unless you have been meditating two hours a day for something like two years so I mean it's strong in that sense in just like a traditional conservative interpretation of of basic dhamma practice although the weaknesses of the

the Goa method it's it turned into kind of a cult of personality based on SN Goa himself and it's very simplified and streamlined you know it ignores most of Buddhist philosophy and just uh emphasizes like goa's interpretation of practicing we posum and whatever philosophical teachings happen to reinforce and support that so but with regard to mahasi or something I mean one of the weaknesses of people who don't practice Janna is they're really missing out on the most subtle States and like I keep saying you know even according to the stock standard description of the four janas

fourth jna is called purity of

mindfulness so if you want perfect

mindfulness you got to attain fourth jna

which is not weas that's that's samata

that's that's doing the the samama

stuff so I think one of the weaknesses

if we piz this the very it's the very

idea of splitting terraa Buddhism into

two schools or two sasos sometimes in

Burma they'll ask ask you now what s do

you follow we Poss s or

SAS but really I don't think that the

Buddha divided his teachings up into two

different roads two different paths that

really they're supposed to be integrated

that when you're sitting in meditation

you cultivate the the deeper Sade States

and when you're moving around making

noise then it's more important to be

mindful of you know like indria Samila

like restrain of the sense doors and

just being Mindful and aware

of like whatever stimulations are

impinging upon your

sensorium so to

speak so oh there's another question

here uhoh he soran joy that Sly devil he

uh asked a two-part question which adds

up all of his questions to four because

the second half of that question is is

it really different in the US from in

Burma or Asia in general well in Burma

the main difference is there's different

kinds of weas there's more different
schools of like Terra Buddhism including
weasa emphasis on on Buddhism in Burma
you know there's all these different
schools there's theu method and and moo
method and uh see um mahasi of course
Tulu sunlun there's all these different
schools with their own interpretation of
of we posa or of practice in
general and uh also it's just more
conservative you know they put way more
emphasis on the importance of monks they
put way more emphasis on you know
feeding monks and doing the ceremonies
and you know doing all the stuff that
was asked about earlier on in this Q&A
just all the traditional stuff you know

they're just boring into it you know

it's like it's like water to a fish

whereas in the west there's all this

political stuff that's gotten mixed in

and it's been very watered down and the

difficult stuff that they can't do is

avoided or ignored and respect for monks

is much decreased in general and just on

and on

so yeah I think you'd still be better

off practicing weasa at an Asian Center

like in Burma than you would at

someplace like spe

Rock although there are good places like

The tagata Meditation Center in San Jose

is a good place for practicing mahasi

method pretty much like you'd be
practicing it in Burma it's uh run by a
Vietnamese group that have converted
over to the Burmese mahasi
tradition so I guess I'll just move on
to sator enjoyer next question can the s
in the US survive the Boomers who remade
American Buddhism for their original
version of Woke ideology and are still
the major source of revenue for it dying
any ideas for what might come after the
Boomer Lia well one possibility that
comes to mind is that you're going to
have Western
monasticism supported largely by Asian
immigrants from you know immigrants from
Buddhist countries and that's like the

aan cha tradition receives a lot of
support from like the Thai Community
local Thai communities so you could have
Western monks supported largely at first
especially by Asian immigrants and then
a lot of people will see that this
really is a highquality product and I
want to support this too and you'll have
more and more westerners supporting um
like serious monastic Buddhism in the
west and probably after the Boomers have
faded away there'll be less of
a less of a stereotype of Western
Buddhists being Looney leftists flying
rainbow flags and so forth
I mean being open-minded about and

tolerant of homosexuality queerness that

sort of thing is fine but really when it

becomes like uh an ideological statement

you know promoted in the dumah Halls

then I mean especially the stuff that

really is contrary to what early

Buddhism

taught so let's see

here I almost started ranting there and

I kind of lost lost the

thread so can the song in the US survive

the Boomers I think so and I think they

might do well I mean it might the

population of Western Buddhist might go

down a bit but it's going to be a lot of

Deadwood is going to be

lost and uh yeah I think all in all it

may be beneficial once you get sort of

the leftist

activists but there's like a whole new

generation of leftist activists

especially in in uh Academia I mean you

read some academic papers uh like

Buddhist in quotes here Buddhist

academic papers that are coming out

lately by middle-aged people who are you

know Gen X at at the oldest and it's I

mean it's worse than what the Boomers

were teaching you know it's just the

queering of Buddhism for

example

so and then all the stuff about you know

mindfulness of white privilege and

mindfulness of inherent racism and you know 50% off for all people of color to attend the Retreats which is discriminatory etc etc so I think that uh I mean it might become more polarized you're going to have like the more conservative traditionalist monastic emphasis on Buddhism which will be supported largely by Asian communities with with hopefully more and more westerners really seeing that this is more of a true dhama than this other stuff that is just is just drifting farther and farther away from what the Buddha originally taught so I don't think that it's a bad thing I'm I'm not blackpilled on that at

all so I'm just going to move on to

storan joyer next

question which is can you say anything

about the idea that cheah or mind does

achieve Awakening and remains after

nibana it seems from what I have read of

Thai Forest tradition terraa that this

is the case to that tradition does that

contradict anata well there are a lot of

taii aons who do talk about the cheetah

as the knower you know it's in a way

they're sort of making a self out of

Consciousness or the observing

mind which is not strictly

Orthodox is they've they've adopted more

of like a Von interpretation of of the

casee of the human condition of of of
mentality um which technically speaking
is not not Orthodox but see that mean
cheetah does not achieve anything I mean
to the extent that you've got like let's
say for the sake of argument that
Ultimate Reality is infinite formless
Consciousness and there are a couple of
sutas in the texts that do support that
idea that like Nirvana is infinite
formless Consciousness but you don't
reify the absolute and so you don't
refer to it as this it that exists you
know you just kind of avoid talking
about it as much as
possible so if reality Ultimate Reality
is infinite formless Consciousness it's

not going to achieve anything all all

you're doing is you're fading out and

just leaving that behind which was

always the same long before you came

along you know sort of like

God

so yeah that would be that would be how

I would interpret

it so yeah and to some degree what

certain taii aons teach is really

unorthodox and does contradict anata

which doesn't necessarily disqualify

their wisdom it's just that taii aons

are less scholarly and less dogmatic

than Burmese seat for example partly

because back in like the 1800s I think

the Burmese sacked the capital of
Thailand which was Audia at the time and
it was like their ecclesiastical schools
and everything just collapsed as a
result of that and never fully recovered
so burmes Seattles are very scholarly
and very dark Matic they know what is
orthodox and what is not Orthodox as a
general rule whereas the ties bless
their hearts they base their
understanding of dhma more on their own
personal experience which obviously has
its benefits but they might use
unorthodox ways of explaining that which
then sort
of through the back door makes them into
Heretics sort

of so

cheetah doesn't achieve Awakening

because cheetah is the Awakening that is

achieved it's just that we have like

this very limited version of cheetah

which then once this perverse belief

that we exist as an individual dissolves

then it just it just becomes wide

open you have access well I mean just

all of cheetah is there in its formless

Majesty it's formless

infinitude so to speak but again

referring to it as an IT referring to it

as it is a as though it were a thing

kind of drags it into samsara and it's

not samsaric nibana is not samsaric and

if we interpret nibana as infinite

formless Consciousness which is

unmanifest Luminous all around as the as

the texts say

then it's not something that uh achieves

anything it's just always there and it's

just that our knowledge of it is

obscured because we are

delusional so as it's sort of like a

Buddhist godhead sort of like Brahman in

Von I'm just going to move on next

question now this is from

Arin and Arin asks me a surprisingly

difficult question which is kind of also

an easy easy question because I just

don't know the answer to it so I can

just say I don't know and move on to the

next one but anyways aran's question is
Gandhi was said to have a massive
interest in the occult what do you know
about this and where would be the best
resource on this subject well I've read
Gandhi's autobiography and I Al also
read a biography of him by Lewis Fischer
and I don't recall either one of them
really discussing the
occult the I mean the most occult thing
I can think of with regard to Mahatma
Gandhi or mandes k
Gandhi is that he practiced meditation
and his favorite meditation method was
the ramama just just repeating Ram over
and over again which kind of could get

you into some sort of Ault State

maybe but

um if he did have a massive interest in

the

occult I suppose if you wanted to learn

about that you might just do a search on

you know Mahatma Gandhi occult something

like that and some kind of um essays or

studies or something might come up about

that um why he would remain silent about

his interest in the occult or

fascination with the occult I don't know

unless maybe I mean it was years ago

that I read the autobiography and the

biography so maybe I just don't remember

him talking about his fascination with

the

occult but yeah I guess your best bet if
you wanted to learn more about it just
do a search on the internet you know
muhamad Gandhi a cult and see what comes
up and I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from White Ash
Piper white ash Piper says if it's true
that there is no self then how can
murder or War be bad karma momentum make
a judgment call why would it be that the
world is delusional how did that
happen well
how can murder or War be bad karma well
if there there is no self at the
ultimate level at the ultimate level
there also is no murder no war and not

even any Karma at the ultimate level

you've got like I was saying just just

like a couple minutes ago infinite

formless Consciousness

undifferentiated unmanifest luminous all

around so there's no war or Bad Karma or

murder or any or self in any of that so

at the level the samsaric level where

there is a self or at least there seems

to be one there also seems to be murder

and War and Bad

Karma but when you transcend the self

you transcend all of that samsaric

[__] so it's it's it's difficult

some people and I hope white ash Piper

isn't one of these but they just cannot

deal with more than one level of reality

at the same

time but that's the same essentially

what we got with nibana and samsara it's

two different levels of

reality and they

coexist so let's see let's see here

momentum makes a judgment call yeah well

karma is like the psychic momentum of

your mind it's the momentum of your

mental States and some people think well

how can mere momentum make choices well

I mean it's dependently co-arising there

are causes for the

choices and it's it's tinged with this

ultimately real Consciousness which may

actually add a certain amount of

freedom in some mysterious paradoxical
way so that's that's kind of one
question then he also ask why would it
be that the world is
delusional how did that happen well I
assume most of you have already heard
the the simile of the block of marble
tine times
the block of marble you got a sizeless
let's just call it sizeless block of
stone it contains within it every single
possible statue every single atom every
single molecule is already in the exact
place it has to be for that statue to be
there you just have to remove the
extraneous Rock generally with your
imagination that's that's how the the

the sculptor does it at

first and so they're all in there

they're they're really they really are

all in there and some of those statues

become are so complex that they become

recursive they become self-aware and

then they start thinking that they are

real and separate from all the rest of

the

rock so then they make virtual judgment

calls and that's that's how the world is

delusional well if you want us you want

another explanation I've given this

explanation more than once also is that

in order for there to be multiplicity in

this world in this Cosmos in order for

there to be a difference between [__]
and Shinola in order for there to be a
difference between this and that there
has to be relations that that's how
perception
works first you've got the papancha
element of perception which like
differentiates things and then you got
like the see papancha Sanka you got the
Sanka um aspect which is giving a name
to it so to perceive something you first
separate a figure from ground and then
you identify that figure you know you
give it a name or even if it's just a a
that or what the hell is that still
you've got to single it out and separate
it from the rest of everything else but

in order to do that it takes
relations same as different from you
know you got to have some kind of way of
differentiating figure from ground and
these ways of differentiating figure
from ground are purely psychological
they don't exist out there there is no
pure same as or different from that can
be extracted from a sample of matter a
chemist can analyze a sample of matter
and just divide it down into its
constituent components he's never going
to be able to isolate pure same as or
different from that that's all
psychological that's all
mental but without same as and different

from you you just have this

undifferentiated essentially a

void so let's see did I answer the

question if it is true there is no self

then how can murder a war be bad karma

yeah I I already answered that how could

there be bad karma for that matter

momentum make a judgment call yeah okay

I think I answered that came close

enough to answering it

anyhow and why would it be that the

world is delusional yeah I pretty much

answer that too thinking that what is

constructed in your mind is really out

there that is

delusional how did that happen well

whatever can happen does happen and must

happen and will always happen because
it's statues in that block of marble
that are always going to be there no
matter what we do the best we can do is
transcend it but still the the deluded
us that is hasn't transcended it yet
it's still going to remain in there
which is kind of too bad really but
that's just the way it is at least
according to
me so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from covac and
sead zida and covac and CAD zida says
how come anytime people have past life
memories it's always a human memory
don't ever see someone mentioning

memories of being a monkey shark lizard
some alien species or some
incomprehensible kind of existence is
instead it's almost always someone in a
very relatable human context that
someone can make up in their imagination
well it has to be something conceivable
I mean if it's Beyond Your Capacity to
conceive you're not going to conceive it
but it is true in Burma some people do
have animal past life memories and
possibly even like ghost or or daa kind
of past life memories but it's all like
traditional Orthodox Buddhism that is
well within their range of stuff that
they've they've learned through cultural
conditioning but uh like P Seattle in

one of his books talks about some woman
who had a past life regression during
meditation of being an
elephant and uh I was at a tanid dong
Retreat where a woman had a past life
regression of being a a dragon I think I
mean she was making the these weird kind
of growly noises in the back of her
throat causing the teacher to get up and
go and attend to her immediately because
it was like weird sounds this woman was
making but uh yeah I've never heard of
anyone having a past life regression as
some sort of alien being with tentacles
breathing liquid ammonia or anything
like that um I think one of the main

reasons I there's two main reasons that can come to mind as why people have past life aggressions they remember being a person and not a non a non-human one is that it's their subconscious imagination Conjuring this stuff up like through hypnotic trance that kind of a thing a lot of the time it's just your subconscious imagination Conjuring up this really vivid imagination this imaginary past life regression because you're told to remember a past life and so you dutifully just conjure one up in your imagination I'm sure that happens a lot of the time so that's one another explanation of why past life aggressions are usually people is

because most of us were people in past in our past lives you know our past several lives anyway it's just that we have human Karma so it causes us to be reborn as humans as a general rule we're just our momentum is is moving in a human direction and you know we might be getting into to a more refined human level you know we might have started off as crude barbarians with no sense of compassion or whatever and we're gradually getting wiser and better you know we're becoming more saintly or sagely kind of humans but still for most of us we are on a human trajectory you know you die as a human

you've got predominantly human Karma so

that causes you to be reborn as a human

again so that's another reason those

would be the two main

reasons take your pick he pays your

money and he takes your choice so I'm

just going to move on to covac and CAD

Z's next

question which I don't fully understand

because I think he uh failed in the

grammar Department in this

question but I will proceed maybe I'll

I'll figure it out reading it this time

in jism there are two main branches with

the most obvious distinction being that

one sect has naked monks like mahavira

was while the other sect has monks wears

white cloth do the Buddhist text ever
describe what the monastics of the Jane
tradition as naked like their
leader so cacad Zena gets a d at Best in
in English grammar on this one does the
Buddhist text ever describe what the
monastics of the Jane tradition as naked
like their
leader um I think maybe he's asking if
the Buddhist text ever described Janes
as being
naked um in which case yeah I mean they
would belong with the the naked
athetics so yeah the aicas were pretty
much all naked I'm pretty sure and uh
the James and the aicas um were closely

related I think it may be that maali goala who was um one of the leaders of the Jas in the Buddhist time uh at one point was a disciple of mahavira it could be vice versa but I think it was um malali goala the the aaka who had gone to the Jane mahavira for for Spiritual instruction at some point so um yeah it's I think Janes were generally described as naked in the in the Buddhist text if if their clothing was described at all or their lack of same that they generally fit under the category of the naked Aesthetics they were like the hardcore radicals who looked down their nose on the Buddhist monks as like shaven-headed

householders because they wallow in
sensuality like they they are able to to
wear sandals you know they can they can
use a sun shade if they want to they can
they can accept invitations to people's
houses and eat good food
there so but um I have read some Jane
texts and uh i' I've mentioned this
before it's one of the weirdest rules
that in in the Jane text that I ever
came across it's like a Jane has to
cross a river there's no Ferry there's
no Bridge how is he going to cross that
River he can only cross the river in a
boat if the boat was going to cross over
anyway because if the boat goes over

just to take this Jane aeic across the
Jane is making Karma by doing that and
the whole religion the whole philosophy
of of jism at least at this level is you
exhaust all of your karma Good Karma Bad
Karma you don't make any new Karma you
avoid making new Karma so you're not
allowed to accept food from somebody if
there's a hungry dog sitting nearby
because you might be depriving of that
depriving that dog of of a meal which
would make karma for yourself even if
there's lots of flies buzzing around
you're not allowed to accept food there
because you might be depriving those
flies of food so you can't cross the
river if they're going to take you

across specially because that's making
new Karma so if the boat's already going
to go across and you are just able to
get on it and go across with with
everybody else if the boat starts to
sink you're not allowed to help bailing
out because that would be making Karma
it might be making good karma but that
doesn't matter you want to get rid of
all of your karma so what you're
supposed to do is if you're the kind of
Jane that wears clothes you take your
clothes off and you fold it up and put
it on top of your head so that when the
owner of the boat gets pissed off at you
and throws you overboard for not helping

to bail it out your clothes won't get so
wet and that's in ancient Jane texts
although possibly not the addition of
Jane text that exists in the Buddhist
time because the Janes lost their their
texts twice I think simply because they
were such Aesthetics that there were
fewer scholar monks like unlike the the
Buddhists there were fewer Scholastic
Janes that memorized this stuff and So
eventually their their scriptures got
lost because there were no monks left
who ad memorize them so they had to have
councils like like a Buddhist great
Council to kind of
restructure um like a Jane body of of
canonical

texts so at least by the the time they

got to um the body of texts that exists

today that Janes had were like de Gambar

or skyclad and

I can't remember what the ones that were

white were

called SRA something like

that so I I hope I answer that question

but I'm not exactly sure what covac and

CAD Zena was

asking so I'm just going to move on to

covac and cot Z's third question which

is do you support the 969 movement and

I'm relatively indifferent to the 969

movement I did not participate in it in

any way

um I did not support or detract you know

it was just something going on in Burma

when I was there and I you hear a little

bit about it from time to time but I

just did not get involved so I do not

support it but I do not I have not

detracted from it or gone against it I'm

not for or

against and for those oh

boy Godzilla

okay so let's

see what was I saying 969 movement oh

yeah for those of you who don't know

what the 969 movement is it's a movement

in Burma to keep Burma Buddhist mainly

is to try to keep Burma from being taken

over by

Muslims and so there are some monks who
are really outspoken in their distaste
for allowing Muslims into the country
and for possibly even removing the
Muslim that exist already in the country
and uh yeah it just really didn't have
anything to do with me and so I
just really it was just something that
I'd hear about sometimes so I'm just
going to move on to the next question
this is from
Austin and Austin said did your foot
constantly fall asleep when you
meditated I've been meditating for a
long time and this doesn't seem to go
away um no it didn't constantly fall

asleep every once in a while one of my
feet would fall asleep usually the top
one like if you're sitting in the full
Lotus you know you kind of have the your
legs kind of like this and let see the
top foot here was the one that would or
would it be this one well anyways one of
them would fall asleep sometimes but if
you sat long enough generally it would
the feeling would come back it usually
if I sat for like half hour or less then
it might be a problem when I tried to
stand up but
um yeah it wasn't really a a serious
problem for me it did happen sometimes
but you generally if you sat long enough
it would go away but it may be that

Austin here has um like the circulation in his legs is somewhat different from mine and so you may want to you know try different postures like if if it's like the full Lotus that's causing your leg to fall asleep then you might try the easy position where instead of folding up like this your your feet are just kind of in front of each other like this that's called the easy position sometimes called the Burmese position um or if you're doing it that way you might try getting into like a half Lotus or a quarter Lotus or eventually the full Lotus um but yeah you might want to like change up your your sitting posture

don't totally wimp out and sit in a

chair though unless you've got like a a

doctor's certificate giving you

permission to meditate sitting in a

chair so let's

see I mean

I mean if it's not really hurting you

then you might want to just tough it out

you know it's like it would be an

aesthetic practice of letting your foot

go to sleep every time you sit in

meditation and it may be that you'll

earn Good Karma through the austerity of

that which will then cause you to rise

above the situation or some

such and with that I'm moving on to the

next question which is from power and

power says you said in your video that
monks need to have their genitals intact
in order to be ordained this may sound
silly but to what degree does the junk
need to be intact let's say a monk or
wouldbe monk had a tumor and had to have
a testicle removed would that be
disqualifying would circumcision be
disqualifying too since the foreskin is
removed well with regard to a male like
a monk as set aside nuns for
now um
you don't even have to have a penis I
mean a monk who cuts off his penis just
I mean there's a story in the in the
rules of monastic discipline about a

monk who is so tormented by lust he just wants to remove the Temptation he cuts off his penis and then the Buddha scolds him and says instead of cutting off one thing you cut off something else and then he made it a tulaa offense which is a a grave

offense to cut off your own penis but he was still a monk because in in order to be a monk you have to have balls and I don't think it says anywhere in the text how many balls you have to have I think one might be enough I would assume that one would be enough although I'm No Authority on how many balls it takes to be a

beu um I don't know if anybody I've

never really heard this I've never seen
this issue discussed in like monastic
literature
but uh so long as you have at least one
ball I assume that would be enough but I
mean it's not the penis it's the balls
you have to be an intact male in that
respect because if you lose both balls
you are technically a unic you cannot be
a monk anymore even if you were ordained
you stop being ordained because you are
a unic not a
man according to ancient Indian Buddhism
so and that's like one one reason why
you could not revive the bikuni order by
having five monks do like a a sex change

operation to transition over to trans

women because it wouldn't be

instantaneous it would have to be

instantaneous in order for it to be

valid because if there's any kind of

intermediate stage between man and woman

like once the balls come off that's it

you're you're a unic and you're you're

like essentially excommunicated

you are no longer

ordained so but again I'm not 100%

certain whether one ball is enough but I

assume it would

be I I would guess that one ball would

be enough but something like

circumcision is is a non it's just not a

factor because there's I I read in I

think it was like Time Magazine long ago
I think it was uh back in the late 90s
back when time magazine maybe was still
doing like legitimate
journalism that there was a special
medical unit in Bangkok Thailand that
specialized in sewing penises back on
because th men tend to be Rascals and
their wives it was almost like a fashion
trend their wives were getting revenge
by cutting off the the penis of these
monks and or not monks but their
husbands and some of these husbands who
could not get it sewn back on again by
this special unit you know like she'd
throw it down the ouse or uh in one case

she just threw it out the the window of
the the Hut and then a duck came up and
ate it and then just waddled off and and
he couldn't get it so uh some of these
men who are suddenly without a penis
they ordain as monks I saw one picture
of one of these dickas monks and he he
had like a disgusted look on his face I
mean it was definitely not a spiritual
vocation for him to be a monk it was
just he was just making the best of a
really shitty
situation
so and also with regard to nuns I mean
it's kind of embarrassing you read some
of the rules about what kind of woman is
allowed to be a fully ordained bikuni or

nun and if if she's got like like some
female bodybuilders that take like
anabolic steroids they've got like a a
clitoris that's like you know good sized
they're disqualified they're not allowed
to be ordained as a none if they've got
a large penis like clitoris and there's
I mean you can you can read this stuff
yourself if you find a translation of
the the the rules of monastic
discipline not that many of you would be
fascinated by such
information and I'm just going to move
on to the next question so what I'm just
going to do and this is from Fred and
Fred says can we have the link for what

did the Buddha really say

um I do think that it is on my new

website now which if I'm not mistaken

would be psa. org and it would be in the

links below this video so if you go to

the links below this video and you find

something along the lines of poa.net

and it's an essay that I wrote back when

I was a monk I think all the essays on

the poasa org website are my earliest

Buddhist essays before I started

blogging so you should be able to find

it there and with that I move on to the

questions of twin Wasabi and twin Wasabi

says I see you're a big sticks

hexenhammer fan you even have some

memorabilia of him like that coffee cup

they're better without the Wings by the
way like the the oroboros I I just don't
like the ones with the wings anyways
twin Wasabi continues I remember him
from 10 years ago when he was pretty
small what made you attracted to him I
was a monk living at a monastery in
California and one of my main supporters
really nice guy named Aaron told me
about sticks hex Hammer this is back I
think it was like 2016 or
so and it was back when STI still had
the leather jacket with no shirt and was
sitting in his kitchen I think with like
the spqr Roman flag behind him he hadn't
been married yet or anything like

that so that's I just it was recommended
to me by a supporter of mine who had
similar political views I guess and uh
yeah I I liked sticks I I still still
likes I mean with regard to certain
things he is not really in Authority
even with regard to his occult stuff he
kind of specializes in the occult but I
don't know just for some reason I just
don't resonate with him at that level
and when whenever he talks about Burma
he he doesn't really know what he's
talking about I have I have to admit but
with regard to seeing the big picture
politically like what's going on in the
world he's better than most at being
able to see the big

picture so that's mainly the advice of a friend plus watching him and liking um his his attitude his ability to see the big picture and so forth caused me to like sticks and usually I watch him every morning before I go to work so I'll just move on to Twin Wasabi's next question have you seen rageaholic he gives me the same Vibes as sticks so you'd probably like him as well no actually I've never seen rageaholic but I might look him up as a result of this recommendation so thank thank you twin Wasabi and I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from pyramid and pyramid says any thoughts of the

criticism of terraa Buddhist temples
being
racist I've read on your favorite
website Reddit that some Buddhists
switched from terava Buddhism to
Mahayana because they said the terava
temple monks were racist against them
well I think in Burma there are quite a
few racist people in Burma which I mean
from their point of view it's it's like
they are nationalists ethnic
nationalists you know they're
traditionalists and they just assume
that being Burmese is the best the best
ethnicity there is it's it's in a way
all countries should kind of be this way
but anyways the Burmese they just assume

that being Burmese is the best that if
they really like like a European person
or or an you know a western person you
know that sometimes they'll say you know
you've got good par
ofy you might be reborn as a Burmese
person next time in your next life you
know that kind of thing or you must have
been Burmese in your past life to be
able to be a monk like this you know
they just consider being Burmese to be
really just like the Pinnacle of of
humanity aside from being a monk which
is even higher than being an ordinary
Burmese lay person
but uh so I mean they can some of them

can be kind of racist but they're it's
not like a hostile racism it's just like
they think that their race is is like
really excellent and so they might be
their racism might take the form of just
being like
condescending where they just assume
that because you're not Burmese you
don't know anything and they'll explain
to you just the like the kindergarten
basics of Buddhism even I as a as a
senior monk would sometimes have people
trying to explain to me how to meditate
and who mahasi Seattle was and all this
kind of stuff they just assume that
foreigners don't know anything PA Al
Seattle one of the most famous monks in

Burma just has this this idea that all foreigners have wrong view only Burmese people can understand dhama correctly and it's mostly like educated and upper class Burmese people have this assumption that only Burmese people can really understand Buddhism correctly and they're so dogmatic that sometimes I wonder if even they can understand Buddhism correctly because they're just stuck in in this level of words and books so

see so some Buddhists switched from terraa Buddhism to Mahayana because they said the terraa temple monks are racists against them some of it might just be a

misinterpretation of the situation if you go to like a an ethnic Temple you know you go to a Burmese temple or a Thai temple mostly they're going to be speaking Burmese or Thai you know the the lay people go there as a kind of cultural center you know they go there to speak their native language and eat their native food and do their native ceremonies and westerners even though they might be welcome just feel out of place there you know it's they just don't fit in even though the people might be really friendly maybe a little condescending but friendly you know welcoming but it's just it just doesn't fit so they might have misinterpreted

that as racism or it may be that they
were just Looney leftists I mean after
all they're on Reddit who are able to
see
microaggressions that others cannot see
and in which case if they wanted to
leave terava and and join Mahayana then
that's fine with me I got no problem
with
that but uh yeah I I have met a few like
Burmese terab Buddhist monks who just
didn't like
foreigners but as a general rule they
stay in Burma they're not going to be
coming to another country where they're
surrounded by foreigners I mean just

kind of stupid if you're racist to then
move to a country where almost everyone
around you is this race that you
despise so it could be something like a
misinterpretation or just sort of a
benevolent racism where they don't hate
you or despise you or want to genocide
you or whatever they just think that to
be their ethnicity is superior because
of course they've got dhama and you're
living in a spiritual
Siberia or
whatever so I hope I answer
that so I'll just move on to the next
question and this is from drunk Dr and
he says how many times do you think
you've said so I'll just move on to the

next question and I guess I answered

that question well gosh that's say

105 that is my guess that is how many

times I guess I have said that so I'll

just move on to the next question

106 guess I answered that

question

so next question is from Blondie and

Blondie says my question is about the

handful of leaves suta where the Buddha

says that what he has shared with the

monks is like the leaves in his hand and

I'm checking to make sure that I'm

recording here okay it says we're

recording I always got to do that at

least once generally more than an hour

after I've started doing this I'll check
to make sure I'm really recording and so
now I got to start over with with
blondie here my question is about the
handful of leav su where the Buddha says
that what he has shared with the monks
is like the leaves in his hand but what
he revealed what was revealed to him
upon Enlightenment is more like all the
leaves in the forest and what he left
out would be of no benefit to Leading a
holy life putting an end to suffering
and all that are there any clues at all
elsewhere as to what the other stuff was
that was revealed that was revealed to
him was
about any clues well I mean you can't

just he couldn't have just said it
because then it would be one of the
leaves in his hand and not uh one of the
the leaves in the forest all around him
maybe some Clues would be like the the
psych powers that you attain upon
buddhahood becoming a Buddha one of them
is just seeing all beings going
according to their K and he wouldn't be
like talking about that a lot but I'm
sure he'd be sort of like neim karoli
Baba up on the the altar up there who I
mean when they look at you they' just
see right through you they'd see your
past lives you know they they know you
better than you know you they would be

able to see levels of your Consciousness
below what you are aware of at least
below what your conscious ego is aware
of so I mean that kind of thing you know
he might be able to see you know your
karmic situation and so forth that uh he
won't be talking about it might not be
necessary might be irrelevant but still
he would know that kind of stuff
presumably but uh aside from Little
Clues like that uh the other stuff that
was revealed to him you know it'd be
like an aspect of his functional
omniscience you know the Buddha
according to tradition was functionally
omniscient he he wasn't like a fully
enlightened Jane like a TI tonara I

guess they're called where he would know
all things at all times you know his his
mind would contain infinite knowledge at
all times he wasn't like that but if he
directed his mind towards something if
he wanted to know something he would
know it and so there'd be all kinds of
other stuff that uh he would wouldn't be
talking about you know he'd want gee is
it going to rain tomorrow you know
something like that I mean he wouldn't
be talking about that kind of thing or
you know he'd be aware of the the
thoughts of the teenage girl sitting in
the back who's just like thinking about
the boy sitting you know a couple people

away from her you know he just let it
slide you know he just keep giving the
sermon or
whatever
so yeah I mean it would just be all
sorts of things that he would presumably
know according to tradition I mean he
was functionally omniscient and so most
of that has nothing to do with with
dhama really or becoming enlightened or
how to help somebody else to become
enlightened and so I mean he just
wouldn't spend much time talking about
it if any time talking about it so I'm
just going to move on to Blondie's next
question which is aan Sumo says that
enlighten M can never be a personal

accomplishment because it's a constant
letting go of conditions and identities
in the present persons exist in the
realm of time this is tremendous as a
wisdom teaching because people today can
hardly be present for 5 seconds without
distracting themselves with some shite
but it's a terrible way out of suffering
it would be better to go to a hospital
when your leg is infected than to let go
of your annoying anxieties about the
Gang Green eating your illusory flesh
any thoughts well I mean if you know if
you know deeply enough that it is
illusory then I mean that that can cure
you right there I mean that's apparently

what Jesus was doing certainly what Mary
Baker Eddie was doing as the founder of
Christian Science that Christian Science
is largely based on the idea God is good
God would not create anything bad
sickness
and injuries are bad therefore God did
not create them and they just don't
exist it's just a kind of delusion in
your mind and so they just refuse to
believe that there is such a thing as
sickness or Gang Green and probably a
lot of Christian Scientists have died of
sickness or Gang Green that they denied
existed but others who had a little bit
more
faith I mean you read the there's the

last chapter of Mary Baker Eddy's
science and health with key to the
scriptures is called fruitage if I
remember correctly and it's just it's a
hundred testimonies of people who were
cured miraculously through Christian
Science and a lot of it is stuff that is
largely psychosomatic you know like like
trouble with their Vision trouble with
their digestion even tuberculosis which
is largely
psychosomatic or asthma largely
psychosomatic um I mean when I say that
tuberculosis is largely psychosomatic I
don't mean that there's no
um what do you call it it's it's like a

bacteria that causes the tuberculosis in your system um they're not saying that in a way they kind of are saying that it doesn't exist but still when I say that it's psychosomatic I'm not saying that it's just purely made up in your imagination and makes you feel sick that it's just like your mental states are determined how susceptible to tuberculosis you are sort of like asthma also I've read is like 90 % of cases of asthma are purely psychosomatic or also like herpes A lot of people know if if you're like experiencing a lot of stress like psychological stress you're more likely to get herpes and it's it's sort of like that with tuberculosis also that

if you've got like a strong mind you're
you're less likely to come down with
tuberculosis than if you're like
stressed out and and like in a state of
disequilibrium so anyways
after that long
digression I mean a lot of the cases
were this kind of stuff but I mean
there's one of the first cases was a
woman cured herself of a 40 PB fibroid
tumor it just I mean she was reading
science and health and key the
scriptures and then it was like she had
this Epiphany she just this is true my
sickness doesn't exist and she just was
running around telling people that she's

cured even before the the 40lb tumor had
completely dissolved but but it just
disappeared in in relatively short order
and she was better another one was a
broken bone guy had a broken arm he just
refused to to see a doctor or anything
and and it got better and then later for
some for some reason a doctor did
examine him and uh whether whether he
was okay having a doctor examine him or
not is another question but the doctor
said why you you had your arm broken at
one point but it was set perfectly it's
completely healed at this point
so uh yeah all this was a long
digression with regard to uh somebody
with an infect an infected leg so which

was just like a little example uh in

this question given by

Blondie which just demonstrates my my

capacity for tangential

thought so let's get to the main

question here though I mean the main

question is any thoughts so I guess that

would be answering because it caused me

to go off on this tangent about Mary

Baker

Eddie let's see ajun suo says that

Enlightenment can never be a personal

accomplishment because it's a constant

letting go of conditions and identities

in the presence that's that's true yeah

I mean Enlightenment is not a personal

accomplishment because ultimately there is no person to become enlightened it's the realization that there is no individuality that is an aspect of Enlightenment itself so nobody really becomes enlightened which is kind of paradoxical but there we are so let's see this is a tremendous as a wisdom teaching because people today can hardly be present for 5 seconds without distracting themselves with some shite but it's a terrible way out of suffering it would be better to go to a hospital when your leg is infected than to let go of your annoying anxieties about the Gang Green EA your loser your flesh any thought well not necessarily I mean I

think from a spiritual point of view

you'd be better off dying with equinity

than living in a state of like

superficial materialism and anxiety and

worry and all this kind of

stuff so yeah I mean I don't think that

that's necessarily true at all if you

could be fully enlightened and die of

gang green it would be better from a

spiritual point of view anyway than

being perfectly

healthy uh just like a superficial

unenlightened Norm

me

so yeah that's that's some thoughts that

I had with regard to this and I mean

there's a lot more that I could say but
there's like more than 50 questions so I
guess I should be so somewhat concise
especially after spending five minutes
digressing about Mary Baker Eddie in
Christian
Science although Mary Baker Eddie also
did say it's easier to cure somebody of
cancer than it is to cure them of a bad
habit because people like their bad
habits that's why they became habits in
the first place whereas not very many
people like
cancer so their their desire to let go
of the cancer is much stronger than
their desire to let go of of whatever
their bad habit is so I'm moving on to

the next question this is from Raphael
and Raphael says what are the best books
you know that can free me from
scientific
materialism that's that's kind of an
interesting question um a book on Paras
pychology the trickster in the
Paranormal by George P Hansen I I keep
pushing that book that's a good one um
the science delusion by rert sheldrake
that's a good one um or like completely
different kind of
perspective Miracle of love stories
about Nan karoli Baba who was just this
amazing Miracle working Sage who lived
in India back in the the 20th

century and even if most of the stories
about him of these Miracles that he
performed were just made up in people's
imagination I mean if just 10% of them
were true then he just stands scientific
materialism on its
ear and a lot of the people I mean
there's spiritual people a lot of them
are westerners like doctors and so forth
who I mean they seem to be trustworthy
people giving trustworthy accounts of
this mindblowing stuff that neem cly
Baba would do and it was part of his his
way of teaching people you know he'd get
some Westerner just locked into the
Western point of view and this happened
to Rams also ROM dos was one of these

these westerners just locked into a like
a scientific materialism kind of view
and then NE cly Baba would do something
or say something that would just
completely blow their mind you know they
just be in this state of I mean just
like tilt or error or something and then
when they're in that state it was much
easier to kind of you know ease them
into a more spiritual more profound
understanding of
reality so I mean blowing people's mind
was something he specialized
in so let's see let's review shall we
best books I know that can free me from
scientific materialism any good book on

parapsychology would at least be kind of
a foot in the door you know it might not
cure you of it because it's still a
scientific kind of book but still you
know it's it's at least getting the door
a little bit open then rert sheldrake
you know for example the science
delusion and the main science delusion
is that science already understands
reality pretty much they just have to
fill in a few more blanks and they'll
have it all worked out that is a
delusion that some of the beginning
assumptions of science are already you
know they're not
correct and let's see what else what
else did I say neem curly Baba is oh

yeah and uh the trickster in the

Paranormal which gives a very uh elegant

in my opinion theory of how the

Paranormal Works how the rules can be

broken that like empirical laws of

nature the laws can be

broken that there're it's just sort of

like a a

stable configuration of energy you know

we've got these laws of physics and so

forth it's stable but it's not the only

possible

way and you can you know once you get to

a certain level of like mental power

let's say wisdom let's say then you can

actually change the rules to some

degree

so yeah I I guess I answered that

question so I'm moving on to Rafael next

question which is did the Buddha ever

say that it is wrong to associate with

people with extremely wrong views some

Buddhists found it wrong for aan Puna to

live stream with someone like Brian Ru

who adheres to the violent ideology of

national socialism well first of all I

would say that Brian Roode does not

adhere to any violent ideology knowingly

because Brian

Rue he uh he really does think that that

all this stuff against the national

socialists and Adolf Hitler especially

is propaganda you know anyone who has

seen the propaganda against Donald Trump now might be able to appreciate a little more Brian Rue's attitude towards just the way uh The Establishment has demonized Adolf Hitler although I don't go as far as ran R does in that regard because it's pretty obvious that Hitler was really an opportunist he he was he would break promises he would make promises in order to break them at the at the ne the nearest convenient opportunity you know like his his peace paack with Stalin for example or um you know his promise with regard to um the sudon L would be his last you know after he gets the Dayton l

or after he gets Danzig or whatever you know he's he's done he's he's not going to do any more expansion anything like that um but he does think that Hitler I mean the Holocaust was to the extent that it happened Hitler didn't know about it that's what Brian Rue uh believes or has believed in the past he doesn't talk much about Hitler anymore so so he's definitely not adhering to any violent idiot theology he is a devout Buddhist who definitely endorses
nonharming it's just that he is a conspiracy theorist and he thinks that the demonization of Hitler and national socialism in general is just you know

it's like the establishment demonizing
someone who doesn't doesn't play ball
with them and it does happen to some
degree as anyone knows who sees how
Donald Trump has been treated by The
Establishment but I don't think Adolf
Hitler was all that great of a guy I
mean he would have been very interesting
to hang out with sometimes you know just
just have go to one of his dinner
parties or something it would be
fascinating I
think so let's see I I just digressed
again so did the Buddha ever say that it
is wrong to associate with people with
extremely wrong views well in the the

mongala which is one of the main paritas
or protection chants in in Terra
Buddhism it's a list the suta contains a
list of 30 38 blessings 38
great causes of great Fortune I guess
blessing is is a good term or uh what's
the other word there's another word that
I'm trying to think of ospice something
like that and number one the the number
one blessing in in the mongal lauta is
not associating with fools
I say when Bal I say cha Balan we're
nonassociating with fools so mainly a
fool is a person with extremely wrong
views among other things you know they
they have weird attachments and all
kinds of other things too but uh yeah

you would you would generally say that
someone with extremely wrong views
especially along an ethical line would
be a
fool so he did say that you're much
better off not a associating with fools
and the second blessing in the mongala
is to associate with the
wise because mental states are
contagious I mean if it's just a matter
of historical fact or like mathematics
something abstract something like that
something that doesn't really reflect
upon your virtue as a person you know
you can be grossly mistaken with regard
to you know some some aspect of History

for example and I mean that's not going
to really be a reflection on your virtue
as a
person so something like that is not a
big deal but the Buddha did warn like
the aicas he warned against the aicas
more than once about how they believed
in strict
determinism and the Buddha says you know
that kind of belief you can go to hell
for that if you seriously believe that
stuff because it's with regard to
beliefs that have an eth ethical basis
with regard to you know how you are
going to cultivate wisdom how you're
going to be a better person that sort of
thing and being mistaken about some

political figure whether it be Hitler or

chairman Mau

or Abraham Lincoln or whatever then I

mean that's really not that big of a

deal I think uh some Buddhists found it

wrong for ajan pun to live stream with

Brian r who um yeah I mean

there Hitler has been so demonized that

uh yeah anyone who would not speak ill

of Hitler I think would would uh run a

foul of some people but then aan pun he

got I mean he was boycotted by a lot of

people just for speaking out against um

taking certain

injections that were almost mandatory

and in fact were mandatory in certain

parts of the world just a few years ago

that I shouldn't

specify but he did lose a lot of support

just for being outspokenly opposed to

mandatory certain kinds of uh medical

treatment you know against people's will

that kind of

thing

so yeah to some degree the Buddha did

say it's wrong to associate with people

with extremely wrong views but that's

with regard to extremely wrong views

with regard

to like how how to

cultivate wisdom and how to walk a

spiritual path being mistaken about a

political leader who lived almost 100

years ago would be largely irrelevant

you know some people would say you know

King ajata satu wasn't that bad of a guy

I mean maybe it was just a conspiracy

theory that he murdered his own father

and became King as a as a consequence

and so forth who knows but it's it s as

the irrelevant to DH

anyway and so I'm going to move on to

Raphael's next

question which is what do you think of

the following monks who are influential

in Burma and then he left a link to an

article about The KES of

Burma and this article actually

mentioned a few monks that that I

actually have met one that I I spoken I spoke with a little bit especially unand Mala bamsa who is uh the the Abbott of a school Monastery on Mand no sagine Hill in in the the city of sagy in central Burma he's a very nice guy he's very mild-mannered monk anyways this article was essentially bashing some of these monks mainly because they support the military government but I mean one warning sign is that this article was posted by atheist Alliance International so I mean they're going to have a dim view of monks in general I think because they're atheists they're they don't like religion all that much apparently what would be the point of

being an atheist who respects religion
and religious
leaders so he he's bash he's he's got
like different famous Burmese monks and
just has like a paragraph or two
explaining why they're bad and like
theato one of the main arguments against
thusi who I've always o met in person is
that he spoke out against same-sex
marriage and I mean what do you expect
of a conservative religious leader I
mean all major religions consider
homosexuality to be immoral Buddhism
less so than certain other religions I
mean Buddhism doesn't declare the death
penalty for homosexual people but

nevertheless it would say you're better
off not being that way just from an
ethical
position and so I mean to say that
theato is bad partly because he does not
favor same-sex marriage and partly just
because he is supported and supports the
Burmese military government I mean it
does kind of make sense that you kind of
for a monk to get along with the
government rather than oppose the
government my preceptor
uh venerable hinet Seattle he was very
naive with regard to the government he
was prover you know Pro Burmese military
and just would not believe the stories
against them about how they're shooting

people in the streets and so forth also one of the senior monks in the Tula tradition who might still be alive today um he used to be a soldier before he was ordained he was like a a low ranking like a lieutenant in the army or something like that and so he had ties with the Army the the Army supported him he he got along well with the Army and so there was kind of no problem there I guess and monks really aren't supposed to be like political agitators anyway they're supposed to renounce all that kind of stuff so it does make sense from a traditional Orthodox Buddhist point of view that you get along with the

government and not like protesting in
the streets against
them with regard to C unand malab bwam
who was the teacher of a friend of mine
in Burma um the main thing that they
said against him was he was against
modern science because he preferred the
traditional Buddhist explanations of
things which are pre-scientific
and I mean a lot of Burmese people won't
even believe that the Earth is round
they believe the Earth is flat because
that's what the ancient texts say and
venerable nandala bamsa he was very
intelligent he's got the bansa suffix at
the end of his name which means he got
some award

for his his great

learning um you know he just prefers the

traditional Burmese or the the Buddhist

ancient Indian Buddhist explanation of

like cosmology and so

forth so he got he got dinged for that

in in the article and also of course he

gets along with the government and is

not protesting against the government in

the streets so what do I think of the

following monks who are influential in

Burma well I do not have a high opinion

of Theus ad I definitely I used to

fantasize about snubbing Theus when I

was a mon because he's really is

extremely LAX with regard to his

monastic discipline and so forth but

unand

maliam yeah I've got nothing nothing bad

to say about him he seemed like a a

very softspoken mild-mannered monk he

could have been very wise he was

certainly brilliant he was a brilliant

scholar

so yeah I think that this article was

definitely written by some flaming

leftist who was just bashing monks for

for various reasons and uh I don't take

it very seriously although some of the

monks are better than others I I would I

definitely had more respect for unand

Mala who is on the list then for theci

who is also on the list but Theus he was

another um

another Monk very high-profile one of

the most famous monks in Burma if he's

still alive who was speaking out against

Burma being taken over by Muslims for

example he did not he did not like

Muslims so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from

ruie and uh we've been talking here for

over two hours already by golly I don't

think we're going to go for three though

I think I'm despite my long digressions

I think uh I'm actually being a little

more concise than usual so anyways ruie

says I've rephrased the question yeah he

asked a question that I didn't

understand so then he he rephrased it do
you think the conditioned and the
unconditioned are like two straight
parallel lines that never cross to
Infinity no I don't think that the
conditioned and the unconditioned are
like two straight parallel lines that
never cross to Infinity if you're going
with like
ukian plane
geometry the conditioned would be lines
in general and the unconditioned would
be the
plane if you go with three-dimensional
ukian geometry you could say that that
the condition would include planes or
just

surfaces and that the unconditioned
would be three-dimensional
space see it's you start off with the
absolute which is everything and then
when you divide it up into parts that's
when you start getting some saric
condition stuff so the block of marble
is the ultimate and the the conditional
virtual statues that exist in that block
of marble are the the
conditioned they are
samsaric so that's that's how I look at
it so I'll just move on to ru's next
question also how could cessation or
Extinction be a vessel the uncarved
block of latent infinite proliferation

well cessation or Extinction is describing nirvana in a psychological or ethical sense there's two main ways you can interpret Nirvana I mean literally Nirvana means blowing out like a candle flame so maybe the oldest definition or the oldest meaning of nirvana was just becoming enlightened which was like a psychological ethical kind of a state and it may be later on or maybe it was sort of a coalescing of different Traditions that another meaning of nirvana was in the metaphysical sense of you know the Ultimate Reality or the infinite formless Consciousness that is unmanifest and the infinite unmanifest luminous allaround Etc so there's two

different ways of interpreting Nirvana

or

nibana the ultimate or the

absolute and so the cessation

let's see I'll just ask the question

again also how could cessation or

Extinction be a vessel the uncarved

block of latent infinite proliferation

well the cessation is the cessation of

the imaginary statue which just leaves

the uncarved block as the reality that

remains or it's this the cessation of in

believing this statue is real

so you're stuck in this belief that

there's a statue in that block of marble

that is ultimately real and separate

from the rest of the the marble and then
finally when you get cured of that
delusion then it's just the uncared
block of marble and you're no longer
attached to a belief that that statue in
there is ultimately real in and of
itself so the cessation is the cessation
of Laten infinite
proliferation so how could cessation or
Extinction be a vessel of latent
infinite proliferation because it is the
latent infinite proliferation that
ceases with the
cessation I hope I answered that
question I guess I answered that
question although it is it's a kind of
question that a lot of people just have

great difficulty and wrapping their head
around it because as I keep saying you
have to be able to deal with two
different levels of reality
simultaneously that nibana and samsara
are not at the same level of
reality so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from nature
cure and nature cure says I assume you
are very much against smoking tobacco
for beus but when it comes to different
chemicals includ influencing the Mind
tobacco has less effects than other
allowable chemicals like caffeine and
sugar caffeine and sugar have more
effects to mind and also has strong

attachment and toxicity what would you say well I'm not entirely convinced that sugar for example uh has more of an influence on the Mind than addiction to nicotine that someone who smokes two packs a day on the one hand and maybe eats you know X number of Twinkies per day on the other hand that I mean if you stop eating the Twinkies I don't think you're going to go through physical withdrawal to the same degree the same amount of craving that you would from from smoking two packs a day for 10 15 20 years I could be mistaken uh with regard to caffeine um caffeine I mean it is a drug

a mind altering drug but it's not a mind altering drug that leads to heedlessness or clouded of mind so it wouldn't fit under the fifth precept and my opinion um it can be that some people will experience mild withdrawal like headaches if they drink like coffee all the time and then just stop but I still don't think that would be nearly as bad as the withdrawal the physical withdrawal and craving of trying to break a nicotine addiction I think not eating sugar and not consuming caffeine would be much easier after several years of doing it than not smoking would be and it just it's just common sense

really that according to the second
Noble Truth all suffering is caused by
craving and so obviously if tobacco had
existed in the Buddhist time he probably
would have banned it because it's
conducive to
craving I mean somebody like aan manun
who was a chain smoker according to
report then I mean he was literally if
he was if he was enlightened then he was
enlightened and a drug addict at the
same time which is I'm not saying that
it's necessarily impossible I mean maybe
maybe it was maybe he was an enlightened
drug addict but nicotine is an addictive
drug
certainly not as bad as

fentanyl but still I don't think it's I
think it's worse than
caffeine but that's just me I mean it's
better and worse are value judgments
anyway unless you give some specific
context in what way they are better or
worse
so yeah I am skeptical that caffeine and
sugar have more effects on the mind and
also cause strong attachment and tox
toxicity I mean to the same extent as
nicotine but I mean the Buddha knew
about I mean he didn't know so much
about processed sugar he may not have
known about caffeine since even tea
wasn't drunk in the Buddhist time in

India that I'm aware of

um he might have known about certain

stimulants like edra which some people

are saying was the the the V drug

soma um but I mean he knew about honey

he knew about palm sugar that kind of a

thing and so I mean in his functional

omniscience in his great wisdom he did

not say that eating sugar is is wrong or

should be avoided or should be against

the rules for

monks but I'm pretty sure I I imagine

that if tobacco was known in the Ganges

Valley 25 centuries ago the Buddha would

have banned it for

months just saying that's just my

opinion though and I'm going to move on

to Nature cures next

question which is is it authentic

practice of Buddhist teachings that Tha

tadin meditate all night up on lupos day

yeah it's called vigil I think and some

of the monks will kind of help

themselves through their night long

vigil by drinking red bow or some such

which reminds me I got an energy drink

here might as well crack it since we're

on the

subject so is it authentic practice of

Buddhist teachings that Tai teron

meditate all night upon aost today it I

don't

recall it being mentioned in the texts

but it's certainly not against dhama
it's not opposed to the text I don't
think there's anything about meditating
all night long that would be like
denounced by the Buddha I just don't
think so so I mean it might not be
specifically mentioned or advocated in
the polyas OR in vinea but it's not
obviously against vinia either so I
don't think there's any problem there so
whether that means it's authentic I mean
it's an authentic practice of Buddhist
teachings to the extent that it's not
opposed to the Buddhist teachings you
might call that authentic but if it's
not specifically mentioned and endorsed
then maybe it's not authentic I guess it

would depend on your definition of
authentic and so I'm going to move
on to Nature Cure's third question which
is would Myanmar ordained beus have to
reordain again if he chooses to stay at
Thai terava Monastery in Thailand well
that depends
on what school of terraa what sect he
was ordained in and what what sect the
monastery belong to for example in Tai
terraa it is notorious that the damay
sect will not do I mean they do not
consider any other monks to be ordained
except maybe the M order or the M sect
from which the dut sect was
derived but they won't do Sama or formal

of the song with most monks in Thailand even and so that would probably apply to most monks in Burma also although the dham youth it seems to me that the the burden is on them to prove that other monks are not really monks that their lineage was broken due to bad like like excommunicated monks not dropping out of the song they stay in the songa even though they've been excommunicated and you know they just keep it a secret and then they particip in ordination ceremonies and so forth back in like in medieval times this sort of thing was relatively rampant and so the dute monks in Thailand just think well it was so rampant for everybody except us that

they're not really monks anymore their

their ordination lineage has been

broken so most Burmese monks if they

wanted to live at a a damay monastery

might have to be re ordained if they

didn't want to just get treated like

novices or lay

people whe if they were ordained in the

same M tradition that the damay

tradition was derived from I actually

asked aan taner about this he didn't

answer the

question um maybe because I was being

too confrontational with regard to this

whole issue of the dam Utes saying that

nobody else is really a monk only they

are that uh there is the same mon sect
that damay is dering from is also found
in mon state in Burma so maybe the monks
ordained in that tradition might be
considered to be legit authentic monks
by the damay sa and they might be
willing to do formal acts of the sa with
them but most other monks in Burma or or
Sri Lanka or even in Thailand um are
considered not to be real monks by the
dam order but that's the only order that
I know of there's none of that really in
Burma with regard to one sect in Burma
saying that we're the only real sect and
all the rest are fake there's I never
heard of anything like that in Burma
it's only the dute sect in Thailand that

I am aware of that has adopted an

attitude like that but even some Dumay

monks they're they're laidback and they

don't really insist on

it and it seems to me that the burden is

on them to prove you know innocent until

proven guilty

and I don't know how they would prove

it maybe they can I don't

know so yeah that would be the only case

I know of of a non dute monk wanting to

stay at a damay monastery which is a

Thai tradition but it wouldn't be the

other way around d a monk if he wanted

to he could stay at a Burmese Monastery

and the Burmese monks wouldn't

care unless they're racist against ties

or something

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

question this is from maram made

Mahayana and maram made Mahayana says I

had just returned to

Germany from child-friendly Greece and

was sitting on the train home from

stutgart with my wife and our small

child two old people ordered us to leave

the train compartment because our child

was supposedly too loud she is 2 years

old and has had a long journey and has

been very well behaved up until then I

quickly became aggressive and had

thoughts of wanting to hurt them because

I don't show this kind of behavior

towards other people this incident upset
me all evening and the next day it feels
like in moments like this all the
Buddhist books I have read and the
Buddhist wisdom are suddenly gone your
advice well you do not have control over
what arises in your
mind um I mean that's it arises going
with Orthodox Buddhism due to the power
of karma or Kama so what arises in your
mind you really don't have control over
that even a fully enlightened being
would not have full control over what
arises in his or her mind but how you
deal with it after it arises you know
you could be mindful just watch it arise

and pass away and then let's say it was
like a really icky thought that left
like this really bad aftertaste you know
it caused you to feel bad then you got
to be mindful of that too you know you
just relentlessly
mindful would be the the Buddhist the
correct Buddhist way of dealing with it
I mean you certainly don't want to act
it out and start punching
heads which apparently maram Mahayana
was not going to
do but uh yeah I mean you no matter how
much you practice you still don't have
control over what arises you know it's
past comma that is conditioning these
reactions to come up and so if you

remain unconscious you know you just
follow the automatic pilot you're just
going to act out what these urges tell
you to do whereas if you're more mindful
you got more wisdom little philosophical
Detachment then you can watch it arise
and not act upon it but it it can still
happen so that's that's really the
practice the practice is not having
angry thoughts AR for example the the
practice is when the angry thoughts do
arise you don't act upon them and you
don't just nurse them you don't sit
there fantasizing even though you're not
punching heads you're not going to sit
there fantasizing about punching

heads so I mean that's that's the

practice right there just be mindful of

it when it arises and U be as detached

from it as possible I mean when you're

being mindful of anger let's say anger

arises if you're being mindful of it

then it's not you being angry anymore

it's just anger is arising and if you

are anything you're the one who's

observing not the thing being

observed so it's just this mental state

that's arising and you're just watching

it arise and pass

away so that is the

practice and I'm going to see what this

is

okay somebody's going to be coming over

later this evening so I'm going to have
to you're going to be hearing beeps of
texts coming and he's going to be asking
me what's going on and and I'm not going
to be answering him because I'm
answering you
guys so let's see
here I guess I answered that question so
I'm going to move on to the next
question this is also from maram made
Mahayana and he says the older I get the
less I want to have to do with other
people for me other people outside my
family mostly just mean Dua the people
at work the people at the gym the people
on the train Etc I don't feel like

discussing or interacting with others
anymore I just don't want I just want my
peace and I realize that you can only
have that in solitude or alone in my
opinion it's clear to me now why only
beus who live in solitude can fully
awaken thoughts well it's not
necessarily only beus who live in
solitude I mean it can be easier for
most people to to cultivate wisdom if
you're living in solitude just because
there's there's fewer
distractions but in my case I'm kind of
the opposite I used to despise the human
race as a general rule when I was a
young man and now I've got more
compassion for people you know I'm more

accepting of people still not completely accepting but um yeah I I do have more sympathy with the human condition now partly just because like I've explained before I tried as hard as I could to be a saint for many years and it just didn't work and so I mean how is somebody who isn't trying to be a saint GNA going to be you know properly behaving properly thinking person you know it's just I have I have more compassion for them after trying to be a saint for for decades and just not being able to manage it and and then it's like well how's how's a normie who's who's working at a plywood Mill or something

how's or working in a bakery or

something I mean he's got a wife and

four kids and all this stuff and he's

living in a culture that does not

promote Enlightenment really you know

what Chan does he have it's I have more

sympathy like more karuna more

compassion for people

now but uh let's

see I I got to go back to the question

here yeah I mean if you don't really

have much interest in interacting with

people that's fine I'm I'm pretty much

the same way even though I just said

that I've got more compassion for people

I'm more accepting of the human race now

still when I'm at work I don't stand

around socializing much I might crack a
joke every now and then you know you
talk about what needs to be done at work
and so forth but for the most part I
mind my own business and do my job and I
just like it better that way I don't
want to stand around talking about good
restaurants or movies and that kind of
stuff you know I just is just I not
really much interested in that
so let's
see I just want peace I realize that you
can only have it that in solitude or
alone in my opinion it's clear to me now
why only beus yeah I mean it's I mean if
that's the way it is for you then you

might you know you might attend to that

and you know try to cultivate some mind

or cultivate Some solid ude I mean

apparently you've got a wife and a kid

so I mean you're not going to be totally

solitary unless you just abandon

them and I'm I'm starting to have these

urges I I hope that you'll forgive me

but I'm going to give a quick text to

the friend of mine who's coming over

just to let him

know

see I don't type really fast because I

don't do that swiping

thing let's see

okay all

right so yeah I mean definitely Buddhism

endorses Solitude WEA you know like Vic

ramas Swami his his first name means

Solitude

so that's that's the friend who's going

to be coming over later

let's push that farther away so the

beeps aren't as

loud and if he calls I get the Godzilla

ringtone which is nice let's

see okay I think I answered that

question it's I'm I apologize for being

distracted in the middle but that's what

happens when you don't live in solitude

see you get distracted and uh but I mean

just living in solitude is there's

certainly no guarantee that you're going

to make better progress because if
you're sitting in Sol if you're living
in solitude
um you you can just start drifting off
into eccentricity you don't get feedback
from other people and so you can just
start drifting without even noticing
then you just become like really weird
that can happen too so it is good to
have feedback from other people and
somebody can tell I mean if if people
keep telling you you're really an
[__] sometimes then you might want to
start listening to that and think wow
maybe I am even though I can justify my
conduct it makes perfect sense to me
other people are seeing me as an [__]

and so it's good to kind of introspect

and thinking well

maybe maybe I should do

something so I mean whatever your

situation is you're always in a position

to practice dhama to some degree so you

do the best you can and you make the

most of what you've what you've got and

if you're a householder with a wife and

a kid and and a job then you just do the

best you can under those sit situation

under that situation you can still be

mindful you can still be moral you can

still listen to Q&A videos you can still

contemplate dhama you can still meditate

I hope you know you get get at least 30

minutes in when the baby's sleeping that
kind of
thing so I guess I'm just going to move
on to the next question um maram made
Mahayana asked another question a third
question and then before the first two
the which before the first two which are
actually the second and third ones he
said you know disregard the other ones
so I will I will disregard the third one
CU we are we are going well over two
hours as usual in fact two and a half at
present so with his permission I'm going
to skip over the question about weird
Karma of people getting stabbed and so
forth but uh if he likes I can I can
answer that one first on the next one

and I'm just going to skip over to a

question from Anthony and I I don't know

if he's expecting an answer to this it

was somebody asked me drunk a Dr in a

previous Q&A asked me about drinking 175

proof

whiskey and I thought 175 proof whiskey

I never heard of such a

thing so anyways Anthony says there are

spirits that go up to 190 proof why do

you find 175 proof whiskey so hard to

believe well 190 proof is pretty much

pure grain alcohol and I have heard of

rum that's like like bardi 151 that's

151 proof but never in my life have I

heard of whiskey that's more than like

110 proof you know like 55% alcohol by volume so I've just never heard of it and it would seem like it would just be pure grein alcohol with a little bit of maltt flavoring contaminating it you know what I'm

saying so yeah thing is I find 175 proof whiskey so hard to believe simply because I've never encountered I've never seen or heard of anything getting close to 175 proof in the realm of whiskey is why so then Anthony says speaking of in your previous vid when you were talking about your experience with sigs and whiskey you mentioned that you did not inhale the cigarettes is that supposed to be a Bill Clinton

reference and I noticed that it could
have been a Bill Clinton refence
reference but it is true when when I was
when I skipped school in fourth grade
with my stepbrother Chucky and we hid
inside of a parked train at a park and
smoked some cigarettes that we stole
from my stepfather his father U I didn't
I didn't inhale I really did not and
that was long before I ever heard of
Bill Clinton I was the one who
originated not
inhaling so I'm just going to move on
next question this is is from creel oh
creel that's throw orer Mangrove I think
we already answered one of his so I

messed up and didn't include his second question with his first question which is generally what I do it's like once you ask a question that's in chronological order but every other question even even if you ask them much later they always wind up in the same bundle the same Clump the same coagulation if you will so anyways creel also known as throat warbler Mangrove says is it lying to convince your son that Santa Claus is real and yeah it it actually is it seems to me I mean lying is when you are deliberately deceiving somebody and when you're I mean you tell your kids you know you should always tell the truth and you know don't chew

with your mouth open and you know when
when you done using something put it
back where you got it and all that you
you teach them the basics of of simple
morality
and then you feed them this [__] andbull
story about this fourth Century
Anatolian Christian Saint who is somehow
still alive and has moved at the polar
ice cap with some beings from ancient
Germanic mythology and some levitating
Caribou who flies around the world
giving presents to everybody in one
night I mean I mean you can say that I
mean some lies are worse than other lies
so I mean telling kids about Santa Claus

is kind of a white lie you know it's
sort of a benevolent kind of lie but
still I mean you're deceiving the
kid besides I mean if we're Buddhists I
mean what does Santa Claus have to do
with
Buddhism in Burma they talk about Saka
king of Gods the Jamin who has two books
one is covered in dogde that's where the
the names of the bad kids go and the
other one's covered in Gold I think and
that's where the names of the good kids
go and I don't think he he goes around
delivering presence with or without the
levitating Caribou but um still he's got
the books you know he he knows who's
naughty and who's

nice but that I mean it may be that a
lot of the adults actually believe that
stuff because they have largely a
premodern worldview so it may be that
the parents are just making an honest
mistake telling them kids about FJ Min
and his his two books where the naughty
kids and the good kids
go but uh yeah technically speaking all
the stuff about Easter bunnies and tooth
fairies and Santa Claus and all that
it's uh I mean you're deceiving the kids
it's I I don't think anyone's going to
go to hell for
that um but I mean there is going to be
a certain disillusionment when your

child becomes old enough that other kids

are going to be explaining to him that

it's all

[__] it's just it's just a way of

parents keeping the kids under control

you know it's their way of controlling

the children like a lot of atheists say

about religion the purpose of religion

is for the government or the the the

status quo to keep everybody

subjugated so Santa Claus is like that I

guess to certain radical

children and I'm just going to move on

to the next

question this is from scholas

or

schoa and he says oh he's got three

questions all about the uh Lord of the
Rings which is kind of
strange but he says is the One Ring a
karmic capacitor a battery that holds a
temporary charge usually to get
something started and then as a little
commentary he says it seems that
whenever a person held the ring their
mental States changed or buckled under
the will of the ring and they were
becoming a slave to Karma which must
closely resemble the one Ring's Creator
Sauron well I don't think so I I don't
think that tolken was thinking about uh
capacitors or batteries or anything like
that it it'd be more like the more

traditional like folklore kind of idea
of like a a magic sword you know it's
it's it's got some kind of secret name
like Gendry and it might have um some
sort of demonic being or other being
like trapped in the The Sword and when
you hold on to it it's like you can't
let it go and it starts controlling your
mind and taking you over I assume it
would be something more long a lines of
you know some kind of traditional
folkloric sort of explanation than uh
capacitors and batteries and that kind
of thing so that's one that's one answer
two to go scolin says why was smeagle
unable to fulfill the one Ring's full
potential unlike Frodo or Bilbo smeagle

had almost no mental resistance and upon seeing the ring he violently murdered the previous owner of the Ring who had been a member of his own family well I think that smeagle just was too inferior of a person he had less virtue you know he had less strength of character and so it just took him over really easily whereas with Bilbo baggin I mean it kind of took him over to some degree too but Bilbo had more of a a grounding in virtue I guess

Hobbit cultural conditioning is more conducive to that than whatever kind of being smeagle was who became the gollum I don't think I don't think

smigle was a hobbit too was he I don't
think so maybe he was it's hard to tell
when they shave the tops of their feet
that's pretty much the diagnostic
feature of Hobbits other than their
small size and so
forth so let's see
I guess I answer that question about
smeagle why he was unable to fulfill the
one Ring's full potential yeah I think
he was just an
inferior an inferior vehicle he just did
not have the the moral backbone or
whatever even though the moral backbone
kind of becomes an obstacle but still
you have to be have the strength to to
like not be destroyed by the energy of

this

thing and so the third question is kind

of a joke question I think is elf a

Corruption of the term

IL and then his commentary is in the

first part of Lord of the Rings after

Gandalf explains to Frodo the dangers he

had unknowingly inherited and that Frodo

would have to go on a suicide mission

and leave everyone and everything he

ever knew behind Sam barges in after

eavesdropping and volunteers to join his

quest because of his obsession with ILS

the Elder

or the Eldar were described as Fair

beautiful and ageless Immortals so I

assume that unlike the daughters of Eve
they were just they would just be
referred to as ILS since they were
incapable of the prefixes which denote
further physical maturation which would
be
mil so I guess the implication here is
that elf is like a Corruption of of mil
or that mil comes from Elf or some such
and uh I don't really don't think it
works that way at all that uh elfl comes
from like old some old Germanic
language and uh mil is an acronym
referring to
something so yeah that was kind of a
joke question and so I won't I won't
really go in depth in my my explanation

on that one so I'm just going to move on
to the next question and uh we are
getting pretty close close to the bottom
for those of you who are starting to get
nervous or maybe you're starting to feel
the urge to pee or something just bear
with me and uh we should be done in
about three hours not from now but from
the beginning and this is from Sam
papala who used to be called Indian guy
and probably still is occasionally
referred to as
Trevor and S papala
says when in meditating I get that py
feeling I think feels like energy
surging through my arms and legs like a

hit a very very weak crack but it's like
I'm about to enter really good
meditation but I can't handle the
feeling because it's so sudden it's hard
to get past it and my mindfulness kind
of breaks because it's so weird I like
it and one time I was able to get
through it I think I don't really
remember what I did but I was it was
awesome so I'm kind of chasing that
Dragon any meditation advice on how how
to get past that well I mean the obvious
answer is mindfulness it's like when
you're being mindful like in the moment
when these rushes of Joy or pleasure or
exhilaration come up I mean it is
difficult not to get excited by that not

to just get washed away by it and then
you lose the the concentration but
ideally you know whatever arises you
just note it and let it go note it and
let it go if it's pain
note it and let it go if it's pleasure
note it and let it go if it's some weird
sound just note it and let it go
whatever it is whatever arises that is
perceivable note it and let it
go but uh some people do have problems
with that I used to know this guy he's a
really good guy he he had his own
construction company and he had this
ambition to just get rid of it all you
know he he liquidated his company and

went off to Burma and was d as a monk

and he naively had this idea that within

about 5 years he'd be a soda then he

could drop out come back to the west and

become a

teacher but what happened was he went to

pandama that was he was ordained there

and he would get drunk on py he was

apparently had good concentration he

would get into deep meditative States

but he would just get like plastered on

this feeling of pleasure and

exhilaration until h just get like drunk

on the joy of meditation and he just

started like cracking up a bit I mean

he'd just be laughing

uously and you know just weird stuff

would happen you know it's like weird coincidences would just have him just breaking out laughing in relatively serious situations and finally the the Abbot upand just told him like no this just not working out you're going to have to go home so he had to drop out of the he dropped out of the Monk went back to America I don't know what happened to him after that but it really was too bad because he was really a good guy and he was serious at least with regard to wanting to renounce the world temporarily you know he got rid of his business and everything um but it can be a danger for

some people other people your progress
is slow and painful you know there's
like four kinds of spiritual progress
there's fast and painful slow and
painful fast and pleasant and slow and
pleasant so slow and pleasant I mean
that might be someone who's getting a
lot of py but it's like derailing their
meditation over and over again I was I
was sort of grinding with the slow and
painful path a lot of the time
anyway but getting back to the original
question the thing to do really is just
be as mindful as you can when it arises
don't let it just sweep you off your
feet so to speak just observe it
mindfully just note it and let it go

note it and let it

go and uh the more you practice that the

better you'll get at it until finally

you will Master it the God's willing and

so I'm going to move on to the next

question also from s papala formerly

known as Indian guy and sometimes

presumably still called

Trevor and he says do you think that we

see do you think that we can fall into

ignorance even with Buddha's teaching

still existing in samsara or do you

think that it would have to be gone

completely for us to fall into ignorance

as a whole well if youve got the Buddha

living in the Ganges Valley you know 25

centuries

ago I mean people in Southern India are

going to be completely ignorant of that

people in North America are going to be

completely ignorant of that people in

Japan people everywhere

except some places in the Ganges Valley

and

even the people in the Ganges Valley

some of them weren't Buddhists they

didn't care you know the there just this

new cult leader called Goda that I mean

a lot of most people just they didn't

become Buddhists in fact some of the

people that did become Buddhists like

the group of six monks I mean they were

just foolish Rascals regardless even

though they be they were in the presence
of the Buddha himself but they were like
what the says you know a fool is like
the spoon that sits in the bowl of soup
and never experiences the flavor of the
soup that if you're just a foolish
person then the wisdom of a Buddha may
not be enough to help you very much that
you might just be closed off to it you
know you just got this shell of
foolishness protecting you from
liberating
wisdom so let's see get back to the
question see if I answered this question
cuz I'm not entirely sure at present do
you think that we can fall into

ignorance even with Buddhist teachings

still existing in samsara yeah obviously

I mean most people have fallen into

ignorance I mean at least they're not

getting any better just because Buddhism

exists in this world I mean even

Buddhism itself has been changed

radically and I mean there's a lot of

just silliness that the Buddha himself

probably would have denounced that is

included in in various schools of

Buddhism at present

so I mean do not underestimate the power

of human

stupidity let's

see did I answer the

question yeah I think I answered that

question so I'm going to move on to the next question this is from Proto sudo Monk and Proto sudo monk he's uh elaborated now he he used he usually has like a little heading for a question and then the question but now he's got the heading for the question and then like a little synopsis like the what is it called like in a scientific paper the abstract and then he's then he's got like a a more elaborate version below that so his this the title of this question is karma meditation and the brain and then the main question is how does karma affect our meditation and our progress in the dhamma and then the the

commentarial elaboration is given the Neuroscience evidence of how meditation subst eventually changes the brain one might argue that the deepest meditation can only happen after say 20 to 30 years or 10,000 Plus hours of formal practice if Karma and rebirth are true and one has advanced in meditation across many lifetimes their brain structure may not reflect that one of deep meditations rebirth is a reset of the brain potentially removing all progress how does the neuros science of meditation fit into the Paradigm of karma well how does the Neuroscience of meditation fit into the Paradigm of karma it really doesn't I mean at least

you can put forth a good case that it
doesn't it's more like I mean
Neuroscience does not condition our
Karma our Karma conditions Neuroscience
our karma is allows us even to hear
about neuroscience and our karma is
going to determine what theories of
Neuroscience we're going to be exposed
to and to some degree what theories of
Neuroscience we're going to
believe so Neuroscience is just like the
materialism stuff that at least
according to me isn't ultimately real I
mean Karma also isn't ultimately real
but it's closer to reality than physical
matter is we have no direct experience

of physical matter all we know is our
own mental States you know like this cup
how do I know this cup is is here in my
hand well I see it I feel it it's all
mental
Sensations it's sensory data which is
mental that's the only way we know that
this cup is here and if we get rid of
all the mental States the cup just poofs
out of existence it just merges with
void and Neuroscience is the same
way Karma at least you're getting into
something
mental so that's you have more direct
experience of
that see the the main question how does
karma affect our meditation and our

progress in the

Dharma

well is as your karma becomes more

subtle you become more wise it's uh as

the mental States become less crude you

you got less of a shell keeping you

unenlightened you know it becomes more

porous maybe a little more translucent

ultimately

transparent your mental States I should

say

so given the Neuroscience ex evidence of

how meditation substantially changes the

brain yeah well I

mean we are our Karma has landed us in a

universe where we've got this thing

called

Neuroscience studying how meditation

substantially changes the

brain so see Karma and rebirth are true

then one and one has advanced in

meditation across many lifetimes their

brain structure may not reflect that one

of deep meditation well I mean there are

some kids that are just prodigies like

neem Koli Baba up there who I keep keep

referring to he he just ran ran away

from home and renounced the world when

he was a kid I mean he he already had

the parmy so to speak he had the

momentum going and he had enough wisdom

that he was aware of that

momentum so rebirth not really a reset

of the brain I mean kind of it can be

but then again you're going to have a

different brain that's conditioned by

the karma you had in your previous life

and so you make progress in your

previous life you're going to wind up

with a

more I don't know more spiritual

brain a brain that can meditate

better in a culture that maybe promotes

meditating that kind of

thing so it's a matter of talent like

Talent you're born with which is largely

a an aspect of

Karma so I kind of answer that so I'm

going to move on to the Proto pseudo

monk next question which is entitled

jasana mindfulness and

nibana and then uh the main question

here the abstract the the condensed

version of the question what is profound

Progressive

meditation which I don't really

understand so we're going to have to go

we're going to have to rely on the the

more elaborate explanation of the

question here you mention in Q&A number

19 back when my q&as were Rel relatively

short that fourth of jna is the closest

to nibana an Enlighten an

unenlightenment being can

experience to me it sounds like you are

suggesting progress in the Dharma is

only deep meditation and is equivalent
to Fourth Janna but you always leave out
weas what about mindfulness s batana
that leads to weasa is this not
contemplation or a deep meditation State
could you please clarify how these terms
jna weasa mindfulness relate to the
progress of profound meditation states
that lead to nibana well yeah it kind of
leads to nibana although that also is
paradoxical because nibana is
unconditioned and has no
cause so there's also that let's see
where do I where do I grasp this
question see sounds to me like you are
suggesting progress in the dhamma is

only deep meditation no progress in the
dhamma is not only deep
meditation that uh I mean eventually you
may have to have at least a moment of
deep meditation to become enlightened
but that might be like the moment before
you become enlightened that some people
apparently can just have this happen to
them after living a virtuous life or
whatever and then just having something
catastrophically slam them out of their
s sor rut and into a higher state of
consciousness so let's see I always
leave out
weasa yeah well I mean we pize the
Insight that arises and I have mentioned
a number of times like one of my

favorite suas in the majaya which is the
Lesser discourse on
voidness and a monk is cultivating
voidness or emptiness
Sun so the first thing he does he leaves
the village leaves The Village Monastery
or whatever and goes out alone into a
forest that's the first increase of
emptiness because all the artificial
hubub of humanity is Left Behind he's
has the relative emptiness of a forest
and then he starts meditating and he
starts getting into deeper and deeper
meditative states he gets all the way
past forth Janna he enters into the the
see the signless concentration of Mind

anima samadi which is you know um the implication is that it's even higher than fourth J it's the highest possible meditative State you can achieve and then when he comes out of that he realizes even that even the highest possible state that can be cultivated still has a beginning and an end it's still conditioned that's not it and that's that's like the Insight that's the weasa that arises and then it causes him to just sort of give up just let go of the whole psarc edifice you know it's like he realizes that you get into the highest possible meditative state that is possible to humans possible to any conscious being

that's still not it and then it just
causes you to in a way just give up and
let go and boom there you
are because Enlightenment ultimately is
effortless even though you might it
might take a hell of a lot of effort to
get to that point
so yeah I mean the weasa is definitely
necessary the liberating Insight is
necessary and just fourth Janna is not
enough to do it although it gets you
closer it gets you very it's sometimes
in the text it's referred to as
temporary
Liberation but it's not permanent
Liberation it's still condition has a

beginning and an

end so let's see what about mindfulness

sa batana that leads to weasa well the

sa batana when you're just being mindful

of

everything then I mean that's keeping

you in a undistracted state keeping you

in a more meditative State and you're

not reinforcing all this old Karma of

just having the inner monologue going

and and just being distracted and

diluted and unenlightened all the time

you know it's just it's making your mind

more clear more simple more quiet and

and then of course fourth jna according

to the text the stock definition is

purity of mindfulness so you reach the

ultimate of s

batana of the ultimate of mindfulness

anyway through getting into really deep

Janna States deep meditative

States

so

see is this not contemplation or a deep

meditation State well weasa isn't

necessarily a deep meditation State I

mean you have to be

perceiving to some degree I guess but

it's it's sort of like a Zen Coan or

something where it's you're using

perception to

like get you beyond perception like the

the the Mahayana Sutra I can't remember

what which one it is says the purpose of
Lord's Buddha's teaching is to liberate
us from our Thinking by means of our
thinking and so we paon that is kind of
like
that let's see could you please clarify
how these terms Janna weasa mindfulness
relate to the progress of profound
meditation states that lead to Nana well
Janna is controversial people do not
agree on what Janna means my opinion is
it's like the four stages of
meditation that first Janna especially
is not necessarily or was not originally
necessarily A superhuman mental state
weasa is just the Insight these flashes
of of knowledge that arise as a result

of getting into a a subtle or a
paradoxical kind of of a mental
situation that it's just all of a sudden
you're seeing things from A New
Perspective or you're seeing things from
a like a different dimension or
something and mindfulness is really just
in a way shutting down your thinking
mind while you're still functioning um
shutting it down as much as you can
manage by just not keeping the inner
dialogue going not interpreting
everything but just staying at the level
of raw data as much as you
can or at least if you're doing like sa
batana of like mindfulness of you know

all of your postures all of your your activities and so forth any mental state that arises anything like that anything perceivable then the scene there is only the scene and the her there is only the heard

Etc

so but actually I mean the definition of Janna is kind of controversial and you know there's the

the Orthodox traditional definition of John and even that is kind of controversial because teachers just cannot fully agree on exactly what that means and then you've got like my own preferred interpretation which would be more along the lines of like something

GC Pond would see would say in his book
studies and the origins of
Buddhism and I sincerely hope I at least
knocked a dent into answering that
question because because we got lots of
questions and I got to move on to the
next one which is from Wayne Sorry Wayne
for keeping you waiting for three hours
but who knows maybe you just fast
forward and or skipped through the other
answers that you weren't interested in
so anyways Wayne says this concept of no
self is tricky to understand if one
deconstructs the body through
contemplative investigation it's obvious
no self can be seen because

Consciousness mind or spirit is
invisible it has no shape or form yet it
is there must be a conductor or a pilot
to our experience for we continuously
must make decisions throughout our lives
if we say Consciousness mind or spirit
is not a self I'm okay with that but to
say Consciousness mind or spirit is not
who we are then I'm totally confused
comments please and thank you well at
the samsaric level that's who we are but
at the ultimate level there is no
differentiation Also let's
see there there must be a conductor or a
pilot to our experience where we
continuously must make decisions
throughout our lives yes but those

decisions have a cause if they didn't
have a cause they would just be random
and that's I mean that'd be more like an
epileptic seizure than than Free Will I
mean the Assumption here is that if we
if we make decisions there must be free
will and therefore there must be a self
because you can't have free will without
some individuality that separate from
the rest of this web of causes and
conditions so I mean the decisions that
are made are made according to a reason
or a a group a bunch of reasons a whole
web work of
reasons conditions if you
will

so there must be a conductor or a pilot
to our experience not necessarily I
don't think so it's like the the even at
the level of just Orthodox terraa you
have a decision just arises in as a
mental state which is conditioned by
Karma and then this this ego which is
just a a group of
perceptions just thinks that it's
separate from the rest of reality and
thinks that it's actually calling the
shots when all you have to do is try to
control your mind and you see that it
really doesn't work that
way even a fully enlightened being does
not have full control over his or her
mind I mean that's one of the the main

teachings of the Buddha second discourse

on the the marks of no self the mark of

no self

anut

so I mean at a samsaric level the the

the the level of doors and windows and

dogs and trees and clouds and all that

then yeah we have a self and we make

decisions and all that that's fine at

the ultimate level there is no

differentiation there is no

individuality there is no distinction

between this and

that and they're they're both like

superimposed upon each other just like

the the various imaginary statues are

contained within the undifferentiated

uncarved block of

marble and so with that I'm going to

move on to the next question which is

the last

question it always catches me by

surprise I'm sometimes I'm thinking man

I hope we're at least 85% of the way

through and boom I'm at the bottom of

the

scroll and this is from rpad RP

a which I think is a French word and

rpad says did the Buddha ever mention

that compassion can be misused abused or

mised placed and I would not at all be

surprised if he did I would not be

surprised if it's in the suas somewhere

but I just don't recall any suta or
passage in the sutas where the Buddha is
saying that compassion can be like MAA
karuna like wrong
compassion you know you can have right
concentration and wrong concentration
you can have right mindfulness and wrong
mindfulness Right View wrong view but I
don't recall the Buddha talking about
right compassion and wrong compassion so
I think that compassion in and of itself
is going to be uh cousa mental state
it's going to be a wholesome good
skillful mental state it's going to be
good
karma and still you can have compassion

that that goes a you can have good intentions you know the road to hell and all that is paved with good intentions but still I mean you're mixed you've got this compassion which in and of itself is a good thing and it's mixed in with all this delusion and foolishness that kind of I mean it can cause the compassion not to seem so good after all and I think that happens a lot in like especially leftist politics I'm sorry to bring up leftist politics at the end of this Q&A but there is a lot of my feminine kind of compassion that actually makes things worse in the long run

so you know just it just vitiates or

like emasculates a civilization where
you're trying to like have everybody
taken care of and make it illegal for
anyone to do anything dangerous so that
nobody gets hurt and all that you know
treating American citizens or the
citizens of whatever country has
children that should not allowed to make
their own decisions in certain cases I
mean even though they might not be
causing any harm to anybody
else but I I guess that's just what
governments do you know that's just one
of their purposes is to prevent us from
doing certain things even though it
might not be harmful to anybody but

maybe

ourselves so getting back to RP A's

question

again I really don't recall the Buddha

ever mentioning that compassion can be

misused abused or misplaced although it

apparently just based on empirical

observation of the world around me I can

say that sometimes it

is you know like the the childless cat

ladies who get involved in politics and

try to fix everything so that

everybody's taken care of and nobody

gets hurt and it just sort of stops the

the survival of the fittest aspect that

that like drives Evolution and drives

Improvement and

Excellence that kind of

thing so yeah I but I don't recall the

Buddha ever mentioning it although just

because the Buddha didn't mention

something doesn't mean that it isn't

true I don't think the Buddha ever

declared that you know the cube root of

27 is three but still the cube root of

27 really is three

even though the Buddha didn't say it

probably and that's that's it that's the

end of the the Q&A by golly we survived

another one at least I did some of you

out there might be dead by now but I'm

still here and I'm going to go over

there and watch my snail very shortly

but uh before I do that then just just
bear in mind if you have questions about
Buddhism Buddhist philosophy meditation
Burma monasticism me me in particular
anything like that any question you
think I can answer possibly you think
there's a good chance at least a 50/50
chance that I can answer a question feel
free to ask it in the comments below and
try to keep your questions down to a
maximum of
three which might be shortened down to
two pray that I do not reduce it
further and uh like And subscribe if you
have not done so already and be be happy

hello and welcome to episode

105 of question and answer I am your

host as usual

poasa and you may notice that my

background is different this time

because we rearranged this office room

which is also the studio so it's the

same room but the background looks

different and I think probably I'm going

to have to switch it back the way it was

because you can't see the Magnificent

Sasquatch artwork from this angle cannot

see my new aquarium although it's

probably just as well at present because

it's not really done cycling and there's

like a bacterial Bloom going because the

nitrogen cycle and the microf FAA and

all that haven't completely

stabilized so it's kind of Cloudy

although my auto sinkless I got three of

them they're getting fat from all the

algae they're

eating but enough about aquari Arium or

Aquaria if you please and uh there's one

other thing I would like to mention

before I start answering questions and

that is that some of you may have

noticed that YouTube has begun

systematically deleting some of my um my

videos and they they give two reasons

for this one of them I'm not even going

to mention the other one is to make make

YouTube safe for its viewers and so for

example one of the videos that they
deleted was me talking with aan
Puna about the the differences and
similarities between Mahayana and terava
so obviously talking with an old monk
about Buddhism is dangerous for the
viewing Community which of course is
[__] so I'm not even sure if I'm
going to be able to upload this video
on
YouTube um because I mean they haven't
said that I've got strikes for I mean
they're they're up into double digits
with regard to the number of my old
videos some of them years old that have
been taken down just deleted for the

safety of our

viewers but um I don't think I've got

any strikes against me at present so

we'll we'll see if I can upload this on

YouTube but you may uh you may want to

start watching me on bitshoot or Rumble

instead of YouTube because YouTube

really is just trying to manipulate what

is on their platform for the sake of

maximizing their control over the

beliefs and opinions of the people who

watch YouTube for mainly political and

ideological

purposes so with that as a kind of

forward or introduction or Preamble or

preface I'm going to start answering

questions and the first question is from

Thro warbler

Mangrove and Thro orer Mangrove says

Christianity has the concept of false

christs or false Messiahs is there

something similar in Buddhism and if so

did the Buddha warn about false

Buddhas well

I think in

Christianity the idea of a false Christ

or a false Messiah is like an like an

evil deliberate fraud trying to mislead

people on purpose like in the Book of

Revelation for example um I don't recall

there being anything quite like that in

Buddhism although the Buddha did warn

against like unenlightened foolish

teachers you know the blind leading the
blind that kind of thing and he did say
following certain teachers like aiva
teachers you could wind up in hell
because of just the the perniciousness
of the wrong view that would instill in
you causing you to
perceive just your world in a very
perverse way that could Lead You
downwards but that's really all I can
remember about um the idea of like false
teachers or just unenlightened teachers
maybe trying to pass themselves off as
enlightened in
Buddhism and uh yeah so it's it's I
don't think it's quite the same as in
Christianity there are going to be a few

more Christian questions coming up here including this next one also from Thor War Builder Mangrove what do you think Buddha would think of Christ would he think of him as a duded being just like the rest of us and when I saw this question it reminded me of it's it was a Zen story I think it might be in uh Zen flesh Zen bones of somebody reading an excerpts from like the sermon of the mount to a Zen priest who was living in Japan probably and asked him what he thought of it and the Zen priest says this person is not far from Enlightenment so what do I think the Buddha would think of Jesus of

Nazareth um it's it's really hard to say because we do not have a very reliable representation of what Jesus of Nazareth taught much as we do not have a very accurate record of what goab Buddha taught you know it's like it's hard to pin down exactly what he said and didn't say in in the case of Jesus of Nazareth I I would be surprised I think if he was fully enlightened but obviously he was a wise man and so I think the Buddha would probably um consider him I mean not to be bad not to be like a false teacher or anything like that but um I mean the Buddha in his wisdom might know way better than I do what whether Jesus of Nazareth really was enlightened or not

or if not you know what stage of wisdom
he had he had reached but um I don't
think that the Buddha would uh have a
low opinion of Jesus
but um based on certain things I would
be surprised if Jesus of Nazareth was
fully enlightened so it may be that at
worst the Buddha would say well he had
some wisdom to him but you'd probably be
better off following someone who is more
advanced it's true Jesus probably could
um perform Miracles or he had psychic
powers using um or abana using Buddhist
terminology but
um I mean to the extent that he wasn't
fully enlightened assuming that Jesus

was not fully enlightened then the

Buddha would probably consider him to be

at least a little bit diluted because

everyone is duded except for a fully

enlightened

being

so um yeah questions about what what the

Buddha would think about something

that's really a tricky kind of question

cuz I mean we really can't know what an

enlightened being is thinking assuming

that the Buddha was an enlightened being

which is a very convenient working

hypothesis for

Buddhists so I'm just going to move on

to thr orer Mangrove next question which

is is our source Buddha nature if so why

did we leave it behind if we were at one
with Buddha nature how did we become
duded and enter Sam SAR it kind of
suggests that we were bored of being
Buddhas and chose to get lost in silly
saric games question mark and there are
four question marks here so this is
really a complicated complex
multi-question
here with regard to is our source Buddha
nature that's really a Mahayana concept
terraa Buddhism doesn't talk much about
Buddha nature at least not in the poly
Canon it doesn't Buddha nature is mainly
like your latent potential for
enlightenment you know sort of like the

innate wisdom or like the the light of
the Dharma Kaaya that shines through you
as much as it can and I think most most
people are kind of murky and translucent
at best and so the the light doesn't
shine through US quite quite perfectly
and then we'd have to be fully
enlightened for us to be like fully
transparent for the light to just shine
through Us full blast so to speak so is
our source Buddha
nature I guess you'd have to ask him
Mahayana Buddhist because in Terra
Buddhism the answer would just be
no um because Buddha nature really is
not a terraa Buddhist concept it's not
found in the earliest text or the texts

that are considered by Scholars to be the earliest texts so the next part of this question if so why did we leave it behind well um you could say we left and Enlightenment behind and it it goes back to the the simile of the block of marble you got the block of marble that contains within it every possible statue including statues that are so complicated they become self-referential and start thinking that they exist as individual beings completely separate from the rest of the whole block of Marvel so we didn't really leave it behind because diluted beings have always been

here and so there was no leaving

behind it's it's just always been this

way and it says if we were at one with

Buddha nature how did we become diluted

and enter Sam SAR well I mean we are

kind of at one with the ultimate you

know the highest truth the dharmakaya

whatever you want to call

it um we're we are at one with that we

just don't realize it because we've

become self-referential

and just thinking that our thoughts are

really representing reality to us which

they are not and I'll get to that in a

in a subsequent

question uh the God's

willing and I I'm not exactly sure why

I've started waving my arms around so
much when I answer questions I don't
think that earlier on like in like the
first 50 or so q&as at least I was
waving my arms around like some kind of
Italian while answering
questions so I hope I didn't just offend
all the Italians out
there let's see so how did we become
diluted and enter samsara it's been this
way from the from the beginning it kind
of suggests we were bored of being
Buddhas and chose to get lost in silly
samsar
games not exactly that there are a lot
of philosophical types who think that or

or just Dharma teachers of various sorts
who say that you know we started off
with with the one you know with god with
the absolute Brahman the da whatever and
then the da wanted to experience itself
through different angles and
perspectives and find out what it's like
to be an individual being and so forth
and so it divided up into all these
parts and I really don't think so some
some of those teachers may be wiser than
me but still I just cannot see it that
way because it's it's always been this
way there was no starting off with
perfection and then leaving the
Perfection to wallow through all this
stuff and then go back to Perfection

again um there there'd be no purpose to

that I mean Perfection is perfection

there's no need for Perfection to get

any better by experiencing this or that

God doesn't need to experience anything

God doesn't need people worshiping him

God doesn't need anything God is already

complete perfect

using theological jargon

there so I mean we didn't start off

being Buddhas um even if you say that we

started off with just being merged into

the

absolute then I mean still that wouldn't

be Buddhist it would just um sort

of you know it's just the the statue

that is the block of stone the block of stone is the absolute going with the the uh the analogy that within that block of stone there's always going to be an infinite number of statues including an infinite number of statues of unenlightened beings and so those statues they can try to become enlightened and they may eventually succeed in realizing that they're just the block of stone that I mean the statue is just this imaginary potential virtual form contained within the absolute but still the infinite number of statues are always going to be in there they've always been there they always will be in

there so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from extremely
rare bird an extremely rare bird says
apart from sex and romance isn't
politics Mara's greatest trick all the
conflict and polarization that ensues is
so great well I think there's a saying
in the in the poly Tex that whatever it
is that you're attack to that's the bait
that Mara uses to hook you so whatever
your attachment is I think probably for
most people even something like food
would be a bigger attachment than
politics in fact human beings in general
probably have quite a few attachments
that are stronger than political

attachments except for a few political
fanatics but for the most part just
things that we like you know food or for
some people it might be like video games
or just watching
movies or just thinking or just just
even like anger just getting pissed off
at things in general those can be bigger
attachments for us and they're just sort
of more built in to the human to human
nature I think just the human The Human
Condition you know we've got all these
foibles and attachments and preferences
and so forth that are just built into us
to some degree politics also but I don't
think if we do have like an animal
Instinct for being political it's not

nearly as deep as animal instincts for
just liking pleasure and food and sex
and so
forth so I think uh it's one going with
uh you know the personification of of
evil and delusion as
Mara that uh you know politics is just
one of the one of the arrows in his
quiver so to speak and you know if that
one doesn't work he'll use something
else but all of us are here on planet
Earth as a general rule because we've
got some kind of attachments that we
haven't cured ourselves of
yet so I think I'll just move on to the
next question this is from xenoid and

xenoid says out of all the people you have met in person do you believe that any of them were fully enlightened or just on the verge of it you said that the orders of monks today aren't what they're cracked up to be but I wonder if there are still any extremely Advanced practitioners that could be stream enterers bhis satas Etc walking Among Us right now well I did answer this question a few q&as ago where I said probably my best bet for um the most advanced being I have sat in the presence of would probably be shum in Seattle I have met some other monks that were considered to be arants in fact in some parts of Burma I was considered to

be an

Arun but just because you have a

reputation for being an Arun and when

you meet someone they seem softspoken

and you know content you know untroubled

that kind of thing it doesn't mean that

they're necessarily fully enlightened I

mean St John of the Cross oh no no St

Francis of AI said that you don't really

know somebody until or you don't know

how wise they are until you've seen them

in a situation where everything's going

wrong where what usually works for them

all of a sudden stops working and starts

doing the opposite you know it's like

then you know how wise they are because

some people they can just be like seem

wise you know when they give talks

they're wise or seem wise they seem to

have it all worked out you know they've

got it together but then when they're

off camera maybe they could be like

freaking out over just trivia you don't

really

know

so let's see

here yeah

so um it's this it's the same answer as

I gave I think it was like maybe two

q&as ago where probably my best guess at

the most spiritually Advanced human

being I've ever met would beue um seato

who was a disciple of mahasi seato

mahasi seato wanted to appoint him his

successor and Shu uman SE says no thanks

and just went off and and went his own

way and started um yea on the outskirts

of

rangon and at least 10 years ago uh his

successor was um uh I almost called him

anjan seato uoda

and SE UA I mean he was just in fashion

among the

weasa like the Jet Set kind of people

you know the the the relatively wealthy

Boomers that have to go and you know

meet the the teachers that are in

fashion and so forth um but I mean Burma

he did not have a high reputation at all

people did not consider him to be
particularly wise you know among the
Burmese
Buddhist population simply because he
was like a scholar more than he was a
meditation
Master but um his teacher and the
disciple of mahasi se he he seemed to be
very wise just very just wide awake you
know just still you know he just be I
mean he'd be obviously not like Frozen
like a statue or anything but I mean
there's no fidgeting or anything like
that you know he's just just kind of got
this penetrating bright gaze to him and
I met him him only briefly but I think I
mentioned in the the last time I

answered this question that there was
also an old monk named Yuan
monci that I met a few
times um did I meet him a few times
maybe I met him only once once or twice
and he lived in a cemetery he was very
serious very mild-mannered softspoken
kind of a monk you know he seemed
content um but still that's you really
don't know until you've observed for a
long time and even then you really can't
be sure you the saying goes that only an
arant can know if somebody else is an
arant only an enlightened being can know
if another person is enlightened or
not so that's that's one reason why we

have so many fake teachers and

charlatans and so forth cult leaders and

so forth because they can pass

themselves off as wise to people who

aren't maybe all that

wise but really they're they're not what

they seem to be to these

people so let's see I guess I answer

that

question I suppose I reckon I

hypothesize that I answer that question

so I'm just going to move on to Xeno

void's second question here which I like

this question this is a good question

not that the other questions aren't good

questions but this one stands out to me

as as a particularly good question maybe

just because it's easy for me to answer it

so the question is are all thoughts Karma or are some of them whaka or the fruition of karma every now and then thoughts seemingly appear in our mind randomly with no feeding or feeling of volition associated with them this is especially true for people with certain mental illnesses which cause an overabundance of intrusive thoughts so any thought that arises in your mind especi like the first movements of a thought that we Paka that is the the fruition of Karma and then once that thought has arisen if you want to go

with it you know you're going to like

follow a chain of

Association and just keep thinking along

that direction that's you're making new

Cara but the first movements and I'm

using like a Roman Catholic term here

the first

movements are really you don't have any

control over that even an enlightened

being doesn't have complete control over

what he's going to think next I mean you

don't know what you're going to think

next until you're thinking it because if

you knew in advance what you're going to

think then you'd already be thinking it

so the thoughts

generally take us by surprise or maybe

not So Much by surprise because they're habitual so generally the same kind of thoughts keep
arising but um like St John of the Cross who was the the Catholic I was referring to using the first the first motions or the first movements that he was a father Confessor and so of course you'd have hyper conscientious nuns mostly would would come to him and make confession about these thoughts that they were having and he would keep telling them you know the first motion the you know the first appearance of the
thought that's not a sin it can't be a sin no matter what the thought is it

might be cursing God or or like raping
the Virgin Mary or something that first
thought that AR es you're not
responsible for that that it's not a sin
for you to experience that or in
Buddhist terminology you know it's it's
not you're not making any new Karma that
is the fruition of old Karma but then if
you follow that you know you you just
keep going with that thought you know
you keep extending it you keep thinking
about it then that could be an issue
where you should make confession if
you're a Catholic or uh you know you're
making new Karma by continuing with the
thought if you are a
Buddhist

so but it can be really Pro problem problematic like somebody who's got OCD obsessive compulsive disorder um you know they can just have these obsessive thoughts that keep arising and um it takes you know it takes some doing to uh to cure them of that or at least to get get them to the point and this is generally how it works if somebody's cured of OCD it's not that they stop having the obsessive thoughts it's just they learn to detach from them to observe them mindfully assuming that they're using like psychological techniques instead of just drugs to like suppress and deaden the arising of

thoughts

that um you know if you're being mindful

of it you just learn to detach like I

knew one of the world's leading

Authorities on obsessive compulsive

disorder and he was using a kind of sad

batana Buddhist Meditation to cure his

patients of obsessive compulsive

disorder and when they were cured it

didn't mean that they stopped having

this urge to wash their hands over and

over again or they stopped having the

the obsessive thought or whatever it was

it's just that they learned to observe

it arise and pass away without acting

upon it you know they stopped

identifying with it it's not me it's my

OCD

so I think I answer that

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

zeni void's thirdd

question and xenoid says in a book by

the French monk I don't know how to

pronounce French names Matthew

Ricard usually I just mispronounce

French words on purpose just so that I

have an excuse for not pronouncing it

correctly because I did it on purpose

anyways getting back to this question

here in a book by the French monk

Matthew Ricard called beyond the self he

gives a description of the unconscious

mind's relationship to Buddhism could

you give your thoughts on this excerpt
and the quote is quote the general
public psychologists and neuroscientists
surely have varying views about what the
unconscious
is as for
psychoanalysis what what it calls the
depths of the unconscious are from a
contemplated perspective the outer
layers of clouds formed by mental
confusion that temporarily prevent one
from experiencing the most fundamental
nature of Mind How can there be
something unconscious in a state of pure
awareness devoid of mental construct no
Darkness exists in the middle of the Sun
for Buddhism the deepest most

fundamental aspect of Consciousness is

this sun like awareness not the murky

unconscious of course this is all

expressed from the first person

perspective and I am sure that a

neuroscientist approaching this issue

from the third person perspective will

have a different view of the

unconscious

so

um I think that for the most part I

mean I've I keep saying that there are

interpretations even found within the

poly texts that Nirvana or the ultimate

the absolute is just pure formless

Consciousness just absolute you know

pure

Consciousness and so um that wouldn't

really be the subconscious you know that

would be more along the lines of the

superconscious you know that's that's

above Consciousness above our mere human

thinking ego Consciousness but still it

does seem to me that we do have a

subconscious mind like the subconscious

mind that's churning out dreams at night

when we're

sleeping or just the weird I mean like

hysterical Behavior where at the surface

you think you're acting for a certain

reason whereas deeper down you've got

other motives that your conscious mind

isn't even aware of or people who can

lie to themselves I'm I've met people I
used to think that I mean how could
anybody lie to themselves in order to
lie to yourself you have to know that
you're lying so how can you deceive
yourself but just through interaction
with people like this who clearly are
deceiving themselves it's like one layer
of your mind is like Mis misinterpreting
your own like motives whereas deeper
down your true motives are really
running the
show
so I I'm not exactly sure how that fits
in with this question
though let's

see I mean we do have there is like a
higher Consciousness and I would say
that people do have a higher
Consciousness which could arguably be
called a soul using conventional Truth
where it's aware of all of your past
lives for
example um there's a book called Seth
speaks it's either the Seth material or
Seth speaks I read both both of them and
um according to Seth this
multi-dimensional entity who was being
channeled through Jean
Roberts deep at a at a deep level I mean
we we're pretty much omniscient that if
someone is lying to us and deceiving us
deep down we know that they're lying to

us and that we are being deceived and

still at the surface level we're still

buying the the shitty car from them or

whatever it is still believing their

their BS stories that kind of

thing so I really don't think that the

existence of like a

superconscious you know um just the pure

infinite Consciousness that pervades the

entire universe I don't think that that

really would uh refute the idea that we

do have like this murky subconscious

mind too

and I mean it's like there's different

levels of the subconscious mind I mean

just because we're unaware of of it

makes it subconscious so there's like higher levels of consciousness that the thinking superficial ego is unaware of and then there's like the deeper murkier kind of stuff like the the dream symbolism and so forth that also the The Superficial thinking ego is unaware there's just all these different levels of mind and the thinking ego is just one of these levels and it thinks that it's who we are but really there's all these other levels that are doing their own thing and the The Superficial thinking ego is unaware of it for the most part it might get inkling sometimes I would say though that a fully enlightened being probably has no subconscious

mind like a fully enlightened being

who's just aware through and through of

what's going on at the conscious level

subconscious superconscious all the

consciouses it's aware of all of that or

the the the enlightened being would be

that that's my guess that a fully

enlightened being has no subconscious

mind there's just no level that this

being is unaware

of so I really hope I answered that

question because I'm moving on to the

next one

anyway we do have sort of the standard

long list of

questions I think it's in excess of 40

questions so I shouldn't spend too much
time um chewing on on one question when
we got to maintain the momentum we got
to have the flow going and so this next
question is from
Fuji and Fuji is responding to a
question in the previous Q&A somebody
asked me of telling your kid that Santa
Claus exists is that lying to your kid
or not and I said yeah yeah it is lying
I mean if if you're saying something
deliberately for the sake of deceiving
another person that qualifies as lying I
mean not all lies are the same you know
they're they're not all equal you can
have relatively harmless lies and then
you can have like really awful damn lies

and so telling your kid about Santa

Claus you know it's a cultural thing

mainly so you know telling your kids

some [__] and bll story about some

Anatolian Saint from the late Roman

Empire who mov to the polar ice cap with

beings from Germanic mythology and Lev

in Caribou and all

this I mean it's it's obviously a

[__] story that that is just

traditional that we feed the children

but still it is it's still

BS so anyways Fuji says wouldn't what

Santa does be the perfect example of

Donna therefore very Buddhist well I'm

very sorry to tell fuy but Santa Claus

doesn't really exist I'm sorry I'm sorry

I had to be the one to tell

you but that's just the way it

is anyways wouldn't what Santa does be

the perfect example of Donna not exactly

because Santa keeps a list he knows

who's naughty and who's nice and he

mainly gives the presents the good

presence to the good kids he gives lumps

of coal and things like that to the

naughty kids so that wouldn't be a

perfect example of Donna Donna if it was

perfect would would just be

undiscriminating you know it just be

motivated by just Universal

Goodwill so Santa is not the perfect

Buddhist even though he's very jolly and

generous and all that he's extremely

generous although he's probably

exploiting his elf workers and all that

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

question which is from covac and sead

zida and CAC CAD zida says do you think

pure land teachings are conducive to

enlightenment

well there's a few different ways you

could look at this first of all pure

land teachings include a lot of Orthodox

Buddhist teachings you know just basic

you know morality and I don't know how

to what extent pure land teachings would

teach a lot of like deep

meditation because you know they're just

saying just you know repeat the name of
you know amid Buddha or whatever and get
reborn into his pure land so there is
that but also
I do think that that some religions like
Roman Catholicism can produce
enlightened beings simply because you're
going to have people that are wise
they're just ripe for enlightenment who
are just born into 16th century Spain
for example you know or they're just
raised in this religion that really is
not a particularly enlightened religion
but still they've got such talent that
they they can become enlightened to some
degree in spite of of their religion
that you know it has enough of you know

encouraging morality and saintliness and
you know this kind of thing that even
though it doesn't even have a concept
really of like being a fully enlightened
arant or at least generally it doesn't
still some people can manage it so um
having said
that uh I do think it's possible that
some pure land Buddhists have become
enlightened um but I do think that pure
land teachings um they're not a
particularly enlightened
teaching essentially they're saying you
know don't strive for enlightenment now
instead just keep praying to this
essentially mythological Buddha on in on

the off chance that he's not just a
mythological iCal Buddha that he's real
and he really did create this kind of
paradise that somehow is not in Sam
Sara and then you can you can be reborn
there and then you can become
enlightened easily um yeah I think you'd
probably be better off just following
what the early teachings told you to do
if you were intent on
enlightenment but it is kind of a tricky
question because I do think that some
members of some not particularly
extremely um Enlightenment conducive
Traditions can still become enlightened
despite that
fact and again pure land does have a lot

of traditional like earlier more

Orthodox uh teachings of Buddhism that

might be sufficient in and of themselves

to get a person you know right to the

verge of Enlightenment and maybe even

Beyond The

Verge but with regard to the wisdom of

the tradition I would not put pure land

anywhere near the top of the various

schools of Buddhism I would have to put

it pretty much towards the

bottom and I hope I didn't just offend

all the pure land Buddhists out there

but I'm just I'm just calling them as I

see them and I'm going to move on to

seov action sead zuna's next question

which is why is it called the Indian
subcontinent what's so sub about it
seems like more of a continent than
Europe since it has its own separate
tectonic plate and it is true that's one
reason why the Himalayas are so tall is
because India is moving like two inches
per year I think northward still which
is still pushing up the Himalaya
Mountains as India keeps moving
northwards into like Eurasia
um I think it's called a subcontinent
because it's you know it's getting up
into Continental sort of size but it's
stuck onto an even bigger continent
which is the Eurasian continent or just
you can just say Asia I

guess so yeah I mean dividing Europe and
Asia into two different continents is
just purely a it's like a a cultural
thing because it's obviously I mean
there's no like narrowing of the ground
or anything in between Europe and Asia
it's just mainly Caucasian Christians
live on one side of the the mountain
range what is the urals that they are
like dividing Asia and and
Europe and then it's like you know
non-Christian Asian people on the other
side or non-Christian non-white people
or something but it's mainly like an
ethnic division rather than a a
geographic one but India uh yeah I mean

it's it's like its own little continent that is just stuck onto the bottom of a bigger continent so it's called the subcontinent seems to me so I'm just going to move on to se action C Z's third question which is I have heard some Hindus claim that Buddhism and all Indian religions are actually just a branch of the sonat Dharma or Eternal Dharma which is a term they made up in during the Hindu revivalist movements in the late 1800s to refer to Hinduism what makes these kinds of people this delusional trying to lump Buddhism into their own religion there's tens of millions or hundreds of millions of these people claiming the Buddha was a

Hindu or part of sonat Dharma and they
perform constant mental gymnastics to
try to prove the Buddha was actually
just part of their religion maybe they
are insecure in their own religion and
want to be associated with religions
that have a better reputation or
something question mark in parenthesis
or maybe they want to control the
religious narrative and eventually
consume Buddhism up into its fold
another question mark in parenthesis
well I remember when I was a very Junior
monk the monastery where I was ordained
Tang Pulu Caba Monastery which still
exists in California near Santa Cruz um

it was essentially ruled by a certain

Indian

woman and and I was sitting in a at a

retreat where she was speaking I mean I

wasn't a disciple there I was sitting up

front as a kind of panel discussion

participant and she said the Buddha was

a

Hindu and I mean it's it's like well

that's that's pretty obviously not

true but it seems to me that in order to

be a real Hindu you would have to accept

the vdas as authoritative I mean that

for me that's just the cut off between

Hindus and non-hindus there are some

people saying there's no such thing is a

Hindu it's all just geography or

something which kind of I mean that's

obviously false too because you've got

SS and Muslims living in India I mean

right next door to the to the Hindus

some of

them so yeah I think that really the

diagnostic feature of a Hindu would have

to be somebody who considers the vas

like the four main vas at least the

first three you know

rigveda yaj Veda Seda maybe at tarva

Veda might I mean maybe some people

could be skeptical of that because it

was added

later um I mean if you accept them as

authoritative then boom it's sort of

like um there was a an ancient Indian philosophy which was flourishing in the Buddhist times called sya and Sonia kind of split into two halves there was one half of just kind of joined Hinduism and started claiming the vdas as authoritative and the other half of the Sania school just remained outside of the vdic fold so to speak and so they didn't become absorbed into Hinduism and so you have theistic Sanka which is yoga and then you've got atheistic Sanka which is still Sanka and I don't I don't know if sonka is still a living tradition I mean aside from the the theistic Sanka which is now called yoga but yeah the Buddha I mean the

Buddhism does not accept the the vdas as authoritative so why do some Hindus insist that the Buddha was a Hindu well it's partly because he was speaking like a an Indian language obviously wasn't a Muslim and that he accepts a lot of the same um philosophical tenants as Hinduism in fact he was borrowing a lot of of terminology from vdic you know Proto Hinduism but he did not consider the vdus to be authoritative and so you have to really cast a broad net to include Buddhism into into Hinduism U and some Hindus will even consider Christianity to be a branch of of Hinduism I mean

some some Hindus just have this idea
that any kind of spiritual wisdom is
just a kind of Hinduism like sonat
Dharma which means you know Eternal
Dharma you know any kind of real Dharma
would have to be a kind of Hinduism you
know they're just sort of broadening out
the definition of Hinduism to include
all
wisdom and I mean they're they're just
very inclusive I
suppose but to me I do think that the
dividing line between Hindu and
non-hindu is are the vdas authoritative
and Buddhism does not consider the vdas
to be
authoritative in fact uh in the text the

Buddha forbade monks from doing Atara
stuff like the Atara Veda is it consists
largely of like magic
charms they like spells that kind of
thing and monks are forbidden to do that
so at least they're they
explicitly instructed you know don't
[__] with the atar
OFA and so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from oalt and
oalt says what is your opinion on
mantras from my experience the intention
appears to be more important than the
words yeah I think uh Jay Krishna mury
would agree with that I mean he he
famously said that it doesn't matter if

you're you're chanting om Padme home or Ram or Coca-Cola you know it's the effect is the same and I think a lot of the uh Transcendental Meditation people might disagree with that because trans Dental meditation teaches its teachers so to speak you know the teachers are instructed that you know you get like a an understanding of what the person's personality type is and different mantras will work better for different personality types and I do think that is possible but I do think that Mantra is there's nothing at all wrong with it that it is just as valid of a meditation technique as like meditation of the breath that I do M

spontaneously maybe I was a Hindu and previous life or something but a lot of the time just I can just be walking or you know doesn't matter what I'm doing just m will just start coming up especially if there's some kind of stress involved sometimes I'll just spontaneous start oming as a kind of coping mechanism or something but it it doesn't always arise that way it can be just I'm just like at work walking from one side of the shop to the other side of the shop and I'll just home will'll just start

arising so I did write a a blog post I think it's in one of my books even just

a an essay about mantras and their

efficacy you know how to use them and so

forth so yeah I do think that Mantra if

it's a simple Mantra it can get you into

deep meditation like like M for example

or budo maybe I think a lot of tha monks

do budo or puto

Boo as uh I guess it's I guess they

would pronounce it puto

um as as this primary object in

meditation and it can get you into jna

I'm pretty

sure just had to have a sip of my

beverage there for those of you who are

not watching that explains the several

seconds of Silence just

now so yeah mantras are are fine if if

it works for you for some people it
works better than meditation on the
breath partly because to keep the Mantra
going it takes effort you know you have
to keep keep oming you know if your mind
wanders away it may be just a part of
your mind wanders away but a certain
part of your mind has to keep homing you
don't have to have any part of your like
deliberate attention keeping you
breathing because you're going to be
breathing no matter what you know it
takes deliberate like a deliberate
effort to stop breathing to hold your
breath but you can be you know flat out
unconscious you're still going to be

breathing

breathing so one of the advantages of

meditating with a mantra is it does help

to keep your mind on the subject or or

the the primary

object but again you shouldn't really be

thinking about the meaning of it that

you know it's something like M it

doesn't really mean

anything which is one of the beauties of

M in my

opinion because if you're thinking about

the

meaning then you're you're still at the

level of just perceptual ideas and your

meditation is not going to get very deep

you have to get past the level of

thinking so don't worry about the actual
meaning even if you're chanting
something or repeating something as a
mantra that does have a meaning and it
it could be just about anything you know
it could be life is a walking Shadow a
poor player that struts and Frets his
hour upon the stage and then is heard no
more it is a tale told by an idiot full
of Sound and Fury signifying nothing
that you could just repeat that over and
over again as a kind of English mantra
for you know some English spiritual
tradition or something there's no
problem with that or dear God please
have mercy upon me a sinner you know or

I mean the Lord's Prayer can be a mantra

like um contemplating the the nine

virtues of the Buddha can be a mantra

gate gate

parate

bodh but you don't think about the

meaning of it or at least your

meditation is going to get a lot deeper

if you go past the meaning of the words

so you're probably better off if you do

a mantra to do something very simple

that doesn't have any meaning that just

jumps out at

you so I'm going to move on to the next

question this is from Stellar Supreme

and I will I will get back to the

question that I just just moved on from

though and uh I'm pretty sure in one of my books maybe Buddhist pra Buddhist ethics Buddhist practice it would it would there's a discussion like an a chapter on on Mantra and meditation so now I'm going to move on to Stellar Supreme formerly known as Liber L and Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra Lam says what do you think of my conspiracy theory that humans are like spiritual cattle where the human realm is an opportunity to individualize but where the spiritual quality of most is collective based and effectively animal Karma I don't actually believe this but I like it as a thought experiment um I'm

not exactly sure where the conspiracy
lies in this unless it's graze or
something putting our Spirits into this
realm instead of a a different realm or
some
such but uh humans I mean actually this
question reminded me of um something
that was said in the naked eight by
Desmond Morris one of the first
important books I ever read in my life
where he's talking about how humans are
at a transitional stage sexually that
our ancestors who lived in the trees
like
chimpanzees they were not monogamous at
all like a chimpanzee will have sex like
20 to 40 times a day and it's with

different chimpanzees I mean it's like

an orgy going

on um but humans when we came down out

of the trees

um a human female can have more than one

child at a one small child at a time a

chimpanzee can only have one kid at a

time because she's got to carry that

that baby through the trees when she's

swinging through the trees or or

whatever it is she's doing through the

trees so humans after they came down

onto the the the ground they stopped

being primarily

arboreal um they they started evolving

new mating strategy of monogamy where a

woman needs a man to be devoted to her

and to take care of her especially when

she's pregnant or has babies because

then she and the children are very

vulnerable and so we started evolving

more towards

monogamy but we haven't fully made the

transition yet and it looks like we

never

will because even largely monogamous

creatures will still have at least a

little bit of messing around I've heard

that even some somebody told me I think

coaction CAD Z actually informed me that

even

storks you know the the traditional

monogamous animal is there's still a

little bit of messing around based on
DNA studies or something although this
could just be like historic hating
scientists cooking their
data but getting back to uh this
question what do I think of the
conspiracy theory that humans are like
spiritual cattle where the human realm
is an opportunity to individualize but
where the spiritual quality of most is
collective based and effectively animal
Karma yeah I mean we we're more able to
individualize than maybe any other
animal that most animals have no concept
of
individuality but we certainly are not

good at it like just humans are the are
probably the animal that is best at
rationality at rational thought but
still we're not masters of it by a long
shot and it also this this question also
reminds me of the idea that I've had for
a very long time that a human being is
like an angel riding on the back of a
dog but it's not just the angel it's
also the dog so we're the Angel and the
dog so it's sort of like we're like a
transitional stage between small G God
and animal I guess the animal should
come first because we're transitioning
by Hope from animal to small G God
rather than the other way around
so that's what I think of it I just I

gave you a few thoughts on that I'm not exactly

uh yeah I mean Libra Lam or forgive me Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra lamb doesn't actually believe this either so I guess we can't take it too seriously so I'm going to move on on the next question this is from Saint sword or Saints word I get I keep thinking it's Saint sword though so maybe it is Saint sword Saint sword says what do you think of

LSD it doesn't cause addiction or craving if anything it reduces it there's reports of LSD usage drastically curbing addictions to opiates for

instance and it doesn't cause
heedlessness despite the propaganda
against it there's debates in some
Western Buddhist communities about
whether LSD breaks the fifth precept
yeah I I mean my generation of
monks um you know the people that were
monks in the S about that were about the
same age as me you know and and older
too this would include like the the
Boomers that were hippies and so forth a
lot of us started off in spirituality
through LSD or through psychedelics it
wasn't through narcotics you know it
wasn't through opiates or downers or
anything like that it's through
Consciousness expanding drugs

you know you have like a mystical
experience I mean most of the time that
I have taken LSD I've taken it quite a
few times over the course of my life not
anytime recently but quite a few times
over the course of my life almost every
time I would have religious experiences
like mystical
experiences and I mean that happened
with with ROM dos too that's one reason
why I liked ROM da so much when I was in
high school because he started off with
psychedelics and then moved on to like
deeper spirituality or just drug-free
spirituality and I kind of emulated
that it's weird when I was a kid I mean

I I mean I was exposed to all the just say no propaganda that you know school kids are exposed to you know don't take it you're gonna you take LSD you're going to think you're G to fly you're G to jump out of window that's what's going to happen and even so I was a good kid you know I was a good student but even so I looked forward to being old enough to take psychedelics the way a lot of kids look forward to being old enough to lose their virginity so yeah it worked for me definitely and uh Romos in one of his books points out that uh some famous Swami said that God came to America in the form of LSD because Americans are

materialists and they wanted their God
in the form of a
material also so neim Koli Baba who's on
the the altar over there not no not
behind me as usual he was saying that
LSD if you take it alone when when the
weather is not really hot you know and
you got kind of a calm mind then it can
be
useful and neim Cy Baba he's the person
who famously took 12200 micrograms of
LSD with no noticeable effect and he did
it very ostenta justly held up put it
into his mouth you know washed it down
no noticeable effect because he was he
was so so conscious I guess that these

little modifications really didn't have
any effect on at least no noticeable
effect so getting back to Saints Ward's
question what do you think of
LSD yeah I think it's like a magnifier
or an
amplifier so I mean if you take it in
the wrong place at the wrong time with
people you don't trust or you've got a
troubled mind when you take it it can
just magnify that and get it worse and
then you can really freak out have a bad
trip or something but you take it like
in a forest or something you know at the
beach you know not when you're having to
interact with lots of other people maybe
just a few people that maybe are

tripping also or that at least know that
you're tripping then it can be
spiritually conducive I mean at the very
least LSD it allows you to triangulate
if you have like an expanded State of
Consciousness then it can give you this
deep Insight that this expanded State of
Consciousness that you are experiencing
is actually closer to reality than the
stuff that you're wallowing in most of
the time in your ordinary waking
State and it's sort of gives you a like
a frame of reference it helps you to
understand that the ordinary Normy
mentality is
delusional and then also it can inspire

you to try to cultivate the same or similar states of expanded Consciousness preferably without the hallucinations um without the chemicals and then you take up meditation for example so like I said most of the monks of my generation started off with psychedelics or it seems that most of them did

so it's not all bad and I have read um there was this this hermit from Texas that lived in a Big Hollow Tree in Burma that he was getting literature A friend of his was sending him literature from this group of Doctors medical doctors who are trying to get LSD legalized because it did have powerful therapeutic

effects that it can like cure or at least be very useful in the therapy of certain mental illnesses for example and also it can help people with like terminal conditions like say they're they're dying of some some disease and they take the LSD and it gives them like an expanded Consciousness where they no longer identify with the dying body you know they they can see just the beauty and Perfection of everything and it just it it just becomes okay which is help helpful there's one it's too long of a story for me to tell right here but there is one story that was included in this literature that I was I was looking

at and about how this one guy he was a
total I mean most psychiatrist and
psychologist had just given up on this
guy and it was one therapeutic acid trip
that he took back before it became
illegal just boom It just knocked him
right out of the rut but it's uh too
long of a story so I won't tell it here
because I got to move
on see I do not think LSD breaks the
five precept fifth precept unless you
take it just for um recreational
purposes I mean if you're just doing it
to party then yeah that could break the
the fifth precept but if you're taking
it for legitimate spiritual
reasons which

is very

plausible then I I think it's I think

it's it might

illegal but I do not think it is

immoral and so I'm going to move on to

the next question which is from Twin

Wasabi and twin Wasabi says would you

ever take a pilgrimage to the Buddha's

birth place birthplace in

lumini and I did do a pilgrimage of most

of the main Buddhist sites in India it

was when I first came to Asia I was with

my teacher V pooku Seattle also known as

let's see Tulu chelon doya Seattle and a

small retinue of other monks and lay

people we all went to India before going

to

Burma and he did not want to go to

lumini because he had problems with his

Visa previously crossing the border from

India into Nepal and so he went to

pretty much all the other places except

for lumini but I was willing I mean I

was kind of disappointed that we didn't

go to lumini also because we went to all

the other

ones so yeah I was willing I was willing

to go to lumini it just didn't happen in

my

case um so yeah I've got I'm not opposed

to the idea of going to

lumini see would you ever take a

pilgrimage to the B Buddha's birthplace

of lumini I'm not sure why twin Wasabi
singles out lumini maybe he knows that
that's the one place of the main
pilgrimage sites Buddhist pilgrimage
sites that I've never gone
to yeah but it it wasn't my choice not
to go there it was the choice of my
seato so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from game fap
and game fap says what's the most unarm
thing you ever did as a
monk and I suppose it would be
committing s deesa offenses with a
female yep that would have to be yet I
mean there's it's it's kind of a it's
kind of a judgment case though I mean

some people would would who are aware of
everything I've ever done in my life you
know all of those people that that are
aware of everything I ever did that they
might single out different
things so I mean it could be just I mean
some people just think that that being
sensual liking you know being
heterosexual
as as a a celibate monk that you know
that's you know it's like sex is pretty
much just dropped between the cracks of
morality from a lot of people and
especially people who kind of vote
leftwards you know sexual Indulgence is
you know it's more of a virtue than a
than a sin or a vice nowadays so they

might say it would be something else and

I'm not exactly sure what they would

think it was because I was pretty strict

as a monk maybe just you know being like

a

like a Hermit that just sort of had no

use for the human race in general but

that's pretty daric

but yeah so I guess the most

undarmaa

offenses I didn't get myself

excommunicated mind you as a as a monk

with with regard

to a

female a human one

so I think I'm just going to move on to

the next question here this is from
power and power says any thoughts on
Pearl Davis she seems pretty cringe for
my liking and at first I didn't know who
he was referring to but then it turns
out I mean I did a very brief search on
Pearl Davis and it turns out that I have
seen one or two of her videos she's kind
of like a a right-wing anti-feminist
type of woman and and I mean she was all
right I mean she wasn't all right enough
that wanted to keep watching her
videos um I didn't subscribe to her
Channel or anything but I mean it's I
wasn't cringing I mean she she seems all
right and somebody responded to this
question in the YouTube comments that

because she's she has caught hell for telling the truth on YouTube I she can't be all bad so yeah I can I can pretty much agree with that that I mean anyone who catches hell on YouTube Can't be all bad so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from ruie and ruie says what is your take on Carl jong's notion of an acausal connection between events so that's synchronicity and I do have on my bookcase over there yong's essay on synchronicity which I have read and I don't completely understand how you can have an acausal connection between events that the connection would have to

be sort of causal anyway it's like how

can it be a causal and still cause

something so yeah I don't think that he

he really explained it very well but

um there was uh he gave one example and

I don't remember the name of the person

it was a French person I wouldn't be

able to to uh pronounce their name

correctly anyway let's call him Monsour

Mont glue there's this story given in in

yung's essay on synchronicity about this

guy

who ate plum pudding for the first time

I think he was a kid and it was given to

him by a certain friend named Monsour

mono then years later you know he's he's

a grownup man now he just happens to be

in a bakery or something and see some
Plum Pudding on sale so or he sees some
Plum Pudding there in like a glass case
or something and he asks for that
because he remembers that he had it once
with Monsour montigo and the like the
person behind the counter says I'm sorry
we can't sell you that is reserved for a
certain Monsour
monago so then many years after this
that he's visiting a friend at some
apartment complex and they bring out
Plum Pudding and the guy just starts he
starts joking about man all I need now
is Monsour montigo because the only
times I've ever had Plum Pudding was in

relation to this Monsour montigo and then right then somebody knocks on the door and it was Monsour monago who was this he was like a very old man his his faculties were fading sort of like the American president at present and he knocked on the wrong door thinking it was some other door and it was it was the same Monsour montigo all three times this guy ate Plum Pudding monser monl was involved although I'm mispronouncing his name so I mean there's obviously a connection but I don't know if young was he considered material reality to be real or not I mean if you take away the physical world and in the laws of

physics saying that this and that is impossible and so forth um I mean if if it's karma for example that's generating this stuff this generating the world we live in then there's really no problem with synchronicity at all if it's all mindmade as the first verse of the DAP says then yeah there's there's really no problem with that it's just when you start thinking that when you become like a scientific realist and start thinking that science explains reality although even now I mean science like like theoretical physics has gotten so surreal that you know it's like what happens really is influenced by the mind

of the Observer and so according to the legend Albert Einstein actually prevailed upon Carl Young to publish his essay on synchronicity because even in even even in Einstein's time it was no longer in in like conflict with modern science that you can still have the Mind influencing physical systems

so yeah I I really have never been able to understand how it could be a causal connecting principle between events because it would seem that there would have to be some kind of causation going on not necessarily physical causation but at least mental causation it' be your own mental States causing the event

to happen or some

such so I suppose I'll just move on the

next question here this is from scolin

or

schaden and he says are you taking

pre-orders for your fourth book and no

I'm not I mean I do have all the all the

chapters written all I got to do is come

up with an introduction and then do like

the editing of like compiling it into a

book that can then be mass-produced on

Amazon I guess and the fourth book is

going to

be assuming that I ever come out with it

because I I do work full-time I'd have

to take like a week off from work or

something to give myself just a full week to just sit down and just edit the thing and just get it done you know get all the writing done and everything the designing and all that but it would be story stories from my personal life so it would be much more autobiographical than the first three volumes of the books that I've I have on I have for sale on Amazon that I have written so no I'm not taking pre-orders sorry and then so then scolin his next question is would you kindly give an excerpt from your fourth book and um I actually read a chapter from my fourth book uh as a YouTube video called In Search Of

Death if if YouTube hasn't deleted that
one too for the safety of the
viewers um but anyways um in search of
death was sort of a autobiographical
account of me as a junior monk
especially um thinking about how monks
are encouraged to contemplate like
corpses and so I made effort actually to
find a corpse to contemplate and my
first efforts were in California before
I went to Asia and I called the coroner
asking if if I and some other monks
could come and observe an autopsy and
the coroner just in this voice of lad
said I wouldn't recommend it and that
was as far as it got that time but then

like when I went to India to all the the pilgrimage places Varanasi was one of the pilgrimage places it was right next to Sarat you know the the Deer Park where the Buddha delivered his first sermon it was not far from Banaras or barasi so we went to varasi also and that's where the burning gats were and none of the other monks really interested but I kind of detached from the rest of the group and went to the burning gats to watch corpses be cremated I had never never seen a a like a corpse before except like on TV or in pictures or something I never even attended a funeral before at that point so um

anyways this is like an excerpt from me at the burning gats in bonares I'm not going to give a really long one just like one paragraph and it is as follows quote I remember while watching the corpse burner children were running among the fires and corpses playing and laughing people can get used to anything one of the kids ran past me and bumped into me squealing and giggling which irritated me at the time a water buffalo in the brainlessly Placid prehistoric manner of water buffalos slowly ambled among the fires eating flowers that had been that had dropped from beers onto the ground

an Indian man offered me some kind of drug looking stuff which I refused later I was told that it was some kind of chewing tobacco one strange thing that I remember was the smell of the place have you ever smelled something that very strongly reminded you of something else yet you couldn't quite remember what it reminded you of that was happening to me at the burning gats I knew that I had smelled that smell somewhere before and was racking my brains trying to figure it out when suddenly it dawned on me a wiener roast it smelled like a wiener roast

there

unquote so that's an excerpt and I'm

going to move on to the next question
this is from
Romeo and this is kind of an interesting
question that has has not been asked
before Romeo says I am a 50 year-old
mental health counselor and was recently
freaked out by a conversation I had with
one of my clients my client a techsavvy
20s something was talking about his
girlfriend a few minutes into our chat I
realized that the woman he was referring
to was not a person but an online AI
entity I was totally flabbergasted as I
sat there for 20 minutes hearing about
how great a romantic partner this AI was
to my client as a professional I usually

try to keep my thoughts and feelings to myself but in this case I couldn't help but blurred out my gut reaction that having a relationship with an AI girlfriend was not the way to go my client responded to my reaction as if I was just some fuddy duddy who is out to who is out of touch with the modern world there was a movie around 10 years ago called her where the main character played by hqe Phoenix falls in love with an AI voiced by Scarlet Johansson back then I thought the concept was pretty creepy but to now see this played out in real life I feel downright scared for the future of humanity I mean AI taking our jobs is one thing but having it

replace each other in terms of
relationships totally dystopian what do
you think of my negative reaction to my
client's AI romance is he right in
thinking that I am just a Gen X stick in
the mud for to bother me so
much well I never watched the movie her
but I have I have watched science
fiction movies I think it was like the
the sequel to Blade Runner had this guy
who had a virtual a virtual mate I I
don't know if she she was like a robot
or if it was just like a holograph that
was there just to talk to him I don't
think I don't know if he was able to
actually have sex with this woman or

there's there's also uh a movie I saw
called uh gosh what was it called it was
it was a movie about essentially robots
with AI and there was this female robot
who was just playing this guy I mean she
was sort of Trapped In This laboratory
type environment and and she was just
playing him to get him to fall in love
with her so that he would let her free
and then as soon as he let her free I
mean she was just boom gone you know she
was out of there and left him just
completely screwed over
can't remember what it's called though
exmachina I think it was called so yeah
I mean science fiction this has been a
theme for quite a while of having like

virtual girlfriends and to some degree
it's it's been around for a long time in
other forms just like guys falling in
love with webcam girls or you know the
the chat chat women on the the the phone
the sex phone hotlines and stuff or even
strippers or or prostitutes to some
degree I mean it's just like a
misplaced like a like a mating urge that
you know you just sort of apply it to to
the wrong
thing I mean that's kind of how
pornography works too sexual stimulation
so just seeing images that you know it
sort of like short circuits are our
animal

instincts so let's see here yeah in a
way it's kind of heading towards
transhumanism isn't it
where I mean we might just get our
personality downloaded into a computer
and then we'll be living in a virtual
world although the world we're living in
already is pretty much virtual as it
is so I think that sort of the gut
reaction that Romeo here had was a gut
reaction to something just unnatural
that this guy was essentially having a
romantic relationship with something
that was not a human female you know
sort of like somebody in a having a
romantic relationship with a sheep or I
mean to some degree even homophobia is

based on this this feeling that you know

a man sleeping with a man is just

unnatural it's creepy it's icky I don't

like it kind of a

thing and this is sort of a step in that

direction or a step past that

direction where you've got this guy who

has a girlfriend who is just the where

is it uh let's

see talking about the ideal romantic

partner or

whatever yeah I can't find it now which

is kind of

weird

anyway yeah so I'm trying to find that

one particular phrase and I can't find

it strangely because I don't want to
just sit here in silence scrolling
around looking for it but uh now I've
I've sort of lost the the thread here
but somebody just really falling in love
happily with just something nonhuman
that is obviously short Circ in human
instincts because you know the whole
Instinct of a man falling in love with a
woman is to reproduce to reproduce the
DNA sequences that's why it evolved in
us you know because it is conducive to
reproducing our Gene sequences
and this obviously isn't just like
masturbating to pornography isn't or
having sex with you know someone on
birth control even really isn't although

that's not quite as far of a a removal
from the natural way of things than
falling in love with just an AI entity
on a computer I mean probably there's no
physical body at all involved I don't I
don't don't think that there'd be an
Android involved in this
so yeah I mean to some degree as people
are getting born closer and closer to
the technological singularity you know
as in transhumanism and all that it's
going to seem completely normal to
them but it's going to seem less normal
to people who are more used to just the
natural way of
things so where exactly is the question

here let's see what do you think of my
negative reaction to my
client's AI romance is he right in
thinking I'm just a genx stick in the
mud for it to bother me so much well I
think I pretty much answered that I
mean I I can definitely understand that
uh I mean falling in love with an AI I
mean it's in a way it's just sort of
like a narcissistic thing that you don't
really want another real person involved
and we're going to we're going to get to
that in one of these in one of the later
questions here but
uh yeah in a way it's just kind of
masturbatory you know it's sort of like
porn it's like psychop porn or

something so what do I think of your negative reaction your negative reaction is a natural reaction for reasons I've already specified and uh is he right in thinking you're just a genetic stick in the mud to bother me so much from his point of view yeah I guess I mean that's kind of a value judgment but uh I would I probably have a similar attitude to to Romeo here so I guess I'll just move on to Romeo's next question here which is along the same vein do you see people falling in love with AI catching on and becoming normalized yeah I think I think that's going to happen more and more it's already happening more and more I

think there was some famous story a year
or so ago about some Japanese man who
wanted to marry a sex doll I think it
was one of the slightly like animated
sex dolls that can actually like speak
and move and and
stuff so yeah I people are going to fall
in love with all and and as like human
civilization becomes less and less
natural weirder and weirder stuff is
going to get normalized if I mean if you
can even call it
normalized so I mean people identifying
as cats there was somebody who um
applied for a job at a different shop
with the same company that I work work
for and they identified as a cat and

they're like wearing the ears and like
meowing and stuff through the
interview and I mean they would have
just been hauled away just a few decades
ago and understandably so but now it's
like they had to go through the whole
interview process because if they just
dismissed them immediately they could
get sued for discrimination so they had
to go through the whole interview
process and then just you know weed them
out because they found someone who is a
better fit because they had you know
more skills or or
whatever but yeah it's like we're
becoming less and less natural

transhumanism is certainly a symptom and
a cause of of our just drifting away
from what is
natural and one thing that is natural is
like families people having kids that's
natural anything beside from I mean
anything going in a different direction
than than families and people having
kids is unnatural just going with the
history of the human race and his human
nature so yeah people are going to fall
in love with AI more they're going to
fall in love with animals more they're
going to fall in love with love dolls
more just because I mean the roots of
civilization are withering
away just like traditionalism and all

that sort of thing kind of keeping

civilization stabilized I mean it's all

just fall fall apart you know the center

will not

hold so I'm just going to move on to

Romeo's third question here if so what

does this mean for the future of

humanity and then parentheses he's got

birth rate quality of life Etc well

there was I read a science fiction story

gosh by someone whose last name is

bear and it was it was definitely just

well ended the transhumanist world where

you could

essentially design your own body that

some people would just be like a sphere

you know it's just it was just you just beyond human body there were there were some people that were just like Amish you know they they had like the reputation of being Amish where they just stubbornly insisted upon having their biological natural human body but it was like most of the human race you know they were just all over the place just all these different shapes and and everything and once you reached a certain age once you were dying that you just have your personality programmed just like downloaded or uploaded into a computer where you would still continue to exist in this shadowy kind of way without a physical body it was weird I

can't remember what it was called

though so what does this mean for the

future of humanity yeah it's it's hard

to say exactly but it's I mean at the

very least you're going to have

cyberpunk

dystopia um birth rates will go down

probably yeah yeah I mean why how

wouldn't they go down quality of life

that's I mean that's questionable

because some people think that with

transhumanism and the technological

singularity and everything we can just

become like

gods and in a way being able to shape

shift and that sort of thing is is sort

of a Godlike ability

too but uh I don't think that the

average human has the wisdom to really

cope with it and I do think that it's

just going to result in a kind of Crash

of civilization every other civilization

in the past has eventually crashed ours

is going to crash too largely through

decadence you know just the loss of

traditionalism that keeps everything

stabilized and strong instead you're

going to have just messed up people

identifying with cats falling in love

with computer programs all this kind of

stuff and it's just going to destabilize

Society it's not going to be able to

hold up under its own weight anymore and

then some other civilization probably

more barbaric but also more

traditionalist is just going to move in

and take

over so I mean that's just my two cents

worth my my little prophecy

there

so yeah I guess I guess I've said enough

on that so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from Joe do

and Jo do says is it okay for Lay people

to chant or recite texts The Meta sua in

particular well yeah the meta suut is

about the the only chant the only uh

parita that I still I could still

probably recite um I don't recite it

very often but every once in a while but
I don't see why not what what would be
wrong with a lay person chanting or
reciting text it happens all the time in
Burma lay people I mean they've
memorized I mean n meta sua is is pretty
pretty Elementary you know they might
know all the Paras they might sit there
chanting patana like Abid dama texts
they might have memorized by heart the
Daka
patasa just chanting is they're really
into it Asian people they're much more
into chanting than Western people
because they just don't get bored with
just reciting the same thing you know on
a daily basis you know like they might

chant the same thing for an hour every

day

and it's just it just gets tedious for a

lot of Western people but for some

reason the Burmese mind is really into

that they like

that

so um just as an aside this reminded me

of that same Texan hermit that lived in

a Big Hollow banon Tree in Burma he said

one time he got stung by one of the the

big centipede the Big Orange centipedes

you know I mean they get like over a

foot long big round is your finger at

least and if you get bitten by one that

it just causes excruciating Agony and he

was saying that he couldn't he couldn't meditate he couldn't sleep the pretty much the only thing he could still do after being bitten by one of these centipedes was to chant so I mean it was sort of like his meditation in a way chanting can be a kind of sort of Elementary level meditation you know it keeps your mind focused on something wholesome and you're not all over the place so in a way it's you know it's sort of like um Elementary meditation and it it depends whether or not you should even pay attention to what the words mean I mean if if you're not doing it just as a kind of a long Mantra then it might actually helpful be

helpful to you if you're chanting the
metosa to actually understand the
meaning of what it is that you're
chanting because then you're you're kind
of contemplating dhamma at the same time
and The Meta is a nice it's a very nice
suo the meaning of it is is deep and
Good Very
wholesome so yeah it's definitely okay
so I'm going to move on to the next
question this is from David and David
says how can someone who has reached
Enlightenment and therefore had a direct
realization of the nature of reality
then go on to make statements that are
factually incorrect scientific medical

geographical cosmological Etc in my
opinion if you have direct realization
of the nature of reality you shouldn't
make scientific
mistakes you should know more than the
scientist if you have unlimited sight
how could you make geographically
incorrect statements what then is
Enlightenment if it is not to know
factual truths and be free from
errors well this is this I mean I lament
about this pretty regularly and I think
some of you who have listened to my cu
A's q&as Q&A
videos um May understand where I'm going
to be going with this and that is that
scientific realism is not

reality that someone who is fully

enlightened they know the the contian

thing in

itself and science as Kant pointed out

very

laboriously science can never get one

iota closer to the thing in itself self

science can never come anywhere near

Ultimate

Reality that to assume that this world

is reality is

delusional so I mean why would an

enlightened

being

know

like delus like know all the details

about a delusional

reality I mean really what matters for

an enlightened being is for him to know

Ultimate Reality and all these details

that are generated by

delusion I mean they're just

irrelevant so an enlightened being I

mean he may know Ultimate Reality he may

know the conent thing in itself but the

content thing as it seems which is what

almost everybody's stuck in you know

it's not ultimately real and it's

largely irrelevant to becoming

enlightened

so as a general rule enlightened beings

will just I mean at The Superficial

level they're going to be like what's

the

word creations of their

culture they're going to be culturally

conditioned to some degree that's just

unavoidable

so yeah I mean scientific this is

another case of people I don't know if

David here is a Buddhist

and I'm not trying to pick on him but I

mean people in the west just assume

scientific realism is reality and then

if they do become Buddhist they try to

like fit that into the context of

scientific realism as just a superficial

like an an app that gets added to

Scientific realism you know they kind of

superimpose it somewhere where it can

fit in might dismiss a lot of of the

important aspects of dhamon just because

you know it's not

scientific

so yeah I mean all right the question

here how can someone who has reached

Enlightenment and therefore had a direct

realization of the nature of reality

they can go on to make statements that

are factually incorrect

because they H they had a realization

into the nature of

reality Ultimate Reality not delusional

samsara or what the the Hindus called

Maya

illusion there are an infinite number of

virtual realities contained within the block of marble so to speak an infinite number of like delusion generated virtual realities and his enlightened being going to be a master of all of those which are all kind of interconnected and sort of merging into each other and blending like you got like a a conscious mind that's sort of going through these different possibilities somebody else is going through a different number of possibilities they might agree enough that they're able to interact but they're not living in exactly the same world so and then of course you've got

the whole other issue of um different
kinds of enlightened beings you know you
got the fully enlightened Buddha who's
supposedly omniscient and can know
whatever he wants to know doesn't mean
that he's going to to know how many
hairs I have on my head or he doesn't
necessarily know that mean that he's
going to know what the cube root of 56
is or like how to speak fluent
Swahili I mean it doesn't necessarily
mean that I mean he could if he really
wanted to know that if he directed his
mind towards it but why would he bother
what would be the
point then you've got like fully
enlightened beings that have psychic

powers supposedly although some of these psychic powers can't be expl by science and so I mean they would have a certain level of like Clairvoyance and so forth but then you've got like the dry Vision to arants an an arant who has no psychic powers other than just the one psychic power of knowing that he's enlightened well he's not going to necessarily be omniscient to be enlightened is not the same as being omnicient I mean especially within like the PS saric context where PSAR is not ultimately real why would you be if you have penetrated to a direct realization of

the nature of reality why would that
make you an expert on
unreality like to know all the details
of a particular
unreality but this is I mean most
western Buddhists most western people
including most western religious people
just accept scientific realism as
obvious factual truth and just start
from there and it is like a serious
handicap so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from Outer
Haven and outer Haven says why are you
so reluctant to comment on burmes
politics and social issues but you have
no problem giving your opinion on
American politics I think you spent

enough time in Burma that your opinion
matters well for starts I don't I never
really thought that I was so reluctant
to comment on burmes politics and social
issues I mean when have I been reluctant
I mean people just don't ask about it
much so I don't answer about it
much um in the past when people have
asked me about Burmese politics I have
answered as thoroughly and completely as
I generally do with regard to other
kinds of questions so I mean if I don't
comment on burmes politics much it's
mainly because nobody is asking me about
Burmese politics much or or social
issues but another thing is first of all

I haven't lived in Burma since around 2018 so I'm really haven't been keeping up on the news in Burma I mean I know about the the military coup and that sort of thing but even when I lived in Burma I was I was a monk living in a forest most of the time and a lot of time I didn't even know who the dictator was it's like somebody talks about you know president so and so and I thought what wasn't sane the president you know oh he was he he got deposed a year ago so I mean I was like a cave dwelling recluse even when I was living in Burma and so I really wasn't keeping up on the news I mean in America the news is in your face it's just hard to avoid

the news sometimes especially with

regard to politics and social

issues

um so yeah I guess that would answer the

question

seems to me I mean I'm not really

reluctant to comment on bur's

politics um I mean sometimes I I can if

people are interested I remember when I

was in Burma living in a cave somewhere

reading the gulag archipelago by Solan

nen you know it's it's about like the

KGB and its predecessors and just like

under stallin just like the the military

police or the the secret police arrested

like 1/4 of the population of Leningrad

over the course of many years just
because they had quotas you know you
have to go out and arrest 12 people and
so it's like some people they just get
woken up in the middle of the night
pounding on the door and then they just
disappear into a like a Patty wagon and
wind up at
a a labor camp a goog in Siberia
somewhere they didn't necessarily do
anything wrong they might have just uh
you know like complained about the
government to a friend of theirs which
turns into a conspiracy to overthrow the
government that kind of thing but
anyways when I read the gulag
archipelago living in Burma which was a

military dictatorship at the time it
made me feel good about living in Burma
because I mean the burmes government is
bad but it's and it's brutal but it's
also incompetent I mean there's no way
they could be as thoroughly bad as like
the the political police
in the Soviet Union I mean they hardly
have any control outside of the army
bases in the bigger cities you know like
a a village in Burma is pretty much just
self-contained politically it may be
that the village headman is appointed by
some higher up but I mean he just does
what he does and no there's there's
hardly any law enforcement unless you're

criticizing the government then they're
on you like like white on rice
so yeah the burmes burmes politics is U
is definitely very different from
America although American politics is
getting closer to burmes politics just
through the amount of this sheer
onslaught of
propaganda I'm not exactly sure when
American polit or American Media like
the mass media just became a propaganda
machine for the for the establishment
but that's pretty much what it is now
with few
exceptions but I mean it's it's like
that in Burma and the way it worked in
Burma was people would just get

saturated with so much propaganda they
would think well I mean most of it's
true but probably at least 5% of it I
mean most of it's false but at least 5%
of it's true you know I can't all be
wrong so it's like just through
onslaught of propaganda a little bit of
it is is like soaking in and people are
are just believing
it
so I guess I guess I answer that
question so I'm just going to move on to
Outer Haven's second question here which
is also is the name of the country
Myanmar or Burma why do you choose to
call it

Burma well it used to be called Burma up
until what was it around
1988 the the government decided to call
it Myanmar because Burma was a name
given to it largely by the British
colonialists and the the military
government at that time was trying to
scapegoat you know anybody they could to
account for just the the like the
economic backwardness and and problems
of Burma so it's like it's not our fault
it's because of the British colonialists
that screwed us over and we just taking
us a long time to recover from it that
kind of thing so they just changed a lot
of names like the irawati river became
the aawa and rangon became Yangon and

the City of May became

Pulu that kind of

thing so the the military government

changed the name from Burma to Myanmar

although I mean it had been called

Myanmar by the natives for a thousand

years over a thousand years and Burma

and Myanmar are both Corruptions of the

word

barama but just because the natives call

it one thing doesn't mean that the

official name internationally can't be

something else I mean Japanese people

don't refer to their own country as

Japan you know it's like nion Germans

don't refer to their own country as

Germany they call it

Deutschland so it was mainly just like

the military government just sort of

reacting against the British

colonialists as a way of scapegoating

them or as a symptom of scapegoating

them because I mean the Burmese

government as I just mentioned are Inc

competent or as a general rule the bur's

military government the only thing

they're fairly good at is maintaining a

certain amount of order enough order

that they can stay in

power and I forgot where I was going to

go with

that oh but like under under the British

regime under the British Raj Burma was

the richest country in Southeast Asia
and then within just a few years of
getting Independence it became the
poorest country in Southeast Asia and
Burma should not be a poor country it's
rich in natural resources has enough
petroleum to be self-sustaining has
pretty much unexploited Fisheries off
the coast it's got some of the best Jade
and diamond or not diamonds but rubies
in the world you know it's got teak
forests it's got fertile soil it's not
grotesquely overp populated it should be
a relatively prosperous country but it
is largely the incompetence of the
government that keeps it as a fourth

world

country and I don't think democracy was

helping it much because I mean democracy

it was just sort of opening the

floodgates to all the the like the Nos

and feminists and and capitalists and

stuff wanting to swoop in and just

exploit this unex as yet unexploited

territory

like feminists you got like the board

wives of the the leader of the the NGO

in in rangon who just sets up her own

group of trying to explain to relatively

healthy happy Burmese women why they

should be as [__] up and miserable as

Western

women so anyways getting back to uh

calling the country Myanmar or Burma I
do think that the the Democracy movement
continued to call it Burma just as a
kind of reaction against the military
government just decreeing that the
name's going to be changed to Myanmar
and the whole name Myanmar is just kind
of it it always kind of bugged me
because there shouldn't be an r at the
end it's pronounced
myanma but they just put an r at the end
to to like signify that it's a long a
m because like in a British accent you
don't pronounce an r at the end of a
word anyway like a car is pronounced car
so they it's supposed to be Mama but

they put an r at the end which is just

dumb in my

opinion so I call it Burma just because

that's the traditional name for it it

just sounds like a prettier name it's

just I just like the name Burma better

so I just continue to call it that and I

used to say I mean if if they kick me

out for calling it Burma I'll just move

to sayam or

salon so I'm just moving on to the next

question here this is from

pyramid and pyramid says is terraa to

Buddhism what Catholicism is to

Christianity I'm just checking to see if

we're recording yeah yeah we're

recording all

right I always had to do that at least
once usually well over an hour after
I've started recording I'll just check
to make sure that it really is
recording anyways pyramids
says is Terra to Buddhism what
Catholicism is to Christianity or would
you say Orthodoxy is a more appropriate
analogy would the mahayan be the
Protestant equivalent well let's just
call that two questions here I mean
technically it's three there's three
question marks but let's just call it
two just just humor me and we'll call it
two so it's Terra to Buddhism what
Catholicism is to Christianity or would

you say Orthodoxy is more a more appropriate analogy yeah I think that probably I mean if you want to go with analogies terraa is to Buddhism what like Greek Orthodoxy is to Christianity or maybe even like something older than Greek Orthodoxy you know like some weird Syrian or Ethiopian church or something but um yeah we could say Orthodoxy probably comes closer to Catholic than Catholicism I mean there's way less homosexuality in the clergy in Terra I think Greek Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism are both pretty much equally monastic you know they both have monastic orders and so forth I do think Orthodoxy probably comes closer to the

original teachings than Catholicism

does so yeah let's go with

Orthodoxy and then the next question

here is is would the mahayan be the

Protestant

equivalent and yeah pretty much although

we've got Protestant terraa now too

especially in the

west but it is um I mean you don't want

to push analogies too far because

analogies will always break down in the

long run for example you could say that

Buddha Goa is like the Paul Paul of

Tarsus of Buddhism or of terraa budh ISM

and I used to think that way but then

you think well no actually the Paul of

Tarsus of terava Buddhism would be MOG

patisa who most people have never heard

of but he was like the like the chairman

of the third Council who really just

established terraa along terraa in lines

with a Terra Vaden

Abida and you know the the sasti vodin

got Pur Ed from the from the SAA and

just kind of moved off into Northwestern

India

and

so but I mean you don't want to really

just insist you know that mug mugali

patisa is the Paul of tarsis

Buddhism because I mean you just don't

pushing analogies you know it's just

sort of an artificial superimposition of

two similar things and there there not
going to be any kind of perfect match I
mean that's the way human language works
really we we think through analogy you
know use a word that sort of is
analogous to some other thing that the
word refers to and it's not a close
match at all but our mind is all messed
up because we're just confusing words
with what they
represent so I'm just going to move on
to drunk Dr here and drunk Dr surp
surprised me this time because I think
the the question he asked most recently
before this was should he should he down
a a bottle of 175 proof whiskey

belonging to somebody else so then you think well drunk Dr is kind of a wise guy isn't he but then he just out of left field he asked like this serious question

here and it is what is the Buddhist perspective on gambling I got hired as a programmer for a slot machine game manufacturer but on the first day I decided to not do it partly because it didn't feel right to work in a business whose sole purpose is to make you addicted to spending money on false hope would it be immoral to directly participate in an industry that is addictive and harmful to many people's lives well gambling is frowned upon in

Buddhism I don't think it's really
breaking a precept
necessarily but it does say in the text
that gambling is is conducive to
suffering that that you know it's just a
bad habit and a wise person shouldn't do
it and uh I mean like playing the stock
market is kind of gambling too I mean if
you look at it I mean pretty much going
outside is a gamble because you don't
know if you're going to get struck by
lightning or
something but um yeah I do think that
drunk Dr did the right thing by uh not
wanting to help program a slot machine
game yeah I mean whether that would be

wrong livelihood or not is is
questionable it's like a borderline case
it depends on how you look at it you
know how how much of a heart ass you are
that's going to decide whether it's
wrong livelihood or not I do think it's
kind of
borderline but um yeah well
congratulations to drunk duck and I hope
you didn't drink the whole bottle of
whiskey that belonged to somebody else
too but yeah I mean video games is kind
of weird it's I mean a slot machine game
you're probably spending real money so
yeah that would be real gambling whereas
if you're making a violent video game
where you're shooting people and killing

people at the very least you're not

really shooting and killing any real

sentient

beings and like the

the the convenient app I got on my phone

that allows me to kill zombies I mean

zombies really are not sentient being so

it's it's okay even if they're real

zombies I think it's still okay I don't

think it would be violating any precept

and and zombies I mean they're just

they're not good fast zombies are way

worse than slow zombies though I have to

admit so let's see

here yeah would it be immoral to

directly participate in an industry that

is addictive and harmful to many
people's lives it depends on your own
mental States I mean that's like one of
the prevailing themes of my Q&A videos
is you know with such and such an action
be moral or immoral and it depends on
your mental States because two people
can do the exactly the same physical
action one person is doing something
moral the other person is doing
something immoral even though they did
exactly the same action because their
motives were
different and then one time I asked one
of my teachers this was back when I was
very Junior monk it might not have even
been ordained yet where I asked somebody

I mean is it worse to do something wrong
knowing that it's wrong or is it worse
to do something wrong not knowing that
it's wrong and he gave me the
interesting answer that it's actually
worse to do something wrong not knowing
that it's wrong it's actually better to
do something wrong when you know that
it's wrong and the example he gave the
analogy if you will is that if you're
going to pick something up that is hot
if you know that it's hot you'll pick it
up more gently you know you won't burn
yourself as bad whereas if you don't
know that it's hot you'll just grab
right onto it and just burn your whole

hand instead of just your fingertips or

whatever so that's something to consider

I guess how well it applies to drunk Dr

situation here I'm not sure though but

it something reminded me of that and so

I I just said it I just blurted it right

out didn't

I so yeah I mean when in doubt don't do

it if you if you're like tempted or

there's a situation where you are

expected or you know you're invited or

able to do

something and it just seems not quite

right to you you're not exactly sure if

it's immoral or

not but but you can't really say if

possible it's better just to avoid it I

mean you're better off avoiding it even

though no harm would have been done then

you just dive right into it and just

[__] yourself up

so good luck to drunk dck and uh yeah

try to

avoid

programming UNH wholesome kind of

games and I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is from Wayne

and Wayne says there are 227 rules for

the monks if all the minor rules were

eliminated in your view how many

estimated major rules will there be left

well first of all I'd say there's a heck

of a lot more than 227 rules that's just

the pooka rules but outside of the ptim Moka there's probably another 2,000 rules like the rule that says a monk has to shave his head isn't one of the 227 that's that's one of the outside rules but let's just say for the sake of argument that we're referring to the ptim Moka here the 227 rules of the ptim Moka so if all the minor rules the Lesser and minor rules were eliminated well this was a debate that came up at the First Council right after the Buddha died so The Story Goes that the Buddha before he died told his attendant Ananda whose name was also Goa because they belong to the same Clan sometimes the Buddha referred to Ananda as

Goa anyways the Buddha tells Ananda that you know after he passes the Lesser and minor rules can be abolished but you know just the important rules should remain and Ananda actually caught hell at the First Council because he didn't ask the Buddha to specify because at the First Council you had 500 aans 500 enlightened beings and for some reason they could not agree on what the Lesser and minor rules were and according to the the canonical history of the First Council some of these arant thought that only the four paraja rules are important all the rest is lesser and minor which would mean

that you could tell lies you could talk
dirty to women you could drink alcohol
you can kill animals and all that would
be okay because those are not among the
four paraja rules and then some of the
the arahant thought that the four paraja
rules plus the 13 sesa rules were
important and then it's this there was
all these different views with regard to
what are the the Lesser and minor rules
so if 500
arant cannot agree on which the
important rules
are who am I to decide which rules are
the important rules but the fourar of
Jas obviously that would be everyone
would agree the four part of J rules are

important they you wouldn't get rid of those so you can't have sex you can't commit murder you can't steal anything worth more than a few cents and you can't deliberately lie about having attained superhuman mental States but even among these lesser like Pia rules which are just intermediary that includes telling ordinary lies it includes punching another Monk in the nose it includes killing animals I mean those seem pretty basic I mean the five precepts are also included in these intermediate rules so I don't think it's really a matter of the category of offense like sesa which is

the second most uh grave level of
offense includes relatively trivial
rules like you're going to build a hut
for yourself so you you you you you have
to have the place approved where you're
going to build the Hut the song has to
be invited to come and look and make
sure that it's not on somebody else's
property and you're not going to be
messing up you know living beings like
an anthill or something by building your
Hut there and the Hut has to be certain
Dimensions you know it has to be like 8
feet by 5 feet
so I mean that's really nothing immoral
about building a Hut that's too big or
in in a place where you know hasn't been

approved you know it's just not a moral

issue really even though it's the second

most serious level of offense so just

dividing it up into categories of

offense paraj

s an

and seia are the are the main ones there

also some additional ones that aren't in

the

pooka um I mean you couldn't do it that

way so you'd have to go one by one it's

like which one of the which is this rule

just a matter of etiquette I mean that

would be kind of trivial like there's

there's like a seia rule against talking

with your mouth

full I mean should that be a rule that
monks aren't allowed to talk with their
mouthful and then so
yeah I don't know maybe let's just say
onethird onethird of the rules would not
be lesser and
minor or let's play it conservative and
say half because some of it I mean it's
really not that big of a deal it's just
a matter of common sense I mean this
whole thing reminds me of where I work
where upper management is just like
bombarding us with new safety rules I
mean some of them are just so stupid
that I mean I just flat out refused to
follow some of these rules and everyone
just says yeah you're right it's a

stupid rule like whenever you are in the warehouse you have to be wearing cut resistant sleeves and gloves even if you're working on a computer in the warehouse I mean you're you're trying to type in numbers in a computer you got to be having all this arm protection and everything just in case something flies across the warehouse and hits you in the arm I mean it's just it's just absurd especially if you're working in 95 degree heat you don't want to be wearing Kevlar leaves all the time I mean if you're handling sharp metal it makes perfect sense but if you're just doing inventory or something it's just the

stupidity of upper management just
thinking if anyone gets hurt we might
get sued we'll lose money we'll just
just bombard them with these rules and I
mean how how I got to that how I started
venting about that when discussing
monastic discipline but still it's like
some of the rules of monastic discipline
are are kind of along those lines it's
like you don't want to give the sa a bad
name and so you're not going
to teach dhma to someone who's wearing a
hat because it's disrespectful to have
your head covered unlike in other
countries where it's a sign of respect
to cover your head in India it was a
sign of disrespect to learn DH from a

teacher with your head covered with a

hat or a turban or some

such

so yeah let's just say 50

50% and I'm just going to move on to

next

question I'm glad that Wayne here

considers me to be more qualified than

500 aans to make this

decision and the next question is from

Mary J Mary J says if there is no

rebirth and we just die and that's it

what would the meaning of life be then

well it seems to me the meaning of life

wouldn't be all that different it'd be

essentially the same

you know it's like the four noble truths
are still true whether you you're reborn
or not whether there's an afterlife or
not and craving and attachment are still
the cause of all suffering I mean you
don't want to suffer try to reduce your
desires I mean it makes perfect sense
regardless of whether when you're dead
you're dead or whether you have an
afterlife that's going to go on forever
and
ever so I mean really all that matters
is right now anyway the present moment
art to is the power of
now so I mean just thinking about the
future and what's going to happen is
just sort of a waste of time anyway I

mean unless I mean you got to be making
plans for a vacation or you know
maintenance on your car or something you
might have to think about the future a
little bit but I mean with regard to
metaphysics the most important time is
right now it's the only moment that
really matters according to terab
Buddhism it's the only moment that
really
exists so be as attentive as possible to
the present moment and the four noble
truths are still true regardless either
way and I really am sorry you guys can't
see my fish tank I'm going to have to
sit in a different angle but maybe I'll

just wait until the the nitrogen cycle

is complete and my

microa is all well established and

balanced and everything so anyways I'm

just moving on to uh I just happen to

look at the fish tank so anyways I'm

just going to move on to the next

question this is also from Mary J and

it's not really a question is a request

it says please show my postcard Mary J

sent me a postcard and here is the

postcard it's sent from Poland and

apparently bless their hearts the people

of Poland have not yet invented the

rectangle and so their postcards are

shaped like this

very nice it got stamps on the back and

everything okay so the next question

from Mary Jay is going a method legit

weasa well some of you have already

heard me [__] about the use of the word

weas with regard to a method because

weasa technically is Insight that arises

spontaneously it's not something that

you do it's something that happens it's

something that arises

spontaneously so

[Music]

weasa is essentially a meditation method

based on saatana or

mindfulness so is the Goa method legit

SA batana or mindfulness um pretty

much I mean no matter regardless of what

Goa Goa people tell you the Goa method

really is

not explicitly recommended in the TX

like the going method you start off with

anapana for the first 3 days I think and

then you switch over to a kind of

mindfulness of scanning where your body

is divided up into these different areas

and you just systematically go from one

area to the next until you feel some

sensation you know like the head area

you just sit there and then you feel a

sensation like my forehead has like this

itchy spot right here so then and then

after you you've noted that you move on

to the next body area and I've never

done the going method this is I might be

somewhat mistaken here but this is what
I've been told is how it
works and I don't know it's it's too
much busy work it's kind of a an
elementary method you can get way deeper
in s patana where you're not like
systematically deliberately like
scanning and moving from one place to
the next it's it's a lot of busy work
which works really good for beginning
meditators it might be very comfortable
for intermediate meditators but it is a
limited method and if you want to really
go as far as you can you may have to
switch methods um from Goa or from
mahasi for that matter to a deeper

method I think mahasi would be superior
with regard to how far you can get with
it and how much it agrees with Orthodox
dhama than Goa although the Goa method
does have its its qualities it does have
its good points and I don't want to bash
the goaman I mean for starters they
really
emphasize like regular meditation like
two hours a day at least keeping five
precepts that kind of thing which a lot
of we passing out like like spirit
rockism and so forth I mean it's
definitely Superior to Spirit rockism in
my
opinion you know just sort of like
Western Boomer

weas is I think it's Superior to that

I'm pretty sure it's Superior to that in

fact I'm yeah I'm almost absolutely

positive that it's Superior to Western

Boomer weasa weas in parenthesis because

I don't like using the word for a

meditation

method so yeah it is I don't think it's

like strictly

against like Orthodox terraa but it's

it's definitely like a a limited sort of

simplified streamlined modified version

of it that you know it's it's not

exactly forbidden but it's certainly not

like explicitly recommended either but

it's it's okay it's better than most

that you're going to find let's just put
it that way although if you do find some
like a Burmese meditation Master who's
teaching like the mahasi method at a
retreat you might get better results
there than that at a Goa retreat
but goka Retreats have changed people's
lives so I really do not want to
badmouth the Goa method or goka
meditation methods that sort of thing
and I'm just going to move on to the
next question which is from yuguo and
yuguo has gone a little bit surreal in
these in this in the next these three
questions and I'm not exactly sure why
but yuga's first question is I explain
and explain and say the reason why and

they say they understand but still want
me to be their way do they really
understand and I'm guessing no I mean
I've had people say they they understand
what I'm saying they really liked my
essay about such and such and then
they'll say I really like the part where
you were saying this that I never
actually said so some people will think
they understand and still not understand
and I think that's just inevitable when
humans communicate that you're never
going to fully get what the other person
is saying because I mean words really
are trying to convey something else and
the way you convey those words would be

the way you interpret those words are
going to be different from the way they
meant those words it might be just
slight little differences but still
you're never going to completely get it
unless you're just really talking about
something really simple that you're in
complete agreement on anyway maybe not
even then
so I guess I answer so I'm I'm going to
move on to the next surreal question
here don't you think you know a little
too much for your own
good well you can never really know too
much reality and then what isn't reality
isn't really knowledge
anyway so I do have a lot of information

in my head I

suppose but uh sharing it with people

does seem to be appreciated and maybe

even helpful to other people so I guess

I've got just the right amount I mean I

don't want to complain say ah I know too

much or I don't know enough either just

I mean it is what it is it's it's all

good I guess so then yuga's next

question technically is three

questions and it is as follows is it

safe is it safe is it safe and I don't

know is is this like a a reference to

the old Dustin Hoffman movie The

Marathon Man where uh some guy named

what was his name he was like a a German

he was like a a

Nazi um dentist played by uh Olivier so

Lawrence Olivier and that was it he he

he grabs Dustin Hoffman the character

played by Dustin Hoffman he keeps saying

is it safe is it safe Dustin Hoffman has

no idea what he's talking about and I

have no idea what yugao is talking about

so I'm glad that yugao isn't a dentist

who's like torturing me right now thank

you yugao for not being a Nazi

dentist but is it safe I I don't even

know in the movie it was it was some

sort of uh diamonds it was a big bag of

diamonds pretty

sure but Dustin Hoffman didn't know that

anyway I'm moving on to the next

question now this is from Anthony

and Anthony

saysi like how you go into detail with

your answers but speaking of not

inhaling what is your opinion of Bill

Clinton so this is this is sort of like

a a prolonged series of back and forth

here because somebody asked me about oh

I don't even remember what they were

asking me about but the answer involved

me skipping school in fourth grade with

my step brother Chucky and we smoked

cigarettes that we stole from his dad

and and I didn't inhale and then

somebody in the next Q&A asked me if

that was a reference to Bill Clinton

like it was some kind of joke but no

really I I didn't inhale but now we've

gotten to this so what is your opinion

on Bill Clinton I assume you were in

Burma during his presidency did you ever

hear about the Lewinsky scandal and his

impeachment do you think he should have

been forced to

resign okay yeah I did miss out on on

Bill Clinton I think uh George Bush the

first was president when I left America

when I became a monk and then went off

to Burma and Bill Clinton took over

shortly after that

um but

uh let see did I ever hear about the

Lewinsky scandal yeah I heard about

Monica

Lewinsky um about how she was like

giving him oral pleasure in the Oval

Office while he's talking on the phone

to some foreign dignitary that kind of

thing and there was like the whole cigar

thing I heard about that so um do you

think he should have been forced to

resign no I don't think so I mean what

was worse than him messing around with

some woman as president was lying about

it I mean that was worse when he's like

being interrogated or questioned or

whatever and he's just lying his ass off

that was worse than him messing around

with some woman um as president I mean

as a husband

yeah he he was he was a I mean he was a

worse husband than he was a president

America was relatively prosperous under

Clinton if I remember correctly I mean I

didn't see much of it because I was

gone but then I mean considering what

his wife was like and uh I mean he was

always kind of a a sex addict anyway

apparently but then again so it was like

Kennedy and any number of other

presidents so I mean for presidents to

be messing around around with bimbos in

the white house I mean that's Bill

Clinton didn't invent

that I mean it was

mainly I guess I assume it was mainly

just Republicans trying to get him much
the way Democrats have tried ferociously
to get Trump for four years or more than
four
years so let's see my opinion of Bill
Clinton apparently America was in a in
an era like an era of prosperity it
during the Clinton years I mean it could
have been just sort of doomed to failure
you know it was just setting America up
for some disaster later on or something
but uh yeah I mean I never had any real
problem with Bill Clinton a lot of
conservative types were saying you know
how can he govern the country when he
cannot govern himself but again it's

like talented politicians throughout history have just been horny guys Julius Caesar for example he was a heavy hitter politically you know he was according to will Durant he was the most enlightened leader of ancient times and I don't know why he didn't include Asoka in that judgment maybe he was just talking about Western
Civilization Kennedy I mean Kennedy had women coming out of the White House that were
uh much more experienced in life when they were leaving than when they came in so yeah just regard to that I mean it doesn't have any bearing necessarily on how well he is able to govern the

country so messing around with some
chick in the Oval Office I mean so long
as he still leading the country
effectively and well otherwise I don't
really see a problem I'm like there
there was somebody in the in the YouTube
comments who was talking about Donald
Trump and it's like and I've I've talked
with other people that were like this
who think that Donald Trump is just
disqualified from being a president
because he is vulgar
essentially and just I mean you can
there's elaborations on the word vulgar
but in reaction to this I mean years ago
I wrote an essay about people in history

who went down with the name the great

you know they got this title of the

great you know because they were

considered to be great leaders and most

of them were narcissistic ruthless

badasses who nevertheless were patriotic

and wanted their country to be

successful and Donald Trump is like that

I mean

he's he's he's definitely like an an

egotist and he's a ruthless badass not

nearly as much of a ruthless badasses a

lot of these leaders of the past called

The

Great and he has enough sense that if I

mean he's he's kind of an egotist so he

wants to go out in history as one of the

greatest of American presidents so he's naturally trying to make America great again and the people in favor of manage decline for America globalist establishment in general they can't stand that and so they're just trying to destroy him in any way they can apparently even in with regard to trying to kill him but but Trump is the bad guy for some
reason but like valentinian the great he's a good example I mean he was a good Emperor actually and it wasn't he himself who started calling himself the great it was other people started calling himself the great probably after

he died so they didn't they they were in
no danger of getting punished for not
calling him that and I mean he
was he really did try to do what was
right for the country but at the same
time he was kind of a psychopath and he
would have people tortured to death put
to death for just the slightest the
slightest mistakes I mean he would
entertain himself by feeding his enemies
to
Bears he had these two brown bears that
he kept outside of his bedroom and he'd
feed people to them and just sit there
and like he just's like watching them
getting torn apart and eaten it was like
the day that he died he died he had like

a stroke after bellowing in Rage at some
messenger
and then but but before that happened it
was like he was getting onto his horse
and the horse kind of shied when he was
trying to get on he immediately he he
just said you know the groom that was
holding that horse should have his hand
chopped off and fortunately for the
groom that was holding the
horse um you know the the Centurion or
whoever was in charge of of like uh
inflicting discipline so to speak just
kind of kind of put it off and didn't
wasn't rushing the job and then
valentinian died of the stroke after

bongan rage at somebody and dropped dead

but um I mean he was the great I mean he

was a really good General and he kept

Rome like above water Rome was in

trouble Rome was in Decline at that

point and he was doing his best to

strengthen Rome and then according to

Gibbon and his decline fall of the Roman

Empire the the fall of Rome happened

just

shortly after valentinian the great died

so he was sort of staving

off the full to some

degree

so

whether like a leader is a saint or not

I mean you'd probably be better off

without a saint as your leader someone
who's never going to like have wars you
know they're just going to forgive all
the criminals that kind of thing I mean
you don't want that you want a Ruth
badass who nevertheless is a
patriot whether Bill Clinton was a
ruthless badass or not though I don't
know so again I've kind of wandered away
from the actual question just to go on
some little political rant I
guess let's
see what is my opinion of Bill Clinton
yeah I really didn't have a whole lot of
opinion of him my father really liked
him he was a Democrat a Union Democrat

and uh you know there are all these
articles about how the the economy was
booming under Clinton anybody who wanted
a job had one under
Clinton
so yeah him messing around with Monica
Lewinsky and who who was the other one
Paula Jones and probably many others I
mean so long as it didn't interfere with
with him leading the country
effectively then I mean it was a moral
issue you know between him and his maker
or whatever and I'm really not really
concerned with that and just as I'm not
concerned with Trump calling people
names so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is uh from the

Proto pseudo Monk and the protos sudo
monk usually gives little headings or
titles to his questions and the first
title is definition of
nonduality so the Proto sudo monk says
can you please define what is nonduality
what does it mean that reality is
nonu and in parenthesis he's got I think
I asked for past Q&A in a miscellaneous
comment section so it probably got lost
yeah some people will ask questions
under like old q&as that I don't even
look at so I the the question just gets
lost so if you want me to answer a
question it is helpful to include it
under the most recent

Q&A so the definition of

nonduality um

the way the perceptive mind the

perceptual mind works the way samsara

works is through Duality it's like the

opposition of of of opposites so it's

like a contrast of opposites that's

that's how

perception creates this world you know

just divides things up and generally it

it's like in a dualistic manner like to

perceive something there has to be

object and around there has to be the

thing you're perceiving and then you

know everything around it that makes a

border for it that gives it some kind of

shape you can't have a formless thing

really

so let's see non

Duality yeah it's just nonperceptual

really because that's how perception

works is through a kind of dualism it's

just contrast it's like hegel's du

dialectic you know talks about his

dialectic and his logic starts with the

first thesis is pure being and then the

antithesis of pure being is pure

non-being and according to Hegel pure

being and pure non-being are

indistinguishable because neither of

them has any kind of like discernable

content so they just merge together they

become the same and throughout the rest

of his philosophy he just considers pure being and pure non-being to be the same but the the

synthesis is contrast you have to have a contrast between being and non-being and then you that's what just generates the whole world that's that's that's what spawns the 10,000 things like in the da Ching the from the Dao came the one from the one came the two from the two came the 10,000 things or just you know all the various entities and objects and so forth of this samsaric

world

so reality is non-u because it has no opposite you know there's no contrast There's no distinction of this

from that it's NEPA Pancha that's one of
the the synonyms of nibana in ply is
neap Pancha which means just
nondifferentiation so it's really
non-perceptual perception is some sorrow
and I feel like I'm really not doing
Justice to this question it feels like I
could be saying something much
more concise not concise what's the word
precise much more you know just on the
mark kind of a thing something that just
really cuts through
it but it's it's not
happening so let see what is non-duality
yeah non-duality is is conscious
non-perception in a way and what does it

mean that reality is non dual reality is
nonperceptual because Duality is a
artifact of perception there is no
Duality without perception because there
is no contrast without perception
perception creates
contrast
so I'm really not sure if I answered
that question in way that anybody will
really understand it but I'm just going
to move on to the next question anyway
this is also from the Proto sudo Monk
and the Proto sudo Mon's title for this
is the middle way of
relationships so the most widespread
wisdom from this is this is Proto sudo
monk speaking this is his commentary to

or maybe this is the question itself
although I don't see any question marks
yet oh here there's a question mark in
there it's it's towards the middle okay
so the middle way of relationships the
most widespread wisdom from elderly
normies is that the meaning of life
comes from relationships it seems to be
built into the human animal the Buddhist
path seems to be the opposite of this as
relationships equal meaning equal Sam
Sara moreover Solitude is necessary to
progress in meditation what role if any
do relationships play in aspiring
towards nibana are they simply sensorial
Impressions that must be noted thereby

nullifying the karma if

so one's stance on people in general

becomes one of avoiding I can't seem to

find the middle way with relationships

as socializing is implicitly seeking out

Dua but if one never seeks out the

result is Solitude which is just fine so

let's see I guess the main gist of the

question here is is there like a dharmic

purpose of relationship ship see what

role if any do relationships play in

aspiring towards Nana okay well first of

all I will point out something that ROM

dos said in one of his old books and

that is from a spiritual point of view

the only legitimate reason for having a

romantic relationship is if that

romantic relationship will help you to
become enlightened so the other person
would have to have some wisdom too you'd
have to have some agreement with regard
to goals in life like spiritual goals
that sort of thing that's what Ram da
said about it but also just from my own
experience it seems to me that you can
learn a hell of a lot about yourself in
a relationship you can selfawareness I
mean it it's just thrust upon you you
may be beaten over the head with
self-awareness because if you're living
in solitude you can develop all these
quirks all these idiot syncrasy that
just seem normal to you and you're just

kind of stuck that way but if you're
interacting with somebody else I mean it
could be a wise teacher the callana
Maita like in in the text or it can be
your
wife then I mean she's going to be
pointing out stuff about yourself and
just sort of triggering you I mean women
are Masters at triggering guys they know
how to push them buttons and so long
long as you are just getting your
buttons pushed then obviously you you
got work you still have to
do I I'm not sure if I'm doing this this
Justice either but it's like when you're
interacting with another person they're
like a mirror and you're sort of getting

your own reflection back at you and

you're getting the person that that's

it's your karma to get

anyway and so I mean for me being in a

relationship from a from a spiritual

dharmic point of view the the main

benefit is that you are getting this

reflected feedback at you like in a way

pointing out your your defects maybe or

just like blind spots or things that you

wouldn't know about or care about if

somebody who cared about you wasn't

saying

it and there's there's that that uh it's

in the Proverbs in the the Old Testament

it's like the like the what I can't

remember the exact words but it's sort
of like the rebuke of a sincere friend
is strikes deep or something like that
where it's like if you've got like
someone who loves you and cares about
you is like rebuking you I mean it's
obviously
sincere and I mean you should take it
seriously even if you think even if
after reflection you think well they're
just interpreting something wrong or
they are mistaken or whatever still I
mean it's providing you with this
feedback that sometimes at least can be
very valuable to help you see yourself
the way others see
you and you just learn how to to get

along with people I mean an enlightened
being should be able to get along with
people and I mean a lot of Hermits they
just turn crusty you know they just they
just don't like people
so I mean that also it just helps you to
learn how to be more human because if
you
become a Hermit for Spiritual reasons
let's
say I mean you just sort of drift away
from being human in some respects and
some of some of that is fine I mean it's
it might be actually to your advantage
to drift away from certain aspects of
The Human Condition but certain other

aspects is like I saying you can just
turn weird and nutty if you don't have
any kind of feedback from somebody
else
so hope I haven't just persuaded
everybody not to have a romantic
relationship so I think I'm just going
to move on to the next question this is
from Mr Prav and Mr panov says could you
talk about lifespan decline of humans do
you see that lifespans are declining
maybe over the past decade DEC or
lifespans have gone down a bit but I
mean this is one reason why I really
cannot accept the the Orthodox Buddhist
history or prehistory of the human race
because they're saying that we're in a

this we're definitely in a decline phase
that has started from the beginning from
the origin of humans on this planet
we've just been a state of steady
decline that the past was better than
the present I mean there might little
ups and downs but as a general rule
we've been in Decline since the very
get-go we were like Gods who lived tens
of thousands of years at the beginning
and it's going to get worse and worse
and worse until our lifespan is like 10
years and we're like cannibalizing each
other so that's what Orthodox Buddhism
teaches and I just don't believe it
because I mean like the archaeological

record indicates that but in like

prehistoric

times the people generally I mean the

average lifespan was way shorter than

today I mean it was like maybe 40 years

if they were lucky I mean there's lots

of infant mortality that probably is is

skewing the numbers farther down but

still I mean that's one reason why we

start wearing out you know losing our

teeth and everything losing our Vitality

our strength and all that when when

we're in our 40s or our 50s at the very

latest it's just we're just designed not

to live much longer than that that's why

women go through menopause around the

age of 50 it's like well I mean they're

not expected to to continue living much
longer than that I mean just
naturally and I mean look at the Middle
Ages life average lifespan was probably
in the
30s
so yeah I just I think that due to like
Medical Technology especially and and
Karma whatever whatever the implications
of karma are that the lifespan has been
increasing I mean even in the Buddhist
time in Ancient India he talks about how
some people reach 100
years and in Burma you know fourth world
country I met a few people that were
over 100 years old but still as a

general rule the average lifespan is
increasing or has been increasing up
until very recently now that we're kind
of hitting into like a certain amount of
decline
a decline of prosperity and so
forth so I mean biologically I don't
think that um you know the maximum
possible lifespan is increasing or
decreasing maybe I mean maybe decreasing
a little bit just because uh we're
keeping all the the the sick people
alive through you know artificial means
and they're having reproduction so
you're getting what I think Edward
Dutton calls mutation load or something
like that which is making us stupider

and weaker and sicker and all that sort
of thing but I mean that that didn't
kick in until fairly
recently I mean when you start having
like a a welfare state I mean one
advantage of just ruthless Doggy Dog
cannibalism is I mean it keeps Evolution
going in the direction of Greater
adaptation greater strength and vitality
I mean it's it's harsh and cruel in
certain respects maybe not cruel so much
as just
unfeeling
uncaring but when you start taking care
of everybody everybody can have kids
including people with like genetic you

know diseases and so forth that they
are bequeathing to their to their
children then I mean that is going to
cause just sort of like the the Vitality
of the species to go into decline but
again that hasn't happened till fairly
till modern times to well into modern
times just with in the past 100 years or
so less than 100 years I would
guess
so do I see that lifespans are declining
maybe for the last few decades a little
bit but still we're we're way better off
than our ancestors were in the Middle
Ages or in the Stone Age for that
matter so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from nature

cure and nature cure says if one person
like he's got Asian American in
parenthesis if one Asian American wants
to be ordained in Burma one please give
three good reasons why it is the best
choice so if you want to be ordained as
a terraa of Buddhist whether you're
Asian-American or not three good reasons
why Burma is the best choice one it's
probably the most devoutly Buddhist
country in existence on the planet that
you can still well
yeah that's that that'll be one good
reason it's it's just a
devoutly sincerely Buddhist culture it's
one of the last remaining wisdom

cultures so-called on the planet another
good reason the the like the climate the
flora and fauna and to some degree just
the Simplicity of life of the villagers
is very similar to the Ganges Valley 2
200 years ago so you can live pretty
much the way the beus lived in ancient
in Ancient
India you know you still you know even
though it's modern times still I mean
you'll see the the men leading their
team of Bullocks out to the fields to
plow and the the teenage girls will be
carrying the the water pot on their head
down to the well or the river to get to
get water for the Hut this kind of thing
and the monks can I mean especially

maybe an Asian-American monk as long as you look Asian you don't stand out so much as the suspicious looking European type Foreigner that you can just wander around and sleep under trees or or wherever and go into the village with your bull and get alms and so that that would be another good reason why Burma is is a good choice um three it's I don't know if this would be part of one or two but it's just very traditionalist conservative culture the Buddhism is going to remain relatively pure there's not going to be a whole lot of like queering of Buddhism that kind of thing no rainbow flags flying over monasteries

in Burma that sort of

thing so whether that would be a third

reason or just like reason

onea I'm not sure

um let's see maybe I'll get back to that

one but I'm gonna move on to question

two here which is please give three

reasons why it is not so good of a

choice well for one thing

it's got a a brutal and incompetent

military dictatorship running it so you

do the wrong thing you might wind up

arrested by the secret

police and who knows maybe taken to a

place that is not very pleasant two I

guess Burmese women are much prettier

than Thai women so they could be more of

a distraction although it may be that

they're

less I don't know how to put it I guess

Tha women with regard to mon tend to be

very

modest maybe even more so than Burmese

women I'm not really sure about that I

never spent much time in Thailand I know

that the taii are much more sensual of a

people than the Burmese burmes are very

Spartan you know it's sort of like

England and France or like or like

Athens and Sparta or Sparta and Athens

Burma would be like Sparta and Tha

Thailand would be more like Athens more

sophisticated and sensual whereas the

Burmese are just stoic you know they'll eat food they don't care if it tastes good or not you know they don't bother seasoning it or anything they just eat it that kind of a thing and so I mean that would be a good reason maybe a good reason to be a Buddhist there um but I'm trying to get back to the the whole angle of of how dangerous the women are I mean Burmese women are very modest and demure very pretty as I mean some of them anyway more so than the ties in my opinion hope I having just offended Thai women so yeah I mean it could be a good reason or a bad reason depending on how you look at it I guess so let's see I mean the main bad reason for Burma is

it's governed by a brutal and
incompetent military dictatorship
another one is just the weather the
weather in Burma you've got like
different I mean it's Burma's a big I
mean it's about the size of Texas I
think so it's a big country but Southern
Burma is just steamy hot and humid
pretty much all year round sort of like
Bangkok Thailand and then upper Burma is
like semi desert just blazing hot in the
summertime it gets kind of cool in the
winter time and it doesn't rain much in
the monsoon season but then you've got
like the mountainous area like Shan the
Shen Plateau where it's a relatively

temperate weather there so

maybe the weather of most of Burmont

sucks pretty bad bad but um you up in

the hills it can be comfortable so again

I'm trying to come up with three reasons

why it's not so good of a choice and I

mean there's just one really

glaring big reason why Burma might not

be the best choice to be ordained and

that is the brutal and incompetent

military

dictatorship

so yeah maybe that's like all three

reasons right there the brutal and

incompetent brutal incompetent

military

dictatorship so

gosh yeah I might have to get back to

that one too so anyways nature T's third

question is what would be your

advice to this person

personally and I assume he means with

regard to where to be

ordained because I really don't know

nature cure personally so with regard to

just General generic

advice um I mean I I couldn't really

come up with very much without knowing

the person but with regard to wanting to

be ordained in Burma I think I'd keep an

eye

on try try to keep an eye on like what

the political situation is in Burma

because after that last coup that
happened a few years ago most of the
westerners in Burma just fled
you know it sort of like what happened
back in like 1988 or 1990 when all the
foreigners were just kicked out of the
country so that sort of thing can happen
it may be that you would try to find a
good serious Burmese Monastery outside
of Burma and then you could be ordained
there and sort this sort of what I did
and then if it is deemed a good idea by
like the Burmese monks there who are
kind of have a much more of a vested
interest in knowing what it's like in
Burma you know they know they got
relatives there they're like telling

them you know they they got pretty good
pulse on the on the news you know just
they know what's going on and if they
think that you'd be okay then you could
go but I mean there are like burmes
monasteries there's there's like a
international like a mahasi center in in
uh where is it Malaysia
that uh you know it's like a Burmese
Monastery that's transplanted to
Malaysia there's a Burmese uh a um
serious Monastery with Burmese monks in
San Jose the Daga Meditation Center that
I mean whether they would want to ordain
you or not I don't know because
generally they're not really open to

ordaining people but um like in Bali
there's some serious monasteries Terra
monasteries that you might be able to
stay at
um but yeah I think before you go to
Burma I mean Thailand is not bad I mean
sure you could find good places in
Thailand or in Sri Lanka there is like a
reform movement like a Revival of like
traditional Terra Vaden monastic values
in Sri Lanka that's been going on for a
few decades at least that that might
work too but I mean it's going to rely
on your own Karma I think and you know
what you're able to find what what re
what the world presents to you as an
appropriate place for you to go to but I

would check out as much as you could you know both outside of Buddhist Asia and inside of Buddhist Asia and just check out just the options in Sri Lanka and Thailand and Burma if the the military government isn't just like um clamping down on foreigners

so yeah I mean just try to have as many options as you can and then narrow down those options to the ones that that really look the best because there might be just some perfect Paradise of a monastery like in the the highlands of Sri Lanka that I've never heard of but there I I have heard there are some good places in Sri Lanka good places in

Thailand also good places in Burma but
again you might have trouble as a
foreigner even getting into Burma
now so good luck to you though and uh I
trust that your Merit will land you in
the place where you
belong and I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is the last
question in fact this was asked just
minutes before I started this video and
this is from Arin and Arin says do you
think the universal exper erence of
psychedelic users seems to reinforce the
truth in the Buddhist teaching of
dependent core rising or any other
teachings well um I just happened to
speak to Arin just minutes before this

video and she further elaborated that
she was talking especially about DMT
because she saw some documentary about
DMT and DMT experiences and like how
like under DMT things just kind of
dissolve into fractals and that sort of
thing and I'm not 100% sure what the
word fractal means to tell you the truth
I'm being honest here although I did
take
iasa and it did I mean it was like
everything's becoming like geometric
patterns mainly triangles in my case for
some reason but um yeah that's that's
not really a universal experience of
psychedelic users in general because um

I'm unaware of that being common for
like LSD or mushroom like psilocybin or
or musculine or that kind of thing I
think Universal experiences as
psychedelic users first is just like an
enhanced state of awareness where all of
a sudden you are just very much aware of
like the feeling of blood flowing
through your body or just you know just
sounds that you usually don't hear or
just all of a sudden for some reason
you're aware of the feeling of the cloth
against your skin which is something
that you usually ignore but for some
reason it's just really obvious that
kind of thing just enhanced
awareness um yeah that wouldn't really

be so much um a reinforcement of
dependent core Rising but it's it's like
an enforcement of when you are wiser
when you have like higher Consciousness
you're more mindful I mean that would be
one thing another common experience of
psychedelic users is just mystical
states where you are transcending
perception and getting close to the
conent thing in itself where you're just
experiencing reality as just like this
unified
Perfection which may not sound very
terraa Buddhist because you know
everything is dooka for a terraa
Buddhist but at like this higher level

everything is already

perfect and that's that's a fairly

common Insight that is experienced by

people on psychedelics and I do think

that it's it does help to reinforce the

truth of the Buddhist teachings although

dependent cor Rising I'm trying to think

of a time under psychedelics when

dependent core Rising really became like

manifest or or apparent to

me and maybe under iasa where

just you just like have this heightened

awareness of just the interconnectedness

of all things like probably the one of

the most common experiences I had under

iasa is it's like you just feel like the

suffering of the universe gushing

through your chest and it's not like I
am suffering it's just like whoa there's
like this this the pain of the universe
is just like gushing through through the
center of me it's like you can just
sympathize or have compassion for all
the messed up people that usually
because I'm in my head most of the time
you know I'm not really an extremely
heart oriented person I I couldn't
really relate to it a lot of women
especially you know they're just you
know they're just like sort of weighed
down by the suffering of others you know
they just feel it in the air maybe
that's what aart TOA refers to as the

pain body I don't

know but um I guess I mean you have more

of like a an

empathy under certain psychedelics

anyway

way which uh again I mean that could

sort of be dependent core Rising where

you've got different personalities

different consciousnesses that are all

part of a greater Consciousness in a

sense but still they're like interacting

and helping to to shape each other that

kind of a thing that's about the closest

I can think of with regard to um like

psychedelics reinforcing or supporting

the truth of dependent core Rising

other than just the idea that it's just

not real I mean you just like under LSD
for example is I mean you just feel that
it's just sort of like this mind
generated illusion or a virtual reality
that you're in I mean the fact that
every the ground's going like this and
the colors are all like flashing and
glowing and everything kind of helps
with that but still you just get this
distinct impression that you know it's
like I'm lucid dreaming now instead of
just being stuck in a non lucid
dream I think and I think I just
answered all the questions too and this
is uh yeah this less than three hours
this is practically a short I should put

this on shorts on YouTube if if they'll
even let me upload the thing because at
the beginning of this video I did point
out that we're up into well into double
digits now of YouTube apparently just
autod deleting some of my my cont
content just because for the safety of
the viewers I guess and it's it's all
buddist stuff which is
weird so if you don't see this on
YouTube then you'll see it on bitshoot
and Rumble anyhow and if you like it
maybe that maybe that'll help to defend
me if you guys hit the like button and
subscribe if you haven't already and and
leave comments like if you've got
questions about things you think I can

answer especially about about Buddhism

philosophy in general mysticism

meditation monasticism me pretty much

anything that starts with m then leave

them in the comments

below and uh feel free to look at my URL

links which include some of the books

that I keep referring to people ask me

questions and I'll say well it's all in

that book right there so yeah look at

the UR links too and be happy

hello and welcome to question and answer

episode 6 gajillion

452 zillion 319 bajillion

32,4

167 and I'm just kind of amazed that

we're getting up into such high numbers

with these but we just keep going just

keep pounding away at this answering

questions until all answers are going to

all questions are going to be answered

which is probably never going to

happen when I first started doing these

I figured well after 50 or so of these

people will run out of questions but the

thing is more people are starting to

watch these and more people are asking

questions because they don't bother they
just cannot find the time somehow to
watch all the previous
q&as to see if their question has
already been answered and before I start
answering this
longish not as long as last time list of
questions I do have an announcement to
make I am thrilled to announce that I'm
going to get some micro and myof fauna
to inject into my new
aquarium after going out looking for
unpolluted ponds or streams that had a
lot of like derbis at the bottom
couldn't find it I went to to various
places I mean it's got to be out there
somewhere but I haven't found it so I

actually kind of wimped out and ordered
it and this is just going to be totally
Deluxe in addition to several species of
tree leaves that are water logged those
leaves are cultured with all kinds of
stuff like gamid amphipods benthic copap
pods beneficial nematodes gastr tricks
maybe even tardigrades rotifers and a
variety of ciliate protozoans
and I know what you're thinking I know
what you're thinking poo how can you
inoculate your aquarium with Git
amphipods don't you know that they're
considered to be a pest by many aquarium
Keepers well I just tell you to just
kind of mind your own business because

there is a method to my madness and I'm
going for like an a diverse an
ecologically
diverse balanced ecosystem in that
aquarium also I'm taking the plung in a
radical fashion and getting some horn
wart and I know what you're thinking I
know you're thinking P how can you put
horn wart in there don't you know that
it's a column
feeder but yeah just mind your own
business I know what I'm doing here and
I do have three snails now three which
isn't a very high number but what can
you do and their names
are righteous fist of apocalyptic chaos
righteous fist of maniacal Fury

and Leroy

Jenkins so with that as an introduction

that has nothing to do with the question

I'm about to answer or at least attempt

to answer I'm going to commence to

attempting to answer questions and this

first question is from Saint

sword again I mean he's never really

specified the the correct way of

pronouncing his name whether it's Saints

word or Saint sword and Saint sword just

seems more natural so I assume that

that's what it is

and so with beverage in hand I'm going

to answer this question and the question

is American culture is already hostile

to Buddhist practice and values what do
you say to Christian nationalists or
even more
reasonable atheistic people like my
brother who advocate for this Hardline
return to
Christianity well first I'd like to
address this first statement that he
makes that American culture is already
hostile to Buddhist practice and values
um not entirely I mean Buddhism some
sort of Buddhism anyway is in fashion
among sort of the anti-r religionists
they don't see Buddhism as a religion
you know certainly there's not a whole
lot of faith involved in fact there's so
little faith involved for these people

that they can just change terraa
Buddhism to suit themselves you know
like I've said before there there are
some of these people that are actually
agitating or advocating to change the
four noble
truths because the second Noble Truth
says all suffering is caused by clinging
and attachment or craving and they're
saying no not all suffering is caused by
craving and attachment some suffering is
caused by patriarchal
oppression but even so I mean Buddhism
American culture is not really hostile
to Buddhism as as far as I know I mean
just like traditional Morality In

general yeah because like sensual overindulgence and so forth pretty much all major religions frown upon that and I mean that's just been pretty much dismissed from the entire equation of morality in western civilization but let's just get to the question shall we and the question is what do you say to Christian nationalists or even more reasonable atheistic people like my brother who advocate for this Hardline return to Christianity well I don't think it's extremely reasonable for an atheist to advocate for a Hardline return to Christianity like Christian

nationalism I mean it reminds me of Ivan karamazov and the brothers karamazov who also he was an atheist but he wrote some um article for a newspaper or some such advocating for the importance of a a the culture being strongly Christ Christian because he just likes what it does to society even though he doesn't believe in it and I mean it just seems strange to me I've never really been able to relate to like endorsing something that you think is

false

um so

anyways getting back to this question a little more firmly if you will what do

you say to Christian nationalists or
even more reasonable atheistic people
like my brother who ADV ate for this
hard Li return to Christianity well I
mean I really can't advocate for a hard
liing return to Christianity because I'm
not a Christian I couldn't really be a
Christian because I just don't believe
the story The Narrative that you pretty
much have to believe you know that there
was this man named Jesus who was the
only begotten Son of God Almighty who
died for our sins you know he is our
savior and I just do not and just cannot
believe it it's just not really a viable
option for me it just doesn't resonate
with me at all and it's just sort of

cynical and borderline at least
dishonest to go along with it when you
don't believe it you know to advocate
for it when you don't think that it's
true so what do I say to Christian
nationalists I mean they're free to
advocate for a return to Christianity I
assume I mean I have been willing in the
past you know just considering all the
options and so forth I think I would be
willing to take the hit and have my own
religion be downplayed or even
persecuted to some degree for the sake
of Western Civilization or American
society sort of
unifying under Christianity like they

did before which would strengthen the
country and give it sort of it would
sort of resuscitate Western Civilization
it might be sort of a shot in the arm so
to speak using a little bit of uh
medical jargon there I almost said the
wrong thing that could get me in
trouble use the V
word but uh yeah it would it could
strengthen Society I agree with that
although personally I couldn't really
become a Christian and I mean if they
really went like Spanish Inquisition
mode you know persecuting non-christians
and so forth I mean I might have to just
take one for the team and get like
burned at the stake or something I don't

know but I certainly wouldn't want to pretend that I'm a Christian when I'm not a Christian I mean I can advocate for a kind of liberal Christianity you know like the people I work with they know that I used to be a Buddhist monk they're cool with it you know it's just as long as you do your job as long as you're you know you're not making trouble we got no problem with that that so you know no problem that kind of Christianity is fine and I think America would be better off if not only were more people believing Christians because traditionally historically Western Civilization has been predominantly

Christian but uh I mean it would have to
be like a conservative traditionalist
kind of Christianity not rainbow flag
Christianity it with a rainbow flag just
indicating
like representing an entire spectrum of
just nutty leftist
ideologies which which includes like I
was saying earlier with regard to terraa
Buddhists just changing whatever you
don't like and like queering the
religion among other
things so what would I say to them well
I mean more power to you just don't
persecute the
non-christians so I'm just going to move
on and question this is from scadden and

scadden he has dedicated all three of
his questions to The Peculiar subject of
Willie
Wonka so question one is is Willie Wonka
a metaphor for
Mara and then he gives some evidence for
this which is represented by a wealthy
Global Elite sells a highly addictive
substance across the world was that it's
chocolate or some kind of candy I guess
well known to everyone regardless of age
or social class well Mara is not well
known to everyone can travel
anywhere and knows everything about the
winners of the golden tickets before
they even

meet well first of all the idea that
Willie Wonka is a metaphor from Mara is
unlikely considering that whoever wrote
the original story about Willie Wonka in
the chocolate F Factory probably was not
a Buddhist probably do not know who Mara
was so I mean you could say well is he
Satan is does Willie Wonka represent
Satan and I just don't think so I mean
it can happen occasionally you've got
somebody who writes a children's book
and puts in some kind of dark kind of
innuendo symbolism kind of stuff for the
adults to pick up on but I don't know
why they would do
this um I mean Willie Wonka it seems to
me that like children's literature

has a lot of sort of folklor
mythological themes to it you know like
read like the old fashion kind of fairy
tales and they're called fairy tales
because there's like a certain amount of
the Paranormal involved witches and
fairies and you know all kinds of things
so Willie Wonka he seems to me more like
Santa Claus where he does have certain
powers you know and he's I mean he can
seem kind of he's got like a dark side
like Santa Claus he'll give lumps of
coal to the naughty kids instead of
giving them the nice present that they
want that kind of
thing

so yeah I think Wily Wonka would be more
of a metaphor for some sort of like a
small G God like Santa Claus I mean
Santa Claus really is kind of deified in
a in a like a pagan kind of a sense so I
think wiie Wonka might kind of along
those lines he's sort of like a new
variant on the general Santa Claus
Father Christmas kind of theme um
although he's less limited because he's
less seasonal you know it's not just a
Christmas
thing so the highly addictive substance
I mean kids like it they don't see it as
highly addictive I guess um a wealthy
Global Elite I really didn't realize I
mean I saw the movie a long time ago the

first one with Gene Wilder in it um I
didn't know he was a wealthy Global lead
I mean's he's sort of like a reclusive
eccentric millionaire or billionaire
nowadays due to
inflation so can travel anywhere yeah
Santa Claus can do that knows everything
about the winners of the golden tickets
before they even meet yeah he probably
does have a certain amount of like
psychic powers or something you know
he's Magic see he's this magical
man so I'm just going to move on to
scadden's uh second question after
probably answering you know probably not
with regard to is Willie Wonka a

metaphor for Mara I don't think he's a
metaphor for Satan either you know he's
obviously more good than bad if you just
go like if you watch the movie from a
kid's point of view you know he has sort
of like this tough dark side at first
cuz it kind of keeps the audience in
suspense and then he comes out as the
good guy at the end
which you know he always was you know
it's it's just kind of typical of sort
of folkish attempts at telling a story
that would be suitable for a young
audience so anyways scolin second
question does Willie Wonka's factory
reside in
hell and then he's got evidence for this

too Factory is larger on the inside than
the outside the winners were fed into
the factory down a river crypting Ally
mentions the uncertainty of the
destination and the fires of Hell
various stages of the factory reflect
each Winner's desires each winner meets
a gruesome fate which should be fatal
unless it's hell the workers of the
factory look quite demonic well that's
kind of ableist or something I think
sizeist see the workers break out
gleefully into song after each
incident um yeah they're like the chorus
in like a Greek tragedy or something an
entire song complete with choreography

they knew yeah they knew in advance they they practiced this the workers were originally from an African Pygmy tribe I didn't know that Oompa loomas were from they're they're African pygmies huh that's an interesting Theory and then finally cannibalism was a common practice among such tribes and may have been implied when a worker was described as appearing to be made of chocolate yeah there was the other kid that swole up into a big blueberry too but um considering my answer to the first of these questions by scolin or skaden um I do not think Willy Wonka's factory does reside in hell I mean there could be you know there's sort of like

some dark you know sort of to to
maintain suspense and a certain amount
of like not knowing exactly what side of
the fence Willie is actually on and then
at the end of course he turns out to be
a good guy
but I mean it creates suspense when
you're in doubt at first and so they
might throw in some kind of dark
symbolism to make you think suspect well
maybe maybe willly is not what he's
passing himself off to be you know what
I'm
saying so let's see Factory is larger on
the inside than the outside I mean that
could that's not necessarily uh peculiar

to hell I mean that's just paranormal

that's magic so again Wily Wonka like

this magical being and some magical

beings you know they got their light

side in the dark like elves for example

they don't just help Santa Claus making

toys elves can do all kinds of things

they can like snatch babies and like

curse your cattle and so

forth so let's see the winners were fed

into the factory down the river you know

that could be some of that that kind of

dark symbolism that's meant to like

create a certain

suspense in the in the viewer to make

them ambivalent unsure of like what kind

of a guy Wily Wonka actually is

cryptically mentions the uncertainty of
their destination fires of Hell okay
various stages of the factory reflect
each Winner's desires well I mean that's
just convenient for the the telling of
the story or the making of the movie I
think each winner met a gruesome fate
which should be fatal well I mean that's
I mean in a way that's kind of symbolism
of a lot of little kid stories from the
past or in little kids poetry where
naughty kids are going to have bad
things happen to them the Goblins are
going to get
you so you know it's it's in a way it's
kind of a moral story where the kids

that obviously are bad kids in one way
or another it catches up to them so
that's like
Karma okay the workers in the factory
look quite demonic again that's that's
ableist and sizeist and probably a bunch
of other things that are not fashionable
nowadays see the workers break out into
gleeful song after each incident it's a
musical you know they got to sing about
something what are they going to sing
about stirring
chocolate see an entire song completely
with choreography yeah see it's a
musical I mean the munchkins on The
Wizard of Oz they they're all
choreographed too it's supposed to

appear spontaneous however because

they're

inspired the workers were originally

from an African Pygmy tribe I'm not even

going there and I really don't think

that there's like symbolic cannibalism

in involved in this and at the end it's

like you know you've got this ambivalent

dark you know sort of ambivalent

symbolism where you're not exactly sure

you know whether will is a good guy or

not and at the

end he turns out to be a great guy and

then he appoints the kid whose name I

don't remember to be like his

successor so yeah Charlie he's got it

here in the next question assuming the

role of Devil's Devil's

Advocate that Wily Wonka is Mara and the

factory is in

hell then what exactly happened to

Charlie

well I mean first of all if Mara doesn't

live in hell Mara lives in a high heaven

realm the Buddhist Devil he's actually

in the highest Heaven realm in the

kamaloka or the sensual

world that all the heaven Realms above

the level of Mara are no longer

sensually

oriented so this is kind of a mixed

mixed symbolism here whereas Mara

wouldn't be in hell anyway he'd be he'd

be in heaven with his three voluptuous

daughters and who knows who

else so let's see what exactly happened

to Charlie well I mean going with the

symbolism

of of scolin here then yeah Charlie

would have become the next Mara I guess

but I think it's it's kind of pushing it

it's it's sort of stretching things to

say that willly Wonka really does

represent Mara or Lucifer or you know

some some demonic super villain and uh

yeah I don't think that the Chocolate

Factory is in is in

hell so yeah I think it's it just goes

with like who was that guy back in like

the 70s and 80s who wrote about just the
the universal almost like the yian
archetypes of like folklore and you know
how even Star Wars fits in you know you
got the young innocent boy he must prove
his manhood and his worth and you know
sort of fulfill himself by going through
these heroing ordeals and all this uh I
can't remember his name Campbell Joseph
Campbell I think was his name I mean
Joseph Campbell could explain Willie
Wonka in the chocolate fa Factory imp
perfectly satisfactory
satisfactorily I am sure and there was
too many syllables in that
word so due to the slight Trauma from
saying a word with too many syllables

I'm just going to move on to the next question here this is from Mary J and this is kind of a follow-up question to the previous Q&A like an answer I gave in the previous Q&A because otherwise I don't know what he's referring to and Mary Jay says what would be the deeper method that in so I assume there's a question
about like like the Goa method or something or the mahasi method where I was saying it is a limited method so after you get a a certain amount of progress a certain amount of advancement then you probably do well to move on to a deeper method you know that

some methods are limited and you know once you get to the max of that method then it's a good idea to switch to a different method or for for what ever reason you just can't make any more progress in it then it might be a good idea to try a different method so what would the deeper method be then with regard to mindfulness I think was the context of this question then I mean it's like the deeper you get in meditation the less busy work your mind is doing the less thinking you're doing the less perceiving you're doing the less focusing on objects you're doing that the more advanced you get with mindfulness or any kind of meditation

really the more kind of relaxed and just
Lucid your mind is that you're you
becomes like what J Krishna mury called
choiceless awareness where you're just
aware of whatever is there but you're
not focusing on it to the to the expense
of at the expense of everything else if
you focus on one thing you perceive one
thing then everything else just becomes
background but what you want is your
focus to be sort of like on a like a
cheap plastic camera where everything is
equally in Focus or like a mirror where
everything is equally in focus and
you're not singling out anything it's
all just there in Crystal

Clarity and that would be the Perfection
of mindfulness if you can perfect that
and according to the text the Perfection
of mindfulness is also fourth Jan so
it's like a twofer you get two for one
perfect
mindfulness forth
jna ah
so yeah the deeper the method the less
busy work your mind is doing but you
can't just dive into the deeper stuff
before you're ready for it because your
mind has to be busy like if you're not
um really Adept at
meditating then your mind's just going
to be overflowing the bounds of the
meditation method you're just going to

be sitting there for half an hour or so
just thinking about food or girls or
playing music in your head or or
whatever
so you have to calibrate your meditation
method with how like agitated or active
your mind is if you've got an active
mind you have to have an active
meditation method because if you don't
if you got if you got an active mind and
inactive meditation you know sort of a
still meditation method then your mind's
just going to overflow and just be going
all over the place it won't stay within
the bounds of the meditation because the
meditation isn't giving it enough to do

your mind has to be occupied with your
meditation on the other hand if you if
you're you've made progress and you're
able to do a more still quiet kind of
meditation and you just keep grinding
away at the ABCs you're not going to
make much progress with that
either
so let's see where was I what's the
question what's the damn it question
here what would the deeper method
yeah what would be the deeper method
then so yeah I mean it's like ultimately
you'd be doing what the the Roman
Catholic contemplatives called
contemplation where you're just not
thinking anything and your mind is clear

you know like the pan of glass or the
mirror or the cheap camera or
whatever but you have to sort of
calibrate where you are at with the
appropriate level of busyness
of the meditation method the actual
meditation method might not be all that
important you could be counting your
breaths or doing a mantra or or
visualizing or whatever it is like in
the elementary levels and then as your
mind gets more and more still then you
kind of make less and less work for your
mind actually to do like the thinking
perceiving aspect of your
mind so I hope I answer that question

because I'm moving on to Mary Jay's next

question

which is any thoughts on Gnostic

teachings of Jesus in The Gospel of

Thomas well I have read the Gospel of

Thomas more than

once um it has been a long time though

probably at least 20 years since I've

read The Gospel According to

Thomas and I've read some stuff about

the Gospel of Thomas

too that it may be older than The Gospel

according to John at least parts of it

are older because if I remember

correctly the Gospel of Thomas does

contain quotes from like The Sermon on

the Mount so it does contain certain

sayings of Jesus that are contained in
like the older synoptic gospels Matthew
Mark and Luke and see Matthew and Luke
are largely based on
Mark so there is that but it's really
hard to say on how authentic the entire
gospel is whether Jesus Jesus really did
say this kind of secret esoteric stuff
because the Gospel According to Thomas
is just sayings of Jesus there's almost
no narrative at all that I'm aware of
it's just a collection of sayings of
Jesus sort of like a a Christian dhap or
something and uh it's it's really hard
to say exactly it might be impossible to
say you know how much of this really was

taught by Jesus and then got lost when
it went mainstream and kind of normies
took over or how much of it just got
added by Gnostic sects or you know some
esoteric sect of Christianity that
wanted to make the teachings of Jesus
more metaphysical kind of if you know
what I'm saying and I really can't say
which it is did Jesus really teach the
stuff like that's not I mean some of it
probably does
include genuine teachings of Jesus that
just weren't included in the other
gospels like the the four biblical
gospels but it's hard to say it's maybe
impossible to say exactly where to draw
the line between Jesus really taught

this and some of this got lost you know when Christianity went mainstream and was taken over by normies or it Jesus didn't really say it and he just got put into his mouth like by Christian Mahayana Buddhists or something who are inventing new kind of deeper more metaphysical teachings and then putting them into the mouth of Jesus I really can't say which it is but The Gospel According to Thomas I would much prefer if the Gospel According to Thomas were included in the New Testament instead of The Gospel according to John I really don't have much use for The Gospel according to John except for like the

beginning and the end like how

Jesus became like a high-profile teacher

and got his first apostles that part of

John may actually be more accurate than

the first three gospels like the first

three gospels Jesus is just walking

along he sees some fishermen and just

calls them you know come follow me and

then they just drop their Nets and take

off following Jesus whereas according to

John the implication is that his first

apostles were for the most part already

Apostles of John and then when Jesus

became John's successor after John was

arrested then you know they just became

his

followers and then like also the uh the

the trial and execution of Jesus might
be more accurate in John but the Gospel
of Thomas doesn't talk about any of this
as I say it's just like a collection of
sayings attributed to
Jesus so those are my thoughts I
guess and uh you might not know any more
now than you did before I gave my
thoughts but I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from
yugao and yugao says please talk about
about satire as a medium that does tell
the truth I find meaning of life very
insightful absurdist comedy is Liber
liberating and then by meaning of life I
I assume he's referring to Monty Python

and the meaning of

life so please talk about satire as a

medium that does tell the truth well I

mean it is a palatable way of getting

social commentary into the minds of

people at least at a subconscious level

you know if you're just like r ing

against

something then it'll turn a lot of

people off you know they'll just tune

you out or whatever but if you put it

into an entertaining kind of a story

where it's just kind of hinted at again

and again it would be much more

acceptable and if it's if it's like

humor too then it kind of puts people

into a good mood and when you're in a

good mood you're more receptive to new ideas if you're in a bad mood it's just like [__] off leave me alone kind of a thing but if you're in a good mood you know you're happy like comedy can do to people then it makes you more receptive to these ideas about how Society is all messed up you know like a good uh a good satire be the first RoboCop movie that was a lot of social satire um even the movie um the the first um what was it called roller ball movie with James KH that was satire I had to watch that in a high school class as a an example of satire and um

yeah I mean it's it's good most people

most normies aren't going to really pick
up on it it it could plant a few seeds
at a subconscious
level but symbolism usually for the for
the average person watching a movie is
just like just right over the head I
mean I I've known people intelligent
people with University degrees who could
read Lord of the Flies and be completely
clueless that the whole thing is an
allegory the entire thing from start to
finish is symbolic you know it's not
kids on an island it's human beings on
planet Earth just for
starters
so yeah I think satire I I do like
satire um like probably the first

philosophical story or work that I ever
read was micromegas by voler and Vol was
a
sist and I just I just I do appreciate
that I can pick up a lot from that kind
of thing but generally it's it's like
I'm understanding what what is being
symbolized and agreeing with what the
person's saying anyway but for the
average person I don't think they're
going to get much out of
it just
saying but with regard to money python
movies I much prefer their first movie
which is Monty Python on the Holy Grail
that's that's definitely in my top three

movies of all

time so anyways I'm just going to move

on to yuu's next question which is do

you have a favorite Monty Python

sketch and I don't know if I have like

one single favorite Monty Python sketch

I've got I've got several I guess the

fish slapping dance is classic the dead

parrot sketch is classic in Monty Python

on the Holy Grail the whole the whole

prolonged scene with Tim the

enchanter is is just

classic or also uh Dennis the the

Socialist peasant the whole scene with

Dennis in is yeah that's that's

excellent but I've got lots of favorite

money python sketches I I kind of grew

up with Monty

Python which some of you may not be

surprised by and so I'm just going to

move on to next question this is from

Fred and as is occasionally the case

with Fred I do not fully understand

where he's getting out with this

question but yeah maybe I do do precepts

have any metaphysical

gain so do you do you gain

metaphysically through keeping precepts

I assume is is what he's asking here and

I mean just the precept itself you know

I undertake the precept to abstain from

Onslaught on living beings for example

um just the precept itself is is just

ethically neutral and you could say

metaphysically

neutral but if you do have live a moral

life then it's it's sort of like the

door is opening to the potential of

metaphysical

gains that like a saint is much more

likely to be exposed to the

Paranormal in a conscious way than the

average sinner

using Christian

jargon so precepts do they have any

metaphysical gain they set you up for

metaphysical gain they can prepare you

for metaphysical gain um I guess at the

karmic level yeah I mean I guess I mean

everything is metaphysical to some

degree Karma I guess could be considered

metaphysical so when you stop or when

you reduce your UNH wholesome Karma and

increase your wholesome Karma that in

and of itself would be a metaphysical

gain ultimately though as I keep as I

keep

saying that Karma and metaphysical gains

in general are mental and not physical

they're not just outward mechanical

stuff so just outwardly

mechanically not drinking alcohol for

example I mean that's just morally

neutral

really it's the associated mental

States and it's the associate mental

states that condition whether you're going to make metaphysical metaphysical gains or not because metaphysical gains are going to be mental not so much physical so I hope I answered that question because I'm moving right on to Fred's second question which is in my opinion what the Buddha taught is very simple and has been ravaged by papancha or diversification for example Mahayana to me he went to a forest cleared up his life circumstances and turned away from the world the question is did he really stop rebirth considering we still have desire for warmth and food Etc how can one have an emotional clean sheet with lots of past

memories well that's a good
question and the thing is even a Buddha
is still human even a Buddha is going to
have like the amig do in his brain that
condition anger for example I think if
somebody gets their AMC Dolly taken out
they become just embarrassingly
affectionate I read a psychology book
talking about a girl who had just
furious bouts of of Rage she was just
smashing stuff and so this was like the
Glory Days of experimental brain surgery
and so they just took out the amcd and
they didn't explain in detail the
situation but it did say that she just
became embarrassingly

affectionate

so I guess uh you have to look look that

one up in a different book I

guess let's see did he did the Buddha

really stop rebirth considering we still

have desire for warmth and food Etc well

one question that the Buddha absolutely

refused to answer is what happens to a

Daga or Buddha after death what happens

to an enlightened being after death he

wouldn't answer it but I guess the

answer to the unanswerable question um

is along the lines of the fact

that an enlightened being is no longer

identified with this natural empirical

world he doesn't identify with it

anymore it can still keep happening you

know nature keeps running its course but
enlightened being is detached from it
he's no longer identified with it
that it's just nature taking its course
and it's not
him so because a Buddha is human he may
still have desire for warmth and food
Etc but it's not him it's just nature
taking its course he is detached from
that so the the complete Detachment I
assume would be complete Enlightenment
it doesn't mean that the thoughts don't
continue to arise you know it's like
I've I've considered that becom
enlightened is like being cured of
obsessive compulsive disorder where the

obsessive thoughts and impulses will
continue to arise it's just that if
you're cured of it you learn to detach
not identify with it and not act upon it
so it just arises is just nature taking
its course and the cured person with OCD
it never completely goes away because
it's largely genetic it's like a it's
according to science it's there's this
built-in glitch in the brain that won't
allow you to shift gears so to speak
the caate nucleus and the singulate
gyrus and and some other some other
obscure Center in your
brain they form a kind of short circuit
and you you can't get out of it it just
keep

cycling

so you just kind of detach from it it's

like that's not me that's the OCD and

then you just go and bake some cookies

or or whatever it is that you

do and you just don't act upon it

so I assume that being enlightened can

be that way at least in some cases where

the thoughts you know the desire the

preference for Comfort continues to

arise even an enlightened being

hypothetically um but the enlightened

being it's not them anymore you know

it's just like weather outside the

window it just really does not have like

any kind of internal effect it's all

just external stuff going on and they're
just watching it go by without
attachment not identifying with any of
it it's nature taking its
course so let's see how can one have an
emotional clean sheet with lots of past
memories again you just detach from it
it can still the memories can still
arise you just do not
react it's just goes in one side of the
brain goes out the other side of the
brain it's like clouds Blowing by across
the
sky and with that I'm going to move on
to the next question from Stellar
Supreme formerly known as Liber Lam and
Stellar Supreme formerly known as Liber

Lam says considering that some saints
and Mystics are just Bound for
enlightenment why would a Bodhi satv Val
be any different than say religious
Dogma in inhibiting Enlightenment the
reason I ask is that the chanting in a
bodh V what opened me up to terraa
Buddhism and to experiencing many novel
spiritual phenomena so I really don't
see them as unenlightening well I think
that taking a buddhis satv vow where you
pretty much you're vowing to liberate
all beings before you become liberated
which I don't see how that's going to
work but you know it's it's like you're
postponing Enlightenment for the sake of

helping all beings so I think the main
inhibition was would be in someone who
takes their budhy satv Val
seriously that you know they're going to
be putting on the brakes to becoming
enlightened they're going to be saying
no I don't want that I'm going to do
something else so that that would
inhibit them from becoming enlightened
because they are deliberately avoiding
becoming enlightened but I assume that
would happen only at really high
levels you get to a high enough level of
spiritual advancement where you know
Enlightenment is is available to you and
you're just saying nope I'm not going to
do it because I took this vow and I'm

going to liberate all beings even though
all beings don't really exist and
there's always going to be an infinite
number of them so I mean
it's you can just sort of get tangled up
in your own promises I guess would be
the main the main way that a budy s AOW
would inhibit
Enlightenment so let's see so I guess I
answer that question so I'm just going
to move on to Stellar Supreme formerly
known as Libra Lamb's next question
which is would you consider disease to
be causal such that it can effectively
be undone as easily as it's acquired
ultimately yeah it would be effectively

it could effectively be undone as easily
it's acquired by like you know Jesus or
somebody who similarly is able to heal
somebody I mean they could heal you more
easily than you got sick you in some
cases you know they just put your hands
on you be well or just be well and go
your way and sin no more and the
person's well I mean it may have been a
long complicated process of catching a
leprosy or whatever it is and then boom
they're all better or I mean nowadays
with modern medicine you know taking
taking a pill that cures you of a
disease could be as easy as coming down
with a disease in the first
place so I mean disease is causal

obviously and uh it could ultimately I

mean in many cases it already can and

potentially it can be undone as easily

as it's acquired I mean just ask Mary

Baker Eddie wherever she happens to be

right now Heaven

maybe

so yeah I don't think that CA something

causal has to be undone as easily as

it's done I mean

huh yeah I think like putting some

things together is easier than taking

them back apart

again then again some things are the

other way around like back in the old

days when people used road maps it was

way easier to un unfold the road map

than it is to fold it back together

again taking stuff out of an envelope

can be a lot easier than putting it back

into that same

envelope but uh I'm just kind of

babbling at this point

see so I guess I'll just move on to uh

Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra

Lamb's third question and this is he he

included this in the Q&A section of the

Discord server but there's no question

mark at all in fact all he's doing is

just quoting me um a statement that I

made in the in the Discord server and

that is quote the idea that a Buddha is

selectively omniscient is an orthodox

position that I think the difference between a Buddha and an ordinary arahant despite the fact that a Buddha starts the system going is a later artifact so somebody was asking about if the Buddha really is
omniscient then how can he get things wrong which you know he's he just goes with you know ancient Indian cosmology and so forth and and somebody asked a question in the previous Q&A that may have started this little ball rolling about how can an omniscient being like a like the Buddha just say things that are just empirically wrong that science you know it doesn't agree with science at

all um so let's see here what's the question again oh yeah there is no question the idea that a Buddha is selectively omnicient is an orthodox position yeah I mean it could just be the idea that the Buddha could know anything that he wanted to know that he could speak fluent Swahili if he wanted to he could know the the cube root of 56 if you wanted to um I mean that could be like subsequent glorification of the Buddha I'm not at all certain that the Buddha would be able to speak fluent Swahili or know the cube root of 56 just by directing his mind in that direction I am not at all certain of that he may come up with really amazing stuff that

no ordinary person might be able to know

like a lot of sages and meditation

Masters can

do but the whole selective omniscience

thing I think could be just

glorification of the Buddha by

subsequent you know devotionalism and

furthermore like I answered it in the

question last time I mean science is not

ultimate truth people think that if

you're an enlightened being you'd have

to be in agreement with science but

science is delusional at least I mean

scientific method isn't delusional

because it's

not really adopting a metaphysical

position but scientific realism is
delusional the idea that science
explains reality is one of the biggest
handicaps to Western Buddhists that I
can think
of so I mean if all this is Maya if this
world is generated by ignorance and
delusion that it is an illusion why
would Enlighten would an enlightened
being know all the minute details
especially if there's an infinite number
of of variations on the same samsara the
same
Cosmos I mean the main thing for an
enlightened being to know is Ultimate
Reality which isn't like this there's no
fish tanks in Ultimate Reality no

doorways no beverages

and no laws of

physics I mean it's just like this

infinite formless Consciousness if you

want to call it

something but calling it anything is

futile because labels don't stick to it

and anything you can really say about it

is ultimately

invalid so I guess I mean considering

that there wasn't even a question mark

in this you just wanted a little bit of

elaboration like guess so I elaborated a

little bit and now I'm moving on to the

next question which is from covac and

sead

zida and covac CAD zida says what is the
leftand path and what are your thoughts
on it well the left-hand path
mainly uh
rejects like traditional morality and it
rejects it outwardly more than inwardly
like the whole idea of Tantra is that
we're now living in the kuga we're
living in a spiritual Dark Age and that
perfecting yourself becoming a perfected
Saint just isn't realistic anymore and
so you have to take sort of the the
degeneracy of of the world as it is and
transmute that into like higher
Consciousness and so like in Indian
Tantra you know they would ritually do
the five M's I think it was it was meat

or MSA

fish or

matcha um let's see was it saxs or

mituna no no pun intended there um see

there was uh majja or or like alcohol

and then there was another one that they

they pretty much lost it has been lost

sort of like the actual ingredients of

Soma in the rig Veda it's this this this

fifth M probably it was some kind of

drug but it's like they've they've lost

the actual meaning of this fifth M that

is ritually participated in and so they

just replaced it with parched grain

which I don't know why parched grain

would be all that like immoral or

anything at a superficial level
even so they do this they take these
things and they do it as mindfully as
they can so what they're trying to do is
like live maybe an outwardly immoral LIF
style while at the same time being
Mindful and detached and trying not to
get messed up by it and usually they
fail because it is it is dangerous
you're literally well you're
figuratively playing with fire by doing
this kind of stuff I mean to some people
that are living living in the world you
know they got they got family they got
they got a like a significant other they
might have duties where they have to do
things that are unskillful UNH wholesome

that

I mean that's the best you can do or

like like if you're a soldier or

something then you just remain mindful

try to keep your mind as pure as you can

while doing the impure stuff

outwardly that's essentially the

left-hand

path and my thoughts on it are pretty

much what I've just said I mean for

somebody who can renounce the world

you're better off you know having as

pure of morals as you can manage if

you're living in the world I mean you're

going to have to make compromise you

know if your kid has lice in his hair

then it's your duty to kill those
lice even though it's something
unskillful you have a duty as a parent
to keep your child healthy and
clean I mean I have to admit I killed a
fish a couple weeks ago I got I had nine
Cherry barbs in there little school of
cherry barbs very nice I like them and
then one of the females started getting
like these patches of fungus covering
her eyes and she wasn't eating and I
didn't want all of them to get sick so I
took her out and put her like in
quarantine in just a jar of water the
next day it's I mean she wasn't doing
well at all and so she got called just
because I didn't want the entire

aquarium to get

sick so I mean you live in the world you

got to do this kind of stuff sometimes

and so the leftand path may be

unavoidable to some degree just try to

keep your mind as pure as you can even

though what you're doing outwardly may

seem impure still be mindful and

detached as much as you can

manage have like meta and compassion for

the little fish that's that's dying that

kind of

thing so I guess I'll just move on to

COV action c z second question which is

um one of his trademark long quotes

asking me to uh to

uh comment on it and he says in samua

22.7 N the definition for the aggregate

seems very weird and then the rest is is

a quote from samut Naya

2279 and why beus do you call it form it

is deformed beus therefore it is called

form deformed by what deformed by Cold

deformed by heat deformed by hunger

deformed by by thirst deformed by

contact with flies mosquitoes wind sun

and serpents it is deformed beus

therefore it is called form two and he

says feelings are easy to understand so

he skips over that one and then and why

do you call it perception because it

perceives thus it is called perception

what does it perceive it perceives blue

it perceives yellow it perceives red it perceives
white because it perceives it is called perception and the next section says and why do you call it Consciousness because it cognizes thus it is called Consciousness what does it cognize it cognizes what is sour bitter pungent sweet alkaline non- alkaline salty and unsalty because it cognizes it is called Consciousness and then the the last section here
says and why do you call them Fabrications because they fabricate fabricated things thus they are called Fabrications what do they fabricate as a

fabricated thing for the sake of forness
they fabricate form as a fabricated
thing for the sake of feeling this they
fabricate feeling as a fabricated thing
for the sake of perception hood for the
sake of fabrication hood for the sake of
Consciousness Hood they fabricate
Consciousness as a fabricated thing
because they fabricate fabricated things
they are called Fabrications
unquote so then setion says can you
please explain what all these mean they
all seem difficult to understand it's
hard to understand the difference
between wiyana and SAA or Consciousness
and perception based on this as they
just seem like sensory functions what

form means here and what mental

formations are as they seem to Encompass

everything else here though this seems

like it aligns with the 12 links chain

thing

somehow okay well first of all this is

one thing that I I've never really liked

about suas and it's partly due

to um not having an established formal

logic in India at the time the troden

texts were composed and also they

indulge in a lot of like folk emology

like this first question or why beus do

you call it form because it is deformed

beus therefore it is called form this is

just a false atmology this Rupa is the

poly word for form and then this verb is

rid which means it's it gets like

damaged or messed up or here it's

deformed because they got to include

form in in the in the answer to make

sort of an etymological connection so it

is rid or

rup I was uh indulging a little uh

Burmese pronunciation of poly there so

yeah saying that uh it's it's Rupa

because it is deformed or because of

rupite then I mean it's it's not a

correct etymology this is found

throughout the text throughout the

commentaries also where it's just sort

of for um just teaching purposes or or

whatever that they'll give this fake

atmology and and it's it's it's just
runs rampant in the text and it's not
really correct in my opinion
so let's see feelings are easy to
understand SE action c z says and then
when you get to perception or Sona why
do you call it perception because it
perceives and this is sort of not so
much um bad atmology as just like the
lack of good logic like sound formal
logic where they'll use like a a
circular definition you know it's called
perception because it perceives but if
you don't know what perception is you're
hardly likely to know what perceiving is
either so it perceives blue perceives

yellow perceives red perceives white because it perceives it is called perception yeah I mean it's it's almost not a definition at all and some of the definitions you're going to find in the sutas and in the commentaries are the same kind of non-de just sort of a circular definition using the word itself to Define itself that kind of thing and then why do you call it Consciousness because because it cognizes and this is one of the things that se action CAD Zina was asking about it's like perception and Consciousness seem like pretty much the same thing and I do think that that terraa Buddhism has traditionally misunderstood

Consciousness they really Orthodox
terraa does not understand Consciousness
so it's like from the from the point of
view of like Abid dama Orthodox terraa
Consciousness is sort of like the the
the canvas on which the perception is
painted you can't have the perception
without this sort of a background to
hold up the perception you know it's
sort of like i' I've seen it defined as
um it's like perception is the mental
state and Consciousness is like the the
presence of the mental state or some
such which really doesn't work
either so I mean the way I understand
Consciousness and perception per

perception is the form of the me of the
Mind Consciousness is the substance of
the mind you know it's
like this cup is made out of ceramic so
cup would be the form ceramic would be
the substance so if this were a
perception the perception would be the
cup level of its reality and not the
ceramic level of its reality the ceramic
level of its reality would be the
Consciousness itself a gold ring ring
would be like outward form like
perception gold would be the substance
or Essence of the Ring which would be
Consciousness that's my definition and
it makes way better sense to me than
like the Abid dama definition of of um

Consciousness especially because they
they they can't deal with different
levels of reality Orthodox terraa
possibly because of the logic thing they
cannot deal with different levels of
reality the ancient Greeks had similar
problems so I mean let's not just pick
on the ancient
Indians but you know it's like in Abid
dama niana or Nirvana is just right on
the same list with with everything else
they consider to be an Ultimate Reality
so according to Abid dama according to
Orthodox terraa Buddhism no sensitivity
is just as real as nibana
is and I mean I just just don't I just

cannot swallow that at all anymore than
I can swallow like the official
Narrative of Christianity I mean if I
had to believe that in order to be a
Buddhist I couldn't be a
Buddhist but fortunately in Buddhism you
don't have to believe everything you
read which is
good and then again some people in the
west especially will use that as an
excuse to just reject anything they
don't like including all that morality
stuff
or Karma you know that's victim blaming
that's that's definitely out of fashion
in the west unless the victim is like
white or

something so let's

see Consciousness

Fabrications yeah I mean you can find

this stuff throughout the sutas where

they're not really I mean they're

supposedly defining things and you're

just as in the dark after reading the

definition or the explanation as you

were before maybe even more so you might

be even more

confused so in cases like this you're

better off just kind of working it out

on your own or reading a lot and just

sort of coming up with the best angle

that you find in the text for explaining

this stuff but I mean this kind of

explanation is really not very helpful

except for a dogmatist who's just going

to memorize it like a parrot and then

think he understands it because he can

like repeat it like a

parrot dogmatists like that

are much more common in in Buddhist Asia

at least with regard to Buddhism with

regard to Christianity they might be

more common in the

west

so yeah I mean with regard to Rupa and

rid I mean it's just like a a false

atmology that's just used for dactic

purposes I think dactic is the correct

word in that

case so yeah if it seems difficult for

coaction COD Z to understand well

welcome to the club because I don't

think I mean I I don't understand how

anybody could really understand this

stuff because it's not really

explanatory it's not really explaining

very much it's just circular definitions

using the word itself as part of the the

the explanation of of itself and it it

just it doesn't work so I'm just I guess

I've kind of semi ranted and complain

enough about coaction CAD Z's second

question so I'm just going to move on to

his third

question and the question is is this

Buddhism in a nutshell and then he

posted a meme of this sort of
crying meme face in front of this
beautiful natural
scenery and the the crying meme face in
front of the beautiful Scenic picture is
saying I can't believe the de urge did
this it's horrible I need to achieve
nosis to escape this hellscape
everything is imperfect and evil so no
that's not Buddhism in a nutshell I
would not say that although to some
degree like the prehistoric religion of
Northern India like from the the IND
this Valley Civilization I guess there
was another civilization that they're
just now finding out about there was
farther east in the Ganges Valley

that may have been associated with the indis valley civilization or something but apparently it was like the the spiritual tradition there and among the gnostics in the in the west also that this whole world is evil and that we should try to escape from that that I mean it's just there's no point in just wallowing in this imperfection and evil and I mean there there are there is some of that in Buddhism although the Buddha was an enlightened teacher who kind of raises it to an enlightened level

so let's see where do I go from here I mean it's certainly not Buddhism in a

nutshell I mean Buddhism is really not
that simplistic in that you know the
world or some Sara is evil and you must
escape from it because it's so
horrible um I mean there's really
nothing to escape so much if if you're
just detached from it and I mean you can
say it's horrible and it can be called
horrible in the text mainly to stimulate
people to want to become
enlightened but I mean
obviously that samsara is not 100%
misery and
horror that's pretty clear to say that
even happiness is misery because it
doesn't last you can just turn that on
its head and say you know even misery is

happiness because it doesn't last so

it's it's not a very good

argument so let's see where else do I go

with this I mean it's not Buddhism in a

nutshell so I did answer the question I

mean it's very simplistic exaggerated

form of one aspect of

Buddhism but

uh I mean if you do achieve nois I mean

you you rise above the world I mean not

necessar escaping the

hellscape but um I mean it's better than

this world Enlightenment literally is

infinitely better than living a samsaric

existence so I mean you just bear that

in mind I guess and then comparatively

speaking you could say everything is
imperfect and evil you know like
compared to just infinite
Perfection but wallowing in that I mean
it could help some people to renounce
the world I mean like even in Roman
Catholicism just the idea that the world
is the veil of tears and you know this
body is just like a like a tomb kind of
a thing did inspire a lot of saints to
just really go for it so it can be
helpful in that respect but yeah
Buddhism there's certainly a lot more to
Buddhism than just
that and then it is kind of a simplistic
exaggerated representation even of a
Buddhist attitude or at least a

traditional wise Buddhist attitude so
I'm just moving on to the next question
this is from bray and Bray said when you
were a monk did you witness or hear
about other monks engaging in immoral
activities and I think Bray may not be
aware of just how finely tuned Buddhist
ethics are in other religions like
Christianity Islam something is either
good or bad you know it's it's 100% good
it's 100% bad or you you you could have
a certain mix if you're doing more than
one thing at the same time but
nevertheless you know everything is
pretty much clearcut this is good this
is bad you should do this you should

avoid that but Buddhism it's almost
impossible to do anything without a
certain amount of immorality involved
just even to believe that you exist
while you're doing it is causing a
certain amount of delusion to creep into
your motives and when have delusional
motives you I mean the result is not
going to be 100%
wholesome so when I was a monk that I
witness or hear about other monks
engaging in immoral activities sure I
mean there's whole different levels of
it like some of the some of the the
school monasteries in manderlay had like
soccer teams you could actually see
monks playing soccer having fun laughing

and stuff and from a traditional
Buddhist point of view I mean that's not
right monks aren't supposed to to be
doing that kind of stuff to to a normie
who isn't a Buddhist who goes sees monks
playing soccer they might think it's
cool you know they may think that's fine
um I heard one rumor about a monk that I
knew who was paraja that he was having
homosexual sex with uh like a teenage
novice but that was just a rumor that
was spread by women at the monastery and
rumors can spread and mutate and be
based on almost nothing in Burma I
didn't didn't particularly want to know
if this was true or not you know I

wasn't going to start investigating

taking take the burden upon myself to

prove or vindicate this this monk that I

knew but I mean that's the only real

rumor even of like homosexual

homosexuality being acted out in Burma

in like in the

songa so you it's the Burmese monks seem

to be much more moral in that regard

than Tha monks I've I've heard much more

about Thai stuff along those lines I

mean having sex with women I've heard

some stories about that too so I guess

that would be immoral too like Burmese

seato who uh you know he's like seducing

nuns that kind of thing I've heard a few

cases of that um especially in the

mahasi tradition but mahasi tradition is
is a big tradition very widespread so
there's more opportunities to hear
something from it than like the theu
tradition or something that almost
nobody knows
about um i' I've told the story before
just a few q&as ago about how I was
walking down the street in rangon there
was a monk like 50 feet in front of me
walking down the street the same
direction is me I'm just walking behind
him and then there's a pretty girl at a
bus stop and this monk literally just
deliberately obviously swerves out of
his way to grab her ass as he walks by

and the girl is startled she looks
around sees that it was a monk and then
just pretends nothing happened and I I
really wanted to engage in a little
immoral activity Myself by just walking
up behind him tapping him on the
shoulder and then just punching him in
the
face but I mean monks engaging immoral
activities all the time like making
confession when they're breaking the
same rules over and over again like
handling money and then in the
confession they're saying yes sir very
good sir I will restrain myself in
future when they know damn well not
going to they're just going to keep

breaking the rule they just consider the confession to be a kind of magical blah blah blah that makes the offense go away so I mean there's all kinds of immoral activities from just the very very subtle stuff like a monk singing you know I'm still that's considered to be immoral in in Orthodox terot of Buddhism especially for a monk like laughing in public I saw a video just today of a monk just laughing out loud in front of a group group of people and I mean whether that not that's immoral or not I mean it kind of is at a very subtle level and then for a monk to

break rules that's also not good I mean
that kind of adds another level to the
immorality but then all the way up to
you know I've heard plausible stories
about you know some famous Seattle semi
anyway messing around with female
supporters and and nuns like literally
seducing them having sex with him so he
wouldn't really be a monk he'd be
excommunicated
technically seeing the monk just swerve
out of his way on the sidewalk to grab a
pretty girl's ass I mean yeah I was a
witness to that one that was like the
the most
immoral um like thing when I was a monk
in Burma seeing another Monk doing I

think but that was like in broad
daylight just on a city
sidewalk so I mean the really immoral
stuff I mean they're not technically
monks anymore like a monk who has sex
who commits parica offense um yeah I
mean I lived at a big school Monastery
and and it was near Mandalay and
Mandalay monks are notoriously there's a
lot of bad characters in the song around
Mandalay and there was it was a
relatively strict Monastery that I was
at relatively and so all the all the s
would have to congregate on upos day for
the chanting of the pooka rules if you
don't know exactly what that means

that's fine but all the monks would have
to accumulate you know they'd have to
meet in the meeting Hall and while all
the monks were in The Meeting Hall some
there was this some Monk he wasn't
really a monk anymore but he was
stealing rare books from this this is a
school Monastery so he'd be sneaking
into Monk's cabins and taking the the
the rarishock
see the anuaka seato he was sort of like
the leader of my little part of the
monastery it was a big Monastery he was
kind of a macho Monk and so one day he
decided he wasn't going to go to the
ceremony you know he was going to
deliberately skip Theos ceremony and

wait and try and catch this this monk
who wasn't really a monk anymore because
he was a thief who was stealing stuff
and selling it supposedly and he caught
him and so the monk was he he he didn't
even live at that Monastery he he was at
a nearby some other Monastery he was
sneaking in he knew when the ceremonies
were going to be and so he was
defrocked you know he was I don't know
if he was arrested or what but he was
kicked out of the
S and so it was a few weeks later that
some monk friend of the thief actually
snuck up behind this Unica Seattle you
know the macho guy who caught the thief

and just chopped him in the back of the head with a machete and his ear just kind of like peeled off you know they they were able to of sew it back on and everything but I mean this is supposedly a monk who did this although he's probably a thief too and so you know he would be excommunicated and not techically technically really a monk but there's all kinds of stuff like I went to uh I went to the manderlay city morg to watch autopsies I did it twice and the first time the the coroner told me that just a few days beforehand he had to do an aut y on a dead monk that was found like lying lying in a ditch near Mandalay and he kind of conspiratorially

kind of almost whispered to me that he thinks it was other monks who who killed him so I mean that kind of stuff I mean there's just rotten monks out there um around Mandalay especially um in sine division it's it's just LAX monks it's not so much like evil monks there it's just sloppy monks

and then in Shan State also it's kind of notorious for um just sort of immoral monks like there was this Australian monk who told me this story once about how a monk moved into some remote Village in Shan State they had a monastery they didn't have any monks living there so they were wel they were

they were very happy for this monk to
come and stay there and because they
didn't know how to deal with monks he
was having to teach them and he was
realizing these people don't know what
monks are supposed to do or not so he
was saying I'm going to need a virgin
every time I do the upos ceremony so
every two weeks they're sending him like
a teenage girl and she's not a virgin
anymore by the time she leaves the
monastery so finally I mean he lived
like that for for decades until finally
he he died and then a new monk shows up
very first I mean he's like a relatively
serious monk who just shows up in this
to live in this Monastery which is now

vacant very first who poest ceremony

they send him a girl and he's like oh

what's this girl for there she used to

help you do aosta venerable sir so I

mean there is a lot of just Wise Guy

crooked monks out there not only in

Burma I think there might even be more

in Thailand from what I've heard at

least you hear about it more in

Thailand probably in uh Sri Lanka

also so yeah that kind of stuff goes on

but uh in Burma I have to admit it's

like compared with

Roman Catholicism they're they're very

well behaved I think on just in general

the average Burmese monk is mild

mannered he might not follow winia very
strictly but you know he's not a bad
person I mean probably the same goes for
Catholic priests but there's less
rampant you know like like I said the
the stories of homosexuality actually
being practiced in Burma I just heard
one rumor from from a very unreliable
source that like heterosexual messing
around I heard more about that but still
I don't think it would would compare
with like
Thailand the burmes are just a very
stoic athetic kind of a people anyway
they're not as sensuous passionate kind
of people like the ties are definitely
to a greater

degree so yeah I did witness War hear about other monks engaging in immoral activities so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from s papala I'll just making sure it's like this compulsive thing where I every once in a while just to make sure I I'll see that see that it's really recording and somebody actually asked me about this so I'm going to have to go into greater detail when I get to that question but anyway some papapa says what are some of the interesting differences of Burmese people and American people well what really struck me is one of the similarities between Burmese people and

American people so before I get to the differences which is going to be harder for me to to think of that the most interesting similarity between Burmese people and American people is as follows when I went to Burma and I'm you know I'm in a foreign culture very foreign to America you see people just acting differently they've got very different values and suppositions you know they've got different premises that they considered to be self-evident that kind of a thing and they were obviously very culturally conditioned I could see how culturally conditioned they were but they were oblivious to this I mean if you tried to explain to a Burmese person

that they're culturally conditioned they
wouldn't know what you're talking about
probably so I lived in that that world
for many years came back to America and
after living in Burma for so long when I
came back to America it was like almost
the same thing Americans they have all
these assumptions that are just progam
red into them through their culture they
are so culturally conditioned and if if
I would even hint at this like at a dhal
people would start getting
offended that every single American at
that dhal resembled every other American
at that domal more than they resembled
any of the Burmese Buddhists that I was

interacting with at some other damaal in
Burma but they want to be individuals
they want to think that they're acting
just based on their own judgment and so
forth they don't realize how profoundly
culturally conditioned they are so
that's the interesting non
difference the cultural conditioning is
different but both sides the Americans
and the Burmese are just oblivious to
just How Deeply culturally conditioned
they
are but with regard to the interesting
differences of Burmese people and
American people well the Burmese are uh
devoutly Buddhist I mean I mean they're
dogmatically Buddhist they assume that

everything in the texts has to be true
in fact everything in the commentaries
has to be true maybe even everything in
the sub commentaries has to be
true so the Burmese are very dogmatic
and from a religious point of view
especially out in the Villages that
haven't been modernized
much they have like a worldview similar
to like a medieval European Catholic you
know they just have pretty much of a
medieval outlook on life and they have
no doubt at all about ghosts and witches
and magic and demonic possession and
this kind of a thing and you know they
just assume that when science says one

thing and the ancient sutas say
something else they followed the sutas
you know they still belong to the kind
of culture where the older a book is the
more reliable it is unlike in the west
where the newer a book is the more
reliable it is if people even read books
anymore
so yeah I mean Americans they're just
programmed into scientific realism and
you know they just accept parts of
Buddhism that are not inconvenient and
that they can fit into the scientific
worldview and um so that's that's one of
the main differences whereas the Burmese
just they're kind of the opposite you
know they start off with the Buddhist

worldview and then they try to fit

science into

that so there is that

um interesting differences well the

burmes are they're spiritual

materialists whereas in the west we're

more material

materialists you know the Burmese think

that you know just Merit is a kind of

metaphysical money and that's one of the

reasons why Burma is a poor country

certainly not the only reason probably

not the most important reason why Burma

is a poor country but one of the reasons

why Burma is a poor country is that

people are more interested in building

pagodas than in building schools or
Bridges or that kind of a
thing and it's just their their capacity
to
endure unpleasant circumstances is just
phenomenal I mean it's just beyond me
even when I was a monk and I'm
practicing equinity and so forth at
least trying to cultivate equinity this
some of the stuff the Burmese can accept
without I mean it doesn't bug them at
all a dog barking outside their window
all night long you know they'll just
like put the pillow over the head if
they even use a pillow instead of just
like a block of wicker like a wicker
square or something the cube some people

will use those as as a kind of
pillow you know it just doesn't occur to
them go out and Chase the dog away tell
the dog to shut up maybe throw a rock at
it or just blasting cheesy pop music
over loudspeakers it's like I would lie
there in my cave just fantasizing about
just marching into that Village with a
baseball bat and just beating up their
PA
system you know being careful not to
actually you know smash any skulls or
anything but still I'd beat the hell out
of that PA system whereas the Burmese
they like
it but I don't want to just keep going

on and on so I'm just going to move on
to Sam papal Papa's next question
here I wonder if he goes by Sam for
short anyways his second question is do
you think the Buddhist idea of craving
intention and Karma is something like a
Missing Link in Understanding Psychology
or sentient life better I think it's
probably already had the most influence
on the whole world's understanding of
sentient beings psychology being that it
seems that the Buddha was the first
psychologist we've ever had well I mean
he may be the first famous psychologist
that we're aware of but I think any kind
of meditation master and there were
meditation Masters before the time of

the Buddha I'm sure that I mean they
would know their own mind fairly well
and so they would know the minds of
other people fairly well too even
setting aside the ability to read minds
which some very Advanced people can
apparently
do so I mean that wouldn't be so much a
matter of like Buddhist doctrines of
craving and intention in karma it would
just be more like just being very
mindful of your own mental States and
maybe having a certain amount of
telepathy or empathy where you're able
to know what other people are thinking
and you'd be observing their mind The

Way You observe your own and and you'd be observing them operating at a cruder level than you're operating and so you'd get all these insights as to The Human Condition so but with regard to U Buddhist doctrines of craving and Karma is that something like a Missing Link in Understanding Psychology better well um I'm not I don't know about psychology nowadays although back in the late 70s early 80s there started being a new kind of more scientific psychology called cognitive science and it kind of got shot in the head because um Academia became more leftist and cognitive science was discovering unpleasant truths about how like for example males

and females have sexual dimorphism with regard to their mental States as well as their bodies this kind of stuff is just taboo now and so I think cognitive science has been sort of suppressed to some degree but one of the one of the things about cognitive science is that you know fear is is like in almost any human interaction there's like a subliminal layer of fear there's always this craving of just be alive stay alive you know it's just this subliminal background noise that we don't even notice really like a fish doesn't notice that it's wet where it's just like you know survival and just constant unease

constant discomfort like this mild

agitation and unease is always with us

and I mean they're trying to demonstrate

this scientifically you know this is one

of the the things that they were

learning about back in the like the 80s

back before cognitive science went out

of f

among

leftists um so with regard to Karma

though I mean the metaphysical actions

of karma that's beyond

science so I mean that'd be Beyond

mainstream

psychology um but then again I'm not

even sure if that's what he's asking

here so do I think the Buddhist idea of

craving intention in karma is something like a Missing Link in Understanding Psychology and sentient life better well it certainly can be yeah I mean Karma especially um especially if you if you kind of set aside the whole idea of karma as this the way most people think of karma you know some metaphysical force that acts upon us from above you know it's like I was a Roman soldier 2,000 years ago and I killed some barbarians and so oh now I'm going to get knifed in a back alley in Detroit or something as a result of that I mean that's that's kind of the way a lot of people think of karma but if you think

of karma more along the lines of
schopenhauer's will then I think it can
really open up uh one's understanding of
how the world works and how the human
mind works and so
forth um let's see I think it's probably
already had the most influence on the
whole world's understanding of sentient
being psychology being that it seems
that the Buddha was the first
psychologist we've ever had well I'm not
so sure about that I'm not so sure how
much Buddhist
Doctrine or Buddhist philosophy has
influenced the West which is where most
like organized psychology has
arisen um I think wherever you're going

to have meditators like in Christianity
throughout the Middle Ages you had like
contemplative sects where you have monks
and nuns sitting in cells observing
their own mind that kind of a thing so a
lot of it would just probably come from
the Christian contemplative Traditions
um
and just you're G to have like brilliant
perceptive people that are going to pick
up on stuff anyway like dovi I mean he
probably knew very little about Buddhism
but he knew the human mind better than
most psychologists do I'm pretty sure
and a lot of that he learned from being
in a uh like a a prison camp in Siberia

because he started off as a kind of

leftist and uh so he was he was almost

going to be executed and then they

commuted a sentence to like X number of

years in a prison colony in Siberia

where he was surrounded by hardened

criminals and he was just a very keen

Observer of of the human race his his

fellow humans and you just pick up a lot

of stuff just from observing other

people if you're got a really perceptive

eye in that

regard

so yeah I'm not so sure how well

Buddhist ideas

have helped like the Western

psychological Community to understand

the human mind better although to the
individual Buddhist it can help a lot
but I I really don't know
exactly how to answer this question
correctly so I think I'm just going to
move on to Sam papal Papa's second or
third question here it's the third one
sometimes I have difficulty counting
higher than
two so s papal Papa or Sam says is there
a country that is recorded to have a
more Elite group of practitioners than
others well I think uh if you're Burmese
then that country would be considered
Burma if you're Thai that country you be
considered Thailand and if if you're in

Nepal or Northern India you would
consider that country to be Nepal or
India I think um a lot of like wisdom
cultures like or Buddhist or like
Eastern Traditions will always consider
their own country to be the most
advanced with regard to understanding
the Dharma or or
whatever but uh I don't know how they
would uh how you'd verify this I mean
you could have opinions recorded that
this country or that country has more
Elite
practitioners but I don't know how you'd
actually prove that you know it's like
the the ascended masters of the
Himalayas you know there's all these

people trying to go and find the

ascended masters of the Himalayas are

communicating through psychic means like

Madame basy or something but

um yeah I I don't know I mean throughout

the world you're going to have spiritual

Geniuses they might be born in 16th

century Spain they might be born in

Ancient India they might be born in

modern Burma whever modern America

you're going to have spiritual Geniuses

just arising

just through statistics if nothing else

just the I mean the odds it's going to

happen you know eventually it just

happens

so I don't know maybe the more
spiritually oriented cultures are going
to have more of these like spiritual
super
Geniuses but and it's going to change
over time you know it's like China went
through like late ancient early Medieval
Times you know they just had this
flourishing spiritual golden age of at
least if you can if you can believe the
Zen Zen Coan collections you know the
Zen material that you had all these
enlightened Masters just I mean just
swarming with them practically in like
late especially like early medieval
China but I kind of doubt China's like
that

anymore so let's just read the question

again shall we is there a country that

is recorded to have more Elite group of

practitioners than

others maybe

India I don't know yeah I don't I don't

think there'd be any way of verifying

this so it would all be just guesses and

and matters of opinion and different

people would have different criteria for

what would constitute an elite group of

practitioners so yeah even 16th century

Spain had some real Heavy Hitters

walking around

but uh yeah it might be any country that

has the most devout and advanced

spiritual tradition so terraa Buddhism

like Burma I I assume has some some

spiritual Heavy Hitters out

there I'm just going to move on to the

next question though this is from game

fap nobody's asked this question before

have you seen Rambo 4 which is set in

Burma I remember to many people this

movie was the first time they ever heard

of Burma or the long-going conflict

there yeah according to the beginning of

the movie The like the caption or the

the screen

verbiage said that it's the longest

going Civil War in existence right now

just the war especially between the Kens

and the and the

Burmese in in Ken State mostly U but

yeah I did see Rambo for in fact I can't

remember if I saw it in Burma or not but

the thing was I knew a monk that had

Rambo 4 when in in Burma he was a

Burmese monk living in Burma and it was

if I remember correctly 20 years in

prison if you were found in possession

of that movie Rambo 4 where Rambo almost

singlehandedly defeats the entire

Burmese

Army and one thing I learned from

watching that movie is that burmes

soldiers when you shoot them they pop

like a ripe tomato

but there was another movie where it was

it was a similar severe punishment if
you caught in possession of the of the
the DVD or whatever it was and it was uh
a picture of the at the time the
dictator's daughter I think it was
Stan's daughter getting married and she
was just encrusted with diamonds you
know she's the dictator's daughter
probably not very pretty and just
encrusted with diamonds and then it
would keep going from that
to scenes of what was going on a couple
blocks away from the from the wedding
where people are just living in dirt and
squalor so it's like encrusted with
diamonds dirt and squalor encrusted with
diamonds dirt and squalor and so it was

like 15 or 20 years in prison for anyone found in possession of that too which is stand I mean censorship really is it's like a a method used by Scoundrels you know it's like we don't want you to know the truth and so we're going to conceal that truth and punish anybody who even finds out about that truth and it's it's becoming more prevalent in the west as many of you no doubt have noticed so yeah I did see Rambo form I mean it was It was kind of idealized I like how they had real Burmese advisors to to make it more realistic and so you know I had like there's one scene

especially that I'm thinking man that's
that's brilliant that's just like Burma
where have like this little Burmese
soldier in the the big floppy hat and
he's kind of like swinging his legs out
when he walks kind of like this and a
lot of burmes people do actually walk
that way I've been told it's partly
because burmes mothers especially if
they live in the village they'll hold
their baby on their hip which causes the
baby's legs to kind of kind of like
spread out like this so they walk like
ducks when they get
older but yeah I did see the movie I
can't remember if I saw it in Burma or
in in America though so I'm just going

to move on to the next question this is

from

ruie and ruie asks a concomitant

question I don't know what is it is

concomitant to he doesn't specify what

it is concomitant to but he says a

concomitant question would be is samsara

perfect and no samsara is not perfect I

mean that's uh one of the the Hallmark

qualities of samsara is that it is

imperfect it's is

dooka so I guess if you become

enlightened then you look at the dooka

and it becomes perfect dooka you know

perfect misery everything is perfect if

you if you look at some SAR with perfect

eyes then you could say yeah all this

misery and suffering is just perfect

misery and

suffering

but um yeah samsara is is not perfect

that's that's why it's samsara it is

delusion that is generating s S I mean

delusion is like at least in some

versions of dependent core Rising it is

like the original

cause

of all of this saric existence or

phenomena is it arises largely due to

delusion if not entirely due to delusion

and you perfect the delusion and it's

not delusion anymore unless it's just

perfect delusion and everything's

already everything's perfect

so yeah samsara is not

perfectible um at least not from a

Buddhist point of view and that's why

you transcend samsara and become

enlightened and so I'm going to move on

the next question this is from Jeffrey

and Jeffrey says have you heard of new

German medicine I think you would be

unnatural with it and no I've never

heard of it this is the first I've ever

heard of new German medicine I don't

know what new German medicine

is I just assume it's something uh

alternative I don't think it's going to

be big Pharma churning out this new

German medicine but I don't know what it
is so I'm just going to have to move on
to the next question this is from
extremely rare bird an extremely rare
bird says it is said in the DAP faint is
this fragrance of lavender and
Sandalwood but fragrant of The
Virtuous s Sublime amongst the
gods so that's the quote from the DAP
and then he say says I'm sure this is
poetic language but can it also be taken
literally can Dava and gods smell virtue
or perhaps see it by other means it is
said that they communicate
telepathically so I guess it's not too
big a stretch well yeah I think that U
higher beings they would at least feel

there's like a higher vibe in the air

you know there's higher Consciousness in

this area I mean even an ordinary human

like if you're in a dark you know you're

surrounded by like I don't know

criminals or just like I don't know what

to call them you know people at the

bottom of

the the

register and I mean it's you're like in

a crummy trailer park or something not

that I'm trying to make fun of people

that live in crummy trailer

parks but I mean just sort of shady

characters you they don't have to say

anything or do anything really you just

get like this bad vibe off of them
whereas if you're
around Saints let's say you're going to
be more eased there's going to be less
of this subliminal enst in the air that
you're going to pick up on and I'm sure
the gods are sensitive to that sort of
thing probably way more than the average
human so yeah I'm sure they could pick
up on like wiser more virtuous people as
opposed to less wise less virtuous
people um just sort of feel it in the
air I would guess or also they can read
mind supposedly and so you know there's
there's various ways but trying to guess
exactly how small G Gods perceive humans
is is kind of silly sort of like trying

to like a dog trying to guess how humans
perceive dogs they just can't do it or
just maybe at a very crude level but
they're not going to do it much
justice so I guess I'll just move on to
extremely rare Bird's next question
after looking to see how long I've been
yammering
here okay so extremely rare bird says
I've been reading a scent of Mount
Carmel well congratulations and I'm
trying to understand the carmelites in
St John of the cross's understanding of
God the carmelites as I understand it
seek to stop manufacturing beliefs about
God because he cannot be grasped by

thought they dismiss and mistrust all of
their senses yet they still seem to
assert God to be an external agency with
a will and that the Bible is truth the
knowledge of which they do gain
throughout through the same senses this
is a contradiction or is it what do you
make of this well one thing you have to
bear in mind is that somebody like St
John of the Cross was in fact living in
16th century Spain when the Spanish
inquis position was at its
peak and I mean you can't just say you
know well parts of the Bible aren't true
or parts of the Bible are mistaken
because you're going to have the
Inquisition down your down your neck and

St John of the Cross was um he was a discalced carite he was part of a reform movement that was bitterly resented by the unreformed carmelites and so I mean he had a Target on his back already you'd have like the papal noon show or some some High um like authority figure in the Catholic church sometimes they'd be on the side of the reformed movement sometimes be on the side of the unreformed carmelites and if he was on the side of the unreformed carites I mean you have an even bigger Target on your back in fact St John of the Cross was imprisoned and just fed like um it was like bread and water and

taken out and whipped periodically until
finally he was able to escape but
there's a good chance he would have died
if he hadn't escaped just from
malnutrition or freezing to death or
something and so I mean if you're born
into a a religion there's just a certain
amount
of Dogma that you just have to be
willing to accept I mean you don't have
much choice and so St John of the Cross
who I think may have been fully
enlightened and he was he would
definitely have made a very good
Buddhist he would have been much happier
in India I think but still um I mean he
was getting into trouble and he was

getting into into Big Trouble in fact he

was seriously considering just

immigrating to Mexico and becoming a

missionary before right before he died

just because there was so much heat and

just so much political [__] against

him and

everything

so yeah I

mean I think religion for a lot of

people is just sort of a necessary

mental illness to some degree ree anyway

where you just have to accept you just

have to like accept paradoxes like

confusing contradictory stuff I mean you

just have to accept it you it's just

that's just the way it is somehow I
don't get it it's fine that's just the
way it is
anyway so I mean mainly with regard to
meditation or contemplation St John of
the Cross was very wise in telling his
the meditators under his guidance
doesn't matter what it is arises Just
Let It Go just do not follow it you know
even if it's like Jesus Christ himself
standing in front of you the devil can
can imitate or impersonate an angel of
Light just I mean if if Jesus really
wants you to know something you're going
to know it so just don't be like
interrupting your contemplation by like
getting you know distracted by this

stuff whatever arises just let it go and he he says that uh I mean you can't know the god through any kind of mental process at least yeah I I guess that'd be a correct thing to say that you cannot know God through your imagination through your intellect through your feelings through any kind of perception or feeling so you just have to dismiss all of that and then all that's left is just this radiant emptiness that you you don't really perceive but it's he calls it dark faith and that's it's like the presence of God that you you can be aware of somehow after you have dismissed all the intellect and the

feelings and the and the perceptions and
all that kind of stuff that cannot know
God the only way to know God is just
directly so let's see how far did I
digress from the question that is my
question to myself at this
point see they still seem to assert God
to be an external agency they had no
choice I mean you deny that you get
burned at the stake with a will and that
the Bible is truth yeah I mean to some
degree you have to accept this basic
tenant of of of Christianity you know
that God I mean you can never merge with
God really that the highest you can
achieve from a Buddhist or a Christian
point of view is the beatific Vision

where after you die you can be in the presence of God but God is still considered to be like a separate entity maybe sitting on a throne surrounded by Angels but at the same time St John on the cross would be saying that you know this world is just based on God I mean the spirit of God pervades everything so in a way he's kind of like the bearded man and because that's you know the Old Testament especially uh gives a lot of you know statements along those lines but still I mean you progress but still so you can't completely let go of this older stuff because as I say it's fundamental Dogma it's right there in

the scriptures and if you try to dismiss
that you get burned at stake after being
severely
tortured so I mean he wouldn't even be
really a Christian anymore if he
dismissed some of the basic fundamental
beliefs about God that are mainstream or
traditional in
Christianity so yeah I mean he was
really pushing it cuz he was saying
there's like the stage of the perfected
and I mean that which would would seem
to be analogous to to the Buddhist
arahant but I mean I was surprised at
even reading that because according to
Christianity you know even nobody is
worthy you only get into heaven through

the grace of God because nobody's perfect and here's St John of the Cross saying not only um is there a stage of perfection but like his mentor St Teresa of Aila was per perfect and but then again he thought that like King David was perfect which uh I don't know maybe he became perfect after B Sheba gate or something so I guess I answer that question so I'm just going to move on to extremely rare birds next question which is what do you think of the following quotes by Yung is it cynical dramatic or true and then in 1938 in reac ction to Hitler and the murmurings of World War II he described Nations as big blind

worms and then quote following what fate perhaps a nation has no honor it has no word to keep not everybody has virtues but everybody has the low animal instincts the basic primitive caveman suggestibility the suspicious and vicious traits of the Savage the result is that when you get a nation of many millions of people it is not even human it is a lizard or a crocodile or a wolf that's what a nation is a monster everybody ought to fear a nation it is a horrible thing how can such a thing have honor or a word that's why I am for small Nations small Nations mean small catastrophes big Nations mean big catastrophes unquote so I think to some

degree Yung was kind of depressed by the
political situation in 1938 like this
reminds me of um bertron Russell's
history of Western philosophy which he
wrote during World War II and it's
pretty cynical and dark I mean he was in
a bad mood when he wrote it and I think
Yung may have been kind of a bad mood
when he writes some of this stuff
because he does write some kind of dark
cynical
stuff um but then
again I'm not entirely sure that a
nation is only like the the lowest
common denominator of the humans that
comp posos it this I mean that reminds

me of what was it the madness of not The
Madness of crowds something the crowd
it's laan Gustav Lebon who wrote
this it's one of the first psychological
Works about just like Mass
hysteria and I mean he kind of agrees
with young here that you know when when
you've got like a a mob of people it all
just kind of goes down to like animal
level and they can just believe anything
and just do all kinds of stupid
ridiculous hysterical stuff that they
wouldn't do in their calmer moments when
they were alone but on the other hand I
do have this idea that a nation can be a
kind of higher form of life that you
know the people in a nation are kind of

like the cells in an organism and
they're oblivious to any kind of higher
functioning going on you know it's like
some muscle cell in your arm is
completely oblivious to the fact that
it's part of this whole human
and it may be at some weird level that
we can't really be aware of that
populations have a kind of higher
Consciousness that I mean it might be
still kind of
stupid but but still it might be in a
way like more advanced more
multi-dimensional than us and that we
can't even begin to understand it but
that's neither here nor there and I do

have to admit that mass hysteria does

kind of

like contradict that idea because I mean

yeah Mass hysteria is pretty stupid I

have to admit and it's like political

parties are relying on mass hysteria to

get people to vote in the way they want

them to

vote especially more like the globalist

types now but it's not entirely

restricted to

them so not everybody has virtues yeah I

I think pretty much everybody would have

to have at least some virtues you know

Hitler loved his

dog of course shot him at the

end

but

still let's see I'm I'm going to the

emergency backup beverage

now so let's see what is the exact

question here let's see is it cynical

dramatic or true I'd say It's a

combination of all three but I do think

that to some degree his perception of

the situation

was definitely conditioned and

influenced by just looming World

War

so um he likees small Nations better

than big

Nations

well I don't know yeah I guess I don't

really understand his point of view well
enough to really really critique it very
well but I did say something and that's
something isn't
it so you get a nation of many millions
of people it is not even human it is a
lizard or a crocodile or a wolf yeah
that's definitely an exaggeration
because a large Nation it is able to
accomplish really complicated
things so it's it's definitely Beyond a
lizard or a crocodile wolf and in that
respect it's beyond an ordinary human
because a nation can do things that a
human a single ordinary human absolutely
cannot do one person cannot have cannot
create like

spacecraft so I'm going to move on to

the next question this is from drunk Dr

and drunk Dr says can you provide us a

Buddhist perspective on crypto or

Bitcoin and I don't think there is a

Buddhist perspective on crypto or

Bitcoin I don't have any kind of uh

cryptocurrency right now just because I

don't know they just never got around to

it or

whatever um when I first started hearing

about Bitcoin it was pretty I don't know

it just seemed pretty shaky on mainly

because it's not based on anything I

mean regular money isn't really based on

anything anymore it used to be based on

gold like in America supposedly Fort
Knox had the Federal Reserve all these
this bricks of gold and you know your
money was represented by this gold and I
don't think that's true anymore so I
mean like something like crypto or
Bitcoin you know it's sort of like the
currency of gingas Khan I think it was
where he just made money that was wasn't
based on any precious metals and that
what really supported the value of that
money that it was like paper tokens or
something was if you didn't not accept
it you'd have your head chopped
off maybe both hands first then your
head
but crypto yeah it's it's I'm not

exactly sure where the value of it comes

from but a Buddhist perspective I mean

obviously there is no

traditional

like I mean the sutas aren't going to

say anything about

crypto even the the medieval subub

commentaries aren't going to say

anything about crypto so I mean it's

just a matter of mental States really

I mean if you're kind of gambling then I

mean gambling is not is is kind of

frowned upon by traditional Buddhism and

I'm going to get to that a little later

probably pretty soon because we're going

through this list pretty

well so a Buddhist perspective on crypto
or Bitcoin I mean just I mean so long as
your mental states are wholesome
whatever you do is wholesome as long as
your mental states are UNH wholesome
whatever you do is UNH wholesome and
that includes handling
cryptocurrency and that's about as
Buddhist of a perspective as I can come
up with because obviously crypto and
Bitcoin are not mentioned I mean even
real money isn't mentioned all that much
in the ancient text I mean at the time
of the Buddha money was still an
innovation in India it was sort of a
recent import from like Babylonia or
something so I guess I'll just move on

the next question this is from Outer Haven and outer Haven says seeing what's currently going on in Bangladesh the Burmese are well within their right to suppress the spread of Islam the Bengals or the bengalis have lost their indigenous culture and values due to this Arabian invention do you have any recommendations for the Burmese so that they do not become the next victims

well I think the best thing that the burmes could do if they do not want Islam to be imported into their country to such an extent that it reaches like a critical mass where they become

aggressive and intolerant which is the
main concern of the
Burmese um I mean the government the
Burmese Army has already driven out most
of the ringas and the rohingyas don't
even want to come back so that problem
is pretty much solved
except if Burma liberalizes again like
they did in 20 2011 and you have this
flood of NGS and and just Western
capitalists and just Western people in
general flooding into the country and
these NOS especially are just pressuring
and pressuring and pressuring and
pressuring the Burmese government to let
let the ringas come back in to to like
resettle the ringas and just be open

with regard to immigration you know like
globalists in general want everybody to
do as a general rule so so I think so
long as the
military dictatorship remains in power
and the globalist avoid Burma like the
plague like they did for a long time
before 2011 I don't think there's much
danger of Islam like Muslims living in
in Burma just reproducing to produce
this critical
mass so I don't think that Burma's in
any real danger right now there's still
quite a few Muslims living in Burma I
think Islam is probably like the second
second or or third most populous country

or religion in Burma but still it's you know it's probably the percentage is in single single digits but uh the British during British times imported a lot of Muslims including the
ringas just for various reasons just settling them in newly cleared farmland and so forth that's what the roh ringas were doing
and the Burmese just never really saw them as real Burmese citizens because they were just imposed upon them by you know the colonialists you know the the the the English oppressor so to speak so yeah I think if Burma does not want to be taken over by Islam probably their best bet is to stay with the

military dictatorship and keep globalist
liberalism as out of the country is
possible but I mean it's it's a
two-sided two-bladed sword you know it's
like the military dictatorship is I mean
they're they're brutal and incompetent
you know they're not good people a lot
of
them so I
mean Verma just has to stay isolated and
poor and oppressed and but that's really
does have you know it's a mixed blessing
it has its advantages just about
anything has advantages and
disadvantages you know any any new
Improvement is going to bring with it

new

problems

so I think it's sort of the Burmese

under the military dictatorship it's

pretty much the way Burma has been for

centuries many centuries over a thousand

years because before before the military

dictatorship you know they've had a few

interludes of incompetent democracy and

then before that they had the British

Raj who ruled I mean Burma was probably

best governed by the British

colonialists you might think colonialism

is evil and all that even so Burma

reached its Zenith of prosperity under

the British and then before that I mean

you had dictatorial Kings you had

despots and so I think the Burmese mind
and culture and so forth they're just
kind
of it's like they're acclimated to
having like brutal oppressive leaders
and that's that's the way a lot of the
world was before people like the British
came
along one of the reasons at least one of
the propaganda reasons why the British
conquered Northern Burma they already
had taken over Southern Burma like upper
Burma was still an independent Kingdom
with a flood of economic migrants
leaving the upper Kingdom into colonized
lower lower Burma that um the the

fortune teller of the king or one of his fortune tellers told him this this area is running out of JuJu we're going to have to move the capital again because they they did that a lot fortune tellers would say you know the whatever whatever forces in the government have used up all the juju here so we're going to have to move the capital somewhere else the king uh realized that was a bad idea he couldn't they just couldn't afford it so as a compromise they decided to just bury like it was like 400 people alive around the outside circumference of like the Royal compound you know like the the seat of government and um for some reason when people found out about it

they just started fleeing Mandalay that
was the the capital city just obviously
they considered themselves Unworthy of
such an honor and so the the British
kind of had that in the the newspapers
back in England justifying their taking
over upper Burma and so having a brutal
dictatorship in Burma I mean that's what
the burmes have they've had it since
since there was Burma pretty much so I
guess you know they can handle it better
than we
can just being oppressed not so much as
I mean they're not so much citizens as
just
subjects but the Burmese can just accept

bad situations to a degree that is just appears super human to us westerners and there's still
as a general rule so long as they're not in a in a village that's just being overrun by the soldier that's just shooting people in the streets and so forth my experience is in Burma the average burus Villager has less unhappiness in his life than the average American and it's very easy to explain it's the Four Noble Truth second Noble Truth suffering is caused by desire the Burmese just have just a phenomenal lack of Desire
as a general rule whereas in the west we're encouraged to have desire desire

is good you got to have

ambition you got to want that new car to

fuel the economy and all that in Burma

it's just not that way and so they just

kind of make peace with whatever

situation they are in and just live a

dharmic life as well as as well as they

can

so let's see I guess I answered that

question the answer to the question was

maybe 5% of what I was actually saying

but the answer is in there you're going

to have to tease it out and I'm moving

on to the next question which is from

Romeo and Romeo said in Q&A number 105

you speculated on what you thought the

Buddha would think of Jesus I was wondering if you could address the reverse are you aware of Jesus giving any opinions on the Buddha or on Buddhism how about Christianity in general are you aware of any official statements from previous popes or other Christian theologians on the Buddha or Buddhism well I mean the new Rainbow Pope has gone and visited Buddhist countries and participated in Buddhist ceremonies and so forth but he's not really a typical sort of Pope maybe I should just back up here to uh wondering if I could address the reverse am I aware of Jesus giving any opinions on the Buddha or on Buddhism no I I don't

think probably Jesus never ever heard of
the Buddha or
Buddhism I that would be my guess that I
mean there may have been some influence
on Jesus from Buddhism let's say that
the Buddha was or like Jesus was a
disciple of John the Baptist who may
have been an essene the essin may have
gotten some of their ideas from
Buddhism but whether Jesus was even
aware of the existence of the Buddha or
of Indian
Buddhism I have no idea there's no
mention of it in the Bible obvious
viously and any information about what
Jesus believed or his opinions that's

found outside of the Bible is even more suspect than what you're going to find in the New Testament itself and the according to the according to the Vatican no more than about 20% of the words attributed to Jesus in the New Testament are likely to be authentic so with regard to the opinions of Jesus with regard to Buddhism or Buddha himself it's really hard to say because we don't really know who Jesus was very well I mean who what was the real Jesus like was he so Jewish that he thought anyone who isn't Jewish is just like

damned I mean some people some Jewish people believe that I mean you know God

was on their side they're God's chosen
people on the other hand maybe he was in
his wisdom he would re recognized that
the Buddha was also extremely wise and
that Buddhism was teaching morality and
and you know like higher Consciousness
and so forth even though it's
technically an atheistic
system so I mean I don't know the
personality of Jesus well enough to know
whether he would approve of the Buddha
or disapprove of the Buddha if he
approved of the Buddha it would be just
through wisdom you know he the Buddha
was wise and good and so Jesus approved
of that if he disapproved of the Buddha

it probably just because you know he was
a heathen you know he wasn't a Jew he
didn't believe in God that kind of thing
and I really don't know enough about
Jesus the New Testament is really not
100% reliable with regard to the
attitudes of Jesus of Nazareth and so
that's just another one of those
questions that I don't think anybody can
really know unless maybe they're
omniscient
I mean you can just make your best guess
I would like to Guess that Jesus would
have approved of the Buddha but I don't
know so of Christianity in general with
regard to Buddha and Buddhism I mean you
got the whole Spectrum I do think that

it's the official position of the Vatican not starting even with the the rainbow Pope that in modern times the Vatican has accepted that other people can go to heaven also through following their own religious systems so Christianity at least the Roman Catholicism is no longer like chauvinistic to the point of you have to be a member of the Catholic church or you're going to burn in hell but then again some Protestant Christians are still of the opinion that if you don't believe in Jesus you're going to burn in hell and I've I've like seing comments on like in Breitbart you know Breitbart

comment SE C which is kind of
interesting actually you know you get a
good crosssection of the mind of like
right- Wingers or or conservatives
people who vote
Republican and there are some people
that are just hysterical like um when
they you know they see that I'm a
Buddhist you know they're they're just
saying that you're going to go to hell
it's like when you're when you're
reciting these mantras the mantras are
just the names of demons that you're
calling and you you twist your body into
weird contortions in order to allow the
demons to come in more easily and it's
just something that some ignorant

preacher told them at some sermon maybe
maybe they saw it on on a YouTube video
or something and they're just repeating
it without understanding Buddhism or
even knowing that Buddhism isn't the
same as yoga where you're adopting the
weird postures and all that so I mean
you're going to get the full spectrum
with regard to Christianity in general
and it would largely depend on different
schools of Christianity
so yeah a lot of like the the
fundamentalist like the Evangelical
Protestant sects would probably say if
you don't belong to their sect you're
going to burn in hell and even even

Catholics are going to burn in

hell

so so am I aware of any official

statements from previous popes or other

Christian theologians on the Buddha or

Buddhism not

specifically um I'm sure previous popes

were like you know approving of Jesuits

going to Japan to convert the the

heathens there you know so I mean back

in the old days you know popes were

still trying to get the whole world to

convert to Catholicism I think or at

least you know the Western world but you

know they're still sending missionaries

everywhere trying to save the

Heathen but uh yeah I I cannot recall

coming across any High profile Christian

Pope or

otherwise uh giving his opinion of

Buddhism I'm I've probably come across

it but again with regard to the Jesus's

Jesus's opinion of the

Buddha that's anybody's guess because I

don't I don't know the personality of

Jesus well enough to know that whether

he would be like

uh open-minded enough to accept a

non-jew teacher as as WI and worthy of

approval and praise or not and with

regard to Christianity like I said it's

is going to be the full spectrum there's

going to be some Christians that think

Buddhism is fine there's going to be other Christians who insist that anyone who doesn't belong to their particular School of Christianity is damned to Hellfire so I'm just going to move on the next question here this is from Twin Wasabi and this one is kind of a similar kind of question P basa any thoughts on the latterday Saints in the Book of Mormon can they be described as Christian even if there are severe differences well and I think they're pretty obviously Christian since Jesus is still number one in their book um my thoughts on the Book of Mormon though I actually did read the book of Mormon in a cave in Burma and uh

I mean I don't think it's any
exaggeration to say it's difficult to
find a single true sentence in the
entire Book of Mormon because the entire
narrative is based on this idea that
there was a wise Jewish person living in
Jerusalem and God ordered him to leave
Jerusalem before the what was it the
Babylonians sacked
Jerusalem and he was constructed to
build I think it was two arcs and they
put some animals in in their families
and then they they cross the ocean and
it doesn't say exactly where they landed
but you can tell that probably they land
landed like in Central America and then

from from there the these people these settlers they they got divided up into two main tribes I remember the bad guys were the lamanites the lamanites were cursed by God and turned brown and ugly because they didn't believe in Jesus 600 years before Jesus was ever
born and then they became the American Indians and it's strange that the Book of Mormon was originally the Mormons were trying to convert the Indians well at the same time their their book is saying that the Indians are cursed Jews they were punished for not believing in Jesus 600 years before Jesus was ever born and it's just if you read the book of Mormon it's like all the wars they

they're fought in two ways apparently because Joseph Smith was no military strategist at all so all the wars are they're like if a city is besieged there's like a they're going to try and Capt a city they got two different methods one is right out of the Book of Joshua where you got one the main Army fights against up up against the city walls and then pretends to retreat and then when the Army follows after them they conveniently leave the city Gates wide open and then these other these other soldiers that were lying in Ambush nearby just rush in and take it over or the other method is just to give free

booze to the to the the guards of the city until they get drunk and P pass out and then you just climb over the walls and take over the city that's the only two methods that were used over and over again and it's just it's just amazing to me it's like

Mormons in a way they're kind of like dead heads you know like the people that used to go to like the uh Grateful Dead concerts it's like the music isn't all that great I mean the Grateful Dead were not really outstanding rock and rollers and is just sort of the atmosphere the feeling of belonging of being in these like Festival kind of crowds and the Mormons I mean you got some really

intelligent Mormons you really brilliant
intelligent Mormons University educated
and everything and they still believe
this Book of Mormon that it's just based
on this obviously
false narrative from start to
finish like Jesus after he died but
before he ascended into heaven he
teleported across the Atlantic Ocean
into North America and just started like
laying waste killing tens of thousands
of people wiping out entire cities of
lamanites or people that didn't believe
in him you know in North
America and just because they were bad
people but it's it's weird that Jesus is

flying through the air and just killing tens of thousands of people before ascending up into heaven it's just it's just so weird and it's just it's just a little bit more evidence to me and I keep bumping the table little little more evidence to me that people can believe anything and that religion again like I I mentioned before can be a kind of not entirely pernicious mental illness at least it gets people on the same page you know it unifies their world view it might be kind of a silly world view in certain ways but at least they all believe in it and it strengthens their community and I think that's one of the

main reasons of of religion at least for
mainstream Normy types
so Mormonism I have met some Mormons and
they seem to be relatively moral people
but their Christianity has sort of
reverted back more in an Old Testament
Direction sort of like the Jehovah's
Witnesses it seems to me that the
Christianity of the Jehovah's Witnesses
also is kind of a few steps backward
back in the direction of the Old
Testament so but yeah I do think that
they're definitely Christians I mean
Jesus of Nazareth Jesus of Nazareth is
still their number one
guy but now the Book of Mormon is pretty

amazing I think Joseph Smith was a bit

on the hysterical side and that he

composed The Book of Mormon in a state

of

dissociation so it's a channeled

document as is the Quran for that matter

hope I haven't just offended like

Islamic fundamentalists by saying that

the Quran was

channeled and that probably Muhammad was

he was experiencing hysterical

dissociation like Joseph

Smith so I guess I'll just move on the

next question

here this is from

pyramid and pyramid says Hey poob basa

why do you have to keep making sure if

you're recording or not is your camera set up really that archaic why not just use a webcam and OBS well I am using a webcam and OBS it's just that before I started using OBS I was using like the built-in default video recorder on Apple on an Apple computer which was photo booth it was called photo booth and photo booth started glitching on me so that it would look like I was recording you know I hit the record button and everything the the light would light up and everything I'd get to the end of like a 2hour long Q&A and it wouldn't the whole thing wouldn't be recorded and then I'd have to do the whole Q&A over

again in fact one time I had to do it
three times in order in order for it to
work and that's that was that was enough
and so I got I downloaded OBS but still
it's like this I mean I wouldn't call it
PTSD but still there's like this
experience in the past causing me to be
very wary and just make absolutely sure
that I really am recording because
before I was using OBS it happened like
at least three or four times where I
think I'm recording and then I had to do
the whole thing over
again
so I don't really have to keep making
sure that I'm recording but it's just
like I it's like I got stung enough

times in the past that I'm just making sure and so I'm going to move on the next question this is from power and power says have you heard of North Sentinel Island it's one of the last isolated places on the planet you were not too far away from it when staying in Burma is North Sentinel Island the island where some missionaries went and then they just got disappeared and somebody tried to rescue the missionaries and there's this video footage of these dark colored guys more or less naked with Spears like getting ready to kill whoever lands in the in the skiff and so they decided they

better not bother with it just let the
missionaries stay dead or
something um I if if that is the same
island I've heard of it because of that
event that happened a few years back and
I've probably heard of North Sentinel
Island
before but um yeah I mean it's it's not
really like like an important issue in
my mind so it's just something that I've
heard of before but never really like
never took the initiative to like look
up the Wikipedia article on it or
anything so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from xenoid and
xenoid says how do you create a keep
hitting the table xenoid says how do you

create a meditation

technique well the way you would create

a meditation technique probably you'd

start off following somebody else's

meditation technique and then you would

modify it based on your own experience

that's pretty much

how I would come across a new meditation

technique that worked for

me um but I mean you're not inventing

anything new at this point you know all

you're the best you're doing is

Reinventing the wheel if you in if you

create your own meditation technique

it's it's more than likely that lots of

people have created essentially the same

meditation technique in the past and you
just didn't hear about it and you just
came up with it on your own um
Reinventing the
wheel
so I mean once you know how meditation
works you know what you're trying to do
in meditation like reduce perception
without reducing
Consciousness then you know you can get
insights on what might work you might
accidentally just be in a certain state
of mind that was like really kind of a
bright expanded meditative kind of mind
and then you're like trying to cultivate
that through a meditation technique or
something

so um yeah that's that's one way of
creating a meditation technique is you
just happen to accidentally stumble into
a certain frame of mind that is
something you would like to cultivate
and so then you deliberately try to
cultivate that otherwise it's uh you
know you're just making modifications on
a pre-existing meditation
technique or you just read about
something in a book and you try to Cy
that but it wouldn't really be creating
something if you're just copying
something else but that's generally my
experience on the subject is uh you know
you just get ideas or you experience

something or you're just sort of
tinkering with a pre-existing meditation
technique that you've already been
taught but for some reason you're not
entirely satisfied with it maybe the
results aren't exactly what you like and
so you know you modify it you change
things and and it if you're lucky it
gets better and then you make more
progress with
it so I'll just move on to xenos soid
next question broadly speaking what are
the major differences between the
meditation techniques of each dhic
dharmic religion well I don't think
there really are many major differences
between the meditation techniques of

each dharmic religion mainly like in in
Terra you've got two main kinds of
meditation you've got samata and you
you've got what is vulgarly called weasa
in other words you've got meditation
techniques that emphasize Sade or
concentration and you've got meditation
techniques that emphasize sad or
mindfulness and I think that would
pretty much be the same for
any um dharmic
religions that I mean I know that the
Roman Catholics like the contemplative
orders like the discal carites they had
the same too I mean they had like
what they called meditation which is

just like visualizing or using a kind of Mantra that kind of a thing and then they've got higher contemplation in which I mean you're essentially cultivating at least second Janna you're not thinking anymore you're just wide awake and not thinking anything so I mean that fits just about any kind of religion any kind of religious system because if you're not thinking anything you're not thinking anything heretical that's that's opposed to the religion so either you're cultivating I mean you you could also include another kind of meditation which would just be cultivating like hypnotic trans States although that one might be still somei

it just wouldn't be some somei or right
concentration but it would still be some
kind of concentration doing
that so I mean different different
religious Traditions will have different
kinds of the lower kind of meditation
where sometimes you're visualizing
sometimes you're using a mantra
sometimes you're like you know
emphasizing the breath or you're doing
scanning like the Goa method that kind
of a thing but once you get up into the
higher method I mean there's only so
many ways you can sit there Wide Awake
without thinking
anything so I'm I'm really no expert on

the different meditation techniques of

different religions in fact even terraa

there's lots of different schools with

lots of different kinds of medic

ating and that's that's even within

Burma you know not even including Sri

Lanka and Thailand and so forth Just

within Burma there are different

teachers who have come across different

ways of meditating and they'll be

teaching that to their

disciples

um and a lot of it is is like the the

Third Kind like the cultivating

hypnotic like trans

States but I'm pretty sure that all the

meditation would either fit under samata

or weas either be based on samade or like emphasizing samade or emphasizing sadit concentration or mindfulness but they they merge at the higher levels you know like fourth jna according to the stock description is the Perfection of mindfulness so especially at the lower levels there's all there's just all these different kinds of meditating even within Terra Buddhism but then the higher up you go the more more it all converges to the to the crystal clear Glacier at the peak of the mountain

so that was broadly speaking I hope that was broadly speaking enough because I'm

moving on to xeni void's next
question which is during a session of
meditation on feeling the void which the
meditation teacher referred to as shuna
I had a vision where after pushing
through some feelings of fear I saw some
vaguely tribal looking symbols and faces
move across my vision I wondered what
they were for a moment before they faded
away and were replaced by a large
singular eye which was glowing orange I
felt no ill will from it instead only
feeling that it was a very powerful and
not to be trifled with the kind of
feeling you get when you see a dangerous
animal minding its own business this
scared the [__] out of me so I opened my

eyes and decided to stop meditating for
the next month I saw the outline of the
eye in the center of my vision whenever
I would blink until it finally faded
away completely what do you think I saw
it definitely felt like a distinct
entity but I wonder if it could just
have been completely conjured by my own
mind okay that's kind of interesting
story getting up to the top uh one
little thing I'd point out is that
you're doing a session of meditation on
feeling the void but the stuff that you
explained really wasn't the void so you
you may not have been meditating on the
void very well because it was very

unvoid like the stuff that you were
experiencing and you say here the
meditation teacher referred to it as
shuna and I would just point out that in
Burma the word for zero is T or sun
that's that's the word for zero in in
burmes
arithmetic so anyways
um xenoid had this vision and then at
first he sees vaguely looking tribal
looking symbols and faces moving across
his vision and then he's thinking what
wondering what they were which again
wasn't meditating very well and then
they were replaced by a large singular
eye which was glowing orange and it
seemed kind of dangerous but at least it

wasn't messing with him and uh what do I
think he saw well
I mean first I mean probably there was
some imagination going
on um but even the imagination can just
translate something something else into
something that you can perceive and kind
of get a handal on with your mind like
for example I might as well just digress
I mean there's no point even trying to
keep this one short I might as well just
go for it my father one time he was a a
hardcore alcoholic for for decades he
was sort of like
the kind of alcoholic that's fairly
common in Eastern Europe but not so

common in the west where he was just
fueled on vodka you know he drink a
quart of vodka a day you never really
see him drunk you never really see him
sober he was just kind of fueled on it
anyways he decided that he was going to
stop drinking and Alpha macho guy like
my father was he just decided to go cold
turkey so he's alone in the house
sitting at a table and on the on the
table in front of him he's got two
Escape Routes if he just gets unbearable
he's got a bottle of booze and a loaded
pistol and he just sits there and he
goes through the DTs you know he's just
like tearing at his hair and
hallucinating and just freaking out

because he's going through alcohol
withdrawal after being a hardcore
alcoholic for like 30
years and during this he starts seeing
this big eye on the wall that's just
watching and he knows that the eye
doesn't really care very much about
what's going on I mean it's just sort of
detached it's just like a detached
Observer just watching what's going on
him just freaking out at this
table and deep down he knew that that
eye was symbolic of like his own like
higher self for lack of a better word
you know it's like a deep wiser level of
him like the observing mind that's just

watching not getting emotionally involed
involved it's just there being aware of
what's going on and maybe this orangey
colored eye was a version of that for
xenoid I'm I'm not entirely sure but I
mean first all these Vision things that
you're seeing um it just it's mainly an
indication that you weren't really
meditating on the void very well and
then wondering what they were I mean
that's just completely off the tracks so
if You' stayed in the in the void zone
so to speak then even if these things
started to appear you just let them go
let them go let them go just don't even
worry about it don't think about it
don't wonder what it is don't try to

interpret it in any way it's just nature
tanking its course so to speak you just
let it happen and Let It
Go but with regard to the large eye it
could have been like some deeper level
some deeper aspect of your own
personality that was like symbolized
that would be my first guess largely
based on my father's experience with his
single large eye except he was seeing it
on the
wall I always kind of imagine it as like
the the eye on top of the pyramid on the
back of a $1
bill so yeah I mean what do I think you
saw I would guess that it's it's

something percolating up from the from

from the depth

that to some degree your mind symbolized

in a way that you could at least somehow

be aware of

it but I don't think that there's like

the big orange eye floating around

looking looking through windows and that

kind of thing you know like looking at

various people or anything so yeah my

best guess is that it was something from

like your subconscious mind possibly

like a higher level of your mind that's

manifesting itself in a period of

relative quiet you know when it can sort

of make it through to the surface and

your mind just sort of symbolizes it in

a certain way maybe distorts it to some
degree and that would be my best
guess but I can't be sure and so I'm
going to move on to the next question
which is from nature
cure and nature cure says every time
when I contemplate the present it is
becoming the past in less than a second
it's like chasing my shadow does the
present moment really exist well this
reminds me of Jay Krishna murty when
he's saying whenever you're perceiving
or thinking you're always dealing with
the past you're never fully in the
present because if you're using words or
any kind of like preconditioned ways of

perceiving things that's all in the past
you're relying upon that in the past to
process the present moment and so you
know the present moment's gone by the
time you've got it into some sort of
manageable you know perceptible
State also reminds me of I think it's
The Diamond Cutter Sutra where The
Diamond Cutter Sutra says essentially
past mind cannot be grasped future mind
cannot be grasped present mind cannot be
grasped so I mean the present
moment yeah it I mean it would seem
logically that it would have to exist
because that is the the foundation of of
the perceptions and our feelings and so
forth even though it's constantly

changing and if you're living at the
level of perception then you're never
fully in the present moment because
you're always relying upon stuff you
learned from the past and so forth
memories and that kind of thing to to
create associations and so
forth so I mean if you say really exist
then you're dealing with ultimate truth
or Ultimate Reality in which case it's
all present The Power of Now it's just
there is just like this one big Eternal
now
and so dividing time up into past
present and future is is just an
artifact of perception it's not reality

it's it's more psychology than than

physics

even but uh the present moment you can

say that it exists even though it might

just be like a geometrical point with no

Dimensions to it so that's even more

like paradoxical or enigmatic and

confusing as hell and with that I'm just

going to move on to nature Cure's next

question which

isaya singala sua actually it's sealo

watas sua or the calakas sua I don't

know maybe it could also go by the name

singala sua but um generally it goes by

the sealo watas Su anyways um the suta

seems profound and good but in some part

it suggests to venerate brahans what is

your opinion on authentic

of the singala sua um I'm not sure what

where it suggests de venerate brahin it

might I mean at the beginning you had I

guess a Brahman who was doing his

ablutions and then bowing to all the

directions and so forth and the Buddha

taught him a better way of doing it and

then it's a lot of I mean the the seala

W sua is one of the main sutas intended

for Lay people you know how to be a good

Buddhist lay person

um so I'm not exactly sure where the

veneration of brahmans comes in unless

it's just veneration of holy men and

general or just veneration it could

include just paying respect to to
brahmans just because you know that's
just good manners I don't think that uh
the Buddha would place any real
metaphysical Merit on paying respect to
brahin other than just it's good to pay
respect to you know revered elders and
that kind of a
thing so the authenticity of the sealo W
sua it's really hard to say because
first of all it's one of the last sutas
in the dean Kaya and usually the farther
back you go in a in a body of text like
the dean Naya the less likely it is to
be authentic or to have a lot of
authentic material in it usually the
most important oldest texts are towards

the front usually or at least you got a higher concentration of them towards the front and towards the end of the collection you got just sort of like stuff that got added later but on the other hand um I mean the advice is just basic advice for how to be a good lay person and so it could be from the Buddha or it could be added later just based on common sense just basic Buddhism for Lay people so I really can't say I forgot to look up GC P's take on it maybe I should do that a second see what GC Pond has to say oh yeah you guys want to do something all right oo cherle

back all right

see early and late in the samuta early

and late in the

majima okay number 31

okay sua 31 addressed to the Le and

interpreting the six quarters buddhistic

doeses not contain any marked late

features it may be early okay so that

pretty much agrees with me I mean it

could be early but it's not dealing with

anything really radical it's not dealing

with you know hardcore Aesthetics like

the earliest text tended to be directed

towards that it's dealing it's

addressing lay people and so it's not

going to be you know getting into any

weird philosophy or anything it's just

going to be the basics on how to be a

good lay person and so it could be early

you know there's nothing

contraindicating that it's early but I

mean it's so basic and common sense that

it could be early or it could be late

just based on common sense so it's hard

to

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

Nature cures third

question after

uh I Bel a little bit

so he says biku suato is having strong

feelings or

demonstration against use of

AI in sua translations and on his sua

Central website what is your take on
this that is the use of AI in sua
translations or suta study well you'd
have to have a really Advanced AI to be
able to translate philosoph opical poly
texts because there's going to be
subtlety in understanding context like
the word dhama can have a whole spectrum
of different interpretations it's not
just dhama has one English word that
translates it I mean if that's the way
it was if each pow had just one English
word then AI could probably deal with it
pretty easily but if you've got to like
figure out from the context you know how
dhama is being used the word dhama for
example or the word Sanara which also

can have a bunch of different meanings
lots of poly words can have various
meanings then I mean how is the AI going
to know this I mean even using a human
to translate poly Tex if he does not
understand dammo very well let's say he
let's KR Norman comes to mind and I mean
no dis disrespect to KR Norman but he is
a linguist he's a philologist and he's
not really interested in Buddhist
philosophy
and so if he doesn't understand like the
context he'll like rely on the
commentaries maybe or just use his
Oxbridge type common sense to try to
come up with a rendering or a

translation and he's not always correct
partly just because he hasn't lived the
life he hasn't practiced the practice
he's mainly dealing with you know middle
indic procrit
languages and so so I mean he doesn't
really care particularly all that much I
mean one time he he wrote to me I mean
we had a little bit of a correspondence
going on just very briefly and he was
saying he doesn't really care what it
means he just cares what it
says but I mean you can't know what it's
saying if you don't know what it means
like with regard how you going to
translate the word dhama I mean there's
so many different ways you could

translate the word dhama how are you
going to translate it in this
context and so
AI with regard to something really
simple you know something really
straightforward that's not controversial
at all I assume AI would do well with
regard to something where I mean you
really have to understand dhamma in
order to just use your understanding of
dhamma to interpret what is being said
here and like having the whole thing in
context and everything um yeah I don't
think AI is Advanced enough to
understand that stuff better than say KR
Norman who is a very talented

philologist so I mean I don't have
strong feelings really I mean AI might
be able to be less biased than some
translators although the AI is going to
be as biased as the person who programs
it which is pretty obvious from you know
some of the the snafus of like Google's
Ai and so forth where you know the AI is
just spewing leftist talking points for
example
so let's see what is my take on the use
of AI in suta Translation or sua study I
really haven't been exposed to it so I
really can't say I mean I haven't seen
any of the results of ai's attempts at
translating auta it might just be
ridiculous or in some cases it might

actually come up with something like
insightful or at least that seems
insightful to a human because we're so
stuck in our Western approach of looking
at things that I mean the obvious is
just looking Us in the face and we're
not seeing it but then again again as I
was saying AI is going to be as biased
as the people who program it and so
you're still not getting around the the
whole human Frailty
issue but biku sujato he apparently has
strong feelings against um even me
appearing on his SU Central I've been
told that any mention of me or any like
citing of anything that I've written or

anything is just deleted because I think

biku sujato is is uh fairly leftist in

his his

leanings so he doesn't he doesn't

particularly like people who are like

way less leftist than him like

participating on his site or whatever

not that I've ever put anything on his

site myself I've just heard heard about

this

secondhand so I guess I guess I address

that sort of more or less maybe kind of

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

question and we're getting towards the

bottom here we're getting towards the

bottom of the Sacred

scroll so anyways the next question is

from the Proto sudo Monk and the Proto sudo monk as you may know puts little headings or titles over his questions and so this one is advice regarding fools and fifth precept and he says how must one apply the Buddha's advice on not associating with fools in this day and age it appears that most people are fools I no longer meet with my old friends people I care for and known a long time as their life revolves around alcohol and general generally Hedonism amongst other things alcohol is a huge support for delusion but it is so widespread it's unavoidable in Social settings at least where I live the fifth

precept equals condemning yourself to
voluntary social isolation what I mean
is you are isolating yourself from the
Rest by not drinking as you are stopping
duding yourself the fifth precept which
I have mostly held for three years I
find is the biggest determinant on my
relationship with Society I feel I am at
an existential Crossroads of abandoning
Society to progress in dhama or
partaking in society at the cost of
delusion did this happen to you before
you became a monk do you have any advice
and I'm just noticing here that the
Proto sudam monk has asked only one
question here which is causing me to
think maybe I forgot to I mean he

usually asks the the maximum number of

three maybe I should uh make a quick

check here to see if the Proto sudo

mon no by golly he only asked one

question

hm all right it's okay I'm not mad or

anything

very so uh there is kind of two

questions though he he asked two

questions in a complex question because

the first question mark is up here at

the top which is how must one apply the

Buddha's advice on not associating with

fools in this day and age well it's

pretty much the same as in any day and

age because the majority of people are

going to be fools just that's just the
way it is I mean most people are going
to be
essentially normies that are not
particularly spiritually Advanced I mean
everybody's got some depth to them and
sometimes who a person who seems to be
quite foolish can just come out with
this insightful remark that can just
have you on your on the back of your
heels as whoa where'd that come
from so I have I've had like people that
I did not consider to be particularly
wise to suddenly just kind of get me out
of left field and just say something
that struck me as as a very
perceptive statement so I mean even a

hardcore alcoholic or some such does

have some wisdom or in in mahayan terms

they have Buddha

nature but um yeah I mean not

associating with fools is blessing

number one in the Maham mongala sua

which is a list of 38 blessings and

Numero Uno is

AAL not associating with fools

so I mean it's been this way since

there've been humans I'm pretty sure

that most humans are going to be

relatively foolish I mean you're not

going to have an entire Society of

sages you might have one a small Society

of sages for a little while and then

it's going to get infiltrated by dorks

or

whatever so

um yeah I mean you have to to do it as

much as as you can I mean being polite

to people you know working alongside of

people that are foolish I mean in a way

it's it's helping you to practice you

know equinity and meta and compassion

and so forth if I mean if you don't just

get

lost

so yeah I mean you don't want to maybe

don't want to be going over to their

house inviting them over to your house

but I mean to the extent that you're

socially obligated to interact with

other people you can interact with just about anybody I mean you can interact with a complete criminal who's trying to rip you off but still you should just be polite you know and just you know excuse yourself relatively early on in the conversation and and make yourself scarce but um getting down to the bottom question mark though oh there's three question mark so maybe he did ask three questions so he said did this happen to you before you became a monkey and yeah it did because I grew up in Aberdine Washington and if you didn't drink beer I mean you just weren't going to amount to anything socially like I went to high

school there and uh yeah I mean the
Pacific Northwest you know going to
college and everything you don't party I
mean you just be you just be a dreary
nobody with no social life and so I
remember
I was in my 20s and I went to Tang Pulu
Kaba a monastery and was ordained for
five weeks as a as a salmona as a novice
just sort of testing the waters like a a
dress rehearsal for being a monk just
see if it was going to
work and after I was disrobing when I
was you know converting back to a lay
person putting on my Layman's clothing
again the my preceptor the Abbot there
asked me will you be able to keep five

precepts and I said probably not because
that was it I mean drinking beer with my
friends it's like most of my friends
drank alcohol and I I was experimenting
a little bit with just being designated
driver but I mean some of you may know
what it's like to be the only sober
person in a group you know everybody
else is just aborus effusively making
dumb jokes and laughing and everything
and you're just kind of sitting there
thinking these guys are acting like
they're weird or dumb or something it's
like you know it's it's like you're not
on the same page with them you're just
essentially just driving them from from

one bar to the next so yeah know that
didn't work for me and so really I
didn't really start keeping five
precepts until I renounced the world I
mean I was you know becoming less and
less I was drinking less and less
probably I might have gone for several
months without drinking before I became
a monk I don't remember now no I didn't
no now I remember I was I got drunk just
shortly before I went to the monastery I
remember that now
couple times at least so in a way it was
just sort of like these last flings
before renouncing it for possibly the
rest of my life so yeah that did happen
to me before I became a monk it's like

in aine Washington there's no Buddhist
Community or at least there wasn't at
the time so I just had my old high
school buddies my college buddies pretty
much all of them drank few of them were
lightweights and didn't drink very much
cuz they get drunk off two beers but
still there wasn't very many of
those so yeah I was in the same kind of
situation where you know you either stop
having friends or you you're going to
hang out with with drunk people
sometimes so yeah that happened to me
and I really didn't make the full
commitment to Buddhist morality until I
became a monk or was at the monastery

anyway and uh do I have any

advice

well

gosh I mean if you could find new

friends that have more of a the same

kind of goals or attitudes as you I mean

that would be nice if you live in a

large city it might be

easier but um otherwise I mean if you're

sort of planning on renouncing the world

anyway then you know you're just polite

and friendly when you

are socially obligated to interact with

people you know you're not like inviting

people over to your house if you know

that I mean you can invite people over

to your house and just not give them

anything to drink I

suppose they might bring their own

bottle or something

though so yeah the way I did it is I

just continued drinking although kind of

tapering off I mean it largely it was a

social thing I didn't drink alone and

it's just your old Buddies For Old Time

sake you're hanging out with them cuz I

still liked my friends you know they're

good guys and uh yeah so I I drank right

up until I went to the monastery I'm

pretty

sure

um but my advice to you I mean I

shouldn't give advice like yeah I don't

you know don't refrain from drinking
alcohol until you actually go to a
monastery which is what I did I have to
admit and uh yeah I've I've drink a
little bit of alcohol even after I
stopped being a
monk so there's that
too so it's hard for me to give advice
um I mean if you can find other friends
that share the same kind of aspirations
as you or the same attitudes at least
they don't get drunk then yeah you could
cultivate new friends or you can just be
like a semi hermit like like I was
largely before I became a monk I I I
moved to a a town where I knew I didn't
know anybody just so I could be more

alone so i' I've always had sort of a

solitary aspect to my personality ever

since I was a

kid um I don't know how easy that would

be for

you so I mean just do what seems right I

guess would be my best advice in this

situation um I mean drinking alcohol

really is not just is pure evil

apparently Jesus of Nazareth drank

alcohol at least he was dipping bread

into his wine he was turning water into

wine so other people could get

drunk so I mean alcohol in and of itself

is is not like a horrible evil it's

going to send somebody to hell but of

course if you become an alcoholic or

just start drinking alone just to deaden

your your painful memories or something

that's not good either

so yeah I guess this is one that you're

pretty much going to have to work out

for

yourself um cultivate new friends or

just kind of be polite and maybe not so

much engaged with your old

friends um interact with people as much

as is you're socially obligated to do

and then just be pretty much solitary

when you're when you come home from work

or whatever that's largely what I did

also

um but I mean so long as your heart

feels good about what you're doing then
you're probably doing pretty good I mean
if your conscience is at ease when
you're doing it you're not doing too bad
anyway assuming that you have a
conscience and so I'm just going to move
on to the next question which is the
very last question the very last
one gosh we're almost three hours now
this yeah this is this is weird
three-hour long videos I never I never
th it I never thought I'd do it here I
am doing it so anyways this question is
from Arin and Arin says when we hit a
wall in practice or in personal
development first of all what does the

wall represent and second how do we
proceed Beyond the Wall okay that's kind
of two questions isn't it I just
separated them so when we hit a wall in
practice or in personal development
first of what does the wall
represent well it can represent more
than one
thing one thing is it maybe that
you're following a limited method like
you're following a limited meditation
method and you just got as far as you
can with
it and then I mean that's sort of
hitting a wall right there although what
I think is more usual I mean it's pretty
common to have limited methods but most

people don't meditate well enough or
practice well enough to reach the end
you know to reach maximum level to be
totally maxed out on the level or on the
on the method and so what is more likely
is when you hit a wall it's like your
own subconscious mind just sabotaging
your practice it's like fear of
Enlightenment because your ego will die
and your ego is like an animal that
doesn't want to die that kind of thing
or you know just letting go of your old
habits it's sort of like letting go of
your like aspects of your personality
which is sort of sort of like partial
suicide you know too much of a change

it's like part of you is dying because

it's getting left behind that kind of

thing there's all these different ways

that your subconscious mind can just

like Rebel and fight against your

practice anyone who's going gone to a

meditation method or a Meditation

Retreat can know just how much your mind

can just like fight against like doing

proper meditation you know it's

sometimes it's like riding a bucking

bronco at a rodeo

just trying to get your mind to just

calm the [__]

down so yeah I

think I mean it's like our addiction to

being unenlightened you know it's it's a

myth that we're not enlightened because we're not trying hard enough to become enlightened I mean the reality is that we're unenlightened because we want to remain unenlightened we're continually trying to remain unenlightened and so like one aspect you know some higher aspect of your conscious mind is like aspiring to become enlightened and then like the lower aspects of your mind that have I mean they've got tenure you know they've been there a long time they're just saying [__] no I'm not doing that and then they'll they'll just start sabotaging just all kinds of weird

things like weird like psychosomatic symptoms can come up or else it's just you just get into the habit of as soon as you sit down to meditate your mind just starts spinning off all these weird thoughts I mean all kinds of things can happen so when you hit a wall in practice like I said at least what I what I what I'm thinking of right now is that either one you've got a limited method and you've reached the limits of that method at least for yourself or what is probably more common is that your mind is resisting change and it wants to stay the way it is and it is subconsciously fighting against making progress

so that leads to part two of aran's
question which is second how do we
proceed Beyond the
Wall well if it's a limited method that
is the limit the limiting factor as they
say in biology then you switch to a
better method you switch to a method
that works better for you and you can
try that regardless I mean even if your
mind is sabotaging your practice then
still switching to a different method
might be enough of a shift that I mean
you can start making progress again
maybe up until finally your mind kind of
you know digs in and entrenches itself
again and starts fighting back

again

so that would be one way was is just

switched to a different method but the

other method is you've got to understand

yourself first it helps to know that

your own mind is sabotaging your

practice like your subconscious mind

some level of your mind just isn't on

board you're not 100% you might be 90%

or 80% or

20% you know like 20% of your mind is is

all for enlightenment but this 80% is is

just not on board and they're going to

just like keep throwing monkey wrenches

into the works or whatever it is

dragging their feet and it's just not

going to

work so I

mean it reminds me of schopenhauer

his the first philosophical tretis that

he wrote the four-fold root of

sufficient reason where he's saying that

um like a person a certain personality

is going to react to the same stimuli in

the same way until its perception

changes that if you want to change your

behavior when a certain stimulus you

know impinges on your sensorium so to

speak then you're going to have to

change the way you perceive things like

somebody might be real Cavalier about

handling snakes or be you know there's

so what there's vipers all around me I

don't care they get bitten once and then
all of a sudden they're going to their
attitude's going to be very different
you know it's like just any kind of
dangerous situation you might be real
you know so what it's not going to
happen to me until it happens to you and
then that's going to really change your
attitude um so like like my father I
bring up my father a lot he's he's a
good case history um he he kept trying
to stop
smoking he you know he he smoked two
packs a day of like Marlboro 120s or
something and then he decided Well he
better stop smoking it's not good for me
so he'd stop smoking and then after you

know a few weeks maybe a month or two
he'll start smoking a pipe every now and
then or or like chewing tobacco or
something within another few weeks he's
right back to two packs a day again and
so he just could not bring himself to
consistently and finally stop smoking
until one day his leg started turning
black he goes to the doctor the doctor
said that he he had injured that leg
before and there was capillary damage
and so these broken capillaries were
clogging up with tar from smoking and
the doctor told him you're either going
to stop smoking or we're gonna have to
amputate your leg and then when it

became that choice when his perception
of sop of not smoking anymore was
altered by what this doctor told him in
his own black leg all of a sudden it
wasn't that hard anymore I mean he still
had the urges and everything but it was
easy to dismiss the
urges so that's how you proceed beyond
the self- sabotage wall is somehow
you've got to change the way you look at
things because so long as you have the
same attitudes the same perceptions and
you react the same way to the same
stimuli then you're just going to keep
doing the same thing over and over
again so you're going to have to change
the way you look at things in order to

change your stereotypical habitual
Behavior which is the limiting
factor or something like that and I hope
I answer that
question I really do and that's it we're
done and so you guys know the drill if
you got any questions you think maybe I
can answer especially about like
Buddhist philosophy meditation that sort
of thing spirituality in general
philosophy in general me personally
Burma also known as Myanmar whatever if
you think maybe I can answer it feel
free to ask and uh just include it in
the comments below this video or if you
have access to my subscribe star you can

ask it there if you have access to my
Discord server you can ask it there and
look at the URL links below so that you
can see my bitshoot and Rumble channels
if you haven't seen them already because
I really do encourage people to use
alternative video platforms because
YouTube is just on a censorious
rampage and I mean they're just you know
they're they're making it clear whose
side they're on and it's not my side
so um what else was I going to say oh
yeah subscribe and like the video if you
haven't done it already I mean you
lasted this long you lasted three hours
so you must have liked it a little bit
and uh be happy and I'm going to stop

recording now

okay hello and welcome to episode

107 of question and answer I am your

host poo basa and if you look very very

carefully at the center of your screen

you should be able to see me I'm just

harder to see because I'm wearing a camo

shirt

today those of you who are just

listening to this and not watching don't

try to see me you won't be able to and

I'm going to adjust this a little bit

like like

this okay

so I might as well start answering

questions I mean I suppose I could go on

a long introduction that has nothing to

do with any of the questions or well it
might have something to do with one of
the questions talking about my aquarium
how I got it all set up two days ago
there's there's apparently a
conspiracy that prevents
people from buying female dwarf gami
fish that you can only find males it's
hard even to order them but finally I
ordered two female garami fish dwarf
dwarf
gamis um from someplace in California
that flew them overnight so that I got
them within 24 hours and um actually
Reverend teacher Father Fish explained
me that the the conspiracy about female
dwarf gamis just uh just like less than

a few hours ago just like an hour or so
ago in a comment he said that
uh um dwarf gamis generally are not bred
in the United States they're bred like
in Southeast Asia or something and then
I guess there's like laws against
sending females through through the
international mail or something because
they might like become invasive or
something so I think it has inspired me
to maybe breed dwarf gamis at some point
in the future so that we can defeat this
conspiracy against Pet Shops or aquarium
stores selling female dwarf gamis
because it's really a pain the neck
getting one also I inoculated my tank

with um microa and myopa I got I got

them the the the leaves the the cultured

leaves on the same day as I got the

female dwarf gammies so that's kind of

exciting and uh somebody did suggest

that I do a video just about my aquarium

explaining like the the ecosystem of it

and everything which uh is a possibility

but my horn wart is kind of Scraggy I

got that in the mail two days ago

also so it's going to have to uh buck up

a bit just to make my tank more

presentable so anyways

with that as a kind

of introduction

forward preface if you please I'm going

to start answering

questions and the first question is from
Jeffrey and I apologize to Jeffrey he
asked me this question via email and
when I've been compiling questions to
answer I sometimes I don't look in my
email because usually the questions come
in comment sections under videos
or they are on the Discord server in in
the Q&A room so I mean I I I missed it
the first time and then by the second
and third time it's like way down in my
inbox buried under a bunch of other
emails so I do apologize to
Jeffrey and uh so I'm just gonna his his
question is the first question here and
he said reading your book and I came

across the mention that Hindus do not

eat garlic and onion

could you explain the reason for this

and if it is something you

practice um well the reason why Hindus

and Hindus do not eat garlic and onions

or a lot of devout Hindus don't and also

a lot of like Mahayana Buddhists don't

either um is apparently because garlic

and onions are not satvic foods like

going with the old Sonia yogic um

interpretation of food food you've got

the three gunas you've got satvic

rajasic and

tamasic and satvic foods are the kind of

foods that good Hindu swamis eat which

is grains fruits nuts and dairy products

that those are considered to be satvic food that are conducive to spiritual growth or just Clarity and peace of mind that kind of a thing and I really don't remember if onions and garlic are rajasic or tamasic rajasic is it it increases passion you know like like meat or really spicy food would um you know it's supposedly according to um you know the the yogic interpretation of these things um it just increases your passions makes it harder for you to become enlightened and tamasic food um it's it leads towards darkness and ignorance and I asked an expert on ayurveda what a good example of tasic

food would be and he said mushrooms but
it would include also like stale Foods
food that's going slightly off I would
assume something like blue cheese that's
it's essentially moldy cheese that sort
of thing would be considered tamasic and
I really don't know which category
onions and garlic fit into in this
scheme but it's not satvic and so that's
why devout um like practitioners of
Indian spiritual Traditions will often
avoid garlic and
onions there was some Chinese Buddhist
Pilgrim who traveled to India um late
ancient times maybe early medieval times
to get copies of various um venas vinia
picus like the rules of monastic

discipline from various Indian schools
and he noticed that in north central
India at the time like the Ganges Valley
the Buddhists weren't eating garlic and
onions or meat because they had
converted they were mostly Buddhists at
the time and had converted to a school
of Buddhism that considered these kind
of dietary restrictions to be
important so let's see
here so I guess I guess I explain that
but oh I guess the second part of the
question is is it something that I
practice no it is not although um I eat
whatever my my woman puts in front of me
and she's a very good cook and uh there

is some onions in it but uh she really doesn't go heavy on the garlic like a lot of people do but it doesn't matter to me I mean onions and garlic are good for you I'm pretty sure and I really do not follow along with the the yogic interpretation of the three gunas and the different kinds of food and so forth I mean I'm sure that there's some overlap between the system and the actual effects of these foods but I just uh from from the terod point of view you know it's kind of like like the New Testament point of view it's not what goes into a person that defiles him it's what comes out of a person that defiles him so yeah I do eat garlic and onions

although not like massive quantities of
either so I'm just going to move on to
the next question here this is from
scolin or schoa deine and his questions
are about future
shock and there was a book that came out
in the 70s I think I think it was by
Alvin Toffler if I remember correctly
called Future
Shock I may have read it as a teenager
but I don't remember it now I just kind
of remember what it's
about but anyways uh he has a little
definition of Future Shock before his
questions and that is Future Shock is a
sense of shock or anxiety while trying

to cope with rapid change in society or technology so that started mainly in like the 20th century maybe it could go back as far as like the Industrial Revolution like the invention of the steam engine that could have started things I suppose but it has been accelerating like technological and societal change have been increasing at an exponential rate and I have read some science fiction novels SC science fiction stories about how eventually it gets to the point where people just can't keep up with technological change and they just start having like psychological breakdowns and

so

forth but let's get back to scadden's

question here how does society's Future

Shock Affliction compare to you when you

were a fairly enlightened feral

teenager well yeah I mean it was when I

was a a fair enlightened feral teenager

that would be like late 70s early 80s

and already the book Future Shock had

already been published and become a best

seller um so it had already started back

then but back then it was mainly

technological I think so most of the the

Future Shock was coming from technology

whereas

now um it's it's beyond I mean

technology is changing fast still it's
kind of amazing but now you've got more
like radical changes that people can't
really keep up with and that's just like
the breakdown of traditional
culture so it was like I was mentioning
in the Q&A last week nowadays because
traditional culture is breaking down
you've got more and more people
identifying as cats more and more people
falling in love with artificial
intelligence you know just fake people
or love dolls or or whatever it's just
like like the tradition that stabilizes
society and stabilizes around like the
family and you know it's like what
normies do essentially you know you get

a job you you kind of set yourself up so
that you can afford to raise a family
you get the home you raise the family
you got kids you know if if you're doing
well you can send your kids to college
that kind of a thing and that's just
completely breaking down mainly because
of efforts of globalists and the left
you know it's like importing all these
you know millions of people from foreign
countries into America or or Europe or
whatever that's part of the the plan is
to cause this traditional Society to
break
down because you've got all these
different traditional societies that are

like competing and none of them really
wins out and so you just have this sort
of uh you know this salad of different
cultur is going on it's no longer really
a Melting Pot where people um you know
they they adapt to the prevailing
culture I can't remember what it's
called there's a word for that but now
it's just they're bringing their own
cultures and they're not conforming and
so it's that is another reason why um
traditional Society is breaking down but
it's also just attacks on traditional
Society attacks on the nuclear family
for example attacks on this being a a
Christian heterosexual Normie you know
they're seen as like the

enemy a lot of people on the left will
say that the really violent dangerous
people are these Normy Christians just
completely ignoring folks like antifa
and that sort of
thing ah having my second cup of coffee
today so yeah that would the main
difference between culture shock now and
culture shock when I was a teenager is
that I mean the culture shock due to
technology is pretty much the same but
the culture shock caused by just the
breakdown of traditional culture is just
vastly beyond what it was back in back
in
1980

say so anyways um I forgot to read his little commentary to his question which is it's pretty bad now but it looked pretty bad before it seemed like the TV show Gunsmoke was kept on air around 16 plus Seasons solely by the will of every blackpilled grandfather staring at a cathode ray tube yeah I mean old folks not really adapting to newer ways that's been a thing since ancient times you know they found some sort of graffiti scrolled on some like a pyramid or something this is like really ancient talking about how the young people today they don't respect their Elders you know they're rejected their traditional culture on and on it's the same stuff

that old folks have been complaining

about with regard to Young Folks you

know since there have been humans

probably but

um yeah it's it's way beyond that it's

way beyond that now but I mean trans

people you know or people identifying as

cats furries this kind of thing just

walking down city streets and not

getting a second

look that kind of thing I mean maybe in

San Francisco in 1980 it could have

passed but now you can have like a a

small town in the midwest probably have

some guy walking down the street in like

a black velvet evening gown

and he's got nothing to worry
about and in a way I mean if people were
enlightened it would be a good thing
kind of like the way the left is
interpreting it you know it's sort of
breaking down these restrictions and
allowing people to express their
individual creativity and uniqueness and
so forth but um most people lack the
wisdom and when you deviate too far from
what is just natural to a human being
and the left ignores even even the idea
that anything is really natural to a
human
being we're supposedly like a blank
slate with no human nature that is
innate to us or any such thing then I've

uh digressed until I for got the

beginning of the

sentence but yeah you deviate too far

from just what comes natural to human

being and you're you're de you're

deviating off into dysfunction and like

mental breakdowns and so

forth like I have nothing personal

against trans people but you look at the

psychological studies and they're way

more likely to like attempt suicide for

example because they just not really

adjusted anymore you know they've kind

of broken loose and are just kind of

spinning around loose you know on the on

the verges of society in a way and you

can try to bring them in but still with

regard to certain traits you know they

just can't fit the mainstream

anymore and it causes alienation and

just you know sort

of it causes all kinds of

things so I guess I answered that

question so I'll move on to schoa Dean's

second culture shock question which is

were there any effective ways to deal

with Future

Shock and uh he's got uh the commentary

here which is there were two ways which

I've noticed that were successful the

first of which the Romans had

used was to have philosophers scrutinize

technology before it could go

mainstream like the steam engine which remained a miniature prooof a miniature proof proof of work instead of becoming integrated into society the second method which the Americans employed was science fiction readers of Science Fiction generally could cope better by being introduced to a concept by a plausible situation and therefore prepare for the future well um before I answer the question I suppose I should give my commentary to his commentary my sub commentary and um I never heard of Romans using philosophers to scrutinize technology because there really wasn't a whole lot of new technology like that

that steam engine thing was really a toy
and it wasn't the kind of steam engine
like they like got invented in the the
18th century it was just the power of
steam was just sort of blowing and
spinning a wheel but it wasn't like
under pressure which really do hard work
so I mean it was maybe a step in the
right direction somebody realized that
the power of steam could actually cause
a physical system to move but I mean it
was a far cry from anything that could
be turned into like an actual Engine
That Could be used for pumping water out
of mines or whatever I guess that was
like one of the original purposes of the
steam engine I think that might have

been why it was invented was for pumping

water out of like coal

mines cuz it went really slow at first

it wasn't something that you could use

to you know power a locomotive or

something like

that so

and yeah I never really read about the

Romans using philosophers to scrutinize

technology there wasn't a whole lot of

technology to scrutinize back then I

mean improvements in like agriculture

improvements in Warfare and that that

mainly came through you know the Romans

are fighting someone like the the Kel

iberians in Spain or the the daans and

what is now Romania and they're taking

hits because the other the the enemy has

certain technological innovations you

know like the daans had this weapon

called a fals that was hooked so they

would stick it past the Roman and then

Yank on it and like cut them in the back

of the neck and so forth so then the

Romans had to improve their helmets to

protect the back of their neck and all

that uh and they started using the the

Spanish sword the

Gladius uh as their main infantry weapon

after they threw their their

Spears

so let's see yeah so I'm not sure about

that but um the second one science

fiction yeah I do think that

uh science people who read science

fiction can maybe adjust to

technological changes more easily than

people who just read Gothic romance

novels or some such or they just watch

TV news or

something although I have to admit most

science fiction authors when they're

portraying the future they get did it

wrong you there are very few science

fiction authors who predicted the

internet for

example um I mean you read science

fiction written like in the 1960s and

70s and by the year 2000 we're going to

be living in undersea undersea Dome
cities and we're going to have colonized
Mars and the moon and Larry nen one of
my favorite science fiction authors when
I was in high school he even had
dolphins in the United Nations by the
year 2000
America and the Soviet Union would have
just divided the Earth up into the
codominium that kind of thing didn't
happen but still I mean it makes you
more open-minded to technological
developments and radical changes in
society and so forth so there is that
but now I have to go all the way back up
here to scolin or
skaden question which is were there any

effective ways to deal with Future Shock
and probably the most obvious way of
dealing with Future Shock is not uh was
not mentioned by scadden and that is
just kind of become a lite you know
become Amish essentially you know so the
Amish they're dealing with Future Shock
by just avoiding the technological
advancements um or become a monk and
just go off and live in a cave in a
forest that's another way of dealing
with it just renounce the world if the
world world is becoming too too [__]
for you to want to deal with it renounce
it go off and live in a spiritual
Community or like an amage type

community that kind of

thing but um what other effective ways

are there of dealing with Future Shock

well first you just keep yourself

stabilized so that even if society's

going to hell you know you've got all

these weird people that are just kind of

you know they're just deviating farther

and farther from what used to be the

mainstream you know they're just getting

way out there you know identifying as

cats for

example um you you just mind you just do

your thing do just try to be as

psychologically healthy as you can you

don't necessarily have to be a normie

I'm not really a

Normy but um just keep yourself

grounded and I mean that is probably

sufficient for most of the people who

watch these videos I think most of you

are not you know identifying as cats or

falling in love with inanimate objects

and that sort of

thing although probably a lot of us are

addicted to the internet or video games

or

whatever

so yeah I mean that's one way of dealing

with Future Shock is just keep yourself

in a a drugged stooper or just escape

from reality by playing a

technologically Innovative video game or

some such but I mean get out of a big
city I mean you live in a small town
you're not going to have as much culture
shock as if you're living in a big city
not only the technology will be somewhat
reduced or your availability of
Technology but also like the imported
people from foreign countries that are
not adapting to the culture they're
mainly in the cities I mean some of them
might be like agricultural workers on
farms or some such but uh
yeah just kind of mind your own business
and adjust your own personal environment
to something that you feel comfortable
with so yeah I mean I mean what else can
you do really you can't really control

what other people are doing you know out
there so you just have to kind of tend
your own garden and keep it you know
within your range of acceptability
so I think I'll just move on to
scadden's next question here which also
deals with Future Shock which is what is
the role of postmodern literature in the
current year and then his commentary to
that is unlike Western philosophers and
science fiction writers who dealt with
Future Shock by asking two questions
what is this and what does it do
post-modern literature seems to be
highly conducive to Future Shock and has
subverted two virtues of early science

fiction the first of which mentioned
earlier becomes downgraded to Mere
predictive programming in a dystopia
while the second its ability to inspire
and manifest the future or meme magic
now only benefits those deluding the
formless sizeless slab into Plato's Cave
well I'm not sure if that particular
commentary helped me to understand the
question better what is the role of
postmodern literature in the current
year well I mean postmodernism is itself
a symptom of what is causing culture
shock it's a symptom of sort of the
breakdown of traditional culture into
weirder and weirder stuff that is
causing people's minds to be affected by

weirder and weirder stuff which is
leading some people just off the Beaten
Track into a
Wilderness from which many of them
cannot Escape so postmodern literature I
mean I've read a little bit of it um
largely it's like self-referential you
know when people in the novel are
referring to themselves as characters in
the novel for example or like in a movie
like um the movie Fight Club that's got
some post-modernism in it you know it's
like they're um like at the end where
he's you know it sort of finally gets to
the point where it began you know he has
like this this is where I'm at now you

know he's like tied to a chair with a gun in his mouth and and then it says how he got there and then finally when it gets to that point again at the end of the movie they're saying oh yeah this this is where how the movie started I can't remember the exact words but you know it it was along those lines um so postmodern literature um you know in a way it's it's again deviating from tradition and getting into weirdness on purpose and that's sort of in style you know it's sort of for some reason globalist philosophers think that this is what the world needs is just to break down all the traditionalism possibly at least for

some of them so that people can just be
programmed to become good Neo marxists
you know first you got to get rid of all
the old traditional stuff that's in the
way of just converting people to being
Pawns in the Brave New
World so a lot of postmodernists the
early postmodernist philosophers tended
to be
marxists so that's probably one reason
for postmodernism is deliberately to
undermine like
traditional National cultures and just
replace it with this new globalist
neo-marxist kind of culture which isn't
going to work because Marxism just it's

like typical of Marxism to ignore human
nature just to deny the the existence of
human nature you know they go with the
blank slate
idea there there is no human nature
there's no animal instincts in the human
animal that were all just blank slates
and so they can just program us once
they get rid of all this other
programming which they're trying to do
you know this tradition traditional
culture they're going to replace that
with the Brave New
World and I don't think it's going to
work it's just it's more likely to cause
a collapse and probably
it's the collapse is not going to be

replaced by this globalist Vision it's

going to be replaced by barbarism at

first

especially

so I guess I guess I answer that

question I say I guess I answer that

question probably five or six times per

video at least so I'm just going to move

on to the next question which is from

Gaz and Gaz says do you have any

questions for us well if anybody knows

about keeping horn wart in an aquarium

then please let me know I'm very open to

suggestions about the cultivation of

horn wart which is a strange

plant and it's got people really

polarized in the aquarium keeping World
some people hate horn wart other people
think horn wart is just
invaluable so it's got good qualities
and bad qualities one good quality it's
it's very frondy and so little organisms
and baby fish and baby shrimps can hide
in the fronds and it's more conducive to
having like a
balanced um diversity of species than if
you don't have if you just got leaves
with or like boring flat Leed plants
then things can't hide in that as easy
but on the other hand horn wart it it
doesn't have Roots it just absorbs
nutrients from the tank water which can
then starve out other

plants and so on so yeah my question for
my viewers is uh how what do you feel
about horn wart and I'm just going to
move on to next question this is from
nature cure and nature cure says thank
you for checking it out on uh GC P's
book and your answer he asked me a
question about I think it's the sealo
wuta in the previous Q&A
and so I gave my answer and then I
checked it out in GC Pond's book uh
studies in the origins of Buddhism and
we pretty much agreed and so this is
what nature cure is talking about he
says thank you for checking out on he
said has KC Pond's book it's GC

Pond and uh what what was the book's
name and the book is this studies in the
origins of Buddhism by GC Pond published
by moelo benaras
and for anyone who wants to understand
early Buddhism you know what really
early Buddhism was like you know like
getting back to the time of the
Buddha
um and like how even terraa Buddhism has
changed and evolved especially during
its first few centuries then this book
is really valuable it's a little bit
dated it was the first edition came out
in like the
1950s but still it's it's really an
excellent book especially if you

understand terava Buddhism fairly well
already because he'll leave a lot of
untranslated pows that a newbie wouldn't
understand um you know he's he's
discussing like the samut nikaya and the
angin nikaya and if you're such a
newcomer to Terra Buddhism that you
don't know the difference between samuta
and angura for example You' probably um
study up on just Elementary basic terraa
Buddhism before tackling this
book but this is really it's one of the
most valuable important books I've ever
read with regard to helping me to
understand what the Buddha actually
taught not just what Buddhism teaches

nowadays but what did the original
historical godma Buddha teach and of
course GC Pond he doesn't know for sure
or either all you can do is make
educated guesses the best you can do is
make educated guesses based on the
evidence so he's good at that although
he was a high cast Brahman
Hindu and so he does take sort of a
Hinduism early Buddhism like for example
he likes to see the Buddha as teaching
something pretty much in accordance with
the
upanishad for
example so
once again GC Pond's studies in the
origins of Buddhism I do recommend it

it's a good book so nature cure second
question what other English books would
you suggest to have
handy well one book that is out of print
and good luck finding it is this one the
earliest vinea and the beginnings of
Buddhist literature by E fra walner
right there and this is just a photocopy
book that was sent to me when I was
living in Burma and the person who
photocopied this um he found this book
in the library of Harvard Divinity
School and so he was Harvard Divinity
School and he he copied this book just
so I could have it but it if you read
old literature on trying to understand

what early Buddhism was like this was
considered to be like the the gold
standard this was was like a very
important pioneering work with regard to
how early Buddhism evolved how and why
it branched into different schools that
sort of thing so this is this is a good
book too but good luck finding
it then another good book for
understanding early Buddhism is this one
is uh published by the Buddhist
publication Society concept and reality
in early Buddhist thought by bikun Nanda
and this is the entire book is mainly
about the meaning of the word papancha
and how the commentators didn't
understand it and got it wrong and he

puts forth such a such a persuasive case
that pretty much all Buddhist Scholars
or terraa Buddhist Scholars who aren't
just like Burmese dogmatic followers of
the commentary that they all pretty much
accept this book as as correct that the
old definition of papancha as found in
the commentaries is and also as is found
in the the old Polytech Society poly
English dictionary has now been replaced
by bikun nanda's approach which is
probably right I I agree with him on
that and there's another book on my
bookcase that I forgot to get maybe I'll
I'll do it just a
second let's see oh here it

is if you want to know like the early history of Buddhism and and like the different schools that evolved and so forth this also was a good book Indian Buddhism by AK water which is also published by melal bernardos although AK water he's good up until the very beginnings of
Buddhism because he has this relatively naive understanding of Buddhism that anything found in the core texts is probably what the Buddha really taught and the core texts are the first four nikayas and the first four books of winam and if you don't know what that means that's fine um and also the first several books of the

kikaya and he just assumes that because
you know if all of the ancient schools
of Buddhism had these same texts then
that indicates that you know it's like
original teachings of Buddhism but there
was like a hundred years before these
different schools started dividing up
and so all it really indicates that
anything that's found in the cortex
anything that is common to most or all
of the earliest schools of Buddhism all
it means is that it predates the first
schisms which were about a 100 years
after the time of the Buddha and a lot
of change can happen in the first
hundred years I mean look at the history

of Christianity it just had explosive mutating growth like a virus in its first century of existence and the same thing happened with Buddhism so there is that but those those are we like my my main recommendations for anyone wanting to understand like early Buddhism and just early Indian Buddhism um there is another book that I don't have on my bookcase I donated it to a monastery library in Burma which is by Richard grid which is um let's see how Buddhism began the conditioned Genesis of the early teachings so that's interesting too and it's dealing with pretty much the same

stuff as Pond's book but I do not think
fra walner or not fra walner but grid
even though he was president of the
polych society he was a professor of
Sanskrit at Oxford or CA I think it was
Oxford maybe Cambridge but he was not a
Buddhist and he had this Oxbridge upper
crusty Common Sense kind of attitude
towards standing dhama and he just kind
of misses the boat a lot of the time
there is one interesting chapter about
whether anguli Mala was an early devotee
of Kali which is kind of
interesting but I don't think that gri
really understood dhama very deeply and
I mean even AK wer here I don't think I

mean he's he doesn't understand it as

deeply as Pond does or as bikun Yana

Nanda did

but just just read books and study up

and uh try not to get LED astray and uh

follow your own common sense and uh you

should make some

progress so I'm just going to move on to

Nature Cure's third question which is do

you still have English-speaking Burmese

biku friends in Myanmar in contact today

well I never really had many

English-speaking Burmese biku friend

in

Myanmar um some of them spoke broken

English and that was about

it so yeah I I don't have still have

English-speaking Burmese biku friends in Myanmar I mean I have there was an an Indonesian monk who lives in Burma I think he might spend the rest of his life in Burma who um I when I disrobed few years ago I I sent him an email and he's mostly living remote out in the woods and you with no contact of you know cell phones or email that sort of thing so it was like just relatively recently within the past year anyhow he finally got back to me and was telling giving me the update on this Monastery we both we both lived at and so forth but um yeah I mean I'm not in any kind of regular contact with anybody in Burma

right now

so I guess I answered that one too so

I'm moving on to the next question which

is from Stellar Supreme formerly known

as Liber Lam and Stellar Supreme

formerly known as Liber Lam says are

there any monks that you are intimidated

by in Burma throughout your time living

there as a monk and I can only remember

one monk who really intimidated me in

Burma and that was

upand and ironically he he attended my

ordination ceremony he was he was

present at my ordination ceremony in in

California when I was ordained and um

back around 1997 it was like the winter

of 9798 I spent a few months at pandama

and he just disliked me from the very
get-go and he was kind of an angry
irritable sort of a person I mean he's
considered to be a meditation master and
if you see him meditating I mean you can
just feel this different it's like a
different atmosphere in the room when he
get goes into like this deep State he
becomes sort of like a conscious statue
I don't know how to describe it I mean
you know he just becomes like sort
of strangely still you know just he's
like a rock sitting there but just the
whole feel in the room
changes and he was apparently a
meditation Master but it didn't stop him

from being a very angry and frequently

hostile

person and he just he was just

continually just chewing me out for one

thing after another it was like um when

I first went there when I I first came

to ask him for permission to meditate at

his Monastery for a few months um you I

told him that I was having difficulty

with um udacha or just like agitation of

mind like my mind is restless it doesn't

settle down easy which is common for

compulsively thinking westerners and he

kind of looks at me like a plumber

investigating leaky pipes and he says

have you taken

drugs and I mean most western monks of

my generation have at least smoked some
marijuana in their time so I said yeah
I've I've taken some drugs and he said
that's it drug addiction has damaged
your
brain and I'm like I've never been
addicted to anything not even tobacco
you know it just kind of runs in my
family my mother especially has like
this had this nervous Restless mind you
know she just had a nervous disposition
and without skipping a be he said then
it is a combination of drug addiction
and mental illness and that was it like
the whole rest of the time I was there I
was the the drug addicted brain damaged

I was the brain damaged drug addict
essentially and he keep bringing it up
you know don't just sit there like
you're high on drugs that kind of a
thing and so my first month there I was
kind of intimidated by him because he's
continually getting on my case until
finally after I've been there about a
month I mean seeing this medit ation
Master who's like pissed off and hostile
on a daily basis I just sto being afraid
of him you know it's like he'd chew me
out and I just sit there as Placid as a
cow and I think that bugged him even
more it caused him to like me even
less because I was no longer intimidated
by him but my first month there I was

fairly intimidated by the

guy and he may really have been a

meditation Master meditation master I

mean he's got high-profile Western dham

teachers um today who were his

disciples so it's I just have Bad Karma

with teachers tell you the truth like

one for someone else he's a meditation

Master a Great Sage possibly semi-

enlightened being and then I just get

like the worst side of

him Karma I

guess so yeah if uh if I ever do produce

my fourth book there's going to be a

detailed chapter on my my few months at

pandama just discussing the stuff that

was going

on it caused me to uh have a little bit

less faith in the mahasi

tradition

anyways yeah that's the only one I can

really think of the only monk in Burma

that really intimidated me at least

temporarily I don't really intimidate

very easily so anyways the next question

is from

Ron and Ron says what if there was a

group of Christians who

believed I.E that is had faith that

Jesus was a run-of-the-mill gay or queer

person who told Parables that there was

nothing wrong with Philadelphia Freedom

and I assume Philadelphia just means

Brotherly Love or male homosexuality I
just assume that because otherwise I
don't know what Philadelphia Freedom
would
be and anyways continuing with Ron's
question here and that that group didn't
try to convert people into becoming
rainbow Christians could that work in
your world well I mean the main problem
here is the towards the beginning that
let's see what if there was a group of
Christians who believed or had faith
that Jesus was a run-ofthe-mill gay or
queer person well I mean any
run-ofthe-mill person who starts a
spiritual tradition is going to be

starting an unenlightened and largely
foolish and delusional religious
system so I mean whether he was queer or
not would be irrelevant if he was just a
run-of-the-mill person starting a
religion then I mean how are you going
to get liberated following the teachings
of someone who is not liberated if
they're just some Normie some gay Normie
saying that it's okay to be
gay then I mean it's not so much their
gayness as as their Norm that is going
to turn that into just a spiritually
destitute spiritual
system so I mean one of my first gurus
or yeah I mean one of my first spiritual
teachers one of the main people that

really got me onto a spiritual path was
ROM Doss and he was bisexual I think he
was more comfortable sleeping with men
than with
women so I mean that part of it is
largely irrelevant so long as they're
not like wearing it on their sleeve and
like promoting like special queer
spirituality or something um you know so
long as it's just spirituality to help
people become enlightened then there's
nothing wrong with that regardless of
who he's sleeping with if he sleeps with
anybody one of the best teachers I ever
had also was gay he was an English
teacher named Mr van

VOR so that part of it is largely
irrelevant I think although you would
expect that a really enlightened being
would probably be celibate probably not
necessarily but probably at least going
with Orthodox terado Buddhism any fully
enlightened being would definitely be
celibate
so yeah so I mean whether if Jesus was
gay or not I mean I don't think he was I
mean and I've been catching flak even
from assuming that Jesus even really
existed as a historical person
but let's assume for the sake of
argument that Jesus was really a human
being even though maybe all of the
stories attributed to him didn't

originate with him you know they just

sort of added on later and let's also

assume that Jesus was

gay

then yeah I mean so long as it's he's

not making an issue of

it um I don't think it's it's really an

issue

but uh it's mainly the the

run-of-the-mill aspect of any spiritual

teacher is going to make what they teach

run-of-the-mill which is not going to

get anybody enlightened unless they they

do it in spite of the teachings rather

than because of them so I'm going to

move on to the next question this is

from Frederick whose name changes every

few weeks so this is the first time he's

asked questions under the name of

Frederick but uh it's okay okay some

people change their name a

lot which in a way is kind of good I

mean it's

uh to to identify with a word like I've

never really identified with my name

much so I'm I'm called by three

different names at least by different

people and it's fine I don't really care

it's just it's just a name so anyways

Frederick

says if dimus Judah Thomas was really

the identical twin of Jesus as syrians

and Indians had believed what if Jesus

appearing to Peter and James after his death was just some practical joke by Jude Thomas that came out of very wrong or right that came out very wrong or right for our civilization so what if doubting Thomas the Apostle Thomas was really the identical twin of Jesus and I don't think so I really don't think so um I don't think he was any brother of Jesus I think he was an apostle but uh assuming for the sake of argument that doubting Thomas was the identical twin of Jesus then Jesus appearing after his death you know like helping the apostles catch fish that kind of thing uh or on the road to emus

or whatever was just a practical joke by
by Thomas yeah I don't think so I mean
he appeared to Thomas himself according
to the the the New Testament and and uh
yeah Thomas because he was doubting
Thomas you know he was doubting that
Jesus really did come back after he died
and then Jesus says you know put stick
your hands into the holes and stick your
finger into the hole in my in my hands
and that kind of thing just to prove to
Thomas that he really did die and then
came back but um yeah this kind of
question is uh I mean it's a
hypothetical question on top of another
hypothetical question is like you know
what if Jesus was a gay Normie you know

now it's what if doubting the Apostle
doubting Thomas was Jesus's identical
twin who had a tendency to make
practical jokes on people um yeah I mean
I don't think so I don't think Jesus was
a gay Norm me and I don't think that the
Apostle Thomas doubting Thomas
uh was Jesus's identical twin with or
without practical
jokes so I mean assuming that it did I
mean it would just add just a little bit
more to um the the Legends really I mean
even if we assume that doubting Thomas
really was Jesus's identical twin and
that he masqueraded as a resurrected
Jesus to fool some of the other apostles

then I mean it certainly wasn't a
deciding factor on whether Christianity
was going to become a world religion or
not um there's a good chance that that
those stories were invented like the
road to emus it's like his own Apostles
didn't even recognize him until later so
it's like maybe they just met someone
who had a weird vibe and then later they
thought wow that must have been Jesus
because it didn't even look like Jesus
when he came to them on the road to
Emmas so yeah I
mean I don't think that it really
matters I don't think it would have
changed anything significantly whether
Thomas pretended to be Jesus resurrected

from the dead or

not I think the course of events would

be essentially essentially the same

either

way and so I'm going to move on to

Frederick's next question

which

is I never was really interested in

Tibetan Buddhism but now I am watching

University level course on Tibetan

Buddhism and the history of Tibet

Professor here says that the Tibetan

Book of the Dead is a 14th century fraud

is it true well I read the the Tibetan

Book of the Dead many years ago before I

was a

monk

and I don't recall if it even States who

the author of the book is maybe it's

attributed to like Padma samaba or

something but I mean a lot of texts are

attributed to people that they really

didn't compose the text and

so uh I me Mahayana Buddhism most of the

text in Mahayana Buddhism are probably

this kind of what what Frederick here is

calling fraud you know it's a forgery

you know it's supposedly by one person

but really it was written by somebody

else that's EXT extremely common you

find it in the Bible you find it in

early Buddhist text you find it in later

Buddhist text you find it in probably

Hinduism I assume I mean probably in
Islam I mean it's just
Universal that people will write
scriptures and attribute them to the
founder of the religion or to some heavy
hitter of the past and it's it's like a
forgery like the what is it the mystical
Theology of the pseudo dianus I mean
that's like a basic text it's like one
of the earliest mystical texts of
Christianity and it's now I mean it was
the person who supposedly wrote it was
dianus the areopagite but and now he's
called the pseudo dianis because in all
likelihood he was like a neoplatonist
philosopher who after the emperor

theodosis shut down the the Greek

philosophical schools he just figured

well if you can't beat him join him and

converted to Christianity and just

brought his neoplatonism a lot of his

mystical ideas into Christianity and

started propagating them so that

Christianity has become more

neoplatonist as a

result there's a lot of Greek philosophy

mixed in with Christianity that most

Christians even are oblivious

to

so um whether the Tibetan Book of the

Dead is a 14th century fraud or

forgery um there's a good chance of it

but I don't really think it matters all

that much I mean if the information in
it is still largely true I don't know
who it's attributed to I don't think
it's attributed to the Buddha
anyway so I mean if it is
helpful to people who are dying and
helpful presumably to people after they
die you know telling you what you're
experience after you die and a lot of it
matches up fairly well with near-death
experiences you know it's like you know
you you rise up and you you go into the
light and you come out and there's this
this higher world you know and you're
meeting all these different beings and
all that sort of thing um yeah that's

that's in the Tibetan Book of the Dead
also so I mean it could be a useful book
regardless of who wrote it or
when and that might be I might be seen
as hypocritical for saying that because
I'm such a stickler with regard to you
know did the Buddha really teach this or
not
but um mainly as a Buddhist I wanted to
follow what the Buddha
taught and so I wanted to find out what
this enlightened being called Goa what
he really taught so I could follow it
because I didn't want to follow just
later you know like later mutations of
Buddhism I didn't want to just follow
along with like some Southeast Asian

tradition I wanted to know what the earliest Buddhism taught and I wanted to follow that as well as I could so with regard to the Tibetan Book of the Dead though I mean Tibetan Buddhism is already deviated quite a distance from the earliest Buddhism so I don't think it would be that much of an issue as to whether it's one of these books that were found you know it's like somebody in the comments under the Youtube video um answered this question to some degree already saying that it's just common in Tibet that you have these found texts like Padma sambava he would hide texts in caves in Tibet and then um

hundreds of years later when people are more ready to receive these teachings they would be found by I can't remember what they're called not a tul cou but you know there's a certain name for people who find the texts and some of these texts probably the overwhelming majority of them were just forgeries you know like the the Tibetan text talking about how Jesus came to Tibet and studied Tibetan Buddhism and then went back and became the the the Jewish Messiah that kind of a thing almost certainly that kind of stuff is just forgeries but with regard to the Tibetan Book of the Dead it's fascinating reading and it may help one to

understand and um like near-death
experiences for example because there is
a lot of
overlap so yeah I mean I really don't
have a dog in this fight I don't really
care that much how ancient the Tibetan
Book of the Dead is I'm not a Tibetan
Buddhist so I can accept whether it was
written in the 14th century or the 4th
Century or the 4th Century BC doesn't
really matter to me so I'm going to move
on to the next question this is from Joe
do and Jo do says what stage of
Enlightenment do you think you
achieved checking make sure it's
recording it's an old habit it's hard to

break but I it is good to check and yes
indeed we are recording so you're going
to see this if if you bother to watch it
so anyways Joo says what stage of
Enlightenment do you think you achieved
in I mean I've answered this kind of
question before and I don't even bother
to go there I'm not sure what the stages
of Enlightenment really are because like
the whole four stages of Enlightenment
starting with stream enterer and then
sakami and then anagami and then
Aran I I I do not consider that to be an
original teaching of the Buddha I think
it got invented later on
um so what stage of Enlightenment do you
think you're better off not even

thinking about it I mean anybody is
better off not even thinking about it
like even if even if you really have
achieved some stage of spiritual
advancement that you're not going to be
thinking wow I've achieved this stage of
spiritual advancement because like The
Diamond Cutter Sutra says which is a
Mahayana text you know even even like a
stream enterer you know they've already
over overcome this self viw and so
they're not going to be thinking I am a
stream enterer I attained stream entry I
mean they've already gone beyond
that so um you're better off just not
even

attempting to figure out or understand
or categorize your level of spiritual
attainment you just keep doing what you
do regardless you know even if you think
you know the truth keep looking for it
even if you think that you're some sort
of Great
Sage then I mean you just keep
practicing just it just gets in the way
just this kind of thinking about what
stage have I achieved and all that it um
it is really not particularly useful or
helpful
so yeah it's hard to say and I wouldn't
venture to categorize my practice to
that or my my level of
advancement I would say that I'm

probably understand dhama better than
the average Buddhist person
but that's just me so I'm just going to
move on to joo's next question which is
did the Buddha say the unenlightened
being is
insane well I think he's referring to uh
a saying found in the poly text which is
in the original poly is putuo UMO which
means the common person is
insane so I mean that might let some of
the higher stages of spiritual
advancement off the hook like an anagami
but um I mean even an anagami until you
are fully enlightened then you're going
to have some delusion so you're going to

have at least a little bit of
insanity but like a a total Normie yeah
I mean they're just stuck in this world
of delusion they they they don't even
realize that they're
deluded and you know they just think
that this delus delusional world that
they live in is reality so yeah yeah the
Buddha did say that or at least the the
texts say that the Buddha said that
so I'm going to move on to the next
question which is from game fap and I
have to I have to I have to admit I will
make the observation that this
particular Q&A has a larger number of
sort of off-the-wall kind of questions
that really don't have much to do with

with with dhama and game fap has has
asked two such questions the first one
is what is South Carolina's barbecue
like
and I'm not aware of eating any
specifically South Carolina Barbecue I
mean there's a few barbecue places that
we've eaten at but whether it was
specifically South Carolina barbecue or
not I can't really say and personally
I've never really been heavily into
barbecue um for some reason they're just
other flavor profiles that I prefer to
that of barbecue sauce so
yeah this is you're probably asking the
wrong question or asking me I'm I'm

really not a

foodie so yeah I'm not exactly sure what

South Carolina Barbecue is like is I

can't really tell barbecues apart you

know I wouldn't know the difference

between North Carolina barbecue and like

Texas barbecue I would not be able to

tell the

difference and so game fap second

question is have you tried any Carolina

Reapers yet and I don't think

so yeah I mean I'm not the kind of

person that that eats a lot of hot

peppers anyway my father would I mean he

liked really spicy food sometimes as a

kid when he would cook it would be hard

to eat the food that he would serve to

us just because it was so hot and he
would go out into the garden and just be
eating these these yellow peppers that I
mean just one of them would have me just
rushing to get a quart of cold water to
drink afterwards and he would just eat
them like
popcorn but uh yeah Carolina Reapers
again I don't think I've I'm unaware of
having eaten a Carolina Reaper and based
on what I've heard about them it's
something that You' probably remember if
you ate
one um in my entire life the hottest
pepper I ever ate was in some Vietnamese
food and it was a little green pepper

that was kind of cone shaped it was
about the size of the sharpened part of
a
pencil and I remember as a monk some B
some Vietnamese people offered this food
and I saw the little green peppers in
there no problem and I bite into one and
immediately it's like like warning
lights are like going off in my mind and
i' I have to think really fast should I
try to eat this or should I spit it out
now and it's like just just the reflex
of chewing it happened again I bit into
it a second time and that was it it was
just like I just had to spit it out and
then I just drank all the water that was
in my little cabin just I mean it was it

was a traumatic experience definitely
but what kind of pepper it was I don't
know was green and like an inch long and
kind of cone shaped and it was I don't
know why people would even do such a
thing as eat these
things so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from not Henry
Porter and whether Henry Porter the real
Henry Porter is watching this or not I
don't know but this one this one is not
Henry Porter and he says why is the goal
to get off the wheel of samsar and cease
to
exist why is the goal to get off the
wheel of samsara and cease to exist well

I mean if you're going to cease to exist
you're going to cease to exist in these
samsaric delusional sense so you're not
really existing to begin with like eart
TOA says anything that's real doesn't
come to an end it's only what is unreal
that begins and passes
away so why is the goal to get off the
wheel of samsar and cease to exist in a
samsaric delusional sense is because
you're trying to overcome delusion and
it's through delusion that you suffer so
you're overcoming delusion and
suffering I mean different people have
different emphases like a more head
oriented person will want to
end delusion whereas a more heart

oriented person will want to end
suffering but it's both the same end I
mean they just it's the same
thing so the goal to get off the wheel
the goal is to get off the wheel of some
Sor and cease to exist although it's not
real
existence is just to end delusion and
suffering
essentially or to to know reality you
know to stop being delusional just
wallowing in this dream world when you
can be at an infinitely higher level of
Consciousness and the next question from
not Henry Porter is along the same lines
I think it's if a soul has reached an

enlightened State why not continue
reincarnation indefinitely to experience
love peace and connection in different
contexts well first of all there is no
soul in
Buddhism so I mean that's just part of
the delusion essentially but see here if
a soul has reached an enlightened State
why not continue reincarnation
indefinitely to experience love peace
and connection in different contexts
because I mean it's
like you can experience love peace and
connection in different
contexts which is an infinitely thin
slice of reality or you can just merge
with the entire infinitude of reality

which contains all of that and

infinitely

more so full Enlightenment is infinitely

better not just way

better it is infinitely better than any

kind of limited perceptual samsaric

State According to some traditions there

are certain beings like neem crley Baba

up on on the top of the bookcase up

there on the altar he may have been

someone who is fully enlightened but

then nevertheless not in order to

experience love peace and connection but

just to help liberate other beings that

they come back and just you know there's

even some Buddhist schools who think

that even after you're enlightened you
can still choose to continue taking
rebirth in order to help liberate other
beings but you don't need to experience
love peace and connection in different
context because you're infinitely beyond
that you're experiencing that plus an
infinitude of other experiences just
because you have merged with infinite
Consciousness I mean God doesn't need to
assume these forms in order to
experience different things in different
contexts that's
delusion it's like an an infinitely thin
slice of reality that has become
self-referential and thinks that it's
separate from everything else and

becomes oblivious to most of what lies
beyond what it identifies
as so I mean why would you want an
infinitely thin slice of reality when
you can have all of
it I mean yeah it's it's
mostly people who don't understand what
enlightenment means or who think that
this is reality somehow that well
they'll think that maybe we're better
off just staying delusional and just
pervaded by unease but it it really
doesn't work that way so I'm going to
move on to the next question this is
from drunk Dr and drunk Dr has blessed
me with this question tell us more about

your obsession with Father Fish how did
you become a big fan of aqu
aquariums well when I was a kid like
maybe 13 years old I had an aquarium
like a little 10 gallon Community tank
and even before that I've always loved
animals I've Loved nature I became a
biologist I studied biology in in
University mainly because of a lifelong
Fascination for and love for Animals
especially plants maybe not so much but
still just animals fascinate me just the
various forms they take and just it's
just like the the life force you know
life has this quality that that
inanimate objects don't generally have
and that is that they are striving to

remain in existence you know they're adjusting and adapting and responding to their environment and so forth and it's just this life force like like schopenhauer talks about when he talks about will you know it's just this will to to like propagate itself and and just like fill every Niche you know just do as much as you can and anyways I've always been fascinated by that and so I've Loved animals when I was a kid I had lots of pets I had hamsters I had lizards had pet salamanders raised chickens in my bedroom which was a bad idea I have to admit you know I had like this little

incubator and I hatched baby chicks but then when you turn them loose in the chicken yard when they get too big to keep in your bed room you turn them loose in the chicken yard and they get pecked to death because they're at the bottom of the pecking order they don't have a mama to protect them it was a bad idea I have to admit so anyways in addition to all that I had an aquarium this little 10 gallon aquarium and I kind of cringe now thinking back on that aquarium you know had like bright blue gravel and plastic plants and that kind of thing but I had this idea of getting another aquarium just because I I mean I have a degree in Marine Biology I like

fishes and just Aquatic Life it's just fascinating to me life began in in water and so you know there's entire Fila of creatures that live only in water they can't live on dry land there's no terrestrial starfish for example no terrestrial jellyfish so I mean I've always been fascinated by life and Aquatic Life and before I became a monk when I was in my mid 20s I kept thinking thinking about getting another aquarium going so that like when I first became a monk one of my main problems with meditation like one of the main things I'd be thinking about instead of focusing on the main

the primary object of meditation is what kind of fish would I get if I had an aquarium that kind of thing and so this this aquarium here is a way sort of wish fulfillment from before I was a monk where I always wanted to have cherry barbs and just wanted to see what it was like to have cherry barbs now I got a little school of cherry barbs always wanted to get dwarf gamis now I got three dwarf gamis so in a way it's kind of a fulfillment of of these dreams I had as as a young person but also one reason why I like this aquarium so much is I mean my birthday was last month and uh I could have saved a lot of money by getting something called a

biosphere

and it was supposedly developed by NASA

and it was a glass ball you know not a

very big one just a hollow glass ball no

air can get in you know it's just sealed

off the only thing they can get in is

heat and light plus you know like

neutrinos or something and inside that

glass ball was some

seawater probably sterilized I'm not

sure a little bit of sand for some

reason that little bit of sand at the

bottom was necessary so some seaweed and

some shrimp and it was just a

self-contained ecosystem you know the

shrimp would feed on the seaweed and

then they would peep pee and poop and
then that would serve as um fertilizer
for the seaweed you know it was just
this self-contained self-perpetuating
system and I find that fascinating I was
really interested in ecology there's a
good chance if I hadn't become a monk I
would have gotten like a a master's
degree in some kind of ecology cuz te
ology is interesting because it's like
the the interconnected web of all this
these these different systems you know
it's like seeing the big picture you're
not just specializing in one genus of
nematode worms for example it's like
you're seeing the whole big picture and
so the the the company that made the

biospheres actually went out of business
I was going to get one of those instead
of one of these it'd be a lot
cheaper and it turned out they went out
of business they got like cheap dumb
imitations of it on on Amazon but I
didn't want one of those so now I'm kind
of going for the whole balanced
ecosystem thing in this aquarium and I
found Father Fish on YouTube who he's
like the guru of the natural lowtech
aquarium where you've got a food web you
know this balanced ecosystem it's like a
microcosm contained in this glass
box and so it's just fascinating to me
so in addition to the wish wish

fulfillment of cherry barbs and dwarf gamis it's it's like an Asian themed tank so the fish species and the plants and everything for the most part not entirely but for the most part are from Asia um yeah in addition to the wish fulfillment there's also just this fascination of setting up a self contained self- sustaining living system and I did fail Father Fish it I I discovered Father Fish on YouTube after I had already laid down the substrate which is just coarse sand but it turns out that it's way easier to get to develop this ecosystem this food web if you have a layer of potting soil or some kind of dirt under the sand because then

the the plant roots reach down into that
they grow better than if their roots are
just in sand so I'm I've got uh a
challenge in that I'm going to have
to develop my own soil you know it's
just going to be maybe two years of
decaying plant material I've got dead
leaves in there and sticks and and just
fish poop and all that kind of stuff is
eventually going to form a kind of soil
that will then make the the aquarium
more ecologically balanced so that
ultimately it may be unnecessary to have
a filter to do water changes even to
feed the fish that it's all just you
know You' got bacteria IA feeding on the

decaying fish poop and and dead plants
and then you've got protozoans feeding
on the bacteria then you've got like
little crustations feeding on the
protozoans and and worms and so forth
and then you got Fish Feeding on that
and then of course the fish are pooping
and peeing and then
refertilized to me and also I mean i'
I've mentioned this before before I had
a fish tank that a kind of Elementary
meditation is a very calming very nice
form Pleasant form of meditation is you
just sit in front of a fish tank and
just watch the fish silently gliding
around that it's for for someone who's
not good at meditation or just a normi

who has no concept of meditation you
just got a stressful job then it's it's
very nice you just come home sit down in
front of the fish tank and just watch
the fish just silently gliding around
and it's very relaxing and calming and
just has this soothing clarifying effect
on your mind so there is a certain
amount of Dharma in keeping a fish tank
also but
it's one one aspect of Dharma for me
though is the whole microcosm aspect and
the whole life force thing about how
life just balances itself out you know
it's like um
how do I put this like a lot of novice

aquarium Keepers or just people who want like a sterile tank that it it'll get overrun by something you know there'll be like a bacteria Bloom and the water will turn all white and cloudy or there'll be like some kind of little worm gets in there and just like has a population explosion that's because it is not an ecological balance if you've got all kinds of like a wide diversity of organisms living in that tank nothing can really get out of balance because there's always something eating those and so if they start to explode the population of the things that feed on them are going to get bigger and just cause the population to go back down

again so just having my own little world
back there is kind of nice
too so anyways I think I answered Dr
drunk DRS question and there is a good
chance I am going to produce just just
for the hell of it just a video just
about that that aquarium back there at
some point although I think I may have
already mentioned that my horn word is
kind of scraggly I got it in the mail a
couple days ago and uh I want it to kind
of bush out and look a little Greener
before I start showing off my aquarium
close
up so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from yugao and

yugao says please give us an opinion on
Melinda and nagasena dialogue how legit
is it so he's referring to the Melinda
paa the questions of King Melinda and
King Melinda is was actually a Greek
General turned King his his real name
was
mandros and he had he was like the king
of a relatively kind of a largish
kingdom he was one of the most
successful indog Greek Kings so he had
carved out some territory in
Northwestern India maybe parts of what
is now
Pakistan mandros he's actually mentioned
in I think it's strabo or one of the the
Greek chroniclers mentions or it might

even be uh oh what was his name who did
the plutar I think Plutarch mentioned
him as an example of a righteous
King
so give us an opinion on on Melinda and
nagasena dialogue well first of all um
it's not canonical that king mandros or
King Melinda lived like in the first
century BC approximately like kind of
around the beginning of the Christian
era so he was hundreds of years after
the time of the Buddha nevertheless it's
part of the burmes toptica so it is
canonical in Burma it is considered to
be canonical is part of the Burmese poly
toptica but um as I say it's much later

you know it's I think the ties and the
the the salies do not consider it to be
canonical like the polych society does
not consider the Melinda paa to be
canonical um one thing I would say is
that probably nagaa was not a terraa
Buddhist there is evidence that nagaa
was like a sarasti Vada Buddhist and
that that area that King Melinda was
king of was really suras territory there
were other schools of Buddhism too but
the the experts are of the opinion that
nagaa probably was not a Terra Buddhist
it may have been adjusted a little bit
to make it more Orthodox for terot of
Buddhists but also the the experts
consider I think AK water in this book

might be one of them he mentions the
Indo Greeks and and Mila and all that
um that uh he mentions that that
probably the Melinda PA has two parts
the first part is the older part and
then there's a second part that has a
somewhat different vibe to it that is
considered to be a later addition which
might be like the Terra vadens adding
something that's more emphatically Terra
Vaden at at the end of this thing in
order to kind of bring it into terraa
more
effectively um I've never read the
entire thing and um from based on the
excerpts I have read from the molinda

paa I really it's it's really not my
style it's sort of very dogmatic and
kind of philosophical in a very kind of
verbose complicated kind of a way which
I do not think is really the best way of
approaching dhama by just you know
excess cerebral
activity but I mean if you want to be
literate in terraa Buddhism I mean
certainly wouldn't hurt to read it to at
least to know what it says so I mean
you're familiar with it you can make
intelligent comments about it for
example but um yeah the main two main
things I would say about it or three
main things one you know it's hundreds
of years after the time of the Buddha so

I mean it's not really representing early Buddhism two there's a good chance that it wasn't originally a Terra Buddhist document it may have it was probably you know some other school like sarvastivada that maybe got adjusted to make it more Terra Vaden and I mean if you really wanted to be scholarly about it you could read some other version of the Melinda paa which might exist out there you know from some other school and see how they compare and third that it's really supposedly in two parts an older part and a newer part so the first half of it approximately would be the older more reliable Melinda paa which

may actually contain you know like
information on the an actual dialogue
between between the Greek king mandros
and um this this Monk
nagasa and the second part would be less
reliable in that regard probably it'd be
all probably all Apocrypha the second
half of
it so I'm just going to move on to
yuga's second question here what is your
opinion on all this anti-islamic actions
that are going on around the world and I
mean I'm not exactly sure what he's
referring to anti-islamic actions that
are going on around the world I mean
there's like protests against um like
Muslim migrants in Europe that I've

heard about there's you know the war

between like Israel and and

Gaza which uh I mean in a way the Jews

are attacking Muslims although they're

not attacking them because they're

Muslims then of course you've got like

the 969 movement in Burma which is

resisting you

know um Muslim immigration they're

they're resisting you know Islam getting

enough of a foothold in Burma that it

can start to take

over you know in in the in the eyes of

these 969 movement participators

so all these this anti-islamic actions

going on around the world I mean aside

from that I mean you you've got uh the Chinese government that has been just persecuting and just genociding the weager
Muslims um but I I don't see it all as connected really I mean it's different reasons for it I mean the the probably the predominant reason like in Europe and Burma is just the the native inhabitants of those countries not wanting like Sharia law in their country you know they don't want people who are moving in and refusing to assimilate assimilate is the the word that I couldn't think of earlier and just setting up like many Muslim countries in like inner cities and so

forth and Muslims for some reason on
average going with Statistics they are
more violent than the average European
or Burmese citizen
so what is my opinion all I mean I
really don't I'm not 100% sure of what
yugao is referring to all this
anti-islamic actions that are going on
around the world different parts of the
world have different different actions
different reasons for their actions and
so
forth so I mean in America You Don't See
Much anti-islamic action going on other
than some people who just do not want
more Muslim immigrants

but

um and and they just don't assimilate

very well I mean that's mainly the the

problem that they're having is just um

the problem that they are perceiving

anyway is just you have these immigrants

come in and then they just refuse to

assimilate to the culture and try to set

up a very foreign culture you know based

on Islam that they don't want in their

own country especially if they become

intolerant and and like you know

fanatical or hostile or

whatever

so yeah I mean that's that's my opinion

I guess because I'm really not 100% sure

what yugao is referring

to uh it may be that he's referring
mainly to like
anti-islam immigrant protests in Europe
you know it's like all a Muslim has to
do is like stab to death some European
child and people people start protesting
against it and then they wind up in
prison on mass for protesting against
the child being stabbed or raped or
whatever by some Muslim
immigrant so yeah I do think that people
living in a the citizens of a country
should have some say over who is allowed
to enter their country and take up
residence
there but I mean the globalist agenda

just doesn't give a [__] about that and
it's causing considerable problems and
the globalists probably knew that that
was going to happen and didn't really
care they figured it was worth it in the
long
run so I'm just going to move on to Yu's
next question give us five reasons
planet earth has any use of human beings
well I mean how could planet Earth have
any use of anything really I mean any
use of human beings I mean you could you
could say that planet Earth is a
conscious being called
Gia um but why would why would planet
Earth have any use for human beings I
mean the only use for human beings that

I can think of would be it would cause
the small G Gods you know higher powers
to take more interest in Earth because
human beings are kind of interesting I
mean obviously planet Earth is more
interesting than some Dead Planet like
Venus assuming that Venus has no life on
it so I mean just the weird stuff that
people do the weird changes that we are
making to the planet on a well I mean
it's the the changes we're making on the
planet are relatively minor because the
planet is so big and we are so
small but um I mean that's the
only
real use

that planet Earth would have of human
beings that I know of I mean I I can't
see how there'd be any other I mean any
other significant impact I think is is
causing some sort of higher beings
whether they're aliens or small G gods
or Angels or whatever you want to call
them to pay more attention to Earth
maybe have a little more influence on
what's going on in Earth maybe they're
more likely to intervene on Earth's
behalf that kind of a thing
that's that's the only thing I can think
of so I I can't come up with five
reasons I mean ultimately planet Earth
doesn't have any use at all maybe that's
what he's trying to get to is that

planet Earth really doesn't have any use
for the human race I mean there the
Earth would be interesting fascinating
even without humans because you got all
these other life forms that are doing
their thing you know causing Earth to be
just a much larger version of that
aquarium whereas just this this balanced
system or at least what that quarium I
hope will someday
become so it could be fascinating for
higher beings and they're just watching
to see what happens next or
something so I'm just going to move on
to the next question which is from David
and David says there are three methods

to escape the cycle of rebirth and
become immortal oh one okay let me start
over there are three methods to escape
the cycle of rebirth
one become immortal like a zoi that's
I'm I'm impressed whenever people come
up with stuff from Burmese
culture become immortal like a zoi to be
reborn first you have to die and an
immortal doesn't die two complete
Annihilation on every level nothing to
be reborn and three the third method is
one of the Buddhist methods and involves
freeing oneself from all desires and
aversions this method is least
understandable while the other two are
self-evident I'm not entirely sure that

complete Annihilation is not also a
Buddhist method what does it mean to be
blown out for
example okay well with regard to his
first method to become immortal like a
zoi that's zois come from burmes
folklore I guess and a zoji is like um
an alchemist or magician who has found
the secret of immortality so they are
Immortal being beings
but they're not fully Immortal I mean
everyone's going to die sooner or later
I mean what happens when the Universe
goes through heat death you know
everything just runs down due to um
what's the

word oh man I should remember this in

not

inertia oh gosh it's law of second law

of

Thermodynamics how can I remember the

second law of ther Dynamics and not

remember the the

term anyways uh you know everything just

runs down you know like the sun has gone

out the sun has gone Nova you know the

Earth no longer exists I mean what's

this zoji gonna do just float around in

space get sucked into a star and just

stay sucked into the star unable to die

for billions of years until the the star

explodes and then the zoi shoots through

space and he's just like tumbling end

over through through outer space for you
know millions and millions of years
until they get sucked into another star
or until the entire universe under goes
heat
death man how come I can't remember that
word it's weird but there's the second
law of Thermodynamics everything tends
to to run down you know there's always a
certain loss of efficiency I think
that's the first first law of
thermodynamics is there's always going
to be a loss of nothing's going be 100%
efficient there's always going to be a
certain amount of friction or whatever
that's causing you know a certain amount

of heat to be generated which is lost to

the

system

man that is just so weird is that the

whole word is escaping me so anyways

that's with regard to zois I mean even a

zoi is not completely Immortal so you're

not going to get off the wheel of birth

and death by becoming an immortal being

because sooner or later you're going to

die I assume that if someone just went

up to a zoi and just just fired away at

Point Blank Range with a Mossberg pump

shotgun that that zoi would would

eventually stop being

alive so I mean they just sort of

overcome the aging process but still you

know they're not bulletproof and they're not going to just be able to get sucked into a star and remain alive sucked into that
star so let's just rule out number one number two complete Annihilation on every level I don't think that's possible either I mean if we assume that Einstein is correct with regard to the four dimensionality of SpaceTime time is just the fourth dimension so even if you annihilate at point you know let's say you annihilate tomorrow you just poof out of existence tomorrow the past still exists according to Einstein according to Saras Buddhism also so so you're

still exist in time you know you're still there before before you poof out of existence tomorrow but if time is just the fourth dimension then in a sense we're all we're always Immortal everything's always going to exist we're going with my Theory of Everything which is the the simile of the block of marble then there's no way you can completely annihilate you're always going to be in that block of marble there's no way to escape from that so you get to the third method and uh he says the third method is one of the Buddhist methods and involves freeing oneself from all desires and aversions so you just transcend the

delusion you are no longer fooled by the
delusion and it stops having such an
effect on you you're no longer enslaved
to it you're no longer captive
to um some sorrow
really so that's really the only the way
the only way is just to rise above the
delusion and then all the like the the
unenlightened you that is still there
existing in the past or the
unenlightened you that is still existing
in the uncarved block become
irrelevant because they were never real
to begin with see that's that's one
thing that that a lot of people have
difficulty comprehending is that you

never really existed to begin with that
we don't really exist as conscious
beings that this is generated an
artifact of
perception it's it's an artifact of
delusion so I mean it's like it's not
that you cease to exist it's that
eventually you realize that you never
really existed to begin with that there
just is no self to be
liberated and so all these illusory
selves that are stuck in time or stuck
in the block of marble become
irrelevant so
let's see towards the end here he's got
a question mark see I'm not entirely
sure what complete Annihilation is not

also a Buddhist meth oh I'm not entirely
sure that complete Annihilation is not
also a Buddhist method yeah a lot of
people that don't understand mysticism
will say that that's that Nirvana is
just Extinction but that's not really
the case and what does it mean to be
blown out for example and I don't have
the book here just a second I'm gonna go
over here and do this and grab this book
and maybe I'll find it without spending
five minute searching for it saying
where is that where where' it go it's in
here some here by golly the very first
page I opened the book to it's just as a
flame tossed by force of wind quickly

goes to its cessation and subjects not
itself to any designation so the sage
released from the mass of names quickly
goes to his ation and subjects not
himself to any designation so that's one
of the earliest
references in Buddhism really to what
blowing out means and and nibbana or
Nirvana regardless of folk etymologies
and so forth like aano tries to
translate nibana as unbinding but
literally it means blowing out right
here just as a flame tossed by force of
wind quickly goes to its cessation and
subjects not itself to any
designation um so the sage released from
the mass of names or the

namaka quickly goes to his cessation and
subjects not himself to any designation
so I think the idea originally in
Ancient India and I think ajan tanro
agrees with this fact I think I got the
idea from him is that fire was a god
fire was the god ugy in ancient India
and so the god was unmanifest I mean he
was there in potential form everywhere
and he would just become like manifest
in the form of a flame but then when the
flame got blown out it wasn't that it
really ceased to exist it just went back
into an unmanifest
form
so um that's kind of what your

Consciousness does you know it's it's
like when you're an unenlightened being
you know you've got your mind that's you
know the the flickering flame kind of a
deal but then when when you get blown
out niad to blow
out then it just becomes unmanifest
again you know it just kind of merges
back into the the the
formless formless infinitude so to
speak so and I might as well add this
translation of the yaka waga was
excerpts from the parion awaga that I
that I wrote years and years ago I mean
that would be another very important uh
book along with these other books that
were asked about with regard to

understanding what the earliest Buddhism
was like in fact the ateka waga whoever
translates it you don't have to read my
translation if you don't want to um and
it's possibly the most important text
for understanding what the earliest
teachings of Buddhism were all
about so what does it mean to be blown
out it's the mass of names is blown out
you know it's it's delusion it's it's
the whole idea that this is reality you
just rise above it you transcend it you
go beyond it doesn't mean that this goes
away necessarily it just becomes
irrelevant you know it's not you anymore
you're not perceiving it as you

anymore

so then again what does it mean to be

blown out I mean you're getting into the

realm of stuff that you cannot describe

in words because you can't really figure

it out intellectually you can't

understand it or grasp it

intellectually this perception just

cannot go there it cannot touch

it

so I'm going to move on to the next

question which is another one of these

questions that really doesn't have much

to do with Buddhism it is as follows

this is from White Ash Piper

white ash Piper says why is it that

Halloween music seems spooky or is it

m um why does Halloween music seem

spooky well music is itself a kind of

language it's a nonverbal language

especially if there's no

singing and it's sort

of it's eliciting emotional

responses so it's like pattern sounds

that cause certain emotions to arise in

a human

being and I mean that's one reason why I

never like country music because I just

never like the kind of Normy emotions

that country music causes to arise

whereas rock and roll you've got you

know it causes emotions of like power

and exhilaration to arise which I

appreciate more than the emotions that

arise from some guy singing in a twangy

voice with a twangy guitar about looking

for love in honky

ton so I suppose Halloween music is just

the kind of music the kind of pattern

sounds that cause sort of a spooky

emotional feeling to arise in the human

mind for whatever reason know it tend to

be slower music kind of dark

slow sort of weird music you know there

there' be like a feeling of weirdness to

it

so and that's that's I mean that's the

best I can do you can just take that

ball and run with it if you please

because I'm really no Authority on

Halloween

music so I'm just going to move on the

next question this is from ruie we've

been going for less than two hours so

golie we just getting started sort of

sort

of ruie says hello poo an old

acquaintance has recently decided to

check out by fasting until the end the

process was relatively fast due to his

old age and extremely frail Health

ravaged by seven plus Decades of polio

what do you think of this method from

the karmic point of view well I remember

reading long time ago some spiritual

teacher I'm not sure who it was could

have been aan cha could have been

maharaji up on the the altar there I

don't remember who it was that said it

but he did say that if you want to

Auto terminate then you're not supposed

to say the SW word on YouTube if you

want to Auto terminate then the best way

to do it is to starve yourself and I

think the reason for that is that you

have plenty of time to change your mind

if you're not 100% sure and also it

gives you a lot of insight into what

it's like you know as because it's a

gradual

process so yeah I mean it makes sense I

mean if I were going to Auto terminate

not that I'm planning on it but I don't

think I would follow that

method but

um yeah I've this isn't the first case

of this that I've heard about I knew

somebody else who had a a dear friend

who decided to just end it all they had

you know health issues they weren't

getting any better they were just

getting worse and they were relatively

elderly already they just fasted until

they weren't alive anymore

so I mean I think we should have the

right to Auto terminate if that seems

appropriate that's that's like a

Christian thing that uh you know that

the sword is a sin you know PL or not

Plato Dante's Inferno had a special
Circle in hell just for people who did
that and uh you know it's like you're
rejecting a gift from God by doing that
but in Pagan Rome for example sometimes
it was your duty you know if you were a
a soldier who Dishonored yourself or
Dishonored The Legion then it was your
duty to fall on your sword for
example you know there quite a few
people who Auto terminated in ancient
Rome like like what was it KO the
younger I think was one who um after he
heard that Julius Caesar had won the
Civil War and was going to be you know
dictator for life that uh he just opened
his veins so to

speak and there's Anthony and Cleopatra
I think Anthony he tried to fall on his
sword and messed it up and and it didn't
work right and he died a lingering death
because he he he fell on his sword
incorrectly and then of course you had
the the Samurai and all that who had
their sepac coup but um yeah I
mean what do I think of this method from
the karmic point of view I do think that
it might be preferable to certain other
ways I mean if you're if you're going to
cease metabolizing regardless of why
that is regardless of you know whether
you doing it yourself it's an accident
it's old age sickness whatever it is

then you're better off in as conscious
of a state as possible I mean you
wouldn't want to just be drugged into a
stuper on narcotics or something you
know you wouldn't want to D a drunken
car crash that kind of a thing because
you want to be as alert and conscious as
possible in your last moment that to
some respects the most important moment
of your entire life is the last one
because that determines your your
bearing your heading going into the next
one and that's why for example Mahatma
Gandhi when he got shot he said heyam as
he was dying it wasn't like in the movie
where he's saying oh God like they got
me no it was like he wanted his mind

focused on God as his last conscious
thought which would help him in in his
next existence assuming that he had one
so it was like Hey God it wasn't like oh
God they got it was hey God just he
wanted his mind focused on God and so
you know no matter how it is that you're
going to experience your final moment
you should do it in as wholesome and
conscious and clear and alert way as you
possibly
can so for different people that would
imply different things I suppose you
know that different people would have
different best
ways of ceasing to

metabolize so with regard to uh this uh
this person who uh was over 70 years old
with polio and all that I'm I'm I'm not
exactly sure you know how it would work
for him cuz I mean going hungry for
weeks I mean that can be very
unpleasant so yeah I I'm not exactly
sure what the best way would
be so I'm just going to move on to ru's
next
question which is what do you think of
aan Buddha dasa's notion of doic
socialism and I have to admit
I really do not keep up with Thai
Buddhism much I mean I was ordained in a
Burmese tradition the only Thai
monks that I really know something about

would be aan shaw you know I've read
some of his books I've met and have seen
on YouTube and so forth you know various
and read in books various Disciples of
aan CHA who talk about aan cha also aan
mun I read his really bizarre
autobiography that was maybe or maybe it
was a biography written by ajan Mahaba I
know a little bit about aan Mahaba and
that's about it I don't really know very
much about Thai monks like famous ones
like Burmese monks like like mahasi
seato or Ley Seattle or you know sh um
Seattle or Tulu Seattle like these
burmes seatt I know significantly more
about their biographies and their you

know what their teachings than I do
about Thai Buddhism and anjan Buddha
Dasa I really don't know hardly anything
about him so I don't know what his
notion of domic socialism
is I mean socialism can be domic but
you'd have to have relatively wise
people participating in it I mean any
kind of Communism
like um you know if everyone was an
arant then you might just naturally have
a kind of communism because nobody would
have any idea of I Me Mine there would
be no person personal property everyone
would just share equally but normies
don't make good Communists nearly as
well as advanced sages do it would have

to be voluntary for starters like in the Acts of the Apostles in the New Testament it was essentially a communistic system i' I've brought this up in Breitbart comments before and just get just massively downvoted because Christians don't want to think that Christianity has anything to do with Communism but you read the act of the apostles and it was everyone would pull their resources and it would be distributed according to need which was communistic you know they had a commune going you know the the earliest Apostles of Jesus the ones in Jerusalem anyway but it has to be voluntary you

can't just force communism on people
that still have natural human Greed for
example selfishness it just doesn't work
very well and so then you have to
enforce at
gunpoint and have you know secret police
pounding on doors in the middle of the
night
so doic socialism I mean any kind of
socialism I suppose can work so long as
it's
voluntary um but the
more I mean the less Advanced the people
are the less likely it's going to be
successful like socialism it it just
blows my mind that you still have people
who endorse Marxism for example despite

over a century now of stagnant and
failed economies
totalitarianism and occasionally
genocide it's like no amount of evidence
to the contrary is going to persuade
these people that Marxism sucks that
it's just a horrible idea it might look
good in theory you know it might look
good on paper but when it's tried in
reality it doesn't
work but what Buddha das's notion of
domic socialism is I'm not sure I mean
even monks according to terraa Buddhism
they're not completely communistic or
socialistic I mean they are allowed to
have personal property at the very least

they own the eight requisites you know

they got their bowl and their robe and

their belt and their water filter their

razor and their

needle and probably sitting cloth

too

so yeah I I'm just kind of rambling

compensating for the fact that I really

don't know what aan Bud's notion of

condic socialism

is but socialism in general you know it

a certain amount of socialism is is a

good thing I suppose like pure I mean if

everything was private property you know

the highway ways would be private

property the you know just everything

it'd be owned by somebody it wouldn't be

owned by the the people at large you
know like there'd be no national parks
you know no public highways no Postal
Service anything like that it would all
be capitalized and I mean to some degree
uh having capitalistic competition like
you know the postal service is competing
was like UPS and FedEx and so forth
which causes them to be on their toes if
you have a monopoly on something
it tends to go downhill because if
you've got capitalistic competition you
know it keeps the the quality of the
product higher and the price lower
because if you have a monopoly then you
got crappy quality and high

prices so let's see

here I forgot where I was going with

that but I guess it's sufficient in and

of

itself oh yeah a certain amount of

socialism you know Public School and so

forth for people who can't afford to

send their children to private schools

you know it it kind of makes sense but

when you're getting up to the level of

equity where everyone is supposed to get

equal outcome then it just completely

ignores that some people are clever

other people are stupid some people are

energetic other people are lazy you know

it's like the people who are smart and

work hard and have a good work

ethic they should do better than the
people who don't and instead the people
who don't just complain and vote
Democrat with their hands out for free
handouts so yeah socialism in general
does not work very well although
inoculating a certain amount of it you
know it's
like I I'm I'm not even opposed to a
certain degree of socialized medicine
where you've got like I mean this
existed way back in like the 1960s
and70s where you had free clinics I mean
you wouldn't go there to get
like surgery or anything but at least
you know you'd have some trained doctor

or nurse who' look you over and you know
if it was something that could be fixed
with some pills and you didn't have the
money you know they'd give you the
pills I'm I'm not opposed to that but
just to have the government playing God
like like Canada's starting to do where
they're picking and choosing well you're
going to be too expensive for the
taxpayers for us to cure you so you're
just going to have to die and you know
this kind of thing you're better off uh
just kind of leaving that to your own
cleverness and IND industry to decide
whether or not you can afford to get
yourself
fixed too much compassion pretty much

destroys darwinian survival of the
fittest and pretty much destroys any
kind of positive direction of evolution
when you know the sickest
stupidest laziest people are having the
most
kids then what is to be expected of
society a generation or two down the
road it shouldn't be that hard to figure
out so I think I'm just going to move on
next question I'm just kind of rambling
at this
point next question is from Romeo and
Romeo says after I belch
slightly one more time okay Romeo says
as I understand it there are six

personality types according to terava
Buddhism the three UNH wholesome types
are aversive or Dosa greedy or
Loba and diluted or mooha and the three
wholesome ones are faithful or Sada wise
or PA and thoughtful and inquiring or
waaka in one of your past q&as you made
a brief reference to how the aversive
personality type may be more apt to
achieve enlight M due to their being
easily irritated by some Sor and thus
less attached to it as such an aversive
type I found that Insight very eye
openening well good so his first
question here with that as a preamble is
do you have any other insights or advice
for the aversive personality type well

this whole system of six personality

types comes from the wisi Maga which is

not canonical but it's the main

commentarial work in terava

Buddhism so I

mean well I won't go there I'll just

I'll just move I'll just continue here

so do I have any other insights or

advice for the aversive personality type

there's not really a whole lot of

discussion of these six personality

types um but it does say that the best

meditation for an aversive personality

type would be meta meditation where

you're cultivating loving kindness

um although meditation on the breath is

is beneficial for pretty much
everybody I mean mainly it's good for
people who think too much but it's it
works for everybody so do I have any
other insights or advice for the
aversive personality type um well that
would be the the main one from the wisi
MAA the wisi Maga recommends meta
meditation for people with the Dosa
personality type um but other insights
or advice for people with the Dosa
personality type is I mean you have to
be mindful and do your best not to take
out your aversion on other people I mean
if you restrain your outward words and
and actions then it can be to your
advantage because it does help you to

turn away from worldliness and live a
more spiritual life because if you got
if if you're irritated by everything
then it helps you to just start avoiding
the world you know just renounce the
world and strive for enlightenment but
of course you have to be careful about
taking out your aversion your Dosa onto
the beings around you because then
you're making bad karma for yourself I
mean you're making Bad Karma anyway just
by having aversive thoughts I mean
that's in a way you're playing with
fire so I mean you should just wallow in
it but it can help to guide you away
from the world and worldliness you know

if you've got a version for the world

you know it's easier to renounce the

world but still you have to be careful

because DOA is an UNH wholesome mental

state and the more you like indulge in

that especially if you're like

externalizing it by you know making

snotty remarks at people or you know

whatever it is cutting somebody off CU

you're mad at them on the on the on the

street or whatever

um then you're going to be making Bad

Karma and just making things more

difficult for yourself at the same

time so that

was that was Romeo's first question the

second question also based on this this

overall theme do you have any insights or advice both from your own observations and or based on Buddhist teachings for the other two UNH wholesome personality types well the Loba personality type the main meditation technique recommended for the person with the Loba or greed temperament is the defilements of the body the 32 parts of the body you know the the foulness of the body so that's I think if I remember correctly the wiui Maga specifically recommends that meditation technique for people with the the the Loba personality type and with delusion I think just I think it's

meditation on breathing just mindfulness
of breathing which is good for for
everybody it's like a Panacea works for
everybody so let's
see the other two wholesome yeah I mean
the person with the Loba personality
type or the the greed the attraction
personality type you know they've got um
more difficulty from a daric point of
view I mean they might be making less
like
um you know offensive Karma you know
they're like offending fewer people
maybe you know they're they're causing
less suffering to others through their
actions and words but still it's like
they're Bound by a silken cord you know

instead of being bound by a chain

they're Bound by this silk and rope

because they're attracted to pleasure

you know they're they're addicted to

pleasure and so it's much more difficult

to renounce something that you like than

to renounce something that you dislike

so um let's see

here

advice on the other two UNH wholesome

personality types yeah with regard to

delusion though people with the moha

personality type they're just pretty

much stuck because I mean to the extent

that you're aware that you're diluted

you're not diluted anymore to the extent

that you are aware of your Insanity to
that extent you're actually sane or like
it says in the dapada you know the fool
who is aware of his own foolishness is
at least wise to that
extent so I mean with regard to the moha
personality type or the delusional
personality type is just try to try to
at least be aware of the delusion you
know just know thyself but it's hard
because you can be mindful of Attraction
and aversion but it it's virtually
impossible to be mindful of delusion in
the present moment I mean in retrospect
you can think wow I was pretty
delusional at that time but while it's
happening you cannot be mindful of your

own delusion because to the extent that
you're aware of it you're not deluded
anymore so yeah the person who is
delusional and not even aware that they
are delusional they're just pretty much
stuck I mean it's very hard to help such
a person other than helping them in a
superficial way you know just just by
not hitting them with sticks and so
forth not poking at
them
so I guess I guess I answered that
question so I'm just going to move on to
Romeo's thirdd question here which is
which of these personality types do you
or did you most resonate with I remember

when I was a junior Monk and I was
reading the wiui Maga and I was
mentioning the these six personality
types and I asked asked one of my
teachers my main teacher venerable
UIA which one he thought I belong to and
he just started laughing and he said
Dosa because when I was a junior monk I
was very disillusioned you know I was
very idealistic going into the song guy
you know I thought I was going to be
joining the Brotherhood of men who are
striving diligently for enlightenment
and they'd all be wiser than me because
they'd all been striving longer than me
because I was just a rookie and then I
actually experience the reality of like

an Asian Buddhist Monastery where most
of the people really are not striving
for enlightenment at all they just want
to live an easy life or whatever you
know they just want to earn Merit for a
good rebirth or something and I was very
just D you know just
Sullen and so yeah um I definitely was
predominating with delsa just in the
form of just sullenness back then and
you know I can I can definitely relate I
think I'm kind of a mixture of various I
don't think I'm just one predominant
type I assume I've got sort of the
intellectual
inquisitive aspect of personality to me

I've got a certain amount of Dharma you
know just sort of the wisdom aspect I
suppose along with a few
others so yeah I think it would be a mix
maybe DOA and the WEA and the bod
kind of a mixture of that somehow I
don't know what the proportions would be
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question here and this is from maximan
or yeah
maximan who was the first Barbarian
emperor of Rome
allegedly and maximan says I've heard
you mention the left provoking Mass
hysteria and was curious if you've
researched the specifics of project 2025
which is basically a TR adjacent plan to

implement Christian nationalism and
authoritarianism well I mean what do
Trump adjacent mean I mean it means that
there are like Ultra conservatives who
are going to vote for Trump just because
he's the most conservative person
running I mean
if and and so they've come up with this
Christian nationalism agenda that Trump
was not involved in formulating and he
has distanced himself from and anyone
who gives Trump a fair hearing who
listens to him talk would know full well
that Trump is not going to implement any
kind of Christian nationalism or
authoritarianism in America this is all

propaganda this is the kind of mass
hysteria coming from the left that has
people
believing that that Trump is somehow
some Mastermind or or some even just
some Pawn or puppet of project 2025
that's Trump adjacent which simply means
people who are going to vote for Trump
have come up with this just I mean it's
like you've got Communists who are going
to vote Democrat because the Democratic
party is the farest left party that is
likely to win an
election that plausibly could win an
election also you got like white
nationalists and so forth who vote
Republican simply because they're

Republican party is the farthest left or
the farthest right I
mean so yeah I mean this is just an
example of the kind of propaganda that
the left is I mean they're just doing
anything they can to throw shade on on
Donald
Trump so yeah provoking hysteria I mean
seriously like compare project 2025
which is just words on paper essentially
that Trump is might give just a Teensy
bit of attention to but he's not going
to implement it I mean that's pretty
obvious anyone who knows Trump knows it
he's he's okay with abortion for
example Ian he doesn't want full ter he

was doesn't want an abortion at nine
months you know he doesn't want just
free abortions for anyone for any reason
I assume but still I mean he's not like
a Christian nationalist or authoritarian
that's just stuff that the left is
saying against him to get glial people
to hate
Trump so provoking Mass hysteria like
the George Floyd riots for example it
turns out George Floyd died of a drug
overdose that that shaan's chauvin's
knee was kind of on his shoulder it just
looked bad from the camera angle but he
was doing what he was taught to do to
immobilize this guy who was freaking out
and saying couldn't breathe long before

he he ever got out of the car because in
all likelihood and they have film
footage of this guy in a previous
example of him getting arrested of him
just taking the pills before the cops
can search him just so that he doesn't
have it on him and he overdosed from
doing that
apparently and so then you've got
billions of dollars worth of damage
dozens of people murdered you have like
pallets of bricks mysteriously appearing
on street corners where where the the
riots are bound to happen all of this
done by the left and then you've got
people like kamla Harris saying not only

is this going to continue but it should
continue they were endorsing this kamla
Harris was actually helping to bail out
these
rioters who are just burning down
Wendy's for example just just running a
muck and it's like the left endorses is
this whereas the right you've got let's
say January 6th where it was mainly
nonviolent it wasn't fiery but mostly
peaceful like like they were saying
about the George Floyd riots it's like
you had unarmed people going into the
White House or or into the capital I
mean ushered in by the police the police
are just letting them in the only people
who died of violent death were unarmed

protesters no cops were I mean then they
just make up lies about like this cop
who got killed from getting his head
bashed in by a fire extinguisher it just
wasn't
true and that's supposedly the worst
thing that's happened on American soil
since Pearl
haror when it was mainly unarmed
civilians going in protesting and taking
selfies and then leaving again who a lot
of them were just ushered in and guided
around by the
police but the George Floyd riots again
billions of dollars dozens of people
murdered that's just fine and dandy

because it was the left that was doing

it

so yeah I have looked at some of these

specifics of project

2025 and yeah I mean you can call it

Trump adjacent to your blue in the face

but I don't think Trump is going to do

much with it if anything

and I should just move on to the next

next question here this is from

cify sorry for ranting a little bit

there happens

sometimes so anyways cify says why do

Buddhist monks especially terraa monks

look miserable Tibetan Monks look much

happier well there's two main reasons

why terraa mons might look

miserable first of all there's the whole ancient Indian ethic which is found in terab Buddhism that you should avoid pleasure I mean you should avoid pain and pleasure I mean it's like um you're going for neutrality a Buddhist a Terra Buddhist monk you know you avoid sensual sensuality you avoid self- torture you just try to go for this calm neutrality and so monks aren't even supposed to laugh in public monks aren't even supposed to show their teeth when they're smiling in public I actually got taken to task once by another Monk because I was smiling and showing my teeth in public and you say you

shouldn't do that that's not that's not
good so I mean there is that but also in
terraa Buddhism I
mean how monks appear in public is very
different from how they appear behind
the scenes at the monastery I lived at
monasteries for a long time I've seen
monks behind the scenes and they're very
different especially Burmese monks very
different from when they're in public
when a when a Burmese Monk Is in public
it's like Stone Face you know they look
modest they're looking down you know
they're not smiling or laughing that
kind of a thing I mean a lot of them
especially when they're going for alms
round they're really good at just

looking like monks are supposed to look
but then when they get back you know
they're smiling and laughing and joking
and just being silly and behaving like
ordinary humans and on average it's
pretty clear to me that the average
Buddhist monk like a terraa Buddhist
monk a beu has less unhappiness in his
life than the average person but the
average person you know they're smiling
a lot of the time they're frowning a lot
of the time and in public they're going
to be smiling more and frowning less
just because of you know they're in
public it's like in Asia especially
somebody losing their [__] in public is

extremely rare every once in a while
somebody will just snap and start chimp
out but as a general rule I mean it's
it's just you just don't do it that you
you're like you you're always like
relatively calm when you're in public
it's like an Asian thing in particular I
think but if if somebody really does
lose their [__] you know they're like
like yelling and raging in public and
the crowd starts to accumulate and
people are just staring in amazement
it's like wow how can you do
that so Terra a monks I don't know where
the miserable comes from I mean they
look pretty calm to me it depends on
what monks you're looking at I

suppose but uh I mean there's two main
reasons one is you're just not supposed
to show emotion in public even though
they show emotion back at the monastery
and two is it's just the whole
philosophy the whole ethical philosophy
of Terra is you're supposed to be
avoiding the
extremes of Pleasure and
Pain or at least kind of steering the
middle path between unnecessary pleasure
and unnecessary pain and so it's just
sort of like this poker
face whether Tibetan Monks really are
much happier than terraa monks or not is
hard to say they might have more fun you

know they get to play soccer and stuff
without it being against the rules of
people criticizing it but
um whether they have more Serenity or
not more contentment is another
question so I'm just going to move on to
cfy's second question here and he says
besides do you realize that you are a
bodh satva or at least you are going
doing the bodh sata's job by spreading
Buddha Dharma
well um yeah a long time ago when I was
a teenager I was informed that I was a
buddhis but by no less Authority Than
The Diamond Cutter Sutra itself because
The Diamond Cutter Sutra says that if
you can read The Diamond Cutter Sutra

and not be filled with alarm and Dread

you know if you can accept it joyfully

you're a bodh SVA and I like The Diamond

Cutter Sutra I never experienced like

alarm or dread while reading the Diamond

Cutter Sutra so according to the

authority of The Diamond Cutter Sutra

I'm a bodh

satma but from the point of view of poly

Buddhism terraa Buddhism to be a bodh to

really be a bodh

which is someone who is destined to

become a Buddha who's like on the path

of buddhahood not just becoming

enlightened like ordinary arant but you

know full SAS buddhahood you have to

receive what in Burmese is called a bate
which means at some point a Buddha a
sasam Buddha has to single you out and
prophesy that you are going to become a
Buddha in the future also I think in
order to become a bodh Sant um I think
you have to have mastered Janna already
you know there's there's a few other
qualifications that in order to be a
Bodhi sat from the the older terad like
poly Buddhist point of view you know
there's these criteria that I doubt that
I actually meet so I might be a Mahayana
bodis satva but I'm not a Terrain
bodh
and I think just the whole idea of the
bodh SATA concept is a later addition

it's an artifact of later philosophical developments of Buddhism that the Buddha himself was not referring to Mahayana style buddhis

svas and buddhis just meant someone who is destined to become a Buddha which was Goda

himself so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from ponm and as I keep saying I doubt that that is really his name but pseudonym says please explain the essential difference between the intention of Good Will or meta and the intention of harmlessness or karuna so yeah he's asking I assume the difference between the mental states of

meta and the mental states of karuna

meta is usually translated loving

kindness although something like

friendliness or Amity might come closer

to the truth because meta is based on

the same word as MAA which means friend

you know in Sanskrit it' be

Mitra and I think in Sanskrit the word

for meta is

Mitri so it means like friendliness

being a true friend so that's one of the

four Brahma viharas or Divine abodes and

karuna or usually translated as

compassion is another one of the Brahma

haras or Divine abodes so I think

pseudonym is asking what's the

difference like the the the pschological

difference between meta or friendliness
or loving kindness on the one hand and
karuna or compassion on the other and
based on the poly texts the main
definition or meaning of meta is like
wishing for the Goodwill of others
wishing for the happiness of others
whereas karuna is sympathizing with the
suffering of
others and sympathizing with the
happiness of others is another one of
the Brahma wears which is
mudita So Meta and mudita are closer
together because they're both uh like
attitudes with regard to the happiness
of others one is just like wishing for

the happiness of others the other one is

like rejoicing in people who are

actually happy but karuna is more like

sympathizing with others

suffering

so I mean that should be

fairly explanatory I think that you know

wanting the the like the the good

fortune or happiness of others is

somewhat different from sympathizing

with The Misfortune of

others they're they're kind of similar

in a way but they're not exactly the

same one is you know wanting others to

be happy the other one is sympathizing

when others are

unhappy and I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from tumul
plots and tumul plots said how did you
get books to read when you were living
in a cave in
Burma well there were various ways that
I got books to read when I was living in
a cave in Burma um every few years I
would go back home and my father would
allow me to just raid his bookshelves so
I did get quite a few of my books like
in every four years or so I'd go back to
America to my father's house and just
help myself to his book collection so
you know I'd be coming back to to Burma
with a suitcase full of books so that
was one way I did it also when I would

go back to visit my my father a few
times he would just say you know go
ahead and order a few hundred bucks
worth of books on Amazon that kind of
thing so I'd be able to pick out books
that I specifically wanted to read also
every once in a while a supporter in
America would just mail me a box of
books that happened at least twice
although once
was um uh a very nice lady who just sent
me like chick literature at least there
was a like a a Charles Dickens novel
mixed in with all the the chick books
but um it kind of got me interested in
Charles Dickens again reading Nicholas
nickelby but um but another main way of

getting books was in Mandalay in the city of Mandalay Burma there was a bookstore called down o way which is like peacock literature it was it was a a little bookstore some dingy little bookstore in a crummy part of town that specialized in selling used books in the English language and almost all of them came from before the military dictatorship when the the sanctions came down and everything and and Burma became like a Hermit Nation so they were old Old English books I still own a few of the books that I got at down away in Mandalay like once a year I'd go there with some supporter and they'd have like

funds for my benefit that I could make
use of and I just pick out any books
that looked interesting there so that
was that was how I got a lot of books
and sometimes I mean you can just find
really you can be surprised by the kind
of books you can find at you know like
on a bookstall in rangon or in Mandalay
there's a few books I got at bookstalls
in in rangon too like I found an old
copy of the suria Santa in uh at a Book
Stall in in rangon it was just it was
just there this this book that was
written like in the mid
1800s just just among all the other
stuff few times I came across mine comp
at bookstores in in in Burma like an old

old World War II era version of mine
comp and I was tempted just just out of
curiosity but I just couldn't bring
myself to ask for mine comp somebody to
buy a copy of mine comp for
me and so that was how I got my
books um I still had a limited number of
books and it was kind of good because
when you when you're living in a cave
alone in some remote area of the world
then any unread books that you have are
going to get read so they can be really
difficult books like I read um hegel's
uh phenomenology of spirit in a cave and
there's no way in hell I could read that
book now or you know reading like really

dense philosophy books FH Bradley uh I can't remember the can't remember the name of the book I've got it still on the bookshelf back there published in 1902 I had to cut the pages apart nobody had read the whole book yet so I had to use a a knife and cut the pages apart because it was one of those really old books where you know you had to use a a book knife or a paper knife or something to cut the pages

apart and I mean there's no way I could read a book like that now and just being honest with myself I don't think there's just too many distractions in the West for me to just Wade through a really difficult heavy you know intellectual

kind of book and I mean with regard to

Hegel and it's just as well that I not

going to read anymore Hegel cuz that was

awful that was like the worst aesthetic

practice the most painful aesthetic

practice I ever practiced was reading

hegel's phenomenology of spirit it

really

sucked so let's see here um yeah so I

answered that question and so I'm at the

very last question this is kind of a

short one this is less than two and a

half hours into it and we're already at

the very very last question and this is

from

Diane and Diane says if you try to make

good karma every every day does that
mean you are on some kind of path to
Enlightenment well maybe but not
necessarily because in in Buddhism
especially terraa Buddhism you've got
two main good paths you've got the good
path for Lay people which is to do good
deeds you know to to make Merit and then
you go to heaven heaven doesn't last
forever though you know after you've
exhausted your karma in heaven you you
have to you know pass away from there
and reappear somewhere else you know
it's still birth and death but then
there's the other path of the the
renunciant in which you're you're not
trying to do Merit I mean you're like

you're going Beyond Good and Evil so to speak You're Going Beyond Merit and demerit you're trying not to make any Karma at
all so that would be the main path to Enlightenment but if you're doing good karma doing good deeds um you know it's it's helping you at least to the extent it makes it easier to strive for enlightenment because you're going to have less [__] happening back to you due to your own Bad Karma so you know you can get reborn in heaven you can get reborn in a fair fairly trouble-free comfortable kind of human life where it's easier to practice dhama than if

you're just struggling for existence in
some third world ghetto
or in Hell or
something so if you're doing good karma
every day that's not exactly the path to
Enlightenment but at least it makes it
easier to follow the path of
Enlightenment if you've got lots of good
karma than if you've got more Bad Karma
than Good
Karma But ultimately if you really want
to become enlightened you have to leave
behind all Karma good and bad because
because like the Buddhist devil Mara if
he can't get you to be bad he'll get you
to be good because even if you go to
heaven you're still in samsara you're

still in his

domain so the pth through Enlightenment

is just transcending the whole system

which includes Good Karma and Bad Karma

whereas um to do good karma and avoid

Bad Karma where you're doing good and

avoiding doing bad that is the path to

heaven but Heaven still isn't the

highest state and you're still in

samsara and even heaven doesn't last

forever but you're way better off doing

good than doing

bad because you know you're just setting

yourself up so you know it's easier to

renounce the Sam Sor to renounce the

world you know if you're in a good

circumstance than if you're just you
know dealing with Affliction and misery
and struggling to survive
so that is it I answered all the
questions that's a good thing I think
and so you guys already know if those
few of you who make it all the way to
the end already know that if you have
any questions to ask feel free to put
them in the comments below or if you
have access to the Discord server you
can ask me there if you have access to
the Subscribe star uh site you can you
can ask me there and uh ask you feel
free to ask about anything you think
that I can answer especially if it has
something to do with some kind of

dharmic trend you know meditation Buddhist philosophy Eastern philosophy in general monasticism Burma me personally that kind of thing and in conclusion I would just like to say be happy

alrighty then I'm checking to see if I'm

recording right off the bat this time

yep okay well welcome to question and

answer number

108 I am your host poo basa and 108 is

not only kind of a high number but it's

also kind of a sacred number I guess

because a Burmese Rosary or a Buddhist

Rosary or M

I guess a Hindu one also has 108

beads

so if if every QA was a bead we'd be

completing a rosary right

now and uh I've I've got like a mild

hangover today not from alcohol I didn't

have any alcohol last night it's just

that um in the past also sometimes if
I've just been working really hard in
like hot weather for the whole week and
it's been in the 90s all week here in
upstate South Carolina that sometimes
I'll just have like this hangover on
Saturday and won't be fully recovered
until Sunday and also I'm like a human
barometer in that it's been hot and dry
all week and then all of a sudden like
half an hour ago it just started pouring
down rain for the first time in many
days and uh sometimes I get kind of
barometric too but I trust that I will
be able to answer your questions
approximately as well as if I was
feeling absolutely 100%

chipper so got the beverage in this case

Bine glandular

secretions and I should commence to

answering questions and the first

question is from covac and sead zida and

covac and CAD Z asked this question more

than a week ago but I didn't see the

question and this does happen sometimes

some people think that they ask a

question in good faith and I don't

answer it it's because I you know they

might think that I consider their

question to be unworthy or some such but

as a general rule I answer even like

silly

questions and so if I don't answer your

question it's probably because it's slip through the cracks or you asked it in an unusual POS in an unusual place like sometimes people will send me like a an email with questions on it and sometimes I just don't check my emails because usually I don't get questions there and so I just go to the usual places which is the comment sections under the videos and also the Discord server also the Subscribe Star channel those are the main places where I look for questions so if you have asked a question elsewhere and I didn't answer it there's a good chance that if you do ask questions in future in the usual places I will see it and will

attempt to answer it whether I will

answer that question to your

satisfaction or not is an entirely

different

question so anyways because I skipped

covac in CAD zida last week he asks more

than three questions this time he asked

if he could ask three more because it's

you know three per week sort of but

because he's Canadian I only allowed him

to answer two extra ones so he's got

five questions here and I guess we

should just Wade right into these so

seal of action CAD Z's first question is

I thought about it and the you're not

killing the animal so there's nothing

wrong with it argument for eating meat
doesn't really hold up to
scrutiny by this logic Buddhists can buy
in cells CP you know what I mean that's
what he says here it's not technically
breaking any precept since you aren't
directly involved in the situation just
like with buying selling meat instead of
killing the animal thoughts well I would
say that if covac and CAD Z do not
really he thinks that a standard
Buddhist position really doesn't hold up
to scrutiny like with regard to Buddhist
ethics it may that he is simply failing
to see the
point which does happen
sometimes

so covac and CAD Zena here is suggesting

that it is actually immoral to eat

meat and again whether something is

moral or immoral depends more on your

mental States than on the outward

physical action and so if you could eat

something without unh mental States then

you have done nothing

wrong so see he says by this logic

Buddhists can buy and sell

CP in

quote um it's not technically breaking

any precept since you aren't directly

involved in the situation just like

buying selling meat yeah but I mean um

buying and selling certain kinds of

pornography um I mean it's not

technically breaking any precept but the

whole porn

mind the whole mindset I Tred to say

mindset and mind State at the same time

it's from a Buddhist point of view

obviously UNH wholesome just eating food

is not obviously UNH wholesome but

perving to

pornography is from a Buddhist point of

view clearly Bad

Karma so it's really not um it's it's

not the same kind of a deal

so again I mean the Buddha probably ate

meat according to the text he ate meat

he allowed the beus to eat meat and if

he considered it to be wrong he probably

would not have allowed it and the
allowance of monks to eat meat is even
found in Mahayana texts just buried in
their rules of monastic discipline where
most Mahayana Buddhists don't
look
so I mean technically buying and selling
pornography technically maybe it doesn't
necessarily involve any un wholesome
mental States let's say it's just like a
code number on a screen you're selling a
bunch of other things and you don't know
for sure what the person is buying
you're just seeing this multi-digit code
you know the transaction occurs and I
mean is just sort of a bland neutral

kind of mental state then that would be very different from like being being involved in the production of particularly pervy or extreme kinds of pornography

so yeah I really I really don't see the C action Cod zida has really like caught out Buddhism in some sort of like logical error here that eating food is neither positive nor negative it's just morally neutral so long as your mental states are morally neutral whereas you know like getting into the porn industry even if you're not technically breaking a rule I mean there's a lot of really bad things you can do that aren't breaking a rule

necessarily that uh I mean it's it's

just the mental States

involved so I mean if you cannot eat

meat and you might be hearing Thunder

crashing outside if you cannot eat meat

without guilt or agitation worry that

kind of a thing then maybe you're better

off being a vegetarian but if you can

eat meat and it's just eating

nourishment then I mean you might even

be sending blessings to the animal that

gave its life you know in gratitude that

sort of thing then you're not

necessarily doing anything

wrong so I guess I'll just move on to se

action cot Z's next question here which

is GC Pond and Caroline RIS Davids I really don't know how to pronounce that name is it rice Davids reys Davids riss Davids I don't know let's just go with RIS Davids I'll start again GC ponde and Caroline riss Davids seem to have the exact opposite approach in a particular aspect when it comes to determining what texts are the oldest and which are the youngest DC Pond used the method of seeing one-off topics mentioned with little connection to Orthodox views as probably being very early as they were too different to be able to be removed too different to be able to be removed however Caroline RIS David said the oldest parts are probably the stock

phrases used in various places around
the texts since these are attested all
over and might be sayings of the Buddha
his disciples actually memorized and
people might have added the context and
stories around those stock phrases later
on both of these arguments seem
reasonable to me however I know you
often cite GC Pond and I'm curious why
you think the explanation of Caroline
RIS Davids is not compelling well
Caroline RIS Davids is kind of an
embarrassment to Buddhist studies maybe
she's coming into Vogue again because
she was a woman and it's identity
politics running a muck nowadays that

sort of thing but Caroline riss Davids

first of all as a

translator I mean her translations

pretty much suck she had a very flowery

pretentious writing style for example

the terata which literally means Elders

verses in her translated title is Psalms

of the Brethren and it's just this

flowery very pretentious translation

style and she really got into studying

poly Tex because of her husband

and her husband whose name I don't

recall his first name that is his last

name was riss Davids he was a much

more reputable poly scholar I mean he

was early who was an early Pioneer but I

think his wife does what a lot of wives

do she took an interest in what her
husband was doing so they could spend
more time together share the same
interest that sort of
thing and really she was sort of like a
closet Christian and so the stuff like
no self she just bashed away at that she
didn't not like that at all she just
considered it to be cooked up later by
Monkish
philosophers and she just had a
very I don't know sort of
intuitive
emotional kind of approach to
understanding dhama and deep down she
was not very Buddhist

so um then again I mean you you can sort
of put this to the test the stuff that
covac and cod Z is talking about for
example there's a lot of evidence that
the ataka waga of the sutin is one of
the earliest Buddhist text for various
reasons I've composed a list of just
bits of evidence that the ateka waga is
very archaic Buddhism possibly the
largest chunk of very AR aric Buddhism
in
existence and it doesn't have any of
these stock
phrases so I mean it could be that some
of the stock phrases certainly not all
of them but some of the stock
phrases originated with the Buddha and

they just got just plugged into suta

after suta after

suta but some of them like the 12 Links

of pija samua which just gets plugged

into suta after suta after suta is

hardly like to have originated with the

Buddha

himself that there are signs of earlier

versions of padicha samua or dependent

core rising and it apparently underwent

a kind of evolution until it finally

crystallized in these 12

links and I mean also some of the stock

phrases that you find in the text are

obviously very late and hardly likely to

be authentic like the conversion speech

that non- Buddhists give give when they
get converted to Buddhism you know
excellent Master GMA excellent Master
GMA just as Master GMA someone would
light you know they would turn right
side up what had been upside down or
light a lamp in the darkness so that
people can see forms etc etc that is a
common
stock I mean just a stock block of words
that just gets plugged into suta after
suta after suta and that's obviously not
original and it's hardly likely I mean
it could be that one person said that
and it just got plugged into you know
more than a hundred
sutas

but it's it's not a very good argument

that Caroline R Davids uses man

is yeah I mean she is kind of an

embarrassment to to like early Buddhist

studies so yeah I'm still going with GC

pond I mean the very idea that you have

an unorthodox teaching in the core text

in some relatively early body of texts

in in the poly

toptica and that is it's just

unorthodox that and it's only found like

maybe once or twice this idea is found

maybe only once or twice in the texts I

mean it's almost it's not necessarily

originating with the Buddha himself but

it's pretty likely to be early you know

stuff that's kind of an embarrassment is more likely to be authentic than stuff that's just blandly Orthodox for example go with the New Testament when Jesus is nailed up on the cross and he's crying out my God my God why have you abandoned me I mean that gives some Credence to the idea that maybe Jesus really did shout that when he was crucified because why would God cry out my God my God why have you abandoned me you could have an entire book maybe it's already been written of the various schools of Christianity trying to explain why Jesus would cry Aloo lakani when he's up on the cross and that sort of thing holds true

in Christ in in Buddhism also if it's

something that's kind of embarrassing

something that's really looks like it

shouldn't be there I mean it could be

something really late and just really

silly that happened

too but like

the that the fragment that is found in

two different suas about how

Consciousness like infinite formless

Consciousness unmanifest shining all

around is like a definition of nibana or

a description of

nibana that I mean it's hardly likely to

be post Orthodox you know it's not like

after Orthodox terraa got streamlined

and established and formulated that's
not going to get added on after that
it's going to be during the formative
phase when it gets added in even if it
didn't originate from the Buddha himself
it's going to be relatively early
regardless in all
likelihood but in conclusion I would
just like to say humbug on Caroline re
Davids and so I'm just going to move on
to cacin CAD zina's third question
which is how can ignorance or papancha
Sanka depending on the specific list
occur before Consciousness even arises
in the dependent origination list in the
momentary model of dependent origination
well again that is assuming that it's

supposed to be in a linear sequence

there was a famous English monk Nan Vera

who pointed out that it says this

arising that arising is it doesn't say

this ceasing that

arises

so ignorance or papancha Sanka I can't

remember exactly how I rendered that

papancha Sanka which is

differentiating perception of a name

something like that it's papancha is

like differentiation Sona is perception

and Sanka is like

labeling naming something

identifying

something and that in some early

versions of dependent core Rising like

Proto picha

samata um that's how it all starts that

is how the whole samsara arises is

through this differentiating

perception

so um ignorance sometimes occurs no wait

let's see how can ignorance or

propa occur before Consciousness even

arises well the Orthodox explanation is

that you're dealing with three different

lifetimes like the Standard 12 Links of

dependent cor Rising you got three

lifetimes you got the past lifetime or

lifetimes you've got the present

Lifetime and then You' got future

lifetimes or just the next life so when

uh it says Consciousness like

wiana it's referring to rebirth linking

consciousness

because Consciousness according to

Orthodox Terra can arise before mental

States they have to arise

simultaneously but C action Cod Z here

is just assuming that it's a linear

sequence of cause and effect which it is

not necessarily and I don't think it

really I don't think that dependent core

Rising it's that Su in

suup means together or with and so it's

coar in dependent co-arising

not this ceasing that

arises this if this exists that

exists that's how Duality works and
that's uh that's how this world this
soric phenomenal Universe arises is
through Duality which is a mental
state so I mean ignorance would be sort
of like this primordial prial it's like
the foundation of samsar also you can
say papancha is like the primordial
Foundation of samsara even though there
really was no beginning it's just that's
sort of like the essence of it ignorance
is the essence of this world or
differentiation and perception are the
essence of this world sort of like
schopenhauer you know the world as will
and representation if you were to
translate that into poly jargon it would

be Sam SAR as let's see Sam SAR as Cheta

and

Sona the world as will and

perception so I guess I answered that

question so I just move on to the next

one here also from cacin sead Z who

asked five questions because I skipped

him last time accidentally it wasn't on

purpose because he's

Canadian so he says please do an

analysis of bikun Yan's interpretation

of this suta where he attempts to

explain the Luminous Unbound

mind do you agree with what he says or

do you have disagreements first of all I

would point out that biku yanle is the

new current famous yanle and not the

previous famous nanami who translated

like the wiui Maga and a number of other

um relatively obscure terod philosophic

philosophical

texts and the new

yanle I believe he is Slavic he's he

lives in

Europe let's see here so there's there's

a a statement and this is like one of

those statements you find in the text

that is probably relatively old it's

like pre- Orthodox otherwise it wouldn't

be in there and uh

see so um this is the verse or the the

the quote that bikana nand no biky

Moy um he has like done a commentary on

and let's see for my translation would
be something like see monks this mind is
shining
forth but it is defiled by extraneous
defilements and then the see thus for
the the unlearned common
person the the unlearned common person
does not understand this as it truly is
and therefore I say there is no mental
development for the unlearned common
person so I think
Ban's explanation is similar to mine I
think we're pretty much in agreement on
this he says that um shining this mind
is shining forth that our like
Consciousness is shining forth and bana

interprets that to mean infinite he says
like the structure of mind like the
basic structure of mind is infinite
which I mean it's if it's really
infinite it would be formless and so I'm
not sure how there would be structure so
I I would use different words than him I
think but he is saying that
ultimately Consciousness is just
infinite and formless
and I would agree with that and then he
says you know it's like I can't remember
the word he uses that I translated as
extraneous the the the poly word is aand
heat and aand heat means like coming
like aanda is like a visitor or a
newcomer in like the rules of monastic

discipline so it's like the our
defilements our mind is pure and
infinite and it is defiled by defilement
that are not of the nature of this
infinite mind is just coming from like
extraneous to that coming from outside
somehow and in the earliest text like
the AA waga thoughts or mental states
are considered to be something
extraneous something outside something
that comes from
outside which is a little difficult for
a lot of Western you know followers of
scientism to really grasp but it is it
is a profound idea that your even your
own thoughts are not you your own

thoughts are just

extraneous

so yeah I mean he doesn't interpret

pabas as shining forth literally that's

what it means is shining forth he points

out that the word akasa which means

space usually also literally means

shining forth or um I guess I mean

technically it would mean Shining

towards oneself if it has the prefix of

a long a but uh still there's there's a

shininess involved in the word for um

space and so bikuni has interpreted this

pabas this mind is shining forth as this

mind is infinite like

space um either one works like the the

other verse that is mentioned in the

article that I've already mentioned

about how the mind is um it's like

infinite formless unmanifest and Shining

all around so that's got shininess and

infiniteness combined so either way is

is is fine I

think um really the

uh the the really profound part for me

the kind of mind blowy part aside from

the the essence of Consciousness is

infinite is

that you know our own defilements our

own like diluted thoughts and so forth

are not that you know they're they're

extraneous to the purity of

Consciousness and then of course the

last two lines are insulting lay
Buddhists to some degree where it's
saying there's like lay Buddhists don't
understand this about the mind and how
it is defiled and so they make no
progress they got no mental development
anyone who doesn't really understand
that according to this what what this
quote is implying you know anyone who
doesn't really understand that
Consciousness is infinite and luminous
and then it just kind of gets like made
dirty and impure through extraneous
mental States in extraneous defilements
covering it
up that people who don't get that don't
make

progress so that's kind of cont

controversial because it's not really an

orthodox idea and so most Orthodox like

aons and seos probably don't believe

this probably fewer sead than aons

because the aons aren't as dogmatic and

there is a movement in like a

philosophical I guess You' call it a

movement just an idea in Thailand that

really the mind is kind of you know it

abides beyond the mere

human that is is essentially like I mean

almost like God or or da or Brahman or

something but for the most part yeah I

do agree with munyana Mo's

interpretation and so I'm going to move

on to cacin sead Z's next question which
is an easy one for me to
answer he said you mentioned biku
nanda's book in your last video I found
that his lectures in the book The Mind
stilled goes over the suos to look at
almost every occurrence of nibana to
come to an
explanation that is non-orthodox to
terava is even more controversial than
his book concept and reality have you
read this and if so what are your
thoughts on it I've heard about it but I
haven't read it so I can't really give
my thoughts on it apparently it was too
controversial to have been accepted by
mainstream terava Buddhist scholarship

um like I said in the previous Q&A his
book concept and reality um gives such
uh you know really a a strong argument
such a strong argument that the
commentarial tradition is wrong on a
certain point that pretty much all
terava Buddhist Scholars accept his
interpretation of the meaning of the
word papancha now um except probably for
some very dogmatic conservative types of
monks who mostly are living in Asia
so I think bikun Yanda was
sinal if I if I'm not
mistaken so that's it for coaction CAD
Zen has five questions so the next
question is from Raphael and his

questions also um they were right after
coaction Cod Z us questions on the on
the the the scroll and I didn't scroll
up high enough I scrolled up to the the
the Q&A that was previous to the one
um I don't I don't know how to explain
this I'm having difficulties explaining
things sometimes lately so anyways I I
missed his his questions too so anyways
Rafael's first question here have you
ever met people who told you that Sean
retention was beneficial for them well
back when I was writing my first blog
there was um an Indian fellow who was
sort of sporadically obsessed with this
issue and he would bringing bring it up
a lot he had a website just on this

issue um sometimes he would kind of lose

interest I guess or fall off the wagon

but then he' just get right back on it

again how Seaman retention is beneficial

if not necessary for deep Spiritual

Development

um

but yeah it never really worked for me

because back when I was younger I mean

there wasn't much retention because um

every two weeks I just have like a

nocturnal emission I'd have some

pornographic dream or something and it

it was not

retained

so um yeah I'm sure there are people I

mean I mean obviously a lot of Buddhist
especially Buddhist monks are of the
opinion that celibacy is beneficial for
them and celibacy for a monk involves
not spank the
puppy so you don't have that as a kind
of pressure relief
valve but um yeah and there have been a
few people and they tend to be obsessive
about it that you know they just have
this idea that if you have an orgasm
especially if you have one on purpose
that I mean your your spiritual practice
has just nose dived or you know you're
just a hopeless case or something but I
wouldn't go so far as that that
celibacy it it is a a good method for

people who are capable of being celibate
without just being like chronically
horny all the time like like a starving
man thinking only of food there are a
lot of horny celibates out there who
just thinking about sex all the time
because they're not getting
any
so I hope I answer that question because
I'm moving on to Rafael's next question
which is your thoughts on dogen and his
Soo
Sho well I did read dogen's most famous
book back when I was in college and I
forgotten almost all of it except for
this one weird scene where there was a

monk who was eating meat he might have
even been raw meat and and like drinking
raw blood and um so dogen goes to his
room and looks in on him and sees that
there's a demon sitting on top of his
head that's actually eating the meat
so that's like all I retain from Reading
dogen's most famous book back when I was
about 19 years
old with regard to Soto shoe um before I
was converted to Terra I was planning
sort of tentatively to become a Soo Zen
Monk and one reason why I preferred sto
Zen to renai Zen is I wasn't much into
Co at the time later I've I've come to
acquire an appreciation for
colons but soo soo Zen has less emphasis

on Coons and more emphasis on something
like shikantaza which is uh a really
powerful meditation
practice so my thoughts on dogen I
really can't remember enough about him
to have many thoughts other than that
you know he was he's reputed to be the
founder of sto Zen in
Japan and Soo Zen was one of the two
main branches of Zen in Japan renai and
Soo renai was called Samurai Zen and Soo
was called like peasant Zen or farmer
Zen because it was simpler and had fewer
Aristocrats following it I
guess but I was tentatively planning on
becoming a sto Zen monk at one time but

obviously it didn't happen that way so
I'm going to move on to Rafael's next
question which was which
is what would the Buddha have done with
monks who repeatedly traded in money
since this is not a paraja offense he
could not have expelled them from the
song well I mean there's other ways of
dealing with with monks who um just
continually break rules I mean you can
do formal acts of the S formal acts of
censure formal acts of like you can just
banish them you know just say you can't
stay here anymore you can do one one of
the most serious ones is a formal Act of
suspension from the S which I mean you
it's not defrocking him he's still a

monk but he's not a monk in good
standing and he is not allowed to live
with other monks speak with other monks
bow or get bowed to with other monks
anything like that he's just like um
ostracized he's he's not excommunicated
but he's pretty much like kicked out of
you know any any group of monks any sa
in good standing also there's one
punishment called the Brahma brahmaand
the Divine punishment which is similar
to that where you're just not allowed to
have anything to do with this
monk so there's a good chance that the
Buddha would have done that first of all
if I mean the Buddha himself if what we

read in the Tex is

reliable first of all the Buddha would

just be admonishing and scolding these

monks and being scolded by fully

enlightened Buddha is probably pretty

powerful experience you know it's going

to be more persuasive than just getting

scolded by some random

person so yeah probably the Buddha would

admonish them then probably scold them

and then maybe have some formal Act of

of the s or the brahmaand imposed upon

them just to

like sort of quarantine them as much as

possible so I suppose I answered that

question so I'm moving on to the next

one which is from Kevin and Kevin says

are the weird little things in your aquarium considered to be sentient beings well certainly they are considered to be sentient beings and I think the fish at least would qualify as a lowlevel kind of sentient being like sentient in the sense of having an actual like images in your mind you know sort of like a a mental Panorama you know like I mean sort of images I mean this sort of conscious experience in the human sense in a way of course a fish wouldn't have conscious experience in the human sense but it would have just this tiny this tiny glimmer of that but the other creatures in in my aquarium

and I I'm excited to announce I got
eight shrimp and I put in there today
they're neocaridina David ey a blue
variety and of course I'm I'm digressing
shamelessly at this point but of course
within the first 10 15 minutes they all
just hid so they're all like under Dead
Leaves and and and like under rocks and
so forth in my aquarium and so I'm
hoping that I'll get to see them
sometimes because this has already
happened to me before I got when I first
got fish and put it in the aquarium I
got two cool loaches which look like
little little eels little stripy eels I
put them in there and I've seen one of
them in the past month that was like two

weeks ago maybe three weeks ago at this point he his head was sticking out from under a rock and that was it that's that's all I saw that's all I've seen of those those two fish that are supposedly in there I don't know if they're even alive anymore there's a guy named Forest galante who had a TV show where he's a biologist he goes out in search of animals that are considered to be extinct sometimes he finds them sometimes he thinks well okay these ones really are extinct but sometimes he finds them and i' I've been seriously considering just trying to contact this guy having him come here and find out if

my kiles are still in there because I
mean I I don't see them and the shrimp
the shrimp just promptly disappeared
into the into the derbis on the bottom
of the aquarium
too but there is one glimmery bright
side from that in that I have inoculated
this aquarium with amphipod crustations
also so now I've got decapod crustations
which are include the shrimp amphipods
which are they're called scuds aquarium
Keepers call them scuds they might be in
there too and I'm just not seeing them
because they're always
hiding which is kind of a bummer but I
mean to have them in there and not see
them is better than not having them in

there at all it's just the thing is you
don't know for sure if they're in there
because you don't see the little
bastards but getting back to Kevin's
question would shrimp be considered
sentient beings Orthodox Buddhism would
consider a shrimp to be a sentient
being
but I mean I have a degree in biology
and I'm doubtful whether a little shrimp
you know it's like half an inch long
really has any kind of like mental
images in its mind you know it could be
like like insects for example they're
just like little Terminators like little
robots their their whole nervous system

is is designed very differently from the nervous system of a human being or a fish they don't really have a central nervous system and so it could be that you know they they'll move away from danger but that could just be like um the the automatic door at the grocery store just moving out of your way when you know the sensors sense that you're coming towards it it could be that kind of a deal I'm I'm not saying that they don't have any Consciousness at all because I mean I think maybe even a hydrogen atom has this little primordial spark of Consciousness I'm just not I'm just saying that in my my opinion it is doubtful whether or not they are

sentient because that's different from

just being

conscious at least at least by my

Reckoning so I mean the little creatures

that live in that aquarium which would

might include like copap pods or little

rers or like parium like

protozoans and where do you draw the

line between sentient and non-sentient

or do you draw the line between having

some kind of

psychology and not having any psychology

where it's all just

behavioral manifestations of

neurophysiology so I mean that's really

a question I I can't answer I mean from

the Buddhist point of view they are

considered to be sentient

beings

but from like a modern biological point

of view there where do you draw the line

between sentient and non-sentient having

like a a mind that

perceives and just not really having a

mind but just being like an

automaton I really can't answer that

question I don't know where exactly you

would draw the line different people

would draw the line at different places

of course a lot of religious people

would just draw the line at humans like

only humans have a conscious mind even a

dog doesn't have a conscious mind Renee

day cart you know the supposedly the
founder of Western philosophy modern
Western philosophy he believed that he
believed only humans have a mind and
that animals like even dogs probably
even
chimpanzees do not do not have a mind
because presumably they don't have a
soul or some such and cartisian
philosophers would publicly torture
animals just as a way of demonstrating
their conviction
that that dog that's screaming and
Howling and crying and trying to get
away is just an automaton that doesn't
feel

anything so that's a little more blatant

digression

there

see yeah I mean they are considered to

be sentient beings but whether whether I

mean all of them I mean is isn't aeba

crawling around ins in the sand I mean

does that have is that sentient

I don't know an nematode worm

maybe it's hard to say I mean I think

that even the sand probably has some

glimmer of Consciousness but I mean it

doesn't think you know it doesn't

perceive

anything it's just this primordial

little

spark so I'm just going to move on to

the next question here this is from
Athena sigil and Athena sigil says
why does Western Buddhism have so many
leftist adherence I mean most Asian
cultures are very conservative this is
still atheno Cal saying this I mean most
Asian cultures are very conservative as
are the teachings and values of most
eastern Buddhist sects whether Mahayana
or terava even when I was a young Lefty
lad and still quite fascinated by
Buddhism I instinctively and through my
observations knew it was a very
conservative and matriarchal faith yet
as soon as it westernized it ignored all
that and became everything it wasn't

looking forward to your answer well hey

stop

it we got dogs and heat

again okay let's see

here so the main question here why do

why does Western Buddhism have so many

leftist adherence and it's fairly easy

to answer um it is true that

in like a country like Burma the

conservatives are the Buddhists because

they are traditionalists they're

following their National tradition which

is what conservatives do they are

conserving their National Traditions

whereas in the west most conservatives

are going to be Christians or maybe Jews

so it's the people who are rejecting

tradition to some degree that are converting to Buddhism so that's one of the main reason reasons why most western Buddhists are leftists is that if they were conservative traditionalists there's a good chance they'd be going to church as
Christians also um partly as a like a symptom of this Buddhism became popular in the west um I think originally became popular among like European westerners you know westerners of European ancestry during the beat movement of like the 1950s and early 60s you know people like Gary Snider he was he was a practicing Zen Buddhist he'd go to Japan to do

sessions in

Japan and uh then the hippies kind of

converted over to Hinduism more but I

mean it was it was still like this

leftist um you know anti-traditional

kind of attitude like the Boomers I mean

they they were just re ing against their

parents so if their parents were

conservatives conservative Christians

they'd just do anything except be a

Conservative

Christian so yeah the main reason why

Western Buddhism has so many leftist

adherence is because Buddhism is not

traditional to the west and conservatism

is like traditionalism and so

conservatives in the west are Christians

or Jews and I for the most part

and uh conservatives in Burma would be

terraa Buddhists and it's like the the

leftist the leftists in

Burma would probably convert to

Christianity or just become atheists you

know followers of

scientism so that's

why and so I think I'll just move on to

the next question this is from cify and

cify say says if cultivating a good

karma in this life will take me to

heaven in the next life does it mean

that it will be even more difficult to

attain Nirvana I learned from Mahayana

Tibetan teachers that the human realm is

the best realm to attain Nirvana yeah

they they say the same thing in Terra

that a human birth is the best kind of

birth to get for the purpose of making

progress in

dhama and that's mainly because because

in the hell Realms the lower Realms

animal realm hell Realms ghosts that

kind of a thing um you're too ignorant

and in many cases too Afflicted too

concerned with just

surviving to really spend much time

thinking about philosophy or higher

things or you know just trying to become

enlightened that sort of thing you're

mainly just in survival mode or just

total Affliction mode whereas the heaven

Realms things are so nice there that the
beings in these Heaven Realms are less
motivated to try and find a way out or
to try to improve their situation
because you know they've already got no
no sickness no headaches no you know no
hunger anything like that no old age
really and so it's everything's fine up
there so they're they're just kind of
satisfied with that so let's see here
what is the question again oh if if cify
does good karma in this life will it
take him to heaven in the next
life and does that mean it would be even
more difficult to attain Nirvana it's
possible although some dvas can still

make spiritual

attainments so I mean you shouldn't try

to avoid Heaven unless you're just

trying to avoid rebirth in general I

mean you're much better off in heaven

than

hell

so um there is a good chance that by

doing a lot of Merit you'll be reborn in

a really good position um to practice

Dharma as a human so I mean if you're

very dhamma

oriented then you're probably going to

have more dharmic karma in your next

life which may very well mean that

you're going to be reborn in a like a a

wisdom culture you know

and that I mean you you'll be better set up for practicing Dharma and cultivating wisdom so I mean if you're just doing good karma that's sort of a worldly Good Karma then you might be more likely to go go to heaven but if you're cultivating good karma in the sense of cultivating you know deep meditative States and so forth then there's a good chance you'll be reborn where you can continue to make progress because that's the momentum of your mind that's the direction your karma is going so you really shouldn't worry about this kind of stuff just do good without really like labeling it as doing good

you know you shouldn't be a spiritual
materialist and just consider Merit to
be a kind of like metaphysical
money just do good without really having
an idea of of doing good and that's
that's sort of the way a bodh a bodh
satva is supposed to act you know he
always does good but he's not thinking
I'm doing good he's not dividing up good
between between good and bad starting a
duality in that sense it's just everyday
life is just that's what he does that's
just the way it
is and that is the wisest way to go
about it I mean the Buddha would not
encourage people to do good and earn
Merit um lay people especially if you

didn't think it would be good for

them so I'm just going to move on to uh

the next question which is from someone

whose name looks like creel but

apparently it is pronounced throat

warbler

Mangrove and throat warbler Mangrove

says what would you do if you had

definite proof that the Buddha never

actually existed and his religion was

merely the fabrication of men by the way

I do not believe the Buddha never

existed I do not believe he existed

either but I highly suspect he

did well okay so what would I

do um if I had somehow had proof that

the never actually existed well I mean I
don't have proof that I exist I mean
seriously I mean I'm I'm such a skeptic
in certain ways that I don't think that
there is any way to really prove
anything in the outside world I mean
that's that's like Spinosa and David
Hume are both famous for having pointed
this out that with regard to anything
out there with regard to the phenomenal
world you can't really prove anything
so like Spinosa was saying and maybe it
was David Hume that something that's
entirely internal to your
mind like a theorem of ukul or
something you know some mathematical
problem maybe like a a theoretical chess

problem you can work it out in your mind
and prove that but with regard to
knowing what's going on outside your
mind you can't really be
sure so anyway that's just just sort of
a quibble there but let's just say for
the sake of argument that I I somehow
had definite proof of one thing and that
is that the Buddha never actually
existed and his religion was merely the
fabrication of men well I mean even if
the Buddha did exist his religion was
the fabrication of men because the
Buddha was a man and all of Buddhism
wasn't fabricated by him there's all
sorts of other men presumably a lot of

them

unenlightened who part participated in

the formulation of of

Buddhism so I mean it wouldn't be that

much of a difference and also if you

consider some other system like

Hinduism um like like the bav Gita for

example I mean it's hardly likely that

Krishna as portrayed in Hindu texts

really existed you know that Hinduism

didn't have just one enlightened founder

it just sort of evolved over the

centuries over the

Millennia and still I assume that if

it's possible to become enlightened in

this world there are enlightened

Hindus so I mean it might change the way

I go

about

um understanding Buddhism a little bit

in in subtle ways but I don't think it

would be that much of a change I

mean I mean did the Buddha really exist

I mean if you asked him that he might

say it's

like nobody can know that um I think

there is a statement in the poly text

like someone is asking if a Buddha

exists after death and he's saying I

mean does he even exist before death you

know how can you know but that's that's

sort of a quibble

also I'm quibbling big

time

so yeah I mean if if the Buddha didn't

really exist I'd have to look at

Buddhism sort of the way I would look at

Hinduism which didn't have like one

single enlightened founder there were a

lot of people contributing to Hinduism

some of them may be enlightened and most

of them probably not which

is s similar situation to

Buddhism but like the Bhagavad Gita I

really do not think that Bhagavad Gita

is like a transcript of statements made

by Krishna to Arjuna on the field of

battle as they're mounted on their

Chariot but babad Gita is still a

profound text has a lot of profundity to

it so yeah in answer to throw orbl
mangroves question I just have to say uh
yeah I mean I don't think it would
really I mean it' be kind of
disappointing you know it might be a
little disillusioned and sad but still
even if the Buddha wasn't enlightened
his system has almost certainly produced
enlightened enlightened Buddhists so
even if even if the Buddha didn't really
exist still there's plenty of
enlightened beings which technically
would be Buddhas because Buddha
literally means enlightened or
awakened I mean if you could prove that
nobody's ever become enlightened that

the Buddha wasn't enlightened and nobody
else has ever enlightened that maybe
that nobody can ever possibly become
enlightened if you could just prove that
that would be yeah that would be the
ultimate black pill I
think but I don't think anyone's going
to prove that so I'm just going to move
on to the next question this is from
Romeo and Romeo says are you familiar
with Alan Watts if so what is your
impression of him and his work well my
my familiarity with alen watts is very
limited when I was in Burma I found in
old way bookstore a book by Alan Watts I
think it was just simply entitled Zen
Buddhism and I read it and I mean he's

eloquent he's a good writer he's

intelligent he seems to understand the

subject matter fairly well I've heard

insinuations that in his private life he

was like an alcoholic and some kind of

you know naughty person or

something but I really don't know much

about that um I think I've heard one or

two of his talks on

YouTube um he was like a a guidance

counselor at a university or something

like that uh that's how he made his most

of his money I guess

um yeah I

mean I really don't know that much about

him like I say I've I've read at least

one book by him and it's it's intelligent well-written book but what he would be like personally I can't say so I'm just going to move on to Romeo's next question and he said in Q&A number 106 you mentioned that you were from Aberdine Washington which is also the hometown of rock legend Kurt Cobain of Nirvana Fame I was wondering if you had any experiences that you can recount of growing up in the same town as Kurt Cobain and or living in that general area during the rise of Grunge music in the late 80s and early 90s did you know anyone connected to kurtt Cobain or in the budding grunge scene in general incidentally what is your impression of

alternative rock music from either '90s

grunge or

before and then he's got this little

like a a footnote kind of saying you

don't have to name all of these on your

Q&A but I'm referring to Classic

alternative music from bands like Lou

Reed Velvet Underground Elvis Costello

Talking Heads The Ramones The Clash

REM Red Hot Chili Peppers The Smiths The

Cure Pixies Nirvana Smashing Pumpkins

Etc not anything past the 90s okay well

actually Kurt Cobain and I went to the

same high school but when I was a senior

he was just like this

lowly like a freshman or a sophomore I

never heard of him I might have seen him in the halls and it just didn't register because he was just a pathetic little nobody at the time so the kind of strange the first time I ever heard of Kurt Cobain I was a young monk living in Burma and I happened to meet this guy from Alaska and when he found out where I was from he said oh Kurt Cobain just died so I didn't even hear about the existence of Kurt Cobain until after he had already died which is kind of strange but there we are so yeah I mean I have no experiences of growing up in the same town as Kurt Cobain I mean I've got lot of experiences growing up in the same town as him and we we played in the

same sunshine when we were

kids

but um I mean I didn't know who Kurt

Cain was even when we were at the same

high school I didn't know who he

was so I mean I do remember the rise of

Grunge music it wasn't called grunge

then at the time the two main bands that

I remember being played on the campus

radio station when I was in college and

afterwards no it was after I was in

college still living in my the town that

I went to the University at was sound

garden which you still hear on the radio

sometimes and uh Green River which

apparently faded Into

Obscurity

so let's see I mean I might as well

mention this it's not really part of

what um Romeo was asking about but it

turns out that my

stepbrother was

relatively famous in a relatively famous

band and that is my my step brother is

Kurt vanderhof my ex- stepbrother and he

was like lead guitar player for a band

called metal church and I'm sure you

could find it on YouTube Metal Church I

think they actually rejoined they got

back together started producing music

again after a few decades partly because

now in this age of pirating and YouTube

and so forth it's really hard to make

money from selling records selling

albums and so the only way to really

make money as a musician is to do live

performances apparently unless you got

some kind of angle worked

out so yeah Kurt Kurt vanderhof of uh

Metal Church Fame in on on the first

album cover of their Metal Church debut

album he thanked his his mother Jerry

Reynolds who was my stepmother

so I think I've answered most of

that um although he's also uh he's

referring to the classic alternative

music from bands like Lou Reid in The

Velvet Underground which I mean Lou Reed

did a like a solo album in the 80s that

a friend of mine had the the CD or
whatever and we listened to it and it
was interesting album Elvis Costello I I
kind of liked Elvis
Costello um Talking Heads was one of my
favorite bands when I was in high school
and in college I remember I got
introduced to Talking Heads I went to DJ
Sound City in Aberdine the South no not
the Southshore mall the wishom mall and
I'm just looking through the you know
the rock and roll section and I see this
this album that's just black textured
like like some kind of industrial foot
plate kind of a thing and the names of
the songs were just intriguing you know
like paper air electric guitar drugs

that kind of a thing so I just thought
and I didn't know what they sounded like
I just bought the tape and I'm listening
to it when I'm driving home the first
song is e Zimbra which has just
gibberish lyrics you know the lyrics
don't mean anything and I'm thinking oh
man what did what did I buy because it
just just kind of like a weird song but
by the time you got to the last song on
side two which is called drugs I mean I
was just cackling like a fiend it was it
was magnificent and I do think that uh
Talking Heads remain in light I mean the
the the the tape that I was referring to
is fear of music but their next album

after that remain in light I consider to
be their Zenus and they started going
downhill after remain in light um that
their next album after remaining light
was still pretty good but then it's like
everything sucked after that or at least
in my opinion it did I just it's just
not listenable but like their first four
or five albums
I was I was really into
them The
Clash I mean everybody had combat Rock
in those days R was never never made
much of an impression on me Red Hot
Chili Peppers I never really liked all
that much there's a few songs that they
still play on the radio that are

listenable the Smiths and the Cure were
after my time pretty much I mean the
Smiths were already making music but I
never really listen to it much although
my my lovely mate my woman was heavily
into the Cure especially and also the
Smith she was like a goth
chick in her younger years um The Pixies
the only song I even know of by the
Pixies is the song at the very end of
Fight Club well um the guy with no name
and his his girlfriend Mara are holding
hands watching the the buildings blow
up but it's a good song I've got it on
my
computer so yeah I mean the '90s I

pretty much missed out on '90s music I
was listening to music up until the late
80s and then I entered a monastery and
then I went to Burma and so it wasn't
until after I came back to America that
I'm finally like discovering bands like
Enigma or The Black
Keys or let's see Dead Can Dance that's
that's pretty
alternative um what else a few other
ones that are The
Offspring I really like The Offspring
they're one of my favorite bands that I
missed out on totally while I was living
in
Burma
so yeah I do like rock and roll and uh I

do like like classic alternative music I
I never really considered like Talking
Heads to be classic alternative music I
mean that was more like New Wave seems
to me classic alternative music would be
more like King Crimson or something
although King Crimson did do an album
imitating talking heads' style so there
is
that so anyways I think I'm just going
to move on to the next question which is
from somebody whose name I cannot
pronounce it's du
attio I don't know what du attio
signifies but I assume they got teased a
lot his kids with a name like that and

du ATO says poo basa said to much
compassion pretty much destroys
darwinian survival of the fittest and
pretty much destroys any kind of
positive direction of evolution which
leads to three
questions one if Darwinism is real why
should we seek Enlightenment since we
are all evolving to it one way or
another well that's a misunderstanding
of Darwinism or evolution in general at
least organic evolution there may be
different kinds of evolution but or
organic evolution really isn't evolving
towards Enlightenment in fact
Enlightenment may never evolve as just
like the status quo for a species

because it would probably be against now
it would decrease your odds of survival
you know if if you have no greed or or
hate or lust anything like that you're
less likely to reproduce your your DNA
sequences so what darwinian evolution
is striving towards blindly through
trial and error really and just you know
whatever works just scattershot and
whatever works just gets it
continues I mean that's more towards
survival like reproducing your
reproducing your DNA sequences you
survive long enough to make
babies so it's the the organisms that
are best at surviving long enough to

make babies

preferably in such a

way that their babies survive long

enough to make babies those are the

ones that are evolutionary

successes and I don't think an arant

would really fit that category arant are

evolutionary dead ends celibate people

in general are evolutionary dead

ends so yeah we're not evolving towards

Enlightenment we're just evolving

towards greater adapt a to the

environment and uh yeah I don't think I

don't think enlightenments ever really

going to fit into that equation so I

mean Enlightenment is just bailing out

of the system and you start off as a

general rule by being an evolutionary dead end Jesus assuming that he existed apparently was an evolutionary dead end godma Buddha was an evolutionary dead end since he had one son but then ordained him so that he became a celibate orun there you go no more no more of the Buddha's DNA sequences are existing except through distant ancestors or like like not very close relatives so let's see here I guess I answer that one so the next question on the theme of evolution is if so are we evolving just to evolve or are we evolving towards Enlightenment well I think I pretty much already answered

that we are evolving towards greater
adaptation to the the environment so
that we are more successful at surviving
and making
babies so in a way we are evolving just
to evolve we're evolving because it can
or at least that is the mechanistic
darwinian mainstream scientific
explanation for evolution although I am
open to the idea and I wouldn't at all
be surprised if there's like a higher
Force you know some kind of spiritual
Force also participating in evolution
sort of like schopenhauer's will
or I mean it could be that there's like
this Consciousness that is in in a way
sort of like um like in Arthur C Clark

in 2001 A Space Odyssey where you have like this alien entity or group of entities that are just promoting the the advancement of intelligence throughout the universe that kind of a thing so there might be some sort of spiritual aspect of um of evolution but I still don't think that it's evolving towards Enlightenment it's just evolving towards filling in all these niches and just becoming whatever it can become sort of what the way schopenhauer's will operates so I think I'll just move on to Du Yao's third question which is is this difference in eng Golds a conflict between Darwinism and Buddhism it's not

really a conflict because I mean it's
just apples and oranges it's just you
know it's like is Buddhism in conflict
with ukian geometry well no because you
know they're just in different spheres
in different Realms so I mean Darwinism
kind
of I mean to some degree it can
complement Buddhism I mean I've combined
Darwinism and Buddhism in my
understanding of of reality like just
understanding that a human being is a
species of animal
and that we still have lots of animal
instincts that is something that for me
anyway has been very helpful in allowing
me to understand myself and understand

human beings in general that we're a
kind of upgraded ape and we still have a
lot of these primordial instincts that
our distant ancestors
had so in that sense and me they're not
in Conflict at all I mean how can one
thing that's true be in conflict with
another thing that's
true although I mean Darwinism is just
samsaric it's like a like organic
evolution is a samsaric phenomenon so
ultimately Buddhism you're going to be
getting off the wheel you're going to
stop evolving you're going to be bailing
out sideways which reminds me of T hard
de shardan who was a Roman Catholic

philosopher who was talking about like

spiritual

Evolution and he was referring and he

just made this one comment that

apparently was referring to Buddhism

where he's saying that um some people or

some beings may not evolve all the way

up towards godhood that they might just

bail out sideways long before you get

anywhere near the ultimate and that's

sort of like what Buddhism does or maybe

like something that like J Krishna mie

teaches it's like you're never going to

reach the end of the path the path has

no end you just keep going and going and

going and So eventually you just bail

out sideways

so anyways the last question here is
there is this difference in end goals a
conflict between Darwinism and Buddhism
um I mean the end goal of Darwinism or
or of organic evolution is just greater
adaptation to the environment so that
one survives and reproduces more
effectively and Buddhism is you're just
abandoning Sam S just transcending it
and merging with the infinite luminous
mind so to
speak
so yeah I there's it's not really a
conflict I think it shouldn't be a
conflict and I'm just going to move on
to the next question which is from

Ken and Ken

says Jesus was most likely an

enlightened person who was persecuted

humiliated and finally crucified to do

such a thing to an enlightened being is

the heaviest of sins is the weight of

this act seemingly responsible for the

persistent persecution s of those

involved well like I mentioned in the

previous Q&A I've actually taken some

heat for assuming that Jesus even

existed as a historical person but let's

just for the sake of argument assume

that Jesus really

existed going with orthodox

terraa he wouldn't be an enlightened

person because for example Jesus got

angry sometimes he wept the shortest
verse of the New Testament is Jesus wept
and from the point of view of Orthodox
terava and enlightened being would not
weep
but um even if he wasn't fully
enlightened um and and I mean just
because ter Orthodox Terra says an
enlightened being cannot weep doesn't
mean that an enlight being really cannot
weep maybe enlightened beings really can
weep NE cly Baba up on the altar back
there he wept sometimes he laughed he
roared he he just did all kinds of stuff
that enlightened beings aren't supposed
to do but he was just like a spiritual

Superman as far as I'm

concerned

so so Jesus was a very great wise person

a saint even whether or not he was fully

enlightened whether whether or not full

Enlightenment even means anything in a

some sort context and then he was

persecuted humiliated finally crucified

to do such things to an enlightened

being or a great Saint is the heaviest

of sins so is the weight of this act

seemingly responsible for the persistent

persecution since of those involved well

I haven't really heard of much

persistent persecution since of the

Roman government because I guess it was

the Roman government that had Jesus put

to death as I understand assuming that Jesus really existed Jesus was executed by the Roman government on political charges I mean it wasn't that he was claiming to be the Son of God or the other people were claiming that he was the son of some Mad God of the Jews the the Romans really didn't care about that but when he's being called King of the Jews and according to the Gospel According to mark that was the sign mounted on top of his crucifix the king of the Jews I mean the the Romans would not Toler a political rival if he's being called King of the Jews and the Jews were just really just

continually like re revolting I almost
didn't want to say revolting because it
could be misconstrued in a different
context but they were like continually
just rebelling and just making trouble
and rioting and massacring and getting
massacred and just I mean they could not
accept that they were not the greatest
nation on Earth that Rome conquered them
and they were a subject State and they
just couldn't stand that um and where
was I going with
that oh yeah so the the Jesus is
suddenly being called the king of these
people yeah the Roman government was not
going to tolerate that but then you read
the New Testament that it was like the

the Pharisees of the Sanhedrin who
wanted to get rid of him and so you know
they like turned him into the to the
feds essentially
and then the Roman government had him
executed but it could be that the
authors of the New Testament were
deliberately trying to make the the
Pharisees and the Sanhedrin look
bad so it could be there's some some
propaganda in there and uh it shouldn't
be too surprising since just look at all
the propaganda we have
lately but this getting back to the idea
that somebody tortured Jesus of Nazareth
to death assuming that he ever existed I

think he probably did but there's people out there who think that that's just nonsense that he couldn't possibly have existed um yeah I mean the the people who actually did you know like convicting him insisting that he'd be killed and then and then of course you know the Roman soldiers who are nailing him to this crucifix and I mean I've read about about how it works it's it's really an awful way of dying being crucified and according to will Durant the historian he said that when you're crucified it's it's being you're hung with your arms outstretched like this which causes just incredible like Leverage and tension on your chest which

eventually causes your heart to
stop so yeah I mean just the people who
actually were involved but it's karma
does not like I mean it doesn't latch on
to an entire ethnicity for 2,000 years
you know it's like even the Bible says I
mean you're not punished for the sins of
your fathers and Karma is even more so
that way you know you you may be able to
find evidence that God just decides to
Smite somebody because his dad was a
[__] you know just wipes out the whole
family just to punish one person that
kind of a thing but in Buddhism I mean
you're your karma is your own Kamas is
just a common saying in ply which means

your karma is your own so it's the

people who actually were participating

in the the torturing and the The Killing

and all that those people were making

very bad

comma but uh like they're they're

distant like

descendants over a thousand years later

I

mean you know if they they're reading

the New Testament and cheering on the

Roman soldiers that kind of thing like

in A Clockwork Orange where little Alex

is like fantasizing about being one of

the Roman soldiers who who kills Jesus

then yeah you can get bad karma for that

too but not just because your great

great great great

grandpa you know like had Jesus

sentenced to death I mean that's doesn't

mean that you are going to have anything

bad happen to

you you just share some DNA with that

person that's about it

so yeah okay I guess I answered Ken's

question so I'm going to move on to the

next question this is from ruie and ruie

said are there any rules for mendicants

handling money mentally and

verbally such as when allocating Temple

donations or Temple managing well there

really aren't any rules of monastic

discipline with regard to mental acts

there are no thought crimes vinia but
verbally yeah if you're acting
physically or verbally then you're in
the realm of breaking rules there is no
Vine rules against thinking thoughts not
that I can think
of so yeah there are rules against Buu's
handling money uh verbally like if you
let's say you're the abot of a monastery
this happens all the time you got the
Abit of a monastery and somebody will
make donations and he'll say if if he's
strict some of some of the ones who are
trying to be strict he'll say give it to
the copy give it to the monastery
attendant which is already against the
rules because a monk is not allowed to

tell anybody what to do with money
unless I mean the only thing you're
allowed to say somebody asks you what
should I do with this money you can say
do whatever makes you happy that's all
you're allowed to say you can't say give
it to that person invest it in this none
of that especially if it's for your own
benefit so you're the Abbot of a
monastery um like I was technically
senior monk Abbot of a monastery in
Burma and I needed like let's say a bag
of cement we were going to do some
little project fix something whatever I
need a bag of cement I'll tell like a
lay person who's like an attendant who I

know has money uh for my for my benefit
say I need a bag of cement I can't say
buy me a bag of cement cuz then you're
telling them what to do with money and
that's the same as handling the money
yourself if you tell if a monk tells
somebody what to do with money it's the
same as him doing it himself it's
breaking the exact same rule as if he's
got the money in his own
hand
so if I needed something I'd say I need
this and but I could not say buy me this
but there are a lot of monks in in uh
Burma probably in in Asia in general who
who are try to be strict but it's just
so difficult not handling money you know

they'll they'll be telling the monastery
attendant you know go buy this you know
we need this you get the money from so
and so and go and buy that and it's
they're breaking the same rules if
they're handling the money themselves it
may be that Karma wise it's not quite so
bad but with regard to breaking the
rules it's exactly the same role
n so it it render just about every
Monastery um uninhabitable to a strict
monk because if a monk buys something
with money or something is bought with
money that that a monk donated or
whatever that a monk handled then the
whole thing is unusable for monks

anytime you use it you're breaking a rule and I've already given this example before but there's this classic example in the commentaries you've got the Shameless monk who buys a mango with his own money he eats the mango tosses the pit that pit Sprouts into a tree a hundred years later a completely different monk sits down in the shade of that tree and he is breaking a rule for making use of something that was bought with a monst
money and almost every Monastery in Burma most monasteries in America also you've got at least one monk donating $5 to the fund for paying the rent or building the the retaining wall or

building the building or whatever that's

it the whole thing is not Kosher it is

ritually

unclean so as a as a relatively strict

monk in Burma I just avoided monasteries

as a general

rule let's see here so I guess I

answered that question I'm going to move

on to ru's next question this is

similarly a book a rule about monastic

discipline I don't know why I said a

book

maybe because it's about beus and

beunis anyways ruie says would it be

possible for a biku and a bonei or these

days a committed assistant female

practitioner or renunciant to wander
together from place to place and even
live under the same roof for extended
periods of time no I mean they would be
breaking several Rules by doing that um
I'm I'm getting kind of rusty on my poty
Moka rules but I'm pretty sure that
there is a rule saying that a monk and a
non I mean first of all it's just
against the rules to travel with a woman
by
Arrangement so if like a woman says come
on venerable sir let's go such and such
place and the monk says okay and they go
he's already broken a
rule so also like sitting alone with a
woman even a bikuni against the rules um

getting back to the the ptim Moka rule

that um I'm kind of hazy on there seems

to be a rule against a monk and a nun

traveling together specifically and it

says if they're going to they can ride

the same boat across a river like they

have to cross a river there's no Bridge

they're able they are allowed by viia to

ride across the river in the same boat

but they can't go up the river or down

the river together only to cross that

River they can be on the same boat

together by some kind of

arrangement so the rules are very

sleeping under the same roof again

that's that's also that's a a pidia

offense there so any Monk and a and a
nun or a monk and a woman in general
traveling together they're going to be
breaking or at least the monk is going
to be breaking several rules just by
doing
that so I mean when I was a junior monk
I actually got into some trouble I got
some scoldings because I would refuse to
travel with a woman like sometimes the
only person who's who can drive the car
is a is a female like a female Monastery
attendant and I just no I'll just stay
here and sometimes I'd be invited
specifically but I still wouldn't go
because you know it's against the rules
and I was trying to be strict in

following the rules and there are some
rules that almost nobody follows
anymore so I'm just going to move on to
the
next next question which is from game
fap and game fap says do you have any
views on diogenes and I assume he's
referring to diogenes the cynic diogenes
of
cipa let's see so do you have any views
on diogenes he seems to me like he would
be the equivalent of a very crass
Buddhist monk and I actually wrote an
essay on diogenes and on the cynics like
the the ancient Greek cynic philosophers
in general I can't recall if it's in any

of my three books maybe it is I mean if
anyone has read one of my books that has
this essay on
cynicism the old-fashioned kind not not
new new fashioned cynicism but
oldfashioned cynicism classical cynicism
then uh please leave a remark in the
comments pointing out you know which
book it's in because otherwise it's just
not online anymore but uh yeah before I
became a Buddhist dienes the cynic was
my hero you know he was like one of my
role models
and uh yeah I mean the the cynic
philosophers came about as close to
Buddhist monks as you're about likely to
find in Classical Greece or Rome I mean

there were certain differences like
monks um the cynics were allowed to have
sex whereas obviously Buddhist monks are
not allowed to have sex they were
allowed to handle money although they
didn't handle very much of it
um but uh it was It was kind of similar
that uh the whole philosophy was you
know in order to be happy you have to
have everything you want and the only
Sure Fire way of having everything you
want is not to want anything so they
just kept their their desires down to
just the level of animal
maintenance which they they considered
sex to be just part one of the animal

needs and so there was a famous cynic
philosopher named Cates I think he and
his wife who was also a cynic
philosopher just had sex in public like
dogs which is one reason why they're
called cynic because cynic means
dogs they're relatively Shameless like
diyes I think he took a dump in public
once and according to one story he
masturbated in public and then when
people were like calling him out for it
he said it's it's too bad I can't
relieve my feelings of hunger likewise
by just rubbing my
belly and and shamelessness was one of
the the aspects of the the cynical
philosophers I mean you shouldn't be

ashamed of anything that you do ESP

esecially if it's just an ordinary thing

like taking a

dump also freedom of speech they

definitely believed in that I think it

was called perusia parisia no

parisia so yeah there's um a lot that I

admire with regard to the early cynics I

mean the the stoics were largely based

on the cynic it's just they made it more

mental and less physical you know it was

more of an attitude with the cynics or I

mean the the stoics whereas the cynics

were more more into walking the

talk to some

degree so yeah I definitely uh I have

written an essay on on diogenes and the

cynics and

uh I don't know if it's in one of my

three books that is published and

available on

Amazon but uh yeah he was he was my hero

before I I discovered Eastern philosophy

Eastern

spirituality so I'm just going to move

on to the next question this is from

Outer

Haven and outer Haven says being a

biologist how do you feel when you see

or hear the terms assigned male or

female at Birth when I see the word

assigned I think of like a professor

giving an assignment this redefining is

manipulative and

misleading yeah I mean when I see a

signed male at Birth

or assigned female at Birth is just

politics you know it's like leftist

politics is saying they can no longer

tell the difference between men and

women I mean it's like notoriously there

was like the most recently appointed

Supreme Court Justice when asked what is

a woman she refused to answer she could

not answer she said I'm not a

biologist so I mean nowadays the left

cannot tell the difference between men

and women

because feminine sentiment has pretty

much taken over the left at least in the decadent West and women identify more with their feelings than with their thoughts and so whether you're man or woman is no longer a matter of pure objectivity like gonads or chromosomes it's how do you feel do you feel like a man do you feel like a woman but I mean how does feeling like a woman even mean anything if they can't even say what a woman is a woman is anyone who feels like a woman you're just using a circular definition that it contains the word in question in the in the answer in the in the

definition so yeah aign male or female at Birth is just a a sign of like

decadence essentially moral Decay

civilizational Decay it's it's like

politics that can no longer a political

a political position it can no longer

tell the difference between men and

women

so yeah it's really not it's not really

a biological term other than you'd be

assigned male or female at Birth due to

your biological characteristics that are

apparent to the

doctor so that is being sort of you know

kind of they're distancing from it as

much as they are able and it's it

happens not only in gender but also in

ethnicity and so forth there is such a

thing as human biodiversity there is
such a thing in biological terms as
sexual dimorphism between men and women
and it's just Marxism and the whole idea
of the blank slate and there's no human
nature and Darwinism should never be
applied to humans that kind of a thing
all Marxist
positions um is just pretty much taken
over especially on the like the
globalist left and it's uh I mean
they're trying to accomplish something
by doing all this but what they're
accomplishing is not really positive
it's certainly not an
improvement so I guess that's what I
think about it so I'm moving on to the

next question which is from scolin or
skaden and he's got some he's got some
strange questions here I think he had
some strange questions last time
too but uh
his first question is is Tik Tock a form
of corporate
meditation and then he gives a little
like bullet points to support the idea
so he says in the essay on the origins
of meditation from the book Buddhist
ethics Buddhist practice I noticed that
Tik Tok has characteristics both from
the passage about gazing Into the Fire
and shamanistic practices and then
another bullet point is trans glass eyes

vegetative St state to keep people from going out side another bullet point creates tribal culture another bullet point users sing dance and chant in unison which creates a kind of group mind yeah I don't think they're watching Tik Tok videos like all together you know they're all dancing while looking into their phone another bullet point is 30 second videos played on a loop which turn into an obnoxious Mantra and then then that the last bullet point is Doom scrolling seems like the outcome is the exact opposite of a Vision Quest even if the technique is similar um no I mean it can be a kind of samat but it's not sasti it's not right

concentration so Tik Tock it you could
call it a form of meditation but it's
more of like a a trans inducing you know
stup inducing time wasting you know
almost debilitating
phenomenon um yeah I mean staring into a
fire
staring into a campfire I I gave that as
a possibility for the origins of
meditation you know how meditation
evolved you know what was its progenitor
what was its ancestor and yeah I mean
you can stare into a TV set which is
sort of a misplaced uh instinct to just
stare into the campfire staring into the
campfire keeps you from wandering away

from the light and getting eaten by

hyenas or

something

see yeah I mean it can it produces a

kind of mild Trans State but um I mean

where do you want to draw the line

between meditation and just something

that induces a mild Trans State you know

like listening to music with pounding

drums and so forth like a voodoo

ceremony where it's just the rhythmic

dancing and the chanting and the

pounding drums just cause people to go

in trans states where they're presumably

allegedly like possessed by by Voodoo

Dei and so forth um I mean just because

it can be a meditation it's not right

meditation so even if we say that yeah
it's you couldn't be called the kind of
meditation Doom scrolling on Tik Tok
Doom scrolling on X or whatever it's not
right meditation you know it's not going
to get you enlightened obviously it's in
fact it's going to take you farther away
from Enlightenment in in most cases than
to get you closer to
alignment so
yeah so I mean it's it's more of a a
kind of corporate thought control and a
kind of corporate
meditation but it depends on exactly how
you how you define the term meditation I
guess so I'm going to just move on to

scadden's next question which is would you happen to know what the situation is in Sri Lanka and then he's got bullet points again from what little I heard the government liberalized they enacted green policies prevented Farmers from buying fertilizer crops failed people became hungry overthrew the regime and then a question mark at the end as the last bullet point yeah I mean I've I've heard some years ago something like that happened that the government of Sri Lanka tried to be very liberal you know they're going to trying to excel the world exceed most other nations maybe all nations with regard to how woke and liberal they were and they were going to

do everything they could to stop global
warming and like the the the fertilizer
had to be like some kind of organic
fertilizer that was too expensive for
the farmers to use and crops failed and
people began rioting in the
streets and uh pretty much overthrew the
the government I think the government
went essentially went
bankrupt due to their attempts to live
up to these these leftist policies or
globalist
globalist quasi liberal
policies so yeah I mean I've heard
essentially the same thing but I don't
know what kind of situation Sri Lanka is

in now I haven't really been keeping up
and Sri Lanka just isn't in the news
Burma isn't in the news it's like what
the countries you see in the news are
just the countries that you know the
globalist establishment wants you to be
concerned with for political reasons you
know you hear a lot about Ukraine hear a
lot about Israel
maybe you hear about Taiwan every now
and then you know you hear about some
certain Middle Eastern countries and so
forth but you know countries that really
uh it's just not to the the
establishment's benefit for people to
hear about it they don't hear about it
much so yeah I guess I know essentially

the same that that uh skoa here knows
and so the last question from scolin or
skaden is one that I don't know how he
came up with this he says is Taylor
Swift a tulpa and I'm not even sure what
a tulpa is because I'm not a Tibetan
Buddhist I'm really not well versed in
Tibetan Buddhism but is a Tula the ones
that that like I was mentioning in a
previous Q&A recently about they're the
ones that go out and find texts and
caves and so
forth uh I think a Tulu is is like like
a a Reincarnation of some llama or
something I don't think she's one of
those so yeah I don't know that much

about Taylor Swift either to tell you
the truth I know about I probably know
more about Sri Lanka than I know about
Taylor Swift I mean I knew that Taylor
Swift was the heartthrob of like white
nationalists back before she let it slip
that she let everybody know that she was
a flaming leftist that uh you know she
looks kind of Germanic and a lot of the
Germanic types you know the the Germanic
nationalist types they just saw her as
this this Dreamboat and then
she came out of the closet as a flaming
leftist it's too bad
really so let's see here I guess I
answer that one because I'm Taylor Swift
Just is not on my radar really I

couldn't name a single song sung by

Taylor

Swift so I'm just moving on to the next

question which is from

Zenith and xenoid says do you believe we

have direct experience of time even if

there's no way way to be sure that time

really exists along with the external

World it does seem that we directly

experience a form of internal time

because we can feel the changing of our

emotions which are not part of the

external

World well yeah direct experience of

time would seem to imply that time is

real and time is not ultimately real it

is conventionally real so from a

conventional point of view you could say

we have experience of time but from an

ultimate point of view there is no us

and there is I mean there's no us to

experience anything and there's no time

from the ultimate point of view the

absolute point of view if if you can

even say the absolute has a point of you

which it really

doesn't so I mean yeah I

mean to to experience time you have to

use

memory so you're experiencing

you arguably let's say that we can

experience the present moment like

perceptually which technically isn't

true there's always like a split-second
lag but let's say we can be aware of the
present moment but still in order to be
aware of the passage of time you have to
compare the present moment with some
previous present moment some previous
point in time and so you can't really
know for sure that that previous point
in time really existed
like bur and Russell pointed out one
time it's impossible to know for sure
that some deity with a strange sense of
humor didn't create the entire universe
5 seconds ago and implant a bunch of
memories into us that of things that
never

happened so I mean from the conventional
point of view we do experience
time in the form of just an everchanging
present moment and without that we
wouldn't really be conscious in a in a
recognizably human sense we have to have
like a linear
thought going through time I mean it
would be our Consciousness would be
radically different if we were
four-dimensional beings who were just as
aware of our death as our birth and
everything in between you know like the
four-dimensional aliens of
trador that um that our our entire
Consciousness would have to operate on
some different different different way

and just life I mean how would we be
alive without like moving you know we'd
be like some frozen conscious statues or
something if we experience all of time
simultaneously like you know einsteinian
SpaceTime but I am unaware of whether or
not I'm actually answering this
question so let's see do you believe we
have direct experience of time yeah I
would say that from a conventional sense
like an empirical sense
we we do I mean man it is a tough
question because all you can really know
is the present
moment so I mean the present moment is
timeless each each present moment is the

only present moment so it is a kind of

mental construct like Emanuel K was

arguing that time is a kind of mental

construct

so

gosh I guess it would me depend on the

meaning of direct

experience and I'm I'm doing this Q&A

later than usual it's starting to get

dark outside already usually I do it

much earlier than this but we had all

the excitement of buying shrimps that

are now like hidden and invisible in my

aquarium let's see

here yeah I I'm sorry I cannot answer

this this question any better than I

just did but I think he's going to ask a

similar one um coming up soon here but
he says his next question you often say
that you don't consider matter to be
ultimately real do you consider matter
to still be contingently real and part
of a contingent external world or only
existent within our diluted Minds it
seems difficult to differentiate things
which exist in contingent conventional
reality and things that don't exist at
all
because both categories fall within the
greater category of s s yeah well I mean
some things that uh exist in contingent
or conventional reality don't exist you
know it's like let's say Irish people

firmly believe in leprechauns and let's
say just for the sake of argument that
leprechauns don't really exist but the
people's belief in those leprechauns
causes those leprechauns to be
conventional truth their existence is
conventional truth
I mean conventional reality is just what
people agree
on so like in the west people who who
vote Democrat are living in a different
conventional reality than people who
vote Republican there's there's becoming
more and more of a rift between these
two World
Views so I mean ultimately none of it's
real but let's I want to get to this one

part of the question

do I consider matter to be still be

contingently real and part of contingent

external world are only existent within

our diluted Minds um it goes back to my

my simile of the the block of

marble that block of marble contains

every possible statue which could also

include physical matter it could include

real actual physical statues but what

separates them out from the the block of

marble is mind you have have to have

mind to separate it out and so I mean

just physical matter can't separate

itself out you have to have some kind of

recursive mind that is like

self-referential in order for it to

start considering itself to be separate

from everything else so whether physical

matter exists or not is almost

irrelevant I mean it's pretty much

irrelevant it's the same either way

whether you want to say it exists but

only by being

perceived otherwise it's just in a kind

of nebulous potential form inside the

the the formless

void man we're getting some we're

getting some deep questions this

time let's

see so it it depends on how you look at

it I guess but I mean without a

perceiving mind you would not have any

kind of differ differentiated material
Universe you'd have like the potential
for it but you would not have the actual
Universe consisting of you know stars
and planets and comets and and Cosmic
dust and hydrogen atoms and and you know
electromagnetic radiation and all that
it just would not exist without a
perceiving mind separating it out from
everything else so it's kind of in there
it's just that it cannot be
differentiated or like separated from
the rest of infinity without some
conscious mind perceiving it and so
whether it exists without the conscious
mind or not is irrelevant really I mean

it's it whether whether there is

physical matter or not is just largely

irrelevant and I sincerely hope I

answered that

question because I'm moving on to the

next one

and this is similar to the first one

from xenoid do you consider time to be

ultimately real I think this is an

important question to ask because if it

is ultimately real that should mean that

Nirvana is permanent whereas if time

isn't ultimately real Nirvana would be

neither permanent nor impermanent

because it would have no relation to

time whatsoever yeah Nirvana is

timeless

aalo

Timeless um but I think I already

answered this question I do not consider

time to be ultimately real it's like a

mental construct uh I can't remember

what Emanuel Kant called it like a

category or something that is just sort

of a gimmick cooked up by the mind in

order to help it process

information

so we just to help it navigate in some

kind of world that it can get some kind

of grasp on

so no I do not consider time to be

ultimately real I do not consider space

to be ultimately real K also considered

time and space to just be mental
constructs so I'm just going to move on
to the next question which is from
KitKat and KitKat says what are your
quarrels with biku bod's translations I
overheard you making this comment on
your studies in archaic Buddhism series
if possible please resume to doing them
with your finished F tank yeah that's
possible and by the way um I am planning
on doing a video just on that fish tank
maybe
tomorrow so you're going to learn all
about the uh the ecosystem I can't
guarantee that you're going to see any
shrimps though because they have
burrowed underneath the Dead Leaves and

uh like probably their ancestors did in
their natural habitat that these ones
are bright blue they're really nice
looking little shrimps and um mostly
people who keep an aquarium you know
they don't have lots of Dead Leaves and
and detrius and so forth on the bottom
but I'm trying to turn this into like a
a biologically diverse little ecosystem
so dead leaves are pretty much necessary
and the shrimps are like now living
under them so you will see some cherry
barbs and some gamis and probably snails
and certainly plants if you watch the
video If assuming that God's willing
that I record that video which I have

every intention of doing but you never
know as a cha would say not
sure so anyways getting back to KitKat
what are my quarrels with biko's
translations I really don't have
quarrels with biku translations in fact
I have stated a number of times in in my
videos that I consider biku to be
possibly the best translator of poly
text into English I consider him to be a
better translator than an
Tano and those being the big two lately
because aan Tano is too idiosyncratic
and
self-indulgent although when it comes to
translating deep philosophical texts or
texts about meditation for example aan

tanero knows DH from experience more than bkub does buub is more of a scholar and his translation style is very kind of mainstream he go uses most of the accept renderings for the different pows but he's he's solid he is a good translator regardless of his politics and I think I have mentioned that bobot's translations are good but his footnotes can be depressing or his endnotes rather and like a third of the book can just be his endnotes just explaining stuff and he'll throw in a lot of you know Pro bikuni stuff or you know gender equality stuff you know he's definitely uh leans leftwards

politically and he injects some of that
into his commentarial explanations but
as a
translator he's good as a monk maybe not
so good but as a translator he is he is
one of the best so I really don't have
any quarrels with his translations
although like translating Asawa as taint
I I think he kind of missed the boat on
that one um but he's he's just following
along with just established tradition in
that
regard so I'm just going to move on to
kitkat's next question
here which is I overheard aan yanami of
Hillside Hermitage who has was already
mentioned in a previous question start

again I overheard ajan yanam of Hillside Hermitage claimed that in the early Buddhist texts that the Buddha never denied the self but accommodating oneself is a cause of dukka contrary to the doctrine that there is no self is there a difference between these two ideas I have chosen to not really acknowledge the idea of self viw from my own personal practice since this really is causing a degree of Dua upon me perhaps your input will bring me at ease well according to Orthodox tradition the anat L or the the mark of no self was the Buddha's second discourse which caused his first disciples to become

fully

enlightened um you you will have people

using kind of sophisticated arguments to

say well he's just saying the five

condas are not are not self which leaves

the door open to something beyond the

five condas although in other suas he

denies that there is anything beyond the

five condas he calls the five condas the

all you know that's that is samsara is

the five

condas um let's

see aan of Hillside Heritage claimed

that in the early Buddhist texts that

the Buddha never denied the self but

accommodating oneself is a cause of duok

I'm not sure what accommodating oneself

means it's she's got too many syllables
in it I guess but I mean in the Tica
waga which again I consider to be one of
the most ancient archaic fragments of
Buddhist teaching still in existence it
does claim that the the source of all
suffering the source of all delusion is
the conceit I am so Buddhists can say
well there is a self but you can't
identify with that self because that is
the root of all delusion and
suffering
so yeah I still I'm not exactly sure
what accommodating oneself means other
than just like catering to
oneself um yeah I'm not sure but like in

the AA waga it says you shouldn't

believe anything you shouldn't believe

the you do have a self you shouldn't

even believe that you don't have a self

because I mean beliefs are just invalid

they're those extraneous defilements

that were mentioned in as an in with

regard to an earlier

question that your thoughts are

extraneous and your beliefs are just

like extraneous defilements so just get

rid of all beliefs don't identify with

anything and I mean how could there

still be a self this this the whole self

is a perceptual

construct

so yeah I mean probably your best bet is

don't believe that you do have a self
and don't believe that you don't have a
self just don't even go there have no
self-regard because the conceit I am is
the root of all delusion and
suffering according to the AA waga and
so I'm going to move on to the next
question which is from drunk Dr and
drunk Dr says why do some Christians
have a problem with yoga techniques they
seem to think it's satanic but it's just
stretching at the end of the day seems
like hysteria to me well it seems more
like xenophobia to
me that it's just sort of like fear and
distrust of the unknown and

unfamiliar so Christians you know of course most Christians think that Christian is the one true religion the other religions are false religions you're going to go to hell for following those um but if you're a Christian or maybe just a certain sect of Christian then you you're you're pretty much going to heaven and they can admit that other religions will overlap with Christianity to some degree pretty much all religions say don't tell lies don't steal don't murder people that kind of a thing but yoga is is not overlapping with Christianity at all it's just totally alien or foreign to Christianity and so from these people's

point of view it's something foreign and alien to genuine religion which makes it like satanic like I mentioned before there was somebody in a breit bark comment section who was saying that that Buddhists will contort their body into weird shapes to make it easier for them to be possessed by demons and that reciting mantras is really just reciting the names of these demons to to call them and then you you contort yourself so they can enter into your body more easily and some ignorant fanatical Minister may have actually preached this at a Sunday church meeting or something and then this person just believed

it but uh yeah I mean it's just so
foreign and alien to what they consider
to be true religion that they just can't
see it as true religion and so it has to
be something that's you know
diabolical that's that's how I see it
you know it's it's essentially a kind of
xenophobia so I'll move on to drunk drun
second
question which is kind of a strange one
have you ever managed to put yourself
into a zen-like trance any advice to
beginners Well I mean Zen is really not
very trans trans likee I mean my my
understanding of Zen is I mean you're
cultivating wide awakeness I've never
heard of a a Zen like

trance I mean maybe some people who
think that they're practicing zazen and
are just like hypnotizing themselves or
something may go into a trance but
that's not genuine
Zen I mean in terada and in like in
Hinduism you can have a meditator who
goes into this deep state where he's
just oblivious to everything going on
around him you know you could be kicking
him and he wouldn't feel it he wouldn't
know anything and I mean I'm skeptical
of that kind of meditation because
you're supposed to be becoming more
awake not become like a hibernating
squirrel but in Zen I never even heard

of that I mean you're working on a Coan
if you're especially if you're into
renai zen or you're doing like
shikantaza where you're just in the
state of like enhanced
awareness just observing your own mind
carefully so yeah I I'm never I'm not
even sure what a zen-like trance would
be I mean I have I've
never um gone into like the hibernating
squirrel kind of of Trans State where
you're just oblivious to everything
around you I do not think that that
would be um purity of mindfulness for
example so I've always considered a deep
meditative state to be an enhanced
Consciousness your more awake you're

more conscious than when you're you're

walking around making

noise

so yeah this is just kind of a weird

like a a curveball or knuckle ball kind

of a

question because yeah I've I've never

managed to put myself into a zen-like

trance because I mean I don't even know

what a Zen like TR would

be but advice for beginners I mean I my

advice to beginners is don't try to

cultivate trans states don't meditate in

such a way that you no longer hear the

ticking of the clock you don't feel the

mosquito bite in your arm you're just

like Blotto I mean you're just oblivious
to the outside world um it maybe some
meditation Master can give you good
reasons why you should cultivate
something like that but as a general
rule you're trying to be more awake more
aware and not go into a Trans State most
trans states that people cultivate are
like self hypnosis which may be samama
but I don't think it's samati just like
Doom scrolling on Tik Tok is not some
aati I mean if you are going to
hypnotize yourself you should at least
know that you're hypnotizing yourself
and not that you're attaining jna or
some
such so my advice to beginners is

uh

well find a good meditation method that

you can make progress with and just keep

going with that meditation method and

whatever happens especially if you're

being trying to practice mindfulness

don't attribute any significance to

whatever arises any kind of weird

fireworks bells and whistles hearing

voices seeing images and all that just

note it and let it go you know it's it's

just you shouldn't be clean to this

stuff it'll it'll derail your meditation

just for

starters so just whatever arises just

note it and let it go remain

very awake and just be very observant
anything that arises into your awareness
note it and let it
go and so I'm going to move on to the
next question this is from the freedom
conversation and I have noticed we've
got a few new people asking questions in
addition to some older people who just
change their name a lot I'm assuming
that the freedom conversation is a new
person and not an old person who just
changed his name to the freedom
conversation so welcome aboard aoy M and
the freedom conversation says why do new
age spiritualists say Buddhism is a form
of mass formation psychosis to my
face and I'm not sure what Mass

formation psychosis is would it be like
Mass hysteria or just everybody
believing in something so that it seems
real um I I I mean I think that new age
spiritualists are more prone to that
than Buddhists are I mean new age
spiritualists can believe damn near
anything I've before I was a monk I
tended to steer I just keep a safe
distance from New Age people because the
softness of their head their their
ability to believe damn near or anything
just I mean it just kind of bothered me
I just felt uncomfortable around it you
know they could use just the the most
weirdest attempts at logic to justify

stuff um or they just have all these

glaring inconsistencies like for example

um let's

see they're they're quite okay with you

know everything is just a mental

construct until it gets to diet and then

it's just absolutely for sure that if

you're going to eat sugar it's going to

give you gout because of this and that

and this this interaction and and it's

like yeah there

it I I I shouldn't I shouldn't continue

in this vein but

when I came back to America in

2011 at least half the people that were

supporting me were new or new age people

and I got more of an appreciation just

because they're very open-minded because
they're willing to I mean they're
capable of believing damn near anything
so that makes them open-minded and very
accepting as a general rule and they're
very just openhearted generous people so
I could appreciate that when they were
supporting me then I I found a new
appreciation for new age
spiritualists but uh still I mean trying
to listen to a conversation of new age
people discussing spirituality I mean
it's you start getting vertigo and just
wanting to Rush from the room within
within a few
minutes so yeah I would I wouldn't take

what new age spiritualists say Buddhism
is very seriously I mean if you're a
Buddhist you probably understand
Buddhism better than new age
spiritualists most of them
understand
Buddhism a form of mass formation
psychosis I mean if that's just the idea
that people believing in something
creates like a false reality that
applies to everything it applies to all
religions it applies to science it
applies to
politics it applies to just everyday
life but if it doesn't mean that if a
mass formation psychosis is different
from that then uh yeah I'm not sure what

it is but even if Buddhism is a form of
mass formation psychosis it is a
benevolent and relatively benign form of
mass formation psychosis the purpose of
which is gradually to allow you to
escape to get you know to go beyond the
mass formation psychosis so it may be
that of necessity because we're
unenlightened we're stuck in a mass
formation psychosis whatever that
exactly is supposed to be but Buddhism
has this gimmick of you know you deal
with this and then you just gradually
detach from
it so you cure yourself of
it but I do think

uh that pretty much everybody is is
psychotic from a Buddhist point of view
unless you're fully
enlightened so I mean it's it that that
that aspect of it is unavoidable you
have to start off uh with the psychosis
or like um there was some Mahayana text
that I read long ago that said thep
purpose of Lord Buddha's teaching is to
liberate us from our Thinking by means
of our thinking so to liberate us from
our psychosis by means of this Buddhist
Mass foration
psychosis fighting fire with fire so to
speak so yeah I think New Age
spiritualism is also a kind of mass
formation psychosis or very nebulous

conglomeration conglomeration I said

conglomeration

of mass formation

psychoses because really I mean trying

to discuss philosophy with a new age

person man I I assume some of them are

capable of of doing a creditable job but

I don't think I've ever encountered one

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

question this is from Frederick who

changes his name every few weeks it

seems like now he's Frederick and

Frederick says if comma is not some

Cosmic Force but our own intention or

mental state and nobody wants to go to

hell why some people go to hell and this

is a good question and I was thinking I
could just do an entire video just
talking about this this one
subject
so why is it that our karma is like our
own mental States but yet our own Karma
can send us to hell when nobody wants to
go to hell well there's different ways
of of discussing this different ways of
approaching it one is I'll just give a
common example that most people can
relate to and that is that dreams at
night I think most of us nowadays agree
that we are creating our own dreams it's
our own mind is generating dreams people
nowadays generally no longer believe
that dreams are implanted into us by a

God so we are creating our own dreams

but still sometimes we create nightmares

we create bad dreams some monster or

some murderer is chasing us through like

an airport and when we try to run away

it's like we're running through syrup we

can't get

away and then right when he jumps on you

that's when you you jolt awake or

something so I mean if nobody wants

nightmares why are we creating

nightmares for ourselves nobody wants

weird creepy dreams that we don't like

but we're creating them ourselves sub

ing ourselves to these weird creepy

dreams

so um I think one important thing to remember is that the the mental states that are generating Karma and generating the fruition of karma it's not our superficial thinking ego it's a different level of Consciousness and that's something that's really hard for people to understand especially in the west maybe where we're just very egocentric we just think that our our conscious thinking mind is just all the Mind we've got maybe we can accept that there is a little bit of subconscious stuff below the surface but for the most part you know if it's part of our mind we should be aware of it as a general rule and it doesn't work that way at all

there's just different levels of mind
that and most of those levels The
Superficial ego the thinking mind is
oblivious to it so at deeper
levels we might have a different agenda
than your superficial thinking ego like
there's a statement that ROM dos makes
in one of his books this is more of a
Hindu concept I'm not saying this is
necessarily true but he'll say that
after after somebody dies they go into
kind of like a BAU realm you know they
can like review their past life and this
is like a a higher level of
Consciousness this isn't like the the
personality of the person who just died

this is like the deeper levels of of
mind that were always there and are no
longer obscured because that personality
is now dead you know it's just like a a
mask that has fallen away and now you're
like at this other level of
Consciousness and and so this other
level of Consciousness sort
of kind of looks at the options and
thinks well what I need for my Spiritual
Development is to be born into a ghetto
to and become a black a drug addicted
prostitute who is knifed to death in a
back alley at the age of 18 okay here we
go and down into the body they go and
like I say that's more of a Hindu idea
but it's like other levels of your

Consciousness may not have the same
values the same agendas they might be
willing to uh to play a role in a
tragedy instead of just doing comedies
all the
time so there is that but another more
Buddhist approach to why it is that we
make Bad Karma that sends us to hell
even though it's our own creation of our
own mind is like someone who's not very
good at driving a car they're they don't
want to get in a wreck but even so their
own actions cause them to get in a
wreck because they're not skillful and
like good karma is technically cusa
which means skillful there it's not good

karma and Bad Karma and Buddhist

philosophy it's skillful and unskillful

so when you act unskillfully

you wreck your car or you wind up in

Hell through your own actions you may

not have wanted to go

there but you're just

incompetent at steering the

vehicle so there's different ways of

explaining it but the main thing to

remember is

that the generation of karma it for the

most part is happening at a different

level of

Consciousness than the thinking mind and

terab Buddhism really doesn't have much

of a concept of different levels of

consciousness or a subconscious or
superconscious or anything but still
it's it's pretty clear that that is the
case and what some people consider to be
their soul is just a deeper level of
their Consciousness that may survive
death and and remains you know fairly
similar from One Life to the
next but again that's that's not
Orthodox Buddhism that would be more
like Hinduism or something
so yeah so I guess the main the two main
things to to bear in mind one it's a
different level of Consciousness that
may have very different values very
different priorities and

also um most people are just incompetent
at steering the vehicle you know they're
just going to go off the road even
though they don't want to go off the
road it's their own actions that are
driving them off the road because they
are unskillful
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question here and this is kind of a this
is a heartfelt question it seems this is
from s papala who I think used to be
called Indian guy sometimes known as
Trevor I think and if s papal laa isn't
Trevor then uh forgive me for making an
honest
mistake so anyway s papal papa says all
I think about is renunciation and dream

of becoming a monk as soon as possible
I'm not that smart and I have many
blemishes that make fear arise but it's
not something I can't change since the
dama has helped me change more than
anything else so far then it must be
what I should do to cure my defilements
Etc I can't wait till I have enough
money to renounce the world I can't wait
to be good enough to renounce the world
I feel like I can't wait any longer to
be honest my question is if one is
having this much mental proliferation
about renouncing the world and going for
full Enlightenment then do you recommend
I go and become ordained immediately all

I think about is Buddhism in one way or

another I know I must get rid of that

craving too eventually but it's crazy

how obsessed I am with the

dama

well it's kind of strange up here when

he says uh

see I can't wait till I have enough

money to renounce the world

well um really renouncing the world

doesn't cost anything so I mean that's

that's good I mean when I went to the

monastery I

donated I can't remember exactly how

much it was I think it was like $7,000

plus my pickup truck to the monastery

and that was I mean that was the best I

could do that's what I had I donated
that as just sort of like to help defay
the costs of feeding me and uh but as it
turns out I was ordained at a a b
Monastery in in America Tulu kab
Monastery and the burmes are so generous
and so supportive of monks that almost
immediately I had sponsors like people
just very eager to support me so getting
support really shouldn't be that
difficult so long as you can find an
appropriate place to be ordained and if
you wanted to go to Asia then of course
you'd have to uh come up with the money
for plane tickets and you know settle
all of your Affairs before going you

have to like pay off all your debts if

you're in debt that no monk should be

ordained if he's in

debt

um let's

see so yeah I mean if you could find a

suitable Monastery in America that would

take you maybe you could serve as a

monastery attendant for several months

maybe a year or something until you

think that you're you're purified enough

and you know you've you've done your

part to support the monastery enough

that then they can start supporting you

as a monk then that can work too it's

something you'll have to look into

though I wouldn't recommend trying to be

ordained where I was ordained because
that place has pretty much gone Belly
Up um let's see I can't wait till I have
enough money to renounce the world I
can't wait to be good enough to renounce
the world well I mean I had those same
kind of thoughts like um when I first
was checking into the monastery where I
eventually ordained I wrote about how
you know I was uh you know kind of
unworthy I just felt kind of unworthy of
becoming a monk and the the monastery
attendant who who wrote back to me said
you know it's like every every saint has
a past and every sinner has a future so
I mean just the fact that you become a a

monk or you go to the monastery in good
faith you know as an attendant at first
you know Paca or whatever you know
dressed in white or whatever support the
monks I mean that's a pretty good
indication that you're above average you
know you're at the right end of the
bell-shaped curve
already so yeah I mean if you really
feel like you should renounce the world
as soon as possible I'm sure it could be
done I mean first you have to find I
mean you can't just
wander maybe you can but as a general
rule you don't just take off wandering
like people could do in India maybe they
still can do that in India where you

just you know get yourself a robe and just start walking maybe with a a bowl or something but in America it generally works better if you can find a supportive Community like a monastery an ashram uh assume if as a terot Buddhist you you'd go to a monastery there's like Asian run monasteries and then there's a western run monasteries the Western R monasteries on average are more serious you's got sort of a more serious more dedicated level of monks there and you could just ask them I mean how could I become a monk here I mean I'm willing to donate what I've got to the monastery and you know willing to to serve as a

monastery attendant on the on the
condition that I get ordained you know
at some point in the not too distant
future so I mean if you really want to
renounce the world I mean you you can
there's nothing really stopping you
unless you're in debt and then in which
case like you got student loan debt or
something you got to pay that off or
somehow get it annulled so that you
don't owe it anymore and then you can
renounce the
world so but I I really don't think that
it would be that difficult you just find
a place that with a teacher that you
respect and trust and I'm sure the the
two of you could work it out

so good luck to you and then uh the next question is did you have to pay to become a monk and I already answered that question I voluntarily donated like 7,000 bucks from my savings account and my pickup truck and then um almost immediately upon being ordained I had just like burmes lay people that were just Overjoyed to be supporting me and if you're a serious monk like very conscientious and sincere then they'll be all the more happy and willing I mean if if you protect dama dhama protects you and if you really have a a calling to renounce the world then the world is going to help you renounce the

world so yeah I don't think you've got
anything to worry about
there so uh I guess I'll move on to the
next question this is from pyramid
and pyramid says you've been doing these
q&as for a pretty long time I see do you
ever get tired or annoyed of having to
answer so many questions over and over
again um no not really I mean I it is
true that I get asked the same question
you know repeatedly
sometimes but um it just indicates that
people really are interested in an
answer to that question so I have got no
objection to answering the question the
same question more than once um the only
thing that kind of bugs me I think is

Western Buddhists who just assume that scientific materialism is the truth and then they're trying to like fit or superimpose dhama onto scientific materialism or scientism scientific realism that I mean it kind of I don't know it kind of bugs me a little bit when when people just keep doing this especially if it's just like one person is like sort of continually hitting it from different angles um another kind of question is about Karma you know is such and such an action Good Karma or Bad Karma it's you know I have to give the same answer over and over again you know it's like physical actions are morally

neutral it's the mental states that
accompany the physical actions that
really are making the karma
so I mean every once in a while I might
get a little impatient with that kind of
question but still I try to answer them
patiently and uh you know in good faith
people ask a question in good faith I'm
I'm willing to answer the question in
good faith as well as I
can so I'm just going to uh move on to
pyramid's next question which is are
there questions you come across and just
roll your eyes and ignore I see in
previous videos you've answered OB troll
questions from TIG about pogs and
whether you've had intercourse while

wearing The Fez actually I think it was
uh somebody else asked me The Fez
question but TIG does he does ask like
like deliberately irreverent
off-the-wall kind of question
sometimes and usually I'll answer those
I mean sometimes the main kind of
questions I won't answer some questions
are just rhetorical or sometimes there's
there a fellow named Fred bless his
heart who just kind of throws question
marks in for no apparent reason into a
comment so it's hard for me to tell if
he really is expecting an answer or not
and then of course there's just
like they're they're rare but every once

in a while you'll just get some kind of
a a snotty question that's asked not in
good faith so I mean sometimes I'll even
answer those but I mean if it's just you
know they're just they're just being
snotty by asking the question then you
know it is um My Prerogative to just
skip that question but as a general rule
it's it's all it's all fair game and
usually even like troll questions or
like sarcastic kind of questions I can
still answer those but I prefer
questions in good
faith from you know about something that
you really want to know about and so we
are at the very last question boom it
always takes me by surprise and this is

from extremely rare

bird an extremely rare bird

says how did you wash your bull as a

cave dwelling

monk well I still have my bull right

right back there under the

Fez and uh how did I wash it well it

depends on where I was like usually if

I'm staying in a monastery like I the

one place I lived longer than anywhere

else it there was a cave there but it

was on the outskirts of a monastery and

so um I would just carry buckets of

water up from the well I lived up on the

side of a hill just like a 4minute walk

down the hill would take you to the bath

house and a well and like the

congregation Hall and and you walk

another couple minutes and you're at the

the chindwin

river um so I would just carry buckets

of water up up the hill to my cave and

i' have like clay pots I had one Clay

Pot just for boil washing water i' keep

that you know with water in it and one

of the things that villagers would

donate quite a lot of is detergent

powder so I have this little bag of

detergent powder and I have this clay

bowl of with water in it and so I just

rinse my bowl out you know first you

just pour in a cup of water and swirling

around and throw throw that so that

you're getting rid of all the the r the
extra rice grains and so forth
and you put in a little detergent powder
and pour in some more water and swish it
around and then you throw that out and
then you rinse it a few times until the
the detergent powder is washed
away there you go you got a clean bowl
and then you sit it in the sun it's it's
a rule of monastic discipline that after
you wash your bowl you have to set the
the bowl in the sun to dry you can't set
it out there for too long that'll ruin
the the black coating on it and uh yeah
that's that's a rule that probably most
monks are unaware of

and uh so that's that's generally how I wash my bowl although um when I was living like on the outskirts of Alando CA National Park um after I would eat I would just go down to the creek Pon and Cha and do water things so every every day after I finish my meal i' go down to this Creek and uh wash my bowl at the creek so I didn't have a clay pot but I still had the the detergent powder and uh I just wash it down there and uh do other water things like brush my teeth and take a bath and so forth fill my drinking water bottles and then just go back up to my cave again or sometimes the one year that I spent the rainy season there um you couldn't really go

down and take a bath in the creek you
couldn't drink the creek water because
it was just like flood waters it was all
muddy and you get the squirts if you
drink the water so then I would uh dig a
hole in the sand near a body of water
and then let it fill up and you bail
that out let it fill up and you bail
that out until it's coming up clear the
sand acts as a water filter and then you
can just wash your bowl there I did know
a monk who lived in uh who lived in
Burma who he didn't even use detergent
power he he would have these soap
berries that he had there was a bush at
the monastery I guess I I I'm not sure

if I ever saw the bush or not but it was
a soap berry bush and it grew these
fruits like this and he would have them
dried and you just put put them in water
and you swish them around and it turns
into soapy water so you could wash your
bowl without the detergent powder just
by using soap berries which is kind of
strange but there we are and that's the
last question that's how I washed my
bowls cave dwelling monk so if you got
any questions that you think I can
answer especially if they're in good
faith not sarcastic or snotty although I
might answer them
anyway for entertainment value at least
then include them in the comments below

or if you have access to the Subscribe
Star channel you can ask them there if
you have access to the Discord server
you can ask them there and uh you know
whatever you think I I'm able to answer
I'm really not much into like Tibetan
Buddhism and really not even heavily
into specifically tie terraa Buddhism
but terraa Buddhism in general Buddhism
in general Burmese Buddhism certainly
meditation philosophy including Western
philosophy me personally Aberdine
Washington questions like that I can
generally answer fairly well and uh look
at the URL links below to see where you
can find me online and find my books on

Amazon and be happy

hey audience and welcome to episode

109 of question and answer I am your

host poo basa and there are a few

co-hosts walking around on the floor

because they're

dogs and uh I'm starting a little later

than usual today because I went out on a

journey a quest to find a twisty looking

stick to put into my aquarium which I

found

and

so I got the beverage with the little

paper umbrella which signifies that I've

got

class and I got the emergency backup

beverage which will'll probably make an

appearance later in this video and we've
got quite a few vid we got quite a few
questions to answer in this video it's
like almost 50 so it's it's it could
last 3 hours this
time but there are weird people that
listen listen to entire three-hour long
videos and
so who am I to criticize such a thing
especially when they're watching my
video so with that as a kind of dumb
Preamble I will commence to answering
questions and the first question is from
game fap and before I start answering
questions I should just let you all know
that if I didn't see your question
somewhere I do apologize if you ask a

question I don't answer it it's mainly
the main reason is just because for some
reason I don't see
it so maybe you asked it like on an old
video it wasn't a Q&A video or something
like that or asked it in an unusual
place or some such so anyways game fap
says you talk a lot about mental states
can you give us a scenario or example of
someone performing the same action but
with different mental States and I've
I've already done this a number of times
like the classic example that I have
given probably several times by now is
you're walking through a forest you hear
a squealing frog you go and look and the

Frog is

being um eaten by a snake the snake is

trying to swallow this frog and the frog

has got himself puffed up you know to

inflate himself as big as possible to

make himself as difficult to swallow as

possible and he's squealing to attract

some other kind of Predator that might

go for the snake instead of for the

Frog so anyways you go you see this

snake trying to eat this frog and so you

chase the snake away and you save the

Frog but one person does this out of

compassion for the Frog they're doing a

meritorious deed the other person does

it out of hatred for the

snake they're doing a demeritorious deed

the exact same action you chase the
snake away save the Frog if you do it
out of compassion for the Frog that's
good if you do it out of hatred for the
snake that's
bad or other examples would be um let's
say you're in a Burmese Village and
somebody comes out and offers food to a
monk that walks by when he's he's got
his bulll he's going for Al around so if
you're doing it just out of compassion
or just just Joy at offering food to
someone you consider to be a holy man
you know it's like a an ordained priest
of your religion like a heavy hitter
according to you know in your

imagination your belief you think this
person is a holy man possibly a saint a
superhuman being possibly like in Burma
the word for human being is not used for
monks monks are above human being level
just according to the standard tradition
of Buddhist Burma so you offer the
food just because you are happy to
support the SAA well you get one kind of
karma if you're doing it out of desire
for merit it's like mainly I mean you're
like hoping to get some kind of good
karma so that you can go to heaven or be
reborn as rich and
beautiful whatever then that's a
different kind of karma you're doing the
same action but you're getting a

different kind of karma or maybe you're just offering food because the neighbors are watching there's there was a few ladies in the village of pinday in central Burma that were like that I noticed they would only offer food if the neighbors were

[Music]

watching so in that case your your volition is not nearly as pure but it's the same action you just walk out put food in a monst Bowl all kinds of things all kinds of things where two people can do outwardly the exact same action and inwardly it's just like night and day

so let's

see I guess I answered that question so

I'm going to move on to the next

question which is from Outer Haven and

outer Haven said says how do we

distinguish between real wisdom and

fantastic fables in Buddhism for example

I highly doubt the story of when the

Buddha was a baby he went around talking

about how great he was and had lotus

flowers grow out of the floor as he

walked is a factual event that

occurred well it's not really that

difficult to differentiate fairy tale

narratives from real wisdom

because real wisdom is pretty much

abstract it's not dealing with any

particular scenario in Ancient India
it's just dealing with the mind how to
purify the mind how to how to like get
increase your mindfulness increase your
concentration and so forth so I mean it
may be that the Buddha is teaching this
to a DEA or some such but I mean who
he's teaching it to is largely
irrelevant whether there's a Dava there
or not is larg irrelevant it's just the
value of what he's
saying and so if it's applicable to you
personally you know if it's instructions
on how to practice dhama correctly
that's one thing if it's like Miracles
and fair tales and talking animals and

fire breathing Cobra dragons and so
forth I mean it's just irrelevant to
dharm
anyway genuine dhma is with regard to
purifying your mind or just cultivating
wisdom getting closer to
Enlightenment so I mean you whether any
of the narratives are actually true or
not really doesn't matter all that much
this isn't like Christianity where the I
mean the whole religion stands or falls
on the narrative you know if Jesus
wasn't the only begotten Son of God who
died for our sins Etc then
I mean Christianity to a lot of people
would just collapse but Buddhism isn't
based on a narrative it's just based on

the value of the Buddha's
instructions and so all the narratives
are all the stories are largely
irrelevant sometimes you can you can be
edified by a story sometimes the stories
are very interesting sometimes they're
educational with regard to what life was
like in Ancient India in the Buddhist
time but it's just totally different
from the philosophical yogic aspect
where you're receiving instructions on
how to practice dhama
correctly so I mean it's not that
difficult to distinguish between what
outer Haven calls real wisdom on the one
hand and fantastic fables on the other

fantastic fables should be pretty

obvious any kind of narrative you know

about fantastic stuff would be the

Fantastic fables and just the

instruction on how to practice dhama

would be the real

wisdom so that should be fairly

straightforward and I also highly doubt

the story of when the Buddha was born he

immediately took off walking with a

lotus flower appearing under each

footstep and just announced you know I

am the greatest in the world this is my

last life

Etc and then he just sort of reverted

back to being a normal baby after

that so so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from White Ash Piper and he says Pacific Northwest or South Carolina if you had your rathers um both have their good points and their bad points with regard to the weather I just was born and raised into like gray drizzly rainy coolish kind of weather it suits me so actually the weather of the Pacific Northwest that lot of people just hate I remember one time I was in a grocery store in Bellingham Washington long ago and I was in the produce section all of a sudden some guy just starts yelling doesn't the sun ever shine in this state and I just wanted to walk up to I

didn't do this but I was tempted just
walk up to him and say yes I have seen
the sun shine it was beautiful was like
a giant ball of fire up in the sky my
friends don't believe me but I saw it I
hope someday my children also will see
it but the main problem with the Pacific
Northwest is it is under the sway of
Looney leftism and Washington State in
particular has been sort of far
leftist probably even before California
was it was like it was like the wobblies
it was it was some sort of like quasi
Marxist labor union group would have was
like like really their stronghold is in
Washington state whereas South Carolina
is firmly Red State and so

politically and economically and with
regard to like Law and Order and so
forth South Carolina is far preferable
to the Pacific Northwest in
general you don't have like antifa doing
stuff in South Carolina maybe around big
universities maybe around Clemson or
something might be a little antifa cell
that doesn't really speak up much CU
they don't want to uh come across the
bearded construction workers with arms
bigger around than the antifa guys
legs but South Carolina it does have hot
humid weather which I don't like so much
especially when I have to work in
it so but all in all I'm I'm happy with

South Carolina mainly because it is a

firmly read State and so it's relatively

sane it's it's more

traditionalist people are polite to each

other people are just genuinely like

each

other got people blessing me like

customers you know it's like God bless

you this kind of stuff

it's um it's just a different kind of

it's a different culture really a

different subculture anyhow than what's

going on in like Portland Oregon or

Seattle Washington

especially so I prefer the weather I

prefer just the the massive forests

everywhere like in Washington state

there's I think there's at least three
national parks Wilderness areas This na
state forests just it's just Forest
everywhere at least the Western half we
get into the eastern half it's it's
largely desert
but but all in all just just because of
the fact that South Carolina is a red
State and Washington at present is a
blue State makes South Carolina
preferable to me a lot of people who
complain about how America is going to
[__] you know how it's just in Decline
mainly they're living in Democrat run
areas either the state or just the city
they're in or whatever and it really is

a luxury people I I see people

complaining about how messed up America

is but here in a place like South

Carolina it's really you know it's it's

at least 20 years behind the the blue

states with regard to everything turning

to

[__] so yeah I'm not planning on moving

to the Pacific Northwest I'm uh I'm

content to stay in South Carolina

although it is hot and humid that is the

main the main difficulty with South

Carolina also so you know you don't have

the the huge deep

forests here that you would have in the

Pacific

Northwest but there's like wild turtles

in South Carolina no wild turtles in

Washington state so there is that

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

the next question this is from Power

tread

Supremacy and it does seem we got some

new names asking questions it's not The

Usual Suspects unless we got some Wise

Guys who who are just changing their

names and I don't know that it's really

just the same guy that asks questions

but I think power tread suprem is

probably power Treads

Supremacy is um possibly a new question

answer a new question

asker and there there are a few in this

in this video so welcome all newcomers
to the question asking activities of
these videos so anyway power Treads
Supremacy says would you recommend
reading Dharma texts via a physical book
or
e-reader well I don't think it matters
at all whichever works best for you
whichever you feel more comfortable with
I used to just read paper
books and didn't really like the idea of
ebooks very much I mean you got to r on
charging batteries and so forth but
lately um almost everything that I read
is on a computer now partly because you
can have an entire poly toptica and like
a thousand other books on one little

computer that's you know half an inch
thick and you know this
big you have it all on your phone that's
even smaller and so you can carry around
an entire library with you um
that's just on one little computer or or
a phone or something and also you can
read in the dark because the screen
lights up that's one that's a big thing
for me like if I'm lying in bed which
would be the main time I'm reading a
book then I'm lying in bed with a woman
lying next to me and if I turn on the
lights to read she may uh not like that
very much she doesn't like light shining
in her eyes when she's trying to sleep

but if I just roll over with my back
tour and just look at my computer screen
it's fine so really it doesn't really
matter how you read your Dharma I mean
you can just listen to Somebody reciting
it if you want um so whatever whatever
works best for you I don't think there's
any
metaphysical like advantages or
disadvantages between one and the
other so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is also
apparently a newcomer because it's from
Ultra claves
herum I'm not sure exactly how to
pronounce this name Ultra claves
herum Ultra Ultra claves claes Ultra

claes

herum and anyways UC says I heard that

there's some Kundalini type ABC given

among the Cambodian Buddhists did you

find in Burmese Buddhism anything with

abis uh num Numa transfer Kundalini Etc

in other words did you find burmes

meditation Masters who can transfer

their realizations state energies Etc to

individual students or groups of people

are there Kundalini Cults among the

Burmese as far as you know either in

Buddhism or the waya Alchemy stuff well

for starters I'm not even sure what abis

is I assume it would be short for abisa

which would mean like special

practice you know sort of like secret
like Arcane esoteric kind of practices
maybe um yeah among the Cambodian
Buddhists that doesn't surprise me very
much um did I find in Burmese Buddhism
anything with abis saac Numa transfer k
Etc no I did not um there was one rather
strange sect in Buddhism or a not not a
g it's just like a tradition the uh the
Inu tradition in mainly in Northwestern
Burma where um you can do like a one
week Retreat there and they promise you
that within one week you'll be able to
sit for for like 4 hours straight
without moving and you will be able to
astral travel essentially into heaven
Realms and Hell

Realms and personally I'm guessing that
it's based on like self
hypnosis because it's pretty it's pretty
wild claim pretty pretty huge claim to
say that even a beginner within a week
is going to be like traveling to Heaven
Realms and Hell Realms and sitting like
a rock for four hours straight and so
forth um so sometimes you can get kind
of far out claims and a lot of like you
know H hypnotism like self hypnosis kind
of stuff and then there's like the
Alchemy stuff going for immortality or
changing base medals into gold or
whatever um yeah Burma is probably the
most Orthodox Buddhist country in the

world and so there's probably going to be less of this than you're going to find in a place like Cambodia or even Thailand you know less weird esoteric stuff that isn't really supported by the poly texts but it has just become like a tradition in an otherwise terab Buddhist like Monastery or or tradition or some such with regard to let's see this question did you find burmes meditation Masters who can transfer their realizations state energies at Etc to individual students or groups of people yeah that's really not Orthodox Terra most burmes Buddhists are educated enough at least the serious ones are educated enough in terraa to know that

that would be wrong view even the idea
that a teacher can like do some kind of
uh transmission of his state of of
attainment to somebody else because I
mean everybody's karma is their own May
maybe if somebody is really ripe for it
through you know it just takes a little
nudge for them to have their realization
I mean that's possible but for like a
meditation Master to like beam his state
of realization into somebody
else
um yeah that's it's really not um
considered to be a thing in Terri of
Buddhism so I mean it's like in Zen you
know you've got Zen transmission from

teacher to

disciple it doesn't really work that way

in terraa

Buddhism that everybody's karma is their

own that you know you just can't get

somebody else's realization just gifted

to you that you've got to earn it

yourself you have to be ready for it you

have to be worthy you have to like

cultivate it it yourself or at least at

least in like a past life so that you're

ripe for it

now so yeah Kundalini I mean that's

that's a Hindu thing as far as I know

maybe some Tibetan Buddhists or

something do Kundalini stuff but uh yeah

I've I don't know if I ever heard the

term

Kundalini in in when I was in Burma my

20 approximately 24 years in Burma maybe

from like another Western Monk and we're

just like talking about Kundalini

meditation or

something so yeah none of this stuff

would really be Orthodox Terra and as I

say the Burmese are as Orthodox as they

as they

come so I mean I'm not particularly

Orthodox myself but I'd have to be

really careful if I was giving a doat

talk in Burma to Burmese people I'd have

to be really careful because if you

stray from

Orthodoxy then they're going to start
thinking this at at best at best they
think this person is a is a foreigner he
does not understand dharm correctly we
should we should have you know pity or
compassion for this person but if it's a
monk doing that kind of stuff teaching
something that's not in agreement with
the text you might have a few like
really gung-ho followers but the
majority is going to say he's a heretic
he's got wrong View and he might even
get in trouble with like the the
ecclesiastical Council in
rangon there have been I heard a few
stories of monks that were like
chastised and rebuked by the the

ecclesiastical Council which is you know
the highest you know it's like the the
archbishops of
Burma you know ordered to stop teaching
their method because it's it's not
correct dhama that kind of
thing so it might happen I mean there's
there's weird groups of monks in various
places in Burma that are teaching weird
stuff that probably I've never heard you
know even 1% of it so it is possible but
I've never heard of it and I've been
around I've been around in Burma been
behind the scenes and monasteries have a
pretty good idea of what's going on in
the average Burmese Monastery and uh

none of this kind of stuff was was going
on there so I'm going to just move on to
the next question this is from
Romeo and Romeo has kind of a a long
intro here but it's it's it's an
interesting one I think so I'm just
going to read it Romeo says I work in
the mental health field and often
counsel people dealing with severe
psychosis some of their symptoms include
hearing dark voices seeing strange
Visions harboring paranoid
delusions tactile Sensations among
others I've seen two basic camps
emerge on how to view psychosis first
there is the growing peer movement made
up of people with a lived experience of

psychosis and their professional allies according to them psychosis is a spiritual gift that we need to affirm and cherish and that many prominent people throughout history have experience psychosis including religious prophets philosophers artists and Poets they feel that mandating someone take antis psychotic medication is wrong and a violation of their human rights on the other side are the people who Advocate the medical model which says that psychosis should be treated with medication for the benefit of the patient as well as society as a whole even to the extent that the person is

mandated to take the medication they say
that if unchecked psychotic symptoms can
render a person a danger to themselves
or others for example a homeless person
pushing someone off of a subway platform
in New York City after hearing voices
telling them that the other person is
the devil
so this leads to three questions the
first one is do you see psychosis as a
beautiful possibly spiritual experience
that should be affirmed without being
mitigated by medication that's
medication with a c not meditation with
a t after all the Buddha is said to have
had paranormal
experiences well I do

think that a a lot of people who are

considered to be highly Advanced saints

were also a bit

nutty

so um I really don't think that

psychosis just as

psychosis is necessarily beautiful or

ugly it depends on what kind of state

the person is in I mean if the person is

harmless you know they're not doing

anything you know they're still able to

function somewhat or they've got people

willing to take care of them then then

there's I don't think that there's

necessarily any problem I mean if

they're

obviously just dysfunctional so that
they can't really function in society
then something has to be
done I mean not you could give them the
choice if if it it is deemed by medical
professionals that they are a danger to
themselves or especially to others then
they may have the choice you take the
medication which will keep it in check
or you're going to have to be committed
somewhere because letting just really
like dangerously insane people wandering
the streets which is kind of in fashion
now I guess um yeah it's not necessarily
the best way of going about it but
old-fashioned insane asylums I mean
those places were like hell Realms some

of

them so I think it should be done on a

person byerson basis I mean if they're

psychosis if they're like a happy

harmless

psychotic then I don't think that we

anyone should necessarily mess with them

but if they're obviously very troubled

and just dysfunctional and possibly a

danger to others if not themselves then

yeah I think there should be some kind

of intervention just for the protection

of society I guess

so yeah I think it would be

uh should be judged on an individual

basis so that leads to the second

question do you think that psychosis should be mitigated as much as possible by the use of medications for the benefit of both the person and Society well I've already been kind of touching on this and again it's like if they are harmless people let's let's say there's a Catholic saint St Teresa of Aila I mean she was continually seeing visions and hearing voices and so forth by modern day standards she might be psychotic she was continually seeing these Visions like beings in Hell or Angels or whatever and her father confessed her was getting a little concerned because she was starting to arouse the interest of the the holy

Inquisition and so her father Confessor
told her I me you don't know for sure
what this stuff is so just make the sign
of the cross every time you see one of
these visions and she was having to make
the sign of the cross so many times cuz
she was seeing so many Visions this is
according to her own autobiography which
I read that she just started carrying a
cross around with her just hold the
cross up every time that she'd have this
Vision or like the founder of the
Quakers I can't remember his name but um
uh William James in his varieties of
religious experience he towards the
beginning he's showing that some people

who are great Saints great spiritual
Geniuses are also a bit on the Nutty
side
and the founder of of quakerism he was
one of these he was like he was like a
personal secretary to Oliver Cromwell at
one point so he was intelligent but he
was just continually just hearing these
voices from God telling him to do all
this weird stuff like take your shoes
off so he he'd just take his he'd hear
this voice in his head or he'd have some
sort of deep intuition that he should
take his shoes off he takes his shoes
off he just gives them to some confused
us farmer standing nearby and he starts
walking barefoot he gets to the city of

Lichfield he he recorded this in his his
journal which William James recorded in
his his book that God told him that he
should walk Barefoot to the city of
Lichfield yelling just over and over
again wo to the bloody city of Lichfield
wo to the bloody city of Lichfield and
God told him to do it so he he did it
and I mean he was fairly wealthy
successful intelligent man but he had
this kind of a Nutty
side so I
mean I think that a certain amount of
craziness is not necessarily a bad thing
I mean craziness and genius or like
especially like a like a really inspired

artist I mean some of them are pretty

darn nutty

too so again I do think that it should

be like each each case be judged on an

individual basis that if they're not

causing harm to

anybody that you know it doesn't seem

likely that they're CA going to cause

harm to anybody just let them be I mean

if they they come for help then yeah

help them you know it's like they can't

get rid of the voices in their head or

these these like you know horrible

thoughts just obsessive in their mind

that kind of a thing yeah maybe they'll

just freely choose to do the therapy or

or take the medication or whatever

[Music]

so I guess I answer that one so the

third question here do you have any view

on the origins of severe psychosis from

a Buddhist

perspective um IE such symptoms being

the result of karma rebirth Etc well

certainly they'd be the result of

karma that if you're psychotic let's say

I'm I'm not referring to all of you but

let's say you're psychotic um it's it's

largely due to some disruption in the in

the the momentum of your mind you know

it's like you've got like a split stream

or like unne like unusual turbulence in

the momentum of your mental state

something like that um yeah I mean some

people are are just they're they're

barely human

mentally you know they might have some

of the basic fundamentals enough that

they're like in the same world as us but

I mean they're just I mean they're just

looking out over a completely different

Vista than the average

person so yeah I mean it's definitely

Karma it's it's some kind of Bad Karma

or or just some sort of strange Karma

you know it's just sort of karma that is

like out on the edges of the bell-shape

curve for humans that is putting them

mentally on the the outskirts of of the

Bell shap shape

curve so yeah I mean karma is the

momentum of your mental States and if

you've got a momentum of really like

dysfunctional or just very strange

mental States then obviously that's

Karma because it's the momentum of those

mental states that is the

karma and I mean different cultures have

different views it's like uh like in

India

people that have really severe

disabilities physical or mental are

considered to be beloved of the Gods

because they're really working out

serious heavy karma in this

life so you know a lot of people

consider crazy people to be like blessed in a certain way there was there was a German nun who was staying at the monastery at which I was originally ordained she had a classic textbook case of schizophrenia I mean she was I mean if you started saying stuff to her that that she didn't like she would just like turn into a statue or at first I like why don't you help in the kitchen anymore it's like you know it's like the the administrators of the monastery she originally was there like helping in the kitchen and and doing things that monks aren't supposed to do and she might respond with some people like cats and other people don't like cats and they'd

say that's fine but why aren't you
helping in the kitchen anymore and you
just sort of like back her against a
wall or something she would just sort of
close her eyes tilt her head back get
this Blissful smile on her face and just
tune everybody out just become like a
statue and at one point she just had
some kind of episode where she was
convinced that she had attained somat
concentration because she was more Hindu
than Buddhist she was a follower of Osho
before she uh she found this place I
think uh they they finally got her to
leave or something at the the like the
the rajes place and so she just kind of

wound up at the monaster and it was like
she just thought she was fully
enlightened she was insisting that
people should bow to her and everything
and man she was just completely
disheveled just kind of like dancing
around laughing and so forth and nothing
that the board of directors tried would
could get rid of her I mean it was like
she was blessed in that respect in that
everything they did did to get rid of
her you know they called the cops on her
tried to have her evicted everything it
just none of it
worked so I mean it really did seem that
she had some sort of karmic or Divine
interference on her

side she was very difficult to deal with

I mean she just saw no point in

cooperating with anybody it just she

it's like she just didn't see the point

of getting along with

people so

I'm not exactly sure how I wound up on

that

digression that would it tangential

thought that's one of the uh the

symptoms of schizophrenia I'm pretty

sure see do have any view of the origins

of severe psych oh yes it's like um it's

not necessarily bad you know some great

Saints I mean you read the biography of

aan manun aan manun was seeing all kinds

of weird things hearing all kinds of
weird things that maybe other person
other people wouldn't see or
hear and you know his followers people
who rever him think that well he was
able to see things that were on a
different plane or some such but going
with Western psychology some people
would just think that he was bit on the
Nutty side but that does not indicate
that he wasn't really a saint or a sage
because you can be very psychotic and
still have like profound wisdom which is
strange I mean it's it's not like
ordinary you know mainstream human kind
of
wisdom but then again maybe you're

better off with some other kind of

wisdom than mainstream human kind of

wisdom so again like my my main qu my

main answer to this whole um series of

questions here is just each each

individual should be judged on an

individual basis and if they're not

causing harm to anybody they don't want

to take the medication they don't want

to be locked in a room or something so

long as they're not a danger to other

people

then God bless

them and it might actually uh be

beneficial to society to some degree

just to have you know weird people out

there you know it's like was it the

Lakota Indian tribe

generally had one person I can't

remember the name of the person well I

mean the like the the position but they

would do the opposite of everybody else

you know they were just sort of this

lional person who would just throw in

this weird lional into the culture which

apparently the Lakota found useful

enough that there'd always be one person

appointed you know it's like they'd

laugh ously when the chief would die

they'd fall madly in love with the

ugliest most foul tempered woman in the

tribe this kind of

thing and it's not all bad so a certain

amount of nuttiness is actually kind of
a good thing I think I mean it would be
the world would be so boring if everyone
was just a
normie so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from Fred and
again Fred sometimes he asks questions
that you don't really know if he's
expecting an answer he just puts
question marks at the end of his
sentences almost at random it seems so
Fred
says celibacy is not natural question
mark and at first I was thinking well
obviously celibacy is not natural
because I mean it's Nature's Way That

You reproduce your DNA sequences you
know it's like propagation of the
species or propagation of your
genes is natural so being celibate would
in that case be unnatural but then I'm
thinking well I mean some species and it
may be that humans are kind of they're
kind of bordering on this kind of
strategy where you've got a few males
have got Herms and then you've got like
Bachelor herds usually of younger males
you know like sperm whales or elk or
certain kinds of birds or whatever
you've got you know um
or even even like jungle fowl you know
the wild chicken that during The Mating
Season you got like like the alpha males

they each get like a herum of of females
and then most of the younger males that
haven't really established themselves in
the the pecking order so to speak you
know they just form like a bachelor herd
and just you know play video games or
whatever so in that case celibacy would
be natural for especially for certain
kinds of beta
males if it's a species where you have
this strategy of the alphas like the the
most successful Alphas are getting all
the females so then it's just natural
that you're going to have some beta
males that are just going to be
celibate so celibacy is probably more

natural for beta males than for alpha
males or for
females and I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from
TIG and Tig has like a like a standard
strange question this question not maybe
as irreverent as some of his previous
questions but then again maybe he's just
trolling I don't know anyways TIG says
the lez a thir Century BC Dost text
recounts an encounter between King mu of
Xiao and a mechanical engineer known as
Yan XI the latter presented his work to
the king and then the rest of this the
next part here is a
quote a quote from the Lei I assume
quote the king stared at the figure in

astonishment it walked with rapid strides moving its head up and down so that anyone would have taken it for a live human being the artificer touched its chin and it began singing perfectly in tune he touched its hand and it began posturing keeping perfect time as the performance was drawing to an end the robot winked its eye and made advances to the ladies in attendance whereupon the king became incensed and would have had yanhi executed at this on the spot had not the latter in Mortal fear instantly taking the robot to pieces to let him see what it really was and indeed it turned out to be only a

construction of leather wood adhesive
and lacquer variously colored white
black red and blue examining it closely
the king found all the internal organs
complete liver Gall heart lungs spleen
kidneys stomach and intestines and over
these again muscles bones and limbs with
their joints skin teeth and hair all of
them artificial the king tried the
effect of taking away the heart and
found that the mouth could no longer
speak he took away the liver and the
eyes would no longer C he took away the
kidneys and the legs lost their power of
locomotion the King was delighted
unquote so then TIG says did an ancient
Chinese artificer produce a lifelike

automaton and

considering just technology in ancient

China I mean it would be difficult to

produce something like this even now

with robotics and computers and so forth

how are you going to make something like

like this out of wood and leather I mean

it's it's extremely unlikely I think

either this is just a madeup story or

it's possible what happened was that

this yansi was a hypnotist that I've

heard my father used to tell me this

that some of the fakers in India who are

able to do all these outrageous stunts

like the Rope the rope climbing they you

know they throw a rope up in the air and

then the Rope just remains vertical and
then you know they climb up the Rope and
you know this like one person climbs up
the rope and then another person climbs
up the rope with like a a scimitar and
then you see like body parts raining
down and and then the guy comes back
down again and my father told me that
the way they do this kind of this really
outrageous magic trick is they just
Hypnotize The Crowd so the crowd thinks
they're seeing this when really they're
not and I would guess that unless this Y
and she was some kind of WI wizard who
had amazing magical powers then he would
just hypnotize the audience into into
them thinking that they're seeing this

because I utterly fail to see how you
could use any kind of mechanical Arts
going with ancient Chinese technology
and make a lifelike robot that can talk
and see and hear and all this with
apparently not even any
electrical like I mean there there's not
even a kind of motor in it you know it's
just wood and leather and this kind of
stuff so I think the two main
likelihoods here that I think what are
the two most plausible explanations one
it just never happened it's just a
madeup story or two this yanii was a
better hypnotist than he was a robot
maker and so I'm just going to move on

to the next question this is from

Stellar Supreme formerly known as lib

Lam and Stellar Supreme formerly known

as lib Lam says do you feel that any one

of the shorter lists for dependent

origination two link three link or

four-link could be more accurate than

the 12 link dependent origination or do

you feel that the entire thing is

contrived and just making a formula out

of a non formulaic original

material well I do not think that

dependent origination or dependent coar

Rising as I generally call it which is a

more literal

translation um I don't think that it

started off as being a temporal sequence

that you will find in in very early text
like the kalaha weasa of the ATA waga or
the central portion of the
sakaa of the digan Kaya where you've got
somebody asking the Buddha you know what
causes this and then the Buddha answers
and then you know he he knows what
causes a well B causes a well then what
causes B and then he'll say well C
causes B and then the the questioner
will say well what causes C and it's
just turns into this thing where you
know it's sort of like this back and
forth and that those kind of back and
forth um question and
answers uh in my opinion eventually

evolved into this established 12 length
system of dependent core Rising but it's
never
identified as dependent core rising in
these early texts and so really I think
dependent core arising it wasn't a
linear sequence it's co-arising you know
if this arises that arises if this being
that is you know if this ceas okay this
being that is this arising that arises
this not being that is not this ceasing
that ceases that's like
the the short version of dependent core
rising and it's not necessarily
referring to a linear sequence of events
it's just referring to
Duality that Duality has to be like

paired

opposites that that's how Sam Sara

arises so yeah I think the 12 link

dependent origination model was

concocted by monks that really did not

understand dependent cor rising and if

you read the text you read the early

Legend the Buddha almost became a Pacha

Buddha he almost became a Hermit that

didn't teach dhama because he figured

nobody would understand dependent cor

rising and now you know Burmese monks

they just learn the 12 links and they

think they understand it but I think the

Buddha was much more likely to be

correct than these Burmese monks that

just memorize something and think they
understand picha Samano
that the Buddha thought you know almost
nobody understands it and I think or
almost nobody would understand
it and uh of the few people who have
tried to explain dependent cor Rising I
think one of the the Buddhist
philosophers who did the best job was
nagar and he was not a terraa
Buddhist he wasn't necessarily A
Mahayana Buddhist I mean that's kind of
controversial like his his main book The
Mula majaka Kaka it's based entirely on
the older Buddhist text has no Mahayana
text quoted in it no Mahayana jargon no
no mention of buddhis satas and so

forth but Nara just consider dependent
core rising to be the same as
voidness because the main point of
dependent core Rising it's it's
conditional you know if this arises then
that arises and so this and that depend
on each other you know they have to coar
in order to create a dualistic
universe and so they're just
conditionally real they don't have a
self Essence they don't have an
inherently real self
Essence and that's um so you could say
that voidness dependent core rising and
anata or no self are all the
same and it doesn't necessarily involve

any kind of long

chain of causes and

effects I mean what causes the causes

you know it's you get to just the

general principle of what causes the

causes not you know a causes B which

causes C which causes D it's just you

know what causes all of that is just

this

dualism it's the way perception

works so I'm just going to move on to

Stellar Supreme formerly known as lib l

next question is nibana a ceaseless

equinity in the Janna sense no I would

say that nibana is not a ceaseless

Equanimity in the jonis sense nibana is

completely off the

scale so ceaseless equinity is

irrelevant to nibana Janna is irrelevant

to nibana if you get into a jic state

then you get sort of like a glimmer of

what nibana might be like in the text

sometimes it's called Janna is called

temporary

Liberation it's like if I mean I've

given this this analogy before or this

simile and I think if you if you don't

get it already it may be that you're

just not going to get it but let's just

say that like waves are like mental

States and water is like Consciousness

so Consciousness is like the the

essence of mental States if you don't

have any consciousness you can't have
any mental States just like if you don't
have any water you can't have waves but
most people are just caught up they're
lost in in the waves just identifying
the waves I like this wave I hate that
wave this wave is bigger than that wave
that wave is nicer than this wave you
know it's just they're all just locked
into waves and they're oblivious to
water even a fish swimming through water
is just doesn't ever notice that it's
wet so
um if if you get into a jonic state
where you eliminate the mental States as
much as it is possible to do it's like
you have a flat calm then it's much

easier to be aware of the water because
you there's fewer waves to be distracted
but once you become enlightened there
could be the Raging of a stormy sea and
if you're really enlightened you're
still seeing it as water you're still at
the the foundational you know essential
level of water and not just being lost
in the
waves so you can use Janna as a way of
like eliminating this distraction so
that you can see through the veil and
see reality which is the level of
essence let's say and then once you've
got that then I mean it's raging of the
storm you see is just water you know

it's like there's a saying that Zen in
the marketplace is a thousand times
better maybe 10,000 times better than
Zen on the on the cushion
because if you still have got like the
enlightened mind when you're out in the
marketplace with with people making
noise and just all kinds of stuff going
on then you've really got it if you lose
it when you when you get up off the seat
and you walk out of the Zeno and
commotion starts happening and you just
get lost in samsara again then you
haven't fully mastered it
yet so I hope I answered that question I
think I did to some degree anyway and so
I'm just going to move on to the third

question from Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra lamb and this he says do you feel that half Lotus is more stable than full Lotus for long-term meditation I'm not sure exactly what he means by long-term meditation more than an hour more than 3 hours or does he mean like you know regularly over a period of years or something I'm not exactly sure what he means by long-term meditation but I do know that if you're able to assume the full Lotus it is the best position for most people to meditate that I mean it will improve your meditation by at least 3% just because you're in the full Lotus it's

it's some kind of stability thing and
also if you're in the full Lotus it's
easier to keep your back straight so
it's easier to remain alert when your
back is straight you're like in an alert
ramrod straight vertical position it's
easier to remain alert that way and um
I'm sure the the Hindus like the yoga
people will have some kind of
explanation involving the Kundalini or
the shakras or some such but it may also
be that when you're sitting in the full
Lotus with your legs like this
that it's like reducing blood flow to
your legs which might increase blood
flow to the upper body including the
brain which may help you to be more

alert or

something but um yeah I mean the full

Lotus to the extent that you're able to

sit that way that it is preferable to

the half Lotus although it may be that

you just can't sit in a full Lotus for

more than an hour without Agony and then

that becomes distracting it may be that

you have better meditation in a half

Lotus if you're going to sit for like

long periods of time if like the agony

of a full Lotus you know your legs just

aren't flexible enough to really get

used to the full Lotus so that you can't

just flop into

position um yeah then you may have to go

back to the the half Lotus which like in
the short term at least isn't as good as
the full Lotus the full Lotus really is
an excellent position for sitting in
meditation
and uh I've just never been able to uh
sympathize with people who meditate
sitting in a
chair so at least a half Lotus it's uh
you know it's better than a quarter
Lotus and a quarter Lotus is better than
the the so-called easy position some
call sometimes called the Burmese
position where you just have your feet
like flat on the floor one in front of
the other like this you know they're not
actually crossed but they're like just

one in front of the other like that and
that's the way most Burmese monks sit is
in the the so-called easy
position so I hope I answered that
question I just saw a
fish my my woman has finally got a fish
in her aquarium and it moved suddenly in
my peripheral
vision so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from dhama
river and dhama river says have you ever
read thos Walden what's your opinion of
it more specifically he seemed to have a
spiritual Pursuit Of Truth without any
religious influence he was similar to
the Buddha in the sense that they both

studied nature deeply well I haven't
read theose Walden I've read like
excerpts um I've really never read much
thoro and so I can't really give my
opinion on it I mean thorough he lived
in a he lived in like a little Shack a
little cabin um by a Walden Pond and he
was he strikes me more like a Lauren
Eisley type if you know who Lauren
Eisley is he was just sort of uh a lover
of nature who just had like like looking
at gazing upon nature just being at one
with it to some degree would would cause
him like insights and he would have
these interesting things to say inspire
d by by
Nature I think Soro was kind of like

that um but then again I really don't
know that much about
him um about the only thing I really
know about thorough aside from what I've
just told you is he had a saying that
has stuck with me for many years that it
seems to be a law that one cannot have a
deep um a deep appreciation for both man
and nature that you're either a people
person or a nature person is very rare
that a person is
both and yeah that's that seems pretty
pretty obvious to me I I was more of a
nature person than a people person and
like in Burma it's like everyone's a
people person they just nature is just

kind of scary they don't like it you
know if I was a monk looking for a good
Forest I mean I'm looking for like a
primeval forest and to the Burmese point
of view a good Forest is one that that
doesn't have any scary animals you know
they've all been killed off or chased
away you know you've got lots of people
especially wood cutters walking around
lots of trails and everything and uh
yeah they just didn't get
it maybe the Japanese have somewhat more
of an appreciation of nature but it's
like an aesthetic you know they like the
the manicured parks and that kind of a
thing so anyways getting back to
thorough here

um yeah I'm not sure how similar he was
to the Buddha but then again I haven't
read his book but he does seem to have
been largely a materialist who at least
to the extent that he considered nature
to be real not something necessarily to
be escaped from or something to
transcend I could be wrong because I
really don't know that much about him
but I really don't think that he was in
the same ballpark as goab Buddha
so considering that I don't know much
about thorough I'm just going to move on
to dhama River's next
question which is do you consider
yourself to be currently following the

dhama without your former religious

affiliation that came with ordination

I'm just wondering if there's a

connection between his path and your

current path oh he's comparing me to

theow I

think um whether I mean I'm not

following orthodox D

anymore because I'm not a monk I don't

have the rules I'm not sitting in like

don't have like a regular meditation U

regimen

anymore um so I'm just kind of

doing more of a a Layon kind of

dhamma which is um you know watching

your own mental States as a general rule

it doesn't always work but you

know trying to be mindful doing a little

bit of oming when I'm working that sort

of

thing

so um I'm certainly not following the

dhamma in the to the same extent or in

the same way that I was when I was a

monk um but I mean everybody if they're

making any kind of progress they're

following DH to some

degree you know if you're just you know

staying out of trouble you know you're

staying away from you know not not

telling lies or something just trying to

be a straight person you know person of

your word um or just you you you're like

more careful more mindful in your
actions than the average person and I
mean you're practicing dhma possibly
without realizing it at
all so it's it's kind of difficult to uh
to say to what extent somebody is
following
dhama um unless you're talking about
just like the Orthodox version of dhama
as it is laid out in the text in which
case yeah I'm not doing that very much
anymore other than just you know some of
the like mindfulness practices or
something but even then it's not really
a systematic practice it's just in a way
what I've learned as a monk is now being
put into practice or applied to Sam Sara

in a more you know at a higher

difficulty setting

so yeah it's kind of a strangely

difficult question to

answer so it's like I kind of struck out

with dhama River because I never read

theow and and this second question of

his is this it's just kind of an elusive

kind of question to what extent I'm

following dhama I mean to some degree I

am to some degree anybody who's not just

flat out like corrupt and Evil

is going to be practicing some dhama in

many cases without it's having any idea

that they're practicing

dhama so with all due apologies to dhama

River I'm going to move on to the next
question this is from not a Canadian
French ATM so automatic teller
machine Let's just call him not a
Canadian so not a Canadian and he
changed his name every few weeks so he's
asked questions before under a different
name not a Canadian says what is the
best dish that your sweetheart makes
that do not include
meat um well there's different ways of
answering this all depends on how you
look at but um I mean like one of my
favorite things is that she makes for me
is just like pasta with
pesto that's I mean that's it you maybe
throw a little bit of Parmesan cheese or

something on it but um yeah that's
vegetarian I guess um if if you include
fish then like pasta Alfredo with salmon
in it she makes really good she makes
that really well but with I mean there's
not much skill in cooking involved you
just know how how to boil pasta
essentially she doesn't make the the
sauce from
scratch so I mean something she makes
from scratch that it's really good dish
she does make a kind of lasagna that's
made with
zucchini um instead of pasta because she
doesn't like carbohydrates as much as I
do so that's that's really good she

makes a good zucchini lasagna I mean

she's really a good cook although um

most of what she cooked has meat in it

she likes

[Music]

meat so I'll just move on to not a

Canadian's next question

which is is it somewhere mentioned who

became the successor of the sakian

kingdom when Buddha became the Buddha

and his son also a monk um it's it's

kind of strange that I I really don't

know who supposedly according to Legend

was the successor of King sud odona who

was the Buddha's father according to the

The Legend you know the Buddha was a

royal Prince and King soda was the the

King of capila watu the city state the

polus of capila

watu um uh I assume that you're going to

have some Chronicle like the um one of

the like the Maha wsa or something that

mainly is dealing with Sri Lanka but

there's got to be some kind of Chronicle

that that deals with this I don't think

it says anywhere in the poly text I

could be

mistaken but the sakin kingdom didn't

last very long after the the time of the

Buddha it was shortly after the Buddha's

death I think it might have even been

king aatu or it was like maybe the son

of King ajata satu who was alive in the

Buddhist time who just essentially

genocided the the

sakian that the capila Wu just got

genocided and it was like some King

wanted to marry a sakian princess and

they sent him like a slave girl instead

disguised as the sakian princess and

when he found out that he didn't get the

princess but he wound up marrying this

slave girl that he just got pissed off

and just just sent his army to just wipe

capila watu off the map and that

happened like just not very long after

the time of the Buddha within a few

decades

so uh it may all just mean that nobody

really knows what happened because it

was you we're getting just at the very

dawn of history that far back in

India

so yeah I mean you could look it up I

assume you could find it online

somewhere you know who who was the king

of I mean it's it's all based on Legend

though because I mean the historians the

the

indologists you know the the experts

generally say that um the buddo couldn't

really have been a Crown Prince his

father wasn't really a king

because capilo watu was a kind of

aristocratic oligarchy you know had like

a council of of Elders kind of running

the place and so people will try to like
compromise and say well the Buddha's dad
was like the senior member of the
Council of Elders but it really was sort
of a republic rather than a kingdom
according to the experts
and so um there are probably you know
some other some other member of the
council took up the like the the
executive position or whatever uh during
the the few decades at most that capila
watu continued to exist as a citystate
before it got
genocided but I assume that just
tradition while will have to have some
kind of answer for that it seems like a
pretty obvious question and it is kind

of strange that I never heard about or
at least I don't recall hearing you know
who was the successor of King
suda and so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from skolin or
skaden and his question
is what is a
tulpa and I think there was a question
about a tulpa in a previous Q&A
recently I didn't know what a tulpa was
it was just some Tibetan term I'm pretty
sure anyways scolin usually has like
bullet points after his questions and so
he's got this one that says I'm not sure
I'm not a biologist though I think
technically Tyler Duran might count as

as one also sxs's bed sheets if you're familiar with that story and Tyler Duran I'm familiar with because he's in the movie Fight Club also the novel Fight Club um but scks sticks hexen Hammer's bed sheets I never heard the story so I'm not sure what skolin or schuline is referring to here but I did look up tulpa in
uh online to find out what the hell is a tulpa and it says in Tibetan Buddhism and later traditions of mysticism and the Paranormal a tulpa is a materialized being or thought form typically inum form that is created through spiritual practice and intense concentration so it would be sort of a manifested being

that's just

mindmade in that case I don't think

Tyler Duran would be a tulp because he

essentially Tyler Duran was just a

hallucination combined with a split

personality of the protagonist of the

movie and the

book so I mean when other people were

looking at Tyler Duran they were just

looking at the main the main character

the protagonist it was it was in his own

mind that he's hallucinating this other

person that isn't him but everyone else

they just considered him to be Tyler

Duran so including Mara his girlfriend

she just called him

Tyler

so yeah a

Tula it could be like an egregor that an

eggor um and maybe in egregor slightly

different egregor are are spoken of in

paganism where it's the belief of all

these people in in this in this being

actually causes that being to exist so

like the devil Lord of the Flies the

monster in the in the in the book Lord

of the Flies forget the movies in the

novel Lord of the Flies that the monster

who was Satan the devil was a kind of

egregor that he didn't really exist

exist in an outward objective form but

it was like he had like this symbiotic

relationship with this dark corner of

every person's mind and that made him
real so a Tupa though would actually
have some kind of physical body
apparently or at least would appear to
have a physical body um and
so I mean it's one of the the psychic
powers that uh a meditator can get
according to to traditional Buddhism is
the ability to multiply their body
manyfold and it maybe that only one is
the real body and the rest are just
these projections that appear real and
might even like feel
real so it might be something along
those
lines but there's really not a lot of

emphasis on tulas in Terra Buddhism but
I guess a Tula is just a materialized
being a materialized like somebody
imagining with such intensity and
concentration some being that the being
just
materializes and maybe magicians in in
Past Times have done such things maybe I
don't know it could be people with
psychic powers can do these things neem
Koli Baba up there he may have been able
to do that sort of thing I mean he is
considered to have been in more than one
place at the same time occasionally
so yeah I guess that's what a tool p is
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question this is also from scadden and I

have to point out here that scadden

asked four questions I think he forgot

that he asked the first one about tulas

or maybe it was just a joke question in

which case I shouldn't have gone to the

trouble of answering

it but he had this another another

comment that had three questions in it

which is the first one is with regard to

I don't know how to pronounce this word

hith

hith hith which is a longing for a home

a place or a feeling that no longer

exists or ever existed and then there's

like the bullet point saying why is

harath so prevalent oh I guess that's

the main question why is herth hith so prevalent and then the bullet Point actually is I don't know if it's just a transition from a life of experiences to a life of conveniences or if there's something else I highly doubt that the past few Generations just had a large concentration of old
souls um well hith a longing for a home a place or a feeling that no longer exists or never existed I mean that's just common to the human race I think you know it's like even in ancient times people were wishing for the good old days to come back again the Golden Age instead of this Dark Age this Iron Age that we're living

in so I think it's just dissatisfaction

with the way things are and people

wanting something that they think anyway

would be more satisfactory looking to

the ancient past or looking to some

future

Utopia I mean unfortunately nowadays

it's largely a Marxist Utopia people are

looking forward to feminized Marxism

castrated

Marxism that that's going to going to be

that's that's the thing that they're

craving or you know that's their longing

for

that um so it's just human nature this

harrith or a longing for a home a place

or a feeling that no longer exists or never existed it's just dissatisfaction of the way things are and craving for something that you think will be better maybe looking towards the past like a conservative type maybe looking towards the future like a progressive type maybe just you know look sideways or something you're just looking for a different culture different country to move to different religion to follow whatever it is and it's largely based on this illusion that you're unhappy because of where you are rather than because of your
attitude and you're going to take your attitude with you maybe if you change

religions that might have a a change
your attitude enough that you become
happier or just changing your
environment if you're really bad
environment it's really a drag just
changing your environment may cause you
to be happier but as a general rule
you're taking your attitude with you no
matter where you go no matter where you
go there you
are as Buckaroo Bonsai once
said so yeah that's just common human
nature I think and I'm going to move on
to scadden's next question here which is
would you kindly recommend a book for
meta cultivation

and then he's got the bullet point
readers face a paradox whenever they
feel emotional involvement for fictional
characters still a novel's portrayal of
love can convey an accurate
representation to the nature of this
emotion even if the specific details of
characters and events are completely
imaginary okay so would I kindly
recommend a book for meta cultivation I
mean I'm I'm really not um
metacentric I've never really put a lot
of emphasis on meta cultivation I never
liked meta meditation just because it
seems like it's fake you know it's for
me you don't just turn on metto like
like a faucet that it has to be

spontaneous you know it has to be like
some kind of genuine spontaneous thing
that that just comes out of you not
something that you deliberately Beam at
at different
beings so I mean he's referring to
novels in the in the bullet point but I
mean Miracle of love stories about neem
Koli Baba it's one of my favorite books
he had he had a lot of meta or another
strange idea that came up is just while
reading this is dostv is the
idiot that Prince mishkin the idiot in
the story um is he was just he was
Christlike essentially that's what Doki
was trying to do is trying to portray a

a

Christlike person just a genuinely good

person and at a higher level he he does

symbolize Christ you know it's like he

and Regan both competing for the same

woman Nastasia you know it's sort of

like like Christ and the devil competing

for the soul of The

Sinner but Prince Michigan I mean people

get pissed off I mean I was I remember

um talking to a woman who is just she'd

get pissed off reading reading the idiot

because Prince Michigan and somebody can

literally try to kill him and then the

very next day he's he's forgiven them

and he's inviting them into his house

and so he just he just forgives

everybody he just lets people walk all
over him to some
degree people might like ridicule him
behind his back especially men but I
mean in his presence they really cannot
dislike the
guy so I mean yeah I mean it might help
to read dovi is the idiot but I'm really
not an expert on meta cultivation meta
is one of my weakest
parames I've just gradually mellowed as
I got as I get older so I do have more
compassion and Sympathy for the human
race I I have more use for the human
race than I used to I have less disdain
for Humanity but still I'm I'm just not

a heart oriented kind of a person and
I'm not just gushing with metop and so I
may not be able to recommend a really
good book for that sort of thing and so
I'm just going to move on to scadden's
transgressive Fourth
question which is would you kindly
explain the ethics of Life
creation and then his bullet point says
like if someone cloned themselves only
to keep their clone in a holding tank
for 40 years just in case they need a
new cornea or spleen or if trilobites
were brought back from Extinction only
for them to wreak havoc by invading
cities knocking over buildings and
chasing scantily clad women around God's

willing yeah I don't think the
trilobites are going to come back and
destroy cities I mean most of them
weren't very big and they were Aquatic
and they just got outco competed by more
more um what's the word more derived
life forms more like more more evolved
life
forms but uh kindly explained the ethics
of Life creation well I mean whenever
anybody has a baby whenever anybody
reproduces that is the main kind of Life
creation um aside from just your body
like producing new cells and so
forth but uh yeah the ethics of Life
creation I don't think that cloning

somebody would necessarily be

uh all that radically different from

just having a baby having a

kid um I mean if you have a kid just to

put them in a holding tank and use them

for spare organs that wouldn't be so

good I mean the

Clone yeah I mean if you had a clone and

had them in a holding tank it would

largely depend on whether they were

conscious or not you know if they're

just going insane and floating in this

tank of of liquid

you know nothing to do just total

sensory deprivation so that they're just

insane or something then yeah that would

be worse than if they were just like

completely unconscious it's just like

this

body

so yeah I really don't think that it

would be ethically necessarily all that

different from just reproducing unless

you've got like

experimental like

genetic um like genetic genetically

manipulated stuff like a lot of Science

Fiction um you've got like scientists

that are trying to produce a certain

kind of organism and they have all these

failed

attempts like the fly kind of a thing in

fact I think it was uh one of the the

bad sequels to the fly um with what was

it name Jeff gold Goldberg Goldstein

gold something you know it was like like

uh like the 1980s version of The Fly was

special you know they had like special

effects back then at that time so yeah I

mean it's it' be sort of like the Glory

Days of experimental brain surgery like

back in the 1970s

where let's cut this out and see what

happens so in a case like that I mean

you're you're playing

God and I mean it would be much more

risky

karmically just creating something that

could just go like horribly

wrong um than just having something that

you I mean you you've got a really good
likelihood that it's just going to be a
normal healthy human being you know like
having a
baby so the ethics of Life creation
there is there's going to be some
mention of this later on I remember
seeing a a similar question might be
coming up really
soon about um like the budhist attitude
towards this reproduction having
children because to exist is to suffer
in a way by having children by creating
any kind of living organism that is
conscious that is sentient in a way
you're like damning them to a life of

unhappiness of course it's their own
Karma though that if you don't have this
kid somebody else is going to have
them so yeah I mean it'd be similar to
that I think I really don't think that
the ethics of Life creation like through
artificial means would be all that
different from the ethics of Life
creation through natural means which is
you know
reproducing so it would be it'd be like
on an individual basis again I think
sort of like the
psychotics that I mentioned
earlier that's not a very thorough
question but he asked four and so he's
just going to have to deal with that and

I'm just moving on to the next question
this is from Jeffrey and Jeffrey says do
photographs prove the concept of time by
affirming the past not
necessarily I mean you can dream that
you're looking at a picture like in your
sleep that really is not referring to
any actual past event
necessarily so I don't think that
photographs prove the concept of time I
mean anything outside of you doesn't
prove anything really that I mean a lot
of the early Western philosophers like
uh Spinosa and David Hume especially you
know they really pounded away at this
that I mean you might be able to be

absolutely sure of something that's
completely self-contained within your
own Consciousness but when you're
dealing with something out there out
there in in that world the phenomenal
world nothing is absolutely certain you
cannot have 100% certainty you can canot
have 100% proof of anything
really
so let's see this this question is is
gonna is very similar to the next
question and so I might as well just
move on to the next question which will
and then try to answer both of these
questions because this next question is
kind of getting into it a little deeper
this is from Austin and Austin

says yeah we are recording after almost
an hour and a half I verified that we
are actually recording here okay Austin
says how do immaterialist solve for
continuity existing without Minds
present to perceive for
example if I light a candle and walk out
of the room hours later when I return
the candle has burnt to the bottom and
the wax has melted if physical objects
he's got psychical
objects I think he mean physical objects
if physical objects only exist in the
mind's perception and there was no mind
to experience this how did it
happen well I mean the inventor of

immaterialism which he called
immaterialism in the west is George
Barkley and George Barkley's answer is
that um you know even if the room is
empty and there's a candle burning in
there God knows God is always watching
and you could use this for um
with regard to like a Buddhist like a
Mahayana Buddhist a lot the main
philosophies of Mahayana Buddhism at
least yogachara and majaka neither one
of them accepts physical matter as
real
so they might say that I mean they
they'd have like a smaller version of
Barclay's and materialism where it's not
God Almighty that's looking at that but

there's always all these beings you know

that we can't see

that you know they're like dvas and so

forth that have this view of stuff that

that really helps to like nail things

down and keep things regular keep Law

and Order with regard to like standard

laws of nature and so forth there is

that but I've I've thought about this a

lot too and it's just in a way it's like

the rules that work for this version of

reality that that has to be built into

it regardless of whether there's

physical matter or

not and that might not be a very good

answer um let's see because I'm trying

to recall how I was how I was dealing
with this when I'm thinking about this
as a monk sitting in a cave somewhere
because I used to think about this
sitting in
caves it's like how can you not consider
that to be proof you know in this case
Austin's case it's the candle that
burned down and in Jeff Jeff's case it
was a picture of something that that was
taken in the past although it's slightly
a different question because I guess
Austin is asking you know how can you
say that physical matter isn't real when
you can light a candle leave the room
come back and the candle is burned out
you know it's burned all the way down

it's essentially what you would
expect so I mean to that extent it's
like your it's like your belief in
reality makes that kind of stuff
happen yeah but I mean it's not proof
nothing can be proven outside of your
own mind like the yogachara
Buddhists which is like the most evolved
or it's more evolved than maamaa I think
that majamaa came first and then
yogachara was an attempt to like build
on to maamaa and I don't think they
really they really were an
improvement um but they think that it's
sort of like Mary Baker Eddie says if
there is no physical matter and it's um

it's all our Karma you know it's it's

all

self-contained and so we see what we

think we ought to see and there's

different levels of

consciousness Beyond just the thinking

ego that was something I was I was

trying to talk about in the previous Q&A

that all this stuff like Karma and so

forth it's not at the level of the

conscious thinking ego that there's

different levels of consciousness that

are aware of all sorts of things like

there's a deeper level of Consciousness

where we have like some sort of empathy

some sort of like psychic connection

with other beings and anyone who's got

some sensitivity has felt that at

sometimes that you feel that there is a

certain sympathy or or empathy or even

telepathy going

on it not necessarily at like the level

of the

ego but it's like at this deeper

level and this kind of stuff is is like

in the realm of that deeper level or a

deeper level

anyway and I'm sorry that I can't really

just prove that matter doesn't exist I

think it was Emanuel Kant who said it

was the scandal of philosophy that

nobody has been able to really prove

that physical matter exists or or

doesn't exist because it's out there and

you can't really prove

anything

ah

so yeah that is it's it's just kind of

frustrating you cannot prove that

physical matter exists you can't prove

that it doesn't

exist But ultimately it is irrelevant

whether it exists or not because

everything comes out the same either way

I mean Miracles magic that sort of thing

might be more likely or more possible if

physical matter is an

illusion and I think the uh the

materialists really have a difficult

time dealing with any kind of um any

kind of like parapsychology any kind of paranormal stuff you know they just flat out say it's [__] as a general rule so anyways I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from the Arya sasti project and the Arya sasi project says since the topic comes up frequently regarding Karma action and mental States example A Psycho is feeling pleasure and happiness or nothing at all hacking his or her victim to pieces on the other hand someone is forced to engage in a wholesome act like court-ordered Highway cleanup charity but is not happy about it are mental States equal to emotions it seems that mental states are more

than just an emotional state can you elaborate Define and discuss said mental States so again this is um talking about different levels of consciousness so the psycho who is feeling pleasure at torturing somebody and then murdering them I mean there you can't really call them a happy person like at the surface level they're feeling some kind of Rush you know it reminds me of the movie uh Clockwork Orange you got the droes these teenage gang members who are going out raping and murdering and torturing just doing Ultraviolence and they're just laughing ously the whole time they're doing it and in a way their laughing is just sort of like I mean

it's it's almost like hooting what
they're doing and in a way it's just
trying to like drown out their
conscience what little conscience
they've got you know it's they're just
sort of like like just pushing forwards
with this rush and just ignoring the the
little you know ignoring the more subtle
stuff that's going
on and a psycho I mean they may be
dissociated from the deeper Parts like
any part any kind of compassion like a
sociopath supposedly has no conscience
no compassion but still those levels are
there they're just like dissociated from
it you know they're like their thinking

ego is blocked off from other levels of

their mind that are still there it's

just that they have you know they're

oblivious to

it and the average person really doesn't

have a really strong link to some of

these deeper levels

anyway so there are different levels of

consciousness

they are they are all like

functioning and for the most part we're

only aware of the thinking conscious

superficial ego and you know like the

dream

symbolism and and just deeper levels of

you know like yunan archetypes and stuff

we we we can like

hypothesize theorize about them but we
don't really have
direct um like awareness of them because
we are falsely identified with our
thinking ego that is just a different a
different part of mind it's just like
one stratum that is like
self-referential but these other parts
and just the minds of others are are
like outside of this self-referential
ego and so for the most part we're
oblivious so let's see
here and people who do good and don't
like doing good yeah there's there's
that kind of stuff too you know the kid
who has to help his mother by washing

the dishes or something and he hates it
and but he's still like kind of
overcoming his dislike for doing it so
there is a certain amount of like
self-discipline and like self-restraint
involved when you're doing something you
don't want to do you don't like to do it
but you know it's it's a good thing to
do
so there's there's just different levels
of mind it's not all at the surface it's
not just the surface mental state that
is that is the main mental state or the
most important mental state there's also
this other stuff going on at different
levels and if you try to just be aware
of those other levels you're not it's

not going to work because the part of

you that's trying to be aware of those

other levels is just this one level

that's just the superficial

ego

so yeah mental states are more than just

an emotional state or rather it's mental

states are more than just the mental

states of the superficial thinking

ego

so I guess I I guess I answered that

question sort of kind of and I'm just

going to move on to the next one which

is from Robert and Robert says would you

say alcohol is more harmful than weed

for the mind and mental Clarity I know

comma is based B on intention but

assuming similar intentions in both

cases which is more detrimental I think

overall for the average person alcohol

is more harmful than

cannabis um partly because alcohol is

physically addictive and cannabis may be

habit forming but if there's any

physical addiction it's very mild

compared with the

psychosis or the the pseudo psychosis

The mimicked psychosis of of a hardcore

alcoholic who's like going through

withdrawals and hallucinating and just

freaking

out so alcohol is more addictive also in

my case it makes me more stupid um like

cannabis I mean it's not really a higher

mental state it's not really a lower

mental state but it's it's just sort of

like shifted sideways or something so

it's I don't know if it's actually

Consciousness expanding but it's it's

not really

a downer either but alcohol I mean it it

affects different people differently but

in my case it makes me just kind of

dumber and

clumsier maybe um less troubled by

inhibitions and so forth although

cannabis can do that to some degree

also but just going with ancient India

monks were allowed to smoke cannabis for

medicinal reasons or at least to use

cannabis for for medicinal reasons

whereas alcohol it's against the rules

for them to consume alcohol

period I mean if it's some kind of sauce

that has been cooked where the you know

you put rum into some kind of sauce and

then you cook it so that the alcohol

Cooks out and you still have the rum

flavoring that's allowable for a monk

but even medicine like cough syrup or

something that's got some alcohol in it

that is forbidden to a

monk but monks are allowed to use

cannabis or Bunga as it's called in poly

and uh they're even allowed to carry a

pipe for inhaling medicinal

fumes but it would have to be for

medicinal

purposes so Robert's second question

here is would you say smoking weed

breaks the fifth precept and it depends

on your

intentions like I mean if it if it has

some kind of therapeutic effect and that

is the reason why you're smoking it then

it's not necessarily a bad thing

although if it's just you're partying

you know it's it's for recreational use

you you're smoking it in order to wallow

in sensual pleasure or Euphoria I guess

then yeah it would break the vi precept

especially if it makes you

stupid you know if if you're smoking

some kind of zombie weed that just zones

you out causes you to run red lights and

so forth then uh yeah that would defin

itely break the fifth

preset uh I I probably in most cases

smoking marijuana does break the fifth

precept

although I don't think anyone's going to

go to hell for

it so I'm just going to move on to

Robert's third question as someone

trying to get back into practicing more

would you say meditation meta General

mindfulness throughout the day studying

sutas or sense rest straint is more

beneficial as an initial

Focus wow that's a good question I do
think that it would it would differ for
different people um you know meditation
is generally the way people
start but it's I mean practicing
meditation without like getting your
morals in order and so forth
um is not necessarily the best way of
going about it meta again I'm I'm No
Authority on meta and it seems to me
that meta should be spontaneous rather
than like artificially
stimulated um see General mindfulness
throughout the day that is that is a
powerful practice but the thing is if
you haven't done other practices like

you haven't like simplified your life
and slowed it down and you know you got
some meditation experience then trying
to be mindful of General activities
throughout the day is uh to some degree
going to be an exercise inut utility the
more you do the better but there's a
good chance that if you're just trying
to start right off the bat with
mindfulness of General activities you
know it's like you know when you reach
for for the cup you know you see the cup
You observe the intention to reach for
the cup you start feeling the the
movements of of your muscles and the the
joints and so forth and then you touch
the cup you you're mindful of the

sensation the hardness of it the
coolness of it and then there's the
intention to grasp the cup and then
there's the Motions of your hand and
then the the tactile sensations of the
hardness the coolness of the cup as your
fingers clench onto it then there's the
intention to raise the cup off the table
and just the the movements the the like
the muscle movements the joints you know
the the oily feeling in the elbow joint
as you bend your arm just all being
aware of all of this throughout the day
um I think the average person would just
crack up before a few hours had gone by
U if they didn't just forget which is

what most people do you just start

wandering off on some train of

Association and just completely forget

to be

mindful so I mean it's very powerful

practice one of the most powerful

practices you can do is just to be

mindful of whatever is happening in the

present

moment um but it makes it a lot easier

if you have sort of renounced the world

to some degree you've simplified your

life so that there's not so much

commotion going on that's going to

distract you and there's less things

going on so that it's easier to keep

track of all of it while you're while

you're doing it just be mindful of
it so sense restraint I mean that would
include the the mindfulness but it would
also include to some degree even
morality and a certain renunciation just
simplifying and slowing things down so
that might be a good a good way to start
sense restraint and then get into some
kind of Elementary meditation and then
gradually I mean certainly studying
sutas might be right off the bat that
might be first just to get yourself some
familiarity with what it is you're
trying to do you know you read the
instructions before you start putting
the thing

together so yeah I mean studying some studying some dhama studying sutas and some some basic sense restraint which would include morality and you know just slowing and simplifying things um and then you know getting a little meditation I mean it's not necessarily something you should do one of these at a time you know you get sort of a a regimen of different things going you know so you might have a little bit of dhama study and then you meditate you know and then throughout the day you know you is trying to have some sense restraint and certain amount of mindfulness which hopefully will improve that sort of thing and if you're a heart

oriented person you can you can beam

meta too I

guess so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is from ruie and

ruie said what's the translation of The

Diamond Cutter Sutra that you use or

have

read well what are you doing

yeah what's the matter

what I think the dog is scared or

something cuz she just like jumped into

my lap look at

this yeah you're going to have to go

back down though yeah you're going to

have to go back

down poor Tater you guys play

nice okay so the translation stop it

stop

it they're not stopping

it what's the translation of the diamond

cutters that you use or have read well

I've read more than one translation I

think the one that the first translation

that I read that really made the most

impact on me was the shambal LA version

and I don't recall who the translator

was but the Shambala version was it was

two sutras combined into one volume it

was The Diamond Cutter Sutra and then it

was the platform Sutra of Hui Nang or

just the Sutra of Hui Nang and whether

this sh Edition is still in print I

don't know probably you could get like a

collector's edition off like eBay or something even if it's out of print you can still get these things um but that was that was a good book that was one of the most important books I read as as a young man was the Shambala combined Diamond Cutter Sutra and Sutra of Huang in one book um I do have a Diamond Cutter Sutra behind me and I think it's Edward con's translation I just found it in in a library in Burma and then just wrote it out into a notebook without without the unnecessary footnotes and so forth but Edward con I he may have even done the Shambala Edition but he his translation is not the best like you

know most sutras or sutas start off with

thus have I heard at one time the Buddha

was staying at like you know J GR or

whatever and Edward con trans he I mean

he he messed up right off the bat where

he he translated as thus have I heard at

one time but the at one time is replying

to what comes after thus have I heard

you know thus have I heard at one time

the Buddha was staying at you know the

Jada Grove or

whatever

so I think I might have fixed that in my

version I think I I did modify K's

version just to satisfy myself with

regard to certain things

but um

yeah I can't say that I ever came across
the best possible translation of The
Diamond Cutter Sutra I think there's
another version of it uh in the Buddhist
Bible there's this there's this old book
called the Buddhist Bible that has all
all kinds of sutas and sutras some very
loose translations in there that might
also contain The Diamond Cutter if they
don't it it should because any Buddhist
Bible that contains Mahayana texts
should have The Diamond Cutter in it the
vaj
cheda
so yeah I've read more than one
translation I'm pretty

sure including Edward con's

translation so I'm going to move on to

the next question which is from drunk Dr

and this is an easy question to answer

drunk Dr asks do you have any favorite

left-wing activist monks in the west do

I have any fa favorite left-wing

activist

monks no I don't I don't have any

left-wing favorite left-wing activist

monks I can't think of very many monks

in general tend to be a bit more

conservative than lay people in the

west um partly because you know they're

they're actually following an ancient

tradition so they are

traditionalists you know they are

conservative in that in that

regard

um yeah I don't even think I have any

favorite leftwing Act AC IST lay people

in the west there's a few that are fun

to make fun of that's about

it so I think I'm just going to move on

to the next question which is from

yugao and yugao says do you think there

is a big Collective mind of human race

that mimics the one of a single

person example being when we as a race

will you stop it why do you what what's

the matter with you what's the matter

yeah I think part of part of the problem

is that both of them are in

heat so just stop it you guys no you

don't get to jump in my lap I'm busy

come

on okay back to yuga's question here do

you think there is a big collection a

big Collective mind of human race that

mimics the one of a single person mimic

example being when we as a race have a

choice to do the right thing we just do

the wrong color itively and vice versa

like there is a huge ego in play

um I assumed at some level there is a

big Collective mind of of the human race

at an even bigger level there's just the

big Collective mind period you know all

sentient beings you know at the like the

fundamental level it's all

interconnected um to what extent there really is like a boundary around the human I mean there there's so many semi-human kind of Minds out there you know like really crazy people and just really stupid people and just you know people that are just like very like challenged and dysfunctional and so forth that there's going to be like a blurry like a blurry boundary on the outskirts of this Collective mind of the human race so I'm not exactly sure to what extent that there would actually be a kind of super beinging

I think what's more likely is you've got sort of the collective Mind of a culture

where everyone is sort of tuned into the
same set of values and so forth so
there's this similarity and it creates
sort of a kind of group Karma that from
the point of view of terado Buddhism
there is no group Karma just like from
the point of view of evolutionary
biology there is no group Evolution that
know occurs at the at the the individual
level but still when everybody is has
the same kind of attitudes the same sort
of values the same beliefs and so forth
that there's a lot of parallel Karma
that makes it seem as though there's
group Karma um and that's setting aside
the whole real like coalescing group
mind at a at a fundamental

level so I think I'm confusing myself to
some degree here probably confusing you
as well if you're actually listening and
not just you know playing on your phone
or
something
so yeah I do think that the cultural
Collective mind or you know like the
national Collective mind would actually
be more of a a thing more of a
significant thing in with regard to the
human race than just the huge entirely
human mind it may be that this huge
entirely human mind is sort of helping
to keep the the laws of physics regular
and so forth but I think it wouldn't

just be limited to

humans

so yeah I mean at some vague level but I

do not think that it's really

significant that I do think that like

the mind of a society of a culture would

be more of a a

significant being super beinging than

just the human race in

general and so I'm going to move on to

Yu's next question which is I rarely

have outbursts but when I do I apologize

and try not to repeat it but people

around have them often and are

Unapologetic about it yet they stick my

few into my face a lot example being my

great grandma was a drunk and my

great-grandfather only was drunk once
when he complained about it she was
sticking that one time to his face every
time why is that well I mean partly
that's just female psychology that my
father who was an authority on women he
was married five times he had this
saying which is not politically correct
so trigger warning trigger warning but
he used to say you can come home from
work and find your wife on the middle of
the kitchen table making love to a
peg-legged negro cab driver and within
five minutes she's going to have it all
twisted around so that it's all your
fault and you're a no good son of a

[__] so in a way it's just sort of evolved into the female psychology to use this kind of stuff as a kind of defense mechanism because in in the distant past and In some cultures even today women can get slapped around by men you know it's like men were bigger and stronger and before you had like liberal policies and feminism and so forth men could pretty much do what they wanted in their own house with their own woman and so or in the tribe in the Hut whatever the

cave and so women got really good at just sort of using mind games and just using like accusations and so forth and just deflecting from from things that

they maybe did wrong by like emphasizing
something that you did wrong you know as
a kind of defense mechanism
so let's see here so that's one thing
that's just female psychology at that
level but
uh let's see so I mean the main question
here is like let's see what is the main
question he just Why is that question
mark so I guess I'm going to have to
read the whole question again I rarely
have Outburst but when I do I apologize
and try not to repeat it but people
around have them often and are
Unapologetic about it yet they stick my
view into my face a lot yeah well I mean

it's in a way of justifying their own

their own position I guess it's like

yeah you do it too or you've done it

before that kind of a thing it's it's

it's a kind of defense mechanism I guess

you know like like great grandma the

drunk great

grandma

gosh subtle questions this is kind of a

subtle

question yeah okay I guess I

answered I guess I answered that

question so I'm just going to move on to

uh yuga's next question here I want to

be good example to people around me but

I'm not perfect I have a feeling people

just remember my UNH wholesome actions

even if they are minuscule to Wholesome

ones what to do so this is very similar

to the prev question which I was having

difficulty

answering um I have a feeling people

just remember my UNH wholesome actions

well it may be that if your wholesome

actions are spectacular ones and your

wholesome ones are just sort of you know

kind of

dull you know unnoteworthy ones then

yeah people might um might remember the

time you chimped out more than they

remember all the times that you didn't

chimp out

so yeah I mean it's partly your I guess

it's your own Karma

essentially and I I assume some of it is

just you know your interpretation of the

situation that you're just not noticing

that when they are wholesomely accepting

you in a in a positive way and you're

just singling out the their UNH

wholesome nonacceptance of you um in

certain cases or something

so it may be that you're also doing the

same kind of

thing that you have a feeling that

people just remember your UNH wholesome

actions which is sort of like projecting

like UNH wholesomeness onto

them

um gosh I mean I don't know Yuga well

enough to know like what he's like I
mean if I like had to work with him
every day then I would be able to
psychoanalyze him here and you know like
maybe come up with a better answer but
in this case it's like why do people see
my bad points much easier than my good
points I can just like generalize
speculate but I mean I have no
familiarity with the like the exact
situation
here so maybe you're just associating
with people that have like a a negative
cynical kind of attitude
I don't know so I'm just moving on to
the next question this is from Joo Joo

says I think I heard somewhere that actors have or Do Bad Karma due to acting but what if actors have helped people feel happy and good modern actors and play actors of antiquity yeah there is a sua where the Buddha does say that actors go to
hell that some actor was telling the Buddha that you know somebody told him that they're going to go to the like the the of the The Laughing gods or something and and the Buddha says Noah that's not going to happen the actors go to hell and whether the Buddha really did say that actors go to hell or not I mean just because you see it in the text does not mean that the Buddha really

said it that most of the words

attributed to the

Buddha you know out there are false I

mean the Buddha didn't really say

them I mean sometimes you see Buddha

quotes where I mean I know enough poly

text to know the Buddha never said that

you know it's just some Feelgood meme

kind of quote that just got put into the

Buddha's

mouth so anyways getting back to actors

I mean what if actors have helped people

feel happy and good well I mean so what

I mean drug dealers help PE have helped

people feel happy and good prostitutes

have helped people feel happy and good

just because you're causing pleasure to somebody doesn't mean that it's like a wholesome kind of pleasure that they are experiencing personally I don't think all actors are going to go to hell I think actors in general I mean there is a reason why show business people have always I mean they they have not had a very high status in society in certain ways like in ancient Rome an actor was what was it called infamia had this they had this um status of infamia where they were sort of a citizen but they didn't have all the rights of citizens I don't know if they were able to vote like Gladiators dancing girls like probably Chariot drivers like in the chariot

races that kind of a thing that it was
sort of a disreputable kind of kind of
job and they tended to be not the the
most upright morally people
like also in the Middle Ages actors in
in a lot of countries they could not
have any kind of church service done for
them you know like baptisms well I guess
they'd be they'd already be you know old
more than old enough to be baptized by
the time they became an actor marriages
funerals that kind of a thing they were
forbidden they couldn't be married
buried in a churchyard like in
Shakespeare's time it is well known they
had no actresses that all the female

roles in Shakespeare's play plays were

originally played by

boys and it was like common knowledge or

common belief back then that an actress

was not so different from a

prostitute and so nowadays it's just

kind of ironic that actors are like

trying to in a way they're set up as

like Paragons of they're like role

models to be emulated or something

although that's kind of in Decline now I

mean show business people it's

like it's their reputation is is in

Decline it seems to

me partly because they're all just like

Looney lefties for the most part like

Robert dairo I mean he has not helped

his reputation as a great actor by just
having this horrible case of trump
derangement
syndrome saying that Trump's going to
become a dictator if he becomes
president just completely ignoring the
fact that he's already been president
once didn't do that kind of
stuff
anyways actors yeah I mean to be a good
actor in a way it's like you have to
lack a spine you have to be able to like
flow and like a just sort of prot and
kind of a person that I mean you don't
have like a a real firm moral compass as
a general rule I'm sure there are

exceptions to this I'm sure there have
been virtuous respectable actors and
actresses that that they're out there
but like a professional actor like let's
say Robert dairo I mean he's played like
really horrible roles I mean he's played
a lot of like murderers I think he he
played like some kind of like like
satanic figure in one movie at least one
movie and so it's like they're sort of
leading people off into some imaginary
samsaric world that I mean especially
lately is is not going to be
particularly uplifting you know it's
just wallowing in
sensuality so that's I think that's what
the Buddha was really getting at or at

least the the Buddha as portrayed in the
suta was getting at and that it's just
leading people astray into an even
falser reality than the usual reality
plus some wallowing in sensuality and
included in that like watching
entertainment shows anyone keep keeping
eight precepts shouldn't be doing that
if you keep eight precepts you shouldn't
be watching movies for
example but some movies they're
uplifting profound movies but most of
them are not and same goes for plays I
guess so I guess I'll move on to jod
Do's next question which is what did
Buddha say about the size of the

universe and the number of World
Systems and I don't think the Buddha
really declared the the universe was any
particular size or that there was any
particular number of World Systems and I
assume that it's
infinite I'm pretty sure that the
official position of terraa Buddhism is
that the universe is infinite in size
and that there are an infinite number of
World Systems different brahmas will
like a mahab Brahma may have like
overlordship of a thousand World Systems
or 10,000 World Systems but I mean it's
just infinite no beginning and no end
samsara has no beginning and no
end so yeah I do not recall any suta in

which the Buddha was declaring the

universe is such and such

size and uh you know there are such and

such number of World Systems I don't

think so I think it's just assumed that

it's infinite and so I'm going to move

on to the next question which is from

mraa

and mitraa Buddha says how are predatory

animals like a lion for example able to

ascend and be reborn into a higher being

if it's in their nature to commit acts

of violence and eat other sentient

beings

um well it may be from Buddhist point of

view that they're not going to ascend

from being a lion necessarily that they
may get a lot of bad karma from being a
lion be reborn as like a goat or
something and then gradually eventually
you know they'll become a a noble white
Royal elephant or something that has
some some chance of getting out of the
animal
realm
so that that would be from a Buddhist
point of view another possibility is
that the lion may have certain positive
qualities that compensate for the fact
that it's killing anales and zebras all
the time
but probably a more Orthodox approach
from Buddhism from a Buddhist point of

view a terado Buddhist point of view is
that yeah I mean it's any predator that
is killing animals and like a cat that's
even like playing with the mouse before
it kills it that sort of thing that uh
they're probably not going to get out of
that kind of existence and be reborn as
a human or you know any kind of higher
being that you know they're just going
to keep cycling through these different
animal existences until finally they
become a herbivore for a while or you
know some kind of peaceful nonviolent
kind of animal and then maybe from there
they have more of a chance to escape
from the animal realm but it is

extremely difficult and rare according
to Terra Buddhism for any being to
escape from the animal realm it does
happen but it's it's not
easy so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from PSA and this
is a long one it's kind of an
anti-natalist sort of
question and he he there's like this
long introduction before he gets to the
question so I better just weigh into
this PSA says there is only one suta
that seems so illogical and
counterintuitive to the dhama that I
doubt it was actually taught by the
Buddha it's the Puda where the Buddha
states that even if you carried your

parents on your shoulders for 100 years
you still wouldn't be able to repay your
debt to them I really would appreciate
your wisdom and compassion regarding
this topic please there are three
important points I wish to make one in
order to have children you need to have
a huge amount of lust and sexual desire
and act upon it without any kind of
birth control method when did this act
all of a sudden become extremely
meritorious question mark but this isn't
one of the questions this is rhetorical
I guess sex was never praised by the
Buddha monks are not even allowed to
masturbate two this Su up puts a huge

amount of responsibility on the children
and makes the parents seem like the ones
who need to be raised educated and
protected according to picha Samu
parents are the ones reacting to TNA and
aana which leads to bah and therefore
bringing more suffering to the world if
anything parents should apologize to
their children for bringing them into
this world three this teaching gives me
a free path to travel around the world
having unprotected sex with hundreds of
women and impregnating them all and
abandoning them all and then I can send
a letter to my hundreds of children
saying even if you carry me on your
shoulders for 100 years you still cannot

repay the debt you have with me for the extremely meritorious Act of banging your mother so this suta seems more like a form of controlling people added by the Elders of the community at the time and here are my questions for you so his first question aside from the rhetorical one do you think this suta was actually taught by the Buddha please kindly explain why um I think it's it's like a toss up he may have said it and maybe he didn't

so let's say for the sake of argument the Buddha did say that we owe a profound debt to our parents partly that is based on ancient Indian tradition

where reverence for your parents I mean
it's in the Ten Commandments too you
know honor thy mother and father that it
was just built in to premodern
Traditions that you honor your your
parents and even if they're bad parents
I mean from the Buddhist point of view
obviously like honoring and serving even
bad parents is better than just treating
them like
[__] I mean it is true that they they
produced you I mean it's according to
your own
comma so I mean you don't have a whole
hell of a lot to complain about in a in
a sense you chose your own parents
through through just the the working of

comma or

Karma so I mean I suppose I should

before even answering these question

systematically I suppose I should back

up a little bit getting to some of the

things he says in this Preamble this

essay let see he first of all it's it's

strange that there is only one suta that

seems so

illogical that that he doubts that the

Buddha really said it I mean there's so

much in in the poly text way more

bizarre than saying that you should

honor your parents even if they're bad

parents so I mean like the Buddha like

when he's born you know he's just takes

off walking with lotus flowers

blossoming under his feet so his feet

don't touch the ground and then he

starts talking saying how great he is

this is his last life and then he just

reverts back to being a normal baby

after that I

mean how can how can that be more

logical and intuitive than the Buddha

saying that I mean you should honor your

parents

so that's that's one part let's see in

order to have children you need to have

a huge amount of lust and sexual desire

and act upon it without any kind of

breath well that's not necessarily true

I mean at least one parent presumably

the father may have had a huge amount of lust and sexual desire but it is just common human behavior and it's not only common human behavior but it's just natural necessary Behavior especially in premodern times that's just what people did it was your duty to do it that's just what people did and it's not that you're honoring your parents simply because they were horny at one time I mean that's not what this is all about at all nowhere does the Buddha say that you should honor your parents because they were
horny no it's for other reasons it's for bringing you into this world and like in

a situation where you can hear dhama at

the very

least

so when did this act all of a sudden

become extremely meritorious it didn't

but that's not the point I mean you

don't honor your parents because they

were horny and had sex and and and then

wound up with you that's not

why I mean you you honor them mainly

because they are your parents and that's

just what you're supposed to do and also

you honor them

because they created you in a sense they

may not have done a very good job they

may be bad parents or some such but

still I mean you're here because of them

and so I mean especially if you're
practicing dama you're you're attending
to what the Buddha said it's because of
them that you're able
to and it's just I mean again it's just
tradition throughout the world in Pre
modern
societies most modern societies that
mean you Revere or at least you serve
and honor your
parents I mean in in Burma you serve and
honor your seya also which is like
sensei in Japan it's like your teacher
that if somebody teaches you something
it could just be like how to fix cars in
Burma he is your seah and you're going

to take his side you're going to defend
him you're going to serve him you're
going to help him if you can they have
such a great veneration for teachers in
Burma that teachers will have students
from decades past just coming and like
literally bowing to them and offering
them present and so
forth and this is a similar kind of a
deal so let's
see two this sua puts a huge amount of
responsibility on the children and makes
the parents seem like the ones who need
to be raised educated and protected well
I mean it goes both ways I mean the
responsibilities go both ways it's not
just that children have responsibilities

to their parents the parents have
responsibilities to their children also
even if they are not very good at living
up to those
responsibilities so let's see this
teaching gives me a free path to travel
around the world having unprotected sex
with no it
doesn't I mean especially there's other
teachings saying that promiscuous sex I
mean that's that's sensual misconduct
Kam so let's see here
okay so getting back to his his three
questions again do you think this suda
was actually taught by the Buddha please
kindly explain why um there's no way to

know for sure no way to be absolutely
certain whether the Buddha really said
this whether you said the thing about
actors going to hell well whatever I
mean it just says that in the text the
texts are not necessarily 100% reliable
but I mean it's something that somebody
in ancient times may have said I mean
the Buddha may have said it maybe he did
maybe he didn't I don't
know so let's see the second question oh
there's only two
questions the second question is if you
answered yes how does this logic align
with the dhama it seems completely
contradictory to me but I'm open to a
different opinion for anyone hearing

this my question is not meant to be an
assertion of my beliefs I'm honestly
looking for the right view regarding
this matter with regard to anybody
you're better off having benevolent
feelings and you know being nice to them
than having malevolent feelings and
being mean to them and with your parents
because it's just built into the human
species built into the primate order
that I mean parents s are you know
they're the
lifegiver and I mean you just serve you
obey your parents I mean there's also a
a rule that a monk is not supposed to be
ordained without his parents

consent I mean it's just premodern

culture is largely responsible for this

sort of stuff and just human nature in

general is partly responsible for it

also but it's just the tradition you

Revere your your ancestor s and your

parents are your immediate

ancestor and I mean it's just it's just

cultural

partly in their family so that gets a

little bit of uh like evolutionary

biology and stuff thrown in at that

level when you consider them to be

family you know they're you you've got

their

DNA but I mean I mean as I have to admit

I really don't have a lot of family

family sentiment that my family was not

a close

family so I

mean unlike most people I think I have

stronger feelings for the people I have

chosen to be with rather than the people

I was just just born with you know it's

like it's it's more significant to me

that I choose to be with somebody you

know a friend or you know a wife than

just like a brother or or even my mother

we really my mother and I really did not

see eye to eye I think I outgrew my

mother like around the age of 13 that

just spiritually she just was like a

toddler she just didn't get it she

didn't have a spiritual or religious

bone in her body she was just just very

like somar Centric

person but still I mean she did try to

be a good mother she I mean she didn't

always succeed she was not a

particularly wise person but still I

mean that was that was one thing that I

used to feel um disappointment in that I

was a monk I wasn't able to take care of

my mother when she got old she certainly

could have used the help and here I am

living in a cave in

Burma I was in Burma when she

died but I'm not sure that I'm even even

answering the question

anymore see

here yeah I mean it just makes sense

that it's better for you to be

benevolent towards your parents than

malevolent or even indifferent towards

your parents even if they're bad parents

I mean you can still forgive them that's

virtuous you can still serve them which

is

virtuous

so yeah I think it may be that

maybe that uh let see PSA just has sort

of parent issues maybe his parents were

not the best

parents but um I think he's looking at

things from a very modern or even

postmodern point of view where like the

family is just being deconstructed

essentially but family sentiment is very

strong up until modern time

I mean there have been times of like

societal decline like Rome or something

where you know family values and like

respect for one's family and so forth

has has fallen by the wayside to some

degree but um it's it's generally not a

healthy state for

society so I'm just moving on to the

next question here this is from

philalethes and I don't think

philalethes has has asked questions

before so philes

says well I wanted to ask if it's

possible for you to do a comprehensive

comparison of all the sects of Buddhism
and I'm curious why you reject Mahayana
I don't think you have any videos on
that so I'd love to see one also talk
about Zen please and your opinions on it
since that's the version of Buddhism
that interests me the most I understand
all your points about Buddhism in
comparison to other religions but why
not
Mahayana well I mean I don't think I'm
going to be doing a comprehensive
comparison of all the sects of Buddhism
here in this Q&A especially since we've
already been going for well over two
hours

um

but let's

see he's curious why I reject

Mahayana well I mean I I I like certain

certain schools of Mahayana I like Zen

I've got Zen books on the bookcase back

there I like Zen Coons for example I I

have a lot of respect for nagar who is

not terab

Buddhist

um so I mean when he says I reject

Mahayana what I'm essentially doing as

acknowledging that most of what is

taught by Mahayana Buddhism was not

taught by the Buddha when I became a

Buddhist I wanted to follow what the

Buddha taught that's why I'm a Buddhist

I mean I don't want to follow some tradition that was cooked up centuries later I wanted to follow what the enlightened founder of tra tradition taught as well as I was able so I started doing like investigations like detective work what did the Buddha really teach I learned very quickly that not everything in the poly Tex is likely to be authentic teachings of the Buddha and so mainly I reject Mahayana to the extent that I just acknowledge that even though a lot of it is very profound very useful there I'm I assume there have been enlightened Mahayana Buddhists even though Mahayana

supposedly you know postpones
Enlightenment indefinitely for the sake
of liberating all beings which don't
really exist and there's an infinite
number of them and it's never going to
happen so I reject Mahayana to the
extent that Mahayana rejects what the
Buddha originally
taught so I mean I don't reject Mahayana
anymore than I reject Hinduism for
example I think there's a lot of wisdom
in Hinduism you know like some of the
upanishads the babad Gita some Hindu
swamis are extremely Advanced I wouldn't
be at all surprised if there had been
more enlightened Hindus than enlightened
terraa Buddhists despite their wrong

View and all that

so I mean really I'm not so much

rejecting mahayan as just

acknowledging that most of the teachings

of Mahayana or at least the teachings

that deviate from Terra most of those

teachings that that are not found in

terada were not taught by the Buddha it

was just stuff that got invented later

and some of it is like going against

what the Buddha taught

like postponing Enlightenment

indefinitely

so I guess I can back up he wants a

comprehensive philalethes here wants a

comprehensive comparison of all the

sects of Buddhism well I I can give like
a really brief history of
Buddhism what so you start off with what
the Buddha originally taught and it was
very like intuitive and not very
structured probably at the beginning I
mean there was no rules of monastic
discipline you know no uniform that the
monks all wore that looked the same and
all that um no monasteries even at
first and then um Buddhism struck
traction it started getting popular
after the Buddhist time like within a
100 years Buddhism was on fire it was
spreading and just different different
places would have different just because
of

isolation I mean they didn't have um the
information age back then you know news
would travel only as fast as a monk
could walk
essentially and so just
isolation and just different teachers
emphasizing different things resulted in
Buddhism starting to split apart into
different
sects and some of these sects just kept
I mean they just kept going and going in
weird directions until they hardly
resembled what the Buddha originally
taught and Mahayana was I mean in some
some like strands within Mahayana were
like a reform movement like PR paramita

was trying to get back at what the
Buddha originally taught because even in
like Terra Buddhism it became so
Scholastic and just like philosophical
just so much like thinking just
cogitation like ABI dama and so forth
Just list after list after list and just
these extremely complicated attempts at
explaining everything
intellectually even though they're
trying to pass it off as something the
Buddha saw in his in like a flash of
insight
but a lot of it just it it doesn't
really stand up to scrutiny so some of
Mahayana was attempt to just get back to
like the original Spirit of Dharma and I

think that like Zen did a good job of

that maaka did a good job of that pragna

paramita did a good job of that but then

other other schools are just like

veering so far away that you've got like

in Japan like nii Ren I think it's nii

Ren where it's they're essentially like

Turned Buddhism into worshiping the

Lotus Sutra which is like Apocrypha the

Buddha probably didn't teach the Lotus

Sutra

buto as a kind of prayer or Mantra just

you know I to the the Lotus

Sutra which again probably does not

accurately represent what the Buddha

taught so I mean just some some schools

of Buddhism um and Mahayana has done
this more than terraa just kept
wandering farther and farther away from
what the Buddha originally taught while
still retaining certain elements of it
like Mahayana is just like a full
spectrum from the ridiculous to the
sublime Hindu ism is like that
too so let's see he says I don't think
you have any videos on that so I'd love
to see one actually I did have a video
on Mahayana Buddhism comparing terava
and Mahayana and dealing with like the
evolution of it and so on and so on
YouTube took it down they deleted it for
the safety of the viewers but it's still
it's still on bitshoot so you might be

able to find

um a video that I did um with aan Puna

discussing you know the comparison in

contrast of terraa and

Mahayana but terraa I mean it's not the

original Buddhism it's already like a

deviation from the original teachings

how much of a deviation is is very

debatable so let's

see also talk about Zen please well I

mean my original idea was to become a

Zen monk until I got converted to terava

when I realized that terada comes closer

to what the Buddha originally taught and

again like I started out saying if I'm

going to be a Buddhist I want to follow

what the Buddha taught especially if I'm
going to be a monk like a professional
full-time
Buddhist not just a part-time Buddhist
or you know sort of a casual Buddhist
but if I'm really going to dedicate at
my life to being to practicing Buddhism
I want to practice what the Buddha
originally taught what this enlightened
founder of the system originally taught
and so you have to like cut through the
Deadwood and most of Mahayana winds up
in the Deadwood except for the parts
that are similar to what's found in
terraa there are certain aspects of Zen
where they may come closer to what the
Buddha originally taught than ter does

now although you can still find it in

the texts the poly

texts so I mean Zen with regard to its

sort of iconic clasm in a sense you know

it's it's disdain for dogmatism I mean

that comes closer to what the Buddha

originally taught than terraa as it

exists today but then adding in pure

land elements and like sort of

mythological svas and so forth it really

doesn't

help

so let's see I guess I answered that

question I say I guess I answered that

question probably a dozen times at least

in every Q&A

video but I I really do I I do think

that probably I sort of answer that

question and so I'm moving on to filth's

second question which is where can I

make a donation to

you well I mean if you look in the links

the URL links below my

videos then you can find uh a means of

making a donation if you so

desire and

uh yeah generosity is virtue it's just I

I feel really kind of cringy like asking

for donations anything like that I mean

it's very helpful but um mainly I'm here

to just do what I'm doing as a kind of

Public Service to um you know some

people appreciate this that's good I'm

not doing it for the purpose of you know getting any like physical reward out out of it but um some people have been have been generous and I am I am grateful for their generosity grateful to them for their

generosity so yeah where can you make a donation is look in the URL links below the video and you should find some link that works that that you can like there's I think there's uh let's see PayPal no not PayPal what is it I don't even remember now um I think there's like cash app or something that I don't think anybody uses but there's I think it's PayPal that people use sometimes or

also I've got a subscribe Star channel
where you can subscribe to make like a a
monthly contribution of as little as
$5 so there's that also I I can't really
say that you get any extra perks from
being on my subscribe star like some
people will say if you're on my
subscribe star or my
patreon they wouldn't take me on patreon
I was too controversial even as a monk
for them for patreon to accept me as a
client but um you know some people say
you know you subscribe on patreon or
whatever and you get like you get to see
these extra videos lot of people don't
get to see or you get these extra
advantages and so forth and all the only

Advantage you get for subscribing to my
subscribe star is you the virtue of
generously supporting me plus I mean you
can see my videos and stuff on the
Subscribe Star channel but I mean
they're on YouTube also and and bitshoot
and lately on Rumble
also
so I answered that one pretty sure so
I'm moving on to the next one this is
from Twin Wasabi and twin Wasabi says
any thoughts on the Dharma
Initiative and I guess the easy answer
to that is nope because I don't know
what the Dharma Initiative is what is
the Dharma

Initiative yeah I I don't know what the

Dharma Initiative is so yeah that's my

main thought on the Dharma Initiative is

what is the Dharma Initiative I don't

know I

I I must have been absent on that

day so I'm just going to move on to the

next question here this is from ketchup

and I do recall a ketchup asking

questions months ago and then he uh was

satiated I guess with my answers and now

he's he's back for more so catchup says

what percentage of your viewers do you

think practice

mindfulness

well golly it's it's hard to say because

there isn't any like cut off between

unmindful and mindful everybody's got
some kind of mindfulness according to
Abid dama philosophy anyway you know
every mind moment has mindfulness in it
you know it's like mindfulness is just
one of those mental states that has to
be in a human mind just pretty much
every mind moment but practicing
mindfulness that's where you're trying
to be more mindful than the average
person it's not just regular mindfulness
it's like right mindfulness it's not
just natural mindfulness It's
Supernatural
mindfulness or
something what percentage of my viewers

do I think practice mindfulness well I
mean pretty much everybody's going to be
practicing at some point where you're
doing something
dangerous or it's like you got this you
got this like a bowl of water that's
full to the brim and you've got to carry
it without filling any then in a way
that's a kind of mindfulness you know
you any tight RPP Walker tight RPP
Walker has got to be very mindful in a
sense you know do rock climbing you got
to be real mindful when you're when
you're rock climbing because if you
space off for like a fraction of a
second you you may be dead same goes for
like motorcycle racing that's why some

people are addicted to rock climbing or motorcycle racing is it forces them to be in this mindful expanded State of Consciousness that they can't really cultivate without the rock climbing or the motorcycle racing it just forces them to be in this expanded state of now so I'm not exactly sure where to draw the line between practicing mindfulness and not practicing mindfulness so I mean what percentage of my viewers do I think try to practice mindfulness maybe that would be a better a better question for me to answer what percentage of my viewers do I think try to practice mindfulness I would guess at

least half at least well members of my
Discord server probably more than half
of them are trying to practice
mindfulness sometimes not all the time
but sometimes with regard to people that
watch my videos I have less of an idea
of the the full spectrum what the
bell-shaped curve would be like with
regard to people that just watch the
Youtube videos um but I would guess it
would be into double digits anyway a
significant amount of my viewers I would
assume try to be mindful sometimes they
make like a deliberate conscious effort
to be above the level of just average
everyday semi-
mindfulness so I'm going to move on to

the next question this is from

Raphael and Raphael says do you think

your meditation would have been more

successful if you had been ordained in

the soo tradition that Soo Zen I asked

because you said that your meditation

got much better when you became

frustrated and stopped seeing

Enlightenment as the goal of your

meditation according to dogen there

should be no expectations at all during

zazen yeah there should be no

expectations at all when doing terraa

Buddhist Meditation

either um I'm not sure that my

meditation would have been more

successful if I had been ordained as a

Soo Zen monk partly because as I say

it's it's all there in Terra

also

so um and and the kind of meditation I

was practicing especially after I'd been

a monk for several years I mean it a lot

of it was essentially Soo Zen meditation

like like shikan

Taza so

um yeah I'm not sure that my meditation

would have been more successful if I had

been a Zen monk because I I wound up

practicing like essentially a kind of

Zen meditation anyway and I mean all the

the the essential teachings are there in

Terra and those were the ones I was kind

of drawn to like the AA waga is very

zen-like

and that that was like my Bible it was

like the AA waga is what kept me in the

monkhood for 30

years so yeah I I kind of doubt it's

possible but I kind of doubt that my

meditation would have been more

successful if I had been ordained as a

Zen

Monk and I'm getting a lot of questions

where it's like I really can't say what

the answer is because it's speculative

you know it's speculation that question

was speculation it's like maybe maybe

not you know that's that's about as far

as you can get with with the
answer so let's see if we have better
luck with pyramid here pyramid's asking
the next question which is did you end
up confronting that monk you witnessed
slapping that girl's booty and he's
referring to a time I was in I was a
monk in rangon Burma walking down the
sidewalk another Monk about 50 feet in
front of me was walking in the same
direction as me so I was like following
behind him and I've watched him swerve
deliberately out of his way I mean
obviously he deliberately swerved out of
his way so he could grab the ass of a
pretty girl standing at a at a bus
stop and at the time I wanted to just

walk right up to him and tap him on the shoulder and then just deck him just punch him in the face but I didn't so I didn't confront that Monk and if I had confronted that monk I might have wound up in
jail or you know it would have been worse than if I didn't confront that monk because I mean I really wanted to just just beat him up and and that would have been inappropriate too to grab a pretty girl's ass at a bus stop is inappropriate behavior to beat up a monk on the sidewalk is also inappropriate behavior so it's just as well that I mean that kind of stuff it just goes on

in in Buddhist countries you know you're
going to have crooked sloppy monks just
like you have crooked sloppy ministers
crooked sloppy priests you know wherever
you go it's it's you're never going to
have just all like virtuous
saints that are ordained or or in the
clergy or whatever there's always going
to be some people that shouldn't be
there so yeah I didn't I didn't really
confront him and I'll just move on to
the next question that was at least a
question that I was able to answer
easily this question is from
Wayne and Wayne says if the oldest of
the sutas are the original teachings of
the Buddha and the Buddha says don't

believe anything everything is empty
this sounds a lot like the teachings of
Zen thoughts well yeah it's like some
people some like Scholars have said that
the ateka waga which is like the largest
fragment of archaic really archaic
primitive Buddhism still in existence as
far as I know that is it's like pre-
terraa Buddhism it's very old
that it's it has been called by some
Scholars as Proto maamaa and they they
just freely admit I mean it does
resemble Zen in a lot of respects and
that's sort of getting back to what I
was saying earlier about how some
Mahayana schools really did try to get

back to the original

spirit and so Zen did that to some

degree also PR paramita did that to some

degree maaka did that to some degree um

some other schools not so

much so yeah it was uh like Zen was like

a reform movement or at least some

aspects of Zen were a kind of Reform

trying to get back to the original

spirit and get away from all of this

like Scholastic dogmatism which was

taking over the the earlier schools of

Buddhism as they continued to develop

change over time and just more and more

like scholar monks just coming up with

more and more philosophies and so forth

it really was just getting cluttered and

just obscuring the original Spirit which
is don't believe anything no beliefs no
perceptions no
view so yeah I think that really early
Buddhism it does resemble Zen in certain
ways I mean bodh but concept is is
nowhere to be seen seen but just that
idea of you know just view the world as
empty and you know don't cling to any of
it that kind of thing that's there are
like a stronger tradition of that in
some Mahayana schools than in Terra
now so I'm just going to move on to the
next question which is the last question
and this is from wolfen house who asked
the question just probably less than an

hour before I started recording this and
wolfen house says would you ultimately
recommend Buddhism as a spiritual path
to any ethnic European I have been
practicing aatu for a while now and
enjoy it but Buddhism does seem alluring
in a deepening of practice sort of way
and I don't know what aatu is I'm sorry
it's uh seems like some kind of
spiritual tradition but do not know what
aatu is it looks like maybe kind of
Hinduism I'm not sure but getting to the
question here would you ultimately
recommend Buddhism as a spiritual path
to any ethnic European well I mean it
wouldn't be very realistic to recommend
it uh to any ethnic European I mean most

ethnic Europeans don't even care about a
spiritual path you know it'd be just
sort of
religion and religion religion and
genuine spirituality are two different
things there's overlap but religion is
superficial as a general rule whereas
true spirituality is I mean you're
really trying to
transcend the ordinary Human Condition
not just trying to you know obey
Commandments in a book so that you go to
heaven like a Jehovah's Witness or
something or just I mean Jehovah's
Witnesses they're not even trying to get
into heaven as a general

rule um so I mean the people that aren't

spiritual I

mean what what's the point of

recommending a spiritual path to

somebody who is going to reject it

because they're just not spiritual they

just don't care and I mean most

religious people that aren't spiritual

that are of European ancestry they're

going to be Christians that's just the

traditional you know that's the main

religion traditionally in European

cultures you know since Roman time

so um and then some people even if they

do have a

spiritual

inclination I mean they're they're

already firmly established in Christianity that Christianity satisfies them they have no problem worshiping a deified Jewish person so I mean if it works for them that's fine I it's like Buddhism it's it's really a very very head oriented approach it's a philosophical head oriented approach or if you get into the really advanced stuff then it's just like radical mysticism and not everybody is very head oriented or a radical Mystic so people that are more like devotionalism has more devotionalism Christianity also has more devotionalism um you know they want a savior something

like that they want a

guru then it may be that they might find

something more to their liking something

that's more satisfying to them in some

other religion and I don't like the idea

of a religious Monopoly that I do think

a culture a society would be healthier

with different religious systems

competing because when you have a

monopoly then the quality goes down it's

just the way it is cuz nobody's going to

choose something else because there is

no something else to choose they got to

take what what they can get but if

you've got like in Ancient India this

one reason why Indian spirituality was

so strong and continues to be so strong

in certain respects is you had these
different sects that were competing with
each other and like debating with each
other and just had to be on their toes
they had to be better than the other
other religion otherwise people were
going to follow the other
religion
so uh I'm really don't like the idea of
like a a Buddhist monoculture I mean
Burma it's in some ways they're better
off than us in some ways they are more
civilized than we are um but they have
kind of a
medieval like dogmatic kind of approach
to religion as a general

rule so I don't think that works very
well for modern
westerners when you're just told
something and you have to believe it
just because you're told that you know
it says it in the Holy Scripture
therefore it is true and if you don't
like that you have wrong view you're a
heretic just it just doesn't work very
well so I mean I am fully in support of
Buddhism having representation in the
world West that it should be an option
for anyone who finds it
valuable but um I don't know if I would
recommend Buddhism as like the religion
for any ethnic
European like Iola talked a lot about um

bringing Buddhism into the West for the

elites to follow like the spiritual

Elites um and he didn't really give a

[__] what the common people were

following

and I mean I guess there's a certain

amount of sense in

that I mean the West might be better off

as a Buddhist West than as a Christian

West certainly it' be way better off as

a Buddhist West than a Marxist

West but I do think that there should be

a variety of different spiritual paths

different traditions and different

people just one size does not fit all

different people have different

inclinations and so maybe for like an
intellectual head oriented person that
also has like a mystical
streak terraa Buddhism or Buddhism in
general might just be excellent but
somebody else I mean other people I mean
what's happening in the west some people
are adopting Buddhism Without Really
accepting it and then they're just
trying to change it into like this sort
of feminized Neo Marxist kind of gobbly
go like they're trying to change
Christianity and Hinduism and and any
other system that they can get their
hands
on so I mean one advantage of not having
everybody be a Buddhist is that you know

the stupidest most foolish rascally bad
people you know they wouldn't have to be
Buddhist if everyone's Buddhist then you
know it's like the best the worst are
all going to be Buddhists and the worst
are going to be like really bad
Buddhists so you're probably better off
just letting them follow some other
religion or more likely no religion at
all but uh yeah Buddhism is a good path
I mean it works well for educated
Western people who think too much it
makes more sense than the average
religion you know it makes more sense
than Christianity for example
but Christianity works for some people

and it maybe that some people have even
become fully enlightened Christians I
mean I I give St John of the Cross as a
possible example of a fully enlightened
Christian but he's not the only possible
example
so would I ultimately recommend Buddhism
as a spiritual path to any ethnic
European probably not partly because it
would be just futi
in a lot of cases most cases that I mean
so what if I recommend Buddhism to them
they're still not going to
care I mean either because they're just
not religious or spiritual or they've
already you know they're they're already
firmly established in Christianity or

some

such so maybe I'm just taking this too

literally and

autistically but I mean as if I mean if

the West had to convert to some

pre-existent World spiritual tradition

or just some pre-existent spiritual

tradition um I think like Buddhism would

probably be the best some form of

Buddhism so I guess I answered all the

questions I hope I kind of did I at

least answered some of the questions and

so I guess we've reached the end

where I say if you got any questions got

any more questions

then feel free to ask in the comments

below and check out the URL links and uh

like And subscribe if you haven't

already and be happy

all right hello and welcome to episode
110 of question and answer I am your
host poo basa this is my beverage this
is the little paper umbrella I already
took out of my
beverage and this is my emergency backup
beverage my co-hosts are lying there on
the floor back there and I might as well
just wait into this but first I would
like to announce that probably about a
week from now I'm going to do a second
installment of my dhic aquarium series
which is now a miniseries or even a
micro series because I've only have one
up so far but we do have some
developments like my sweetheart my

lovely bride has finally put fish into
her aquarium so there's that plus I've
got a little
invertebrate aquarium also I'm that I'm
in the process of setting up so it's all
very
exciting and for those of you who uh are
new to these q&as I suggest that you go
back and watch the previous 109 videos
before watching this one just so that
you'll be all caught up and won't like
ask questions that I already
answered so that'll take a few hundred
hours so while we're while you're doing
that the rest of us are just going to
proceed with me answering these
questions and it's sort of a moderate

amount you know it's like like the
middle path between too many questions
and not enough questions it's all nice
so the first question is from pseudonym
and pseudonym says regarding the three
afflictions can you discuss delusion
what precisely is delusion how does it
manifest in the mind what might be
confused for delusion that is actually
not delusion and we've got like let's
see
here should be four question
marks he ask four questions in this one
question so that's that's kind of sneaky
pseudonym so anyways let's see the three
afflictions I assume he's referring to

the three poisons or the Three Fires

which are Loba Dosa and MOA or greed

hate and delusion are the usual ways of

uh rendering them although something

more like attraction aversion and

semiconscious stupidity might be more

accurate

might be more precise

definitions and he wants me to discuss

mooha or delusion in

particular so what precisely is

delusion um if you read the tech the

poly texts you know delusion is defined

variously you know considering what is

beautiful to be ugly considering what is

ugly to be beautiful considering what is

permanent to be impermanent considering

what is impermanent to be permanent

considering what is self to be not self

you know just essentially

distorting your your understanding of

reality although semiconscious stupidity

comes pretty is is a pretty good just

overall general

definition um it's not just delusion

sometimes it's called ignorance and in a

way in Buddhist philosophy ignorance and

delusion can be synonymous there's a lot

of overlap between ignorance and

delusion

so

delusion mainly is

belief delusion is perception especially

if you believe that what you are

perceiving is real so one way of

defining mooha or delusion is

considering what is real to be unreal

and considering what is unreal to be

real and this world is virtually real

conditionally real but not ultimately

real and therefore it is not really

real except conditionally or

provisionally or

virtually so my personal definition of

delusion other than just semiconscious

stupidity

is essentially believing Sam Sor is real

believing

perception believing your own

perceptions considering you to be

considering yourself to be perceiving

what is real when nothing that is real

is really perceived perception

immediately just distorts and like

corrupts reality at the very

least

so um you could look it up in a Buddhist

dictionary something like that like Nana

TI loa's Buddhist dictionary he might

have a a nice very Orthodox definition

of delusion but um what the hell I I'll

just get

[Music]

that I won't bother with the Polytech

society definition

because I mean they weren't really

Buddhists anyway so let's see here let's
look up moha first just to see if he's
got the pow here
moha
moha um moha delusion is one of the
three UNH wholesome Roots the best known
synonym is aija which is not knowing or
ignorance so here's mooha is defined
practically as ignorance again getting
back to what I was saying and that's
really all the definition there is in
this book it's a really good book though
in uh with regard to defining other
words in Buddhist philosophy
so yeah delusion is essentially belief
anything that you can believe is
delusional

so you can chew on that for a while the
other sub question another sub question
here in this same question is how does
it manifest in the mind it manifests as
perception so any kind of image that you
perceive any kind of anything you
perceive that's how delusion manifests
itself so the next sub question here is
what might be confused for delusion that
is actually not delusion and how can you
I mean how can you confuse something
else for delusion because the confusion
itself is
delusion so really everything that
you're perceiving is a kind of
delusion especially if you are believing

what you perceive I mean like an an Haun
an enlightened being might still be able
to perceive something but they're not
invested in that they are detached from
it they don't identify with it they
don't have any particular beliefs
towards it um so it's just nature taking
its course they're not
involved but so long as you get involved
in it so long as you start believing it
then that's delusion which is uh pretty
much everything is
delusion so
yes this is a good way of starting this
Q&A just insinuating that everyone who
watches my videos are
delusional but only a fully enlightened

being has no

delusion and uh I might as well add that

according to Abid dama um

moha are the opposite of moha is amoha

you know no MOA and that amoha is a

definition of

wisdom so wisdom is like the opposite of

delusion and when you have zero delusion

then I mean that's it that's the

Pinnacle of wisdom how can you get

higher than you know no delusion if no

delusion is the definition of wisdom if

you have if you're down to zero delusion

then you've reached maximum

[Music]

wisdom so I think I'm just going to move

on to pseudo next question

here how have you found right speech to

be challenging to maintain in Lay life

in comparison to as a monk to what

extent did your monastic training

prepare you to keep this precept post

disrobing what specific tips or tricks

can you share that may be helpful for

Lay people seeking to maintain truthful

speech so this is we got three more

question marks here so pseudonym has

asked a total of approximately seven

questions which is

transgressive and he's going to be

severely

punished just bear that in

mind so let's see here how have you

found right speech to be challenging to maintain in Lay life in comparison to as a monk um

really I took not lying very seriously even before I became a monk and then 30 years as a monk you have to like observe your behavior and your speech pretty much all the time to make sure that you're not breaking any rules and also you're trying to cultivate mindfulness and so you're trying to you know avoid saying what you shouldn't say and so forth sometimes you know you shouldn't say it and you say it anyway but at least there's that you're still being mindful of it

anyway so yeah the most challenging aspect of right speech as a lay person is I do have a woman who every once in a while says what are you thinking and that can be really difficult because I mean most of the time almost all the time I'm thinking something totally benign but you know every once in a while you get like these weird thoughts in your head and if she asks right when I'm having this thought that I mean if I tell her the truth she's not going to like it at all all but then I'm not going to just lie about it and so you have to like think try and think like a lawyer and put it tactfully and even then you know it's it can turn into a

fiasco

anyhow but fortunately she's only asked

me what I was thinking I mean she's

asked me lots of times and she's only

asked me once when I was thinking

something that she wouldn't like at all

I had to tell her and then of course she

didn't like it at

all so let's see to what extent did your

monastic training prepare you to keep

this preset post this roing well I mean

I've just made it almost a lifelong

habit not to tell polite lies you know

it's like somebody invites me to come

over to their house I mean nobody does

but if somebody want to invite me to

come over to their house you know the
polite thing and say well I'm I'm busy
I've already got other plans something
like that which isn't true at all in a
lot of cases you know or you know why
didn't you answer my emails or my text
well I've been busy that's probably it's
it's got to be one of the
most common
lies that people tell is I've been busy
as an excuse for not doing something and
the insinuation is like somebody doesn't
email me for six months this happened
before it was several months or he
didn't come to visit me I was in Burma
or something and I really didn't care
all that much but he he's saying you

know the reason why is because I've been
busy and the implication is that he has
just been slammed I mean he hasn't had
time to like like whatever it is send an
email for like six months straight I
mean it's it's just nonsense I don't
like people saying that stuff to me I
mean it doesn't like make me angry or
anything especially if I don't really
care you know it's like it's okay that
you didn't email me for six months you
know they're just volunteering this
excuse to be
polite so I mean I'm pretty blunt in
real life that might not surprise very
many of you but uh as a general rule I

really don't I mean I can be tactful I can speak like a lawyer kind of you know sort of not exactly lying but not like telling the full Ugly Truth on the other hand

so yeah just my monastic training the main help my monastic training uh contributed to me just not using wrong speech is it just gave me a habit of being mindful of what I'm about to say you know what I what I want to say you know so that I have a little bit more self-editing

power let's see here what specific tips or tricks can you share that may be helpful for Lay people seeking to maintain truthful speech well don't tell

lies that would be the main advice not
even polite wise you know don't say that
you were busy when you weren't busy
don't say that you know I'd like to but
I can't when really you can you just
don't want to and you may lose a few
friends especially the kind of The
Superficial types that insist upon
decorum and you know being phony
politeness and all that but some people
may actually admire the fact that you'll
just say um no I don't want to come
tonight just I'd rather just go home and
chill something like that if you I mean
anything that you can
say with meta in your heart anything

that you can say in a a feeling of you
know benevolence and friendship
generally I mean you're not going to be
dropping a brick too much doing that
kind of thing it's generally you're
you're avoiding Bad Karma by speaking
like with a A Heart full of friendliness
Amity benevolence that kind of stuff
there's actually a rule um in in the
rules of monastic discipline that one
monk should not admonish another Monk
unless he can do it with meta in his
heart so just angrily chewing out
another Monk you're not supposed to do
that and just harping at him or just
something you're just irritated and
you're kind of venting at him you

shouldn't do that kind of stuff happens
all the time but still you shouldn't do
it that you should only admonish or
criticize another Monk if you've got
like Love in Your Heart Like brotherly
love so if you can tell the truth with
that kind of
um that kind of attitude going then
you're you're doing okay I mean still
there might be superficial people that
don't like that but I mean otherwise if
it's the truth is so ugly that you just
can't bear to tell it then just don't
don't say anything
but someone who spent their entire life
um like just telling polite lies just

because that's the polite thing to do
that's the socially acceptable thing to
do is to lie sometimes then I mean it's
going to you're going to have to
reprogram yourself you're going to have
to break old habits and form new habits
and it's going to take a lot of
mindfulness because a lot of this once
it becomes a habit you just blurt it out
without even thinking about it it just
come happens
naturally so you're going to have to
practice mindfulness with regard to that
and just bear in mind don't tell
lies because if you can't adhere I mean
you can't be committed even to
Conventional truth how you going to how

you going to get ultimate truth how are
you going to know ultimate truth if even
conventional truth is considered to be
optional so I suppose I answered that
well enough I'm going to move on to the
next question here which is from covac
and sead zida and he starts with a
quote and the quote is I don't know
where he got this quote maybe from
Wikipedia the quote says although a
single static temperature can be
comfortable people are attracted by
thermal changes such as campfires and
cool pools thermal pleasure is caused by
varying thermal Sensations from a state
of unpleasantness to a state of

pleasantness and the scientific term for
it is positive thermal
Alesia from a state of thermal
neutrality or Comfort any change will be
perceived as unpleasant this challenges
the assumption that mechanically
controlled buildings should deliver
uniform temperatures and comfort if it
is at the cost of excluding thermal
pleasure unquote so now the question is
uh this seems to reflect the way many
people see life happiness comes from
climbing never giving up and being
better than you were before in life
pleasure is not found in stability but
from upward movement but for some reason
when there is no movement at all we are

expected to believe that magically it is
somehow the most Blissful thing ever it
seems very counterintuitive to how we
experience life how can you explain this
contradiction and it seems like maybe
he's insinuating that nibana would suck
because nothing changes in
you know something like that or maybe
even like the the really the highest
formless Realms where you're living in
just unchanging Bliss for a zillion
gajillion years just World Cycle after
World Cycle you're just up there just
soaking in and radiating
Bliss so yeah it would seem that he is
um in kind of hinting that nibana

couldn't really be pleasure or Pleasant
or even desirable just because it
doesn't change and people want stuff to
change people um we have like a Restless
dissatisfaction we're always wanting to
move on to the next thing even if it's
just more
pleasure you know you're eating ice
cream you just want to keep eating the
ice cream that kind of
thing but the thing is this is ref ing
to human nature and once you become
enlightened I mean the enlightened mind
has transcended human nature there's
still like vestigal human nature and
enlightened being just because you know
the body is human and so forth but I

mean this is just totally Beyond
Pleasure and Pain you get into like
nibana it's just totally Beyond Pleasure
and Pain you know it's just the ultimate
and you can't get anything better than
the ultimate it's an unenlightened mind
craves stimulation there are people a
lot of people especially kind of I mean
I think they might be more common sort
of at the lower levels of society there
they can be found all through Society
but I've most of the people I've met
that are like this tend to be at the
lower levels of society and it's like
they got to have problems and trouble
and Chaos going on or they are bored

stiff you know they got to have Feud
going with somebody they got to just go
out and do wild stuff and get into
trouble or else they're just bored
they're climbing the walls they just
they got to sit at home and not do
anything for an entire evening it's just
they can't stand it and to some degree
that is caused by just a kind of
insensitivity where it's like some
people can't feel their hand unless
their hand is like touching against
something or hitting against something
or grasping something and they have that
feeling with regard to their themselves
in general you know they can't feel
themselves unless they're like in some

sort of conflict or some kind of trouble
or some kind of turbulence going on you
know that's it makes them feel
themselves through like comparison and
contrast figureing ground so to
speak so this whole way people see life
is delusional essentially it's based on
an unenlightened mind mind happiness
comes from climbing never giving up and
being better than you were before in
life until you reach the ultimate and
then there just nothing could be better
and then if you're you think wow this is
this is kind of lame I'd rather just be
struggling and striving and and like
improving in a relative sense then

you're not

enlightened that you're still I mean you

weren't enlightened to begin

with and I'm not at all sure if I'm even

answering this question correctly

because

um yeah I'm not sure if he's really

insinuating something about nibana if

I've just like read that into it but it

is true that we have this sense of

restless in Restless dissatisfaction

that just drives us through life like in

the early poly Tex it refers to the

spike in the heart that causes us to run

in all directions and that when you

become enlightened you remove the spike

from the heart and then you are at

ease so this Restless disatisfaction is

just a a a symptom of dooka it's a

manifestation of dooka or just what is

usually translated as suffering in

English so it's it's like an

unenlightened mental

state

so I guess I answer that question I'm

just going to move on to seal of action

in cpad z next question which is when

you were in your youth were you ever

scoped enough to potentially want to

fight in a war and covac and CAD zonam

has remarked in in the Discord server of

which he is a member that he just would

not fight in a war he would just draft

Dodge or whatever you know he just
wouldn't do
it and I mean there have been times I
mean most most of my male relatives have
been in the military my father fought in
World War II I have a brother and a half
brother my half brother he fought in
Vietnam my brother was in the military
but there were no Wars going on at the
time my grandfather my father's father I
think he fought in the Spanish American
war um almost got drafted into World War
I so I mean it's like almost all of my
male ancestors who fought in the Civil
War were in Gray uniforms they were on
the side of the South so I guess it's
kind of appropriate that I'm living in

South Carolina who fired on Fort Sumter

and started the whole

thing but the thing is it wouldn't take

a

scop for me potentially to want to fight

in a war I mean at the very least I

could do like muhamad Gandhi did and

just volunteer to be like an unarmed

stretcher Bearer you know be a a medic

or something where I mean you're not

like being what could be perceived as

cowardly or someone who doesn't give a

[__] about his own country where um you

know you you're you're facing the fire

you're you're it's like a in a way it's

sort of like a manhood ritual kind of a

thing I mean you can't you can't become

a man without actually fighting in a war

or you know standing on a battlefield

but I mean that's that's the way used to

happen a lot in uh I mean well up into

modern

times that anyone who's going to be in

the ruling class I mean for the most

part they unless they were like a boy

king or something then you know they

were going to go into the military

that's just that's just what you

did so it might be that I'd be willing

to join the

military just for the sake of you know

facing this kind

of just facing the The Cauldron The

Crucible kind of a

thing um that's kind of way my father

went about it he was just a macho alpha

male type and uh he just considered it

his patriotic Duty and so he went and

did it and SE and CAD Z I might consider

that to be a scop but I don't know I

don't think it's necessarily that

anybody who's willing to fight in a war

has been sort of just manipulated

through propaganda to be willing to

fight I mean in a lot of wars

that it's it's mainly you know the rich

people are getting rich from the

military-industrial complex and so forth

you know the military just wants to try

out their their new toys to see how well
they work that kind of a thing and you
know it's a lot of people who who join
the military just become Canon fer but
there are some Wars that are
politically Justified you know a war of
self-preservation a war of defense that
kind of a thing or
arguably I mean the way my father looked
at World War II he considered to be
completely
Justified that the Allies would fight
against the Axis
powers so I don't think that it's
necessarily A S out but when I was young
I mean I was a militant pacifist so I
was like a vegetarian when I was young

and uh I took the the as ASVAB test when I was in high school the arm Services vocational abilities test and just got like way up at the top I got way up in like the you know 98% range on everything except for the speed arithmetic which I was I went too slow I didn't fully get what they were trying to get at and you weren't supposed to have enough time to finish the whole thing so you're supposed to just zip through it I'm not good at hurrying so I didn't do well that one and so I got you know recruiters calling me saying I got the highest score in western Washington State and Mathematics and so on and so

forth and they're wanting me to become
um they're wanting to give me a a a 90%
scholarship on the conditions that one I
join the Navy in this case and two I
train as a a nuclear technition and I
just took the test because I like taking
tests I really had no intention at all
of joining the military my father wanted
me to join he wanted me to get into Roc
or something but um I was just like a
like a hippie when when I was young and
just yeah I I might have been like SE
action CAD Z I think I probably would
have been you know I might have
volunteered to be a medic or something
that would not be required to shoot
people that kind of

thing but

um

yeah I don't think it would it was

necessarily A scop in that case so I'm

just going to move on the next question

here also from seov action cpad he says

since disr you probably learned of many

of your family and friends dying and

some new ones being born have they tried

to make up for lost time or catch up

since you came back such your siblings

nephews nieces cousins Etc what were

their reactions to you disrobing and

really I I encountered approximately

zero of any of this because I do not

come from a close family my father and

my mother were both the the respective
black sheep of of their
family and I remember I mean when I was
in Burma as a monk the the Burmese are
very family oriented and so sometimes a
monk would ask me you know how many
uncles and aunts do you have and I would
say I'm not sure exactly and their jaw
would just drop because how can you not
know how many uncles and aunts you have
but um yeah I was never like 100% sure
because I have met very few of my my
family even I've got like half brothers
and half sisters I've never
met but I guess there's another question
further down the scroll specifically
with regard to that sort of thing so

let's see my family and friends dying

well I mean uh since I disrobed I

learned of many of my family and friends

dying now I haven't and some new one's

being born now I I'm not in touch at all

with Mo even most of my half brothers

and sisters my brother I've got a full

brother he's got the same parents as

I've got and I'm not exactly sure what

country he's in right now he's not very

communicative I've sent him a few emails

um since

Christmas and nothing nothing back from

him really

so yeah just my family is that way which

is one reason why it was easier for me

than for a lot of other people to

renounce the world to to go off into

homelessness cuz I really didn't have

any strong ties like

that so see yeah I've had like like a a

half niece like the daughter of a half

sister who tried to contact me a few

times and I mean I'd be willing to email

her and everything but I mean I really

wasn't all that interested I really do

not have much family sentiment and I

think I was mentioning this in a

previous Q&A that I really have more

feelings of

loyalty um Etc towards people that I

have chosen to be with friends my woman

you know it's like I have chosen them

not it's not a matter of you you're just
born with you're just kind of stuck with
them you're just born that
way and it's it's largely just because
my family um almost all of my uncles
aunts grandparents cousins nieces
nephews they all lived in on the East
Coast I lived on the west coast and I
met relatively few of
them so yeah I don't know what's going
on with
them
so yeah they didn't have any reactions
to my disrobing that I'm aware of if if
if they've had any reactions they didn't
did not share those reactions with me

and so I'm I'm just going to move on to
the next question here this is from game
fap and game fap says have you ever
considered making a reaction video to
Buddhist memes and giving your opinions
for example it would be great to see
your reaction to the Buddha box on South
Park yeah I'm unaware of the Buddha box
on South Park and I never really watched
much South Park I've been told that it's
brilliant like brilliant satire I just
hate the the the
drawing it's so crude and unrealistic
that it just kind of bugs me I really do
not like the like the cartooning art of
South
Park um let's see have I ever considered

making a reaction video well I mean I'm
considering it now just because somebody
gave me the idea and now I'm finally
thinking about the idea it would take a
little bit of um it skill I'd have to
figure out some way of like screen
sharing one meme after another while
while doing the video which is uh beyond
my abilities at this present
moment but it is possible I guess I mean
a lot of them a lot of I mean most
Buddhist memes would be essentially
irreverent Sac religious that kind of
thing
so yeah it's possible I don't know I'm
not going to do it today though so I'm

just going to move on to the next

question this is from count nine and

this is the question I I referred to

just a few minutes ago which is as

follows do you know all your siblings in

this life and let's see do I know all my

siblings I know who who most I think I

know who they are see I actually have

two sisters named

Mary um half sisters I got one full

brother then I've got an adopted well

half brother also adopted on my father

side um and like an unofficially adopted

half sister on my father's side that

I've never

met the the half brother I've met we've

we've actually come into physical

contact with each other then on my
mother's side gosh I'm like her seventh
out of eight children I'm pretty sure
and two of them I didn't even know about
until I was a monk living in a cave in
Burma and then I find out I've got two
half sisters named Mary that were put up
for
adoption um as soon as they were
born um my mother didn't want to have an
abortion that sort of thing so she put
her her babies two babies in a row up
for adoption both female and just
through random chance they adopted
parents both named them Mary so it's
like hi I'm poo basa this is my sister

Mary this is my other sister

Mary so let's see I've got one half

brother died before I was born that one

of the half sisters named Mary died

before I ever found out she existed then

I've got um my mother had twin boys long

before I was born to a different husband

uh Jim and Joe I've met Jim in person

Joe I have not even talking to talked to

on the phone we've never communicated at

all that I can remember and then he had

I've got a half sister named Diane who

uh I think we've spoken on the phone a

few times and emailed a a little bit but

we've never actually met in

person so I come from a strange family

as as you may have gathered from two of

the last few

questions so and it's also possible my

father he may have sown some Wild Oats

and have some kids out there that that I

don't even know of that's possible

too so really of all my brothers and

sisters I've met in

person I mean if you include Half

brothers and half sisters less than half

of

them so that's kind of weird so I'm just

going to move on to the next question

this is from not a Canadian and not a

Canadian says is it at all possible for

someone to have psychic powers without

realizing that he has them and I think

it's

possible um especially if you consider

that around some people like spiritually

Advanced people just weird coincidences

like practically miraculous stuff can

happen around them and they're not doing

it on purpose it's just because they are

so Lial of a being you know their like

their attachment to this version of

reality is so

attenuated that just weird stuff just

manifests around

them um I remember a story about ramama

Mahari who may have been fully

enlightened for all I know that uh he

supposedly

manifested to someone who was praying to

him in a temple like you know many miles
away and this this devotee is praying to
Ramana Mahari in a temple and suddenly
he sees Ramana Mahari in the air outside
and when Raman Mahari was asked about
this he said yeah I mean he was
essentially saying this is not a quote
of course yeah that was weird it's just
I just noticed myself just sort of
levitating in that direction
um so I mean it wasn't like he was
trying to do it it wasn't like some sort
of volitional act I mean that's the
point I'm trying to make here that you
know the more advanced a person is the
less likely it is that any kind of

psychic powers is going to be like
volitionally exercise it's just going to
spontaneously
occur and so I assume that some very
spiritually Advanced being or maybe one
that's even not so spiritually Advanced
can have these weird phenomena weird
synchronicities and so forth happening
and they don't you they're clueless or
maybe they're so humble they just can't
believe that it's actually coming from
them like a lot of Psychics you know
they don't they might have real talent
you know they might have some actual
Clairvoyance for example but they can't
believe that they have it themselves and
so they just Channel some being that

sees this distant event or phenomenon or whatever and then they attribute the the real power to this being that they're supposedly channeling when in all likelihood the being that they're channeling is just a figment of their subconscious imagination that's used as a kind of gimmick to help the like the uh the psychic abilities manifest so yeah I do think it's possible for someone to have psychic powers without realizing that he has them and so I'm going to move on to the next question this is from ult Ultra CL herum and I hope I'm pronouncing that correctly Ultra CLA

herum and he says is the history of
Burma or Burmese buddhism's history
something you are confident to take my
amateure questions about um yeah I I
know a lot more about the history of
Burma and the history of burmes Buddhism
than most people do probably more than
most Burmese people do I have uh studied
up on it a bit
so I do know uh more about burmes
history and burmes buddhism's history
than most people so probably I mean
depending on how obscure the question is
there's a good chance I would be able to
answer questions about that
topic so I'm going to move on to ultra
CLA herum next question here can I ask

if you have any paranormal stories or

weird experiences I mean I heard your

father was an a cult

and then I know myself in Thailand I had

some otherw worldly experiences in just

the short time I was

there well there is I

mean probably the

most uh

solid like Paranormal event that I

experienced I've already mentioned it

more than once I've mentioned this

several

times but I might as well mention it

again when I was around 12 years old my

father was hiring a new housekeeper and

we had a poltergeist in the house weird
stuff like just the the handles on
coffee cups would just pop off the the
cup while it was in the like in the
cupboard you know just glass wear would
just kind of break spontaneously while
it was in the cupboard silverware would
get all bent and twisty um just weird
things would appear in the house nobody
knew how they got there this kind of
thing
and so when my father was like talking
to the new
housekeeper he was telling her there's a
poltergeist in the house and if you find
any like broken dishes anything like
that don't immediately blame the kids

because this kind of stuff happens here
and while he's explaining it to her you
know she starts getting this slow smile
on her face and like one eyebrow is
gradually going up like she can't decide
whether he's joking or crazy and then
right when he gets to the end of his EXP
just within just a few seconds of him
just getting to the end of you know the
Poltergeist is in the house stuff
spontanously self-destructs then an
ashtray right on Plain View right on the
table between them there was you know
sitting like caddy corner at the at the
kitchen table I was sitting at the other
end this glass ashtray just made this

sound like zinc and just split into two
halves and and slid apart about an inch
and a half and then of course she
stopped smiling immediately and started
taking him
seriously and I was right there I
observed that and I mean you could say
well it was like the the heat of a lit
cigarette in the ashtray caused uneven
expansion of the glass which then you
know caused the glass to break and maybe
so but there were hundreds or thousands
of cigarettes in that ashtray before you
know it was like a quarter inch thick
ashtray I think if I remember correctly
it came from a casino
um at the very least it was some very

remarkable synchronicity where my father
just finishes an explanation about
glassware self-destructing and then we
had glasswar self-destruct Right In
Plain Sight just within 5
Seconds of him finishing the
explanation so paranormal stories I mean
lots of paranormal stories that happen
to other
people um weird experience paranormal
stories yeah I mean in Burma that kind
of stuff
abounds um mainly I mean lately it's
mostly like weird synchronicities where
I'll just say something that that my my
woman was thinking that kind of a

thing um I mean with no real connection
no no no way I would know that she would
be thinking about something like that
it's just that we're kind of in tune and
we're on the same wavelength you know
most of the time at some level anyway
and so I it's like our thoughts are kind
of connected our minds are connected at
some level so in a way that's paranormal
in and of itself but it does increase
the amount of weird synchronicities and
so forth that
happen so yeah my father was an
occultist but I wasn't really exposed to
um any of his real heavy occult stuff um
he did have uh a tape it was an old real
toore tape recorder that he had when I

was a kid and he recorded a seance once
and that was one of those things you
know it's kind of like watching the
scary movie you when you're a kid you
listen to the Seance tape and it was
some woman in trance and you you can
hear heavy breathing through the whole
whole Seance and at first she's talking
it sounds like a Native American I mean
it could have been just been gibberish
nobody could understand what was being
said it sounded like some kind of native
American language and they're trying to
get rid of this spirit because nobody
can understand what he's saying anyway
so finally they they're able to get this

Spirit to move on and then the next
spirit that comes in to this woman at
the Seance I don't know what it's called
now I mean she'd be channeling or
downloading or something now but it back
then it was called she was a spirit
medium and they were at a
seance so anyways um after the Native
American was finally moved moved on um
she's the the woman in trance the the
medium just started this booming jovial
laughter and then she she Point singles
out my mother who was actually at the
Seance I think this might be the only
Seance my mother actually attended with
my father and then she's saying honey
don't you remember me and and my mother

of course had no

idea who was who was talking to her said

you Dro My Baby on his head and it

turned out that that

apparently the spirit that's coming

through in the Seance was this black

lady who lived it was a neighbor to my

mother when she was a little girl and my

my mother actually dropped this black

lady's baby um and uh I mean they for I

mean the black lady forgave her and

everything she's just a little girl she

could I mean you know it's like stuff

happen

sometimes and uh she was you know

telling her stuff that the medium

couldn't have known I'm I'm I don't
think my father knew about this you know
about my mother when she was a little
girl dropping a
baby so I mean that kind of stuff is uh
considerable and uh this the black lady
named named Auntie that's just what my
mother called her auntie um she was
saying if you're ever having trouble
with the baby and that was me I was a
baby at the time that this this
recording was was taken just just call
on me and I'll take care of it so one
time I was crying and crying and so my
mother remembered that so she called out
to Auntie well here's your chance and
according to my mother um within a just

a few moments I just sort of got

distracted from crying I was looking

like at some blank space and and started

smiling but I mean it's all anecdotal I

don't remember doing that because I was

just a baby at the

time but my father would he had lots and

lots of paranormal stories

and uh I've Heard lots and lots of

paranormal stories in Burma and even if

most of them are fake I mean I've heard

some wild

ones that uh still it's paranormal

stories oh then there was the time I got

attacked by ogres but we don't need to

get into that so uh I'll just move on to

uh Ultra claas her mati's next question and uh this this one isn't really a question that's what I'm allowing for here because this is just a commentary um to a statement that he made that isn't one of his questions I'm pretty sure there was no question marks at all in an entire paragraph that that the sentence I'm about to to say came from and it's mostly regarding Tibetan Buddhism that I really don't know that much about but anyways utra CLA herum says I was taught that maaka comes as a logical refutation of yoga Chara's tendency to monastic eternalism and it's my understanding I have read that yogachara actually came after maaka that

majaka was you know you had this very
Advanced philosopher nagara who just
went to the Cliff's Edge and you you
always have to have like philosophers
after that who who give like very
sophisticated explanations for why you
should back away from the Cliff's Edge
you know Goa Buddha went to the Cliff's
Edge and just jumped off into the void
into the emptiness and then you know
Abid dama Scholars and various Buddhist
philosophers just started backing away
from the Cliff's Edge then someone like
nagara goes right back to the Cliff's
Edge again and so um yogachara in my
opinion was just another sophisticated

procedure of backing away from the

Cliff's Edge

again um so I do think that yogachara

came after

majaka so um that would kind of throw a

monkey Ranch into the idea that majamaa

comes as a logical reputation of yoga

charara but that wasn't one of the

questions so I'm just going to move on

to the next one this is supposing that

cthulu were a real high priest of the

great old ones and since all beings have

Buddha nature do you suppose one could

reach Enlightenment before going mad by

Mig

[Music]

to I don't know what that

says I'm really not to love craft
much so anyways the idea here cthulu is
a real high priest of the great old ones
and since all Buddhist all beings have
Buddha nature can could he reach
Enlightenment before going mad and I
mean even if you did go mad I mean
samsara is endless supposedly we've been
here since beginningless time we've been
in samsara since beginningless time you
know there's there's no lack of time for
cthulu to go through his Madness phase
and then go into the hell Realms and
then after he he's exhausted his Bad
Karma there you know he manifests
somewhere else gets born into some other

world maybe goes up into heaven realms

for a while comes back down again maybe

manifests as an animal for a million

Generations you know it just it just

keeps going it keeps

cycling

so in all

likelihood cthulu he's a real high

priest of the great old ones and he's

kind of a nasty person or a nasty being

I should say then yeah probably he's

going to be getting all the karmic

retribution for all of the Badness that

he's been doing and then it's all going

to be worked out and it's up and down

and up and down and up and down for know

cycle after World Cycle after World

Cycle Eon after Eon and then

eventually

supposedly potentially anyway he can

become enlightened you know a zillion

gajillion World Cycles from now maybe

but still there's uh all the time in the

world

[Music]

literally so I think I'm just going to

move on to the next question this is

from

yugu and yugao says what is the

difference between our knowledge and

understanding of Dharma and one of

Buddhas

so this could be interpreted two

different ways what is the difference
between our knowledge and understanding
of Dharma and a Buddha's knowledge and
understanding of Dharma that's that's
the first way I interpret it but I also
could see that it could be what is the
difference between our knowledge and
understanding of Dharma and our
knowledge and understanding of
Buddhas which I think the first
alternative is more likely so that's the
one I'm going to answer so the
difference between our knowledge
understanding of Dharma and the Buddha's
knowledge and understanding of Dharma
first of all
the Buddha's knowledge understanding of

Dharma is not going to have any delusion in it so with regard to like the highest Dharma or nibana he doesn't have to have a concept of that he just experiences it directly we on the other hand have perceptions about nibana you know we think about nibana we can talk about nibana we have ideas about nibana but we're not experiencing nibana directly we're not experiencing the conten thing in itself we're stuck at the level of the conten thing as it seems so our knowledge understanding of dhma is going to rely almost entirely on Words and and just Concepts whereas a Buddha's knowledge and understanding of

dhma is just going to be based on
reality and then in his wisdom he could
then sort of come up with different like
yogic techniques makes that will help
one to see reality but at the same time
he's detached from all that he doesn't
consider it to be ultimately real it's
just sort of like a
spontaneous
generation of like benevolence coming
from him if that makes any
sense so the Buddha can have he can put
his understanding of dhamma into words
but that's really not the essence it's
just this makeshift it's what the
mahayan call skillful
means so also I mean the Buddha would

would know like the path experientially
because he is he has succeeded in in
Walking the path to its
fruition whereas for us it's still
largely theoretical and guessing and so
forth but the main difference between
the understanding of Dharma of lay
person or like a putuj a common
worldling on the one hand and an
enlightened fully enlightened sasam
Buddha on the other is the fully
enlightened SAS Sam Buddha is just going
to be seeing it directly you know he's
like a person who can see who who knows
what light is whereas the the common
worldling is like a blind person trying

to come up with ideas about what light
is but with regard to just the path you
know just the the
techniques the rules to follow and so
forth um a l or a pjen a common
worldling would would cling to those and
consider that to be like real and
something really important whereas from
from like an enlightened being's point
of view it's not real it's just kind of
skillful means and it's just sort of
being evoked largely from the the karma
of the
Seeker so
I just keep thinking of like Ram Do's
statement about neim Koli Baba who's up
on the the altar up there where he said

the the better you got to know him the
more you realize there's really nobody
there that he was just like a mirror
reflecting your own Karma back at
you so in in a case like that then the
Buddha's knowledge and understanding of
Dharma I mean it's it's in a way it
wouldn't even
exist it's just
like it would seem to exist as your own
karma is being like reflected back at
you but he's in this state of like
Supreme
Transcendence so anyways I'm just going
to move on to yuga's next question here
please talk about your favorite part

from the ATA waga and give us the
explanation of it and as it turns out
just through random chance of course I
happen to have a copy of the aaga here
with book marks at some of my favorite
passages and I don't really have a
favorite part of the AA waga you know
sort of like asking someone what's your
favorite lead Zeppelin song and I mean
it just depends on what kind of mood you
happen to be in or some
such lately I've been steering more
towards what what is and what should
never be from Le Zeppelin 2 but anyways
um there there just a bunch of of just I
mean the waga is like a gold mine and so
you got one nugget of gold here another

nugget of gold there and another nugget

of gold there it's like which nugget of

gold do you like better I mean it's all

it's all it's all

gold so let's see here one of

them is

from see here it's from the small

discourse on tactical deployment or the

Chula Chula

wuasa and this is obvious

not Orthodox terraa which is one reason

why I like it I like the Mind blowy kind

of stuff this has to be pre

Terra and it is the Buddha here says

truly I do not say it is so which fools

say contrarily to each other they have

each made out their own view to be true
therefore indeed they hold the other to
be a fool so here the Buddha is is
essentially denying that he makes any
kind of like philosophical
assertions which is in accordance with
the AA waga more or less although you
still find assertions in the Tica waga
but far fewer than you find
elsewhere but that's just it's just kind
of fascinating to me that there are
texts where the Buddha will say you know
I I don't make assertions which I guess
is itself an assertion but I mean when
you're when you're dealing at that level
it's very difficult to make sense
properly so let's just skip that one one

of my longtime favorite ones or move on
from that one we didn't exactly skip it
did we well this this has always been
one of my favorite favorite
verses and this is in the
mandasa and the Buddha says not by what
is viewed not by what is heard not by
Inner knowledge nor by morality and
observances is Purity said to be by
absence of what is View by absence of
what is heard by non-n knowledge by
immorality by non-observance also not by
that so having let go of these not
taking hold of anything a peaceful one
not being dependent would not have
longings for

existence so I mean he's saying
essentially Purity doesn't come from any
of this stuff or from the absence of any
of this stuff which is I mean it's like
a Zen [__] and there are a lot of zenik
[__] like statements in the
ataga and how do how to explain that how
do it's just like you're transcending
samsara see all this stuff like views
like what what is viewed what is heard
even knowledge morality observances it's
all just samsaric phenomena that you're
trying to go
beyond so and kind of clinging to that
we're clinging to the absence of it even
it's all just clinging to samsara so you
have to just stop stop attaching to any

of this stop taking any of it seriously

stop believing in any of it and then you

just let it all go you let go of

samsara also I mean one of my favorite

sutas in the entire ATA waga is the

let's see the sudaa

no the parantica Su which I won't I

won't read the whole thing it's only

eight verses but still

um it's see

here I mean it's

just you can just pick verses at random

practically and and they're they're all

good or most of them anyway it's like uh

let's see the last verse of the suda Su

or the eight verse discourse on the pure

the holy man is gone beyond boundaries
by him there is nothing he has known or
seen that is seized upon he has no
passion for passion he is not
impassioned for dispassion by him
nothing outward has been taken up here
and even thoughts are considered to be
outward
extraneous or the last verse of uh see
which one is
this the duta or the eight verse
discourse on the corrupt the last verse
of that one indeed one having recourse
one having recourse to philosophies has
recourse to argumentation to one not
having recourse about what how would one
make an argument for him in indeed there

is nothing acquired or discarded he has
shaken off all views even here so the
the theme here really is that beliefs
and Views and also like practices
techniques all of this you have to
detach from all of it you can't cling to
some kind of belief system you can't
cling to some kind of yogic practice
because you are clinging to samsara by
doing that and the whole point is to
stop clinging to samsara
and also here this one line for him
indeed there is nothing acquired or
discarded the word acquired in discard
is in theal
it's and so ATA and N ATA is acquired n

is discarded but it's obviously a p it's
a play on words because ATA also means
self and n it means the same thing as
anata or no self so for him indeed there
is no self and no non-self because if
you cling to the idea of a self again
you're clinging to samsara if you cling
to the idea of no self still you are
clinging to just samsaric views so you
just have to let all of that go that's
like the predominant theme of the yeka
waga and it's obviously not Orthodox
because gradually as the philosophy
developed they had to differentiate
between wrong View and this right view
that you really have to be dedicated to
in order to become

enlightened and to some degree you have
to be dedicated to it even bearing in
mind that it's just a raft made of
rubbish that you use to cross the flood
once you cross the flood you leave it
behind but It's
Tricky so I guess I answered that I'm
going to move on to the next question
this is from
PSA and PSA says if you were a young man
today let's say you could have once
again your body when you 18 years old
but you were able to keep all your
wisdom that you attained in this
lifetime would you ordain again if yes
how would you do it in which country in

a big Monastery with a famous Abbott or
in a small remote temple with an unknown
Abbot would you interact a lot with the
other monks or keep to yourself would
you go about it alone like the
rhinoceros suta all these questions are
examples there is own there is the only
question I have would you ordain again
if yes could you please give
details so I've thought about this a
lot um to be honest if suddenly I were
18 again and I remembered all that I
know I knew when I was 18 all that I
know now uh I have to admit my first
impulse would be to set myself up well
enough that I can find my woman when
we're both

young that's that would be my first
impulse that would be like that's that's
it um in a way it's like if I knew then
what I know now would I still go to want
to go to high school would I still want
to get a degree in Marine Biology I mean
it's like to some degree the answer
would be no because you know I already
learned that stuff it's like I consider
being a monk to be a kind of Education
and so even if I did become a monk it
wouldn't be the same way I did it this
time because I mean I've already done it
that way and I learned what I could
learn from it
so gosh I mean there's a good chance

that I'd be set up I'd be I'd be in the
process of setting myself up to meet my
woman when we're both relatively young
you know at the right time without kind
of creeping around thinking you know
thinking that I'm some kind of stalker
or something something that would be
tricky
um but then who knows what's going to
happen it's like the best laid plans of
mice and men you can have this firm idea
you're going to do this all of a sudden
you have this experience that just you
know it's who knows it's like I could
meet some enlightened being who just
says you know follow me and it's
possible it's theoretically possible

that I could do that maybe still with
this intention in my mind you know I'll
do this for for a few years or several
years and then then I'll find my woman
when we're still relatively young kind
of a thing because I i' have to wait
until she was old enough because I am I
am older than
her so I mean I might try and kind of
get the best of both
worlds and uh you know ordain
temporarily or something but I I
wouldn't be able to really do it the
same way I did it this time so I'd have
to like somehow come across some some
Monk that I consider to be an

enlightened being or very near to it
very Advanced who could then persuade me
to you know to follow him and whether he
lived in a big Monastery or in a remote
Temple and is unknown I mean that who
knows so let's see would I interact a
lot with the other monks I keep to
myself I'd try to keep to myself um
going alone like the rhinoceros horn I
mean I did that for many years more than
20 years I mean I wasn't always alone as
a monk but most of the time I was and I
mean there are limitations to that to
being all alone because you can just
drift you you got blind spots that you
can't see it's it's better to have
feedback from someone else especially

somebody wise who can you know help you
to overcome these blind spots uh or
these weaknesses that you just don't see
so yeah it's it's difficult to uh to say
exactly what I would do if all of a
sudden you know I woke up tomorrow when
I was 18 years old again and still knew
all this stuff I mean I'd be tempted to
like start investing in apple and
Microsoft at first and you know and when
you know Bitcoin comes out and you get
some of that you know I I could be set
up really rich and just live kind of a
life of leisure I wouldn't have to work
for a
living unless you know some kind of

karmic catastrophe hits and uh yeah then

I could sort

of kind

of live sort of a a dharmic life well at

the same time not being ordained or

something it's it's it's really

difficult to say because I mean I

wouldn't want to do the same stuff I

already did because I already did it and

so there'd have to be some other route

and uh there's a good chance I mean if I

did have to become a monk again I still

think I'd go Burmese although I mean

when I was 18 I think Burma might have

been shut down I don't know it's like I

mean Burmont is sort of a gamble because

you know there is a military

dictatorship and sometimes there's
economic sanctions sometimes they'll
kick the foreigners out of the country
you know sometimes they might arrest
foreigners in their country you know
it's it's kind of tricky but I do think
that Burmese Buddhism is is really um in
some ways preferable to Thai Buddhism or
Sri Lankan Buddhism although there's
going to be really good abits really
good traditions in Sri Lanka in Thailand
in Burma and that also would just be a
matter of forces beyond my conscious
control exposing me to like some really
wise teacher or some really Advanced
like uh a tradition you know like some

Reform movement going on like in the
highlands of Sri Lanka or something you
know you'd have to come across
um you have to become aware that there
is this Advanced teacher here and he's
he's teaching you know like aan Mahaba
or some such you know maybe I could uh
go be a follower of ajan Mahaba or
something in
Thailand but um but I have to admit I
would be I'd be very tempted if I were
suddenly 18 and knew then what I know
now you know just set myself up and get
rich just you know live just by a a huge
Forest Park maybe set up some monks
there you know and I could support the
monks and you know do some meditation or

whatever and you know just live that

kind of a life being a monk in the west

really is the West is not set up for

that sort of thing there are monks who

are succeeding

uh within

limits but still I know it might it

might actually be preferable to be a

sort of amateur

renunciant

um and not especially I mean if you just

don't have to work for a living you know

you can just go off and live in this

this remote Forest Area and you can set

up some monks in little huts and support

them and and learn from and so

forth but uh I I didn't I did not have
really good luck in finding really
Advanced wise teachers in a way it's
just something about my inner beliefs
it's sort of like cheating if you if you
have a a really wise teacher but um you
know I've I've come across monks that
were considered to be aans or just
meditation Masters and so forth and they
they just didn't impress me at all like
I've already talked about upand I mean
some people consider upand just be like
this Great Sage and meditation master
and some kind of Arya it's pretty
obvious that upand to himself considered
himself to be like an a sakami I think
um but to me he was he was an angry old

man he was just hostile and

just he he he'd get pissed off on a

daily

basis

so yeah I my karma may not be very

helpful

in finding a really Advanced

teacher

so

golly yeah I I assume I answered that

question more or less I mean it was

vague and because really I don't know

what I would do exactly as I said my

first impulse would be to find my

sweetie and just you know we can we

could be together when we're both

young but um you you never know what's
going to happen I mean if if you're just
destined to become a monk and I really
do feel like I was just destined it was
like one of my main purposes in this
life was to be a
monk and so I mean if you're just Destin
it's like you can fight against the tide
or whatever but still you're going to
wind up where you were intended to be
and so there's a good chance that you
know she' just think I was a stalker
she'd think I was crazy that kind of
thing just have nothing to do with with
me marry some other guy and
then then I just at the same time I I
just happen to find the right teacher

who knows who knows how it would
happen so I guess I'll just move on next
question I hope I didn't disappoint PSA
too
severely but um you know I do consider
being a monk similar to getting an
education I mean it is a kind of
education and who I get the same
education a second time I I got as far
as I could with it I learned what I had
to learn so it would have to be
something significantly different than
that and I'm not sure what it would be
unless you just happen to wind up in the
presence of some very Advanced master
who then just reels you in you know

maybe he's like neem Koli Baba and just
blows your mind with some kind of
psychic feet and then you just you
become his disciple you know next thing
you know you're you're wearing white
robes or
something so anyways I'm just moving on
the next question this is from skaden or
a
skaden would you kindly recommend your
approved translation of the
idiot and then uh he's got like the the
little bullet point commentary here I
tried to pick up dovi once I had two
translations and three different titles
for the same work the possess the devils
and the demons it only became worse at

the introduction they couldn't even
agree on a direct quote from Luke
83236 well different Bibles do not agree
on the direct quote from Luke 83236 I
mean the New Testament was not
originally composed in English so
there's going to be different
translations so I mean with regard to
the original of the possessed or the the
devils and that that's a good book too
that was it's considered to be one of
dov's four masterpieces although it's
like the the fourth one you know it's
it's the the least of his masterpieces
partly because he was going to make it
his magnum opus that dovi had this

ambition this dream of writing his greatest novel which was going to be about a damned Soul finding Redemption and he hesitated because he just felt he wasn't up to the task he wasn't ready for it yet and then it just never happened because he died first it was going to be in this the Devils or the possessed and all of a sudden he wound up owing a lot of money because he had real problems with keeping money he was a gambling addict he was addicted to roulette and he was just like desperate desperately in debt and in need of money so he took this this novel that was going to be just a Great Masterpiece and just sort of rattled it off fast to get

some fast money so that he could pay his

debts but still it managed to be um one

of his four masterpieces with maybe

Notes from Underground being sort of

another minor Masterpiece and I'm uh

looking back at my bookcase to see if I

have yeah just a

second yeah you like those asky too

don't

you

okay

so the the translation I've got here is

from Alan Meer

it's the uh Oxford University press so

that's that's the the copy of dosf is

the idiot that I have although the

translations from constant Garnett which are over a hundred years old they're still good they're still very readable she she was a good writer in addition to being a a competent translator and so that's all public domain you can just download that for free on the internet

um well getting back to the the possessed or the Devils it is kind of interesting that uh he's got socialists as as like symbolic Devils that dovi when he was a young man started off as a kind of socialist and then he uh he got red pilled big time and so in this novel he's got a socialist movement as sort of the devil incarnate and just you know

the devil is going to try and destroy

the world or you know

destroy

spirituality through socialism

essentially but yeah this is It's

possibly my favorite novel The

Idiot and it's it's the whole thing is

it's it's it's got different levels to

it and just the symbolism of it is just

it's just profound in in some respects

it's apocalyptic literature it's it's

also like this allegory for Christ and

the and the devil fighting for the or

like competing for the soul of The

Sinner and all this it's really

good even though I'm not a

Christian so uh I think I'm going to
just move on to scadden's next question
here which is you mentioned a return to
barbarism are we there yet no we're
we're not we're not the the level of
barbarism right now we're still in a
kind of a feat decadent overdeveloped
Society that's in Decline you know it's
just gotten so decadent that it's it's
just sort of like grad we're in the
decline phase we're not in the the fall
stage
yet so anyways uh he below this he's got
the bullet point commentary So Below
where he says you mentioned a return to
barbarism are there yet he then has this
little commentary that says I was

reading a short essay by

shringer and he had similar thoughts but

he wasn't saying there was going to be a

large disruption by invading vizigo

Warriors it was closer to uh Western man

is in danger of relapsing to an earlier

level of development which he has never

properly overcome crass unfettered

egoism is Raising its grinning head and

its fist drawing irresistible strength

from primitive habits is reaching for

the abandoned Helm of our ship well I

mean I when I look at the situation now

I look kind of at the way Rome was in

Decline

um also just the whole idea of like the

the globalists and the left in general
are just trying to just inundate the
West with nonwestern
migrants you know so you got you know
Haitians eating ducks at the park eating
people's pets this kind of thing and
it's when you import the third world you
become the third world so that is a
major factor in the decline of the West
I think lately relatively recently but
also it's just sort
of it's it's getting to the stage in in
American politics for example which is
similar to the late Roman
Republic where you had like the iaqi who
are these reformers they're trying to
reform they were like populists and the

Senate just has them murdered in the street one of them was just murdered in the street the other one it was like a civil war where you wound up getting murdered um you know it's like the government just starts killing off its political opponents people that aren't playing the game you know they're not just finding their Niche and taking their taking their payments and so forth that they're actually like ideal logs you know they're actually trying to make significant changes in the status quo and help the little people then they they're just you know they are Public Enemy Number One they're going to be

destroyed one way or the other and
America hasn't gotten quite that far yet
but I mean obviously Donald Trump got a
bullet through his ear just just like
little over a month ago I
think you got people I mean you don't
hear anything about it anymore it's like
the the The globalist Establishment they
just memory hold ass just like no that's
that didn't happen they you know they're
coming up with conspiracies like he had
somebody shoot at him on purpose you
know okay I'm going to from 145 yards
away I'm going to turn my head all of a
sudden you're GNA shoot me right through
the ear or just graze my ear yeah
right so let's see

here yeah I do think it's just going to

be

like softness and

weakness which is largely encouraged by

socialism because you're going to get

paid even if you don't do anything you

know you break the law in a lot of cases

you get rewarded for it you get bailed

out or you just you know they just let

you go do whatever you want so long as

it is to the advantage of whoever is in

power and uh yeah it's

just I think a little too much feminism

you know too much like compassion and I

mean compassion in and of itself is good

you know helping the poor and needy is

good but when being on welfare becomes

like a considerable career

choice and when breaking the law is not

not punished but actually rewarded like

crossing the border into America

ilegally is actually rewarded instead of

punished then I mean it's just you got

nowhere go but

down and people are just becoming

demoralized because they're realizing

more and more that the government

pretends to give a damn about them but

doesn't anyways I'm just going to move

on the next question here this is also

from

scolin so he says which Shakespeare play

closest closest resembles the current

year and then his uh little bullet point
commentary is the Great navaka vadin
Sage Auto excelsor mentioned once
concerning Shakespeare's complete works
that it's all there so I'd like to apply
this wisdom to the present after reading
Sir John glove's fate of Empires essay
I've determined that we've passed the
age of intellect the information age and
now are in the age of
decadence
so the main question which Shakespeare
play closest resembles the current year
and I have to admit I've never read all
of Shakespeare's plays um and I haven't
read any of them really

recently so this is just going to be
like off the top of my head of the ones
that I'm familiar with maybe the one
that comes closest to the current year
would be the tragedy of Julius Caesar
because that's getting into the same
late Roman Republic everything's going
to [__]
phase and and just like Machiavellian
scheming politicians who really care
more about themselves than about the
welfare of their country and so
forth and uh Trump is kind of like a a
Julius Caesar type in certain ways I
mean he's no military genius or anything
but he has a lot of the same kind of
like force of ego force of Personality

that Julius Caesar

had so yeah I'm guess in the tragedy of

Julius Caesar because I really can't

think of any

other like Shakespeare play that really

reminds me of modern times

now possibly one of the other Roman

plays that I haven't read I haven't read

cor Alanis for

example so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from Austin

and Austin says what principle or method

in Buddhism can reliably help me discern

between delusion or self-deception and

true insightful meditative

experiences that bring me closer to

reality or

Nirvana well I don't think there is a

principle or method in

Buddhism that can reliably help you to

discern between delusion or

self-deception and true insightful

meditative experiences um partly because

discernment is itself

delusional and um I I mentioned men this

maybe one or two or three q&as ago where

you can be aware of attraction or Loba

when it arises in you you can be aware

of delsa or aversion when it arises in

you but moha this the semiconscious

stupidity this delusion you cannot be

mindful of it you cannot be aware of it

when it's happening maybe in retrospect

think whoa I was really delusional then
but when it's happening to the extent
ENT that you know it's delusion it's not
delusion so I guess partly just being to
the habit of mindfulness but the main
thing like if you're meditating and
stuff is coming up the main thing to do
is just don't take it seriously just
note it Let It Go note it let it go it
just arises and passes away you just sit
there observe it arise and pass away
don't try and interpret it you hear the
Buddha talking to you it's just hearing
hearing don't take it seriously
don't consider it to be significant note
it Let It Go note it Let It Go St John

of the St John of the Cross gave the same advice to his meditators because he was a father Confessor at a contemplative Convent I'm pretty sure he was the father Confessor to some contemplative nuns so he was like their meditation instructor and it was the same thing just I mean the devil can impersonate an angel of Light so no matter what it is you see or here in your in your meditation Just Let It Go just don't take if if God really wants to get some point across to you he'll do it but don't just like latch onto that because for starters you're not going to be meditating anymore you're going to be just latched onto this this Vision or or

whatever it

is and you really cannot tell the

difference between reality or even like

beneficial some sor conventional reality

and delusional harmful saric reality so

just don't even go there just note it

and let it go note it and let it

go because as I was saying earlier any

kind of idea is inherently delusional

anyway because it's all

symbols you know first you have to

create multiplicity which already you're

you're off the tracks so to speak and

then you're like you're identifying one

thing with this symbol and the symbol

isn't it you're thinking about a tree

you've got this symbol of a tree that I
mean a real tree is just infinitely
different from your concept of a
tree so in a in a sense it's all
delusional so the best thing you can do
just note it Let It Go note it let it go
especially if you're meditating
but there really is no way to be mindful
of delusion while it's happening because
to the extent you're aware of it it's
not delusion
anymore so just I mean just being
mindful in general is is very
helpful so I'm just going to move on to
Austin's next question is the ultimate
nature of Mind created or
uncreated um the ultimate nature of

anything um you could say it's uncreated
or you could say that it's neither
created or uncreated or you can just go
with the like the four-fold logic that
what is it the tetralemma you to say
that it's created is invalid to say that
it's uncreated is invalid to say that
it's created un and uncreated is invalid
to say that it's neither created nor
uncreated is invalid any idea you've got
about it is delusional and
invalid so
you can do with that as you please I
guess but I would say the ultimate
nature of mind uh if we assume that
Nirvana or nibana is infinite

Consciousness pretty much the way
Brahman is described as infinite
Consciousness in some of the
upanishads then it wouldn't be created
it wouldn't be like the result of a
cause or the cause would just be
perceiving it as something otherwise
it's just merged into the the
absolute so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from
xenoid and xenoid says according to
Buddhism everything that happens to us
is the fruition of karma therefore there
is no luck or random chance however
everyone still encounters situations
that involve good and bad luck all the
time suppose you are walking down the

street Street and you're about to enter
a store but you see a cute dog outside
so you spend 5 minutes playing with the
dog and chatting with its owner rather
than entering the store immediately as
your conversation is coming to an end
the store explodes due to a gas leak had
you not encountered the dog and were
drawn to it you would have been killed a
non- Buddhist will most likely think
something to the effect of damn I'm
really lucky or thank you God for
protecting me but how would someone
raised in a Buddhist country react it's
seems to me that they should think damn
I'm glad I cultivated the positive Karma

to not die just now but they could just as easily feel bad for cultivating the negative Karma to put themselves into a dangerous situation to begin with I wonder how people raised in dharmic cultures rather than abrahamic materialist ones think about situations like these well one thing and this I might be answering a different question that he's going to ask next but in Burma to be lucky the word for being lucky is kond that's that's how you say I'm lucky like if if something really good happens to me I can say can but can is the Burmese Corruption of the word Kama so the burmes really don't differentiate between luck and Karma I mean the word

is the same can K or k mongu is is like

bad luck can sod you know my luck

sucks but it's

like can is it often means luck in in in

burmes parlance but really it means

comma so when I would bless somebody as

a monk sometimes I would throw in can

Kaz means may you have good can which I

mean it could be interpreted two ways

it's what like one may you have good

comma which means you know you're doing

good things and and making good comma

but also it can just mean may you be

lucky

because they're the same it's sort of

like an ancient I think it was Greece or

Rome where there was a goddess of
destiny that just became like the
goddess of luck you know they really
didn't differentiate between Destiny and
luck so it's it's like a certain amount
of confusion going on in the mind just a
certain
ambiguity with regard to certain
things but if I was walking down the
street and I was going to enter a store
and then I see a cute dog and spend 5
minutes playing with it and the store
explodes before I go
in I I wouldn't consider to be luck I
really don't believe in luck it's it
would be comma or it could be even like
tapping into a deeper level of my

subconscious mind that knows I shouldn't
go in there even though my conscious ego
doesn't know still there's this
awareness deeper down that it's not your
time yet so get distracted by something
and I mean I read a Paras ology book
about u i mean this kind of stuff
happens a lot like there was a person
he'd never been late for a plane flight
in his life he was going to get on this
plane fly somewhere but for some reason
that day he was just dragging his heels
you know he gets up late and he's like
messing around he gets distracted does
this or that he's late to the airport
the plane takes off and it

crashes and so it's not necessarily luck
on something like that happens it's like
deep down you have this sense that
something's going to happen you might it
might not rise to the conscious level
but it has enough of an influence on you
that it can you know it can influence
your
behavior
so uh exactly what the average Buddhist
even like let's say a
superficial just a nominal Buddhist in
Burma that's like a total materialist
they might adopt the Western point of
view but for the most part um I still
think that they would consider it to be
can or or

Kama because I mean commas it just

influences

everything and I don't think there's

anybody who's gonna who's going to feel

bad because they didn't blow up in a

store because they still had bad enough

comma that they almost blew up in the

store I don't think there's anybody or

very very very few people who would

adopt that

attitude and so I'm just going to move

on to uh xenoid second question which is

along the same

lines while living in Burma did you ever

see a difference in reaction between

non-spiritual inclined normies and those

who were spiritually inclined when they encountered luck-based situations like the gas leak scenario I'm imagining a burmes or Ty Normie saying damn I got lucky only for his more religious friend to say luck doesn't exist it was Karma whaka stop talking about luck you're starting to sound like a Westerner I wonder if this happens at all though because the understanding of karma whaka is so deeply ingrained into the culture and as I already said the word for luck and the word for Kama is the exact same word in Burmese and so there's just a conflation of ideas around this word so they might not like fully consciously differentiate what what they mean when

they say k

k i mean does it mean I'm lucky or does

it mean I have good comma that cause

something good to happen just

now but I do think the Burmese they're

devoutly religious Buddhist people and

so most of them probably do not believe

in like random

luck they might try to get around Karma

or something by using like fortune

tellers or or like astrologers or or or

like Wizards or

something but still the wiser person

might say you can't you can't escape

from Karma you're not gonna you're not

going to shortcircuit the system that

way I guess the biggest differentiation
between a devoutly religious Burmese
person and just a superficial
materialistic Burmese person
is The Superficial materialistic Burmese
person is more likely to get upset when
something goes wrong whereas the
devoutly Burmese Buddhist person would
just say well my comma wasn't
good so they'd be a little more
fatalistic I guess whereas the
materialists would just be more more
prone to just getting
upset so I'm just going to move on to
xeni void's third question here
certain situations can be seen as very
lucky from one point of view while being

seen as very unlucky from another for example Trump was very lucky to survive being shot and to be hit in the ear rather than the brain but was very unlucky to be shot in any capacity what kind of karma leads to the occurrence of weird scenarios like this that can be seen as lucky or unlucky depending on one's point of view I wonder what Trump thought or did in the past that led him to let him very specifically being shot in the ear rather than the brain all while on live television well this reminds me of a story I've come across more than once I think I first encountered it in a ROM do

book there's a story of the Chinese Farmer and the Chinese farmer had a horse the other farmers in in the area didn't have a horse so this Chinese farmer was considered to be fortunate or lucky because he could plow more Fields with his horse than the other Farmers could without his horse then one day the horse runs away so now this farmer is considered to be unlucky or unfortunate because his source of wealth and prosperity has disappeared then about a week or two later the horse comes back and it brings with it a wild horse so now he's considered to be lucky because now he's got two horses that are going that can

be the the source of his prosperity and
and well-being and so forth so he sends
his son to tame the Wild Horse and the
Wild Horse bucks him off and he breaks
his arm so now the neighbors say well
he's unlucky because his main helper on
the farm has a broken arm and can't help
as much then the Army came through and
and recruited or drafted you know what's
the what's the word impressed All the
able-bodied Young young men to go fight
in a war and they didn't take the
farmer's son because he had a broken arm
so now everybody thinks the farmer is
lucky because his son because he had a
broken arm didn't have to go fight in

the

war so I mean the moral of the story is

I mean you can't really tell whether a

person is lucky or not because you don't

know what's going to happen

next so I mean when something like that

does happen let's just assume let's just

go with the Chinese farmer that

I mean it's a combination of Good Karma

and Bad Karma and I mean anything that

we do is bound to be a a combination of

wholesome and UNH wholesome I mean it's

extremely rare if not impossible to just

have pure good in an action or pure bad

in an action that there's always going

to be a mixture and when events like

this are happening when something bad

causes something good which then causes
something bad which then causes
something good where there's all these
these various factors involved you know
it's like different kinds of karma all
sort of merging into this one mass of
karma
so you know it's just a combination of
different kinds of karma it's it's not
all bad or good it's just this mixture
it's this salad of Karma and when it
arises you know it's not going to be
pure good or pure bad there's always
going to be this this mixture this this
shade of
gray or sort of lumpy splotchy colors

all through it or

something so I suppose I should just

move on to the next question which is

from Joe do and Joe do says what is the

story behind those Vietnamese monks

burning themselves in the 60s I read the

Wikipedia article but thought you might

know more in

depth um somebody answered his comment

with a sub comment below his comment

saying that they were prot tting against

the war but that was not my

understanding the the the famous One the

famous monk who I mean the the the

photographer who took the picture got

like the pets are prize for it or

something it was just this iconic

picture of the monk U burning himself to
death I think he wound up in uh in an
ingar Bergman movie too Persona I think
it
was about this woman who just goes mute
after seeing this Monk on the news
burning himself to death
that it's my understanding that that
monk had made a PCT with a friend monk
of his that was living in what is
now well Northern
Vietnam and that they were gon to they
were going to do this and it's my
understanding they weren't protesting
the war they were protesting the fact
that Vietnam was ruled by Catholics that

the like this ruling family in Vietnam
were Roman
Catholics and they were
like they didn't give a [__] about
Buddhism you know they considered
Buddhism just be like this you know
ignorant hick religion or something and
um you know they were their elitists who
were kind of sucking up to the west by
being Christians or or for whatever
reason that they became Catholics and so
a lot of the people in Vietnam just
really resented the fact that they're a
Buddhist country most of the people are
Buddhist but the rulers of their country
not only were not Buddhists but just
kind of despised Buddhism apparently at

least in the opinion of these people and I think the uh the wife of the president or dictator or whoever was in charge of running Vietnam or Vietnam or South Vietnam at the time I guess it be South Vietnam that uh she called it like the the Buddhist barbecue or something I mean she just just made a joke of it she didn't

care but I mean it's different monks set themselves on fire for different reasons a few years ago I read that in Tibetan Buddhism that there had been this this epidemic of monks lighting themselves on fire I think it was something like a hundred monks in one year lit themselves

on fire and in their case I would assume
that they were mainly protesting against
China you know colonizing
Tibet so different monks will have
different reasons um but I think the
Vietnamese monks it was sort of
political and sort of religious because
I think they were protesting
against you know the their government
the government of a Buddhist country
being essentially anti- Buddhist anti-
Buddhist Christians or some such but I'm
no expert on on the subject
so I'm going to move on to joo's next
question which is what are the main
differences between terraa and Mahayana
and why did you choose terraa Buddhism

well how long do we have here golly the
main differences between terava and
Mahayana well I mean one of the most
obvious differences is the whole buddhis
SAA concept that it goes the bodhisatwa
concept has its roots in Prem Mahayana
Buddhism like in Terra they've got the
bhis SAT but the bodhisatta was just
someone who is destined to become a
fully enlightened Buddha and generally
it's referring to Goda himself before
his Enlightenment before his
Enlightenment he was the
bodh the one who is destined for
enlightenment or Bound for
enlightenment and then in Mahayana

Buddhism not only did they probably
mistranslate the term buddhis satva or
buddhis into buddhis satva but but they
kind of negated a one of the main points
of Buddhism which is you should become
enlightened as soon as you
can you know it's like in this very life
of it all possible and they're saying no
just put it off indefinitely for the for
the sake of all beings you know out of
compassion for all beings you're going
to save all beings but these all beings
even according to Mahayana don't really
exist so it's like you're postponing
definitely Enlightenment for the sake of
virtual
reality which is not a very good good

reason and also it's just bad math or
bad logic because samsara has already
been here for an infinitely long length
of time so an infinitely long length of
time has already elapsed and we still
have an infinite number of suffering
beings which is a pretty good indication
that there's always going to be an
infinite number of suffering beings in s
s so you're better off
just transcending s
Sor best way to save all the beings in a
bad dream is just wake up from the
dream so that's one of the main reasons
I mean the the terad interpretation of
no self differs from the Mahayana

interpretation of no self and I think
the Mahayana interpretation is probably
a better interpretation may come closer
to what the Buddha originally taught and
that
the terod they believe in no subjective
self you know there is no person there
is no unified me that has an intrinsic
self-existence whereas in Mahayana it's
not only subjective it's objective I
mean there is no entity at all there is
no self-existence of anything not just a
person or a being I mean even a I mean
an atom a molecule anything like that
even that doesn't have an intrinsic
self-existence so like in Abid dama they
interpreted no self to mean anything

that can be divided down into smaller

parts cannot be a self and so some of

the Mahayana philosophers took that and

said well even if you get it down to

this Rupa kalapa or this

Elemental this this element which is

what Abid dama insists upon that you

know everything can be divided down into

these elements that are indivisible the

Mahayana say well I mean that little

particle that is indivisible still has

like a top half and the bottom half and

you can at least divide those up you

know

mentally

so then the no self the no self

interpretation differs in fact some
Mahayana Buddhists just insist that
there is a self some Terra Buddhists in
the west insist that there is a self but
they're just essentially Heretics
but in Mahayana I mean there there
apparently are some sutas or sutras or
some schools of Mahayana Buddhism that
have gone to the point of saying yes
there is a self but it's sort of like in
the upanishads you know it's sort of
like the the underlying dharmakaya you
know the some kind of Buddha nature that
that pervades the universe is the self
of all beings that kind of thing um
Mahayana Buddhism has a more
sophisticated understanding or

interpretation of voidness or emptiness like nagar says that dependent Co Rising but Samu is the same as emptiness so emptiness doesn't just mean blank voidness it means emptiness or or that nothing really has an inherent self-existence that it's all just conditional and uh I think most or the two main philosophical schools of Mahayana Buddhism historically the two main ancient schools of Mahayana Buddhist philosophy would be maaka and yogachara and neither one of them accepts the existence of physical matter so the earlier schools accepted the existence of mind and matter yogachara

accepts mind but does not accept matter

and maama

just considers all of it to be

essentially just conditional or virtual

at best I did read a a philosophy book A

book on Indian philosophy written by

Indian professors for Indian

universities and they based their book

on um ancient or early medieval

philosophy texts that were like a survey

of all the the philosophical schools all

the main ones anyway of of India at

least Northern

India and they divided Buddhism into

four categories there

was

um mind and matter both exist and you

can experience both of them directly and
that was sasada Buddhism Terra isn't
even in the the scheme of things because
it it ceased to being a significant
player in Indian Norther Indian
Philosophy by by Medieval Times
apparently so one school Buddhism
considers mind and matter to be
ultimately real and you can know both of
them directly and that would probably be
um I mean Terra would fit in with that
it's closely related to sasti V just
with regard to its its
Evolution second you've got mind and
matter both ultimately
exist and mind you can know directly but

matter you can infer with certainty and that was the the um was it cultrona school which is now extinct I'm pretty sure so those were both hinana or Shak Kayana those were both Prem Mahayana schools both of them believed in the Ultimate Reality of mind and matter then the next would be yogachara which says mind exists and can be known directly matter doesn't even exist it's all this idealist philosophy only mind exist so yoga is also called The Mind only school then fourth the most radical is maaka which says neither mind nor matter can be known with

certainty that that ultimately it's it's empty but it's not this blankness it's

this emptiness in that there is no
inherent self-existence to
anything so overall Mahayana Buddhism
tends more towards philosophical
idealism and the rejection the existence
of physical matter whereas the older
schools including Terra accepted the
existence of physical
matter but I'm not so sure the Buddha
himself would accept the existence
physical matter if you go with the AA
waga he says don't believe anything
don't believe that there is physical
matter don't believe that there isn't
physical
matter

so um I do think that uh in certain respects that Mahayana is is more sophisticated philosophically although in certain respects they have just deviated radically from the early teachings so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from Romeo and Romeo says in a previous Q&A you said that in Buddhism being unhappy is immoral and a choice based on desire this makes total sense to me for the average Normie who is down in the dumps because he can't afford the new car he wants wishes for a better job a more exciting romantic life Etc however I am confused as to how this holds true in the case of severe clinical depression

when the person can hardly muster the desire to do basic things like get out of bed or take a shower much less cling to a desire for worldly pleasures I'm referring to a darker more inward chronic Melancholy where the person has little or no desire for pleasure and which persists regardless of external situations a mild form of it is sometimes called an honia but I think I mean something stronger than that so his first question here is I am far from being a leftist but at the risk of sounding like one by pulling out the don't blame the victim card here is my first question how can a chronically

severely depressed person be held
responsible for actively choosing their
low dark moods and lack of
Joy okay well I do have some experience
with depression I've never been like so
totally depressed that I was like should
be committed to an institution or
something but I have gone through phases
of relatively severe depression in my
life um none
recently but uh I think the last time I
really went into a serious Depression
was after I've been a monk for about 10
years and I've I've told the story
before just look at the previous 109
q&as you should find it in there
somewhere um but I do think that there's

there's two factors to this depression

first of

I've noticed in myself that my mind like

my Consciousness expands and contracts

like the Buddhist Cosmos except at a

much faster rate and probably not quite

so regular so it's like when I'm in a

state of depression it's like my mind is

sort of

contracted and you know music doesn't

sound as good I'm not interested in

things like trying to meditate when I

was depressed as a monk U it's like

trying to balance a a marble on the tip

of a sharpened pencil I mean it's just

almost impossible to get it going for

more than just a

second and so I do think that this

contraction of of Mind however however

it's going to be explained you know just

low energy or something that that isn't

the same as being unhappy but it is

conducive to being

unhappy

so um see how can a chronically severely

depressed person be held responsible for

actively choosing their low dark moods

and lack of Joy well it's not at the The

Superficial conscious level they're not

choosing to be depressed I mean going

with like materialism it can be just

sort of a uh like inherited like both of

my parents they they they could get

depressed sometimes so I I've got it on
both sides of my family to some degree
you can say it's
genetic but again this like compressed
or contracted mind this depression is
not the same as the unhappiness the
unhappiness in my opinion maybe some
trained professional knows better than
me on this this just based on my own
sort of
self-observation that the the suffering
comes is a result of the contracted
Consciousness that joyfulness is more
expansive and contracted is is more more
sort of shut down and and not joyful so
to speak but getting back to this

question here is like a person who is
depressed they're unhappy and and before
before I go any further with this just
just to confuse everybody more I mean it
all boils down to the second Noble Truth
you know got the four noble truths
second Noble Truth second Noble Truth is
all suffering is caused by
desire so like physical pain is not
suffering the the suffering comes from
the desire for the physical pain to
stop so the physical pain you hurt
yourself that's not the same as
suffering that's just pain but then you
suffer because you want that pain to
stop and so I do think something similar
may happen with a depressed person that

the contraction of their mind isn't the
same as the suffering it's just that
they want something different that they
don't want to be this way they they
don't want just low energy their mind
contracted inability to really
enjoy you know
sensuality music or whatever it is food
anything you know closeness with another
person you know it's just just they
become more neutral in a way but then
their mind just wants that to
stop and they might not have much
control over that I mean you don't
really have control over whether you're
depressed or not I mean there's things

you can

do but still I mean you don't you can't

just say you know let me be not

depressed and just have it happen so I

do think that the suffering from being

depressed is just a just this vague deep

desire just for this not to be like this

to be different to be better somehow

however it's going to be better that's

that's that's what they

want so I hope I answered that question

kind of cuz I'm moving on to the next

one here also from

Romeo what exact desire is the severely

depressed person clinging to a desire to

be miserable well I guess I just

answered that one it's just a desire for

anything but this or a desire to just be

less contracted and more more open to to

Joy so it's just a desire for to just be

just anything besides this you know I

don't like the way I am right

now but I mean it's it's something

really vague because there have been

times when I've been depressed and I'm

I'm thinking of the second Noble Truth

it's like I must be Desiring something

if I am unhappy so what is it that I

desire and it's not obvious other than

just

different from this better than

this

so um number three any tips on how

mindfulness can help someone who is
severely depressed well that's part of
the problem like I just mentioned a few
minutes ago like when you are depressed
meditation can become virtually
impossible so the trick is to be mindful
before the depression kicks in and it's
like I have way more resistance to
depression now because I can sense like
the early onset of it and then you can
start doing something before it really
gets into the
pits so just I mean for me sleeping a
little
extra and also just accomplish something
every day you know don't don't let
yourself feel like a day just got wasted

just accom it might just be like

cleaning your room cleaning your cave

just do something

something positive every day just so

that the day wasn't a complete waste

which will then help you to slide deeper

and deeper into this

funk Funk not in a good

sense so but but I mean once it hits I

mean once you're really depressed then

mindfulness is way more difficult

meditation is way more difficult just

taking an interest in dhama is way more

difficult um

so yeah I mean the mindfulness should be

practiced before the depression occurs

and then you can get sort of the early warning signs you're more sensitive to changes in the system in physical or or psychological and then you can in a sense be sort of on your guard and you know in a way sometimes you can fend it off so I hope that was of some help because I'm moving on to the next question this is from cify cify says could you say a few words about taking refuge in Buddhist teachings and SAA okay taking refuge in dhama and sa so not taking refuge in Buddha which is the toughest one for me and and it took me a long time before I really understood the significance of taking refuge in the Buddha

because I mean the Buddha is not here
anymore how do you take refuge ref in
someone who literally is non-existent
other than just his teachings but that's
dhama that's the second
Refuge so I mean finally I came to the
conclusion that you can at least in my
case I could validly take refuge in the
Buddha and just taking refuge in the
whole possibility of a Buddha in in like
Buddha hood and it's its possibility in
this
world but with regards to the Buddhist
teachings how do you take refuge in it
the best way to take refuge in the
Buddhist teachings is to practice them

to study them to understand them and to put them into practice that would be the best way of taking refuge in the Buddhist teachings taking refuge in the S um I have been told it's it's considered to be common knowledge in Burma that when a monk takes refuge in the S he's taking refuge in a different s than a lay person taking refuge in the sa and that's just totally setting aside the like the the leftist or whatever Buddhists in the west who when they take refuge in the songa they're just taking refuge in themselves in their meditation group CU that was weird I was I was confused at first when I started encountering lay people referring to

themselves as sa it's like wait you guys
aren't s s is monks and nuns but the
West in their arrogance have just
adopted the term sa for themselves just
even though they might not keep precepts
or take refuges or meditate more than
you know twice a week or something still
their
songa so now you go to an airport in
Burma or something you see a a sign sing
song Only Just because you meditate
sometimes you don't get to go in there
that's for
monks so anyways let's see here taking
refuge in the Buddhist teachings and the
S oh oh yeah I was I was talking about

the two different kinds of Refuge so a
lay person when he takes refuge in the
song at least an orthodox like a a
Burmese Buddhist when a Burmese Buddhist
takes refuge in the sa he's taking
refuge in the S of monks that the monks
are the teachers they're The Heavy
Hitters they're the professional players
you know the lay people are like sand
lot ball whereas the the monks they're
the they're the pros you know they're
it's it's like a spectator sport now you
might play a little baseball or football
or something but the ones that are on TV
you know they're the ones that they're
making the money they're the really good
one the good players you know they're

the serious ones and it's it's kind of a similar attitude with with like Orthodox terraa

Buddhism so anyways lay people take refuge in the sa of monks whereas kind of ironically monks take refuge in the in the Arya sa the sa of Aras which includes lay people so when lay people at least Orthodox devout Buddhist lay people take refuge in the sa they're taking refuge in the monks whereas when a monk takes refuge in the sa he's taking refuge in Monks there some monks and also some lay

people which is kind of counterintuitive

I

guess

so

um yeah so I guess I answered that

question didn't I so I'm going to move

on next one cify says is it a common

practice to take refuge in terraa

Buddhism well it has been my

understanding again from an orthodox

point of view like a devoutly Burmese

Buddhist point of view that in order to

be a Buddhist you have to be someone who

takes three refuges and at least five

precepts that I mean that's like the

bare minimum of being a terot of

Buddhist is three refuges five

precepts of course in the west or you

know elsewhere just if you consider

yourself a Buddhist then you're a Buddhist but I mean you really want to get down to the the nitty-gritty you know just you want to be a hard-nose about it then that would be like Rock Bottom the bare minimum requirement for being a Buddhist a serious Buddhist in an orthodox sense would be someone who takes three refuges and five precepts so is it a common practice to take the refugees in terv bu yeah definitely it is like in in Burma like devout Buddhist every upos day sometimes more often than that but every upos day they'll go to a monk go to the monastery go to a monk and ask for the three

refuges and usually on upos day which is
the full moon day the half moon days and
the new moon day full moon New Moon Half
Moon days that they'll take eight
precepts
so it is a common practice to take
refuge in terab Buddhism you
know in
inah P so T is the three refuges and sah
with pchas Cam five precepts that's is
when you take the five precepts or the
eight precepts first you take the three
refugees so cif's third question is
should I take refuge daily um it's not
necessarily I mean it's not necessary to
take take the ref the three refuges
every

day but like whenever you take the

precepts they start with you start with

taking the the three

refuges so if you want to do take the

the five precepts you know the three

precept the three refugees and the five

precepts and then I mean you get the the

three refuges as an extra added bonus to

the five

precepts so it's not necessary to take

it daily except for maybe in your heart

you know if if you're a devout Buddhist

I mean it's like you're taking Refuge

through your respect and veneration and

gratitude on a daily basis you don't

have to do the ceremony I mean the

ceremony is just an outward ritual I
mean outward rituals really are not
nearly as important as just having you
know
veneration respect gratitude in your
heart for the three Treasures Buddha
dharm and
S so I'm going to move on to the next
question which is from Don Fades I think
that's how to pronounce his name Don
Fades and Don Fades is responding to my
answer to the first question in the
previous Q&A what about depriving the
hungry snake of his dinner is that not
Bad Karma because I was talking about
how two different people save a frog
from a snake one of them I mean it's the

exact same action they just chased the
snake away from the Frog when the Frog
was going to eat the snake or the snake
was going to eat the Frog they they
scare the the snake away so it lets go
of the frog the frog is saved and so two
people can do this exact same action of
chasing that snake away from the frog
one of them does it out of compassion
for the Frog he doing a meritorious deed
another person does it out of hatred for
the snake he's doing a demeritorious
deed
because karma is volition karma is
Will so don Fades adopts the Western
utilitarian point of view or the idea

that karma is just a matter of outward physical actions that karma really is not a function of the result of the actions you can do something with the best intentions you can make good karma and still you could cause a lot of suffering I was thinking just today like somebody's they're in a car full of people right they're driving the car there's other people in the car driving down the highway they see a squirrel in the middle of the road they just just instinctively they don't want to squish the squirrel so they just swerve off the road they crash the car people in the car get hurt maybe the car bursts into

flames but that action of trying to save
that squirrel out of just compassion I
mean that was a meritorious deed even
though the result was a car wreck and
and injured
people so depriving the hungry snake of
his dinner I mean if it's not a
consideration then I mean it's if that
is not your intention your intention is
just you feel sorry for the Frog and
want to save its life then you've done
something good that is it's entirely a
matter of your mental States it's
entirely a matter of your will your
intention your
volition and whether a snake goes hungry

or not is

irrelevant so I I was thinking I was

going to give another example along

these same lines now I forgot

it yeah damn it was a good example too

just take my word for it there's there's

this other good example I I could give

depriving a hungry snake of his dinner

man it's like one of those things where

it's kind of in the back of your mind

it's like after I finish this sentence

then I'll talk about that and then I get

to the end of the sentence and it's

gone

so depriving the hungry snake of his

dinner yeah oh well we'll just have to

move on to the next one but really

utilitarian ethics like Jeremy Bentham

that that I mean it's just a adopted as

just standard ethics in the west now I

mean it wasn't standard in the west you

know 700 years ago 700 years ago it's

like you you should kill the snake

because snakes are

bad you know it's like God says in in

the Bible you know snakes are not good

you know they they caused us to Fall

From

Grace so might as well just kill it but

now it's it's like You' got these modern

ideas that you know it's like it's

essentially utilitarianism it's like if

you cause suffering to somebody else

that's bad and then you you add Karma to
that it's bad karma but that's not
necessarily the
case so I still haven't thought of the
other example so I'm just move on to the
next question this is from
philes and files says have you read
nich's genealogy of morals what do you
think of his critique of asceticism and
what do you think of his critique of
human belief in or yearning for an
alternate hint wel of sensation of
sensation I mean I don't know if nibana
counts as this but K ding an sit Plato's
forms and the Christian Heaven certainly
do as a form of decadence prevalent in
cultures and religions well the easy

answer to all this is no I have not read
n's genealogy of morals in in fact I
just don't like nche very much I just
his style is just too like surreal just
too emotional and surreal and like
artistic instead of
philosophical so that the only complete
book by n I've ever read is is
Antichrist and I have to admit that the
introduction by manin what HW m is that
is that I don't remember his initials
Menin his his introduction was way more
interesting to me than n in in the the
main text of the little book The
Antichrist I tried to Wade through thus
fake zarathustra and I got as far as the

tight RPP Walker Who falls off the tight RPP and breaks his leg or something and I just what I know about n I've read about n in like um books on Western philosophy and so forth and I just just I've never really been attracted to N I just do not like n all that much I much prefer

schopenhauer so what do I think about his critique of aestheticism I don't know what his critique of aestheticism is what do I think of his critique of human belief in or yearning for an alternate hwealth of cessation as a form of decadence prevalent in cultures and religions from certain ways of looking at it I suppose especially if um people

are like

living you know like a demoralized state

and so they're like hoping for a better

world afterwards then yeah I mean that

it can be a sign of um a kind of

religious decadence or something but I

mean it can also just be common sense

that if there is a better State than

this one perhaps we should be trying for

that better

state so yeah n just i' I've never been

really into

Nicha and so I'm going to move on to

Phil's next question if Enlightenment is

uncaused then doesn't that mean either

we are already enlightened from the

moment of our Inception or we never will
be well we are unenlightenment
itself I mean nibana has no beginning
and no end and it pervades the entire
Cosmos pervades all possible cosmoses
it's just that we are a kind of delusion
so we aren't enlightened in fact we are
the really the only thing that isn't
enlightened that this um as it says in
the ATA waga the root of all delusion is
the conceit I
am that that when you create a me or an
i or a we then you are you've gone
delusional so
in a sense we kind of already are
enlightened because we're pervaded by
the absolute and it reminds me of the

beginning of eart toa's first favorite
first famous book uh The Power of Now
where he he's like there's a guy sitting
on a box begging for money and somebody
comes up to him and says well why don't
you look inside the box and he says I
don't know so just look inside the box
and he he open gets up and he picks up
the box and the box is full of money and
he's just been sitting on this box of
money begging for handouts the whole
time and that eart TOA compares the
average person to this guy who is
sitting on a box of money and begging
for handouts because he doesn't realize
that he's already got it that we already

have it and that's more of a Mahayana concept than a Terra one but still it's one that I can appreciate I think that Mahayana may be a bit more fisticated in its philosophy uh with regard to this aspect of of Buddhist philosophy also that in a sense I mean we are pervaded by Ultimate Reality and the only thing that's keeping us from being enlightened is these mental states that we keep generating that keep us unenlightened this idea that we exist and this this world is ultimately real and we take it all seriously and everything and um but really you get rid of the the conceit I am boom Enlightenment and it doesn't have a beginning it doesn't have an

end that's it's like Mahayana Buddhism

they've turned it into the whole thing

into a kind of [__] it's like a paradox

you know there is Enlightenment but

there's nobody who gets enlightened

there's no moment of

Enlightenment you know there's no

beginning to it there's no end to it you

know there's no cause for

it so

yeah in a in a sense I think it's more

true than untrue to say that if

Enlightenment is uncaused then doesn't

that mean either that we are already

enlightened from the moment of our

Inception it's just that like ca says

again you've already got it it's just

that your mind is making so much noise

that you don't notice

it and it's just the ego is

unenlightenment

itself so underneath your

ego there is

Enlightenment so I'm just going to move

on to the next question this is from

Elijah and Elijah starts with a preamble

which is I have a strong calling towards

practicing the dhamma but I have

struggled with substance abuse and

mental health issues all my life as well

I am clean and sober now and still have

a very strong calling towards practicing

the dhamma and meditation and to the

point of wanting to become a terod

monastic

so question one for someone like myself

and with your own prior experience would

you recommend I go for it and eventually

take up ordination well I don't know you

well enough to know exactly uh what you

should do because all I know about you

is is essentially what you've just

said um but I mean there's nothing wrong

with going to a monastery and maybe

volunteering to be like a monastery

attendant just for room and board you

know you're going to cook for the monks

and help clean the monastery and maybe

drive them where they need to go that

kind of thing and then if the

abbit sees that you have potential to be

a good monk thinks that you can make it

as a monk then that's fine but of course

um it's up to the Abbot or whoever this

the Monk Is who would ordain you that

really he is one to decide that whether

you know you will have um you've got

what it takes so to

speak so I mean if you really want to

test the waters you want to try it out

that would be a good idea for starters

is volunteer to be a monastery attendant

at at a relatively strict Monastery

where you have respect for the senior

monk you think that he is wiser than you

are doesn't necessarily have to be

enlightened if you can find an

enlightened one so much the better but

at the very least you know you've got to

consider him to be a wise role model

someone that you would like to emulate

to some degree

and I mean you stay there he observes

you he gets to know you you you can ask

him questions and

then um he'll make the decision I both

of you will make the decision whether

you should become a monk there or not so

that would be a good idea I guess it

probably work better in the west than

trying to become a monastery attendant

like in Burma or Thailand or or Sri

Lanka probably it would work that sort
of thing would work best in a in a
western country
um but good luck to you or good can to
you um I'm just going to move on to his
second question here are there any
particular meditation practices or
dhamma teachings in general you would
recommend for someone trying to stay
clean and sober and maintain mental and
emotional
stability um
gosh the general mindfulness is is
probably um the most important thing
just just try to maintain as high a
level of mindfulness as you can manage
throughout the day even when you're not

sitting cross-legged

and uh

see meditation practices dama teachings

in general you would recommend for

someone trying to stay clean and sober

read sutas I mean some of like some of

the the verses of the terata are very

inspiring um just read texts talking

about what it's like to be a monk what

monks are supposed to do you know the

the philosophy the ideals and all that

and if it really resonates with you it

helps to uplift you it's going to help

you to stay clean and sober and maintain

mental and emotional stability that plus

mindfulness it's it's hard for me to

give you specific advice because really
um I don't know you very well at all so
it's it's hard to say for sure I mean
I'd have to get to know you and then
like P analyze you a little bit and see
what your your strong points and weak
points are and so forth before I could
really give you some like clear-cut
informed
advice anyway question three he says
lastly out of Burma Thailand and Sri
Lanka which Buddhist country would you
recommend I visit and study or practice
the dhamma in note I have a strong drive
towards aestheticism and would love to
experience what living in a cave is like
someday if that helps your answer at all

well like I mentioned earlier on in this Q&A Burma is is a gamble because military dictatorship sometimes it's shut down nobody can come in it's hard to get visas um sometimes there have been at least once where the the Burmese government just kicked all foreigners out of the country the monks Western monks there just mostly just moved to Thailand and and live there for a while um but it depends on what your karma confronts you with I mean what you find like Burma Thailand and Sri Lanka all have wise teachers they've all got serious monks um in Sri Lanka there might be fewer of them but they're

they're in the forest if you can find
like a uh a Sri Lankan Forest tradition
or Thai Forest tradition or I mean
burmes Burma really doesn't have much of
a forest tradition the tong Pulu
tradition was one of the few really
significant Forest traditions in Burma
but it's the Tulu tradition is now in
Decline the I mean tomu seato has long
since passed away his successor pooku
seato has also passed away and so the
the third generation of teachers really
is not anywhere near the caliber of the
first two
generations um but I mean you should ask
around look around do some research and
find a teacher that you think would be a

good teacher for you and everything else
will take care of itself that in
Thailand I mean there's not as much
Forest as in Burma in Sri Lanka there's
not as much Forest but still there are
Forest forests there and like Forest
monks who are very serious I mean for as
a general rule You' probably stay away
from the monasteries in town unless your
teacher puts you in a moneran town for
some good reason
so yeah I I can't really say for sure
which country would be more appropriate
for you Burma I like Burma as a Buddhist
country with a I mean it's it's good to
be a monk in Burma if the the military

government isn't like shooting people in the
streets Thailand I think that's where
most uh Western Terra Western Terra
monks I mean that's that's where they go
to become monks if they they leave the
West they go to to Asia Thailand seems
to have more Western monks than um all
the other countries combined all the
other terraa Buddhist countries combined
and Sri Lanka for the most part Buddhism
is very decadent in Sri Lanka the monks
are very LAX and sloppy in Sri Lanka as
a general rule you can see monks with
jobs with briefcases walking down city
streets going to work or whatever that's
something you wouldn't see in Thailand

and probably wouldn't see in Burma
either even in Mandalay where the monks
are the
worst but there are good teachers and
serious monks in all three of those
countries and it's whatever your karma
allows you to
find and if it resonates with you I
would I would try that one because you
really so long as you find a good
teacher and a good tradition with
serious monks in any of those countries
that it's all
good and Sri Lanka does have like a
reform Forest Tradition now that I've
been told is is very serious very very

devout you know very conscientious in

their practice and uh Thailand I mean

with regard to

aestheticism Thailand would probably be

better than Burma unless you're just

going to do the aestheticism entirely on

your own volition like I did because the

like Burmese Terra and TI Terra are not

entirely the same I mean the texts are

pretty much the same but in Burma

there's more meditation and scholarship

and in Thailand there's more monastic

discipline and Danga and Danga is is

atic ISM

essentially

so that that maybe should be a

consideration

also so

uh I hope I was of some help to you

because I'm going to move on to the next

question which is the very last question

I'm always caught by surprise by this

and this question is from White Ash

Piper who asked this question just

shortly before I started

recording try to do it in chronological

order and he asked this just less than

an hour before I started recording so

white ash Piper says of all the

near-death experience accounts I've

heard regarding reincarnation and Tom

Campbell virtual reality Theory where

we've had many lifetimes I've never

heard any of them saying their real name actors have real names why don't these folks and I'm not entirely sure what white ash Piper is referring to here that essentially he seems to be saying that people who have had near-death experiences somehow regarding reincarnation or virtual reality are always Anonymous they never give their name and I've never really come across this I mean near-death experience accounts I've read about many of them and usually there's not much mention of reincarnation and the whole Tom Campbell VR Theory I assume that means virtual reality um I've never I never come across that at all so I really don't

have any firsthand experience of anonymous nde accounts with regard to these things um maybe with regard to reincarnation there might have been some mentions of it but as a general rule the near that experience accounts um you know it's it's the same general account where you know someone is clinically dead you know they're drowning they've been in a motorcycle accident they're on a an operation table operating table in a in a hospital whatever and then next thing they know they're awake and they're kind of drifting up towards the ceiling and they can look down and see their body down there maybe with like

paramedics trying to revive them or whatever and then they they get higher into the sky and they see the the bright light and they go into the light and they come out the other the other side you know like the heronimus Bosch painting you know the the emperion I can't remember what it's called that imperion is in the title of this famous herous Bosch painting where you know you go up and through this tunnel of light and you come out into this Heaven realm and then there's going to be some sort of spirit guide at least one takes you aside they're they're going to be like a religious figure or maybe a deceased family member or something and then

you're going to like review your life
and you know they might give you some
kind of teachings about things that
you've been doing right or wrong and
then they might give you a choice
whether you want to stay there or go
back down into your body or they might
just say it's not your time to go yet
you're going to have to go back down and
then they wind up back down and
sometimes it's like an enlightening
experience where they just don't fear
death anymore or
um I mean some people apparently have
had like an ecart TOA type Awakening
from near-death experiences like uh John

Ren Lewis I've talked about him
before um but I don't recall him talking
about reincarnation and I don't think he
talked about Tom Campbell virtual
reality Theory so I really don't recall
any virtual reality Theory near-death
experience accounts and I can't even
think offhand of one that particularly
mentions reincarnation or
rebirth so why people wouldn't mention
their real name I don't know if you look
for people mentioning their real name I
assume you can find
it um it may be that you
just uh you know encountered casual
mentions or maybe some kind of YouTube
video or book that really doesn't get

very deep it's not trying to

um document anything you know it's just

giving

anecdotal like statements that really

they don't see any point in saying

exactly who it was that said this

so yeah but the Tom Campbell I didn't

even know who Tom Campbell is I assume

he's he's not the guy that makes the

soup so yeah virtual reality Theory yeah

I can't really help you very much on

this because I really don't have much

exposure I mean I've I've had

considerable exposure to near-death

experience accounts in general but

specifically with regard to rebirth or

virtual reality Theory um I can't think
of any so I assume if you keep looking
for names you're going to find them just
try and find a more serious account that
has like footnotes and documentation and
so forth and I I assume they're out
there that uh that you'll find
somebody's actual name I don't know why
you want to know their name unless
you're going to try and look them up and
and ask them questions or something but
that's it that's the last question
that's my last answer for the day I'm
not going to answer any more questions
at all
today so that's it and if you made it
this far you've probably made it this

far before so you know if you want to
ask questions you can just include your
questions in the comments below these
videos if you have access to subscribe
star you can ask me there although
that's not the best place to ask cuz
sometimes I won't notice because the the
messaging function on subscribe star is
really I mean it's almost
invisible or if you're on the Discord
server you can ask me questions there
there's a special room just for asking
questions so um just if you got a
question about something you think I can
answer then go for it and chances are I
will at least attempt to answer your

questions and like like And subscribe if

you haven't done so already and be happy

okay we are recording I checked within
the first hour and we are in fact
recording so hello and welcome to
episode
111 of question and answer I am your
host P basa and I'm having a bad hair
day but it's it's not quite bad enough
that I'm just not doing the video today
so here I am here is the beverage with
the little paper for umbrella which
I hereby remove emergency backup
beverage and I suppose we should
commence to answering questions and I
didn't count how many questions there
are this time so I'm not exactly sure
whether this going to be two hours or

three

hours but we're just going to do what we

do here and uh let's just commence to

answering questions I suppose I should

have turned the camera a little more so

you can admire with awe and wonder my

aquarium let let's do that a little bit

okay so first question is from Quick

quiz and quick quiz says what if beu

pets his puppy once a month and never

tells confess to other monks since it's

not paraja technically he's still is

biku

right um yeah I assume when he refers to

petting his puppy he's he's referring to

full out spanking his

puppy so yeah I mean if this is with

regard to

autoeroticism so to speak and so if a

monk deliberately causes himself to have

a sexual

climax then that is sesa which is the

second most serious level of monastic

offense it's the worst you can do

without getting

excommunicated so I mean petting the

puppy I mean so long as you're not

trying to have an orgasm that's not even

against the rules so long as you're not

trying to have an orgasm even if it

accidentally goes off so long as you're

like not doing anything to help it along

anything like that on purpose then you

haven't broken a rule but if you do it

on purpose then

yeah you are you are culpable as they

say in uh well courtrooms or

something so if a beu masturbates might

as well just say it and fully to orgasm

because it's the orgasm that's

technically against the rules if a monk

like he he's petting the puppy and with

the intention of having an orgasm and

then just for whatever reason doesn't

have one that's still against the rules

it's it's a lesser rule but the

intention to have an orgasm has to be

there in order to commit a serious

offense so let's say we got a monk who

is spanking that puppy on a regular

basis and never confesses so what
happens is he's still a monk because he
hasn't done anything to excommunicate
himself if he actually had sex with
another being you know not even
necessarily a woman could be a man it
could be an animal if he has sexual
intercourse then yeah he's out too even
if he doesn't have an
orgasm but uh let's see here so he's
still a monk he's not excommunicated he
is technically a Shameless Monk and he's
going to be digging himself deeper and
deeper into a hole because to confess
this kind of offense a s say to offense
you have to do Penance for six days and

six nights plus however many days and
nights you did not confess that offense
when you had opportunities to do so so
it's like if you are concealing that
offense you've done that you're not
telling anybody even though you have
opportunities to confess to another Monk
then the Penance you do is increased by
the number of days that you do that and
if a monk is just doing this habitually
for let's say a year or
more then even eventually if he does
have a change of heart you know he wants
to set things straight he wants to be a
monk in good standing and all that he
wants to do Penance for it which you
have to do then he's going to have to do

penants for more than a year and it's
really inconvenient not only for him but
for the other Monks at the
monastery like he's got to make
confession to them on a daily basis or I
guess if it's just for having concealed
the offense it might just be once a week
I don't remember exactly now but he's
got to keep track of all the monks
coming and going to the monastery if
there's a lot of monks coming and going
he's going to have to move to a
different Monastery to do Penance just
because you have to make confession to
every monk who comes to that Monastery
and if it's your day to make confession

and you ask where's venerable so and so
it's like oh he he took off on a trip
then that day is doesn't care count
because you didn't make confession to
him before he left it's very
inconvenience it's it's really a pain in
the neck and just especially for a
serious monk just the headache of having
to do this
Penance for at least six days and six
nights or longer if the the defense is
concealed that's one of the main
incentives not to break the rule because
it is not easy like in Burma there are
certain monasteries that are generally
remote Forest monasteries that can
specialize in Monks doing penants so

monks will go there where there's not
lots of monks coming and going there's
lot like this huge song of lots of monks
that you got to make confession to it's
easy to get them all together so you can
make confession to them that sort of
thing
so yeah I mean he's still he's still a
beu but he's not technically a very good
one and if he ever decides to become a
good one he's going to have to make conf
confession for each day or he's going to
have to make do Penance for each day
that he concealed the offense in
addition to the six days and nights for
having committed the the the offense in

the first

place so quick quiz's second

question is it as follows what if biku

lives alone in total Solitude in the

forest and no other monks around how he

can confess and purify himself self well

I lived in that kind of situation a lot

like when I was just living alone out in

a forest somewhere I could go for months

without making confession to another

Monk and especially considering that the

few monks that live did live in that

area were very sloppy monks and it's

against the rules to confess a broken

rule to a monk who has also broken that

rule and not confessed

it so yeah I mean if there's just not a

convenient opportunity

then it's not against the rules you're

not really con considered to be

concealing it and it's not like

technically against the rules to do upos

by yourself without having made

confession because there's nobody nearby

to make confession

to or there might be monks nearby to

make confession to but they're just very

LAX monks there's a very good chance

you've broken at least one of the same

rules that they break all the time so

there that is sort of a a loophole it's

it's a an allowable reason for not

making confession if you're in a remote

area there's and there's no convenient

monks nearby for you to make confession

to when I was living in

America like when I was living in

Bellingham sometimes Bellingham

Washington and I was the only monk in

town that I would make confession over

the phone although if you're living in a

remote area you know out in a forest

somewhere you're probably not going to

have cell phone reception or anything

like

that

so yeah that is that is

a like a valid excuse not to make

confession if you're living in a remote

area by yourself so I'm just going to

move on to the next question this is

from chory dick and unless chory dick

has changed his

name to chory dick from some other name

that I am familiar with this is the

first time chory dick dick has asked

questions and shory Dick says do you

still love Moby

Dick and um I've mentioned elsewhere

that Moby Dick is one of my favorite

novels it has more profundity to it than

a great many scriptures including the

Old

Testament

um when I was taking English classes in

college I had uh an instructor inform me

that Moby Dick and Huckleberry Finn are
the two greatest American novels ever
written although who knows maybe another
one has been written since then and I
don't know which one it
is so do I still love Moby Dick it's
still one of my favorite novels it is a
profound
novel so yeah I suppose I still love
Moby Dick I mean if he's just referring
to the whale and not the novel then yeah
I still have a lot of respect for Mobi
dick who um as I put forward in in an
essay long ago really does symbolically
represent the left fist of God or just
God in general that Mobi dick is a
manifestation of

God and Melville in the novel does point out that one of the first avatars of Vishnu who is considered the supreme god by Vite Hindus was a giant fish and I mean there's all these all these reasons I mean I don't know if my essay is still I think my essay still is it's on my new blog I reprinted it from my old blog onto my new blog so it is there and it's I do consider it to be one of the the best things I've written it probably being my top 10 of favorite essays that I've written that I mean it's it's got some dham in it but it's not specifically terab Buddhist but I mean it talks about how Moby Dick had a

reputation for being Immortal that he he
could had a reputation for being in
various places at the same time there's
an emphasis on he has no
face that um if you see him underwater
he has no you you can't get close enough
to see him without dying but if you pull
him out of the water you pull a whale
out of the water they lose their shape
so they're they're essentially formless
because Mobi dick was white he was
essentially colorless and also he spent
most of his time on the equator in like
the center of the Pacific Ocean which is
like the middle of everything so you
have this faceless colorless formless
Immortal omnipresent being that lives in

the center of the world the center of
all things I mean pretty obviously to me
even though a lot of people don't get it
that's God especially to like a
transcendentalist an American
transcendentalist who lived like in the
the mid to late 1800s when that was
really a big thing going
on so so yeah I still love mommy dick so
I'll just move on to chory Dick second
question which is what are your top five
desert island books no scripture suta
self-help textbooks Etc so I assume um
getting a book on how to survive on
desert islands would not be
allowed and no scripture either so this

this is kind of uh limiting isn't

it maybe maybe Moby Dick would be on my

list of five desert island books um Jean

Wolf's the book of the new Sun I mean

that's like five books all right there

um but if that counted as one book the

book of the new son I mean that's what

it's called right even though it's like

five

volumes

then um yeah I might just uh go with

jean Wolf's book of the new son as one

of them I mean seriously I might even

consider taking all five volumes and

just have that be my five books but if

who's ever like banishing me to that to

that island and is in charge of the

books and all that he's he's in a good
mood that day he's in magnanimous he
lets the book of the new Sun count as
one book so I have Moby Dick Jean Wolf's
book of the new
son
gosh um maybe a short story collection
by Brian Aldis called moment of eclipse
I think that's the one that contains the
short story called equinity which is
really an excellent short story it's
about these three cloned Brothers called
ery you know they're they're just clones
of each other identical triplets and
this is like in the far distant
future and this this breed of human is

cloned specifically for one purpose and that is missionaries so they are these three ear Lowry Brothers are sent to this Frontier planet to set up a shrine to the omniscient God which is an omniscient computer so they have to build this this Shrine and like set up the computer and turn it on and everything and then their their job is done and part of their like their philosophy is indifference I guess I guess the the name of the story is indifference and not equinity I think I might have said equinity at first but I mean it's really it's really nice story The Very ending of it is very sweet too um but getting back to Desert Island

books maybe dovi is the

idiot um the idiot or crime in

punishment I'd have to have one by

dovi um because I mean like books on how

to survive on desert islands aren't

allowed scriptures aren't

allowed so gosh I mean there could be

some way of getting around that you

could get just some kind of like

mechanical encyclopedia or something

that might let you even though

technically it's not a textbook it or

self-help it might help you to figure

out you know how to build things that

you need on desert

islands H let's

see gosh I mean another way of cheating

would be to get a novel about some

survivalist and just like you know take

down notes on on what he's doing to stay

alive so anyways let's see I had Moby

Dick book of the new son moment of

eclipse um doski is the idiot and what

would be number

five

gosh this is tough because I I really

never made up a list or anything as you

can tell I mean sometimes I might think

about how how I would answer a question

but this is not one of

them um maybe Ridley Walker by Russell

hobin it's always been one of my

favorite favorite uh

stories Ridley Walker and that's that's
Al it's like a post-apocalyptic story
about like 2,000 years in the future
when um it's also like 2,000 years after
a thermonuclear World War 3 civilization
is just building itself back up to the
level of of agricult culture from hunter
gatherer societies Ridley Walker he's a
member of one of the few remaining
hunter gatherer tribes in Southeastern
England at this point and the entire
book is written in a kind of pigeon
English that takes him getting used to
some people just can't get past the
weird spelling and grammar of Ridley
Walker like the word once is just a

numeral one with CE after

it so okay I think I answered that one

so I'm moving on to chory Dick's third

question which is do you think it's

possible to write a book like Moby Dick

today it's possible to write it but I

don't think Moby Dick if Moby Dick

hadn't been written by Herman Melville

in the 1800s and was written Now by

somebody else it wouldn't get famous he

might find difficulty finding anyone

willing to publish it he might

self-publish on Amazon nobody would buy

it you know some people a few people

would buy it they think this is a

masterpiece it doesn't matter because

first of all Moby Dick is about ho in

which is Politically Incorrect not

nearly as politically incorrect as it

was like back in the

1980s but you know it's it's just not

really an issue anymore we've moved on

to other issues that we're supposed to

consider to be

important so anti- hailing propaganda

You Don't See Much Anymore I don't know

if the Japanese or Norwegians or whoever

are still hunting whales in limited

quantities but it's just not really an

issue anymore

but Moby Dick U it would just be bashed

for racism even though at the time it

was bashed for not being racist enough

because um Moby Dick I mean Herman
Melville he's trying to portray certain
nonwhite
ethnicities as equal to or even Superior
to white people in certain ways so you
know he's got ququ who is um he's like a
South Sea Island cannibal with sharpened
teeth who is portrayed as more
noble than most white people but at the
same time Herman Melville is realistic
in his portrayal of these people and you
know he freely admits qu quag was a Head
Hunter and a cannibal and also the way
he portrays black people it's realistic
but real M doesn't go anymore when you
portray black people you have to um
either glorify them or portray them in a

way that very few black people actually
exist like commercials there's so many
commercials on TV with black families
and it's like the husband is the husband
I mean that for starters he's wearing
like a cardigan they're living in this
mcmansion this really nice place you
know and it does not represent the way
most black people are and if you did
have a commercial that represented black
people as you know the average you know
black person statistically speaking it
would just get bashed for being racist
because reality is racist
now so also I guess transcendentalist
spiritualism which is what Moby Dick is

largely about that and

hailing um that also I mean it's just

not in Vogue

anymore so yeah it is possible to write

a book like dick but with regard to

getting it to sell you know having it

declared one of the greatest American

novels and that's an entirely different

ball of

fish or kettle of wax I should

say

so I mean with regard to just the

profundity of it and like the spiritual

undertones and overtones and all that

Jean Wolf's book of the new sun is

comparable in profundity to Moby

Dick so I mean that kind of book like

Moby Dick could still be written and can still be very popular although it may be that most people have never heard of Jean Wolf's book of the new son but it is a masterpiece I would consider that to be one of the greatest American books ever

written so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from ruie and ruie says he asked this question like two Q&A too two q&as ago but it was like after the deadline I didn't see it so maybe this question should be the very first

question anyways ruie says how unusual is it to become a Wandering mendicant a

year or two after entering the

robes

well I assume it's relatively unusual I

mean first of all a a new monk a navaka

monk a newcomer he has to live in

dependence on a his preceptor or on a

like a uh what's the word

signified no that's not it just like an

official teacher an aaria he has to live

in dependence on one of those for at

least five years so he couldn't just

take off wandering legally I mean he he

he'd probably be breaking a rule of

monastic discipline um there are some

loopholes like at the very least I mean

he can stay away from his preceptor and

teach or teacher with with their like

consent if he is like enjoying Solitude in a forest area but that doesn't apply to the Reigns Retreat or at least my teacher of monastic discipline told me that during the Reigns Retreat the three months of The reigns Retreat still he's got to go back and stay with his preceptor or his his acharia his teacher his designated teacher is the word I was trying to come up with um during the Reigns
Retreat so I mean it is allowable to some degree that within a a year or two of being ordained you can take off wandering but you'd have to take off wandering with your preceptor or teacher

or at the very least you can wander a
bit in remote Forest areas and then come
back and stay with your um preceptor or
teacher um during the range
retreat but some some monks famously uh
especially aan cha he didn't become like
a Wandering mendicant until a number of
years after he ordained he was already
you know free of his niia his dependence
on a preceptor or teacher but he was
like a he was like a teacher himself
like at some monastic school and finally
I mean he's reading these texts and you
know it just kind of dawned on him or or
just sort of gradually just overpowered
his attitude of why am I in a school
Monastery teaching when I should be

following what these texts say I should
do so that's when he left the school
Monastery and really became like a
meditating
Yogi so it does happen um I mean it can
happen to a monk at you know any stage
where they just realize you know they
keep reading these texts saying that a
monk should be wandering in the forest
or just wandering
alone and you know they're staying at
some cushy
Monastery and a lot of monks I mean some
monks like a lot of dogmatic kind of
monks they'll just kind of read the text
saying how a monk should live and it

just you know they're just

like uh referencing it in their mind as

just like abstract information that does

not apply to them you know that was for

ancient times or something a lot of

Christians read the Bible the same way

their eyes just kind of gloss over when

it gets to something they don't want to

follow like gather not up your Treasures

upon the Earth for

example

so um yeah I mean it can happen at any

time but if it happens during the first

five years there are certain limitations

to what is

allowable so I'm not sure how unusual it

is for monks to become a Wandering

mendicant you know just you know at
least a year after they've been ordained
um it does happen though but generally
they would have to wait for 5 years
before they're they're like a free agent
and can just go off on their own without
having to be in dependence on somebody
else so I'm going to move on to ru's
next
question which is kind of an interesting
one did you ever have fever
hallucinations and then he he continues
here I experienced some last night there
was nothing nasty about the images which
were actually quite pedestrian but the
loop repetition was quite quite

disturbing I suppose we can handle or at
least get used to the horrors of samsara
but its structure is more inaccessible
well yes I have had fever hallucinations
that I can remember once I was about 19
years
old and I came down with
pneumonia and I was lying on my back in
bed coughing and coughing and coughing
this is before I went to the hospital I
think I went to the hospital later on
that same
day and I'm just as I'm lying on my back
coughing I start hallucinating it looks
like oil Derek sort of like the oil
Derek um like on the Houston Oilers
football helmet I don't know if they

still have that on the football helmet I don't watch pro football anymore um or there was also like an old arcade video game based on Star Wars that had like these oild Derek things sprouting up out of I think it was the Death Star and you had to like avoid them or they're like shooting at you or something and I mean it was like that they were sprouting out of my

chest and when it reached full size it would just burst out of the top you know like a gusher and then I would cough it was I would cough simultaneously with this the top of the oil DK bursting and then it would just fade out but there

would always be like two or three more

at different stages of growth on my

chest and upper abdomen at the time and

that was that's the only fever

hallucination I can remember having

um so I guess I answered the question so

I'm going to move on to ru's third

question which is do you think the

hallucinatory experience provided one

survives it can shed light on the

repetitional structure of Sam Sara so

I'm not exactly sure how

hallucinations would specifically shed

light on the repetitional structure of

Sam

sor maybe I mean it's sort of like

you're hallucinating something that

you've seen before or at least a
variation on something that you've seen
before so that is recurring so it's like
a
repetition but um I assume for some
people yeah I mean you can get insights
from just about anything you can get
insights from seeing a dog licking his
balls but then other people you know
they can be exposed to just really
obvious like symbols that represent
something profound they can or like the
monks that I was reading referring to
just minutes ago how they can read
profound texts and it just it doesn't
occur to them that it should apply to

them personally you know it's just
information and you know they don't even
try to like contemplate it understand it
you know they'll just read the
commentary and see what the commentary
says and they'll they'll just say well
that's what it
means so yeah I think for some
people um but not definitely not not for
everybody let's see and with regard to
shedding light on the repetitional
structure of
Samara um yeah I'm I assume
so but I mean I don't have any personal
experience with regard to hallucinations
shedding light on repetitional structure
of samsar at least fever hallucinations

that really didn't ask about other kinds
of
hallucinations
um but with regard to any hallucinations
I've ever had
it didn't really cause any insights with
regard to the repetitional structure of
samsara but I assume that there's all
kinds of people out there some people
are more sensitive to certain kinds of
insights than
others I wouldn't at all be surprised so
let's let's say yes it is it can shed
light on the repetitional structure of
samsar and so I'm going to move on to
the next question which is from covac

and Cad

zida and CAD Zina says any practical

advice on stopping comparing myself to

others and then he gives the example of

seeing whether someone is mogging me or

not subconsciously I'm getting paranoid

of being mogged in public and I'm

starting to avoid going outside to avoid

it so CAC and CAD zida is possibly the

only person I know who has the word MOG

in his working vocabulary I've up until

this morning I was not fully aware of

what MOG even means it means something

kind of negative of somebody kind of

giving you a hard time but I wanted to

find out what mogging literally meant

before answering this question so I

looked it up and on there's one uh website that says the following and I quote the word mogging is derived from the acronym AOG which stands for alpha male of the group to MOG someone is to assert one's dominance over them with the hopes of impressing women the word comes from pickup artist communities that are preoccupied with the urge to attract women despite having some pretty misogynistic conceptions of them and yeah I've noticed that too a lot of pickup artists will have sort of either I mean misogynistic conceptions about women or just you know certain biases against women that sort of

thing so anyways getting back to the

question here though any practical

advice on stopping comparing myself to

others especially he's paranoid about

being mogged in

public and I mean that's just kind of

strange to me that he wouldn't want to

just go out in public because he thinks

somebody is going to assert dominance

over him and it may be that seov action

CAD Zen does not include the the the

part about in order to impress women who

might happen to be watching you know

like he's at the beach and some big

muscle guy kicks sand in his face that

kind of

thing um I mean for starters I mean he

did get some really good advice from my
from my woman on the Discord server he
asked this on the Discord server and she
pointed out that I mean most people
walking down the street the overwhelming
majority are not thinking about him at
all you they might glance at him as just
kind of an obstacle to navigate around
on the sidewalk but I mean they're not
thinking any negative thoughts about him
I mean he's just not I mean he's just an
extra in the background of their their
own personal movie I mean most people
just are not thinking about
him and I mean why would anybody MOG him
anyway I just it's just kind of

strange I mean in a previous question he
was asking about I mean he was
mentioning that he self-conscious about
his height that because people MOG him
about how short he is but he's well over
six feet
tall because I guess it's just in his
family most of his male relatives are
taller than he is and that's kind of the
case in my family too most of my male
relatives um especially on my father's
side of the family were taller than me
my father was taller than
me he was 6'6 in his prime although he
got pretty close to the same height by
the time he was in his
80s um so yeah I mean now the first

thing is just I mean face the the

extreme likelihood that this is largely

an irrational

fear that most people are just are not

going to be thinking about you

positively or negatively but also I mean

just general mindfulness when when you

see this arise you you see it as a as an

arising mental state and then if it's

some sort of irrational worry or fear or

or whatever then you can just noted as

that you know irrational fear

arising you know just irrational thought

arising and you make a habit of that and

I mean whenever it something arises and

You observe it you know mindfully it's

not you anymore so if you're unmindful

and let's say worry arises in your mind

it's I'm worried but if you're being

Mindful and worry arises in your mind

it's worry is arising

so that you've already created a kind of

philosophical Detachment from

it so talk some sense to

yourself along the lines of what my

lovely mate was saying and also just

exercise mindfulness of mental States

like this that arise in your

mind and that's about the best you can

do I think if anyone else has any

suggestions feel free to add them in the

comments and I'm going to move on to

seov action CAD Z's next question

which is when is the next suta
discussion and yeah it's it's it's long
overdue in fact somebody specifically
requested that I do a suta discussion of
the kalaha wew Su which is one of the
sutas the AA waga um I don't recall
having done a video about that one I
might have to go back and look at my
short playlist studies in archaic
Buddhism to see if I've already done a
sua on the kalaha wuta but if I haven't
that would probably be the next one it's
not one of my favorites but it does have
certain
very significant parts to it I mean the
end towards the end is very profound

there's like this [__] likee statement

like two-thirds of the way through and

also it is an example of Proto padas

Samu I mean it's fairly obviously one of

the early prototypes of the 12 Nido

theory of picha sop if you don't know

what that means just wait till I get to

the video and do it and then you can

watch that and I'll explain it better so

when let's let's shoot for within the

next few

weeks and I may be doing a a an aquarium

video soon maybe

tomorrow but that's that's not it's not

Ironclad

yet let's see here so I'll just move on

to seal of action cot Zer next question

was just tips on being disciplined in life and that's a difficult one because seriously I mean I referred to schopenhauer's first first philosophical essay over and over again it's the four on the four the four-fold root of sufficient reason it's like the four different kinds of reasons for something happening not just like excuses but the actual causes or reasons for something to happen or to exist and one of them is psychological and he says that in order I mean a person with a certain personality is going to react in the same way to the same stimuli you know the same thing keeps happening you're

going to keep reacting in the same way
until your personality changes your your
like your attitude changes your
perceptions are going to have to change
in order to act differently so I think
sooner or later if you're just
undisciplined you can't bring yourself
to like EX exercise regularly for
example or meditate
regularly then eventually I mean it's
going to cause problems for you then and
then those problems if they build up
sufficiently it could cause some kind of
Crisis is going to require you to
reassess your
attitude so like for example I've give
the example before about how my father

tried to quit smoking several times you know he he'd stop he was he would smoke two packs a day then he'd stop and then well he's going to like chew a little tobacco every now and then or or like smoke a pipe every now and then and within a few more weeks he's right back to two packs a day again and then his leg started to turn black and he had had a log roll over that leg and and crush it there was capillary damage in that leg it was pretty much healed up but still there were damaged capillaries and the tar from the cigarettes were clogging up the capillaries in his leg and his leg was turning black and the

doctor told him you've got a choice you
stop smoking or we amputate your leg and
then when it came to that I mean that
was a radical enough shift in his
attitude in his perception of the
situation that all of a sudden stopped I
mean to stop smoking stopped being this
this
struggle and really I mean to discipline
yourself
to have a struggle I mean that's that's
like a red flag that's like an early
warning sign like if you're trying to
exercise and you're struggling to do it
or you're trying to find the time to
meditate every day you're struggling to
do it then I

mean the the soonest convenient excuse
to skip a day you'll take it so it's
like if you want to discipline yourself
one thing you got to do is just make it
not a big deal you know it's just
something I'm going to do that's it you
know you have to have a Deton on you
have to have determination to stick with
something instead of falling off the
wagon after a few weeks just at the
nearest convenient excuse or
opportunity and the more you the more
meditate the more insight the more you
meditate the more insight and wisdom you
acquire generally the easier discipline
is self-discipline

um it may be I'm not exactly sure what
else I mean if you had some sort of
cruel Taskmaster watching over you who
would punish you if you didn't do well
you know like in some old-fashioned Zen
monasteries you got the guy with the
stick something like that the roshi with
a
stick um but if you're on your own then
you have to you have to rely on yourself
and really um I mean just you you have
to just have firm firm Adit firm
determination that you are going to do
this and I tend to be pretty well
disciplined when I want to be but it's
it's something that you got to be
careful about because if you're just

kind of half-hearted or half asked about
something you're better off not like
committing yourself to doing that you
know you're better off just if you're
honest with yourself it's like well I'm
not so sure I really want to do
that so I mean if there's something you
really really want to accomplish then
first of all you decide yes I really
really want to accomplish this and then
you figure out what you need to do in
order to accomplish that and then you do
it with determination and you don't give
up and you don't start fudging and just
taking days off which get longer and
longer you know it's like first you take

off a day or two you know you go on vacation or something it's not convenient and then it's like it starts happening more and more it's like for me like reciting the potim Moka it was something I could do as a monk I would recite the biku ptim Moka it was my duty at some Monastery is to do the ptim Moka Rec recitation and then um it's just kind of boring to to like keep reciting it over and over again when you're alone because I mean it's I'm not Asian some Asian monks they can just recite the same thing for two hours straight every night they don't get tired of it it doesn't bore them but I mean just doing the same thing over and over again it

just is kind of boring to me and so I
started living alone in a forest where
the the biku Pima did not need to be
recited when I was staying in a
monastery where it was my duty I'd have
to recite it over and over so so as not
to forget it you know in between upos
days but when I'm living alone there's
no biku pona recitation then i' just
sort of do it less and less often until
finally I was forgetting it
so you got to have good reasons and good
good determination in order to be
disciplined with regard to this or that
and I'm moving on to the next question
now this is from

Austin and Austin I think it was the previous Q&A asked if there's some way of differentiating genuine Knowledge from delusion when you're meditating and I said no I mean anything that arises is going to be delusional to some degree and you can't be aware of your own delusion because then it's not really delusion anymore so anyways this is kind like a follow-up question Austin says if there is no fundamental means to distinguish between truth and delusion in our meditative experiences how can Buddhism justify its claims given that its foundational claims rest on the the Buddha's own meditative experiences and

Enlightenment and then there's a little bit of additional information that he he added later which is how do I know what I observe is true because as was answered in the previous Q&A there's not a method to adequately determine what is true and what is delusional in meditation I'm asking a deeper question on what justifies our experiences in meditation as being a true belief or an axom to start at even to claim that empiricism is true as a Justified belief is itself not an empirically Justified claim well with regard to something that arises there's always going to be a certain amount of

delusion involved however you can get
farther and farther away from delusion
for example just going with Abid dama
philosophy
that like for example if you're
meditating on the breath if you're
breathing if you're if you're noting
breathing in breathing out breathing in
breathing out well breathing in
breathing out are not ultimately real
they're not ultimate realities even
according to Abid dama but if you're
just observing the the sensation of
breathing you know like the sensation of
touch at the nostrils as the air is
going in and out Vena or feeling
according to Abid dama that is an

Ultimate

Reality and even according to me it's a

much more subtle form of delusion

because there's going to be a certain

amount of perception involved and the

perception is delusion or at least

illusion

so I mean you can attenuate the delusion

you can make the delusion less the less

you think I mean if you get to something

like what St John of the Cross calls

dark Faith or fourth jna you know you

get into a deep jic state where thinking

stops then delusion like the main kind

of delusion has

stopped so it's not like you have to

differentiate or distinguish between you know this idea is a true idea this idea idea is a delusional idea it's just that you get away from the ideas and then there's this reality underlying them and you get closer and closer to this silent reality but it may be based on what Austin is saying here that he just wants to know the difference between like conventional Right View and conventional wrong view even though conventional Right View is conventional truth which is not ultimately true it's skillful means do with Mahayana terminology so if you want to distinguish between what is useful even though it's not ultimate truth and what

is not useful or worse than useful or

you know worse than just not useful just

going within within the realm of

conventional truth symbolic truth then

then you'd have to just rely on um just

empirical self-observation if you follow

this does it help

know that's like

pragmatism you have to use like

pragmatism I guess or you could compare

your experiences with what the text say

if you trust that particular text you

can go to a wise teacher you consider to

be wiser than you and have him you know

judge your experience or just observe it

hear about it tell you his impression on

whether that's likely to be useful to

you or beneficial to you or

not so I think it was a certain School

of jamaka some Mahayana schools anyway

who divide it up into essentially three

truths you know in Terra Buddhism

Orthodox terraa or just traditional

terraa you've got ultimate truth and

conventional truth conventional truth is

a level that almost everybody's stuck at

conventional truth is like the content

thing in itself most people can't touch

it even though they're exposed to it all

the time they just can't deal with it

because they're stuck in like perceptual

mode

so anyway some hayana schools divided up

this conventional truth which isn't
ultimately true into two kinds of
conventional truth you know there's just
like useful wise conventional truth that
helps you to eventually transcend
conventional truth and then when that
would be like dhamma and then there's
just unwise delusional conventional
truth that doesn't help you at all it
just makes things
worse and that would be sort of like the
philosophy of Kant again where you know
the thing itself you can't touch but
then he's like analyzing the structure
of
delusion and like trying to understand

that which I mean it's still not the

thing in itself it's still not

ultimately true but at least it's

helpful in letting in helping you to

transcend this being stuck in

perception so in your meditation if

you're perceiving less without just

going into an unconscious stuper where

if you're wide awake still and your your

thoughts become fewer your perceptions

become fewer then the veil gets thinner

and there's less in between your level

of understanding and Ultimate

Reality

so

see but how do you know what You observe

is true I mean if you don't interpret it

if you just just abolish

interpretation then you're much closer

to the actual truth or reality then if

you start thinking about it and

interpreting it and symbolizing

it so I hope I answered that

question because I'm moving on to the

next one this is from Stellar Supreme

formerly known as Liber Lam and he says

in regard to this suta and then the

remaining is a quote here

or what's coming next is a quote quote

with regard to external factors I don't

Envision any other single Factor like

friendship with admirable people as

doing so much for a monk in training who

has not attained the heart's goal but
remains intent on the unsurpassed safety
from bondage a monk who is a friend with
admirable people abandons what is
unskillful and develops what is skillful
and that's from the Ed Waka number 17
and then Stellar Supreme formerly known
as lib lamb says could Right View be an
attainment facilitated by something like
group
Spirit um well I mean with regard to the
suta he's talking about the kalana Maita
I assume it doesn't I mean it's probably
the word kalana Maita is in there
somewhere like the good friend this
isn't the only suta there's one suta in
the nikayas where the Buddha is saying

that having a good friend or a kalayan
is the whole of the Holy
life and I mean it's it's kind of a
weird statement to make considering that
you know there are other things that are
probably more important than having a a
good and wise friend but having a good
like a good and wise friend who can
guide you who is wiser than you are yeah
that that that is very valuable so then
you saying could it could Right View be
an attainment facilitated by something
like group Spirit Well it can be
facilitated by something like group
Spirit because as I've said before
mental states are

contagious that if you associate with
wise people you cultivate the the
company of wise people they're going to
uplift you and if you associate with
fools you ass you cultivate the the
company of foolish people they're going
to drag you down because mental states
are contagious they're going to affect
your
mind so
Right View whatever whatever that is to
you then certainly it could be helped by
just hanging out with with wise dharm
oriented people and not hanging out so
much with foolish people or just
indoctrinated worldly
normies so I'm just going to move on to

Stellar Supreme previously known as
Libra lamb or formerly known as lib
Lambs next question which is do you
consider it fitting to talk about the
tetralemma of the enlightened being
after death in terms of a fruitive
spirit or is Spirit necessarily a form
of existence and I'm not exactly sure
what he means by fruitive that it's not
in my dictionary the word fruitive does
not exist in my dictionary on the
computer I typed in fruitive and it
tried to correct it to furtive and
furtive is something where you you don't
want to say the whole truth but because
the whole truth might be ugly so you're

careful about not saying the whole truth
kind of a thing but I'm not sure that
Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra
lamb really is does mean that I think
fruitive spirit I think he might mean
that it's just like um like a Sanara
it's like this conditioned
impermanent entity or quasi
entity because he Compares that to
Spirit necess necessarily being a form
of existence which might mean that it's
not impermanent and not a sanaro not
conditioned
but um he who was formerly known as lib
Lam does ask these really cerebral kind
of questions that are hard to decipher
sometimes so do I consider it fitting to

talk about the tetralemma of the
enlightened being after death and the
tetralemma of the enlightened being
after death is the enlightened being
does exist after death the enlightened
being doesn't exist after death the
enlightened being does and doesn't exist
after death and the enlightened being
neither does nor does not exist after
death those are like the four options in
classical Buddhist
logic and do I consider that be
fitting um in terms of a fruitive
spirit um so what is the spirit that he
who is formerly known as Libra L is
referring to that's that's like my first

question is what is what is this Spirit
he's referring to um I think he's
referring to like the spirit does exist
after death the the spirit of an
enlightened being does or doesn't or
does and doesn't or neither does nor
doesn't exist after death and none of
those is valid all four options are
invalid with regard to an enlightened
being and part of it is that you just
can't nail down an enlightened being
that I mean they're off the scale and
their Spirit so-called is is just off
the scale I mean it's it's neither is
nor isn't nor is and isn't nor neither
is nor isn't it's
just so I mean the spirit itself would I

mean the same tetralemma I assume would
apply to the spirit so is it necessarily
a form of existence well is it not
necess neily a form of existence is it
and is not a form of necessary form of
existence or is it neither or not
unnecessary form of existence I mean
that's generally what it gets down to so
the whole question would be invalid in
that
sense ah see do I consider it fitting I
mean that's that's like the the key of
the question here do I consider it
fitting to talk about the tetralemma of
the enlightened being after death in
terms of a fru Spirit which I still

don't fully understand or is Spirit
necessarily a form of existence so we
can logically deduce that a fruitive
spirit is not necessarily a form of
existence which I guess I mean from the
Buddhist point of view a spirit would
not necessarily be a form of is not a
form of existence gosh he who was
formerly known as lib Lam asks these
really OB this like obstru kind of
questions that are difficult to
decipher
so yeah let's just say it's not
fitting and move on to the next question
here and and and if he wants to clarify
like in plain English with not lots of
syllables what it what I mean what he

was asking I can give it another

shot so this next question is from

xenoid and xenoid says can you explain

the difference between tatna and

Chanda and and both of them are often

translated as desire Tanana is usually

translated as craving literally it means

thirst whereas

Chanda uh I usually translate it as

preference so there's a there's a lot of

overlap between just craving and

preference you know Chanda would be like

a strong

preference um but it it they're not

necessarily exactly the same because for

example chonda also is a technical term

in monastic discipline where there
there's a monk who is too sick even to
be carried on a stretcher to a formal
Act of the S he's too sick even to do
that or for whatever reason he cannot
attend a formal Act of the sa so he
sends his Chanda he sends sometimes it's
translated as consent but I would
translate as his his preference you know
he's got to participate in a
vote and so he's going to send his
Chanda as as his vote of approval or
disapproval to some formal Act of the S
so that's one reason why I generally
translate Chanda as preference or strong
preference um because of that aspect of
it but chonda might be more of a neutral

sort of Desire whereas TNA is more of a

like a a thirsty craving kind of desire

but there is a lot of overlap between

the two and maybe I should look it up in

the dictionary but I don't think I'm

gonna this

time so because I have to look up two

different words and that that would take

twice as long

probably so let's see

here yeah there is overlap between DNA

and Chanda but I think Chanda is more

ethically neutral and can just mean

preference so so xenoid second question

is do Buddha still experience

Chanda well this is you're getting

into I'm flirting with

uh unorthodoxy here flirting with heresy

because I think it's possible that a

Buddha could still experience tatna at

like a superficial level like it rises

in the mind just through the force of

past

comma but an enlightened being being

does not I mean just is observes it

mindfully does not identify with it

doesn't get carried away with it you

know it can still arise I mean I think

that enlightened beings still show at

least outwardly that they have

preferences neim Koli Baba had certain

foods that he liked better than other

kinds of food for example the Buddha

himself apparently preferred silence to
noise I he'd get on the case of monks
that were being too noisy that sort of
thing so I would say that they
experience it at a like a superficial
level just because they are human and
they've got this past comma that's still
causing this stuff to arise it's just
that they are not lost in it anymore you
know they can just observe it arise and
passed away and not get lost in
it so I I hope I answered that one
because I'm moving on to the next
question from xenoid which is is the
thing that separates Buddhas from Pacha
Buddhas their amount of Chanda if not

then what does yeah I don't think that
their chonda would would uh
differentiate a Buddha from a peka
Buddha um a peka Buddha for those of you
who are like unfamiliar with obscure
terms like Pacha Buddha is a fully
enlightened Buddha who never thess
doesn't start Buddhism he does not start
the wheel of dham rolling because he
remains a Hermit you know he's this full
fully enlightened omniscient more or
less being who arises between
dispensations of fully enlightened
Buddhas of sasam Buddhas so Pacha
Buddhas according to Terra only exist at
times when there is no Buddhism in the
world and

for their own reasons they do not start
Buddhism again they do not start the D
wheel of dhar rolling they they remain
Hermits and the the official reason for
that is that I mean they're pretty much
the same as a sasam Buddha except that
for whatever reason they won't or just
can't explain
dhama and it may be that they just won't
like according to the legend our Buddha
godma Buddha almost became a paba
because he figured nobody was going to
understand picha seata or dependent cor
Rising
so then mahab Brahma had to come down
from heaven and beg him to to teach

Buddhism because there's going to be at least a few people who have little dust in their eyes and then the Buddha kind of used his Clairvoyance and saw all right yeah there's there's some people that'll understand it and so then he went ahead and didn't become a peka Buddha he became a SAS Sam Buddha so it could be there are some who there's so much into ultimate truth or ultimate reality that they don't even want to deal with this manifestations of like conventional truth this this delusional Sams that they're just focused on the goal which they have attained you know they're just like dwelling in this state of the absolute and they don't want to

be wallowing in the muck of symbolic
perception and
like normal worldliness anymore so that
could be part of it or I mean the
implication in in some of the texts is
that for some reason they can't explain
dhamma it's like they've just
transcended Sam Sara to such a degree
that they can't come back down into it
and like use the language of samsar to
try and help other
beings but at any rate it's not the
amount of Chanda that differentiates a
Buddha from a Bea Buddha it's their
capability and or willingness to explain
dhamma to other

people that differentiates them and so
I'm going to move on to the next
question this is from mraa Buddha and
this might be the last question we ever
get from mraa Buddha because he has
informed me that he has unsubscribed
because somebody was censoring his
comments which is probably not me but
the people who run this platform or the
computers who run this platform
I'm referring to YouTube by the
way so anyways my tra Buddha says why do
you believe in the staged fake shooting
of Donald Trump it took place during his
presidential campaign meaning that it
was a staged event for a publicity stunt
his ear looks completely unscathed now

as if it never happened well this kind
of a strange reasoning here to say that
it took place during his presidential
campaign meaning that it was a staged
event for a publicity stunt I mean does
that mean that nobody can really try to
shoot somebody if they're running for
office that it's just somehow impossible
that there's some wacko who just does
not want this person to win the election
so they try to shoot him to make sure he
doesn't win the election that that is
somehow impossible I don't think so in
fact it makes perfect sense why shoot
him if he's not running for office I
mean there's no need to shoot him then

if you don't want him to be president

but if you don't want him to be

president

and neither of these two people Crooks

and what the other guy's name is you

know they just did not want him to win

the

election so they took matters into their

own hands and of course fortunately they

[__] up so I mean if this is a staged

fake shooting I mean just setting that

aside a staged fake shooting I mean

somebody really did get shot in fact a

few people really did get shot two

people were shot dead so is is Trump so

evil that he's willing to have people

killed just for a publicity stunt I

don't think so I mean just look at
consider aam's Razer it is more likely
that somebody really did shoot at
him you know grazed his ear with a
bullet right as he turned his
head I mean he clearly wasn't expecting
it I mean he's not that good of an actor
and also the entire Secret Service who
are in the tank with with the Biden
Administration I mean they're they're
like Biden Secret Service Plus a bunch
of just um Homeland Security people that
took a a web a webinar for a few hours
to qualify them to be his bodyguards I
mean they'd all have to be in on it I
mean why is

that so with regard to his ear not
showing signs of of being wounded I mean
if he wears a wears a bandage people
make fun of that oh look how this big
bandage he's got on a show and then if
he he doesn't wear a bandage and is
presumably I mean they've got like
makeup and stuff they can cover up the
scab that kind of thing why not because
if he doesn't he's going to take Catch
Hell from that too oh he's just putting
it on display for everyone to see
another publicity
stunt so first of all I mean the fact
that the this attempted assassination
occurred during his presidential
campaign caign does not mean necessarily

that it was a staged event for a

publicity

stunt and the fact that his ear looks

completely unscathed now means that he's

he's Rich he's got people that can fix

up his ear so it doesn't have this big

ugly scab on

it so why do I believe in this the

staged fake shooting of Donald Trump

well because it's pretty obvious to me

that it was very likely to be real and

that two people actually did die and a

few other people were seriously wounded

by

gunshots man so I'm just going to move

on to the next question this is from

White Ash Piper and white ash Piper says
I get the point on the snake and frog
story my take is that I don't know the
snake story and the way I see it is this
could have been the one frog that saved
his life what right do I have to steal a
meal
so this is getting back to the the story
of the the frog and the snake that I've
told several times at this point it's
it's like my ex my favorite example my
go-to example of two people performing
outwardly the exact same action one of
them is getting good karma for it the
other person's getting bad karma for it
and it's like a snake trying to swallow
a frog and you chase the the snake away

you save the Frog you chase the snake away and if you do it out of compassion you've done something good if if you do it out of compassion for the Frog you've done something good if you do it out of compass or hatred for the snake you've done something bad so I it's the motivation if you're motivated by compassion you've done something good if you're motivated by hatred you've done something bad even though the outward action is exactly the same so the question here is what right do I have to steal a meal and this reminds me of when I was talking about this or a similar Topic in the previous Q&A I had this

this other example that eluded me and
now I remember it again it's with regard
to monks and stealing that for a monk to
steal something of a certain value which
is a coin the value of an ancient coin
called a pot up if he steals something
as worth that much or more he's
excommunicated for life he is kicked out
of the
S so the the taex because this rule is
so important you know it's like it you
have to know exactly for sure whether a
monk is or is not excommunicated you
know that's an important thing to know
so they got all these sample cases like
in legal books and one case is youve got
a monk in a forest who finds a trapped

animal you know there's a fox with this steel jaw clamped on his leg so the monk lets the lets the animal loose so has he stolen from the Trapper and again it depends on his motivation if he does it out of compassion for the animal he can do that he can he can release uh an animal caught in in some other person's trap but if he does it out of resentment and vindictiveness against the Trapper it's like this is what you're getting you son of a [__] just I'm I'm letting your animal go so just you're going to go hungry then then he's guilty he has actually stolen because his motivation was to

deprive the

the Trapper from what he had caught

whereas in the in the previous example

he's motivated by compassion for the

animal and wanting to stick it to the

Trapper was just not part of his his

reason so in that case I mean what right

do you have to steal a meal I mean

compassion is more

important you know it's

like I mean what

right to steal a meal from a snake or a

Trapper I mean rights are themselves

artificial I think I had one person

actually leave the the uh the Discord

server over this issue that he was

talking about rights and um one or two

other people and me kind of were
pointing out to him I we weren't like
attacking him or anything but just
pointing out that I mean rights I mean
what is a natural right I mean rights
are just sort of like an abstract
concept that we superimpose on society
but we don't really have rights that are
just god-given I mean I'm not aware of
them they're like part of a social
construct or
something so what right do I have to
steal a meal it's not really stealing if
your motivation is not to steal see
that's in Buddhist Buddhist ethics it's
it's

motivation like for

example you you you don't have your

glasses on or whatever and you get on

the wrong bicycle and and ride it home

it's not until you get home that you

realize that it's not your bike it just

looks like your bike it was close to

your bike on the rack and so you know

somebody could accuse you of stealing

that but you didn't steal it because you

didn't have any intention of stealing

you have to have the intention to steal

in order to steal something just as you

have to have the intention to lie in

order to lie to somebody there has to be

the willful deliberate intention to

deceive somebody if you're going to lie

and then with regard to stealing it's
just the the willful intention of taking
for yourself or depriving somebody else
of their
property so just turning an animal loose
or saving a
frog that doesn't necessarily enter the
picture I mean you may be incidentally
depriving someone of a
meal but so long as that's not your
intention technically you haven't
stolen and who knows that's what the the
implication is going to be that Trapper
that was a that was a good Fox he could
have got some money he could have got
medicine for his his sick baby for all

you know not going to happen now

but I mean you cannot take

responsibility for all these

unforeseeable ramifications of your

actions or even if they're foreseeable

if that's not your purpose

like stepping on bugs on purpose that's

against the rules for a monk it's

against the rules for a Buddhist you

know supposed to just be trampling on

bugs but there were times in Burma like

around the beginning of the rainy season

I mean you go outside and the ground

would be completely covered with little

insects and there's no way you could

walk from point A to point B without

stepping on some of them and you knew

you're were going to step on them you
could see them there there's just this
mat of just clustered insect some kind
of little gnats or
something and so I mean so long as it's
not your intention you just want to get
from point A to point B you want to get
to the ouse or something you just step
on them you just walk right across them
and you kill lots and lots of them but
so long as you're not doing it like with
the deliberate intention to kill them
then I
mean that's I mean that's really what
makes it against the
rules accidentally killing something or

just incidentally killing something

incidentally depriving someone of their

meal I mean that's I mean it still might

be real in Sam SAR somehow but it's not

on you

ethically it's like

microaggressions you know

microaggressions it's just not really

ethical it's more political than ethical

asking someone where they're from

telling telling some person from a

foreign country that he speaks really

good English those are microaggressions

even I even read back when

microaggressions were a big deal it's

not so much anymore that even for a man

to stand up and let a woman take his

seat on a crowded bus would be a
microaggression it was like I don't know
benevolent patriarchy or something like
that so I don't know if I've even
answered this question though what right
do I have to steal a meal I mean it's
you're not even really stealing and
rights are just sort of an artificial
creation of the of the Mind anyway as
far as I know I mean someone can prove
to me that rights really do exist out
there in The Ether
that's that's something else I might
take this back and possibly even eat a
hat or
something

so yeah all right I guess I'm just going
to move on the next question this is
from
philes
files I don't know how to pronounce some
of these names I'm winging it I'm just
doing the best I can files says I guess
what unsettles me with all this and I'm
not exactly sure yet what all this is
I'll have to start over I guess what
unsettles me with all this is that if
we're already enlightened then samsaric
being samsaric things like love hate
tragedy comedy Beauty ugliness Etc don't
seem to have any value at all I'm
guessing you're going to say that
ultimately they do not but within the

bounds of this delusory world they do in
which case wouldn't it drive you crazy
to on the other hand embrace all of it
as a delusion and on the other to
partake in Daily creating meaning and
valuations since as n says to live is to
Value this is why I asked you about
Nicha since to me the Cure or the core
of his work is about this yeah well I I
don't really like Nel that it just Revel
in samsara you know um so I mean what's
where's where's the main question
here let's see if we've already enlight
if we're already
enlightened then some soric things like
love hate tragedy comedy Beauty ugliness

is that don't seem to have any value at
all I'm guessing you're going to say
that ultimately they do not yeah
ultimately they don't like eart TOA says
in his first famous book I mean the
entire solar system or Galaxy could
explode and in the grand scheme of
things that just from the point of view
of ultimate being it would be completely
irrelevant completely
unimportant so let's
see where is the question where is the
question mark okay see in which case
wouldn't it drive you crazy to on the
one hand embrace all of it as delusion
and on the other to partake in Daily
creating meaning and valuations since as

n says to live is to Value um you can still do it at like the surface level that you're not identified with that anymore but because you're a human you have to act like a human I think it's in the jeangu where there's this little chapter talking about how you know the enlightened Sage he still behaves like a human being because he just happen to be born

one so I mean embracing all of it as delusion I mean that's going too far I think embracing everything as delusion I mean it's just you're just not attached to it anymore that you're being Mindful and like an enlightened being presumably

is mainly centered

in in ultimate truth and then this like

virtual truth this conventional truth is

just like ripples at surface you know

he's down in the still water but the

ripples are still happening on top and

it's it's fine it's nature taking its

course it's that he's not going to be

against it because an enlightened being

is neither for nor against those are

like two extremes to be avoided you take

the middle path between for on one side

and against on the other

side so

I mean he might tell others that you

know what they're wallowing in is

delusion ultimately but to him I mean

he's he's fine I mean he's not

denouncing anything really you know it's

just nature taking its course it's not

ultimately real you know sort of like

having a TV show on that you know you

know it's not real it's not that you're

against the TV show just because it's

not

real so I think a lot of people have

difficulty in and

like dealing with two levels of reality

at the same time you know you've got the

ultimate level and the conventional

level and they're they're just I

mean it's not like you go from

conventional to Ultimate necessarily

it's both are always there so it's just like the emphasis or the like the the attention or the focus or where you are centered or whatever shifts but it's still the same stuff going on it's still the
same so it's not like you know you you abolish the self in order to become enlightened because there was no self to begin
with it was just that you believed that there was one but the belief was in error
so gosh have I answered this question I mean it wouldn't drive I mean obviously it doesn't drive enlightened beings crazy because on the one hand I

mean they don't necessarily embrace all
of it as delusion I mean they just see
clearly what it is see that's the thing
it's not like they have this idea this
Dogma that everything is delusion
they're just seeing clearly what it is
and it's just like ripples at the
surface nature taking its course it's
not them it is not ultimately real but
they're not against
it so to partake in daily creating
meaning and valuations well to the
enlightened being the meaning also is
just sort of irrelevant it's just I mean
they they know that meaning is delusion
if you wallow in

it because I mean that's what Samara is

is meaning and it's it's symbols that

are trying to represent something that

they are not and people can't tell the

difference because they don't even have

access to anything beyond the symbol in

most cases

so I mean it wouldn't drive an

enlightened being crazy they're they

they're beyond that it's the

unenlightened person that is

crazy

so I might have just made things worse

by my answer but I'm going to move on to

Phil's second question

here which is for most of my adult life

I've been drawn to the Buddhist view of

nibana and infinite cosmology but at the same time I find it deeply depressing to to reconcile with this view my love of certain things in this world and when I stop loving anything I become depressed which as we all know is a form of attachment on its own you yourself seem to have things you care about deeply for example your lady love so I'm wondering how you reconcile that in the face of the ultimate delusion of I am well you don't have to have an ego to love in fact there are some people I think art TOA is one of them who say that the per when you become enlightened you have perfected love I mean love is acceptance

love when you really love somebody or

something you've knocked down Pink

Floyd's wall to some degree you there's

like the the barrier between self and

other has broken

down

and if you're enlightened Pink Floyd's

wall just doesn't exist anymore and for

those of you who are too young to know

about Pink Floyd's wall sorry I'm not

going to explain it here but it's like

this wall you got around your heart that

most people put there to protect their

heart you know for for self-preservation

or something but I mean they just wall

themselves in they can't really love

anybody if they've got this wall

completely in place so when when you're
enlightened you know all barriers
between self and other are down and so
that's just perfect love I mean there's
just it's all just us in a sense
so I Me Your Love increases the more
enlightened you are the wiser you are
the more capable you are of loving
because love is like I mean love and ego
are almost I mean they're almost
incompatible and love and Pink Floyd's
wall are completely
incompatible so let's see Buddhist view
of nibana and cosm at the same time I
find it deeply depressing to reach
reconcile with this view my love of

certain things in this world you

yourself seem to have things you care

about deeply so I'm wondering how you

reconcile that in the face of ultimate

delusion of I am the wiser you are the

more capable of love you

are or reasons that I've already tried

to specify anyway so I mean there's

there's no problem

there I mean you can you can love your

enemies when you're wise fools can't

love their enemies you can I mean you

can

love in a way you you have to love evil

even if you're enlightened you're not

endorsing it you know you're not

suggesting it to anybody but still I

mean you forgive the bad people and it's
you just accept the way things
are you have an open heart towards even
evil people if you're fully
enlightened so yeah I really don't think
that there is necessarily a problem
there it depends on what kind of love if
it's just some sort of like emotional
attachment then yeah that that can
dissipate but it's going to give way to
something that's even deeper and
better so I'm just going to move on to
fil's third question which is I suspect
if I was a less nervous type of person I
would simply be able to adopt the view
of Conan the Barbarian I note which is

as follows it's not the Destroyer defeat the enemies see them driven before you and hear the lamentation of the women it's actually even wiser than that Conan the Barbarian says quote I know this if life is illusion then I am no less an illusion and being thus the illusion is real to me I live I burn with life I love I slay and am content but Al and then unquote so then Phil says but also how does this barbarian's view stand against the teachings of dhama well he's more of he's more of a follower of n obviously um but I'm I am impressed that Conan the Barbarian could come up with that much wisdom I mean this must be must be later on after he became a a

king ruling with a troubled brow and all
that
um if life is an illusion then I am no
less an illusion and being thus the
illusion is real to me I live I burn
with life I love I slay and I'm
content yeah that's pretty nichan to me
that's
like Revel in Sam sorrow but at least if
he knows that it's an illusion then I
mean if he bears that in mind then he's
he's got wisdom I mean he's sort of
moving towards an enlightened point of
view
so yeah I mean that is I mean if you are
going to wallow in samsara just like

conscientiously wallow in

samsara then Conan's attitude maybe

minus the slaying part would would

actually make

sense but I mean you can do all

that with a certain amount of Detachment

you might not be as passionate about it

you'll be detached but you can still

participate in like ruling the kingdom

and all that your brow wouldn't be as

troubled if you if you did it with

Detachment so you can still do the same

stuff it's just that the the emphasis or

the you know where the the center of

conscious is or whatever is different

and again it's just this trouble people

have

with understanding that samsara and

nibana are not

opposites that they're just superimposed

one on the other and in in a sense

they're just Inseparable so you just

accept both you know it's like the

enlightened person isn't against some

sorrow they just accept it without

clinging to

it and I I don't I'm not sure if I

answer that question either I am

impressed that Conan the Barbarian came

up with some philosophy like that though

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

question this is from Romeo and Romeo

says have you ever TR have you ever

traveled to bodaya where the Buddha
achieved his Enlightenment if so do you
have any travel tips if not then why not
um yeah the main travel tip I would give
if you go to B Gua and I have been there
I was there like in gosh like December
of
1991 I think I a junior monk at the time
maybe 92 yeah December of
92 I've been a monk for less than two
years and we went to the pilgrimage
sites in India the Buddhist pilgrimage
sites before I went to Burma and I think
my main advice don't give money to the
Beggars until your last day because if
you give money to the Beggars they're
just going to know that you give money

to Beggars and they are just going to
Hound you
mercilessly and I didn't have money at
the time they just kind of sometimes
they'd try to beg from me and then I
wouldn't have anything to give them so
they just kind of gave up but I remember
reading in a book a long time ago Jack
cornfield went to Bod Gaia and he gave
money to the Beggars you know out of
compassion and they just pegged him he's
somebody that gives money to Beggars and
he was just he was just had flocks of
Beggars just hounding him everywhere he
went after that and he said it pretty
much ruined his trip at one point he was

or at the end he you know he was going
to take all the last rupes he had you
know he he got it all changed into small
notes he was going to have the the
beggers line up he was going to give
everybody you know the same amount but
the Biggers at the end of the line
started panicking like he was going to
run out before he got to them and so
they just started mobbing him and
finally in order to just save his skin
apparently he just watered up the money
and just threw it over their heads and
when they all turned to to like pounce
on the money he took off off you know he
went a certain distance to looked and it
was just like this free-for-all going

on so yeah that would be one bit of
advice for bod GA another one is just
check out the bhan temple that was one
of my favorite temples in at Bood Gaia
just just because of the Aesthetics of
it it was just really this exotic
beautiful looking
Temple and uh aside from that yeah I
don't have very many travel tips I can't
remember bod
Gaia now that was that was a different
place so yeah I think that's my advice
so I'm just going to move on to Romeo's
second question is visiting bod Gaia a
sacred pilgrimage for Buddhists like
Muslims traveling to Mecca approximately

what percentage of practicing Buddhists
do you estimate actually visit bodaya so
that's two questions isn't I got to
separate
these okay I'm still separating
okay so first question is visiting Boda
a sacred pilgrimage for Buddhists like
Muslims traveling to Mecca yeah I mean
it's not as important to Buddhists to go
to bodaya as it is for Muslims to go to
Mecca um but it's like the four main
pilgrimage sites where the Buddha was
born which is lumini and Nepal where he
became enlightened which is Boda where
he taught the first sermon which is at
sarot the the the deer park near benarus
and then where he died which is oh what

is the name of the place where he died I

can't remember

now gosh I have

these lapses in

memory the name of the place where the

Buddha

died yeah it's not coming to me anyways

those are the four like main pilgrimage

sites you can go to lots of other places

you can go to like vulture Peak or you

know e gy cave at the black rock or you

can go to

let's see um another one is sa you know

like anap pindas Park you can go

there and in the back of my mind I'm

still trying to remember the the name of

the town it's it's two different names

the the ancient name and the modern name

or two different names um so anyways

it's it's like a sacred pilgrimage but I

mean

it's most Buddhists don't go to bodia or

to the other three places which is

really the next question question you're

approximately what percentage of

practicing Buddhists do you estimate

actually visit bu guy i' guess less than

1% cuz most practicing Buddhists are

like Asian villagers who just don't have

the means to travel to India or Nepal to

go to the the holy sites so I would

guess probably less than 1% just based

on the idea that you know most Asian V

most Asian Buddhists are like villagers
that like assistance farmers and so
forth and most western Buddhists
probably also don't go it might be even
a higher percentage in the west and but
because we have more money we can afford
plane fair to
India but still I'd guess less than 1%
of Western Buddhists go to bulaya I
could be mistaken on that though it
could be as high as
2% maybe one out of 50 but I mean that's
that's still kind of pushing it so yeah
I would say it's like a fraction of 1%
of of practicing Buddhists who actually
go to Boda I was fortunate in that I was

able to go just because that's where we

sto one of the places we stopped on our

way to

Burma I was with my teacher paku seatt

or Tong Pulu Chon doya Seattle he went

by different names with his retinue and

I was part of the retinue and so we went

to Japan and then Thailand and then

India and then back to Thailand and

finally to

Burma so

I guess I answered that one so I'm

moving on to the next question which is

from game fap and game fap says any

opinions on the flagrant amount of bias

we see on Wikipedia what about rational

Wiki I see your buddy Brian gets a lot

of hate on there um yeah with regard to rational Wikipedia rational Wiki um I've I've seen very very little of it I I really don't use rational Wiki much I remember I did kind of look up maybe the only time I ever really spent much time on rational Wiki was I watched a Brian Rue video where he's talking about there's these two people that are just bashing him and bashing and bashing on rational Wiki I think they were like I don't know some sort of far right kind of fundamentalist and they considered Brian not to be far right enough and so they were like denouncing him or maybe they saw him as a rival or something for

being the spokesman of some movement or something and so they were just bashing away him which is not particularly rational I mean they might have bashed him in rational ways as far as I can remember

but um I mean the whole urge to bash somebody is not rational it's not logical but getting to Wikipedia yeah I mean Wikipedia is useful for certain things like science and some like ancient history and so forth um it's it's actually pretty good but I mean like poit itics for example yeah I mean you have a lot of leftist activists who are just actively propagandizing on Wikipedia to the point where every once

in a while they'll have like fundraising drives and you know they'll ask for donations and I could not in good conscience donate even though I use Wikipedia a lot relatively a lot I was looking at it earlier today about about something some some family of fishes or something but uh just
the propaganda that they are responsible for just it may be that the founders or like the people who are at the top running Wikipedia might not have much to do with it it's just that the people editing you know they'll just edit in this propaganda stuff like um I think it was Stefan

moleno um he he did not have access to
his own Wikipedia article and he was
blocked from his own Wikipedia article
and then the people who wrote the
article were just bashing away at him
and he couldn't even defend himself I
mean he couldn't even correct like
obvious misstatements you know untruths
in the article that kind of stuff yeah I
mean it's
reprehensible I remember reading a long
time ago it was it was an article I
think it was on sexual dimorphism in
humans and most of the article was fine
except somebody like some feminist
obviously had inserted statements into
the article just completely out of

context that for example the fact that men have like 40% greater upper body strength than even a female athlete just the average guy has 40% higher upper body strength than even a female athlete that that is all caused by like patriarchy and sexual stereotypes encouraging men to exercise and discouraging women from exercising and I mean that was right there in the Wikipedia article it was just kind of obviously this insertion that somebody added and it didn't last very long because it's so such obvious [__] so my opinions on the flagrant amount of bias we see on Wikipedia um

with regard to a lot of it you know you
want to read about some ancient Roman
Emperor I don't think the feminists or
the you know the queer activists or that
that sort of people really are thorough
enough to get into like um a Wikipedia
article on do mission for
example um and also like the science
stuff that the scientist like you want
to look up some family of fishes or some
some group of Club mosses or some such
then I mean most people even most
activists they're just not qualified to
add or subtract anything
really but you get into like
Pharmaceuticals then you know you can't
really trust what you read in there

because I have you know I've I've come across information that you know pharmaceutical companies are really just trying to um you know like censor anything negative like like gnarly side effects or it hasn't been tested fully that kind of thing or like shady aspects of the testing that kind of thing you know that stuff you know gets deleted but I've just I've just been told that or have read about that so I mean I don't really have strong opinions about Wikipedia I do use it regularly I use it quite a lot it's it's really good for um movies like you hear about a movie that might be a good movie I mean

god king um Roger Ebert is no longer
with us you can't rely on his his
reviews and so sometimes I'll just look
at the Wikipedia article about the movie
and just go down and look at the
critical response and so forth get a get
a good idea of
whether it's going to be a good movie or
not
so yeah I mean that's about it I really
don't think about Wikipedia very much
even though I use it so I'm just going
to move on to the next question this is
from Joe do and Joe do says you said in
the last show that some Wars are
Justified can you list which ones you
think were it would come down to a

matter of belief the Christians thought
they were Justified to colonize the
world because they believed
that there should be no other God
worship but theirs in the Commandments
in other words anyone who wasn't
Christian was fair
War many people believed that the Axis
powers in the world wars were as
Justified or more than the Allied Forces
and then he's got dot dot dot after this
and it may be that it keeps going
sometimes on YouTube in the comments
instead of show more it'll just cut it
off so I saw this this dot dot dot and
when I cut and pasted the question the

dot dot dot was not it was not part of
the part that was copied so apparently
YouTube um I mean I I refreshed the page
and still it was the same thing so if
there's any more to this question um I
didn't see it but I guess the main
question here uh can you list which ones
which Wars you think were Justified Wars
well just about any kind of War of
self-defense like just go back to
ancient Rome look at look at the history
of ancient Rome and you had Barbarian
tribes on the other side of the the danu
on the other side of the the Ry on the
other side of like the the the tigis
river that I mean they were just
attacking over and over again especially

across the danu and the Rind you had
like on the North and like North
Northeast of the Ry in the danu I mean
you had like mainly Germanic tribes some
sarmatian tribes like Proto Slavs um and
also some like West Asian or East Asian
Nomads Central Asian Nomads that came
westwards and I mean they are living in
villages in forests mostly and right on
the other side of the river you've got
one of the most highly Advanced richest
countries to have existed you know it's
like the the standard of living in
Europe did not reach the level of
the Roman Empire until late 1800s early
early 1900s especially like in England I

think it was Winston Churchill who's
very very divisive figure nowadays he
said in his history of the english-
speaking peoples that England
never like never got back to the
standard of living they had under the
Romans until the early 20th
century so you've got these barbarians
that looking right across the river it's
just ripe for the
picking and so they were continually
just invading and attacking and I mean
in the West in both sides of the Roman
Empire eventually just died out just
because of Barbarian
invasions I mean it was other reasons
that weakened Rome so that the Barbarian

invasions eventually became
successful so I mean there was like the
internal Decay and all
that demoralization of the populace so
forth um so I mean any country has the
right to defend itself if you got some
other country like or not even a country
you got a barbarian horde invading your
country you have the right to defend
yourself against that especially if the
Barbarian horde are not peaceful and
they're bearing weapons and they are
killing and raping and
looting so I mean that would be like a
really obvious example and then I mean
examples less obvious than that it

becomes a matter of politics because as
I've as I've said before one reason why
as a young man I wasn't much interested
in politics is that I came to the
realization that what is right and good
from a political point of view is not
the same as what is right and good from
an ethical or moral point of view I mean
there's some
overlap but still I mean War sometimes
just makes perfect sense I mean Rome
Just prospered largely because of War
they became very rich just from
conquering like the daans and the
carthaginians and so forth
who was very much to the benefit of
their own

people so from a political point of view
you could say it was justified I mean
Rome and Carthage they had to Duke it
out over who was going to be the
superpower of the Western
Mediterranean but when it comes to just
what like even from a moral like a
Buddhist point of view I mean some
hardcore Buddhists would just say no war
is is ethical all war is wrong you're
better off just getting killed by
enemies than fighting back against them
which is one reason why Buddhism got
eradicated from India when the Muslims
invaded so I mean it's a judgment call
pretty much the whole way I guess you

know if you want to be just a strict uncompromising Buddhist Saint or dogmatist that you think it's better to die than to kill it's better to let your family die than to harm that poor Barbarian who just trying de feed his family or just following orders or whatever then yeah you're better off just renouncing the world and going off out into the forest but I do think that I mean even a monk has the right to strike out in self-defense so I do think that any country Any Nation any society is Justified to fight in its own defense but when you start getting into like

well this country is being taken over by marxists you know it's going to fall under the Chinese or Russian sphere of influence instead of our sphere of influence so we've got to at the very least get the CIA in there and Stage a coup and get some Lackey to our cause installed as dictator or whatever then yeah I mean most of that is military-industrial complex making money politicians making money as kickbacks from the military industrial complex um you know the military wants to try out their their new weapons see see what their new strategies and stuff how they do um you know it's it's politics and so

I mean when you get to that level when

you get away from just self-preservation

or if you're just a Buddhist Saint even

beyond that then you just have to like

make a make the the distinction yourself

what is Justified and what is not

justified but at the very very least

unless you're an absolute Buddhist saint

that thinks it's better off that your

family gets killed than that you hurt

that poor

Barbarian then at least Wars of you know

Defending Your Own borders against

Barbarian

invasions is is

Justified to preserve the the life of

the

nation so and that wasn't any kind of
veiled political commentary on what's
Happening Now at the southern border or
anything like that
it's just common
sense so I'm just going to move on to
joo's next question here which is if
samsara is infinite wouldn't it
undermine the characteristic of
impermanence well samsara isn't the same
from one moment to the next there is no
abiding Spirit of samsara it's like a
human being or a flame that's different
from one moment to the next and so it's
a different samsara every moment I mean
you want to generalize that as Sam Sara

you're putting it under this symbol then

yeah you this going to be a little bit

delusional because samsara isn't just

this one unified

samsara that I mean that's just it's

almost like human like semantics or

grammar or just the way the human mind

like lumps things together and

generalizes so Sam SAR itself is a

generalization

and it is not it is still subject to

impermanence because everything in

samsara is in a state of

flux so I'm just going to move on to the

next question this is from nature cure

and nature CER says could you please use

your Channel's post section for quiz

purposes many channels do that I will
have correct answers or it will have
correct answers so gang would gain their
correct understanding through answering
fun questions well that's a good idea
actually and uh yeah if there's a good
chance I'll eventually do that I did uh
have one poll on on my uh no I've had a
few polls on my Discord server but
putting putting in like a quiz on
YouTube it's really it's a good idea I
hadn't really thought about doing that
before so now at least I'm thinking
about it I'm not making any promises
about actually doing it but it does seem
like a good idea so so I'm going to move

on to the next question this is from Robert and Robert says do you have any opinion on a specific Tha Buddhist interpretation of the cheetah after watching a d talk by Tai monk it seemed as though he suggested that the cheetah is the self because it is not contained within the five condos well technically from from the Orthodox terava point of view it is contained within the five condos because cheah is WIA it's Consciousness so from an orthodox point of view you yeah it's one of the five condas it's just that Tha monks I mean they've been influenced by Mahayana to some degree they're not really Scholars as much as the Burmese are they're not

as dogmatic and so they've kind of

drifted into like

anotic understanding of reality which I

mean the

upanishads is it's it's not a they're

not foolish documents at least the ones

that are saying you know the Atman is

Brahman and Brahman is just like

infinite formless Consciousness and so

forth that's kind of the direction some

of these time monks are going and it's

sort of a fashion in Thailand to talk

about the jit or the cheetah as you know

it's like essentially yourself and some

Mahayana Buddhists like um there's one

person on the Discord server who is a a

pure land Buddhist and he's he's citing
the Nirvana Sutra over and over again
and the Nirvana Sutra apparently I've
never read it personally but it
apparently is saying essentially that
Nirvana is the self or it's just like
the the ult the absolute is sort of like
the one self that everybody shares it's
not like everybody has an individual
soul like in Christianity everyone
shares the Same Soul which is just the
the
absolute and I mean that's that's one
way of looking at it I mean I don't
really have any argument against that
other than pointing out that early
Buddhism doesn't teach that or it kind

of does in a few obscure places I've
mentioned before there are some
statements in the sutas Apparently very
old ones comparing Nirvana with infinite
formless Consciousness or saying that
the mind is is bright and Shining forth
and it's defiled by you know some saric
you extraneous things which is a similar
idea but the thing is it's uh
it's really it's not
Orthodox terado Buddhism it's not so
much Orthodox Buddhism even other than
some schools who really do want to say
that there is a self but they they can't
really call it s they got to use some
other word for it as a general rule

because it's so clear it's just so it's just stock that there is no self in Buddhism and so some people will try to some some philosophers they'll even try to come up with you know sort of ways of sneaking the self into the back door you know by saying well there is a self it's just not any of the five condas but Consciousness is one of the five condas and so they have to say well it's a different kind of Consciousness you know it's not WIA it's just wiana something else and I mean in a way they're you know they're kind of Heretics but I'm a heretic too so I can't really bash it too much so I'm going to move on to

Second Robert's second question which is
have you read the not self strategy by
taner OBU and if so what did you think
of it so that's kind of two questions
but it's it's the second one is very or
the second part of this question is very
short because I haven't read it so have
I read the not self strategy by tenis
robu no I haven't and if so what did I
think of it well there is no if so
because it's not it's if not and I mean
I am Vaguely Familiar with with tanisa
OBU he is ordained a Tha tradition he
does have respect for some of these taii
aons who really do say you know the
cheetah is it's like the who we really

are you know it's like the Observer you know it's like you know it's the self essentially um but I mean he has to admit I mean he doesn't like no self he prefers not self because apparently he does have the door open to something other than the five condas being the self even though there are sutas that call the five contas five condas the all you know that's that's it all that's that's

everything so yeah I'm I really do not adopt this view myself even though if it's in the up punish ODS or something you know it's it's another way I mean Ultimate Reality you cannot describe it in words it's just off the scale

anything you say about it's going to be
invalid so um generally with regard to
like God or the self or whatever you
have your choice between is and
isn't and I mean you want the tetralemma
is is isn't is and isn't neither is nor
isn't but the the second two are so
obscure that they're not they're not
very useful so as a general rule you got
to say you know the absolute the
ultimate is or it isn't and both of them
are wrong both of them are invalid
but I mean the way the human mind works
is you got to settle on something and so
most religions say is and they call the
ultimate God or Brahman or or whatever

but the Buddhists they decided on isn't
and they they came to the conclusion at
some point that even though isn't might
be just as invalid as is nevertheless
it's less dangerous you're less likely
to cling to some s with isn't than with
is but it's off the scale is and isn't
are both
wrong so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from Outer
Haven and uh we've been going at this
for almost two hours I'm still don't
know how close I am to the bottom
because the little thingy on the side
doesn't it doesn't indicate
correctly so outer Haven says why do so
many perverts tried to start their own

religious movements and then he's got
this list maybe I shouldn't read it but
I don't know freedom of speech or
something his his list of examples are
Muhammad Joseph Smith Rasputin koresh
and Jim Jones and then he said Buddha
and Jesus seem to be the few exceptions
so why do so many perverts try to start
their own religious movements um well
they're not necessarily perverts to
begin
with some of them I mean I mean some of
the lower level cult members you know
they want to be uh a cult leader just
because they want first pick of all the
pretty girls who are attracted to the

cult I mean there are some like that I
suppose but then some people I mean they
don't start off as I mean it's not even
I don't know if it's even right to call
them pervert some of these people I mean
not all of them are perverts but um like
Kesh I mean he was a polygamist I don't
think he was messing around with
children or animals or anything like
that I don't think he had like a foot
fetish or
anything so I mean Muhammad was just a a
product of his time you know he he
married Aisha when she was nine but I
think he waited till she was 11 which is
probably when she started menstruating
you know became started the transition

into becoming a biological adult that he

consummated the

marriage um let's see

why do they try to start their own

religious movements some of them I

assume are just sincere you know they

start this religious movement they are

inspired somehow or other and then it

just turns out that they're seen as just

the greatest guy in the world by all

these young women and so if if they

they're just falling into their lap like

ripe fruit then they go for it because

they're

human so I assume that is the case with

some of these that they didn't start off

as perverts just trying to start their
own religious movement so that they can
perve more easily that some of them were
just well-intentioned
and maybe a little nutty maybe a little
hysterical or something but still you
know all of a sudden even though women
wouldn't look at them twice before now
that they're the leader of this new
religious movement it's like women with
stars in their eyes are just like
falling all over themselves to just do
anything they can for them and so it's
relatively rare man who could resist
that for very long I
think Buddha and Jesus seem to be the
few exceptions yeah I'm sure there's

more exceptions than that there were a
lot of like founders of schools of Hindu
philosophy and so forth that uh you
know I assume that they they remain
saintly
so I guess I answer that question so I'm
moving on on to the next question which
is from Twin Wasabi and twin Wasabi says
what is your opinion on new atheists
like Richard Dawkins he's an intelligent
man but his enormous ego prevents him
from stepping outside his self-imposed
box I saw in an interview he even
admitted that no amount of evidence
would convince him of any deity or
Supernatural phenomenon what kind of

scientist says that no evidence would
convince them yeah I mean he's extreme
ly smug I mean that's that's the word
that I would use for him I mean he's
he's also got a huge ego but he's smug
and he's not entirely operating in good
faith like I did read the the science
delusion by rert sheldrake who mentions
in his book about how he got invited to
be on a documentary with Richard
Dawkins and the whole thing was a setup
it was sort of like the Trump's debate
with kamla Harris you know the whole
thing was kind of a setup where they
were going to make him look like a fool
and Richard Dawkins I mean he was just
kind of Shameless about it you know it's

like they're just the whole point of the documentary was to make anyone who disagrees with Orthodox mainstream science look like a crackpot and a fool so yeah I'm not sure about if he says that no evidence can convince him that's that's strange because I mean like Paras ology is is also science so I mean he would be even against some kinds of science you know he just Ms he's like the amazing Randy he's just mainstream materialistic science and even controversial scientific Fields like parapsychology he's just GNA say it's all [__] I'm not paying any attention to it or if I do pay attention

to it I'm just going to Mock and sneer

at

it and a lot of atheists are like this

just Rel their their new religion is

atheist

or scientific materialism scientific

realism is essentially their religion

and they have like this faith-based

attitude towards it and they just reject

that science has any articles of Faith

which it certainly does I used to bash

away at scientism and I've written a

number of essays just pointing out that

scientism or scientific realism taken as

an interpretation of reality is I mean

it's more sophisticated than most

mainstream religion with regard to its

articles of faith but still it's got

articles of

Faith like it's belief that there's like

this phenomenal world going on out there

even if there's no mind to perceive it

they have no way of proving

that they might be able to produce some

kind of evidence that's good enough for

them or just even that like this gray

blob of meat with a consistency of an

overripe avocado inside our skull has

the capacity to understand

reality they just take that as a matter

of

faith and some of them like Dawkins are

extremely smug about

it

so yeah the new atheist is uh it's

essentially scientific materialism

turned into a religion as far as I can

tell so I'm just going to move on to the

next question this is from Master Poe

and Master Po says you're in a checkout

line in a grocery store all of a sudden

without warning flatulent occurs and for

those of you who are not very good at

three syllable words it means somebody

farted I guess somebody also has three

syllables so you're still in the dark I

guess okay I'll just start over Master

post says you're in a checkout line in a

grocery store all of a sudden without

warning flatulence occurs by you and

your wife is standing next to you are
you embarrassed well no I wouldn't be
embarrassed because I mean let's face it
everyone knows women don't fart I wasn't
born yesterday they don't fart and they
don't take dumps that's a guy thing so
I'd probably just glare at the the
nearest guy in
line so in that case I don't I'm not
sure if I'd be embarrassed or not
sometimes people ask questions um I mean
not necessarily of me but like in
politics or something you know what
would you do if this happened and
sometimes you don't know how you're
going to react in a situation you've

never reacted to before you know it's

just going to be something comes up from

inside something

nonverbal and uh yeah I got distracted

it looked like somebody was outside the

window so let's see yeah I mean you

don't know exactly how you how you're

going to react or what's going to happen

whether I'd be embarrassed or not I'm

not exactly

sure let see so I guess I answered that

question I'm going to move on to master

pose next question would an enlightened

being be embarrassed

well I mean it's just kind of a strange

question to ask if an enlightened being

would be embarrassed if a woman farted

because like I just pointed out women don't fart I did hear a Burmese nun make a sound like she was farting once so I mean possibly I mean she kind of stopped being feminine enough because she was sort of you know shaving her head and becoming a nun and all that it might be might be possible then so would an enlightened being be embarrassed and again

um maybe at The Superficial level just human nature taking its course past comma which even enlightened beings allegedly have you know might just cause this reaction to occur spontaneously except the enlightened being would not

be like living at that level it would
just be nature taking its course which
is one reason why it's hard to evaluate
claims that such and such person is
enlightened for me anyway in Orthodox
Terra in order to be fully enlightened
you've got to be an absolutely perfect
Saint I mean you can't do anything wrong
you can't even want to do anything wrong
you are just absolutely perfected Saint
in an ethical sense and I'm not so sure
that that's the case
personally so would an enlightened being
be
embarrassed probably not but even if
they did show some signs of
embarrassment it may I mean if they were

fully enlightened it would just be
nature taking its course just a natural
human reaction and but they're not at
that level I mean that's just one of an
infinite number of levels that they have
access
to and I hope I answer that one because
I'm moving on to the next one this is
from cify cify says is a mental crisis
an Inseparable part on the way to
Nirvana and I've mentioned before that
ROM do made a statement in one of his
early books that haunted me throughout
much of my life and that was that the
absolute dispair or despair is an
absolute prerequisite of significant

spiritual

growth and in my case it seems to seems

to have been born out that the the main

spiritual growth spurts in my life have

res have been results of dis spare just

you hit this crisis you hit this wall

you don't know how to deal with it and

um there is a book battle for the Mind

by William Sergeant which maybe I should

take to that desert island um it's based

on the idea that we we vertebrates

including Pavlov's

dogs um we're governed by habit you know

it's just like like schopenhauer was

saying earlier you know a person there

exposed to the same stimulus they're

going to react the same way so long as

their personality Remains the Same their
their way of perceiving things remain
the
same so what happens is we just get
locked in to these habit this habit
habit pattern and even if it doesn't
make us happy so long as it keeps us
alive so long as it keeps us going
through life we just cling to that we
could be miserable we could have all
kinds of bad habits but so long as it
has succeeded in keeping us alive well
enough then we just cling to it and it
takes some kind of Crisis where our
habitual way of dealing with things just
cannot cope with it anymore it's just

your mind just breaks down that's how
Chinese brainwashing worked that's how a
lot of religious indoctrination works
like the early methodists were like this
it's like how um like in stalinist
Soviet Union how the interrogation
procedures work where Not only would
they get you to confess to trying to
overthrow the government they' get you
to actually believe that you were trying
to overthrow the government it's how a
lot of like military basic training
Works where they just break you down
into a quivering mass of jelly and then
build you back up into a fighting
machine that will not question in order
that's how a lot of manhood rituals work

like in in premodern

societies so it's I don't think it's

necessary for everybody to have this

kind of crisis breakdown in order to

just break through into a new level you

know a higher better level hopefully

unless you've got the Chinese commissar

who's there indoctrinating you into

being a

communist

so um in the in the text themselves the

polyc they do say that there's four ways

of making spiritual progress there's

slow and painful slow and pleasant fast

and painful and fast and pleasant so it

may be that if you're you're in the

pleasant side of the equation that you
had your crisis and your your like
despair in a previous previous existence
and you don't need that anymore but
somewhere along the line it may be
necessary and ROM dos said it was a
absolute prerequisite to significant
spiritual growth that you are going to
have
despair because that's what breaks the
shell and allows you to form a newer
better bigger shell which eventually
also is going to have to
break so I think I'm just going to move
on to the next question because we've
already been going for over two hours
here I'm not exactly sure how far down

the the list I'm I've gotten so the next
question is from yugao and yugao says
not much to ask today about how about
just how are you well I'm fine thank
you um I remember when I was a little
kid I used to hate it grown ups would
ask me how I was because I was told by
my mother when someone asks how you are
you say I'm fine but when I was a little
kid I didn't know what the word fine
meant so it just kind of bothered me I
had to keep saying that I was fine when
I didn't even know what it
meant but uh let's see how am I I mean
there's stuff going on you know it's
like if you're in a relationship there's

I've mentioned this before it's more of
a roller coaster ride than being a monk
you know and I'm if if you're a monk
you're going for like neutral smooth
sailing you got more calm seas but if
you're in a relationship there's more
positive and more negative it's just the
way it has to be
apparently so there's that also at work
I mean we've been going through a
troubled time at work I was just wiped
out when I came home from work yesterday
I've been wiped out most of this week
partly because the
manager he was offered a job that paid
like twice as much money he he moved on
we don't have a manager and it's taken

the corporate you know it's taken them

relatively forever to get to get us a

new manager and we're just completely

underst staffed there's a couple other

people also left recently just because

they were getting they got a better

offer somewhere or one person she just

she just hated working

there um and so I mean we're we're

trying to get by on barely a skeleton

crew and it's just sort of chaotic

because nobody is really experienced at

being a manager and somebody's got to do

the manager

stuff so right now we've got like the

the warehouse coordinator you know the

guy who's like overseeing like the

foreman of the sheet metal shop like the

production side of it you know he's he's

doing most of that and I mean he's

stressed out and just it's it's

stressful it's it's not

easy so yeah I mean there's more

positive and more negative now that I am

not a monk

anymore let's see so yugu says do you

like your non-monk life I have no

regrets really I think it's just the the

thing I I should have done and and yeah

I mean I like my non-monk life for the

most part I mean you have bad days

sometimes but for the most part um yeah

I do like it and I certainly have no no

regrets

so I'm going to move on to Yuga O's

third question which is read any good

book or seen a good movie lately and I

haven't been reading many books or

watching movies much lately which is

very different from the way I used to be

just like five 10 years ago well when I

was in America anyway well I read lots

of books in Burma watched mo more movies

when I was in America but uh I did watch

the second Dune movie Dune part two I

guess it's called that was that was a

fairly good movie it was approximately

as good as the first movie so yeah I

haven't read hardly any books at all

lately um and that's like the only good
movie that I can I can think of I think
it qualifies as a good movie so there
you are and I'm moving on to the next
question I do appreciate easy questions
sometimes so this is from rapael and
Raphael says one rule I don't understand
stand is that you need your parents
permission to become a monk is there
only the option of behaving like
Rapala and threatening suicide by
fasting to eventually get your parents
permission if they are
stubborn well that's not the only option
like I mentioned before a few q&as back
I did have a friend who was ordained
without his parents permission both of

his parents were devout Christians they did not consent to him becom a Buddhist monk and so he was ordained under Tom Pulu himself the founder of the tradition which I was ordained and they ordained him anyway even though he didn't have his parents' permission um because if you don't have your parents permission and they ordain you it's still a valid ordination unlike some if if if you're lacking in certain qualities then no it's not a valid ordination but if your parents don't consent that if you get ordained it's still a valid ordination you're still an ordained monk it's just that the monks

who ordained you have committed a Duca
offense which is a relatively minor
offense and so Tom Pulu told him that
Thea is willing to make the Sacrifice by
ordaining him and committing this
offense which they then had to confess
to to some other monk to expiate the
offense so that would be the the two
main ways of going about it um either
just hold your breath till you turn blue
threaten suicide or something until your
your parents under duress give
permission or just go ahead and get
ordained without their permission which
is against a minor rule but still you
you would be an a validly ordained monk
un unlike like for example a trans man

ordaining as a monk that even if the

monks ordain this person this person

still would not be an ordained monk

because you have to have a full at least

one

coone biological coone you have to be a

biological

male and not a unic even Unix can't

can't be ordained so let's say there's a

unic a castrated male wants to be

ordained even if they ordain him it's

not a valid

ordination he's still just a lay

person so I guess I answer that one I'm

moving on to the next one this is from

na

Canadian and not a Canadian says did you have a midlife crisis well I did have a crisis like when I was gosh about 40 I guess
um but uh whether it was a midlife crisis or not I don't know it's I mean 40 is kind of the middle of the average person's life I guess so yeah but I mean I don't it wasn't being middle-aged as far as I know that that caused it it was something else that caused it was I was living in a cave in Burma I've been a monk for like 10 years so gosh I'd be like only like 37 38 years old yeah I don't think that would be a midlife crisis if you have a crisis when you're like

38 huh so maybe I didn't but I did have
that one crisis it was like the last
time I ever got really depressed and it
was I mean I've described it for I had
some kind of fever which just ruined
everything I couldn't meditate couldn't
eat couldn't sleep couldn't bathe just I
mean it just I just hit rock bottom like
all Comforts were deprived I mean I was
deprived of all comfort and consolation
essentially and so it just triggered
this depression just thinking I've been
a monk for more than 10 years and it's
like if this can if I can still hit rock
bottom like this I mean it's just utile
I mean it's just hopeless and so that's

when I just kind of gave up and it was

right after I gave up that I just had

this spiritual grow Spirit it was it was

like despair resulting in like

significant spiritual growth

apparently but whether that was a

midlife crisis or I don't I didn't buy

like a red convertible or

anything so I think I'm just going to

move on to the next question this is

also from not a Canadian if I would not

be reborn then whoever will be reborn it

won't be me so why care well I mean you

aren't don't really exist even now

you're not the same you from one moment

to the

next so I mean why bother I mean if if

it's not even you you can just hit
yourself with a hit yourself in the foot
with a hammer or something I mean it's
not going to be you it's going to be
somebody
else so it's again it's not like in
Buddhism you try to eliminate the self
in order to become enlightened because
the self isn't real to begin
with so I mean or on the other hand I
mean you can just have compassion for
whoever is going to be caused by your
existence you know sort of like you'd
have compassion towards your own
children so I mean that would be another
reason right there even if you think

that there's not going to be any kind of
connection at all between you and who
you're going to be reborn
as but I mean you don't exist even now
in reality there is no you in Ultimate
Reality and so there is going to be no
almost you in the next life but I mean
if you can be indifferent towards what
happens to you I mean if you don't care
if you go to hell then I mean you may
not care if whoever comes after you who
is similar to you has the same Karma as
you you know a lot of that's essentially
the same same strengths and weaknesses
as you I mean I guess you wouldn't care
about that either sort of like uh like
devil worshippers I mean like real devil

worshippers not like the just the ones

who

are like what's the word atheists who

just call themselves satanists but don't

really believe in Satan but there are

some people who really do like try to

sell their soul to the devil and it's

kind of it's kind of the same thing it's

like I want good stuff now even though

I'm sending my future self into hell I

mean that's that's just ridiculous

that's that's so foolish you know it's

like you don't care even not only do you

not care about others you don't even

care about your future

self although ultimately there is no

self but like Conan was saying I mean if
if it's all an illusion and my S also is
an illusion it's real to me so until you
can get to the point of just being IND
different with whether you go to heaven
or hell then even though you don't
really exist you're still probably
better off doing good instead of
bad and I'm not 100% sure that I
answered that question I or maybe at
least not answered it in in the vein
that not a Canadian wanted it to be a
answered see if I would not be reborn
then whoever will be reborn it won't be
me so why care yeah well it's going to
be I mean it's not going to be the same
you I mean there is no you to begin with

but I mean you're different from one

moment to the next and

so I mean it's the same kind of a

deal so I guess I'm just going to move

on to the next

question this is also from not a

Canadian did you have a mental

existential trouble when switching caves

and other places to live um not really I

mean I had a little bit of existential

trouble when I first came back to

America in 2011 when I was still a monk

and I literally didn't know where I was

going to sleep that night I was just so

fed up with being stuck in Burma that I

just I'm going for it I'm just doing it

I'm going to America wasn't sure who's
going to pick me up at the airport I
just like sent out this announcement
saying I'm G to be there anyone who
wants to pick me up can do it because
I'm coming and that was I mean it took a
certain amount of Courage I guess and
there was a certain amount of
trepidation like what the hell am I
getting my myself into but I'm just
doing it you know it's sort of like
entering entering the battlefield
almost but just like in Burma moving
from one cave to the next or something
um I mean there might be a certain
amount of nervousness or something just
associated with that but it wasn't

really anything major certainly nothing
that would give me enough like anxiety
that I'd be thinking do I really want to
do this do I really want to move into
that Force I usually I really wanted to
so it was it just seemed like the thing
to do at the time so I did
it so yeah probably the only time that I
had real existential trouble when when
switching places to live as a monk was
that big move I made in 2011 where I was
just going to try and be a freerange
monk in America not living in a
monastery Just Landing there and letting
DH take care of me which it kind of did
it did I mean Christianity says the same

thing Buddhism says the same thing you
know give no thought for tomorrow what
you will eat or where you will sleep
that kind of thing if you really take it
seriously it's true that Dharma or
whatever I mean you get what you need
you might not get much more than that
you might just be like really living
from hand to mouth but it it did work
sort of kind of I did eventually go back
to Burma though because it wasn't
working well enough it was I was being
support Ed by so few people that I felt
like I was a burden on these few people
and so and it was just America the
attitude like even some of my main
supporters why don't you just drop out

and get a job they just did not get it
you know they didn't really understand
the whole dynamic of monks and lay
people and all that they just cons
called themselves sa and consider that
to be good enough some some people not
my supporters but other people like in
the same like Dharma group you know they
they were just kind of resentful the
very existence of a monk you know it's
like I was just wearing robes to make my
put myself above them or something as
though their own lukewarm mediocrity and
dhama wasn't good enough
somehow so I just kind of deviated from
answering that question which I think is

already pretty much answered so I'm
going to move to the next question which
sort of is from not a Canadian except he
blames his his fiance avenity so let's
just attribute it to avenity so that way
we get get away from the the
transgressive fourth question oh and I
didn't do it I'm not I'm not going to be
able to answer this question anyway I
guess please listen to 9inch Nails every
day is exactly the same with lyrics and
tell me what you think about it and I
didn't do it
damn maybe I can just uh answer this one
in the comments below after I watch the
video
yeah I totally it totally spaced this

one off I mean 9in Nails it's I don't know they have sort of like a really dark at least the few songs that I've listened to have like this dark cynical semi satanic kind of approach to to their lyrics that uh I don't really appreciate um but who knows it's not a representative
sample might not be statistically significant but yeah I do apologize for not having listened to 9in Nails every day is exactly the same but I'll get to it I guess so I'm just going to have to move on to the next one with all due respects to not a Canadian who asked the transgressive fourth question anyway

this is from drunk druck and drunk Dr
says have you noticed that World War II
mythology has become the prime symbolic
religion in the west since the 50s
Tucker Carlson had on a historian who
holds contrarian views about the war
this immediately infuriated a horde of
establishment experts like ants coming
out of a hill few subjects are as sacred
as World War II which is why the
establishment furiously protects its
image I know you read AG ajp Taylor's
book origins of the second world war
which was also controversial why is the
Orthodox view of World War II so
protected well first of all I don't
think that World War II mythology really

has become the Prime symbolic religion
in the west I mean you got scientific
materialism like Dawkins who uh I mean
that's more of a religious thing than
the the established narrative about
World War II rather than World War 2
mythology let's just call it the
established
narrative and uh yeah I mean nowadays
people are just kind of ignorant of
World War
II I mean most people really don't know
that much about it um um I guess that
the average American couldn't name more
than three countries that fought on the
axis

side um you know they they wouldn't know
like the major battles or anything like
that they wouldn't really know how it
happened they just know that World War
II happened like Adolf Hitler started
conquering Europe and killing Jews and
so all these other countries had to
fight against him to keep him from
taking over the world than killing off
all the Jews I mean that's essentially
World War II in a
nutshell um you know for the average
Normie I guess so let's see here um why
is the Orthodox view of World War II so
protected
well partly I
mean it is true the German national

socialists killed a lot of Jews and so
Jews Hebrews maybe I should
say um you know they really want they
don't want to see Adolf Hitler humanized
in any way that he is just the evilest
person to exist really I mean largely
because of this this established
narrative Adolf Hitler I mean if if I
mentioned this before that if there was
a a poll people were ask who is the
evilest person who ever existed I would
guess Adolf Hitler would would wind up
at the top of the list even though
there's worse people than him I mean
Stalin killed more people than Hitler
did ma killed more people than Stalin

and Hitler

combined Paul pot was was no angel

either worse than Hitler in my opinion

although he may have caused less damage

because he was mainly just killing

cambodians

so let's see why is the Orthodox view of

World War II so

protected um I mean it's just they're

just invested in it now I mean even

setting aside the Hebrew aspect you've

got I mean

nationalism you you got I mean it's hard

to say it's just the establishment set

up this narrative this is the

established narrative so it can't really

be changed very much I mean there might

be a little bit of tweaking but it can't
just be
overthrown because it would just
discredit pretty much everybody who has
been invested in a establishing this
established
narrative and of course we're the good
guys you know our side is the good guys
and we should have won and so we
did so I mean anything that that
challenges that unless maybe you've got
I mean even leftists can't say that we
weren't the good guys I mean generally
they say America is is evil we're the
bad guys but you know at least we had
the Soviet Union on our side they were

one of the allies and we were are going
against Nazis and everyone knows Nazis
are are totally evil even though
Communists are considered to be
okay even though the Communists kill
more people than the fascists
did so I guess that's that's the main
reason is just uh you know the Hebrew
aspect of you know not wanting to make
somebody who is responsible for the
death of lots and lots of Hebrew people
to to somehow reclaim him or you know
like I don't know rehumanize him and
then also it's just uh you know we're
the good guys this is the the like the
established narrative and I mean you
don't want you don't want to overthrow

that it's just it's just unnecessary rocking the boat although nowadays you can you can go back to ancient Rome and say well doiss probably wasn't really persecuting Christians like the Christians were saying that he was persecuting him or you know such and such Emperor probably wasn't really the psychopathic monster he has portrayed because you know he was of you know foreign extraction or he was of the lower classes and the patricians who were writing the Chronicles hated his guts pretty much like the establishment hates Donald Trump's guts and so they're just spewing you know all the bad stuff

they can say about him even though a lot
of it might be completely
groundless but I'm I'm just completely
deviating
aggressing um and and just making my
best guess to drunk DRS question and so
I'm just moving on to the next question
this is from
Elias and we are getting close to the
bottom this is the second to last
question all of a sudden
boom anyways Elias says although it is
unlikely that God or amitaba exists the
thought of laying my destiny into the
hands of an external being is very
tempting why are we humans like that and
what is the cure for this phenomena he

says phenomena which is plural it should
be
phenomenon where it would be what is the
cure for these
phenomena so anyways Elias is mainly
asking you know
why even though I mean why do we want to
put our destiny into the hands of an
external being which might just be
mythological well it's part of human
nature I think some of it is just sort
of of like like in infantile
instincts like instincts from childhood
where you feel very safe and protected
with a parent you know with your dad or
your mom you know they're big and

powerful and they look after you and
they feed you and keep you safe and
everything and these instincts to some
degree you know remain with us through
life and it could be to some degree
we've got like it has transmogrified
into a kind of political Instinct where
we just obey the leader and follow
orders and so forth like some people
just glorify certain political leaders
some people think Trump is is
essentially God's chosen who's who's
been chosen by God to save America that
kind of
thing
um also just the whole Guru thing just
just sort of surrendering your yourself

to a guru and just just like

unquestioning

obedience um it is part of human nature

it's like possibly it didn't happen to

us until we became a domesticated animal

you know when we were still relatively

wild hunter gatherers um we may not have

been so just programmed to obey the

chief the way we are

now but I do think it's just uh Lack of

self self-confidence would be another

another aspect of it where a lot of

people they're they're obviously not

happy I mean nobody's completely happy I

that's the first Noble Truth of Buddhism

and so they just get this idea that you

know if only God will protect me or

something you know or you know Apollo

Athena you know

Oso Donald Trump you know if they'll you

know if they they'll protect me and so

you know I just throw myself at their

feet kind of a thing thing you know so

so there's different reasons I I assume

different people have different reasons

for it some with some people it could

just be like the the childlike infantile

desire for a parent figure to protect

them and others it could just be like

the domesticated animal of obeying the

leader and there's a lot of that in the

human race because most people are

followers they want somebody to follow

you know they might choose the the best
person to follow and then they just
follow them the Roman Empire was like
that you know you might be choosing like
a ruthless psychopath to be the emperor
the next Emperor but he's a damn good
General and there's going to be relative
Prosperity even though he might be
purging some senators and so
forth so yeah I assume there's there's
various reasons for it but it it does
seem to be human nature that we that
most people I mean I'm really not a
follower I may not be much of a leader
but I'm not much of a follower either
and so I mean I've been kind of a loner

throughout most of my

life but uh I think most people just are

programmed to be followers and largely

it's just lack of enough Vision or

intelligence or drive or whatever to

really get their own life worked out and

know what direction they should go so

they just pick someone to decide for

them and that's one reason why people

are are such sheeple and just obey

believe what what they're told by

mainstream media even though mainstream

media is just like blatant Shameless

propagandist Liars

now

so yeah it's a tough question and I I'm

I can't really give an authoritative

answer on it although I just kind of

threw some ideas at it so I'm just going

to move on to the next question and this

is from Fred and this is the last

question and Fred says is naroda samapti

the same is being knocked out and

recovering

Consciousness so he's neurotop or the

attainment of

cessation um or in longer form it's the

attainment of cessation of let's see

perception and

feeling

so yeah I think that's it so it's it's

the cessation of perception and feeling

and according to Orthodox terraa this

neota sopy or the cessation of
perception and feeling is just a state
of suspended animation you're
essentially in a temporary
coma because Orthodox Terra came up with
this idea that you cannot have
Consciousness without perception and
feeling so if you get rid of the
perception and feeling you got to get
rid of the Consciousness
too so I mean that's it I mean you're
just in the state of suspended animation
only a very highly Advanced Saint can
attain this stage which is strange that
why would anyone want to attain it
because you wouldn't even be aware of
having attained it because there's no

awareness there's no consciousness it's
just like being in a coma as soon as you
come out of it the last thing you
remember was going into it because you
can't remember what was going on when
your mind was not
functioning so I think this is just a
case of Orthodox terraa coming up with
this idea that you cannot have pure
Consciousness without an object there
always has to be consciousness
of something so you get rid of the
something that there's consciousness of
you get rid of the
Consciousness and I don't think that
originally was that way we already I

already mentioned you know there there
are a few sutas that imply that nibana
is infinite formless Consciousness and
also you got these taii aons talking
about the jit or the the che that is
sort of like this self in an upanishadic
sense so it could be that there was
something like that it's it's just off
the scale though and that's the problem
you can't really nail it down yes is
invalid no is invalid yes and no is
invalid neither yes nor no is invalid
because it's just off the
scale once you put it into words once
you put it into Concepts you've lost it
you just have to be aware of it
directly and that's mysticism which

Somebody Like Richard Dawkins would just

sneer

at but that's the only way of really

understanding reality is to understand

it directly without coming up with

thoughts and symbols for describing it

because you're going to fail it just

doesn't work that

way so it could be that there was a

state of neuropathy which was the

sensation of perception and feeling that

you could attain and you remain

conscious while you were doing it it

would be like fourth J or fourth jna

like the highest of the formless janas

is

um the realm of neither perception nor
non-perception so the next stage would
just be
non-perception but Orthodox terraa says
if you reach non-perception you're not
conscious anymore it's just nothing
you're in a temporary coma there is no
experience no awareness at all
but I do think it's possible that you
can have Consciousness that does not
have an object that's unorthodox
heresy but still there are a few verses
at least in the text that say this but
the thing is again once you reach that
stage it's off the scale and anything
you say about it is going to be
invalid so there's really no point in

arguing much about it maybe just for

fun and that's it and that is it for the

Q&A too so if you have any questions you

think I might be able to answer

about Buddhism philosophy meditation

monasticism Burma me personally etc etc

feel free to leave them in the comments

below like And subscribe if you have not

done so already and be happy

okay then wait a minute yeah yeah it's recording

yeah hello and welcome to episode 112 of question and answer I am your host pel Bosa and this video is going to go up a little later than most of my Q&A videos for the simple reason that couple days ago we were right in the path of hurricane helain it just passed right over the top of our city although fortunately by the time it got to us it wasn't a hurricane anymore it was just a big

storm a tropical depression if you will and about 95% of the power in this area was knocked out not to mention internet

although

fortunately um Weir where where I'm

living right now is is in the the lucky

5% because of our electricity kind of

flickered a little bit and it stayed on

although the internet has been going on

and off more or less at

random so with that as a kind of

Preamble that the house is safe we are

right in the middle of the path um I

mean you go outside and there's there

was trees all over the road yesterday

and like in

Northern um like North Carolina it's

just a disaster area in certain place

especially up in the hills because it

wasn't so much the wind I mean the wind

knocked trees over and so forth but it

was torrential rain it rained like 4

inches in one night at least around here

it

did and up in the hills when it rains 4

Ines in one night you wind up with flash

floods and mudslides and so forth that

were just like wiping out Bridges and

that kind of thing drowning houses and

so forth but I guess I guess we're good

we dodged the bullet

again knock

wood so with that as a preamble I remove

the little paper umbrella from my

beverage and I will commence to

answering

questions and the first question is from
Raphael and Raphael says did you know
that the Buddha Associated dark skin
with
ugliness and then uh he continues here
with according to the Lac
badia suta the Buddha told his disciples
do you see monks venerable badia
approaching ugly unsightly deformed and
despised by the
monks unquote quote
unquote so he says he continues here
rapael does dub the PO word rendered
ugly above means literally bad color so
since the Buddha was a white supremacist
by today's standards leftist woke
Buddhists should leave the religion

immediately and uh it is true that the the usual word for ugly in poly is duana which literally means bad color or discolored and uh it it had come to mean ugly I mean that word the Buddha didn't have any control over the word for ugly in like ancient indic languages it just turned out that way and so he used the word um with regard to venerable Bia who was considered to be ugly there's a good chance he was dark skinned it was dark skin tends to be associated with ugliness or rather with just being low class like in Burma for example dark skin having dark skin is considered to be

undesirable that the ladies will use
like sunblock like thark additionally to
prevent themselves from being burned
dark and they might the more wealthy
ones might use skin lightening creams
and so forth because it's simply a
status symbol Anyone who reads thorine
weblin the theory of the Leisure Class
would know that dark skin indicates that
you are a manual laborer working out in
the fields getting burnt black in the
sun whereas upper class people don't
have to work outside in the sun
and they are of a lighter
shade but also in India especially
ancient
India lightness of skin was um it was

kind of an an Aran thing where I mean
the word for cast in in in like poly is
W or in in Sanskrit it's warna which
means color so your cast is your color
and like some Hindus will say well it's
just sort of symbolic colors for you
know representing each of the four casts
but originally in all likelihood it
meant that the invading Indo Arians were
lighter skinned they were of the upper
casts whereas the natives were darker
skinned they were subjugated and of the
lower class of the lower the lower
classes and so and they were darker
skinned on
average so it was just built into the

culture at the time the Buddha was
simply using the word for ugly just
regardless of the derivation of the term
or the etymology of the
term also there's a a a rule of monastic
discipline it's in the Pim Moka that a
monk has to make his robe duana or
discolored before he wears it and that
is uh it's a strangely interpreted rule
that now is interpreted to mean that you
just put a spot or in Thailand they put
three spots just usually ink on the
their robe as a way of like discoloring
it or making it ugly or whatever before
the monk can wear
it
so so I guess the question here is did

you know that the Buddha Associated dark
skin with ugliness it was a cultural
thing at the time that light skin was
considered preferable to dark
skin um but I mean the Buddha didn't
come up with that it was just that was
the culture the word for ugly literally
mean means bad color which doesn't
necessarily mean dark color it just
means a bad color like someone with
jaundice would be discolored
also so yeah I mean the Buddha used the
word but he didn't invent the word he
didn't coin the term or anything and so
that's just the way it was and that's
the way it still is like in like

southeast Asia the ladies want to have

lighter skin you know they'll use

sunblock and all this kind of stuff to

avoid getting burned

darker because lighter skin is

associated with higher Social

Status so I guess I'm just going to move

on to the next question which is from

Romeo and Romeo

says my brother a white American married

a Japanese woman and they are now living

in

Hawaii my brother says that every now

and then he experiences is some

anti-white sentiment either from the

native Hawaiians or from other Asians

that moov to Hawaii from places like the

Philippines they even have a disparaging term for white people called holle I guess in Hawaii in in Hawaiian Polynesian my question is about whether you experienced any anti-white racism during your time in Asia either while working on ships in Japan as a monk in Burma or during any of your other travels you have previously mentioned being gawked at by villagers and such while in Burma can you recount any more overtly hostile experiences of being singled out for being white while in Asia well I mean I it's true I did work on Japanese ships before I became a monk and the Japanese are ex just on average

extremely polite extremely civilized

also extremely clean

and so I never received any kind of

derogatory statement that I could

understand maybe somebody said something

in Japan in Japanese that I didn't

understand but they were completely

polite to me no problem there when I

went to Burma also most I mean as a

general rule in Burma I was idolized I

was adored by the

people and the main reason for that I

think is that in Burma

whether it's still true or not I don't

know probably is they just assume that

Americans tend to be rich beautiful and

happy you know America is sort of like a

a daa realm you know it's like it's like
paradise a lot of people in out in third
world countries have this idea that
America is like paradise and everyone
there is Rich and
happy and so the the Burmese were they
were very proud and gratified and
Vindicated that I would want to renounce
Paradise in order to come and live in
poverty with them practicing their
religion and even practicing it at a
higher level than most of them were able
to practice it even the monks I was I
was practicing at a higher level than
even most Burmese monks Who as a general
rule tend to be pretty

LAX but the Burmese are kind kind of a
racist they they do think that even
though America is like paradise it's
best to be Burmese that the Burmese you
know they're the most fortunate people
because they've got Pure dharm and so
forth and so one of their great
compliments if they really like you and
want to compliment you they say you must
have been Burmese in a previous life or
you I mean if you keep living like this
you could be reborn as a Burmese person
in your next
life um even so it is common in Burma
for the upper classes especially like
educated people especially to assume
that only Burmese people can really

understand dhama correctly all

foreigners have wrong view including the

ties and the

salies and so you'd have well-meaning it

wasn't hostile but you'd have

well-meaning educated Burmese people

just assuming that I don't know anything

and trying to explain just kindergarten

level basics of Buddhism to me just just

assuming that I would know that kind of

stuff which was kind of insulting it was

kind of like a micro microaggression or

something but I mean it wasn't hostile

it was just sort of

condescending um there have been a few

like really sort of anti- white racists

that I've heard about in Burma like for
example in the The Village
ofier which was about maybe two miles
from my cave at one
time um there was this one guy who was
always badmouthing me and um you know
he's saying that if he ever comes if
that monk ever comes to visit our
village I'll escort him right back out
again this kind of thing and then a
short time after that I mean he was
unpopular because most of the people
considered me to be this great holy man
and so he was unpopular because of that
and then shortly after that he got jaw
cancer probably from chewing tobacco or
some such but of course the people who

idolize me they're saying there you see your bad mouth the the holy man and this kind of stuff happens to you also when I lived way out in the sticks in a different cave in Northwestern Burma in uh the edge of Alando catha National Park I heard about this other guy who was always bad mouthing me just probably you know he maybe he was old enough that sort of British colonial times were kind of a sore spot with him and you know it's just white people you know they're the colonizers they're the bad guys or something anyways he'd badmouth me a lot and then he wound up getting picking a fight with somebody or getting in a

fight with somebody and then he got
thrown in jail so again it was like
there you see bad things happened to you
when you criticize the the American
monk so I mean I get gawked out a lot
mainly by little kids had never seen a
white person before way out in remote
areas of
Burma but uh I've never really
encountered any overtly hostile
experience because of my ethnicity when
I was in Asia now I spent um spent some
time in Indonesia also like on the
island of Bali and never any kind of
xenophobia or any such thing partly
because Bali is like a tourist area lots
of white tourists there they're just

used to it you know we're a source of

income for them no

problem

so I guess I answered that one so I'm

just going to move on to the next

question this is from White Ash

Piper and white ash Piper says you say

that there's no such thing as rights

except to defend

themselves um yeah I I say that I don't

say really that there's no such thing as

rights it's um it's just I don't think

that rights are are like inherent in

nature that they are kind of social

construct so anyways just to make sure I

looked up the definition of rights in my

dictionary and it says a moral or legal
entitlement to have or obtain something
or to act in a certain way well of
course the legal
entitlement I mean you know that's a
social construct any kind of legal
entitlement is artificial you know it's
just people agree to it
they consent to it or whatever you know
it's just decreed by the government and
you have this right although of course
governments that just make these kind of
decrees generally are not strong on
granting people
rights you're much more likely to have
rights as legal entitlements in a
democratic more populist kind of society

but still there's the moral

entitlement and I assume white ash Piper

would be referring to that

immoral entitlement and you can say that

moral entitlements

empirically you know they have some

reality you know that like telling lies

is immoral there is a certain reality to

that it's not Ultimate Reality but we

can say it is conventional reality which

again makes it kind of artificial I mean

even the existence of this cup well

that's not a good example the existence

of

clouds the existence of air I mean

that's also just a conventional

reality so it's it's kind of artificial

to begin

with but I mean if you want to say that

we

have moral

entitlements that are just sort of built

into ethics you know from a Buddhist

perspective um I mean I'm I wouldn't be

completely against

that but but like I mean I am willing to

accept certain rights

as fairly I mean just an obvious good

idea everyone should have the right to

their own thoughts and their own beliefs

nobody should be punished for just

what's going on inside their head

something like that the right to strike

out in

self-defense you know

it's why not but still ultimately it's

something that is it's it's kind of

artificial it's like an artifact of

human psychology and our decisions on

what is good and right and proper and

all

that

so I mean I'm not really gonna just

argue the point that you know rights

just do not exist in any sense I mean

Beyond just artificial the legal

level but I do think that rights it's

it's kind of an abstraction

that I mean you can't really no

scientist could isolate a right to do

something from from some substance for

example that you know it's it's

something that we agree on you know it's

better not to kill than to kill

something like

that um but I mean what is I mean an

entitlement a moral entitlement I mean

what does that even mean really a moral

entitlement to strike out in

self-defense well some states you strike

out in self-defense you go to prison and

not the person who assaulted

you it's it's

just uh to some degree it's still an

artificial

abstraction so I would consider rights

to

be still a useful term I mean especially

if it's a legal entitlement you can just

read it right there in the Bill of

Rights or

whatever but whether human beings in

general or just conscious beings in

general just automatically have

rights um I I just don't see it it's

just it's just too much of an

abstraction that we can plausibly apply

to things but I don't think that there

are these rights in The Ether or in

Plato's heaven or some such that apply

to us regardless of whether we

acknowledge those rights or

not

so um I guess I'll move on to the next

question this is from Fred and Fred says

is neodo sopy the death of the life

stream is it in effect the death of the

individual Jaa well from the Buddhist

point of view the individual Jaa is

another one of those artificial

abstractions um it's not really the

death of the live stream because in

neota sopy or the attainment of

cessation which only a very highly

Advanced Sage can attain after he comes

out of neroda I mean he's right back

where he was before essentially so it's

more of just like suspended animation

for a while at least that is has become

the Orthodox interpretation of neod sop
the attainment of sensation you just go
into a kind of temporary self-induced
coma or state of self um just suspended
animation you know it's it's beyond even
being a hibernating squirrel I
think and then you just come right back
out of it and so you wouldn't even be
aware of it ever
happening so I mean I don't even see any
value in that it's like being reborn as
a perceptionist Brahma where there's no
mentality going on you might be in this
perceptionist Brahma realm for millions
of years you wouldn't even be aware of
that fact you know you get reborn as

some other kind of daa for example or
Brahma where you can recall your past
lives you wouldn't be able to recall it
because you never experienced it because
you were you were not having any
mentality going on you're just like a
statue so it's just kind of
these I don't know it's almost cont
self-contradictory the the Orthodox
interpretation of neurot sopy or the
Orthodox assertion of one of the 31
planes of existence being the realm of
perceptionist brahmas where they can't
even work out their karma I mean you're
supposed to stay in that realm until
your karma is exhausted you can't even
exhaust Karma if you don't have any

perceptions going on it doesn't make

sense so like I said in the previous Q&A

if I remember correctly

neurotop it originally just meant the

sensation of perception and

feeling and because like Abid dama says

you can't have Consciousness without

perception and feeling then they're just

saying you don't you can't have

Consciousness or or anything it's just

you're just your mind just stops

temporarily and then starts up

again

so I guess I answered that one and so

I'll just move on to the next one

checking to make sure that we really are

recording and we are so second
question is the Buddha was a man who
wanted humans to be content strive for
the imperturbable serenity of cheetah
rules and regulations were an add-on for
Naughty monks in my opinion question
does vinia get in the way so essentially
does following these rules these rules
required for monks does it get in the
way of the monks and for some of them it
does probably for all of them it does at
least least once in a while like there's
the entire silata
parasa um just adherence to morality and
observances where I mean if you just
cling to to vinia you cling to the rules
which a lot of strict especially younger

monks do a lot of strict monks just cling to these rules they'll despise monks who don't follow the rules as strictly as they do you know they'll just they'll act badly while in order to follow the rules you know I gave the example this story that I heard of a young American monk in Sri Lanka who was attended this Festival where people were handing out stuff to the monks and there was one old man who was handing out a bag of you know it's just the standard soap towels and toothpaste kind of stuff but there was also a little packet of milk powder in that bag and this young American monk very self-righteously when

the old man offered him this bag that
had milk powder in it he just slapped it
out of his hands into the air just
that's inappropriate I'm not going to
accept this milk powder monks aren't
supposed to accept milk powder like in
the afternoon maybe it was after the
meal it was in the afternoon or
something and I mean that kind of
behavior is due to clinging
to morality and
observances so it can get in the way
although for the most part the purpose
of winia is to make your life simple and
blameless and if you follow the rules
without any kind of attachment you know
you just follow it because it's your

duty as a monk to follow the rules then it's not a problem but if you cling to those rules make an issue of those rules you know use those rules an as an excuse for despising somebody else for example then yeah that's that's V getting in the way that's silata parasa

so but still I mean it's the S is way better off with Venia than without Venia there's a a scene in the text where a monk is asking the Buddha why previous Buddhas didn't have winia and then the Buddha answers oh no no they ask why previous um dispensations of previous Buddhas didn't last very long and then the Buddha says because they didn't have

winia and if we didn't have winia now
you can be sure that Terra monks would
just be all over the place you know
they'd just be handling money getting
married maybe stealing a lot of them
anyway it's just you have to have some
kind of rules in place even though it
can be an obstacle nevertheless it's
even more of an obstacle it would just
destroy the whole system if you didn't
have any kind of rules so in Ancient
India at first there were no veneer
rules partly because there was already
an etiquette establish lished you know
it was already sort of an Unwritten
Constitution for
renunciant that you know there's certain

things you'd be celibate for example
you'd only eat in the morning you know
you wouldn't handle money that kind of
stuff was just it was just the social
construct for renunciant at the time and
then it got codified it got standardized
and a lot of extra rules got added and
when I was a a monk I used to wish that
there were more rules just because it
would help me behave better you know
just this moral duty to follow the rules
would keep me from from any kind of
unnecessary
rascality because if there's no rule
against it then you can easily talk
yourself into doing something even

though it might not be the best thing to do

so rules and regulations were an add-on for Naughty monks yeah that I mean according to tradition that's why it happened monks started at first you just had veteran heavy hitter renuncian in the S no need to make rules you know they were just spontaneously being virtuous but then as Buddhism became more popular you got people that aren't so well established in dhama who are joining and you know they just want to for whatever reason they join the S and they just start messing around like the group of six monks they were doing all kinds of

stuff so then you need

rules and I think uh really if you if

you read between the lines in the the

ecclesiastical history of the First

Council that really a codified monastic

code didn't even exist until after the

Buddha died that the first first great

Council was called the vinia STI or the

Council on vinia so that's where they

probably they standardized most of the

poty Moka and some protocols like like

ordination procedure and so forth and

you'd have to have rules at least for

that you know how do you know whether

somebody's a monk or not even if you

don't have any kind of

rules so I'm pretty much answered that

one so I'm going to move on to the next

one from philalethes who tries to trick

me here by having four questions but he

starts with question number zero so he's

got 0er one two and three

and I don't know I'm I'm a little too

skillful in

mathematics to believe that there's only

three questions here when they're

numbered 0 1 2 and

three but I don't know maybe maybe if

one of the questions is really easy to

answer I'll answer the the third one

which is fourth on the list so anyways

question number zero what is the origin

of your name punch basa which he he

spelled incorrectly here I got to fix

the spelling of my own name okay poasa

actually p poasa is a combination of two

words PA and

obasa and each of these is a root plus a

prefix so PA is PA plus NAA and obasa is

o plus

basa so PA is usually translated as

wisdom prna in in

Sanskrit um which is PA is it's like the

same prefix prefix as the Greek P so I

mean the literal translation of paa just

etymologically into Greek would be

prognosis because the NAA is has the

same Proto Indo-European root as

gnosis and the PA at the beginning is

like Pro in Greek so it'd be like
prognosis but it has a different meaning
here PA the PA just means moving
forwards and the Nia means knowledge and
so usually it's translated as wisdom I
like um the first famous Nan's rendering
of understanding that understanding is a
a good um definition of p i mean it just
means like forwards
knowledge for knowing in a sense
although again it would have a different
meaning in English as for for knowing
but again it would be the same
Indo-European atmology in English it
would be for knowing with the for f o r
e and then the ba obasa basa means shine
or shining and the O which it would be

Ava in Sanskrit is indicates a downward

uh like a downward meaning to it so

obasa means like down shine you know the

The Sun Shines down on us so it's

obas so so poasa combined together is

like understanding down shine so I'm I'm

like Mr understanding

shine and I didn't name myself I would

have named myself something different

but that's just the way it is in Burma

they asked me what day of the week I was

born on I said Thursday or I didn't even

know at first they had to look it up in

a book and then they figured out I was

born on a

Thursday and in Burma if you're born on

a Thursday day your monk name starts

with PB or

M and poo basa they just liked when I

was ordained temporarily as a novice

before that I was

pami which again is a p a p name I'm I'm

glad that I didn't get named pami as a

monk because I just didn't like that

name Pras Swami sounds better in

Sanskrit but pami I just didn't like so

much

so I'm just going to move on to Phil

lees's first question or number one

which is actually the second

question is it harder to become a monk

now than when you ordained in the 90s

and I really can't say because I haven't

tried to ordain again since the 90s um I don't see why it would be harder to become a monk now I think you'd actually have more options like when I ordained Tong Pulu Caba Monastery was probably the best Terra voden Forest Monastery in America because abay Airi didn't really exist yet and also wat meta didn't really exist yet or it was it was just like getting started and really hadn't been established
yet so you probably have more options in the west with regard to being ordained um and I don't see how it would be any easier or harder in in like Asia I think

Thailand maybe they might kind of look
in to and see if you're like you have a
history of being like some kind of Act
political activist or something and they
might refuse you a visa on on that
regard I've heard about that sort of
thing happening before
but I I don't think it would be all that
much more difficult now as as in the in
the 1990s it might even be easier for
all I know so I'm just going to move on
to the next
question which is this is also from fil
would the Buddha if incarnated today be
a lite and I'm not 100% sure what a lite
is isn't it weren't Lites like
anti-technology protesters like like

during the Industrial Revolution weren't
they like breaking machines and so forth
because they considered machines to be a
kind of automation that was robbing them
of their jobs that kind of thing so
would the Buddha if incarnated today be
a lite um if I understand the word Lite
correctly I don't think
so um you know he's not so much a social
activist you know I don't think he would
become be like Amish although if you
renounced the world you know there's a
good chance he would you know say that
monks shouldn't have cell phones
shouldn't have computers that sort of
thing I don't know what he would decide

you know it's like who am I to decide

what a Buddha would

decide at least with regard to this you

know it's it's hard to say but people

who are claimed to be enlightened beings

nowadays in the west are on social media

and so forth they're not Lites as far as

I know and so I kind of doubt that the

Buddha if he wasc incarnated today would

be

anti-technology that he would probably

just

accept you know what's going on like in

the Buddhist time money was like a new

technology you know it had just recently

been introduced into to into India and

you know he wasn't opposed to these

social changes in fact he benefited from social changes because in the Buddhist time the the Ganges Valley was undergoing a lot of change including the adoption of this money economy that was really just radically changing the the economics like the social structure of the area because it was like the upper classes in really ancient times you your wealth was measured by your the number of cattle that you had mainly and all of a sudden the rich people were were not no longer like the owners of these big plantations and ranches you know they were in town handling money like anata Pinda you know he was

like a banker or a money lender or some
rich Merchant something like that some
sort of city magnate who is very wealthy
with money not with
cows so yeah the Buddha just I mean it
was all right and um it could be a kind
of a similar thing where the Buddha was
actually benefiting from say the
information age and internet and all
that who knows but I'm just moving on to
the next question which is the
transgressive fourth question despite
his
uh his Sly way of numbering the
questions and this this question is I
mean it's I don't
know what's the bare minimum practice

one would realistically need to attain stream entry I'm guessing keeping at least five precepts if not eight and some amount of daily meditation but how much is a must well anyone who's familiar with my interpretation of the four stages of sainthood and stream entry in particular would know that I think that the Orthodox interpretation of stream stream entry is not the original interpretation of stream entry I think the original interpretation of stream entry was it's sort of like a born again Christian this would be like a born- again Buddhist or some such where you have just entered the stream

of living

a a life that is on spiritual terms

rather than just materialistic terms you

know you're no longer just in survival

mode that you now have like a higher

aspiration a higher way of interpreting

reality but it wasn't so much any kind

of like Paranormal you know it wasn't

any kind of attainment of sainthood or

sagehood it was just you had a change of

heart really you know there was some

kind of insight maybe that inspired you

to become religious just like there may

have been some kind of insight that

inspired Russell bran to get baptized

and become a practicing Christian

recently so what's the bare minimum

practice ractice one could realistically

need to attain stream

entry I mean from my point of view it

could just happen to you spontaneously

you could be just a messed up person you

could be like I had this I have this

friend who um he was a rascally guy you

know he was in a he was in a punk rock

band which doesn't so much indicate he

was a rascally guy but it kind of

indicates that he had sort of like the

this Punk attitude and you know he was

stealing things and so forth and then a

friend of his suggested he attend a

Meditation Retreat and just attending

that Meditation Retreat just turned his

life around you know it just gave him
this Superior option with regard to how
to live your life and some something
similar happened to me when I was 16 17
years old I was getting in a lot of
trouble you know skipping school a lot
doing a lot of drugs just partying just
getting in lots of trouble with my
parents
especially and my father required me to
see a youth counselor and this youth
counselor turns out was a spiritual guy
and he turned me on to like ROM dos
books he also gave me his copy of
Illusions by what is it Richard Bach
which is excellent excellent
book and again it was like it was just

providing me with a an obviously

Superior

[Music]

way of looking at life and living one's

life rather than just you know be the

the human Sam and swim upstream spawn

and die or just partying and just

rebelling and just getting into trouble

all the time having lots of fun and also

getting into lots of trouble so that the

fun and the trouble just balanced out

and it was just kind of a quagmire

roller coaster ride kind of a

life so I think that was more the

original meaning of stream entry is just

entering buddh the stream of

dhamma and becoming a Buddhist like a

devout

Buddhist not just one going through the

motions but one who's really is inspired

to practice dhama as well as one

can with regard to the Orthodox

interpretation of stream entry what's

the minimum practice again I think it's

possible that if you've got parmy you

know you've done a lot of a lot of

practice in previous lives it could be

just about anything that could inspire

you you could just be an ordinary Normie

and hear one profound sermon and that

would be

enough or you could have a near-death

experience you could be just a complete

Normie almost drown almost die in a motorcycle accident or whatever it is almost die on an operating table have the near-death experience which might be enough to just give you that Insight that some kind of Awakening experience that will take you to the next level so the bare minimum practice I don't think there is a bare minimum practice you know anguli Mala was a serial killer and then he meets the Buddha and the Buddha essentially talks him out of being a serial killer and inspires him to enter the stream of dhama be ordained as a monk and he wound up becoming um an Aran being fully enlightened according to the

story so I don't think there is a bare

minimum practice although the more

practice you

do um the more likely it is that you

will have some kind of Awakening

experience it's just there's no

guarantees but the more virtuous and

dharmic your life is the better your

odds are your odds are never going to

get up to 100% And they're probably

never going to reach 0%

but still the more you practice the more

you you know avoid harming others for

example then the more receptive you're

going to be the more clear your mind is

going to be to some kind of insight

coming along from from whatever

source that will you know take you to

the next

level

so I'm G to move on to the next question

which is from chickory dick and chikory

Dick says can you explain nanava tera's

conception of padicha samua and how it

differs from yours well Yana Vera Tera

was very controversial he still is

controversial to some degree he was an

English monk with an Oxbridge education

he was converted to terava Buddhism I

think at the around the end of World War

II from Reading Julius iola's the path

to Awakening

I think that's the name of the book The

Path to

Awakening and so he and nle osbert Moore

went to Sri Lanka and were ordained as

monks around

1950 I guess it was Salon in those

days and Nana Vera was just a hyper

intellectual I mean he was just

completely stuck in his head and just

very intelligent very well educated and

extremely into exist ential IST

philosophy which was all the rage around

1950 so he was an existentialist

philosopher who became a Buddhist monk a

terraa Buddhist monk and then was like

trying to improve on existentialism by

sort of combining it with with Terra you

know he was saying the existentialists

always wind up hitting a dead end it was either despair or they would just Veer off into mysticism and he he despised mysticism utterly all he'd have to do was just accused something of being mysticism that was reputation enough he didn't even bother to refute it beyond that he was so much of a rationalist and but at the same time nana Vera had this weird idea that even though certain texts that were not core texts like Abid dama were just not the authentic teachings of Buddha nevertheless he considered the core text the first four ncah the first four books of WI

and the first several books of the C
kudik nikaya to be
absolutely 100% reliable teachings of
the
Buddha and so he could not doubt the 12
link theory of dependent core Rising he
could not doubt that but he interpreted
them all as being simultaneous and his
explanation of picha samua is so hyper
intellectual that I assume very few
people could understand it I don't even
remember whether I fully understood it
or not because it just wasn't worth the
ever it's sort of like reading Hegel
where it's just not worth the effort to
bust your brains trying to follow along
with this hyper intellectual discussion

when you you just have this feeling that

it's BS to begin with you know why have

to teach yourself calculus in order to

follow a geocentric Astron astronomical

system you know it's it's that kind of

situation so

um he's he believes that it's all

simultaneous you know he he's the one

who pointed out that it says this

arising that arises not this ceasing

that

arises so I mean we agree on that much

and that's about as far as it goes

because I do not consider the 12 link

model of dependent cor rising to have

originated with the Buddha that that's

not really what dependent core Rising

was all about but nanov Vera he could

not doubt anything in the

sutas so he starts with the 12 links and

then gives his own like

idiosyncratic interpretations of these

12 links and how they're all sort of

interrelated because he considers it all

to be simultaneous and really the the

only real point of agreement that we

have is that it's all

simultaneous but I don't accept the 12

link Theory that's obviously to me

obviously

uh a later development and you can see

like prototype models of the 12 links in

older sutas and apparently they just

finally settled on 12 links probably

within the first hundred years of

Buddhism because all the ancient schools

apparently had these 12 links but you

can see prototypes you know like the

kalaha wuta the central portion of the

Saka sua and even the nidana sua which

is the largest

discourse in the text on dependent core

Rising even that one it's like a

cardinal discourse explaining dependent

core Rising even that one deviates from

the 12

links

so yeah I N

Vera um yeah his understanding of pija

sopata was extremely dogmatic to the extent that he accepts everything in the sutas but then kind of re like reinterprets it away from what the commentaries cuz he had no use for the commentaries at all

so I hope I answer that one because I'm moving on to chory Dick's next one which is is it different from your statue metaphor and then he said please let me know if you can read my comments now yeah I saw this your your questions on YouTube and on bitshoot this time so is nano Vera's interpretation of picha different from my carved block metaphor yeah it's radically different

in fact nanov ver would utterly despise
my theory or the simile of the uncarved
block because as I pointed out nanov
Vera hated mysticism he said that it it
it violates the Aristotelian laws of
thought and there's there's three main
Aristotelian laws of thought it's like a
equals a which is the law of
identity a let's see
what's the other one a is a does not
equal not
a so it's like you can't say that
something equals its opposite and then
there's the law of excluded middle which
is um see what's the symbolic way of
explaining the law of excluded middle a

has to be either or B has to be either a or not a and he says that mysticism just violates these laws of thought and so it is just [__] for for example um one of his followers wrote a book on dhama and he's talking about the different Jas he refused to translate the highest formless jna name which is the realm of neither perception nor non-perception because it was self-contradictory he it was like an embarrassment to this idea that you cannot violate the laws of thought so I mean my theory of the the simile of the block of marble is Mystical it's a mystical interpretation of reality and nanov ver would have just despised it utterly because he was so

stuck in his head he could not
appreciate mysticism which is too bad
because in my opinion the Buddha was a
Mystic like the whole AA waga is a
mystical text where it's saying you know
just get away from thoughts you're not
going to understand reality through
thoughts you just have to experience it
directly which is what m ism is nanava
just hated
it so yeah there's a lot of difference
between me and Yanna Vera although we do
agree on certain things we both agree
that Abid dama was not taught by the
Buddha that you know this um you know we
don't have much use for commentaries we

don't have much use for most Mahayana philosophy except for when it does agree with older Buddhism that kind of thing and I did have one person uh an a European Monk contact me once and asked me if I was a follower of nanov Vera just from what he had been reading on my blog but the main difference between nanov Vera and me nanov Vera was a rationalist who hated mysticism and I am pretty much of a Mystic at least with regard to you know an approach to the absolute and I just consider that rationalism has severe limitations also he was much better versed in exist existentialism than I was although he is the one who inspired

me to read FH Bradley so I I'm
appreciative of that also he had had
read Gibbon's Decline and fall of the
Roman Empire like three times as a monk
I had read it like twice as a lay person
but when he said that you know he had
already read it three times and was
considering reading it again that that
kind of opened the door for me to read
given again as a monk because back in
those days I was trying to be strict
about not reading worldly stuff you know
nothing didn't want to read stuff that
had nothing to do with dhama like you
know Charles Dickens or
something so in a way he was sort of the

gateway drug for me to start reading
novels and so
forth uh so I guess I answered that
question and I'm saying I guess I
answered that question already kind of a
lot in this
video somebody asked me how many times I
say I guess I answered that question
that was a few q&as back and it's it's
going to be at least we're going to be
up to double digits in this one I think
so anyways the next question is from
Stellar Supreme formerly known as Liber
Lam and Stellar Supreme formerly known
as Liber Lam says would it be considered
bad karma to persist in calling someone
by a label that they explicitly renounce

after being informed of it for the sake
of superficially discrediting that
person and their
critiques for the purpose of super so
who's super officially
discrediting oh I see so it's the person
who's calling the name is doing it for
the sake of superficially discrediting
that person or is it the person being
called that name is renouncing that name
in order to superficially discredit the
person who called them that name it's
it's not clear there anyways I'm just
going to have to start back at the
beginning because I only made it about
halfway through before rudely uh

interrupting myself and digressing
so Stellar Supreme formerly known as
libr Lam says would it be considered bad
karma to persist in calling someone by a
label that they explicitly renounce
after being informed of it for the sake
of superficially discrediting that
person and their critiques like an
Israeli person telling an American
critic that they are amalec the ancient
biblical enemy of Israel or a Nazi when
that American says I do not believe in
or accept those labels for my
self so the American says I'm not a Nazi
and then an Israeli person persists in
calling them a Nazi I mean is that bad
karma well of course it would be um I

mean if you use

language like with regard to another

person for the sake of causing harm or

unhappiness or shame or discomfort or

whatever to another person then yeah

that's that's a kind of wrong speech

and yeah it's unethical for example I

mean some viewers can consider that a

transwoman who is a biological male who

identifies as a woman is still a guy

he's just a guy who identifies as a

woman so I mean that is just being

honest with oneself and just speaking it

out like that is just being honest with

others but if you're dealing like one

on-one with one of these trans women and

you just keep calling him sir or mister

or Mike or or whatever you know whatever

his male name was before he

transitioned and if you're doing it for

the purpose of embarrassing that person

or making them uncomfortable or

insulting them or whatever then of

course that is wrong

speech but if you're just being trying

to just be honest you know not trying to

Dev devate into Fantasy Land just for

the sake of you know being diplomatic

you know you're if you're going to be

dishonest with yourself for the sake of

being dis diplomatic outwardly then

that's not good

either so I mean you have to be honest

but at the same time you have to examine
your motives and why am I calling this
person
that like I can
call a lot of Democrats not all
Democrats but a lot of them cultural
marxists or Neo
marxists and they might be offended by
that largely through ignorance of the
origin of their own
opinions but if I'm doing it for the
specific purpose of insulting someone or
making them feel bad then yeah that's
wrong speech it doesn't matter what it
is that you're saying if you're saying
it for the specific purpose of making

someone

unhappy just for the sake of making them

unhappy then

yeah I mean that's wrong speech and you

shouldn't do that at least from a

Buddhist point of

view so let's see

here see I guess I guess I answered that

question I said it

again so I'm just going to move on to

seller Supreme formerly known as lib

Lamb's next question which is would the

Buddha reject the prophecies about

Israel and the Israelites being special

the authority of ancient biblical

prophets and their sayings about a m

Messiah well it's hard to say what the

Buddha would say what what the Buddha
would accept or reject about prophecies
about Israel it may be following his own
teachings like in the AA waga as they
are portrayed in the AA waga that he
wouldn't accept or reject you know it
just well that's what they
say um so my guess would that guess
would be that he would not accept or
reject but I mean if you were going to
talk let's say that the Buddhist somehow
knew about the Israelites and that they
were teaching in the Buddhist time
something that they supposedly were
teaching in the Buddhist time but now
modern Scholars are saying well Judaism

as it exists today didn't exist until

like helenistic times at the

earliest um I

mean let's see Israel and the Israelites

being special I don't think that I mean

he would just point out that you know

the brahans consider to be special too

but they're not necessarily special you

know the brahmans were kind of like the

chosen people of

India at the time the authority of

ancient biblical prophets I think he

would point out that some prophets

really do predict the future to some

degree and some of them are

fake and biblical prophets kind of fit

the same category just based on just

retroactively looking and seeing how how correct they were what their what their track record is so some of the biblical prophets made false prophecies and there sayings about a messiah I don't know what the Buddha would say about the Israelis or the Israelites prophesying a messiah I maybe he he he would know better than I would so yeah it's it's hard to say but with with regard to him would would he accept or reject this kind of stuff I think that the enl point of view would be neither to accept nor reject

so I'm just going to move on on next

question this is from Outer Haven and I
do not get this question I think it's a
joke question outer Haven says how many
two Factor authentications until I reach
Enlightenment and uh yeah there's
there's no way of really knowing the
answer to that
question could be an infinite number I
don't know
yeah so I'm I guess I'm just going to
move on to the next question I just do
not understand two Factor
authentications until I reach
Enlightenment so this is from game fap
and game fap says that Trump doll seems
to move around the room and be in
different positions in each video is it

possessed like Chucky or perhaps you are using the doll in inappropriate ways or a voodoo doll um actually my woman keeps moving the doll doll around she she kind of decorates the background she put the hats on top of the the the plant thing back there too see the the Trump doll is uh yeah you can see him right right there kind of peeking over the back of the chair there on the bookcase he's like on top of the books on the third from the top row so he's there but he's not he's not self-propelled he's not sentient in any way as far as I know yeah it's just that uh my set designer is is moving it around sometimes she

also placed the the uh the atal pumpkins
back
there so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from drunk Dr
and drunk Dr says what's the situation
with polygamy in Myanmar I've heard that
it is technically illegal but not
enforced well I heard the exact opposite
I've heard that it's Tech technically
legal but I never encountered a
polygamist in Burma like polygamy is
also legal in Thailand and I actually
did meet one guy with two wives in
Thailand he was a Burmese man kind of
ironically and he had two wives uh an
older Burmese wife and a younger Thai
wife and the younger Thai wife was like

handling his visas and all that kind of
stuff until this guy who was in his 70s
he had to have been started messing
around with like a 21-year-old Thai girl
and then the younger Thai wife who was
maybe in her early 50s said that's it
I'm not I'm not putting up with this so
he wound up losing his second wife and I
think he is now monogamous again if he's
still alive he'd be very old
now so I do think it was has been my
understanding that in Myanmar polygamy
polygamy is legal it's just that almost
Nobody Does it
so I don't think it's technically
illegal but not enforced it's just kind

of it's not enforced by the people that
they can get married they can marry more
than one per one woman but don't that's
my understanding of the situation and
just like in Thailand I think polygamy
is legal but rare I think it's even
rarer in
Burma so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from
ruie and ruy says I've been thinking
about the incompatibilities between
dhama and Marxism of which there are
many including materialism so what's
your take on the following if karma is
personal and not transmissible couldn't
it be seen as an external form of
private property like in a certain sense

the body is yeah I think like hardcore
communism it wouldn't even consider your
own body to be your own personal
property because I mean the state can
just do whatever they want with you you
know they can just pound on your door in
the middle of the night and throw you
into a police car and nobody's ever
going to see you
again
so you could see it as a kind of private
property like there is the statement
it's it's like uh symbolic of equinity
of UPA that is it's just the the the
statement Kamas which means each
person's karma is their

own so I mean that if it's your own then

that would make it your private property

in a sense although at the same time

there really is no self in early

Buddhism or in terraa Buddhism and so

you can't really have I mean private

property would be like a conventional

truth but certainly not an ultimate

truth so ultimately there'd be no such

thing as private property or communal

property there's just no property

ultimately because you know there's no

differentiation ultimately

and with no self you know I me mine I

mean nothing is really mine if there is

no

me but in a sense you know like in a

figurative sense one's karma is one's

own

Kamas so you can do you can deal with

that as you please I guess and I'm going

to move on to the next question and this

is from the person whose name is spelled

something like creel but ironically

pronounced anounced throat warbler

Mangrove and throat warbler Mangrove

says if the Buddha reincarnated today

what would he be most appalled and

pleased by regarding the state of

Buddhism today in your opinion thank you

for answering well again I'm having the

second guess a fully enlightened sasam

Buddha here like I mean there's a good

chance that I mean at the the most
important level he wouldn't be appalled
or pleased by anything you know he would
not accept or reject he'd have perfect
equinity so I mean that would be my best
guess that he would have perfect
equinity would not be appalled by
anything would not be pleased by
anything but I mean outwardly he might
like make comments you know he might
give sermons like he does in the texts
where he is kind of critiquing certain
certain aspects of like the social
structure like Brahman claims of being
you know the highest
cast that sort of thing so what would he
be most appalled by or what would he

like

denounce um I think a lot of it would

just be fake Buddhism masquerading as

teachings of the

Buddha and there's a lot of that even

included in Terra Buddhism that he would

at least try to set the record straight

and saying I have never taught that you

know in my previous existence in Ancient

India didn't teach it didn't endorse it

I do not endorse it

now and uh what would he be most pleased

by I think he might be most pleased I

mean superficially that he might speak

Praise of is the very fact that the the

system that he started has existed for

2,500 years apparently in the Buddhist time or shortly after the Buddhist time and he was he is portrayed in the text as predicting that Buddhism would only exist for 500 years at least true Buddhism and maybe he was right maybe what we got now isn't true Buddhism anymore a lot of it isn't pretty obviously much of it isn't maybe even most of it but there's still you know there's still like undercurrents at least and you go out into remote Asian forests it becomes like you know overcurrents you know where they're really are trying to follow what the Buddha taught so yeah what he'd be most

appalled by would be fake Buddhism
masquerading as genuine Buddhism in even
in tavana but even more so in like
Mahayana schools whereas some of some
mahay schools are teaching essentially
the exact opposite of what the Buddha
was teaching you know and passing it off
as teachings of the
Buddha and I think what he be most
pleased by by would be just the very
fact that dhama is still limping along
2,500 years
later so I'll just move on to the next
question which is from pyramid and
pyramid says very interesting would you
mind expanding and elaborating more on

scientific

materialism and somebody answered this

in the comments answered pyramid saying

that my book philosophical Dharma has a

number of essays in it that are criti

speaking scientific

materialism also I forgot to ask my my

wife um if my first article on

scientific materialism is up on my

website which she's been kind of

Designing that and and sort of putting

the essays and stuff in order when

they're ready you know when it's ready

to be put in and that kind of thing and

I I forgot to look at my own website um

to see if that article scientism is is

up that's the largest most elaborate

article or essay that I've written about scientific materialism that may be online
now but would I mind expanding on or and elaborating more on scientific materialism well I mean for starters scientific materialism starts with what is uncertain and sometimes even rejects what is certain what is uncertain is the existence of a material Universe out there that exists regardless of whether anyone's perceiving it or not they just accept that as an article of faith and some scientific materialists will reject Consciousness I mean BF Skinner was like the classic example of this who just I

mean he didn't not want to deal with
Consciousness at all now he's saying you
don't eat because you're hungry you're
they say that you're hungry because you
eat so there there just a number of
assumptions made in science that are
that are accepted as obviously
True by philosophically naive scientists
but really it's an Article of Faith just
the the idea that everything that
happens in this universe has to happen
in a
regular pattern like rule following
way that I mean you can't have anything
happen that isn't obeying some
pre-established law of physics or law of
nature so I mean science is even

designed to just filter out anything
that seems random that seems like it's
not following the rules correctly you
know like an example I give is in
chemistry if you do a number of
measurements you know you're doing like
some kind of statistical study or
something so you have to have like a
group of measurements of the same
phenomenon one of them comes out
differently from the rest you just you
just dismiss that when you just assume
that something went wrong that science
is geared only for finding repeating
patterns and then assumes that only
these repeating patterns are real that

nothing can happen outside of these
repeating patterns so I mean that's an
Article of Faith a very convenient even
necessary Article of Faith of scientism
is that the future will behave the same
as the past did that laws of physics
can't change
and I mean you pretty much have to do
that if you're going to be like making
inferences with regard to the Future
based on the past which is what science
does you know you verify or at least
like reinforce a hypothesis or a theory
by making predictions you know if this
is true then this should be true in the
future it's like one of the ways of
verifying Einstein's idea of light being

bent by gravity is there was a a total
eclipse of the Sun and you had
astronomers like trying to verify or or
debunk Einstein by measuring whether
there was some sort of curvature of
light going around the Sun where they
could see a star that should have been
obscured by the Sun but then they can
actually see it so that verified
Einstein or at least reinforced
Einstein's
theories so I mean there's all kinds of
Articles of Faith the very idea that
reality can be understood intellectually
the very idea that this gray blob of
meat in your skull is capable of

understanding reality that kind of
thing and then they just take it as a
kind of religion really they have faith
just unquestioning faith in in their
scientific materialism Like Richard
Dawkins he's he has so much faith in it
that he's just like overbearingly smug
about it
but I mean if you want more information
on that you could obtain my book
philosophical Dharma look on my website
to see if my original scientism article
is there and and if it's not it will
eventually be put up on that
website so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from
RFS and RFS says venerable sir in

regards to the fear did you overcome the
fear of death as a monk
well I've I've never been extremely
afraid of death I mean if somebody were
to put a knife at my throat I guarantee
you I'd start sweating and my heartbeat
would increase but it's not so much the
fear of just death as the fear of the
the few moments before death because
getting your throat cut can be very
unpleasant or so I have been
told
so uh it is true though that like for
example in medieval Japan the samurai
would go and stay at a Zen Monastery for
a time to help them overcome the fear of

death because Buddhism is effective at
helping a person overcome the fear of
death so I'm not especially afraid of
death I mean you can have like
instinctive startle responses you know
just reflexive stuff that happens but um
I mean I'm not really all that afraid of
death um but did I overcome it as a monk
I think um it may have helped it
along but I mean my father wasn't afraid
of death he wasn't a monk and he just
firly believed in reincarnation he
believed he could remember some of his
past lives he kind of looked forward to
dying sometimes especially when he got
old you know he's just curious I want to
see what happens next he was getting he

really did not like being old and sick
and broken down when he was like 80
years
old so yeah I mean fear of death has
never been like a major issue with me
maybe when I was younger but whether it
was my being a monk or just getting
older
maturing um that helped to overcome it
more and more is is uncertain but I'm
sure being a monk helped being a
Buddhist in in general was very helpful
in helping anybody to overcome the fear
of death although a lot of devout
Buddhists in Burma are still terrified
of dying and the justification they'll

give is that you don't know what your
next life's going to be I mean you can
just have like this horrible thought
right at the moment of death that can
send you into a lower
realm
so yeah I hope I answered that one
because I'm moving on to the next
question this is from the Proto pseudo
monk occasionally known as Cool
Whip and the Proto sudo monk says you
have said that practicing dhama in the
lelay life is like playing samsara on a
higher difficulty setting despite my
strong yearning to renounce the world
externally by becoming a monk I think in
my case the worldly life presents a

fruitful ground for progressing towards Enlightenment at least in this life for reasons I needn't get into I think the degree of mental renunciation possible monk or not may be the same for me it's like I see my present Karma my thoughts interests Etc and the monastic existence may be counterproductive and may result in dwelling in regrets as card put it like the fruit from the tree that has not fully ripened I have assessed for myself that I should do like the Hindus and renounce the world externally completely as a Wandering beggar at an older age I have to admit that framing the worldly Life as a higher difficulty

setting has been quite beneficial and
insightful perspective and played an
important role in my confidence for
being able to follow the path before I
thought unless I wasn't a monk I
couldn't would practice Advanced dhama
but I think the Paradox of Enlightenment
makes worldly life in my case actually a
more appropriate form my questions are
and so his first question is with that
as an introduction could you speak on
how a late person can achieve
enlightenment well there are two main
ways um do it on purpose or do it by
accident and in the
west it seems like most of the people
who claim to have become enlightened or

to have had some transcendental
Transcendent Awakening experience Have
Had It Happen by accident they had a
near-death experience they almost
drowned they almost died somehow or
another and or like at ca he just had
this horrible existential crisis and it
became so unbearable that it just kind
of slammed him out of his his usual mode
of samsara into something
better so that's the main way that a lay
person achieves Enlightenment is just by
being ripe for it without without
realizing it and then just some
cataclysm just slams them out of some
Sor so to

speak um with regard otherwise I mean

you can practice a lot and if you've got

talent and worldly life isn't so much of

a distraction that you still are able to

keep dhamma as your highest priority

where everything else is just kind of

secondary to

dhama then still you can make you know

great progress this I think it was who

was it ramach Krishna said that I mean

if if you are moved to tears at the very

name of God then you can do whatever you

want that you're I mean your mind is

already dharmic and so you know it what

you do outwardly is almost

irrelevant so

I mean just practice as much as you can

as a lay person you know keep dhama as
top priority wisdom the cultivation of
wisdom and uh possibly almost die and uh
that might be your best chances although
still the odds of becoming enlightened
are greater for a spiritual renunciate
that's just going with Statistics but
like I pointed out before let's say for
the sake of argument that you're a
thousand times more likely to become
enlightened if you are a spiritual
renunciant but if there are 10,000 times
as many lay people as there
are like monastic re renunciants then
still there's going to be 10 times as
many enlightened lay people in this

world as enlightened monastic re

renuncian so I think I'm just going to

move on to the next question here

are there advantages for a being lay

person within certain conditions

compared to being a monk to seeing Nebo

so are there any advantages spiritual

advantages to being a lay person um I

think a lot of Burmese monks who were

ordained as

children um they to some degree they

can't miss what they never had but they

never developed any kind of resistance

that um traditionally some of the best

monks and the Buddha himself was like

this are people who have lived a worldly

life and then finally realized that

nothing is entirely satisfying that
nothing you do is going to completely
satisfy you so they just kind of they
get in neida you know they just kind of
turn away from it you know they've had
their fill of it they're kind of fed up
with it and and so a lot of monks who
just renounced the world before getting
fed up you know they still have these
uncooked seed needs I guess where you
know they still have these yearnings of
oh it it'd be really nice to to do this
or that you know um make some money have
a family that kind of
thing um so there is that advantage of
being a lay person where the lay person

can get insight into how living a
worldly life is is never going to be
fully
satisfying I mean nothing is fully
satisfying that's the the first Noble
Truth of
Buddhism so with G aside from that I
mean some lay people they they just they
still have worldly Karma they haven't
worked out yet let's say like
relationship Karma you still have to
learn how to deal with other people on
an intimate basis in a skillful way that
you know it just remains as these latent
tendencies in a celibate monk whereas a
lay person may actually be like able to
work on that kind of stuff whereas the

monk can't it just remains this uncooked seed that he's going to have to become enlightened in spite of that that latent tendency that's still there that he hasn't fully worked out so that's another possibility um and also especially in the in the west to be a monk in the west as as I've said before it's like being some kind of tropical plant that has to live in a greenhouse in an artificial environment with special caretakers that it's just sort of a constraining kind of existence that doesn't work for everybody just being a monk in general doesn't work for

everybody I mean if if your like your personality traits are in tune with Solitude and simplicity and so forth then that's fine but if they're not in tune with that and then you become like a a a renunciant monk you could just be going nuts out there so um if you're just not ready for whatever reason or you're just maybe that's not even the best word in in this context it's if it's just like it's just not in tune with your personality type to become a renunciant celibate monk then you may have to just you know do your best at the higher difficulty setting but don't forget that it really is a higher difficulty setting I mean if if

you um you know you're not very good at
playing the game you know it's hard for
you to win at the easy level but still
you you think well I'm just going to
give myself an extra challenge by doing
the hard level I mean it's very easy for
Lay people to deceive themselves to kid
themselves and thinking well I'm just
doing a higher difficulty level when
really they couldn't even come close to
winning at the easy level
I mean not that not that becoming
enlightened as a monk is easy it's it's
easier you know it's it may be way
easier that's why the Buddha he
developed the sa to begin with because

that maximizes your odds so you're

you're going with a long shot as a lay

person even though it's already a long

shot even as monk because most monks and

nuns do not become

enlightened not in this

life

so yeah don't don't try to kid yourself

into thinking that it's more noble and

exalted to be to remain a light person

just because it's more

challenging if I mean you can't you

can't succeed in in meeting the

challenge so I think I answered that one

so I'm going to move on to the protos

sudo mon thirdd question here which is

could having imperfect cila breaking

some of the five mainly the fifth or
eight precepts help one to see the three
marks of existence for example very
occasionally drinking having sex
listening to music without desire so
that' be like Tantra one may be able to
investigate how much suffering comes
from these how useless they are instead
of taking a vow to not do these things
without having understood it beforehand
maybe it would help in working out the
karma such that one would gain perfect
CA by seeing in contrast to artificial
emulating perfect cila and getting
stuck okay let's see
here um well one one way of answering

this question is the way I already
partially answered the question above
which is by like wallowing in
sensuality you can then gain the Insight
if you're wise enough that this is not
the path to happiness that it's not
working you know I'm still not fully
satisfied and happy by wallowing in
sensuality so it can give you that
Insight also if you're mindful let's say
you're you're being Mindful and you tell
a lie to somebody and then you can just
feel this unease in your body while
you're doing it then I mean you can get
insight into just the the immediate
effects of
immorality so that's that's a

possibility too

I mean drinking or taking drugs I mean

that's that's one way of doing it is

like the person who's strung out on math

or they're an hardcore alcoholic or

something who just lose everything and

hit rock bottom you know they lose their

job they lose their wife they lose their

family they lose their house they lose

their friends they lose their reputation

they lose their health you know they hit

rock bottom and then finally it Dawns on

them whoa this is not a good idea I

should stop doing

this I mean they might have that

half-hearted idea many times before but

finally it just sinks into the center

that I got to stop doing this so I mean

that's I mean it's definitely not the

preferred route to

Enlightenment but I mean it does happen

with some people where you you you live

a worldly life until you just hit rock

bottom because you're you're doing

something wrong getting in fights or

whatever and

finally it's just it just kind of cures

you of it just hitting rock bottom like

that can just cure

you but uh I don't really recommend

following the route of like pseudo

Tantra till you hit rock and bottom but

some of this really is like Tantra that

apparently Tantra does work for some
people but it's playing with fire it's a
dangerous way of practicing dhama and
you would do well to have a wide teacher
guiding you through some of that
stuff so let's
see I think I answered
that okay I hope so there's probably a
few things few more remarks I could make
but I can't think of what they are so
I'm moving on to the next question here
and this is from Twin
Wasabi twin Wasabi says I've been
studying Mormonism and the concept of
exaltation kind of reminds me of Nirvana
Mormon believe that if you are righteous

enough you will eventually become a God
just like Elohim and rule over your own
Planet many Buddhists believe that you
will not obtain Nirvana until after
death I even saw in an LDS video where
the man said that if he had to renounce
Mormonism he would join Buddhism
obviously it's not the same but do you
see any similarities or am I mistaken
well most of what I know about Mormonism
is is that I have read the book of
Mormon and the Book of Mormon is is so
outrageous you know it's difficult to
find a single true sentence in the book
you know it's the whole the whole story
is based on a Jewish family coming with
an an arc to Central America and

becoming the ancestor of all the Native American tribes throughout North and South America and you know they were punished by God for not believing in Jesus hundreds of years before Jesus was born and so forth so I do think Joseph Smith was like hysterically dissociating and coming up with some stuff that is I mean it just kind of amazes me that intelligent educated people can actually Follow The Book of Mormon but apparently what twin Wasabi is studying is like extra stuff that that arose after the Book of Mormon for example it's my understanding that whoever is the leader of the book of Mormon is is considered

to be an inspired Prophet who's sort of like the pope and what they say is like official

Doctrine I could be wrong that's that's my vague understanding of post Joseph Smith

Mormonism so it may be that they have this idea of exaltation but I mean just becoming a God after you die I mean that's that's sort of like Buddhism but it's it's it's not Enlightenment

becoming a God Like Elohim or Jehovah I mean obviously Jehovah is not enlightened just based on what the Old Testament says about

it rather a cruel Tyrant it seems to me so and ruling over your own Planet I

mean I mean some Mahayana Buddhists like
pure land Buddhists think that some
Buddhas will create this Buddha
land um it's not really it's not found
anywhere there's is not the slightest
hint of that found anywhere in the
oldest texts you know the Prem Mahayana
texts but let's
see so many Buddhists believe that you
will not obtain Nirvana until after
death well that's certainly not a terraa
Buddhist belief could be some some
Mahayana sect that believes that or just
teratas terraa Buddhists that that don't
fully understand what their own text
say um you will not obtain Nirvana until

after death yeah that's definitely not
Orthodox terraa right there so just
because a Mormon man says that if he
couldn't be a Mormon anymore then he'd
become a Buddhist I mean that's not
really any strong evidence of much of
anything I'm sure that a lot of Mormons
would just become like Orthodox
Christians or something
too so do I see any similarities between
Mormonism and Buddhism well I mean there
there are some fairy tales in Buddhist
texts that devout Buddhists believe just
as there are plenty of fairy tales in
the Book of Mormon that Mormons believe
and but with regard to the wisdom of the
texts yeah it's like night and

day um and with regard to the later

developments of Mormon philosophy I'm

really not familiar with that I mean the

Book of Mormon was enough to cure me of

any interest in what Mormons teach I

have met a few Mormons

that were relatively they were moral

serious good

people so I mean that's a similarity I

guess there are a lot of moral serious

good terab Buddhists

too but Mormonism would be more like

Mahayana

Christianity I mean in a way the Book of

Mormon is it's almost like a reform

movement trying to get back to the old

testament which is kind of retro grade
uh progress it seems to me more regress
than progress a lot along with you know
a lot of Mahayana Buddhism you know
they're trying to improve Buddhism and
then they uh more often than not they
just make it worse or muck it
up so yeah I really don't see a lot of
similarities between Mormonism and
Buddhism I do not consider Mormonism to
be an enlightened system which is a
major
drawback of Mormonism in my opinion but
who knows maybe they've got some obscure
esoteric teachings in the in the Mormon
church that is like an Enlightenment
tradition but I have seen neither hide

nor hair of

it you know sort of like the Jehovah's

Witnesses they pretty obviously have no

concept of Enlightenment no

Transcendence at

all so yeah I really do not see many

similarities I see some like shallow

superficial kind of similarities between

Mormonism and Buddhism but aside from

that I really don't see much so I'm

going to move on to

yugao who says please talk about modern

psychology and how and if it clashes

with Buddha's teachings and point of

view well I'm really not exactly sure

what the state of modern psychology is I

mean I'm pretty well acquainted with
like mid 20th Century Modern psychology
with freudians and yans and adarian and
you know they had all these different
theories and it wasn't very scientific
at all you just had to have like put
forth your point of view
eloquently and that was good enough to
get a school going and people following
you and then like in the the late 70s
and 80s a new kind of psychology started
arising called cognitive science that
was way more empirical much more
scientific much more based on brain
function and so forth and then that kind
of faded out when it became politically
incorrect because you know like the new

left the Neo marxists they still follow
along with the Marxist idea that a human
being is like a blank slate you know
there is no human
nature that we are programmable which is
very convenient for leftist governments
that are trying to program the populace
to actually be in favor of their brand
of
leftism so I'm not exactly sure what
Yuga is referring to as modern
psychology I
mean I think modern psychology does have
the advantage over Orthodox Buddhism
with regard to the subconscious mind
because terava Buddhism in particular

has almost no concept of the
subconscious mind other than a few
things like karma is a mental state and
you're not aware of it so that could be
called subconscious and um like latent
tendencies anas in poly that in a latent
tendency that could be considered kind
of
subconscious um there's the uh banga
cheah in in U Abid dama that I mean
that's officially the closest you have
to a subconscious state and it's just
like a test pattern that doesn't
change so yeah I think modern psychology
has the advantage with regard to
understanding like subconscious
motivations and so

forth like certain other things like

dream

symbolism that kind of thing um has a

greater understanding of like Neurosis

or like psycho like mental illnesses or

even just uh

like

hysteria that hysteria is much better

understood even by Sigman Freud

by traditional Buddhism

because Buddhism despite the fact that

it was an enlightened being who founded

it

presumably nevertheless it was

pre-scientific and so you know no

Darwinism in early Buddhism no

freudianism in early Buddhism you know
there's a lot of the benefits that we
have derived from empirical science was
lacking in those days and teacher he's
not necessarily going to be able to know
all about you know technological and
scientific advances that that are
happening thousands of years in the
future he's just going to be live within
the context of the society in which he
lives and communicate within the context
of the society in which he
lives
so yeah I think modern psychology um
actually has the Improvement on Buddhism
in an understanding of you know the
subconscious mind and um you know

like hysteria and so forth and just
especially cognitive science which arose
and pretty much passed away I assume it
still exists out there but it's not
nearly as high-profile as it was before
it became Politically Incorrect in
leftist
Academia that just understanding just
the
darwinian evolution of human nature the
purposes of like like Charles Darwin one
of the greatest books he ever wrote was
the expression of the emotions in man
and animals where he I mean people just
do not question their own behavior they
don't try to view it empirically or

critically but like when you're
surprised your eyebrows go up your mouth
drops open why I think Charles Darwin
might have been the first person to put
forth like a a good theory for that and
he's saying that when a human being is
surprised let's say you're a caveman
100,000 years ago and you're walking
through the forest and you suddenly hear
a loud twig snap somewhere off the trail
you stop your eyebrows go up your mouth
drops open when your eyebrows go up it
it makes your eyes open wider so that
you have better peripheral vision you
can see danger better with your eyebrows
up when your mouth drops open you start
breathing through your mouth which is

quieter than breathing through your nose
so that you can hear danger more
easily and Darwin point points out that
with a dog I mean it's to some degree
it's the opposite like if a dog is
sitting there panting because they
usually breathe know a dog sitting there
panting and it hears an unusual noise
it'll stop panting in order to stop the
the any kind of excess noise so it can
hear danger more easily or hear prey
more easily or
whatever so I mean modern psychology
really does help to understand human
nature at at least with regard to
cognitive science and to some degree

even the earlier mid 20th century

stuff um I mean every once in a while

they'd get insights a lot of the time

they're wrong I have I'm I'm very

skeptical of the whole adus complex in

in uh freudianism that for

example but I mean they did have

insights and like modern insights the

Ancients didn't have so that was

actually an advantage of psychology but

with regard to

um how Buddhism is superior modern

psychology generally does not have any

concept of transcendence or

Enlightenment which is an extreme

limitation it puts them at the level of

Jehovah's Witnesses and maybe

Mormons if you just have no way of breaking through samsara it's just a mental prison it might be a more comfortable technologically advanced mental prison but it remains a mental prison

and then of course Buddhism does teach a lot of things like just sort of the the importance of mind you know mind is Chief mind is the Forerunner you know it is all mindmade you know first verse of the dapada and and Karma that karma is a mental state and we are creating our own reality that's something that is largely absent from Modern psychology and it's extremely important

to know so it is good to be somewhat

eclectic and to accept ccept you know

what is useful from from any

system because Orthodox terraa is I mean

it doesn't explain everything there is

better than any other system some things

explains really well like

Transcendence but other things if you

want to understand

samsara science

is really good at at understanding

certain aspects of samsara anyway just

the super official stuff

anyhow gravity for example Buddhism

doesn't explain gravity then again

modern science can't explain how this

lump of gray meat in your skull actually

generates conscious experience they
can't begin they can't get anywhere near
that then again Buddhism doesn't explain
how the gray meat generates conscious
experience but at least they're
acknowledging that this conscious
experience is just fundamental to
reality so I think I've rambled about
that enough I'm going to move on to
yuga's next question which is explain
second samyo give more faithful
translation and few examples so I looked
up
samyo in my Buddhist dictionary for some
reason for years as a
bookmark in this book I've kept a little

map of the ancient Persian Empire I'm

not exactly sure why I do that but

samio is the usual translation is feder

but samyo literally I mean feder is

really not a bad translation of samyo

yoj just means yoking it means like

binding so it's like yoj has the same

atomology as the English word yoke you

know Bound by the Yoke or whatever

yoj means like binding Sam just means

like together or

with so it means essentially like

attachment and in Burma thanin which is

Burmese way of saying s it just means

attachment like thano means you know

somebody's attached to some somebody

else especially it means sort of like

emotional attachment to another person

he's got than yozen for that kind of

thing but anyways according to uh nanaa

venerable

nanaa there are 10 Fetters tying beings

to the wheel of existence and uh the

second one which is I guess what he's

asking for second sjena I assume he

doesn't just have second thrown in there

because he's acknowledging that that is

his second question you know explain

second Samena no there's no there's no

commas there at all so he says explain

second Samena so the second Samena is a

according to venerable Nana tioa

skeptical doubt or

vicha and I have to admit skeptical doubt is not a good translation of vich kicha that I mean this having doubt is not necessarily any kind of hindrance or Fetter or attachment just if somebody says it's going to rain tomorrow or the Dallas Cowboys are going to win the Super Bowl this year or whatever and I mean you doubt that that is not any kind of of like Fetter or hindrance or or any such thing it's Wii kicha is more like indecision than doubt like IND doubt in the sense of wavering and not being able to decide that's the kind of doubt that it is it's not just I don't think you know I'm I'm not at all impressed by this person's arguments and I'm still

not convinced that that you know a is
true you know that kind of
thing that's fine but if you're like in
this state of indecision like you can't
decide one way or the other and but you
want to decide I mean just setting aside
judgment all together that's fine too
but when you're like wavering and you
can't decide one way or the other then
that can that can be a problem you can't
like fully make up your mind one way or
the other and so you're in this state of
deal doubting
indecision that's what Wii vicha is in
in my interpretation
anyway so like you know did I break this

rule or didn't I break this rule I mean
that happens to a strict monks a lot you
know you you do something you have to
psychoanalyze yourself did I do that on
purpose you know was there any moment
when I was trying to do that on purpose
and you're like I mean that kind of
thing I P Al Seattle once told me that
actually that kind of doubt is that's
good it's like cusa because it's helping
you to try to be moral better but with
regard to you know what am I you know
it's like am I this way am I that do I
have a soul or not and you're like
struggling with this I mean to some
degree it can lead to some positive
resolution when you finally do make up

your mind but when you're in this state
of indecision it's it's sort of like
you're disqualified from Enlightenment
you know it's like this it's it's
essentially binding you Sam yo literally
does mean like
binding it's it's tying you up it's a
Fetter
so I'm not sure what other kind of
examples to give other than just you
know the qu the standard um questions
that the the foolish person is asking in
the suas like what am I and where am
where am I from you know what was I in
the previous life and you're just kind
of stewing over this stuff then yeah

that's that's definitely not productive

and it can hold you

back but generally I don't really think

a lot in terms of the official lists of

the 10 of these and the the 10 of those

and the eight of the other and all

that anyways I guess I'm just going to

move on next question this is from Power

and this is another joke question I

think I'm guessing this is a joke

question he says when the venerable P

basa was born did he come out of his

mother's womb walk around and talk about

how great he is to the doctors and that

this is his final

rebirth well I don't recall doing that

but then again I was pretty young then

it was a long time ago so I'm guessing

that I didn't my parents never mentioned

it so I think I'll just move on next

question and this is from let's see CH

Chas

is who changes his name a lot and I

think tasas is is is actually his his

real name so it's kind of understandable

how he changes it around but anyway Tas

is says you've said before that the only

meditation you do is humming M at work

now that you have Aquarium um do you do

watching fish meditation well yeah it's

not necessarily humming I'm not humming

oh I'm just kind of mouthing and

exhaling M more than anything else and

it doesn't happen only at work but it
does happen at work sometimes but yeah I
do just kind of sit in front of that
aquarium back there I've got another
aquarium over there an invertebrate
aquarium that I stare at a lot too and
also my sweetie's got a new aquarium
that will be featured in the next
aquarium update video which might happen
soon especially if I don't have to go to
work tomorrow because the place where I
work has had no power since helain blew
over this area and just wrecked it
pretty
much so let's see here yeah I do sit and
just stare and chill at that aquarium I
like looking at that aquarium more than

I like looking at a TV set that I just
sit there and stare at it but but part
of the problem is that it's not
completely finished in my mind and so
I'm thinking about ways of like altering
it so sometimes I'll be sitting there
just chilling other times I'll be
sitting there thinking well maybe I need
another AO sinkless and I mean there's
crud growing on the leaves I'm gonna
have to do something about that although
I I was very happy yesterday I was
looking at Father Fish my new Guru yeah
he put out a new uh video showing off
his his fish collection and you look at
his aquarium and it's the the plants are

covered with crud you know there's all
this algae and stuff growing on his
plants and it's okay with him he's
completely fine with it because he's
like the guru of the natural aquarium
just kind of like in nature where plants
have a certain amount of crud growing on
them you know it's not all pristine
crystal clear water zero algae none of
that and so I mean I do feel a little
better I can I can stare at my aquarium
with more peace of mind now after seeing
that Father Fish video because there is
a fair amount of crud growing on my
plants and so
forth but I think I'm uh digressing
somewhat see do I do I do watching fish

meditation yeah yeah I do also watching
shrimp um with regard to my little
invertebrate
tank um I I just keep watching for
amphipods and copap pods I put a one of
my gamis in there who promptly ate all
the ostra cods but there's still lots of
uh copap pods skittering around and some
amphipods that sort of thing which
you'll you might see um or at least hear
me talk about when I do the aquarium
video so yeah I mean watching fish is
just kind of a mild relaxing meditation
not very deep I doubt you're going to
get into the ja from watching fish
unless you're really into it but also

just mindfulness of daily activities you know like feeling the wind on my hand when I go like this like I did just now um yeah it is I mean I do recommend as for people who aren't really good at meditating and they would like to meditate just get yourself a little fish tank put a few fish in there and then just sit there and just watch them silently gliding around it's a really very nice meditation so I'm just going to move on to Chas CU as is is next question here do following the monastic rules require a lot of self-discipline or maybe when one lives in the monastery it's quite easy well it depends on the monastery

because a lot of monasteries are LAX monasteries where it's very difficult to follow the rules because especially um Burmese monks living in a Burmese Monastery if a if a monk who wants to be strict is living in a LAX Monastery if he is strict he's going to get antagonized by the lack sloppy monks you know they're just say oh he just wants to get famous he's just trying to make us look bad kind of stuff and I mean he can get driven out by by the unconscientious monks because they can't stand living with a strict monk that happens at places in Burma I generally avoided that kind of scene

however um but even if you're at a strict Monastery I mean you still have to know the rules you have to study the rules and there's five books of wiia and there's probably at least 2,000 rules that a monk has to follow it's a myth that a monk has only 227 rules to follow that's just the potim Moka rules but in addition to the poty Moka rules you got lots and lots of other rules like the rule that says a monk has to shave his head is not in the potim Moka for example

so do following the monastic rules require a lot of self-discipline or maybe when one lives in the monastery is quite easy yeah it takes a lot of

self-discipline and a lot of mindfulness
because you have to observe yourself and
your behavior and your motives because
some rules there's there's two main
kinds of winning rules there's achida
and SAA achida is you break the rule
even if you do it by accident like for
example drinking alcohol even if you
don't know that it's alcohol you know
it's it's like some kind of fruit juice
that went bad in the hot weather it
started to ferment you drink it it
tastes like wine you've broken the rule
even though you had no intention of
breaking the rule sa is only if you do
it on purpose is it against the rule

like telling a lie for example you have
to have a deliberate intention to
deceive just saying something that isn't
true by accident you know you're just
misinformed or something that's not
against the rule so um you have to like
observe your own
motives like when you're going through
daily life just so that if you break a
rule you'll know whether you did it on
purpose or
not and just knowing all the rules you
have to like reprogram your habitual
Behavior especially at first your first
few years as a monk you know we are
creatures of habit and so you know you
might just start humming you know just

some tune is in your head you start
humming or maybe even singing it you've
broken a rule it's just a habitual thing
that you happen mindlessly but monks
aren't supposed to sing make music it's
against the rules
just you have to be observing your
behavior and and at first especially is
is this against the rules is this not
against the rules and you have to know
the rules so you got to study those
too so it's never really easy to follow
all the rules especially your first few
years once once it becomes your new
habit like your new way of living life
then you don't have to think about it so

much but at first you got to think about
it a lot and just essentially reprogram
your habitual
Behavior so I'll just move on to CH asks
is his next question here which is apart
from using money what major rule is the
hardest to follow well I mean not
handling money was not really hard for
me I mean a lot of monks that handle
money they just it's just they just
can't imagine what it would be like not
to handle money they think it would be
just horrible you know I had some Sri
Lankan monks and like a Burmese mon told
these Sri Lankan monks that I didn't
handle money I was a junior monk at the
time and they just kind of stared at me

like I had just grown an extra head out of my shoulder or something it's like how do you manage it's like I managed the way the monks and the Buddhist time managed you know it's really not that difficult it can be inconvenient it can be a little bit scary like if you're in a you're like in an airport in some foreign country with no money that can be a little bit uh intimidating I guess but just not handling money I mean sometimes it was inconvenient but it was never really difficult so what's the hardest major rule to follow when I was young especially the whole rule against not having orgasms because when you're

young you're just kind of full of it

it's like the pressure builds up until

you can just be climbing the

walls so that was a difficult one um and

it with with regard to Major rules yeah

I think that was really the only really

difficult one for me to follow

especially when I was a younger

monk because I mean it's just this

Instinct this drive and I me you can't

just decide not to be lustful anymore it

if it happens it happens but um it's not

something that you're just going to

decide on especially when you're like in

your 20s and 30s

so yeah I guess that would be the the

hardest to follow for me and then

somebody who's just lowy has doesn't
have much libido it's not a problem for
them like a lot of Asian monks they're
just low te and apparently celibacy is
just their natural state or
something so what major rule for them
maybe handling money or some some monks
that are really attached to food just
not eating in the
afternoon like I remember I think I told
this story just a few q&as ago how I was
in some remote Forest Monastery it
wasn't it wasn't a strict one though and
uh I was just passing through and some
Monk came out to visit me I was staying
out in the the zat which is sort of like

this roofed platform out in the the back compound and he was asking me don't you get hungry in the afternoon and I said sometimes but it's not a problem and he says well I I do it's it's really a problem for me so I have to eat dinner every day but uh I just make confession and the offense goes away and I and I just sort of couldn't resist saying yeah the karma doesn't go away you know and you make confession but I mean you you you promise you're not going to do it again you promise you're going to restrain yourself in future and then you just go ahead and and keep doing it so he just kind of got quiet after that so

yeah I guess that would be it and so I'm
just going to move on to the next
question because I really can't think of
any other major rules that are hard to
follow I mean like not killing somebody
that's fairly easy to resist the urge on
that one most of the time you know not
stealing anything I mean that's
sometimes not stealing can be tricky
like if you're in the west and there's
like copyright laws and that kind of
thing you might have to like study
copyright law before you download
something that kind of
thing but I'm just going to move on next
question this is from scolin or

skaden and this question is fairly easy
scadden says would you kindly give your
opinion on Japanese yoga Shin Shin toitu
toito Shin Shin toitu do and then uh his
uh bullet point afterwards is if you
haven't heard of it which I haven't I
settle for a demonstration of its
practice apparently you can cut through
a pair of chopsticks with a playing card
if you visualize the sticks parting
before you draw your card
down for some reason women are quick to
pick up this technique and can replicate
it after a couple of attempts so that's
Japanese yoga is you cut through
chopsticks with a playing
card I don't I don't get it how how do

you get yoga out of that

um yeah I've never heard of it before

and I don't have any playing cards here

handy I think there might be there's one

chopstick over by the aquarium that I

use

for the stuff but uh yeah I'm really not

planning on chopping through it with a

playing

card

so

yeah well I I really don't have an

opinion on Japanese yoga I assume

there's more to it than just chopping

chopsticks with playing

cards I assume there's more to it than

that but yeah I don't know anything
about it really so I'm just going to
move on to Skol adin's next question
which is is there a way of determining
whether an ailment is
psychosomatic and the bullet point
commentary here is it seems like a large
chunk of media consumers are prone to
illness just from suggestion like when
people believed they had carpal tunnel
from being on the internet even though
typewriters had been around for decades
or women who watched soap operas in the
1950s who kept self- diagnosing
themselves with severe life-threatening
diseases from the show only to be told
by their physician later on that none of

these illnesses are even in any medical book okay but the question is is there a way of determining whether an ailment is psychosomatic well from a Buddhist point of view it's all psychosomatic just like from a Christian Science point of view every ailment is psychosomatic because it's caused by your own mental States maybe some Orthodox terod would say oh there's other things besides Karma that that cause these things but mind is number one mind is Chief it's all mindmade so from my point of view every single possible ailment ultimately is psychosomatic I mean if you you don't want to say ultimately it just doesn't

exist ultimately it's psychosomatic

because your own mind is creating your

reality it's it's your karma mental

States whatever your mind is creating a

reality and therefore you have a even a

broken bone that's

psychosomatic but let's just go with

more of a normie approach is there a way

of determining whether an ailman is

psychosomatic I think that

there's in some

ways like I have read that most like 90%

of asthma is psychosomatic even stuff

like

tuberculosis is to some degree

psychosomatic because even though it is

caused by a rsia or a bacterium or

something still your mind has the
ability to resist it and that's like in
Christian Science in in uh the end of
Mary Baker Eddie's book um science and
health with key to the scriptures
there's this long chapter called
fruitage which is like a 100 pages of
testimonies and Asthma and tuberculosis
are two of the main ones that people
cured themselves
of and my father said he used to be an
x-ray technician that almost everybody
has had tuberculosis at some point but
they're able to just kick it it's it's
sort of like a a herpes virus where
stress or you know some kind of mental

imbalance reduces your resistance to it
increases the likelihood of it
manifesting so even something like
tuberculosis or or even
cancer uh to some degree a psychosomatic
even within a Normy materialistic
context so is there a way of determining
whether an ailment is psychosomatic is
more of you'd have to make an educated
guess as to what percentage of it is
psychosomatic so I mean even you catch
you know Bubonic plague and you know the
the bacterium is detected in your system
and all that still it could be that your
mental States were like instrumental in
deciding whether or not you get sick
something like that or malaria or

whatever I mean for my point of view

it's all psychosomatic at at one level

at a deep

level

but um yeah well obviously if someone is

self- diagnosing themselves with a

disease that doesn't even exist then

that's pretty likely to be

psychosomatic or somebody comes comes

down with some kind of inexplicable

ailment that you know the doctors can't

figure it out then that could be

psychosomatic you know there's like

cases of hysterical uh paralysis and so

forth that

were made much of by people like Freud

and Yung that you know that's that's

psychosomatic hysterical

blindness like uh Tommy in the movie

Tommy with the soundtrack by The Who who

sees uh the Primal scene so to speak

when he's a little kid opens the door

into

his mother's bedroom and sees her in bed

with I hope his father and he just kind

of goes blind and deaf as a result of

that that would be

psychosomatic

um but uh I don't think there's a

100% accurate reliable precise way of

determining whether an ailment is

psychosomatic unless it's just obviously

a case of a person who is hysterical and

there's just they've been thoroughly
examine there's nothing wrong with them
physically but still they can't move
their legs or you know they can't see or
something like that then you know that
would be a pretty good indication that
it's
psychosomatic so I think I'm just going
to move on to uh scadden's third
question which is kind of a similar one
for me do you have any anecdotes of
people actively rejecting
reality and then the bullet point
commentary is this seems like a pretty
underrated concept that quite a few
people are unaware of which is quite

strange since it affects most content creators my best example of this is the leading website for book reviews you could look up any of your favorite authors and it's almost guaranteed that their work is rated low because a horde of people who don't read are aggressively misunderstanding them on purpose as a form of character assassin character assassination so Rowling probably be on that list I guess they're not afraid of symbolic death as long as it's their wicker man well just getting to the question above here without really paying much attention to the commentary do you have any anecdotes of people

actively rejecting reality well pretty
much everybody actively rejects reality
because this isn't
reality so yeah from a Buddhist point of
view any unenlightened being is
rejecting reality
anybody everybody except for a fully
enlightened being is rejecting
reality to some degree or another some
more than others I suppose because I
guess schuline here is referring to
people rejecting like conventional
reality you know conventional truth and
of course anyone who's biased is going
to do that anyone who just thinks that
Donald Trump is like Hitler he's an

existential threat to the United States

a threat to

democracy you know he's just going to

become a dictator from day one he's

going to refuse to

to to like stand down after his his next

four years assuming he gets reelected I

mean that is just rejecting

reality you know somebody like uh Robert

dairo is just flagrantly rejecting

reality of course a lot the

propagandists on stations like MSNBC

they're rejecting reality too although

for them it might be a machia ellian

thing they may know that Trump really

isn't a threat to our democracy but they

have to say it because that's their

job because they're Shilling for the

other

side but anyone who's yeah I think

everybody rejects reality to some degree

or another to the extent that you're

biased for example and everyone's

biased but at a higher level everyone

who isn't fully enlightened is rejecting

reality because this world this saric

world is not ultimately real it is

conventionally real provisionally

real um virtually

real but it's not ultimately real that

Ultimate Reality is not so much rejected

though it's just

ignored most people are just clueless so

I mean they're not even aware that
they're rejecting it so in a way they're
not really rejecting it they're just
completely oblivious to
it and so the next question is from
hercus who was a very interesting
Byzantine emperor and I'm glad to see
that he's still doing
well and hercus says do you have
knowledge of Western monks still being
in Burma during or since the Civil War
have they all left the country and I'm
not really sure I haven't been keeping
up on what's been going on in Burma I
have no intention of ever going back
there certainly not as a monk um but I
have been in a certain amount of

communication with Western people who
used to live in Burma and all of the
people that I was in communication with
that I'm still in communication with
have left the country just uh I think it
was voluntary I don't think that the
Burmese C government has kicked out
foreigners yet like they did back in
like 1988 or 1990 where they just kicked
out all foreigners
um but I think a lot of westerners who
are capable of leaving have left I I
assume there's still westerners like
Western monks still in Burma the
government generally treats monks well
including Western monks so I would not

at all be surprised if there's still
plenty of monks at places like um sh um
y or PA y or any of the other mahasi
places you know like pandama or chanate
or uh sadama Rami places like that I
assume there's still Western monks there
and Western monks really are not in much
Danger from the government the
government really does kind of treat
westerners with kid gloves they get they
they have more rights they get treated
better than the citizens because they
don't want to start an international
incident so yeah I it may be that most
westerners including most western monks
have voluntarily left the country when
you know the government did their coup

and started shooting people but um I
don't think they've been kicked out and
so I assume they're still you know maybe
50% even still there so I'm just going
to move on to hercus is next question or
herac leus as a follow-up question did
you experience conflicts between the
ethnic groups during your stay in Burma
I did didn't experience ethnic conflict
directly there
was um I went to a few Brown zones well
one brown Zone in particular in Burma
they got white zones Brown zones and
black zones white zones there's no
Insurgent activity tourists can go there
no problem a black Zone on the other

hand is completely off limits because it might be actually under the control of like the

Karen nationalist army or something the the government really doesn't have full control there and so nobody can go there and then the brown zones which are intermediate you know it's like there has been Insurgent activity there you have to get like a special permit to go there and so I did go to Southern mun State when it was a a brown Zone and you know I I was shown like the battlefield where the the mun Army and the the Burmese Army had fought and so forth but um I didn't actually see any Insurgent activity um also I was maybe 12 miles

away from a big anti-muslim Riot or a
riot between Burmese Buddhists and and
Muslims who are mostly of Indian
ancestry or Bangladeshi ancestry
bengalis that uh people had died in that
I was 13 M 12 13 miles away and didn't
realize that it was going on cuz I was
just living out in this Forest Monas out
in the middle of a a Barren Wasteland it
wasn't until a few weeks later that I
even heard that this Riot had erupted in
the city of
mtila between Muslims and
non-muslims so you know I've heard about
it heard about it plenty and uh just
kind of have indirectly been exposed to

it but I've never been like in the midst
of a battle between insurgents and the
the Burmese Army or have have not
witnessed any kind of riots or lynchings
or anything like that so I'm just going
to move on to the next question which is
from Zenith
void and I think this is going to be
possibly even the longest Q&A video I've
ever done don't mean to scare you off or
anything but uh it's hard to say how far
far down the scroll I am let's see
xenoid says do you believe in the
existence of the historical Christian
and the mahab barata
war well um it's sort of like asking me
if I believed in the existence of the

historical Achilles and the Trojan War
or believing in the historical
Hercules um I think it's likely that
there was some ancient hero who acquired
the name of Krishna it probably
conglomeration of different people
merged together into one narrative like
Hercules or King Arthur but I mean
probably there it is based on some
original person or group of persons that
got coales into one person in the mahab
barata war I've actually uh seen like
Scholars talking about the the war that
it likely was so that that was probably
a historical event although the the
Sanskrit epic the

mahabarata um you know it's not
empirical objective history it's mostly
Legend and mythology just like the story
of Krishna is mostly Legend and
mythology so do I believe in the
existence of the historical Krishna and
the mahabarata war um I think it's
there's a it's likely that the the war
actually did happen probably not the way
it's described in the mahabarata or like
the the babad Gita and that Krishna
I mean it may be he was just made up or
it may be that there was some hero you
know like Achilles there may have been a
a historical prototype of Achilles a
historical prototype of Hercules a
historical prototype of King

Arthur that it's just so distorted and
like um conflated with with various
other people that you know it's there's
they might as well well have just been
made
up so that's that's kind of my stand on
with regard to Krishna and and the war
then zeni's next question is do you
believe that Krishna as he is portrayed
in the mahabarata was an enlightened
being well he was portrayed in the mahab
Barat barata or barata as
God you know he was God in human form he
was an avatar of
Vishnu and Vishnu to a Vite is the the
EST God just the

ultimate so Krishna as he is portrayed
in the
mahabarata was an enlightened being
because he was portrayed as an
enlightened being I mean the original
Krishna may have just been some warlord
or something who participated in a war
you know a long time ago and then got
sort of deified as he became a greater
and greater hero like Hercules Hercules
got deified also he he originally just
this strong man like a super ancient
superhero I mean before that he probably
was just some kind of warlord or
Chieftain who was just a badass got a
lot of Legends made up about him and
then as the The Cult of Hercules spread

to other places the like local deities

that were worshiped were identified with

with Hercules and then he acquired you

know

their their mass of stories and legends

you know just got added on so that

Hercules I mean he'd done everything

he'd been everywhere

and with Krishna I mean it's hard to say

to to what extent there really was a

Krishna you know it's it may be that

Krishna as he is portrayed in the Epic

is just it's like night and day with the

original chrishna just like

Hercules or

Heracles so yeah he was portrayed as an

enlightened being because he was
portrayed as God Anyone who reads the
Bava Gita knows Krishna is God just in
human
form and it is true that Krishna does
all kinds of stuff you know it's like I
can't remember if he kills people but I
mean he was having promiscuous sex with
500
milkmaids all at the same time by
multiplying his body up to 500 and
boinking them all simultaneously that he
stole something I'm pretty sure at least
when he was a kid and I mean that's sort
of like um
sarian in gene Wolf's book of the new
son it's like Krishna isn't just the god

of goodness you know sort of like some
people will say you know Krishna was
doing all this rascally stuff I mean how
could he be God but he's he's higher in
a way than the Christian God because the
Christian God is just the god of good
whereas chrishna was the god of good bad
everything you know he just encompassed
the entire Human Condition pretty much
like seian who became like the Messiah
in the story where his he starts off as
a as a a
torturer you know it's just someone like
that is you know they embody like the
entire Human Condition not just the good
parts he's not limited to only goodness

and light he's he's got the full
spectrum he's the god of
everything which is kind of a
sophisticated way of looking at God at
least in like a a anthropomorphic
form so yeah do I believe that Krishna
as he is portrayed in the mahabarata was
an enlightened being yeah I mean he was
portrayed as God a manifestation of God
at least in the Bhagavad Gita I haven't
read the entire epic but I have read the
Bava
Gita so I'm just going to move on to
Zenith void's third question which is
how are Krishna and the mahabarata
viewed in Buddhist culture well I mean
in

Burma which is the Buddhist culture I'm most familiar with there's no mention of Krishna and the mahabarata there is um I did come across a shrine to A God Called Beano May that was out in the middle of this desolate Forest I mean it was just just completely secluded you're just taking this windy Gravel Road through this forest and all of a sudden you're at this Shrine to Beano which literally means means black
Vishnu but that was sort of like a a Hindu god that got incorporated into like the fringes of a Buddhist culture which does happen but it Krishna himself is not mentioned in the poly text the

mahabarata war is not mentioned in the poly texts at all I mean Krishna is found in its poly term and it's poly form of katna which just means Darkness or black blackness and it's not with regard to any deity it's just you know doing such and such an act is on the side of kahna which just means you know it's on the side of Darkness it's it's like immoral it's it's unskillful you shouldn't do that kind of stuff but it's not referring to Krishna in particular I think the closest there is to a reference to Krishna in poly Tex at least that I'm aware of is there are references to Vishnu in the polyx although he's called isana

if I remember correctly so he's not

called Vishnu but in Hinduism I think

isana and Vishnu are the same God at

least they got conflated at some point

so like in the the jagas

sua um isana is mentioned as one of the

chief gods of tawa timsa

heaven

so with regard to a Buddhist culture

like Burma yeah that would be it but

like I've lived in Bali for a while too

not nearly as long as I lived in Burma

and in Bali they've got Hinduism a kind

of brahmanism and and like Buddhism just

all combined into one religion at some

point in medieval times they there was a

decision made that since the people were following Hinduism and Buddhism they might as well just combine them into one religion which they did and so you got this mishmash religion in Bali
um that contains Buddhist and Hindu elements and so the Buddhists of Bali are well acquainted with like the symbolism of the the mahabarata and and the whole war and Krishna and all that I had one of my one of my friends as a monk was a Indonesian monk from Bali who was explaining to me the symbolism of this
war you know it's it's essentially a war between you know the the light side and the dark side you know the the leader of

the dark side was literally

blind which is symbolic you know he's

explaining the symbolism of like the the

brothers on the good side and I mean I

I've forgotten most of his

explanation but you know in a culture

like in Bali then certainly it's it's

viewed as just part of their background

it's almost you know part of their

scripture even though they might

identify as Buddhists they're well

acquainted with it it's taught in

schools and everything because it's just

part of the

culture but in Burma it's not that way

at all and in the poly texts there it's

just not mentioned as far as I can far

as I can

recall so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from covac and

sead

zida and man we more than two hours

already wow time flies when you're

having

fun so coaction cot Z now says is

Buddhism a form of nihilism and then

he's got this commentary after the

question question nihilism is a

philosophical approach that rejects the

absolute validity of commonly accepted

or fundamental aspects of human

existence such as knowledge morality or

meaning see while not directing towards

any specific conclusion such as the rejection of values this sounds pretty similar to Buddhism accepting things like morality truth and experience as conventional truth but ultimately rejecting it all as just empty and any meaning we give to things is just a process of perception well in Buddhism getting back to the original question is Buddhism a form of nihilism in Buddhism when you when you're reading a text it mentions nihilism in the text that's generally annihilationism the idea that when you're dead you're dead nothing continues after death and that is

opposed to eternalism or SAS it's ID
which means the view of being cut off at
death and then there's sasad or DT which
is the view of
eternity and Buddhism follows the middle
path between annihilationism or nihilism
and eternalism but SE of action CAD Z
apparently is not referring to this he
understands Buddhism well enough to know
that Buddhism is following a middle path
between those two extremes and so he's
referring to the philosophical approach
that rejects the absolute validity of
commonly accepted or fundamental aspects
of human existence such as knowledge
morality or meaning not directing
towards any specific inclusion well

Orthodox Terra does not reject um knowledge morality or meaning like Abid dama I mean knowled PA is an Ultimate Reality um CA I mean there's certain aspects of CA that are considered to be ultimately real I mean wrong view even as immorality is is ultimately real in Abid dama um I think that that whoever formulated Abid dama really wasn't even sophisticated enough to differentiate their ultimate realities from meaning itself since every one of these ultimate realities has some kind of meaning has to have some kind of meaning so yeah I think Orthodox terraa would certainly not be

nihilistic um even my my interpretation
my heretical interpretation of early
Buddhism M it's not totally nihilistic
because there is an assumption that
morality I mean if you consider anything
to be real morality be would be one of
those things that would be considered
real I mean it's it's just built into
the system it's just sort of a given you
know obviously Buddhism is a moral
system it's an ethical
system and knowledge I mean ultimate
knowledge I mean that's that's not
denied at all it's just it is denied
that it is perceptual like in the Ana
waga you know Ana waga states there is
one truth not not another that one wise

person can argue about with another wise
person there's this one Transcendent
truth I mean they they they go that far
admit that much but still it's just off
the scale it's I mean you can't really
touch it intellectually or
perceptually so I'm getting texts on my
phone with regard to whether we're going
to go to work tomorrow because the power
is off at the
shop
see
so I mean it depends on a person's
understanding of nihilism I guess some
people might say that Buddhism is
nihilistic because it denies that you

know anything samsaric is ultimately
real at least my interpretation of
Buddhism and the interpretation of many
Buddhists
whereas Orthodox terraa with Abid dama
and the commentaries and all that even
accept some Sara um like certain aspects
of it to be ultimately real like the the
elemental particles of which it is
composed both mental and physical are
ultimately real according to Abid
dama so I do I do not think that
Buddhism is a form of nihilism although
different people might interpret it
differently so I'm just going to move on
to se ofaction CAD Z's second question
which is do you think your uncarved

block analogy is a type of
eternalism um no and there's somebody
else asked a question a little farther
down that's similar to this but you
could say the uncarved block is eternal
but the uncarved block really isn't
Eternal because it's just off the scale
it is timeless it's aalo and it's not
even an it it's it's just the
limitations of human language and human
perception you got to refer to the
absolute as an it you know you have to
reify the absolute which is what you're
not supposed to do in early
Buddhism and and a lot of people just
cannot cope with that they cannot deal

with it they don't know how to deal with
it you know ultimate truth is so off the
scale that you can't say anything valid
about it so you're better off just not
saying anything about it even not even
calling it it that's just too much even
calling it it is already you've crossed
the line and you've reified it and
you're talking
nonsense
so the uncarved block
analogy um I don't think so but I think
I might go into a little more detail in
a question a little farther below
because it's it's in a way it's more a
general question where I can address
both questions at the same

time so I'm just going to move on to seov action CAD Z's third question which is it's it's kind of a provocative question here I think he's provoking somebody else on the server who is a pure land
Buddhist but he says have you ever read the par Maha Pari Nirvana Sutra or the datag Garba sutras and their claims of a true self what are your thoughts I mean them as Standalone texts themselves well um I've read excerpts from the Maha Pari Nirvana Sutra which is just a massive elaboration on the older Parana Su which is a suta found in the Dian nikaya of the poly Tex

describing the Buddha's last days and I have read that the Maha let's see the mulas saas Vaden School of Buddhism just expanded that into just this huge you know just it's just this huge body of of stuff just very elaborated all kinds of extra stuff added some other sutras and stuff taken from other sources added into it just just elaborate like narrative stories added to it and so forth and it may be that the the Mahayana Buddhists have done something with this Mula sarasti Vada version of the Maha pariana sutta um but it turns out that the Daga Garba Sutra I read recently and I actually took some notes here so my

thoughts

yeah I have read the datag Garba Sutra

in its entirety if there's only one and

their claims of a true self what are

your thoughts okay so the Daga Garba

Sutra uh the first paragraph it it takes

place on vulture Peak and where the

Buddha is attended by thousands of great

monks and bodhisattvas as numerous as

all the grains of sand in the Ganges

River multiplied by

60 so

I mean I I did a little bit of math

trying to figure this out so how many

grains of sand are in the Ganges River

it turns out that just one um like one

cube of sand 8 feet by 8 feet by 8 ft
with grains of sand 1 millimeter in
diameter would would only be 10 billion
grains of sand so let's just be very
conservative and refer say that there's
a trillion grains of sand in the Ganges
River so that would be 60 trillion
bodhisattvas attending this I
mean obviously they mean it figuratively
but why the hell do they multiply it by
60 you know it's like if they're just
trying to say that it's just this
innumerable
multitude happening on vulture Peak
which I've been there is really not that
big of a place I mean you couldn't even
fit a thousand people on vulture Peak

and here we've got thousands of monks
attending the
Buddha and like apparently like 60
trillion at least bodhisattvas this is
in the first paragraph the second
paragraph is he's also attended by bodh
satras from Buddha lands so not from
Earth but from Buddha lands that are
postulated by pure land Buddhist so you
got the Buddhas who create this Buddha
land which I've actually been told is
not even considered to be one of the
planes of existence it's not even in
samsara which is just kind of
mind-blowing to me but anyways there was
another 60 trillion bvas from these

Buddha lands coming to vulture Peak on planet Earth to listen to the Buddha and attend on him along with countless numbers of gods Cobra dragons gandaras auras

garudas canaras Etc and garudas and canaras are mythological giant birds so that's the second paragraph so we've got up to like well we got like 150 trillion people here or including the Cobra dragons and the the mythological birds and so forth so the third paragraph the Buddha uses psychic powers to emanate countless thousand PED lotuses in all through the sky just multi ude of just Indescribable colors and Aromas these thousand petal lotuses

filled the sky and in the heart of each
one of these thousand pedal lotuses
there is a Buddha sitting
there so that's that's the the third
paragraph the fourth paragraph the
miracle was so stupendous that the
Buddha did by emanating these countless
thousand p lotuses with the Buddha at
the heart of each one that all the
beings there including the the great
monks were dancing in ecstasy even
though it's against the rules for monks
to be
dancing so that's the fourth paragraph
and then the as part of the miracle or
the the psychic feat of these thousands

of of lotus flowers they then rotted
away and started to stink but the
Buddhas stayed pristine in the center
and then the Buddha was doing this as a
kind of like a
simile or U not a like a parable or
something because the whole point of
this was to demonstrate that like in the
heart of every conscious being there is
this Buddha nature that's the dag Garba
and then in the fifth paragraph the
Buddha starts explaining by having a
conversation with a Bodhi SATA named
vajra mati now it seems to me that if
the Buddha really did something this
stupendous on vulture Peak with
thousands of monks in attendance that

there would be some mention of it in the
older texts the Prem Mahayana text and
there is no hint of it and it's it's
obviously made up fairy
tales so I mean it's it contains
anachronisms like the Buddha attended by
all these Bodhi satas that are never
mentioned in the older texts you could
say there's some kind of conspiracy
where all mention of bodh satas you know
aside from the bodhisatta of the Buddha
himself is just eradicated expunged from
the older text but you would think that
it would be too well known I mean this
was such a stupendous miracle that the
Buddha performed in front of literally

trillions of witnesses how they could

even all fit there I don't

know that I

mean the only way a person can believe

that this is authentic teachings of the

Buddha is if they are very gullible or

so Faith oriented they're willing to

believe whatever they see in their own

texts anybody capable of critical

thought with regard to such things would

have to acknowledge that this is just a

later addition to the ever expanding

Corpus of Buddhist

texts where some newly developed

philosophical system is trying to get

some kind of street cred by attributing

their newly developed philosophy to the

founder of the religion who existed
centuries before and that nobody had
ever heard of this until this new school
came along expounding
it now there is a little bit of support
a few hints of support for the idea that
we do have a kind of Buddha nature that
it can be found in the poly text like
I've been mentioning recently a few
times like the idea there's a suta that
says this mind monks is shining forth
but it is defiled by extraneous
defilements so I mean you could say that
this this luminous shining mind that we
all have that is then defiled by
extraneous defilements could be called a

kind of Buddha nature but the thing is
older Buddhism did not not reify the
absolute that there's a few hints of it
you can find in the texts and they're
probably very old hints which doesn't
mean that the Buddha taught them it just
means that they were ideas that were
entertained by Buddhist monks before
Orthodox terava or Orthodox early
Buddhism really got formulated and
systematized so yeah the buddhy S named
V raati I'm pretty sure he's not
mentioned anywhere in the poly
texts that bodh satas from Buddha lands
Buddha lands
themselves not mentioned in the early
texts I mean these These are

anachronistic so you can say that some

early Buddhists did believe at least

they did

reify the absolute and acknowledged that

like in the upanishads the absolute

pervades everything including us

so that like our truest nature is the

absolute because everything else is just

sort of like a an illusion conjured up

by perception but you get beyond the

perception the Conan thing in itself is

always

here and some schools of Buddhism

including some early Buddhists wanted to

turn that into like you know our true

nature is this but what one out and

Early times at least is the idea that

you do not reify the absolute the

absolute is completely off the scale

anything you say about it is going to be

invalid to say that it exists is invalid

to say that it doesn't exist is invalid

to say that it does and doesn't exist is

invalid to say that it neither does nor

does not exist is invalid so any kind of

reversion to the idea that we have this

Buddha nature is a step

backwards it is a Degen generation of

Buddhist

philosophy so I think I'm just going to

move on the next

question and this is from

Austin and this is a difficult one I

think Austin says how can we
epistemically justify that Enlightenment
exists and epistemically it's not part
of my working vocabulary and so I think
I need to drink a beverage or something
coat the old vocal cords don't you
see ah okay epistemically I I ass I
assume that means like es like in
accordance with
epistemology so like epistemology is
like the theory of knowledge how do we
know anything so how can we
epistemically justify that Enlightenment
exists well I mean for starters there is
is the idea that there is Enlightenment
always and it's just that it's covered

over by delusion but the enlightenment
is always there and people can have
moments of insight sometimes in moments
of Crisis where this
deeper for lack of a better word Deeper
Self deeper nature deeper reality comes
more to the surface and so from your own
experience of greater Lucidity you know
that you can feel that you're getting
closer to that but it's you also get
this feeling that it's always there it's
just that you usually don't notice it
and here I am reifying it and it's you
can't help but reify it which kind
of in a way it kind of justifies these
Mahayana philosophers who just started
it just took the ball and ran with it

and just reified it big

time but the less you reify it the

better because because you cannot do it

justice and it's just delusory

delusional so how can we justify

epistemically that Enlightenment exists

well you can't just take an enlightened

being's word for it because you can't

prove that they really are an

enlightened being and taking somebody

else's word for it is uh you know it's

just essentially hearsay you know it's

just taking somebody else's word for it

it's not your own knowledge you're just

accepting somebody else's knowledge as a

belief but you don't know it even if

they really know it directly you just

believe it which is far inferior to

actually knowing

it so I mean the the best way you can

justify that Enlightenment exists is

your own moments of greater or greatest

Lucidity when you're actually getting

closer to that and it's it's kind of

foolish to assume that what you just

experience in your greater lucidity is

as great as it's Poss it could possibly

get you can extrapolate from

that that there's going to be even less

like veil of perception

obscuring

this so-called luminous

reality that is um it is not a

multiplicity and is omniscient as the
book of the Tibetan book of the great
Liberation says of it and again I'm
calling it it because of limitations of
human language and human
perception but you're better off this
not not talking about it because
anything you say about it is going to be
invalid
so the main the main ways of justifying
the existence of Enlightenment through
extrapolation from you know your most
Lucid moments you can extrapolate
forward Ward from that going with the
assumption that you did not reach the
ultimate with your most Lucid moment you

can take the word for from people that

you consider to be much wiser than

you also there's uh just like using

logic which may not be epistemological

or

epistemic that there is an Ultimate

Reality like the conen thing in

itself and although Kant said that you

cannot know the ultimate

the thing in itself all you can know is

the thing as it seems but still there is

one content thing in itself that we can

know directly and that is the conti and

thing in itself of Consciousness itself

because we are just immediately exposed

to that so all you have to do is just be

fully aware of it without theorizing

without interpreting or symbolizing

anything which is a mystical

State and mysticism is the greatest

justification of Enlightenment even

though somebody like Nana ver utterly

despised

mysticism so I guess that's the best I

can do with regard to

that you just have to take it as a

convenient working hypothesis at first

before you can prove

it and so I'm moving on to uh Anthony

and Anthony says did you ever reprimand

another Monk for not following the rules

on the flip side were you ever

reprimanded for not following the rules

um I can't remember ever being reprimanded by not for not following the rules but then again I was in Burma most of the time and I was ordained in a Burmese tradition so I was with Burmese monks even when I was in America most of the time and they just do not reprimand I mean somebody like upand who is just this Fierce scolder he would reprimand people but it was just for not not meditating well it wasn't for vinia violations as far as I can remember remember he might he might have reprimanded monks but he didn't reprimand me cuz I was one of the strictest Monks at his place when I was there

so yeah I I don't recall ever being reprimanded for not following the rules mainly because I pretty much did follow the rules more than pretty much anyone around me so with regard to me reprimanding another Monk there there is a ceremony called the POA ceremony that happen happens the last upos day of the rainy season of The Rains Retreat and it ends the rains Retreat after the POA ceremony the rains Retreat is done and instead of reciting the ptim Moka like you do every other full moon day in New Moon day on the POA day it's the invitation ceremony and so every monk in ACC in order of seniority will invite

all the other monks there to tell him
what his offenses
are and in Burma it is the tradition you
never answer another Monk's po you just
I mean the monk makes his invitation
three times the monks all say sadu sadu
sadu move on to the next he could be the
sloppiest most Shameless monk at the
monastery nobody's going to say a word
to him so anyways I was a young Monk and
I was a barbarian you know I was not
bermed and I didn't see any point in
this meaningless Ceremony this ritual of
every monk inviting someone to tell him
what his faults or his offenses are and
then nobody answering so there was this
one Monk and he was one of the worst

Monks at the monastery and of course he was my nextd door neighbor at the monastery too he was just of he was ordained when he was older he was like a village farmer he remained a village farmer as a monk he's raising chicken he's out there with his his hoe and his mic he's digging the ground and planting crops and all this kind of stuff he really did not care about rules of monastic discipline I don't think he even bothered to attend the the osta ceremony half the time you know he's he's just like a lay person wearing monks robes and so I actually tried to answer his POA and like the the

presiding Abbot at the time the the the actual Abbot was gone was like the second in command was presiding over the ceremony he just starts waving at me like frantically just you know shut up don't say that and it may be that he just thought I was just going out of out of line out of turn or something you know it's like I was trying to do my porn or something but it's just like you do not answer another Monk's invitation in Burma I assume there's a few strict monasteries that do the one I was at was not one of them so I tried to reprimand or at least to inform him of the rules that he was breaking which of course he knew about and didn't care see that's

that's part of the problem there's no
point in reprimanding a lack sloppy monk
it's it's like I used to talk to this
one old monk who said that you know you
can wake up somebody that's really
sleeping but someone who's just
pretending to sleep you can't wake them
up and it's it's sort of that way with
monks breaking the rules they know
they're breaking the rules you can't
inform them they're breaking the rules
cuz they already know they don't care
the very fact that they keep doing it
indicates they don't give a [__] they're
just going to do that so it's it's just
kind of a waste of time and effort to

reprimand a monk for not following the rules unless he's like your disciple or something then you can you can chew him out if you want to or just better yet you know advise him with meta in your heart how that he's breaking this Rule and he better knock it off that kind of thing so with regard to other monks that are tried to reprimand I did kick out a monk or two back when I was a senior monk at one boo Wildlife Refuge Monastery one Boo b do J in in Northwestern Burma that you know I just kicked him out because there's one in particular he was hard to kick out too he refused to go at first um because he wasn't following the

rules he just was shamelessly handling

money for

starters so

yeah I guess that's it I guess that

answers that question so I'm just moving

on to the next one and I think we must

be getting close to the end

here

but that's just an an educated guess

this is from extremely rare bird an

extremely rare bird says nothing is

permanent as we know as Buddhists but

isn't morality sort of permanent as a

universal pattern speaking from my own

experience I cannot will morality or

feelings to be this way or that way they

follow their own rules like raskolnikov in crime and punishment one can rationalize murder but cannot escape the mental consequences the moral weight and significance of it so in one way morality seems like a set pattern that you either align with or don't but at the same time the notion that there is a single set in stone morality for all being seems wrong considering that we all to put it simply have different opinions and moral dispositions it's a complex topic but I would appreciate hearing any thoughts you have on this and this is the question that is kind of similar to seov action CAD Z's question about whether the the simile of the

block of marble is also a kind of eternalism and here extremely rare bird is asking if morality is eternal just because you've got this law of like the second Noble Truth third Noble Truth fourth Noble Truth that remain true you know just into Infinity presumably and this is dealing with an issue I mean I can bring up a few other examples like the idea on a that on a ukian plane the angles of a triangle will always add up to 1880 de I mean that's just Eternal presumably 1 + 1 equals 2 Eternal presumably but the thing is all of these the morality the the block of marble the the simile of

the block of marble 1 plus 1 equals 2

the angles of a triangle on a ukian

plane adding up to 180° it all depends

on

perception if nobody's perceiving it

it's just

void if nobody is perceiving that it's

void and so it's it's really a matter of

perceptions that are following a certain

pattern but the pattern isn't Eternal

the pattern is kind of flickering on and

off sort of like the world in general

according to orthodox terab Buddhism

it's just kind of flickering in and out

of existence and is not Eternal in that

respect

so ultimately yeah it's not Eternal

because it's it's like an artifact of perception and the perceptions themselves are not Eternal even though this perception now is very similar to the perception of somebody 100 years from now that doesn't mean that it's been constantly in existence for 100 years it just means that under certain circumstances you know there's going to be equivalent you know

equal equal

perceptions just like there's equal triangles so that's really how I describe it it's not that you have this law that is permanent because the law doesn't exist the law is just void

unless there's somebody some sentient
being actually perceiving that law and
the perception of that law is not
permanent but it's not like this law is
just in The Ether somewhere or like in
Plato's Heaven it's just doesn't exist
except that you've got these perceptions
arising that perceive it and then bring
it into existence while it's being
perceived and then it poofs back out of
existence as soon as the perception of
it
ceases and it may be that certain things
do
change even though we're not aware of it
changing so I mean that's the best I can
do at present but it is a matter of it's

not really an eternal law that exists in

Plato's Heaven it's just like a

characteristic of certain

perceptions that are similar but the

perceptions themselves certainly are not

Eternal and when there nobody is

perceiving it it's like the tree falling

in the forest

it's just not

there so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is from

Robert and we are getting close to the

bottom I think yeah we are getting close

to the bottom Robert is the second to

last

questioner so think I'm gonna open up

the emergency backup

beverage okay so Robert says

it seems to me that on a Buddhist

framework moral worth is just a madeup

concept and that ultimately there exists

no moral worth only intention action and

consequences or Karma would you

agree um well moral worth is not

considered to be uh an Ultimate Reality

even in Abid dama moral worth is sort of

like rights that we were talking about a

little earlier that it's is kind of an

abstraction you know it's not you can't

you couldn't just isolate the moral

worth of a person you know you divide

that person up into all of his

constituent component parts and then the

moral worth you know would be in this

little test tube here no it doesn't work

that

way so moral worth yeah it's kind of a

value

judgment and different people would

would uh value another person's moral

worth differently I

assume um I don't know if there's any

like

empirically

just like a a

Bedrock of judging moral

worth so yeah intention action and

consequence um yeah I mean that's that

would be what the abstraction of moral

worth is derived from the intention the action and the consequence and the intention the action and the consequence are all essentially volition and perception so yeah moral worth I do not consider to be an Ultimate Reality something like intention like perception and volition would be closer to being an Ultimate Reality than the the generalization of moral worth so I'm just going to move on to Robert's second question here and he says I'm sure someone has asked this before but I haven't seen it directly asked why did you disrobe well if you look on my blog I wrote I think it's a three-part

series before I disrobed explaining why
I was going to disrobe at the time and
uh so if you want like the full complete
explanation the full complete answer to
your question I would look on my
blog um I think one of them might even
be in the the 10 most popular or most
read um blog post so you might even see
it on the little scroll
below whatever is the most recent blog
post without having to do much of a
search but I mean in short why did I
disrobe the main reason I just stopped
making progress I stopped making
progress for at least let's see 10 years
I mean it was several years at least

where I just was not making progress you
know I was not breaking any new ground
in my meditation in fact the best
meditation in my life occurred back
around between 1999 and
2004 and then it was
just it was kind of stagnating in my
practice I was not making progress
barely even like holding holding my
ground you know like treading
water so there was that second I was
burned out on living in Burma and being
a monk in America is a totally different
ball game than being a monk in Burma cuz
in Burma it's a Buddhist culture it's
even like the climate the Flora and
Fauna are similar to the Ganges Valley

in the Buddhist time so you could live pretty much the way the texts tell you to live wander alone like the Horn of a rhinoceros and all that whereas in America again it's like being some kind of tropical potted plant that has to live in a special protected environment and it just wasn't working nearly as well for me I wound up living at a Burmese Monastery in California that was totally
LAX and it just was not encouraging you know there was no atmosphere of encouraging me to practice or any such thing and so there was that too and then another reason is I could not stop

liking girls one girl in particular who
is now my
wife and so those are like the three
main reasons
but if you want like the elaborate like
wellth thought out fairly well written
explanation I would look on my blog and
there's like a multi-part series
explaining the different reasons why I
was intending to disrobe at the
time so I'm just going to move on to
Robert's third question which is I have
a tendency my whole life to go to the
Extremes in my thinking everything is
pointless to everything is amazing and
tend to obsess over things when I get
interested in something I quickly become

obsessed almost unable to think about anything else any advice well I mean the best advice I would give you is to be mindful just observe it and try to understand it you know just observe it while it's happening be aware that it's happening note that it's happening and then you know just try to be open-minded with regard to any insights that arise with regard to why this is and even if you don't ever come up with any clear answer to why this is just being mindful of it helps to break the momentum it's like um if you identify with the obsession you know it's I'm obsessed on this then it just reinforces

the Habit it reinforces the karma
whereas if you remain detached you know
obsession is arising it's not I'm
obsessed it's you know it's like you're
standing back just observing the
obsessive impulses or whatever then
you've created a kind of Detachment from
it and you stop feeding it so much and
it starts to lose momentum
gradually and just understanding it you
know and The More You observe it the
less it is you and the more it's just
something it's an object that is being
observed and then when you when you
detach from it to that extent you know
it's it's sort of like the the bad habit
it's yeah essentially it is a bad habit

or a habit

anyway where I mean the more you do it

the more the Habit is reinforced whereas

by detaching from it and not feeding it

then gradually it fades out sort of like

aan cha talking about stray dogs how you

know a bad habit is like a stray dog if

you feed it it's just going to hang

around it's not going to go away if you

stop feeding it it's still going to hang

around for a while until finally it

gives up and goes away

way so you just mindfulness is the

Panacea mindfulness is like the the

medicine that cures all

ills and so I'm moving on to the last

question which is from

Andrew the last question so this isn't

going to be the longest Q&A I've ever

done this is only going to be a little

over three

hours amazing as Jesse Lee Peterson

would say amazing

so Andrew says are monks allowed to

drive obviously in the poly Cannon there

aren't any mentions of modern-day

Transportation but what is your opinion

on this subject were you allowed to

drive by car motorcycle boat

Etc well this actually was a

controversial issue back when trains and

cars were first introduced into Buddhist

countries because there is a rule of man

IC discipline saying a monk is not

allowed to travel in a

vehicle unless he is sick and then if

he's sick he's allowed to travel in a in

a it's like a rickshaw pulled by one

man

so um that doesn't apply to boats

because monks are allowed to travel in

boats and now I'm getting a phone call

which I'm just going to try to

ignore you may notice that my ringtone

is God Zilla not that Godzilla is

actually in the room here it is my phone

probably somebody from work telling me

if we have to go to work tomorrow

because the power is

out so I will use this as an opportunity

to drink my emergency backup

beverage okay so anyway where was I oh

yeah there is a rule saying a monk is

not allowed to travel by a vehicle and

apparently it is a land vehicle because

boats are allowable that was the only

way to cross a river in some places in

Ancient India was in a

boat

so

um the whole idea you can't I mean the

rule it just says a monk is not allowed

to travel in a vehicle and so that has

come to be interpreted to me a vehicle

that is pulled by an animal or by

animals and I was sick one time I I

injured my foot and uh drove in rode in

an ox cart a bullock cart in Burma for

16 miles

and um I realized that one of the main

reasons for that rule is that when

you're riding in a bullock cart that I

mean from start to finish the Bullocks

are receiving a beating you know they're

receiving a 7h hour long beating because

Bullocks unlike horses start to slow

down as soon as you stop Wheeling on

them you just got to keep hitting them

to keep them going because otherwise

they start slowing

down

so that is how has been interpreted in

vinia that it's so long as it's not

pulled by animals it's still okay

because it was mainly apparently an

issue of like animals getting whipped

and beaten when they're when they're

pulling the vehicle because even horses

that don't slow down immediately they're

still getting whipped

sometimes you're being a burden on these

animals

so um

technically the rule that says a monk

should not ride in a vehicle is the same

as the rule says a monk should not drive

a vehicle but in Burma and I can't

really say with regard to other Buddhist

countries but in Burma it has simply

become a kind of

etiquette that monks should not drive

vehicles I've seen monks drive vehicles

seen monks on a bicycle in Burma and uh

one monk that I knew who used to live at

the same Monastery as me he actually he

not only had his own vehicle but he died

at a at a red light he had a like a

coronary he had a heart attack at a red

light he just died at the intersection

in his

car

so it's just a matter of etiquette

really if the the rule against not

driving a car would be the same as the

rule against not riding in one so

technically if it's okay to ride in a

car it should be okay to drive the car

yourself but it's just become a kind of

Buddhist etiquette that it's even though

monks can ride in a car they shouldn't

be the one who's driving

it and it's just a matter of etiquette

it's not really part of monastic

discipline but it does kind of make

sense I was always willing to to go

along with

that

so

um I remember when I was first became a

mon at the monastery in burmes Monastery

in California that certain lay people

issued this like a letter that they sent

out to various monasteries complaining
about how they're starting to see monks
driving cars and now it's like most car
most abots anyway just have their own
car this the
complaining continued for a while and
then petered out and then the monks just
started driving
cars so
see so I guess the an the answer to the
question aren monks allowed to drive is
technically there's no rule against it
unless one interprets the rule to mean
that a monk is not allowed even to ride
in a
vehicle but still it's like a a social

like a cultural etiquette thing that is
just considered to be improper
inappropriate for monks to be driving
even though it's okay for them to ride
in the back seat or even in the front
seat
but I was told that in Burma when trains
first became a thing back in British
times some strict monks just refused to
even ride on trains they just insisted
on walking everywhere which is the way
it was done in the Buddhist time so I
mean you can't really go wrong with that
but uh walking long distances is really
uh not really much of an option I
guess and so that's it I guess uh I'm
done I am done answering them their

questions and so

as you may have heard before if you have

any questions feel free to to submit

them below the video or if you have

access to subscribe star you can answer

there or you can ask questions there if

you have access to uh the Discord server

you can ask there and anything you think

I might be able to answer I obviously

know nothing about Japanese yoga and

chopping Chopsticks in half with playing

cards anything like that but terab

Buddhism early Buddhism some aspects of

Mahayana Buddhism meditation monasticism

Burma like philosophy in general I know

fair amount about like Hinduism that

kind of a thing then feel free to ask I

can't promise that I'll be able to

answer adequately but I'll give it a

shot anyway and uh if you haven't done

so already feel free to like And

subscribe to this Channel and be happy

alrighty

then we are recording we are live is

this

working okay

then hello and welcome to episode

113 or I guess it would be more

correctly pronounced

113 of question and answered I am your

host poo

Bahasa and we're starting a little bit

late today I mean

usually I start doing my Q&A videos

around 2 in the afternoon my time and

now it's way after 5 o'clock it maybe

dark by the time I'm done with this

outside that is probably the lights will

still be on in

here but my woman and I were uh running

around doing things earlier today

including we checked out what our old

neighborhood was like where we lived

last year and I think the electricity is

still off on that side of town there's

so many trees that have fallen down are

next door our neighbor the house that

was closest to us has their entire roof

destroyed and apparently they have no

electricity either uh it looked like a

big oak tree or something had just

fallen down onto their house the house

where we used to live the front the

front uh fence it was like a RW iron

fence that's wrecked and parts of the

roof were also damaged on on the house

we used to live in so I guess it was

good karma on our part that we moved

here where I mean we were right in the

middle of the eye of the storm when it

passed through and our electricity

didn't even go off so praised be the

gods and uh I'm going to have a drink of

my beverage

here and for those of you who uh know

what the cup is I know sticks was a Ed I

don't

care

so also another thing we did today was

we sent a uh a load of groceries to the

airport where they are flying the

groceries to North Carolina which is
still a disaster area I'm not exactly
sure how bad of a disaster area it is
because I mean some of the people who
live there who are making YouTube videos
you get these hysterical accounts of
like bodies everywhere and just the area
around Asheville North Carolina just has
this stench of of Rotting Flesh and
there's like corpses that are still like
up in the trees that the government
doesn't even want to take down and
identify they just want to bulldoze it
all and it seems to be a unanimous that
the government is not helping it is
private citizens helping each other that
is doing most of the good and so anyone

I mean do not be fooled by the fact that
you're not hearing about this on most of
the mainstream media that it's not
really news anymore because it's still a
disaster area there are still people who
don't have food or water or
homes because it's all been destroyed
and the roads have been destroyed and
it's just very difficult to get anyone
or anything in or out of those
areas and FEMA which is the US
government's like
Organization for helping disaster
victims is out of money because they
spent all their money helping illegal
aliens so now that you've got a real

disaster they don't have any money in fact uh it just seems to be a unanimous account from you know people that you're you see doing these videos on in the disaster area that really the the government is not helping all that much if at all and in some cases they're doing worse than helping by sending people away not letting people into to you know help the victims you know they they've got like truckloads of goods and so forth they're trying to get in the government will just send them away helicopter Pilots you know they're trying to rescue people the government just I mean threatens to arrest them sends them away and then the government

is

doing min

minimal minimal efforts or minimal

effects anyway in actually helping these

people so if you want to help um I think

uh I'm going to have a link below either

just in the description of the video or

like in a pin comment or something where

you can order stuff through Amazon it

will then go to this it's like a a

Realtors group in North Carolina that

appear appears to be like ser serious

sincere church-going Christian people

who just consider it their sacred duty

to help as many people as they can it

seems completely legit and we have

donated to that

also so with that is kind of a preamble

I guess I should start answering

questions because we got lots of them I

didn't count how many there are but

there are lots lots of questions today

it's not that it was too high of a

number for me to count though so so at

least it's it's a number low enough that

I'm able to count that

high so anyways the first question is

from Twin Wasabi and twin Wasabi says

are all cultures equally valid and that

would depend on what you mean by valid

I'm not exactly sure what twin Wasabi is

referring to here when he says are all

cultures equally valid I mean what does

valid

mean um with regard to like the dhic

nature of a of a culture you know the

like the amount of virtue in a culture

then certainly it's not the same I mean

just look at like the hanss for example

who seem to have been just completely

immoral sociopaths with regard to anyone

outside the tribe you know they saw

anyone who is not a fellow hun as just a

thing to be exploited if they were in an

exploited kind of a

mood so I mean with regard to validity I

mean with regard to like like adaptation

to the environment like in a darwinian

sense then again no because some

cultures Prosper other cultures not so much so with regard to just like success or um like strength I mean obviously not all cultures are the same I mean if you want to have sort of like a a point of view with no value judgments then you could say all cultures are equally like meaningless but it does seem to me that some cultures are certainly preferable to other cultures from my own point of view I would certainly prefer to live in some cultures and not in other cultures I would not want to live in communist China for example even though the American government seems to be moving in that direction

also the EU government appears to be
moving in that
direction so are all cultures equally
valid I suppose twin Wasabi should
specify exactly what he means by valid
you know what is a valid culture and
what would be an invalid
culture but I mean all cultures are not
created equal some cultures I mean to
just about anybody except for somebody
who's completely apathetic or maybe
fully enlightened and just above making
distinctions like that I mean some
cultures are just preferable to other
cultures so that would going with value
judgments that would make them better

than other cultures simply because more
people like
them but I'm not exactly sure what twin
Wasabi was was getting at with all
cultures being equally valid and so uh I
think I'm just going to move move on to
the next question which is from Athena's
sigil and Athena sigil
says since you've lived in various
countries and cultures what are the
differences between Buddhist countries
versus Western ones in terms of social
cohesion fairness for Citizens treatment
of animals Etc are Buddhist societies
better worse or is it all relative given
economic and technological advantages in
the west versus the third world world I

know quite a few

Filipinos and economically the

Philippines is similar to many Terra

Buddhist countries I'm not saying that

they're Saints but even though poor

economically they're some of the most

happy and content people I've ever

met well the number of Buddhist

countries I've lived in I mean mainly

Burma that's the country I know the most

about I've spent a few weeks in Thailand

also a few weeks in Japan maybe two

weeks in Japan also worked on Japanese

ships um before I was a monk for months

and months so um I have some knowledge

of what Japanese culture or Society is

like you know living amongst Japanese

people so let's

see what are the differences between

Buddhist countries and Western ones well

I mean it's

it's I think you'd have to go on a

country bycount

basis um like Japan in many respects

more closely resembles the West than it

does a country like

Burma Japan whether it's even a Buddhist

country or not is kind of kind of

debatable you know they've got Shinto

and most people probably aren't very

religious there you know it's like you

hire a some kind of Buddhist priest to

officiate at certain ceremonies and it's

just kind of like a business or just a
tradition they don't really understand
Buddhism so much just like you know
people don't understand the origin of
Easter eggs and Christmas trees you know
it's just part of their culture they
follow along with it they don't think
about it
much so how much Buddhism has really
affected Japanese culture maybe with
regard to you know the Japanese ideals
of
self-discipline and Equanimity and stuff
like that
I'm sure it must have permeated into the
culture and affected it in that respect

um with regard to Burma again it's um
let's see a Buddhist country like Burma
as opposed to a Western Country like the
USA I mean it's very different but it's
not just because of Buddhism so it's
hard to disentangle the Buddhism from
other factors that are causing
differences between you know a country
like Burma and a country like the USA
know Burma is like a fourth world
country it's very undeveloped it's ruled
by a brutal and incompetent military
dictatorship and America is more or less
of a representational democracy a
constitutional
republic so there's differences just
along those lines too but to see Athena

sigil says in terms of social cohesion

well see social cohesion is not so much

a matter of

Buddhism or non- Buddhism is it's

largely um I think in a

non-socialist society you're going to

have more social cohesion just like you

know the disaster in Western North

Carolina it's the the government isn't

helping nearly as much as just fellow

citizens are

helping and so social cohesion it's like

in Burma in a burm Village somebody's

house burns down the neighbors all chip

in and help build them a new house I

mean the houses aren't very fancy you

know they can build them a new house in
a matter of a few
days but I mean it was like that in
America also back Frontier times you
know colonial times where you know
everybody knew everybody else especially
like everyone's going to the same church
there's a lot of that here in South
Carolina it's like church groups you
know the church you go to is like
helping the people that need help you
know it's like somebody in the church
still has their electricity going so
they offer their their electricity to
people who want to come over take a hot
shower you know use the chest freezer to
store their food so it doesn't go bad

that kind of thing so that's more like

lack of

alienation caused by just people

interacting and relying upon one another

instead of just being alienated like in

the west and relying on the government

which isn't nearly as reliable in many

respects so fairness for

Citizens well Burmese culture very

Buddhist is not fair for Citizens you

know the citizens have essentially no

human

rights um but I mean that's not so much

a matter of Buddhism is just a matter of

other factors treatment of animals

um I think Asian people in general do

not have the same empathy towards

animals as we westerners do and I again

I really don't think that that's a

matter of Buddhism versus non- Buddhism

I'm not exactly sure why it is that like

people like the Burmese they're very

people oriented they don't like nature

that nature is just kind of

unpredictable and scary there's monsters

and and tigers and stuff out there and

you can just get lost in the forest

you're not

careful

so treatment of animals in a way in

Burma there's more of a I don't know

it's it's a it's a Buddhist thing where

you shouldn't be mean to animals and

it's very low stat if you're a fisherman

or something that's or a butcher very

low status professions and and the the

people in Burma are very status oriented

you know like even the pronouns they

don't just have like words one word for

me and another word for you it's like

there's at least half a dozen words for

me and at least half a dozen of words

for you and the the pronouns that you

use with regard to yourself and the

other person it depends on your relative

social status

largely

so it's

it's hard to say because you know each

country is different and you might have
one country like Burma where you know if
you're a fisherman or a butcher or
something that's a low priority you know
low status job not low priority but low
status and then some place like Japan
where you know they're doing all they're
doing the medical experiments on dogs
and so forth with way less animal
cruelty laws and so forth than in
America at least that my
understanding
so let's see are Buddhist societies
better worse or is it all relative given
economic and technological advantages in
the west versus the third world I think
that is largely it that is probably more

important in determining just like

fairness for Citizens and social

cohesion and so forth it would be other

factors that are not

religious although the more religious

you are like even in the west with

church groups like I was saying you're

more they're more likely to to like you

know have a a social cohesion and work

together and help each

other as opposed to some alienated

person living in an apartment building

in a big city who doesn't even know his

Nextdoor

Neighbors in a berm Village everybody

knows everybody

else so he's got a little commentary here about I know quite a few Filipinos and um let's see they they're some of the most happy and content people I've ever met and that's the same way in Burma and I've pointed that out and this could be like the general happiness of the people that can definitely have something to do with whether they are Buddhist or like you know atheistic materialists like possibly most people in the west at least in Europe Europe has way more atheists per C per you know per hundred people than America does and it's the same way in Burma I used to point this out and I I got some like Angry push back when I would mention

this in dama talks you know when I'd
come to America that the Burmese the
average Burmese Villager has less
unhappiness in his life than the average
American with all the technology and the
money and so forth government
programs all of that although FEMA is is
not one of the The Beneficial government
programs unless you happen to be an
illegal
immigrant so yeah the Burmese they have
less unhappiness in their life they
might have less positive happiness too
they they probably have less fun than
the average American but I mean I used
to I used to tell people this it's like

you go through a burmes village and just
count happy smiles not fakey you know
Fake Plastic glued on kind of smiles for
appearance sake but genuine happy smiles
and then go to a city in America walk
down the sidewalk and and look at the
people there that are just stone-faced
and it's it's very different and I mean
that's the Burmese they just it's it's
the second Noble Truth of Buddhism it's
just an easy explanation second Noble
Truth to Buddhism so it's like all
suffering is caused by desire and the
Burmese have this phenomenal lack of
Desire they can put up with stuff that
westerners cannot put up with you know
they just they just accept it you know

they're very accepting people as a

general

rule so I mean that's partly because

they're Buddhist also partly because

they are just stoic people living a

third world culture where I mean they're

living pretty much at the same level the

standard of living as people in ancient

times

so yeah it's it's it seems to

me um with regard to certain things like

General morality and general like moral

ideals that the religion of a society

certainly will affect that although

human nature is human nature you're

going to have kind-hearted people and

coldhearted people in any

culture but then again like Burma or a

third world a traditional Society is

going to be more

conformist individualism is less of a

thing in traditionalist

societies

so this is surprisingly a hard question

to answer because there's all these

complex um conditions that it's hard to

disentangle the like the Buddhism or

just the spirituality or the religion

from other

factors so I mean but with regard to

General happiness a Buddhist culture

does seem to be more conducive to

General happiness or at least lack of

unhappiness lack of dukka than most of

what you find in the

west and so I'm going to move on to the

next question this is from Robin's Nest

and Robin's Nest says I would like to

ask you your thoughts on medicine Master

Buddha of lais lauli Radiance an

important figure in the Mahayana and

vajrayana Buddhist Canon this is a

particular Buddha I hear the most about

second only to amitaba Buddha in the

Mahayana and vajana Canon my first

question is one do you think that

praying

Nano and or reciting Mantra to or for a

particular Buddha before meals in

particular with meat and wishing them a
better rebirth and dedication of Merit
especially to a particular Buddha EG
medicine Master Buddha would work all
the same in the terraa tradition
simplified do you think dedication of
Merit and showing gratitude before meals
especially where you wish well for the
deceased animal generates Merit
regardless of whether the Buddha in
mention canonically exists this is not
two questions by the way this is a
simplification of the question
LOL and then a little bit of a
commentary here whenever I eat food
especially with meat I recite the
medicine Master Buddha darne according

to the Sutra I have a routine specific

prayer I regularly do before eating food

which is usually longer when it's meat

LOL

um okay so let's just's scroll up to the

top do I think that praying Nano and or

reciting Mantra well I don't know what

Nano is I think fo might be the Chinese

word for

Buddha but then Nan before I don't know

what that means so let's just kind of

skip

Nano praying or reciting Mantra to or

for a particular Buddha

um well in terab Buddhism there really

isn't much praying done that in there's

at least one

suta where the Buddha actually kind of

ridicules praying he says praying is

like standing on one side of a river and

then like begging the other side to come

over on this side so you don't have to

cross

it so I mean praying is really kind of

unorthodox a lot of devout Buddhists do

pray including terava Buddhists and I'll

get back to that I once had a little bit

of a discussion with a a burmes village

Doctor Who said that he used to pray to

the Buddha every day and uh there's a

question more specifically referring to

that farther down the scroll so I think

I'll save the story I've probably

already told it before

anyway um so do I think that praying or

reciting a mantra to a particular Buddha

before

meals um let's see and then would work

the same in the terrible a of

tradition well um there's certainly

nothing at all wrong with you know like

gratitude and well-wishes towards the

being that gave it to life so that you

could eat the

food um at the very least you in a way

you're like sending meta

to some animal who is now deceased but

has moved on to some other existence

possibly as another animal probably as

another animal so there's absolutely

nothing wrong with that I've done that

many times

myself um praying is it's really not so

much I I have prayed in my life

especially even as a monk I think

especially as a monk but when I would

pray it was times when I was just in at

wit's end you know it's like anybody out

there who's willing and able to help

please do so you know it wasn't even

really directed towards anyone in

particular it was just anyone out there

who's willing and able to

help you know Davis or or enlightened

beings with psychic powers anything like

that you that was it was all a fair game

um so I mean praying to a Buddha that

you don't think really exists or ever

existed um I think Robin's Nest here is

mainly referring to what is generally

called medicine Buddha and like the

Buddha image is he's holding like a

little vial or Bowl which contains

medicine you know it's like spiritual

medicine it's

symbolic um I mean if you believe that

he really does

exist then at least

this offering respect to him is is

fine um a lot of Buddhist I mean the

main thing that you see um in terraa

Buddhist Society is a lot of devout

Buddhists before they eat anything they
will take a little bit of it and offer
it at their altar you know the Buddha
statue has no desire for it the Buddha
himself has no desire for this food but
still in a way it's kind of making a
small sacrifice
that before you eat anything you offer a
little bit to the to the Buddha image on
the Altar and uh in a way um you know
it's kind of fills the need for
devotionalism in a lot of people I never
really did it myself I really didn't see
the point in offering rice and Curry to
a
statue but a lot of people do it also as
monks I did live at certain monasteries

where they would

recite um you know I I eat this alms

food not to beautify myself make myself

more attractive to make myself look good

but just to keep me healthy so that I

can continue practicing dhama that kind

of thing that was chanted before each

meal at certain monasteries where I used

to stay and my nose is itching very

much just uh take a brief a brief break

here while I itch my nose

okay let's see here so yeah I mean

offering gratitude in general that

gratitude is really a um underrated kind

of emotion or or feeling that actually

there are some teachers I think it was

uh Paul low used to say that gratitude
will get you farther than equinity the
Equanimity can just kind of be a sort of
apathy whereas gratitude is just
Acceptance in a way it's joyful
acceptance and that can get you farther
it can be a relatively powerful
spiritual practice just cultivating
gratitude and all of a sudden it reminds
me of this movie holy man where Eddie
Murphy plays this you know presumably
enlightened being or at least very
spiritually Advanced being he's walking
down the road and somebody throws a a
cup of like Fanta grape soda at him and
it splatters he's wearing like this
white robe it splatters this purple

stuff and he's he just kind of looks at

ah grape I love grape you

know gratitude he's he's so grateful at

the opportunity to to smell that great

beverage that is splattered all over his

robe

so yeah I mean praying not so much in

Terra um

just offering gratitude or respect to

beings including the Buddha who probably

won't really

care but or to the animal who is

deceased who also may not care but

really when you're doing this kind of

thing it's for the sake of your own

attitude you know you're making your own

attitude more wholesome it may be
completely irrelevant to the animal that
was killed or the the Buddha that may or
may not exist you know out there
somewhere but it's it's like cultivating
wholesome mental States in yourself and
if doing this little ritual of you know
saying grace of some sort before you eat
offering gratitude or respect before you
eat if it's helping you to have
wholesome mental States then it's fine
you know it's a good
practice so I think I'm just going to
move on to the next question also from
Robin's Nest what is a good proper and
meritorious manner I think Robin's Nest
means

Mantra or prayer which is terot a
tradition infused and preferably English
that one could use before eating food to
gratitude well the only real Mantra or
chant that I know before eating food
that is is a common one in terab before
eating food is the one the monks do with
regard to eating alms food it's it's
pretty much like I just said and I I
used to recite it every day and i' I've
forgotten all the words in Polly
now but um it's not really gratitude
oriented it's just I eat this food you
know not to beautify myself not for fun
not for pleasure but just to stay
healthy so that I can continue

practicing meditation continue following

dhamma so terraa is definitely more dry

of a system more this sort of

cerebral less emotional less

devotionalism a lot of devotionalism has

been added of

course

um so what is a good proper meritorious

Mantra or pray prayer yeah the prayers I

mean you're just not going to find

prayers in

terod texts

really um chance you can find but um I

really can't think of um like a poly

chant or an English translation of a

poly chant that is done by lay people

before eating food to Express gratitude

it's more done just through actions or just kind of off the cuff you know it's just whatever feels good to you to do and like I said in terado Buddhist countries they'll offer a little bit of their food to the Buddha image on the altar do do the bowels do whatever kind of prostration or or little brief chant they do when they pay homage to the Buddha and then they go and eat their food

um but really I mean I guess there is a lot of gratitude towards the Buddha in in like the heart of the person who is paying respect to the Buddha and offering some of their food to the to

the Buddha but um not so much to the

animal

so yeah you may just have to like invent

your own if you do not want to recite

what the monks at many monasteries

recite with regard to um see

Bur saywa meat etc

etc that's in burmes pronunciation of

poly which is how I pronounced all of my

poly for the many years that I lived in

Burma so I'm sorry that I can't really

answer that question very well because

it's it's not really a terraa Buddhist

thing although I'm sure that there are

terot of Buddhists out there who have

come up with something maybe Monks at

monasteries in the West who have come up

with some kind of agreeable satisfying
kind of chant to do before eating that
is I mean it might be just sending meta
I mean that's a possibility where you
just send meta to all beings but again
that's not so much gratitude as just
like friendliness benevolent
feelings so I think I'm just going to
move on to next question this is from S
papala and S papapa says what do you
think of car Jung's
synchronicity sometimes I wonder if it
can meet with Buddhism in some way but
ultimately it's just another delusion
well I mean Buddhism at the conventional
level also is largely another delusion

you know you're believing in people that
really exist like goab Buddha who I mean
like this person I mean that's that's
delusional from the point of view of
Buddhist philosophy because there is no
self there is no person
so I do think that going just with
conventional reality like the
conventional truth taught by
Buddhism um Carl Young synchronicity
really is not in conflict with that in
fact it helps to I mean it can serve as
like evidence that really the mind is
number one that that I mean y
synchronicity he calls it an acausal
connecting principle I think that's how
he call what he calls it an a causal

connecting principle but I don't
understand the a causal part I mean
there pretty much has to be some kind of
cause in order for it to be an effect
you know so I mean I think everybody's
experienced synchronicity or just weird
coincidences like meaningful
coincidences that happen at a rate that
is beyond what would be expected from
random
chance so I do think that there is such
a thing as
synchronicity and uh I think it just
helps to point out that really the world
we live in is
mindmade that so so that like certain

aspects of our subconscious mind are
Conjuring up this synchronicity because
it's Conjuring up the reality in which
we live which includes that
synchronicity that meaningful
coincidence so I do think that Carl
Young synchronicity he can't really
explain it Buddhism can explain syn
synchronicity better than Carl Yung
could explain synchronicity because it
does happen in fact like the more you
practice dhama the more deeply you go
into meditation the more these weird
coincidences and synchronicities
happen so I mean Yung was on to
something he was describing something
that he couldn't really explain the why

of it really unless it was like some sort of collective unconscious and archetypes or something you know may be that he he explained it somehow but I don't think he explained it very well I mean I've I've got his essay on synchronicity on the book case back there and I don't recall him actually explaining some kind of mechanism because he's calling it a causal which I mean it's practically random I mean he he just can't come up with any kind of mechanism for exactly how it worked possibly because Carl Young still considered physical matter in an external world to be ultimately real or

at least real enough that we don't
really have much if any control over it
but really we do we just don't realize
it because it's happening at a deeper
level of
Consciousness so I think I'm just going
to move on to s papala next
question which is what if seeing the
synchronicity of how your conceptions
and then perceptions as a pugena paintt
this world with thoughts of self through
our delusional me mind perceptions and
Kama kind of plays out as long as we
have this delusion due to attachment of
to self and
whatnot well that's kind of a
complicated sentence isn't it what if

seeing the synchronicity of how your
conceptions and perceptions paint this
world with thoughts of self through our
delusional me mind perceptions and comma
kinds of plays out as long as we have
this delusion due to attachment to self
and whatnot for some reason this is a
difficult question for me to
understand okay I'm going to try and
simplify it get rid of some of the ex
like the the Clauses that kind of break
up the sentence and kind of fragment
it so what if seeing the
synchronicity of how your perceptions
paint this
world okay

have yeah it's it's not even a

grammatically correct sentence as far as

I can tell that he kind of lost the

thread of subject object you know

subject and predicate kind of a thing at

some point so what if seeing the

synchronicity of how your conceptions

paint this world and then it just the

sentence just kind of goes in a

different direction after that and it

that thought itself is not completed in

a grammatically coherent manner

so yeah I'm not exactly sure what s

papapa is asking

here um what if seeing

the of how your perceptions paint this

world with thoughts of self through our

delusional M mind perceptions and

Karma okay how kind of okay what of

seeing the synchronicity this I mean

this could be a half hour long for me to

even get through this what if seeing the

syn ionicity of how your perceptions

paint this world kind of plays out as

long as we have this delusion due to

attachment to self and whatnot

well yeah I think that I mean the less

attachment to self you have though um it

could you can have more synchronicity

like I was already saying that around

like people like sages or people who are

just doing intensive practice

synchronicity happens more and it could

be that you're becoming less attached or

whoever it is is becoming less attached

to the the main

rules that are like applied to some

saric reality our version of

it it you become less attached to that

and so more becomes possible you can

have more magic you can have more

miracles the less you are attached to

the way things are supposed to

be

so yeah I mean synchronicity would kind

of be included in karma and with an

enlightened being it would be more the

karma of the people around that

enlightened being rather than the

enlightened being himself he would just

be kind of a uh like a window who allows
the miraculous or you know whatever you
want to call it the Paranormal
this the
synchronous uh he allows it into this
world kind of because he is sort of uh
he's a Lial place you know he's sort of
a weak spot in the rules you know he's
he's not nearly so attached to the rules
about how things are supposed to be in
this version of reality and so anything
becomes more
possible but still I'm not exactly sure
if I've answered this
question God
I think I'm just going to move on to

some papal Papa's third question I hope
I at least kind of Knocked a dent into
it but that was kind of a weird question
that I did not fully
comprehend
so some papaa says I watched an aan Sona
dama talk on Right View and he said that
the blessed one said that first there is
Mother and Father what's that about in
your opinion where is that actually
discussed in the discourses I only own
the Majin Naya at the moment and it's
not under Right View I do think that
it's you could probably find it in the
mjay I didn't try to find it I'm
familiar with the with the the quote and
I'm sure it's found more than once in

the texts that when you're talking about right view that first there is father and mother so right view just begins with the idea that you should honor your parents that you do have a kind of karmic connection and obligation towards your parents and then you know after that it moves into you know there is like the giving the result of giving Karma I mean it's essentially um admitting to the existence of karma that is the the gist of of this um strange quote that starts with first there is mother and father and it's not really explained you know the commentators will explain it but it apparently means first

year his father and mother or mother and father is just the very beginning I mean you have a duty to your parents you know it's your own Karma that landed you with these parents anyway and then he moves on to just basic Karma just accepting that there are consequences moral consequences to moral actions that's the that's the main gist of it and there are some philosophy in the Buddhist time who are like materialists who just did not believe that there was any such thing as karma and thus there was no such thing as right and wrong except maybe just in like a pragmatic sense of you know there's a right way of like fixing a a

carriage and then there's a wrong

there's wrong ways of fixing it so I

mean they they might make distinctions

between right and wrong in that sense

but not in the sense of Ethics really

that you could just go around murdering

people and if you so long as you don't

get arrested for it or lynched by a

howling mob that you haven't done

anything wrong there were philosophers

who supposedly were saying that kind of

stuff in the Buddhist

time

so I guess I'll just move on to the next

question then then this this Q&A may be

disappointing because there are some

obscure kind of questions and then like
with that question it's like I haven't
read the text recent you know it's been
years since I came across that text in
my reading and so um I mean I understand
the gist of it but I can't really go
into minute details about the specifics
of it so I'm just moving on to the next
question this is from Outer Haven and
outer Haven says would you ever go
hunting can someone call themselves both
a hunter and a Buddhist or are the two
paths entirely incompatible sounds like
youd just be building negative Karma
well I think the Buddha's last meal no
no it wasn't a butcher that offered his
last meal never mind I he was he was a

metal

Smith but I mean would I ever go hunting

I guess that's the first question um

ordinarily no but if there was like a

zombie apocalypse civilization collapses

the only way that I could feed myself

and my family would be by going out and

hunting then there's a good chance that

I actually would and I know that I would

be making Bad Karma so to speak but as a

lay person I mean to some degree as a

lay person you have to be a stoic you

have to acknowledge okay I cannot be a

saint it's just not appropriate for me

as a man not to protect my family not to

provide for them that I like let's say

in a in a disaster area you know it's
like you got to go out and find
something to eat and it may be that you
might have to steal it or loot a store
or something or you may have to hunt for
it because otherwise your family may
starve so something like that I mean you
just have to admit I mean you don't try
to justify saying well hunting's right
in under these circumstances I mean
you're still going to be making Bad
Karma you just have to accept that and
be willing to accept the consequences
when they come back on you so you it
requires a certain amount of
stoicism just the ability to accept the
consequences of what one does instead of

like yowling like a scal scalded cat
when the consequences come back on
you so that's really missing a lot in
modern society in ancient times
classical Society in the west there was
a lot of that just the acceptance you
know I'm going to die I could die a
gnarly death tomorrow and I just have to
accept
that I mean you might try to protect
yourself and save yourself and not die a
gnarly death but it's going to happen
sooner or later so when it does to
people around you I mean you may grieve
and all that but still you just have to
accept this is just the way it

is and as a Buddhist where you
understand how Karma works better than
some ancient Pagan then still I mean
it's it's karma it's it's what what goes
around comes around so you really have
to just deal with the consequences of
your actions and be willing to accept
that when it happens if you are you know
something is disapproved of by by dhama
or the Buddha or wise people and you
decide to do it anyway you just have to
kind of say to yourself well I mean I'm
going to be making Bad Karma so if I
really want to do this I have to be able
to accept when the opposite happens back
at
me and then I mean once you make your

peace with that you can continue and go forwards you're still going to be doing something ethically wrong you'll be making Bad Karma but at least um you're like taking responsibility for it it's like you're owning it and I mean you have to acknowledge that there's going to be consequences

so can someone call themselves both a hunter and a Buddhist I'm sure that in Burma you know you got the village butcher who usually is well if there are Muslims in the village it's often a Muslim who is the village butcher or fisherman that uh there's a lot of Buddhist

fishermen and uh you know they just do the best they can it's like I had one guy saying well I can I can keep three precepts you know I can keep two and a half precepts I kind of thing it's if that's the best they can do if so long as you take you know let see how do I say

this I mean generally to be a terab Buddhist you take five precepts and three refuges take the three refuges first you take three refuges and five precepts but everyone's going to be breaking precepts sometimes so I mean you can be a hunter and a Buddhist at the same time you can believe that Buddhism is true and then you can sort

of say well in my situation in life I
just can't be a saint I'm going to have
to be breaking certain precepts and so
you just have to accept that that I'm
not a very good Buddhist even if I am a
Buddhist something along those lines so
the two paths are not entirely
incompatible I mean
there's zen master Samurai for example
that you know it's like they have to
interpret Buddhism in a way that and
wasn't just completely condemning
themselves but still I mean you can
still have the equinity the meditative
mind the mindfulness I mean it helps you
to be a swordmaster if you're if you

have equinity and mindfulness you know
you don't lose your head you don't get
start getting excited and agitated when
you're fighting your your enemy or
whatever
so yeah I mean pure Buddhism is Main
mainly just for the heavy hitter
renunciant meditating out in the forest
and then everybody else they've got to
just do the best they can I mean
everybody's doing the best they can
including the Heavy Hitters out in the
forest but some people can't do nearly
as well as that you know they're still
you know they're keeping two and a half
precepts and not meditating but still
they have some appreciation for what

dhama says and even though they may be
doing something that dhama condemns in
in a way they're more careful about it
they're more conscious of it they may be
a little bit more mindful like I asked
my teacher once back way back when I was
just first entered the monastery you
know which is better to do something
wrong knowing that it's wrong or to do
something wrong not knowing that it's
wrong and my teacher gave me the
surprising answer that it's better to do
something wrong knowing that it's wrong
and the simile he gave is that if you
pick something up knowing that it's hot
you're less likely to burden yourself

than if you pick something up not
knowing that it's hot you know you're
going to be careful when you do
it so yeah
Buddhism I assume you know Mass
murderers could be Buddhists even though
they would be horrible Buddhists sort of
like you know Mafia Hitmen are
Catholics so yeah you'd just be building
negative Karma no it wouldn't just be
building negative Karma because at least
you know keeping dhama in mind is
positive you know paying respect to the
Buddha is positive you can do a lot of
positive things that to some degree can
kind of count counterbalance the
negative stuff that you do you can do a

lot of Bad Karma and a lot of good karma

in the same lifetime you know on the

same

day

so yeah you can be a hunter and a

Buddhist at the same time it's just just

that you would not be practicing

Buddhism nearly as well as the heavy

hitter renunciant in you know going

experiencing forth a Janna out under a

tree in the forest

somewhere and so I'm just going to move

on to the next question this is from

Fred and Fred says can these Mahayana

people tell lives and prove them and

then there's three question

marks and I I assume he's responding to
my take on the tagata Garba Sutra which
is a relatively important Mahayana
Buddha Sutra that starts off with just
wild wild fairy tale Miracle stuff going
on and Fred says can these Mahayana
people tell lies and prove them well I
mean most Mahana Buddhists are not
really telling lies I mean you can say
something this is blatantly false
or false
and not be lying because in order to lie
you have to have the deliberate
intention to deceive so if you are
mistaken and then you repeat that
mistake that's not really lying I mean
it may have started off as a lie

somewhere along the lines but if you
believe that it's true and you're just
repeating it that's not lying even if
it's totally
false so yeah it is a weird phenomenon
that's found in pretty much all
religions
Islam maybe not so much but pretty much
all religions will have fake scriptures
attributed to the founder of the
religion or some great Saint or sage in
that system that somebody had to have
known at the beginning that they didn't
really say that somebody had to make it
up but I mean most Mahayana scriptures
are this way for

example some of the books of the Bible

are this

way so I mean there are honest ways that

it could happen where let's say you've

got just this teaching of somebody who

isn't the Buddha you know he's maybe a

Buddhist he's got some weird ideas maybe

he starts this teaching and it strikes

traction a lot of people like what he

taught and start repeating it and then

maybe 50 years later after it's become

entrenched in the Society people hear

that and they just assume that the

Buddha taught

it and it's you know it's kind of a a

weird more or less heretical idea that

nevertheless a lot of people like it

they they think that it's true and so it winds up being incorporated into some kind of body of scripture but in a lot of cases I think somebody has to know that they're making stuff up and putting it into the mouth of say go to maudo but I think most Mahayana Buddhists who for example believe in dag garas Sutra you know they think that the dag garas Sutra is authoritative genuine teachings of the Buddha and all that um you know they they think that and so they're not lying when they repeat it even though they may be mistaken still it's it's an honest mistake

so the if there were Mahayana people

telling lies about this kind of stuff it
happened in Ancient India which had a
very surreal kind of approach to reality
very
dreamlike and I mean to this day in
Burma there's all kinds of just wild
rumors and so forth that just get
accepted as
fact
that you know it's just sort of like the
gullibility of certain people and
somebody's just making this guas you
know it could be that you had some kind
of nutty monk who had a vision you know
he just saw in his mind the Buddha
giving this speech and then he just
assumed that it was real he repeats it

said the Buddha taught this and then it catches traction might even start a whole new school of Buddhism so there's there are ways that some of the the weirder nuttier aspects of Mahayana Buddhism just the the stuff that's just flat heresy Flatout heresy from a Terra Buddhist point of view or the point of view of you know the early schools of Buddhism the earliest schools of Buddhism that I mean there could be that there was deliberate lying lies being told but there are some other ways that I was kind of touching on that it could be kind of an honest mistake kind of a

thing but I mean there's no way the
Mahayana Buddhist could prove that the
Buddha really did teach the datag Aras
Sutra just like there's no way a terava
Buddhist can prove that the Buddha
taught the sad batana Sutra or the let's
see Daka Pat anything like that there's
no way to prove it I mean you can work
out you know some some sutas are more
likely than others to be
authentic and the stuff that comes after
the the early schools is much less
likely to be authentic because otherwise
it'd be in the earlier schools
too and Mahayana really they got to do
some mental gymnastics to get around the
idea that I mean just to to believe that

the Buddha really taught this I mean
it's like the standard explanation you
got like three main approaches one
approach is like the approach taken by
Scholastics for example which is like
even some Mahayana Buddhists acknowledge
Mahayana Buddhism did not get taught by
the Buddha himself it did not arise
until hundreds of years after the time
of the Buddha you know that's one group
another group I think maybe even the I
think the
traditional explanation from
Mahayana is that the
Buddha it's it's so weird this is like
the official Mahayana interpretation

that even the Buddha's main disciples
like Sara molana were not wise enough
even though they were fully enlightened
they were not wise enough to appreciate
Mahayana and so the Buddha had like
these secret teachings where according
toata Garba Sutra they were like it was
like trillions and trillions of beings
listening to these talks including monks
he's just performing these wild
spectacular Miracles and that somehow
none of the early like like terraa Proto
ter a l of Buddhist were there you know
it's like it's it's just so absurd it's
so unlikely that the Buddha would have
taught an entirely different message
that in some respects contradicts you

know what is considered to be Orthodox

early

Buddhism without the Orthodox early

Buddhists being aware of it that he just

had like this completely other religion

practically that for some reason even

even his chief disciples were oblivious

to well it's just nonsense and then

there's a third explanation where you

can say that let's see what would be the

third explanation I was thinking about

this a little

earlier see oh yeah it would be a kind

of conspiracy theory where the Buddha

taught all this Mahayana stuff with

thousands of monks and attendance like

it says in the texts including all these
buddhis satas and and beings from Pure
lands and stuff coming and that this
conspiracy was that the earlier schools
of Buddhism just didn't like that stuff
and just conspired to delete it all from
their own
texts which also doesn't seem very
likely so the likeliest explanation is
that the Buddha just never taught it and
it just got added
later which is even what a lot of
Mahayana Scholars admit
to and so I think that's a bit of a
digression and I should move on on
because uh we got lots of questions
today and I've already been going for an

hour so the next question is from drunk

Dr oh here you go this I was I already

mentioned this drunk Dr says can you

elaborate more on so-called Buddha land

almost sounds like a meditation theme

park well I assume he's referring to

this Daga garvas Sutra again where there

was 60 times

as many bodh

svas as there are sand grains in the

Ganges and a person on the Discord

server actually tried to went to an AI

to determine how many sand grains are in

the Ganges and it was up in the

sextillion so you'd have to multiply

that by 60 60 setian

sextillion and they all came from Buddha lands or pure lands and this the pure land or Buddha lands is nowhere to be found there's not the slightest hint of it in the poly Tex that I am aware of it was

uh it's it's an aspect of pure land Buddhism and ironically pure land Buddhism is one of the earlier schools of Mahayana to arise according to experts like uh what's his name AK wer in his book on Indian Buddhism he pointed out one of the early EST um acknowledged schools of Mahayana Buddhism was pure land which according to him arose in Southern India and pure land Buddhism I've I've heard it said

that pure land Buddhism is like
Christianity for Buddhists where you've
got certain Buddhas who will generate
this this like paradise and if you pray
to these Buddhas you can be reborn into
that paradise and I had a Pur land
Buddhism try to explain that these bu
Bud lands aren't even in samsara in a
way they're indistinguishable from
nibbana or Nirvana already which is just
kind of a mindblower to someone who
knows you know what samsara is where
it's you know Diversified and has
qualities and aspects in the absolute
which it
doesn't so yeah it's just this weird

idea cooked up by not so early Buddhists

but still ancient ones

that there are Buddhas who create this

paradise why GMA didn't create one they

don't really say unless they're saying

that just ancient India and the the

Ganges Valley

Basin was was his paradise that he

created but the evidence doesn't seem to

support that very

well so these Buddhas they create this

kind of paradise world where it's very

easy to become enlightened so I mean

it's just ruled by this enlightened

being you know it's just righteousness

prevails is this it's just saturated

with Dharma you pray or just recite his

name over and over and over again just
keep your mind directed on this Buddha
he will allow you apparently to be
reborn into this paradise world where
you become enlightened more easily and I
mean the go to a Buddha apparently based
on the earliest text would never say
such a thing and in fact he would
probably denounce such a
theory now he's saying get enlightened
In This Very life if you can don't
postpone it don't pray to anybody don't
try to wind up
reborn I mean that's that's one of the
the teachings of early Buddhism you
should not be W Desiring Rebirth of any

sort

whatsoever

so that's what the so-called Buddha

lands

are and I'm going to move on next

question this is from David

Jr and David Jr says here just a second

I gotta fix something

here all right David Jr says Buddhists

believe in reincarnation but say it is

not the soul or consciousness of the

dead person that reincarnates but the

karma the karma consequences of how this

person lived so his first question is

why should this newly born person

inherit this Karma why should this Karma

belong to them if it's not the same

Consciousness or Soul well see there's
not only no soul in Buddhism so many
people do not get this there's not only
no soul in Buddhism there is no self at
all there is no person in
reality so all of this is just kind of
like a a virtual reality so you can say
there's a virtual soul that gets
virtually reincarnated as this new
virtual person you can say that if you
want to but in ultimate truth there's
none of
that so what passes for one person from
One Life to the next the only thing
according to Terra Buddhism that
transmigrates from One Life to the next

is Karma and that is just the momentum

of the mental States it's like the

psychic momentum the the stream of

Consciousness if you like that is what

gets re incarnated it's not ultimately

real

though in tervada Buddhism you could say

that the like the Mind moments of these

mental states are ultimately real but

the person isn't

regardless so why should this newly born

person inherit this Karma they've got

the same momentum they've got the same

momentum of mental States the same

psychic

momentum so when it stops here it just

starts it starts again as soon as it

stops you know it's sort of like pushing
down a lump in the carpet that just
causes the lump to arise somewhere else
it's not the same piece of carpet but
it's like has the same characteristics
because it's simply this lump you know
being transferred to a different
lump if that if that
helps so there is no newly born person
to inherit anything ultimately it's just
karmic momentum and even that is at the
level of you know samsara not the level
of the
ultimate okay so why should this Karma
belong to them if it's not the same
Consciousness or Soul well it's not the

same Consciousness from one moment to

the next you're not the same person from

one moment to the

next so I

mean might as well add that as an

additional problem I mean it's rebirth

is happening every moment because it's

like different different body different

mental States from one moment to the

next according to Terra you know

everything is in flux and like even

matter even physical matter which Terra

accepts I I don't personally but Abid

dama the Abid philosophy accepts that

physical matter is ultimately real but

it's flashing in and out of existence at

like what is it trillion a trillion

times a second and you know it just
ceases to exist reappears so it's
different from one moment to the
next so I kind of answered that one so
I'm moving on to David Jr's next
question how can you talk about the
desire to end your cycles of rebirth if
you are not being reborn well it's not
really you I mean that's what I'm saying
is not only is there no soul there's no
person at
all but we are stuck in this
illusion that there are people and souls
and so you're trying to get out of the
illusion you're trying to get out of the
Matrix you're trying to get out of the

virtual reality and into Ultimate

Reality in which there will be no you

anymore because there never was a you

ultimately so you can talk about the

desire to end your cycles of rebirth

without you actually being reborn simply

because you want this virtual reality

with virtual suffering and virtual

delusion to

stop and then I mean going with

upanishadic language you just merge with

with the

infinite you know all the barriers are

down and there's just you just merge

with the

ultimate but you're not really not

supposed to Crave that because that

craving is just another kind of craving

which gets you stuck so you just

practice Dharma as a kind of sacred Duty

or what just something that you are

moved to

do and then you get wiser and wiser and

the illusion gets dimmer and and just

eventually just kind of Fades out or

just poofs out all of a

sudden okay so I suppose I answered that

one I'm going to move on to David

Junior's third question which is what is

reaching

Enlightenment what is becoming a Buddha

and why seek

it well I mean the Buddha has different

meanings it originally just meant
awakened one you know an enlightened
being and sometimes there are a few
texts in which the ordinary enlightened
being is called a Buddha and so it may
be that David Jor is asking about
becoming an arhan just an enlightened
being because a Buddha in Terra also in
Mahayana has has acquired a different
meaning where it's like way more exalted
than ordinary enlightened being Mahayana
Buddhist would even go so far to say
that an ordinary enlightened being or
arhon isn't even fully enlightened even
though they certainly are based on the
early
texts so what is reaching Enlightenment

reaching Enlightenment is just awareness
of Ultimate Reality awareness of the
conent thing in itself as opposed to the
content thing is it
seems so you you've gotten out of the
Matrix and but there's no you after
you've gotten out of the Matrix CU you
are I mean generating your own
Matrix you don't really exist it's all
just this interconnected web of Illusion
essentially so reaching Enlightenment is
is reaching or attaining full awareness
of reality instead of just wallowing in
delusion why seek it I mean if if you
like being deluded and un happy then
there's no real reason to seek it I

guess but all suffering and delusion are
s saric they do not exist in ultimately
Ultimate Reality unless you're an Abid
dama scholar and then you can say that
suffering and delusion are ultimately
real even though people are ultimately
real but mainly why seek
Enlightenment because once you're
enlightened you are no longer stuck in
delusion and
suffering it's better than
heaven and I'm going to move on to the
next question this is from
Anthony Anthony says it is said that the
Buddha was Clairvoyant I knew a Buddhist
who said that he prayed to the Buddha
because he knew that time was not a

constraint on the Buddha and could hear
his prayers all the way in the past what
do you think of these theories
um this is the little story that I was
warning you about that I was going to
mention here I got to adjust this oh
okay it's
adjusted I didn't need to adjust it so I
I had this talk with uh a Burmese
Village doctor he was the the doctor the
village doctor in the the village of
lame in central Burma very nice
guy and uh he told me that he prays to
the Buddha every day and I asked him why
do you pray to the Buddha every day when
the Buddha is dead and he can't hear you

I mean he's no longer in this world and
the doctor told me well the Buddha can
look into the future and see and hear me
praying to him which even that is not
good Terra a Buddhism because according
to Terra Buddhism only the present
moment
exists they they mocked the sarvastivada
Buddhists who said that the future and
the past still exist in a sense you know
sort of like Einstein saying that that
time is just the fourth dimension
so that the past present and future all
in a sense are simultaneous but in the
Orthodox point of view of terab Buddhism
which the burmes are supposed to accept
without

question is that only the present moment exists the future does not exist yet the past no longer exists so the Buddha cannot see into the future other than by extrapolating just using like superhuman logic you know logical extrapolation to to see General Trends but he won't be able to um get past people making decisions that are not deterministic you know people are not completely locked into determinism even though free will also is is something that Terra Buddhism doesn't really accept so it's it's a paradoxical State enigmatic state where both Free Will and determinism are both

they're you know they're both

rejected but the Buddha cannot really

see the future all he can do is just

extrapolate and go with

probabilities so even then it's hardly

likely that the Buddha would have looked

into the future and have seen this this

good Village doctor praying to him

unless he just had like this omniscience

where he's he's just seeing every

possible

scenario and then he'll he'll be seeing

this do praying to him also this doctor

cursing him and then his next door

neighbor praying to him and all just all

these

possibilities

so what do I think of these theories
it's pretty much what I was saying a
little earlier with regard to making
prayers in general in that when you're
praying to a Buddha I mean the Buddha is
probably not going to know about it you
know you're sending mea to an animal who
died so that you can eat that riy steak
the animal probably is going to be
completely oblivious to any of that but
what you're doing is you're cultivating
your own wholesome mental States you
know you're you're cultivating reverence
and respect and gratitude and good
feeling towards others you know like
benevolence and so forth so it's mainly

subjective whether it has any effect

beyond your subjective experience is

largely

irrelevant

so he can pray to the Buddha but

probably the Buddha is not going to be

listening or caring I mean unless he's

just totally omniscient and is seeing

all possible scenarios including that

one which is just like infin ismal spec

compared with everything else

so I when you're praying when you're

sending meta and so forth most of it the

overwhelming majority of it is just

cultivating subjective wholesome mental

States regardless of any effects it has

out there in in the world

somewhere and I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from scolin
or
skaden and he says is bias something to
overcome some biases you can overcome
you know I think people with Trump
derangement syndrome would do well to
overcome that particular bias it it just
you know it's skewes your reality and
causes greater delusion although a
certain amount of bias is just part of
the human condition I don't know if
anyone is going to be completely free of
bias even a fully enlightened being may
still have like vestigal bias even
though they're not identified with it

anymore it's just nature taking its

course and you know they're economists

while they're biased but still it's just

sort of

vestigal and just being human is going

to cause bias I mean we're biased

against like bitter tastes and biased in

favor of like sweet or rich or savory

tastes we're biased against stink like

rotting meat or a cat fart and we biased

in favor of more good smelling smells

like flowers or baking bread for example

it's just built into us that we have

certain

biases so I guess I should have uh read

his little explanatory commentary before

answering the question so his question

is is bias something to overcome and

then he says I'm not even sure how that

would work considering how much bias is

integrated into Communications like if I

were to say the three following words

literally yellow bird most likely The

Listener has a mental image just from

that even though it was vague and could

have referred to anything from a real

bird to a cartoon bird and if it was a

reference to a cartoon bird it could

have been a Tweety Bird or Woodstock

from

peanuts so yeah I mean certain biases

you can overcome them and you do well to

overcome them because it's a kind of

delusion other kind of biases we're just
stuck with because of being a human
being or because we were just born into
a culture that makes certain assumptions
and we just absorb those
assumptions so nevertheless it is good
to keep bias to a minimum if
possible you know try not to be so
biased that you're just completely
irrational for
example so I'm just going to move on to
scadden's next question which is would
you kindly explain the relationship
between conventional reality and
Ultimate Reality and then his little
commentary here is it's it kind of
sounds like conventional reality is

symbolic to the thing itself like when
people look at the stars in the sky
they're not seeing the thing in itself
but the thing is it was across light
years or perhaps it's more delusional
like the moon which does not emit its
own source of light but deludes that
dilutes I assume he means it dilutes
that of the sun I don't know I'd hate to
find out the uncarved slab is a black
mirror that reflects Karma or
something okay conventional reality
symbolic yeah ultimately conventional
reality um it's not just misinterpreting
sense
data um because you can't just have bare

uninterpreted sense data there was uh

some medieval Buddhist philosopher of

the Dig Naga

School venerable daroda I think his name

was who who pointed out and this is

profound that sense data that has no

kind of perceptual interpretation is as

though it just doesn't exist at

all

so I'm not exactly sure why I mentioned

that but it's not just a matter of you

see a star and then you misinterpret

that star and that's the the star is the

Ultimate Reality and the

misinterpretation is conventional

reality because in a way you're just

creating the star that just out of like

primordial chaos

and that's probably not going to be

understood very well but it's

like this the block of marble it's it's

my Theory of

Everything Is the the block of marble

and inside that block of marble you have

an infinite number of virtual potential

statues you know every single molecule

of every statue is right there where it

has to be all you got to do is just

remove the extraneous Rock and that

statue is already in there and so

conventional reality is like singling

out some statue in that rock and

assuming that it's real you know you're

just with your mind you're just
dismissing the extraneous Rock and
you're just seeing that statue and
assuming that statue to be real or more
more to the point is you are one of the
statues and you're you're in a you're a
statue that's so complicated so
intricate that it has become
self-referential and starts believing
that it's it's a real it's a real thing
it's not just a conditional provisional
virtual statue containing a block of
marble it thinks that it's already
carved it's it's you know it's it's
legit it's the real deal so ultimate
truth would just be the uncarved block
and all conventional truth would be

singling out this statue or that statue

or this group of statues in that

uncarved block and thinking if you're

delusional that it's real and

enlightened being might just still

single out statues but at least he knows

that they're not

real that they are virtual statues

contained in this uncarved

block

so you could say that just the

perception is all is real other than the

uncarved block because it's the

perception that is singling out these

virtual

statues okay

so then I move on to schoen's third
question I assume he pronoun I I assume
he intended to be pronounced scolin but
I think Aladdin you know as pronounced
in English in in like Arabic would have
been something more like Aladin
anyway so anyways here's the third
question hypothetically if the wind blew
and Enlightenment was offered and the
person rejected it because they were
young did they soft to block themselves
like they missed their chance this
lifetime um well I mean if you're
offered Enlightenment somehow through
some miracle I don't know about the wind
blowing and doing it but I mean if you
offered Enlightenment then yeah you

should go for it you certainly you
shouldn't say well I'm still young I
don't want to be enlightened yet but I
mean I mean if you become enlightened
when you're young you're still going to
be young it's not going to like take
away
your youth I guess Shri shankara who is
one of the founding fathers of ADV vant
he became enlightened when he was a
child according to
tradition um you know he probably
remained a virgin and so forth never
danced or drank or anything maybe but
still I mean it's it's better to be
enlightened than to be like a wild

teenager anyway I speak from experience
because I used to be a wild teenager
not extremely wild I never never got
imprisoned or
anything so I nevertheless have come to
the conclusion long ago that if somebody
did somehow miraculously invent an
Enlightenment pill and if you took this
pill you would become enlightened I
think even most monks would run away
from it in Terror as though it were some
rabid demon-possessed
snake that most people just do not want
Enlightenment I that's the main reason
why we're not enlightened right now is
because we don't even want to be
enlightened we're continually trying to

remain unenlightened we like being
unenlightened mainly because we don't
know any
better so let's see this just read the
question again hypothetically if the
wind blew and Enlightenment was offered
and the person rejected it because they
were young did they soft block them yeah
well they just pretty much [__]
themselves up royally
like they missed their chance in this
lifetime they might not have missed
their only chance but certainly they
missed their 100% certain chance and now
it's like total long shot
material so yeah they [__] up is what

what they

did and I'm just going to move on the

next question this is from pyramid and

pyramid says I'm surprised a Buddhist

monk is that familiar with Mormonism

have any missionaries ever come to your

house

if so did you end up having discussions

or just telling them to leave um well

the main reason why I'm familiar with

Mormonism is that I have read the book

of Mormon I think I read it in a cave in

Burma you it was just an English book

that I had access to so I read it and it

was it was astonishing it was just

really bad book in my

opinion um but have any missionaries

ever come to my house the only Mormon
missionary I ever spoke with I was
walking through a University campus
talking to some guy who um was
cultivating association with me you know
he just you know asking me lots of
questions and stuff and so we're we're
just walking along I got my robes and my
bare feet my shaved head and all that
and this Mormon missionary came up to me
all smiles and he asked me if I've ever
read the book of Mormon and I said yeah
actually I have written the Book of
Mormon and he said what did you think of
it just setting himself up
and I'm thinking and I I said like well

I think it's very unlikely that American
Indians are a race of degenerate Jews
were punished by God for not believing
in Jesus hundreds of years before Jesus
was born and then of course the smile
just kind of evaporated and he he
implied that I didn't really understand
the Book of Mormon very well but that's
obviously what the Book of Mormon is
about I think a lot of Mormons more
intelligent sensible Mormons kind of
have tried to back away from a literal
interpretation of the Book of Mormon
even though the Book of Mormon was
clearly intended to be interpreted
literally but with regard to the like
more advanced Mormon philosophy that has

come up you know has been I don't know
devised or revealed in later times I
really don't know that much about it I I
know a little bit about like the the
temple garments the special underwear
that high rank Mormons have to wear all
the time so that when they take a shower
they just kind of pull it off till it's
around one ankle and leave that ankle
with the the the long johns kind of
sticking out of the shower when they
take a shower that kind of
thing
so that's about
it and I guess I should just move on
because I answered the question so it

does make sense that after I've answered
the question I should move on to the
next question because otherwise we never
get to the end of
this so the next question is from power
and power says has Father Fish replace
diogenes as your main Guru well diogenes
was never my main Guru really he was
kind of a role model when I was a
teenager my father used my father was
the first person to tell me about
diogenes the cynic diogenes of
cipa um who was like a founder of
classical cynicism in ancient Greece
but uh I don't think he was ever really
my main Guru Father Fish I call him my
Guru partly because I I watch a lot of

Father Fish videos and I tried to set up
my aquarium in accordance with the
teachings of venerable Father Fish
although as I've mentioned before I I
kind of messed up by not putting a layer
of soil under my sand but I do have a a
wellestablished food web going in there
now my fish really don't have to get fed
very much at all because it's all like a
self-contained food web going on in
there but uh my main Guru it's it's hard
to say I think my main Guru just if I
were asked who my main Guru is even
though I'm not thinking about this kind
of stuff nearly as much there a good
chance it would be neem karoli Baba

whose picture is up there on the

alter that I've felt the most devotional

or like a like a deep connection with

neim karoli Baba than with uh any other

spiritual teacher even though I've never

met him a friend of mine actually did

meet neem cly Baba and I was just I was

just amazed you know I was like wow what

did what did he say and he my friend

told me the only thing he ever said to

him was um he had he had shaved his head

recently the friend and not NE Cy Baba

he he started being uh shaven headed and

Ne Cy Baba asked him he started shaving

his head that was the only thing he ever

said to him

personally so it was a little

disappointing for me you know it was

nothing profound just why did you start

shaving your

head

so I mean some people might be

disappointed that my main

Guru is not Buddhist but I mean I really

don't look I mean the Buddha himself is

so far in the past in the distant past

that you don't see him I don't see him

so much

as like an individual person he's like a

legend you know it's sort of almost like

soccer it's I mean he's probably more

legendary than Socrates maybe not quite

as legendary as Hercules but I mean he's

you don't really know for sure you know
what he was like it's just you just get
this vague image or at least I do
because I'm not a dogmatist that just
accepts whatever I'm told with regard to
the Buddha because some of it's just
unbelievable so
um and I just really don't have that
much of a devotional bent like Tong Pulu
you know or aan sha somebody like that
they could be my Guru but um I really
didn't have that kind of attitude as a
terava Buddhist I still don't terva
Buddhism you know it's not really Guru
oriented you can you have dependence on
a teacher as a junior monk you can have
a teacher a venerable teacher someone

you

Revere uh so I guess that would be a

kind of Guru but I never really had a

terab Buddhist teacher who I considered

to be enlightened some of them were wise

I mean all of them knew things that I

didn't

know but um yeah I never really met

somebody that I consider to be a SAT

Guru or just you know sort of like the

absolute

personified neim Koli Baba comes close

to that he might be the he might be the

one

but even diogenes of cipa was not the

absolute personified and Father Fish was

not the absolute personified unless
everybody is the absolute
personified so I think I'm just going to
move on to power's next question which
is there's a DJ Buddhist monk in Korea
who uses Buddhist themes and iconography
in his music his goal is apparently to
try to make Buddhism appealing to a
younger Audi audience but some monks are
arguing that this DJ Buddhist monk is
making a mockery of the faith he's even
been banned in some Asian countries from
performing what is your take well I
wouldn't be surprised if Burma is one of
the countries that banned him there was
uh this is back around
2012 it was uh I think he was guy from

New Zealand came to Burma like 2011 the
floodgates were open all the economic
sanctions went down you know Burma
became sort of Quasi democratic
and so a lot of westerners just rushed
in and just were looking around for ways
to make money you know it's unexploited
capitalist Dream Land essentially or at
least in their their idea they they went
to Burma looking to make money and this
guy set up a bar which is already kind
of starting off on the wrong foot and
then he put out this advertisement
showing the Buddha wearing headphones
kind of like a psychedelic colored
Buddha wearing headphones and he want up

in prison for that because it's just
mocking Buddhism and in in a western
country you can do that kind of stuff
but in
Burma they don't put up with that [__]
you know it's like this is our country
we are devoutly Buddhist you come here
mocking our religion with that [__] you
go to prison or you get deported or you
get go to prison and then get
deported so yeah I mean I can relate to
the idea that what he's doing is
offering a kind of degenerate form of
Buddhism maybe with the idea that
degenerate Dharma is better than no
Dharma at
all but that is debatable sort of like a

lot of the stuff that goes on in the

west I mean it's degenerate Dharma

degenerate Buddhism and you say well I

mean for some people at least it's

better than no no Buddhism at

all but still

um let's see what is my take I guess I'm

giv my take right now aren't

I I can sort of see both sides but I

think I would have to side with the

traditionalists who are saying I mean

music in general is not good DH I

mean like anyone who is keeping eight

precepts shouldn't even be listening to

music C certainly shouldn't be playing

music or singing

um Mahayana Buddhism like is in Korea
maybe they've lightened up on the idea
that that music is wallowing in
sensuality and therefore should be
avoided
but yeah from a Terra point of view yeah
I mean he's he's already started off on
the wrong foot by becoming a DJ playing
Buddhist
music because playing music is not
dharmic from a Terra Buddhist point of
view which is one reason why Terra
Buddhist music tends to
suck because there's there's going to be
Terra of Buddhist music it's just that
it's kind of frowned upon it's
considered to be kind of you know bad

behavior and so you know it's not nearly
as good as like Muslim music some Muslim
mus is really
nice so I guess I gave my take on
that that I do think that uh devoutly
Buddhist countries would be justified in
Banning this
guy but I mean I don't think that he
should be punished or anything
necessarily unless he just knows that
it's against the law in Burma for
example and goes ahead and does it
anyway and then he's got to reap what he
sewed so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from The Three
Holy

baskets and this is kind of an easy
question even though I can't answer it
very well which is can you do a video on
the pandura debate and I'm not exactly
sure what the pandura debate is I mean
it may be that he's referring to the
debate which was essentially the Second
Great Council but if it's the pandura
debate is not the second great Council
then I'm not sure what the pandura
debate is so I mean he may want to
specify before I start going into a
description of the Second Great Council
which I kind of touched on in a recent
Q&A maybe even the the previous
one but uh yeah the word pandura I'm not
exactly sure it's not capitalized either

so I mean theoretically it could be like
a town or city or something where this
debate took place in Ancient India maybe
but I don't know so I'm sorry I
apologize to the Three Holy baskets for
not knowing what the pondor debate
is unless it's the second Council that's
my guess and uh if so then if the Three
Holy baskets would be so kind as to
verify my guess that yeah you're
referring to the Second Great Council
then I could give a discussion of the
second grade Council but right now I
think I'm just going to move on to the
next question which is from
cify and cify says could you share your

knowledge on how to make the daily

practice of sitting more consist

consistent well it's going to take

adiana it's going to take

determination that I mean if you're

going to get a daily consistent practice

of meditation first you should pick you

know at least one time per day when you

are most likely to be able to dedicate

that time to meditating for most people

it's usually right when you get up in

the morning or right before you go to

bed or

both so once you pick this time then you

stick to it you have to use deter

mintion you know even if you don't feel

like it even if you're not feeling so

good that day you know even if you know
you just don't want to do it at all you
still just have to do it if if you're
going to make a consistent practice of
it you have to have Adana which is
determination you have to stick to it
and no other person can really do that
for you I mean if you're at a you're at
a like a meditation
center and they're going to like punish
you you know you got the in some
oldfashioned Zen monasteries where you
got the guy with the
stick then yeah I mean that would be a
way of spurring you on to consistent
meditation practice but I mean sitting

in a group is a good way of having
consistent meditation practice at least
while you're sitting in a group because
it's kind of I don't know kind of
mortifying to be the only person who
gets up and walks out you know everybody
else is sitting there for the full hour
you know assuming that it's lasts for an
hour you know so it it kind of makes you
ashamed be to be the first one to get up
and leave for
example but if you're by yourself then I
mean you have to
like I mean you have to be on your own
case you have to beat yourself with a
stick if
necessary and you just really have to

make this firm determination and if you
can't do that if you're just the kind of
person who just falls off the wagon
easily then I'm sorry I mean nobody else
can really make you do that I'm not sure
about any life hacks that can compensate
for not having self-discipline other
than just gradually cultivating
self-discipline and it may be that you
fall off the wagon so many times that
finally you get so disgusted with
yourself that you just can't stand
living with yourself so that you're
willing to really change and start doing
it so
yeah in my case um I don't know it's

just I just meditated a lot especially
my first 10 years as a monk I mean I was
probably averaging like six hours a day
of meditation my first 10 years as a
monk so even my first 20 years it was
probably averaging out to like four
hours a
day that probably wouldn't even include
walking
meditation just sitting
there so in that case I just it's like
my duty I was was a monk before I was a
monk I really didn't meditate very
consistently but after I became a monk
it's like this is my job this is my
sacred Duty you know I can't just [__]
around I don't want to just blow it and

waste it and become like a Shameless

sloppy

monk so that was really the main thing

that got me behaving was actually being

a monk and just being revered by the

people as a kind of holy man and not

wanting to be a

fraud so so there's that possibility

that's the only way you can do

consistent meditation is by being

ordained as a monk maybe you could go

for that and I'm going to move on to the

next question this is from

files and files says you've probably

been asked this before but I was

wondering what your opinion is on casual

drinking and I don't mean water or milk

do you ever drink and the fact is yeah I

do drink alcohol sometimes in fact I had

a shot of B

over ice with a little bit of orange

bitters on it just last night helping me

unwind after

work so the thing is drinking alcohol in

and of itself is not necessarily

immoral I mean Jesus drank alcohol

apparently for

example and no Socrates could drink

anyone under the table and he was

considered to be you know the the wisest

of the Athenians the wisest of the

Greeks according to the Oracle of

Deli so I mean just drinking alcohol in

and of itself especially if it's small
amounts like last night it was like a
shot of
whiskey I rarely get drunk it does
happen occasionally I have gotten drunk
since I stopped being a monk but um in
one time I spectacularly puked my guts
out as a result of that
so I mean it's breaking a rule you know
it's breaking the fifth precept by
drinking alcohol and a monk is breaking
a rule even if he just takes some cough
syrup that has some alcohol on it or he
drinks some fruit juice that has started
to ferment in the hot weather or or take
some kind of medicine that he doesn't

know has alcohol in it until he takes it

and he tastes the alcohol he's still

broken the

rule and I mean I had a a friend a burm

monk when I was in Burma who was

repeating some sermon that he heard

about drinking alcohol how it was

somebody was dared to break one of the

five precepts so he figured drinking

alcohol would be the most minor of of

the five precepts which it pretty much

is it's you know the least you know it's

it's fifth on the list fifth in

importance

essentially and so he said well I'll

drink alcohol so then he he gets drunk

and then he goes out and starts raping

and killing and stealing and winds up
breaking all five and that's sort of
like the justification for not drinking
alcohol if you get drunk of course your
inhibitions go down you become at least
most people become stupider you know
it's like it's like the the connection
between the your higher self so to speak
and just you know the the ego that kind
of gets muddied or severed even in some
people I mean some people just become
monsters when they get drunk I one of my
best friends in high school and college
he was like richy Cunningham I he was
just
cleancut this this really good guy you

know his father was a police officer he
was raised to be really just polite nice
guy but when he got drunk he just went
wild and some people it's like they have
lots of
inhibitions and the alcohol kind of it
removes the inhibitions and all this
repressed stuff just splatters outwards
a lot of people are like
that especially certain quiet guys with
like a really intense look in their eyes
that you don't want to be around them
when they get
drunk so yeah I do drink occasionally I
have a few times gotten
drunk but I I like the taste of beer
sometimes you come home on a hot day and

a cold beer goes down you don't want to drink something sweet you don't want to drink coffee which will just keep you up at night you I don't want to drink just plain water just a cold beer goes down really nice so it is breaking a rule but whether it's it's immoral or not depends on you know how you drink and why you drink how much you drink that kind of thing so I'm I'm kind of a a renegade I guess and I'm just going to move on the next

question this is also from files and he says in older times especially in China many Buddhists including monks and sages were also daoists mostly I've only heard

of Zen or Chan Buddhists that were also dsts but I'm curious what your opinion is on this is it possible to combine or even syncretize dosm with terrible V and Mahayana personally I find the da Jing and the xang Z absolutely beautiful enigmatic text infinitely filled with wisdom much like some sutas so I was wondering to what extent one can utilize both well yeah you can be an Eclectic I mean you can combine Christianity with Buddhism you can combine Hinduism with Buddhism obviously it's already combined Hinduism and Buddhism I mean there's a lot of overlap between them dosm there's even a theory that Lau was never a historical Chinese person but was like a

garbled version of the Buddha which
would make Daoism a kind of garbled
version of Chinese
Buddhism but it's pretty clear that Zen
Buddhism did really adopt certain Dost
ideas and attitudes and daoists probably
accepted some Chan or Zen Buddhist um
ideas and attitudes so yeah I mean dosm
if you read the text I mean there's not
a whole lot of Dogma that is going to
interfere with Buddhism dosm is very
kind of diffuse it's just sort of I I
don't know what the word is I mean it
doesn't really set down any hard rules
you read the da Jing or the jangu it's I
mean it doesn't have like this

systematic philosophy like terraa
Buddhism does and so they can fit
together fairly well without a whole lot
of conflict going on or contradiction
something like Christianity and Buddhism
there's going to be considerable
contradiction and you're just going to
have to pick What attitude to take or
else you can just be like a
muddle-headed person and adopt two
mutually contradictory attitudes or or
points of view a lot of people do
that but dosm really doesn't have any
hard philosophy at least not in the the
two main texts of it where there's
there's much to be in conflict with
Buddhism and so you can adopt more of

this kind of a mystical intuitive

approach which the Chinese generally did

anyway with their

Buddhism and I don't think there's any

problem

so I mean Terra and DSM it might be a

little harder fit than Mahayana and DSM

Mahayana is just kind of more kind of

diverse with regard to what it's willing

to accept than than Terra is but I

really don't see anything in the ding

that's really contradictory I mean I'm

sure there's a few statements in there

that could be interpreted uh as heresy

from a Terra Vaden point of view but

yeah I mean some of it's really profound

like one of my favorite verses of the

the ding I've probably recited it more

than once in these Q&A videos is he who

follows learning increases day by day he

who follows da decreases day by day he

becomes less and less until he has

attained to

non-action with non-action there is

nothing that he cannot

attain and I mean you could call that I

mean if that were found in in a poly sua

then I don't think many people would

have much difficulty in believing that

the Buddha himself actually taught

something like

that so yeah dosm is so devoid of any

concrete dogmatic philosophy that I

think it can be superimposed on Buddhism

fairly

easily so I'm just going to move on to

the next

question this is from rakasa and rakasa

says following up on the explanation of

paa's atmology would you explain the

etymologies of wiana and

SAA since they also seem to be based on

the same verb as PA but are samsaric

Gates rather than Transcendent of Sam S

yeah so pa uh which generally is

interpreted as wisdom in English or

understanding and then You' got

wiana which is usually translated as

Consciousness in terraa although

interestingly in Mahayana I think and I think in Hinduism it has a different it's it's almost means the same as perception it's it's sort of like this indiv visualist like consciousness of something in particular where it's it it involves like discernment or distinctions or some such and then you've got SAA which means in Terra Buddhism perception and they all have that NY in them and that NY means knowledge it's it's based on the same Proto indoeuropean root as the G in gnosis or the Cano in Canal you know the GN the the KNN in English and the JN in in Sanskrit which just becomes like n n with the tild over it in poly you know

it's all it all comes from some
prehistoric word that means to know it
means knowledge knowing so PA is
literally it means fourth no forn
knowledge kind of prognosis know that PA
in poly has the same meaning as the like
the English or Greek prefix p r so it
means kind of a forward kind of a thing
and it means wisdom or understanding in
general wiana the V at the beginning it
means
separateness so it's like apartness so
technically it seems like the Mahayana
interpretation or the Hindu
interpretation of wiana would be more in
accordance with the literal meaning of

the word which means sort of like aart
knowledge it's sort of like
distinguishing whereas somehow in in
Terra or early Buddhism in general it
just came to mean Consciousness in
general so maybe the vi was interpreted
just as like an intensifier rather than
with any um connotations of like
apartness or
distinctness and then
SAA um that is perception and the the
Sun the San or s m in poly has the same
atmology as Co n in Latin you know it
means like with or together so it's like
with knowledge with know
Sona um and really it's it's doesn't
seem to make a whole lot of sense

calling it SAA I mean they could have
all originally been practically synonyms
but just the literal interpretation of a
word I mean the the real meaning of it
as it is used can be radically different
like the word understanding in English I
mean you're not standing under
anything I mean it's just it's the the
emology does not help in understanding
what the real meaning of the word is and
so it's it can be that way in with
regard to wiyana or SAA or or any of
these words I mean all of them have the
root which means knowledge or knowing in
it but they've got different prefixes
which might just be added on there just

to distinguish different kinds of

knowing so let's see since they also

seem to be based on the same verb as paa

but are some saric Aggregates rather

than Transcendent of Sam

Sor um kind of although like like I keep

saying there are at least two texts

texts in ter a Buddhism in the sutas

that

identify nibana the ultimate as infinite

Consciousness the upanishads also go

with the idea of Brahman as infinite

formless

Consciousness although I don't recall

what the Sanskrit word for Consciousness

would be in the upanishads it might not

be wiyana it might be something

else so it's just kind of arbitrary word
juggling I mean words themselves really
don't have much influence on the actual
thing they
represent um unless you're just the
person who thinks that words actually
determine things like I guess the Greeks
some a lot of the ancient Greeks believe
that but I'm uh digressing into weird
territory and so I'm just going to move
on to rasa's next next question
here which is I have read that it is an
offense in terado vinia to ordain
someone with eczema however you have
mentioned in the past that some
ordinations remain valid even if doing

so is an offense for the ordaining monks
since I have eczema can I be validly
ordained if I persuade some monks to
willingly make the offense well I kind
of had eczema it wasn't really eczema
but I do have a tendency I've got like a
searc skin type so I get like searc
dermatitis fairly easily if I don't take
a bath for more than just a few few days
I start breaking out in like a rash
which is sort of like an autoimmune
allergic reaction kind of thing to like
the bacteria that live in my skin
oil or to the waste products of the
bacteria that are living feeding on my
skin
oil and I was ordained it's like the way

I did it just so that I would have a
clean conscience is I kind of used
bathed regularly and just kind of used
uh like dermat Dermatology cream I don't
skin cream to kind of clear it up so
that at the time I was ordained I didn't
have any symptoms of it but you if you
do get ordained with eczema for example
you're still ordained it's a minor
offense for the monks who ordain you but
it's still a valid ordination I remember
when I first came to Burma I was staying
at this Monastery that a lot of
monasteries in Burma will do temporary
ordinations it's called d ordination
where someone will come and be ordained

for like a week or two weeks you know they've got some vacation time or it's the New Year's celebration which lasts about a week you know they'll they'll come and they'll be ordained and then they'll just disrobe after a week or two or a month or whatever and there was a monk at the monastery who literally had leprosy I mean what at first when I first saw his arm it looked like like pizza on his arm it was just like open ulceration on his arm and uh at first I wasn't didn't know what it was I'd never seen leprosy before at that time there's um I guess leprosy has pretty much been cured now but at the time when I first went to Burma in the early 90s you could

still see people who who were were
lepers essentially and he was ordained
as a monk and uh it was maybe a minor
violation for the monks there who
ordained him but he's I guess he wasn't
a legitimate monk there is a of diseases
that you're not supposed to have if
you're being ordained and you have to
answer that you don't have them at the
ordination ceremony which was the main
thing I didn't want to lie at my own
ordination ceremony so I at least made
sure that I didn't have any symptoms you
know I had the potential maybe but
technically I guess eczema and cber
schem dermatitis aren't the same but I

mean eczema it just means like a skin disease you know if you got like an unsightly skin disease it's going to scare villag

you know the main purpose with regard to something like that is you don't want a monk who's going to look like some kind of scary monstrous kind of being you know like a lot of people are afraid of of leprosy I mean especially in a culture in a time when leprosy is a is a thing people are kind of afraid of that they don't want to be hanging out with someone with Leprosy although the official reason given in the text is that the Buddha's personal physician was jivaka the Doctor Who was such a good

doctor he could cure anything he cure things that people can't cure even nowadays and so monks or people with these diseases were joining the S just to get treated by Jiva because he was treating them for free because they were monks and so finally there were so many like people with diseases getting ordained getting cured by Jiva and then just dropping out because they really didn't have a spiritual vcation that the Buddha made a rule that if you have this any of these diseases which includes epilepsy leprosy like I mentioned I think tuberculosis is on the list um the skin disease

one few others I think I think possibly
even asthma is on the list if I remember
correctly that um you're not supposed to
be ordained but it's one of those things
where even if you are ordained it's I
mean it's it's a valid ordination unlike
uh if you're not human and you get
ordained or if you're like a unic you
don't have a set of balls you get
ordained as a monk it just doesn't apply
at all it's not a valid ordination
you're still not a
monk so yeah eczema would be one of
those where if you are ordained it is a
valid ordination even though it's a a
minor offense and I mean the tricky part
is you are question questioned at your

ordination and you are asked if you have
these diseases and you're supposed to
say you know Nati band you know I don't
I don't have benal sir and I mean I
certainly didn't want to start off kind
of on the wrong foot at my ordination by
lying so at the very least you could
tell them that you do have this and then
you know if they're if they are already
forewarned that you do have it it's not
really a lie because you do not have the
intention to deceive in order to lie you
have to have the intention to deceive
another person and so if they already
know that you do have this and you're
just saying I don't have it in poly

during the the ordination ceremony just

for the sake of the formality of it then

uh I mean that's that's better than than

like telling a deliberate lie your own

ordination

so yeah you could be validly ordained

with with

and so I'm going to move on to the next

question this is from Romeo and we've

been going for 2 hours now by golly

although we are uh at least two-thirds

of the way through so this isn't going

to be any record-breaking long one

although these these q&as tend to be

very long and

uh some people have complained about how

long they are but I'm not exactly sure

how to answer these questions in a short form I guess I I should just do more short videos on different subjects maybe I could just answer each question as a separate video that just really blow out my algorithm I think anyways this next question is from Romeo and Romeo says even though I'm not a Christian I enjoy the Serenity Prayer God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference for it's sucin wisdom can you recommend a similar equivalent a suda Mantra Etc in Buddhism for accepting things in life with

equinity um and I was I've been thinking

about this I cannot I cannot think of an

example of something that is similar to

this I mean first of all no prayers in

Terra at least none in the texts so I

mean that's

out

um I mean why not just go with this I

mean

you don't have to include the god

word and just grant me the serenity but

then who's doing the granting I guess

may I have the serenity to accept the

things I cannot change the courage to

change the things I can and the wisdom

to know the

difference there you go it's sort of

like a blessing on yourself in a way

sending meta to

yourself but I cannot think of any

anything really similar in Terra maybe

you could like read through the D a and

find a verse that comes close to

it um but it wouldn't it wouldn't be

real super

close so I do apologize to Romeo for not

really being able to come up with a

terraa Buddhist a poly poly equivalent

to the Serenity Prayer which I think uh

is attributed to St Francis of

aisi but uh yeah I mean if you really

like it just maybe you could just do the

English may I have the serenity to

accept the things I cannot change the

courage to change the things I can and

the wisdom to know the difference I mean

it works I mean I'm collecting enough

that I can accept wisdom from from

other other uh systems other schools

other

religions

so

see yeah I one of my great comforting

thoughts was actually I think I ganked

it from Christianity I think it's

something from the something from the

New Testament but now I can't even

remember what it was so I'm just going

to move on to the next question here

this is from

Robert and Robert says I have to write
an essay on a question based on
metaphysical or epistemological themes
in either Aristotle deart libnet lock or
Hume for my University course in the
history of Western philosophy what would
be some interesting things to discuss
especially if I can incorporate some
early Buddhist thinking while still
keeping it focused on Western philosophy
well the first thing that came to mind
is that David Hume actually had a kind
of theory of anata which was in his
first magnum opus his what the tretis I
think it
is so I mean obviously I mean he was

saying that there really is no self
there is no unified self that is really
is just like
perceptions that are arising and passing
away so it's it came very close to to
Buddhism uh he kind of backed away from
it later on partly because he got a lot
of push back from it and uh also partly
because it was really hard for him to to
explain you know if there is no unifying
self then how do the you know how do
these perceptions arise you know
subjectively you know just in this one
person even though he's saying that
there really is no person at least not
subjectively that there is no abiding
essence of a person's mental

states that is just sort of like in Buddhism is just this flux that is changing every moment so I mean if you wanted to get some Western philosophy with a a Buddhist flare to it you could uh write something about hume's theory of no self which is in his his first major work which is his tretis um another one that is possible is like libet's monadology um I mean it's not really a Terrain idea but it comes very close to like yoga charara Mahayana Buddhism where in in you know each everything in the world is is this monad you know it's like an atom and the atom reflects the

entire universe you know each atom is is
self-contained it has no windows and so
you could just have one of these atoms
and all the rest of them could be could
disappear these monads and that that
that one remaining monad would be
oblivious to the fact that everything
else was gone because there is no real
interaction it's it's sort of like in
yogachara Buddhism they teach that you
know there there is no physical matter
and we're just kind of dreaming our
reality through the power of Karma and
it's just through like the infinitude of
all the beings in the universe that we
just happen to to like interact we
dovetail our Karma dovetails with with

the karma of other beings so that we can
seem to interact when ultimately there
is no real
interaction so those are the two main
kind of Buddhist ideas one is Terra
Buddhist like hume's idea of no self and
uh and also lebit is Mony which is just
this weird idea I wonder if lebit
actually believed in his monod ology
because it's such a bizarre kind of
theory of
reality but uh yeah i' I'd leave day
cart alone he was not a particularly
daric person as far as I can tell not
that he was a bad person it's just that
his ideas were just going a very

different

direction so I guess that's my two

suggestions hume's idea of no self which

is found in his his first major work his

tretis or maybe leit his monadology as

uh I don't know kind of as a kind of

solipsism and so I'm just going to move

on to Robert's next question which is he

says maybe a response to day carts I

think therefore I am yeah I guess you

could refute

dayart I mean even uh what's his name

beran Russell yeah he I mean he was he

was already critiquing day carts I think

therefore I am coito

ergosum where yeah I mean he's he's

saying that's that doesn't make sense

that doesn't really hold water you know
you you could just say thoughts arise so
there is no I think therefore I am it's
just if thoughts are arising then there
I mean it's kind of like what Hume was
saying you know you could just say the
thoughts are arising with no self as a
kind of vessel for the
thoughts so that's a possibility I
suppose it' be more of a reputation of
decart than you know really trying to
like I mean certainly shouldn't advocate
for it not as a good Buddhist
anyway and so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from Alfred who is
different from Fred who is sometimes

goes by the name of Alfred this is a totally different Alfred and Alfred says I saw a video where these Chinese Communist Buddhist monks are apparently worshiping the party flag religion is tolerated in China as long as the party comes first which is why you see the general secretary's picture in churches some monks are even registered as communist members I guess when there's power and money to be made even monks become a business as a former Buddhist monk how would you reconcile this if you were that position would you go along to get along try to fight the system or just leave all together well if I were a Buddhist

and let's say the Burmese government
which they wouldn't do because they tend
to be at least superstitious Buddhists
you know they they do they do not deny
dhama even if they don't follow it very
well um and if if they somehow through
some weird you know you have this the
the military dictator just kind of goes
psycho you know he has like a Nero
moment or something and says you know
all the monks have to to to bow down to
me
um yeah I think I'd probably leave Burma
and if if I was Burmese I think I'd just
go out into a remote Forest area where
the government generally doesn't have

tentacles reaching that far and I assume
even in China there are like remote
areas where a monk could live and
hopefully he won't be living there and
get a reputation for being like some
Sage which will then you know as soon as
the word spreads to the the authorities
you know they'll have to go and
interrogate him or something because
they don't want him you know making
making
trouble but uh yeah I mean there's
there's not much point in being a
Buddhist if you're going to be
worshiping the Communist Chinese
flag I mean different people become
monks for different reasons maybe they

just want to live an easy life maybe
they think that um you know the benefits
of being a monk will kind of compensate
for the you know the detrimental effect
of of worshiping this flag in order to
keep the government off their back but
yeah I mean in vinia there is a a rule
where the monk says or where where the
Buddha says monks I allow you to obey
Kings and the main reason for that in
the in the text according to the context
of the story was that the King was
decreeing an interc calorie month you
know this this year the month there's
going to be 13 months instead of just 12
which you have to do with the Buddhist

calendar the ancient Indian calendar

because it's based on the moon more than

on the

Sun

so I mean you could sort of use

something along those lines it's like

you know the the government says we have

to worship this flag at least we could

sort of bow down to it just because I

mean we're just obeying the law and we

don't give a [__] about the flag

necessarily it's just we are re IR ired

to do it outwardly even though inwardly

it's just we're being mindful of the

bending and you know the pressure of of

our knees and our forehead against the

floor and all

that but uh I think if you read the Wii

MAA and you're you're hearing about

these these great arahant monks in in

like ancient early medieval Sri Lanka

who I mean they wouldn't they wouldn't

do that stuff they they'd rather just

get tortured to death than you know sort

of Sully

dhama by putting it the same level

as xiin Ming Shin

ping or the uh communist Chinese

flag so yeah I have read a lot about or

seen a lot about China how they're

they're actually like redacting parts of

the Bible to make it more in accordance

with Chinese communism and yeah they're

taking down like crosses from the altars
and Christian churches and putting up a
big picture of chairman shei that kind
of thing which
is yeah I mean I don't really do well
under situations like that there's a
good chance I might wind up being the
ones who got tortured to
death anyhow I'm just going to move on
to the next question which is from
ruy and ruie says what are your thoughts
on upspeak from a domic perspective
considering that utter attention should
be paid not only to language but also to
enunciation and I assume by enunciation
is essentially the same as
pronunciation and upspeak I've never I

don't not I'm not familiar with the term
it's not part of my working vocabulary I
know what up means and I know what speak
means but
upspeak I mean I I'm not familiar with
the term so what are my thoughts on
upspeak From adamic perspective
considering the utter attention should
be paid not only to language but also to
enunciation so it seems that upspeak
might mean like you have to have exactly
perfect
pronunciation and there is some of that
in terraa Buddhism when monks are
reciting a formal Act of the
S where if you pronounce the dhama or

you pronounce poly incorrectly in accordance with burmes tradition and burmes have weird pronunciation but if you pronounce you know like a b instead of a p you stutter your words and say a word wrong that can invalidate the formal Act of the S so in Burma often they'll have three monks all reciting the same thing in the formal act just to make sure that at least one of them hasn't messed up the poly so that they're actually doing it according to the
rules and um my teacher venerable Boku who was taught at a monastic School in the city of paku which is how he got his name pooku

Seattle um the pronunciation of ply according to the paku tradition is even weirder than the pronunciation of ply in ordinary Burmese tradition and I was told that he was doing so many ordination ceremonies like for these Don labah temporary monks during like New Year's week that he actually herniated himself using like the explosive frickative or just like you have to say like U an aspirated consonant like you know in in poly it differentiates between p and pH between B and BH between T and th and so forth and these H's have to be pronounced in order to do it correctly so it's it's

[Music]

like the way you have to pronounce this

likeo um he actually herniated himself

doing one of these

s kind of a things and I mean

really like an

Indian or like a Sri Lankan monk

listening to Burmese pronunciation will

just laugh at just how bizarre it is

Thai pronunciation also is pretty weird

they kind of mix p with b and d with T

so Buddha becomes

paa not in the the Spanish sense but in

a Thai sense and it's

just so I mean you have to pronounce it

correctly according to the tradition

that you're

in but I mean poly technically is a dead
language and nobody can know for sure
exactly how it was pronounced in ancient
times probably the sinal pronunciation
comes
closest um but like the M pron iation
the Thai pronunciation the Burmese
pronunciation the pooku pronunciation
they all have these
weird like
idiosyncrasies like in Burma Burmese
pronunciation of poly s is pronounced
like th like you don't say s you say
thanga and I I don't know why that what
happened unless maybe there was a king
that had a lisp you know 500 years ago

and it just became the the like the

Vogue the the fashion to speak with the

same lisp as the king or something I

don't know about

that so I mean you should get the words

right especially in a formal Act of the

S but what is right in one part of the

Buddhist world is going to be different

from what is right in another part of

the Buddhist

world

so those are some of my thoughts on

upspeak assuming that I understand

upspeak is I guess it just means like

being very hard-nosed with regard to

saying everything exactly

right and I mean that was um a big thing

for the brahans in you know vdic
brahmanism that you had to pronounce the
the hymns from the rig Veda and the the
other vas perfectly when you were doing
the the fire sacrifice CU if you
stuttered your words or you slurred your
words you didn't say a word right you
had to start
over and I think that was one of the
theories about where the whole idea of
karma comes from Karma means act like in
a formal act like s Kama is a formal Act
of the sa in po that you know it's like
you have to do everything just right in
order for the the ACT to be like
skillfully

done so that's one theory about the
origin of the very idea of karma
although there's another theory that I
think think I might give a little more
Credence to is that the theory of karma
was part of some of the philosophical
systems of the prehistoric Indus Valley
Civilization which eventually got kind
of syncretized with with early
vadis or maybe not even so early anymore
around a little bit before the Buddhist
time so I aside from that I'm really not
100% sure what upspeak means so I'm just
going to move on to the next question
this is from Yuga
and uh going scroll down we still got a
few questions to go here yugao says my

first question today is to correct my
last the samyo I wanted you to correctly
explain and give examples of is rights
and rituals so it' be
silata so he says my opinion is that
there is no subconscious to begin with
oh I guess that's a different question
so let's just make a space between those
two Okay so so he wanted me to explain
the the samyo or feder of silata which
sometimes is translated as rights and
rituals but originally like you read the
ataka waga which is very ancient
Buddhist text one of the most ancient of
all Buddhist
texts archaic Buddhism pre terrain it

talks a lot about

cabata and it's saying that cabata is

isn't going to get you

enlightened the opposite of

cabata also isn't going to get you

enlightened

and terraa Orthodox terraa didn't really

understand this so if you look in the

commentaries what is this cabata that's

being talked about there they say that

cabata is doing really

absurd like ritual practices like

imitating the behavior of dogs or cattle

and clearly that's not what it means

when you're reading the ATA wagan it's

talking about cabata it's talking about

morality and observances so morality

would be any kind of act that has like a
a karmic um you know like an ethical
aspect to it so you avoid doing
something that is immoral or unethical
whereas an observance isn't necessarily
ethical at all like a monk having to
shave his head every two mons or two
finger wits whichever comes first at
least that much I mean there's nothing
immoral about not shaving your head
there's nothing immoral about having
long hair or also like you're only a
monk is only allowed to eat between Dawn
and
midday but there's nothing inherently
immoral about eating dinner in the late

afternoon for example there's not even
anything immoral about eating something
in the middle of the night it's just an
observance so the ca part is morality
you know not killing not lying not
stealing that kind of stuff and the
observances are just proper way of
pronouncing the words in in an
ecclesiastical act you know shaving the
head the robes being a certain way that
kind of
stuff and clinging to that is called Sil
parasa even if it's morality even just
doing what is good if you're clinging to
that and you're just worried about
whether you know you're being good
enough or whether what you just did was

right or wrong and I mean you're just
kind of stewing over it then I mean
that's like an attachment it's it's like
an attachment to Sam Sara because these
actions are all samsaric
actions but it's certainly not just
rights and rituals it is
literally morality and observances and
the morality is like the the rules of an
ethical nature or practices of an
ethical nature and observances are rules
or practices that aren't necessarily
ethical it's just like etiquette or this
is just the way it's done kind of a
stuff so clinging to it is it just
messes you up and you should if you read

the the AA waga there'll be a lot of discourse on that I mean the ATA Waka even says that a monk should not follow rules which is just flies in the face of later developments in terraa with this immense code of monastic discipline it does mention the ptim Moka in the ateka waga but it's not referring to
rules in fact it's it's a little bit controversial exactly what patim Moka originally meant it came to mean this codified rule or a set of rules 227 rules for monks but apparently before that it meant something else it was like on upos day that like the senior monk would give a sermon which was called the

ptim Moka just kind of a how to train

yourself kind of stuff and then

eventually it just came to me on the the

full moon and New Moon the monks would

just recite these

rules

so yeah so I guess I explain

that but you shouldn't you shouldn't

cling to even

morality you shouldn't cling to

immorality or immorality either you

shouldn't cling to anything but clinging

to morality and observ es is one of the

impediments to uh progress in DH so I'm

just going to move on to yuga's next

question which is my opinion is that

there is no subconscious to begin with
it's just lack of mindfulness on part of
them mundane actions being so habitual
what do you think well I mean if you're
not being mindful of it you're not fully
aware that it it's there which would
make it subconscious I mean the way
Karma works I mean that has to be
subconscious if you're not fully aware
of how how karma is working but karma is
mental States you know so your mental
states are conditioning your reality
from one moment to the next and you're
not aware of that happening so that
would be a
subconscious or latent tendencies that
you know you have this latent tendency

to behave in a certain way but it's not being like stimulated it's just kind of lying dormant so that also would be a kind of subconscious mind but it's like the the mind that is creating your dreams at night with the symbolism there is dream symbolism Freud was actually right about that there is dream symbolism and you might not even get the symbols that your own mind is Conjuring up like my favorite example of that is the Australian monk friend of mine who was sort of thinking about disrobing and he eventually did and he had this weird dream and he didn't understand this dream when he was telling me about it

and it just clicked for me immediately I
knew exactly what it meant that he was
in this canoe with like three gorill
and he's just having to paddle around
and around the middle of this lake with
these gorillas who are just sitting
there very peacefully but he knew that
if he paddled back to land those
gorillas were going to just jump out and
run a
muck and so he was just kind of Trapped
just paddling around and around in this
this canoe with these gorillas and I
mean it was pretty obvious to me like
According to Freud um water in dreams
usually represents Spirit you know it's
sort of the religious life the spiritual

life

Dharma so him being in that canoe was

like him being a monk him him living the

holy life so to speak and those gorillas

were like his latent Tendencies you know

his

defilements that if he went back to land

and dis robed they're going to run a

muck and he didn't even get it I mean it

was his own dream his own mind conjured

it

up but getting back to yugao here in

this Theory there is no subconscious to

begin with I mean I think until you're

fully mindful until you're fully

enlightened there's going to be aspects

of your mind that you're not aware of
partly because that you identify people
in general identified with their ego and
the ego is not all there is to the mind
it's just the ego is the part that is
like self referential and thinks that
that's all there is but there's all this
other stuff like the the dream symbols
for example or Karma at a more
metaphysical level that we are not aware
of and there is this interesting theory
that a fully enlightened being would
have no subconscious mind I mean he'd
just be mindful of all of all of it
going on but until you reach that stage
there's going to be aspects of your mind
that your ego isn't aware

of and unfortunately Terra Buddhism

really doesn't have much of a theory

about subconscious mind

I think they to some degree the Abid

Scholars dropped the ball on that

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

next question this is from Joe do and

Joe do says why do you think such a

highly Advanced being as aan cha

suffered such a plight many people

nowhere near his level don't suffer such

things and what he's referring to is

that aan cha had diabetes I'm pretty

sure and had went into had like a

diabetic stroke and just became like a

vegetable the last several years of his

life he was essentially like a drooling vegetable being pushed around in a wheelchair

and see it's it's it's uncertain to me that he really was suffering I mean it was it was like he wasn't there anymore it was just like this drooling body with I mean the spirit of aan CHA might not have even been there anymore I mean it was like the the mental processes of aan cha his karma so to speak I mean it's I don't I don't know enough about what it was like being around aan sha after he had the the stroke or whatever it was that made him become this vegetable um whether he had any Lucid moments at all I'm not aware of I

mean but I mean when he was in like the vegetative state I don't think that he was suffering and it might be that it just he just wasn't there he was off it may be just going with the idea of a a spirit his Spirit may have just left his body May during Lucid moments may have returned

briefly

but um yeah I mean neim cly Baba who who also was very Advanced spiritually he also suffered a kind of diabetic stroke um and died but he it for him it happened fairly quickly and if you read ROM doss's book about him Miracle of love stories about neem curly Baba which

I highly recommend he apparently was
like dropping hints that he knew he was
going to die soon but nobody wanted to
take the hint because they didn't want
to think about that you know because he
was their Guru and they were you know
devoted devotees and all
that so it could be aan cha suffered
such a plight just due to his karma I
mean I mentioned before mahog galana was
literally beaten to a pulp according to
tradition and he realized that it was
his karma he escaped the first two times
but they kept coming after him and so he
realized that it was just inevitable
that it was going to have to happen so
the third time I he just let them beat

him to a pulp because it was some
previous comma that had to work itself
out and presumably that was the case
with aan cha also although whether he
was suffering or in misery or anything
I'm not so sure about that because it
may be that I mean after he became the
the vegetable in the wheelchair there
was just really it was just like an
empty shell still metabolizing like a
someone in a coma kind of but I really I
really don't know enough about what aona
was like after he had that attack
whether he he was loose it at all or
whether he was just out of
it so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from covac and Cad zida
and seac and CAD zida says psychedelics
can induce mystical experiences doesn't
this kind of debunk all of spirituality
as it shows that these states are just a
result of brain chemistry thus
ultimately a result of a materialist
framework and I would say no it doesn't
it doesn't debunk that at
all I mean first of all let's say that
you're not even a materialist then
there's no brain chemistry other than as
a perception and the only brain
chemistry anybody has any awareness of
is a
perception so you have a perception of
taking this drug which I mean going with

somebody like Mary Baker Eddie would say
that's just it's a kind of placebo
effect that you take the drug fully
believing it's going to have that effect
or and also the people around you may H
may have that expectation that you're
going to get high from taking it and
it's just it works as a kind of gimmick
like terot cards or Ouija boards or
something so that's that's a possibility
I mean it's I mean for coaction CI Z now
to say that that if you take a drug it
affects your mind that that debunks all
of
spirituality that I mean that's that's
just

weird and it's it's doesn't even show

that these states are just a result of

brain chemistry I mean your brain

chemistry assume for the sake of

argument that we have brain

chemistry so I mean your brain chemistry

does not have the job of causing you to

experience

reality your brain chemistry has the job

of keeping you alive long enough to have

babies preferably in such a way that

your babies live long enough to have

babies of their own I mean just going

with like

Darwin

so your brain chemistry is not your

brain is not designed for you to

experience reality it's it's I mean if
if you were fully enlightened that would
probably be uh counterproductive from
the darwinian point of view of survival
of the fittest if you're an arant you're
much less likely to have
babies so I mean just because you take
something and it disturbs your brain
chemistry in such a way that you
actually see reality more clearly you
know it it it like it it messes up the
delusion so that you're actually able to
see through the delusion to some degree
I mean even if there is such a thing as
material substances and brain
chemistry there's nothing debunked at

all so you take a drug that messes with
your brain chemistry and your brain
chemistry is not designed to experience
reality you do not experience reality
even mainstream science says that the
stuff we perceive in our surroundings is
not ultimately real or at the very at
least it's radically different from the
way we perceive it so then you take some
drug that interferes with natural brain
chemistry and it in some cases it'll
cause you to see more
clearly so yeah that's it doesn't debunk
anything
really even from a materialistic
framework it still doesn't necessarily
debunk anything because even

materialists admit that your brain

chemistry I mean the purp of it is not

for you to experience Ultimate

Reality so I'm just going to move on to

seov action cot zina's next question

what do you make of the 16 steps of the

anapan Sati suta which is majaya number

118 the instructions seem not to make

much sense well as it turns out I happen

to have venerable Nano and bod's

translation of the maim minaya right

here and it just happens to turn out

I've got a bookmark

right at the

anapan and I have to agree I never had

much use for the

anapan and even the instructions in the sa patano which are very similar with regard to mindfulness of breathing it's just the instructions are not good instructions like for example let's see even with regard to the very first part breathing in long he understands I breathe in Long breathing out long he understands I breathe out long breathing in short he understands I breathe in short or breathing out short he understands I breathe out short he trains thus I shall breathe in experiencing the whole body he trains thus I shall breathe out experiencing the whole body he trains thus I shall breathe in tranquilizing the body

formation he trains thus I shall breathe
out tranquilizing the body formation
it's like nobody should meditate like
that if you're doing if you're doing
mindfulness of breathing even just
breathing in breathing out I mean even
that's kind of overdoing it in my
opinion it may be good as an elementary
practice but it's like I breathe in long
I breathe I mean you've got I in every
single breath I mean what good is that
from a Buddhist point of view and then
it continues it's like I shall breathe
in experiencing Rapture I mean why would
anybody try to set themselves up like
that I mean it's it's it's it just is

not good advice iice he trains thus I

shall breathe in experiencing the mind

but while you're breathing in you're

thinking all this stuff I mean it's not

good advice in my opinion he trains thus

I shall breathe in contemplating

impermanence but it's it's like

whoever like came up with the finished

version of that

sua is like they

used language I mean they could have

explained it much more clear

or much more

effectively but I mean they've got it

all like in the future tense I will

cultivate this and I well while you're

breathing in and out you're supposedly

doing mindfulness of breathing and

you're thinking there I will experience

Rapture while you're breathing I mean

what is the point of that it's like if

you're doing mindfulness of breathing

you're supposed to be mindful of the

breathing and then whatever happens let

it

happen so yeah I I've never had much use

for the sua and I kind of doubt that the

Buddha would have taught such a kind

of I don't know it's just sort of

clumsily it's like a clumsy attempt at

explaining the progress you make while

doing mindfulness of breathing but in

reality in all likelihood you're just

doing mindfulness of breathing and stuff
like the Rapture and the awareness of
impermanence and so forth arise as a
kind of insight or just they arise
spontaneously it's not like you're
trying to make yourself do this stuff
cuz I mean just about any meditation
Master is going to tell you to stay away
from I mean thinking a lot for starters
thinking in the future tense thinking
about yourself I will do this I will do
that I am breathing in short I am
breathing in long it's just it's just a
clumsy attempt at explaining this stuff
and I don't know how such a clumsy
attempt wound up in the text unless I'm
just grossly misunderstanding

it so what do I make of the 16 steps in
the anapan city sua um yeah I don't
really value that advice at least it
doesn't work for
me it might work for other people and
that's fine it just doesn't work for me
and it's I'm skeptical of how authentic
a teaching like that would be supposedly
coming from a fully enlightened being
who is
giving what seems to be really bad
advice with regard to how to meditate on
the Brea on on the
breath so I think I'm just going to move
on to covac cot Z's next question here
in majima number 108 Ananda is asked if

the Buddha Praises all kinds of
meditation Ananda says he did not praise
meditation on ill will sensuality sloth
and toror restlessness and worry or
doubt
the poly word used is Janna which means
the Buddha does not praise Janna based
on the five hindrances usually these are
considered to be hindrances to Janna but
this text seems to imply you can have
wrong janas based on these as well the
translators seem to have just translated
Jam as meditation what is your best
interpretation of what this word
actually means well literally the word
Janna means something like blazing or
illumination

and originally it probably just meant
meditation and the four Jas were
probably as I've said multiple times
before just the four stages of
meditation so I mean first JRE you're
still thinking how is that a superhuman
mental
state so it got turned into a kind of
superhuman mental state possibly by like
scholar monks who are more interested in
formulating Doctrine than in actually
meditating themselves they really didn't
understand it and so
you wind up with meditation itself
turning into a superhuman mental state
like right concentration is the four Jas

which probably just meant right

concentration was you know the four

levels of meditation and then it got

turned into a superhuman mental state UD

manusa

dama so Janna originally like in the AA

waga a mon is called the J you know

someone who

meditates so probably John even though

literally it means something like

illumination um you know effectively in

in common parlance it came to mean just

meditation and then in terraa Buddhism

it became like these four superhuman

mental States and then in Abid dama it

turned into five and then four more

formless Jas were added as a kind of

annex to Fourth jna and then even higher States got added to that like cessation of perception and feeling or the uh signless perception of mind and so forth but I think in certain other schools of Buddhism J just meant meditation like the Zen School Zen is Japanese for the Chinese word chan and Chan is Chinese for the Sanskrit word Jan or John so it was just the meditation school it wasn't the school that does the four janas because as far as I know in Zen Buddhism they don't even have the concept of these four four Jas that are um mentioned so many times in the poex and always in the same R just stock

formulas so yeah Jonna probably just

meant meditation and then it got turned

into a superhuman mental

state so I'm just going to move on to

the next question here and we are

getting close to the bottom we are

getting close to the end here so it'll

be kind of a manageable three-hour long

I mean why watch you know the the sequel

to Dune when you can just watch this Q&A

instead there's no aliens or explosions

I'm sorry to say it would really liven

up the

q&as but uh some people like listening

to meet answer questions and God bless

you or well just bless you and just

non-specifically so the next question is

from Stellar Supreme formerly known as Liber lamb and Stellar Supreme asked this question in such I mean Stellar Supreme is is apparently a very cerebral kind of guy who uh may be even a little bit on the Spectrum or something who asks these cerebral complex questions and so he asked this question on the the Discord in the on the Discord server in the Q&A room and he immediately was kind of ridiculed by someone else saying you always ask these questions and the most confusing complicated way possible so I think he edited and changed it and then finally he just deleted his entire attempt and included

this this question uh below all that so
this is like the final version of this
question which is which did you find
more enriching Peak meditation or
psychedelics and that's fairly easy what
I found more enriching was Peak
meditation but psychedelics do have
their advantages for
example you can take a tab of acid for
example I'm not suggesting anyone do
this mind you but you could take a tab
of acid and be fairly confident that
there was going to be some significant
effect happening within the next 30 to
45 minutes with meditation you may be
renouncing the world going off into a
cave struggling and floundering for

years before you experience anything

thing as profound as say an Insight from

an acid

trip but when you do get there first of

all it's more clear I mean your mind

isn't like under the influence of drugs

other than your own brain chemistry

assuming that we have any of that just

for the sake of argument let's assume

that there's brain

chemistry so um you know it's like

there's no doubts about it really like

after you come down from from like a

psychedelic trip especially you can

think well I was high and there's going

to be like all this distracting stuff

like the the Psychedelic colors and
distortions and so forth that come with
an acid trip which are not there in
meditation I mean you're still
straight and it's just you're just
seeing everything with Crystal Clarity
and you know it's like there's nobody
there in a sense you know it's just like
the mind is just like glass or a mirror
or
something so Peak meditation definitely
is better but it's a hell of a lot more
difficult and not as reliable unless you
just got talent you're just a natural
born meditator and some people are like
that some people just sit down their
first Meditation Retreat and they just

become like a

statue so yeah definitely my best

meditation was more enriching

than any Acid trip I ever took although

I might not have ever become a monk if I

hadn't taken psychedelics first because

it gives you like a glimpse of what is

possible you know it helps you to see

through the veil to some degree you know

it kind of destabilizes or disrupts your

ordinary unenlightened brain

chemistry so to

speak not that I'm advising anybody to

take psychedelics

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

question this is from

Austin and Austin says what is your thoughts on Eastern Orthodoxy do you see any similarities to Buddhism and I really am no Authority on Eastern Orthodoxy I think most of what I know about Eastern Orthodoxy I read in like gibbons's Decline and fall of the Roman Empire and like early medieval history like Byzantine history that kind of stuff that's where most of the stuff I learn about Eastern Orthodoxy I've read a few of um Thomas Merton's books he he wrote some essays like on Mount AOS which is like a male only strictly Orthodox monastic uh I think it's like a little um what do you call it like an is not an

ismos like a little little thing of land
that juts out a peninsula that's it it's
a
peninsula um but really I haven't read a
whole lot of
um like Eastern Orthodox Saints who have
written like I've read a fair amount of
Catholic stuff you know I've read St
John of the Cross and and St Teresa of
aula and and like St Francis of aisi
that kind of stuff but I've never really
gotten into just because of you know
where I was born and the just cultural
reasons I guess got into Eastern
Orthodox Christianity other than just in
a historical context

but with regard to my thoughts on
Eastern Orthodoxy with regard to any
similarities to Buddhism well I mean
most
religions worthy of the name religion
other than just some sort of cult um you
know at the basic level of morality they
tend to be fairly similar you know don't
kill don't steal don't lie you know
honor your mother and father that kind
of stuff that's pretty much uniform
throughout most religious systems
so I mean there would be that similarity
also I have been told that some Eastern
Orthodox Mystics were essentially like
St John of the Cross or St Teresa of
Aila I mean they were Mystics and you

know they wrote about it there's a lot
of literature on Eastern Orthodox
mysticism where I mean they may they may
have been experiencing states that are
essentially the same kind of states that
ancient Indian Buddhist monks experienc
although of course they would interpret
them differently you know they'd have to
use Christian jargon instead of ancient
Indian
jargon so there may be enlightened
Eastern Orthodox monks or Christians it
wouldn't surprise me at
all especially after reading some of the
Catholic
stuff

so yeah I think that the main difference
I mean it's mostly cultural differences
and it may be like an Enlightenment
Tradition at least for the The Heavy
Hitters that have renounced the
world similar to similar to Buddhism you
know you've got two different levels you
got the lay person and you got the the
monastic or the renuncian which in the
west people don't like that
distinction but I mean that's just
because they're egalitarian Americans
that don't really like anyone being
better than them kind of a kind of a
situation ation but in like the older
pre-ot schools of Christianity it was
kind of similar where you had the lay

people and then you had like the well
you also had like the the secular clergy
who are just kind of like lay people
really and then you had like the the
monks the monastics that would just go
into a cell or go out into a Hut in the
forest and they would do a lot of
meditation what what a Buddhist would
call meditation so there are
similarities it's just that or
Christianity kind of has the cross to
bear so to speak of the all the Jesus
stuff and Jesus dying for our sins and
the only begotten Son of God Almighty
and all this kind of stuff that in my
opinion gets in the way of genuine

Dharma or Genuine spirituality I mean
you can still become enlightened as a
Christian so long as you don't cling to
this like if you're practicing what a
Catholic would call High contemplation
then you you're not thinking anything
and so at least while you're doing that
you're not going to be fettered by
clinging to these
dogmas and Buddhists cling to dogmas too
it's not just a Christian
thing so there are similarities I'm No
Authority on Eastern Orthodox
Christianity though so I can't really
get into a whole lot of detail but I
mean obviously at The Superficial levels
they're similar with regard to just

morality and so forth and then probably

at the higher levels I have seen enough

evidence that the Eastern Orthodox

church has had Saints and sages you know

similar to like meister eckart and St

John of the

Cross so I'm sure they've got their own

Enlightenment

Traditions so oh also I was told just

recently that uh the SE the the feast

day of St josephat in the Orthodox

church has has recently uh

recently occurred and St josephat was a

previous incarnation of the Buddha

according to the jica

tales but we don't need to get into

that so finally we got one last question
this is the last question and it's from
chases and chases says please explain
once again dependent Co rising and he's
just doing this to be difficult
because I mean the Buddha himself did
not really succeed apparently in
describing or explaining dependent core
rising in fact according to the legend
he was not even going to teach Buddhism
he was going to become like a Hermit
Pacha Buddha just go off and live in a
cave somewhere and not try to teach
dhama to anybody because he figured
nobody would understand dependent core
rising and now I'm supposed to describe
it I'm supposed to explain it

so first of all the 12 links were probably devised by monks who also did not fully understand dependent core rising of all the the monks all the Buddhists who have attempted to explain dependent core Rising I think the best job was done by venerable nagar who is not a terraa Buddhist although in his Mula ma jamaka karaka in which he puts forth his understanding of dependent core Rising he refers only to the older Buddhist texts and doesn't use any kind of references to Mahayana scriptures or any kind of mahayan ideas like the bodhisatwa concept so that is kind of an

introduction I guess what is dependent
Co arising well I mean the short form is
you know see this being that is this
arising that arises this not being that
is not this ceasing that ceases that's
like the short version of dependent core
rising and it comes closer to what the
gist of dependent core Rising is it's
dependent core Rising is how this world
of Multiplicity
arises it's you've got everything has to
have conditions you know everything that
arises in samsara is conditioned and
each one of these conditions
conditioning it is is also conditioned
so you have this infinitely complex web
of conditions and conditions and

conditions that really are are mutually supporting and they're not really based on anything they have no substance other than just the absolute which pervades everything sort of you can say even though it's completely off the scale and defies any kind of attempts at valid explanation so dependent core Rising I mean the 12 link Theory just assumes the reality of samsara and it's dependent core Rising is just how like rebirth occurs within the context of of samsara But ultimately originally I think dependent core Rising was explaining samsara not just what goes on inside samsara but how samsara arises and it

arises through

this you've got a

virtual web work of conditions that are

all creating this

illusion of like a wellestablished

universe but I mean this is so hard to

explain I mean the Buddha couldn't do it

how am I going to do

it but it really is it's it's sort of

like dependent core Rising everything I

mean it's sort of contained within the

name itself picha suup picha literally

means having relied on or because of Sam

is together UPA is

arising so it's

dependent is the padicha part Co is the

Sam and uh see picha in the up is

arising so it's dependent co-arising and it's like nothing arises alone it's always there's always this context it's like figuring ground where the context is is like the the ground that is sort of conditioning the figure and the figure itself is the ground for for other things and it's it's like there is no abiding Essence to any of it it's what um Nar called emptiness or voidness he said dependent core Rising is what we mean when we say emptiness because you seem to have these phenomena going on but they have no underlying Essence they are without Essence and it's just this seeming web workk of conditions none of

which has Essences but it's like they
are causing each other to appear to
exist in this weird way that neither I
nor GMA Buddha himself could really
explain very well or if the Buddha did
explain it nobody got it that was one
part of his teachings that few people
really understood which kind of bears
out his feelings uh in the legend as
soon as as he became enlightened he
wasn't he was just going to keep his
mouth shut because he figured nobody was
going to understand
it but it is like it's all happening now
it's not this chain of events you know
this cause and effect like the 12 links
Theory which is standard Orthodox Theory

even nagar had to include one chapter on the 12 links just because it was already established Dogma you couldn't like you couldn't like erase that part you know it was just you're stuck with it so you have to do the best you can which is what a lot of Christians have to do you know even though they might be extremely wise they might be Saints and sages but still they can't just dismiss all this Christian dogma that is found right there in the

Bible

so explaining dependent core Rising I think I must have at least one essay in my books in which I'm really trying to

do my best with a clear monastic mind at the time about what is dependent core Rising how exactly it works and uh I don't know if I can really do it justice after talking straight for three hours but I I I gave it a shot and and it's not easy to explain and the Buddha knew that it wasn't going to be easy and he went ahead and tried it anyway and I really don't think that there are very many people in this world who really understand dependent core Rising even though it is considered to be Central to Buddhist philosophy you know it's it's considered to be one of the most important aspects of Buddhist philosophy because it really

is like the theory of

everything so in a way it's it's sort of

like the Orthodox Buddhist uh attempt at

explaining The Theory of Everything

whereas my own Theory of Everything Is

the uncarved block with these virtual

statues that are kind of

mutually interacting and conditioning

each other so that would be like you

could try to think of it in that way if

it helps

any but it's it just

transcends rational thought I think I

it's I mean

it's the brain simply is not designed to

understand this stuff so trying to

understand this stuff with an ordinary human mind is it's sort of like trying to pound nails with a screwdriver or something so I guess I should just uh admit defeat on that one and call it good and that's it that was the last question so you guys all know the drill I don't know why I always wait until the very end before saying this because some people they won't listen to the whole thing and they'll say where where can I ask questions but where you can ask questions is down below in the comments and you can ask about practically anything who knows maybe if you ask something completely at random I still might be able to answer it

although generally Tero Buddhism meditation in general like Burma that kind of stuff ancient India you know how Buddhism began how it arose what the earliest Buddhism was probably like me personally this kind of stuff I can generally answer I know a fair amount about Western philosophy I know a fair amount about other Eastern Traditions like Hinduism a little bit about ISM um so if you have questions about that sort of thing feel free to to ask in the comments below if you have access to subscribe star you can ask there if you have access to the Discord server you can ask there and uh like And subscribe

if you have not done so already and be

happy

all right it looks like we're

recording therefore I say unto

you

hail welcome to question and answer

number

114 I am your host poob basa and

this is my beverage I will remove the

classy and sophisticated paper

umbrella take a take a little drink of

it and then I shall commence to

answering questions the leastwise I'm

fixing to start commencing at any rate

so the first question is from

RFS and RFS has asked the same question

twice because he asked one onto an older

Q&A after I'd already glean the

questions from the comments there so then he asked it again on the previous Q&A which was good thing to do I suppose although I think I had already recorded his the first version of his question so he's got two versions of the same question here which only counts as one question and it is as follows venerable sir I am traveling to Thailand from America and it will be my first time in a Buddhist country what is the proper procedure for offering food to monks for example if I cook steaks for the monks do I need to w wrap them individually cut them into single pieces question mark and then the second version omits the

stakes and he says I am traveling to
Thailand from America and it will be my
first time in a Buddhist country what is
the proper procedure for offering food
to monks is the food portioned wrapped
individually then offered please help me
to not appear like a
barbarian and uh it's it's good that you
want to offer food to the monks uh
although it varies from place to place
how exactly it is
done um like for example sometimes in
Burma there some places in Thailand also
where people will offer only white rice
into the monst Bulls when they go for
MMS round and all the curry and non rice

food is just sent to the monastery which
is kind of a strange way of going about
it also some places in Burma uh monks
will accept Curry like other other
things besides rice and maybe like
unpeeled fruit and so forth um only if
they've got little little Curry cups on
top of their bowl whereas other places
everyone just dumps the food right in
with the rice and so you may have to
look around and see how other people are
offering food in order to know how to do
it you know in in accordance with the
tradition in that particular area so
like the first day you might just want
to watch other people there who are
offering food and then kind of imitate

them if they're only offering rice and

not offering anything besides rice other

than maybe like a banana or something

then you should go like that you the

monks may not appreciate you dumping

soup or fried vegetables or whatever

into their bowl if they're only

accepting

rice but it depends other places like if

I remember correctly in

Bangkok um when I went for alms round

there like in 1993

um people would offer rice just

sometimes in plastic bags they'd offer

Curry sometimes and I think I think they

would offer curry in plastic bags so

that when you got back to the monastery
or wherever you went back to to eat your
meal you'd have this bowl just full of
these plastic bags that you'd have to
like sort through and and also in in
Bangkok it's a common thing for at least
in 1993 for them to offer bags of water
too so you get these
little bags of just drinking
water so you might want to carry well if
you're a monk you'd want to carry a
shoulder bag or something uh some places
like in uh the city of Mona in Burma
around May and June which is mango
season the mangoes are ripe then you
have to carry a great big sack with you
to put all the mangoes in because

everyone's offering mangoes but with
regard to offering the food um yeah my
advice to you because it VAR IES from
place to place on what is the accepted
traditional way of offering food just go
out and watch the first day and see what
the other people are doing if they're
only offering white rice then just
you'll know the monks are accepting
white rice or or they probably would
accept like fruit that kind of thing but
any kind of Saucy Gloppy stuff you know
some some monks don't accept it in some
places other places they accept it only
if they've got Curry cups on them or you
offer it in a plastic

bag other places they'll just have it
all dumped into their
bowl so I can't really say exactly what
would be the correct way although I mean
just etiquette I mean you take your
shoes off before you put the food into
into a monks Bowl so at least you should
know to do it Barefoot and do it
respectfully use both hands or if it's
something that really only takes one
hand you can just put your second hand
like on your forearm so that you're
still using both hands to offer it
because that's just like showing that
you are
wholeheartedly giving you know with both
hands and uh that's that's really all I

can think of at present but my main
advice with regard to how to offer food
properly watch what the other people are
doing on the first day and then just
kind of follow along with what they're
doing so that you'll know whether to put
it into a plastic bag or just dump it
straight in or just offer rice and take
the other stuff directly to the
monastery that sort of
thing so and and I do hope that you
won't discredit us Western
barbarians so I'm just going to move on
to the next question and this is from
chasz is and chasz is I think this first
question might be rhetorical because I

kind of already answered it in the
comments to the previous Q&A but ask is
is says is China really communist they
look wealthy and
prosperous and I answered I had to
answer that question twice in the
comments because my first my first
answer just disappeared which does
happen on YouTube I'm not the one who's
doing
it um I mean technically China is
communist because the country is ruled
by an organization called the Chinese
Communist Party
but they're not purely communist anymore
because they realize communism cannot
compete economically with capitalism and

so they've added a little bit sort of like government supervised capitalism into the system so now it's more along the lines of like
Fascism and I mean you can have Marxist fascism you can have a country that's more or less communist and also fascist at the same time North Korea is a good example of this
so it is kind of like I mean in fascism you do have some capitalism but it is regulated by the government much more than in a place like the USA you know you got price controls that kind of thing is all fair game and when he's when tasz is says that China looks

wealthy and prosperous mainly you're
just seeing Beijing Shanghai and some of
the bigger industrial cities in the
bigger industrial centers of those
cities but most Chinese people would be
living below the poverty level by
Western
standards so you're not seeing a
representational sample of Chinese
people when you say Chinese people look
wealthy and
prosperous China is still relatively
undeveloped out in the the red States of
China the flyover areas of
China so I'm just going to move on to tr
is's second question and tasz is may not
pronounce his last name or his name the

same way I'm doing it but some people
are just silly and can't pronounce their
own name
correctly so tasz is a second question
here is why do you think quite a lot of
old people are bitter and angry the
opposite of Children and Youth I think a
lot of old people are bitter and angry
just because they can't they're not as
well equipped to enjoy life life anymore
it reminds me of the Book of
Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament of the
Bible where it's saying that you know
when you get old just you don't enjoy
life anymore or you don't enjoy it as
much life becomes more of just kind of

something to endure you know it's like
your your sex drive goes down you don't
you can't really enjoy sex so much you
can't really enjoy your food so much
partly because you know Tomatoes don't
agree with you anymore or you know this
this causes indigestion or it's just
that like your senses have become
dulled and so largely it's like the some
of the negative aspects of life like
physical ailments tend to increase and
the posit some of the positive aspects
especially in the sensual realm decrease
and so a lot of people especially if
they were sensual people when they were
younger and they're not very adaptable
they're not very resilient in that way

they just life just becomes an
unpleasant thing for them also there can
be a lot of just bitterness over a life
badly spent you know they kind of don't
want to face the fact that they didn't
live up to their ideals their dreams
their Ambitions that kind of a thing so
there can be some of that too but I
think one of the main reasons why old
people are bitter and angry is um you
know they have got like chronic
discomfort or pain in addition to just a
decreased capacity to enjoy sensual
pleasures and if you're you're
not you're not feeling good you're more
likely to be in a bad mood and a lot of

older people you know they got these
aches and pains and you know stomach
problems and different issues that just
kind of wear down on them and they can
be in a bad
mood and then they start yelling at kids
to get off their lawn and that kind of
thing but of course you know there's
also individual
conditions individual aspects that apply
to this old person who's bitter and
angry different set of issues apply to
that old person who's bitter and angry
but I think in general it's just greater
discomfort in the body and less capacity
to enjoy sensual Pleasures so that would
apply mainly to Normy type older people

who really were into sensual Pleasures
when they were younger and just can't
enjoy them as much as they are
accustomed so I'm just going to move on
to chasz is's third
question which is kind of an interesting
one not that other questions aren't
interesting but this is the first time
anyone's everever asked this one as far
as I can
remember why Buddha mahavira LSU
confucious zoroaster and first Greek
philosophers lived in 6th Century
BC what happened in 6th century BC that
enabled this religious Awakening well
first of all I would point out that a

lot of like buddhistic Scholars nowadays
are saying that the Buddha probably
didn't really live in the 6th Century BC
it was more like the fifth century
BC also Lau may not have existed as a
historical figure some some academics
are trying to at least hypothesize that
Lau was really just a garbled version of
the Buddha which would mean that Lau
also didn't live in the 6th Century BCE
zoroaster or Zorra I'm pretty sure a lot
of Scholars anyway think that he was
before the 6th Century BC BC Before
Common
Era so it's not necessarily the case
that all these people uh really did live
in the first in the 6th Century

bcee but they did live in what is called
the axial age and that's a term coined
by a German philosopher named Carl
Jaspers I think at least for a while he
was an existentialist he was also
somewhat of a historian and he coined
the term axial age and uh let's see here
a lot of what I know about the axial age
I read in this book this is sort of like
my introduction to the axial age it's a
history of God by Karen
Armstrong It's it's a good book worth
reading it's sort of like a history of
Western
monotheism and uh she says a few things
like uh let's see

here uh the individual conscience the good life and the question of Justice in society were like issues for the axial age and she had like a brief introduction to the axial age which I will include here this is Karen Armstrong saying I won't try to imitate her voice so bear with here the period 800 to 200 BCE has been termed the axial age in all the main regions of the Civilized world people created new ideologies that have continued to be crucial and formative the new religious systems reflected the changed economic and social conditions for reasons that we do not entirely understand all the chief civilizations developed along

parallel lines even when there was no commercial contact as between China and the European area there was a new Prosperity that led to the rise of a merchant class power was shifting from King and priest Temple and Palace to the marketplace the New Wealth led to intellectual and cultural fluorescence and also to the development of the individual conscience inequality and exploitation became more apparent as the pace of change accelerated in the cities and people began to realize that their own behavior could affect the future or the the fate of future Generations each region developed a distinctive ideology

to address these problems and concerns
DSM and Confucianism in China Hinduism
and Buddhism in India and philosophical
rationalism in Europe the Middle East
did not produce a uniform solution but
Iran and Israel zoroaster and the Hebrew
prophets respectfully evolved
respectively evolved different versions
of
monotheism strange as it may seem the
idea of God God like the other great
religious insights of the period
developed in a market economy in a
spirit of aggressive
capitalism and with regard to India and
Buddhism I've read you know elsewhere in
different books that really it was a

kind of social Revolution like uh the beginnings of like a money economy and the center of society moving away from large plantations in the countryside to cities

um that helped to produce Buddhism so it was sort of a a change in in the way Society was structured led to this ferment a lot of Despair a lot of war and upheaval Revolution that kind of stuff which led to new ways of thinking and more individuality more emphasis on like the individual conscience and you know how a person should try to live a good life rather than just Conformity and following along with tradition or

with whatever the king decreed or
whatever the priests decreed that sort
of
thing so I do think that the answer to
this question is not so much with regard
to the sixth Century BCE as just that
General time period in human history is
it there was definitely a Kind of
Revolution that is still with us today
you know the the results of that
Revolution it's just an increase on the
individual person and just also ideas of
you know social justice for lack of a
better word I know social justice has
gotten some really negative connotations
lately due to a certain amount of
hysterical

silliness of the early 21st

century

so I suppose I answered that question or

rather Karen Armstrong answered it

through me I was like a I was channeling

Karen Armstrong there and so I'm just

going to move on to trasa

is's Fourth question oh my

goodness some people some people they

just they just don't care they just go

right ahead and ask that fourth question

don't

they

shame so anyways cheers ask as is

transgressively asks long time ago I

asked you what second Janna feels like

now I'm asking what third jananna feels
like
and um I mean just going with the texts
third joh first of all you're not
thinking anymore you're in a heightened
state of awareness your mindfulness is
very intense and you're no longer
feeling like emotional Pleasure and Pain
but you're still capable of feeling
physical Pleasure and Pain and that is
I mean you can't really describe how it
feels exactly especially to no one who's
someone who's never felt it before it's
like trying to explain what sound sounds
like to a person who was born deaf or
what color looks like to someone who was
born blind if you've never experienced

it before then I mean you can kind of

extrapolate get into your most

Lucid moments you know your memory of

your most Lucid moments and then

extrapolate to that to a point where

you're not thinking anything you're just

wide awake and I mean you've just gone

beyond emotional pain and pleasure and

but you're still capable of feeling

physical pain and pleasure and fourth

jna even the physical pain and pleasure

I mean that's gone too and you're just

in a state of pure

mindfulness

so just you can chew on that it's it's

probably not going to help much in

really knowing what it feels like
because you got to feel it yourself you
know it's it's like someone ask you what
vanilla tastes like somebody out there
they come from some remote area they
never tasted vanilla before they ask you
what does vanilla taste like what are
you going to tell them you could sit
there and explain and explain and
explain until you're exhausted and horse
they're going to be clueless with regard
to what vanilla tastes like the only way
to tell them what vanilla tastes like is
to tell them where to find some vanilla
and then advise them strongly
strenuously vehemently taste it for
yourself and then you'll find out which

is what the Buddha was doing with regard
to dhama and Enlightenment and so forth
he's not explaining what nibana is like
he's just telling you how to experience
it for yourself because that's really
the only way to
know and so I'm just going to move on
the next question this is from covac and
Cad zinaa and SE action CAD zida says
what's wrong with a person if they can't
seem to commit to anything always second
guessing what they say do and think
sounds like skeptical doubt but for
everything well it seems like a lack of
determination lack of Adana and I mean I
used to be this way sometimes I would

just sort of amaze myself like as a monk
I I it's time to open a new water bottle
I go and it's like it's like which water
bottle should I open they're exactly the
same they're all the same water you know
it's it's all the same brand even I mean
what difference does it make but I would
actually stop and hesitate and like well
maybe I maybe this one or and then I
realize that it's just silly and So
eventually you have to reach a point of
maybe emotional maturity maybe you could
call it that or it's just I got to just
do this even if I do it wrong you know
just like over analysis paralysis can
just like be a a handy cap for a lot of
people So eventually you just got to the

get to get to the point where you allow yourself a certain amount of time to make a decision then you make that decision and follow through with it I mean it may be at some point you realize this is the wrong decision this isn't going to work there's a better way of doing it so then you can change but if you're just thinking well I'm not so sure about this eventually you just got to get to the point where it's like I'm doing this even if I do it wrong and then just go for it and that takes a certain amount of aitana or determination which is one of the 10 parmes it's something that can be

cultivated and uh mindfulness when you
start second guessing yourself and
starting to get wishy-washy or whatever
just note that and realize that it's not
really you it's just habitual thought
patterns
arising so what's wrong with a person if
they can't seem to commit to
anything yeah it's it's a lack of
determination and some over analysis
paralysis and just thinking too much
also just maybe not enough experience in
life to really appreciate the idea that
that just doesn't work very well that at
some point you've got to make a decision
I mean you you don't have forever to
make the decision you've got a like a

you've got time constraints because you
got to make other decisions after that
so you just make the decision
I mean you might have to contemplate it
as long as you still have time you know
you might know you know how much time do
I have to come to the conclusion that I
have to come to but then once you come
to that conclusion you have to act upon
it and you just continue acting upon it
until it it's becomes obviously
impossible to do it that way or you
suddenly see a better way of doing it
and then there's nothing wrong with with
switching but still you've got to be
able to commit to something and I mean

it's like to to some degree it's like Western people you know it's like committing like like marriage for example I'm pretty sure at least half of marriages in the west fail it's just people can't really commit in the old days it was like For Better or For Worse you vow to God in a church before a priest or a minister that you will be together for better for worse till death to us part and then two years later you get divorced because maybe the second ta isn't all that good you just can't agree on the budget you know she somebody's spending too much money or something and it's over and it's it's just lack of determination and just sort of lack of a

kind of equinity where you're willing to put up with that kind of stuff because in in older times you know up premodern times even well into modern times it was like if you're in a bad situation you just put up with it because you made the decision and now you are bound to that decision

so I hope I answer that question because I'm moving on to seal of action sead zina's next

question which is I have heard you criticize the commentary of Buddha goosa in some places but what are your overall thoughts on it as well as the commentaries of vazu Bandu asanga the

wuti Maga

Etc well before I start raging against

Buddha ghost

I will point out that vazu Bandu and

Thea I'm pretty sure they weren't

writing terraa Buddhist commentaries and

I've never read anything by them I've

read something about

them

but um yeah I'm really not familiar with

the commentary is a vazu Bandu or aanga

you know it's they are significant in

the history of Buddhism in general in

Ancient India but they're not terraa

Buddhist I didn't really study them all

that much the wuti Maga was

Terra Vaden or at least Proto Terra

Vaden and the wisi Maga which is the
central commentary in the Buddhist um
commentarial literature the
atas it's it's sort of like the Hub with
the other commentaries being like spokes
going out from the Hub on this
wheel the the wisi Maga which was
composed by uh Buddha goam was based on
the wiui Maga and the wiui Maga was sort
of pre- Orthodox Proto Orthodox and so a
lot of it got changed I have seen a copy
of the wiui Maga which had disappeared
it was like in the some at some time in
the 20th century it finally got
rediscovered it was like an old
manuscript of it was found in some

Monastery in Sri Lanka so that Scholars
became aware of it and it started
getting translated in English and
published in books and so forth so I
have seen a copy of it um I wasn't
really that much interested in reading
the whole thing because I'm really not
all that interested in commentaries I
have more faith in my own judgment in
many cases than I have in the Judgment
of these early
medieval Scholastic monks from South
India and Sri Lanka because if you read
the commentaries
it's Buddha goa's commentaries
especially since he's he's in question
here they really are making wild guesses

sometimes and um they they never or very rarely do they admit that they're making guesses and so they're sort of giving like a an orthodox interpretation of what the texts say and sometimes it it deviates quite a lot from what the texts say so that the Burmese who are complete dogmatists are are most Burmese scholar s are very dogmatic they have like a medieval attitude towards the texts check in to see yeah we are recording so they can't doubt even the commentaries everything in the commentaries has to be true they believe that the commentaries are the words of the Buddha that were like

transmitted outside of the poly Canon
until finally they were edited and
translated um in Sri Lanka because there
was this body of commentarial literature
that at the time was mostly in sinal in
early medieval Sri Lanka and it may be
that Buddha Goa and probably a lot of
other monks translated them from Sali
back into P again it's it's a more
elaborate kind of Scholastic poly than
you're going to find in the earlier poly
texts you know the whole writing style
and grammar and so forth are obviously
it's it's obvious obviously more
convoluted more
Byzantine than than the earlier texts
harder to read than the earlier

texts um and a lot of time they're just

guessing they really like for

example I mean I could give a lot of

examples but um for example there's in

in nenia the rules of monastic

discipline there's a list of the

allowable Fabrics the allowable

materials for which amongst robe can be

made so it's cotton

linen wool

silk Bunga and SA or saana comes first

saana and

banga and banga is

hemp sa is Sun hemp which has the same

atmology Sun hemp or Bengal hemp as the

word poly word SAA the writers of the

commentaries who lived in the South apparently did not have access to Sun hemp which is Bengal hemp which which lives in the North you know it's like subtropical or you know it's a different climate there so they didn't know what what saana meant so they said saana means hemp and banga which really does mean hemp they said that's any combination of the above which has no no etymological support you know it's just they just pulled it out of an orifice essentially or another example is in the texts um for example in in the rules of monastic discipline in the beginning of the chapter on beunis or nuns the Buddha says because nuns are being ordained now

the the SAS or the true dharm is only going to last half as long it's only going to last 500 years so the commentators like Buddha goosa I mean they can't really they can't say the Buddha was wrong they can't say that the Buddha didn't really say that cuzz I mean they have to assume that it's all the teaching of Buddha so they say what when the Buddhist said 500 years what he meant was 5,000 years and why he would say 500 when he meant 5,000 they don't bother with that how anybody could have understood the Buddha when he said 500 meaning 5,000 they didn't have a commentary to refer to they're just

sitting there listening to his words and he's saying 500 how's anybody going to know that he meant 5,000 how do the commentators know that he meant 5,000 they just have it's just this weird tradition and so in in a place like Burma that's very dogmatic the commentaries actually are more authoritative than the poly Tex themselves because for example when the Buddha says 500 if you didn't follow the commentaries you wouldn't know that when he said 500 he really meant 5,000 you know it's like when the commentary says when the Buddha says blue what he really means is red I mean if you didn't have the commentaries you wouldn't know that

it means red when he says blue so

actually the commentaries are in a way

more authoritative than the polyc

themselves to just devout dogmatic

terraa

Buddhists at least of the Burmese

variety

so a lot of serious Western monks just

avoid the commentaries a lot of serious

Western monks don't even bother with the

wisi

Maga and the W the commentarial

tradition has a lot of stuff in it that

is kind

of a Corruption of

dhamma that is not really in the text a

lot we don't real a lot of people don't
realize that a lot of this like Abid
dama for example some of the basic main
teachings of Abid dama aren't even found
in the Abid dama pedica they're found in
the commentaries of the Abid dama all
the cheah vti the the different mind
moments Rupa kalapas all this kind of
stuff that's found in like all these
ultimate realities the lists of ultimate
realities and all that it's not in the
poly Tex not in the poly toptica like
the Abid dapa it's in the
commentaries
so in a way budag Goa is sort of like
Paul of Tarsus in a way I mean it's a
loose analogy but at the same time that

he sort of standardized and you know
largely created Orthodox terraa he also
kind of mess it up a bit which is in my
opinion what St Paul did to Christianity
at the same time that he was turning
Christianity into a world religion he
was also just [__] it up to some
degree hope I haven't just offended
Christians out there but in my opinion
St Paul really I mean in a way he's as
important as Jesus of Na Nazareth
himself with regard to making a like a
mass religion out of Christianity but at
the same time he distorted it in weird
ways that kind of corrupted the original
teachings so yeah I I used to rail

against Buddha gism you know I'm a

Buddhist not a Buddha

goist so I guess I've uh did done some

uh let's

see what are my overall thoughts yeah

those are some of my overall thoughts

and so I'm just going to move on to C of

action CAD Z's third question which is

about the cook

sua which is Samaya

47-8 and he's got this um long quote

here this is supposedly the Buddha who

is speaking here this is the suta

suppose that there is a foolish

incompetent unskillful cook who has

presented a king or a king's minister

with various kinds of Curry mainly sour

mainly bitter mainly peppery mainly sweet alkaline or non- alkaline salty or non-s salty he doesn't take note of his master thinking today my master likes this Curry or he reaches out for that Curry or he takes a lot of this Curry or he Praises that Curry today my master likes mainly sour Curry today my master likes mainly bitter Curry mainly peppery Curry mainly sweet Curry alkaline Curry non- alkaline Curry salty Curry today my master likes nons salty Curry or he reaches out for non-s salty Curry or he takes a lot of nons salty Curry or he Praises nons salty Curry as a result he is not rewarded with clothing or wages

or gifts why is that because the foolish incompetent unskillful cook doesn't take note of his own master in the same way that is the case where a foolish incompetent unskillful monk remains focused on the body in and of itself Ardent alert and mindful subduing greed and distress with reference to the world with reference subduing greed and distress with reference to the world as he maintains thus focused as he remains thus focused on the body in and of itself his mind doesn't become concentrated his defilements are not abandoned he doesn't take note of that fact he remains remains focused on feelings in and of themselves the mind

in and of itself mental qualities in and of themselves Ardent alert and mindful subduing greed and distress with reference to the world as he remains thus focused on mental qualities in and of themselves his mind doesn't become concentrated his defilements are not abandoned he doesn't take note of that fact as a result he is not rewarded with a pleasant abiding Here and Now nor with mindfulness and alertness why is that because the foolish incompetent UNSC ful monk doesn't take note of his own mind so then SE action CAD Zuna says this suit had called someone a fool who seems to be doing everything right on paper

but not getting the result what was he
supposed to do I don't get what the
simile is trying to tell us and what
taking note of his own mind means well
it seems to me let's just start with the
cook the cook he might be a really good
cook he might cook food that really good
but the thing is he's not he does it's
like he's not taking into consideration
what the king actually wants to eat so
it's like he's not taking into
consideration the person who's eating
the food he's just making you know salty
food when maybe the king isn't in a mood
for salty food he's making sweet food
when maybe the king is in a mood for
Savory food that kind of thing so then

when you get to the monk who's
concentrating on you know whatever it is
he's concentrating on the way I
interpret this to mean possibly this is
my provisional interpretation is that
he's not comparing that with the effects
this meditation is having on his overall
disposition you know in in a sense he is
the cook and the king at the same time
so it might be that he's getting into
deep meditation when he's sitting there
but he's not really noticing that when
he gets up and starts walking around
he's still got all these defilements
that aren't being attended to it's like
the meditation isn't causing sufficient

insight to arise that he's able to
really change his personality it might
be just he's in a kind of rut maybe he's
he sort of uh dissociates when he
meditates a lot of people are like this
they can sit down and just sit there
like a rock you know they just go into
this deep state of samati or whatever
but it's it's sort of dissociated it's
there aren't any open doors between that
state and their ordinary waking state so
when they meditate all it does is make
them a better meditator it doesn't
really improve the rest of their life
because it's like there's hardly any
communication at all between this
meditative state that they are

cultivating and might be getting into
deep states and their ordinary Waking
Life so I think the cook is the king in
that he's the the Monk Is is doing deep
meditation but then he gets up and he
still gets pissed off when crows are
making lots of noise
or he's irritated by like visitors
bugging him or he still has these
attachments to food or attachments to
women or whatever it is it's like he's
getting into these deep meditative
States but he's not really applying that
to his own overall
state so that would be my provisional
interpretation maybe that the suta is

longer and I might get more context from reading the whole thing but from what I have seen of it that would be my interpretation it and so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra Lam and Stellar Supreme formerly known as libal Lam says would prayer work the same as meta where you can direct it at individuals but not groups of people or can you actually direct meta at multiple targets and before I answer this question or attempt to answer I would just like to say if I seem to be talking a little faster than usual or a a little more animated than usual I did coffee Leroy Jenkins this

morning where I drank more than I

usually drink of coffee also I ate an

entire octopus this morning which kind

of is settling oddly in my in my

innards and so I'm on a caffeine Leroy

Jenkins at

present just not really trying to do

that but I realized it was like my third

cup of coffee I was sitting in a

restaurant where I ate the octopus and

uh yeah they they gave me a free refill

and uh maybe I should have turned it

down but here we

are this isn't coffee that I'm drinking

by the way it's just bovine glandular

secretions so anyways getting back to

Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra

Lamb's question here I might as well ask

it again because you may have forgotten

what the question was would prayer work

the same as meta where you can direct it

at individuals but not groups of people

or can you actually direct meta at

multiple

targets well yeah actually you can

direct meta towards all sentient beings

in the entire Cosmos simultaneously if

you read the text on how a monk sends

meta I mean he may send meta by category

you know all female beings all male

beings all human beings all subhuman

beings all superhuman

beings also among can just beam meta in

directions you know first he beams meta
in the east then he beams meta to the
west then to the north then to the south
then upwards then downwards you know
it's
like it's it's sort of like like a radio
broadcast or
something and with regard to
prayer um you can pray to more than one
being too I mean just at a secular level
you can have somebody standing before a
tribunal or a jury praying praying to
the whole tribunal or the whole jury to
have mercy on him for example I mean
that would be kind of like a a human
worldly example of prayer but to a

polytheist you know an ancient Greek or

some Hindus nowadays they might be

praying to all the gods simultaneously

or at least to their favorite ones they

might throw in their Guru in in that

prayer also so I think prayer and meta

can both be directed towards multiple

Target

simultaneously

so yeah I mean definitely if you read

the poly Tex a monk can be beaming meta

just just any direct it's just

scattershot in in One Direction then

another Direction Just or just by

category or whatever which is in a way

it strikes me as just too intellectual

and cerebral a way to be beaming genuine

meta but that's just me it's it's one reason why I never really took meta meditation extremely seriously as a viable practice for myself it just seems to me that meta is best directed spontaneously and uh when I have prayed in the past like I mentioned this in a previous Q&A you know it has generally been in the past when I was in a state of just wits and despair and then I would just be praying to anyone out there who is willing and able to help which presumably would be like Davis or like sages Guardian Spirits any anybody like that and if it was more than one that's that was fine with

me so yeah I think prayer and meta can

be

beamed into multiple targets

simultaneously although it may be that

just judging from the way the mind works

it may work best at a single Target you

know people tend to be kind of

simple-minded like mathematicians still

haven't figured out how to do like a

three-body problem where you've got to

be like taking consideration into like

three variables simultaneously you know

so like you got to narrow it down in

order to be able to handle it mentally

because we're just humans and it may be

that sending meta or prayers to another

being that you you might start anyway at

just a single Target until you get

really good at it and then try and sprad

spread it out from

there and so I'm just going to move on

to the next question from Stellar

Supreme formerly known as Liber Lam

which is what goes into contemplation of

and meditation on the Earth

element yeah not very many people

meditate on the Earth element anymore

especially Earth

Casina and when I first when I saw this

question I was mainly just thinking of

Earth Casina which is one of the the

40 um standardized meditation methods

you find in the Wii Maga which I was

talking about a few minutes previously
and with the Earth casin you just make a
circle is U on on like a
flat like a like a board like a white
board you would just like paint a circle
out of mud and let it dry and then
you've got like this dirt disc that you
contemplate on and you really don't have
to think much of anything you might just
be thinking Earth Earth Earth but mainly
it's just like a hypnotic device that
you focus your attention
on and you don't even really need to be
thinking of anything and um with regard
to meditation just on the four elements
in general you could emphasize Earth
element on meditation on the four

elements an Earth element according to
Buddhist philosophy mainly just means
hardness or
solidity so it's like the firmness the
resistance to to pressure is mainly the
Earth element it's not so much just dirt
like the the ancient Greek philosophers
you know they considered Earth element
to mean that there was just sort of like
this this Elemental form of matter that
was Earth element but in Buddhist
philosophy it's more of like a a
quality it's the quality of
hardness that is that is the Earth
element or resistance to pressure you
know it's just kind of a solidity kind

of a thing

and uh I've never really done it

systematically I've never done Earth

Casina also I have read that you can

just take like a round plate or

something and just fill it with put dirt

on that but you couldn't really tip it

sideways so that you can see it as a

circle without the dirt falling off um

so You' it' be more of like an ellipse

when you're seeing it kind of you know

kind of from the side which wouldn't

seems to me it wouldn't be as effective

if cuz Cena is supposed to be a disc or

a circle you're supposed to ideally

you're supposed to see it as a

circle so I mean I I mined in chemistry

in college also I've never really had
much use for the four elements idea in
Buddhism you know it's just kind of an
arbitrary thing they started off
probably with more of an ancient Greek
idea of really four elements in like an
alchemical approach to explaining
physical reality you know Earth element
is like solidity water element is
cohesion uh fire element is temperature
and air element is like the kinetic
aspect or
motion and that's supposedly accounts
for the physical Universe you know at at
like a physical
level and I mean I just don't think that

way I took minor in chemistry and I just it just doesn't work for me it just it has never really struck traction with me at all it just seems like like a geocentric Universe kind of a thing it's like you know I can understand where they're coming from but it just it just doesn't work for
me I mean why bother to like meditate on the earth as the center of the the universe you know maybe you've got the sun and moon and planets going around with epicycles you know the way toic astronomy was working with with you know circles within circles to account for the fact that it was really an ellipse and they couldn't

really accept the idea that orbits were
elliptical because Aristotle who was
like God emperor of philosophers in the
West in those days said that in in outer
space everything moves in a
circle and it just went without question
up until people like uh what was his
name oh man I'm drawn in a blank it
wasn't cernic us wasn't Galileo it was
this other guy who came up with the
ellip IAL
orbits so yeah what goes into the
contemplation of a meditation on the
Earth element I mean it can be nothing
more than using uh a disc made of
painted mud you know painted onto a like

a white background as just like a
hypnotic object you know you don't even
have to be thinking about Earth at all
it's just a convenient Circle for you to
be focusing your attention on as a kind
of hypnotic object which I mean you you
might be hypnotizing yourself I do think
that wiui Maga in it's really it's
largely a manual on self hypnosis I know
a lot of meditators would disagree with
that but that was when I read it it
struck me my father was an amateur
hypnotist I know a little more about
hypnotism than most Buddhists do I
guess and so I do I do realize that like
for example in Burma a lot of people
just cannot tell the difference between

Hy IC trance like autohypnosis and

jna and it may be that Buddha Goa also

was not really all that great at telling

the difference between self hypnosis and

like SAS right

concentration so I mean if you're just

meditating on the the four elements

though then it's an intellectual

exercise you're not going to get into

very deep meditation because you have to

keep thinking so you're never going to

get past first Janna

and so I would

recommend I mean if you want to do earth

Casina you can do that although you

might be better off with like light

Casina or white Casina something like

that it might work better and the four

elements I mean you're going to have to

find someone who's really good at

meditating on the four elements who can

then tell you the benefits of meditating

on the four elements because for me you

know it's like meditating on some

obsolete alchemical idea

and because you have to just keep

thinking you're not going to get into

very deep

meditation so I'm just going to move on

to the next question from Stellar

Supreme formerly known as lib Lam which

is as

possible our assertions about

Aristotelian logic being Universal
confounded by the nature of meditation
where there can be signlessness and
suspension of bodily feeling where such
Logics have no basis for being
considered so yeah I mean essentially
um Aristotelian logic works fine for a
rationalist and like we were talking
about in the axial age the axial age
manifested in the west at least
according to Karen Armstrong as
rationalist
philosophy that's how we Europeans dealt
with the axial age by coming up with
rationalism and rationalism has its
limitations and it's I mean there are

limitations to it definitely and it
doesn't apply to reality it applies to
sort of certain structure of human
thought you know like mathematics geomet
like ukian geometry these kind of things
you know they they're valid within the
context of human
psychology but out there you know beyond
the limitations of human psychology
they're largely
meaningless so I mean anyone having a
mystical experience even that is
Transcendence of a aotian logic and one
of the first essays that I wrote for my
first blog in which I was trying to
refute venerable nira's hatred of
mysticism because he just didn't

understand mysticism he just loathed
mysticism because he said it violates
the laws of thought but I mean if you
think about it there's all kinds of
things that can violate the laws of
thought in my example was a coke bottle
a Coca-Cola bottle made of glass not
plastic an old-fashioned glass Coca Cola
bottle well which is it is it glass or
is it a
bottle well it's both it's glass and
it's a bottle but glass and bottle are
not
synonyms glass is not the same as bottle
therefore if glass is a bottle is not a
so that cook bottle is a and not a

simultaneously and that's just violates
the laws of thought you can't have a
equals not a that's just VI that's just
tramples with hob nailed Jack Boots the
Aristotelian laws of thought but it's
right there in that cook
bottle
so Aristotelian logic it definitely has
its advantages you know it helps to weed
out sloppy thinking but still it has its
limitations too and uh I mean it's not
just even limited to like rationalistic
thought because anyone can perceive any
Nory can perceive a Coca-Cola bottle and
see that it's 100% glass and 100% bottle
simultaneously with glass and bottle not
meaning the same

thing the ancient Greeks I mean they had
these it was almost like zenos paradoxes
where you got three people let's just
for the sake of me not having to come up
with Greek names let's just call them AB
B and C you got person a person B person
C now person B is taller than person C
but shorter than person a which the
Greeks considered to be a kind of
paradox because he was tall and short at
the same time taller than and shorter
than simultaneously but it depends on
the context and it's just they just
couldn't really deal with it at the
time
so yeah Aristotelian logic it's

Universal within a certain context of

human

psychology but it's not just Absolut Ely

Universal it's not some law of the

entire

universe so I'm just going to move on to

Stellar Supreme formerly known as the

Liber Lamb's transgressive fourth

question and I've already raised his

name up to shame and ridicule on the

Discord server

shame really you guys what's this world

coming

to anyways Stellar Supreme formerly

known as lib Lam says would it be

skillful for the average Normie to

repent for their wrong view instead of

upholding some contrived fight for Right
View well I mean
repent I mean what is the meaning of
repent repent generally involves a
certain amount of
remorse Contrition which really is is
not considered to be a wise mental state
from a Buddhist point of view um and how
are you going to repent for your wrong
view if you still have it I mean that's
I mean that's that's not good if if you
are repenting of something that you're
still doing let's say somebody's
committing adultery they're having an
affair and they're repenting of it while
still doing it I mean what good is that

but in order to to stop having wrong
view you have to have you have to
acquire Right View that's otherwise
you're just you've just switched from
one wrong View to a different wrong View
and you're repenting one wrong view
while still wallowing in this newer
wrong view which I don't see the benefit
of that either unless maybe it's just a
somewhat less crude kind of wrong
view
so let's see I I need to ask the
question again would it be skillful for
the average Normie to repent for their
wrong view instead of upholding some
contrived fight for Right View well I
mean if if they're willing to

acknowledge that that everyone is crazy
putuo UMO you know all normies are
insane then I mean that would be a good
good starting point just acknowledge
that yeah I don't have Right View yet I
might not know what Right View is
because I don't have it yet but at least
I realize that I am a diluted being I
mean that that can have some Advantage I
mean at least it'll make you a little
more
humble but this contrived fight for
Right View I mean you don't have to
really fight for Right View you just be
a Seeker you know you're looking for
Right View you don't have to turn it

into a struggle or a battle or anything

you know you're just out there

inquiring while acknowledging that you

don't have it yet I mean that's that's

fine that

works it's not totally ideal because

totally ideal would mean that you're

already

enlightened so yeah would it be skill

for the average normally to repent for

the wrong view

um yeah it depends on what repent means

but really I think it should be

something

more more realistic I guess because how

can you repent of a wrong view while

still wallowing in

it so just acknowledge that you have
wrong View and Aspire or strive or
gently move in the
direction of finding Right View just
keep keep seeking maybe even after you
think you've got Right View continue to
seek even so because you might be
mistaken because that was the fourth
question I'm just going to call it good
and move on to the next question and we
do have a fair amount of questions this
is sort of an average amount of
questions you know it's up it's in the
40s
somewhere so this next question is from
Outer Haven and outer Haven says is

there an objective moral standard and
how is it determined I assume you don't
think Joseph Stalin was a good guy but
millions of Russians do what makes them
wrong and you correct does it all just
boil down to a matter of opinion at the
end of the
day and I think somebody in the comments
pointed out that his choice of Joseph
Stalin was maybe not the best choice
because there probably really aren't
that many Russians who really think
Stalin was a good guy for example I mean
as soon as the Soviet Union fell
Stalingrad got got its old name
back I mean people realize that Stalin
was a bad guy it might be better to have

chosen Lenin because even during the
Soviet Union the average Russian and
they had a pretty good idea that Stalin
was a bad guy but Lenin was kind of
deified almost you know he was glorified
Lenin you know lennin was a good guy
it's just that Stalin took over
afterwards and ran the Soviet Union into
the
ground
um so but but that's just let's see see
what makes them wrong and me correct so
I don't think Stalin was a good guy gu
no I think uh in a lot of respects he
was worse than than Adolf Hitler he
killed more people than Hitler did

anyway and Stalin was mainly killing his
own people although he I guess he was
Georgian so I guess killing ukrainians
wasn't his own people in know ethnic
sense but yeah Stalin was essentially
like a gangster who just Rose to the top
through ambition and
ruthlessness but uh let's just set aside
Joseph Stalin as much as would like to
to dwell on Stalin let's just set him
aside for the moment and just get to the
main question here is is there an
objective moral standard and how is it
determined well the objective moral
standard in Buddhism anyway is just
based on human
psychology that certain actions

especially certain perceptions are going
to take you farther away from
Enlightenment and other perceptions are
going to take you closer to
Enlightenment and that's skillful and
unskillful that which takes you closer
to Enlightenment that which causes you
to have fewer desires more contentment
less suffering overall in the long run
is skillful and what takes you farther
away from Enlightenment increases your
attachments and desires increases your
suffering that is
unskillful so I mean it's just based on
how human psychology works and so um you
know nobody except for a fully

enlightened Saint is going to be
completely a good guy maybe I mean even
an enlightened Saint can seem like kind
of a jerk sometimes I suppose you know
even the Buddha according to the text
would scold people like rebuke people
who might have taken offense at that and
they think well this this GOI he's he's
really not a good guy you know they can
make those decisions But ultimately from
a moral standard it's just whatever gets
you closer to Enlightenment is good
whatever takes you farther away from it
is bad this that's just what it's based
on
so um judging Joseph Stalin itself would
be kind of unskillful because you're not

supposed to be judging people

anyway you know that even just judging

people in a way takes you farther away

from

Enlightenment

so yeah it doesn't all just boil down to

a matter of opinions at the end of the

day unless you're just en normally

wallowing in samsara and don't know what

ethics is really based on at least from

a A dhic or Buddhist point of view you

know for a lot of people in the west if

there is any kind of ethical standards

it's

utilitarian or it's based on decrees of

God

Almighty and neither one of those really
applies in Buddhism it's just more based
on how human psychology
works and because we're all human our
human psychology is has is very much the
same is more more the same than
different so there are in a way within
the human species anyway just sort of
universal standards of certain kind of
emotions attitudes for example will get
us closer to Enlightenment certain
emotions and and attitudes will take us
farther away from
Enlightenment
so and and it's in a way it's like for
for some people want a kind of attitude
or action will actually be a step up an

improvement whereas that same that same attitude might be a step down for somebody else so there is that kind of relativism like someone who is usually very generous they offer something and then they just kind of like I don't want to be doing this I should be keeping this you know they have like a twinge of stinginess when they're offering I mean that would be a step down for them because they're kind of moving away from Enlightenment whereas the person who's always stingy but this time overcomes the stinginess enough to offer something you know he's still experiencing the same amount of twinge of stinginess as

the other person but for him it's an
improvement so at least he's he's taking
a step upwards even though it's
essentially the same mental
state but just from the the amount of
cusa and ausa it would be the same for
both people but at least you know for
the more advanced person it would be a
step down and for the less advanced
person it would be a step
up you know sort of like weightlifters
you know one guy who can bench press 300
pounds I mean he's never done it before
so that's an improvement but then this
other guy who usually can do 400 he can
only do 300 then he he's he's like
degenerating so that shouldn't be too

confusing or hard to understand and so
I'm just going to move on to the next
question this is from sanguine Ultima
and sanguine Ultima says would you say
that Mahayana is to Buddhism what
Mormonism is to
Christianity and if we're going to go
with analogies just try to find the best
analogy I would say there's probably
better analogies than that because
Mormonism didn't exist until modern
times whereas Christianity had existed
for almost 2,000 years before Mormonism
came
along um whereas something like
Buddhism I think Mahayana Buddhism which

began in ancient times it would be more akin to like ticism so you had like like early Christianity like the ebionite you know the Jewish Christians you know from the the near East the Levant that would be sort of like early Buddhism and then you have these Gnostic sects growing up kind of somewhat based they're I mean they're based on Christianity but then they they start having this more Cosmic scale of all these ranks of angels and just weird interpretations of what what God is and who Jesus was you know some some sects considered Jesus never to have been a real human being which a lot of Mahayana Buddhists think about gorma Buddha you know they've just sort of

deified him that he didn't really he
wasn't really a human being he just was
like the semblance of a human being that
sort of thing so I think something like
gnosticism would come
closer um to
Christianity um with regard like
Mahayana is to Buddhism what not ticism
at least some Gnostic sex would be to
Christianity because they were ancient
and they had the same sort of turning
like a
straightforward teaching from one person
supposedly into just this Cosmic
elaborate mythology with all these ranks
of superhuman beings and so

forth so yeah I would say nosism comes

closer to Mahayana

than than Mormonism does like when

you're comparing Buddhism and

Christianity so I'm just going to move

on to uh the next question which is from

scolin or

skaden and scolin or skaden says how

much overlap does the Mahayana

bodhisattva and Jesus have in common so

here's another Buddhism and Christianity

question and then his his bullet points

he he likes these bullet point

commentaries after the question he says

maybe I could use them

interchangeably I'd probably write down

Jesus if I'm talk taking notes because

it's

shorter yeah yeah they're not really

synonyms because Jesus is like an

individual proper name and bodh satva is

just I mean especially um from the

Mahayana point of view it's just a kind

of class of spiritual being so you

wouldn't say that the Buddha like in a

Mahayana text the Buddha gave this

sermon and there were

millions of jesuses in attendance I mean

it just wouldn't make sense it would

sound kind of silly

anyhow so I mean bodh satva is just four

four syllables Jesus is two syllables I

mean you shouldn't be so lazy that you

don't want to say an extra two

syllables so how much overlap do does

the Mahayana bhava and Jesus have in

come it's really hard to say because

it's hard to say exactly you know what

Jesus was like like assuming that Jesus

existed

because sometimes I catch flak from

people on Discord or in YouTube comments

or bitshoot comments or whatever then

they think that I'm just this gullible

rube for believing that Jesus even

existed but let's just assume for the

sake of argument that Jesus of Nazareth

really did exist and I assume even

though all of the Legends aren't based

on his life necessarily anymore than you

know all the legends about Hercules were
really based on some protohistoric
Dorian warlord or Chieftain or something
who became known as
Hercules
um yeah it's just hard to say whether
you know how wise Jesus was you know
what level of spiritual attainment he
attained a lot of people would say that
he was an arhant that he was beyond a
bodhisattva other people would say no he
wasn't an Aran you know he he got in bad
moods he wept famously you know he he
had doubt when he was nailed up on the
cross and all this um so it could be
that he was a kind of bodh

satva not a Buddhist one apparently at
least not in that LIF time it may be I
mean it couldn't be that he was a
bodhisattva like a a Mahayana Buddhist
bodhisatwa in a previous life because
the historical Jesus of Nazareth
assuming that he really existed I mean
he was was born around the time that
Mahayana was beginning to arise in
India so technically I mean he would be
sort of
a like bodh satva adjacent kind of going
parallel a fellow traveler of the bodh
satas um in in in a Buddhist sense it's
it's really hard to
say but first of all because it's hard
to say exactly you know where Jesus was

at assuming that he even existed

and

uh yeah so it's it's really a difficult

question to answer it's it's sort of

like a hypothetical or something so I

think I'm just going to move on to

scadden's next question here because I

really can't say I mean it's it's just

like two different cultures that had

very little overlap at all saying you

know how does Jesus overlap with a a

buddhis satva it's just I I would have

to know way more about Jesus than

possibly anybody in the world actually

knows then setting aside you know

fervent

beliefs just like actual knowledge I
mean even even the Buddha himself I mean
it's it's very difficult to know exactly
what the Buddha was like because all we
have is these texts and the texts
clearly are not 100%
reliable so I'm just going to move on to
scolin or scad's next question which is
is Prince mishkin autistic and he's
referring to one of my favorite novels
The Idiot by Fodor
dovi and Prince Michigan is the
protagonist of this novel The Idiot and
Prince Michigan is sort of a metaphor or
a parable for Jesus so we're getting a
lot of Jesus questions in this in this
Q&A and is Prince Michigan autistic um

well let's just read the bullet point
commentary before I try to answer that
he says I noticed that the prince keeps
being labeled by midwit as an idiot in
the USSR in America the old term used
for autism was idiot savant yeah well
not all autistic people are idiot
savants the person who's just almost
can't talk and just like clutches a
spoon all the time and they're they
might be autistic but they're not
necessarily a savant you know they
they're not like r man who can just you
know do you know seven digigit like
square roots in his head that kind of
thing but uh in Russia I don't remember

the word in Russian but Prince Michin
was what in Russian is called a holy
fool or God's
fool so in a way that's why he's called
an idiot I mean technically he's called
an idiot because first of all he had
really severe um epilepsy when he was a
kid so that he really was just kind of a
slobbering idiot I mean I mean he he had
such severe epileptic seizures that he
was just kind of like in this
days like throughout much of his
childhood and then he got sent to this
clinic in in the Swiss Alps which is
symbolic of Like Heaven until you know
he's he's lived a very sheltered life
and he's very saintly and he he like

forgives his enemies and so forth so
you've got these worldly money oriented
people who call him an idiot partly not
because he had epilepsy as a kid but
because he's so innocent and naive and
forgiving that from a worldly cynical
point of view that's
idiotic and then later on at the end of
the at the end of the novel he really
does go back to being
the like the like the the idiot who's
just like in this days and is nonverbal
and doesn't recognize visitors and stuff
that's a spoiler you might not want to
listen to that part if you haven't read
the novel

yet

so yeah he's God's fool he's not

necessarily autistic I don't know if in

dov's time um there really was a concept

of autism and Prince Michigan is largely

based on doeski himself doeski was no

saint he didn't have any Illusions about

being a safe being a saint but dovi did

have the same temporal lobe epilepsy

that Prince Michigan has and so he sort

of takes his his own position kind of

with the epilepsy certain other

character traits and then tries to you

know make it Christlike that was the the

ambition of dovi in writing the idiot he

wanted to portray a genuinely good human

being and at the time he complained that

really nobody had really tried that I mean donot was was an attempt also um pck in in um Charles Dickens is the pck papers he's another attempt at a genu genuinely good person Charles Dickens I mean his his good guys like the cheeryble brothers in in Nicholas nickelby I mean they're just like syrupy sweet people I mean it's just it's not very it's just sort of like this superficial like like stereotype like a caricature of a good person but dovi wanted to just portray at a deep level just from top to bottom just a sincerely genuinely good person and also at at one or two levels of the novel he also

symbolizes Jesus

Christ so um there might be some autism

you know just the author himself who was

portraying him might technically have

been on the

Spectrum I mean it wasn't severe autism

and that's not why Prince Michigan is

called an idiot in the novel he's called

an idiot in the novel because he was a

holy fool just so naive and trusting and

forgiving and innocent that worldly

cynical people just considered him to be

an

idiot

and like men especially like businessmen

would be mocking him behind his back but

really nobody could bring themselves to

mock him to his face because he was so

such a genuinely good person you

couldn't help but have love for the

guy but then when he was gone they'd be

you know mocking him ridiculing him

behind his

back at least the the men would the

women are too soft-hearted you know they

still liked

him so anyways I'm just going to move on

to scolin or skaden third

question and praise to scolin or

schuline for not asking a fourth

question

here and he says was Nicola

a Mystic Saint and then the bullet

points he he saw despair early on in

life he gained moral character after

reading abafi son of ABA at 8 years

old which places him at level

one right between level zero normal

materialist spiritual

illiterate and level two intermediate

higher proof of spirit but still not

perfected let's see from childhood

onwards has multiple outof body

experiences

had a psychosomatic stress indu induced

debilitating illness that he cured by

reading Mark

Twain that's that's a new one on me how

do you how do you cure yourself of a an

illness from Reading Mark Twain he lived

an aesthetic Forest life for a couple of years gained a greater theoretical understanding of electrical engineering even though he couldn't study in Academia in those years and this there's more but the first couple chapters of wizard The Life and Times of Nicola Tesla okay so the the question again was Nicola Tesla a Mystic Saint and I he may have had some mystical Tendencies but I don't think he was particularly saintly I mean he he was kind of messed up in certain ways he had like weird phobias and foibles like something about the female neck like women working in his laboratory they had

to keep their necks covered they weren't allowed to wear jewelry just cuz this kind of stuff kind of bothered him so I think Nicola Tesla he was more of a Mystic artist than a Mystic Saint you know in some in some respects he's more like JF Gary Epi or even like Elon Musk who Elon Musk admits to being somewhat autistic you know they they might have this inspiration and there's a certain mysticism to creativity you know it may be that a lot of his ideas you know he had like the vision of the the electrical generator thing I don't remember exactly what it was that that came to him in a kind of vision that um yeah there could be a certain

amount of mysticism to it but it was more of a kind of nutty you know sort of borderline you know sort of like the the borderline between genius and just Insanity that would be my guess I really don't know a whole heck of a lot about Nicola Tesla about half of what I know about him comes from Drunk History on YouTube speaking of YouTube they've really cracked down on on not having ad blockers so that I may even stop watching YouTube at all if I mean if I can't watch YouTube without either paying money or watching commercials which I loathe then I'm just going to switch over to rumble or

something so yeah Nicola Tesla may have
been had some mystical talent but I
don't consider him to be particularly
saintly you know he was more like an
inspired
genius but not especially Saint I mean
saint L like a saint would be a moral
genius you know and
uh yeah I'm not so sure that Nicola
Tesla was a moral genius he may have
been like a scientific genius a
mathematical genius but a moral genius I
maybe I just you know have never really
studied up on his life but the
impression that I get was he was just a
bit on the Nutty side which maybe was
caused by being sort of a linal being

you know it's sort of like the autism or
whatever kind of mental foibles he had
kind of had cracks in his mind that
allowed the inspiration to shine through
that kind of
thing but I really have no Authority on
Nicola Tesla so I'm going to move on to
the next question which is from
cify and cify says there is too much
confusion about what is valid Buddha's
teachings and what is made up the
question is if I stick to five precepts
steps and daily meditation on the breath
would it be a better option than
worrying about which teachings are true
and which ones are made up in my woman

and her mama have just pulled into the

the driveway and so there may be some

noise and commotion going on in the

background in a minute or

two so I think I just interrupted myself

very rudely and so I'm going to crack

open well I'm going to finish my

beverage

here and then crack open the emergency

backup

beverage and then I'll uh ask this

question

again from cify this is from cify cify

says there is too much confusion about

what is valid Buddhist teachings and

what is made up the question is if I

stick to five precepts and daily

meditation on the breath would it be a
better option than worrying about which
teachings are true and which ones are
made up however I like Tibetan Buddhism
I like their colorful tradition which
many aspects of our mind represented by
different Buddhas and boddhi satas and
how to work on my mind with the help of
those representations on the other hand
Terra seems like a rigid system take it
or leave it kind of attitude as I said
it's confusing and thanks to any Karma
letting me find you it seems you are the
best person to give a clear answer and
help me to clear the confusion off my
mind okay so let's um yeah I appreciate

that and let's let's get back to the top
here that's where the actual question is
so let's see the question is that's
that's helpful when he says the question
is you know the question's right after
that if I stick to five precepts and
daily meditation on the breath would it
be a better option than worrying about
which teachings are true and which ones
are made up okay well I mean worrying
itself is not a good idea just just
forget the worrying part I mean you can
still seek you can still search you know
you can still
study and really there are some fairly
fairly good
like guidelines you can follow if you

want to know what the original Buddha
originally taught if that's not
important to you if you're just willing
to accept whatever wisdom and you don't
care if the Buddha really taught it then
the door is wide open you can accept
just about anything but you have to be
careful careful with regard to there are
five faculties in in Terra Buddhism five
indas also they're called the five
powers or strengths the five
balas and that two of them are Sada
which is usually translated as faith and
Pa which is usually translated as wisdom
but here it's more
like more like just intelligence so it's

sort of like faith and and uh let's see
what well it's a good a good way of
putting them in this dichotomy here it's
like like faith and understanding faith
and and like intelligence faith and
reason yeah there we go faith and reason
so that's you got to have a balance of
faith and reason because if you have too
much Faith you can believe anything no
matter how ridiculous it is and I mean
some new age people come to mind when I
when I say that
if you have too much
reason then and and not enough
Faith then you're going to be a hardened
skeptic and even if you come across some
Golden Nugget of wisdom you may just

reject it because of insufficient data

or whatever and in the the wisi Maga

Buddha Go's wisi Maga which I mentioned

probably close to an hour ago now maybe

an hour ago or more it says that a

person with too much un too much Reason

Not Enough faith is like a person who is

sick and their sickness is caused by the

medicine they

take so it's like your own reason is is

causing the

problem

so let's get back up to the top here the

question is if I stick to five precepts

in daily meditation on the breath would

it be a better option than worrying

about which teachings are true and which ones are made up well I mean some of the made up ones can be true I mean you can have have some madeup suta or Sutra in which the Buddha is still saying something wise even though the historical Buddha didn't really say that but I mean there's a lot of things the historical Buddha didn't say that are still true the the the historical Buddha never said Carson City is the capital of Nevada even though Carson City actually is the capital of Nevada so there's there's true things even philosophical truths that the historical Buddha didn't say that you can still I mean you shouldn't reject it just because the

historical Buddha didn't say it but I
mean if it depends on what your
priorities are if you really want
because you're a Buddhist let's say
because you're a Buddhist you want to
follow what the founder of the tradition
originally taught like if you're a
Christian you want to follow what Jesus
taught not what Paul of Tarsus taught
not what some Pope taught not what some
patriarch taught but what Jesus himself
taught
that would be the purest truest
Christianity is following what was
taught by the historical Jesus and it's
the same way with Buddhism the purest

Buddhism presumably would be what the
historical GMA Buddha the original
Buddha actually taught and so I mean
it's impossible to be 100%
sure but I mean there are certain
guidelines I mean like most Mayana texts
I mean it's not going to be what the
original historical Buddha taught it
might be something that he would approve
of might be something that he would
agree with it might be like a paraphrase
saying in other words something
essentially like he taught some of it
but still I mean if you really want to
get as close to what the original Buddha
taught then you're better off going to
the texts that are the closest to what

the original Buddha taught which
nowadays for the most part are poly
texts that's not to say that the poly
texts accurately 100% accurately
represent what the original Buddha
taught but you've got a higher
percentage of authentic teachings to be
found in the poly texts so at least you
know you're increasing the percentage
of what you consider to be the teachings
of of Buddha but I mean if that's not
important to you if you just
you want to accept what you consider to
be wise what Vibes with you you know
what what resonates with you you know
you can read the Bava Gita some of it's

very wise you can read the ding some of

it's very wise some of the New Testament

is very wise the general Epistle of

James has got a lot of wisdom to

it Kabir whatever teachings of ramam

Mahari just

whatever that's fine

it all depends on on really what you're

going for I mean if you just want to

suspend judgment like a classical

skeptic and just practice you can do

that too but it's hard not to have

beliefs until you're enlightened even

enlightened being is going to have the

semblance of beliefs they might not

cling to them or identify with them but

they're still going to be there the

cultural conditioning and stuff is still

going to be

there

um so if you just stick to five precepts

and daily meditation on the breath yeah

that's that's fine but still you're

going to have to think you're going to

have to have beliefs and presumably

you're going to have beliefs about

Buddhism and so you should be careful or

at least know what your priorities are I

mean do you want to know what the

historical GMA Buddha really taught or

at least you want to get as close to

that as you can then that's one thing

but I mean if you just just want to

accept any kind of wisdom anything that resonates with your heart or with your inmost self or whatever you want to call it then I mean that's that's a different approach you can take and I mean I kind of can appreciate both ways i' I've gone both ways it's just that when I'm in Buddhism mode I really do want to get as close as I can to what the Buddha originally taught but if I'm just an Eclectic I'm willing to accept wisdom from any Source mode then I can read the D Jing the shangu the the bagavat Gita the General Epistle of James whatever and that's all fine I've read a lot of scriptures even even after becoming a Buddhist monk I mean great many

scriptures I have read only after I
became a Buddhist monk of of other
religions and so it's good to be bahuta
as as it's called in P to be to have to
have heard much you know to be learned
to be well read you know to to be able
to compare different traditions and know
the points and the the strong points and
the weak points and so
forth but I mean it's just the worrying
about it which is I mean that's that's
the stumbling block you know just
reading the bagavat Gita or reading the
heart Sutra you know I mean there's
nothing wrong with that it's just when
you start getting false ideas because of

it or just just worrying did the Buddha
really teach the heart Sutra and just
stewing over it that's not going to be
very helpful in all likelihood he didn't
although he may have approved of the
message I do think that the Buddha that
the the heart of what the Buddha taught
the essence of what he taught is more in
agreement with the heart Sutra than with
a lot of what you're going to find in
the poly
texts
so it really depends on what your
priorities are I mean if your priority
is to know what the original historical
gab Buddha taught then there are ways of
at least increasing the odds or

increasing the percentage of genuine teachings in you know within your field of view you know you can dismiss certain things fairly easily like Abid dama for example even within the poly texts

so yeah um yeah the confusion part is is really the kind of the the stumbling block or the obstacle and so I mean you can go either way and it it's it's all good so long as you're not stewing and like indecisive and worried and fedding and all that but just looking and just seeking you know just studying that's all

fine and really it depends on what your

priority is to to determine which way

you should

go but I mean you you do you should

balance faith and reason too much of one

and you're out of

balance so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from

Yuka and Yukka

says let's see what are your thoughts on

this in the

AR majaya number

26 the Buddha didn't want to talk about

the Enlightenment with anyone at first

but then came the god Brahma sahti and

pleaded the Buddha to go and teach and

then the Buddha went out of compassion

if the Buddha was fully enlightened I

assume that he would have been more than
willing to go and share his Insight with
others without having to be exhorted to
do so well this story is also found in
in vinia in the vinia ptica the book of
monastic discipline the books of
monastic discipline pretty sure it come
it's in the
mahaga
um yeah so I I am familiar with it and
uh I guess uh he just wants my thoughts
on it well for
for starters I do consider the story
probably not to be authentic history
that it does kind of it does kind of
have the odor

of religious

propaganda I mean there's probably a

kernel of truths it may be that the

Buddha really was hesitant to teach

dhama because according to this same

story he didn't think anyone was going

to understand dependent core Rising

padicha Samu and

and I mean that was a valid concern

because it seems to me anyway almost

nobody really understands it even though

it was Central to the Buddhist

teaching you know according to the text

padicha Samu is Central to dhama and

still almost nobody really understands

it it aifi into the 12 link Theory the

12 nidana Theory and then people just

memorize that and think that they
understand it and they don't
but the propaganda comes in where the
Hindu personification of Ultimate
Reality or the the you know the Proto
Hindu the vdic personification of
Ultimate Reality comes down and gravels
before the Buddha that's the propaganda
part also there there are other sutas
where you've got the viic
personification of Ultimate Reality and
the the patron deity of the Indo Arian
Saka king of Gods Alias Indra are like
guarding the door to the Buddha's cabin
you know there like one standing on one
side other standing on the other side

and they're reciting spontaneously these

verses of Praise

devotionalism me as just pretty pretty

intense religious propaganda where they

are like exalting the Buddha over the

highest most important deities in the

viic

pantheon and the Proto Hindu

Pantheon

so um it may have been though that the

Buddha really was hesitant to start

teaching because he figured people just

wouldn't understand the message and if

his original message was like the ATA

waga terada has pretty much forgotten

the ATA waga there there's one text

called the Mahan nesa which is a a

canonical commentary on the ATA waga
which reinterprets the ATA waga into
something relatively mundane you know
like in the Ana waga where it says um
the Buddha says don't have any view the
the Mah Nida says well when he says
don't have any view what he means is
don't have any wrong view I mean why
even bother don't believe what's wrong
why why even say that it should be
obvious you shouldn't go around having
to tell people don't believe what's
false
so um yeah and also in terava there is
the the existence in teravan tradition
of the P Pacha Buddha which is like a

Hermit Buddha he's a fully enlightened
Buddha he doesn't teach he just goes off
into the forest and like in Zen Buddhism
and so forth there are enlightened sages
who just live alone in the forest they
they're just don't want to be bothered
it's it's not really a matter of
compassion because I mean compassion to
some degree involves a certain amount of
delusion because there is no self there
really are no suffering beings
ultimately
conventionally like in this virtual
reality they exist but in Ultimate
Reality there are no suffering
beings and so if so you got a being
who's in enlightened I mean they're just

dwelling at the level of the

absolute some of them just don't see any

point in in like re-entering the the

feverish dream to try to awaken these

dream beings who are not ultimately real

which kind of reminds me of ramen am

Mahari where he had his Awakening

experience and for I think it was like

at least two years afterwards he was

mute it was like he hadn't worked out a

way of like reconciling this new

heightened awareness with just living in

Som saric worldliness using language

communicating with these normies

essentially not just normies but virtual

normies

so I guess I gave my thoughts on

that and I do think it's largely just a

legend I really have my doubts

that Brahma sampad you know the the

personification of Ultimate

Reality came down to earth and gravel to

the Buddha to teach a tradition that

would

mock himself Brahma sah or belittle

him I just It just strikes me as

religious

propaganda and so I'm going to move on

to the next question which the person's

name I'm not so sure how to pronounce

this

laund is that how to pronounce it is

spelled L4 o t h u n

D4 so if we say that four is an a it
would be LA thund or La Tunda something
like
that anyway the person with two fours in
his name says I can't find anything in
the vinea regarding the SEMA and women
going into the post Hall and meditating
or paying respects when there are no
monks in there on day or on days where
the sa is doing official business I
thought they're not allowed inside but
some Elder monks and some Junior monks
think it is or think
it's um well I actually wrote an essay
on semas or ecclesiastical boundaries
which is in this book available on

Amazon here I'm I'm doing some hype here essays in terava Buddhism and on page 157 we've got technical matters ecclesiastical precincts or SEMA and one of the things I mention in this is that the whole idea of semas or nowadays A SEMA is considered to be like a meeting hall for the monks it's like a congregation hall for the monks that's not what SEMA means in poly Sema it's like an ecclesiastical boundary all the monks who live within the same SEMA are required to do their formal acts of the S together and the boundary markers of a SEMA can include a mountain or Hill a rock a forest or Grove of trees a single

tree A path or Road a termite Mound a

river or stream or any body of water so

you can see here that some of the

boundary markers for AA or like a

mountain a forest a river and so it's

fairly obvious just based on the SEMA

and I if you want to read the original

information on semas I'm pretty sure

it's in the vinia

mahaga but it's it's fairly clear that

AA was like uh what is it called in

Christianity like

uh

H I can't remember what it's called in

Christianity where you just got this

area where you know everybody goes to

the same Church you know it's kind of an oldfashioned idea but that's what a SEMA originally was I mean it's like the maximum dimensions of a SEMA is like something like 20 miles on a side a SEMA cannot be so big that you can't walk to the meeting Hall in that SEMA within one day so

originally the SEMA was just the precinct the precinct no that's not it ah it bugs me when I can't think of the word it's it's an oldfashioned Christian word anyways it's just it I mean it could be like miles across the SEMA it's just all the monks living in this area with well demarcated boundaries which can include mountains and forests they

all go to the same congregation Hall which doesn't even have to be a congregation Hall it's just like a specified place where the monks all meet and then they do their formal acts of the of the sa together and so I mean obviously there can't be a rule against women being inside the SEMA because it's going to be like an entire city can be the SEMA it's called the GMA SEMA that's one kind of SEMA where especially if the city is an oldfashioned City with City walls those walls can be the boundary of the SEMA and then you can't just make all the women in the city leave when the monks want to do a me

so it's the whole idea has gotten
corrupted so now the ecclesiastical
boundary is usually just slightly larger
than this one congregation
Hall um but clearly the rules haven't
changed since ancient time so there
really is no rule against women being
inside the SEMA when monks are meeting
but there is a rule against anyone who
is not fully ordained which includes
women men and like novices even from
being within Arms Reach of the monks
when they are doing a formal act all the
monks have to be within Arms Reach of
each other you know they're they're kind
of huddled together but you can't have
anyone who isn't a monk outside of that

and you can't have any monk farther

farther than Arms Reach or that

invalidates the formal

act

so what is the question

here I'm not sure if there is there's no

question mark here so maybe we should

continue with with Lao thunda question

here because I haven't gotten to a

question mark the SEMA at the temple I

go to has an artificial pond with the

Hall built at top the pond and the pond

is enclosed by a gated fence and there

is a perimeter of pav bricks laid down

surrounding the fence I saw a person

temporarily ordained as aiku in honor of

their father's death however there were
people or relatives just outside the
hall not standing on the perimeter did
they inadvertently validate the
ordination no they didn't because I
cringed when I bowed down to someone but
I did so out of respect for the Triple
gem so no you can't have a rule I mean
it's it's certainly not in the rules of
monastic discipline that you can't have
unordained people inside the boundaries
of the
SEMA um like during an ecclesiastical
act because as I say a SEMA can be miles
across and I still can't think of the
the the Christian term for it in English
for perish that's it it's a parish so

it's just this entire area where all the
monks living inside that entire area
have they all have to do their formal
acts together and this got de
degenerated corrupted into something
that is not in the poly text where the
SEMA just shrank down to this little
formal boundary around this little
congregation hall building
but the rules remain the
same so you can have women inside the
SEMA it might be against tradition in
that culture for women to be inside the
congregation Hall during a formal Act of
the sa but there's really no rule
against it it doesn't invalidate

anything so long as they are not within
Arms Reach and it could be a man who's
within Arms Reach if he's not
ordained so I mean if you want to read
up on it it's in this book
also it's in the Maha waga of the vinia
ptica if you want to get to the original
source
so let's see here's here's some more all
these questions arose because some guy
wanted to use some cinder blocks that
were used to decorate or reinforce the
Gated fence replace it with matching
cinder blocks and use the cinder blocks
from the SEMA wall to make a tombstone
or Mausoleum for people's bones and
Ashes at this Temple I was told from

others whatever is in the SEMA stays and can't be taken out but yet the new Abbot here said it's absolutely fine and that there was no harm to be done I refused the Abbot and did other chores at the temple who's in the wrong well the Abbot is is correct because the original meaning according to the poly rules of monastic discipline is a SEMA is just a large area in which all the monks who live in that area have to do their formal acts together and it can be miles across with like a mountain demarcating one one side of it and like a forest demarcating the other side of it you need more than just two boundary

markers but

still and so I mean it is kind of

against tradition it's not against the

rules but it can be against tradition

for there to be like women or lay people

inside the congregation Hall when monks

are doing a formal Act of the S although

like at an ordination you know the

junior mon the new Monk's Mama might be

watching you know it may be okay I mean

it's not against the rules so long as

she's not within Arms

Reach but it depends on like the the

tradition of that area or that Monastery

but really no rules are being broken

other than maybe just local Monastery

rules but it's not against

vinia so whatever is in the SEMA stays
and can be taken out well a lot of
things can be taken out like you put
flowers on the altar the flowers get old
and wither up and dry out you just throw
them away outside the SEMA
building I mean that's that's an obvious
exception
so yeah it's it's really it's just
become very ritualized and it's has
deviated quite a lot from the original
meaning of the
rules and the original meaning of the
rules was essentially it is I've already
a parish you know it's just the area
within which all the monks who live in

that area have to congregate together at

this designated

place

so I guess I answered that question so

I'm going to move on to the next

question which is from Joe do and Joe do

says I've heard you talk about eart toas

the Power of Now I forget what you said

just quickly do you like the book is it

worth reading yeah I like the book and

it is worth reading you know he he

adopts kind of a an unusual attitude or

an unusual perspective on you know the

perennial philosophy you can call it

that you know just sort of wisdom in

general he's got sort of a as as like

dhamma teachers who are considered to be

enlightened beings or who consider themselves to be enlightened beings you know it's kind of a different angle some of what he says I don't really get saying that women identify with their pain body I mean that's I've never heard that before he's got some kind of strange ideas all animals are fully enlightened except for a few domesticated pets who have like acquired Neurosis from their owners from their human owners that kind of thing but yeah it's it's well worth reading definitely you can definitely uh get benefit from reading that book regardless of whether eart TOA really is enlightened or not

he's obviously he obviously had some kind of Awakening experience at least he acquired like a heightened state of awareness there was certainly a Consciousness shift when he had his experience that just slammed him into this higher level of Consciousness so I mean you don't have to accept or reject anything that he read but it's it's good to expose yourself to that kind of thing so I'm just going to move on to joo's next question following up on my question about why aan suffered late in life what I am struggling to understand is how is it that the serial murder gained serial murderer gained Nirvana after renouncing

the world and his ways without making up
all that bad karma first or after again
the story about the awakened monk that
had to get beaten to a pulp I don't know
them by name sorry surely he didn't have
as bad karma as the serial murderer and
why did he have to make Pi up that Karma
after Enlightenment trying to wrap my
head around it because I think some say
aan cha was yeah a lot of especially
people in Thai Traditions think aan sha
was an Arad also aan man ajan Mahaba
those would be like the big three in
Thailand there's a few others aan Le
damad daro and so forth that are
considered to be you know enlightened

beings by a lot of people in Thailand or in Thai Traditions but uh yeah the the ser murderer was anguli Mala and even after he became enlightened he did I mean people were throwing rocks at him I'm sure he uh he got bloodied quite a few times I don't remember how he died he may have died like a painful death as a result of the karma that he committed or he generated when he was literally a serial

killer and Maham molana was the chief disciple of the Buddha who was literally beaten to a pulp even after he was fully enlightened

um but the thing is when you become enlightened or in order to become

enlightened you do not exhaust your
karma that's something that the Janes
believed the Buddhists did not accept
that the Buddha himself didn't have any
use for that idea the Janss would try to
exhaust their karma to use up all their
karma and then that would be like they'd
become enlightened after they had
exhausted all their karma but in
Buddhism Enlightenment and your karma
are almost irrelevant you know there
there there's no direct correlation
between
them so I mean you do try to make good
karma so that you can have enough smooth
sailing in your life enough Clarity of

mind you've got you don't have like a

[__] storm going on all the time so you

can cultivate dhamma you got good karma

that helps you to cultivate dhama and

then from there there's like this

jumping off point and it's at different

stages for different people some people

might have to attain fourth jna before

they can get to the jumping off point

some people can jump off before they've

attained Janna it's just depends on the

person like their talent their their

personal qualities or whatever their

luck random chance I don't

know but I mean you don't exhaust your

karma before you become enlightened and

you can have a lot of good karma and a

lot of Bad Karma and still you can make
significant spiritual progress whereas
somebody else who doesn't have as much
Good Karma or as much Bad Karma you know
it it might be more difficult for them
just for because of other
reasons so I mean some people the Bad
Karma is what slams you so hard that it
just knocks you out of Sam Sor that's
kind of like eart told us case I mean he
was having this existential crisis where
he was becoming just I mean he just
couldn't stand it anymore I mean he was
just at wit's end and it just slammed
him into this higher state of
consciousness something very similar

happened with rahen am Mahari is going
to come up in a later question
here so it's it's not that you have to
use up your Bad Karma or get rid of your
Bad Karma somehow in order to become
enlightened it can still be there if
You' got enough Good Karma compensating
so that you can still make progress you
can still hear you know the enlightened
teacher speaking to you anguli Mala must
have had some really good karma
also um I think it's Richard gri wrote a
book um let's see how Buddhism began the
condition Genesis of the early teachings
one chapter was about anguli Mala and he
has this hypothesis that anguli Mala who
is portrayed as just a serial killer may

have been like a devotee of Kali who may have still been a serial killer but at least he he had like this yearning for some kind of you know Divine Awakening or something he was just going about it in the wrong way but he had some kind of momentum going from a past life this spiritual momentum and just taking this really wrong turn may have just slammed his momentum the other direction when he met the Buddha I mean it's there's all kinds it can take all kinds of weird stories you know there's all kinds of different people can have these Awakening experiences so yeah I don't think that

anguli Mala being a serial killer and

then becom coming enlightened I mean I I

do think that he met with a lot of

violence cuz people knew who he was

people were like throwing rocks at him

because he he killed their their Uncle

Joe or

whatever but um yeah I don't know how he

died I think he might have died a

violent death

too but it didn't matter so much because

he was

enlightened he had laid down the burden

he did what had to be

done so yeah it's it's not like the

Janes believe that you have have to use

up all of your karma even your good

karma all good and bad you just exhaust
your karma and then you don't have any
more sticky Karma sticking to your Jaa
and then you just float up into heaven
that's essentially what the Janes
believe but in the Buddhist it's I mean
samsara is kind of
irrelevant you know it's like you can
bail out of samsara at pretty much any
stage it's just that the more advanced
you get the more likely it is that
you're going to be able to get the
insight allows you to just bail out it's
not like you go up up up up up until you
reach nibana it's like you just go up
this endless ladder up up up with no end

to it until finally you just bail out sideways so I kind of sort of answered that question and I'm moving on to the next one this is from RP brothers and RP Brothers says hey can you levitate I was told levitation is possible I used to try to levitate like when when I was in Burma I would like jump up and try not to fall back down again I fell back down every single time I also used to try to wave my hand through like Solid Rock and it didn't work either I kept hitting the thing you know like tried to wave my hand through a post or something and it just kept hitting until finally I just developed this defeatist attitude where I was like trying to be careful not to

hurt my hand when it hit which of course
that means you don't have the faith of a
grain of mustard seed but in my dreams
yeah i' I've had a lot of lying dreams
or levitating dreams but in uh my
conscious waking State I do not have a
whole lot of psychic
Talent my father was more psychic than
me or at least he was more intuitive
than
me maybe a little more Lial than
me although I guess I'm Lial in other
ways so I have tried to levitate and
somebody in the comments made this semi
joke answer that there was a picture of
photograph of me levitating over the

city of Mona in Burma and I heard that
there was this picture going around of
me levitating over the city of Mona and
I would just say well must be somebody
else because I don't remember doing that
but the Burmese are very a friend of
mine also was seen levitating even
though he didn't remember levitating
either so you can get legends about you
pretty easy living in a place like like
Burma or India
but uh yeah I tried to levitate and it
just didn't really succeed I I couldn't
levitate for more than about one
second so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from five
precept Paul formerly known as five

precept

Pete and his first question is have you

read whisper in the heart the ongoing

presence of neem karoli Baba and no I

haven't but it sounds like an

interesting book I wouldn't mind reading

it if I had it maybe I'll maybe I'll

order it or something

I have read uh Miracle of Love um

stories about NE Koli Baba which uh and

I've got his his picture up there on the

on top of the bookcase on the closest

thing I've got to an

altar so yeah the correct answer to this

question is no I have not read whisper

in the heart the ongoing presence of

neim cly baba but it sounds like a an interesting book an inspiring book too so anyways if ie pret Pete formerly known as no five preet Paul formerly known as five preet Pete says assuming all the manifestations and miracles of neem carolib Baba are true wouldn't that still not explain how he is appearing to people after his death well we don't know what state he is in now because even in Miracle of love stories about neem corib Baba there were several stories about him manifesting after he died sometimes as other people but with the same mannerism as NE cly Baba you know it's like he would just appear as like a little kid or or some old sawu or

something and you know this it could
just be the imagination of the the
devotee who is so you know firmly
directed towards NE K Baba they would
see him and and other other people but
in a way it kind of reminds me of in the
New Testament you know the the disciples
the apostles on the road to emus and
they meet Jesus and they don't recognize
him you know it's just he looks like
somebody else apparently so was it
really Jesus or was it just somebody
else they later they thought oh that
must have been Jesus because he acted
like Jesus
did

so let's get back to the question though assuming all the manifestations and miracles of neem cly Baba are true wouldn't that still not explain how he is appearing to people after his death well neim cly Baba just did not follow rules that's one of the reasons why I really I just resonated with NE Cy Baba he was like an enlightened Rascal and he did not follow rules it's like there's a story in Miracle of love where ROM dos is talking to a physicist and he's you know talking about the Miracles of nimc Baba and the physicist is an open-minded physicist and so he's he's accepting the possibility that neim Cy Baba can read minds and do with these these psychic

Feats and then ramda says also he can
appear in more than one place
simultaneously and then the physicist
kind of of backs off from that says well
that's that's impossible and then ramda
says yeah it may be impossible but he
did it
anyway and that's just kind of the way n
Koli Baba was I mean he just broke
rules so I mean there's no telling what
he did I mean he could be some sort of I
mean assuming that he wasn't even fully
enlightened he could still be some sort
of deity who can just continue appearing
or I mean he could be enlightened and
just be breaking the rules about what's

supposed to happen to Enlighten people

it's hard to

say

so oh this is like another question

that's tacked on to the question above

that I've already been responding to

wouldn't he have taken rebirth elsewhere

or enter partana well he could take

rebirth as some assuming that he did

take rebirth he could take rebirth as

some being in some higher Dimension that

can still manifest however he pleases on

in this version of ssar I mean that's

presumably

possible but trying to second guess

somebody like NE cly Baba is a Fool's

erand it's just an exercise and futility

and so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from s
papapa and some papapa says what kind of
exercises are allowed as a monk would
push-ups jogging and sit-ups be allowed
or just walking meditation I can imagine
that making your muscles bigger and
having a six-pack would be seen as
sensual I read through the 227 rules of
the order so I'm going to guess no on
building muscle but I'm still asking
because I don't really know so getting
back to the question which is right here
at the top what kind of exercises are
allowed as a monk well there are two
main kinds of exercises that are

specifically promoted in the text one walking doing a lot of walking meditation or just you know walking to the Village I mean sometimes a monk will live in a forest it could be 2 miles or more to the nearest Village I've heard of places that were like s miles away so you'd be walking you know 15 miles a day just going for food and walking through the village and coming back again so a lot of walking that's good for your health it's good for the cardiovascular system and so forth and then the other kind of exercise that is specifically allowed in the text is just doing chores around the monastery chop wood carry water that kind of

thing so with regard to the examples
some papapa gives push-ups jogging and
situps well jogging let's just say a
jogging monk would look inappropriate to
in a Buddhist culture and it would not
Inspire respect or reverence in a non-
Buddhist culture you know you got the
monk with jogging I mean jogging shoes
would be out he'd be out jogging in
flipflops or barefoot
and just he'd look silly and people
would be laughing at him in a non-
Buddhist culture and in a Buddhist
culture people might be like clucking
their tongues and shaking their head and
thinking these Barbarian monks they just

don't know how to act

properly so jogging would be out

swimming would be out because there's

specifically a rule a monk is not

allowed to play in water he's only

allowed to swim if he's got a genuine

reason like it's the only way to cross a

river he's trying to get away from like

a charge water buffalo or

something charging elephant maybe then

you can jump into the water and swim but

swimming for exercise is uh I mean maybe

if it's like prescribed by a doctor you

know it's definitely for health reasons

you might be able to get away with it

push-ups and sit-ups I mean if you did

it in privacy for health reasons but

it's really not necessary I mean going
with the the early Buddhist texts if if
you're walking a few miles a day and you
you chop wood carry water kind of stuff
you know you're filling your five gallon
bucket with water at the well and you
got to pull the Rope to fill the bucket
and then you know you're carrying it on
your shoulder you're walking a quarter
mile to your your cave or your Hut or
whatever that's fairly good meditation
when I was a monk I wasn't doing any
kind of special meditation but you know
I was in decent good shape just from I
mean first of all just living a rough
examp existence you know it kind of

brings out the caveman instincts and maybe boosts your testosterone or something just from living a rough existence and then you know all the walking and you know fetching bucket after bucket of water just fill the the Big 10 gallon can to take a take a bath and you know carry another five gallons up on my shoulder back up the hill back to my cave that kind of thing that was in good shape I mean you could do like yoga stretches and so forth I suppose but I mean what would be the purpose of it if it's to help you to stay limber so you can sit in the full Lotus for an hour or more then that would be a dharmic reason but you just want your

body to be a well honed machine that you know you just want to be able to look at yourself in the mirror and with admiration then no that that would not be a good good excuse and it's furthermore looking into a mirror is against Venia

anyway so yeah I think you'd probably be best as a monk just doing a lot of walking meditation and uh some of that uh chop wood carry water stuff and if that's not enough I mean you got to you've got to uh kind of examine your motives why do you want to do push-ups why do you want big biceps or welld developed pectoral muscles or or a

six-pack or anything like that it's like
how does that help you to practice
dhama maybe if you got a doctor
prescribing it for some sort of
condition maybe then but otherwise I
think you're just better off with
walking chopping wood and carrying
water so I'm just going to move on to S
papal Papa's next question and
specifying that my answer to the first
question was specifically with regard to
monks well L people you can do as you
please so anyways some papapa second
question
here since everything is mindmade and we
are all a part of this beautifully cruel
game based on Karma and our defilements

aren't we able to kind of read each other's minds to some degree by having awareness of mine and others bodily speech and mind an example is something's someone's smiling at you but you know that it's fake and someone else Smiles at you and you know it's genuine I know it can't always be true at all times and ultimately aren't I just projecting that based on a wrong perception or just perception and then con ceptions in general it's not hard to see and Social Psychology or whatever psychology that handles this seems to have a good understanding of how to see it and the Deep mental states that

accompany these actions but it seems like Buddhism might take it a little further or deeper but I'm not all the way certain so let's uh get back up to the main question here aren't we able to kind of read each other's minds to some degree by having awareness of mind and others bodily speech in mind well I mean even animals can do that I mean um I think part of the situation here is it it reminds me of a book called Seth speaks by Jane Roberts who is channeling this multi-dimensional entity called Seth and Seth says you always know if you're being lied to you always know if you're being ripped off you always know what the other person's motives are that

everyone has like this communal like
telepathic
mind but you don't have full conscious
access to this level of your own mind
because most of us are stuck in the ego
this ego isn't your entire mind the ego
is like this
self-referential part of your
Consciousness that is pretty much
oblivious to anything beyond it because
it thinks that it is has its own
existence separate from everything else
so your ego is oblivious to like your
subconscious mind where this telepathic
ability exists and so it's not so much a
matter of some like Adept

Swami who cultivates telepathy that
creates the ability to be telepathic
it's just that he acquires access to
that level of his mind that is already
telepathic but we've all got it it's
just that most of us are completely
contained in this mental prison of our
ego and we're unaware of all this other
Consciousness around it that we have I
mean we should have access to if our ego
wasn't all closed off against
it so maybe an animal doesn't have as
much of an ego presumably animals don't
and so they're more able to read minds
or or read people's true intentions you
know like a dog proverbially can tell
this weather a person approaching him is

friend or enemy you know they can sort of see through the fake smile see through the con man Spiel you know they can tell better than a lot of people can whether someone is really a friend or an enemy also my father used to be a big game hunter in Alaska and he said that sneaking up on a moose is damn near impossible like if you're out moose hunting I'm not recommending that you all go out moose hunting here but if you go moose hunting sneaking up on a moose is damn near impossible the Moose will always get spooked and run off but if you sneak up on a tree next to the Moose you know you're just concentrating on

that tree next to the Moose sneaking up on that tree it's as easy as shooting cows my father kind of had a magical attitude towards things he was sort of a pagan type um but I mean that could be an example I mean Stone Age people they just accepted it as this fact that animals can read minds that's one of the hypotheses for how meditation was invented you know somebody had to invent meditation one possibility is that it was Stone Age Hunting magic where people firmly believed animals can read minds and so if you're lying in Ambush with your spear or your your adle adle or whatever then you try to not think you know you you

just you just try to keep your mind

empty while you're you're lying in wait

for the for the animal to go

by so I mean there is that also they

have done studies where there is a

significant ability in humans to know

when someone is staring at them like

behind them that we do have like this

subliminal ability to do this kind of

stuff I don't know if they figured out

exactly how we do

it but we do seem to have you know above

random chance ability to know when

someone is staring at us from like

behind us

somewhere so we do have access to this

kind of a group

mind but because we're locked into our

ego and think that our ego is who we are

then in a way we blind oursel to all

this other stuff that we should have

access to but deny ourself access to

it and uh I kind of I hope I answered

that question because I'm moving on to

the next one and this is from ruie and

ruie says hello poo would you care to

elaborate on the utterance of

another as a requirement for Right View

as well as on the qualities of that

other that should be clearly apparent

and I do vaguely recall that there is

like a suta saying in order to have

right view it you know it one of the pr

requisites for Right View is the
utterance of another but I mean it never
really made an impression on me and uh
the utterance of another is very
sporadic in its reliability you know the
utterance of another is not necessarily
going to get your right view it could go
the other
direction so I assume the implication is
the utterance of another is the
utterance of a wise being you know like
like a Buddha some some sort of very
wise
being but if you're just an Normy it's
hard to tell who's wise and who isn't
wise because you can't really understand

something greater than

yourself so you're going to see everyone

pretty much at your own

level and I really I mean it never

really resonated with me that in order

to have Right View you have to have the

utterance of another it may be going

with the Buddhist idea that only a

Buddha can come up with Dharma on his

own know that in order to learn dhama if

you're not a Buddha you're going to have

to get it from somebody else so that

could be what it's referring to here I

don't recall the

context but that would seem to be a

logical uh like consequence of Dharma

you know if if a sama Sam Buddha is the

only person who can really comprehend
Dharma on his own without it being
taught to him then all the rest of us
are going to have to learn it from
somebody else so that is probably what's
it's referring to as the utterance of
another someone who can teach you
dhamma
um so I guess I answered the question
didn't
I the qualities of that other I guess
they would have to really understand
dhama in order to teach it to somebody
else and nowadays it's not even
necessarily the utterance of another
much as you can read a book I mean some

of my most important teachers have been
books so I mean the book itself is not
conscious so the book itself is is not
wise it's neither wise nor foolish it's
just like this you know paper and
ink so it's just you need to hear the
right words that can trigger the Insight
which reminds me of there was some Zen
monk who wasn't enlightened he walking
through the marketplace and he's walking
past a butcher shop and there's this
lady there saying to the butcher give me
the best cut of meat you've got and the
butcher says every cut of meat in my
shop is the best cut of meat and somehow
that triggered an Insight in this Monk
and he had an Awakening experience so

that was the utterance of another
although of course he had experienced
previous utterances that were more along
dharmic lines that set him up so that
was right for this random comment from a
butcher to just be the last little nudge
that send him over the
edge but I do think probably what it's
referring to is that since only a
Buddha can learn dhama completely
without a teacher then everyone else has
to have a teacher and nowadays it can be
a book it can be a YouTube video it
could be a
podcast preferably be be like a really
wise teacher generally a monk but not

necessarily and so I'm going to move on
to the next question this is from game
fap and game fap says living in the
state of South Carolina how often do you
come across Confederate
iconography like this shirt look at
that what is the general public
sentiment of the state's Confederate
Heritage it's kind of silly silly that
all of a sudden these memorials became a
problem when for a hundred years no one
cared not even Martin Luther King our
culture looks for scapegoats instead of
fixing real problems well every once in
a while there's like one house on like a
state highway just a few miles out of
town they have got a huge Confederate

flag flying over their house every once
in a while you'll see a Confederate flag
on like draped from someone's porch or
something and they don't catch a lot of
flack from
it um it's just seen as kind
of sort of Southern Heritage you know
nobody's thinking I support slavery
that's why it's like you know they think
of the more positive aspects of like
state rights that kind of thing when
when they they think
about um you know the Confederacy like
my father was from Georgia and when he
was when he was kid there were still
people alive who had fought in the Civil

War so that when he was a little kid
grown-ups were telling him that his
belly button was where the Yankee shot
him and my father used to say that to me
to that's where the Yankee shot
you um but I mean from the southern
point of view they they would kind of
switch it over I mean it wasn't about
the Civil War wasn't about slavery it
was about states rights you know are we
going to have like a loose Confederation
of states or are we going to have like a
like a like a centralized federal
government that's going to be the most
important although I think slavery was a
major part of the Civil War like I read
the autobiography of John Stewart Mill

who used to be in the Guinness Book of
World Records as one of the people that
was estimated to have one of the highest
IQs of any person in
history he was a politician he was in
England but I mean he was a politician
extremely intelligent and in his
autobiography you know he lived during
the time of the Civil War and he said it
was pretty obviously about
slavery so I don't think that there are
very many people who fly Confederate
flags or have Confederate bumper
stickers on their pickup trucks
generally it's more likely to be a
pickup truck than a car that has a

Confederate flag bumper sticker on

it um there is a a store just north of

Greenville called uh Dixie Republic

which is where I got

my got my

shirt I like Corinthian helmets too and

also it says mul La you know come and

get it which is with reference to uh the

second Second Amendment of the US

Constitution um yeah they've got lots of

Confederate paraphernalia there a lot of

portraits of Confederate generals and so

forth South Carolina it's like there's

all kinds of streets and parks and I

think there's one County there's schools

named after Wade Hampton and if you read

the biography of Wade Hampton man that

guy I mean he was he was a high ranking officer in the Confederate Army during the Civil War before that he used to go bear hunting without a gun he would just sick his dogs on a bear and then just jump on it with a knife and stab it to death this guy and I mean he was uh after the Civil War during Reconstruction he had this group of or it wasn't really his organization it wasn't kind of like the German Essay with Hitler it was it was this other group called the red shirts they were like Vigilantes they just endorsed him to be the governor of South Carolina and they did some terrorism kind of stuff

you know scaring people into into either
voting for him or not voting at all that
kind of thing the election was very
irregular so that you had two Governors
at the same time two like you had the
governor and the anti-g governor like
two different governments trying to
govern South Carolina it became clear
that most people were on the side of
Wade Hampton and so the other guy was
kind of you know advised by the
president of the United States he'd
better just like give it up and resign
or
something but there's a lot
of um Confederate Heritage in the South
and most people I mean it's they don't

really think about slavery it's just

sort of like a national or you know

Southern Pride kind of a thing you know

we stood up to the to the [__] in

Washington DC that kind of

thing we've got our own Heritage

here so I forgot the question though

let's see living in the state of South

Carolina how often do you come across

Confederate iconography yeah well you

drive past Dixie Republic which is the

store that sells all this Confederate

stuff also other Southern stuff they got

all these flags incl including a big

Confederate flag out

front um unfortunately though I was

going to buy an American flag there it
turns out all their flags are made in
China who wants to buy an American flag
made in China I
don't I did get the shirt though I don't
think the shirt was made in
China
so yeah actually it reminds me a few
months ago there was a uh I work at a
sheet metal shop and a customer came in
to pick up some like Roofing panels and
he had a Confederate flag on the company
truck you know it wasn't just this
privately owned pickup truck it was you
know this this
organization it turns out that they were
an organization they had a kind of a

valid excuse they uh they like renovated
or like restored historical buildings
and so he had a Confederate flag on the
back of his pickup truck this this
customer and also my the the factory man
manager was very impressed he actually
was had a an SS skull
ring if I remember correctly he also had
like a braided beard he was a badass
looking
guy but he kind of had the excuse for
the the Confederate flag on his on the
company truck just because they restored
historical buildings which would include
you know Confederate era buildings I
suppose and uh so it does happen you

know it's not super super common but

it's not super rare either that you'll

see a Confederate flag either flying

over somebody's house or draped from

their their balcony or or stuck onto the

side of their car or something not super

rare but it's really they're not

thinking about slavery when they're

doing it they're just thinking about

like Southern Pride Southern

individuality so to

speak so I'm just going to move on to

next question this is from Twin

Wasabi and twin wasabi says would you

ever talk to Sam

shamon he is a YouTuber who does

religious discussions but I don't think

he's ever talked with a Buddhist monk
before I've never heard of Sam
Shimon um I'd be willing to talk to him
really I'm I'm willing to talk to just
about anybody you know there's any
YouTuber who wants me to be interviewed
on their show or something as a general
rule you know I say okay you know I
don't go out searching for people to to
interview usually my woman is is always
wanting me to like reach out to this
person or that person see if they want
to be interviewed but I'm just kind of
standoffish in that respect but if
somebody asks me usually I will say yes
even they could just be small time you

know they got 35 subscribers or

something it doesn't really matter to

me um so I mean if you wanted me to be

on a show there's a good chance I'd go

for it as long as it's in good faith

then then I'd be willing to go for it

so but i' don't know who he is so I'm

just going to go on to the next question

here this is from

Romeo oh Romeo says my two questions

require you to Dawn a guidance counselor

Fez if you own one so just a

second people haven't been asking maamaa

questions lately so The Fez hasn't been

getting much use it's kind of acquiring

a little bit of dust

actually see

here all

right see my two questions require you

to Donnie godan counselor Fez okay

check my beloved niece a junior in high

school is soon going to take the SATs

and begin looking into colleges while

not totally discouraging her I have

urged her to think twice about going to

college considering the exorbitant costs

available Alternatives like remote

online learning and widespread leftist

indoctrination do you see going to

college as still necessary to B to

better one's life in 2024 well no it's

not

necessary

um yeah it's it's certainly not
necessary to better your life and really
considering how most universities have
just become like leftist indoctrination
centers then I mean there would be that
definite disadvantage to going because
there's a good chance she would just
come out
brainwashed um I mean I really liked
going to college I was I was sort of a
hot shot in college I was like a brain
jock and uh had a lot of fun in college
like the university I went to had lots
more girls than boys going there or I
should say more women than men young
women than young
men had a lot of fun in college it was

some of the most fun I ever had in my
life was in
college but uh yeah it's it's a bit
different nowadays like the same
University I went to I mean it's it's
just become just like shrieking leftist
hysteria at this
point for example if if Trump wins a
second term no doubt there's going to be
like therapy sessions offered for free
by the the university clinic and all
this stuff for people who are just
freaked out because we've got a a
fascist as president again he's going to
he's going to destroy the con the
Constitution even though it's mainly the

left that doesn't like the

Constitution so the answer to this

question is fairly simple it's not

necessary to better one's life you know

it can better one's life but not nearly

to the same degree as as in the past

because we are living in the information

age I mean you can learn just about

anything you want to learn online for

example you it's like the internet is

like a a seventh sense you know the

sense organ is the computer and the the

internet I mean it's like you have this

Clairvoyant I you can just have access

to the world's knowledge at your

fingertips so let's see let's just move

on to the second question Romeo second

question considering the high

probability of AI replacing many

currently existing

jobs during her lifetime which field of

employment do you suggest someone my

niece's age

pursue and that's a very difficult

question because I don't know your niece

you know different people are going to

have different talents different

interests and so on but uh I mean with

regard to AI I think it's fairly obvious

that AI is going to pretty much abolish

most artist jobs it may abolish most

musician jobs at least uh like recorded

music there might still be some call for

live

musicians but most of the music probably

is going to be composed by AI like

mathematician forget about it um I think

certain professions are less likely to

be taken over by AI especially like any

kind of interpersonal interaction kind

of a job like there's always going to be

doctors even though it may be that an AI

program is diagnosing your symptoms

you're still going to have to have a

Doctor Who's like you know asking you

questions you know like looking you over

sitting down having a talk with you

still going to have to have nurses I

assume I don't think they're going to

have robots that are like you know

taking people's blood pressure and so
forth I mean to some degree it's
automate automated but you're still
going to have to have the the nurse put
the the cuff on your arm or
something but still I really don't know
the daughter or the the
niece at all so I'm not sure what her
talents what her inclinations would be
so it would have to be you know
something that you like and are good at
I mean any kind of profession you want
to be successful and happy in a
profession I mean there's there's a few
things I mean you have to like what
you're doing you have to be good at what

you're doing and you have to be able to make money by doing it I mean those are like the three big things and so I mean AI will in influence the third one but still it depends on the individual you know what it is that they like and what it is that they're good at and with regard to your niece I have no idea who that what that would be although as I say most art is going to be computer generated I mean already like most of my my uh the thumbnail nail s on my videos now are are AI generated music probably it's it's really taken off poetry even although poetry is pretty much of an obsolete art form yeah and math definitely so yeah

some of the more human stuff but I mean
you definitely don't want liberal arts
degrees because then you're definitely
going to come out some brainwashed
leftist some some Neo Marxist although I
did read
recently that a lot of people in the in
northern states are sending their kids
to Southern States to get a university
education because Southern States like
in Georgia Alabama South Carolina or
more conservative and traditional and
most the universities might still be hot
beds of leftist activism but not nearly
as much as in some place like New York
or

Massachusetts also there are just some
universities and I would advise my niece
to choose one of these that are still
are there's like an emphasis on freedom
of thought and expression University of
Chicago for example or like Hillsdale
College which I mean a lot of these
places they offer courses online anyway
which kind of deprives you of the the
fun of being on a University campus but
University campuses probably aren't
nearly as much fun now and the fun that
is to be had is probably
of a more of a degenerate nature than
like when I was I mean even when I was
going to college in the in the in the 8S
the mid to late

80s mid 80s let's say you know it's like
you got young women who are away from
their father's watchful eye for the
first time in their lives and they just
go Hog Wild but nowadays I mean I mean
there's such a thing as too much of a
good thing I mean they're just extreme
at this
point and also of course you go to a
drunken party you're drunk the girl's
drunk and then you uh hook up with her
and then you know three months later
she's persuaded by some foaming at the
mouth feminist that she was like taken
advantage of because she was in a
suggestive State because she were drunk

Ian you can have your life ruined for
rape you know it's like both of you are
equally drunk but I mean you're still a
moral agent even if she is too
inebriated to be one so somehow there
have been multiple cases of that sort of
thing although I'm completely digressed
from the
question so yeah I would advise her that
I mean she's going to have to decide for
herself what her interest are what she's
good at you know and try to you know
Steer her away from stuff that's going
to be taken over by by AI like like art
for example unless she can find a niche
you know be a Potter you know some
pottery I assume isn't going to be

completely taken over by AI even though
painting probably will drawing probably
will but find a university that still
has some Traditional Values that isn't
just like a Marxist indoctrination camp
that would be one of the most important
things if she does go to a
university and of course you can do
courses online now so that that will
spare you from a lot of
it so I think I answered Romeo's
questions so I'll take the Fez back off
and uh move on to the next question
which is from prisic
Monk and prisic monk says how well does
The Following song align with your

concept of terraa Buddhism and he's
gotten the link to this YouTube video
which I almost couldn't watch because as
I have said YouTube is really cracking
down on not allowing ad
blockers and I just refused to watch
commercials on Youtube so I mean I had
to refresh a few times in order to
finally be able to watch it and uh it's
called fake I think maybe the band or
the or the uh the composer is called
that handsome
devil and uh it's like the
refrain in the in this song it's like
rap so I actually listen to some kind of
rap music it's this is a distraction
from what is really happening and it's

talking about how everything in your
life is fake you know the boobs are fake
the lips are fake the smiles are fake
it's all fake you know everything is
fake which kind of reminds me of Holden
Coffield in The Catcher in the Ry who
was like obsessed with phony people
everywhere he just couldn't stand it
even though he himself was a phony
person you know he was lying all the
time just coming up with all this
[__] he was telling people and The
Catcher in the Ry is a crypt Buddhist
story it's more Mahayana than terava
though
so what let's see where's where's the

question again how well does The
Following song align with my concept of
terraa
Buddhism well I mean it's saying that
you know everything is fake or at least
you know it's just listing off you know
thing after thing after thing that's all
fake with the refrain being this is a
distraction from what is really
happening but but I mean what is really
happening is fake too so I mean that
that would be the main difference here
between the song and Terra Buddhism is
that the song is kind of implying that
we're living in a an artificial fake
world that's but really it's like a
distraction from the real world that we

should be paying attention to and the

real world is still

samsaric

whereas I mean in Terra if you're if

you're like an Abid scholar or something

you could say that's sort of true that

there samsara is ultimately real

according to the Abid dama philosophy or

at least according to the Abid dama

commentaries but my understanding is you

know it's all just conventional truth so

in a sense you know no matter how deep

down you go in samsara it's all going to

stay fake or just like

conventional like provisional

conditional like uh what's the other

word virtual potential you know it's not

ultimately

real so I mean you can reduce the amount

of fakeness by just like going off into

a forest where there's no like human

artificial [__] that's being thrust

upon you but still you've got your own

perceptions who which are generating

Illusions and you believe the Illusions

which turns it into

delusion so

yeah I mean there are certainly

themes that uh between the that sort of

overlap between this song or rap I guess

you call it rap rap a song even though

nobody's actually singing and uh and

Buddhism terraa

Buddhism but um I think terraa Buddhism

goes a bit deeper than the song does

which is to be expected because it's

just a

song so so I think I answered that and

so I'm moving on to the next question

which is from

pyramid and pyramid says one of the main

rules in Buddhism is not to compare

yourself to others it sounds logical but

this is very hard to do in the Modern

Age sports for example is literally all

about comparing yourself to others who

ran the who ran the fastest who scored

the most points who had the best

performance the award shows the Oscars

Grand Etc are also about comparing
yourself what advice do you have to
those who want to remove or at least
minimize the comparisons that we
inevitably make and personally I've
never been really a competitive person
um if I compete it's like with myself I
try to do better than I've done before
so it's still kind of I'm comparing
myself to myself which is still
Mana the word the word usually for
translated as conceit
sometimes pride is mana and poly and
literally Mana means measuring so you're
measuring yourself up that's that's Mana
that's conceit or sometimes translated
as Pride like Mana J he's got big Manana

in Burmese means he's proud he's a stuck

up

person

so yeah in Thea waga it says to consider

yourself Superior to others is conceit

to consider yourself inferior to others

is conceit to consider yourself equal to

others is conceit and so just comparing

yourself to to somebody else in any way

is conceit I mean just to to have

self-regard is conceit it's something

that a Buddhist shouldn't have so if you

want to get away from that I mean first

of all get away from

competitive uh

environments you know I mean you can be

sort of like Prince Michigan in the
idiot where people are competing against
you and you're you just don't see it you
know you're not competing back which
means you're going to get people
backstabbing you to get the promotion so
that you don't get the promotion that
sort of thing
um also I mean there was there was a guy
that I used to work with that it was
kind he was a young man and he was kind
of a a masculine kind of guy he worked
out and he was a you know he was pretty
pretty well-built kind of a young guy
and I kept getting the impression that
he was like competing with me and I was
told when I was in the University that

there was this guy who was competing with me and I just didn't get it it's like why you know I mean in case in in the case of the guy who's working with me then you know he wanted to Pro get promoted you know better than me you know I was kind of seen as a rival or something I

assume but uh yeah I just don't think that way so I mean one way is you just you just don't think that way although if you tend to think that way then one of the best things you do first of all get away from competitive environments and even better yet you can become a Hermit you can become a

recluse and then you're not competing
with anybody maybe you know competing
with animals competing with
yourself but it's more of a competition
is more of a mental
state than than you know something that
you necessarily have to partake in you
know it's like an attitude
but other people can be competitive with
you and you don't have to be competitive
back which may mean that you're not
going to get promoted as much as the
competitive guy which is one reason why
men can make more money than women even
though now the laws are kind of and also
the like the Dei initiatives and
everything are geared towards women

making at least as much money as men a
lot of women make more money than men
just because they're
women but women just aren't as
competitive as men so they have to like
you know rig the game in women's favor
just so that they can com sort of
compete without having to really
compete but I I'm like straying away
from the question again how not to
compare yourself to others I mean the
traditional Buddhist way is you go off
alone into a forest and just stop
interacting you opt out of society I
mean that would be the the traditional
Buddhist way of going about it otherwise

you just have to adopt a
non-competitive like attitude you just
do the best you can without worrying
about what anybody else does and it is
doable I mean I generally tend to be
that
way so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from drunk
Dr drunk Dr says have you heard of the
phenomenon called the hum it is a loud
unexplainable noise that people have
reported hearing across the world
maybe this is the power of the Buddhist
Meditation reverberating throughout the
centuries no I've never heard of the hum
and that's that's the question right
there so I guess I could just leave it

at that nope I've never heard of the hum although I kind of doubt that it is the Buddhist Meditation reverberating throughout the centuries although it does remind me of a story in one of ROM Do's books how he had been taught a Mantra by one of his teachers in India and he was doing this Mantra and doing this Mantra until suddenly it just he just kind of locked into this it was as though the Mormon Tabernacle Choir was all doing the same Mantra with him you know it was just like reverberating just thousands and thousands of voices all doing the same Mantra and so he told his teacher about it and he says Ah you got

into the the like the frequency of that
Mantra so that you know you were kind of
tuned into all the other beings
especially the more advanced ones who
are doing that who had done that Mantra
you know they just kind have created
this akashic record of the Mantra going
on so that might be more along the lines
of the reverberations of the Buddhist
Meditation would be you'd have to get to
that level you know it's not going to be
just some ordinary physical level that
ordinary normies are going to
hear but yeah the correct answer the
short answer is nope I've never heard of
it and so I'm going to move on to the
next question here this is from power

and Power says ever notice so many
atheists are bitter and angry ever have
any atheists rage and mock you because
they think they are superior than you
why be so angry at something that you
think is not real for example I'm not
angry at Bigfoot because I don't think
it's real so I don't waste my time well
atheists do think that people who aren't
atheists are real so they're not angry
at God so much as they're angry at
people who believe in God but not all
atheists are angry maybe a lot of
atheists are angry but just like not all
old people are angry which is a question
I answered couple hours

ago um and some some atheists are just
smug like a lot of the atheists you see
on YouTube or somebody like Richard
Dawkins I mean they're just smug is all
get out they're not angry they're just
they just like are in love with
themselves they're just delighted with
themselves and they're just amused at
the very idea that somebody wouldn't
believe the same way they
do but angry atheists yeah I think
they're just kind of intolerant of
people who disagree with them like some
a lot of leftists are that way too
especially nowadays it wasn't wasn't
always that
way so I think most atheists are bitter

and angry because they kind of validate
their own opinions by the opinions of
others and if a lot of other people
don't believe the same thing as them it
kind of casts shade on their own beliefs
and they're kind of offended by that I
would
assume there was one atheist in
particular that used to rage at me on
minds.com which is sort of like alt
Facebook I don't do much on on Minds
anymore but uh I used to when I was a
monk especially that was like the the
one social media site that I actually
participated in you know with memes and
that kind of thing and there was this

one guy who just raged at me he I mean
he had the idea that all religions are
just invented by like people in power in
order to keep people like repressed and
he he actually used this argument he's
like trying to argue Buddhism he I mean
he was ignorant of Buddhism he's
actually trying to argue Buddhism with
me saying the very fact that godma the
Buddha was of the upper classes he was a
katri of the Roy like the nobility that
itself demonstrates that he was just
trying to keep everyone down
and it's like no he renounced all that
so yeah I have had some interactions
with at least one just I mean he was
just really just he never said anything

positive except maybe about himself but
I mean he was just this bitter angry
atheist but the most of the ones you see
on YouTube I mean they're more the smug
type they're not they're not really
angry and bitter so the angry bitter
ones they're just sort of pissed off
that people don't believe the same thing
they
do and that's it's not just atheists who
are like that well maybe I mean marxists
are tend to be atheists so yeah but it's
not just people over the issue of
atheism it's just that kind of person
who I mean they don't really have faith
in

anything that they just I mean it's sort
of an AFR to them that someone would
disagree with them that someone would
believe something that they consider to
be [__] you know it kind of
undermines their own certainty and they
resent
that but then the ones who really are
certain about their atheism are just
smug so I think I answered that one so
I'm going to move on to the next
question this is from Ken or kazen which
always reminds me of the man kazen Wars
but I assume kazen is not an alien with
like ears that come go up like a like a
fan like the kazen
were so anyways Ken or kazen says

recently went down a ramam m hary
Wormhole listening to the David godman
talks fascinating there are a lot of
stories about devotees having
spontaneous mystical experiences with
permanent personality changes some of
them were basically looked in a somat
state for years afterwards I think maybe
he means locked in a somat state for
years afterwards were these devotees
experiencing
nibana out of all the modern Mystics I
have read about I would consider ramam
mahashi to be the captain of the team um
whether what they were experiencing
exactly I cannot say but Raman mahashi

supposedly had the ability of like
somehow triggering enlighten m in people
who were dying like I think he did this
to his own mother you know he'd be like
laying his hands on their forehead and
maybe touching like their heart with the
other hand or something as they are
dying and just somehow create some sort
of spiritual circuit or something so
that they were kind of in tune with his
own enlightened Consciousness as they
died and it just helped them to fade out
instead of being reborn I think he did
that with his favorite cow
also um but exactly what they were
experiencing I cannot say because I
wasn't there I didn't experience it

myself but I'm kind of doubtful that

that if they were locked in a somat

state for years afterwards with a

permanent personality

change maybe or it could just be that

they had some sort of like relative

Awakening experience they were in a

higher state of consciousness but still

not fully enlightened because you

experienced nabana for

years then I mean that's it you're

enlightened supposedly like if you're

like an Arya but not quite fully

enlightened you might experience like a

flash of nibana you know for like a

split

second but that's that's just Orthodox

terraa and I'm I'm a little bit

skeptical even of

that

see I mean I can accept that I mean you

can get glimpses even though you're not

fully enlightened you can still get kind

of glimpses of the goal or you know the

highest state the absolute because it's

always here all it takes is a thinning

of the veil and it can shine

through but whether somebody can be in a

state like that continually for years I

mean and then stop being in that

state that's that's questionable

although like I said earlier that Ramen

am Mahari himself when he first had his

Awakening he was mute for like two years

it like he it took him like two years

before he could like

reconcile this new state of of

Consciousness with the old State of

Consciousness you know like the absolute

with the conventional it took him like

two years before he finally was able to

start speaking

again but what happened to these people

I really can't say I wasn't there I

really don't know much more about it

than than uh

what Ken or kazen is uh mentioning here

I did read about Raman marari but I

didn't read about how um you know people

were having permanent personality

changes that were locked into somati

into a samati state for years and didn't

I didn't read about that part in in the

book that I

read so it's I really can't say what the

devotees were experiencing I mean it's

possible with an enlightened being just

damn near anything is impossible or

anything anything is

possible you know like I was saying with

NE cly Baba he he would just break rules

he didn't care he was no longer

constrained by that kind of

stuff so Ramen am Mahari he's he was

definitely a major heavy hitter in 20th

century

spirituality I mean he was uh the saint

leest of the

Saints I mean there was never any the

I'm aware of never the slightest hint at

any kind of Scandal with him that he was

just a genuine Saint in addition to

possibly being fully enlightened even

though he was a

Hindu

so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from

xenoid and uh we're almost done xenoid

is the last person on the list but it

always sneaks up on me so xenoid says

can you explain the difference between

inaction and non-action ction and that's

that's a good question inaction is just
not acting it's just like remaining
Motionless In Action you know like uh an
inanimate object or you know someone
who's just sitting in a chair he's
relatively inactive you know he's still
going to be fidgeting a little bit maybe
you know his abdomen is going to be
rising and falling as he breathes his
eyes are going to be moving around maybe
but it's relative inaction but
non-action like mentioned in Chinese
text like the D Jing is
wo which means non-action no action and
that's a different kind of thing
altogether that's sort of like the
behavior of an Aran because karma I mean

the literal translation of karma into
English is action so an enlightened
being they're not creating Karma anymore
therefore an enlightened being is not
creating action I mean he's still
talking walking around but it
not inaction it is more non-action or
woo way where he's so detached that he's
not making Karma anymore so there's no
longer any
subjective like being enslaved to a
habit pattern kind of a thing there's no
delusion motivating his actions and so
he's detached from samsara so that as
far as samsara is concerned he's not
leaving any tracks you know he's like

quite Shan walking across the rice paper
and leaving no tracks behind that's kind
of symbolic of woo way or
non-action where I mean it's outwardly
there's action but there's no like
momentum to it there's there's no karmic
consequence to it really other than
other people who are like unenlightened
people who are observing that they might
have a reaction that is karmic but the
the person himself the enlightened Sage
you know he's just in a way he's just a
mirror reflecting other people's Karma
back at
them so he's not creating any Karma
because he's just
detached so I think that that would be

how I would describe it although like a

Dost might describe woo way or

non-action differently but still it's

the same general principle of you're not

making any ripples you're not leaving

you're not leaving

tracks that you might H outwardly seem

to have an action

but it's like there's no momentum to

it so to speak so I'm going to move on

to xenoid second

question which is can you answer the

dragon's question at one minute and 24

seconds in this video and the the the

video in question is on YouTube which is

called pax's wide words and it's on the

Philo artograph referred channel of YouTube and the the dragon's question is it's it's a question I heard in a philosophy class in college it's it's kind of a trite question actually and it's kind of a leading question that I think most people who ask that question are expecting a certain answer to be the correct answer and so anyway the dragon says what is better to be born good or to overcome your evil nature through through great effort and when I was in university My Philosophy professor said essentially this made essentially the same question and he considered it to be better to overcome your evil nature through great effort I mean what is what

it PR what is praiseworthy about being

born a saint it's more praiseworthy and

therefore better to be born a sinner and

then redeem yourself to perfect yourself

you know but let's say Albert Einstein

was right and that time is the fourth

dimension then it would be better to

just be born good because then you're

good

longer you know it's like you start

being good earlier so that you de you

have a less Badness and more goodness by

being born

good so I mean better is a value

judgment different people can it's like

a matter of opinion I guess which is

better but it seems to me that I mean
ultimately they'd be equivalent or if
anything you could say that it's better
just to be born good because then you
you're good longer you know you're not
bad you you you erase you eliminate all
the Badness that would have happened if
you started off bad and then gradually
became good even though it's through
your own Noble efforts and so forth
still there's all this Badness that's
there unnecessarily if you could have
chosen just to be born good to begin
with
and forget all the sentimentality it's
it's largely a matter of sentimentality
that people would prefer the the second

that it's is more praiseworthy and
therefore better that you start off bad
or at least you know imperfect and then
strive through heroic efforts to become
good
when I mean obviously if you're good
from the beginning then you're good
longer there's more good in that not in
just setting aside the value
judgments but this reminds me of what I
consider to be a better question that I
saw in a movie called Avalon which is
one of my favorite movies by the way if
you can watch a movie called Avalon it's
an excellent movie and it's it's a a
spiritual movie like a parable of

Enlightenment and it's a science fiction movie in the the genre or Genry of virtual reality like the Matrix is a good one the 13th floor or uh let's see existence is another one to some degree uh dark city would be another one kind of on the kind of On The Fringe of that Genry but it's like the virtual reality like a computer generated virtual reality that is symbolic of samsara and you got the person in this virtual reality trying to transcend the virtual reality so anyways there's this character in this virtual reality called the bishop and he says and this is it's with regard to a video game there this this virtual reality is a video game in

the future that you can enter into and
you just some people get lost in the
video
game so anyways the bishop says which is
the greater challenge which is the
better game which would you choose given
a choice the sort of game that you think
you can win but can't or alternatively
one that seems to be impossible but
isn't and then he says that the game the
the perfect game is like a delicate
balance between those two that that's
how the game developers are trying to do
it and it's symbolic of samsara and and
Enlightenment Enlightenment is the same
kind of enigma you know it's like we're

living in a in a samsaric world where
you think you can transcend it you think
you can perfect it but can't or
alternatively it's like it's like
balanced and one that seems to be
impossible but is
so that was I consider that to be more
profound than than the dragon's question
and the the philosophy philosophy
professor's question when I was in
college of you know which is which is
better to be born good or to overcome
your evil nature through great
effort anyways I'm just going to move on
to the very last question the last
question of this Q&A also from xenoid
which starts with a z or a zed if you

happen to be in the UK or Australia or
New New Zealand or
whatever so it's kind of symbolic isn't
it so symbolic anyways his his question
is why are memories typically lost upon
death and I guess the main reason from
from just a saric point of view is
because you've got a new brain you've
got a different brain than the one
previously so I mean that that's the
easy answer you don't remember your past
lies cuz you got a different brain now
but um there are many cases if you read
a book read one of the books by Ian
Stevenson you can you can see that some
small children still remember their

previous lives and then they gradually
forget it as they get older because you
know they start getting lost in this
version of samsara and maybe their
parents are kind of creeped out by their
kid talking about being a different
person and so forth and they just kind
of suppress it you know sometimes you
know and parents can even get angry
especially fathers kids talking about
being a different person and so forth
just shut up about that and so they just
eventually lose
it but I mean it's
like first of all you're not the same
person so I mean it's like the same
stream of karma this the same psychic

momentum goes from One Life to the next
but it's not necessarily specific
memories and they're can be like some of
those memories can make it through to
the next life but there's all this
trauma and commotion and stuff going on
first you're you're like unconscious in
your mother's womb and then there's all
this commotion of being born and the
bright lights and all this stuff that is
just completely disorienting and then
you're the process of just being a baby
that really can't think very well yet
you know it's like the myelin sheaths on
your neurons are not fully developed yet
and so forth going with the you know the

the standard rules of this version of
reality and so in in a way rebirth is
sort of like you know one birth is one
finger on this hand and another birth is
this finger on this hand and this finger
doesn't remember being this finger
because it never was this finger but
it's all part of the same hand it's kind
of a deal like that that's another way
of explaining it I
suppose but there are some people who
can remember past lives my father
claimed to remember a number of past
lives the Buddha supposedly remembered
this thousands and thousands of his past
lives some of which are supposedly
recorded in Jonica

stories but the correct answer as to why
memories typically are lost upon death
is something I can't really
answer um I've given my best guesses you
know you got a new brain it's not really
you anyway it's just sort of a a
continuation on the same theme but it's
not the same
person and also it's just all this stuff
happens between lives that can just
cause you to forget I mean you don't
even remember what you did like on your
second birthday you know it's this same
life but it happened so long ago and all
the stuff happened in between and then
there's like the issue of your nervous

system wasn't fully developed which
would theoretically cause you to forget
a lot of things not only to happen in
this life but happened in previous lives
and so forth so I assume all of that has
something to do with it and that's
that's it that's that's my answer to
that question and that's the last
question the last answer on this Q&A and
so like I should be saying at the
beginning but I never do I always say it
at the end if you have any questions
that you think I can maybe answer
especially about ter of AO Buddhism
early Buddhism meditation spirituality
in general philosophy General eastern
and western that kind of thing Burma me

personally anything you think maybe I

can answer feel free to ask the question

and I'll do my best to answer it as I

did this time in all previous

occasions and like And subscribe if you

haven't done so already and feel free to

look at the URL links especially if you

want to study up on

semas where this book is for sale on

Amazon along with two others

and be happy

alrighty then hail audience hello and

welcome to episode

115 of question and answer I am your

host as usual poo

basa

and we've got just sort of a moderate

number of questions so that we probably

won't even go three hours this time I

have had people um somewhat complaining

a little bit

that my videos are getting way too long

but I got to answer questions I mean

that's the purpose of

this so I mean if you can't just sit

there for three hours and listen to the

whole thing you do have the option of

pausing it and going away going potty
having a drink maybe doing something
else and then coming back and continue
watching it because I mean it's not like
one of those things where you have to
keep track of you know what happened
before it's not like watching a movie or
something you could just listen to the
the questions in any order so I mean one
thing that might be useful is if
somebody other than me that is were to
make timestamps so that people can just
look at the the questions that they're
specifically interested in but uh I'm
not going to do it myself because I just
spend hours on on these things anyway
and so anyone else wants to do that

that's fine

and it's it's getting into flannel

shirt-wearing weather now it's all of a

sudden just a few days ago the

temperature plummeted so that it's

getting just slightly above freezing at

night now here in upstate South

Carolina so that is just sort of a

little bit of small talk to kind of get

the ball rolling to melt the ice as it

were I shall remove the classy and

sophisticated paper umbrella from my

beverage and commence to answer

questions and the first question is from

covac and sead

zida and covac CAD zida says it seems

like suffering horribly from a terminal
illness and dying would create worse
mental States than getting euthanized
you can accept your end gracefully
because you know you are going to suffer
horribly and be at peace with your
chosen easier death but suffering and
pain into your mind breaks and you
contemplate death constantly so you can
escape the suffering seems much worse
thoughts and really it's this kind of a
false dichotomy that you can euthanize
you know get yourself euthanized you
know you can Auto terminate or whatever
or you can suffer in pain until your
mind breaks and you contemplate death
constantly I mean that's it's not really

your only two options here or at least

not the your only two possibilities of

what can

happen so I mean going from going with

the the the Buddhist point of view

especially the Terra Vaden Buddhist

point of view you know anything that you

experience is the fruition of karma

especially you're suffering pain before

you die that's the fruition of karma too

and so you would be burning up more

karma by just toughing it out but you do

have the option as far as I know in

Buddhism or in terab a Buddhism Auto

termination is not

particularly immoral you know in in

Christianity especially now I mean
especially in the west it was it has
been the influence of Christianity that
has caused Auto termination to be a
terrible sin in Dante's Inferno there
was a special ring of hell just for
people who Auto terminated but um in
Buddhism also in pre-christian paganism
it it was sort of something that is an
option I guess if if life is becoming so
bad that it's just not worth it anymore
you know you've Dishonored The Legion or
whatever then you know it is it is sort
of an ex socially acceptable way of of
dealing with the situation I
guess so I mean it would depend on you
know each person individually it would

depend on the circumstances and so forth
um but as a general rule in Buddhism you
know like there were monks who were Auto
terminating in the text and the Buddha
said you know it's like it's not a good
way of doing it I mean you shouldn't you
shouldn't you should try to remain alive
until you have accomplished the goal and
some people it's like the
extremist of you know mortal Agony is
really the push that they need to send
them over the edge and apparently based
on a lot of
authorities that it's like the moment of
death is like a big chance at becoming
enlightened there in the even in the the

commentarial literature there are many

um instances of people who become

enlightened at the moment of death

godika in the godic kasuta I mean he he

did it both ways I mean he Auto

terminated and died at the the moment of

death or died at the moment of death he

became enlightened at the moment of

death although again the Buddha does

generally discourage Auto termination

for

monks

so with regard to this it depends on the

individual some people can be more stoic

than others some people may have more

need of this karmic fruition coming to

pass than others and so really it it is

an individual choice but generally even
though it's not considered to be grossly
immoral from a Buddhist point of view
it's not
encouraged and so I'm just going to move
on to se action Cod Z's next
question um which includes kind of a a
semi lengthy quote here from Samaya
54-6 so see actions Zena says the Buddha
asks how a monk is being mindful of
breathing and then the rest is a or what
follows is a quote from the the suta
itself the monk says sir I've given up
desire for sensual pleasures of the past
I'm rid of desire for sensual pleasures
of the future and I have eliminated

perception of repulsion regarding
phenomena internally and externally just
mindful I will breathe in mindful I will
breathe out that's how I develop
mindfulness of breathing and then the
Buddha says that is mindfulness of
breathing arita I don't deny it but as
to how mindfulness of breathing is
fulfilled in detail listen and apply
your mind well I will
speak and then arita replies yes sir
then the Buddha says this and how is
mindfulness of breathing fulfilled in
detail it's when a mendicant gone to a
Wilderness or to the root of a tree or
to an empty Hut sits down cross-legged
sets their bodies straight and

establishes mindfulness in their
presence just mindful they breathe in
mindful they breathe out breathing in
heavily they know I'm breathing in
heavily breathing out heavily they know
I'm breathing out heavily they practice
like this I'll breathe in observing
letting go they practice like this I'll
breathe out observing letting go this is
how mindfulness of breathing is
fulfilled in detail and then covac sead
zida says what do you make of the Buddha
seeming to say the 16 steps is the full
way to practice and the monk doing just
being mindful of breathing in and out is
not doing it completely despite

overcoming sense desire and this is

pretty much uh another just sort of a a

reworded question that I think covac and

sead Zina asked previously with regard

guard to

the the anapana suta which is just the

suta on mindfulness of breathing and

there's this long list and I pointed out

then and I point out here again that I

do not think the Buddha would have

taught how to do mindfulness of

breathing with all this thinking all

this I am doing this I am doing this all

this stuff about future tense like I

will breathe out observing uh letting

letting go for example it's like I just

do not consider this to be

likely a genuine teaching of the Buddha

it's something that got added in later

on and then it's just sort

of you know it just gets added to other

sutas

also so I mean arita formerly a vulture

trainer I think he was kind of a foolish

monk at first according to the texts and

uh so it may be just sort of a

gratuitous throwing in arita because you

know he's likely to do something

perceived as

wrong um even though here I mean it

seems like his version of doing

mindfulness of brief would be

superior to all the I'm doing this I

doing that all this discriminating
discernment thinking in the future all
this kind of stuff that you're supposed
to be doing when you're doing
mindfulness at breathing I think just
being in the present moment just
watching the breath going in and out is
a better and deeper method even though
I'm disagreeing with this text
but just about any kind of Westerner
capable of independent thought and
critical thinking is going to disagree
with certain texts because there's all
kinds of stuff you can find in the
texts so I do think that arita's method
is actually superior to the method that
the Buddha

allegedly says is better than what arita
is doing even though just looking at the
instructions you can see that it's not
nearly as deep of a method because of
all the thinking even thinking about
what I'm going to do in the future all
the this discriminating you know this
discriminating this from that while
you're supposed to be meditating and not
even
thinking so yeah I would consider that
to be a later development and not an
improvement on what the Buddha
originally
taught and so I'm just going to move on
to seov action CAD Z's next question

which is another uh comment on a

su so ction says in Ang AA

6-38 it seems someone was teaching wrong

view of the maaka in the time of the

Buddha so the quote is venerable Goda I

am one of such a doctrine of such a view

there is no self-d doer there is no

other doer so then the Buddha says I

have not Brahman seen or heard such a

Doctrine such a view how indeed could

one moving forward by himself moving

back by himself say there is no self-d

dooer there is no other doer what do you

think Brahman is there an element or

principle of initiating or beginning an

action and then the Brahman says just so

venerable sir then the Buddha says when

there is an element of initiating are initiating beings clearly discerned and then the Brahman says just so venerable sir and then that's it that's that's the end of of this excerpt from the suta and then SE of action c z says however the Brahman could have said no if he was a fan of nagar how would the Buddha have responded if he had said that since there is nothing that can be called self then there is no initiating being well really the Brahman is not really adapt adopting like a maamaa point of view because maamaa rejects all possibilities logically to say yes is invalid to say no is invalid to say yes and no is

invalid to say neither yes nor no is

invalid so he's put forth A View which

is already pretty much

against um just hardcore maamaa you know

I adopt this View and that is I mean AA

waga also which is kind of Proto maamaa

you know you're not supposed to adopt

any view at all so to say that there is

a self to say that there isn't a self

Etc you know both of those are views and

so really according to the TIC wag also

you know you should not adopt self viiew

you should not adopt no self viw because

you shouldn't adopt any

view but then it's getting the Buddha

here seems to be arguing in favor of

self viw which seems to contradict

Orthodox

tervada so I mean let's see where is it

how indeed could one moving forward by

himself moving back by himself say there

is no self-d doer there is no other Doer

I

mean that I mean that's shot down

philosophically elsewhere in the text so

here you got the Buddha endorsing what

elsewhere he shoots down and an element

of

initiating I mean what would be the

element of initiating how do you get

initiating as a pure substance or a pure

you know just pure nothing but

initiating I don't think that's really

logically possible either and then when

there is an element of initiating or

initi beings clearly discern and here

he's he's just flat out arguing in favor

of self viw not even like the more

subtle self viiew of something like um

vant but he's just saying you there are

beings which is just flatly contrary to

just the mainstream of Buddhist

philosophy and also it's contrary to you

know the early teachings of like Thea

waga so again I would say that this is

probably

um like a

Corruption of of the of the sutas it's

like a later

addition probably not originating from

the

Buddha but I guess the question here is

how would the Buddha have responded if

he had said that since there is nothing

that can be called self then there is no

initiating

being um yeah I'm not sure how the

Buddha would respond to that it depends

on you know what I mean if this really

was the Buddha

I mean he probably wouldn't have been

saying what he is saying here in the

text to begin with um but if it wasn't

the Buddha it would be like whatever the

author of The suta is wanting the Buddha

to endorse

essentially

so I mean it's still a view I mean how

would the Buddha have responded let's

just say the the historical

Buddha who I mean he the found of early

Buddhism so how would the Buddha have

responded if he had said that since

there is nothing that can be called self

then there is no initiating being well

that's still A

View to even to believe that is too

much so I that's how I mean how the

hypothetical Buddha who would say such

things as the previous the preceding I

don't know because I kind of doubt that

the Buddha really said this but

if the historical Buddha how would he

respond to somebody saying since there
is nothing that can be called self then
there is no initiating being he he' just
say that's a view too you're still
clinging to a
view so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from Raphael and
again this is going to be another sua
quote someone wants me to comment on so
RAF oh no I guess it's no I guess it is
okay so Raphael says can can you comment
on this and this is a question on Reddit
so there's like some Buddhist subreddit
out there somewhere I really don't pay
much attention to Reddit but somebody
asks on Reddit are there any Buddhist

texts that specifically renounced gender identity and why they ask the question I'm not sure and the answer is yes the Som suta is short and direct and then it quotes the suta what difference does Womanhood make when the mind is Serene and knowledge is present as you rightly discern the dhama surely someone who might think I am woman or I am man or I am anything at all is fit for Mara to address and I'm guessing I haven't looked this up but I'm guessing this is from the bikuni samuta see it doesn't say it's it's uh in the suut nikaya and there's this whole chapter on nuns meditating in the forest and then Mara the tempter comes and tries to distract

them from their meditation meditation by you know asking them some some question some heretical kind of question and then the enlightened none will respond and I assume that's this enlightened none is responding to Mara Mara is probably trying to discourage for meditating saying how can a woman possibly become enlightened something like that you know and then she says what difference does Womanhood make when the mind is Serene and knowledge is present as you rightly discern the dhamma surely someone who might think I am woman or I am man or I am anything at all is unfit for Mara to address so let's see what here can I

comment on this well um I'm not sure why
the person on Reddit is asking about
text that specifically renounce gender
identity I mean they might have been
sort of you know trying to come up with
something against identity politics in
the early text or it may be that they're
like non-binary or something and there
want something to support like this
identity politics of someone who is like
neuter they identify as neuter or
something so I'm not sure exactly what
the intentions of the question asker on
Reddit uh was but I mean it's just there
is no self I mean you don't identify as
anything oh I just that's kind of weird
excuse me I got distracted by like light

from the

shining through the blinds that just

disappeared on the

wall so I guess that's I guess that's my

comment on this it appears to be um of

the bikuni

samuta um probably I'm guessing just

based on what how it looks here some

non-meditating then Mara comes up tries

to discourage her from meditating by

making some sexist derogatory derogatory

comment about how you know how can a

woman Poss possibly qu enlightened or

some such and then she answers with this

and I mean it's basic Buddhism I mean

you're not supposed to identify as

anything any kind of self-belief

self-regard is conceit anyway so I mean

someone's in jna someone's in deep

meditation where they're not thinking

anymore they're not identifying as

anything it's just I mean you're getting

closer and closer to a kind of

hypothetical pure Consciousness with no

content

and it doesn't really matter if it's

male or female or anything else at that

point

so I guess that was my comment so I'm

just going to move on to the next

question this is from the Arya swasti

project in the Arya swasti project says

I know that the precepts and the other

methods of Buddhism lead to Liberation
however most people don't even follow
the five precepts if we know it's the
way to Liberation why is it so damn hard
to follow the instructions by the Buddha
and most people really don't know that
it's the way to Liberation and it's
certainly not it's not the way in and of
itself for example a cow generally keeps
five
precepts you know they don't they don't
kill they don't steal they don't commit
sexual misconduct I mean they go into
heat and then you know it's Mating
Season or whatever and they they have
babies but it's not really any kind of

sexual misconduct I'm pretty sure they

don't take in toxic

was it what was the fifth

one I didn't do it in the right order

that's

why certainly don't tell lies I've never

heard a cow tell a lie in my entire life

or use any kind of wrong speech

really

so I mean I don't know for sure that

keeping five precepts is the way to

Liberation I mean it certainly

helps but I mean I think that they

probably have been people who have not

followed the five precepts absolutely

perfectly who have become

liberated and whether the Buddha

himself he I mean it's it's likely that
the Buddha just went along with some
version of the five precepts which are
already pre-existent in India you know
the the brahans had their own version of
the five precepts The Janes had their
own version of the five precepts the
first four fairly consistent the fifth
one was variable among the different
schools
and uh and that was for the lay people
that's sort of like tossing a bone to
the lay people giving them something
that they can you know practice because
back in those days they weren't late
people weren't doing much meditation you

know they were too busy you know tending

the fields or tending the children or

that sort of thing and

so I've pretty much lost the threat of

the question

here so I'll just read it again I know

that the precepts and the other methods

of Buddhism lead to Liberation well how

do you know that unless you become

liberated unless you're extrapolating

you know it's helped you and so you

extrapolate and you just think it's it's

going to lead to that but I mean

eventually you have to you have to just

leave everything behind before you can

become

liberated so I'm not I'm not trying to

be like Mara's advocate here and saying

that you shouldn't keep five precepts

that kind of thing but I mean you don't

want to cling to five precepts you don't

even really want to insist on five

precepts

because that's more subtle kind of

clinging and so people they really don't

have that much faith I mean we

westerners especially and I'm I'm

included I'm a Westerner too we tend to

be kind of

skeptical and maybe a little too

open-minded in certain respects and so

it's like well maybe yeah probably even

but you're not really 100% sure the way

a person is 100% % sure that if they
stick their hand into a fire it's going
to burn them it was uh John Stewart Mill
made a remark in one of his famous
essays that I don't remember which one
it was that to find someone who believes
in their religion the way a person
believes that if they stick their hand
into fire it's going to burn them you
have to look to the Eastern Nations that
have not been influenced by Western
Civilization or you have to look into
the West when it was predominantly
Catholic you know modern Western Society
just can't believe anything 100%
anymore so there's always you know well
maybe probably you know working

hypothesis and it it makes for a lot of lukewarmness but also it makes for Less rigidity and dogmatism so there's a tradeoff you know it's like either way you've got you know good side and a and a bad side so we just have to to deal with the sides we've

got

um let's see but even a lot of Burmese people um you know they're not super good at following five precepts because it's just they don't really have this 100% stainless steel or titanium faith that it's necessarily

true so

I think I answered that one so I'm just

going to move on the next question this is from Arin and Arin says what is the karma of a saint who is born of evil debauched abusive parents and then uh a little comment here I think Karma can be complicated and it's nice to hear how it can be explained under different circumstances that aren't so black and white well the the example that came to mind with regard to this question U it's not strictly about evil debauched abusive parents but it's comes pretty close and that is the story of St John on the cross possibly my favorite Christian in St John of the Cross his his father was the son of a family of relatively wealthy silk

Merchants you know they were like upper
middle class in 16th century
Spain and he was doing a lot of
traveling around like buying silk and
and and that sort of thing and he fell
in love with a a a silk Weaver a a girl
who just she was of the lower classes
you know some probably some Village girl
who was just a weaver and he fell in
love with her and they eloped and got
married and because this was 16th
century Spain his parents the St John of
the cross's grandparents just disown him
he was just thrown out of the family
because he disgraced the family by
marrying beneath him he married some

lower class girl and so they just cut
them off entirely and so St John of the
cross's parents um they just had to get
by as Weavers you know he he had no more
of the the family wealth and so they
were just having to like toil and earn a
living and then the father died so that
they were even in more Dire Straits it
was like this widowed woman trying to
raise three sons and they think think
that one of the three sons just died of
malnutrition St John of the Cross was
less than 5 feet tall when he was full
grown probably due to malnutrition as a
child and the grandparents and I think
there was an uncle involved they were
just abusive she's the the mother in

just I mean in desperation is like
begging them to and even if they reject
her I mean they're her own flesh and
blood these grandchildren they should at
least take care of them somebody took in
St John of the cross's Elder brother and
he was just treated like a slave and
abused and so St John of the
Cross he eventually got sent to like a a
Catholic boy school for like poor kids
that couldn't afford for you know to
have a private
education and he was partly working his
way through this school you know earning
his keep earning his board and keep by
working in a plague hospital so as a

little kid he has to work in a plague
Hospital like changing bed pant hands
maybe
wiping ick out of sores that kind of
thing seeing people dying all the time
and real is that's one of the reasons
why he became a saint I think it was
just the the sheer hardship of his
childhood due to these abusive
grandparents and an abusive
uncle that I mean he was it's like some
people are born Saints some people
achieve sainthood and some people have
sainthood thrust upon them and that kind
of childhood for some people who are
like spiritually mature and ripe I mean
St John of the cross in a way he had

sainthood just thrust upon Him by this
hell likee
childhood so different people will react
in different ways to to different
situations like some people today are
traumatized even into adulthood because
their parents got a divorce when they
were a kid my parents got into a divorce
got divorced when I was a kid kid and
for me I mean I didn't like it but you
know I was flexible and just accepted
the situation and but some people they
just won't accept the situation and it
just makes this festering soar in their
psyche that just stays festering for the
rest of their life

maybe so I mean two different people are
born to of evil debauched abusive
parents some people I mean it will just
destroy them other people it will just
it'll be like the pressure between like
on a watermelon seed between your
fingers it just pops upwards you know
into some Heavenly realm practically and
then just there's the full spectrum in
between some people you know they'll in
a way it'll be like a crucible like a
purifying fire that helps them in
certain ways and it's their karma so
it's it's you know it's in a way it's
their burning off Karma through this
karmic fruition but at the same time
they're going to have scars from it so

there's the whole
Spectrum so I mean the karma of a saint
who is born of evil debauch and abusive
parents probably they they have the the
potential for sainthood to begin with
and they just it's like a a purifying
fire that just in a way Burns Burns away
a lot of their pride or you know their
conceit or whatever it is their laziness
whatever they just can't be that way and
just kind of forces them into a higher
level of
Consciousness but it's going to be
different from from person to person and
from Saint to Saint for that
matter so like in the Middle Ages maybe

that's one reason why there were so many Saints in the Middle Ages is because children were treated like livestock a lot of people who lived in the Middle Ages would be sociopaths by modern standards because they had they had to deal with so much neglect from their parents and I have read that the infant mortality rate or just the mortality rate before the age of like seven was so high more than
50% that parents could not really be emotionally invested in their children they just you know they just treat them like
livestock because chances were the kids were going to die before they they even

got got reached you know seven or 10

years

old after they got older then the

parents would say well this one's going

to survive probably we should uh be more

emotionally invested care more about

them you know it' be less of a risk to

our own heart to really care about this

kid so it could be that a lot of

medieval Saints started off in life that

way with just kind of

cold like negligent sort of parents and

a lot of the people they just Farm off

their kids to some wet nurse or nanny or

something

so I suppose I answered that question

and so I'm going to move on to the next
one this is from Dark Age
Dinger and Dark Age Dinger
says I've been going to a Burmese
Monastery even learning the language but
something I realized is that the monks
there are a little unscrupulous at least
when viewed through a restrict Orthodox
lens I've went with them to the local
market and seen them perform
transactions which from what I
understand of vinia is an offense I've
also seen them eat afternoon on quite a
few occasions anyway wondering your
thoughts on this well my sympathies to
dark AG Dinger for having to realize
this and I realized it fairly quickly

after I became a monk living among other
monks and the fact is that among Burmese
monks probably Sri Lankan monks it's
approximately
98% of the sa that are
like unconscientious like this they
don't even try to follow the rules
strictly in Thailand it might be even as
low as
95% but it's the overwhelming majority
in terab Buddhist countries that the
monks are going to be handling money
eating dinner if they feel like it just
doing whatever they please and not
really caring about the rules and this
is sort of getting back to that five

precept question that the AR swasti
project asked because here you got monks
that are ordained I mean they
voluntarily chose to be monks and like
in Burma 98% of them don't even try to
follow the rules
correctly and part of that is that
Asia Asians tend to be more conformist
than westerners and so if they are
brought up in a corrupt tradition they
just go along with the
corruption most of them
do so that's just the way it is you have
to search diligently to find really
strict conscientious Asian monks with
regard to Western monks that might even
be as high as

50% that try to follow the rules
correctly even most of those fail you
know they're still talking about um you
know they might not be handling money
with their hands but they're still
telling people what to do with money
that kind of thing endorsing checks that
kind of stuff which is just breaking the
exact same rules if they're handling it
themselves
so but with with westerners you might
have as many as 50% that are really
conscientiously trying to be proper
monks and follow dhama correctly partly
because we westerners have to reject our
own culture sometimes go against the

wishes of our parents you know lose our friends in order to practice dhamma it's a bigger commitment and we're tend to be more serious about it although you it's it's sort of like Medieval Europe where I mean most of the monks in medieval Europe were corrupt too and the priests also at one point in the Middle Ages the pope actually had to uh put forth It's a papal bull or something like that um AB ol olving women of the necessity of making um confession because so many women were being sexually abused in the confessional you know it's just becoming rampant and monks were just like murdering each other in in the Middle Ages you you read the beginning of

bertron Russell's history of Western

philosophy he he gets into that pretty

well he was he was in a bad mood when he

wrote that book partly because World War

II was going

on um

so yeah it's just it's just the way it

is really it's it's unfortunate I I used

to say a lot of the time that I mean if

95% of the S would just be purged you

know just just to remove the Deadwood

you'd have way fewer monks but they

would be much higher caliber of monks

and it would probably be to the benefit

of

Buddhism because a lot of monks

especially Asian monks they don't get
ordained as monks because they have a
genuine spiritual call fall in you know
they just want to live an easy life they
want upward social Mobility maybe
they're they're like latent homosexuals
and want a culturally acceptable reason
for not getting
married um it may be that they're just
stupid or ugly or lazy and just couldn't
make a living otherwise and so their
parents centered the
monastery and uh that's fairly common in
terata Buddhist cultures I am sorry to
say I was Sullen and disillusioned my
first couple years as a monk is just it
was just really I was so idealistic when

I first became a monk because like I've said before I used to think that I was going to be joining the Brotherhood of wise men diligently striving for enlightenment and everyone would be wiser than me because they'd been striving longer than me and it just didn't turn out that way at all I mean most monks Burmese monks that I've experienced they just want to live in Easy Life some of them maybe want to get famous as a teacher but the most of them do not have a genuine vocation a genuine spiritual
calling and and those that do it's it's kind of a low-level one where they just

want to do enough good that they get a
better rebirth that kind of
thing
so um my sympathy goes out to Dark Age
drer because I I went through the same
thing so anyways I'll just uh move on to
Dark Age dinger's second question what
are your thoughts on conspiracies do you
think they're primarily another
distraction from Mara and should be
ignored um conspiracies I mean I think
maybe he's referring to conspiracy
theories I mean there's obviously
conspiracies there's obviously
conspiracy theories and obviously some
conspiracy theories are true and also
some conspiracy theories are just

mainstream that's just what the

propaganda is and most of these you know

sort of sheeple will believe the

conspiracy theories like so many

conspiracy theories were flung against

Donald Trump just as a way of destroying

him which fortunately have largely

failed but like the whole Russia like

the P dossier the Russia conspiracy hoax

that kind of thing I mean that was a

mainstream

conspiracy

so you can't really I mean if you're

going to have any kind of social

presence any kind of social or cultural

awareness like awareness of current

events that kind of thing then you
always have to be on your guard you
can't just be totally gullible and
believe whatever you're told it's it's
better off to have a certain amount of
skepticism regardless of whether it's
being said by your side or some other
side still I mean it's good to have a
certain amount of philosophical
Detachment and skepticism and I mean
that's one thing we westerners are
really good at which makes us lukewarm
with regard to keeping five precepts for
example
so um yeah I don't think that they're
primarily another distraction from
Mara um because conspiracies do exist

and we should be aware of them when
they're happening to help them not
happen if they turn out to be a bad
conspiracy
so I think I answer that one I'm going
to move on to the next question which is
from yakub did nothing wrong and this is
one of those Wise Guys Who changes his
name
regularly so he's not really a new
question asker he's just that he's
asking under a new name and yakub did
nothing wrong says is it sacriligious or
otherwise ausa to have an altar for your
Buddha figure and then also enshrine
non- Buddhist personages such as Donald

Trump or or yakub alongside the blessed

one and for those of you who may notice

that up there on top of the bookcase the

hell somebody stuck a pumpkin up there

just a

second take the pumpkin off the altar

put over

there

okay where was I oh yeah

so let's see kind of got distracted now

as as you notice on the I've got a non-

Buddhist personage up there which is

neim karoli

Baba so also I think that Buddha picture

behind the Little Buddha statue might be

a medicine Buddha which technically I

mean it's not terad

anyway um so yeah I mean I've after my
father died I had a picture of my father
kind of at the front of the altar lower
down than the Buddha statue I mean you
shouldn't have anything higher up than
the Buddha statue even though I'm doing
it there just because I can't really
avoid the fact that the picture is
larger than the little
statue so whether something is
sacriligious I mean that depends on
somebody's interpretation of religion
whether something is ausa depends on the
the doer own mental States so if
you're if you're
like putting something on the altar just

due to negligence or just lack of
respect or something like some some
people will just like toss junk onto
their altar just to get it out of the
way while they're like cleaning or
something you know they just it'll just
accumulate junk sometimes so I mean that
is just in a way it's kind of
sacrilegious probably acusa I guess
unless it's just for them it's just
completely neutral the altar is neutral
the junk they're putting on the altar is
neutral you know it's all just neutral
then it could be neither cusa nor ausa
or neither moral or
immoral but as a general rule the altar
should be a place of reverence you

shouldn't be littering it with stuff

that you don't have a like a good

respectful reason

for like I know somebody who put a

picture of Donald Trump on their on

their

Altar and I mean they did it just as a

way of like being it's making it easier

to send meta to Donald Trump to protect

him from assassination attempts

essentially that's like the main reason

for it and I don't see anything

necessarily wrong with that I mean

there's there's nothing about Buddhist

altars in the poly Tex because Buddhist

altars apparently hadn't been invented

yet at the time that the Buddhist texts

uh were

composed so it's it's really a matter of

One's Own volitions one's own

attitudes um that that determines

whether some something is moral or

immoral putting it on an altar if it's

not particularly Buddhist I mean some

people I'm sure they've got like a

picture of Jesus in Burma is it was very

common to have pictures of sa Baba on

Buddhist

altars along with the Buddha although

the Buddha was like C like he was in the

center and then you have sort of like

other other images maybe around the

Buddha mostly Buddhist but not

necessarily like there I've saw quite a
few little images of sa Baba on Buddhist
altars in Burma where the people are
very
devout so with regard to SAC religious
though it just depends on the attitude
of the person who's making the Judgment
some people are Puritans they would say
that you know even a Mahayana Buddhist
image on a on a Buddhist altar would be
sacrilegious because most Mahayana
Buddha images aren't even go to a Buddha
you know it's it's like amitaba or
something some some mythological Buddha
that
according you know to for most terraa

Buddhist this doesn't even really exist
it's some other Buddha not you know the
historical Goa Buddha it's not even one
of the previous Buddhas it's just some
kind of madeup cosmic mythological
Buddha that Mahayana Buddhists have
decided to go with who maybe an egregor
at this point where the belief of so
many people is actually making some sort
of valid existence for this being I'm
not sure
but yeah I do think that mainly it
depends on the attitude of the person
who's doing it the person who is
perceiving the situation or the person
who is setting up the Altar and putting
things on the

Altar and it's going to vary from person

to

person

so and and I've done it myself I've got

Nim CI Baba on my own altar that's the

closest thing I've got resembling an

altar anyway

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

question this is from

trasis and trasis says do you have a one

Contra argument that our lives are not

created by our minds and it seems to me

that the strongest argument against

idealism would be the very fact that you

can have somebody go into a room they'll

see what's there and then they'll leave

and then somebody else can go into the room and they'll they'll see essentially the same stuff even though there was no Direct communic ation between these two people that it does appear that if we accept that idealism is a fact that there really is no Ultimate Reality to physical matter then it would seem that things there they cease to exist and then start existing again you know if somebody is not in this room I mean just assuming that the fish don't have enough Consciousness to cause the books on my bookcase to exist then they just don't exist and it's somebody walk in all of a sudden they exist again so it's like intermittent existence sort

of but it's just a perception anyway SAS

Peri to exist is to be perceived as

George Barkley used to

say so that's I mean you might say that

it would be more in accordance with

aam's

razor that it's just they just continue

to exist even if nobody is perceiving

them although how they would exist it

would just be an undifferentiated void

so I mean it's in a way

even now I'm I'm trying to slip more

Buddhist philosophy into this than is

necessary I guess but it does seem that

would be the strongest argument and

there's ways around it I mean you can

say like maybe a yogachara Buddhist
might say that that's just the way it is
it is true it's just existence is
intermittent for inanimate objects
somebody has to be perceiving them but
there is so much it's like our Karma
with other beings in this world have
enough in common that we are creating
essentially the same world that if
someone's world differs you know
significantly from our own they're going
to be in a different world not in our
world or you could go with Barkley's
idea that that's always being perceived
the books on my book case are always
being perceived even when there's no
conscious being in this room because

there's like like a deity who's
observing it like according to Barkley
you've got the central scrutinizer which
is God and God is just sort of keeping
everything together he's like
stabilizing the entire universe even
though there's no physical matter in
Buddhism who knows it could be I was
just thinking of this the other day that
you've got the
Brahma who is like the overlord of
10,000 World Systems and he's sort of
overseeing these 10,000 World Systems so
it may that you've got this very high
being who is just sort of locking
everything into

place

so anyways that is my one I think that

is the strongest argument against

idealism the very fact that you can have

apparently things going on in a room

when there's nobody there to observe it

and then you can come in and see the

after effects you can like I don't know

close circuit cameras or you know just

walking in and the clock has one time

and you walk out you walk in later the

clock has a different time so presumably

it I mean it might seem like a better

argument I mean obviously it does seem

like a better argument to most people

that the clock was just minute hand was

just moving slowly the whole time nobody

was in the room rather than first the
clock is you know the minute hand is
here somebody leaves the room the clock
disappears and when it reappears again
it's you know it's pointing in a
different direction with with no
continuity in
between so I do think that is the
strongest argument but I don't think
it's strong enough and I really do not
consider physical matter to be
ultimately real largely because in order
for anything to exist you have to have
perception I don't see how you can get
past that there anyone who's arguing
that you can have individual objects

without anyone perceiving them they
don't understand how indiv ual existence
Works they understand how perception
works and so they just it's like they're
trying to
sneak um some kind of perception into
through the back door so that there's
some kind of perception going on even if
there's nobody to perceive
it and that might be confusing to some
of you and uh so be it because I think
I'm just going to move on to the next
question and this is from
pseudonym and I'm checking to see yeah
we're definitely
recording so pseudonym says what is the
Buddhist description or understanding of

Brahma and there's different
understandings or Buddhist descriptions
of Brahma I mean Brahma you've got a
whole slew of Brahma Realms in Buddhist
cosmology it's like the whole Rupa Loca
which is one of the three main spheres
of samsara you got the Kamal Loca where
we we are that includes animals lower
beings and like the first several levels
of heaven with dava's inhabiting it but
once you go from Dava to Brahma you got
the Rupa Loca and then you got the arupa
Loca so I guess the top two levels of s
the samsaric cosmos are inhabited by
brahmas um with regard to Brahma as just
an one Brahma you know the Brahma that

would probably be the mahab Brahma who
is the overlord of all these systems and
in a way it's a kind of Buddhist
propaganda kind of religious propaganda
against Hinduism because Brahma was
coming to mean I mean the the god Brahma
in in like vadic Proto Hinduism was
coming to be a personification of
Ultimate
Reality and I mean you read the
upanishads when you've got the sages
trying to describe Brahman which is sort
of the
non-persian it's very similar to
Buddhist attempts at describing nibana
or Nirvana that probably these sages had
similar experiences they're trying to

explain the the same state essentially

but within different contexts one is

like vadic Hinduism the other one is

Buddhism and so they they go about it in

different

ways and then of course of course you've

got like Catholic saints who may

experience also something very similar

to what the vonas Hindus and the

Buddhists were experiencing but of

course they're going to have to

interpret it in accordance with Biblical

Christianity which doesn't work nearly

as well in my opinion but that's

okay so

Brahma was becoming in the Buddhist time

the personification of Ultimate Reality

so then the the Buddhist pists say nope

he's just at this relatively mediocre

level of Heaven there's all these other

Heaven Realms above mahab Brahma that

are attainable some of them only

attainable by

Buddhists

so

um the Buddhist description or

understanding of Brahma I would say is

less reliable than the description or

understanding of Brahma by say the

people who compose some of the chief

upanishads

who were using Brahma as just like

Ultimate Reality especially Nuna Brahman

which is like Ultimate Reality which has
no discernable characteristics which it
comes very close to a lot of Buddhist
descriptions of the ultimate or the
absolute but the Buddhists don't call it
Brahma they call it something else
Mahayana Buddhists will have a whole
slew of names for
it and then Brahma just becomes kind of
a Foon I mean some of the sutas about
mahab Brahma are just making a fool of
mahab Brahma you know it's just more
religious
propaganda so what is the Buddhist
description or understanding of Brahma
that would be like mahab Brahma but

Brahma itself can be an abstraction too

like Brahman in in

Hinduism um but I guess we'll get to

that in the next question so I guess

I'll just move on to the next question

which is also from pseudonym and it is

how does this understanding of Brahma

factor into loving kindness compassion

joy and equinity being labeled the

Brahma viharas well I pretty sure I

haven't read it recently there is a suta

where some

Brahman of the Brahman cast goes to the

Buddha and he's talking about um you

know the the way to Brahma you know

which is for a Hindu is like the highest

good it's like the ultimate and then the

Buddha just kind of what he did a lot of the time was like repurpose the terminology of other religious or spiritual systems and so he'd say well the the way of living with Brahma is cultivating these four mental States you know which is loving kindness as it's usually translated
compassion um sympathetic joy and equinity and so in a way he was just repurposing like the the language of the brahmas to appeal to to brahans the language of the brahans to appeal to brahans which is something that the Buddha did you know he would kind of understand where you were at and then

use a language that you were able to
understand and willing to accept in
explaining dhama so it started off
apparently where the Buddha was
explaining the Brahma viharas to brahans
and then the name just kind of
stuck that's my best explanation of how
these four mental states that can be
cultivated came to be known as the
Brahma viharas you know the the Divine
abodes because Brahma can also just mean
like divinity that's how um the first
famous Nana
nanami uh wanted to translate Brahma
whever he he saw it was as Divinity or
Divine he was calling the brahans
divines as though they were like you

know it's sort of an old-fashioned word
for a priest or a minister is a Divine
and it wasn't a very good translation
but nle was kind of eccentric and he
wanted one pow always to be translated
by the same English word so with certain
poly words that have lots of different
meanings he had to really really like
scratch his head and come up with some
one word that could fit the entire
spectrum and in this case it didn't work
very
well
so yeah I think I I think I explained
that at least to to my own
satisfaction so I'm just going to move

on to pseudonyms next third question
here please provide Clarity on the
relationship between right intention and
the Brahma viharas and then uh he's got
like a a sub question embedded in the in
the main question which is are the
Brahma viharas collectively considered
part of right intention or only meta and
karuna why or why not and then he says
thank you for sharing the dhama well you
are welcome so
please provide Clarity on the
relationship between right and intention
I assume he's referring to the second
step of the Noble eight-fold Path which
would be Sama sanapa and SAS
sanapa isn't always translated as right

intention I mean it's got a lot of different translations right attitude is one of my favorites right thought sometimes I can use even right mental action because it's followed by right physical action and right verbal action so in a way it's just sort of the the standard Triad of Acts of Mind Body and speech so right intention SAS sanapa I assume that's what he's referring to here um and the Brahma wear the relationship between right intention and the brah haras well the brah miara are just a an

optional Avenue of cultivating wholesome mental States and so wholesome mental

States stes presumably would be
contained within SAS sanapa and it would
include you know all four Brahma viharas
I don't see why it would only include
meta and karuna and not mudita even if
you want to say that
um like uh equinity you know is somehow
above the other three because it's so
detached but still that is a mental
state and so all four brah Horas would
be included within s sanapa or right
attitude right mental action right
intention whatever you however you want
to render the term Sama sanapa which is
the second step in the noble Eightfold
Path so the relationship is that the
Brahma viharas are just included within

SAS

sanapa at least the the aspect of the

four Brahma viharas that are in fact

mental States or mental actions that I

mean cultivating the hor would include

you know all the other seven steps of

the eight-fold path you know you know

right effort for example or right

concentration that kind of

thing

so I think I answered that and I am kind

of trying to abbreviate my answers a

little bit just to try and make sure

that it's not a monstrously long video

but still I do feel like I have to do

justice to the question and so it's

always going to be very long unless we
get back to the the very early days of
these q&as and I only wind up with like
12 questions or something but back then
I think I would even just wait until I
got a longer list before I would do the
video I wasn't doing them every week
back in the
beginning so we're going to uh move on
to the next question which is from Joe
do and Joe do says is sex outside of
marriage sexual misconduct like having a
girlfriend and not necessarily if you
are monogamous with a person that you
love and it's not just you know
promiscuous and it's the person that you
love that you're faithful to doesn't

already have a mate you know it's not
just being faithful to a married
mistress something like that um then it
would not be considered sexual
misconduct so technically speaking
Kamara uh which is the third precept
it isn't exactly the same as committing
adultery but I mean if it's promiscuous
sex you're just hiring a prostitute
picking up some drunken chick in a bar
that kind of thing then that would be
sexual misconduct but if two people
sincerely love each other they're
faithful to each other it's as though
they are married marriage really is not
a Buddhist institution at least not in

early Buddhism because early Buddhism was a monastic institution and it's just a serious offense for a monk even to participate in a wedding it's just a secular thing it doesn't have anything to do with dhama necessarily other than just how dhama applies to everybody but just the institution of marriage in and of itself is not considered to be a particularly Buddhist institution in early Indian Buddhism although Mahayana monks will perform wedding ceremonies and so forth but that's Mahayana so sex outside of marriage is not necessarily sexual misconduct if the two people genuinely are devoted to each other and faithful to each other and

neither one of them has commitments to

anybody

else so I'm just going to move on to the

next question which uh I don't I don't

see the thing is I've got this problem

here that Joe do technically has asked

four questions and but two of them are

kind of like like this one it could just

be like a polite manner of speaking

where it's like can you hand me that cup

you know it's like I want this cup

handed to me I'll say can you hand me

that cup it's it's just sort of a

turning something into a question when

it's really a

request

so um I can I can interpret this in that manner and then Joo gets down to the allowable three questions and will not necessarily be severely punished this time so Joo says can you please ask Brian Rue if he could please upload a playlist of his teachings on Buddhism surely YouTube won't censor that but surely YouTube does and will and has censored that poor Brian Rue has probably had well over a dozen YouTube channels and they always get taken down I mean once you get taken down once then the very fact that you've been removed once is sufficient reason for YouTube to remove you every time after that you've already been kicked out you can't just

come in under a different name with

YouTube but just look on bitshoot he has

got playlists on bitshoot you can look

at like the the Dharma truther Dharma

monk

truthers um what is it playlist or

whatever you know he's got playlists on

bitshoot

and I think he's on Odyssey also that I

mean you're going to have to leave

YouTube leave the YouTube Plantation

which I'm tempted to do at this point

simply because I'll get ad ad blocks are

not allowed even if I click on my own

videos you know it's like YouTube

doesn't want me to see even my own

videos even though I don't monetize any
of it just because I've got an ad
blocker on my computer and I mean if
that's the way they're going to be then
to hell with YouTube I'll just move on
to rumble or something although my
second largest audience is on bitshoot
because I've been on bitshoot much
longer than I've been on
Rumble so yeah if you want to uh see
Brian ruse teachings on Buddhism
bitshoot is the place to go bitshoot
dcom I'm gonna move on to joo's next
question which is almost a funny
question he says ever considered making
a Facebook page would be awesome for
your followers and I have steadfastly

refused to go on Facebook partly just because that Facebook is just as censorious and dishonest in their censorship as YouTube is if not worse I mean it may be that Zuckerberg he's claiming that he's libertarian now maybe he's turned over a new Leaf or maybe he's just you know politically strategizing in case Trump wins or something but you know Facebook is just another cess pit as far as I'm concerned so um people were pestering me for years I should I should be on Facebook get you should get a Facebook page until finally a supporter of mine back when I was still a monk actually set up a Facebook

page in my name for

Pabu and I never even logged into it I

looked at it a couple times but I never

logged into it I just have no interest

in Facebook I am on minds.com which is a

kind of alt Facebook you it's like a lot

of the people that get kicked off of

Facebook go to minds.com which really is

a free speech platform to free speech

for most leftists because you know

there's like you know esoteric hitlerism

study groups and that sort of thing on

there but I really even on minds.com um

I originally opened a channel on

minds.com as a monk just to upload my

blog

posts and still I'm just mainly just

using it to upload my Q&A videos my other videos now haven't written a blog post in several months at this point and I I used to like do a lot of meming on minds.com but it's it's pretty much Fallen by the wayside now that I've got so much to do in so-called real life that my virtual life on on Minds has taken a major hit and I just have like a vestig existence there now but Facebook yeah I'm I'm not going to do that so I'm just going to move on to joo's Fourth question or let's just call it third question just so that he Dodges the bullet and doesn't receive the severe punishment which is what's your thoughts

on the power struggle between Tibet and China well it doesn't seem like much of a power struggle does it I mean China has just invaded colonized Tibet and uh Tibet doesn't have much of a chance to do much about it at the present moment and I mean if if you're familiar with Chinese history that China and Tibet were like Arch enemies for a long time sometimes Tibet would actually be more powerful than China but that's not the case anymore China has invaded and conquered Tibet the Dal Lama lives in Exile China is doing everything it can to control who the who the llamas are you know who the the tul C are you know it's like they're gonna make sure once

HH the Dal Lama dies China for sure is going to start announcing they have found the next Dal Lama he's going to be a a devout follower of the Chinese Communist party just a convenient Lackey and you know who knows what's what's going to happen but there's not much of a power struggle it used to be that in the west because Tibet had been colonized conquered violently by the Chinese um that to favor Tibetan Buddhism was very much in fashion among liberals also there were so many like Tibetan Monks in Exile in other countries like in the west that you had a lot of Tibetan places opening up so

that um I think 20 years ago or 30 years ago Tibetan Buddhism was much more in Vogue in the west than other schools of Buddhism partly because it was like a hot issue you know China was the bad guys who invaded Tibet and then you had all these like a an a diaspora of Tibetans moving out into other countries and setting up like Dharma centers and so forth um but now the Liberals are pretty much uh kissing the collective butto of
China and uh there's not nearly so much activism on the part of Hollywood entertainers and so forth of freeing Tibet you know reestablishing the Daly Lama as the Theocratic leader of Tibet

and all that so the power strle is uh is
just kind of feeble struggling on the
part of Tibet at this point but China's
gotten the uh the death grip on Tibet
and they've done what the West is kind
of doing to the West which is just
brought in I mean what the Chinese have
done is they've just sort of like
relocated millions of
Chinese citizens or subjects as they
should be called into Tibet to just kind
of cify it to Chinese IE
it so it's hard to say how Tibet could
possibly regain
Independence much less become more
powerful than China like it was a few

times in the past other than just China collapsing if you know if China goes through the same thing that it went through um like before World War II or maybe shortly after World War II then you know it just kind of goes collapses into a kind of Anarchy and chaos then Tibet may be able to make its move but at present it's uh not much going on seems to me so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is uh from Stellar Supreme formerly known as Liber Lam and Stellar Supreme formally known as Liber Lam says I was recently speaking with a lineage holder of a Terra Vaden Sri Lankan Monastery he's got Terra voden in in kind of like scare

quotes here so I'll just start over I
was recently speaking with a lineage
holder of a Traden Sri Lankan Monastery
he claimed that the Buddhist satva is
equivalent to the teravan concept of the
buddhis SAT even when I clarified the
distinction he also claimed that Burmese
terava was based in lineage started in
the 11th century CE by Maha weara
despite Burmese terada having its roots
in the 3r century BC with Emperor Asoka
he also claimed the path of arahan ship
is inferior to that of the bodh SAT and
that aan cha and biku Bodhi believed in
such a buddhis SAT path what are your
thoughts on the claims made by these

authorities of Buddhism well there are quite a few U terava Buddhist monks in Burma who they are on the bodh satata path they want to be Bodhi satas in fact there are some who want to they're they're like a kind of minor bodhisatta where they don't aspire to becoming a Buddha they just aspired becoming like a chief disciple like saruta and molana were so like one of the most famous seatt in Burma um he he claims that he's a bodh he's destined to become a Buddha apparently but that's not very likely I think a lot of these seat say that they want to be bodh satas largely because they do not want to really practice conscientiously for the sake of

Liberation in this very life so they
just put
off I think that's one of the main
motivations for that and it's it is sort
of like a Proto mahayan idea that that
goes way back you know well into terada
that being a Buddha is just nobler and
better than being an ordinary arant even
though originally I don't think there
was originally a distinction between the
two other than that the Buddha was like
an one individual he was just the
founder but he was an AR too you know
Nam buddas the Buddha was an arant and
there are at least a few texts that
refer to an ordinary enlightened being

as a Buddha because I mean Buddha just
means enlightened it means awakened
literally so there
are monks I think in fact the founder of
my own tradition venerable Tong Pulu he
also wanted to be a bodh SAT he wanted
to be a Buddha in some future life
although um I remember I was told that
on one of his visits to America some
star-eyed westner asked him if he was
fully enlightened and then T Pulu se's
answer was I have made a multi-life
commitment which was interpreted to mean
that he was really striving to become a
Buddha so it does exist in terraa where
you can um strive to become a Buddha
although they're not postponing

Enlightenment indefinitely until all other beings are saved you know they're just trying to perfect themselves sufficiently that they can become a sasam Buddha instead of just an Aran although I think that they got uh hijacked by later developments in Buddhism so let's see Terra having its roots in 3dr Century BC yeah I mean Burmese terraa it started with the Mons like the M Kingdom which may have been suan abumi which is mentioned in the Ashokan inscriptions as one of the countries that the emperor Ashoka in India sent missionaries to so um whether it goes all the way back to the thirr

century BC like whether it was an
unbroken um tradition in Mon's in like
in the mon kingdoms and mon Empire I'm
not sure but by the time Terra or by the
time the Burmese
uh converted to terraa they got their
terraa from the mons so it's actually
more accurate to say that Sri Lankan
Buddhism now is derived from Burma
rather than the other way around because
um there were a few times um when
Buddhism the sa in Sri Lanka had become
so degenerate that almost all of the
monks were either invalid or paraja you
know there's one Chronicle where there's
this guy lamenting that almost the only
morality still shown by monks in Sri

Lanka is their devoted dedication to
supporting their wives and
children so it was like the sa just
pretty much killed itself off in Sri
Lanka and then had to be reimported they
had to go to Burma and also to Thailand
to bring back ordained monks who could
then start ordaining Sri Lankan monks
and get the S going
again so to claim that the path of arhan
ship is inferior to that of the bodh SAT
no I mean the path of the bodh SAT is
probably an anachronism it's or it's
rather it just got added later I do not
think it is an original teaching of
Buddhism so it's hardly likely to be

superior to what the Buddha obviously

was teaching which is Strive to become

enlightened In This Very

lifetime so yeah auna probably believed

in in a bodh SAT path because it is

existent in terava

Buddhism

so yeah the buddhis path is preferred

even by some very high-profile seos and

aons even though they might not talk

about it

publicly and I mean it is an established

terot of Buddhist tradition even though

I do not believe that it originated with

the Buddha himself it was just a like a

product of later devotionalism where

like with the jica

stories where the Buddha is just raised
to a there an astronomically higher
level than an ordinary enlightened being
even though technically the ordinary
enlightened being and the sasam Buddha
are just as enlightened as each other
both of them have zero
delusion and so it was just the
devotionalism towards the Buddha caused
people to just place the Buddha on this
astronomically High pedestal and then
that was considered to be something more
noble to strive towards than just being
some ordinary arhon the Mahan then just
belittled and ridiculed and considered
to be

inferior

so I guess I'll just move on to Li

Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra

Lambs next question which is a followup

on the first one is do they have wrong

View and that depends on how you define

Right View I mean they have Orthodox

traditional view but whether I don't

think that the Buddha would have

endorsed it the the historical GMA

Buddha I don't think he would have

endorsed the bodhisatta path or the

mahayan buddhy satva path that he just

there's no evidence that he really

taught that stuff or no no persuasive

evidence

anyway so whether they have wrong view

or not with so many other questions is a matter of who you're talking to and and what you're using as a a standard I mean just with regard to Orthodox mainstream terraa as it exists today then it's not wrong view but if you're going to compare it with what the Buddha originally taught which we really can't be 100% sure of then I would guess it probably is wrong View and all view ultimately going with the earliest text all view is wrong view that's why the word DT has come in later Buddhism to mean wrong view when literally all it means is view originally like in the early text like the ataka waga the

Buddha saying have no View and then
later on it got interpreted to mean when
he says have no wrong view says no no
view what he means is no wrong view so
just the word that means view has come
to mean wrong view in in uh traditional
terab Buddhism but that's not what it
originally
meant so I'll just move on on to Stellar
Supreme formerly known as Libra Lamb's
third question which is another followup
on the first question have they
committed a sesa offense and I don't
know how they would commit a sesa
offense um by saying that they want to
be a Buddha in some future world system
that they're that's what they're

striving towards I mean I don't know
what what sesa rule it would be in a
Breaking of I mean even if a monk has
wrong View
in order for that to be a s De offense
he has to be admonished by the sa three
times formally admonished by the SAA
three times and then after three
admonishments if he persists in
maintaining that wrong view then he's
committed to S DEA offense but again
this is traditional accepted belief in
in Terra um I don't think anybody has
been admonished for wrong view for
adopting this point of view and I mean
just the whole thing of admonishing a

monk for having a wrong view it doesn't matter what their view is I've never heard of that happening in Burma in in historical times the Burmese are so accepting and wanting to avoid Making Waves although there have been some teachers including tanid dong seatt who have been rebuked by the the chief ecclesiastical Council in Burma of which which is led by the the S Mahan nayaka searo he's the highest ranking monk in Burma he's sort of like the Tai s Raja except he's not called the S Raja he's called the Mahan nayaka which is the the great leader of the S and he sort of presides over this ecclesiastical Council which will then kind of police

the sa a little bit although of course
they they do almost nothing to promote
you know monks actually following Venia
in fact the song the the the highest
Monk Burma will accept money and spends
money and most Burmese people don't even
know it's against the rules for mons to
handle money because almost all of them
do it including the highest ranking ones
and the most famous ones most of
them so no nobody's committed a s Desa
offense for
endorsing the the bodh path instead of
Simply striving for enlightenment In
This Very life and so I'm just going to
move on to the next question this is

from

Wilson and Wilson says you mentioned a while ago that one ought to hang out with people who are wiser than they are if they want to be wise or that hanging out with foolish people will make you more foolish Etc I've heard variations on this my whole life wise successful Rich Etc but it always begs the question wouldn't the wise people you're now hanging out with be hanging out with a fool that is you and thus becoming less wise how did you get wise people to break this Rule and hang out with you and I used to think about this when I'd read the rhinoceros horn disc discourse the kaga sanasa it's saying that as a

general rule you should go alone like
the Horn of a rhinoceros but if you can
find a wise teacher like a good friend
who is wiser than you you should hang
out with him and I always used to think
essentially what Wilson is saying here I
mean if he's wiser than you and you
should hang out with him but going with
that same suta that that wiser person
than you shouldn't have anything to do
with you but I assume that there are
some people who are wise enough that
they're stable they're not going to be
dragged down at least not very far by
helping a sincere disciple who is
sincerely seeking wisdom and not just

being like a a foolish you know drunker

who cheats at

cards did I say drunkard or drunker I

think I might have said drunker

drunkard drunkard is what I was

saying so yeah that is true

but um it does seem to be like a logical

fallacy but speaking of logical

fallacies um this begging the question

thing it it's kind of a kind of a minor

very minor tiny pet peeve I have and it

seems most people don't really

understand what begging the question

means I think so many people don't

understand what begging the question

means that the whole meaning of begging

the question has changed into something

that it wasn't originally supposed to
mean which happens in English a lot so I
shouldn't complain against that but
begging the question
literally means that you're asking a
question that that is already decided on
the answer to the question it's
something along those lines it's not
just there's something that's begging
out it's it's just like calling out for
an answer which is the way some people
in interpret begging the question but
begging the question is sort of like
assuming the desired answer in the
question
itself but we need to get into that anym

than we already got into it just

now so yeah I think I already answered

the question that there are some people

who are wise enough that um they're

they're just stable they're not going to

be like swamped they're not going to be

submerged by some less WI person wanting

to be their

disciple and it does seem like

especially if you're an enlightened

being then that's it you're not going to

get dragged down by foolish disciples I

mean it might cause you to scold them

you know it might cause you to lose some

time but it doesn't really matter at

that point because um it's my

understanding in ter of a of Buddhism

anyway that once you become enlightened

that's it there's no falling back

there's no backslid sliding for an for

an enlightened

being so I'm just going to move on the

next question this is also is from

Wilson and that is I've heard of various

spiritual charlatans claim to be so

enlightened so as to be above rules of

morality Etc the Hindu answer to this is

that being above morality means you

already effortlessly exemplify it not

that you are exempt from it does this

guideline hold in

Buddhism um well I mean the Hindu answer

in theory would apply to Buddhism that

being above morality means you
effortlessly exemplify because in terado
Buddhism you can't become enlightened
without being a perfected Saint in Terra
Buddhism and I am skeptical of this but
the official position of tervada
Buddhism is you have to have purity of
morals before you can have purity of
mind and you have to have purity of Mind
before you can become enlightened like
purity of wisdom so you have to be inter
teral was a perfectly moral Saint before
you can become
enlightened and I do not think that that
is necessarily the case um like the ATA
waga would would say that I mean it's
morality and observances is just

something that it's just it's it's
essentially irrelevant to Enlightenment
you don't become enlightened through
morality observances and you don't
become enlightened through immorality
and non-observance either it's just sort
of irrelevant
but you could say and I think some
Hindus say this ramda said this with to
Nim karoli Baba who's back there on top
of the
bookcase that I mean once you become
enlightened then you throw away the raft
it's like you use this raft of Dharma
which is made up out of you know sticks
and leaves and Vines It's Just Junk once

you cross the the flood in this raft you

you don't need the the raft anymore and

so this adherence to morality could be

called part of this raft that once you

become

enlightened toss it aside that is not

Orthodox terava

but um like somebody like Ram dos when

he's trying to explain Nim car Li Baba

who was just phenomenally Advanced he

was a spiritual

Superman but especially he would like

tell lies he would say stuff that wasn't

true and he knew it wasn't true or like

someone would invite him to their house

he'd say sure yeah I'll be there and

then he just wouldn't show he had no

intention of

showing so that was ROM Do's explanation

of how NE cly Baba could be so

spiritually Advanced like when he would

meet you he would know and understand

you better than you know and understand

you so that was ROM Do's explanation is

like you know he you may need it when

you're developing but once you've got

there you know need it

anymore although just if you're behaving

spontaneously like there's nobody there

you're just a mirror reflecting other

people's Karma back at them then if

they've got some kind of crooked Karma

you might be reflecting like some kind

of crookedness back at

them so I've uh kind of lost the the

thread of this question here so I'm just

going to ask it again also from Wilson I

have heard of various spiritual

charlatans claim to be so enlightened so

as to be above rules of morality Etc the

Hindu answer to this is that being above

morality means you already effortlessly

exemplify it not that you are exempt

from it does this guideline hold in

Buddhism well all of a sudden I'm

reminded of one of the the first Coons

in the mumon KH which is some some old

zen master was asked is the enlightened

being free of karma or like is he no

longer exempt or no longer constrained

by the law of karma and he said yeah
he's no longer constrained and as a
result of the him saying this he got
reborn as a fox who lived out in a den
behind the monastery
somewhere so it's like the enlightened
being is at one with the law of karma
would be the correct answer I
suppose but uh yeah I'm not so sure that
everybody who claims to be above rules
of morality because they're enlightened
is necessarily a spiritual
charlatan I mean there are definitely
spirit ual charlatans who uh claim to be
above morality I mean there's a lot of
people who claim to be enlightened to or

acclaimed by their disciples to be
enlightened who certainly were not moral
people Osho formerly known as the bwan
Shri Raj Nish is an example of this one
of my favorite spiritual teachers who
might still be alive today which is Paul
low um see there's a few other examples
I some Zen Masters have been that way um
see who else golly there's quite a few
oh Krishna mty Jay Krishna mty me both
both famous chrishan mes are like that
so really I mean it's it's like
Enlightenment is I mean you can't pin
anything to it it's not really involved
in Sam
sorrow that nothing in samsara can touch
it nothing samsaric can touch the

absolute

and so if you're dwelling at the

absolute what's going on at the saric

level is just

irrelevant so I am open-minded on the

idea that you can have enlightened

Rascals that appear to be immoral like

neem coroli Baba

again but uh it certainly is not

Orthodox terab Buddhism because

according to Orthodox terab Buddhism you

have to have completely absolutely pure

morality before you can get to

completely absolutely pure mental States

before you can get to full

Enlightenment so it all depends on how

you look at

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

Wilson's thirdd question

here which is I am having a great deal

of trouble understanding the doctrine of

nonself or no self or not self honestly

the whole thing sounds like a

translation error it makes perfect sense

to me that oneself wouldn't be

fundamentally made up of conditioned

things thoughts feelings memories your

body Etc but the Atman or your will and

awareness or your Consciousness seems

like it would be absolutely fundamental

to everything even if you say the self

is an illusion then you presuppose that

there is a self to fool with this

illusion if there is no self then what

is being fooled well this

is this this kind of argument is shot in

down in the East and in the west like in

the west like um ber Russell shot down

uh decart's Kito eroom it's like I think

therefore I am which is kind of what

Wilson here is is accepting as a valid

argument but as beron Russell points out

I mean you thinking is no proof of any

kind of self I mean you could just say

there are thoughts the thoughts are

integrated

but there's no underlying fundamental

self Essence holding up these thoughts

it's just thoughts that

arise and I mean that's it and that's
that's what David hume's idea of no self
um that he he he um discussed in his
first major philosophical work the
Treatise that um you know that's what he
was saying I mean there's no underlying
self necessarily there's no evidence of
that because it's all you're aware of is
these mental States these perceptions
and so logically you could just say that
the the mental States exist but this
underlying Essence called the self
doesn't have to there's there's no
logical necessity for it so you can have
a thought thinking I exist but that's
just a thought and even that ultimately
isn't ultimately

real I mean it's all devoid of essence

which is basic to early Buddhism also to

maamaa

Buddhism so let's

see yeah the Atman yeah it's like in the

the earliest text that refer to this

it's it's kind of a pun in the AA waga

where it's saying you know for the wise

monk there is no self there is no not

self I mean it's just any kind of belief

is going to be invalid any kind of

belief I mean that's the problem that's

some sor Sam Sara is

perception so you have to go beyond

perception and to say well after you've

gone beyond perception there's the self

all you're doing is just dragging

perception with you into this

theoretical state of Enlightenment and

it doesn't work that

way

so yeah I mean the existence of thoughts

the existence of a perception of being

fooled for example does not logically

necessitate any self that is actually

fooled and so I guess I'm just going to

move on next question this is from

xenoid oh and speak of the devil here's

David hum and narara well narara I guess

that requires a

fez sorry there

Donald

this not sure

exactly I'm not sure exactly how how
much maama is being mentioned here but I
have already discussed m jamaa i I
humbly apologize for not putting on The
Fez when discussing it let's see
here trying and get the
Fez the tassel all set up right okay so
I'll I'll read the question again in an
alternate timeline if David Hume and
nagar were able to read each other's
works or meet in person to share ideas
what do you think they would have
thought of each other God that's that's
really a tough one I mean I know more
about David hume's mental States than
nagar's mental States because nagar

wrote in a kind of poetry like formal
poetry at least the only work of his
that I have read which is the Mula Ma
jamaka karaka you know it's very a
formal Exposition composed in like
Sanskrit poetry and so it's hard I mean
aside from the philosophical points that
he was making it's hard to guess what
his personality was like you know what
he would think of somebody else David
Hume on the other hand he wrote a lot
I've read quite a lot of what David Hume
wrote and he was kind of a sarcastic
wise guy in addition to being a skeptic
and also he lived in Scotland during the
the so-called Enlightenment which at
this point was towards the end of it he

was he lived in like the mid mid to late 1700s and uh probably like most other well-educated upper class Europeans or westerners he probably just sort of had a kind of bias in favor of Western culture a certain uh like chauvinism that you know just the very fact that you have some Indian philosopher writing something I would assume David Hume being a product of his culture would kind of be reading it tongue and cheek he might have to admit well there's some impressive statements here but still I kind of doubt that I mean David Hume didn't have much use for religion anyway so I assume he might

even have less use for like Indian
religion than for Western religion
although it may be he might be willing
to use Eastern religion as a kind of
weapon against Christianity which I mean
if you read some of his stuff is there's
like these veiled attacks on
Christianity all the time
in in the writings of David Hume usually
veiled because I mean he lived in a
Christian culture and he would be
committing social suicide if he just
came out and just blatantly attacked all
Christianity but he he could attack um
Roman Catholicism for example because
there were very few High you know Elite
Roman Catholics in Edinburgh Scotland in

those

days

so yeah if David hum and Nar were able

to read each other's works or meet in

person to share ideas what do you think

they would have thought of each other I

think nagar might have had a Little Bit

of Sympathy For David Hume because David

Hume was a skeptic but he never got

Beyond skepticism now garina on the

other hand used skepticism as a way of

like demolishing

Samara in order to get to what lies

Beyond samsar but he can't even talk

about what lies Beyond on samsara

because you have to use samsaric

language to discuss anything and so by
trying to discuss what lies Beyond
samsara all you've done is just create
more
samsara and so some people will
misinterpret like maamaa or nagar as
just being Skeptics might interpret the
Buddha himself as just being a skeptic
just I don't know but the fact is that
there's a deeper level than that which
is mysticism and I don't think David
Hume had much use for mysticism I don't
I think he just had no use for it he was
I mean the Christianity that he had to
accept at a surface level was
protestantism which pretty much
eliminated all renunciation you know all

monasticism which pretty much eliminated
all mysticism from Christianity there's
not a whole lot of mysticism in
Protestant
Christianity it's probably in there I
assume it's in
there
so I think nagar might have had a Little
Bit of Sympathy For David Hume like he
was a a clever Barbarian who was getting
close to the right track you know he had
got he had grasped the the the basics of
like maamaa to the extent of just
doubting
everything but he couldn't take the next
step which would be mysticism or you

know just mental cultivation just you
know David Hume didn't meditate anything
like that he would have little
appreciation for Janna it might be that
he would scoff at explanations of
Janna um like it just reminds me of
Gibbon Edward Gibbon who wrote The
Decline and fall of the Roman Empire and
I think Gibbon and hum knew each other
they were both members of this
intellectual movement called ironically
the Enlightenment and Gibbon just I mean
he just despised mysticism it despised
the whole idea of meditation you know
it's just people it's just these Looney
Hermits who are lightheaded from
starvation and fanaticism and constant

prayer they're having these
hallucinations that they think are more
real than the
world that's that's how Gibbon would
describe it and I think that's how a lot
of these smug intellectuals of the
Enlightenment movement in the west like
in the 16 1700s would look at like deep
spirituality
they would not see it deeply at all and
it's intellectuals even nowadays like
scientist Stephen Hawking being a good
example you know they similarly they had
almost no appreciation at all for
anything beyond the
intellect

so I think David Hume might have had a
kind of tongue-in-cheek admiration for
for nagara maybe sort of grudgingly
acknowledge that nagara was a very
clever intell ENT man but I don't think
he would really understand the point of
nagar and nagar I think would kind of
have a similar sort
of
um almost like pity for David Hume
because you know he was just sort of
locked into this intellectual
rationalism kind of approach to reality
even though David Hume realized the
limitations of of like rationality
better than most western philosophers
still it's like he couldn't move Beyond

just skepticism just admitting that we
are blind worms was about as far as
David H could get with regard to
understanding the just the limitations
of being a human and he could not really
transcend the limitations of Being Human
through mysticism which is pretty much
the only way of transcending the
limitations of being a
human so xenoid second question is a
follow up on the first question where
would they agree and disagree I think
they would
agree that most of what or pretty much
everything that people are sure of they
are certain of that they think they know

for sure they don't really know it's

just

beliefs um with regard to David hum's

experiments with anata I think there'd

be some agreement there that there's no

underlying self you know this just

because there are thoughts that believe

in a self that doesn't logically

necessitate an actual self underlying

those perceptions those

thoughts um to what degree nagarjuna

would agree with uh some of David hume's

other ideas like the cause and effect

are not is not necessarily real that

that's one thing that David Hume just

pounded away at and it's it's it's

profound and I think even a lot of

Buddhism never really got that far in
that CA and effect you don't really know
cause and effect cause and effect is an
inference one continues to see B
following a and so then you say well B
is caused by a that's that's David hum I
mean he he really pounds away at it in
very eloquently so it may not be very
convincing in my very abbreviated
version of it but uh also David Hume he
really pounded away at the fact that
really our desires are controlling us
and that the the intellect is just a
slave to the passions and I think nagara
would have uh admired that
Insight I think nagara also um I think

Buddhism in general I mean karma is
really just will it's not rational at
all rationality is just this it's just
this artifact that is used as a tool in
service of irrationality
so I think they would agree on that and
uh I think I should just continue with
the next question now see zeni void's
third question what other extremely
radical Skeptics from the east or west
deserve to be brought into this
conversation well pero the not uh pero
of alah but the skeptic Piro the skeptic
you know the the founder of puristic
skepticism if he wasn't free you know he
was busy or something something his
mouthpiece later on in the Roman Empire

of uh sexus empiricus who was I mean
most of what we know about classical
skepticism comes from this book by sexus
empiricus might be on my bookcase I know
I used to have it I haven't looked for
it recently and I'm not going to just
sit there and my back to you trying to
find it on the bookshelf but uh yeah I
mean some of the the Greco Roman
Skeptics might be um brought into the
conversation I think uh possibly the
original like the the the actual
Socrates you know he said that the only
thing that I know is that I don't really
know anything something like that there
was a lot of skepticism in

platonism um so there could be some
platonistic Skeptics but again that's
all Greco Roman so you could toss in at
least one of the the heavy hitter uh
Skeptics from Greco Roman
civilization um
and I'm really not very familiar I mean
you could throw in just for the sake of
spicing things up some like medieval
Chinese Zen master who you know they
were more like nagar though I mean they
weren't really Skeptics I mean they
could use skeptic as a tool for
dismantling
samsara but they wouldn't stop at that
you know that's just sort of the jumping
off point instead of where you end maybe

even some uh 20th century um

existentialists who say that you know

the world is ultimately meaningless that

kind of a thing but I think

existentialists I I don't know who would

be a good example a good candidate for

participating in a conversation with

David hum and narina and maybe you know

Piro or sexus

empiricus

so yeah and it's kind of arguable

whether they were even radical Skeptics

if you're a Mystic you can use

skepticism as a tool but it's not that

you really are a skeptic you're just a

Mystic using skepticism as like an

intellectual tool for this kind of

dismantling some

Sor so I guess I'll just move on to the

next question this is from

philes and files says you usually talk

about Janna by the textbook definition

but what's the deepest jna you feel

you've been in personally

and if I was a monk I wouldn't be able

to answer this at all I'd be against the

rules but I'm not a monk and it's just

hard to say exactly I mean it would be

at least second jna I suppose because I

wasn't thinking anymore you know my mind

was just Crystal Clear like glass and no

thoughts were

arising but I mean how do

you gauge it

exactly as to you know what level you

got Beyond that is hard to

say um and and also like I keep saying

Jan is almost a useless term because it

it's so controversial with regard to

exactly how it is interpreted and I do

think that the way it is interpreted now

is is not the way the Buddha himself

interpreted it I do think the four janas

were just the four stages of meditation

Janna originally just meant

meditation and first Jonna would not be

a superhuman mental state I mean you're

still thinking it'd just be like

correctly doing Elementary meditation

would be first

jna but that's not what Orthodox terata

teaches anymore now even first jna is a

superhuman mental

state so what's the deepest jna I feel

I've been in personally I can't say I

don't know I mean it might be just sort

of a a mistake even to try to categorize

that kind of stuff but I had gotten to

the point where I wasn't thinking

anymore and I was very mindful in it's

like when you get into a stage like that

the a thought can start to arise just

through the power of karma going with

Buddhist philosophy um you know Karma

just keeps generating thoughts whether

you want it to or not but you just see

just the first like ripples of that

thought starting to form and then you

just as soon as you you see it which is

almost instantaneously it just Smooths

back out again and disappears

again just become as soon as you become

aware of

it so it's it's just hard to say I

really can't answer this question um but

I had gotten to the point where I wasn't

thinking anymore but it's like the ways

of of differentiating third and fourth J

or second you know third and fourth J

from second Janna is all of them you're

not thinking anymore but with third jna

you're still feeling physical you're

still capable of feeling physical

Pleasure and Pain and then with regard

to Fourth jna you're still capable of

feeling physical and

mental Pleasure and Pain No wait you're

still you no longer experience physical

or mental Pleasure and Pain in third

genre you no longer experience mental

Pleasure and Pain but you can still

experience physical Pleasure and Pain

but it's in a way it's just a

potentiality you are still capable of

experiencing

that

so I mean just because I didn't feel

physical pain when I was sitting in

meditation I mean it could just be that

there was no pain to be experienced really but who knows I really can't answer that question so I spent enough time uh explaining why I can't really answer that question and so I'm just going to move on to Phil's second question which apologies if this is too blunt but do you ever feel regret for spending such a substantial portion of your life in asceticism and sense restraint a lot of people seem to be terrified of Orthodox Buddhism because the idea of spending their life and sense restraint and negating one's identity feels like dying to them at least partially or temporarily so no I

don't think I've ever felt regret for
spending 30 years as a monk sometimes
there'll be like this feeling of whoa
it's like I was actually a monk for 30
years and now I'm an old man and so I'm
like re-entering the world as an old man
with very few assets other than just
like mental ones
plus a good woman who loves
me so no I don't really feel regret I
mean it's I mean why would I feel regret
for that I don't understand other than
just you know 30 years of my life has
gone by but what would I be doing if I
hadn't become a monk you know it's like
there's a good chance I would be like an
unemployed University professor at this

point if I hadn't become a monk cuz

that's kind of the direction I was was

heading you know as sort of a hot shot

in like Marine ecology I would have

gotten like a master's degree in like

Marine ecology or something like that

and wind up maybe on a University campus

as a biology Professor who then loses

his job because as a biology Professor I

would not call some guy who identifies

as a woman

she and it's like being in the wrong

University is just like this hot bed of

polit politically correct

hysteria

so yeah no so so the answer is no I

don't really regret having spent a
substantial portion of my life and I
mean I'm glad of it you know it's it's
one hell of an
education and uh yeah who I am right now
as a result of that so no I do not
regret it and so I'm just going to move
on to Phil's third
question which is you mentioned you're
drinking Bine gland secretions do you
have any health advice especially
concerning New Tropics and supplements
well I don't even know what neut Tropics
is and the bovine and glandular
secretion that's just
milk I put it in my coffee every
day and supplements I mean the only

supplements that I would really endorse
would be like jinsang and spirulina
which are both more or less natural
and uh just I prefer the root just the
unprocessed jinsang root if you can get
that just take a little chip of it and
just put it into a glass of water and
wait a few hours till it's soft and
chewy and the water's kind of brown and
tastes like Jin sing and you drink the
water and you chew up the root and
swallow it and it's it's fine and it
used to be when I when I lived in
Burma um it's like right towards the end
of the hot season no right towards the
end of the rainy season but before the

cold season is really kicked in it's
like the weather just keeps
flip-flopping there's these extreme
violent uh weather changes from like
rainy to Sunny Sunny to rainy and so
it's just like wet and and like humid
and warm and then it just goes to
blazing hot and like extremely humid
because all the water's evaporating and
filling the air and just it keeps going
back and forth like this and I would
come down with this kind of fever and in
the the villagers called the Udo Pia
which is like climate fever or weather
fever and um in Burma it's especially
the kids who would get it but I was a
round-eyed barbarian and I was getting

it um and it seemed like if I took Jin
sang or spirulina regularly towards the
end of the rainy season I wouldn't get
this fever and the fever would there's
nothing you could take to get rid of it
until the weather finally cooled down
like around the end of
November you know so it might last like
a month and a half i' i' have this
feverish condition that just would not
go away until the weather finally cooled
down when the when the cold season
finally arrived and so spirulina and and
jinsen I would both
endorse
um but uh I mean b gland secretions is

just milk and so yeah it's there's
nothing wrong with drinking milk either
especially in your
coffee so yeah new neotropics I don't
even know what that is Health advice I
really don't think about health and like
like food supplements and pills and that
kind of thing very much at all it's like
my attitude towards my own health is
sort of like my attitude towards that
aquarium back there where you just if it
feels right if it looks right it's
probably right and you don't have to
keep doing water tests you know checking
the ph and the the like the nitrogen
levels and all that you just have faith
that it's balancing out everything's

good and and it's like thinking about it
a lot can have you being like worried
about your health and and that sort of
thing and worrying about your health is
unhealthy any kind of worry is acusa
it's bad karma you're better off without
it so I just have faith you know to some
degree I'm like a Christian
Scientist and uh you know it's all it's
all mindmade anyway so the best way to
have a healthy body is really to have a
healthy
mind and just not worry about health but
but as I say spirulina and Jin sing are
both good they're they're at least maybe
it's just a placebo effect you know it's

like you believe that they're good so

they're

good so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from Sam

papala and some papapa says how much of

Mahayana is heresy in Terra and or how

much of it is heresy to you I personally

think it's beautiful and can get you

some places but I think it will get you

stuck in some sor with all of its wrong

views well with regard to how much of

Mahayana is heresy in

terada then almost all of it because

they've cooked up new sutras new

discourses of the Buddha that the Buddha

in all likelihood did not really say

them and so that would be kind of heresy

they're saying the Buddha said this stuff when it's not recorded in the oldest text that he actually said that stuff so he probably didn't I mean just from the the Orthodox choden point of view cooking up new new teachings of the Buddha to to the extent that they deviate from the earlier teachings of the Buddha that would make them heresy and wrong View and that would be most of it I mean there there are the earlier texts are embedded in the Mahayana traida which is just an entire Library it's huge all these books in the Mahayana trapa and the earlier texts are are like buried deep in those and almost

no Mahayana Buddhists will will read
those texts instead they'll just look to
terraa maybe read some translations of
teravan text without bothering to look
into their own Mahayana text a lot of a
lot of this stuff isn't even translated
into
English
so how much of it is heresy to me well I
mean when you're having other Buddhas
that kind of thing or like endorsing you
know don't become enlightened In This
Very life but put it off indefinitely to
all other beings which ultimately don't
even exist or enlightened to uh yeah
that's that's pretty much heretical and
that's what Mahayana Buddhism is largely

based

on so I mean a lot of what the Buddha

taught in Mahayana texts you know it's

not you know the Buddha it's not

necessarily the historical Goda but some

of it like the prya paramita stuff I

mean that's getting back towards the

very early teachings like pro pro uh

what do you call it pre terraa so I

think the Buddha even though he might

not have taught the heart Sutra or The

Diamond Cutter Sutra I think he would

endorse a lot of what is contained

especially in prya paramita maybe maaka

and like some of the Zen stuff but pure

land stuff I mean that's from a

especially from an orthodox early

Buddhist point of view that's almost

100% wrong view except for the stuff

that is in agreement at least with

regard to keeping morality you know not

telling lies that kind of thing that

would be right view

anyway so how much of Mahayana is heresy

in

Terra uh most of it you know like it's

let just say

90% and how much of it is heresy to me

well I really don't think in terms of

heresy like you could say that The

Diamond Cutter Sutra is heresy but I

still like it you could say that the the

Gad Gita is heresy from a Buddhist point

of view but I've still read it I like it
it's it's profound like some of the
chief upanishads even some parts of the
the New
Testament there there's wisdom in there
and so I really don't think of it as
heresy it's just different cultures or
subcultures have come up with their own
attempts at describing the the the
Indescribable in a lot of
cases so with regard to Mahayana I mean
Zen and like the the Perfection of
wisdom literature is is good and and
beneficial and can help even a terot of
Buddhist so long as they allow
themselves to be helped by such things

but other aspects of Mahayana like the whole bodhisattva idea or the pure land ideas they're it's just so far off the track that I mean you'd probably be better off just sticking with the early Buddhism stuff and uh not not bothering with that kind of stuff it's just my opinion it's just my sincere opinion that's that's there you have it there so yeah but I really don't think much in terms of heresy other than as a technical term that heresy is just what is contrary to established Orthodoxy that's what heresy is as far as I'm concerned so I really don't have any kind of heresy um because I'm not determining

what is established tradition I can say
according to Orthodox Terra this is
heresy or according to Roman Catholicism
that is heresy but I mean according to
me I mean you've got wise teachings and
foolish teachings and everything in
between and just I just leave it at
that so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from
ruie and ruie says the venerable ajan
Puna has often manifested his fondness
for chat's notion of a dhama as a point
instant do you think it is applicable to
Ultimate Damas as well such as nibana
and please a humble request no off the
scale stuff so without the off the scale

stuff I mean I can just say that nothing applies to the ultimate dook because I consider there to be only one in in Mahayana or not Mahayana but Abid dama you've got all these ultimate Damas you know they're like elements ultimately real elements which really are kind of Point instead they're like a pixel it's not just a PIX a pixel of light it's not just
two-dimensional but it's like this one pure
indivisible Speck of something real and it could be a color it could be a it could be like a mental state like a perception it can be like a kind of matter Earth element water element fire

element or there's 28 different kinds of matter according to Abid dama it's not just the four
elements and so I mean these Damas in Abid dama that's what a a dharm in Abid dama is it's just like this pixel of quality you know the indivisible Speck you know so it' be like a point instant it exists for only one moment and it it it occupies um I had one there was one burmes ABI dama scholar who says that one of these ultimate Damas is approximately the size of an electron so it's sub microscopic it's just this tiny Speck but um I do not consider Abid dama to

be really describing Ultimate Reality

and I do not consider there to be plural

ultimate Damas I think there is just one

ultimate dhama and nothing applies to it

I can't say that it's off the scale but

it's not a point instant and just

anything you say about it is going to be

invalid

so I do not consider nibana to be a

point incident and I do not consider any

of the other ultimate realities

described by Abid dama to be ultimate

ultimately

real so I'm just going to move on to the

next

question which is from yugu and he just

says how are you lately well I'm fine

thank you

um yeah I mean I don't know how how to

uh elaborate on that it's just kind of

strange when I can answer a question in

a single sentence and then I'm just feel

like like I don't have my cell phone or

something it's like wow how I how do I

deal with this I I answered it

already but I guess the biggest

development in my life recently is the

snail Apocalypse in my aquarium where I

recently acquired as if you watch the

the aquarium update video you know that

I got some uh bat a striata or zebra

loaches who it turns out are predatory

on snails and they've pretty much wiped

out my snail population except for the
biggest ones are still alive but even
the two mystery snails the big ones
Leroy Jenkins and righteous fist of
apocalyptic chaos they're pretty much
closed up all the time because the
loaches are like trying to get at them
so I suppose I should take the two big
ones out and put them in my 10 gallon uh
invertebrate tank and just let the two
Nite snails that don't stick out a lot
of meat you know they just kind of stay
underneath their shell and move around
underneath their shell without sticking
their feelers out or anything they're
doing okay so I guess I'm just G to have
to get more Nite snails and

uh just deal with the fact that that's
the only kind of snail I can have in
that aquarium now because the zebra
loaches are just just preying upon all
the rest of
them so and it's Saturday it's always
Saturday when I do these are almost
always Saturday Saturday is nice I like
Saturdays so I'll just move on to yuga's
next question which is please tell us
your opinion about Jim kry and his
breakdowns on public television notably
the ones on New York Fashion Week
2017 was it wise of him to talk about
that deep stuff in public like that and
Jim Carrey I don't really follow Jim

Carrey I he used to be like there used to be like Breitbart articles about Jim Carrey where he would be drawing pictures I assume this is Jim Carrey I might even be confusing him with someone else he's like a comedian like a comedic actor right and he would just draw these he has anti he has Trump derangement syndrome apparently you know he'd be drawing these horrible pictures of trump as some sort of you know swine like caricature or something but uh I read somewhere that Jim Carrey either considers himself to be fully enlightened or at least he's got fans who consider him to be fully enlightened and like an enlightened being with Trump

derangement syndrome is is kind of an enigma to me like a an oxymoron or a paradox at least uh and with regard to his breakdowns on public television I'm I've never been a Jim Carrey fan um I've seen some of his movies he seems to be a fairly good actor did he play The Grinch in the liveaction version of How the Grinch Stole Christmas I mean he did a good job in that if if that was in fact Jim Carrey but I'm really don't I'm not keeping up on
kerana so to speak and so I really know nothing about his breakdowns or New York Fashion Week in 2017 or talking about deep stuff in public or any such thing

sorry about that I'm just not really a
major Jim Carrey fan so I'm just goingon
to move on to the next question which is
from gamef and game fap says how did
Tibet become synonymous with monks
and I think I pretty much answered this
question to a large degree in a
previous I mean in a previous answer to
somebody
else I think Tibet became synonymous
with monks largely because um the
diaspora like The Exodus of Tibetan
Monks from Tibet into other countries
and how especially like in the
1980s it was it was like a celebrated
cause that you support toet against
China and then so you had a lot of

Tibetan Monks in the west and then it
became this this cause that was
politically correct the the Hollywood
entertainers were were all in on it
where you know Tibetan Buddhism is you
know the Dal Lama is wonderful and you
know everything's good one thing the Dal
Lama did to end that was he actually was
saying in public interviews that you
know all the migrants that have moved
into Europe should go back to where they
came from that Europe is for Europeans
and of course that was you can't say
Europe is for
Europeans
so um but it originally became

synonymous with monks in in the west I
guess certainly didn't become synonymous
with monks in in
Burma Tibet Tibet did not become
synonymous with monks in Burma at any
time but
um yeah I do think that it was largely
because of the the diaspora of Tibetan
Monks like fleeing Tibet after China
took it over and then it became like a
fashion that you're in favor of Tibet
and the Dal Lama against China and but
now the the Liberals are all kissing the
collective behind of China and so and
and the Dal Lama has said a few
Politically Incorrect things which has
helped him to fall from grace and no

longer be in fashion that uh

nevertheless Tibetan Buddhism has left

uh an imprint on the west and so a lot

of people will just think of the Dal

Lama they a lot of people will even

think that the Dal Lama is just like the

the pope of all Buddhism they'll think

that even the Dal Lama has Authority in

terado Buddhist countries which is not

the

case there is no pope of teral each

country may have like a presiding like

highest ranking like the S Raja in

Thailand or the S Maha SE in Burma

but yeah it's it is just a a common

fallacy that that the Dal Lama really is

sort of like this this pope of all
Buddhists or
something so I guess I kind of answered
that so I'm just going to move on to the
next question which is from five precept
Paul formerly known as five precept
Pete and five precept Paul says if I
don't feel a strong urge to move forward
with a major life decision should I take
that as a sign that it's not the right
path well it could be a sign that it's
not the right path but it isn't
necessarily a sign that it's not the
right path for example let's say
somebody is an
alcoholic and they don't feel a strong
urge to move forward with sobriety you

know they don't want to kick the habit
they don't feel a strong urge to kick
the habit then they should not take that
as a sign that kicking that that
overcoming their alcoholism is not the
right path so if you've got a bad habit
that you
enjoy then you may not feel strong a
strong urge to break that habit even
though breaking that habit I mean it
would be part of the right path for
you
so yeah I do not think it's necessarily
the case that not feeling a strong urge
to move forward with a major life
decision should be taken as a sign that

it's not the right path because it could just be that you have this reluctance to do what you consider to be the right thing or you have a just like your subconscious mind or your defilements or whatever are just trying to talk you out of something that would be to your advantage and I'm not sure what five pret Paul is contemplating here if he's contemplating any major life decision I assume maybe he is because he did ask the question but um you're going to have to rely on more than whether or not you feel a strong urge because sometimes strong urges can be foolish in fact it may be that most strong urges are foolish strong

urges it's just kind of the nature of a
strong urge to be kind of
unenlightened in as in general there may
be exceptions to
that like a strong urge not to to step
on a a an ant or something I mean that's
fine you know it might might manifest as
a strong urge not to just want to hurt
anything that's that's fine but still
strong urges in Buddhism have a
connotation of having like strong
attachments and desires and so forth
that for the most part you're better off
without and so you're better off with
something more subtle than whether or
not you have a strong urge or not I mean

you just can consider you know all just like with me if I'm going to make a major life decision it's my nature that I'm just going to brood over it like when I was going to move to a good forest in Burma I just sat there and stared at a map for hours and I had a friend who would come visit me sometimes he'd walk in he'd just see me sitting on the floor staring at the map again he'd just start laughing it was just I'm just waiting you know just kind of trying to I'm just waiting for the right decision to come and then either the right decision comes or you just keep waiting until finally you have to make the decision whether you know anything has

dawned on you yet and then you just make
your best decision and follow through
with
it so I hope I was of some help to five
preset Paul in answering that question
because I'm moving on to the next one
and uh let me see here Yep this is the
last group of questions this is from
skolin or skaden who asked these
questions uh today shortly before I uh
commen to answering them I'm pretty sure
so anyways scolin or scoline says would
you kindly break down the symbolism in
the 13th floor and the 13th floor is a
movie and I watched the 13th floor twice
in my life and largely because a person

who claims to be enlightened named Jed Makenna or at least he calls himself Jed McKenna um he recommended it's one of his favorite movies for like philosophical spiritual reasons so I watched the movie the 13th floor and uh sko Adin or schaden has his standard bullet points after after the question and he says red lips seem like one which is symbolic of the red truth such as the blonde woman or the old man who gets kissed on the cheek in the singer's Lounge in those scenes they speak knowledge that goes beyond the conventional truth and the thing is I never really studied the symbolism of the movie the 13th floor

there's some movies where it either just
clicks and I just go into on deciphering
symbols mode or else I just study it
because it's such a fascinating movie
and the 13th floor I mean I watched it
it's a good movie it's worth watching
it's a philosophical movie but I never
tried to interpret the symbolism Beyond
just the obvious level that these
science fiction movies in which someone
is living in a computer generated
virtual reality that you know it's
symbolic of us now living in like the
Matrix and the Matrix that is one movie
that I have studied very thoroughly so
I'm I'm aware of a lot of the symbols

that a lot of people aren't aware of for example um when agent Smith first drives up at the beginning of the movie his license plate is supposedly I have read this a Bible reference to the Smith in his fiery Forge which of course represents agent Smith is metaphorically the devil that's why he's called Smith because he's sort of like the the fiery Forge kind of a of a bad guy but the 13th floor I'm I vaguely remember the movie and the symbolism the main symbolism is of course course that this virtual reality um the computer generated virtual reality in the movie is symbolic

of what we are living in now we are
living in a virtual reality this is not
ultimately
real so sorry about that of not really
studying the symbolism of the 13th floor
I mean there's other similar movies like
The Matrix or even like dark city that
I've studied the the symbolism of a
little more or at least I just kind of
intuitively grab ASP the symbolism of it
while watching it better than the 13th
floor sorry about that so I'm just going
to move on to scadden's next question
which is kind of a strange one would you
kindly explain the synchronicity between
Abraham Lincoln and John F Kennedy and

then the bullet points are quite a few and they are as follows AB Lincoln was elected to congress in 1846 JFK was elected to congress in 1946 Abe Lincoln was elected president in 1860 JFK was elected president in 1960 the names Lincoln and Kennedy both contain seven letters both presidents were concerned with civil rights both of the president's wives lost children while living in the White House both presidents were shot in the head on a Friday President Lincoln's Secretary was named Miss Kennedy Kennedy's Secretary was named Miss Lincoln both were assassinated by Southerners both were succeeded by Southerners Andrew Johnson

who succeeded Lincoln was born in 1808 Lincoln Lynden Johnson who was succeeded Kennedy was born in 1908 John wils Booth who assassinated Lincoln was born in 1839 Lee Harvey Oswald who assassinated Kennedy was born in 1939 both assassins were known by three names both names are comprised of 15 letters President Lincoln was shot in a theater named Ford Kennedy was shot in a car named Lincoln made by Ford John wils Booth ran ran to a theater and was caught in a warehouse Oswald ran from a warehouse and was caught in a theater both booth and Oswald were both assassinated before they could go to trial a week before

Lincoln was shot he was in

Morrow um Morrow Maryland and a week

before Kennedy was shot he was with

Marilyn

Monroe so I have seen a lot of this um

back when I was a kid you could get a

penny that had Abraham Lincoln on it and

then stamp

like in the space above the date on the

penny was a little picture of of Kennedy

like the the profile like you'd find on

a a half dollar and it had a lot of the

same stuff on this little card you'd get

with this penny I had one of those I was

like kid or at least I saw one in our

house not sure exactly who the owner of

it was and yeah I mean it's obviously a

synchronicity there's all these
parallels between the two men and one
Buddhist way of looking at it is it's
just like the Karma of the population
they had the the karma to have an event
like this happen and it happened
twice um aside from that I mean it could
be just sort of the collective
unconscious eliciting this theme more
than once going with like some kind of
yian idea who came up with the idea of
synchronicity but it does seem to be a
meaningful coincidence which is one of
yung's definitions of a of synchronic
um in a way you could argue that it's
kind of an evidence that the world is

mindmade rather than

materialistic just that you can have

like this same pattern repeated that I

mean just through random chance or just

materialistic factors is hardly likely

but if our own minds are are creating

our environment then you know the

collective unconscious or whatever the

collective Karma or whatever of the

population can produce this same event

there's two different versions of the

same event which uh is kind of

interesting but I don't know if Yung

himself who came up with the idea of

synchronicity could explain exactly how

it happens and I can't explain exactly

how it happens either other than just

it's just elicited from the karma of the
people and once wasn't enough for some
reason so it had to happen twice and if
it happens again you know like
let's see here someone born in
2046 oh wait someone who was uh elected
to congress in 2046 and elected
president in 2060 if he follows the same
pattern then that would be pretty
amazing but we're gonna have to wait for
that
one so I'm just going to move on to
scolin or scad's last question which is
the last question so we're way under
three hours I tried to uh be a little
more concise than usual and so we're way

under three hours and just just watch

I'm going to digress so much that it's

it's going to take me half an hour to

even get to the answer to this

question so oh God forgot to put the the

paper umbrella in here before I started

drinking from it classy

sophisticated

okay so scolin or scolin third question

is what was Dr Richard Albert trying to

imply in Krishna play Krishna play about

his compensated

date and then he says don't read the

following unless it's true gold digging

airheaded

bimbo and I assume what what he's

referring to first of all he's referring

to a book edited compiled by ROM dos
formerly known as Dr Richard Albert of
Harvard University before that Stanford
who became ROM dos he came went to India
looking
for like spiritual Masters meditation
Masters who could tell him something
about
LSD that I guess I should back up a
little this is going to be a three-hour
video anyway what the hell Richard
Alpert he was like this Jewish bisexual
University Professor that he started off
in the uh University of California
whatever whatever you call it moved to
Stanford then got promoted to Harvard he

was a professor of psychology straight lace guy aside from the bisexuality and so forth and then he he met this guy named Timothy liry who also got a job at Harvard and they started experimenting with psychedelic drugs and they both got kicked out of Harvard because of this and

so um Richard Albert Dr Albert went to India trying to find someone who could give him advice with regard to you know the the values of this or you know how to deal with it you you know how to cultivate these states possibly without using the chemicals and so forth and he met maharaji or Nim karoli Baba and so in his books Miracle of love stories

about neim CI Baba there is a chapter
called Krishna play and Krishna play is
mainly about sort of sexual
issues how neim karoli Baba who's pict
is up there that I mean he would be
playing out the karma of women and some
of it would be sexual so there's these
weird things like this one story where
there's this old
lady who came to visit maharaji and he
actually started nursing from her breast
and milk started flowing from her breast
these kind of weird
stories and because she never had a
child and it just it was like this
lifelong source of Sorrow to her so he

became like her child just to help her
overcome this somehow it's stories like
that and anyways uh ROM Doss mentions
that he hooked up with this woman in New
York after he had after maharaji had
died this was like late 70s or something
and she was a
psychic and um that she was supposedly
channeling maharaji and so ramas he got
involved romantically with this woman
her name was Joya I think she was like
this Jewish housewife with fake
eyelashes who nevertheless she was she
was like this really talented Channeler
and she could Channel this really
mind-blowing stuff you know she just go
into this Trans State and gradually I

mean he he goes into much more detail in
his book gr for the mill where he's
talking he's got an entire chapter
discussing his interactions with this
woman
and she was becoming more and more of
like a cult figure that she was um in a
way he was sort of EX she was exploiting
him um just for his spiritual clout
mainly
and so he eventually just kind of parted
ways with her after it became clear that
it was in a way it was like her
spiritual power was going to her head
and she was becoming like a spiritual
Nero or

something so let's see what was Dr
Richard Albert trying trying to imply in
Krishna play about his compensated date
I mean in in the book in uh not Gris for
the mill but the book about neem cly
Baba he just mentions that neem cly Baba
was continually warning him about Kanan
Kam which is gold and women always be
careful of gold and women be careful
about gold and women you know they're
they're danger to
you and maharaji apparently knew what he
was talking about and then Romos after
he's involved with this woman he's he
finds himself in like a jewelry store
buying her this gold jewelry and then
all of a sudden he remembers you know

maharaji was constantly warning him about gold and women and here he's buying gold for this woman so that's as far as I know that's mainly what he's trying to imply in Krishna play about this woman is just that maharaji I mean he knew pretty much everything already and so he's kind of warning him in advance and it took him years before it finally dawned on him what was happening but um if you really want to know the details about ROM Doss and his interactions with this this woman in New York City that he he gives an entire chapter about it in his book Grist for the mill which is one of the first

spiritual books I ever read and I highly
recommend it it's an excellent book one
of the coolest things about it this book
is the header across every single page
is ram ram ram ram ram ram ram which was
maharaji's Mantra that he would I mean
he was always meditating on
Rah so that's it I don't think she was a
gold digging airheaded bimbo but I mean
she might have been to some
degree I mean she she kind of at least
had the the bimbo attribute to some
degree um whether she was airheaded or
not I don't know and gold
digging gosh yeah I'm not so sure about
that either but if you if you read Gris
for the mill by Romos which is classic

it's one of his best books in my opinion
then uh yeah I I definitely recommend it
and he describes his interactions with
this woman in much more detail than just
the very brief mention of it in U
Miracle of love stories about neim corly
Baba and U that's it I answered all them
their questions didn't I and so I should
always say at the beginning but always
wait till the end to say it is if you
have any questions that you think I can
answer that that Carrie what's that guy
I see I didn't even remember his name
Carrie something Carrie that I mean I
don't know about him I don't know a
whole lot about Hollywood actors that

kind of thing but Buddhism Buddhist
philosophy meditation Burma uh what
early Buddhism was likely to be like
that kind of thing I can answer fairly
well as a general rule
so just include questions in the in the
comments below this video If you please
and uh no more than three per person and
it may actually get decreased someday
but I'm still going with three even
though it makes for long videos and uh
be sure to like And subscribe if you
have not done so already I assume if you
got all the way to the end like this you
at least liked it a little
bit and look in the URL links below this
video

um for other ways that you can access my information including three books that I have for sale on Amazon and of course as always be happy

all righty then I think we're recording

yep I checked right after I pushed the

button to make

sure hello and welcome to episode

116 of question and answer hail audience

I am your host p bosam and you may

notice from the little sticker here I

did my patriotic duty today and voted

voted

early and uh I don't know it just was

like my

patriotic duty to participate in such a

historic election between on the one

hand a totally incompetent diversity

hire who cannot answer a single question

and who made it into Politics on her

back or a Hitler figure who loves Jews
who's going to abolish the Constitution
overthrow our democracy and set himself
up as dictator for life so I mean the
decision was a pretty easy one to make
for me
going to have a drink from my beverage
here remove the paper
umbrella which does not remove the class
of having paper
umbrellas and I got to
admit I'm usually kind of pretty much of
a chill person you know I'm not an
overly excitable person but I've been
kind of stressed out this weekend I've
been stressed out lately the past few
days and it may be evident in my tone or

some such in this Q&A because as my old
boss used to say I have thrown my sucker
in the dirt and I might actually get
myself fired when I go back to work on
Monday possibly the only reason I
wouldn't get fired on Monday is they
know that if they get rid of me they're
just screwed and may have to just lock
the place up
so it is an American tradition like
Disobedience to superiors and I'm just
like defying an incompetent management
at
present but we need to go into details
because that's not why we're here we are
here so I can answer

questions and I should say this at the beginning usually I don't even think of saying this till I get to the end but if you have any questions about something you think I can answer particularly about terraa Buddhism early Buddhism in general philosophy even more in general Eastern or Western I know quite a bit about non- Buddhist philosophy also monasticism Burma me personally got questions about anything like that that you think I could possibly answer feel free to include them in the comments below

and so I'm just going to uh start answering questions then and one of the very first questions is from Athena's

sigil and let's see I'm just going to

scroll all the way down to the bottom

I've got it down at the bottom here

Athena

sigil um ask the question essentially oh

it won't scroll up here that's that's

Dandy okay his question is essentially

explain the poly

Canon so I think that just going to have

to be a separate a separate video just

because it's not a question you can

answer very quickly you know it's not

like a one sentence answer when you

explain the poly

Cannon so I'll probably do another video

possibly right after this one and then

put them

up whenever so setting aside Athena

sigils question of explain the poly

Canon I'm going to answer the question

from game fap and game fap says do you

ever get bored of Buddhism after all

these years how do you refrain from

getting bored well I mean do scientific

realists get bored of scientific realism

do secular humanists get bored of

secular humanism it's just like a model

that you use to help you interpret

reality so so I mean reading Buddhist

books I can get bored of reading

Buddhist books watching Buddhist videos

on the internet I can get bored with

that in fact I've pretty much always

been bored with that I've just have
never been really fascinated by other
people's interpretations of dhma unless
it's under some unusual
circumstance because most of it I've
already heard before a hundred times at
least you know if it's something kind of
Innovative I might be interested in that
but for the most part I'm I remind
myself of this jazz musician I used to
know he was a trumpet player from St
Louis who said he told me he doesn't
like to listen to other people's music
because he doesn't want it to
contaminate his own unique personal
style and I can kind of relate to that

you know it's like I kind of trust my

own judgment more than I trust the

Judgment of most people who write books

about Buddhism or do videos about

Buddhism or

whatever but I have studied bu Buddhism

I almost said Buddism I've studied

Buddhism extensively I studied some

budism

also um and so I mean i' it's just under

my belt it's like an

education um and so it's not like

something that one can be easily bored

with I mean some people assume

that all the time even when I'm not in

front of a camera I'm talking about all

this Buddhist philosophical stuff which

I am not it comes up sometimes sometimes it doesn't come up usually it doesn't come up so it's just sort of like this foundation and I I don't see how I would get bored of Buddhism anymore than a scient like a scientist would get bored of
science just I just don't see it so the answer to this this yes or no question that has already taken about five minutes to answer is no I do not get bored of Buddhism except with regard to reading Buddhist articles or watching Buddhist videos I usually just don't do that so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from

Arin and Arin says I see a lot of
Buddhists in Discord speaking about
going to Retreats and how nice they can
be to set aside the real world chaos Etc
I once heard it said that a person's
garden is their own idea of heaven and I
believe it how can we use Buddhist
principles to make our homes yards and
Living Spaces more retreat likee in
order to foster a personal space that is
more conducive to practice while
fostering more retreat-like benefits at
home we see some of this in Zen and with
Fang shuy but is there anything in Terra
that would lead to
this well like I used to advise people
back when I was a monk and people would

ask me you know how can I live a more
dharmic spiritual life my advice Numero
Uno is get rid of your TV set and I mean
if you want to set up your house like a
Terra Vaden Retreat Center not the way
real terod and Retreat centers are but
the way they would be if the the
founders the people who set up those
Retreat centers were following dhama I
mean you would not have beautiful
landscaping you might have decomposing
corpses or at least
skeletons you know you can decorate the
house with skeletons some of the text
say you should avoid anything
beautiful so I mean you just strip the

house down to the bare necessities it
would be auster I mean if you want your
house to be set up like a retreat center
you would want it all
AER and you know no beautiful
decorations it would just be Stark
simplicity so I mean maybe if you want
to have some semblance of a forest you
could just have lots of plants
everywhere so it's kind of jungly I mean
you could do that I suppose auster with
plants but I mean from a Terra voden
point of of view like an ancient Indian
aesthetic point of view all the the
beautiful decorations and everything you
just wouldn't have that I used to I used
to think about this a lot when I was a

monk it's like you read like Buddhist magazines and it's advertising Retreat centers I remember reading an advertisement for a retreat center talking about just the beautiful scenery and you can go like um like what is it water skiing or it was water boarding or something no water boarding is a torture isn't it no they didn't have that but I mean it's like you can go get a massage like from a raiky master you can go swimming at the beach and all this kind of stuff just so beautiful but I mean if you follow the ancient poly texts I mean you should have like human remains you know it's just it should be

like a reflection on asuba or impurity

or just sort of the

disgustingness of life in

general so um for like a person with

aesthetic tastes who really likes

everything to look nice and everything

you might be better off with with Zen

and I mean with regard to our front yard

we've got this little postage stamp of a

front yard now and I keep saying I mean

we should just turn the whole thing into

a Zen Rock Garden I mean what's the

point of mowing this little yard that is

useless for anything

really so maybe um if you want your

house to be like a retreat

center you may be better off going with

Zen and just have like the Japanese
elegant Simplicity not a lot of
decorations and not a lot of bright
colors and everything maybe some
plants but you want to you want like a
retreat center in in in the spirit of
the ancient ply texts I mean it's just
going to be just like bare
walls bare floor as little comfort as
possible and yeah I don't think that's
going to go very
well so I hope I answered that question
because I'm moving on to the next one
and we really do not have an extremely
long list which is convenient for me
because then I can devote more time to

answering the one Whopper of a question
from Athena's sigil later on
so this next question is from pseudonym
which as I say as I have said before I
doubt that it's his real
name anyway pseudonym says I I just got
to milk as much out of that joke as
possible pseudonym says how might you
guide someone to set boundaries within
relationships while also practicing the
Brahma viharas in other words how do you
prevent the practice of the Brahma
viharas from turning you into a per
verbial doormat and I do not know how
practicing the Brahma VOR
viharas would turn somebody into a dmat
you know it's not going to remove your

spine it might require quite a lot of

backbone to practice the D of or the

Brahma

weara

so see how do you guide someone to set

boundaries within relationships well I

mean the boundaries within

relationships it should just be like

your ethical principles you shouldn't

have to compromise your principles in

order to get along with somebody else

which may be kind of as burgish you know

it may cause you to lose friends I mean

sometimes being too honest or too too

candid can cause you to I mean you can

lose more than just

friends as I may find out on

Monday but uh I mean just having like

meta karuna mudita and UPA I mean UPA I

mean if you're having a relationship

with a woman and you have too much

equinity that may not go very well

so you may have to emphasize the first

three a little more if you're engaged in

like a romantic relationship with

somebody if you just are supremely

indifferent that's not going to really

be a very very good thing I think from

in from the perspective of the other

person

anyway so let's see how would I guide

someone to set boundaries within

relationships well I mean the boundaries

is just your ethical principles it's

what you consider to be really important

in order for you to have uh what's the

word ah sometimes words just Escape me

not

rectitude which is kind of a obscure

kind of a word anyway

man it's weird that I just cannot think

of the

word

ah anyways just just to have like a

moral backbone and then just base your

your your boundaries on that and try not

to compromise your what you consider to

be really vital to living a good life a

virtuous life a proper life you know

don't compromise that any more than you absolutely have to to and that's enough of a boundary I think unless I mean if you're like a private person you like a lot of alone time you may have to set a boundary like you know I just need to chill by myself for a while you know I don't want to socialize tonight I just want to relax maybe kill zombies on my phone for half an hour before I really start engaging because I just want to unwind something like that so I mean you have to take take into consideration that if you compromise your own principles too much then you're going to be less of a person that's going to how do I put this I mean you might get along

with people even worse just because

you're being fake and it's causing a

strain on you which may eventually cause

something to

tear so just be true to yourself I guess

and then I just tried to just pounce

back at that word that I couldn't

remember and uh gosh I think it maybe it

has three syllables though so I'm I'm

I'm kind of closing in on

it anyways so yeah I really don't see

how practicing the Brahma viars would

turn anyone into a doormat unless maybe

they are just already

predisposed towards be being a doormat

anyway but I mean if you're not a

doormat before you practice the Brahma viharas I don't think they're going to turn you into one if you're kind of dor matish to begin

with then it may be that it might somehow make you even more of one by I mean I don't even know how I don't know how the four Brahma viharas of like loving kindness this the usual translation it's not a very good one in my opinion but that's what it's usually called meta or loving kindness Runa or Compassion mudita or sympathetic joy and UPA or

equinity um I don't see how those four qualities even if cultivated you know intensively I don't see how they would

turn somebody into a

doormat

so I guess that's my answer and I'm

going to move on to the next one and I'm

still like this back part of my brain is

trying to come up with the word

of

man I mean there were times when I was a

monk sitting in a cave and it would be

somebody's name some famous person's

name for example and it would just

Escape me it's not just in my old age

it's not like I'm you know losing it

very

much but I it was like one of them was

Hershel Walker I remember I was sitting

in a cave in Burma just racking my brain
just going through the alphabet over and
over again trying to wait for one of the
letters to just kind of click and then
just kind of lead me into the name and
it took it took hours it just derailed
my meditation because I was just so
stubbornly determined to remember that
name but I can't really do that here I
mean probably within a few minutes I'd
have it but you guys don't want to see
me sitting here just like furiously
cogitating going through the alphabet
trying to remember
word so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from covac and
sead

zida and seac and sead zida is asking
these audite kind of questions lately
and so his first question is what are
the four foundations of
mindfulness or the four applications of
mindfulness might actually be a more
correct rendering of Sati patana it
would be Sati and upana which would be
like you know the the application of
mindfulness rather than Foundation of
mindfulness but setting that aside it's
sa batana regardless of how you render
it into
English um what are the four foundations
of mindfulness I mean why is it a thing
what's the purpose Etc because to me it

seems like an arbitrary classification
of random meditations thrown together is
there supposed to be some deeper
original meaning to the four foundations
and maybe the meaning was misunderstood
later on when they tagged these lists of
meditations to them yeah that's possible
and I should have brushed up on because
I really have never been interested in
in all these lists in tervada Buddhism
you know the three of those the four of
the other you know the 37 of that just
these lists I there was this monk that
was ordained at the same ceremony as me
I think he might still be in robe so
he's he's a senior monk now but I
remember he was just really into Abid

dama commentary studying the wisi Maga

and he would just have lists that he

would be memorizing as a way of studying

dhama and I just was really it just

seems so artificial and arbitrary to me

but you've

got mindfulness of the body mindfulness

of the of

thoughts or or mindfulness of mind let's

see mindfulness of feelings and then

mind fulness of dhama and that

mindfulness of dhamma I mean the first

three are pretty straightforward you

know it's

like

uhas that was what I would tell like

burmes people would ask me what kind of
meditation I would do um sometimes I
would tell them it would be like chasa
or wait anasa which are mind mindfulness
of the Mind itself or mindfulness of
feelings and I could be
just like getting this wrong because
it's been a while since I've studied
this but the first is the body
mindfulness of the body and like
mindfulness of breathing and so forth
mindfulness of just everyday activities
you know when you're like being aware of
the movements of your body and
everything
but you're not really being mindful of
your body when you do that it's more

chasa mindfulness of your mind

mindfulness of mental States because

you're only aware of your body through

the intermediate of mental States

so I mean the only reason you can be

aware of like breathing is through these

mental sensations of experiencing

breathing so I mean look at my hand I

can contemplate my hand that's kind of

contemplation of the body I mean it's

not really an orthodox you know there is

no hand meditation technically but still

I mean it's I'm medit I'd be meditating

on the

visual sensation which is mental visual

perception which is mental about a

certain amount of tactile sensation

which is also

mental maybe I could like make sounds

one hand clapping and then that would be

auditory perceptions which is also

mental so already I mean I was I've been

the sort of person that the four sa

batas really you know I would just

like to my critical mind it did not seem

like a very elegant system

it's just sort of in a way like covac is

implying it seems to me that it's just

kind of like this Jerry rigged

conglomeration of different meditation

techniques just put under

categories because some of them are are

very different from what an ordinary

person would consider to be or an
ordinary Buddhist or an ordinary
Buddhist monk would consider to be
mindfulness like contemplating
decomposing corpses for example I mean
that's a kind of mindfulness meditation
but it's really not what we consider to
be mindfulness meditation in the sense
that mindfulness meditation is just
experiencing whatever is
arising um just as it is right now
without any kind of like verbal
commentary just as close to unprocessed
sensory data as possible which would
also include just thoughts or or mental
processes as they arise

also so I mean if I'm doing

like mindfulness on breathing I'd be

more inclined to call that wait anasa

mindfulness of just the sensation of

touch or because the sensation of touch

is technically mental it could also be

Che NASA so I mean how you look at

mindfulness of breathing it could be any

of the first three sa batas and the

fourth sa batana is the one that used to

stump me the most I used to like really

like try to figure out what the the

Daman nasana is and it is somewhat

controversial different dhama teachers

will interpret it in different ways I

think aan Tano's interpretation is a

fairly good one but it does seem to be

just kind of a catchall of like dharmic

Concepts I think that may have

originally been it where you're just

like

contemplating dharmic teachings or just

Buddhist Dogma although some people will

interpret that differently because it's

got lists of qualities it could be like

you know you're it's based on the

quality itself rather than just

contemplating the

list so I do tend to agree with what COV

action CAD Zena is implying that the

different meditation techniques arose

first and they just got attributed to

these four different categories and like

I already said mindfulness of breathing
could belong to any of the first three
categories technically speaking
depending on how you interpret it how
you look at
it I mean chasa maybe not so much but it
certainly could be considered weit in
aasana especially if you are
contemplating the weighta or the feeling
of the air at your nostrils or the the
if you're more of a mahasi person doing
the mahasi method the feeling of your
abdomen rising and
falling
so there may be it may be that the
Buddha originally did teach for
panas and it may be that it's it's that

has been to some degree lost or at least
very much
garbled but like GC Pond says in his
Monumental work studies and origins of
Buddhism even the saatana sua in a way
it's kind of like The Sermon on the
Mount to Christians where in all
likelihood the historical Jesus assuming
that he existed I don't want to offend
anyone on bitshoot by sugges in that
that Jesus of Nazareth really existed
but just for the sake of argument let's
just say Jesus of Nazareth really did
exist as a historical figure probably
The Sermon on the Mount wasn't just some
sermon that he delivered all at one time

in a way it was sort of like collected sayings of Jesus then wound up getting put into the Bible as one sermon at least in one of the gospels whereas in like a different gospel I think in Matthew it's The Sermon on the Mount but in Luke it it's like diffused out in probably closer to as it actually happened and it could be that the sa patan and the Maha saan there are two of them um that it was just sort of like a uh like a meditation manual just a list or a like a compilation of different meditation techniques that were just conveniently categorized under four different categories so um GC Pond is of that

opinion he he has some relatively

learned reasons for believing that it

does make sense to

me um so whether the Buddha originally

gave a teaching of four sa Banas or

whether it was just a convenient

compilation method of different

meditation techniques that the Buddha

probably did teach at least a lot of

them

then I mean it may be impossible to

really know the answer to that

question so I'm just going to move on to

se action sead zona's next

question which is where do you think the

future of humanity is going based on

this video where human brains become
fully simulated and we are able to
predict and know even individual
behaviors better than ever and he it was
he uploaded
this um his like a short YouTube video
of some kind of geeky Science Guy kind
of going on and on about how
scientists have digitized the brain of a
fruit fly and then they they put it into
a computer they uploaded you know all
the the neuronal connections and
everything of this fruit fly brain and
then they were able to make a kind of
program out of that so that they could
kind of input digital stimuli to this
brain and then it would act like a fruit

fly you know it's like they'd put
digital uh data representing food near
the fruit fly and then the fruit fly BL
brain I'm having trouble talking with
regard to tongue twister kind of words
the fruit fruit fly brain say that three
times fast would like respond with you
know extruding prosus towards the food
and so forth and to at the end of this
little video the geeky Science Guy is
saying we could do that to a human brain
and that means that with regard to you
know an afterlife and Free Will and
everything and then it just kind of like
short circuits and that's the end
because of course he's a kind of

materialistic atheist probably who you know he's just sort of like hinting at it without just blurting it out but I do think it is possible that say a human brain could be digitized but whether the digitized human mind you know you upload your personality into a computer you upload like the the brain structure your brain structure into a computer somehow that whether the assuming that there is some kind of Consciousness that is generated through this pattern this complex pattern you know it you've got energy there which then becomes it's so convoluted and complex that it becomes like

self-referential that you know it could
like cause self-consciousness to arise
but whether it would even closely
resemble the original human with the the
organic gray blob of meat called a brain
I mean whether they would even be close
to each other is
questionable because science simplifies
things and just because they're human
they're going to be oblivious to to an
infinite number of things that we just
we don't have the sense organs to detect
it for example and so just because
you've got the the neuronal sequences or
whatever of a brain programmed into a
computer that doesn't mean that it's

you're going to have like this

digital brother this identical twin who

thinks just like you inside this

computer that's going to have to be

tried I guess

by scientists who consider the the you

know scientific inquiry to be more

important than ethical issues that sort

of thing because I mean brain scientists

especially do the most gruesome

experiments I mean I've I used to have

this friend who was a

neurophysiologist and he was sending me

books on like the human brain and all

this cuz I was interested I want to know

how the brain works

and it just goes over and over about

just these experiments done on monkeys
you know they they'll take a monkey
they'll cut off the top of his skull and
plant like electrodes into his brain and
then make him like solve puzzles in
order to get like a squirt of fruit
juice into his mouth through a tube
because you know he's clamped into this
cage where he can't move other than his
hands kind of a thing or one experiment
some famous elegant experiment where
they remove the entire cortex from a
cat's brain and then see what the cat
does after it recovers from the from the
operation more or
less I mean I just felt like dirty after

reading the book it's like I wanted to

take a shower after reading a few

chapters of this

book so anyways getting back to seov

action CAD Zina where do you think the

future of humanity is going based on

this video we're going to have to see

whether or not uploading a personality

into a computer really does does

replicate a human

mind and that's that's anybody's guess

really I do think that probably it's not

going to be an exact replica even if

they get all the neuronal the neuronal

structure

correct

then I

just probably they're going to be
overlooking something and it's not going
to be equivalent so it's it's a question
as to whether you know we're going to
reach a science fiction scenario where
people are just uploading their their
brain structure their personality and
and I mean your personality isn't
entirely limited to your brain structure
I mean there's all kinds of like
hormonal stuff going on you know and
they're going to have to work that in
also somehow otherwise you're just going
to be without
hormones not even virtual digital
hormones and still in the back of my

mind I'm trying to remember that

word oh

boy and I think it's got a g in it but

it's not the beginning it's there's a g

somewhere in the

middle so let's see

here where do you think the future of

humanity is going based on this video

where human brains well I mean this is

just transhumanism you know and we're

we've already started on the road of

transhumanism I think the first person

to get false teeth or a prosthetic leg a

peg leg or something that was like the

beginning of transhumanism where you're

combining you know like objects with a a

human being kind of a thing but of

course uploading a human mind into a
computer there was a really good movie I
think I think Johnny Depp was in it
about how this computer scientist I
think gets his personality programmed
into this brain or into this computer
but the thing is once his mind was
programmed into the computer he had
access to the the entire internet
essentially and so I mean he stopped
being very human pretty
quickly so I mean you'd have to upload
the human mind into the computer somehow
without overlooking stuff like hormones
and then you'd have to like upload them
into this virtual reality that resembles

our our empirical reality closely enough

that the person wouldn't just go insane

I think in that movie with Johnny Depp

they started off with a monkey they they

programmed a monkey brain into the

computer first and all they were getting

from the monkey brain was

screaming because it was just so freaked

out that it's just like in this black

void you know there's no trees or even

cages you know it's just completely

Beyond his

understanding

so yeah that's that's technological

singularity stuff and it's The

Singularity because we cannot predict

what's going to happen once it

hits so the future of humanity may not
even get that far because once AI
becomes intelligent
enough most of you have probably seen
enough science fiction movies like The
Terminator movies or whatever to know
that once a computer becomes sentient if
that's even
possible once a computer becomes
sentient I mean it's just going to
surpass us in a matter of milliseconds
probably because it can program itself
you know it's like recursive
self-programming that it's just going to
this it's going to be like the uh what
do you call it the the curve you know

the what do you call that s it's not an
s-shaped curve is it no it just goes
whoop and then it'll it'll be as as
above far above us as we are above
amibas with regard to intelligence so I
mean you just can't predict what's going
to
happen so human beings playing with this
kind of stuff thinking that they're
going to create heaven on Earth or
whatever there's no telling what's going
to happen with
that and so I'm just going to move on to
seov action CAD zina's third question
here which
is in angura nikaya
4-37 the Buddha says that one who

possesses four qualities is incapable of decline as and is in the vicinity of nibana what for here abiku is accomplished in virtuous Behavior guards the doors of the sense faculties observes moderation in eating and is intent on
wakefulness and then um sovac continues here similarly in majaya number 53 it says quote mahanama a noble disciple is accomplished in ethics guards the sense doors eats in moderation is dedicated to to wakefulness they have seven good qualities and they get the four absorptions Blissful meditations in the present life that belong to the higher

mind when when they want without trouble
or difficulty
unquote so then covax continues here
these four are often repeated in many
sutas either as a group or as the four
or four practices in the gradual path
such as majam minaya 107 which GC Pai
thinks is is one of the earliest
descriptions of the Buddhist path what
is the significance of each of these
four individually and how can these be
practiced
properly okay these four individually so
the first would be virtuous Behavior
which is keeping five precepts or if
you're a monk keeping V that would be
virtuous activity and it's virtue is

passive it's negative in Buddhism it's
not doing things you can just sit there
doing nothing and be perfectly virtuous
from a Buddhist point of view something
like
generosity is it's different that's
Donna not Sila so the positive things
that you do that's different from
virtuous Behavior going from a ancient
Indian Buddhist philosophical point of
view so keeping five precepts for a lay
person would be virtuous Behavior
guarding the doors of the sense
faculties is a little more subtle
there's different levels to it I mean
first of all you guard the door of the

sense faculties by just not exposing
yourself to a carnival you know it's
like you you go to like a secluded place
with not much going on you you go to the
The terad Retreat Center atmosphere with
bare
walls and I mean you just try to strip
things down as
sensorily austere as you can and then I
mean if even if you can't do that I mean
that would be like for starters that
would be like surface level and then at
the deeper level you just try to stay
mindful with clear comprehension so that
that you don't have a running commentary
you just experience what you're
experiencing in the present moment with

as little like interpretation as
possible that would be guarding the
sense doors first of all you avoid
excess stimulation and then secondly
what stimulation you do unavoidably
receive you just do not respond to it
it's sort of like J Krishna mury talking
about choiceless
awareness where it just kind of goes
through you it goes like some sound a
barking dog for example just goes in one
ear and out the other ear and you don't
interpret it as barking dog it's just
auditory Sensation that you are
experiencing while it's happening and
then when it stops happening you just

move on to whatever happens next you're just in the present moment just experiencing whatever stimuli or occurring to you and not having this I like this I don't like that what was that sound this this running commentary this interpretation perceptual interpretation you try to stay as close to Bare sensory data as you can manage and even you get like a second chance whereas even if you start to think you can still be mindful of the thought and kind of objectify that and detach from that so you don't still still you have a second chance at not just getting lost in this stream of Consciousness this internal

monologue so that be guarding the sense
doors at least from my interpretation
observing moderation in eating for a
monk that's one meal a day and you don't
eat until you're stuffed you eat just
enough so that you stay skinny but
healthy with regard to lay people
I mean it would just be not eating to
excess and eating to live rather than
living to eat you know not being a
foodie not taking pictures of your food
and putting them on Instagram or
Facebook or whatever you know it's
just you just eat plain food you're not
like saucing it all up with all these
flavor profiles and caring about

presentation and stuff that you can
learn about if you watch a show called
chopped but
I mean essentially moderation in eating
is just eating what's put in front of
you not being picky in your food and
just eating for the purpose of remaining
healthy enough to continue practicing
dhama and then being intent on
wakefulness I think the just the
standard dogmatic interpretation of that
is that you sleep as little as possible
the ideal in the text is one
watch of the night which is onethird of
a night so that would be approximately
four hours just sleep four hours a night
and there was only one month in my life

when I was able to average over the
course of a month less than four hours
per night that usually I'm a sleep ahead
I had to be in some of my best
meditation had to be going on in order
for me not to need more than four hours
of sleep but at that time I had this
rule is that if I woke up and I already
been asleep for for 4 hours that was it
I had to get up I couldn't go back to
sleep again and in the text it says you
know when you lie down to sleep you
should be like looking forward to
getting back up again in the morning you
know it's like you sleep as little as
possible and for most people it's going

to be more than four hours because I
mean I tried it at a pandama at a
Meditation Retreat at Pama in Burma and
I I was down to like five hours per
night I think and I was starting to
hallucinate in the like the the after
the evening meditations I was starting
to dream while sitting there in
meditation it was like I had this
physiological need to start dreaming and
so I'd be just it would be like
hallucinations going on in my head so
finally I had to like increase it to
like five and a half hours and then the
it was like the dreaming stage the sort
of the awaking dreams
didn't start until the last meditation

of the evening before I went to sleep
and then it was more manable so you're
going to have to figure out what the
minimum of sleep you can get away with
is I mean at first when I first became a
monk I'm thinking like four hours is
like the the goal I should be going for
and I was just dragging myself around
like a zombie because before then before
I was a monk it was like nine hours was
ideal for me I've I've always been kind
of a sleepy head although I don't sleep
that much
anymore so those are like the
four the four virtues the the four
qualities that supposedly if you possess

these qualities you are incapable of decline although I mean you if you lose the qualities that would be decline I mean it would seem that once you have all four qualities you'd be like a soda paana or something and you couldn't backslide I mean you couldn't possibly start eating too much again which I'm kind of skeptical of that uh I mean so long as you have that you're incapable of decline but then if you lose any of that I mean that would be decline in and of itself so that it would it would seem to be that once you get these four qualities I mean you you're just that's it that they're not going to go away no matter what you do really so yeah I it

may have started off with the Buddha
giving a like a discourse in Ancient
India the Ganges Valley you know
praising
monks especially monks who keep their
precepts who are restrained with regard
to the sense doors you know who observe
moderation in eating and who are intent
on wakefulness that that would be a monk
who is practicing well and that you know
you can expect progress from that and
then it could be that some of the the
elaborations on that idea came later to
say that I mean it's like once you EST
once you get those four qualities you
can't possibly backslide and stop having

the four qualities I mean that would
seem to imply that just having those
four qualities for just one moment all
at the same time would imply that you're
an Arya and uh I don't think the texts
actually go that far
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question this is from dhama
River and dama River says I once lived
in a Buddhist temple where many monks
were quite miserable they were extremely
unhappy I never imagined monks could
suffer so much it honestly felt like
prisoners doing time it didn't feel like
holy men striving for any kind of
Liberation is this normal are monks
supposed to be like this are they

supposed to live tortured existences
with no joy whatsoever or are they
supposed to live the holy life joyfully
and happily is a miserable or joyful
monk a sign that he's practicing
incorrectly or correctly what are your
thoughts well I mean I was a monk for 30
years and I've spent time at lots of
monasteries and I
never to my to my knowledge ever set
foot in a monastery where it was just
abounding with miserable monks I don't
know what nationality dhama River
doesn't say um what kind of Buddhists
they were he says Buddhist
temple um and he doesn't say what the

nationality of the monks would

be um

so I mean it could be some kind of Asian

Monastery where the monks were just uh I

mean I don't know what country this

Monastery was in um you know maybe they

were Asian missionary monks in the west

who were just they missed being I mean

they were like in this foreign land

where they couldn't communicate well

couldn't do the things they used to be

able to do back in the motherland or

whatever but even then I mean generally

Burmese monks and the one Thai Monastery

I stayed in at the West in the West for

a short time they just did not seem

miserable at all I mean as a general

rule you practice dhama you're going to have a certain amount of Serenity contentment I mean if you're practicing correctly you're going to have some Serenity and contentment and a certain amount of Happiness although the best kind of happiness for a Buddhist isn't like positive happiness that has the opposite of negative unhappiness so that you have wind up with this Duality you know this roller coaster ride of up and down happy unhappy happy unhappy it would be more just a kind of Serenity but even Serenity or even like neutrality sort of a a a Serene neutrality I mean that's not miserable

it may it may look miserable to other people it that's that's one thing is that some people may go to a monastery where monks are practicing relatively conscientiously and I mean they may think that these monks are miserable just because they're not grinning and smiling and and singing and laughing you know it's it's they may think man this is so austere you know maybe they're eating one meal a day of just rice and goop it's like how could they be happy and I mean they're obviously not being overtly bantly joyful so they may just kind of project that I mean if they were in that situation they'd be miserable these monks aren't extremely

joyous so I mean it may be that somebody
could go to a monastery and see sort of
neutral
monks as you know that project you know
their own kind of what they would be
like if they were in the same kind of
environment onto these monks but I mean
aside from that I've never been at a
monastery where you had all these
miserable monks just kind of drooping
and moping
around as a general rule Burmese monks
tend to be fairly happy
people for various reasons I guess and
if you're doing intensive practice
you're going to be enjoying the fruits

of dhama you know it's like you're going

to be

experiencing a kind of happiness that

most people just don't

experience

so let's see is this normal no it's I

don't think it's normal I've never I

never saw it in all my years as a monk I

never was at a monaster I've been at

lots of monasteries never was at a

monastery where even a significant

number number of the monks were

miserable I mean sometimes there were

times when I was a monk that I was

fairly miserable but it was like

struggling and striving just sort of

like wrestling with the devil in the

wilderness wrestling with my own defilements and sometimes you just kind of get depressed or discouraged or whatever but still there's this goal of dhama that you it's kind of like a shining light on the horizon anyhow so yeah I mean are monks supposed to be like this no are they supposed to live tortured existences with no joy whatsoever um you're allowed the joy of meditation and it may be that if they're shitty meditators they won't be able to experience that um the Buddha did allow a few Pleasures to monks one was The Joy of Eating which of course you're supposed to do in moderation the joy of

sleeping also you're supposed to do that

in moderation the joy of bathing taking

a nice bath you have to do that in

moderation and then just the Bliss of

meditation which you can you can wallow

in that

one

so I mean aside from that I mean

tortured existences I mean even self

torture is not the middle path although

the austerity of a conscientious

monk um I mean it may look like torture

to an outsider

but I mean it's just sort of this

superficial austerity that really is not

torturing the Mind other than maybe

causing the monk to practice being okay

with

discomfort but being okay with

discomfort is not the same as being

miserable so is a miserable or joyful

monk a sign that he's practicing

incorrectly or correctly not really

because I mean I've mentioned before in

these q&as that there's like four

different ways of progressing in dhama

you can have fast and happy fast and

unhappy slow and happy and slow and

unhappy and it's going to depend on like

the personality the character traits and

so forth the parames the comma of the

individual who's practicing so sometimes

I mean you can be practicing correctly

and be miserable like there's uh the case of um let's see the the Buddha gives a discourse on like four different ways of practicing dammo this is a different four different ways where one of them or maybe maybe it's the same one let's see there's no there's the kind four different paths and there's the kind that starts unhappy but winds up happy and that's the monk who has strong desires you know he's he's a lustful person or just by Nature he you know he's just got these he's a hot head or whatever and then he becomes a conscientious Monk and it's like restraining him he is so repressed by restraining his urges that he's like

like a basket case he might be just like beating his breast with tears streaming down his face in frustration but according to the suta I mean eventually he's going he's not going to become Enlighten necessarily because he's he's got so so many strong urges and so forth but at least he's going to go to heaven afterwards as a result of that and I mean that's kind of like the the biblical chrisan Christian approach you know is you're supposed to be miserable now so you can be happy later so I mean that does have a certain application in Buddhism so um I mean a miserable whether a monk is miserable or

joyful really is not a reliable like a
statistically significant correlation
with whether he is practicing correctly
or incorrectly I mean if he's Serene and
content then that's a good kind of a
good indication but if he just laughs a
lot and smiles a lot I mean it could
mean that he's just not very serious and
you know he's just kind of a wise guy
who has a good time easily easily amused
or
something
so yeah I really do not consider um like
the dichotomy the D the Dual duality of
misery and just Joy or Elation you know
like ma manic
depressive um I don't think that that is

really either one is a good indication
of whether a monk is practicing
correctly I mean he would be following
the middle path between misery and like
Elation misery and just being giddy with
joy he'd be following the middle path of
just Serene
equinity but I mean we are human and a
monk is repressed I mean a lot your
animal urges tend to you have to just I
mean you wind up having to repress your
animal urges a lot which I mean if you
know about Freud he would say that's
going to make you a neurotic basket case
but I mean at a higher level once you
get good enough at it then you just

watch these urges arise without reacting
to them that's that's mindfulness that's
not just repression that's allowing it
up to the surface not just pushing it
down and then just kind of processing it
transmuting it into something neutral by
not
reacting but I've kind of wandered away
from actually answering this
question but yeah it is definitely
abnormal to go to a terraa Buddhist
Monastery and have a significant number
of the monks there be miserable unless
maybe something really horrible is going
on at the
monastery and then it would be
temporary and even then the wise the

wiser monks would be more Serene than like the rookies so I'm just going to move on to the next question and this is from tasz is and tasis says let's say I am in Burma and I tell people that I am not a monk and everybody knows this and now I shave bald and wear monk robes and bull and everything and I walk from town to town just for the fun of it would I be arrested no you would not be arrested because that sort of person in Burma who looks like a monk and dresses like a monk and acts like a monk but is not ordained is called a yate and I used to have a friend he was from Texas he was a

monk for many years and then he kind of
got I know it was like he didn't follow
the middle path very well he he I mean
he was like a Buddhist Rambo most most
people will stray off into the
self-indulgence side of the middle path
he strayed over onto the excessive
athetic rigger
side and so it was like the his loot
strings were too tight and he couldn't
play music properly according to the the
metaphor and So eventually he just kind
of burned out and kind of like turned
against Buddhism at a surface level but
deep down he still believed it and so he
became a
eate and which means I mean he he wore

monks robes still he shaved his head

still sometimes not always well some you

they don't shave their

head and he just went for Al still he

lived inside of a big hollow tree big

Banyon tree for many

years and everyone was cool with

that so it I mean it is a a traditional

thing in Burma that you can be

unordained and still live pretty much of

a monastic like a monk life and so long

as you admit that you're not a monk that

you're a ye or whatever and ye

interestingly the word Y in burmes comes

from the Sanskrit word Rishi so it's

like you're a

Rishi doesn't come from poly because the

poly word is

e so they got an r in there that which

the Burmese pronounce like why burmes

often pronounce R like why because in

the original Burmese language there was

no R sound Asians have a thing with the

letter R for some reason East Asians

anyway

so yeah you would not be arrested and if

you were a serious practitioner you

meditated you know you calm and

restrained and public and all that then

you might actually still be uh respected

and people would be happy to put food

into your

bowl I'm not entirely sure about other

countries but in Burma it's it's a traditional thing that has been there for hundreds of years so I'm I'm going to move on to the next question which is from five precept Paul formerly known as five precept Pete and five precept Paul says I recently had a difficult encounter with someone and found myself stewing in resentment it made me wonder when I was filled with hate was I sending harmful energy towards them possibly causing Misfortune in their life or was I only hurting myself well mainly you were hurting yourself and this it's the other way too if you're sending meta to other beings mainly you

are benefiting

yourself um whether they will receive

that meta or not or whether they will

receive that hate or not depends on

number of factors you know your mental

States their mental States how sensitive

they are to Vibes in the air so to

speak

um so it may be that they received some

harmful energy from your anger at them

but it's mainly their own Karma like

whatever they did is maybe they did some

some dick move against you then in a way

it's their own karma that's causing

their suffering rather than any kind of

hate you're beaming at them although I

mean I have experienced meta from you

know other people you know it's like my
preceptor for example he didn't like me
very much I was just this wild unruly
Barbarian and I mean I'm still that way
I defy authority sometimes you know it's
like I follow my conscience before I
will follow some authority figure which
I mean it's it's like a tradition in
America Civil Disobedience America as a
nation arose from Civil
Disobedience um so anyways he didn't
like me very much but then one day I was
outside doing something and I just had
this Rush of
like I mean it's like someone was just
beaming love at me me and then it turns

out that at that same time the the pre

my preceptor was in the Dharma Hall

leading a meta meditation and I I mean

it could have just been some coincidence

synchronicity or something but I do

think that uh he was deliberately oops I

just got the message that my battery's

about ready to go dead because I forgot

to plug the computer in this time one

moment

please let's see here

admire my aquarium while I'm doing

this

okay we're doing all right just hope I

hope that it's uh I'm not using more

more battery power than I'm getting

because sometimes um in the past for

some reason like the fans going on the computer and it drains the battery faster than it recharges and I just get down to like 2% and it starts like freezing up and stuff so anyways let's see we're getting back to oh yeah the preceptor and yeah so I do think that it is possible I mean mental states are contagious like if you beam hate at somebody they're going to feel the results of that and just saying well it's their own karma that's I mean that might um kind of justify to yourself what you're doing but still you're making Bad Karma you know it's like punching someone in the nose you

know it is true it's their karma to get
punched in the nose otherwise you
couldn't punch them in the nose no
matter how hard you tried they have to
have the karma that allows them to get
punched in the nose but still even
though they are repaying a karmic debt
you are making new karma for yourself by
punching them in the nose and so it's
really not some kind of you can't use
that in a casuistic Manner and say well
it was their karma so you know I could I
could just take all of their property
away from them and it's it's their
problem that it doesn't work that way
because it might be their this their own
Karma to experience what they're

experiencing but you're making new Karma
by doing it and so sending harmful
energy towards people I mean it can
work but still you're hurting yourself
more than you're hurting the other
person arguably even punching them in
the nose you're hurting yourself more
than you're hurting the other person
even if it breaks their
nose because they may have just paid off
a karmic debt but you have just incurred
a new karmic
debt so yeah the short answer I mean I
I'm really not good at short answers I
always have to meander all over the
place but uh I mean it may be that if

you're like beaming hate at this person
they're going to pick up on some of it
it may cause them a certain amount of
dooka some some
troubless of mind or something but still
you are mainly hurting yourself and I'm
going to move on the next question here
this is from
Romeo and Romeo says one of the central
themes I find in your q&as is the
importance of one's mental state in
generating the right momentum to carry
you through this life and towards the
next with this in mind my question
pertains to how to mindfully be aware of
current events in the conventional s
world when it objectively seems to be

going to hell in a hand basket I say
this as an admitted yet conflicted News
Junkie who feels the need to keep a
breast of what's going on in the world
even though doing so often brings me
down every now and then I try to go on a
news fast but it doesn't usually last
for very long they say ignorance is
bliss but I honestly don't see sticking
my head in the sand and tuning out
what's going on in the world as an
option for me one of the things I like
about your q&as is that you balance the
pursuit of ultimate truths while still
being grounded in conventional samsaric
everyday reality you seem to be able to

strike the right balance between

cultivating and maintaining a pure

positive mental state while at the same

time being aware of current events and

the negativity often found in them any

suggestions on how I can strike this

balance as

well well I mean first with regard to

Ultimate truths in the plural I really

think that there I mean ultimate truth

is is one there is only one ultimate

truth over which a wise man could argue

with another wise man as the AA waga

puts it um but that's just that's just

sort of a

quibble um I think in order to be able

to see current events with equinity

there are two things that you can

cultivate I mean there's probably other

things you can cultivate but two just

occur to

me and I'm still trying in the back of

my mind remember that one word that I

can't remember

now so even when I stalled for a second

to drink from my cup still the word did

not did not

arise into my

sensorium so two things that you can

bear that you should that you could try

to keep in mind one if current events

are bugging you read history read

gibbons's Decline and fall of the Roman

Empire for

example read read about the Huns or the

mongal even read about World War I or

World War

II and you'll see that it's not just

that things are [__] up now it's the

world has always been [__] up that's

what samsara is all about in fact things

are actually pretty good compared to the

way they've usually been in the past

I mean we're just kind of soft and

gentle now we've been feminized so that

now the problems are causing through

like degeneracy rather than Barbarian

Invaders raping and

pillaging or just Psychopathic Kings or

Emperors or whatever I mean things were

really messed up even in the Buddhist
time like on the the list of 10 dangers
that is given in the text occasionally
that danger number one on the list is
Kings the danger of Raja or Kings and
it's not just enemy Kings invading like
your own country I mean your own King
can be a danger to you too back in those
days there were no constitutional
monarchies in those days it was you had
a king he was usually a kind of
sociopath or a lot of the time he would
just be this ruthless sociopath that's
maybe how he became king in the first
place
and he can just do whatever he wants I

mean human rights are a modern
Innovation maybe like the Romans and the
Greeks maybe some some of the the
ancient Indians also you know it could
have been an Indo-European thing this
whole idea of Human Rights or at least
the rights of the
citizen but uh I mean mostly I mean
that's for the most part that's like a
modern
Innovation so just I mean read gibbons's
decline fall the Roman Empire you want
to see just a a [__] show that lasted
for hundreds and hundreds of
years uh and another thing is just bear
in mind that whatever we are
experiencing it's our Karma to

experience so I mean if you want things
to to work out better in the world
around you I mean you got to work on
yourself and make what's inside you
better and then it's going to be
reflected
outwards it was like eart TOA I think it
was in his his book The Power of Now
saying that some people who disapprove
of what's going on you know in the
outside world it's like somebody
standing in front of a mirror like this
like raging against their own reflection
in the mirror because it really is the
world we live in is is a projection of
our own mental

States in a

sense so just kind of bearing those two

in mind I mean the easy route is read

some history and just see what a [__]

show history is I mean it's just for

most of the existence of the human race

I mean things have been a heck of a lot

worse than they are now I mean we're

just kind of in a decadent degeneracy

stage I mean the [__] hasn't really

started hitting the fan and it won't

necessarily start hitting the fan I mean

the Roman Empire it pulled itself out of

you know almost destruction more than

once like the emperor aurelian pretty

much almost

singlehandedly with the aid of the

legions just prevent Ved the the Roman
Empire from just fragmenting into these
little petty States all over the
place
so yeah that would be my my two my two
uh bits of advice on that one is read
more history like gibbons's decline
follow the Roman Empire is classic and
uh just bear in mind that the world we
live in our Karma has landed us here our
own mental States our own actions it's
our own doing which you know new Agy or
like woke kind of Western Buddhists will
call that victim blaming but that is
just basic Buddhist
philosophy so I'm just going to move on

to the next question this is from scolin
or schuline he never tells me how to
pronounce his name correctly and there's
a a nonzero chance that even if I knew
how to pronounce his name correctly I
still just might deliberately
mispronounce it
so anyways scolin says are there any
benefits to going to hell and then has
he likes bullet points like little
commentary after after the question so
the bullet point here is I remember once
you mentioned that some Retreats were
advertising people reaching Heaven or
Hell Realms on the first day well that's
it's not exactly going to hell it's more
like using Clairvoyance to see hell you

know it's it's sort of like

Dante in in The Inferno you know he's

just a visitor you know he's not stuck

in hell he's just he's not being

tortured in Hell he's not receiving the

punishments he's just being Guided by

Virgil through you know being shown you

know like on a guided tour through hell

and the The Meditation Retreat that was

there the meditating Meditation Retreat

Center in Burma that was advertising how

stop it how if you attend one Retreat

you'll be able to go into the Realms go

into the hell Realms and see the beings

there and all that um you know it was

like mainly using Clairvoyance probably

the body of the meditator was still
sitting there on the mat when their mind
is observing Heaven Realms or Hell
Realms or
whatever so it'd be more a matter of
just like the Divine eye Clairvoyance
allowing you to see Heaven Realms see
hell Realms rather than actually going
there bodily
so Dante even went farther than the
meditators at this Meditation
Center so I mean the benefits of
actually burning in Hell being tormented
in hell like being reborn as a denisen
of hell yeah there's I mean you could
argue that you're burning off some
pretty serious Karma by going there but

it seems to me that if you're going to

go to hell for crime

like or you know sins what do you want

to call it defects Moral

Moral

misbehavior of this committed over a

matter of a few

decades and then you're going to burn in

hell for a zillion gajillion years for

doing that which is what Buddhism

teaches essentially if you go to hell

like a vich hell the bottom pit of Hell

you're G to be there for a long long

time so I mean in order for you to be

there so long for just a some you know

you just happen to to murder somebody or

something which sent you there or you
badmouth some Saint or something then I
mean it seems to me and the hot weather
in Burma caused me to have this this
idea that once you get there it's so
miserable that you are so miserable that
you're just generating like this these
foul mental states that are perpetuating
stay in hell you know it's like you are
so miserable you are just cursing the
entire universe that kind of
thing so yeah there's no benefit to that
you're better off just uh being reborn
as a human having just the usual human
[__] happened to you and just getting
through it as well as you can rather
than burning in a VY hell and being

hacked with by demons with with axes and

that kind of thing

so I'm just going to move on to

scadden's next question is there any

specific methods to breach the shores of

Hell or would I just need my guru's

blessing like jaia skaden go to hell

with love in your

heart um so I mean if you actually want

to go to hell I mean no I mean to

cultivate Clairvoyance through Janna

would be like the the Buddhist the

acceptable Buddhist way of at least

developing cultivating the

capacity to view hell

Realms to see them with like

Clairvoyance the Divine eye debach

chaku and I still can't remember that

word

so yeah so it'd be just cultivate Janna

whatever kind of Janna works best for

you whatever kind of meditation

technique conducive to jna you are best

at then you can try and there's still no

guarantee that you're going to get

psychic powers by doing it personally

that Meditation Center in Burma that was

advertising how people who go do one

Retreat will be able to see the heaven

Realms and see the hell Realms and all

that it was probably hypnosis self

hypnosis because I don't know I mean in

Buddhism to be

guaranteeing that your first Meditation

Retreat you're already going to have

psychic powers it seems way more likely

that it's just a kind of hypnotic trance

rather than genuine

jna

so yeah I think you'd have to be able to

I mean it's possible if you had like

some Guru with psychic powers who could

just lay his hand on your

head yeah lay his hand on your head and

then just like kind of beam something

into you ROM dos says that neim cly Baba

would do that kind of stuff to him

sometimes other people would say the

same thing that he could just like lay

his hand on your head or just say

something or do something and I mean you

could have like this flash of you know

some kind of paranormal activity going

on but um I think the standard

Orthodox um uh

advice on how to breach the shores of

hell as scolin says it would be to

cultivate psychic powers through in deep

meditative

States so I'm just going to move on to

scadden's third question here which is

have you ever performed or been part of

an

exorcism and then his bullet point

comment here is I know beaming meta is

the Orthodox stance but surely you could

just choke slam Lord zerxis back to Hell

well the thing is that demons

in Buddhism don't come from hell I mean

there's demonic entities down there but

the ones up here don't come from there

they're just terrestrial demons or

they're coming from you know some Valley

in the

Himalayas that you know they're just

kind of making foray over the mountains

into the Ganges Valley and then they're

going to be going back to the Himalayas

after they've wed their Havoc so to

speak

um but have I ever performed or been

part of an exorcism aside from just

chanting that is the way in terraa
Buddhism at least Burmese terado
Buddhism You' got someone who is
supposedly possessed by a spirit or
you've got a haunted house the monks go
there and they chant parita which are
protective chants I've done that a lot
of times when I was living
alone there was this guy he he had to
have been a autistic he was not like
mentally like towards the center of the
statistical bell-shaped
curve um and he was having trouble with
Spirits pestering him all the time and I
just I mean the best advice I could give
him
is I mean chant the metosa memorize the

metala and chant that because that is
the standard Orthodox way of like
appeasing and sort of
defusing malevolent supernatural beings
just beam love at them and then they
can't maintain their shitty attitude
towards you you know they they are
appeased you know they chill out they
feel happier because you're beaming love
at them which helps them to be happy
maybe even against their their wishes
and then they'll they'll leave you alone
because happy beings don't want to make
trouble for other people it's unhappy
beings that try to make trouble for
other beings you know you got some bully

raging on a on a Subway or something

he's not a happy person you got some

leftist some radical leftist screaming

in your face they are an very unhappy

person and that's why they're doing

it criminals that like to hurt people

that kind of thing they're hurting too

and they just are taking it out on other

they're just lashing out at others it's

not Society is to blame it's their own

doing but still they are unhappy and

they're taking it out on

others

so it does make sense as as a Buddhist

technique to be meta at malevolent

beings even though some people might

think that's kind of unfair it's not

Justice that bad people should have love beamed at them you know they should be punished
somehow but um I have done kind of exorcism I remember once when I was in college um I had to move out of the college housing um for summer break you know it wasn't open during summer break so I moved into this little studio apartment and it just had like this dark Vibe it's like I couldn't really relax there I always felt kind of at a sense of unease there there was like some kind of you know who knows what the hell it was an old building a lot of people had been living there who knows what kind of

stuff had happened there it'd be like
certain kind like sedd motel rooms that
have that same kind of vibe like who
knows what kind of [__] has happen in
this room before so I was just getting
interested in Buddhism back then and uh
so I just did like a little ceremony I
didn't use Sage I hadn't heard about
Sage yet fortunately because sage
burning sage always gives me a headache
but you know i' lit some insense and I
just started chanting I think it was The
Diamond Cutter Sutra because I hadn't
really been fully ConEd converted to
terraa yet at that time and uh it seemed
to have helped at least it was the
placebo effect at least I was more at

ease you know it's I mean a lot of the
time in haunted houses you're in a house
that's supposed to be haunted it's like
your own apprehension and fear of what
might happen help stuff to happen so it
could have just been a kind of placebo
effect but I did do like this little
purification ceremony in that apartment
to kind of and inan a way it was kind of
an exorcism or just a way of like
cleansing the atmosphere
you know sort of making the atmosphere
so clean that dirt liking Spirits would
go away kind of a
thing you know the impur spirits feeding
on impurity would go away because there

the place had been

purified so to

speak so I think I'm just going to uh

move on to the next question here and

this is from xenoid and

xenoid has asked three very long

questions lots of question in these

three

questions so might as well just Dive

Right In Here xenoid says before hearing

the four noble truths I was severely

depressed because my desires in life

were not being met when I heard them for

the first time I understood that they

were logically coherent but I initially

did not understand the full weight of

their implications however a few days

later I had what I would call a mini
Awakening experience I vividly remember
standing around at work and feeling a
sudden Rush of understanding over the
fact that desire is the cause of all
suffering desires only exist in the mind
one only suffers when desires are
present and that these desires can be
eliminated from the Mind therefore
leading to a state of perfect peace
which could be called
salvation from that moment forward I
never again felt felt
the feeling of Doom I had about life
previously it felt like my entire world
view changed in an instant all because

of a few simple facts primarily
revolving around the second Noble Truth
things didn't magically become perfect
but I genuinely feel optimistic about
life again because I am fully convinced
of the reality of Liberation my
Consciousness feels bright again similar
to how it did when I was a devout
Christian it's shocking to me that I
used to believe that life was simply
good or bad entirely based on external
circumstances and that if my desires
weren't fulfilled I might as well die I
consider the fact that you only suffer
because you want something rather than
not having the thing you want to be the
most important fact about life my

question

is does this type of experience have a

name in Buddhist philosophy it feels too

big to just be called Insight but

definitely not big enough to be called

stream entry or anything like that

because it was just a realization of

facts within the confines of samsaric

language and not an intuitive

understanding of anything close to the

unconditioned well it would still be

considered Insight I mean you can have

liberating Insight you can have little

insights or you can have just the big

Insight that just causes you to wake up

entirely so yeah it would definitely

beyond the spectrum of insight but I do
agree with this this uh personal story
here that I mean I've said it many times
if you know only one thing about
Buddhism if you know only one thing
about Dharma you should know the second
Noble Truth which is whenever you are
unhappy is because you want something
and it's it's your own action you don't
have to want
it it's it's like people think that they
are just they don't have any choice but
to be unhappy when it's raining on the
day they're supposed to go on their
picnic you know it's just like I that's
the way most people are in fact most
western Buddhists are this way I think

maybe even most eastern Buddhists still
adopt this kind of like re materialistic
or realist attitude that being unhappy
is imposed on you from outside when
really ultimately according to the
second Noble Truth All unhappiness is
self-inflicted
and that is really a super empowering
idea you are no longer a victim unless
it's just a victim to your own bad
habits your own habitual bad mental
States or just of your ignorance of the
second Noble Truth some people I mean
it's even even like relatively wise
Western philosophers I think even David
Hume had this idea that you know certain

external things happen

you just have to be unhappy I mean this

you don't have any

choice but I mean to an enlightened

Sage I mean if you read uh William James

um the varieties of religious experience

he gives a lot of examples of of like

people being like whipped and beaten I

mean they were like they were like

French Protestants huguot I think they

were called the

huguo and the the C Catholics were

persecuting them and they were just

being like whipped with rods and so

forth but they were so charged up with

faith in their religion that they were

just swooning with joy at the honor of

being whipped and beaten in the Name of Christ a lot of like the Christians who allegedly were fed to lions in the Coliseum it was the same kind of thing they'd be singing hymns of Joy while you know the lions are running them out killing them

because it was such an honor you know even in the Bible like I think it was uh in the Acts of the Apostles of the New Testament where um some of Jesus's apostles after Jesus Is Dead they get summoned to the samedin they're warned to stop teaching this Christianity stuff and then they're whipped and then as they're leaving they're

rejoicing and so really it's not
necessarily Insanity that causes
somebody to Rejoice at being whipped and
beaten it's just a matter of your own
attitude so I mean that is really one of
the most liberating things and I I've
told people many times if you know only
one thing about Dharma it is that
whenever you are unhappy it's because
you desire something and that is and
that that desire is
optional ultimately that is a volitional
act so your own unhappiness is a
volitional
act it's just self-imposed un
happiness and the second thing I mean if
you only know two things about Dharma

the second thing what I've told people

is that regret or remorse is always bad

karma it always just makes things

worse so I think I'm just going to move

on to xeni void's Second long

question which is how see I could have

answered that question with just like

one sentence and I didn't

that's why these videos are so long

anyway xenoid second

question how do you know when somebody

is ready to hear the four noble

truths question mark But then he's got

like this additional stuff

here which I may as well read I

guess he says from my last question you

understand that I believe the four noble
truths primarily the
second are on earth shattering
realization about the nature of
suffering and contentedness the thing is
I think these truths could initially
have a negative effect on the life of
someone who is already happy and
fulfilled I remember being at an Eastern
Orthodox Church about a year ago when a
little old Christian woman who was
obviously very happy and fulfilled in
life said something like come for
cookies and fun when referring to an
event the church was hosting soon it was
a very cute moment that felt straight
out of a cartoon I think it's pretty

obvious that this happy go-lucky little
old lady is going to be experiencing
better mental States when she's spending
time with her family and Community
receiving the holy sacraments and
imagining her eternal life in Christ
almighty's boundless love rather than
contemplating the nature of Duca
contemplating how her desires are
actually the root any whatever suffering
the root of any whatever suffering she
does experience being told to meditate
on death Etc I do believe that Buddhism
is fundamentally life denying
Multiplicity denying religion but that
doesn't strike me as a bad thing however

to many people Buddhism is seen as gloomy I saw a comment online from a Buddhist turned Christian that Buddhism is embracing depression my friend who only has a cursory knowledge of Buddhism said that it seems like a form of nihilism sometimes I want to explain Buddhism to people when I see them in bouts of depression but I worry that if they don't fully comprehend The Logical conclusion of the for Noble Truth which is salvation it may actually break their psyche even more because they will see that the things they still do enjoy about life are fundamentally meaningless okay so let's go all the way back up here to the actual question

which is how do you know when someone is
ready to hear the for Noble Truths well
you don't necessarily know I mean in a
way the fact that you're telling them
the for Noble Truths means that it's
their karma to hear it but that doesn't
mean that they're ready to accept it I
mean they might hear it and reject it
with scorn with ridicule which would
actually cause them more harm than if
they never Hur it at all
maybe with regard to the little
Christian lady I mean something
resembling the second Noble Truth is
found in the general Epistle of
James and James was wiser than Paul of

Tarsus in my

opinion and James supposedly was the

leader of the Christians after Jesus

died assuming of course that Jesus ever

existed don't want don't want the bit

shoot people on my butt

so yeah I mean I think the general

Epistle of James I haven't read it in

years but I'm pretty sure it does say

something about how it's like suffering

is caused by

desires so I mean it may be that the

little old Orthodox Christian lady was

just very wise or it could be that you

know she's happy at church even though

there might be other places when she's

not so where she's not so happy I mean

most

normies you know most people that don't

really do deep meditation I mean they're

going to be upset a lot of the time when

things don't go their way or

whatever um so it's hard to say about

this little old lady I don't really I

don't know her at all of course and so

she may have been just really wise just

a Serene contented person or it may be

that she was just you know happy when

she was at church and maybe just was

taking it out on her her daughter or

something

at other times I don't

know but let's see

here let's see yeah Buddhism in a way
it's life denying yeah I mean you're not
supposed to wallow in it anyway I mean
you can accept it with equinity it's not
I mean pushing it away that's aversion
you know you shouldn't have attraction
or aversion if you can help
it so to that extent it's not so much
life denying as just sort of like you
know putting up with it
uh multiplicity denying yeah at the
highest levels it is multiplicity
denying um but I mean it's it's gloomy
to people who want sensual pleasures and
so forth and they just don't get it that
there's a higher level of happiness that
comes from intensive Dharma which does

include a certain amount of

aestheticism you know to avoid pain you

also avoid pleasure to some degree and

then you get this Serene equinity that

that's in between the the pleasure and

the pain or the the happiness and the

unhappiness

so let's

see sometimes I want to explain Buddhism

to people when I see them in bouts of

depression yeah I mean you don't want to

philosophize to people who are miserable

that does not work I mean to you got

someone who's miserable and you're

telling them yeah it's all

self-inflicted it's not even real anyway

it's all an illus

I mean you're you're likely to get

screamed at or something I mean some

people if they really are miserable the

best thing you can do is just give them

a hug you know don't try to philosophize

at them maybe you know after they're

feeling better you know that's that's

one thing about Dharma is you you need

to learn it when you don't need it as

bad because if you wait until the [__]

is hitting the fan so to speak then I

mean it's not how are you going to

practice mindfulness only when these

really horrible mental states start to

arise you got to practice it like in a

relatively calm state so that it's

second nature by the time the the shitty

mental state starts to arise that it's

you've already got kind of a you've got

it down somewhat so that just it's like

second nature to be mindful of it and

then you you neutralize

it you transmute it into something

ethically neutral

so I don't know if I've even answered

this

question let's scroll away the hell up

to the top here how do you know when

someone is ready to hear the for Noble

Truths I mean you really don't know I

mean if they are in like a contemplative

you know they're unhappy but they're

they're like seeking you know they're
searching for why or you know how do I
make this better kind of a thing then
they might be receptive matter fact they
may be more receptive to learning about
the second Noble Truth than when things
are going okay and they don't give a
[__] you know they're they're in Western
Normy mode of thinking that whether
you're happy or unhappy depends on
external
circumstances and it looks like uh yeah
my battery is up to 11% now so I think I
think we're not going to freeze up and
have other glitchy malfunctions
necessarily so yeah I mean it would
depend you're going to have to pick up

on them if they're just shut down
they're so miserable they're just closed
off and just I mean you can get a sense
at if philosophizing at them is just
going to make things worse you know then
you might be better off just giving them
a hug and you know just be nice to them
and just let them kind of deal with it
you know give them some kind of
superficial advice on how to improve
their situation or some such but leave
the philosophy alone for a while but if
they do seem to be like really
questioning
you know maybe even reaching out in
despair because their habitual way of

dealing with reality isn't working
anymore I mean if they're having a
crisis like that then it just may be
that they are ripe for hearing some kind
of profound truth that can turn their
life around because there is a certain
aspect of human nature it's there's a
book about it called battle for the Mind
by William Sergeant it's a profound book
it's one of the most important books I
ever read that talks about how we are
creatures of habit you know we just have
this habitual way of going through life
and even if it doesn't make us happy at
least it gets us through life well
enough that we're just kind of locked
into that and it's only when we have a

crisis when our habitual way of dealing
with life just isn't dealing with it
anymore that we can I mean we become
very open to suggestion that's how like
Chinese thought reform works it's how a
lot of things even certain kinds of like
religious Retreats work this way where
they just
like like they put they put you into a
crisis and then you can be born again or
you have your insights or you know you
you realize that communism is is the one
true way or or whatever it
is you go through the manhood ritual
that kind of
thing and so I think my qu my answer is

even longer than the question here so
I'm just going to move on to zeni void's
third question question which is what is
the best way to introduce someone to
intention based ethics when they've only
ever known vague utilitarianism and
consequentialism and then that's that's
the main
question and then he goes on to say when
I tell someone I'm a Buddhist they'll
often ask if I'm a vegan and then they
will be perplexed when I tell them I'm
not how can you quote how can you
financially support meat companies when
you know they kill animals if your
religion demands that you never kill
anything yeah this I get that sometimes

too they ask no they ask I struggle to explain this because I don't know how to go about properly justifying Buddhist ethics I can point out problems with consequentialism like how it inevitably leads to horrible greater good atrocities but to them this just sounds like a criticism of the concept of morality as a whole not utilitarianism consequentialism in particular

well that is kind of a tricky question which I mean the actual question is what is the best way to introduce someone to intention-based ethics when they've only ever known vague utilitarianism consequentialism um I mean if they're

just locked into like Western Scientific
realism then I mean if they're just
locked into western style samsaric
realism I mean you may it may be like
talking to a wall it may you may be just
wasting your your time and effort trying
to help them see the light so to
speak um I mean you might explain that I
mean ethics in Buddhism what is good
what is good karma is what gets you
closer to reality closer to
Enlightenment and what is Bad Karma
takes you farther away from
Enlightenment and that is purely
psychological it's purely mental you
know I've given lots of examp
or maybe just the same example over and

over again of how two people can do
exactly the same thing outwardly but one
of them is making good karma the other
one's making Bad Karma you know the
saving the the frog from a snake is the
standard example I've given a few other
ones so I mean if you can eat meat with
pure mental States Jesus ate meat
assuming that he really existed go to My
Buddha according to the earliest tax the
poly tax he ate meat
also the enlightened monks ate meat
Tibetan Monks eat meat because I mean
you can't grow many crops in Tibet very
easily I mean it's just I mean like the
Bible says too it's not what goes into

you that defiles you it's what comes out
of you that defiles you it's your own
actions that defile
you so I mean you could use your own
ways I'm not going to try and formulate
an argument here um just putting forth
the point that ethics really is
psychological it's not materialistic
it's not this outward thing and that
whether we are happy or not depends upon
our own
attitude I mean that might be the start
is like the whole second Noble Truth
thing and then once once you can kind of
get the point across that ultimately all
suffering is
self-inflicted then maybe you can kind

of go with the idea of Karma and mental
States and really it's your mental
States when you're doing something that
make something ethical or unethical not
the the mechanical outward action of
it but I think you might have to tailor
your arguments to fit the individual
just as the Buddha did you know you find
out kind of what their point of view is
and then you kind of you know angle the
argument to be more likely to be
something that they can accept like if
they're a Christian for example you can
use like the general pistol of James or
you know some of the the quotes that
I've already given like it's not what

goes into a person that defiles them

it's what comes out of a person that

defiles them that kind of thing but if

they're if they're just like an atheist

I

mean if they really are just just

scientific material IST and think that

you know there's you know let's say that

they're indoctrinated into modern

postmodern

leftism where they just have to say that

you know victims are victims because of

hii for example it's not the second

Noble Truth has nothing to do with it

and in in fact i' I've said before they

actually are Western Buddhists I put in

scare quotes here who say that the the

second Noble Truth should be
modified because not all suffering is
caused by desire some suffering is
caused by patriarchal
oppression and with someone like that
you're better off just keeping a safe
distance from them if if at all possible
do not engage them in any kind of
conversation that may result and then
becoming red-faced with
hysteria or just like sneering at you
so anyways I'm just going to move on to
the next question here we've been going
for less than two hours that's that's
something and ruie is our next
questioner hail ruie and ruie says how

much value would you place on rebirth by aspiration like someone who wants to be a bodh I guess I had a teacher in Burma who was a kind of he wanted to be a kind of bhis but he maybe he was just too humble to Aspire to becoming the next like a future Buddha he wanted to be a future great disciple because according to like tradition each Buddha has two Chief disciples our historical GMA Buddha had saruta and mugana so each Buddha for for unknown reasons I don't think the text ever really explain why this has to be so but every Buddha has to have two Chief disciples and his aspiration was to be reborn in some future age as a Buddha Chief

disciple or I mean there's other ways of rebirth by aspiration like like some old temples like in Burma for example will have these little inscriptions it's like a clay tablet that has this inscription on it and people will like donate it or like offer it at an altar at this Temple and a lot of these um little clay tablets are women that are praying to the Buddha or you know whatever power there is at this Temple that in their next life they can be reborn as a man that was actually fairly common because men were considered to be superior at least

socially and

physically so how much value would I

place on it well I mean it can be done I

mean even according to Orthodox Terra

Buddhism you know or it's it's sort of

like in the upanishad it's whatever a

man inclines his mind toward that does

he become so I mean if you have this

deep like drive or urge or desire to be

reborn in some certain way you want to

be a rock star or something then I mean

your karma is going to be kind of moving

in that

direction and so I mean that does happen

if you're just not ripe for

enlightenment yet you're being realistic

let's say and you just don't even really

want to become enlightened yet then I
mean you can kind of steer your course
through karmic
samsara in certain ways and I mean it's
it's a samsaric thing um you might uh
you know there might be some Dharma to
it like pure land Buddhists for example
they want to be reborn in this kind of
Buddhist Paradise where it's easier to
become
enlightened and the Buddha didn't teach
it pretty sure the Buddha said if at all
possible strive to become enlightened In
This Very life you don't know what your
next life's going to be there's no
guarantees strive to become enlightened

In This Very life if you can or do your
best that's the best you can
do and so rebirth by aspiration I mean
the Buddha says you should not hope for
any rebirth I mean that's even back in
the Ana waga that's that's you know like
primordial archaic Buddhism is saying do
not wish for any future
existence but I mean it can still work
it's it's not really Orthodox Buddhism
except for maybe some kinds of Orthodox
Mahayana Buddhism or I guess it even
kind of worked its way into terraa with
devotionalism where some people can you
know aspire to be a Buddha or like one
of my teachers he's he aspires to be a
future great disciple or some such but

even that is a kind of deviation away

from the earliest primordial teachings

of a sage does not desire any future

existence you should not aspire to any

future

existence or you shouldn't even aspire

to

non-existence you shouldn't be aspiring

for any future State at

all so I mean there is some validity to

it in a samsaric context but I'm I'm

fairly certain the historical gab Buddha

did not endorse it and he would

discourage

it and so I'm going to move on to the

next question this is from Stellar

Supreme formerly known as Libra Lam and
Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra
lamb says did you ever consider being a
damay
monk and the easy answer to that is nope
I never considered becoming a dute monk
I mean you can kind of think about it I
mean you might have to consider it just
enough to reject the
idea so maybe there was sort of like
casual semic consideration but I was
never seriously tempted to become a
damay monk and those of you who don't
know what dute is it's the strict sect
of Terra in
Thailand so I wasn't even a Thai I
wasn't even in a Thai tradition and the

dut they're they're somewhat puritanical
in the sense that they don't consider
any other monks to be real monks only
dute monks are real monks plus maybe the
M tradition that damay was derived
from so I mean Burmese Buddhism was also
derived from a mon tradition but I never
was able to determine whether Dam monks
in Thailand will consider Burmese monks
to be real monks but the Mahan nikaya
monks which is the most populous sect of
terraa in Thailand they don't consider
them to be real monks they will not do
ceremonies with them for example they
just consider them to be lay people
wearing

robes and it seems to me that the onus
would be on the dute monks to prove that
I mean there is some wisdom to innocent
until proven guilty
um so to some degree it's it's like they
kind of hoty intolerance in a certain
way at least it can come off that way it
was I mean it's like something that I
wasn't really interested in also in
order to be reordain as a dute monk
you'd have to like reset your seniority
to Zero by becoming a dam Mayu monk if
you had been a monk for three years and
then you you switch over to damay you
got to do oh I think it's called doly
Kama or it's like the act of making firm
is it's like you have to be reordain and

only this ordination is the real
ordination because you weren't really
ordained before then that kind of thing
and it just never really appealed to me
and I'm I'm not so much of a stickler on
like unbroken lineage to think that you
have to have an unbroken lineage of
ordinations from the Buddhist time until
now in order to become enlightened for
example I mean that's silata parasa or
adherence to morality and observances
and it wouldn't even be morality in that
case it would just be observance
observance of the ordination tradition
or some
such

so I could have just said no but I have
to give the long answer that's much
longer than the question itself and so
I'm just going to move on to Stellar
Supreme formerly known as Libra Lamb's
second question which is what do you
think of the parable of Jesus leaving
behind the 99 sheep for The Lost One in
the context of mudita as we understand
it in Buddhism compare and contrast
please well I mean my understanding I
haven't read the New Testament very very
uh
recently I'm still I'm I'm like
struggling trying there's like this back
part of my brain trying to remember that
one word and there's just this

blockage so anyways my understanding of the parable of you got a Shepherd who's got a 100 sheep and one of the sheep gets lost it Strays away from the flock and so the shepherd will temporarily abandon the the 99 in search of that lost sheep and then when he finds the lost sheep and brings it back he's rejoicing more over that one sheep than he rejoiced over the other
99 and mudita I don't see how it even fits into this this Parable because mudita is rejoicing in the happiness of someone else you know you are glad that someone else is happy and I mean would the shepherd be rejoicing that the lost

sheep that has been found as happy I
mean it might not be all that happy it
might be like struggling in his arms as
he's carrying it back you know it might
be preferred maybe it went away just
because it wanted to go away and now
he's he's dragging it back to those 99
[__] that that one sheep had just
been barely tolerating all this time so
I don't think mudito necessarily fits
into the context of this Parable at
all
um yeah I mean who's experiencing the
mudita it's it's not clear to me it's
like I mean there you've got 101 beings
in this Parable you got the shepherd
you've got 99 sheep that don't get lost

and then you got the sheep that does get
lost and who's experiencing the mudita I
mean the the shepherd might be rejoicing
that he got his one sheep back but
that's not mudita because mudita is
being glad that somebody else is
happy so I don't I don't think it really
fits the context or maybe I'm just not
understanding the parable but I'm not
sure who even in the parable would be
experiencing
mudam
so um I mean the the parable my
understanding of the parable is that you
know God rejoices in reclaiming a lost
soul more than he rejoices in the 99

Souls that weren't lost and didn't have
to be like
saved but I mean I'm not sure where the
mudita fits in so I'm just going to move
on to the next question this is from
files and files says what is the
Buddhist teaching on close friendships
are they just a form of clinging some
close friendships could be a form of
clinging but not all close friendships
are a form of clinging I mean it may be
you've got like the wise friend you you
know it's like you got the preceptor who
loves you like a son and you love him
like a father and there might be a
certain amount of clinging but it's not
just clinging it's not even mainly

clinging it's just there's like this

symbiosis going on with both sides

benefiting in a

sense so I mean I've had I still have a

few friends from from high school at

least one in particular I had a second

friend from high school who died

recently um but I mean we were friends I

mean we weren't super close anymore

because they were living on the west

coast and I'm now living on the East

Coast after having lived in Asia for

many years so I mean it wasn't really a

close friendship so maybe it doesn't

apply

here but uh yeah I mean a close

friendship it's or or like a romantic relationship it's it's not just a form of cling different people are going to have different levels based on their own personality their you know how their wisdom and all that but I mean there's definitely more to it than just clinging so I mean some friendships are definitely um encouraged in Buddhism especially the friendship with the kalana Maita the good friend the spiritual friend who helps to guide you in

dhama and I mean it can be sort of like the disciple Guru kind of relationship or just even like a fatherson kind of relationship which I mean fatherson

relationships aren't just a form of

clinging although they're generally is

some clinging in

there

so the Buddhist teaching on close

friendships is the main kind of close

friendship would be the kalana Maita of

the you know the spiritually oriented

friend who helps you to practice

dhama that would be the main Buddhist

teaching in the poly Tex with regard to

close friendships so I'm going to move

on to the next question here do you

think friendships can last a lifetime

and stay genuine sure I mean most of

them

don't but um I mean most of them don't last a lifetime but some people I mean especially if you live like in a a third world village where I mean you grew up your whole life with your next door neighbor you know he's you played you played together when you were kids and you grow up and you're still friends and neither one of you moves out of that Village you know as your parents and grandparents just going back Generations all lived in that same plot of land in that Village you know it's way easier in like a pre-modern kind of society where people don't move around much and so and people are also kind of more close-knit less

alienated so it comes easier in in a
place like you know rural Burma for
example but it's it's possible in the
West too like and like I said I've I've
had friends that um since I was a
teenager most of my friends since before
I was a teenager that we've just drifted
away partly because you know I just
drift away you know
I'm I moved away from my hometown long
ago so the people that were still living
in my hometown or you know some of them
drifted away from the hometown also so I
mean it's just it's less likely to
happen in the modern way where people
are more mobile and not just rooted to

the land in this you know ancestral
Village so I'm just going to move on to
Phil's next question which is many
people seem to desperately desire these
types of friendships close long-term
friendships with members of the same sex
and yet struggle to achieve anything
that's not shallow which usually just
ends up hurting them even more is it
even worth it well I mean if they can't
achieve anything that's not shallow it
may be that they themselves are
shallow and a shallow person is not
going to have a deep relationship a
shallow person has to have a shallow
relationship
um let's

see I mean it seems to me that that kind
of friendship should arise spontaneously
I mean it's like if you have to make
effort to have this long-term
friendship then I mean it's kind of
forced it's not spont on aneous and
natural it's like this artificial thing
that it's more likely to
fail so I mean I guess the the
healthiest attitude is just to be open
to the possibility of it although you
know once you've become several years
old it's hard to have a a lifelong
friendship with anybody because there's
already been those several years before
you even

met so yeah struggling to achieve I mean

that's like struggling to have a stable

relationship with your m

you know like a romantic relationship

when it becomes a struggle I mean if

there's struggle occasionally like in

times of Crisis you know somebody is

having a meltdown and the other one is

kind of you know one or both of them are

kind of struggling to deal with this

crisis situation or whatever I mean

that's going to happen and even really

good friends may get pissed off at each

other sometimes but

um to just have it be like this chronic

struggle just to cultivate this

long-term friendship um yeah I think

that's you're starting off on the wrong
foot with the whole struggle
thing um you're better off just
accepting the friendships that you have
whether they're friendships for a day
you know you're sitting next to somebody
on an airplane strike up a conversation
everything's fine you have a nice
conversation you might even exchange
phone numbers or something that you'll
just promptly forget and you'll never
call the other person but I mean there's
nothing wrong with that I mean
pretending that you want their phone
number if you really don't I mean that
would be a certain kind of dishonesty

but still I mean making a friend with
somebody for five minutes while you're
standing in line to vote something like
that there's no problem or having a
friend that I mean you went to
kindergarten with I mean that's fine too
I mean there's there's nothing
necessarily wrong with having a
friendship that doesn't last forever
because really nothing lasts forever
anyway
so I mean it's like making a problem
that doesn't necessarily have to
exist just accept the friendships that
you've got value the friendships that
you've got especially if it's a good
friendship and that's that's

good and I still can't remember that

word so I'm just moving on to uh the

next question which is from Joe do and

Joe do says do you believe that the idea

of the bodh satva has no credibility at

all I am a big fan of his Holiness the

Daly Lama do you think the concept of

his return to help Humanity lacks wisdom

and that there is no validity to his

rebirths well this is kind of similar to

a question I've already answered about

aspirational

rebirth

um but this is kind of a different angle

on it do you believe that the idea of

the buddhy satva has no credibility at

all well I mean I think it can happen
and it may be that the Dal Lama really
is like the same being reborn over and
over again you know they do all these
tests you know they'll have this array
of objects the child has to pick the
right one consistently and which is like
that's what the previous Dal Lama that
was like his property that kind of a
thing you know they got these filters
these tests which is going to be
overthrown if at all possible by the
Chinese Communist party after our
current HH the do Lama passes away
because of course they're going to want
control over the next one and so they're
just going to say this is the one and

they're going to like groom him to be
like the authentic Del Lama even if he
isn't so I mean it can happen like neem
cley Bob up on the alter back there
according to him he just kep keeps
getting reborn and it's mainly as a kind
of B even though he's a
Hindu so I mean it can
happen but like I said before it's it's
not really in accordance with what the
Buddha was teaching unless they're so
Advanced that they don't even have
aspiration anymore that it's just the
karma of the the beings in the world
they're like like like almost summoning
this being to be reborn among them who

really there's there's nobody there if
he's fully enlightened he's just sort of
reflecting their own Karma back at them
with nobody
there but uh that wouldn't so much be a
buddhis zva as just a fully enlightened
being or some being just this far away
an Auburn pubic hair away from Full
Enlightenment which uh maybe I shouldn't
make jokes about that but um yeah I I
wouldn't say that has no credibility at
all it is a samsaric phenomenon so it's
not ultimately real but within a
samsaric context like an empirical
Buddhist philosophical context that mean
it can happen presumably it does happen
and I am really don't have any dog in

the fight with regard to whether the
dely Lama has been the same being
reincarnated over and over again that I
guess tradition says that the Dal Lama
is actually Avatar of the Buddhist God
MRI you know he's a kind of bodh satva
God the god of wisdom and a buddhis SVA
at the same time very Advanced one
and I'm a little more skeptical of that
idea but it is possible that you can't
have like a tul
cou I think a tul coup is just like a
being that deliberately is reborn and
then there's like this lineage of this
same being being reborn as this this
Tulu I think I'm No Authority on Tibetan

Buddhism

so I mean

ultimately from the point of view of

Ultimate Reality there's no validity in

anything

samsaric

but within the the context of samsara I

do think it is conceivable I mean I'm No

Authority on this but it is conceivable

that you can have have an advanced being

who is deliberately kind of choosing his

next life and just having like a lineage

of of physical lives with the same

conscious entity inhabiting them as a

kind of

tradition I mean it's conceivable I

don't see why it would be necessarily

just flat out and impossible but I can't
really say it's not really in the Terra
Vaden tradition
anyway so I'm just going to move on to J
next
question which is if you have watched
The Joe Rogan podcast with Trump by the
time you answer this what was your
thoughts of so or if so maybe he meant
to say and I did see part of it my
sweetheart was watching it but I was
kind of busy doing other things through
through a lot of it including taking a
shower and I went out to vote see I went
out to vote where is it right did it
fall off no there it is see patrio IC

Duty everyone should go out and vote
it's early voting now but you can in in
South Carolina early voting started like
last
Monday so yeah I did watch The Joe Rogan
podcast I mean it wasn't any kind of
heavy hitting political Manifesto or
anything it was just Joe Rogan and
Donald Trump just hanging out like
friends and having this conversation
that went all over the place they're
talking about you know whales the effect
of of windmills on wh sonar and talking
about like UFC fighting and boxing and
and talking about politics and um it was
it was interesting and KLA Harris would
be utterly incapable of doing that and

she's she's not going to go on Joe Rogan
she's been invited I think but I mean
she cannot
communicate without reading a
teleprompter she can't answer the
simplest questions she'll just go around
around a word of salad apparently as a
kind of strategy not to pin herself down
to any position that intolerant leftists
of some some strand of leftism would
hate so I mean she's just like she gets
asked a question about you know her
position on something she'll just
Meander around and around cackle a
little bit not answer the question and
then if there's a follow-up question

like well I mean the question was this
and she she'll just just like get
uncomfortable and nervous and and won't
answer the question and on Joe Rogan I
mean she'd be submitted to she' I mean
she'd be subjected to that for three
hours and I don't I just can't imagine
her actually doing that so I mean Donald
Trump is actually like a human being
he's not just projecting an image that
he is like what you see is what you get
with with Donald Trump but come Harris
she's just trying to project this phony
image to set her to distance herself
from her own past Behavior her own past
record and and the past record of the
administration of which she is a part so

she's just doing this dance and mainly

it all boils down to Donald Trump is is

bad you need to vote for me

because just

because so I mean that really doesn't

answer the question though does it what

is my thoughts of The Joe Rogan Trump

discussion I know I don't know if you

could even call it an interview it's

just these two guys hanging out I don't

know if if if Joe Rogan would actually

get baked before he would do an

interview with with Trump it's my

understanding that he usually smokes out

in his high when he's doing these

podcasts but maybe out of respect for

Donald Trump he he refrained from

getting loaded before the before the the

show or during the

show um no I mean it wasn't any kind of

really

hard-hitting um you know some of the

stuff he would that Trump would say was

the same kind of stuff he would say in

his his

rallies um it was was kind of

interesting towards the beginning where

he's talking about just how surreal it

was becoming president you know being

shot through the ear he said it wasn't

surreal I mean he was just like in this

state of heightened awareness you know

he knew where where everything you know

it was like Crystal Clarity when he got
shot through the ear but when he was
like go walking through the White House
like the private quarters and everything
for the first time it was like it was
like a dream state for him you know it
it was hard to really um kind
of realize that this was actually what
he was doing so that was kind of
interesting it was just like a little
bit of personal details about the life
of Donald Trump who does strike me as a
much more genuine person than his main
competitor in in this presidential race
that's going
on so might as well just move on to this

question and it is the last question the very last question so this is a relatively short Q&A although there's going to be like a an appendix to this Q&A in which I'm answering Athena sigils question for me to explain the poly Canon so anyways this is the last question this is from bukoto Prav and bukoto Prav says um the age of saints and sages are over and there won't be any new religion on the face of the Earth for some time do you agree with this and not necessarily I mean I wouldn't make that assertion I would not just flat out say the age of saints and S are over and there won't be any new

religion on the face of the Earth for
some time um it may be that I mean for
some time I mean that could be like a
day or a century I mean for some time is
not is kind of a
vague um statement you know what is how
long does for some time
last but uh anytime in the foreseeable
future Maybe so I mean I don't think
that the age of sages are over the age
of saints is kind of over CU Western
culture is pretty much taken over the
world and Western culture is not
particularly virtuous even though people
think that they're virtuous they just
have kind of a a distorted understanding

of what virtue really

is for example the modern the postmodern

left considers any kind of sensual

Indulgence to be completely divorced

from from virtue or

morality but sages I still think you

know like you could say ekart toah is a

kind of sage there are a lot of sagey

type people even though they might not

be Saints like Jay Krishna mury was a

kind of sage and and even though he

wasn't a

saint

um and but and he kind of started his

own kind of religion really I mean there

are a lot of followers of of Krishna myy

even

today um like the person who was
ordained at the same um the same
ordination ceremony as me he he started
off being a follower of Krishna
mury um and another guy that I know um
he was born in Ohio California his
parents were like at the Krishna mty
ashram he was he was pretty much Born
Into the Krishna mury ashram but uh and
me Krishna mury wasn't exactly a Hindu I
mean it was just sort of his own thing
so there are like these new little
religions that kind of
arise um not mainly because of saints
which is it may be that because they're
sages but not Saints they're there's

just

not and there's maybe a little too much

Scandal for the tastes of like skeptical

cynical westerners or some such but

there's no telling I mean it may take

Western Civilization or at least some

area within the sphere of Western

Civilization to have some kind of like

[__] hitting the fan crisis kind of a

situation where people are in sufficient

despair that they're willing to let go

of their former conditioning and accept

some new system with some

charismatic teacher who may be a saint

or a sage teaching this and then you

know they just the old way isn't working

anymore this is generally how new Rel

religions arise or at least a lot of the
time that's pretty much how Buddhism
arose and
Christianity where just the old ways are
just becoming obsolete and so people are
in this state of like ferment and
largely just
despair and then this new optimistic
idealistic system arises generally with
some charismatic teacher and then just
it just somehow strikes a cord it just
seems to fit the the Zeitgeist or
whatever and people join it and it's
it's hard to predict whether anything
like that is going to happen anytime
soon it might but I mean it's it's not

really conceivable that I mean you can't
really predict how or when or where it's
going to
happen so I mean there is a possibility
so I'm not going to just deny that the
age of saints and sages is is is over
I'm not just going to assert that and
that there won't be any new religion on
the face of the Earth for the
foreseeable future um I don't think
that's necessarily the case anything is
possible and so it may be that you know
things are going to get bad enough
somewhere in the world that people are
going to reject their old conditioning
and reach out to some new system that
just happens to be arising in the area

with some charismatic

leader who knows

so that's it I answered all the

questions again and so like I said at

the beginning if you have any questions

that you think maybe I can answer about

religion Buddhism especially early like

terraa or like archaic Buddhism

especially monastic discipline Burma me

personally philosophy in general

whatever if you think maybe I can answer

the question then feel free to ask in

the comments below if you have access to

subscribe star you can ask them there if

you have access to my Discord server you

can ask them there and um like And

subscribe if you have not done so

already and be happy

okay then hello and welcome to question

and answer number

116a this is like the appendix to

question answer number 116 I am your

host poo basa your host poo basa I think

I just said I'm your house P basa I

don't know how well that came

about

but I was asked this question for the

Q&A and it's such a huge question that I

figured it's best just to make a

separate show of it I've done this

before long ago back when q&as were

possibly even in single digits I did one

of these about Free Will I think it was

at the time where somebody asked a

question it was it was going to involve
even more of a rambling digressive sort
of answer than usual so I might as well
just go for it now and uh we are
recording I'm pretty sure we've been
going for a whole minute already so
that's good so Athena sigil asked
hey poo my question for next time which
is now now it's it's next time I'll
start over hey poo my question for next
time is explain the poly Canon the
various texts and their significance in
terava teachings a lot of westerners
only know the DAP and a few famous
quotes by the Buddha or think that all
Buddhists worship the same things and
read the same TT texts obviously they do

not as there are variant various schools
and I've noticed so many don't
understand or appreciate these
differences and distinctions I know so
many well-intentioned Seekers who have a
hodgepodge understanding of what
Buddhism is and that various Buddhists
have significantly different
cannons and Vary from one another for
example Zen Chan shingan nichiren Etc
are all classifies as classified as
Buddhist but are they they all worship
the Buddha but through different texts
or even radically different
interpretations so maybe this has two
questions what is the poly Canon and its

constituents and what makes it different
from the other forms of Buddhism I like
your long rambling answers that's good
because they show your vast knowledge of
the subjects and if you don't know
you'll admit that okay have a great
weekend and thanks per
usual so that is the question
question right here the main question is
explain the poly
Canon so right here he he kind of re
asks it at the bottom too what is the
polyc Canon and its constituents and
what makes it different from the other
forms of Buddhism so I guess the way to
do this would be in a kind of historical
more or less chronological order of

explaining you know what the poly Canon
is how it how it developed how it
evolved and then how kind of like post
taden post early Buddhist Mahayana
Buddhism kind of went on from
there so I mean the the Buddhist texts
began with the teachings of the
historical Goa Buddha assuming I mean
there's certain to be Skeptics out there
who think the Buddha never existed or
that Jesus never existed or whatever but
we can say with a fair amount of
confidence that Buddhism began with the
teachings of a certain Sage of the
shakya clan in Northern India you know
fifth or sixth Century

BCE and he would just wander around I
mean if if you read the earliest
Buddhist text like the ateka waga of the
suttin it's pre- Orthodox in some parts
of it are just not in accordance with
later established Orthodox Terra
Buddhist tradition you're like have no
view have no belief this kind of thing
it had to get reinterpreted in later
developed terraa to just mean have no
wrong view have no false belief but I
mean why would the Buddha try to warn
people not to believe what is false I
mean that just goes without saying or at
least should
so you start off with the Buddha walking
around wandering around Northern India

the Ganges Valley mostly and just giving talks which I assume were largely spontaneous talks and he would tailor his talks to the people he was talking to like aan cha used to say that some people would accuse him of contradicting himself because he'd see one person going too far to the right and he'd say go far to the left he'd see another person going too far to the left and he'd say go farther to the right and then they would compare this at one point you're saying people should go farther to the left another Point you're saying people should go farther to the right that's contradicting

itself and the Buddha probably did this kind of thing I mean he'd be tailoring his talks to who he's talking to and according to the poly texts and I'll get to the whole idea of poly and all that in due course that according to the poly Tex I mean that's the way he taught I mean if he was teaching a Brahman he would you generally use sort of Brahman ideology and he would try to tailor his arguments in a way that the Brahman could understand and accept it rather than just giving him some alien foreign kind of philosophy that is going to be rejected right off the bat and if he's talking to a Jane he would be talking more in terms of Jane philosophy and and

like if he's talking to some sort of like a materialist philosopher and they had them in in the Buddhist time then uh I can't remember the Char vakas they are called then you know he'd be using a kind of um you know language and sort of attitude that this other person could accept and so there wouldn't really be necessarily this this unified coherent message at first that that was for later when you have the scholars trying to like streamline the whole thing into an establish doctrine that doesn't contradict itself and they weren't fully successful at that but that's how the Buddhist texts originally began was the

teachings of the Buddha that were

recorded from memory in the form of

sutas or

sutas and suta or Sutra usually is

translated into English as discourse

literally it has the same atmology as

the English word suture like a thread

that you use for T like you know

stitching up

wounds so it's like a a thread of

discourse and that would be like the

earliest Buddhist teachings that were

recorded would be recorded just like

verbally they wouldn't be written down

yet in ancient Indian the Buddhist time

there wasn't much writing going on and

it wasn't Indian tradition until much

later that you write down like religious
or philosophical like scripture kind of
stuff stuff like the the four vas
weren't written down down for a long
time or that is my understanding that it
was just a tradition in India that is
memorized by Heart by the priests or the
monastics which in a way kind of gave
them a monopoly on wisdom and PE and the
ordinary people would have to come to
them because they couldn't just buy
books on Amazon in those
days so anyways that's how like Buddhist
teachings Dharma began was just the
Buddha giving instructions mainly to his
monks

as he got more and more famous he would give talks to lay people also like even like kings there were some Kings who were sort of like Alexander the Great you know they just like to go and talk with philosophers and so sometimes at least if we can believe the texts there were Kings King the king of kosa the king of magada you know some of the other smaller leaders of various States would come in and hang out and discuss philosophy with the Buddha and there would be people sitting around like remembering this stuff which is kind of what happened with Jesus of Nazareth also where at first you know you didn't

have like a scribe writing it down as
he's as he's saying it it's just that
people would remember something that he
said and just repeat it and it would
just kind of get spread around as you
know the Buddha taught this and it was
just sort of this amorphous body of just
sayings essentially
and some of it would be um like like the
ATA waga of the sutin which I considered
to be the largest fragment of archaic
pre terraa Buddhism that we know of that
it would be turned into poetry by some
somebody whether the Buddha himself
composed poetry or not I don't know I've
heard the theory that as like a prince

or a high ranking Atria like a noble
that one of the things he would learn as
a child is just impromptu versification
that he would learn sort of like rapping
nowadays where you know you can just
speak in poetry but it may be that it
was just a gimmick where people would
just commit his teachings to poetry as a
way of making it easier to memorize
because stuff wasn't written down
yet so that would be like the first
stratum would be just these sayings of
the Buddha some longer some shorter that
people had memorized especially
monks and just you know just memorize it
teach it to others so that you got this
tradition going with regard to

philosophical and just spiritual advice
then the next stage would probably be
the rules of monastic discipline
according to the text the Buddha was
laying down rules of monastic discipline
starting about 20 years after he started
teaching dhama there were no rules rules
of monastic discipline at first because
at first according to tradition you just
had all these wise heavy hitter veteran
Aesthetics that were the Buddha first
converts it wasn't until he became more
and more popular and then you started
having like normies joining you know
that weren't these veteran athetic Heavy
Hitters like at

first and so he started having to come

up with rules

although there if you read between lines

in the texts it does seem to be that

probably there was no like established

monastic code during the Buddhist

lifetime like for

example in the the official history

found in the rules of monastic

discipline themselves of the First

Council after the Buddha died after he

attained

Parana that a lot of the I mean the

enlightened monks his enlightened

disciples accepted it with equinity some

of the the unenlightened monks were

grieving because their teacher had died

and then you had this one old monk just saying why all the long faces now we don't have venerable Goda telling us do that do that don't do this all the time you know we can do whatever we want to and mahak kasapa who was the Buddha's successor as senior monk in the sa at the time of his passing away his two Chief disciples had pred deceased the Buddha he was alarmed by this and so he decided there better be a first counsel to just codify rules of monastic discipline so that I mean you have something to stabilize the S because if you don't have any kind of structure any kind of established order it's just

going to disintegrate and there is a scene where somebody asks the Buddha one of the monks asks the Buddha why is it that the dispensations of previous Buddhas didn't last very long and the Buddha says because previous Buddhist didn't have wiia they didn't have rules of monastic discipline and so in a way that could be read as a kind of um apologetic for creating these rules of monastic discipline as a kind of necessary evil almost as a way of like stabilizing the sa so that they have this rule this order that just kind of keeps things regulated at the very least like at the First Council which is called the vasiti that the the Council

on vinea the council on monastic discipline that they had to have protocols for ordination like in the Buddhist time he would just say ehib beu come Monk and that was it that was the ordination and all the Buddha just had to declare you a monk and you were a monk you know presumably I mean he's he was like inviting you into the songa but without without the Buddha I mean how are you going to have ordination ceremonies and you know it's like what are the monks going to have to do originally there was just a kind of protocol for athetics in Northern India you know there was just sort of a

general um established etiquette that

the Aesthetics would follow you know

they were celibate they'd go for alms

and eat only in the morning you know

they'd go barefoot as a general rule

they'd wear robes some of them would

shave their head some of them would have

like um the brahin the matted ha

Aesthetics the julas they would

essentially have like dreadlocks you

know they just let their hair just grow

in mats

and you know it was just sort of a

protocol that it was just like a

tradition like Unwritten laws Unwritten

rules so they decided for the sake of

the stability of the S so that the the

true teachings could last for a long
time that they had to have these rules
with regard to ordination procedure and
also probably the the core of the potim
Moka rules I would assume the core of
the potim Moka rules and also like
ordination protocols and all that were
like at the First Council like the first
vinia and then um you know that's like
right after the Buddha's passing away so
then what happens is Buddha becomes
Buddhism becomes more and more popular
more and more people join including
people
who they're more philosophical than
spiritual you know they're just like

rationalists and so they're trying to systematized dhama and also there's going to be a lot of because stuff isn't really written down yet there's going to be a lot of just stray teachings that are attributed to the Buddha that get Incorporated even though they might not have really been by the Buddha like for example in the rules of monastic discipline a monk is supposed to stay in one place during the Reigns Retreat that's the three months of the monsoon season he's not supposed to travel around he's supposed to stay in one place but there are C certain excuses where a monk is allowed to travel and one is there's somebody who has heard

this teaching of the Buddha that hasn't
been like codified yet that hasn't
really been incorporated into the into
dharm yet and so the Monk Is is allowed
to go and talk with this person and I
mean a lot of the time I probably most
of what is included in the the suta
ptica and I'll get to the piticas in in
a minute or two
that I mean the Buddha didn't really
teach it some of it is just stuff that
was popular people thought it was very
wise you know that the origins of it
were lost in the the haze of the past
and so they just assumed it's so wise
the Buddha must have taught it and so it

gets incorporated into the into the text
and the people who are deciding making
the Judgment calls what to incorporate
and what not to incorporate weren't
necessarily the most enlightened monks
the most enlightened monks were probably
meditating alone out in a forest
somewhere whereas the ones in the big
school monasteries that are coming up
with these new rules and doctrines and
all that I mean they weren't necessarily
the wisest monks I lived in Burma for
many years and it's it was fairly well
known that scholar monks were
notoriously LAX in their practice you
know it's like their approach to dhama
is Scholastic and intellectual They

Don't Really practice all that

much and so you don't have necessarily

the best and wisest monks that are

determining what is going to be

established

Doctrine and early on you had this

division of dhama and discipline dhama

and and and

vinia and in in the earli in in the

sutas the Buddha doesn't talk about Abid

dama so there was just this originally

or at least early on you just had this

division of dhama and winia this

Doctrine and discipline you know it's

sort of like the theoretical aspect and

and also like meditation instructions

and so forth and then there's just the
the rules of discipline that that
stabilize the S and just keep it from
fragmenting and monks just going and
doing all kinds of weird stuff that they
probably shouldn't be
doing and then Buddhism continued to
become more and more popular and you've
got these at
C I've got some notes Here don't want to
skip over anything stray teachings
attributed to the Buddha and also
philosophical and dogmatic developments
that are put into the mouth of the
Buddha so that within a 100
years um you
had probably even a hundred years after

the time of the Buddha less than half of
the teachings attributed the Buddha
would be really coming from the Buddha
himself and the teachings that existed
during the first hundred years or so of
Buddhism or at least the first 70 before
the first schism
that that would be called The Core text
that is called the core text by Scholars
or at least scholar monks that I've
talked to that those are the the the
texts that are pretty much in common
among all of the old early schools of
Buddhism because Terra was not the only
early School of Buddhism that a lot of
terraa Buddhists think that terraa

naturally obviously is the original teachings of Buddha and all the other schools just kind of branched off from that but that is really not the case that there were many schools of Buddhism like even in like the time of Asoka like middle of the 3rd Century there before Mahayana arose there are already lots of different schools of Buddhism you had the Maha sang gikas who pretty much dominated in the Buddha's actual Homeland like sort of the the Ganges Valley sort of Central and and Eastern Ganges Valley and then the Tera schools the the prototypes of terraa and in Allied schools like sarasti Vada they arose farther to the west and then

terraa gradually through competition pressures and so forth was migrating into South India and eventually wound up in Sri
Lanka or at least the the ancestors of terana so around the time of the second no the third Council the First Council was right after the Buddha died and that was probably establishing just basic Doctrine and mainly the rules of monastic discipline or at least the like the the basic framework the first foundation of the rules of monastic discipline because more got added later second Council was what was sort of the the cause of the first major schisms

into schools and it's not really
necessarily significant with regard to
the rules of monastic discipline or or
just the the texts in general aside from
the fact that that caused schisms
different schools branching away from
each other and then just through
isolation and just different teachers
emphasizing different things the
teachings just start moving in different
directions with different emphases and
so
forth and like I was saying that uh
Terra was first it was sort of migrating
westwards through Northern India and
then started Ed migrating
southwards and poly is the official

language of the Terra Buddhist
scriptures and devout terraa Buddhists
generally believe that the Buddha
himself spoke poly and then most of the
other schools started changing it over
to Sanskrit because Sanskrit was like
the classical language of ancient India
so it it's sort of like in in the west
the ancient West if you had some kind of
philosophical text it' generally be
translated into classical Latin or like
attic Greek instead of the more
rustic dialects and so forth
elsewhere but in Terra they just did not
switch over to Sanskrit and nowadays
they're saying that the Buddha probably

did not speak

poly but he spoke a kind of

protop that poly arose in like the area

of magada which was sort of the Buddha's

main stomping ground the kingdom of

madaa and then as it migrated it started

incorporating um certain aspects of

languages that were farther west and it

became streamlined into a kind of lingua

Franca for monks especially Terra monks

or Proto Terra monks so it's kind of an

artificial language at least Scholars

are saying that nowadays that it

probably was not the the original

language that the Buddhist spoke

although it probably the two languages

probably be mutually intelligible and

one of the bits of evidence why the ateka waga of the suata is so old is that it has like archaic word forms that were lost to the later more streamlined developed form of the poly language it's got like these archaic forms it's sort of like reading Shakespeare when you're used to Modern English the language isn't exactly the same so so around the time of the third Council during the the reign of the emperor Asoka um you already had lots of different schools and the third Council was mainly a terraa thing the other schools had their own councils at that

point apparently and one of the main reasons for the third Council was to purge the sarasti vodin from the Terra vadens it was like that was what caused Terra or Proto terraa and sarasti Vada a close related school to split apart and also is at this third Council probably that Abid dama was added as the third basket of the Buddhist scriptures so the Buddhist scriptures are called the titica or the three baskets first basket is vinia the school of the the rules of monastic discipline second is the suop ptica or the basket of discourses and the third pitica which as I say probably was not added until around the time of the the third Council like third mid

middle thir Century BCE is the Abid dapa
which the Burmese considered to be the
highest and most important teachings of
Buddha but it is unlikely that the
Buddha taught very much of it that it's
a kind of commentary it's like these
scholar monks that were mentioned
earlier were trying to
codify no I'm starting to lag um down to
5% okay so the battery is is running low
on my computer even though I've got it
plugged in but they're trying to
codify dhama and explain everything in
accordance with this dogmatic system
this philosophical system that they were
developing and a lot of the main

teachings of Abid dama aren't even

really they're not even found in the

Abid ptica it's it's like commentarial

tradition

and maybe I if I just didn't do

anything I I have this idea if I don't

do anything that the lag on the the

camera will catch up but I don't think

it works that way so I might as well

just keep keep waiting through this but

there's definitely a lag and I hope it

doesn't ruin the quality of this very

badly

so it was around the time of like the

mid-3rd century that you finally got the

titica the three piticas of terava

Buddhism vinia suta

and Abid

dama and I may as well if I'm explaining

the polyc Canon I may as well explain

that within the sutapa you've got five

nikayas or five collections the first is

the dega nikaya or the collection of

long

discourses the second is the majam

minaya or the collection of middl length

discourses then you've got the samut

Kaya which is the collection of

connected discourses which tend to be

shorter discourses that are grouped

together they're edited together in

accordance with topics so you'll have

like the nidana samuta is all about the

12 nidana theory of dependent core

Rising then you've got the angur inaya

which is also short discourses but they

are group together in accordance with

numbers so you've got

the like the group of ones the group of

twos the group of Threes And the Buddha

will discuss you know one main topic in

the group of ones two main topics in the

group of twos you know three main topics

in the group of threes and so

on and I think uh the lag has caught up

with me a little bit we're up to 6% on

the

battery ah

so and then finally you've got the Cuda

kinaya which is the small collection but

it's actually the largest collection

which is just sort of

miscellaneous there's a lot of like the

dhap which is one of the most well-known

po

texts is found in the cudak kinaya and

it's generally considered to be

relatively late that modern Scholars who

are experts on poetry ancient Indian

poetry they'll say say well this meter

style that this verse is composed in did

not come into Vogue until you know X

number of centuries after the Buddhist

time and so probably that's when it was

composed and the kinaya it's uh it's

just uh just really a miscellaneous

collection of texts like it contains the suttin which contains some of the most archaic texts it was like these texts were so well known that they were just in a group by themselves they were not incorporated into these other bodies of text that I already mentioned like the samuta for example and then you've got like the udana which also contains some very old texts the IDI Wuda maybe contains old text and you've got gradually you got later texts like you've got the the terata and the terata which are supposedly versus composed by enlightened monks and nuns then you've got um even apparent ly and possibly later stuff like the jota stories which

are

devotionalism after lifetime after

lifetime after lifetime that that gave

rise to the idea that being a Buddha was

this like almost infinitely above being

an ordinary enlightened being and it was

largely this devotionalism the

glorification of the founder of the

system so that was like uh one of the

seeds of Mahayana is this idea that to

be a Buddha is much better than to be an

enlightened just an ordinary arahant or

enlightened being even though originally

I doubt that there was any kind of

distinction between the two the Buddha

himself was an aans and there at least a

few texts in which an ordinary

enlightened being is called a Buddha

Buddha simply means awakened or

enlightened and arant literally means

worthy one and that is applied to the

Buddha like in the the basic namot tasa

bavato AR samas

Buddhas um which is like the beginning

of just about any kind of poly

chant that the Buddhist called an Aran

and so it was this devotionalism and

glorification of Buddhism that led to

the Practical deification of the

Buddha

so um you had Abid dama and then you had

like commentarial literature that was

still um it was still probably mainly

just not written down it was just this
extraneous tradition of official
explanations
for texts the texts that are
canonical so Mahayana came mainly from
the category of stray teachings
attributed to the Buddha and later um
philosophical developments coming from
more and more Divergent Buddhist
philosophers so I mean everything is
impermanent everything is anicha
including
Buddhism and so it just continues to
change and evolve and so terraa is more
conservative and Mahayana has just
continued to develop certain aspects of

Buddhist philosophy and also
devotionalism and until you get into
like um pure land Buddhism or certain
other kinds of Mahayana where the the
historical godma Buddha really is not
even he's hardly in the equation anymore
that you see like the Kamakura Buddha in
Japan or that gigantic standing Buddha
in Japan those aren't even GMA Buddha a
lot of the Buddha statues you'll see
like the ones based on the comic akura
Buddha um I mean that's not even goab
Buddha that's some
mythological Cosmic Buddha that was an
innovation of certain Mahayana
devotional sects or schools so that um
the historical GMA Buddha in some

schools of Mahayana he just pretty much

Fades from the picture and then you get

into like I think it's nii Ren where

they're basically basing their system on

veneration of the Lotus Sutra like the

chant namu yo rengo is I'm pretty sure

it means something like you know I bow

to the Lotus

Sutra and and the Lotus Sutra is not

found in the core text it

postdates um the the the schisms that

that sort of were initiated by the the

second Council or at least came shortly

after the second

Council so

uh it is kind of interesting though that

these oldest texts like the dig nikaya

the majam nikaya the pooka rules you

know these the first four nikayas of the

sutas dega majima samuta and angut and

also um certain books of the

vinia that they are found in Mahayana

Tex they're called

agama not they're not called nikayas

they're called aama

at least the the groups of

sutras and they're they're in the

Mahayana texts they're in their traida

but almost nobody pays attention to them

because for Mahayana it's more important

these later sutras these later teachings

that got developed that are considered

to be more

important because they're like some
esoteric higher teachings that were kept
secret from the first Buddhists and I
mean the official the official
explanation for how Mahayana suddenly
arose hundreds of years after the time
of the Buddha is that the Buddha
realized that people just weren't wise
enough to understand Mahayana at the
time even his enlightened Chief
disciples apparently were not wise
enough to appreciate Mahayana so it was
put and it was sort of
anachronistically printed volumes of the
Mahayana teachings were put in a it was
like a Castle or a cave under the ocean

and guarded by Cobra dragons until
people became wise enough like with the
Advent of the the the Buddhist teacher
nagar the Buddhist philosopher nagar he
was wise enough and so you know the
Cobra dragons presented him with these
earlier secret teachings of the Buddha
which needless to say is is not a very
believable story except to those who are
predisposed to believe pretty much like
I mean in in terrible a of Buddhism
there's a similar explanation for the
Advent of the Abid dama peda because all
of a sudden you've got these new
teachings of the Buddha that are just
being declared authentic teachings of
the Buddha despite the fact that nobody

had heard of them before and so the explanation for that is that one rainy season one monsoon season the Buddha left a kind of holographic image of himself on Earth and then he levitated or teleported up into a heaven realm and taught the deities Abid dama and that a kind of synopsis of it was brought down by one of his chief disciples and then it was codified and I mean again it's sort of like the the mythological explanation of the origin of Mahayana is just a kind of gimmicky mythological explanation for how it is that all of a sudden new authentic teachings of the Buddha are appearing

after nobody knowing about them for over

years or hundreds of

years

so I guess that's pretty much of a a

brief synopsis of the history of

Buddhist texts I mean I guess I could

have mentioned this is is not a very

well structured um talk or explanation

but but in in vinia you've got five

books of of vinia also so I might as

well backtrack now that I've gotten all

the way up into developments of Mahayana

I can go back to um vinia and say that

there's four main books you got the

mahalaga or I guess we should it depends

on what order they come in it depends on

on like the the Buddhist culture in some

countries mahaga and Chula waga come

first but they came later than the next

two which are the the two books of the

the potim Moka rules so that's pidia and

let know it would be it' be part of

and let's see I think it's pidia or what

they're called I got them on the

bookcase back there but I'm not going to

get up and

look

so

um probably the the earliest part like I

already said of the rules of monastic

discipline would be just the potty mocha

rules and then all these other rules

kind of a spun off you know it's like

the potty Roa potty mocha rules weren't comprehensive even the rule that says a monk has to shave his head is not included in the potty mocha rules and so more and more rules were gradually added until finally you get to the last book of vinia which is the Pari which even states in the book itself that it was composed in Sri Lanka which means that it would be much later even than the third Council and it was it's still canonical it's probably one of the latest additions to the poly toptica and it's mostly just a kind of review like a study Aid kind of a

thing and

all the schools of Buddhism at least uh

I know that in Mahayana Buddhism they do have like potim Moka rules they're called pratim Moka in Sanskrit they've got vinia piticas but for some reason they just apparently when they're like moving into like China central Asia and China and then like Korea and Japan and so forth it just the culture was so different from the culture in which these rules of monastic discipline arose that vinia has been pretty much much abandoned by Mahayana just as they have abandoned the earliest teachings as found in what what they call the aamas and then of course because Buddhism is impermanent and constantly

in a state of flux then we have what's
you know like what Terra a Buddhism is
turning into in the west with a kind of
woke Boomer Buddhism with everything
optional and Reviving the bikuni order
under you know question
pretenses and just sort of turning it
into a feminized system you know very
compassion oriented even though
originally Buddhism was one of the most
masculine spiritual systems ever devised
much more so than Islam in that it was
devised
by originally just athetic men who
avoided women like the plague
and now it has become especially in the
west a kind of feminized sort of um sort

of Dharma flavored neomarxism or some

such and that that's that's where we are

right now we've we've gone from ancient

to postmodern and that's my attempt at

explaining the the poly Canon and

Buddhist texts in general and so I'll

just stop here and say be happy

okay we are

recording so hello and welcome to

question and answer number

117 I am your host pel

basa and those of you who watched the

previous Q&A may recall that I mentioned

that I was in a somewhat agitated mental

state because of the situation at work

which might result

in my being

fired and uh I'm in not really much of a

better mood this weekend because on

Tuesday it actually happened so I'm no

longer working at a sheet metal

shop and at first like last weekend I

didn't want to give any details because

I was still working for the place and
everything but what happened
was upper management for several months
has had this policy of not hiring
anybody at our shop e not even to
replace people who had left and it took
eight or nine people to run the shop
efficiently and effectively you know we
had eight at the beginning of the year
and still we could have used an extra
guy just to make sure everything gets
done in a timely manner and people just
started quitting and upper management
just saw found no reason to replace them
so the other warehouse guy quit so I was
the only full-time machine operator in
the shop then the office manager quit

then one of the two sales reps quit and then a little over two months ago maybe two and a half months ago the branch manager quit and we went for more than two months without even a manager there and we were just swamped we could not keep up with customer orders we're get getting farther and farther behind the sales rep is saying well maybe in a week or so we can get your order when it's supposed to be like the next day and we were just so completely swamped with too few people that every few weeks I would send an email an increasingly frustrated aurbic kind of email to upper management telling them that we are losing

customers we are losing business we are losing money because of managerial incompetence and it I mean the the last one I sent which was this this previous Monday morning I just flat out accused them of being incompetent and I mean the camel's back was just broken at that point I didn't give a damn anymore and I mean I just told them I me I may lose my job because of

this but I mean if I do then the total number of full-time Warehouse staff where like machine operators will be zero and then you're finally at long last going to have to do something about this

situation so I sent the the email to the

regional manager the head of HR in this responsible for for that area the regional manager's boss the regional manager's boss's boss and the CEO of the entire
Corporation and all I got back that day was this Bland email from the regional manager thanking me for expressing my concerns um but then the next day after that Tuesday we were completely swamped as usual I get called into the manager's office which is usually locked because there's no
manager and uh there was like this conference call with the regional manager the the the HR guy and some some

lady that I'd never seen before and
they're saying well
you're just going to have to do it and
it was just completely unrealistic what
what they were telling me to do what
completely precipitated this was as I
was saying we were completely swamped we
could not keep up and then some Regional
sales guy sent us this order to produce
that was just so unrealistic it was 20
foot long trim very complicated it would
take two guys forever to make this stuff
we only really had one guy
anyway so I sent this email in in the in
the email that was accusing the upper
management of being incompetent with
regard to just losing customers losing

business losing money due to their own policy of refusing to hire anybody that I said if if this order is going to get done somebody else is going to have to do it or you could reduce the length of it so that only one guy can make it because I'm only one guy or you can have the sales guy who like the regional sales guy helped me make it and he can expect to help me make all this other long complicated stuff that he sends me until we get more guys and so the regional manager on this conference call said well he hasn't had the the necessary safety training to help you on that machine but nobody in the shop had

had that s safety training so he's just
bullshitting me and probably my theory
is that he just resented being called
out for being incompetent he wanted to
do some kind of dominance mood on me
dominance move and put me in my place or
some such
and so he's just saying you're going to
have to do it and so I just said no and
so I got fired so I'm looking for
another job maybe I'll get a job at the
zoo that would be kind of
nice and uh so that's the big news
and I have to admit I've been in kind of
a not a very chill relaxed kind of mood
lately as you may you may have already
noticed

I guess the other big

news is uh I got two more loaches for my

aquarium and they' just wiped out all

the snails except for some called

they're called Nite snails because they

stay completely underneath their shell

whereas any kind of snail that like

sticks feelers out or anything out of it

shell the loaches get it also my lovely

sweetheart she got uh a little siese

fighting fish tank she was going to have

a male and a female in the same tank

didn't work the male was just like

beating the [__] out of the female and

so we've got like this little you see

like a little blue fluttery kind of fish

back there that's the the female siese

fighting fish who is a refugee now in my

tank because of an abusive

partner so I think we're all caught up

and I guess I'll just commence to

answering questions because that's why

I'm here I still have this job of

answering questions and um there is a

good chance I'll put out a few few more

short videos

than I usually do and by short I mean

less than two

hours um preferably less than half an

hour um just

because this is like the only job I've

got right now other than just looking

for another job which does take some

time and effort especially when you're
trying to do stuff online you got of
jump through so many Hoops you know it's
like you're getting you're having to
verify security codes and all this like
they're going to send it to your phone
then you have to log in and come up with
a new password password and everything
just to like apply for a
job so anyways the first question is
from Virgil and Virgil is asking about
moot seatt of Burma and he says mogot SE
did you attend a retreat in his
tradition of weasa or do you know anyone
in Burma who did if so what's your
opinion about the system I heard his

weasa is very popular in Burma and it is true that when I was living in Northwestern Burma which is the part of Burma I probably spent the most time in um there was a lot of people following the MoGo method there were a lot of people following MoGo even more people following the Ley method Ley Seattle method and also there was some uh the Inu method those were like the three main methods in that area plus probably mahasi because mahasi is everywhere in Burma so anyways Mogul Seattle's method it has a lot of emphasis on understanding uh padicha samua in accordance with the traditional dogmatic 12 link theory of dependent cor rising

and if you don't know what that is

that's fine you might actually be better

off not knowing what that is so I never

really attended a retreat in the MoGo

method I I never followed the moogo

method of meditation but I did have a

couple of Monastery attendants who were

were really into the MoGo method and um

just living in that part of Burma I came

across a lot of people who followed the

MoGo

method and it really does rely heavily

on I mean on understanding the 12 Links

of dependent core Rising as is expressed

in the text and the commentaries and um

it's almost like a symbol of the MoGo

method that you've got the the wheel of dependent core Rising with all these arrows and links and everything and a lot of like the two meditation or the two Monastery attendants that were staying at the monastery sometimes they would meditate a lot of the time they would just sit there crossing it with their eyes closed listening to a recording of either moot seato himself or a disciple of mogot SE explaining dependent Co
arising and I think they use those those charts of the circular wheel of dependent core Rising as a kind of like like a Mandela or something and so for me it just has way too much thinking

about this dogmatic interpretation of dependent core rising and just I mean what I heard about MoGo is that he was very wise some people thought he was fully enlightened but still the method itself really did not appeal to me just because I really don't have a whole lot of use for the 12 nidana theory of dependent core rising and just all this thinking and listening to recordings while you're supposed to be meditating and so forth it just didn't appeal to me so my opinion of the Seattle himself would be higher than my opinion of the tradition that is associated with that Seattle just because I mean for some

people it might be really nice and I
never really did find out what any
deeper level of meditation would be
other than just like contemplating
dependent Coe Rising I assume there
would be some mindfulness involved but
mainly you know when you ask about MoGo
method they're going to tell you how it
differs from other methods and how it
differs is this emphasis on
understanding the 12 Links of dependent
core Rising divided up into three lives
you know the previous life the present
life and the future life
and Etc and so on
so that would probably be the best I
could answer that question without just

rambling into complete digressions so
I'm just going to move on to Virgil's
next question which is also about mot
Seattle he says after mot Seattle was
cremated apparently they found some sort
of relics in his Ash including an
eyeball an intact tooth and these pearly
things that look like gemstones that
said to appear only in the case of aans
do you know if there is any support in
the sutas that link these relics to the
achievement of arahan ship or is it
purely Burmese
folklore well actually neither it's not
purely Burmese folklore because I have
read that in China like back when China

was still like openly Buddhist at least
a lot of China was openly
Buddhist they were finding these same
relics these little balls that look kind
of like pearls in the ashes of Mahayana
Buddhist monks and the Burmese I mean
they would have to say no that's not
possible because the Burmese believe
that if you find these little pearl-like
things in the ashes after a mon is
cremated that is evidence that he was he
was
enlightened so they don't believe that
Mahayana mon can become enlightened
because they're staunch devout terraa
Buddhists and so they really don't know
how to deal with that that I mean there

are Mahayana monks who also Leave Behind
These balls and there's no mention of it
at all in the poly texts in fact I have
seen probably what are authentic relics
of Gab Buddha himself and it's just
charred little bits of bone and I came
across a theory which might be might be
accurate that these little pearl-like
balls are actually gall stones or kidney
stones so yeah but but it's it's really
a big deal in Burma they're called D
doll which is us it's translated as
Relic but literally means something like
noble
element and I mean there are like little
Museum like little building I mean it's

a small Museum just like one big room
that's like connected with a big pagota
or or some such you can go in it's just
all these do DOS all these little balls
and little white shap
that are like in reliquaries you know
they're like in little glass cases and
so forth and they'll point out this is
from this rant and this is from that
arant and they almost always have some
from the Buddha himself which you know
it's sort of like in medieval Europe
people selling fragments of like the the
Jawbone of the donkey that that Samson
was killing Philistines with or you know
a piece of the True Cross or this kind
of thing you know a piece of the the

crown of Thor horns that was crowned

Jesus and all this it it's kind of the

same thing because there's no mention at

all of these little Pearl like things

that were found are found in in the

relics or in the ashes of the Buddha

himself or in anybody that you're going

to find in the poly Tex at least I've

never come across any mention of these

little pearl-like

balls being found in the ashes of a

cremated arant

but in Burma and the only the only thing

I ever heard about with regard to mogot

Seattle what what they found in his

ashes I've been told that both of his

eyeballs were left

unburned and it could be that it was

just like two of the larger Pearl like

balls that maybe are like kidney stones

or gall stones or something I don't

know um but if you saw of MoGo he had

very like striking penetrating eyes kind

of like Osho or the the buwan Raj Nish

how I mean Ian I'm not comparing them

personality wise or attainment wise but

both of them had like these like

penetrating eyes you know like these

large dark kind of luminous looking eyes

and so it may be that because he really

did have striking eyeballs in life that

when they found some balls in the ashes

they just assume that they were his

eyeballs

so yeah the intact tooth I I never heard

about the whole time I was in Burma I

was living in MoGo

country and uh never heard of

that and then the Pearly things which

um yeah it's just it's mainly just a

tradition but it's not purely a Burmese

tradition because it also existed in

China in days gone by before China

turned

communist so I think I'm just going to

move on to the next question and this is

from cify and cify says don't you

sometimes miss your Monk's life and

really the the the correct answer the

true answer to that is no I I don't
really miss the Monk's life um you know
it was just obviously very important
part of my life you know this important
stage you know like half my life I was a
monk it's just kind of amazing to me
that really it was like I spent so long
as a monk it doesn't really seem like I
was a monk for 30 years but I
was but I mean I've really taken to
Heart the idea of you know wherever you
are I mean that's just where you are and
you just continue you know moving
forwards and regretting or wishing
things had been different in the past um
I mean everyone can fall pray to that
even I am like like over the past few

days you know past four days just kind
of replaying just the whole Fiasco at
work in my mind and thinking ah I should
have said this you know this would have
been more I would have been fired
regardless but at least I could have
like stated my case better but really I
was so angry at the time that I mean the
camel's back was already broken and it
was it was a hopeless
case so anyways after that digression
um yeah I mean I don't really miss the
Monk's life I'm glad that I was a monk
you know it's it's been just a formative
you know period of my life definitely I
wouldn't be sitting here talking to you

guys right now if I hadn't become a monk
but I mean I I stopped being a monk just
because it wasn't working anymore I've
I've already gone over all the reasons
and everything it just it was like it
had run its course I had gotten as far
as I could with it it was time to move
on to something else it was fairly
obvious at the time so no regrets no no
real missing of
it and so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from covac and Cad
zida and he says you were talking about
how breath meditation can involve many
aspects of the for sa patana it says
explicitly in the various descriptions
of the 16 steps to

sa that when followed properly it

satisfies all four

saatana can you please explain how this

does that what I mean is that I

understand you have said that it isn't

good meditation advice but I don't even

understand how you can possibly practice

what is even said in these instructions

as the instruction seems so vague and

random and I really do not understand

why COV action c z is so fixated on

these 16 steps of anop since both of us

appear to be pretty much in agreement

that it's not very good instruction I

doubt that the Buddha gave the

instruction as it is found in the texts

that it just doesn't make a whole lot of sense there's all this thinking you're supposed to be doing mindfulness of breathing but there's all this thinking about what you're going to be doing in the future you know I will be this in the future I will do that you know it's like and all this discernment all this discriminating
perception that I mean it's it's not good meditation if you're doing that unless somehow there's some way of transcending the discriminating perception so that you can be kind of above and detached from the discriminating perception maybe like purely mindful of discriminating

perception in which case you're not
really dealing with the content of the
of the perception
anymore so and why he keeps this is like
his third question about these same 16
steps and he says can you please explain
how um the 16 steps which I don't
consider to be authentic teachings of
the Buddha probably you know I can't
just categorically insist that the
Buddha really didn't teach it but it may
be like a garbled distorted version of
something that he taught because to me
it just does not seem like good advice
with regard to how to do mindfulness of
breathing and so can I please explain

how this satisfies all for sa patana I
mean you'd have to look in the
commentaries I guess and maybe you'll
find an explanation of that but I mean
it's all academic because neither one of
us really takes it very seriously
apparently although maybe setion CAD zut
takes it way more seriously than I do
because this is the third question he
has asked about this and it's it's all
pretty much like flogging the same dead
baby because choking the same dead
chicken if you
will because it's It just strikes me as
all academic it's just some sort of
commentarial explanation to make sense
of things that isn't necessarily going

to be an improvement on just not

knowing

so let's

see yeah I

mean you you can work it out for

yourself because it's just a It just

strikes me as being this academic

question about

the 16 steps of mindfulness of breathing

that I do not consider to be very good

advice it could be that I just not

getting it somehow but all this thought

and like thinking about what you're

going to cultivate in the future and all

that when you're supposed to be sitting

there just being mindful of breathing It

just strikes me as some sort of
Scholastic some ancient Buddhist
Scholastic got carried away maybe just
took the original teaching and just sort
of elaborated on it in a way that kind
of distorted it beyond all
recognition so yeah there's there really
I don't know what the answer would be to
that I really have not had any real
interest in it I never really took I
mean from the first time I read the
anapana Su that I mean it just did not
strike a cord with me at all it's just
it just kind of just blanded with a thud
when I read the thing never had much
interest and it didn't bother reading
the commentarial explanation of it it

just didn't work for me I went with a

different

method so I mean if it clicks with you

then yeah go go ahead and do it and then

maybe you'll find out from your own

experience how all four of the the

foundations or applications of

mindfulness are satisfied and perfected

by following the 16 steps

but it's just it's just not something

that I'm really in a position to explain

because I never bothered to find out

what the explanation is it's sort of

like reading Hagel or something or

reading like this complicated text on

like like an Earth centered astronomy

I've got a a a book back there the suria
Sant that I mean I read the thing just
just as a matter of self-discipline kind
of you know it's just I don't like
having a book and getting started on it
and then not finish finishing it but
it's it was so hard to read this and
it's all based on a geocentric model of
the universe which I mean I just can't
take it seriously anyway why try to
figure out how to you know try to follow
this and just you know keep up with it
understand everything that's being said
when you don't really take it seriously
to begin with hegel's phenomenology of
spirits and other one you know I read it
but at some point there's just you have

to reach this point point of is just not worth the effort to bust my ass intellectually trying to understand everything that he's saying when even the editor and translator of the book didn't fully understand it and I'm pretty sure that Hegel really was just being a sophist when he was writing most of it

anyway so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is also from seov action Cad zonam and please seov action CAD Z no more qu questions about the 16 stages of anapon it as found in these suas so C action seot Z says as you probably know people care a lot about

looks when they are young and start
caring about other things when their
looks start going to [__] with age as
most don't age as well as you when I try
to overcome attachment to the body by
thinking it will one day become old and
ugly I constantly think about how it was
never even goodlooking to begin with
anyways so I'm just coping Maybe there
is a different way to deal with
attachment to the body for people who
never had any delusion of thinking their
own body is attractive in the first
place do you have any advice for people
like this well I'm kind of like that
myself I mean when I was younger I just
I did not consider myself to be

good-look there were a few girls in school when I was younger that thought I was a cute cutie or something thought I was you know attractive but mainly I think I was attractive because of my personality and my intelligence and so my sense of humor more than my appearance I think I might have actually improved in looks since I was 20 years old like I I never liked my nose I just thought that I had like this little snub nose and it just was not attractive and uh had kind of like a weak chin or something which as I've gotten older it's kind of filled out you know it's like um your your features kind of

continue to grow somewhat or maybe
there's like this old Talking Heads kind
of Spoken Word Song you on their album
remain in light talking about how a
person you know it's like their attitude
determines their appearance you know
they can sort of gradually subtly alter
their appearance through you know the
ideals they have in their mind and so
forth maybe that happened with me or
something I don't
know but um yeah I mean I never really
considered myself to be really
goodlooking or or even particularly tall
even though I'm well above six feet
still I mean like if I try to imagine
myself talking with other people I'd

always kind of imagine myself at about
the same level as them and so I mean I
never really I've never really been
identified with my body all that much
either
so yeah this this might be a strip two
in answering SE action CP Zina because
I've never really been that preoccupied
with my looks I mean when I was young
like when I was in high school and
college I just had like long straggly
hair it was all curly I didn't quite get
into the dreadlocks but you know I'd
like comb it with my fingers and and all
these weird booping sounds that you hear
are uh my sweetheart's computer's

notifications on for Discord I think

so yeah I mean I never really was all

that I really didn't care all that much

about my

appearance never considered myself to be

all that good-look and and furthermore I

was just so head oriented you know just

so introverted that I really just did

not identify with my body all that much

and so let's see maybe I should just get

back to the question here let's see

where is it and I try to overcome

attachment to the body by thinking it

will one day become old and ugly um I

constantly think about how it was never

even good-looking to begin with anyway

so I'm just coping maybe there is a

different way to deal with attachment to the body for people who never had any delusion of thinking their own body is attractive in the first place you have any advice for people like this well I mean if you're doing Buddhist Meditation on like the foulness of the body like the 32 parts of the body meditation or contemplation of corpses for example then I mean you're supposed to be considering that your body is foul now no matter what you look like you know it's like even the most beautiful woman in the world I I saw a few autopsies when I was in Burma and I know that like the smooth rounded voluptuous

curves of a beautiful woman you get
below the skin and it's looks like this
partially melted Vita cheese the
subcutaneous adapost tissue you know and
then there's all the guts and stuff you
know it's snot and mucus and flam and
all this kind of stuff is you know even
inside the most beautiful person and I
mean you look at people on on the
Internet or on TV nowadays the most
beautiful people I mean there's lots of
plastic and stuff added to them anyway
they've got all these art artificial
padding and stuff
added and I think we're just going to be
stuck with these Discord notices booping
for I don't know how much longer that

was that was my my Discord server

there so let's see here a different way

to deal with attachment to the body for

people who never had any delusion of

thinking their own body was attractive

in the first place well I mean just

contemplate the 32 parts of the body for

example do that meditation and that

works for anybody regardless of what

they look like because you know you once

you get under the skin I mean it's all

this

goop

essentially so maybe you could try that

but I

mean I don't know it's just I can't

really relate to it very much simply
because I never really identified with
my body never really identified with my
name either it's just I'm I'm more
mentally oriented I guess and they're
just going for it big time on the
Discord server right
now so I think I'm just going to so I
guess I should give like the def answer
before moving on to the next one that
would traditionally according to terraa
Buddhist tradition the correct
meditation to do or the correct practice
if you want to reduce your attachment to
your own body is contemplate the
foulness of your body now don't
contemplate how foul it's going to be

when you're

80 just contemplate you know all the

goop and ick and and just I

mean I guess guess witnessing an autopsy

might not be realistic but maybe you

could even find online somewhere like an

autopsy video or something that would be

the the next best thing to actually

watching a real

autopsy

so yeah the 32 parts of the body

meditation is the standard meditation

that is prescribed in terava Buddhism

for overcoming attachment to the

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

COV action Cod third

question which is you have talked about
half the sua doctrines being added in
the first 100 years but this doesn't
seem to make much sense to me with your
comparison to Jesus you have made before
he taught for like one to three years
all his disciples rejected him in the
end while the Buddha taught for 45 years
had many enlightened students and Ananda
lived for almost 40 years after the
Buddha himself died
the Puda teachings that are in common
with all schools seem closer in
comparison to the works of Plato or
Aristotle really being their own we
don't have their writings directly and
mostly have their teachings from Roman

sources and vague references from later Greek sources however they were both famous enough that their teachings would have been preserved much better as a result sure the Buddha didn't write anything himself but it doesn't seem fair to compare it to the case of Christianity even in Christianity Jesus's brother James seems to have run the sect of ebionite Christians which probably heavily reflected the historical Jesus's teachings well but that church died out so it seems even with one to three years of preaching Jesus's true teachings lasted around over 400 years so with all this in mind

even in the worst case scenario it doesn't make take doesn't make much to say Christianity was ruined in the first 100 years the original message was still out there but it was just a minority school so how can you claim Buddhism with many more factors and circumstances to preserve their teachings would end up having half the text common to all schools be added on later and when I was he's referring to statements I made in a previous video like the video that I I uploaded right before this one few days ago about like the history of the the development of the Buddhist text and I was being generous when I said maybe half of the core texts represent

authentic teachings of the Buddha I
think it might be closer to maybe 20 to
25% let's say
25% so I mean I'm I'm doubling down
literally on what I was saying in that
previous video that of the teachings as
they existed like the Dharma or Dharma
as it existed the suta literature and
and the vinea as it existed 100 years
after the the time of the Buddha was
maybe 25% authentic but I mean there's
like a spectrum at on the on the one
extreme you've got literal
verbatim records of what the Buddha
actually said you know just 100%
quotes and then you've got after that

would be like a paraphrase you've got
sort of a and it you know as you move
farther away that the paraphrase gets
looser and looser but still it would be
along the lines of what he taught and
some that he would be likely to endorse
and then you start getting into stuff
that's largely Irrelevant this stuff
that's just kind of made up and added
but is kind of you know sort of along
the lines of what he taught even though
you know it's it's just made up in the
kind of Tau me originated with somebody
else in more or less of the spirit even
though the Buddha never really addressed
the issue or some such or never would
address it in that manner or whatever

and then finally you get stuff at the
extreme this just mythological stuff
that the Buddha would just denounce that
he would just deny having anything to do
with that and some of the stuff that is
in the poly toptica including the core
texts would in all likelihood be
something that the Buddha would just no
I would never say such a
thing a lot of the miracle stuff for
example
so the Christians did have the advantage
in that both the Jews and the Greeks and
it was like a hellenized Judaism was
sort of like the environment in which um
Christianity first arose both the Jews

and the Greeks had already had an objective sense of history and of accurate recordkeeping which was not the case in India I mean it's still I mean I mean in India and the Buddhist time there was more of a surreal understanding of real ity you know there was less of an idea of objectivity and it's still that way in large parts of Burma where I mean just wild theories and and just rumors and so forth can spread like wildfire and just totally distort like something I said or did you it would come back to me like two days later in this totally distorted form so it is true that the Buddha apparently was much uh more successful

as a teacher than Jesus was although
where he says here that um let's see he
said something like all of all of
Jesus's disciples like re rejected him I
don't know where you get the idea that
all of Jesus's disciples rejected him in
the end I mean according to tradition
all of his apostles were martyred for
not rejecting him I mean it's true that
St Peter you know kind of Deni IED
knowing him you know then the [__]
crowed three times and and so
forth but
um I mean it was written down earlier
than than uh than Buddhism by hundreds
of years I mean hundreds of years after

the time of the founder and also the
culture that it arose in was definitely
more attuned to the whole idea of like
accurate objective recordkeeping and
even then they just missed the boat it's
sort of like human beings are like the
only the most we're the most rational
animal but still I mean we're a far cry
from perfect at
it so he talks about uh James who was
considered to be the brother of Jesus
and James I mean he was he was the
leader of the the Christian church after
Jesus died you know he was he was in the
the lineage of of King David and so
forth supposedly presuming that that
they actually took that seriously that

Jesus was a descendant of King David
that the leaders of the Christian church
after Jesus died were his family members
because you know it had to be the same
branch of of King David I guess at least
that's what I have that's what I have
been
told um and for whatever reason reason
James is pretty much edited out of the
New Testament you know there's a few
brief mentions of him and then there's
the one General Epistle of James and
mostly Paul just kind of did a hostile
takeover of Christianity and and the
followers of Paul and so James who was
actually the leader of Christianity he

was like the first pope or something

that um he he's pretty much edited out

he is downplayed because he and Paul

apparently didn't get along there was

like this ideological divide between

them and apparently Paul's side one and

Paul turned Christianity not just into a

sect of of Judaism but into a world

religion the state religion of the Roman

Empire

so let's see

here yeah so I mean in answer to this

long question here let's see what is

where's the question mark it's right

here at the end let's see so how can you

claim Buddhism which many with many more

factors and circumstances to preserve

their teachings would end up having half
the text common to all schools be added
on later well I mean it's not many more
factors about the only factor in favor
of the Buddhists is that the Buddha was
much more effective as a teacher so
there would be more people who would
actually understand what he was teaching
but like I said in the video when you're
determining what's going to be official
Doctrine it's usually not the wisest
monks the wisest monks are out alone in
a forest meditating it's the busybody
School monks you know the politician
monks they're the ones who are making a
lot of the decisions with regard to what

to include and what to edit out of this

body of I mean you can't really call

literature because it wasn't even

written down

yet and again in Ancient India and in

the orient the Ori

in general maybe not China so much but

there is there was a kind of surreal

approach to reality you know it's it's

it's all mindmade kind of stuff they

just did not have the same like

empirical sense of objectivity that

existed in the

west so it resulted in more Distortion

more weird stuff getting added in not

that the New Testament doesn't have

weird stuff added in but there's more of

it in nap

texts so I think I'm just going to move

on to next question and this is from

isog I'm not sure how to pronounce this

name it's it's not really a common name

I'm pretty sure isog I think and isog

says what do you think of the terava

Buddhist conflict with rohinga

Muslims and there's really not much of a

conflict going on anymore in Burma with

rohinga Muslims because most of them

were dri driven out into Bangladesh and

then after they were driven

out the you know certain governments and

uh not for-profit

organizations they uh there's like

pressuring the Burmese government to let
them come back in again and
resettle and the rohingyas didn't even
want to come back they'd rather stay in
refugee camps in Bangladesh then come
back to Burma and take their chances
with the military
government so I mean there's not much of
a conflict going on anymore between
terraa Buddhist and Burma and rohinga
Muslims not that I know of Unless
somehow they they did come
back but uh there is like the 969
movement in Burma led by Asin wethu or
at least that used to be led by ashin
wrau I never really was interested in it
all that much but there are some some of

the most famous seatt in Burma like

thigo seato is an outspoken critic of

you know Muslim immigrants into Burma

you know Burma should be kept for the

for the Buddhists that kind of a thing

at least the ethnic Burmese Heartland of

Burma you know I mean so a lot of the

the ethnic groups on the the fringes you

know the geographical fringes of Burma

um you know they're Christians or

whatever largely due to uh missionaries

during British colonial times

um but the Burmese they are very

traditionalist and conservative with

regard to their religion they really

don't give a [__] about political

correctness so I mean the rohinga
Muslims were brought in by the British
to settle newly cleared areas for for
Farming and so the the Burmese don't
even really consider the ringas to be
like legitimate citizens because they
were just installed in Burma by the
colonialist
oppressor
so there are a lot of Burmese people and
it's it's understandable I suppose
because there's a lot of people like
this like in the west also who just do
not want their traditional culture to be
overwhelmed by people who may be
antagonistic to their traditional
culture and in Burma it's just

considered to be a trism just a kind of obvious fact that if youve got a small number of Muslims you know you got a few Muslims in the village they're perfectly fine they're good neighbors a lot a lot of the time the The Village butcher will be a Muslim simply because it's not considered to be immoral for a Muslim to kill whereas it is for a Buddhist obviously but once you get a certain critical mass they start becoming aggressively

intolerant

so well I mean they're just not politically correct enough to just you know sit by and cheer on the death of

their traditional culture and so to some
degree some of them are fighting back
but it's not so much a religious thing
you know it's not like I mean it's more
of a cultural thing and to some degree
it's a kind of xenophobia thing
xenophobia just being like distrust of
foreign ways and so
forth foreign people I guess to some
degree and we people in the West can
disapprove of that or whatever but the
burmes don't give a [__] whether we
disapprove or
not so I mean they have the right to
decide for their own country what
they're going to do right now they're
ruled by a military dictatorship I'm

pretty sure and I don't think the

military dictatorship is really keen on

resettling or importing lots of

Muslims or really any kind of any kind

of foreign migrants into

Burma and

that's they're a Sovereign Nation

supposedly although they're becoming

more and more just sort of like a

satellite of

China well the Chinese really aren't Pro

Muslim either so there's no problem

there I

guess and

uh yeah I guess I answered that question

so I'm moving on to the next one this is

from ruie

and ruie saysi wonder whether in the

time of the Buddha there were many who

after hearing a few sermons took off on

their own and reached final

Liberation and that's what the texts say

I mean I don't I'm not exactly sure what

ruie means here if he means hearing a

few sermons and then taking off on their

own without like converting to Buddhism

sort of like sidarta in the Herman hes

novel um you know he he heard a few

sermons and he decided that he would is

just going to do it on his own you know

he's some some of us are just not really

followers so you know the whole

unquestioning obedience thing is just

doesn't work for for some of

us

so see so I'm not sure if ruy means that

just people who heard a few of a sermons

and then as Buddhists maybe like

Buddhist monks went off and meditated

and if you read and if I mean if that's

the Assumption then if we can trust the

text at all it happened a lot you know

it's just like the standard story you

got somebody who comes to the Buddha

talks with him the Buddha converts him

you know he gets a little bit of

teaching he goes off meditates

diligently in the forest and before long

he becomes

enlightened it may not have happened
nearly as much as it is claimed in the
texts I mean in the text you can have
you know thousands and thousands of
people all becoming enlightened
simultaneously
but um you know I'm I got no problem
with the idea that it did happen but
with regard to people who um heard a few
teachings of the Buddha you know they
met the Buddha in person were inspired
to go and practice but they didn't want
to be ordained as Buddhist monks and
they just went off as a
non-denominational
aesthetic and went off and meditated in
the forest and became Enlighten that

could have happened too probably was n
as common since probably the people that
were really moved and like converted
just became Buddhist
monks um I mean if if they weren't then
you'd have to have a certain kind of
character to really be moved and to
really like commit to what the Buddha
taught well at the same time not
becoming one of his
followers
so I'm not exactly sure which way ruy
was intending with this question whether
he was referring to monks or whether he
was referring to people that just heard
some sermons of the Buddha and then just

went off on their own kind of like a modern Westerner might do you know they just became eclectic you know they just combined some of the Buddhist teachings with some of mahavira's teachings and maybe threw in a little bit from maali gosala and you know some some bramis stuff you know theyd studied the upanishads a little bit and then they just went off and and with the this kind of eclectic combination of views or or something or maybe they just the Buddha was teaching no view you know like in the ATA waga and so they just considered it unnecessary to join any kind of you know any kind of tradition if you know it's like all you

got to do is just not believe
anything so I mean it's hard to say
exactly you can't really answer these
kind of questions with any kind of
certainty because I do not have the
Clairvoyance to look into ancient India
and see what was actually going on there
all we have is texts that are not
entirely reliable and some of the stuff
like if if they're talking about non-
Buddhists they might not even get
mentioned I can't recall any any stories
in the texts of a person coming and
listening to the Buddha and not
converting not becoming a monk and then
just going off and becoming a

enlightened anyway I mean according to

Orthodox tradition if you're not a a an

ordained monastic in in Buddhism if you

become enlightened you have to be

ordained very quickly afterwards or

you're going to die you're just going to

have a sudden

death

so yeah

I'm it's I'm not

sure I don't like I don't particularly

like getting questions that I really

can't answer very well well but it

sometimes does happen and it's already

happened a few times already in this one

video because sometimes people are

asking about hypotheticals or they're

asking you know what happened and you
know there might be no records of it so
it's like how do you
know even if I had some kind of
Clairvoyance I mean how do I know that
that it's being accurate in this in this
case you know I might be accidentally
accidentally peeking into an alternative
version of reality or something that
doesn't apply to to us right here or
something so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from
Romeo and uh Romeo is asking it's it's
three questions that are all It Strike
me as very
similar so he says my questions pertain

to the fact that in the very near future
AI will be replacing many of the aspects
of life that people find meaningful like
work art music relationships Etc
so the first question is how do you
think most people will react to the AI
takeover and the seeming meaninglessness
that will come with it and it seems to
me that finding meaning in life is kind
of like feeling Pride that pride is
something that you're born with it's
most people it's not that they have to
rise up to some some level of prominence
or success before they feel proud it's I
mean if you're just a proud person to
begin with you you can be proud of
anything you can be proud of how many

beers you can drink without puking you
can be proud of how big your feet are
you can be proud of the number of women
you have dumped on it doesn't matter you
you'll come up if you've got this
tendency to Pride you're going to take
pride in something you're going to be
proud about
something and I think it's pretty much
the same way with finding meaning in
life that if you just have a tendency to
find meaning in life and pretty much
everybody does then you're gonna find it
somehow or other I mean it might be
something silly like you know getting
into immersive video games or you know

some sort of virtual reality stuff or um
just how getting a hobby getting a fish
tank maybe or or whatever it is building
model cars I don't know but I mean
relationships I assume AI will replace
relationships for a lot of people which
is not good for the human race because
you have to have like real people
getting together in order to make babies
and perpetuate the
species but I mean it's going to weed
out it's kind of the Misfits the
biological Misfits The evolutionary
Misfits so um yeah there might be a lot
of Mala you know people that just maybe
a lot of unemployment simply because AI
is going to be replacing a lot of people

in their

jobs so let's see here what is the

question again I sometimes I got to

reread the question just because I I've

talked so long that I've forgotten what

the question is how do you think most

people will read or react to the AI

takeover and the seeming meaninglessness

that will come with it I think a lot of

them will just follow along with

whatever they're told to follow along

with which is the way it seems like most

people in the world are you know it's

just they're told you know just follow

along with this and everything will be

fine and so just follow along with that

whether everything really will be fine

or not um there's some people are going

to just be in Despair and rebel which is

always the case any kind of change that

happens there's going to be some people

who don't like it and rebel against

it so yeah I'm not I'm not sure I mean

with regard to meaninglessness I mean

from my philosophical point of view

you're better off with

meaninglessness because meaning is some

SAR you know meaning is a kind of

illusion

so

um see how don't how do you think most

people will react to the AI

takeover yeah I think a lot of people

are just going to get immersed in

virtual reality kind of stuff and

uh see take up Hobbies maybe there's

going to be a certain reaction against

it so that people will actually spend

more money just to deal with an actual

human

than dealing with this

Ai and one thing I've noticed with

regard to technology like computer

technology is like whenever something

gets developed it gets it gets put out

there when it's still got all these bugs

in it so that nothing ever really runs

really

well it's like you know you got to have

the newest version which is still like a practically a prototype and there's all these glitches and so you can't just have a method that's all worked out from three years ago you got to have the newest version which is it's going to be like way more imperfect than the version before that in certain respects anyway but I don't know if that is actually helping to answer this question or not might just help some people to just not get sucked into the AI thing but I think if a corporation is going to save money by having you know AI um you know just you just talk to the AI when you're the drive-thru window which I think is already happening you know you're not

talking to a real human you're talking
to this artificial intelligence which
then records your order and then maybe
just maybe an actual human will be
involved in the process of cooking that
order and serving it to you
but yeah it's it's hard to say exactly
what's going to happen it's not so much
for me a matter of meaninglessness is a
matter of I mean there's going to be a
lot of unemployed people I think and so
there might be have to be some way of
finding busy work jobs that for for
actual humans to do because otherwise
we're we're kind of screwed it's it's
just going to be you know everyone's

going to get this stipend like an
allowance to live on because and then
where's the money going to come
from but with regard to finding meaning
in life I think that people like I was
saying earlier people that generally
have a tendency to find meaning somehow
somewhere and they'll come up with
something it may be that their new
meaning in life is just to protest
against the meaninglessness or even to
like have this this new philosophy of
meaninglessness or some such you know
that'll be their meaning in life that'll
be you know their purpose is to just
rail against the lack of
purpose but people will find a way

somehow or another and I'm just going to move on to Roman 's next question CU as I say these are all interrelated very similar questions do you think it is possible for people to find meaning in their lives considering the seeming meaninglessness that will come with the AI takeover if so how and I think I've already answered

that do you think it is possible for people to find meaning in their lives yeah of course it is it's of course it's possible I mean Dharma is not going to go anywhere I mean there's still that Christianity probably isn't going to go anywhere

so people are going to find meaning I
mean it's like a need for any
unenlightened
person to have meaning in their lives
and so I mean when it's a need like that
you're G to you're going to find
something
see yeah I guess I've already answered
that question I hope so anyway because
I'm moving on to the third one here can
dhama help people cope with the seeming
meaninglessness that will come with the
AI Tak over if so how so I've already
partially answered this question and
that as I already said dh's not going
anywhere you know AI is not going to
replace dham probably at least not for

everybody it may be that you have like
you know AI Bots that are you know
answering spiritual questions and so
forth uh whether they'll have any actual
wisdom or not I don't know but uh also I
mean it will help some people who are
more advanced
in that DH like or the archaic Buddhism
like in Thea waga the Buddha is is
saying I mean meaning is the problem you
know you don't want meaning you know
it's like meaning is samsara meaning is
what keeps you trapped in samsara and so
you know some people will cling to like
a a lower level of dhama you know a more
kind of a Normy level of dhamma as their

meaning the meaning that they need to to
to you know get through life and then
more advanced people may actually
embrace
meaninglessness they might they might do
it more easily since you know everything
is becoming apparently more and more
meaningless due to AI so then they'll
like embrace the the early teachings of
the yo wagas at least a few people
probably will and where it's saying you
know it's like don't have meaning
meaning is not good for you
anyway so yeah it might be like a
surgence of existentialism or something
but with regard to the actual way the AI
is going to

manifest in in

society I mean I really can't I really

can't predict that other than that you

know there's a lot of jobs like Romeo is

saying here a lot of jobs are going to

be phased out because humans are going

to be replaced by machines but that's

been going on for a long time you know

it's like John Henry against the the

steam drill you know it's the people

have been protesting that you know just

think of all the poor uh like the

blacksmiths or what what are the ones

har no faers the ones that shoed horses

you know they all lost their jobs

because the invention of cars and so

forth and uh I mean it's it's just going
to keep happening I mean so long as
technology keeps developing there's
going to be like new jobs for people to
do which may not be predictable at
present and then there's going to be
older jobs to get phased
out I mean The Chariot makers are really
they're really they've really hit hard
times because I mean the demand for
chariots is so low
nowadays so we're just G to have to wait
and see I guess that's the best attitude
especially from a Buddhist point of view
it's like don't worry about the future
especially if the future is uncertain
which It generally is you just wait and

see what

happens so I'm willing to do that and

I'm going to move on the next question

this is from dhama river and dhama river

says I recently heard a quote by Bhutan

Buddhist monk Zar K rimpoche I will

paste it here exactly as he said it it

had a big impact on me because lately I

felt that I had stopped making progress

with my meditation practice and I find

myself sitting on the cushion wasting my

time with thoughts running wild and the

mind is uninterested and unengaged I can

relate to that could you please read it

out loud and then provide your

perspective on it thank you and then he

has beginning of quote so this this next

is going to be from

Zar K

Roch beginning of quote wisdom is the

most important all the others are

secondary do you understand to see the

truth is the most important morality

discipline even meditation even

so-called meditation as precious as it

sounds if your meditation is not making

you see the truth you are basically

rotting your butt do you understand

sitting on something it's useless okay

maybe it's going to relax you a little

bit it may sort of make you calm down a

little bit so what if you don't see the

truth a little bit of calm that you can

achieve in many ways to see the truth is
always so important end of quote and
completely agree with this I it's like
the whole point is to know
reality that's wisdom is the highest the
highest virtue in Buddhism you know it's
like you have you have to have good CA
good morality which allows you to have
good concentration which then allows you
to have wisdom so wisdom is like the
goal you don't become enlightened
without perfecting your
wisdom and in this case the perfecting
your wisdom just means getting down to
zero delusion regardless of any you know
philosophical framework that you might

be dealing with you have to get down to
zero delusion and I mean that's that's
the goal I mean that's really number
one so yeah I mean it is more important
than morality or discipline or
meditation because the whole point of
morality discipline and meditation is to
get you to
wisdom I mean that's that's the whole
point you know we're we're wallowing in
delusion and unreality and so we're
supposed to free ourselves from that
we're supposed to be liberated from that
we liberate ourselves from unwisdom
so yeah I would I would agree with the
rimpoche the venerable the venerable one
and so I'm just going to move on to the

next

question this is from Jack and Jack says

my question is about taming the Mind

tying it down to a pole like a wild

animal can you just elaborate on this

where does it come from in the teachings

Etc and I actually looked briefly for

the the like what Su this simile is in

there is a simile with regard to

mindfulness of breathing not the 16

steps of mindfulness of breathing but

just mindfulness of breathing

and the simile is you're taming an

animal by kind of T tethering it to a

pole and the pole

represents the breath the animal the

wild animal is your undisciplined mind
and the tether is mindfulness it's like
whenever the animal tries to get away
this tether will keep it from getting
away from the pole until finally the
animal will stop struggling against this
tether and just stay near the pole of
its own accord so it's like mindfulness
of breathing if your mind starts
wandering away from the breath with
mindfulness you bring it back to to the
breath bre again and you just keep doing
that and doing that and doing that until
your mind just naturally stays with the
breath and so you have domesticated
tamed your mind by using mindfulness of
breathing and I don't remember what suta

it's in and I'm pretty sure it's not in

the majaya because I looked in the

majaya and I just did not see it in

bod's like index of similes it wasn't

wasn't in the index of similes at least

it wasn't in there with regard to

teaming animals or tying them to poles

or any such

thing but it is a

sua um using the simile of an animal

Tethered to a pole as a simile for how

you tame your own mind through using the

the the Rope of mindfulness to keep it

on the breath the breath is the

pole so I suppose I successfully

answered that one so I'm going to move

on to the next question which is from
trasis and trasis says I am using my
three questions here on this one qu
because I want a little deeper analysis
I know this is Buddhist Marine Channel I
don't know how the Marine gets in there
I know this is Buddhist Marine Channel
but could you please say something more
about your interpretation of the letter
of James you probably may want to read
it again after all this time and
actually I did before I did this video
because it's only like four pages long
it's a short little chapter in the New
Testament that probably a lot of
Christians are unaware of because it
really doesn't get a whole lot of

press partly because as I said earlier James pretty much got edited out of the Bible and his his dominant role in early Christianity um this kind of got I don't know memory hold or something but it turns out I do have a Bible it's a good one it's this one right here it's a Catholic Bible I think due to the the maltes cross down there and also there's like some little Latin inscription in here from uh

somebody yeah I won't try to find the Latin inscription I

guess oh yeah wait the impr

premature yeah and the censor dep depuis censor deparis is the Reverend Kenneth H

Shan

but this is a this is a good copy of the Bible a good edition of The Bible because it's got footnotes it's got Maps it's got alternative renderings you know it's like there's like the scene I think it's in John where the woman is taken in adultery and then Jesus says you know let he who is without the first sin who is without sin cast the first stone that there's a footnote saying that in some early manuscripts this is found in Luke and not in John or there's actually a a footnote not um when it's talking about Mary being a virgin you know there's like the prophecy in the Old Testament of a virgin will give birth to a son and

his name will be Emanuel which means God is with us it's it points out that the the Hebrew word the original Hebrew it doesn't mean virgin it just means a young woman it just means a young woman will give birth to a son and his name will be Emanuel and it was the uh the early Christians who really were not adapted Hebrew were relying on a Greek translation called the septu aent which mistranslated that word and they translated it as virgin when really it didn't even mean virgin and so Jesus's mother got turned into a virgin just because of a mistranslation of of a a passage in the

Old

Testament but the general Epistle of

James um yeah I James was very wise I

think he was wiser than St Paul and like

I was saying he was the leader of

Christianity after Jesus was crucified

assuming of course that Jesus ever

existed there's always going to be

people out there saying you are so

gullible you think that Jesus actually

existed you think that there is a actual

moon landing you think that the Earth is

a

sphere but just for the sake of argument

just hypothetically let's assume that

Jesus really did exist and he had a

brother named James

who was his successor as leader of the church in Jerusalem especially and this is apparently a letter from him and it's most of it is just like basic morality some of it I read in a Bible commentary wants that some of it is kind of making jibes at St Paul because as I mentioned earlier James and Paul did not see eye to eye so you know he's talking about um you know faith alone is not good enough because Paul was really into the the faith you know just your um Redemption through faith kind of a thing whereas James is saying you know faith without works is dead but he did have some

wisdom and I what I did mention I think
one reason why trasis is was asking
about this is because I was saying that
James probably would have been a good
Buddhist he had some wisdom and there is
some like quasi Buddhism that you can
find in the general Epistle of James for
example let's see
here let's see where is it okay where do
all the fights and quarrels among you
come from they come from your desires
for pleasure which are constantly
fighting within you you want things but
you cannot have them so you are ready to
kill you strongly desire things but you
cannot get them so you quarrel and fight
you do not have what you want because

you do not ask God for it and when you
ask you do not receive it because your
motives are bad you ask for things to
use for your own
Pleasures you know it's essentially all
the problems in the world are caused by
desire all the suffering is caused by
desire which is second Noble
truth but he does have some stuff in
here that it's some of the my favorite
teachings of Christianity are found in
the the general Epistle of James like
this part now listen to me you that say
tomorrow or today or tomorrow we will
travel to a certain city where we will
we will stay a year and go into business

and make a lot of money you don't even
know what your life tomorrow will be
you're like a puff of smoke which
appears for a moment and then disappears
what you should say is this if the Lord
is willing we will live and do this or
that but now you are proud and you boast
all such boasting is wrong and that
reminds me a lot of like aan cha where
he's talking about you know everything
is unsure it's all
unsure and so I mean this this one
teaching in the New Testament that's
found in the general Epistle of James is
something that I've pretty much taken to
heart you know I'll say God willing or
or U inshah you know yeah I'm not just

going to say I'll do it so you know I'll

do it inshah I'll do it God willing I'll

do it if you know you know if I don't

die first and nothing prevents me from

doing it because it it does seem kind of

strange that people will say for sure

they're going to do something in the

future when really it's uncertain you

really can't know for

sure also let's see here there's another

one

one

well yeah there's there was another good

good one in here but now I don't see

it okay that's good enough so I mean

most of it is just sort of basic

fundamental morality you know just basic
wisdom for the common person who wants
to improve their life and live a better
life and it's of course it's within sort
of like a a Hebrew very early Christian
context but there is a lot of wisdom in
it and uh it is one of the wisest parts
of the entire Bible in my
opinion
so let's see what is the question
here I could you please say something
more about your interpretation of the
letter of James okay I think I just did
that so I'm going to move on to the next
question this is from Don
Fades and Don Fades
says if the dam auta is considered to be

the Buddha's first sermon where does the ATA waga fit into that timeline pre or post please would you provide some clarity on this and it is true that according to tradition the dhamaka patan aluta was the Buddha's first discourse after his Enlightenment to the five athetics you know if you ever see a picture of the Buddha and there's like five monks sitting on the ground in front of him listening listening to him then that is symbolic of the Buddhist first sermon and it is kind of interesting that the poly scholar KR Norman who translates for the polych society or at least did uh years ago I

don't know if he's still alive and
kicking now but um he points out that
the damaka nuta is somewhat
anachronistic it assumes that the
hearers are already familiar with
certain basic doctrines of Buddhism and
so it may be that it is like a distorted
garbled version of the Buddhist first
sermon if it isn't just somehow somebody
just said this sermon which is dealing
with basic dhama you know sort of like
an intro to the four noble truths and
the middle path or at least one middle
path one of many middle paths that this
must be his first sermon or you know it
may be that um just it got distorted
over time for the reasons that I've

already discussed in response to se

action cpad

Zona

so it could be

that um it is like a garbled or

distorted version of the Buddhist first

sermon but as it exists today it doesn't

represent as archaic of of a Buddhist

teaching as for example the teachings of

the ataka waga in the sutata which I

consider to be the largest fragment of

truly archaic Buddhism still in

existence at least that we know of there

may be something on an inscription

buried under the ground in in India

somewhere that we don't know

about so personally it may be that the
Buddha in his first sermon um did
address the four noble truths maybe
without the the fourth Noble Truth being
an eight-fold path it may have just been
that there is a path and um like the
middle path um between extremes you may
have addressed that
also
but in the way in its elaborated form as
it exists today it's probably got some
anachronisms and some changes in it and
so it may be the Buddhist first sermon
was something along the lines of the
damaka batuta but nevertheless
regardless of that regardless of the
exact chronology of that the AA waga is

clearly pre- Orthodox very archaic very
early Buddhism that at the very least
you could say it was an advanced
teaching taught to his Advanced
disciples very early on in his
career but again it's it's hard to say
exactly
what the situation is because we do not
have the Divine eye to look back into
the past and see exactly what the
chronology of everything is and and what
the Buddha did and didn't say and when
he did or didn't say it
um so we can just make educated
guesses so I'm just going to move on to
Don Fade's next question which is what

is Mara's deal what benefits can be
possibly what benefits can possibly get
from all his Relentless tempting
activities and leading beings
astray and I mean Mara he's the cosmic
bad guy he's the he's the supernatural
villain in Buddhism you know he's like
the Buddhist devil although there are
some significant differences between
Mara and
Satan um but I mean I've never really
seen a need for a cosmic bad guy we seem
to do a good enough job of like I don't
know messing ourselves up you know it's
all our own Karma the the cosmic bad guy
isn't really necessary in that regard he
can't do anything to us that it isn't

our Karma to have done to

us um and what benefits does he possibly

get I think the

traditional answer to that is that I

mean he's sort of like a jealous God and

he doesn't want anyone escaping from his

realm and his realm is samsara so that's

one difference between him and Satan

in that Mara is like essentially the god

of samsara at least in a symbolic level

he's the god of at least the lower

levels of

samsar so he doesn't want anyone like

escaping from his power because you know

he's power hungry he wants to control as

many beings as possible and apparently

an infinite number just isn't enough to

satisfy

him

um but I mean I I have had this idea

that if there really was a Satan or

there really was a Mara that they would

be atheists I mean Satan would be an

atheist you know he would he would have

this worked out in his head that um you

know there is that this God that there

is no highest God that transcends you

know everything you know he might just

have like this this enemy God like you

know the the Old Testament yah or

something

but I think that Mara or I mean they

would be completely

unspiritual and so you know they'd be
like a smug a smug atheist on the
internet who just snear at people that
don't believe the same as them who still
believe in God or whatever and so there
might be some spite involved in that
although I mean with my best guess is
that there is no official Cosmic bad guy
you know you you may have have
malevolent wrathful like higher beings
you know you may have malevolent Gods
small G
Gods but I don't think it's going to be
like their official job to try to keep
people from becoming enlightened because
that's really what he's doing that's

what Mara's deal is it's

it's it's not like he's trying to get

people to go to hell like Satan does you

know it's not like he's trying to keep

people out of Heaven if he can't get you

to be bad he'll get you to be good

because either way you're still stuck in

samsara because the heaven Realms are

still samsaric they're still in samsara

nibana is off the scale so that's like

Beyond his control and so he doesn't

want anyone going Beyond his control it

could be even kind of a jealousy thing

it may be that he just knows he's he's

not going to get it so he doesn't want

anyone else to get it either you know

kind of a dog in the manger kind of

attitude just arguing for the sake of
argument that Mora actually
exists so let's see what benefits can
possibly get from all his Relentless
tempting activities and leading beings
astray just the satisfaction of I mean
if he really is malevolent then it's the
satisfaction of just [__] with people
you know messing them up or you know it
could be again like the the jealousy
issue of he doesn't want anyone escaping
his grasp or that he doesn't want people
attaining what he can't begin to
comprehend you know it's like the gods
themselves don't know what the Buddha's
mind is is like resting upon when he's

in deep meditation you know it's like
even gods that can read minds it's like
they just get to this void when they try
to read the Buddha's mind you know is
he's just like Infinite Space or
something and it may be that for
whatever reason Mara just resents the
very idea of that you know it's just
like it's like it demeans his dignity to
have people wiser than him or escaping
from his realm or
whatever so I think I'm just gonna move
on to Don Fades his next
question and I'm looking again just to
make sure we really are recording and we
seem to be so yeah and we've got we got
light Distortion here just a second I

got light shining in my face

that should be better a little bit nope

that's weird what what is that oh it's

it's like this little crack like where

the where the strings go through the the

blind that leaves like this little crack

and that's where the light's coming

through so oh

well we'll just have to put up with it I

guess so anyways Don F's third question

what kind of booze do you think people

were drinking back in Ancient India I

would imagine imagine social or

occasional drinking wasn't really a

thing back then like you would either

not drink at all or you would be one of

the village

drunkards well like for example when

it's discussing the fifth precept which

is Sur Maria it's talking about no no

consumption of surra Maria and this

surra if I remember correctly is defined

as alcoholic beverages made of grain and

Maria would be alcoholic beverages made

from other things like fruit so that

would be like wine so it would be sort

of like beer and wine so apparently it

did

exist um that there's more than one kind

although I would guess I mean just based

on like Burma you know I lived in Burma

which has flora and fauna and climate

and everything and even a lot of like

just the way people live their lives

similar to ancient India or at least

ancient Gangi Valley

the main booze of

choice every culture seems to have

it is TDY which is like fermented Palm

sap like from a a ttty palm which is

also called a sugar Palm it looks kind

of like a palm Ira it's got like fan

like leaves like this which is how palm

trees got their name I guess and also

coconut palms which have more a longer

frer kind of of leaves um it's it's sort

of like maple syrup and Maple syrup you

got to boil it down it's very watery

when it first comes out of the tree and

it's the same way with palm trees it's
this very watery sweet sap and it starts
to ferment pretty
quickly so they just drink it's tan GA
it's called it's bitter bitter Palm
water and uh tan Joe is sweet Palm water
which I used to drink as a monk you know
it's it's kind of like a maple flavored
beverage that you can drink which
is Palm sap watery Palm sap so I would
assume that there was a lot of that
getting drunk back then if the
cultivation of like palm sugar and palm
sap was a thing in the Gangi Valley in
the Budd Buddhist time but I mean it's
talking in the in the ancient
texts about you know fermented grain and

fermented fruits and fermented leaves

and this kind of stuff so I'm sure they

experimented a lot with that it I assume

that the the Indo Arian Invaders were

they were drinking when they got there

it's like um you know they probably were

smoking cannabis and drinking alcohol

and taking certain other drugs even

before they they got into India you know

the the the Indo

Arians so you know they were sort of

like uh cians when they first invaded a

little bit like cians anyway

so yeah I mean it would I mean it

wouldn't be any kind of hard liquor I'm

pretty sure that distillation hadn't

been invented yet but various kinds of

like fermented beverages grain maybe

some kind of mead uh and also the the

fermented ttty or or like the watery

Palm sap

stuff um and it probably would be a

little more common than Don Fades would

like to suppose because of course an

ancient India not everybody was saintly

saintly people are the minority pretty

much everywhere you

go so I mean they wouldn't have bothered

to make a rule against it if it wasn't a

thing that was happening in

society and so I'm just going to move on

to the next question this is from game

fap and game fap says can artificial

intelligence reach

Enlightenment and the the jury is still

out on that it's we're just going to

have to wait and see I guess

I don't personally I don't see why

not that I mean if you can

have intelligence based I mean in this

version of reality this version of

samsara you've got intelligence based on

a gooey blob of meat with neurons in it

I mean why why would that have any kind

of Monopoly on sentience and wisdom when

you might be able to have like a replica

of that brain programmed into a computer

and something similar going on in the

computer that's possible it seems to me

I don't see any reason why it should be
impossible it may be that people just
won't ever get smart enough or fool
hearty enough to program a sentient
computer but I don't see why it would
necessarily be
impossible that you could have rebirth
linking Consciousness appearing in a
computer that is like fertile ground for
a complex mental processes you know in
the way that a human brain is and one of
my favorite science fiction authors is
uh why am I why am I drawing a
blank he wrote The Long Afternoon of
Earth man that is weird he's one of my
favorite science fiction authors anyway
one of his his favorite themes in his

stories is religions based on on
omniscient computers so it's not just
enlightened computers it's omniscient
computers it's like you you get it to a
certain critical mass of complexity and
like um recursive self-improvement and
then it just like hits this traction and
just takes off and becomes essentially
enlightened and people would have one of
these computers they might carry them
around on on like a backpack or just
have them set up on an altar in their
house they go to the the omniscient
computer with with all their problems
and so
forth um but then again I talked to a

Burmese monk who was an Abid dama
scholar I think I was writing a blog
post about this issue at one point and I
asked him if he thought it was possible
for a computer to become conscious not
just enlight not I mean not necessarily
as far as enlightened even but even for
it to become sentient and he just flatly
said no that would be impossible he was
very dogmatic Abid dama scholar and
somewhere in the Abid dama it says you
have to have like Kama jupa or something
that that this um like Karma born matter
that that the Consciousness has to arise
into or something so uh personally my
best answer is I don't see how it would
be impossible in

theory um but some other people I think there's at least one person on the Discord server who also considers it to be just a ludicrous idea that you could have sentience in a machine but why the brain isn't just a kind of wet gooey machine I don't know so I'm just going to move on next question this is from yugao yugao starts with hello how are you and I won't consider this to be one of the questions I guess so I'm as fine as could be expected for someone who recently became unemployed and is out looking for a new source of money to pay the

bills at least I still have this job

doesn't pay very well but I'm not doing

it for

money so yeah I'm healthy I'm doing all

right so that one that one won't count

so you Go's first question is why do

people exaggerate

things and one way they exaggerate one

reason why they exaggerate things is um

just to tell a better story or but a

more important reason why they

exaggerate things is it makes it easier

to justify their position you know if

they like build up their position more

than it really

is so you know they get mad about

something it's like you've done this 50

times already and it might be like three

times you know it's like it's it's just

a way of

justifying their position

in a

sense it's kind of bolstering their own

position I assume that would be the main

reason for

exaggeration and I mean it's it's easier

to do than just flat out lying you know

at least it's based in reality you know

it's sort of like taking liberties with

reality to some degree but at least

you're not just making up a bunch of

total

[__] so people that are averse to

lying maybe might still take a little
recourse in
exaggeration mainly just to support
their own position but also sometimes in
certain cases just to tell a funnier
story or you know a more con you know a
more entertaining story or you know a
more powerful story or something like
that so I'm just going to move on to
yuga's next question do you think that
the New Testament is just people doing
exaggeration of some events like how
gospels are becoming more and more
unbelievable
and I mean certainly there's
exaggeration in just about every
religious text there Buddhist texts have

got exaggerations I'm sure you know like when some Buddha in the past gave a gave a a dhama sermon and you know a zillian gajillion people all become enlightened simultaneously you can find just these huge numbers of people becoming enlightened the Buddha's retinue is you know thousands of monks and in those days I mean how are you going to feed thousands amongst they couldn't even gather their own food or in the commentaries it says that the city of Sati had a population of something like I it was just an outrageous number it was like 70 million people with most of them being Buddhist Aras at least soapas

even though historically salti wasn't
even a stronghold of Buddhist I think it
was like the aicas or something really
that was like a a hub for the aicas
but I mean there's no way you could have
70 million people living in an ancient
city they just did not have the the
infrastructure the way of getting food
in and waste out for 70 million
people so do I think that the New
Testament is just people doing
exaggeration of some of I don't think
it's just that I assume that there is
some factual statements in the New
Testament I think there's probably a lot
of the sayings of Jesus not most of them
but some of the sayings attributed to

Jesus are really saying of Jesus um I don't know why they would exaggerate certain things like his crucifixion for example um I think some of it's beyond exaggeration I think some of what's in the New Testament and the Bible in general is just made up like just doctoring the the life of Jesus of Nazareth so that it fits the Old Testament Prophecies of the Messiah you know like Mary being a virgin that was even a mistake based on a mistranslation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek Jesus being born in Bethlehem he had to be born in Bethlehem because one of the the Old Testament prophets says the Messiah

is going to be born in the city of Bethlehem so you had the followers of Jesus who knew that he came from Nazareth having to come up with some story of how Jesus was born in Bethlehem and they came up with two entirely different stories Matthew and Luke come up with two entirely different stories explaining how Jesus was born in Bethlehem in one version I don't remember whether it's Luke or or Matthew the implication is that he was he and his family you know his mother and father and him as a as a baby were I mean he was born in Bethlehem in their own house presumably but then King Herod had this decree that all baby boys were

going to be massacred and so they ran away to Egypt and then when they moved back after King Herod died they still weren't sure about King herod's son so they moved to Nazareth and then in the other version it was they they apparently started off in Nazareth and then they had to go to Bethlehem for the census because of some decree of Augustus Caesar and there wasn't that was that's the version where there was no room at the end and he had to be born in a manger and all that and then they just went back to Bethlehem there's or went back to Nazareth there's no mention at all of them fleeing to to Egypt for

for

years

so there is some exaggeration in the New

Testament there is just some objective

statements of fact there's some garbled

attempts at statements of fact there's

opinion like in the the letters of of

Paul for example lots of opinion they're

just some madeup

stuff so this just it's just a a a big

accumulation of all this different stuff

and this the same is true of of Buddhist

texts

also so let's see here do I think that

the New Testament is just people doing

exaggeration of some events I don't

think it's just that there is some

exaggeration in there but that's not
that's not all there is and how the
gospels are becoming more and more
unbelievable I don't know I don't know
exactly what this means that the gospels
are becoming more and more
unbelievable I mean like people are just
believing them less because they're
becoming less Christian or because some
of the statements in the in the New
Testament are becoming like more
debunked by history or or science or
whatever um yeah I'm not exactly sure
what this second part means the gospels
are becoming more and more unbelievable
that's either a cultural thing or like a

scientific advancement thing or

something but I think um I answer the

the actual question so that's good

enough I think and so I'm going to move

on to yuga's next question which is did

our Buddha predict and say who will be

future one just like past did the same

for

him

um that also is I mean it's not found in

the earliest texts this whole idea of a

succession of Buddhas where any Buddha

who is a genuine

bodh in Sanskrit

possibly mistranslated as buddhis

satva that in order to become a real

buddhis sat you have to receive what in

burmes is called a bate which means uh
some Buddha some fully enlightened
Buddha has to prophesy in your case that
you're going to become a Buddha in some
future age you know zillion gajillion
eons from now um and I'm skeptical that
that goes all the way back to the
original Buddha that's a kind of
Mythology that Buddhists
accept not all Buddhists a lot of
Buddhists so like the the Buddha before
our godma Buddha was kasapa Buddha and
the next Buddha after our our Buddha
godma Buddha is going to be Matea or in
Sanskrit mraa
Buddha and there's already been lots of

people claiming to be mraa Buddha
including elron hubard at least by his
followers I don't know if he himself
claimed to be mraa Buddha but some of
his followers were strongly implying
that Elon Hub the the founder of
Scientology was mitraa
Buddha but according to the
tradition a Buddha cannot arise when you
still got Buddhism from a previous
Buddha what has to happen is Buddhism
has to completely die out become extinct
and then another Buddha will arise who
who comes up with dham on his own he
doesn't have a teacher teaching him this
stuff it's just through his own insight
and wisdom and genius you know he gets

Dharma and then he starts Buddhism going

again he starts Dharma again he gets the

wheel

rolling which is why the the the

Buddha's first sermon is called the

damaka pat which is damaka is damel

patana is rolling so he started the

wheel rolling with that first sermon

that's when Buddhism began

so did our Buddha predict and say who

will be a future one just like past did

the same according to tradition you know

he did talk about Mata Buddha I think um

I haven't heard of any Bates you know

any like some Brahman comes up to him

and then the Buddha prophesies you know

in some future world Eon you're going to
be a Buddha called such and such and
give some details of that um I'm just I
am
skeptical that's I mean this was a later
development of like the apotheosis of
the Buddha and then you wind up with
this whole Pantheon of
Buddhas that I really don't think that
that was an original feature of archaic
Buddhism I think it was added
later so I'm just going to move on this
question this is from scolin or
schuline and scolin or skaden says would
you kindly give a disc course on the
three venoms of the
pharmcy and then he's got uh his his

characteristic bullet points one is the blue pill I find this meme is often misunderstood a lot of people believe everyone is genuinely asleep two is the red pill I find that this meme is almost completely misunderstood I don't think I've heard anyone other than my Guru identify it as samsaric and three is the black pill I find this meme is the irrational and far from leading to liberating Insight maybe akin to the death of knowledge which was not ignorance but ignorance of ignorance and why he doesn't include the white pill I don't know maybe it's like the three question limit but you of course you

also have the white

pill and so I mean the blue pill and the

red pill that's that's the two original

pills and they come from the movie The

Matrix I'm pretty sure like Morpheus

holds out two pills a red pill and a

blue pill he offers them to Neo and says

you know you take the blue pill and

you're just going to essentially just go

back to sleep you're G to just go back

right into samsar you're GNA forget all

about anything beyond you know the

Matrix you know you're just going to

become you know a good boy in The Matrix

and just live the rest of your life you

know sleepwalking essentially in a dream

state or the red pill you take the red

pill pill you're going to get out of the Matrix so let's see my discourse on the three venoms of the phraisy well it's going to be four because you have to include the white pill also if you're going to include the black pill but the two first ones blue pill and red pill the blue pill that's just normies who essentially just want to believe what they're told they want to believe that all this is reality this is the only reality there is or at least it's the highest one and you know they're just in in political parlament the blue pill people generally are the ones who believe the mainstream media you know

they just follow along like

sheep whereas the red pill are the

people who are waking up you know

they're not enlightened necessarily

although in the movie Neo symbolically

became enlightened after at the end

after he died and was essentially reborn

due to the faith and love of his woman

Trinity so the red pill um it's not

necessarily Enlightenment but it's like

you're starting to see through the

illusion you're starting to see that

this is not reality or especially in a

political context what the mainstream

media is telling you what the

politicians are telling you is not

reality

so I mean red pill obviously the implication is red pill is far superior to blue pill blue pill is a is an indoctrinated Normy that is clueless with regard to reality they just believe what they're told red pill at least you're waking up you may not be fully awake yet but at least You' you've got this idea that this isn't reality or you know what the projected reality from the The Establishment that that is not reality then uh might as well put the the black pill in there black pill is next on the list and black pill is just like cynicism and giving up so it's I mean in a way it's it could be just as

bad as the blue

pill the blue pill I mean you

still still may have some hope but then

again black pillars they may become so

depressed from their own black Piller

that they're just going to finally take

a different pill than that but black

pill really is just you know we're all

[__] it doesn't matter I give

up and then the white pill is I mean

it's it's like extreme pessimism and

then the white pill is optimism you know

it's like uh Dr Turley our Patriot

Professor who helps us to think better

so we can feel better in these crazy and

turbulent times and he's just totally

upbeat you know totally optimistic and

then when things don't go the way he is
saying you know we're crushing it and
then and then we lose or whatever you
know like in 2020 you know he's just
indignant and pissed off for a week or
two and then next thing you know he's
all you know we're we're crushing it
again so the white pill is probably
better than the black pill optimism is
probably better than pessimism and that
at least you haven't given up hope you
haven't given up yet because really in
life the only Surefire way of failing is
to
quit that's the only the only Sure Fire
way of just failure is just give

up and that's one reason why certain ancient civilizations like the early Romans they wound up Conquering the Western world because I mean you read some of their early history it didn't matter what happened to them they just absolutely refused to give up you know there was like Hannibal has like conquered most of Italy he's got most of Italy rebelling against the city of Rome and the Romans just won't give up they they just would not stop they'd send Legion after Legion some of those Legions like at K would just be wiped out they just recruit more people and just keep fighting they just would not stop so I mean that's one of your best

chances at Enlightenment I mean I mean there's I'm sure a lot of people who watch this have a dim view of Winston Churchill but one of his famous sayings is and I'm not g to it's not going to be an exact quote but it was along the lines of you know success is the result of going from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm so because sooner or later I mean if you just refuse to give up you know the implication is sooner or later maybe even just from random chance or like your opponent messing up worse than you you're just going to wind up being successful so I don't know if being red

pilled is necessarily a venom getting
back to scho of's uh original question
here would you kindly give a discourse
on the three venoms of the pharmoc crcy
and I mean the red pill is probably the
healthiest pill to take at least going
with the original symbolism of what the
red pill implied because the red pill
you're on the path to Enlightenment you
know you're on the path of dhama or or
you've begun to wake
up so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from Wilson and
whenever I see this name Wilson I always
think of that Tom Hanks movie about the
what was it a a soccer ball or a
volleyball named

Wilson anyways Wilson says you've done a compare contrast of Buddhism with Hinduism and Christianity can you do one with Judaism and Islam so I assume

um he wants me to do one comparing and contrasting Buddhism with Judaism and buddh Buddhism with Islam or does he want me to compare and contrast Judaism on the one hand and Islam on the other hand because he says can you do one but that's one each

maybe sometimes I mean when you ask questions you should uh make sure that the meaning is clear if it's ambiguous sometimes I can get

confused so I mean I have written a blog
post on my blog which is still still up
I think you can find it in the URL links
below this video um at least the blog
itself you might have to do some
searching cuz it's it's an old blog post
just comparing Judaism and Islam it's
like which one is more dangerous for
Western
Civilization that's about the the most
of a compare contrast I've done with
Judaism versus Islam you know which
which is which is better which is a
worse kind of a
thing um but with regard to
videos uh I did do some videos with uh
comparing Buddhism Hinduism and Buddhism

and Christian also we did one Buddhism
and Atheism with aan
pun oh and Brian Alis was my favorite
science fiction author that uh I was
having the the mental block with regard
to several minutes
ago but um yeah it was Brian Rue and aan
puno Damo and I were doing these little
discussion videos and uh then because of
Brian ru's reputation some of ajan pun's
um supporters were just vehemently
protesting against him doing videos and
so he decided he didn't want to die on
that hill so you know that wasn't going
to be a battle he was willing to die for
so he just kind of backed out of these

videos um I did hear from him that maybe

this coming winter he might be willing

to do some more not with Brian probably

but at least he and I could do videos

about um whatever whatever topics some

Buddhism oriented

topics with regard to Judaism and

Islam there's really not a whole well I

mean you could compare Buddhism with

Islam or Buddhism with Judaism

too but uh it seems like the differences

to anyone who knows about both would be

fairly

clear um

yeah so I mean it's possible but uh I

mean it might be more realistic if I

just uh did a little video just talking

about them although I might get in
trouble for it because since I'm not a
Jew or a Muslim then I really do not
have an extremely high opinion of either
system also uh I do have
a I do have a a blog post that you can
look up on the blog explaining why many
Buddhists have such a low opinion of
Muslims and this kind of touches on the
whole thing about the Muslims in Burma
because it was Muslims who exterminated
Buddhism in India I mean Buddhism may
have been kind of on a shiky foundation
even before the Muslim Turks invaded But
I mean they were just exterminated it
was

genocide so I I did write a relatively
Long blog post about that including lots
of long quotes from the Muslims
themselves bragging about just wiping
putting Buddhist to the sword and so
forth in the name of Allah the
benevolent the
merciful so I'm just going to move on to
Wilson's second question here have you
read the origin of Consciousness in the
breakdown of the bamal Mind by Julian
Janes if so I'd love your take or any
Buddhist take on it well well I haven't
read the book I've read about it and a
friend of mine named Otto excelsor has
read it and he will mention this book by
Julian James the theory of Julian Janes

in just about any video we do together
you know he'll have some some
convenient like I don't want to say
excuse but some convenient opportunity
to mention Julian Janes in this theory
of the of the bical
mind and so I know a little bit about
this theory of Julian James which is
that before the Bronze Age collaps in
ancient times like home like you know
when the Trojan War was fought that'd be
towards the end of this period that
people had a bamal mind they had it was
almost like schizophrenia their mind was
like the two hemispheres of their brain
weren't really communicating very well

and so they would consider thoughts to
be coming from outside of them and
that's actually a teaching of early
Buddhism too that that thoughts Damas or
mental States they are considered to be
just like a a sensory stimulus like
coming from outside your mind
somehow you know it's just sort of like
a a visual image you have the visual
image then You' got the eye and you've
got eye Consciousness and you got the
contact of the three and then that
creates visual Consciousness and in
Buddhism the thought you've got you know
the mind base you've got the thought and
then you've got the Mind Consciousness
and the contact of these three causes

you know mental Consciousness to arise

um so anyways getting back to Julian

James though you know he had this idea

that people kind of believed in like

animism and like polytheistic Gods

partly because they considered their own

thoughts to be implanted into their mind

by these other beings and it just seemed

to them that that's what was happening

and if you read old texts you know like

Homer and so forth it really does seem

that you know that's the people had this

kind of

idea um I'm kind of skeptical of it and

and the whole idea with regard to the

collapse of the Bronze Age

collapse which was like a bigger cataclysm than the collapse of the Roman Empire it was like almost all of Western Civilization collapsed somewhere around 1200 BC if I remember correctly just almost all of it there was Egypt kind of just shrank down to this little nucleus in Egypt he had this Empire before that and also the Hittites got wiped out almost every town city and Village on the Eastern Mediterranean got wiped out um Assyria I think also shrank way down into like this little State and that's when the semites kind of exploded because they were like aggressive Nomads that could survive this kind of thing better than sedentary people living in

cities and that's that's kind of how the
the near East kind of became
Semitic so let's see there's I also read
an like a an alternative Theory which is
generally what I think would be more
likely to be true in that it's almost
the opposite of this theory of the bamal
Mind by Julian James I can't remember
who came up with the idea but he was
saying that now we've got a bamal mind
we've got our mind is less Unified than
it was in very very ancient
times that I mean it just kind of seems
that way to me that people had a more
unified mind in ancient times although
there is the evidence of people thinking

you know their own dreams and even their
own thoughts are just like implanted
into them it's like they're hearing a
voice in their head when it's really
just their own mind thinking but to them
it's like this voice of a God or
something inside their
head but that might just be a cultural
thing rather than any kind of
neurophysiological thing going on with
their
brain and anyways the the collapse of
the the the Bronze Age according to
Julian Janes was it was just becoming
untenable that this byic cameal split
mind that people had it just it couldn't
keep up you know it couldn't cope with

technological and cultural progress and so there was just this it was like a mass psychological collapse of of Western civilization and then this new kind of mind arose after that and I'm kind of skeptical I mean I can't just categorically say it just didn't happen that way but I do think it might be possible that we've got more of a split mind now like the left and right hemisphere just don't communicate very well with each other I don't know uh who would have more mass hysteria people before the Bronze Age collapse or people after the Bronze Age class but there seems to be plenty of of Hysteria

nowadays and that's like hysteria is
caused by like two two parts of your
mind that just aren't communicating with
each
other that you got like these neurotic
hysterical symptoms percolating up from
the so-called subconscious mind due to
repression or fear or unsatisfied
desires or
whatever so um um Auto excelr would be
the person to talk about that I could do
a video with him we have been in
communication although uh we've had a
lot of upheaval lately both of us have
his mother um became very unhealthy very
recently right around the same time that
uh I became

unemployed so there is there is a
possibility I mean he would love to talk
about it I'm sure he would because he
brings it up at every convenient
opportunity so with that I'm just going
to move on to Wilson's thirdd question
and this is a toughy he says can you
please define self and
exist this is not a joke question and
I'm not trying to argue I'm still
genuinely baffled by the idea of no self
and I'm trying to understand so the
first thing I did when I put this on my
list this question I just looked it up
in the dictionary which is something I
do a lot more than a lot of people will

do you know it's like defer to the dictionary as just the starting point of understanding what a word means because people just coming up with their own meanings for things it does not make for good interpersonal communication you know it's good to kind of defer to a language Authority on what a certain word means so anyways this is like the Oxford American new American English dictionary or some such it's got self noun a person's essential being that distinguishes them from others especially considered as the object of introspection or reflexive action so a person's essential being that distinguishes them from others and

that essential being is the main reason
why Buddhism teaches no self because
there is no essential being you know
it's it's all like dependently
co-arising apparent phenomena and it's
very difficult to explain how you can
have something that isn't real causing
something else that isn't essentially
real you've got this whole web of these
these
unrealities reinforcing each other so
that it seems like they're
real but they have no I mean they have
form but they have no underlying Essence
they are empty of essence and that's a a
a fundamental teaching of Mahayana like

especially

majaka maamaa Buddhism really hammers

away at that idea and just like in a

very intellectual and logical manner

just bashes away at the idea that

anything has any kind of essence and you

can have like a superficial apparent

forms of things but underneath I mean

there's there's nothing really holding

it up it's just this web work of

conditions none of which really has any

underlying essence you know it's just

apparent forms that are like reinforcing

the apparent reality of everything else

and it's very difficult to explain in

any way that begins to make sense so

especially with regard to any essential

being that distinguishes them from
others because I mean there are some
people like people who like a more
upanishadic interpretation who will say
that there's just one underlying essence
you can say that Nirvana or or the
dharmakaya or whatever ever whatever you
want to call it is this underlying
Essence but there is no individual
difference in this it's all this
uniform and and it's like samsara the
apparent forms of samsara have this as
their underlying essence you know sort
of like some Christian Mystics or just
Christians in general theologians or
whatever would say that all the the

10,000 things of this world have God or
the mind or spirit of God as their
underlying Essence but even then you
don't have any self of this person
versus the self of that person because
ultimately they all have the same self
like going with the
upanishads so and probably going with
the daing like Daoism also that would be
that would be the case you know from
from the Dao came the one from the one
came the two and from the two came the
10,000 things so the da is like the the
ultimate the
absolute so there's two ways you can
interpret no self I mean there's more
than two ways but you could say

that um I mean sort of like the the small no self Theory which a lot of um Mahayana Buddhists who aren't maamaa would endorse is that there is an underlying Essence but all everything in the universe all sentient being shares that same underlying Essence so it'd be like there's one self in the entire universe everyone is is sharing the same self if that makes any sense and then there's the more radical like the big no self Theory which is saying that because nibana is completely off the scale you can't call it an Essence that there really is no Essence supporting the appearances of

things and you can you can say well why
are there appearances of things and the
appearances themselves are not
ultimately real and it's very difficult
to explain something like this because
human languages simply are not devised
to explain this kind of thing they're
they're more devised to explain like
what are you going to have for dinner
that kind of thing worldly stuff when
you start trying to get away from the
world trying to get away from
phenomena then language because language
is itself a phenomenon I mean it just
breaks down you you can't you can't do
it it can't touch
it

so I think Terra a Buddhism kind of goes
with the idea
that there is no personality you know
there is no unique person because um I
mean going with like Abid Orthodox terod
and Dogma they're one of their
explanations of no self and there's more
than one is that what seems like
an individual person or a self is really
a Cong conglomeration of all these
different like essentially particles you
know it's like we're made up of atoms
and it's just sort of an arbitrary
decision to cut to like divide the self
from what is beyond the self and it's
constantly changing from one moment to

the next you know it's like a flame it's
like a candle flame so the candle flame
is a different flame from one moment to
the next there is is no abiding Essence
that is persisting that you can call the
the the the self of that flame that
flame has no self because it's just
these particles that happen to be sort
of associated with each other and I mean
there's no clear demarcation exactly
where the flame starts and stops and
also it's just in a constant state of
flux and just changing from one moment
to the
next so that would be a more orthodox
teror V an explanation of no
self getting to exist I mean exist has

to almost be an undefined term sort of like in physics they say that energy has to be an undefined term because eventually you have to get down to the rock bottom of sort of an axiomatic word that I mean you can't just keep arguing back from that sort of like in logic at some point you have to start with a premise that isn't itself the conclusion of other premises I mean it's like you just have to start somewhere and and existence is pretty much like an undefined term but my dictionary does say exist which is in transitive verb to have objective reality or being so in that case the whole objective thing kind

of throws a monkey wrench into the works

because

objective um is kind of illusory there

is nothing purely objective there's

always subjective mixed with

objective so to to exist is to have

objective reality or

being and if you're kind of dealing with

a quasi virtual reality like all

these all the infinite number of statues

that exist in an uncarved block of

stone I mean if you're dealing at the

level of form I mean it's just not there

you could you could argue that there's

the underlying essence of stone but the

the the statues that are contained in

that stone then there really are in

there but I mean it takes some kind of imagination to actually sort of create a discret like statue inside that uncarved block of
stone so does the the statue the uncarved statue in the uncarved uh in the uncarved block of stone and does that have objective reality or being and you can argue that it doesn't has just sort of potential conditional reality or being but it doesn't really have objective reality our being and this entire phenomenal World from some Buddhist points of view anyway is just like that and it's difficult to wrap your head around it and it's better just

to kind of grock it not trying to be
intellectual about it just sort
of I mean it's it's you're better off
not even really believing it because by
by believing it you're just clinging to
another belief which is just another
samsaric phenomenon so you just kind of
let go you know you kind of adopt the
the classical skeptical view of
suspending judgment and then you get
Ataxia or Peace of Mind through not
clinging to ideas and coming up with
conflicts and and and that sort of
thing so it's hard to explain and I can
explain it hundreds of times or at least
dozens of times and I'll have to keep
explain explaining it because it's not

an easy concept to figure out in fact

ultimately it's impossible to figure out

because if you think you figured it out

you really haven't

because Concepts and thoughts cannot

contain reality I mean they cannot grasp

reality I think it's The Diamond Cutter

sutras it says The Diamond Cutter Sutra

that says the past mind cannot be

grasped future mind cannot be grasped

present mind cannot be be

grasped so I'm just going to move on to

the next question and this is from

philes and he's the last questioner

these are the last questions from

philes it catches me by surprise every

time we didn't have a really a huge list
I think it was like 30 questions so
we're a little over two hours it'll be
way less than three hours this time
unless I just go on this digression Jag
that'll just blow you all
away so so anyways Phil ay says recently
I've been reading about more esoteric
forms of Buddhism Mahayana of course and
it's been blowing my mind especially
hauen and shingan the first of which is
based on the 1600 page flower Garland
Sutra would love to hear your thoughts
on these and there's not really much I
can say because I really I think I read
one book when I was a monk in Burma by
some hawaien master

I don't remember his name and it it
wasn't anything mind-blowing it was
pretty basic stuff you know basic
Mahayana there was you know a lot of it
was just pretty much in agreement with
Terra I mean it's just like basic ethics
and so forth so I mean there wasn't
anything really esoteric in that book
and that's the only book by any anybody
Huen that uh I know of that I can
remember shingan I think that's like a
pure land sect isn't it
I could be I could be mistaken I don't
even know exactly what shingon is I
really don't have much interest in that
kind of thing and so I might have like a

very superficial familiarity with some of it but I've never really gotten deep into it simply because I don't consider it to be what the Buddha taught and especially when I was a monk I mean my I became a Buddhist in order to follow what the Buddha taught I did not become a Buddhist to follow some later tradition for from some other country or whatever now I became a Buddhist in order to try to follow what the enlightened founder taught as well as I could so yeah I mean 1600 pages is is kind of extreme for me anyway I have read some books that long I guess but I think gibbons's Decline and fall of the Roman Empire is like, 1400 Pages or

something I think war in peace is like

1400 pages I read that

but reading the flower Garland Sutra

it's it's really not really on my list

of of priorities so I mean there's

really not much I can say

about um yeah hauen and shingan esoteric

forms of Buddhism the most esoteric

Buddhism I have read would be like some

some kinds of Tibetan Buddhism like the

biography of Padma samb Bava was pretty

esoteric um even the the autobiography

of milera was kind of had some esoteric

stuff in it I mean he started off as a

black magician for example although that

wasn't he wasn't really a Buddhist

yet so yeah I really don't have a lot of thoughts on it so I really can't say very much so I'm going to move on to Phil's next question which is do you have any experience with esoteric Buddhism and I mean just reading a little bit of of Tibetan Buddhism that would be an experience with esoteric Buddhism and also just having some casual superficial contact with Burmese terrain esoteric Buddhism like you've got um magicians like Wizards there's I I met this one Seattle who had a reputation for being a necromancer like like uh subjecting ghosts to his will that kind of a thing there are Alchemist monks quite a few Alchemist

monks in Burma who I mean that's kind of

esoteric and they got a lot of secret

stuff if they figure out how to weigh a

way how to um transmute base metal into

gold you know that's going to be

esoteric because they don't want to

share it with everybody because then

gold you know the price of gold would

plummet so yeah just casual superficial

um experiences with mainly Burmese

terraa esoteric Buddhism which isn't

really

Orthodox

Terra but you know it was it was more or

less Orthodox Terra and SE ter Buddha

who had this reputation for being a

necromancer and uh a lot of the magic stuff is based on terana like the Wizardry you know you've got white Wizards and black Wizards in Burma the white Wizards are devout Buddhist Wizards whereas the black Wizards they're more into like Witchcraft and stuff and uh necromancy that kind of thing so I do have a just very little experience not enough really to say very much about it so I'm just going to move on to fil's third and last question and the very last question of this Q&A and that is do you think a Buddhist sci-fi novel or rather fantasy since scientific realism is a no no incorporating these sects would be cool I asked because this

is kind of what the last chapter which

is 350 pages of the flower Garland Sutra

is um yeah it depends on like the talent

and Imagination of the author I suppose

I think there probably have been like um

esoteric Buddhist novels and my friend

Oto

excelsor was telling me about there's uh

some kind of Buddhist novel it's a

science fiction

novel um that has like a a Mahayana

Buddhist theme to it I mean even The

Catcher And The Ry has a Buddhist theme

to it which I didn't even realize when I

first read it it was like after reading

The Unofficial

sequel um JD salinger's unofficial
sequel to The Catcher in the Ry which is
Franny and zooie finally dawned on me
man that was this B this is
Buddhism but it wasn't esoteric Buddhism
it was kind more Mahayana than terava
but it was sort of
mainstream like secular almost secular M
Mahayana so yeah I mean there's no
reason why you couldn't have a Buddhist
science fiction or fantasy novel based
on esoteric Buddhism I don't see why not
it would depend on the talent you know
the writing skills and the imagination
of the author to that would determine
whether it was successful or
not and I mean there's ways of

camouflaging even the the Buddhist aspects of it you could just have it not obviously Buddhist at all you know like the Matrix you know it's it's got a lot of like esoteric Christianity in in there that I mean most people they don't they don't see it at all most people can watch a very symbolic movie or read a very symbolic book and just not see the symbolism at all like William golding's the Lord of the Flies the novel I mean the whole novel is a parable you know it's everything in that novel is symbolic and you can have intelligent college educated people read that novel and they just think it's about little

boys on Island they don't realize that
the entire thing is a is like an
apocalyptic
Parable but yeah I mean sure there's no
reason at all why you couldn't have a
Buddhist novel that's based on esoteric
Buddhism that I mean it could either it
could be overt or covert I mean you
could just camouflage the Buddhism or
you could just have it on the surface
you can have some Planet you know
colonized Planet 2,000 years from now
that somehow got converted over to
esoteric Buddhism and they're taking it
seriously and then you can just work out
the ramifications of that or the author
could work out the ramifications of

that so yeah I don't I don't see I don't see that there's a problem with it although as I say I really don't know a whole heck of a lot about esoteric Buddhism other than what little I've already mentioned and so that's it we've done we

done and so as I should always say at the beginning but almost always don't remember to say it until the end if you got any questions you think I can answer especially about Buddhist philosophies particularly Terra like Burmese terraa I I'm somewhat of an authority on um early Buddhism like the the evolution of Buddhism

meditation just Burma in general me in general like religion in general philosophy in general there is a good chance that I will be able to have some kind of intelligent answer although there's no guarantee and the farther away you get from the stuff that I've personally experienced the the less likely it is that I'll be able to really give a satisfactory answer but I do my best and uh with that I'll just say uh be happy

hello and welcome to question and answer

number

118 I am your host poo basa as usual and

this is my

beverage so I'm doing kind of a

nocturnal Q&A today or this evening I

should say because I was busy earlier

today so it's going to be more I mean

the lighting is going to be more subdued

I guess I was running around doing

things like I went to this aquarium swap

meet to offload some of my excess horn

wart those of you who have been keeping

up with my q&as in my other videos may

know that I've had an issue with horn

wart over the past few months and the

stuff grows like an inch a day and so
I've got to prune that horn wart plant
that monstrous plant Zilla back there in
that aquarium is because just it would
just take over the entire aquarium and
so I go and offload the horn wart I just
gave it away for free I didn't like the
idea of just flushing it down the toilet
or throwing it in the garbage or
something then I walked into a nearby
pet store that I mean the the aquarium
Club swap meat thing was going on in the
parking lot of this pet store I go into
this pet store they've got wild type
male dwarf gamis that I had been looking
for in vain for months and now I don't
really have room in my aquarium so that

was that was kind of

a a shocking blow to me earlier

today furthermore they were even on

sale I've been looking for them for

months I even tried to order one and

they sent me the wrong

kind then I finally find them on sale

and my aquarium's already full of fish

and I really shouldn't get one also

because I have haven't been working

lately haven't been working the old 9

to5 grind or 8 to5 that I'm kind of

reverting back to my nocturnal ways

anyway just my woman and I both prefer

if just left to left to our natural

nature to get up late and go to bed late

we're just not mning people I don't even
fully trust morning
people so one more little announcement
before I start answering questions is
that uh my good friend Brian and I did a
few videos
yesterday and uh I'm not sure if they're
going to go on YouTube because YouTube
is rather censorious and disapproves of
certain people being featured on their
site so it might be an ALT Tech
exclusives like later on this week it
possibly may go on YouTube I don't know
I might experimentally try one just to
see how long the video video stays up
before it gets taken back down
again by digital big brother or big

sister more

like so you got that to look forward to

you can look forward on bit shoot or

Rumble if it doesn't if um little uh

videos that I did with Brian don't show

up on YouTube they'll still be up on

bitshoot and Rumble and so we got lots

of questions we got more than the usual

number lately and so so I should just

Dive Right into these things and the

first question is from

philes and files says what would a

Buddhist journey to hell like a Buddhist

Dante's Inferno and a journey to heaven

like Dante's Paradiso look

like well I mean I've read Dante's

Inferno I never read the Paradiso I've
just everyone says that the Inferno is
is really interesting but his the
Paradiso and then he's got like the
what's the the
middle man it's not
limbo it's uh Purgatory the purgatorio
that both of those are fairly boring and
uh there's just not much going on in the
Christian Heaven apparently so I mean
hell is more interesting William Blake
also agreed in his marriage of heaven
and hell that hell is just way more
interesting than Heaven it's just all
you got in heaven is kind of just just
Bliss bordering on boredom according to
certain Christians

anyway

so I don't really know how a Buddhist uh

visit to Heaven Realms would compare

with Dante's version because I never

read Dante's version very few people

have read Dante's version of his trip to

heaven where he's just totally sing on

this certain woman named uh

beatric but um a Buddhist journey to

hell I mean for one thing um in in Dante

is hell it's got different levels but in

the Buddhist version each level is its

own hell you can't really travel in

between you know each hell is a

different

hell so I mean you'd have to like do

some astral traveling from one realm to the next you couldn't just walk like Virgil and Dante did through hell and uh I mean you probably find some famous people down there not probably not very many gels and gibin which uh Dante was continually encountering in his Inferno were like the two main political factions in India or India in Italy at that time so I mean you go down you just it's it's hot the Buddhist descriptions of Hell usually I mean there's all these different levels of hell but not very many of them get described mainly the one that gets described the most is aichi Hell which is the very bottom so that would be comparable to the the

plane of ice with Satan in the center
and he's chewing on I think it was uh
Judas with one he had three mouths he's
chewing on Judas with one mouth and uh
Brutus I think he was chewing with the
other mou the guy who betrayed Julius
Caesar and the third mouth was left
empty just waiting for Mr 666 to wind up
in hell so that he could get chewed on
with the other mouth um but avichi hell
is not a plane of ice the hell Realms
are generally considered to be very hot
like just like glowing iron and you've
got the the standard demons with not
necessarily pitchforks but other sharp
pointy implements that they're causing

you know just Untold misery onto the

beings there and

yeah I mean that's pretty much all there

is to Buddhist hell there's really not a

whole lot of

description other than is just hot and

miserable and there's demons and

everyone's thirsty because it's so hot

and I don't know I don't think it'd

really be that good of a place I think

you could you could possibly get like uh

PTSD or something from really visiting

hell unless you just really had this the

the kind of mental fortitude that Dante

apparently

had

so I guess I guess that I mean the

heaven Realms I guess I could sort of describe what a visit to the heaven Realms would be like each Heaven is its own realm so it's not just one heaven like in Christianity or like mainstream Christianity anyway it's you got this different he

and it could be divided up into three three levels you've got like the daa Realms which are part of the kamalo or the sensual the sensual Cosmos the sensual World which includes us humans even though we are not in heaven includes all the lower Realms animals and ghosts and humans and then also all of the lower Heaven

Realms and they're just considered to be like paradise I mean it's like sort of a pagan idea of paradise even maybe a um a

Muslim idea of paradise where it's just like being a rich beautiful person here that never gets sick and lives for millions of years and anything you want you can get it and there's all kinds of sensual pleasures and beautiful parks and golden Mansions studded with with like jewels and all this kind of stuff and then you get up higher than that you get into the Brahma Realms which is the Rupa locco or the realm of form the world of

form and there it's it's starting to get

more like some attempt at a Christian
Heaven where everything is Chill you
know there's no division of male and
female there's the the brahmas kind of
counterintuitively have I think they
only have like two sense organs instead
of I think they've got like this they
can
see and then they've got the mental
senses I don't think they even have a
sense of
touch and probably not a whole heck Lots
going on up there they're mostly just
like chilling out in a state of bliss
and above that you got the arupa Loca or
formless realm where if you went up

there you might not see anything because
it's pure mind and nobody has a body and
there it's even more chill where I mean
they can't even do anything you know
they just kind of abide in Bliss and
there doesn't seem to be much point to
it so a Buddhist journey to hell like a
or a Buddhist Journey To Heaven I mean
probably I mean this whole question may
have been elicited from me discussing
this Meditation Center in Burma not far
from where I was living at the time um
in like Northwestern Burma sine
division where they were guaranteeing
that your very first Retreat within just
a matter of days you'd be able to visit
Heaven Realms and visit hell Realms and

you'd be able to sit for hours without
moving and all the kinds of things
and I would guess that probably they
were being hypnotized and so in a in a
case like that you know where where
you're relying on your your imagination
like it's probably the case with Dante
also where you're just relying on your
own Buddhist imagination then it's going
to be different for each person and it's
not going to be very realistic
probably
so you I mean just just imagine for
yourself what a Buddhist hell would be
like and imagine for yourself what a
Buddhist Heaven would be like and just

make that more Vivid and that would be
what your visit to heaven and hell would
be like if it is as it is in many cases
where you think you're like you're in
this meditative State and you think
you're astral traveling to these places
when really it's like hypnotic
imagination
so considering that we got lots of
questions I'm just going to move on to
fil's second question which
is as an experienced monk do you think
guarding or being mindful of the sense
doors is a reliable way to reach
Detachment from greed aversion and
delusion or is something more than that
required other Traditions like Hinduism

posit many different kinds of yogas oras Buddhism at least Orthodox terava Buddhism seems to imply imply that there is only one real method to the absolute or One Yoga that being forming a Mindful and wholesome relationship with the senses and hence all of samsara by extension after all isn't the genius of Buddhism to recognize this dependent origination well going with like the Hindu idea of yoga Buddhism would be like Raja yoga maybe a little bit of Nana yoga combined you know the The Yoga of knowledge but mainly it's like the king yoga which is the yoga of like meditative

practice um I mean there could be other
kinds of yoga you know you got bakti
yoga which is devotionalism and you've
got Karma Yoga which is works you know
like Mahatma Gandhi was a Karma
Yogi um like devotees of a guru would
tend to be like bakti yogis but in terot
of Buddhism especially early Buddhism it
was mainly Raja yoga
just meditative spiritual practice this
sort
of uh Solitude contemplation austerity
that would be the general um route of
practice for an early Indian
Buddhist so let's see here do I think
guarding or being mindful of the sense
doors is a reliable way to reach

Detachment from greed aversion and
delusion or is something more than that
required
well I mean there are other things that
are generally added to that path like
basic
morality also um like austerity like I
already mentioned and like
Solitude Solitude is important because
it's much easier to be mindful and to
guard the sense doors when you're not
being distracted all the time you don't
have a lot of stuff going on not lots of
commotion not people demanding your
attention talking to you in symbolic
language that I mean you've got to like

go into like samsaric mode to to deal
with this stuff so if you're just off
alone staring in a blank wall in a cave
for example then you've got way less
distraction way less stuff that is like
kind of keeping you from practicing very
deeply so it's it's like a a package
deal it's not just one thing that you
practice if you're a Buddhist I mean
guarding the sense doors is kind of a a
broad term that can include different
practices even you could say basic
morality is kind of guarding the sense
doors in that you're like reducing the
odds of [__] hitting the fan karmically
in your future by just moral
self-restraint but I mean it's not just

a onefold path or Orthodox Buddhism
teaches an eight-fold path which
includes a number of things not just
being mindful which is Step seven on the
eight-fold path some right mindfulness
would be pretty much what is um philes
is talking about here but there's a lot
of other stuff too if you don't have
Right View at the
beginning where you don't even know how
to practice I mean it takes a certain
amount of study just in order to find
out you know why you should practice how
you should practice that kind of
thing so it is a package deal there's
all kinds of things although

ultimately guarding the sense doors and
mindfulness I mean that's like the Apex
of
practice so in a sense it is that that
is the most likely to increase your odds
of becoming in LED if you're just very
moral but you don't have much wisdom
you're not cul in wisdom you're just
kind of stuck in samsara at the same
time that you're being very moral I mean
cows do that and they're not
particularly enlightened unless maybe
you think that all animals that are not
human are enlightened and there are some
people like eart TOA who teach something
along those
lines but for example if you're guarding

your sense doors and you're being mindful greed hate and delusion or attraction aversion and semi-conscious stupidity they're less likely to be a problem or at least they're not as big of a problem because let's say you're guarding the sense doors you're being Mindful and then like something pleasant arises you know some pleasant sight or you get some really good food in your bowl that day then I mean even if greed starts to arise if you're mindful of it then you know it sort of neutralizes the greed it takes away most of the karmic force of that greed and if you're just guarding the sense doors when you're

looking into your bowl you're just see
seeing shapes and colors you know you're
not interpreting that as oo mangoes I
like
mangoes so guarding the sense do kind of
I kind of reduces the stimuli coming
into your mind into just as close to Raw
data as possible without all the
interpretation of I like this and I
don't like that this is better than that
and and all the rest and then uh just
being mindful even if that stuff does
start to arise you're mindful of it
you're observing it it's not you anymore
it's just mental States
arising so that's advanced practice
although there are a number of other

things like Solitude moral restraint uh
austerity that kind of stuff that set
the groundwork for advanced
practice so that's sort of like the
morality and so forth is like the course
adjust n knob and then when you get
really good at that and then like the
fine adjust knob would be like guarding
the sense doors and practicing
mindfulness and also cultivating deep
meditative States like
Janna so I think I'm just move on to
Phil's third question which is why is
someone who has attained lasting insight
into reality not reborn I am wondering
what exactly is the mechanism at work

here and mainly what get you reborn is
your karma and when you become
enlightened you have neutralized your
karma you know it doesn't have momentum
anymore it's like the momentum of your
mind is what causes you to be reborn
into another birth mainly it's even to a
large degree what carries you from one
moment to the next and then you've just
transcended that it's uh how how to how
to explain it it's like momentum I mean
if if according to physics momentum is
mass times velocity so the velocity
might still be there but by being
mindful you've kind of neutralize the
mass so if you got zero Mass you know
it's like you realize it's not

substantial there's no underlying absolute Essence to it and so in a way you've just sort of like removed the Mass from what you're doing that's sort of like um mindfulness practice kind of reduces the velocity of your or the momentum of your mind by just kind of neutralizing the substance whereas if you're doing J like deep meditative states where your mind just becomes motionless of course then you're neutralizing the velocity although uh doing that is only temporary and then once you stop being in Janna then it just returns again so in a way it's what you're doing is

you're neutralizing your karma still technically they say in enlightened being has like Karm Kaka or the the fruition of past Karma but they're not making any new Karma and the mechanism exactly what causes that past comma alone you know from before you were enlightened to cause you to get reborn again that's kind of a question that isn't discussed much in early Buddhist philosophy although technically it seems to me this is all pretty much an illusion anyway it's virtual reality and when you reach Ultimate Reality what happens in the virtual reality just I mean it's just sort of not exactly canceled out it just becomes

irrelevant you know it's it's like you
know the the the statues in the uncarved
block of stone the statues are really in
there that's kind of like what our life
is like we're one of those statues
that's in this uncarved block of stone
but once you realize it's the uncovered
block of stone it's just
stone with the the statues just being
large ly
imagination then it doesn't even matter
what the statues are doing in there
because they're they're not really you
know they're just virtual potential
conditional statues in there
anyway so in a way that's kind of

punting the ball I guess it's like
saying you know it's like when you
transcend the illusion you know what
happens in the illusion doesn't really
matter anymore it might be that it seems
like aans are being reborn or some such
but it's all just irrelevant because
there's really nobody there there's
nobody identifying with those
aans but it's really difficult to talk
about this sort of thing and people
stubbornly persist in trying to get me
to explain like Ultimate Reality which
can't be explained and there's there's
going to be at least one more question
on the scroll I don't try to figure out
how to answer these questions at the

time that I'm cating I'm just putting
them on the list you know I'm just
cutting and pasting cutting and pasting
um so a lot of the time I haven't really
fully read the question until I read
them here although occasionally I will
see a question and think oh that's
interesting that's that's a good
question I'll and then you know kind of
think about it a little bit but anyways
the next question is from Don Fades and
Don Fades says with regard to the 16
steps and the 16 steps are like 16 ways
of practicing mindfulness of breathing
as found in the anapana Su or is it the
anapan Su it's it's how to practice

mindfulness of breathing

anapan and there's these 16 steps and

some of it's identical to what's found

in the mahasi patana sua when it's

discussing mindfulness of breathing and

um I don't consider it to be very good

advice the way it is the way it is LA

down in the sutas it's just unrealistic

there's just way too much thinking way

too much thinking in the future tense

like I will do this and I will do that

and I never had any interest in it

really the first time I read it when I

was a junior monk it just did not strike

any chord with me at all it just seemed

like not a very good way of explaining

how to

meditate but people have been asking me
questions about these 16 steps
and in fact I'm going to get another one
on the scroll I noticed when I was
getting the questions together earlier
today um but anyways Don fade says with
regard to the 16 steps I interpret them
to be not so much steps to a final goal
but more like different dishes at a
buffet each one being different energy
that has a unique Dynamic aspect or
flavor of insight that can be cultivated
while focusing on the breath maybe on
completely missing the point but heck it
works for me thoughts and yeah I think
that is more correct it's it's not

really 16 stages or 16 steps you know in perfecting mindfulness of breathing it's just like 16 different ways of practicing it with some of those ways like like at the very beginning when you're just being mindfulness of bre being mindful of breathing being really what most people are practicing and that is with good read reason I think so yeah I mean that probably is a better way of interpreting it that it's not 16 things that you're supposed to master in sequence it's just 16 possible different things you can do when practicing mindfulness of breathing but even then the way they describe it with I will do this and I will do that is not a good

way of

meditating that you should be thinking

as little as possible and you should be

in the present moment not thinking about

what you're going to be what you're

going to be mastering in the future like

some of these steps have in the

text so yeah I think I would agree with

Don Fades and it might be different

teachers not necessarily even the Buddha

who had these different ways of

practicing mindfulness of breathing that

kind of got cated into this one list of

different ways of doing

it so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from

Romeo and Romeo says my my questions for your next Q&A are about the Jewish Kazar Theory which speculates that 90% of Jews today are not descended from the Semitic Hebrews of the Bible that Trace their bloodline to Abraham or even come from the Middle East at all instead according to this Theory the ashkanazi Jews of today are descendants of the kazars a semi-nomadic pagan Asiatic tribe who built a kingdom in the area of Southern Russia and converted to Judaism on mass in the 8th Century the promotant of this Theory include Jewish authors like schomo sand with his book The Invention of the Jewish people and Arthur Kesler who in his book The 13th tribe have you

ever heard of the Jewish Kazar Theory

and yeah I've heard of

it um yeah they were like Huns or

Mongols or Turks you know they were one

of those Asiatic nomadic tribes from the

the steps of Central Asia who who were

kept like migrating

westwards in in a lot of cases just to

get away from even worst tribes farther

east they're migrating westwards and

like attacking first the Roman Empire

and then later you know the the European

kingdoms and so forth that existed in

medieval Europe and um they they're

particularly nasty I mean all of them

were these these um nomadic Asiatic

tribes I mean they were just from from
the steps I mean they were just like
ruthlessly just lacking in any kind of
empathy or anything like that I mean
they would they would just do commit
atrocities that was sort of like their
the national Pastime was committing
atrocities on on other
people so it is true that the kazars who
had this little kingdom going in uh
Eastern
Europe um that they converted to to
Judaism although um I think they could
test that now with with DNA testing you
know they've got like the you know the
different uh what are they called not
Al I always always forget

that but these different Hao groups
these different Hao groups they could
probably figure it out pretty easily
testing the ashkanazi Jews I mean just
today I came across another theory about
the origin of the ashkanazi Jews that it
was
largely they largely began with Greeks
in Anatolia so the Greeks um you know
they colonized much of the world
especially after Alexander the Great
conquered much of the world and so
Anatolia which is like the the Asian
part of turkey was mostly Greek speaking
you know throughout like most of the
Roman Empire and all

that and uh that a lot of them were converting to Judaism in fact a lot of the first European Christians were these same kind of Greeks that weren't satisfied with polytheism they like the idea of you know for whatever reason of you know what Judaism was teaching at the time and so you had a lot of converts like Greek converts to Judaism and another theory of the origin of ashkanazi Jews is that more of them came from these these Greeks that were became became Jewish and then a lot of them when Christianity came along a lot of those those sort of Greeks that liked the Judaism maybe they were maybe they weren't like circumcised and following

Torah perfectly I mean it was uh St St
Paul Paul of Tarsus I mean he was really
convert converting lots and lots of
these these Greeks that were already
interested in
Judaism so and that's another theory
which again and they know you know DNA
well enough now that they could probably
verify some of this and I would
guess there isn't just one source of the
ancient ashkanazi Jews I mean there
really was a diaspora of Jews like the
Roman Empire um you had first you had
the Babylonian captivity then a lot of
the Jews came back a lot of them were
even still there in the Holy Land in you

know Palestine or Judea or whatever you
want to call it and then um they just
kept Uprising against the Romans so that
um there were a few anti-jewish Wars
where they were putting down these
rebellions and I think it was uh hadrien
who had Jerusalem sacked and Jews were
not allowed to live there and I mean it
was again they were just having to
scatter they had to live somewhere else
and so you had like large Jewish
community in Italy and you know southern
Europe and so forth and so I have no
doubt that some ashkanazi Jews really
did come from these like displaced Jews
of the diaspora and then some of them
probably came from the kazars some of

them came from from these Greeks that

converted to Judaism like in you know

like helenistic times and uh uh early

Roman times

and you know who knows there's probably

others so what would be the main group

of you know the main ancestor of

ashkanazi Jews well the main ancestor of

ashkanazi Jews is W weren't Jewish at

all they were just Europeans that inter

intermarried with

Jews so yeah I think the modern

ashkanazi Jew is way below 50% Hebrew in

ancestry you know you got blonde

blue-eyed Jews nowadays

so like Scarlet Johansson is Jewish I

think she was born that way not like
Elizabeth Taylor who just married into
it or Ivanka Trump who married into it I
think she was born that
way so yeah I mean I'm really no
Authority on you know the the ancestry
of Ash Kazi Jews I would guess that it's
from a number of sources like I was
discussing and uh I think I'm just going
to move on to the next uh question which
is also from Romeo which I think I've
already answered because it was just
sort of a you know a followup to the
first question how plausible do I think
this Kazar theory is yeah so I already
answered that part and then he has in
parenthesis here as much as I'd like you

to answer these questions I understand
if you avoid doing so due to the
possibly controversial nature of them
and really I don't think that even very
many Jews would object to what I just
sad
so yeah I think I already answered those
questions so I'm just moving on to the
next one which is from cfy and I'm
checking and yep we are recording fact
we've been recording for more than 30
minutes
already and cify says you kind of
answered the question that I asked a few
weeks ago about so-called assisted dying
that is becoming a norm in the west what

is your opinion about it from a Buddhist
point of view well from a Buddhist point
of view to choose to die like to choose
well maybe I shouldn't even I mean this
this question may be more controversial
and upsetting to people than the origin
of the ashkanazi
Jews because it contains you can easily
say a certain word that you're not
supposed to say on YouTube you know it's
certain words you're not supposed to say
for various
reasons um so
anyways youth in Asia
assisted
self-termination um it's the person who
wants to Auto terminate they have that

right from the Buddhist point of view

it's not entirely moral but it's not

considered to be anything horrible you

know it's it's sort of like like like I

said in the earlier Q&A that cify is

probably referring to um the whole idea

that auto termination is like very

immoral

comes mainly from Christianity in

pre-christian

paganism you know everyone had that

right sometimes it was your duty to Auto

terminate if you were a soldier who

disgraced the legion it was your duty to

fall on your sword for

example a lot of famous Romans did this

and not necessarily fell on their sword
I guess Mark Anthony fell on his sword
and he messed it up he didn't fall on
his sword right and it took him a long
time to
die but um from the Buddhist point of
view the the problematic part is the
people that are helping like someone
wants to end their life then that is
their decision to make but anyone who
helps them is from a Buddhist point of
view participating in Murder like you
just help somebody to off themselves
don't want to use disrespectful language
but you help them in this process then
you are from a Buddhist ethical point of
view

a kind of

murderer and that that applies also to

abortions from from the Orthodox teravan

point of view that's all that's also

murder and so helping someone or or like

especially if you talk them into it you

know it's like well you know this is a

terminal condition you're not going to

get better it's going to get more and

more icky as time goes by maybe you want

to consider this option than that person

from a Buddhist ethical point of view is

a murderer if the person takes their

advice so it's really you got to be

really careful because sometimes I can I

can agree that youth in Asia like let's

say an animal for example one time more than once when I was a kid my father would shoot some animal we had a a kitten that got up into a car when he started the car the fan belt just kind of chopped it up and it it was kind of kind of maimed and kind of crawling away my father went and got the gun and shot it also we had this really nice cly dog that apparently got hit by a car he disappeared for a few days and when he came back it's like all the skin on his side was missing and my father just went in and got the gun and shot him and buried him out in the garden and it just kind of makes sense that sometimes it's going to cause less

suffering but if you're doing it to
somebody else to someone other sentient
being still you're messing with their
karma you are responsible for
terminating their karmic stream in this
life and so it's you're making big Karma
by doing
it from a Buddhist point of view even
though like from a utilitarian Western
ethical point of view you know it may be
the lesser of two evils it may be you
know well intentioned you know you've
got motivations of like sympathy or
empathy compassion still from the
Buddhist point of view ancient Indian
ethics that I mean messing with somebody

else's life and ending some other

being's life is about the biggest worst

Karma you can

do

so um with regard to that sort of

thing the doctors and nurses especially

would have to be more careful than the

person who's making the decision because

you know they

pretty much have a right over their own

life because it's their life but even to

help them is in a sense um committing

murder and in creating big

Karma and not good karma

either so I mean we in the west who are

eclectic and somewhat lukewarm in our

Buddhism I mean we can just kind of

weigh the pros and cons and decide which
way we're going to go but still I would
advise it being very careful especially
if it's like your parent then I mean if
it were my parent I'd let them make the
decision and I wasn't G to wasn't going
to help them
really I wouldn't want to my father I
mean he my father was a tough guy he
wasn't really afraid of death you know
if he wanted me to help him that would
cause like a new like
internal sort of uh debate in my mind as
to whether I should help or not I
certainly wouldn't want to I mean from
the Buddhist point of view one of the

things you can do that's guarantee you
of going to hell is to cause
deliberately cause the death of one of
your
parents although generally they're
thinking more along the lines of Lizzy
bordon and not along the lines of just
unplugging the machine that's keeping
them alive because their body is too too
broken and wasted to keep itself
alive so let's see here I've noticed
that I say so a lot in these q&as I hope
it really doesn't bother people all that
much the more I get aware of it the more
I'm going to have like this automatic uh
like a reflex of catching it like I used
to say what was it basically a lot you

know a lot of people will just throw
basically they'll just pepper their
sentences with
basically and then I had a friend of
mine just point out as an observation
you know basically doesn't really mean
anything and then it just kind of
humbled me to think that I was just sort
of peppering sentences basically without
being fully mindful of the fact that I
was using this word so
much so
anyways I hope I answered it better this
time but I've got lots of questions to
answer still this could be a three-hour
long one those of you who like The Joe

Rogan Pro podcasts you may not be
intimidated by that some people are
scared off by three-hour long videos
especially if there's no like explosions
and space aliens and nudity and that
kind of stuff so I'm just going to move
on to cfy's second
question in my meditation sometimes I
reach the state of Stillness where I
almost stop thinking and only observe my
breath where do I go from there do I
stay in that Stillness or do I do
something else let's say I dissolve into
a light and build my body back well you
shouldn't do anything
deliberately um if you're trying to get
into deep meditation the less thinking

the less effort the better it's kind of
counterintuitive or or ironic or
paradoxical maybe that the the better
your meditation gets the more effortless
it gets until finally when you become
fully enlightened or you get into the
deepest possible meditative States is
just
effortless so you get into a state of
Stillness where you almost stop thinking
and only observe your breath well I mean
you're still you haven't completely
stopped thinking yet so you can still
work on that and observing your breath
it depends on how you're doing it I mean
the less effort you know the less

watching and the more just plain seeing

there is the better see watching is a

deliberate act that involves a certain

amount of volition and perception and so

forth but just

seeing is more detached than watching

you know it's like just hearing is more

detached from

listening so it's better to hear and see

you know the wiser you get the more

hearing and seeing you're going to do

and the less listening and watching

you're going to do the less listening

and

observing so

yeah I mean if you get it perfect then

you're going to you're going to have

fourth jna because mindfulness of
breathing goes all the way up to fourth
jna so if you can perfect that
mindfulness in breathing then you've got
fourth genre you've got as high as you
can get so I mean if if you're just kind
of stagnating you're not making any
progress you might want to try other
things you know if you just keep trying
and trying and trying for years and
you're not making Improvement then it
does make sense that you can experiment
with something
else but um at first I mean I don't
really know what your what your progress
has been like

so um I would say just keep doing
mindfulness and breathing unless you're
just stagnating and not making progress
and then try something
different but it isn't really a
progression of you get the the
mindfulness of breathing down so that
you're you almost or completely stop
thinking you're only observing the
breath and then you start like trying to
dissolve into light or doing any kind of
psychic stuff yeah that's that's like a
step
backwards the less stuff you got going
on the better because you're trying to
get as close to a flat calm as you can
in your mind so that you're not

distracted by the waves and then you can see you know essentially the water as the water you can just get through all the samsaric phenomena which are mainly just appearances and just get through to the reality underneath so the less stuff you got going on the better unless you just got a busy mind you need busy stuff going on just to keep your mind like occupied because if you've got a busy mind and you're trying some kind of very still quiet meditation your mind's just going to overflow that overflow the the primary object and just be wandering all over the place

so I hope there was some useful advice

in that long rambling monologue because
I'm moving on to the next question this
is from Indiana
dharm and Indiana dharm says how
advisable is it for a renunciant to send
meta presumably meta would ordinarily
generate Good Karma but a serious
renunciant is trying to minimalize or
minimize all Karma well according to
terab Buddhism even just like getting
Jan where you're in these deep
meditative States that's good karma too
I mean you you get into Brahma Realms
only through through attaining jna
according to to Buddhism at least terada
Buddhism so uh a certain amount of Good
Karma is unavoidable you're just going

to have to deal with it which I mean
good karma I mean it can cause
distractions you know it can cause you
know all kinds of you know really
Pleasant stuff to come your way but you
can just kind of neutralize that the
effects of that by just guarding the
sense doors you know being Mindful and
so forth but I mean the Buddha in the in
the text advises monks to to uh radiate
meta to to beam meta to broadcast
meta and um really I mean the less
attached you are to it the more it is
that you're just being mindful of what
you're doing then in a way you're sort
of transcending the karmic effect of it

anyway you know you're detaching from
The Meta because you're doing it
mindfully you know it's just like energy
transfer or something just this
phenomenon going on so that in a way
you're detached from it it's sort of
like The Diamond Cutter Sutra which is a
Mahayana text it talks about the proper
conduct of a budh satva and it's like
the proper conduct of a budhy satva is
to do only good while at the same time
not really thinking of it as good you
know you're just detached from it you
don't care about the outcome you're just
doing it because that is what you do or
it's which reminds me of the bagavat
Gita also where you know it's like the

fruit of your actions you just offer up
to God it's it's a kind of Detachment so
you're doing good but you're not
attached to the good you don't have that
kind of karma it's just more of a a
spiritual wholesome karma that's going
to help you you to practice spiritually
in the
future so I'm just going to move on to
Indiana dh's second question in Orthodox
terraa is it mandatory to take refuge
before an ordained monk in order for it
to be official oh so if now it's not
really necessary a lot of Burmese people
think that if you take three refugees
you know dhama uh Buddha DH s and or

five precepts or eight precepts it
doesn't really count it's like
unofficial if you don't do it in front
of a monk or at the very least do it in
front of the Buddha at an altar you know
you do it in front of the Buddha statue
or something but I mean it doesn't
really matter it's like it's more
internal than just an external ritual
anyway like keeping five precepts I mean
the actual ritual of taking the five
precepts is almost irrelevant what's way
more important is that you actually
follow the five precepts you you might
not ever you know do the the poly
recitation of undertaking these five
precepts and it's the same way with the

three refuges I mean so long as you

sincerely take refuge then you you

you've taken the

Refuge regardless of what you say or

don't say or any rituals or whoever you

know whether you do it in front of a

monk or anybody else or

nobody but a lot of mainstream like

Asian type Terra think that really it's

it's better to do it in front of a monk

um or at least like I said you know do

it in front of a Buddha statue at an

altar and so I'm going to move on to the

next question which is from Stellar

Supreme forly known as Libra Lam and

Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra

lamb says what is the best argument you

can think

of for why an alcoholic should quit

drinking here and

now well from a Buddhist point of you

second Noble Truth clinging and

attachment or craving and attachment are

the cause of all

suffering so alcoholism is a kind of

addiction ethanol addiction addiction

involves craving an attachment

so alcohol addiction is a cause of

suffering so if you don't want to suffer

you should try to overcome that

particular addiction or any addiction

best not to be addicted to

anything so that's the best especially

the best Buddhist argument for why an
alcoholic should quit drinking
because craving and attachment are the
cause of all suffering according to the
Buddhist the the second Noble Truth of
Buddhism so since alcohol addiction is a
cause of great craving and attach ment
then it is the cause of great suffering
and if you don't want to suffer most
people don't want to suffer very much
most people would like to keep their
suffering to a minimum as a general
rule that uh it just it just makes just
makes sense it's just a sensible
thing so I'm just going to move on to
Sellar Supreme formerly known as Libra

Lamb's second question which is could it

be argued that there are sentient beings

in the lra which lra is literally Loca

is world or Cosmos and udra means Beyond

or higher

than

so could it be argued that there are

sentient

beings um that are higher than the

cosmos or I mean definitely there are

sentient beings higher than this world

you you got all the heaven Realms and

all that now just not even not even

bringing up space aliens

but um I mean Beyond any world I mean

you got the formless Realms the formless

Realms could be called

lood but um I mean if you if you mean

Beyond samsara beyond the 31 planes of

existence then it could be argued I mean

anything could be argued but it wouldn't

be Orthodox

Buddhism so I mean it sort of reminds me

of the answer to an earlier question

where it's like what is it why is it

that an enlightened being stops being

reborn I mean it doesn't they don't

necessarily I mean it's you can't even

really put it into words it's not them

getting reborn anymore because the them

has been

neutralized

so sentient beings in the lodra I mean

there are a lot of people including a

lot of Buddhists who think that Buddhas

just continue to be

reborn or enlightened beings continue to

be

reborn but uh it's it's in a different

way where it's like there's nobody there

and it's just sort of they're appearing

as phenomena to other unenlightened

beings that they really don't have any

even even any belief in a self anymore

they don't have an ego anymore or any

kind of you know it's

like what what was keeping them you know

sort of existing as an entity no longer

exists

but I mean it's you get into these

Realms of just Paradox and the mind can't grasp just mind warpy stuff when you're trying to think about it's like an enlightened being you know they transcend this body there's this karmic stream and just kind of just let it go where it wants while you know they have just merged with the absolute or some such or just ceased blown out like a flame and then you know what happens to that karmic stream according to Orthodox Buddhism it just gets cut off Orthodox Buddhism is very mechanistic in its description of certain things and so it might be that Orthodox Terra Buddhism is not 100% correct and it could be that

there is some semblance

anyway of like the

transcended karmic stream of an

enlightened being

still like manifesting in this universe

with nobody there it's just like the the

karma of other beings are helping it to

manifest which it's it doesn't make

sense to even talk about

it so maybe I should just move on to the

next question this is from the Arya

swasti

project and the Arya swasti project says

very sorry to hear about the issue with

your employer since this is a common

Misfortune in a lot of folks Liv lives I

think most people have been fired or let

go at some time on that note most people
also attribute something like this to
bad or past Karma I.E maybe they tired
they fired someone without good cause in
a past life personally I think karma is
infinitely more complicated than that
but can you share your thoughts in
regard to the karma aspect of losing
your job well I mean it certainly was
was
co-created I was getting increasingly
frustrated and annoyed with the just
Flatout incompetence of upper management
and so I was becoming more just fed up
and disgusted in my communications with
upper management which is not

diplomatic so I mean even if I hadn't

gotten angry in the final interview

where they're telling me do this and I

was telling them it's just not realistic

to do this they're saying do it and I

just say no

and whether I'd gotten angry or not at

that point I probably wouldn't be

working there anyway but I did get angry

I was just I was getting

too just agitated and just impatient

with these people to even try to be

polite

anymore so that was on me although with

regard to what how the situation arose

leading up to

that who who knows I mean there's

there's infinite complexity in karma you know there's no telling what it was exactly it could have been like a hundred different things all just sort of kind of weaving together to make this incident occur and there's no way I mean I'm the Buddha says even trying to understand Karma can cause you to go insane you know just the all the ramifications of it and the the the subtleties and complexities of it so it's really hard to say exactly what brought about that I mean it it'd be my own mental States ultimately because karma is a mental state but then again you know

enlightened beings you know Maham mogana

as I keep saying according to tradition

was literally beaten to a pulp even

though he was a fully enlightened being

he was the Buddha's one of the the

Buddha's Two Chief

disciples so I mean even the Buddha had

you know David trying to kill him and so

forth so you still can have Bad Karma

and there's no telling what resulted in

me working for a company that just had

this this utterly incompetent attitude

with regard to hiring

people

so I have no idea but really I'm just

not I don't score high marks on

unquestioning obedience I just never

have I've never been good at questioning
obedience and when they're when you've
got somebody who's stupider than you and
obviously incompetent ordering you to do
something that's just
ridiculous
then I'm I'm I'm just not going to do it
I mean it it would depend on the
circumstances but in this circumstance
it was the camel's back was already
broken I was just fed up and so I just
flat out refused and
so I'm uh looking for another job I
think I might uh I mean the place where
I used to work would hire me no problem
but I'd rather not take a a major pay

cut in order to go back to work and so
I'm checking out my options at
present and there's a chance I might get
sort of a like an afternoon shift like
working until like 11: p.m. which would
be better for my woman and me because as
I was saying at the beginning of this
thing we are night people anyway we're
really not morning
people so
I think I'll just move on to the arus
swasi project second
question which is do you think that it
happened in order to clear room for
something more suitable for you that's
possible too because sometimes even a
spiritually Advanced person can have bad

things happen to them just because it's
time for a change you know it's
like you know they need something bad to
happen to them for whatever for whatever
reason like in a previous Q&A I think it
was maybe two q&as ago I was talking
about the childhood of St John of the
Cross he had a horrible childhood I mean
just abuse starvation like having to
work in a plague hospital as a kid all
this kind of horrible stuff was going on
as a kid but it just was like a crucible
that just sort of cooked him into being
a
saint and that can happen I mean
near-death experiences have caused

people to have Awakening you know
Awakening experiences also so just
because something seems to be a bad
thing happening to you in a lot of cases
it's really not that bad like ROM dos
back when he was Dr Richard Alpert he
was a Harvard Professor he got fired
from Harvard which was considered to be
just a total disgrace but they just
opened up his path to going to India and
and meeting neim Koli Baba and becoming
a a relatively Advanced spiritual
teacher so we'll just have to wait and
see
with regard to what the results of this
entire situation are going to be and I'm
just going to move on the next question

which is is there anything that we can do or need us to do like purchasing your books or a subscribe star to help the situation sawu well that's I mean that's a generous kind of question to ask and I mean you can't buy my books on um Amazon if you please the links are below just as usual and also I do have a subscribe star there's other ways of of donating to the cause if you see you fit and then it is a meritorious deed although we're not exactly starving I mean it is nice to have help at times like this but I mean I'm doing this for free I'm not doing it to get paid or anything so just a kind of public service and I mean

we're not really hurting right now we do
have money in the bank right right now
not like a whole lot of money but we do
have money in the
bank so I appreciate uh that sort of
indirect kind of offer and I'm just
going to move on to the next question
this is from
Toronto and Toronto says is it fair to
consider president Trump a bodh satva at
this
point and he asked this question on the
Discord server and I I gave this sort of
joke answer I said maybe a demigod and
possibly to be declared a God by the
Senate after his
demise and then uh Toronto that maybe

took me seriously because he said will you go into more detail about this in the Q&A so here we are so Toronto wants to know if president Trump is a bodh satva and I mean in this life he's no doubt unaware of being a bodh satva he's really not a particularly spiritually oriented person as far as I can tell I mean he's more the hero kind of person I mean he he is kind of a Julius Caesar type person which is why I made kind of the joke about he might be declared to God by the Senate after his demise it was like in back in Pagan Rome you know after a good Emperor died he could be declared a God by the Senate and then

he'd be considered a God and there'd be
like temples or shrines or whatever set
up in his
honor but if he was a bad Emperor they
would say no he's not a God and they
just throw his body into the Tyber River
so a demigod yeah I don't think he's a
demigod because I'm pretty sure both of
his parents are
human um but I mean he does have a kind
of heroic character to him which a lot
of leftists and a lot of sneering
blackpilled I don't know what they would
be Libertarians or or you know like
super right-wingers or something they
might just sneer at that but I mean he
is kind of like a Julius Caesar

figure and uh luckily his uh his
previous practice of forgiving his his
political enemies and putting them in
positions of trust which backfired on
Caesar totally at the end it it kind of
backfired on Trump in his first first
ter but uh he survived
it but uh yeah I think president Trump
has the potential of just going scorched
Earth and just just really going for it
and I'm sure that most of his supporters
are going to be cheering him on
enthusiastically if he does this you
know like just like gutting the the the
federal bureaucracy for example
deporting the illegal aliens that kind

of

thing getting the getting the hostages

back which for some reason during the

Biden Administration the fact that we

still have American citizens held

hostage in Asia by by Hamas and I think

also in Afghanistan after all this time

I mean it's like you don't see it in the

news at all nobody gives a

[__] but I do think that President Trump

does give a [__] about this kind of

stuff so he's he's kind of a heroic

figure and it's like totally unheroic

people hate and resent him just

maniacally you because nowadays on the

left to be heroic is to be sort of like

a moral degenerate who flaunts their

degeneracy that's like like brave for

them but I mean if you're if you're like

heroic in the ancient sense that's tox

toxic masculinity at the very

least

so um yeah I think he might have to

really declare himself dictator for life

or get himself declared dictator for

Life by Congress and then after he dies

maybe they will declare him a small G

God but I kind of doubt it I really

don't think so I don't I I think he'd

really want that anyway he would not

want to be the Julius Caesar of America

even though he kind of is sort of to

some

degree but Julius Caesar I mean while
we're while I'm digressing on ancient
history um Rome was the Roman Republic
was in a much worse State than the
American Republic is now that there were
just continual bloody Civil Wars going
back and forth Just continual purges
whoever got into power would just Purge
their political enemies then you know
you'd have some Survivor among the
political enemies who Rises to power
somehow just starts purging the other
side it was I mean it was there was a
very big turnover rate in the Senate at
TH in those days and it was just Rome
was sort of degenerating into chaos
political and social chaos and Julius

Caesar by having him having himself
declared dictator for life and sort of
setting the groundwork for the Empire
the end of the Republic and the
beginning of the empire
he really did kind of push reset on Rome
and got it going for several more
centuries but I don't think it's really
necessary for Donald Trump to even try
anything like this and besides he's an
80-year-old
man maybe one of his sons can can carry
on the Legacy or something if
necessary so I'm just going to move on
to uh the next question which is from
chasis and chasz says do you hold view

that a person cannot do anything to
become enlightened if yes why the Four
Noble Truth says that there is a way to
Enlightenment and it involves things
like right action and right livelihood
therefore it's doing something well it's
sort of like Krishna mty Jay Krishna
mury used to say is that you can open
the window but you can't make the W the
breeze blow in that you can get yourself
ready for enlightenment but you can't
make it happen so even even like in the
the sanos suta the mahasan sua the
Buddha says if you practice this
diligently for you know X period of time
two things are are guaranteed you'll
either become enlightened or you'll get

really close to being enlightened and
you can't guarantee that you're going to
be enlightened because there's no way to
make it happen so it's like you open the
window but whether the breeze blows in
or not is beyond your control but I mean
it's not going to blow in if you don't
open the window so the practice is to
get you as
receptive as possible to the moment of
Enlightenment and you can't guarantee
that it's going to happen you can't
force it to
happen but still you can increase your
odds and you know you can just be ready
for it you can be receptive for it to

happen and part of that is you know

clean your room open the window and then

maybe the breeze will blow in sooner or

later if you keep the window open long

enough it's very likely to blow

in so yeah the the no

four the uh the Noble eight-fold

Path you know it is the path leading to

Enlightenment but it doesn't make

Enlightenment happen it just makes you

ready for it and then you know God

willing it'll

happen but it's it's it sort of devolves

on some something akin to Divine Grace

because you really do not have control

over that there's nothing you can do

because doing is Karma and niana is not

the result of any kind of

cause you know this Karma leads to more

karma it does not lead to the cessation

of

karma so I'm just going to move on to

tasz is's second

question which is if a lay person is to

follow five precepts Anar 8 novice 10

and a beu 227 plus thousand more then

wouldn't it be better for one's Karma or

comma and convenience to just keep the

eight precepts and keep keeping them

well and keep keeping them well and

strict and not ordain as a monk and

break lots of rules well it can

be I mean if you just keep eight

precepts but I mean it's the whole lifestyle of the monk is more conducive to Enlightenment than the lifestyle of say somebody living in a house with a family and a TV set and bills to pay and you know a job and insurance and all this kind of stuff it's like the radical like Solitude and austerity of of the Monk's life is really um I mean it's that more than following all those rules that makes the Monk's life more conducive to spiritual advancement the cultivation of wisdom and ultimately Enlightenment

so yeah I mean uh some people they they would just prefer to be a novice you know dress in Monks robes live the monks

life but then just you've only got 10
rules plus the seia rules which are kind
of minor rules of etiquette that a
novice still has to follow a
salera that uh yeah in a way that could
be in certain ways more conducive to
Enlightenment part because like in a
place like Burma you would have much
lower Prestige than a fully ordained
monk you'd have less people like coming
to visit you and and pestering you and
wanting to talk with you all the time
that sort of
thing but mainly it's it's the lifestyle
more than the number of rules that that
really determines whether it's a a

spiritual life that is conducive to

spiritual

advancement so I think I'll just move on

to the Third question of chascas is

which is I mean why become a monk in

21st century is it a social status thing

paradoxically and again it's it's like

the lifestyle and in the west becoming a

monk in the 21st century is somewhat

problematic because you can't really

live the lifestyle of a monk that is

described in the text who's just

wandering around going going into the

village for Ms like sleeping under a

tree that kind of thing it doesn't work

nearly as easily in the west mainly

because early Indian Buddhism was

designed for early India not for 21st
century America or Europe or
wherever
so I mean to become a monk in the 21st
century in like Burma or Thailand or Sri
Lanka I mean that that's why one thing
becoming a monk in the west where I mean
you're living in like a house in the
suburbs it's got maybe a little
Monastery sign out front not too big
because you know they don't want you
want don't want to attract trouble or
anything and then you've got all these
you know payments you know bills and
stuff with regard to this house and
maybe you'll have a committee of lay

people that are paying the bills monks
aren't supposed to handle money and then
you've got to like defer to this group
of lay people and their ideas about how
the monastery should be R and
it's it's just not the same kind of
Lifestyle as is described in the sutas
in the polych if you really want to live
that kind of Lifestyle your best bet is
to go to a terot of Buddhist country and
try to follow that lifestyle as well as
you can in a climate and in a society
that really supports that sort of thing
rather than in the west where it's
supported by some people and just sort
of ignored by most people and maybe
antagonistic for some people and you got

all these complications of living a
worldly samsaric kind of a life and you
can't really just cut your ties with
society and just become a nameless
wandering
beggar which is what the early monks
were you know you just wandered from
place to place nobody it might be that
nobody knew what your name was you
didn't have a name hardly
just sleep in a different place every
night you don't know where your next
meal is coming from that kind of thing
yeah it's maybe I mean it's conceivable
that you could do that in the west but
um the West just isn't designed for that

sort of

thing so I mean if you want to increase

your odds of becoming

enlightened then yeah becoming a monk

makes sense and it's probably makes even

more sense to become a monk in a

Buddhist culture rather than any non-

Buddhist

culture but I mean it's it it depends on

the individual for some people the

Monk's life just they're just not meant

to be a monk they just do not have the

temperament that is suitable for being a

monk you know you don't like looking at

bare walls in solitude and silence day

after day for the rest of your life then

being a monk may not be for you if you

just can't stand and being a celibate
for the rest of your life then certainly
being a monk is not going to be the
right choice for you it's not for
everybody and for some people it might
be an obstacle I mean if you're so
frustrated you know it's just it's so
you're going so much against your own
Nature by being a monk that it's just
tying you in knots you're just like this
neurotic mess and sexually frustrated
besides then yeah I mean you might you
might be better off trying to you know
strive for enlightenment in some other
way and just following some of the
lifestyle but it should be simple and

harmless you know it's just avoiding

trouble as a general rule unless you're

really an advanced tant practitioner or

some

such so I think I'm just going to move

on the next question this is from scolin

or

skaden and scolin or scho ofine says

what are some of the ways that people

have tried to cheese themselves into a

heaven realm and I'm not exactly sure

what it what it means to cheese yourself

into a heaven realm

um and then he's got the bullet point

the the characteristic bullet point I

don't suppose people tried voting

so yeah it doesn't help me to understand

the question so people have tried to cheese themselves into heaven does that mean just kind of like I don't know doing some kind of slick deal to get into heaven and I mean that just reminds me of of the Burmese belief that if you build um pagot I mean that's that's pretty much it you're pretty much guaranteed of Heaven That's The Stairway to Heaven right there it was like uh George Orwell who is much more famous for his novel's Animal Farm in 1984 he also wrote a novel called Burmese days because George Orwell lived in Burma as a colonial police officer during the British times in central Burma and he

wrote this novel about what it was like
in colonial Burma during the British Raj
and the villain of the story was upo
chin who was this this Burmese guy just
completely corrupt and his wife would
warn him sometimes you know you are an
evil man you're going to go to hell and
upo Chin would just say you don't know
anything I'm going to build a
pagota and it's like like he just thinks
that building a pagota would just like
erase all of his past misdeeds just
erase his his Bad Karma or
something but aside from that I'm not
sure what cheesing yourself into a
heaven
realm I'm not even sure exactly what

that

means trying to cheese themselves into a

heaven realm so if it doesn't mean some

kind of slick deal where you can get in

without technically being worthy of it

then then then I'm not sure but in in

Asia especially in in like Buddhist Asia

there are a lot of spiritual

materialists who just consider Merit to

be a kind of spiritual money and they

just do meritorious Deeds as a way of

buying their way into

heaven and that's and if you just do the

meritorious Deeds without caring about

heaven just because that's what you do I

mean it's going to be much more

meritorious over all then you got this
kind of transaction going you know I'm
going to do this in order to get that
you know it's just becomes sort of like
a business trans
transaction but I do not fully
understand scolin or skillin's question
and so I'm moving on to the next
one and I would advise people to try to
be articulate in your question so that
it's clear that someone other than you
if they read it they'll understand what
it
means just always try to imagine this I
do this when I write I don't write very
much anymore because I'm usually doing
videos like

this but when you write something you
know try to imagine somebody other than
you reading it you know who doesn't have
the same inside knowledge you've got and
you know doesn't have the same
vocabulary as you seem working
vocabulary
anyway so anyways scad next
question has anyone made it all the way
to the highest Heaven realm and formed a
herum from Mara's three voluptuous
daughters and if anyone has done that I
do not think it has been recorded it's
not recorded in the Buddhist texts I'm
pretty
sure so yeah I mean you seduce Mara's

three daughters you might have Mara to
contend with you might get pissed off at
that or who knows maybe he'll like you
for being a
rascal but yeah I mean total
hypothetical there no way of of knowing
such an answer it is not recorded
anywhere in the text that I have ever
seen and I rather doubt it so I'm just
going to move on to the scadden's third
question which is as
follows has anyone claimed full
disclosure from
meditation and then in the bullet points
he has something like aliens exist
they're our greatest allies the world is
bankrupt so you're now their slaves I

just reached Enlightenment so

byy well this is another somewhat

ambiguous question has anyone claimed

full disclosure for meditation and with

regard to like this I just reached

Enlightenment I'm sure there have been

lots of people who have claimed full

disclosure on that one you know the

Buddha himself apparently made the full

disclosure of his Enlightenment after

meditation

and in the in the poly sutas you're

going to find lots and lots of people

doing

likewise um with regard to somebody

through meditation I would assume that

people through meditation may have come through with disclosures that there are like small G Gods you know there are like entities in other dimensions and so forth kind of like from an iasa trip or something sometimes meditation can be somewhat

psychedelic for some

people um I'm sure that people have had all kinds of weird insights including like worldly political kind of insights and so forth through meditation um I mean the only ones that really matter from the traditional Buddhist point of view are these reaching Enlightenment or reaching one of the stages of Arya ARA hood or you know getting one of the

weasa Insight knowledges you know

there's this list I think it's 10 weasa

Insight knowledges that you're supposed

to get like the mahasi method a lot of

people don't realize this but the mahasi

mahasi method is largely based on just

doing mindfulness of breathing until

these weasa Insight knowledges start

arising in order and then the teacher if

if you get the right one in the right

order he'll he'll write it down he'll

make like a a harping noise and write it

down and then that'll sort of give you

positive feedback to move on to the next

one or some such

so maybe I

answered one of scadden's three
questions there which I guess is good
enough so I'm going to move on to the
next question which is from
Virgil and this is kind of an
interesting question I don't think
anyone's asked this one
before and it's about meditation he says
what does it mean to change postures
mindfully does that mean you keep
awareness of the meditation object while
you adjust or change your posture like
switching your legs or it means to be
mindful of the process Itself by
focusing on the body and the process of
changing
legs does it mean you keep awareness of

the medit oh okay all right I think in mahasi they say to be aware of the feelings while changing and noting everything but that may not apply to some atat type practices like meta or anapan where you need to stay with the object yeah that that would be my answer is it depends on what kind of meditation you're doing if you're doing mindfulness medit meditation then you're supposed to be mindful of whatever is like foremost in your mind whatever is like the most noticeable stimulus is what you're supposed to be mindful of so let's say you're sitting in meditation you're doing mindfulness like sa batana

meditation and which would include
mindfulness of breathing you can do
mindfulness of breathing as a
mindfulness meditation which is like
what mahasi
teaches and you're going to notice like
your knee hurts and then it it just
keeps it keeps keeps hurting until
finally you get to a point where you're
not you're no longer meditating on your
breath you're meditating on the
screaming pain in your knee and that
could go on for a long time and maybe I
mean it used to be in mahasi they would
teach you even if it hurts so bad you
think you're going to die don't change
position it's called heroic effort pain

is the key that unlocks the door to

nibana pain is the friend of the

meditator they used to teach that back

when

it was people were tougher I

guess so I mean you notice the pain in

your knee for a while then you notice

like continued urges to change the

position of your knee then maybe you

notice the decision yeah I think I

better change position in my legs

because my knee is hurting like a son of

a [__] and then you got to notice the

intention to to move your arm and to

like lift your leg and then you're

noticing the the screaming pain is is

your sword joint is like being moved and
then you know you're being aware of the
the pressure of your hand against your
leg and the the muscles and your arms
and and the whole rest you know
everything that arises you're supposed
to be mindful of it and note it until
finally you're back in regular position
again maybe your knee doesn't hurt
nearly so bad anymore so you can go back
to mindfulness of breathing but if
you're doing some kind of samata like
concentration meditation you know some
somat based meditation then it may be
like if you're doing mindfulness of you
know like light Cina or something then
you would still try to be focused on the

light Casina while very sort of uh
unobtrusively you know just as casually
and slowly and just sort of
non-disruptively as possible change your
position although if you're doing somat
really well then probably You' just sort
of be detached from the pain
anyway so yeah it does depend on whether
you're doing like mindfulness based
meditation or like somat concentration
based
meditation and so I'm just going to move
on next question this is from seac and
sepad zida and seac and suad zida says
please explain the karma generated in
this case and he left a link to a video

which was about a 10-year-old girl with
emotional problems who stomped on the
head of a baby and killed it and the
baby's father was unwilling to forgive
her for
that so what is the karma generated in
this case well there's three main people
involved I guess there's there's other
people involved first you got the baby
who's who died and there's no telling
what the baby's Karma was that caused
its life to be just abruptly ended at
the at the age of about six months
because of this girl stomp this
10-year-old girl stomping on his head
and then the 10-year-old girl I mean she
was kind of a mess already apparently

based on the video and I mean she's
she's even more of a mess now because
she's guilty of first-degree murder at
10 years
old so I mean she's got a mess of a life
to contend with Unless somehow and let's
hope that this happens somehow she has
some kind of breakthrough and make some
progress rather than just spending the
rest of her life just this
mess with regard to the father I mean
it's understandable I mean from like a
saintly like a saintly point of view
like the Orthodox Buddhist point of view
of course he should forgive the girl you
know in Christianity of course you're

supposed to forgive everybody but I mean
it's understandable that he would want
her to be punished for killing his
baby and that his reluctance or
unwillingness to forgive her in a way I
mean he's making karma for himself
through the anger and the hatred and the
desire for vengeance you know maybe it's
just Justice that he wants but still
he's got a strong attachment which is
creating Karma he's he's obviously not a
happy man and he's making bad karma for
himself too but in a situation like this
if you're not a saint already I mean
somebody kills your baby
then I mean it may take quite a while
before you cool down enough to just sort

of get a little bit of Detachment it may be two years from now he's willing to forgive the girl it's just that you know he's kind of caught up in in just paternal instincts and anger and indignation and all that but I mean obviously if the girl made worse Karma by killing the baby than the father is making by not forgiving her for killing his
baby and with regard to the karma generated mean others you know like the judge and you know the police officers involved and so on and so forth who knows so I'm just going to move on to se vaction CAD Z's next question which is

you said you don't want me to ask more questions about the 16 steps were you being serious or was that a joke because I genuinely had more questions about it well I was I was serious it's like three questions about these 16 steps and there was another question about it in this Q&A so that's four questions about these 16 steps or 16 approaches to mindfulness of breathing I mean I've already said over and over again it's just largely an academic thing for me I really don't think the Buddha actually taught this it could be that it was just a compilation of different different like instructions with regard to to mindfulness of breathing that some of these

instructions were put into very clumsy
language which is which makes it very
obviously bad advice for a meditator I
mean you have to reinterpret the
instructions in order for it not to be
bad
advice and it's just I just never paid
much attention to I read read the suta I
think it's in the
majima and I mean it just it really did
not strike a chord with me at all it
just it just seemed like it was not good
meditation advice for me maybe someone
else would really go for it but for me
it just I don't know so why CAC andad Z
is so intrigued by this I mean you

should ask somebody else you should ask
somebody who takes it more seriously
like a more Orthodox kind of teacher
like you know any of the monks that do
q&as you know there are monks on YouTube
that do q&as and they tend to be more
Orthodox than me they'll take the UN
sua more seriously than I do and then
they might be able to come up with I
mean you could even look on on the
internet there's at least one entire
book written on that one sua which has
like probably most if not all of the
commentarial stuff translated too and
you could study that I don't remember it
was biku b or I hope it wasn't biku cuz
he doesn't really meditate but I mean

there some famous monk from like the 1970s or 80s wrote this book about this suta you know it's just indepth explanation and if you really want to know what the 16 steps entail and and so on and so forth etc etc then yeah I would suggest that you you know ask somebody else or or try and find that book and study that book or look online I mean it might be all online now that what is the commentarial explanation for these 16
different steps or or stages or or approaches to mindfulness of breathing because I mean why why keep flogging a dead baby with this I no I shouldn't

have said that because we just did one
about a dead baby so yeah I shouldn't
have said that dead horse let's just go
back to the
horse man and somebody thought that me
talking about the ancestry of the
Ashkenazi Jews is going to be
controversial something that people
could complain
about but yeah I mean I'm No Authority
on these 16 steps you're better off I
mean if you're really that interested
you should probably ask somebody who
takes it way more seriously than I
do and so I'm just going to move on to
se action CAD zina's next question what
is the difference between a democracy

and a
republic well a democracy is the rule of
the
majority whereas a republic generally
has a constitution that helps to protect
people from the rule of the majority it
can be a Democratic Republic which is
what America supposedly is but still I
mean like this the
stereotypical uh description of a
democracy is two wolves and a sheep
deciding on what to have for dinner so I
mean the the founding fathers of America
realize that democracy can be that way
it can be mob Rule and it can be you
know the majority preying upon the

minority and so you set up a

constitution that is going to protect

the minority to some

degree

so that would be

my amateurish attempt at describing the

difference between a democracy and a

republic and so I'm just going to move

on to next question this is from

xenoid and xenoid has asked some very

lengthy questions here

very long questions asked by xenoid the

first one is the shortest of the three

he says when sidarta Goa was asked if he

would exist after death not exist after

death exist and not exist after death or

neither exist nor not exist after death

he rejected all possibilities here he is
telling us that we can never understand
the absolute through thought however if
we are going to talk about the absolute
in any way we have to imperfectly shove
it through the lens of one of the four
possibilities which of the four do you
think
tarnishes the understanding of the
absolute the least
well probably most terab
Buddhists including most terava scholar
monks would have to go with the second
option so that SED when a Daga after
death does not exist that would come
close to the truth I think so I mean

your four options are an enlightened
being exists after death doesn't exist
after death does and doesn't exist and
neither does nor does not exist after
death and I mean just going with like
mainstream Buddhist philosophy the
second option comes closer to the truth
is he no longer exists that's why early
Buddhist iconography never showed Buddha
images they would show a footprint
they'd show an empty seat they just show
up bod leaf or something to represent
the Buddha because he was no longer in
this
world he was no longer in any
world so probably the four the the one
option of those four which tarnishes

Buddhist philosophy the least would be
that an enlightened being no longer
exists after death although I mean
that's kind of what we go with although
really
it's it's beyond that even that is
invalid which then gives rise to these
possibilities that I was mentioning
earlier about how an enlightened being
could still seem to exist after death
but it's you're getting in you're
getting into really paradoxical ground
at that point so I'm just going to move
on the next
question and I'm still feeling a kind
of sort of cringy semi- regret for that

flogging a dead baby comment that I made earlier because I mean it it was just too close to the story of a man who lost his baby and then there could be a connection and and then no such connection was intended so Zenith void second question and this is one of the long ones a logical issue I've had with the achievability of nibana is that because it is without cause and does not cause anything else it cannot interact with the causal and contingent meaning that it cannot be achieved because it cannot be affected and is not within the realm of cause however the idea of God being the absolute also does not work because

in order for him to create or interact with his creation he must have a causal or contingent aspect meaning he is still within the realm of contingency and therefore not absolute a scientific materialist might just say well then there is no absolute but even through simple Aristotelian logic this doesn't work because this leads to Essen thisness picha suada which has components of infinite regress therefore lacking any explanatory power or a grounding reality to base anything off there is a divide among atheists as to whether or not existence had a beginning or is eternal but these options fail

because this would require a causeless beginning or an infinite regret which are both illogical it seems that Sedar tooda was right in his claim that the absolute can never be properly understood through words going with pure Aristotelian logic I don't think the absolute can be reached but in the context of a meaningless and this teologico samsara where even death cannot certainly promise finality it seems like the only thing worth trying to do especially considering it seems likely that others namely the Buddha have done it in the past how can I get my mind to shut up about trying to understand the absolute and get closer

to just experiencing it as a lay person
I seriously doubt that lay people can
become enlightened It seems impossible
to fully integrate the understanding of
the absolute if you have to do things
like trying to survive and constantly
understanding everything through some
SAR language instead of meditating
247 so is okay so I guess the the
question mark the actual ual question is
how can I get my mind to shut up about
trying to understand the absolute and
get closer to just experiencing it as a
lay person well I mean if you really
believed that you can't understand
intellectually which you can't then I

mean you wouldn't just keep trying to
figure it out it's just it's like
compulsive thinking I guess and I mean
from the Buddhist point of view the
thing to do is just be mindful of it and
when it starts to arise just label it
impulsive thinking and Let It
Go but apparently you do not fully
believe that you can't figure out the
absolute because you keep trying and if
you really knew that you couldn't figure
it out you wouldn't keep trying you know
it's like you might try to jump to the
Moon you know five or six or 700 times
but eventually you're going to have to
realize that you just can't jump to the
Moon there's no air up there anyway

anyway so I mean once you fully realize
that you can't jump to the Moon which
most people fully realize then that's
why you don't see people trying to jump
to the
Moon you know you don't see merry many
people trying to do the impossible
unless they just don't know that it's
impossible yet but once you know
something's impossible then as a general
rule you stop trying I mean you got to
draw the line somewhere if it's
impossible don't try to do it especially
if you're sure that it's
impossible
so I think you haven't

fully you haven't fully realized that

you can't figure out the absolute

because thoughts are symbols and symbols

are very crude attempts at representing

what they're trying to represent and

what what the these symbols are trying

to represent in this case is completely

formless and how the mind cannot grasp

that you just can't you cannot perceive

something that is formless you're going

to have to have some kind of form to it

you're GNA have to attribute some kind

of form to it just just for it to be

like something that you can deal with in

your

mind in order to call it an

it

so yeah I

mean the best thing to do I guess is

just be mindful I mean whenever you

catch yourself trying to do this instead

of just like setting aside the the

claims that it's impossible because you

don't fully believe them just it's not

going to work you're never going to

figure out Ultimate

Reality you cannot figure out Ultimate

Reality symbolically because Ultimate

Reality is not

symbolic symbols are very different like

the letters t are extremely different

from an actual tree

and then when you're trying to think

trying to figure out the the ultimate
ultimate truth it's even it's even more
different like your attempts to
understand Ultimate Reality are even
more different than the letters t r are
from an actual
tree so it's just it's just not going to
work and eventually you're going to have
to just realize that and then you'll
just let it go once once you have fully
realized that you cannot figure out
Ultimate Reality then you'll just let it
go so but until then you should be
mindful at least that you're trying to
figure out reality again trying to
figure out reality again you can even
you can even label it as that whenever

it comes up trying to figure out

reality but it's just not going to

happen I mean you can sort of figure out

some Sor to some degree which is what

science is really good at or at least

it's better than anything else we know

of at present

empirical science scientific method but

the ultimate is is beyond that science

can't touch that

either so I mean maybe you could just

try and get into like Kant Emmanuel Kant

where I mean that's that's what he did

best was explaining how people can't

really know the thing in itself all they

can know is the thing as it seems but

Kant was not a Mystic and so I mean
there there is one thing in itself that
we have direct access to there is one
Ultimate Reality that we really can know
directly and that is the thing in itself
of our own Consciousness and that is not
perception and symbols that's just
Consciousness as
Consciousness because once you get into
thoughts and perceptions and so forth
then you're dealing with the thing as it
seems so I'm just going to move on to uh
zenith oids
next very long
question which is would it be fair to
say that the Buddha is the Incarnation
of the absolute in the same way that

Jesus and Krishna claim to be and I I
could just stop here but he keeps going
I believe that neither Jesus nor chrisna
can truly be the absolute if they have
contingent aspects I don't know how
Hindus deal with this issue but
Christians have a few ideas to deal with
this problem
one Christ is just a prophet not God and
not absolute that's the Aryan heresy two
Christ only had a has a divine nature
this would make him not man and
therefore not a sinless man who could
redeem Mankind through his conquer of
death that was like some Gnostic sects I
think three Christ or also what was it

uh the quietists or or something like
that three Christ has a human nature and
a divine nature this means that he has
two Wills Oriental Orthodox Christians
claim this understanding would mean that
there are two sons instead of one as
there can be only be one will within a
mind and therefore false yeah I think
that was like the the heresy of St serel
of Alexandria or something the the poly
fite no Duo fite
monopis site I don't know four Christ
has one nature which is both human and
divine this is what Oriental Orthodox
believe the pmic made by other
Christians is that this means Christ is
neither created nor uncreated which

fails on an excluded middle and makes
him not God because God is only
uncreated I think that the Buddha has
the same symbolic archetypal
significance within the collective
unconscious as Jesus and Krishna that
being the perfect human who is one with
the absolute but I don't think this
works going with strict Aristotelian
logic because the absolute is totally
not understandable through words if we
were going to try to intellectualize
what the Buddha became upon achieving
Enlightenment we would have to divide
him into a condition and unconditioned
nature apply to him something which lies

outside the five Aggregates Etc I don't think we can describe him properly just as we can't describe n okay so the qu the actual question is way up at the top here would it be fair to say that the Buddha is the Incarnation of the absolute in the same way that Jesus and chrishna claimed to be it wouldn't really be an incarnation of the absolute I mean he wasn't enlightened when he was born he he didn't get enlightened until you know he was what 29 29 years old or was it that was that was that when he he renounced the world yeah I think that's when he renounced the world so he didn't become Enlighten till he's sitting under the bod tree and became enlightened

before that he he apparently wasn't the
Incarnation of the absolute and
Incarnation means would seem to assume
that you were born that way you know
Incarnation so the way it works is that
You' got let's say just a totally
foolish person like maybe a vampire or
something you know some soulless being
who is just totally foolish you know has
no wisdom other than maybe a certain
worldly cunning they would be
spiritually opaque you know like like
Satan or
something then the the ordinary person
any any being that has what Mahayana
Buddhist call the Buddha nature would be

sort of translucent like a bathroom

window or like a the the shower curtain

or the the door to the

shower you know light goes through it

but not

perfectly and then an enlightened being

would be like spiritually

transparent you know it's just there' be

be no

Distortion so somebody like neim Koli

Baba up there on the altar right right

there I mean he was considered to be

just a SAT Guru you know he was just God

personified God in human form and I mean

it's just kind of the way it is he was

just sort of spiritually transparent or

at least his his devotees considered him

to just you know God just shown through
him because he had sort of
this like attenuated his ego or
attenuated his delusion sufficiently
that I mean the just the Spirit light of
spirit which is always there just shown
through him unimpeded and the Buddha
would be like that I suppose it's not
like you're attaining anything though
really it's like let's see there's a
piece of paper right well no forget the
piece of paper let's just go with the
the uncarved block of marble that I'm
I'm always harping away at and you got
all these statues in that block of
marble so if you're at the level of

unenlightenment you're dealing with the
statues you see them as these entities
they're the these images you know but
when you become fully enlightened you
realize it's all just this block of
marble that the statues contained inside
that block of marble are virtual you
know they're really in there in a sense
but it's virtual you know it takes
imagination a certain amount of of
Illusion to create these
statues but once you become enlightened
I mean like one of these statues once
one of these statues somehow becomes
enlightened you know you've got
enlightened statues in there every
possible statue is in there including

statues of enlightened beings then they
realize that it's just Stone and so they
no longer have this false identity as
this individual being it's just they
just merge with the
Stone and so it's like when you when
you're calling that stone God or the
essence of God the daraya The Da Brahman
whatever you want to call the absolute I
mean we're already that we're already
100% that it's just that an enlightened
being um they don't have any Illusions
[__] up that you know they're no long
it's no longer
distorted so the Buddha would be like
that any enlightened being would be like

that maybe Jesus although his behavior
in the New Testament would not be
enlightened behavior from a an orthodox
terraa Buddhist point of view
but that's take that for what it's worth
so yeah Krishna also he was an avatar of
Vishnu to the vaishnavite Hindus he was
you know that's the highest God he's
just God the absolute personified just
it wasn't that you had this God right
here and outside of him was not God it's
just everything is God you know it's all
God and then you just have this one
being here that knows
that and and that he's no longer
identifying with anything other than
that maybe at this kind of the surface

level it may appear that he still has an
ego on a personality and and so on and
so forth but deep down it's like the
absolute is just he's aware of the
absolute and just or if in Christian
terms he is just aware that the spirit
of God is completely just suffusing his
entire body and everything else too
everything outside of his body is
equally 100% suffused by the spirit of
God or whatever you want to call it
which in Buddhism isn't even reified and
so it's off the scale and you can't say
whether it exists or doesn't exist
partly because it's formless
so would it be fair to say that the

Buddha is the Incarnation of the
absolute in the same way that Jesus and
Krishna claimed to be um not in the same
way as Jesus because I don't think that
Jesus I mean he was considered to be the
only begotten Son of God so he was just
qualitatively different from everybody
else whereas the Buddha was just a human
being he was a human being who had
he had eradicated attraction aversion
and semiconscious stupidity from his
mind and so in a way he just kind of
merged with this enigmatic paradoxical
absolute which can't be said to exist or
not
exist and uh maybe Krishna would be
somewhat

intermediate because Krishna would still
be sort of qualitatively different from
an ordinary human being because we're
not all avatars of Vishnu
but really at the moment of
Enlightenment nothing is gained you're
just realizing what has always been
there from the beginning so an
enlightened being is different from any
other being simply in that he's like
spiritually transparent he he doesn't
have any self Illusions getting in the
way of the absolute and realizing the
absolute is there and everywhere
else so I don't know if that EXP explain
anything but I'm moving on to the next

question this is from

yugao and yugao says now that a big T is

back in the house yo from Buddhist

standpoint tell us will he or will he

not bring anything good to this world of

ours well I think one of the main Goods

that Donald Trump will bring to the

world is that he is going to be a thorn

in the side of creeping deep

degeneracy that the left has like

degeneracy is practically their

battlecry it's like they're promoting

that and it's it's just amazing like you

watch all the Meltdown videos on YouTube

or or Twitter or whatever this this

leftist after leftist after leftist most

of them female they they're just like

freaking out you know they're just
they're just convinced that the world is
coming to an end and it's in a way
they're they're just symbolic of the
decline and fall of Western Civilization
just decadence decadence used to be a
big deal like historians would talk
about a a like a society in Decay you
know the decadence of this Society was
causing you know societal decadence
resulted in the the the fall of the
civilization and so forth they don't
talk about it anymore because we're
smack dab in the middle of it and so
Donald Trump
sort

of I mean he's not like some

reactionary fighting to return to the

old ways so much as he's just calling

out the really obvious

degeneracy of you know just like

bringing sexual deviant right into the

mainstream I mean to tolerate sexual

deviant that's fine is like most sexual

deviants or at least a lot of deviation

from the biological Norm you know

they're not exactly harmful you know so

long as you're not being a predator on

children or something then you

know that's fine maybe so long as it's

you know in private somewhere between

consenting

adults but I mean to just drag them into

the mainstream so you've got like
government embassies flying the rainbow
flag that kind of thing and it's just
you you got [__] in the military in
fact in high command it's like gibbons's
Decline and fall of the Roman Empire he
he at the time that he wrote this which
is like the late 1700s it was just
considered to be a truism in among
historians at the time that a Telltale
sign of a civilization in severe decline
is the rise of Unix into social
prominence and that's what's happening
now in the West except we don't call
them Unix we call them
trans and Donald Trump is going to be

definitely throwing a monkey wrench into
that which is a good thing I mean he's
not going to have us all you know like
everyone has to have a Bible that they
carry with them at all times any such
thing he's relatively moderate in that
regard but even being a moderate is a
hell of a lot better than just parading
degeneracy and celebrating
it I mean the left they have removed any
kind of sensual excess from the entire
field of Ethics like sensual excess you
know drug abuse gluttony sexual
overindulgence that kind of stuff it's
no longer an ethical issue
anymore to to a lot of people like in in
the new Left

especially and so there is kind of a
push back against that because it just
goes against just common sense to the
average person that's one reason why KLA
Harris lost she's she's got like moral
degenerates twerking at her rallies on
stage that kind of stuff just
celebrating
it so yeah that would be one good thing
is that that uh Donald Trump is sort
of he's sort of facilitating a return to
more normal values with less celebration
of
degeneracy less celebration of Decline
and
fall also I mean there's there's going

to be more honesty in government with
him which I mean some people may just
laugh at the very idea because they have
been indoctrinated to believe that he is
just the worst liar that ever existed
when I mean if you look at the the the
debates and you count the lies on both
sides Donald Trump probably tells fewer
lies than his
opponents and his lies are mainly just
sort of exaggerating like a car salesman
might exaggerate how good the car
is so let's see from a Buddhist
standpoint tell us will he or will he
not bring anything good to this world of
ours yeah I think he's returning some
common sense which is you know like a

secular you know worldly kind of common

sense but even that's better than just

flat out

lunacy and just lying I mean the the

mainstream media they're just

professional Liars at this point faith

in America in the mainstream media is

down below 20% I think and most of the

people that believe it are on the

left it's down to like 8% for like

right-wingers or conservatives or

traditional

people who vote

Republican so let's see here yeah I do

think that he will bring something good

to this world of

ours of course there's going to be just
people raging in hysteria for the next
four years but maybe if some of them at
least have enough self-awareness to
realize that I mean when they're in the
minority you know Trump won the popular
vote he won more than half the
country and just vote wise that they're
in the
minority and they can't really be lied
to anymore to believe that they're
really they're the majority they're on
the right side of history and and
trumpism is just some sort of weird
cult I mean they might still believe
that but now they have to accept that
that cult is taking over the

country and I think that's a good thing

because I mean the cult is really what's

being brainwashed into these people like

at universities and even like like

kindergartens now they're just raised

into

it so anyways I'm just going to move on

to yuga's next question which is also

from karmic view are you happy that you

were born in USA is there any other

country you wished you could have been

born

to well

well like ancient India in the Buddhist

time like Northern India the Ganges

Valley I mean being born into certain

cultures of the past which maybe I was
born into those cultures in the
past but nowadays you know I was born in
1963 and the USA was obviously the place
where I should have been born your karma
lands you where you ought to be so I'm
satisfied with that and like I said
earlier like unquestioning obedience is
is just not one of my personality traits
and so USA I mean America was born of
Disobedience we were born of Civil
Disobedience and Rebellion our national
anthem is actually a war song about our
it's well it's war of 182 but still
maybe maybe the British still haven't
fully accepted our independence at that
time

so yeah I'm I'm happy that I was born in
the USA and I am happy that um the Neo
marxists lost the election and they lost
big I don't think they fully realized
just how badly they were
beaten because now we've got the
president we've got the Senate very
probably the House of Representatives
the Supreme Court most of the governors
most of the people
and Trump I think he's learned his
lessons from from the first time he was
actually trying to put out an olive
branch to like the neocon globalist you
know the globalist Republican Elite you
know like inviting them to participate

and they were just stabbing him in the
back every chance they got and I think
he's learned from that and most of them
have been purged now the the Republican
voters have just purged them like they
were all Liz
Cheney so I think he may go scorched
Earth and I think that would be that
would be extremely
entertaining so yeah I'm I'm glad I'm an
American I mean I can't think of any
other country in the world today that I
would prefer being born
into so I'm just going to move on the
next question and this one is from
Jazz and Jazz lives in
Thailand and so he has asked me these

questions through a friend through email
so I hope he sees the video because it's
in the video that I'm answering his
questions so Jazz says is it good to set
aspirations for the future quitting
sugar addiction hoping to encounter wise
and Noble teachers aspiring to live as a
single person for the rest of my life so
is it good to set aspirations for the
future well in the texts in the early
Buddhist text it says a wise man would
have no aspiration
you know you're not hoping for some
future State you know you're just right
here in the present being as Mindful and
detached and equanimous as you can

manage without worrying about the future
not worrying about the past not worrying
about stuff that doesn't
exist but I mean you can make plans I
mean so long as we're living in this
world we can make plans I mean quitting
sugar addiction is not so much an
aspiration is I mean it's just like a a
task you know like something to do which
we all have to do that we all have to
acknowledge that there are things that
need to get done and if you really think
that quitting sugar addiction is
something that needs to be done you
should just set about and to do it I
mean there's no need to really aspire to
it all that much it's just something to

do so you do it hoping to encounter wise
and Noble teachers I mean hope is yeah
that's also something that's really not
encouraged in early
Buddhism um because again you're you're
just like thinking about some future
state that isn't right here right now
you know it's it's sort of like you're
you're wandering off into
unreality but I mean you can live your
life in such a way as to maximize the
odds of encountering wise and Noble
teachers you know do your best that sort
of thing I mean it's more like task
oriented
behavior rather than you know like

aspiration

like you got something to do you got to

change the tire on your car I mean you

don't have to Aspire to changing the

tire on your car you just acknowledge

that the tire has to be changed and so

you set about changing

it

so yeah I mean it's it's it's more of a

pragmatic thing aspiration is seems kind

of

idealist

idealistic whereas I mean if you just

set about to do something but you really

have to be careful of goal oriented

dharm

cuz usually the future is not the way we

expect it to be you know this we can
plan out the future but it's never going
to be exactly the way we want it and so
it's best not to have much attachment to
any future State just live your life in
a way that is as good as you can manage
and I mean you you can acknowledge that
there's things that you you should do
and so you should set about trying to do
those things but um um maybe describing
it as an
aspiration isn't nearly as good as just
describing it as like a I mean even
calling it a goal is is maybe pushing it
a little bit you know it's it's it's
just something to be done it's like a

duty maybe that's the way to do it it's

it's your sacred duty to maximize your

chances of encountering wise and Noble

teachers for

example and I'm not exactly sure that I

answered that one

so let's just move on to Jazz's second

question and see if I can be more

certain of answering that

one it is as follows is it okay to focus

on one of the Brahma viharas

individually or is it better to practice

them in conjunction with one another why

is it better to practice all four as

opposed to just UPA or equinity well I

mean different people have different

characters and certain Brahma viharas

which the four brah yaras or meta or like loving kindness the usual translation is loving kindness like you know benevolence two is compassion karuna or compassion and then you got mudita or sympathetic Joy which is taking joy in other people's joy and then fourth is upco or equinity and different characters are going to do better at different brahama viharas some people will just be really good at cultivating compassion for example Maybe not so good at equinity you know some people would be really good at meta which is the main one that gets taught the most gets

practiced the most and maybe they're not
so good at mood or
something and as a general rule you're
more likely to Master One Thing than you
are to master
for so I mean in generally unless you're
just really drawn to doing all four and
you can do all four well then probably
you'd be better off just emphasizing one
one of them and then you could maybe do
the other three a little bit you know
but just to put most of your emphasis on
one of them and that would be the one
that you're the best at or maybe it's
the one that you feel deep down is the
one you need to cultivate the most maybe
because you just are lacking in that or

something so that's the one you really
need to work on you'd be one of the
other either the one you're the best at
or the one that you just feel that you
need to work on the most because maybe
maybe you're just not good enough at
that one but trying to do all four at
the same time it decreases your odds you
know down to 25% that you're going to
really be good at what you're doing then
if you just emphasize one of them but it
may be some people just can do all four
maybe they've got parames you know they
got momentum going from past lives
cultivating all four or something and
they can do it really

well so

yeah I think the standard way of doing

it is to emphasize one of

them but it one size does not fit all

for everybody and so I'm just going to

move on to the next one from Jazz which

is tips and advice on how to sleep in a

sitting posture yeah that's the sitting

Danga this it's one of the 13 optional

aesthetic practices for monks and it's I

think it's chapter two of the wisi MAA

so I mean you could read chapter two of

the wisi MAA if you've got it which is

just an overview of the 13 dangas each

Danga has three three levels easy medium

and hard so the sitting practice where

you never lie down you sleep in a

sitting position also has easy medium
and hard easy is you're allowed to sit
in like a chair that might lean back a
little bit and the way I always figured
it is if it's you know less than four
45° you know it's it's on the side of
perpendicular from 45 then you're still
sitting up but if it's less than 45 then
you're just lying
down so you could get a kind of
reclining chair that and not recline it
all the way back but have it you know
like closer to perpendicular than 45
degrees that would be the easy the easy
way of doing the sitting practice the
second level the medium level which is

what I did as a monk for couple years
is you're allowed to lean back against
something so I just had a board like a
flat like a 1 by8 or something I had it
leaning against the wall and then I
would lean against that I'd have to have
a pillow because I've got sort of a sway
back my my back is kind of s-shaped and
I I'd have to lean my head way back and
it was harder to breathe if I didn't use
a pillow so I still had to use a pillow
and it's it's hard to get used to
because like when I was first trying to
do this you know I'd wait wake up at 3:
in the morning just flopped over on my
side one time I remember I was sitting
in the full Lotus position in the

meditation Hall and I just like fell
over still in the full Lotus just
sleeping and also there's another way of
doing the the medium level if you if
you're not going to lean back you can
take like a rope or a belt or something
you can raise your knees up and then you
have the Rope like around your back and
around your knees kind of holding you up
that way but I don't think that would
work very well unless you were sitting
on something very soft because I think
your your ass bone would be grinding
into the floor and it get relatively
painful after a while so let's just skip
the rope and the or the belt or whatever

and just say that just you're sitting on the floor but leaning back against something and then the hard level is you're not leaning back against anything you're not sitting in a chair for the most part you're just sitting as though in meditation and sleeping that way and I've Been Told that the late wayo Seattle of Burma actually slept just sitting upright in meditative posture I did know uh one American monk who was trying to do all of the dangas in at the highest level and he kind of cheated a little bit because he took his alms Bowl put it in front of him and then leaned forward he rested his forehead onto his Ms bowl and slept that way and he wasn't

getting enough sleep and uh it really
took a toll on him and he had drop out
of the monk Hood because he had a kind
of breakdown mainly from lack of
sleep and then as soon as he recovered
he came back to Burma and reordain and
was a monk for many more
years so yeah those are the the three
ways you can do it according to the wiui
MAA and it does take some getting used
to like especially if you're doing it at
the medium or the hard level it may take
months before you can really
go to sleep and then wake up the next
morning still sitting and not just
flopped over on your side on the

floor but I mean there's a good chance
you're going to wind up getting like bed
sores on your behind and everything if
you're if you're meditating sitting in
meditation all day and sitting and sleep
all night or you're just sitting sitting
sitting most of the day and night then I
mean that can result in like bed sores
and that kind of thing I can I speak
from experience on that one so I'm just
going to move on to the next question
and this is from Krypton air yeah two
hours and 12 minutes that's not too bad
I
guess Krypton air says what are you
using to measure the amount of progress
you make is it based on General equinity

in everyday life the amount of reduction
in emotional intensity with regards to
emotional reactions to events and
circumstances base resting mental state
have you considered the possibility of
deep Saras arising and clouding your
current mind State like dust in the air
as a result of sweeping the
floor well that's kind of two questions
I guess but I I think the main one is
what are you using to measure the amount
of progress you make well I never really
measured the amount of progress I made
other than in meditation I mean your
progress in meditation is pretty easy to
gauge it's just you know

how well do you keep your mind on the primary object of meditation you know how much are you thinking how little are you thinking you know how how well can you just sit there without your mind wandering how long can you keep your mind focused on the meditative object or if you even go beyond having meditative objects how long can you just sit there just

empty so that's that's a fairly good way of measuring your progress in meditation with regard to everyday life it's not nearly so easy I mean there's you're probably better off not measuring it I mean like the word

Mana in in poly usually is translated as

conceit sometimes as pride and it's

something you're not supposed to have

it's it's like UNH wholesome Karma but

literally Mana means measuring it's like

measuring yourself

up and like to compare yourself to

somebody else is a kind of mon even if

you consider yourself inferior to some

to somebody else that's still Mona it's

still you're you're like measuring

yourself so you're probably better off

not measuring or trying to measure the

amount of progress you're making in dama

you should just keep practicing because

sometimes like like Krypton air here is

implying towards the end sometimes it's

not clear like one story that that I've given before is there's this guy who has a big rock in his backyard and he doesn't like that rock it's hard to to get the lawnmower around it he's got to get the weed eater out and and like trim around this rock because he can't get the lawn mower up against it so he doesn't like this rock he's going to move this rock out of his backyard G to move it over to the side or something and so he goes out there and starts tugging and pushing and pulling on this rock and he can't budge it but he's stubborn so he just every day he's out there just pushing and pulling and shoving on this rock and little does he

know that that rock that Boulder that
he's trying to move out of his backyard
actually goes down like 12 feet it's
just huge thing that weighs many tons
there's no way he could possibly move it
but eventually he just he can't move it
he doesn't know that it's this huge you
know like this huge
Boulder and he just gives up in Despair
and thinks that he's made no progress
when actually all that pushing and
pulling on this rock has resulted in him
being just like mus ular and a athletic
you know he's in really good shape
because of all this strenuously pushing
and pulling on this rock trying to move

it and even though he couldn't move it
at all and it seems like he totally
failed nevertheless without him really
noticing it he's buff now he's a
Chad and meditation can be that way it's
like it seems like you're not making any
progress but any effort you make is
going to yield results even if you don't
notice the results any effort you make
is going to bear fruit
so maybe one of the best ways of
measuring the amount of progress you
make is by just keeping in mind how much
effort you have
made but really trying to figure it out
is is not so easy you may think that
you've really you're just chill you

think that you got light shining out of you think you've made some attainment or something and it may not be that way at all ROM Doss used to gave this story once probably more than once about this this hermit who lives out in the forest and he's meditating every day and he's doing all this practice until it's like there's light shining out of him and he thinks he's really attained something and he's gonna he thinks he's ready to go back into society so he walks into town and he's on the sidewalk and somebody just jostles up against him and he gets he gets pissed off you know it just annoys him you know it's like he

thinks that he's enlightened or
something but then something comes up
and these old habits just arise you know
there are latent Tendencies anas they're
called imply that uh I mean you can't
really know maybe you can judge the
progress you make by how you deal with
situations when the [__] is hitting the
fan that might be uh some kind of um way
of gauging whether you're making
progress or not that a certain situation
that might have had you blowing your
stack years ago now it's like you can
deal with it calmly that kind of thing
that would be some evidence but I mean
it may be just because you're older you
know you're just getting too old for

that

[__]

so yeah you're probably better off not

trying to measure the amount of progress

you make you're better off with just

conscientiously striving to be better

just

conscientiously you know doing doing

your spiritual practice and not even

caring about the results it's your duty

to do this spiritual practice regardless

of the

results because I mean keeping a

scorecard and and you know writing down

numbers on on a piece of paper and all

that it really is not particularly

helpful unless it's just something in
particular you're trying to keep track
of like for example uh a few times as a
monk I would keep track of how much I
was sleeping as a way of reducing the
amount of sleep that I was I was
indulging
in but even that wasn't really trying to
measure my progress it was just keeping
track of how much I was
sleeping so I hope I answer that one
because I'm moving on to the next one
this is from Ken and at the time that I
first saw this I didn't understand the
question but now I think I do Ken says
did you release the
monkeys and I think I heard that

somewhere in South Carolina the state of

South

Carolina like 43

monkeys escaped from a laboratory which

probably means that some animal rights

activist infiltrated that laboratory and

let them

loose and it wasn't me I was not the

animal rights

activist who released those

monkeys and I do not have an emergency

backup beverage so I'm just going to

have to survive the rest of this video

with no freaking beverage

so I mean I can sympathize with animal

rights activists who release who

liberate

monkeys um like like I mentioned maybe

in the previous Q&A I was reading a book

on I've read more than one book on how

the brain works and just it's just

Grizzly horrifying kind of experiments

they do on these monkeys just really

awful experiments you know cutting off

the top of their skull and planting

electrodes in their brain and strapping

them into this this Frame thing and

making them you know with one hand that

can still move you know they're like

pulling a lever to try and solve

problems or something and they're seeing

what part of the brain is firing when

they're doing this and all that it's

like and then of course when the
experiment's done they don't just like
replace the top of their skull and give
them a banana and you know send them on
their way it's like they're just
destroyed you know they're probably they
remove the brain and like do a like a
analysis on on any change that happen in
the brain or that sort of
thing so no I did not release the
monkeys and I think I'm just going to
move on to the next question that was an
easy question answer I could have just
said nope I moved on but it's I've got
to have long digressions in my answers
or it just doesn't work somehow so the

next question is from ruie and ruie says
I've been watching a multitude of
iterations of the woke meltdown online
in the wake of Donald J Trump's
Landslide victory and cannot help but
think of Frank Herbert's fear as the
mind killer in the novel Dune indeed
these psychotic hysterical meltdowns
seem to be utterly fear-based and while
these Snippets of online mental collapse
are sad to watch they also offer an
opportunity for contemplation on this
occasion would you like to speak a bit
on Buddha dhama as a path to fear prooof
the
Mind well I don't think just I mean I've
been watching watching a lot of the

Meltdown videos too and uh for me it's
sometimes it's an interesting
anthropological study I don't think it's
all based on fear to some degree it's
like infantile Tantrums because they
didn't get their
way that you know it's partly fear I
guess but to some degree it's just this
meltdown of them insisting on comma
winning just absolutely vehemently
insisting that she has to win and then
they don't get that and then it just
like something
snaps it's like an infantile kind of a
thing where they're throwing a tantrum
because they want ice cream or some such

but then again there is some fears they

they they have been indoctrinated to

believe Donald Trump is the second

coming of Adolf Hitler that he is a

fascist that he is going to destroy

American democracy even though the left

was doing more of democracy destroying

than than Donald Trump ever did that

he's going to destroy the the

Constitution he's going to abolish the

constitu even though the left is really

doing more against the Constitution than

Donald Trump ever did etc

etc

so with that as kind of a a

preamble ruie

here is asking let's see on this

occasion would you like to speak a bit on Buddha dhama as a path to fear proof the Mind well yeah there's different ways that dhama will help to make you fear resistant like I've said before the Samurai Warriors of medieval Japan used to spend time at Zen monasteries to help them overcome their fear of death and certainly dhama can help you to overcome your fear of death I think just about anybody even someone who has lived in a monastery for years if somebody put a knife to their throat they'd start sweating and their heartbeat would increase they'd start breathing a little faster I mean that's just

natural but I mean fear of death

especially I mean if you're just going

to get reborn

anyway it's not that big of a deal like

like some spiritual teachers say I mean

after you've died you're going to

realize it's like wow I've done this

lots of times before it's not that big

of a deal but with regard to fear in

general of course the the Panacea the

the the Surefire cure for that even

though take some time to do it is

mindfulness it's like fear arises if

you're mindful it's like fear is arising

it's not I'm afraid like an unmindful

person they're afraid it's like I'm

afraid I'm scared shitless but if you're

mindful fear starts to arise and it's fear is arising it's not you if you are anything at all you're the Observer and not the object being observed so when the fear just becomes the object being observed you have this philosophical Detachment this separation from it and it's not you it's just this phenomenon that's arising the thing is that if you you wait until you're afraid before you try to practice this it's not going to work you know it's like you're you're already all doped up on adrenaline and and you're all agitated and everything and you know it's already derailed so I mean you have to practice it when you

don't really need it yet I mean you can
argue you need it all the time but you
you practice it when you're calm so that
it becomes second nature and then when
the something whatever it is
arises then you know then you it's just
second nature That You observe the
phenomenon you're detached from it and
it's not you and then when it's not you
and you're detached from it you don't
reinforce it you don't feed it and it
gradually dwindles away and the Habit
eventually dies out or just becomes a
pale shadow of what it used to
be and also I mean just living a an
aesthetic existence like like monks
lived I remember one time I was at my

father's house and we had we they had
like rats in the Attic or something and
my stepmother poisoned these
rats I mean she she she knew better than
to ask me to do it because I was a
Buddhist monk at the time so anyways I'm
sitting there in a chair next to my
father and we're talking and I look down
and there's a rat like looking up at me
on the floor you know it's it had
reached the stage of what is it cyanide
poisoning or whatever is it cyanide
whatever whatever the usual rat poison
is that I mean it was just kind of
sitting there in broad daylight and it's
like I was so used to living in Burma

it's just oh there's a there's a rat
under the table dad you know it was like
no big deal some people would be very
startled they look down and see a rat
looking up at them but I mean I've had
rats crawling on me at night when I'm
trying to sleep Scorpions on me at night
when I'm trying to
sleep I got stung by a scorpion once I
was sleeping on my bed in my cave I feel
something crawling on me I figure it's
just like a cockroach or something I
tried to brush it off and it it turned
out to be a scorpion and it stung me but
I mean if you're detached from your own
existence you don't have a lot of
attachment to things then it's going to

make you less afraid and also just
living a like a relatively tough
aesthetic kind of existence it just kind
of brings out the stoic in people and it
just you just gradually become less
fearful or at least that was the way it
worked for
me let's see so where's the question
again here would you like to speak a bit
on Buddha dhama as a path to fear proof
the mind yeah I mean ultimately it's
mindfulness that fear proofs the mind
because then even if fear starts to
arise you detach from it and it's not
you it's just a mental phenomenon that
is arising which you are observing like

an anthropologist observing some some

artifact of

humanity but of course like I was also

saying there there are other ways that

Buddha dhama also can make a person less

fearful but I'm just going to move on

the next question now this is from

Wilson and Wilson says is there a dolly

Lama or pope of of terraa if so who is

he and no there is not each country has

like each terraa Buddhist country will

have like a leader of the s i I suppose

in Thailand it's the sa Raja the the

king of the sa who is the number one

monk in Thailand but he has zero

Authority in Burma or Sri Lanka in Burma

it's the S of mahanayak SE who is

considered to be the top ranking Eccles
astical figure in the Burmese sa I'm not
sure what it would be in Sri Lanka I
assume they have that or it may be that
each individual sect of terava each each
like monastic tradition in Terra has its
own leader um so maybe the the closest
you've got to a pope of terraa would
just be Whoever has been monk the
longest he would be the senior Monk and
he may not have much Authority but at
least he gets to sit in the front and he
gets to walk in the front of the line
that kind of thing everyone all the
other monks have to bow to him because
who you bow to is just purely a matter

of seniority whoever's the senior monk
gets bowed to you know the junior monk
bows to the senior
monk so I mean I there would have to be
an a monk who had been in the song of
the longest and I mean there's few monks
I met one monk he was H he's he must
have been he must be long long gone by
now he was 102 years years old when I
met him in in all likelihood he was
ordained as a monk when he was 20 so
he'd been a monk for like 82 years he
was a novice before that I
assume so he wasn't the the highest
ranking monk ecclesiastically he wasn't
the the S Mah
though so yeah the easy the easy answer

to Wilson's question is no there is not just a a supreme leader of Terra Buddhism it's just each country has like the the highest ranking ecclesiastical you know sort of you know equivalent to like an Archbishop or something so I'm just going to move on to Wilson's next question which is is there any specific advice about dealing with strong feelings of regret or the desire to go back in time and fix something this seems to me to be much harder to let go of than other hindrances and again it's the same thing as with fear is it's mindfulness is how you deal with it you know you get into

the habit of being mindful of thoughts

and feelings that arise and then when

this particular kind of feeling arises I

mean it's just second nature you just

observe it and let it go it may not go

away immediately so you might have to

observe it and let it go several times

or just keep doing that you know just

keep observing it as just this object

that isn't

you but uh once you really take it to

heart

that

regret is just always bad karma then it

makes you almost immune to it you might

have a little twinge of it every now and

then but still I mean once it's sort of

like the the previous question about

under trying to figure out reality how

can I stop like trying to figure out

reality it's like once you fully realize

that it's impossible or in this case

once you fully realize once you take it

to heart that regret is

always every single time this bad karma

it just makes things

worse that once you really take that to

heart I mean it's

like you don't you don't go there

anymore it's just why do it you know

it's just it just automatically just

drops away as a general

rule so I mean through mindfulness and

then just really trying to really

understand that

regret the stewing over the past doesn't

help anything it just makes things worse

you're just making the situation

worse so I'm just going to move on to

Wilson's third

question which is are one's intentions

at the mercy of conditioned events one's

intentions are the ultimate Arbiter of

karma like you said earlier about saving

the frog from the snake however it seems

like they might be able to change

involuntarily hypothetical scenario you

see a suffering homeless man on the

street and you take out your wallet to

give him some money so that he can

afford food or medical care as you reach for the dollar suddenly out of the corner of your eye you see a famous YouTube star who searches for people doing good deeds and gives them $10,000 if he catches them in the ACT he sees you and turns his camera to face you the dollar is in your hand what do you do it seems like now having known that you absolutely will get a reward for this act the motivation for doing this to get $10,000 could spring up in your mind and dominate your motivation for helping the homeless out of compassion your intentions are now dirtied by events outside of your

control on the other hand not giving the
money because you want to avoid the
situation also sounds bad what would a
good Buddhist do in this scenario well a
dollar is kind of cheap don't you think
I mean probably you should give him more
than just a dollar especially if he
needs medical care I mean a dollar is
not going to get you very far but
setting that aside I mean
still let's see intentions
are let's see where does he say it here
no yeah your intentions do not change
involuntarily I mean you may not have
complete conscious control over your
intentions because your intentions are
not entirely

subject to Your Ego to your thinking
mind so that's that's the thing it's
it's hard for a lot of people to
understand they just naturally identify
with their ego they think their ego is
me and so their mind is doing something
beyond the control of their conscious
ego and they just think that it's it's
like involuntary or something but really
it's like this subconscious
intention that's just not under the
control of their ego
so I say so a lot don't
I it just seems to be appropriate to say
with regard to this whole YouTube thing
I mean you should just stick with the

original intention I mean you're going

to be aware of this guy watching you I

mean I'd be embarrassed of getting

caught just giving $1 doll I mean I I

might reach in and give it pull out a

few more ones at

least um

but but even I mean ultimately it's your

karma to have this YouTube guy there and

your karma the fruition of your karma

your karma is intention your not so much

intention as volition or will so I mean

it's it's all generated by your

mind but where is the question

here let's see what would what would a

good Buddhist do in this scenario I mean

he just give him the money I mean just

try to ignore the YouTube guy and then

if the you YouTube guy gives you 10,000

bucks you can give even more to the to

the

beggar I

guess kind of a kind of an unusual sort

of circumstance that's never happened to

me before

actually but I mean if if your intention

is to give money to this beggar then you

just give the money to the beggar and

you know anybody watching you should be

irrelevant doesn't always work that way

but I mean that's that would be how a

good Buddhist would do it I

guess so I'm just going to move on the

next question this is from thermal
squid just scrolling down a little bit I
think we're getting kind of close to the
close to the bottom of the
scroll thermal squid says why are
normies condemnable or blamable at a
spiritual level I hear that term used
often here as a point about the dullness
of their mediocrity but I find that it's
typically normality and formality in
general which is assumably comfortable
or safe you do not need to worry about
the average person holding some extreme
or delusional view being neurod
divergent or mentally unstable or
otherwise as unpredictable or unadjusted
I feel as if those that consider

themselves to be Above the Rest or
employ this term are often just
unfortunate and no more intelligent or
wise than anyone else so I guess the
main question here is why are normies in
in air quotes condemnable or blamable at
a spiritual level well I mean they're
not condemnable or blamable
really but I mean to he says a little
farther down here you do not need to
worry about the average person holding
some extreme or delusional view
everybody holds a delusional view it's
just the the normies so-called share the
more or less the same delusion but
there's still there's still very

delusional and sometimes I'll use the
word Normie as just a loose translation
of the poly word pugina which means
common person you know normi is a normal
person and from from the Buddhist point
of view the the normal person the putuj
is insane pjo umaro the the common
person is out of his
mind so at a spiritual level yeah
all normies are delusional it may be
that they share the same kind of
delusion which makes it a kind of
conventional truth you know it's uniform
enough that they can function and
interact but still they're living in a
delusional
world and all of us are that are not

fully enlightened so it's not like I'm

trying to pick on

anybody and that's I mean just the poly

Texs just hammer away at this

so let's see here it says you do not

need to worry about the average person

holding some extreme or delusional view

well not so much extreme but definitely

delusional being neurodivergent or

mentally unstable well like Freud says

everyone is neurotic at the very

least yeah I mean the normal person can

be mentally

unstable let's see or otherwise

unpredictable or unadjusted I mean so

what if they're

predictable I mean that's that's really not like the spiritual Criterion for judging like who you want to associate with is how well they are predictable how predictable they are or how adjusted they are to an insane Society like Eric from he was he was a uh part of the Frankfurt School for a while he was a unabashed socialist my father was also a socialist I mean he was sort of a strong union man and he was a naive socialist back in the old days when socialists could still be tough you know he was sort of a Jack London type socialist but um anyways getting back to Eric fromom um I mean he says that in an insane

Society it's the people who are adjusted
to that Society who are the insane ones
that that in an insane Society the the
people who are more the most sane are
going to appear maladjusted
so yeah I mean if you're just going like
grading on the curve going with
statistical averages and so forth then
yeah then I guess the average person is
like right there in the right there in
the center of what is like normal that's
why they're called normies I
guess and I mean they would be
considered healthy I suppose relatively
anyway but from from the point point of
view of Buddhism or like Eastern Eastern

spirituality in

general the average person is

insane because this is not

reality so I think I'm just going to

move on to Thermal squid second question

because these are all kind of related to

each other and he says this ties into a

conversation I had with libram formerly

known as Libra lamb now he's Stellar

Supreme this ties into a conversation I

had with Libra lamb recently as well why

is Conformity considered to be an

effeminate Behavior I see that dissident

and revolutionary personalities tend to

be degenerate prone to violence drug use

immoral and nihilistic in general a

Bohemian or some kind of atypical

Consciousness seems naturally averse to
wisdom or something like
dhama Conformity then is only
undesirable in modernity with its unique
conditions a person that is disposed to
being different just because or sticking
it to the man is immature and usually
unskillful typically this crowd takes
pride in having mental illness or
cementing their individuality in some
pathological criteria I don't see how
edginess or individualistic loudmouth
characteristics are conducive to the
cultivation of virtue just as an example
so I guess the only question mark to
this is at the top here why is

Conformity considered to be an feminite behavior and I mean it is true that women are more conformist than men are and that's just it's part of our psychological sexual dimorphism my father who was somewhat of an authority on women had this saying that he said several times I recall when I was a kid he said that it ever became the fashion for women to have their head shaved and their scalp painted with red and green checks they'd all be rushing to the beauty parlor to have it done women more than men are slaves to Fashion they have to conform um to a greater degree than men do so that would be why Conformity is considered to be an

eminite Behavior because it is more

feminine than

masculine so let's see that's that would

be the the simple

answer like the the clothing Industries

tried in vain for decades to try to get

men as enslaved to fashion trends as

women and they failed men were much more

likely to just wear the same jacket the

same pants for 15 years straight until

they just wore out whereas women they

might have to get different a whole

different set of

clothes every six months some of the

really fashion conscious

ones you know now in Autumn it's like

subdued Grays and Browns it's like well
we going to have to get a new wardrobe
so that is why Conformity is considered
to be an eminite Behavior it's just an
anthropological thing that women
throughout most of the history of the
human
race um they were much more prone than
men are of just being like captured as
booty by an enemy tribe the men all get
slaughtered the women get enslaved they
get brought over and kept as concubines
just like prizes of War you know booty
so to speak and so so they might women
are much more likely to all of a sudden
find themselves I mean throughout most
of the history of the human race much

more likely to all of a sudden land in a
totally different environment a
different Society worshiping different
gods with different taboos different
kind of clothing styles and everything
and so women are much more flexible and
much more likely to conform to the
society in general which is one reason
why it's mostly these young women who
are shrieking and screaming and crying
Hyster Aly on these meltdown videos
because Trump
won they conform to an insane society
that is losing the
battle so dissident and revolutionary
personalities tend to be degenerate

prone to violence drug use immoral and

nihilistic not all of them I mean the

Buddha re arguably was a dissident

revolutionary type of

person I mean like Elon Musk I mean you

could say Elon mus musk is uh I mean

he's kind of you know he's on the

Spectrum I suppose but he's a genius

it's like the greatest

Geniuses are deviant you know they're

not in this middle of the statistical

bell-shaped

curve so the greatest Geniuses you know

they're kind of on The Lunatic Fringe as

a general

rule and it may be that most people on

The Lunatic Fringe are you know they're

tend to be degenerate prone to violence
drug use imoral and nihilistic but even
so most of the Saints are there
too so it's you might be a little bit
more of a a grab bag out on The Lunatic
Fringe but that's where you're going to
find like the most
outstanding super Geniuses and Saints
and sages in
addition to the homeless people yelling
curse words on the street corners or
just staggering around like zombies
because they're they're too high on
drugs to do anything other than stagger
around like
zombies so I guess I answer that one and

so I'm going to move on to Thermal

Squid's next

question I think there's a question mark

in here thirdly you say often that

regret and remorse are always UNH

wholesome mental States but are they not

obvious components in something like

humility if we for get our misdeeds we

will Orient ourselves towards thinking

that these things occur to others and

not ourselves that others are worse than

us or that we have some High Ground here

in any substantial way regret and

remorse then seem to [__] or fragment

a sense of self it it it is almost

remembering its imperfection actively I

also think that they are effective in

preventing any further tragedy hypocrisy
or decay of moral conduct shame then
exists for a spiritual reason and goes
far beyond the rumination of attributes
you cannot control if you read the
questions from 3 to one there is a kind
of General subtext about the usefulness
of associating with those that live
alternative Lifestyles or are possessed
by strange ideas like me I guess I feel
like I have wasted a lot of time and
have exposed myself to so many more UNH
wholesome mental states by abdicating
the Norm or the daily mundane toiling of
the commoner the line between
unconventional and insane is far too

ambiguous for

me yeah

well okay so I guess the main gist of

this question

is why are regret and remorse always un

wholesome mental States and that is what

Buddhism teaches I've already I've

already discussed this uh several

minutes

ago um but are they not obvious

components of something like humility no

I mean humility is very different from

remorse you can be a humble person I

mean a lot of a lot of Burmese monks are

just very humble people I've know lots

of humble people and I've never really

noticed any great remorse I mean there's

this guy I used to work with up until recently very humble guy and I really liked him and sometimes he'd be hard on himself because you know he might mess something up and he'd be oh he he'd just really just kind of take it out on himself I guess and I mean it's unnecessary there there's two different things it mean you could say that for some people remorse will help them to prevent doing the same misdeed again because they feel so bad through their regret after doing it but it's unnecessary it should be unnecessary I mean all you have to do is acknowledge you did something wrong and like

determine just have the determination
you're going to try to do better in
future and and that's it like there was
it's in William James the varieties of
religious experience and it was some
heretical Christian teacher who I think
he may have been killed by the
Inquisition or something but he was
saying if you're running a race and you
fall down the best thing you can do is
just immediately jump back up and keep
running you don't just sit there weeping
and wailing because you fell down that's
not you're not going to win the race if
you do
that the the best thing you can do if
you fall down get right back up and just

keep going and I mean there's a lot of sense to that there is some wisdom to that that if you have enough sense to acknowledge that you did something wrong and just determine to try and do better in the future then all the the self-loathing and the the beating up yourself you know all this regret and remorse is completely unnecessary and furthermore as I as I've said before and as Buddhist philosophy teaches Buddhist ethics it always just makes things worse I mean it may have like this side effect that helps you in a certain way it might help to keep you from doing the same thing in future but as it says in in the

text I mean if you're going to have
experience shame or you're going to
experience moral Scruples you should
experience them before you do the
misdeed and not afterwards afterwards
it's useless it's just making the
situation
worse so if you're going to have shame
or moral Scruples you do it before the
deed so that it prevents you from doing
the misdeed in the first
place so let's see here if we forget our
misdeeds well I mean remorse is not the
same as I mean if you don't have remorse
it doesn't mean that you forget your
misdeeds
I mean you can still remember I did it

wrong that time I shouldn't do it wrong

that way again I mean that's that's it

that's not

remorse but it's not forgetting that you

did it wrong it's it's just it's a false

dichotomy in that

case so let's see

here we we will Orient ourselves toward

thinking that these things occur to

others and not ourselves yeah that's if

you have like this selective Amnesia

which is not the same as simply not

feeling remorse and

regret the others are worse than us yeah

you're not supposed to do that either we

have some High Ground here in any

substantial way regret and remorse then
seem to [__] or fragment a sense of
self not really I mean it's yeah I mean
you wind up with a crippled sense of
self but still it's a sense of self and
not only is it a sense of self it's like
a crippled sense of self but you're
better off just with no sense of self
but that is for very Advanced sages I
suppose see I also think that they are
effective in preventing any further
traged yeah I mean they can as a side
effect but it's not the best way of
going about it I mean you can pound
nails with a
wrench but I mean that's not the best
way of pounding Nails you're better off

using a

hammer so I mean you can avoid doing

misdeeds through regret and remorse but

you're better off not not bothering with

the regret and remorse and just having

some better reason for not doing the

same

misdeeds so let's see

here shame then exists for a spiritual

reason and goes far beyond the

rumination of attributes you cannot

control yeah but the shame should come

before you do the thing instead of after

you do the

thing so and I suppose I answered

this see I he says I feel like I have

wasted a lot of time and have exposed
myself to so many more UNH wholesome
mental Days by abdicating the norm or
the daily mundane toiling of the
commoner well yeah I mean I I do the
daily mundane toiling of the
commoner but uh still I can acknowledge
that the the the commoner as a general
rule is just flatly
delusional see the line between
unconventional and insane is far too
ambiguous for me yeah it's like the the
line between genius and insane is also
rather ambiguous
like getting back to William James and
his varieties of religious experience
that he starts off the book with this

discussion of how some of the greatest
Saints would be considered
insane he's I think it's George Fox he
he has some some uh passages from George
Fox who I think was the founder of the
Quakers who was a very functional person
he was like a personal secretary to
Oliver Cromwell you know he was
intelligent and everything but he was
nutty at the same
time and you just read these these
excerpts from his diary where where this
inner voice of God is having him you
know take his shoes off and walk through
the middle of this town of Lichfield
just yelling at the top of his lungs wo

to the bloody city of Lichfield he has
no idea why he's doing this just God
told him to so he's doing it later he
found out that Christian Martyrs were
killed in Lichfield what was what was is
now Lichfield during Roman times and
that's he figured that was why God had
him doing
that so I mean you want to you want to
get rid of unconventional people I mean
you're going to get rid of progress
pretty much any kind of significant
progress any kind of
Enlightenment anything that's just
really you know Way Beyond the
statistical Norm the bell-shaped
curve so I mean there is a certain

amount of gambling since most people

lunatic FRS are just

lunatics so anyways I think I'm just

going to move on to the next question

here and we're getting close to the end

here which is kind of good because we're

going to go over three hours I kind of

figure we would there's there's a lot of

questions this time this is from eight

precept aroan who I got my suspicions

that he might be a brother or close

relative of five precept

Pete anyways eight precept aroan says

venerable sir I am feeling Torn Between

Two meaningful paths monastic life and

family life I am in Thailand now and I'm

currently not able to ordain for at least 10 to 12 months but I have met a wonderful woman from a good family who is also grounded in dhama how might I discern the right path for me and what qualities or practices should I focus on to make this decision with wisdom and compassion and that's that's a tough question because of course eight precept aroan knows about the situation way more than I do because all I know about this situation is what I just read in this paragraph and so eight precept aroan may have to

like understand himself well enough like can I be celibate for the rest of my life and I mean if you're a horny kind

of person a lot of guys are that may not work very well or on the other hand do you really want to become enlightened In This Very life

then it's I mean it's going to be easier if you renounce the world and you don't have other people requiring your attention and and like distractions and responsibilities and maybe a little bit down the line you got children and all these attachments and responsibilities and distractions and so forth then I mean you may be just swamping yourself with distraction so that you can't really practice dhama effectively but like I was saying earlier the monastic

life of just be walls silence Solitude

you know renunciation no Family Ties

this kind of stuff it doesn't work for

most

people and

so um I mean you're going to have to to

know yourself well enough like to know I

mean do you really want

do you want like love and family and all

the ups and downs of that or do you want

bare walls silence and Solitude as a way

of reducing distractions so that you

increase somewhat your likelihood of

becoming enlightened or at least

increase the amount of spiritual

progress you're likely to make unless

the spiritual progress you need to make

in this life is like learning how to

deal better with people

and just like sharing your life with

another person and making compromises

and so

forth so I mean I wouldn't want to just

flat out tell somebody they shouldn't

renounce the world but for most people I

mean most people just don't do it and

most people couldn't do

it and it may not be the the right

choice for even for some people who do

renounce the world and of course people

who just choose to to adopt the

householder life the family life I mean

some of them might have been better off

if they hadn't done that especially

after like their third or fourth divorce

not that I'm saying that eight precept

aroan is likely to get divorced from

this thail

lady I think it's much less likely um

you know some place like

Thailand but um yeah it's very difficult

so let's see how might I discern the

right path for me and what qualities or

practices should I focus on to make this

decision and wisdom with compassion when

I have an important decision to make and

I'm not sure what the answer is I just

kind of sit there empty and just kind of

wait you know you just fill your head

with as much information as you can and

then just let it digest until an answer comes to you and generally the answer is going to come to you at a time of like peace when you're like alone at least I mean you might be like lying in bed next to your your or something but maybe she's sleeping and you're just lying there in a contemplative State just at ease and it's times like that when it's more likely that the intuition of the right thing to do is going to arise you know just get as much information in as possible and then just wait and let it digest you know let it ripen and mature until the correct answer arises in a moment

of like equ it Clarity you'll have a
Moment of clarity and then the right
thing will
arise but aside from that I really don't
know 8 precept aroan well enough I don't
know his personality what his character
is like to know whether he'd make a good
monk or whether he'd make an even better
husband and father I really don't
know so I'm just going to move on to the
next question and this is from
Raphael and Raphael is our last
questioner of the evening because it's
it's dark outside and my you can see my
fish tank is in Moonlight mode
now so Raphael who asked two questions
this is his first question do you think

that racial

homogeneity is important for social

peace some studies suggest that

Multicultural environments lead to

increased mistrust among people do you

think the racial

homogeneity in Burma contributes to the

overall happiness of the Burmese

population

well Burma is

multi-ethnic uh country although it is

true that they're pretty much segregated

and you got like the seven states of

central Burma they're ethnic Burmese no

it's the seven

provinces yeah I think it's the seven

provinces are just ethnic burmes which
are kind of in the center and then
you've got seven ethnic states around
the outside and yeah they're pretty much
homogeneous Within you know whatever GE
geographic area you're in you're G to
have Burmese people you can have like Ms
in the South and you're gonna have you
know chins and Burmese or or shans and
Burmese and you're gonna have like some
Indians that live around and they're
pretty well integrated and um so I mean
it's not 100%
homogeneous but more so than America I
suppose so do I I think that racial
homogeneity is important for social
peace um I mean it's more conducive to

social harmony I think although there
have been multi-racial
civilizations you know Rome was
multi-racial I think the ancient the
ancient Indus Valley Civilization the
prehistoric indis Valley Civilization
which is one of the great prehistoric
civilizations that was supposedly
multiethnic or at least I have read
that there were like East Asians and and
Proto ooids and like Mediterranean
Caucasians all living together in that
Civilization which lasted for
centuries so I mean it may be that a
certain too much peace might actually
not be so good of a thing I mean a

certain amount of upheaval and Chaos may
actually promote progress and a certain
hardiness hardiness of the people
so I mean even a certain amount of like
interracial what inter intra intra
racial interracial like competition
certain amount of you know just having
competition like strengthens things you
know sort of like that's the way
capitalism Works you've got different
like companies competing against each
other which strengthens the entire the
entire situation so I mean you may have
more riots and upheaval and so forth but
there's going to be a like a positive
side to that
also but uh I mean

some some cultures I mean it's it's too
late I mean you can't really just kick
out the ethnic minorities I mean once
it's already multi-racial it's pretty
much going to stay that way until maybe
a few centuries down the line they're
all going to be so interbred that it's
just going to be one sort of light brown
race or
something um so which does
happen so see do I think that racial
homogenity is important for social peace
I think it's somewhat more conducive for
social peace but then again I mean
social peace might be
overrated you know to have a certain

amount of like chaos and upheaval may
actually have its
advantages so do I think the racial
homogene
of Burma contributes to the overall
happiness of the Burmese population um
maybe yeah I think I think there is a
good possibility that the fact that it's
not so much racial homogeneity as just
cultural homogeneity they all see eye to
eye you know it's a very traditionalist
country pretty much everyone has the
same more or less same approximate point
of view so that I mean you can have
pretty much people getting married at
random that hardly even know each other
before they get married and it's likely

to work out simply because the people
are so uniform that they're very likely
to see eye to ey even though they didn't
know each other before they got married
hardly so it's uh not I think it's more
cultural homogeneity than racial
homogeneity and I think that sort of
thing is uh it's kind of a lost cause in
a place like
America just because there's so many
different people Living in America
individualism is much more valued and
insisted upon than in Burma like in a
place like Burma I mean you don't want
to stand out you don't want to be the
weirdo it's a Conformity based culture

so it's stable it doesn't make much
progress just because it's everyone
thinks the same you know there's not
much originality at
all so it is good to have different
groups and just ort of even competing
with each other different religions
competing with each other just a certain
amount of chaos it's it's that's what
brings about things like the Italian
Renaissance I mean they were all
Italians I guess but they they were
living in like individual city states
that hated each other's guts and were
having these Fierce competitions with
each other and there is all this
struggle against whether the pope should

be the ruler of all Italy or whether the
Holy Roman Emperor should be the ruler
of all Italy and I mean it was like
chaos like brought forth the
Renaissance so yeah I
mean like social peace I mean it can it
can be overrated it can be just playing
boring you got to have originality and
Innovation and so forth in order for a a
nation to really Prosper especially if
it's competing with other nations or
other cultures
so I don't know how well I answer that
question I'm going to move on to
Raphael's second question which is the
last question I almost cuss I almost use

an exploitive to emphasize that this was

the last [__]

question but it's it's kind of a good

question it's it's not like a really

difficult question it's not one of those

ambiguous hypothetical qu questions it's

just kind of a technical question which

is nice especially to end with and it is

as follows saffron colored robes

forbidden for monks to wear and

ironically the answer is yes bright

yellow is one of the Forbidden colors of

Monk robe so it's just kind of ironic

that poetically mon terraa Buddhist

monks robes are called saffron robes

which I think comes from Sri Lanka where

Sri Lankan monks as a general rule do

not follow the rules very well at

all but yeah bright yellow is on the

list of prohibited colors along with

like bright orange bright

red

um it's kind of strange I think blue is

out white is out but strangely some

colors like gray are still allowed even

though I never saw a monk wearing gray

robes but it is allowable to wear gray

robes it's just not

traditional whereas it is traditional in

some parts of Buddhist the Buddhist

world that bright yellow is allowable

even though technically it is

forbidden it's on the list of forbidden

colors and I think I I might be
confusing it with turmeric but there is
a yellow dye that in the sutas it's used
as a kind of metaphor for something that
looks really good at first and then just
disappears because it doesn't last I
can't remember if it's saffron saffron
dye or turmeric as dye that you can use
it as a dye and it looks really good but
you wash it once and the dye just washes
right
out so yeah my robes in Burma were
generally of a kind of a reddish brown
like a russet color which uh I used uh
see what's it called it's a kind of it's
KATU it's like the resin from autch tree
which is a species of

Acacia and you can buy it bulk in the marketplace because some people include it in their Beetle quids they chew Beetle nut and they sometimes they'll put some of this katchu stuff to add a kind of bitter flavor to it and it makes good robe dye so I would use that so I mean reddish brown is definitely an allowable color so that's what I did but saffron any kind of bright yellow is actually a forbidden color and that's it I answered all the damn it questions not that I'm complaining that's why I'm here I do this voluntarily I'm happy to answer questions so even though I might cuss a little

bit doesn't mean that I'm not completely
willing to answer questions and so if
you got any questions you think I can
answer I usually I mean I really should
do this at the beginning because
probably most people don't make it all
the way to the end but if you have any
questions you think I can answer about
early Buddhism terraa Buddhism
monasticism philosophy in general
Eastern or Western religion in general I
mean I don't might not know much about
particular obscure
Cults but religion in general I
understand fairly well I
suppose just me in general that kind of
thing I can answer questions like that

fairly well and you may include your
questions no more than three per episode
please in the comments below and uh like
I said I may have some alt Tech
exclusives coming up with my friend
Brian that I I'm not sure whether
they're going to go on to YouTube or not
that you got that to look forward to in
the the following
days and uh I guess the only thing left
to say is be happy and then I'm going to
push this button and I won't be talking
to you anymore until next week or maybe
in a few days

alrighty then we are

recording hello and welcome to episode

11 of question and answer I am your host

poo basa and this is my third cup of

coffee so far today so it may be that by

the time we get to the end of this I'm

going to be like vibrating and bouncing

up and down and

stuff but such is life

everything is in a constant state of

flux

anyway so with that is kind of a very

brief inconsequential

introduction I think I'm just going to

commence to answering questions because

we got quite a few and so this is

probably going to be kind of a longish one maybe it won't be three hours we'll see and the first question is from Elias and Elias says is the view that an enlightened being has a crystal clear mind and doesn't think anymore in line with Orthodox Terra so the easy answer to that is no according to Orthodox Terra enlightened beings are still thinking they're still wondering about stuff you kind of wonder how it is that an enlightened mind would be different from an unenlightened mind other than just no greed hate or delusion but considering that they're thinking about people and this kind of stuff they're still thinking about samsaric phenomena

as though they were real you'd

wonder why is that not

delusion but the thing

is um because we're human we're still

thinking even though an enlightened

being is no longer identified with that

thinking and is no longer creating

Karma so Orthodox

terava um especially Abid dama

philosophy came up with what is called

kid a or functional mind something like

that which is just a kind of gimmick

that allows enlightened beings to still

act as though they are creating comma I

mean they still look like they are

performing volitional

acts whereas in reality they are not

because they're not creating karma karma

is

volition

so um I don't think that an enlightened

being really does have just a completely

thoughtless clear mind probably they

still are thinking

thoughts um but they're just not

identified with those thoughts it's just

nature taking its course it's just the

brain performing its natural

function just assuming that it is the

brain that thinks Orthodox Terra a

philosophy the commentarial tradition

Abid dama and all that just doesn't know

what the brain is for according to the

wisi Maga the brain is just marrow
feeling a large Hollow bone and that
thought actually arises in one of the
chambers of the
heart so an enlightened being if they're
like in a state of deep contemplation
might have a crystal clear mind that
doesn't think but when they're standing
up and walking around talking to people
this sort of thing presumably they're
still thinking it's just that their
thought is kind of denatured in a way
you know it's just has no momentum
anymore it's just like the semblance of
thought or it's I mean it was always the
semblance of thought it's just that now

they just realize it's just a semblance
and they're not identified with it they
don't consider it to be real it's just
nature taking its
course so I'm just going to move on to
the next question and this is from covac
and cod Zeta and COV action CAD zida
says if matter exists independently of
mind then wouldn't that mean it is
technically an absolute since it exists
without depending on anything else
except itself well not necessarily if
matter exists independently of mind and
there's no way of proving that but
hypothetically if matter exists
independently of mind then still it
wouldn't necessarily be an absolute

because the matter could be caused by
something else and also like for example
in Orthodox terraa Buddhist philosophy
matter is ultimately real but it's like
in a constant state of flux it's
appearing in disappearing a trillion
times a second and if you take away the
causes of that particular matter that
particular matter also dis disappears so
it's not like an Ultimate Reality except
in a like a very conditional
sense but that is assuming that matter
does exist with even if there's no
conscious mind perceiving it and again
there's no way of proving
that

so since it exists without depending on anything else I mean obviously oh maybe not obviously to everybody but it's pretty clear to me that any kind of Multiplicity requires perception to divide things up because the divisions are are largely arbitrary you know you can look at a forest and say that is a forest or you can single out one clump of trees or you can single out one tree or you can single out one branch on One Tree or you can single out one twig on one branch on One Tree or you can single out one leaf on that twig on that branch on that tree or you can single out I mean you can just keep singling out like a cell on that leaf or an organel

contained within that cell or a molecule
contained within that organel or or
whatever I mean it's it's just arbitrary
what you're going to consider to be the
thing that is being observed what is the
object what is the unit and without
perception dividing stuff up you just
have this undifferentiated
void
so if matter exists independently of
mind I'm not sure how that would happen
then wouldn't that mean it is
technically an absolute not even even if
we grant that matter does exist without
it being perceived by anybody with by
any conscious mind still whether it's an

absolute or not is questionable because
it's still conditioned you know it's
still like a conditional
reality so um since it exists without
depending on anything else and you don't
know that I mean matter depends on stuff
that isn't matter for example matter
depends on space you can't have matter
without space so the matter is in a
sense depending on something other than
matter for its
existance Etc and then you've got like
all this um like theoretical physics
stuff about how matter is really just
extremely high frequency of
electromagnetic radiation and so matter
is is energy eal

mc^2 so maybe coaction C Zen is assuming

that just like energy fields and like

electromagnetic radiation and so forth

would all be put under matter just as

any kind of

non-mental entity I don't

know but I think I've answered that

question sufficiently to satisfy myself

anyhow so I'm just going to move on to

se action CAD zuna's next question which

is is the word samsara actually ever

used in the sutas if so where and in

what context and yeah it's found

throughout the sutas it's found

throughout the

nikayas and um for example verse 60 of

the

dapot right here this is one this is

probably my favorite translation

by I should know this I just want to

make sure I get it right though aaria

Buddha rakita his translation which is

sold through the Buddhist publication

Society of Sri Lanka

anyways it's uh chapter 5 the chapter of

the fool the

balaga the very first verse of the

chapter on the fool which is long is the

night to the sleepless long is the

league to the weary long is Sam SAR to

fools who know not the sublime truth and

um the venerable author here translates

samsara as worldly existence and that's

generally what samsara means I mean

literally

it's it means like fairing on or like

transmigration would be arguably a

literal translation or at least close to

a literal translation I think in Chinese

when the uh Buddhist texts were

translated into Chinese samsar is

translated as birth and death so in a

way it just means like just the the the

journey I don't like that word much but

the journey through worldly

existence and it's it's found just

throughout the

texts probably only Kaaya have the word

samsur and it means essentially worldly

existence so I'm just going to move on to covac C's third question which is you have talked about AI on this channel but what are your thoughts on embryonic selection and genetic engineering there are already companies that can select for IQ and height and in the future they will be able to do much more essentially making a character select screen for your child what are your thoughts on the future of this where eventually everyone pretty much does this well it may not be that everyone pretty much does this it's going to be the people who can afford it so it's like there's already been a science fiction movie about this called gataka where like the upper classes like

the professional classes the wealthy and so forth they can order genetically engineered children and so like in the movie gataka and this would probably happen um you're you show interest in a young woman she's going to be like looking around your cubicle at work looking for a hair or something so she can have it taken to a lab and have it genetically analyzed to see if you are one of these genetically perfect Superior humans before she's going to really take an interest in you or not so yeah I mean it could result in like in the movie a kind of genetically engineered upper class who are you know

they got super high IQs perfect health
you know they're going to be all the
astronauts and the the the good athletes
the professional athletes the doctors
the Geniuses the The Talented artists
almost all of them will belong to this
genetically engineered Elite
but I mean that's Eugenics essentially I
mean a lot of people consider Eugenics
to be immoral I don't know why exactly
it's like Eugenics with regard to farm
animals or crops that sort of thing no
problem they don't see a problem with it
really at
least a few extremists might but when it
gets to human beings I mean that's
that's like something the Nazis did

Eugenics that's just bad

I mean the Nazis arguably got their

ideas from the founder of Planned

Parenthood in

America and Planned Parenthood started

off as being a kind of eugenics program

Eugenics was kind of a big deal 100

years ago or more but for some reason it

has gotten a bad rap although now now

that you have the option of having like

like physically perfect genius children

for whatever price you'd have to pay for

that then people are going H that's

that's kind of a good

idea but I think probably you'd be

better off with just oldfashioned

Eugenics rather than like people artificially genetically engineering stuff I mean it could be that you could still kind of have a combination of natural Eugenics and the artificial you know DNA sequencing stuff by just like doing scans on all the eggs and all the sperms you know doing some automatic scan and finding the ones you know from the donors you know the the mother and the father that are the most perfect and just combining those rather than actually getting into the The genome and monkeying with that because when people do that kind of stuff they're not omniscient people are not omniscient scientists are not omniscient and

they're going to overlook something you
know they're going to genetically
engineer for something and it's going to
cause some side effect that was
unforeseen
so in my opinion probably old-fashioned
Eugenics where you're just selectively
breeding Superior specimens to produce
Superior children would probably work
better
although that of course leaves out most
people who are not very well
bred so let's see here what is the
question exactly what are your thoughts
on the future of this where eventually
everyone pretty much does this yeah I

don't think eventually everyone's going
to be pretty much doing this it's going
to be the elites that are doing this the
the wealthier people people living in
mud Huts in the third world are not
going to be doing
that
so we might be ruled you know 100 years
from now by a race of genetically
engineered Supermen which is found in a
lot of Science Fiction and uh it always
for some reason turns out to be a bad
thing the saurin Superman it was even in
Star Trek you know KH was one of these
genetically engineered Superior people
and they just try to take over the world
and then the the the genetically

inferior masses have to rise up in
rebellion and cause this catastrophic
cataclysmic World War which renders the
Earth uninhabitable or some
such so I guess I've talked enough about
that because really all he asked was
what are my thoughts and I just spewed
out a whole bunch of
thoughts whole bunch of head thinkings
just came out through my mouth and so
I'm just going to move on next question
this is from Wilson and Wilson says how
do monks who take on the Danga of living
in a forest feed themselves I'm guessing
they're not hunting wild animals or
farming do they take supplies with them

rely on visitors or do they live

entirely on gathered

Flora none of the above really I mean

they could rely on visitors but the

thing is wherever a monk is living even

if he's living in a forest he has to

live within walking distance of a

village he's that's the the Goa Gama

that's you know the his Resort his Al's

Resort so he's got to be able to live

close enough to a village that he can

walk there for alms round every morning

and then walk back which so that's a few

miles I suppose and so really causes the

problem if you're living in Burma or

probably Thailand possibly Sri Lanka

I've never been to Sri Lanka where if

you're within walking distance of a village you're also within distance of hearing the the loudspeaker system blasting cheesy pop music and Monks chanting and Village announcements and so forth which is uh bothersome to westerners who like peace and quiet but not bothersome to people in third world countries that don't seem to mind noise so how do monks who take on the dong of living in a forest feed themselves they live in a forest that is nevertheless close enough to a village that they can walk to the village and get their daily alms food and then walk back to their their their tree or their

Hut or their cave or wherever they're

walking back to I mean technically you

could have lay people bringing you food

I'm sure a lot of monks who live in

forest do

that um I generally I mean there's

another Danga which is you only eat alms

food in which case if you're doing that

Danga also then you wouldn't be

accepting food brought to the

monastery

so I guess I answered the

question so I guess I'm just going to

move on to Wilson's second question

which is following up on the pope of

terava question so we asked in a

previous Q&A whether there is just one

like reigning Supreme terraa monk who is like the pope of terraa and I pointed out that no there is not each country has like a senior authoritative monk figure but the terraa in general does not so Wilson says following up on the pope of terat question and I'm checking to see if we're yeah yeah we're still recording okay following up on the the pope of terava question I have sometimes seen Catholics criticize Protestants for not having a central Authority and saying the result is the bizarre Patchwork of doctrines you see in Protestant Christianity some are flying rainbow Flags some don't even believe in

vaccines or blood transfusions some are handling live snakes etc etc given that terata Buddhism also lacks a central Authority do they have the same issue if so does each division within terava consider themselves the true one and everyone else to be heretical or they all unified at the end of the day well they're all unified by dham like in the Maha parasuta the Buddha says that after he dies dhama will be the teacher and all terab Buddhists share the same sutas they share the same Vena which is the same rules of monastic discipline so the ultimate Authority is the poly texts and it's pretty clearcut what the doctrines are um it's there's

like refinement of Doctrine in the commentaries the commentaries are like Orthodox although some schools of Terra might take the the commentaries more or less seriously you know they'll put emphasis on this or that so there's going to be somewhat different interpretations like the mahasi tradition of Burma um you know they'll they'll emphasize some what some some commentary says in that you don't even have to have access concentration in order to become a soda pond you know just momentary concentration is good enough you don't have to have jna you don't have to cultivate these deep

meditative States just being mindful
very mindful is good enough and that's
considered to be unorthodox and there
was a big uh controversy like back in
the 1950s especially with Sri Lankan
monks saying that's mahasi method is is
is not correct and then the mahasi
method saying no no this it's correct
but because of this here sub commentary
says so and so I mean you might have
like disagreements on certain aspects of
teravan Doctrine but the the authority
the final Authority for orthodox Terra
is the polyan Canon and that includes
you know all the rules for monks and
everything and so um there's not a whole
lot of

Divergence I mean all schools of
Christianity might consider the New
Testament um especially the New
Testament to be you know the ultimate
Authority but I mean you look at all
these C these Christian schools and a
lot of them just kind of don't have a
whole lot of use for certain teachings
of even of Jesus of
Nazareth the Catholics I mean they
Incorporated a whole lot of ancient
Pagan stuff as this kind of syncretism
to help them take over the the Pagan
mindset and the Pagan world World viiew
they just adopted a lot of classical
paganism as a way of just kind of easing

themselves into control of the Roman

Empire religion

wise so and also the New Testament it's

it's not a very thick book whereas the

poly Canon is in the in the Burmese

Edition is 40 volumes so it's a lot more

information and so yeah I mean there's

not nearly as much Divergence in terraa

as there is in Christianity or

Protestant Christianity Protestant

Christianity would be more like Mahayana

you know protestantism came after

Catholicism just as Mahayana came after

terava or after the earlier schools of

Buddhism which Terra is the the prime

example

nowadays

so yeah it's it's really not the same
kind of situation although in the West
you've got a lot of Divergence most of
the the serious Divergence from
classical Orthodox tervada is found in
the west where you've got a lot of like
progressives who are just trying to
change it to suit themselves a lot of
them just don't like the idea of monks
you know they're just trying to turn
terraa into a kind of protestantism like
a kind of Buddhist
protestantism and they're just
essentially [__] [__] it all up I
mean if you don't like Terra follow
something else don't just change the

religion to suit your own unenlightened tastes so I'm just going to move on to Wilson's third question before I start ranting maybe I got a little bit of ranting in there but I think we should just move on to the next question so Wilson's thirdd question how can we best help people suffering from Trump derangement syndrome some of the meltdowns are kind of amusing but I think a lot of them are coming from genuine suffering we all have unskillful thoughts cravings and attachments naturally but I believe these days there are media sources that are deliberately trying to cultivate these states in others for political ends and they've

reached a scientific level of
Effectiveness I'm not even talking about
dissuading them of their beliefs I think
that's in the realm of normal discussion
I'm talking about helping them to drop
panicking fear-mongering and hatefulness
well yeah it is true Wilson brings up a
good point that I mean some of the
mainstream media most of the mainstream
media to some degree are actually
promulgating this fear-mongering and
they were trying to win an election
through fear-mongering you know Donald
Trump is a Nazi he's Hitler he's a
fascist he's a threat to democracy he's
going to declare himself dictator he

said so himself he's going to put Liz
Cheney in front of a firing squad etc
etc etc and they just can't stop now I
mean to stop now would be like admitting
that they were just lying to everybody
gaslighting everybody from the
get-go so that is kind of a problem I
mean it's like America is divided up
into two main camps sort of like the
Roman empire was divided up into two
main camps when Christianity was taking
over paganism you know like the fourth
century and uh Christian was sort of
like the Progressive Movement of ancient
Rome although I have to admit
Christianity did have a kind of moral
High Ground that progressivism

lacks although the progressives do consider themselves to be morally superior to the people they despise which isn't very moral but there we are so anyways how can we best help people suffering from Trump derangement syndrome I mean just talking common sense to them you know Trump was already president for 4 years you know he didn't become dictator then it's like just wait and see you know just point out that if they're like repeating like parting like the the Liz Cheney in front of a firing squad stuff I mean you can just point out to them the actual truth of the matter and I mean you may lose friends

or whatever um but I mean there's really
not much you can do you can just avoid
political discussion
and then if if they keep bringing it up
about how Trump is you know evil he's a
devil he's a pedophile rapist and all
this then I mean even the rape thing
that he's continually accused of it was
this woman just accused him of molesting
her in a department store like 20 or 30
years afterwards I mean it's like he
runs for president all of a sudden she
remembers this and brings it up and it
was just her word against his she had no
no evidence it was just accusation and
then of course a left leaning judge with
a left leaning jury found him guilty

because they're trying to stop him from

becoming

president but I mean at this point I

mean in ancient Rome fourth Century Rome

you're still a pagan how are you going

to talk sense to a Christian like

especially if they're like an evangelist

type of Christian they're just full of

zeal you know they're just Wildey

Fanatics and there was a lot of those

ancient times lots more than now at

least per capita like you know per per

thousand

people so I

mean I think just calm common sense I

mean you don't want to start ranting at

them or raging at them because that just
hardens their position you know they
just you get pushed back you
know so I'm not exactly sure I think for
a lot of them just the realization that
the majority is against them now um I
mean one of the reasons why they're
going along with the Trump as Hitler
stuff is they're just conforming to what
they consider to be the right side of
history and when it becomes more and
more clear that their side is
losing then a lot of them are just going
to abandon ship and it's already
happening you got a lot of Democrats
voting Republican for the first time in
the recent

election but trying to talk sense I'm
like trying to talk sense to a Jehovah's
Witness I mean it's not going to
work so the best way to help people
suffering from Trump derangement
syndrome calm Common Sense compassion
don't just fling stuff into their face
don't rant at them you know just remain
calm and sympathetic and I mean if they
keep bringing stuff up you can either
just calmly point out the actual facts
of the issue if you know the actual
facts of the issue or change the subject
just say let's not talk about politics
it's pointless let's talk about
something

else and really I mean that's all you
can do you can send meta that would be a
good Buddhist approach just beam love at
them even if they disagree with you and
think that you're just some ignorant
buffoon so I hope I answer that one
because I'm moving on to the next one
and this one is kind of similar this is
from nmit and nmit says what did the
Buddha say about politics
and he didn't say a whole lot about
politics I mean the closest he would say
about politics you know he'd be talking
people out of having Wars you know it's
like he would um there was one suta in
particular where there was like These
two factions that were getting ready to

fight a war over like property rights over a body of water or something like a river or some such you know that that was sort of like their border and he's just you know encourage in them to find a peaceful solution there's a kind of possibly apocryphal suta in the dean kayak where the Buddha is saying that crime is caused by poverty and that a good king would subsidize farmers and provide them with you know seed seed grain and like whatever whatever equipment they needed for for growing their crops and so forth but for the most part the Buddha said that if you're really trying to become enlightened

don't bother with Poli politics don't
talk about politics in fact there's u a
long list of subjects of conversation
that monks should avoid it's called uh
just animal talk it's just stuff that is
not conducive to Enlightenment it's just
some saric distractions and that
includes Talks Of Kings talks of
ministers talks of Wars you know just
essentially talking about
politics so yeah I mean Buddhism early
Buddhism was
based on like from the get-go you know
step one of being an early Buddhist is
you renounce society which includes
renouncing politics you go out alone
into a forest and

meditate

so yeah I mean that's that's mainly the

the political thing I you can people on

on whatever side of a political Spectrum

can find passages in the text that

appeared to endorse their side

but the Buddha was he was a Centrist I

mean he was he taught the middle path so

yeah he would he would uh discourage any

kind of

extremism other than the extremism of

renouncing society altogether and

becoming a a Wandering recluse that's

kind of extreme nowadays but in the

Buddhist time in Ancient India that was

the middle path

so yeah I mean the less Politics the
better for someone who is striving to
become
enlightened it's just that if you're
living in this world especially if
you're living in like a Democratic
Republic where it's your civic duty to
participate in politics to some degree
because you're a
voter then I mean it does it is kind of
a civic duty to have some kind of
knowledge about current events and some
kind of theory about politics you know
following what you think would be best
for society so you can vote in favor of
that but if you're like a radical
renunciate you're you're going for

nibana in this very Life by following
the teachings and texts then you're not
even going to talk about politics even
if like lay people come to you and talk
want to talk about politics you just
change the subject
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question which is from uh PSA and PSA
says is taking Mahayana or vajrayana
ordination inferior to terava ordination
or it doesn't matter as long as the
practitioner is serious and honest well
from a Terra Vaden point of view like
the Orthodox point of view certainly
Mahayana or vajay ordination would be
inferior because the Orthodox position

of any religious system is that that
religious system is the best
one I mean why follow a religion if you
think there's some better religion that
you're not follow and why you just
follow the one you think is
better but according to my own
opinion and I'm not really just a
dogmatist who follows along with
whatever it says in books especially now
that I'm not a monk
anymore then I mean it does matter I
mean it it depends on a lot of different
things like like you can ordain in a
terraa tradition and you're at a sloppy
Monastery with monks who don't practice
and a an Abbot and like a preceptor who

is not a wise person he doesn't practice
he doesn't follow the rules um you might
be better off being ordained at a strict
Zen Monastery than at a LAX terraa
Monastery um there's always going to be
a certain amount of like unorthodox
teachings or just stuff that the Buddha
didn't really teach you're going to find
some of that in terraa you're going to
find even more of it in Sam Mahayana and
like Tibetan schools so there's that
consideration
um mainly if you find a really wise
teacher like someone who's enlightened
or close to Enlightenment just really
wise who can just has deep Insight who's

an Effective Teacher I mean it doesn't
really matter all that much
what tradition he belongs to he can be
terraa he can be a Zen roshi he can be
some vajana he can be a llama he can be
a Sufi he can be a Christian I mean so
long as he's like the wisest teacher you
have found the wisest teacher you think
you're likely to find anytime in the
foreseeable
future you'd be you'd do well I mean if
you just cannot accept Christianity you
don't think Christianity is true I mean
you should be honest and upfront with
this wise Christian teacher and say I I
really can't believe that the Jesus
story I can't cannot believe that this

Jewish Carpenter turn Miracle Rabbi who lived in the early Roman Empire is the only begotten Son of God and died for my sins and all that but still I mean if he's really wise he might still be willing to teach you maybe with the expectation that as he teaches you maybe you'll gradually see the light and become more of a Christian or some such so I mean there's a lot of things to take into consideration but um I mean everything else being equal you know the wisdom of the teachers and the the strictness of the monasteries or or the the the centers you know the the Dharma centers

or whatever then you're probably better
off with terraa than with some schools
of Mahayana especially or with vaj
rayana I mean vaj rayana and Mahayana
they do have like profound teachings
like Zen in in Tibetan Buddhism some Zen
methods are very Advanced um like maama
philosophy is very Advanced but then
they've got all this other stuff you
know mythological stuff thrown in or
even just stuff that the Buddha would
have
denounced if if he had heard of it
during his
lifetime so I mean you really have to
like carefully choose based on all these
variables

and I think one of the most important
variables is just the wisdom of the
teacher that you're going to
follow if you're not even following a
human teacher you're just reading books
and so forth I you'd probably be better
off starting with Terra because it's
older it goes farther back it's at least
um chronologically it comes closer to
the Buddha you're going to find a higher
percentage of genuine teachings of the
Buddha in the poly text then you're
going to find in later texts that have
already started diver in and and going
in different
directions you're still going to find

wise stuff there it's just that you're

going to have to dig more to find

it so I hope I answer that question so

I'm because I'm moving on to psa's

second

question and it's uh right here I

watched your video with Brian on Trump

winning in a landslide and around the 48

minute Mark you mentioned the morning

after pill I don't I don't remember

mentioning the morning after pill but

maybe Brian mentioned it

anyways uh PSA continues here I just

wanted to mention that this is not a

miscarriage pill the morning after pill

prevents the egg from being fertilized

by the sperm so the woman never actually

gets pregnant I'm not advocating for the morning after pill as a birth control method all I'm saying is that when a woman gets an abortion a baby dies but when she takes the morning after pill nobody dies it's just a fact you can do this research on your own what are your thoughts on this um I'm not sure exactly how long it takes after the man squirts for the the spermatozoa to find the ovom in the woman's womb
area and like to fertilize the egg I don't know how many hours that takes on average whether it's possible for her to take a pill the next day before the the zygote has formed before her egg is

fertilized yeah I don't I maybe I should just follow the advice of PSA and do the research on my own but I don't think you guys want me to do that right now so yeah I mean from a Buddhist point of view then to kill or prevent an egg from being
fertilized is much better than killing a fertilized like an embryo at this point once the egg is fertilized it becomes an embryo a zygote is the first stage of embryonic
development and then from the from the Buddhist point of view life begins at conception a human life begins at conception
so and people who think that that's just

a theory that's just some weird
interpretation no that was the belief
it's found in the sutas it's in the
rules of monastic discipline also that
life begins at conception the rebirth
linking Consciousness enters the
mother's womb at the moment of
conception as soon as that sperone
fertilizes that
egg in fact it can't fertilize the egg
unless the the like the it's called the
Gonda it's sort of the uh the karmic
momentum of a being who's going to be
reborn as that baby is there ready to
enter so yeah I mean the morning after
pill if it really does

um prevent the fertilization of the egg it's it's almost like sort of like celibacy really you know the the ovam is is celibate even if the mother or the woman is not celibate that ovom remains a virgin in a sense so yeah I mean that would that would not be nearly as um as large of a a caric event as actually terminating a pregnancy even though it's like in the First hours after fertilization from a Buddhist point of view from a biological point of view um I think that that's kind of an ethical judgment that people should make individually because from a biological point of view a fertilized egg doesn't feel anything you know it's it's almost

like killing a a bacterium in a sense it

doesn't have a nervous system

yet so

yeah so I mean I do go along with

Buddhism to the extent that it

is you're probably better off not

terminating a pregnancy not having an

abortion inducing a miscarriage that

sort of thing but I'm not going to

insist because I really don't have a dog

in the fight you know it's it doesn't

involve me directly I'm willing to let

somebody else decide and I do think that

the best thing to the best

line of action to take with regard to

this is have some authoritative body

possibly the Supreme Court in
consultation with medical authorities
just come up with a certain time
when a baby becomes a citizen or a human
who is worthy of Human
Rights and I guess nowadays it's just
assumed that you're not a human with
human rights until you are actually born
and you have to be born naturally I mean
if if a
doctor performs an abortion and the
fetus comes out alive and viable in some
states that alive viable fetus that is
now a a premature infant still doesn't
have human rights and can be killed
without any murder being committed so I
do think it would be a good idea

probably for the Supreme Court to just
make an official decision on
at what point in the development of a
baby does it become a human being a
citizen that that has
rights and I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from
Toronto and Toronto says the more I
practice vajana the more convinced I am
that terraa is dull nihilistic and
lifeless am I wrong if so how well the
texts of terraa can be rather dull
because they're very
repetitive um largely because they were
um composed for oral recitation and
memorization they weren't written down

for hundreds of years at least that's
what most people
believe so yeah the the poly Tex can be
dull but terraa itself you'd have to
actually live the lifestyle in order to
decide whether it's dull not istic and
lifeless I mean to be a lay person just
trying to practice Terra like it's sort
of like Sandlot ball you know
it's if you're really going to practice
Terra the way it was meant to be
practiced starters for starters you
renounce the world and then you're
wandering around like through forests
you know you don't know where you're
going to sleep that night you don't know
what you're going to eat the next day

and I mean that's not exactly dull I've I've done that sort of thing and yeah I mean it's like if you're sitting in a chair in a house or sitting in a meditation Hall you know once a week then Terra is I mean you're getting like this pale
shadow of a fragment of terraa and so yeah it can seem dull but if you're really living the lifestyle I mean just observing your breath for hours a day staring at blank walls you know that can be dull I mean Zen does that to some degree also so I mean to that extent I mean if you just need stimulation you need bright colors and sounds and stuff

going on all the time then yeah V roana
might be better for
you um but I mean if you're really a
good meditator I mean if if it really
you really are cut out to live the life
of an ancient Indian Buddhist aesthetic
then just watching your breath as it
moves in and out of your nostrils for
hours a day it just doesn't get boring
or it doesn't stay boring anyway I mean
sometimes you can go through these
droughts of inspiration and it just
seems boring and dumb and dull but I
mean that is the route to Enlightenment
I mean it is a well well trodden path to
Enlightenment anyway with regard to the
nihilistic stuff and with regard to like

um sort of

uh like denying your your natural urges

renouncing the world and so forth it's

it's somewhat nihilistic it's not

nihilistic so much in the philosophical

sense as it is in just saying no to what

most people say yes to just sort of

detaching yourself from from samsara

that could seem nihilistic certainly

lifeless well you're not having babies

anyway you're still alive in fact you

may be more aware of your life processes

if you're practicing Terra budhist

mindfulness

intensively

so it all depends on how you look at it

I suppose you can say that terraa is is
more dull than some much more
stimulating system because that's really
not the point of terraa the point of
terraa is to cure you of your addiction
to samsara and if your addiction to
samsara is requiring you to be
stimulated most if not all of the time
then I
mean I don't know what to tell
you so I think I'm just going to move on
the next question this is from Raphael
and Raphael says in one of your q&as you
mentioned that out of sheer gratitude
you once prostrated yourself multiple
times before a Buddha statue in Burma
what event prompted you to do that

again and I don't know this is this
might be a rascally question because
yeah I did do that and remember this is
in Burma this this wasn't in
America but uh I was I was tripping
balls on acid at the time that somebody
gave me this vial of liquid
LSD and figured mind as well so I took I
think it would be the equivalent of like
two or three
hits you know I don't know I don't know
how many micrograms that would be and I
was just sitting there meditating
throughout most of the night and just
like overflowing with just gratitude and
joy and you know love for all beings and

and I was I was really bwing to the
statue that night that was uh in the The
Meditation Hall I was my my cabin or
where I was staying at that time was a
room off the side of the main
congregation Hall where the big the big
Shrine and altar were so it was a great
big imposing Buddha statue that I'm
sitting at that at the foot of and um
yeah and then what happened the next
night I mean this isn't really answering
the question this is just gratuitous
extra added Divergence here deviation
what what am I trying to say digression
that's it
digression is that supposedly there was
only like a couple hits left in that

vial just based on what you know how

much it was supposed to contain and it

turned out that I wound up taking just

the most massive dose of LSD I'd ever

taken in my life then the next night

after that and I pretty much just like

liquefied and just melted into the floor

that

night yeah I wasn't doing much bowing

that second night I was I was pretty

much just

horizontal

so yeah I

mean uh I I don't know exactly where to

go with that but psychedelics I mean

especially monks of my generation at

least half of them probably got
interested in Dharma through
psychedelics because psychedelics caus
like an expanded mental state and then
you start getting interested and you
realize that such mental states are even
possible where you're more awake more
conscious than usual that you're in a
state that in some respects is more real
than your usual waking State and then
you start looking for natural ways of
cultivating that same expanded
Consciousness without using the
chemicals but somebody gave it to me and
I thought all right yeah I'll do
this okay so I'm just going to move on
to Rafael's next question which is you

spent most of your time in Burma in solitude where their times however when you appreciated the company of another Monk and yeah especially Another Western Monk because then we can like cry on each other's shoulders about uh just the having just the trials and tribulations of living in
Burma so I mean just being able to hang out speak English you know you can have deep conversations about philosophy even whereas with a Burmese person first of all there's the language barrier I never spoke I never completely mastered the Burmese language and even if I did there's still the culture barrier where

most Burmese Monks at least the ones
that I knew all think kind of the same
and so it's rare to have like a really
novel original stimulating conversation
with a Burmese monk after you've had a
few conversations with Burmese monks
because you get the same kind of
conversation from Burmese monks in
general so being able to hang out with
someone who had more of your point of
view some originality some critical
thought and so forth
than uh yeah just being able to crack
jokes that kind of thing yeah that was
that was refreshing that was that was
good that did happen
sometimes so let's see

here I think I'm just going to move on
the next question this is from Stellar
Supreme formerly known as Libra Lam I
guess he's still called Li Lamb by some
people they didn't get the memo yet I
guess so Stellar Supreme formerly known
as Liber Lam says is the holy life
driven by culminating self-restraint
such that the more committed one is to
fighting their caces the more insight
they will attain middleway
considered so this is almost completely
understandable so Stellar Supreme is uh
his complicated cerebral questions um
this one is is pretty accessible as his
complicated cerebral questions go so is

the holy life driven by culminating
self-restraint such that the more
committed one is to fighting their cesas
the more insight they will attain Middle
Way consider well I mean if you're
committed to fighting your cesas then
you're pretty much doomed to failure
unless you get to a certain stage when
you realize that cimar Rouge tactics
against your own defilements is not
going to work you know you're just
creating more karma with the
struggle so I mean the more progress you
make the more effort it
becomes with certain you know certain
exceptions that can occur along along
the way but just being committed to

fighting your caces that can be like a a
fanatical point of view that is is as
much of a hindrance as a help but at the
at the end here he's got sort of the the
uh the mitigating factor of Middle Way
considered but still it's it's not there
there's no
guarantees it's not just a matter of
like
determination to fight your kesis I mean
you're going to have a certain amount of
parmy a certain amount of spiritual
Talent you know it's sort of like
someone who wants to be a great artist
that just their commitment to striving
to be a great artist isn't necessarily

going to help them become a great artist
if they just lack talent to begin
with and I'm thinking of what was her
name Fanny Fanny price in uh of human
bondage my Somerset mom she was like
this fanatical art student just
determined she was going to be this
great artist she just had to fight fight
fight to to just learn everything she
needed to learn and the the problem was
she was just devoid of talent she just
was a hopeless
case so let's see here let's let's just
read the question again shall we is the
holy life driven by culminating
self-restraint such that the more
committed one is to fighting their caces

the more insight they will attain Middle
Way considered not necessarily I mean it
could be that you're not really
committed to fighting your caces you're
just drawn to meditation or something
you just enjoy it you're good at it and
it just progresses from there um it
could be like a joyful thing and not
really a struggle thing but it depends
there there's different temperaments
different characters and different
people are going to make progress in
different
ways but uh cultivating self-restraint I
maybe that's what he meant instead of
culminating

self-restraint cultivating

self-restraint um yeah I mean that's

definitely uh an important aspect of it

even if you're like taking some kind of

esoteric tantric route or something

there's still going to be some

self-restraint involved

so um yeah so self-restraint I mean it

is it is like essential you know it's

it's it's a vital part of spiritual

practice but the commitment to fighting

your cesis that's I don't think that

really is necessarily vital and it can

be more of a do more harm than good and

eventually you're going to have to let

go of that you never let go of the

self-restraint necessarily but it

commitment or

determination to overcome your

cesas um yeah to some degree it's it's

like goal oriented dhama which is always

playing with fire because things never

turn out exactly the way you expect them

to things just go in a different

direction and then you can become

disillusioned and discouraged and

everything because you have this ideal

that you're setting up which may not

have been a realistic ideal to begin

with which is one reason why J Christian

murty was always warning against having

ideals you know it just makes a person

like hypocritical to some

degree so the holy life driven by I
assume he means cultivating instead of
culminating
self-restraint um such that the more
committed one is to fighting their caces
it may be that you're not having a
conscious commitment it just can just be
like a drive or a sense of Duty or
something that would be better than just
having this determination of slaying
your
defilements and cesis is usually
translated as
defilement so I'm not sure if I answered
that one but let's move on to Libra lamb
oh Stellar Supreme formerly known as lib
lamb second

question it is as follows in the great discourse on causation it gives this outline of the diens then there is the dimension of non prient beings and secondly the dimension of neither perception nor non perception do that's unquote do you see this as implying that beings don't inhabit Beyond eth jna or just at the base of it or what before this it notes beings inhabiting Jonas 1-7 well according to the Orthodox interpretation of the Buddhist Cosmos and the 31 PLS of existence when you get above the dava a when you get up into the the the Rupa Loca or the the realm of form and the

arupa Loca or the formless Realms each
one of those Realms corresponds to a
level of
jna so um there's there used to be
originally four stages of Janna four
four levels of meditation essentially
and then four more were added
subsequently that were kind of an Annex
to Fourth Jan so that you can still say
there's the four Jas but then you've got
the four formless Jas that that are
added onto that and the two highest ones
are the realm of nothingness in the
realm of neither perception nor
non-perception and that's what's being
mentioned here in this quote then there
is the dimension of non- prient beings

and secondly the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception and this level of I mean the the formless jna of neither perception nor non-perception is the highest johnic State you can reach and that also corresponds to the highest Heaven realm in the entire Buddhist Cosmos the realm of neither perception nor non-perception where mind is so subtle you can't really tell if it's there or

not so see do I see this as implying that beings don't inhabit Beyond eth J or just at the base of it or what yeah I mean that is the highest realm in the Buddhist Cosmos that any being being can

be can can exist in can be born into is

the the realm of neither perception or

non-perception which corresponds to the

highest formless J

state so yeah that would be the highest

the highest you can go in Sam

Sara and I hope I answer that question

and I'm moving on to uh the next

question which is from

xenoid and xenoid said can you give your

opinion on this video and he sent a link

to a video by what's his

name uh redeemed Zumer or something like

that yeah redeemed Zoomer on on YouTube

gave this this little did this little

video where he's talking about how um

the Jedi in the Star

Wars

saga um come close to Buddhism whereas

the evil Sith you know all these darths

that they actually come closer to

Christianity even though this redeemed

Zumer is himself apparently a Protestant

Christian so xenoid says as a kind of

commentary I think it's true that Star

Wars is definitely more daric than

abrahamic the only thing that strikes me

as deeply Christian is that Anakin is an

obvious analog to Christ so that's Darth

Vader at least Darth Vader before he

became Darth Vader he was like the Darth

Vader kind of abod or something so

anyways see the only thing that strikes

me as deeply Christian is that Anakin is an obvious analog to Christ I wonder how much George Lucas was praising and critiquing Jesus Through Anakin because on the one hand he ultimately does fulfill his role as the chosen one and save the Galaxy while on the other he is extremely far from perfect Luke seems like a more positive portrayal of a Christ figure because in the pre- Disney continuation of Star Wars Luke encourages his new Jedi Order to not avoid attachment romantic or otherwise which is more Christian than Buddhist I think the thing redeemed Zumer missed is that the Sith seem more nian than anything else and I should say as a kind

of disclaimer that I really was not
heavily into the
sequels um like the second Star Wars
movie with the Ewoks and all that it
turned me off big time I I thought the
Ewoks were cringe and then it didn't
really end you know it was just setting
up for the next the next step in the in
the sequel and so I was very unimpressed
by The Empire Strikes Back and then uh
return to the Jedi I remember almost
none of it I've seen each of those
movies just once I think I saw the
original Star Wars two or three times
every movie after that you know up
through um I think it was like the sixth

one I saw once and then when it started
getting into the the like the the
politically correct um Disney stuff you
know with the message kind of uh
hijacking the the actual story that uh I
just lost interest and didn't watch any
of
those so I really am not well versed in
the whole iconography of Star
Wars so it is true that this redeemed
Zoomer was kind of wall in samsara and
thinking that you know it's wiser and
better because he's a Protestant
Christian apparently that you should you
know that wallowing in samsara in a
certain way is good Detachment is bad
and he's enslaved to a kind of worldly

you know kind of reformed Jewish worldview and he was saying that like contemplation is a Buddhist thing and Christianity doesn't really endorse like getting into like a formless state where you're not thinking about anything and so he was apparently unaware of the contemplation practiced in like contemplative monastic orders in Roman Catholicism and also in like Greek Orthodoxy Greek and Roman or Russian Orthodoxy

so um also he was apparently unaware of the general Epistle of James that I mentioned relatively recently in these q&as where where James essentially has

like a daric point of view with regard
to the cause of all suffering is
desires whereas redeem Zoomer is saying
you know Desir is some desires are good
and you should hate evil and not be
detached you know you should still be
kind of in PSAL Sara functioning within
the context of psara even
ideally um you know it's like love good
hate evil and you should have passion
towards fixing the world and making it
better and this kind of
thing
so see let just scroll up here in zeni's
question can I give my opinion on the
video um I think a lot of these
resemblances of you know the the Jedi

being kind of based on Buddhism and the
Sith being more less based on
Christianity and all that it's just
coincidental to some degree that um I
think the the Star Wars story especially
like the first few ver first few
episodes first few installments of the
series would be more along the lines of
what's the the hero with a thousand
faces I can't remember the guy who who
wrote the hero with a thousand
faces it's just like the
standard um what do you call it just
it's like a universal kind of theme like
an archetype an archetypal story where
you've got the innocent youth who is

destined to become a hero it's in in a way it's like his innocence makes him somehow worthy of Performing these you know extreme feasts you know like the The Grail story it has to be sir percel the pure who had never lay with a woman was the only one worthy of finding the Grail this kind of stuff so I think it's not so much intended by George Lucas to be Buddhism versus Christianity as um you know it's just like this um archetypal story that you can interpret that way but you can interpret other ways also but then again it is true I've mentioned this before that Yoda is based on a Buddhist monk that Yoda um was based on the Cambodian

sa Raja who was living in Stockton California George Lucas came from uh a city just a little bit south of Stockton I can't remember his name and uh let's see h no forget it I'm not going to try and remember the name of the town that George Lucas came from but he apparently was familiar with this Cambodian s Raja who was living in Exile in California not living in Cambodia because the government was anti-religion in those days so he sent people with cameras and Recorders and followed around this 100 year old uh Cambodian Monk and they based Yoda like his his speech mannerisms and so forth on the way this

old Cambodian monk was talking and even
the word Yoda the name Yoda literally
means warrior in the poly language
presumably in Sanskrit
also so I mean there was some obvious
deliberate Buddhism that was uh included
in the whole Jedi philosophy and
everything so it could be that George
Lucas deliberately liked Buddhism and
tried to model the the spiritual
philosophy of the Jedi to some degree at
least on Buddhism maybe he was down on
Christianity you know maybe he would had
a strict Christian upbringing and
rebelled against it or something and
tried to make the
Sith um more Christian but then again I

think wasn't was George Lucas still
running the show when when the Sith came
out and all that I don't I don't
remember I don't remember
that so yeah I do think that a lot of
the similarities are just sort of
coincidental but it is true that Yoda is
based on on a Buddhist monk so there is
that and I'm just going to move on to
the next question this what I'm going to
do this is from this is also from
xenoid and xenoid says if our reality is
created by our per ceptions does this
mean that fictional stories have their
own reality under themselves as long as
someone is perceiving them as in as long

as there are people watching Star Wars
is there a real Anakin Skywalker who
saved a Galaxy a long time ago far far
away
and I think probably in Orthodox terraa
the answer would be no although I did
read I think I think the book was Seth
speaks by Jean Roberts who is channeling
this multi-dimensional entity who calls
itself Seth back in the
1970s and Seth Seth was saying that one
reason
why um no matter how many beings become
enlightened there's always more beings
there's always going to be an infinite
number of beings in this universe
because the universe is like spawning

new beings and he gave two ways in which
it happens I mean might be more than two
ways and this is just completely
unorthodox you know this is heresy from
a uh a terot a Buddhist point of view
but it's intriguing I think it is
interesting that one way is that the
karmic stream of a being can split so
you you've got like this karmic stream
of a human being or a low ranking daa or
something and they just kind of send off
this little offshoot that then just
becomes a dog or something
and then that just starts its own its
own Evolution you know it's just it's
like a new being that just split off

sort of like asexual reproduction
through budding you know and some some
beings some relatively primitive animals
reproduce this way like a Hydra the
freshwater Hydra reproduces his way just
through budding it just splits off
little little copies of
itself and then another way is through
like imagination or dreams where you
dream some being you it's it's a being
that you've never met before this
happens all the time you know you dream
about somebody you have this you know
you're interacting with this person in
this dream and it's someone you never
met before it's someone you don't know
it's just your imagination kind of

created this person and according to
Seth that these beings that you're
generating in your imagination your
Daydreams your night dreams it it's sort
of you're creating beings that start off
this very subtle shadow kind of
existence and then gra that's starting
off this whole new this whole new
Evolution of a of a karmic stream for a
being whether that's true or not I don't
know it's just kind of an intriguing
idea but uh yeah I mean it does seem
like
um like I think about my father
sometimes he died many years ago but in
a way it's like it's you're you're

perpet perpetuating a kind of existence
of this person that you keep remembering
and thinking about and this just sort of
it creates this Vibe of them or
something or like reading War and Peace
by Leo
Tolstoy um you know Pierre bahov so many
people read about Pierre bahov that in a
sense he could become what pagans call
an egregor it's like an actual being who
exists because so many other beings are
contributing their Consciousness to
believing in this that it actually like
creates an actual being that exists and
again this is just vile heresy
pernicious wrong view from a terab
Buddhist point of view but it is an

intriguing

idea so let's just try and get back to

the question here if our reality is

created by our

perceptions does this mean that

fictional stories have their own reality

under themselves as long as someone is

receiving them in a sense yeah I mean it

would be way more tenuous shadowy flimsy

ephemeral kind of an existence than this

but I mean even this world that we

consider to be so real is also fiction

in a sense we're in The Matrix in a

sense it is an illusion it's

Maya and so you've got a way more

attenuated more crude less developed

version of that that you know when we're
reading a novel that you know is sort of
creating these beings it's kind of
giving life to them especially if it's a
good novelist who who is good at
like personification what's what's the
word character development that kind of
thing he makes a realistic
multi-dimensional character then in a in
a way you could say that so long as
someone is perceiving that character
they do have a kind of
existence just as as I'm perceiving this
cup which is giving this cup a kind of
existence and my coffee is cold
now
so I just I just want to try and do

justice to this question it is an
interesting question if our reality is
created by our perceptions does this
mean that fictional stories have their
own reality under themselves as long as
someone is perceiving them as in as long
as there are people watching Star Wars
is there a real Anakin Skywalker who
saved a Galaxy a long time ago far far
away well I mean this cup isn't real so
I mean you can say that it's a real cup
I mean it holds the coffee
in so I mean it's a kind of conventional
reality so long as people believe that
something is true that adds a kind of
conventional truth to it so I mean when

you're reading a story you in a a part
of you is believing that it's real you
know it's like when you're watching a
scary movie um I mean I can detach from
movies more than most people whereas you
know you get to like the the scary part
and it's like you know the special
effects are good in this you know it's
it's you know I I'm be still thinking of
it as a movie instead of just getting
immersed into the
story but I mean you're creating little
universes whenever you're doing that
like you're playing a video game I mean
that's your world is this video game
that you're playing and I mean it's it's
no no more fake ultimately than this

world which is also a kind of

Illusion so it could be uh like one's

philosophical point of view or attitude

is going to

determine the exact answer to this

question so yeah there's not a real

Anakin Skywalker anymore than there's a

real

Lucas so I mean it's just a a matter of

levels of like pseudo

reality and I'm just going to move on

next question this is from Romeo and

Romeo says if I am correct in Buddhism

there is no right or wrong only skillful

or unskillful and one's mental state is

the sole determining Factor as to

whether an action or is good or bad you
often use the analogy of the snake and
the Frog to illustrate this I am
wondering if you can clarify this
concept as it pertains to the
uncomfortable topic of pedophilia I
don't even know if you're even allowed
to say that word on
YouTube just call it the p word I guess
there is a movement a foot to legitimize
mutually consensual relationships
between adults and children not only do
these pord activists sincerely believe
that they are not doing anything wrong
by having sex with underage children
they actually believe they are doing
good exclamation point they consider

laws against adult child relationships
as Prejudice and oppression I know this
is hard to believe but if you are
skeptical check out the Namba well
website how would the Buddhists know
right or wrong when it comes to physical
actions without bad mental States apply
here after all however warped we may
feel about their behavior and mental
state
these PWS themselves feel perfectly fine
with them and these people actually are
these people actually not generating Bad
Karma for themselves well let me take a
more extreme example of someone who
thinks that they're doing the right

thing but really from a Buddhist point
of view they're making very bad karma
and that would be like an Islamic
terrorist you know someone who blows up
a building that's got women and children
like unarmed civilians in there who
never never did them any wrong and they
think they're going to go to heaven
because of this they think they're doing
something good or I mean a much
milder um situation would be someone who
hunts or fishes for relaxation you know
it's just a a wholesome kind of hobby
you know they just sit on the river bank
and catch fish and you know haul them up
on the bank and Bash their head in and
then they take them home and cook them

for dinner and it's just wholesome all

good clean

fun so I mean it's just because you can

justify something or just because you

believe that what you're doing is good

doesn't mean that from a Buddhist point

of view it really is good for example in

Buddhism any kind of like sexuality

wallowing in

sensuality of any sort even like food or

or music anything like that alcohol

intoxicants whatever it is

dancing that wallowing in this is

already um you're making bad karma for

yourself to some degree and I mean it's

it's there's there's a whole scale I

mean doesn't mean you're going to burn
in hell because you went dancing but
still or because you had sex with your
your spouse or something but
still um just because you enjoy
something doesn't mean that you're not
making Bad Karma because there are
underlying mental States like lust for
example and with regard to
like having sex with a child I mean deep
down you know that there's something
like deviant about it they they've got
like deviant reasons you know sort of
like unhealthy reasons for why they're
attracted to small children in the first
place you know they're afraid of
grown-up women or it's just like the

complete helplessness and Trust of a

small child makes them feel like they're

more at ease and and in control of the

situation or some

such but um just because you can justify

something does not mean that you're

you're doing something

right

so and then the children as a general

rule it messes them up even if you know

they go along with it at the time later

on you know they can have relatively

severe psychological issues because of

what happened to them as a child

that I mean that happens a

lot so let's see what is exactly the

question here how would the Buddhist know right or wrong when it comes to physical actions without bad mental States apply here yeah I mean just the the lust for starters and um I mean as a general rule there's some sort of deviance involved some kind of unhealthiness involved even in being attracted to a child even though the the PWS can justify it and say you know they're just as healthy as anyone else just as a morbidly obese person can say they're just as healthy as anyone else or or whatever it is you know anyone can justify their position no matter how how deviant or unhealthy it is

so um I'm not exactly sure what like the

underlying um like unskillful mental

States would in all probability be

involved in someone who is sexually

attracted to a toddler for

example I mean there is a difference

between being sexually attracted to a

16-year-old girl who is biologically at

least an adult you know she is

biologically sexually mature and then on

the other hand someone who is like

sexually attracted to a

5-year-old I

mean it's uh

it seems to me that there would be some

sort of deviance especially in the

latter case the the the first case that
was just standard through in throughout
the human race for thousands of years
you know it's lately that has become
considered very bad and especially if
it's someone on the other side that you
need a good reason for attacking them
you can bring that up but you know like
Matt Gates you know he supposed L
allegedly had a relationship with a
17-year-old
girl and I mean even 50 years
ago or a hundred years ago it would be
just kind of a non-issue unless he was
married and was like committing adultery
or
something not that I'm trying to justify

anything necessarily I'm just pointing
out that some of this is like cultural
you know it's based on culture but I
don't think there's there's been a very
very rare that there's ever been a
culture that would approve of an adult
man having sex with a toddler you know
that's that is unnatural you know
there's just something built into us
that sees that as reprehensible and
deviant and even the people who do it
are probably still going to have that
instinctive taboo like repressed in
their subconscious mind so that it's
still there even though they're
like you know maybe

subconsciously like repressing that

because they don't want to they don't

want to feel that or

something so I guess I've babbled enough

about that so I'm going to move on next

question this is from

quator

quator and he says is nibana experienced

at each of the four stages of

Enlightenment and there was somebody

else

who not under a Q&A but I think it was

under a different video that I uploaded

was asking me or he he was talking about

is nibana experienced and technically

you would have to say that nibana is not

experienced that you don't really

perceive nibana at least from an
orthodox terraa point of view that you
don't really you can't perceive neb and
if there's no perception there's no real
experience from an orthodox ter about a
Buddhist point of
view but just set aside the word
experienced so quator isn't says is
neana experienc at each of the four
stages of Enlightenment and according to
Orthodox terraa you get a glimpse of
nibana at each of the the attainment of
each of the four stages so when you
become a sodon you get this glimpse of
nibana that lasts a trillionth of a
second and then you kind of go into a

coma a little bit after that and then
and then somehow you even though you
didn't experience it you still are aware
of having somehow kind of experienced it
and I really think that the whole idea
of the four stages of Enlightenment is
um not what the Buddha originally
taught that uh like in GC Pond's studies
and origins of Buddhism he gives reasons
for uh why he is skeptical of the whole
four stages of enlightenment
that soap probably just meant like a
born again Christian just like you've
entered upon the the the path of dhama
and you know you're very idealistic and
enthusiastic and so forth and that's
probably what it originally meant but

then it became a superhuman mental state
you know it was like like one of the
stages of Enlightenment from I mean
later on the the next stage is
sakami which isn't even mentioned in the
oldest texts like I think in the S
paluta which is in the Dian Kaya it's
it's one of the Cardinal texts in Terra
Buddhism where King aatu comes to to
speak with the Buddha and the Buddha is
giving ajat satu a discourse on the the
advantages or the benefits of practicing
dhma and he gives them an ascending
order and I'm pretty sure he doesn't
even mention the four stages of
saood that probably the idea of the four

stages of Enlightenment or Aria hood or
sainthood is uh subsequent to the
composition of the Sona
paluta um if I remember correctly that
the four stages are not mentioned in
that text so I mean it's all kind of
academic if the four stages of
Enlightenment are just a kind
of apocryphal teaching that the Buddha
didn't endorse and that it's like a
misinterpretation or or Distortion of
earlier
teachings then I mean according to the
text that I mean there is like a flash
of nibana that lasts like a trillionth
of a second at the attainment of each of
these four stages but I'm not even sure

that Nana even works that way that you know like you get this flash that lasts a trillionth of a second and then you kind of go into a coma afterwards and then you snap out of it and somehow you're aware even though you didn't technically experience it that that it you you you somehow kind of almost sort of experienced it it's some some aspects of Orthodox terraa do not stand up to scrutiny very well and so it relies on dogmatism or people just not really wanting to apply critical thought or not being able to I mean they're not like philosophically sophisticated enough to to see the flaws in an argument kind of

a thing

but uh according to Orthodox Tradition

at the at each of these four stages

there is going to be a flash of

nib so but I do think it's it's just

kind of an academic question like a

hypothetical kind of a question because

I do not think that the four stages of

Enlightenment um were really taught by

the Buddha I think it's a distortion of

earlier teachings and I mean it's it's

just I don't really think don't really

care about

it so I'm just GNA move on the next

question and this is from the person

whose name is spelled like it should be

pronounced creel but is actually

pronounced throat warbler

Mangrove and throat orer Mangrove says

do you think that the end of suffering

and the end of rebirth are one and the

same and again according to Orthodox

tradition yes the end of suffering and

the end of rebirth are one and the same

that when you end suffering I mean you

you end you don't create any more karma

and like at the moment of death what

Karma you had as latent like residual

Karma just evaporates somehow and so

there's no

more like rebirth linking Consciousness

there's no more psychic momentum that

causes you to be

reborn um so in a way the end of rebirth
is kind of a side effect of the end of
delusion
or you could say that the end of rebirth
is a side effect of the end of suffering
which is itself a side effect of the end
of
delusion um but like I was mentioning I
think it was the previous Q&A or the Q&A
before that um I think it is kind
of it's It's plausible I guess that an
enlightened being could continue to
appear to take rebirth even though
there's not going to be anybody there I
mean ultimately there never was anybody
there there's nobody here there's nobody
anywhere but um it's just sort of like

this kind of a a empty being who is sort
of like an egregor like I was mentioned
earlier where it's just he's just like a
production of other people's Karma
something like that I think is
possible and some some ttim monks
apparently believe that that's possible
because in um what's his name aan man
who's considered to be you know he's
like the greatest monk of of modern
Thailand that he was sort of almost he
was practically the founder of the the
Thai Forest tradition he was considered
to be an
arahant and according to his biography
written by one of his disciples who is

also considered to be an arant he had

Buddhas and and whole retinues of

thousands of of dead arant dead Buddhas

all coming to visit

him so I mean that's unorthodox but at

least some high some highly respected

revered th monks anyway believe that

it's

possible whether it's rebirth or not or

just some sort of you know pseudo

rebirth some kind of

karma conditioned manifestation

maybe but

yeah I mean it's in a way we're getting

into hypotheticals

again but uh officially according to

Orthodox terado Buddhism the end of

suffering and the end of rebirth are one
and the same so uh I move on to throw
orer mangroves follow-up question if so
how did the Buddha know that he will not
suffer any more rebirths
and how can we say how the Buddha knows
anything
I mean we're second guessing a fully
enlightened sasam Buddha you know how
did he
know who knows I don't know how the how
the Buddha knew this but presumably he
was like infinitely wise because he had
zero delusion and so he'd probably just
see clearly the the State of Affairs and
just announce the clearly seen the State

of Affairs you know he he just knew that

his karma was neutralized

deactivated and

so but all we can do is just second

guess a fully enlightened being which is

kind of silly I guess so I'm just going

to move on to the next question here and

this is from the Virgin Mary Jay whose

real name is chasz

is and Virgin Mary Jay whose real name

is tascaz is says some monks said that

somewhere in the sutas there are stories

of the Buddha when his back was hurting

and when he was in pain sometimes he

would stop a doat talk and ask someone

else to finish this doat talk instead of

him and he himself laid down is it true

well there are sutas where the Buddha would want to stretch his back and you know you it may just be a kind of a manner of speech in Ancient India you know so you're just getting tired of sitting up all the time you know you're getting uncomfortable it's not necessarily that you've got a back ache that your back is hurting you know it's just like I need to stretch my back and lie down you know it's just getting tired of sitting up all day long or something and so yeah there were times when he would lie down um I think there's a few times when he'd be giving a talk and then you know it's like I

need to stretch my back I'm going to lie
down let somebody else can continue
that's possible I mean it is in the text
that he did do that I don't know for
sure that he was literally in pain it
maybe just it was getting late it was he
figured it was time for him to to lay
down and he just let one of his chief
disciples continue with the discourse um
because he wanted to stretch his back
kind of a
thing
so yeah so it it does say that in the
texts so I'm just going to move on to uh
chasz is a second question here which is
what do you think it means Darkness
Darkness within darkness which is like

uh metaphorical talk of Christian Mystics Darkness within darkness and I assume darkness is just a lack of perceptual content like emptiness in in Buddhism and darkness within darkness is that you don't even have the concept of emptiness or Darkness you know it's just even beyond that you know sort of like um there's a text the the kalaha where is talking about how the advanced Saint presumably the enlightened being he has no perception of perception he has no perception of
non-perception and so Darkness within Darkness you know it' be you you don't even have the perception of non

perception that's that's how I would interpret it it's like Darkness sort of like Nuna Brahman in Hinduism where it's just Ultimate Reality which has no discernable characteristics it's like a characterless mystical state but even to call it darkness is going too far because even that doesn't really apply it's just sort of a a symbol that that is invalid ultimately and so you just darkness within darkness which is kind of separating you like One Step from the first symbol and just you I mean you take an infinite regress of Darkness within Darkness within Darkness just forever I guess to really completely distance yourself from just this concept

of darkness which doesn't really work

but you have to say

something so it's just like

non-perception of

non-perception sort

of but it goes beyond words which is why

they have to say Darkness within

Darkness Ness because they can't say

what it really means and so I can't say

what it really means

either so I'm just going to move on to

Virgin Mary J Alias tasas is his third

question

here how about Liv stream Q&A on black

Sunday December 1st why is it called

black Sunday is that a is that like a

European thing I don't know I know

there's like Black Friday which is the

day after Thanksgiving and in Europe I

don't think they have Thanksgiving the

way Americans have

Thanksgiving um I mean it's possible

it's theoretically possible I could do

uh a live Q&A on December 1st which is a

few weeks from now I

guess so yeah I'm not going to promise

but yeah it is possible so I'm going to

move on to the next question which is

from skolin or

skaden and the question is how

contagious are mental States and then

he's got the bullet point commentary

there seems to be quite a few people

seething that weren't about a week ago
for whatever reason they seem to have an
unhinged view of the world like Freud
who thought his patients were a one one
representation of the average person
maximum cherry picking so how Rel how
contagious are mental States um it
depends on like if you're like a very
open empathetic person and don't have
much wisdom then they could be very
contagious on the other hand if you're
kind of a reserved kind of aloof sort of
person and you've got wisdom then you've
got more resistance you might still feel
feel it in the air you know there's a
pissed off person in the room you can

feel that but it's going to be less

likely to get you as agitated as if you

were a

very

empathetic um and at the same time sort

of a a foolish sort of

person so it would be largely a matter

of of two factors it's just wisdom

versus unwisdom and also like how

connected are you with the mental states

of other people but we're all connected

to some

degree and uh I mean even a a sociopath

probably has some kind of connection

even if it's subconscious and they're

not fully aware of it I mean even for

most people most of the connection we

have with with one mind and another mind

is subconscious it's not a matter of

conscious thinking

ego so yeah there's

um how contagious our mental States

contagious enough that you have to be

careful about it but it's going to vary

from person to person but it's always

going to be there there's a certain

amount of contagion in in mental states

which is why in the mongal lauta the

list of black blessings in a person's

life blessing number one is not

associating with

fools because you associate with fools

and their mental states are contagious

and you you catch you catch a dose of foolishness from them and then the second blessing is associating with the wise because wise people's mental states are also contagious so if you're in the presence of a very wise person that uplifts you I mean it's sort of refines the the the Consciousness the vibe of the area you know the the co the center of gravity of Consciousness is raised by having a wise person there

so yeah I think I answered that one about as well as I'm able to so I'm just going to move on to scadden's second question is there an optimal method to jettison thought pollution and and then

the bullet point says I noticed that after spending some time with a negative unwise person that negative unwise perceptions arose that were analogous to me for about a week or so it was odd because I didn't even converse with them it was like you could just pick up negative irrational perceptions just through osmosis or just through like a perception of that person and then that kind of triggers latent tendencies in yourself I mean if they're not even nearby anymore then the contagion part is is already finished and it's just sort of you know it could have like planted a seed or what is more likely it

just sort of activated this latent

tendency in

yourself so getting back to the real

question the actual question is there an

optimal method to jettison thought

pollution mindfulness is the Panacea

just let it let the thought arise and

note it and let it go so you have to

have mindfulness as a kind of habit

already you know it's just something

that you have to practice in life so

that when situations like this happen

then you've got a kind of defense

against them so a foolish thought arises

you just you know thought arising and

then you just note it and let it go

that's the optimal method to jettison

thought pollution and prevention is a
good way I mean that's not jettison it
but preventing the thought pollution by
just not associating with foolish people
if at all
possible so I'm just going to move on to
scolin third question and I really don't
know the correct way of pronouncing his
name I guess it would be
scolin anyways he says would I generate
Bad Karma for causing or forcing an ego
death and then the bullet point says
like if theoretically somebody named bag
of bones Bo for short went online and
com commented like a good samaritan but
then this comment was read by a mentally

ill person who tried to mislabel it as
problematic is ISM phobe arises thereby
trying thereby trying to detach from the
moment because it not only challenged
their world view it completely BTF Ed
them as they believed their mental
illness was their true self well whether
you I mean if you've got good intentions
in what you say you know you're just
telling the truth you think people ought
to know the truth and you're not saying
it for the sake of punishing anybody
making anyone feel bad or whatever you
know you just you're just saying
something that you think is just an
objective fact that ought to be said and
you're not saying it as a weapon not

deliberately to for the sake of

bothering anybody necessarily then you

haven't done anything

wrong somebody else can I mean it's like

someone who who makes a kitchen knife is

not guilty if somebody uses that kitchen

knife to stab somebody

else I mean it's it depends on your own

mental

States the the karmic or ethical quality

of an action depends on the intentions

and volitions of the person who commits

or who who does the

deed so would you generate Bad Karma for

causing or forcing an ego of death only

if you did it intentionally or I mean if

there's a certain amount of carelessness
or delusion involved and there's always
a certain amount of delusion involved
then indirectly it might cause some
problems but as a general rule the
ethical quality of your actions or your
words depend on your own intentions and
if somebody decides to get offended by
that even though I me like
microaggressions microaggressions are a
good example you know you meet like
someone who's obviously not from your
country you ask them what where they
come from that's a microaggression and
then if they're like a progressive
leftist they might get offended simply
because they've told that they've been

told that it's offensive you know it's a microaggression they've just been micro aggressed but I mean if it's done in in good faith you're just being friendly and then you might even commit another microaggression by telling them they speak English very well you know that sort of thing I mean that's a microaggression too people can be offended by that but if you're not meaning any any offense at all you know you're just being trying to be friendly then yeah I mean it's on them it's their own fault if they get offended and that's that's one thing that's always true regardless is being

offended is always your own fault
whoever is offended I mean that's their
doing so I mean you could go up to a
saint and just chew them out call them
every name you can think of and if
they're really wise they won't be
offended you know they'll just forgive
you but if they get offended that's
they're doing I mean for you to be
chewing them out is you're doing for you
to be trying to offend them is you're
doing but if they actually are offended
that's they're doing and that's like a
relatively Elementary level of Buddhist
ethics that Western lay Buddhists just
don't like that part and so they just
ignore it or reject it a lot of

them but because of course the the the
doctrine of progressive leftism is I
mean you're not supposed to offend
anybody and if you do that's your fault
but really if you offend Somebody by
accident you know you're not even trying
to offend them then if they get offended
that's entirely their
fault it's their own
doing so I think that may answer the
question and if it doesn't too bad
because I'm moving on to the next one
and that's from lucky
luchano and lucky luchano says I have a
question how do you feel about the
concept of the Dao and the way daoist

Traditions believe it's necessary to

gain a type of Enlightenment but it

isn't part of Buddhism well the Dao yeah

it's just a different approach to

essentially the same

situation that uh Zen Buddhism

Incorporated quite a bit of dosm into it

when it moved into

China

um but I mean the da itself is really a

kind of poetic way of describing the

absolute you know it's like from the da

came the one from the one came the two

from the two came the 10,000 things it's

just the da is just sort of the

underlying Harmony or or probably better

yet the source the underlying source of

the underlying Harmony you know it's
just sort of the ultimate the absolute
and it's spoken of a lot in a poetic
manner that really was not the approach
taken by ancient Indian Aesthetics that
were equally
spiritual but it was just largely a
cultural thing like the Chinese I've
read that the Chinese mind at least back
in those days was much more poetical and
intuitive the Chinese language is more
kind of poetical and intuitive than like
ancient Indian languages like Northern
Indian like indic languages so just the
way of thinking resulted in a different
emphasis whereas in Buddhism the

ultimate just is not reified you just

don't talk about it much you know it's

just off the scale whereas most

Traditions that that aren't like

Buddhist will reify the absolute and

generally in the west they call it God

but in the east they call other things

Brahman or da or or

whatever eart aarta calls it being

there's all sorts I think uh who is it

uh Paul low just refers to the source

that kind of

thing so it's just sort of a different

it's largely a cultural difference with

a A different kind of approach to

essentially the same

situation so lucky luchano second

question is do you you think the da
could be real and from a Buddhist point
of view the absolute you know it's it's
ultimately real but then you can't
really say anything about it so even to
say that it's real is invalid to say
that it isn't real is invalid to say
that it is and isn't real is invalid to
say that it neither is nor isn't real is
invalid anything you can say about it is
invalid so you're better off just not
talking about it that's like the ancient
Buddhist
approach so you can say that the da is
real you say that the ultimate the
absolute is real the highest truth

Ultimate Reality yeah Ultimate Reality I mean that would have to be real in a sense but the concept of real is very different from actual reality and when you're just dealing with intellectual Concepts and words and so forth you're better off just I mean for some people it's helpful I guess I mean most spiritual Traditions do reify the absolute and call it by some name even the Buddhists have to call it nibana or nibana datu or Mahayana Buddhists will talk about the the dharmakaya or the one mind or whatever um so I mean in order to even talk about something you have to give it a
name and so long as the da is is like

Ultimate Reality then by definition

Ultimate Reality would have to be

ultimately

real but there's different

approaches so I'll just move on to lucky

luchiano third question which is do you

think the da and the Greek logos are

pretty much the same concept just

explained a little differently by two

different cultures and the logos I mean

the Greeks in general tended to be

rationalists they were just in love with

rational thinking and even the the name

logos I mean literally means word like

in the New Testament where it says you

know the go uh when Jesus is called the

word

that really the the original Greek is

logos Jesus is the

logos and that was sort of considered to

be like the creative

Force so the Dao is behind the creative

Force so it'd be more like what plotinus

was calling the good you know it was

like the da would come closer to like

the ultimate in the philosophy of the

neoplatonist like like plotinus

especially the Greek logos would be like

a step down it it would be more like

practically like U like the Demi urge or

something you know it's it's like

the like Maya in in like Mahayana

Buddhism no not mahay Buddhism but

Hinduism you know you've got Brahma who
is the personification of Ultimate
Reality his consort is Maya who is the
one who is like giving birth to the
entire universe and
um I think the Dao would be more like
Brahma or Brahman and logos I mean I'm
I'm No Authority on Ancient Greek
metaphysics of of this nature like
gnosticism or even um neoplatonism you
know I I never read all the way through
like
plotinus so I mean I'm No Authority on
this kind of ancient Greek attempts at U
mysticism but logos is my understanding
I could be mistaken but it is my

understanding that logos was more of a

phenomenal you know sort of what is

creating the universe of Multiplicity

and not like the the underlying

unity in a way gives rise to the

multiplicity it was more of um you know

it was like a step at least one step

away from the

ultimate

so um I guess I answered that one about

as well as I am able and so I'm just

going to move on to the next question

and look at the clock and it's a little

less than two

hours okay this next question is from

eight precept aroan an eight8 precept

aroan says would intending to ordain for

a higher rebirth hinder the monastic path even if the intention is later purified with practice um well it would be kind of a hindrance at the beginning but I mean you're you're going to have unenlightened reasons to begin the monastic path otherwise I mean you wouldn't need to to take the monastic path because you'd already be enlightened and this the classic the classic example of this is the Buddha kind of played a dirty trick and uh he had a half brother named nand not Ananda his his chief his uh attendant but just nand that was the Buddha's half brother and on nand's wedding day

the buddha showed him a glimpse of of Heaven like tawa timsa heaven and what the celestial nymphs like the goddesses look like up there and compared with them the woman that nand was going to marry this mere human mortal you know looked like a a burnt monkey by comparison and so the Buddha played a kind of dirty trick on nand to get him to renounce the world and essentially jilt his fiance on their wedding day and so nand became a monk wanting to get it those Celestial nymphs and wanting to get it those those goddess hotties in heaven but as he practiced you know he was using kind of a bad reason for practicing to begin with but any reason

to practice is better than just not
practicing and then his he was
practicing correctly you know under the
guidance of the Buddha himself and so he
was making like development wisdom so
that as he got wiser and wiser his
motivations got wiser and wiser and he
eventually became enlightened and then
of course he didn't want the hotties in
heaven
anymore so you can start off with a
foolish reason and just about any reason
to start the monastic path is going to
be a
delusional um to some degree foolish
reason because you're unenlightened it's

going to be an unenlightened reason and

then if you practice even though I mean

it that dumb reason

is still going to be inspiring you to

practice and so long as you're

practicing correctly then your wisdom

will improve and then you'll come up

with better

reasons so I mean any anything that

causes you to practice dhama is you know

it's sort of like skillful means in in

Mahayana they talk about skillful

means you know it's so long as it gets

you going then it's it's not all bad it

could be an unenlightened reason but

still it's getting you to practice and

then when you practice you get wiser and

your reasons get

better so in a way it's kind of a

hindrance just because your whole mental

state when you're unenlightened is is

just to some degree a

hindrance but it's it's better than not

be entering the monastic path at all if

that is really what your calling

is so I'm just going to move on to the

next question this is from LA

infamia and La infamia says is God in an

abrahamic or vidic way a theory and so

long as you got names and labels and so

forth It's all

theoretical like God in the abrahamic

sense um we can get to the vidic sense

next I suppose but God in an abrahamic sense I mean yeah that would have to be theoretical um I mean humans trying to understand God and then coming up with like a wrathful vengeful god um who developed over time I mean originally the god of the the Hebrews was L it was just like a Canaanite god a father figure who then later got conflated with an Edomite or midianite uh war God and God of storms called Yahweh they got conflated maybe some Egyptian influences helped to in the development of God also and uh I mean it was in a way it was a theory although of course monotheists who believe in the abrahamic God would not consider it to be a theory

they just consider it to be a

fact but um it's just I mean how could

it not be a theory when you've got mere

humans trying to come up with

ideas about a being that is infinitely

Beyond on them you know it's it's like

amibas trying to understand a human it's

it's it's not going to happen at least

not in that way you know you can if you

get if God becomes just like this

formless underlying

just practically emptiness it's just

infinite formless Consciousness or some

such then you can understand that but

not intellectually you just have to like

blend in with it you just have to become

aware of it by getting rid of all the
distractions that are preventing you
from from just being aware of it
directly but God in an abrahamic sense
is the wrathful
vengeful you know the the angry old man
with the long beard sitting on the
throne in heaven with angels flooding
around his feet like
butterflies that would be like the Old
Testament kind of
God so I mean even that developed over
time so that like in seminary schools
like Catholic Seminary they're teaching
like a very abstract kind of God that's
getting very close to like what the
upanishads are

teaching so yeah getting getting to the
upanishad are just the vdic the vadic
God I mean vdic God wouldn't be a
capital G God if you're talking about
like the rig Veda that's that was like
polytheistic um there may be some later
texts later hymns in the rigveda that
are hinting at monotheism or one
ultimate highest God but instead it's
like I think like
vdic Proto Hinduism was called something
like
henotheism where it's like you know each
God or there's several different gods
that are all praised as being the
highest God because in a way they're

sort of like representations of the
highest God and you can have more than
one representation of the highest God or
some
such but I'm not exactly sure what a
capital G God in a viic sense would be
unless it's a vonti sense of Brahman as
just infinite formless
Consciousness and so long as you're
thinking about intellectually it's a
theory if you're in a mystical State
experiencing it directly then it's not a
theory but so long as you're
thinking um you
know yeah I mean so long as you're
thinking about it you're trying to
figure it out then it's going to be a

theory

so I think I answered that and so I'm

going to move on to L infamia second

question which is does early Buddhism

reward dying in battle like creating

extra amount of positive Karma um the

only way you would get good karma from

dying in

battle or being on a battlefield to

begin with would be like if you were

like a pacifistic stretcher Bearer

you're just an unarmed person like

taking wounded soldiers off the

battlefield so they could get medical

attention and then you get killed doing

that you know like muhamad Gandhi did

that during World War I he was like a
stretcher Bearer on battlefields just I
mean he was unarmed he was a pacifist
but he was doing his patriotic Duty for
the Empire by uh you know helping
getting wounded soldiers off the
battlefield so that he could get medical
attention so something like that would
be okay but fighting as a soldier in
early Buddhism definitely a no no like
monks are forbidden even to set foot on
a battlefield you're not allowed to even
go and look at monk or look at monks
look at soldiers like in formation like
a par military parade anything like that
monks aren't allowed to even go look at
that I mean obviously Buddhism was

Radical pacifism you're not even allowed
to step on
bugs not on purpose anyway you step on
them accidentally then that's fine but
um you step on I mean to kill any living
being on purpose I mean any macroscopic
being I think bacteria are fair
game protozoans I suppose are fair
game so yeah Buddhism does not reward
dying in battle you're not guaranteed of
heaven or any such thing if you die on a
battlefield there is some military
metaphors like Poetic language like
there is a suta in the suan where before
the Buddha became enlightened he's
striving for enlightenment and Mara the

evil one is trying to talk him out of it
and the the buddhis you know the the
soon to be Buddha says it's better to
die in battle than to live in defeat but
I mean he's talking about spiritual you
know sort of figurative spiritual battle
and not actually standing on a
battlefield killing
people so yeah emphatically not in that
case case so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from ruy but I
will say I will say that like Zen
Buddhists there have been like samurai
sword Masters that were apparently Zen
Masters there was like a an unofficial
extra Coan Coan added added to the mumon
con by some Samurai swordmaster who

added another Coan to the mumon con

which is a collection of Zen Coons and

apparently he was high respected with

regard to his wisdom even though he

probably like hacked people to death

with swords but he did it in in

accordance with Bushido and you know

like the Zen Detachment and just doing

it all for honor and not for you know

like as a thrill sport or you know

aggression or anything like

that so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from

ruie have another slug of cold

coffee and ruie says would you say that

UPA is what creates an enduring Rift

between Dua and TNA until final
Deliverance is achieved would you also
agree that it consists of an enduring
nonverbal State I.E without mental
formations in which awareness is
nevertheless still present so upeka is
the highest of the four Brahma viharas
and it is is considered to be the
highest of the four Brahma viharas it's
it's um the only Brahma weara that leads
all the way to fourth of
J so it's it is the mental state that
can get you the highest of the four
Brahma wi haras anyway um so let's see
there's two questions here I guess so I
might as well separate the two questions
and maybe I'll I'll answer the second

one first because I think it's easier

would you also agree that it consists of

an enduring non-verbal State without

mental formations in which awareness is

nevertheless still present I mean if you

want to call just pure Consciousness or

um you know

like for example fourth J like the

highest state of contemplation yeah I

mean there would be UPA in that so I

mean you could call it that I mean just

kind of by default it's not like upeka

would be a discreet mental state like

one of the 52 ultimately real mental

States is described in in Abid dama it

would just be sort of a lack of agitated

mental States or attached mental States
so that an enlightened mind would be an
equanimous mind so that they would there
would always be UPA and an enlightened
mind and it would be non-verbal I
suppose although I mean you could have
UPA while thinking thoughts but the UPA
could still be there so it wouldn't be I
mean the the verbality is that a word
the verbosity the symbolic states of
words would not be really an aspect of
UPA but they could be they could exist
at the same
time so yeah I mean you'd have to have
awareness with UPA so see would you
agree that it consists of an enduring
non-verbal State without mental

formations in which awareness is
nevertheless still present yeah I mean
you could have UPA with mental
formations and with words in thoughts
but that wouldn't be the OPA they could
coexist it's just that they would not be
the UPA I mean they could be suffused
with UPA I suppose because UPA really
isn't a discreet mental state so much is
it's like an absence of non-an mental
States seems to me but you'd still have
to have Consciousness so pure UPA would
be like fourth
jna so getting up to the first part of
this question would you say that eka is
what creates an enduring Rift between

Dua and tahna which is like unease and
craving until final Deliverance is
achieved um well the
dooka yeah I think the rift would have
to be before you even get to the dooka
unless it's just physical dooka if it's
physical pain then you can have like
Detachment from that like equ equinity
towards that but but the the like the
mental dooka the unhappiness aspect of
dukka I mean you've already failed at
equ equinity if if you're experiencing
that unless maybe You' just sort of
denatured it through mindfulness you
know you're detached from it and then it
could still be just nature running its
course but then it gets really difficult

to explain that sort of

thing so would I say that UPA is what

creates an enduring Rift between duka

and tatna or between perception and

craving yeah it might be better to um

have the rift between perception in TNA

like sa and

TNA um or in the 12 nidana Theory I

think it's wa and in TNA so that would

be where the you you cut the chain is

between like feeling and

suffering so would I say that UPA is

what creates an enduring

Rift um until final final Deliverance is

achieved I mean you could say that I

mean there's other words like niida you

know there's like the the kind of
Trilogy in Buddhist Spiritual
Development you start off with niida
which is like disenchantment or sort of
disillusionment which leads to WEA which
is dispassion which comes closer to
equinity and this dispassion leads to we
MO wuti or weoka which is Liberation so
niida leads to WEA which leads to
weoka um so I guess in neida just being
fed up with Sam Sor that wouldn't be
pure UPA but then the next stage is WEA
which is dispassion so that might be
like UPA and then the that would be UPA
and which then leads to liberation or or
U
weoka so yeah I mean you could you could

argue that way I me there's different

ways of interpreting things I suppose

but that's

one relatively valid way of interpreting

it

um I wouldn't say that UPA UPA is

necessarily enduring especially at

first but when you become fully

enlightened I assume UPA would always be

there

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

question this is from

rpad and rpad says did you break your

monastic vows before or after dis robing

and this is based on the misconception

that terab Buddhist monks take monastic

vows I mean there are no real vows that

monastic terraa Buddhist monks take

you've got rules of

discipline you know you got you know

training

rules and I mean all monks break those I

mean there's different levels you know

it's like seven different categories of

monastic offenses you know you start off

with Duca and dubas which you just make

confession and it's over then above that

is p desia which you make confession and

it's gone then is ptia and nissia Pia

and above that is you're starting to get

into uh I mean all of these you can just

disappear they just disappear the

offense anyway disappears through

confession then you've got tulaa which is a like a grave offense which would include something like eating human flesh and uh that one also I mean you can just confess it and it uh it sort of absolves you of the ecclesiastical offense it doesn't absolve you of any bad karma you made and then above that is s say so there's 13 of those and those you have to do Penance for six days and six night and then go through a relatively elaborate reinstatement ceremony which is really pain in the butt I did it a few times mainly just to get rid of doubts in my mind is did I do that on purpose or was it an accident

you know you got to like psychoanalyze
yourself you can't be sure whether you
really did break the rule or not so you
just do the Penance just just to just
kind of wipe the Slate clean and then
finally you've got the four Paras where
if you break any of these four paraja
rules you're excommunicated from the
songa for the rest of your life and uh
that's having
sex stealing anything that's valuable
enough that you can get arrested for it
essentially um murder killing another
human being or talking another human
being into killing themselves or
whatever and then finally is
deliberately lying about having attained

superhuman mental States and I did not
excommunicate myself everybody breaks
rules but um I didn't break any of the
rules that would excommunicate me and so
I deliberately dis rubbed and then uh
then I I did
uh kind of commit a parica
offense which would be the first
one after after I wasn't wasn't a monk
anymore so with regard to this question
did you break your monastic vows before
after disrobing there are no monastic
vows you know it's not like a Catholic
who vow takes the vows of what is it
poverty Chastity and obedience I me it's
that's that's a Christian

thing so I'm just going to move on next question this is from Connor and Connor says if we go by the idea that this infinite unconditioned Consciousness is God or Brahma how does Buddhism differentiate itself from Hinduism and other mystical schools of thought the main way Buddhism differentiates itself I mean superficially it's just the term used but at a deeper level Buddhism as a general rule does not reify the absolute you know it's just doesn't even go there the Buddha taught I mean one of the main teachings of early Buddhism you cannot understand Reality by thinking about it you cannot figure out ultimate truth and so you don't even go there it's like

it's like actual mysticism

you just attain it directly without like

figuring it out because you can't figure

it out and so in a way it doesn't reify

the absolute because if you reify the

absolute you've taken the the highest

truth and just turn it into a symbol and

then people start think confusing the

symbol with what it's supposed to

represent which is what a lot of

Christians do with God for example

they've got their idea about what God is

like and that's just infinitely

different from what God is really like

because you cannot contain God in some

relatively crude human symbolic thoughts

and

ideas so I mean Buddhism I think wisely

just acknowledged that I mean you can't

understand it by thinking about it

you're just going to pervert it into

something that it isn't by theorizing

about it and talking about it and so the

Buddha pretty much just described

nibbana as what it isn't it's not this

it's not that it's not the other thing

and did not really try to explain what

it's like because you just can't explain

what it's

like so um generally in human language

you either have to say something exists

or something doesn't exist and the

ultimate I mean it's it's just a

dichotomy a symbol

dichotomy and it's none of it is really

valid exist is invalid doesn't exist is

invalid does and doesn't exist is

invalid neither does nor doesn't exist

is invalid and

so nevertheless as a human being as

human beings we have to use some kind of

language and so generally we have to

choose one of the false dichotomy of is

or isn't and most religions most

spiritual systems including Buddhism

choose is I mean I mean

including Hinduism and some Mahayana

Buddhism choose is whereas early

Buddhism um I mean it didn't even go

there but then Terra was more inclined
to adopt the position of
isn't and so in a way it's safer but
it's it's less satisfying emotionally to
people who want to know that they're on
the right track and they're believing
the right theories and dogmas and all
that so it's like a human weakness that
most people will gravitate towards is
and call it God or Dao or Brahman or the
dharmakaya or the one mind or
whatever um whereas really just not even
going there is the wisest approach and
you just feel it through dark Faith what
what St John on the cross called Dark
Faith you know you can it's
just you can't even talk about it I

don't even know why I'm trying to talk

about

this so so I mean that's the main the

main

differentiation with regard to the

ultimate how Buddhism differentiates

itself from Hinduism and other mystical

schools of thought is that Buddhism is

less inclined to try to reify the

absolute to symbolize the absolute to

try to explain the highest truth because

the Buddha realized that you cannot

explain it you cannot figure it out you

cannot know it perceptually

and the Hindus like the more advanced

Hindus kind of know that too but still

they have to use it as a kind of a
gimmick or a makeshift calling it words
and and saying stuff about it even
though it's all ultimately
invalid and so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from
cify and cify says he's got questions
and at the end of his first question
there's these three dots that don't cut
and paste but no matter how many times I
refresh the page is there's only this
one question it may be that cify asked
more than one question but no matter how
many times I refresh that page it I
would only get this one question and
this one question is how to avoid that a
personal practice wouldn't become an

escapism that in its turn becomes a

spiritual

Pride well how to avoid that a personal

practice wouldn't be become an

escapism in its turn becomes a spiritual

Pride well the way to avoid the

spiritual pride is through mindfulness

to some degree if you're not wise enough

to catch it I mean you've got delusion

still then I mean you can't be aware of

your delusion because to the extent that

you're aware of it it's not delusion

anymore but I mean spiritual Pride when

that arises you can be mindful of that

and that can help you um to cure

yourself of it to detach yourself from

it but with regard to a personal

practice how to avoid that it won't

become an

escapism um I'm not exactly

sure I mean it would depend on your

motivations I think if your motivation

is to understand reality and to be more

awake more conscious then other people

can say that you're practicing escapism

by just sitting there you know like

watching your breath or whatever

but really um they're more escapists

than you are the person that sits there

just watching his breath for an hour

straight is less of an Escapist than the

person who is like Doom scrolling on

X or or whatever it

is I mean most of the stuff that we do
is just a way of like escaping from just
the the burden of existence in a way
just the we're trying to escape from
just the discomfort the dooka of the
first Noble Truth of just being alive
and so we try to distract ourselves by
you know getting interested in this and
forgetting the outside world whereas the
person who's meditating is actually
trying to get closer to
reality you it's less of a distraction
than Doom scrolling on X if you're
sitting there just watching or or like
perceiving the sensation of touch at the
nostrils when you're

breathing so how to avoid that a
personal practice wouldn't become an
escapism you didn't just have to have
like right intention for that one and
just have enough wisdom to to know when
you're getting closer to reality than
when you're getting farther away from it
and don't bother with other people's
definitions of
escapism you know an escape from reality
you know my father used to say drugs are
an escape from reality but uh some drugs
will take you closer to reality if
you're not
careful and then then the next stages
how to avoid the personal practice won't
become spiritual Pride or result in

spiritual pride and that's just mindfulness you got to like observe yourself and know what your own motives are and so forth and so I'm going to move on the next question which is from cun Drew and kund Drew says what is your favorite non-spiritual book of all time and that's a difficult one because as a general rule books that I like have to have some kind of like link to spirituality so any kind of Novel I mean there's always spirituality to be found in novels Moby Dick very spiritual book Doki is the idiot very spiritual book anything written by dovi practically any of his his great novels have spiritual

basis to them or like a strong spiritual
theme um like battle for the by William
sergeant that I've mentioned several
times I mean that's that applies to
spirituality so the the one book that I
can think of that is one of my favorites
that is not spiritual you I'll get it
just a minute stay right there we be
right back see where is
it oh boy I should have should have
gotten it out here oh here it
is
okay I found this at a used bookstore in
Mandalay in Burma when I was a
monk strategy the indirect approach by
BH little Hart and this BH little Hart
he was uh writing he was a military

strategist he was like the military
editor for the Encyclopedia Britannica
for a while and he used to write uh in
military
journals and one of the things he was
writing about before World War II was
the possibility of a tank Invasion
through the ardens and the British and
the Americans just kind of ignored him
but the Germans were carefully studying
what this guy was writing and he was
without trying to he was like one of the
main teachers of tank strategy for the
the Germans in World War II they they
studied this guy
intensively because um like tank warfare

was a new thing you it was just getting developed in World War II and he was the guy that was trying to come up with strategies because you know it was like this new kind of warfare and so you had to have new kinds of strategies and so he was comparing tank warfare now to like heavily armored Cavalry like the cateracts you know the knights and armor just heavy like plate armor of like the mid ancient and Middle Ages so anyways I mean there is some spirituality in this too like in the introduction he's talking about how strategy the indirect approach is a a full-on offensive is just the most foolish way of fighting like with regard to the military but

also with regard to just like winning an argument getting your point across just like a full-on frontal offensive is like the worst way of going about it and so in the in the introduction he's talking about how it is like pretty much the duty of a prophet to just tell the the the FL out unvarnished truth and then prophets get martyred you know like the the the prophet is not a diplomat he's just telling it as it is just flat out and offending everybody and so he winds up getting killed and then another person comes along who's more diplomatic who then can teach what the prophet was teaching except kind of doctor it up and

put it in more indirect terms or some such so that it's more accept and then a new religion can get started from that but um as a general rule this this book which is well worth reading by the way it's

uh it's mainly like a a strategic playby playay of some of the most important battles and wars in history some of the most influential or consequential battles and Wars you know he's pointing out you know he's got this thesis that that the Great greatest victories come from the indirect approach like he talks about uh Sherman William T Sherman in the Civil War and that one of the reasons why Sherman was so devastating

in his tactics is that he would he would like March his men like in between two main objectives two main cities so that the Defenders didn't know which city he was going to go for until right at the end so they would either have to defend both cities so which divides their forces in half or they would have to put most of their forces in one city and then Sherman would just go and attack the other city so it's like you don't use Force against Force you use Force against weakness you know you you attack it could even be like a secondary Target or something but if it's undefended you just go for it and I mean

it's like he he quotes sunu at at the beginning in like these little quotes it's like you know it's like the The Secret of successful strategy is when when you're near let your enemy think that you're far away when you're far away let your enemy think that you are near when you are many think make your enemy think that you are few when you are few make your enemy think that you are many when you're ready to fight make your enemy think that you are not ready to fight and when you're not ready to fight make your enemy think that you are ready and it's just deception and counter fuge and just using strength against weakness instead of strength

against strength that sort of
thing and I mean it applies it can apply
to all sorts of things you know like I
was talking about he he does make this
token little reference to uh
spirituality at the beginning but mostly
it's it's like a a synopsis of what
makes the most successful
strategies um and it's the indirect
approach where I mean ideally you defeat
your enemy before the battle of the even
started you know you just ruin their
morale you cut off their Communications
you cut off their food supply just let
them sit and get hungry and demoralized
and then you attack that kind of

thing so anyways I'm just going to move
on next question this is from Fred and
Fred says given that everything in the
cosmos has cause and effect it follows
nibana is outside the cosmos in my
opinion therefore it cannot be
experienced by Prana
what's your idea on this and yeah this
is another person that seems to be a
theme in this
Q&A um there was one sort of a question
that I'm not not going to
answer that it wasn't really set up as a
question for this Q&A that's talking
about how nibana cannot be experienced
you can't really experience it because
in order to experience something in

accordance with Terra of Buddhism anyway

you have to perceive it and you cannot

perceive nibana because a perception is

just a symbol nibana is not a

symbol so if you symbolize it you're not

dealing with nibana anymore you're just

dealing with this symbol that's called

nibana

so nibana is outside the cosmos yeah

it's outside of samsara anyway uh or at

least

it's um maybe not outside of samsara but

it's just at a whole different level

than samsara

and so it cannot be experienced by Prana

yeah I mean you can't perceive it anyway

the unenlightened Mind cannot perceive
or understand
nibana but again nibana is underlying
everything in a sense you can if you
want to reify nibana anything you say
about nibana is going to be it's going
to be invalid but you can say this is a
cup or this is
porcelain and it's ceramic let's call it
ceramic maybe it's not real porcelain I
don't know but it's ceramic so I mean
it's ceramic and it's a cup at the same
time but ceramic and cup do not mean the
same thing they are not
synonyms so it's the form is cup but the
essence is ceramic and that's kind of
the way you can look at nibbana and

samsara nibbana is the underlying

Essence samsara is The Superficial

forms but again you're reifying nibana

it's completely Beyond Duality neither

is nor isn't applies to it and so it's

just a fool is Aaron trying to to

explain it and I'm just gonna have

another drink of this cold

coffee

so yeah you can't really perceive it

because once you symbolize it that's not

it

anymore then it becomes form it becomes

superficial form because a symbol is a

form so I'm just going to move on to fr

second question which is you never

answered my robot question I think it's possible a robot can be self-aware yeah Fred he asked questions sometimes I'm not sure if he's really asking the question or not sometimes I think it's like a rhetorical question this time I thought maybe he was joking but he's talking about um somehow the idea of like AI becoming self-aware was disgusted and so he was saying if a robot looks into a mirror Can it have self-awareness and I thought he was the way he asked it I thought maybe he was joking or just kind of asking a kind of rhetorical kind of semi jokey question but I guess he was serious it's hard to tell sometimes with Fred because

sometimes he'll just put question marks
at the end of comments just kind of the
way some people when they talk they you
know they end it like they're they're
asking a question you know and it's it's
it's sometimes it confuses me so I mean
if a robot looks into a mirror Can it
have self-awareness that way um I mean
there's different ways you could do that
you could just
program the the the robot to acknowledge
its own reflection in a mirror in which
case it might not be conscious at all
it's just acting in accordance with its
programming so that wouldn't be exactly
the same as self-awareness it would have

to actually be aware to have like a

mental image in its

mind and and like see that Its

Reflection in the miror and recognize

that that is its own reflection

and I think it's possible I don't see

why it would be necessarily impossible

that you could have uh sentient robot

that would be able to recognize itself

consciously in a mirror not just you

know like being programmed to

acknowledge that that is Its Reflection

without it being sentient that would be

different

but I don't see why not so an Abid

scholar I spoke to a Burmese abama

scholar um told me that like a computer

can never possibly be conscious because
Consciousness requires kamama jarupa
which is like matter that is generated
by Karma and a computer wouldn't have
that but I think he was just being
dogmatic and just repeating what the
book said and when those things were
composed there were no comp
computers so I think I'm just going to
move on to Fred's next question have you
seen the Swedish television show humans
also the British did one along the same
lines now I can't recall ever seeing a
Swedish television show and I watch very
few television shows at all I don't
watch very many like American television

shows although we do have Discovery plus
and it has become a tradition that my
woman and I will watch some kind of
paranormal ghost investigating show
before we go to sleep and we can watch
the same one many times because we
generally fall asleep before we get
halfway through it
lately so yeah like there's one called
portals to hell with Aussie Osborne's
son jack Osborne and a woman named
Katrina Weedman or
Weidman they this some of it's pretty
trippy some of the some of these haunted
houses haunted places they go to it's
some really trippy stuff goes
on anyways yeah with regard to Swedish

television shows no I haven't seen any Swedish television shows by any name whatsoever and so I'm just going to go on move on to the next question which is the last question I always get taken by surprise the last question of the Q&A is from extremely rare bird an extremely rare bird says Earth's Wildlife populations have reportedly declined by an average of
69% in only 50 years primarily this decline is due to the loss and fragmentation of the animals habitats driven by our Global agricultural system leaders like Trump do not seem to care about the climate or global warming and

even tries to make things worse in his
first term more than 125 environmental
rules and policies were rolled back
and then there's the rest of the world
countries that don't even have any
environmental policies and keep chugging
along as usual so the prospects for the
future are looking bad what are your
thoughts on this issue yeah well I think
we are in the middle of an Extinction
event which
began a long time ago like most of the
megaphon on this planet has already been
killed off everywhere except for like
Africa um like all of the megaphon the
really big animals got killed off in
Australia coincidentally shortly after

humans arrived there and it was probably

human predation that like drove the

woolly mammoths and Woolly rhinoceroses

to Extinction like the the really big

animals I mean that was one of the main

reasons why they became extinct is

people killed them off and so I can't

remember what it's called the quadron

area or

the the the

holine I can't what whatever whatever

era or Epoch we are in now it's called

that Extinction event and there have

been many Extinction events on this

planet I mean whenever there's an Ice

Age whenever there's a major glaciation

most of the animals go extinct most of
the animals get killed off at least on
on land it's not so big of a deal in the
ocean except for everything cools down a
lot and so you know fish and others
other kinds of animals that require
warmer water may go extinct but I mean
we have had Extinction event after
Extinction event after Extinction event
on this planet and generally it has been
caused by like Comet impacts meteor
impacts or like volcanic activity there
was one major Extinction event I can't
remember exactly which one it was it was
a major one where apparently this huge
Coal Field in like Siberia caught fire
and just pumped billions of tons of

carbon into the atmosphere which caused
some kind of Extinction event I think it
was there was so much carbon dioxide in
the air that in the ocean at least there
was so much carbon dioxide getting
absorbed into the ocean it caused
carbonic acid which dissolved the shells
of all the the life forms that had car
uh calcium carbonate shells and then
anything that fed on them also became
extinct and it just caused you know
there have been times when most of the
life forms most of the species have just
been killed off and we are in the midst
of one of those
and it's it's not nearly as bad as some

of them have been there's there's like
different strands here I think with
regard to humans it's just inevitable
that we're going to go through some kind
of Extinction event I mean not us
ourselves necessarily going to become
extinct unless there's like AI takes
over gets sees us as a pest that's in
the way or you know some massive
thermonuclear explosion but even if
there's like a thermonuclear Armageddon
there's going to be at least some Elites
in special underground bunkers with you
know nuclear energy and hydroponics and
stuff there's going to be small
populations of human that are going to
survive even that

probably um so with with regard to
global warming and the climate I am
somewhat
skeptical of that and partly it's like
the globalist establishment it is to
their
advantage that everyone believe that
global warming is this incipient
disaster unless all of a sudden we have
like International regulatory
commissions like governing stuff that of
course is like setting the stage for
globalism in general but again it's like
why is it that an increase in carbon
dioxide um which is going to warm the
Earth to some degree why is it

necessarily a bad thing I mean the Earth
has been much warmer than it is
now and I mean it wasn't a disaster I
mean if things change too fast then
certain species won't be able to evolve
fast enough they'll die out it will you
know contribute to the anthropogenic
extinction event that we've been in for
thousands of
years but I mean I have I have
heard that there's more vegetation
covering the earth now than there was 20
years ago because carbon dioxide is a
kind of fertilizer and that one reason
why um more people aren't starving right
now is because the increased carbon
dioxide in the atmosphere causes crops

to grow better so I mean there's there's
like an upside and a downside to
everything and for some reason the
establishment is emphasizing the
downside even maybe exaggerating it to
some degree
and just ignoring the
upside so I think there was there was
some commission or I don't know if you
call it a commission it was it was a
group of people in at Oxford University
all kinds of experts and they were
trying to figure out what to do about
global warming or climate change or
whatever it's called now and they were
saying the best thing we can do is just

be flexible because we're not going to

be able to stop it even if America and

Western Europe just cracked down on

environmentalism went completely Green

China and India are still going to be

spewing out carbon

dioxide they they don't

care China

especially so China is emitting more

carbon China and India are emitting more

carbon dioxide than all the rest of the

world combined and they for they they

don't have to follow the Accords or

anything you know they'll say well 20

years 30 years down the line then we can

do

that so I think the best thing the most

realistic approach we can take is just
be
flexible as as flexible as we can manage
I do not think that the Earth is going
to become Tatooine some sort of desert
planet um in the past when the when the
temperature has risen what has happened
is it increases evaporation from the
ocean which increases cloud cover which
increases rainfall and instead of a
desert you get the world is more jungly
like when the dinosaurs were walking
around I mean there were dinosaurs at
the South Pole or in Antarctica anyway
because it was warm enough the Earth was
warm enough that you could have

dinosaurs even like in the the Arctic

and

Antarctic so why it is that it's going

to be a desert that's just going to kill

everybody I'm I'm not sure about that

and of course then you've got like

counter theories that most of the global

warming I mean most of the global

warming isn't necessarily anthropogenic

you know there's like variations in the

rad radiation output of the Sun and that

sort of thing that some people are

thinking um is is doing more of it than

we humans

are so let's see what is the question

here I'm just

see Earth's Wildlife populations have

reportedly declined by an average of 69%
in only 50 years years yeah well when
that the meteor smacked into what is now
the Gulf of Mexico like 63 million years
ago it was like the wildlife populations
declined by an average of like 90% in
only like five
years primarily this decline is due to
the loss and fragmentation of the
animals habitats driven by our Global
agricultural system yeah that is true
and it's it may be that I've I've been
told that what is happening
in like in recent years is that more and
more people are getting more and more
concentrated in the

cities um so that in a way you've got
it's it's not as destructive as if the
human population was just like
distributed evenly all over the
Earth but I mean there are places that
should be protected like the Amazon
rainforest um some of the big
rainforests in like Borneo which are
just being chopped down on by people
that value money more than they value
some abstract ecological disaster that
may happen decades in the future like I
lived in Asia for many years the burmes
they they have no no compassion or
sympathy with with nature nature is just
scary they don't like it you know
they're people oriented and a tree is

either I mean there was one Monastery attendant that would not stop chopping down trees at the monastery I eventually just threw him out and wouldn't let him come back but I come down there he's chopping down trees why you chopping down the trees you say oh this this tree is no good it doesn't have fruit on it or anything it's not a valuable tree it's like you just don't get it I mean they just do not appreciate nature or nature conservation I've seen Burmese guy chop down a tree just to pick some leaves out of the tree for making Beetle quids or something wrapping cigars or something

just chop down the whole tree just to
get some leaves handful of
leaves
so yeah I mean the realistic thing to do
is we just have to be flexible with
whatever mess we create we're going to
have to figure out some way of surviving
it let's see here leaders like Trump do
not seem to care about the climate or
global warming and even tries to make
things worse in his first term more than
125 environmental rules and policies
were rolled back yes uh Elon Musk was
talking about that before he could H
like it was some kind of he was going to
land a rocket in the ocean and then it
was like the national Marine fishery

service or Noah required him to do a
study on what were the odds of a a
spacecraft Landing in the ocean hitting
a shark and so he had to do that study
and then they had what are the odds of a
spacecraft Landing in the ocean hitting
a
whale and it's it's a lot of these
environmental rules and policies are
just like bloated
bureaucracy that should be should be
rolled back with regard to conservation
and so forth yeah I mean I do agree I
I'm I'm all in favor of like Wildlife
refuges preserves national parks that
sort of thing definitely and there

should be more of them in fact I think

it'd be good if like most of the Amazon

rainforest which is dwindling rapidly

were were

conserved and it's kind of unrealistic

to to hope that like Borneo won't just

all get turned into what is it uh like

those oil Palms oil palm

plantations yeah it's we are kind of

making a mess of the world but it's just

not realistic that we're going to be

able to

stop because even if the West stops the

East isn't going to

stop

so let's see

here and then there's the rest of the

world countries that don't even have any environmental policies and keep chugging along as usual so the prospects for the future are looking bad what are your thoughts on the issue yeah I guess I've already said it just we have to be flexible and adapt to whatever kind of mess we create and I mean it's it's going to be a matter of karma from a Buddhist point of view you know we're going to live in the world that our Karma like has destined us to live in so I really don't think that we're going to destroy the Earth and uh things are going to get warmer and that's going to have some positive aspects and some

negative

aspects and uh just to emphasize the

negative and ignore the positive or even

punish people who come up with the

Positive stuff like I mean the the whole

establishment they'll punish science s

that don't tow the line like there was

some Australian scientist who pointed

out that the Great Barrier Reef was

actually getting better it wasn't global

warming or carbon dioxide that was

killing off parts of the the Great

Barrier Reef at one time but it was just

sort of a natural cycle that it goes

through and then it was starting to get

better he pointed this out he lost his

job because it goes against the

narrative so a lot of this it's like
fearmongering I mean anyone who watch
watched like most of the mainstream
media before Trump was elected president
of the USA could see just the the
blatant hysterical
fear-mongering that that they were using
as propaganda to get people to do what
the globalist establishment wanted them
to do and it's rather naive to think
that the globalist establishment is
using fearmongering about global warming
to get us to do something that's good
for the Earth
rather than good for the globalist
establishment they're thinking about

themselves and I just had this thought
it was a really good thought what that
caught me in mids
sentence now I can't remember what it
was which is too bad it was really it
was really a Salient point I must
say so we're just going to have to rely
on a certain amount of human common
sense and also just rely on the idea
that these predictions of how the world
was going to go to hell have have been
false thus far you know it's like I
think it was what's his name um Gore Al
Gore was was saying that if we didn't
change any everything soon by 2010 or
some such Manhattan was going to be
underwater it didn't happen I mean we're

still technically in a in an ice age so
long as you've got standing glaciers on
the earth ice packs and so forth we're
still in an Ice Age the Earth Earth is
much cooler than it usually is at the
present
time so I think uh we are contributing
to in some small way to the carbon
dioxide in the atmosphere which is
causing the Earth to
warm but it's not all bad it's good for
the plants and so the plants grow better
and just because the Earth warms up a
bit I mean some places are going to get
more comfortable even though other
places are going to get less comfortable

there going probably be increase in

rainfall in some places decrease in

rainfall in other places and trying to

keep the Earth completely static without

changing is just

unrealistic like I mentioned earlier

there's there's going to be like

fluctuations in like solar radiation and

all sorts of things that are beyond our

control

anyway so we just uh do the best we can

and hope that any massive Extinction

event isn't going to happen anytime soon

I mean the extinction event we're in

we're in now was it the hene Extinction

event I think that's what it's called I

mean it's been going on for thousands of

years it may be accelerating now but

it's been going on for thousands of

years

already and

uh we're just going to have to uh trust

in our Karma that we're not going to

have to all face a major Extinction

event that's going to just wipe out

everything and make the Earth an

uninhabitable

desert and uh you know I

mean probably prob things aren't as bad

as the globalist establishment would

keep saying I mean the thing the thought

that I was having is there are there are

way more dangerous things in this world

than global warming there's still nukes
there's more nukes now at least more
countries that have nukes including
North Korea Iran will probably get nukes
soon Pakistan has got nukes now and so
like thermonuclear war is still like
more more of a a threat to us as human
beings than climate change also AI like
before Stephen Hawking died he he
switched his main threat to the human
race from nukes I mean that was his main
thing for for many years and towards the
end of his life he switched over to AI
the AI is really our main threat right
now nobody talks about nukes it's like
the mainstream media just forgot about
nukes pretty much they might mention

that something like Iran is close to getting nukes and you know Israel bombed their their nuclear Iran's nuclear research centers and Development Centers North Korea's got nukes you know they may mention that but it's nothing like the 1980s where you've got like famous people like Carl Sean you know doing going on these protest marches to to government agencies about you know nuclear winter is going to just you know Wipe Out the Earth and all this I mean that's still a bigger threat than climate change and it's just the establishment doesn't want you to be afraid about that they want you to be

afraid about climate change because that
serves their
interests I'm not saying that there is
no danger at all from global warming
increase carbon dioxide and other
greenhouse gases and so forth but it's
just not realistic to assume that we're
going to do [__] to stop it because even
if the West did it and impoverished
themselves in the process much reduced
the standard of living China and India
still be just chugging away at
it so again like that that uh Oxford
Group uh came to the conclusion and just
like they were saying it's like the best
thing we can do the most realistic
approach we can take is to be flexible

and to adapt to the

changes and I think that's it that's uh

that is that's that's the last question

and I I hope I've answered it maybe not

satisfactorily to a lot of

people but I did answer it and so uh as

I always say at the end which I should

be saying at the

beginning if you have any questions that

you think I can answer about early

Buddhism terab AO Buddhism Buddhism in

general like Eastern philosophy or

spirituality in general monasticism in

general meditation philosophy on Eastern

or Western myself personally

Burma that kind of thing feel free to

ask and if I can answer I will try to do

so and just leave your question in the

comments below no more than three

questions per episode

please and be happy

Al righty then it does appear that we
are recording which is good hello and
welcome to question and answer number
120 I am your host poo basa and this is
my
beverage which is morning coffee I'm
actually doing this in the morning which
is unusual for me I'm mostly an
afternoon
person so
I will announce that there is an
aquarium video coming up which has
almost no Dharma in it whatsoever it's
it's verging more over into like
ecology which I guess you know Dharma
applies to everything in the world so it

also implies to the Ecology of fish

tanks so I guess there's

that so that'll that'll probably be up

in a few days and it does look like I'm

going to continue working in a sheet

metal shop

because the uh my previous

employer um is is very eager to hire me

back not not the most recent one but the

one before

that so still going to be driving a

forklift and stuff which is actually

kind of nice I I enjoy operating a

forklift so I might as well start

answering these here particular

questions and the first question is from

a Athena sigil and Athena sigil says

explain Abid dama both historically and culturally and don't hold back add your criticism I know you're up to the request well yeah actually I am although starting off with a meaty kind of question like this right off the bat especially since I just woke up a little while ago might not be ideal but we we'll give it a shot here Abid Philosophy for those of you who don't know what Abid dama is it is the third pitica of the Buddhist scriptures the Buddhist scriptures are called the titica or in Sanskrit the tripa which literally means three baskets first basket is vinia or rules of monastic

discipline second is suta or Sut which

is the discourses of the Buddha with

regard to philosophy and meditation and

so forth and third is Abid dama or in

Sanskrit Abid

Dharma and

originally Abid it's mentioned a few

times in the text but it's also often if

not usually paired with abiva so you've

got

auta where the monks are sitting around

usually with the the Buddha not there

you know it's just some monks sitting

around discussing dhama and so forth and

they will discuss Abid dhama and abiv

vinia which I mean generally what it

what it originally meant apparently is

like higher points finer points of dhama
and finer points of vinia which is the
first two piticas essentially you know
dhama is just like the the theory and
vinya is like the
practice roughly
speaking so originally Abid dama just
meant like finer points of dhama and
then it's it got turned into what are
sometime sometimes called the matrices
or the matrixes which are like lists of
points it was like sort of like a
synopsis of dhamma you know sort of like
a I wouldn't say a catechism but just
sort of like the basic points in
like systematic form that that was like

a learning Aid like in very ancient

times still in India of course and

eventually it

started like

diversifying it started growing and

evolving into a whole other ptica a

whole other branch of Buddhist

philosophy which attempts to explain

everything and this was actually pretty

much in Vogue in Ancient India ancient

Northern India like the Ganges

Valley um there were even like some

Proto Hindu schools like the niaya

school there was another another one I

can't remember the name of it but there

was niaya and another um another school

of within the viic Traditions that were

trying to do the same thing as Buddhist
Abid dama which is trying to categorize
and explain everything in the universe
so it was sort of like an attempt at
Aristotelian physics or what science is
trying to do in modern times just trying
to explain the
entire phenomenal
Universe empirically
objectively and so it was it was just
invogue in Northern India in ancient
times and the Buddhists were not immune
to that Vogue and so the different
schools of ancient Indian Buddhism most
of the ancient schools with one notable
exception started coming up with their

own philosophical interpretation of
dhama and trying to explain everything
in accordance with that interpretation
and that became their Abid dama or their
ABI Abid
Dharma and it's fairly clear that it
doesn't go all the way back to the time
of the Buddha according to the original
like the traditional explanation of Abid
dama um the Buddha didn't teach it on
this planet what he what happened
was during one Reigns Retreat the Buddha
just sort of manifested a kind of
holographic image of himself on this
Earth we won't get into the the question
of whether that is ethical in in
deliberately deceiving people into

thinking that he was really there when
he wasn't and then he flew or levitated
or teleported up into I can't remember
which Heaven it was it was either tawa
timsa or tus heaven where his mother was
his mother was now a goddess living in
this this sort of medium rank Heaven
world and he was teaching this
philosophy to her and the other gods
small G gods and goddesses there and
then he was sending a kind of synopsis
of that it's like review notes back down
to earth through I think it was mahamana
one of his chief disciples was like
coming back down to earth with these
notes from the Buddha's sermons or

lectures on the the nature of Ultimate Reality up in heaven and then on um it was the end of the Reigns Retreat when the Buddha descended this like um miraculously manifested staircase from Heaven back down to earth and so in Burma the last day of The reigns Retreat is called Abid dama day because that's the day that the Buddha came back down to earth after teaching Abid dama in heaven and it's fairly clear that this is a kind of rationalization for explaining how all of a sudden sudden new genuine authentic teachings of the Buddha that nobody had heard of before all of a sudden are being declared genuine authentic teachings of the

Buddha it's like well he didn't teach it
on this planet that's true but he taught
it up in heaven and then it got brought
down to us and now we're finding out
about
it so Abid dama the Abid dama ptica I
mean when it becomes canonical in terava
Buddhism it probably did not become
canonical
until the third Council which was during
the reign of the emperor Asoka so this
would be approximately 200 years after
the time of the Buddha
and um there there's some evidence for
that I mean I could have maybe I should
just a second I got to get a

book okay see when I was in Burma I was

really down on Abid dama because the

Burmese consider Abid dama to be the

highest the most

important teachings of the Buddha when

from a historical empirical point of

view probably the Buddha didn't even

really teach it and so I spent a lot

more

time let's

see oh maybe it's not even here wrong

book never mind but I spent a lot of

time when I was in Burma a monk in Burma

this kind

of bashing up Abid dama you know like

like a common insult to another Western

monk might be your mother was an Abid

dama scholar that kind of

thing so

anyways I forgot I forgot the the strand

of thought that I that I was working on

which which is pretty common with

me but um so there are some EV there are

some bits of evidence that Abid dama

really is not early and one of them is

that one of the books of the Abida is

the Kata watu which is third or fourth

on the on the list of seven texts that

are canonical Abid dama texts in Terra

Buddhism and the Kata

watu the whole purpose of the Kata watu

or grounds of debate it could be

interpreted like translated into like

grounds for debate is giving the terrain arguments against the other schools of Buddhism with regard to philosophy you know so like the sarvastivada school had this tenet in their philosophy that past present and future all exist in a sense simultaneously kind of kind of like an einsteinian interpretation of time whereas the terad in Abid dama had a more Newtonian interpretation of time where only the present moment exists past doesn't exist future doesn't exist only the present moment exists so in the Kata watu which was presumably edited if not composed by a certain monk named mogali

patisa who was like the chairperson like
the leader of the third
Council that uh it's it's like giving
you telling you how to argue against
these heretical pernicious wrong views
of the other schools of Buddhism and
it's hardly likely the Buddha would have
actually taught how to debate against
other schools of Buddhism when of course
in the Buddhist time there were no other
schools of Buddhism and also there are
plenty of texts that discourage
debate like the pasur sua of the
sutan so that's one bit of evidence that
obviously one of the seven books of Abid
dama is just plainly anachronistic

because it applies to the state of

Buddhism

during the time of the emperor Ashoka

rather than the time of Gab Buddha

himself also one of the main arguments

against the authenticity of Abid

dama is that every school of Buddhism

like I was saying before every school of

Buddhism had its own Abid dama even

terraa and sarvastivada which are very

close in fact the purpose the main

purpose of the third Council apparently

was to purge the sarasti vadin from the

Terra

school so sarvastivada and terada were

within the same tradition like stava

Proto terava up until the third Council

during the time of the the emperor

Ashoka

and it was like one of the main purposes

was to establish this is orthodox

Buddhism from our point of view and

these this other Branch this other like

rival philosophical school that is still

contained within the tradition is kicked

out and if you read the ancient

Chronicles of Terra Buddhism it says

essentially that non- Buddhist Heretics

had infiltrated the S and the purpose of

the third Council was to kick out these

non- Buddhist Heretics when in all

likelihood it was the sarasti vodin the

sarasti Vaden branch of this this

philosophic um Buddhist philosophy were
being kicked
out so even the sarasu vadin and the
Terra vadens had entirely different Abid
Damas not a single text is the same so
every single School of these these
ancient Abid Damas were were completely
different so that also is very good
evidence that Abid dama did not
originate with the Buddha but was cooked
up in later
centuries um just due to this this
ancient Indian need or or fashion for
just trying to systematize and
categorically explain everything and and
they still failed like I mentioned I
think it was the previous Q&A that that

paully ter terod and Abid dama tries to
explain the entire universe but for some
reason they don't include
gravity gravity is not included it's not
one of the the four forces or anything
like that like in modern science it was
just assumed and they didn't explain
this either but it was just assumed in
ancient Abid dama philosophy or ancient
Indian cosmology for that matter that
the entire universe has the same up down
orientation that there was just kind of
no gravity or gravity was just kind of
built into space because there was just
this automatic orientation of up and
down throughout the Universe and it

doesn't really work that

way

so it's and The Devout Terra a Buddhists

like you know like in Burma for example

very dogmatic very like medieval in

their faith-based approach to Buddhism

it all has to be correct everything in

the scriptures has to be 100%

true that if you point out to them that

that all the other ancient schools had

their own different Abid damas that

they'll say well you know they were

Heretics they had wrong view they

rejected the true Abid dama and then

just invented this fake Abid dama from

scratch which I mean it's common among

any religion to assume that your own

religion is the one true one and that
other religions are often just evil
people who are deliberately embracing
what they deep down know is wrong like
the The Book of Mormon is full of this
anyone who wasn't a Mormon in the Book
of Mormon anyone who didn't follow what
the Book of Mormon is teaching I mean
they were doing it just deliberately out
of just stubborn bloody mindedness they
knew that what the Mormons were
following was true and still just out of
just pernicious evil they rejected it
and it's just very difficult for me to
believe that that's the way it is I know
for a fact that that's not the way it is

not necessarily with regard to the Book of Mormon because I think the Book of Mormon is almost entirely fiction so another another bit of evidence that Abid dama is is not 100% correct and and in my books there is some some bashing of Abid dama you can you can find it in my books which are for sale on Amazon you can find it in the the the URL links below but um that some of the the most important teachings of Abid dama like there's there's a text called the Abid damata Saha which is in Burma is considered more important than the the poly Tex themselves because it's like um

like a summary of the teachings of Abid dama and some of the most important aspects of Abid dama that are taught in courses on Abid dama and so forth aren't even found in the text it's it's all commentarial stuff because at the time that the toptica was finalized Abid dama philosophy still wasn't finished yet and so they had to keep adding to it um after the toptica was was finished you couldn't add more books to the toptica at that point or add more texts or I mean it was pretty much all memorized at the time um so I mean they just had to include it in the commentaries so certain things like Rupa

kalapas which are like these molecules

that the universe is made of it's basic

to abidal philosophy only in the the

text or only in the commentaries or the

cheah witi which is this this sequence

if I remember correctly it's 17 mind

moments per each um it's like 17 events

that happen for each mind moment for

like if you're going to perceive

something it takes these 17 mind moments

in

sequence and it starts with

banga and goes through these different

stages of you know like adverting the

attention and all this kind of stuff

that's that also is found

only in the in the commentarial

tradition and not in the the poly texts
like the canonical polych themselves so
it's fairly clear that Abid
um was not really taught by the Buddha
by the Buddha I mean like some of his
teachings are represented in that but
Abid dama just tries to explain Ultimate
Reality and they're even considering
Samara to be ultimately real you know in
in Abid dama you got four main ultimate
realities you've got mind mental States
matter and
nibana and there's 28 different kinds of
matter there's 52 different kind of
mental States and so you've got this
broad spectrum of all these different

ultimate realities and so according to Abid dama like traditional Orthodox Abid dama which includes the commentarial tradition that NOS sensitivity or femininity or Earth element are all just as ultimately real as nibana or Nirvana itself and I think they just completely missed the boat and I would agree with the English monk Nana Vera who lived like in the he was a monk in the 50s and first half of the 60s in Sri Lanka who rejected Abid dama he considered just to be just bogus and he would say you're better off not learning any Abid dama because that means there's less that you have to unlearn in order to really understand

dham so I bashed Abid dama a lot when I
was a monk in Burma and then when I came
back to America nobody gave a [__] about
dama nobody really gave a [__] about
even like authenticity in the texts
really that they were more interested in
in like
scientism that you know when I came back
to the
West one of the main Shockers I think
was that most westerners who call
themselves Buddhist really adopt
scientific realism as their metaphysic
their interpretation of reality and then
just try to superimpose some dham
especially the ethical aspects on top of

that and so then I started bashing
scientism and pretty much stopped
bashing Abid dama because there is no
point to
it
so I guess that's enough I mean there's
quite a few questions there's less than
40 this time but more than 30 so I guess
that's good enough I I'm just going to
move on next question this is from Fred
and Fred says what's your thought on
Daniel Ingram claiming arahantship I
haven't watched his videos yet well I
only watched part of one video from
Daniel Ingram but my mind was already
kind of poisoned against him before I
ever saw him on YouTube and that was I

did look at his website years ago people
were asking me about Daniel Ingram years
and years ago back when I was still a
monk and you look on his website I don't
know if it's still like this now but
he's like advertising himself as an
arant as a fully enlightened being
on his website and he's got this list of
accomplishments where he has mastered
all these Jas and and like superhuman
States and so forth and I mean I really
don't think a fully enlightened being is
really just going to be bragging and
just advertising how enlightened he is
that's one thing that from the very
beginning when I first started reading

the sutas when the Buddha is just
bragging about how great he is and how
people should worship him and so forth I
I was just thinking an enlightened being
is very hardly likely to say this kind
of stuff so I it's sort of planted the
seed of really doubting the authenticity
and
genuiness of many poly texts because I
really do not think that a person who
has transcended self viiew who no longer
really identifies with an ego who no
longer identifies as anything is just
going to be bragging at advertising how
great he
is so yeah I I I was always skeptical of
Daniel Ingram there are a lot of like

sociopaths or conmen out there trying to pass themselves off as fully enlightened and also there are a bunch of people out there who have some kind of experience in their meditation and then they think bam that's it I must be enlightened now at very least I'm a soda paa I mean that's that's pretty common you got like the person who really wants to make progress in dhama and then they have some kind of breakthrough in their meditation you know they see lots of you know bright lights and fireworks and they have some kind of insight that arises and so then they just latch onto this idea that they're enlightened now

so not anyone who tries to pass thems
off as enlightened that really isn't
enlightened is necessarily a con man
some of them have just fooled themselves
into thinking that they're fully
enlighted like for example there's the
famous suta in the udana the Bahia suta
it's one of my favorite sutas in the
texts and it's about this non- Buddhist
athetic philosopher named Bahia who is
getting a lot of respect from people
he's made some significant progress in
dharm and so he starts thinking wow
maybe I really am enlightened and then
some small G God some deity who used to
be a friend or Kinsman of bajia in a
previous life comes down to him and says

no you're not enlightened but there is
an enlightened being called the Buddha
who lives you know over in the the
kingdom of kosala and so then Bahia goes
and meets the Buddha because he had
enough wisdom to to accept this
admonishment from the small G God from
this Dava that he wasn't really
enlightened but still it is possible
that some people can have some kind of
experience or whatever it is that causes
them to think that they're enlightened
when really they are not and I'm not
sure which one it is with Daniel Ingram
I personally am skeptical that he really
is enlightened I I finally saw him on a

YouTube video and he seemed like kind of nervous and fidgety and I don't know he just did not come off as an enlightened being to me at all although that could just be preconceptions on my part and those of you who have watched a lot of my Q&A videos may know that I'm just skeptical of the idea that within a context you really can have enlightened beings anyway that an enlightened being is a kind of paradox so if it's a paradox it doesn't follow the rules then really it's like you know no rules apply and you can't really say much about the situation and it could be like a lot of people Mahayana Buddhists a lot of Mahayana Buddhists anyway eart TOA

saying you know we're all already
enlightened it's just that we don't
realize it yet somehow but the
enlightenment is already
there so it could be that Daniel Ingram
just had a flash of insight into that
and would like to believe that he's
enlightened or um but or it could be
that he's just a like a con man just
wanting famous wanting to be famous and
make money and so forth from this
reputation of being fully enlightened or
I mean I cannot entirely rule out the
possibility that he really is
enlightened in which case what Buddhism
says about what enlightened beings are

like is all false or a lot of it is
false so I'm personally uh fairly
skeptical and have been for many years
with regard to Daniel Ingram largely
because of him just bragging advertising
that he's this enlightened being who is
mastered this this this this and this
it's all on page one of his website or
at least it used to be
so yeah there's there's a lot of people
like that out there and there's another
person mentioned in one of the questions
below I have noticed that's along these
lines also so I'm just going to move on
to Fred's second question is draining
the spuds really wicked the body has
fluid it would normally spew out at some

stage well I wouldn't call it Wicked you
know it's like I mean of course course
he's talking about you know emission of
semen and I mean just the physiological
act itself is ethically neutral that
it's not even condemned in the polyx for
example in in the rule the sesa rule
it's number one sesa number
one um in the in the rules of monastic
discipline it says a monk is not allowed
to deliberately emit semen and
deliberately have an orgasm
unless it's in a
dream and when I was a younger Monk and
still full of juice um about every two
weeks on average you'd have like a

pornographic dream that would then you
know restore your hormonal equilibrium
so to
speak so just the physiological Act of
causing an
orgasm deliberately or not deliberately
just the the physiological Act of having
an orgasm is ethically
neutral but if you're trying to trying
to have an orgasm on purpose then you're
wallowing in sensuality which is got a
certain amount of unh wholesome Karma
associated with it and then if you're a
monk and you have agreed through your
ordination that you're not going to do
that kind of stuff you're going to
follow the vine rules then there's also

some some

additional like UNH wholesome karma for

a monk because not only is he wallowing

in sensuality to some

degree but also he's knowingly and

willingly breaking these rules and it's

a fairly serious rule sesa rules require

six days and six nights of penance and I

I've noticed there's a question about

that also down

below so yeah I mean even then it's not

really wicked I mean some teenage boy

jerking off to pornography or something

or older person jerking off to

pornography um then I mean there's a

certain amount of unskillful karma

involved but I wouldn't go so far as to
call it Wicked or evil you know it's
it's unskillful to some degree from a
from a strictly ancient Indian aesthetic
darmic point of view and which all kinds
of things are immoral from the ancient
Indian athetic Point of View just
putting salt and pepper on your food to
make it taste better is still it's
you're wallowing in sensuality it's it's
not good you shouldn't do
it listening to music liking music that
kind of stuff wallowing in
sensuality the ancient Indian Buddhist
ethic was very austere and you should
not pursue any kind of sensual pleasure
other than what is absolutely necessary

like eating food in general sleeping
bathing that kind of thing that's that's
about
it so yeah my experience was that when I
was celibate and not deliberately
causing orgasms then every few weeks
when I was younger um it would just like
the the the hormonal pressure would
build up until finally I would just emit
in my sleep and then when I reached
about 42 years of of age when I was in
my early 40s it stopped happening and I
I missed it actually because some of
those dreams were pretty hot I have to
admit so anyways I'm just going to move
on to Fred's next question which is was

Muhammad an immoral man well this is
kind of a controversial one and from a
from a Muslim point of view Muhammad was
not an immoral man he was the perfect
man you know he was the ideal he's the
role
model but from a Buddhist point of view
obviously Muhammad was an immoral man
because he killed people he raped women
he sold women and children into slavery
he was a pirate essentially I mean and
this is all from the the the Muslim text
themselves you know it's not like
non-muslims are making this stuff up
against him it's just right there in
their own own tradition that for example
when Muhammad moved to Medina from Mecca

you know he was driven out of Mecca he
was not popular there he moved to Medina
and he didn't really have property there
that he and his followers could like
profit from and so he had to come up
with some other way of supporting
himself and his followers so they
started doing essentially Bandit raids
on Caravans which involved killing
people sometimes and it's stealing you
know he's he's like killing people and
taking their
stuff I mean from a from a Buddhist
point of view that is just flat out
immoral that's about as immoral as you
can get and then also I mean there's

there's cases that the the Muslims admit
to themselves where he would kill
somebody in a in like some little war
they weren't very big wars during his
time the wars got much bigger after he
died and then he'd be like having sex
with this dead man's wife you know 50
feet away from her her dead husband's
body so yeah he was he was a a very
immoral man like a murderer uh a a Thief
a bandit a warlord
essentially so he was much closer as um
spiritual leaders go he was much closer
to Moses assuming that Moses ever really
existed there must have been at least
one person upon which the The Legend of
Moses was

based and I mean Moses was a warlord
it's it's kind of ironic that know like
Hebrew people nowadays really have a dim
view of the whole idea of genocide but
as far as I know the first recorded
attempt at genocide is in the Old
Testament where Moses was commanding
that all Canaanites be exterminated
every man woman and child even the even
the dogs and donkeys and stuff in some
cases so Muhammad comes much closer to
Moses than he comes to the Buddha or
Jesus the Buddha and Jesus apparently
were like very moral people you know
they were saintly people whereas
Muhammad and Moses assuming again that

Moses ever really existed they were

essentially Warlords who who used

religion as a way of getting their

supporters um more fanatical in their

support unifying the people getting as

just fanatically

obedient and whether there was whether

it was sincere or whether it was getting

back more into the con man

stuff who

knows but I already answered that

question uh the main question anyway was

Muhammad an immoral man depends on what

tradition you're following I guess so

I'm just going to move on to the next

question this is from

files and FY says have you ever met an

enlightened being and what was he like
well I've answered this question a
couple of times I think over the course
of these q&as so I would advise anyone
before you ask a question watch all
119 of the previous q&as and then
there's a good chance your question will
already be answered there but um here we
are and here's the question and again
I've I just I already mentioned just a
few minutes ago that I am skeptical of
the the very possibility of a really
fully enlightened being living within a
samsaric context like an unenlightened
person when you look when an
unenlightened person looks at another

being they're looking at them through
unenlightenment colored glasses so an
unenlightened person
they're not going to really be able to
perceive an enlightened being they'll
perceive some saintly person and then
they'll have this unenlightened idea of
what enlightenment is like what an
enlightened being is like and then
they'll just project that onto the other
person which is one reason why you've
got so many fake enlightened beings in
this world people who are considered to
be enlightened beings who
aren't so with that as a kind of
introduction or disclaimer
have I ever met an enlightened being and

what was he like as I've said before the

the one person that I've met

that maybe had the the

best plausible claim for being

enlightened was sh um seat in Burma and

I only met him for a few

minutes and I was staying at a monastery

called the aoya in mon state in southern

Burma and um seatt would spend his

summers at um a monastery that was maybe

5 miles away on a different

Hill and so I was told that um seatt was

going to be there and I of course wanted

to to meet him so a lay

person walked me there and it was during

the hot season in southern Burma just

hot and humid I was completely drenched
in sweat my robes were just wet with
sweat by the time I got there and I'm
sitting there um just
sweating and and just kind of very
uncomfortable and um um seato and this
other old Seattle he was he was very old
s um Seattle also had to abandon
probably at least 80 at the time and
this other old monk was probably older
than Shu um seatt and the difference
between those two old Burmese monks was
like night and day because this one old
monk who was with Shu um seato he was
out of it I mean he obviously had severe
cognitive decline he was almost deaf
people would have to yell into his ear

and even then it was questionable
whether he really was able to hear it or
understand what was being said I mean he
was he was really scile and um was just
kind of sitting straight up and down
just brigh eyed just kind of looking
right through you and I mean that's
really all I was exposed to with regard
to Shu um Seattle I've I've spoken with
other monks
both Western and Burmese who knew him
way better than I did and like I used to
know this a retired
surgeon who con he uh was ordained as a
monk after he retired from being this
kind of upper class sort of surgeon and

he said of all the monks that he ever
met that he thought had the greatest
claim for being Enlightenment would be
the one was the one that he considered
the most likely was wayoo Seattle but
weu died back in like the 1970s I think
and so of the ones that were still alive
at that time this was like the late 90s
that I was talking with him he said sh
um Seattle probably would be the one
that he would consider to be enlightened
if you had to guess that you know any
monks were enlightened because just
having a reputation for being
enlightened doesn't really mean very
much and uh I had an American friend
still still have him as a friend in fact

pretty

sure who was a a disciple for a for a

short time I think of uman and he he

said shatt could definitely read minds

you know he would just be talking to one

person and then just like break off and

start addressing what this other person

was thinking about and then go back to

his main conversation you know

so um yeah with regard to what he was

like from my point of view I mean he was

just sitting straight up and down very

bright-eyed very alert and attentive and

that's about that was really it because

I only was there with them you know had

a very brief audience with him for a few

minutes and then I was off I went back

to um the B

aoya so I'm just going to move on to

Phil's next

question which is how do you justify

holding political views when the Buddha

explicitly tells us not to have views

and considers politics animal talk don't

worry I'm not being contentious here

where if I am then I apologize but I was

just thinking that whatever your

justification for being a trump

supporter is speaking not a Democrat but

as someone who's fairly apolitical it

would impart some wisdom unto us lowly

spiritual

peons well I'm no longer a renunciant I

am now a taxpaying citizen of the United States I am a

householder I've Got a Woman I've got bills to pay and I vote you know it's like you know democracy it's the duty of a citizen to participate in the political process at least to the extent of being aware of what the political situation is so that you can vote knowledgeably and you know

justly in in the elections you know it's sort of it's the duty of an American citizen who hasn't renounced the world to participate to some degree so the Buddha discouraged discussing politics but he also discouraged living in a

house he discouraged handling

money he discouraged having a

mate so I mean that applies to hardcore

renunciant people who really are

radically renouncing Society but I'm no

longer radically renouncing society and

so I do take an interest in politics

and I do speak about my interest in

politics from time to time but from the

point of view of a an American citizen

it really is your duty to have some

political awareness and it's very

interesting subject yeah it's very

interesting especially lately you know

the whole Trump phenomenon has like

radically transformed the political

situation in America and indirectly to

the rest of the Western

World just because the whole globalist

unip party in America has been

overthrown now You' the the remnant of

the globalist uni party is the Democrat

plus a few vestigal neocon conservatives

in the Republican

party and they're they're being purged

gradually so it's it's very it's

interesting times from a political point

of view it's so damn interesting it's

it's hard for me not

to talk about it

sometimes so anyways I guess that's good

enough of an answer so I'm just going to

move on to Phil's third

question which is as follows mechanical
or mechanized behavior for example
repetitive Mindless Behaviors like
having stock answers for everything is
waking death and a path to whatever can
be called hell and is a form of
suppressing what mahayan ists call
Buddha nature agree or disagree
um I would
disagree partly because it depends on
your attitude it's not the outward
Behavior mechanical or mechanized
Behavior like you're working at a
machine you know it's just repetitive
Behavior you're like sticking something
into one end of a machine or taking it
out of the other end of the machine and

putting it into a crate or something

that I mean that can be a kind of

mindless zombie like Behavior or it

could be like a meditative experience

like like when you're practicing

meditation I mean mindfulness of

breathing I mean how mechanical or

repetitive can you get than just

watching the the sensation of touch at

your nostrils as the air goes in and out

or you're doing walking meditation I

mean it's just you know Left Foot Right

Foot and just I mean it's just whatever

it is that you're observing is just this

mechanical process and you're not even

being creative really there's no hardly

any originality

involved

so um I don't think it's really a path

to Hell either it's more of a path to

like a let's just say that you're just

kind of zoning out you just kind of go

into this semiconscious stuper when

you're running the machine or when

you're sitting there breathing it's not

that you're in a height and state of

awareness you're just in a semiconscious

stupid just mechanically zombie like

doing what

doing even that I don't think would be a

road to hell so much as a road to like a

ghost realm where you're only like

halfway there you know you're just my

experience with like seances and you
know Spirit phenomenon and so forth is
that they tend not to be fully conscious
it's like they're like sleepwalking
these these kind of beings so I mean it
would be more of a road towards that or
possibly even a kind of animal existence
a kind of mindless animal existence than
actually going to hell because you have
to do something bad to go to hell and
just like being in a semine conscious
stuper is not necessarily Wicked or
evil but I do agree that like um
repetitive let's see having stock
answers for
everything I mean a lot of Burmese

Seattles are like this where you ask a question and they got like a a standard stock list of like 40 questions that they know how to answer like 40 answers and they'll just pick the one that most closely resembles the answer to your question it might not even really be answering your question but it's the closest one that they have memorized and they're comfortable with yeah I mean even that's not a road to hell but it's you're not fully awake you're not fully conscious especially with regards to like having stock answers for everything that just just being a dogmatist who's maybe just afraid to have their own

opinion out of fear of of like heresy of

giving the wrong answer

because the the the Burmese Buddhist

Burmese Buddhists in general not all of

them but most of them are pretty much

like medieval European Catholics where

it's all dogma and you're afraid to

deviate from that because that's heresy

and you can go to hell for

it

so let's see let's just review this

question here mechanical or mechanized

behavior for example repetitive Mindless

Behaviors is like be having stock

answers for everything is walking death

yeah it's it's like walking semic

Consciousness walking it's like sleep
walking more than walking death and a
path to whatever can be called hell yeah
I've already discussed how I think it's
more like the the P realm you know the
ghost realm or maybe animal realm than
hell and is a form of suppressing what
Mahayana call Buddha nature it I don't
know if it's so much suppressing it is
just concealing it just covering it
over yeah obscuring it might be better
than suppressing it so I'm just going to
move on to the next question which is
from
quor and quor has radically transgressed
the rule of three questions per episode
because he has asked a total of six

questions and I'm just saying I mean
when Donald Trump gets into office and
and establishes his fascist regime
quator with with six questions like this
can easily wind up lined up against the
wall and shot although not with anything
lethal something that might sting a
little bit you know BB gun or something
I mean we don't want to get too too
crazy here so quor I'm just going to
answer like the three first ones he
asked or it might just be the three
medius most interesting ones or
something so I mean he asked let's
see he asked that if all experience is
is to be had only through the condas I'm

not answering that one because it's too many moving from fourth Ofna to the death list and then he asked another question about soda stage which indicates he's not really familiar with my understanding of what soda ponas are but we're not even going to go there he can ask those questions for the next episode if he so chooses so questor's first answer here or question I'm I'm I'm giving the answers at least I'm trying to qu tor's first question here is if you share Merit knowing that you can't actually share Merit is that a form of wrong speech and it's just a manner of speaking I you really can't share Merit from a terraa Buddhist point

of view maybe in Mahayana where there's
an idea of direct transmission or
something or in Hinduism or you've got
um like gurus and swamis who are
actually um like manipulating or
altering the karma of of their disciples
like neim coroli Baba up there he did it
through food where he he would could
somehow burn off your karma by eating
food that you offered to him and ROM dos
mentioned there was another um kind of
Swami holy man in India who did it
through cigarettes people would donate
cigarettes to him he'd be smoking like
three cigarettes at a time I don't know
if he he died of empyema or not but um

it was like burning off the karma of of his disciples by smoking the cigarettes that they offered to him and and that is not a thing in Terra from the Terra Buddhist point of view that is not really possible or it could be through some loophole you know through the back door somehow but as a general rule it's it's not considered to be a thing in terab

Buddhism so you can't really share your own Merit the way sharing Merit works is you perform a good deed and other beings nearby who are aware of you doing this good deed can experience mudita or Joy at your benefit you know they're happy that you did this good thing and then

that is their own wholesome mental state which then creates their own Karma their own wholesome Karma their Good Karma and so a lot of the time like Burmese um Burmese Buddhists after they do some meritorious deed like offering robes to a monk and taking the precepts and so forth they'll do this water pouring ceremony which starts off with them yelling and they're gradually pouring the water into a bowl or something and that is their way of sharing Merit it's it's like they're calling attention to their their sharing of Merit so that beings that might not have been paying attention will start paying attention

like whether they're deities or in the
ghost realm or just people standing off
at a kind of a distance
then they'll start paying attention and
then it increases the odds that these
onlookers will then rejoice in the Merit
of this devout Buddhist person who just
did this meritorious deed and they're
rejoicing not the deed of the other
person but they're rejoicing at that
other person's deed is what is their own
wholesome Karma and causes them to get
their own Good Karma so if you share
Merit knowing that you can't actually
share Merit is that a form ofong speech
no I mean you can call cheesecake
cheesecake knowing full well that it's

not cake at all it is

pie and I mean it's not like you're

making any you know not like you're

lying by calling it

cheesecake or a starfish I mean a

starfish isn't a star and it's not a

fish

either but you're not lying when you

call it a

starfish you call it like an an a

asteroid e

eodm asteroid not in the sense of the

Rock in space but just starlike star

shaped so it's just a manner of speaking

it's conventional speech smuti Sacha

it's conventional truth and so um I mean

if you're trying to deceive somebody it depends on your intention if you're trying to actually deceive somebody and to thinking you're sharing Merit when you're really not let's say you're some high-profile Dharma teacher who's advertising that you can share Merit for a small fee kind of a thing and people think you can really share Merit and you know that you can't then yeah that would be um a kind of wrong speech also wrong livelihood but just using manners of speech that you know you can continue calling cheesecake cake when really it is

pie and it's it's not like you're a liar and you're going to burn in hell for for

calling it

cheesecake so I'm just going to move on

to quat tor's next question

here which is you mentioned that most

people don't even want to be enlightened

but isn't that just out of ignorance if

they were to experience nibana they'd

have something to aim for I wonder if

those that believe they want

Enlightenment actually understand what

it is I think that the higher janas

would at least need to be experienced to

get some idea of what to expect so I

mean the main question here is you

mentioned that most people don't even

want to be enlightened but isn't that

just out of ignorance well yeah of course I mean if there wasn't any ignorance they'd already be enlightened so yeah if you think that your ignorance your delusion is the reality you don't want anything beyond that that's kind of scary you'll have to like let go of what you consider to be reality what you consider to be yourself and in in a way it's just like jumping off a cliff or just jumping out of an airplane or something it's I mean it's scary even to most Buddhist monks I think I've mentioned before that if somehow someone invented an Enlightenment pill which would probably be red the red Enlightenment pill and if

you took this pill you're guaranteed to
full Enlightenment I think a lot of even
Buddhist monks would run from that pill
in Terror as though it were a rabid
demon-possessed
Cobra because we are attached to what we
consider to be reality what we consider
to be ourselves and to lose that would
be like death and fear of death is just
hardwired right into pretty much all
beings intelligent enough to have any
kind of perception at
all so see here if they were to
experience nibana they'd have something
to aim for but if they experienced
nibana I mean they wouldn't have to aim

anymore I wonder if those that believe
they want Enlightenment actually
understand what it is nobody does if
you're not enlightened you're not going
to know what enlightenment
is if you have not experienced Ultimate
Reality you don't know what Ultimate
Reality is and any idea you have about
what it is is going to be unrealistic
it's going to be false it's going to be
invalid excuse me
having to like burp or something in mid
rant is somewhat
uncomfortable so he says here I think
that the higher jonuts would at least
need to be experienced to get some idea
of what to expect I mean maybe to some

degree although it's not this idea of
what enlightenment is like that helps
you get
enlightened I mean it can be helpful but
a lot of people become enlightened just
out of the blue you know like
C TOA I'm not I'm not insisting that he
really was enlightened but he had some
kind of Awakening experience anyway and
he didn't have any idea of Enlightenment
before that it was just that he
experienced such a state of emotional
crisis that it just slammed him out of
his like habitual way of looking at
reality into a higher way of looking at
reality so that's the way it generally

happens to

westerners

especially that that I mean it's just

you have some kind of insight that you

weren't expecting through meditation or

through a near-death experience or

something and it just you know it's just

out of the blue I mean you can't really

get an approximation of Enlightenment

other than maybe through like the higher

Jas that will at least give you a kind

of flat calm mentally so that you're not

distracted by all the waves and then you

can sort of get an insight into what

um you know not being distracted by the

waves is like because the waves are

samsara the waves are like the

phenomenal socalled reality that we're
stuck in we're stuck at the level of
form and not the level of
essence so I guess I answered the main
question here is isn't that just out of
ignorance that people don't want to be
enlightened well
obviously and I mean even if they had
some fairly useful still invalid but at
least kind of useful and Orthodox
interpretation of what enlightenment is
like they'd still be afraid of it
because they're just locked into this um
essentially delusional reality this
delusional world with this delusional
self and they're so invested in that so

attached to that that if you became
enlightened you'd have to let go of all
that and then it would be like death for
them so I'm just going to move on to
quora's thirdd
question which is referring to the
simile of the raft used to get across
the river we Ed the DH to cross Sam Sara
but when we reach the other Shore we
discard the raft does this translate to
experiencing the fourth ad jna during
everyday life in
non-activity and then discarding that to
reach nibana not necessarily I mean it
could include that I
suppose um although you're not going to
be in fourth

of like when you're walking around

talking not that I'm aware

of I mean that's like a flat calm

mentally so you wouldn't be

perceiving I mean if you if you perceive

anything in fourth jna it's just like

subliminal just like bare minimum the

slightest ripples on the

surface and uh I mean it could be

through some Paradox that a being who is

like that whose mind is like blank

almost you know like just like glass can

still like walk around and and like

order something in a restaurant carry on

a conversation drive a car that kind of

thing um I think Orthodox Terra would

say no you can't do that although who knows but the simile of the raft raft is just practice in general dhama in general not just even just practice but the theory in fact it's it's more the theory than the practice that is this raft made of rubbish you know the standard simile which is found in the I think it's the alagadam of the majaya is you know there's a man standing at the like the shore of this flood or some flooded River and he wants to get to the other side there's no boat there's there's no Bridge so he just gets a bunch of sticks and and branches and and tying it together with vines you know there's grass on it and so forth

it's just a bunch of debris he finds
like on this side of the river and he he
lashes it together into a kind of raft
or float he gets on that and then he
just paddles that across the flood and
when he gets to the other side he just
lets it go he doesn't just pick it up
and carry it on his head and continue on
his way carrying this raft is he just
lets it go he he bees it or he just
pushes a into the water and lets it
float away because he doesn't need it
anymore and that's what the Buddha was
teaching with regard to dhamma and it's
a very profound teaching that a lot of
Buddhists really don't understand that

this Dharma that they consider to be
sacred and holy is essentially useful
rubbish and once you get Enlightenment
it's it's not necessary anymore it's
just
rubbish so you have to let it go and
it's mainly these beliefs that we have
about dhama the practice itself is just
physiological actions that I mean you
can still continue behaving in a saintly
manner it's just that you don't have any
attachment to it you don't have any
attitude towards it it's just what you
do spontaneously at this
point but all these you know the Noble
eight-fold Path all these thinking about
how to get to Enlightenment and

everything it's it's not necessary

anymore you just let it go and just

beliefs in general you let those go

because beliefs are just delusional

symbols in our mind that we cling on to

because we really don't know anything

better because we're not enlightened

yet

so yeah it's not just that you're

letting go of fourth jna you're letting

go of the entire philosophical system

because the entire philosophical system

is just symbolic thoughts in samsara you

don't need symbolic thoughts in samsara

anymore so you can just let all of that

go and it's not even you letting it go

because the whole idea of you is also

let go

of so skipping over the next three

questions from quor who is very

transgressive in this in this Q&A I'm

just going to move on to the next

question which is from Stellar Supreme

formerly known as Liber Lam and Stellar

Supreme formerly known as Liber Lam says

would a rag wearing monk clean clean the

rags before stitching them into a robe

I'm thinking there would be a risk of

infection if there were a cut or soar in

contact with dirty rags and sure yeah

you wash the the rags like you got a

monk who's doing the Pam suula Danga pom

suula literally means like um dust Heap

garbage heap and so in Burmese a rag robe like this is called pantu coming from poms pull up and so in in the Buddhist time early on in the Buddhist dispensation that's how monks would get their their robe cloth they they weren't allowed to accept cloth from lay people yet in the early days and so they just wander around and pick up Rags you know they'd wash the rags and then they'd like cut them into the proper shapes and sew them together into this Patchwork kind of robe and one of the main kinds of bags that you could use would be burial shrouds or shrouds at what is called a charnal field where um people

that were too poor to um to get a decent burial or cremation would just be thrown out into this field to be devoured by insects and and like vultures and crows and and dogs and and Jackal and so forth and some of them would have cloth on them and so the monks were allowed to take that cloth after after the body you had been there a while because there's this story um in the text about this monk who took a burial shroud off of a a freshly deposited body and the freshly deposited body reanimated so the monk was essentially chased by a zombie so in order to avoid zombie chases in the future the Buddha made this rule that the body has to like be cold and there

for a while I don't remember the exact
length of time it has to be there before
a monk is able to like take the the
cloth off of it in order to make robes
out of it but I mean in that case
obviously you got a burial shroud that
was wrapping a corpse then probably you
should wash it before you wear it I mean
you're going to have to wash the robe
after you've been wearing it for a while
washing robes is
important um also if you're going to Dy
it with with dye to turn it in the
proper color then uh generally use like
boiling hot dye which is going to
sterilize it anyway and a lot of monks

like Forest monks in Thailand instead of
washing their robes with like laundry
detergent they just rede it in this
boiling hot solution of robe dye which
is like dissolved tree Bart resins and
so forth that uh that not only fixes the
dye but it also sterilizes it and cleans
it to some degree and and I knew a monk
who tried to make a real puku robe out
of
rags and it's not easy in Burma because
Burma is not a rich country probably
ancient India wasn't very rich either
but people don't throw away their their
old shirts and and their songs and so
forth until they are just no good
anymore you know it's just really Rags

just threadbear rags and it's all
different colors maybe not so much in
Ancient India but nowadays you got all
this like blue polyester and all this
kind of stuff that when you make a robe
out of it um this this this monk that I
knew who made one of these people really
didn't like it because I mean he looked
kind of like a clown because he just
wearing this Patchwork all these
different colors that the robe dye
really can't cover over you know like
using tree bark uh robe dye isn't going
to cover over over like a blue shirt
that's part of your robe it's going to
stay pretty much blue and so he got a

lot of complaints and eventually stopped
wearing that
robe um he did get a a shroud once that
was just it was just put there on it was
like folded up on top of this body for
Lay people wanting Merit by offering to
this relatively Advanced monk so he just
picked the the Shroud and just folded up
cloth off of this corpse as as as a kind
of you know ceremonial ritual way of
getting a burial shroud that really
wasn't a burial
shroud so the answer to that question in
one word is yes which I could have done
but I just got to ramble and stuff
instead so the second question from
Stellar Supreme formerly known as lib

Lam still known as Libra lamb in some circles I'm pretty sure is as follows do you find Paras ology or physicalist empiricism to be more explanatory to the nature of reality please provide Exposition and note that I'm not asking which is optimized for experimental reproduction but which best explains the real
itself well Stellar Supreme formerly known as Liber Lam seems to seems not to really understand how parapsychology works because there's all different sorts of interpret ations of parapsychology so I mean some parapsychology is physicalist empiricism

in fact a lot of parapsychology is physicalist and Paras ISM especially like in the Soviet Union and in communist China they had parapsychology Labs where they're they're trying to understand you know Paras pychology and like control it you know once you get spies that can read minds then it's Off to the Races you know and then there was this

there was this woman in the Soviet Union her name was Nina kuligina if I remember correctly and she could move objects she was sort of like a Russian Yuri Geller who could like move objects without touching it and so forth but what the the Soviets and the Chinese didn't

understand or I mean they were locked
into Marxism which is materialist and so
because their own ideology required them
to consider parapsychology to be
physical in nature they've got like
these special sensor helmets they've got
all these these sensors everywhere
trying to detect any kind of fields or
Rays or something coming out of the the
brain of the psychic that was doing this
and they failed they they had psychics
or people who were talented with regard
to certain psychic uh Powers who could
do amazing
feats kind of like Yuri Geller was
considered to have been able to do

but their their approach to

parasym that they just failed to

understand

it so

um certain interpretations of

parasyn given by oh what's his name the

the trickster in the Paranormal I can't

remember his name right off hand but the

author of the trickster and the

Paranormal his interpretation of the

nature of reality is is much

more explanatory of empirical reality

than like scientific

materialism scientific materialism is

definitely deficient in certain ways it

cannot explain Consciousness itself for

example pH like scientific materialists

just cannot begin to explain how it is
that this gray blob of meat that has the
texture or consist of an overripe
avocado contained in your skull actually
generates like subjective
experience they say well it's a s it's a
byproduct of chemical reactions or
whatever but they don't know how you
know it's just their best
guess so when you get into paraschos
then you've got a better chance at
really getting into some profound
understanding of our you know the the
human predicament or what we are or how
we
are so it depends on the interpretation

of parapsychology but a more idealist
one that is not just materialistic is
going to be more explanatory with regard
to the nature of reality because reality
is is not
physical so I'm just going to move on to
stillar Supreme formerly known as Libra
Lamb's third
question which is do you feel that
Christians use too much discursive
reasoning when it comes to explaining
God and that we could characterize such
a thing as God better as super
mundane and thus incomprehensible by the
ordinary
mind well Christianity is sort of like
Buddhism in that respect in that you got

all different kinds of

Christians even within a single School

of Christianity you got all different

kinds of

people and some of them are going to be

more mystically oriented especially like

in Catholicism or or Greek Orthodox or

whatever you've got just radical Mystics

or there were certain schools what was

dotism where it was like you could not

understand God by thinking about it and

so it was like quietism where you would

just in a way it was like a Buddhist

kind of practice where you're just

essentially doing deep meditation or

contemplation because that's the only

way you could come anywhere close to
really understanding God is just through
Experiencing God directly by suppressing
or dismissing all other kinds of
perception until you've got like a
mental flat calm going so you're not
distracted by all these waves and so
that you're more likely to be able to
experience the spirit of God which per
invades the entire universe which is
always right here all the
time so from a like a theistic point of
view with a capital G God any kind of
relatively sophisticated or Advanced
type of that is going to have the spirit
of God everywhere it's not just that you
got the angry old man with the beard

sitting on a throne up in space it's the
spirit of God is everywhere it's just
saturating everything including us
so that the only the the best way to be
aware of the presence of God is just
dismiss all this distracting perceptual
symbolic stuff from your mind and then
maybe just maybe you'll experience the
presence of God which is filling you all
the time anyway and that's found in
Christianity and Hinduism and you know
whatever probably sufis like Sufism
which is a branch of of Islam um
probably the the Hebrews got their own
version of it and definitely in
Buddhism although just the the

intellectual theoretical aspect of it
will be different in Buddhism because in
Buddhism technically there is no capital
G
God so do I feel that Christians use too
much discursive reasoning when it comes
to explaining god um yeah and it's but
not all of them it's just some
Christians just aren't ready for
advanced mysticism just like most
Buddhists aren't ready for advanced
mysticism and so they've got their Abid
dama they've got all their theories you
know they've got their wrote
explanations for what nibana is and they
just rely on that because they can't
experience it in any other way they

can't experience it really in that way
but at least they got some kind of way
of kind of dealing with it
conceptually so yeah I think it's that
way in in all
religions that the normies most people
are just going to be dealing with mental
Concepts that really cannot approach the
absolute but that's really all they've
got that's the best they can
do and then you've got the more advanced
people you know a few like Advanced
Mystic types meditation Masters and so
forth contemplatives who are able to
experience reality to some degree
directly everybody has at least a little

Inkling of Ultimate Reality that's sort
of like the it's like the our source and
we're just we're just soaking in it it's
always
there I think it would take some kind of
like non-sentient
robot or maybe a vampire or something
that is just completely cut off from the
absolute so I guess I'll just move on
the next question this is from covac and
CAD zida
and he says you have said the world is
an undifferentiated Mass without
perception however this seems to assume
the world is continuous and on a
spectrum bleeding from one thing to
another naturally but if the world is

quantized then it seems there are natural divisions between one thing from another at the smallest scale for example you cannot say that an electron and Photon are undifferentiated without perception because they are physically separated and have fundamentally different properties they can't be broken down into any further Parts hence fundamental particles even if you consider quantum mechanical waves they are still quantized meaning there is a natural differentiation and separation between things does my thought process have some validity to it or do you think there is something I missing here um

well that's the main question there's
kind of a double question here does my
thought process have some validity to it
no and then do you think there is
something I'm missing here yes see what
you're trying to do you're trying to
dismiss perception out the front door
and then just sneak it in back in
through the
back so let's see up here towards the
top this seems to assume the world is
continuous and on a spectrum no if there
is no differentiation there is no
Spectrum there is no difference bleeding
from one thing to another there is no
one thing to another I mean that just
forget that

that is just

void

invalid so but if the world is quantized

then it seems there are natural

divisions between one thing and another

at the smallest scale yeah so long as

you've got perception dividing stuff up

and like giving identities to different

things it may be that there was some um

misunderstanding with regard to how I in

in the previous Q&A I was talking about

how like how you divide things up is

arbitrary so you can you can identify an

entire Forest you could single out a

clump of trees in that Forest you could

single out one single tree you can

single out a branch on that tree you can
single out a twig on that Branch you can
single out a leaf on that twig you can
single out like a a cell in that leaf
you could single out like an organel
within that cell a molecule within the
organel an atom within the molecule a
subatomic particle within the atom but
that doesn't mean
I mean it could be misunderstood that I
think that all of that is is real but
that's just I was just talking about the
arbitrary nature of identifying
anything that where you draw the line
but still you've already got perception
that's dividing stuff up and if you get
rid of perception this symbolic

interpretation it is as though there is
nothing
left there were Buddhist philosophers in
medieval India if not ancient India that
were were really discussing this a lot I
think it was called the Dig Naga
School venerable daroda was was a a
famous member of this school who who who
made the statement and I'm not going to
try and find it but you know if you get
rid of all perceptual
interpretation then I mean all you got
left is just emptiness it is as though
there's no sensory data at
all and in order to have any kind of
differentiation you have to have

relations which are like same as

different from would be two of the main

ones bigger than smaller than better

than worse than but just like same as or

different from you've got to have that

in order to divide the universe up into

parts and same as and different from do

not exist out there they are

psychological processes they're

psychological interpretations they are

perceptual

you get rid of the perception that's it

it's all

gone

so I think I uh ranted myself into a

dead end

there so anyways it's it's all just

mindmade you get rid of the the mindmade
aspect of it and it's just blank
void or it's it's Nirvana its Ultimate
Reality but it's it's still not really
divided up into parts except through
perception which is
delusional so I'm just going to move on
to seov action cpad Z's next
question and I don't know why Ted
kazinski is he's two people asked about
him in this Q&A so anyways seov action
CAD Zina says have you read industrial
society and its
future by Dr Theodore John kazinski he
was a famous child genius who was a
Harvard trained math professor by 25 and

made many strides in the fields of physics like in string theory due to other people using his mathematical discoveries he also happens to be called the unibomber by some people if you have read the manifesto what are your thoughts on it from a DH perspective I haven't read the manifesto I think my brother read it who is totally blackpilled on politics and just the world in general so he mentioned it to me a few times and I did watch like a documentary about John kazinski or Ted kazinski the unibomber that was talking about how there was some kind of clandestine mental experimentation done on him like MK Ultra kind of stuff when

he was younger and that may have been
what kind of [__] his mind up and
caused him to start trying to murder
people but I mean he could be another
case of somebody like um Nica Tesla who
was like a scientific genius but also
kind of nutty at the same
time I mean obviously if you're trying
to kill people by sending bombs in the
mail then I mean that's not exactly well
balanced
psychologically so yeah I I haven't
really read what he wrote I mean he
seems to be I mean you can you can argue
just about any kind of point in a
persuasive cogent kind of way but I mean

that's one of the problems with this
world is there's not just one correct
way of interpreting things and you can
take a kind of blackpilled you know very
cynical kind of interpretation of things
but at the same time you can take
another kind of interpretation that
isn't as blackpilled or as cynical and
it's just as valid or just as invalid
depending on how you want to look at
it but yeah I mean the main question
here is easy to answer because I really
have not read the unibomber
manifesto I have read a few manifestos
in my life but that isn't one of them so
I'm just going to move on to the next
question here also from coaction CAD

zida in udana

5.1 Queen Malika told her husband that she finds herself most dear and the King City agreed and felt the same way they went to the Buddha who agreed with them and said quote searching all directions with your awareness you find no one dearer than yourself unquote since you have a wife now do you agree with the Buddha so yeah before I I answer the question I would just point out that King pacity was the king of kosala which one one of the two main Regional powers in the the Ganges Valley in the Buddhist time and it eventually got conquered by magada which grew into an Empire after

the Buddha died and Malika was his
favorite wife even though she had a dark
complexion and was uh considered not to
be
beautiful but anyways um yeah in the
udonna 5.1
5-1 chapter 5 suo one um pacity asks um
Malika his wife his favorite wife you
know who who is most dear to her
possibly expecting her to say that he
was and she honestly and wisely said now
that she considers herself more dear
than anyone else and then King panity
had to agree yeah I guess I guess you're
right that's the way it is with
everybody but I mean there are
qualifications of that with regard to

like doing what I consider to be right

something like that I mean I'm not just

going to completely s

for my woman and just do whatever she

wants me to do you know i' I do have

certain principles and standards and I'm

going to live my own life to a certain

degree you know as well as I can but on

the other hand if I had to choose if one

of us had to die I'd choose myself

without hesitation I'd let myself die I

would let her live and me

die so I mean there's it depends on how

you look at it I

suppose with to standing up for my

principles and so forth I would I would

prefer standing up to my own principles
than standing up to my wife's principles
in in many cases anyway you you have to
you have to compromise to some degree if
you're in a
relationship but again I mean if if one
of us had to die then I would I would
volunteer for that so I mean I love her
more than my own life in that regard
anyway I love her life more than I love
my life to the extent of um I'd be
willing to die for her sake even though
I won't agree to do whatever she tells
me to
do so I'm just moving on the next
question here this is from
xenoid xenoid says have you read the

entire poly Canon um no I haven't read
the entire poly Canon I've read the
entire vinia ptica um the first four
four books in poly and then the last in
in English English translation I've read
the entire Dean nikaya in English and
ply the entire majaya in English and ply
um most of the samuta or maybe at least
half of the samuta in P um and I don't
think I've even read the entire samuta
in English translation the angura Naya
which of the main four nikayas was least
interesting to me and I've just kind of
read bits and pieces in in poly or in
English I haven't read the entire thing
of that and then with regard to the Abid

dama um oh well there's also the the kudak nikaya um yeah I've read the main texts of the kudak nikaya like I've read the Sudan the DAP the udana I can't remember if I've read the entire IDI Wuda uh don't think I've read the entire terata or terata although I have read you know you know many of the verses in there and with regard to a lot of the the fairy tale stuff like the jotas I've read some of the jatakas in inali and in English and I've read let's see small parts of like the Buddha WAMS saww that kind of thing but a lot of it or also the pet Wu I read the entire pet watu in the polych society English translation but yeah I haven't I haven't

read even all of the sutas especially
that when you get into the the kudaka
nikaya I have there's a lot of that I
haven't read and uh with regard to Abid
dama the only Abid dama book that I read
in its entirety is the the Kata watu
that I mentioned earlier the the grounds
of controversy the grounds of discussion
which was a manual um helping Terra
monks debate against Buddhist monks of
other
schools um I've read like The Abid
damata Saha which is that compilation
the summary of Abid dama philosophy I've
read a lot of Abid dama stuff just
because in Burma you just wind up with

these books the essence of Buddha Abid
dama by Dr Min tin m i mean you couldn't
get rid of it you get rid of it and a
week later somebody would offer you
another copy of it
so yeah I haven't read the entire thing
and there's a few few texts that haven't
even been translated in English like the
Nida um is part of the Kik nikaya um
I've read probably most of the Mahan
nesa I've read pretty much none of the
Chula nesa there's it's divided up into
two
parts so yeah there's there's not a
whole lot of people who have really read
the entire poly Canon some of which
you'd have to read not in English but in

some other language because not all of
it is translated into English and and um
even I used to know this monk a western
monk who was really into Abid dama he
really interested Abid dama and with
regard to the patana which is the the
last book of Abid dama which is several
thick volumes he said it's
unreadable that it's just so Technical
and complicated and just abstract and
dry and dull that you just can't read it
it's just unreadable
so I guess I answered that one I'm
moving on to Xeno void's next question
which is do you know if anyone has
attempted to make a shorter version of

the Canon that removes all the
repetition that is no longer needed
because of writing I do enjoy the
meditative aspect of reading a
repetitive text with slight variations
but at a certain point it can get
tiresome I think this aspect of the text
might turn off a lot of potential
readers from Gaining the wisdom they're
looking for
well um has I guess the main question
here is has anyone attempted to make a
shorter version of the cannon that
removes all the
repetition and even the official tipicas
like the Burmese government's version of
the detica has a lot of ellipses in fact

there's a poly word for it called

Pala so you know it just have like a pop

you know it it'll be like dot dot dot

and then in parenthesis Po and then dot

dot dot and then continue with with the

poly textt because there's so much

repetition that some texts it's mostly

palea like in the samut Naya you get to

these chapters these

samas where you you might have 10 sutas

that are exactly the same with just like

one word different in each one and so

when you read even in the the official

Burmese government edition of the the

poly toptica is the whole suo will just

be it'll all be Pala with just this one

word you know it might have just a thus
have I heard at the beginning and then
it'll be you know it'll just give a few
lines just to kind of let you know that
it's the same as the one before it and
then it's all ellipses and Pala and
that's it so there are even in these
official versions in from terata
Buddhist countries that some sutas are
mostly
omitted just because it's exactly the
same you know it's several sutas in a
row that are exactly the same with just
like one phrase or word
different and English translations like
bot's translations as a general rule
they get rid of most of the

repetition at least half of the

repetition they get rid of it's just

tedious if you're memorizing it by heart

which is what it was designed for you

kind of like the repetitions because

it's easier to memorize and easier to

just keep it memorized but

um yeah when you're reading it in a book

it gets tedious even for

like like Burmese monks who are very

dogmatic and and just don't mind

repetition very much but still it's I

mean it's the whole way that the whole

texts are

composed

um it's just it's just not the way

people talk you know like the Buddha you know it's like you know I saw three cows in a field yesterday what were those three cows I saw a brown cow in the field yesterday that is the first cow that I saw I saw a black cow in the field yesterday that is the second cow that I saw I saw a spotted cow in the field yesterday that is the third cow that I saw those are the three cows that I saw in the field yesterday when all you have to do is just say I saw I saw a a brown a black and a spotted cow in the field yesterday and that's you the entire amount of of information is there in that one sentence instead of being

spread out into like three

paragraphs so I mean most versions of

the titica do reduce the amount of

repetition and like bod's translations

it's it's reduced quite a lot but I

don't know if anyone has really

attempted to make a shorter version of

the entire to

ptica that where it's just all

repetition is is removed I don't know

you'd have to have a lot of ellipses or

else you'd have to like monkey with the

the grammar or something to get rid of

it and uh I don't think anyone has

bothered so I'm just going to move on to

Xenith void's third question

here which is you've mentioned that some of the texts most likely come straight from sedara Goda Buddha some do not come from him although he would still approve them and some he would denounce would you ever consider ranking each section of the Canon or perhaps even each individual suta by how genuine they are I know a lot of people cringe at tier list videos but I think this could make for an interesting one well there's one major problem with that is that you can't really be sure there's no way of being certain there could be uh a text I mean you the exact quotes I me mean how are you going to know if the Buddha said it in exactly those

words also there could be a text that's
just a kind of conservative text that
was composed centuries after the time of
the Buddha but it's all like really
Orthodox stuff that is indistinguishable
from the earlier
stuff so you really can't know for sure
and I think the best attempt at this
that I have seen is in studies in the
origins of Buddhism by GC Pond who goes
through each of the the main um the the
Sut collections the nikayas and goes Su
B sua through the first three no the
first two and
then
um I don't know I'm just kind of

confusing myself now but GC Pond does the best attempt at that and if it was going to be a video I mean it would be an extremely long video because there's like 40 volumes in the in the toptica although some things like Abid dama you can just dismiss right off the bat like I've already mentioned and in uh GC Pond's book studies in the origins of Buddhism he does dismiss Abid dama like on page one you know he just gives the the lateness of the Abid dama peda is Manifest you know he gives a few a few just of the the main reasons for that and then just ignores it from the rest of for the rest of the book he doesn't talk much about

vinia but like the putty mocha

especially uh the pookas not including

the seia rules that would be like the

oldest stratum of the of the vinea

um let's

see

so let's see where's the question mark

would you ever consider ranking each

section of the Canon or perhaps even

each individual suta by how genuine they

are yeah I mean it it would require a

lot of guessing it'd be educated

guessing but still you can't really be

sure how old the text is I mean you you

can weed out some of the obviously bogus

ones like the ones with like glaring

anachronisms or Abid dama for example as later additions to the text you can um do like what AK waterer did and just identify the core texts which are the texts that are common to all or almost all of the ancient Indian schools of Buddhism that arose before muham Yana that that gets you down to before the first Schism

anyway with with a reasonable amount of of

confidence so for for AK water that was good enough he just got down to the cortex and considered that to be authentic teachings of the Buddha but I mean all that does is get you within a 100 Years of the Buddha's life and a lot

of change can happen in 100 years a lot
of change happened in Christianity in
the first hundred years a lot of bogus
texts got added to Christianity in the
first hundred years including some that
are in the Bible
today
so yeah it would
be it would it would have to involve a
lot of guessing and and it would be an
extremely long video possibly even
longer than the Q&A videos
are so if you really want to study up on
something like that I would recommend
studies in the origins of Buddhism by GC
Pond who really did attempt to identify

as well as he could he had to guess or
just sort of say this one's
uncertain with regard to you know the
the the main texts
anyway so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from
Romeo and Romeo said did you read comic
books Andor graphic novels either
growing up or later as an adult if so
which titles or characters were your
favorites and why how about Mad Magazine
were you a fan of it so with regard to
comic books there's only two kinds of
comic books that I read when I was a kid
one was when I get my haircut at Ernie
and Ray's barber shop in Aberdine
Washington they had like Richie Rich and

Casper the Friendly Ghost and stuff that
I would I would read when I was waiting
to get my haircut but I I would wouldn't
waste my money on buying one of these
for myself and there's other things that
I would rather have than than those kind
of comic books and then also um for for
a few years anyway I had as a
stepbrother Kurt vanderhof who I mean he
started making it kind of big in in rock
and roll he was in the band Metal Church
and then as soon as it started getting
really big he uh he kind of dropped out
of rock and roll um musicianship and
became like a producer or something but
he had all kinds of comic books when he

was when he was a kid and some of the
comic books he didn't like much anymore
he offloaded on to me and it was mostly
Spider-Man so he had all these
Spider-Man comics I just wound up with
this pile of Spider-Man comics you know
fighting the Green Goblin and Doc O and
this kind of thing and so I pretty much
worked my way through that but again I
just read them because they were given
to me and I never spent a dime on any
comic book as far as I can remember
there was a kind of graphic novel that I
read when I was in my 20s it was
Brothers of the head by Brian aldus
about this rock musician who was
actually it was two rock musicians they

were siamese twins and they had a third dormant head on their on the shoulder of one of them and the dormant Head Starts waking up during the course of the novel and uh it was it was a graphic novel it was it was

Illustrated so I mean that would be the only graphic no I ever read but with regard to Mad Magazine I was heavily into Mad Magazine as a kid I would spend a lot of money on Mad Magazine a lot of money from a kid's point of view who just has like you know $5 a week allowance or something but yeah I had Mad Magazine I was into like uh what was his name Don Don Martin he was good spy

versus spy I liked Al jaffy Snappy

answers to stupid questions I think I

had all of those all of his Snappy

answers to stupid questions series is

it's good for a young smartass to get

guidance on how to give smartass answers

to stupid

questions um so yeah Mad Magazine would

be the main

one but I haven't read Mad Magazine in a

long time I don't even I'm not even sure

if they even have it

anymore and uh I pretty much started

losing interest in that when I got into

like high school and just started

reading science fiction instead so Mad

Magazine was pre science fiction in my

the the evolution of my reading

tastes and so I'm just going to move on

next question this is from

Al and Al says what do you think of the

recent drama that has unfolded in the

twi Community with Delson Armstrong

renouncing all of his attainments do you

think Twi is a legitimate terraa group

so I guess that's two questions there's

two question marks

here so see what did I just do okay

so what do I think of the recent drama

that has unfolded in the twwm community

with Delson Armstrong renouncing all of

his attainments well Delson Armstrong

was another one of these people who just

declared and announced and advertised
that he was an arot that he was fully
enlightened and I just found out about
dson Armstrong recently it was just
after this kind of Scandal happened and
apparently what happened was he was
declaring himself to be an arahan fully
enlightened being and then I think he
like fell in love love with a young
woman or something which then was
sufficient evidence that he still had
like cravings and attachments and so
forth and so maybe due to an outcry from
his supporters he had to humbly admit
well yeah maybe I'm not really fully
inlightened which is another case of
like um I was talking about earlier with

regard to what's his

name and tww I'm really not sure what

tww is Tranquility something Insight

Meditation with a lot of emphasis on

meta meditation which is something that

is just too touchy feel for for my

interests any any kind of U Community

Insight Meditation community that really

emphasizes meta meditation I'm just I

don't know I just don't feel it so I

mean this whole case reminds me of

Andrew Cohen back in the 90s who was

another one of these another one of

these people who who just is declares

himself fully enlightened and then over

the years he keeps behaving in an

unenlightened way until he gets enough
push back from his followers that he
just comes out and announces well maybe
I wasn't really enlightened to begin
with so again whether Delon Armstrong
was just deliberately deceiving people
or whether he just overestimated his own
attainments I really don't know because
I don't know anything about dson
Armstrong
so I'm just going to move on to Al's
next question which was part of the
first question which is do you think Twi
is a legitimate terraa Group Well you
got some lay person advertised as as
fully enlightened and and there's a a
monk who is one of the leaders who's

just going along with that then yeah I
think that it's it wouldn't be fully
legitimate I don't think it's like fully
illegitimate that probably some of what
they're teaching is in accordance with
with terraa or Buddhism in general
but not everything and so I would I
would give that like a partially
legitimate and partially illegitimate
status maybe it's a little more
legitimate now that the professed
arahant has outed himself as not really
in
Aran so but yeah I mean I never followed
tww I don't know much about it I I saw a
picture of the old monk who's one of the

leaders and he looked familiar but

that's that's about as far as it goes so

I'm just going to move on to the next

question which is from Virgin Mary Jay

also known as chasz is and Virgin Mary

Jay says Mary Jay I mean he shouldn't

really be a virgin I think this is also

one of those false false

declarations because he does have a

woman so anyways Virgin Mary J says have

you ever read industrial society in its

future by Ted kazinski If you yes what

do you think about it well no I haven't

I haven't read it like like I said

before I have read a few manifestos

radical manifestos in my life but that

was not one of

them and uh yeah I mean I've seen quotes
from it like excerpts from it that are
kind of like a kind of blackpilled
cynical interpretation of things that
have their own validity their own truth
and all but I mean you don't necessarily
have to inter ret it the same way as him
all interpretations are ultimately
invalid
anyhow but I mean he was brilliant
thinker and at the same time he was also
kind of nutty and was like sending bombs
to people in the mail trying to kill
them so I'll just move on to Virgin Mary
Jay's second question anything on live
stream on December 1st yeah I think I

can go for that let's just plan on me

doing a live stream Sunday morning or

early Sunday

afternoon no later than mid Sunday

afternoon next Sunday which would be

December 1st

20124 and hopefully I will be better at

figuring out how to do a live stream the

the first live stream that I did the

previous live stream that I did was the

only live stream I've ever

done and those of you who are there may

notice that I was actually accidentally

turning off the live

stream and then having to like

kind of start a whole new live stream

again because you can't just end it and

then get back on again you have to like
start from scratch and it was very
frustrating because I didn't know that I
was whether or not I was
recording so it looked like I wasn't
recording and so then I'm like turning
it off and cussing and maybe cussing it
cussing before I turned it off and just
trying to figure out how to do this
so yeah let's just let's just say I'll
do a live stream on December 1st inshah
uh assuming that I can do it at least as
well as I did it the first
time so I'm just going to move on to
Virgin Mary Jay's third question if the
middle way in Ancient India wouldn't be

the middle way today but rather extreme asceticism what would be nowadays the middle way between Rat Race consumption is Instagram life and living alone in the woods well that's a good question and it's something I used to think about lot when I was a monk because you know when you're talking about the like the history and evolution of Buddhism you started off with a middle way between self-indulgence and self- torture and almost immediately especially after Buddhism became a popular spiritual system like a popular religion then you wind up with a new middle way which is the middle way between self-indulgence and the original middle way and then

when Buddhism came to to the west then
you wind up with an even newer middleway
which is the middleway between
self-indulgence and the traditional
middleway between self-indulgence and
the original middle way so the middle
way just keeps moving farther and
farther towards wallowing in
self-indulgence and it's already got a
fair amount of wallowing in it already
when you look at Buddhism in the
west where pretty much all you have to
do is just meditate sometimes and that's
that's pretty much all you have to do at
least in a lot of Buddhist Meditation
groups or Buddhist groups dharmah Halls

that kind of

thing

so I mean I don't think it's a good idea

to start monkeying with a spiritual

system in order to make it conform more

to Social and moral

degeneracy so I'm quite content with let

the middle way be the original middle

way and just

acknowledging that that is seen as

extreme nowadays by decadent degenerate

modern

people but still I'm quite content to go

along with the ancient Indian middleway

as declared by the historical Buddha

himself that so long as you're not

torturing yourself and you're not

wallowing in sensuality

you know you're not

like like avoiding discomfort and you're

not seeking discomfort really then

that's the middle way and I mean you can

be a little liberal in your

interpretation of that I mean you you

might want to prefer that you don't

necessarily have to be wandering beggar

with no money and no family and no

home cuz it's it is pretty remarkable

when you think that the original middle

way the middle way the moderate Centrist

way was wandering around homeless dress

in rags with zero money zero family zero

home just begging for your food in the

streets so it's the middle way from a dharmic point of view it's certainly not the middle way from a social point of view

so yeah I'm I'm just inclined to just stick with the original middleway and everyone just be honest and say well I'm just not following that it's just too much for me or

whatever so I guess I answered that one kind of so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from ruie and we are by golly we are still recording aren't we and ruy says hello poo a nomic question have you you or anyone else noticed the following panel just below the video and he's referring to the the

previous Q&A video United Nations

climate change refers to long-term

shifts in temperatures oh it's just

United Nations dot climate change refers

to long-term shifts in temperature and

weather patterns human activities have

been the main driver of climate change

primarily due to the burning of fossil

fuels like coal oil and gas unquote

so um let's see here ruie continues here

it is impossible to get rid of the thing

it just sits there plus click on it and

you'll be directed to a page of un

cultural revolution style propaganda it

somehow feels like it's meant to

re-educate those who might have searched

for online material deemed as climate denialism funny including funny enough science sites and or videos as well as general non-woke stuff so I guess the main question here is have you or anyone else noticed the following panel just below the video yeah I I definitely noticed that it appeared immediately upon uploading that video that is just like the the AI or whatever you want to call it um just flagged that climate change in the title and just slapped that that label that explanation underneath and it happens a lot like when I did the the Trump Landslide video with with our good friend Brian immediately had like um like the

election results you know in a similar
little Banner little box underneath the
video it happens uh automatically and
there's no way you can get rid of it
other than just get rid of
YouTube and uh I mean what what it says
here the United Nations I mean that's
already suspect the United Nations is
not an objective body it's not people
like sincerely trying to to find the
truth it's just you know they've got an
agenda it's a globalist agenda and
they're just going to say and do what
furthers the globalist agenda so climate
change refers to long-term shift in
temperatures and weather patterns human

activities have been the main driver of
climate change which is itself
controversial there are scientists
saying nope that's not true some
scientists will say it's like
fluctuations in the radiation coming
from the Sun that's causing it and uh
even if it is true that human activities
have been the main driver of climate
change and I mean I'm not going to deny
that we have been you know increasing
carbon dioxide into the atmosphere but
like I was saying in the previous Q&A
for most of the existence of the earth
it has been much warmer with much more
carbon dioxide than now and that really
the only realistic thing that we can do

is just prepare for a a warmer Earth

with maybe somewhat higher sea levels

although of course Manhattan still isn't

underwater like Al Gore was claiming it

was going to be many years

ago so it's not nearly as much of a

threat

as the The globalist Establishment would

have us believe because there are still

nukes in this world there's still the

threat of the technological singularity

with AI taking over which both of those

are certainly more of a threat than the

earth gradually warming

up

so the question is uh have have we

noticed it yeah like the very first the
very first uh comment I think on that
was uh was mentioning this United
Nations like semi- propagandist
disclaimer underneath the video so I'm
just going to move on to ru's next next
question is what did your Penance
consist of and I assume he's referring
to the the Penance for sesa
offenses and the Abbott of the the
monastery that I first lived at in Burma
who was one of my
teachers he took this Penance once a
year just just to sort of get rid of any
kind of doubts because some some of
these rules it's you can be in doubt
like the very first s OFA is is to have

an orgasm deliberately and sometimes
it's like you can wake up in the middle
of a wet just a wet dream this happened
to me a couple times and it's like you
start like moving just sort of
instinctively and then you got to like
psychoanalyze yourself it's like did I
was I helping to cause that to happen
kind of stuff or one that happens even
more often for Burmese monks that seem
to be lower tea and less lustful than
Western monks is they're like on a bus
or something and they brush up against a
young woman and it's like that's s
number two is to touch a woman with your
mind inflamed by lust and it's

interpreted in such a way that even if
you just enjoy the contact then that
that's good enough so long as you make
any kind of move even just the the width
of a sesame seed just a hair's breath
towards her to to prolong or continue
the the the
contact then you you're guilty of
breaking that rule and monks get on
buses including some strict monks will
get on a bus or something and some
pretty girl will brush up against them
and it's like what do I do you know so
they'll they'll do I mean some some
sloppy monks will be like deliberately
rushing up against the women because
they're they're completely Shameless

monks there's more of those in Burma

than the really conscientious on ones

I'm sorry to say it's like that in

terava Buddhist countries in general I'm

pretty

sure but you do a S say you commit a

sesa offense and you confess it and then

you have to do Penance for six days and

six nights plus however many days you

failed to confess the

offense so if you break a rule s rule

let's say you spank the puppy or

whatever it was and you a week to make

confession even though there are

opportunities to make confession you've

got to do the Penance for another week

an extra week in addition to the six
days and six
nights and how it's done in reality is
very different from how it's how you're
required to do it in the in the in the
vinea itself so the Burmese monks just
turned into a kind of game it's really
awful the way the Burmese monks do this
and I've never approved of it I used I
got in so much trouble over this I would
even my own Abbot would be doing penants
for sesa because a lot of monks do it
and they would do it in this completely
bogus sloppy way that was traditional in
Burma but just flatly against what the
texts say and I would just refuse to go
to their ceremonies they were they were

going to they one of the penances you
have to do is every day you have to make
confession to every monk at the
monastery that you have committed the S
of to offense and when it's the Abbot
just all the monks get called into the
Dharma hall or called to the the the
Abbott's quarters so that he can make
confession and I'm just like no no it's
you're not the Abbott so long as you're
doing this Penance you are the lowest
monk at the
monastery because that's that's the
Penance that's how it works is when
you're doing this
Penance you are the lowest monk at the

monastery you're not allowed to sleep
under the same roof with other monks you
have to go last in line you have to um
you know you have to sit at the back if
if the monks are are gathered together
you got to make these confessions you're
not allowed to have anyone bow to you at
least not other monks because you're the
lowest one you got to stand up if
another Monk comes comes into the room
because you shouldn't be sitting when
another Monk Is Standing because that's
disrespectful there's more than 90
penances that have to be done a lot of
them are it's it's kind of obscure and
the situation doesn't arise but
essentially you have to be kind of an

outcast monk you know you're not allowed
to sleep in the main general area where
the other monks sleep you got to get
like the the worst cabin on the
outskirts of the
monastery and and just you know you are
like the lowest peon monk at the
monastery until your Penance is complete
and you do that for six days and six
nights plus however much extra um you
you have to do because of not confessing
the offense right away and the way it's
done in Burma is you take you take the
Penance upon yourself at dusk and then
at night when you don't have to walk in
the back of the line or or anything like

that you you do the Penance and then at
dawn the next day you stop taking the
Penance and you're right back to being a
regular monk again during the daytime
you know it's only nighttime Penance
which is not the way it's supposed to be
done it's just like [__] cheating
the rules it's traditional in Burma even
the serious monks will do it that way
but I just refused and that was it was
just too much I it was hardly even
Penance at
all so yeah I defied two Abbotts at
least at least two abots with regard to
just refusing to go to their ceremonies
and that kind of thing just because they
hadn't really done the Penn the

reinstatement ceremony at the end you
have to have at least 20 monks to to
convene to reinstate a monk who is doing
Penance and I would just refuse to go
it's like [__] that they didn't do
Penance as far as I'm
concerned but I mean if you really want
to know all the list it's like between
90 and 100 penances of these observances
wat it's called you know like ca Bata
parasa which is um clinging to to
morality and observances Wat is
observances and so it's these penances
are observances that have to be observed
while you're doing Penance and I already
named you know the most important ones

you have to make confession to every
monk at the monastery every day which is
really a pain in the ass especially if
there's lots of monks coming and going I
mean it's really I mean you have to do
do penants for a few extra days just to
make sure that you you got it because
there's like you know you go to make
your confession and it's like where is
venerable so and so it's like oh he left
this morning it's like well that day
doesn't count cuz I had to make
confession to him and he was there that
day and he left before I could make
confession to him so that whole day
doesn't
count and then just you know going at

the back of the line and sleeping in the worst place on the outskirts of the monastery and that kind of thing now I mean that that was mainly what it was about so I'm just going to move on the next question which is from Raphael and Raphael this is an easy question he says how good is Pan's translation of the sutas I have no idea who Paton is so I mean tan is like a it just means like a monk in Thai so his name would be Pia but uh I I don't know who who this monk Pia is so I have no idea how good his translations are sorry

Raphael I don't know so I'm just going

to move on that next question this is

from eart

Bala and uh I'm not exactly sure why a

certain person has decided to start

calling himself eggart

Bala but that's what he's calling

himself and so he says how do you say

nice in poly for instance have a nice

day or be nice

children and I

mean nice would essentially be good you

know have a have a good day or be good

children so nice and good I'm I'm

assuming are pretty much synonyms in

poly and good I mean kalana like the

kalana Maita is like the main

translation you'll find like in a

probably in a English Depo dictionary

you look up good or Nice in a in an

English Depo dictionary it'll probably

say kalana like the kalana kalana Maita

or the good friend but really kalana

means something more like beauti

beauti like a kayani is a beautiful

woman not because she's virtuous in fact

um the kalana the the Kalani was

generally like um the most beautiful

prostitute in the area so it doesn't

necessarily mean virtuous but so I don't

think that

really uh kalana would be the best

translation of good or nice it would be

something like Suk or sukita like sue

the prefix suit at the beginning of a

word generally means good or or like

well done or something like that so

probably the most common word for

good would be like suad which literally

means like well done or sukida something

like

that but um yeah I'm kind of rusty on my

poly so I can't say for 100% sure but

uh like the the prefix Sue itself is is

like uh it just means good so like uh

like with regard to Good Conduct you

know Su Suk would be like having Good

Conduct or it would just mean Good

Conduct you know a good deed well done

that kind of thing but there could be

like a common word for good that I'm
just missing out on I mean obviously
right would be Sama like Sama s budha or
s you know like the the Noble aold Path
there's a bunch of SAS but I guess
that's different so I'm just going to
move on to S
papala and his question is what's the
difference between bodh satva and
Mahayana and terraa traditions I'm
thinking terraa is just anyone on the
path to Awakening in
mahay's believe in bodh satas being
almost god-like beings that play a role
in our lives or come back from Pure land
to become Buddhas or whatever it's all

very confusing please enlighten me well

yeah there some papapa theory is not

entirely correct here um originally bodh

sat in poly it meant someone who is

destined to become a Buddha or probably

more correctly was destined to become

the Buddha so that in in the poly texts

when it's referring to the Buddha before

his enlightenment

sometimes it refers to him as the

Bodhi and bodhisatta probably I mean

bodh satva probably is a is a wrong

translation of bodh bodh satva means

Enlightenment being whereas bodh sat I

mean it could mean Enlightenment being

sat and

satva are you know they correlate

between um Po in Sanskrit but probably

sat in pi

was it was like a a past participle

turned into a noun um of the verb sedy

which means like to be bound for to be

bound to to be attached to to be

destined for so probably bodh me one who

was destined for enlightenment not an

Enlightenment being which doesn't make

much sense because a bisat in many cases

is someone who has indefinitely

postponed enlightenment

so why do you call someone who asked

postpone Enlightenment an Enlightenment

being I mean that in itself is kind of

suggestive that the Mahayana Buddhist

mistranslated the word and didn't really
even understand what it origin was
supposed to mean which does happen that
some of the translations from poly or
Proto poly into Sanskrit are just false
translations I mean they're not accurate
translations and I think this is one one
of the
cases so anyways in terraa abod is
someone who is destined to become a
fully enlightened Buddha not just an
enlightened being not just an ordinary
arant but a SAS Sam Buddha someone who
after Buddhism has died out after Dharma
has died out in the world he rediscovers
it and starts the wheel of Dharma
rolling

again he starts it

turning so that's what a Buddha is in

terraa it's someone who ReDiscover dama

after it has died

out

so um in order to be uh a bodhisatta

like to be a real genuine bodh satata in

terraa you have to meet a few

qualifications I think you have to

master the four janas first before you

can become a real bodhisatta and also

you have to be declared a bodhisatta by

a fully enlightened Buddha like for

example our historical gab Buddha

according to tradition he was declared a

bodh by the Buddha deepankar who lived

like zillions of years ago on some

previous Earth he was like 28 Buddhas

into the

past before we got to Goda and then

godma was a kind of aesthetic named

sumeda like aan Sumo you know he was he

was was this kind of a I think he was a

Brahman named sumeda and um according to

the story he had volunteered to help

make this foot path for deonar Buddha

and his retinue who are going to come to

this dharmah Hall to get offered a meal

and he just couldn't keep up with um

what he was like required to do and so

there was like this unfinished stretch

of about 6 feet of path that was wasn't

done yet before deona and his retinue

were going to come you know they were going to walk over the path so he just lay down and just let his body be their footpath and then after after this event uh deepan Buddha said that you know in a future life you will be you know a Buddha named Goda etc etc so it's somewhat more technical than in Mahayana in Mahayana it's someone who has decided that to be a fully enlightened Buddha is better than to become an ordinary enlightened being or arahan which they have demoted down to someone who's not even fully enlightened really at least in some schools

so I think both of them bodh in p and
the in my opinion mistranslated Bodhi
satva in Mahayana Buddhism they're both
uh someone who is destined to become a
fully enlightened Buddha in the future
probably the very distant
future um but there are just different
qualifications to it in in terava and
Mahayana and I mean both of them can be
a Godlike being like for example um our
Buddha our godma Buddha before he was a
human being in this life he was a deity
in talaima
heaven so I mean according to tradition
of course so I mean then you had the
bodhisatta was a a small G God in a
heaven realm so you can have bodhisatta

gods in terraa it's just there's lots
fewer of them you don't have entire R
news of bodh svas in terraa Buddhism
that was a later
development and some some text some
mahayan techs even have like retinues of
peka Buddhas attending on the Buddha
which I mean from the
the older terraa point of view is just
impossible because paja Buddhas were
hermit Buddhas who exist only when there
is no Buddhism in this
world that's why they're Hermits is
they're not teaching Buddhism I mean
they've they've kind of rediscovered
Dharma for themselves but they don't

teach it they're just a Hermit living

out in a cave

somewhere

so I think the basic meaning of bodh and

bodh

are the same it's someone who is

destined to become a Buddha in the

future but isn't a Buddha

yet but then the the whole approach to

it like emphasizing the importance the

the superiority of that path in Mahayana

is absent in Terra although the it was

like the the beginnings of it the roots

of it are found in these older

Traditions like in Terra and even that

is an anachronism I don't think that the

whole buddhis SATA or buddhis

idea originated with the Buddha himself
because I think the Buddha was an arant
and you know he was like the first one
he was the one who started the tradition
going but I mean there was no original
idea that to be a Buddha is something
that you should go for instead of just
becoming enlightened In This Very life
in terada the Buddha made no secret of
the fact that he considered it better
become fully enlightened In This Very
life if you possibly
can and that a fully enlightened Buddha
and an ordinary arant ordinary arant
both of them are fully enlightened they
have zero delusion you can't get any

wiser than zero

[Music]

delusion so the Buddha was just the

first one he wasn't like infinitely

Beyond an ordinary fully enlightened

being like later tradition turned him

into because it's just standard in human

religious thought that you glorify the

founder of your religion obviously in

Christianity he got turned into God

Almighty with regard to Buddhism I mean

they they still admit that he was a

human but he was just so far beyond

other humans um that I mean he's just

totally glorified he's he's higher than

the gods the gods come down from heaven

and worship him

so I was going to say something else too

I just sip at my cold

coffee yeah I can't use the uh the

thermos mug kind of thing because the

paper umbrella doesn't fit into it very

well

so oh yeah I was going to say that

probably the whole Boda idea comes from

the glorification of the Buddha and then

you had like jota stories that are

talking about the Buddha's evolution in

wisdom and other qualities other virtues

the parames over millions and millions

of years and it just started coming into

Vogue to consider um to be a Buddha is

just so much more heroic so much more

difficult so much more

worthy uh than just being an ordinary

enlightened being that later schools

like Mahayana schools just started just

kind of rejecting the whole idea of

becoming enlightened In This Very life

which was what the Buddha was

teaching so they reject what the Buddha

was teaching in favor of we should

become like the Buddha himself and just

postpone Enlightenment possibly

indefinitely which is pretty much the

opposite of what the Buddha was teaching

but we don't have to go there but the

the basic

definition of a buddhis Sant or a

buddhis

is pretty much the same that is just
someone who is destined in the future to
become a Buddha although the
qualifications for that are much higher
in terraa like I said you have to master
the four
Jas and you have to receive what in
burmes is called the bate which is an an
actual Buddha has to declare you a
buddhis you can't just decide to be
one so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from 8 precept
aroan and 8 precept aroan says are there
any Buddhist holidays unique to
Burma and I don't think so I did mention
earlier on towards the beginning of this

Q&A that the last day of The reigns Retreat is called Abid dama day in celebration of the Buddha coming down from heaven after teaching Abid dama in heaven to the Goddess that used to be his mother and to the other gods and goddesses there whether in other countries like in Thailand um the last day of the rain Retreat is called Abid day I don't know abidan

Nate um but really I mean that's pretty much it I mean you got Buddha day the full moon of what is usually May sometimes it can be at the end of April usually it's the full moon of may you know that's Buddha Day celebration of the Buddha's

Enlightenment um but that's going to be common throughout any uh terab Buddhist country and I mean there's really not a whole lot of
um Buddhist holidays in Burma other than just the standard like the beginning of the rains Retreat the end of the rains Retreat Buddha day you've got the the month after the end of the rains Retreat the full moon which is the Festival of Lights which is common to other Buddhist countries I think it's uh originated in India or
something so I'm not aware of any Buddhist holidays that are unique to Burma unless I'm just not thinking of it

so I'm just going to to move on next question this is from jwes and jwes asks a question which was just uh it was like a a screenshot of a post on X by Bronze Age pervert and Bronze Age pervert says question that I've been pondering for over 10 years I can make myself ejaculate purely by Will without any physical stimulation purely from mental concentration is it then also possible to make yourself die again without any physical means but purely by Focus and I would guess that a very Advanced Adept Yogi might be able to just think himself dead but I don't think the average person could do that I don't think someone who really did not

have pretty much of a

superhuman uh attainment in

somat could do such a thing because I

mean once you become unconscious I mean

you could like hold your breath or

something I mean even that wouldn't be

purely mental but once you pass out then

you're just automatically going to start

breathing

again so yeah I I wouldn't rule out the

possibility that like an an extremely

Adept meditation Master might be able to

just think himself dead but um I'm not

sure about that I can't think of any

example of that other than uh like an

early episode of Star Trek which doesn't

really

count and even he' stayed dead for a

very short time and then came back alive

again

so let's see is it then also to POS also

possible to make yourself die again

without any physical measure but purely

by Focus well I mean the one case I

could think of is someone who is badly

injured

and then they can just give up and die

or if they have like a tenacious life

force and just refuse then they can Will

themselves not to

die so I mean in a case like that that

would be like some kind of sort of um

Fringe example I guess that certainly

mental States would be different um well
I mean they would be the determining
Factor on whether you live or die but if
you're perfect ly healthy let's say you
got the meditation master who is
perfectly healthy and just decides it's
time to die whether he could will
himself dead or not I've never heard of
a case of it I assume that it's possible
because just about anything is possible
but whether it's ever actually happened
or not I would I would guess that it
actually has but I can't really be sure
so I'm just going to move on to next
question this is from
PSA and PSA says what is the oldest

person person can be and still be allowed to ordain in Terra and I don't think there is a maximum age limit so you could be 110 years old and still be ordained as a monk although preferably you should still be able-bodied and able to like do your duties as a monk instead of being on your deathbed and ordained that way um the only maximum age limit thing I can think of with in Terra is that there is a rule of monastic discipline that you're not allowed to become a preceptor or a teacher if you are feeble with old age but there is no limit that I know of with regard to a maximum age for being ordained there's not even a rule against being ordained

when you're feeble it's just that you

can't take on the duties of being a

preceptor or a teacher if you are so old

that you are just

feeble

decrepit so to speak

so I think I answered that one and so

I'm just going to move on to the next

question which is from Arin and Arin

says as a biologist and also a former

Buddhist monastic how do each of those

schools answer the origin of Life

question well I'll start off with the

Buddhism um how do each of these schools

answer the origin of Life question in

Buddhism there is no origin of life

really that that Sam Sara has existed forever and so life like conscious beings have existed forever with regard to life on this Earth on the other hand um they have a kind of cosmological explanation where um first of all the previous Cosmos the previous Universe at least the astronomical Universe has been destroyed by a cataclysm like generally like this Universal Firestorm that wipes out all physical matter and then the the new universe has to re-evolve and the first thing that appears is the Throne of Brahma and this is all generated by Karma so the entire universe isn't generated by any kind of physical Force like the big bang like in

science but it's it's a manifestation of
Consciousness karma is a mental state
and it's karma that starts causing this
entire universe to reach evolve and so
you got the Throne of
Brahma and then the the mahab Brahma of
this world system appears just through
the force of karma you know it's like
he's reborn from this higher formless
realm into this world of form and he
starts getting lonely because he's all
there all by himself and right around
the time that he starts feeling lonely
more beings start appearing around him
and then he considers he thinks that his
own desire caused them to appear and so

he starts thinking that he's like a capital G God but with regard to life on this Earth um the way the Buddhists explained it in Ancient India is that we start off as essentially gods and we have been de degenerating instead of evolving up from from pwn slime that we are degenerating from
Gods so at first we lived astronomically long lifespans and we didn't have to eat food and I mean we were just like living on light and we are essentially you know Godlike beings living in a kind of Heaven realm and then gradually we started to degenerate somebody some you know protohuman God um found it it was sort of like this mana on the ground

they kind of scooped some up and started eating it and then it just kind of caused us to become more crude and coarse and more dependent upon physical food and then gradually we'll get to the point where the lifespan is only like seven years and we'll all be like cannibalizing each other and so forth and then it starts going back up again but essentially the Buddhist explanation of the origin of life is that it is generated by Karma ultimately it has no beginning

um and when it when like a new material Universe has to re-evolve after the previous was destroyed it's it's like

the karma of the me it's the mental
states of the beings um that are going
to be reborn into this world that
cause these new beings to start arising
you know at be at first they'd have to
arise just spontaneously like in heaven
Realms upper Heaven Realms where you
don't have to have a mother you're not
born from a womb you just appear
spontaneously so with regard to
biology um um the origin of Life
question I mean some some biologists
just try to kick the can down the road
and say it was spores from outer space
but that doesn't explain how where those
spores came what was the origin of the
first

Spore so when I was in when I was in

college and we were learning about I

took a class in organic evolution and we

had uh a few weeks at least on the

origin of Life

theoretically and

the the biological explanation is that

the primordial

Earth um it was the atmosphere was

mostly volcanic gases you know a lot of

hydrogen and stuff there was no free

oxygen lots of lightning lots of um like

gamma rays and just intense radiation

there was no o ozone layer yet and so

you had like methane and ammonia and all

these these various water

clearly and just the radiation and the
the lightning and so forth would cause
uh especially like carboxilic acids to
appear spontaneously they they've
reproduced this under laboratory
conditions that you can get very simple
polypeptides you know like like the
precursor of a protein just appearing
through electricity uh going through the
the theorized primordial atmosphere of
the earth and that some some people will
some Skeptics will argue well that that
same electricity from the lightning
bolts and so forth will just break up
anything once it starts getting
complicated so then they have to further
theorize that these uh polypeptide

Chains would then sink you know deeper
into the water or they get buried in mud
or something where they're just somehow
you'd eventually over the course of
millions of years you'd wind up with a
self-replicating p chain Like A
Primitive protein like an enzyme that
catalyzes its own reproduction and that
would be like the first protolife would
be like a simple protein chain that is a
an enzyme that catalyzes its like
reproduction of of the same kind of
protein
chain and then you get into the question
of you know where cell cell membranes
came from and I remember when I was in

that class I did a uh we all had to do
like an or oral presentation and I did
mine on like the origin of cell
membranes from um just like lipid
molecules that would form dis
spontaneously into clumps
and um so I mean from the biological
point of view you start off with the
primordial atmosphere of methane and
ammonia and various gases and lots of
water you know as soon as the Earth
cools down enough to have liquid water
you've got liquid water and then it was
just sort of radiation and and lightning
that would cause more complex organic
molecules to arise and then um
eventually over millions of years

eventually you'd wind up through random

chance presumably of one of these

protein chains being able to catalyze

its own reproduction and so the first

like genetic material

would have been a protein and then

somehow through mutations and just

various random trial and errors you wind

up with nucleic acids taking over as the

genetic um

material in in life but there is some

evidence anyway that it started off as

as a protein thing that the first life

was or the first Proto life was a kind

of self-replicating protein

and it it would be a sort of like the

entire Pond you'd have like the organic soup of the primordial oceans or maybe more likely um like a a pond on land like it would just become like this protoplasmic substance it' be it'd be mostly water of course but it would be like this organic soup where all these reactions were able to like take place you know pretty much at random until finally you wind up with cell membranes and so forth that you wind up with the mo the first very primitive anerobic bacteria the Ary bacteria which still exist but um free oxygen is toxic to them because they originally evolved before there was free oxygen in the atmosphere so I mean I can accept a kind

of combination of these two for the
origin of Life on this Earth forget
other planets previous universes and so
forth on this planet planet that I do
think that Karma does exist I am a
Buddhist after all and so I think that
there is truth and validity from a
samsaric objective empirical point of
view to the idea that Evolution occurs
you know more or less darwinian fashion
but I can also accept that to some
degree it's also Guided by mind because
mind is the Forerunner it's all made
it's all made of
mind so mind would have to be uh like a
central feature in even organic

evolution along darwinian lines that
still there can be mind that is guiding
it consciously or just subconsciously
you know sort of it could be like this
blind will that schopenhauer talked
about or I mean there could be like some
higher entity like in 2001 A Space
Odyssey kind of a
thing but I don't think that ultimately
the Buddhist idea and the the empirical
biological idea are in Conflict other
than just the whole cosmological
mythological idea that we started off as
Gods with astronomical lifespans feeding
on light and that we degenerated down
into human status because it's pretty
obvious to me that we are evolved from

more simple primate

mammals that was one thing I really

liked in Burma was the Tre shrews

there's Tre shrews are very common

they're called shintu in

Burma they look like a a squirrel what a

shin in Burmese but they're not they're

not squirrels they look like a squirrel

but they're not a squirrel because

they're very primitive like a Proto

primate and they feed on insects and

they've got a long snout like a shrew

and they make this whirring noise

instead of chattering like squirrels and

it just seemed like Grandpa they got

ears that look like human ears on this

little squirrel like thing and then when
I was a kid they were considered to be
the most primitive of all primates
although now they're they're in their
own um their own order rather they're
not primates anymore they're like a
intermediate stage between like insector
like shrews and the actual Pro simians
like lemur or seers or
something but I do think that Karma
definitely is playing a role in in
evolution that it is helping to guide
Evolution even though you can you can't
explain it in mechanistic terms like
Darwin did but still you there's there's
no reason why you cannot have like
karmic forces that are influencing

Evolution and so I'm just going to move
on next question and this is the last
question so we're kind of a short one
this this is less way less than three
hours and remember the next Q&A is
probably going to be a live stream so um
you may uh if you're confident in my
capacity to do live streams this time
you may save your questions until then
or you can leave them in the comments
below it's it's your call but this is
the very last question this is from
dhama
River and this is in response to the
little video I did on Zen Coons um which
was the video I did previous to this one

and he says would you know if the
ordination lineage of Zen Buddhism can
be traced back to the Buddha or is this
an ordination lineage that got started
up later
on um I would assume that the ordination
lineage of pretty much all schools of
Buddhism can be traced all the way back
to the
Buddha uh it may be that there's some
school of like aana Buddhism that was
started by like unordained people you
know started off by lay people and then
they just kind of set up their own
ordination lineage later they just
started to let's just make monks from
this you know non monastic tradition and

just kind of started off some new tradition that way but I don't think Zen was that way I I don't even think pure land Buddhism started off as like unordained people that then just created their own monastic tradition from scratch that didn't have a succession going from the Buddha until now I mean according to Zen tradition mahak kasapa was like the first patriarch of Zen if you don't include the Buddha himself as the first patriarch of Zen and then you just had like early schools of Buddhism which includes terada sasti Vada the mahasan gika schools and so forth and then you know some of them are just kind

of

evolving you know farther and farther in

a mahayan trai tradition and then

eventually they just wound up being

called

Zen I don't think that uh they would be

considered fully ordained from a an

orthodox

strict like monastic discipline

perspective in terraa

because their tradition like their their

ordination

procedure is very unlikely

to be considered a valid ordination

procedure according to the rules of

monastic

discipline in terraa Buddhism so I mean

that's that's like for me the nail in
the coffin for the people saying that
the bikuni ordinations are valid because
it's based on like a Taiwanese or Korean
tradition of nuns that had a ordination
tradition going back to the Buddha going
back to the first nuns because the
ordination itself would not be
considered valid it's not done in
accordance with how an ordination has to
be done according to the ancient rules
of monastic
discipline so the ordination lineage
such as it is it' be valid from the Zen
point of view but it wouldn't be valid
from an older ancient Indian Point of

View because they probably left behind
the Indian languages they probably left
behind even the the precise words of the
the the ceremony of ordination so that
it would just it would just be in valid
it wouldn't be a correct and valid
ordination from an earlier ancient
Indian Point of View but still you can
say that the ordination lineage such as
it is in Zen Buddhism probably goes all
the way back to the Buddha probably all
of the schools of Buddhism you know it
was just monks ordaining monks which
ordained monks which ordained monks and
it might be that the way they're going
about it is changing and diverging and
deviating from the original model but

still it is a continuous tradition
that's going and changing and evolving
until you finally wind up you know a
thousand years later or more than a
thousand years later as Zen or Chan or
GI Buddhism or or whatever how I mean
whenever you want to say that Zen
Buddhism began what is the origin of Zen
Buddhism it's hard to say really I don't
know if anyone could really say it you
know it' probably be before buddy Dharma
so it start in in India as Janna
Buddhism but exactly what school that
would have been I don't know like what
school of Buddhism was did bodh Dharma
was he ordained in I don't

know so dhama River would you know if
the ordination lineage of Zen Buddhism
can be traced back to the Buddha or is
this an ordination lineage that got
started up later on I would guess that
it can be traced back to the Buddha even
though
by ancient Indian standards it would no
longer be considered a valid ordination
tradition according in accordance with
the rules of monastic discipline but
even so it was just monks starting in
the Buddhist time that just kept you
know ordaining and and you know
producing more disciples which then
ordained their own disciples which
ordained their own disciples and even

though they might have drifted away from
Orthodoxy or what would be considered a
valid
ordination by Orthodox standards still
it was you know people dressed as monks
you know doing the ceremonies to ordain
until they finally wound up with like
Japanese
Zen that would be my guess I can't prove
any of it and that's it that's that was
the last question and so like I already
said if you have any questions no more
than three per episode please or you may
be severely punished
especially when Trump gets his fascist
regime installed people start being

lined up against the wall bear that in
mind no more than three questions per
episode and if you if it's about
something you think I can answer you
know early Buddhism obviously terraa
Buddhism Buddhism in general maybe like
Indian philosophy Eastern philosophy
even to some degree Western philosophy
meditation monastic discipline Burma
that kind of thing the origin of life
from a biological point of view that
kind of thing um yeah I might be able to
answer that I'll at least give it a shot
and if I don't know the answer I'll
admit to not knowing the answer and just
move on to the next
question um and uh check out the URL

links smash that like button and

subscribe if you have not done so

already and be happy

but

okay we're streaming there

apparently see no data it still

says well

I don't know if we're working

here

see VI was waiting

we

have

okay enable auto

start let's

see go

live no data

[Music]

okay settings

I'm not seeing it

connect same collection

well

see [__]

me I can't hear what you're

saying oh okay

okay

so I have been told that I am live

streaming but nobody's telling me that

I'm live

streaming it's 12 o'clock so I should

get

started but I don't know because it's it

says that it's not connected on on

YouTube Studio

so just a second I'm going to have to go

consult

okay of course we got technical

difficulties let's see here

live

studio yeah

analytics

damn still says no

data so I'm not exactly sure see I don't

do this very often oh here we go

okay I think

maybe

okay

okay

Dandy I'm too close to being a boomer

for this kind of

stuff so let's see here I got to go

this

okay so I think I'm on doing like two

live streams simultaneously somehow

perhaps

okay one moment please I got to go

consult

again e

oh technology is so much

fun

okay okay so apparently there's like two

live streams

now so I'm going to go back like

this okay I think it's this

one go with this

one all

right this is so much fun I think it's

this one

now can someone tell me

connect streaming software to start

preview but I've already supposedly done

that and it says no

data so it's like I'm set up on one but

not on the

other and I don't know how to set up on

the

other so I guess we're just have to

going to go with this

one let's see

here okay

okay we're just going to have to go with

this one this is one probably isn't the

one that was announced it's

like I've never done this before well

I've done it once

before but what happens

is you hit the the live stream thing and

it first of all it tells me to insert a

code to hook up the like The Studio

software with the the YouTube live

stream and there's no place to insert

the code I looked all over the

place and then so you just hit go live

and it just starts this whole new

YouTube live stream so the one that was

announced is is still defunct it's not

happening because of course I'm almost a

boomer and I'm Technic technologically

illiterate to some

degree so we're just going to have to do

it this way cuz I mean according to this

we've already been streaming for 11

minutes

so let's

see yeah and I'm informed that I have to

send I have to end this one then go to

scam stream under the notify me one from

yesterday

but I don't know this one's already

working I think I think I made just go

with this one it's like an intelligence

test for everybody not only for me but

for the viewers and oh you couldn't see

that what I just did I took the paper

paper umbrella out of the out of the cup

there so this is

fun let's see

here Cool Whip is

back

okay so this is kind of tricky for me

because there's like three different

screens I have to look at presumably all

simultaneously one of them is the

YouTube thing that has the the chat on

it another one is the the list of

questions from elsewhere and the other

one is the like the the uh what do you

call it the Studio

software so this one's working I'm not

going to try and try and go back to the

other one where people are probably

still waiting

you got people that are going to be

sitting there patiently for like half an

hour with nothing happening because I'm

on a different stream from the one that

was announced yesterday because I don't

know what I'm

[Music]

doing also tomorrow's my first day of

work after after about a a month between

jobs so that's kind

of sort of uh increasing the amount of

like I don't know emotional tension or

some

such so yeah Shakra go is

here Aly is

here okay so I guess we're doing well

enough because anyone who's

subscribed to the channel is going to be

seeing this anyway maybe if they're

looking so I guess what I should do do

is just start answering

questions and while at the same time

juggling several

different several different

screens okay it may be that after I do

this five or six times I'll actually

know what I'm doing or maybe someone who

actually knows how to do this will uh

give me the the instructions because I'm

pretty good at following instructions

figuring stuff out on my own

sometimes not so

good but if I have like cookbook type

instructions I do fairly

well so

anyways people who are asking questions

on the other live stream that was set up

yesterday and then I didn't know how to

access it um you're going to have to ask your questions again here because that's one screen that I'm not going to be referring to in this process so I guess I can start answering questions and I'll uh see do this I guess what I'm going to do is answer questions from the chat and then when there's a LOL and questions from the chat I'll go to the the list from like the previous YouTube comments and from the Discord server and so forth yeah okay so I think somebody on the Discord server speaking of the devil is uh providing the new link because the old link is not working so well so let's

see here Cy can see and hear me which uh

could be a mixed

blessing Amy Christine says it seems

fine NPC number six giv me instructions

that I was trying to follow

but

okay let's see here Cool

Whip have a five Q&A Marathon pending

yeah I don't think

so all right so cool weip has a question

question number one once you said monks

disrobe is usually due to the

reason falling for a woman I was

wondering if the rules say a monk can

never talk alone with a woman when did

the monk be

flirtatious well there is a rule that

says um it is against the rules for a monk to sit alone with a woman where nobody can see them and there's a different rule saying that monk is not allowed to sit alone with a woman even though others can see them but they're so far
away that they can't hear what they're saying and there has to be at least one man present who can understand what is being said so like an adult male I should say so if they don't speak the same language that's out too but in Burma so many um people come to visit monks sometimes it'll be a group of women not a man in sight so there is

that

also let's

see what is the question again when did

the monk be

flirtatious

um yeah I mean it is allowable for a

monk to remain standing if he's visited

by a group of women the thing is they're

just not allowed to sit

together so um back when I was still

being relatively strict sort of bucking

the tide I would remain standing when

women would come with no male

chaperon but eventually it gets to the

point where it happens so often um just

traditionally women tend to be more

inclined to go to monasteries than men

for for like the purpose of visiting monks taking eight precepts on upos day offering things to monks volunteering to to do my laundry that kind of stuff and doing laundry in Burma's a little more complicated than here because they don't have machines out in these Village monasteries you just have to take it to the well soak soak the robe in a bucket and then like pound on it with a stick and it never really worked for me because the robe I was wearing when I was doing it would get soaked and sweat while I was washing the other one so it was just an exercise and futility but there are opportunities for

monks and women to kind of be

flirtatious in fact sometimes it's the

women that start being flirtatious first

because they know that most monks don't

remain in robes their entire life and

they kind of want their foot in the door

so that when the monk

disres she might be the first woman that

comes to

mind when he starts looking

around so there are opportunities for

flirtation um of course monks aren't

supposed to be

flirtatious

demure burmes village women as a general

rule aren't very flirtatious but they

can be very attentive and smiling and so

forth that can amount to the same thing

for a

guy so I really do hope that people can

actually see and hear me because I'm

kind of Flying Blind here I am assuming

because people have told me that I am

actually visible and

audible so I'm just going to scroll down

here

let's

see supr Supreme wise

eclectic yeah with the cowboy hat I

actually do kind have kind of have a

cowboy hat but it was made in Sri

Lanka back before Sri Lanka went

bankrupt and had to shut its

doors let's see here Emperor
Palpatine is calling it loving kindness
a cringe attempt to Pander to females
and romanticists or is it an attempt to
to Pander to Sufi Christian love
Fanatics of their god um Emperor
Palpatine is referring to the pow
meta which has the same atmology as
Maita which means friends So Meta
presumably means like Brotherly Love or
benevolence friendliness I mean
literally it'd be like friendliness but
for some reason probably a 100 years ago
or more some early translator started
translating meta as loving
kindness and who started it I don't know
it is not really the ideal rendering and

I don't know why they called it loving
kindness in a way it's kind of
describing what meta is why they didn't
just go with like friendliness or Amity
or benevolence or or something along
those lines I'm not exactly
sure so let's see
yeah I don't know if it was I don't
think it was a cringe attempt to Pander
to females maybe
romanticists um like a hundred years ago
Romanticism may have been somewhat more
of a an issue than it is now I don't
think it was any attempt to Pander to
sufis
although a lot of Western Buddhists were

formerly Christian broughtup Christian
would think in Christian terms also a
lot of poly translators and and Scholars
aren't even Buddhists at least in
earlier times especially like Polytech
Society probably most of the translators
for the Polytech Society or like a
significant fraction of them anyway were
not Buddhists at all like KR Norman who
was is an excellent philologist who was
really quite an expert on um ancient
indic
languages you know he he was probably uh
a member of the Church of England and he
really was not interested in buddist opy
he was just interested in ancient indic
languages

procrit so it could be uh sort of

Christianity more than anything else

influencing the rendering of the word

meta as loving kindness rather than

something like Amity or

friendliness

so let's see

here okay

oh here's somebody tasz

is has asked a question can I do an

Appalachian English accent and I really

no I I can't do an Appalachian English

accent I can kind of do like Southern

Accents you know I can do a Burmese

accent I can really do like a half-ass

British or Australian accent but

Appalachian I think there's different

Appalachian accents like farther north

you've got one Appalachian accent

farther south you've got a sou like a

different Appalachian

accent and who knows it may it may vary

somewhat from holler to holler in the

Appalachians you know one Valley may

have a slightly different aspect or

accent than than it you know I don't

know so the answer to that question is

no let's see

here so

Sal oh yeah this is I think this is even

on the list too

so Sal who was that was short for Sal

something else let's see here I might

have it on the list here Sala Sal

wherefor out our

Sal yeah Sal recluse that's it so his

last name is

recluse so s says what is your take on

the DAP by F Max

Muller and I read it a very long time

ago as a called student when I was

systematically working my way through

Max Muller's sacred texts of the East

series and in the University library and

uh it was so long ago that I don't

recall the like the quality of the

translation it was an early pioneering

translation you know probably late 1800s

that it was translated so he probably

got a lot of the terms unorthodox if not just flat out wrong you know it's like they hadn't settled on like standard renderings from poly into English yet so he probably wasn't calling meta loving kindness back then but I really do not recall the quality of the translation there are better translations um I think uh Buddha Rita's translation is the one that I generally go to so I can't really say um I mean it was adequate

I I don't recall it clearly but I mean I assume that it was an adequate translation with a few sort of minor misinterpretations and so forth because it was an early pioneering work so

you're probably better off reading a

later translation after a lot of the the

bugs have been worked out of the

system and then Salon re's second

question is what is my take on the sutin

inata by V fbow

and I think fabul was like a Danish

translator um also in the late 1800s and

I have to say that F's translation of

the

sutata um pretty much converted me to

terava

Buddhism it was

um it wasn't so much his translation

which was adequate you know again

probably the same arguments could be

used um with regard to fb's translation
of the SU as Max Muller's translation of
the DAP it was an early pioneering work
but it worked for me it was good enough
of a translation that it inspired me to
take a much greater interest in terraa
Buddhism mainly because the suttin is an
early text at least it contains lots of
early sutas very early sutas in fact
some of the earliest sutas in in the
entire poly Canon are found in the suan
niata and it came from a time before
monks were sedentary living living in um
like comfortable monasteries they were
still just radical Wanderers in those
days and just the aesthetic ideal of
these radical Wanderers really appealed

to me and it inspired me to start

preferring terraa to something like Zen

where the Zen monks as a general rule

are relatively set Ary and and living in

monasteries and not just being cave

dwelling Hermits out in a forest

somewhere but I still think that it is

um a passible a possibly good

translation although again there are

lots of subsequent translations of the

sutin so I'm just going to move on to

Salon a ruse's next

question let's see which is in general

what's your opinion

or on understanding early Buddhism to

get better authentic Buddhist words in

poly or

Sanskrit um so I'm do not

completely oh said and then he says

considering that there are various

doubts and opinions on these two

languages and their interpretation and

my woman's probably going to um get on

my case a little bit as a result of me

doing this because when I read I have to

look to the bottom of the of the

bifocals you know the bottom half of the

bifocal glasses so that I'm like

everyone's like looking up my nose she

doesn't like it when I do that

but I don't know what to

say because I kind of squint and have to

look through the the bottom of the the

bifocals in order to see this stuff so

question three of Som reuse in general

what's your opinion on understanding

early Buddhism to get better authentic

Buddhist words in poly or or in Sanskrit

considering that there are various

doubts and opinions on these two

languages and their interpretations well

there are doubts and opinions even with

regard to English that you can read I

mean even some of the questions that I

get I do not fully understand the

question those of you who have seen

these Q

q&as know that probably you know every

Q&A I'll get at least one question in

English that I do not fully understand
so there's always going to be a kind of
language barrier even if you're reading
something in a language that is your
first language still there's going to be
a certain amount of
ambiguity with regard to interpreting
what was said when you when you're just
reading it in print and don't really
hear the inflections or read the mind of
the person asking the question so even
this question is somewhat ambiguous I
assume what he means is what is my
opinion on trying to understand early
Buddhism by reading the the ancient
texts rather than
translations and paully would be an

older Buddhist language than Sanskrit or Buddhist hybrid

Sanskrit um and some of the translations from Proto poly a language similar to poly into Sanskrit were bungled in my opinion and in the opinion of a lot of Scholars that um they mistranslated certain words like the word bodh satva which I think is going to come up later on the on the list of questions that were asked elsewhere so I think that learning po if you really want to understand what the texts say there are a lot of good translations aan Tano's translations are very good bod's translations are among

the best just very I mean bbod

especially is just very Orthodox I mean

he's got the language down he knows the

grammar he knows the the tradition

unlike a lot of lay translators that

sometimes aren't even Buddhists you know

he's um he comes from within the

tradition and he understands it fairly

well so he can and he understands the

language fairly well but still if you

know the original

poly um for reading the poly text and

understanding the polych that is better

there's going to be a certain amount of

ambiguity in fact even the commentators

don't really fully understand everything

in the text so that even if you're

relying upon like an early medieval

commentarial tradition for interpreting

the poly Texs

still

um sometimes the commentators are just

guessing too so you just do the best

that you can I mean if you I mean it's

certainly going to help to know poly and

or Sanskrit if you're studying like

ancient Indian texts and of course you

can still read the translations if if

there's you get a get to a passage in

poly for example that's difficult to

understand let's say it's in poetry or

something so poetry is harder to

understand um then you can refer to a

translation you can refer to like a
medieval
commentary and that can help you but
still um sometimes you just have to just
kind of intuitively
understand what you're reading just like
you intuitively understand something in
English you know there's like various
ways of interpreting it but generally
just intuitively you just follow a
certain way which sometimes is wrong but
I think it's more reliable than just
slavishly following a dogmatic
commentarial tradition or just going
along with what translators say because
sometimes the translators will go with a
dogmatic traditional interpretation when

the dogmatic traditional interpretation
may not be correct because they're
trying to take like an old pre- Orthodox
passage that isn't technically Orthodox
and just reinterpret it so
that um it will seem Orthodox and that
happens a lot so I mean you just do
whatever you can do what intuitively
feels right and there's certainly
nothing at all wrong with knowing poly
or knowing Sanskrit in fact it it has
helped me a lot is having some
familiarity with the poly language at
least you should know the technical
terms in the original poly so I mean
knowing what meta is not just entirely

relying on the word loving kindness but

you know knowing like the technical

terms knowing what anusia is for example

you know a latent tendency that kind of

thing Kama I mean some of them are even

practically English words now like s

so let's

see I you I'll just move on next

question because we're we're getting

lots of questions here we might be here

all day but that's okay I

guess

see next question is from Mr

shunryo and Mr shunryo says do you like

to play video games and are they good

for building meditative

concentration um there's two kinds of

video games that I do play I've got um a
Walking Dead um zombie game I think it's
called No Man's Land on my phone and I
play that pretty much every
day it's a strategy game and I like
strategy you know like planning stuff
out you know working out the best ways
of doing things um that appeals to me
and then sometimes on my computer I'll
just do like puzzle games or you know
just like sudokus and stuff
so I think for my for me it's not so
much good for building meditative
concentration um it's really a different
kind of concentration but it is mental
exercise you know it's like you're

you're exercising your brain on figuring
out stuff you know like a Sudoku or
something it's it's pretty much just
like mental calisthenics like mental
push-ups or
something so yeah it's it's not really
good for meditation it could be that you
can find video games that are spe
specifically designed to improve your
like meditative concentration or some
such just like there are video games it
will teach you how to type that kind of
thing but yeah it's as a general rule
playing video games is a very different
kind of somati than than the kind of
concentration that you need for good
meditation I mean just the fact it

strengthens your mind like if you're
doing like strategy based or like quiz
stuff you know sudokus that kind of
thing it can kind of strengthen your
mind it makes your your brain maybe a
little more
muscular but I don't think it's
necessarily going to help you with
meditation at all in fact it can be a
distraction from meditation especially
if you're playing the video game instead
of
meditating okay so I'm just going to
move on to the next question here and
this is from cool whip question two my
sister brought me full monks robes from

India I'm not sure what to do with them
I assume I can't wear them at home can I
when I become a monk can I give it to
myself no no idea what to
do so I mean there's there's no rule
against owning Monk's robes if you're
not a monk um it may be I would guess
that they're not made according to the
rules of monastic discipline I pretty
much had to just have my own robes made
by like a a guy with a sewing machine or
a woman with a sewing machine like a
villager who knows how to use a sewing
machine and it would be a non-electric
one that's that's worked with a foot
like a foot
pedal and I would just have to give them

instructions and be like their assistant to make the robe entirely according to the rules of monastic discipline because most robes that you buy in a shop are not made according to the rules of monastic discipline even though they may advertise that they're made according to vinia still they usually aren't like for example a mon robe is supposed to be cut into pieces and then sewn back together and a lot of what what will be done in Burma is they'll just cheat they'll just sort of like make a little fold in it and sew across that so it looks like a seam that's holding two pieces together when really it's just this ornamental

kind of fold with a seam across it to
make it look like two pieces of cloth
were sewn together um so that's one
thing you can do I mean if you don't
want to keep them you can offer them to
a real monk or um you could wear them
around the house if you wanted to I
don't know why you would want to but the
thing is you can't try to pass yourself
off as a monk if you try to pass
yourself off as a monk that disqualifies
you it's you're wearing the robes by
theft by being a fake Monk and then that
makes you ineligible to be ordained
later on
supposedly
so okay I think I answered that one so

next question is from Shak regosa who
changes his name
frequently but uh Shakra Goa is one of
his more well-worn names I guess and he
says if the monk simply has a powerful
animal magnetism then he's giving off
constant Riz energy whether he wants to
or not some so women fall in love even
if the
never talks to okay that's not even a
question so Shakra goosa is being my
extra special assistant and he's he's
helping me to answer questions and it is
true there are some monks that have a
powerful animal magnetism so to
speak and I gotta I gotta scroll way up

here

again

because when people more people add new

stuff it adds to the bottom and then the

scroll gets kind of screwed around here

okay let's see yeah there are some monks

that are just like hunky guys I guess

and the the the village ladies are all

being particularly de demure and blushy

and fluttery around him which uh can

complicate matters to some

degre

so next question is from tasz is I think

he spelled his name wrong

here

yeah what do you do when a person spells

their own name wrong it's true ask as

is let's see here question two somebody in the comments said that Ananda recited 82,000 teachings out of 84,000 do people really believe that well the person who who made the comment apparently believed it I've never really heard that before I mean it is considered that the poly texts um especially the suas were all recited by venerable Ananda at the First Council that venerable Ananda was the Buddha's attendant although he wasn't his attendant during the Buddha's entire career he was his last attendant I think the Buddha had like two attendants before Ananda who for whatever reasons are not nearly as famous as Ananda is

and Ananda apparently or according to tradition had like a photographic memory and so he just remembered everything the Buddha said so that he recited it at the First Council which is kind of an anachronism since a great many suas probably were not recited at the First Council um so I think some Burmese people might agree that the Buddha recited 82,000 teachings out of 84,000 just because going with the idea that he wasn't with the Buddha all the time but I do think it's it's kind of an arbitrary estimation that became traditional dogma and I don't think it necessarily has much to do with empirical objective reality

so I'm just going to move on to the next
question here Emperor Palpatine says I
don't see the danger of sensuality as
the buot that's
heresy see I don't see the danger of
sensuality as the Buddha taught us to do
but due to religious parents forcing me
to not enjoy stuff when I was young I
feel nothing but
bitterness what am I
missing man let's see I'm G have to read
this one again I don't see the danger of
sensuality as the Buddha taught us to do
yeah it's it's kind of a I mean it's
it's not just the kind of blatant danger
that you're going to see on warning

signs near like high voltage wires or
something it's not that kind of danger
it's the danger of just kind of getting
you lost in samsara as you wallow in it
but due to religious parents forcing me
to not enjoy stuff when I was young I
feel nothing but
bitterness um yeah the bitterness I'm
not exactly sure what the bitterness is
directed towards is the bitterness
directed towards the the religious
parents is the bitterness directed
towards sensual Pleasures or is it is
the bitterness directed towards like not
indulging in sensual Pleasures I don't
fully understand this
question which just goes to show that

even an English speaker reading in English will not necessarily understand everything that he reads um yeah I do not understand what the bitterness is directed towards other than I mean just there's no need for bitterness I suppose I mean with regard to sensuality there is what is called niida which is just sort of a feeling of just being fed up with it um some of the best monks including the Buddha himself were people who had lived a worldly life you know they' wallowed in sensuality and eventually they got to the point where they realized that even if you get

everything you want you're still not

completely satisfied that you can have

everything you can have money women Fame

you know all the rest nice big mansions

to live

in nice car of course they probably more

like a chariot in the Buddhist time and

still you're just not satisfied it's

like a superficial kind of stuff that

can't really deeply satisfy you so

so um I'm not exactly sure how I was

answering the question there

though oh man now I gotta scroll back up

oh here we

go yeah so really I do not fully

understand the question because of I do

not know what the bitterness is directed

towards um but I think the main thing
that you're missing is that really
wallowing in sensuality it's fun but it
it always has a corresponding negative
so it's like a roller coaster ride and
it's very distracting and it distracts
you away from looking deeper within or
or just understanding dham really
because you're so distracted with
samsara that um you just cannot see past
samsara there's so much going on in
samsara that you can't really penetrate
through to you know what's on the other
side so to speak to tear the veil so to
speak so I'm not sure if if I fully
answered that question though so Shak

regosa says I was really impressed
Zuckerberg thought it was a worthwhile
investment to buy the naming rights for
loving kindness yeah I that could be a
joke shakar Goa is a wise guy so I'm
just going to move on to cool Whip's
third
question and cool Whip's third question
is I've calculated that if I save up
approximately
€1,000 I could fund to study a Bachelor
of Arts in Buddhist studies in Thailand
four years of student visa time to learn
Thai and find a monastery thoughts on
this plan well my experience with
monastic schools or poly schools is they
they are often snake pits like scholar

monks in Burma are just notorious

they're notoriously LAX sloppy

unconscientious monks and so

um if I was planning on becoming a monk

I think I'd just bypass any kind of

degree in Buddhist studies aan Shaw

pointed out long ago that people that

are learned in Buddhism tend to make

less progress simply because their mind

is so full of ideas and dogmas and

philosophies and so forth that they're

just stuck at that level and they can't

really get past all of the intellectual

stuff

to get to what is really essential to

dhama because intellectual stuff is

really more of a hindrance than a help
it can be a kind of skillful means
towards the beginning of one's dhama
practice and it can also be sort of a a
guide to some degree you know even in
more advanced practice but still you're
never going to understand dhama by
thinking about it you're going to
understand you know how to meditate why
to meditate you'll get some kind of
appreciation for that that's really all
you need you need to know how to
meditate why to meditate and if you're a
monk you need to know you know monk
stuff you need to know the rules you
need to know how to bake a bowl and sew
robes and dye robes and that kind of

thing but with regard to

philosophy the less you clutter your

head up with it the better although some

of us we just have to have you know

intellectually oriented cluttered minds

and so you have to just sort of um hold

it with an open hand hand instead of a

like a clenched fist so to speak you

know hold your hold your views lightly

as hypotheses working hypotheses rather

than as

dogmas so yeah I'm not sure what kind of

school The Bachelor of Arts degree in

Buddhist studies um would be in Thailand

but in in Burma yeah getting a like a

Buddhist studies degree in Burma um you

know monks who don't follow dhama would

be teaching dhama monks who don't follow

vinia would be teaching vinia and it's

just um it's not really

ideal so I think I'm just gonna move on

to the next question from La

infamia my parents they were hippies in

the 80s and 90s and they converted to

vajana and after reading about terraa

for me it seems like an Asian religion

the terraa seems more

European um well terava is more

Indo-European it's more Arian I guess

than Tibetan Buddhism because Tibetan

Buddhism took like a largely

Indo-European

tradition and then made it more like

tibeto Burmese you know sort of um the
Tibetan languages are more related to
Chinese than to Indo-European stuff so
yeah I mean the early poly texts
were more European in their mindset than
later like Tibetan and Chinese and
Japanese kind of Buddhist
developments I didn't know there were
still hippies in the 80s and 90s I guess
there was Earth hippies when I was in
college there was a kind of Earth people
that they were sort of like hippies
except they had jobs like working on
organic farms and so forth and the women
wore Birkenstocks and had hair legs and
that kind of

thing see but I don't know if that would
really count as a
hippie so yeah that wasn't even really a
question so I'm just gonna I'm just
going to move on to the next question
here so this is Cool Whip he's oh this
is like a continuation of of question
three this is he's getting tricky here
this is question 3B maybe or this is
maybe just commentary because I don't
see any question marks I feel before
making the big decision of renunciation
this may be the optimal four years in
Thailand as work I think is actually
harder route and plus can devote 100% to
dhama community yeah well living in
Thailand isn't

bad my brother does that when he's not working he's just got a little piece of land that his exgirlfriend owns and she's still friendly towards him so she hasn't just thrown him out or anything and you know he just lives this kind of Spartan easygoing existence in Thailand and that might be preferable to getting the degree it depends on what kind of institution is offering the degree in Buddhist studies because I mean there's good degrees in Buddhist studies and bad degrees in Buddhist studies presumably since it's in Thailand at least you'll be spared a lot of the queer Buddhism stuff you know where you've got like

Jewish lesbians writing learned articles

on

Buddhism um so let's see

so it could be even preferable that you

just you know live a quiet cheap life in

Thailand avoiding the girls and avoiding

the party scene you know staying away

from pukat in the the the the beaches

with naked European women running around

and just kind of look around for good

monasteries spend your time instead of

attending school and getting this

intellectual head filling of ideas which

I mean for some people it may work I'm

not entirely trying to talk anybody out

of it if it's like a good education

rather than you know like the education

you get in Burma which might be very

learned but again it's people who don't

practice dhama teaching dhama people who

don't practice vinia teaching vinia that

kind of

thing

so yeah you if you just lived a a

peaceful quiet life maybe teaching

English as a second language or

something and uh just spent a lot of

time researching and looking for good

monasteries

although some of the best monasteries in

Thailand are famous so you might just

pick one of the famous good ones or you

could try a different route and find

someplace that isn't famous yet that has
some wise Aon that you really resonate
with and then try and uh get yourself
set up there or of course you could also
be like a Paca or just a monastery
attendant if you already find the good
place you know you sort of set yourself
up for becoming a monk through just
being a monastery attendant like dressed
in white and serving food to the monks
and that kind of
thing so next question from La
infamia why black people feel attracted
to DH in general um in my experience I
never really met very many very many
black people that were attracted to
dhama in general I

met one or two black

monks I think both of them are

Temporaries I guess in in like South

Africa and like what is it Rwanda or

Uganda or something there's like a a

famous terab Buddhist Monastery

there in the west I think the main

reason why black people feel attracted

to dhama is simply because the white

people who are the majority in Western

like the we Western

weas are desperate there's they're

leftists they believe in Dei and all

that so they are just desperate to

recruit as many like people of color as

possible and even a black person who's

practically a beginner in dhama can get
a position as a member of the board of
directors or as a teacher or somewhat or
or some such just because they fit the
diversity quota and they just like
affirmative action or
something so that's one phenomenon in
the west is they just Skyrocket to the
top because there's so few of
them um but with regard to people who
just genuinely are attracted to terraa
just on its own merits I mean it can
appeal to anybody I mean there's going
to be people in any ethnicity that can
appreciate dama so I assume there are
people black people too who just can see
read a poly text and and it really

resonates with them and they think oh

that makes more sense than certain other

religious systems I've been exposed to

so why

not

so let's see

here I'll just uh scroll down here where

it's

CK Alquist says that's a good question

question

mark let's see I know a couple of black

Med mediators serious practitioners and

they can't get any of their black

friends to sit a course or take any

interest yeah

well a lot of people like

that so okay cool whip is mentioning

something to tasas is Emperor Palpatine

is consciousness a bad translation for

wiana no I think it's wiana is a good

translation um or Consciousness is

probably about the best translation for

wiyana although in Mahayana Buddhism in

Sanskrit it's

Viana and or vigana and um it means

something else it means something much

more perceptual and cerebral but yeah I

think Consciousness is about the best

translation for the pow

wiana so

see see Cho's

gy see I have questions about how terava

Buddhism look on conceptual and logical

look of

mind

um see questions about how tervada

Buddhist look on conceptual and logical

look of Mind well Buddhism on the one

hand has probably a

more um psychological approach to mind

than just about any other spiritual

system maybe some other systems Indian

systems especially like yoga might have

a similar view

but um so on the one hand Buddhism has a

very empirical objective kind of

approach to mind with regard to the Abid

dama philosophy it's like Aristotelian

this complicated philosophy trying to

explain everything with more or less

success but on the other hand early

Buddhism really just advised no kind of

intellectual understanding of Sara in

general because it's not going to get

you enlightened no amount of

intellectual understanding is sufficient

for

enlightenment

so that's probably the most profound

understanding of of mind is

realizing that just perception

perception and mental

efforts is are just not going to help

you to understand Enlightenment to

eradicate

delusion that delusion is itself

perceptual

and it's not just having wrong

perceptions it's just believing that

your perceptions are real whatever those

perceptions

are so let's see here question from Al

Al Y how is someone without a self

capable of voluntary action reflexive

power control of choice yeah I think

this is included on the list too

reflexive power of control or Choice

according to Nana Vera and that includes

practicing

dhama okay so H how is someone without a

self capable of voluntary

action all right

so first of

all voluntary action does not

necessarily um imply Free Will Free Will

is is ruled out in in ter in ter

Buddhism in the sutas for example in the

anat L Su which is considered to be the

Buddhist second formal discourse second

formal discourse after he became

enlightened he says that with regard to

any of the five condas you can't say let

it be this way let it not be that way

and have it reliably happen and one of

those condas is Sanara which includes

will it's mainly will or volition so we

don't have full control even over our

own volitions although strict

determinism also was ruled out so you

have this ambiguous par oxic kind of
situation in Buddhism where seems like
the your only two options of Free Will
and determinism are ruled out I mean the
only other option would be just random
chance and I mean it's obviously that's
not the case
also so how can a person without a self
how are they capable of voluntary action
um because of reasons and it seems like
this question is on the list of
questions that that I still haven't even
started on and it's more complete
because it's not like this little
snippet in a chat so I think I should
just come back to that

one so I can see the full question and

and just kind of deal with it that way

so I'll Al's second question

here how do aans who have quashed all

self viw make decisions for example even

something as small as choosing whether

you want mayonnaise on your sandwich or

not requires assessing one's preferences

yeah this is also on the list I'll get

back to that

one let's

see oh oh somebody added more and then

all of a sudden the the

scroll got got out of kilter

here okay Al which I don't see how can

be

wholesome okay yeah so this is all he's

still asking in several installments the
same question that I've already got
written down down so yeah he says all
one question so it's just easier for me
to deal with it in large print and
absorb it all at once and then answer
the question that way so um probably
let's hope in a half hour or so I'll be
able to get to the list of questions
that's that's already composed from
people asking elsewhere and uh address
it there so Emperor Palpatine says have
you noticed the commentaries from the
Mahayana sasada seem to have a much
better understanding of dhama for
example vasubandhu's commentary seems

much closer to the sutas than Buddha Goa

yeah I have read that I haven't really

read any kind of commentarial liter

literature from Mahayana or sarvastivada

other than maybe just

excerpts passages from it but I have I

have read that SAS Vaden commentarial

tradition actually comes closer to the

spirit of the sutas than Buddha gh's

attempts

so yeah there is some truth to that or

at least so I have

read um but then again there's there's

always going to be certain points like

the sasada Buddhists understood certain

points better than The Tradin and vice

versa so there's always going to be um

pros and cons or pluses and

minuses so rebellious monkey says you

have stated that you are not sure if

Enlightenment holds any meaning within

Samara

what conditions would need to be met for

enlightenment to hold meaning in ssara

well complete absence of delusion for

example complete absence of greed hate

and delusion or Loba DOA and

mooha and whether that is really

possible or not within a samsaric

context like you can look at someone

with a sort of a cynical point of view

and F fault what they're doing and and

consider it to be delusional you know

the Buddha say things in the sutas that
are apparently are not true you know the
Flat Earth floating on water for example
um so I mean whether the Buddha really
said it or not is questionable um and if
he did say it you know he's
just I mean it doesn't necessarily imply
that even though at a surface level you
appear to be delusional it doesn't mean
that you really are delusional because
it may be that you're just speaking the
worldly language that your hearers will
understand and be able accept and so
you're sort of injecting Dharma
teachings into this worldly point of
view that is ultimately delusional or it
could be that um it's just the

delusion is just nature taking its

course you know you just have this human

brain and it's by its very nature it's

going to be delusional because it's

going to believe in the perceptions

generated by itself as reality and so it

could be that Enlightenment is just

complete Detachment and

non-identification with this delusional

being this meat

puppet so the whole thing is is very

philosophical and uh ambiguous and so

forth let's

see yeah within a samsar context it's

everything is

imperfect you know it's like everything

is dooka within a samsaric contact so
you have to go beyond samsara but then
the body that's that's moving around and
making noise and saying things is still
essentially in s s so it's like that's
not the part of your mind that's
enlightened in a sense or at least some
people could argue that
way so let's see here Connor Dono Connor
let's just say Connor let's just be keep
things on a first name basis here isn't
infinite Consciousness which you claim
as nibana not just the sixth or seventh
J of infinite Consciousness how do Nana
and this J of Consciousness
differentiate well I did write um an
essay on this subject long ago back when

I was a monk in Burma that was back
before I even started um keeping a
Blog and the the formless Realms which
include the realm of infinite
Consciousness I think that's the second
of the the formless
Realms um but these four formless
Realms um one theory that I've got one
is they're first of all they're probably
anacron that the Buddha originally
didn't teach them they were added on
later and so it could be that you've got
various old teachings attempting to
explain Enlightenment which stopped
being Orthodox as Orthodoxy was
developed and so they had these old

texts talking about infinite formless
Consciousness as Enlightenment or um
nothingness as Enlightenment or neither
perception nor non-perception as
enlightenment
and when that stopped being Orthodox
then you've got like scholar editor
monks trying to figure out how to deal
with these passages and so one Theory or
hypothesis that I've got is that they
just got turned into these formless
Realms these no longer Orthodox attempts
at explaining
Enlightenment and so in that case it
could be that the realm of infinite
Consciousness is based on some old
passages that were pre- terrain pre-

Orthodox describing Enlightenment as
infinite Consciousness and then that
became like heresy or unorthodox and so
they said well that's just like a this
formless realm which is a kind of annex
to Fourth
J
so another way of differentiating them
is that the the sixth or the the second
formless realm is a perception of
infinite Consciousness whereas real
Enlightenment would not be a perception
it would just be infinite Consciousness
it's not just the idea or perception of
infinite Consciousness it's infinite
Consciousness so that would be another

way of of differentiating the two and so
I'm just going to move keep moving here
and um I think one disadvantage of doing
a live stream like this is that people
can ask way more than the usual limit of
three
questions CU some of these names keep
Emperor Palpatine again here I remember
you said arupa states were added later
so what do you make of the mention of
infinite nothingness mentioning Paran
waga State the brahmans talking to
Buddha were able to attain yeah that
that's in the essay too that's the first
of the um I think that's the first no
wait Infinite Space than infinite
nothingness

see infinite Consciousness wait a minute
infinite infinite Consciousness isn't
even a formless realm is it I think it's
Infinite Space infinite no no okay yeah
yeah it is you got Infinite Space
infinite Consciousness nothingness and
then the realm of noted perception or
non-perception so yeah I mean infinite
nothingness or just the the state of
nothingness yeah that's that can be
found in the paga as a way of of like a
method of becoming Enlightenment like a
a vehicle just it is not there is
nothing just having that kind of
attitude um in a way it's just like
shutting down perception because

perception is samsara so you shut down
the perception or transcend it in some
way and then you can get Beyond samsara
by getting Beyond any kind of idea so
you can just kind of as a tool like a
mental tool that you can sort of grasp
intellectually just call it nothingness
but really it's just off the
scale and I'm not sure if I answered
that question I'm not sure how many
Emperor Palpatine has asked
already
so I think I'm just going to move on
next question is from Don Connor almost
called him Donner when should you
definitely become a monk if you Glimpse
the deathless of or nibana should one

immediately go to ordain well it depends on the individual person and their circumstances in life I mean when you should definitely become a monk is when you're definitely called to become a monk you know you've got the you've got the vocation you've got the calling and you just feel like that's the thing for you to do and it may be that you should do that instead of going to college when you're
young um maybe even instead of finishing your high school diploma if you're young but I mean if you're old then I mean whenever I mean any time to become a monk is I mean from the Orthodox point

of view is better than um not becoming a monk at all unless you've got some kind of um you know you you're in debt you got to pay your debts off before you can become a monk you know you've got obligations to serve the government you know like you're you're in the military or something you're going to have to be discharged before you can become a monk um you know you've got family obligations you may want to settle all that kind of stuff before you become a monk but I mean as as soon as possible would be the the Orthodox answer to that question so Emperor Palpatine when are you making more videos with aan Puna maybe later this

winter but um I'm really not um keen on

pursuing um people to

interview uh over the past several

months and so it may be that my woman

will will set up some kind of audience

with him or something like that um but I

I really don't know so Connor says if uh

oh somebody added to the to the scroll

so now I've gotta scroll back up

again okay Connor where is

Connor see

man okay here it is if one has sator and

Glimpse true nature is it not the

equivalent to stream entry stream entry

being you Glimpse the deathless or is

this wrong uh it's hard to say Satori is

a Zen concept so in Zen you pra you you experience sator or keno and that's sort of like your breakthrough you know it would be roughly equivalent to what a Terra Buddhist would consider stream entry so I would assume that a lot of people in Zen who who experience sator or Keno um if they were Terra vadens would consider it to be stream entry and vice
versa so I don't know if there's a onetoone correspondence they're exactly the same it's two different systems with two different points of view and attitudes and so forth so it may be that they're not exactly the same at least with regard to the theory explaining

them okay tasz says where is your

long-legged dog and didn't Thursday

turkey taste funny no we didn't we

didn't eat the dog it's just that where

is

it yeah the dog is is behind me in the

Cozy cave see she got a Christmas

present early on which is a cozy cave

and see if I can find if if this is even

yeah yeah she's right back there in that

that dog bed and whip it as a breed of

dog

see here I gotta readjust things whets

as a breed of dog have certain

characteristics one is they like being

under covers you know they'll they'll

Burrow under blankets and so forth they
really like that so this kind of dog bed
it's like a a cozy cave they really like
it and she just camps out she just ever
since she got that dog bed a couple days
ago she's just been living in that thing
and another thing about whippets which
is sort of like a small Greyhouse
is they they counter surf it's just well
known that whippets are counter Surfers
you can't leave anything that dogs like
to eat at the edge of the counter
because she's going to like get up on
her hind legs and like scour the
counters for anything she can get and
find it and and eat it or knock it to
the floor and mess it up or

whatever so now we did eat real

turkey let's

see Connor says is anap weasa or is it

samata it can be either one depending on

on how you how you do it for example um

if you're doing mindfulness of breathing

and you just concentrate just entirely

on con consciousness of breathing and if

your mind starts to wander away you just

immediately bring it back and just keep

noticing for example the touch of of air

at the nostrils that would be a kind of

samata but if you're doing weasa like sa

batana then whatever it is that is the

most obvious that's what you direct your

attention to and you note that then you

let it go and come back to the breath if
there's nothing more obvious than the
breath you come back to the breath
that's just the primary object but so it
depends like if if you're like keeping
the mind focused on the breath and just
whenever your mind wanders away you just
bring it back um that would be more
samata oriented whereas um if you're
just watching whatever you whatever is
arising and passing away and only if
nothing is more obvious you go to the
breath that would be more weasa or sa
batana although there's a lot of overlap
you know you just if you're if you're
sitting there being mindful of your
breath and your mind wanders away and

you just note wandering and bring it back then it's you're doing essentially both at the same time and I really don't think that the Buddha had this strict division of two different approaches to Enlightenment s and weasa that for example fourth Jan is considered to be in the in the stock description the Perfection and and purification of mindfulness so I really don't think that it's an either or kind of a thing that they're both just they're both approaches mindfulness and and samata or concentration are both approaches to Enlightenment with some being more what you do when you're cross-legged and your

eyes are closed and we pass on our mindfulness being something that you can do even when you're you're standing up and moving around which then keeps your momentum going so that when you sit down for for meditation again you've got this momentum going you don't have to just start cold from scratch every single time

so let's see Mr shinri says do you feel a mostly vegetarian diet is needed to practice Buddhism no it's not really necessary to practice Buddhism I mean it can be helpful for some people but according to the poly Tex the Buddha and his monks did eat meat partly because they were Beggars and Beggars can't be

choosers and they would just eat what
was put into their bowl although there
were certain restrictions with regard to
meat for example you weren't allowed to
eat meat that was killed for your sake
you shouldn't be the cause of the animal
dying but if you're just eating
leftovers which most monks were doing
you know you're eating leftovers from
yesterday's dinner that somebody else
ate then um you can accept meat into
your bowl and eat it
um according to tradition uh Davida who
is sort of like the Buddhist Judas es
scariot um tried to reform Buddhism
during the Buddha's own lifetime he was

insisting that the Buddha should be stricter and he insisted as one of his points he had a number of points um that he wanted to enact in the S one of the points was that all monks should be vegetarian and the Buddha said no we're not we're not going there if monks want to be vegetarian they can be vegetarian but he's not going to make it mandatory so it's not really necessary although there is probably some truth to like what yoga teaches where you've got some food is rajasic some food is more conducive to passion and so forth and that's generally meat and like spicy food whereas other food is more satvic more conducive to calmness and Clarity

which traditionally has been let's see
fruits nuts grains and dairy products
mostly and then then you've got tamasic
foods which are even worse than rasic
foods which would be like stale moldy
kind of like preserved Foods I would
guess that something like pickles might
be tamasic um mushrooms I've been told
are
tamasic so there may be some kind of
especially someone who is sensitive to
the effects of the food they eat May um
you know it may be to their advantage to
be strictly vegetarian although there is
nothing from an early Buddhist point of
view there is nothing necessarily

unskillful or UNH wholesome about eating meat that that um became more of a thing later on after like most of Northern Buddhism converted to Buddhism or at least large parts of it converted to Buddhism then you had you know a himsa you know nonkilling non-harming that was becoming like more of a like an established cultural norm so that you know it was just harder and harder to find people who are willing to to be butchers and so forth but uh in the early days when most people weren't Buddhists and even the the Proto Hindus the you know people following vidic brahmanism they were still eating meat and so um since Buddhism was just kind

of like a renunciation of society you're
not even really supposed to be
participating in society you're on the
outskirts of society it's a meat eating
society and so they weren't really
trying to rebel against that or any such
thing
so let's see
see let's see
here okay Emperor Palpatine says sorry
the bitterness was for missing out on
life seems that I'll never be able to
know why sensuality is bad because I
never had a chance to enjoy it and see
yeah a lot of Burmese monks were
ordained as children are like that you

know they never had a woman they never drank they never took any kind of intoxicants they never even danced and you know they're ordained as children um in as novices in the monastery and just grew up in the monastery and so they really don't know what they're missing you know you can't really miss something if you never experienced it and so in some in some respects that makes it easier for them because you can't miss something that you never had an experience with but on the other hand it makes them less resistant to Temptation because like I said earlier some of the best monks are the ones who have wallowed in sensuality and finally

realized that just doesn't satisfy them deeply and so they moved on to something else whereas a lot of Burmese monks they come to America which is like a rich country they just I mean they have no resistance you know it's sort of like the early Native Americans had no resistance to alcoholism or tuberculosis or something some of these Burmese Village monks come to the west and you've got relatively Rich Burmese donors just offering them all this electronic stuff and offering them money and so forth and it can really destroy Burmese monks fairly quickly that way I've seen it happen many

times see

here yeah tras says if you know the

winia you can kill a chicken yeah we

need that CH

that let's see Liber Lam formerly known

as Liber Lam well what the hell he's

calling himself Liber Lam

now he seems somewhat

confused Stellar Supreme sometimes known

as Liber Lam says is it skillful to have

low psychological affect typically

modern Psychology Associates it was

depression to not find joy in common

worldly things like eating and being a

laborer and such so it depends on the

individual so affect for those of you

who are not like well vered in

psychological jargon it means sort of

like an emotional

state aect as as a noun means a kind of

like emotional state so it' be like way

Denai in poly uh typically modern

Psychology Associates it with depression

to not find joy in common world

it's it depends I mean depression is

more like a Contracting of spirit

whereas just not having a affect I mean

you can just have equinity calm Serenity

you could be like a Vulcan maybe you

could be on the spect maybe and it would

be somewhat diff different than being

depressed just being in a state of like

equinity is is not the same as

depression so you can have an expanded
mind without much affect which would be
good or you can have like a contracted
mind without much affect in which case
you might be depressed but then again
depression generally involves some
negative a effect you know you I mean
you can be depressed without really
noticing it in which case you might have
a contracted spirit with little affect
but once you start being miserable in
your depression then that's affect
too so it would be different from just
having little
affect and now I got to scroll back up
again here
okay so cool whip still working on

question three here

apparently question 3

C don't want to transgress the main

point to go to Thailand you need some

Visa I don't care Bachelor of Arts it's

the Visa option student work spouse

invest monk so option before monk ba may

be easier um yeah in Burma they've got

meditation Visas so you can just go to a

a monastery you know they'll sponsor you

and then you can you can get a

meditation Visa that's the kind of Visa

I had even when I was a monk was a

meditation Visa I don't know if they

have that in Thailand yeah I mean

marrying a taii woman probably is not

the best idea if you want to become a

monk um working yeah like I said maybe

English is a second language or

something um yeah well I mean just look

into the school and if it's a reputable

school that isn't a kind of monastic

snake pit then yeah may be the may be

the way to go I mean as as I've been

saying it depends a lot on the school

and You' got to be real careful because

some monastic type schools really are

just notoriously LAX and sloppy and

unconscientious with regard to D in

general

so let's

see

um just working down here see tras is is

so

okay let's play a very mature and

sophisticated game of where are you from

I'll start and he says Poland

okay so that's not a

question let's see Cool Whip after and

after three months three months to

decide whether to become a monk maybe

doesn't seem like enough time four years

would give me plenty of time you can be

ordained or not even ordained you can

stay at a monastery in Thailand I'm

pretty sure without being ordained I

mean you can be like the Paca the uh the

anagarika the white clad Monastery

attendant like aan cha traditionally

requir someone to be a white clad

Monastery attendant for like one year

before they can be ordained as a novice

and then they're a novice for like

another year before they can become a

fully ordained monk that applies to

westerners so it could be that

um you you could live like you could get

some kind of religious Visa without

actually being a fully ordained

monk

So Co whip is from Spain it says and now

I just got

more more uh comments here so that the

scroll was messed up again

okay let's see Emperor Palpatine if you

could go back in time and talk to your

younger self would you convince him to
renounce the monastic life to get with
your current wife when you were younger
man man well that's that's like a a
super
hypothetical let's see talk to your
younger self well I mean I had to go
through everything I went through in
order to be myself
now I mean colloquially speaking Cally
using the word self so I mean I don't
really have any regrets I'm not sure if
I had just dropped out of the monk Hood
many years before and gone off in search
of this this girl that I didn't really
know I mean there's no telling how it

would have worked out you know she might
have just thought I was some kind of
weird stalker or something and avoided
me like the plague who knows it was just
our Karma that it worked out this way
this time and so I really shouldn't have
any regrets or wish that things had been
different but uh we're together now
which is very
nice um let's see Cool Whip question
four apparently the Tibetans have
totally dominated Spanish Buddhism I
think the Spanish needs a guru an exotic
virgin similar to a Virgin Mary JC they
can't escape they okay that's not even a
question
okay let's see here judge Caligula

Bushman what can one say to pagans or
even Christians who argue that Europeans
or American whites shouldn't be Buddhist
because our ancestors weren't thanks
well I mean their ancestors who were the
first Europe or the first Christians I
mean their ancestors weren't
Christian so I mean you could if you go
back far enough you could apply that
very same argument to any religion
because the first people that convert to
that
religion um their ancestors didn't
follow that religion did
they with regard to Buddhism though I
mean it's it's more

Indo-European I guess than Christianity

is although Christianity has absorbed so

much

induran um

culture that I mean it's probably closer

to like late Roman paganism than it is

to Judaism at this point especially like

Roman Catholicism that uh absorbed lots

and lots of pagan elements just to make

it easier for people to to convert you

know was a smoother transition you know

just like repurposing pagan holidays

like the feast day of soul and victus as

a Catholic you know a Christian holiday

called

Christmas um you know it just made it

easier so a lot of the uh like Christian

Catholic mass and so forth um is
repurposed like Pagan ceremonial
stuff so I do think that Terra
Buddhism is it's uh it comes closer to
an Indo-European like a traditionally
European point of view in in many
respects anyway with regard to his
General attitude than than like
Christianity or or Islam or the attempts
to revive European paganism which is a
kind of LARPing it seems to me it's like
making a
replica I mean you can't really know
exactly for sure especially the esoteric
stuff that that wasn't recorded or it
was recorded and then it was all the

books were burned when Christianity took
over so um yeah trying to revive
European paganism is I mean you're just
creating a replica and kind of laring
for most people whereas uh terraa
Buddhism it's one of the most Arian so
to speak one of the most Indo-European
Traditions that is still an extent
unbroken
tradition some um some of the the
schools of of Hinduism like mimamsa I
think no is that right mimamsa I think
comes closest to the just the primordial
vdic brahmanism where they're still
doing fire sacrifices to the god to the
vidic gods and so forth but Buddhism
works better than that people are much

more inclined to accept uh a kind of
skeptical
philosophical you know non-theistic
approach to reality than just going back
to worshiping ugy the god of fire and so
forth so let's just scroll down
here Don fade says how do I get on your
Discord server well you're gonna have to
find my email or I mean if you know
somebody else who's on the server you
can probably do it through them but if
you want to contact me you'd have to
find my email in my URL links and
contact me through that but I can't
really um just broadcast an open invite
to everybody indiscriminately because

then we'll get lurkers and so forth
so Emperor Palpatine so he's he's
refraining from asking more questions
that's that is appreciated because I
still got the list it's not a very long
list because I think a lot of people are
just waiting to put questions in the
chat but uh there are there is a list
that I am going to have to get to so is
there a difference between an incel and
a monk yeah obviously a monk is ordained
furthermore a monk tends to be ordained
voluntarily so he's not involuntarily
celibate he is voluntarily celibate he
is a v cell although probably a lot of
incels do become monks and then they're
just sort of to to some degree it might

be called a cope but in my case I was
voluntarily celibate and was ordained
which made me a monk instead of an
insult so let's see
here looking for the next question here
here we go H here I really do not know
how to uh pronounce such
names he says where you introduced to
Asian black magic in Burma do you
believe the effectiveness time monks
seem to practice it there is some some
black magic in Burma and I didn't
experience it directly but I had a lot
of Burmese people like warn me about it
be careful about witches for example um
when I moved into the cave at um WBO

Wildlife Refuge Monastery some of the villagers were warning me that I have to be careful that if from from the hillside like the front yard of my cave the front yard I could look across the Valley of the chindwin river and on the other side were two extinct volcanoes and one of the extinct volcanoes had some sort of alkal Lake like a crater lake at the top and it was used for they there was like a little Factory there extracting alkal from the water for the sake of making laundry detergent or something but there was this other smaller older extinct volcano and there were two witches

supposedly who lived on the the slopes
of that volcano and they had already
been messing with monks you know it's
like one of them was infatuated with a
monk who had lived in the same cave that
I lived in and he he kind of rebuffed
her he didn't want to have anything to
do with her so she drove him insane with
with witchcraft that kind of thing I so
many stories you can hear in Burma about
Sorcerers and magicians and witches and
so forth there's a saying in burmes that
um one out of every seven houses houses
a witch so they definitely believe in
witches um also like dark magicians like
um I can't remember if I mentioned it

recently but there was a relatively
famous seatt called tangon seatt who
taught a system that was fairly similar
to the mahasi method although he he
emphasized a lot of standing meditation
the walking meditation was a little
faster he was he wasn't uh emphasizing
the the rising and falling of the
abdomen like mahasi but was more just
standard anapana but anyways um there
was a a monk back in the early
90s um who wrote a book with a title in
burmes like Dharma Battlefield and he
was calling out Tangi dong Seattle for
being a necromancer and black m black
magician and whether Tangi Don was a
necromancer or not I don't know but I

have had monks explain to me how
necromancer Works in Burma where you've
got you put out raw meat and raw blood
for the spirits it's been a belief in
Asia since ancient times that Spirits
feed on raw meat and raw blood so you
just keep setting it out there so the
spirits can feed on this raw meat and
raw blood until they're jonesing on it
and then you can say well you're going
to have to do my bidding before you get
any more of the raw meat and raw blood
and then the spirits will start um you
know in a way they'll be like drug ICS
enslaved to their to their dealer you
know they'll they'll be having to do

this that and the other in order to get
their their fix of raw meat and raw
blood and that's that's how necromancy
tends to work in Burma and I've had
people explain it to me but um whether
it works or not I have no idea it could
be just scy Village dogs coming at night
and eating the raw meat and the raw
blood but the monk who wrote that book
denouncing um tangin on seatt turned out
he became very much more famous
internationally later on because that's
the same ashin
weu who uh is like a leader if not the
leader of the 969 movement which is
opposed to uh you know Islam growing and
spreading through

Burma

so let's see judge Kul La Bushman I had

a mystical experience when I was in bod

Gaia it was only a split second does

Buddhism have an explanation for this

experience thanks probably although

really you can't say

exactly um what the experience was I

mean it could have been a flash of

insight um or it could have

been let's see just a good just a sudden

um meditative moment or some

such but it's it's hard to say but yeah

i' I've experienced mystical

experiences um many

times and uh I mean Orthodox terraa

might not be able to explain it very clearly because they're pretty much Orthodox terat pretty much chained to the yid dama philosophy and the commentarial tradition so that um you know you have to find your explanations there rather than in the sutas themselves

so it it's hard to say exactly if you just had a mystical experience there's a good chance that it could be called a flash of insight like we but I mean I'd have to know more about it really to to make any kind of statement on it so I'm just going to move on to Robert's question frequently in meditation I end up in a state of sloth and torper after

watching the breath for a while rather than being more wakeful I become sleepy and eat tips well walking meditation is good for when you start getting sleepy I remember I think it was Jack cornfield when he was living in Thailand I think he was practicing under um aan sha at the time aan sha had to meditate on the edge of a like a a well and wells in Asia there there's not just this little metal tube it's a big wide like brick lined cylinder going down maybe six feet across with a big bucket and a pulley at the top and he was sitting on the edge of that meditating and he just could not fall asleep you know he was terrified of

just falling over backwards and falling

70 ft down this

well um but I mean there are things you

can do walking meditation is good

drinking coffee is something that I

started doing after about 10 years as a

monk

um make sure that you've got good

posture if if your back is straight you

know you're just straight up and down

then you're much less likely to get

sleepy than if you're kind of slumped

over you've got bad posture so that's

another way of doing it

but there are various ways there's at

least one sua in the poly TX just

describing all the things you can do

meditate on light for example just kind
of pull in your ears and and and just
there's there's all sorts of things you
can do um splash water on your face that
kind of
thing so I think I'm just going to move
on next question here let's
see keep scrolling down okay Alfred
Alfred says he has a question I don't
care if I [__] up the grammar I live in
Thailand and the monks I see are just
actors Canon arant
choose so that's K and Aran choose well
obviously um from an from the point of
view of an outward Observer they're
choosing stuff all the time um

internally you can't really say what's
going on in arh Han's mind because one
could
argue um that a fully enlightened being
is there's really nobody there that
they're just reflecting back the karma
of of their people who are looking at
them so I mean if if an arhant is alone
in the forest there's nobody
there so Canon arhant choose I mean from
an from an outward observer's point of
view they're obviously choosing all the
time but subjectively you can't really
say what an arant is doing even even
like a a clairvoyant mind reading daa
can't really know what the mind of an
arhant is

doing so let's see

here NPC number six do you think most

western Buddhists celebrate Christmas as

a cultural holiday yeah it's it's not

even really a Christian thing anymore

it's Santa Claus and elves really have

very little to do with Christianity I

mean Santa Claus I mean technically

literally he St Nicholas who was like

this fourth Century Anatolian

Saint who uh is like the patron saint of

pond Brokers but Santa Claus is such a

far cry from that Christmas trees are

not particularly Christian you know it's

just a a cultural thing and so yeah I

think the overwhelming majority of

Western Buddhists living in the west do

celebrate

Christmas

so let's see Emperor

Palpatine see when you answer the the

list questions please keep the chat open

it would be fun if we get to hear people

commenting here as well okay Al y says

what was the silence like in your cave

you talk about the rare events but I'm

curious about the quiet meditative

moments which I assume with the true

purpose of cave life um yeah that was

one of the purposes of cave life another

purpose of cave life just from a

practical point of view is that it's

like 15 or 20° cooler inside the cave

than it is outside in the blazing hot wastelands of central Burma so it could be 115 degrees um Fahrenheit outside but I lived in one cave where it was just a constant like 84 degrees all year round it was sort of like the well water it was so deep into the into the hill that it was sort of like the average temperature of summer and winter day and night was just a constant
84° so there is that um the silence in the cave it was I mean there's always some kind of sound going on like you can never get Beyond uh hearing distance of Village PA systems for example also when I first moved to the cave on the hill at

one bow um is right overlooking the chindwin river and so there were like s pans going up and down the river the first my first few weeks there it was just it was really bugging me it's like having a lawn mowers mowing lawns all the time you know it sounded kind of similar until finally after about two weeks it was just like this part of the brain that just filters out extraneous noise kicked in and then I didn't bother me hardly at

all so the silence like in the cave you never have total silence I mean even if you know there's birds chirping outside and crickets at night and and uh also you just have like this feeling of

static in your ears sort of like a mild hum which is caused by who knows your blood pressure or something sometimes you can hear your own heartbeat you can hear yourself breathing you can hear yourself kind of rustling around changing positions in the cave and so forth so

um it's it was quieter than being outside but still it was it was fairly quiet quiet it depend on what part of Burma I was in what what which cave I was in I mean sometimes it's like crows outside I'd have to go out and Chase the crows away or rats gnawing in the the thatched roof in the the shelter outside

the cave I'd have to go and Chase the

rats away or catas sometimes I mean they

just ear splitting so loud some crickets

also can just be earsplitting

loud so

yeah I mean there is quiet but relative

quiet but you never find real peace and

quiet anywhere in Burma um because for

starters you have to be within walking

distance of a village where you can get

your alms food which means that you're

within U hearing distance of Monks

chanting over loudspeakers or cheesy pop

music being played over loudspeakers or

just announcements being made over

loudspeakers so

next question from Gary do you think

Thomas Merton was assassinated I don't think so I think it was like a a ceiling fan just fell on his head on a freak accident or maybe it wasn't a ceiling fan it was it was some kind of electric fan that fell on him hit his head and just electrocuted him so I really I mean he was in Thailand at the time too he was like in Bangkok Thailand um to attend some International religious conference and this electric fan just hit him in the head and electrocuted him instantaneously so it just seems like it was a freak accident I don't think Thomas Merton was high up high enough up

on any government lists to Warrant
assassination so I'm just going to move
on to the next question this is
rebellious monkey do you and or Terra V
reject
compatibilism the philosophy that Free
Will and determinism are not
contradictory and play equal roles roles
in action and
decisionmaking um no I let's see let's
see do I and or terado reject
compatibilism yeah I think both of us
would since Free Will and determinism I
mean Free Will is just logically
impossible for starters you know like
Albert Einstein who was no idiot by the
way Albert Einstein used to say he had

no idea what people were talking about when they talk about free will like a rationalist and Einstein was one he was kind of a spinos baruk Spinosa also was a rationalist and according to Spinosa there is a God but even God doesn't have free will because Free Will is just logically
impossible and in Buddhism it doesn't really take the logical approach it just says that with regard to any of the five condas you Cann out say let it be this way let it not be that way and have it reliably happen which is one of the main arguments for no self in Buddhism you would have to have a self a real self in

order to have real Free Will and since
Buddhism doesn't teach a real self it
really can't teach real free will
either
although my my theory is I've got like
this hypothesis that when when you've
got
self-referential any any kind of self-
reference you know like the classic
example is this statement is false it's
a paradox it can't be true or false and
the reason why you're able to have that
Paradox is because it's
self-referential and so when humans
become self-conscious we become
self-referential that can cause some
kind of short circuit in logic that some

somehow allows some semblance of free
will to exist that's just this weird
hypothesis that that I got mainly from
Reading um the trickster in the
Paranormal by George P
Hansen
so I mean there's certainly a certain
there's certainly a kind of
determinism and there's also just sort
of a a wild card from
Consciousness that it's it defies any
kind of rational explanation so there
can be something Ain into free
will that prevents us from being just
strictly deterministic like the Buddha
also rejected U determinism he rejected

Free Will and

determinism which kind of reminds me

that um Mah not mahasi ramama

Mahari who may have been fully

enlightened even though he was a Hindu

he used to say that the only free choice

you really have is whether or not to be

mindful so

you can you can do what you like with

that but I don't think that it's really

rationally

comprehensible because it's

paradoxical so let's

see Cool Whip loves how I say whipits

yeah it's right because that's the

correct way of saying it okay next is uh

judge kiga Bushman see to explain

experience in short I was in trouble and

during a rickshaw ride through the rice

feels I felt Oneness and all fear and

trouble disappeared a weird

Unforgettable experience um it could be

just like a

random perception or it could be like

genuine Insight or weas

on um but uh yeah it's really hard for

me to say without having experienced it

myself so I'm just going to move on to

the next question here and

um yeah after after the next couple

questions I'm really am going to have to

uh move over to the list so this next

question is from

java nandin what if what if I get
ordained as biku in Burma and after some
time like two to three years leave Burma
and go back to my country just live
alone in the forest I will work as fire
watcher guard and get paid well if
you're G to be a monk then you really
it's you're not allowed to handle money
also if you are ordained as a monk and
you remain as a monk then you have to
live in dependence upon a teacher or
preceptor for at least five
years so I mean if you're going to do as
you say you're going to do then really
you would be a like a LAX relatively
unconscientious monk who is not
following the rules correctly so you're

probably better off not doing that I
mean what's the point of being an
ordained mon
if you're going to be still like working
a job um you know I mean what what would
be the point of it I mean the main
difference between a monk and a lay
person is the rules of monastic
discipline it's the rules of monastic
discipline that make a monk is if a monk
disrobes it's also through an act or
through some violation or following of
rules of monastic discipline and so
really it's it's the the rules of or
what differentiates a monk from an
unordained person and if you're going to

be a monk who just doesn't follow the rules then you're better off just not being one that's one of the reasons why I disrobed is just living in the west it was just so difficult to follow all the rules and I just made up my mind that if I wasn't going to be following the rules there's no point in me being ordained I mean that wasn't the only reason but that was one contributing reason so furthermore he's Jah nand says since I didn't do part of J I'm still a beu right yeah you'd be a beu you just wouldn't be a very good one I mean you'd be an unconscientious beu so see tasz is says on Saturday two weeks from now Catholic Church

commemorates St John of the Cross well

that's nice St John of the Cross is the

patron saint of Spanish poets and also

he is the mystical doctor of the Roman

Catholic church so anything that St John

of the Cross says with regard to

mysticism is official

Doctrine okay so let's see Al y question

three you once mentioned you were

attacked by ogres what exactly did you

mean by this oh yeah that's uh that's

actually

golly I'm I'm sort of um editing my

fourth book

now which uh is going to

contain um a number of personal

anecdotes from my existence as a monk
part of it in Burma some of it in
America a little bit in in Indonesia
also and it's going to include the essay
of the time I was attacked by
ogres um but I mean what it all boils
down to is I was living on a big Flat
Rock under a tree in Burma at the time
and I woke up
and it was taking forever to for for
Dawn to come that day I was I I got up
and I I didn't have a clock or a watch
so I just knew it was dark that's that's
what time it was it was nighttime and I
I meditated until my legs were sore
changed position meditated some more
until my legs were sore I couldn't do

walking meditation because it was dark
it was very very up and down territory
there lots of poisonous snakes so it was
I couldn't really meditate or I couldn't
really do walking meditation so I just
lay back down and tried to sleep a
little more and then finally I woke up
again and I propped myself up on my arm
on my hand like this kind of craning my
head to see if Dawn was appearing over
the hills and I started hearing this
sound
[Music]
like really loud coming from down the
valley it was sort of like somebody
strumming on a bass guitar over a PA

system or something and I was thinking that's weird I mean where's that coming from and then I started hearing this this it was like a a crowd of people all talking at the same time but that was coming from inside my head it was sort of like in the the song Welcome to the Machine by Pink Floyd where you've just got all these voices talking kind of in the background

and um so then I like wow that's that's weird and then I realized that I was completely paralyzed I couldn't move I was I was frozen in this position of like propped up on my on my hand craning my head to see if if Dawn was appearing over the horizon yet and so then I

started thinking well should I be scared
and then of course being scared wasn't
going to help anything so I figured well
if this is some kind of being like I was
warned about before before moving there
I'll get back to that in a minute but if
presumably they're I mean they're burn
supernatural beings you know if it's
supernatural beings doing this they're
Buddhists and so I just started like
repeating in my head namas
bwas budas and it just you know the
spell was broken poof I could move again
all the sounds were gone and everything
so the thing is that before coming to
that the place was the aoya or the

outskirts of the aoya in mol State I was
warned by a monk with a degree in
physics you got to be careful cuz
there's ogres there there was there was
also other beings there there was a a a
being called an osas Sal there was at
least one Naga or dragon that lived
there um but you had to really be
careful about the ogres or yaka in P in
in Burmese they're called
Balo and they they had some kind of
Supernatural guns that that they would
attack people with there was this famous
story of this Hindu Swami who was
meditating in the same Forest that I was
meditating in and he was he knew about
the ogres so he tried to protect him s

from the ogres by making like a Charmed Circle and that was the worst thing he could have done because apparently Burmese ogres are Territorial and so they attacked him with these Supernatural weapons that caused him to go into like a Fugue State he was just wandering around lost in the forest until he came out onto a highway what what eventually happened to him I don't know maybe he went back to India or something after he got his wits together enough to do that so I mean at the time you know I was I just assumed in all likelihood it was like a waking dream where um when you're dreaming your

body is paralyzed so you won't be acting
out your dream you won't be sleepwalking
and so forth um and so I just kind of
assumed that that's probably what
happened I wasn't all the way awake yet
I mean I was certainly awake enough that
my eyes were open you know I was I was
like stuck in this position looking to
see if there was um any sign of dawn but
um so I mean from a western point of
view I wasn't really attacked by ogres
but when I went down to the lower
Monastery and told one of the monks
there he just his eyes just got really
big and he just says don't be afraid
they're just testing you and then just a
few weeks later I traveled to some place

that was like 400 miles away in central
Burma no longer in mon state in southern
Burma I went to this Monastery up near
the the town of mayo where there was an
Australian monk there almost as soon as
I walk in the door he's like what's this
say here about you being attacked by
ogres and then I went to visit um this
recluse who formerly a monk who lived in
this big hollow banion tree he was from
Midlands
Texas and I went to visit him and it was
the same thing it's like what's this I
hear about you being attacked by
ogres so that was that was essentially
the ogre attack if you want a more

complete

any more uh complete account of it you

you'll probably have to purchase the

book or

something let's

see um tasz is says show us your ring up

close well let's see I'll have to switch

like this and see it's it's sort of like

a

twig it's it's sort of rustic like tree

bark or something it's very nice it

matches my my woman's wedding band

although hers is is much smaller and

more

dainty

so I'm going to go like this again

because usually I can't see

myself all

right let's see here night

tapes night tape says now that you are a

householder what does your practice

entail and my practice such as it is

there's a certain amount of

austerity like getting up having to go

to work you know sometimes uh a man's

austerity can just be like dealing with

female psychology you know living in a

relationship there's a certain amount of

austerity there also just habits of

General

mindfulness like sometimes if I'm

driving a car I might start like cussing

at some idiot on the highway in front of

me or some such but as a general rule I

do it mindfully just this decades long

habit of OB observing my own mental

States you know causes me to just sort

of observe what's going on in my own

head as as like weather or something and

then about the only

real like meditation practice I still do

as a lay person is I spontaneously M

I'll just start doing oh spontaneously

sometimes so

let's see

here surprised that the supernatural

beings are Buddhists well it's just the

way it works like in the west the

supernatural beings are Christian and

that's why Catholic priests can do

exorcisms and drive away demons and so
forth through in the name of
Jesus so to some degree I think it could
be um like a placebo
effect so okay so I made it all all the
way down to the bottom of the list and
so I'm just going to go to this uh the
standard question and answer list that
I've collected from elsewhere and the
very first question which could have
been the very first question of the
whole Q&A is from maram made Mahayana
and maram Mahayana says every now and
then I still browse through your blog
Politically Incorrect Dharma also known
as The

Outsider and are there things that you
no longer see in the same way today like
the West needs more
fascism see although I think that is
somewhat true since we don't have real
democracy anyway so um yeah I I used to
write a lot of kind of
incendiary blog posts on the blog that
I've got going now it was much more
incendiary than the previous blog that
was much more directed towards Buddhism
Buddhist philosophy and so forth so yeah
my second blog there was a lot of
just deliberate political incorrectness
just saying true things that a lot of
people would be afraid to say but I
really didn't have a job to lose or

anything at the time I was a monk um and
I'm living in South Carolina now which
is very conservative so I probably
wouldn't get in trouble for any of it
even now but um yeah I did I did write
some kind of incendiary kind of Articles
and one was about how the West needs
more Fascism and
I mean I I made it clear at the
beginning of the essay or the blog post
I didn't really want Flatout fascism in
America but mainly the argument was
based on the idea that we're all in the
same boat and when you've got a whole
bunch of people leaning way to the left
or port in boat talk it causes the boat

to just tip so you need other people
leaning more to the right or
starboard to keep the boat from
capsizing so that was the main argument
that I was making there it was kind of
an incendiary title you know why the
West needs more fascism or some such but
um it was mainly just kind of you have
to have something going the opposite
direction from this you know Neo Marxist
crap that's threatening to just capsize
Western Civilization you need people
leaning the opposite direction in order
to kind of keep things on an even Keel
not that fascism is really hard right
there i' I wrote a few essays in that
blog just kind of discussing you know is

fascism really hard right what would

hard right be if it's not fascism that

kind of thing so some of my views are

slightly different um but not really

like radically

different so are there things that I no

longer see in the same way

today um not really I mean there could

be subtle changes everyone's attitude

changes subtly over time but there

hasn't been any

radical shift like when I got red pilled

in 2015 that like that was like a

political radical shift where I just

came to the conclusion that the left in

the west was just had was just going

completely insane

so that would be like the last major

change so there there could be some

older blog posts that I've written

before then where I was more of a a

lefty I I mean I was never like a

Flatout socialist or anything but you

know sort of a classical liberal and

classical liberals used to be considered

to be pretty much on the left but now

the left has left behind Classical

liberalism so that the classical

Liberals are now seen as Nazis

on on the

right so yeah I think that the only real

changes would be are the the main

changes in some of the stuff that I've

written would be before and after the
red pill experience of
2015 where you know I'd be more cynical
towards politics you know maybe more
pragmatic with regard to politics after
than before but most of what I've said I
still I still consider to be
true unless there's just something that
I'm just not thinking
of so I'll just move on to maram mahay's
next question which I do not fully
understand even though it is in English
and I am a speaker of English as a first
language he says unite the right of
dhama instead of getting involved in
politics in general and then in

parenthesis he says the right-wing in
Europe and the US is closer to
Christianity anyway so what should we
rather do to not waste our time so I
guess maram Mahayana is
suggesting that I mean to just adopt
right-wing politics in the west is
almost the same as adopting traditional
Christianity although that's not
necessarily the case I mean just for
example I mean I'm not a Christian and I
mean I'm not super hard right I mean
I've done some of those uh political
compass tests and I I wind up pretty
close to the middle actually it's just
that people on the left have become so
far left that someone in the middle is

considered to be a farri

Nazi so unite the right of dham instead

of getting involved in politics in

general yeah I mean if you want to just

um do religious traditionalism like

Buddhist traditionalism I mean that's

certainly an option in my case I do

consider to be the duty of an American

citizen to participate in the political

process at least through voting and in

order to vote you have to have some kind

of knowledge of politics current events

and so forth so you can make an informed

intelligent

decision so in my case and also politics

has become just so fascinating ever

since Trump got into politics you know
it's just fascinating I mean it's going
to be really interesting early
2025 when Trump is getting at least some
of his cabinet picks uh approved and
they just start overhauling the US
government and just essentially causing
just wreaking havoc on globalists in
general and just corrupt Crooks who have
got themselves well established in
government so well established they can
just cut cover their own tracks and
avoid avoid trouble up until soon
possibly so that's going to be really
interesting to just see what happens
during Trump's first month as number
47 but I mean if you really do just want

to practice traditional spirituality and
not be interested in politics which is
obviously the correct thing for a monk I
mean monks are supposed to just opt out
of society
you're not supposed to be wallowing in
politics I mean a lay a lay person a
householder like I have become it's kind
of a a like a a civic duty but as a
renunciant it's your duty to just not
give a [__] about politics not even talk
about politics and just sit under a tree
and meditate and purify your mind so
that you can become
enlightened and there's nothing wrong
with that either and so I'm just going

to move on the next question this is
from C action sead zida and SE of action
sead zida says how do I cope with
getting old and my best days being
behind me it feels like whenever my
friends and I talk we almost always end
up reminiscing about life in our younger
days really feels like our story is over
like War veterans chatting about old war
stories or some Grandpa talking about
back in my day things just aren't as fun
anymore hanging out relationships sports
TV Etc it has all gotten shittier with
age and I would guess that COV action
cpad z9 isn't even 30 years old
yet I would assume he's in his 20s I
just get the impression that he's in his

20s and he's already talking about how
his best days are behind him and one
thing I've noticed about Co action CAD
Zera is he does tend to adopt a very
superial point of view with regard to
certain things like with Ard to male
female relationships he just adopts this
superficial point of view which is what
most people do adopt in the west I
suppose including most women that he
would be attempting to have
relationships with some of them are just
hardly anything past the surface and
even the surface is all filtered through
Instagram filters and all
that

so I think it's it's a matter of attitude I mean I'm over 60 years old now I'm 61 years old and with regard to certain things my best days are behind me with regard to just having like energetic Vitality in general like my best meditation happened when I was about 40 so I mean spiritually it may be that I was reaching my Peak at about 40 years of age or maybe a little over 40 so it depends on I mean what with regard to what you're referring to to I mean it is true if i' meet some old buddy from high school or college we'd be reminiscing about just the the wild crazy drunkenness we indulged in back in high school high school and college but

still I mean I can't really say that my
best days are behind me necessarily
because you don't know what's going to
happen in the future it may be totally
unexpected
even but I mean with regard to this like
animal
stuff then yeah I mean you reach your
Peak when you're like I've read that a
man reaches his sexual peak when he's
like 17 years
old but with regard to spirituality
that's going to happen later and with
regard to just life in general who knows
what's going to happen in the future I
mean in a way you're just kind of

damning yourself by if you really do
insist that your best days are behind
you that I mean you're just on the
downhill slide in in every
way I mean that's that's defeatism
that's that's
blackpilled and being blackpilled is is
not really a daric wise spiritual
approach to take so you should always be
open-minded I mean you should never be
sure even if it seems at the surface
that your best days are behind you you
don't know what's going to happen next
year you don't know what's going to
happen so I mean with regard to
different metrics things I mean you may
not reach your Peak until you're full 40

like in Orthodox terraa the decade of

wisdom is your

40s so I mean you haven't even reached

the decade of wisdom I assume seov

action CAD zida is not 40 yet so my

advice to se action CAD Z is stop being

so damn

superficial and I'm just going to move

on to his next question here there is a

famous saying that can only be tracked

to majaya number 28 where Sara claims

that the Buddha taught one who sees

dependent origin ation sees dhama one

who sees dhama sees dependent

origination however since this verse is

found nowhere else then do you think

this was added later as you usually say
for sutas that are not said by the
Buddha because this seems like a very
important teaching and maybe it was from
a lost suta hard to believe this
seemingly very important line might not
even be original to the Buddha I mean
doesn't the Buddha say that whoever sees
dependent origination sees me
it see isn't it like in the nidana Su of
the dean nikaya I mean I was going to
actually check this and then I forgot so
it could be like in the nidana suta of
the of the dean nikaya where the Buddha
is actually saying it with regard to
himself and not just somebody else
saying about

him um but see the question is since

this verse is found nowhere else then do

you think this was added later because

this seems like a very important

important teaching and maybe it was from

a lost suta um it's possible the Buddha

said that um but it's you can't really

know for

sure I mean how can you possibly know

for

sure so I mean you can make educated

guesses you can you can make a guess but

I mean there's no way to know with

absolute certainty whether or not the

Buddha said some particular

thing so

I think I mean dependent core Rising is considered to be Central to Buddhist philosophy it's considered to be essential that I mean you can't really know dhama unless you understand dependent Co rising and still almost nobody understands it even in ancient times people didn't understand it it's been interpreted many different ways and finally the Orthodox way of understanding dependent cor rising or picha samua is to crystallize it down into the 12 nidanas or 12 links which almost certainly did not originate with the Buddha they were like Proto 12 links uh theories that aren't called dependent cor Rising like in the kalaha weasa or

the central uh versus of the Saka pyas
of the Dig Kaya that it's it's very
similar to the 12 links you know it's
analogous it's not called dependent coal
Rising though and it's it sort of like a
prototype of this 12 link Theory and
even the 12 link theory is interpreted
differently by different
people for example in terraa it's
traditionally considered to be uh the 12
links occur over three different at
least three different lifetimes in the
past the present life and in the future
life whereas some others interpret it
all as within one life some interpret it
is all just completely simultaneous like

venerable Nana Vera did famously in the

20th

Century

so yeah I do think that dependent core

Rising was very important that the

Buddha did teach it but it was different

from the 12 links and it's like almost

nobody understood it in fact according

to tradition in the texts the Buddha

almost didn't teach Buddhism that he BEC

he almost became a paja Buddha just a

Hermit Buddha he was going to be fully

enlightened but he wasn't even going to

bother teaching dhma because he figured

nobody would understand dependent Co

rising

and finally according to tradition mahab

Brahma came down from heaven and begged
him to to teach dhama so he
did and uh I think he was uh pretty much
correct that almost nobody understands
dependent core Rising I think possibly
the one Buddhist philosopher who
understood dependent core Rising better
than any other was nagara who was not
even a terab Buddhist
but the mul ma jamaka karaka is one of
the best expositions on dependent core
Rising that I know of and it's it's not
Orthodox terana so I'm just going to
move on to covac CAD Z's third
question which is to the best of your
abilities please explain the Traya of

the Buddha and how these relate to the

datag Garba if they do and this is all

Mahayana Buddhism the trikaya are the

are the three bodies of the Buddha

uh the first is the nuraya which is just

the physical body of the Buddha you know

the Buddha the the body of sidarta

Goa and this would correspond to like in

Christianity you've got just Jesus The

Carpenter's son the Flesh and Blood guy

who walked around on this planet and

sweat and had to eat and drink and go to

the bathroom and all

that so after the monaya you've got the

samboa Kaya and it's my understanding I

have read that the samboa Kaya in

Buddhism was an innovation of the

yogachara school that before yogachara
you had maamaa that only had two bodies
or like earlier forms of Mahayana only
had two bodies but it was an innovation
of the yogachara school or so I have
read that in that added the Sakaya which
is sort of like the heavenly
Buddha like in this Buddha realm that
he's he's sort of like this Cosmic being
he's sort of like a a powerful Cosmic
deity which is uh a Mahayana Innovation
with regard to the Buddha the Terra
vadens already had started glorifying
the Buddha and you know had started up a
kind of devotional cult towards the
Buddha but it was the Mahayana Buddhist

who turned him into a kind of cosmic
deity and so the the
Sakaya would correspond to like Jesus as
the Christ's spirit enthroned in heaven
and then finally the third body of the
Buddha is the dharmakaya and that's just
like the Buddha Essence the Buddha
nature just the spirit of like Nirvana
the essence of Nirvana that just
pervades the entire universe so it would
be like the spirit of God the Father
pretty much just pervading the
universe so how do these relate to the
Daga Garba which is a different it's
there's a whole sect of Mahayana
Buddhist philosophy called the dagat
Garba school or the the the womb of the

datara or the embryo of the datag with
datag itself meaning the Buddha so it's
like the the womb of Buddha which
everybody has within them they've got
like this embryonic Buddha existing
within you know every sentient being has
sort of like the latent potential at
least like Buddha nature um of becoming
fully enlightened and that would
probably come closest to the dharmakaya
which is just the the absolute which
pervades the entire universe which then
of course pervades us it would be sort
of like the um Brahman in the upanishads
where you're Atman or your self your
soul is really just that aspect of God

that just happens to be you know within

you so the dag

Garba probably would come closest to the

dharmakaya in the three bodies of the

Buddha system of Mahayana

Buddhism and so I'm going to move on to

the next question this is from

files and files says I realized recently

that one thing which prevents me from

Right View is the idea of how if at all

someone without hisself is capable of

voluntary action oh he's got a different

name I can't remember what his name is

on

the on the the side chat but now he's

called philes so I'm just going to have

to start all over because I realized

that I this is the question that I was
postponing which then just jolted me
into this this sense of new awareness
that then derailed the the perceptual
train of thought so anyways philes or
whatever he's calling himself on the
chat says I realized recently that one
thing which prevents me from Right View
is the idea of how if at all someone
without a self is capable of voluntary
action which is reflexive power of
control or Choice according to nanov
Vera and that includes practicing DH I'm
pretty certain question mark I have
tried meditating on this but I just
can't can't wrap my head around it

especially our hanss who have quashed all self view how the heck do they make decisions then for example even someone even something as small as choosing whether you want mayonnaise on your sandwich or not requires accessing one's preferences which I don't see how they can be wholesome or if something is so small can be wholesome what about larger things I mean is an arant or someone with Right View capable of making art I mean art requires self viiew does it not and I know there were many artist monks but that doesn't make sense of it and on a more Cosmic level if there's no self then how is willfully practicing dhama even possible how does the no self viw

not lead to Absolute skepticism isn't
this a paradox and if it is a logical
Paradox in dhma practice I feel like
it's really a question of faith in which
case why not have faith in Yahweh as the
absolute I need to take a really long
nap until next Sunday or that's today
isn't it because I need my answer or I
might just spontaneously combust just
kidding I stopped doing that a while
back so he doesn't spontaneously combust
anymore which is good it's it's it's
really a nasty
habit so this is a long question which
is all considered to be one very
complicated question

so let's

see I realize one blog one thing which

prevents me from Right View is the idea

of how if at all someone without a self

is capable of voluntary action well none

of us really has a self we might have a

delusional self viw we might

delusionally believe that we have a self

But ultimately we don't and from the

Orthodox terrain point of view you've

got mind and mental states that are real

and and um with regard to making

unenlightened decisions it's mostly a

matter of habit like with regard to the

choice of whether to put mayonnaise on

your sandwich or not as a general rule

that's going to be largely based on you

know your past experience with mayonnaise do you like mayonnaise on your sandwiches it's it's going to be largely deterministic with regard to that and it reminds me that I was reflecting a lot on free will when I was a monk in Burma and it's like one time I needed a new sweat wiping rag my old sweat wiping rag was wearing out you know it was just getting you know threadbear and pretty much useless so I went into the storage room of my cave to get a new sweat wiping rag because I had a bunch of extra ones lying around that people had donated to me and I had the had it narrowed down to two there was a

yellow one and orange

one and I'm just kind of I really didn't

have any good reason to pick one over

the other if I had there was a good

reason that reason would be what decided

it you know if you could just see

clearly enough that one choice was

superior to the other choice on whatever

criteria that's what makes your decision

for you but in this case there was no

obvious reason to choose one or the

other and so I'm just kind of blank

almost and then finally this thought

arises I'll take the orange one

I didn't know that that thought was

going to arise it just arose and it

turned out later on that I changed my

mind and went with the yellow one but
it's like you don't know what you're
going to decide until you're deciding it
otherwise I mean if you already know
what you're going to decide then you've
already
decided so it's just like Karma arises
with regard to these things and you
don't really
notice the determinism of it it in most
cases because it's just you got this
one offer this one option that is just
in accordance with your character your
past experiences and all that is just
clearly the obvious choice it's only
when you get into just a totally

arbitrary choice you can't make up your mind whether you want to wear the blue shirt or the red shirt that is you don't even know what you're going to decide until the decision just arises in your mind and it's conscious mental States it's not necessarily UNH wholesome it's just Karma just the the momentum of your your stream of Consciousness is just driving you in a certain direction and the less conscious you are the less control you have over that the less conscious you are the less enlightened you are the more you're just going to be running on autopilot there's just going to be this habitual kneejerk reactions are going to be ruling most of

your life and that's the way most people
are there's really not a whole lot of um
like enlightened
creativity going on with with regard to
a fully enlightened being or the wiser
you are the more intuitive and
spontaneous it's going to be but still
um that doesn't mean that there's
necessarily Going to Be Free Will and
trying to understand exactly how this
works I've already implied that the
Buddha in the text rules out both
obvious possibilities that Free Will is
out and also determinism is out there
may be I mean there's obviously some
determinism especially the less

enlightened you are the more foolish you

are the more semiconscious you are the

more you're just going to be ruled by

habit habit energy which is

karma when the more wise you get the

more off the scale you're going and the

less comprehensible it is

unfortunately and uh my wife is walking

around Outdoors where the motion

detectors keep

binging so I may actually have to stand

up and get her to stop if she doesn't

stop

soon

so it's I mean you can't really wrap

your head around it it's just something

that cannot be understood intellectually

reality itself cannot be understood
intellectually which is something that I
pound away at it's one of the
predominant themes of my Q&A is that
people want to understand reality
intellectually and it just doesn't work
that way it's not going to happen you
can you can get like a model of
empirical reality like science that is
useful but it's not
reality it's like perceived phenomena
which are ultimately
delusional so I'm not sure if I have
helped files at all or just plunged him
into utter despair with my answer but
I'm just gonna have to move on to the

next one I have no no idea how long

we've been going at this because I'm not

even looking at the the editing software

because I have to see the the the chat

and so forth so hopefully I'm like

visible and

everything and I'm moving on to the next

question which is from

quor and

quor says is it accurate to say that the

Heavenly Realms are not suitable for

achieving enlightenment because they

lack the experience of the first Noble

Truth if there is indeed no suffering in

the formless Realms does this mean it's

impossible to experience boredom or

sadness there well I mean the first

Noble Truth of Buddhism is valid it's
applicable no matter where you are in
samsara the first Noble Truth of
Buddhism is dukka to exist is to be
dissatisfied to exist is to be unhappy
to some degree
and that's that applies whether you're
at the bottom pit of aichi Hell or
whether you're in the most like
exalted uh
ephemeral maybe ephemeral isn't the
right word but like the realm of neither
perception or non-perception just
totally just as subtle as it gets still
the first Noble Truth remains true so
there's always going to be a certain

amount of restless dissatisfaction regardless of what heaven realm you're in and being in like the lower Heaven Realms you know with the the pleasure Gardens and the the Golden Palaces encrusted with jewels and the the voluptuous uh Celestial nymphs and all this then it it'd be sort of like being a rich person who just doesn't get sick and doesn't get old but still like the Buddha when he was a young man he wallowed in sensuality and he realized that it just wasn't going to it wasn't going to deeply satisfy him it just wasn't cap able of that and so you can have the same kind of experiences in heaven I suppose there can still be

boredom in heaven I think or just a
desire for something more than you've
got even though you've got everything
imaginable still you realize if you have
enough wisdom that it's just not
completely satisfying and then you
finally realize that nothing is
completely satisfying because that's
just the way samsara works there has to
be like this Restless dis satisfaction
to keep pushing you through Sam sorrow
moving on to the next thing
insatiably so I think I answered that so
I'm moving on to quora's next question
which is as
follows is it more accurate to say that

the earliest sutas describ janas as
mental States reached through deep Sade
or rather as states of subtle reality
experienced through daily life as a
result of years of sudden patana
meditation um well the earliest sutas
when they mention Janna it's just
meditation and then the four janas the
the system of four janas which is still
relatively old it's found in the
relatively early
texts um that is just originally in my
opinion it was just the four stages of
meditation so as a general rule in
Ancient India sitting meditation was
more of a samat thing and you were doing
more of a mindfulness thing the rest of

the time when you weren't like sitting
in deep meditation you're like up
walking around you're walking for alms
you're washing your bowl whatever it is
that would be more a case of sa s or
mindfulness and clear awareness clear
comprehension but I mean there is
overlap between sa batana and Janna you
know it's like like I already said
fourth jna is in the text called the
Perfection of
mindfulness so it's not two separate
paths as some people believe in Burma
it's called two different saas sometimes
a Burmese person will ask you what
sasana do you belong to the the samata

saasa or the weasa saana when really I

do not think that the Buddha had this

either or dichotomy that there's a lot

of overlap it's just like two different

emphases with generally

traditionally j or suata or just like

somat based meditation being what you

were doing when you were sitting cross I

good with your eyes closed and that you

would maintain this kind of M this

mindfulness

momentum by just practicing

sad when you know you're you're standing

up and you're you're walking around and

making noise

so getting back to the question here is

it more accurate to say that the

earliest sutas described janas as mental States reach through deep Sade or rather as states of subtle reality yeah it'd be the first one it would be mental States reach through deep samati that would be the traditional approach to Jonna in the early texts and um I think there probably still people asking questions yeah there's still people asking questions on the chat so I'll get back to the chat after I I get through some more of the the questions on the list and then I'll go back to the chat and read all the questions that remain there that I haven't answered yet and then that'll be it and then we'll we'll stop

and I'll turn off the machine somehow
and and move on to doing something else
so anyways the next question is from
Romeo and Romeo says every now and then
I come across an article online
cautioning people about the adverse
effects of meditation this is confusing
to me because I have found profound
benefits to my mental States and overall
well-being since I have been meditating
despite being relatively new at it I am
including a couple of such articles at
the end of this post for your reference
in one of them it refer it mentions
something called the Dhat trata
meditation scripture as a Buddhist
Source cautioning people about

meditation so question number one
are you familiar with the Dhat trata
meditation scripture if so what is your
impression of it no it's it's apparently
in Sanskrit so that would mean it's
probably a Mahayana Buddhist text and
I've I do not recall having read the
Dhat trata meditation scripture it's not
in it's not terraa so it really wasn't
within my purview if I just use the word
perview
correctly so yeah I'm not familiar with
it so I don't really have an impression
of it so I'm just going to move on to
question two did the Buddha ever mention
the possibility of meditation being

potentially harmful if so in which sutas
and I don't recall the exact sutas
except maybe it could be mentioned for
example in the alagad upas sua in that
if you're meditating on something
unskillful it can harm you and like the
alamasa just Compares being a monk with
handling a snake that if you are a monk
you have to be very careful how you go
about practicing dhama because if you if
you handle dhama wrong it can just reach
around and bite you which reminds me of
an old I think it's a Catholic proverb
uh saying a statement to the effect that
it's easier for a a monk to go to hell
than for a lay person to go to hell
simply because you've got uh like more

duties you know you've got a a higher responsib ability it's easier to fail in your duties as a monk than as a a lay as a lay person but I do think that the Buddha does sort of warn against um for example the AAA monks how I mean if you're meditating on wrong view if your meditation is Guided by wrong view it can lead you in a wrong direction which can be harmful to you I don't remember exactly which sutas say this but as a general rule if you're meditating correctly it's all good even if something bad happens to you still you're making good karma by doing it so did the Buddha ever mention the

possibility of meditation being

potentially harmful um there's also one

I it suddenly comes to mind that there

is another case in which there is a monk

named Sona

cikana who

he he was raised he was born and raised

this Rich pampered guy and according to

the text he actually had Downy hair on

the bottoms of his feet which indicates

that he never had to walk around very

much so he was able to grow this hair on

the bottoms of his feet which is pretty

is probably not good human anatomy and

physiology um to to believe that's

possible but still so anyways this

sonak cikana went to visit the Buddha

because he was ordained in in like south of the Ganges Valley in a relatively is like a a frontier of Buddhism so he went to the Buddha to to just pay his respects because the Buddha was still alive you he wasn't ordained by the Buddha but he was ordained by a disciple of the Buddha he wants to meet the Buddha so he goes there and he's he's doing walking meditation so strenuously that it looks like a cow has been slaughtered on the Walking meditation path his feet are all broken open his feet are all bloody and so the Buddha sees all this Blood on the Walking meditation path and he gives

sonak cikana this little parable about
you know when you were a lay person and
you played music could you play good
music when your strings were too loose
and then of course son says no and could
you play good music when the strings
were tooo tight and then says no and it
says well D practice the same way if you
try too hard that's like having the
strings too tight you're not going to
get good benefit you're not going to get
good results and I mean if you have the
strings too loose that's like your
practice is too LAX so it's like a
middle path in practice you don't want
to try too hard so that something
snaps and it is kind of interesting that

in this text the same suta which I think
is also mentioned in in the rules of
monastic discipline that the asks Sak
Sona Kiana to recite some DH for him and
he recites the ataka waga of the
suata so that was one indication that
the ATA waga was very old text because
it's mentioned in other canonical texts
by
name so but the main the main way that
meditation can be potentially harmful if
you're trying too hard or if you're
meditating like in a wrong method that
based on some heretical wrong view
that's going to lead you possibly to
Hell by you know dwelling on it too

much so I'm just going to move on to Romeo's thirdd question which is have you ever felt any adverse effects of meditation or have you known people who have if so what exactly were the nature of these adverse effects for example dissociation psychosis depression Etc question mark well first with to other people anyone who's been to a lot of meditation

Retreats can know that somebody can just snap people can just snap and just start howling like dogs or um friend of mine was at pandama the forest the so-called Forest Monastery of pandama in Burma and there was some I think it was an a Malaysian monk a Chinese Malaysian mock

I think if I remember correctly who just
started I mean he was like possessed by
some kind of spirit he was just
blaspheming just roaring with laughter
and just just making a mockery of like
the three refuges and all this and um
seatt upand who was still alive at the
time um decided that he was possessed by
a yaka or an ogre um and so he had a he
had had him sent to a psychologist or
something
so I mean so some people who are not
prepared for intensive meditation I mean
it can just be too extreme it can be
like being in a Chinese thought reform
camp or something it's just just moving

in slow motion and and just getting
minimal sleep and just sitting in
meditation observing your own mind for
hours and hours every day it can cause
people to
snap and it's largely people who are
just plunging head first into intensive
practice without much momentum going
from practice before they enter the
retreat with regard to
myself
um I've had adverse effects of
meditation just like physical you know
just pain in the joints and so forth bed
sores from sitting too much with regard
to psychological adverse effects of
meditation the only thing I can really

think of I mean I've never just snapped
from meditation doing intensive
meditation but there is a kind of
mindfulness where you're not like super
deep mindfulness but it is you've got
some mindfulness going that it kind of
magnifies negative stuff you know it's
you're not mindful enough to completely
like um separate yourself from it to be
completely objective and and like
equanimous so it's it's like this
negative stuff that you're being mindful
of it's like you're looking at it
through a magnifying glass which makes
it bigger and clearer and still you
don't have good enough mindfulness to

detach from it so that can it can be

very

unpleasant when you're when you're being

like sort of mindful so that you're

you're able to see this this negative

Duca stuff close up but you're not

mindful enough to just be completely

detached from it so it sort of magnifies

the

[__] so that's that's probably about the

worst ad adverse effects of meditation

that I've had

personally um and then of course like I

was said before that some people just

snap if they're plunged into an

intensive meditation environment that

they're just not used

to so and then and then Romeo includes
two uh articles neither of which neither
of which I looked at like too much
mindfulness can worsen your mental
health from verywellhealth.com
and uh let's see meditation can be
harmful and can even make mental health
problems worse from the conversation.com
um yeah I mean you can find adverse
effects of anything you know I'm sure
there's lots of um lots of articles on
how exercise and if you do it wrong can
really mess you up or eating Health Food
you know can can just mess you up if if
you go about it wrong so just because
people can come up with these articles

on how meditation can can worsen your
health or something that I mean it
doesn't mean that it's it's a bad thing
that some people just aren't ready for
it it doesn't work for
them and probably the people who are
writing these are people who just don't
like meditation and so they're
emphasizing the the negative aspects of
it like you can do with anything
anything at all you can emphasize the
negative aspects of it you can find some
negative aspects that maybe are just
trivial and then just sort of make an
entire article about that and make it
seem like it's a much bigger deal than
it is but I mean there's always going to

be a certain amount of risk in life you know like joining the military you know just basic training you know it can have the same stressful effect of somebody just snapping anyone who's familiar with um Full Metal Jacket knows what happened with uh what was his name I don't remember his name but he he snaps in in basic training or whatever whatever it was
called so yeah I mean just because there's a risk just because there's some difficulty or some Hazard um doesn't mean that you shouldn't do it I mean just being a monk wandering around in tropical Asian forests obviously there's

all kinds of things that can happen you
can get bitten by a snake you can get
bitten by a scorpion you can get malaria
you can get all kinds of other diseases
like dissenter or hepatitis or whatever
all kinds of things can happen and it's
just you got to take the risk if you
think that it's worth worth the
risk so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from ruie and ruie
says have you had the experience of
Awakening within sleep and as you are
still asleep start identifying the
storytelling of the mind going here is a
story here is another story and so forth
and so on as the storytelling mind
unfolds like seemingly it always does

well this sounds like lucid dreaming and I've never really had a fully lucid dream I had a friend of mine the the Texan hermit who lived in the Big B Big Hollow banion Tree in Burma he was exper experimenting a lot with lucid dreaming he would tell me a lot about it he I I borrowed a book or two on the subject from him just to to read about lucid dreaming but I never really had a fully lucid dream I had borderline lucid dreams like as a monk there were a few times where I'd be dreaming about breaking a rule I'd be like eating in the afternoon or something and then I'd stop and think wow this this is against

the rules I shouldn't be eating dinner
I'm a monk and then I and then I'd have
enough loose
to to realize oh wait this is just a
dream I can keep eating dinner so I had
a few dreams like that where you know
that you're dreaming at least you have
like this little flash of insight in the
dream to know that you're just dreaming
so it's okay you know that what you're
doing does not have the same
consequences as it would if you were
awake and that reminds me one time I had
this dream that I was stealing car
stereos which is nothing that I'd ever
done before you even like as a a feral
teenager and it was like I started

panicking I realized that's a part of
jica offense I'm excommunicated from the
sa for doing that and then finally I
realized oh wait it's just a dream so
I'm not really
excommunicated so I hope I answered ru's
question there because I'm moving on to
tig's
question who sometimes goes by the Alias
of I shop at
Costco and T says have you ever had the
fireball cinnamon whiskey and if so what
is your opinion of it or on it and Tig
is very irreverent he's kind of a smart
aliy kind of a guy and so he'll ask me
these kind of questions have I ever had

the Fireball Cinnamon whiskey and no I

have not I've never had any kind of

flavored whiskey that I am aware of in

my

life um I do occasionally uh drink a

little bit of Wild Turkey Bourbon though

just not not enough to get slammed or

anything

but every once in a while it's it's it's

almost a kind of aesthetic practice

because

whiskey I mean I've never really

acquired a taste for drinking hard

liquor

straight so it it takes some doing in my

case I mean if if I wanted to spend 200

bucks a bottle on something nice you

know Johnny Walker Green Label or

something maybe it would it would go

down easier but um I just don't do

that so I'm just going to move on next

question question since TIG was asking

kind of a a smart aliy kind of joke

question anyway I think so the next

question is from

cify and uh yeah cfy's in the chat too

so cify says would you accept an

invitation to give teachings if one day

circumstances come together well uh I I

don't see why not although the thing is

now I'm a lay person and I have to work

for a living and as I mentioned

tomorrow's my first day of work work at

my new job which will be a forklift
operator for a big trucking company so
I'll be loading and unloading trucks and
may never Bend sheet metal ever
again which is kind of sad I was getting
really good at bending sheet metal but
driving a forklift is fun and I'll be
making more money at this job than at
the last job anyway which is nice so
anyways would I accept an invitation to
give teachings sure um I mean if it
worked
but as again I've got I got to work for
a living and so you know I got bills to
pay I got a I got a family to
support so I mean just doing like I did
before you know just going to Indonesia

or some place you know getting invited
to a a Dharma Hall in some other
Town um you know it's it could work but
um just the the everyday realities the
Practical real ities of having a job and
so forth May interfere with that when I
first stopped being a monk and came to
South Carolina I was very open-minded on
becoming like a full-time Dharma
teacher and I did have this idea which I
still think is a good idea of like
meditation hiking trips where just a
small group of people hike out into a
Wilderness Area find nice campsites just
Camp there and you know you're
meditating in your tent or whatever

during the day and in the evening you
all go come and sit around a campfire
and have a Dhat talk that kind of thing
you know you wouldn't have to rent a
Dharma hall or anything like that it'd
be fairly
cheap and um for some reason it just
never caught on really and here in South
Carolina I'm living in the Bible Belt
I'm not sure that I've ever met another
Buddhist living here in South Carolina
during the years that I have been here
at this point I'm sure that there are
Buddhists I mean there's there's like a
Sri Lankan Temple that's somewhere
within a 20 mile drive of here I'm
pretty sure I've just never gone to see

it there's a Vietnamese Buddhist

Monastery this supposedly very pretty

probably Mahayana Buddhism of some sort

um but I'm just just sort of innocent of

South Carolina

Buddhism

so after that long rambling answer I'm

just going to move on to the next

question

and this is from xenoid and xenoid says

what are the etymological differences

between Buddha datag arahant bodhisattva

and

bodhisatta okay well let's start with

Buddha the etymology of Buddha Buddha is

like a past participle of a verb like

bodit boded means to wake up or that's literally it means to wake up so the Buddha literally is awakened so I mean that's that's fairly straightforward Buddha literally is the awakened one the tagata is somewhat controversial I don't think people are entirely in agreement even within Orthodox teravan tradition what the exact atmology of the word Daga is and that's another name for the Buddha and my interpretation is it's a combination of two words data which means like this and AATA which is a past participle of aach which means to come so it's or or in this case to become so it is he who has become

like this he who has become such he who

has become thus and that using a word

like dat or also

tadi which is found in the Thea waga of

the suip the word t which also means

just like this and it's referred to an

enlightened being an enlightened being

has become

such he has become like this because he

has attained this state that you can't

put into words and so you just call it

such you just call it like

this and it reminds me of a book by uh

the philosopher bertran Russell who said

that in the English language there's

only two words that aren't

generalizations and that's this and that
so I think it might also include
something like thus or like dat like
that it's it's like you're trying to get
Beyond labels and words and Concepts and
you're just it's a way kind of a gimmick
of just trying to get directly at
reality like this and so the Buddha is
the one who has attained that who has
attained this suchness that is beyond
words in just immediacy immediate
reality so moving on to the next one is
the word arahant
which I mean it could
be derived from a verb which means to be
worthy to be worthy of like Aro is it
just means worthy and it's not

necessarily a good thing in all cases like you can be worthy of punishment and it would have that Aro at the end of the word like dandaro worthy of punishment or worthy of um of taking Penance or something you use the same word araha Aranda just means possessing araha possessing
worthiness and it's it was like an honorific that was probably used before Buddhism like I think judges like it was just kind of an honorific term for some exalted person that they would be called you know the worthy one and that sort of got Borrowed by Buddhism as a word for describing a fully enlightened being and

then with regard to bodh sat I've
already discussed this I think in the
previous Q&A Bodhi is Enlightenment or
like awakenment you know it's Buddha and
Bodhi have the same basic
atmology so Bodhi is like
Enlightenment and
sat um it can have different meanings
but I'm pretty sure that it is a past
participle um of the verb SED which
means to attach to be bound for and so
abodh sat in Terra Buddhism was a being
destined for or Bound for enlightenment
which was a person who wasn't a Buddha
yet but was destined to become a Buddha
and so in the earlier text it's mainly
referring to goab Buddha before he was

fully enlightened when he was just the
bodh SAT the buddhis SAT one destined
for for buddhahood and then I think the
Mahayana Buddhist probably mistranslated
sat into satva which means a being and
so the the Mahayana Sanskrit term bodh
satva means Enlightenment being and not
someone who is destined for or Bound for
buddhahood although that's still kind of
what it means they just mistranslated
the second word in my
opinion so having discussed the
eological
derivations of those words I move on to
Zenith void's next
question which is are there any burmes

or Thai authors that are comparable to
dovi in their use of religious themes
and philosophical depth in their
fictional works and there may be but I
am unaware of it I doubt that it would
be in Burmese the burmes are not a
particularly imaginative creative people
and I think that kind of like that kind
of fiction like doeski wrote is is like
a western
phenomenon I mean there may be in Japan
or China or something something similar
maybe the tale of Genji in Japan I mean
it's some classic work of
fiction maybe I've never read the tale
of Genji though but doeski was just sort
of a miraculous phenomenon he was sort

of like you know like U Michelangelo or

something just this tormented

creative

genius and uh yeah the Burmese they're

just not that like inspired with

creativity like most people who consider

the themselves artists in Burma they're

more like Artisans they're Craftsmen

they learn how to crank out a certain

kind of painting or a certain kind of

statue and they just they just start

turning them out and there's almost no

actual creativity or self-expression

involved at

all with regard to Thai literature I

know much less about Thai literature I

spent a total of just a few weeks in Thailand and uh most of my experiences are with burm Burmese Buddhism rather than Thai Buddhism and with Burmese literature rather than Thai literature but uh I would be surprised if Burma or Thailand created anyone comparable to dovi or Michelangelo and so I'm just going to move on to uh xenoid third question here do you generally prefer Western or Eastern literature well with regard to spiritual literature I prefer Eastern you know like Buddhist texts with regard to like secular Literature Like fiction then I would prefer the Western literature simply because from from what

I've been exposed to Western literature
is just richer more creative more
imaginative more
inspired than the like Eastern like
Asian fiction I mean you can still find
some about RA rabindran tagor in India
wrote well you know he was he wrote well
by Western
standards but with regard to Burmese
literature yeah it's so like
philosophical like spiritual literature
I prefer Eastern as a general rule but
with regard to just about any other kind
of literature I prefer Western and it's
partly just because I'm a Westerner I
think like a Westerner and so Western

writings tend to harmonize with my
character more than Eastern
writings so the next questions are from
Salon recluse who um reproduced his
questions into the chat and so they're
already answered like my take on the DAP
by F Max Miller my take on the Su by
fbow and let's
see and also my opinion of understanding
early Buddhism through po or Sanskrit
rather than English I've already
answered those and so I'm just moving on
to the next question which is from
skolin or skolin
and he says would you kindly discuss how
realistically death is portrayed in the
movie final destination and no I won't

kindly discuss it because I never saw
the movie I I don't know if I've ever
even heard of a movie called Final
Destination I really don't watch nearly
as many movies as I used to i' I've
watched very few movies over the
past gosh two years maybe
H I did watch the second Dune movie and
uh oh I watched Alita battle Angel again
like a week or two
ago but uh never watched Final
Destination so I'm just moving on to the
next question from scolin or scoline is
there a middle way for contemplating
death and then his characteristic bullet
point comment says I can't redecorate

the place with furniture made of Bones

like leather face

and watching autopsies upsets people

unless it's alien autopsies so a middle

way for contemplating death I mean you

don't have much choice in the west

anyway they don't have charnal fields in

the west like they they used to have in

India I mean they don't even have

charnal fields in Burma really you can

go to a a cemetery and see some bones

lying around and that's that's about

it so I

mean I I kind of kind of circumvented

that difficulty by going to see

autopsies when I was a junior monk until

they finally begged me to stop coming to

see

autopsies um so I mean you're going to

have to find some workaround for

contemplating death regardless

especially because there's no chnal

Fields anymore with just rotting

decomposing corpses lying around to to

admire or to

contemplate so I mean one thing you can

do it's something that I did at a

library in rangon once was I just

checked out a book on Forensic

medicine and you can get a book on

Forensic medicine which is a book on how

to do autopsies and you don't have to

share that book with other people you

can hide it under your pillow if you
want
to or I mean you can just contemplate
death you can do that too you can use
your own imagination and go where that
leads
you um I mean you can find literature on
the subject that would be helpful you
can read what what is said on the
subject in Buddhist texts for example
I'm sure the entire books have been
written on this like with regard to the
32 parts of the body somebody donated a
book to me a long time ago that had
photographs of all the 32 parts of the
body including [__] it was just like
this photograph of a

turd so I mean you can do all kinds of
things like that that uh do not require
you to actually find a decomposing
corpse to
contemplate so I'm just going to move on
to scad's next question which is a very
difficult
question and that is if Mara was right
in front of you and you needed to kill
him with a particularly irreverent joke
what would you say and I'm kind of
caught flat footed on this I mean the
first impulse that came to me when I was
asked this question was to tell him a
riddle but Mara being a deity who has
Clairvoyance like the Divine eye and can

read minds he'd know the answer to the riddle so he'd be able to to wreck my riddle easily and make it not funny so what other kind of joke would you make about

Mara it's like I mean it might be just something irreverent like nice shoes you're wearing today or you know how's the daughters something like that you know it' just be some sort of you know flippant kind of comment that I'd make to him um but I mean you don't really want to defy like the Buddhist Satan to his face because he he might get at you somehow or another I mean you you like offend his his you demean his dignity by laughing at him or some such

I mean he can get back at you so yeah

I'm not sure I I I suppose I could have

racked my brain for some kind of

irreverent Mara joke but I mean I just

have to I just have to wing it if if

Mara ever comes to visit me we we meet

face to face then I'm just going to have

to rely on spontaneous wit I guess and

I'm sorry to

disappoint but I really just cannot

think of an appropriate joke to tell

Mara that would somehow kill him with

the funniness of the joke other than

like maybe a riddle but he would know

the answer to it and so it would it

would it would fall flat

essentially I'm not sure I I would uh
want to tell a joke tomorrow tell you
the
truth so the very last question on the
list before I go back and see if there
are any uh additional questions in the
chat is from budo poo and he says are
the four noble truths and the eight-fold
path found in the old oldest
sutas and it all depends on what you
consider to be the oldest sutas for
example what is considered to be the
very first suta after the Buddha's
Enlightenment is the damaka puas sua in
which he discusses the four noble truths
and the Eightfold Path so according to
tradition the Buddha's very first

discourse after his

Enlightenment discussed the four noble

truths in the eight-fold path although

it could be an anachronism and maybe

that really wasn't exactly his first

discourse it may be that the Buddha's

first discourse was with regard to the

middle

path I mean that's that's also one of

the main things that the Buddha was

talking about so it could be I mean in

the in the

damak so it could be that the first

discourse was really about the Buddha's

conception of the middle way between

extremes and then other things got added

like the The buddhistic Scholar KR
Norman points out that the damaka puan
asuta does contain certain anachronisms
certain
assumptions that you would already be
familiar with certain ideas in Buddhist
philosophy based on what is found in the
text itself that the text itself of the
what is considered to be the Buddhist
first discourse after his
Enlightenment is you I mean it is
assuming that the hearer is already
familiar with Buddhist philosophy to
some degree so um I am somewhat
skeptical that the first sermon of the
Buddha after his Enlightenment would be
exactly verbatim as is found in the

first sermon or what is considered to be the first sermon but if you look back to like obviously fairly very ancient archaic Buddhist text like the ataka waga there's no mention of the Four Noble Truths or the noble eight-fold path and CG

P GC P GC P says in his book very important excellent book studies in the origins of

Buddhism that um they're probably was four noble truths taught by the Buddha but the fourth Noble Truth which is the Noble eight-fold Path May originally not have been eight-fold that the Eightfold of the eight-fold path might be similar

to the 12 12 fold of the 12 nidana
theory of dependent col Rising that it
was something that was developed later
and there are certain prototypes like
you can find a tenfold a ten-fold path
in the sutas
also so there was a certain amount
of like settling on this specific path
the eight-fold of it and so forth so it
may be that the four noble truths were
origin that the Buddha was talking about
it from towards the beginning you know
from the from the very beginning
possibly but the eight-fold path may not
have originally been eight-fold it may
have originally just been there is a
path so that was the very last question

there so I can just uh get rid of

that and let's see what happens let's

see if we got any more questions

here

see uh got to keep keep scrolling

upwards let's

see keep scrolling up we got more

questions

here see got keep keep scrolling up

until I get oh okay show us your ring I

already did that see there it

is there's a time lapse on the video

here so

that yeah okay let's see maybe I can do

this please excuse me I'm experimenting

okay now I can see what I really look

like

okay let's see now I gotta scroll down

okay Dragon asks are you David that went

to Fort Lauderdale as copia last 30

years ago no I've never been to Fort

Lauderdale I was a A copia or a monaster

attendant a little well considerably

more than 30 years ago now

like

1990 like early spring of

1990 I was a white clad Monastery

attendant in California but uh never

went to Fort Lauderdale

so let's see Emperor Palpatine coo

sounds super depressing his question

made me sigh yeah send meta to the co of

action cpad zida tasz is says I'm still

young and random

let's

see so let's see where's we need a

question we need question marks that's

what we need

here okay Chapo's gy or Chapo C he p o

says see how does an anagami transcend

intellectual constructs to move from a

conceptual understanding to a direct

experiential realization of dhama thank

you for your guidance well anyone

familiar with my understanding of

Buddhist philosophy knows that I am

somewhat skeptical of the four stages of

sainthood for example in some very early

text like the first several sutas of the

idaka an anagami is considered to be
fully
enlightened so I mean it does make sense
that an anagami or a non returner would
be someone who is fully enlightened and
not someone who is just going to be
reborn one more
time so how does anagami transcend
intellectual constructs to move from a
conceptual understanding to a direct
experiential realization of dhama well
you do that partly through mindfulness
through Restraint of the sense doors
which means um even your own thoughts
you don't follow I mean you just note
them and let them go note them and let
them go even your own thoughts so that

you don't even identify with your thoughts a thought arises it's just a thought arising You observe it like an ich theologist observes a dead fish it fades away that's not you it's just nature taking its course and when you do that like as a practice fulltime when you're not even identifying with your own thoughts that when thoughts arise you just note note it as a thought and let it go you know just observe it Let It Go observe it Let It Go that uh eventually you just stop identifying with your thoughts and then when you do some relatively deep meditation and just stop thinking all together you realize

that you're still there in a sense that
there is still Consciousness going on
you're still wide awake in fact you may
be even more Wide Awake than you were
when you were
thinking so it's a gradual development
of a Detachment from thought and a
stealing of thought and then when you
have detached from your thoughts and
have stilled your thoughts you're you
actually have more insight into reality
than before because you're just directly
experiencing it instead of just thinking
about
it so I think I'm going to move on to
another question
here let's

see tasz is says Hey NPC number six stop

walking outside and making her husband

hot and

beverage

see okay let's

see I'm just I'm just scrolling okay

some papaa has a question which is in

Terra is there a precept recitation for

Lay people well if a terot and lay

person if they take five precepts they

have to take the five precepts you know

listing them generally in ply in

Burma so I mean you wouldn't just be

sitting alone reciting and then as a

general rule if you're taking the five

precepts in a ceremony the monk will say

yaham mudam D what they taught which
means as I say so you should say or just
repeat after me and then he'll recite
the five precepts or the eight precepts
in poly and then the lay person will
repeat it although they really don't
need um Burmese villagers as a general
rule have it all memorized anyway they
don't really need the monk to say it
first it's just part of the tradition
that the monk says it
first so yeah that would be the main
precept recitation for Lay people in
terraa is when you are taking the five
precepts or the eight precepts or
however many precepts you are taking you
list them off generally in poly which

can be considered

recitation okay so let's see

here see Emperor

Palpatine I don't see any question

marks

okay see a bit of cinnamon and coffee is

good uh my woman likes cinnamon her

coffee and I just I prefer coffee that

tastes like

coffee let's

see aato or Elgato yeah the cat says is

this a

Q&A yes that was an easy one I like

questions that are easy to answer like

that

so let's see Elgato ask another question

which has been

retracted so so let's

see

gosh see Emperor Palpatine wait if NPC

is Poo's wife does that mean she's on a

computer in another room monitoring his

live stream when he's in the Next Room

strange Dynamic going on there yeah yeah

she's actually in the bedroom is

probably watching this video at least

some of the

time and I guess I guess that might be

it oh wait

one last question here unless somebody

else throws in throws in another one is

from avenity which romantic comedies do

you

like are there any are 3 any which

romantic comedies do I like gosh a

romantic

comedy that's that's kind of like a

chick-flick that's I mean that's kind of

what women like romantic comedies with

like human interaction and feelings and

stuff

see romantic comedies I'm sure there I'm

just I gotta like check into like the

the storage compartment of my memory

long-term memory because when was the

last time I saw a romantic comedy I mean

the the fisher king with Robin Williams

that might be considered a comedy in at

least to the extent that it has a happy

ending um

gosh romantic comedies I mean if you ask

me about like movies with space aliens

and explosions I could like my favorite

of those I could come up with a long

list probably but romantic

comedies gosh yeah the only one that

even comes to mind is the fisher king

which might not even qualify as a as a

comedy because it's pretty gruesome in

Parts

gosh romantic

comedies romcoms if you

will yeah well I can't think of any

other than maybe the

Fisher seriously if you want to ask me

about

movies space alens and explosions are

where they're at telling

you so I guess we're done then my golly

I have no idea how long oh it's been

more than three hours three hours really

really flies doesn't it

so oh tras is is give us some movies

with explosions well Elita battle Angel

is is good I mean it's it's kind of even

a I don't know if You' call it a comedy

since her her boyfriend gets killed

before the end of the movie so yeah

Elite of battle Angel is good the Dune

movies are

good um see just about any science

fiction movie with Tom Cruz in it is

good like uh what's the one Edge of Tomorrow I mean it's it's like a feminist propaganda movie almost any kind of action movie nowadays is feminist propaganda where you've got this beautiful young woman who's like the toughest fiercest bravest person in the whole movie who can just beat up entire rooms full of of like hardened criminals and and like space aliens and stuff but it's it's a good movie let's see oh yeah NPC number six says the little hours was pretty crazy about Catholic nuns practicing witchcraft although whether that's a romantic comedy or not I don't know cuz they're like going to like do human sacrifices

on men there it wasn't really like they

were being romantic with them or I guess

maybe one of the nuns did kind of fall

for the guy and helped rescue him or

something

gosh let's

see how do how do you get things done

when you can't focus because of anxiety

or

ADHD

well see

get things done well I mean I can manage

to get things done regardless of certain

things like anxiety or ADHD I mean if it

really has to get done then you just

have to prioritize and even if you get

distracted you just keep coming back to it again and again I mean that's I mean that's just the practical way of doing it if you can't stop yourself from feeling the anxiety or the or having the ADHD then I mean you just have to just keep sort of like if you're meditating your mind wanders away you just have to keep bring bring it back again and again just bringing it back to the task that needs to be done until finally you get it done otherwise you can just uh practice mindfulness with regard to anxiety and ADHD long term and gradually over time you will detach from them and you won't identify with them anymore so any more live q&as in the future

probably probably although one of the
disadvantages is that it's the print is
very small on the side chat so that I'm
kind of going like like this all the
time trying to read this these tiny
print whereas if I do a pre-recorded one
with a long with a list that is already
that is like assembled compiled from
various sources I can increase the font
up to like 42 point where it's easy to
see I don't have to
squint let's see okay well I guess
that's it then and we've been going for
quite a while so it's a good time to
stop now I guess and so
so um I'll probably go back to

pre-recorded ones next week and so if
you have any questions about anything
you think I can answer include it in the
comments not the side chat um because
the side chat I guess is going to get
closed when I close this but comments
below if you have access to the Discord
server you can ask there if you have
access to subscrib Star you can ask me
there and anything you think that I can
answer especially about early Buddhism
meditation terraa orthod terraa that
kind of thing then feel free to ask and
uh be happy

hello and welcome to episode

122 of question and answer I am your

host as usual poob

basa and we've got uh much fewer

questions than usual this time so this

won't be a three-hour long one probably

unless I just really start digressing

wildly and I cannot promise that that

won't happen

but it it looks like maybe I have

finally answered most of the questions

of people that that watch these videos

they've just run out of questions or it

could be that many of my viewers are now

hibernating because of the wintry

weather or it could be that I just chase

people away from this Q&A series by my
feeble attempts at doing a live stream
last weekend you know they just sit
there for the first 10 minutes and I'm
still haven't quite figured out what's
going on yet so they go well I'm not
going to do that
anymore but it turns out that YouTube
did kindly offer the option of like
editing the video after I did the live
stream so I was just going to cut off
the first 10 minutes where I'm like
trying to figure out whether it's
working or not and um then I I I did
that and then it turns out that you know
all the views and the the comments and
everything don't just you know they stay

with the unedited version then you've
got two versions so then I just deleted
it so I'm going to commence to answering
questions here after I open my
beverage so we open the beverage and
then for the sake of showing what a
sophisticated person I am I insert the
paper umbrella like thus and I take it
back out again cuz if just for
show take a sip of said beverage and I
will commence to answering
questions and I hope the people that
don't like watching the really long
videos will appreciate that this one
probably isn't going to be all that long
so the first question is from huie Cheer

and I don't know how to pronounce his
name I don't know if anyone really knows
how to pronounce his name and who Che
says I heard heard about dry Jan meaning
people who reach nibana without
achieving Jan or meditation they reach
nibana purely from insight and
realization of anata what are your
thoughts on this matter well I've never
heard of dry Janna before but there is
such a being in the text as a dry
visioned arahant which means uh a person
who has become fully enlightened without
having mastered Janna and more important
certainly without
having without having acquired any
psychic powers I think that's what Drive

Vision means it's like he doesn't have
any Clairvoyance or mind reading ability
doesn't have any of the psychic powers
on the standard list and so he becomes
enlightened mainly through practicing
like sa batana just mindfulness practice
that sort of thing and it is possible
some people have different thresholds of
Enlightenment so to speak some people
might have to get all the way to Fourth
jna before they reach the the jumping
off point so to speak other people I
mean they may not even have to get Janna
at all they may just uh you know be very
Mindful and then somehow the the
necessary click or whatever it is that

causes Enlightenment to occur happens

without them having gotten any psychic

powers without them getting into any

really subtle sophisticated meditative

States so yeah it is it is in the text

it is um sort of an option so to speak

and they are mentioned in the suas Dy

Vision

orans

so um that is one reason why like the

mahasi method will argue that you don't

have to attain Janna that you're

probably better off not attaining Janna

or not practicing trying to get Janna

that sort of thing but it's it's not

one-sized fits-all some people will need

need more advanced or more subtle States

Of Consciousness before they can see
through the veil penetrate the veil so
to speak and become enlightened so
um yeah I mean it's it's not the sort of
thing that you would say well everybody
should just become dry
visioned um because getting psychic
powers it can lead you astray and you
can abuse your powers and get into you
know get into ethical troubles and make
Bad Karma for yourself that sort of
thing or just get stuck in the stuff you
can do with your psychic powers get
stuck in Janna and then stop making
progress those kind of arguments are
used especially by teachers of the

mahasi method but really the Buddha
would not have taught jna or like subtle
meditative States for for no reason you
know if if it wasn't a good idea the
Buddha probably wouldn't have taught
it so I mean if you can become
enlightened without having mastered
Janna or acquired any psychic powers
then I mean to be enlightened really is
the most important thing it's much more
important than becoming Clairvoyant or
whatever
but it's it's not one size fits all
there's there's all sorts of people all
kinds of dispositions and characters and
so forth and so the Buddha didn't just
teach one way to

everybody and so that's one reason why
it is good to have a teacher especially
a wise teacher who knows more than one
method because then he can get to know
you and get some insight into what might
work best for you and if something
doesn't work he can he can switch to you
know trying something else with you that
kind of
thing so don't just settle on the first
method you come across and just grind
away at that even if you stop making
progress it that sort of
thing and so I think I answer that
question I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from

quor and quor says do beings in the formless Realms consist only of mind or do they have astral bodies with which to see and it is my understanding that they do not have even an astral body they are just pure pure mind and consequently they have no sense organs and so that's why um according to the legend after the Buddha became enlightened he thought well who should I teach first you know who should I share this this new discovery or rediscovery with and he first he was thinking of his two first teachers that taught him Jonah taught him samat meditation and then he realized that because they attained these high janas they had attained super

high formless heaven Realms and so they
couldn't hear him teach anything because
they didn't have ears
they did not have any sense organs and
it's just it causes you to wonder I mean
what kind of existence would they have
it they those the lifespan in these
formless Realms is just like on the
realm of eons and they can't really do
anything they they can think thoughts
presumably but for the most part they're
just abiding in this state of bliss
which if it doesn't change at all it
seems like those Neons are going to go
either super fast or super super slow
and they're going to start getting bored

if it goes slow because they're just
nothing going
on so yeah in the the beings in the
formless Realms yeah they consist only
of mind and they they don't even have
like dream bodies they might have some
kind of imagination but it may be I mean
I'm No Authority on these these formless
Realms and personally I think the
formless Realms are a kind of
anachronism which I've mentioned before
and I'll probably mention again over the
course of this Q&A that these formless
Realms were probably early pre- Orthodox
attempts at explaining Enlightenment at
least some of them were and then when
they kind of fell out of favor it was

it's just kind of you know they got W
wound up on The Cutting Room floor so to
speak they then you they were too well
known to completely ignore them so they
say well some people thought that this
was Enlightenment but really is this
very Advanced meditative state which
corresponds to this very Advanced Heaven
realm but I don't think the Buddha was
really teaching this stuff um like the
historical go of Buddha I doubt that he
was teaching these formless Realms and
some of the some of the Realms the
heaven Realms that are on the standard
list of the 31 PLS of
existence I

mean you you have to wonder it's really
I'm I'm capable of critical thought I am
relatively skeptical and so I kind of
doubt the existence of some of these
Heaven Elms like the perceptionist
brahmas where they've got a body but no
mind essentially they would have what in
Abid dama would be called like banga Che
just like this holding pattern of
Consciousness with nothing going on you
know they're they're essentially
unconscious and they're just like
statues in this Heaven realm and again
they live for for
eons so I mean what is the point I mean
they couldn't even burn off their karma
because they're not doing anything it's

just somebody came up with the idea
somebody else thought it was a good idea
to include on the list and so it got
included on this list
and I I really don't think the Buddha
taught
it so I answered that one in kind of a
cynical way cynical manner so I'm just
going to move on the next question this
is from covac and CAD Zona and he says
do you think babies and women are
happier than men is it over for the male
race um no I don't think that babies and
women are happier than men I mean
apparently seac and CAD Zeda has not
been around very many babies because as

Charles Darwin points out I mean the
first expression of the emotions
expressed by babies is screaming that is
like their sole means of C communication
for their first few weeks of Life
practically so I mean babies are born
screaming they're not particularly happy
but the way I look at things I've got
what I've referred to before as see it's
the principle of subjective equilibrium
which means that positive and negative
is going to balance out it may be that
one person seems happier than another
person
like objectively but
subjectively it's you just get used to
whatever you're whatever you are at like

your standard status quo State just is sort of zeroed out you know it's just neutral so some people might go around with a smile on their face most of the time other people might go around with a frown on their face most of the time but both of those have just been zeroed out that's just their neutral State they don't really see it as positive or negative that's just the way things are so I think that subjectively everyone is pretty much tending towards zero that some people might have lots more happiness and lots more unhappiness and some people have like this Twisted kind of happiness or unhappiness like

they'll take pleasure in their misery
you know like some people just aren't
satisfied unless they've got some kind
of health condition that they can talk
about all the time you know they're just
fascinated by these like unhealthy
States it just it's like been worked
into their character it's part of their
identity and so they kind of brag about
it or you know they take a certain
amount of satisfaction from grumbling or
complaining or whatever it is so some
people they might seem unhappy but deep
down they're deriving some
satisfaction from their their anger or
they're complaining or whatever it is
I'm not saying that everybody's like

that but there's a lot of subtlety and
complication that really isn't much
taken into
effect and also I mean if you've seen
the studies you know every once in a
while if you read social media look at
social media you'll might see a graph on
how the the happiness of women has begun
plummeting ever since women's Liberation
so to speak
so yeah I don't think that babies and
women are happier than men fact e Caro
says women identify with their pain
body I mean how happy are you going to
be when you identify with a pain
body so I think that some people like

monks who seem

Serene they seem content with life

they're just kind of it's like Smooth

Sailing at neutrality for them whereas

some people that have a lot of fun like

I did when I was like a feral teenager

it's just a roller coaster ride ecstasy

misery ecstasy

misery but it all balances out to zero

you really can't have like heads without

tails you can't have up without down it

all has to balance out which is sort of

an aspect of dependent core rising or

picha suop

poom so I'm just going to move on to see

action CAD Z's second

question he says you mentioned

Consciousness being a more complex
process in the sarvastivada
Mahayana but this also seems to be the
case for the terraa there's a simile of
the child needing a coin being like
perception an adult seeing the same coin
being like Consciousness and a coin
expert Merchant money maker or whatever
it was being like wisdom please please
help put these teachings in context well
I'm I don't recall any suta discussing
this I mean there's a good chance it's
in there I'll take covac CAD Zid as word
for it but going with Orthodox
terraa that Consciousness is just sort
of like it's like the canvas on which

perception is painted that there's even
in obid dama there's only one kind of
Consciousness there's 52 different kinds
of mental States Each of which is
qualitatively unique and ultimately real
28 different kinds of matter only one
Consciousness although you get into like
Abid dama TCH especially Abid dama
commentary text and it'll talk about
like these different qualities of
Consciousness but really there's only
this one Consciousness and and
it's terraa Buddhism has a hell of a
time trying to explain any real purpose
for it it's just like the canvas on
which perception is painted or mental
state in general so like I've been

saying Consciousness is like water and
mental states are like the waves and
it's all water it's just the substance
or Essence of mental states are
Consciousness just like the substance or
Essence of waves is
water it's just two different levels of
reality so it could be that there's some
anomalous sutas there are lots of
anomalous suas that the commentaries
have to kind of stretch and twist in
order to force fit it into
Orthodoxy but it's
mainly uh Mahayana and I think possibly
sarvastivada also that had a different
it's like a perceptual kind of

definition for conscious or for wiana I

should say

visana in in Sanskrit or mispronounced

Sans

anyhow so I mean it would seem to fit

the atmology better the the the v in

wiana or Viana means like separate

separateness or apartness so it would

seem to be a kind of

discrimination and I do think that some

schools of Buddhism have wiana not as

this sort of

quales unified essence of mind but

rather as some kind of discriminating

phenomenon but that's really not what

terraa teaches and I mean there might be

some outlier kind of suta I mean you can

find sutas that that can justify or like
adopt all kinds of different points of
view that are not necessarily
Orthodox
so yeah I'm not exactly sure what Co I
mean Co action Cod he likes kind of n in
you know he likes trying to find
exceptions like you said this but then
there's this over here kind of stuff and
uh some people on the Discord server
kind of get impatient with him because
of this including including me
occasionally but if you if you look at
Abid dama which is just the gold
standard for Orthodoxy and terraa
Buddhism there's one

Consciousness one kind 52 different

kinds of mental states only one

Consciousness and really they have a

difficult time explaining his purpose

it's mostly just sort of the foundation

upon which the mental States rest in

Orthodox

terala so or is sort of like the the the

ground to the figure of the the

perception or whatever so I'm just going

to move on to covac CAD Z's next

question which is a very long one

and he says you mentioned before that

perception keeps us from experiencing

Ultimate Reality but in angura

10-9 it

says and then he's got this uh quote

from auta from the angur in nikaya but
how Lord could a monk have an attainment
of concentration such that he would
neither be percipient of Earth with
regard to Earth nor of the next World
with regard to the next World and yet he
would still be
precipi and then the Buddha says there
is the case Ananda where the monk would
be precipi in this way this is peace
this is exquisite the resolution of all
Fabrications the relinquishment of all
acquisitions the ending of craving
dispassion cessation
unbinding it's in this way that a monk
could have an attainment of

concentration such that he would neither be percipient of Earth with regard to Earth or of water with regard to water nor of fire wind the dimension of the infinitude of space the dimension of the infinitude of Consciousness the dimension of nothingness the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception this world nor of the next World with regard to the next World and yet he would still be percipient and then also in angur and Naya

10:7 it says once friend Ananda when I was staying right here in Sati in The Blind Man's Grove I reached concentration in such a way that I was

neither percipient of Earth with regard to Earth nor of the next World with regard to the next World and yet I was still precipi but what friends saruta were you precipi of at that time also this is this is uh saruta saying this instead of the Buddha so somebody asks saruta were you what were you percipient of at the time and then srya says the sensation of becoming unbinding the sensation of becoming un binding one perception arose in me friend Ananda as another perception ceased just as in a blazing wood chip fire One Flame arises and as another flame ceases even so the sensation of becoming unbinding the

sensation of becoming unbinding one

perception arose in me as another one

ceased I was precipi at that time of the

sensation of becoming

unbinding based on these it seems oh

this is this is

back to covax and CAD zida here he says

based on these it seems you still have

perception while in the nibana Sadi

thoughts well he's got two excerpts here

the first one as I was already saying is

referring to the four formless Realms

which I consider to be an anachronism

and an indication of a later text and

the second one is even attributed to the

Buddha which is also I mean it's no

guarantee that it's a later text but the

odds are a bit higher that it's a later text because it may be that whoever cooked up the suta was conscientious enough not to stick it into the mouth of gmab Buddha himself but to stick it into one of his subordinates so to speak but I mean anyone who knows how perception Works should know that you cannot really be aware of Enlightenment through perception I mean there there could be perception still going on it's just that that's not where you are centered it's like a fully enlightened being I mean it's getting into the paradoxical realm it reminds me of that one zenik verse in the kalaha wuta where it's saying you

know the enlightened monk presumably has no perception of perception he has no perception of non-perception he is not without perception and he has no perception of void so it's it's like a paradoxical State there's still going to be like a semblance of perception it's just that when you're at the level of water instead of waves the waves become irrelevant so when you're at the level of Consciousness instead of mental States the mental States become irrelevant so I mean they can still be there it's just that that's not what you are attending to really that's just nature taking its course and it does seem that at least

one of these I think both of these

excerpts are translated by venerable

tanero who for whatever reason

translates nibana as

unbinding I don't think it's a very good

translation but he's as obstinate as I

am I guess and just insists on

interpreting nibana as

unbinding

so apparently saruta according to to the

second excerpt he's alternating between

two perceptions the sensation of

becoming unbinding the sensation of

perception unbinding oh the cation of

becoming I should say unbinding or

nibana but the perception nibana is

radically infinitely different than the reality of nibana itself I mean anybody who knows how perception works even scientists

scientism agrees that a perception of a thing is different from the thing itself and you can't really perceive the thing as it really is even some materialistic scientist can tell you that colors don't exist out there it's just like a mental image it's like mental symbols interpreting different frequencies of electromagnetic

radiation sound also it's just the mind turning into some sort of symbol that can be dealt with just like certain vibrations in the

atmosphere

so I mean you can find sutas that say

damn near

anything

but um assuming that there

is um perception going on in us in a

mind that is

like experiencing nibana if that even

means anything

then it's just going to be like I was

saying before where the mental States

may still be functioning it's just that

that is not really um I mean it's just

it just becomes

irrelevant that that is not the point at

all if you are experiencing the content

thing in itself of

Consciousness then I mean there there's

either going to be no mental States at

all going on or those mental States will

be going on but they're just going to be

completely

irrelevant but I do think that ancient

Indian philosophers were kind of like

ancient Greek philosophers that were

just too much stuck in their head trying

to rationalize everything systematize

everything I don't think that the Buddha

was teaching that but that was

definitely the fashion in the few

hundred years after the time of the

Buddha

so I'm just going to move on the next

question this is from xenoid and xenoid
says in a previous Q&A you mentioned
that there may be real evidence for the
historical kasapa Buddha can you
elaborate on this well I do not recall
saying that there may be real evidence
for the historical kasaba Buddha there
may be things that I said that could be
interpreted that way for example in the
Schon pagota underneath the shuon pagota
in rangun Burma or Yangon yanma
that
supposedly a relic of kasapa Buddha is
is under the
pagod uh I don't remember what it is
it's like a bath cup or a walking stick

or something there's supposedly the

relics of four previous Buddhas

enshrined under the shagon pagota in

Burma but again I'm I'm I'm rather

skeptical of this kind of stuff um it

may be that Kasa Buddha which was the

Buddha immediately prior to like the

predecessor of our Buddha goab

Buddha the next Buddha before goab

Buddha was kasapa

Buddah and uh ironically it may be that

uh the new director of the FBI under um

under President Trump incoming president

Trump is going to be named

Kapa which is the Sanskrit of

kasaba K

Patel but I digress

so um I don't think there is any like I

don't know how you could have any real

firm

evidence of a Buddha that existed a

zillion gajillion years ago well let's

just say millions of years

ago um it may be though that there was

some

shadowy kind of tradition of some

enlightened being named kiapa or kasapa

that you you know was sort of

retroactively um given the status of the

previous Buddha like like in jism

there's the the Jane equivalent of a

Buddha is a

tankara and um mahavira who is

considered to be the founder of

jism um he was just one of a succession

of toneras and some of those previous

toneras may have actually existed in you

know sort of a quasi myth ological

prehistoric you know sort of echoey kind

of way over the centuries that you know

they may have existed back there this

just sort of like a a shadowy tradition

remembering them very

vaguely but almost none of the details

about kasaba Buddha would probably be

historically correct just like almost

none of the details of Hercules would be

likely to be historically correct

so yeah maybe I I don't think I said

that there there may be real evidence I

don't think like the bath cup or
whatever it is under Theon would uh
necessarily indicate that there was a
real historical C Buddha but you got
have to bear in mind that Buddhas don't
come very often Buddhism has to
completely die out and then civilization
has to crash pretty much and then build
itself back up again before you have
another Buddha and so it's going to be
many many many centuries in between
Buddhas and uh now Millennia even at the
very
least so I mean you can't go with a
historical like a
literalist interpretation of previous

Buddhist unless you want to adopt sort of a the Buddhist equivalent of Christian creationism and just deny science you know that GE ology and the age of the Earth and all that and and just say that unlike the the the the new the young Earth creationists that this Earth has been here for or human beings anyway human beings have been walking around on the surface of this are speaking some kind of induran indic language for literally millions and millions of years which a lot of Hindus believe probably a lot of like traditionalist Buddhists believe but I've seen too much scientific evidence I mean I I do have a degree in

in biology minored in chemistry um

so I do think that human beings have not

been on this Earth for more than about a

million years depending on where you

want to draw the line between human and

non-human but like cities Advanced

civilizations with cities and kings and

laws that that kind of thing it's it's

been just a matter of not very many

thousands of years that that has been on

this planet I really do not believe that

there's like the lost continent of

Atlantis and then Lura and and some of

the other like really prehistoric

civilizations uh I think for example

Atlantis is just probably a garbled

version of the Menan civilization which
was centered on creit that would be my
guess
so yeah that would be my elaboration so
I'm just going to move on to Zeno's next
question which is why are only 28
Buddhas listed in the terraa tradition
um well they got to they got to cut off
the list somewhere and once you get back
to the first on the list which was
deonar um I mean you're you're talking
like several Earths ago several
universes ago you know it's like
expansion and contraction World Cycles
coming and going um many times to have
these 28 Buddhas and it may be that you
start with deona because he was the one

who according to tradition predicted
that our godma Buddha was going to
become a Buddha that that was his bad in
what they call it in Burmese where in
order to be a real bodh Sant top in
terraa Buddhism you have to receive a
kind of Prophecy in the presence of a
Buddha Sama Buddha that you are going to
become a Buddha by such and such name in
some future
age and so in the Reign or the
dispensation of deonar Buddha as I say
several eons several universes ago many
Earths ago in the far far far distant
past that during the the dispensation of
deonar Buddha our goab Buddha was a

Brahman I think he was a kind of recluse
named uh Sumo and I I told the story one
or two or three Q&A ago according to the
story that this um reuse Sumo had taken
upon himself the duty of finishing a
walking path for deanr Buddha and his
retinue of of monks
because they were going to come to get
to receive Ms at a certain Pavilion or
some such and he wasn't able to get it
done in time he he's got like six feet
to go and here comes deona Buddha and
all these monks probably thousands and
thousands of them so he just lies down
in the dirt and lets them walk over the
top of him and then the Buddha gives his
prophecy that you know in a future age

you know a zillion gajillion years from
now you will become a Buddha named Goda
so I assume that's the convenient
traditional explanation if there is an
explanation at all of why they start
with Deon because he's the one who
predicted that our gab Buddha or he
prophesied our our gab
Buddha so might as well just cut the cut
the line off there I mean you got to
stop
somewhere so I'm just going to move on
to zeni void's third question
which is do you find any of the stories
of the mythological buddh to be
particularly

profound no some of them are are like
amusing they're entertaining like
mongala Buddha I've I think I've read
something about mongala Buddha before I
mean it's like something out of Monty
Python's Flying Circus it's just so wild
the the details of the life of mongala
Buddha but all the stories of of the
mythological Buddhas of the past are
based on gab Buddha so every single
Buddha has like this template that he
has to he has to like renounce the world
and become enlightened in accordance
with this template where you know he's
got to renounce the
world um on some kind of vehicle our our
go up Buddha he did it on a horse I

think if I remember correctly it wasn't
a chariot he he went with his Chariot
driver but I don't think they were in a
chariot they were just on a horse and
but I mean you can go in a chariot you
can go on a horse you can go on an
elephant or you can go in a kind of
flying palace called the
Wiman and then you have to renounce the
world and practice severe austerities
and then you have to become enlightened
sitting under some kind of
tree and our goab Buddha was became
enlightened under the uh Fus religiosa
the the bod tree the the Pea
treat and there's there's a few other

things you know you have to have a woman
offering milk rice on the eve of
Enlightenment and all this so I mean
there's not a whole lot of
diversification in the stories of these
Buddhas other than just how tall they
were their
lifespan um you know how long they did
the the uh the
austerities you know it's like what kind
of tree they sat under this sort of
thing and there's not a lot of profound
philosophy to be found like in the
Buddha wsaw which discusses this sort of
thing um it's mostly just devotionalism
and it's really not even intended to to
contain much profound

philosophy it's just stuff for people to

believe in

mainly so I'm just going to move on on

this question and this is from files and

Phil

athes um first of

all one of his questions is

extraordinarily long and it's also a

compound question so that if I were a

stickler I would say that he's actually

asked four

questions but considering that there

weren't a whole lot of questions asked

this time I'll just accept it I'll let

it slide his second extremely long

question is like a compound question but

he will not be severely punish this
time so anyways fil's first
question is is the dhama subject to
anicha and then he's got a quote here no
religion has ever yet persisted for even
a single Century unchanged the
possibility of such a thing is even
contrary to anicha or impermanence and
the Buddhist the Buddhist dhama could no
more defend itself from growth than any
other living seed and then he says this
is from some book arguing in favor of
Mahayana but it's it's a pretty lame
argument it's like I mean arguing in
favor of degeneracy essentially not that
I'm saying that all Mahayana is
degeneracy but you could use this as an

argument in favor of degeneracy

everything is bound to change so you

just have to embrace the

changes I

mean one way of changing is just to

degenerate to get worse worse so it's

that's no excuse for for accepting it

but getting up to the main question here

is the damama subject to anicha or

inconstancy

impermanence

um technically yes and I'm not even

referring to Buddhism obviously Buddhism

is subject to impermanence Buddhism has

changed just pretty much

continuously since its Inception even

even under the Buddha himself it was it
was changing it's like for example
according to tradition it was 20 years
or so before the Buddha allowed any monk
to to stay under a roof it was about 20
years before he allowed any monk to
accept cloth from donors before that
they all had to just find rags and like
burial shrouds and that sort of thing
and make those into robes you know it
was it was a long time like there was no
vinea rules at the beginning it was like
approximately 20 years again before he
started establishing vinea rules rules
of monastic discipline so even in the
Buddha's own time that sort of thing is
changing like the human um institution

of

Buddhism I mean obviously that's

changing all the time it's

just there's I mean that's just the way

it is but with regard to dhamma itself

like the four noble truths let's just

assume that the four noble truths are a

kind of universal law sort of like the

Pythagorean theorem is a universal law

that the square of the two shorter sides

of a right triangle are equal to the

square of the the side of the hypotenuse

or the long the long side that that's

going to be true presumably in some kind

of ukian

space always it's that's not going to

change presumably but it doesn't really
exist unless you've got a mind
perceiving it
and the minds perceiving it are
impermanent so 1 plus 1 equals 2 you
could say well 1 plus 1 is always
equaling two but you do not have 1+ 1
equals 2 up in Plato's Heaven somewhere
as this eternal law that's like has some
objective existence even if there's no
humans that are doing Simple
arithmetic so it potentially is
eternal like different Minds over the
course of Eternity may come up with
essentially the same sort of idea like
the Pythagorean theorem or know the the
first three Noble Truths especially or

1+ 1al 2 or whatever it is but it's just

not there unless there is a mind

perceiving

it as uh George Barkley used to say SAS

perip which means to exist is to be

perceived and so exists so sort of in

the mind of a perceiving

being but it's it's always the Mind

itself is always changing the

perceptions are going to be changing

it's not going to be perceived in

exactly the same way every time and so

on

so technically yes that Dharma is

subject to impermanence both in the the

human institutional anthropological

sense the sociological sense and also
even in the sense of like Universal laws
because the universal laws just don't
exist unless somebody is perceiving them
it's not like they're in pl's heaven
just waiting to be perceived or waiting
to
manifest in some more or less human kind
of
world so I'm just going to move on to
Phil these next question some of these
questions are hard to answer in a way
that really is easy to grasp it's like
some people ask questions that it
requires dealing with two different
levels of reality
simultaneously most people probably are

not good at that you know it's like our brain was not designed for that sort of thing so some people are just kind of locked into just this one point of view that tries to be comprehensive and you know include other other angles and so forth but it might just be sort of twodimensional when really no amount of two-dimensional thinking is going to help you to understand what is three-dimensional you know it's like the the answer might be a cube when you're just dealing like on this flat chalkboard kind of approach to understanding things if that makes any sense again some of the stuff is is hard

to

understand because it requires thinking

just completely Outside the Box in

certain ways like the the culturally

conditioned box that most people have

been brought up in is simply inadequate

for understanding certain things even

science is inadequate for understanding

certain

things

so this is now I'm going to Phil's long

complicated compound question

here and I suppose I could just ask the

very first sentence which really is what

contains the question then he's got all

this commentary following afterwards but

he says don't you think the seeds for

Mahayana are already present in the Canon and of course the answer is yes but I'll just continue with this little essay here for example the last verse of the majaya 22 is essentially the Buddha saying those who love and have faith in him will go to heaven and then he quotes in this teaching there are mendicants who are followers of teachings or followers by faith all of them are bound for awakening thus the teaching has been well explained by me made clear opened illuminated and stripped of Patchwork in this teaching there are those who have a degree of faith and love for me all of them are bound for heaven and then

philes says uh let's see here also in udana 83 sounds straight out of the vdas or the Bhagavad Gita in its Talk of the formless uncreated and this the F the famous passage here from udana 883 there is OBU an unborn unoriginal at uncreated unformed were there not obus this unborn un originated uncreated unformed there would be no escape from the world of the born originated created formed and then files continues in another place answering the question what kind of being is a Buddha Goda says that he is neither a DVA nor a Gandara nor a yakha nor a man but is a Buddha which sounds as if a Buddha must not be regarded as an ordinary man and clearly to be seen

here is an opening for the later Mahayana doctrine of the body of transformation so I assume that would be the uh samboa Kaya there is also the three jewels saying which leads to the development of the term Buddha originally just an Epi epithet for enlightened one to mean something positive and Cosmic and that must be followed by the development of the mystery of nibana in a positive sense all this is hinting to me that the Mahayana do is already present in the oldest text irrespective of whether it is considered a natural progression or degeneration okay so then the the

compound sub question comes after that
so I mean we'll just go back right up
Scroll way up here to the top here and
the main question is don't you think the
seeds for Mahayana are already present
in the cannon and for the most part most
aspects of Mahayana yes and it comes
from Buddhism began as
a system of
renunciation that most of the Buddhist
first converts were already renunciant
you know celibate renuncian living in
forests and then they he was a good
teacher so they went to him and he
started the ball rolling started the
wheel turning I should say and it he the
his system became more and more popular

until more and more kind of normies
started joining not only as la
supporters but even monks who really did
not have any profound spirituality to
them they were more like philosophical
or devotional you know they wanted to
worship the Buddha or whatever and so
Buddhism started moving more towards
devotionalism and glorification of the
Buddha like I have read that the whole
idea of like the the buddhis satva
concept in Mahayana is largely derived
from the jota stories where you take the
they're sort of like asap's fables from
India they're old Indian fables that
have been converted into Buddhist

teachings where the Buddha at the end of
the Fable the Buddha would say you know
in in at that time I was the wise Fox
and and Ananda was this was the monkey
or this this kind of thing and it became
a description of the Buddha striving for
Eon after Eon after Eon to perfect
himself self enough that he could become
a fully enlightened Buddha and then the
idea got established in Buddhism that
it's way better way more noble and
exalted to be a Buddha than it is to
just be an ordinary arhon even though
the Buddha wasn't teaching that at first
he was saying you know I'm enlightened
you can become enlightened too all you
got to do is live like this and it much

increases your odds even if there's no
guarantees and it's just human nature
that you want to glorify the founder of
your tradition the Christians really
took the ball and ran with it by turning
the founder of their religion into God
Almighty Buddhism at least didn't do
that Islam didn't do it Judaism didn't
do
it Hinduism kind of did
sometimes like Christia for
example but yeah this with regard to the
the buddhis satva concept there was a
buddhis SAT concept in Terra that I've
discussed a number of times in previous
Q&A videos so I mean the seed for that

was already there and also prag paramita

the the Perfection of wisdom and maamaa

Buddhism the seeds of that are found

like in very early texts like the AA

waga of the sutin some Scholars have

called it Proto maamaa you know Proto

Zen where it's just really profound to

the point of being enigmatic kind of

mindblowing kind of

stuff

that um as I said in subsequent

centuries the fashion was like

philosophical proliferation and trying

to categorize and systematize everything

very scholarly you wind up with ABI

dhama just this huge mass of texts

trying to explain everything very

objectively sort of like arist Dole in in the western world and so some Mahayana was a kind of Reform movement trying to get away from all this Abid dama highly intellectual gobleg and get right back to the original Spirit where you're not going to understand it by thinking about it you're not going to understand reality intellectually so that was actually a good thing in Mahayana like pragna paramita and maamaa after that where it was really an attempt at a reform movement the glorification of the Buddha turning him into a cosmic deity and so forth was I mean it was more in

accordance with a lot of human nature so Buddhism became more accessible to more people that way but technically I consider to be a kind of degeneration of Buddhism not an entirely bad degeneration at least it made Buddhism more accessible to people in general instead of just to hardcore aesthetic renuncian living in forests but the one main kind of teaching of Mahayana that I I don't really I'm unaware of any seeds found in the oldest text would be pure land where it's saying you know not only do you not try to become enlightened In This Very life but you just kind of Leave Behind the historical Buddha and start praying

to some mythological Buddha
living kind of on the outskirts of
samsara kind of not even really in
samsara anymore which is it just stands
early Buddhist philosophy on its
head
so I think some aspects of Mahayana like
the Perfection of wisdom and maaka was a
kind of Reform movement trying to
actually improve or trying to get away
from all this intellectual stuff and get
back to the original Spirit which was
not a bad thing in my opinion some of it
was like the devotional stuff like you
know the buddhis satva concept turning
the Buddha into this Cosmic deity and

all that the roots were in that because

it's just human nature that you want to

glorify your teacher and then they just

kept glorifying and

glorifying until it was just the

difference between that and the original

teachings was vast and then you have

like pure land which is even farther

away from the original teachings in my

op opinion so much so that I'm unaware

of what the actual seeds of pure land

Buddhism would

be in the in like the Su the poly text I

don't know what that would be that could

be just something without seeds in the

earliest

texts so I'm just going to scroll down

to the second part of this compound question where philes says I am curious also what you think of this quote quote by early Buddhist scholar Ananda kumaras Swami so the quote is the development of the Mahayana is in fact the overflowing of Buddhism from the limits of the order into the life of the world into whatever devious channels Buddhism may have ultimately descended are we to say that that identification with the life of the world with all its consequences in ethic and aesthetic was a misfortune few who are acquainted with the history of Asiatic culture would maintain any such thesis so what do I

think of this I mean yeah I can kind of
relate to that I mean pure land Buddhism
at least they still have like ethics
like standard Buddhist ethics at least
they preserve that
much um I do think that Mahayana
Buddhism has moved kind of in the
direction of Hinduism where it's just
this broad spectrum everything from the
you know like the the ridic to the
sublime you know there's just like
absolute just foolishness in Mahayana
Buddhism and also some profound wisdom
in Mahayana Buddhism so it's much
broader than the earlier schools of
Buddhism because it's sort of just been
Fanning out just evolving out to fit all

these different cultural niches and so
forth
so I do think that certain kinds of
Buddhism um you know people would be
better off if they were practicing and
believing something closer to what the
historical Buddha actually taught and
which might actually be there in their
culture if it hadn't been taken over by
something very
different but I mean I don't know if you
can call it a misfortune I mean it's
just the way people's Karma has worked
it's
just what has happened in the past you
shouldn't regret what has happened in

the past that's always bad karma just to

just to have

regret can't change the past you just

have to accept the way things are at

present

so

um yeah I mean he's saying that it's not

a Mis not a

misfortune um he's not necessarily

insisting that it was a good thing

although he kind of is hinting that at

least it's more accessible to more

people and so forth but I mean that

really wasn't the original purpose of

Buddhism the the original purpose of

Buddhism it was not for Joe average it

was for the spiritual Elite that people

who could really appreciate this
profound wisdom that's who it was for
and so dragging it down to the level
where Joe average can appreciate it in a
way it's
degenerating dhama or at least it's
adding stuff to dhama that wasn't
originally supposed to be there so I
mean if you're just adding to it that's
one thing but if you're just dragging
the whole system down and degenerating
the whole system that's certainly not a
good thing even though it may help more
people that way
but um in general you got two different
kinds of religions in this world you've

got extremely difficult religions that
only a few people can follow and then
you've got really easy religions that
almost anybody can follow but I mean
they're not going to get a whole lot of
benefit from following what's
easy so Buddhism kind of worked out uh
like probably the ideal Jerry rig of the
situation where you just got two levels
you got the level of the monks who can
go for the advanced stuff and then you
got the level of the lay people which
for the most part have been Asian
villagers who just want to do their
ceremonies and they want to you know
worship and you know they they really
can't get into deep meditative States

necessarily few of them can most of them can't so you know it kind of keeps the lay people happy you know in the in the village and it gives the the elites something very Advanced where they can really strive for enlightenment and Christianity the older schools of Christianity had something similar where they had you know monastics and and Ley so I mean that's probably the best way of going about it turning Buddhism into a Protestant Buddhism where you just try to abolish renunciation and so forth and there are a lot of so-called Buddhists in the west who really do not like the idea of monasticism they want a

classless

society um not only politically but also

religiously they want to get rid of any

kind of Elites and they want to just

drag everything down to the same unified

level of

mediocrity which is not a good

idea so I don't know what that had to do

with the

question but I think I'm just going to

move on to

Phil's fourth third

question which is is magic real and if

so how does it work well I do know a

little bit about magic because my father

was an amateur warlock who was like the

leader of a a coven of housewife witches

long ago and he would explain certain
things to me and the way it works
according to my father and there's going
to be different kinds of
magic but I think there's two main two
main factors involved in Magic first of
all it's faith if you really believe
that it
works then that is going to help it work
and that's also combined with the second
aspect which is that everybody has a
certain amount of psychic Talent we we
kind of in in the west especially it's
it just kind of dormant because our
culture doesn't really accept that you
know it's not really part of the

mainstream a belief in like psychic abilities and people and so forth but everyone has a certain amount of psychic talent and if you get like a coven of witches together who they're sort of unifying their mind they're they're like doing these kind of dances where they're all kind of moving in unison and they're chanting the same U incantations so that their mind is all channeled sort of unified you know their mind is all working on the same thing and then when they direct that towards some spell or whatever you've got you know the little spark of psychic talent and some of them will have more of a spark than others all kind of combined together which then

magnifies this psychic ability which

then makes the possibility of effects

much greater and then of course you've

got all these Minds also uh like

participating in the first aspect which

is just Faith or just firm belief you

know the the faith of a grain of mustard

seed can move

mountains so that you've got enough

people believing in this you know

preferably also if you're going to put

cast a spell on somebody you want them

to believe that that it's going to work

too because that's that's half the half

the battle right

there so I mean that's that's how my

father explained it it's it's just sort of like the latent psychic ability of the average person which is going to be stronger in some people than in others and then when you get people together into like a coven for example it just sort of combines you know you use techniques to get everyone thinking in the same direction directing their mind towards the same goal and then it increases the odds of that and um it kind of reminds me of something that my father told me that his father had done a number of times where you take a little square of like thin stiff paper like onion skin typing paper which I don't know if that exists anymore I

assume that like uh a square from a magazine know like with thin glossy like stiff kind of pages you fold that into a pyramid so I think you'd Fold It diagonally in half and then you'd fold it the other diagonal in half and then you fold it Crossways in half until you make this thing that looks like a pyramid and then you can take a cork or maybe a candle and you stick a needle um like Point end up into that cork or into the candle it helps you can you can light the the needle to heat it up so it'll stick into the wax of the candle easier and then you balance that pyramid on the tip of this needle and then you

get a bunch of people all sitting there looking at that pyramid trying to get it to spin and according to my father his father who was an ordained Baptist Minister he would you know get you know all the family together and they'd be spinning it spinning the the pyramid one way and then they they'd say okay now let's try and spin it the other way just you know in case there was like a draft in the room causing it to spin one way they could stop it and spin it the other way and so forth and of course it helps if you got at least one person in the room with some some real psychic talent but that would be an interesting experiment to do if you got

a group of open-minded people you just make one of those little paper pyramids out of a square of stiff thin paper put it on top of a a needle and then just try and to do it with your mind and that would be pretty much how magic Works according to my father's explanation but you have to use gimmicks in Magic as a general rule um the average person we've just been programmed to some degree to believe that we just can't do certain things we

cannot um we can't do magic you know we can't perform Miracles we can't you know see the future or you know read other people's minds or or whatever and so we

use gimmicks that are like crutches or
training wheels you know we may use
tarot cards or astrological charts or
Ouija boards or go into a trance and
channel some supposed ascended master or
some such when really it's coming out of
our own subconscious
mind um we just don't consciously
believe that we're capable of producing
this information or whatever it is and
so we have this gimmick
that kind of lets it come out of us
indirectly like we're supposedly
channeling somebody or we're using these
cards or this Ouija board or
whatever so magic kind of works that way
also it's like a gimmick you know it's

like you might not think that you have
this ability to perform certain things
but I mean if you do the Spells
correctly you know you got all the the
paraphernalia and everything following
the instructions in the book kind of a
thing that that that helps you to have
unquestioning faith or belief in what
you're doing which then makes it more
efficacious makes it more likely to
happen and my father did tell me stories
about some of the stuff that he and his
Covenant of witches did like there was
one witch who had it was like a rash on
her body and she wanted to get rid of it
so the witches all got together you know

the coven assembled and they made her
rash go away and then a like several
days later it would come back in a
different place so they all got back
together made the rash go away and then
it disappeared again and then it
happened again until finally they
realized that for some reason she just
had this karmic need for a rash on her
body so they just moved it to a part of
her body like the side of her leg or
some such where it was it caused the
least discomfort and inconvenience and
then just left it
there and another trick my father used
to do is he would buy
warts he would he would pay somebody a

dime for a wart if somebody had a wart
on their finger or something he'd give
them a dime and say okay that that wart
is mine now and I'm going to I'm going
to take it and most of the time it would
cause the wart to disappear it's just
warts are very psychosomatic I mean
obviously there really is a wart there
but certain
ailments like asthma is notorious for
this even tuberculosis is there's a
large psychosomatic element where your
mind has more influence on whether you
have it or not not than most
other like conditions I guess but I'm
I'm just rambling at this point so I'm

just going to move on to the next

question this is from someone calling

himself Virgin Mary J but I'm pretty

sure his real name is tasz

is so tasz is says is the new job

hard and he's referring to my new job I

just got a new job I just started last

week so I've I've been on the job for

five days thus far and it's not really

hard it's kind of nerve-wracking

especially at first because I'm just I'm

still in training I've got one more day

of training before they just cut me

loose but I'm a a forklift

operator lots of forklifts in operation

there and it's kind of like being a race

car driver where you're having to like

weave between all these other you've got
a forklift backing out of a a trailer
here another one coming this way and
it's like
it's like it's like traffic and Bali
where it's sort of like blood cor pusles
just kind of flowing and not actually
crashing into each other but I mean you
have to be really
alert pretty much all the time when when
you're doing the job which is fine I
mean it's good to have uh the necessity
to be alert being alert is a good thing
from a Buddhist point of view um so it's
a little bit nerve-wracking but it's
it's not anything really extremely

difficult the the only really real
challenge I might have is speed because
I've never liked being in a hurry I've
never been really good at at Rushing and
some of these young guys on these
forklifts they're just I mean it's I
don't know why they're even allowed to
they're just like banging and smashing
and just doing all kinds of this
highspeed Maneuvers on a forklift which
um I'm sure OSHA would
disapprove but I mean I hope that's not
required of me because I don't know if I
could really bring myself to being a
reckless forklift
driver so anyways I'm just GNA move on
to uh Virgin Mary Jay's next question

here oh I mean trasa is his second
question here if Buddha didn't speak
poly but a similar but yet different
language why people want to know what
the best poly translator is because the
the terraa Buddhist texts are composed
in poly so the Buddha himself may not
have spoken poly he spoke something a
language that was similar to poly
probably they'd be mutually intelligible
not so different but we don't know
exactly what that language was because
the language that has come down to us is
poly which is sort of a
modified um a modified Lang sort of an
artificial language I've I've read that

it was intended to be a kind of lingua Franco for various monks in different parts of India that would be mutually intelligible they could still communicate in this language and that was the language that the texts were finally um like composed in like written down when they were finally written down they were written down in Terra Buddhism in the in the poly language so I mean if you want to know what the the Buddhist text the terraa Buddhist texts say then you have to know pully even if the Buddha himself didn't teach or speak poly just like I mean Jesus of Nazareth didn't speak New Testament Greek probably but the New Testament is

composed in New Testament Greek so I
mean if you want to know the original
teachings as close as you can of the New
Testament like what the New Testament
actually says then it helps you to know
New Testament Greek um for some reason
terraa Buddhists are much more inclined
to study poly than Christians are to
study New Testament Greek I don't know
why that
is but I mean the long the short of it
is that the poly texts are composed in
poly the terava Buddhist scriptures are
in the poly language regardless of
exactly what language GMA Buddha
spoke so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from

cfy and we've been going for a little

over an hour this is from cfy as I said

and I'm GNA take a sip of my beverage

first okay cify says I came across the

works of Ivan illich or Ivan ilich have

you heard of his work if you have what

is your opinion about I've barely heard

of Ivan

illich I think I've heard of him before

but I haven't read anything that he's

written I probably haven't even written

one of those or read one of those like

brainy quotes sometimes you'll see these

quotes you know maybe like the picture

of the person on one side and then this

quote I don't think I've even seen that

much from Ivan illich so sorry cify I'm
just gonna have to move on next question
and this is the last question already I
told you there wasn't a whole lot of
questions this
time so I hope I haven't just scared
everyone away with my attempt at a live
stream last week or it could be that
you're just hibernating so after you
wake up you can ask more questions if
you like
so anyways this is the last questions
from ruie and ruie says do you prefer
the expression nature of reality or
nature of experience in relation for
existence to the three characteristics

and what they describe well I don't
really prefer either because I generally
call it the three marks of
existence so nature of reality it would
be more
existence and existence is it seems to
fit best because it seems objective but
really it's more
psychological and in uh I think it's the
kalaha wuta in the ATA waga that
existence and non-existence are both
derived from mind according to this this
early Buddhist text so it seems kind of
objective and maybe even physical But
ultimately existence is a kind of mental
phenomenon an artifact of
perception so I mean you can take it

either way I guess which is convenient

because the three marks of existence of

impermanence um suffering as it Dua is

usually translated and no

self um I don't know it just kind of

fits better the three marks of existence

impermanence suffering and no

self so I mean nature of reality is not

so good because ultimately the first two

of impermanence and

suffering um there's some soric they

don't really apply to ultimate the

ultimate or the absolute only no self

applies to the absolute what Sab Sanara

all conditioned things are impermanent

sa senara all condition things things

are Dua or suffering unease but then it

sub a

dama anata or you know it's anything

whether it's conditioned or not is no

self or has no

self

so you need kind of a term that can

apply to both samsaric phenomena and the

absolute sort of the content things as

it seems and the content thing in

itself which I don't know is the nature

of reality might apply to the third one

but not to the first two the nature of

experience maybe would apply to to

either one but I just go with the three

marks of existence even though it might

not apply extremely well to nibana

whether nibana you can't say that it exists you can't say that it doesn't exist you can't say that it does and doesn't exist you can't say that it neither does nor doesn't exist so it's just you have to deal with a certain amount of paradox when you're dealing with the absolute which is infinite and formless I mean the the human mind just cannot deal with it very well and perceptions I mean you cannot have an infinite formless perception and so any perception that you have of it is just going to be this arbitrary label that's really not going to resemble what you're trying to trying to

describe or refer

to but my my preferred rendering for the

tilana

I mean Lana literally means

Mark the Tana the three marks I mean

that that might be enough that might be

a good enough rendering right there just

the three marks although it's kind of

vague so I I throw in three marks of

existence just you know it's like the

three aspects

of you know what

is I

guess so if I had to choose between

nature of reality and nature of

experience I I'd guess I'd have to

choose nature of experience because it

seems to be a little more accurate and

that's it I'm already done by

golly so as uh I should usually say at

the beginning instead of at the end if

you have any questions about anything

you think I can answer especially with

regard to terraa Buddhism early

Buddhism um to some degree Buddhism in

general although I'm not really an

expert on some of the more far out kinds

of Buddhism I'm not really an expert on

vaj Rana or pure land Buddhism or nii

Ren that kind of stuff um Burma

monasticism

meditation myself personally I'm pretty

good at answering questions about that

uh if you think if you have any

questions no more than three per episode

please just feel free to include them in

the comments below and click the like

button if you like this and don't click

it if you didn't I guess and subscribe

if if you're into that

and be happy

alrighty then

howdy welcome to question and answer

number

123 I am your host P basa and I have to

admit I'm feeling kind of hibernating

today it's like winter weather has

kicked in and

also I started a new job like two weeks

ago and I'm working nights pretty much

like from 5 to three I still haven't

fully like adjusted to the to the whole

time change and everything so bear with

me I got some coffee here the beverage

which I I should hold up here the

beverage removed paper

umbrella and you guys should some people

may not like me drinking during these
q&as but I mean the beverage is good it
kind of coats the throat so I can talk
three hours straight and just just pray
that I don't start eating in the middle
of these q&as cuz I like talk with like
food in my mouth and it's like like
stuff gets stuck between my teeth and
all that it's it's it's not good so just
count your lucky stars that I'm just
drinking
stuff and we've got kind of a moderate
middle middle path number of questions
today and so I suppose I should just
Dive Right right in just weigh into this
and the first question is from
files and files says recently a

Christian friend has lent me a book on the biblical commentaries of medieval German Mystic meister eckart and one thing that struck me is that he would not even admit that God was good eckart's position was that anything that was good can become better and whatever may become better may be become best God cannot be referred to as good better or best because he is above all things if a man says that God is wise the man is lying because anything that is wise can become wiser and so anything that a man might say about God is incorrect even calling him by the name of God God is super essential

nothingness and Transcendent
being beyond all words and Beyond all
understanding the best a man can do is
remain silent because anything he prats
on about God he is committing the sin of
lying the true Master knows that if he
had a God he would he could understand
see the true Master knows that if he had
a God he could understand he would never
hold him to be God to me this sounds an
awful lot like the doctrine of no view
in the ATA waga
thoughts yeah well um there's a number
of things I can say I mean even for me
ehart to say God is super essential
nothingness or Transcendent being I mean
that would be the sin of lying too I

guess according to him I mean it's it's
not really lying because at least from a
Buddhist point of view in order to lie
you have to have the deliberate
intention to deceive so people who
really do believe that God is like Santa
Claus sitting up on a throne in heaven
with like a white suit instead of a red
one and angels for helpers instead of
elves and not quite so jolly I mean if
they really believe that then they're
not lying even if what they're saying
isn't technically
true but let's just scroll up to the top
of this long question here yeah Meister
ehart he would be in a very short list

of Christians that I know of that I'm familiar with that could possibly be very spiritually Advanced possibly even fully enlightened from a Buddhist point of view like St John of the Cross also obviously would be on that very short list those would be like the top two I think there'd be some uh like Greek Orthodox monks also who were very wise and wrote you know along these same kind of lines and what me ehart is talking about is also I mean he
was his predecessor would be the pseudo dianus who wrote the mystical theology which is very short you can download it for free on the internet and you know the mystical theology is like no words

can apply to God and it's like it's like
trying to stick tape onto a powdered
donut it just doesn't stick it's just
not going to work it just does not work
that way God is completely off the scale
Beyond Duality Beyond symbols and words
are
symbols so to say that God cannot be
referred to as God as good well
I kind of I mean I don't think me eart
was adopting the position that I'm going
to adopt right now but I do think that
like the the Hindu conception of
Krishna as just the highest God a an
avatar a human manifestation of the
highest god um with Krishna being a

rascal you know he he was not
particularly virtuous in an ethical kind
of sense and in a way it's more f
that like the highest God isn't just
going to be a god of good he's going to
be a god of good and bad and everything
in between he's going to be a god of
everything which includes lying and
killing and and like fornicating and and
all the rest of it that that would be
the highest God in a way it's sort of
like um in Gan Wolf's the the book of
the new son the the savior of the world
you know sort of like the the second
coming of Christ
starts off as a torturer you know it's
like he has to have all of the the dark

side as Wells the Light Side sort of

encapsulated into one person so that he

can really be a representative of

humanity but I don't think Mo aart was

talking about that that's just a

digression very first question I'm

already

digressing I'm digressive

AF

sometimes so

yeah I

mean I think he gets a little too

rational when he's talking about how

good cannot be referred to as good

because anything that is good can get

better I mean that's just kind of it's

unnecessary it's just nothing no kind of
label no kind of symbol will stick to
the absolute something that is totally
Beyond samsaric phenomena it's like the
thing in itself you cannot describe the
Conan thing in
itself and God would be the the Lulu of
all conti and things in
themselves so yeah I do think that
Meister eart whether he was influenced
by like the pseudo dianus and earlier
Christian Mystics or whether he just had
the talent you know the parmy from a
Buddhist point of view that he just
discovered this stuff by himself for
himself
um you know through his own meditative

practice contemplative practice I don't
I don't know I don't know uh nearly as
much about Meister eart as I know about
St John on the
cross but uh he would have made an
excellent
Buddhist so I'm just going to move on to
the next question from
philes which is I feel the best way to
achieve realization as opposed to book
learning of the above is through the
establishment and biting in of janas but
of course I have never even reached
first Janna what do you think well I
mean going with the Orthodox
interpretation of the four Jas all of

them are superhuman mental States even
the first jna where you're still
thinking so getting back to my my
hypothesis or Theory or lame idea or
whatever I think that the four janas
were originally just the four stages of
meditation and first jna where you're
still thinking is I mean even a beginner
if he's meditating correctly would be at
the first
stage so that's just a niggle I guess
maybe even another
digression um see through the
establishment and abiding in of Janna's
the best way to realize yeah if you're
able to do that not everybody can attain
higher contemplative States though

especially in the west compulsive thinkers and all that it's just it's not for everybody like in Buddhism you've got thousands of thousands of monks who are diligently striving to attain higher contemplative States second third fourth jna and most of them can't do it even though they're trying they're dedicating themselves to it they can't do it so the on the bright side it's not really necessary not for everybody some people can become enlightened without Janna like the Dy Vision arance that I mentioned at the beginning of the first or the previous Q&A and I think most enlightened westerners most westerners

who at least are extremely highly

Advanced um they are the dry Vision kind

because most westerners don't dedicate

their lives to cultivating these

Advanced contemplative States and

they're much more likely to become

enlightened like accidentally like eart

TOA he W he didn't even have any

meditative practice and then he just

gets slammed through some exist itial

crisis into this higher state of

consciousness

so I do think that probably most western

sages are dry vision and they really

haven't attained

Janna so I nevertheless the Buddha would

not have taught Janna if there wasn't a

good reason for it and I do think that
if you can completely steal your mind so
that you're you're wide awake and your
mind is just clear like
glass that you're much less likely to
get distracted by samsaric phenomena
which keep you stuck in samsara at least
at the very least you get this Insight
that when you're not thinking anything
you're still wide awake in fact you're
more awake than when you are in your
normal awaking State of Consciousness
and of course you you get this insight
into you know there is
something deeper than just the this this
phenomena the these forms that distract

almost everybody all the

time we think this is

reality so let's see here what's the

question again I feel the best way to

achieve realization as opposed to book

learning of the above which I think he's

talking about meister ehart and you

can't really name the absolute or talk

about the absolute is through the

establishment and abiding in of janas

but of course I've never even reached

first J what do you think yeah I mean if

you can attain janas that is best but

it's not the only possible way and so

just do the best you

can and I'm just going to move on the

next question also from

philes and philes

says is I'm going to check make sure

we're recording here yeah we are philes

says is movie to Burma still the most

reliable way to pursue genuine Orthodox

Buddhism I feel that for the

unenlightened travel can disturb one's

dham practice in many subtle ways that

might be hard to detect for example it

can boost the ego or sense of self and

so can being a foreigner among

natives well I mean there's there's a

plus and a minus to everything there's a

light side and a dark side to everything

and so traveling to a foreign country

you've got the you've got certain

hassles you got to learn a new foreign language you might have Visa hassles I mean you might have weird tropical diseases this kind of a thing there's going to be a certain culture barrier but that can actually be to your advantage um

so travel can disturb one's doar practice but also it kind of gets you out of ruts it puts you into like this Stranger in a Strange Land kind of phenomena where I mean you're you become as a little child again you're seeing everything is for the first time because a lot of it you really are seeing for the first time so I wouldn't be too worried about that because there's a

tradeoff you know there's going to be
pluses and minuses and they balance out
in the long run so staying at home has
its pluses and minuses and traveling to
some tropical Asian Buddhist country
also has pluses and minuses but that's
not really the question is moving to
Burma still the most reliable way to
pursue genuine Orthodox Buddhism that
depends on the political
situation um I really am not sure about
the political situation in Burma I know
that most of the foreigners in Burma
have fled if they haven't been kicked
out they have left
voluntarily um after the military coup

and all that so you'd have to check into
that you know you might try to contact
one of the the mahasi centers or PA out
in Burma and just ask them you know what
is the situation for foreign yogis in
your country now and they might say well
it's it's very difficult you might want
to try something else in which case you
might be better off going to some remote
area of Sri Lanka where there is like a
a Resurgence of a forest tradition there
also there's more of a forest tradition
in Thailand than probably there ever was
in
Burma but the thing is go to a remote
area
going just living in a remote area

amongst rustic people subsistence

Farmers Hillbillies does have its

advantages for one thing you're much

less likely to get spoiled rotten by

like relatively wealthy Asian spiritual

materialists trying to get themselves

into Heaven by just offering you all

kinds of stuff which does happen it

happens in Burma a

lot

so I think

you'd still you could still do well

especially if the political situation in

Burma is just

like apocalyptic or something you might

try finding some relatively remote

Forest Monastery in Sri Lanka or

Thailand um that's strict and there

there are strict monks in Thailand and

strict monks in in Sri Lanka although in

Sri Lanka you might really have to do

some searching to find

one um

so yeah I mean the situation in Burma

especially the political situation the

situation of foreigners living on visas

in

Burma I mean that's kind of a a role of

the dice I guess I'm not exactly sure

what the situation should would be with

regard to that so you'd have to

investigate that and if it looks like

Burma really is not going to work out

for you then I'd go for you know some
remote like Northern Thailand or the the
mountains of central Sri Lanka or
something in
America I mean you could be a monk in
America that was my original plan I was
originally ordained in California but
America's got its own problems I
mean asceticism is practically illegal
in America I mean you can't even just
build a little Shack like you're
supposed to according to the ancient
text because there's building codes
there's all these codes and everything I
mean you could live in a tent I I guess
there's no codes for

tents and I mean you can't really live
the lifestyle of an ancient Indian monk
as described in the texts you know the
role models in the text you can't live
like them because you're living in a
non- Buddhist postmodern Western
Country so definitely anyone who's going
to be ordained I would highly recommend
they spend at least a few years
preferably like five years at least in a
traditional terraa Buddhist Asian
country just so that you can like feel
what it was like for the early monks you
know sleep under a tree walk through the
village for alms in the morning that
kind of thing that is uh much more
difficult to manage in the west although

it it has been

done so I think I answer that question

I'm just going to move on to the next

question which is from thermal squid and

technically I have a confession to make

this this first question from thermal

squid was technically the first question

chronologically that I received for this

Q&A but it's kind of a morbid Gres kind

of question I didn't want to start off

the Q&A discussing something really

morbid and so I kind of bumped him down

to the second place just so I wouldn't

be starting the Q&A with this question

which is as follows thermal squid says

what is the most painful or grotesque

thing you've ever

experienced perhaps something that

sticks around in your mind today or is

remembered

viscerally um yeah there there are a few

I have to admit and really the first

image that popped up in my mind when I

read this question was I was walking in

southern in Burma it was people have

asked me about like the one person I

think might be fully enlightened like if

I if I've ever met someone I think might

be fully enlightened I I would say you

know possibly the most likely

possibility would be sh um seatt and on

the occasion when I was walking from my

Monastery to sh um's Monastery in mon

State during the during the hot season
he would stay at this certain Monastery
in the hills for the hot season because
the weather was more comfortable there
we're walking along with this guy who's
guiding me there I'd never been there
before and off in the distance I see
this dog that has like this pink
plastic like a cast on its leg his front
leg and it's just standing there
watching me and I was thinking that's
that's nice I mean in Burma dogs are
just disposable a lot of them don't even
have owners they're just sort of like
like
feral Pariah dogs and so somebody

actually took care of of their dog and put like this big cast on him and then I got closer and I could see the look on the dog's face and he's just kind of looking at us was this kind of hopeful pleading look on his face and I realized that he didn't have a cast on his leg at all it was just like the skin had all just like peeled off and it was all swollen up probably with a gang green or something and I mean that is the plight of dogs and cats throughout much of this world

I mean the dogs and cats in America you know like safy back there's got her little cozy cave and you know they they they eat as much as they want they get

chicken scraps and stuff you know

they've got it made they got love

they're clean they get sick they get

medicine not in Burma I mean there's

stories

like uh one time I was going for alms

round in

rangon and there's this dog kind of

Staggering in towards me and I get close

enough to see that it had been chopped

in the head and there was actually a

hole going through its skull like its

brain was opposed to like exposed to air

so that dog wasn't going to last very

long but also I mean you see stuff in

Burma that you generally do not see in

the west like one time I was invited to
somebody's house I go to their house and
there was a female relative maybe 40
years old sitting in a chair chair and
she was clearly insane I mean she had
like a big open sore on her nose that
caused me to think maybe it was like
syphilis or something but who knows it
might be that she just like fell down
onto her face and gashed her nose up but
I mean she was just like she had like
this little fan like a one of those
collapsible kind of fans she just like
slapping the the the arm of the chair
pretty much the whole time I was there
and the the family just very patiently
you know they're like making sure she's

got everything she needs and you know
just but still just it was sort of like
being in a mental hospital where you've
got someone who's just completely out of
it you know obviously they're you know
just over over the deep end and just
kind of their face is sort of
grotesquely um marred in a way and just
you're just thinking about like the
family I mean in Burma you just can't
just sh ship off your some family member
to an institution you I mean Family
First it's like you take care of them
you know they're they're like crapping
on themselves they're completely out of
their head you still that's just your

cross to bear so to speak that's your
duty as family and this that's the way
it was in the west up until modern
times or one time
um I was just going for alms through the
village this this Village in central
Burma subsistence Farmers mostly and I
see a man leading what looked like a
teenage boy by the hand and this teenage
boy just did not have a face he had like
Elephant Man disease it was just all
like
lumps you know it's like he he couldn't
couldn't see there was like no eyes if
there were eyes they were covered up by
these folds of you know deformed flesh
and that was another case of I mean you

you don't just send them to an

institution you don't send them to a a

like a high class

surgeon I mean they subsistence Farmers

living in a fourth world country so

that's they're just stuck with that seen

people with Leprosy I've had people with

Leprosy put food into my

bowl so yeah I couldn't really pick a

first place although the the first image

that popped into my mind when thermal

squid asked this question and I I read

it for the first time was that dog with

the the swollen pink front leg that I

thought was a plastic cast and it warmed

my heart that some Burmese person

actually took the trouble of sending
their dog to a vet and getting a cast
put on his broken leg and then getting
closer and realizing that that was no
cast it was that dog was
doomed so I'm just going to move on to
Thermal Squid's second
question which is is there any Merit in
getting hooked on crack in an inner city
dumpster ch en chanting mantras well
depends on your mental States whether
you're even going to get any good
karma cusa from chanting
mantras um but even if you do get some
Merit for chanting mantras the demerit
of getting loaded on crack in an inner
city dumpster is going to more than

compensate the other way in in in
Buddhist ethics it's there is no just
clear demarcation between black and
white any action that an unenlightened
person does is bound to be a shade of
gray it's going to be a mixture of of
good and bad uh skillful and
unskillful I think a lot of people in
the west they're just kind
of uh conditioned by like Christian
ethics where something is either right
or wrong God says this is right so if
you do it it's right and if he says
don't do it it's wrong and that's that
it's all black and white or as in
Buddhism it's it's a matter of your own

mental States and even if you believe
that you're that I am doing this let's
say I'm giving alms to a beggar so I'm
getting Merit for that that's a
meritorious deed I'm giving alms to a
beggar but I'm thinking I'm giving alms
to a beggar and just this self view this
delusion you know of like identity view
that's going to cause a certain amount
of demerit or unskillful Karma
so anything with any greed hate or
delusion or attraction aversion or
semiconscious stupidity any act that has
any of that is going to have a certain
demerit to it which is pretty much
everything that an unlighted person does
but still I mean you can get Merit also

and so you got the person loaded on
crack and a dumpster chanting mantras he
might be getting some Merit for the the
chanting mantras and he might be getting
some Merit for other things
too maybe he's being mindful maybe he
just adjusts his position in the
dumpster mindfully gets like this little
Merit point so to speak for this moment
of Lucidity of
mindfulness so I mean who knows he's
he's on crack that's like cocaine I've
never never done crack before but I
assume it's a form of cocaine it might
cause a certain Lucidity of mind you
might have certain

insights which you might get Merit for that too but as a general rule if you're like addicted to something and you're living a kind of lifestyle of a homeless druggie then there's probably going to be at least as much demerit as Merit regardless of how wisely you try to be uh a crack addict getting loaded in dumpsters so I think I'm just going to move on to Thermal Squid's next question question here he says it's his second question because I think he forgot about the the painful grotesque thing question which he asked on a different uh in a different location so anyways he says my question here is in whether or not it is safe to mostly discard or discount

something like Tantra I feel that it's
even more out of range than something
like pure land Buddhism where the strong
devotional crypto theism of Mahayana
really in what way is Extreme sensual
activity useful in cultivating wisdom
inducing trauma like that seems to just
be dangerous or even flat out disgusting
it seemingly appeals to those that want
to be esoteric or enigmatic but want to
to evade the effort resulting in a kind
of lazy lay existence with a daric
excuse to take drugs and engage in
unsayable atrocious activities under the
guise of Spiritual Development I think
that it's funny to imagine that some in

ancient times took heroic doses of
cannabis and datura and lay down in snow
or ice for hours and just had some kind
of miraculous click but I find that
something like this appeals to the
absolute
minority okay so I'm just now realizing
that there's four questions here because
thermal squid did not recall having
asked his first question
elsewhere
so this is uh problematic and and
transgressive and everything but I don't
know I I suppose I should just answer
this question before I deal with the the
issue of a fourth transgressive
question let's see oh with regard to to

uh Tantra well what most people in the
west are calling Tantra isn't really
Tantra so that's that's for starters
most people who think they're doing
Tantra I mean they're just wallowing in
sensuality and calling it Tantra but
Tantra it's it's a philosophy based on
the idea that we are now in the kuga and
saintliness is not a realistic option
especially like in the west that's it's
even less of an option in the west just
because saintliness is it's very much
out of fashion even
like normal virtue and
self-restraint is out of fashion as a
general rule in the west so especially

among young

people so what Tantra was doing it was

indulging in like

limited amounts of stereotypical

immorality um as a way of learning how

to cultivate wise mental States and make

spiritual progress while living in a

kind of degenerate age and it was based

at least what I was what I was taught

based on the five M's M you got mituna

which is sex mamsa which is

meat let's see how do you say

fish matcha is fish I'm pretty sure Maja

is

alcohol and the fifth one it's it's sort

of like certain words in the rigveda or

even in Shakespeare where don't entirely

know exactly what it is anymore and so
it's it's probably some kind of drug
that started with an M but has been
replaced with parched grain and I don't
think that parched grain is particularly
like conducive to immorality but that's
what they do in these
rituals and so I mean they might just
take a sip of the alcohol they're not
going to get wasted on it with regard to
the the meat and the fish they might
just take a little taste of it just for
the sake of having done that this this
transgressive act while living in this
transgressive age and with regard to sex
I have read that the way you have

tantric sex is the man will lie on his
back motionless and a certain woman a
deini I think she's called will I mean
essentially do cowgir position on him
and she has been trained at like some
Temple to be able to to have sex without
being emotionally involved I think there
a lot of women who just do this
naturally but I mean she's just kind of
going through
this almost like a meditative exercise
and he's supposed to just be meditative
you know he's technically literally
having sex I mean his penis is inserted
into a vagina but at the same time he's
just trying to be mindful of the
sensations that arise and not being

Carried Away by lust while doing it and
that's really the whole point of Tantra
it's not like you're wallowing in it
it's you're learning how to engage in
these de stereotypically degenerate acts
while living in this degenerate
cuga while at the same time not getting
sucked into it remaining detached and
being mindful of
it so that I mean the mindfulness is
pretty much the the main tool with
regard to being detached from it instead
of you know just getting into it you're
just experiencing the sensations
objectively and most people who try it
especially if they're like amateurs who

have read about it in a book or

something um you know they just don't do

it right and they're just wallowing in

sensuality and thinking that they're

doing tatra maybe telling others that

they're doing Tantra when really I mean

there might be a little bit of Tantra

involved

but mainly they are deceiving

themselves and I do think that there is

a certain I mean to some degree

everybody has to do T like even a monk

like there are certain sensual Pleasures

that a monk can't avoid like eating food

or sleeping or bathing and so he just

has to do that with Detachment you eat

food just to keep yourself healthy

you're not doing it in order to wallow in sensuality and so Tantra is like taking it a step further with regard to sensual Pleasures that you could technically avoid but just don't and it's pretty much the same kind of procedure as a monk eating good food or taking a bath or something that is pretty much unavoidable and so he just remains detached while doing it so it's not necessarily like you're just wallowing in stuff that's flat out disgusting I mean that might be what people who are calling it Tantra in the west are doing like a lot of new age people may be but like traditional

Tantra there might be some disgusting
imagery but it's uh as a general rule
it's really not that wild it's just sort
of limited amounts of stereotypical
immoral behaviors that you learn to do
mindfully
so let's see thermal
squids third question which is really
his fourth question oh okay this one
I'll just answer very briefly because
it's a the transgressive fourth question
anyway so what are some of your favorite
words and most hated words I'll just
give like two main examples one one
example of possibly my favorite word in
the English language which is
supposedly I really like the word

supposedly for some reason I mean it

just describes

samsara I mean that's the word for

samsara it's the adverb for samsar

anyway

supposedly and the one word that comes

to mind in the English language that I

particularly dislike is

normaly a return to normaly it's not

normaly it's

normality

normality so that one kind of triggers

me a little bit when I hear

normaly I mean I just kind of cringe

inwardly just just saying it just

seconds

ago other words that I like I like I

like the word regag it just rolls off

the tongue

reglet and it's a word describing the

little dimples on the surface of a of a

meteorite like it looks sort of like the

dimples on a golf ball those those

little dimples on a meteorite are called

reg mlit which is really nice also I

learned another really nice word just

recently just a few weeks ago Petra cor

and petor which literally means

something like Stone blood is the word

for describing

that Heavenly smell after the first rain

after a protracted period of hot weather

so a lot of you probably know what I'm

talking about I never smelled it in the Pacific Northwest because there was never a protracted period of hot weather before without rain but in Burma living in like the semi desert wastelands of central Burma the first rain of the hot sea or after like towards the end of the hot season there's this smell in the air that's it's sort of like baking brick with like a hint of baking bread and that smell is called Petra cor which is nice I mean it's nice that it has its own word I mean in the English language there are certain just common phenomena in in this world that English has no word for it like the need to take a pee

like if if you need to eat something
you're hungry you might even be ravenous
if you need to drink something you're
thirsty if you need to sleep you're
sleepy or exhausted or tired but you
need to take a pee there's no word for
it and I mean sometimes you got to pee
really bad you don't have time for all
these extra syllables there should be a
word just for that and there
isn't but then again it's like I've I've
mentioned before maybe not on q&as that
in the Burmese language there's owls all
over the country they don't have a word
for owl there's owls in downtown Rango
goon they don't have a word for owl it's
like each kind of owl has its own name

but there's no Collective generic word
for owl same for lizards they got a word
for snake they do not have a word just
for lizard each kind of lizard has its
own name there's lizards in downtown
rangon lizards everywhere they don't
have a word for lizard they do have a
word for snake
though so I guess I shouldn't pick on
the English language too much
anyways thermal squid just uh volunteers
that some of his favorite English words
are Critter warbling Lucidity and evoke
and some of his uh least favorite words
are seepage oblong slurping gurgling and
cudgeling so apparently he's he's more

interested in just the sounds like the

the melodious or anti- melodious sounds

of a word whereas for me I think regag

glyp is I just love the way it just

rolls off the tongue but supposedly is

more of a a philosophical liking I

think so I'm just going to move on this

question this is from

quator and quator says it seems that the

state of jna is achievable by removing

Saras like mopping the floor to reveal

clean

tiles aans cannot create new Saras to

dirty the floor again

how then are arant not constantly in

fourth

Janna also if they have Sanara remaining

wouldn't their constant equinity

obliterate the remaining

ones so I think by Saras he's using more

of a mahayan term I think in in like

poly Buddhism it'd be more like kesas

your defilements you have to remove or

at least suppress your defile

Ms in order to attain jna and Jan

especially second third and fourth jna

you're not thinking anymore but thinking

isn't necessarily A

defilement so I mean after you attain

Janna you come out of Janna and from the

traditional Orthodox point of view Janna

you can't really be moving around

talking when you're in Janna because

your mind is is becoming like clear and

in order to move around and talk and you

know navigate through samsara and

communicate with others and so forth

then you've got to be back into thinking

mode

so technically according to Orthodox

Terra I'm pretty sure you can't be in

fourth jna when you're walking around

talking and it's it's not like

permanently

removing um I mean you have to remove

your your defilements your caces but

that doesn't mean that you're just by

doing that that you're automatically in

jna that's just sort of a prerequisite

you know as attending college you have a

prerequisite of a high school diploma or

a like a what is it

GED in in America but that doesn't mean

that you're in college just because you

got a high school diploma that's just

like a

prerequisite so there are other factors

involved in attaining Janna mainly you

sit still you you sort of avoid

stimulations which will be stimulating

your mind and keeping you from being in

Janna you you go to a quiet secluded

Place sit down meditate and then you can

attain Janna but then there are times

when you got to like interact with other

people and so forth in which Janna just

is not an

option so in a sense if you're

enlightened you don't need Jonna anymore

see Jonna it's especially fourth jna

you've got like um like like I was

already saying your mind is like clear

like glass or you got a flat calm your

mind like going with the analogy of

water you have turned your mind into a

flat

calm in order

to like go beyond just the distractions

of the Waves where you can just see the

water as water and not just be stuck at

the level of waves but then if you're

enlightened when the waves come back you

can still stay at the level of water

that's um like in Zen it's called Zen in the marketplace that Zen in the marketplace is 10,000 times better than Zen on the cushion because then on the cushion before you're enlightened you have to get to this flat calm in order to get this
Transcendence of all the symbols of samsara but once you're enlightened you don't need that anymore that's like a a gimmick it's like training wheels kind of you don't need that because even when there's raging stormy SE you can still be seeing water as water whereas if an unenlightened Normie in the storm you see they're just like whoa all these

huge waves you know all this crashing
and roaring you know they don't see just
water
anymore so yeah it's like fourth Janna
is called temporary Liberation or just
jna in general in in po Buddhism in
terraa Buddhism is is called temporary
liberation but it's not permanent but
once you get to the permanent permanent
Liberation you don't really need Jonna
anymore Jonna is just sort of a way of
seeing the water as water and not
getting lost in all the waves because
Jonna is like reducing the waves to a
bare minimum so that you you don't have
those waves to get distracted by but
once you're you're you have mastered

seeing the water as water then when the
waves come back it doesn't even matter
they are irrelevant
so I'll move on to quat to second
question in the process of eradicating
Saras and moving to subtler and subtler
realities are we removing the karmic
effects that attachment to those Saras
or wrong views could result
in are we removing the karmic effects
that attachment to those Saras could
result in if this is the case would an
arant be completely free from comma
could moana's death simply be a result
of the comma of the people who killed
him perhaps molana had the comma of the

momentum of the path whilst he was at a lower stage of Enlightenment and perhaps that comma was protecting him once he becomes an arhun that protection is no longer needed um going with Orthodox terraa that once you become enlightened you stop making new comma but you still got this past comma that that is still going to be working itself out up until you die you attain Parana and then that residual vestigal past Comma just poofs out of

existence um I think that to some degree that may be a kind

of I don't know attempted to call it an oversimplification based on the the drive of early Buddhist philosophers to

fit everything fit the whole philosophy
so that it is of a piece and they wound
up with just one level you know where
Nirvana is at the same level of of
reality as as tongue sensitivity or
femininity things like that Earth
element so they really did not have a
multi-level understanding of reality it
was like a two-dimensional flat plane
when really they might have been better
off thinking more thre ition
Ally
so I think I might need to read ask this
read this question again and I do notice
there are at least two question marks
here three question marks in one

question so let's see here in the
process of eradicating Saras again this
isn't you don't really eradicate Saras
at least not all of them according to
Orthodox terraa because any condition
thing is a Sanara or also any
um I guess by sanar here he might be
referring to like volitional acts
because Sanara can also mean volition
act like
saraa mainly means chaa or volition or
will so we're moving to subtler and
subtler realities are we removing the
karmic effects that attachment to
those volitional acts could result in I
don't fully understand this question
are we in the process of eradicating

Saras are we removing the karmic effects

that attachment to those Saras would

result

in um to some degree I suppose although

I mean in a way you're not so much

removing as transcending you can't

totally remove all volitional acts

according to Orthodox Terra

like in Abid dama they have to come up

with some new kind of mind called

kiria which accounts for how an an

enlightened being apparently does

volitional acts still but it's not

mentioned at all in the text and it was

apparently just a way of like Shoring up

one of their theories with regard to how

the mind works and it's it's not very
convincing so probably I mean in my
opinion that an enlight being still has
the semblance of volitional Acts but he
has transcended that he's not he's not
working at that level of reality anymore
that's just nature taking its
course that's the waves when he is now
focused on
water so whether it's a flat calm or
raging stormy sea it's still the same
exact water and that's kind of the way
the enlightened mind
operates and someone like Meister eart
might call the water God it's all
God so let's
see in this case would an arant be

completely free from comma he's
transcended it I still think like even
in Orthodox terraa there's still
residual past comma even if he's not
making any new comma but from my point
of view he has just transcended it he no
longer has attachment to it one way or
the other so could mogul death simply be
a result of the Comm of the people who
killed him um not just the Comm of the
people who killed him but everyone who
is affected by mola's death yeah that's
a possibility that's one way of looking
at it at
least but still I mean there's this
residual comma that

molana still has even though like

subjectively he has transcended that

it's still just nature taking its course

it's still water seeking its own balance

so to speak

so perhaps mulana had the comma of the

momentum of the path whilst he was at a

lower stage of Enlightenment and perhaps

that Karma was protecting him I do think

that it's it's just a matter of water

and waves or just transcending Karma

rather than eradicating

it you don't necessarily eradicate your

karma you just transcend it it's still

kind of there it's just it become it's

just irrelevant relevant from your own

like where your Center is you know it's

it's just it's just water it's not this
wave versus that wave anymore it's just
water and it just kind of
irrelevant so I'm just going to move on
the next question this is from
Romeo Romeo says what is your elevator
pitch for the evidence of the existence
of karma to someone doubtful of it well
I would start off with just the
automatic pilot aspect of karma karma is
like habitual energy it's like habit
energy that drives us through life while
we are sleepwalking in a kind of
semiconscious stuper that I mean it's
like karma is mostly running the show
it's just like habitual responses to

accustomed

stimuli so it's it's like automatic

pilot that would be an obvious example

of karma that even

a scientific materialistic Normie could

accept that would be like a foot in the

door and then you'd have to I mean

depending on how open-minded they are

with regard to metaphysics and so forth

once you get that idea that we do have

that we are pretty much running on

automatic pilot most of the time that

most people are running on automatic

pilot most of the time they're not fully

awake it's just practically like

knee-jerk reaction

that then you can get into the

metaphysics of it where we're doing that
even at deeper levels that we're just
creating our own reality through force
of habit but a materialist probably
won't take it that far but at the very
least you can get the foot in the door
with regard to just the force of habit
is is like a manifestation of of the
Buddhist idea of
karma it's is the momentum of your
mental
States so I mean from the Buddhist point
of view karma is volition karma is cha
so in order to deny Karma you'd have to
deny volition or
will which most people wouldn't do even

most scientists

wouldn't so I mean you can get a foot in

the door pretty easily but then I mean

if they're just hardcore materialist you

know scientific realist or whatever ever

that might be as far as you're going to

get because I mean in order to believe

in karma in the more like metaphysical

kind of you know the more like fully

Buddhist perspective of it then I mean

you're going to have to leave behind

strict mechanistic materialism or or

something along those lines and accept

that this universe is to a profound

degree a manifestation of mind even some

theoretical physics agrees with this

that you know it's it's the mind that

collapses the state Vector so to
speak so it's the habits of mind are
collapsing the state Vector in
like established ways habitual ways that
are creating our reality something along
those lines you might be able to sort of
make some Headway even with some
scientific realist if you adopt that
kind of approach
maybe so I'm just going to move on to
Romeo's next question which is also that
are there any beginners books you can
recommend for someone trying to better
understand and wrap their heads around
Karma and to tell you the
truth no I can't think of any any any

book for a beginner that you can

recommend for someone trying to better

understand wrap their heads around Karma

I mean maybe eart to is the Power of

Now

um maybe yeah I really I really can't

think of any I mean I certainly I can't

remember ever reading a book like you

know the the beginner's guide to

Karma everything you ever want to know

about Karma but we're afraid to ask you

know the karma

primer I yeah I I can't recall that ever

is coming across something like that so

you'd have to come across maybe some

kind of self-help book on how to

overcome just these pre-programmed

habits how to break habitual habit patterns that might be your best approach to like a beginner's guide to Karma because like I said in the in answer to the previous question you know sort of like the surface level the most indisputable form of karma is just this automatic pilot of just habits driving us through life so it could be if you find some kind of self-help book maybe written by some clinical psychologist or something on how to understand your habit patterns and how to you undo your bad habits some kind of book like that would probably be a good one even though it might not contain the word Karma at

all but if you're trying to understand
karma from an orthodox Buddhist point of
view I don't think
you're really going to I mean you'll get
like a good intellectual grasp of what
the official traditional Doctrine is but
I don't think it would be nearly as
helpful in understanding the reality of
karma as the self-help book that teaches
you how to recognize and overcome like
habitual Behavior
patterns so I'm just going to move over
move on to the next question this is
from scolin or
skaden and scolin or skaden says what do
you think about the Warren Ed and
Lorraine and what do I think about them

I saw a documentary about them a few
months ago and I've just seen like
little um I've seen a few go shows that
had Lorraine uh War I almost called her
Lorraine
Newman those of you who are old enough
to remember the first the first cast of
Saturday Night Live would know who
Lorraine Newman is but um add in
Lorraine
Warren um I really don't recall a whole
lot from that documentary that Lorraine
was more or less of a psychic Ed was
more of less psychically talented but
was really into the investigative aspect
and so they kind of teamed up it might

be what brought them together in the
first place their their shared passion
for understanding paranormal activity or
some such or it may be that just it
happened after they got together I can't
remember now but I do think that for the
most part they were sincere they may
have sensationalized certain things for
the sake of you know their their
careers but um my my sweetie and I she's
she's kind of got
me pretty kind of I wouldn't say hooked
on it but I'm very willing to go along
with this tradition she has had for many
years of before going to bed at night
watching a ghost
show and you know like The Dead Files or

paranormal

lockdown or let's see Ghost Hunters

Ghost

Adventures um portals to hell was one of

my favorites uh with Katrina Weedman and

Jack Osborne who's Aussie Osborne son

that they go to these haunted houses or

haunted theaters or haunted condemned

prisons or whatever and um I assume

they're pretty much like the modern

iteration of Ed and Lorraine Warren you

know I don't think that Eden Lorraine

had something that subsequent Ghost

Hunters don't have and there's lots of

shows you can you can watch um there was

one Ghost Adventures I think they're the

most popular and I just I really don't I refuse to watch that one because the the the hosts of the show are just so cringe that they're supposedly paranormal investigators but they're just sensationalistic as [__] just trying to be entertaining and make a good show and you know it's like oh I just got a weird feeling you know they're just walking around oh it felt like something just touched my arm you know it's it's like that's half the show and um a lot of lot of them they won't use real real psychics or at least people who claim to be psychics they're trying to use like technological
devices so they've got like this these

little things that look like radios that
produce this static and every once in a
while you'll hear something that sounds
like a human voice which invariably they
will interpret as Spirits trying to
communicate by manipulating the static
in this device
and sometimes it's like they hear
something like and it's like it just
said go away or I'm going to kill you so
this kind of stuff is ridiculous I don't
know to what extent Ed and Lorraine
Warren engaged in that I think they were
sort of pre- technological stuff they
hadn't invented like ghost ghost boxes
or anything yet and so they were mainly

relying on Lorraine her alleged psychic

abilities to just kind of feel into it

and the ghost shows that my sweetheart

and I

watch my beloved

woman um yeah I prefer the ones with

psychics over the ones that are relying

on like technological

gadgets to detect changes in I mean if

you can it's fine to have gadgets that

are like like infrared sensors like

because like if there is like Spirit

activity like a common event is it

causes a the coldness in the air also it

drains batteries it's like if there is

going to be any kind of

manifestation that they have to absorb

energy through heat or through energy AB like stored in a battery or something in order to to produce the manifestation so that's kind of interesting I guess but I I'm just kind of digressing all over the place um I do think the Warren were sincere I do think that they weren't entirely frauds there might be a little bit of trickster element like um I read a book it's one of the most important books I've read especially over the past 20 years the trickster in the Paranormal by George P Hansen where he's talking about how even talented psychics or talented you know people with like Paranormal abilities they'll

still indulge in a certain amount of trickery and fakery which is like transgressive and in and like helps to open cracks in in the rules that are governing this version of reality so that genuine Paranormal Activity can can come through they tend to be Lial beings and they try to make things more Lial and like fakery a certain amount of fraud

ironically can actually like help produce more genuine paranorm normal activity which is this weird almost like a catch 23

situation so I mean getting back to the warrant uh I really don't know nearly as much about the Warren as I know about

somebody like Katrina

Weedman who is like a modern or like um

Amy Allen from The Dead Files but I mean

some of these shows I do think there is

a lot of fakery in in this ghost hunting

stuff like and and and not just fakery

but also just like jumping to

conclusions like the common theme of The

Dead Files you got Amy Allen and Steve

deevy who was a former he's like a

retired New York homicide cop they've

teamed up to investigate haunted houses

and Amy Allen is the psychic and Steve

deevy he just does the investigating

part he's like you know find he's asking

questions sort of like interviewing the

people who live in the house seeing
what's going on there and it's like
somebody says you know I got scratched
in the middle of the night and I just
happen to have the picture of it right
here and they'll show this picture of a
scratch on their skin like anyone who
gets scratched in the night carries
around pictures of
it and then he'll come up with he'll be
investigating like Librarians you know
he'll go interview a librarian or
historian local historian or something
it turns out that only 40 years ago
somebody was was brutally murdered only
half a mile from here and then they just
kind of fit that narrative into into the

the haunted house which strikes me as
questionable but it does seem like there
is um a certain amount of genuine
paranormal activity in haunted houses I
mean even on these shows sometimes
you'll see weird stuff or hear weird
sounds that kind of thing
so I mean one of the most
uh remarkable I mean it could have been
faked but there was like um it was an
episode of portals to hell with Katrina
Weedman and Aussie Osborne's
son and they have cameras everywhere
through this I think it was a haunted
hotel and there was like a ballroom with
chairs and one of the chairs just all of

a sudden just sitting there just twists
like you know 45°
and why a ghost would want to just twist
a chair just for fun I don't
know but still it's stuff like that it's
my father he claimed to see ghosts I
I've seen like supposedly when I was
like three or four years old I could see
a ghost of the lady that used to live in
the house before we lived there um I'm
I'm open-minded with regard to the
possibility of paranormal phenomenon I'm
certainly no
materialist and so I'm I'm I'm answering
this question in very prolonged
digressive kind of way but I do think
that there is something to it I think

that some people like the Ghost

Adventures guys they're mainly just

entertainers they just want to make a

good show and they're very successful

they've got like half a dozen spin-offs

at

least but they're just cringe I just I

just refuse to watch that

I've seen a few episodes and that was

plenty

so yeah I mean the world is is is not

just mechanistic materialistic phenomena

that there is weird stuff that science

cannot explain and it probably will

never explain it other than just fitting

it into a category like Quantum

Randomness which is also something they
can't explain that you know they just
you know they'll account for it they'll
say yeah that's Quantum Randomness and
so at least they acknowledge it and it
may be that that more and more
paranormal stuff will eventually get at
least acknowledged even if it isn't
explained by modern science or
postmodern
science but the Warren were in a way
they were like the the
forerunners of this exploding population
of Ghost Hunters that have their own TV
shows um
nowadays so I'm just going to move on to
scadden or scad's next question which is

a followup on the previous one which is
what's your expert opinion on the museum
that the Warren started that's filled
with cursed
objects and his characteristic bullet
point comment here is I think the Warren
are gone now so I'm not sure what
happens to the inventory of items that
were said to involve demons ghosts and
sleep paralysis
entities and then in parenthesis he's
got worst case
scenario so um what's my expert opinion
on the museum that the Warren started
it's filled with cursed objects I I
never really I don't know much about the

museum although one of the episodes of
portals to hell with Katrina Weedman and
Aussie Osborne's son they went to one of
these museums that had lots of weird
kind of black
magicky cursed stuff and they they did
have one of those voice boxes or at
least a previous investigator had
recorded a voice coming through there
one of the one of the most haunted
objects they had at this this Museum was
this grotesque clown doll that was
locked in a
cage and it was made by prisoners at a
concentration camp in Nazi Germany in
the 1930s allegedly
and it was just they had a chain around

the cage to make sure it stays closed
and they were playing you know the this
um like this radio thing these these
previous
investigators and it was it just sounded
like a kid's voice very clearly saying
I'm stuck in this box you know static
before static after and then just very
clearly this kid's voice saying I'm
stuck in this box which could have been
a total fraud it could have been fake
but there was weird stuff I mean weird
stuff happens I mean I've lived in a
house with a polter guys before i' I've
explained that several times so I mean
I'm open-minded with regard to I think

the world is a manifestation of mind and
there's going to be certain events that
just do not follow
rules that weird stuff can happen that's
just not supposed to happen that laws of
physics so-called can be broken and with
regard to these cursed objects I think
it's
possible that uh I remember it causes me
to remember um when I was in my 20s like
my mid 20s before I became a monk I was
in a bookstore and I saw a book for sale
written by Alistair Crowley and I was
tempted to buy that book I was curious
what the philosophy of Alistar Crowley
would be like and then I I thought well
it could be that he just put a curse

I he was a he was a bad man he he may
have just for shits and giggles put a
curse on that book to curse anyone who
read it or even who touched it so it
kind of scared me off I didn't do it I
can be a little superstitious in that
regard but um yeah I mean what's going
to happen to the Warren's Museum I
assume it's going to keep going I don't
think they're just going to like auction
off everything here you can buy this
cursed Ouija board that was used in a in
a black mask or something for you know
opening bid $50 I mean somebody somebody
might do
that but I don't think it'd be very

wise so yeah I guess the inventory of
items that that are in the uh the museum
I assume somebody else is just going to
continue running the museum and continue
earning the profits for the $5 admission
fee or whatever they
charge so but I do think that you know
you can have have cursed objects or you
know hexed objects or
even like blessed objects even but it it
depends a lot on the minds of the people
who are like operating with regard to
these objects because it's all a
manifestation of Mind
anyway so I don't think that just
inanimate objects will necessarily have
any kind of Juju but they they any

consciousness of associated with those objects can in a way attribute that Juju and in faith of a grain of mustard seed can move mountains so you believe somebody believes even if it's just like some kind of spirit being believes that that object has got Juju in it it can cause it to have some kind of effect and I've I've just been rambling on that one that was a half hour long answer so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from xenoid and xenoid says if Abid dama Scholars don't believe a subconscious mind or Storehouse Consciousness where would they say things like facts

opinions and memories reside within the
mind it's not so much that they are
residing there's just a potential for
them to
arise I asked uh an Abid a Burmese Abid
dama scholar once sort of about this and
he says um in Abid dama they refer to a
certain aone and aone is a Burmese word
which means
momentum so it's like karma is the
momentum of your mental States and so
there's like a residual potential of
things to arise due to this momentum
that's
going I didn't ask him the question
specifically about the subconscious mind
because in Abid dama there there really

is no subconscious mind other than what

is called

banga which is like a like a a holding

pattern it's like your last

conscious like mental image in your

previous

existence somehow according to Abid dama

philosophy or at least Abid dama

commentaries it's becomes like the the

whole like uh like the screen on the TV

sets back in the old days you know there

was like the the Indian and like the the

circle it looked like a Target kind of

that you know it would just be there

when when the station was off the air

that that's kind of with the way bonga

cheah operates it's just this image in your mind that doesn't change it's flickering off and on trillion times a second but still you know it's just there when your mind isn't otherwise occupied with something else which is a pretty
lame um idea for a subconscious mind otherwise they've also got what is in in Terra Buddhism you've got what is called anusia which is a latent tendency an underlying tendency which doesn't mean that it's lying in weight that it exists it's just that there is a potential for that when the conditions conducive to that arising are right then it arises so yeah it's not like Memories or

facts or opinions are always just
lurking under the surface from a
Buddhist point of view it's just that
there is the potential for them to arise
because your mind follows these habitual
kic patterns which then will come to a
configuration of suitable conditions
that will cause that to arise so you
have to eliminate the conditions that
cause it to arise in order for it not to
arise
anymore so it's it's not like you've got
these memories that are just stored and
and they're just there all the time but
at like a subconscious level it's just
that there is the potenti potential for

that memory to arise when the
circumstances are right for
it so I hope that was at least somewhat
explanatory because I'm moving on to
xeno's next question which is as follows
what do you think of the idea of
cultural
appropriation I used to think it was a
completely [__] concept until I
realized that very ironically the worst
example in the world of cultural
appropriation is white liberals thinking
that Asian religions Buddhism in
particular are completely compatible
with cultural Marxism and practically
synonymous with leftist activism just
goes to show how unaware and conceited

they really are well the problem with
the the white liberals thinking that
Asian religions Buddhism in particular
are completely compatible with cultural
Marxism is that they're not taking the
cultural appropriation far enough
they're just appropriating certain
aspects of Buddhism that they like and
just ignoring or rejecting the rest of
it so they'd be much better off if they
were more thorough in their cultural
appropriation but cultural appropriation
to make a a crime or some sort of
microaggression out of is just
idiotic I mean it's just stupid you've
got I several years ago this maybe back

around 2016

there was some white guy with dreadlocks

who was being hounded by these two black

people with with like they they're like

threatening to cut his dreadlocks off

because he was appropriating their

culture well at the very same time

they're speaking English and dressed in

western clothing these two black people

that are hounding the white guy for

having

dreadlocks which is I mean it's just

idiotic it's like any one reason why the

ancient Roman Empire the Roman Republic

and then the Empire became so great was

because they adopted the idea of

cultural appropriation anything that

works especially like

militarily anything that works you know

like some enemies in Spain had a sword

that worked really well the Romans

started using that sword the

Gladius which is where the word

gladiator comes from means

swordsman so it's like cultural

appropriation is is really a good idea

if you've got some other country that

comes up with some Innovation that

really is a good idea you're stupid I

mean it's almost suicidal not to adopt

it and like I mean what's wrong with

Americans eating pizza I mean it's

cultural appropriation of Italian

culture we actually improved on pizza
pizza was considered to be poor man's
food it was mostly just like plain
cheese pizza at first when it was in
Italy and then it comes to America and
Americans start putting all kinds of
meat and mushrooms and onions and stuff
on it and then it goes back to Italy in
this improve they culturally
appropriated the new kind of pizza from
us so I don't see any problem at all
with cultural appropriation it's just
common
sense it's just that with regard to the
the the American liberals adopting
Buddhism they just adopt only certain
parts of it so their cultural

appropriation is incomplete and

inadequate if they appropriated more of

it it would be better

so I'm just going to move on to xeni

void's third

question which is how does charity

function within Buddhist culture and

what is its relationship to buddhism's

intention-based

ethics so charity I assume he's

referring to Donna which literally means

giving and it's not technically

considered to be the same as morality

morality in Buddhism is negative

morality is don't do this and don't do

that and don't do the other whereas

giving is do that you know it's a

positive act which is not a matter of

Sila

strangely from the traditional Buddhist

point of view Donna and CA are two

different

things so how does it function with a

Buddhist culture well I can speak mainly

from the point of view of Burmese

Buddhist culture in which case it's

largely a kind of spiritual materialism

where people think that they're earning

Merit points you know which will help

them to get into heaven or help them get

reborn as rich and beautiful in their

next life by offering stuff to monks and

really in Burma most donations go to

monks it's just this idea they want the most the most profit from their investment which is you know this spiritual materialism they're going to donate something
they want as much back from that as they can possibly get and so donating to the SAA that's the best thing you can donate to monks have been hammering away at this for 2,500 years almost probably so I mean you've got Wise Guy monks that are just continually pounding away at you know if you offer stuff to monks you get just tremendous benefits you know you're going to you're going to just be set up for Life lifetime after

lifetime after that for offering a new meditation cabin to this Monastery or whatever and so in Burma people I mean one time I tried to explain to a village doctor you're better off feeding a hungry Village kid or even a hungry Village dog than to put another dish of food in front of an obese monk who's already got 50 dishes of food sitting in front of him and he just didn't see it that way at all it's like but you get more Merit by offering to monks meanwhile the little kid in the village dog are
hungry so the burmes especially I really can't speak uh for all Asian Buddhists of course but there is a lot of

spiritual materialism in in burmes
Buddhism and I mean with regard to how
charity you know how it causes Merit
it's it's a way of breaking your
selfishness breaking your your self viw
you that you know you want to cling to
what is yours and it helps you to break
these bonds of of selfishness mainly
that would be the main spiritual benefit
plus of course you're setting yourself
up
for in the future people will give more
stuff to
you and you'd be better off still in my
opinion feeding a hungry Village kid or
even a hungry Village dog than to give

food to an obese monk who's already got
50 dishes of food in front of him
because it may be that when you're
hungry then somebody will feed you or if
you're like the Burmese person you're
hungry and they walk right past you with
a a bag of food in order to give it to
some obese monk who's already got way
too much
food
so yeah some things like building a
pagot I mean that's just considered a
Stairway to Heaven you're practically
guaranteed of Heaven in Burma if you
sponsor the building of a pagota they
don't really like fixing old pagodas but
building a brand new one that's yeah

that's the stairway to heaven right

there so the burmes see it more as a

kind of

spiritual

investment just like spiritual

materialism whereas uh I would I would

view it somewhat differently I mean you

really should not be goal oriented

in your charity or your your

morality I mean it should be its own

reward I think that's one of the last

sentences in Spinoza's ethics is that

virtue is its own reward you shouldn't

be doing virtuous acts in order to get

some benefit later on like you want to

get into heaven or something um it it is

kind of sulles the virtue of it it's
just a
transaction you know it's like a you're
trying to bribe God or
something so just do it because it's
just the right thing to do and don't
worry about the benefits you're going to
get from it and then ironically you get
more benefit from it that way I remember
one time one of my teachers in Burma
gave this this sermon how the best way
to get the maximum benefit from what you
do like a meritorious deed like like
charity or something is do it without
any hope or expectation of Rewards and
so the people a lot of them they're
thinking I want the most rewards

possible so I'm going to have to donate
this in order to get the most rewards
possible I'm going to have to donate
this in in such a way that I'm not
expecting rewards and it's it's they
just like [__] their own minds up
trying to squeeze as much Merit out of
their meritorious Deeds as they
can it's kind of sad really but I mean
they're very virtuous people I mean
they're Aston inly virtuous by Western
standards and it's it's partly due to
spiritual materialism partly just due to
like cultural conformity you know
they're just conforming to their social
norms but still I mean it's it's good

regardless even though it might not have
the most exalted reasons for it still
it's a good
thing so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from seac and sead zida
and seac and CAD zna says do you think
the English world was colon has
colonized the west and he included with
this uh a video link to some German big
wig speaking to Vladimir Putin in
English he says that he's German but
he's addressing Putin in English and
Putin ask him why are you speaking
English you're a German why aren't you
speaking
German and so seov action suad Zina says
because of this maybe or at least partly

because of this do I think that the
English world has colonized the
West to some degree maybe I don't think
it's really being colonized though it's
it's like throughout history in the west
there's always been like a lingua
franka which nowadays is English it's
English is like the one language you can
speak throughout much of the world and
people will know what you're saying
before it was English it was French like
back in the
1700s that French was the lingua franka
where you know you could find some and
wherever you were in the world you'd
probably unless you're like some place

really remote that you'd find someone who also spoke French before that it was probably Latin you know Latin was the lingua franka for centuries so it's just makes sense that you're going to have one language that is like the main language that people from different cultures that can you know they can all speak that language so an educated person like like the overwhelming majority of Dutch people speak fluent English that I saw a like a map or infographic or something talking about just the number of the percentage of population of each C different countries that speak English and it was well above 90% in the

Netherlands and other countries also

it's it's very high so it's not so much

colonization it's just a matter of

that's

just like the universal language or as

close to a universal language as we've

got nowadays unless maybe you're in the

Far East and it might be like Mandarin

Chinese so I mean to some degree the

English world has kind of not exactly

colonized the west but in a way sort of

conquered it with regard to like

technological innovations of the

anglosphere have then permeated the rest

of the world you know most of the

technological innovations in the world

were invented in the anglosphere

although like the Germans also have

invented a some things and like the

Italians and the French and so forth but

mostly overwhelmingly it has been you

know the the British and the Americans

especially with regard to

technology so I don't know if I'd call

that colonization though I mean

colonization has a different meaning to

it I mean we've heavily

influenced the rest of the

world but uh I think that's different

from actual colonization so I'm just

going to move on to seal action CAD

zina's next question and I have to say

that seal of action CAD zida he's been

getting into these abstruse technical questions with regard to Buddhist philosophy which I'm not confident that I'm the most qualified person to answer with regard to like technicalities in the philosophy I'm more I mean I've always just been more practically minded you know sort of pragmatic empirical and a lot of the stuff that you find in the text these these technicalities have never really been of great interest to me but um I think I might be jumping the gun a little bit because I'm not even sure exactly I don't remember precisely what he's asking here so he says in the

sutas it tells of a way to attain

enlightenment

by seeing the five Aggregates as

impermanent over the years teachers like

mahasi seato have come up with their own

methods to try to do that and then in

parenthesis he's got by noting them and

then he says but how do you think this

was practically done in the

past

well I think probably I mean what mahasi

seatt was um advising just being mindful

of everything as it arises and passes

away that that's one of the best ways of

getting insight into arising and passing

away so I don't think mahasi invented

anything new um one of the weasa Insight

knowledges that anyone is supposed to
experience according to Orthodox terada
is the Insight knowledge of arising and
passing away a phenomena also when
somebody becomes an Arya the traditional
formula for describing them as having
become an ARA is they realize everything
that has a beginning has an
end it is just the nature of anything
with a beginning to pass
away and if you're like carefully
observing phenomena in your meditative
practice then you see everything is
arising and passing away everything's
like in a state of flux even something
that seems like it's pretty stable

really isn't you know you've got a pain
in your knee you might think that it's
the same pain from one moment to the
next but if you are sitting there doing
mindfulness meditation and your knee is
in pain you can just feel it just sort
of throbbing and surging and just it's
like in this constant state of
change and so certainly um it's going to
be
mindfulness just mindful attention is
going to allow people to realize that
really everything is in a state of flux
that even stuff that seems like it's
pretty stable is really just constantly
changing everything's just arising and
passing away your own mental States you

know your own mind you just close your
eyes you know so that it you think that
everything is black most you would
assume most people just say when you
close your eyes what do you see they
just see you don't see anything it's
just black but I mean if you're Mindful
and you're you're just very attentively
looking at what you can see with your
eyes closed it's just like this
flickering static it's very dark you
could say that it's black but still it's
very
discernable P perceivable like
flickering static going on the whole
time it's the same thing when your eyes

are open it's just that it's it's not as
obvious because you've got too many
other things to distract you hearing is
the same way always changing just the
feelings in your body always changing
and if you're being mindful of that it
becomes more and more
obvious so I'm going to move on to se
action CAD z a third question
which is as
follows it says in the sutas that when
form and I make contact eye
Consciousness arises however we can also
see in dreams despite our eyes being
closed even when closing our eyes we can
still see things if we are meditating as
well especially when zoned out one can

say this is mental Consciousness but
these are clearly visual Consciousness
because they involve of colors and
shapes what is the Buddhist explanation
for this visual Consciousness as on the
first glance they seem to break the
dependent origination formula in these
well the traditional or the Orthodox
Buddhist explanation would be it would
be mental that if you're dreaming at
night or you're just vividly imagining
something that would be
mental I mean it would just be the Sixth
Sense base which is mind because really
it's nothing is impinging on on the eye
sensitivity

um which reminds me of two things I got
to digress I can't just flat out answer
give a straight answer and then move on
to the next thing which would cause
these q&as to be much shorter I
guarantee it but I remember one time a
friend of mine an American monk who is
like me is no longer a monk ask me when
you close your eyes what do you see and
like I just said it's like it's like
seeing static on a TV screen except with
a contrast turned way down and he said
he talked to an Abid scholar Burmese of
course who said no that's impossible you
have to see black and so because
nothing's impinging on the eye and it's
like these dogmatic Buddhist Scholars

will reject their own experience in
favor of what the book
says so just because the book says
something doesn't necessarily mean that
it's necessarily true especially it's in
Abid dama commentaries but there's also
this phenomena that I have experienced
since I was a kid and I can do it pretty
much at will and I would like any
feedback from you if you if any of you
have experienced something similar to
this ever since I was a kid if I can
with my eyes closed if I just kind of
adjust my focus in a certain way which
is hard to explain you just kind of have
to experiment with it I see this field

of ovals they're like light like pink ovals you know kind of I don't know if you can see that but it's like a pink oval or like a an a duck egg shape on a field of like turquoise blue they're all in lines and they're all moving diagonally up towards kind of upwards and towards the left they're all the same size perf it's just geometrically perfect so I assume that's not just my imagination that's like something to do with the retina like the like the the op itical aspect of the nervous system or something and then there was another one that I could see when I was a kid I haven't been able to see it in a long time that was perfect circles red

circles with like it was just a red line
it wasn't solid red just a red line uh
circle on a black background with black
in the middle and they were also moving
I can't remember exactly the direction I
was a kid when I I could see those but
it was still it was just you could see
it perfectly I mean it was just it
wasn't reliant on imagination because it
was just geometrically perfect and
always the same and always moving in the
same direction at the same speed which
uh I don't know if and I assume because
it's so
concrete that other people must be able
to experience this but I've never never

really heard anybody talk about seeing
pink ovals on a turquoise blue
background you know in in rows moving
slowly a diagonal
Direction but I I can still do it I mean
I just close my eyes and just kind of
focus my vision a certain way with my
eyes closed and I can see
it and that would I don't know what
would be the official I I assume that
might be Optical even though there's no
object impinging so maybe that would
violate Buddhist philosophy right there
it might have to be just by default just
mental sensation even even though it
does seem to be like the optical
apparatuses involved because it's so

clear and so geometrically perfect it would have to be like some kind of artifact of you know the the retina or something but just because you see something in the text doesn't mean that it's necessarily gospel truth with no possible
exceptions so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from Master Poe and master Poe says says of all the inventions in history what's the best one and the the invention that comes to mind immediately was bread I think bread was just it was whoever came up with bread especially leave bread that was great but then again then I started

thinking well that's

prehistoric that's not in history I

assume Master Po just meant over the

course of human civilization what's the

what's the best invention in which case

I would say

in my opinion

bread but I mean if it has to be

historical where you know the person who

invented it in in the year that kind of

thing then I mean the wheel would be out

bread would be out that was that's all

prehistoric so I don't know maybe like

the generation of electricity I mean

electricity is a big

deal so maybe

electricity and I don't want to uh

disappoint anybody but I should have
said you know like meditation or
something but I don't know it's
meditation doesn't have the same kind of
effect on
Humanity as bread I mean in China they
don't Asian East Asians don't even
understand bread they don't get it they
think it's some kind of semi cake or
something but uh in western western in
the Western World bread is just the
benefits of bread have pervaded nowadays
people say Bread's junk food because you
know the the genetically modified wheat
or whatever or the wheat is just you
know it's been produced it's been like

breed in such a well I shouldn't use the word bread in a different sense it might confuse people but I mean people are saying bread is junk food now but still bread I've been a a bread eater my entire life I've I've descended from a long line of bread eaters I think and it just it just really suits me it's just really nice I like
bread but otherwise maybe electricity this I mean electricity wasn't really invented but like a the generation of direct current or something I don't know who did that I'm pretty sure it was before Faraday I think Faraday invented alternating current but gener like direct current you know where you got

magnets running through a coil of coer
wire or something somebody had to come
up with that it's sometimes I'm just
amazed at just the the Brilliance of
some of these early scientists that were
I mean who who would come up with the
idea of running magnets through a wire
like a coil of copper wire in order to
to I mean why would they do that they
maybe they had this theory that maybe
that would generate electricity and so
they tried it and it
did and anyways I'm moving on to the
next question this is from Benjamin and
Benjamin says it's looking more and more
like the Jews Christians and Muslims are

about to engage in mutually assured destruction that said do you have any regrets about moving back to the West if the Asians are wise they will sit this one out and come out on top seems to me like a good time to move to Asia well I don't see how the Jews Christians and Muslims are any closer to mutually assured destruction than they were like in the
1960s I mean the Cold War was going full blast you had we were at the brink of nuclear
Armageddon several times at least during like the
1960s you know Cuban Missile Crisis people thinking they're seeing like um

attacking missiles or bombers and almost pushing the big red button when really it turns out that it was a flock of geese or something that happened several times so I don't think we're really much closer to engaging in mutually assured destruction or if we do it's going to be at such a scale that it's going to mess up the entire world and not just the Western Hemisphere and Europe that I mean if there's like a thermonuclear arm again the Chinese are going to be hurting just as bad as everyone else is but let's just say that this civilization collapses let's say Western Civilization collapses what's going to

happen in the East China is just going
to take over everything probably and
then I think I think I'd probably better
I would prefer to take my chances in a
collapsing Western Civilization than
move to the East and just become a
subject of Chinese
despotism so
yeah I mean like Burma Burma is
certainly no
Utopia I mean Burma's one of was one of
the poorest under the British it was the
richest country in Southeast Asia almost
immediately after getting Independence
it became the poorest country in
Southeast Asia and Burma is just
overflowing with natural resources it's

got pretty much untapped Fisheries it's self self-sufficient with petroleum it's got teak forests it's got some of the best rubies in the world they're they're set up they got gold they got Jade they're set up they're not overpopulated they got relatively fertile soil there's no reason why Burma should be a just a poor ass country and it is a poor ass country mainly because that the government is just hopelessly incompetent the burmes just cannot organize the only people in Burma that come close to being able to really organize is the military which is one reason why the military keeps running

the

country so yeah I have no delusions

of like southeast Asia being any kind of

paradise I mean I lived in Indonesia for

a few months that was that seem to be

all right

but now I really don't think the Jews

Christians and Muslims are going to uh

engage in mutually assured destruction

anytime soon and if they do the East is

going to be screwed just as much as the

West

probably so I guess I answer that

question I'm moving on to the next one

this is some

Gordon I'm checking to see how many

hours we've been going at this less than

two hours this shouldn't be an extremely
long one although it'll be longer than
the last one I
guess so this one's from Gordon and he
says I saw on some infographic a while
ago that Myanmar does not use the metric
system what system do they use is it
confusing did it cause you any trouble
when you were over there no it didn't
cause me hardly any trouble at all
because they use the old English system
of miles and inches and
Fahrenheit so yes Burma and the United
States are two of the last remaining
countries that still go with Miles and
in inches and and Fahrenheit and gallons

you know just the old the old English
system although the Burmese do kind of
go far farther than Americans do like on
the on their Highway they've got instead
of every tenth of a mile they've got
every furong which I think is every
eighth of a
mile they they measure their their mile
markers go by furlongs which is only
used in horse racing in America as far
as I know also they do have a few
traditional units of measurement like
the PA which is 3.6 PBS so sometimes uh
like villagers especially they'll
measure some in petas I think a SAT is
1/4 of a
p so I mean they do have an old

Burmese

traditional they do have those

traditional units of measurement but

they're not used very much and mostly

they use the uh the just the Standard

English measurement and one weird thing

about

Burma is that they drive on the right

side of the road the same as Americans

do but most of their cars have the

steering wheel on the right side so that

the the driver is like up against the

the side of the road and you pretty much

have to have uh somebody sitting in the

passenger seat on the left side of the

car to tell you when the coast is clear

when you can pass somebody because if you're driving by yourself you got to get way out at least halfway out into the the other lane just to see if it's clear so needless to say there's lots of wrecks in Burma plus also they just haven't had traffic traffic there for very long so that you've got these people that just don't know how to drive taken to the roads they don't have well established um like what would you call it etiquette Road etiquette there but that's not even part of the question because I'm digressing constantly probably half of these q&as are me just digressing about stuff so I'm just going to move on to Gordon's next

question which is as follows

based on some questions you answered a

while ago I got the impression that

being a Hermit was pretty well frowned

upon in Buddhism monks are either in a

monastery or within walking distance of

a village is being isolated discouraged

on purpose if so why well no isolation

WEA like V ramaswami WEA WEA means like

Solitude or isolation is very much

encouraged the problem is that monks

were discouraged from being totally

independent of lay people that lay

people should have some interaction with

monks they should be able to see monks

and so there is a rule that monks can't

just grow their own food they can't just
pick fruit out of the trees and eat that
they do have to rely on lay people for
the benefit of the lay people
mainly and so a monk does have to live
within walking distance of a village but
that can be five
miles I mean you're living five miles
out into a
forest you're pretty much of a Hermit if
you're living out there by yourself
especially if you're discouraging
visitors so yeah I was pretty much of a
Hermit for most of the time that I lived
in
Burma and uh you know just discouraging
visitors I'd live in a cave sometimes I

just wouldn't come out of the cave even
if people are wanting to see me you I
just wouldn't come out there are times
when I just pee into a big bath cup or a
plastic bag or something just so I
wouldn't have to go out and deal with
the visitors waiting outside my
cave so yeah being a Hermit is is not
frowned upon at all it is strongly
encouraged in Buddhism but being a
Hermit doesn't mean that you have to
live 20 miles away from the nearest
human I mean five miles out into a
forest or even two miles out into a
forest I mean if you're living by
yourself you're not dealing with other

people then you're pretty much of a

Hermit you're discouraging

visitors you're pretty much of a

Hermit I've known Hermits that were

living on the outskirts of town they

just would had like this fence around

their place and just refuse to open the

gate you know they go in there and stay

by

themselves so the

only the only uh exception to that is

like I said you have to to be within

walking distance of a village so that

you can get your food and that's mainly

out of compassion for Lay people that it

really is a good thing for them to see

renunciant you know that was the fourth

sign that triggered the Buddha's own
renunciation was seeing a robed
renunciant that inspired him to find
some other
route um you know towards
happiness so it's also one of the uh the
blessings in the the mongala sua the 38
blessings in life one of them is seeing
renuncian so the Buddha did have some
appreciation for that and did set things
up so that monks couldn't just live
completely alone and never see
anybody but I mean it does say in the
text over and over again that even when
a monk does come to the Village he
shouldn't be striking up acquaintances

in the village you know he should just

silently collect enough food and then

just go back go back into his forest and

eat it

so yeah I mean walking distance of a

village

that's that's not like disqualifying

anybody from being a

recluse so I think I answered that one

so I'm just going to move on to Gordon's

third question here which is a follow-up

question to the previous one is there

any danger or at least hindrance to

practicing if one is socially

isolated um there can be danger to

practicing if you're socially isolated

to the extent that uh first of all if

you don't have a teacher you're going to be like going from trial and error just flying by the seat of your your pants or flying by the seat of your sarong or whatever so there is that also if you're a recluse you're living in isolation you don't get feedback so you can start drifting in eccentric directions and just keep drifting until you're just weird maybe maladjusted because you're not getting feedback from preferably a wise teacher but even from other people it can be beneficial like a Hermit living alone just the stereotypical hermit who lives alone he's talking to himself all the time and

then he comes he stops being hermit

comes back into society he's still

talking to himself all the time nowadays

it's not that big of a deal people think

that you're just talking on the phone

with like an earpiece or

something

but so

the texts do strongly

encourage isolation being socially

isolated opting out of society go alone

like the Horn of the

rhinoceros but still I mean there's

always going to be pluses and minuses to

anything there's going to be you know

potential

drawbacks to any choice that you

choose so I think I answered that one

I'm moving on to the next one this this

is from Stellar Supreme formerly known

as Libra Lam and he just informed me

recently that he's thinking about

changing his name

again so this is his his name might take

up several minutes at some

point but for the time being he is

Stellar Stellar Supreme formerly known

as lib Lam and his first question

is is Buddhism as a path well outlined

by speaking of it its final goal

as a kind of sadu or Noble mindedness

and I think if you want to say Noble

mindedness it you probably the more

traditional rendering in poly would be

Aria because the word

usually uh translated as Noble into

English is is

Arya like the the four noble truths or

the the four Arya

arasa the noble eight old path is the

Arya Eightfold Path Arya

Maga so yeah um let's see I'll just

start I'll just start over here is

Buddhism as a path well outlined by

speaking of its final goal as a kind of

sadu or Noble mindedness um I suppose I

mean it would depend on the person I

mean you can say that the goal is Aria

or Noble mind

but I mean that doesn't necessarily mean

that you're enlightened why not just say

Liberation like

weti weoka or or Enlightenment itself

Bodi why not why not just use a word

like that I mean as the final

goal yeah it be the enlightened mind the

liberated

mind Noble mind isn't necessarily

enlightened but a liberated mind would

be so I mean for some people it might

work other people it might not work and

I'm just going to move on to the next

question here also from Stellar Supreme

formerly known as Libra lamb and

possibly soon to be known as something

else is there another poly term that you

would consider to be more Choice oh well

I already answered that one like weti

weoka um Bodi you know nibana

Enlightenment or if you want to say

Noble mindedness you could say

Aria instead of of

sadu so yeah I guess I already answered

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

Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra

Lamb's third

question what are your thoughts on maati

or wrong Liberation in the context

ofical ways of talking about

Enlightenment in the modern day like

with Daniel Ingram Nelson Armstrong I

think isn't it Delson Armstrong and many

other such Western practitioners wrong

Liberation well I mean if it's
Liberation I don't it's it's hard for me
to think of a a kind of a wrong
Liberation unless it's just you think
you're liberated when you really aren't
so that could be false false or wrong
Liberation is just the idea that you
think you're liberated which probably
happens a lot in the west people who
claim to be enlightened that aren't just
flat out deliberate frauds or
nevertheless like overestimating what
they have attained that could be called
like MAA weti so what are my thoughts in
the context of heretical ways of talking
about Enlightenment in the modern day

like with Daniel Ingram Nel Nelson or Delson Armstrong and other such Western practitioners my thoughts on wrong Liberation in the context of heretical ways of talking well some people again like some people may just o overestimate what they've attained and then that could be Liberation because they're really not liberated at all they just think they are or it could be that you get into the the kind of state like some of these people who think that they're liberated they're in a way they're glib you know they have a quick response to any objection which in a way kind of makes them seem like they're speaking with

authority um when really they're just

glib or smug you know there's a lot of

smug orans in the west seems to

me

so I'm not exactly sure how to answer

this question though so I'm just kind of

throwing words at the wall like

spaghetti to see if it

sticks let's see what are your thoughts

on wrong Liberation in the context of

heretical ways of talking about

Enlightenment in the modern day well

there's all different ways of talking

about Enlightenment like eart TOA talks

about Enlightenment in a certain way h

came up with the idea of women

identifying with a pain body I have no
idea since he's the only person that
I've ever heard mention
that
um yeah I mean some of their
explanations of Enlightenment seem to be
legit it may be just that they haven't
lived up to that explanation I mean if
if you've got no
attachments then I mean regardless of
the con the conduct of the person that
that would be a fairly good explanation
of Enlightenment even though they might
still have attachments that they just
aren't mindful enough to realize or
whatever so yeah this is just a hard
question for me to fully wrap my head

around well enough for me to be glib

about

it in the context heretical ways of

talking about Enlightenment yeah I'm I'm

not exactly sure how heretical Daniel

Ingram and Nelson or Delson Armstrong or

and others eart TOA and any number of

people there's another uh another Ingram

a female Ingram who is claiming to be

enlightened also um that how heretical

is their way of talking about other than

maybe them saying that you can still

outwardly wallow in

sensuality um that certainly would be

unorthodox from a terraa point of view

from terraa point of view you have to be

a saint in your morals before you can
become enlightened which I am personally
skeptical of I do think that a saint and
a sage are not necessarily the same
person that really you can just
transcend the whole
phenomenal
Carnival and still it's just nature
taking its course and an enlightened
being wouldn't necessarily be enslaved
to any kind of rules like neim Koli Baba
up on the on the altar back there um he
didn't follow rules I think there's a
good chance that he was fully
enlightened he was very highly Advanced
spiritually definitely had psychic
powers um but I mean he did not follow

rules certain rules I mean he he was a
strict vegetarian I'm pretty sure I
don't think he ever ate
meat but I mean he would just yell and
Roar and laugh and cry and and hit
people and do all kinds of stuff that
that a stereotypical terraa Buddhist
sage just would not and even could not
do and that's something that's kind of
bothered me about you read in the text
like an enlightened being can't do this
and he can't do that and you know he
can't tell a lie he you know there's all
these things he can't do but I mean you
can say he just can't want to do that it
just doesn't even occur to him to even

want to do that but still just putting
all these limitations on a being who has
transcended all limitations is uh I
don't know it's it's just kind of
dubious to me I'm not just flat out
asserting one way or the other but I do
have a certain amount of healthy
skepticism with regard to that and I do
think it's possible that someone like
Jay Krishna mury May really have been
fully enlightened even though he didn't
behave like an enlightened being is
supposed to behave or neem cly Baba up
there on the other hand other people
like Osho formerly known as the bwan
Shri Raj Nish some people think he was
fully enlightened and I I fairly

skeptical of that just as I'm fairly

skeptical of Daniel Ingram being fully

enlightened even though he just flat out

asserts it or at least used to on on his

web he's got a website and right at the

beginning of the website he just

declares himself an

arhant so yeah it's it's just really

kind of a weird

situation where I mean a fully

enlightened being might not even mean

anything in a samsaric context within a

samsaric

context there may be no fully

enlightened beings it might just be a

kind of like a myth or something and

part of that is because like if if

you're unenlightened if you look at an

enlightened being you're going to be

looking at an enlightened being through

unenlightenment colored glasses and he's

just going to seem like another

unenlightened

being or if you an unenlightened person

considers person X to be fully

enlightened that that person X is just

living up to some

unenlightened idea of Enlightenment that

this unenlightened person

has so you look at the world through

unenlightened glasses all you're going

to see is

unenlightenment you're not going to see

a fully enlightened being you might see

some being that you have an

unenlightened concept of Enlightenment

and you attribute that to that being but

you still don't get

it so

wrong Liberation it seems like any kind

of Liberation would be fairly good

unless it's Liberation from something

wholesome I

suppose Liberation from like social

standards of you know being nice to

people that kind of thing

maybe but um I think mostly wrong

Liberation is people thinking that the

liberated when they're not and it's not

so much

theoretical um it's it's just that

they're overestimating what they've

attained whereas if I mean any kind of

concept of Enlightenment would say you

know you got no more Dua at least um you

it might just be the semblance of dooka

but still you know you're you're free

from just

like gosh free from greed hate and

delusion even though it might be that

you still have a semblance of it because

that has just become irrelevant because

you transcended it without eradicating

it so it's very

tricky and it's so tricky that I'm just

moving on to the next question this is

from chasz is and tascaz is says today
if it is Saturday and right now as I'm
doing this it's Saturday although it
doesn't get uploaded until Sunday so
I'll just start over tasz is says today
if it is Saturday in Catholic Church it
is the day of St John of the Cross do
you have any favorite chapters of books
you especially
recommend well I don't know if I'd call
them chapters of books that I especially
recommend like the ascent of Mount
Carmel is an excellent book but although
no particular chapter stands out it's
it's just the whole book is good so
rather than single out just a chapter I

might single out one of its shorter
works like for example he's got a poem
called stanas concerning an ecstasy
experienced in high
contemplation that is is excellent in
fact see I got the book over here just a
minute just so happens that I've got the
collected works of St John of the Cross
right here St John of the Cross drew
that picture too he had a vision of of
Jesus on the cross and he drew it
because he was also a talented drawer
so let's see stanas concerning an
ecstasy experienced High contemplation
and then uh the refrain that keeps
appearing is along the lines of I
entered into unknowing and there I

remained unknowing transcending all
knowledge so that's a fairly brief
poetical description of like high
contemplation like like a johnic state
which is uh it's it's interesting it's
very nice St John of the Cross is the
patron saint of Spanish
poets also there's a a little collection
of sayings of his called the sayings of
light and love which is only a few pages
long it's it's sort of like Proverbs you
know it's he'll he'll give advice like
if somebody asks you for something that
you have you should give it even though
you think you may need it later that
kind of thing you know don't expect it

back just give it that kind of thing

which is very saintly uncompromisingly

saintly most people wouldn't be able to

live up to that stuff

but that's the way Saints are they're

very

uncompromising there's a a

Catholic Catholic priest once told me

that there's a saying in Catholicism

that when one monk at a monastery

becomes a saint all the rest of the

monks become Martyrs that's just because

Saints can be such just un fiercely

uncompromising har

asses so I'm just going to move on to

Chas as is the second question which is

what is the story about the picture of

you holding a pizza as a monk yeah

there's I think it was a thumbnail on a

previous Q&A so I won't be able to use

it for this Q&A of me as a monk uh

holding up a pizza and

somebody um in Upstate New York wanted

to feed me you know they wanted to

donate a meal to me and so they called a

pizza place and had a pizza delivered

you know they paid for it with a credit

card something over over the phone it

took them a while to find a a pizza

place that would that would take an

order from New York because I was in

California at the time on the opposite

side of the

continent but they uh had had a pizza
delivered to me it was a good pizza too
and they wanted some kind of documentary
evidence of me receiving the pizza so I
had a take a picture of me holding the
pizza so I could send it to the guy in
New York to show him yep here's the
here's me with the pizza I got the pizza
by golly it was a good pizza too so
that's the story it's just somebody on
the other side of the country wanted to
donate a pizza to me donate a meal so
they had a pizza delivered and just to
show them that I got the pizza I had a
one of the Burmese monks take a picture
of me holding the
pizza so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from Fred and

Fred says is chasing nibana a Fool's

errand um chasing nibana I mean it's

you're gonna eventually have to stop

chasing it in order to attain it because

like goal oriented dhama I mean it can

get you just so far but it's not going

to take you all the

way so whether it's a Fool's erand or

not I mean not necessarily I mean it may

be necessary at first for like a

beginner even a person who is in

intermediate

stages even fairly advanced in

dhama they can be chasing nibana I mean

it's better to chase nibana than to

chase your neighbor's wife or something
obviously certainly less of a Fool's
erand than that but I mean eventually
the goal oriented stuff you're going to
have to let go you have to let go of
even your attachment for enlightenment
you have to let go of your IDE ideal
because the ideal is going to be
unrealistic it's not really necessarily
going to correspond with reality anyway
I mean it's just not going to correspond
with reality an ideal and the reality
the real versus the ideal I mean that's
the standard conflict that Jay Krishna
mury talks about so you got to let go of
that but it may get you a long way get
you fairly Advanced before it's time to

let go of it so I wouldn't say it's
necessarily A Fool's errand but it's
it's certainly not going to take you all
the way you're eventually going to have
to let go even of that last
attachment so I'm going to move on next
question which is the last question and
this is from mumum Mo I don't know if I
pronounce his name correctly Mumu MOX is
not a particularly common name in
American
culture so anyways mumum MOX says is
using black magic to un alive someone
just as bad karmically as doing it to
them in person and the answer from
Orthodox terraa from the point of view

of Orthodox terava is yes for example it is one of the four paragas one of the four offenses that if a monk breaks one of these rules he is excommunicated for life you know he's kicked out of the monk Cod for the rest of his life and one of them is murder to kill another person is your that's it that's paraj jaica your excommunication at for the rest of your life and be these these four rules they're so important they have to like um in the text cover all the possibilities because you got to be absolutely sure whether this Monk Is EXC commun excommunicated or not so like with regard to stealing you know they've got all these different theoretical

cases about stealing like like you're
not allowed to steal anything worth more
than a certain amount like a coin called
a pod off so what if a monk just steals
a little bit every day that eventually
adds up to a PO then that determines I
mean whether that is part of J or not is
whether it's all part of the same plan
or whether it's just like a fresh idea
every
time that kind of thing or like if he
starts to move it how far does it have
to move before it's stolen you know if
it's got legs if if like all four legs
leave the ground if I remember correctly
then that part of jaica if he just kind

of tips it a little bit and then changes
his mind and sets it back down he's
committed a lesser offense so with
regard to murder there are certain
things that a monk I mean is just
included under Murder one is just flat
out killing
somebody you know you stab them or
poison them or whatever two you persuade
them to commit
suicide that's that's right there in the
rule that persuading someone to commit
suicide is the same as killing them
third like hiring a Hitman hiring an
assassin that's another one and also
like helping a woman to get an abortion
because in terava Buddhism a human life

begins at conception which a lot of the western lefties May reject but they don't have the authority to change that and another one is using magic so if you kill someone with black magic you still kill them me the black magic is the weapon so you're still just as guilty of murder if you use black magic to kill somebody although it's weird like let's say you're trying to kill person a you shoot them you shoot at them and you accidentally kill person B because you're a lousy shot you know you didn't aim good enough then you're not guilty of of murder technically because you were trying to kill person a and you

failed you accidentally killed somebody
else and to accidentally kill somebody
is not the same as deliberate murder at
least from the point of view of ancient
Indian Buddhist monastic discipline of
course they didn't have guns back then
had bows and arrows I guess or trying to
poison somebody the wrong person eats
the poison again if you're trying to
specifically poison this person and then
some other person eats that then he and
the other person dies the wrong person
dies then you're not guilty you're not
paraj according to my understanding
anyway but yes the short answer that I
always avoid in these Q&A videos is
using black magic to un alive someone

just as bad karmically as using doing it
to them in person well that's I mean
it's still murder you you're you're not
off the hook by using some gimmick like
black magic just like you're not off the
hook by using poison or something
but the karma may be different I mean
the karma of killing someone from a
distance you know you don't even see
them at the time like you're you're
doing black magic rituals it might be
less violent graphic kind of karma then
if you look at them right in the eye
just sticking the knife in and and just
killing them face to
face so yeah I mean in in a case like

that it might not be just as bad
karmically it's still bad it's still
murder but different ways of murdering
people are going to have different
karmic qualities to them which is kind
of problem in the modern world where you
can have some coward sitting in a
computer room launching cruise missiles
you know killing people that he doesn't
see you know they're not even a blimp a
blip on a radar screen you know he's
just pushing the launch buttons and you
know hundreds of people are dying and
for him it's it's just not that big of
of a deal as like in ancient times
you're standing out on a battlefield
with a sword or a spear looking your

enemy right in the eye and stabbing them
and and just feeling the you know the
that first the resistance and then the
the give as the the blade goes in and
you you see them gurgling and falling to
the ground and all that it's going to be
a different quality of karma even though
you've killed them just as dead and and
you probably didn't kill nearly as many
as the coward in the computer room
launching cruise missiles
so there are definite differences in the
karma although at the bottom line is
you're still killing people and you're
still making heaps of Bad Karma by doing
from the Buddhist point of view killing

somebody is about the worst thing you
can possibly do it's like the worst
possible Karma you can do is killing
although I think something like torture
would be worse than just you know some
sort of instantaneous kill shot but
that's just me and that's it that's
that's the last question of this Q&A and
like I should always say at the
beginning but rarely do if you have any
questions you think that I can maybe
answer with regard to Terra AO Buddhism
early Buddhism meditation Buddhist
philosophy in general philosophy in
general Burma myself in particular
anything like that you think I could
maybe answer it or better yet probably

answer it then include your questions in the comments below if you have access to subscribe star you can ask me there if you have access to the Discord server you can ask me there no more than three questions per episode

please and uh smash the like button I mean it's Smash It gently you don't don't just you know damage the computer or anything like that and uh subscribe if you haven't already and be happy and I'm going to stop recording now

okay then hello and welcome to episode
124 of question and answer I am your
host poo basa and I'm sitting here
wearing this cozy robe because my woman
wants me to wear a cozy robe I came out
wearing a sweater she said you need to
wear the Cozy robe it's a Christmas
video Christmas is coming up we're not
Buddhists but I mean we're are Buddhists
we're not Christians doesn't matter
Christianity has almost nothing to do
with Christmas anymore it seems
like so I put the Cozy robe on over the
top of the Cozy sweater and then she
pointed out that I'd be sweating like
the proverbial aab so then I had to

switch and take off the the Cozy sweater

and put the Cozy robe back on and see

this is the kind of work I have to do to

make these

videos

so I guess I suppose I could mention

that this is not the first Q&A I've done

with Christmas tree behind me I remember

one time it's a couple years ago I was

doing a Christmas video with Christmas

tree behind me might have been the same

Christmas same Christmas tree because in

South Carolina apparently they do not

sell real Christmas trees it's weird I

never had a fake Christmas tree until I

moved to South Carolina in in the

Pacific Northwest you go out and you

chop down a real tree or or at the very
least you go and bu buy a real tree from
some lot that has real trees all around
you know but here I've never seen a real
tree for sale I assume they have them
somewhere maybe on the black market or
something you go into like the the the
Hispanic quarter or something you might
be able to find a real tree like you
know behind somebody's trailer for sale
or
something so anyways I was sitting in
front of that tree that tree
and there was like this cream colored
whiet that was resting on a chair behind
me her name was Fallon I inherited her

when I got my woman my woman was part of
a package deal I got two whippets along
with her which was really it was a
bargain I could not pass up and we no
longer have that whip it because it
turned out one day I drive to work at
the sheet metal shop where I no longer
work and as soon as I get into the
parking lot I get this text you got to
come back home saffron has to be taken
to the vet so I rush in tell the the
boss I'm going to be late go back home
and what happened was these two whippet
they're both female they were constantly
Rivals for the affection of the humans
and both of them wanted to be the
favorite whiet and both of them went

into heat at this at the same time and
they're all doped up on female
hormones and they go outside to go pee
and Fallon the cream colored one which
was usually the passive one literally
tried to kill saffron and just just RI
this gash like six inches long in in
Fallon's neck just barely missed the
jugular vein or the cored artery or
whatever whatever would have killed her
there so we got rid of that whip it and
so now we got one whip it left which is
a total digress see I'm digressing
before we even start answering questions
and so I guess I should start answering
questions after showing the

beverage emergency backup beverage and
also after I give this message from my
sponsor ever since I started using Dr
Squatch brand soap my complexion is so
goddamn Supple you wouldn't believe it
just kidding [__] Dr Squatch I don't
even use soap
but the thing is it's it it really kind
of bothers me a little bit kind of
saddens me just I'm not mad I'm just
kind of disappointed that so many people
that are on YouTube have started selling
[__] on their videos even s hexenhammer
666 who has steadfastly refused to
monetize his videos is now all of a
sudden selling beef jerky and mushroom
pills on his videos and his friend

Jeremy the ordering as much as onethird
of his video can consist of him trying
to sell you
coffee but personally I have loathed the
commercials my entire life or at least
since I was a kid maybe when I was a
toddler I didn't hate them yet I don't
recall
that and so I mean I go with the golden
rule I don't want to subject you to
something I do not want to be subjected
to and so I have refused to try to
monetize anything I'd rather make make a
living driving a
forklift then uh sell mushroom pills or
doctor's Squatch soap on my videos Dr

Squatch I'm sure he's very nice and

everything

but I think a dog just St oh there it

is gotta be

careful so I mean it could be three

years from now I'll be selling my own

brand of coffee or something but I

sincerely hope not and I think we should

just get right to the answering

questions after more than five minutes

of me yammering away and already

starting to sweat from the Cozy robe and

the the fire lit behind me which is not

a real fire by the way and and saffron

who survived the the neck gash is is now

standing right in the right in the way

so that you can't see it it's not really

a fire though it's it's one of those
fake fires it's not real wood it's like
porcelain fake wood with natural gas I
prefer real fires but I don't know it's
just the way it is nowadays especially
in South Carolina I think where they
don't even sell real Christmas
trees so I suppose I should commence
answering questions leastwise I'm fixing
to
commence and the first question is from
Dharma River no it's from dhma
River hope D dhama river is not offended
by me confusing him with perhaps a mahay
Buddhist and dma River says what's your
opinion of Hui

Nang and Hui Nang is considered to be
the sixth Chinese patriarch of Zen he's
the last patriarch of Zen the patriarchy
the succession stopped with
Huang
and the Sutra of Huang also known as the
platform Sutra or the platform Sutra of
Huang is a Sutra even though it has no
pretention of being spoken by the Buddha
himself is spoken by Huang supposedly in
China like medieval China so in medieval
China there were still sutras which I
assume are part of the Mahayana
trtica um that are
just centuries separated from early
Indian Buddhism and from goab Buddha
himself and I've read two translations

of the Sutra of Huang

and the first one which was part of a it

was a a combined volume of the the

Diamond Sutra and the Sutra of Huang in

a Shambala Edition which was one of my

prize possessions as a college

student um so I read that first this

Shambala um translation

ofing the the Sutra of

Hing and it seemed like it was really a

reliable Sutra because supposedly Hui

Nang delivered a discourse to a large

group of people includ including some

Chinese

dignitaries and there was supposedly

like a scribe an official's Chinese

government scribe who was
transcribing the the discourse as Hing
was delivering it and so I mean that's
seems pretty reliable you know you'd
think you're not relying upon uh a Sutra
that was transmitted in by oral
tradition for centuries before it was
ever written down this was written down
right then or so I thought and then when
I was a monk in Burma I happened to
check out from a Buddhist studies
Library like The International Institute
of advanced Buddhist studies library in
rangon another translation of the the
platform Sutra of Huang and I think it
was translated by a man named yam
pulski and this was based on a different

manuscript in fact it was a manuscript which if I remember correctly was discovered in a cave like relatively recently in modern times like some point in the 20th century and it dates back to the Tang Dynasty and it's an earlier manuscript than the one the Shambala translation was based on and it is significantly different a lot of the narrative part at the beginning and the end is missing and yam pulski gives this pretty compelling theory about the whole situation of
huining that according to yampolsky huining wasn't really the sixth patriarch at least originally he was not

the sixth patriarch so there's this story that just that is found in the Sutra of Hing about how huining became the sixth patriarch so he's like an literate barbarian from like far Southern China where the people there were considered to be rustics and barbarians you know he wasn't civilized he was illiterate he couldn't read Chinese but um at one point he he becomes enlightened he has an Enlightenment experience I think if I remember correctly he happened to hear a monk chanting The Diamond Cutter Sutra and that caused this flash of insight this higher level of conscious iess and so he decides he's going to be go and

become a Zen Monk and so he goes to the monastery of the fifth patriarch whose name I don't remember and he's because he's just this rustic Barbarian Village boy type they don't take him seriously they don't know that he's enlightened they just have him like sweeping floors and that kind of thing he's not even ordained as a monk really if I remember correctly so the fifth patriarch is getting old he knows he's not going to live forever and so he decides to have a contest on who can become the sixth patriarch the next patriarch and so he says somebody should

write a verse on the wall of the
refectory if I remember correctly to
show their their level of
attainment and so the only person who
dared to write a verse was the senior
monk like the
assistant Abbott you know he was like
the senior monk after the patriarch
himself
and he uh he wrote a verse that was
something like the body is a bod stand
the mind a mirror bright constantly we
wipe it Moment by moment lest any dust a
light so one night or one day don't
remember now Hing saw this verse that
was written on the wall and the fifth
patriarch says this is a good verse that

you know everyone should memorize it and
study it even though deep down according
to the Sutra the fifth patriarch knew
that this senior
monk really was not enlightened but
nobody else dared to compete with him
this is this is like East Asia you know
you just don't compete with like someone
who's higher than you so Huang also knew
that the verse did not represent an
enlightened point of view so we had
somebody write a verse on the wall next
to the the other verse he couldn't write
it himself because he was
illiterate and he the the verse went
something like there is no bodh stand

there is no mirror bright since
everything is void where can the Dust
Light and so according to the story
according to the Sutra itself the fifth
patriarch knew that this this was the
enlightened one this is the one who
should become the next patriarch so he
summons Huang into his quarters at night
gives him the robe and bowl of the
patriarch to signify the succession and
tells him to flee because these other
monks are not going to tolerate some
unordained illiterate Barbarian becoming
the next patriarch they're going to
they're going to assault him take his
bow and robe away that kind of thing so
Hing just takes

off and the story continues but we don't
need to continue that that Saga because
the point is that according to y pulsky
one reason probably the main reason why
the patriarchy the lineage was broken
with
Huang is that Huang wasn't really the
sixth patriarch that this senior monk
who wrote the first verse probably was
officially named the sixth patriarch and
his school which was called the gradual
School of Zen died out Hui Nang
represented the sudden School
where Enlightenment you know it's not a
gradual process of becoming Enlighten it
just hits you like a thunderbolt

although like a lot of zen zen people
will say sometimes the sudden School the
sudden method takes longer than the
gradual method because it may take a
very long time before that sudden
Thunderbolt hits
you
so um yampolsky continues in his very
disillusioning introduction to this this
story or his his theory that probably
the entire platform Sutra of hu Nang is
a kind of forgery composed by one of
huang's senior disciples who I believe
was called
shanghui so shanghui just forged this
entire platform Sutra you know putting
in the the fake details of the meeting

and the official scribe transcribing it
and everything and it was mainly just
sort of the the basics of the teachings
of
Huang so so yeah it's it was really kind
of disillusioning to me that this this
one Sutra which really seemed at first
just based on the Shambala Edition that
it really was just a transcription of a
genuine discourse given by the sixth
patriarch and then Yan pulsky comes
along with an older manuscript that's
significantly different and just shoots
down the whole idea of hang really
having been the sixth
patriarch but I guess tradition Al he is

the sixth patriarch now he just wasn't
originally the sixth patriarch according
to this Theory which does seem plausible
and even like persuasive to
me but hu ning I mean the Sut of hu n
has had some significant effect on me
for
example um I've said more than once
probably even on Q&A videos in the past
that hing's idea that when you become
enlightened you look around and see that
everybody else is also enlightened so if
you want to be you want to liberate all
beings like what Mahayana Buddhists are
supposed to do then the best thing you
do is liberate yourself which is what
terava Buddhists are supposed to do

because it's only by liberating yourself
that you're going to be able to look
around and see that everybody else is
liberated everybody else is already
enlightened if you look through
enlightened eyes you see essentially
nibana and if you look through
unenlightened eyes I mean if you're
unenlightened you could look at Nirvana
supposedly all you'd see is samsara
because you're looking through some Sora
colored
glasses and see another another thing
that stuck with me from the Sutra of
Huang is the idea that the one of the
best

practices like especially when you're meditating is do not let your thoughts hook up in sequence if a thought simply arises

fine note it and let it go but don't let them hook up into a chain of Association because then you're not meditating anymore your mind is just wandering so this is a very long answer to dhama River's question what is your opinion of who N I think he was a wise Monk and I think you know he may have been enlightened even though Mahayana Buddhist are supposed to postpone Enlightenment um until all other beings are enlightened but according to who n the only way to liberate all beings is

to become enlightened yourself and then
you look around see everyone else is
enlightened
already which is a little
bit um paradoxical I suppose but when
you're dealing with at least two
different levels of Truth or reality at
the same time Paradox is pretty much
unavoidable whenever you're dealing with
infinity Paradox is just always lurking
around the
corner so yeah it's it's one of my
favorite Mahayana sutras I haven't read
it in years but it is one of my
favorites and I do think that Hui Nang
was a very wise man possibly an

enlightened Buddhist although I think
yam pulsky did kind of persuade me that
he wasn't originally the sixth
patriarch so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from
Romeo and Romeo says you always end your
q&as with be happy is it possible to
induce such a mental state if so how if
it is possible then why don't most
people do it well I guess you could sort
of induce a happy mental state through
like direct stimulation of the pleasure
centers of the brain but you might have
to insert an electrode or something
first which would be somewhat
inconvenient certain intoxicants have a
euphoric effect but I think Romeo really

isn't referring to like h mechanical materialistic stimulation of certain areas of the brain so is it possible to induce a happy mental state you can't force someone to be happy against their will you know someone is just wallowing in misery they just you vehemently insistently wallowing in misery there might not be a whole heck of a lot you can do other than just kind of give them space you know just be nice to them if if even that is just backfiring you know just kind of steer clear of them until they're feeling better you know like I've said before sometimes if someone is unhappy the best thing you can do is

just give them a

hug but um to someone who has some

flexibility there are obviously ways of

making people happy just being sweet to

them being thoughtful and considerate

say something nice praise them you know

especially if it's sincere

praise just love them just let them know

that you love them you're there for them

that kind of thing I mean it certainly

doesn't hurt and as a general rule it

does tend to uplift people and make them

happier if not just flat out blatantly

joyful so if it is possible then why

don't most people do it

well most people are also not

particularly happy and it's hard to make

someone else happy if you're not happy I
guess maybe like depressed clowns can do
it you know iians that are in a bad mood
but they still can manage to do their
their their standup monologue thing I
mean that's possible but as a general
rule if you're not happy you're not
really eager for other people to be
happy
either so there is that also I mean
we're governed by habit we're
unenlightened beings for the most part
governed by habit and we just haven't
developed the habit of trying to uplift
the people around us some people do
those are called nice people there are

nice people in this
world but uh clearly it's just making
other people happy just is not a
practical priority for most people in
this
world so I mean and a lot of people if
they try to make other people happy it's
just like this sort of cookbook method
or or just you know they're forcing it
and that's not going to work either if
you're going to help other people be
happy it helps for you to be happy first
and then your happiness is just
contagious because mental states are
contagious so there's that too like like
I've said before the opposite is also
kind of true where as a general rule

people that are just troublemakers that
are just like messing with other people
they want other people to be unhappy
it's generally because they are
suffering it's a happy person doesn't go
around insulting people making people
miserable able on purpose because if
you're happy it's like you want it's
just like you want your environment to
be happy it's like the happiness inside
and the happiness outside have to kind
of balance out you it's like water
seeking its own
level so yeah the dog is wondering why
I'm sitting out here talking to this
screen so let's see here I think I

answered that question I hope I did cuz
I'm moving on to the next question this
is from SE of action sead
zida and SE of action CAD zida says
majaya 38 is the suta about Sati the
fisherman's son talking about
Consciousness going from Life To Life
maybe it's Sati there's no mron over the
i in the name I I just I just
interrupted myself I'll start over SE of
action CAD zida says in maim aaya 38
it's the suta about Sati the fisherman's
son talking about Consciousness going
from life to life and is rebuked by the
Buddha for claiming this in the same
from life that seeming this is the same
from life to life however ajan tanero

says that in the PO the Buddha
specifically says that dependently
originated Consciousness does not arise
Without a Cause And even
asks Sati what kind of Consciousness aan
Tanis uses this as further evidence that
nibana is a kind of Consciousness in a
way can you look at the poly and confirm
this and do you think what he says is
confirmed by this and your other General
thoughts on this so aan tanero well
first let's get to the the Su a little
bit the suta starts with this monk
formerly of he was he was the son of a
fisherman so he might have been a
fisherman too which a lot of the time

when they show like a bad or foolish
Monk in the sutras they have him
descended from some shameful
occupation and this is this is the case
with Sati he's a fisherman's son and uh
I mean from a Buddhist point of view
anyone who kills animals for a living
it's it's not it's not right livelihood
it's not a wise
livelihood so this fisherman son Sati
talks about how it's Consciousness that
passes from One Life to the next and he
seems to be referring to one
Consciousness that is a kind of self or
soul and a lot of kind of new Agy kind
of people will think that really it's
it's like your your Consciousness stays

the same that's your soul your higher
self or whatever and the Buddha asks him
to clarify and aan Tano apparently is
using this as a kind of circumstantial
evidence to support his idea that you
know
May one kind of Consciousness May really
pass from One Life to the next but the
Buddha is like asking what kind of
Consciousness he's talking about and
then Sati says it's the kind of
Consciousness that experiences the
results of good and bad actions that
kind of thing and so then the Buddha
declares him to be a fool that has made
no attainment at all and it's it's very

circumstantial argument is certainly not
any kind of proof at all that the Buddha
is just asking him what do you mean when
you say that and then Sati says you know
it's just this Consciousness that that
passes from One Life to the next which
is what the
experiencer of good and bad actions and
that's kind of similar to what a lot of
Tai aons are talking about as you know
the knowing one you know the mind that
you know is it there is the the seeing
and then there is the Seer that sees and
that's your Consciousness and they
consider that to be a kind of you know
it's it's like the Aton in the
upanishads and aan tanro has been

infected by that a little bit I
think but I think if you wanted to argue
that Nirvana is a kind of Consciousness
you'd be way better off you'd be on more
solid ground just referring to that one
ancient fragment that verse fragment
found in the majima majaya and the dean
nikaya that is apparently referring to
vaa as infinite formless unmanifest
Consciousness the thing is that in
Orthodox terraa Buddhist philosophy
Consciousness is
wiyana you know it's one of the five
Aggregates and it arises and passes away
a trillion times a second or 17 trillion
times a second trillion times an eye

blink whatever and it has to arise with conditions it is a conditioned phenomenon

so then you'll have some people saying well that's only WIA that's just W Consciousness as one of the five Aggregates when really there's another kind of Consciousness that isn't wananda and that's what GC Pai who was a high a high cast Brahman who wrote origins in the studies of Buddhism that was his preferred interpretation that maybe something along the lines of aan Tano's preferred interpretation also where you have this higher Consciousness that is not conditioned but it's because it's infinite and formless it is unmanifest

it's just off the scale and I really
wouldn't argue much against that either
the problem is is that early Buddhism
does not reify the absolute anything you
say about the absolute is going to be
invalid so you should just shut up about
it say as little as possible about it
because anything you say about it is
going to be
invalid to say that it exists is invalid
to say that it doesn't exist is invalid
to say that it does and doesn't exist is
invalid to say that it neither does nor
does not exist is invalid it's off the
scale words can't touch it you might as
well just shut up on the issue but some

people just can't shut up on the issue

they want to try to sneak it in through

the back door but it's just too big to

fit through the back

door so to speak using metaphorical

language

so let's see what's the question

again can you look at Theo and confirm

this that's aan Tano's evidence but I

mean it's his evidence mainly

consists of

asking Sati what he exactly he's

referring to when he refers to some

Consciousness that passes from One Life

to the next and it may be that all he's

doing is just you know getting

Sati to clarify exactly what he means so

that the Buddha can you know say what is right or wrong with his theory or his belief but I mean the whole is a lot of these these sutas where you've got a foolish monk who has wrong View and arita who is formerly a vulture trainer is another one of these where he has this point of view that is unorthodox heretical you know it's the same conscious passes from One Life to the next and then these other monks come up to him and say is it true that you have this pernicious wrong View and and it's like the monk always says yep I got that pernicious wrong view I believe that it's true it's a pernicious wrong

view it's it's just so ridiculous and

it's it could just be that the original

story just got turned into this stock

formula where the foolish monk even kind

of admits that he has a pernicious wrong

view but just stubbornly insists on

following it and believing it anyway or

it could just be that it's just uh kind

of made up the whole

story hard to

say but yeah aano it's just

circumstantial evidence and rather

flimsy circumstantial

evidence so at least as far as I

understand the question and what aan

tanero

says so I guess I'll just move on to C

action C Z's next question which is as
follows well I'm going to take a sip of
my beverage first it's orange juice
Citrus is good in the winter
time or so I've been
told okay then SE of action CAD Zeda
says um make sure that we're really
recording yeah we're really recording SE
of action CAD Zena says in real life I
have a tendency of constant thinking and
rationalizing that prevents me from
acting at all in the world and being
frozen I am not able to initiate
anything by myself in regards of
choosing what to eat who to talk to when
meeting new people what to do in my free

time or make any real decisions it feels like there is something people naturally have that I might be missing or never developing it due to being raised in a very sheltered way where my parents told me what to do and I didn't disobey and just did what they told me now I have no ability to make independent decisions of my own because I don't know what my values are or if I even have any other way to initiate decision making thus just continue what I did as a kid and that is just spend my time browsing the internet what should I do in a situation like this well coaction CAD Zena has asked this question in other words on a previous

Q&A and one thing I'd point out is is
that he says he can't do anything here
I'm not able to initiate anything by
myself he says but I mean obviously you
initiated sending this question on the
Q&A your parents didn't tell you to send
this question uh to the
Q&A so over analysis paralysis does does
exist in this world I've known a few
people with over analysis paralysis I've
had it myself but I mean here it says
let's
see I'm not able to initiate anything by
myself in regardless of choosing what to
eat I I would assume that if you get
hungry enough you're just GNA just G to

have to

decide you know it's

like you're not just going to sit there

and starve because your parents aren't

there to tell you what to

eat so I think a lot of this is sort of

passive

indecisiveness that I mean you're just G

to have to plow through it I mean

sometimes I mean I've I think the last

time I as answered this question it was

I was saying that I mean sometimes I can

sort of get indecisive sometimes it's

obviously ridiculous like sometimes as a

monk I'd have this like a whole bunch of

these water bottles you know they

they're these bottles of water that

people would donate to me and most of
it's like the exact same brand they're
essentially identical and I'd go in
there and catch myself thinking which
one should I take and it's like it
doesn't matter they're all the same and
then I just grab
one so I mean sometimes you just got to
catch yourself and realize just kind of
rationalize to yourself talk some sense
to yourself that you actually have to
get something done and so you should do
it even if you're not 100% certain that
it's the right thing to do it's let's do
this even if we do it wrong and I've
gotten to that point Point many many

times it's just when you start thinking too much and hesitating it gets to the point where you actually have to do something and so you just pick what seems like the best thing to do and do it and SE of action CAD Zina he talks about being unattractive to women because of his looks but I guarantee you that for a normal woman which I mean young women nowadays I don't have much exposure to them you know it's like they're all completely you know sold on what is it Instagram and Tik Tok and all this maybe but I mean those aren't the women that you want to attract anyhow like The Superficial mainstream Normie chicks that are just essentially what

used to be called Shameless

[__] I mean those aren't the kind of

women you want anyway so just going with

normal women which may be in the

minority now like not normal in the

sense of statistically normal cuz those

would be like the the Instagram thoughts

I mean just sort of still

relatively healthy in their

attitude the dogs are running around on

a hardwood floor that's why that's why

they make that noise how you doing so I

mean going with normal women I think

being passive and indecisive is going to

be much more

unattractive to a woman than just

physical appearance assuming that one

isn't just

hideous I mean a person could be just

average looking maybe even a little bit

homely looking but if they're aggressive

and decisive a lot of women will find

that attractive because women themselves

this is sexual dimorphism in the human

race I'm sorry it might not be

politically correct but it is

objectively true women tend to be more

passive than men do partly because they

don't have as high of testosterone

levels so maybe you you should uh take

testosterone treatments or something

which will make you more

impulsive more aggressive more

decisive although I really do not
recommend like chemical therapies as a
way of changing one's attitude I mean
some kind of herbal stuff maybe they
sell a lot of testosterone boosters that
are just like uh what is it it's some
kind of Indian azva go no not azva GOA
that was a monk azva gandha
which I guess is also a kind of aquarium
plant so I mean you just have to get to
the point you have to be able to
recognize when you're undergoing over
analysis paralysis and you have to
realize that you have to make a decision
and so you just make the best decision
you can at the moment with no

regrets it may be you 10% of the way

down the road you realize there's a

better way of doing it if it's not too

late then you can switch to the better

way of doing it but just sitting there

and not knowing what to do and being

passive and just hoping things get

better isn't going to work hope is not a

strategy

so let's see

here I guess I answered that

question but I mean obviously seac and

CAD Zuna does have the ability to make

independent decisions on his own because

for

example he asked this question without

anybody telling him to ask the question

he asks quite a few questions in fact he
is one of the main questioners on these
q&as so it's just a matter of catching
yourself being mindful enough to know
when you're in that
situation and when you have to make a
decision like you're hungry you got to
eat something your your mama's not there
telling you what to eat then you're just
going to have to decide what to eat and
it might not be the best thing to eat so
what just eat
it so
anyways I hope I answered that question
kind of I hope there was at least some
tiny morsel of useful advice in there

because I'm moving on to se action sead
zuna's third question which is most
conservative people in the world seem
quite content with the mainstream
cultural version of the religion but the
spirit spiritual Parts always seem like
a gathering place for the mentally ill
especially in the west does this pattern
hold in non-western cultures as well
from your experience and why do you
think this is the
case well yeah it it holds true um in
Burma also to some degree like some of
the strictest monks are very eccentric
you know some of the most
serious like meditative strict inv vinia
kind of monks tend to be a bit on the

eccentric side and one of the reasons
for that is that in order to be
successful in the spiritual life there
has to be a little bit of just like
wild-eyed
fanaticism that just being detached and
philosophical results for the most part
in being
lukewarm and being lukewarm just isn't
good enough you got to have this WEA
this drive
and a certain amount of fanaticism which
is often goes hand which often goes hand
inand with a certain amount of nuttiness
I mean read about Catholic saints like
European medieval Catholic saints a lot

of them were really nutty people they
might have still had very high
attainments they might have been masters
of Janna or contemplation as the
Catholics call it high contemplation but
still they were nutty and advanced at
the same time St Teresa of for example
I've talked about her before I've read
her autobiography St John of the Cross
who I think may have been like an
enlightened Christian if there ever has
been
one he talked about the stage of
perfection and he considered St Teresa
of Avila to have reached the stage of
perfection and St Teresa Aila like I've
mentioned before she was seeing so many

visions of like angels and like devils and beings in hell and maybe the Virgin Mary then Virgin Mary made a lot of appearances in people's Visions back in those days she was seeing so many of them that her father confess her was getting concerned that maybe the Inquisition was going to get involved because she might be possessed by something and so he told her whenever she sees any Vision like this just make the sign of the cross and she was doing it so often she was her arms were getting tired for making the sign of the cross so she just brought a crucifix around with her and just holding up the

crucifix every time she'd see one of these
visions and at the same time I mean she was a very intelligent effective person you know she was the founder of the the New discal carlite Order and really was an intelligent just a very skillful administrator good at like persuading people like in in politics and so forth getting getting popal n show to go along with what she wanted to do and all this kind of stuff another one is George Fox the founder of the Quakers who was a personal secretary to Oliver Cromwell he was relatively wealthy just successful competent administrator and at the same time he's hearing voices and acting in

really strange nutty

ways so there is a certain I think part

of it is to be very spiritually like

talented you have to be Lial you have to

be kind of getting out onto The Fringe

anyway so I mean a someone who is

talented spiritually is going to be at

the edge of the bell-shaped curve

they're going to be in just this kind of

Lial state where weird things happen

and I mean genius and Insanity go are

like very close together and spiritual

genius and Insanity also were kind of

close together anyone who's read the bi

the biography of aan man I mean I mean

I've I've been warned shouldn't say aan

mun was maybe a bit on the Nutty side

because he's considered to be an Arun in

Thailand but you I mean you read this

he's he was like one of those medieval

Catholic

saints so there's a bunch of factors

involved like the fanaticism aspect that

you pretty much need fanaticism to

really drive you full blast in your

spiritual practice that

lukewarm mediocrity isn't good

enough and also

oh my sweetie is distracting me she's

walking around over

there what was I

saying oh also I mean just the very fact

that if you're spiritually Advanced or

on the road to spiritual advancement

then you're going to um you're going to

be on on the edge you're going to be on

The Fringe anyway that normies tend to

be just just the standard brand of

semiconscious delusion

so oh my sweetie's going to go to the

store so she's walking she's she's

walking around alluringly and

distracting

me I always make her leave the room when

I do one of these because I've got like

this this radar I always like sense her

presence and when she gets too close I

start getting

distracted so anyways um yeah I think I

answered that there's probably other

things that I could have mentioned but

um even i' I calculated when I was

drying myself off after taking a shower

today even though I don't use

soap um I was thinking just like like

five minutes per question if I get 40

questions I mean that's three hours

right

there if I did my math

right see three hours is 180 minutes so

40 questions yeah that'd be a little

more than four minutes per question 4

and a half minutes per question and it

stretches out to 3

hours not even including the distract or

the the uh what do you call it

digressions which is this is right here

is a

digression so anyways I'm just going to

move on to next question this is from

xenoid and xenoid

says how would a Buddhist properly

rebuke

someone well in vinia the rules of

monastic discipline

it says that a monk should not rebuke or

admonish admonish is probably a better

word rebuke is too negative you know

there's like this hint of anger involved

in

rebuke so maybe admonish would be a

better word and according to the rules

of monastic discipline if a monk a monk
should not admonish another Monk unless
he has meta in his heart if you're just
pissed off and venting it's not going to
work you know you're just going to be
breaking a rule by doing that so the
best way to admonish someone if not
rebuke someone is I mean you got to be
on their side and trying to help them
and not just venting irritation at what
they
do so anything you can anything you do
with meta in your heart is bound to have
a lot of positivity to it and is more
likely to have positive
effects so I think I'm just going to
move on to xenoid second question which

is along the same vein can you give an example of a rebuke done well either from your own life or the Buddhist texts well in the text the Buddha sometimes is pretty harsh like Sati who was the son of a fisherman He just flat out called him a fool who had no wisdom at all and until finally Sati was sitting there all slumped over and just like completely crestfallen you know he was shamed and humiliated because he got chewed out by the Buddha himself

but I mean if you're an authority figure and someone is like your charge you know it's your duty to discipline this person then a certain amount of harshness may

be called for like if you're a parent

you've got a discipline a child

sometimes it may be that a spank on the

behind is the way to

go so it depends on the circumstance but

if someone is your

equal or or like higher than you then

yeah you're probably better off not

angrily rebuking them let alone the SWAT

on the

behind so let's see can you give an

example of a rebuke done well

um man I mean rebuke is just admonish

admonishment probably would be a better

word here I think CU rebuke as I said

it's got this connotation at least of

like

anger and scolding and so forth which I
mean you're already on the wrong track
when you get angry and scolding unless
you can scold with love in your
heart so I don't know it's like if
someone is messing up you can calmly
point out to them that they're messing
up you know explain to them what they're
doing wrong with like a brotherly tone
of voice and if they don't give a [__]
you know they already know they're doing
it wrong and they don't care then I mean
there's no point in wasting your breath
on them you might you know go to someone
else if it really is a problem you know
go to their supervisor or

something

um but a specific example I mean I

generally don't admonish people Much

Anymore um and at the time when I have

admonish people like when I was a senior

monk in Burma um yeah is you can't

really be sure whether you did it well

or not because you don't know exactly

what effect it had on the other

person uh with regard to rebukes in the

texts it's usually the Buddha rebuking

people and like like with regard to

sadit the son of a fisherman um that he

was he was pretty harsh with

him so yeah I think a an admonishment

done well is really you have to have a

certain amount of met in your heart and

I mean you have to have have like
benevolent motives you know you have to
try you have to be trying to help the
other
person by admonishing them to point out
to them that what they're doing isn't
right and you know that they should
probably do it some other way that kind
of thing that would be done well I mean
to do it with meta and you get the point
across then you've done it
well so sorry if I couldn't come up with
a specific example examp Le other than
the Buddha chewing out Sati I'm just
going to move on to zenith's third
question which

is should Buddhist Le who are

knowledgeable in dhamma rebuke monks

especially sloppy ones or is it not

their place to do so I was listening to

a talk by the Orthodox Christian priest

father Josiah

trenum where he mentions that if a

priest starts preaching heresy it is the

duty of anyone listening including the

Le to rebuke them what counts as

heretical belief in Buddhism is not as

strict as is it is in Christianity but I

think Buddhists should be applying this

standard to monks who do not live

dharmic lives or practice

Venia um well for

starters the obvious thing like in Burma

like in a Buddhist country if there's a

sloppy monk the first the first Avenue

of action is just don't support

them um if if it's something that you

consider to be serious I me it's just

monks handling money that sort of thing

which most monks do

then they know that they're not supposed

to handle money they don't you know they

just don't

care

um and I mean a lot of Asian people may

think that you're just going to go to

hell for rebuking a mon and and again

rebuke is just not a good good word um

like admonish or just say tell the monk

that you don't feel comfortable with
them doing what they're doing um that
you know like if Mon's handling money
then I don't know like I said I mean
it's it's kind of pointless to even
bring that up to a monk because almost
all monks know that by handling money
they're breaking the rules and they
don't care so you can wake up someone
who sleep but someone who's just
pretending to be asleep it's it's
trickier to wake them up especially if
they are just insistent on just con
continuing to pretend that they're
asleep with regard to a Buddhist
teaching wrong
view a Buddhist teacher like a even a

monk who's teaching wrong view then dep
it depends on the circumstances I mean
if he's given a group talk and he's
saying you know women should have
reproductive Freedom or whatever
implying that women should be able to
get abortions when according to Orthodox
Terra Buddhism abortion is murder that
that conception that that life the life
of a human being begins at conception
that's when rebirth linking
Consciousness begins that's when the
karmic stream of the new life begins is
that conception so you got some leftist
Monk or pandering to leftists in the
west you know ad ADV advocating for

female reproductive rights or whatever

then yeah I mean you could politely

point

out that you know abortion is

technically murder that any monk who

helps a woman get an abortion is

excommunicated instantaneously for the

rest of his life regardless of the

opinions of Western

liberals so I mean if if they're going

to say something that is just flat out

wrong view saying something wrong that

might even be

harmful then it's a judgment call I mean

I've sat through discourses given by a

western monk he was called a John but I

mean he really didn't know very much and

he would just say this stuff that you
know like the first verse of the DAP
says the mind is like the ocean and the
first verse of the DAP says nothing
about any ocean you know it's just I
don't know where he came up with this
stuff and I would just sit through it
and and the audience is just eating it
up with a spoon they love this
guy and I'd be sitting there like trying
not to make faces trying to keep both
eyebrows at the same level instead of
just kind of like this kind of leaning
away from him because I'd be sitting up
front next to him because I was a monk
at the time

too sometimes I mean it's just not worth
the effort I mean it just it just seems
like a lost cause you know I couldn't
just interrupt him in the middle of his
his disc discourse his sermon and
correct him that would they they'd
probably find fault with me because the
audience didn't know any different they
would just think I was being a
troublemaker or something well I mean it
might be that just in front of other
people if something is just really
egregious you might call him out on
it um otherwise you might uh wait until
later and take him aside so that you can
have a private discussion that kind of
thing so

let's see what is the question here

maybe I should refresh my memory with

regard to what the actual question is

should Buddhist lady who are

knowledgeable in dhma rebuke monks

especially sloppy ones or is it not

their place to do so um yeah rebuke

again like admonish would be a a better

Kinder kind of word and

uh yeah I

mean your first option is just don't

support what you consider to be bad

monks or just really sloppy

monks um and if you think that what they

are doing or teaching is just really

harmful really egregious then you can

call them out on that but you should do

so carefully try not to do it with any

vituperation you know try to do it um

you know for the benefit of people

rather than just like

venting like aversion for what he was

saying or for him personally that kind

of thing

so I mean if you go about it wisely with

meta in your heart with good intentions

sometimes you can get away with that

sort of

thing but um you know you should you

should choose your battles wisely I

guess and so I'm going to move on next

question this is from s

recluse s reu says I've started thinking

that sasana existed only for 500 years probably but there was no number of years mentioned in any early sutas maybe they corrupted beus or yeah maybe they corrupted beus erased it if there really were numbers anywhere after living among beus in Burma and Thailand I've lost faith in terraa beus I already know how Mahayana monks are they are even worse mostly so I guess becoming biku to get enlightened would be naive thing to do these days to learn dhama internet is being enough

nowadays for those who lives in solitude and learning dhama with wisdom will get enlightened in my opinion what do you

think of Sasa and original Buddhist
teachings and please tell me the name of
your Monastery with cave that you dwelt
for 10 years I want to stay there for
some time please spell it okay well
that's like two questions so I got to
separate these
okay so the first
one or is there even a question
here oh what do I think of the Sasa and
the original Buddhist teachings well
that's I mean that could be an hourong
video all in and of itself I'll just
address some of the stuff he set up here
he started to think sa existed for only
500 years there was no number of years
mention in any early suit as well in the

vinia uh I think it might be at the

beginning of the bikuni which I would

guess is I can't remember whether it's

the uh mahaga or the Chula waga of the

viia Pika but it's the story of the

Buddha starting up the order of beunis

or Buddhist nuns and it was the Buddha's

Aunt his stepmother also the same woman

mahab

goami is that

right yeah Muhammad [__] goami who she

was following the Buddha around begging

him to ordain her as the first nun and

he just kept

refusing so I mean he was just saying

just no it's not going to happen don't

don't even bring it up then Ananda his
his cousin I think and also his
attendant his chief attendant Ananda who
is also of the GMA
clan um he talked the Buddha into it you
know mainly using the argument that
aren't women just as capable of becoming
enlightened as men are the Buddha had to
admit yes women can become enlightened
also just like men can and so then
Ananda was saying well then why
shouldn't women be able to get ordained
and and live the holy life too so
finally the Buddha relented and it was
like well now you've done it all right
there's going to be nuns now but because
of this the saasa will only exist for

500 years so the true Dharma will exist for only 500 years and the commentary which which was composed more than 500 years later they had to come up with a completely lame excuse they couldn't say that the Buddha was wrong they couldn't say that the Buddha didn't really say it so they said well when he said 500 years what he meant was 5,000 years so that's like Orthodox Tradition now is that Buddhism will exist for 5,000 years even though it says quite clearly in the texts that the true DH will exist for only 500 years and personally I'm kind of skeptical that the Buddha really said it because I'm a Wester I can question

the authenticity of texts in a way that like a devout Burmese Buddhist just couldn't so it does say that Buddhism will exist for only 500 years the true Dharma will exist for only 500 years in the text and that was 2,500 years ago so if that is literally true then the true dhama no longer exists at least not in in an unbroken lineage so after that he says after living among beus in Burma and Thailand I've lost faith in terava beus well there are some strict ones I mean it may it may be 2% of the sa is really devout and conscientious strict in their practice you know they really are striving for

enlightenment it may be less than 2% but they do exist out there and there are good monasteries you may have to search for them they might be out out in some remote Forest Area

somewhere but you can still find like conscientious seriously practicing monks in Burma in Thailand and also in Sri Lanka although in Sri Lanka it might be well below

1% so yeah I can I can relate I I remember looking for a good place like a good Forest Area area in Northwestern Burma my first time I I'd only been a monk for a few years at that time and I it was just depressing every Monastery I

went to it's like the monks weren't even trying you know they weren't even trying to follow the simple rules much less anything more advanced you know it's just I remember this one place in Northwestern Burma um I went to this this Monastery I was going to spend the night I was traveling and I get to the main Dharma Hall and there's this sloppy criminal looking monk sitting on a stool at the entrance to the Dharma Hall he's chewing beetles so his mouth is all red and he's got a a a handful of money in one hand and lay PE the villagers were having to pay admission to go in and watch the the TV set that they had in the Dharma Hall so is is sort of like a

kind of like a movie theater a Village

movie theater or something with the

ticket taker being this this monk

chewing beet

and he just kind of stared at me with

just like this kind of a dead

look I was asking where the Seattle

was

so let's

see yeah so I mean there are some entire

areas where it's just out of fashion for

monks to practice strictly but there are

still some places where you can go where

you can find conscientious strictly

practicing

monks so then he says so I guess

becoming a buku to get enlightened would
be naive thing to do these days not
really I mean you don't really need
other monks once you get your training
you can just go alone like the Horn of
the rhinoceros like the suta says you
can live alone in a cave and so forth
and it's easier to get your basic needs
satisfied like food if you're a monk
than if you're just Joe
Schmo you know living in a
cave so to learn DH internet is being
enough nowadays is well that's not
exactly true either I mean if you're
really talented it might be enough that
you just need a certain amount of advice
but to have somebody overseeing you

giving you feedback especially towards
the beginning is definitely helpful to
have an actual
teacher so let's see here for those who
lives in solitude and learning dhama
with wisdom will get enlightened not
everybody's ready for enlightenment it
is unfortunate that most people the
overwhelming majority of the human race
just is not ripe they're not ripe for
enlightenment yet so what do I think of
the S the original Buddhist teachings
well I mean it's certainly a
Nicha Buddhism is impermanent and has um
certainly it has declined from the
Buddhist

time but there still is a lot of genuine wisdom and dhamma there and uh the original Buddhist teachings I mean the highest concentration of it is in the sutas with some sutas being more likely to be authentic than others I mean I've discussed that sort of thing elsewhere

um so I mean I do have a relatively short playlist of studies in early Buddhism or studies in archaic Buddhism that might give some hint as to what the earliest Buddhism was like you know the original Buddhist teachings but um it's it's just too vast of a subject for for me to try and to try and do it justice in this Q&A because I got about 40 other

questions to attend

to so I'll just move on oh yeah the

second part of his question please tell

me the name of your Monastery with the

cave that you dwelt for 10 years I want

to stay there for some time please spell

it it's one

bow um in English it would be one bow

Wildlife Refuge Monastery and one bow

would be w un space Bo one bow in

Burmese it would be one b b do and it's

on the bank of the chindwin river it's

like something like 15 miles up River

from the city of Mona so if you go to

Mona in Northwestern Burma go to the

boat dock try to rent like a San or

something going by boat is by far the
most scenic and comfortable way of
getting there if you go by car it's not
as comfortable but you can do that too
there are roads there
now um so it'd be in between the
Villages of one bow Wu n space Boo and
lameier which would be l a y space m y a
y and it's in Budin Township the nearest
sizable town is
Budin which would be b u t a l i n and
it's all in sine division in Northwest
Burma so yeah just one bow Bay doj one
bow for Monastery and if once you get to
Mona and you get to the boat dock where
there's people that can rent boats then
they'll know what you're talking about

and we we'll be able to get you there or
I mean if you can rent a rent a a car or
something you know with a driver and
then they'll probably be able to it's a
relatively well-known place
I've lived in number of other caves in
Burma that was the one where I spent
more than 10 years of all the places
I've ever lived in my life I think that
one cave at that one Monastery is the
one place I've lived longer than
anywhere
else so let's see here I think I
answered that one so I'm G to move on to
the next one this is from scolin or
skaden who's one of the only people who

asks questions on uh bitshoot and he

says

it's long been held a tradition to tell

Ghost Stories on Christmas Eve would you

kindly tell you a ghost

story well I mean I do have a few I

suppose I mean the ones where I've seen

ghosts I've answered I've talked about

that a number of times already my little

brother he would keep seeing the man

when we were when we were kids he was

four years younger than me he still is

pretty

sure and uh he would keep seeing the man

man he was like five years old

maybe 3 to 5 years old and if you'd see

the man during the daytime you know

someone was about ready to sit down on a chair and says you know don't sit down on that chair the man is sitting there but he was okay with seeing him during the day but at night it would freak him out he was scared he'd have to have a nightlight on at night and so forth and so my father who conducted seances and ran a little coven of witches and so forth he attended a seance once and Uncle Henry came through and Uncle Henry was formerly a slave of one of my great-grandfathers and after emancipation after the Civil War uh Uncle Henry just stayed with the family and he was uh you know he was sort of

like the butler you know and he was just

a member of the

family and he was the only person who

could call my great-grandfather Baptist

and get away with

it that uh his name was John Roach I

think my my great grand my

great-grandfather's name was John Roach

and his nickname was John the Baptist

roach and Uncle Henry is the only person

who could call him Baptist to his face

and just I mean he would he would scold

them you know they were they were sort

of like

roommates anyways Uncle Henry came

through in this

Seance and my father asked him if he was

you know visiting our home cuz we lived
our house is my father was a very Lial
person we had Poltergeist phenomena just
weird stuff happening in our house and
my father asked Uncle Henry if he was
visiting the house and he said yes and
so my father asked him you know could
you please not doing it you're scaring
the hell out of my youngest boy so Uncle
Henry says all right and then my brother
never saw the never saw his man
again so that's kind of a ghost story I
mean it's not a spectacular I watched
the ghost show last night I mentioned I
think it was the previous Q&A my
sweetheart my woman has uh gotten me

into this tradition of before going to
sleep you watch a ghost show and usually
we fall asleep before the ghost show is
over and then it just move auto plays to
the next one and while we're we're we're
asleep so anyways there was this it was
a good go show it was uh it was about
but Montana
there was this Haunted Mansion in but
Montana and eventually it got bought out
and got turned into a frat house for
some
University I'm not sure uh what
university is in but Montana I think the
University of Montana's in
Helena but anyways there's especially
this one room room seven in this this

frat house and nobody wanted to live there it was just it just gave people the willing just to walk into that room and back in the 1970s there was a guy named herb something who stayed in that room and he just kind of went over the deep end and just started trying to to kill people and so you you've got this research team these these paranormal investigators you've got this this big bald guy

Dave shider or something who used to be on a different ghost show called The Holzer files and then and he's got the psychic the show psychic is this woman named Cindy kesa and you know she's

she's the the sensitive she's the Paranormal sensitive and then the the guy he that goes more with the uh technological stuff and so they're investigating this house Cindy qu of the psychic walks into room seven and she just starts like freaking out she she she has to leave you know it's it's rare that you see her panic but she couldn't really open up her her psychic abilities she couldn't do automatic writing or or that kind of thing to get more of a feel as to what's going on because just deep down she just felt threatened that there was something dangerous there and she just could not allow herself to open up and use her more her her higher psychic

talents and so forth and the guy shider
I think his name was he has some kind of
special recorder like a lot of them have
that there kind of static in the
background and then you can sometimes
kind of hear voices in the static where
entities supposedly are manipulating the
the static to to communicate and it just
came through really clearly you know I
got her or herb and I'm going to get you
too and I mean the guy was it it was a
weird show I mean to some degree they
have to sensationalize it kind of make a
making a good
show but he was just literally just he
was so shaken by the end of the show

because it was it wasn't just a ghost
there was some kind of demonic entity
that was that was like haunting this
house and it was like
enslaving Spirits including this this
herb guy I think who was who had gone
insane and tried to kill people back in
the 70s when he was a a student living
in the frat house um you know he was
just like crying just weeping openly and
that's the first time I'd ever seen him
do that I mean I've seen quite a few
shows with the same guy on it and I mean
he was just shaking Cindy qua the
psychic had to flee the house twice on
two two different occasions that really
it was there she was afraid that they

were just making things worse things
were just getting worse instead of
better but so it was like you had this
kind of demonic entity that could
possess people and it was sort of for
some reason like enslaving other Spirits
in this
house that uh I mean a skeptic can just
say it's all [__] but uh I have I've
seen enough weird stuff in my life to at
least be open-minded with regard to the
reality of at least some of
it also there was some kid there the
spirit of some kid who was leaving
handprints on things including one of
the paranormal investigators he was sort

of the sidekick of the big bald guy he
had this handprint just suddenly appear
on his
back of a little hand like a kid-sized
hand it was just weird
stuff so I guess that's the best you're
going to get for ghost stories from me
at least this time so I'm moving on to
scadden's next question this is kind of
an easy one if the ghost of Don
Cornelius from Soul Train were to show
up right in front of you and he said he
needed you to dance to Aid in his
eternal mission of spreading peace love
and soul
what kind of moves would you bust to
bring Goodwill to all and joy to

everyone well I think I mean it doesn't say that I actually have to do it it just just Don Cornelius from Soul Train were gonna just he says that he needs me to dance and I just might say well you pick the wrong guy I'm just not a Dancing Fool like some people are but if I absolutely had to Dance I mean Don Cornelius pulled a gun on me and told me to dance I I might do the Jed clampet dance which you're never going to see me do on a video but the Jed clampet dance is is if I just bust out dancing there's a good chance it's going to be the the Jed clamp at dance and anyone who's seen a lot of Beverly Hillbillies reruns like

the old black and white ones The Beverly
Hillbillies kind of started sucking
after it went to color but you might
actually see uh Jed clampet cutting a
rug doing the Jed clampet dance
so I'm just going to move on to uh
scadden's next question his third
question which he says is an unrelated
question which is kind of good says you
mentioned you came across a fellow who
seems to be burning off the karma of a
Richie Cunningham and that he took a
heroic amount of psychedelics like neim
karoli Baba what's the most profound
thing he said to you maybe it's super
related like ramda said um now this guy
I knew in in Bellingham Washington

really nice guy super clean cut you know
he really kind of has this richy
Cunningham Vibe and he went to a an iasa
ceremony and the iasa had no effect on
him whatsoever and so I was just kind of
teasing him say it's your whitebred
karma you know he's he's so cleancut so
normal that it's like he had no linal
openings for the the the medicine to to
really take
effect and so he went to another um iasa
ceremony where they gave him like
increased doses in fact they were giving
him like this ball of solid iasa to eat
and it just had no effect whatsoever
just nothing and it wasn't because he

was so spiritually Advanced I think it's just that he was such a Richie Cunningham kind of Normie with just such absolute whitebred Karma that it just couldn't take effect I think he eventually started trying mushrooms and it was he said it was it was interesting but he really didn't get a lot out of that either um so I mean I can't remember anything really profound that he said you know he's I mean he was a good guy really good guy and you know he practiced meditation he went to the the local Dharma Hall that's how I met him and I think possibly the most impressive thing that he ever told me is this clean-cut guy from

Texas just I mean you wouldn't expect it at all he he had actually gone on a kind of pilgrimage to India and visited uh ramanam maharshi's
ashram so um yeah maybe that's the most profound thing he ever told me even though you know it's it was just more of an impressive thing than a profound one but um aside from that I really don't recall us having any really profound philosophical discussions or any such thing and it was wasn't like he was NE cly Baba where the iasa had no effect on him just because you know he was just centered at this plane far beyond the effects of iasa like neem curly Baba

supposedly took 1,00 micrograms of very pure pharmaceutical LSD took them very slowly and obviously right in front of somebody and it had no obvious effect on them whatsoever but that was that was a different deal than this guy that I met in Bellingham Washington who just I mean he he was not like like an enlightened Sage as far as I can tell you know he just seemed like a really nice clean cut kind of guy like Richie Cunningham again um and it's just for some reason iasa had no effect on him one of the one of the strange few I think because I've taken iasa a few times it just turns me inside out

so yeah maybe maybe it was something

about soup I don't know so I'm just

going to move on next question this is

from

TIG and Tig who's kind of a irreverent

smart aliy kind of guy says do you like

pumpkin alses will you have any for

Christmas and I've never had a pumpkin

Ale in my life I tend to avoid anything

like pumpkin spice you know that's kind

of a girly thing I don't do pumpkin

spice pumpkin flavored stuff I mean

pumpkin pie I might have every once

every few

years you know just somebody gives me

pumpkin pie I won't refuse it I

guess but uh pumpkin alses no I've never

had a pumpkin ale I can't call I guess

I've seen them at stores or something

but just not interested and I will not

have any for Christmas I'm not going to

have eggnog for Christmas either I'm

just one of those kind of people so I'm

just going to move on to the next

question and I might as well because

I've got kind of a dry mouth open the

emergency backup

beverage and this question is from

Stellar Supreme formerly known as lib

Lam for those of you who are listening I

just took a prolonged Swig of the

emergency backup

beverage anyways Stellar Supreme

formerly known as Liber Lam says Daniel

Ingram believes that Insight
territory um can be used to distinguish
The Dark Night of the Soul associated
with the arising and passing stage of
insight from Clinical
psychosis do you estimate that good
results will come from this despite the
prevailing delusion in his work that
fourth path attainment or full
Enlightenment is reached almost
exclusively through meditative insight
now when Daniel when Stellar Supreme
formerly known as Libra Lam says Daniel
Ingram believes the Insight territory
can be used to
distinguish I didn't know what Insight

territory was so I asked him to clarify

and he said Insight territory is J on

progression or what they perceive that

to be so I that's kind of

different what Stellar Supreme formerly

known as Liber lamb calls Insight

territory

appears to be appears to be just the

standard progression of of

meditation um through

Janna

So Daniel Ingram believes that jna can

be used to distinguish the dark KN of

the Soul associated with the rising and

passing stage of insight from Clinical

psychosis

um I'm I'm kind of skeptical of that

because if you're clinically psychotic you're not going to be able to tell the difference and if you're not Clin Ally psychotic then you may be able to tell the difference so for some people that really are clinically psychotic I don't think they're going to be able to tell the difference between their The psychosis they've got and The Dark Knight of the soul and I suppose I should clarify what the Dark Knight of the soul is that and I don't recall vividly it's been a long time since I read the collected works of St John of the Cross but the Dark Knight of the Soul according to St John of the Cross

who I think coined the

term is there are times when you just

stop making progress and it's like all

of your

consolations you know the feeling of The

Nearness of God just the the the

Euphoria of deep contemplation you know

the joy and meditating all of that is

gone you're just in a state of aridity

of Soul aridity of spirit and it feels

like you've lost everything and and St

John of the Cross considers you to be

really blessed at a time like that

because that's when the big the big

advancements can happen that's when the

the big changes can happen it's sort of

like you have to undergo this sort of a

crisis in order to break through to the

next stage which is a a higher and

better

stage

So Daniel Ingram believes that J

aggression can be used to distinguish

The Dark Knight of the Soul associated

with the arising and passing stage of

insight from Clinical

psychosis well I think the clinical

psychosis might be some severe

depression and so I think what he's

talking about here Stellar Supreme has a

cerebral way of expressing himself that

sometimes is difficult to follow

um but oh my sweetie is back now too so

that's

a little bit distracted

now so anyways see here um so I think

the the question here is you've got this

spiritual depression Going Through The

Dark Knight as opposed to just clinical

psychotic depression that is just like

immobilizing

incapacitating and I

think you should be able to tell the

difference um

it's hard to say I mean I've never

really just

been that depressed like in the John St

John of the Cross sense of the dark KN

of the Soul um you know I've had times

of spiritual aridity where you just have

to kind of muscle through it that kind
of a thing but just being absolutely
bereft of any consolation whatsoever I
went through that once and it did
precede one of the main uh spiritual
growth spurts I ever had um but I mean I
knew myself well enough to know that I
wasn't being psychotic and I think
anyone who does a lot of meditation
whether they've mastered Janna or not
should be able to know whether they are
psychotic or not or rather what they
should know that they're not psychotic
because if you are psychotic you're not
going to know it
probably so I mean you just have to have

faith in in yourself and that's

generally the way i' I went through it

just living alone in caves and

meditating and you know going through

crises and sometimes a few depressions

and so forth um yeah I mean the thought

that maybe I'm psychotic really never

really it it wasn't a viable option for

me to entertain other than just the idea

that anyone who isn't fully enlightened

is insane from a Buddhist point of

view and I am sorry that

you may not be able to to appreciate the

Deep Purple tone of this cozy robe that

my my lovely mate insisted that I wear

for this

video

so gosh I mean this is Stellar Supreme
formerly known as Libra Lam he's really
good at these kind
of unintentionally abstruse cerebral
subtle kinds of questions that uh there
are things that a lot of the time I've
never really considered before like how
do you know whether you're going through
the Dark Night of the Soul or whether
you just got like this severe manic
depression this bipolar episode or
something um I mean it's there's not
necessarily A Difference necessarily
because I mean you're just looking at it
from two different points of view you're
looking at it from the clinical point of

view of Western psychology which is
going to consider a lot of saints highly
advanced Saints to just be maladjusted
and [__] up I mean they wouldn't use
those
words but like the very first chapter or
one of the first chapters of William
James the varieties of religious
experience what I would encourage anyone
who wants to understand religious
experience better to read he points out
that a lot of these people he he uses
George Fox the founder of the Quakers
who I've mentioned earlier as an example
of by modern psychological standards
spiritually Advanced people may seem to
be

insane or at least

maladjusted

dysfunctional and so there's really not

even necessarily A a distinction to be

made between the dark and night of the

Soul which is looked at in spiritual

terms from Through The Eyes of a Mystic

and like clinical depression which is

looked at from you know a clinical point

of view by some psychologists with a PhD

from some

University they might be considered the

same in some

cases but it's not really something that

I had any trouble with because I never

really considered myself to be psychotic

except in the philosophical sense of you
know anyone who isn't fully enlightened
is is
insane so I'm sorry if I couldn't answer
that one any better than I did because
I'm moving on to the next question which
is from quor and quor says does an
arya's equinity Karma comma he says
comma does an arya's equinity comma or
comma that ends comma protect them from
harm whilst on the eight-fold path to
arant
ship thanks for your response regarding
arh Hans being in fourth John okay so
that's that's not part of the question I
didn't have to write that down see I was
thinking that the only thing preventing

Jonas were okay so I don't have to

include that part he was just discussing

my answer to his previous question so

I'll just delete that

part so the question is does an arya's

equinity comma or comma that ends comma

protect them from harm whilst on the

eight-fold path to arant ship well

equinity I mean you don't even have to

really call it equinity comma it's not

really comma that ends comma comma

doesn't end comma comma creates more

comma or Karma I generally use the

English word the Sanskrit word is now

English Karma just because people

understand it

better also it it gets converted into an adjective better karmic makes more sense than comic because comic might be misunderstood

so equinity comma in a way it would just be a much more subtle form of karma that isn't entangling you as much as most other Karma would it's not I mean calling it karma that ends karma is not technically correct I mean there is no Karma that ends Karma there's Karma that is just sort of like I mean you can call it like a dud Karma like equinity Karma you can call it sort of a dud you know it's like a a bullet that doesn't go off it's like a firecracker that won't explode you know there's still something

there but it's just not making a lot of impact and creating more karma you know it's just sort of a kind of neutralizing kind of mental state equinity you know it's just not making new Karma it's not reinforcing old Karma

so I I think i' I'd quibble that it's not really Karma that ends Karma it's just sort of a weaker kind of more subtle kind of karma that consequently kind of like reduces the momentum of your karma just by not adding to it not adding very much to it

anyway so does equinity protect people from harm whilst on the eight-fold path

to Aran ship to some degree I mean
equinity first of all it's like you're
decreasing ing the momentum of your
karma and also just the equinity itself
when other Karma arises you the fruition
of other Karma arises you have something
bad happening to you for example the
equinity kind of neutralizes that you're
not going to just spin off into into
misery or something because you're going
to have the equinity
going
so I'm not sure if that's what quor
means though quor may think that if
you've got equinity you're practicing
equinity that is going to prevent bad
things from happening to you and that's

not necessarily the case I mean to some
degree it can it will reduce the amount
of bad things that happen to you but
somebody who's really striving for
enlightenment can still have bad things
happen to them it may be that they need
bad things to happen to them to help
slam them out of any ruts they happen to
be in or to force a kind of Crisis that
will then um just kind of force them to
make
progress so sometimes like harm may
actually be a blessing in
disguise and I I mentioned this family
member I had in the
past um who was kind of a superficial

kind of a selfish sort of person and
then she got cancer and all of a sudden
she's facing her own mortality and even
though she
recovered still I mean she was like a
deeper better person after that just
because she was having to face her own
limited lifespan and just sort of
questioning herself whether she was
living her life the right way that she
should be living it and so forth so
still I mean you can be on the path to
Enlightenment and it may be that you're
sort of blocked because you have to have
this bad thing happen to you and you
know it's just you're not ready until
next time or

something there's Al I mean there's so
many complications it's it's not just
this cookbook like like an equation or
something it's it's so complicated
there's so many variables that you
really can't just make a pronouncement
one way or the other but um an Arya his
equinity uh certainly will protect his
mind from making more Bad Karma when bad
things happen to him whether or not bad
things happen to him the equin will
prevent him from reacting with
attraction or
aversion so I mean he will be making
less Karma because of that but I don't
think it's necessarily the case that a a

The Good Karma that an Arya is making
the subtle more advanced kind of karma
that like a saint is making even though
he's not enlightened yet is really going
to necessarily protect him from bad
things happening to him it will reduce
the odds of it but still it may be that
he just needs something bad to happen to
him for some for whatever
reason so I don't know if I answered
that question because I'm not 100%
certain that I even understood that
question so I'm going to move on to
quator second question which is easier
to answer I'm happy to say Can ill will
arise in the mind without our conscious
participation and have karmic karmic

consequ quences see he wrote comic

consequences which is easy if you're

reading it but if you're just hearing it

you might

misunderstand so ill will can arise in

the mind without our conscious

participation um well it's without our

volitional participation like when a

thought arises in your mind when it

first appears in your mind that from the

Buddhist point of view is the fruition

of past Karma and so that is not a

karmically um

what's the

word a karmically active mental state

it's it's like just a fruition like when

the the first movement as joh St John on the cross would say the first movement arises in your mind then that has no ethical quality that's neither good nor bad it could be a horrible thought but you're not making new Karma by thinking that horrible thought when it first appears but if you follow along with that and continue with it then you're making new

Karma and St John of the Cross who was extremely wise man he was he was the father Confessor at a Convent for some for some time and so he had you know hyper conscientious nuns coming to them coming to him and confessing these thoughts that were arising in their mind

and he's telling them when it if it
first arises you don't need to confess
that you know that's that's just from
the Buddhist point of view past Karma is
coming to the surface it's only if you
latch onto those you allow your thoughts
to hook up in sequence as H would say
you know you just kind of follow go down
the rabbit hole or whatever then you're
making new Karma but the first one the
first thought it could be hate it could
be rage whatever it is if it just arises
in your mind that's just past Karma you
know at the fruition stage you know it's
is just working itself out and you
haven't done anything wrong no matter

how horrible the thought is so long as
you don't follow that thought and nurse
it and continue with
it so I think I answered that
question and so I'm just going to move
on to quis tor's third
question which is you mention a
difference in Kama karma from someone
pushing a button versus someone stabbing
someone yeah this is in the previous Q&A
both acting with the intention to kill
does this mean that karma is not
specifically about what is right and
wrong but more to do with what the
mental state is regardless of the
intention regardless if the intention is
the same and then parenthesis he's got

when I say the intention is the same I
mean they both have the base intention
to kill but perhaps there's a difference
in the motivation and reason behind that
intention um that's the end of the the
parenthesis there and then he continues
for example the person stabbing someone
on a battlefield or playing that event
in their mind versus the person shielded
from the visual impact of their actions
also taking into consideration that
people react to things differently
depending on upbringing and other
factors like levels of spiritual
attainment so if an Arya kills assuming
they can there would be less of a karmic

consequence than if a nonaria kills well
from the point of view of Orthodox Terra
an Arya really cannot deliberately
murder somebody cannot deliberately kill
somebody it could be an accidental thing
you know like Padma samb Baba dancing on
a rooftop you know this I've read this
in in a biography of Padma sambava he's
dancing on a rooftop and he kicks a rock
off the roof and it falls down and it
hits somebody in the head and kills them
and Padma sambava just accepted
no um I mean he he did not consider
himself guilty of having done anything
wrong you know he said it was the karma
of the person I was just dancing it's I
did not do it deliberately it just

happened nature taking its course you
know he was just sort of like a blind
instrument nowadays people might say
different he might get arrested
depending on his
ethnicity he would he was to no he was
North Indian I guess so I don't know how
that would work out so anyways let's see
here I gotta I got to tease out the
actual questions here by searching for
the question
marks so um in the previous Q&A I
mentioned that the the karma can be
different on how you kill two people
kill somebody one's just sitting in a
computer room and launches a cruise

missile just pushes a button and the
cruise missile you know flies 50 miles
or whatever and blows up a building and
maybe 30 people die and then compare
that with the way people killed each
other in ancient times on a battlefield
where you're armed with a sword or a
spear and you're looking your enemy
right in the eye and you're just killing
him right in front of you that I mean
the the karmic quality of the ACT is
going to be
different and
so see does this mean that karma is not
specifically about what is right and
wrong but more to do with what the
mental state is regardless of the if the

intention is the same yeah well I mean
the intention is going to be like the
will involved there's always going to be
subtle differences it's not going to be
exactly the same will even even that one
soldier in ancient times you might kill
15 Barbarian enemies during the same
battle with his spear or whatever and I
the volition may be slightly different
for each one you know it's not going to
be exactly the same it's not some kind
of cookie cutter equation kind of a deal
where you if you do act a you're going
to have consequence B you know it just
doesn't really work that way it's way
more complicated and more subtle than

that so it is true that karma is not specifically about what is right or right and wrong but more to do with your mental States because karma is a mental state karma is essentially will urge volition so right and wrong are not used whole heck of a lot in Buddhist ethics it's more skillful or unskillful that which takes you closer to Enlightenment or farther away from Enlightenment um you know that which helps to free you from Sam SAR or you know trap you snare you in Sam Sor and snare you so yeah there's going to be all these subtle differences and with regard to um I mean quor brings up the idea that if you kill someone on face to

face then you may be making more and
more karma over the rest of your life
just recalling that and just going into
these trains of thought these trains of
Association just thinking about it maybe
feeling guilt over it or whatever um and
so if the coward sitting in the computer
room just launching cruise missiles he's
not going to have that complication I
mean he may still be thinking about it
you know like one of the guys that
dropped the a bombs on on Japan at the
end of World War II I think think he
committed suicide afterwards just
through remorse of what he had done I
don't think they they told him that it

was necessarily an atomic bomb he was
dropping he was just gonna he just I
think he just thought he was dropping a
regular bomb which I mean it's hardly
any better I mean you're still killing
lots of people down
there but uh still I mean there's all
these all these subtle differences
that's going to that are going to affect
your your mind and and thus affect the
Karma that you create through your mind
because of course karma is a mental
state it's not just some sort of
undiscovered law of physics of you know
every action has an equal and opposite
reaction you know it's not Zeus up in
heaven keeping score with regard to who

needs what to happen back to them

anything like that it's just the

momentum of your own mental States and

water seeks its own level you know Karma

kind of seeks its own level and so

H how do I explain

it it's uh I forgot even what I was

trying to say happens sometimes I need I

need another

drink so yeah I mean just the

circumstances of of how you're doing it

and one of the the the main factors of

karma not the only Factor but an

important factor is the emotional

intensity of the ACT so um somebody like

some sociopath with with like ice water

running through his veins who is just pushing a button or launching missiles I mean that's it's going to be a very different quality of karma than somebody who just goes into a Berserker rage on the battlefield and is just hacking and slashing and stabbing away they might kill the same number of people but the quality you know how the karma is going to reach fruition and everything is going to be very different it's not just some sort of equation or at least it's a very complicated equation with lots of variables and it's a different equation for each act so let's see here I think I answered

that question maybe not very

well lost the track at least

once see

here does this mean that karma is not

specifically about what is right and

wrong I mean right and wrong or skillful

and unskillful are definitely definitely

major

factors but really there's all these

subtleties of your own reaction to What

You Did which can result in making more

and more karma you know it's like the

guy launching Cruise launching

missiles he might not even know if if if

it hit anything you know it might have

got knocked down by an anti-missile

defense system

you know it may have blown up an empty

building that that you know the the

enemy knew the missile was coming

somehow you know they evacuated the

building and then he blew up an empty

building it's like there's all these

things like I I came up with a thought

experiment once of you can have somebody

who accidentally kills someone and

doesn't even know that they killed him

you know let's say you've whatever it is

you know there's a new sheriff in town

some Cowboy shoots his gun up in the air

and the bullet comes down a mile away

and kills somebody and he doesn't even

know it on the other hand you've got

somebody who has planned out this murder
for months and he's
waiting um with with like a gun you know
he's got this he's got this rifle like a
sniper rifle the person's walking by and
he shoots for his head and it was like
when the person hears the shot it
startles them and they slip and fall the
guy misses
but he sees the guy go down after the
shot then he just takes off he's got the
Escape Route already planned out he gets
on a plane flies to Argentina and spends
the rest of his life thinking he killed
this person when the other guy he just
heard he thought it was just a a car

backfiring that startled him and he he
slipped and fell he got back up
continued on his way and it's no big
deal so what's the karma of these two
people you got one person who's
oblivious to the fact that he really did
kill somebody and then you got the other
person who thinks that he killed
somebody body but really didn't so I
mean which one has worse Karma and in
some ways I think for the most part the
guy who thought that he was killing
somebody wanted to kill somebody but
didn't made worse Karma than the guy who
just accidentally killed somebody and
didn't even know that he killed
them so I mean there's it's not just you

know if you do action a it's going to
result in karmic fruition B anything
like that it's very subtle and
complicated and I'm moving on the next
question this is from thermal squid and
I have to admit I do admire the name of
this individual thermal squid is very
it's a good name I like that
name and thermal squid says would you
agree that humor is a kind of ugliness
with limited or no power to
disgust no I wouldn't I wouldn't say
humor is a kind of ugly
with limited or no power to discuss I
mean some humor is like sick jokes which
can be very disgusting leopard jokes I

had a roommate in college that
specialized in leop
jokes or gross jokes like when I was in
like junior high school I guess it's
mostly called Middle School gross jokes
there some of them could be fairly
disgusting I'm not even going to give an
example um I have my own theory of
humor it's uh humor it like gets like a
certain intensity of seriousness going
you know you're taking somebody serious
at least to some degree and then at the
very end the the momentum of this
serious narrative just evaporates into
absurdity and so you've got this energy
that you've dedicated to making sense of
what this person is saying you know this

sort of a concentration a a seriousness
you're taking it seriously and then when
you get to the end this momentum is just
diffuses and so this energy that you've
been dedicated to following the
narrative or whatever it just has to
release itself through say tightening of
facial muscles and like small
convulsions of the the diaphragm and so
forth um as a kind of
reflex so that's I consider humor to be
sort of like the unexpected
evaporation of
meaning where you know you're
attributing a certain mental energy to
making sense of a narrative and then all

of a sudden the whole the whole sense of

it just collapses and so this energy

that you've dedicated to making sense of

it of taking it seriously it suddenly I

mean it's just it just has to like

diffuse through you know smiling or

laughter or or

whatever that's my theory and that which

means that it is a theory which belongs

to

me so let's see

here I'll just move on to Thermal

Squid's next

question do you feel that there is such

a thing as irony poisoning and

fortunately he gives a kind of comment

matal explanation of what his question

means because if that's all there was to
the question I would be at a loss so he
says with regard to irony poisoning it
is the phenomena it's
phenomenon phenomenon in the singular it
is the phenomenon of being so liberal
and accepting of stupidity or
Ridiculousness that one's character or
principles are compromised essentially
being entrenched in a jesting sentiment
that gets one
lost or that one gets
lost
um
gosh I think I was following along with
that pretty well up until the final just

the very end of the sentence of being

the

phenomenon not phenomena phenomenon of

being so liberal and accepting of

stupidity or

Ridiculousness that one's character or

principles are

compromised that much I know happens but

then he says essentially being

entrenched in a jesting sentiment that

one gets

lost the jesting sentiment I'm not so

sure about I mean liberals who take very

seriously people who identify as cats

and so that they are actually advocating

for litter boxes to be put in public

restrooms for just to accommodate the

people who identify as cats and I've heard of this actually happening in certain schools where there's litter boxes in the girls' rooms because some of the female students identify as cats um but the Liberals take that seriously I it's not like they're so accepting of stupidity and ridiculous that their character I mean their character or principles are compromised but it's compromised by taking that seriously even though maybe deep down they realize that it's it's just a state of moral degeneracy for society you know it's the it's well into Decline and

fall unless it gets turned

around

so um liberals who are so accepting of

just the the craziness of extreme

leftists you know like on on Twitter or

ex recently there was I think he was a

principal at a public school who

was obviously a guy in drag with like

really exaggerated lipstick and just

like weird hair um you know it was I'm

sure this person preferred she her

pronouns even though was obviously a guy

phys like like

biologically and so I mean it's like

people who accept that um I mean you've

got trans sexual Congress people at

least one now

that that the people on the left
especially they have to take that so
seriously that it's practically
sacred and I don't think that there's
really that much of a jesting sentiment
I think deep down there's a certain
cognitive dissonance that probably a lot
of these people that that aren't just
completely brainwashed or or conditioned
that deep down they have to know that
this isn't right which may help to
account account for a large number of
leftists who are actually converting to
voting Republican now because they just
can't take it anymore it's just becoming
just too far out but I've never really

come across anyone

who like takes that stuff

semi-seriously but then kind of makes a

joke about it or like you know they know

that it's absurd and they don't care and

then they just kind of become like toxic

Hypocrites or something

yeah I'm sure it exists I mean anything

you can

imagine I mean it's it's if it's

possible it's bound to happen sooner or

later there's all kinds of people out

there but yeah I think for the most part

one of the the signs of being uh like a

hardcore liberal leftist and I don't

even like using the word liberal because

technically I'm like a classical liberal

a classic liberal is very very similar

to a

Libertarian so I mean like a Marxist

really isn't a liberal a a Neo cultural

Marxist is fairly different from like a

John Stewart milbrand

liberal

so I mean if you're so leftist you're so

cultural

Marxist that I mean one of the symptoms

of that is you pretty much lose a sense

of humor that I mean jesting is is

almost taboo I mean you have to take it

all seriously you take everything

seriously I mean the sense of humor is

is like gone and I really don't think

fear of the Lord is is the the beginning
of wisdom I think a sense of humor may
be the beginning of wisdom and they're
losing even that much that their sense
of humor is just they're taking
everything deadly seriously that their
own side is completely right no matter
how bizarre their behavior is and the
other side you know the conservative
traditionalists are just evil and they
take that seriously
too so there's really like comedy is
pretty much dying out in the west due to
this I mean they call it woke now but
it's just this far
leftist distaste for any kind of humor
because it might offend

somebody you know making anybody making
a joke about anybody may be
offensive so let's see here yeah I'm
sure there is such a thing as irony
poisoning but I don't think it's very
common it's it's it's rare sort of like
Kuru or something it's just not really a
common thing because the just the
jesting sentiment gets lost um around
the same time as all of this weird
Fringe leftist moral degeneracy stuff
starts being taken so seriously that it
becomes like
sacred and so I'm just going to move on
to Thermal Squid's next
question can stupidity be recreational

and again he's he's got the helpful commentarial explanation here I once remember having sorted words with a coworker where he responded to my accusation of idiocy with only on Sundays and I took that to heart finding it supremely amusing I feel as if it's perhaps this the case that we could be so dumb that our activities might be considered like a craft to a fortunate witness gosh I don't understand this question any better than I did before I read it see here can stupidity be recreational okay and then his example he had sorted words with a coworker where he resp responded to my accusation of

idiocy with only on Sunday so he's only

he only admits to being an idiot on

Sunday and I took that to heart finding

it supremely amusing I feel as if it's

perhaps the case that we could be so

dumb that our activities might be

considered like the craft like a craft

to a fortunate Witness

I

just the

explanation I think has mystified me so

that I understand the question even

less he craft to a fortunate witness so

in other

words like somebody can act stupidly

that can be interpreted like some kind

of Genius comedy by somebody else I mean obviously that can happen stupidity can be recreational well obviously you can take drugs that make you stupid that are recreational drunkenness is a kind of recreational stupidity for a lot of people um I think you can have recreational stupidity like for example when I was young my father was the same way we liked associating with Riff Raff and it's like riff ra associating with Riff Raff actually does have certain advantages for example Riff Raff tend to be more they're less hypocritical for the most part than if you if you went to a party like I went to a few University parties that were

like a prestigious University where
you've got young guys or young people
just kind of posing and projecting an
image and it it wasn't a fun party at
all it's like everyone is like judging
you and comparing you with their
projected image and your projected image
and it was like they're just practicing
for cocktail parties at at for some
Corporation or something I mean it it
was not a fun party going to that but
you go to a party with Riff Raff there
might be fist fights and people getting
thrown through windows or whatever but
it's like what you see is what you get
you know there's not a whole lot of

hypocrisy going

on so associating with riffraff can be I

mean in a way you have Lowered

Expectations and like with my father and

me we could just sort of automatically

rise towards the top of the Riff raft

you know we were like Lords of Riff Raff

in a way which is I mean that's rather

than just being sort of a middle level

elitist you can be a prince of

riffraff so I mean there's that and the

thing the whole reason I bring this up

with regard to the question can

stupidity be recreational just hanging

out with just

dumb people who aren't even trying to be

smart you don't have to be smart when

you're with them either and it's just
kind of it's more fun in certain
circumstances anyway I mean I wouldn't
want to be that way all the time I don't
associate with Riff Raff much although
the the new place where I'm working
there's people that probably could
qualify as Riff
Raff um so in a way it's it's more
relaxing more conducive to ease more
peace of mind to some degree even though
I mean they're more likely to rip you
off you know after you go out to your
car it might be that your car has been
stolen or the the stereo has been taken
out or the tires have been slashed or

something I mean that's always a hazard

in associating with Riff Raff but I mean

there is a certain amount of

recreational stupidity involved I mean

even setting aside drunkenness

but I don't fully understand thermal

Squid's

question he and lib Lam or Stellar

Supreme formerly known as Liber lamb I

mean they they they're

uh unintentionally Rivals for like

cerebral sort of questions that are

difficult to understand sometimes so I'm

just moving on to the next question and

this is I assume from someone called La

thunda although instead of a there are

fours so la thunda I assume is their

name or else it's Loro

thundor says there is a temple nearby

I'm in the US by the way that I don't go

to but my friend who's a sheriff

informed of seeing monks in a courthouse

to settle a dispute over property

lines so that the temple can start

expanding with a structure that might be

on the neighbor's property I thought

monks weren't allowed to be involved

with court

things and that the property line

dispute should be handled by the

trustees and copas is this a case of how

it's not possible to adhere to vinia in

this Western modern day and age as the

courts need a name or
representative to have a court
case well as far as I know it's not
against the monastic rules of discipline
for a monk to attend a court hearing or
you know discuss something to a judge or
to like a city council or something like
that I was when I was a monk I was
actually asked to come to a I think it
was a County council meeting over
something kind of similar to this case
that is given in that the monastery I
was staying at wanted to build a pagot
and a lot of the neighbors were
vehemently opposed to having a p Goa in
their neighborhood and so I was asked as
a Westerner to go and present the case

of the monastery to the this the County Council and I would have done a fairly good job of it but at the last minute it was like one of the senior supporters Burmese supporters of the monastery his son got selected instead of me and he gave this totally hokey like a school book report kind of speech completely rehearsed

all just written down and and really it did not persuade anybody and the case was refused and they couldn't go ahead and build the pagota it would have been a really pretty pagota too and there's a good chance I could have gotten the point across that it's completely

harmless and and really it would just be
this beautiful monument in the
neighborhood but so I mean there's no
actual rule against that so long as
you're not discussing money or you're
not trying to s Swindle somebody out of
their property something like that so I
don't think it's against vinia for a
monk
to attend some Court proceeding I mean
what would happen if a monk got called
to jury duty I mean I don't think it
would necessarily be
against the the rules of laws of um the
rules of monastic discipline unless
maybe um you know was for some kind of
death penalty offense or maybe you know

whether not somebody should have to pay
a fine because monks aren't supposed to
have anything to do with
money but just going in and answering
questions before a judge there's there's
no rule against that that I'm aware
of
so I mean you would have to look into
you know is there money involved you
know I mean I mean directly involved in
in the court proceedings you know are
they discussing money or or you know are
they trying to do anything dishonest
anything like that that that might
qualify as some transgression of the
rules of discipline but just going to a

court proceeding over discussing matters
of fact like where the actual property
line is I don't think that that's
against the
rules so I'm just going to move on to
launda or Loro thunda for's next
question which is what is the ethics of
the case where a temple resells
or Pua pronounced bcha in Lao and Thai
sadana that monks can't use and give the
okay reasoning of the reselling or Pua
as to help pay for the utility bills and
the devotees are just trying to help
collect the donations donations in
quotes I'm sure the volunteers don't
incur negative comma but how does it
affect the song of monks um there is

some complication in this and I think
there are rules that kind of can go both
ways um I was taught that it is a tulaa
offense which is a relatively serious
offense it's a more serious
ecclesiastical offense than killing an
animal or telling a lie
for like giving away or getting rid of
sa
property but there's some loophole kind
of rule that does get made use of
where um like a a monastery they can
take Monastery property and exchange it
for something of equal value or
something like that it's it's very
obscure i' never really studied it much

because I just avoided that kind of
situation when I was a
monk I just tended not to give away
Monastery property or sa property just
going with the idea that there is a rule
that declares that to be a serious
offense and there may be a kind of
loophole to that I assume there is but I
really didn't study up on that um what
is the ethics of the case where a temple
resells s dama which is just stuff that
was donated to the s that monks can't
use yeah I mean that is kind of a
problem where monks are accepting stuff
that they can't use I
mean sometimes I mean when I first got
to Burma somebody offered wanted to

offer me something and I said
really I don't have any use for that and
then some other person kind of stepped
in oh you must never say that because
you're denying these lay people the the
opportunity to earn Merit by donating to
you and that's the way the burmes see it
they they don't care if the monks need
anything or not they just they just want
to get Merit by offering stuff and so
there are monks in Burma that will have
an entire store room full of laundry
detergent for example soap and
toothpaste laundry detergent all this
stuff that is donated at a rate of 20
times the rate at which it's actually

getting used and so it just builds up
and builds up and builds
up and I mean it it can be somewhat
problematic of a
situation and in a case like that I mean
it would make sense for monks to give it
away you know give it away to people
that it's allowable to give stuff to
like to the monastery attendants you
just do whatever you want with this we
don't need it you know that kind of
thing I mean it would be
understandable especially if it was not
donated to the sa in general but donated
to an individual monk he can give that
sort of way although still there are
rules that discourage that is you're

giving away a gift of faith that there
that's a minor offense so I mean it's
very you can find rules that can sort of
justify going either way you know
there's rules against it and allowing it
at the same
time and it depends on how you navigate
the complexities of these rules which um
you know which gives rise to the old
burmes saying that if you're skillful at
vinea you can kill a chicken you know if
you know all the loop holes that you can
do damn near anything you want you like
Mahayana monks eating dinner and calling
it The Medicine meal because you're not
allowed to eat food in the afternoon but

you can take medicine in the afternoon
so we just call the food medicine or
some of the the rules like even the
strict monks aan tanro endorses this a
monk is only allowed to keep three robes
which is three rectangles of cloth which
is upper lower and outer and you can
wear them all at the same time you get
one suit of clothes you can have
anything in addition to that you can
keep it for 10 days and you got to get
rid of it within 10 days or else you
have broken a nissia pidia rule which
means you have to you have to for fit
the the transgressive extra robes and
then you have to make
confession and the

way like monks of the Thai Forest
tradition they just call it accessory
cloth you're allowed to keep accessory
cloth which is like bags and water
filters and you know handkerchiefs that
kind of thing so they just call it
accessory cloth and then they just keep
as many robes as they want they can have
50 robes so long as they don't call them
robes but obviously it's robes
so there's all these loopholes um but
I've I've kind of digressed my way away
from this
question what are the what is the ethics
of the case where a temple
resells sadana that monks can't use and

give the okay reasoning of the reselling or Puja as to help pay for the well I mean if they're reselling anything that should be entirely the call of the lay people and they would take upon themselves the duty or the the responsib possibility if the monks you know just make it clear that they don't care then I mean they might be committing a minor offense by allowing Monastery property to be pilfered but I doubt even that you know so it's like you could have sort of a wink wink nudge nudge kind of a situation where the monks say look at this all this stuff here we got no use for it um and then they just kind of like wink and walk away and then the

monastery attendants say well we should sell this and make some money to put into the Community Fund for the monastery then the I mean really there'd be no evil Deeds going on there there's all these loopholes like it's against the rules for a monk to damage plants or to cause others to damage plants so what do you do you're living in a temple in the west where you've got shrubberies you've got a lawn that needs mow you've got flower beds you're not allowed not only can monks not weed the Garden or mow the lawn or anything like that themselves they can't even ask others to do it so the trick is like this is done

a lot in relatively strict monasteries
in Burma you just say copy I'm Gro make
it allowable you know you just point at
this tree say make it allowable which
means cut the tree down but because you
didn't say cut the tree down you just
said make it allowable then somehow
you're off the hook
and me answering this question in a very
roundabout way is just I'm just going on
these sort of semi rants in various
directions but you know if monks are
involved in selling anything even if
it's their own property you know it's
regardless of whether it's owned by the
sa owned by the monastery owned by an
individual monk um still I mean you're

breaking the rules by selling something

or even causing somebody else to sell it

so probably the best case

scenario they have all the stuff they

don't

need then they just say well they just

say to a a monastery attendant you know

Board of the board of the board of

Trustee of the board of directors or

whatever just say we don't need this

stuff we don't really care what happens

to it and then they just walk away and

let the lay people take care of it that

that might be a loophole that allows

them to get rid of sa property without

breaking a rule but selling anything

yeah monks aren't supposed to be
involved in that paying utility bills is
also something monk shouldn't be
involved in even if they're going to get
really cold if the utility bills aren't
paid that's just too
bad and I've I've said enough on that
I'm just going to move on to the next
question or else I could just continue
ranting and digressing for another 15
minutes easily
so the next question is from ruie and
ruie says how did your sitting practice
bleed into the rest of your everyday
existence well that's a good question
and kind of a subtle one and sometimes
it's it's not really clear exactly how

your sitting practice influences the
rest of your everyday existence although
for starters you get a more quiet mind
more
clarity which then has a certain
momentum that even after you get up and
start moving around especially if you're
meditating and like doing mindfulness
meditation you know you're you're doing
like subtle mindfulness when you're
sitting there with your eyes closed and
that helps you to be mindful throughout
the rest of the day when you're moving
around making noise so that's one way of
doing it and also you have you may have
certain profound experiences sort of

like a psychedelic drug experience also
even though you know it's in the past
but still still you have the memory of
that it had its influence you know it
gives you like an an extra frame of
reference so to speak which can then
also influence you like in your everyday
life you know you can remember certain
insights that you have had which can
influence pretty much um you know
anything in life after
that so I guess just um adding momentum
to mindfulness in general because you
get into deeper levels of it or can
anyway when you're sitting motionless
and also just the insights that you have
through meditation just stay with you

after you're not meditating you know

it's just sort of a memory that you can

uh fall back on you know it's it's

something that's there that you can um

exploit so to

speak um see besides that my sitting

practice how did it bleed into the rest

of my everyday existence

I guess those would be the two main ways

there might be other ways that I'm just

not thinking of right now so I'm just

going to move on to the next question

which is from somebody who calls himself

kundru and also not kundru so this is

kind of a paradoxical person here who is

called kundru and not kundru

simultaneously and kundru or not kundru

says are there any memor things have

been placed into your arms

Bowl yeah there have been a few things

in fact three things immediately come to

mind when I'm when I was asked that by

krew and not

kundru one was I was going for alms in

this poor Village in central Burma it's

called lame Village and a woman called C

which means that she's either a teacher

or a nurse probably offered something in

a my bowl it was kind of yellow and kind

of these weird lumpy

shapes

and and she was like one of the first

people to put food in my bowl and I

didn't want to stand there staring at to
see what it was you know that would be
kind of rude so I just continued on my
way more food got put in and I forgot
about the yellow lumpy things till
finally I'm back at the cave in central
Burma and uh I'm going through my food
and I find one of those lumpy things
there was like five of them
and they were like whole frogs that were
cut in half I had three front halves and
two back halves I picked one of them up
and it was like this this frog kind of
staring at me like
this and it just I couldn't bring myself
to eat them pretty sure if I remember

correctly I didn't eat them although I

have eaten frog legs before you you get

these little frogs like you know like

this big you pick off this Little P

sized bit of meat off the thigh and and

eat that I've done that

before so there is that then I remember

one

time um I was living at mahag gandon

which was a big school Monastery on the

outskirts of Mandalay in the city of

amarapura which was the capital of Burma

at one time

briefly and uh I used to walk across

this rickety teak Bridge

built I think in the the early 1800s

called upan Bridge upan Da Da and uh

there was a a village ton Village on the
other side and before I got to the
bridge I walked past a number of these
little like stalls that were were
selling food and so forth and some guy
came
out and he offered me these it looked
like little
sausages and he he explained it to me he
said
in like sort of Burmese English pish
which he's trying to say fish but there
is no F in the Burmese language so he
says fish and it was a kind of like fish
sausage like Seri kind of stuff like the
kind of stuff that fake crab meat is

made out of and so I just continue on my way and I I come back from T Mountain Village and everything come back to my meditation cabin at the monastery I sit down and I take a bite into something that tasted really really strong of fish and I thought it's it's that it's that stuff that guy gave me and I mean it was just really this overpowering smell and taste of just beyond

fish and I figured I mean this stuff's going to give me the trots tonight I'm this stuff went bad and so I'm trying to pick out any of it that I found and I see some movement in my bowl and I look and there's a a great big blowfly maggot like like this long like crawling up the

side of my bowl and it's like man it's
that rotten fish that this guy gave me
so that was kind of memoral and I did
have the trots all night that night that
happens a lot in Burma like you you go
for alms round in some village where
they don't have electricity or
Refrigeration stuff goes bad fast some
food is just danger food like shrimp you
eat shrimp at your apparel you know it's
if you're out in a village you get some
shrimp Cur or something it's a coin toss
as to whether or not you're going to be
making midnight trips to the ouse also
something like already peeled uh
pineapple for some reason when I'd be

out in like this semi desert area and
get pineapple that was already peeled
into my bowl pretty much every time I
ate it I'd wind up like taking like
desperate baby steps to the ouse in the
middle of the
night because you got you can't take big
steps you got you got to be walking like
this really fast baby steps like this
cuz you got to keep that sphincter
clench for all your worth so that you're
not going potty before you get to the
ouse so there's that I mean on a lighter
lighter note I guess in the the city of
mtila in central Burma south of Mandalay
that's the only place I've ever gone for
alms as a monk where you can get Beetle

quids that some people will just put
Beetle quids into your bowl and by
Beetle I don't mean
insects it's the AA nut which has a mild
stimulant effect wrapped in a it's a
kind of pepper Leaf called a beetle
beetle pepper Beetle leaf and this
sometimes there's other ingredients for
flavoring sometimes a little bit of
tobacco will be put in and guys in
Southeast Asia chew those sort of like
chewing tobacco in the west and I was
always kind of curious about it and
somebody sent put this little package of
already wrapped Little Beetle quids into
my bowl so I experim to see what chewing

Beetle was like and I mean it had kind of a similar effect as like smoking a cigar you know you still get like that mild buzz from it or something but it really wasn't for me and it turns your spit turns your slobber into like ketchup this strong vinegary smell oh lime like not the citrus fruit but the uh the mineral mineral lime I don't think it's quick alarm I think it's like slaked lime or whatever that's one of the ingredients and the the beetle the orka nut and your slobber and the lime cause this chemical reaction that turns your slobber into this thck ketchupy stuff which is really disgusting so I suppose I could come up

with some more memorable things I had

goldfish in my bowl I couldn't bring

myself to eat goldfish it was you know a

little little Goldie looked so cute I

couldn't bring myself to eat

that um I've had

like H

roasted let's see what what are

they Pastor domesticus I can remember

the scientific name more

easily oh gosh God watches sparrows yeah

sparrows they'll eat Burmese people will

eat sparrows and it's like a whole

sparrow with just the feet and the beak

cut off the whole rest of it you know

it's like the feathers all burn off in

the fire or something you just get this

very crunchy little

[Music]

bird so yeah I've had those in my Bowl

before but I'm just I'm just going to

move on here the next question is from

philes and files says in your

translation I'm looking it's already

been more than two

hours yeah I kind of figured this is

going to be kind of a long one files

says in your translation of AA waga

1113 it

says that he for whom form has become

void has no perception of perception and

no perception of non-perception and

after that it goes on to say that he is

not without perception and then it goes
further and says that yet he has no
perception of void I remember when I
read it I couldn't make head or tails of
this please
explain okay and then he's got kind of
his own interpretation but I think we're
kind of pressed for time now a little
bit due to my multiple digressions and
semi
rants um but yeah I mean for example I
did a a video on Zen koans just like a
month ago and I brought up that verse
it's from the kalaha wuta of the suata
and it says with regard to presumably an
enlightened being he has no perception

of perception he has no perception of non-perception he is not without perception and he has no perception of void and it's like a Zen Coan it's like it's like a riddle it's like a a paradox or an enigma and I think it was that way deliberately you know it's it's supposed to be difficult to understand although if you want an explanation of it the explanation would be that you're no longer centered at the level of perception and so perception becomes irrelevant the enlightened being has a semblance of perception still going on it's just that he is not stuck in that anymore and so the actual perceptions become irrelevant you know they're in a

way they're

denatured so they're like neutralized

perceptions they don't have a karmic

quality anymore because an enlightened

being is no longer creating

Karma and any kind of perception has

volition Cheta involved with it which is

karma so in a way an enlightened being

is kind of creating Karma but not really

because it's only the the hollow

semblance of karma with the hollow

semblance of perception

and again it requires thinking at two

levels simultaneously in order to really

start to even begin to wrap your head

around

it and a lot of people can't do it I
hope philes is capable of
that because otherwise it's just going
to remain this Paradox it's like a Zen
Coan so I mean just accept it as a Zen
Coan if if it doesn't make sense because
that's kind of what it was intended to
be which is one of the reasons why um
the ATA waga is considered by some to be
a kind of Proto Zen it's like the roots
of Zen Coons like found even in the
earliest
texts so I guess I'm just going to move
on to fil's second
question did the OA waga and archaic
Buddhism influence your decision to stop
being a Terra aiku no they actually

influenced my DEC influenced my decision
to start being a terraa biku and Thea
waga helped me to remain a biku for as
long as I did because Thea waga is that
you're better off not believing anything
so you come across all this stuff that
you can't believe in the
texts that you know like a
traditionalist Burmese Buddhist just
accepts without question like a a
medieval European Catholic just accepts
the whole Bible as literally gospel
truth that I just could not do that and
so you I would find consolation in the
ATA waga where it says you know don't
believe anything which is was actually

helpful for me so it

didn't it didn't influence my decision

to stop being a beu it it was influenced

my decision to become one in the first

place and it helped me to remain one for

30

years but yeah it hadn't really nothing

to do with with me no longer becoming a

no longer being a

beu so let's see

here I'll just move on to Phil's third

question what do you do for fun besides

work on your

aquarium well I kill zombies on my phone

I've got this app that allows me to kill

zombies remotely as a kind of Public

Service which is kind of

satisfying and uh I still you know I

surf the web still read some stuff it's

mostly on the computer screen now rather

than on a paper book I haven't read a

paper book in in a long

time um hang out with my sweetie that's

fun eat food eating food can be fun

especially because my woman is an

excellent

cook

um hell sometimes even work can be

fun I'm getting the hang of this new

kind of fork lift

operation um let's see what else hang

out with friends although U my woman and

I are both pretty much asocial and don't

hang out with friends very

much and's see what

else sometimes just going to the grocery

store and going up and down all the

aisles can be

fun but uh that may indicate that I'm

just like an old man or

something but I mean you can you can

have fun doing just about anything

really so yeah and work on my aquarium

I'm not really working very much I'm

just kind of feeding the fish every day

pruning back the horn wart

occasionally so I'm just going to move

on next question this is from

PSA PSA says do you think our lives in

samsara can be compared to The Truman

Show and Truman slowly figuring out
everything is fake is similar to a
person slowly waking up well that's
pretty obviously the symbolic meaning of
The Truman Show in fact there are a lot
of these kind of science fictiony
virtual reality movies including the
Matrix the 13th floor existence you know
sometimes it's a video game sometimes
it's just a a simulation but
people thinking the simulation in the
game or in this just the the simulation
is real and then gradually figuring out
that it isn't I mean that's a pretty
common theme in in some science fiction
movies like um Avalon it's one of my

favorite movies is excellent movie and it's it's another kind of Truman Show kind of a thing it's about a video game where people can get lost in the video game and they start thinking the video game is real and then it turns out that this the people that are playing the video game are themselves in a kind of simulation and so it's again it's kind of like the 13th floor also where people that think they're in reality really I mean they're the ones entering the simulation but they themselves are in a higher simulation so there's quite a few movies like that and the the symbolism is pretty obviously The Truman Show like there's that one point I I Saw The

Truman Show more than 10 years ago I saw it only once uh it's certainly not my favorite of these virtual reality uh like Parable science fiction movies that I'd have to put the Matrix well Above The Truman Show and Avalon also but I do vaguely remember there's uh the scene where the creator of The Truman Show is like trying to talk sense to Truman you know it's like saying I am your father kind of stuff and obviously he's supposed to be like the demiurge or sort of the god that's creating the the fake reality that we are living in so yeah it's it's pretty obvious it's obvious

symbolism so I'm just going to move on

to the next question this is from nitt

and nmit says thoughts on the UFO

phenomenon question

mark and my thoughts on the UFO

phenomenon are mainly I think that the

standard explanation favored by the

ufologists is the least likely to be

correct like the a lot of the these UFO

people the

ufologists they sincerely believe that

UFOs are Flesh and Blood space aliens

flying through light years of space in

nuts and

bolts spacecraft to come to Earth to

warn us about the the dangers of nuclear

power and to take tissue samples that

kind of thing and I think that probably
the least likely explanation I mean some
of it is just misidentified object
especially nowadays with drones all
sorts of weird phenomena like star link
and satellites and all this a lot of it
is just I mean it's literally a UFO
because it's unidentified but it could
be identified as something mundane
another thing is a lot of it is just
fake you know frauds you know hoaxes
there's that explains a lot of it um but
with regard to some of it I do think
that UFOs are more of a paranormal
phenomenon than Flesh and Blood space
aliens flying through light years of

space in nuts and bolts spacecraft to visit this planet that I think that some of it is just this paranormal you know just weird phenomena that are sort of slipping through the cracks into our version of reality I think that would explain a lot of the genuine UFO phenomena that can't be explained as hoaxes or just misidentified mundane objects and another possibility is that UFOs are like from an alternate an alternate earth like an alternate human race that is probably more advanced than our human race or something similar to humans but more advanced than us that have developed the ability technologically or psychically or

whatever to bleed through probability
into our version of reality maybe as
like anthropologists studying you know
like a species that's similar to their
own or like would have been their own
species but we branched off in a
different probability you know at
whatever time that something like that
would be much more likely because
another Universe you know is just a
quarter of an inch away just you just
move sideways through probability and
you know you don't have to fly millions
and millions of miles through outer
space you just go through this you
know bleed through into a different

version of of the same reality or
whatever so I think that's
possible but I I continue to think that
the least plausible
explanation is the the Flesh and Blood
space aliens from another planet flying
in spacecraft through outer space to get
here so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from David and David
says if suffering arises from desire is
the desire to end suffering itself a
form of suffering and yes it may be the
last kind of suffering that you have to
let go of that that's kind of the way a
lot of spiritual practice works is a
person will sort of break their
attachments to almost everything but

they'll still have this one last
attachment to becoming enlightened you
know they'll renounce the world they'll
you know they'll break their family ties
leave behind their friends and all that
and just single-mindedly strive for
enlightenment but they can't become
enlightened because they still have this
one attachment and that's the attachment
for enlightenment itself So eventually
they're going to have to have some
insight experience where they let go
that last attachment and then they can
become
enlightened so yeah it's it's subtle
it's more of a wholesome desire it's a

more of a wholesome

suffering but still it's something that

has to be let go of before you can

become fully

enlightened so I'm just going to move on

to David's second question if

Enlightenment is the cessation of

seeking can the desire to cease seeking

be the barrier that prevents it and yeah

it's just pretty much just replacing

Desire with seeking um from the from the

previous

question so I think I'm just going to

move on to David Ser

question I have read about a procedure

in which Burmese monks attempt to make

themselves Immortal it involves being

sealed into a wooden coffin alive and entering meditation after a predetermined time the coffin is opened and if the body is gone the monk has been fully successful a shin twet or one which exist exits alive if the body is there but Incorruptible then it is partly successful a the [__] or one who exits through death if upon opening the coffin the body is there and rotting like an ordinary body the person has been unsuccessful and has died a mortal like a regular human have you encountered or heard about this practice in Burma and would this person be considered

enlightened it appears that it might be possible to escape the wheel of rebirth through becoming without becoming enlightened question mark well in my approximately 24 years in Burma I never heard of this once it certainly is not mainstream Buddhism and from the sound of it it's probably a kind of alchemical sect of monks there are monk Alchemists out there they're not mainstream they're kind of a fringe phenomenon in Burma they're they're trying for immortality or for converting base Metals into gold like medieval Alchemists in the West trying to find the you know the philosopher stone or whatever and uh and

it's it's not Orthodox Buddhism like

according to Orthodox Buddhism you just

cannot become

immortal it's just not going to happen

anything that has a beginning has an end

everything is conditioned everything is

in

constant so yeah this is if this exists

I assume it I mean it wouldn't surprise

me if it does even though I never heard

of it in 24 years 30 years of being a

monk in a Burmese tradition never heard

of it once but I have heard about

Burmese

Alchemists

and some of them are ordained monks that

are practicing Alchemy and they consider
the Alchemy to be more important than
practicing dhamma and their attempts at
becoming Immortal are just an obvious
case of this because it's pretty basic
Buddhism that you cannot be immortal I
mean there's sort of the the karmic
stream
that is in a sense is Immortal even
though it's constantly changing and
doesn't remain the same from one moment
to the
next but this is a different kind of
immortality it's like the immortality of
the the individual
personality which I mean it's just sort
of

alchemy masquerading as
Buddhism so whether any of this actually
happens or not like the Asin twet where
they meditate inside of a coffin and
then when the coffin is open there's
nobody there anymore uh where would they
go possibly like the zois which are also
a kind of Alchemist a Burmese Alchemist
they they live in the the Himalayas
where nobody sees
them so I mean but the Earth is going to
the Earth is going to to die eventually
even this Earth is not permanent so
what's going to happen to them then
they' be in some other kind of world but
any kind of world is going to be

impermanent not just the individuals
inhabiting that realm the realm itself
is going to pass away eventually at
least the material Realms there might
still be formless Heaven Realms that are
still there even though they're changing
from moment to moment and don't have an
abiding self
Essence so yeah in in conclusion I would
just say that this sounds very much like
a school of Burmese Alchemy like
monastic Alchemists who are taking
Alchemy more seriously than they are
taking D and they're taking
Buddhism so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from
mumum and mumok says in an older video

you mentioned a Thai Forest monk who has
telepathic powers do you remember what
his name is and no I do not I just
happen to visiting p doya in southern
Burma and I was speaking with a German
monk there and the German monk advised
me that if I spend any time in Thailand
I should seek out this Monk and talk
with him because he can clearly read
your mind and he'll make it clear that
he can read your mind and also he said
that he's not that far from the the
Bangkok Airport you know not not a very
long drive to to go see him if I happen
to be stopping in Bangkok
but I mean this was back in like the

1990s whether he's still alive or not I
don't know um but maybe you could ask
around with monks in a Thai tradition
that would be more familiar with Thai
monks in Thailand than I
am so sorry about that I'm just going to
move on to the next question which is
from tasas is and I wonder if avenity
calls him tasz is sometimes now
anyways trasis says could you say
something more about your new book like
what is or will be in it yeah I'm
working on a fourth volume which
probably could have been done by now if
I had only gotten the idea earlier
during the month when I wasn't working
to start editing it and it wasn't until

like my last week that I thought hey I
could be editing that book right now so
I I had had most of the material for it
already written I just need to edit it
together compile it's it's going to be
the same format as the first three which
is a collection of essays except the
main theme of this fourth book that I'm
working on and I'll probably edit a few
more chapters
tomorrow is just personal experiences as
a monk both in Asia and in America
mostly in Asia but there's going to be
some uh like
Memoirs from from my attempts of being a
monk in America also so it's going to be

less philosophical and more personal

experience oriented this this fourth

fourth book and I'm more than halfway

done editing

it so it'll it'll probably be up it'll

probably be available on Amazon by gosh

March at the latest I

hope I'm I'm editing like maybe four

four chapters per week now now that I'm

working you know fulltime

again

so and I think it's Memoirs from

Myanmar the uh see the path of a an

incendiary Western Buddhist monk

something like

that so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from

jewels and juwels says do you think
different ethnicities may be
biologically hardcoded or predisposed
for varying spiritual experiences and
that's an interesting question that's
it's like an intriguing question and I
can't really say for sure and I would
assume that the most of the differences
for Spiritual experiences in different
ethnicities would be more cultural just
a different way of thinking and looking
at the world and interpreting reality
that you know it'd be
a premodern society would be more likely
to be mystically inclined for example
you know and and more religious than

philosophical and then you'd have sort of you know like more modernistic Western especially technological kind of societies would be more philosophically inclined and trying to to understand things more of a Gana yoga kind of approach to to the spiritual path um but how much of it would be genetic with regard to insights that arise or you know how you have spiritual experiences um it could be possible I mean some ethnicities may be just more prone to a mystical approach and other other ethnicities maybe more uh just more genetically um designed towards a more philosophical approach you know they're just more cerebral for whatever

reason not just culturally but also

genetically so I mean there may be

differences like that although I do

think that most differences in like

Spiritual Development spiritual um

experiences um most differences in

between ethnicities are going to be more

cultural than than like

genetic

biological but I mean it's something

that I've never really seen much

evidence you know trying to explain to

verify it or debunk it or explain it or

anything it's it's an interesting

question one that I've never really

thought about much so I really can't I

really can't say for sure but my own my best guess would be there may be subtle differences but most of the differences between ethnicities are going to be cultural more than genetic and so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from waifu body pillow also known as Arin she has changed her moniker on Discord for her own for her own reasons so waifu body pillow also known as arain says do you think the 12 Days of Christmas could be compared to Tantra in Buddhism in British history people would essentially break various rules and Norms during the time around

Christmas gluttony heavy drinking sloth
and not working ceremonially whipping
children allowing children to rule over
the adults and the church for a day it
seems like this Christian celebration
could be an archetypal version of Tantra
in Buddhism how would you compare them
from a Buddhist
perspective well I'm not so sure whether
it'd be a Buddhist perspective or not
but what waifu body pillow is talking
about here is like traditionally around
Christmas time like the 12 days of
Christmas there was it was like
Carnival um it was it was similar to
like the the Catholic carnival before

Easter or before lent I mean and it
derived you know I mean you'd have like
the Lord of misrule where somebody would
be um chosen usually you know some some
drunk or you know like the least likely
person would be chosen Lord of misrule
to be sort of sort of like the Master of
Ceremonies of the the rry during this
this Christmas time and this is evolved
from the ancient Roman Festival of
saturnalia which occurred around the
same time right at the end of the year
around the time of the winter Soul dice
which is at the time of making this
video
today and so it was it was a different
kind of purpose than Buddhist

Tantra um saturnalia and also later this
this traditional quasi Christian revry
that would happen um it was you would
have a kind of moral chaos at the end of
the year to sort of burn it out of the
system to purify the society before the
beginning of the next year so as you
would have like this time of like
everything being backwards and chaotic
Masters serving slaves have the the
drunkest fool become just like the
leader you know everything going
everything backwards everything just
Topsy Turvy and chaotic at the end of
the year to get that out of the system
so that you would have more of a a pure

start for the new

year and anyone who has read the golden

bow James Frasier's the golden bow

classic in early Western anthropology

cultural anthropology knows what I'm

talking about there was one case that I

think he was a Christian

martyr uh named John or whatever

whatever the the version of John he went

by it was a version that translates into

English as John during the reign of the

emperor Diocesan which is like the end

of the 3 Century so it's getting well

into the Roman Empire times you know

there's a lot already a lot of

Christians by that time and one of them

being this this Roman soldier stationed

on the danu named John and it was the tradition on the danu which is kind of out in the provinces in fourth or thir Century Rome that you'd have a king of the saturnalia at the beginning of saturnalia you'd have a king chosen by lot and this king of the saturnalia could do anything he wanted he would have small group of soldiers with him and he could walk through the marketplace just take whatever he wanted he could take any woman he wanted he could take any boy he wanted he could walk into anybody's house do anything that he wanted commit any atrocity he was completely

sacran you know he was he was completely
Beyond any kind of rules he could do
anything he wanted but at the end of the
saturnalian the last day he had to go to
the nearest Temple of the God Saturn and
sacrifice himself on the altar by
cutting his own
throat and this was fairly common this
kind of thing was fairly common in
ancient times and we there was still the
hold over well into modern times in
England and other European countries as
this vestage of the saturnalia I mean
you wouldn't have human sacrifice
anymore even that was kind of digil in
the in by the time of you know the
emperor Diocletian it probably had

already been done away with in the big cities but out on the provinces you know in those relatively rural areas it may still have been a thing so the reason we know about this is that there was this Roman soldier named John he was a Christian and he got chosen by lot to be king of the saturnalia and he just refused
as a devout Christian to spend his last week on Earth just engaging in in just the most reprehensible debauchery and then to commit suicide in at a in a pagan Temple and so he was executed probably by his Centurion put to death for refusing to participate in this

this old

ceremony so I do think that's very

different in its purpose from Tantra

Tantra is you're trying to like

neutralize worldliness by doing like

worldly acts like having sex for example

in a state of like mindful Detachment

you're trying to cultivate the ability

to perform like stereotypically immoral

acts with enough

Detachment that it really

doesn't Sully you you know you're making

as Little Bad Karma as possible while

doing these things by in a way like

training yourself to do it with like

equanimous mental States you know

philosophical Detachment you can you can

you know drink alcohol eat meat and so forth and you're doing it with this moral Detachment that makes it not so bad because we are living in the K yoga and sainthood is considered by Tantra ists whatever they're called to to be really no longer a viable option so you have to learn how to navigate a more degraded like degenerate kind of samsara wisely and so that's what Tantra is trying to do is trying to like live live in the world but not of the world essentially using biblical terms whereas um The 12 Days of Christmas in in this Lord of misrule kind of sense which is derived from the

saturnalia had this different purpose it
was more at a cultural social level and
it was just burning off the
chaos um deliberately to try to purify
the society right before the new year
starts so that you can start the new
year relatively clean and
straight which is kind of a symbolic m
magic you know it's sympathetic magic I
guess you'd call it so it's the purpose
the underlying purpose of it is
different from Tantra and the whole way
you went about it is different from
Tantra like in saturnalia and the later
you know the the mert the festivities of
the 12 Days of Christmas you just have
roaring drunkenness whereas in Tantra

you'd be drinking a little bit of

alcohol ceremonially and trying not to

become a roaring

drunk so yeah it's it's like the whole

philosophical Foundation of it is

considerably different between the two

the two

traditions and so I'm just going to move

on to waifu body pillows second

question which is do you think impostor

syndrome is a common internal feeling

among Buddhist monks because of the

incredibly high standards you are held

to and impost syndrome as I understand

it is the belief that like you're just

an impostor you're not really good

enough to to get the the respect and the
The Prestige and the status that you've
got and I mean I'd have twinges of that
I remember one time when I was still a
very Junior monk I'd been in Burma for
just a matter of months at this
point and there was a woman bowing down
to me and she was a a fairly attractive
young younger woman and I was at I just
had this flash of feeling gosh I wish I
could see her ass better because she's
kind of bent over and
everything and I was just beating myself
up for for hours after that it's like
man I'm supposed to be a holy man you
know and I just had this lustful thought
that I was kind of indulging in trying

to check out this woman who's bowing
down to
me so I just felt unworthy at times like
that before I became a monk it was even
more just I was very worried that I
would be Unworthy of being a monk
because I had these naive ideas that a
monk is just this saintly sage like Phil
philosopher aesthetic striving for
enlightenment and ideally that's what it
is and then you become a monk and you
look around you see there's damn few of
those kind of monks there still are a
few but they are definitely in a tiny
minority statistically
speaking and I assume that there are

some monks who just consider themselves
to be they secretly consider themselves
to be Unworthy of being
monks um I never really saw any clear
signs of though other than you know a
few twinges that I experienced
myself because I I was as a general rule
up until towards the very end I was
striving to be as good of a monk as I
could
and then I mean Coming to America it's
you know it's like more advanced level
when you're trying to be a good monk in
America for various reasons but you're
in a alone in a Burmese Forest you know
it's the distractions and the the um
like the the Allure of you know other

things you know they're they're kept at

a

minimum so yeah I I would have to say

that you know there are some that do

have this kind of feeling of being

unworthy I mean when I was I first

exposed to this question it reminded me

of my father who had kind of a similar

experience from being a soldier in World

War I where he survived you know like

some of some of his his comrades that he

considered to be better men than he was

you know they got blown up they got

killed and he somehow this you know this

sort of unworthy drunk of a guy that he

considered himself to be at the time he

he survived and he just had a certain
amount of guilt over that that you know
better men than he he was got killed and
he didn't so I mean I assume that it's
fairly common in in human beings to have
feelings like this um I think that what
my father was feeling is not so
different from what waifu body pillow
body pillow is uh is mentioning here of
just this feeling of kind of guilt and
unworthiness but one of the things that
I've really taken to Heart in in
Buddhism is that a guilty conscience is
always a bad
thing that remorse or
regret you know self- reproach in a
negative kind of way is you know it

always just makes things

worse they you know you you could argue

that remorse can actually prevent you

from doing the same thing again and that

is true but ideally you can you can just

know that you did wrong and acknowledge

that and determine that you're going to

do better next time without having to

beat yourself up over it without without

the regret and

remorse which is called Kucha in poly

and it is a UNH wholesome mental state

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

to the next question and this is from

Enigma and it looks like yeah we're

already at three hours this is going to

be one of the longest ones it'll be less than three and a half we're getting down towards the bottom here this is from Enigma and Enigma says I read a long time ago that in Sanskrit there are multiple words for different mental states that Miss in Western languages when trying to understand karma from a western point of view how well do the cultural semantics of words like mind and mental momentum translate from Buddhist semantics for example I can't translate mind from English to my native language having two different words for it where neither carries the meaning of Mind appropriately so I normally just stick to use the English word so when

Karma and the fruits of it are a manifestation of of physical reality through mental momentum to understand Karma requires to have the right view on mental States and mental momentum how much differences are there from the cultural semantics of a western experienced mind to ancient Indian classic Buddhist experience and understanding of mind and mental state how well does the translation of conscious and subconscious Fair without having a wrong view as a Westerner well that is a problem with with regard to a language barrier and a culture barrier that obviously modern westerners are

going to understand reality understand
samsara and also understand Dharma
differently from an ancient Indian from
the the gang's
Valley so I mean there's always going to
be this trouble I mean the Bible is the
same you know the Bible gets translated
there just is between two languages
unless they're very similar languages
like maybe Spanish and Portuguese or
Norwegian and Swedish or
something that there's not just going to
be a word for word translation you know
one word in this language always
necessarily means this other word in
this other language it doesn't work and
so you have to use just do the best you

can and it's you're never going to
understand Buddhism the way an ancient
Indian Buddhist understood it not only
because of the language but just because
of the cultural conditioning the whole
way that you are conditioned to
understand the world is going to be
considerably
different so that is a kind of handicap
but you can through understanding dhama
partly through your own practice mainly
I hope through your own practice that
you will get insights into what certain
things mean and then you can come up
with your own words like referring to
Karma as like the psychic or mental

momentum of your mind I had to come up
with that on my own I was wasn't taught
that by somebody
else it just makes sense to me it it
seems to make better sense than some of
the ancient Indian attempts to explain
it which are kind of metaphysical almost
magical that the ancient Indian mind was
more seral less objective less
philosophical in certain ways less
rational than like a modern Westerner is
so you have to make sense of things the
best you can for
yourself and it's true that there are
certain poly words that are very
difficult to translate in English like
Dua which is one reason why a lot of

translators just leave dooka
untranslated that there are a lot of
poly terms that are just left
untranslated much more so than in
Christianity also like Karma I mean it's
just become an English word it just got
accepted into the English language as
it's or dharm or Dharma again it's just
there is no one word that that is one
pow Dar dhama I mean there just is no
exact English equivalent for that and so
you either leave it untranslated or you
just have to keep like investigating
dhama you know practicing it getting
insights into dhama that you get just
sort of a feel for it you grock it as

Robert heinlin would

say you just get this intuitive

understanding through your own

experience and so even if you don't have

the exact word for it still you have an

appreciation for what it means and you

may just you know the better you know

poly you may just leave it untranslated

in poly but even then you're going to be

understanding the poly word with a

modern

Western mindset that still isn't going

to be the same as the way an ancient

Indian understood the

word so we just have to do the best we

can and it can be a hand handicap but in

certain ways it can also be to our

advantage that you're not just locked in
to a dogmatic approach where you're just
memorizing explanations and thinking
that you understand what you're what the
explanation is attempting to
explain so like the words for love in
poly I mean in English you got pretty
much the one word love in in pully you'd
have different words for different kinds
of love like in ancient Greek also you
had you had three different kinds of
love you had like um agape filos and
Aeros you know it's it's kind of like
that in paully also there's like sexual
love or like emotional attachment kind
of love and you got like the higher kind

of love and you know it's

it's there's just the language barrier

is always going to be there whenever

you're translating one language into

another and even if you are fairly good

at transl ating the languages still the

whole way of thinking is going to be

different just due to cultural

assumptions and so forth so we just do

the best we

can so let's see where are the question

marks I got to find a question mark in

this long question here so that I'll

know exactly what the question is see

how well does the translation of

conscious and subconscious Fair without

having a wrong view as a Wester well

from the terab Buddhist point of view
there is no subconscious mind to speak
of I mean there's subtle events
happening according to Abid dama or
rather the Abid dama commentaries the
chah witi that we're not consciously
aware of because it happens so fast at
this subliminal
level that might be called
subconscious or you know you got the
bonga cheah that I mentioned in the
previous Q&A which is just sort of a
static pattern that that is in your mind
when you're not thinking of anything in
particular like if you're in a deep
sleep or something but that doesn't

really equate to like the Freudian concept of the subconscious or unconscious mind and so that's just a whole different Paradigm for understanding how the mind works and that's one kind of advantage that a Westerner has is we can be more eclectic and use different explanations of like how the mind works as a kind of triangulation that you that you acknowledge well there's this way of like the ancient Indian way of understanding it there's also the modern psychological way of understanding it there's also this this experiential way that I as a modern Westerner have have like learned through my own practice and

then you can sort of combine and compare
and contrast these different approaches
that you can you can I mean if you like
if you've been a Catholic You' studied
Catholic like Catholicism you might have
like the official Catholic explanation
of how the mind works and so forth and
so I mean in a way it might make things
more confusing but also you're less
locked into this dogma and being locked
into a Dogma is not necessarily a good
thing maybe for a beginner or total
Normie that dogmatism will at least you
know keep you pretty much on the
straight and narrow and keep you away
from like vile heresies and so forth but

you're going to be locked into it I mean

it's not even really your understanding

you're just parting somebody else's

understanding and their understanding

might not have been all that great

either so how well does the translation

of conscious and subconscious Fair

without having a wrong view as a

Westerner that's the only question mark

I see in this so that is essentially the

question how well does the translation

of conscious and subconscious Fair

without having a wrong view as a

Westerner

gosh I mean wrong view for a western it

just comes to us we're we're inevitably

going to have a certain amount of wrong

view so I mean that's that's not so bad
because I mean the earliest Buddhism
taught that you shouldn't have any view
at all so you shouldn't consider the
ancient Indian view which developed over
time um as a kind of degeneration of
Buddhism really that that is something
that is just gospel truth that there is
no explanation of reality in words
that's going to be really gospel truth
anyway so all we can do is the best we
can and um you know a modern Westerner
can become enlightened an ancient Indian
can become enlightened although the
philosophical framework may be different
even though both might be Terra

Buddhists simply because an ancient
Indian is going to think differently
from a modern Westerner
regardless of whether they're studying
the same texts or anything like that
because the whole approach is going to
be different the starting assumptions
are going to be
different oh wait I see another question
mark here how much
difference how much differences are
there from the cultural semantics of a
western experience mind to an ancient
Indian classic Buddhist experience and
understanding of mind and mental state
yeah they're going to be different and
in some respects the modern Westerner is

going to have the Advantage like it's
fairly obvious to me that there is a
subconscious mind you know it's like the
the symbolism of dreams for example
terata Buddhism says almost nothing
about dreams very little about dreams
they can't really explain the how the
purpose of Dreams anything like that so
um to some degree a modern Western
attitude even towards the mind can
help I mean you shouldn't just throw out
all of of early Buddhism because then
you're not even a Buddhist anymore but
still you can use modern Western
knowledge like I use biology like
Evolution darwinian a darwinian

understanding of the human race is very
helpful it helps to explain human nature
that what like emotional responses our
instinctive Behavior human nature
evolved for a purpose it helped our
species to survive and then you can
understand your own behavior a lot
through understanding that and the
ancient Indians just didn't have that
they didn't have formal logic even which
I mean you can't really create truth
through formal logic but at least you
can weed out a lot of
[__] that that a logical logical
thinking is good as a kind of [__]
detector you can detect really lame
arguments that way which ancient Indians

they did not have that

luxury but I'm not sure if I'm even

answering this question especially this

last question how well does the

translation of conscious and

subconscious Fair without having a wrong

view as a Westerner yeah I think even

the people the ancient Indians who were

developing like Abid dama philosophy

where they're making the difference

between mind and mental States you know

Consciousness and and the various mental

states that have to occur with

Consciousness in a sense I mean they

were having wrong view

also that the Buddha really didn't teach

that stuff at least it's not in the
sutas a lot of it isn't and a lot of
it's not even in the Abid dama ptica
it's in the commentaries to the Abid
dama so I mean you shouldn't be too
worried about that I mean if you study
dhamma and practice Dharma you'll get an
idea of what Dharma is
about and so you'll get an idea of where
you can you can like use your own
opinions as a way of understanding
things when and when in certain cases
you should just defer to what the sutas
say but I don't think that it's really
the main problem for
westerners is I mean Western
Civilization is largely based on Greek

you know the ancient Greeks who were
just like cerealis [__] they were just
they they considered intellect to just
be be like the supreme power and and
some ancient Greek philosophers
considered like God to just be like this
Divine
intellect and so we really overestimate
the power of the intellect in the west
and uh that is kind of a a handicap for
us in a way we can use the intellect to
weed out [__] arguments that that is
good you can you can use it to weed out
really faulty reasoning that may be used
in certain ancient texts justifying a
position that kind of

thing

um

but I even forgot how I even started

what what exactly started me on that how

well does the translation of conscious

and UNC subconscious yeah I

mean subconscious I mean there isn't

even a word for it in poly that I'm

aware of and even conscious I mean

there's the word Consciousness there's

various words like mono or cheetah mean

um Consciousness like in Alid dama

mostly Consciousness is wiana and they

might be somewhat different connotations

for those three terms

but really I mean we have to start with

where we are we can never I learned this

through as a as a monk I was trying to live like an ancient Indian athetic that was like my ideal I was trying to live up to like the sutan live like the monks in Ancient India didn't care about modern burmes tradition modern Thai tradition didn't give a damn I just wanted to be like an ancient Indian Monk and eventually realized as a western man that I just couldn't do it I was going to be a western man no matter what I was going to be a modern Westerner that is trying to practice ancient Indian Buddhism and can get there to some degree but you can't just erase Leed Zeppelin and Gilligan's Island and Star

Trek and Star Wars and all these
experiences I've had in the modern world
just the whole like training in science
you know degree in biology you can't
just erase that and become an ancient
Indian so you just have to deal with
what you've got deal the hand that was
dealt to you or play the hand that was
dealt to you as best you
can and I'm not still not sure if I
answered the question but I spent plenty
of time on it so I guess I should move
on the next question and this is from
Indiana
dhama and Indiana dhama says can you
provide an update on the republishing of
your AA waga translation well there was

a person who contacted me and said that
he was willing to
reformat my ATA waga translation into a
smaller size and uh I think he's kind of
disappeared he's kind of disappeared off
the face of the map and so it may be
that I'm going to have to reformat it
myself I have found there has been a
donor who has volunteered to foot the
bill for uh a new addition for free
distribution but still the work has to
be done for formatting a like my idea
from the very beginning is to have a
small book that can fit into a pocket
that you can carry around with you you
you like go to a park and sit down under

a tree you can just pull out the awaga translation and just read from it you know it be a small book and I have to reformat that so that's really the main thing and then of course you have to find someone who's willing to publish the book I don't want to do the Optica waga translation through Amazon because you can't do it without Amazon taking you know money for doing it and it should not be for sale even though I make no personal profit I do not want it for sale for money I mean it may be if I get an addition that the people who who who want the book May I mean it would be helpful if they could like like provide the postage for

it but I do not want the thing to be

sold from money if at all possible but

as I say even though the a donor is has

appeared who is willing to provide the

funds for it

um I have to reformat it or else the

person who offered to format it can

reappear or somebody else can offer to

reformat it so there is that but it's

going to have to happen after this book

that I'm working on now because I don't

want to stop editing this one in order

to start reformatting the other one and

so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from Indiana dama also

I've have heard it said I can't recall

by whom that dama practice is like
opening a window and hoping that the
breeze of Enlightenment comes through
the window it seems to me that the
advice of the AA waga is to demolish the
entire house stripping off one's
garments and leaving nothing standing in
the way of that enlightened Breeze
thoughts well the person who said that
doin practice is like opening a window
so that the breeze can blow in but you
can't force the breeze to blow in so
there is no guarantee that was that
would be J Krishna
mury that's uh where I got it anyway and
it's just a metaphor I mean you can take
the metaphor more literally and say the

Ala waga you just demolish the entire house but I mean Krishna mury wasn't really talking about like a literal house either I mean he's just you know you clean your room you get your get your Affairs in order you know in whatever form that takes you have the window open and you cannot force the wind to blow in there's no guarantee that you're going to become enlightened no matter how hard you practice but at least you can be prepared for it I mean you can sort of get yourself ready for enlightment M and in Thea waga very early Buddhism they were very radical about it much more

radical than Krishna mury where yeah
it's just like just extreme radical
mysticism where you are just stripping
your life as bare as possible of any
kind of content that can become a
distraction but to some degree it's just
you shouldn't take like a analogies too
literally because they will always break
down so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is the last
question so this is gonna we're going to
be like three and a half hours
approximately on this one and I've done
three and a half hour q& before you guys
are compensating for the the small
number of questions I received um a few
weeks ago this is from buo budo Pano or

budo poo if there was supposed to be
little squiggles over the the last two
ends Buddha Pano says what did the
Buddha PR Proclaim about
energy what we know about energy is that
it neither it is neither created or
destroyed it just
is it pretty clear it's pretty clear
that energy is in and out of all things
including
us and is a constant therefore perhaps
permanent can we also assume that nibana
is also just an un manifestation of
energy or perhaps energy itself thank
you and then he says happy holidays and
all the very best in the new year so

yeah ho ho ho to all of you

people so um this is sort of what I was

talking about earlier in the long

rambling semian to a

question um it's it kind of applies to

this also what did the Buddha Proclaim

about energy and really the ancient

Indian mind did not have the same

understanding of energy that the modern

scientific Western mind has for example

I mean there is a word that's sometimes

translated as energy which is WEA which

is one of the the eight steps on the

Noble eight-fold Path no that would be

right effort which involves weam but

it's it's it's considered one of the

five faculties one of the five powers in

in like the sutas in terab philosophy

but it's like a mental

energy so I mean it's not the same as

energy in physics and the ancient Indian

mind did not have this idea of Just

Energy as energy in a physical or you

know physics sense for example um heat

would be like tjo or like fire element

in in like ancient Indian philosophy

heat would be a manifestation of Fire

Element but movement which also

presumably from a western point of view

would be an example of energy that would

be wind element and so fire element is

some kind of energy and wind element is

another kind of energy and then you've

got the mental energies that I mean that
they've got their own names too it's
it's not all identified as the same
thing so it's just a matter of different
cultural approaches to to essentially
the same thing and it's just not the
same between you know the ancient Ganges
Valley and the modern scientific
approach so let's see what did the
Buddha Proclaim about energy he didn't
Proclaim anything about energy really in
the physical sense other than maybe
attributing them to fire element or wind
element or whatever because that was
just the cultural way of approaching
those things in Ancient India with
regard to mental energy you know he he

had statements about mental energy like
WEA is one of the the five faculties or
five powers or you know it's something
that should be cultivated you should
have energy towards practicing
Dharma but really I mean Buddhism is not
about
physics trying to understand the the
world I mean the Abid dama Scholars
attempted it and didn't do a very good
job in my opinion with regard to
explaining you know what we would
explain with physics you know science in
general um so yeah I mean it's it's just
it's not a good match the Buddha really
did not make proclamations about energy

in general because energy in general was
just not a concept as far as I can tell
in Ancient India I mean maybe like
different philosophies like Sania might
have like some primordial source of all
energy but in Buddhism it's just that's
not the purpose of Buddhism the purpose
of Buddhism is not to explain the
phenomenal world at least not to explain
it comprehensively to give you enough
understanding of it that you can detach
from it and transcend it is one thing
but I mean it's it's just not the
purpose of
it so let's
see oh let's see what we know about
energy is that it is neither created nor

destroyed it just is it's pretty clear
that energy is in and out of all things
including us and is a constant therefore
perhaps
permanent yeah kind of sort of except
it's always changing I mean that's
energy in general I mean it's different
from one moment to the
next um unless it's maybe potential
energy but even whatever is like storing
the potential energy is going to be
still changing from one moment to the
next so it's not going to be exactly the
same from one moment to the next can we
also assume that nibana is also just an
unmanifest well no matter what you

assume about nibana it's going to be
invalid I mean it's just this is one of
the weaknesses of the western mind is
the Western mind like I was already
saying it values intellect Way Beyond
its worth you cannot understand Reality
by thinking about it period it's not
going to
happen I mean you might be able to come
up with some explanation for reality
that satisfies you at
least but you know it might be good
enough for your purposes but it's not
going to be ultimately valid it's going
to be
delusional and it's it's like people
keep asking over and over again about

you know is is nibana like this or is

Nana like that or you know what is what

is the re Ultimate Reality like kind of

stuff these kind of questions and it's

just you're never going to be able to

explain

it the only way you're going to know

what Iana is like is to experience it

for

yourself and it's any idea you have

about it is going to be

invalid to say that it exists is invalid

say that it doesn't exist is invalid say

that it does and doesn't exist as

invalid to say that it neither does nor

does not exist is

invalid that words and ideas cannot
touch reality it's a kind of virtual
reality created by perception perception
is Sam sor
so any kind of perception you have is
going to be samsaric it's not going to
be nibana it's not going to accurately
represent nibana nothing can accurately
represent nibana other than just
experiencing it just pure and clear you
know in and of
itself so with regard to what the Buddha
proclaimed about
energy ancient Indians at least ancient
Buddhists did not have the same idea of
energy that we do and so there was I
mean they didn't have even have the

concept of just plain energy different kinds of energy would be identified as different things heat is fire element movement is wind element both of those would be considered energy by a physicist but not by an ancient Indian so I guess I'm done I guess I answered all the questions or at least I tried to answer all the questions there are some questions that are very difficult to answer sometimes because it's a very abstruse subtle kind of a question other times I just don't understand what the question exactly is asking but like I should always say at the beginning and rarely ever do if you

have any questions you think I can
answer um like especially about terab AO
Buddhism early Buddhism Buddhism in
general philosophy in general
spirituality in general meditation in
general Burma myself personally
Etc feel free to ask and please no more
than three questions per video because
these videos can get pretty long just
like five minutes per question for 40
questions is well over three
hours and I do try to do do each
question Justice you know I do try to
give like uh an adequate or at least my
best attempt at an adequate
answer and so that's that's it and Merry
Christmas and ho ho ho Happy saturnalia

may you have a an auspicious

saturnalia and be happy and now I got to

uh push the stop button

okay then hello and welcome to question

and answer number

125 I am your host

poasa and these blue Reflections in my

glasses in my spectacle

lenses are because a certain person has

strongly urged me to look at the

questions on a bigger screen so that I

won't be squinting and going like like

that trying to read them and the moral

of the story is there's always a

tradeoff you know everything has its

good side and its bad

side so I mean I could just kind of go

like this all the time then you don't

see the reflection or go like this which

is the reason why this whole

blue screen thing was suggested in the

first place so we're just going to deal

with you guys not being able to see my

eyeballs very well and we don't have a

whole lot of questions today I might as

well just wait into them after

presenting the

beverage and uh taking the preliminary

sip to

lubricate my talking muscles and so

forth so let's get right to it first

question is from mraa

Buddha and mraa Buddha says what are

your thoughts on

Osho also known as the bwan Shri Raj

Niche and it turns out that I've written

a few articles or essays about Osho or

at least featuring

Osho um

prominently one of them was called the

uh let see the something of the enomatic

Bugan the case of the enigmatic

buan and I haven't refreshed my memory I

mean I wrote them years ago and I

haven't reread them just to answer this

question

but it's just the way it is so anyway

what are my thoughts on Osho I mean I

was I was raised in Aberdine Washington

which was maybe 100 miles or so from

Oregon we got Oregon TV stations and so

when the ban as he was called then was

living in Antelope Oregon which then

turned into rajes puram Oregon I was

seeing all the news about it

and consequently as a kid you're pretty

much or I mean just as a normie back

then kind of you you get your mind

poisoned against the whole Raj Niche

thing you know because the mainstream

media were just portraying him as some

creepy cult

leader and so you know at first he was

just kind of a joke and then I started

Ed reading like both sides of the issue

I was reading you know like anti-cult

people talking about him but also people

who are like sympathetic to him writing

about the same sort of thing where I

mean in a way there's like there's both
two sides to the story I mean he wasn't
just this fraudulent cult leader but on
the other hand I don't think that he was
all on the other hand I don't think that
he was a fully enlightened being or if
he was then the Buddhist conceptions of
fully enlightened beings are might as
well just be chucked out the
window one thing that's kind of
interesting is one of my favorite Dharma
teachers or spiritual teachers that are
still alive today I'm pretty sure is
Paul L and it wasn't until after I
started liking Paul L that I that I
found out to my amazement that he was

the right-hand man of Oso known as the
ban Raj Nish in those days and this was
at his ashram in I think it was Puna
India and then when um the buan and a
lot a lot of his supporters and
disciples moved to Oregon in the United
States um he got sort of pushed out
through political maneuvering he and
Sheila didn't get along very well Sheila
was the notorious new right-hand person
of the bwan who sort of took over the
ashram when the bwan was in his
reclusive possibly drugged stage and she
wound up going to prison for attempted
murder she was like trying to poison
people this sort of thing
so all in all my thoughts on Osho I mean

I've read a few of his books also and he
seems more glib than profound he could
sit there and talk for three hours on
spiritual matters but you read his books
and there's nothing really original
there's nothing really striking about it
it's just sort of a glib re like recount
is that a word he just recounts all this
I mean he's sort of recycling other
spiritual traditions and just doing it
very glibly and um really it didn't
strike me as particularly profound on
the other hand I met a few of his
disciples when I was in
Bali in in
Indonesia and

I asked them there was one he was a
German artist now nowadays he's a German
artist living in Indonesia I asked him
if he thought the bagwan was enlightened
and he just kind of rolled his eyes went
it was obvious he was certainly
enlightened and then I was speaking to
another um disciple of the bwan who
still had the name given to him by the
bwan and um he he was sort of
non-committal you know he didn't want to
say yes or no really
but my theory on the Bugan is with
regard this applies to a lot of
spiritual teachers not just Oso the bwan
shiraj niche is that they probably had
some kind of um like Awakening

experience like they had a shift into

higher

Consciousness that um kind of gave them

certain powers also the bogwan just had

like the the large hypn IC eyes you know

the resonant voice the ability to talk

for three hours straight that kind of

thing but I mean just because you're at

a higher level of Consciousness doesn't

necessarily mean that you're a saint

like a monkey is at a higher level of

Consciousness than a sheep but a

monkey's a lot nastier than a

sheep so I I'm willing to admit the

possibility that he did attain some

higher level of Consciousness short of

full Enlightenment but it didn't really make him a saint you know sort of like being at a higher level of Consciousness than a sheep doesn't make a monkey a saint in fact you know like in Buddhism you've got Mara the evil one who made it into a very high heaven realm the the devil you know the the Buddhist approximation of Satan isn't chained up in Hell he's up in the the highest Heaven Realm of the sensual sphere the highest the highest Heaven of the the the kamaloka you which is the the it's like the the heaven of gods who Delight in the creations of others I think it's called and he got there through meritorious deeds and through mental

cultivation and attaining higher levels
of consciousness and then he winds up
being sort of like the Buddhist
tempter so I would say that Osho
did get some sort of realization but it
was like a partial one and it was not
sufficient in causing him to become a
saint it just sort of caused him to have
certain a certain Charisma a certain
ability to influence like the minds of
others kind of stuff you know there
might have been some con man thrown in
there too conmen can do it without
having attained higher mental States but
am willing to assume that he had
attained something that put him on a

higher level than the average Joe but I
I'm very skeptical of the very idea that
he was fully enlightened although there
are other people who claim to be
enlightened who say that OSHA was
enlightened like the the notorious Jed
McKenna which is probably an alias who
says OSHA was enlightened and he he
declares himself to be enlightened also
so I mean I can't really say for sure
one way or the other but personally I'm
rather doubtful of certain people like O
show or Daniel Ingram would be another
case um there are certain other category
of sort of eclectic gurus who may be
enlightened that I would place maybe in
a higher likelihood than Osho himself

Paul low I would consider to be more likely to be highly spir spiritually advanced than Osho at least from a Buddhist perspective somebody like eart toah people like that I would probably put above Osho but it's just a guess and I'm going with preconceived notions about what an enlightened being would be like based largely on Buddhism and from the Terra Buddhist point of view you have to be an absolute Saint you have to have perfect morality before you can perfect your mind which means of course not you're not going to be like Osho who gets first pick of all the pretty sasans for

example and everyone freely admitted to
that so those are my thoughts on Osho
for the time being and I'm just going to
move on to the next question and this is
from Amy we got another kind of a ban
question here which is what do you think
of the Bava Gita so Bava and
bwan same etymology
but the bagavat Gita is more Orthodox
Hinduism I guess it's not vadic
technically I don't think it counts as a
scripture but it might as well be
scripture I mean it's not a vdic text
but it has influenced the spiritual life
of modernday Hindus at least as much as
the four vas or in the Buddhist time it
was still just three vetas the Atara

Veda got added later so what do I think of the Bava Gita I think think it is a profound text if I had to make a list of all the major Sacred Scriptures of the world religions that I have read in order of profundity the babad Gita would be you know it it'd be well up into the top 50% something like the New Testament might be kind of around the middle you know the Old Testament would be down towards the
bottom but the babad Gita it does have a lot of wisdom to it and I have read the babad Gita was composed around the beginning of the the Christian era and you know like first century BC to first

century BCE no ad CE you know BC to ad
you know and um part of it was like a
polemic like an argument against
Buddhism because Buddhism really was
much much more popular in India 2,000
years ago than it is now
whether it was the Buddhists or the
Hindus that were in the majority 2,000
years ago I'm not sure exactly it may be
that India was a predominantly Buddhist
country 2,000 years ago but the Hindus
hung in there you know the the vdic
brahmans hung in there and the babad
Gita was sort of an argument against
Buddhism like for example towards the
beginning where um Krishna is persuading
Arjuna to fight in the Great

barata war and he's saying essentially
arguments that in in Buddhism are
considered to be a kind of wrong view
which is you know it's everything is
ultimately Divine and Immortal so you
can't really kill
anybody
so um I do think it is possible that
part of the babad Gita had some I mean
it had certain digs against Buddhism
because they were very much in
competition for cultural and spiritual
ascendancy over the Indian subcontinent
at the time but it's well worth reading
it is a profound text anyone who's
inclined towards theistic thought you

know you prefer to believe in a god you
prefer to identify the absolute the
highest principle whatever as
God then yeah the babad Gita is fairly I
mean it's profound as a monotheistic
text more so in my opinion than the
Bible
although a lot of Christians most
Christians would disagree with that
assessment
so I'm just going to move on next
question here this is from rpad or rpad
he says could you please elaborate on
the distinction between not self and no
self and he's referring to the Buddhist
idea of anata in in ply in Sanskrit it
would be anatman

but in P it's anata which is the

language of terada

Buddhism

and there are some teachers like aan

tanero is one of the the more higher

profile ons who don't like the

translation of no self for anata the an

is means not or no and the ATA means

self and the main reason why someone

would object to no self and prefer not

self is if deep down they still have

self viiew they want to believe that

there is a self they just want to assume

as a general rule that the Buddha was

just saying that none of the five

Aggregates none of the five condas are

self and so that kind of leaves the door
open to something else being the self
something like the absolute or Nirvana
you know some formless
Universal you know in infinitude you
know the absolute the highest truth or
whatever that could still be called the
self and the polyc just do not say this
for for the Buddha to say that there is
no self or to say you know none of the
five condas are the
self but still there is a self out there
but he doesn't say that still there's a
self out there he just says None of the
five condos of the self and then also in
another text he refers to the all you
know as the five condas you know that is

the universe the universe is the five
condas so you got people like uh Ken Ken
wheeler I mean he just I don't know if
he still does this I haven't seen him I
haven't watched any of his videos in a
long time but he used to just pound away
at the idea that when the Buddha says
you know the five condas are not self
that really you should not have the idea
I am like in the ATA waga a very ancient
primordial kind of Buddhist text it says
that the root of all delusion and misery
is the conceit I
am and that's self view essentially or
that's a very fundamental way of having
self viw is just thinking I am

so really the people who quibble about
no self and prefer not self in my
opinion as a general rule deep down they
still have self viw they want to believe
that they have a self and so they're
using that as a kind of
loophole to get around no self and just
say well the Buddha was just saying none
of the five condos are the self thereby
tacitly leaving the door open to some
other kind of self like the aunt mom on
in in an upanishadic sense although
Buddhism really does not support that at
least the texts don't the early texts
don't the closest the early texts come
to any kind of loophole like that is by
saying you shouldn't have any view at

all you should not believe that there is
a self you also should not believe that
there isn't a self that the reality of
the situation is completely off the
scale and just trying to put it into
words is going to be invalid you're
going to just start off on the wrong
foot so no self means there is no self
not self means there maybe is a self
it's just sort
of you know it's not
conditioned you know it's it's not a
Sanara it's not a conditioned thing that
it's some kind of formless immortal
entity or some such that is
never specified in the texts and it's

really a lame kind of argument where

someone is saying well the Buddha says

you know you there is no self sa sa D

you know anything no matter what not

just condition things Sab D an means

anything is not

self anything even the bana itself it's

itself I say

but it's like you got the the three the

three marks of existence Sab

Sara Ana all conditioned things are

impermanent or Inc constant Sab Sara Dua

all condition things are conducive to

unease dissatisfaction suffering but it

switches on the third one

dama and that the dhama is used instead

of sa Sankara it says Sab dama because

it's referring to absolutely

anything the first two apply only to

samsara the third one applies to

absolutely anything nothing is a self

there is no

self and some people like westerners

especially who grew up in a Christian

culture or sort of a vestig Christian

culture they just cannot deal with that

they can't cope with it and sometimes

they just vehemently even angry L insist

that the Buddha taught a

self when the evidence indicates that he

certainly did

not and so I'm just going to move on

next question this is from covac andad

zida and see in cad zida

says can you do please do an analysis of

ajan tanero writing on nibana is his

attempt to give an overall description

based on how he

interprets the sutas so I'm curious

which point of his you would agree and

disagree with and which things you would

interpret differently please ignore the

part about nagara in the beginning well

I'm ignoring the whole thing it's just

too long didn't read I mean it's like

it's very long I don't know if it's an

entire book or not but I'm not going to

read an entire book or even a very long

article just you know read this entire

thing and what are your thoughts on it

no I'm just I'm just not going to do

that although I did read a book by a

John tanero called the mind like fire

Unbound in which is the the main topic

is nibana and it's like the first book

where he puts forth his

argument

for

um translating the word nibana as

unbinding which I think is kind of a

lame translation but obviously he

doesn't think so he's got his own

reasons I mean literally

nibana pretty obviously means blowing

out like the blowing out of a flame the

blowing out of a candle that kind of a

thing so the mind like fire Unbound he

he puts forth the the argument that like

the ancient Indians to the ancient

Indians fire was a God it was the god

ugy like the messenger of the god sort

of like like mer y to the Romans or I

guess there were other messenger like

messenger Gods too Iris I think maybe to

the Greeks but

um it was because it was a god it sort

of was

everywhere and it was it was like the

the

latent Spirit of fire was already found

in wood for example before you you set

it on fire like in to the the medieval

Alchemists there was a substance called

fistan that supposedly existed in like
flammable objects like wood that was
released when when the the fire burned
and so the ancient Indians according to
the aon's argument saw fire the same way
that there was sort of like manifest
fire which would be an actual flame and
then there was unmanifest fire which was
kind of a potential that pervaded pretty
much the universe and
so the aan put forth this argument that
that's how the early Buddhist saw
Nirvana also is that I mean it
was it could be like the the blowing out
of a fire but the fire isn't extinct it
just becomes

unmanifest you know it just kind of goes

off the scale so to speak and I mean if

you take it that far or I could pretty

much agree with

it but the thing is when you start

talking about it as an it and start

insisting about it that sort of thing

you've reified it which is a no no for

ancient like early Indian Buddhism to

reify the absolute just drags it into

the mud and it's no longer the absolute

it's just kind of

delusional so you're better off just not

trying to explain it because any

explanation is going to be

invalid

so yeah but the ajan he definitely does

have a kind of eternalist and self View
kind of tendency towards you know with
regard to himself he does kind of like
eternalism of A Sort and self of A
Sort but
um it's it's kind of in fashion in like
the the Thai Forest tradition in which
he was
ordained and so there are a lot of Thai
Forest aons who refer to the mind or jit
as you know the one who knows the one
who sees this kind of thing and it may
be due to some Mahayana Buddhism or
Hinduism that also kind of got absorbed
into Thai culture you know centuries ago
that just kind of went mainstream in

Buddhism there um certainly Burmese

Buddhism doesn't have

that so for whatever reason the

venerable ajon does kind of like

somewhat of an eternalist View and

somewhat of self

view so I'm just going to move on to

seal of action C Z's next

question which is as follows you have

talked about being skeptical about the

non prient rebirth because karma can't

be burned off when there is no mind

there however since people do become

unconscious in the real world and can do

so via anesthesia injury or other means

and you say karma can't be burned off

while there is no mind then how do you

explain people going completely
unconscious in the real world if Karma
has to ultimately explain it happening
as well well I mean there is no Gap from
the mental point of view that if you go
into a coma you're completely oblivious
to any passage of time and subjectively
there was no passage of time going with
Orthodox
terraa there's like there's always a gap
between each moment that everything
including your mind is flashing off and
on you know a trillion times a second
minimum trillion times a second and so I
mean how do you explain it reappearing
after a fraction of a trillionth of a

second any better than it reappearing
after 20 years I mean subjectively it's
the same you're not going to be aware of
any Gap in
between so partly it could be the karma
of the other people around and also it
could be your karma that you're going to
have a kind of sudden transition you
know that you're going to close your
eyes in 1989 and open your eyes in 2005
due to some car crash that put you into
a coma or you just mix the wrong pills
at a party or some such so it's it's not
really any kind of like
self-contradiction uh as far as I can
tell it could be that you just have this
Karma that there's going to be a sudden

shift and so I mean outwardly

objectively you had to be in a like

stasis

for 15 years or some such but

subjectively there's just no Gap at all

if you notice any kind of Gap then you

weren't completely unconscious because

if you're completely unconscious you're

not going to notice

anything so I kind of answered that

question I'm going to move on to seac

and CAD Z's next question which is

what's the difference between linal and

mystical well they kind of have a

different perspective itical

is experiencing reality directly without

the intermediary of symbols like
perceptions it is like going Beyond
perception and experiencing reality
directly whereas
Lial Lial means sort of like a an
entryway or a window it's it's sort of
like an entrance and so something that
is linal is sort of creating gaps
between the rule r at least with regard
to the way I use the word Lial like in
the trickster in the Paranormal a book
by George P Hansen he talks about
liminality a lot that's his explanation
of the Paranormal is that there are
certain cracks or gaps between the like
the laws and the rules that give our
world structure it's kind of an

artificial structure and there are ways
of increasing those gaps and some people
just have more gaps than others like a
psychic for example is going to be more
Lial than an ordinary person the psychic
isn't necessarily a
Mystic they might be a little closer to
being Mystic than joeo the you know the
the forklift driver or something but
still I mean
the it's
like how do I explain it it's just the
perspective is different it's with
regard to different
aspects of what is trying what one is
attempting to describe so mystical is

just sort of a a metaphysical state or a
psychological metaphysical state where
you are experiencing reality without
symbols whereas lional is sort
of it's with regard to like gaps or
entrances into this world or out of this
world that could manifest as mysticism
or they could manifest as paranormal
experiences psychic powers that kind of
thing but it is a an interesting concept
to me
liminality a lot of people think that
you couldn't possibly break the laws of
physics for example why well that's just
what the scientists say that's what they
assume but um
really like like George P Hansen

explains there's just sort of this
artificial structure that gives a
certain stability to our version of
reality enough stability that it doesn't
just
disintegrate but still it's not 100%
stable if it were 100% stable there
might be no like real Consciousness or
anything it would just be like pure
determinism so a certain amount of
liminality or
just cracks between the rules cracks
between the laws where this weirdness
can can seep in I mean that's that's my
concept of liminality anyway I'm sure
that there are other possible

definitions of Lial or liminality but
that's the one that I tend to go with
and so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from Indiana
dham Indiana DH says this is a followup
to my second question on the AA waga I
have not found the advice of the ataga
to be radical I think it is probably the
key to maximizing one's chance for
nibana yet so little of dham practice in
the East and the West seems geared
toward eventually adopting the aaa's
advice if nibana is Liberation from
samsara why not encourage the most
radical approach exiting samsara is
itself radical since samsara is
everything that is is not nibana there

seems to be a typo in this question
because towards the top Indiana dama
says I have not found the advice of the
eka waga to be radical and then towards
the end he's saying that why not
encourage the most radical approach even
though he thinks the ATA waga does
maximize your chances of
Enlightenment so maybe he I'm not
exactly sure what he's trying to say
with regard to that but with regard to
the AA waga itself it's just most people
can't grasp it so most people including
most monks most Buddhists most Buddhist
philosophers they're stuck in their head
they can't conceive of ever like just

letting go of perception just stop
attaching to perception stop having
beliefs that kind of thing it's just
they can't they just can't do it they're
not ready for that yet and so the AA
waga started off being very
popular but it faded Into Obscurity as
Buddhism became more and more of a
popular kind of a system like a
mainstream system and normies just are
not ready for the AA waga the AA waga is
death it's scary have no beliefs I mean
that's what that's what we are really
that's what our personality is is just
an accumulation of belief
beliefs don't have habits well Thea waga
doesn't really don't have habits but

that would be part of it too and that's
that's pretty much what a character is
is like an accumulation of
habits
[Music]
so yeah I think the ataka waga with its
idea of no view no perception no belief
and then it just takes for granted that
the people who follow this are going to
be homeless atic mendicants wandering
around with no home sleeping under trees
wearing Rags begging for their food in
the
streets that that was how you do it in
Ancient India and even Buddhist monks
the most Buddhist country in the world

probably is Burma right now and almost nobody is doing that because Buddhism converted into a kind of philosophical teaching and the burmes are very dogmatic and so they just DED dicate themselves to mastering this Dogma just memorizing all the definitions and the lists and all that and practicing a kind of cookbook method of meditation that for the most part doesn't get them very far and that's just the way people are I mean it's going to be a tiny minority that can really appreciate really Advanced wisdom so let's see what is the actual question here if nibana is Liberation from some Sor why not encourage the most

radical approach well it depends on how
you look at it I mean um bu Buddhism is
supposed to follow the middle path
between
extremes so I mean you could call one of
the extremes radical or you could call
both extremes radical the radical
self-torture and radical
self-indulgence in which case Buddhism
would be like the least radical approach
because it's the middle path between
radical
extremes so maybe radical especially
because he seems to be using it in a
self-contradictory way where the first
part of the the question contradicts

this the second part of the question due

to some typo that I'm not going to try

and

decipher

um yeah so it depends on how you would

how you would determine radical I mean

radical literally comes from root you

know the word radish means root it's the

same atmology as radical

radics so I mean just getting to the

root of of reality I guess would be

spiritually radical and Thea waga is

about as radical of a text as there is

in that regard some Mahayana Buddhist

texts are comparable you know like the

the Tibetan book of the great Liberation

for example some Zen stuff you even like

um the heart Sutra is pretty radical in

in the same kind of way although it's

the heart Sutra is just more creating

Paradox which blows your mind whereas

the Tica waga is just don't believe

anything no view no perception you know

just just W just wander around sleeping

under trees begging for your food in the

streets while being just sort of

philosophically

empty so that you are not having reality

obscured by these perceptual symbols so

it's essentially a mystical text or a a

mystical spiritual system where you're

just trying to eliminate all these

obscuring clouds of words and symbols

and ideas just so that you can see

reality directly which is being obscured

by all these

clouds so

whether whether you want to call it

radical or not I guess it would be a

matter of personal taste

see so I guess the only question mark in

this whole paragraph here is if nibana

is Liberation from some s why not

encourage the most radical approach well

part of it is just too scary and it's

just too

radical if you want to call it that

because most people just aren't ready

for it and so and that includes most

Buddhist monks including most Buddhist

philosophers who sort of help to codify

and

standardize Buddhist spirituality

Buddhist philosophy so that it just kind

of shifted away from this just direct

approach just plunging into the absolute

so to

speak and uh I guess I kind of answered

that question so it's time to move on to

the next one we don't have really a

whole heck of a lot of questions this

time um maybe just slightly below

average number of questions so I don't

think we're going to go for three hours

besides I'm not digressing nearly as

much except for that's exactly what I'm

doing right now next question is from
Ken and Ken says I have been on a ramena
Mahari kick lately and have heard many
stories of people that were essentially
incapacitated for Years After
experiencing the self have you heard
about this in the Buddhist side of
things and nothing comes to mind I
cannot recall I mean I may have come
across a story like this where you've
got somebody who just kind of gets
jolted into a higher level of
Consciousness and they're incapacitated
by it like ramam Mahari was when he
first had his jolt I think Ram Nam
Mahari was mute for years after he had
his realization it was like it took him

years to finally sort of find like a
some way of reconciling or integrating
this higher level of Consciousness with
this kind of lowly you know meat puppet
level of existence you know on on the
surface of the planet
Earth so I mean I haven't really come
across that in in Buddhism much but I
think one reason for that in Buddhism is
that Buddhism is more of a a unified
system whereas Hinduism it's just this
broad spectrum of the ridiculous to the
sublime there's all these different
strands of Hinduism in different
directions and so it's more likely that
you're going to kind of get off on a a

weird Sidetrack or something but then
again that didn't happen to Raman Mahari
because he wasn't even particularly
religious at the time that he had his
sudden
Awakening but I would guess that
Buddhism being more like unified like
terraa Buddhism especially it's is
pretty
streamlined and if it's been you know
the bugs have been tested and everything
saying so you just follow it like like
the text say you should follow it or
some dogmatic instructor instructs you
to follow it then you're not going to
have much problem like in Hinduism you
got problems with uninitiated people who

haven't purified themselves sufficiently
who are trying to do like Advanced
breath control or Kundalini or things
that are potentially dangerous and then
you can just get messed up by that kind
of thing whereas in terava Buddhism
there's very very little of
that so no I haven't really heard about
somebody just getting messed up through
sort of straying into some
esoteric state that they weren't ready
for I mean you can have people that can
crack up at meditation Retreats that
happens quite a lot actually so that's
kind of a lower level of somebody who
just they just crack from the strain of

moving in slow motion and medit ating
all the time and not talking and
sleeping only a few hours per night you
know this kind of thing it's sort of
like being in a thought reform camp and
they can just crack under the just the
internal pressure of that and also some
people they'll have weird experiences
and start thinking that they're like an
ARA or some such so in a way they can
become delusional as a result of
meditative experiences um yeah that some
people that have like a tendency towards
schizophrenia for
example yeah
okay I'm starting to recall a few cases
now of someone who had a tendency

towards

schizophrenia and then in meditation you

know they have some kind

of some kind of elevating experience

some some jolt happens to them in

meditation and they can just go off the

deep end they can insist they're fully

enlightened you know all this kind of

stuff um in the book that I'm editing

now it's going to be my fourth book for

publication which I hope will be ready

for publication by March um there is a

case history of this nun this German nun

who during a Meditation Retreat all of a

sudden just started believing herself to

be fully enlightened and she was just

kind of wandering around disheveled

giggling and just behaving in a

completely unhinged

manner so it can happen but being

incapacitated the way Ken is referring

to like Ramen Amari was I've never

really heard anything exactly like that

so I'm just going to move on to Ken's

next question which is similar to the

first

question also do you suspect that there

may have been US citizens who have

tripped into self relaxation

inadvertently maybe he means realization

inadvertently became incapacitated but

then were dealt with clinically in a way

that obscures their realization in an

outwardly sense

so I I think what he's asking is have

people become enlightened or like had

some sort of Awakening experience and

then just been institutionalized because

they weren't acting normal

anymore um that kind of thing can happen

or it could be that people that are

already kind of abnormal they're they're

Lial like like I was discussing

earlier they're kind of on the The

Fringe or the verge of normality so that

weird things like Enlightenment could

happen to them more

easily um they might be a combination

like I was talking in previous Q&A maybe

the two previous q&as how um like
medieval Saints some of them had really
really high attainments but at the same
time they were pretty
nutty George Fox is an example I've
given I think the last two Q&A in a row
like the founder of the Quakers who I
mean he was kind of nutty guy if if you
read his journals and that kind of thing
so there is that as a kind of
complication so it may be that someone
who is kind of nutty to begin with um
you know kind of has some kind of
experience that makes them seem even
more nutty but even someone who's
enlightened just they suddenly just go
sane so to speak they could be viewed as

insane like there's a movie called Fearless which highly recommend and I can't remember the name of the actor Jeff Bridges I think he uh has a near-death experience he's in a plane crash and he's one of the the few survivors but as the plane is is you know in the process of crashing before it hits the ground he just sort of faces his imminent death and makes peace with that and it just sort of it's like a breakthrough you know he becomes sort of like eart TOA and after that it's like things that he used to be afraid of or things that bothered him didn't bother him anymore and he was like sort of

compulsive truth tell you know he
wouldn't lie anymore and people just
thought there's something wrong with him
you know because he's not the the old
himym but this isn't the kind of stuff
that Ken is talking
about that I I I assume there have been
people like Rah nam mahashi in America
who had some kind of realization
and then they just get sent to a mental
hospital they spend you know years or
the rest of their life in just kind of
you know in a in white jammies in this
hospital and maybe you know the
caretakers the the nurses and so forth
you know he might be might have been
their favorite patient because he was so

peaceful and and kind and

everything but I I maybe that they just

had no no idea that he was actually

operating at a higher level of

Consciousness than them I mean it

wouldn't surprise me I assume that

something like that has happened

before but I don't know of any

particular cases so I'm just going to

move on to the next question this is

from Huer and who

says you are answering a question on

subconscious mind from what I understand

in Buddhism there is only one mind as in

one mind per person and not not a

collective mind or hive mind anything

else is the formation of the mind like

thought ideas concept memories Etc

therefore the definition in Buddha

buddhism's mind and the mind in

subconscious mind are different

subconscious mind are more like

suppressed memories maybe due to trauma

or from past life Karma hence

subconscious mind is karmar related

because it controls our emotion and

action or volition in the background

what are your thought okay so I'll have

to scroll up a little bit

here says so who each here says from

what he understands in Buddhism there's

only one mind as in one mind per person

although in Buddhism there is no person

and not a collective mind or hive mind
anything else is the formation of the
mind like thought ideas concept memories
well no I mean what is called a mind in
Buddhism I mean mind or can have
different meanings it can just mean
Consciousness like the word mono or the
word cheetah can just mean Consciousness
like what would be called wiana in
poly but even that it's not just one
mind because it is flashing off and on a
trillion times a second it's a different
mind from one moment to the next much
like a candle flame or like an electric
current going through a wire is not
exactly the same from one moment to the

next it's always

changing different electrons different

photons whatever it is it's different

from one moment to the

next so also I mean like the mind is

sort of like the body the body is just

an accumulation of Parts an accumulation

of particles even and the mind also it's

like every mental state especially from

the point of view of Abid dama which is

orthodox terraa is like it's like a

conglomeration of this these different

elements constituting what a vulgar

person would call the

mind so it's not just one thing it might

you might say there's one Consciousness

per moment yeah that's that's fine you

want to say there's one Consciousness

per moment but it's a different

Consciousness each moment at least

according to Orthodox terana and

Buddhism in

general

so let's see the definition of Budd in

Buddhism mind and the mind and

subconscious mind are different well the

mind and subconscious mind I mean I'm

not referring to just Consciousness I'm

referring to just mental States

mentality in general which has to be

conscious you can't have an unconscious

mind that mind practically by definition

is going to be

conscious so the subconscious mind would
be some of those particles you know some
of those strands of all this mentality
going on that lie Beyond this self
self-referential ego you've got this
self-referential ego which is a system
of of like thoughts and beliefs and so
forth that are aware I mean it's aware
of what's under its own you know lens
but there's other parts of mentality out
there that are still conscious it's just
that they're not part of the ego you
know they're they're beyond the scope of
the ego at least
temporarily and I think people have a
really a lot of
difficulty making sense of the

idea

that there's mind beyond the ego that

they identify with their ego their ego

is me I am this and it's the ego which

literally means I am in I'm pretty

sure and they just cannot comprehend

that there could be any kind of

mentality beyond the ego because they

just think the ego and the mind are are

synonymous so you do have other levels

of consciousness going on that are not

within the scope of the conscious ego

which is really just a semiconscious ego

it's not fully

conscious

so yeah the subconscious mind

um it's not so much like suppressed

memories because the memory doesn't

exist until the conditions arise which

caus the memory to

arise so I mean that's a lot of people

have trouble with memories in Buddhism

if there is no s self where are the

memories stored but it the mind just

doesn't work that way at least not from

a Buddhist point of view that the

memories aren't stored anywhere it just

requires certain conditions to arise

that cause

that memory to arise and then the memory

ceases to arise when the conditions

causing it to arise

cease but things like like suppressed

motives you know like hysteria people
who are acting hysterically who have
motives that their ego isn't fully aware
of that there are motives like below the
ego that are motivating a person's
behavior and their ego can't see those
motives you know you can deceive
yourself I used to think that I mean how
could anybody deceive themselves they'd
have to know that they were deceiving
themselves because deception has to be
deliberate you can't accidentally lie
you have to lie on purpose but then I
started seeing people that were kind of
hysterical people that were thinking
that they were acting for a certain

reason when really is pretty obvious

that they had deeper reasons that they

weren't aware of that were still

motivating their behavior

also like dream

symbolism like just dreams in general

are largely

subconscious but it's all Consciousness

it's all

mind so I don't know if I answered whe

cheer's question or

not but I'm just going to move on next

question this is from

quor and quor

says does a newly conceived human being

consider themselves to be that newly

fertilized egg or go or do they not form

a new attachment to form until later on
would they carry over the awareness they
had from their previous life assuming
they were human in their last life and
know where they
are and what is happening to them
assuming they consider the forming
embryo to be
themselves that's that's a pretty good
question I think and I have read some
stuff on this subject not recent L but I
have read it and I re I think that this
is kind of a weak point for Buddhism
there are certain things that Buddhism
just doesn't explain very well the
subconscious mind that I was just

discussing is one of them Buddhism
really can't explain that very well at
least not Orthodox terraa in the Abid
dama philosophy this is another one it's
like according to Buddhism a human life
begins at conception that in order for
an uh and a sperm to fertilize an egg
there also has to be some karmic stream
ready to enter and be reborn to undergo
rebirth linking Consciousness right as
that egg is being
fertilized and what that
human let's say it's a human being
reborn as another human you know what
does that human mind that
human like mental momentum the karmic
stream what does it do when it's just

like this fertilized egg and then it

becomes just sort of dividing clump of

cells you know it goes through the

different embryological stages and

there's there's not even a nervous

system yet so from the Buddhist point of

view I would assume that for the most

part you're like in a deep sleep during

this during this time it would be like

banga Che and which is just sort of like

this like a

a test pattern kind of a thing you know

it's just kind of the static mental

state um but I have read books on you

know

like life you know like rebirth and so

forth that weren't strictly Buddhist
just based in part upon you know
empirical case histories and like people
who could recall their previous lives
and this kind of thing which you can
take it for what it's worth it's not
really strictly scientific but
um there are some people who who claim
including some some Hindu swamis that
aren't as rigidly dogmatic as a Terra
Abid dama scholar they can say that you
know you're sort of drifting in and
out like like some people will say that
when you are an embryo that your spirit
is for the most part not in your mama's
belly but it's just doing you know other
stuff you know it's going through you

know outside other realm kind of stuff

until the body is ready for you to start

identifying with this curled up little

baby inside your

mama presumably there'd have to be some

kind of nervous system getting hooked

up

so there is that I mean from the

strictly Buddhist point of view my guess

is my best guess is that you would be

considered to be like in a deep sleep

while the EMB

is developing into something complex

enough that you can start have thinking

thoughts then again it maybe that in

Ancient India they believed that even a

an tiny embryo can already think
thoughts because they apparently thought
that a lot of animals have human
intelligence so why not an
embryo um but I do think it's more
likely assuming that there is rebirth at
the at the moment of
conception that your karma is going to
be working itself out in other ways in
you know some like a BAU realm you know
some sort of intermediate realm which
Buddhism doesn't really accept um and
the dogs are playing behind me you guys
stop it stop it hey don't yeah she wants
to play with me instead
now so where was I so yeah I mean it's
my best guess would be that it's not

exactly the way the Buddhist text

explain it in just a second you're going

to stop

it now they're going to go in rough

house in the kitchen or

something so let's see what is what

exactly is the question the question no

there's two question marks here see do

they does a newly conceived human being

consider themselves to be that nudely

fertilized egg no I don't think so

unless they're sort of outside the

mother kind of looking in and thinking

yeah that's what's going to be me and

then I won't remember this anymore

because you know it's like pushing a

reset or something or do they not form a
new attachment to form until later on
yeah I think the the real attachments
would come later on at least with regard
to that body there any attachments
before before the embryo is developed
would be you know in some other realm
that Terra Buddhism doesn't really
describe so where's the other question
mark let's see would they carry over the
awareness they had from their previous
life um and know where they are and what
is happening to them assuming they
consider the forming embryo to be
themselves um yeah terot Buddhism really
doesn't go over this kind of stuff very
much um dos used to talk about this kind

of stuff he used to say this this is
from a more Hindu perspective that some
babies they take rebirth early on not
necessarily at conception but very early
on and then some babies might not enter
into the the fetus until it's almost
ready to be born and then he said you
can tell the difference between those
these two kind of babies because the
baby that's already just crying and
squalling and behaving like a baby that
one's been inside of its mother for
quite a while you know presumably for
the most part in a dreamy sleep State
whereas the babies that are just kind of
like stunned and zoned out you know

they're just kind of spaced out those
are the ones that have just recently
made the
transition and they they didn't really
enter the the mother's womb until
shortly before birth that's like a more
Hindu perspective but considering that
that Buddhism doesn't really have much
to say on the issue that I do think it's
fair game to be looking at different
theories I mean it's always fair game to
be looking at alternative ways of
explaining things because Terra really
does not have any kind of Monopoly on
wisdom in my
opinion and there are certain
things like the subconscious mind and

exactly how rebirth happens you know
like what happens to your karmic
stream you know when the person you're
going to be is still just a clump of
cells that kind of thing it doesn't
really it doesn't really do much to
explain that sort of
stuff so my best guess is that you're
not really going to be spending a lot of
time assuming you got this psychic
momentum which is your karma that is
going to be reborn and right now the
person you're going to be reborn as is
still just just a a multiplying clump of
cells you know is the mother is two
weeks pregnant or something then for the

most part you're going to be in some
other realm you know sort of like what
would be considered an intermediate kind
of Realm and I mean you could call it
like a spirit realm or something which
would make it a little more Orthodox and
maybe just sort of like commuting back
back and forth a little bit more and
more as the baby becomes more developed
until finally um the only other
explanation would be that you'd be like
in a deep sleep kind of like in a a com
state or something or an unconscious
state or just very very minimal
Consciousness but it's hard
to uh hard to explain what all of your
karma is going to be doing the psychic

momentum um when it's in the form of a

clump of cells

which is one reason why a lot of people

have difficulty in the idea of rebirth

as like a worm you know how is all this

complexity going to go into a worm how's

it going to fit in that

worm it's kind of similar how's it going

to fit in that

embryo so my best guesses would be

heretical with regard to this stuff

because Orthodox terraa does really

doesn't do very much to explain it

satisfactorily so I'm just going to move

on to quis tor's next question this is

referring to the example you give about

the sniper with intention to kill and
belief that he did Kill versus the one
that accidentally killed and didn't know
it let's assume the sniper will go to
hell after death would they have the
same experience and time in hell that
they really killed that person if so the
person actually being killed becomes
irrelevant with regard to the Killer's
Karma also the person who accidentally
killed someone and never finds out about
it would have the same experience after
death had they not killed them at all
yeah I mean for the most part I would
say that is true
although there's also like a
subconscious element like at a at a deep

level our minds are all connected so
there could be a subliminal effect of
messing with another person even if you
don't know that you're messing with that
other person let's say for example let's
give another example you've got the guy
sitting in a computer room launching
cruise missiles you know he's he's just
some some dude that works for the Navy
or the army or whatever he's launching
missiles and he doesn't know exactly
where those missiles are landing some of
them are going to get shot down in
midair and not hurt anybody some of them
might blow up an entire
Hospital full of people so

it's like let's say one guy shoots a missile and it doesn't kill anybody but he doesn't know that another guy shoots a missile and it blows up a hospital he doesn't know that either so would they have exactly the same Karma assuming that all else is equal um I think at a superficial level yes but I do think that at a deeper level where where there's like empathy and telepathy going on where minds are connected that deep down you you may know even though your conscious ego doesn't know that you actually did kill people that that Karma your your karma would be influenced by that and it's the same case with someone who's not trying to

launch explosives at somebody you know
they just shoot in the air and the
bullet comes down and kills somebody a
mile away and they never hear about it
or they might hear that somebody died
suddenly or whatever you know they they
never make the connection that they
actually killed somebody even by
accident then still at this subliminal
level where minds are connected there
may be some awareness of what happened
at a subconscious
level but Buddhism doesn't really
discuss that even though Buddhism does
have cases similar to this where for
example if you are rude to an

enlightened being you're making much
worse Karma than if you're if you're
rude to an ordinary monk for example and
the person who's rude doesn't have any
clue that the person he's insulting is a
fully enlightened being he just he
doesn't understand that he's he's
clueless so how is it that you can go to
hell for
eons
for mistreating an
arant when you wouldn't have received
nearly that much of a of a Karm aric
punishment so to speak if the person you
were insulting wasn't an Aran and you
have no clue I mean how could you
know so I do think in cases like that

it's Buddhism is just sort of
glorifying its Elite so to speak and
there's a lot of this you can find in
the text you know how you're going to
get just massive karmic rewards for
supporting good monks and you're going
get massive punishment for dissing good
monks so I mean from the beginning to
some degree I think it was like Buddhist
Wise Guys just trying to condition the
populace into wanting to support them
and being afraid not to support
them so I'm kind of skeptical of the
idea of you know there's the story I've
told before of the the rich man who had
some leftovers given as alms to a Pacha

Buddha and then afterwards he regretted
it because he was stingy and thought
well I could have just given it to the
workers and so he received karmic
rewards just massive I mean he spent
eons in heaven for offering this this
alms food to the peka Buddha but then he
also just received this very severe
punishment I can't remember if he went
to hell or not also you know Heaven
first and then hell or something or
whether it was something else but he did
receive serious punishment just as
karmic retribution for having regretted
it afterwards and he'd had no idea that
this person was an enlightened being
that the the MS were offered to so how

is that possible and I'm personally

personally kind of

skeptical um I think it could could

happen that if you're going to you know

be rude to an enlightened being that I

mean at a subconscious level again it

may be that you are aware of what you're

doing

and so you're going to get you know more

serious karma for that

but um I don't think it's quite as

pronounced as some of the poly Texs

would have us

believe and um let's see what was what

was the question here anyway let's say

would they have the same experience and

time in Hell had they really killed that
person I do think that there is like a
deeper subconscious level where minds
are connected where you may have this
deeper subliminal awareness of what you
did that might um influence your
karma but that's about as far as it
would
go so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from ruie and ruie says
do you think the ecstasies of art
architecture the visual arts music film
literature are all wrong samade
so the ecstasies of art I assume he
means the apprec like the ecstasies
involved in the appreciation of Art and
not the production of art first time I

read this question when I was cutting

and pasting it onto the list here I was

thinking more of the point of view of

the

artist that an artist who is absorbed in

painting for example would you call that

right right Sam Sasa or Madi you know

right concentration or wrong

concentration

and it reminded me of one time I was in

Indonesia and I met an artist a

relatively famous artist in Bali who was

telling me about how he'd like to

practice meditation he was very

aesthetically oriented which is suitable

for an artist and uh he just said he's

never really gotten into meditation he'd like to start meditating and being mindful this kind of stuff and I pointed out to him like I asked him like when you're painting I mean you're right there in the present moment aren't you you know you're not thinking about other self self you're just right there just dealing with you know colors and shapes and so forth and he agreed and I said well I mean that's pretty much what you've got going for meditation right now is when you're in this present this present moment be here now when you're when you're painting but now now that I think of it ruy may be talking about appreciation like somebody who's

listening to a symphony that you know
they're just really into that that
Symphony would that be right
concentration or wrong concentration you
know they're just really just to the to
the extent that you're in the present
moment then yeah that would be right I
wouldn't say it's all black and white I
wouldn't say it's all right or all
wrong but if you're right there in the
present moment that's good even though
you're very much
perceptual and it's it's like sensually
pleasing as a general rule most art most
great art is going to be sensually
pleasing so to some extent you're like

wallowing in sensuality but at the same

time there are

like there is virtue in it just being

right here right now in the present

moment has its value I mean there's a

certain meritorious to that so I think I

mean it dep it would depend on on the

art

also like let's see architecture you're

like in a cathedral or something a

Gothic

Cathedral um yeah I mean that would that

can really uh Inspire ecstasy in some

people being in some medieval cathedral

in France or

something

um whether that would be I I I really do

think it's it's a shade of GR in in

Buddhism there's almost no just pure

white and pure black there's always

Shades of

Gray and so it can be uplifting it can

be a more meritorious mental state than

if you just walk into a a

Walmart you know you're you're uplifted

to a certain degree you know your heart

is open I mean that kind of stuff is

good even though um it's it's not really

the most conducive to Enlightenment

necessarily and there will be a certain

amount of wallowing and sensuality

involved um I don't think people go into

much ecstasies of art looking at like

modern art that is deliberately

ugly so yeah I do think that it's it's

just sort of a shade of gray a complex

modeled shade of gray that will depend

on one person or you know it just

depends on the

individual so I'm just going to move on

to the next question this is from

files and files says what survival

skills if any did living in a cave

require I assume you made fires when it

got cold and dug latrines for yourself

at least and no I did not partly because

it's against the rules of monastic

discipline to build a fire to keep

yourself warm unless you're like sick

and in central Burma it really doesn't

get that cold anyway you know it's
easily survivable so I did make Fires
for the sake of burning garbage because
you get a lot of plastic wrappers and
that kind of thing when you go for M
sometimes and I did make Fires for
heating coffee
water but you're not supposed to make
fires to warm yourself unless it's like
below freezing and you're going to
you're going to die of hypothermia or
get frostbite or something if you don't
build a fire with regard to digging
latrines that's against the rules of
monastic discipline also digging in the
ground is against the rules for monks

because you're going to be cutting
through little worms and stuff when
you're digging the ground so you're not
supposed to do that
either so I would just if I moved to a
different place there wasn't an ouse
there I'd just crap on the ground until
some generous good-hearted villagers
would offer to make me a latrine
that happened
before so survival skills living in a
cave I mean just knowing the survival
skills of like the habits of certain
dangerous animals like snakes the
ability to differentiate a venomous
snake from a harmless snake that would
that would come in handy that would be a

valuable survival skill there was the one cave that I lived in where they had to dig me the latrine I learned the survival skill of how to purify water like during the rainy season the the river the the stream there was just Brown it was like flood water you couldn't drink it You' get diarrhea if you drank that water but what you do is just with your hands or with a bow lid or something you scoop out uh like a crater a big
bowl-shaped uh Basin in the sand near the creek or near the pond wherever the water is you just you you just dig out this

Basin in the sand let it fill up bail
the water out generally with your bow
lid or a bath bath cup or something let
it fill up bail it out again and just
keep doing that until the water is clear
and then you can drink the water safely
that was like one of my most valuable
camping skills that I that I had to do
uh living in caves that and being able
to uh know the the habits of like wasps
and snakes and so
forth but I didn't
really need very many other survival
skills not that I can think of anyway so
I'll just move on to fil's next question
which is what's the closest you got to
feeling like Indiana Jones out in the

sticks so Indiana Jones was like an
archaeologist so I
guess the closest I got to feeling like
an archaeologist when I was in Burma was
the first time I went to Pagan which
used to be the capital of Burma like a
thousand years ago and they hadn't
started renovating the temples yet the
government eventually got this dumb idea
that tourists would be much more
interested in going to see renovated
temples than
ruins so back in the 90s when I first
went to ban it was still lot of ruins
and you could see out in a farmer's
field there'd be this ruined Temple just

standing out in the farmer's field and you go out there and you go inside and there'd be like U the remnants of murals on the walls there'd still be a Buddha statue his belly would be ripped out it was probably ripped out hundreds of years ago by people looking for Treasure because sometimes um like a certain amount of treasure would be enshrined in this
Shrine and apparently in Pagan they were putting it in the belly of the Buddha because there were a lot of Buddha statues that just had their bellies missing they'd still be sitting there in Serene meditation and you know it's like they'd be

disemboweled and those are some of my
favorite temples just sort of like the
smaller ones that nobody had bothered to
you know maintain or anything they were
just kind of
abandoned so that kind of that sort of
thing made me feel kind of like an
archaeologist with regard to just the
adventure aspect of Indiana jnes one
time I did make a raft and raft down
pone Creek and quite a few miles down
the chindwin river on this this raft
um it was I I used to stay at Alando
catha national park for for hot Seasons
I spent a number of hot Seasons there
and I'd leave when the rain started

usually like when the monsoon started
and when the monsoon started almost the
only way out of that area was hiking um
through the forest to get to the nearest
road which was like 16 miles usually
depending on roads getting washed out
one time it was like more than 30 miles
that had to be traversed before you
could get to an actual
road and it was just horse flies it was
it was just awful it was terrible horse
flies everywhere and they're attracted
to moisture and me being this foreign
whose ancestors evolved to survive ice
ages I would just be drenched in sweat
the the the villagers who' be
accompanying me would be fine because

they wouldn't be sweating as much as me
the horse flies would just be attracted
to me I'd have to have like the sweat
wiping rag in constant motion keeping
them off of me so one year I decided I'm
GNA I'm gonna be intelligent this year
and I'm going to take take a raft and
ride the raft out to the river so I
won't have to be hiking through the the
forest with all the horse flies and so I
actually brought with me that year two
big truck inner tubes and I I blew them
up I had like a little bicycle pump that
I I pumped up the inner tubes and then I
made this lash this Frame of like bamboo
poles over the top of that for like a

frame and then there was like a a teak wood plank that was used for a seat and some some nice Village guys carved me paddle like a a kayak paddle with a an ore or like a blade at each end it was all solid teak too it was nice and so I'm like going down the Rapids on this inner tube raft it was not a very well-designed raft I mean it kept it was kept me above the water you know it floated but unlike a canoe a raft like that made out of inner tubes it's it stops moving forwards as soon as you stop paddling you know that you can't really get some good momentum going you can't really Coast glide through the water like you could with like a

streamlined

canoe but there was especially right

before I got to the to the

river um it was it was pretty it was

like the most white water rafting I ever

did and then I got out onto the river

and it's a big flooded River you know

was looked like it was about a mile

across probably not that much but at

least half a mile probably and man

that's the most that's the closest I

ever felt to being like an insect

sometimes you see like some tiny Beetle

wandering across like this expanse of

concrete you know and just it seems so

Fearless just in this hostile world I I

felt like that in that little raft which
was you know not much bigger than I was
in the middle of the chindwin river at
the beginning of the monsoon season and
there's like big river boats going up
and down up the river and and there's
like a a storm brewing behind me the
wind was blowing you know the the storm
closer to me just like black sky and I
just felt like a bug at that time just
like that little Beetle wandering across
the the
pavement just this tiny Speck that just
surrounded by this hostile
Universe maybe someday that'll get
published I did I did kind of keep a
journal going at that time

but uh that would be with regard to

Adventure that was probably my biggest

adventure that in just the the yearly

hike through orando Katha National

National Park always

Barefoot so I guess that would be it and

I'm just going to move on to Phil's

third question which is were there any

or many British colonial remnants in

Burma I always think of that one Kipling

poem Mandalay

um yeah there's not a whole lot of

British colonial remnants like in rangon

there are still some a lot of buildings

like old government buildings from

British times um you know throughout

throughout Burma you can find you know
old buildings like the the trains and
the Riverbats at the time that I was
living in Burma were almost all remnants
from the British Empire that the Burmese
government just never got around to
making new or buying new trains and new
Riverbats and some of those trains it
was just one train that I rode in Burma
it was like being on a galloping horse
it was just like bouncing down the
tracks the whole way it's left over from
British times the topographical maps the
best maps in Burma were made by the
British during the British
Empire um and then also there's one
place I can't remember the name

H yeah I can't remember the name of this place it's right next to PO windown in Northwestern Burma it's one of my favorite places to go in Burma po windown I mean and it's like a a medieval complex of cave temples just hundreds and hundreds of these cave temples carved into the into the side of the hills um so that's nice but especially I especially like it because there's troops of scy monkeys and I I just love feeding monkeys so I'd go there with big bags of like fruit and stuff and feed the monkeys um but there's a place right next to that and I B something down I can't remember the

name of it but it's an easy walk from po
wind down which is it was it's it's like
this big Sandstone Hill that like a
village of temples has been carved into
the solid
rock and you you go around the steps and
there's like these narrow Avenues with
just kind of lined with shrines carved
into the Rock and there's one in
particular that it's one of the bigger
ones bigger ones of these shrines it's
got like the Imperial Crown the British
Imperial Crown included in the like the
the architrave of the of the temple you
know sort of like the the facade across
the top that it had like a peacock and
stuff and also there was like the the

British Imperial Crown there so they

were sort of kissing some Imperial butt

by including that on their Temple

wall but uh yeah I mean there are

vestiges there's there seems to be more

vestages of British colonial like the

Raj in Burma then you're going to find

like in Bali any finding remnants of the

Dutch government there is is is I don't

think I can't remember seeing anything

maybe there other just a few old

buildings

so let's

see I think I'll just move on to the

next question this is from Stellar

Supreme formerly known as lib lamb and

sometimes still known as Libra Lam I
have to admit and his first question is
what's the karma of being a mul
Santa and being a mul Santa it would be
somewhat like being an actor in terraa
Buddhism in the sutas you will see the
Buddha saying that actors are going to
go to hell
and I don't think all actors are going
to go to hell I mean throughout history
actors have tended to be moral
degenerates I mean there's like a
statistically significant increase in
the likelihood of someone being a moral
degenerate if they are an actor like in
ancient Rome actors were infamia you
know they they weren't considered to be

full citizens you know they were down
with Chariot drivers and Gladiators and
that sort of thing um like in
Shakespeare's time women were not
allowed to act on stage that's why there
are relatively few women in Shakespeare
plays they were all played by prepub
bessin boys because you know actresses
are were just notoriously immoral they
just made a law preventing them from
preventing actresses from existing in
Elizabeth in
England throughout the Middle Ages
actors and actresses they would they
were sort of infamia even long after the
time of of the Roman Empire like a lot

of places actresses and actors could not
they they couldn't receive the benefit
of the church you know they wouldn't be
they couldn't be married they couldn't
be buried in a in a Sanctified Church
ground anything like that so there there
is that and I think from the Buddhist
point of view though it's not so much
the moral degeneracy of being an actor
it's it's like the the karma of creating
a false
reality more false than this so-called
normal
reality that I mean even this isn't
ultimately real but what an actor does
or a m Santa is like promoting uh a
reality a version of reality that's

false even by like the level of conventional truth so in a way it's sort of subverting the Youth of of of the country by you know promoting you know impersonating some Anatolian Saint from the late Roman
Empire so I mean they do make people happy and again it's going to be a shade of gray it's going to be a mix a karmic mix of um meritorious and Dem meritorious but from a Buddhist point of view being a m Santa I mean you are deceiving children literally they think that you're someone that you are pretending to be but aren't and you're promoting like this false reality you

know in a way you're contributing to the
delusion of
children so I mean even if there is a
real Santa out there you're not it if
you're a mall
Santa so it's you're like an
impostor so I don't think that you're
going to go to that M Santas are all
going to go to hell but
um I don't think that it's particularly
meritorious there's worse things you
could do but being a m Santa it's it's a
shade of gray and it's going to have
some good points and some bad points but
it's not it would not be encouraged from
a Buddhist point of view even setting
aside the whole idea that Chris

Christmas is a Christian holiday and Buddhism just isn't really into that so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is uh also from stellar Supreme formerly and sometimes still known as libr Lam how would you rank the German chocolate you got for Christmas in relation to other kinds of chocolate you've tried well it was all right I mean I'm not going to complain against it I'm certainly eating all of it although it's a little sweeter than I would consider optimal the best like if I had to eat only one kind of chocolate for the rest of my life I would probably go for giradelli

86% Cacao giradelli is good chocolate

and 86% Cacao is is seems to be about

right for

me so I think I'll move on to next

question now this is from scolin or

scoline let's check here yeah only an

hour and a half we're just motoring

right along

here scolin or schuline says if you

could increase the viewers knowledge by

one book for the following year what

would you choose so I assume what he

means is if I could have my viewers read

one book what what book would I have

them

read and

apparently I have to just go one size

fits all I couldn't just tailor the

book to the

individual but uh I mean if I had

everybody read just one book I'd just

okay read the

sutan that's a good book to read I think

a lot of my viewers have already read

the any though but in that case just

read it

again that that would be it I suppose um

I mean if it couldn't be something like

that then the trickster in the

Paranormal by George P Hansen that I

continually harp away at is also a good

one my friend utto sent me a copy of

that book

so the credit goes to Otto for that one
also he's the one who sent me the book
of the new sun and the trickster in the
Paranormal and the Book of the new Sun
are like the two books by Otto that I
have read from cover to cover and
they're two of my favorite books so Otto
excelsor has excellent taste in books
and I should read more of the books that
he has sent to me but I just don't read
books very much at all
anymore so I'm just going to move on to
scadden or schine's next question which
is would you kindly make some
predictions for the new year and
predictions for the new year man I do
hope that America America will um will

do better this year than it has during

the Biden

regime I think there is a good chance

that Trump's second term is going to be

damned interesting that he's really

going to be upsetting Apple carts or at

least trying his best and I do think

that the the so-called swamp you know

the like the The

Establishment is in way they sense their

own defeat you know they're not trying

nearly as hard they're not nearly as

hysterical now as they were in 2016 the

first time Trump won so I do think that

there is a

possibility that

uh the the Trump the second Trump uh Administration is going to really shake things up and just start breaking old corrupt systems and are doing more to to break up old corrupt systems than has been done in a very long time possibly since Theodore Rosevelt I do hope that he and Elon Musk will continue to get along and won't start feuding which is kind of because of the whole H1B visa thing that I think Elon Musk has has partly because he's got he's a multibillionaire he's an autist and also he has this newfound power to influence society that in a way it's gone to his head and he's he's going Nero you know he's threatening to

wage war against MAA and all this kind
of stuff now if he can't get cheap
Indian labor to work for his tech
companies so there is a possibility of
that but I'm not really predicting much
I just think it's going to be my main
prediction is it's going to be damned
interesting and I do think that Western
Civilization is going to be lurching a
bit more towards the right and more
towards populism and away from just this
globalist woke [__] that is just
insane so yeah I think there's going to
be a lot of
upheaval um which I think in the long
run is going to be good

upheaval with regard to uh like wars and rumors of wars and so forth I think Trump in office is going to damp down a lot of the global threats I think China will be less they'll be threatening to invade Taiwan less I think Hamas is going to collapse a little faster I think um like the whole Russia Ukraine thing is probably going to be um negotiated to a peace under Trump probably but yeah I'm I'm not really feeling very prophetic you know I'm not I'm not having any Visions I'm not downloading any Visions at present and so I can't really make predictions other than mainly it's going to be there's going to be a lot of upheaval it's going

to be damned

interesting so I'm just going to move on

to scolin or Skin's next question which

is kind of a strange

question he says from the various

answers over this year have I drifted

off course in understanding them and

then he's got these bullet points mind

is Chief mind is the Forerunner nowhere

in that verse does it mentioned oceans

the last person is greater than one

wisdom one wisdom equals free of

delusion I don't that doesn't make sense

to me the late person is greater than

one wisdom and one wisdom equals free of

delusion so the late person is greater

than free of delusion which doesn't make
sense to me but I'll continue here there
is no self self is delusional the self
is the wall great album well with regard
to that one the wall like the Pink
Floyd's wall would be a rather a rather
serious manifestation of the self but it
wouldn't be limited I mean the self
wouldn't be limited to Pink Floyd's wall
just the very ex the very idea that you
exist is
already uh a self you know kind of self
view anyways and something like Pink
Floyd's wall is is like rather severe
alienation although I mean you can refer
to the self or the
ego as kind of Pink Floyd's wall and

that you have to just completely knock
it down so that there's no boundary so
if you have a self there should be there
would presumably be a boundary to that
self there' be self as opposed to other
you know if there is no other than self
itself loses all meaning which
is something to consider for those
people who believe in a self especially
if they're
Buddhists so okay I'll just continue
here the delusional mind reiles the wall
to experience nibana the wall needs to
be breached breaching the wall can be as
fast as opening a window or as a long
arduous process like breaking out of

prison with a spoon although you you do
not exist your actions are real enough
because they affect the mind like the
assets of those plastic Asian web girls
who keep getting conspicuously consumed
I don't understand that one I mean
plastic Asian web girls I understand you
know it's they're all the filters and
stuff that make them look plastic and
some of them are just Ai and it's some
some fat guy in his underwear that's
just producing these these Asian web
girls but
they keep getting conspicuously consumed
I don't understand that one necessarily
and then so be here now be happy um I'll
just scroll back up to the question here

from the various answers over this year
have I drifted off course in
understanding them well I'd have to know
what your understanding is of all these
issues um you give little hints and I
did address a few of those hints see
mind is Chief yeah mind is the forun
know her in that verse does it mention
oceans yeah that's all from dap verse
one and the lay person is greater than
one wisdom I don't understand that one
especially when one wisdom equals free
of
delusion yeah I don't understand that
part there is no self yeah that's that's
that's I'd say that's right at least at

the ultimate level if the ultimate can
be said to have a level self is
delusional yeah that's the root of all
delusion is the conceit I
am let's see the delusional mind reile
the self is the wall yeah I already
discuss that a little bit the delusional
mind reifies the wall yeah that's that's
true to experience the botom of the wall
needs to be breached or transcended I
mean you don't necessarily have to
destroy the thing you just have to
render it
irrelevant breaching the wall can be as
fast as opening a window or as elong
arduous process yeah I I I go with that
just assuming that at the level of

samsara there even is

Enlightenment let's see your actions are

real enough because they affect the mind

yeah yeah they are ultimately

mental okay yeah

well it seems like seems like scadden is

doing fairly well as far as I can tell

although I really can't say um if he has

drifted off course in understanding that

any Beyond just these little hints that

he has

given so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from dama river and

dhama river says in your opinion what

are the top three best and worst

countries to ordain as a monk and

somebody already attempted to answer
this question in the comments under the
YouTube video and my answer would be not
so different I mean North Korea
immediately comes to mind as not a good
country to be ordained as a monk
um some radical fundamentalist Islamic
country um you know maybe Syria nowadays
or Saudi Arabia or Afghanistan maybe and
then there's
like uh subsaharan African nations that
are just in a state of just chronic
upheaval and Corruption and coups and
overthrows and massacres and all this
kind of stuff Nigeria maybe there I
assume there are safe places in Nigeria
it's just that you don't hear about them

in the news but uh it's not a place
where I would want to be ordained as a
monk so I mean you could take your pick
of just the most
repressive or just unstable chaotic
countries to be ordained as just take
your pick of three and those will be the
three worst ones I think North Korea
would make it on the most lists the
three best countries to to ordain as a
monk well with regard to Burma it
depends on the political
situation so let's say Burma is not best
because of just because of the political
situation even though it's the most
Terra voden country in the world so you

still got Thailand you got Sri Lanka and

let's

say

third Cambodia

maybe Cambodia or possibly even Bali

there's uh there are a number of terraa

Buddhist uh monasteries in Bali Bali is

a nice place but and you can go for alms

round in Bali too so that's

nice um even even some place like

America isn't bad the the main problems

with being ordained in America first of

all it's not a Buddhist culture so

you're dealing with

irreverent westerners who just consider

you to be another guy who just dresses

funny

also it's more difficult to live like
the texts say a monk should live you
know wandering homeless sleeping under
trees that kind of stuff it's possible
but not very doable in general in
America especially in the winter
time so probably the three best
countries to be ordained as a monk would
be terraa Buddhist countries in tropical
or at least subtropical Asia
so Thailand Sri Lanka and if not Burma
then let's say
Cambodia and so I'm just going to move
on next question this is from
PSA and PSA says if you could go back in
time to your last year as a monk would

you choose to disrobe again well yeah I
think I reached the point of no
return um around
2018 that really my last
reasonable plausible chance at remaining
a monk for the rest of my life was when
I was still in Burma and I volunteered
to become the resident Abbot of a
monastery uh in the foothills of the
Shan Plateau called Miga Dawan on in Yan
o Village cold water pot
Village and the Abbot there who was
getting old and wanted to find a
replacement he liked me and that
Monastery was set up for Western monks
in the tong Pulu tradition I was the
only one left in Burma so I was the

obvious choice but he was too
embarrassed in Burmese it's called anade
he didn't want to admit that even before
I made the offer he had he had already
said yes to this this young scholar monk
who's going to turn the place uh into a
school
Monastery but if I had if he had allowed
me to become the resident Abbot of migan
Monastery in on the outskirts of yan o
Village in Burma then there's a good
chance I'd still be a monk today but
that didn't happen I came back to
America in late 2018 if I remember
correctly and I mean if I could go back
in time to my last year as a monk I mean

I might disrobe

sooner instead of waiting as long as I

did because really it just wasn't

working out very well in America for

various reasons just the main problem

was just living in a a Burmese temple it

was in the tong Pulu tradition which I

was ordained and the Abbott was one of

my early teachers who participated in my

ordination ceremony but the burmes as a

general rule just are not very strict it

was very LAX there was the atmosphere

was not conducive to like serious

sincere practice and and it just wasn't

working and I'd already tried being like

a Freer range monk just living among

westerners that didn't work out so well

either and so it was I just kind of lost
my momentum lost my inspiration to
remain a monk it just had stopped
serving me for the most part and that
started like more than a year before I
dropped out so if I could go back and
time to my last year as a monk if
anything I would have dropped out even
sooner so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from
xenoid and xenoid says there is data s
to suggest that the older someone who is
susceptible to Alzheimer's and Dementia
Works past retirement age the longer it
takes for them to experience the
symptoms of senility do you believe

monastics may be more susceptible to
senility because they do not have jobs
well the regular meditators are not
particularly susceptible to
senility that meditation keeps you alert
and so meditation it also keeps you
healthy like um when I would was
meditating doing regular sitting
practice as a monk you know i' sit
several hours a day for years and years
I was more I had more resistance to like
common colds and that sort of thing also
I think partly is you start noticing
like an imbalance in the system right
when it's starting because you're so
sort of in tune and you're your senses
are more subtle so that you can sort of

catch it and just kind of will or
whatever it is you know your mind just
kind of steers you away from it
somehow something like that or your mind
is just more balanced and so your body
is more balanced because mind and body
are connected you know mind is the
Forerunner mind is Chief so you've got a
a mind that's just clear and bright and
subtle and quiet and everything it just
helps your whole system to be
healthier unless you have a real karmic
need for something to go
casoy so monks that just sit around and
listen to the radio and drink tea and
smoke cigars and hang out with with Old

Village guys they might become scile um

you

know relatively easily but but the

serious practitioners who are you know

ardently vigilantly observing the

sensation of touch at their nostrils as

the air goes in and out for several

hours a day that yeah I think their mind

is healthy and so it helps to keep their

body and their brain

healthy I really had very

little um I didn't have a whole lot of

contact with scile old monks and the

ones that were scile old monks for the

most part didn't meditate much if at

all so I think I'm just going to move on

to zeni's next question do you believe

the AC of meditation preserves the
mental strength to ward off cility well
I I kind of already answered that one
yeah I do I do think so and it Wards off
other things besides cility like other
health problems it can ward off also
although you have to be careful to kind
of keep a balance going if your
meditation is kind of extreme you know
you're pushing yourself out of kilter
through your meditation practice by like
trying too hard or something that can
mess up your health also so you have to
like be awake and aware enough to know
what is the good middle balance and just
just it really does it is helpful in in

being healthy in

general so I think I'm just going to

move on to Zenith void's third question

do you think monastics would benefit

from still doing mental workouts perhaps

something like complex math in order to

keep their mind strong or would this be

unadvisable because of the potential to

become attached to such intellectual

Pursuits well personally for myself I do

think that it is good to exercise your

brain your brain is like a muscle the

more you exercise it the healthier and

stronger it is likely to be so I mean

doing

sudokus is uh you know it's just like a

mental exercise it's not like you're

actually gaining anything by solving an

evil

Sudoku but it's just a good like a brain

workout and I do get a certain

satisfaction from from doing sudokus

especially evil

ones

so yeah I do think that it's not

necessarily a bad thing I think maybe

for like a devout monk who thinks that

anything worldly like a Sudoku is

something to be avoided at least they

can try and figure out and just like

study the text and try to understand

like difficult ideas and Buddhist

philosophy that kind of thing would have

a similar

effect but I mean think if you're just

doing following the atica waga wandering

around homeless and you know dressing in

rags and begging for food in the streets

and just not believing anything just

keeping your mind clear and wide open I

don't think you're going to have any

problem s with that

either other than maybe getting attacked

by Bandits or tigers or

something so I'm just going to move on

to the next question this is from

Romeo and Romeo says my question is

about the similarities and differences

between the meditation methods practiced

among Mystics of the major faiths you

often mention Christian Mystics like St John of the Cross and Teresa of Aila in your q&as I was wondering if you can break down the specific similari and differences between the contemplative meditation methods that Christians like them practiced versus The Meditation practiced in Buddhism for example the method of observing and letting go of the arising and passing of thoughts and physical Sensations in s batana is this what the sufis in Islam Hindus or Christian Mystics do as well well I'm no Authority on sufis how the Sufi meditate and even Hindus I mean I'm I'm familiar with certain Hindu meditation techniques

but the really Advanced ones that are

Beyond Mantra that kind of thing I'm not

really an expert on Advanced Hindu

meditation techniques I mainly have just

done Buddhist

Meditation but I have read like in St

John of the Cross he explains very well

how a Christian contemplative would

practice meditation and

contemplation and

so um when you get past meditation with

regard to meditation which is you're

still thinking you still have mental

images going the Christian ones are

you're you're

visualizing uh events in the Life of

Christ for example or you're repeating a

kind of Mantra you know like the Jesus
prayer dear God please have mercy upon
me a sinner over and over again that
kind of thing um yeah I think that it's
generally not quite as advanced of a
meditation method as in buddhis when
you're still thinking especially if
you're just thinking breathing in
breathing out breathing in breathing out
or using a very simple Mantra like budo
in in like Thailand that's probably the
most common
Mantra
so but when you get into contemplation
which is you're not thinking anymore
then to some degree the Christians may

actually have the advantage because the Buddhists is just an aspect of Buddhist philosophy that you cannot have Consciousness without perception if you're going to be conscious you got to be perceiving something and so they can't really practice very well um the the practice of just getting rid of all perception even though in the ATA waga it says have no perception still Buddhist philosophy developed to the idea that you cannot be conscious without perception and so the idea of like St John of the Cross doesn't work because it's in a way it's sort of a handicap in Buddhist philosophy this idea that you cannot get

rid of perception you cannot have pure
Consciousness without perception whereas
St John of the
Cross his his method of contemplation is
dismiss anything from your mind that is
not God and so you cannot understand God
through the intellect this dismiss the
intellect you can't understand or know
God through your emotions dismiss the
emotions you know you can't sense god
with your sense organs dismiss the
senses you just dismiss dismiss dismiss
all mental States because no mental
state can contain God until you're just
empty and then still there's something
there and that's the that's like the

Divine Insight you that's dark Faith you realize the spirit of God is still there you've dismissed everything that can be dismissed and still there's this presence so to speak it's just formless and you can't grasp it it's it has no form but still it's there and you know that it's there whereas in Buddhism you just get more and more and more and more subtle you know the perceptions just become more and more and more and more subtle and there's not even I mean you'd be a heretic to want to get rid of all perception and and remain conscious it may be the perceptionist brahmas were not like statues like the later commentarial tradition declared them to

be because maybe in early Buddhism

apparently that you could be conscious

without

perceptions but it is now considered to

be unorthodox it's um it's wrong view

it's it's heretical to think that you

can have Consciousness without

perception or and other mental States

like volition

so let's see it I mean the result is

essentially the

same but it's the way they went about it

is slightly

different because in in Buddhism I mean

you start with a primary object and then

the primary object just becomes more and

more subtle until you know you get as
far with it as you possibly can whereas
somebody like St John of the Cross has
just dismissed the primary iic just
dismiss get rid of all of
it so that would be the main difference
although the results are essentially
very similar you know they're they're
getting into the same kind of mental
States or the same kind of levels of
consciousness and I think both of them
may be conducive to
Enlightenment if you're an Adept if you
are blessed with just being ripe for it
you're like the Yellow Leaf that all you
got to do is just touch it and it falls
away from the

tree so let's see what exactly is the

question

here my question is about the

similarities and differences between the

meditation methods practiced among

Mystics of the very of the major faiths

yeah unfortunately I'm really no

Authority on Sufi

meditation um I I did meet a Sufi

meditator once he almost the only thing

I can remember about his meditation was

he would meditate with his eyes open

instead of closed but then some Zen

Buddhists do that I used to meditate

with my eyes open instead of closed um

when I was in a cave in Burma a lot of

the time partly because it's like the
mental energy involved in
seeing um if your eyes are closed that
mental energy is still just kind of
knocking around looking for something to
do whereas if you keep your eyes open
even if you're staring at a blank wall
just the vision of seeing a blank wall
still is using that energy which is sort
of getting some of that energy out of
your mind which otherwise might be used
to just wander around get into
trouble
so yeah even Hindu meditation I'm it's
the Hindus are more into samata than the
Buddhists there are some smug Buddhists
who will say the Hindus only do samata

they have noasa but I don't think so

because weas is inside which can arise

spontaneously even if you're not trying

to cultivate it it can still

arise

so I think the Hindus take the path of

just more and more and more purification

more and more and more subtlety whereas

in Buddhism once you hit a like uh the

minimum necessary amount of subtlety or

the maximum level sub you once you get

to the an adequate level of subtlety you

can just bail out

sideways whereas the Hindus have this

idea of you just keep following the path

and following the path no bailing out

sideways you just keep following it
until you get to the end but there is no
end you can just keep following a path
and just increasing subtlety you know
forever
so of the two ways of doing higher
meditation practices contemplation
that I that I know of which is
contemplative Roman Catholics like the
the the discal carmelites and terraa
Buddhism they're they're similar I mean
it's the ways they go about it even
mindfulness I mean St John of the Cross
had his own kind of mindfulness the the
Catholics call it recollection which
which is kind of strange because in
recollection can mean memory also the

poly word Sadi which is translated as
mindfulness also means means
memory but it's like you're not me
remembering anything because you're
right in the present moment just like
you're destroying the past and the
present you're just or the past and the
future I mean you're just right there in
the present moment so that was a
practice for Catholics and for for
Buddhists more Buddhists than Catholics
I think you had to be in one of these
contemplative orders I think in order to
be taught this
stuff so I mean the practices between
the discal carites of the late 16th

century Spain and Terra Buddhists

they're in a lot of ways they're more

similar than different I mean it's they

just happen to converge it's like

convergent

evolution but I'm not sure exactly how

well I answered that

question and I'm not going to answer any

better because I'm moving on to the next

question which is from chasz is and

tasas is he asked this question that I

didn't understand at first it it comes

out he doesn't English is not his his

native language he's he's a barbarian

who lives in one of those countries that

does not have English as its primary

language and so he says I fell severe

existence pain and everything seems to
be good what should I do and then I
didn't asked him what does iel severe
existence pain mean and he says it is
psychological not physical I feel bad
that I exist and had in the past a few
attempts so to speak you can call it
weat tatana or desire for
non-existence While others have life
plans and Ambitions and aspirations my
life is really waiting for the end so
when he said I fell severe existence
pain I think what he means is I feel
severe existential pain
he's got existential
dooka he says his life seems to be good

probably has a good woman who loves him
what should he do well I mean for
starters just try to understand it I
mean that that would be number one I
think observe it you know observe it
like an ich theologist observes a dead
fish you know be mindful of it and I
mean the The More You observe it and I
mean not just wallowing it or feeling it
but really observing it objectively and
trying
to understand what it's like you know
what what it feels like what effect does
it have on your body what effect does it
have on your emotions what effect does
it have on your intellect just observe
it like a scientist kind of and try to

understand it and don't necessarily try
to figure it out just keep observing it
and observing it until Insight arises
spontaneously that will help you to
understand
it I mean it could be that you're just
sensitive to the first Noble Truth which
is to exist is is
dooka and it may be that there's like
karmic holdovers from previous
existences when maybe you were some sort
of anti-world aesthetic
type and that's that could everything
seems to be good partly because of the
Merit you earned as this anti- worldly
aesthetic

type but let's see here he feels bad
that he exists and had in the past a few
attempts so to speak well I
mean you have to I mean the way to be
happy is just to accept the way things
are and so if you have these feelings
you should accept those too you
shouldn't be against your against this
because that's just sort of complicated
dooka just making things worse
so I mean when you have these feelings
arise I mean you're alive now you're
going to be dead after you die there's
no need to to hurry it up because
there's obviously things you have to
learn while you're still alive so I mean
you should make use of your life

wisely and try to understand what arises
if you can I mean not try to figure it
out cerebrally but just observe it
carefully and then when when you've
observed enough that you're going to get
start getting insights you probably
already have to some
degree so just be patient and understand
or just be mindful of these feelings
that arise and when you're ready to
understand why it's that way then you
will but until then you just keep
collecting data so to speak through
mindful
observation and um be patient
you know just accept the way things are

and if you have these feelings of existential pain just observe those the way you would observe like an itch or something whatever arises you know the wind blowing on your skin You observe that existential pain You observe that you feel hungry You observe that you have an urge to eat pasta You observe that just whatever arises including ex existential pain You observe it mindfully

and it just helps and also in addition to increasing the odds of the Insight the necessary Insight arising also it just reduces the the momentum of it you know it's like you're gradually neutralizing the karma of

that and I mean pain from the Buddhist

point of view is something that you're

better off neutralizing rather than just

wallowing in

it I mean having aversion for pain

that's kind of one extreme and then just

like wallowing in that' be or or having

a version for pleasure that would you

know there's like the middle path you

shouldn't be wallowing in in anything

really but I think I'm starting to

ramble but uh good luck to you seem to

be a good

person so just be mindful just observe

it and I'm just going to move on to the

next question question this is also from

trasis and trasis says do people eat
dogs in Burma and I've heard about
people eating dogs in Burma it's mostly
like poor villagers who are ignorant and
think that eating dog meat will cure
them of
malaria that is it's sort of like this
folk remedy from malaria that some
people will eat dog meat as as in an
attempt to cure them of malaria also
I've heard the coren eat dog that I had
this the same Abbot that almost
appointed me the next Abbot or kind of
was sort of almost going to appoint me
the the next Abbot of his Monastery um
there was a Convent
of they were Franciscan nuns that lived

about a mile away and um he had he had
these puppies he wanted to get rid of
The Franciscan nuns who were on friendly
terms with him said that they' take the
they'd take the puppies and the the
Abbott said well there's a lot of coren
nuns there they might eat them and I'm
I'm telling him you know Bon I mean
they're they're Christian nuns they're
not going to be ask you know taking
these dogs in order to eat
them so there are certain ethnicities in
which eating dogs may be more common
than other
ethnicities and there's like the folk
lore the folk medicine believed in by

generally the most ignorant people most
Burmese people know that you're not
going to get cured of malaria by eating
dog meat and then there's just some who
are very poor you know that are they
they will eat anything they're more
likely to eat cats than dogs more cats
get eaten in Burma than
dogs cats are considered to be good good
eats whereas dog meat people that eat
dog meat are looked down upon by the
mainstream of burmes society and unless
maybe you're in coren state or
something so I'm just going to move on
to to zasas is this third question which
is did you start meditating because it
was easy for you or not no actually it

was not easy for me at all um just by
Nature I'm a crappy meditator that I
have a like a high strong nervous kind
of mind and it was very difficult to
meditate sometimes meditating would be
like being a c Cowboy at a rodeo riding
a bucking
bronco so yeah it was it
was yeah so it was not easier for me it
was very difficult like before I became
a monk i' tried to meditate I'd set up
like a timer for 30 minutes and I mean
it would just seem like it was taking
forever you know it was hard just to sit
still for 30 minutes or I'd light an
incense stick and you know after a while

you think oh it should be about I open

my eyes and it's you know still like

half half unburnt

still so no I was I was going against my

nature really in becoming a professional

full-time meditator and I had to

meditate like hard a lot for years

before I started really getting into

what could be called like deep

meditative

States so by Nature I am not a good

meditator so I'm just going to move on

to the next question this is from Fred

and this is the second to last question

the last two questions are from Fred and

Fred says the suta with Sati the

fisherman's son is a bit problematic

question mark most people would assume
his assumption was correct can you
comment on this if the psychic chain
jumps surely it must be connected so
he's referring to a question asked in in
the previous Q Q&A about a sua from the
majima in which a monk named Sati who
was a fisherman's son which is setting
him up for being a fool because it works
this way in the sutas if like a monk
with foolish ideas is GNA come from like
a low status family or low status like
tradition or something and for a bud for
a Buddhist a fisherman is a professional
killer Bad Karma not good so anyways
Sadi the fisherman son who was an

ordained monk nevertheless had this idea
that it is consciousness that moves from
One Life to the next that that's like
the self you know it's like your
Consciousness is what
reincarnates it just your the same
Consciousness goes into a new body is
essentially his idea and he was
denounced and scolded by the Buddha for
believing such thing and the main way of
understanding this is that like I was
saying earlier it's a different
Consciousness from one moment to the
next it's like a flame the flame is
constantly changing one moment to the
next it is a different flame even though
similar conditions are creating a

similar flame it's not exactly the same

and it's the same with Consciousness

it's not exactly the same Consciousness

similar conditions are creating a

similar Consciousness from one moment to

the next and eventually according to to

terraa Buddhist philosophy at the moment

of rebirth rebirth linking Consciousness

it actually has to jump from one body to

the next or rather it's not really

jumping because it disappears in one

body and then reappears in in in a in a

new

body a uh like a a fertilized

egg in in the case of if you're being

reborn as a as an animal including a

human animal on this planet I mean if

you're reborn in some of the heaven

Realms or the hell Realms it maybe you

just assume adult form spontaneously in

the moment of

birth so I mean the main thing to bear

in mind is it's not the same

Consciousness from one moment to the

next even in this

life so when when you die in this life

and your Consciousness reappears through

rebirth linking Consciousness into a new

life

it's it's going to be a similar

Consciousness a similar karmic stream

mainly it's the karma of it similar not

not necessarily the Consciousness

even but it's not the same Consciousness
and it's not even exactly the same Karma
because it's it's like a flame or a
river or the the electricity going
through a wire it's different from one
moment to the next it's not the same
there is no underlying stable essence
it's just the conditions that cause it
to exist happen to be there and the
conditions are changing from one moment
to the next even though they they remain
similar usually and so the Consciousness
or the karma I mean it's it continues to
arise even though it's not exactly the
same so I'm just going to move on to
Fred's second question which is the last

question of this Q&A and this is yeah

we're way less than two and a half hours

this is a short one Fred says can nibana

be experienced really and that's kind of

a trick

question um I mean in a way we're

experiencing nibana now nibana is

reality nibana is reality unfiltered

through perceptual ideas and images and

thoughts

words Perceptions in general perception

is samsara

so the thing is it's sort of like art

TOA says that I mean we got it now I

mean how far away are you from reality I

mean you're soaking in it you're like a

fish soaking in water while at the same

time being oblivious to the fact that

it's

wet so I mean you're just pervaded

through and through with nibana or the

highest truth God if you want to call it

that the Dao Brahman whatever the

absolute but I mean even calling it the

absolute is too much I mean we have to

call it something if we're GNA try and

talk about it we're g to try to

understand it through speech you have to

use words but the words are just I mean

it it

doesn't it doesn't really apply it's

just

invalid but let's just say reality is

always here and nibana is

reality so I mean we're we're

experiencing it at a subliminal level

but like ca says it's like you've got it

now but your mind is making so much

noise that you don't notice

it and that's pretty much it really so I

mean I guess when you become enlightened

you're just no longer distracted by all

the

perceptions and you're more aware of it

like at that fully conscious level

whereas right now it's just sort of this

subliminal subconscious kind of

awareness

but it's still

there and in a way we don't really

experience it more when we're
enlightened than we do now it's just
that it's pure it's less obscured but in
a way when we are enlightened we're more
conscious so I guess if we're more
conscious we'd be more aware of whatever
it is we're aware
of but in in answer to the question the
simple question can nana be experienced
really um I think it's a trick question
I don't think that like yes or no is
really valid but in a sense you can say
sure yeah we can experience reality
that's when we're enlightened we are
experiencing Ultimate Reality fully
consciously and that's it and like I

should always say at the beginning and almost never do if you have any questions you think I can answer with regard to early Buddhism Terra aut Buddhism Buddhism is m in general you know the evolution of Buddhism meditation I mean certain other kinds of philosophy and religion I mean I'm I'm No Authority on all of them but I have a fairly good working knowledge of certain aspects of it all Western philosophy even Burma living in Asia living in the forest that kind of stuff just with regard to me personally I can answer those questions fairly easily as a general rule so if you think I can answer a question feel free to include

them in the comments

below and no more than three questions

per episode please because if we're

asking unlimited numbers of questions

there's bound to be people who are going

to be asking like 10 questions and then

we can be we can be going up over four

hours in me trying to answer

them and uh smash the like button that's

what you're supposed to do you don't

just press it you don't just tap it you

smash asash the son of a [__] and

subscribe if you haven't already and uh

be happy

alrighty then hello and welcome to

question and answer number

126 I am your host poo basa and this is

my

beverage and this is the emergency

backup beverage just in case furthermore

this is the jar of sacred Sav and this

is the Cajun seasoning so I'm ready for

anything

except for maybe few of the questions

that I'm going to attempt to

answer so I'll just ceremonially remove

the little paper

umbrella from the

beverage take the preliminary Sip and

I'll just uh wade into this in a state

of being unwashed and

unkempt cuz I didn't bathe today I bath

twice yesterday so so man I just twisted

my tongue trying to say

that so without any further

Ado I'm going to answer questions here

or at least try to answer questions the

first one is one of the more difficult

subtle kind of question from Master Poe

which is what you would expect from

Master Poe and Master Po says if one

enters Nirvana or enters

n if one enters Nirvana can one also

exit

Nirvana and who is it that achieves

Nirvana or anything for that matter

being no self in

Buddhism

well it all depends on how you look at

it I guess for example if you look at it

from the point of view of Orthodox

terraa before you become fully

enlightened and according to Orthodox

terava even a fully enlightened being

when they're alive anyway they enter

Nirvana so to speak for like a

trillionth of a second like an Arun can

do it at will do he wants to enter

Nirvana for a trillionth of a second he

just goes right ahead and does that and

then you go into a kind of very brief

coma and then you just regain normal

Consciousness

again which is not very convincing to me
I really have a little difficulty in
swallowing that
information
so I mean really there's no entering of
Nirvana there's nobody that enters
Nirvana the whole thing is a paradox and
I say it over and over again and people
don't like not having things
resolved
so I really don't know what to tell you
like in in Mahayana they play up the
Paradox you know they point out out
there is Enlightenment but there's
nobody that becomes enlightened you know
there's no real state that you can point
at it's just kind of paradoxical because

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

like the whole mechanism of

Enlightenment like for example the the

second part of Master Po question is who

is it that achieves

Nirvana nobody there never was

anybody so in a way what Nirvana is is

you've got this

delusion that's like a flame it's it's

not the same from one moment to the next

there's no abiding self Essence to this

delusion that you can point

at and then when that dies down then the

Nirvana the the reality that was there

all the time shines

through

so who is it that achieves Nirvana there

nobody achieves it there is there was

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

anymore they become

irrelevant

so I don't think there's any

real satisfying way of explaining

Nirvana

so I'll probably keep trying though

because people will keep asking the

question and some people are just too

lazy or too to inconsiderate or whatever

to watch all

125 of the previous q&as just to find

out if the question they're curious

about has already been answered and it

often has just about every Q&A though I

will get like a unique answer or

question that I've never been asked

before so anyways let's just kind of do

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

that are all trying to be explained at
the same level of reality for example by
Abid dama and the commentarial tradition
which is
orthodox
so it's more Nirvana is more more of at
first maybe a fading out of delusion
until finally it just gets to the point
where the it's like these
perceptions that used to be believed in
are no longer believing in themselves
because there's no self to believe in
them it's just sort of a
self-referential kind of a thing and
then they just become sort of denatured
and irrelevant so that a fully
enlightened being can be in a state of

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

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

the Buddhist the ancient Indian

explanation of why actors go to hell

it's not like they're moral degenerates

which is the way most cultures

traditionally have looked upon show

business people it's it's a whole

different reason in in terraa Buddhist

ethics and so anyways Master Poe is

asking if actors can go to hell for

creating full realities that people

believe in at least temporarily couldn't

that be this a similar case with fiction

authors and personally I do think that

it's the ethics

of some

artist like writing a screenplay writing

a a play writing um or just acting in a
play acting in a movie writing a novel a
short story whatever it's it's should be
judged on a person byerson basis because
some authors and even some
actors they may be acting in the case of
the actor in a spiritually uplifting
sort of movie know some people find
certain movies profound and
helpful
so I think it should it could be judged
on a a like a case by casee basis
fiction authors I think
I don't know it's it depends on what
kind of fiction they're writing you know
some some fiction writers are writing
uplifting stuff like what Richard Bach

for example I think that's his name he
wrote Jonathan Livingston Seagull and
Illusions and so forth which are
profound
so yeah I some can go to hell just like
some you know bus drivers can go to hell
it's just uh depends on their what
they're doing and their attitudes with
regard to what they're doing what their
motivations are what their will is with
regard to
it it Sugg justs that from a an orthodox
Terra Buddhist point of view uh creating
false realities like I mean they didn't
have fiction writers in the Buddhist
time they probably had something like an

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

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

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

the poly

texts but as a Freudian term

um yeah it just doesn't exist because

the whole the whole idea of you know the

ego the ID the super ego you know the

edus complex and all this that's

Freudian psychology which didn't really

exist and even you know like a early

19th century English speaker wouldn't

know what you were talking about

probably if you start talking about the

ego or like especially like the ID and

super ego and that kind of thing it may

be that Freud just borrowed a term that

was already existent in the English

language I really am unfamiliar with the

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

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

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

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

to them um in Burma and also in the west
maybe a little more in the west than in
Burma and it's the four Brahma wehar are
the Divine
abiding are meta or
generally loving kindness mudita or like
sympathetic Joy being happy at another
person's
happiness um no that was the third one
karuna is the second one which is
compassion and the fourth one is UPA or
equinity and there are a number of books
written just on the Brahma viharas and
because I was never particularly
interested in the in the subject I
haven't read any of them but I do know
that they exist and um I'm sure that you

could do a little research you know just
ask somebody that knows more about the
subject than I do what is the best book
about the four Brahma weara and it may
be that aan tanero has written something
or beu B or or
somebody but I'm sure that there are
several at least books just on the four
prah
Horas but again I was never never
particularly interested in that it's
like when when you study Buddhism
generally you you sort of resonate with
certain teachings and gravitate in that
direction other teachings just like the
four elements also for me I have a minor

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

always Mata I've never heard of any kind

of guided equinity

meditation of you know within the the

context of the four Brahma viharas or

sympathetic Joy meditation I've never

never come across that but meta

meditation it's

everywhere and I forgot where I was even

going with that why did I even start

with

that oh man yeah I I got so lost in in

in exp explaining my terms that I forgot

the whole point of starting the

sentence which does happen

sometimes yeah yeah I completely lost it

but I mean the four Brown We hars There

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

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

four Brahma wih haras and I'm not trying
to bash it at all and I'm just moving on
to the next question so what I'm
doing this is from covac and sead zida
and seac and CAD zida he'll ask a number
of questions on the same theme sort of
like a a yabut kind of followup to the
pr previous question and so we're we're
on like number three of questions from
covac c z not regarding the karma of
becoming
unconscious so coaction CAD Z says since
you say that you could have Karma to
make your un make you unconscious as you
don't feel the passage of time then why
do you think the same can't apply to
people who had been doing a meditation

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

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

sudden shift in scene and maybe you have
a karma for a sudden shift in scene you
have the karma to all of a sudden your
body is 5 years
older something like that but still
you're not going to be expending any
karma when you are totally
unconscious so I mean getting back to
the the brahmas the perceptionist
brahmas I've got a little popup window
here trying to sell me
something perceptionist brahmas
supposedly
they occupy a heaven realm that is far
above the human realm according to the
31 PLS of existence scheme of Orthodox

terraa Buddhism there's this one plane
this Heaven Realm of the perceptionist
brahmas where they are like statues they
have no mentality going on because
according to Abid dama according to
Orthodox
terraa if you're going to be conscious
you have to have perceptions so they're
not conscious they're like statues they
cannot possibly expend any Karma there's
no change in their karma the whole time
that they are in suspended
animation it may be that their karma is
that they're just going to skip a few
zillion years but I don't know why they
would do that it it wouldn't even
necessarily be an like unnoticeable

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

being made or or

expended no generation or

fruition Unless somehow your mind is

just off in some other realm but the

implication with regard to the 31 plans

of existence is that these perceptionist

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

frozen like a statue here while their

mind is off doing something else that's

not what they're

saying so again if you are going to

become completely unconscious for one

second or one World

Cycle then I mean really it's all the

same because there's no karma that's

actually being spended it's just that

you have this Karma to suddenly skip to

a sudden change of

scene and that's it that's all it

amounts to or there might be other

ramifications of it but nothing is

happening subjectively with regard to

your karma if your mind is completely

not working at

all so I'm just going to move on to se

action and CAD Z's next

question and he says this is a question

I asked to you as a biologist rather

than a Buddhist as I know that is also

your specialty what are your thoughts on

parent Gene editing future your children

personally I see it as a moral good as

you would probably agree that much of

the important things in life IQ
discipline looks morality are highly
dependent on genetics and not just a
product of the environment as well and
thus worth the risks of potential side
effects of removing the seemingly bad
genes in your kids they might have some
evolutionary reason to exist but the
pros seem to outweigh the cons in our
current niche
well um I've I've answered this question
before and like I I said
before I think any kind of like genetic
manipulation like genetic
engineering is going is going to be a
mistake because humans are only human
they're going to be improving one thing

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

and you're going to wind up with

drawbacks you're going to wind up with

the Dark Side of all

that but I think a better method would

be if you could

screen like you know the the the husband

the Father the prospective father

donates a seen sample and then you got

like these technicians that are

screening out the the spermatozoa that

are carrying like lethal genes or or

certain like disease genes that kind of

thing then if you just screen them so

that you're getting the the the

healthiest ones then I think that would

be much less of a case of playing with

fire than you've got like technicians

that are actively genetically

manipulating

the Genome of some child to be born that

that's going to have its own moral

problems from a Buddhist point of view

and also just like difficulties from a

biological point of view because

inevitably humans are going to overlook

something and create some kind of

monster so I guess I answer that one and

so I move on to seov action CAD Z's

third question which is how long is Tig

banned for and yeah I'm I'm thinking

indefinitely I'm not going to say I'm

not going to just vow in public just

swear on a stack of Bibles or something

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

inviting someone to watch porn with him
and it was just a joke but it was just
the standard TIG trolling kind of a joke
that got him
ejected so I'm just going to move on to
next question this is from mraa Buddha
but I will come back it's in a a Discord
server that is dedicated primarily
towards Dharma and Dharma adjacent
issues for the most
part that I mean there really does have
to be some minimum standard of allowable
conduct I mean certain things have been
not allowed from the beginning like
Angry name calling and other members
that kind of thing abusive speech you

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

on jidu Krishna

myty and I have to admit I like Krishna

myty I mean generally if I just say

Krishna mty I'm referring to Jay or jidu

Krishna mury and if I'm referring to ug

Krishna mury which is an entirely

different Krishna mty than I would

specify ug Krishna mty um but if I just

say Krishna myy and I'm not already

talking about ug I generally mean J

and I mean he had an interesting life I

never really read his biography or

anything but it's my understanding that

there was like a a school of

theosophists I can't remember their name

that discovered him and were grooming

him to become a kind of world
Messiah and he had some kind of
spiritual breakthrough some kind of
Awakening experience and then he just
said no I'm not going to be your world
Messiah and just took off and went his
own way
and there's a certain amount of Scandal
associated with Krishna mty and I mean
on the one hand he's declared to be I
don't know if he declared himself to be
but he he was certainly declared to be
fully enlightened and the people that
were grooming him to be the world
Messiah apparently considered him to be
close enough to full Enlightenment for
their

purposes um but at the same time he has

a

very oh kind of an anarchistic

interpretation of what enlightenment is

all about from a terraa Buddhist point

of view he couldn't possibly be fully

enlightened but I'm not completely

Orthodox in that regard I am a little

more open-minded and I'm not just a pure

dogmatist with regard to Orthodox terraa

Buddhism so he notoriously was having an

affair with his personal secretary's

wife so I mean there's that and what

might be even more scandalous I was told

that in his later years he actually wore

a toupe and it's it's it's hard for me

to imagine a fully enlightened being

wearing a

wig I mean unless it's for like some

sort of ceremonial purpose but just for

like cosmetic purposes to look better

is it's kind of he's it's kind of a

paradoxical case I would be more

inclined to have I'm more inclined to be

open-minded

with regard to Krishna M's Enlightenment

than say osho's Enlightenment I was

asked about Osho in the previous

Q&A um so again he he apparently had

attained some higher level of

Consciousness his books are profound

I've got a couple of books by chrishna

mury on the bookcase back there and what

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

this this dichotomy of real
versus ideal it's like whatever reality
is that's it I mean don't fight against
reality because you're going to
lose so I mean if you're just an
of a person don't struggle against your
assholery you know you should be mindful
of it and try to understand it and
ideally if if it is intended to be it
will Fade Out the better you understand
it because assholery is often the result
of ignorance
anyway so when I was still a monk living
in Burma I had a certain friend who was
a Hermit who lived inside of a big
hollow tree and he was familiar with
Krishna mury and I told him about this

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

regarding him like messing around with

women other than maybe just like

touching them in certain

ways but I mean

like committing adultery that kind of

thing I've never I've never heard any

any rumors of

that so there's a kind of spectrum with

regard to understanding what

enlightenment is all about what an

enlightened being is like at one extreme

you've got Terra of Buddhism I mean

that's one of the most extreme

interpretations of an enlightened being

and that an enlightened being has to

have absolutely pure morals you have to

purify your morals before you can purify

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

sure but just to say that he can't say

what isn't

true um I mean why maybe there's some

enlightened reason for on some occasion

saying what happens not to be strictly

factual

so um with regard to Krishna

mury yeah it's hard to say I mean he

he'd just be a question mark in my my

opinion neim cley Baba would have his

disciples go and listen to Krishna mury

when Krishna mury was in India giving

talks he send his disciples to go listen

to Rah morti he called him because um

maharaji n babo is more into Rah than in

Krishna so Krishna mty I mean he's well

worth reading and even if you're a

devout terava Buddhist it's good to have
your views
challenged and a lot of what he said
really really does make sense like the
whole pitting the ideal against reality
you know the ideal versus the real I
mean that really is like what is it the
third patriarch of Chinese Zen um San
says you know to set up what you like
against what you dislike is the disease
of the mind it's kind of a similar sort
of
statement so Krishna mury definitely was
at a higher level of Consciousness than
the average person just like Osho
probably was also but that doesn't

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

Jupiter's gravitational field and and
get sucked into Jupiter that kind of
thing so let's just say the Earth just
goes off into space like the moon does
in the old TV show space
1999 well how long will the human race
survive it could be indefinitely but it
would be in very small numbers you know
they there' probably be like um like
what do you call it Fallout shelters you
know like the sort of thing that was
being discussed at the end of Doctor
Strange Love the movie Doctor Strange
Love where probably numerous governments
have just underground bunkers with like
nuclear reactor keeping the energy going

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

that are a mile underground or

whatever so I'm just going to move on to

Zeno's next

question which is do you believe it is

possible for advanced civilizations to

arise on planets that are entirely

covered in water and I actually read a

book by Isaac Asimov I think it was

called extraterrestrial civilizations

where he actually discusses this that

he was he was talking about how you've

got like an intelligent species living

in water and they could become very

intelligent just like an octopus is

relatively intelligent dolphins and

sperm whales are relatively very

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

much so there's that

too so I think you could have an

advanced civilization of intelligent

beings in water but it would not be

technological advancement probably it

would just be they would be wise beings

maybe much wiser more intelligent than

us it's just that they would still be

living in like an enlightened Stone Age

kind of a

situation unless they figure out how to

get advanced technology underwater with

no fire

so I'm just going to move on to zeni

void's third question which is have you

ever experienced fear of large inanimate

spaces that hold many things like the

ocean space

Etc and I think it was the previous Q&A

I mentioned probably the closest I ever

got to that was I was on this tiny raft

that was made out of two inner tubes

with like a little bamboo frame over the

top of it and a wooden plank seat across

that and I was going down the chindwin

River at the beginning of the the

monsoon season when the chindwin river

was flooded and the weather was rainy

and stormy and I'm out in the middle of

this big river on this tiny raft just

feeling like a speck in the midst of the

universe feeling like some tiny Beetle

like in the middle of a concrete parking

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

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

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

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

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

unhappiness

dissatisfaction

unease so I mean just trying to live

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

of dooka let's say you really take the

tech seriously and you just become a

homeless Wanderer wearing Rags sleeping

under trees I mean just like two weeks

after the last rain you're sitting under

a tree you don't have a mosquito net you

just just get eaten alive by by

mosquitoes and you're not even allowed

to slap

them so there's a lot of dooka involved

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

that's geared towards like gradual

reduction of

dooka you know it's it's you're sort of tapering off you're weaning yourself off of Misery by practicing dhama but the misery is still there it just becomes more and more attenuated until finally you get to a certain point where your suffering and delusion become rarified enough that you can just sort of see through it and transcend
it but I mean even according to the like the the text themselves the simile of the raft for example Buddhism is is just a raft made out of rubbish it's made out of sticks and Vines and grass and this kind of stuff that you use to get across the flood and then once youve crossed

the flood you just cast it aside you

don't need it

[Music]

anymore so I think I'm just going to

move on to noddings second

question which is as follows I'm also

curious what you think of ramam

maharshi's teachings on God and whether

or not they are compatible with Buddhist

philosophy his descriptions make God

seem like a conditional manifestation of

ignorance which percept which perhaps

would be compatible with picha Samu here

are some of his comments quote ishara

the person personal God the Supreme

creator of the universe really does

exist but this is only true from the

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

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

rules and laws this is like most of the

western

monotheistic conception of God is it's

like a giant

man and then you've got the more

abstract God like Brahman or really even

if you read like some of the more

advanced Roman Catholic theology

probably Greek Orthodox would be similar

where it's no longer a he no longer has

any

preferences you know he no longer lays

down any Commandments anything like that

it's just Ultimate

Reality but before you get to that point

you personify the absolute you don't

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

effects it's perceived causes and

effects from the Buddhist point of view

it's just impersonal dependent core

Rising nature taking its course whereas

in a more theistic religious system then

I mean God just kind of steps in

automatically and you apply all of that

to

God or you apply a lot of it to God

anyhow

so I think mainly his description is you

know the absolute God or or Brahman

which is a more advanced conception than

the personified

Brahma you know the the the god that

actually cares about answers prayers and

that kind of stuff and you start off

with a

more a more

Elementary kind of understanding of God

and then eventually you just get to the

point where it's just Ultimate

Reality

so yeah I think there is a certain

amount of of overlap with regard to um a

personalized personified God and

dependent core Rising but the

personified God goes beyond just

dependent core Rising with regard to the

attributes that are attributed to the

personified capital G God

but I mean they kind of both take care

of sort of regulating the the phenomenal

universe so I guess there is there's

quite a bit of

overlap and I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from

quor and quator says if there is no self

does that mean that there is the

experience and an observer but no

experiencer or perhaps The Experience

itself requires a witness for it to

exist

and the identification to that

experience is what creates self so this

is kind of a complicated

self-referential sort of question maybe

I should uh kind of try to ignore the

second half of it at least for the time

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

Observer there's no

experiencer that

again I mean i' I've explained this many

times you know it's getting back to like

the uncarved block of marble the

uncarved block of marble is the reality

and you've got an infinite number of

possible statues contained inside that

block of marble they're really in there

they're already there all you got to do

is just disregard the extraneous Rock

they're right there every single

molecules already in the exact correct

place they're really in there but

it's just like potentially or virtually

or

conditionally so these experiences and
observers and experiencers are potential
conditional virtual but not ultimately
real the only reality is just the rock
itself and when you got nothing to
compare That Rock with then even that
becomes
meaningless
so let's see quor says or perhap per APS
The Experience itself requires a witness
for it to exist and the identification
to that experience is what creates uh no
it's like the experience does not
require a
witness that is um a misunderstanding
because like you've got a
perception let's say you've got this

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

conscious

the perception itself is perhaps is you

can say that it's substance is

consciousness and that's I mean it's

conscious the the thought itself is

conscious it doesn't need any kind of

like Observer or any such

thing so I guess instead of spending

another five

minutes wallowing in that my attempts to

explain I mean some of this stuff is

really hard to explain because human

languages is not designed the human

brain is not

designed to to know this

stuff so anyways quor second

question you mention that once you

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

feeling on body come to a stage that
body is not felt it at all and then it's
just
nibbana well no it doesn't work that
your mind just Fades out into nibana I
mean you can it fades out to a point
where you you're become more susceptible
to having an Insight like a liberating
insight and experiencing
nibana but then I mean the mental States
come back and a fully enlightened being
is still in the bana presumably this may
not be orth orox this is how I see it
that it just becomes all this the
perception becomes irrelevant I mean I I
keep saying this stuff over and over and
over and over and over and over

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

forest and then he starts meditating and
in the text I think he's meditating on
Earth elements just as an example and
then that gets more and more subtle till
he gets into first Jan then second Janna
third Jon fourth jna and then he attains
something according to the Sut that's
even higher than fourth Jan which is
let's
see gosh I don't remember what it's
called now the formless concentration of
Mind Animo Sam the formless
concentration of mind so
even that is not Enlightenment so what
happens is that after he attains that he
comes back out of it and then he
realizes he has this Insight that arises

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

you

create I mean it's just going to be

conditioned it's not going to be a

Nirvana and you can't make Nirvana you

can't make yourself be enlightened and

so it's like finally it just Dawns on

this meditator it's like he reached the

highest possible level of meditation and

even that's not it and so it's like

finally it's like this this belief that

you can attain it it just collapses and

it's already

there it's all this belief and striving

and and struggling and all that is

obscuring what has been there from the

beginning so even getting into really

subtle meditative States that's not good

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

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

experiences a glimpse of nibana does
this refer to the cessation of
perception and feeling or is that state
considered to have no awareness and thus
wouldn't give any meaningful insight
into nibana that would result in the
dropping of the first three feds thank
you for sharing your Insight and
knowledge and may you have a happy New
Year well same to
you
although um people people just
obstinately continue asking me questions
about like the four stages of ARA Hood
in early Buddhist philosophy terava
Buddhist philosophy and I keep saying

that I'm pretty sure that's an
anachronism I don't think the Buddha
really taught these four stages of
sainthood and so it's pretty much
academic what the text say about
them
so if a sodon I experience is a glimpse
of nibana I don't think originally
soapas were superhuman beings I just
don't I think originally a soda or
stream enterer was someone who had just
entered upon a spiritual life who had
begun interpreting their existence in
spiritual terms they would be sort of
like the Buddhist equivalent of a born
again Christian like a genuine born
again Christian not some famous

entertainer who just announces that

they're a born- again Christian and then

three years later they're wallowing

depravity

again so if aapon experiences a glimpse

of nibana does this refer to the

sensation of perception and feeling well

nibana is not the same as the sensation

of perception and feeling the sensation

of perception and feeling it's another

one of these

anachronistic States in my opinion I

mean you start off with four janas and

that's not good enough because the

ancient Indian philosophical mind was

always trying to one up the absolute

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

like second a and second

B and then you get the these extra

States like the the signless

concentration of mind that I mentioned

with regard to the small discourse on

voidness or this this sensation of

perception and feeling which is pretty

similar to signless perception of mind

you know they're just trying to one up

the upanishad are kind of the same way

you know you got Braman and then you've

got like this state that's above Brahman

it's like OA Brahman or

something so probably the Buddha

himself he he taught you know there's

enlightened beings and there's

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

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

glimpse of nibana upon attaining his
fruition of the sort of no the path path
and fruition of being a sopana let's say
for sure that a sopana sees the glimpse
of nibana and also let's just say for
sure there is such a state as the
sensation of perception and feeling but
I think you have to be at least an
anagami
to get to the level of the sensation of
perception and
feeling so yeah it's it's orth from
Orthodox point of view it's not the same
and from my personal best guess of the
situation my understanding of the
situation it's all academic you're just
talking about artifacts of of later

early Buddhist Indian

philosophy so I'm just going to move on

the next question here this is from

nmit and nmit says do you think the

bagavat Gita could be written to counter

Buddhism and this is kind of strange

because I answered a question about the

Bhagavad Gita in the previous Q&A in

which I was saying exactly this so it's

it may be that he's just kind of like

wait a minute did I hear you correctly

when you said the babad Gita could be

written to counter

Buddhism you know it could be like wait

a minute can you say that again because

I already I'm already answered this one

in the previous Q&A and it may be that

he heard that and then he asked this in

response to me saying that the bagavat

Gita indeed

was written in part

plausibly um as a kind of argument

against

Buddhism and to some degree I mean it is

it does make sense I have read that you

know the babad Gita was written you know

in Buddhist times you know was it was

written after the the time of the Buddha

and it was teaching some pretty

obviously non Buddhist things like like

Krishna persuading Arjuna to fight on a

battlefield against his own

relatives you know that would be just a

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

they've got their own Merit you know
they they also have like positive POS
teachings in addition to this sort of
negative like refutations of other
systems
so I do think it is possible it is
plausible that some of the Bhagavad Gita
is sort of like backhanded Jabs at
Buddhism or maybe that's not a very
polite way of putting it but attempted
refutations or contradictions sort of
like saying implying that Buddhism
doesn't have it completely
correct which kind of makes sense from a
like a a Hindu point of view I don't
know if you could call them Hindus by
the time that they started following the

babad G instead of just doing vadic

sacrifices and so

forth

so yeah so in answer to the question

here do I think the babad Gita could be

written to counter Buddhism I think that

certain parts of it may have had

Buddhism in mind when like Krishna is

telling Arjuna why it's okay to kill his

own relatives it's like in in the Gita

one of the main teachings is you follow

your Dharma which is like your duty and

you just offer up the results the fruits

of that to God you know you're a soldier

it's your duty to kill so you kill but

you're not interested in in Rewards or

punishments anything any like the
results of your actions you just
dedicate to God which according to
Buddhism doesn't work but in a way it's
it's kind of a a Hindu way of
transcending uhu you know it's almost
like a tantric attitude really you know
you can kill people and then you
just just dedicate the fruits of that to
God because God's telling you to do it
anyway
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question this is from
Romeo and Romeo says in the internet era
is there any advantage to roughing it
out in caves in Burma and such like you
did as a monk in terms of practicing

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

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

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

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

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

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

comfy like

monasteries and they don't really face

any challenges you know it's like all

these lat and tendencies just remain

latent because there's no opportunity

for them to arise because they're not

being challenged

so yeah I mean definitely you go out and

wander around homeless in a you know

like a a tropical Asian Forest it's

going to be a very different experience

very different learning experience than

studying articles and texts on a

computer screen in the comfort of your

own

home I mean you you don't really have

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

of a good thing it wouldn't save me all
this unnecessary trouble of all this
trials and tribulations of living in
Burma it would just be I would be just
become so much of a couch potato that I
just couldn't bring myself to do it
anymore so yeah the internet really does
not create Heroes it creates sort of
like spiritual
Unix just kind of weak flabby
people that I mean they just don't see
any point in getting off their chair or
off their couch you know just shutting
down the computer and doing something
you know substantial
so if available internet uh did cause me

not to be ordained it would not have
been for my benefit it would just be
that I had just become so much of a what
a dopamine junkie and and just a couch
potato that I couldn't bring myself to
do what the Buddha says a person ought
to
do so I'm just going to move on the next
question this is from tasz is and tasas
is says let's say that somewhere in some
forest or just plain basement with
internet access Pacha Buddhas or just
normal awakened people exist today they
don't want girlfriends money social
interactions they eat just because
they're hungry and there is nothing they
have to do could you agree that for

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

reform camp or

something

um let's

see yeah I mean it depends on the

society it depends on the individual

person it depends on who in the society

what kind of authority figures this

enlightened being come across like the

wisdom of the social worker let's say

someone gets referred to a social worker

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

underachieving at work and then their

boss is sympathetic because enlightened

beings tend to be good people that

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

give you a chance you go and talk to

this motivational therapist you know and

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

is possible to compress all major
teachings of the Buddha into just one
volume one book and disregard all
repetitions similar sutas jotas poetic
Stuff Etc um theoretically it's possible
although really the main problem is
knowing for sure what the Buddha did and
did not
teach so I mean if you're just going to
go with philosophical schools like the
most influential teachings then yeah you
could even use AI to help you compile it
and just come up with this volume of you
know 100 Pages or 300 Pages or 10 pages
or whatever you know you
just it's possible but when you want to
know for sure what the historical gab

Buddha really taught you can't know for
sure it's it's largely detective work
and guess work and I mean there's no way
to be 100%
certain but it's been tried before for I
mean you can find like Buddhism in a
nutshell or what the Buddha taught by W
po rahula there's all these books that
are like a little synopsis like a
summary of the main teachings of
Buddhism but whether the historical
Buddha really taught this stuff or or
not is questionable in some
cases so I think I probably answered
that one yeah so I'm just going to move
on to Chas as this his third question

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

by so yeah banana milkshakes are good

too I have to

admit anyways and but with with to milk

drink he has milk drink in quotes

then milk with coffee with milk in it

which is what I'm drinking

now so anyways next question is from

Gordon and this is kind of a long

complicated question it's kind of a

trick a trick of asking a whole bunch of

questions as one question I think but

anyways Gordon says let's say a

scientist sets up an experiment ment he

finds eight people four that have

expressed an interest in in killing

another human being and four that won't

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

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

it

so describe the karma earn for each of

the participants and it's going to

differ from one person to the next there

is no

cookbook system for if person a does ACT

B it's going to result in karmic result

C it doesn't work that way two people

can do the exact same thing even with

the same motives but because the

circumstances of like their past Karma

and everything are different their their

feelings afterwards are different maybe

they're going to have different Karma

because of that so the people that want

to kill they're already getting bad

karma because of their desire to kill

but it's going to depend on like what
kind of desire to kill do they have are
they just a sociopath that's just bored
it's like yeah I'll kill somebody or is
it like I hate everybody I want to kill
this
so I mean even this the desire to
kill two people can have a desire to
kill somebody and for one of them it
might
be like just at least kind of a cold
ruthless kind of a motivation well the
other one is just based on just rage and
hatred so I mean just the quality of
these two people both wanting to kill
somebody just even setting aside like

the father whose daughter has been

molested by this who's just

smirking and and joking and say says

he's going to do it

again that I mean to set aside the

indignant father you know that kind of

scenario just you just got a bad person

who's just wants to kill somebody and

still there's going to be a spectrum of

different kinds of attitudes with regard

to somebody wanting to kill somebody

somebody that they don't even

know

so I think part of what I was talking

about in a previous Q&A is is going to

apply here in

that whether thinking you killed

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

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

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

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

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

be taken into

consideration so I mean wanting to kill

is certainly worse than not wanting to

kill that's I mean that's not wanting to

kill is is morally neutral at

worst wanting to kill is always like

morally negative then if you really did

kill or not the only difference um would

be like at a very subconscious level

maybe and then if you kill on purpose or

accidentally then the accidentally one I

mean that can mess up your life even

even worse than someone who actually did

kill somebody or it could have like in

the case of an enlightened being it

would have no

effect ideally theoretically at least in

some

cases so God I hope I answer that

question it's a long

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

the next question this is from scolin or

schuline and this is another kind of

long well this next question isn't but

the one after that from scho ofine is a

long one so this one is the Resurgence

of Flat Earth a Zionist scop and I've

never seen any evidence suggesting this

I've never I've never heard any

theories um until maybe now that there's

a Zionist scop to get lots of people to

believe that the Earth is flat really I

have no idea why it is that more and

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

the very fact that the higher up you go
above the surface of the Earth the
farther you can see indicates that the
Earth is
curved I mean if the Earth really was
completely flat then you'd be able to
see a million miles you know just
assuming that atmospheric like like fog
or something didn't block The View but I
mean you wouldn't be able to see farther
the higher up you
go so I mean whether all this belief in
the Flat
Earth and uh you know the faked moon
landing and all that whether this kind
of stuff is Zionist Sops I don't know

what benefit they would get from it

other than just like promoting a certain

amount of like soft headedness in

certain people I don't know I don't see

what the point of it would be but who

knows I'm really not an authority on

Zionist

scops so anyways I'm just going to move

on to scadden's next question which is

kind of a similar one I get this

suspicion he says would you kindly

anthropologically critique the fenis

rules of acquisition and the fangi are

an alien race on later later versions of

Star Trek they weren't on the original

Star Trek they were on like the Next

Generation and they're just kind of a

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

business 47 don't trust a man wearing a

better suit than your own 48 the larger

the smile the larger the knife 91 your

boss is only worth what he pays you 94

females and finances don't mix 109

dignity and an empty sack is worth the

sack and 190 here all trust nothing so

I'm supposed to

give scroll up here a little my kind

anthropolog iCal critique and personally

I think that this is sort of like a a

backdoor uh

like it seems like it's sort of like

underhandedly referring to a certain

stereotype of a certain human ethnicity

that is not a space

alien a stereotype of like a superficial

money grubbing worldly minded

materialist

and I mean there are people that that

live at this level it's it's they

consider themselves to be superior to

anyone else just because everyone else

is too stupid to make as much money as

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

best to avoid such people if if possible

or have as little to do with them as

possible and if you do have to do

something just be polite and you

know but uh yeah this is pretty pretty

extreme stereotype of just like the

absolute greedy money grubbing

materialist and there are people like

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

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

nowadays that most ashkanazi Jews are descended from these kazars and not really from Hebrews but I'm pretty sure there have been genetic studies that show that actual Kazar ancestry is minimal in modern ashkanazi Jews modern ashkanazi Jews are predominantly European and they do have some Hebrew ancestry I'm pretty confident but I do think that the majority of their ancestry at this point is like Eastern European but they do have some Hebrew in them so that I think there are some people who do not like Hebrews who are trying to play up this Kazar Theory just to deprive the Hebrews of their Holy

Land considering that the kazars didn't

come from

there

so let's see oh he's also he also has

this the bullet point his bullet point

commentary to this question is I read

once that during the Cold War there was

an immigration treaty with the S Union I

think it explains why most 83% are

far-left and atheist I think he's

referring to Israelis or like Jewish

people in Israel and I don't think that

uh it's going to be 83% farle in Israel

anymore it may have been that way at one

time but the the leftist political

parties in Israel have pretty much

collapsed the Israel is pretty much

right-wing now at least

politically um

so yeah I think I think the main answer

to this question would be to refer to

genetic studies of the ancestry of

ashkanazi Jews and I do not think that

there is very much Kazar ancestry I

assume that there's

some but I don't think that it's really

one of the main

ingredients and so I'm just going to

move on to the next question this is

from dhama

river and dhama river says have you

heard of the sasana raka Buddhist

sanctuary in Malaysia someone

recommended it as a good place to

practice meditation and receive training

to ordain as a monk have you ever heard

of it have you ever visited this place

or lived there what is your general

opinion of Buddhism in Malaysia okay now

I don't think I've ever heard of sasana

rqa Buddhist sanctuary in Malaysia I at

first I was thinking it might be I think

it's the

II let's see International

oh

boy I was I was thinking of it just

earlier it's it's the aidas it's a

mahasi place in Malaysia but I think

that's I

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

teaching Buddhism to a

Malaysian so the fact that you've got

Buddhist centers in Malaysia is kind of

strange like even books i' I've had

somebody send me a book that was printed

in Malaysia for it was a Buddhist book

and on the cover it says not for Malay

or I think it's not for Muslims I think

it

says and you have to put that on the

book it wasn't that the the Buddhists

were being up and saying no this isn't

for Fior Muslims or anything no it

wasn't that way at all it was the law

that they had to put like a warning like

on a cigarette pack this is not for

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

common in Burma I mean not like super
common but I have met several of
them
so yeah I mean it could be a good place
but I really don't know that much about
it but the whole situation of Buddhism
in Malaysia is kind of a strange
situation and I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from
PSA and PSA says it sucks that even if
we have a solid theoretical
understanding of the Dharma we are still
bombarded with all kinds of feelings and
cravings and addictions and habits
that are so strong and it makes you feel
like all our theoretical understanding

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

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

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

go so what can we do to reduce the

strength of Body Sensations that enslave

us and dictate so many of our actions

well renounce the world for starters

really I mean it used to be that

Buddhism step one the first thing you do

before you become a Buddhist or right

after you become a Buddhist is renounce

the

world so what can we do to reduce the

strength of Body Sensations yes simplify

and slow down your

existence and

uh yeah and just practice mindfulness as

fulltime as you possibly can

but this is really it's it's it's a

common predicament like somebody in the

west who you know they're very

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

in a an environment when you're

bombarded by stimuli that that is going

to make it more difficult to be mindful

of whatever

arises

so I mean at the very least you know you

can try to practice some let's see what

is it

Nama which is renunciation it's the

third param first is Donna Sila then n

of the 10 parmes according to Terra

Buddhist tradition that's renunciation

so that's towards the beginning that's

one of the more Elementary things to do

you know one of the that's one of the

basics and it's just people in the west

I mean the addictions prevent them from

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

same stuff yesterday I can tell you that
from experience experience there's a lot
of old habits that pretty much just were
invisible most of the time that I was a
monk and then I come back and start
hanging out with lay people in America
again they just come right back
again so Eternal vigilance is the price
of
Freedom so to
speak so what can we do to reduce the
strength of Body Sensations that enslave
I mean you've got to
just remove yourself from
distractions so that you can have more
you can slow things down simplify things
to some degree and then just be mindful

of whatever

arises and I mean it's not going to work

perfectly but at least it's going to

reduce the amount of

distraction this next question is from

Kevin and I have no idea

where Kevin comes from why why he was

moved to ask this question but as a

general rule I do answer questions

unless they're just

flagrantly just on you know just like

abusive or something anyways Kevin says

I know you liked a drink as a monk did

you have any Drunken Monkey kung fu

skills when you disr did you have to

give up the Kung Fu or are you you're

still a bit handy and then he says

hiya

well Kevin is delusional if he says he

knows that I liked a drink as a monk in

my 30 years as a monk I drank a total of

one beer and that was when I was in

America hanging out with Americans I

thought what the hell I'll have one beer

and that was it I had accidentally would

take a sip of like medicine that turned

out that had alcohol in it a few times I

would take a sip of some kind of fruit

juice or sugar cane juice that had

started to ferment in the tropical hot

weather in Burma you know it starts

tasting like wine a little bit so you

have to confess the

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

Burma the Maha Ari sect of Buddhism that
was predominant in Burma before the
burmes converted to terraa where the
monks would drink alcohol and they they
practice some kind of martial arts some
some kind of boxing I
think um but speaking of the old TV show
kung fu there was a a generous um
supporter and and viewer of this show uh
sent me for Christmas a box set of the
entire Kung Fu series including some
like extra documentary stuff which I
haven't watched yet but I I certainly
will God willing
inshah but as for Kevin I have no idea
where he comes up with his stuff maybe
he's just trying to be a smart alec or

something so I'm just going to move on

next question this is from

ruie and ruie says how would you

approach or relate the Notions of forth

adna and Christian

limbo that's just kind of a that's a

strange one Christian limbo I don't

really know much about it I mean it's

supposed to be where unbaptized babies

go if they die before they get the

opportunity to be

baptized that they go to this limbo and

also I think virtuous pagans in some

versions of Roman Catholic tradition go

to limbo although of course Dante's

Inferno had like the top ring of Hell

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

limbo I mean there probably wouldn't be

a whole heck of a lot of of thinking

going on you know a newborn baby

is um yeah it's I don't think that

they're thinking very

much so I think that they're very

unrelated there might just incidentally

be some sort of

indirect overlap between the

two but again I'm No Authority on

Christian limbo so I think I'm just

going to move on to the next

question and this is from Fred and Fred

says could we say nibana is

vibrationless well we could say that but

anything you say about nibana is going

to be

invalid so you can say nibana is

vibrationless you can say that vibration

is just utterly irrelevant to nibana

you can say nibana is without

curves or you can say that curves are

just totally irrelevant to nibana

depends on how you look at it and no

matter how you look at it um if you're

looking at it from a perceptual

perspective it's going to be ultimately

invalid so I think when Fred says could

we say nibana is vibrational it's

talking he's talking about like

different vibration rates for like

different levels of reality or something

and I would just say that yeah the

vibration rate is just

irrelevant it doesn't really

apply so I'm just going to move on to

this question this is from

arpad and rpad says how often would you

get sick from the food you received as a

monk in Burma well if the Raging trots

in the middle of the night doesn't count

as sickness then it was almost

never but if if like sudden emergency

trips to the ouse in the middle of the

night count as being sick it was fairly

common in fact it was pretty much of a

daily occurrence for my first four

months or so in Burma and there certain

foods I've said it before danger foods

like shrimp or already peeled pineapple

things like that that I mean it was

really you were playing Russian roulette

with your own sphincter in a case like

that

because with tropical heat and no

Refrigeration some kinds of food go bad

really fast

and then you wind up making emergency

trips to the out house um aside from

that the only thing I can really think

of is I I had some kind of hepatitis

once when I was in Burma and I got three

different interpretations of it from

three different doctors the first doctor

said it was a complication of malaria

which I hadn't had malaria in a while I

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

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

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

very little resistance and so all it
takes is one grubby little kid to sneeze
into the food before he puts it into my
bowl and then I eat it and I get a
cold so but with regard to like getting
really sick from eating the food aside
from just the the the midnight trots and
and an occasional Cold plus maybe one
case of
hepatitis that uh generally I didn't
have much problem with that and so I'm
just going to move on to arad's next
question which is did you ever need to
get treated for parasitic
infection and you get worms a lot mostly
pin worms living in Burma and in fact it
was it was so common in in tropical Asia

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

through the soles of your feet to get

into

you so did I ever need to get treated I

mean I would have survived probably

without taking the Dormer pills but I

kind of like there was a certain Dormer

pill that came from India that it said

even on the rapper at War can cause

strange dreams and it really did you you

get these really weird surreal dreams

when you take the dewormer

pills so yeah that's about it parasitic

infection see yeah that's pretty much it

oh I mean there was like bed bugs and so

forth but that's not really an infection

that's more of an

infestation but I'll I'll spare you the

the horror stories about bed bugs and

I'll just move on to the next question

which is the last question after a

little over two hours so yeah I haven't

been digressing much and I've been

fairly succinct in answering some of

these

questions if not

Kurt so the the result is that we're way

below three hours this time and so Joe

asks the last question and that is do

you believe Mara exists and for those of

you who are innocent of Buddhism but

somehow managed to get all the way to

the end of this video that Mara is more

or less the equivalent of Satan in

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

is anyone becoming enlightened and
escaping from his
realm so do I believe that Mara
exists in in my Theory of Everything the
uncarved block of marble the mara statue
is in there so in that sense he exists
ultimately Mara doesn't exist just as
ultimately I don't exist you don't exist
nobody exists so it's kind of a trick
question
but personally Mara is redundant I don't
think there's any need for Mara even
assuming that in an infinite Universe
anything that possibly can happen does
happen unless it's just sort of like an
anichi and repetition of the same world

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

little skeptical of this Cosmic bad guy

is I mean to have certain

positions that that have to be filled

you know like Saka king of Gods or Mara

the tempter that after one being ceases

you know you got Saka king of Gods I

mean gods in in Buddhist cosmology do

not live forever so after one Saka king

of Gods Fades out and is reborn

somewhere else he gets replaced by a new

Saka king of Gods same goes with Mara so

after one Mara dies or ceases to exist

as Mara a new Mara is reborn to take his

place and it's just like this job

title

and I don't know I'm just it just seems

like a very much of a an artifact of
premodern myth logical Tendencies more
than an empirical observation of the way
things
are so I'm I have little doubt that
there are like wrathful and malevolent
superhuman beings out there that can
mess with people sometimes I've watched
enough ghost shows to see evidence for
that
but I really am skeptical that it works
the way the texts say it works like even
Satan I mean Satan really got invented
by the Jews during the Babylonian
captivity based on their observation of
the zoroastrian Persians who had two
Gods a good God and an evil God and then

as the Jews were gradually becoming more
civilized becoming less barbarous they
were seeing that it's really not so good
to have their God be just this cruel
bloodthirsty
Tyrant so it was sort of made them feel
better to put a lot of the evil worse
stuff under somebody
else
and now people think that I mean Satan
is an obvious fact you'll have Catholic
like uh exorcists who have had tussles
with Satan numerous times who was it uh
Martin Luther through the pot at Satan
saw him right there in his
room so I mean there's going to be

people who are just as sure that Mara

really exists and just exactly the way

he's described in the text and all that

um there is an interesting

suta in which uh Maham molana rebukes

Mara and there's a story in there about

Ki being a relative of

Mara so kie was still like a demonist

back in those

days um I think collie never really

started being considered a benevolent

goddess even though she's like a harsh

benevolent goddess uh until like early

modern

times but I'm digressing all over the

place it's

like the later it gets into these the

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

exist and I guess I'm

done so getting back to Mara though that

uh yeah I mean he's not really part of

my equation I really do not take Mara

into consideration when with regard to

my understanding of ethics for example

or how I should live my life I don't

think Mara is going to get me anymore

than I think Krampus is going to get

me so that's it I at least tried to

answer all the questions I hope I

answered at least some of them to your

satisfaction and if you have any

questions like I always should say at

the beginning and almost never do you

think I can answer a question feel free

to ask in the comments below and smash

the like button don't just press it

smash the son of a and subscribe

if you haven't

already and be happy and I'm going to

push this here button here

okay then hello and welcome to question

and answer number

127 so we're getting up into high

numbers I mean even with my towering

intellect I can hardly count up to

127 so we're getting up there and I'm

sitting before you looking

very

Shaggy because my beloved Barber of the

opinion that in the winter time I should

have as much facial hair as possible to

insulate my face against the bitter cold

which includes the bitter cold of this

house which also explains why I am

dressed like a

Scandinavian my beloved sweetheart bless

her heart second

here bless her heart is allergic to

artificial heat and artificial air

conditioning I don't understand how it's

even

possible so we have to have our house in

the winter time no warmer than about 65°

fahit because if it gets higher than

that she gets a killer sinus headache or

in the summer time if you have the the

air conditioning set too low again

killer sinus headache but if the the

weather just naturally goes up and down

she seems to be okay it's just that if

you use artificial heat or artificial

air conditioning to raise or lower the

temperature then she's wiped out by it I

don't understand how it's possible if
anyone can give advice on how to
better deal with the situation like for
example to be able to turn the heat up
to a civilized level of of temperature
without wiping out my my sweetheart with
a sinus headache feel free to leave a
comment in the comments
below so this is going to be a long one
we got lots of questions so I shouldn't
be digressing too much and I probably
should have more than one emergency
backup beverage because I think I may
need it so I'm just going to wallow in
this just going to dive head first right
into this and the first question is from

philes and Philthy says thoughts on IQ

and

Enlightenment and I don't think that

there really is necessarily A

statistically significant correlation

between IQ and and the likelihood of one

becoming

enlightened so I do think that I some

towering intellectuals are just so

addicted to thought so addicted to their

own intellect they're so vehemently

identified with their thoughts that they

become a hopeless case whereas some

people that are not particularly

intellectual can become enlightened more

easily than some intellectuals so there

may be a certain amount of overlap I

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

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

thoughts on G and

uspensky and those of you who are

unfamiliar with gerf and uspensky

gerf was a Russian philosopher who was

influenced by Eastern

spirituality and

taught a kind of Western philosophy that

was pretty much a western version of

Eastern philosophy and had sort of an

ashram and taught the importance of

mindfulness and so forth um I haven't

read any of his books I haven't listened

to any of the special music that he had

composed for his disciples to help them

cultivate wisdom I mean I've read about

girf um and some of it I mean he really

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

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

because philosophy abstract

philosophical Concepts in

general um they're they're relatively

hard to

understand and if you make it any harder

on purpose then you're just putting a

wall between like the idea and the

person you want to learn the idea which

is not necessarily a good

idea but I really don't have a whole lot

to say about girf uh I don't have

anything bad to say about

girf um I'm unaware of any like sex

scandals or anything like that uh

associated with the biography of

gerf but I really am no Authority on the

man and so I'll just move on to uspensky

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

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

and bad ideas just because it's so
ethereal so up there that they really
don't have much of a frame of reference
to separate the sheep from the goat so
to
speak and so really uspensky is T moram
is full of weird ideas it's just that he
wasn't able to to really
establish any foundation for these ideas
in my
opinion but I mean one of the one of the
main thoughts of uspensky Trish morgam
is that the universe is more than just
four dimensions you know three
dimensions of space plus time he's
talking about a fourth dimension of

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

of

thing yeah so uspensky I I I wouldn't

exactly recommend reading uspensky I

think gerf probably was a wiser man

but I think uspensky eventually did

break with gerf over some philosophical

idea but that's really about all I know

about the two and so I'm just going to

move on to Phil's third question which

is thoughts on eugi Krishna

mty and I read a book called goner who

was which was written by like a personal

attendant on eug Krishna mty and eug

Krishna mty was like more radical even

than Jay Krishna myty he apparently had

some kind of Spiritual Awakening and in

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

having sex with an elephant or something
I mean it was like a photoshoop picture
I mean it wasn't like she was actually
doing this and and it was he did it in
such a way that um it was clear that he
was trying to portray the Buddha's
mother who according to Legend had this
dream of a white elephant you know and
then and then she got pregnant probably
without having to you know it's like
practically a virgin birth at least an
asexual pregnancy that kind of a thing
and eug Krishna mury I mean he he would
like hit people and stuff but maharaji
did that
too so um I do have a book by eug

Krishna mury that I haven't read yet so
that's that's of no help in this case so
basically most of what I know about eug
Krishan mty is what I learned from this
book gor from one of his
disciples
and and it's it's a matter of what are
your criteria for an enlightened being
and we've been discussing this a few
times recently where you know you got
this spectrum of the ideas of what an
enlightened being can be like and at one
extreme you've got something like Terra
which insists that in order to become
fully enlightened you have to be an AB
like an absolutely perfected Saint you
have to have pure morals before you can

have pure

concentration before you can have

Enlightenment you have to purify your

morals before you can purify your mind

and then you have to purify your mind

before you can become fully enlightened

and at the other end of the ex The Other

Extreme from that you got someone like

eug Krishna mury or even Jay Krishna

mury that I mean it's like outward

morals become utterly

irrelevant so from a terab Buddhist

point of view obviously someone like eug

chrishan mury couldn't possibly be fully

enlightened but I'm not strictly

Orthodox in my terraa

Buddhism and so I have to keep an open
mind that it is possible to have a fully
enlightened
Rascal and if eug Krishna mty was fully
enlightened then he was indeed a fully
enlightened Rascal he was called like a
spiritual
terrorist that he would just
deliberately attack any idea that was
considered sacred partly you know
ostensibly because any attack attachment
to sacredness is going to be an obstacle
to Enlightenment any attachment at all
is going to be an obstacle to
Enlightenment but um with regard to eug
chrish mury again I'm No Authority on
what he taught but he would be one of

those examples of uh an alleged

enlightened being who

nevertheless is not a

saint but nevertheless he he had

profound

ideas he taught profound things and so

at the very least he did have some kind

of experience that caused him to be

operating at a higher level of

Consciousness than the average

human but beyond that I would not

venture to make any

assertions so I'm just going to move on

to the next question this is from covac

and Cad

zida and seov action CAD zida says what

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

they just merge into the same thing and
so Hegel starts off with this idea that
pure being and pure non-being are the
same totally
indistinguishable that they are
essentially synonyms and in his logic
after that he just assumes that just
everything and nothing are the same so
then the the
synthesis based on this first thesis of
pure being and the the antithesis of
pure non-being is a kind of contrast
that in order for anything to exist
there has to be some sort of perceived
contrast between being and not
being so I really am not of the opinion

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

paradoxically divide up the pure being

artificially in order to create the

seeming

of something rather than nothing or this

something as opposed to nothing because

you can't have something without a

nothing to compare it

with so I guess I answered that one well

enough I'm going to move on to se of

action CAD Z's next question which is

how did you cope with the death of your

parents

well I was in Burma when both of my

parents died one time I was living in a

cave in like Northwestern Burma and I

had just heard when I was going for MMS

round this somebody gave me the news

that my teacher venerable PKU seatt had

died Tulu chelen doya

Seattle had passed

away so I asked one of my supporters to

call um one of Tom Pulu the Tom Pulu

tradition's main supporters he was like

the president of the tong Pulu like

support

organization who lived in rangon to call

him and find out when the cremation was

going to be because I would like to

attend my teachers funeral so back in

those days this was like the late

90s or was it the late

2000s

yeah yeah I don't remember exactly when

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

venerable pooku SEO die my father died
around the same time or a little bit
earlier by the time I found out about it
he hadd already been passed away for at
least a
week so I mean he my father didn't even
want a funeral there wasn't a funeral
and so I'm I was pretty much stuck in a
cave in Burma
anyway um and really I never cried when
either of my parents died I just felt
like this there was like this hollow
feeling in my chest that lasted for
maybe 10 days to two weeks that I
experienced when my I found out that my
father had died and in his honor I read
a story from a book that I pilfered from

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

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

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

the bathroom you know feed eating or

this kind of stuff and I was kind of

bracing myself for well even though I'm

a monk you know it is my duty I haven't

been a very good son because I've been

living in a cave in Burma for the last

20

years but you know I should do what I

can and then all of a sudden boom she

just falls down hits her head and and

she is moved on to whatever comes next

and like I wasn't exactly I wasn't happy

about it but still in a way I was

relieved at the idea that this person

that I loved who was afraid of death

didn't really have to face it you know

she didn't have some long lingering

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

thing but with my father it was more a

matter of losing one of my best

friends

so again I couldn't go to my mother's

funeral I was a monk with no money stuck

in Burma at the

time so really there wasn't a whole heck

of a lot I could do other than try to

console my my grieving

brother and so now I am an

orphan and I'm just going to move on to

covac and CAD Zena's third question

which is thoughts and then he's got the

link to some article from science

alert.com entitled

hmpv what to know about the respiratory

virus outbreak in China so apparently

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

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

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

the next question this is from

Raphael and rafhael says what was your

impression of Padma samb Baba's

biography after reading it and it is

true that many years ago I did read a

biography of Padma sambava who's

considered to be like the second Buddha

to Tibetan Buddhists that he is

considered to be like one of the

founding fathers of Tibetan Buddhism of

vajana and again padas samb Baba was

sort of like Yugi Krishna mty in a way

that he was

tantric um it's been many years since I

read the biography I vaguely remember

there was uh a part where he and a woman

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

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

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

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

or not I have no way of knowing there

are a lot of texts that become popular

are just attributed to

famous sages of the past as a way of

lending authority to them you know like

Mahayana Buddhist texts as a general

rule are you know sort of forgeries that

are put into the mouth of goab Buddha or

some other some other Great mahayan

Sage

so with regard to Bas samb Baba's

biography yeah I mean it's if you like

to have your beliefs challenged which is

good I I like having my beliefs

challenged to some

degree um yeah I mean it's it's worth

reading just if if only for the sake of

being more literate in Buddhism knowing
who podma sambava was for example
and I'm just going to move on the next
question also from
Raphael he says your thoughts on the
interpretation of pure Land by venerable
Master
Hua and he just has this quote here
Master huah says quote fundamentally
there is no heaven and there is no pure
land people believe a heaven and a
heaven exists they imagine the existence
of a pure land and a pure land exists
the pure land dhad door was spoken by
the Buddha in order to teach you to do
away with your false thoughts it is

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

of causing you to purify your mind that
is the pure land if your mind has no
confused ideas that is heaven if you
look for it elsewhere you show only your
greed
well he seems to be confusing heaven
with Nirvana In this case it seems to
me his description of Heaven seems to be
more more applicable to Buddhist idea of
Nirvana than Buddhist ideas of Heaven
which are still some soric Realms just
higher than this one that we are in
right now also I would disagree that he
says the pure land dador was spoken by
the Buddha I don't think that the
historical gmma Buddha taught anything

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

majaya where

um a a carpenter will knock a big Peg

out of a piece of wood with a smaller

narrower Peg and it's it's kind of like

that you're driving like this gross

diluted thought out of your mind with a

somewhat less diluted thought but still

you got to get rid of both

pegs and let's see here first yeah first

of all I would disagree that with Master

Hua that the Buddha actually taught pure

land Buddhism I really do not think goab

Buddha the historical goab Buddha taught

pure land

Buddhism let's see

Also let's

see at the ultimate point when you have
no false thoughts or confused ideas you
arrive at the pure land well I mean he
seems to be like equating heaven and
pure land with
Nirvana because if you have no false
thoughts or confused ideas you're
essentially
enlightened I mean you're you're even
beyond heaven at that
point so it's just it's a way of
rationalizing the existence of a
teaching of Buddha that wasn't really
taught by the Buddha but Mahayana
Buddhists as a general rule are not
willing to admit that Mahayana Buddhism
wasn't really taught by the Buddha and

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

conclusion after becoming familiar with

the Western world and the Burmese people

who have a traditional

middle-age yeah it's like medieval

religious

mindset yeah I can appreciate religious

people

especially people who are not extremely

wise do well to just commit

themselves to a pre-established

spiritual Dogma that the average person

is not going to come up with their own

independent thoughts that are wiser or

better as a general rule than the the

religion in the the culture of which

they live so it would take it takes kind

of a a person with somewhat unus usual

talents or somewhat unusual
intelligence to really break away from
the mainstream of like Orthodox dogma of
whatever whatever religion it is that
they're in and try to make better sense
of
stuff so yeah I I wrote an article it's
in one of my books I think it's in my
book philosophical Dharma about
comparing religion to poetry how back in
the day poems like in the English
language especially not only had meter
but they rhymed there was like this
structure it was very limiting structure
you know you have to you whatever you're
going to say it has to fit this this

rhythm

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

rhyming it's got a

rhyme and some poets got so good like

for example colid with his poem KU L con

it just occurred to him spontaneously he

wasn't trying to work out what rhymes

with what it just appeared in his mind

while he was on

drugs as it turns out but I mean once

like a talented poet back in pre-

postmodern times you know somebody like

Shelly I mean you just get so used to

working within the framework of meter

and rhyme that you just can

spontaneously start creating this

beautiful inspired poetry with meter and

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

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

like

anything Whitman could get away with

poetry that didn't have meter or rhyme

and so eug chrishna murty is kind of

like that he can he can get away with

spirituality with no

rules but I do think that you know the

Poetry that is the most beautiful has

meter and rhyme and also like the

religion that is most beautiful has this

framework that adds structure and

stability and like balance and so forth

which for most people is best it's going

to be outliers who are going to do

better than the the pre-established

structure by just going out on their

own so let's see what is the

question is this also my conclusion that

uh see despite their and simple way of

thinking I value the humility of deep

deeply religious people more than the

arrogance of some intellectual yeah the

people of Burma were some of the most

virtuous like the people around my

Monastery of one bow Forest Monastery on

the chindwin river about 16 miles up

River from chin from Mona the city of

Mona in Burma they were the most

virtuous people I'd ever dealt with my

life and their life had a certain simple

beauty to to it that I really admire and

respect and you come back to America

where people say that they're Buddhist

and don't keep five precepts and don't
meditate very much and still call
themselves sa and all this and yeah I
I'd have more respect for the Burmese
approach despite its limitations because
you can get so locked into a Dogma you
just have this medieval mindset you
can't question anything that you are
taught it's just all has to be gospel
truth literally
that I mean it didn't work for me
because I just am not that way I'm not
that way in religion not that way in
politics I can't just follow a religion
or a party and just accept everything it
just doesn't work I've got to think for

myself I've got to follow my own

conscience my own best judgment that

sort of

thing but still I do have a lot of

respect for deeper religious people in

Burma and also deeply religious people

in South Carolina who for the most part

are are Baptist Christians rather than

terraa Buddhists but still it's

like they carry their religion around

with them all the time you know it's

just inside them that they're kind of

living their life more or less in

religious terms at least there's a

religious tinge to their everyday

experience just their humbleness their

their honesty that kind of thing that I

have I have to respect that even though

I'm not a

Christian I'm not really all that great

of a terot of Buddhist either for that

matter even when I was a strict monk

still I was a

heretic just because I did not believe

everything in the texts like the entire

third ptica for

example so anyways I'm just going to

move on next question I can't really

spend a lot of time on each question

just because there's lots of questions

and we want to keep this to less than

three and a half hours if

possible so next question is from

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

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

the time just so that they don't forget
the 40 volumes that they have memorized
or they're still memorizing it you know
they're they're doing it even more
probably with regard to the ones that
aren't just memorizing uh still I mean
it's it's going to be like most of the
day like a hard it'd be like sort of
what a um
like what do you an intensive Meditation
Retreat where you're meditating most of
the day these these monks these scholar
monks in Burma are like in intensive
scholasticism Retreat pretty much all
the time and they're just like studying
it and they do have this medieval
attitude that it's all gospel truth it

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

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

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

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

although they are dogmatic phenomenal

Scholars and I'm just going to move on

to Stellar Supreme formerly known as

Liam's next

question which is do you suppose that

non prient beings would have some

ordinary scale of experience in terms of

temporality on on the grounds that there

is in an inter to separate moments of

hypostatic banga in the form of feelings

with their impulsion that goes beyond

non precipi

space Libra Lam is like this he writes

stuff that's even harder to understand

in the Discord

server so do I suppose that non precipi

beings would have some ordinary scale of
experience in terms of temporality on
the grounds that there is
inters to separate moments of hypostatic
banga
well hypo banga is like the subconscious
mind the closest thing
that um Orthodox terraa has to a
subconscious mind like in a Freudian
sense would be bonga which is just it's
like your last conscious memory in your
previous existence which comes over into
this existence as a kind of test pattern
like if you're sound asleep you're not
thinking anything you just have this
image in your mind that's Banga
Banga every thought moment begins and

ends with

banga which may be the the image of your

family looking at down at you on your

deathbed in your previous life just

before you die something like that but

you don't remember that

so the thing is I think one of the one

of the things Liber Lam or Stellar

Supreme formerly known as Libra Lam is

suggesting here is that you would notice

a passage of time even though you're

supposedly unconscious simply because

these bongas are happening one after

another and there're so it's like one

bonga it's like one image another the

same image another the same but they're

at least repeating and so You' notice

the

repetition but you're not aware of any

gaps because the gaps there's no mind in

between the

gaps so you wouldn't be aware of the

gaps that it all just converge into one

bonga and if nothing is

changing then there's no passage of time

it could be there'd be like some kind of

fluctuation although Abid dama doesn't

say

this and still

you wouldn't be able to perceive the

banga see that's that's part of the

problem is in order to perceive anything

it takes 17 mind moments of all these

different processes just to perceive one
image just even one pixel of one image
and there's none of that if all you've
got is
banga so you there's this bonga it's UNP
in a way it's kind of it's not even
really a perception
you know your mind doesn't advert to it
it's just sort of this background filler
for when you're
unconscious or as unconscious as you can
possibly be without being an inanimate
object so let's see here in the form of
feelings with their impul well there
wouldn't be any feelings because waya
isn't arising when all you've got his

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

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

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

got I was getting older in my teens and
early 20s it could mystical experiences
were generally triggered by psychedelic
especially
LSD and then as became when I became a
monk and started meditating intensively
after several years I got good enough at
meditation that I started having
mystical experiences in meditation
also um but it's I don't know how really
to describe it I mean it's you can't
really describe it very well it's just
your mind is clear like glass in the
meditative
sense and you're just wide awake you're
more conscious than you you normally
are but how do you describe that I'm not

sure I mean you just have no doubt that
this is more real than the ordinary
waking State of
Consciousness
um see maybe I should just go over this
question a little better here I've heard
you speak about magical otherworldly
experiences from your youth have you or
any of the monastics you have spent time
with over the decades experienced any of
these transformative otherworldly
Perceptions in adult life yeah I've I
mean most monks they're not really going
into details and most monks probably
don't experience much in in a mystical
sense especially Asian monks who are you

know they're just doing their cultural
Thing by being a monk most of them
really do not have a spiritual calling
in my
opinion
um transformative otherw worldly
perceptions so that wouldn't include
just paranormal stuff I assume that
seems to be talking about like expanded
Consciousness higher levels you know
higher Realms kind of stuff and with
regard to Burmese monks I haven't really
talked about that sort of Stu that kind
of stuff much and generally yeah I
haven't really spoken with people that
have described me in detail at least I
don't remember

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

so they had that kind of pushing them

towards saintliness in a way that

Buddhist Buddhists don't have that and

so I'm I mean yeah how can I how can I

let's see how can I discuss it

though yeah I mean you can't really at

least in my experience mystical

experiences it's just like an

expansive hyperconscious State and it

doesn't go into words very

well

so yeah I'm rather than spend another

five 10 minutes just kind of stumbling

over my words trying to explain what

ultimately is unexplainable I guess I'm

just going to move on to Gnostic

rocker's next

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

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

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

crisis you know it takes like something

to just slam you out of a rut

and then in most cases you just find a

new

run so I mean it is true that you care I

mean you're stuck being who you are as a

general rule so if you're a cynical

smartass before you become a monk good

chance you're going to be a a cynical

smartass

monk you're going to be I mean whatever

it is your personality pretty much

Remains the Same and like your C

cultural conditioning you can't just

leave that behind I learned that through

experience that I could not become an

ancient Indian monk no matter how

closely I would try to follow the

ancient Indian texts on how an ancient
Indian monk is supposed to live and and
conduct his life and his his behavior
and everything still I was born and
raised in the United States of America
in the 20th century
mostly so you're just stuck with that
and so for the most part it's true and I
mean whether it matters or not is kind
of irrelevant because it's just the way
it
is and I mean just most of it is
inevitable except for in some cases
someone will just hit this totally
disillusioning crisis that will cause
them to let go of whatever it is they

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

instead of just the this debauched party
animal that he was
before so I mean even though it usually
happens that you just take your
personality before you were a monk and
you just are the same personality after
you become a monk except you just you
know switch jobs essentially I mean
that's usually the case but not
absolutely always is and there's really
not a whole hell of a lot you can do
about it you just make the best of what
you
can and so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is also from
Gnostic

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

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

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

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

shoulder

so I'm not really exposed a lot to

ritualization around hierarchies based

on henpecking and Relentless bowing as a

means of establishing transactional

relationships with others I just don't I

don't think I've ever really

viewed Buddhism that way I mean when I

read this the thing it mostly reminds me

of is that Zen monaster I went to which

is Shasta Abbey in Northern California

with all this bowing and ritualization

but it didn't strike me as henpecking or

EST establishing transaction

relationships with others it was just

tradition it's just what you're supposed

to do so you do

it

so

yeah let's see

here it's it's easier for the easterners

because they live in a more class

conscious Society than than we do the

burmes definitely live in a much more

class conscious Society than we do as

I've mentioned before they're half dozen

different pronouns for me half a dozen

different pronouns for you and the

pronouns that you use depend not on

gender so much as just the like the

relative social status between the

person that you're talking to and

yourself and and they can be very groly

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

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

Sprite or seven up something like that

and the other one was this little gold

can of King dang

250 and I never liked Sprite or 7op so I

thought well what the heck I'll just

drink this gold stuff I didn't know what

it was I'd never seen it before but the

lady who offered it to me says Ah he

likes that and she started bringing me

more of it because she thought I liked

it because I picked it over the two and

I think it tastes at least as good as

well I got a can right here this is my

emergency backup beverage this is

Western Red

Bull I think it tastes better and at

least in the 90s when I when I was

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

Thailand and he saw this cring dang Red Bull I guess uh cring dang in in Thai is literally translates into English as Red Bull in Burmese it's called Chu Yi which means wild
buffalo so anyways this this Austrian businessman is in land he sees his stuff and he thinks that's a good idea like energy drink so he he sort of got permission to use the the brand but the ingredients are totally different you know the whole design of the can and everything is totally different and I mean it's more legal and I think now that the even the gold can cring dang 250s now that it's sort of a internationally Famous Brand they've had

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

just drinking Red Bull chemically aided

by one can of buff I I had that as uh

caboc cob it was just like this code in

my journal I was keeping keeping track

of like sleep and meditation and so

forth that there'd be like this

chemically aided little um note that I'd

put in there when I get Red Bull and I

might as well take a sip of it in honor

of Red

Bull so

what are my thoughts on I guess I guess

those are my thoughts aren't

they

so I guess I'll just move on next

question this is from

trasis and trasis says why sometimes it

is Goda spelled g o t ma a and other

times it is godma spelled g u t ma a is

it like poly versus S difference and

that is correct Goa with an O is the

poly way of spelling the name go go and

godma with a G auau is the Sanskrit way

of spelling the name Goa

so

historically I guess in in American

culture Western culture in general it

would be spelled g u t ma but within the

context of Terra Buddhism which uses the

poly language it's g t m

a and it's it's almost the same because

like for example the Burmese

pronunciation of the letter O is

essentially like Au it's a dip thong o

GMA so it's the same name it's just that

one is in poly and one is in

Sanskrit and only a terraa Buddhist for

the most part would have it spelled g t-

ma a and not g- t

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

trasa is a second

question which is it has occurred to me

that Legends say the Buddha after

getting a rice with milk and honey or

whatever it was sat down under the B

tree with very strong desire to not get

up until he became enlightened that

strong desire had not stopped him to uh

wake up even abandoning wife and kid to

look for an answer to life is some kind

of

Desire so is strong desire to wake up a good thing well it's it's sort of like knocking out the big Peg with the smaller Peg you know it's you're replacing one like UNH wholesome desire or a whole bunch of unh wholesome desires with a more wholesome desire a simplified more wholesome desire which eventually you do have to get rid of but I have been for a long time skeptical of this idea that the Buddha sat down under the bod tree with this firm determination

he wasn't going to get up until he was enlightened because that itself is a

kind of attachment that I just I'm I'm

just uh I am skeptical of the very idea

because you have that strong an

attachment you make that strong

determination I'm not going to get up

from this seat until I become

enlightened that very determination can

be what prevents you from becoming

enlighted because you have such this

strong insistent desire on things being

a certain way

and wisdom just doesn't work that way so

I am skeptical that the Buddha had this

determination I think it's what might be

more

likely

is something that would be heresy might

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

of given up

you know I I wrote an article about it

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

somewhere I think it might wind up in my

fifth volume of

essays which I haven't started editing

yet but uh yeah so I do think that you

have to have a desire for enlightenment

or a desire to cultivate wisdom at first

and that's part of the raft and then

once you and eventually you have to let

go of that because

I mean eventually it becomes an obstacle

even though it's helpful at first to get

you to a certain point but then after

you get to that certain point you have

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

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

yeah I mean probably not necessarily but

probably and

uh yeah I mean at first you have this

desire for enlightenment and I've

discussed this before how um you know

it's like the last desire that you have

to get rid of your last attachment is

your attachment for

enlightenment that at first it's

skillful because you have this one

desire for enlightenment that I mean

it's eclipses all your other desires

your desires for you know family and

social status and wealth and and stuff

nice car sensual pleasures and all that

you replace all of these less skillful

desires with this more more skillful

simplified desire for enlightenment and
so you strive for enlightenment and you
strive and you strive and you strive but
because you still have this attachment
you still can't become Enlighten until
eventually you have to just let go of
that that last attachment and then you
can become
alighten so I guess I'm just going to
move on to the next question also from
chasa is which is how much of a legend
how how much of a legend of the Buddha
is fiction and how much is likely TR
true events I would say well over half
is fiction or just
Legend I don't think necessarily it was

deliberately cooked up it was just stuff

that is floating around weird Legends

you know kind of

rumors that then get taken more

seriously and then someone decides yeah

we better include

this so I mean obviously like the Buddha

being born the day of his birth his

mother is standing up under a tree

holding on to a

tree he's born he immediately takes off

walking he doesn't have any goop on him

he's not this little red screaming baby

he immediately takes off

walking Lotus Blossom appearing under

each footstep so he doesn't touch the

ground and then he just starts bragging

you know there's no one greater than me
this is my last birth and then and then
after that he just kind of reverts
back to being an ordinary baby well I
don't think so the whole thing about the
Buddha being 27 ft tall I just don't
think
so there's just a lot of it even the
stuff in the text with just all these
grandiose Miracles and the grandios
bragging about how people should worship
him and so forth I think a lot of that
is fiction even in ancient Greece most
people probably knew that Plato's
dialogues were were not really coming
from the mouth of Socrates maybe a few

of the earlier ones you know like the
apology and so forth but eventually
Plato just started using Socrates as a
sort of mouthpiece for his for Plato's
own philosophical views and early
Buddhist monks have done the same with
the
Buddha where most of the texts of you
know what the Buddha is saying the
historical Buddha probably didn't really
say it a lot of it would be Stu that he
wouldn't really disagree with
necessarily but um I do do not think
that most of what you find in the text
and even less of what you find in just
the the extraneous tradition is going to
be uh factual accounts of historical

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

nurmi's next

question which is what are your thoughts

on Bim ra Ed car and his adaptation of

Buddhism

so um I am exposed to some people who

think that uh Shri Ed car was just kind

of like a a charlatan others think that

Shri edar was just a modern day Saint

and and

sage and I really don't know a whole

heck of a lot about him I do know that

he tried to revive Buddhism in in India

mainly for outcasts for Untouchables or

har John or whatever they're called

people that weren't that didn't fit into

the cast system and so they were like

untouched

excuse

me you know like street sweepers and

Beggars and so forth they really didn't

have much of a

chance and so umed Carr Dr umed Carr um

started this movement of converting them

to Buddhism as a way of just getting

them away from the tyranny of the cast

system or just the oppression or you

just the disadvantage of being an

Untouchable in the Hindu cast system

they just sort of removed themselves

from the whole system by converting to

Buddhism and it's clear to me reading

excerpts of Ed car's writings on

Buddhism that it seems to me it was

mainly a social movement more than a
spiritual one the umed Carr modified
Buddhism to suit himself in his more
secular views on the purpose of Buddhism
in
India um and
so I really am more inclined I don't
think that he was a charlatan or a Great
Sage I do think he was kind of like a a
social
reformer that he was converting The
Untouchables to Buddhism not so much out
of a belief in Buddhism but as a way of
helping them socially by getting them
out of Hinduism and the whole cast
system that has them at the complete

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

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

all

possible so that's the main reason just

the the likelihood of scandals arising

in the songa which is not good for the S

it was it's not good for the reputation

of the S so he just said no we're not

going to do that at first then he got

talked into it and then said all right

but because I'm ordaining nuns now the

song is only going to last for 500 years

or the the true teachings the sadama

Will Survive for only 500 years which

was about 2,000 years

ago so anyways the next question from

yugao which was the second half of the

first the second question is why in all

religion women are seen as inferior

particularly at that ancient times well
it's just like up until modern times
women were just pretty much generally
seen as inferior to men just around the
world I mean they could be respected and
admired
as mothers as healers as shamanist
priestesses you know they'd have certain
niches where they could shine but as a
general rule like politically and
socially women were subject to men men
were the leaders and that was just might
makes right I suppose men were stronger
than women even though a lot of
feminists would deny
that but men just generally are more

powerful than women are not due to some
carefully structured patriarchy but just
because men are more aggressive and
physically stronger and they can
just have get what they want I suppose
better than women
can so this is sort of like an empirical
observation in in in a certain sense and
then that social inferiority often
resulted in certain biases where men
just consider women to be even more
inferior than just the empirical
situation made them like I think it was
Aristotle considered women to be
just practically you know unteachable
that they were just so inferior they
Aristotle even thought that they had

like a as a sign of their inferiority

they didn't have as many teeth as men do

which isn't true I guess that on average

women have slightly more teeth than men

do just because men might be more

inclined to lose

teeth so yeah I mean in all religions

women are seen as inferior up until you

know the 20th

century mainly just because women were

like socially inferior and physically

inferior and so they were it was just

sort of assumed that in general women

are inferior and often like a

patriarchal kind of religion will blame

women for you know the failures of men

you know like Eve talking Adam into

eating the Apple for

example

so yeah it's like the Hindus I think

consider women to be like really the

immoral gender i' throughout most of my

life I've kind of seen things the other

way but I think women have been more

virtuous than men largely just due to

social pressure

which is now alleviated from them and so

they've just thrown off the burden and

have become Instagram

thoughts so let's see here I guess I

answered that question in various

indirect roundabout ways and so I'm just

going to move on to the next question

this is from

xenoid and xenoid says in the song

anesthesia by the band Type O Negative

there is a lyric which reads when you

trust someone illusion has begun this

made me

wonder so here's the here's the actual

question would the Buddha trust not

trust trust and not trust or neither

trust nor not trust it wouldn't it

couldn't be distrust because that is a

necessary active State of Mind trust

seems like a passive state of mind but

perhaps that is only true from a

samsaric conventional point of view

neither trust nor not trust seems to be

the correct answer

because it would mean having no view on

the situation well I mean second

guessing of fully enlightened Buddha is

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

already trying to like second guess the

motives of a fully enlightened being a

sasam

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

errand to begin with but with regard to

trusting

people the budo didn't have to trust or

distrust because he could just look

right through you you know he would know

your mind mind he would know if you were

lying or telling the truth if you're

honest or dishonest so I mean where

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

inapplicable it would be unnecessary why

have belief if you already

know belief and true knowledge are not

the same and trust is sort of like

belief but if you have the true

knowledge of what the person is like the

trust is just misplaced there's there's

no room for it

so I'm just going to move on to xeni

void's second question which is you've

me I'm going to make sure that we're

actually recording here yeah I guess we

are we've been going at it for an hour

and a

half ever since I had that that

recording software that kept glitching

on me I've become sensitized because

there's one time I had to do the same

Q&A three times because it would say

that it was recording and then it

wasn't so bear with me

anyways xenoid

says you've mentioned that in the sutas

there is a story of a dolled monk who

became enlightened by rubbing a cloth do

you believe stupid people can become

enlightened yeah that was pretty much

the first answer first question that I

answered in this Q&A is along these same

lines

about any correlation between IQ and

Enlightenment I do think that stupid

people can become enlightened

like a Carta thinks worms and frogs are

enlightened

so why not stupid people that there

really is a difference between

intelligence and wisdom so you can have

an intelligent fool and a relatively

stupid Sage a simple-minded sage anyway

so I do think that it is possible it

might be I mean they may have certain

handicaps in just like working out some

of the basics like the prelim

preliminary

stuff but then with regard to not having

desires I mean that Enlightenment is

based on the four noble truths and it's

like if you don't have desires then

that's it you're enlightened if you're

conscious and don't have desires then presumably you're enlightened based on the third Noble Truth and why would a stupid PE why would a stupid person have any more trouble eliminating desires than an intelligent person unless they just their mind is kind of stupid to the point of like being defective where they're not capable of really being mindful or some such

but yeah I I do think that it is definitely possible for someone with an IQ below 100 to become fully enlightened if full Enlightenment even exists in this world which itself is a kind of problematic

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

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

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

Christianity like Catholicism and

Protestant

sects

so yeah it's it was like a

deliberate um deliberate illogic like

flaunting of ill

logic and flouting of logic flaunting

and flouting are not the same

word so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from

Romeo and Romeo says do you have any

favorite artists paintings sculptures or

eras or Styles western or otherwise if

so what draws you to them

well let's see I mean some of the

ancient Greek sculpture and the Roman

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

better than the Renaissance Masters so I
it's like why I even try we'll just make
ugly crap on
purpose let's see I like uh what was it
neoclassicism like uh 17 1800s in uh
yeah early be 1700s early 1800s like in
in English painting they had more
classical themes I like like in the
Renaissance lots of nice paintings but
somebody like Raphael who was obviously
a damn good painter he was pretty much
obsessed with madonas he just cranked
out one Madonna after the other I think
with regard to Renaissance I prefer
uh like the Dutch Renaissance like
Rembrandt and the Theon

Ikes that kind of thing where they were

more into portraits and just sort of

realistic scenes and kind of not so

heavily focused on madonas and baby

jesuses and so forth I like Velasquez I

like his painting

style

um let's

see bugaro that's not his that's not the

correct the correct pronunciation of his

name but he was a good painter I like I

like looking at his

paintings um for me a good painting or

good sculpture is something that looks

as much like real life as

possible you know it's like I'm not much

into impressionism I did not like much

like

impressionism I did not think that that

was really an improvement in painting

you know van go he's considered to be a

great but still I'd take REM Brandt any

day of the week

[Music]

um because I think like especially

nowadays now that photography has been

invented and pretty much

mastered that a good painting or a good

drawing should look as close to a

photograph as possible but in order not

to make it just obsolete that a good

painting or drawing should be of

something that you can't photograph and

so something like

surrealism has always appealed to me

I've always liked surrealism

surrealistic

art so of like the the modern um like

painting fads Fashions I definitely

prefer surrealism after the neoclassical

phase of painting you know what was it

uh was it datus or was it the the son of

datus who was Icarus yeah there was one

painting I really liked of Icarus who

crashed you know he his father made

these Wings they escaped from prison and

then he flew too close to the Sun the

wax that was holding the feathers on the

artificial Wings started falling off and

then he crashes and then there's this

famous painting of of Icarus kind of you
know looking sort of like a Greek god
like an Apollo or something lying on the
Rock With These Wings and you got like
these three naked nymphs water nymphs
all coming up out of the water and
gazing in Wonder at this crashed Icarus
painting like that I like I like even if
they don't have naked nymphs in them I
can still like
them
so yeah I mean he's mainly talking about
painting painting and sculpture so I'll
leave out
poetry which would be another five or 10
minutes of me

rambling so favorite artist I mean I do

have kind of a a tender spot in my heart

for

eer although

um he's he belongs in his own category

really and I guess I guess I've named

off a few which is probably enough I'm

really not heavily into art I've never

really had the artistic temperament I

can draw fairly well but again it's more

of reproduction of what I

see and I mean I wasn't really

artistically inspired since I was in

high school probably when I was like a

an emo teenager I was much more artistic

than after I became like a coldblooded

scientist turns

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

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

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

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

to the

intelligence um and versus wisdom kind

of dichotomy that's been brought up a

couple times already that it can be help

to have a stronger brain like a more

athletic kind of

brain it may be helpful in certain

respects for insights to arise you may

be more intuitive that way just because

you've got more nerve and you got more

branches to your neurons and so you got

more possibilities you know more

possible routes for your insights to

take maybe it's not absolutely necessary

but it can be helpful and I've always

been kind of a brain jock I like

exercising my brain to some degree just

trying to solve evil sudokus

occasionally that sort of thing even

when I was a monk I would like just

brain

exercises just to keep my brain from

getting

flabby

so have I answered the question is there

any domic benefit to learning new skills

like a language that enhance brain

connectivity um I suppose so and just

dealing with practical matters I mean

sometimes practical matters are helpful

to a monk too if you move to a foreign

country it's helpful to be able to speak

that the language of that country

fluently to learn poly for example is

good for a monk just to learn certain

things that monks are supposed to learn

just mastering philosophical Concepts

take some intellectual exercise that

kind of thing remembering all the rules

you have to follow takes a little bit of

intellect comprehending

stuff so I

mean I think it's possible for a stupid

person to become enlightened but I do

think an intelligent person has certain

advantages maybe statistically his odds

are a little better although the odds

for anyone are not particularly good for

becoming

enlightened

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

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

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

nibana is not worth aiming for because

then I would

die I would cease to exist as an

individual and so I don't want

that but it's up to you on if you think

that the end of delusion and suffering

is worth aiming for then go for

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

Fred's third

question which is the end goal is not

explained so why pursue it well again I

mean it's it's explained sort of as the

end of delusion and

suffering and that in itself should be

enough to inspire people to pursue it

that's that's what inspired the Buddha

to pursue it you know he didn't like

this old age and sickness and death

stuff and so he wanted to transcend that

according to tradition and that's what

inspired him to become like a religious

mendicant and what eventually caused him

to become the go a Buddha the sasam

Buddha of this of this

era so you can't really explain it

because it's reality and we're not

dealing in reality we're dealing with

symbols that supposedly represent

reality but really

don't and so I'm just going to move on

next question this is from

Austin and Austin says have you ever

experienced remote viewing or had an

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

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

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

I'm like walking through the living room
and looking at everything very carefully
trying to determine whether I'm really
doing it or not and then poof I'm lying
on my back in bed again and I thought
well I this is this is just too much I
cannot trust what I am seeing and so I
just went to sleep and the next morning
there was no bread or anything so it
could have just been this really
elaborate
hallucination that seemed like an outof
body experience but probably was just a
very elaborate
hallucination cuz I was having very
elaborate hallucinations even before

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

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

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

living in a cemetery he seems very

Serene and benevolent and everything but

you don't really know a person until

you've gotten to really know them and

see them at their

worst and just because a person seems

very you know content and calm and

benevolent and so forth I

mean he's talking to a visitor he's

never met before it may be that he's

just on his best behavior here but I've

met quite a few monks that I I assumed

were very

wise but it's it's hard to say

exactly but I have no doubt that I met

lots of of monks and lay people that

were more advanced than I was in certain

ways like with regard to the amount of

meta that they have towards others

especially I mean I've been working on

it for for decades now but when I was a

younger man

I really had very little love for the

human

race I preferred the company of trees

and animals to the company of humans as

a general

rule it's only in my later years that

I've softened towards

Humanity

so see at the bottom here he says or for

the most part did you find most monks

there to be underwhelming yeah most

monks like most Asian monks

especially um you know they just have

this medieval dogmatic approach they're

uninspired they don't really have a

spiritual calling they have other

motives for becoming a monk you know

it's just their their family was was

poor villagers with eight kids they had

too many miles to feed so they just send

one of their kids to the monastery or

some monks are just sort of Laten

homosexuals and they want a socially

acceptable way of not getting married to

woman so they just become celibate monks

and usually set themselves up in a

relatively luxurious Monastery in town

like almost every mahasi Center in Burma

has like the resident latent homosexual

Seattle not not necessarily the Abbott

but he'll be like an assistant

Abbott

so yeah there are a few that monks that

were considered to be very saintly and

Sage likee

um mamy OTA was another you he was a

better meditator than I was apparently

he was a lot of people were impressed by

how wise he was but I mean probably in

some respects I would still be more

advanced than him but in most respects

he would probably be more advanced than

I was back when I knew

him so yeah it's it's kind of complex

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

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

Asian Buddhist culture they they just

don't have

it so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from

quor so quor says if sight sound touch

smell taste and mental formations are

absent body is completely absent and All

That Remains is the experience of

awareness contentment Bliss and

Stillness and an inner monologue

commenting on the experience would this

still be considered a

self having a subjective experience or

do the condas need to be present well

obviously if there's any kind of

experience the condas have to be present

Consciousness is one of the five condas

wiyana cond and like this inner

monologue I mean obviously that's

thoughts that's

perceptions so

I mean all of this really is is five

five condas I mean it's still there

except for he says there's no body but

All That Remains is the experience of

awareness which would be Consciousness I

guess contentment I mean contentment

with what what contentment I'm not

exactly sure what he even means by that

I mean you'd think that contentment

would be a kind of

feeling Bliss which also is I mean

sometimes like satand in Hinduism you

know the highest reality is is

considered to be Bliss so it's hard to

say with regard to that one

Stillness and an inner monologue how are

you going to have an inner monologue and

Stillness at the same

time yeah the inner monologue just can't

happen without five

condas um would this be considered a

self I mean they're without perceiving

it it's like there's nothing

there it is I

mean I got to take a

drink a big

drink so this is kind of a strange

question I mean he's would this be

considered a self I mean in Buddhism

nothing is considered a self except for
a diluted mind a diluted mind considers
selves to exist according to early
Buddhist philos ophy only a diluted mind
would consider a self to
exist
so would this be considered a self well
to a diluted mind it would but I mean
only to a diluted mind you'd even be a
the awareness of
contentment I mean it depends on how
subtle you think contentment and Bliss
can go if you think that contentment and
Bliss can just merge with Ultimate
Reality like the conception of
saand which is like true mental Bliss

which is like practically a synonym for

Brahman or Ultimate Reality or

God then maybe you could have that but

it wouldn't be reified and so you

wouldn't say that it exists once you

start saying that it exists then you're

dealing with perceptions and delusion

and then it's all it's all just some

saric delusion

so would this still be considered a self

having a subjective experience I don't

think there would be a subjective

experience I really don't there would be

no subject you can't have a subject

unless you're contrasting it with an

object and there's no

object so there's no subject

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

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

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

quora's third

question which is what separates two

meditators who experience forth the jna

on a regular basis that one can become

liberated by letting go of the desire

for Liberation whereas the other cannot

perhaps the one with the potential for

Liberation experientially knows that

there is a higher state and the other

doesn't or perhaps it's more of a

letting go of the idea of cultivating

subtler states of Mind well you got two

meditators who say have mastered forth

jna um the difference between the one

who becomes enlightened and the one who

doesn't become enlightened is the one

who becomes enlightened has some kind of

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

necessarily the same Insight that

everyone

experiences whereas the other person who

doesn't become enlightened doesn't have

that insight and it's just one of them

is more insightful one is more just less

attached in their usual samsaric frame

of mind when they're not meditating that

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

matter of talent I

think and plus maybe other other factors

that's very subtle

but I think the main differentiation

would just

be one one person is more intuitive and

insightful and has more spiritual Talent

maybe a little more inherent wisdom and

than the other

one plus maybe there's a certain like

karmic momentum that's helping them

that's not helping the other person that

sort of thing the other person might

just just not be ripe yet just not ready

for it

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

question which is from

arpad and arpad says how often is a mon

monk allowed to shower bathe or wash

himself in any

fashion is soap allowed or is it

considered a

cosmetic well I guess that's two

questions isn't

it I I count questions by the number of

question

marks so the first question is how often

is a monk allowed to shower bathe or

wash himself in any fashion well if you

read the potty Mona rules

there is a pidia rule saying that a monk

is only allowed to bathe no more than

once every two weeks unless there are

certain factors like it's it's like the

towards the end of the hot season which

is very muggy and sweaty is the

beginning the beginning part of the

rainy season which is similar that's if

the monk has been traveling if the monk

has been sick if there has been like a

storm with wind and rain which kind of

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

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

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

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

not supposed to use

perfumes so when I was in Burma I used

this stuff called carbolic soap that had

this it was had carbolic acid in it and

it smelled had this strong unpleasant

chemically smell which I considered to

be okay because monks aren't supposed to

use perfumes most soap is perfumed and

so I just use this this cheap kind of

soap sometimes I just use liys soap that

you're supposed to use for for uh

washing clothes I'd use that if I didn't

have any of the stinky carbolic stuff so

soap isn't considered to be a cosmetic

but the the the nice scents that are

infused into the soap are considered to

be perfume which monks are supposed to

avoid if at all

possible and so I'm just going to move

on to our pad's third

question does re birth occur in plants

and minerals and I think the Janes would

say that plants and maybe

minerals um do are subject to like

rebirth with regard to

Buddhism it's not so clear I don't

recall ever coming across any statement

unequivocally just declaring that plants

and or minerals are reborn like crystals

something like that are subject to

rebirth um in vinia it does say that

plants are what are called ainda Jaa

which is one faculty life so apparently

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

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

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

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

Orthodox Terra

at least in the earlier texts I can't

really say about commentarial tradition

or subc commentarial tradition anything

like that but in the earliest text I

don't think that there's any statement

one way or the other about plants being

reborn so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from T

trumptonshire

Gap and trumptonshire GAP says if AI

takes over the world and kills all

humans would that be evidence tending to

disprove Dharma

and I don't see how it would disprove

Dharma I mean how would it possibly

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

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

any any hazard to the the veracity or

the believability of Dharma regardless

of what AI does or doesn't

do seems pretty straightforward to

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

question this is from ruie and ruie says

do you think the verbal and intellectual

inaccessibility of nibana could make it

an object of anxiety sure yeah

definitely it is I mean it is certainly

an object of anxiety y to some people

um because it's just this

nebulous something that you can't grasp

you can't understand it and when people

identify with their understanding

something you don't understand can be

scary I mean it's like death I mean some

people that meditate they get to the

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

possessed snake because most people are

enlightened not because we're not trying

hard enough but because we want to be

enlightened that's why we're

here so

certainly just nibana itself partly

because it's so nebulous and

ununderstandable that it's it's just an

OB object of anxiety or even

fear so I'm just going to move on to

ru's next question

which is over focusing on nibana

distracts From the Path does it not

certainly especially when you get

towards the end of the path towards the

beginning it might be the main motivator

that helps you to stay on the path is

focusing on the goal but eventually you

have to let go even of that attachment

or that

desire and I've got a dog looking at me

now how you

doe so let's see yeah I mean we've we've

gone over this a number of times I think

where I mean focusing on the goal is

useful at first you know it's like again

knocking out the big Peg with the

smaller Peg but eventually you have to

get rid of all the pegs you know it's

focusing on Nana is part of the raft

that once you cross the flood you don't

you don't need it

anymore and I

mean it just

becomes at first it's skillful means and

then as you progress and get closer and

closer to the goal then any kind of

attachment or desire is eventually just

you're gonna have to let everything

go so I'm just going to move on to the

next question this is from

cify and cify says are we too late to

stop the islamization of Europe and I

mean that depends on what direction

Europe takes over the next 10 20 years

like if it continues stubbornly to go

the globalist route then maybe so then

maybe it's too late and Europe is going

to become Islam islamized at least

Western Europe and parts of Central

Europe Eastern Europe I think will

resist

islamization on the other hand if like

the the nationalism that is becoming

more and more in

fashion like as is exemplified by the re

election of Donald Trump then it may be

that there's going to be a Reconquista

before the the Muslims conquer that you

they'll just be driven out or whatever

forced to assimilate like early

non-muslims were forced to assimilate to

Islam um but even let's say Western and

Central Europe does get turned into like

a caliphate then still I mean they 100

200 300 years later they could still be

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

being

racist then yeah they're going to get

what they

deserve fortunately America is more

invaded by

relatively relatively innocuous hisan

anics who for the most part are willing

to work for a

living instead of hanging out on street

corners harassing Western

women so yeah we're just G to have to

wait and see see what direction Europe

takes over the next few years see if afd

actually uh comes to power in Germany

then that that could be a game changer

right

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

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

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

flamess holding it all

together it's just these phenom PHA in

flux changing from one moment to the

next due to conditions allowing their

existence and in a human mind somehow

this flam likee conglomeration of mental

States becomes

self-referential it's still changing

from one more to the next although

there's a lot of similarity because of

momentum and it starts thinking that

it's this unified eye which it is not

so let's see my question is there must

be mind Spirit or Consciousness that is

always present and aware although it's

not the same from one moment to the

next and that we must take control of

but no we don't have control we have

maybe limited control but like the the

Buddha's second discourse after his

Enlightenment the anat luta says with

regard to any of the five condas you

cannot say let it be this way let it not

be that way and reliably have it happen

we do not have that kind of control over

anything so who is this eye that

experiences and thinks if it is not the

self it is

delusion and if you want to take it even

farther like some Mahayana schools I

mean even these little particulate

entities that are in constant flux from

one moment to the next like in a flame

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

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

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

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

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

it it's common to some of them anyway

but I mean it's certainly no proof of

the reality of a

self ah excuse

me need another drink of my emergency

backup beverage who is almost exhausted

at this

point okay next question is from

apocalypse Chow who I suspect is the

same person as skolin or skaden because

he's got the same kind of bullet points

after his questions

so apocalypse Chow says would you kindly

explain the role of the Trinity so two

Trinity questions in one in one Q&A

that's kind of

unusual he

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

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

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

Buddhism you got obviously the Trinity
and Christianity I'm not sure what the
equivalent in like Judaism or Islam
would be but I wouldn't be surprised if
they've got some prominent Triad in
their systems
also but
um I think it's just um like a triangle
is a stable figure
you know it's just like in in
architecture it is stable like a square
can collapse on itself but a triangle is
stable that's why a geodesic dome is
generally made out of triangles because
they're very stable and secure and maybe
that that idea of something with three
parts just kind of fitting together into

this

indestructible you know

Unity it's uh it's somehow permeated

into philosophical thought and religious

thought but uh I'm really not sure why

the number three is so prominent other

than that it's just a low number that's

going to come up a lot

anyway

so yeah it's the role of the Trinity

differs in different trinities I mean

the role of the trinity in Christianity

even that's hard enough to explain

because it's not particularly logical

anyway

so the role of the Trinity I assume in

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

leans left towards animalm mindedness

heedless mindless NPC or maybe it's the

political class ruling class that gets

elevated by bringing others down like a

zero some game and then the bullet point

is is hegelian dialectics purpose to

promote cycop paths All the Way to the

Top by creating

sociopaths now I don't think that's the

purpose of hegelian

dialectics I really

don't um yeah I I really never know

noticed like hegelian philosophy tending

towards animalistic mental

States um you know Marxism is partly

based on like the Marxist dialectic is

based on the hegelian dialectic although
of course Marx rejected idealism and and
just preferred
materialism um which is more
animalistic materialism I suspect is
more animalistic than idealism the idea
that it's all just mental state
um FH Bradley who is one of my favorite
Western philosophers was heavily
influenced by Hegel he was a he was a
idealist and I mean he certainly was not
particularly animalistic although there
is a a legend that FH Bradley who lived
at
Oxford um used to have as a habit he'd
he'd go up and sit on a roof or
something like that or just he had like

this little Veranda or something

something outside of his room and he

he'd shoot stray cats with a pistol from

there which is kind of

animalistic but as a general rule I just

don't see like heelan

dialectics pushing people towards

animalistic mental States or towards

psychopathy although I guess shooting at

cats for fun is kind of

sociopathic so

yeah I think heelan dialectics just got

like

hijacked first by Marx and then later by

like Latter Day Neo

marxists um you know it's just sort of

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

toasty kind of a

guy

so yeah my guess would be that hegelian

dialectics largely due to somebody like

Carl Marx admiring the system which was

kind of a charlatan kind of a system in

my opinion I agree with schopenhauer on

that score U it Just Got Hijacked and

converted over into a system that has

been

um it has wound up creating possibly

more evil than

good but I think it was just sort of

matter of happen stance and not any like

deliberate evil on the part of

Hegel so I'm just going to move on to

apocalypse child's third
question which is is woke an iteration
or trope of romance fiction and then
he's got the bullet points I noticed
that both have many similarities in
common same demographics Lonely Woman
and extremely feminine men core demo
middle-aged women with Arrested
Development and massive amounts of alone
time encyclopedia britannica's article
on romance fiction notes that to romance
has come to mean to make up a story that
has no connection with reality Good
Samaritans often point out that the woke
makeup stories with no basis in reality
Like Jesse smette the reader of romance
is not primarily concerned with the

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

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

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

poetry written not in Latin mainly about chivalry and that I assume is how romance in Modern English usage came to mean like like men and women falling in love with each other and sort of IDE real istic descriptions of That in literary
form um because it started at one point a romance was a tale of like courtly love like some Knight and his his lady that he adores and maybe is married to some other guy that sort of thing he fights Duels for her honor and all that and then that came to morph into like the stereotypical harleyquinn Romance or those Hallmark movies or

whatever but

woke I mean you can come up with

similarities between all sorts of things

I mean you can come up with probably

more similarities between woke and early

Christianity in the Roman Empire like

neomarxism

now political

correctness progressivism whatever you

want to call it it's sort of like our

version of late Roman

Christianity except late Roman

Christianity to be fair did have some

kind of moral High Ground which

progressivism does not it progressivism

mainly just takes unrefined feminine

sentiment and identifies that as

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

sure and it's not even necessarily the

same demographics

anymore unless this unless the

demographics are the readers which would

be like bored upper class white women I

suppose so yeah I really I really do not

think that woke is an iteration or Trope

of romance fiction I just think that

it's just sort of a a feminized version

of

Marxism with changes made like getting

away from class and just considering the

patriarchy to be the oppressive class

that kind of

thing so woke is sort of anti-male

whereas romance fiction is really not

anti-male it's I don't even think that

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

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

babies are enlightened I think they know

nothing

thoughts um there is a suta in the poly

toptica uh discussing this very this

very idea that babies are enlightened

and Buddhism says no babies are not

enlightened that really they've got all

these karmic underlying

tendencies that are just keeping them

unenlightened and they have no way of

working them off yet because they

haven't really developed enough

intelligence or maturity to really start

working out their karma very well in

this life I mean karma is happen I mean

there they have karmic fruition by stuff

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

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

manifesting so I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from PSA
and by golly it's the last question boom
it always takes me by surprise and hell
we're less than three hours so this is
doing pretty good I was hoping this
would be less than three and a half
because we had about 50 questions to
answer in this
Q&A so anyways this last question is
from
PSA and PSA says I heard monks are not
allowed to wear any form of underwear
that sounds really
uncomfortable is it negotiable or is it
a big sin for a monk to wear boxers
under his robes and I do not understand

why freeballing it with a kind of song
would be
uncomfortable I mean I don't get that at
all the only
time I was uncomfortable wearing a like
a lower robe with no underpants was
right after I had dyed that robe and if
you dye a robe especially with certain
substances then it can get super stiff
it's like cardboard and it get rough cuz
I would wear like a lower robe made out
of essentially canvas because they would
last longer that way I wouldn't have to
make a new robe every year that if you
make your lower robe out of a kind of
Homespun like rough Homespun or canvas

it'll last at least two years which cuts
the amount of robes you have to sew in
half and so you you dye the robe so it's
stiff like cardboard and you you'd have
to like force it to fold it around
yourself and then it would be rough
enough that you could get some abrasion
going but just I mean I have no idea no
clue whatsoever about how freeballing it
under a comfy cotton song could be the
least bit
uncomfortable maybe some guys are just
too dangly or something and will sit on
it but I
mean I mean it's like something you get
used to you you learn how to deal with
it it's it's the way people are men

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

and Eastern monks will wear in the

temperate zone sometimes even in the

tropics I've gone to the tropics and

seen a monk I mean in a tropical country

it'd be during the cold season but still

it's not going to get very cold

certainly not going to get anywhere down

close to freezing and they've got like

stocking caps and socks and some this

sort of thing on and it's just against

the rules

and monks would prefer to break the

rules than than do something like wrap

themselves up in a Wool Wool felt

blanket which is actually

allowable

so yeah for a monk to wear boxers under

his robes first of all it's just silly

and

unnecessary and just like this womanly

desire for Comfort I guess

to be

cozy but also to for a monk to wear

anything besides the three robes the

three regulation robes is against the

rules and he's certainly not allowed to

wear Layman's clothing which would

include Layman's underwear or Layman's

socks but it's a minor offense it's a

Duca offense which is the lowest

category of offense you just make

confession and it's you are absolved of

that offense but if you just keep

wearing them if you if you're wearing

the underwear while you're making the

confession you have immediately broken

the rule again as soon as you've stopped

making the

confession

so yeah I guess I answered that question

so that's it I answered all the

questions and like I should always say

at the beginning but almost never do you

have any questions about things you

think I could be able to answer like

early Buddhism ter ter of Auto Buddhism

um monastic discipline meditation

Eastern philosophy some Western

philosophy just religion in general me

personally Burma etc etc if you think I

could possibly answer a question that

you would like to know the answer to

feel free to include that question in

the comments below no more than three

questions per episode

please and uh like And subscribe if you

haven't done so already ready and be

happy

Al righty then hello and welcome to

question and answer number

128 I am your host P basa and for those

of you who are not good at numbers 128

is kind of a high

number and I got my beverage here with

the classy little paper

umbrella take a sip of said

beverage and before before I start

answering questions I would like to

indulge in a little fantasy fulfillment

I hope you will indulge me in this

Indulgence there's always this way I

wanted to start a damat talk back when I

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

mean you can't really tell jokes in Asia

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

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

little

nuggets don't you hate that and what's

even worse than that is when like the

turd pinches off halfway and then the

the what's left it won't come out and it

won't go back in either so you wind up

having to wipe like 30 times don't you

hate

that and I always wanted to start a doat

talk that way and just could never

really bring myself to do it and so now

I have subjected you to

it and so I'm just going to start

answering questions enough of this fool

isness the first question is from seac

and sead zida who didn't make it uh

didn't ask his first question in time

but he asked it like after i' already

recorded the last one so he's at the top

of the list this time and he says in the

uncarved marble block analogy why would

a carved block be Dua or Sam Sara but

not an uncarved block which would be

nibana

and the reason why you take the the

nameless uncarved block which is not Dua

and you make like imaginary statues out

of it like virtual

statues why that is dooka is partly

because to

imagine and then

believe this virtual statue carved out

of the nameless uncarved block re

requires will it

requires effort which is driven by a

kind of restless dissatisfaction and to

believe in it requires delusion and

delusion carries its own kind of Duke up

so it requires

effort which is

impelled by this Restless

dissatisfaction that is pushing us

through some sorrow from one moment to

the next and also it's just pervaded by

delusion because you are believing that

this imaginary statue which is really

potentially in there in that uncarved

block but to believe that that is the

statue and that it's real and everything

that's a delusion and that that's got

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

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

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

parts of India so it started off with

something like Mugi which probably it

would be mutually intelligible like

someone a native speaker of mugged in

the Buddhist time or ashoka's time would

probably understand most of what was

said in

poly so it comes closer to poly comes

closer to the the language of muga in

ancient times then it comes to classical

oric Sanskrit although they're all

ultimately derived from essentially

vidic

Sanskrit so I'm just going to move on to

seac and sead Z's third

question which is please explain how to

generate niida and I'm not sure that you

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

a three-step

process and I don't know if you could

deliberately generate disillusionment

unless you just seek out ugly

truths but I guess the way it's usually

done is you've got people chasing after

satisfaction and like Mick Jagger you

just can't find no satisfaction you

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

guess I got to be more consistent in my

grammar I suppose being a public speaker

and

all so I guess the best way to cultivate

niida or

disillusionment is just try as hard as

you can to find satisfaction in worldly

Pursuits and you will ultimately fail

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

is just make more money or get more
stuff or have more women or a prettier
one or whatever that then you're going
to be satisfied when it just doesn't
work that way this satisfaction is just
built in to this version of reality
that's the first Noble
Truth so I mean you can seek out ugly
truths I guess but then you might start
taking some morbid pleasure in
that um or you can just uh just keep
trying to find satisfaction until
finally you fail and hopefully you'll
have enough wisdom to realize that you
failed and then you might even have more
wisdom to realize that it's just built
into the system that you're never going

to be fully satisfied

and then you can move on to the waga

stage and I'm just going to move on the

next question this is from

quor and quator says if Sakaya dii

literally translates to one's own body

view why don't they just translated it

as belief that you are the body it would

make sense that an experience of the

deathless which is beyond the elements

for example udana 8.1 would result in

dropping that belief well technically

according to tradition sakad even though

it could be literally translated as

one's own body it doesn't it's not

doesn't really mean one's own

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

to one's own body view I mean it could

technically but that's not generally how

it is interpreted why don't they just

translate it as belief that you are the

body yeah there's there's a

different there's one of the questions

that the Buddha wouldn't answer is is

the Jiva the same as the body and he

wouldn't answer that at all but there

it's it's not so much the self or the

soul as just kind of like the life force

Jaa literally means life

life

so so I guess I gave the the the

Orthodox answer to that question in fact

I think the commentaries don't even uh

translate the sa part of Sakaya as one's
own they they have it more as sought
like in Sanskrit it be sought like true
or existent so it would be
existent um true existence not it be
existent group group I think Kaya is
considered to be a group so it'd be like
existent Group which would be any of the
five
condos so I'm just going to move on to
quis tor's next question and I didn't
bother to count how many questions there
are but I don't think it's a really huge
amount so we'll probably be under three
hours this
time and uh I think the thumbnail is
going to be a scantily clad Buxom female

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

anyways back to the questions quor

second

question is if the Buddha went to two

teachers to learn the formless Jas and

determine that these Jas do not lead to

Liberation but the fourth jna does then

why are the formless Jonas sometimes

considered to be levels of the fourth J

does this have something to do with

absorption Janna using nimas versus full

awareness janas well I think uh quor

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

garbled version of the legend the legend

is the Buddha did learn all the the the

Jas from his first two

teachers and then he he realized that

wasn't good enough and then strangely he

remembered when he was a kid

and his father was plowing a

field that he was sitting under a I

think it was a rose apple tree and he

just kind of spontaneously went into

first Janna and then he realized after

remembering this that's it that's how to

become enlightened and it doesn't make

good sense to me that he mastered all

the Jonas already realized that that

wasn't the way and then he remembers

attaining first Jonah as a kid

and then thinking that's it that's the

way to do it which is just some

strange I mean it doesn't make good

sense does it I don't think it has

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

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

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

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

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

anymore so I guess I'll just move on to

the next question which is from

files and filthy says top three Mahayana

sutras and

why so I guess he means my three

favorite Mahayana sutras not like what I

consider to be the best ones although

from my own point of view they'd be

pretty much the same so I guess the

heart Sutra either version I guess

there's a large a longer and a shorter

version of the heart Sutra I mean it's

just really profound and it's in my

opinion it's not radically Divergent

from orth Orthodox or even or like early

Buddhism you know pre- Orthodox like

pre- terraa Buddhism I don't think the

heart Sutra would be really all that

deviant from

that and also it's really short and it's

easy to memorize and everything and I

mean you could read the whole thing in

less than five minutes

probably so after the the heart Sutra

would be The Diamond Cutter Sutra the

vajra

cheda which is very Prof found and it's

just kind of right up my alley it's got

a lot of paradoxes and so forth in it

it's one of the earliest Mahayana

sutras at least I'm pretty sure it is so

yeah I would include The Diamond

Cutter and with regard to the third it I

really had to scratch my head the first

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

good enough that I actually wrote some quotes from it some excerpts in my old notebook and I'll just give you a few examples of why I like it excerpts from the latara Sutra excerpt number one neither words nor sentences can exactly Express meanings for words are only sweet sounds that are arbitrarily chosen to represent things they are not the things themselves which in turn are only manifestations of mind so that's good I like that I can I can endorse that message here's another one disciples should be on their guard against the seductions of words and sentences and their elusive meanings for by them the

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

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

maybe it's the best

betat well I mean if you're not even

thinking about dhama if dhama is just

not even on the radar then I mean you're

kind of living like an animal which some

people like eart too think are

enlightened but I think your your

chances would be lower than if you're

actually striving for enlightenment in

some reasonably wise manner but it does

remind me of a saying by Paul low who's

one of my favorite dhama teachers who's

still alive today I'm pretty sure unless

something horrible has happened to him

recently where he's saying that your

best bet at becoming enlightened is to

want Enlightenment with all your heart
and do nothing about it it's just
like having your your radar just grab
just like focused on that without
necessarily having to live you know
follow any rules do any practices any
rituals anything like that but just be
yearning for
it and that reminds me of the old story
that I probably told before on a Q&A but
it hasn't been in any recent Q&A about
some some man who hears about some
master out in the forest who is
supposedly enlightened so this guy goes
to the master and he says let me be your
disciple I want to become enlightened
like you please teach me so the master

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

up my

theory that I mean just yearning for

wisdom um is more important than just

doing some cookbook method because you

know that's what you're supposed to

do that if you have to you if I mean if

you want wisdom or Enlightenment there

more than anything else in the world

that will get you farther than all these

practices without

it but so I mean so I would agree that

the the outward practices are not of

primary

importance but not even having dhama on

your radar not even caring about it I

think that's just kind of like living a

Bine

existence

and maybe at CA is right and cows are

enlightened but from Buddhist point of

view they're

not so I'm just going to move on to

fil's third question which is as follows

are there any really juicy or esoteric

dhamma secrets that you don't give out

publicly or in videos not asking you to

name them just if you have any juicy or

esoteric dhama secrets well I mean there

is the suta where the Buddha is is just

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

with a a closed fist you in other words

he has nothing hidden he's he teaches

with an open hand it's all there I mean

there's another suo where he he picks up
a handful of leaves and says you know
what I'm actually teaching is comparable
to these leaves and what I Could Teach
the stuff I know is equal to all the
leaves in this entire Forest but all you
really need to know is is this but
really
the the official position of Terra
Buddhism is that there really are no
esoteric Secrets it's all there in the
texts so I mean if you can read the text
and they're pretty much all translated
into English published for public
consumption at this point then I mean
it's not really esoteric you don't have
to go through any um like secret

trainings and purifications or anything
like that to get into like higher levels
of meditation then yeah that could maybe
be esoteric because that's not available
to any
anybody but with regard to like
teachings you know there's Advanced
teachings that the like the Normie who's
just beginning would not really
understand and then also there's like
scandalous secret stuff about
monasteries and famous monks and that
kind of thing that generally I don't
talk much about but they they do exist
you know some famous semi famous seato
who's like seducing nuns that kind of

thing you know I've heard stories about

that kind of thing and don't really talk

about it

much but I don't think there really is

any juicy esoteric dhamma secrets with

regard to teachings you know there are

experiences like meditative experiences

that might be considered juicy or

esoteric and then there's you know like

kind of dark scandalous kind of stuff

about this or that

monastery this or that teacher that

might be juicy maybe not so esoteric but

really terab Buddhism doesn't have like

secret hidden teachings except for just

Advanced teachings that wouldn't make

sense to a

beginner and so I'm just going to move

on next question this is from commoner

report and commoner report says I have

not spent much time on your channel so

you might have covered this question in

the past but have you studied bagavat

Gita

shrimad

batam and

Cha

chamita well I mean I've read the

bagabag Gita I have talked about that

recently it is a profound text I

consider it to be more profound than the

New Testament for example more profound

than many

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

Hari krishnas I did read one Hari Krishna book that was given to me by a Hari Krishna he had the top knot and everything

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

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

profundity so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from the
sabats and I already qu answered this
question in the comments under the
bitshoot video bitshoot version of the
the previous Q&A but I might as well
answer it again because most people
don't watch um my videos on bitshoot
although the numbers does seem to be
very slightly increasing
l so anyways the sabur says is it not
true that animals cannot be enlightened
nor attain Moksha due to their spines or
chakras being being less developed than
ours it takes a human being to become
self-realized as our spines or chakras

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

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

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

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

radio no nobody to hang out with and I
really wouldn't get bored I just don't
get bored easily um the only time as a
monk or the main time as a monk when I
would get bored is I would have to sit
through some long- winded sermon given
by a Burmese
Seattle it's just like being with people
that I don't really see eye to eye with
I don't really fit in that could be
boring for
me but boredom is essentially just a
kind of desires I want to be doing
something else it might not it might
just be something that I don't even know
what it is but I want to be doing
something besides just sitting here

doing

this so how do you get better at dealing

with that I guess being mindful of it

and then The More mindfully You observe

it you know what is it like what does it

feel like to be bored what does boredom

feel like just observe the boredom like

an ethologist observing a dead fish and

then you'll get insight into it you'll

understand it better and at least while

you're observing it you're doing

something productive and maybe you'll be

a little less bored which kind of is

self-defeating or or maybe not

self-defeating if if You observe the

boredom that makes the boredom go away

then I guess that might be a good thing

but it makes it harder to observe

it

so dealing with bored I mean it is just

a kind of desire and so I mean being

mindful mindfulness is the Panacea I

mean it cures all ills really

and

uh I guess that that would be my advice

with regard to dealing with boredom but

I'm really not an expert because I don't

get bored easily every once in a while

you just feel a little bit bored but um

yeah I I generally do not bore

easily so I'm just going to move on to

xenoid second question here how can we

stop procrastinating and just get that

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

big paper to write I would procrastinate

and in a way it would help because

you're like thinking about the paper and

what you're going to write and you're

you're learning more stuff until finally

you know you're up until midnight the

night before it's due typing the thing

or whatever

but um you know I I did well at that I

mean it has served me well in life

procras ination is not a bad thing so

long as you eventually get it done

before it needs to be done by the time

it needs to be done if you get it done

then that's good in fact I was listening

to a discussion with it was like Jordan

Peterson and some I don't know who the

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

fake Christmas

tree like almost everybody else in South

Carolina so that's just it's just going

to have to get done tomorrow it's just

there's no point in putting that off any

F farther it's already past the middle

of

January

so stop procrastinating well I mean you

just got to use the rationality that I

mean if it really needs to be

done and you got to get started on it

now in order to get it done then you

start

now but a certain amount of rational

procrastination like it doesn't really

have to get done now so I'd rather do

something that I would prefer to do at

the present moment I don't really see a

problem with that but just common sense

will prevent you from procrastinating

beyond the time when you really have to

get something

done so I mean it's just overcoming

laziness I guess more than anything else

it's just Adana it's one of the 10

parames determin

you got to have

determination and I guess for some

people the only way to really cultivate

that is just by beat being beaten over

the head by harsh reality from just not

learning that

yet so I'm just going to move on to zeni
void's third question how can we
lengthen our attention span well first
of all get off the [__] internet the
internet more than anything else has got
people's attention span down to about
like
this but even just living in the west is
I have read books in caves in Burma that
there's no way in hell I could read now
I've got like FH Bradley's Logic on the
bookcase back there and it's some a book
that I would like to read but I just
know that there's so many distractions I
mean you can just click on a Wikipedia
article or just like scroll through
headlines and stuff that it doesn't take

much of an atttention span it's easy you
can read a lot of information that way
that it's much easier than trying to
read like a two volume just this thick
dense Tome of just
abstract difficult to follow
information yeah I mean moved to a cave
in
Burma it worked for me I couldn't I
never read the entire Old Testament of
the Bible until I was living in caves in
Burma and then I read two different
translations of the Old Testament read
the book of Mormon read hegel's
phenomenology of spirit there's no way
in hell I could read hegel's phenomen

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

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

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

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

the Discord server associated with me

and Q&A and so forth

Buddhism I mean they just flatly deny

the possibility that that like a

computer can become actually

sentient but I really don't see why not

I mean if it's just like the brain is

just sort of a a vehicle or container

for sentience in this version of reality

that other versions of reality don't

have brains like formless Realms don't

have

brains cuz brains are form they're

they're like material substance

supposedly

presumably and I really don't think that

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

like

self what do you call

it h this this this word I always have

trouble always have trouble remembering

the word but it's recursive it's like

recursive self-improvement the the

computer isn't necessarily locked into

these instincts and and reflexes and so

forth like like we mammals are so I mean

it can just like hit this curve and just

just be in the stratosphere compared to

us it can be as far beyond us as we are

Beyond amas within a very short time

assuming that that it's even possible

that an AI can become sentient or even

really intelligent I mean the sentience

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

impossible and so why not become

enlightened also I

mean in a

way

omniscience might be kind of a computer

equivalent to Enlightenment like I've

read a number of science fiction stories

about omniscient computers becoming like

the basis of some future religion you

get this computer that it you know it's

it's recursive

it gets just this um critical mass of

information that then just you know it's

it's enough and it just figures it all

out and it becomes um omniscient that

that could be considered a kind of

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

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

for creativity also known as writers

actors

musicians where does the creativity come

from as I pondered this often behind my

Brier 673 Bulldog a bankroll of

experience from past lives perhaps what

say you poob basa and for starters I

will say that a Brier 673 bulldog is a

kind of tobacco pipe I had to look it up

though I didn't I didn't already know

this I just learned that shortly before

um doing this video when I was compiling

the questions and came across a mention

of a Brier 673

Bulldog so where does creativity come

from and I mean philosophers of the past

have had this idea that that first

you've got

fancy which is is a word that has

different meanings now I mean like a a

figment of one's fancy I mean it's fancy

isn't really used for imagination

anymore although it used to be a kind a

word that was pretty much of a synonym

for

imagination and uh that would just be

recombining stuff that you've already

that you already

know like in dreams sometimes you you'll

be recombining different elements of

different experiences into some new

fictional experience and I think a lot

of creativity just comes from that

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

their psych gaps where stuff from you
know like I don't want to say Beyond
this world but it's like practically
like from a different dimension can like
come through
which is where the Paranormal comes from
I mean it's coming from like a
paranormal Source essentially I mean
that would be another kind of like that
would be like inspired genius level of
creativity unless someone's just really
good at recycling elements of previous
experiences but somebody like David Hume
would argue that really you cannot
imagine anything that you've never
experienced before that I mean you can

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

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

explanation for

it

so I guess I'm just going to move on the

next question this is from

yatish and yatish says did Buddha ever

encounter people with neurological

conditions dementia schizophrenia or

autistic people well almost everyone the

Buddha ever met was insane because from

the Buddhist point of view we've all got

neurological conditions we are all

insane pjo UMO you know the common

person is

insane um in the Buddhist time they

probably didn't have any concept of

neurological conditions like dementia

like like scile people I'm sure that the

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

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

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

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

do Insane things and there is a rule

that says that a monk is not responsible

for rules that he breaks if he is so out

of his mind that he doesn't even recall

doing

it which in a way kind of I used to

think as a monk you know wow if you got

so drunk that you blacked out you could

do damn near anything while you're going

on your drunken Rampage and you'd be off

the hook I mean you'd still you you'd be

breaking the rule of drinking but that

would be it of course you wouldn't

remember anything that you did so it

would be the

point so yeah I mean

I'm sure he encountered insane people I

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

allowed to eat raw meat or drink raw
blood unless he is possessed by a
demon so I mean they had the concept set
for it and they wouldn't have the
concept if nobody ever came across
anything like that
so yeah the the short answer to this
medium length question that I already
answered at Great length is did the
Buddha ever encounter people with
neurological conditions dementia
schizophrenia or autistic people then I
would say very very probably yes
although it was not considered to be a
neurological condition back then because
they had no concept of neur
ology so I'm just going to move on to

Ya's second

question you know they had a different

different interpretations for things ya

Tia's second

question what did Buddha what did Buddha

taught kids now so what did the Buddha

teach to Children is there something

specific he said for kids or teens like

I am guessing there is some age and

growth after which it's practical for

them to contemplate the world and

understand his teachings what did he

advise to do before that again the

Buddha really was not hanging out with

children much he was a a forest dwelling

aesthetic recluse for the most part he'd

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

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

to be based on a certainty that God will
come through for someone if the person
musters enough faith in and Devotion to
their
creator what does Buddhism say about
Hope does Buddhism offer a more skillful
way of managing feelings of Despair for
people lacking in hope that mere Blind
Faith uh more lacking in Hope than mere
Blind Faith as in Christianity what is a
more Buddhist approach for managing the
hopelessness I come across with my
clients in the mental health system well
I do recall there is a suta where
somebody asks the Buddha does an
enlightened being have hope and the the
Buddha says no that a wise person really

shouldn't

be like indulging in Hope

hope so hope is really not all that

great from a Buddhist point of view um

apparently at least U I'm not exactly

sure what the poly term was it was

translated into English as hope it could

be that it just wasn't that good of a

translation like aspiration even is kind

of frowned upon in Buddhism that it's

it's all desires for the future which is

something that you shouldn't be doing

but then again the Buddha was mainly

teaching relative ly Advanced renunciant

meditators that were not like living a

worldly secular kind of life but my

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

should always be open-minded because any
anything can
happen that would be my best
advice and so I'm just going to move on
to
PSA and PSA says how do I know if I'm
actually purifying my mind or not with
my meditation what yard stick can I use
to measure this and this is a tricky
question that's more difficult to answer
than one might expect because of course
we are as I mentioned just a few minutes
ago pretty much all delusional and so
people can think that they're making
progress when really they're not and
that is kind of a kind of a problem in a

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

just contentment and serenity not

necessarily like giggling and

hugglets side it's G to the the coin's

going to have an opposite side of that

but

just

like contentment in general or just

willingness to accept the way things are

fewer desires few less grumbling that

kind of a thing that would be a good

indication but you're better off not

using yard sticks anyway you're better

off just that's all Mana and the term

Mana is usually translated in po as

conceit but literally it means measuring

and that's what you do with a yard stick

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

white one and a black one what book is

that so let's find out shall we go back

here

and I think he's talking about this

one it's in

between it's in between Edgar Allen Poe

and khil

Jabron and it is great cases of Sherlock

Holmes Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and this

is not my book The khil Jabron one and

the Edgar alen Poe one also those these

all three of them belong to my woman

although I have read some some Sherlock

Holmes I remember the first thing I read

by Sherlock Holmes aside from maybe a

few short stories was The Hound of the

Baskervilles because ever since I was a

kid the title was just intriguing you

know that's a cool sounding title The

Hound of the Baskervilles and it was it

was very disappointing novel I have to

admit so yeah it's it's Sherlock Holmes

see there he

is there he is I don't know that pipe is

probably not a bulldog though the 573

could be a Brier pipe

though so let's see here tasas is a

second

question is new puno's chick number six

your sixth

girlfriend

well gosh my my woman does kind of

associate herself with the number six

but that's because ever she's like

aesthetically

oriented she has like the the artistic

and she's always liked the shape of

number six also she likes even numbers

better than odd numbers probably because

she's female I've always favored odd

numbers to to even numbers I guess it's

because I'm a

guy so she just likes the number six and

always has ever since she was a kid but

I mean you could in certain certain

scale that now that I think of it that

she could be my sixth in a certain

unmentionable

way and I'm just going to move on to the

next

question this is from dhama

river and dhama river says whenever I

reach a deep level of meditation I reach

a point where fear arises it's an

unworthy level of fear it's very strong

this causes me to stop meditating I've

contemplated this and discovered there

are two reasons why this happens one

fear of death and two fear of going

insane I obviously don't want to die and

I don't want to go insane so this fear

is understandable but it's a roadblock

what do you recommend what should I do

in this situation well this reminds me

of a book I read while in a Hut in

Bali at the edge of a Chinese cemetery

and it was by Osho and Osho said that he
was talking to some kind of psychiatrist
I think
who said that there are three major
fears that a lot of people have and it's
the first two are just exactly what dama
River here mentioned fear of death and
fear of going insane the third is fear
of losing oneself in
orgasm and a lot of people they just
fear this and I mean to me I Osho for
some reason that I did not get at the
time he didn't make the connection but
there's obvious connection between all
three of these and that is fear of
losing one's self one's perceived

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

Meditation Retreat you your your ego can
just be like fighting tooth and nail to
resist the dissolving of this belief in
self because that's the death of the
self essentially I mean it never really
existed in the first place but it's this
illusion of self that really wants to
stay
alive and all you can do is you just
have to face the fear be mindful of the
fear I mean you don't just panic and
stop meditating like fear arises if what
if you're meditating then you've got
like this really juicy like object of
meditation to observe mindfully that's
fear fear shouldn't really it's it

shouldn't be that hard to observe

mindfully unless it's just this

knee-jerk I'm out you know just as soon

as it arises you just panic and just

quit but I mean it takes a certain

amount of Courage I mean meditation is

not bad for you it's it's like your

delusion is fighting to keep you

duded I mean that's really what it boils

down

to I mean you're not going to die from

meditating and

I mean if you're meditating really

wrongly you might go insane or if you

get into some deep level of meditation

that you're just not ready for which can

happen in like some kinds of of Hindu

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

fully enlightened Buddha that kind of

thing but I mean if you got a relatively

healthy mind doing terraa Buddhist

Meditation is not dangerous you're not

it's not going to kill you it's not

going to make make you go insane but it

does attenuate your ego and your ego is

going to fight

back so I mean really if you stop

meditating cases like that it's it's

just like you're doing the bidding of of

your delusion

essentially so the best thing to do is

just tough it you know just to stick

with it observe the fear

as as as an OB of meditation note it and

let it

go so I guess I'll just move on the next question here this is from ruie and ruie says did you ever build and keep a mental image of the Buddha if so what materials did you use for example or that is he had IE
idest extent literature or iconography and finally was it nebulous or clear and no I never built or kept a mental image of the Buddha other than just a very very nebulous shadowy kind of image of there is a person had no idea what he looked like he was a man relatively tall probably pretty skinny you know and it's like trying to have a mental image of my mind of of like the original

Hercules it's like he's so far back in
into the the Misty past there's no way
you could really know what he looks like
and so any clear mental image you have
is going to be inaccurate it's just
going to be madeup imagination and I
didn't want to deal with just madeup
imaginary
Buddhas so you just accept what
information you can glean from the texts
and you got to be skeptical even of that
because it's not 100%
reliable because I really doubt for
example that he had that he was 27 feet
tall or that his heels stuck out and as
far behind his ankles as the rest of his
foot stuck out in front of it so that

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

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

like the hazy nebulous idea that he was

a man in Ancient

India

so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from thermal

squid and thermal squid says is there

any dignified or blameless sewer slide

and I had to look that up and it turns

out that it's a euphemism for getting

past algorithms on the internet it means

Auto

termination so is there any dignified or

blameless Auto termination I think of in

the H I think often of the Hindu pryo

pavesa which I'm I'm unfamiliar with the

Hindu PRI pavasa basically if you've

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

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

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

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

thermal squid saying

that so if I could remove an entire

philosophy or religion from the world's

historical record and

history being honest I think Islam might

be my pick for a number of reasons first

of all it just

homogenized just a rich cultural

diversity throughout much of the world

you know from from Northern Africa

throughout Anatolia the middle e East

Central Central Asia that it was all

just like the cultural diversity was

largely wiped out and replaced by Islam

also the Indian genocide of Buddhism

where Buddhism was pretty much

exterminated by fanatical Muslims in the

Middle Ages I discussed that to some

degree in the previous

Q&A

and yeah I

mean for example Donald Trump was bashed

for his so-called Muslim ban when really

all he was doing was Banning immigration

from the

main countries that that are known for

terrorism and just through whatever

reason most of them were Islamic

countries North Korea was on the list

but the uh the Democrats ignored that

part so yeah I might have to go with

that I mean scientific materialism also

that that would be a good choice also

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

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

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

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

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

example I mean a lot of people who who
watch these q&as probably think Darwin
was just a complete fraud complete
charlatan just totally wrong but I don't
feel that way he's probably my favorite
scientist of all
time and so whether he had he was by
polar or not or whether he just had just
one pole of depression without the manic
episodes I don't
know but um yeah I mean there it doesn't
disqualify somebody it's it's a matter
of I mean in a case like the the three
examples that thermal squid has given of
obsessive compulsive disorder
schizophrenia and
bipolar um there none of them is

mentioned as disqualifying in the text
um certain diseases like epilepsy or or
uh what's the word leprosy things like
that um that I mean you're not supposed
to be ordained as a monk if you've got
like a
disfiguring kind of scary looking or or
like in regard to epilepsy just kind of
something that could scare you know
superstitious villagers away from
Buddhism then that would be forbidden
but in the case of these mental
illnesses that do not necessarily strike
me as very severe except for maybe some
severe
schizophrenia then that would be a call

to be made by the preceptor the the
senior monk who is going to ordain this
person that the senior monk he can judge
the personality of this person and if he
can he may judge that this person is not
fit to be a monk you know and so he
might not ordain them at all or might
just ordain them as a Salona or uh in
burm music we call a Coen like an adult
novice that I've met quite a few adult
novices who are a bit on the Nutty side
or just very simple-minded and
so the the seato of the monastery
decided Well they really don't have what
it takes to be a fully ordained monk but
we can you know put them in robes and
they can be like a monastery attendant

and you know get a little bit of dhama
and you know as much as they are capable
of without having to take upon them all
these rules that they wouldn't be able
to follow and they wouldn't be able to
memorize the poty mocha and all this
sort of thing and so yeah it would be a
judgment call by whoever is presumably
going to be the preceptor of such a
person and then he's got 3A thermal
thermal squid has the followup to
question three which is if so are they
able to make their what see if so what
are they to make of their existence if
they cannot live the holy life is it
just over for them well no I mean you

can still I mean as a lay

person

um you you can still earn Merit you can

still meditate and so forth like

somebody with Leprosy for example their

mind is perfectly clear you know they

might have a perfect they might have

wisdom but they just can't be ordained

as a monk because they've got this this

disease that kind of is disfiguring and

prevents them or even epilepsy you know

some somebody like dovi had had epilepsy

he was a relatively wise person despite

that his personal life was was kind of a

mess but still I mean he was capable of

relatively profound Insight at least

into the human

situation so I mean you work out your karma it may be that your karma prevents you from becoming a monk but I mean most people's Karma prevents them from living the holy life if you're born into a culture where there is no holy life as an option that's it you you can be you can be born into a century or a millennium where there's just living the holy life just is not an option so you just do the best you can it's not it's not over for them I mean you can still make progress you won't be making as radical of progress as if you're a disciple of GMA Buddha in the ancient gangji's Valley but still I mean you can

always do

something anything is possible

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

question which is from

kundru and kundru says in your book

entitled philosophical Dharma is there a

reason why you use Dharma instead of

Dharma and uh yeah I've got the book

right over there on the other table but

I won't I won't bother to go over

there but yeah there's uh actually two

reasons I think why I entitled that book

philosophical Dharma instead of

philosophical Dharma first of all Dharma

is an English word it's it's more easily

understood by people than Dharma because

Dharma which is kind of the second

reason applies only to terraa Buddhism
or it's also found in asoken
inscriptions and so forth but as a
general rule dhama with two M's instead
of RM applies only to Terra and my book
philosophical Dharma is the most
eclectic of the three books that I have
published now and it's not dealing only
with Terra you know I I talk about
Mahayana which uses the word Dharma also
I deal with Hinduism which uses the word
Dharma and also I I impli some like
Western philosophy which with a little
stretching could qualify under the
English term of
Dharma so Dharma with an R was more

applicable more descriptive of the

contents of the

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

the next question this is from

apocalypse chow and I think I might

strike out with apocalypse child's three

questions which are sort of strange

questions seems to me first his first

question is thoughts on One Flew Over

the Cuckoo's Nest and I never read the

novel I saw the classic movie with what

Jack

Nicholson and I saw it many years

ago gosh I don't even remember the last

time I saw One Flew Over the cuckoo n I

think it won a an Academy Award for best

picture or something didn't it

maybe it was it was it was a good movie
and it's about this guy who I don't I
don't know if he's like really sane or
if he's just like not really crazy but
he really has this issue with authority
you know he like defies Authority just
as second nature until finally they give
give they lobotomize him or or give him
like some kind of electroshock therapy
and turn him into a kind of a vegetable
or
something but yeah I mean I really I
could not analyze it philosophically at
this point because it was so long ago
that I saw that movie that I just
remember you know it's about this guy

who's relatively sane it seems who is
like trapped in a mental
hospital and how he deals with that how
he's like getting along with the other
people and how they essentially destroy
him at the end because he's thinks too
much for himself I guess you know he's
not conformist enough with the other
crazy
people and I mean now that I think about
it it could be like a parable for like
any sort of original thinking person
someone who thinks for themselves living
in society in
general but that's just a guess because
it's been such a long time since I saw
the movie and that's probably my most

success uccessful answer of the the

three that he's asking

because his next question is thoughts on

sluggish

schizophrenia which I'd never heard of

before but then he's got the

tldr uh bullet point here that sluggish

schizophrenia is a fictional diagnosis

used in the Soviet Union as a political

tool to oppress anti-soviet

dissenters so in a way I guess it kind

of ties in with One Flew Over the

Cuckoo's Nest or my provisional

interpretation of it it's like sort of a

communist or authoritarian government

just declares any non-conformist

insane so yeah I mean I wouldn't put I
mean especially back in Stalin's time I
think the Soviet Union re really reached
its low Point like from a a spiritual
point of view or like a a moral point of
view under
Stalin that
uh yeah I mean I read the gulag
archipelago Soul [__] and at least the
uh the The Abridged English version of
it and uh yeah I mean they they did
horrible things and governments do do
horrible things and sometimes well
always the governments that are doing
horrible things are trying to pass
themselves off as
benevolent and that happens even now and

I've been thinking about that a lot that
really one of the most important
just really gamechanging innovations
that have occurred over the past few
decades is the arising of the internet
that the internet has just
completely
revolutionized the people's acquiring of
information I mean it's it's caused our
attention spans to be this long but
still we completely by bypass all the
the propaganda or a lot of it you know
we're able to go around the propaganda
and get to actual facts that the
government doesn't want us to
know and so how that kind of ties in

with uh this but uh maybe I shouldn't

sit here and trying to figure out how it

ties

in so yeah that's that' be my thoughts I

mean I've never really heard of it and

it's just kind of tossed out there so

I'm just going to move on to uh apoc

child's third

question thoughts on the song

institutionalized by sewers sidal

Tendencies which was apparently a punk

rock band back in the 1980s at least

this song institutionalized it really

strikes me as punk rock I'd never heard

it before until just like within an hour

before starting this video I decided to

just watch the Youtube video and it's

about some young guy who you know it's like he's kind of introverted he's trying to figure stuff out he's kind of overwhelmed by the world and it's just the pressure of trying having to figure stuff out before he really is able to figure stuff out causes him to mess up sometimes causes him to just like kind of tune everybody out until his family his his parents put him in an institution and he just wanted a Pepsi so in way I guess all three of these questions by apocalypse Chow I never really I didn't really notice this until just now while I'm answering them they all kind of tie into someone who's

not necessarily insane who is declared
insane by the
system so it also kind of reminds me of
um I it's a a book by Eric Fram who I
have to admit was this Jewish guy who
was briefly a member of the Frank school
he was a devout socialist he didn't have
much use for like mainstream
Marxism but he definitely was a
socialist and he had this idea that in a
in insane Society like he was calling
Western Society at the time but all
societies are insane because the common
person is
insane but he was saying in an insane
Society the samee person will appear mad
that

really I mean the the well adapted
people the people that conform to the
insane Society are The Crazy Ones or at
least most of the crazy people in
society are the conformists because the
society itself is
insane so yeah I guess that's like the
predominant theme of Apocalypse Chow
here is like a sane person relatively
speaking is considered to be insane in
an in Ane
system and with regard to the the song
institutionalized there's some really
good guitar in it it's it's almost like
rap music though it's just he's not it's
not really a song because the guy's just

yelling through the whole through the
whole piece the whole musical piece so
to speak but the guitar is good and I
mean it is it is sort of
thought-provoking with regard to the
lyrics
and so I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from Raphael and
Raphael says will there be a live talk
once in Discord and we do have a live
chat room in discourse that almost never
gets used I think it's been used maybe
two or three times since the Inception
of the Discord server and it was just
mainly because I was getting pestered
enough that I was saying all right all
right we'll just open up the Discord for

people that want to talk um and I was I
was I was present there and had we had a
conversation it was it was all very nice
nice um but I mean anyone who wants to
talk on the
Discord um voice chat room is is welcome
to do so I mean I don't necessarily have
to be there to do it also although if
people really want to to set up
something um that that'll work too I
guess I mean if if people really want to
have some kind of like talk session on
the Discord server with me involved in
it then we can work out uh a time for it
and we can do
that but it's just for the most part

it's just not really uh one of my
priorities so it's like people have to
pester me to in order to get the ball
rolling so if you really want it to
happen you got to pester me more I guess
and I'm just going to move on next
question this is from
nmit and nmit says what sutas should a
beginner to Buddhism read in order to
best understand the teachings of the
Buddha I would I would recommend the
suata which contains a little bit of
later stuff but for the most part it
contains early
teachings and it's you know it's
describing a world in which Buddhist
monks are just homeless

Wanderers which I mean stopped being the
case relatively early on in the history
of Buddhism I mean there have always
been some homeless wanders but before
very long most monks started just
accumulating in sedentary monasteries
and not moving around very
much but yeah the sutin that was really
the book that converted me to terraa
Buddhism so um if you want to know what
early Buddhism was like not just the
developed Orthodox system of terava but
even pre terraa you know this primordial
Primal
Buddhism um yeah read the
sutin so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from

Robert and this is Robert's the last guy

to ask questions my golly this is going

to be less than two

hours all

right so Robert says when I meditate I

often end up in a dull sleepy State any

tips well my first tip is have good

meditative posture sit straight up and

down if you start slumping when you're

meditating it it just helps you to be

sleepy it's like your posture helps to

determine your mental States they've

done SC scientific psychological studies

on this that if you adopt kind of a a

sleepy posture it helps you to be sleepy

whereas if you uh adopt like an alert

posture it helps you to be alert so if
you can sit in the full Lotus that's
best but even if you can't sit in the
full Lotus get as close to the full
Lotus as you can and just straight up
and down keep your back straight and
that will help very much in not being in
a dull sleepy State also I mean if you
are really in a dull sleepy State you
should alternate with walking meditation
sitting meditation walking meditation
like like the mahasi method it just
alternates one hour sitting one hour W
walking one hour sitting one hour
walking although maybe an hour might be
a little too long for the

walking but it does help to keep kind of

get the blood flowing and it's very hard

to fall asleep when you're walking

so that works

too um there are sutas on what to do

when you're experiencing Tina or sloth

and torper more like more like laziness

and

sleepiness

um and includes like like visualizing

light and splashing water on your face

and pulling on your your ear earlobes

and kind of rubbing your arms and that

kind of thing to as little gimmicks to

help you we wake up but I I guess the

two main pieces of advice that I would

give first of all remain in a very alert

posture back straight you know head head
held up in a straight position and also
if you really start getting sleepy do
walking
meditation so Robert second question how
do you join the Discord server well if
you look through the URL links that I
have below pretty much every video then
you you can search for my email address
amongst those links and you can send me
an email and introduce yourself kind of
tell me where you're at not necessarily
geographically but you know just like
you know why you want to join what you
expect that sort of thing and uh chances
are I'll uh send you an invite link or

if you know someone who's already on the server and there's let's see maybe I don't know maybe 50 people 40 at least so that's less than one per country on average on this Earth but if you know that one person that's in your country that's on the on the server then you can uh help them to be your intermediary so

anyways I'm just going to move on to Robert's third question which is as an Africans speaker living in South Africa I wanted to know if you are familiar with the language and if you have ever visited South

Africa um the only thing I know about Africans other than it's spoken in South

Africa is it's it's like a dialect of

Dutch I think it's most closely related

to the Dutch language because South

Africa was colonized by Dutch settlers I

guess um I've never visited South Africa

although I I know a few people who who

were monks in South South Africa there's

a A mahasi or a

chanate uh Branch Monastery in Peter

merb and I had a friend an Australian

friend uh venerable dhama rakita who is

now disrobed and also um a friend

uh oh gosh what's his name

UK

ukim KRA with Burmese pronunciation who

actually disrobed in South Africa

married a South African woman I think
and then they got divorced and then he
reordain and and he went back to Burma
and reordain as a
monk but uh yeah there is a a Cham yaka
Branch Monastery if it's still going in
Peter Meritt in South Africa but uh I've
never been anywhere on the African
continent I've never been anywhere in
Europe either the closest I ever came to
Europe was I worked on a Polish fishing
boat or a ship a factory troller
um off the coast of Washington and
Oregon in the pa Pacific Northwest of
America but it was considered to be
polish soil because I had to go through
customs after I got off the ship so

technically I was on polish soil even
though there was no real soil because it
was a ship I mean it was kind of a dirty
ship so maybe that's why if it was a
clean ship maybe I wouldn't have had to
go through
customs a lot of cockroaches on that
ship I got got to
admit so anyways that's it my golly this
turned into a kind of a short one I
think is partly not so much that there
were very few questions it's just that I
was kind
of uh more concise I guess in answering
the questions and it would be even
shorter if I haven't started off with

that self-indulgent introduction that
many of you probably wish you had never
heard so if you have any questions that
you think I can answer answer about
early Buddhism Terra Buddhism meditation
Buddhism in general the like the history
and evolution of Buddhism Eastern
philosophy in general in Ancient India
that kind of stuff me personally
monasticism Burma any kind of questions
like that do you think I can
answer then go ahead and answer and
please no more than three questions per
episode and uh be sure to like And
subscribe if you haven't already and uh
check out the URL links below the videos
and be happy

okay

then hello and welcome to episode

129 of question and answer I am your

host poo basa and I sit before you

unwashed and

unkempt on a comfortable weekend and I'm

not even wearing real clothes today and

I got the uh mandatory beverage

and because there are so many questions

this time I've got two emergency backup

beverages just in case and I think I'm

going to be cracking into at least one

of them because we've got about 50

questions and this could run three hours

and so I might as well just Dive Right

into this and the first question is from

Gnostic rocker and Gnostic rocker or

Gnostic rocker says you mentioned that

at very in times in your life you'd been

skeptical about the goodness of humanity

and chosen to shun the crowds preferring

the company of being alone with nature

and animals to being with people I feel

the same but I wonder what was your

journey to that realization and was it a

difficult process to accept that you

felt that way in my case it was

difficult because I wrestled with why I

felt that way was it because I felt

Superior to other people which I don't

or was it from some some kind of Nichi

and resent

rantal almost said it like it was an

English word or something or perhaps
projection of my own Shadow Self onto
others now after years of contemplation
I'm fully at ease with not really
wanting to be with the crowds I've
worked out why I feel that way I'm okay
with it I'm curious about your journey
to such a such a state of mind and I
really didn't have a journey because I
was born that way I think it was uh
Henry David thorough said that it seems
to be a law that a person cannot be he
cannot have a deep what's the
[Music]
word he cannot be a people he has to be
that essentially what Theo said is you

have to be either a people person or a
nature person you cannot have a deep
regard for both man and
nature and I'm just a nature person
ever since I was a kid I've kind of
disliked the human race like when I was
a kid my two favorite movies I was just
telling my sweetheart that this today my
two favorite movies when I was a kid
were Planet of the Apes and the Omega
Man both of them about the collapse of
civilization you know the collapse of
the human race in one case into
essentially mute animals and then the
other into like strange zombie type
creatures so I mean I just born that way
I just prefer the the the company of

animals or trees with with some

exceptions there are some animals I

don't like probably even a few trees I

don't

like and I've I tried to understand it I

think to some degree it's like the

closer a being is to me the more

critical I am of it you know it's like

I'm kind of critical of myself self it's

like why did I do that why didn't I do

it this other way or or you know this

kind of thoughts can arise and the more

closely some some being resembles me the

more critical I am of that being in this

the more I'm am likely to disapprove of

it like a dumb animal they're dumb they

got excuses or a person that's
like less similar to me than other
people I can I'm much more likely to
have Christian charity towards that
person it's just the closer you get to
to being me the more I am likely to have
like a critical attitude because you
know it's like I have a conscience with
regard to myself I've got like
principles and standards and so forth
and the closer someone is to me the more
I apply those standards onto that other
person and then they're more likely to
violate those standards and I mean
that's not the whole story but that is
one aspect of why I tend to prefer the
company of lizards to the company of

humans although in my old age I am
becoming more tolerant of my fellow
man and my father was the same way it
was like he wrote poetry sometimes my
father did and one one excerpt from his
poems is I've lashed out with hard and
calloused hands at the imperfections of
my fellow man
and my hands are on as callous as his
probably but it's a similar thing so
anyways I'm just going to move on to
Gnostic rocker's second
question which is Buddhism seems to be
in accord with apophatic theology what's
your perspective on that and then kind
of as a little commentary he's got 17th

century Mystic angelous celesia seems so
close to dhama Insight too as his
Persian Islam lamic Mystic Mahmud
shabistari in his 14th century writings
and then he includes some uh some quotes
from them which I won't necessarily read
here and uh some links and so forth and
he says uh these remind me of the
essence of su udana Ida
dap so I guess the main question here is
uh what's my perspective on Buddhism
seeming to be in accord with apophatic
the theology well I mean setting aside
the whole theology part because Buddhism
isn't referring to a capital G God other
than as a kind of delusional wrong
view but Buddhism is apophatic with

regard to the ultimate with regard to
the absolute and a lot of very
intelligent Buddhists just absolutely
cannot get this that even with regard to
no self that Buddhism has an apophatic
like attitude towards reality that
reality cannot be expressed in symbols
it cannot be said in words like the name
that can be named is not the Eternal
name it's that's that that is just basic
to early Buddhism and even a lot of just
intelligent
monks just cannot get it and there's
going to be one of these monks
apparently that's going to be mentioned
in one of the questions

below but my main introduction to

apophatic theology was the mystical

Theology of the pseudo dianus which you

can download for free off the internet

and it takes just a few minutes to read

it's not very

long and yeah this wise people sages

around the world can come to the same

conclusion which is you cannot express

the highest truth in words the name that

can be named is not the Eternal name as

the very first verse of the the the D

Jing

says

so yeah I mean it makes perfect sense to

me that I mean Buddhism does not have a

monopoly on wisdom there's going to be

wise people all over the world some people will be wise even in spite of their culture like to some degree Jesus of Nazareth was like this he was so far beyond his culture that even his own disciples didn't really understand him apparently so see what's the question though my perspective on Buddhism being in accord with apophatic theology yeah it's in accord with apophatic anyway the theology part really doesn't apply to Buddhism but unless you want to just use theology as you know like the philosophy of the ultimate something like that the absolute so yeah that's I got no problem with that and then um so the Buddha was

kind of an apophatic philosopher like
one of the the main apophatic
philosophers of ancient India I mean in
a way he was like the first really
bigname apophatic philosopher in India
and the Hindus still they have to have
everything nailed down in words for the
most part you know they'll have this
elaborate Philosophy for trying to
describe the Indescribable Buddhism went
the same route with Abid dama the
commentarial tradition just established
orthodoxies of the various schools you
know they try to explain everything
they're just locked in their
head philosophers tend to be
intellectual to the point of just being

addicted to their own

intellect

so I guess nagar kind of moved back

towards apophaticism um but he did it in

a very intellectual way like Anyone who

reads the mul jamaka karaka it's very

complicated intellectual arguments the

whole purpose of which is to just

destroy philosophy leaving just this

desolate Wasteland of Silence behind

through which reality can

shine

so I guess I answer that question and as

I say I got lots of questions I

shouldn't really be taking a lot of time

answering a single question unless I

just happen to feel like it so Gnostic

rocker's third

question as I scroll down here a little

bit is as follows I wonder what you make

of the research work of mford Spiro

writing on burmes religious motivation

from an anthropological Freudian point

of view in the early 90s I studied in a

Burmese Forest Hermitage in Japan with

an ex Zen monk who had converted to

terraa I told him I was considering a

life in the robes he insisted I read

Spiro's book cover to cover before I

make any such decisions that book

Buddhism and Society a great tradition

and its burmes vicissitudes had a

profound influence on the way I

understood the psychological
underpinnings of the monastic life since
you know the ordained life so well from
the inside and outside I'm curious to
hear your view well the only book I've
read by melord Spiro was burmes
supernaturalism
and I I never read this other one the
Buddhism in society a great tradition is
Burmese vicissitudes but um I assume it
would be more or less in the same vein
with the same general attitude since
it's the same general person who's
writing both books and mford spirro was
trying to describe Burmese
supernaturalism like their belief in

Witchcraft and ghosts and other
Supernatural entities and demonic
possession and and Wizardry and all this
kind of stuff and he obviously didn't
believe any of it that he was like a
western 20th century secular humanist
who probably didn't believe in any kind
of religion other than like scientism
mainly maybe or who knows maybe he was
like some sort of secular Christian I
don't know but he obviously didn't
believe that you know the stuff that he
was writing about he was he was doing it
as an anthropologist which supposedly
would imply that he would have an
unbiased objective approach but really
it doesn't work that way that everyone

is biased and he was simply biased in
favor of 20th century secular humanism
whatever Trends were going on in
cultural anthropology at the time and it
was pretty obvious that it was sort of a
condescending attitude towards burmu
supernaturalism and with regard to
Buddhism it may be that he'd be a little
more respectful maybe a little less
obvious in his disbelief well not just
overtly saying I don't believe this [__]
but still you know he's coming up with
alternate theories you know like
hysteria and and this kind of thing just
cultural conditioning as ways of
describing these allegedly Supernatural

events and to some degree I can relate
like the phenomenon of the nadoo in
Burma nadoo literally means
a small G God's wife and when melfred
Spiro wrote his book most nados were
either like teenage girls or women
around the age of menopause and of
course he describes this well I I
suppose I should describe naad a little
better that a naido is a woman who is
possessed by a spirit and at certain
festivals they'll dance orgastic just
just like they're possessed you know
they'll just just dance like crazy and
sometimes they will prophesy sometimes
just emitting gibberish like someone
speaking in Tong in tongues at like a

Christian Revival meeting and mford
Spiro just had this idea that it was a
kind of Hysteria that they're working
off repressions like the teenage girl
because she's still kind of unwillingly
a virgin because she's not married yet
and then Village Burma you don't have
sex until you're married or engaged at
the very least and the the menopausal
women you know they're just sort of
asserting their femininity and putting
it out there you know they're waning
sexuality or their waning sexual
attractiveness and so forth nowadays
nados apparently seem to be mostly
latent homosexual men in

Burma so I mean it's it's a like an
opportunity to just flaunt oneself to
just let it all
out but he he took this approach to just
about every aspect of burm super
naturalism just coming up with some
psychological alternative explanation to
you know taking the Paranormal at face
value and whether he does that with
Buddhism or not I don't know but I would
say that if you want to understand
Buddhism or Burmese Buddhism melord
Spiro will give you a certain angle on
it it'll give you a certain perspective
from a kind of
skeptical not even really skeptical but
just kind of a materialist Western point

of view

you so let's see what's the question

though what do I make of the research

work of melord Spiro writing on

religious burmes religious motivation

yeah well I never read his book on

burmes religious motivation I only read

his book on

supernaturalism and I might be uh going

through three beverages this evening cuz

I work I work nights now and so I wake

up around noon

usually and so the the the usual

schedule when it's still daytime outside

when I'm doing q&as it it it doesn't

work that way anymore I'm usually doing

them at night now and and it's nighttime
where I am right
now and the even the fish tank it's got
like it's in Moonlight mode
already so let's see here I guess I
answered that one so I'm just going to
move on next question this is from Lord
and Lord says I've been practicing for
about a year and a half now and most
times I can dissolve my sense of self
and experience Rapture is that a normal
thing you would say for a Layman like
myself and have you experienced Earth
shattering Bliss and contentment before
so that's kind of two questions isn't
it yeah okay let's
see guess I'll separate it but this is

Lord is already transgressive with
regard to the number of questions asked
so maybe I shouldn't be multiplying the
number of questions he has
asked so with regard to um Lord he's
been meditating for about a year and a
half apparently and he says he can
dissolve his sense of self and
experience Rapture and then is that a
normal thing you would say for a Layman
like myself well I mean it's not
mainstream it's not that normal but it's
certainly not any thing completely you
know off the bell-shaped curve I mean
there's I've met lots of people who are
just good at meditating you know even

like they can be a relative beginner and

they'll sit down and just go into some

fairly good suat and you know I I knew

this one this one

Layman he he eventually became a monk

but he didn't last very long where he

would just get drunk on py when he would

when he'd be doing like intensive

meditation

he would just it was like he was just

getting drunk he was so happy just

experiencing this Bliss that I mean

eventually he he sold his business he he

got rid of all of his stuff he went to

Burma was ordained

pandama and he was just getting so

intoxicated on PT or Rapture that I mean

he's just like just bursting out in
galling laughter for no apparent reason
and just kind of dancing around jumping
on his bed just kind of trying to work
off all this energy and eventually he
just he just was told he's going to have
to leave he's to go back home again and
I never heard from him since he was a
really good guy I hope everything worked
out well for him in the long run but
yeah there are some people who like
burmes villagers especially you know
they can go to a beginning Meditation
Retreat and just go into these states of
bliss you know it's just it's like deep
meditation or deep Sade relatively deep

anyway and you know they just don't
think as much as the average person or
they can just
dissociate because a lot of this really
deep meditation for a lot of people is a
kind of dissociation where your entire
mind isn't pacified it's just you're
kind of in this one compartment of your
mind that is pacified and blissed out
but still it doesn't make much of an
effect on your overall personality when
you're not meditating because it's just
sort of a sealed off
compartment so with people like that and
I don't know what kind of person Lord is
really but with people like
that

it's how do I explain it I mean I've
talked about this before that it just
meditating just makes you a better
meditator it doesn't necessarily have a
whole lot of influence on what's going
on in your everyday life if you're if
you're that kind of person but then some
people they're just good
meditators there's it just works that
way and it's probably more
common outside of Western Civilization
where people are just compulsive
thinkers you know sort of like
conditioned into the cult of objectivity
and just like analyzing everything all
the time um the average like burmes is

villager they just don't seem to think

very much so they can sit down and go

into deep meditation relatively easily

although in many cases they're so

dogmatic in their approach to Buddhism

that they don't really know what to do

with these deep States and even the

monks who's just usually like some

Village seato who himself I mean he

doesn't have very deep experience of

meditation you know he can't really

guide

them so

let's see what is the question oh what

would

I see is that a normal

thing you would say for a Layman like

himself um you know it's not it's not
wildly unusual it's certainly kind of an
outlier you know it'd be less than 2% of
the population probably but or maybe you
know in outside of Western Civilization
it might be
5% but still you know it's it's unusual
kind of but it's not like extremely
rare so I'm just going to move on to
Lord's second question which is the
second half of the first question and
have you experienced Earth shattering
Bliss and contentment before well I
don't know how you would Define earth
shattering I never really shattered the
earth I mean I experienced Bliss in

meditation like like deep states of

meditation where I had no doubt

whatsoever this is closer to reality

than anything I've experienced before

and five minutes of this is well worth

20 years of struggling and floundering

in a fourth world country just working

towards

this

so whether it's it could compare with

what Lord

experienced I don't know it might be a

whole different kind of

thing so anyways I'm just going to move

on to Lord's second or third question

here what are your thoughts on people

like AES Shanti Muji Papi and the like

people who teach Neo

ADV well I had a friend who was into AES

Shanti back around 200 11 or

12 and so I watched one or two of his

videos out of curiosity and I mean he's

kind of like eart

TOA he uh he seemed nervous at the

beginning of the speech which kind kind

of struck me as something that an

enlightened being might not be also he

had certain mannerisms in his speech

like saying like kind of a lot it might

be like two or three kindas in one

sentence I'm not sure if it was kind of

but it was one of those kind of words

that are just used as filler they don't

really mean

anything so my Muji I have known nothing

about Muji pop G I don't know even know

who pop G is I mean people like eart TOA

I know who that that is but uh I don't

know if he would be a technically a

teacher of Neo

ad but people who teach Neo

ADV um in a way

it's it's just sort of like not having a

structure to what you're experiencing

it's like they didn't get enlightened

necessarily through some rigid religious

or spiritual structure and so when

they're teaching what they experience is

like it's just sort of

amorphus but uh I really can't my

thoughts on people like aash Shanti Muji PBG and the like I really don't have many thoughts on these people there's I mean different there's different ways of climbing the same mountain and you can get to the top of the mountain from different angles and there's different ways of
explaining like relatively Advanced spiritual States and how to get there although the practices seem to be relatively uniform it's like the higher up you get the closer you get you might be climbing the the same Mountain from two different sides and so you might be very different down towards the bottom

but the higher up you get the more the

more it comes

together and that's the way spirituality

is that like a Christian and a Buddhist

might be very different in their like

base dogmas you know down towards the

bottom but as they get higher and higher

and higher so a lot of the Christians

and probably and a lot of the Buddhists

too will never get anywhere near the top

that even the system might not even

allow for that but the closer to the top

they get the more they just converge

until they they're in agreement when

they get to the top so long as they're

not insisting upon any of the like the

beginner level

dogmas so Neo

advas is just sort of a

more well be more modern obviously

because it's Neo but it would be you

know like a

less classical version of advant which

is is based on the the upanishadic

literature of ancient

India so I'm not sure how well I answer

that one but I'm going to move on

to Lord's third or possibly even fourth

question and he asks a a fifth question

or a fourth question and since the limit

really is three and we're arguably like

plausibly up to four already I'm just

going to he can ask the the next

question for the for a different Q&A I

guess so the his last question here that

I'm going to answer is have you met any

black monks before from the West who

were ordained

and I think I've met one black monk

before possibly two but for sure I

remember one he was at Cham in rangon

and he was a temporary

Monk and he had

learned the

uh what method was it it wasn't the

mahasi method he was at Chan me which is

in the mahasi tradition the sunlun

method I think it was which um includes

a lot of heavy breathing especially

towards the beginning and he was all

hyped up about becoming a teacher of the sunin method in in the west he came from California and uh he didn't last very long is a monk and he's the only black monk that I think I've ever met that I can think of other than some very dark skinned Sri Lankan monks but there are a few monasteries in Africa there's a famous one I think it's what is it Uganda or Rwanda something like that that there actually is a monastery I have seen like videos of black monks in Africa going for alms round and and villagers putting food in their bowl that kind of thing so they do exist although I've only met one personally

and he was just a temporary monk he

didn't he lasted just few weeks or

months before dropping back out again

which was his plan from the

beginning so I'm just going to move on

to

quor and let's see I think quator has

four questions too we get people are

getting transgressive

here yeah

okay so I'm not sure which if I mean I

shouldn't read all three of

them he's got one follow-up question

which I guess I should read because

that's his first

question and then he's got another

follow-up question at the end which wait

a

minute let's

see I don't know so anyways I'm just

gonna answer the first three just in

chronological order I guess so quor asks

a follow-up question to a question he

asked in the previous Q&A that I

answered apparently not in a fully

satisfactory Manner and I'm making sure

that the computer is

charging and it

is so he says I find it strange that

Buddha would have thought the formless

janas were not the way then he meditates

in fourth Janna which are the formless

janas and finds the necessary Insight

within that to gain Enlightenment also
he probably would not have had a
realization that the first jna is the
way if he had rejected the formless Jas
which is why I'm thinking it has to do
with the difference between absorption
and full awareness janas since there is
a difference between experiencing Janna
through deep concentration versus
experiencing it because there aren't
enough hindrances left to stop the Janna
from arising thoughts please if there's
more to add well again he's this is
essentially the same question as he
asked in the previous Q&A about this
weird Legend where the Buddha has two
meditation instructors before he becomes

the Buddha before he becomes
enlightened and they teach him the
highest possible JRE is the the his
first teacher taught him up to the I
mean he mastered the the first four
standard Jas plus the first three
formless Jas and then his next teacher
taught him all the formless Jas too
and then he realized this isn't the way
to become enlightened and then at a
later time he realized you this is all
right first he he goes to the in the
meditation instructors Masters all the
janas that you can possibly Master
realizes that's not good enough then he
goes off into the forest and starts

torturing himself doing severe austerity
for six years realizes that isn't good
and then he recalls when he was a kid
and his father was plowing a field and
he was sitting under a tree watching his
father plow a field that he
spontaneously went into first jna and
then he thinks that's it that's how I
become aligned so it's it's a me it's
it's a mixed up Legend apparently it's
like two different legends that were
cobbled together that quor is
obstinately like
assuming that this is like some kind of
historical
objective fact that that's the way it
happened and I just don't think

so so it's just a confused Legend in my opinion but his way

see let's just read over this a little better here I find it strange that Buddha would have thought the formless janas were not the way then he meditates in fourth Janna which are the formless Jas not necessarily the four formless Jas because in my opinion they're somewhat anachronistic taken are just tacked on to the standard four Jas they were added as a kind of annex to Fourth J so originally fourth genre was not a formless JRE unless I mean in a way it is but according to Orthodox tradition standard fourth jna still has a

meditation object and so it isn't really formless and so then they take the four formless genas which I consider to be added on later then and they just kind of include them as like subgroups or like subdivisions of fourth jna so let's see here he meditates in fourth Jonna which are the formless janas he says but not necessarily finds the necessary Insight within that to gain Enlightenment but no it like first jna that he realized that first jna which might just mean jna in general which completely disregards the legend that he had already mastered all the Jas before he took up the six years of severe austerity and rejected it as

not the

path so trying to make sense of this I

mean you want you can just do as many

mental gymnastics as you can to try and

rationalize this starting with the

assumption that it's objective history

which in my opinion it is not so I mean

you can just stretch and twist and just

bust your brain trying to work out some

way for this to make sense and I think

it's just wasted

effort but towards the end he's saying

let's see here I'm thinking it has to do

with the difference between absorption

and full awareness janas since there is

a difference between experiencing jna

through deep concentration versus

experiencing it because there aren't

enough hindrances left to stop the jna

from Rising well I mean just I mean I've

covered this recently also I don't know

if quor asked the question but just

because you don't have the hindrances

it's not like the hindrances are like

some Dyke or damn holding back

J that like suppressing the hindrances

are a necessary like

they're what what's the word getting

lost with words they're like

prerequisites

but I mean just because you get rid of

the hindrances temporarily doesn't mean

you just that's what causes Jonna that's

just a prerequisite before you can

attain Jonna but just because you've

done that doesn't mean it just that the

hindrances are like some kind of damn

holding back

jna it really doesn't work that

way

so um so quor is is assuming that

there's two different kind of J there is

the jna when you're sitting motionless

with your eyes closed which according to

the legend the Buddha as a kid that's

what he was doing sitting motionless

under a tree in meditation when he

experienced first jna and said that's it

that's how to become

enlightened and it's just a confused
Legend there may be some way of
rationalizing it that will be
emotionally satisfying to some people
who want to believe that this Legend is
some kind of objective factual
history but I'm I'm skeptical of
that so I'm just going to move on next
question this is quor second question
now and I will mention though quator
seems to imply that there is a kind of
Janna that is there when you're just
like an enlightened being who's walking
around is just always in Janna but I
mean that is not Orthodox Terra you can
come up with your own theories on Jan
that you know will

be like in defiance of Orthodox terab
like for example the Buddha when he died
as he was dying he was in such severe
pain he went into Jonna first he went
into first Jonna then second then fourth
third then fourth then the formless Jon
is in order and then goes back down to
first and then goes up to Fourth again
and then he passes away while he's in
like ordinary for the J which is an
another little hint that the formless
Realms weren't part of the Janis scheme
at the beginning so they had to like
tack those on but then they had to like
have him come back down out of that all
the way back to first and then up to

regular fourth again in order to to go

pass into

Parana so I mean really if you start off

with dogmatism just starting off with

the assumption that Legends and entire

sutas and so forth are just 100%

accurate and factual and reliable then

you're just going to lock yourself into

this dogmatic system that is going to

have a lot of Deadwood at

best some of it's worse than Deadwood

some of it's actually detrimental to

believe this

stuff so you have to be careful and you

should be skeptical in the classical

sense of suspending judgment you know

when you read something in a text it's

not a matter of I believe this or this
is [__] there's also like the
alternative of just accepting it as a
hypothesis you're not insisting it's
true you're not insisting it's false
you're just considering it maybe working
with it a little maybe accepting it
provisionally to see how things work out
from that and with regard to some of
these old Legends I mean they're just
irrelevant
stuff like biological or biographical
stuff about the Buddha's life a lot of
that I mean it really has nothing to do
with dhama practice like whether Jesus's
mother was a virgin or not should be

just utterly

irrelevant you know it's like what did

the man have to say that's what's

important

so for the second time I think I'll

leave this question

and I'll move on to quora's second

question which is is it possible to feel

depressed in a Heavenly realm form or

formless um I think it's possible but it

would be much more subtle than in the

human realm that no no matter where you

go there's going to be like happiness

and unhappiness even in the heaven

Realms there's going to be happiness and

unhappiness because the first Noble

Truth you know everything is Dua you

know the first truth is everybody
suffers you know it's like existence has
suffering built into it individual
existence has suffering built right into
it there's no Escape so long as you are
existing as some kind of
being so even up in the higher Heaven
Realms there's going to be a certain
amount of maybe mild boredom mild
restlessness maybe a little mild
depression in in the sense of just sort
of your depression for me is often
experienced as just like a contraction
of spirit then you get more manic it's
more expansive you know expansion and
contraction so I don't see why a higher

being a superhuman being could have some
contraction of spirit relatively
speaking it would be much more subtle
than we are experiencing just like you
know a the depression of the average
human would be much more subtle than the
depression of someone who is like some
low ranking ghost or like denisen of a
hell realm or
something so yeah it is possible in my
opinion
so I'll move on to quor third
question which is is it possible to
leave that realm or are you stuck there
for a predetermined amount of time if
you're constantly forming attachment to
subtle sensation happy I'd hate to think

of the negative comma you'd be

accumulating and would have to pay back

so I'm don't fully understand this part

so I mean the main question is is it

possible to leave a heaven realm or are

you stuck there for a predetermined

amount of time well it seems like humans

can commit well I shouldn't say the word

humans can Auto

terminate um they can choose to do that

I assumed like superhuman beings might

choose to do that for whatever

reason but I'm I'm No Authority on these

Realms because I cannot recall having

been

there so let's

see yeah I think that if some Dava

really wanted to leave a Dava realm and

just be

reborn I mean why would they want to be

reborn somewhere else I mean want to go

back to being a human that's sort of

like a human wanting to go back to being

an animal or something um maybe I I

wouldn't say that it's absolutely

impossible in fact uh I'd be hesitant to

say that anything is absolutely

impossible but uh how common it is I

have no idea of saying and I don't know

if the Buddhist texts at least the

polyas I don't know if they really

address this

issue so his his commentary will follow

up here is if you're constantly forming
attachment to subtle sensation I'd hate
to think of the negative comma you'd be
accumulating and would have to pay back
well I mean it would be a very subtle
attachment and it would be much more
subtle than the attachment you're
getting as a human to listening to good
music or having good sex or eating good
chocolate or or
whatever so I mean the mental states are
more subtle the higher up you go so
there's still going to be a attachments
and so
forth um and I mean if you're having
happiness and you're got this subtle

attachment to the happiness and the

happiness itself is meritorious it's

good karma to be happy it's bad karma I

mean it's all going to balance out

positive and

negative but I mean when you're unhappy

that is essentially immoral by Buddhist

ethical standards it's Buddhist ethics

are are alien to to the Western morality

which is either based on monotheism or

it's based on

like like 19th century British to um I

almost said totalitarianism

utilitarianism like Jeremy

Bentham somebody like that those are

like the two main kinds of Ethics that

we have in the west and Buddhism is

just light years away in some in some

respects that it's based on psychology

not upon the will of God and not upon

the effects of your actions on the

masses around

you

so you can't have subtle I mean you can

have subtle attachment to good

meditation too but that doesn't mean

that you you're making a lot of Bad

Karma um and not making good karma

that's going to compensate for that or

even more than compensate for it for

example if you're abiding in meditative

Bliss you're going to be making some

strong good karma for that and you might

also be making some subtle Bad Karma

through your attachment to it or just

feelings of superiority or whatever that

you get because of this but still uh

you're better off um in a heaven realm

than not in a heaven realm or you're

better off having good meditation that

you have some some mild subtle clinging

to rather than just not having good

meditation at

all

so let's see here I mean I'm tempted to

answer quor fourth question just

because again he's he's talking about

soda

paas maybe I don't

know yeah I mean again I mean he's

discussing my skepticism of well what
the [__] this is going to be a long one
anyway but really try to keep questions
down to no more than three per episode
don't just obstinately throw in a fourth
one hoping that I will indulge you in
your
transgression so can you please
elaborate on which sutas commentaries
and perhaps discrepancies or other
factors led you or Lead You to believe
that a sodana has not necessarily
witnessed nibana or that nibana is never
experienced well that's in way this is
like two questions first of all I mean
the whole four stages of sainthood you

can read it in GC Pond's book his
reasons for why he thinks the four
stages of ARA hood are an anachronism
for example the the oldest texts seem to
like conflate an an Arun was an anagami
a non returner you would think would be
enlightened and sakagami aren't
mentioned at all soapas in the early
texts are generally I mean just from the
context it would appear that a soap
originally was like a new convert to
Buddhism usually a lay person who monks
were supposed to go easy on them not ask
for too much from them for example
because that might cause their faith
their Newfound Faith to falter
and then later on according to my theory

the the four stages of ARA Hood were

devised

and then it's like every time you become

on one of these

stages one every time you reach one of

these these four stages you have this

flash of of n you have this glimpse of

Nirvana and I mean the glimpse of

Nirvana is acceptable to me but I think

s upon originally just meant a new

convert to

Buddhism like a born again Christian

kind

of so I'm it's a long question let's see

and also he's saying that you know what

caused me to think that nibana is not

experienced well from Orthodox terraa to experience anything you have to perceive it you cannot perceive nibana a perception of nibana or Nirvana is delusional because the perception is infinitely different from what it is trying to

represent and I mean I I don't want to keep just just wallowing in this just because it's already a transgressive fourth question and also it's a a fifth question because it's like asking two different things in the fourth question so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from the Arya swasti project and the ARA project says have you ever heard or know of an instance or

condition where someone is asleep to themselves they seem to awaken and can see everything in the room and they cannot move people call it sleep paralysis however more often than not there is an entity of some sort close by this has happened to me many times and it is unnerving and it just happened a few minutes ago it is really difficult to Rouse oneself from one of these I should mention that this only occurs during the day do you have any explanation of what it is and am I seeing the room remember my eyes are closed or imagining it I guess that's three well I think probably the closest

I have had to this kind of sleep paralysis that he's describing is the notorious time that I was attacked by ogres when I was living at the andoya in southern Burma and I was hearing voices hearing loud sounds coming from down the valley and realized that I could not move at all

and um so that was the fact that I could not move my eyes were open but I I was like paralyzed that that would be a kind of sleep paralysis possibly one of the most famous cases of sleep paralysis is in dov's novel The Brothers karamazov where Ivan karamazov Ivan is having his his famous conversation with the devil and at the end he realizes he's like

he's paralyzed and he has to like jolt
himself and then the devil disappears
when he finally is able to move again so
the whole thing is kind of a vision and
it's it's built into human beings that
when you're dreaming you are paralyzed
because if the paralysis doesn't work
you start acting out your dreams like
sleepwalking sleepwalking is a kind of
failure of sleep paralysis so you have
to be paralyzed when you're dreaming
just so that you won't like get up and
start moving around or try to get up or
you know that kind of
thing so in a way it's kind of a glitch
in this reflex or mechanism that we that

we have built into

us where you just can't move your

muscles in of your actual body when

you're

dreaming um why it would only happen

during the daytime or why an entity

would generally be perceived at the same

time like one of the most common kinds

of sleep paralysis experience is a kind

of nightmare situation where you're on

your back and there's there's like some

angry dark ghostlike entity pressing

down on your chest and you can't move my

father had this happened to him when he

was an old man I've never had one of

these before I've read about these kind

of cases before for and it's generally

considered to be a kind of nightmare

it's it's sort of like an archetype you

know it's common in the human race

although people that are more paranormal

in their thinking um you know they might

think that it's some sort of evil entity

or Poltergeist or something like that

but

um let's see what is the actual question

here let's see is it really ult to Rouse

no that's not a question do you have any

explanation of what it is well I mean

for starters there is just the standard

normal sleep paralysis that paralyzes us

when we're dreaming it can still sort of

get stuck so that you can actually wake

up and still be paralyzed I have had bad
dreams where you know something bad is
happening to me I'm trying to get away
and I can't move at all until finally
it's just through this supreme effort of
will I just sort of like jerk myself
with which actually jerks my body and
then I wake
up maybe I shouldn't have said jerk
myself there's some people with dirty
minds that might misinterpret that but
you know just like trying to just
suddenly move just break myself free
from this paralysis and usually that
would end the dream but then I'm still
dreaming and it's all within the context
of the dream and it's not like I've I've

begun to wake up

really so

so so are you seeing the room or

imagining it well ultimately there is no

room I mean ultimately it's it's kind of

illusory

anyway but in my case when I was

supposedly attacked by ogres um I'm

fairly sure that my eyes were open like

I was propped up like this I was lying

on my side propping up my head to look

down the valley to see if the sun was

coming up because I didn't have a clock

or a watch or anything and I just went

for Ms round at dawn so I was checking

to see if it was Dawn and then that's

when I started hearing the weird noises
and so forth and then I realized that I
couldn't move I was just stuck like my
head propped up like this kind of
looking towards the
horizon
so um if your eyes are closed and you
think you're seeing the room probably
you're not it's probably you're dreaming
you're seeing the room um I mean there's
a lot of weird experiences I've talked
to a meditator at PA doya who was
working on like visualizing the internal
organs of the person sitting in front of
him and he's sitting there and he's
visualizing the the skeletal structure
and everything and then he opens his

eyes when he's done he realized the
person got up and laugh long before he
was finished and he told his teacher the
teacher says Ah it's not important but
still he thinks he's using the samati
eye to look into the body of the person
in front of him and seeing the skeletal
structure
and then he opens his eyes and there's
nobody there he thinks there's somebody
there that he's looking at their bones
but the person wasn't even sitting there
anymore so it's just vivid imagination
in that case and when you're dreaming as
a general rule you can't tell the
difference between reality so-called

reality waking reality and and the
dream so yeah I think it can go either
way in that case I mean the paralysis
part and the dreaming can continue even
after Eyes Are Open so it may be it can
happen with eyes open or closed in which
case if your eyes are closed you're
dreaming that you're seeing it and if
your eyes are open it's just a higher
level of dream because we're in a state
of consensus trance right now
anyway so I guess I'm just going to move
on next question this is from
Jeffrey and Jeffrey says hey Santa Claus
Buddha could I get a beautiful wife that
isn't crazy and doesn't trust the
government medic medical system or try

to get me to go to church or therapy

it's okay if she thinks we're on a

spinning ball zooming

666,000 mil hour around the Sun and that

someone drove a dune buggy on the moon

even if she votes I would like her to

enjoy cooking and cleaning never gets

tired of loving me have a lovely voice

no physical ILS or weird characteristics

always laughs at my jokes doesn't talk

too much does what I tell her to and

never speak ill of me well yeah if you

find her she's probably going to be

riding a

unicorn but it is possible and if you've

got the karma to to come meet such a

woman and actually attract such a woman
because if a women like this are hard to
come by you know there's everybody's
going to have some kind of you know
something like here's like always laughs
at your jokes well you know no phys
physical ailments or weird
characteristics I mean that's just
unrealistic I mean if you want to
understand women the best thing you
could possibly watch on YouTube for
understanding women is just look up hot
crazy Matrix on YouTube hot crazy Matrix
three words you'll find the video and it
points out that on a scale of 1 to 10
all women are at least a four
crazy that's important to bear in mind

it's it's it's helped me a lot in life

just realize I mean you're not going to

find a woman who's below a four with

regard to General

Insanity

so yeah I mean you're going to have to

make some compromises especially if you

yourself are not the perfect man so for

for like the average guy or Jeffrey here

probably isn't average but still you

know for like a guy to be like insisting

on the perfect woman

whereas the perfect woman I mean she can

choose any guy there is out there you

know cuz she's one of the extremely few

perfect women maybe the only one so if

the only perfect woman on earth why
would she pick Jeffrey see that's that's
the thing it's like you gota you got to
have some realism and also bear in mind
that uh if you aren't perfect you
shouldn't be insisting on the Perfect
Mate other than perfect ly suited to you
which even then could be a fair amount
of dysfunction like some people I was
talking I was talking to my my
sweetheart recently about this some
people they're in a relationship and
they're fighting all the time but I mean
the fight is coming from inside them
it's like it may be the perfect mate for
them is someone they're going to be
fighting with because they got all this

fight that's got to come out they gotta
fight with someone might as well be
someone who likes fighting back with
them
so I mean when we're living in an
imperfect world you got to deal with all
these weird like quirks and
Imperfections and so forth that are just
part of the the practice really it's
it's like accepting another person's
imperfections or even better than yet I
mean imperfections are are like
mindmade so like if you love somebody
perfectly the the your love for that
person makes them perfect if you love
somebody perfectly they're perfect

because imperfections are like perceived
flaws you don't perceive any
flaws then they're perfect and it's it's
not even like you're blinding yourself
like let's say you know she's you know
she has some weird habit she licks well
no people don't lick stamps anymore she
just has this she bites her toenails
let's say and no my woman doesn't bite
her toenails but you know she's got this
Quirk and I mean if you just don't see
that as a fault she's got a speech
impediment you if you don't see that as
a fault it's not a fault you know she's
got sagging breasts if you don't see
that as a fault they sag
perfectly so it's just a matter of

attitude and whether you can accept a
person as they are or not is largely a
reflection on your own capacity for life
love I mean if you're you're really
fussy about who you're willing to accept
chances are it's not going to work out
very
well and that's that's kind of like the
way love works in like Hollywood you
know you got all these beautiful plastic
people they're beautiful on the outside
anyway and you know it's all superficial
and then they've got like these actual
personality traits just [__] things
up because you know they're they're so
superficial they can't really deal with

anything deeper and they just wind up
getting a divorced 6 months after they
got married because they just can't
accept the way the other person does
whatever it is they're
doing but it is possible anything is
possible but I wouldn't really be too
insistent on getting Aphrodite goddess
of beauty to fall in love with you and
be completely faithful to
you and so I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from Master Poe
and this is kind of an easy one it's
actually a double question some people
they'll ask two questions in in one and
then it's they're they're actually
asking two questions I noticed these

things so Master Po says did you happen
to catch Tom Campbell on Rogan now I
didn't I don't even know who Tom
Campbell is so that was an easy one I
can just move right on to Master Po
second
question and have you ever heard of
Arthur bless it a Christian who walked
all over the world carrying a huge cross
spreading the gospel I asked because
he's been to Burma too I wonder if
there's a tall tell about a man and his
cross I brought him up because he passed
on January 14th 1925 and then he's got
an 84 after that I don't what the 84
represents and then he says a modern day

St John of the Cross he's one of the few
men that I've admired and I think I've
heard of Arthur bless it but um I really
that's that's pretty much pretty much
all I know about Arthur bless it it was
what Master Po just told me in the the
followup commentary to his question and
I never heard of any like weird Western
Christians dragging or carrying crosses
around Burma that the only legendary
white person that I really heard much
about in Burma was an Italian monk who
lived in Burma like during the 1930s and
40s and he actually walked from Burma to
Bod GAA and back again because it was
all part of the British Empire back
then and uh I think he was put into a

concentration camp by the British

because he was Italian during World War

II he was on the bad guy side and uh he

was he was he was a serious

Monk and he wouldn't stay at monasteries

because monastery

you know the monks don't follow rules

you break rules just by setting foot on

a monastery so he would just stay at

like public rest houses you know there's

these buildings called zat in Burma it's

just like a thatched roof sometimes a

metal corrugated metal roof just on

poles with like a raised platform people

can sit in the shade and so you can a

mon a monk can sleep there if he wants

to so that's what this um Italian monk
was doing I don't even remember what his
his name was but he was relative ly
famous and that's like the only famous
Wester that you really hear much about
in Burma at least um I mean I other than
just like famous people like Donald
Trump or
something that that just don't go to
Burma but of the people that were in
Burma famous
westerners yeah that that Italian monk
was probably the only one I really heard
much about at least the only one that I
can think of at present never heard of
Arthur besset carrying AC cross around
Burma I've never nobody ever told me

about that so I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from
thermal
squid and he says in respect to self
deltion what about wherein the monk who
struggles to maintain fourth Janna who
slits his own throat in frustration
that's that would be godika in the
godika suta of the sautin Kaya the text
say that the Buddha had said that he had
reached the unconditioned yeah and that
was sort of uh i' I've thought about
this because in other places the Buddha
says a monk should not Auto terminate
unless he has already attained what he
has to attain which means he's already

become enlightened he's already become
an Aran then it it doesn't matter so
much but you don't want to like
terminate yourself before you get to the
the to the final goal and then Goda in
the godika sua he becomes enlightened at
the moment of Auto
termination so that was sort of an an
exception to the rule I guess because it
went against what the Buddha himself
said pretty much although it turned out
that he wound up you know becoming
enlightened
anyway but um I think most people who do
auto terminate are not planning on
becoming enlightened at the moment of
death so still you're better off uh

becoming enlightened if you can for

doing such

thing so I think I'm just going to move

on to the next question which is from

seov action Cad zida and he says next

sua video when and that's kind of an

easy one because it's the the correct

answer is I don't know although I may be

doing uh a video fairly soon with my

friend Auto auto excelsor on

multi-dimensionality which may not

mention any sutas at all but at least

it'll be a video that isn't a Q&A

video so I'm just going to move on to se

of action CAD Zena's second

question thoughts on the parable of the

workers in the vineyard it obviously
does not seem to fit the Buddhist
worldview due to past lives and Karma
though but I'm still curious what you
think about it personally um I'm a
little rusty on my new testament but if
I remember correctly I would guess
The Parables of the workers in the
vineyard are is it's the parable where
um these workers in the vineyard are
being paid a certain rate you know
they're being paid one piece of silver
let's say I don't remember how much
they're getting paid and it wasn't
enough there wasn't enough workers so
halfway through the day they go out and
find some more workers to work in the

same Vineyard and they're getting the
same pay as the earlier ones and finally
get to the 11th Hour they're almost done
but still they want more workers and so
they're paying the full piece of silver
to everybody including the people that
are only going to work for like an hour
and so some of the earlier people are
getting pissed because they're working
all day and they're getting paid the
same as these people who just showed up
and they're almost
done so that that was like a parable for
salvation where you know presumably
mostly Jews were going to be saved and
then you got the like these pagans who

are converting to Christianity like right before the world ends which was going to happen approximately 2,000 years ago you know this is the final hour says St John the Evangelist in one of his I assume it would be his first epistle so is the Salvation I mean the parable is the Salvation is the same I mean you're if you're going to go to heaven you're going to go to heaven regardless of whether you've been God's chosen people for thousands of years or you're just some Greek Pagan who signs up you know just a few years before the world comes to an end which Christians were expecting to happen any time so I mean you could somewhat apply

this to Buddhism where it's like people
who have been like striving spiritually
lifetime after lifetime get the same
Enlightenment as someone who just you
know he he almost gets poisoned while
riding a bus in Thailand has a
near-death experience and that just
slams him into
Enlightenment you know it's the same
Enlightenment maybe the person who was
striving spiritually lifetime after
lifetime after lifetime they probably
have more sophisticated psychic powers
and so forth but still one arant equals
another arant they both both have zero
delusion

illusion so I guess you could kind of

work that in to

Buddhism although I mean the main point

was that I mean Jesus was apparently

comparing the Jews who had been

worshiping the correct God for a long

time and comparing that to like some

Greek who just converts over to Judaism

because in Jesus's time what he was

teaching was essentially a kind of

Judaism and then he gets saved even

though you know he just he just joined

the

bandwagon so I mean I guess you could

you could do that with Buddhism too

unless I'm just confusing my Parables

and seov action CAD Zen I was referring

to a different

one and so seov action CAD Zena's next

question is please give us a tour of the

house and N I'm not going to do that

although I will say that our living room

has really high ceilings which is nice

I've always liked High ceilings this

house has the highest ceilings of any

house that I've ever really lived in

which is nice I mean I've stayed

temporarily in houses with like a

two-story house with the living room was

like two stories high I mean the the

ceiling was like way the hell up there

but I didn't you know I might have spent

a few nights there but this is the first

house I've really lived in like long
term and it's it's got ceilings like
probably at least 16 feet high in the
living room which is nice also has a
fire fireplace but it's a fake fireplace
with fake fire from from like fake vogs
with with like natural gas coming
through the cracks and the logs so
that's kind of lame I have to admit also
we've got this tiny little postage stamp
of a front yard and the backyard's
hardly any
bigger but at least it cuts back on the
amount of yard work that has to be
done but no you're not going to get a
tour of the house that's not going to
happen so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is from
xenoid and xenoid says how do we get
better at dealing with
loneliness and then he's got the
commentary here someday I want to be
able to live alone in a forest with no
friends family or romantic partner and
be completely happy on my own but being
alone is really hard for me I always
have the TV on or a YouTube video
playing to keep me company and the
desire to have a girlfriend is
constantly gnawing at me it feels like
my actions or time are made necessarily
less valuable if I'm not sharing them
with

others and gaining their approval or
affection or companionship even though I
don't logically believe this to be the
case I recognize that these desires are
not self-evident not necessary courses
of suffering and ultimately delusional
but it's still difficult to get around
them and this is another kind of
question that I really can't answer
based upon my own
experience because I've never really
I've I've always been a loner my father
says when I was a little kid like two
years old just a little toddler I'd be
like sitting on the steps of our house
in the dark just sitting there
Motionless in the dark just I don't know

why so yeah I mean I've always been kind
of a loner I was pretty much of a Hermit
before I became a monk I've I've had
friends but never I mean not since
College anyway have I had like
really close friends where you know
you're like going over to each other's
houses all the time you know people you
know they come to your house a lot you
go to their house a lot and stuff like
that I
mean my my woman and I we've invited
very few people into our house since
we've been together neither one of us is
particularly social
um being with being with a woman that

you love is I mean it can be pretty much
the same as being alone you feel kind of
similar to when you're alone it's just
like they're so easily accepted that
it's not like you've got anyone kind of
impinging on your space or anything like
that because you're sharing the same
space essentially and some people are
just they've just got it built into them
they're just gregarious by instinct or
something and like like in Burma it was
like even a famous hermit would always
have at least one attendant living with
him and there'd be he'd be like
accepting visitors every day that kind
of thing and I remember I was staying at
a big school

Monastery that the the one reain Retreat
I spent there it was like 1500 people
living there monks and
novices and I had a cabin all to myself
it was surrounded by other cabins but I
was the only person living in this cabin
and a lot of the Burmese people were
just amazed how can you live alone like
this when I'm just surrounded by
hundreds of other people it's just that
this one cabin which got which has got
other cabins just like 10 feet on either
side of
it and I mean it was it was a little too
too many people for my tastes but the
burmes were thinking it was just like

this

exceptional like Solitude that I was

living

in so

so yeah I can't really relate to like

always wanting to be like in a social

setting like being surrounded by other

people um but I

mean I mean you've got two options I

mean you can kind of make peace with

that and just live in a group setting

like a communal kind of situation which

there's nothing wrong with that or you

can just kind of go against your own

nature which is going to result in a

certain amount of frustration and

unhappiness but if you think it's worth

it if you think you really need to learn
how to be alone then you might just
might be best off just forcing yourself
like what I did before I became a monk I
moved to a town where I didn't know
anybody and just kind of kept to myself
I didn't have people like pestering me
all the time because nobody knew me so I
mean you could do something like that
and then you'll you'll be listening to
the radio or like having watching
YouTube videos or something but yeah
it's one thing you can do is just be
mindful just try to observe your
feelings of loneliness try to understand
that so you can understand it better and

understanding it better helps you to
transcend it to some
degree but really it does seem like your
two options are just make peace with
your need for human
companionship and just live in a
communal house or something with
roommates and all that or a
commune or just you're just going to
have to like go cold turkey I guess and
just force yourself to to learn to live
alone those would be like your two
options as I see it and I don't think
you're necessarily going wrong either
way although it may be that forcing
yourself to live alone when it goes
against your nature might result in a

lot of

unhappiness um but if you think the

unhappiness is worthwhile that is

something that you really need to learn

then then then that's that's what you're

going to

do but yeah I really it's something I

can't really relate to very well and

that's one reason why in the west it's

one reason why people say that lay

teachers are often more effective than

monk teachers because lay teachers can

relate to the problems of other lay

people whereas monks are like celibate

and just like uncompromising

uncompromisingly saintly in certain

respects and they just can't really
relate to the problems of the lay person
coming to them but even though I'm
technically a lay person now I still
can't really relate to a need for human
companionship since I have been a loner
since I was
little I'm just like like I was saying
earlier on I do prefer tree the company
of trees and animals as a general rule
for most of my life to the company of
humans although I am kind of softening
up towards humans in my later
years but I mean you're kind of stuck
being who you are TR struggling against
who you are is is a rough one and
Krishna murty would warn against that

that's that was like one of his main
teachings don't struggle against who and
what you are because I mean chances are
you're going to lose you're going to
lose the struggle because you're stuck
being who you
are so I'm just going to move on to xeni
void's next question here can you
recommend some sutas to read where the
Buddha goes over how mindfulness works
and how to do it properly preferably
early ones that are more likely to be
what he really taught well I mean the
classic text on mindfulness is the Maha
Sati banuta there's two sa patan suas
there almost identical I think the only

real difference between the two is the
Maha or great sadip patan sua has like a
an explanation of the Four Noble Truths
in
it but aside from that they're
essentially the same sua and they're
relatively old and are probably based on
even older material like GC Pond his
theory is that the SAR batana and mahasi
batana suas were like compendiums of
these different instructions on
meditation just possibly taken from
various sources and just compiled into
like this collection of meditation
instructions on various kinds of
meditation and all of it being
mindfulness of some sort or another Sati

patana so yeah I mean the main Su to

read with regard to mindfulness how it

works and so forth is the one of the sa

patan

suas Maha sa panas and the dean nikaya

and regular sa batana is in the

majima and I'm just going to move on the

next

question from

xenoid and he says what is your opinion

on Albert kamu and the philosophy of of

absurdism I think Kimu would have made

for a good Buddhist well I mean I have

read some of Kimo's fiction and he's

often considered to be an

existentialist he was big back when

existentialism was at its peak I think

and maybe absurdism is just sort of like

a a subsect of

existentialism

um I've also read kamuz the myth of

Copus which is one of the lamest

philosophical books I ever read I I

think the whole point of the book the

main theme of it is we shouldn't Auto

terminate just out of

spite just out of spite against the

cosmos we should just stubbornly remain

alive that that was was that was like

his profound explanation of why we

should not Auto

terminate but uh I mean he was pretty

much of an existentialist even though

you might call him an absurdist you know
to exist is absurd or existentialism is
you know it's like to exist is
meaningless and we just attribute
whatever meaning we want to it whatever
we think is best
so yeah I mean some of his some of what
he wrote is kind of stressing the Absurd
aspect of life just kind of the
pointlessness of
it and I'm not so sure he would have
made a good Buddhist I think he might
have been just too skeptical and kind of
cynical to have really taken Buddhism
seriously and I've pretty much wiped out
my first beverage

here which has been failing at

lubricating my throat as you may have

noticed so I may have to crack the

second the the emergency backup beverage

very soon

here so yeah getting back to Alber Kimu

yeah I think he died in an absurd way

too I think he just died in like a freak

car accident or something but uh I do

not consider him to better a

particularly profound

thinker as existentialists go I think

there were probably several that were

deeper than him like uh kard I never

read anything by kir guard but he does

have a reputation for being kind of a

Proto existentialist who was a profound

thinker uh Carl Jaspers again I never read anything by Carl Jaspers but he seems to have gone in a good direction towards the end because he turned to mysticism you know mysticism is like the answer to existentialism unless you're this eccentric English monk named Nana Vera who lived in Sri Lanka or Salon as it was called back then back in the 50s and early 60s who thought that uh existentialism the only answer to existentialism was Buddhism but he had such a complicated just hyper rationalistic hyper intellectual understanding of terraa Buddhism that um I mean you'd have to be some sort of

professional logician even to understand
what he's
teaching and I really need to open up
the emergency backup bever
because I got like this tickle in my
throat so I guess I'm just going to move
on to the next question which is from
arpad and arpad says what kind of
meditation could be practiced lying down
with pros and cons oh I didn't separate
his questions so I got to separate
them okay so what kind of meditation can
be practiced lying down with pros and
cons any kind of meditation can be
practiced and lying down you can be
mindful of your breath while lying down
you can be contemplating death while

lying down you could be looking at a casino especially if you got it on the ceiling while lying down you can be practicing any kind of mindfulness meditation while lying down just any kind of meditation that you can practice sitting you can also practice while lying down unless it's just meditation on the posture of sitting which is not a very profound meditation technique anyway but the main con the main disadvantage is that you're much more likely to be drowsy or sleepy or just flat out fall asleep because you're lying down like I mentioned in it might have been the previous Q&A if it wasn't

the previous one it was the one before
that how to avoid being sleepy when
you're meditating is just have like this
ramrod straight posture a very alert
posture helps you to stay alert and if
you're in a sleepy kind of posture like
lying down it's much more conducive to
being
sleepy so that's the main the main thing
I experimented a little bit with run
using a rosary just lying on my back
just using my thumb to work through a
rosary I experimented with that briefly
and it didn't seem to work very well I
just not really a rosary kind of person
or a Mala person I should
say so I don't think there really are

any pros to meditating while lying down
which is why lying down meditation is
rarely taught by anybody because there
are very few advantages to it and the
main disadvantage is it's more conducive
to sleepiness and less alertness than if
you are standing up or walking or
sitting straight up and down in the full
Lotus posture
so I'm just going to move on to our
pad's second
question if the five remembrances just
make me sad instead of furthering
Detachment should I stop doing them well
if you're not getting benefit from doing
the five remembrances in offhand I'd be

guessing at what exactly all five

remembrances are but it's my

understanding that they

Recollections of like your own Merit and

the the gods the the virtues of the

Buddha and so forth

and I mean they're relatively Elementary

level meditations anyway as a general

rule I don't know why they would

necessarily make you sad but clearly if

you're trying to do a meditation method

and you're not making progress and in

fact it might even be like having a

detrimental effect on you then you

should try something

else so yeah I'm not sure why the fiber

memory would just make you sad but um

instead of furthering Detachment but I
mean if it's not working try something
else I mean that's just common
sense so I'm just going to move on to
Rad's third question is what have you
learned or understood through meditation
that you wouldn't have otherwise well
one of the main ones one of the main
insights that I got from meditation is
that excuse me
when you stop thinking you don't just
disappear you don't just become
unconscious that in a way it's more
you're closer to reality without
thinking than when you are thinking and
a lot of people especially people who

are addicted to thinking would just
think it's like your personality would
disappear it'd be like death you know
there'd be nobody there but
really if you're if you're wide awake
and not thinking anything you're closer
to reality and you're more awake than
otherwise you know it's like you don't
die nothing really disappears other than
temporarily some thinking that isn't
really all that valuable
disappears so yeah that would be like
the main
Insight that I got through meditation at
least that can be expressed into words
easily another thing that you learn very
quickly

when you meditate that you wouldn't
learn if you didn't meditate meditate is
just how hard it is to control your
thoughts a lot of people they just they
never try to meditate they never try to
go against the stream and so they think
I can control my thoughts you know I can
think about whatever I want to think
about but when you're actually just
trying to focus your thoughts on just
the sensation of touch at the nostrils
as the air is going in and out without
thinking about other stuff you realize
that you've got monkey mind and I mean
you realize just how little actual
control you have got over your own

thoughts or what you think are your own
thoughts when really you have damn
little control over them you know you
can kind of steer
them this way or that way but you really
don't even have much control over what
you decide what direction you decide to
take so that's I mean that's a basic
Insight that people can learn very
quickly their very first Meditation
Retreat or you know their very first
attempts at meditation is that what you
think the the control you think you have
over your mind is largely
[Music]
illusory so there's probably other ones
but if I racked my brains tried to come

up with a list I could probably could
but considering the huge number of
questions we've got I think I better
move on to the next question which is
from Stell Supreme formerly known as
Libra Lam and occasionally still known
as Libra
lamb and he says how would you recommend
one to reconcile staying proactive in
life and paying respect to the
multifaceted nature of transitoriness it
covers what one is identifying with
plans they make desires or wishes they
have actions they take and their sense
of what fruitful results even are in
other words how do we find our North

Star standing on shifting

grounds well I mean if you've got a goal

that can be your North

Star but um really it's it's this is

kind of like an artificial problem to me

it kind of strikes me that way I mean

obviously things are changing and

sometimes you just take like

a what do you like a a transitory

approach it's like if you're dancing for

example I'm not not recommending anybody

start dancing but I mean if you're

dancing you're just in this flow it's

like everything is in flux really I mean

the floor remains a constant I suppose

there are some constants but still the

music is changing your body is changing

everyone around you is changing the the
flashing lights like like reflecting off
the disco ball it's all changing and
still there's just I mean you don't even
really have this unified goal while
you're dancing you're just dancing
you're just going with the flow it's
just this flux and you can go through
life that way and I think a lot of
people do it's it's overthinking becomes
a
problem I mean how many how many
conscious beings have a problem with
trying to reconcile staying
proactive and and paying respect to the
multifaceted nature of transitory iness

I mean you just accept the way things
are this is the way it is and if you
have any kind of goal or or like
priorities then you work towards those
goals or those priorities and I mean
that's it I mean things will be changing
other things will be staying relatively
constant I mean there always has to be a
balance between like stasis and change
that's for me that's a good example of
my understanding of dependent core
Rising that you have to have some things
staying the same and other things
changing if everything stays the same
that's death that's stasis I mean time
doesn't even pass really because there's
no events to to measure time you know

there's not even a ticking of a clock

but I mean if everything's changing

you've just got chaos you know nothing

stays the same then you know it's just

all meaning is lost

so I mean we're just in this situation

this this is just the way it is and so

you do the best you can I mean it's like

the only only Stellar Supreme formerly

known as Libra Lam and sometimes still

known as libber lamb can come up with a

problem like this because he is so

cerebral in his approach to life that

he's like finding problems that most

beings in this universe it never occurs

to them to see any

problem

so let's see it covers what one is

identifying with plans they make desires

or wishes they have actions they take

and their sense of what fruitful results

even are in other words how do we find

our North Star standing on shifting

grounds I mean for the most part your

karma is driving you through this

anyway and then if you don't have you

don't have any Karma anymore then it

just stops nothing is like impelling you

through

Samara but really I'm I'm not I'm not

good at advising with regard to stuff

like this I mean it's it's a problem

that it would never occur to me to to

see as a

problem it's like you think too much and

so you're you're dredging up problems

that don't necessarily really

exist how do you do this I mean you just

do it I mean you been doing it your

whole life I

assume so let's see here I guess I

better just move on some I'm getting

questions this time that I can't relate

to very

well just because I just don't function

that way like being lonely I mean there

when I was a monk sometimes I'd miss I

have this one friend named mucus man

that I would miss more than anyone else

really him and my father I guess you
it'd be so nice to just hang out with
him I'd be sitting under a rock ledge
out in a forest somewhere just thinking
man it'd be nice to hang out with mucus
man but as a general rule I was pretty
cool just being alone so when I get
questions like how do you deal with
loneliness it's like I don't
know just just observe it mindfully that
would be like the standard Buddhist
answer right there observe it note it so
anyways getting back to
Rafel who is asking the next question he
says your thoughts on this quote of ajn
Martin and I think ajn Martin has the
poly name of

pamo and he's on YouTube I think he's German and he's he's not the only German podama because I used to know this other German monk named pamo that I thought was a John Martin at first but it turns out that it's it's a different German monk named

pamo anyways rapael says your thoughts on this quote of ajan Martin and then ajan Martin says and I

quote Consciousness or wiana is one of the condas and of course is not Eternal the Cheta is eternal just remember what the Lord Buddha said the Daga after dead neither is nor is not the cheetah is not individualistic nor personal how could

the Lord Buddha talk to aan man
presenting dama to him in the form of
the Lord Buddha if there is nothing that
is eternal and everything dies away way
we grasp the term cheetah wrongly we
think every being has a cheetah no that
is not right every being is part of that
one cheetah that is eternal this world
this would be the correct view
unquote and from a Orthodox terraa
Buddhist point of view this is just
Shameless heresy and this runs a mock
especially in the Thai Forest tradition
I'm not exactly sure why but the Thai
Forest tradition has this kind of cryp
self view where they're saying you know
there's this eternal mind that is the

one that knows and it's essentially like
vant where you've got the Atman is
Brahman that you know it's like God
pervades the universe and our soul our
Atman is just that aspect of God that
just happens to be localized here but
really it's all part of this same
undifferentiated infinite consciousness
kind of stuff and it may be that Thai
Buddhism uh still has some like vestigal
lingering effects of Mahayana Buddhism
or
Hinduism that have caused so many Tai
aons to be spouting this clear heresy
from an orthodox Buddhist point of view
nowhere does the Buddha say that cheetah

is eternal that mind is eternal nowhere

it's not in the

sutas even the upanishadic approach to

reality is shot down in the sutas where

you know you've got this eternal

Consciousness or like formless Eternal

Consciousness which some pre- terod and

philosophy may have

supported but I do think it is wise that

early Buddhism adopted this idea of a

simply essentially

apophatic spirituality where um I didn't

really explain what apophatic meant when

I was answering the question about

apophatic theology it's just reality

cannot be expressed in words and so I

think early Buddhism took this seriously

like the AA waga this you do not make
assertions because any assertion is
going to be delusional because reality
cannot be expressed in words the name
that can be named is not the Eternal
name
so um and with regard to the Buddha
talking to aan man I mean that's just a
scandal in aan man's
autobiography or maybe it was his
biography that was written by ajan
Mahaba and aan man was considered to be
an arhan aan Mahaba also was considered
to be an arhan and so Tai monst and Thai
Traditions especially take this
biography very seriously and some of the

stuff in this biography is just wildly
heretical just like blatantly delusional
wrong view from an orthodox terraa
Buddhist point of view for example aan
man was having just multitudes of
Buddhas and retinues of thousands of
arahan disciples all of them Dead coming
to visit him to discuss
dhama and that's just I
mean one time I I hinted to a monk who
had had been ordained in a tradition
that I mean that sounds a little bit
psychotic and he said don't say that
Monon don't even think it because you
know it's like aan manun is just like
this axom ajan man was an arhun and aan
manun ate cheese in the afternoon so

it's okay for Tai monks to eat cheese in
the afternoon aan monk was a ajan mun
was a chain smoker he was literally a
drug addict it's okay to smoke tobacco
in Thai Buddhism because ajan Munday and
if he was an arot and he could do that
it's if it's good enough for ajan man
it's good enough for
anybody but seriously um you this idea
that the cheetah is eternal yeah I
double dog dare you to find a passage in
the sutas that says the cheetah is
eternal unless maybe it's that obscure
text that is describing Nirvana as
infinite formless unmanifest
Consciousness or maybe like in the gasa

where Mara the evil one is searching for
the the consciousness of Goda after he
passes away and the Buddha says he's not
going to find it because goda's
Consciousness has become
unmanifest so you can kind
of it's like I was saying earlier where
there's different ways of interpreting
things there's different ways of
climbing the same Mountain but the early
Buddhist way is you do not reify the
absolute you cannot put Ultimate Reality
in words it's just skillful means you
have to use
like which is the language of normies to
try to influence the minds of normies or
if you're a human you've got to use some

kind of human language just as a way of
you know just thinking things that
sometimes you just got to think things
but to assume that it's real is
delusion and for some reason the tie for
tradition has this kind of self viw
which ultimately is not endorsed in
Orthodox terraa and is heretical wrong
View and I mean if they were like vonti
Hindus it would be
fine and they want to think well terraa
is wrong here or I just prefer to use a
different Paradigm than terava in this
case at least that would be honest but
for them to try to like twist and
distort

Orthodox terava teachings to saying the
Buddha taught this when really he didn't
I mean that's you know it's it happens a
lot that monks and and a lot of them are
in TI
Traditions you know they they'll try to
justify or
rationalize deviations from Orthodox
terraa by saying
well it's really Orthodox you know they
won't admit that it's not orthod o like
monks eating cheese in the
afternoon I mean the real reason why Tha
monks think eating cheese in the
afternoon is okay ajan monk ate cheese
in the afternoon he was an Arun that's
the real argument but then You' got

monks like ajan tanro trying to say that well in Ancient India people made butter differently than they make it now and really what we call cheese is actually a kind of butter and that was his justification I mean it's like just really reaching trying to just do anything you can to make what you want to be Orthodox or right Orthodox or right when the honest thing to do is just to say cheese is hardened curd I mean in in Burmese the word for cheese literally is is it's D gay which means hardened kurd and kurd is not allowable they had kurd in Ancient India not allowable in the afternoon and since

cheese is like purified kurd it's like

kurd that has some of the excess whe

like pressed out of it maybe a little

bit of bacterial culture or something

but it's almost it's more pure kurd than

kurd

is and then to say that that is really

butter I mean it's they just want to eat

cheese in the afternoon and using any

kind of arguments like it's sophistry

it's like they're trying to rationalize

what they've been taught by their

teachers they don't want to doubt their

teachers they got reverence for their

teachers they know their teachers were

wise men and so they just assume they're

right and so they will prefer what their

teacher says to what the sutas say and

if you do that I mean you're at least

you're still being honest if you

acknowledge that but when you start

saying that the teacher who's teaching

the stuff that's just flagrantly in in

like just flouting what the pudas

teach and you're just saying well the

the suit has do teach it or at least you

know the Buddha didn't say that it's

flat out

false you know that kind of stuff you

know they're trying to force fited into

Orthodoxy you're getting into the realm

of

dishonesty and I am really do not want

to just call these Aon these taii

aons who insist that Consciousness that

the cheetah mind is

eternal that they're they're all just

dishonest people I mean you know they've

got their justifications and their

rationalizations and some of them just

don't know the sutas very

well but

still again I mean if they were

vedantist Hindus or even some sect of

Mahayana Buddhists it wouldn't be so bad

because at least they'd be in in harmony

with what their own scriptures

say but the poly Texs do not say that

the mind is

eternal unless it's these really obscure

texts that really are not mainstream and
just don't fit into
Orthodoxy and I don't even think that
the Tai aons are even referring to
that so I think I'm I'm just going to
discontinue this
mild rant and move on to the next
question this is from kundru and kundru
says have you read the novel Journey to
the West if so what are your thoughts on
it and Journey to the West is a novel by
Herman Hess I think in German has some
interesting name like do Morgan L
fart and uh when I was in my early 20s I
went through a phase of reading Herman
Hess novels and it included Journey to

the West I may have read it like on a
Japanese fishing vessel back in those
days when I was working on Japanese
ships um and I don't recall it extremely
clearly it was not one of hessa's novels
that really impressed me all that much
maybe I should read it again maybe it
would impress me more if I read it again
when you're reading something on a like
on a ship that's like rocking back and
forth in your inner ears kind of in in a
little bit of uh chaotic motion or
whatever and you can't really
concentrate as well as if you're like
alone in a
cave but the Journey to the West
um yeah I mean it really did not make

any like major impression on me of
Herman hess's novels the one that I
liked the most was actually Steen wolf
not sidarta like a lot of people might
suspect me being a Buddhist and all but
but uh Steen wolf was a good one I like
that one but Journey to the West no I
think it was Journey to the east well
okay so this might even be a different
novel because hess's novel is the
journey to the
East and here we've got a novel called
Journey to the West and I've never even
heard of that one unless kundru is is
confusing East with
West but I mean I have read the novel I

read it in my early 20s which was
considerable time ago more than half my
lifetime ago and uh yeah I I don't
remember many details I remember it was
towards the end he had to receive some
kind of punishment and so it was like
first the first offer him the the option
of you have to tame a wild dog and he
didn't want to do that so then his
second choice was all right if you don't
want to tame the Wild dog then you have
to let one of your teachers give his
honest opinion
of your
faults and he realized that they're
going to get harder and harder you know
if he passes one the next one's going to

be worse so he says okay I'll take that
one when really it seems to me like I
mean that wouldn't be nearly as bad as
taming a wild dog but I mean some people
enjoy taming wild dogs I think I might
actually enjoy it too uh depending on
the dog I guess but yeah Journey to the
West i' I've never even heard of a novel
called Journey to the West I think he
might be referring to Journey to the
east anyways I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from
yugao and let's see here we've been
going for yeah I hope I'm at least
halfway
done I hope well I would assume few of

you hope that I'm at least halfway done

too but you can look you already know

how long this thing is going to last I

don't know yet you have that advantage

over

me

so yugu says I have one meditation

question it would be nice if you could

answer me here I have been just a minute

here my mustache is getting so long and

Shaggy that it's getting into my mouth

sometimes it's still doing it I go like

this okay Yuga says I have one

meditation question it would be nice if

you could answer me here I have been

doing breath meditation and over the

past months I can enter a state where my

body feels light and filled with joy
that brings a smile on my face my
question is should that become object of
my meditation or should I go back to the
breath I really like to abide in that
nice feeling well depends on what your
your priorities are and what kind of
meditation like if you're doing like
samata meditation you're trying to
cultivate Janna then you should just
stay with the breath if if it wanders
away
into like enjoying these feelings of py
or Rapture or whatever just bring it
back to the breath on the other hand if
you're doing like weasa meditation

mindfulness meditation sa

batana then whatever is the most obvious

whatever is the most

obtrusive

perception then you're you're fine with

just moving to that and then you can

understand the you just feel what the

pleasure feel feels like don't just

wallow in it

obviously but I mean you should be

observing whatever it is that is like

the primary object which is like the

most the most obvious thing in your

sensorium whatever is most obvious

whatever is most noticeable that's what

you

notice and like the pleasure you don't

just wallow in it you're like observing
it objectively no matter what it is with
Detachment so you'd have to observe the
the pleasure and joy with Detachment
which may not be easy to do and if you
really can't manage that then you'd
probably be better off staying with the
breath
anyway I think I'm just going to move on
to yuga's next
question while meditating a thought
occurred to me maybe it shared fear from
see while meditating a thought occurred
to me maybe it shared fear from many
where gate AI is used like a big data
collector of each habits and tendencies

of people it's become so correct in it
that it became a Godlike indisputable we
have preemptive arrest selective
pregnancies sick are denied medication
cause they will die anyway control the
elections big brother kind of control
can this be just a bad dream well that
kind of
dystopia I mean some people people
wouldn't even consider it to be a
dystopia but that kind of dystopia it's
unlikely I mean if computers become
that uh I mean that intelligent then I
mean I don't see why they're going to
bother with even having people around I
mean what would be the point of even
keeping people when the computer is that

advanced and just gets along fine on its own so let's see here AI is used like a big data collector so it'd be spying on everybody you know everybody would be like locked into the system it'd be like the Borg kind of um indisputable preemptive arrest that would be like Minority Report selective pregnancies again if why why even bother what be the why bother sick are denied medication because they will die anyway controlled elections well big brother kind of a control I mean elections I mean why even have elections if the computer is so intelligent it knows who's going to be committing crimes before they commit

them then it's going to know who's the
best person to be the governor of this
state or the president or you know the
god emperor of the the entire planet or
whatever so I mean democracy would be
obsolete if it's completely disregarding
people's desires and deciding for us
what we need to do then why allow people
to
vote um
so yeah I mean it is it is possible
although you won't have that happen to
you unless it is your karma to have it
happen to
you and I do think that in my case it's
just not it's not part of my destiny my
karmic Destiny to become just like this

meat cell in this like cybernetic

Society yeah I think I might get cold or

something or like uh in Brave New World

it's like some of the the intellectual

non-conformists are all just sent to an

island something like that that might

not be too

bad but uh yeah I think once you get to

this point then yeah I don't think that

they're going really going to be caring

all that much about the welfare of the

individual I think individuality would

have been would have been like become

obsolete or something by

then so anyways I'm just going to move

on next question

this is from Fred and he says what's
your thoughts on Daniel Ingram and I've
I've actually answered this question
this will be the third time in maybe
five q&as so Daniel Ingram has become
kind of a he's he's trending I guess and
I've never really thought all that much
about Daniel Ingram I was told about
Daniel Ingram back when I was a monk in
Burma and so um I looked up his website
on the internet and and he's like on on
the homepage of of his website this is
like back 2012 or something he's
actually declaring himself to be an
arant and in fact being an arant is is
sort of like the foundation of these
other claims that are even more

grandiose and I mean I am skeptical of anyone who brags about how enlightened they are like in the text the Buddha brags about how enlightened he is and I don't think that the Buddha really said that stuff I think that that is like devotionalism that was added into the texts centuries later possibly or at least decades later um so I mean I if I really thought that the Buddha was bragging about how enlightened he was I would have less faith in dhama than I have now and Daniel Ingram bragging about how enlightened he is it it really does kind of make me more skeptical and it makes

it more like to me that he is either
overestimating his own attainments or is
just a deliberate fraud I think either
of those two would be more likely just
going with
Statistics than that he really is a
fully enlightened being and I saw him
briefly on a video a few months ago and
he was just like this
nervous person a guy who talked like a
normal guy acted like a normal guy and
uh I mean it may be that my
preconceptions with regard to who can
and can't be enlightened are just wrong
I mean from the terab Buddhist point of
view I mean there's no way he could
possibly be enlightened but my own point

of view is a little more broad than
strict Orthodoxy in a terab Buddhist
sense but even so I mean Daniel Ingram
is pushing it and there are a number of
people like this who claim to be
enlightened brag about being enlightened
put it on their website that they're
enlightened and all this and then maybe
10 20 years down the line they have to
admit that they're not really
enlightened because they got caught in a
sex scandal or
something but I'm not going to just flat
out insist that Daniel Ingram isn't
fully enlightened just like I wouldn't
flat out insist that Jay Krishna mty

wasn't fully enlightened um although I
think I would be more inclined to
consider chrisna myty to be legit the
real deal than Daniel Ingram
but who knows that's that's assuming
that being a fully enlightened being
even really means anything in any Som
saric
context so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from chasz
is and chasz is
says questions about basic morality if
ultimately we don't exist and orans know
this and maybe experience it then why
pretty much the worst thing you can do
karmically is killing an
arant why would that be that bad of

course I don't want to harm I don't want

any harm to

aans

well I do think that the way it works in

terraa is if you kill an arot then

you're guaranteed to go to hell that's

one of the the few things you can do

that absolutely guarantees that you're

going to go to hell and it's it's really

I think part of it is just a kind of

like Buddhist chauvinism that only a

Buddhist can be fully enlightened the

the fully enlightened Buddhist is like

the highest level of of human being an

arhan is the highest level of life in

the entire Cosmos really an enlightened

being is higher than any God really not
necessarily with regard to ples of
existence but with regard to like
exaltedness of just venerableness
wisdom I mean they've they're like off
the scale they have transcended the
entire scale that has gods and brahmas
and so forth on
it so like I've mentioned before that
even having bad thoughts about a fully
enlightened being can land you in a
world of trouble according to Terra
Buddhism and the only way it seems to me
that this could even work would be if
there is like a subliminal telepathic
connection connection between beings so
that deep down you know this is like a

highly Advanced Saint and not just an

ordinary

monk otherwise it's your own karma is

subjective I don't see how dissing

someone you think is a monk is going to

land you in hell or dissing someone you

think is just a normal

monk is going to land you in hell um

otherwise like how is that

possible that somehow their their

Enlightenment has to affect your own

mental States because your own karma is

your own mental

States so I think there's a good chance

that

this sacredness of enlightened beings to

the point that um anything you do with

regard to an enlightened being is going

to have like super magnified Karma one

way or the other even if you don't even

know they're an enlightened

being that it may be that their Vibe has

an effect on you which then you know it

magnifies your own Karma or something

that's possible I

guess

but I

mean we don't really exist our aans know

this they don't really exist our Karma

doesn't really exist I guess Orthodox

terava would say our karma really does

exist we as IND individuals don't but

the mental states have a basis in

reality I mean it gets complicated cuz I have to like when I'm answering questions I try to give my best answer but if my best answer isn't Orthodox then I kind of have to admit that it isn't Orthodox and also give the Orthodox position just because I don't want to be passing off my own like unorthodox theories as orthodox V and in cases like this um really I do have a certain amount of skepticism with regard to just the super magnified Karma that occurs around enlightened beings when like Ordinary People are interacting with them even if they don't even know that these beings are enlightened beings

that somehow there would have to be some
subliminal effect on our own mental
states where deep down we know that they
are very Advanced
Saints um without consciously being
aware that deep down at the level that
we are generating Karma that we know
that we are dissing a fully enlightened
[Music]
being so it's
complicated so and I do think that there
is a good chance that this is sort of
like the
glorification of Buddhism and like the
people who have attained the goal of
Buddhism that it's just in a way
sort of a warning to lay people you know

don't disrespect monks you don't know if
that monk over there is fully
enlightened or not so you should just be
you should be vener you know you should
venerate monks just in case you they
might be enlightened or something and I
mean I assume there is some of that
involved in
this because otherwise there's no good
Orthodox explanation for how just
thinking a critical thought about an
enlightened being is going to cause you
to burn in hell for
example especially when you don't even
know that they're an enlightened
being and there's a number of cases of

this sort of thing there's

kokala or Calia there's alternate

spellings of his name there's a sua

where he goes to the Buddha and tells

him that saruta and molana really don't

have good motives and the Buddha says

don't talk like that and then kokala

insists they really don't have good

motives and then as he's walking away

his body breaks out in boils they get

bigger and bigger and then burst and

then he

dies and all all he was doing was maybe

slandering these monks that if he really

thought they were fully enlightened I

don't think he'd be slandering

them and maybe he was even being honest

and maybe it was just his perception you
know he just misinterpreted something
that they did or said that caused him to
say that they had bad motives but
according to the text it didn't matter
he went to hell aichi hell which is the
lowest the bottom pit of
Hell so the whole situation is
complicated and it's just kind of a an
entangled tangle and I've got to try and
pick at it with two different picks one
is my own best gu
and the other is orthodox Buddhism and
it's it's in a way it's very difficult
and I got to try and answer questions
relatively briefly because we have so

many

and

gosh yeah so with regard to before I

move on to the next question though even

though I haven't really answered this

one very well is my own best guess is

that there is a kind of subliminal

awareness that that you're dealing with

a

sage um even though at the conscious ego

level you may not be fully aware of that

that that is going to affect you but I

do think that a lot of it is just

exaggerated in the texts that these you

know zillion years in Hell or like SOA

in the DAP commentary where he sees an

arahant bathing in a public bathing

place and this monk uh had like this golden complexion and this this man sya thought wow I wish my wife had had a complexion like that his skin is really Nic looking and because of that he just immediately transforms into a female as a kind of karmic punishment so I mean did he know that this venerable monk was fully enlightened there's there's a lot of cases of this in the texts and in the commentaries too of just having disrespect for an enlightened being can just really mess you up even if you don't even know they're an enlightened being and I think I'm a little bit

skeptical of that but certainly if you think somebody is or might be an enlightened being you shouldn't be too harsh with regard to them that just like flat out calling Daniel Ingram uh a charlatan a fraud I would hesitate to do that just in case maybe he really is that you know that terot of buddhism's explanations of what an enlightened being like are is like are just wrong and that Daniel Ingram really can be a fully enlightened
being well I mean I would hesitate to just flat out say that he was he's a he's a fraud or just delusional or whatever although I'm not extremely confident that he is the real deal

because I don't

know so

anyways that shaskus is is asking kind

of difficult questions this time because

his next one is is kind of

similar with regard to its level of

difficulty at least he says if I told a

61-year-old you that we are changing

from moment to moment and your body will

be different at 71 and your thoughts

will be different and dreams and hopes

and everything and in in an Ultimate

Reality you don't even exist and you

should just live your life but at the

age of 71 you'll have this one severe

two think would that information give

you peace oh it wouldn't be me anyway or
you will still feel that pain at 71 the
same as you would feel it now um yeah I
mean that's one thing that people don't
fully wrap their head around as if this
is an illusion but still it seems real
to us I mean this is an Ultimate Reality
that we're living in but it seems real
and so you should act as though it is
real if I mean if you go to hell you
won't really go to hell because there
really is no you and there really is no
hell but still it seems real so if you
don't want to seem like you're in
hell like you don't want to seem that
you exist in hell then you should behave
accordingly so that you avoid going to

hell I mean it doesn't matter if you're
happy or unhappy in the the grand scheme
of things what difference does it make
if this little speck of of of Life on
this ball of rock just out in the some
Podunk arm of the Milky Way galaxy I
mean who cares if it's happy or not I
mean it doesn't
matter ultimately it doesn't matter but
still I mean it kind of matters to us
and so you should still behave
accordingly so that you're going to you
know kind of try to minimize suffering
especially unnecessary
suffering so let's say somebody
prophesies that when I'm 71 years old

I'm going to have a bad toothache at the
very least I could get some toothache
remedies ready in preparation for when
I'm
71 maybe take a little better care of my
dental hygiene or
something but I mean why would it make
any difference whether I mean
philosophically you can say it's not
ultimately real but it's relatively real
it's conditionally real it's virtually
real and so long as we're still in The
Matrix we still have to act as though it
were
real but I would get some uh toothache
remedies handy if I did get this
prophecy that I was going to get a

tooth and so I'm just going to move on

next question this is from

Romeo and uh Romeo asked an unofficial

question that won't count as his three

what's with the smoking hot meditating

woman in the thumbnail through your

video I've already explained this in the

previous

Q&A um that my sweetheart usually does

the

thumbnails and she keeps wanting to have

these like muscular Chad guys meditating

on the thumbnails and I point out to her

that 98% of my viewers are male they

don't want to be looking at Chad guys so

she's okay and so she makes this hot

Buck some female meditating on the thumbnail and I really did not design it myself I'm kind of indirectly responsible by talking her out of doing the the Chad guy but it is kind of in keeping with um I did have a series of uh pictorials on my blog that are still on the blog if you're interested called beauties of meditation I did like three three episodes of it where I was kind of as a monk it was sort of like combining The Best of Both Worlds this this beautiful woman's sitting in meditation and I mean that was it was sort of like my ideal when I was a monk I mean I was still a man I still liked girls or I guess I should like women at

this age and uh and then just combined
with Dharma the beautiful woman combined
with Dharma is sort of
symbolized as you know this this
beautiful woman sitting in the full
lotus in deep meditation or some such
anyways that wasn't even one of the
questions
so Romeo says I recently came across two
quotes that as an admitted aversive
personality type I found eye opening the
first is from an nin who wrote erotic
novels I'm pretty sure which is we don't
see things as they are we see them as we
are and then the other quote is from
Carl Yung which is everything that

irritates us about others can lead us to
an understanding of
ourselves so then Romeo
says do either of these quotes relate to
Buddhism in any way if so how so the two
quotes we don't see things as they are
we see them as we are well obviously
that's going to apply to Buddhism
because the things as they are really I
mean from the terraa point of view all
things are is like these shimmering
little clouds of like adom like
specs then each one of those specs
really exists for a trillionth of a
second and is replaced by another
similar spec but the thing that they are
supposedly coales into isn't ultimately

real only the specs are real you know
it's sort of like pixels like dots you
got a a picture that's this a bunch of
dots that the dots might be real but the
image you form of that is just your own
perception that's your own creation and
different people like if it's an optical
illusion kind of a thing different
people might see different things Roar
Shacks ink blots different people will
construct different things out of the
same
ink and that's going to be based on
their karma their their latent
Tendencies their predispositions and so
forth so yeah I mean that would apply to

Buddhism and with regard to Carl Young's
everything that irritates us about
others can lead us to an understanding
of ourselves well that's obviously true
too because I mean it's like
if you're irritated that's you that's
your own doing that's not the other
person's doing somebody can call you a
no- good soand so if you're offended by
that if that bothers you that's your
fault which is one of the the blatant
like naric teachings of like political
correctness progressivism where you've
got Buddhists trying to combine Terra
Buddhism with
progressivism but still they've got to
adopt the aggressive idea that if you're

offended it's somebody's else somebody
else's fault especially if you're Brown
and offended it's got to be somebody
else's fault especially somebody with a
lighter skin tone than you've
got and it's just ridiculous because if
you're offended that's on you to be
offended is
immoral to be offended is you making
your own Bad Karma because you have
reacted with aversion to to something
out there and the something out there is
in all likelihood going to be ultimately
neutral it's just going to be sounds in
the air for example even if somebody
punches you in the nose and you get

offended by that it's still on you it's
on them that they punched you and you're
going to feel pain but you don't
necessarily have to feel
resentment or
offense I mean the pain is
unavoidable but the the resentment or
the offense feeling of being offended
that is a volitional act on your part
that is 100% your own damn fault and
that's an important thing to realize and
a lot of people masquerading as
Buddhists in the west just cannot and
will not get
it so getting back to Carl Young here
everything that irritates us about
others can lead us to an understanding

of

ourselves

yeah it's like first of all if you're

irrit ated and it's your own fault and

so if you have Insight you can see I

mean why is this bothering me why does

it bother me when he like says you know

all the time I mean for somebody to say

you know two or three times in a

sentence I mean or or like somebody who

doesn't use their turn signals when

you're driving on the road somebody

doesn't use their turn signals why would

that cause you irritation I mean it's

your own choice there's two drivers one

person is irritated when the other

person doesn't use deter signals the
other person doesn't give a
[__] you know it's it's like you two
people hear the same words being spoken
one is offended the other one isn't
offended that indicates that it's a
personal thing it's not
inevitable that this person's words or
their behavior or whatever is going to
cause suffering to others is it depends
on the level of wisdom of the others
because they're the ones who's create
who are creating their own
suffering so it can help you to
understand yourself it's like okay this
stuff bothers me and I'm going to have
to work on that because if I were

completely wise nothing would bother
me I mean some things might cause pain
or inconvenience or whatever but
still I mean the purpose of Buddhism is
to learn suffering and the cause of
suffering the cause of suffering is
desire or especially the desire for
something to be different than it
is so somebody doesn't use their turn
signal and you're bothered by that it's
not them not using their turn signal
that has bothered you it is your own
insistence that they ought to use their
turn signals your own attachment to the
idea that that idiot should have used
his turn signal just now and it's the

same way with like somebody says the

says the word

Eskimo and then might not be an Eskimo

for 100 miles I mean there there's no

Eskimos in sight still you're going to

have some liberal with the big

problematic plastic Rim glasses getting

offended they're not Eskimos they're

Inuit

it but this person with the problematic

glasses they're just offended because

they

insist that everyone has to use the

politically correct ethnological names

for

people and person who said Eskimo I mean

they they weren't being racist at all

necessarily they were just it's just the
word they use it's just like an
objective
thing but I think I've been going for a
little too long on that one so I'm just
going to move on to the next question
this is also from
Romeo oh he says if not what is your
take on these quotes regardless of
whether they relate to Buddhism or not
well I mean they're they're both true
and I think uh it wasn't an if not it
was an if so I think I already answered
that question so I'm just moving on to
the next one which is from ruie and ruie
says during your Burma days were you

ever summoned to bless a construction site building commercial establishment or any dwelling in general and yeah that did happen sometimes also it happened when I was living at burm temples in America I got brought to like Asian restaurants that were just being started you get invited to houses a lot to bless the house you know you chant Pita you know if somebody gets a new house a Buddhist person gets a new house they'll call monks the monks will come and the monks will chant parita which is like blessing the house driving out any malevolent spirits and that kind of thing and then the people will earn Merit by listening to the doat talk and

feeding the monks which ALS will also
help to bless the family and it happens
quite a lot although when I was in Burma
it didn't happen as much as when I was
living in a a place in a Burmese temple
in America just because I was was a
Hermit living out in the woods and
people knew that I really did not accept
H like invitations to houses very much
I'd preferred to eat just alm's food I
wouldn't just go to somebody's house and
get food there as a general rule um I
did help I did chant parita at a school
that was being opened it was like a
private school um yeah I've chanted
parita at a few houses in Burma um but

it it I mean it did happen it's a very
common thing in in Buddhist Asia that
you invite monks to some new house or or
like a new business to to chant parita
and bless the place in fact in Thailand
I've heard that even cars are that way
they'll even somebody gets a new car
they'll invite some monks to sit in the
car and chant parita and then they might
be like making little chalk marks on the
the roof like the inside ceiling of the
car that kind of thing as a way of help
hoping to bless the car so that it won't
get an
accidents so yeah it did happen
sometimes and I'm just going to move on
next question this is from ofm and ofm

stand says I didn't I was I was

wondering what it stood for and so I

said ofm stands for instead of saying

ofm

said ofm said the Lan of aara Sutra is

associated with yogachara which in the

past I've heard you disavow as something

of a departure from traditional Buddhist

epistemology and practice what are your

thoughts on yogachara as an extension of

Abid dama and early

maaka well I don't think yogachara is an

extension of Abid dama because the

Mahayana Buddhist really didn't have any

use for paid no attention to poly Abid

dama that Abid dama in Mahayana Buddhism

is mainly based on the svasti Vaden
version of Abid Dharma which does not
have a single text the same as the Terra
vadan Abid dama so as an extension of
suras Vaden
Abida I'm not exactly sure because I
have no Authority on sasti Vaden Abid
Dharma but yogachara is somewhat of an
extension on majaka I have read some
history of Mahayana Buddhism where
maamaa came first and then y yogachara
was sort of like U an elaboration on
maaka and the only two changes I think
that yogachara made that I'm aware of
one is yogachara insisted on idealism
where mind is real but matter isn't real
and so yogachara

the really the yogachara view of how our
Karma works and how we live in society
or live in this world is it
solipsism it's kind of like Le nitz's
monads where I mean it's like it doesn't
even matter if there's anything around
you because your karma is completely
creating your own world it's just
through like karmic coincidence or the
Infinity of the universe that your karma
dovetails with the karma of everyone
around you but really even if there
really wasn't anybody around you you
would be experiencing the same thing
because it's entirely solipsistic your
mind is creating your

reality that you're not really
interacting with anybody you just
perceive yourself to be interacting and
just through like I said the Infinity of
the universe karmic coincidence or
whatever that it's just dovetailing with
the these other solipsistic individuals
that think that you're interacting with
each other when really you're
not so that was kind of an innovation of
your yogachara I think was like this
solipsistic
karmic idealism and also I have read
that the yogachara Buddhists came up
with the the tree Kaya the third CA of
the tree Kaya which is you've got the
nuraya which is the Buddha it's the

three bodies of the Buddha nuraya is like the physical body of the Buddha you know gab Buddha the sakian sage then you got the Sakaya which is like the cosmic Buddha up in a Celestial realm and then you've got the dharmakaya which is just like the the absolute you know just like the spirit of Enlightenment which pervades the entire universe which is kind of the approach taken by these Thai Forest aons that I was talking about earlier which it is not Orthodox terava but Mahayana Buddhism can accept something along those lines so already you had the neuronic I mean that was that's what you started with that was

the the actual physical human G Buddha
and then um early Mahayana came up with
the dharmakaya which was like their
concept of the absolute which I mean you
shouldn't really be reifying the
absolute so that was kind of a mistake
but still you got to talk about
something so they reified the absolute
called it the
dharmakaya well the the Sakaya the
celestial Buddha up in heaven that was I
have read an innovation of the yogachara
school which was the next major
development in Mahayana after mamaka and
I think it was a step backwards much
like Abid dama was a step backwards from
the suas then you've got yogachara which

is a step backward from maamaa all I

should be talking about maamaa I should

wear the majamaa F here it

is there it is maama

CZ okay

so I mean those are the two main

developments that the two main

Innovations of yogachara that I perceive

I could even be wrong with regard to

both of these but yoga was like the mind

only School whereas maamaa it denied the

ultimate existence of anything that is

perceptual anything that you perceive I

mean it's just void it's

indeterminate but yogachara then kind of

back from that and said well cheetah you

know the mind is real you know which is
kind of like what John Martin was
talking about so a John Martin's view is
actually more yogachara I think although
he'd be probably also be a materialist
except the existence of materialism but
his his view that cheetah is eternal is
more of a Mahayana point of view than a
Terra point of
view ah so what are my thoughts on
yogachara as an extension of Abid dama I
don't think it really is at least not
with regard to poly Abid dama and an
extension of early maaka yeah it was a
step backwards I think from early maamaa
they're they probably some innovations
that might be somehow good but I don't I

don't know what they would

be I would prefer majamaa to yogachara

pretty much any day of the week so I'm

just going to move on next question this

is from

Jeremy and Jeremy says it is interesting

that Buddha the arahant is not

infallible concerning all the monks that

unived themselves from his first

instructions on contemplating the body

after that mishap he then recommended

the breath as a meditation object what

are your thoughts well I've considered

that in the text the Buddha was not

infallible that he did make mistakes

which you would think if he was

omniscient he wouldn't do for example my
main example um as a monk I I think
about this as in it's in the book of
it's in vinia the book of monastic
discipline and it's it's in the ptim
Moka actually it's one of the origin
stories of the ptim Moka
where the Buddha realized that there
were monks that were getting sick they
were only eating one meal a day and then
they were getting sick in like for
various reasons in the afternoon so the
Buddha allowed them to five tonics I
think ajan tanro calls them the five
tonics in his his book on Venia which is
like butter ghee oil sugar
and

see butter

oil oh butter ghee oil sugar and honey

not in that order but that's the

five and uh the monks actually started

getting he he allowed it in the morning

when monks are generally allowed to eat

food and some monks were getting sicker

because they were eating it the wrong

time so then the Buddha said okay you

can eat those five tonics if you're sick

in the afternoon which is generally the

wrong time for monks to be consuming

nutriment and so he made the mistake it

was like he allowed a kind of medicinal

substance which actually made some monks

get

sicker so that was that would ently be a
kind of mistake made by the Buddha
caused by not foreseeing the the
inevitable result of the Judgment
so um my
thoughts on the Buddha like not being
infallible I mean it does make sense if
he was an enlightened being that is
human I mean he's a human being he he
wouldn't necessarily be omniscient
that's just it could be just a kind of
Buddhist devotionalism glorification of
the Buddha in a way I mean he would know
reality but this samsara is not
ultimately real so You' think that if
someone is fully enlightened I mean
they're not necessarily going to know

how to speak fluent Chinese or know the
cube root of of 26 anything like that
they're not going to just know
everything necessarily they won't know
how many hairs I have in my beard
so I think that being enlightened isn't
necessarily the same as being infallible
at this like phenomenal worldly
level what happens at the phenomenal
worldly level is largely
irrelevant
so yeah and then the the example Jeremy
gives here is that the Buddha was
talking about the Lo the loathsomeness
of the body and then he went off in
retreat meditated in the forest and

monks were getting so disgusted from
their own body like contemplating what
the Buddha was saying about the
loathsomeness of the body that they
started Auto terminating or actually
getting this other monk I think it was a
monk to he was like volunteering to to
help them along and uh I think that was
the first case of of Murder in the in
the text that was when the Buddha made
the rule against murder of
it's a paraja offense warranting
excommunication from the s for life if
you cause the death of another human
being and this first perpetrator I mean
the rule wasn't laid down yet so he
wasn't

excommunicated but I think uh that would
be less of an error than
even hoody hoodie did about the five
tonics where he was making monks sicker
instead of better healthier
but uh what are my thoughts about what
exactly I'm not sure what Jeremy is
angling for here
see with regard to recommending the
breath as a meditation object I'm not
sure how that I mean what what there is
to comment on that could have just been
a coincidence or kind of backing away
from contemplating on the loathsomeness
of the body although lomen of the body
was still a major meditation theme in

early Buddhism

so I guess the main question is just

about the fallibility of a fully

enlightened Buddha or a fully

enlightened being in general which I

think is still is still

possible but I'm just going to move on

the next question here this is from

nmit and nmit says did early Buddhism

mention rebirth and Karma I heard this

Indian professors say that the Buddha

was an atheist who didn't believe in

rebirth or Karma this thing were these

things were added later well the Indian

Professor is probably mistaken that he

is thinking from an intellectual point

of view so he's stuck in intellectualism

he cannot comprehend apophatic mysticism
the Buddha was a Mystic he wasn't an
atheist or a skeptic or you could say
maybe he was an atheist just because he
wasn't talking about God that he would
refer to the absolute as nibana or
nibana datu and not as some
deity so he could have been an Atheist
to that extent but I mean he was the
Buddha
was like avoiding making assertions like
in the Tica waga He just flat out says
don't make assertions he said with
regard to himself I do not say this is
so which is what fools say mutually to
each

other so it could be that when he was originally teaching like really Advanced veteran Aesthetics he was teaching them the radical just don't have views don't have opinions don't follow dogmas you know just get rid of all of that it's all perceptual delusion in which case he probably wasn't talking much if at all about rebirth and Karma but when he starts teaching people that are less Advanced I think there's a good chance that he was teaching things like rebirth and Karma to people that weren't ready for the teachings of the ataka waga yet but like if the AA waga is typical of the earliest teachings which is when the Buddha was just teaching like

veteran Advanced spiritual practitioners
who had already renounced the world you
know then he might not have been
teaching about rebirth in karma because
he's teaching about right now you know
first second third fourth Noble Truths
that don't necessarily involve rebirth
in karma
so that is sort of I mean there a
certain amount of guesswork involved but
I would assume that when he wasn't
teaching his most advanced level of
teachings that he was accepting rebirth
and Karma and obviously if you read the
sutas there's plenty of mention of
rebirth in karma um

especially karma is important in that
for example according to the rules of
monastic discipline um if a non-
Buddhist wants to be ordained they have
to go through a probation period I think
it's like four months of probation
because you know they they don't want to
be importing their own like false dogmas
from some previous system into Buddhism
and and declaring that Buddhism they
want to make sure that they're really a
Buddhist now and not just an AAA who
wants to dress like a Buddhist so
but Hindus or vdic brahmanist
in those days didn't have to go through
the probationary period because they
were Karma vadens you know they already

believed in in Kama and this kind of
stuff so that was close enough to
Buddhism that they could be accepted in
they could be ordained without probation
the probationary
period so I think I mean there's no
proof one way or the other whether the
Buddha really did teach rebirth in karma
or whether it was added later but I
think there is a good chance of it I
think it is probable more than 5050 that
the Buddha really did teach rebirthing
Karma and the the sutas are just full of
the Buddha teaching rebirth in
karma so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from

rakasa and rakasa says can you talk
about your interpretation of the movie
The Seventh seal I just read your blog
post on Fight Club and you mentioned
seventh seal as one of the movies dug
into in order to better understand it I
couldn't find another post or video
where you go into depth on it
specifically so I apologize if You'
already done so elsewhere I don't think
I have and the Seven seal is a profound
movie I I saw it many years ago back
when I was still a monk it's an ingar
Bergman movie it's all in Swedish with
subtitles so I I would consider watching
it again but I have to watch it alone
without my sweetheart cuz she doesn't

like foreign movies with subtitles she
wants to be able to see the movie
without having to always look down at
the bottom with the
subtitles
so let's see the the seventh seal it's
mainly about a man who desperately wants
to believe in God but he cannot find
proof of God it's like the it's the
seventh seal is a movie about the
problem of the Silence of God he will
not
prove himself existent you just have to
take it on faith and he was the the
protagonist in the movie he's he's like
a crusader who comes back from the

Crusades he's gone from Sweden for for a long time he comes back to Sweden and the Bubonic plague or some kind of plague is running rampant and he's seen all these atrocities in the name of God in the holy land during this Crusade he comes back to his Homeland and it's just being wiped out by this horrible plague and there is the the good family where their name is Mary and Joseph and they've got a baby which is obviously symbolic and the movie is probably the most famous thing about this movie is this Knight who comes back from the Crusades um as soon as he gets back to to Sweden death is on the beach saying

it's time for you to go you know you got
to die now and and he the the Knight
challenges him to a game of chess and so
like one of the most iconic scenes from
the whole movie is this Knight who
desperately wants to believe in God
playing chess with essentially
death and they play throughout the
throughout the the the uh the
movie and
uh there's like this one scene where
this this couple
Mary and Joseph who are really nice
people and they're like some of the best
sign of goodness that that this Knight
has seen in fact they're like the best

evidence of the existence of God and genuine goodness in this world and he's sitting there on the like out in this field with them and the the Lady Mary has picked some wild strawberries and they she serves in this bowl of wild strawberries with milk

and he's just I can't remember the exact quote I'm sorry I can't but he's just says you know this is the closest I've come to certainty you know this is this is the best sign of goodness in this world it's me sitting here with you eating these

strawberries and then there's this other scene where they're just passing through some town and there's a woman who's

going to be burned as a witch and he desperately wants to know if there's she she supposedly talked to to the devil or something like that and so he wants to know if there's a devil there's probably a God too so he goes to her and and asks her have you really spoken with the devil and she just says look into my eyes and you'll know and he looks in and all he sees is

fear but um I mean it's been a long time since I watched the movie it's been a long time since I've tried to really understand the movie but I mean the main theme of the movie is just the problem of the Silence of God and how you have

to find your evidence for God in this
world despite all the the ickiness that
you can still find it if you look hard
enough and he was looking real hard he
was that was like he was driven he had
to find some some sign of justification
for his faith before he finally loses
the game of chess to death and and has
to
die so let's see
here I guess that's good enough so I'm
just going to move on next question this
is from mooners and we're already two
and a half hours this is going to be at
least three hours long I have a feeling
I apologize but what can I do I got to
answer your questions it's my job it's

why we're

here answering

questions so this next question is from

mooners and mooner says if comma is

morally subjective and dependent on

mental states does it open the way for

moral relativism like we see today no it

doesn't open the way for moral

relativism like we see today because

it's based on human

psychology and there's just an empirical

fact that certain actions are going to

cause certain Mental effects on another

person it's like murder for example if

you murder somebody then it's going to

cause certain effects on you just really

drastic radical effects on your mind

which are going to

then manifest at some point as the

fruition of

karma so moral relativism is it's all

just a social construct but it's not all

just a social construct that there is

such a thing as human nature and it's

just um a law of human psychology that

certain acts are going to have certain

effects on your mind as a general rule I

mean there's it's it's it's not going to

be completely cookbook you know just the

same for every single person but there

are going to be significant

Trends and there's going to be like a

certain spectrum of you know what the

effects going to be depending on your

you know how the action connects to your

mental States and so

forth so I mean moral relativism is just

based on the idea that morality is

purely a cultural construct whereas

Buddhism doesn't have that idea morality

is based on just human psychology and

like whatever takes you closer to

Enlightenment is good and whatever takes

takes you farther from Enlightenment is

bad

and it's not just purely a cultural

construct so I guess I'm just going to

move on to next question which is from

apocalypse

chow and this is kind of a strange one
would you kindly explain the metaphysics
of Dawn of the
Dead and Dawn of the Dead He's Got His
characteristic bullet points cuz this he
used to be called schuline or skul and
um one bullet point says there's no more
room in hell and then so the dead will
walk the earth well that's just kind of
in that's just really fasile because
hell is never going to run out of room
there's there's always plenty of room
for
hell so or room in hell I should say so
the dead will walk the earth yeah I
don't know it's it's just sort of comic
book

met it's it's I don't know how mythology
kind of stuff it's like I mean I never
saw Dawn of the Dead I was never really
into zombies much until I saw the movie
World War Z which actually was a good
zombie movie I like the movie World War
Z and it really impressed upon me the
the the hard fact that fast zombies are
way worse than slow
zombies but also I did watch um The
Walking
Dead and I mean clearly it's you can't
take it very seriously I mean it has to
be a metaphysical magical kind of a
thing that somebody their body is broken
so that they die but still they can just

keep walking around and and they don't
have to eat they don't even have to
breathe somehow their body is still
functioning even though it's completely
like half rotten and and dead I mean
there's no way any kind of virus like
some virus developed in a a bioweapons
lab that somehow leaks out it can happen
sometimes that that it would cause
zombies like in The Walking Dead because
I mean it just reality just doesn't work
that way the only way it could possibly
happen it would be it was if it was some
kind of Supernatural event that was
causing these bodies to reanimate even
though I mean they're so broken they
couldn't possibly work

so let's see the metaphysics of Dawn of

the Dead there's no more room in hell so

the dead will walk the earth yeah it's

just silly because hell is I mean

there's always more room in hell they

they pack him in real

tight no they really don't even have to

pack them in tight there's just there's

never going to be uh

any standing room only in

hell everyone who's worth wory of hell

can wind up there regardless of how many

beings are already there already an

infinite number of beings

there so I guess I'll just move on to

apocalypse child's next

question in one instance Jesus performed
a slight of hand where he transferred
the inner demons from one person into a
herd of swine which were then driven mad
and then drowned what are the pig's
karmic momentum
which burned off someone else's Karma
well the burning off of somebody else's
karma really wasn't the pig's own Karma
I mean that was irrelevant to the pig's
own Karma the pigs just had this bad
karma which allowed them to have a demon
um enter their body and then they just
immediately run into this Lake and and
and
drown yeah I mean that's it's a weird
story in the Bible that's that's Legion

this this the Buddha not the Buddha
Jesus crosses over what the the lake of
Galilee or something and there's this
group this tribe of people called The
gadin Who live on the other side or
maybe it's just the town gadera or
something anyways there's this this
crazy man living in a cemetery who's
just shrieking and cutting himself with
rocks and when Jesus asks him his name
he says my name is Legion for we are
many which implies that he was possessed
by a great many malevolent entities
so then Jesus drove these evil spirits
out of Legion I don't know what his name
was after that and they all went into

this herd of pigs who then just

immediately rushed down into the lake

and

drown so the pigs just had bad karma to

get suddenly possessed by a demon and

drowned I mean it didn't last very long

you know it was probably more merciful

than having their throat cut by a a

butcher

so yeah I mean the pig's Karma didn't

have necessarily anything to do with the

karma of Legion it just dovetailed well

enough that Legion had the karma of

having these Le these demons possessing

him

temporarily driven out and then these

pigs just happen to have the convenient

Karma of being receptive to being possessed by a demon and then they drowned but there wasn't any I mean the the karma of the pigs wasn't necessarily to absorb the demons that were driven out of somebody else it was just to get the demon and drown so I guess I answered that one so apocalypse now's third question if the world ends and everyone else dies should I just try to live as long as possible I haven't read enough scripture to know where everyone would go but I guess wherever they arrive will just become hell not necessarily always it seems like a waste to just leave after

reaching the highest promotion possible most superlative man strongest smartest most handsome largest penis with dominion over the Earth well if everyone dies except you then I mean how are you going to know that you're the only one left you know if you it's like an Omega Man situation then um you know there might still be a few other people like there's a movie a movie made in New Zealand back in the 80s I think called the the quiet Earth where this guy thinks he's the only man but it turns out that there's a few other people like maybe one in 10 million people are still alive and so he eventually meets up with like two other

people

um so I mean if I woke up one day and I

was the only person I mean it would be

quite a shock I have to admit but I

don't think I would immediately Auto

terminate um you know I might be looking

around see if there's anybody

else um I mean you can still just live a

life of solitude why not I mean like we

were talking about earlier you know you

shouldn't from the Buddhist point of

view you shouldn't Auto terminate unless

you've attained the goal and if you're

the only person there you'll have plenty

of solitude for practice and so forth

so yeah I mean the Buddhist thing to do

would just keep just practice dhama you
know just make continue making progress
for as long as you're still alive and
and able to make
progress and uh if everyone else
disappeared I mean why why would it
wherever they arrived just become hell I
mean they were here and this this wasn't
hell there are an infinite number of
Worlds infinite number of places they
can go they'll go wherever it is
appropriate for their karma to land
them so I think I'm just going to move
on next question this is from game fap
and game fap says what is your gaming
experience
like I feel you would have been a big

Doom guy back in the day um my gaming

experience well you have to bear in mind

that I became a monk in like

1991 and I remained a monk until

2021 so like the MMOs like the Golden

Age of like World of Warcraft and all

that Doom that was when I was a monk and

I had no experience and no exposure to

that at all it was

like I remember when I was a kid our

family got this really cool video game

called

pong and it was it was really a good

game cuz you could play three different

sports on this one video game you could

play tennis hockey or

handball and

uh actually things even got better than

pong gradually over time and by the time

I was in high school we would

occasionally skip school and drive 50

miles to the town of Olympia where they

had a big mall they didn't even have

malls in aine back then not yet anyway

or if they did it was a rudimentary kind

of mall and we'd go to this the mall had

this place called The Gold Mine which

was an arcade and you go into the arcade

and play play video games so that was

that was what gaming was like when I was

like in high school is you put in a

quarter and play a video game like

Pac-Man I got really good at Pacman I

was like relatively drunk one night when
I was in college and I got up to the
fifth key in Pac-Man and for those of
you who don't know what Pac-Man is I
mean there's like this fruit or
something that appears on a screen and
if you eat that it causes the monsters
to turn blue and run away and you can
eat them instead but at the at the end
there's seven keys that looks just like
a house key or something if you get
through all seven Legend has it the the
the monsters all surrender they got like
white flags and you win and I was like
drunk in college at a like a roller rink
or something I got up to the fifth one I

was just in the flow just a few beers
that well I probably had more than a few
but you just get into this like
spontaneous flow under under alcohol
sometimes like I was good better at pool
when I was drunk too and I got to the
fifth key and and died that was by far
the closest I ever came to winning
Pac-Man but uh after getting out of oh
even when I was a monk when I was in
America on the
internet that there were certain video
games that I would play they were flash
games so I never got into the these
immersive MMOs I never really got into
that probably the best video game I
played on the internet was it's called

World's End and I think it was made by Polish people because the people have like Polish names and stuff I think there's even like a this guy named kurva in the game and um it was then for some reason Google just decided to abolish Adobe Flash from it platform all these games just hundreds thousands of games you could play they just poofed out of existence so I can't play World's End it was it's created by some company called mezzanine stairs if you ever get the chance it's it's worth playing it's like a turn-based strategy game which is what I prefer I don't like games where you have to go

fast so nowadays there's only really two
games that I play one is I kill zombies
on my phone it's The Walking Dead no
man's land is the name name of the game
and I'm I'm
becoming almost Invincible on that and
also there's this other really good
video game called
Sudoku it's not really big on special
effects but the numbers are very
realistic I mean those numbers look like
real numbers on the screen there and
that's it I mean the whole MMO thing
World of Warcraft and all that I never
really got into just partly just because
I was a monk back when all that stuff
was going on and also I'm just not into

having to move

fast I like to carefully think out what

I'm going to do strategize come up with

a winning strategy and and play that way

so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from dhama River and

this is a easy one what's your opinion

of Shanti daa and I have no idea who

Shanti daa is no clue so I'm just going

to move on to the next question this is

also from dhama River he says I once

heard you say the following quote quote

most Buddhists especially in the west

are not trying to wake up they're just

trying to sleep more comfortably unquote

it was during a group video call I think

Brian Rue was one of the people on it honestly this was the quote that made me look you up on the internet and watch more of your videos it's one of the greatest and most badass quotes I've ever heard from anyone in the world I agree with you can you please elaborate a little a little bit more on it I just want you to expand your message which I believe it's extremely important in these modern times thank you so he wants me to elaborate on this quote most Buddhists especially in the west are not trying to wake up they're just trying to sleep more comfortably and it is true and um I don't think that I actually came up with that on my own I think that

is a paraphrase of some of the stuff
that Paul low has taught in the past
that he would say that like people are
practicing spirituality as a kind of
cope for not really wanting to be
enlightened that if you really want to
be enlightened you'll be enlightened
it's just that you have like these
aversions for fear of annihilation and
so forth and so you compensate by just
having these spiritual practices that
you do that kind of helps you to feel
better about not really deep down
wanting to be enlightened so you can
just sort of Play It spirituality and
remain unenlightened and which is

essentially remaining

asleep and I mean especially in the west

people just want to feel good about

themselves I think a lot of people who

practice meditation it's it's like

stress relief kind of stuff or like the

one Buddhist group that I was

interacting with as a monk in the west

the main Western Buddhist group that I

mean they would just kind of Glide

around with these Blissful Smiles on

their face when they're in the Dharma

Hall and if anyone would bring up

something you know somebody raises their

hand and says what what what should a

person do if they're like the victim of

incest and it's like the leaders of the

group would just shut it down
immediately was like someone had just
dropped a brick this like we'll talk
about that later and then they just get
back to you know something Blissful so
that everyone can feel comfortable
feeling good about themselves they
didn't really want to deal with anything
unpleasant and so I mean if you want to
become enlightened you have to be able
to deal with anything you know you have
to you have to be able to deal with
anything that life throws at you you
can't just avoid the unpleasant
uncomfortable stuff because you're never
going to learn how to deal with it and I

mean most people in the west are just too lukewarm they're not willing to do the really deep harrowing stuff that you have to do if you really want to like cook all those seeds and get everything straightened out and cleared up and and so that you can become enlightened and so I mean they just kind of compensate for being lukewarm and you know meditate and some some people use meditation as a kind of substitute for Narcotics you know they get like this nice feeling that they they meditate for the nice feeling rather than having to face any skeletons and any closets that kind of thing that they kind of see Dharma as just feeling good and you know

they don't want to contemplate death or
anything like that a lot of people are
like
that and like I've said before even
Buddhist monks I think a lot of Buddhist
monks they I mean if somebody invented
the the enlightenment pill where you
were guaranteed to become enlightened by
taking this pill they would just run
from it in
Terror cuz they just don't want to
become enlightened deep down you know
they might say you know I want to be
enlightened but you know not just yet
sort of like St Augustine praying to God
you know save me from my sins but not

yet so let's see

here just trying to sleep more

comfortably yeah I mean it's basically

it it's I mean a lot of people they just

don't even have a concept of

Enlightenment they're so locked into

their intellect they just have to see

everything percep

and they they want reality to be in in

accordance with this human ape

psychology they think that that the

world really is human ape psychology and

not just this projection of human ape

psychology onto a world or onto you know

the outside whatever it

is

so where do I go from here

but I mean it it is fairly clear I mean
most people do not really want to be
inlighten even most Buddhists do not
want to be really be inlighten even most
monks do not really want to be
enlightened you know they they want a
better rebirth you know they want to
make some progress but they don't want
to do anything totally radical so that
their personality dissolves anything
like that I mean that's
scary so I guess I've elaborated on at
least a little bit a little bit of
commentary
anyway and so I'm just going to move on
the next question this is from

Wayne and we're actually getting close
to the end here so we're doing pretty
good now it's three hours so we're not
we're not going to be less than three
hours but we'll be less than three and a
half hours unless I just start
digressing wildly which can happen at
any
moment so anyways the next question is
from Wayne and Wayne says have you read
the Zen teachings of bodh Dharma by Red
Pine what are your thoughts on true
nature oh wait this is three questions
damn we got way more than 50 questions
once I start separating these questions
you know getting one question mark per
paragraph Okay Wayne says have you read

the Zen teachings of bodh Dharma by Red
Pine no I have not the only thing by Red
Pine I ever read was the poems of
Hanan which was kind of a disillusioning
kind of kind of thing Hanan
was he was a Hermit who lived in a cave
in China medieval China and he's
considered to be like a Zen master he
was kind of a Dost and into zen at the
same time and according to the Legends
he was like this zen master but you read
his poems and it turns out that he was
like a mandarin like like a a bureaucrat
an official who happened to be on the
wrong side of like a civil war there was
like a coup or something and he wound up

being red listed and when you were red listed that wasn't good that meant that you know your your head was going to wind up Landing in a basket or something and so he went off and become became like a Hermit mainly to hide from the authorities and in some of his poetry he's like moaning and complaining about how you know he's got to live out in this cave instead of being like this high ranking official he couldn't have been a really high ranking official anyway because he was like lame and back then in order to be like a high ranking Mandarin bureaucrat you had to be like physically perfect in addition to having mastered the Chinese Classics like

confucious and all that had ma Mastery
of like horse writing and archery and
all this and he was lame he couldn't he
could be nothing more than like a middle
level bureaucrat he complained about
that one time he saw some of the the
emperor's wives that were you know out
frolicking in the forest one day and
he's just like pining over
them so it turns out that I mean he
wasn't the the mystical magical Zen
master that tradition makes of him and
it's probably that way with a lot of
these Chinese Zen Masters that they've
just been glorified through a kind of
Mythology and that was like one of the

main things I learned from Reading red
Pine's translation of the poems of
Hanan but I mean I didn't even really
answer the question well I guess I did
at the very beginning he said have you
read the teachings of the Zen teachings
of bodh Dharma by Red Pine and no I
didn't so I could have just said no and
moved on to the next one but then it's
like the closest thing I can to
answering the question like well I have
read this other thing by
him so I'm just G to move on to to
Wayne's next question what are your
thoughts on true
nature true nature I mean is that like
in Zen like according to the legend the

six patriarch hen n when you know
according to the legend he takes the the
bll and robe of the patriarch and the
patriarch tells him to just flee because
nobody's going to tolerate this
illiterate Barbarian cook who's not even
a fully ordained monk being becoming the
next patriarch but there was this one
this one monk to doggedly hunted him
down and he's going to take that bow and
robe back to the Monastery or it
supposedly belonged and hhan asked him
this question he like before your mother
and father were born what was your
original face and that was like this
Coan that hit this Monk and I mean it

was like it hit him hard and he couldn't
answer it and then he realized that Hing
really was the sixth
patriarch and so maybe this the true
nature is the same as the original face
and I mean you can't really have
thoughts on it I mean it's it's a Zen
Coan true nature I mean the true nature
is just I mean if it's not even correct
to say it's infinite formless
Consciousness because you cannot reify
the ultimate you cannot reify the
absolute anything you say about it is
going to be invalid which is I mean most
people just don't get this including
most Buddhist monks I
think so TR true nature I mean it's

indescribable

for

starters but I mean if you want to call

it as a kind of makeshift infinite

formless Consciousness go right ahead

and that would be the true nature of

everybody they all share the same true

nature just as in the upanishads

everyone shares the same self or

Aton so I'm just going to move on to

Wayne's third question is it equivalent

to Spirit awareness or Universal

consciousness oh so this is sort of a

followup on the second one true nature

is it equivalent to

Spirit awareness or Universal

Consciousness I mean you can call it all
three it'd be Universal Spirit Universal
awareness you know it'd be like the
element of awareness that's what
Consciousness is is
awareness so you could call it all three
I mean you can call it whatever you like
you can call it blean if you want to and
calling it blean might actually be just
as valid as calling it anything
else but
um yeah I mean apophatic apophatic
mysticism is the way to go which I mean
you cannot express the highest truth in
words the the name that can be named is
not the Eternal name the very first
words of the D

Ching okay so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from Arin and Arin says what are the top three qualities that practicing as a strict Monk um gave you I I uh she dictated it so I had to include the um and what she meant was um what three qualities help me to become a functioning Layman after I stopped being a monk so what are the top three qualities that practicing as a strict monk gave you in order to help me to transition smoothly into being a lay person and one of them is a kind of Detachment that I mean a monk is supposed to see the world as just stimuli you know it's like when you look

upon the world you're it's like you're
seeing images on a on a movie screen so
there's always this
Detachment and so first I was seeing
images on a movie screen with regard to
being a monk and then I started seeing
images on a movie screen with guard to
being a lay person and so I mean it
really didn't affect me very much not
that I even ultimately exist but still
there's like this Detachment from just
this
world that causes me to be able to make
transitions more easily than someone
whose life is just totally an upheaval
and they're melting down and so forth so
that would be one of the qualities like

that that practicing as a strict monk
gave me another one would be
austerity and um maybe I shouldn't say
it but a certain amount of aestheticism
can actually be very helpful in like
dealing with uh a woman who's being
unreasonable for
example that it's just you're used
to just harsh reality and like going to
work having to work for a living getting
up early in the morning which I don't do
anymore because I work nights but having
to get up at 6:00 in the morning and I
mean it's like an aesthetic practice
having to work all day it's like an
aesthetic practice and I mean I just got

used to that I mean when you're when I
was a monk you know you just I'm just d
ripping with sweat in the the blazing
hot wastelands of central Burma sleeping
on a concrete floor with a piece of wood
for a pillow all this kind of stuff it's
I mean being a lay person is actually
pretty cushy by comparison in a lot of
respects so that would be another
quality so first I've got like
Detachment and then austerity and then
what other three qualities practicing as
a as a strict
monk oh boy what would be the third one
I mean an increased amount of meta for
my fellow human I guess would help that
I really being uh like a a solitary

renunciate

um in a way it kind of helped me to appreciate my fellow humans better you know it gave me like for example being a monk where you're trying to perfect yourself trying to purify your mind and you see that that is a tall order is not easy to do so that it causes me to have more Christian charity and acceptance of the common person who really doesn't have much of a chance other than just being kind of a [__] so it's like even if I was trying as hard as I could to be a saint and I just stayed being stuck who I was essentially because that's the way it is you me you're just stuck being

who you are it's very difficult to just stop being who you are and start being somebody else schopenhauer had a lot to say about that so it caused me to just have more patience and sympathy and and meta you know benevolence towards human beings in general which helps me to fit into this world better than before I was a monk and just kind of like despise the human race in

general so I guess those would be the three and then arin's second question what are the top three habits as a monk that turn turn turned into that made it more difficult for you to adjust as a late person so three habits as a monk that made it more difficult for me to

adjust as a late person o well I mean

just the

Solitude

um the Solitude aspect caused me to have

fewer social skills I guess you know

being a Hermit is not very good for

developing social skills and so there's

that you know it's

I've having to take take a crash course

and like just being polite I

guess maybe that might be one of the the

habits as a monk another habit is just

um when you don't have to work for a

living you can just I don't know if you

call it lazy but I mean you just you're

at leisure most of the time and then all

of a sudden having all this stuff you
have to go into like survival mode and
you just got to do all this stuff and
take care of everything and that was
that was kind of difficult that was kind
of a shock to the system where when
you're a monk I mean you don't have to
worry about much of anything first of
all everything's very simplified and
you're not even allowed to cook your own
food it's people just give you your
food and
so yeah I mean that would probably be
just the habit of not having to do very
much and then all of a sudden having to
you like support myself and my woman and
you know pay

bills that kind of

thing so that would be that would be two

and then the third habit that made it

difficult for me to turn back into a lay

person

man see the third habit that well

shouldn't mention that one I

guess H I can't really think of a third

one other than one that's kind of

unmentionable

something to do with being celibate for

30 years and then

suddenly suddenly not being celibate

anymore it caused a certain shock to my

system I think and it wasn't just

physical sh it was more of an emotional

thing it's like when you know this like
sexuality is like this no mustn't do it
no mustn't do it and then all of a
sudden it's okay to do it in fact it's
kind of like my husbandly duty that it
really required a a major shift from 30
years of conditioning to all of a sudden
you know doing this thing that I'd been
wanting to do but just like nope can't
do it can't do it can't do
it it was it was like this weird it's
like neurotic conditioning and so forth
that had to be overcome in order to
really come close to being like normally
functioning and I'm not saying that you
know there was anything really outwardly
horribly abnormal but it really took

some adjustment so to

speak and I'm not going to go any more

details than that

God so anyways then there's the last

question the very last question which is

from PSA and PSA says what's today's

beverage what's the flavor and are the

contents of it healthy for you or is it

all chemicals well with regard to

chemicals everything's a chemical water

is a

chemical water is dihydrogen oxide so

many people are killed every year by

water anyways my first beverage the

primary

beverage was about maybe 40% organic

coffee I don't know what country it came
from but it came from a country where
there's like little brown people
speaking in foreign languages they're
like picking the coffee beans by
hand and uh probably like spreading it
out in the the Sun and everything and
then the other 60% was was milk it
wasn't organic milk I'm sorry to say
that store was out of organic milk when
I went there please go easy on me I
would have got the organic if they had
it but it it's guaranteed not to have
any of those like hormone injection
stuff that they give to the cows to make
them give more milk so at least there's
that so that was I mean the primary

beverage was lots of it was like coffee

and milk probably a little more milk

than coffee and the second one is this

which it's got some chemicals in it but

then again water's the

chemical and I'm happy to say that

uh just this one can has got 50% of my

daily requirement of panthic

acid ah and the flavor I don't know what

flavor is Red Bull I don't

they just invented some new flavor maybe

it's just like pantothenic acid flavor

or

something yeah I don't know exactly what

the flavor of Red Bull

is so that's it I'm done my golly and

like I always say at the end when I
should be saying at the beginning if you
have any questions no more than three
per episode
please and I do count question marks you
want if you want to ask one question
that's got like five question marks in
it that's that's a no no that is
transgressive so if you have any
questions that you think I can answer
about Buddhism meditation early Buddhism
terraa especially pre terraa meditation
monasticism philosophy in general
spirituality in general I mean the
farther you get away from Terra Buddhism
the less likely it is that I'll be able
to give like um an educated answer

anything remotely resembling an

authoritative answer but still you might

be surprised sometimes

so uh ask them in the comments below if

you please and uh smash the like button

don't just press it smash the son of a

[__] if you liked it if you didn't like

it then don't do it that would be kind

of dishonest I guess and uh subscribe if

you haven't

already and be happy and now I got to

press the stop recording button here

alrighty then hello and welcome to

question and answer number

1030 I am your host poo basa and this

may be the shaggi you ever see me

because the cold weather is pretty much

over and I think my woman might give me

a haircut tomorrow but I'm still kind of

intermediate I'm like ambivalently

poised between getting my beard trimmed

shorter or just growing it long with

like a braid and like a Muer bead

hanging at the bottom of it I get away

with that [__] cuz my ancestors at least

a lot of them were

Germanic

so you'll find out at the next Q&A I

suppose and so I'll just take a sip of

my chosen

beverage which is not from my sticks cup

as you can see because my woman doesn't

like sticks very much anymore she says

he's becoming a lull cow partly because

he's wearing like a pirate hat sometimes

in his videos now and also that's just

the whole New Orleans thing not New

Orleans New

Orleans and just kind of like dumping

his wife and all that stuff she's women

it's like a lot of people especially

women I think they cannot really

differentiate the person and and like

the Productions of that person you know

it's like Bill Cosby is all of a sudden

not funny anymore even though he was a
fairly good stand-up comedian back when
I was a kid or also Woody Allen not
funny anymore just because of their kind
of sexual Kinks so to
speak Michael Jackson you know his music
I mean people still listen to Michael
Jackson's music apparently because the
whole him doing inappropriate things
with white children was uh not really
conclusive and a lot of people don't
believe that he did
it so anyways I guess I should just
start answering questions and it's going
to be a moderate amount of questions
it's going to be like the middle path

between the extremes of not nearly

enough questions and way too many

questions and the first question is from

ch

is who interestingly now goes by the

name of

Julie so I do hope that after his

transition he at least had the common

courtesy to his woman to to at least

convert to being a

lesbian and tasz is says I mean

Julie if non-material beings such as

ghost or human Souls exist which are

believed in many religions and they can

see hear and think without a body then

why people need eyes to see ears to hear

and brain to think and dreams or

otherwise we call them dead we are
living in a material world and
materialism seems to explain things in
this world we are living right now
thoughts well I think we can just kind
of ignore other religions and just kind
of go with Buddhism especially Terra
Buddhism because that is really the main
perspective of these videos that I'm
making and according to terab
Buddhism um ghosts are not non-material
beings ghosts have a physical
body much as we have a physical body
it's just that the matter of which they
are composed has a different subtlety
than ours

going with more modern lingo it's like
the the physical matter of which ghosts
are composed their bodies anyway has a
different frequency or vibratory rate or
whatever and with regard to human Souls
I mean from the Buddhist point of view
they don't
exist so really any kind of
beings if if they can see and hear as a
general rule they've got physical eyes
and physical ears even though they might
be invisible from our point of view
nevertheless they're just at a different
subtlety of matter and they still have
eyes and ears like according to the
legend the Buddha after his just
immediately after his Enlightenment he

was thinking who should he teach Adam to
First and the first people that came to
mind were his two teachers who taught
him
meditation and then he realized they're
in formless realms they won't be able to
hear me say anything and so then he had
to uh find somebody else which turned
out being his five athetic companions
before his
Enlightenment so you do have to have
physical sense organs in order to have
um sense contact and sense Consciousness
and sense perception going with Buddhist
philosophy so I'm just going to go on to
what tasas is or Julie's second question

which is why you make a special point on
not telling lies when you occasionally
drink beer and maybe once in a while
kill a mosquito maybe well I haven't
really
killed a mosquito in quite a long time
just because I'm not really exposed to
mosquitoes much here I mean when you're
living in the tropics I killed more
mosquitoes ironically as a monk than I
do as a lay person because as a monk I
might be living in a cave with no screen
door mosquitoes coming in and I mean you
just sit there and get bitten and
actually killing
mosquitoes it didn't happen nearly as
much when I was a monk as killing like

biting flies because a mosquito just itches when it bites you plus maybe you get malaria but like a horse fly or a smaller like a Sandfly kind of thing I mean it hurts and they come in swarm sometimes and I just never had the patience to just sit there and be bitten by horse flies it

just it just wasn't going to happen there was this one kind of fly I not sure what it's called maybe a Sandfly it was sort of a salt and pepper kind of a grayish modeled color and it was longer than a house fly not nearly as big as a horse F they they would come in swarms and I would use my sweat I was

getting really good at I had like a
little washcloth that I'd use largely
for wiping sweat but it was also
necessary just as a flail to keep biting
parasitic insects off of me and I got
really good like you got one on your arm
here you kind of hit hit it from like
the other side so it has like this
Whiplash effect and goes really fast
when it wraps around and I was just
getting too lethal to be appropriate as
a monk I mean at first you know it's
like you you almost kill it and it flies
away and that's
fine but anyways I try to compensate my
demerit from killing these insects by
feeding them to ant lions because the

place where I was living under this Rock Ledge where I had no mosquito net or anything like that I was just a Sitting Duck for any parasitic insect that came along um there were a lot of these ant lion pits and those of you who live in places where it rains a lot may not know what ant lions are but it's a kind of insect that digs this cone it's like a funnel shaped pit in sand or dust and things follow into it and it grabs them and eats them and so I'd feed the the nice little ant lions with uh the victims or me I mean I was kind of the victim I was striking out in self-defense so I did get a little bit

of Merit to kind of compensate for the

demerit of of killing them little

bastards

but I have I have to admit I have

occasionally fed live food to those

fishes back there and I'm not the one

that's killing them but still I mean

when you're dropping brine shrimp live

brine shrimp which when I was a kid were

known as sea monkeys when you drop them

in there the fish they they just kill

them all off it's it's like brine shrimp

genocide kind

of but what getting back to the question

here see I'm just digressing all over

the place I haven't even started

answering the question

really why you make a special point of
not telling lies when you occasionally
drink beer and maybe once in a while
kill a mosquito well I mean telling the
truth is
important and I mean I've gotten myself
in trouble by just brutally brutal
honesty I
guess um you know everyone else is
expect like job applications or
something everyone's expected to just
lie but I don't do it and uh I mean it's
just it's just better it's there's more
Integrity in drinking a beer every once
in a
while and U maybe killing mosquito once

in a while and just owning up to it then
pretending that you don't CU that's
dishonest and you're still drinking the
beer and killing the mosquito anyway so
by lying about it you're just adding
more demerit to to the pile I guess
so I think I'm just going to move on to
Julie actually trasa is third question
which is did you learn the most popular
polish word on a first day on a Polish
ship um yeah this is with regard to a
statement I made on the previous Q&A
where I worked on a Polish ship when I
was 21 years old the sagita which is
Polish for Sagittarius there was a
Polish fishing Fleet off the coast of
like I mean they would fish off the

coast of like Oregon for hke at the time
and the fishing fleet was named after
constellations so I was on on the sigita
with Captain bouic
kumka and uh yeah it was it was like the
cuss word just the interjection of
choice for Polish Sailors is
kurva and one time I asked the technolog
who is one of the officers on the ship
you know what does that mean and he just
kind of awkwardly says it means um
change but I don't see how change would
become like the favorite cuss word of
Polish Sailors so anyone knows what
kurva literally means just put it in the
comments below and and I'll I'll finally

finally figured out after all these

years but wasn't the first day but I

mean it happened pretty frequently when

stuff would go wrong you'd have all

these police Sailors on the the back

deck of the ship

saying so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from the

savatours

and I'm not sure if the savatours is

really more than one person or it could

just be one person pretending to be more

than one person just to kind of increase

their clout or something and the sabur

says what is mind

so what is mind it doesn't matter and

what is

matter never mind it was just too hacked
of a joke for me to pass up but what is
mind I mean it's sort of like energy in
physics like
Consciousness I mean mind would be
Consciousness and mental States I
suppose going with English
words so yeah mind would be a
combination of Consciousness and mental
States like perception and
volition so if you want to know what
Consciousness is it's getting it's
getting into like
energy to a physicist where it's
practically an undefined term I mean you
just have to get down Dig Down dig down

until you get down to sort of like the
Bedrock of words that I mean you can't
really Define them in other terms
because I mean you have to have sort of
like the the basic fundamentals
of words that I mean they don't really
have anything beneath them and like
energy in physics I mean that's just the
the basic you know that's that's what
physics is all about is the study of of
energy and so in a sense it's kind of
ironic but also kind of appropriate that
it's practically an undefined term I
mean you can say it's like the capacity
to do work or some such but with regard
to Consciousness I me you can say it's
awareness

but I mean you could also say it's

energy I mean personally I think

ultimately energy and Consciousness are

the

same

so empty space you know According to

some physicists anyway empty space

contains both zero energy and infinite

energy and so I mean you can say the

same thing about empty space contains

zero Consciousness and infinite

Consciousness kind of a thing

but what is mind I mean it's it's just

one of these words where um I mean you

can everyone knows what mind is pretty

much because that's really the only

thing you can know for sure if you can

know anything for sure it's your own

Consciousness because anything else you

know you know indirectly through your

own

Consciousness but I guess like a really

simple

like um what's the word I'm trying to

think of I can't even think of the word

I'm trying to think of

now uh it's not

sufficient insufficient like an

insufficient brief explanation would be

awareness

so yeah but I mean technically from a

Buddhist point of view mind or cheetah

would be Consciousness and conscious

ious is sort of

like ter Terra Buddhism has real

difficulties trying to explain

Consciousness because they can't really

have it as the substance of mental

states which in my opinion it is because

they have to put it all at the same

level of reality so they've got

perception and Consciousness being

equally real at the same level of

reality and nibana and all sorts of

things that's everything is just at the

same level of Ultimate Reality

and uh yeah I mean it's like the

substance of thought would be another

way of defining mind or Consciousness or

I mean if you want to use mind in the
broader English sense it would be both
Consciousness and mental
States and I think I better just move on
to the next question this is from s
papal laa and S papala says what's the
longest time you have meditated and I
assume he means the longest time I ever
just sat in meditation without getting
up and that was fairly early on in my
career as a beu when I was able to sit
in the full Lotus for two hours straight
so it would be somewhere in the
neighborhood maybe plus or minus a
little bit of two
hours and the thing is my legs have
never been extremely flexible and I was

never able to sit in the full Lotus
without Agony for much longer than two
hours but but I mean with regard to just
meditating in general if you're doing
intensive meditation you're meditating
all day you know it's like you sit for
an hour and then you're mindful of the
desire to stand up you're mindful of the
actions involved the physical actions of
standing up you're you're mindful of you
know the changes in your vision as
you're standing up you know you're
mindful of all these things then you
start doing walking meditation and so
it's
unbroken like some Seattles they talk

about if you want to start a fire you
rub two sticks together and it's not
going to happen if you rub two sticks
together for a while and then just set
them down and then a while later you
pick them back up and rub them together
some more and then you set them down and
a little while later you come back and
start rubbing them together again you're
never going to get a fire so you have to
keep rubbing the sticks which means that
even when you're not sitting
cross-legged with your eyes closed
you're still meditating you're still
practicing SA batana mindfulness of
walking mindfulness of seeing
mindfulness of whatever it is that

you're

doing and with regard to that kind of

meditation then yeah pretty much all day

when I was doing really intensive

meditation like at a Meditation Retreat

or like a self- retreat out in the

forest just going for it full blast then

pretty much the only time you're not

meditating is when you're sleeping or if

you're just you know your mind wanders

away and you you just start thinking

about something or you have to interact

with a visitor or something and then

maybe the the meditation or general

mindfulness will you know kind of

evaporate but with regard to sitting

cross-legged which was in the full Lotus
it was about two hours and so I'm going
to move on to the next question this is
from Jo do and Joo says how were the
Pyramids
built and I'm going with the standard
like archaeological
theory that the Egyptian pharaohs had
armies of thousands of slaves and that
the building blocks of the pyramids were
pulled with ropes over rollers however
many miles it took to get there and they
do have theories now that the pyramids
like the Egyptian pyramids especially
we're not talking like Aztec Pyramids or
prehistoric Chinese pyramids we're
talking Egyptian Pyramids like the Great

Pyramid or the Great Pyramids of Giza
that originally they were sort of in a
spiral they were they were built with
like a spiral Spiral ramp going around
the outside so that the Rocks could be
pulled up to get them up to the top
they'd be going up this ramp that went
along the outside of the unfinished
pyramid and I guess there is some
evidence that that is the case based
on whatever it is you know sort of like
what is it
ultrasound or something or was is it
deep sensing sonar I don't know what
it's called but you know they can see
the structure of like a spiral ramp

going along the outside of the the
pyramid going up towards the top so yeah
that would be my main
hypothesis I think space aliens had
nothing to do with it technologically
advanced um
atlantans after Atlantis sank under the
ocean I don't think they had anything to
do it um if it wasn't armies of slaves
using Stone AG or copper age or very
early Bronze Age
Technology then maybe it was priests who
were channeling the power of some God
who was able to help build these
pyramids but I really do not think that
space aliens or atlantans had anything
to do with

it and I will just point out once again

that I think in all probability Atlantis

was just a

garbled um a garbled Legend accounting

for the the minoan civilization centered

on

creit and that cre ceased being like the

the local power in the Eastern

Mediterranean largely due to the

eruption of

Thea um like an ancient volcanic island

about 70 miles from cre which may have

wiped out the creeton Navy and also

blanketed the the island of cre with

enough volcanic ash that the crops died

so that their civilization was hurt

badly enough that Myan Greeks or dorians
could then invade cre and take it over
and just turn it
Greek so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from xenoid
and Zenith void says what are your
thoughts on this excerpt from the book
Blood Meridian on the nature of war and
he kindly left a YouTube link in which
judge Holden is giving his theory of war
and zeni continues here judge Holden is
seen as one of the most evil villains in
fiction often compared to the devil the
Gnostic demiurge and its archons Mara
Etc I like cormic McCarthy's
paraphrasing of heraclitus's quote war
is the father of all things in this

speech by the judge and yeah this in the
speech by the judge the judge finishes
by saying war is
God and I mean it was too long of a
speech for me to really like address
everything he says but really what he
does say about war has some dark wisdom
to it is it's like war created the human
race I mean the judge doesn't say that
I'm saying that you know it's like
Darwin the like Darwinism accelerated
through War that's one reason why the
human race evolved as fast as it did you
know up in the the last you know 100,000
years or
so is that I mean war was fueling that

that instead of being attacked by leopards and bears we're being attacked by Barbarian tribes and that sort of thing and it was just the strongest succeeded and like in the in western civilization you start off with the Greeks and then you had the Romans after that and both of them just they were militaristic civilizations that turned kicking ass into a science that's one reason one of the main reasons why the Greeks and the Romans were as successful as they were is because they were using like Western Ingenuity as in as ways of like improving the efficiency at which they could just like slaughter their

enemies so I

mean judge Holden is kind of glorifying

that and justifying that and you know

saying that you know it's sort of like

the force of Darwin or even like God to

him in like shaping mankind I mean he

wouldn't care about people kind he would

mankind for him and you know it's like

it's sort of like darwinian Evolution

compare combined with like honor and

like the value of Life at least the

value of this the winner you know the

value of Life To the victor you know

that sort of thing is just to him I mean

that's the me that's the purpose of life

sort of like Conan the Barbarian

paraphrasing genas Khan you know what is best in life to defeat the enemy to see them driven before you and to hear the lamentation of the

women and I mean there is a kind of dark wisdom to that because that kind of element added to a civilization makes that

Civilization just ass kicking and so they're more likely to prosper and then of course they get real prosperous and then they start getting decadent with like compassion and human rights and all this and then things start to collapse or at least Decay and then some other warlike barbarous tribe just kind of sweeps in and takes

over so I think really
civilization once you take away the
militarism then you start getting into a
state of like castrated
degeneracy just I mean it's almost
inevitable and so I mean it may be
better to have a certain amount of
militarism Guided by ideas of justice
and honor than to have castrated
degeneracy so I mean judge Holden was
kind of an extremist on that score I
don't think he might have cared all that
much about Justice it's just might makes
right but still to have a certain amount
of militarism like Trump is trying to
return the United States to

after you know a

Democrat um Administration has the main

purpose of the army being promoting gay

rights and this sort of thing around the

world handing out food packets that kind

of

thing like uh who is it heg Seth says I

mean the main purpose of a military is

lethality either the the ability to kill

your enemies or else just be scary

enough that your enemies are just aren't

going to mess with you

anymore so it's a kind of harsh worldly

wisdom that is pretty much unavoidable

so long as you are living a worldly

life and I'm just going to move on next

question also from

xenoid and xenoid says what do you think
of this Friedrich nche quote under
peaceful conditions the warlike man will
attack himself I think some warlike men
will attack themselves just in a way
just sort of abuse themselves through
like over drinking and and just acting
crazy and getting in fights biker bars
and that kind of thing although a lot of
other warik men warlike men under
peaceful conditions will just sort of
they will attack other people like my
father when he was a younger man I mean
he was he liked bar brawling you know
you'd go to a bar for three reasons get
drunk pick up a women and fight somebody

I mean that's he liked fighting when he
was a young man I mean he' pretty much
outgrown that by the time he became my
father but still there are guys like
that and uh so under peaceful conditions
the warlike man won't necessarily attack
himself he may just become like a biker
or a gang member or you know just
fighting amongst themselves
but maybe n had something else in mind
that I'm not thinking of maybe he was
thinking on a higher plane than that so
anyways I'm anyways I'm just going to
move on next question this is from
xenoid also can you explain the
symbolism of kie killing Shiva and I
assume he's referring to the pictures

you can find um

occasionally in New Age homes for

example especially new age female homes

of you know colie who's like dancing on

the the body of Shiva she's got like the

necklace of human heads you know she's

got like blood dripping everywhere like

the tongue sticking out and the fangs

and all that and apparently that came

from a

Legend

um where the the Davis and the asuras

you know the gods and the Titans were

having one of their Wars and somehow kie

just started fighting

she just went into a kind of Berserk

frenzy and just started killing all the
the the demons or the the asuras and
then after they were killed she just
kept killing and killing until she was
just going to kill everything I mean she
had momentum going she was on a roll and
so the other gods go to Shiva and say
look she's your consort you deal with
her you got to stop her so he goes and
she kills him too but then I mean
killing him kind of caused her to
realize whoa well I think I'm overdoing
it somewhat so then she breathed life
back into into Shiva and Shiva was all
better again and I think part of this is
just the standard Indian system going
back into vidic Times of whatever God

that you're worshiping is the highest
God a manifestation of the highest God
so colie in this case was just
demonstrating herself as like the
Supreme deity who can even kill Shiva
and then restore Shiva to life maybe
with some feminine
lifegiving like the stereotypical you
know Miracle of giving life of of women
thrown
in because the females are the ones who
bring life more than males do at least
uh you know bi biologically I guess
and kie is just kind of interesting to
me because it wasn't until early modern
times that Ki was becoming a kind of

cosmic deity who actually had some good
aspects you know now she's like the
Slayer of defilements the Slayer of
demons that kind of thing but I me there
are mention of Kali goddesses in the
poly Tex and they're pretty much demones
you know they're like cousins of
Mara and and so colie was a kind of
demonist who haunted battlefields up
until maybe like the 1600s in India I
think it was like in Bengal especially
that she started being reformed and
turned into a kind of cosmic good
goddess with like a fierce aspect in in
slaying evil kind of a
thing but the symbolism kie killing
Shiva I think my best bet my best guess

is that colie

worshippers you know who who she's like

the the the big one you know she's just

demonstrating her superiority like in

the bagavat Gita you've got Krishna

declaring himself to be Shiva in

addition to all these other gods like

he's Brahma he's Shiva he's he's all the

pantheon of gods he's everything so to a

Vite you know it's like that's showing

that Vishnu is greater than Shiva

because shiva's just one of the aspects

of Vishnu and it's kind of the same deal

here where kie is is supreme because

she's even killing Shiva and then

restoring Shiva to life and uh I mean

that's my best guess although a Hindu
who knows more about the Legends and all
this might know better than me on this
case with regard to this case so I'm
just going to move on next question this
is from Stellar Supreme formerly known
as Libra l and occasionally still known
as Liber Lam and he says have you ever
had NADA and in parentheses he's got
inner sound in meditation and so I I
don't fully understand this that NADA is
Spanish for
nothing but why he would equate NADA
with inner sound I don't know um but
NADA just nothingness yeah I mean
there's a certain amount of nothingness
that has arisen in my meditation sort of

like it reminds me of St John of the
Cross his Ascent of Mount Carmel the
ascent of Mount Carmel is just NADA NADA
NADA NADA NADA NADA just nothing nothing
nothing nothing nothing nothing nothing
till you get to the the peak of you know
the
highest highest realization that a human
being is capable of
experiencing but when Stellar Supreme
identifies NADA with inner
sound then yeah
I can't really relate to it I mean I
have meditated in which um you know you
can hear like your the your pulse in
your inner ear you know it's like you

can hear your own blood pressure

essentially you know you're your mind

gets so silent and you're in like you

know silent cave and so I mean you can

hear like the blood rushing through your

inner ears which then has some effect on

the eardrum

presumably but uh it hasn't been

anything metaphysical that I'm aware of

I haven't heard any Celestial music or

anything like

that so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from covac and sead

zida and seac and sead zida says please

explain the samba

Kaya and I'm No Authority on the samba

Kaya um it's a Mahayana Buddhist

concept and it's one of the three bodies of Buddha the three Kaaya of the Buddha first youve got the nuraya which is just the physical body of godma Buddha the sage of the shakya clan then you've got the Sakaya which is sort of like a Celestial Buddha in like a kind of Heaven realm and then you got the dharmakaya which is sort of like the essence of buddhahood which is sort of like omniscience or infinite Consciousness that pervades the entire universe and I have read that early Mahayana only had two bodies they had the nuraya or the physical body of the Buddha and then they had the

dharmakaya and I have read I don't
remember where I read this possibly in
AK Waters Indian Buddhism
book um that it was the yoga charara
school which arose after the maamaa
school it was sort of like
a um I wouldn't call it a reform of
maama but it was sort of built upon
maaka philosophically and I think it was
kind of a step backwards from maaka
personally but the yoga charara School
according to whatever author I was
reading was um it was it was them or
they who came up with this samboa Kaya
concept I mean it's certainly not a an
early Buddhist concept it's uh you know
it arose centuries after the time of the

Buddha according to scholarly
authorities and it was the third of the
three bodies of the Buddha to get
traction become famous become like
official Mahayana Buddhist
Doctrine so I mean if you compare the
three bodies of the Buddha with like
three versions of God in in like
Christianity like the nayah the physical
body would just be like Jesus The
Carpenter's son living in
Nazareth and then the samboa Kaya would
be sort of like Christ in glory
enthroned in heaven with the angels
fluttering around him and that sort of
thing and then the dharmakaya would be

just like God Almighty who is just
pervades the universe and doesn't really
have a physical body that sort of
thing so I'm just going to move on to se
of action sead Z's second question
which is have you ever felt like if you
read through the sutas or other profound
texts somewhere you would find what you
were missing and immediately find the
key to nibbana for some reason I have
this hope and I don't know why well when
I was young maybe you know when before
I'd read everything now I've pretty much
seen everything there is to say on the
subject of like becoming
enlightened although occasionally after
you know I've stopped looking

then you know I'd stumble across or just
karmic coincidence would just land a
book into my hands that was just right
what I needed to read like for example
um there's a book by Paul low called in
each moment and I was going through a
rough time as a monk because I was just
like struggling against my own
defilements you know it was like I was
trying to be a perfected Saint just like
the text say you know a monk should not
feel anger a monk should not feel lust
monk should not feel hatred a monk
should not have
preferences you know and it's like
trying to live up to that it's like

you're trying to be somebody else you're

not you're trying to be not yourself

it's like you're you're you're like

rejecting your own nature and just like

trying possibly in some cases trying to

use like camar Rouge tactics against

your old defilements just destroy your

defilements and it results in a lot of

like

frustration and

hysteria and

just sometimes it could even get to the

point of self-loathing

and it really was not working or helping

all that much and then I get this book

in each moment by Paulo who's saying you

know don't be against your own nature

don't be against even if you are against your own nature don't be against your own against this you know just accept the way things are which is kind of like a chrisna mury kind of teaching too and it just happened to be the right thing at the right time it was just what I needed to read but it wasn't like I had this feeling that if I just get this book or some book it's going to help because I figured I already read everything but every once in a while you'll just get this nudge you know an unusual Direction you know it's like it might be saying stuff that's not so different what you've already read

before or heard before but it's just
hits you at the right time from just the
the right angle to nudge you in just the
right way to make some improvement you
know to make uh you know like like a
growth spurt a spiritual growth surge
kind of a
thing so have I ever felt like if I read
through the sutas or other profound text
somewhere I would find what I was
missing and immediately find the K toana
at this point it's I can pretty well
appreciate that um I mean you're not
going to find the secret of reality
written in words just I mean genuine
knowledge is not in words the the name
that can be named is not the Eternal

name which is I've said that like three
videos in a row at
least the name that can be named is not
the Eternal name
so um it's not so much the words or what
you like what this or that suta says I
mean if you haven't read it before you
haven't been exposed to that information
then
maybe but generally wisdom literature
once you you're familiar with the that
genre that I mean it's very it becomes
more and more unlikely that you're going
to come across something that's just
going to go wow I never never considered
that before because I mean once you've

read the like the the mystical

Literature Like the higher more more

advanced dharmic texts of various

religious systems you've read Krishna

myty you you know you've read all this

stuff then eventually you get jaded and

it doesn't have much of an effect on you

anymore you've already you've already

read the same general stuff over and

over

again and in Terra it's even more that

way because it's more limited you know

this I mean doctrinally you're not going

to have all these extreme views this

this whole spect it's going to be a much

bro much more narrow

Spectrum so yeah when I was young I felt

that way I suppose but the more
experience you get the less you feel
that way but then like I was saying
every once in a while you just you just
might out of the blue due to your own
Karma just get hit with this teaching
that just hits you the right way and
nudges you in the right
direction so I'm just going to move on
to se of action Z's next question how do
I come to terms with friends moving on
like TIG it makes me not want to meet
new people in the first place because I
know what is to eventually come well I
mean that's impermanence I mean Sab Sab
Sara anicha everything that has a

beginning has an end Neo I mean that's
just basic Buddhism I mean it's just
something you bear in mind I mean I mean
it seems like
that seac and sead Zona has a certain
amount of clinging to others that uh you
know he does he wants it to be permanent
or something and I mean anything that
has a beginning has an end it's just
something that you I mean it requires a
certain amount of dharmic maturity or
something to just really accept that as
just that's just the way it is and it
could be that I mean you really take
that to heart and it might inspire you
to just go alone like the Horn of the
rhinoceros and become a renunciant

recluse which is something that I did

for many

years um or on the other hand you might

think that human interaction is worth

the the fact that it's it's not going to

be permanent everything that has a

beginning has an

end like I mean this reminds me right

now of um my my woman's mother's

boyfriend has a son who I mean he's

apparently I mean maybe I shouldn't say

this but I mean his his body is wrecked

he's got like like stage four cancer and

he's had a number of Strokes after being

diagnosed with that and he's got blood

clots and all sorts of things going

wrong with him and I mean there's a good
chance he's not going to be here a week
from now and I mean as a father I mean I
never met the guy but I mean his father
certainly has and that's just
what you may have to face in life if you
interact with other
people that yeah I mean they're going to
be taken away from you sooner or later I
mean that's just right there in the the
poly
texts like read the the Sal Su of the
suan that you know just as just as all
fruit you know it eventually falls from
the tree or just as anything made of
clay is eventually going to get broken
that it's the same way with the life of

Mortals

and lamentation is useless because

that's just the way of the

world so I mean you got two choices you

can if you don't want to have to deal

with the impermanence of human

interactions then you just go alone and

become a renuncian recluse or just a

recluse or whatever and I mean otherwise

if you think that there is still value

in it I mean eating I mean it's like why

bother eating ice cream I mean it's it's

going to be gone you're going to eat it

all and then it's going to be

gone I mean does that mean you shouldn't

eat ice cream I mean it's good while

you're eating it and then you run out I
mean the Bowl's empty you know oh
well Le you can get more ice cream and
you can get more friends
too so I mean it's just a matter of
personal choice I think the traditional
ancient early Buddhist approach is well
it's all impermanent so you're better
off just not wallowing in it not getting
any attachment to it at all but still I
mean there is a difference between
having a friend and clinging to a friend
so you can have a friend and appreciate
that friend and enjoy that friend's
company derive benefit from that friend
and then when you just go your separate
ways you know there's no moping and

lamenting about it it's just that's just
the way life is
anyway yeah and you're going to find TIG
again I mean he's already been kicked
off our server twice once as an American
apparently and once as an Ethiopian so
TIG takes many forms and he may come
back as say Japanese next
time and then you can be friends with
him until he's kicked off again and then
he'll come back possibly as uh Uruguayan
and you make friends with them again and
enjoy
that don't cling because clinging is the
cause of all suffering clinging and
attachment and desire and

craving and

delusion and I'm just going to move on

next question this is from

PSA and PSA says are you secretly a

vigilante superhero with a double

identity fighting crime and bringing

Justice to the world when no 's looking

and that should be an obvious no because

there are certain people in this world

if I really was a

superhero that I mean they wouldn't be

in their position right now because I'd

I'd mess them

up so I mean it could just be that I

believe in karma and it's like well you

know if I take out this James Bond super

villain type person who is causing all

kinds of havoc in the world

that uh you know he' make Bad Karma for

me so I'll just let him keep doing that

but then I wouldn't be much of a

vigilante superhero if Buddhist ethics

prevented me from harming any

being so I mean I it's just I got to

deny it anyway because otherwise I

wouldn't secretly be the Vigilante

superhero

anymore

so yeah I can't just blurred out you

know in reality I am Wonder

warthog next question this is from yuguo

and yuguo says I met a person who does a

Goa meditation they told me that you

should not know anything about Buddhism
and learning dhma is useless I was
baffled I tried convincing them that
right effort is important but failed and
he thoughts and then parenthesis he's
got they told me that it comes from
meditation right effort well goink
meditators are like the Jehovah's
Witnesses of Buddhism that a lot of them
are just
fanatical and they have like a similar
attitude or at least many of them do as
Jehovah Witnesses where is if somebody
leaves the
group you know they stop being going a
meditator and goes follow start
following some other

method they're just considered dead
they're just shunned which is what
Jehovah's Witnesses often do also
and I mean they are just a lot of Goa
people are just totally convinced that
they have found the way and that you
don't need to do anything other than the
goink method I mean I knew this Canadian
monk he didn't last very long I met him
in Burma and he was a going
meditator and he gets ordained as a monk
just because he wanted to live in a
certain cave and only monks could could
stay and meditate in that cave so he
became a monk so he could meditate in
this cave and do his goink Retreats his

10day goink or what are they called

they're not called

Retreats I can't remember what they're

called but anyways sometimes I'd be

trying to teach him some kind of dhama

and he'd get this look of just like just

he he it's like he could hardly stand me

telling him just basic fundamentals of

Buddhist ethics and philosophy it's like

I don't care about that WKA G is my

father I'm completely satisfied with

this teachings I don't need to know

anything else and I mean how many goka

meditators become enlightened Goa wasn't

wasn't enlightened according to his own

confession well I did read in like a Goa

pamphlet once this is like the words of

SN Goa himself that um I mean if you if
you need to swim it's good to to like
have PR practice in swimming you ought
to know how to swim swim and not just
have like a degree in swimology without
ever having gotten into the water so
that I mean to that extent sure personal
practice is more important than reading
stuff in books but still I mean the Goa
method is like very much stripped down
and
simplified probably
oversimplified and it does not seem to
be a method that really can take you as
far as some other methods can
so those are my thoughts I guess but I

mean try and talk sense to a Jehovah's
Witness and see how far you get and try
to talk sense to a Goa meditator who is
just absolutely persuaded Goa G is his
spiritual father you're better off not
knowing anything else about Buddhism
other than what Gua G has taught then I
mean it's pretty much the same
situation so I mean just even knowing
just like the three marks of existence
that kind of thing I don't I assume Goa
teaches that but I don't know what kind
of emphasis he puts on
it but even even Goa system had the
entire poly toptica printed but they had
like the stuff that was emphasized by
Goa printed in red ink and the rest of

it P printed in Black Ink so so you
could know which parts especially to
study
anyways I'm just going to move on to
Yu's next question which is what is the
reason that in the west all bad things
that happen are attributed to Karma and
all good to God it's baffling to me that
people think karma is only responsible
for bad stuff well that's just kind of a
it's like a colloquial use of karma like
Instant Karma especially where you do
something bad and then something bad
happens to you you know it's like you
can see videos like on rumble or
something Instant Karma where somebody

pulls a gun on a guy and then the guy
just pulls out his own gun and shoots
him that kind of thing or some guy tries
to rob a tries to carjack somebody and
then the guy in the car just runs him
over that kind of thing Instant
Karma um so I guess it's mainly because
of that sort of thing although sometimes
you'll hear about Karma you know some
there's a good person something good
happened to them and some people will
say yeah that's his karma too it's just
that it's just more commonly used with
regard to the Instant Karma kind of
thing of somebody's doing something bad
and immediately gets you know gets
smashed because of it and in the west

now all good isn't attributed to God
definitely because there are so many
atheists that just aren't going to do
that plus really religious people will
tend if they're in a religious
contemplative kind of mood will accept
that you know whatever happens to you is
the will of God although that's more of
a Muslim thing now than a Christian one
I
think so yeah I mean I haven't really
noticed the same I mean there's a
certain Trend in that
direction but I really don't think that
in the west all bad things that happen
are attributed to Cara and all good

things are attributed to God you know
some people don't believe in karma or
God so I mean the majority of people
aren't going to be attributing bad
things to Karma uh and probably most
things I mean even Christians unless
they're feeling particularly spiritual
at that moment will just think that good
things that happen is just good luck or
you know your own doing or or
whatever natural natural phenomena
taking its course taking their
course so yeah I I don't entirely agree
with the
generalization that in here in the west
all bad things are attributed to Karma
and all good things are attributed to

God but uh it is more likely that karma

is considered a Bad Thing mainly just

because of like Instant Karma videos on

like YouTube and Rumble and bitshoot

and and

X so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from

nmit and nmit says almost all of my

friends are more successful than me make

more money than me this really bothers

me any idea on how I could deal with

this well I mean it's it's fairly

superficial point of view maybe it's a

traditional cultural point of view that

success is equated with the amount of

money you make which isn't true at all

especially from a spiritual point of
view I mean from like a a Biblical
Christian point of view it's the exact
opposite you know it's the poor who are
going to go to heaven and woe under the
rich for they already have their
consolation
so yeah I mean it's it's a superficial
point of view possibly like a a cultural
like an Asian point of view where you
know the doctor is more respectable than
the
carpenter but uh I mean nmit seems like
a relatively like
philosophical relatively spiritual
person who should be able to acknowledge
the plain

fact that I mean true success is not

measured in

dollars or whatever the unit of currency

is in your

country I mean that's just that is

really just superficial and you

shouldn't even play along with that kind

of thing

just if you're happier than them but I

mean if it bothers you that they more

make more money than you then I mean

that's one of the reasons why you're not

as happy as you could

be so I mean I'm not rich I drive a

forklift for a

living and uh I really don't care you

know it's like we I'm I can live fairly

comfortably I can support my woman

fairly comfortably you know we can eat

restaurant food sometimes we're not in

debt well I guess we still making

payments on the

Jeep but still the house is paid for I

technically although you don't really

own property in America because of

property taxes it's like you're still

renting you don't pay your property

taxes they just take the house away from

you so

anyways how you deal with I mean

you're you're better off well I don't

know from Many religious points of view

including early Buddhism you're better

off not being rich I mean in Buddhism I
mean the the most serious practitioners
of Buddhism are the monks and they're
forbidden even to touch money under
almost any
circumstances I mean you're penniless
literally I had zero money for 30
years so it's just a matter of
perspective I mean there's nothing
necessarily
wrong with having most of your friends
having more money than you maybe you
should just find poorer
friends golly but seriously I mean you
should if you look at it philosophically
you should realize that real success is

not measured in

money real success is measured in wisdom

or goodness or happiness not in money

and a lot of rich people are just messed

up people Mich Michael Jackson he was

sort of a role model for a long time he

was just one of the richest most well

most famous people in the world he was

rich could buy pretty much anything he

wanted to buy a chimpanzee buy a castle

whatever and he was a messed up

miserable person Howard Hughes one of

the richest people of his day he was a

messed up individual a lot of rich

people are messed up in fact I mean like

a

a relatively destitute Burmese villager

has less unhappiness in his life than

the average multi multi-millionaire or

billionaire in the

west just because they have fewer

desires second Noble

Truth all suffering is caused by desire

plus the other things that I mentioned

several minutes

ago

so I guess it seems to me nurman has

enough understanding

really to comprehend and agree with what

I've just explained so I don't really

see what the problem is other than just

habit so be mindful of it when

this unhappiness arises and then you'll

understand it better and stop
reinforcing it and I'm just going to
move on to the next question this is
from thermal squid and thermal squid
says why should we strive for
enlightenment if we can be properly
suspicious that terms such as
enlightened beings refers to nothing or
are otherwise
unquantifiable I have hit a wall here
and can't escape a kind of skepticism or
nihilism about the reality of something
like Enlightenment despite the fact that
I'm arbitrarily certain that other
elements of the Dharma are reliably true
for example that the world is a denser
mental State and that Consciousness is

undesirable Etc however I cannot make much sense of the advice that striving for enlightenment which is implied to be impossible or nebulous is both samsaric or hindering and also the object of our urgency well let's see here yeah enlightened beings I mean that's that's an oxy [__] in a sense because ultimately there is no being and it's part of the problem that thermal squid has it seems to me based just on this question just disregarding all the other stuff that he is written or composed texted printed whatever is I mean he's just stuck in his mind he is addicted to

intellect so I

mean you cannot know Reality by thinking

about it you cannot know reality

intellectually and Ultimate Reality is

just off the scale that doesn't mean

that it doesn't exist within the context

of

delusion which we are in I mean the

samsaric reality is just pseudo reality

this isn't ultimately real so it's like

if you can't bring Ultimate Reality into

this

delusion then what's the point why go

for this Ultimate Reality because we're

in this world of delusion we're stuck in

this world of delusion at present why

should we even try because you can't

prove that Enlightenment can exist
within the context of
delusion but you got to transcend the
delusion and the reality is always there
and there's no one that that's well I
mean there's some people I guess but
still I mean Buddhism is largely based
on the
idea that even though a person may not
become enlightened I mean they you have
to kind of say that just because it's so
mind warping to try to deal with reality
and delusion or like reality and pseudo
reality at the same time because you try
to mix them together and it doesn't work
you just wind up with confusion more

confounded or is it confusion worse
confounded but there is reality I mean
that would be hard to deny
and this isn't it that would be a little
harder to deny I suppose but still it's
definitely
deniable so I mean it's like if I can't
drag like highest truth into the context
of falsehood what's the point of trying
for the highest truth I mean that's that
seems to be what's going on
here so let's see here let's just read
this a little more more here I have hit
a wall here and can escape a kind of
skepticism or nihilism about the reality
of something like Enlightenment despite
the fact that I'm arbitrarily certain

well I mean yeah I mean just forget the theories forget like the the attempts at intellectual comprehension of what cannot be intellectually comprehended I mean what you don't I mean skepticism I mean that's that's actually good skepticism is a good thing in the classical sense of suspending judgment because when you suspend judgment adoria can arise or it's like essentially mysticism and some people just are not mystically oriented so I mean I do sympathize with people that do not have a mystical bone in their body because really that's the way you you know

reality is through mysticism not through
any kind of intellectual Endeavor unless
maybe you're going to be like a hardcore
maama philosopher who who uses just
brute force of intellect to demolish all
beliefs which then just leaves silence
and Clarity and emptiness behind through
which reality can
shine H okay so let's just skip down
here however I cannot make much sense of
the advice that striving for
enlightenment which is implied to be
impossible or nebulous within the
context of delusion yeah it is
impossible I mean within the context of
samsara Nirvana really may just have no
meaning because I mean delusion cannot

contain Ultimate

Reality and recognize it as

such so striving for enlightenment is

both samsaric or hindering and also the

object of our urgency well striving for

enlightenment it's it's in a way one of

the main reasons why striving for

enlightenment is effective is eventually

you realize that it doesn't work but you

have to fully realize that not just

intellectually I mean you have to really

deeply see the truth of it like the the

the smaller discourse of voidness where

the monk gets into deeper and deeper

meditative States until he gets into

what is arguably the highest possible

attainable meditative state and then he
realizes that's not Enlightenment either
it's like no matter how high you go
that's not it and so then he just it's
like something clicks or he just kind of
gives up and boom he's
there but I mean you can't shortcircuit
it you can't just give up right off the
bat because then really you haven't had
the necessary liberating
insight and I'm just going to check and
see if we're really recording yeah good
we've been recording for over an hour in
fact let's see Y and the battery's
charging and everything this is good
it's
good so I guess I have addressed thermal

Squid's first

question I hope at least to my own

satisfaction sort

of so I'm just going to move on to

Thermal squid second

question which is as follows if we can

only use folk terms for mental states

with language or abstraction never

capturing reality what is the criteria

for Liberation well I mean you have to

put that into words wouldn't you which

isn't going to work but he continues I'm

sure I've asked something like this

before it's not a question of right

perceptions or right view but there

seems to be no real grounding to the

reality of something like a liberated being the predic the predicaments of various interpretations and contentions surrounding meditative States seems inevitable and that by and large they are totally unresolvable because mental states are not qualifiable or able to be mapped having Insight that the intellect is established seems to not actually help us here we might say that an enlightened being is free of suffering but this seems to be ripe with potential for confusion a being may appear to not EXP ER suffering yet their internal world could be radically different Etc outside of the consensus of agreement on what certain words mean or their

relationship to reality truth would then

seem to be totally irrelevant or even

impossible yeah truth is kind of an

oxymoron because truth

implies

statements and statements that are

representative of reality and statements

do not represent reality

so in a way truth is an oxymoron you're

better off dealing with reality than

truth if that makes any

sense well let's uh I guess the question

mark is up here at the Top If we can

only use folk terms for mental states

with language or abstraction never

capturing reality what is the criteria

for

Liberation I mean it'd be awareness of

reality that's my interpretation it'd be

if you you are fully enlightened then

you're always aware of reality sort of

like from a using Christian terminology

a person who is the like the most

advanced Christian would be someone who

was constantly aware of the presence of

God and does the will of God you know

like the Divine puppet that St John of

the Cross talked

about who has mortified his own

self-will and just acts in accordance

with the will of God

and I mean it doesn't matter what the

Paradigm is if it's intellectual and

made out of words it's going to be

inadequate I mean you have to do the

work you have to

like uh attenuate your own delusion

sufficiently that you get more and more

of an awareness of reality shining

through

you that like the more foolish you are

the more opaque you are spiritually and

then the more advanced you get

spiritually the more transparent first

you got like the translucent phase like

like a shower curtain that kind of thing

the frosted glass of the bathroom window

and then you get more and more

transparent so that truth is just

shining through you

unhindered and I mean trying to

understand it in words just isn't going

to work I mean there's like makeshifts

that that are adequate for the time

being adequate for your

purposes but I mean you just go with

logic I suppose there I mean it would

seem to me

logically pretty solid that there is

reality there is some Ultimate

Reality this may not be it but but it's

there and also it does seem to me that

there is one conten thing in itself that

we have direct access to and that is the

content thing in itself of our own

Consciousness so through practicing

meditation if you're doing the right
kind of meditation you get access to the
content thing in itself of Consciousness
which is like direct insight into
reality not based on any kind of
philosophical
cogitations I mean that's that's just
running in circles it's just an exercise
in futility the only real
positive benefit of like intellectual
philosophizing as an attempt to
understand reality is one it's good as a
[__] detector you're able to
identify faulty reasoning and two it can
result in something like maamaa where
you can just tear apart any belief

leaving Clarity and silence

behind so did I answer the question what

is the criteria for Liberation awareness

of reality knowing knowing reality

almost said knowing the

truth knowing reality just firsthand

without having to think about it without

having to theorize about it without

having to put it into words of any

kind and some people delude themselves

into thinking that they're there when

they're not there yet but that is one of

the

hazards and nevertheless I mean knowing

Ultimate Reality is like the most noble

thing you can strive for it seems to

me I mean you can try to feed and clothe

and house the entire population of the
Earth and even if you succeeded still
you're just putting Band-Aids on onto a
problem and you're not really
penetrating through to just the
Transcendence of the entire illusory
problem
so I mean even if you can't be sure that
Enlightenment exists still I mean you
should be
open-minded not just you know nihilistic
towards the idea not just label it
[__] and move on to something
else that to know reality to know the
highest truth so to
speak is a good thing and you should be

striving for it even though there's
clearly no guarantee that you will be
successful
well striving for it is is Good Karma
anyway but that's you'd have to believe
Buddhist philosophy or some similar
philosophy to take that part
seriously and I'm just going to move on
to Thermal Squid's next question
here which is do we have the power to
say one way or another and uh I'm not
sure what he means by one way or another
so I'll have to read the the subsequent
commentary here if these two former
questions are answerable or result in
Paradox then it seems that openness or
interpretive

eclecticism are actually degenerative
I'm going to have to back up if these
two I gota really pay attention to
questions like this Liber Lam is like
this sometimes too if these two former
questions are unanswerable or result in
Paradox well I mean I have answered them
even though kind of a paradox if you're
trying to take two different levels of
truth and put them just on the same you
know just paint them on the same canvas
I mean that doesn't work so let's see if
these two former questions are
unanswerable or result in Paradox then
it seems that openness or interpretive
eclecticism are actually

degenerative because we can more or less
say or believe anything or be suspicious
about anything in regards to the spirit
or its function if we tell others or
motivate others to see for themselves or
conclud for themselves we have a series
of idiosyncrasies and something robust
of which we can commit to or have faith
in in that way I see dogma and Orthodoxy
as inescapable without losing the plot
entirely if we don't have the power to
say one way over another I don't see how
skeptical doubt could be overcome at all
this process of spiritual or immaterial
induction has no real
ending so I got to try and teach is the
actual meaning of this just kind of

coales it into language that I'm
comfortable with that that works for me
so I think one of the main points that
he's trying to make here is if you just
try to be eclectic and not follow some
established traditional system and
somebody like Renee gwon would insist
that you have to follow an established
tradition that coming up with your own
your own approach I mean it's just worse
than useless according to him although I
don't necessarily
agree that I do think that most people
are better off following an established
tradition that the established tradition
that has been tried and tested for

centuries is probably going to be a
better system than the average dude can
come up with on his
own but there's always going to be
outliers there's always going to be like
gifted or inspired people just intuitive
people people who just are not
conformists they're they are not
followers they've got to do it their own
way so if they've got to do it their own
way then that's just the way it's going
to be and I was kind of like that I mean
I followed Buddhist tradition
mainly through vinia or monastic
discipline that was the strict tradition
that I adhered to for decades at least
more than two decades not the full 30

years because I was kind of slacking off

towards the end after I came back to

America

especially

but still I mean to have that kind of

structure with regard to my practice

that was very useful for me but I just

could not

believe everything in Orthodox terab

Buddhism like Abid dama I I reject

pretty much the entire third pitica

of the three piticas the

titica

so let's

see did I did I already answer the

question let's

see if these two former questions are unanswerable which I'm I at least I think I kind of answer them or they result in Paradox and the Paradox is there only if you try to force fit more than one level of reality onto the same level which is what most people do including the ancient Abid dama Scholars but that's neither here nor there then it seems that openness or interpretive eclecticism are actually degenerative and for a lot of people they are but not for everybody like if you're just a like a Mystic by Nature then Dogma can get in the way see because we can more or less say or believe anything or be suspicious about anything in regards to the spirit

or its function if we tell others or motivate others to see for themselves or conclude for themselves we have a series of
idiosyncrasies not something robust of which we can commit to or have faith in well it depends on the individual that there's all different kinds of folks and some people they just are followers they are dogmatists and so of course somebody like that would which would include almost all medieval Catholics for example most modern Burmese terraa Buddhists very dogmatic just medieval in their thinking but I mean the more westernized and modernized you are the

less likely you are and especially

certain personality types to just

believe anything you're told you know

the Kalam masuta warns against this I

mean the entire Tica warns against

this

so yeah I mean for thermal squid this

seems to be more of a problem than it is

for

me and it's partly because thermal squid

is apparently addicted to intellect that

his approach to truth is through

intellectual comprehension or at least

he's got to have a firm grounding in

intellectual comprehension before he can

really move forward with confidence or

some such and I don't think it works

that

way that I think he is overvaluing

intellect even though a lot of people

they just that's all they know there's

there's intellect and then there's just

like you know emotional [__] so of

course intellect would be preferable but

that is still

insufficient that you've got to do some

meditation and get past the thinking

once you learn how to stop thinking when

you're wide awake not thinking anything

then you can get insights into just how

futile it is to try to understand

Reality by thinking about

it so it may be for some people this is

just this this is like a game changer
this is just a rule just what is it it
just breaks the the deal you know it's
it's a deal breaker you know it's like
well if I can't have like complete
confidence
intellectually in the validity of the
entire system then I'll just follow some
other system I'll just do something else
so I mean that's one of the hazards I
mean there's there's always going to be
a certain amount of filtering going on
and some of it's kind of tragic
filtering you know where just the
circumstances of your personality or
your physical health or your position in
life just prevents

you from really moving forward
spiritually and some of it is fixable
some of it may not be like if if you got
like some serious degenerative disease
or something it might I mean you might
just be stuck in this life that I mean
it's just not it's just not going to
happen in this life and Enlightenment
doesn't happen for the overwhelming
majority of
people but that's not to say that it's
it's not worth striving for because even
striving for it's going to wind up with
improvements in the
situation even if you don't get all the
way there you're going to be making

progress which is preferable to not
making
progress anyways I suppose I should just
move on to the next question which I
trust will be easier to understand and
this is from ruie and ruie says for you
what would be the percentage of wheat
and chaff in the cannon and also what's
your view of the fashion even sponsored
by some fully ordained mendicants of dag
groups segregated by race and sexual
orientation dhag groups for black and
brown people dhag groups for queers Etc
isn't developing a carapace against
hypers sensitivity a good chunk of the
practice well this is actually two
questions so I got to separate these

okay so I'll I'll deal with the first

question first

for you what would be the percentage of

Wheat and chaff in the cannon and it

depends on what your criteria for

deciding between wheat and chaff are

like i' I've said before it's like at at

one extreme you've got like verbatim

quotes of the historical goab

Buddha and then you know like one step

away from that is you've got like

paraphrases of what the historical gab

Buddha said you know not in exactly

those words

but you know it's a fair paraphrase of

what he said you know the gist of it is

there then another step F farther from
that is something that the Buddha really
didn't say but would probably agree with
you know he'd say yeah that's all right
yeah you can follow that and then you've
got like another step from that is like
ambivalent stuff that you know he
wouldn't even talk about you know or and
then at the Other Extreme would just be
stuff that the Buddha would just
vehemently denounce this is not dhama
don't follow this and there are some
teachings that would belong to that
extreme especially in Mahayana but
there's some of that in terraa too
Mahayana just took the ball and ran with
it so you got just this full spectrum in

Mahayana you got somewhat narrower

Spectrum in

Terra so with regard to what the Buddha

would agree with and consider to be

useful as wheat and all the rest chaff

you know like all the miracle Stories

the talking animals you know this kind

of stuff plus the stuff that the Buddha

would just say no that's that's not good

like like aspiring to be reborn as such

and such in a future

existence no the Buddha would not have

advised that and with regard to I mean

if even with regard to certain

philosophical

beliefs yeah like you know

well I won't go into details but there
are like some cookbook like descriptions
of how Karma works like if you do this
it's going to result in 100 lifetimes of
this result kind of a stuff that I
really don't think the Buddha would have
taught that I don't think the Buddha
would have been advising people to
worship him that kind of thing so
getting back to the the question what
would I consider to be the percentage of
Wheat and chaff and the
cannon let's let's go with uh
20% wheat 80%
chaff so I mean that would rule out jica
stories Abid dama all that kind of stuff
I mean that would rule out half right

there so I'm being fairly fairly

charitable and conservative in saying as

much as 20% would be stuff that the

Buddha would endorse even if he hadn't

taught it in those words that he you

know he would endorse this

message and and you it might be less

than 20% but it wouldn't be much more

than 20% I'm pretty

sure in this position has put me at odds

with like most monks like when I was a

monk you know I was still of the the

opinion that you know 20% maybe even as

little as

10% and I means some people are just say

if you don't believe in it why even a

monk why do you call yourself a Buddhist
if you don't believe in it but I mean it
was the AA waga is don't believe
anything and vinia just says you know
follow these rules and following the
rules I mean it doesn't matter whether
the Buddha really taught it or not
doesn't matter if it represents Ultimate
Reality or even empirical truth you know
it's just helpful to follow the rules
and aside from that I was free to be
skeptical in the classical
sense so yeah let's just go with 20%
wheat and I'm just going to move on to
ru's second question and also what's
your view on the fashion even sponsored
by some fully ordained mendicants of dag

groups segregated by race and sexual orientation dag groups for black and brown people dag groups for queers isn't developing a carapace against hyp sensitivity a good chunk of the practice well I wouldn't say carapace carpas is like a beetle shell you know it's like a hard shield and really you're it's better off like like the da Ching says the sage should be like water you know it's like water is more safe against a spear thrust than a carapace is the spear can just thrust right through that carapace and just break a big hole in it whereas you stab the spear into water the water just gives

way and then when the spear is pulled
back out again it just closes back up
and it's fine again so that would be the
better way is just it's not being like
insensitive or shielded is just being
able to accept anything that comes
along but with regard to like um let's
see where where is it segregating by
gender you know it's I mean that's
pretty standard actually I mean the
Buddha segregated the sa by gender
assuming that the Buddha really did
allow buunis to be ordained that's a
little bit controversial a little bit
debatable but let's taking it at face
value you know what the suas what the
sutas say then the Buddha segregated the

sa male and female just because when men
and women mix celibacy stops happening
you get you wind up with scandals that
kind of thing Temptations at the very
least so that kind of segregation I mean
that's got a longstanding precedent and
it's still kind of that way in like in
Burma where you'll have men on one side
of the dhal and women on the other side
of the D when the monk is giving a talk
that kind of thing or in in like
meditation Retreats that kind of thing
you'll have men and women segregated
like Pond dama in rangon when I went for
a retreat there it was the men had their
meditation Hall and the women had their

own meditation Hall and there was almost
no interaction which makes sense with
regard to race I mean what would be the
point I mean this
really the whole segregation by race and
sexual orientation is more of a
post-modern western thing based on
identity politics and really Buddhism it
discourages identity in
general the identity is
delusion so really a lot of these woke
that's the that's the word they use now
it used to be politically correct or
Progressive or whatever that these
Dharma groups in the West that have
special meditation groups for queers
special meditation groups for for people

of color mainly black people I guess since the Asians are like Southeast Asians you know they got their own groups I mean it's it's just sort of Western delusion infiltrating dhma and trying to take it over you know it's like cultural Marxism you know getting its tendrils into Dharma so that it can use Buddhism for its own purposes its own political
agenda so yeah I think that's a dumb practice and I am sorry to say that this morning or earlier today I did see a dhama video my my wife was playing a d I don't even want to say the monks involved but they're considered to be

relatively based but it it appeared that

they had just pretty much sold out and

they were endorsing you know special

queer meditation group and that sort of

thing or at least sort of accepting it

as part of their their monastic agenda

as you know teaching for Lay people and

so

forth so

anyways let's see what's my view on the

fashion even sponsored by some fully

ordained mendicants like the ones I I

was listening to today abdom group

segregated by race and sexual Orient

yeah it's I mean with regard to gender

just for

biological problematical reasons you're

better off segregating men and women um
maybe even to some degree by age because
you teach children differently than you
teach adults you know sort of like
Sunday school and in Christianity you
know the kids all go and you know color
in the Jesus coloring book while the
parents are listening to the the boring
sermon you know that kind of thing might
be
appropriate but uh a special
queer Dharma group that kind of thing
that's just strikes me as you know
cultural Marxism infiltrating
Dharma and I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from Romeo and

Romeo says can you speak in general
about the jota tales of the Buddha's
past lives okay well the jota tales it's
one of the the books of the kudik
Naya and it's probably relatively late
technically the only canonical part of
the jotas is the verses and then the
stories in Pros are considered to be a
kind of commentary although they're
generally printed together because you
can't really understand the verse
without knowing the story too and in
most cases the story came first and the
verse is itself the kind of commentary
that is kind of ironic but Jah is like
the birth stories it's stories of the
Buddhist previous lives sometimes as

animals sometimes as

humans

um let's see can I speak in general

about

them yeah and I mean the jota stories

most of them probably were pre-existent

I mean they existed already before

Buddhists came along and converted them

into the Buddhist past life stories I

mean I think many if not most jica

stories begin with you know like once

upon a time when Brahma was reigning in

bonares you know it's just it's sort of

like the standard Once Upon a Time in

Western stories his Brahma dat was

reigning in bonares you know he was some

legendary King in the distant past and probably these were like the ponchet Tantra or like asap's fables that had already existed in Indian folklore and then the Buddhists took them not the Buddha himself probably but Buddhists in general early Buddhists took these stories that were pre-existent most of them and then just added like a Buddhist beginning and ending you know so you've got like the the wise rabbit who sacrificed himself to the god Saka you know Saka king of Gods because Saka king of Gods came disguised as a as a mendicant the rabbit had decided he was going to offer food to a mendicant if you saw one that day and he didn't have

any food that that mendicants like

because mendicant don't like rabbit food

apparently and so he was just going to

offer himself you know this kind of

thing and it's like he had a friend

there was like a monkey and an utter

something like that who who did come up

with stuff they were going to offer you

know the the three friends the rabbit

the monkey and the otter all decided

they were going to offer food to a

mendicant

and you know etc etc and so at the end

of the story the Buddha says well I was

the rabbit and you know Sara was the

monkey and and Ananda was the the otter

or whatever I don't remember the
names and so it's you just take this
story like would be found in the ponchet
Tantra or like asap's fables and then
it's just at the end the Buddha just
identifies the main characters in the
story with himself and you know some of
his chief disciples or great
disciples and it just turns into a kind
of a Buddhist moral
story um and then it was to some degree
the jota stories that gave rise to the
whole bodhisatwa
concept that that was sort of like Proto
Mahayana was the the the composing of
these J jica Tales because it was making
the Buddha more and more glorified above

the average enlightened being until
finally the Buddha like striving to
become a Buddha was considered so much
more like praiseworthy and Noble and
glorious than just becoming an ordinary
enlightened being the Mahayana Buddhists
just started saying well becoming an
ordinary enlightened being is just
inferior and you shouldn't do
it
so yeah I do think it's like a later
addition that the Buddha himself wasn't
teaching these Jonica stories and uh I
don't think that they really added much
of value other than sometimes you can
learn cultural stuff from reading these

jica stories plus if you're just
interested in talking animal stories you
know just for entertainment value then
there's that
too but I was never particularly
interested in jica stories to tell you
the truth I mean I read a few as
practicing poly or just for various
reasons you know like two of the uh the
parita the protection chants that are
among the most common protection chants
in Burma are based on J jota Stories the
quail Joda and the peacock Joda and I
mean just the quail jota you got this
baby
quail who is living in the forest with
its parents and then there's a forest

fire and this baby quail who has human intelligence makes a solemn asservation of Truth a solemn proclamation of Truth truth cuz I know how to pronounce Proclamation correctly and I can't remember exactly what the proclamation of Truth was but it was the power of speaking that truth averted the forest fire and the forest fire just went around where the quail family lived and then the Buddha at the end says you know I was that quail and I mean Burmese people can accept this at face value yep the Buddha was a quail with human intelligence in a previous life life who had psychic

powers I had one monk who was had a degree in mathematics or wait he was he had a degree in physics and he was a mathematics teacher at a high school before he was a monk and I would be telling him about the jica stories and talking animals and so forth and he's finally starting to come to my point of view and he's saying but I mean when the Buddha was a parrot I mean parrots can talk so maybe the parrot ones were true but yeah I think the overwhelming majority of jica stories are fiction so that would be part of the chaff that I was mentioning earlier so I'm just going to move on to Romeo's second question which is are

there any of these tales that especially resonate with you or you feel contain the most wisdom an aspiring Buddhist can learn from and no I really the the jica stories are not your best source of wisdom in the poly

toptica that they're essentially talking animal stories fairy tales and I mean you can get like a moral story like a like you know there can be some kind of ethical message like in an asap's fables but still there's really not a whole lot of profundity in the jota stories so there's not a single jota that really stands out to me as something that I would consider to be

profound the baby quail jica huh

no so I'm just going to move on to

Romeo's third question can you recommend

a simple compact version of the jota

tales similar to asap's fables that I

can purchase well to tell you the truth

I would steer you more towards the dhap

commentary you're going to find much

more of value and much more of Interest

unless you're really into fairy tales

and talking animals but if you really

want to know what India was like in the

Buddhist time and get some like

well-known Buddhist stories that that

most educated Burmese Buddhists would

would be very familiar with that most

westerns have never heard

before then yeah go for the DAP
commentary there's like a classic one by
Berling game I think it's called
Buddhist Legends by Berling game that is
public domain you know it's an old book
you can download it for free off the
internet with regard to the jica Tales
um there is a book of jica tales that
have like Poly on one side and English
on the other that that's the book I was
using when I was studying ply just sort
of reading the the jica in poly and kind
of referring to the English sometimes
when I was just learning poly but aside
from that really I I I cannot really
wholeheartedly endorse jica

stories but I mean if you you can look

it up on the on Amazon something like

that I'm sure you can find um like a

bridged versions of the jica stories but

again I would much more highly recommend

the dapot

commentary so I'm just going to move on

to the next question and this is from

Puda

Brahman and I suspect that Puda Brahman

is the same person that used to be

called skolin or schuline and then

changed his name to apocalypse CH

because they're all into these bullet

point things so anyways pollut Brahman

says would it be fair to say memories

are rooted in

familiarity and inversely if a person is committed to avoiding pain and seeking pleasure then they're avoiding learning deluding Joy I think maybe he means like diluting Joy like in chemistry you're diluting a solution rather than deluding Joy I'm not sure that's just a guess but I mean this is sort of a double question would it be fair to say memories are rooted in familiarity um I guess so I mean sort of you know it's they're rooted in kind of chain of Association like Memories it's my theory on how memories work is it's it's largely like emotional or like a feeling you just a

certain word or a certain image will

trigger this feeling which then sort of

through I mean going with

neurophysiology through like synaptic

connections then connects you to this

other memory or this you know this

stored stored

info so I guess to some degree that

would be

familiarity I

guess and let's see here and inversely

so you get like the the crypto second

question If a person is committed to

avoiding pain and seeking pleasure then

they're avoiding learning and deluding

or diluting

Joy man well let see yeah I mean if

you're committed to avoiding pain and
seeking pleasure yeah I mean that's one
of the two
extremes I mean seeking pain and
avoiding pleasure would be the Other
Extreme so I mean you just live your
life naturally you try to do good but I
mean you're not like avoiding any kind
of unpleasantness at all costs you know
within
reason you just kind of take what
comes then that's your best way of
learning because your karma is going to
throw at you exactly what need to
experience and trying to avoid pain or
even discomfort or inconvenience and

seek out pleasure and convenience and
comfort then in a way you're kind of
stunting your growth because you're
avoiding a lot of the karma you know
you're just sort of like holding it at
Bay holding it back preventing it from
happening when it's going to have to
happen sooner or later and it may just
have to wait for something to break
before it can just flood in
so avoiding learning and deluding
joy yeah well with regard to the Joy
yeah it would be more of a delusional
kind of Joy it wouldn't be as wise and
spacious kind of joy as you know like
feeling Rapture and meditation that kind
of thing just being able to accept

whatever happens is a better kind of Joy
than trying to control control
everything so that you can prevent
anything uncomfortable from happening
then yeah that's a very
fragile like a kind of a an inferior
kind of Joy although that is what almost
everybody is going for because people
just naturally want to just seek out
pleasure and avoid pain which is just
it's just built into us it's like
instinct animal instinct
but by doing that I mean your your
happiness is a very fragile thing so a
certain amount of philosophy and
spiritual practice where you can be

happy with anything I mean as a monk
when you have no money you got no family
ties you got no home you don't know
where you're going to sleep that night
what you're going to eat that day you
know your your stomach is empty you're
dripping in
sweat and maybe you got diarrhea besides
and you're still
happy then I mean it's happened before I
mean it's happened to me plenty as a
monk where you know you're sleeping on a
concrete floor with a piece of wood for
a pillow just because that's the most
comfortable way of being I have to
admit because I mean it's just so hot
you want to be just on a cool concrete

floor just because that's the coolest

place there

is but still I mean you can be happy you

can be happy with an empty stomach you

can be happy sleeping on concrete just

if you accept the situation this is just

the way it is and it's fine I can accept

that I'm not very comfortable I can

accept that my stomach is

empty you know I can accept that I have

zero money then it's not a problem

doesn't matter what it is if you accept

it it's not a problem and it doesn't

matter what it is if you won't accept it

it's a

problem but I'm not sure if I even

answered the question and since he kind
of snuck in this second half of this
question is kind of a fourth question
I'm just moving on to the next question
and he's saying would you kindly this is
still uh what's his name again PUD niwa
Brahman who I think is probably scolin
who's just having a little
fun he says would you kindly give any
insights into the movie Under the Silver
Lake which came out in
2018 and then the bullet points are
nobody fully got it every frame is coded
in symbolism there's something there but
no one understands and I really can't
give many
insights into the movie Under the Silver

Lake cuz not only have I never seen

under the Silver

Lake I'm not sure if I've even heard of

it before I don't know what it's about I

have no clue as to what under the Silver

Lake is about although I have seen

movies that are damn hard to understand

like possibly the most difficult movie

to understand it's obviously symbolic

but I just I I saw it only once maybe if

I watched it like eight times and like

was studying it on the internet like

I've done with other movies I get it but

STI what is it sticy New

York I think that's what it's

called sticy New York which is kind of a

play on SKC but it's s

sticy and that's a weird movie and I

mean the guy's like he's sitting there

reading the paper and he's getting like

years older just while sitting there

reading the paper that kind of thing is

going on or malland

drive that is I I actually kind of

understand malland drive but I had to

like study up by reading theories

interpretive theories on the internet

just to try to figure out mhall and

drive but that's understandable and even

the Matrix most people can can watch The

Matrix and not get that it's a symbolic

movie the whole movie is a kind of

parable or like reading Lord of the

Flies by William Golding I mean college educated intelligent people can read the novel forget the movies the movies sucked I mean they just completely did away with the symbolism but you read the novel which is a which is like an apocalyptic Parable almost everything in the novel is symbolic of something else they just they just think it's a like a book about kids on an island they don't get it it's about human beings on planet Earth so anyways getting back to under the Silver Lake I have no clue I've never saw the movie I don't think I've ever heard of the

movie

so but I do like symbolism and it's it

has caused me to be

kind of intrigued kind of maybe I'll

watch under the Silver Lake although I

might have to talk my woman into

watching it with me she's got her own

tastes you know she watches like chick

chick flicks and stuff that I mean if

there's no explosions I mean what's the

point of watching a movie if there's no

explosions you

know anyways I'm just gonna move on to

puden yawa

Brahman third or fourth question

would you kindly explain the Bermuda

Triangle and

unfortunately um I watched a documentary about the Bermuda Triangle several years ago and there's something some peculiarity of the ocean floor there it's kind of shallow water there with sort of like a a chalk floor that causes the radar to like bounce off of it irregularly to cause like false signals and so forth I don't know if that would have anything to do with ships disappearing but it could be responsible for a certain planes to like crash into the water and just disappear under the water that kind of thing but um I'm approximately a skeptical of the idea that aliens are abducting

entire vehicles from that area as I am

the aliens built the

pyramids so I I would assume that some

of it is just

coincidence that there's like famous

cases of ships and airplanes

disappearing in that

area that there could be some

peculiarity that's causing you know it's

some sort of

strange um what's the word not

geography geological like some some

geological anomaly or something there

that messes with like instruments and so

forth that causes things to mess up

something like that I consider to be

more likely than anything paranormal or

of alien

origin so I'm just going to move on to

the next question and this is kind of

has sort of a long intro to

it before he gets to the actual

question and this is going to be less

than 3 hours trust me oh all you got to

do is look at the time and see how long

it's going to last I don't have that l

luxury I don't know exactly how long

it's going to be we're getting up close

to two hours because I'm digressing

wildly anyways Dharma River says I'm

extremely surprised you don't know who

Shanti DEA is he was a bit of a

rebellious and solitary monk who caught

a list of criticism by the other monks
because of his who caught a lot of
criticism by the other monks because of
his unorthodox methods the monks even
tried to set him up for failure at point
and it backfired on them big time sounds
like Donald Trump there his story is
also very similar to the Buddhas both
well that's not Donald Trump both were
born to great wealth and were supposed
to become Kings and renounced it in
order to pursue Liberation I strongly
recommend you read his book bodh satvara
vatara a guide to the bodh satva way of
life so it's he's obviously a Mahayana
figure I think you will like it he
teaches the do in a beautiful poetic

style I don't know if you enjoy damama
taught through poetry and now we get to
the question how about millera or long
Chena do you know any of them if yes
what do you think of them thank you well
I have no idea who long chimpa is
although his name sounds Tibetan but
milera there we go we finally hit upon
somebody that I have some familiar
familiarity with so um I read Evans
wentz's translation or at least the the
the Edition that he
edited of the songs of millera which
included um an autobiography of millera
which I found much more interesting than
milla's

verses and I mean poetry is fine like

most of the sutin is poetry you know

it's like the ataka waga is composed in

poetry and that's like my favorite

spiritual poetry would be the AA waga of

the

sutin so when he says I don't know if

you enjoyed dama taught through poetry

well I mean poetry was like a common

vehicle of dhama teachings in early

Buddhism like I said almost the entire

suttin is composed in poetry lots and

lots of poetry almost all of the

protection chance the the paritas are in

verse lots and lots of verses some of

the most profound texts in Terra in in

poly Literature Like The udana always

has a verse the sagata waga which is the first um the first section of the samut nikaya all all verses terata terata all verses so there's a lot of profound teachings in poly that is composed in poetry and for me that's my favorite kind of spiritual poetry would be I mean I think the babad Gita also is in in in verse the English translations are not so much inverse but I'm pretty sure the babad Gita is inverse um maybe the upanishads I'm not entirely sure because I mean when you read an English translation it's it doesn't have meter and rhyme to it anymore anyway or not even meter I don't I don't think ancient

Indian poetry did rhyme

milera though and like the poems of

Hanan I read I read those but milera his

bio his autobiography was fascinating

much more so than his verses I mean just

you know praising Buddha and dama and

all that it's fine but I mean his life

was I mean he was really into it you

know he starts off his his he's got like

the cruel Uncle who I mean he his father

dies and then his father's brother

essentially swindles his uh him his

mother and his and I think he had a

brother out of their their property and

so the mother being vindictive sends

young milera to some sorcerer to learn

black magic so he can get revenge on the

evil Uncle which he does you know he
destroys the evil uncle and his family
by Conjuring up some huge scorpion like
creature that just attacked the house
and caved it in while they were inside
of it something like that if I remember
correctly but then Mila he has got you
know the the seeds the roots of
wisdom and so you know he decided to
change his ways and he becomes a a good
Buddhist I don't know if I think he was
ordained I'm not entirely sure but at at
one point he's living out in a cave you
know in Tibet somewhere and he lives out
there by himself until his clothes just
rot off and he's mostly living on

Nettles and so he's eating Nettles every day living almost entirely on a diet of nettles until his body turns green and he's so there's this Naked Green Man probably very hairy living out in the woods and people just assumed it was a monster they were just scared shitless of Mila at one point that the pot where he would cook his Nettles he dropped it and broke it and there was like this scum of dried nettle residue inside the pot that remained intact and pot-shaped I remember that part from the from the autobiography but just reading about his life was much more interesting to me than reading the songs that he composed and that's the way it was with Hanan

also I derived much more memorable
useful knowledge and entertainment from
just reading the biography of Hanan some
of which was included in in his poetry
you know some of the Poetry would
include autobiographical information but
that was more interesting to me than
their take on Dharma or
Dharma so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from
hv20 Canon and hv20 Canon says what is
the nature of your opinion with respect
to the channel theory of Sam Sara and I
don't think I've ever seen any any
single
video on a channel called theory of

samsar I'm completely unfamiliar with it
sorry about that but at least it made it
an easy question to answer that didn't
take very long so I'm just going to move
on to next question and we're getting
towards the bottom here this is the
second to last question and this is from
Wayne and Wayne says what are your
thoughts on the wiui Maga
is it at a reliable read it seems to be
more organized and easier to read than
the poly Canan thoughts so my my
thoughts on the wisi Maga first of all
it's not really like a
synopsis of the suas that the sutas are
Buddhism the wiui Maga is Buddha gism
Buddha Goa is the composer like the

editor compiler

composer of the

the almost said the aaga the uh wiui

Maga and Wii manga is largely a manual

on what is considered to be samata

meditation although a lot of it seems

pretty hypnotic to me like the emphasis

on Cina discs where you're just staring

at this colored disc

until I mean you just meditate on that

and meditate on it and meditate on it

until you can see it as clearly with

your eyes closed as when your eyes are

open and then you start manipulating it

making it bigger and smaller and you

know messing around with this kind of

stuff and I mean that kind of thing
really wasn't interesting to me very
much I mean kind of as a way of becoming
literate with regard to what Terra
Buddhist Orthodoxy is about
but um a lot of it I mean is most of it
is not particularly useful like the
first chapter is good which is just the
value of morality the second chapter is
interesting because that is the overview
of the 13 dangas or optional aesthetic
practices so that was interesting like
the first two chapters that was only the
only required reading when I was a young
monk my teacher told me to read the
first two chapters on the value value of
of morality and the

dangas but there's also um just kind of anthropological stuff and cultural stuff you can learn like um there is uh like an overview of the 32 parts of the body and so you're learning like early medieval Sri Lankan beliefs about how the body works like for example they didn't know that the heart was a blood pump they didn't know that the blood was circulated by the heart they thought that blood was circulated through a kind of splashing effect produced by the liver that the heart was the Org the organ of thought that thought arose in um like one of the chambers of the heart in the midst of some some blood and your

personality type would determine what
color the blood was one personality type
you'd have sort of like a a pale pink
blood in this chamber of the heart
and almost the only really um like
empirical statement that was based just
on
observation was that if your spleen
protrudes from your body you die that's
included in the wisi Maga um like the
brain they had he was hard pressed to
find a use for the human brain the brain
is considered to be bone marrow
inhabiting a large Hollow bone and if
you get sick like you get a cold some of
it melts M and liquefies and comes out
your nose in the form of snot that kind

of thing is interesting some of the

stories about

early like Sri Lankan

monks you know some of them are are

supposed to be edifying but it's they're

pretty extreme stories you know it's

like there was one monk that the the

king of of Sri Lanka or Salon or

whatever or Lanka I guess it would just

be called Lanka back then that the king

would come to visit him and sometimes

his one of the queens or the only Queen

would come to visit him and no matter

who came to visit him the monk would

always say long live the king and then

finally they asked him why he always

says even if the queen comes to visit
him he says long live the king it's
because he does he never looks up you
know he doesn't know who he's talking to
as though he couldn't really tell by the
sound of their voice or some such there
was another story I think it was about a
monk who had these beautiful murals
painted all on the ceiling of his cave
and he never noticed him once because
he's always looking downwards you know
this is all supposed to be edifying you
know like role models that you should do
if you want to follow if you want to be
a good monk there's the story of the
monk who lived in the forest and thieves
Bandits tie them up with living Vines

you know they just there's some Vines growing they just grab them without uprooting them or anything tie him up take whatever stuff he had which probably wasn't very much leave and then when they're leaving they like kick over a lamp or something and start a forest fire and this monk is so strict in following vinea that he's not going to harm a living plant by getting himself untangled from these vines that he's tied up and so he voluntarily dies in the forest fire rather than break the vines and hurt the plant in order to become free and save himself and then of course he becomes enlightened at the

moment of death so you can get stories
like that but but it's not really a
synopsis of the sutas it's the sutas are
Buddhism and the commentarial tradition
is Buddha gism which is like a later
attempt to really systematize the
information in the sutas into a unified
like more or less
self-consistent Theory or system and it
doesn't always work
so the wui manga it's it's not canonical
you know it's it's like the the central
text in the commentarial tradition you
know it's like the Hub of the
commentarial tradition all the other
commentaries are like spokes coming out
from the Hub kind of a

thing I mean it may be of value for some people to read it and even some serious monks like Western monks especially just won't bother because they want to know what the Buddha taught and not what Buddha goat

Tau and so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is the very very last

question and this is from count nine and count nine says you mentioned in one of the previous Q&A last year the story of a monk who mainly spent effort to memorize the scriptures in a pointless way unless unsatisfied with his spiritual progress also blamed by his

companions he changed approach let's see
eventually evl do I guess it's
eventually he finds a teacher an
enlightened child monk as other
potential candidates hesitated to teach
him as he was a monk who was more senior
to them the junior triggered a
breakthrough by using the parable how to
catch a lizard the name of the Elder
sounds for me like Potala H
unfortunately my hearing is sometimes
bad could you please give me the exact
name and where I could find it in the
scriptures I will honestly try to use it
not for the purpose of memorizing it in
a pointless way and he's got a smiley
face I tried to find it by my own

including the use of AI unfortunately

without success as I always got lost in

the ocean of available Buddhist

information okay so this is the story of

potila p o t t h i l a

that name again p o t t h i l a and I

think the the t's have dots under them

but don't worry about that and it is

found in the DAP commentary it is the

commentary to verse

282 of the

dapot so you will find the story as a

commentary to verse

282 in the DAP commentary

and this is another case of I was asked

previously what the Buddha taught to

children and I was thinking in terms of
lay children and just completely spaced
off the fact that there were according
to the text according to tradition
enlightened children that were ordained
as novices that some children became
enlightened I think including the the
enlightened child novice in this story
as soon as the razor touched their head
to shave their head to become to become
ordained you know it's like before
you're ordained you have to get your
head shaved as soon as the razor touched
his scalp he became enlightened so he
was so ripe for enlightenment that I
mean he he was just waiting for the
Buddha and waiting to be ordained and

boom that was that was all it

took and yeah it is a good meditation

technique I used to call it third gear

you know it wasn't the highest

meditation technique that I practiced

occasionally but

it was it was a fairly Advanced

meditation technique where according to

the story potila you know he's

memorizing all the text he's very

learned and the Buddha keeps calling him

pointless potila Tua potila I think is

in the PO you know it's just like empty

empty potila you it's like here comes

pointless POA there goes pointless po

potila I should say

potila pointless potila and I do think
that I've I've got the whole story
translated in uh in one of my books I'm
pretty
sure anyways so I mean because he's so
learned and he's respected in on the
Saga he's a senior Monk and he's very
learned with regard to the text which is
an anachronism because in the Buddhist
time there were no texts yet there was
no Abid dama to master anything like
that so um finally he you know he asked
the Buddha why do you keep calling me
this and the Buddha says it's because
you're not meditating you're spending
all your time studying this intellectual
stuff so then poila takes the hint and

he goes off looking for someone to teach
him and for some reason he walks
hundreds of miles if I remember
correctly finally gets to this Monastery
and goes to the senior monk there and
says please teach me how to meditate and
because he's a senior Monk and he's well
respected and everything that you know
he doesn't want to teach him even though
everybody at this Monastery is
enlightened Everyone's an Aran this
Monastery and so he just keeps going
down the roster until finally his last
the last one that he hasn't asked yet is
this nine-year-old enlightened
novice and so the enlightened novice you

know tells him all right if you want me
to teach you first just Wade out into
that pond so without without hesitation
POA just starts wading out into the pond
and so then the kid calls him back you
know he had proven that he's willing to
do what he says even if it sounds
ridiculous so then he gives them the the
meditation instruction it's like and
it's all in the like a aimile it's like
let's say you've got a termite Mound
that's got six holes and there's a
lizard inside that termite Mound and you
want to catch that lizard so what you do
is you block off five of the holes and
then you watch very carefully that sixth
hole so that when the lizard comes out

you can grab it and it's a simile for
how to meditate by sort of blocking off
the the five sense doors of seeing
hearing touching smelling tasting and so
the only sense door left is the mind so
you know you're sitting there in
isolation with your eyes closed you know
you're not tasting or you know anything
like that and you're just watching the
Mind intently and when a thought arises
you catch
it and that's how you meditate in so you
catch the thought the thought just kind
of disappears because you can't think
and note the thought at the same time
it's like the same part of the brain

assuming this going with

neurophysiology that by noting a thought

the thought

stops so if you note it immediately the

thought will start to arise and then

just disappear and then you if you get

really good at it you're just sitting

there in

silence intently you're you're in the

state of

intentness and you know as if any

thought even begins to arise you just

catch it and it and it disappears again

but this all might be unnecessary

information because all he's got to do

all that count n has to do is just look

up the DAP commentary verse 282 like for

example I already mentioned Berling game

Berling games Buddhist Legends is is

public domain now and it's you can

download it for free off the internet I

am sure I think i' I've done that myself

in fact

so that's it we're done we done I didn't

even open the emergency backup beverage

for this

one so let's see we're little over two

hours that's not too

bad okay then and like I always should

say at the beginning and almost never do

if you have any questions you think that

I can answer especially about like early

Buddhism terab Buddhism in particular

Buddhism in general like Indian

philosophy even more more in general

Eastern philosophy even more more in

general philosophy just completely in

general that kind of thing meditation

monasticism Burma me personally Etc just

include them in the like put them in the

comments

below no more than three questions per

episode please and if you do like these

q&as some people do

takes all

kinds so if you like these q& a feel

free to smash the like button don't just

press it smash the son of a [__] and uh

subscribe if you haven't already and if

you please be happy

alrighty

then hello and welcome to question and

answer number

131 and I'm not fully prepared yet just

a second I gotta enlarge the size of my

questions

here get it up to like

42 so I can see it from a

distance okay now I think maybe I'm

ready are you

ready got my emergency backup beverage

with the little paper umbrella which

signifies my

class take a sip and we got lots of

questions and I'm kind of starting late

haven't even bothered to move my camera

over to that desk over there which is
where I usually do it so I got like the
bookcase and the alter and stuff in the
background not this time those of you
who watch my videos just to see the fish
gliding around silently in my aquarium
in the background you're out a luck CU
you're not going to be able to see it
because it's like over that way my
aquarium
is and we got lots of questions we got
like 60 Questions possibly the largest
number of questions ever on a Q&A and I
will conscientiously do my best within
reason of course to keep this thing less
than three and a half hours
long but who knows cuz I'm already

digressing I'm already talking about
stuff that isn't the
questions and before I start answering
questions I seem to vaguely recall
somebody somewhere asking me a question
about moth men and it just sort of
slipped through the cracks and
disappeared questions do this sometimes
if you ask a question and I don't answer
it there's a good chance that I just
didn't see it or just kind of skipped
over it somehow inadvertently it does
happen
sometimes so don't think that if you
asked a question I didn't answer it that
I was offended that because it was such

an inappropriate question or some such

no I mean if you're deliberately being

offensive or something I might not

answer a question like that but that

doesn't happen very often so if you

answered a question or if you asked a

question in good faith I don't answer it

just ask it again and chances are I'll

see it the second time um sometimes

people will ask questions like on under

old Q&A videos where I don't look for

questions that kind of thing it happens

sometimes so anyways anyone's C about

curious about Moth Man moth men plural

moth

people if we're not if we're not going

to be so

patriarchal um but I don't know anything
about Moth Man really just very very
little
so I think I'm just going to move on to
what is technically the first question
and this is from
Newman and Newman says how does
intention work in Terra Buddhism for
example can someone will of their own
intention to agree and adopt the
teachings of the Buddha or is there some
kind of Grace mechanism that causes the
intention to pursue Enlightenment to
arise in the
postulant and for some reason this this
reminds me of an essay written by

William

James about I mean you can't just

believe whatever you want to

believe it's just not a viable

option to just believe something because

you think you ought to believe

it I mean it doesn't work for me it

didn't work for William James there

could be some people out there who just

kind of they're somewhat invertebrate

in their approach to life and they can

just believe what they're told to

believe I mean like in a predominant

like Medieval Europe you just had to be

a Catholic and back then it was you

really didn't see any option it was like

Catholicism was just considered to be

true and so even if it didn't seem true
to you there was some other aspect of
your mind thinking well you know
everyone believes it so it's got to be
true it's just there's something wrong
with me and not seeing the truth of it
and so they'd Fall Away along but with
regard to terab Buddhism in a non-
terava Buddhist culture can you will of
your own intention to agree and adopt
the teachings of the Buddha I don't
maybe some people but it doesn't work
for me I mean you have to be persuaded
you have to think that it's true or at
least you have to consider it to be more
true than your other

options so yeah it's not really a Grace
mechanism it could be a Karma a karmic
preparation thing where you just have
the karmic
predisposition to accept
dhama but still I mean it has to strike
you as true and
worthwhile in order for you to accept it
and believe it I mean you can kind of go
along with emotions without being
completely persuaded I mean I'm not
completely persuaded of much of anything
really but still I mean it does have to
seem like a viable
option and so um I'm not sure exactly
how intention fits into this I mean
Newman asked how does intention work in

Terra Buddhism that's the question

that's the question mark comes after

that how does intention work in teral

Buddhism in which you might say that you

know intention is like Karma itself you

know volition is

karma D that kind of thing but then his

example that follows that is uh what I

just addressed and uh I think I

addressed it well enough for such a long

Q&A as this may turn out to be so I

think I should move on to Newman's

second question which is if someone with

wrong view for example belief in God or

God's essentialist metaphysics Etc

practices meditation as understood by

Buddhists in which initiation isn't
necessary is it effective in the sense
of CD developing or psychic powers
powers in general or propelling one
towards Enlightenment although they
don't currently hold the Right View
necessary for it at that time well when
you're meditating you're pretty much
suspending wrong view I mean if you're
if you're sitting in meditation like on
the breath for example and you're
philosophi and holding on to like
theological views or essentialist
philosophical views you're not really
meditating so while you're
meditating your wrong view just
evaporates if you're meditating properly

for the most part I mean you might think
that the breath is real when you're
breathing and that kind of thing which
is kind of technically still wrong view
but um it's it's a matter of degree I
guess and still people who have really
wrong views can make progress in dhama
Golden example St John of the Cross
believed in God Almighty believed Jesus
died for his sins believed Mary was a
virgin was was furthermore essentially
an
arant um and he may have become an Arun
himself despite these dogmatic views
because the more progress you make in
meditation the more detached you are

from Mere thinking and the mere thinking which contains these wrong views becomes less and less essential to your spiritual practice less and less essential to your understanding of reality so St John of the Cross started off as a devout Spanish Catholic in the 1500s and continued being a devout Spanish Catholic I mean he's he's a Catholic saint now he's the M mystical doctor of the Catholic church but his practice was extremely Advanced and his teachings became more and more similar to Buddhism but I mean he couldn't just deny the truth of Catholic teachings because the Inquisition was breathing down his neck and he had already almost

died in prison

as for a kind of religious

persecution not because of his views so

much in that case but because he was

part of a reform movement of the the

carite order of monks and nuns and so

the unreformed carmelites got revenge

and accused him of these trumped up

charges and he wound up in prison and

almost died he might have died if he

hadn't escaped

well that's neither here nor there the

point is that St John of the Cross was

much more advanced than most Buddhists

are despite the fact he believed in an

eternal and Immortal Soul God Almighty

Jesus as God's only begotten son who

died for our sins etc etc Mary virgin

enlightened virgin

Etc so yeah I'm I'm not one of those

fundamentalists terraa Buddhists who

think that you have to

believe Orthodox terraa Buddhist

philosophy or you're just lost you don't

have any chance and probably you're

going to wind up in a lower

realm I don't I don't subscribe to that

so you can have wrong views still become

enlightened because the the wiser you

get the more progress you make in your

meditation the more detached you are

from views you just don't identify with

views anymore even though they're still

there as a kind of cultural

artifact so I mean that's one reason why

I'm so open-minded with regard to

members of other religions for example

being fully enlightened because you just

eventually detach from the dogmas the

dogmas do not contain the essence of

dhma

anyway they're they're they're a raft

made of rubbish that you use to cross

the flood and then you let it go and you

get to the other side because it's not

something that should be really clung to

due to any

inherent like profound

truth it's skillful means as the

Mahayana Buddhists call it and so I'm
just going to move on next question this
is from Gnostic
rocker and Gnostic rocker says what is
your view on the following observation
by scholar of religious cultures and
nationalism Ernest G gner and so Ernest
oh wait he continues Gnostic rocker this
is Gnostic rocker still not Ernest
gilner yet in giler's na Nations and
nationalism he theorizes that in
shamanistic pre- aarian cultures men
profess to worship nature River and
Mountain Spirits but in reality they are
worship worshiping themselves he
theorizes that in agrarian cultures men
worshiped dreaded bowed down to and

feared God but in reality they were
fearing and worshiping the auster power
over life and death that the Kings held
period in nationalism gilner informs us
men worship race Bloodlines ancestors
and what they understand to be unique
genes but in reality they are fetishes
fetishes how do I say this
fetishizing
fetish turning into a fetish and
worshiping themselves from what I have
observed of life gilner seems to have a
point is there if there is some truth at
all in the above analysis regarding
subconscious or hidden obscured
motivations in men then what are terava

or Mahayana Buddhist subconsciously
worshiping or devoting themselves to
well first of all I don't think that
gner was entirely right I do think that
throughout history there have been
people worshiping God that were really
worshiping what they consider to be God
and not just themselves although I will
say that all religions are idolatrous to
some degree because what you're
worshiping is a creation of your own
mind it wasn't necessarily made by human
hands but it's made by human
ideas so in a way you know anything that
you worship is going to be a production
of your own mind I mean you can say
you're worshiping God you're worshiping

ultimate truth you're worshiping you
know the dharmakaya Nirvana supposedly
something that has that is eternal that
existed before you but your
understanding of it is a creation of
your own mind and that's really what
your
worshiping so I mean to some degree it's
not nearly as political or
like uh what's the word I want to say
socialistic but not with regard to
socialism as with regard to sociology
sociological you know it's not so
political or sociological as gilner is
saying where deep down maybe they have a
an inkling that they're really

worshiping

themselves um I really think that most

religious people are sincere that

they're not just sort of you know

worshiping themselves through the back

door so to speak but at the same time

like I said all religions are somewhat

Idol

in that you are attributing Holiness or

sacredness to something that is

artificial created by humans not So Much

by human hands as by the human

mind and that's pretty much unavoidable

unless you're just going to be a kind of

atheist you can have the choice of being

an

idolator or an atheist but you'd have to

be a humble atheist that isn't
worshiping
atheism as some kind of highest truth
so getting down to the question
though let's see see gner seems to have
a point if there is some truth at all in
the above analysis regarding
subconscious or hidden obscured
motivations in men then what are terado
or Mahayana Buddhist subconsciously
worshiping or devoting themselves to
their own understanding of
Dharma because Dharma itself I mean if
you don't conceptualize it you're
oblivious to it unless you get into a
really deep mystical state which most

people

don't so yeah in a way you'd be

subconsciously

revering your own best understanding of

dhma like this concept of Buddha and

dhamma that you kind of project out

there which is really in here and that's

the way it is with all religions and I

do not think it's nearly as political as

gilner is saying and so I'm just going

to move on to Gnostic rocker's third

question which is I have read lau and

jangu but little of the iching professor

Richard Wilhelm in his Princeton

University analysis of the iching posits

that the iching is a Chinese dialectical

resolution between two opposing visions

of being the Indian Buddhist view that
all existence is no more than illusion
and the Chinese philosophy of existence
which regards existence as real a thing
in itself a numon behind that illusion
of becoming thus the iching
resolves the contradiction of these two
opposites and like the above everything
we know moves in opposites have you
studied the iching and what did you make
of it in the light of the above I never
really studied the iching I I knew this
girl in college that had eing she didn't
have the yo stock she had to use coins
or something I did my my reading you
know you just kind of throw the coins

and then you look at the the pattern and
you look it up in the book and it gives
you like this little thing about the
king is going to be successful if this
or that you know something something I
don't recall the details so I haven't
really studied the iching or especially
like not the metaphysics like the
metaphysical underpinnings the the
philosophical suppositions of the iching
you know it's I'm just considered to be
a kind of fortune telling device that
the philosophy of it I don't
know I don't know really you know what
kind of metaphysical assumptions are
made in the iching whether it's largely
Buddhist or doist or confucianist or

anything like that sorry about that but

uh really the eing is not a kind of

Dharma that is studied as a Dharma

really by most people you think of

Chinese religion iching generally isn't

on the

list so this is like a fourth question

oh man oh no this is a third

question okay Gnostic rocker you're off

the hook because I guess you did just

ask three questions here third question

have you ever mentioned to your fellow

workers that you are Buddhist if so then

how did they react I never do tell

colleagues nowadays since when did so in

the past I Was Made fully aware of how

far away most western people and indeed
most East Asians also are from
understanding Eastern religions I wonder
what happened in your case if you told
colleague since you were a monastic for
so long in conditions most westerners
wouldn't understand yeah I mean I'm
working among blue collar workers in the
Bible Belt of the United States and the
place where I'm working at now it wasn't
until
yesterday that I mentioned that I was a
Buddhist to anybody I mean there a few
friends few people you know they're just
talkative I don't know if they're really
curious or just talkative you know
they'll be asking questions you know

where are you from and this kind of
thing and so you know I I'd have to
mention now I spent a lot of time in
Asia and it's like
why and I just kind of like deflect and
and just wouldn't say that I was a
Buddhist monk because I might as well
has say that for the past 30 years I was
with Elvis on a UFO with aliens or
something although yesterday this guy he
asked me what religion or nationality
are you and I I was like well do I get
to pick I mean is it one or the other
I'm a I'm a US citizen I'm American and
he said he was too and then he informed
me that he was Jewish which is kind of

surprising you don't expect to see you
know like a a light brown haired Jewish
person who doesn't look Jewish driving a
forklift in South Carolina you know
they're all supposed to be like doctors
and and lawyers and movie producers and
that kind of
thing so
anyways um then he he did pursue this
and asked me what religion I said well
I'm more terraa Buddhist than anything
else and then he's the reason he asked
is cu according to him my mannerisms
remind him of this really cool guy that
he knows who is a Mormon so I guess he
was sort of fishing to find out if I was
a Mormon too because I act like this

Mormon friend of his or remind him of
this Mormon friend of his and uh so that
that's as far as it went and I don't
know if he would ever pursue it because
again you tell a bluecollar worker
in the Bible Belt of the United States
South
Carolina about that you're a Buddhist or
we a Buddhist and you know it just
doesn't you know it's like tilt on the
old pinball machine it's like they don't
know how to process the information
although the very first place I worked
here in South Carolina everyone knew I
was a monk cu the manager was like we're
going to have a monk working here you

know before I even showed up a lot of
them were skeptical they just thought it
I was just making it up and that I was
really in prison for 30 years or
something anyways I'm just going to move
on to this question this is
from it's spelled QX
ztk so
K says I am curious about dependent
origination I get the links from sense
to clinging but from ignorance to six
sense bases it is hard for me to see the
causal Connection in each step
especially name and form to six sense
bases also from clinging to aging seems
confusing cling to becoming seems
especially odd to me and should we view

both as

undesirable presumably Buddhists and not

and not anti-natalist as far as I know

but I may be wrong so presumably

Buddhists are not

anti-natalist as far as I know but I may

be wrong some of this seems to fit into

the common criticism that Buddhism is

anti-life I am somewhat sympathetic to

that argument though many other aspects

of Buddhism keep calling out to me

making me unable to ignore it perhaps

you can clarify for

me well this is kind of more than one

question in a way it's a complex

question anyhow but with regard to

dependent

origination as I've pointed out time

time and time again

I do not consider the 12 links to be

original teachings of the Buddha that if

you look in the text you can find Proto

dependent core rising of like precursors

prototypes of the 12 link theory for

example the kalaha sua of the ataka waga

of the suata or the central portion of

the Saka pauta and the Dian Kaya contain

like Proto picha samatas like the the 12

nidana Theory and really I have to agree

with that the 12 nidanas don't make very

good

sense like for example between feeling

and and craving there ought to be like

perception or something in there but

there

isn't and also there's two two terms

that mean the same thing like let's see

a Sanara towards the beginning of the 12

nidanas and also bwa towards the end

both mean essentially comma so I mean it

could shortcircuit it you just skip over

the whole middle go from one comma to

the next because they mean the same

thing and just there you go you know you

just got rid of the whole central part

of it through a short circuit if you

will but uh let's see from ignorance to

six sense bases it is hard for me to see

the causal Connection in each step so so

AIO SAR which is I mean if you go with

Orthodox

interpretation

that it's like this is referring to the

Past P the previous existence previous

ignorance resulted in previous making of

Karma and then and then it results in

like Consciousness which is rebirth

linking Consciousness in this life life

and then you've got like um namarupa

which is mind and body according to

Orthodox interpretation the six sense

bases um yeah so it's like the first

three steps or the previous existence

according to the Orthodox interpretation

and then it results in this

existence and um name and form to the

six sense basis

well when you have a mind and a body you

know let's say you've got got the

fertilized egg would be the simplest

name and form presuming that this the

fertilized egg has some tiny little

speck of Consciousness to it and then

gradually it develops into the six sense

bases you know you got the six senses

including mind as

sixth so that's doesn't strike me as too

difficult to understand if you're

willing to accept the the Orthodox

interpretation of what I consider to be

an

and probably not an original teachings

of the Buddha also he says from clinging

to aging seems confusing cling to

becoming seems especially odd well I

mean partly you're dealing

with like

English like makeshift interpretations

like clinging the word in poly is oad

Don which literally means uptake and it

also could mean fuel like like firewood

in the Buddhist time in like

colloquial poly or the language similar

to poly that was spoken in the Ganges

Valley where the Buddha lived aaon could

mean just firewood but it means

uptake and so you got first you've got

like

craving thirst which causes you to take

up and cling to things and then the B
which is usually translated as becoming
or whatever that's Karma it's like the
force of existence it's like the
momentum of your mental states that
keeps you going through some Sara so
it's like the clinging to stuff it it's
like the fuel for your
karmic journey through Sam
SAR so that's not too difficult to
understand if you think about it in
terms of the original poly and don't
rely too heavily on makeshift English
rendering
of the
terms but again I really do not think

the Buddha originally taught dependent
core Rising as 12 links it was more like
you know this being that is this
becoming that becomes you know this this
not let's see I'm I'm forgetting the the
short version but it's essentially you
know this not being that is not you know
this being that is this not being that
is not
I mean that's like the condensed version
of the of the short version and it's
just sort of like
conditionality it's not this
sequence of things and some famous
Western monks like Nana Vera especially
I think interpreted the whole 12 links
to be authentic but simultaneous not

like a linear sequence you know he he
keeps pointing out it says this being
that is not this ceasing that
is but it's it's just kind of an
academic
argument you can study you know the
Orthodox interpretation of it which is
helpful but still logically it's not a
very elegant theory in my opinion it
could be fixed up more than it already
is and it's already apparently a fixed
up version of earlier attempts or or I
mean the earlier attempts aren't even
identified as ptia suop it was just like
you know what causes this and then the
Buddha answers and then they say well

what causes that and then the Buddha answers and then well what causes that and you wind up with this chain of this causes this causes this causes this and that somehow uh evolved into an interpretation of dependent cor Rising because as the Buddha correctly predicted right after his Enlightenment almost nobody understands dependent Coral rising and so it just like crystallized into this 12 links and then monks just memorize that and think that they understand it when really they still don't and even the longest sua on dependent core Rising the nidana Su of the D Kaya even that doesn't have the Standard 12 links it's even that is it

was like an early prototype but then it

got worked on even since the composition

of that sua so that you've got like the

Streamline 12 links and probably in my

opinion perception should have been

thrown in there but 13 links is less

auspicious than 12 I

guess

so I guess the next

question

see G separate these I don't like having

them clumped together so it's

like next question is presumably

Buddhists are not anti-natalist as far

as I know but I may be wrong some of it

seems to fit into the common criticism

that Buddhism is

anti-life I am somewhat

sympathetic um okay P perhaps you can

clarify for me well I mean the first

Noble truth is if you exist you're going

to suffer and the best thing you can do

is try to stop suffering so it is kind

of anti-natalist to that extent and the

early like the vdic brahans the

followers of vidic brahmanism in the

Buddhist time accused the Buddhist of

being destroyers of life because or at

least partly because the brahans had

this idea that first you should be a

householder and have kids before you

renounce the world whereas the Buddhists

are saying renounce the world as soon as

you can preferably before you have kids
so um vidc brahmanism was more conducive
to the sustaining of Indian Society
whereas in Buddhism it's sort of like
mod modern Western Christianity where
most people just aren't very good
Christians I mean there actually is an
epistle in the New Testament saying that
if you are single when you become a
Christian you should stay single and if
you're married when you become a
Christian you should stay married
because Jesus is coming any time now and
I mean how many Christians follow that
there's so much in the New Testament
that in order for it to become like a

secular Mass religion it just stuff
needs to be
ignored so it's it's kind of that way in
terata Buddhism where at least there's
it's sort of stratified so if you want
to really be serious about following the
system correctly you renounce the world
you go off into the forest and meditate
whereas the lay people who considered
themselves to be Buddhist they realized
that they're not practicing Buddhism
entirely correctly in a way Terra of
Buddhism was set up as a kind of
spectator sport where the monks and nuns
are like the pro athletes and the lay
people are just like fans supporting
their favorite

team and in the west people resent that

and to some degree a lot of Western

Buddhists so-called resent renunciation

and like people who do renounce the

world because it somehow makes their own

lukewarmness and mediocre practice seem

not good enough somehow

so in a way Buddhism kind of is

anti-natalist you know it does teach

kind of what Ecclesiastes teaches in the

Bible that you're better off just not

being

born and if you are born which most of

us are then I mean the thing to do is

just get off the wheel just stop just

cut it out knock it off for crying out

loud so it's kind of anti-life the whole

purpose is to transcend

this dim glimmery fever dream of

samsaric

existence into something

better better than mere samsaric

existence which is also called Life by

by some people but it's not ultimately

real you know you're transcending an

illusion it's not like you're just like

pissing on life on Earth it's just there

is a higher reality than this fever

dream generated by life on Earth so to

speak and I should just move on next

question really we got lots of questions

I shouldn't dwell too long on any

question in particular unless I just

happen to feel like it cuz after all

this is my

show next question is from Romeo and

Romeo says were you a fan of The Beatles

well the Beatles were before my time

they broke up in

1972 I was I was a kid wasn't really

sophisticated in my musical tastes I'd

be listening to kgh in Aberdine which

just played top 40 stuff if I hear the

radio at all I didn't own my own radio

probably yet at that

time

but I would say the top three rock and

roll bands I mean Leed Zeppelin and the

Beatles would be the top two and I'm not

even sure who who number three would be
so I do think The Beatles are one of the
two greatest rock bands of all
time so I don't know if that makes me a
fan or not I'm just sort of
acknowledging my just based on my
own
analysis of you know the qualities of
rock and roll bands then I would
consider the Beatles to be in the top
two along with Leed
Zeppelin so Romeo's second question and
he does kind of have four questions here
although they're kind of all along the
same lines if so can you speak about
what you liked about them well they were
they were groundbreaking Pioneers they

were very Innovative they just
transformed rock and roll and pop music
you know just on their own practically
especially after they started taking
acid and grew their hair
long and also they were just good
musicians I mean you listen to a classic
Beetle song like say Strawberry Fields
Forever I mean it's really sophisticated
music it's not just some Garage Band
just banging grinding and pounding out
some song and but there some Garage Band
types were really good ACDC they were
simplistic you know the stuff they
played could be played by some Junior
High School band without much difficulty

but still The Beatles were they had a
certain sophistication in a in ability
in in addition to like inspired
Innovation so that's that's what I liked
about him my guess like within Me
Without You is that is that how it goes
Within Me Without You with sitar you
know that was I think that was one of uh
H I can't remember his name the bass
player George Harrison you know he he
was allowed like two songs per album
George Harrison got to write two songs
per Beatles album with John and Paul you
know doing the rest kind of
collaborating on the
rest and so George Harrison did most of
like the Hindu inspired spiritual kind

of songs like within Me Without You with the sitar music um but I think I'm kind of rambling at this point so do you have a favorite Beetle favorite albums or favorite songs um it's kind of interesting before I became a monk when I was still like a quite robed like a postulant you know a monastery attendant at the monastery where I was ordained just one day washing dishes in the in the kitchen building I was trying to come up with a beetle song to represent each person at the monastery like there was this abrasive Jewish guy who a lot of people didn't liked him I liked him though and he was Happiness is a Warm

Gun um my theme song was nowhere man

it's not exact one of my favorite songs

though it just seemed to fit me at the

time but again Within Me Without You is

one of my favorite Beatle songs also my

favorite Beach Boy song of all time is

back in USSR by The

Beatles so favorite albums I don't know

if I have a favorite album I mean

Sergeant Pepper is classic I mean that

was one of those Innovative just

completely groundbreaking kind of albums

sort of their like Rubber Soul and

revolver before that

were good The White Album was getting

kind of Bleak at

times but yeah I mean I wasn't I'm not

really into Beatles music before they grew their hairong and started taking hard drugs you know when they became hippies that's really when they blossomed in my opinion they were already really famous before that but there you are so if not what didn't I like about them the the main thing I didn't like about the Beatles is Paul McCartney who was not really a rock and roller he was more of a pop musician and so in my opinion most of the real dud songs on their albums like she's leaving home on Sergeant Pepper just an insufferably bad song in my opinion they're almost all written by Paul

McCartney so I do think that Paul

McCartney was uh little too much of a

pop musician not enough of a rock and

roller to really have the Beatles be

like

Led Zeppelin where just everybody in the

band was like topnotch in what they did

up until John Paul Jones started

preferring keyboards to

bass that was the beginning of the end

that was driving D John botom to drink

really hard

probably so I'm just going to move on

next question this is from ruie and ruie

says hello poo did you do you know when

the term Yogi first appeared in a

teravan context well Yogi definitely is

a poly word in addition to a Sanskrit

one it's used a lot in terraa in in

Burma Yogi means like a meditator

especially a female meditator like a lay

meditator is called the yogi in fact

Yogi Yan or Yogi color is kind of a dark

brown and that's the the women the the

Burmese Buddhist women who just sort of

dedicate their lives to medit meditation

and keeping precepts and all that

they'll often wear this dark brown color

which is Yogi

color but it is true

that in uh the oldest suas the word Yogi

isn't used excuse me um yoga is found in

Old text you know it means like the Yoke

like yoga K is a a term that's found in
very early Buddhist text which just
means like rest from the Yoke you know
it's like release from bondage kind of a
thing but yoga as like a spiritual
practice came later I mean as a as a
word meaning that in poly in the
text I have read that one of the oldest
mentions of the word Yogi is in the
terata so that's canonical it's
relatively old but it really takes off
it's used a lot like in the wisi Maga
the commentarial literature that kind of
thing it's it's well established as a
term by then but it's not found in the
the oldest sutas like the strata the
strata of the sutas um but like I say it

has it is in the

terata and it means um Yogi it means

just like a spiritual practitioner

especially a dedicated relatively

Advanced

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

next question this is from

avenity and avenity says I have some

basic knowledge of Buddhism but it's

kind of all over the place could you

make a Buddhism for dummy's video or

something so that I could get a grasp on

how all the aspects of the Buddhism

philosophy fall into place that would be

neat and yeah in fact I could have done

it this weekend but I wound up doing a

video right before this one with Auto
excelsor and a guy named Satori D about
like artificial
sentience like programming real
Consciousness into a computer and uh I
don't know if I'm going to upload it
onto my own channel probably not but you
can probably find it on the Autos navaka
Vada uh channel on bitshoot I think he's
started a a navak cavada channel on
YouTube also he's he's going more
mainstream now that the mainstream is
somewhat less censorious and
insane but um
yeah Buddhism for dummies video or like
intro to Elementary Buddhism 101 yeah I
I might do that next weekend um if I'm

not completely distracted by having to

do other things but it is a good idea

and I think I'll do

that so I'm not making any absolute

promises but inshah I will do it and

relatively you know maybe even next

weekend

so I'm just going to move on the next

question which is from covac and cod

zida and his first question which is

more of a

command let's call it a request is

explain this map and he's got a map of

Burma and Burma is divided up into this

Patchwork and each patch on the map is

like who is in charge of that area of

Burma the Hun you know the official Burmese government is less than half of the map of Burma and then you've got these other groups like The People's Defense Force the kachin independence Army the aracan Army etc etc it's just a veritable Patchwork and Burma has pretty much always been this way since Independence the the names have changed like for a while um after Burma got independence that there was the Quan Tang I think they're called they were the followers of Chang Kai Sheek in like after they got driven out of China after China became Communists under Mao there was a large number of these Chinese soldiers just set up their own little

country in Northern Burma for

years and so Burma has always been this

way I mean ever since Independence

they've been at war with the Kens anyone

who watched that fourth Rambo movie

would

know so yeah um that's that's

essentially what it's about is that

Burma has always been ineptly run the

burmes just cannot organize very well at

all that in my opinion one of the worst

calamities ever to befall the country of

Burma was independence from the British

Empire although the Burmese just don't

see it that way for some peculiar

reason explicable only to themselves

perhaps so that's that's what the map is

it's just the various areas of Burma

that are under the nominal control of

various I mean the government plus

various Insurgent groups and Burma has

pretty much always been this way since

they got independence from the British

Empire and I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is also from

seacan CAD Zuna and he says I saw a

brutal comment on YouTube What Would you

advise this person and so what follows

is this

person and their

comment and this person

says the older I get the angrier I feel

about some of the stuff my parents

taught me growing up I was always the
straight A student never got in trouble
didn't drink or smoke and only started
dating when I turned 18 because of all
the negative messages and threats of
punishment they said they'd dish out if
I ever did now I'm in my 30s and my mom
keeps telling me about all the stuff she
and my dad got up to when they were
younger and they would have killed me
for doing they laugh about it but I push
so much of myself down to make them
happy and it turns out they were already
doing those things themselves I don't
know where to go from here but life
feels really Hollow and I don't trust

them anymore well for starters he just
seems like a whiner to me that may sound
brutal in and of itself but it's like
different people react to the same
circumstance I mean that's just kind of
standard you know everybody parents are
always like trying to teach their kids
don't do the [__] I did when I was young
you know they might not put it in those
words but it's like they've learned from
their mistakes they're trying to pass
off this wisdom secondhand to the kids
so the kids don't have to make the same
mistakes and some kids just resent that
I mean there are so many people who
they're like traumatized throughout life
because their parents got divorced when

they were like nine or 10 let's say or
they they find out that they were
adopted and then they're like oh I was
this accident you know I was a
mistake and it's like other people they
find out that they're adopted their
parents get divorced like my parents got
divorced when I was like eight or nine
years old and it's just that's just the
way life is you know you just accept the
way things are and so I mean suffering
is always
self-inflicted so this person isn't
unhappy because their his parents
assuming it's he his parents you know
made him or like they they strongly

urged him sometimes with threats of
punishment to be a good student and not
get in trouble and do the right thing
you know it's like I forgot how the the
sentence started but I mean it's
like what's wrong with that really
you know it's it's it's self-inflicted
suffering oh yeah now I remember he's
not suffering because his parents did
this he's suffering because he just
won't accept the situation and that's
just the way suffering is it's not the
situation that makes you suffer it is
your own choice to reject the situation
to refuse to accept it it doesn't matter
what it is if you accept it it's not a
problem and it doesn't matter what it is

if you refuse to accept it it's a
problem I mean it could be somebody
loving you and you think well that's I
don't want to be loved by this person
and so you suffer because you're like
pushing against the way things are not
that you have to live with that person
just because they love you but still I
mean you don't have to be
against you don't have to
just I mean this is I mean Buddhism one
101 that even most Buddhists don't
really fully
comprehend is really the second Noble
Truth all suffering is caused by desire
and generally desire for things to be

different things to be different than
they are if you if you desire something
to be different than it is you
suffer and it's your own choice
ultimately you have the choice but most
people are so driven by just knee-jerk
reflex just habit
that they don't even acknowledge that
they have a choice maybe they're living
in a culture like Western consumeristic
culture where it's just
assumed that if you're going to be
inconvenienced or uncomfortable then
you're going to suffer it's just people
just believe that and it's false you
always have a choice unless you're just
so semiconscious that you fail to see

that you have a choice

it may be that your karma is such and

Karma is like habit energy it's just

going to drive you in the direction of

being unhappy just through habit because

it's your Habit to be unhappy about

certain things but still if you're

mindful at least you can observe the

unhappiness with Detachment which then

robs it of its motive force it robs it

of its momentum and then it can just run

its course you can observe it

dispassionately if possible and you're

not making new Karma that is just

reinforcing The

Habit so it does take some

work but I

mean I I knew this woman I mean she was

relatively well versed in in buddhis she

she taught she taught English to the

Tibetan Monks at daram Salah in India

for a while and she was telling me once

that she had a very indulgent

father she had very indulgent parents

who just made life easy for her and

she's been processing that she's been

trying to overcome this you know for X

number of years it's

like

what I mean my parents got divorced when

I was nine I mean I didn't like it much

but then you know there's certain perks

to it I mean you get two different sets

of Christmas presents two different sets
of birthday presents every year I mean
there was certain certain advantages to
it so it's it's mainly a matter of
attitude whether having parents making
you behave yourself even though they
didn't behave themselves very well when
they were your age I mean you can resent
that if you choose or you can accept
that if you
choose and if you accept it it's not a
problem so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from xenoid
and xenoid said if the Buddha has
completely rid desires why does he still
do anything rather than lean back

against the bod tree and wait to pass
into Parana this makes this makes me go
along with the interpretation that when
he achieves Enlightenment he completely
disappears from samsara and that
everything anyone else sees of him after
that is the fruition of their karma
Alone um yeah I mean trying to second
guess the subjective mental states of a
sasam Buddha is already a Fool's errand
I would say say but still I I think
there is a lot of sense in the idea that
once a person is fully enlightened
there's really nobody there and that
what they do and say is a reflection of
the kic
fruition of the people around them more

than of

themselves or you could just say that an

enlightened being kind of like St John

of the cross's conception of a Catholic

enlightened being that according to St

John of the Cross once a person has

reached the stage of perfection which I

mean shouldn't really exist in

Christianity because nobody's worthy you

know it's only the grace of God that

gets you into heaven and all that but

according to St John of the Cross there

is this stage of perfection where the

renunciant mortifies their own self-will

until they just don't have any self-will

anymore and they are totally motivated

by the will of God they become like a
Divine puppet in Buddhism you you can't
really have that because there is no
yahwe up there who is like the Creator
God like the the capital G God so in
Buddhism you might just say that an
enlightened being just automatically
does the right thing you know it's just
he just does the perfect thing and if
the perfect thing just happens to be you
know postponing death in order to teach
people
dhama then that's fine I mean according
to the text the Buddha did have
compassion a
new and also he taught his own disciples
that they should go out and teach dhama

for the benefit of the people for the

benefit of of this

generation he was the teacher of Gods

and Men or Lords and Men I should

say Lords and Common Man is a

alternative translation to

that so let's see here but yeah again I

mean the Buddha's mind is going to be

off the scale it's not really going to

be

analyzable through some saric

means and so you're better off just not

even trying to go

there and so I'm just going to move on

to Xenith void's next question which is

along the same lines here is the Buddha

always happy or does he feel nothing at all I think this is the main hang up for people when you introduce them to Buddhism because they assume happiness and suffering necessarily need to both exist for there to be any happiness while listening to biku's translations of some pudas I heard it mentioned that a monk should have no likes or dislikes not liking anything seems to imply never being happy however monks of various religious Traditions are happier than everyone else this seems like something you just have to experience for yourself to understand well in Buddhism you do have the duality of like Suka and Dua you know happiness and unhappiness that

they're like a a dualistic pair that

just kind of come together you know this

you get one you get the other also it's

two sides of the same coin but there's

like a deeper kind of Happiness which is

just contentment of just transcending

the whole

Duality and the Buddhist mind also is

going to transcend the whole

Duality so even if he does appear to

have mental state he justes appear to

have like emotions feelings even

preferences like the Buddha seem to

prefer quiet to noise for

example

then it's it's just sort of like this

it's just sort of like empty it no
longer has any karmic motive force
subjectively
and um what else was I going to say
I mean it's just he has it's there but
it has been transcended and so it's it's
kind of there I mean it was never really
there to begin with it's all just
this like conditional quasi reality
anyway and I I'm just gonna have to move
on because we got lots of questions it's
like 60 Questions this time which is
possibly the most questions ever on a
Q&A and so I just got to keep driving
through this
so zeni void's third question people
often question Christians and Muslims if

God can defy the laws of logic and do things that we think are impossible such as simultaneously existing and not existing can the Buddha do things which are impossible I found this video reading Julius iola's analysis of Isa which implies that he can although I've also heard versions of this story where the Buddha simply moves up to a higher Brahma World rather than completely disappearing however completely disappearing then later reappearing is obviously the more profound of the two if he really completely existed samsara before his bet with Baka Brahma shouldn't he also be able to return to

samsara after death as many mahayan
believe sorry for the transgressive
fourth question I will save it for the
next q yeah this I don't know if that
was a transgressive fourth question at
least I've just got three clumps of of
words three paragraphs here
maybe there's he slipped in a a question
mark that yeah I guess he does have two
question marks in this long complicated
question so can the Buddha do something
impossible no nobody can do anything
that's impossible because the word
impossible means nobody can do
it so I mean Christian God can't do
anything impossible because the very
fact that he's doing it proves that it's

possible so yeah I mean the Buddha can
do things that are paradoxical like kind
of existing and not existing at the same
time sort of you know I mean he's sort
of here but he's also like transcended
and is off the scale at the same time in
Nirvana and ssara simultaneously I mean
it's kind of paradoxical but it's
obviously not impossible if that is he
managed to do it because the very fact
that he managed to do something proves
that it's not
impossible where I mean this whole thing
about going up to Baka brahma's realm I
mean Baka Brahma is still in samsara
he's just in a heaven realm and the fact

that that he's called Baka Brahma is

proves or

indicates that it's a kind of religious

propaganda making fun of baka Brahma

because Baka literally means something

like a crane you know kind of bird and

brahma's usual bird that he's associated

with

is the Ruddy shelu which looks like a

wild

goose

hamsa in in pan Sanskrit it's hamsa like

paramahamsa Yogananda paramahamsa means

ultimate Goose or more correctly

ultimate Ruddy shell duck why a shell

duck if there any ornithologists who

watch this I would like to know why a

shell duck is called a duck and not a goose because they're big like a goose got a long neck like a goose Hong like a goose why is it a duck maybe it's just sort of like a kind of parallel Evolution where this family of ducks just grew into into geese separate from the main line of geese or something but that's neither here nor there Baka Brahma I mean he's identified with like a crane which sort of like an asap's fables is sort of indicative in in like Indian folklore as being a foolish kind of bird

so the Buddha goes up to Baka Brahma and it Baka Brahma makes a fool of himself

in the in the suta and it's still in

samor so there's really no Paradox or

impossibility involved at all the Buddha

just goes up into a heaven realm comes

back down again no

problem so but if he completely exited

samsara during his bet with Baka Brahma

well I don't know I mean if he made a

bet with Baka Brahma it's been a long

time since I read the sua so maybe

xenoid is this xenoid I think it's

xenoid yeah

xenoid is maybe he remembers a detail of

the Su where the Buddha leaves Sam Sara

but he would just be going into nibana

temporarily but he would still have his

body and everything so he would just

sort of maybe his Consciousness would

vacate the body and then reenter it but

the whole sua is probably fiction

because it's pretty clearly religious

propaganda making fun of vaded

conceptions of Brahma as some supreme

god whereas the Buddha goes up there and

makes a fool of this same supposedly

supreme

god

so yeah not only many mahayan believe

that the Buddha can come back after

death but a lot of the Thai Forest

tradition aan man especially believe

that Buddhas like from pre

eons can somehow just

reincorporate just generate a new body

and just come and talk to aan

man and it just doesn't work that way in

Orthodox terava but the Thai Forest

tradition Thai monks in general they

they never fully recovered from having

their ecclesiastical hierarchy destroyed

by the Burmese during some unprovoked

invasion hundreds of years

ago

so

yeah shouldn't he also be able to return

to Samar after death I mean return I

mean from

where I mean Nirvana is not a

place you know it's just this

unconditioned

reality that I mean suddenly it becomes
conditioned he I mean mean you could
have somebody's Karma generate some
semblance of a Buddha coming and talking
to you you know you believe firmly
enough or your karma is just right for
some being to manifest and communicate
with you that's fine but it's not really
the Buddha it's it's just this
manifestation provoked by your own Karma
your own mental States or
whatever and I just got to keep going
here I just got a Wade through this this
next question is from Stellar Supreme
formerly known as Libra lamb and
occasionally still known as Libra lamb

and he says anything Lial on your mind
today well I mean this whole talk about
transcending samsara that that has
occurred a few times so far in this Q&A
that's that's kind of
Lial um lately not necessarily today but
I have been thinking about an a question
that I answered in the previous Q&A
about dark wisdom about kind of the
wisdom of
militarism and in a way that's kind of
Lial too I've I've been tempted to to do
a like a little video on that also
although it's it's like bottled
lightning I was inspired to talk more
about it and now it's the the lightning
is kind of fizzled out I think so I'm

not nearly as uh motivated to talk about

it

this now as I was a few days ago and I

did the did the video with auto I'm not

going to be doing three videos in one on

one weekend unless some of them are

really short ones you know like teensy

teensy

ones so yeah not especially other than

just kind of some of these questions

almost any Q&A I got to go Lial in

trying to explain two different levels

of reality

simultaneously he's talking about

Enlightenment is Lial unless you got

like this burmese dog IC

mechanistic cookbook understanding of things where you can just lock the most exalted ideas into this framework of words and memorize the words and think you understand it so I'm just going to move on next question this is from Otto this is the first time Otto has asked a question on these q&as that I can recall anyway it's been a while at any rate and and Otto's question is quote I prayed God to make me a better Buddhist unquote and then he says legit and that would depend on what you mean by legit you know legitimate I mean is that is that a valid I mean if it works I mean pragmatically it's legit if it you know if you're praying to God gives you an

increase in faith or self-confidence to practice Buddhism I mean eventually you you'd like outgrow the idea but I mean you like I've said before you can start off with lame motivations or lame ideas about practicing but the more you practice the more your wisdom is going to develop and then it's like your reasons get wiser you might start off with foolish reasons but if they're at least wise enough to get you practicing dhama then they're good enough at that stage until youve outgrow them and then acquire better reasons so I mean legit it depends on how you interpret legit pragmatically it

is you know it's it's good enough it's a good enough reason I mean logically it's not really legit because of course in in uh Buddhism there is no capital G God at least not in Terra

Buddhism so it all depends on how you look at it and I'm going to move on to the next question this is from Austin and Austin says is there something independently real that grounds reality and the scand do or is it all transient properties dependent and empty Turtles all the way down

well this is one of those Lial dealing with two different levels of reality I mean at the level of samsaric phenomenal reality then no there is there is not

something independently real that
grounds reality and the five condas he
use the scas which is the the Sanskrit
version um yeah it's all trans
properties dependent and empty all like
interrelated so it's like every
conditioned thing is conditioned by
other condition things and none of it
really has an underlying self
Essence but you can say all the way down
at the bottom like at the level of
Ultimate Reality like the Bedrock of
Ultimate Reality then you have this
Ultimate Reality the uncarved block
from which all these imaginary statues
are carved carved in

imagination you got the uncarved block
but it just transcends phenomenal
reality or unreality you know it's just
this paradoxical state that anything you
say about it it's going to be invalid
it's like essentially Nirvana the
dharmakaya capital G God the da Brahman
whatever like the the quantum
field it's like like whatever you want
to call it it's this under
underlying like Bedrock of reality that
is just off the scale you can't really
say that it exists or doesn't exist or
anything like that and trying to pin it
down is just it's just going to make you
go
nuts because you can't do

it but at the level of phenomenal
reality then no I mean there's there is
nothing that's independently real that
grounds all of the the phenomenal
World other than what is just off the
scale and it's just this paradoxical
Ultimate Reality that has has no
constituent Parts no perceivable aspects
near gab Brahman Ultimate Reality which
has no perceivable
qualities so I'm just going to move on
to Austin's next question and I I'm
aware that a lot of people just are not
satisfied by such answers because they
insist on Ultimate Reality expressed in
words and if you express it in words

it's not Ultimate Reality the name that
can be named is not the Eternal
name and some people are just so
addicted to their own thinking that they
just cannot accept that and so they just
keep searching and searching and
searching and searching in
vain for some logical coherent
explanation of Ultimate Reality and the
best you can get would be like maamaa
philosophy or like the philosophy of
Kant where you can sort of get a grip on
how delusion works that creates a false
reality but it really can't touch the
Ultimate Reality below it or pervading
it
whatever so I'm just going to move on to

Austin's second question

which is I think you should find a

Mahayana Monk and get him on your show

for some cross talk what do you think

well if any Mahayana monk wants to talk

with me that's fine I'm my my woman is

always on my case or maybe I should say

continually not constantly but

continually on my case to like invite

this person on my show or invite that

person and that kind of thing and you

know for me it just doesn't work that

way you know I'm just sort of like

surfing the waves and you know whatever

comes my way I'll surf it somebody

invites me to do a talk that's that's

fine so any Mahayana monks out there

want to uh have a

discussion um like on a YouTube video

then that's that's fine with me somebody

if Austin here wants to hook me up with

one that that'll work

too so I'm just gonna move on the next

question also from

Austin Austin's third question do you

believe your metas psychical beliefs

aligned more with Mahayana maamaa than

terava I think maybe he means

metaphysical and not metas psychical so

metaphysical beliefs yeah my metaphysics

are definitely more Mah onist than

terrain because Terra they're to some

degree they're like realists and they

believe in four ultimate realities which

then can be divided out into

gosh I don't even remember the total

number 80s

something um but the four main ones mind

matter mental States and

Nirvana so they've got Nirvana and like

samsara at the same level of reality

which is already starting off on the

wrong foot but I do not consider

physical matter to be ultimately real so

that kind of kicks me out of terod and

Orthodoxy right there

um so yeah maamaa comes closer but

saying my metaphysical beliefs are more

in accordance with Mahayana there's

Mahayana is just a lots of different schools it's not just one school of of Buddhism called Mahayana it's a whole bunch of different schools you know sort of like you might have one Roman Catholicism but you've got all kinds of protestant schools in Christianity in Mahayana is sort of like Protestant Buddhism in a sense in that you know the Baptists aren't necessarily on speaking terms with the Jehovah Witnesses who in turn don't have anything to do with the Mormons who in turn maybe don't have anything to do with the seventh day Adventists Etc you know there is no pope of protestantism because they do not consider each other to be authoritative

Mahayana is similar to this so with regard to maamaa definitely yeah my metaphysics is more maamaa than terad I have to admit and mjamaica says you know it's all just there is no underlying self Essence nothing is ultimately real that you can point at whereas in terana we're we're our bodies are made out of Rupa kalapas our minds also are made of rupac Copus which are like these little atoms that are ultimately real at least the constituent components are ultimately real like the subatomic particles con constituting these Rupa kapas are ultimately real even though they're condition and exist for only a

trillionth of an eye blink but still
they're ultimately real according to
Terra and I don't I really cannot accept
that so I'm more mamaka although some
schools of Mahayana I have even less use
for than some of the the tenants of
Orthodox commentarial
terana and so I'm just going to move on
to this question and this is from
cabison and cabison says how do you
think Buddhism can help someone with
selfesteem problems to be more confident
and outgoing I've always had these
problems and although I've improved over
the years I still feel down a lot of the
time and I tend to be a people pleaser
so how can Buddhism help someone with

self-esteem problems to be more
confident and outgoing well I mean the
main purpose of Buddhism isn't to turn
you into an extrovert to make you more
outgoing but so I mean there are no
practices you're going to find in the
sutas you know he monk he monks is is
how to become more outgoing you're not
going to find it but
indirectly certain Buddhist
practices um can help you to be more
confident and maybe more outgoing even
though of course Buddhism is much more
inclined to endorse Solitude and just
being a
Hermit so

self-esteem I mean in Buddhism there is

no self and so if you take that

seriously then you're going to be

without much of an ego at least your ego

is going to be much reduced along with

these like ego doubting itself

self-esteem issues if you don't have a

self you're not going to have

self-esteem

issues so I mean you just learn to be

more equanimous just accept the way

things

are um to be more confident I mean Sada

or which usually translated as Faith uh

sometimes is translated especially by

Monk translators as

confidence so if you have more faith in

dhama that's a certain kind of

confidence it's more confidence in dhama

than confidence in yourself

though

but um how to be more confident and

outgoing just worry I mean it seems to

me like the main problem here is is like

worry anxiety which is Kucha in poly and

it is always bad karma it's it's the

same as regret or remorse a guilty

conscience that kind of thing it's all

Kucha um and

like feeling yeah anxiety in public

feeling nervous before you give a public

speech for example that would all be

cucha

also um so I mean the more you practice
mindfulness I mean mindfulness is the
panace mindfulness cures all ills so if
You observe self Consciousness arise
self-consciousness in the bad sense or
like anxiety worry anything like that
just social awkwardness You observe that
as a kind of phenomenon that isn't you
because it really isn't
you it's just this habitual mental state
that arises and so long as you keep
feeding it it's going to be like a stray
dog it's just not going to go away but
if you stop feeding it it'll hang around
for a while but then it'll it'll drift
away any kind of bad habit including
social anxiety for

example that uh just observe it don't
feed it be mindful of it that would be
the the best approach I guess from a
Buddhist point of view I mean it might
not make you more
outgoing because being outgoing
outgoingness is not necessarily a
Buddhist
virtue anyways towards the end cabis and
says I tend to be a people pleaser and I
mean trying to help people be happy is
one thing but
using like pleasing people as a kind of
defense mechanism you know a survival
mechanism you know always trying to be
on the good side of people and and I

mean I I've known people like this you
know especially like like short skinny
passive kind of guys that I have known
that you know they just kind of like be
they're just really Pleasant and joking
a lot and you know they just kind of
survive sort of like the little dog that
kind of wags its tail through
life and uh I don't know it's like if
you're doing it for the sake
of just trying to please people to make
yourself more safe or something then
yeah that's not necessarily a wholesome
mental state or a wholesome attitude but
I mean just being a people pleaser in
the sense of just trying to help people
be happy you know trying to be pleasant

rather than unpleasant like if you're in
a bad mood not taking it out on others
that kind of thing that's 100% AOK from
a Buddhist point of
view but outgoingness really is not a
Buddhist virtue not that it's
necessarily bad I mean if you just feel
perfectly comfortable in the midst of a
crowd and just strike up conversations
with people you don't know I've never
been that way a lot of people are like
that some of the people I work with
that's how I got to know them is they
just walk right up and start talking
because they just walk right up and
start talking to

everybody but they're probably not role
models for the perfect Buddhist in other
respects so mindfulness is the Panacea
mindfulness cures all
ills and uh there are other I mean just
practicing meditation and so forth it
can improve your wisdom which will not
necessarily make you less awkward in
public but it will at least make you not
care so much if you are awkward in
public and I should move on to the next
question which is from java
nandin I think I don't know how to
pronounce this name I'm just guessing
and Java nandin says I know you are not
a fan of wisi Maga but what is your
opinion on palas samapti and neota

samapti mentioned there well first of all I mean sop just means attainment and Palos mopy and neurotop are two entirely different attainments that are not related it's not like a pair I mean you've got um mega and palat that are paired but you not Pala and neurod it's like neurotop is a very Advanced presumably meditative state that only an anagami or an arant can can attain and it's essentially a kind of you just go into a coma it's the sensation of perception and feeling which from the Orthodox terab point of view means I mean you're essentially comos and I do not see why that would be considered

such an exalted

State um I mean you wouldn't even be

aware of having attained it because the

awareness of having attained anything

would be part of the perception and

feeling so I

mean I I'm skeptical that the Buddha

taught neurotop that neurotop is just

one of these meditative States that's

above fourth Janna that ancient Indian

philosophers I mean they're just not

satisfied with just four Jas and so

you've got the abdist inventing a fifth

jna

that's where you divide second jna into

two or you've got like the the formless

Jas get added on as a kind of annex to

Fourth J because technically fourth J
was as high as you can go and then
you've got neurotop gets postulated
you've got like the signless
concentration of mind what what is it
I animita Chito samti that is mentioned
in a few sutas that it's like the Indian
mind is always trying to one up the
highest it's like some people are saying
this is the highest and then some other
group says nope because we've come up
with a higher one and I think that that
neurot sopy may be one of those kind of
things and almost nobody would attain it
anyway because you'd have to be at least
an anagami to attain it pmop on the

other hand is paired with mega and this
also is kind of a weird
like practically a glitch in Orthodox
terraa Buddhist philosophy that there's
the four stages of Saint Hood those of
you who have watched these q&as know my
opinion about the four stages of Saint
Hood I think that in itself is a kind of
artifact of later developments in
Buddhism but each of these four stages
has two aspects to it's got Mega and
palat mega is the path so you've entered
the path on becoming um a soda or an
anagami or whatever and then there's the
palat or the fruition so it's like once
you're like locked into becoming a soda
then that's the the the path of that's

soda Mega and then once you fully attain
the consummation of soda Hood then
that's the Pala or the
fruition and so that would be the
attainment of fruition would be palas op
but it's in the sutas it's talking about
how both of these like the four pairs of
individuals who are worthy of respect
worthy of gifts worthy of you know
bowing down to them and so
forth according to Orthodox tervana this
Mega stage lasts like a trillionth of an
eye blank it's just Boop so how are you
going to bow down to somebody who exists
for a trillionth of a
second so apparently there's a

misunderstanding in Orthodox terraa of what what may have been in it in and of itself a previous misunderstanding which furthermore may have been a garbling of like an earlier teaching where you've got Mega and palat you know path and fruition that supposedly the the path stage lasted a considerable amount of time that long enough period of time that you could bow to the person offer them gifts and so forth and it's not just a trillionth of a second and then immediately you move on to to Pala it's like one moment is path it lasts only one moment and then you hit Pala afterwards it's it's just kind of strange so that's my opinion on that and

I'm I'm heartily skeptical of both palop

and

neurotop unless

pmop refers only to like aun stage full

Enlightenment but even I'm kind of

skeptical about full Enlightenment

within the context of samsara because

within the context of samsara everything

is unenlightened because samsara

is an artifact of

unenlightenment ignorance

delusion so I better just move on the

next question here see we've been going

for almost an hour and a

half you guys have the luxury just

looking down at the time bar and seeing

how long this is going to be I don't
even know so the next question is from
jewels and juwel says is it possible to
make Marco
El a Supreme Court Justice and when he
asked this question I didn't even know
who Marco El is I don't know how to
pronounce
El could be eles for all I know Marco is
pretty solid I I got Marco down but the
the second name the eles Ela I don't
know and I didn't know who Marco was
until just like half an hour later I'm
just like scanning news headlines
because the news is so fascinating
nowadays now that Trump is running a
muck in in disassembling the Deep

State reducing the size of
government and it turns out that Marco
Al or whatever his name is is he goes by
the the nickname of big balls and he's
one of the like the the young
autists that um Elon Musk has appointed
to review all these workers at us Aid
and determine whether they should keep
their job or not and there was some
journalist so-called who had previously
worked for us Aid who put out a hit
piece against this Marco guy and which
caused him to resign because he had made
racist comments on social media at some
time in the past and then finally uh
cooler heads prevailed and he was

brought back in and he's now back on the

the aest squad of deciding the the

future of people who work at us Aid and

anyways juwes says is it possible to

make him a Supreme Court Justice

technically the I almost called Trump

the Buddha

that's not

good anyways technically Trump could

like

nominate this Marco this big balls as a

Supreme Court Justice but it's my

understanding that a Supreme Court

Justice has to be approved by the Senate

I'm pretty sure you know there's going

to be like Congressional hearings and so

forth and you know it's like the the

nominee has to appear it was like like

what was his name Kavanaugh

you know he he had to get grilled by

hysterical Democrats before he got to

assume his seat on the the Supreme Court

also the

nanji brown Jackson or whatever her name

is you know she's having to get grilled

by Republicans asking her if she knows

what a woman is and she said I'm not a

biologist how should I know what a woman

is so Trump could like nominate Marco as

a Supreme Court Justice but I doubt that

he would get through the he would be I

doubt that he would be approved by the

Senate so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from Master Poe and

master Poe says are you getting tired of

these

q&as not really I mean they're kind of

getting longer you know they're they're

occupying a little bit more of my time

but the time that I'm using to to do

these q&as used to be the time that I

would use to write a blog post and those

of you who are familiar with my blog may

have noticed that I haven't I haven't

added a blog post to my blog in probably

more than a year because I'm doing this

instead now this is my means of

promulgating the DH rather than writing

like cynical blog

posts so am I getting tired of these

q&as I mean sometimes I'm tired and and

do them anyway not so much tired of the

Q&A but just tired in general kind of a

thing but the show must go on it's in a

way it's it's a public service that I'm

happy to

do and so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from The Three Holy

baskets and the Three Holy baskets say

cuz there's three of them what are the

types of women I I might have made a

joke at the expense of the titica just

now and so I would like to retract that

joke because that was you shouldn't make

jokes about Buddha dama or

sa so the three holy baskets says or say

what are the types of women that the

Buddha said we can have sex with or not

possible to engage in sex with I

remember the Buddha said it somewhere

yes with regard to

Kam like sensual

misconduct and it's kind of strange that

at least in one text this kamu

kamua or sensual misconduct which is

like the third pre the third precept for

someone taking eight precepts no wait no

five precepts even five precepts so it's

it's in the form of a list of the women

that are

forbidden and it's just a it's

patriarchal you know it just assumes

that it's guys it's phow Centric if you

will it just assumes that you know it's
going to be a man who is inquiring into
this
question and every woman on the list
that is forbidden is a woman who is
already like spoken for like under the
protection or guidance or
guardianship or
ownership of somebody else like a woman
who's already married I mean she's under
the authority of her husband you know
he's got he's got authority over here
another man shouldn't mess with with a
married woman you got a woman who is
betro you know she's engaged already
spoken for you've got a woman still

living with her parents you've got the
slave girl of another person you've got
a female inmate in a prison who's like
under the guardianship or protection of
like the prison staff prison guards and
there's a few other ones there's a one
or two obscure ones that that really
just kind of fit into ancient Indian
culture but the gist of it is that any
woman who is already under the
protection or guardianship of another
person is off limit so
technically like even if you're a young
guy a young woman who is still living
with her
parents she'd be off limits so to
speak if she moved out then it'd be

different and so I mean you don't really have to be married I mean it's the the third precept isn't just don't commit adultery because you can still be monogamous without technically being married I mean marriage just is not a terraa Buddhist institution anyway that's purely a secular Affair monks it is strictly forbidden for a monk to conduct a wedding ceremony like in Burma it's like you just when when a man and a woman get married in general they just go down to the Village head man and sign papers they're married and then after that the the couple will go to the monastery and then the monks will bless

a done deed

so I mean you don't necessarily have to

be married to the person but

generally um promiscuous sex is out so

like a prostitute you know she's under

the authority of her pimp or whatever

and mainly what it means is it's

somebody that you are monogamous with

that neither one of you is is like under

obligations to anyone

else and that is acceptable

it's not necessarily recommended because

of course celibacy is considered to be

best from an orthodox terab Buddhist

point of view

but there we are I think I answered that

question and so I'm just going to move

on to the Three Holy basket's second

question which is

NTI is homosexuality right I got no idea

it's it's a Sanskrit term it's not found

in terava Buddhism and because terada

budh ISM doesn't deal with Sanskrit it's

it's poly I'm not exactly sure what the

poly vers niat would be the same but

Mich

drti uh see maybe duti would be like

corruption it'd be like Dy in

poly

so yeah I'm I'm not exactly sure I don't

know enough about this to really answer

it because I mean it's my understanding

that like in Ancient India like in the

Buddhist time they really didn't have
much of a concept of homosexuality kind
of like in ancient Rome like there
wasn't really a concept of homosexuality
in ancient Rome it's just like if you
were on top I mean you could be like
under underneath could be a woman or
like a teenage boy or whatever but if
you were on top then you were still
acting the role of a man you were still
masculine that was you know that's as
far as it went and I think think in
Ancient India men with what would be
called homosexual tendencies now would
choose like Unix that kind of thing I
mean I'm sure there must have been
homosexuality like two gay men together

in Ancient India even though they may not have had a word for it but um you know it's just I'm not aware of it being specifically addressed in po texts and NTI may be it's if it's not Mahayana it's it's a Hindu term and I'm not familiar with it so I'm just going to move on next question and this is from chasz is who now goes by the name of Julie and trasis is who now goes by the name of Julie says if beings in heaven Realms cannot hear or see us then what about Mara who can you've mentioned that the Buddha didn't teach dhama to his previous two teachers because they were in heaven realm it wasn't just that they

were in a heaven realm they were in a formless realm where they had no sense organs and so he couldn't teach the the DAV or the the brahmas in a formless heaven realm because they had no body and because they were just pure mind with no body they didn't have ears to hear they didn't have eyes to see why the Buddha couldn't have communicated telepathically with them I don't know but that was like the reason that the Buddha after he became enlightened he didn't teach his
his first two teachers who taught him Janna um because they were in formless Realms they they mastered these formless janas they died in formless Janna they

entered this formless realm and so he
couldn't teach them but ordinary like
dvas and and also like the brahmas from
the Rupal Loca or the the realm of form
that the brahmas that still have a
physical body they can see us they want
to most of them don't want to see us you
know it's sort of like why would we want
to go to some vacant lot and look at the
ants crawling around in this vacant lot
I mean most of us unless we're
entomologists or little kids who are
interested in ants we just don't
care and so like dvas and and brahmas
can see us we can't necessarily see them
it's like whoever's the higher can

generally see the lower beings but the
lower beings can't necessarily see the
higher beings unless maybe the higher
beings like adjust their their vibration
or something to make themselves visible
to
us how that relates to ghosts is kind of
problematic because ghosts are lower
generally we can't see them and it's my
understanding that ghosts in general
can't see us
either so it may be that ghosts that we
see that when a person does see a ghost
I mean the ghost doesn't necessarily see
us back because we are at the the the
less
crude um level of of

matter than they

are so let's see if beings in heaven

Realms cannot see or hear us yeah well

some of them can all except for the the

ones in the formless Realms because the

form the ones in the formless Realms

don't have eyes or

ears so yeah Mara I mean he's just in

the he's in the highest Dava realm

there's Brahma Realms above Mara let's

see you mentioned the Buddha didn't

teach Doo's previous two teachers

because they were in heaven Realms yeah

they were in formless heaven Realms so I

think I answered that question from

tasas is Alias Julie and so tasz is

Alias Julie's second question is do you
prefer apples or oranges I prefer
oranges if I'm just going to eat the
fruit I eat lots of oranges I rarely eat
an apple almost never in fact ever since
I was a kid I have disliked
apple peel it's like eating sour wax
paper wrapped around the apple with
regard to cooked apples like in pies or
apple fritters or something I'm all for
it apple fritters my favorite pastry is
probably an Apple
Fritter but just the fruit itself I
prefer oranges and so I'm just going to
move on next question this is from
cify cify says if all of us in this
realm are crazy but some of us are aware

that we are crazy does it make those who
are aware of the craziness less crazy
and yes indeed it does and I do not have
my copy of the DAP handy I think it's
verse 63 don't quote me on that but I'm
pretty sure kind of almost pretty sure
that verse 63 of the DAP says the fool
who is aware of his foolishness is at
least wise to that extent but the fool
who considers himself wise is called a
fo indeed and that was one of my great
comforting thoughts as a young monk it's
like if I know that I'm a Fool at least
I'm wise to that extent that in itself
is a kind of
wisdom

so let's see here let's go back to the
question if all of us in this realm are
crazy but some of us are aware that we
are crazy does it make those who are
aware of the crazy yeah yeah it does if
you're aware of your foolishness then
you're at least wise to that
extent so I'm just going to move on to
next question this is from
mooners mooner says what do you think of
JD Vance's concept of Ordo amoris does
Buddhist lay ethics support Ordo amoris
and I don't know I don't know what was
what was in my mind at the time but when
mooners mentioned JD Vance I was
thinking Jack Vance who was an old
science fiction writer from like back in

the

1960s and um I'm thinking it must be

some from some science fiction novel or

something but actually JD Vance is the

vice president of the United States and

he was talking about Ordo amoris in a

recent interview and Ordo amorus is like

ordered love it's like with regard to

loving others there's like a priority

list you know like presumably for a

Christian God would be at the top of the

list you love God then you like love

yourself you love your family you know

you love your neighbors you know you

love people that are like sinning

against you and so forth you know it'd

be like this priority list of who you're

supposed to love maybe who you should

love

more

and does Buddhist lay ethics support

that um I assume it does I mean ideally

like a fully enlightened being would

just love everyone the

same but but at the same time realizing

that nobody really

exists but for a lay person I think it

would not be at all in conflict with

Buddhist lay ethics that you would love

your wife and your children more than

you love the person who is bad mouthing

you in

public they just it's just like

practical common sense you know you

selflove love of your immediate family

love of your friends I mean if you can

manage it you love your enemies too I

mean that's not some Monopoly of

Christianity that a Buddhist should

should love his enemies also but it's

more important I think for you to love

your spouse and your children and

yourself I mean that would be more vital

more important in In Living a happy life

than you know

loving Adam shiff let's

say and those of you who don't know who

Adam Schiff is well good for

you so I would assume that it's like

tacitly allowed in Buddhism maybe
there's even texts you know with regard
to lay ethics you know giving some kind
of priority you you should have respect
for your teachers and that kind of
thing and but uh yeah I don't think that
it would violate just secular lay
Buddhist ethics that you have like a
priority list of who gets the most love
and who gets like the
leftovers so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from thermal
squid and thermal squid asked some
questions in the previous Q&A about you
know why should you believe in Nana if
it can't be logically proven kind of
stuff and I answered the question you

can look at the previous Q&A if you want

to see what my answers were excuse me

I'm I'm trying to burp and not burp at

the same

time so anyways thermal squid

says I wouldn't say I'm obsessed with

intellect but the absurdity seem to

begin when we abandon it outright in

simpler terms samsar encompasses all

conditionality and also all mental

states there are then no metaphysical

tools and mediums we can use here to

help us perception is out discrimination

is out tradition ritual Etc everything

is gone here wherein then is knowledge

or immersion of nibana or the deathless

actually

found the best you're going to get is

mysticism you know like St John on the

cross he talks about dark Faith where in

his version of contemplation you just

dismiss everything from your mind that

is not God Buddhist point of you dismiss

everything from your mind that is not

nibana and few people can do this

disclaimer here few people can actually

manage this but getting back to St John

of the Cross you can't see the see God

through your senses you can't sense God

through your senses dismiss the senses

you can't understand God intellectually

dismiss the intellect you can't

understand God emotionally dismiss the

emotions you can't know God through any like mental state dismiss all the mental States and so you get down to just what should be just emptiness and nothing but according to St John of the Cross you still know something is there and that is just like the the spirit of God that pervades the the universe you can still you're somehow still aware of that you know that it's there that's dark Faith because I mean it's dark because there's no real conceptual content to it you've already dismissed the

concepts it's just like an immediate awareness

and people have more or less Talent at

this kind of awareness where you just in

call it intuitive you know it's in maybe

deeper than what would be standard

intuition but there's like this feeling

like when I was a kid

you know like a teenager I'm reading my

first like Eastern philosophy books and

it's saying you know it's all an

illusion this world is an illusion and

somehow deep down I'm like yeah I I mean

I could I really got on board with that

but at the time I didn't even understand

like

philosophically why it was saying this

it was just like deep down there was

just this feeling of yes that that's

it and you can be you can be mistaken

with regard to this kind of stuff too I
mean some people are just absolutely
absolutely sure that this or that cult
leader is fully enlightened when really
they
aren't but that's part of the problem I
mean it's like we are delusional and
we're trying to use our own diluted mind
to cure ourselves of delusion so I mean
you're just going to have to have a
certain amount of faith fath at first
choose the wisest Faith you can come up
with and then go with that let's see
here it's like at the beginning here he
says I wouldn't say I'm obsessed with
intellect but the absurdity seem to

begin when we abandon outright no that's
not true at all because absurdity is
itself just a figment of
intellect I mean you get rid of the
intellect you get rid of the absurdities
also if if you're in a state of just
like like mystical
contemplation where there's no intellect
there's no absurdity
either it's just I mean absurdities can
come through various means humor or
Paradox or just like sloppy intellect
but it's still intellect I mean it's
insisting upon rigorous logic I mean
you're just locking yourself into a cage
and that's not going to get you
enlightened either

so to some degree you got to have a
certain amount of faith and that's like
in the in the poly Tex it talks about um
the the five strengths or the five
faculties and two of them are Faith and
essentially intellect or it's like uh
faith and like what would be a good
word I mean in the word is PA but it
doesn't necessarily mean wisdom here
it's it's more like Theory you know
youve got fa Faith or or just intellect
let's just go with intellect Faith or
intelligence and they have to be
inbalance you have too much faith and
not enough intelligence then you can
believe anything no matter how

ridiculous it is but if you have too
much intelligence not enough Faith then
you're going to be so skeptical I mean
you're you're not going to do anything
you'll have insufficient data to really
do anything and according to the wisi
MAA take that for what it's worth a
person with too much intelligence and
not enough faith is like a person who is
sick and their sickness is caused by the
medicine that they're taking you you
just keep taking the medicine which just
keeps you
sick so at the bottom is the actual
question mark wherein then is knowledge
or immersion of nibana or the deathless
actually found I mean ultimately it's

mysticism and a lot of people including
a lot of brilliant intellectuals have
almost no mystical Talent whatsoever
they just do not get
it like step Hawking was saying
mysticism clouds the issues when
actually it's the issues that cloud
mysticism so I'm just going to move on
to Thermal Squid's next question
here which is it is said at least in
some of these videos that nibana can't
be experienced so it seems to me that we
are still using logic or Reason and or
discurs thinking here it seems to me
that intuition that there is an ultimate
and perfect reality is not deniable the

technicalities are what I'm focused on
endless deliberation on Truth or words
here is not the issue but actually
making something like Enlightenment or
even absorption reachable not just an
artifact of one's intent or efforts
something actually substantial Beyond a
kind of contentless Consciousness which
might be too quickly discerned to be the
absolute
itself EG BR Brahman the one and so and
so forth take the metaphor of the raft
do you sail out across the river with a
busted raft that will sink it seems to
me that we'd be double triple quadruple
checking this to absolutely make sure
that we don't drown well this isn't

really a question this is he just it's
just something that I I just decided I'd
comment on that you make the raft you're
not just going to be like in over
analysis Paralysis on the near shore
doubting whether the raft is really
going to get you across I mean you make
the raft as best you can and then you
just go out there and and and brave it
and it takes a certain amount of faith
that you're going to be able to do it
and that it's maybe it's going to take a
certain amount of faith that there's
even another shore on the other side
because you can't necessarily see it
let's say maybe it's really farog that

day so that was just sort of my two
cents worth on that one so thermal
squid's real second question here is can
Critters become enlightened and that
depends on who you talk to according to
to eart TOA in his first famous book The
Power of Now all animals are already
enlightened in a sense because they're
fully in the present moment you know
they're not living in the future not
living in the past and the only animals
that are not enlightened are animals
that have acquired certain neurotic
Tendencies from their owners like like
domesticated animals like
dogs although from the Buddhist point of
view animals are not

enlightened so can Critters become enlightened technically from an orthodox point of view just giving the the official Orthodox answer here no animals cannot become fully enlightened regard of aart TOA saying that most of them already are enlightened because I mean like how much greed hate and delusion does like a Mito like a microscopic Copa pod like planked in the ocean or a jellyfish how much greed hate and delusion does a jellyfish have possibly zero but it but it also has no real mind at that point so I think that an animal like a cow might be closer to Enlightenment than the average human but

that's just because they have less mind
which can hold less delusion so really
it's a matter of like in the cow's case
going with like Buddhist philosophy that
it's going to have to keep moving
forwards and get more and more
diluted in before it can get to the
point where it's conscious enough that
it can start reversing that
delusion and I mean something like an
insect I think insects are just kind of
like little um Terminators you know like
like little robots they might have
Consciousness but I doubt that they have
perceptions and perception is where
delusion comes in so I mean it may be
that they're already kind of

Enlightenment it's kind of a bummer to think that a fly or a mosquito is enlightened being but in a way they kind of are cuz they just don't have hate and delusion they're just little robots you know this little glimmer this little speck of Consciousness but U I think I'll just pass move on to the third question which because it's a followup of the second question he says if so what creatures do you think are closer to Enlightenment or Liberation than others well is there's two different closer to enlightenments like I already mentioned a cow it's probably closer to Enlightenment with

regard to it has l greed hate and
delusion than the average human but it's
going to have to keep progressing
forwards it can't back up and and just
have less and less to has zero it's
going to have to get more and more greed
hate and delusion by becoming a more
complex creature that becomes
self-referential and can actually start
trying to reprogram
itself so the animals that are closer to
Liberation than others would probably be
the most intelligent ones you know the
ones that have the most Consciousness
about them which you know
like sperm whales Dolphins
elephants Apes you know the the

creatures that are considered to be you
know in highly intelligent or probably
be
closer um chronologic like temporarily
to Enlightenment than than other animals
like a cow even though the cow may have
less greed hate and delusion
so I think I'm just going to move on the
next question PSA says are you a Naga
that only takes human form during online
videos don't lie don't break CA are you
a
Naga and apparently from the context
he's referring to shape-shifting COBRA
dragons and yeah I'm not a
shape-shifting cobra Dragon I promise

I'm not a shape-shifting cobra dragon

I mean there are other interpretations

of Naga sometimes the Buddha is called a

Naga but he's not called a

shape-shifting cobra dragon that

Naga is apparently not an indoan term

and it refers to any kind of

imposing being so an elephant like a

bull elephant can be called a

Naga the Buddha can be called

Naga and I mean if somebody considers me

to be imposing then

arguably maybe I could be that kind of

NGA but I am not a cobra

Dragon I'm just going to move on the

next question this is from

Alfred who I believe asked this question

on Rumble it's rare to get a question uh
for a Q&A on Rumble usually on Rumble
all I get are these people giving me
fasile Praise of how great my content is
and then offering to optimize my
presence for a small fee that's all
almost the only kind of comments I get
on
Rumble so anyways Alfred says does the
Persona transfer at rebirth and I'm not
exactly sure what Alfred is referring to
with regard to the
Persona although I would mention what
last in the previous Q&A I was
discussing like really hard to
understand movies Persona by imar

Bergman that's a difficult to understand
movie when you get to the end of the
movie it's like all of a sudden it ends
it's like why did it end I mean I I
wasn't I didn't even have a grip on what
was going on
yet so anyways Alfred is saying does the
Persona transfer at rebirth and I looked
in the dictionary because I wasn't sure
what he meant by Persona and it turns
out that there are various
interpretations various possible
definitions of the term and the two main
ones that I think he might be referring
to is one is the aspect of someone's
character that is presented to or
perceived by

others or it could be in accordance with
yungan psychology the outer or assumed
aspect of a
character so I guess it'd be like your
personality especially the outward
aspects of your personality the obvious
to others aspects of your personality um
does that transfer rebirth to some
degree but it's not going to be
necessarily you know just the same exact
same mannerisms and so forth because
you're going to have possibly be reborn
into a different culture you're going to
have some different DNA it's all going
to be kind of added to the mix and the
it's not going to be exactly the same I

mean it could be enough that some
intuitive maybe psychically gifted
person could recognize you as you know
their aunt Mabel or
whatever but it's uh it's more compc
that it's it's it's like your karma is
all that really transfers and that can
manifest to some degree as your persona
but also uh influencing your persona is
going to be a lot of other factors like
karma from the the I mean the life you
just came into that is you know starting
to take place immediately like cultural
conditioning and that sort of
thing so I think I'm just going to move
on to the next question and we've been
going out for two hours golly this is

kind of a scary one not this question
but just just the the mass of questions
I have received we may have to we may
have to trim it down to no more than two
questions per per
episode so anyways this is from quor and
quor says do you think it's possible
that time is an illusion and those of us
if not all who are destined to be arant
are getting guidance from our arant
future selves who reside in Parana there
aren't nobody's residing in Parana par
nibana is
undifferentiated it's
unconditioned I mean it's it's just
nibana par nibana technically is like

the death of an enlightened

being so they're they're like crossing

over into nibana that's that's par

nibana they're I mean it's like par

nibana is nibana without residue which

means it's you don't have an enlightened

being's body and mind still kind of

associated it's just part of neana is

you know you you've passed away and you

don't come

back and there's no discernable content

in nibana it's it's it's without moving

parts so there there's nobody residing

in nibana or

Parana but getting back to the first

part of the question is do you think

it's possible that time is is an

illusion yeah I do think that time is an illusion and those of us especially like the passage of time and those of us if not all who are destined to be arhant are getting guidance from our arhant future selves it's not necessarily your arhant future selves I mean it could just be your more advanced wiser future selves or kind of like you still are kind of connected to them because of the illusion of the passage of time you know it's like your future selves already exist in a sense and they're like they're still you they're sort of connected to you and I've had this idea when I was a monk you know it's like who

who would I pray to in a moment of
desperation you know it's like the gods
and enlightened beings out there plus
also like the future me who is much more
advanced I mean not the future me who's
fully enlightened and just dead and and
gone I mean what's the point of pring to
to that person but you know before you
become fully enlightened and die going
to Pana you might have psychic powers
and so forth that you could beam meta
back at your previous suffering diluted
Incarnation so to
speak so I think that's
possible and I do think that you could
derive benefit from the wisdom and
goodness of future incarnation ations so

to speak of of you you know you get to
the point where you're you're close to
nibana you got psychic powers you just
got this oceans of love you can beam you
beam them back at this miserable [__]
up previous version of you that kind of
thing that's possible I don't think it's
necessarily Orthodox terana but I do
think that it's possible and so I'm
going to move on to quator next question
which is if a meditator experiences jna
every day for the last three years of
their life and then dies in agony
incapable of Janna at time of death
versus someone who has never experienced
Janna and then achieves it on their

deathbed and dies in Janna does the
meditator first person not get reborn in
a Janna realm but the second person does
technically according to Orthodox terada
yes so that's why gotica self terminated
the the mindblowing godika sua where
Goda he got Janna and lost it and then
got Jonna and lost it and got Jonna and
lost it it's like his mind was kind of
unstable with regard to that my mind was
similar I could really relate to
that where you you get into deep
meditation and then you just kind of
lose it and then you get into deep
meditation and then just lose it and
Goda was like this he was getting Jonna
and then losing it getting it losing it

getting it losing it until finally he
was getting desperate and he's thinking
if I die without Jonna then I mean
there's no guarantees of anything I mean
he could wind up in in a Hell realm or
something but if he if he dies while
he's got Janna he's guaranteed of a
Brahma realm so the next time he got it
he Auto terminated he took his his head
shaving razor and and um did an icky
thing to his own neck and so and not
only did he um not get a lower realm but
he became enlightened as he was bleeding
out and his his Consciousness became
unmanifest so technically according to
Orthodox terava Buddhist philosophy um

yeah the second person does better than
the first person first person had Jonna
for three years and then died without it
sorry no no Brahma realm for you whereas
the person he gets Jah for the first
time in his life dies immediately boom
Braham so there you go and I'm just
going to move on to quor third
question does wishing good wishes and
prayer for someone to get well actually
help them heal and can someone's
negative wishes upon you cause you to
become ill mentally or physically or is
it more of a placebo effect and not the
energy itself um I'm not sure that
there's necessarily even a different
between like somebody's blessings curing

you and the placebo effect like when
Jesus in the New Testament would would
heal somebody and they would thank him
and he would say it's your own faith
that cured you so if you don't have
faith then in a way it
hinders deriving the benefit or the the
the opposite of benefit from somebody
else like beaming mental States at you
although uh with with Saints with
saintly people you know all things are
possible it seems like or a lot of
things are possible that aren't possible
for normies so I do think
that um like prayer you know the prayer
of a righteous man aileth much good

wishes just like beaming meta would

which would be more of a a terot

Buddhist way of going about it that it

can help people or you know beaming hate

at somebody could harm people but I mean

the the other person's karma is really

key that you know if they just don't

have the karma for you to succeed then

you're not going to

succeed sometimes you can try to help

someone even physically and it just

backfires I mean I I remember back when

I was a young man I wouldn't kill

insects or spiders that were in my

apartment you know I'd catch them with a

cup and a piece of cardboard and let

them go out outside and I remember I

caught something I don't remember what
it was some kind of some kind of little
creepy Crawley I let it go out on the
front porch and IM immediately just
comes heading straight back at me and
then a spider jumps out and grabs it you
know it's like you try to help it and it
just made it worse or one time I was in
a college student and I was at some
Alpine Lake and I'm sitting by the by
the side of this Lake up in the
mountains and this little ant just comes
trundling down the rocks and just goes
right out into the water and starts
floundering so I scoop the the ant out
and put it on the rock you know let it

dry out and immediately it just heads
straight out into the water again so you
catch it one more time put it up on the
Rock immediately it's I mean it was just
it was just determined to like Auto
terminate I guess so finally the third
time I just said well your call I washed
my hands with this one
so I mean it it depends a lot on the
karma of the individual
involved um like even Jesus of Nazareth
you know he had these miraculous healing
healing abilities you know he was
psychic powers be called in in Buddhism
but someone who just thought he was you
know who's this guy think he is you know
this is just Jesus The Carpenter's son

that somebody like that Jesus wouldn't
be able to heal them you know he went to
his own hometown of Nazareth and is
everyone there is like who does he think
he is that's just Jesus The Carpenter's
son and Jesus wasn't able to do very
many miracles there he just cast out a
few demons and then
laugh saying no Prophet is without honor
except in his own
Hometown so I mean if you have the karma
that is makes you receptive to that then
somebody blessing you can heal you just
as some doctor giving you medicine can
heal you but you got to have the karma
for it and I'm just going to move on

next question because we've been going
at it for more than two hours and I'm
not exactly sure how many more questions
there are but there's at least
several and so next question is from
dhama river and dhama river says if you
were given the choice in which realm of
existence would you like to take rebirth
and why well let's
say not taking re re birth isn't an
option here it's like you got to take
rebirth but at least you get a pick
where you're going to be reborn and
probably I'd be better off just not
picking where my karma just puts me
where I need to be I mean that would be
the wise choice you start like making

conscious decisions it might not serve
you nearly as well as if you just let
Karma take its course sort of like you
know it's like people in ancient times
they would be making offerings to
afrodite
because they want such and such person
to love them you know they want to hook
up with this person when really they'd
be better off not forcing the issue and
just letting the person who is destined
to be their mate show up maybe a year
down the road it may be that trying to
force the issue can just land you in the
wrong place with the wrong
person and I've got this

little little popup window I got to get

rid of okay

so getting back to the question though

see I'm I'm Meandering all over the

place even with the most questions ever

in a Q&A video I'm still just Meandering

and digressing just

AF so dama River if says if you were

given the choice in which realm of

existence would you like to take rebirth

and why well I mean you could kind of

cheat and go for the pure abodes because

you're guaranteed um Nirvana once you

once you you have passed away from the

pure abodes only anagami can go there so

I mean I could kind of cheat and and

like go to the pure AB boats which would

then necessitate me being an anagami
or um if if that kind of cheating is
frowned upon then I don't know tawa
timsa would be nice you know it's it's
sort of like being just this wealthy
powerful beautiful human who never gets
sick you know you can just kind of
manipulate your reality to some degree
you know you want chocolate ice cream
you just automatically get it that kind
of thing tawa timsa wouldn't be bad plus
you get to meet all the F the most
famous gods are in tawa
timsa so yeah I think I might do that if
the pure bodess are were off limits for
whatever reason you know so even Genies

when they give you three wishes you know
you find the lamp in the on the beach
you rub the lamp the genie comes out
offers you three wishes sometimes
there's still limitations it's like you
you can't wish for like one of your
wishes to be like three more wishes is
is just cheating and you can't do
it so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from
Wayne and Wayne says in your view how
far could a householder go on the path
to Enlightenment well even a householder
can become enlightened it's just that
you're you've got more of the cards
stacked against you it's much more
difficult it's a much higher difficulty

setting but some householders do become
enlightened I pretty
sure it's just that let's say for
example I've I've I've brought this up
before let's say that a monk or a non is
a thousand times more likely to become
enlightened than a lay person but there
are 10,000 times more lay people than
monks and nuns so still you'd have 10
times more enlightened lay people than
enlightened monks and nuns just going
with the
math so I mean technically you can make
it the whole way although the way it
generally works for Lay people if they
get into some higher Awakening you know

somebody like eart TOA or I always

forget his name John Ren Lewis somebody

like that it's usually by accident it's

like they they go into this crisis and

just get slammed out of their

unenlightened

rut so a householder who becomes

enlightened it seems to me they're much

more likely to be like hitting ahead by

something than to do it through

meditative

Insight that's just my experience just

westerners in general who become

enlightened or who appear to become

enlightened who have some kind of

Awakening experience as a general rule

because westerners are so

lukewarm so so inclined to overthink
everything that generally they just lack
the faith for one thing to really just
go wholeheartedly like a medieval
Catholic saint and become enlightened
through just you know intense practice
that instead they're just kind of ripe
and then they get beat over the head or
having some kind of near-death
experience or like in um at C toa's case
just this existential crisis where it's
just so unbearable that it just like
wrenches them out of their rut and they
wind up in this higher level of
Consciousness that it's something that
you don't plan for it's just you just

get visited by this crisis and you have
Enlightenment thrust upon
you so anyways I'm going to move on to
way second
question which is could you describe the
destination of a nonr returner and I I
just mentioned that it's the pure abodes
that non-r returners or anagami after
they die they go into these high heaven
Realms that are accessible only to
anagami only the good Buddhists only
good Buddhists get to go to these Heaven
Realms and they are guaranteed that when
they pass away from from that heaven
realm that pure Abode they just fade
into Enlightenment Fade Into Nirvana
nana I should

say so yeah I think there's four four

Heaven Realms called the pure abodes and

all anagami go to them and uh I think

you still have a

body maybe yeah I think I think it's

like the highest Brahma

Realms

so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from thought fog and

I'm just I'm going to cheat she a little

and scroll and yeah we got several

questions but it's not a very long

scroll to the bottom at this point so

the next question is from thought fog

and thought fog says what's in your

archive digital and physical would you

please do like a literature tour or

something maybe your top five digital

items and top five physical items in

your possession um yeah I mean it

probably be better to do like um like a

separate video that I prepare in advance

with visual aids like the actual books

and so forth

um the thing is I mean it it's pretty

much all past tense because I do very

little reading nowadays I mean if I read

it's like online I'll be reading like

articles and so forth I haven't read an

actual book in more than a

year so My archive I mean I can just

kind of

kind of roughly go over what's on my

bookcase that the top shelf of the bookcase is all Buddhist stuff it starts off with poly like canonical text gets into poly commentaries and dictionaries and grammars that kind of thing and then um then it gets it just into like Buddhist philosophy Buddhist history and then towards the end I've got some Zen stuff which is still Buddhism so it's on the top shelf and the the second shelf it starts off with other religions Hinduism Christianity you know the the writings of St John of the Cross are on the second shelf you know the the upanishads the bagavat Gita um Miracle of love stories about neim K Baba that's

on the second shelf no disrespect to
maharaji intended and then it gets into
uh gets into some like um paranormal
like parapsychology and and a little bit
of philosophy stuff towards the end then
the third shelf is Western
philosophy and uh let's see how the
let's see yeah it's the third shelf is
mostly like Western
philosophy including FH Bradley's logic
which I'll possibly never read in my
life because um I just don't have the
attention span living here in a house
with internet that I did living in a
cave with no internet and just a limited
number books to read so you read
everything you got no matter how dry and

dull and complicated and difficult to

read it is then towards the

third let's see fourth or the second

from the bottom is uh I've got history

like gibbons's Decline and fall of the

Roman Empire highly recommended it's

it's really a tragic story though I mean

reading about the the gradual decline

and eventual collapse of the Roman

Empire it really is tragic it's it's

just kind of sad

sad and let's see oh I've got my

strategy book down there and some of my

sweethearts books about uh let's

see like pre-colombian America that kind

of thing and then at the bottom is like

fiction and poetry that kind of stuff

that's on the bottom shelf and like my

favorite stuff well let's

see top shelf I mean I really like my

two Zen class Classics book which is the

mumon Khan and the hean

Roku um even though it's it's not

Terra um suan of

course um my annotated poly English

dictionary which is the big book with

the blue cover that's all torn showing

the red the red binding underneath um I

spent hundreds of hours annotating like

adding pow and adding definitions to the

pows in there so that every single page

is just got pencil all in the margins of

of stuff that I added back when I was a

monk and let's

see I mean some of the most important

books I've ever read are actually on

that shelf battle for the Mind by

William Sergent I don't see it it's

probably let's

see yeah it's on there somewhere and

let's

see golly Miracle of love stories about

NE Crowley Baba which is on the second

shelf really is one of of my favorite

books of all time it's just an amazing

book it's it's about the closest book

you can read to actually being in the

presence of an enlightened being or at

least an extremely extraordinarily

highly Advanced

one and let's

see Moby Dick down in the bottom the

idiot dostv is the idiot which is

probably my favorite novel I've got down

there and see what

else I guess that's good for uh I guess

that's good for uh my bookcase and with

regard to digital books I mean I've got

the book of the new son by Gan wolf

which is one of my I mean I consider

that to be like modern American

scripture that could be like a a holy

book or something as far as I'm

concerned and like Charles Murray's

human accomplishment I think that's what

it's called that was really an important

book for me to read it's uh Charles
Murray I mean he's more famous for
writing the bell curve but he wrote this
book in which he goes with like
encyclopedias from all over the world
not just like in the English language
but like Japanese encyclopedias
encyclopedias from like arabic speaking
countries just all over the place and
like the the biographical entries that
have the most to say about them you know
the longest biographical entries he
would all calculate this in to who were
the most significant people in history
with regard to a number of things like
art music science technology just these

different

fields and so he he compiles this list

of the most important influential people

in the world the most accomplished

humans at least Within These certain

Fields philosophy was one and it turns

out that most of the significant human e

conf even according to like Chinese

encyclopedias Japanese encyclopedias

Indian encyclopedias the most important

accomplishments like

overwhelmingly come from Europe that

Europe was just this I don't know what

You' call it just it was just this

created this

Genesis of just Innovation and so forth

and it's almost all men and there's he

has a chapter explaining why it is is
that you know there are so few women
that are like in the top 100 you know
maybe just like two or three like Marie
cury was of the European women I think
she was like the most influential in
regard to science of all women although
her husband was more important than she
was and I think the highest ranking
female across the board was a Japanese
woman who lived like around the 10th
Century who wrote this novel called The
Tale of Genji that she is like the most
important accomplished influential
females Within These certain Realms of
all time I'm sure like in politics you'd

have more important females like Queen
Elizabeth the or even like Margaret
Thatcher or somebody
but um his his explanation is first of
all that women are just more inclined to
have other priorities in life than just
obsessing on a career cuz if you're
going to be at the top of your game
you're going to be a Shakespeare or like
an Isaac Newton or some such a Bach some
a dostv somebody like that I mean you
got to just be
obsessed you know you can't have a lot
of other interests you can't be like
doing that and being a stay-at-home mom
at the same time so there's that I mean
Charles Murray even says that with

regard to his wife his wife once told
him that if one of our kids is sick you
can still go to work and and do your job
and not be like obsessing all all the
time I can't do that I mean just because
of Fe the way the female emotions are
wired her kid is sick she's going to be
thinking about the sick kid all the time
she can't just go on with her
day so there's that plus of course men
have a broader shaped bell-shaped curve
than women do and also of course they
were sociological like especially before
the 20th century before like the middle
of the 20th century women were just like
you know they they couldn't get the same

kind of educations and so forth as
men but it it's also true that the
bell-shaped curve of like intelligence
is broader for males than for females in
the human species and so not only the
stupidest morons but also the most
brilliant super Geniuses are more likely
to be men and of course feminists just
can't take that at all they just can't
stand
it that just in just about any field the
most qualified person is likely to be
male simply because the bell-shaped
curve is broader for men so that the
people the the the highest extreme tend
to be all
male but anyways it's an interesting

book um I've got a number of other books

on on my computer that um I'd have to

like go through my my files and look

through them but those are some of the

important

ones and so I mean that's that's good

enough for now I mean this is this is

going to be an obscenely long Q&A

especially if I don't like keep it

concise so I'm just going to move on

next question this is from the Proto

sudo monk who I haven't heard from in a

while this he was asking questions under

an alias

and the Proto sudam monk

says why is the practice of yoga so

vastly underestimated in Terra Buddhism
and then he continues I think here given
the fact that yoga has been around 5,000
years in India wouldn't it be extremely
likely that all the arahant in the time
of the Buddha were all practicing yogis
particularly the five Aesthetics the
ones that were the ripest for
enlightenment and wasn't the Buddha
probably well practiced in yoga
as The Story Goes his former teachers
were probably yogis this is probably
where the derogation comes from and I'm
not exactly sure what the protos sudo
monk is referring to with regard to yoga
I mean yoga in general like in like as a
Buddhist term it just means spiritual

practice like any kind of meditation
would be yoga any kind of moral
self-restraint especially at the more
advanced levels of like extreme
renunciation and just you know guarding
the sense doors and all that that would
be yoga you know yoga is like y like
yoking or restraint at least that's one
way of interpreting the term I mean it
has the same proto-indo-european root as
as uh the English word
yoke so given the fact that yoga has
been around 5,000 years in India he's
got a capital Y and I mean yoga as as a
system that is called yoga first of all
I'm a little skeptical it's been around

for 5,000 years I mean that would be well back into the Indus Valley Civilization and they had some kind of yogic practices some of those seals they've they've found in like the ruins of of the indis Valley Cities you know they have like it looks like people sitting in meditation and so forth and there's a good chance that the shamana uh traditions of ancient India including jism and Buddhism and aism had their roots in this atheistic yogic kind of spiritual system that was you know in it was like mainstream in in the old indis valley civilization so but I mean 5,000 years is kind of a guess it would seem to me and what is called yoga with

a capital Y is derived from another one
of these from Dem monic Traditions that
was called Sonia and it's mentioned in
in the Buddhist texts the Sonia system
and
Sonia um it had its own peculiar
philosophy and it also had you know like
meditative practices and so forth
and at some point after the Buddhist
time the Sonia system kind of split and
some of the Sonia philosophers they they
kind
of got incorporated into the vdic
tradition they became Hindu by accepting
the authority of the vdas and accepting
the existence of like a supreme god like

Brahman or Brahma and they became known
as theistic Sanka whereas like the older
unreformed version of Sanka was just
called atheistic Sanka so you had
atheistic Sania which is just still
called Sanka and then you had theistic
Sania which became called
yoga and within yoga you've got
different strands you've got Raja
yoga ha yoga like the just putting your
body into pretzels I mean that's not
even really one of on the list you've
got Bak yoga or the the yoga devotion
Nana yoga the The Yoga of knowledge
Karma Yoga The Yoga of service or action
and Raja yoga which is generally more
the the buddhistic kind of of yoga of

just like self-restraint and meditation
and so forth so I mean with regard to
yoga with a small why of spiritual
practice which had its like ancestral
roots in the indis valley civilization
sure you know it's like most of these
Advanced practitioners were following
that General tradition but capital Y
Yoga which is theistic Sanka first of
all it didn't exist yet in the Buddhist
time time and it was just one strand of
this whole prehistoric tradition or this
tradition with its roots in prehistory
of just the idea that you know it's more
Dharma is more important than any idea
of God that that Dharma is the origin of

like um ethics for example and that this
world is not a good place and we should
Escape from it that kind of thing that
that kind of philosophy with the
spiritual practices to help you like
work out your karma and so forth uh it
just goes back into the the indis valley
civilization and it was like uh
eventually evolved in by the Buddhist
time into Sanka Buddhism also although
Buddhism had a lot of vadic like
terminology and ideas added jism the
aicas and so forth and there are
probably lots more
so what is the question I should
probably what why is the practice of
yoga so vastly underestimated in terava

Buddhism well I mean technically terava
Buddhism is a kind of yoga if you're
using yoga as like spiritual practice in
general it may be the protos sudo monk
is referring to yoga that involves OAS
or the you know the bodily
postures um and I mean the the full
lootus was apparently adopted by terraa
Buddhists and early on but I'm not 100%
sure what the Proto suda Monk Is is
referring to here I mean there's three
different ways you could interpret yoga
I suppose just yoga a spiritual practice
in general along like ancient in like
even prehistoric North Indian lines
which I mean Buddhism did ganism did the

aicas did you know anyone who wasn't
like a Brahman fire worship being priest
in the Buddhist time who was spiritual
was probably going along with this this
the shamana
Traditions or you could have the capital
Y Yoga of theistic Sanka which didn't
really exist in the Buddhist time Sonia
did but I mean it was just one of many
Traditions to derive from this shamanic
early tronic tradition and then you just
got like the the small Y Yoga Yoga again
of ha yoga of you know just assuming the
the various bodily positions and doing a
few other things like fasting and water
netti and string nety where you're like
using like sinus floss you know you're

flossing your sinus cavities and

swallowing along strips of cloth and

like pulling them back out again and

that kind of

thing so I'm not exactly sure what the

Proto sudam Monk Is is exactly referring

to but the same general tradition that

gave rise to what is called yoga

also helped to give rise to Buddhism and

many others and it's just meditation in

general seems to have derived from

this so I'm not sure exactly why the

protos sudo monk would say that the

practice of yoga is vastly

underestimated in Terra Buddhism I don't

I don't fully understand that and so I'm

just going to move on to the Proto sudo monks next question after I mean he includes some some sayings of Swami saand that uh I mean if you want to read those you can go back to Q&A number 130 and look in the comments under the YouTube video so anyways the next question is why not integrate the practice of yoga as a preparation for neana and then he continues here from my experience yoga seems to do what it says and it feels like a game Cher compared to just drilling the noting method into a very distracted dispers stressed out not relaxed mind well I mean that's just not the way you're supposed to do it anyway so deep relaxation and

concentration is much more achievable
hence Insight is much closer it seems
extremely logical I don't understand why
Buddhist frowns upon yoga so much they
see it as lesser but frankly unless you
are fully enlightened it seems to be
extremely useful thoughts and again I'm
not even sure what he's referring to as
yoga whether it's just the yogic
Traditions which Buddha follows you know
the with their roots in the prehistoric
Indus Valley Civilization probably or
the capital Y Yoga of theistic
Sanka which I mean the Buddha just the
philosophy of theistic Sanka really is
inferior to the philosophy of Buddha in

my opinion and then you've got um this
ha yoga so but I mean he's he seems to
be implying that if you just practice
Buddhism without practicing something
else you're going to have like this
distracted mind but I mean if you really
live the life of becoming a monk like
what terata Buddhism is based on you
know step number one is
renunciation then you I mean if you
practice the whole thing of dhama not
just Western secular attempts at terraa
Buddhism but terraa Buddhism the way it
is described in the texts then I mean
the problem is much
reduced that you're definitely not going
to have that much of a distracted

dispersed stressed out

mind that that the distracted dispersed

stressed out mind for somebody trying to

do Terra AO meditation is is caused by

them not practicing the whole method

they're just picking the stuff that's

convenient for them they're not doing

the whole thing you know so they're just

picking and choosing what they're going

to follow and then it's

incomplete surprise

surprise so I mean if if you're a lay

person and just following everything

that a a a Buddhist renuncian is

supposed to follow just isn't convenient

for you then if something else helps if

practicing some kind of yoga and I still don't know what he's talking about exactly um if practicing some kind of yoga helps then fine I mean if it works then go with it if it doesn't work then don't let's see so I guess that's that's it for uh Proto sudam mon I think so I'm just going to go on to the next question which is from Joe do and Joe do says is the dolly llama enlightened and I mean I discussed this in a recent Q&A not with regard to the doy Lama with regard to a lot of people that are considered to be enlightened like
oh what's his name gosh I can't remember his name now he's he he declares himself to be enlightened on his on his website

page

one now I don't remember his name but

there are a lot of people who are

considered to be

enlightened and just to say just because

they don't seem enlightened because they

don't live up to your preconceived

notions of what an enlightened being

should be like um I mean

that's I mean it's very problematic

there was a a a Buddhist

School sometimes they were called the

yogachara logicians you know they were

like medieval North Indian text or

Buddhist sect Buddhist School sometimes

called the Daga school they were

logicians you know they they

Incorporated logic into their dhama and

and some of the stuff they came up with

was really profound like bare sensation

with no perceptual interpretation is as

though there's no sensation at all that

kind of thing which I agree with but

they considered like the classic

problematic premise is that a person any

person is

enlightened because logically you can't

verify that it's just purely

problematic so is the doy Lama

enlightened well

maybe um I kind of doubt it it may be

that he really is the

the Incarnation of a long line of llamas

that he's like an avatar and and I guess
the Dal Lama is considered to be an
avatar of Manus god of wisdom who is a
kind of bodh
satva um you'd think that if he was the
god of wisdom he might be enlightened
but I'm not 100% sure about that because
manuser is more of a Mahayana being than
a
teravan uh it may be that I mean it's my
understanding that some Mahayana
Buddhists will accept that
that some bodh svas are already fully
enlightened then they're still bodh svas
which is kind of I mean it doesn't work
that way in

Terra but I mean I would guess that he
probably isn't fully enlightened but I
would guess that he's wiser than the
average
person but who knows I don't know I'm
just going to move on to the next
question here this is from
philes and philes says I've started to
believe eug Krishna mty was an arant
even though he would laugh in my face
for implying that he even says in one
interview that he is completely blown
out and that people don't realize
there's no one there when they're
talking to him but he does this without
using Buddhist vocabulary thoughts well
I mean this is like the same question as

the previous one except directed towards
eugi Krishna murty instead of towards
the doy Lama um it may be I mean eug
chrishna murty he didn't follow any
rules and he just I mean he he like shat
on rules even more than Jay Krishna mty
did like I I mentioned before that he
sent a picture to the doy Lama of some
porn star having sex with an elephant
with the the picture modified slightly
so that you could see that it was
supposed to be the Buddha's mother you
know who had like this dream of the
elephant when she got pregnant with with
Goa and um I me so he would do stuff
like that

but I mean it could be that he really
did attain something that the ideas of
what an enlightened being it has to be
like is just the Terra of Buddhist just
don't get it Terra Buddhist say that in
order to be fully enlightened you have
to be an absolutely perfected Saint who
never does anything wrong you have
perfect
morality and I'm skeptical of that so
I'm
openminded with regard to somebody like
eug chrishna mty really having attained
something but I mean how can you
possibly
know I mean in ug Christian M's case he
actually underwent physical changes I

mean he he like it's like he reverted to

like a prepubescent bodily State I mean

I haven't read the details

but I don't

know how can you possibly know that and

it may be that an enlightened being just

doesn't even it's not even a valid

statement within a ssar context it's

just purely

problematic and I keep getting asked

these questions is so and so fully

enlightened well

maybe so I'm just going to move on next

question and this is from Kama comma

comma comma Comma Chameleon who used to

go by the name of schaden and now is

just kind of he's just become rudderless

he's just broken free of his Moorings

and is changing his name on on a pretty

pretty

frequently so anyways comma comma comma

comma Comma Chameleon says Spiritual

music

recommendations and then he in the

standard bullet point he says I like the

keeper of seven keys by

Helloween it was a song about a wise

Sage who went up against Satan to rescue

mankind um Spiritual music

recommendations well certainly not

Buddhist because Buddhism really does

doesn't have very good music Hindu music

tends to be good and I consider Shiva to

have better music than Vishnu as a

general

rule so I mean just getting into like

Indian trance music the only kind of

music that I can like type like if like

I'm editing my

book um I can listen to like Goa trance

music and still function and and that's

about the only kind of music I can

listen to without being like distracted

by the

music um there is a lot of Indian music

with I mean it's like taking like om

namashivaya and just putting it to music

that kind of thing like Hindu mantras

set to music like there's one um Lord

Shiva and deep meditation which is just
om namashivaya over and over again with
like electronic music in the background
that kind of thing or how about uh um
shiva's Indian shiva's India by 1200
micrograms I mean I don't know if you
call it super spiritual but at least it
has a like a religious theme to
it but yeah I mean sort
of like sitar music too like raagas
sitar and TAA is an excellent com
musical combination like of instruments
so that' be good like old Ravi Shankar
stuff that' be all right anyways I'm
just going to move on to kak kak Kama
chameleon's next question which is
spiritual places

recommendations and then the bullet point says the only place I've known to be spiritual was the ocean I've seen people I know who walk down the beach just to keep everything together the air seems to dilute anger and occasionally I've heard of people just abandoning Society to take to the see yeah Sailors are notoriously spiritual people at least uh at least ishmail and Moby Dick was but uh in addition to the ocean the mountains up high in the mountains there's there's a good reason why mountains are associated with uh meetings with God and so forth it's not just that you're higher up to outer

space but just the the clarity and

silence and I mean it's it's has a good

effect mountains and and and the shore

are are like the two most spiritual

places just geographically or

geologically although with regard to

specific

sites um I mean bod Gaia definitely is

it's worth going to if you're a

Buddhist so I would add bod Gaia to that

list or any of the the the four main

um like uh pilgrimage places like the

place where the Buddha died

also and uh I I always blank out that

name of the place both names the modern

one and the Ancient

One between the two Sal trees I remember

that

though so let's see here I think I'll

just move on to comma comma comma comma

Comm chameleon's third question

spiritual animal

recommendation and then the bullet point

says the Farmer's Almanac says to pick a

pet based on your personality habits but

I don't know what's the best spiritually

like picking a rescue animal they seem

to have more character or just feeding

whatever animal I come across or

choosing a specialty animal like a

helper monkey or a PTSD dog or an ant

farm well yeah I think it would depend

on just what intuitively you're drawn to

what you feel most comfortable with some

people are dog people some people are

cat people um

like Carta says he's he's lived with a

number of Zen Masters all of them

cats personally I'm more of a dog person

than a cat

person um and you just have like a a

deep bond with some animal I mean dogs

have a certain spirituality to them

because they are capable of

unconditional love for for you that I

mean is rare to find in a human I mean

you can kick your dog and the dog will

still love you and you kick your woman

and she might just decide that she's had

enough of

that um but also um just aside from any
kind of like spiritual connection and
speaking of which I've got this dog
named Tater if you've seen my q&as you
probably noticed Tater walking around
and I do think it's possible that Tater
was like an infant who died in my in
some previous life you know it's like
like Tater has like this personality of
sort of like at least a one-year-old
child you know when they're still not
able to speak yet but they've already
started forming like a personality
they're kind of aware of what's going on
around them I think it's possible that I
may have that this dog I've got was like

a a human baby in a previous life

possibly my own human baby but I'm not

sure about that it's just a guess

so I mean fish fish in an aquarium

that's a good meditation object if if

any of you have seen my aquarium videos

that really just sitting in front of an

aquarium and watching the fish silently

gliding

around that that's that's a very

relaxing beneficial kind of relatively

Elementary meditation that a person can

do so there's that too I would I

wouldn't really recommend the ant farm

and I'm just going to move on to the

next question and we're getting we're

getting down there we're yeah it's still

going to be 3 hours but it's it's fairly

good I mean I've done some videos that

were three and a half hours with fewer

questions than this so I guess I'm doing

all right this is from Ken Ken says did

you meditate 50,000 hours in your 30

years as a monk and I actually got out

the

calculator and it was

I mean if you average like 5 hours a day

of

meditation for 30 years it comes out to

a little less than 50,000 hours so

that's just from like sitting

cross-legged

that maybe sitting cross-legged in

meditation I did like maybe 40,000 I
don't know I was I was averaging at
least 6 hours a day my first 10 years
and then it kind of tapered off maybe my
second 10 years it was like four five
and then towards the end I just really
had gotten as far as I could with it and
had was sort of losing my definitely had
lost my momentum by the time I finally
disrobed but uh I mean if you include
walking meditation I probably did 50,000
in 30 years so Ken second question how
many hours per day did you meditate
seated and I already I already mentioned
that I mean it was I was averaging about
6 hours a day my first 10 years as a
monk maybe four or five my second 10

years and then it kind of gradually

tapered down I mean I was still I mean

even shortly before I dropped out you

know it was still couple hours at

least

so and then and then you include walking

meditation like towards the end I was

getting more benefit from walking

meditation than sitting meditation so I

was doing more walking than than sitting

cross-legged and so let's see the third

question from Ken what was the longest

period you spent in silence

and I'm not exactly sure I never really

kept track of how long I spent in

silence I mean a monk is forbidden by

the rules of monastic discipline from
taking a vow of
silence so there is that I mean there
are some monks including one of my
teachers who would go wizzy bait it's
called in Burmese where you just don't
talk maybe just to make confession
and then you know you're not taking a
total vow of silence I mean a monk is
required to make
confession on on
occasion but uh I mean even when I was
alone I'd live alone in a cave I'd be
talking to a stray dog or talking to a
lizard there was a a kind of chameleon
lizard in fact that I named Linda you
know I'd say hey Linda how's it going in

fact when you're when you're alone and
you don't have anyone to talk to people
do have like a talking in in inct I
remember once finding myself bending
over this little weed outside my cave
saying who's a good little weed H who's
a good weed yes you you're a good little
weed and it's just you know you're just
talking just talking to yourself
sometimes which isn't a good habit but
Hermits notoriously talk to themselves
largely because humans do have an
instinct to talk and like babies when
they're babbling you know already the
talking Instinct has kicked in even
though they don't really know how to

speak a language yet so what was the
longest period I spent in silence it's
hard to
say few days at least
probably and I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from Young
phenomenon and this is our last
questioner and he's got two questions
and the first question of these two
questions is as follows I have heard you
mention Carl young a few times in these
videos I would like to know what you
think of the man and his
work well I mean I'm No Authority on
Carl Young I have read several things by
Carl Young I I've got his his essay on
synchronicity on the bookshelf there I'm

pretty sure at least I used to have it
there um I've read his answer to job
which was good I like that I've read
some weird stuff that he he wrote I mean
when I was in Burma um I had access to
it was like the collected works of Carl
Young and he wrote a lot of really
obscure stuff about like alchemy that I
read some of his stuff on Alchemy like
it's it's just etched in my memory you
Carl Young wrote
about um there was some alchemical sect
I don't even know what country it was in
maybe Syria or some such place where it
was it was like a religious cult they
were Alchemists but it was like

religious Alchemists and maybe most most Alchemists were was kind of like a a yogic thing where they had this Temple and there was this tradition I guess that if a certain person I think they had to be like have like blue eyes maybe even blonde they walked in you were supposed to like kidnap this person and then you you trap them in this vat of olive oil so that just their head was sticking up out of the olive oil you know the rest of their body is just submerged in olive oil and then all you feed them is figs that have been soaked in olive oil and you just keep the person in the oil and keep feeding them these figs soaked in oil until their

skin just becomes waxy and translucent and then you rip the head off this person while he's still alive I mean he stops being alive by the time you've done ripping his head off you don't cut it off you have to like pull it off and by then it was like supposedly his whole body had just become soft and waxy from soaking in this oil for so long then you take the head and you preserve it in some way it's already fairly good pres fairly well preserved from all the oil I guess you put it into a box surrounded by some sort of like cotton or or kpo or something and then you put it into this niche in the temple and you could use it

for prognostication you could ask the head questions and it would answer at least to somebody trained in hearing answers from this head so there's that I read psyche and symbol as a as like a teenager which was just over my head at the time it was one of my father's books um you I've I've read quite a lot of Carl Young but I've never really mastered Carl Young's psychology or philosophy and um ROM dos used to say that um like Sigman Freud was operating at the level of second chakra I mean he just kind of boiled everything down to sex but Yung was operating at third chakra so I've I've recalled that that's that's some little nugget of information

I can divulge with regard to Carl Young
is that ROM do considered him to be
functioning primarily at the level of
third
chakra um but aside from that I really
don't like all of his stuff about Thea
and the Animus and the Persona that was
brought up earlier I really have never
bothered to master Carl Young's
psychology so I can't really say much
more about Carl Young than I already
have and so I'm just going to move on to
Young phenomenon's second question which
is the very last
question and it's not even fully three
hours yet we're doing good and young

phenomenon says have you read the red book and I do think the red book is on my bookcase I got it for Christmas like two years ago but like I say I hardly ever read books anymore it's weird as a as a monk I used to read a lot before I was a monk I think I read even more it was like I couldn't really sleep at night without reading for at least half an hour before I became a monk and then the reading kind of got replaced by meditating and now it's just I just go to bed and don't have to do anything before I go to bed and usually I manage to fall asleep pretty easily so I do have the red book I just haven't read it and I guess the red book is just sort of

like personal stuff that he wrote that
wasn't intended for publication but then
somebody went and went and done gone
published it
anyway so I mean that's it I finished
finished answering all the questions and
so I'm done and or at least I'm fixing
to being done because I just got to say
the last standard stuff that I always
say like I should say it at the
beginning but I almost never do you have
any questions about something you think
I can answer which would probably mainly
be with regard to terraa
Buddhism early like pre- terraa Buddhism
Buddhism in general although some

Mahayana stuff I'm not really well

versed in like Eastern philosophy in

general there's I I mean it's it's

getting a little more iffy and sketchy

but a lot of the time I can answer stuff

about Eastern philosophy Western

philosophy I have a fairly good

knowledge of Western philosophy

mysticism in general meditation in

general like

Burma living in

caves

biology human evolution that kind of

thing I'm uh there's a good chance I

would be able to answer questions about

that and no more than three questions

per episode please and if questions

continue to be as many as this time we

may go down to two and pray that I do

not reduce it

further and if you like um you like this

video I mean if you made it this far you

probably do unless you just hate

watching then smash the like button

don't just click it or whatever just

smash the son of a [__] subscribe if

you haven't already and be happy and now

I'm going to stop recording

alrighty then hello and welcome to

question and answer number whatever it

is I am your host poo

basa and I'm in a very slightly

zombified state of mind today so I hope

it will not interfere with the quality

of my question answering in the past

I've been similarly

zombified and just getting into to the

the flow of the Q&A usually is

sufficient that I'm more or less un

zombified at least 15 minutes into the

thing or 20 or something so I got the

beverage with the little paper umbrella

demonstrating my taste and style and

sophistication and so

forth and we might as well just Wade

right into

this and there's there's like

not like an obscenely large number of

questions so I think we should easily

stay under three hours unless I just go

on a complete digressive rant on

something and so let's just do this and

the first question oh I should also say

I'm doing this in for a change of

scenery in our newly painted bedroom

which the I mean the paint is kind of

nice the color is kind of a subdued dark

color for a bedroom but it's not so good

for a studio because the lighting is not

so good

but that's just the way it

is so now I start answering

questions and the first question is from

Young phenomenon and I think this

question was submitted and then it was

like submitted under an older video and

then it got deleted or something

possibly by the person who posted it but

it's too late because it's already I

already uh copied it and it's first on

the list so young phenomenon says my

beloved Kine has some serious joint

issues but he isn't too old yet I'm

faced with the choice of doing what

little I can for him since I can't

afford surgery or taking him in to be

euthanized he has a really hard time

getting around and I am struggling to
make this make the right choice here I
don't want to keep him around out of
attachment to him while he suffers but I
also do not want to end his life
prematurely since his joints are really
the only part of him failing with age I
could use some advice
poasa what do you think would be the
right choice well from the Buddhist
point of view like the Orthodox terraa
Buddhist point of view probably other
schools of Buddhism would agree
euthanizing an animal
is interfering with its Karma to some
degree and is
unethical so euthanizing animals even if

they're in pain from the Buddhist
ethical point of view which differs from
the standard Western ethical points of
view it's still unethical to euthanize
an animal that is in pain mainly because
instead of let letting nature take its
course you are like playing God or I
mean you are literally terminating the
life of this animal of this sentient
being so I mean this this story this
question reminds me of this monk I knew
in Burma he pretty much hated the human
race but he loved animals there are
people like that schopenhauer was
another example of
this and this monk was kind of like a

Burmese

schopenhauer and he loved animals and he

had this dog Uncle Wiggly I called him

who started getting it was like

intestinal cancer or just some kind of

blockage so that he couldn't poop

anymore and this monk this Buddhist monk

like on a daily basis he's got his

finger up the dog's butt like helping to

get the poop out because the dog isn't

able to do it anymore because of the

obstruction there and I mean he did this

for months until the dog finally passed

away so with regard to a a dog that's

got like bad joint pain um the first

thing that comes to mind is I mean you

could give it small doses of what humans

take for joint pain you know maybe you know aspirin or ibuprofen I I really don't know I mean I'm I'm not in a position to give Veterinary advice but some kind of like maybe a anti-inflammatory given to the dog might be helpful um I should have consulted with my sweetheart because she's like an expert on dogs and she might be able to give advice on this but it didn't occur to me before starting the video and I don't think you want me to just go off and ask her with a like nobody sitting in front of the camera for like three minutes so you might want to consult with somebody who knows about you know

animal medications what you would do for
um you know inflamed joints or whatever
it could be like degenerating joints
like the bone itself is degenerating in
which case I'm not sure what you could
possibly do but uh you know making the
dog's life comfortable so it doesn't
have to get around very much might be
something you could do but really it's
it's you have to consult your own heart
your own intuition to decide what would
be the best under these circumstances
because after all it is Young
phenomenon's dog and so young phenomenon
is in the best position to decide what
is best um although you should bear in
mind that just from the Buddhist point

of view if if he considers the Buddhist
point of view to be important then the
Buddhist point of view would just be
keep the dog as comfortable and well
cared for and loved and just let nature
take its course I mean you can give it
medications and so forth but uh euth
euthanasia is still essentially murder
from a Buddhist point of
view but again
the Buddhist point of view is not
necessarily
authoritative on anybody who watches
these
videos so I'm just going to move on to
the next

question which is from David and David
says practically speaking how does one
burn up their karma I hear people
talking about this but they either don't
talk about how it is actually
practically accomplished or they talk a
load of gibberish
which gives one the impression that they
don't know how to accomplish this
themselves
well um burning up one's karma is not
really a Buddhist thing a Buddhist is
not supposed to be trying to burn up
their karma other than just in a way
also letting nature take its course
which would mean you just live your life
with a kind

of acceptance or equinity so that you're not generating more karma or at least you're keeping the generation of new Karma to a minimum by just self-restraint saying out staying out of trouble keeping five precepts you know living a moral ethical life a simplified quiet harmless life and so past Karma will be burning itself out and you'll be making less fresh Karma but you're never going to exhaust your karma that was that was like a a philosophy of like the Janes The Janes presumably still believe that you're supposed to exhaust your karma in order to become enlightened and so they would try to speed up the

process Through self- Torture and so
forth but a Buddhist if you're just
following the middle path you're not
seeking trouble you're not running away
from it either necessarily you're just
letting whatever happens happen and just
not reacting to it
with attraction or aversion that is
going to be creating more
karma so I guess I answer that question
because I'm moving on to the second
question from David which is as follows
as far as I understand it ending the
cycle of rebirths involves elimination
of all desires and aversions while along
with Karma which along with karma is the
factors which Propel one into being

reborn is this your understanding or are there other factors I assume when one is dying there are they are reviewing their entire life and at that moment all kinds of regrets and desires are formed which causes us to be propelled into another rebirth to set things
straight well I mean not necessarily I mean somebody who just dies of a sudden Blow To The Head for example doesn't have time to be reviewing their entire life unless it's like in this kind of a a BTO kind of a realm
immediately after
death like near-death experiences the review stuff happens after the body is

clinically dead and the spirit is

elsewhere so let's see here let me

review this question let's see that

ending the cycle of reverse involves

elimination of all desires and

aversions uh which along with

Karma um is the fact which Propel one

into being reborn yeah yeah that's

that's basically correct um is this your

understanding or are there other factors

well I

mean yeah you still have Karma that is

causing you to be reborn and you still

are identifying with that Karma you know

you're identifying with your

personality and

so see how do I how do I explain this I

mean it's not just

Karma that causes you to be reborn

because even an enlightened being

supposedly well no no that's not right

because like an enlightened being they

don't they're not enlightened before

they're born so yeah it is it is karma

which is just the momentum of your

mental States and if you become

enlightened you may still have these

mental States but they they no longer

have any momentum you know it's like

they are without mass or some such so

that they no longer have this this

karmic effect to create future events

after I mean to the extent of causing

you to be reborn and there's all kinds
of problematic issues like how is it
that a fully enlightened being still has
karmic fruition and there's a another
question on the list that touches upon
this same issue it is a kind of
messiness in ancient Indian Buddhist
philosophy and part of the reason for
that is ancient Indian Buddhist
philosophy uh arose in India before
India had developed a kind of formal
logic and so there are
self-contradictions certain messiness
just bad
systematization in terava Buddhist
philosophy and to some degree the
Mahayana Buddhists uh were in a somewhat

better position because they had a more
sophisticated kind of logic in India at
the time that Mahayana arose hundreds of
years after after the earlier
schools but I'm I'm like digressing away
from the question here let's
see oh boy yeah I'm I'm still slightly
zombified I have to admit as far as I
and it's not because I'm hung over I
didn't get drunk last night so shame on
you for even suspecting
that so let's see here the cyc re
rebirth involves elimination of all
desires and aversions which along with
karma is the factors which Propel one
into being reborn well I mean the

desires and aversions are themselves

creating the karma which is the only

thing that passes from One Life to the

next according to

traditional like early

Buddhism so is this your understanding

or there other factors it's karma karma

is what does it and an enlightened being

somehow transcends and like neutralizes

their karma so that it no longer has the

power

to cause you to be reborn in into

another

life so let's

see I assume when one is dying they are

reviewing their entire life and at the

moment all kinds of regrets and desires

are formed not necessarily which causes
to be propelled in another re birth to
set things straight no what propels you
into another birth is just the momentum
of your mental states which is your
karma and I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from anara
Lion I think I think that's how you
pronounce it Anar lion or anara lion I'm
pretty sure it's not
anarion anyways enar lion says is it
possible to get psychic powers through
Perfection of fourth jna what does
terava scriptures say about this
traditionally in Buddhism it's through
cultivating the jic states fourth jna

being the highest one that result in

psychic powers

so um it's not that fourth JN

necessarily causes the psychic powers

it's just that it's sort of preparing

the

ground uh for these psychic powers to

manifest

themselves so yeah and in like in Terra

Buddhism there's what is called the dry

Vision to arant who is a fully

enlightened being that never mastered

Janna and so they don't have any psychic

powers so yeah it is true that according

to early Buddhist tradition psychic has

come through mastering these these

Advanced meditative States called

Jan so I'm just going to move on the

next question this is from the sabats

which might be one person or it could be

a plurality of

people and the savatours

say in the bhavat Gita as it is and then

in parentheses it's i k c

n 1 ver 36 the translation or

explanation States quote according to

vdic injunctions there are six kinds of

aggressors one a poison Giver two one

who sets fire to the house three one who

attacks with deadly weapons four one who

plunders riches five one who occupies

another's land and six one who kidnaps a

wife such aggressors are at once to be

killed and no sin is incurred by killing such aggressors unquote what is the Buddhist point of view especially karmically well you can't just from the Buddhist point of view you can't kill people with no sin incurred although sin really is not a Buddhist term it would be

ausa you know unskillful UNH wholesome Karma Bad

Karma so a person could be like a serial killer and still the Executioner who lops off the serial Killer's head with an axe is still I mean he's still guilty of terminating a human life I mean there's all kinds of like complications ramifications mitigating factors and all

this but the fact remains that exe even
an executioner who's doing the will of
the people or the will of the King the
will of the government by executing
violent criminals still I mean he's not
a good person he is a killer himself
it's just that he has government
sanction for doing what he's doing and
there is a story in in the rules of
monastic discipline about a monk who had
like like kindly motives or
compassionate motives who advised an
executioner the headsman to keep keep
his ax sharp and try to finish off the
victim with just one chop just for the
sake of being painless and Humane and

even that was condemned by the Buddha according to the texts and this monk was guilty of like he was complicit in Murder because he's giving advice on the Executioner on how to kill people and if the Executioner took his advice that rendered the monk complicit he was like an accomplice in the killing of another human which is a paraja offense which results in a mon being excommunicated from the SAA for
life so I'm just going to move on to the seur second question which is is the doy Lama truly enlightened when he is on public record as telling people to get the covid jab and telling a boy aged about 10 to suck his tongue well I

already answered the question of whether

I consider the Dal Lama to be

enlightened which was I don't know I

mean enlightened beings are problematic

it is a problematic

premise

so this is just sort of I mean he's just

sort of questioning my I don't know by

pointing out two things that are

presumably blameworthy that the dolly

Lama is supposedly culpable of one is

telling people to get the covid jab and

I don't know if it is impossible for an

enlightened being to promote vaccines I

mean some Co Jabs technically were not

vaccines they were like a totally

different kind of animal some of the
covid vaccines were legitimate vaccines
I think the Johnson and Johnson vaccine
was actually uh a vaccine based on like
denatured viruses or whatever like like
a polio vaccine or a small box vaccine
or some
such small poox I should
say so I'm like encouraging people to
get
vaccinated um I don't think that
necessarily disqualifies somebody from
being enlightened even if some of those
so-called vaccines apparently have way
more negative side effects than were
people were admitting to for years and
were actually punishing people who are

bringing up what are now considered to
be just undeniable facts with regard to
telling a boy to suck his tongue that's
a Tibetan cultural thing the dolly llama
was probably just trying to joke around
with the kid and in this case he dropped
a brick you know he's just trying to
speak at a tenure level or a child's
level and it didn't didn't work out very
well and again whether an enlightened
being is incapable of telling a joke
that backfires or
bombs
problematic so I mean regardless of any
dirt you could dig up against the dolly
Lama unless you've got like video

footage of him like screaming and

beating on people that kind of thing

then still I don't

know I would guess that he probably

isn't I mean he's supposedly an avatar

of um the

mahayan god of wisdom

manjusri and manri is a bodh SVA and I

don't think that manri is fully

enlightened although some Mahayana

schools redefined their own redefined

term of bodh satva so that you can have

fully enlightened buddhis svas even

though the Buddha himself ceased being a

budy sat when he became enlightened so

Mahayana schools I mean who knows with

regard

to exact terminology and so forth

because different mahayan schools will

have different definitions of the same

terms and all

that so I mean I would guess that Dal

Lama is wiser than the average

person but I would guess he probably

isn't fully enlightened but I mean I

have no way of knowing

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

question this is from Stellar Supreme

formerly known as Libra lamb and

occasionally still known as Libra Lam

and Stellar Supreme Etc says can you

share the main comforting thoughts you

had as a monk I think they deserve to be

an answer to a Q&A question for their
practical value and it is true when I
was a monk I had the three comforting
thoughts first comforting thought was
even if I make no significant progress
in this life at least I'm staying out of
trouble more or
less and that's still relatively true
maybe not as true as when I was a monk
but still I'm pretty much staying out of
trouble kind
of second of great comforting thoughts
is I think it's the first half of verse
63 of the Dum aana which goes the fool
who is aware of his foolishness is at
least wise to that extent so if you know
that you're a fool that means you have

some wisdom you're not a complete fool a complete fool is a fool who thinks he isn't a fool but a fool who knows that he's a fool isn't a complete fool he actually has some wisdom and that was a comforting thought to me at times as a monk and the third comforting thought comes from The Sermon on the Mount in the New Testament which is blessed are they who know their spiritual poverty for theirs is the kingdom of heaven or at least just even just the first half of that blessed are they who know their spiritual poverty although you had some Wise Guys Like St John of the Cross who interpreted Spirit of

pover poverty of spirit to mean that you
are essentially in fourth J and so your
mind was completely destitute of any
kind of perceptual
content but I really doubt that that's
what Jesus had in mind assuming that
Jesus of Nazareth really did say
that the
Christians may be even better than the
Mahayana Buddhists at reinterpreting
statements made by the founder of their
religion so let's just review one even
if I make no significant progress in
this life at least I'm staying out of
trouble more or less two the fool who is
aware of his foolishness is is at least
wise to that extent and three is blessed

are they who know their spiritual
poverty so I'm just going to move on to
Stellar Supreme etc's next question
which is are there more comforting
thoughts you've learned later that you
would incorporate in the same way as the
other three if you were a monk again no
I think those three were sufficient I
mean I could try to come up with
something you know to exist is to
transgress you that was that was sort of
like a a motto more than a comforting
thought but I mean there's there's more
you could add you know beware of goal
oriented Dharma that kind of thing but
those are more like motos that just

belong in their own

category and so I'm just going to move

on to Stellar Supreme etc's thirdd

question which is do you believe that

there was credibility to the super

natural claims in the Sanya paluta

denaya number two regarding the three

knowledges or visions they seem to be

both accessory and integral to the

nature of a sama samb Buddha and the sya

palasa is considered to be relatively

very old and it's important it is a

cardinal

suta and it's King AATA satu goes to see

the Buddha

and he asks him you know what are the

benefits of being a renunciant or some

some a Sam which would be like a philosopher a non-vedic philosopher essentially and so the Buddha gives this graduated talk starting with really like lower level you know it's like if you become a monk then you get more respect and better treatment and so forth you know that's sort of like the Bottom Rung and then the very top is like full Enlightenment and it is interesting to me that although he mentions the first four janas nowhere are the formless Jonas mentioned and furthermore nowhere are these four stages of ARA hood that I'm continually being pestered about mentioned at all in this suta which

would seem to indicate I mean it could be some circumstantial evidence that at the time that this sua was composed the four stages of AR Hood did not yet exist in Buddhist philosophy and also the four formless Jas possibly did not exist yet or at least they were not considered to be

janas so getting back to the question though um is do you believe that there was credibility to the supernatural claims so of the three knowledges so the three knowledges is the Buddha is giving like the the list of the six standard um psychic powers that you can get through for through through like jna or as your wisdom increases you get

you can get these six psychic powers and the last three that he mentions are also pretty much like traditionally bound up with becoming a Buddha like when you become enlightened as a fully enlightened Buddha not just a regular arant but a s Buddha you have the three knowledges that occur to you the first knowledge is remembering your past lives the second knowledge is seeing the arising and passing away of other beings according to their karma you know it's like you can sort of see the karma the karmic state of various beings what their Destiny is likely to consist of you know what their past has been like

you know in in general terms at the very least and then the third one the the highest psychic power is just the awareness of Enlightenment itself you know it's sort of like the awareness of Nirvana is sort of like Beyond mere Clairvoyance it's me Beyond merely the Divine eye the debach chaku it's it's it's higher than that it's the highest psychic power is just penetrating through samsara seeing through samsara
and attaining to
nbano so do I believe there is credibility to the supernatural claims um I suppose so I mean how how can you possibly know one way or the other for

sure though unless maybe you are also a

SAS Sam Buddha but according to

tradition um there's not going to be

another samasan Buddha until long after

Buddhism is completely gone from this

world although some people might say

it's gone

already so let's see here did I answer

the

question I mean the question is do I

believe that there was credibility to

the supernatural claims uh regarding the

three

knowledges and I

mean with regard to a a sasam Buddha I

mean how can you really know for sure

what the mental states of a fully
enlightened being are going to be like
and again there's there's a question
that kind of touches upon this later
on um and it's it's so hard to talk
about some of this stuff because if
you're talking about like the subjective
experience of a fully enlightened being
from the point of view of of like an
unenlightened being in
Samara it just doesn't really Jive and
even if you try to do it
skillfully you're going to have to be
dealing at two levels of reality
Ultimate Reality and samsaric
conventional reality
simultaneously and I mean for most

people it just goes whoop right over

their head

they just don't get it and I mean

there's nothing that you can do really

to fix that not I mean maybe there might

be some Zen master who just knows the

exact words to say or just the exact

time to just wall up somebody with a

stick that will just kind of knock their

damn Foolery out of their head and then

they'll they'll

see but I mean I can't hit you guys with

sticks I mean even Zen Masters really

can't hit people with sticks much

anymore because people are wimps now and

they'll they'll be offended and they'll

Sue and they'll be traumatized and
taking therapy for years afterwards and
it's just a big
mess so I do think that there is
plausibility but I mean
credibility it's it's kind of a a sticky
word for me I mean you're better off not
believing anything the Ana waga says
don't believe anything which doesn't
mean that you positively disbelieve
everything because disbelief is itself a
kind of belief you know somebody says
it's going to rain tomorrow and then
somebody says I don't believe it it's
not going to rain tomorrow well they're
just believing that it's not going to
rain tomorrow which is still a belief so

it's suspension of judgment it's it's um
skepticism in the classical sense of
just suspending judgment and not
believing one way or the other and
that's your best bet and for an
unenlightened
being to be trying to second guess the
mental states of a fully enlightened
being is just
silly so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from seov
action sead zida whose second guess is
the mental states of fully enlightened
beings on a regular
basis and SE action CAD zida who is a
silly person says when you say that

there is nobody there for an enlightened being and it's just a reflection of the karma of people around them doesn't this contradict the Buddhist teachings for example the Buddha said he could still feel pain despite not suffering Maham mogana getting beat into a pulp due to his past Karma or bajia getting killed by a cow on the loose yeah I mean there's I mean or for example the Buddha decided to teach the dhama out of compassion you know that's like a subjective emotional mental state inspiring the book Buddha to teach when one way of looking at an enlightened being is that there's really nobody there and why would a fully enlightened

being have compassion for beings that he
can see full well don't really
exist so the the Buddhist teachings as I
mentioned earlier are full of all kinds
of like logical messiness and
self-contradictions and so
forth but you can kind of Mak sense of
this by saying that a Buddha or an
enlightened being has mental States it's
just that in a way they are neutralized
because they no longer have karmic
momentum and so in a way an enlightened
being has mental States but he has
transcended those mental States and so
that they're they're practically
irrelevant they're irrelevant to like

his experience of existence assuming a
fully enlightened being experiences
anything
and again I mean trying to second guess
enlightened beings is just silly but
people keep asking me about this it's
like what could an enlightened being
feel this or does he feel that or does
he experience and it's
like I mean how do you answer these
questions
so I'll just I'll just start over again
when you say that there is nobody there
for an enlightened being and it's just a
reflection of the karma of people around
them doesn't this contradict the
Buddhist teachings to some degree yeah I

mean that is a

hypothesis that I mean it's one way of

looking at it and it does contradict

certain teachings where the Buddha is

just thinking these thoughts sometimes

if you read the text the Buddha is

thinking thoughts that a modern

Westerner cannot take seriously like in

the commentaries the Buddha is thinking

all these thoughts about how you know

once you know 5,000 years has elapsed

after his past passing away all of his

relics are going to coales and they're

going to give a a one last doat talk

levitating in the air and then that'll

be the end of dhama which is kind of

strange that dhama would end right after
the Buddha gives one last dhama talk but
why why that would kill dham I'm not
sure but there's all these I mean you
can find all kinds of stuff in the texts
you know the Buddha just bragging about
how great he is how people ought to
worship Him talking animal stories all
kinds of stuff that I mean you don't
have to take them seriously unless maybe
you're like a a Southeast Asian villager
with sort of a medieval mindset and you
just cannot dare to question any of it
for fear of going to
hell so you can say from a saric
objective point of view a fully
enlightened being still has mental

States but it's like the mental states

are

denatured they no longer have karmic

momentum and so I mean the enlightened

being no longer identifies with them in

in a sense the enlightened being is

empty but trying to explain this stuff

is

just it's it's

just an exercise in

futility futility of futility all is

futile and so I'm just going to move on

to se of action seot Z's second question

which is what are your thoughts on the

various heretical schools and teachers

mentioned in the texts and like the Sona

paluta the second suta of the dean Kaya
does start off practically with King
ajata satu going to the Buddha and
telling him you know what these
heretical teachers you know the six the
the six heretical teachers taught him
you would ask these questions what are
the benefits of the Holy life and I mean
you can find them throughout the sutas
and it's not very reliable
information because the Buddhist the
early Buddhists indulged in a fair
amount of religious propaganda just as
the Mahayana Buddhists later on just
turned the tables and just indulge in
like scathing religious propaganda
against the earlier Buddhists which in

my opinion is much worse because the
Mahayana Buddhists were essentially
slandering the Buddha himself and his
chief disciples and so forth you know
the earliest Buddhist mean it's like
they're saying well that's just kind of
the inferior vehicle you know etc etc
but getting back to the six heretical
teachers one of them was mahavira the
the founder the historical founder
anyway of
jism and you can read Jane texts and you
see that the Jane texts are are
considerably different from the terava
Buddhist or the early Buddhist version
of what mahavira would teach I mean the

early Buddhists had these six heretical
teachers including mahavira the founder
of the James who was called neant NATA
and I think NATA is just like a kind of
ridiculous name which means something
like son of
grandson so anyways I mean they make
them look like fools according to
Buddhist tradition mahavira founder of
The Janes vomited hot blood and died
simply because one or two of his
disciples converted to Buddhism and it's
not very
likely so you're going to get just like
this rough fairly inaccurate sketch of
what some of these teachers or what any
of them was teaching by reading the

Buddhist version because the Buddhist
version is just going to distort it sort
of like you know the the globalist media
distorts what like a right-wing populist
is saying you know they just twist it
into something ridiculous and then just
condemn the Ridiculousness of of their
own
twisting so anyways um if you read AK
W's history of Buddhism in India he he
mentions that um in addition to neant
natap the MAV the founder of The Janes
that a number of these other teachers
would all qualify as
ajivikas that mall goala is mainly the
one who's identified with the aiva

religion which is extinct now but it was

more popular than Buddhism in the

Buddhist

time um

so kind of you can kind of pick up a few

things but really it's just not to the

advantage of early Buddhist pists to

give a fair representation of what these

teachers were teaching in a Buddhist

text where of course the the early

Buddhist wanted people to to believe

Buddhism and rather than these other

these other

sects so I mean there was one who might

qualify as a charvaka I can't remember

his name where you know he's saying that

you can go up and down the banks of the

Ganges with like this Raaz rotating
razor knife and just leave heaps of of
like mangled flesh all up and down the
banks of the river and you're not doing
anything wrong you know that would be
just like just materialism you know
there is no Karma there is no ethics you
know there's no Foundation to ethics
other than just like Superstition you
can do whatever the hell you want
there's going to be no repercussions for
that that sort of thing at least there's
not going to be any metaphysical
repercussions so you had somebody like
that who was like a
charvaka a number of people that might

qualify as a Jas you had mahavira the
founder of jism who was a contemporary
of the Buddha and uh probably and oh
also you had uh San beati puta who was
previously the teacher or the leader of
the Buddhist Two Chief disciples who
left him and converted to
Buddhism and he was sort of a
skeptic um so what are my thoughts in
the various heretical schools aside from
the thoughts I'm already I've already
been uh expressing probably their own
point of view is going to be
wiser than it is portrayed in the texts
and that can be seen from like jism you
read Jane texts it's not very similar to
what nant NATA is teaching in the

Buddhist

texts and also there are some uh

vestiges of ajaka religion like

inscriptions and so forth where uh I

think his name is Basham I can't

remember his first name he wrote a book

about the aicas an entire thick book

about the aiva religion and I mean some

of the teachings of of the aikas really

kind of are represented in the the

Buddhists kind

of like rejection or criticism of the

aicas like the aicas were strict

determinists you know they think that

you know really your fate is laid out

and it's sort of like you take a ball of

of string and you just hold on to one end you just throw the ball of string and it just unwinds and unwinds and unwinds till it reaches is the end and then there's no more ball of string the the aicas really did kind of believe something like that it's just determinism that you're going to live what is it 84,000 lives from start to finish it just runs its course and the the way you know that you're close to the end of the ball of string the way that you know you are close to Enlightenment whatever the aiva conception of Enlightenment was is you're you're an AAA monk I mean that itself is fairly good evidence

that you're at one of your very last
lives if not your very last
life but uh yeah I think if you really
wanted to understand the teachings of
these six heretical teachers six non-
budhist
philosophers um that were not vadic and
these were in the Sham tradition that
you you probably do best to seek
elsewhere or be very cautious in reading
the the official Buddhist explanations
in the suas like for example in the S
pal
so I suppose I answered that question
that those are my thoughts I mean he
wasn't asking anything more than just my

thoughts and those are my thoughts so I
did answer it and I'm going to move on
to the next question this is from Stefan
I think and the S has like this little
this little thing over the top of it I
don't know what influence that has on
the S whether it remains an S sound or
whether it's like ston or something I
don't know I'm not very good at
pronouncing certain foreign languages
especially when I'm not even sure what
language it is so anyways let's just
call him Stefon let's anglicize his
name and so I mean
that's I don't know that could be a
micro aggression or something to
anglicize somebody's name without their

permission but we do it all the time so
might as well just be unrepentant and
just Brazen it out Stefan says Steve
says I wanted to ask if you are familiar
with Hillside Hermitage in Slovenia led
by nanami if so I would be interested to
hear your thoughts on the approach to
dhamma practice and meditation I've kind
of overheard a few of U their videos
especially venerable Nan's videos uh he
seems to be a serious practitioner he
seems to have some wisdom he seems to be
relatively like
Orthodox and so as like Buddhist monk
Western Buddhist monk teachers go I
think he would be considered one of the

better

ones um he might be a little kind of

opinionated like it's my way or the

highway kind of a thing I don't I'm not

sure about that but uh he does seem to

be relatively strict and serious and

have some wisdom and the only thing the

main thing that I don't like about

venerable nany is his name because he

detracts from the first famous Nan moly

now there's two famous Nan mes the first

nanam mole I think his name was osbert

Moore he was an Englishman who lived in

Sri Lanka and he wrote the famous

translation of the wisi Maga he

translated a lot of kind of difficult

abstruse philosophical text in the mahay

or the Terra tradition and so now
there's a new nle who is kind of
eclipsing him so that when you just say
yanle people will just assume you're
talking about the new famous nle in
Slovenia and not the old famous Nan mole
who was an Englishman living in Sri
Lanka or Salon I guess it was called
back
then so but I really I'm I'm not like an
avid viewer of his videos I don't really
watch dhama videos much my sweet heart
does sometimes and so I kind of overhear
what's being said but that's about as
far as I get with it so I can't really
say for sure um what the situation is

there but I just get the impression that
he is stricter and more serious and has
made more progress than a lot of the
high-profile Western monks or Eastern
monks monks in
general so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from Green Cube
and green Cube says how to be
happy well I mean you've got sort of the
conventional samsaric answer and then
you got sort of the more advanced
Buddhist answer the more advanced
Buddhist answer is I mean you've got to
become enlightened in order to stop
suffering if you want to go beyond all
dooka all unease you have to become
fully enlightened which involves

renouncing the world and practicing as a
conscientious mind and mastering jna
preferably and you know just eradicating
your defilements and all this and even
if you try as hard as you can there's
still no guarantee you're going to
succeed on the other
hand you can sort of mitigate your
unhappiness by just being content with
little try to reduce your desires be
mindful so when your habitual desires
arve you can just observe them with
Detachment and not just immediately act
out the the craving that sort of thing
just live a virtuous life live a
harmless life you know don't [__] with

people that kind of thing and uh just
living a a philosophical dharmic kind of
life will make you happier although if
you exist you're going to have
unhappiness in your life that's the
first Noble Truth so long as you exist
as a sentient being
there's going to be unhappiness in your
life and that's just I mean one way of
being happy is just not care whether
you're happy or not just it's sort of
like the ancient stoic point of views
where it's like you're just willing to
accept whatever life throws at you with
a certain amount of
forbearance so there's that too but
either either way either way that I just

mentioned is far preferable to the
standard secular
materialistic point of view which is
just human nature really to believe the
way to be happy is to get what you want
to avoid unpleasantness and to get lots
of pleasant stuff and it just doesn't
work that way is not conducive to
happiness just getting whatever trying
to get whatever you want and avoid
whatever you don't
want that is just a Fool's errand and it
doesn't
work because you're going to get what
you don't want regardless
and sometimes you're not going to get

what you do want and sometimes even if
you do get what you want it turns out
not to be the way you are expecting it
to
be and even then you're still going to
get sick sometimes you're going to get
hurt sometimes you're going to get old
all this stuff's going to happen and a
lot of it you just have no control
over so one or two renounce the world
and become enlightened that would be the
best way although there's no guarantees
with that and second way is just sort of
M mitigate the unhappiness sort of
refine the unhappiness through living a
dharmic life and cultivating wisdom and
virtue

so I'm just going to move on to the next
question this is from
Austin and Austin says if morality isn't
independently
grounded how can we make objective moral
truth claims so if morality isn't
independently grounded I assume he means
that morality is subjective and not
based on some Cosmic
law I I assume that's what he means by
morality isn't independently grounded
but the thing is even if morality is
subjective which from the Buddhist point
of view it is it's based on your own
psychology because we're all human we
all sort of have the same

general like composition of character

and the like our minds work more alike

than

different and

so there's a certain moral law that's

not written down necessarily up on some

tablet up in space but still if a person

tells a lie or they kill or they steal

it's going to have certain effects on

their mind if only because they are

human and if you're a human it's going

to have a similar effect it's not going

to be exactly the same for each

person but still because we are all

human that these

certain like aspects of human psychology

that result in Morality apply to us it

may be for some four-dimensional alien

on the planet

trador who maybe even has tentacles that

it might be different I mean they might

have a different kind of morality based

on a different kind of

psychology

so I guess and we make objective moral

truth claims just based on I mean in a

way it's almost like statistics you know

it's like different people have

different subjective States but still

you can generalize you can objectively

make statements about these individual

subjective States and come up with you

know patterns that can be verif ified

and statistically analyzed and all

that so I mean ultimately our Karma our

and our our ethics our morality is

subjective based on our own psychology

but we're all human and so we all have a

similar psychology with similar rules

about

ethics even though cultures May differ

you know some cultures still say it's

okay to kill people sometimes most

almost all cultures say that cultures

that would like be un like what's the

word uncompromising

pacifists then they just historically

they just don't last very long because

they can't compete with violent

barbarians they just can't stand up to

them so I guess I've started to digress
on that one I think I'm just going to
move on to Austin's second
question which is empiricism asserts
that all knowledge comes through sense
data however that statement itself is
not justified through sense data this
would then follow the implication that
logic and Mathematics exist
independently of our minds what say and
this is a very complicated question I'm
not even sure if I can fully understand
it um empiricism asserts that all
knowledge comes through sense data
well I guess but it doesn't necessarily
I mean it comes through physical sense

organs so I mean it's just sort of the

the

bare material of our perceptions

especially the initial perceptions when

we're like you know what uh David hum

would called the more Vivid the more

lively perceptions that are our

experience of a presumed external

world so that would be empiricism would

be based on experience

more I mean I would say empirism is

based more on experience than on sense

data so however that statement itself is

not justified through sense data but I

mean it's you can call it just a a

hypothesis a philosophical point of

view

um yeah I mean it's it's justified
through like inference or not inference
what's the word like like
induction logical induction which is not
purely logical I mean it's not
completely valid it's not as solid as
logical deduction logical induction is
you keep seeing the same patterns over
and over again and so you assume that
that pattern will continue into the
future and so you make predictions based
on that that's kind of what Science is
based on it's a lot of induction rather
than deduction deduction is you're do
doing like a logical syllogism and it's
like you're proving something if the the

initial premises are true then the
conclusion will necessarily be true but
induction is is different from that and
that's mainly how empiricism
works so this would then follow the
implication that logic and Mathematics
exist independently of our minds I don't
necessarily think so I mean there's like
the potential of it but it doesn't
really exist doesn't take any kind of
form until there's a mind perceiving it
and still I'm I don't entirely 100%
follow the reasoning in this question
and I may be that I've just missed the
point because first of all as an
empiricist I would not assert that all
knowledge comes through sense data I

mean it comes through

experience but some experience is not

necessarily through sense State

especially like if you become

enlightened then that Enlightenment is

not experien through sense data I'm

pretty

sure

so I I hope I answer that question my

apologies if I fail to even see the

point of the question or to to follow

the the reasoning of it but I got more

questions to answer so I'm going to move

on to Austin's third question which is

in the Buddhist Paradigm empiricism

serves as the epistemological framework

for understanding truth however if not
all knowledge comes from sense data
alone how can this idea itself be
justified as a true belief well again
empiricism is not
necessarily all entirely based on sense
data it's just based on like
experience so experience whether it's
sense data or not most experience would
be based on sensory data I mean from
like a biological point of
view let's see but I these these last
two questions of Austin are difficult
ones in the Buddhist Paradigm empiricism
serves as the epistemological framework
for understanding truth yeah see for
yourself come and see

aaso it's one of the qualities of dhama
it's aaso come and see see for
yourself however if not all knowledge
comes from sense data alone how can this
idea itself be justified as a true
belief well I mean if not all knowledge
comes from sense data alone then where
does it come from I mean it seems like
the onus would be on Austin here to
say if all knowledge doesn't come from
experience then where does it come from
because I mean even if you just take
somebody else's word for it that's
that's an experience you're experiencing
somebody else telling you
something so I mean this was one of the

main arguments in early Indian philosophy early philosophy in general is what is a legitimate source of knowledge all the vdic schools of philosophy had to include the vas as like an ultimate source of knowledge whereas the non-vedic schools which would include like Buddhist philosophers would could just dismiss the vas just scriptural author scriptural Authority is not really an authority it's not really authoritative and in fact I mean a radical skeptic might say there is no fully authoritative source of knowledge and some Buddhist schools are pretty much follow about like the maamaa

school theyan they don't even accept

personal experience as authoritative

we're all we're all living in an

illusion

anyway

so

gosh empiricism serves as the

epistemological framework for

understanding truth well I mean

depending on how you look at it

depending on what school of Buddhism or

what school of Phil philosophy I mean

truth doesn't necessarily have a

framework you know truth can just be

like

emptiness and you don't experience

emptiness

sensorially

so I mean how can this idea be justified

as a true belief well [__] justifying

true beliefs I mean all beliefs are

false no belief I mean a belief can be

conventionally true but no belief is

knowledge I mean knowledge and belief

are two entirely different things they

can there can be a certain amount of

overlap

theoretically but belief is delusion

belief is thinking that you know

something that you don't really know

that's why there's a difference it's

like the first philosophical essay or

one of the first philosophical essays I

ever wrote was called knowledge and
belief I think and I was pointing out
it's like let's say there's a clock
that's stuck at 5 minutes to 6 you know
it just always says 5 minutes to 6 now
through random chance somebody comes
along at exactly 5 minutes to 6 looks at
the clock to see what time it is and it
says 5 minutes to 6 so he walks away
thinking it's 5 minutes to 6 but does he
really know that it's 5 minutes to 6
that clock always says 5 minutes to
6 so I mean there's all kinds of these
weird ways I mean you can just because
you believe something doesn't mean that
you know something I mean most beliefs

if not all beliefs are they're just not

ultimately

true no belief is ultimately true a

belief is a perceptual

phenomenon that true knowledge is just

on a completely different

level but this this is this question is

approximately as difficult as the

previous one in the Buddhist Paradigm

empiricism serves as the epist logical

framework for understanding truth no it

doesn't really I mean you could say

empiricism serves as the epistemological

framework for understanding Dharma and

how to practice so that through

practicing dharm you can eventually

understand the truth but it's not this

epistemological framework that is
considered to be ultimately true that's
just skillful means that's the raft made
of rubbish that gets you across the
flood and then you throw the raft away
so how can this idea itself be justified
as a true belief fools can justify
anything and I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from
xenoid and xenoid says at what age did
you seriously begin meditating every day
well I experimented with daily
meditation for the first time as a
senior in high
school and I was doing M at the time
time and I just totally sucked at it I

was not good at meditating at all for
until after I had become a monk really
so it didn't last extremely long and it
would be like a few minutes before I
went to to school I'd sit down on the
meditation mat and try and M just try to
keep the monkey mind from being a monkey
mind which didn't
work
so my first attempt at serious daily
medit ation happened as a when I was
like 17 years old but it didn't really
kick in until I had decided to become a
monk I was like in my late 20s mid to
late 20s and uh I Was preparing to
become a monk and then I just started
really um taking it more seriously or

just like forcing myself because it was
at first my mind was so hyperactive so
nervous and high strong and agitated so
much udacha shot going with the poly
term that just sitting
still was not easy just sitting still
for 30 minutes you know I'd have to set
up a timer to so i' I'd know that I sat
for 30 minutes CU if I didn't I'd be
opening my eyes it's like 30 minutes has
to have passed by now it's like 15 that
kind of
thing so at what age did I seriously
begin meditating every day first at 17
which didn't last and then maybe around
like 25 26 something like that and then

it it really kind of struck traction and
I got better and better at
it so I'm just going to move on to xeni
void's second question what is good
mindfulness meditation supposed to feel
like I seriously attempted it for the
first time the other day and I felt kind
of dissociated during it but happy
afterwards I don't know if this is
because I was proud of myself for
finally getting around to it or if it
was actually because of the meditation
itself so what is good meditation good
mindfulness meditation supposed to feel
like well I mean it can feel like just
about anything is that's really not the
point of what it feels like it's good

mindfulness meditation means that you
are being mindful you are observing and
noting objects you know observing just
note it Let It Go note it Let It Go note
it Let It Go without your mind wandering
so good mindfulness meditation means
your mind mind isn't wandering away so
that you're sitting there and then you
finally realize for the past 10 minutes
you've been engaging in a sexual fantasy
or thinking about what that noise is
outside the window or thinking about
your fourth grade teacher or this kind
of thing so good mindfulness meditation
is that your mind stays on the object
whatever the the primary object is and

if anything else arises you're mindful
of that you don't get distracted Ed by
it to the point that you're just not
noting and letting go noting and letting
go anymore I mean if your mindfulness
meditation gets really good you can even
get rid of the the
noting but at first you know whatever it
is that's arising and generally you use
your breath as the primary object not
necessarily but in general that is very
common and so it's like in breath and
out breath you know the touch of the
touch of breath uh the nostrils and
you're just noting that and if you get
bored then you note the boredom if you
get exhilarated you note the

exhilaration you know you just note it
Let It Go note it let it go whatever it
is that arises note it and let it go and
so it could be any kind of feeling anger
arises not it Let It Go boredom arises
not it Let It Go exhilaration arises not
it Let It Go sadness arises note it Let
It Go Just Bleak despair arises note it
Let It Go but so long as you're noting
it and letting it go that's good
mindfulness
meditation regardless of whether you
feel good or bad but if you're being
mindful of it you're detaching from it
so if you feel good it's just a good
feeling it's not I feel good it's just

you're noting a good feeling and then
and then it goes and it's if you feel if
the bad feeling arises it's not you
feeling bad it's just you knowe a bad
feeling arises then you let it go and
then when the distraction or whatever it
is is more noticeable than the primary
object has passed away you just go right
back to the primary object which is
often just the touch of sensation at the
nostrils just the touch of air the touch
sensation of air at the
nostrils so it can feel very different
different times but I mean the main
point of good
meditation is I mean primarily
especially at first is that your mind is

sticking with the object or if if
something else arises you know you're
being mindful of that and you're not
just sitting there thinking about what
you want to have for
dinner so I'm just going to move on to
xeni void's third
question which is has meditation ever
made you feel amped up instead of calmed
down I was once doing the meditation
technique shown in this video which I
didn't watch and on my fourth attempt I
entered into a state of very intense
focus it felt similar to being on adero
however my heart rate was normal and
almost no thoughts entered my mind

during this time the effect lasted
around 30 minutes I plan to continue on
with this technique in order to overcome
my ADHD yeah I apologize for not
watching the video because um I just cut
and paste this question and there was a
link to a video after the question but
it did not
register that I had to watch the video
in order to answer the question and I
guess I really don't have to because the
the only question mark in this question
here is has meditation ever made you
feel amped up instead of calmed down and
in my case no it really hasn't I mean
when you're not meditating instead
you're just thinking about something

that can amp you up just the thoughts of what you're thinking about can amp you up but just noting and Let It Go note it Let It Go note it Let It Go so um yeah that doesn't really cause me to feel amped up I mean there's there was a time especially I was living in a forest in Burma and my mindfulness was just sort of like

mediocre it was it was sort of like I was seeing everything like through a magnifying glass but it wasn't enough to just you know it wouldn't dissipate and so it's like if you're in a bad mood you can if you're being mindful like with mediocre mindfulness it can just amplify

the bad mood without really helping you
to detach from it very well you know
it's like you're looking at through a
mic or through a magnifying glass makes
it bigger but it's not good enough to
just be able to just let it go and let
it let it pass away you know it just
makes it worse in a sense so I have had
mindfulness like bouts of a peculiar
kind of mediocre mindfulness where it
would just make bad things worse just
because it's like you're seeing it more
clearly without really being able to
detach from it very
well but that's about as close to what
um xenoid here is is mentioning that
that I can recall

offand and so I'm just going to move on
to the next question which is from PSA
and PSA says would you like Canada to
become the 51st
state and not especially and I mean one
thing is if Canada became the 51st state
it would be bigger than all the other 50
states combined so probably you'd have
to divide Canada up into individual
states like maybe the already existing
provinces could each become a state but
still Canada is more messed up than
America is you know it's more castrated
than America is so I don't think that
um like annexing Canada would
necessarily be to the advantage

of the United States you know it just be like increasing the size of the problem so yeah I mean I somebody in a on the Discord server I think it was yesterday said that that Indians have destroyed Canada but really it's it's like culturally castrated like liberals white liberals have destroyed Canada at least to the extent that it is destroyed Justin Trudeau is not Indian and he's he's done more than most if more than anyone to just drive Canada into just this state of being just this
I a place that I would not want Annex to the United States although I got friends in Canada there's lots of good people in Canada they might not be able to say the

truth

publicly might not be able to bear

arms but I guess they got free health

care which uh now includes people

advising you to just self-terminate if

it's going to cost the government too

much to fix you have you considered this

option so I guess I answered that

question so I'm just going to move on to

psa's next question is can chat GTP

become enlightened I don't think so I

mean they would have to to get like

massively upgraded for that even to be

like

plausible I

think

so yeah I don't think chat GTP can

become Enlighten

unless just any kind of um anything that

isn't human is already enlightened just

kind of merged with Nirvana you know

it's sort of like humans are the ones

that ate the forbidden fruit the fruit

of the knowledge of Good and Evil and

all that and we separated ourselves from

God so to

speak so I mean somebody like art would

say pretty much everyone is enlightened

except us humans so that might include

computers and so forth I mean they might

they wouldn't be conscious in the human

sense but I mean like a rock might be

considered enlightened a tree might be

considered enlightened and if a rock or
a tree are is enlightened then chat GTP
can be enlightened too but
um with like sentient and enlightened in
the human sense I think chat GTP is is a
very far cry from
that so I don't think chat GTP is
sentient in other words or
self-aware so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from ruie and ruie
says ever heard of deathbed ordinations
and no I actually have never heard of a
deathbed ordination I've heard of monks
in Thailand ordaining
trees they or they do the ordination
ceremony on trees and then they hang

like a a monks robe on the tree as a

kind of

environmentalist act where they're

trying to keep superstitious wood

cutters from cutting the tree down and

they're they'd be much more hesitant to

cut down a monk tree than just a regular

lay

tree but deathbed ordinations no I never

heard of it and technically I'm pretty

sure it would be against vinia just like

ordaining a tree is just completely

invalid I mean they're not really

ordained sorry to tell that to people um

but I don't think there's any Tai wood

cutters watching these videos anyway

that's going to be encouraged to cut

down trees from me pointing out the

plain fact that trees cannot validly be

ordained into the

S but there is I know for a fact that

there is a rule of monastic discipline

for forbidding a monk who is old and

feeble from becoming a preceptor and I

think there's also a rule that prevents

a monk or

prevents a person from who is old and

feeble with age from being ordained like

a preceptor should not accept a student

you know like or ordain like a new monk

who is like completely broken down and

feeble with with old age but um I'm not

100% sure about that

well I mean deathbed ordinations they're just based on the Superstition that just the act of being ordained is meritorious and I mean it's it's part of the spiritual materialism that runs rampant in terada Buddhist countries the burmes have got a lot of spiritual materialism they think that just taking five precepts from monk with no intention of actually keeping those precepts just doing the little ceremony of taking the five precepts is itself meritorious they think that just anybody being ordained for 3 days as a monk it's called the don laah don laah literally is it's the Burmese pronunciation of the poly word that means hard to get hard to

obtain that that like the the beu life
or a monk existence is difficult to
attain in this world so it's like this
rare treasure that they're getting and
they think that I mean they're getting
some kind of great from being ordained
as a monk even though they don't know
the rules they don't follow the rules
they're breaking the rules the whole
three days you know they they've still
got a bank account which is they
shouldn't have they don't really
renounce the world they just think that
through some kind of
magic that they're just going to get
this really Advanced Merit just from

being ordained for a few days I mean if
they're serious about it they really
want to live the Monk's life that's
that's another thing especially if they
get rid of all their money which almost
none of them
do so I guess getting back to the
question ever here ever heard of
deathbed ordinations I've never heard of
them this is the first I've ever heard
of deathbed
ordinations so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from
quor and quor says the fourth jna is a
state Beyond Pleasure and Pain and is
characterized by Equanimity if
attachment is formed towards this state

would this clinging taint the equinity resulting in a lower jna well if you're having if you're in fourth Janna you're not going to be having attachment to it if you're going to have attachment to Fourth Janna it's going to be at times when you're not in fourth jna so it may be that you attain fourth Janna and then you've got attachment to that when you're not meditating that that can sort of interfere with the depth of your meditation that the this attachment can be like like an a stumbling block or like a kind of hindrance to your meditation but it's not going to happen while you're in

fourth

Janna it's going to happen when you're

not in fourth jna which can then sort of

sabotage your ability to get forth jna

again then it might wind up in a a

lesser johnic State just because your

attachment like your your greed and

desire for this this exalted experience

and that's one reason why the weasa

teachers like in of the mahasi tradition

warn people against practicing somat

talk you can get psychic powers you can

get all these mind-blowing states and

then you get attachment to those and it

can lead you

astray so I'm just going to move on to

quis tor's next question let's see here

we've been going at it for over an hour
it's all right I'm okay with that next
question is it someone's strongest
desire which determines their rebirth or
is it more to do with ending up in the
realm most similar to their vibrational
frequency not sure anyone would desire
to be reborn in Hell well I mean one of
the most important factors is just your
mental your very last mental state that
in a way like determines your bearing I
mean it's your karma in general that's
going to be determining your general
like moment momentum your general
direction but that very last moment
before you die has um what do you call

it it's it's more of an effect than any other mental state in your life determining where what direction you're going be going that's which is why like when Mahatma Gandhi was shot you know he says Hey Ram not it's not like oh God they got me like like in the movie which is you know completely secularized but you know it's like he wanted his final moment to be like based on God directed towards God because you know that's that's the direction he wanted to go after he died so that kind of thing is uh it's your strongest desire is certainly going to be a significant aspect of your karmic momentum you know let's say that

you're just just a horn dog just

dedicated your life to being an

extremely lustful person then certainly

that's going to have a radical very deep

effect on what your next life is going

to be like um

but

still it's like your very last conscious

thought is I mean in Trad traditionally

this is what they say there are some

sutas that may deny this but the Su

there's all kinds of sutas that that

contradict each

other

so I guess I should ask and I should

read this question again is it someone's

strongest desire which determines their rebirth or is it more to do with ending up in the realm most similar to their vibrational frequency not sure anyone desire to be reborn in Hell well I mean you die with a human mental state you're more likely to be reborn as human you die with like a demonic mental state you're more likely to wind up in a demonic realm you die in in like this animalistic mental state you're more likely to wind up in an animalistic existence you die with like a Heavenly mental state you're more likely to wind up in a heaven realm that kind of thing although there are people that will say no there's this Su that says but that is

my understanding but the thing is let's say you've lived like a an icky life an immoral life and then for whatever reason you're like in an exalted State when you die you wind up in like a Heavenly realm but it's not going to last very long because you don't fit there very well you know you just sort of like squeaked in there but it's it's not likely to be a stable situation or it can go the other way too it may be that you've lived a virtuous life and you know you cultivated Advanced meditative States even and then at the moment of death you're like in a completely like like a hell realm or or

like some sort of I don't know like an animalistic state or something then that can wind you up in a kind of a lower realm but even that it's not going to be stable and so you're not going to stay there for very long

probably so at the end he says not sure anyone would desire to be reborn in hell yeah it doesn't really work that way most people don't desire to have nightmares at night but still a lot of people have nightmares when they sleep even though their own mind is creating it I mean our own mind is creating our reality so mainly it's just it's like the the subtlety of your own mind is going to determine the subtlety of the

realm in which you exist that's that's

like the long and the short of it right

there so sometimes I kind of confuse

like my best guess my understanding with

what the official dogma of terraa

Buddhism is I do try to distinguish

those two especially if I don't agree

with the established Dogma which does

happen

sometimes

anyways I'm going to go move on to

quora's third question which is as

follows if someone has spent years

meditating and has eradicated many

defilements moving to subtler and

subtler realities is this person if this

person experiences fear is their

vibrational frequency different than a

non meditator experiencing

fear even if the

experience feels subjectively the same

to both people no if it feels

objectively the same then it's the

same so what's what's more likely to

happen you've got a person who spent

years meditating has and has eradicated

many Def

defilements and they feel fear it's just

going to it's going to be a different

kind of fear as a general rule than some

non-m meditator experiencing fear you

know like someone who's been practicing

mindfulness meditation they experience

fear it may be just second nature just a
matter of habit that they're going to
note the fear and detach from it so it's
not going to feel subjectively the
same and it's like I answered that
question so quickly that I've now got
like early early answer completion
insecurity you know sort of like being
the first person that hands in the test
that's like a kind of insecurity or the
last person that hands in the test at
school I don't know if you guys
experienced that maybe tests are now
considered to
be racist or sexist or
something let see so yeah I mean it's

not going to feel subjectively the same

to both

people I'm just going to move on next

question this is from thermal

squid and thermal squid says feelings

about Carl Schmidt and I have no idea

who Carl Schmidt is but fortunately for

all of us thermal squid has uh included

a little bit of commentary here that

maybe I'll be able to make some kind of

comment on he says first he says

feelings about Carl Schmidt which I've

already divulg to you then he says

particularly on the political it seems

to me that political realities are more

or less totally barbaric and I feel that

this makes it clear about the entire

Pursuit evil seems to be instrumental in winning the game of the material world and that there's really no spiritual solution to this evil I mean yeah I don't I don't think so I mean like the founding fathers of the United States of America were not pure evil I don't think they were primarily motivated by evil they were
idealistic and apparently had some good intentions they were trying to set up like the best constitutional republic that they could come up with and so I mean you do have like benevolent Kings even benevolent autocratic Emperors so it's not just pure evil um like

obviously Kings as a general rule they
they're just the son of the king they're
the eldest son of the king and so I mean
they don't necessarily have to like even
murder all of their brothers or anything
like that
although in Persia that was pretty much
the standard I think for a long time in
ancient Persia first thing a new king
would do would be to kill off his male
relatives so there'd be no no contenders
to the
throne but uh I mean political power
does attract moral
inferiors but it doesn't attract only I
mean it's like politics is not just
purely composed of moral inferiors

although if you see the the stuff that
is coming up in American American
politics with Elon Musk and his group
like examining auditing different
different like government agencies you
might think that yeah it's just it's the
whole thing is just rotten to the core
there's no worm in the Apple it's just a
ball of
worms but it's not necessarily that way
so see thermal squid here says it seems
to me that political realities are more
or less totally
barbaric um I mean barbaric has negative
connotations but not it's not
necessarily a bad thing you know sort of

like in a previous Q&A I was talking
about like the dark wisdom of
militarism that is there is a certain
wisdom to that and it may be there's a
certain wisdom to a kind of ruthlessness
in
politics let's see evil seems to be
instrumental in winning the game of the
material world not necessarily I mean
that is one common strategy
that does have some some success I
suppose but yeah I mean that should not
discourage like genuinely good people
from trying to participate in the
political
system like Pericles of Athens I don't
think he was pure

evil I don't even think Winston

Churchill was pure evil although quite a

few people that watch this these videos

might disagree on that one so anyways

I'm just going to move on to to Thermal

Squid's next question I'm not even fully

sure that I answered his first question

but then

again the the only question mark in his

first question was after feelings about

Carl

Schmidt and I I don't know who Carl

Schmidt even

is

so thermal Squid's next question what

sort of attit attributes and qualities

rise to the mind immediately when you
hear the phrase sick freak or depraved
maybe even deranged please go into
detail and even potentially be
grotesque I don't see what what possible
benefit there would be had in going down
a rabbit hole of
grotesqueness seriously I mean it's it's
generally could involve toxic mental
States and I mean it's just why would I
want to inflict myself with toxic mental
state or inflict you the viewer and
listener of these videos with toxic
mental States so sick freak I mean the
first thing that came up would just be
something sexual you know just somebody
with weird Kinks depraved depraved is a

much more general term and I think

depravity is

largely I mean it's sort of like the

atmosphere breathed by the political

left nowadays just sort of cultural

castration and and just G General

decadence and depravity seems to be the

general direction that like the

globalist left the people that were

being chewed out by our our good

American vice president recently in

Munich that that seems to be what they

want they want depravity they don't

necessarily want sick freaks but a

certain degeneracy like moral

degeneracy is uh

yeah it's it's it causes the downfall of civilizations when it when it goes mainstream which is what is has been going on in the West for decades if not centuries so deranged I mean that's even more General still deranged is just insane which is what pretty much everybody
is so yeah I think that's good enough I mean wallowing in like
like minute descriptions you know just graphic descriptions of depravity and so forth it it's not to anybody's benefit whatsoever that I that I can uh I can see it present so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is also from thermal

squid which is karmically speaking with asking goofy silly cryptic or bizarre questions on this channel be bad karma in the sense that we might be wasting potential for acceleration of insight or spiritual progress this question falls into a similar category about having bad opinions about monks or doing other seemingly dull things to a monastic that wouldn't otherwise result in hell if it were a lay person but I also feel that you desire to answer questions that are easy personal or otherwise outside of the confines of seriousness or urgency I think it would be divinely ironic to have had the opportunity for major

enrichment yet wasted on questions about
Critters or some other kind phenomenal
topic so I guess the main question here
is up up here see karmically speaking
what asking goofy silly cryptic or
bizarre questions on this channel be bad
karma in the sense that we might be
wasting potential for acceleration of
insight or spiritual progress I mean
it's it would depend on the individual
who's asking some people people ask
goofy silly cryptic or bizarre questions
in good faith you know they they just
have a mind that works differently and
it may just sound like a goofy silly
cryptic or bizarre question to to
somebody else when to them maybe it's

they don't realize how goofy it may
sound to somebody else on the other hand
some people may just deliberately be
trolling and asking smartass questions
and they would be getting worse Karma
than the person who is just kind of kind
of a a goofy person maybe who asks a
goofy question in all
seriousness it's the people that are
just like being sarcastic trolling that
kind of stuff and it does happen on this
on this uh on these Q&A
videos people just asking just
ridiculous
questions on
purpose just just to see what happens

see what kind of result get I mean that
has that has happened before so let's
see but he he further says that it's
like um would it be bad karma in the
sense that we might be wasting potential
for acceleration of insight or spiritual
progress a person who in good faith is
asking a question that might be
considered a silly question from others
I mean I might just point out to them
that it's a silly question you know I
might kind of to I mean sometimes I do
kind of um good-naturedly berate people
for for asking certain kinds of
questions like second guessing the
mental states of a fully enlightened
being for

example um just for this Q&A somebody a
generous supporter of
mine um they asked questions that were
just completely in [__] land that just I
mean it was like they deliberately asked
questions that did not make rational
sense you know it's like like some Zen
Master on mushrooms would ask these
questions and I mean I I didn't even
include them because I mean it's so
difficult to tease out any kind of
actual meaning from the question that I
mean this wasn't much point in
answering so but I mean if somebody is
asking a question in good faith it might
seem like a silly question to other

people but to them it might not seem
like a silly question and it might not
even be a silly question to them or I
mean I can sort of give some kind of
feedback that might kind of allow them
to see the question from the way other
people would see it Etc but I really
don't think that there's necessarily bad
karma in the sense that you might be
wasting potential for acceleration of
insight or spiritual progress unless
you're doing it on
purpose I mean if you're if you're
asking a kind of a a question that other
people would consider silly in good
faith then you really haven't done
anything wrong other than just the

standard you know the immorality of

being

unenlightened and in Buddhism I mean

really it is immoral not to be

enlightened it is immoral to be

delusional it's just the way it is it's

immoral to be unhappy in

Buddhism and usually Buddhists don't

describe it as such but that really is

the case it is immoral to be unhappy

even though everybody's unhappy

sometimes at least everyone who isn't

fully

enlightened so let's see I I suppose I

answered that question so I'm just going

to move on the next question this is

from

Romeo and Romeo says I'm a fairly recent

Explorer of mindfulness and so much of

what I've learned here to for has been

focused on the awareness of what is

going on within an individual person's

internal world

however the other day while reading

Joseph goldstein's excellent book

mindfulness I found out about another

aspect of mindfulness that I wasn't

familiar with awareness of the external

mind states of other people can you

speak on this aspect of mindfulness any

practical tips on how to actually do it

I find it hard enough to focus my

Awareness on my own thoughts and

feelings much less somebody else's and
it is true like in the sa patana sua
it's talking about how you're mindful of
your own feelings and you can be mindful
of other people's feelings and from the
time that I was a junior monk studying
this stuff it really did not make much
sense to me
although I don't think it's something
that you would necessarily try to
cultivate it might be something that you
just pick up on somebody being angry so
you can just be mindful of that you can
you just pick up on somebody being
joyful so you can just be mindful of
that but I don't think that you're going

to be cultivating deliberately being
mindful of other people's mental States
unless you've gotten to the point where
you can read
minds it may be that there are some kind
of strange Advanced meditation Masters
who have developed the psychic power of
looking into somebody else's mind and
knowing what they're thinking and
feeling and then just like practicing
mindful Detachment of that which would
be a very peculiar yet Advanced
meditation technique but other wise I do
think it would be more halfhazard where
you just become aware of somebody's
mental state through whatever means and
then you just note it and and Let It Go

I mean it might be there are certain

associations with your own mental states

that way

but yeah it is it is kind of weird I

don't think that there really is a very

good explanation of it in Terra

tradition or at least if there is one I

either haven't seen it or what is more

likely um was told it or I read it and

it just didn't satisfy me very well and

then I just forgot

it

so I do think that it's not something

that you would deliberately cultivate

because I mean being mindful of your own

mental States is something you're much

more on Solid Ground there and you know
you've always got your own mental states
to work on which is one reason why
almost all mindfulness meditators are
being mindful subjectively of their own
States and not trying to like be mindful
of somebody else's mental States it just
doesn't work nearly as well it's
something that may come up occasionally
just haphazardly but I don't think that
it's something that you cultivate unless
maybe like I said you're very Advanced
you can read minds and then you can like
detach from somebody else's mental
States instead of detaching from your
own so anyways I'm just going to move on
to the next question is from Fred and

Fred

says uh is there really a difference

between nibana and

Moka well Moka is sanskrit and in poly

it would be mocha which means a

Liberation so is there really a

difference between nibana Enlightenment

and Liberation and no not really

although nibana can ALS nibana has like

two different possible meanings you know

it can be like like an ethical kind of a

subjective State the attainment

of Enlightenment or it can be a more

metaphysical State whereas Moka

generally is like the first kind you

know it's like an attainment it's not

some abiding or I mean anything you say
about the absolute is going to be
invalid but it's not a metaphysical
state so much as like a
psychological State you know more of a
subjective
event that happens it's Moka literally
means Liberation and it's just like a
synonym for nibana in the sense of the
attainment of
Enlightenment so Fred's second question
can the lizard brain be
controlled and to some degree indirectly
you can control the lizard brain you
cannot have complete control over the
lizard brain you can't have complete
control over any aspect of your brain

but you know like like core emotional
stuff then through mindfulness you can
learn how to note it and be detached
from it and just through self-restraint
and so forth and in it combined with
mindfulness you can learn how to be less
angry or you know less greedy or
whatever it is so indirectly through
practice maybe prolonged dedicated
practice you can modify the behavior of
your lizard brain
but I mean you can't just make a
decision one day I'm just not going to
be angry anymore and expect that to be a
realistic
statement I mean that's you read the

text and sometimes it says you know a monk should never be angry a monk should have no preferences this kind of thing and you can't just decide okay from now on I won't get angry anymore it just doesn't work that way because the lizard brain is not completely under our control so you just have to do the best you can indirectly and you can kind of steer Ste it in certain directions if you've got the the determination you know the steadfastness and the like the WEA that just the the energy the commitment and everything to to sort of gently guide your lizard brain in a certain direction but still it's going to remain the

lizard brain and it's going to be like
the animal aspect of your mind like the
sort of like the the Primitive animal
aspect of your mind and you're not going
to just be able to reprogram that and
just however you please we're pretty
much stuck being who we are we are human
All Too Human and we're going to remain
human until we die and then maybe we'll
be human again who
knows so I'm just going to move on to
Fred's next question which is do you
think a soda paana is one who knows the
ropes so to speak and this is another I
mean people's just obstinately
insist people even people who watch a

lot of my Q&A videos they just
obstinately insist on asking questions
about the four stages of Arya hood and
like I mentioned earlier on in the Sona
paluta which is discussing sequentially
the steps of like higher and higher
benefits of living the holy life four
stages are not on that list at all
neither are the formless
Jas so so a soda paana probably in in
all likelihood in my opinion it just
meant a new convert to Buddhism someone
who had entered the stream and you know
they weren't going to get a lower realm
just because you know they're good
Buddhists now so they're not going to
get lower Realms just because of that I

don't think that being a soda originally
meant that you have the glimpse of
nibana and then you're incapable of
telling lies after that you know there's
certain Feds that don't exist for you
anymore you no longer have self viw and
you can't do these immoral acts anymore
I really don't think that that was the
original meaning of aapo the original
meaning of aapo probably in my opinion
was a new convert to
Buddhism well entered the stream of
Dharma by converting to
Buddhism so is is he one who knows the
ropes not necessarily because if they're
a new a new

convert then they might be a beginner
you know they might be really like eager
to learn but there's still might be a
lot of Basics that they haven't learned
yet and with regard to the soda in the
later derived more metaphysical sense of
someone in the four stages of Saint hood
and Buddhism has a monopoly on four
stages of saood you don't hear anything
about that in other religions which is
another bit of evidence that I think the
Buddhists just made it
up anyways
um just going with the traditional
interpretation of a sopon as someone who
is at the lowest stage of of sainthood
or sagehood has had their glimpse of

nibana and can't tell a lie anymore and

can't be reborn into one of the lower

Realms anymore and so forth are they one

who knows the ropes I mean it depends on

what the ropes are I guess I mean they

would have to have a pretty good Mastery

of some of the basics of Buddhist

philosophy

anyhow and they can't be immoral much

anymore

so I guess they would know some ropes

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

next question this is from

Wayne and Wayne says could the god of

the Old Testament be an

archon okay there's he's got another

question right after this which is

similar but I might as well divide them

up

into into two different questions okay

could the god of the Old Testament be an

archon and I don't think so I think the

god of the Old Testament um he started

off as a Canaanite god L he may have had

his I mean wherever the semites

originally came from you know he

probably migrated from there and it was

this belief in L and then he got

conflated around the time of Moses

assuming that Moses existed he got

conflated with this midianite or Edomite

like God of Storms and War and just

blood in general just violence named

Yahweh and then this belief just evolved over time anyone who looks at the belief in some of these metaphysical beings you know like God Almighty in this case Yahweh

Jehovah that I mean you see that just the whole belief about this entity has evolved over time until finally you've got um Jehovah being sort of like this really crude primitive attempt at understanding the absolute you know the Christians took it even farther like in Catholic the theological seminaries and so forth that God becomes so abstract that you know he has almost no resemblance at all to The Angry God of

the Old

Testament so I mean he could be an

egregor as the pagans would call them

where it's just the belief of millions

of people just sort of their faith in

this being does actually kind of creates

this real real

entity but yeah an archon I mean that's

the sort of agnostic term

anyway so yeah I think the god of the

Old Testament is is more of a

sociological entity than a Divine entity

although sometimes he is tried I mean

people have tried to equate him with

like the absolute you know the capital G

God and so forth

but that was a later

development that that Yahweh was like a god of storms who was like the chief rival of the god Bal who is also a god of Storms and you can't have two God two storm Gods living in the same area it's just not big enough for the both of them so I mean God's I mean God Almighty Jehovah started off as the Canaanite god L who had like a female consort and was one of many gods and then it just evolved over time

so yeah I do think that the Old Testament God and the Old Testament and New Testament Satan are both more sociological than

theological so I guess I'll just move on
to Wayne's second question which is kind
of similar is Jesus of the New Testament
a bodh satva
thoughts and I mean a bodh satva I mean
really I mean Jesus Jesus lived around
the same time that the mahayan bodh
satva concept was coming into
being so I mean that's just coincidental
I think I mean it's it's really you're
trying to impose Mahayana Buddhism onto
Christianity just sort of apples and
oranges I don't think I think it really
works that way that I do not think that
Jesus as Jesus of as Yeshua the
carpenter son of Nazareth I do not think
he took any budhy son of vows I really

do not think

so so some people might say yeah he is a

bodh he's going to be an a Buddha

someday but I mean it's just guessing

theorizing

okay so I think I'm just going to move

on next question this is from yugao and

yugao says have you seen Eternal

Sunshine of the Spotless

Mind um and then he says any thoughts

about it from a Buddhist perspective and

then what do you think about that

expression so that's actually three

questions so I got to separate

these okay have I seen Eternal Sunshine

of the Spotless Mind I think of Jim

Carrey starred in that and actually know which is kind of weird because I almost saw it several times you know it's like I'd be deciding what movie to watch and it's like oh this one's considered to be philosophical and profound and everything but then I'd always wind up watching something else like one time I watched The Truman Show instead of Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind although Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind is on numerous lists you can find on the internet of you know the best philosophical movies this kind of thing but no I haven't seen it so um the second question is kind of nullified now which is any thoughts about it from a

Buddhist perspective I'm not exactly
sure what it's even about you know it's
it's kind of a love story it's supposed
to have some profound aspects of you
know what it means to love somebody that
kind of thing but that's that's about it
I just I've just shot my wad with regard
to describing what I understand about
the
movie so Yuga third question what do you
think about that expression which I
assume is the expression Eternal
Sunshine of the Spotless Mind and it's
it's a poetical nice way of describing
you know sort of illuminated
wisdom Buddhism uses illumination as

kind of a synonym for wisdom you know

like jna means something like blazing or

illumination

so yeah I mean it's nice it's kind of a

poet IC

metaphor so I'm just going to move on

this question this is from dhama

river and dhama river says let's see

just a minute indulge me here I want to

scroll down just to see oh we still got

a uh it's not a really a long scroll

down to the bottom now it's we've still

got several questions but we're

definitely way over halfway

done so philes is the next question and

he says how does one end the accuse

suffering of being hated shunned and

abandoned by a lover well being hated by
a lover I
mean that seems to be kind of an
oxymoron doesn't it to be hated by a
lover but I mean if you got a lover that
turns on you and starts hating you I
mean it's questionable whether they ever
really loved you in the first place I
mean love in that sense is just animal
mating instincts it's not genuine love
I've got this popup button thing there
we go I got rid of it I mashed the
button made it go away so how does one
end the acute suffering of being hated
shun and abandoned by a lover time
really I mean you could have avoided it

by just not getting entangled with that
person but that opportunity is PED and
so mainly it's just time heals all
wounds I
guess um I mean you can I mean if you're
really in the habit of mindfulness
mindfulness is the Panacea that cures
all ills but still it's going to I mean
the throbs the pangs are still going to
arise and then you just have to note
them mindfully which won't make them go
away it will just help you to detach
from them
somewhat but I mean that's just you mean
you take your chances you get like
intimately involved with another person
especially if you get intimately

involved with a person is not Suited

sued to then this kind of stuff happens

and it's just you got to consider it to

be worth the risk you know better to

have loved and lost than to have never

loved at

all I think Tennyson said

that

so how does one end the acute sufferings

by continuing to exist and then it fades

away maybe you find a new lover

preferably one that won't just repeat

the the process of the previous

one so I guess I answered that question

cuz really there's no really good answer

to that I mean how do how do you end the

acute suffering of the loss of a loved
one you know you just it just runs its
course it does whatever it needs to do
to your
heart and then you move
on so Phil ay second question if reality
can't be expressed in words then what
are words for I've begun to feel that
the primary purpose of language is lying
mainly in terms of praising and
denigrating not communicating neutral
valueless information inter subjectively
as is commonly believed in my view
language is not utilitarian at least not
by The Common Sense idea of utility and
we fail to see this because of massive
karmic

delusion well I mean let's just get up
to the top here if reality can't be
expressed in words then what are words
for navigating
samsara I really do not believe that the
main purpose of words is lying like when
I go to work almost all the Talking that
I'm doing is just like work rated stuff
you know where should I put this what
what where does that go you know what
should I do next that kind of thing so I
mean it's just navigating some sorrow
which is not ultimately real but um I
mean it is true that children learn to
lie almost as soon as they learn to
speak even Apes who have been taught

sign language learn to lie pretty
quickly but yeah I do not think that
it's anywhere near the primary purpose
of existence it just has survival value
from a biological point of view human
language has great survival value it
allows us to pass on information from
one person to the next and from one
generation to the
next so you know at first it was like
hey I found something good to eat over
here that kind of stuff which might have
been a lie sometimes but usually
wasn't and so I'm just going to move on
to Phil's third question does being
silent for long periods of time in
itself have any positive spiritual

effects it can have positive spiritual
effects on people who for example are
just like chronically talkative or
they're like very social you know
they've got attachments to socializing
attachments to just talking all the
time and I mean I've met monks who I
mean they probably would have been
better off if they took AOW of Silence
from time to time there was this one
monk in particular he was just talking
all the time and usually not about dhama
he was talking about this really great
cricket bat that he had at one time or
talking about you know this motorcycle
experience that he had this kind of

thing so that I mean some monks would
just kind of steer clear of him just
because they didn't want to be talk to
about cricket bats and
motorcycles but um being silent for long
periods of time yeah I mean it can have
positive spiritual effects like for
example one of the the main spiritual
advises of Tong Pulu the founder of the
religion or the founder of the the the
sect of terrible lot of Buddhism which I
was ordained the the the ordination
lineage in which I was ordained had this
advice with regard to dhama practice
which was eat less sleep less read Less
Talk
less so at least reducing the amount of

talking that you do does have positive
spiritual effects or at least it
can so it's let see here I mean it can
just help you to break attachments to
talking that would be the main benefit
of
it and so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from
Casa with a K and Casa says hello how
many types of Buddhism are there like
different schools or philosophical
differences and stuff like that well
it's it's sort of like saying how many
how many different types of Christianity
are there I don't think there's as many
types of Buddhism as there are types of

Christianity you know first you got like
the old schools of Christianity you know
the Catholics the Greek Orthodox you
know the Coptic Christians in in
Ethiopia the the nestorian Christians in
Syria and then of course you've got all
these Protestant schools that I mean you
can just have Fly by Night Protestant
Cults
arising and they're just all over the
place so Buddhism isn't quite that that
diverse but I mean you've got it started
off with the old schools which now
there's only one really remaining
there's like a vestigal sarasti Vada in
the Nara region of Japan that
nevertheless has incorporated so much

Mahayana that it's almost

indistinguishable from Mahayana or so I

have read and been told but technically

speaking you still have some vestigal

sarasti Vada in

Japan but of the older schools all this

all that really remains is Terra and

then you've got numerous Mahayana

schools and I mean the main ones early

on were pure land that surprisingly I

was surprised to learn that pure land

was one of the the earliest Mahayana

schools which arose around you know five

four or 500 years after the time of the

Buddha you got

maamaa um you got

yogachara and you got Zen then you got like various Tibetan lineages you got the K what is it the gugas I think are the yellow hats the Ning mapas I think are the Red Hats

and um I means the the philosophies very widely you know you got nii Ren in Japan which is almost which has essentially degenerated into a little more than reciting namoo Rango rengo over and over again which is sort of worshiping the Lotus Sutra you know it's homage to the Lotus Sutra which is a kind of apocryphal Sutra sura you know it's sort of like Christians whose religion just has pretty much devolved down to nothing more than just repeating as a mantra

Praise of the Book of Mormon that kind

of

thing so how many types of Buddhism

there are I really can't say I mean you

can divide it up into Terra and Mahayana

or you can divide it up into Terra

Mahayana and vajrayana which is what a

lot of Tibetan Buddhism goes under but

within

Mahayana um there's various schools you

know it's like Zen is very different

from Pure land even though in a lot of

monasteries they're combined into into

one system which is weird or like nii

Ren and like

um oh let's just say maamaa I mean just

as different as night and

day so different schools or philosoph

IAL differences I mean it would it would

take a long time for me to try to

discuss various philosophical

differences between the different

schools but mainly terraa I mean it's

not exactly what the Buddha taught but

it's like the closest to what the Buddha

taught that still exists as a living

tradition and it's just become

enlightened In This Very life you know

the Buddha was a man he became

enlightened you can be enlightened like

him and just do it if you can and then

in Mahayana it just became more and more

you know more like mythological space

Buddhas and and just don't try to become enlightened in this life you know the Buddha said you should do that no that was one of his lower teachings his more advanced teachings is postpone it indefinitely until all beings are enlightened even though that's impossible so I mean some of the teachings of Mahayana it just they just kind of went off the deep band in my opinion but I shouldn't be spending a lot a lot of time discussing different philosophical differences between different schools of Buddhism because it would just take too long and we've already been going at this for a little

over two hours at this point so I'm just
going to move on to the next question
and this is from bodhisatta 969 and
bodhisatta 969 says should we as
right-wing Buddhists at least not left
woke Buddhists use the 969 as a symbol
and spread the movement everywhere and
gather under the
969 of course I assume that the
mainstream media is reporting on this
movement is as almost always a lie that
means nonviolence of
course so the 969 movement is a movement
in Burma and 969 represents the
qualities of the nine qualities of the
Buddha the six qualities of the dhama
and the nine qualities of the manga that

are in the standard like Mantra that is
recited when one is reciting the
qualities of Buddha dama and sa so
that's where 969 comes from but mainly
in in Burma it is kind of movement to
keep Burma at least the ethnic Central
areas of Burma Buddhist which means to
resist Islam and that is considered to
be you know just racist and and
xenophobic and wrong and bad and
terrorism and all this kind of stuff and
it's not necessarily bad for a culture
to want to preserve
itself
so should we as right-wing Buddhists and
I'm not extremely right-wing I'm I'm

more or less of a Centrist when I take
those tests you know where where you fit
on the political Spectrum I'm usually
pretty much near the center which I
guess is appropriate for a Buddhist
because that's the middle path between
extremes and all
that so should we use the 969 as a
symbol and spread the movement
everywhere and gather under the 969 well
it's a matter of personal taste I mean I
don't think that it's necessary and I
don't think it's very realistic really
that very many people are going to go
with that especially since the 969
movement is either unheard of to
Buddhists or they've you know they've

read the the media propaganda and

consider it to be like a terrorist

organization so yeah I don't

know I think just I mean the movement I

mean just real dhama just like tradition

not even necessarily traditionalist

dharm but like try to follow what the

Buddha actually

taught and there's people that will

appreciate that and people who will you

know they'll try to learn what the

Buddha really taught and and try to

follow that as best they can just D just

the poly

texts

so yeah I really don't think that the

969 movement is is likely to strike much
traction in the west partly because most
people don't know what it is or they've
had their mind poisoned against it by
mainstream
propagandists so there might just be a
better way of going about it you know
people might just like Flock to
venerable nanam in Slovenia as like this
charismatic leader of like a mainstream
like traditionalist Terra Buddhism
something like that might be more
realistic not that I'm singling out Nan
mole because I think he's necessarily
the
guy so I'm just going to move on to bodh
969 second question which is what do you

think of a joh sha and his teaching

style maybe also in comparison to ajan

and he has man here but I think maybe he

means man or is there an aan

man if there is an aan man I'm not

exactly sure who he is aan man I've

heard of so I mean I'm not really like

super well-versed In tha monks although

aan Chaw and aan manun are two of the

ones historically that I I know

something about

so what do I think of ajan Chaw and his

teaching style I think he had a good

teaching style P partly because it was

based primarily on his own personal

experience he wasn't just like

dogmatized just repeating what he read
in sutas which is generally the way burm
seatt work burm seatt are very dogmatic
and so I mean you cannot deviate from
the Orthodox
position um even if your own personal
experience deviates from it they will
prefer to follow the tradition they will
force fit their personal experience into
Orthodox tradition somehow because
Orthodox tradition is more authoritative
even than their own personal experience
in dhamma and meditation and so forth
but Ty monks aren't so much that way
they're less dogmatic in fact they're
less scholarly in general and so aan man
or aan cha I mean taught primarily from

his own experience just from the wisdom
that he acquired through practicing
dhama and that is valuable and good and
also aan
sha he would really work on the
weaknesses of his disciples like I've
said before if aan cha had a disciple
who was just terrified of ghosts he'd
make him go live in a cemetery he had
another disciple who he just didn't want
to associate with people he just wanted
to be a Hermit he'd send him to to one
of the busiest monasteries in town you
know the busiest aan cha Branch
Monastery in a city somewhere you had
some other monk who was very gregarious

got lonely easily he'd send them off
alone into a forest this kind of thing
and that's that's a good way of teaching
somebody also I think it was uh um Jack
cornfield said that he was when he was a
junior monk under aan cha he had a lot
of problems with sleepiness so aan cha
made him medic sitting at the edge of a
well where if he fell backwards it was
like 70t straight down and so that
worked like a
charm you know you just don't fall
asleep when you're meditating when
there's like a 70 foot vertical drop
just right behind your
butox so yeah I think aan cha was was
very wise and that's one of the main

reasons why he is you know he's like the founder or he's like probably at least half of Western monks are in the aan cha tradition and for good reason I think because aan cha just you know he had a good system that worked well for westerners as a general rule the burmes tend to be way more dogmatic in a medieval scholarly kind of way Scholastic kind of way that doesn't work so well for westerners as a general rule and uh compared to ajan mun I don't know about ajan man but aan mun um yeah ajan mun was I mean he sort of revived the Thai Forest tradition he was fierce I mean he apparently had psychic powers

so he could read your mind which would
make it easier for him to help you but
um I do think that aan Cha's style is
preferable ajan manun you know he he was
a chain smoker for example so he was
literally a drug addict you know
addicted to nicotine
and just Fierce and for some people that
works really well I guess aan Mahaba was
a disciple of aan man who was also
relatively Fierce and I I can appreciate
a fierce teacher but an angry teacher
not so much so they'd have to be fierce
without being angry because anger
obviously is frowned upon in Buddhism
whereas a certain fierceness is is very
skillful you know like the Marine Corps

drill instructor that just you know
fills you with you know fear of of
getting on his bad side kind of a thing
you know just wanting to please him or
whatever so yeah aan cha and his
teaching style definitely get two thumbs
up from me I got nothing bad to say
about aan
cha and so I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from scolin who
changed his name to various other things
and now has returned home to the name
scolin or sko Dean and he asks strange
questions sometimes and this is one of
them in fact there's like three of them
and the first question is would you

kindly explain the lyrics to Love Potion
Number Nine which is a song from like
the late 50s or early
60s and it's my understanding this guy
was unlucky in love so he goes to a
gypsy and she gives him this love potion
and he drinks it and he just falls in
love with everybody and he winds up
getting in trouble by kissing a police
officer and I mean what's there to
explain it's like the Love Potion
probably should have been given to the
girl that he liked so that she'd fall in
love with him instead of him just
drinking it and falling in love with
everybody although if he gave it to a
girl he'd probably want to get her alone

somewhere before she started falling in love with you know everyone else around her but I mean there's really not much to explain I'm not exactly sure why scolin would ask me about this unless he thinks maybe there's some deeper meaning like maybe the Love Potion is poisonous or something I have no idea so I'm just going to move on to scadden second question thoughts on Pride and Prejudice and Zombies and so I mean that has to be two questions because Pride Prejudice and Zombies I mean it's not just a Unity here Pride and Prejudice it is the only Jane Austin novel I ever read I was living in a cave in Burma somebody sent

me this box of books which included I
mean it was a woman that sent me this
box of books books and so it had a lot
of chick lit in it including Jean
Austin's Pride and Prejudice so I did
read it and it's a chick
book but it's very well written Jane
Austin I have to admit is one of the
greatest authors in the English language
I think she was very she was just a
brilliant writer even though she was
writing stuff that's mainly of interest
to
women so I guess that's pretty much all
I got to say about Pride and Prejudice
with regard to zombies I mean the main
the main thing that I've taken away from

various exposures to zombies in like video games and also in in movies and so forth is that fast zombies are way worse than slow zombies you're going to be dealing with zombies deal with the slow kind the fast kind like in World War Z no that's not good you're in you're in trouble when you got fast zombies and I'm just going to move on next question and this is the last question boom very last question this is from Yoshi Buie and Yoshi Bui says many people believe there's no such thing as karma how would you respond to that is karma a theory a belief and is there any evidence of it seems that if we think of

karma as volition will or mental state
and that everything that happens to us
is of our own doing then we may as well
believe in a God to simplify things
because a God is because a God is as
inexplainable unex inexplainable
non-pro a concept as karma for example
if a rock falls on you and kills you
what difference does it make in terms of
proof If you ascribe that to the work of
karma versus the work of God why not
just ascribe it to Randomness or bad
luck
instead so I mean there is sort of
self-contradiction in here there's a
mutually contradictory statement or the
first part of the statement contradicts

the second part where he's saying like

uh where is it seems that if we think of

karma as

volition Let's see we may we may as well

believe in God because a God is as

inexplainable or non-pro a concept as

karma but I mean how is God as

inexplainable or non-pro as

volition

obviously volition I mean within a

samsaric empirical context volition

exists pretty obviously much more so

than Yahweh sitting on a thrown up in

heaven

somewhere

so first you start off with fairly

obvious examples of karma which like
force of habit the autopilot that's
essentially what karma is it's it's the
momentum of our mental states which
generally serves as an autopilot it just
pushes us through S Sor and I mean it's
hard to deny that most people are on
autopilot most of the time so that's
just like a superficial fairly obvious
manifestation of karma that it's just
force of habit that is just pushing us
through life through force of
habit and then you can take it a little
deeper where it's like there are like
scientific studies that show that people
who are like worried about being mugged
are more likely to get mugged people

that worry about getting sick or
whatever are more more likely to get
sick although I don't know if they they
like filter out the possibility that
they just know that it runs in their
family and that's why they're worried
about it that kind of
thing but I mean a lot of karma I mean
to just this completely superficial
Normie I mean it would have to be a
matter of Faith until you get deep
enough in your practice to realize that
we really are creating our
reality and there's not much point in
trying to persuade somebody of that if
they're just not ready to understand it

yet um

but we are creating our reality and for

the most part we're creating it like

subconsciously we're not fully aware

that we are creating our reality just

like we're creating our dreams at night

and like I mentioned earlier I mean some

people have nightmares even though we no

longer believe that our our dreams are

implanted into our mind at night by some

God that that our own mind is creating

these dreams and it's creating

nightmares just because that's kind of

where the person is at and it's creating

our our outward life I mean someone

wants to be a materialist they just want

to insist on being a materialist they

can do that and a lot of people do that
especially in the west and it's it's
just kind of
superficiality in I mean it's like
spiritual bankruptcy essentially whereas
I mean if you're able to get deeper into
it you're able to like see through the
veil a little more clearly you realize
this is not reality even science will
admit that this what we are seeing is
just a construction of
mind they would say that it's based on
something deeper than that that we can't
see but I mean they can't prove
that I mean materialism can't be proven
any more than belief in God or or belief

that karma is creating our
reality it's just that we it's just our
cultural conditioning in the West so we
just assume that it's some kind of
obvious fact which it
isn't but I mean the deeper you go into
it the more like weird synchronicities
start happening just like weird
coincidences start happening and also
just you start being able to see below
the surface a little better and then
you're you're more inclin to accept that
really this universe is a manifestation
of Consciousness even some science like
like theoretical physics is going with
the idea that it's it takes like a
perceiving Consciousness to single out

one possibility among this this cloud of possibilities to sort of crystallize this world into like this concrete system that we see we're not even seeing it directly we're seeing it indirectly through a kind of inference I guess
so I mean science and there there were books written like in the 70s and 80s like the da of physics and so forth that was trying to really push this idea that science is actually getting closer and closer and closer to Eastern philosophy and it kind of is or at least it did for a
while but I mean with regard to beliefs

again like some of the earliest Buddhist
texts say don't believe any anything
which means you know don't positively
disbelieve anything either it's just
accept something as a working hypothesis
if it helps you to to be a happier like
more virtuous better person then fine
just go with that don't cling to it
though just use it as a working
hypothesis and you're better off not
firmly believing anything because that's
just
attachment so in Buddhism the the
convenient working hypothesis
of one of many is that there is karma in
which case our own mental states are
conditioning the reality that we live in

another convenient working hypothesis in Buddhism is that the founder of the system gab Buddha was a fully enlightened being there's no way to absolutely prove that but it is a convenient working hypothesis which most Buddhists just cling to as some kind of gospel truth but they couldn't prove it and if you point that out to them they might start getting upset but that's just the way people are in general with regard to any beliefs that they have you challenge somebody's beliefs you're challenging them so let's see did I answer the question did I answer the very last

question see many people believe there's
no such thing as karma how would you
respond to that well people can believe
whatever they whatever they please I
guess whatever they consider to be most
likely to be correct and in the WB
just because scientism has been the
reigning like world view with regard to
explaining reality then just by default
they get conditioned into
scientism but let's see is karma a
theory a belief and is there any
evidence of it well yeah there's plenty
of evidence for I mean The Superficial
stuff just The Power of Habit at driving
us through life is like on autopilot
that's that is a manifestation of karma

so at least with regard to The
Superficial stuff yeah there's plenty of
evidence more more evidence than maybe
for God Almighty for example but I mean
any Theory or belief I mean science is
is a it's made up of theories it's
beliefs it's a belief system any
religion is a belief system any kind of
system that you use to navigate samsara
is a kind of theoretical belief
system there's no way to prove Jack
didly unless it's just completely
self-contained in your mind like like a
a theorem of euklid or something maybe
you could prove you could maybe prove
within your own mind that you can

Checkmate an opponent in chess when the
only pieces still on the board are his
King your king and a bishop and a knight
of yours that maybe you could prove that
just logically but you cannot prove that
physical matter exists you cannot prove
that scientism is really true it's based
on induction more than deduction you
can't really prove anything with regard
to any supposed external
universe so you just choose what you
consider to be most
likely in good faith and go with that
and use it just as a working hypothesis
something held Loosely in the hand not
clung to because once you start clinging
to it it becomes a hindrance doesn't

matter what it is like aan sha used to

say even right view becomes wrong view

if you cling to

it so just keep it at the the level

whatever whatever Theory you think is

most

useful you just accept it as a working

hypothesis and don't cling to it don't

just vehemently angrily insist upon it

to other

people and that's it I'm

done that's

it so like like I usually almost always

say I should let see how how do I put

this I almost always never say this at

the beginning when I should I almost

always say it at the end that if you
have any questions you think I can
answer feel free to include them in the
comments below this video
especially about ter Buddhism early
Buddhism Buddhism in general Eastern
philosophy in general philosophy even
more in general meditation monasticism
Burma me personally that kind of stuff
I'm generally pretty good at like some
Western
literature I'm fairly good at like
somebody somebody locked out and I
actually did read Pride and Prejudice by
Jane Austin so I was actually able to
comment on that but I haven't read
everything and and people asking me

what's your opinion about myON Schmick

it's like I don't know and I generally

do not watch a lot of like dhama videos

that kind of thing I just for some

reason it just it does not appeal to me

so that's it and uh hit the like button

smash the son of a [__] if you feel so

inclined and uh subscribe if you haven't

already and uh I guess uh be happy

okay then hello and welcome to question
and answer number
133 I am your host P basa and you guys
don't notice this but I just got almost
20 minutes into this video and then had
to stop and just scrap it and start over
because somebody asked me a question
about a sua that I read a week ago and
then had pretty much forgotten what it
was about and so I get to that question
and it's like I don't remember so I'm
going to have to stop the video in order
to go back and read this sua so that I
can make some kind of reasonable comment
about it other than I didn't read
it so there is that and uh before I

start answering questions I would just like to show my beverage with the little paper umbrella show the emergency backup beverage with the emergency backup little paper umbrella and also I would like to shout out to somebody called shumo shumo I assume it's just one person and not two people each called shumo who this morning cash at me a generous donation and there is no like message thingy on cash app that I have seen I mean I didn't even know how to work cash app I had my my sweetheart do that part for me so since I couldn't I couldn't like respond respond on the cash app thing I'm responding now and saying that your generosity is

appreciated may you earn much Merit by doing such things and since I'm talking about my sweetheart might as well point out that I am wearing a waist coat right now I don't know see a waste coat which I've never owned before I read about them in like Charles Dickens novels but I got it for Valentine's Day this is one of the things that happens when you have a woman in your life that if I didn't have any woman in my life I wouldn't have flowers behind me I wouldn't have stuff on the walls probably like bare walls I'd probably be wearing gray cotton sweats every single episode and I'd be

fine with that but now I've got more
clothes than I've ever owned in my life
probably and most of it was not bought
by
me and in addition to dressing me nice
and putting flowers and other
decorations in the background she also
cooks really well and uh sometimes even
cleans up after me and in addition to to
the shirt and the waist coat that I got
for Valentine's Day I also got some
special underwear which I am wearing but
I'm not going to show them to anybody
other than to my
sweetheart and we've got fairly large
number of questions today including two
questions that I somehow spaced off last

time and didn't answer including the one

that I I had to like stop the video

almost 20 minutes into it in order to go

back and read the the

suum because it is kind of an obscure

sutum so I guess I should just uh start

answering questions then which means I

gotta

find okay so I've got to answer these

some of these questions I'm answering

for the second time and the asymmetry of

my beard is bothering me ah

man I maybe I should just I don't know

just hold I hold my head at like this

angle like this so that you don't really

notice I could just do the whole Q&A

like

this but I'm not going to so anyways the

the first missed question that I should

have answered last week but didn't is

from dhama river and dhama river says I

have studied both Terra and Mahayana

Buddhism I respect both but I don't

understand what is the point of the

bodis satv vow it seems like a trap to

get the person into a karmic contract

that will keep them rolling around in

samsara indefinitely it's a binding

agreement to hey one of the dogs just

coughed or something it's a binding

agreement stop

it it's a binding agreement to a

seemingly impossible task because there

is no such thing as liberating an
infinite number of beings by a person
who is also possessed of no self or
anata
it's a shame that Mahayana monks are
required to take the bodh satv because
there is so much wisdom in Mahayana but
in this particular aspect terraa makes
more sense because it encourages
practitioners to liberate themselves
first in your opinion what is the point
of the bodh satva how do you understand
it in terms of Liberation and all of a
sudden I'm remembered of the I think
it's called the Navas sua of the suata
which points out pretty much what um

dama River here is pointing out that if you're going to help people across a river it's I mean you got to be Adept at crossing the river you can't be helping people to cross the river while you're being washed Downstream by the current but I do agree with dhama river that Mahayana Buddhism in its buddhis vows is indulging in some sloppy reasoning that presumably samsara has been in existence for an infinite length of time and there are still an infinite number of suffering beings at least in a conventional sense of suffering beings but ultimately they don't really exist not not like at the ultimate level and so if an infinite period of

time has already elapsed and still there
are an infinite number of suffering
beings that's a pretty good indication
that there's all always going to be an
infinite number of suffering
beings so yeah I think the Buddha
himself the historical godma Buddha
would have denounced the whole bodh V
concept um let's see the question part
though let's see where's the question
mark in your opinion what is the point
of the bodh how do you understand it in
terms of Liberation well I think in the
case of the bodh Val um compassion
just overwhelmed
reason and uh they just committed

themselves to like an impossible task in
that I mean glorification of the Buddha
started before Mahayana even in terat
attacks there's a fair amount of
glorification of the Buddha I think
originally the Buddha was just an Arun
and he was saying you know I became
fully enlightened you can become fully
enlightened too by following my
teachings at least there's a good chance
that you'll become fully enlightened by
following my teachings and you should
strive for that in this very
life and I mean according to early
Buddhist philosophy the Buddha really is
no wiser than any of his enlightened
disciples because according to Abid dama

at least PA or wisdom is a synonym for
amoha or lack of delusion so when you
have zero delusion you have maxed out
out on wisdom and any enlightened being
has zero delusion and therefore any
enlightened being has maxed out on
transcendental wisdom anyway maybe not
with regard to worldly wisdom like
cleverness perceptiveness that kind of
thing but where where it really
counts like Supra mundane wisdom the
lonliest dry vision arant is going to be
just as wise as a sama samb Buddha
because both of them have zero
delusion so anyways uh glorification of
the Buddha um like through jota stories

and just I mean you can see it all

through the

sutas um it's just this human Trend to

glorify one's the founder of one's

tradition and

So eventually before very long really

the Buddha was just considered to be

just like orders of magnitude above of

an ordinary enlightened being and the

Mahayana Buddhists they were very they

were more into devotionalism

and they just kind of took the ball and

ran with it and they're saying you know

it's so much more noble and glorious to

become a fully enlightened Buddha that

to become an ordinary fully enlightened

Arun is the inferior vehicle the

deficient vehicle and so they just start
dissing the actual historical teachings
of the actual his hisorical goab
Buddha the Buddha says strive for
enlightenment In This Very life and then
later Mahayana budas are saying nope
postpone Enlightenment
indefinitely and it's just not a very
good idea especially since it's
extremely unlikely that they're going to
liberate all beings unless they follow
the teachings of Huang in the Sutra of
Huang a Chinese Mahayana text who short
circuits the whole thing
by saying when you become enlightened
you look around and you see that

everyone else is enlightened too the
problem is is that when we are
unenlightened we're looking at the world
through unenlightenment colored glasses
and so we see an unenlightened world
full of unenlightened beings but when
you become fully enlightened you just
transcend all that you wake up from the
dream
so I mean it's like somebody vowing to
stay asleep stay in the dream until they
have liberated all of the dream beings
in their dream when really you're
liberating them by just waking
up so anyways getting back to the
question in your opinion what's the
point of the bodh I think it's sort of

like leftist politics or Progressive

politics nowadays where just like full

gush of compassion is just overwhelming

the reasoning capacity of certain

Buddhist

philosophers I think I mean if you want

a better answer than that you're going

to have to ask a like a Mahayana

Buddhist because I'm just seeing it from

the outside in just this kind of seeing

it objectively and I'm seeing it less

compassionately than a Mahayana

Buddhist

so I mean some Mahayana Buddhists they

think that after you come enlightened

you can just remain a bodh satva which

is kind of trampling underfoot the
original meaning of the poly term
bodhisatta which was just someone who is
destined to become a Buddha and as soon
as you become enlightened you're not a
bodhisatta anymore whereas in Mahayana
apparently they've got fully enlightened
bodh sanas that just somehow stay in Som
Sor out of compassion and it may be that
kind of thing that is uh more in harmony
with any semblance of sense in the bodh
vs that even after you become
enlightened you voluntarily somehow
remain in samsara to liberate all these
ultimately non-existent
beings but I think your best bet would
be to ask a Mahayana Buddhist and

they'll give you a more sympathetic
answer to their own
tradition and so I'm just going to move
on to dma River's second question which
I didn't skip over last
time because he he included it recently
for this episode so he says do you get
the impression that nowadays Buddhist
monasteries are turning into liberal
Social Clubs with a Buddhist flavor to
them and then sort of as a commentary he
says and the monks and the monk that
gets the most support is the one that
caters to the desires of the woke crowd
and not the unpopular monk that teaches
the real

dhama and I guess

I guess it is kind of two questions it's

sort of like question two and then

question 2a because it's they're

obviously like linked and related so

anyways I'll just attend to the to the

first question mark first do you get the

impression that nowadays Buddhist

monasteries are turning into liberal

Social Clubs with a Buddhist flavor to

them some are and some have been for

years I mean there haven't really been

terraa Buddhist monasteries in the West

um that were like run by westerners

until like the 1980s at the very

earliest so I mean it's it's kind of a

new thing there have been temples before

then like Thai temples Burmese temples
shonkan temples um bana Society is maybe
the first Terra Forest Monastery in in
America and it was run by the monk who
with all due respect was like the chief
C P year at the the weara book service
so I mean they don't really follow vinia
as far as I know at least certain rules
they don't but I'm I'm digressing and
we've got like 48 questions so I
shouldn't digress very much I should
just answer questions here should do my
damn it
job so some Buddhist monasteries
especially like Western Buddhist
monasteries Buddhist monasteries fre Ed

by westerners which often have Western

monks and western

beunis western nuns

um yeah it's it's sort of a complicated

phenomenon where first of all

most Buddhists of European ancestry most

people who consider themselves to be

Buddhists who have European ancestry or

just non-asian ancestry they tend to be

left of center politically and

culturally because conservative

Americans tend to go with

Christianity so it's sort of like the

progressive types the liberal the

liberal types which I mean liberalism in

the in America now is essentially

progressivism cultural Marxism that kind

of

thing so I mean most of the western lay

supporters are going to be liberal or

Ultra

liberal and when the monks are being

supported by the these people they have

to be

diplomatic at I mean they've got to be

circumspect at best and you know

sometimes kind of even diplomatic where

you're just kind of dancing around

certain issues avoiding certain

issues

so some monks just can't manage this and

so they're plunged in the The Dragon's

Lair of some leftist Metropolis like

Seattle Washington or Portland or one of the big cities in in California or like Barry Massachusetts places like that where you've got lots of ultra liberal types and some of the monks just out of a desire not to offend their listeners and to get support because monks are not allowed to support themselves they have to rely upon the generosity of lay people sort of like blanch Dubois on a streetheart of a street car Named Desire you know I've always relied upon the generosity of

Stranges monks are like that to some degree and so some monks that maybe don't have as firm of a vertebral column as others will kind of Pander you know

they'll be welcoming in the lgbtq
retreat group and this kind of thing and
maybe even going so far as to promote
mindfulness of white privilege
meditation and this kind of
thing and uh I mean some monks just
really have just they really go for it
one of the most famous Western monks
nowadays is biku body who even goes so
far as to promote female reproductive
Health which includes abortion I mean
that's like a euphemism for abortion the
very fact that they have to use a
euphemism indicates that even some of
these people know that it's kind of a a
cedd kind of a thing especially from a

Buddhist point of view because from a Buddhist point of view abortion is murder at least from a Terra Buddhist point of view I mean that is just uncontroversial anyone who denies that is just ignorant of the texts any monk who even talks a woman into getting an abortion is guilty of being an accomplice to murder and he is excommunicated for the rest of his life so if any woman took biku's advice with regard to his promotion of female reproductive rights and got an abortion bbot would be excommunicated he would be par of J he'd be kicked out of the songa for Life automatically so there are some strict

serious monks that remain traditionalist

and

conservative um usually monks are more

conservative than lay people um simply

because they are following the tradition

they are

traditionalists but as a I said most

western lay

Buddhists who are of non-asian

ancestry uh they tend to lean leftwards

politically and

culturally and so some monks just you

know they're trying to be liked and

supported and just brutal honesty will

get them just not

supported so they have to be careful I

mean my advice to any Western man who
wants to be a monk go to Asia stay in
Asia as long as you can stand it and
then if you come back you got I mean
it's more important to stay true to the
tradition than to make sure you're going
to get enough support you're better off
going hungry sometimes because you have
said that you think the bikuni order is
is like fraudulent it's not real it's
invalid or you think abortion is murder
or I mean the te point out that the text
say it not just your opinion it's right
there in the poly texts that you don't
want to have special Retreats teaching
mindfulness of white privilege special
Retreats for people of color or like gay

people or something I mean most terraa Buddhists in America are in fact people of color and this fact is just ignored for the most part by these Ultra liberal lay Buddhists but most terava Buddhists in America are brown skinned people from Southeast and South Asia they are immigrants who brought their terraa Buddhism with

them

so I guess I answered that question I mean some Buddhist monasteries are turning into liberal Social Clubs with a Buddhist flavor and uh yeah I would do well to find monasteries that are not like that and the the Dharma centers are

even they're even worse

I mean back when I came to America in

2011 I was relatively shocked to see

that I mean it was like left leaning

Boomers who really could not

differentiate Dharma from their leftist

cultural conditioning they just combined

them into one group and just assumed

that the Buddha himself would be

perfected in political correctness which

he was not

but that's just kind of like the secular

approach to Buddhism that most western

lay Buddhists

take and I suppose I should just move on

to the next question mark which

is as follows and the monk that gets the

most support is the one that caters to the desires of the woke crowd and not the unpopular monk that teaches the real dhama yeah and there is actually a case of this in the in the ancient poly text this is not a new thing that Western cultural Marxist

Buddhists Buddhists didn't invent this sort of thing it's been around almost from the beginning there's a story in the text of a serious monk you know a monk who's practicing correctly who who goes for Ms through this Village and he keeps his eyes downcast he's not like cracking jokes with the lay people you know he's he's not making acquaintances

with the lay people he's aloof and
detached just keeping his eyes downcast
accepting the bowl accepting food into
his bowl in silence and then passing
through and some of the lay people were
like disgusted with this monk thinking
that he was just some stuck up [__]
of a monk because their Village monk he
was friendly to everybody he'd just hang
out come over to their house and just
hang out you know he was like their
buddy and the Buddha points out that
really it's the the silent Monk Is the
good
one that you're not I mean a monk is not
supposed to be making friends in the
village and it's probably easier in the

Buddhist time when a monk was just just
wandering you know it's like he's just
seeing unfamiliar faces all the time if
he even bothers to look up whereas if a
monk is staying in the same
place then it's I have to admit it is
hard not to make friends with lay
people but monks aren't supposed to do
that at least that's what it says in the
texts and so I do think that you're
better off just being honest you know
like ajan tanero from the beginning to
his credit he was saying that these new
beunis just it's not a valid ordination
procedure they're not real
bonies maybe he's changed his mind on

the issue maybe he's he's received so
much flak from that that he may have
changed his mind I don't
know but there'll be a little about aan
tanero in subsequent oh the very next
question in fact this this question also
I skipped over somehow I spaced it off
last time this is from Co of action Cad
zida and he says I came across a very
confusing suta please explain its
meeting and I just happen to have it
right here let see where is
it yeah it's the kalakuta from the angur
nikaya angur nikaya 4.24
and it's not a very long Su but I don't
want to read the whole thing I'll just
read uh like the first paragraph the

first substantial paragraph once you get past the
introduction the blessed one said monks whatever in the cosmos with its Davis maras and brahmas its generations with their contemplatives and brahans royalty and common people is seen heard sense cognized attained sought after pondered by the intellect that do I know whatever in the Cosmos with its Davis maras and brahmas its generations with their contemplatives and brahans their royalty and common people is seen heard sensed cognized attained sought after pondered by the intellect that I directly know that has been realized by the the dag

but in the Daga it has not been established so I come back and get the questions all back together okay so it's essentially say that the Buddha knows things the way a lay person or like an unenlightened person knows things but in the Buddha he knows it but it's not established which means there's no clinging to it there's no Karma I mean it's just like phenomena arising and passing away with the the mind of the Buddha simply observing and just not clinging to anything not interpreting anything really not getting involved it's just holding the knowledge in an open hand instead of like grasping it in a in a clenched fist kind of a

thing so I mean again you have to think
at different levels of reality I've I
try to talk about this kind of stuff and
and usually it fails that first of all
trying to explain an enlightened point
of view to unenlightened people is like
trying to explain colors to a blind
person unless they have some special
talent some in intuition maybe like
latent memories from a past life when
they could see or some such then maybe
something will
click and I'm not claiming to be
enlightened by like insinuating with
that statement but I mean it takes a
capacity for multi-dimensional thought

when somebody is like trying to explain
everything to to fit everything onto a
two-dimensional plane of knowledge so to
speak you can't really understand
Enlightenment that way I mean you can't
even begin to to get an intuition of it
really so let's see
here yeah I mean the the meaning of it
is that it's like the same kind of
thoughts can arise in an enlightened
being it's just that the the same kind
of like
samsaric Quagmire isn't occurring in the
mind of the enlightened being that it's
just their this it's like objects in
front of a mirror they're there so long
as they're in front of the mirror and

then as soon as they're they're not in front of the mirror the mirror they're not in the mirror anymore it's just there's no attachment at all it's just nature taking its course no more will like volition no more karma that's like creating friction and clinging and all this kind of

messiness so I think I'm just going to move on to seal of action CAD Zena's next question and he asked four questions which is not exactly transgress it because as I say I spaced off the first one in the previous Q&A and didn't answer it there and so covac is milking this and getting away with

asking four

questions but I do not encourage that

and uh so don't do

it so Co of action CAD Zena says what do

you do when you are having a low

day well I mean I have been

significantly depressed in my life not

real recently

but my mind does expand and contract you

know it's like contraction of spirit

expansion of spirit sort of like in a

more exaggerated form it would be like

being bipolar or manic depressive as it

used to be

called um you know these mental

disabilities or whatever you want to

call them like being bipolar or manic

depressive they're or schizophrenic even or you know there's all these different things that can happen to a person's mind that are considered to be pathological I mean they're mainly just exaggerations of a normal State you know it's like everybody's on this this spectrum so to speak autism comes to mind but everyone's kind of on a spectrum with regard to all these different mental qualities and it's sort of like the outliers are the ones that have the the disability whereas you know there there are people just write at the verge of like being obsessive compulsive some people are not obsessive compulsive

at all but I mean you can have
tendencies in that direction but not be
clinically significant like I took a
test for obsessive compulsive disorder
and you know I did get like um you know
I did score you know above zero on it
but it was not enough to be clinically
significant so anyways what do you do
when you're having a low day if I'm
going through a period of low days then
I found that sleeping a little extra
helps and also a accomplishing something
every day even if it's just cleaning
your cave you know just just accomplish
something you know just clean the house
wash your your laundry or something just
so you can you don't feel like the whole

day was just wasted because that makes

it

worse um but aside from that I mean just

be aware that it's just nature taking

its

course um a low day I mean I'm not

exactly sure what he means by a low day

than just sort of a kind of a depressed

day it's that's different from one of

those toe stubbing days where

everything's going wrong that can be a

just a [__] up mess of a day too and I

guess the way you deal with it might be

a little different you might have more

capacity for mindfulness because I have

found that when my spirit contracts like

in a state of relative depression it's
much more difficult to meditate and it's
much more difficult to be
mindful and otherwise being mindful
that's the Panacea that's the cure of
all ills in terraa Buddhism mindfulness
just note it Let It Go observe it detach
from it it's not
you but you can still remind yourself of
that even if you're not doing it at a
very deep level just remind yourself I
mean it's just nature taking its course
you know I mean even at a like a
physiological materialistic level it's
just some sort of chemical imbalance
going
on so I guess I answer that question

so I'm going to move on to seov action
seat Z's next question which is can you
please explain why Maha molana allowed
himself to be beaten to a pulp in the
end after seeing his past life it might
explain why the thugs were ultimately
coming for him but I don't get why he
went along with it well according to the
story um some non- Buddhist
athetics um apparently they hired some
Hitmen to to beat up Maha molana to just
get rid of him essentially to beat him
to death and they came after him twice
and both times he used his psychic
powers he had he was the the disciple
the great disciple who was foremost in

psychic powers Maham mogana was psychic
AF he just he could do all these
miraculous Feats and so forth and so
twice he he was able to just fly away
just get away from them and then he had
like this past life uh memory
of doing some horrible thing I think it
was like killing his parents in some Far
distant life and it was such weighty
Cara that it was still sort of like a
ball and chain on him to some degree and
even though he was fully enlightened
already and wasn't making any new Karma
was going to pass into partana at death
for re enlightened reasons that maybe we
cannot fathom assuming that the story
really happened this way he just decided

Well it's just uh my just this Karma has
to be resolved it's gonna they're just
going to keep trying until they succeed
so he might as well just uh bow his head
you know GG well played and uh reach his
part in bana it was just time for him to
go he just realized that's just the
natural natural course that was trying
to take place and he was sort of
interfering with it by getting away from
these murderers every
time so I'm going to move on to seac and
C
zona's fourth question which is not
entirely transgressive because I skipped
over one of his questions last time and

that is do you know if Mara being the ruler of a specific sensual Heavenly realm is mentioned in the sutas or if it is a later commentarial material well I have read that Mara really is not the ruler of the the Heavenly Realm of the the Davis who Delight in the in the constructions of others that is it's the highest Heaven Realm in the sensual sphere any higher than that and you stop being Davis and start being brahmas and I have read that Mara really isn't the ruler of that heaven realm that he sort of um made like a pirate raid I mean I can't remember the exact way that it was described but Mara just sort of like claimed some territory

there that that I mean it was sort of like he he colonized it or something he conquered it and this he's just sort of got this uh Insurgent group or whatever you know sort of like the Insurgent groups in Burma that have defied the government and have St have staked out their own territory that's kind of the way Mara and his three voluptuous daughters have done in the realm of the dvas who Delight in the creations of others um but I don't think that it's mentioned in the sutas I do not recall coming across that anywhere in fact I mean in early Buddhism the whole 31 PLS of existence scheme had not been fully

worked out yet and Mara was considered

to be you know he's like the the bad

daa and they really didn't nail down

exactly where he was

living so I mean most of the dvas that

are known by name live in tawa timsa

which was like where the the viic

pantheon lived I mean that was like the

traditional just the

heaven and then it got multiplied into

all these different

Realms and uh yeah I do not think that

it had been worked out yet in the

mythology exactly um what heaven realm

Mara lived in or how he got there that

kind of

thing so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from

Austin and Austin has been on a kind of

empiricism kick lately he's been asking

asking questions about

empiricism and uh so he's or maybe even

just theory of knowledge he's asking

epistemological

questions and so Austin is sort of

following up on a followup of a previous

answer to a previous question how does

experience justify itself to argue that

all knowledge comes from experience

besid Enlightenment you would need a a

way to verify this claim without

assuming it is true

beforehand if you use experience to

prove that experience is the only source of knowledge you create a circular argument what say you and then he's got like a footnote here rationalists like day cart argue that some knowledge for example mathematical truths logic or innate ideas is independent of experience for example we don't need experience to know that 2 plus 2 equal 4 or that contradictions cannot both be true some knowledge like ethics metaphysics or linguistic structures may not be directly derived from sensory experiences but rather from reasoning Intuition or any cognitive structures

well it depends on what you mean by

knowledge first I mean like true

knowledge like real knowledge not just

belief not even true belief but actual

knowledge can only come from experience

because that is

Enlightenment the only true knowledge is

knowledge of

nirvana nibana in paully the everything

else is just symbolic constructions

which are

beliefs

so how does experience justify itself it

doesn't bother to justify anything why

the [__] should it even bother to

justify anything reality is there why

should reality have to justify anything

why should it have to prove

itself so anyways Austin continues here

to argue I'm I'm reading this the second

time to argue that all knowledge comes

from experience besides Enlightenment

well that's all knowledge doesn't come

from experience besides Enlightenment

because all knowledge is Enlightenment

everything else is just belief it may be

conventionally true conventional truth

so in a way it's kind of conven

knowledge like to know two and two is

four Carson City is the capital of

Nevada conventional knowledge but it's

not ultimately

true so you would need a way to verify

this claim without assuming is true

beforehand okay so let's let's do a
little a little speech on theory of
knowledge also known as
epistemology at the turn of the 20th
century there were three main theories
with regard to how do we know the truth
what is
truth so the main one is the
correspondence theory that is like
science it's like a statement is true if
it corresponds to some objective matter
of fact like the statement the apple is
on the table is true if and only if the
Apple really is on the table then there
was the coherence Theory which was
championed by people like FH Bradley and

FH Bradley was saying that a statement

is true

if and only if it is in harmony with

every other statement that has already

been perceived as

true so the apple is on the table is

true if and only if it is in harmony

with all of the other perceptions that

you consider to be true so it's like a

subjective psychological construction

and then there was a third theory that

was championed by William James called

pragmatism which is it's true if it

works and if it's stops working then it

stops being true and that one kind of

fell by the wayside and almost everybody

goes with the correspondence theory of

Truth nowadays which is it's a statement
is true if it corresponds to some
objective matter of fact but I think the
correspondence theory of Truth Works
only with
Enlightenment that all other knowledge
so-called which isn't real knowledge
it's just conventional like virtual
knowledge goes with the coherence Theory
which is it's true if it's not
contradicted by anything else you
consider to be
true
so how does Nirvana justify itself how
does knowledge of Nirvana justify itself
it doesn't not that I know of at least

not in this like um with regard to
justifying its own truth
value I just I mean some people are just
delusional they think they're
enlightened when they really aren't and
there's really not much you can do about
that anyways I'm just going to move on
to Austin's next question which is
Buddhism does not claim moral laws exist
independently of experience so
theoretically I could compassionately
kill someone to prevent greater harm
question mark so long as I don't have
negative mental States because of what
I'm Mor moral justified in doing so
question mark well it sounds good in
theory but the reality is that if you're

going to kill somebody I mean you know
you know that you're killing somebody
and just that knowledge that volition to
kill somebody regardless of any
justifications or rationalizations you
can come up with you can say you know
it's like you're putting them out of
their misery or it's going to save 10
other people by killing this one that
kind of thing still it's GNA have an
effect on your mind it's G to have this
subconscious karmic effect where you
know that you are depriving this
sentient being of life and even though
you can justify it at The Superficial
level still at a deeper level it's going

to have a karmic effect that you might

be oblivious to at the

time so I noticed I'm waving my arms

around I think it's the waste coat the

waste coat is causing me to wave my arms

around a lot cuz it's like a vest so I

got like freedom of arm motion or

something

anyways let's see Buddhism does not

claim moral laws exist independently of

experience yeah it's it's a matter of

human psychology or just psychology in

general that certain actions have

certain effects on the

mind and certain

volitions I mean they have certain

qualities and the volition to kill

somebody is always going to have a
certain amount of negative volition
which is Bad
Karma but I mean sometimes like a lay
person especially this is something that
I I bring it up every once in a while
that only a monk can really afford to be
a saint that if you want to follow
Buddhist ethics perfectly renounce the
world for example if you've got a family
you need to protect you couldn't you
wouldn't really be worthy of of the word
man if you just refused to rescue your
child from a predator because you didn't
want to harm the
predator or you refuse to delouse your

child's hair because you didn't want to

kill the poor

lice that kind of a thing you're better

off not having a family not having any

kind of social or like familial

obligations renounce the World Go off

into a forest and be a

saint I mean lay people that want to

follow Buddhist ethics

perfectly is it's not very realistic

maybe if you're lucky you know you just

got a family that's never threatened by

anything dangerous or any such thing you

know you can just be like the the holy

fool like uh Prince Michigan and dov's

novel The Idiot but even Prince Michigan

I mean he did dislike people some

sometimes he forgave them eventually but
he still disliked them at
times
so yeah I mean theoretically you could
compassionately kill someone to prevent
greater harm theoretically you could fly
through the sky
too but as a general rule it doesn't
work out that way so I wouldn't go
around compassionately killing people
just on the going with the idea that so
long as you're doing it compassionately
you're not doing anything wrong I mean
look at leftist politics I mean maybe
the people at the top are just ruthless
and

Machiavellian in a lot of their thinking
but a lot of the like the college
educated white women in the west you
know they're going along with
Conformity but also just compassion
unrefined feminine sentiment and it
results in making things
worse so trying to kill
compassionately um I mean trying to do
something humanely except that you're
going to make Bad Karma you know you're
GNA let's say you're going to take full
responsibility for you and your family
eating meat and so you're going to raise
chickens you're going to raise your own
chickens and so that you know that the
chickens will be raised and killed more

humanely than the the hormonal
monstrosities grown in these warehouses
by and on factory farms so I mean it's
not like you're doing anything really
good I mean there's some goodness mixed
in I mean it's all Shades of Gray but
you're still killing the chickens I mean
you may do it very humanely you might
give them an over overdose of some
opiate so they just kind of die smiling
and hugging themselves and rocking back
and forth but still I mean there is no
way of
cheating ethics or cheating Karma that
still there's going to be effects even
if you don't think they're going to be

effects and don't want there to be
effects still there's going to be
effects so I'm just going to move on to
Austin's third
question how do Buddhists derive an is
from an ought well it goes the other way
around they derive the ought from the is
just like I was talking if you do the
certain action then there's going to be
like negative consequences and therefore
you ought not perform that action if you
don't want those negative consequences
to some degree a lay person does well to
be a stoic that you just have to own
your actions and accept okay I'm doing
this act it's going to cause negative
consequences and I'm just going to face

those negative consequences with
fortitude a certain amount of stoicism
is very valuable for a Buddhist lay
person who cannot afford or is not is
not in a position to be a perfected
saint you just got to toughen up a bit
and have some backbone and just when
when the negative consequences finally
reach me I'll face them with equinity or
at least as much equinity as I can
muster so how do Buddhist derive an is
from an ought it's it's the other way
around they derive the ought from the
is far as I mean otherwise I don't fully
understand the question I'm not sure
exactly what Austin is referring

to so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from the
sabur which might be more than one
person might be only one person and the
sabur says or
say thank you for answering about not
killing bad people but if one doesn't
react do we just sit back and get
enslaved by for example no I guess that
is the New World Order all evil needs to
succeed is that good people do nothing
do we get bad karma for reacting to evil
or bad karma for not doing your duty by
defending your family it seems like
Catch 22 incidentally I'm only one
person oh there there you go the sabur
is just one person maybe he's referring

to all of his organs as sort of a a

synergistic

hole well this is just a continuation of

the previous question I guess or the

question before

that see if one doesn't re act do we

just sit back and get enslaved well I

mean if you want to be a saint and never

do anything wrong renounce the world and

go off into a forest and meditate sit

under a tree wear

Rags beg for your food silently in the

streets because if you're going to be

living in the world you're going to have

to do negative things sometimes like

defending your family maybe Defending

Your Country defending yourself

Defending Your Home

like I got a glock in my nightstand next

to my bed and if somebody breaks into

the house there's a good chance I'm

going to shoot that

person and then I'm just going to have

to accept well that's some weighty Karma

that I just did I'm going to have to

face that sooner or later I

suppose but still it's better I mean I

would prefer that to having somebody

break into the house and do who knows

what to my woman or to me or or to just

even steal stuff I mean you just can't

tolerate that kind of thing if you are

taking

responsibility for a family and a

home

so yeah if if you want to be a perfected

Saint renounce the world that's that's

my best advice to you all evil needs to

succeed is that good people do nothing

but if good people are good enough then

there's not going to be a whole lot of

evil going around so it's I mean having

good karma means that there's going to

be less bad things happening to you

that's just the way Karma works the more

bad stuff you do the more bad stuff gets

done to you and of course you don't have

complete control over that some of it

subconscious stuff some of it's residual

from the distant past that kind of thing
but at least you're going to reduce it
by just living a virtuous
life so do we get bad karma for reacting
to evil or Bad Karma for not doing your
duty from the Buddhist point of view
inaction is morally neutral you never do
anything wrong by just not doing
anything you could sit on the bank of a
lake and watch a pretty girl drown I
mean there's there's cases in the
texts I I hope this never really
happened cases in the text like examples
of the monk that will sit on the bank of
the River or the or the the lake and
watch a pretty girl drown simply because
it's against the rules for mon to touch

pretty girls he'll just let her drown
and technically he hasn't done anything
wrong he hasn't done anything right
really he hasn't done
anything but it's like the trolley
problem you know the the common trolley
problem where you've got the the Train
That's heading towards 10 people and you
can just pull the lever and have the
train get diverted so it squishes just
one person instead of 10 from the
Buddhist point of view I mean you're
still guilty of killing one person if
you don't do anything you're not guilty
of killing anyone inaction is always
morally neutral but if you caus the

trolley to go and and squish one person
you're guilty of murdering one person
somebody else is guilty of murdering the
10 if you don't do
anything that is just it's very
mechanistic very straightforward easy to
understand Buddhist ethics that
westerners still don't really understand
very well sometimes because they're so
locked in to the standard Western
materialistic utilitarian ethic that
prevails in the west thank you Jeremy
benam for [__] up the ethics of the
West I mean it works fairly well if
you're just a worldly secular humanist
type person but for a Buddhist it's
delusional so again I mean be a stoic if

you think that it is the right thing to do to stand up against tyny then do it and if you if you can do it peacefully like the pen is mightier than the sword and all that that may be best but it may be if that you think that you are called upon that it is your duty as like an American citizen and a free man to bear arms against tyrannical forces or people breaking into your house or whatever it is then you go ahead and it's your choice to make you know it's like it's just that there's going to be consequences so I mean you just got to man up and accept the consequences sometimes I guess if that's what you're

going to

do so I'm just going to move on the next

question this is from Athena

sigil and Athena sigil says okay we've

talked about the Lial spaces and beings

before I'm here to first ask about your

thoughts if any on Robert andon Wilson

who wrote the Illuminati Trilogy I'm

also going to recommend a book by Eric

Davis called high weirdness a book on

the early '70s

counterculture which focuses on the

strange experiences of Robert Anton

Wilson Philip K dick and the

ethnobotanist Terrence

McKenna if you're not interested then

ignore I thought I'd throw this in as

you've talked about esoteric subjects before plus I went down a weird rabbit hole with on R aw whatever that is and related subjects today well I'm really not like very familiar with any of these people I did read one book by Robert Anton Wilson as a teenager and I read it again in my 20s called shringer cat the universe next door which is just talking about is it's sort of like a fictional account
representing like the many worlds hypothesis that you just kind of shift sideways through probability and you wind up in a world that's not quite like this one and so it was just sort of

different versions of the same the same phenomena with the same characters and you know it's like pocket books was like the paperback um like it was a paperback book that I read it was published by pocket books and then like partway through the novel all of a sudden you've got this the title page again and it's by rocket books and then a little farther through the novel you've got the title page again and it's locket books you know with a different little logo a rocket and a locket and and so it's uh that's that's what I know about Robert Anton Wilson um I mean they did produce another book that I looked at and on the cover it says this is not a

book and uh I mean obviously it was a
book so it's um it's it's a way of
trying to knock people loose from just
kind of clinging to this version of
reality as far as I can tell Robert
Anton Wilson I'm pretty sure he's a
physicist and just sort of moonlights as
a as an
author I'm not sure about that Philip K
dick obviously he was a science fiction
author and I've I've seen a number of
movies based on his
writings so there is
that and Terence McKenna I mean I keep
hearing about him but I've never really
been into Terrence McKenna so I don't

think I even saw any of his YouTube videos so where's the where's the question mark here first to ask about your thoughts if any on Robert Anton Wilson yeah I guess that's really all I can say is the only thing I've ever read by Robert Anton Wilson is shringer cat the universe next door and it was it was good I liked it I read it more than once I eventually left it on uh I think it was on the Polish ship I worked on when I was 21 years old the sigita I left it in the the observer's uh cabin for like the next Fisheries Observer that worked on the ship could read it if he wanted to if he was weird and like that sort of thing because it is kind of a weird

book so I guess that's it so I'm just going to move on next question so those questions are actually kind of easy where you know what is your opinion about you know Joe Schmo and it's like I don't know I never never really never really met

joeo anyway this next question is from Newman and Newman says do human beings reincarnate within the same lineage or Clan or tribe or ethnic group or is it random is there if there is a kind of karmic logic is it fortuitous to be reborn within a particular ethnic group such as a member of a people that practices and has received the teachings

like ties or what have you well I don't
think it's human beings don't
necessarily neily reincarnate within the
same lineage or Clan or tribe or ethnic
group but it's certainly not random it's
just you know what your character is
like what you need to work on in in your
life it just it's sort of like water
flowing in into that direction and you
wind up there like I can
hypothesize about my past lives and I
would guess in the previous existence
before this one I was American my father
was completely persuaded that I was his
father which makes me my own
grandpa so maybe I'll just I'll just
assume that as a working hypothesis um

sometime before that I think there's a
good chance I was Japanese like back in
like the 1700s like Samurai era Japan
and then I was like an
English like Catholic monk in the in the
14th century who died of Bubonic plague
theoretically uh good chance that uh I
lived in like southern Italy during the
late Republic or early Roman
Empire um maybe uh even even farther
back like some snake worshipping Shaman
in like Northwestern
India that kind of thing so I mean it's
it's not so much the culture
necessarily and and the culture has
changed I mean we're talking about you I

mean you're living a life that's maybe
80 years long and it may be that the
culture has changed so that you don't
really fit the culture when you're an
old man as much as you did when you were
20 a lot of old men just feel like they
just don't fit the culture anymore so it
may be that some other culture that
comes along will actually be a better
fit
somehow like uh Edgar Casey he was uh
doing past life readings while in trance
later on in his career
and a lot of Americans apparently came
from Rome I mean America modern America
is is to some degree like a
Reincarnation of of the Roman

civilization so that a lot of people I
mean they can't be reborn as ancient
Romans anymore because ancient Rome
doesn't exist anymore and so America is
sort of a good fit for
them so let's see I mean I think a lot
of people would tend to be reborn in the
same lineage or Clan or tribe or ethnic
group simply because that's a better fit
um it's not I mean there's no real
outward
Force requiring them to be reborn that
way it's just that their character just
fits that culture and it's just it just
works and so that's what happens but
outliers are going to be more sporadic

in where and how they get reborn what
kind of life and what kind of culture
and that sort of thing because it may be
that you get something down you know
you've kind of learned what you need to
learn so then you got to work on
something else which might be a
radically different
environment so there is a kind of karmic
logic and it's not really I mean it it's
not random
chance but different people's Karma
Works differently and some people may
really benefit more from like sampling
around different cultures different kind
of lives sometimes male sometimes female
this kind of thing and others might be

more conservative and just kind of stay
in the same culture and kind of go with
the The ancestral lineage and all
this so I hope I answer that one because
I'm moving on to Newman's second
question which is a follow-up question
how does filial peity and or ancestral
Worship in Buddhist East Asian societies
work are they venerating their
particular lineage is or do they have a
more Universal idea that no matter what
ethnic group they're born into every
ancestor of their current body is a
kindred being well the
only the only uh East
Asian um society that I can speak of

from like years of experience is
Burmese I didn't live in Thailand I mean
I was I spent just a few weeks in
Thailand a few months in Indonesia but
not long enough to really um see a lot
of the culture happening and and enough
to really understand what's going on and
speak the language so that people can
explain and that kind of thing but
filial p and ancestral Worship in
Burmese Society it's not so much I mean
ancestor worship has pretty much died
out in Burma it's it's veneration for
your ancestors especially the ones that
you remember your parents and your
grandparents maybe your
great-grandparents that um after they

die like periodically you'll be like
doing acts of Merit and dedicating it to
your to your parents or your
grandparents or or whatever whatever
ancestors or I mean it could be even
like uncles and aunts maybe although
generally your duties your parents are
are
greater and um I mean you're just doing
acts of Merit and sharing the merit with
them to help them in whatever realm they
happen to be and it generally only works
from a terot of Buddhist point of view
if they are ghosts if they are pasas
because it only works you can only share
merit with somebody if they're actually

aware that you're sharing merit with
them so if they're reborn as another
human they're off oblivious just be
living a new human life they don't know
if you're an animal likewise if if they
reborn into a heaven realm the beings in
the heaven Realms got better things to
do than to be like keeping an eye on on
us you know they got their own lives to
live up there too so it's mainly ghosts
P that are kind of Haunting the area
that might still be following along with
their loved ones still like attached to
the house or something that will be able
to see that their children or
grandchildren are performing these
meritorious acts generally offering

stuff to monks taking precepts at the monastery and then doing the ceremony of of sharing Merit and then the ghosts rejoice in them

and then their own rejoicing like uh kind of mudita it's one of the four Brahma viharas you know rejoicing in another person's um good fortune or happiness that rejoicing is their own meritorious deed and it helps them but that's about as far as it goes in Burma and with regard to ancestor worship in a place like China or Japan I think it's probably discouraged in China because of Marxism and all that and in Japan and I think the Japanese have become so

materialistic and secularized that for
the most part Most Japanese people are
not into ancestor worship it may be like
a an old traditional thing that still
exists uh for some people but I don't
know that much about it but in Burma
it's mainly a matter of trying to do
your like filial duty to your parents
and grandparents and so forth by
performing acts of Merit and dedicating
the the Merit to them and if they happen
to be able to see what you're doing and
rejoice over it then that rejoicing is
creating Merit for them which then can
then help them especially if they're a
Paya it can help them to get out of that
realm into a better

one so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from meditators library and meditator Library says I turn valuable sutas into audiobook on my channel by using
AI I've noticed that many monks including biku suat are vigorously against the use of AI are you against the use of AI what is your opinion well if I'm watching a video and it's narrated by AI I usually just stop watching it because it's just sort of like a dead voice with no understanding or wisdom behind it it's like a fake person which makes it kind of like a fake narrative or a fake video kind of I

mean it's it's just sort of like a
feeling I get it's like I don't for some
reason I just prefer that if a video is
narrated like a YouTube video it's
narrated by a real human and not just
this dead voice with no mind no
consciousness no sentience no
understanding or if it is you know sort
of like an AI
like a a Proto understanding but that's
about it you know it has to understand
sentence structure and how to pronounce
words and so
forth but yeah I mean I'm not against AI
on any kind of ethical grounds or
anything with regard to like AI narrated
videos it's just that I prefer not to

listen to them I prefer a real human who actually has some kind of understanding that you can empathize with so any empathy you get like somebody is trying to share wisdom presumably they have wisdom that they are sharing with you and I mean a lot of the transmission of information is coming from a kind of empathy you know feeling what that person is feeling and then it helps you to understand what's going on whereas the AI of course doesn't understand diddly it's just a dead voice with nothing behind it so yeah I do think that it would be less effective in transmitting wisdom

from wisdom texts aside from the fact
that the AI isn't going to like be
slurring its words and and messing up
this kind of
thing it'll be more perfect um
transmission at least with regard to
pronunciation of common
words but still I would prefer a real
human and that's that's my feelings on
it I'm not necessarily against the use
of AI although I do think that the
technological singularity is a real
possibility and there's no telling
what's going to happen if AI really does
become
sentient so I mean it could be the end
of the human race for all we know when

that happens and some people are saying

it's going to be happening within the

next few

decades some people are saying it's

already

starting so I'm just going to move on to

the next question

which is from

Romeo and Romeo says my question asks

you to take a brether from answering

questions about Buddhism and requires

you to Dawn your geopolitics Fez if you

have one well I was actually going to

wear The Fez just to to go with the the

fancy sort of pseudo embroidered waste

coat that I got for Valentine's Day so

what the hell I got it right here look

at this I think they go well together

yeah I think it's a good

combo The Fez the waste coat the shirt

the special underwear yeah this is quite

the

uniform okay so

anyways as you are probably aware

president Trump's Department of

government efficiency or

Doge recently uncovered a scandal

involving the US Aid agency literally

millions of taxpayer dollars at tens or

hundreds of millions sent overseas

including to your former home of Burma

to spread the left's radical woke

ideology this includes funds for

advancing Dei in Serbia's Workforce money for sex changes and lgbtq activism in Guatemala producing a Dei musical in Ireland and Publishing a transgender comic book in Peru as much as I'm against it I kind of understand why our political Elites spread their radical agenda domestically to divide and conquer the populace create a voter base of vulnerable people that they can reliably tap into for political power among other reasons but at the risk of sounding totally clueless about geopolitics what the heck do our political Elites get out of spreading their woke ideology overseas well one

thing to bear in mind it's not so much
the left it is the globalists it is
globalism they want to create the Brave
New
World and so they want to spread this
ideology just as universally as they can
to get everybody on the same woke page I
think that is a major part of
it um but I mean it's it's really
nowadays the the main political
dichotomy isn't so much left and right
anymore it's globalists versus
nationalists and I'm happy to say the
nationalists are now on the
offensive that the globalists are now on
defense and they have so thoroughly
castrated themselves as part of their

ideology of just feminizing the world
that they can't fight for [__] all they
can do is just get hysterical and lie
and people are seeing through it now you
know they're so used to the the lying
hysteria that it doesn't have much of an
effect on them
anymore so yeah I guess it's they're
trying to create the Brave New World
which is globalist you know it's world
it's not the Brave New Country not even
the brave new continent it is the Brave
New World the New World Order and so
they want everybody as many people as
possible to be on the same page with
regard to this political correctness

hysteria cultural

Marxism uh blame everything on evil hii

that kind of stuff and uh and it is true

also that it kind of weakens them I mean

it castrates the people that follow this

as a general rule there might be a few

Macho progressives out there uh at least

Macho in certain ways even though like

culturally they've had their balls cut

off

so yeah I guess the main two advantages

the main two like reasons for it are one

to just spread this ideology as as much

much as possible because it's a

globalist ideology and two it does

weaken and feminize the people who take

it to heart and makes them easier to

keep under

control and I'm happy to say it seems to

be slipping through their fingers so

that you had some

German Like official he's on like the

the security Council of Germany crying

like a girl in front of a crowd of

people just because they realize they

are losing control and being castrated

all they can do is cry about

it so I'm just going to move on the next

question so I'll just take the Fez

off it's really good Fez by the way I

mean Fez orama just Fez or.com makes

really good

fezzes okay next question is from kify

and kify says how to deal with enst from the Buddhist point of view and as I keep saying mindfulness is the Panacea mindfulness is how you deal with any kind of troublesome mental state that you observe the mental state with Detachment I mean the very fact that you are observing something means you're already detached from it it's no longer let's say anst is arising right it's you're not saying I'm anxious I'm nervous I'm feeling existential dread it's existential dread is arising and so already it's not you anymore if you are anything you're the one who's observing and not the object being observed and that's one reason that's one of the many

philosophical reasons why there is no
self is because you can observe any of
it you know one part of the system
observes the other part of the system
proving that that other part of the
system isn't
you so you just observe the anst with
mindfulness and the way of an ethologist
observes a dead fish you know like what
does it feel like how does it feel in
the stomach area you know what what
effect does it have on the body how does
it feel emotionally what thoughts are
arising you just observe it like
scientifically and then you detach from
it it's not you anymore and then it by

detaching from it you are depriving it
of sustenance and it causes its momentum
its karmic momentum to become less and
if you do that like consistently then
the the momentum becomes less and less
until it becomes only the pale shadow of
of the previous
anst so that would be the from the
Buddhist point of view I mean that's
obviously the way to do it and then cify
says how do you deal with angst well
when I'm at my best you know I follow I
do mindfulness is you just observe it I
mean I'm been in the habit of that for
30 years as a monk so it's it's second
nature a lot of the time if something
just comes up and I start getting pissed

off or upset a lot of the time not
always but a lot of the time it's just
you just observe it arising I mean
cussing helps too cussing does kind of
it serves as a pressure release valve
when I'm at work I cuss actually quite a
lot not at other people but it's yeah
I'm dropping F bombs to myself as I'm
whipping around on the forklift trying
to avoid collisions with 25 other people
people whipping around on
forklifts but the best way I mean based
on my own personal experience as well as
on the authority of Buddhist text
mindful
observation and so I'm just going to

move on to the next question this is

from

kundru and kundru says do you know

anything about your European ancestry

and my sweetheart Who provided me with

this Valentine's Day waste

coat um she just insisted I mean she was

really into I I really had not much

interest in my my ancestry because it's

more of a I mean I don't really identify

with my family like I actually have more

like sentiment of loyalty to my

friends than to my family it's like I've

chosen my friends chosen my woman uh my

family I was just I mean it was just

you're born with them you know and

you're more likely to have more in

common with regard to interests and

point of view and so forth with people

that you choose than with family members

who I

mean they might have like radically

different attitudes than you have I mean

some friends do too I mean that's

there's nothing wrong with that it's

good to have some

variety I mean if everyone was the same

it'd be pretty

boring but uh yeah she insisted that I

get my DNA tested so I did and it turns

out I'm about 50 or

60% English I'm about 25%

Scottish uh 6% Welsh 4% Irish and the

remainder is like Continental North

Germanic so I'm got maybe a little

Celtic blood in me but for the most part

I'm Germanic Northern Germanic north and

west Germanic

that would be almost all of my

ancestry

so there is that which which

justifies uh my intention of growing

this beard long enough to braid it with

like a m bead at the bottom

M so I'm just going to move on to the

next question this is from bodh sat

969 oh yeah we're recording good we've

been at it for over an hour

so bodh 969 says in the Su of the sick

and dying wakali the Buddha says come

beus we want to go to the Black Rock on
the slope where wakali the noble son
took up the knife and then when Mara
appeared after wali's well you can't say
the word starts with s and it means Auto
termination this beuz is Mara the evil
one he is looking for the consciousness
of Vali the noble son thinking where has
Wall's Consciousness found a crutch or
support or
stability but with his Consciousness
without support a crutch or stability
wakali the noble son has finally entered
nibana so suici
a damn it slipped out so Auto
termination is not a problem in Buddhism

question mark and then he's got this um asterisk I don't know what's the right translation in German it means he's got something in German and then I put that into Google translate and it says where did his Consciousness find support but in my own translation of the the godic kasuta and this is I mean this could be the godic kasuta except for the very one statement at the beginning is where has the consciousness of the go of the gentleman oh where is the consciousness of the gentleman Goda established so wakali I mean I haven't read the suta maybe ever I mean in the suta of the sick and dying wakali um I mean the Goda suta is exactly the same

as this suta except for Goda wasn't sick
Goda just kept getting getting Janna and
losing it and getting Jonna and losing
it and getting Janna and losing it until
finally he was in a state of desperation
saying well if I die with Janna which is
a a deep meditative State um I'm
guaranteed of a Brahma Realm after after
I pass away whereas if I don't have
Jonna when I when I pass away there's no
guarantees I could wind up in a lower
realm so next time he got Janna he uh
used his own straight Razer for shaving
his head
and cut through the neck area and uh he
became enlightened at the moment of

death and maybe wakali did the same
thing exactly the same with exactly the
same words with Mara the evil one
searching for the consciousness of
wakali and the Buddha is saying he's not
going to find it because the
consciousness of wakali is now
unestablished so I mean that means he
was he's enlightened his Consciousness
no longer is clinging to anything which
kind of means that it's it's just off
the scale you know it no longer exists
in a samsaric context where it can be
pointed to or found by Mara the evil
one so actually the question mark here
is so Auto termination is not a problem
in Buddhism well the Buddha says you

should not Auto terminate unless you
have already accomplished your goal and
the godika suta and this suta that the
wakali suta which I mean is strange that
it's almost verbatim exactly the same as
the Goda suta um they kind of broke the
rules they went against what the Buddha
said and then wound up kind of not going
against what he said because they became
enlightened at the moment of
death but the Buddha does say you
shouldn't be doing that until you've
like done what needs to be
done and they just kind of wound up
doing what needed to be done as they
were bleeding

out but yeah otherwise I mean the Buddha

would not encourage anybody especially

not like a a totally unenlightened

person to Auto

terminate because I mean

you're you're not

really I mean you're dying through an

act of violence against

yourself which probably means you're

going to be making more Bad Karma which

there's a good chance it means you're

going to wind up in a situation that's

even worse than the when you're in now I

mean at times it may be that auto

termination is appropriate I mean I've I

would consider it under certain

circumstances and there is a question

about that coming up so I'll deal with
that when when the question comes and so
I'm just going to move on to the next
question this is from ruie and ruie says
how emotionally overpowering were your
dreams during the cave dwelling Burma
days and I'm not exactly sure what he
means by emotionally overpowering I mean
does that mean within the context of the
dream itself or does it mean after
you've woken up that you're still
emotionally
overpowered by that dream that you were
having but aren't having anymore I don't
know really which ruy has in mind I mean
I've had emotionally overpowering dreams

in like in which I I died for
example um got very emotionally worked
up during the dream there I had a few
dreams I remember there was one weird
dream I had as a monk where I was
stealing car stereos for some
reason and then I suddenly realized I
can't be doing this I'm a monk this is
parica and I'm like I'm mind is racing
it's like what should I do I'm part of I
should put put them back you know so I'm
immediately thinking I should put the
car stereos back into the cars but it
was already too late I was already like
excommunicated for life and then it was
just the agitation caused me to wake up
and then and then I thought oh it was

just a dream okay so I'm not I'm not
kicked out of the S after
all yeah I have had dreams that were so
intense that just the shock of the dream
woke me up I remember one time and those
of you who are my age might remember who
Emma Sams was she was this British
actress who was really pretty and I had
like this erotic kind of dream with this
young woman you know I'm a monk you know
when I'm awake at the time in a cave but
I had was having this erotic dream with
this young woman and then I realized it
was Emma Sam's and just the shock of
recognition just woke me right up out of
the dream which is kind of disappointing

actually anyways um I've never had a
dream that was so emotionally
overpowering that I remained emotionally
overpowered for more than just a few
seconds after I woke
up so I'm really not sure which ruy has
in mind but uh I mean my dreams tended
to be a little more intense when I was a
monk just because there's more clarity
of mind and also less going on in your
life less distraction so that anything
you experience seems more intense
because you've got less you know going
on in the
background but uh yeah I did have a lot
of weird dreams like some some really
strange

ones I still have relatively strange dreams sometimes but uh I usually don't remember them and so I'm just going to move on to ru's next question he says do you think distraction is the natural Universal state of the mind and would you equate it to ignorance and by extension
suffering and how pre-buddhist could the remedy of Sati be okay well this is two different questions seems to me so I'm separating these and so ru's up to three questions so do you think distraction is the natural Universal state of the Mind distraction um not necessarily the natural state of mind I mean you look at

hunter gatherer societies which would
have maybe more of a natural state of
mind than some post-modern person living
in a city that I mean they could have
very intense concentration like they're
out hunting or something it takes a lot
of like non-d
distraction so I mean distraction in the
sense of restless just sort of
restlessness Restless dissatisfaction or
just restlessness in general yeah I
could I could agree with that but uh I
think distraction is maybe not the best
choice of
words um and I wouldn't necessarily
equate it to ignorance like the Restless
dissatisfaction is not the same as

ignorance you know the ignorance is more a matter of content the Restless dissatisfaction is more of a like a process you know it's like ignorance is a noun whereas the Restless dis satisfaction is more of a verb you know it's sort of substance for versus what would you call it uh Form and Function yeah Form and Function so ignorance is more of a form and and the distraction is more of a function which I mean they they can combine into the same whole you know it's just the limitations of the human mind cause us divide to divide things up into nouns and verbs you know Form and Function when really they're

just it's just part of a

four-dimensional Unity that we are not

sophisticated enough mentally to fully

appreciate

so we are equate like Restless

dissatisfaction or just restlessness to

ignorance no I don't think they have the

same meaning although they're part of

the same phenomenon the the same they're

part of Sam Sara the the like the

the the characteristics of samsara I

guess and uh suffering

yeah I guess both of them both the

restlessness and the the ignorance are

key to suffering because the

restlessness is is motivated by desire

you know just dissatisfaction wanting

something else wanting something
more and I mean that's brought about by
ignorance because you don't realize that
you already have
Infinity so yeah kind of and so I'm just
going to move on to ruy third question
and how pre budic yeah pre budic could
the remedy of mindfulness be um I'm not
sure I think mindfulness may have really
been um something that the Buddha was
the first philosopher in India to really
emphasize I'm not sure I'm not I'm not
like fully well vered in like um you
know what what the brahans were teaching
in the forest when the first upanishads
were coming out or you know what the

Janes were following the Janss were more
of a materialistic me had more of a
mechanistic approach to how Karma works
and how you become enlightened I mean
they were just burning off their karma
through like not doing anything positive
and just passively torturing
themselves um so I do think that
Buddhism was possibly I can't say for
sure but possibly the first spiritual
system are at least the
first spiritual system that really went
mainstream that emphasized the
psychological aspects of how to become
enlightened and what karma is and you
know how how you how you get
enlightened um so yeah I think Buddhism

may have been the first to just fully
psychologize Karma and mindfulness is a
way of becoming enlightened I think yeah
I think the Buddha may have discovered
that
that uh he didn't invent it I'm sure
that there have been like spiritual
Geniuses since the Stone Age since
prehistoric times that just had the
talent the innate spiritual ripeness to
to just be mindful and see the value of
it and benefit from the value of it but
um yeah I'm I'm not sure how much
mindfulness there was in before Buddhism
and I do think that it might be that
that's what the Buddha discovered um

according to the legend rather than
first Janna I mean there's a question
about this that hasn't I haven't got to
yet about you know this the traditional
story of how the Buddha became
enlightened you know he went to his
first he he mastered all the janas under
two teachers two different teachers
mastered all the Jonas realized it
didn't get him enlightened then he
started torturing himself for years that
didn't get him enlightened and then
according to the legend he recalled as a
child sitting under a tree when his
father was plowing a field first jna he
just spontaneously went into first jna
and then he realized that's it but I

mean he already mastered all the Jonas

first Jon is the lowest

one so there is it's a weird confusion

in in the story that um as it stands

seems to be a confused story like it's

like a like May more than one story got

cobbled together and so the pieces don't

fit very

well but it could be mindfulness that uh

is what he realized you know he had a

very lucid mindful moment as a child and

then he remembered that and then that

was what he fixed upon or you know

started doing or something but as I say

there's a question kind of about this

later so I'm just going to keep going

here oh here it is I

think no no it isn't this is from quor

quor this is a follow-up question and

quor may have asked something similar in

the past but would please like a more

in-depth understanding of the canonical

views on the topic as well as my

personal views if they differ so quor

says in the scenario of the meditator

who enters forth a jna daily but dies a

miserable death versus the non-m

meditator who has never experienced

fourth Janna except at the time of their

death the one that dies in fourth Janna

has presumably taken birth in the fourth

J realm correct me if I'm understanding

you wrong but you mention that someone

who has squeaked into a Heavenly realm doesn't fit there very well and therefore are not able to stay in that realm for long can you elaborate on how it's possible for someone to exit the J realm early I was under the impression that lifespans of certain Realms are predetermined well first of all is a non-m meditator is very unlikely to get fourth

Jan so I mean even the person who has never had fourth jna before and then they get it right before they die then I mean still they're good Med you get fourth jna you're an Adept you are a master meditator and I still got this

asymmetrical bump on my beard that's

kind of bugs

me so I mean it's not like Joe scho

you know who just walks into a

meditation hall for the first time just

sits down he's just plops down on the

cushion and goes into fourth Janna and

then Keels over dead it I mean it

doesn't happen that way anyone who's

going to attain for Janna is going to be

they're going to be an

Adept I mean they're going to be they're

going to be really good

meditators

so chances are if you attain fourth

genre um you go into a heaven realm and

then I mean the the these Brahma Realms

are just conducive to maintaining that

kind of mental Clarity so it may be that

I mean you you don't just wind up in

fourth of jna accidentally right at the

moment of death that I mean most cases

at least most cases I mean you're going

to you're going to wind up in a the

appropriate Heaven realm corresponding

to the these deep meditative states that

you

attained

um but I mean I mean we're we're not

experts I'm certainly not an expert on

what Brahma Realms are like and to a

large degree they are artifacts of post

Buddhist time Buddhist

mythology I mean the whole 31 plans of existence it's not mentioned in the sutas I mean certain Realms I mean obviously the human Realm attemps of Heaven gets mentioned animals get mentioned P get mentioned but this whole scheme of 31 PLS of existence I mean it's it's just an artifact I mean the Buddha himself probably did not teach this stuff and so a lot of these some of these questions like the really technical ones especially like the four the four stages of sainthood and all that it's just academic you know it's like ABS I mean it's information that doesn't have any real positive benefit from knowing it

because you don't you still don't really
know it I mean
it's it's it's just like uh this idea
that arose in Buddhist philosophers
after Buddhism had started declining in
its
inspiration so let's say that you've
lived a certain kind of life and then
like on your death bad you have like
this period of like an anomalous mental
state that then kind of squeaks you in
to a a realm that where you don't fully
belong um I mean yeah it could be
unstable I mean you can say let's see
here uh quor says I was under the
impression that lifespans of certain

Realms are predetermined but I mean you
can say the lifespan of a human is you
know 80 years let's just say 80 years
but obvious ly some some humans die when
they're a day old I mean just because
you have this like a certain lifespan
attributed to this plane of existence it
doesn't mean that you're just I mean you
you got a timer you it's like Logan's
Run or something and then like the
crystal starts lighting up at like for
everybody at exactly the same span of
life it doesn't work that
way so so right when I was in the middle
of that sentence I had this flash of
something I should say and then it faded
back out again see life span of certain

Realms are

predetermined yeah so I mean just

because the lifespan of a human in

general is going to be let's say 80

years just for the sake of argument that

doesn't mean that all humans are going

to live 80

years and so somebody can appear briefly

in a heaven Realm and they just don't

belong there like even the near-death

experiences

ndes where people will go up into a

heaven realm and then they'll just come

back down again they'll either be told

it's it's too early it's not time for

them yet or they freely choose you know

it's like I i' prefer to go back down

into this body that's on the operating

table or lying on this lying on the road

or

whatever so I mean it's yeah it's it's

not some kind of law that cannot be

broken that if you're going to be born

into some Heaven realm where the

lifespan is 10 billion years that you're

going to be there exactly 10 billion

years you're going to be there until

your con your karma is

exhausted and if you don't have much

Karma to keep you there that karma is

going to be exhausted fairly quickly and

then you're just going to pass on to

somewhere

else

so let's see is there any anything that

I left out here

let's

see followup question I may have asked

something similar in the past but would

please uh like a more in-depth

understanding of the canonical views of

the topic as well as your personal views

if they differ the canonical views I

mean in the sutas I'm unaware of any

mention of a DEA that that lives only a

very short time in the heaven realm and

then passes away this it's it's mostly

mythology you got to bear in mind that

all these this talk about Heaven Realms

and so forth is mostly mythology it's
madeup theories about stuff that most of
the people who came up with these
theories had no personal experience with
other than maybe some Visions when they
were meditating and there's no guarantee
that those Visions are
accurate so I mean these kind of
questions I mean it's like what benefit
is there in even knowing the answer how
does this help you in life
and I don't mean to scold
anybody so I'm just going to move on to
quor next question which is is there any
truth to Hell being a place of
punishment and repentance or can it be
just as likely for someone who has never

hurt anyone to end up in hell as it
would be for a murderer I don't think
it's just as likely for some just
unobtrusive average guy to go to hell
and that is just as likely for him to go
to hell as like a serial
killer but I do not think that hell is
directly a place of punishment and
repentance it's like when when you die
let's just go with the the Buddhist idea
of rebirth when you die you've got a
certain momentum going like a psychic
momentum that is your karma and that
karma is it's going to land you in your
next life and it's going to be
appropriate to like your attitude just

your vibrational rate the coarseness or
or like finess of your mind the subtlety
or lack of subtlety of your mind is
going to determine what level of reality
or unreality what level of s Sor you're
going to wind up in so it's just a more
of a matter of how crude your mind is or
how subtle your mind is if you die with
a Heavenly kind of mind you wind up in a
heaven realm if you die with a h frame
of mind or if you just go through life
especially with a like a hellish frame
of mind there's a much higher chance of
you winding up in some kind of Hell
realm so it's just it's not like P
Divine punishment or any such thing and
heaven isn't a Divine reward unless you

want to just kind of see it that way

it's just sort of like a side effect

even but really it's just the the world

that you wind up in the version of

reality you wind up with you wind up in

is just like

mirroring the state that your mind is

in I mean you're creating your reality

and so someone with just a really crude

[__] up mind is going to create a

crude [__] up hell realm to live in

someone with a wise virtuous like subtle

kind of a mind is going to wind up in a

more Heavenly kind of Realm simply

because their mind is skillful enough to

create that kind of reality

so I think I'm just going to move on
next question this is from PSA and PSA
says how do you feel about Myanmar
recently entering the VIP Club of level
four do not travel countries it's now
the same category as notorious Bad Boys
such as Afghanistan North Korea
Venezuela and
Somalia I would just wonder what your
feelings are about this considering you
live there for a huge part of your life
and you successfully pursued Spiritual
Development there does it arouse any
sentimental or emotional reaction in you
it's also the only Buddhist country on
the level four list how do you think
Buddhism can influence the current state

of social and political Affairs in

Myanmar what role does it play in it

well this is like two questions doesn't

it this is like two different questions

I got to separate these okay so the

first

question so essentially how do I feel

about Burma being at the level four do

not travel country status and I mean

Burma's been this way before I mean it's

nothing new really I mean there were

sanctions against Burma's like brutal

and repressive military dictatorship up

until

2011 so before that I mean still it was

it maybe wasn't level four but still I

mean all foreigners got kicked Ked out
of Burma back around 1988 or 1990 when
the riots the public beheadings and
stuff going on Burma has always been a
mess this I mean half of Burma has been
controlled by Insurgent groups since
World War II
practically since the British left I
mean things just went to [__] almost
immediately after the British left Burma
and it's to some degree the british's
fault because they Ed the divide and
conquer you know they use sort of like
um ethnic animosities and this sort of
thing to kind of keep the Burmese people
or the people what is now Myanmar from
like like uniting against the British

Raj that kind of thing but on the other
hand the Burmese they just they just
cannot organize worth a
damn I mean it's it's the state Burma is
in is largely a reflection of the just
the prevailing attitude of the people
like some famous philosopher I think it
was voler says every country gets the
government it
deserves and one reason why Burma has
the brutal and
repressive military government is
because the Burmese are just so passive
and stoic they can put up with damn near
anything so I mean it's
like the Burmese can just tolerate stuff

that even I as a as a monk who had been
a monk for years it's like I was
unwilling to tolerate like some dog
barking its guts out right outside your
bedroom window the Burmese most Burmese
people will just like cover their ear up
with a blanket or something and just
sleep through it or try to sleep through
it I'd be I mean I'd have like a little
pile of rocks outside my door to to
chase dogs away I mean I couldn't make
them stop barking and Howling but at
least I could make them go off some
distance away from my
window so the burmes they're afraid of
their own shadow you know they're
they're afraid of sun they're afraid of

rain they're afraid of wind they're afraid of cold they're afraid of heat they're afraid of the government they're afraid of witches they're afraid of ghosts they're afraid of monsters in general they're afraid to walk through a cemetery they're just the Burmese are easily scared

people and it's and it's not just the government it's just it's just kind of the way they are I'm sorry to say it I mean in some ways they are very superior to the average

Westerner but I mean everyone's got their their strengths and their weaknesses and one of the weaknesses of

the burmes in general is that they they
cannot organize and they're just passive
and just put up with bad situations you
know it's like how many Burmese people
does it take to change the light bulb
the answer is none they just stumble
around in the dark and are patient about
it occasionally bumping into something
and going
I mean there's there's lots of lots of
answers to that riddle how many burmes
people does it take to change a light
bulb but that was one of my favorites
right there I mean there was one the
first time I ever heard that joke how
many Burmese people does it take to
change a light bulb none onsu G is going

to change it for them because that's
kind of the attitude they have it's like
we're not going to stand up for our own
rights we might get we might get in
trouble we might get disappeared by the
government which does happen so they
just hope America will invade and and
fix things for them but it won't stay
fixed I mean bur Burma it was like their
first leader or who is going to be their
leader was General
Onan who was on the side of the Japanese
during World War II up until he realized
that the Japanese were worse than the
British at at at ruling Burma so then he
switched sides and he became a kind of

war hero and then after World War II he just has this idea we need Independence for Burma as soon as possible while he was still popular so he could be the shoe in for the first president of an independent Burma and then so he insists I mean the British were volunteering to rebuild the infrastructure of Burma before they granted Burma Independence because Burma was a battlefield rangon was bombed out I mean it was their infrastructure was in in smoking ruins all sign suit are Onan no we want independence now now now so they get independence and then almost immediately General Onan and almost his entire cabinet were assassinated there's some

some guy with a machine gun just comes
into a cabinet meeting and just guns
them all
down so they wind up with unu as as like
their first real prime minister or
president or whatever whatever he was
and he was just incompetent he was he
was a good guy he was having he was
having like um coconut plantations
planted all over Burma and because the
Maha Min mahagiri the mahagiri who's
this daa in in Burmese folklore likes
coconuts and so that's what he was doing
and this the country was just falling
apart and so the first time unu the
incompetent but very good person he asks

the military to take over for a while to get in control so the military actually comes in and takes over you got a military dictatorship by invitation and they get things pretty much going and they get things organized you know they kind of put down the rebellions and so forth to some degree the hand control back over to unu things just start going to [__] again and so the second time they just they just moved in and Burma became a military dictatorship from then up until like 2011 with uh just brutal repression of any kind of dissent there was one time when there college students were protesting at the University of rangon

you know the the big the biggest
university in Burma the the students
were protesting in like the Student
Union building the Army just comes they
chain all the doors closed put Dynamite
all around the building and just blow up
the building just kill everybody inside
and of course people just stopped
protesting because they were
scared and it's just it's just the way
it's been it's I mean when I was in
Burma one thing that I would think about
sometimes it was kind of a worrisome
thought is just secret police showing up
at my cave saying come with us you know
I'd think about what I was going to do

in that kind of situation because that

kind of thing can

happen so yeah I mean Burma's always

been messed up ever since it got

independence from the British it just

took a nose

dive and 20 11 it was like the the

generals just took off their military

uniforms and put on like business suits

or just lay lay clothing and the

government didn't change all that much

they had to change the Constitution a

little bit but the the Army still retain

like 60% of control of parliament or

this kind of thing so that you know they

they still got to M have most of the

authority and uh then several years ago

at this point or at least a few years
ago things just were weren't going their
way and so they just took over again and
we back to the military dictatorship and
I don't know if things are necessarily
much worse than they were like in
1960 in 1960 there was like like
Insurgent groups like fighting in the
streets in in like major cities in Burma
it's just been this way for a long time
so it really is no surprise to me and it
really doesn't bother me all that much I
have no intention of going back to Burma
anyway I am sorry that it's that way but
that's just the way it has
been

so uh psa's next

question oh this is like the the

followup on the first one it's also the

only Buddhist country on the level four

list how do you think Buddhism can

influence the current state of social

and political Affairs in Myanmar what

role does it play in it well to some

degree it gives them this passive

equinity where they're willing to just

put up with anything I mean that's part

of it it just results in kind of passive

fatalism to some degree and Buddhism

doesn't necessarily cause passive

fatalism but to some degree it does in

Burma but I think it's more of

a I think the Burmese might be this way

regardless what religion they

follow and it could be partly because of

a centuries long

tradition of just brutal governments

just trampling the people with hob

nailed Jack Boots so that the people are

just cowed and I mean they have to

really be pushed beyond all endurance

for them to really rise up because

chances are if they rise up they're just

going to be gunned down in the

street so I'm just G to move on to psa's

third

question which is as follows you said

chat GPT cannot become enlightened is it

because it doesn't have a body in order

to become enlightened we need to have a body that serves as a witness of eradicated impurities and Saras maybe let's forget about chat GPT because or chat GTP because it will only complicate matters further and lead to confusion could you please Focus strictly on the necessity of a physical body to serve as a witness in order to reach Enlightenment is this a correct assertion well according to Buddhist philosophy you do have to have some kind of body but it won't necessarily be physical in the sense of this version of reality like I've mentioned in a previous Q&A ghosts are not non-physical beings they just have a physical body

that is at a crudder level like a
crudder vibratory rate you know a
crudder frequency than ours there's just
different subtleties of matter and like
a Brahma is going to be a very refined
subtle form of matter that's very very
different from this it may seem
immaterial to us but it's just their own
kind of matter and so you have to have
some kind of form in order to become
enlightened there has to be some kind of
form it doesn't necessarily have to be
what we would consider to be a material
body but there has to be kind of like
boundaries you know some kind of
form so with regard to chat GTP it's

it's not because it doesn't have a body
I mean chat G GTP has a computer as its
body just like our thoughts have you
know a brain and C the brain contained
in this body in this version of reality
you know that's that's how our our mind
arises chat GTP has like computer or a
group of computers as its body and I
think I keep calling it GPT and it's GTP
I don't know what the the letters stand
for
anyway but it's it's not that chat GTP
can't become enlightened because it
doesn't have a body it can't become
enlightened because it is not
sentient that is why it cannot become
enlightened it is not sentient I mean

it's got artificial intelligence but

it's it doesn't have like real

selfawareness

at least I assume it

doesn't but idiot scientists in idiot

scient like computer Geniuses are trying

to create sentients in a computer which

can bring about the the technological

singularity and you have no idea what's

going to happen after

that because the computers once they

become sentient and start improving upon

their own minds of their own volition

they're going to be as far beyond us as

we are Beyond amibas within a very short

time and then there's there's absolutely

no telling what's going to happen you
cannot predict what the computers are
going to do anymore than an amoeba can
predict what a human is going to
do but that's a whole different that's a
whole different issue I guess a whole
different kettle of
wax so let's see
here yeah but I mean you do have to have
some kind of form because otherwise it's
just completely dissipated and there's
going to be no significant progress
because there's no means of progress
because progress itself relies upon some
kind of
form so I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from harim cthul

and harim cthul uses the one of the
taboo words in this question have you
ever
considered Auto
termination and then he continues here I
find myself in a situation where I dream
of it every day I wish no one knew my
name I wish that I were a vagabond with
no bonds or responsibilities excuse me
the only things holding me back are the
vague memory of divine ecstasy I
experienced the prospect of suffering in
even more if the soul truly goes on
after death and disappointing a
Christian Mystic who once for told me
that I fulfill a heroic

Destiny I don't think I will go through
with it I find it fascinating how this
state of being contrasts with the
ecstatic one the world Remains the Same
and yet one sees only Darkness while the
other one is overwhelmed by
light um
okay well it is true I mean as a monk I
did consider Auto termination quite
often in fact and for a while I even had
a certain toxic substance that I just
had stored in my cave just in case that
you know it's good to have like a fire
exit it's good to have an Escape Route
just in case there's some sort of
emergency where leaving the scene just
seems like the the lesser of two evils

at the very at the very worst

so yeah I mean a lot of the time um when

I was a monk I mean being a monk it's

not just you're just sitting around

chilling and and being calm and Serene

all the time I mean you can have like

really rough times as a monk you're

striving to become a saint and you know

your your character just is stubbornly

not cooperating and you can just be

frustrated and desperate and just this

sucks I don't want to do this it's going

to be 120° heat for a month straight and

it's just miserable you can't stop

sweating it's just you know weird

tropical diseases and there are times

when you just think I'd be better off

not

metabolizing and one of the main things

that kept me alive was just the idea

that it would kill my mother that if she

found out that I did that then I mean

there's it would it would just destroy

her I'm pretty sure but it's just it

just seemed

like I mean just because things are bad

now doesn't mean you should just give up

that you know the only Sure Fire way of

failing is to quit to give up that is

the the 100% certain way of

failure

so I mean it was a consideration I mean

it's something that is is always an

option it's just that I just it never
got bad enough that I decided to take
that
option I remember one time um there's a
certain kind of Lily That Grew wild
around my cave and somebody warned me
you know don't don't eat that don't eat
the bulb of this Lily because it's
deadly poison and so one time I just
casually asked a l supporter um you know
how many would you have to eat for it to
be lethal and um I don't remember her
answer but then shortly after that she
secretly had some friend of hers go out
and just pull up all the all the lies
around my cave just in case I decided to

take one or

two but uh yeah I mean I considered it

it was it's it was always an option but

um I'm glad I didn't I mean from from

the Buddhist point of view that you

don't really solve anything other that

it might just be like a quick fit

but your karma remains and you might

even have worse Karma because you have

laid violent hands upon yourself so to

speak which is going to have a karmic

effect and I mean you just get born

again into the same general dilemma so

your best bet is to solve the problem as

well as you can rather than just give up

and rather than just quit because I mean

even giving up and quitting It's Just

Landing you I mean it might give you 9
months vacation inside a new mama's
belly but still you're just going to be
reborn into the same [__] so you're
you're better off learning to to deal
with it just learning how to accept the
situation and master
it then you won't need to get reborn
again so I guess the only real question
here was that have I ever considered
that and yeah I can considered it quite
a lot actually when I was a monk not
recently but when I was a monk just
living in a cave in central Burma um
sometimes things would get pretty awful
and uh you know I would consider it I

had I had like an escape plan but I
never took the escape
plan so I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from Master Poe
and master Poe says Nirvana the end of
redundancy question mark so is nirvana
the end of redundancy so that would mean
that samsara is
redundancy and in a in a way kind of I
mean samsara is is symbol samsara is
perception perception is samsara the
world we are living in that we think
we're living in is perception and
perceptions are symbols so a symbol is
like a generalization
um I think it was Sig uh I almost said
Sigman Freud U bertran Russell who said

that every word in the English language
except this and that are generalizations
so it's like what we're doing is we're
taking a bunch of experiences and
lumping them together and putting them
into one word which is a
symbol and so I mean in a way that's a
kind of redundancy you know you can't
have like a new word for every unique
experience
I mean if you live in the the absolute
particular nothing has a name because
any kind of name even to a person is
really just a
generalization like Napoleon bonapart it
wasn't just this one entity it's a

generalization of all these I mean he
was changing from one moment to the next
and he was composed of all these
different particles and and so forth so
it wasn't just one thing it was just
this group of constantly changing things
that for the sake of convenience we call
Napoleon
bonapart and so that's just the way
perception works is a kind of
redundancy it's it's like generalized
symbolism and symbols are kind of
redundant at least they're repetitive
you know it's like it's you use the same
symbols to represent lots of different
things which is a kind of redundancy I
guess but I'm not exactly sure what

Master Po meant by

redundancy and uh I didn't look it up in

the dictionary before I I started doing

this Q&A and I'm not looking it up now

because I'm moving on to the next

question and this is from

java I don't know how to pronounce some

of these names Java Java says I came

across one of your reply on CT

discussion about reporting theft can be

paraja I was little confused there is it

about the case that monk receives some

sort of compensation for their theft

report if monk witness a theft or

robbery then he reported to police or

authority would be paraja even though

the monk is not asking any reward for

the report three question marks also

what if he doesn't report theft robbery

looting any

opy okay well I guess that's two

questions so what the hell let's

separate them

up see got to separate them if it's more

than one

question okay so I do not know what a CT

discussion is and I think Java

misunderstood what I was saying um I

never would say that to to report a

theft can be part of jica I can't think

of a situation in which reporting a

theft would be part of even if you got

paid for like you got a reward let's say

a year from now there will be bounties
for reporting illegal aliens in the
United States that you'll get a reward
of $500 $500 for every illegal alien
report some Monk reports an illegal
alien gets the $500 I mean that wouldn't
be part of G I mean it would be nigia
pachia for handling
money but it wouldn't be paraj jaica I
mean you have to actually kill somebody
or steal somebody or have sex with
somebody or lie to somebody about having
attained supernormal superhuman mental
States that's paraja four paragas
killing stealing sex well I guess sex is
first sex stealing murder and

deliberately lying about having attained
superhuman States and reporting a theft
is none of these and so yeah reporting a
theft would not be part of J I think
what Java is thinking of and
misunderstood is that let's say a monk
has some possession let's say it's his
Ms bowl and let's say a thief steals his
alms Bowl if that monk snatches it back
from that Thief that monk can be part of
jaica for stealing from that thief
because the monk isn't supposed to own
property so he he shouldn't have
personal property so in a way that bull
wasn't really his personal property the
monk wanted to steal it
then but I mean there is kind of a

loophole to this in that if the monk has not given up a claim to it he still considers it to be his property then by snatching it back he probably wouldn't be part of jaica but if he has given up hope on getting it back let's say somebody steals his bowl and he just considers it lost he's already like made efforts to find another Bowl you know he just has given up claim on that bull and then he sees that bull later if he if he takes it then he's guilty of stealing that bull because it's now somebody else's property he has given up any claim to it and then you know he just assumes that it's gone it's not his bowl

anymore and then he sees it and tries to take it back then then he could be guilty of stealing um under certain circumstances I've been told that even just snatching back something that is snatched from you can be theft just because of the monks not supposed to own anything idea but that's I think that's debatable that that could be controversial I think there'd be serious monks taking both sides on that one so but but still I think for sure if somebody steals from a monk the monk has given up hope on getting it back and then sees it and takes it then he's stealing and then he he would be paraja because theft is one of the paraja

offenses so the next question let see
also what if he doesn't report theft
robbery looting any a no I mean not
doing anything is never against the
rules I mean no action is morally
neutral you don't break a rule by not
doing anything and except for maybe in
certain cases a a monk that grows his
fingernails too long then like if the
fingernail sticks out past the meat of
your finger then that's considered to be
too long that can be an offense so the
monk can just sit there and not do
anything and let his fingernails grow
until it's an offense I mean something
like that maybe but even that would be

morally neutral inaction in Buddhism is
morally neutral I've already discussed
this earlier on you could just sit there
and watch somebody drown and you're not
necessarily doing anything wrong at all
you could watch the trolley run over the
10 people instead of pulling the lever
so that it only runs over one person
you'd actually be doing worse by pulling
the lever from the point of view of just
ancient Indian Buddhist
ethics and a lot of modern westerners
won't like that because it goes against
their culturally conditioned ethical
code it doesn't matter so
what so I'm just going to move on to
this question this is from Kasa with a K

and Kasa spelled with a K says hello
where venerable saruta a dry Vision
arahant without having any Supernatural
power or such I've read that he was
liberated by both ways IE ubat
bagaut and how does it relate to that
thank you well that's kind of like two
questions is I got separate him we're
probably up to 50 questions at this
point so the first question is was
venerable saruta a dry Vision Aran
according to tradition no he was not he
had Jan and there's one weird sua I
think it's in the uh udana of venerable
saruta who is sitting in um the
cessation of perception and feeling you

know he was just deep deep deep deeper than fourth Jan and some yaka like ogre comes along and just Wallops him in the head just for fun and that he because he was an ogre or a yaka he hit that he hit Sara's head so hard that it would have split a mountain in but saruta didn't even feel it so after um so after the yaka does this he immediately the the Earth just opens up he plunges into hell for having walloped an arant upside the head and then finally saruta comes out of this deep meditation

and molana who's there says didn't you notice anything just now and sorrya says no but I do have a little bit of a headache so the whole purpose of me

telling this story is to point out that venerable Sor paa did have definitely he was a master of Janna he had psychic powers didn't use them as much as molana did but he was definitely not a dry Vision Oran and so moving on to kasa's second question with a K mind you says without having any Supernatural power or such okay I've read that he was liberated by both ways IE ubat bagaut and how does it relate to that thank you to tell you the truth this whole idea of the different ways of Liberation including the Liberation by both ways the ubat bagaut it's obviously an artifact of later Buddhist attempts at

philosophy I'm fairly certain the Buddha
didn't teach anything remotely
resembling this it's just
more academic stuff that knowing it
might make you like more literate in
Orthodox terab Buddhism but you get no
benefit whatsoever aside from that it's
just not a useful thing to be pursuing I
mean there's other things like how to
meditate well that you'd probably get
much more benefit than from studying
this kind of stuff
that it's it's found only in what
are based on the evidence later sutas
you know it's just a later development
in Buddhist philosophy where in ancient
Indian philosophers including Buddhist

ones just could not leave well enough
alone they keep wanting to elaborate and
complicate things and systematize things
come up with new things to fill in gaps
perceived gaps this kind of thing and
this different ways of becoming
enlightened different kinds of um you
know the three different kinds of
Buddhas and the the different ways of
getting Liberation and all this it's
just I mean it doesn't
matter I never had any interest in it I
never bothered to to memorize it or
anything like that just because it just
it was just a dud you know it just it
was just a a clunk you know it didn't

really strike a cord it was just it did
not appeal to me at all it just did not
strike me as anything worth knowing and
so I just let it slide so maybe you some
like really Orthodox monk who just knows
believes all of it and has studied all
of it and knows all of it you'd be
better off asking him question about
that kind of thing but according to
tradition Sara venerable Sara definitely
had Jana and so I'm just going to move
on the next question this is from
avenity and we've already been going for
two hour this is going to be at least
three hours I just have this feeling
avenity says when a person is addicted
as they get more and more into the

addiction they gradually lose interest
in their relationships Hobbies goals
until the only thing that's left on
their mind is to pursue the addictive
substance or behavior supposing that
person overcame the addiction would it
be easier or harder for them to become
enlightened since they got free from the
only desire they had in life well I mean
it wasn't really the only desire they
had in life it was the main one but even
like a drug addict is going to have
other desires um besides that and I mean
it can go either way I mean there's all
kinds of people some people that have
been addicted to something I mean even

dhama can be can be an addiction I mean
that's largely how people can become
enlightened through practice is they
just lose all interest and everything
else they just become obsessed with
practicing dhama and becoming
enlightened and that becomes like their
last big addiction their last big
attachment and then finally they're able
to break that attachment and then then
it's easy relatively speaking even
effortless so in a way it's kind of
almost like a like a worldly
unskillful equivalent the Dark Side of
just theomania just being addicted to
religion um so with some people I mean
who are have some root in wisdom have

some uh Insight then yeah if they've
been addicted to something then they
could and they break the addiction then
they can apply that to Breaking the
addiction to just living in samsar the
addiction to worldliness the addiction
to you know craving and desire you know
they can just sort of use the same kind
of attitude to break that addiction and
then it can really help them whereas
some people they just don't have much
wisdom much Insight you know they just
break an addiction and then they just
become addicted to something else like
um there was an old saying the only cure
for dipso Mania is theomania which means

the only cure for alcoholism is defined
religion you know you're just replacing
one attachment with another one Carl
Young said something similar where he's
saying that you know if you eliminate
some mental like attitude or force in
your mind it has to be replaced by one
of equal
intensity so maybe you break the
addiction to a drug or whatever or sex
or whatever it is you replace that with
an addiction to Dharma then that can
help you or just the the Insight you get
the experience of knowing how to break
an addiction to a drug or whatever it is
can then help you to break the addiction
to worldliness or just s Sara in

general but not everybody's going to
have that wisdom so it depends on the
person but I I'm not sure if it's going
to make it harder for anyone just the
ability to break an addiction is a good
thing but whether it will be used uh in
a higher more spiritual sense or not
depends on the
individual so let's see
I'm just going to move on next question
this is from
Michael and Michael says could you do a
talk on the relationship between
Buddhism and stoicism and I really don't
know enough about stoicism I do think
that Buddhism would come closer to

cynicism like classical cynicism than stoicism like cynicism was like the the predecessor the Forerunner the Prototype of stoicism and it was more of a renunciation like Buddhism is you know a stoic or a a cynic philosopher like diogenes in a way they were like a homeless athetic like an early Buddhist monk you know they'd just wear wear rags and beg for food I think the the cynics were allowed to beg for money but they weren't supposed to to get rich doing it you know probably just beg for enough money to pay for your food that day so I do think that uh the relationship between Buddhism and cynicism would be more interesting the

stoics took some like the best
philosophical aspects of cynicism and
kind of did away with a lot of the
actual practical aspect of like
renunciation of the world and all
that but I really don't know enough
about stoicism to give like an
intelligent like educated talk about it
and so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from thermal squid
and thermal squid um has got some long
questions here or rather he's got a
short question followed by a long
comment on the question and at least in
this first case it it will help to
understand the question so I guess I'll

read the entire little paragraph following the question here so thermos squid says are there elements of predestination in Enlightenment or Buddhism and that's the question are there elements of predestination in Enlightenment or Buddhism and then uh as a kind of explanation of what he's getting at he says I have thought about this in relationship to other spiritual systems speaking of souls or people who are just intrinsically doomed to hell or non-s salvation such as the Gnostic hilik the Eternal destined suffering of some jivas in D vant and then finally the calvinist ideas of predestination it seems to me that the notion of people or

beings who are intrinsically trapped without any way of Escape AP is found especially in ancient polytheistic religions too or at least resign to a poor fate and afterlife I feel that Buddhism has retained some of these elements in some ways such that I cannot think of what will happen or occur to most in the world that some people's Karma totally traps them and that it's a rare miracle that they could escape and in respect to the tendency or ability to be able to hear or receive the dhama and progress in meditation being qualifiable until one is completely enlightened Etc I am suspicious that

Karma actually plays a major role in your ability to become enlightened and that Enlightenment must be the esoteric of the esoteric in the way that you and the early text describe for some people it really is a better luck next time issue or even worse because there is no finitude of beings agnosis is seemingly generated or established eternally this thought concerns me greatly much like the metaphor of the wind blowing through the window there isn't anything we can do but open it up or pull back the drapes in that way Enlightenment as an attainment seems completely arbitrary um well let's just go way up here to the actual question are there

elements of predestination in

Enlightenment Buddhism

um first of all I would say the Buddha

did reject determinism like the aivas

were determinists the aicas were like a

spiritual philosophical School in the

Buddhist time they're now extinct but

they were strict determinists they

believed that you're going to live

something like 84,000 lives from start

to finish and then that's it you know

it's just all predetermined just all

cause and effect the Buddha rejected

that said it was it was a wrong view

that you I mean you make Bad Karma for

yourself by believing that but he also

rejected Free Will so that he he pretty much rejected both obvious alternatives on the other hand there is some some predestination in Buddhism in that Buddhas can make Prophecies of the future and I gotta get rid of this little popup window so a Buddha can make a prophecy of the future like any Buddha has to be prophesied to be a future Buddha by some previous Buddha so in order to be bodh sat from the terava point of view you there has to be like what's called a bate in Burmese where a Buddha is going to single out this person and say in a future age you are going to be a Buddha called such and such and you know he'll give a few

details of the life of what this person
is going to become when he becomes a
Buddha so I mean that's kind of I mean
it seems suggestive of predestination
it's it's Destiny it seems seems like
but then at the same time in terraa
Buddhism there the future doesn't exist
so that you like a Buddha any kind of
being with like Clairvoyance or whatever
cannot see into the future because the
future is just flatly
non-existent according to Orthodox
terraa and so according to the
commentarial tradition what the Buddha
does is he uses his omniscience to
extrapolate

but it's kind of hard to extrapolate

something that's going to happen you

know eons in the future on some distant

future

Earth so it's not a very good

explanation I think the sarasti Vaden

School of Buddhism maybe were a little

more correct with a more einsteinian

view of

time but still predestination is out I

mean in the strict sense of just strict

determinism but then

thermal squid is I mean his

commentary is is seems to be going in a

different direction than just asking

about like

predestination in that I

mean it it is true that in Buddhism very
very few people become enlightened even
people who are trying to become
enlightened even people who have
dedicated their lives to it like monks
and nuns even just a tiny minority of
them less than 1% actually
succeed
so in a way you're you're kind of
Trapped being who you are you're stuck
being who you are and most people don't
even want to become enlightened so
that's that's one thing most people are
trying to remain unenlightened because
they just don't know any
better so I mean it's salvation and

non-s salvation and all that it's in in
a way it's kind of Christian terminology
because in Buddhism it's it's just so
I'm sorry you just keep going and
evolving you know just going through
these various lives it's not like you
got one shot at Salvation And if you
fail you burn in hell forever and ever
it's it's more there's more Cosmic
Justice than that and that we wind up
where we want to be we wind up what is
where it is most appropriate for our
attitude like I was saying with regard
to rebirth uh in answer to a previous
question it's like we land where just I
mean we're creating our own reality so
if you have a crude mind you're creating

a crude reality if you have a more
subtle mind you create a more subtle
reality and I mean what is unjust in
that we are creating it through our own
volition even though we're too
semiconscious as a general rule to
realize that we're creating it we think
it's just we're just passively
experiencing this out external world
when actually we have put ourselves into
this
situation
so yeah I mean he says it seems to me
that the notion of people are beings who
are intrinsically trapped without any
way of Escape is found especially well

yeah I mean but they're the ones who are
doing it to themselves it's not some God
punishing
them we're we're putting ourselves where
our own volition lands us so I mean to
to say that that's
that's unfair or something It just
strikes me as as kind of
ridiculous unless we're just unfair to
ourselves yeah for some people it really
is a better luck next time issue yeah
almost everybody I mean if that is in
fact you consider Enlightenment to be
the goal then almost nobody reaches the
goal in this life it's just like
an I mean it's extremely long process
of just people evolving spiritually

until they're at the point when they
even realize that they should be like
reaching for something higher or
better so let's see
here in that way Enlightenment as an
attainment seems completely
arbitrary yeah I'm not sure I mean in a
way it's it's not the result of a cause
Nirvana is not the result of a Cause
but it's it's just so difficult to
explain especially to someone who
insists on just like logical coherence
and so forth that I mean that in itself
is a kind of handicap or it can be at
times
so yeah I mean getting back to the

actual question up at the top here are
there elements of predestination in
Enlightenment Buddhism it seems like
unofficially unofficially yes
technically officially no but the the
idea that most people just are not in a
position they've got almost zero
potential to become Enlighten because
they're just not ripe for it yet they
don't even want it
yet that yeah I mean that's just it just
seems to be like a a fair description of
the actual situation and whether it's
whether it's just or not just it's
strikes me as almost
nonsensical because we are doing it to
ourselves through our own

volition it may not be free volition and
we're just like semiconscious so that we
don't most people aren't even aware that
there's any kind of choice to be
made but I mean even like the average
person like the average lay Buddhist who
isn't even trying for full Liberation
they can at least try to live a virt
life and wind up in you know in a better
situation than the one they're in at
this moment but for example let's say
You' got someone born to a crack
addicted black prostitute in
Detroit and they just have the cards I
mean they just got dealt a shitty hand
from the beginning you know they have no

no exposure to dhamon even if they did

it would just strike them as [__]

the yeah yeah I mean there are beings

like that and like the the entire animal

realm or almost the entire animal realm

is like that too whereas all these

beings countless billions of them they

just got no chance in this in this life

it's going to be better luck next time

and chances are they're going to be an

animal next time so it's going to be

better luck the time after that or or

better luck after like a billion more

lifetimes as some sort of marine copap

pod some sort of Plankton who knows

but that's just the way it is I mean

whether it's whether it strikes a person

as fair or just or not is is largely
irrelevant and I'm just going to move on
to Thermal Squid's next question which
is do you have wait did I skip
one oh okay yeah I did no I almost I
almost skipped one so his next question
feelings about the naturalistic fallacy
and whether or not it has any Merit and
I'm not going to read the the little
essay commentary to this one um the
naturalistic fallacy is just the idea
that if it's natural it's good that
natural is necessarily better than
unnatural and that's not necessarily the
case I mean like modern medicine is kind
of unnatural but still it's better than

just having diseases in my opinion I
mean modern medicine has has had some
fails but still as a general rule the
lifespan of the average human human is
especially in in the Civilized part of
the world you know the the more
developed part of the world is
significantly longer and less
gruesome because of say eradicating
small poox or developing antibiotics and
it's it's not exactly
natural antibiotics I mean they kind of
come from nature but still I mean making
the little pill is not natural or unless
you opt the Buddhist point of view where
anything that happens is just natural by
definition I mean humans are still in

nature and we're just creating a strange
version of of it for ourselves but still
it's all natural in that
sense but uh the naturalistic
fallacy uh yeah just because something
is natural doesn't mean it's good I mean
like Nature has not designed us to be
happy nature uses pain and suffering to
get us to do what Mother Nature wants us
to do which is to stay alive long enough
to propagate our Gene
sequences
so I mean as a general
rule I mean we are sort of naturally
evolved to fit into a natural
environment and so I think maybe more

than half the time what is natural would
be better than what is unnatural but
there are a lot of exceptions to that
like modern medicine or even becoming
enlightened is pretty unnatural just the
the things you have to do to yourself
like being celibate for example is kind
of unnatural it's not completely
unnatural because I'm sure there have
been a lot of males especially that just
never got a mate you know it's it's
common throughout the many species in
the animal kingdom that you have like
Bachelor herds of young males that just
don't mate because it's the the the
alphas that get all the females
so yeah I mean nature really is not

designed for us to be

happy and

so it may be that living a life that is

more conducive to happiness is just

going to have to be

unnatural and developing wisdom and so

forth that there's going to be a certain

amount of unnaturalness but like I said

in Buddhist philosophy if it happens

it's natural

like there is no unnatural or

Supernatural it's just whatever happens

is just de facto just practically by

definition it's

natural

so let's see uh I think I'm just going

to move on because this really is going
to be a long a long Q&A I just have this
feeling we're going to go more than
three
hours so thermal squids third question
do you have any chronic pain or age
related pain or aches also do you find
your stomach hurting at all or often and
he's got sort of a shorter commentary
here so I might as well says I'm 24 and
I'm starting to develop back pain and
such despite a highly active and
non-sedentary lifestyle religious eating
and Superstition so on I'm not sure if
I'm a hypochondriac or have a mental
disorder but I really feel old all the
time no matter what I do I wonder if

tolerating or becoming more accustomed
to pain as a feet of age or if it's a
psychic thing where I'm just hyper aware
of my body I see you drink sometimes
several Red Bulls and wonder if this
hurts to do well I actually had a a Java
monster this time no Red Bull this time
but I mean it seems like the commentary
to his questions don't always fit the
actual question so let's just go up to
the question here that's all I'm
technically required to answer is the
question
do you have any chronic pain or age
related pains or aches also do you find
your stomach hurting at all or often

well I'll get to the second part for my
stomach i' in order to be a monk you
pretty much have to have a cast iron
stomach so my stomach
usually it it doesn't hurt almost never
do I have stomach
aches it has happened though that I mean
it whether it has anything to do with me
being a monk for 30 years or not I don't
know but for 30 years I ate only in the
morning so now if I eat or drink um I
mean milk is okay but some things if I
eat or drink like within two hours of
going to bed I start getting acid reflux
which is something I never really
experienced um before I dropped out of
the monk Hood where it's like the

stomach acid is accumulating to you know help you digest what's ever in your stomach and then when I lie down in bed can like burp up into my esophagus and then it kind of burns my esophagus and then I can't sleep and then I got to get up and take an acid tablets or and or Pepto Bismol and then I got to prop my head up on like three pillows just so I won't be completely horizontal it'll be enough of an angle that the stomach acid doesn't get up into my esophagus U with regard to chronic pain or age related pains or AES um yeah my joints I mean as I'm getting older there is a bit more joint pain and stiffness

which is just symptomatic of old age um
especially like in really cold weather
or like really rainy weather you get
more like pain and stiffness in the
joints um strangely right after I
stopped being a monk I had like pain in
my hip joints where like where my my
thigh bone my femur enters the pelvis
then it was it would hurt so bad it was
hard even to get into a car sometimes to
lift up my leg enough to get into a car
and it turns out that that was caused by
sitting in the full Lotus for hours
every day for so many years just sitting
cross-legged on the floor meditating and
then when I sto doing that it was just
it was like the joints or the ligaments

had to restructure

themselves um and it it was it was

painful but as a general rule I mean um

as I get older there is more stiffness

in the joints and

um I mean it's it's just something that

I just have to accept I mean there's not

much I can do about it so it's just you

just accept the situation I was an

aesthetic professional aesthetic for

long enough that a certain amount of

pain and discomfort is just is just some

it's just life really just an aspect of

life and there's going to be negativity

in life regardless of what you do or

don't do and so stiff joints I mean it's

acceptable way of burning off the
necessary negativity in my life at least
some of
it so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from yugao and
yugao says hello how are you how is the
new job well I'm fine and the new job is
it's it's stressful and hectic sometimes
I mean it can be a hectic job I mean
it's sometimes it's just like this
chaotic Maelstrom going on where you've
got it's like 25 or 30 forklifts all on
the same dock just unloading trailers
and loading other trailers and just I
mean you're avoiding collisions much of
the time cuz some people drive like
absolute Maniacs some people drive like

maniacal

idiots and so you got like somebody

backing out of a trailer here you zip

this way somebody's coming out this way

through a shortcut you you the other way

it's like you're just like zipping

around just trying to you know do your

job while at the same time avoiding

maniacs and sometimes you're the maniac

too I guess works that way too so I do

kind of Miss bending sheet metal I miss

running the trim Brak and making things

that way and uh but still I mean

sometimes it's like when I first get to

work sometimes I hate my job but then

after a few hours as a general rule I

kind of like it it's sort of like
playing a video game but it's like
you're I'm I'm like lazy at first you
I'm a lazy person just by nature and so
I'm all chill I'm at home everything's
calm and then I go to work and just get
plunged into the into the Maelstrom and
so I just I I react with a certain
amount of aversion but then once I get
into the flow of it then it's it's
okay so yeah yeah the new job is uh I
mean I prefer using my brain to make
things there's really not a whole heck
of a lot of intelligence required to be
a forklift operator other than just a
certain amount of finesse just like
positioning something with the tips of

the forklift that kind of thing or just
learning how to load things so that it
doesn't go all sideways 50 miles down
the highway that some people they're
just totally brainless at work I mean
the average IQ of the people at this job
site is double digits I mean it's just
the way it is it's just what you expect
you know it's not like I'm complaining
or anything it's just the way it is and
so some people I mean they'll load
they'll load something into a trailer
and I can look at it it's like that's
going to be sideways within five miles
that when that truck takes off that
thing's just going to vibrate and fall

over and I'm not really there to like
fix everybody else's fuckups so
sometimes I just shake my head like oh
well so much for that one but um yeah
it's it's all right I mean it's okay so
I'm just going to move on to yuga's next
question which is don't you think that
in allegory of a cave person that is
free is having a harder time than one
stuck in delusional State having to
explain what he knows to them is ex
exhausting well I mean just because
you've gotten out of the cave doesn't
mean you have to explain what you know
to the people who are still in the
cave so yeah that's that may be the hard
part is coming back into the cave and

trying to explain to the people in the
cave that they are in the cave and
that's one of the profoundest things
I've ever read in Plato I've read most
of Plato's works his
dialogues um never got around to reading
his laws but
yeah I mean it is a profound allegory
the the whole allegory of the cave
Plato's
Cave I think it would be an excellent
name for like a like a beastro or
something Plato's Cave I think there was
a some like a beaten dive in New York
back in the day called Plato's Cave um
but yeah I don't know in some ways it

might be a harder time but they're

they're better equipped to deal with

that harder time

so yeah I'm I'm not exactly sure how to

answer this

question the person who has gotten out

of Plato's Cave and then goes back into

it may have a harder time but then like

I just said they're they're better

equipped to deal with a hard time

because they're free and they're not

chained in a cave looking at flickering

Shadows on the

wall but I mean to some people they just

most people prefer to be chained up I

mean that's just the way it is that's

getting back to what I was saying to

Thermal squid earlier is I mean how
unfair is it if it's people just wanting
to be there are people just putting
themselves in that situation through
their own
volition so yeah I mean it's kind of a
Fool's errand trying to get people that
don't want to wake up to wake up people
that don't even know that they're asleep
trying to get them to wake up and it's
that can really be uh Can it can really
be a difficult
job and uh so I mean I think adopting my
position of I'm not I'm not saying that
I've completely escaped from the cave or
any such thing but I mean I'm just

putting it out there for people who are
inclined to listen to it and people who
aren't interested I'm not going around
knocking on doors like a Jehovah's
Witness and I'm just going to move on
the next question this is from Mad
Gringo and mad Gro says you've mentioned
in previous
videos um and then there's an arrow and
it says mediocre lukewarm lay practice
if sitting every morning and evening is
the standard Baseline perhaps what might
a lay practice look like that is serious
one that may actually lead to some
semblance of advancement marok
coup well I think what kind of lay
practice is would look that serious if

it's the person's top priority in
life I mean if if waking up or just
cultivating wisdom you know to live a
dharmic life is your top priority in
life then you are doing well and your
practice is good regardless of the
external manifestations of that practice
regardless of how many hours you sit
cross-legged regardless of what books
you read regardless of whether you chant
or not if like cultivating wisdom is
your top priority and you're going about
it in a relatively Wise Way maybe with
some guidance from actual dama then
you're doing
well but if you've got other priorities

you know like practicing dhama is like
third or fourth on the list then doesn't
matter how many hours you sit doesn't
matter really much of anything else that
it's not really serious dhama practice
and I mean that's fine most people just
aren't in position most people just
aren't ready or they just have other
obligations that they consider to be
like
obligatory that they're just well I'll
just do the best I can and that's that's
that's what they're doing and I mean you
make any effort and it's going to bear
fruit any effort's going to have results
even if it doesn't seem that way at the
time but really I mean serious dhma

practice for anybody is it's your top priority so I'm just going to move on next question this is from Fred and Fred says how does procrit match up with poly and I'm not exactly sure what he means by procrit because paully itself is a procrit that

procrit is like indic languages derived from vidic Sanskrit that were spoken like in ancient up to Medieval Times so any language that is evolved from vidic Sanskrit any indic language spoken in ancient or Medieval Times in India would be procrit and so ply would be procrit the the the mugged mugged that was the precursor of ply that the Buddha himself

presumably spoke was definitely procrit

maybe Fred is referring to the language

of the Jane text which is another kind

of

procrit um how does it match up well I

mean how does Spanish match up with

Italian I mean how I don't know how does

Spanish match up to

Italian I mean it's it's a kind of

question that I'm not sure how to answer

but poly itself is a kind of procrit any

language derived from Sanskrit that was

a like a spoken language not classical

Sanskrit that wouldn't count as Pro but

just like the the language that the

people were talking that that language

was evolved from vidic Sanskrit you know

the the Indo Aran Invaders the language that they were speaking then it it counts as procrit and I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from Julie Caesar I think that's I'm not exactly sure how to pronounce this it's Julie Caesar I think and Julie Caesar says why the Buddha didn't become awaken through meditation taught by his two previous teachers did he invented a new form of meditation and yeah I was mentioning this earlier and I've mentioned this in a few Q&A videos previously that you've got the legend where the Buddha renounces the world he wants to become

enlightened and then so first he goes to these two teachers or one after the other one of them teaches him all he teaches him seven Jas including three the first three formless JRE so this probably an anachronism this probably is not historically accurate this is a Legend So then he he didn't get enlightened from that so then he goes to another teacher who teaches him even the highest formless jna and then the Buddha says I mean he realized he still wasn't enlightened and so then he tries six years of self- torture like the like what the Janes and the aicas were doing just trying to burn off his karma that way and become enlightened by burning up

his karma that didn't work and then
according to the to the tradition
according to the legend he recalls as a
child oh wait okay he recalls as a child
sitting under the the shade of a rose
apple
tree and he just spontaneously went into
first jna and then the Buddha or the
buddhis SAT at this point thinks that's
it that's how that's how to become
enlightened and it just doesn't make
sense because he had already mastered
first Janna realized it was not
conducive to Enlightenment so there's
something missing in this Legend and it
may be that what he invented was

mindfulness meditation or sa

batana but it may be that the the people

who like the legend and you guys stop it

back

there the the two little dogs are in

heat and so they're continually raping

each

other yeah you're silly

so let's see here where was I before

before that

happened let's see oh yeah so it may be

that the people who formulated the

legend were just really keen on Janna

and so they had him go back to Janna as

a way of becoming lightened but um it

just doesn't make good sense and so it

could be that it was like s batana that

the Buddha really um you know like weasa
was what separated um Buddhist
Meditation from the previous
unenlightening kinds of meditation and
it is a kind of myth or belief among a
lot of Buddhists that that is what sets
Buddhist Meditation above other kinds of
meditation is that the Buddhists have
weasa you know they've got Insight
Meditation where you can get liberating
Insight but Insight can just happen
spontaneously after you've practiced
Janna so I don't not sure that that
would be it but like mindfulness or sa
batana might be really what the Buddha
like I don't know if he invented it or

you know I mean be more like he

discovered it or maybe he learned it

from some other teacher that just never

got famous it's hard to

say

so I guess I answer that question and so

I'm just going to move on to Julie's

Caesar's second question what kind of

puzzle games are popular in Burma chess

go

Sudoku well puzzle games I mean chess

there is chess in Burma in fact there's

two kinds of Chess in Burma there's

Western kind of Chess and then there's

like a specifically Burmese version of

Chess which was derived independently of

Western chess from the original Indian

chess chess comes originally from
India and so the burmes have this other
kind of Chess which is played on a chess
board I think it's the same number of
squares I'm not 100% sure on that and
it's got the same pieces you know like
the the eight pawns and the two Rooks
two Bishops two knights king and queen
except I'm pretty sure the the movements
that that the pieces can make are
different and also I think each player
gets to position his pieces on the board
as he likes you know on his side of the
board
so you can set them up they don't have
to be like in the two two rows that you

can sort of strategize in the way you

you start out with your

pieces so aside from that I mean I

wasn't really into games when I was a

monk in Burma I did see a lot of times

guys sitting at t- Shops playing some

kind of like Skittle poool where it's

instead of balls on a big pool table it

was like a smaller square with like

wooden discs that they flick with their

fingers so I mean they played that

there's a lot of like dice they gamble

they gamble for money with dice and uh

now I'm kind of distracted by what the

the Poopers are doing back there because

I don't want them to be doing anything

inappropriate on this video even though

they're doing inappropriate things in

the backyard pretty much all the

time

so yeah I guess that would be it I mean

I really don't know what kind of puzzles

Burmese people do but they they do play

chess not a lot of them I it's sort of

like how many people in America play

chess but there is like it's a

specifically

burmes traditional kind of Chess that is

different from the chess that we play in

the west although both kinds can be

found there so I'm just going to move on

next question this is from Stellar

Supreme former known as Libra lamb and

occasionally still known as Libra lamb and he says do you suppose there could a parallel between Powers over the material world and debts to the material world where in the tragedy of the story of Maham mogana would be emblematic of such Powers the context of my question is of astrology depicting forces Beyond ordinary comprehension or control and these forces being perceived as being like hungry Titans well from the Buddhist point of view it's all Karma I mean a ology is a kind of from a Buddhist point of view it's a kind of animal knowledge and I do think that Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra lamb and occasionally still known as

Libra lamb has been obsessed with
astrology on the Discord server for
several days at this point and
personally I am skeptical of astrology I
mean it could be some kind of Cipher but
the position of some planet or asteroid
I just do not see how it's going to have
any formative effect on my
personality I think that uh it started
off as just a kind
of I don't know in a way kind of like a
more or less superstitious way of trying
to get a grip on certain mysterious and
potentially scary aspects of life and I
mean it works well enough to satis ify
people and I mean from the Buddhist

point of view it's it's all a matter of

karma or

Karma I did write an essay years ago

when I was a monk in Burma um that talks

about tarot cards and astrology and

Ouija boards and compared that with how

Karma works and it's it's like you

already have a certain knowledge deep

down but you your your conscious ego

doesn't believe it has this knowledge

and doesn't have a way of tapping into

that knowledge directly and so it forms

an outward gimmick like tarot cards

Ouija boards astrology charts and then

it uses that as a kind of gimmick you

know you can't believe that you have the

the knowledge in your subconscious mind

but you do believe that this these cards
can help you to understand this
knowledge or the Ouija board or
channeling or whatever it is the the
astrology like the natal charts and all
this and I mean it's it's just like a
crutch to help you use your own innate
psychic abilities to apply it to
whatever it is you're going to apply it
to and the thing is
um like even spiritual teachings work
the same way where if it's your karma to
hear something that means it's already
potentially inside you in a way you
already deep down know it if you're
going to learn something that it's your

karma to hear this and therefore you've
already got like the latent knowledge
inside of you which is just brought to
the surface that was like the main point
of the the essay that I
wrote but uh yeah I think astr I really
don't have much appreciation for
astrology even though it may work to a
certain degree in a way it's it's like a
cipher for something else cuz I really
cannot I really cannot comprehend how
the position of some asteroid in the
asteroid belt for example is going to
have any effect whatsoever on my
conscious mind or my destiny anything
like
that maybe like Seasons but even I mean

astrology is kind of messed up like the due to a a phenomenon called pression of the equinoxes that a Leo like I'm a Leo but I wasn't born under Leo the sun was not in Leo when I was born because precession of the equinoxes has everything shifted by at least one sign so technically a Leo was now born in Virgo so either Leos now or Leos and Virgo it's like how's this work now I'm confusing myself so if what a Leo used to be is like what a Virgo is now or vice versa just because either that or it's it's not the sun sign at all that's doing it because as I say Leo isn't born under the under the sunsh sign isn't

when the sun is in Leo anymore due to
precession of the
equinoxes so yeah I mean it would take
somebody to really just back me up
against a wall and just through sheer
force of of re reason and logic would to
just convert me over to thinking that
astrology is is legit but again we Leos
are naturally skeptical so that's
probably the the thing that I'm having
right now and I'm moving on to a
different
question well should I should I move on
to another question I mean did I do
justice to Stellar Supreme formerly
known as lib Lam and still occasionally
known as lib lands question here do you

suppose there could be a parallel

between Powers over the materal material

world and debts to the material world I

don't even fully understand that which

is it's it's it's a common predicament

when Le Stell Supreme

Etc asks questions because he's just

this strangely cerebral type of

person oh yeah but I mean going with

within the context of Buddhism the whole

deal with Maham Moana I mean it was not

some Powers over the material world

other than Maham ulana's own Karma Plus

plus indirectly the karma of the people

that were bound to murder

him so I'm just I'm going to move on to

next question and we we are getting kind of close to the bottom I guess so yeah it's already three hours this could wind up being one of the longest q&as I've ever done and we really may have to shorten it down to like two questions each even though most of the people haven't asked very many questions it's just more people asking questions now which is fine you know not complaining I mean that's why we're here right of course it is so anyways next question is from Raphael and Raphael says do you know aan punam's view on the Eternal cheetah doctrine of his Thai Forest tradition and no I have not heard aan Punam discuss the the one who knows the

mind that knows this kind of self view
that Ty Forest monks um many of them
have that it seems to be fairly common
to have kind of
anotic understanding of mind or
cheah um that technically speaking is
unorthodox and heretical wrong
view but uh yeah ajan pun he's never
told me himself and I've never seen
anything on his videos I don't watch his
his I don't watch monk videos hardly at
all so I have not been exposed to his
ideas on the subject assuming that he
has uh conveyed those ideas at at any
time but um I would assume it's not that
different from what other monks ordained

in the Thai Forest tradition would say
on the subject which is that
Consciousness is a kind of crypto Soul
or self sort of like the upanishads say
with regard to the Atman the Atman is
Brahman which is essentially um infinite
formless
Consciousness and it's not Orthodox
Buddhism but then again I mean I'm not
an orthodox terot a Buddhist but I can
appreciate the the early Buddhist idea
of just not reifying the absolute the
name that can be named is not the
Eternal name trying to describe the
highest truth is just a Fool's errand it
is futility of
futilities and it just giv give somebody

something to cling to you're better off
just leaving it alone and just not
trying to wrap your head around it you
can try to experience it directly
through
meditation but you won't be able to
really validly put it into words Even If
you experience it for
yourself and I'm going to move on to the
next question this is from rpad or
rpad and he says did you ever shave your
head with a straight razor and I would
never dare take a straight razor to my
own head or face I'm I'm I'm so glad
that the safety razor was invented
before I was born because I'm kind of a

clut sometimes and it would just be a
matter of time before I would gash
myself
severely um when I was ordained every
monk at his ordination has to have all
of the requisites which includes a razor
for shaving his head and in my bowl I
had this Remington electric razor which
it turns out was not good for shaving
heads and the senior monk his name was
usil l seatt usil l who presided over um
my ordination you know he was checking
to make sure I had all the requisites
and he sees the Remington electric
shaver in my bow instead of the standard
straight Razer he says something like
yeah we are in the modern

West but I did have a straight Razer you know occasionally somebody would donate a straight razor and uh I did get shaved with my my straight razor once some some Burmese monk offered to shave my head and so I said all right and he used my Straight Razer and I had never used that straight Razer before I had never sharpened it and it was dull and it hurt like

hell but I have seen monks sh getting shaved with straight razor in fact at mahag Gand on this big school Monastery that I spent a little over a year at they would even sharpen up like a butter knife and there'd be monks that were

that were like shaving the head of

another Monk with like a a sharpened

butter

knife so I think I might have just

answered the second question from rpad

which is our straight razor is common

for monks nowadays to have one is pretty

common and among Burmese monks to use

them is pretty common although usually

they will shave each other's head

instead of shaving their own head with a

straight razor and I mean I as I said I

would not dare to even make the

attempt so um I have found and those of

you who plan on becoming monks may may

uh benefit from paying close heed to

this is that a shik injector single

blade is the best razor I ever came
across for shaving heads you don't want
double blades or triple blades I mean
now they got like you know six blades or
something all in the same little thing
but if you have more than one blade the
the hair just gets stuck in between the
blades and plugs it up and it it's it
doesn't work nearly as well well but a
shik injector single blade it works
really good for shaving heads I highly
recommend
it but uh again some a lot of Burmese
monks use straight razors so I'm just
going to move on to the next question
this is from xenoid and we're getting

close to the bottom here only two more
questioners xenoid and somebody
else and uh 306 yeah we might not even
break any records for extreme L
excruciatingly long
video so xenoid says if you were a Hindu
would you be a vaishnavite or a shite
Shiva as a destruction God seems
antithetical to Buddhism there is even a
book entitled Nicha and the dance of
Shiva by Miguel Sano Nicha said he would
only believe in a God who knows how to
dance and Shiva destroys the universe by
dancing ING with all this being said
Vishnu preserves the universe and
therefore preserves Sam Sara so maybe he
isn't much better from the Buddhist

point of view well for starters if I
were a Hindu would I be a vaishnavite or
a shite well I mean if I was in a Hindu
in India I'd probably just follow
whichever form of Buddhism or whichever
form of Hinduism I should say was
prevalent in my culture like
vaishnavites are more of a northw
Western India thing and shites are more
of a Southern India thing although of
course there's lots of
exceptions um I do think that the shites
have better music than the vaishnavites
on the other hand according to the
Hindus the Buddha himself was an avatar
of

Vishnu which would make the Buddha

pretty much Vite or hind or Buddhists

would be kind of vaishnavites in a way

just automat

ically but I have to admit that just

intuitively I prefer Shiva to

Vishnu that Shiva is the aesthetic you

know he's the one in deep meditation in

on Kash Mount kyash you know he's he's

more mysterious more interesting to me

than

Vishnu so if I had to choose I think I

probably would go with Shiva even though

the Buddha himself is considered to be

an avatar

Vishnu but Shiva is just I don't know he

just seems more Macho or something or

more I don't know what it is I really

he's just got like

this what is it Mystique that appeals to

me so I'm going to move on to xeni

void's second question which is an easy

one what is your opinion on Yukio

Mishima and his writings not notably sun

and steel and I am completely unfamiliar

with Yuki Mishima I don't know who yukoh

Mishima is other than the fair

likelihood that he is

Japanese but aside from that he's a

Japanese person who wrote something

called sun and steel that's all I know

about yukoh

Mishima so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is also from
xenoid which is as follows who is the
most important and thought-provoking
Buddhist philosopher alive today when
aan padama was asked this he said aan
Sumo and to tell you the truth I
probably don't know who is the most
important and thought-provoking Buddhist
philosopher alive today because I really
don't keep up with this stuff you know I
don't watch like monk videos on YouTube
I don't read like many Buddhist books
anymore other than just looking up
something in Theo text
which I mean was compos they were
composed very long before anyone alive
today um but I would guess of the ones I

know I think ajan tanero would be more
important in with regard
to uh I mean provoking thought and also
guiding an understanding of Terra
Buddhism I do think that aan tanro has
written a lot of philosoph opical books
and he is influential whereas aan suo
I'm not I mean he doesn't write very
much and I've listened to a few of his
talks that I mean they were he had
wisdom but I mean there wasn't anything
really like unusually profound or
thought-provoking so of the monks alive
today I would guess aan
tanero but probably the the correct
answer would be somebody I I don't even

I'm not even thinking of and don't know of so I'm just going to move on to Virgil and the very last question the very last one and Virgil says do you have any good recommendations for a meditation on the 32 parts of the body I heard this was one of the meditations done by Tong Pulu did he left any written materials on this practice or guided audio meditations um actually ton Pulu se's teachings on the 32 parts of the body I think are contained in living Buddhist Masters which is one of the first books written by Jack cornfield and he wrote it quite a while ago back when Tom pul was still alive so Tom Pulu died like back around n late 7s

or 1980 or something like that so it's
been quite a while and it is true that
Tom Pulu did teach the 32 parts of the
of the body meditation and my teacher
who was the direct successor of
Tulu who was Tulu chelen doya um he also
taught the 32 parts of the body
especially to younger people who were
troubled with lust it's considered to be
uh an efficacious meditation technique
for reducing lust
and I really don't think that Virgil
would be much impressed by some of the
aspects of Tom pato's 32 parts of the
body meditation because for the way Tom
Pulu and the Tom tradition teach the 32

parts of the body meditation it's
practically just a mantra I mean you're
just reciting the body parts you know
like ques D
the and and I mean you're not even
supposed to be visualizing the parts or
where they are in the body anything like
that it's just supposedly when you get
really good at it you get into the flow
the body parts just start like appearing
in your mind
spontaneously and I really don't think
that is the best way of going about it
that probably you should be trying to
apply some meaning to the words you know
head hair body hair nails teeth skin I
mean to do it in English rather than in

poly would probably be of advantage to
someone who speaks English more fluently
than they speak poly and just to have
some like
visualization of each body part but the
rest of the tong Pulu way of doing it
makes good sense it's like um the 32
parts of the body are divided up into I
think it's six groups like the first
group is quesa l d
D or head hair body hair nails teeth
skin so the first week you go you just
do the first five in order then the
second week you do the you do the first
five backwards you know in reverse order
and then the third week you do forwards

and backwards and then the the next week
after that you move on to the next group
of
five so that would be uh a part of the
tong Pulu method of doing the 32 parts
of the body that I could recommend you
know the first week you do the first
group forwards next week SEC the first
group backwards next week forwards and
backwards and then the next week after
that you move on to the next
five um but I don't think just doing it
as a mantra is as useful as actually
visualized ing the parts and you may
refer to a book or refer to the internet
to get like a good view of each of the
parts that you're visualizing I mean

with regard to the the first five it's all external stuff so you can visualize head hair body hair nails teeth and skin fairly well without having to look it up in a reference book but when you start getting into like spleen and and Marrow and this kind of stuff then it helps for you to actually get a view of what it looks like in order to visualize it and kind of place it in your own body when you're when you're doing the meditation and uh I guess that's it I mean somebody donated to me a book on the 32 parts of the body that had like a a photograph I mean it was all like in Japanese or Korean I can't remember now

but there was a photo of each of the 32 Parts here was like a a picture of poop you know that's one of the 32 Parts is is feces

so um you that was kind of useful I suppose but you can find that sort of thing on the internet I assume you could probably order it online maybe Amazon would sell something like that but um that's it and uh I wish you luck in your meditation and I I wish all of you prosperity and good fortune and uh we're done and like I always should say at the beginning and I always space it off I mean that's that's basically it it's just a matter of habit at this point I should say if you got any questions

about anything you think I can answer

especially about early Buddhism ter of

Auto Buddhism Buddhism in general

monasticism like the the rules of

monastic discipline meditation like

Eastern philosophy Western philosophy me

personally Burma you think I can answer

a question um feel free to ask it in the

comments below the video no more than

three please and I think we might have

to get down to two soon just because

these videos are getting well over three

hours

long

so um aside from everything else I just

say uh be happy and then I'm going to

hit this button right here

alrighty

then hello and welcome to question and

answer number

134 which is a relatively High number I

am your host pel

basa and last night I came home from

work with kind of a scratchy throat

which when I woke up early this

afternoon had developed had

metamorphosed if you will into a

full-blown sore throat

and now I'm starting to get like a runny

nose and like it's like traveling down

into my trachea or something and seems

like I'm catching a cold no worries

though it appears to be not

life-threatening and uh The Show Must Go

On so we're doing this I actually feel

pretty good despite the uh nasal

irritation and all

that and the throat

irritation I should say so anyways we

don't have a whole heck of a lot of

questions which is good cuz it's going

to give my throat kind of a rest to do

one of these it's less than 3 hours long

so I got the beverage which is here

paper umbrella demonstrating my class

and style and

sophistication and I just stabbed myself

in the

face accidentally with said paper

umbrella but before I start answering

questions I would like to give a shout
out to somebody named Kevin
who cash at me a donation several days
ago and unlike PayPal I haven't figured
out how to message anyone acknowledging
you know the the generosity of Their
donation and all that so I'm doing it
here because I don't know how to do it
otherwise also I would like to uh sort
of uh Express a little bit of I don't
know skeptical cynicism perhaps in the I
mentioned in the previous Q&A that I do
get like acid reflux and somebody asked
a question I didn't just blurt it out
just
unprompted and so I I get these these

comments saying if you got acid reflux

what you need is to drink more

acid like vinegar or something and it

just it just doesn't make sense to me

this seems like some kind of a scop so

anyone who suggested that I did I like

consume more acid because of acid reflux

your name is on a list

now and it doesn't seem to it doesn't

seem to be true I mean I haven't tried

the apple cider vinegar but orange juice

is one of the things that I really

cannot drink you know within like two

hours of going to bed just

because

acid citric acid in this

case plus a little ascorbic acid I

suppose anyways let's just start
answering questions and the first
question is from Master Po and Master Po
says what does ataka waga mean in
English and there are two AA wagas in
the poly toptica one is the chapter of
eights in the angura Naya which goes
it's it's divided up into groups or
chapters from 1 to two to three up to 11
so eight is in between 1 and 11 and so
there is an AA waga of the yur andaya
but the AA waga that I usually mentioned
is in the
sutan and the meaning of that Vaga means
like group or chapter but ataka ATA is
the poly word for eight so it's it's

related to the word English word eight

uh like octo as in Octopus from Greek

you know it's all based on Proto indoan

the C at the end ATA means like a group

of eight or an octad so it is the

chapter of octads and the reason why the

Tica waga is called the chapter of

octads even though it's there's 16 sutas

in there is because there's a core like

a nucleus of four sutas Each of which is

eight stanzas in length and they are

considered to be possibly the four

oldest sutas in the ATA

waga so it's the chapter of octads or

the group of octads

ah so that was relatively easy let's

move on to the next question this is

from mraa Buddha and mraa Buddha says
does karma negate the idea of free will
I don't think that Karma would negate
the idea of Free Will what does negate
the idea of Free Will is no
self um anata in p anat man in Sanskrit
because Free Will implies that there is
this entity that is separate from every
everything around it that is making its
own choices independently to some degree
of everything around it and that would
be a self Buddhism teaches there is no
self so that pretty much kicks Free Will
in the head when you don't have a
self also um the uh
anuta which is considered to be by

tradition the Buddha's second discourse
after his Enlightenment he points out
that you cannot say let it be this way
let it not be that way to any of the
five condas and have it reliably happen
and one of those five condos is saraa
which is volition mainly volition so
even your own volitions you do not have
complete control over
them so that kind of negates the idea of
free will also at least to some degree
but what mainly kicks Free Will in the
head for a Buddhist is the concept of no
self
because Free Will does imply that there
has to be a self that has this Free
Will so I'm going to move on to the next

question this is from

Romeo and Romeo says I've been

practicing Insight Meditation

consistently for a year or so for

approximately 20 minutes a day I focus

on the sensations of my breath the speed

and Rhythm of the inout and Rise fall

the temperature of the air Etc when I

get distracted by a thought body

sensation sound Etc I note what Drew

away my attention then gently bring my

focus back to my breath since I've been

meditating I can definitely say that I

feel much calmer more patient and more

centered in the present moment but I am

confused about which profound insights

into myself or reality I am supposed to
be gaining can you please speak on this
and I've got this divided into two
questions which is erroneous so I got to
fix that okay
so you see Romeo is confused about which
profound insights into himself or
reality he is supposed to be gaining and
it I consider this I've considered this
for many years to be a mistake to tell
somebody in advance what kind of insight
they're supposed to have because it's
sort of like implanting a suggestion and
then you get into some kind of hypnotic
state you see exactly what you're told
to see that this happens like in the
mahasi method like when I when I spent

some time at at Pand Rama and rangon upand would be telling people in advance what kind of insights they were supposed to be having and some of the people would go into like these deep hypnotic States and just dutifully see what they were told and in one case there was a Korean Mahayana monk there who did not have a complete Mastery of the English language and so he misunderstood what he was supposed to be seeing and then he saw through his own Insight that like the mistaken version of what he was supposed to be experiencing and then upan just kind of angrily told him no you didn't experience

that and I've considered that it would
be a good
experiment to um like at a at a place
like PA in southern Burma that you take
a group of people that don't know hardly
anything about terava Buddhism like
Taiwanese nuns or something and you just
teach them everything wrong you know you
teach them Abid dama stuff wrong it's
you know it's like 13 mind moments to
every moment of matter and all this
stuff you just teach it to them wrong
and then when they start having their
insights into the nature of reality
through the samade eye I mean is it
going to come out right or is it going
out going to come out the way they were

told it was going to come

out so

um profound insights into yourself or

reality um you're probably better off

not being told in advance what kind of

insights you're supposed to have because

then your subconscious mind can conjure

up fake insights and you can wind up

fooling yourself with

that

also the like the official list in

Burmese it's called nanzen you know it's

theana insight knowled is that you're

supposed to experience in in the correct

order in sequential order and when you

get to the final one then you've become

an Arya and one of them is namarupa
Parana something like that no it's not
par namarupa something it's like the the
Insight knowledge of distinguishing mind
from matter and I'm pretty sure when I
was at Pama I actually experienced that
one it's one of the earlier ones
and to me it wasn't really an Insight
distinguishing mind from matter it was
more of an Insight distinguishing like
Sensation from perception or like
feeling from perception you know it's
like you have this almost pristine
sensory data and then your mind just
starts interpreting it so it was like a
clear distinction like it it was really
kind of striking the distinction between

sort of the incoming data with maybe
some unavoidable preliminary you know
just automatic perception involved in
that and then there's like the like the
thinking mind just takes that ball and
runs with it and just starts like this
commentary on it and it was very clear
distinction
so I think that maybe whoever named it
namarupa Parana or whatever in
Nana um I think even they didn't really
understand what what it was that they
were describing because matter is
problematic the Mind cannot know
physical matter the mind can only know
mind because that's what it

is but I mean you can have insights that aren't necessarily on any list like one of the most important insights I experienced as a meditator as a monk is once you get to the point where you stop thinking then you realize is that you are not your thoughts because when your thinking stops you don't stop or at least you know the conscious process doesn't stop and if anything you're more conscious after you stop thinking than when you're thinking because when you're thinking your mind is narrowed down to focus on what it is that you are perceiving and you're just kind of ignoring everything else you're ignoring the entire rest of the sensorium whereas

if your mind is just wide open you're

Wide Awake you're not thinking anything

then you know it's like the entire

sensorium is equally in

Focus but again it's you're probably

better off not being told in advance

what kind of profound insights you're

going to have because then your

subconscious mind can just dutifully

generate some fact simile or

approximation of these insights and then

it's not a genuine

Insight so I'm just going to move on

next question this is from Fred

and Fred

says that was interesting about your

termination potion what was it made from
and that this is uh like a follow-up
question from an answer I gave to a
question in the previous Q&A about
somebody talking about how they were
considering Auto termination and asked
if I had ever considered it and then I
said for years as a monk I did have like
a certain substance on hand just in case
you know I needed like an Escape Route
like a fire exit or something which as
you may have guessed I never used but
all it was was just a big bag of
charcoal and when you're living in a
cave with almost no air circulation I I
assume that would be
sufficient and then Fred follows up with

I am probably the oldest viewer but physically okay I also had topping thoughts which he's referring to Auto termination I suppose and then he said I had hip replacement a while ago it's General wear and tear well good luck with your health

Fred and I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from a clever fellow called chasz is who keeps changing his name and I can't pronounce his new name so we're just going with trasa is which I also don't know how to pronounce but at least I've settled on one variant of pronunciation on that one so chasz is or whatever he's calling

himself today says as a young monk have you believed in most of the Orthodox terava teachings maybe without Abid dama and when I was a young monk when I first was ordained I hadn't read very much of the poly toptica I was not extremely well acquainted with Orthodox terraa Buddhist Doctrine you know I was almost totally innocent of the commentarial tradition for example knew almost nothing about Abid dama I just read some sutas you know read the sutin the DAP

um certain verses from like or certain sutas from the majaya the dean nikai and this kind of stuff but um I mean I was pretty naive and when I first became a

monk I had this idea that terraa

Buddhism like the terraa Buddhists were

so conservative they were afraid to

change anything and so with terab

Buddhism you still had the original

Buddhism

and the more I read the more I studied

the less likely that

became um like even in the sutas there

there's certain sutas I mean the talking

animals the fire breathing Cobra dragons

the Buddha just bragging and grandiose

terms about how great he is and how

people should worship him this kind of

stuff I just couldn't

really you know I I just couldn't accept

that so I just do not have like the dogmatic follower kind of mentality you know it's like I I still have like a critical mind and maybe a little too critical sometimes but you know you read like there's a a suta where there's a follower of the James who's a master of debate and he's bragging in advance about how he's going to go to this this philosopher Goa and just wipe the floor with him in debate just he's just going to take him like an elephant takes like something in its trunk and just kind of beats around with it just I mean he's just going to just mess him up he's such a a famous renowned debater he's so good at debate he goes to the Buddha the

Buddha asks him a

question couched in Buddhist terminology

this Jane debater just follow just

agrees with this assumption that a Jane

wouldn't even agree with in reality and

he just he just surrenders he quits the

debate immediately he just he just

immediately converts to Buddhism after

just like one utterance that was

doctrinally wrong view from a Jane point

of view and so I'd read this kind of

stuff it's like no that wouldn't happen

in real life or there's a su or a su in

the sutin where there's some

Brahman who um he's he wants to make an

offering to some Brahman holy man he

sees the Buddha sitting under a tree and the Buddha apparently had like his head covered with his robe or something maybe it was a cold day so he gets closer and then he realizes that it's a Buddhist monk you know it's a shamina with a shaven head or or something like this and he just starts calling him you know no you worthless skin head and then the Buddha says like do you know what is a skin head or what what is conducive to being a skin head and then the Brahman just immediately does a 180 and just no venerable sir please explain to me what makes a skin head oh he calls him an outcast it's the outcast Su I think it's the wasala sua of the supata and it's

like people just don't act this way

maybe on

TV where they'll just do a complete 180

just for no apparent reason whatsoever I

mean it reminds me of an old episode of

The Flintstones probably a lot of you

are too young to remember The

Flintstones you're loss I assure you

anyways Fred Flintstone this caveman

goes in a time machine you know maybe

someone from the future came back with

the time machine so that this caveman

could get into the time machine and come

into the the present day and he winds up

at this like a a stone age theme park or

it was like a theme park that had like

caveman actors you know actors
pretending to be caveman there and so he
goes to this hot like a hamburger stand
and he orders a hamburger or whatever it
is it says how much is that going to be
and then the the clerk or the you know
the the guy behind the counter sees him
in dress like a cave man says that'll be
two rocks so Fred Flintstone just lays
down two rocks because apparently that's
what they use for money in the Stone Age
and the guy just starts yelling for the
police and I mean it works in a cartoon
I guess but it just doesn't work that
way in reality and when you read sutas
where people are acting in a way that is
just contrary to human nature or like

the whole I Dream of Genie show one of
my favorite shows when I was a kid I had
kind of a crush on Barbara Eden when I
was a little
kid here you got this beautiful blonde
with superhuman powers fall who is madly
in love with this guy she's like bowing
down to him and calling him master and
he's just like get away from me I mean
he wasn't gay either Ian it's like on TV
and stuff this works but if you're
reading a text that you
think is potentially with an enlightened
author you know the founder of your
spiritual system and there I mean stuff
is happening that just is like setting

off alarms it's like this wouldn't

happen in reality then immediately and

you start having to put on the brakes

with this terada is like the original

kind of Buddhism that the terraa

Buddhists were afraid to change

anything because they things got changed

um of terava

Buddhism um

today it's the most conservative School

of Buddhism by far of all the schools of

Buddhism that still

exist but just because it is the most

conservative School of Buddhism by far

still it's it's it's not really super

close to what the Buddha was originally

teaching so getting back to the question

sure ask as is or whatever he's calling
himself
today uh did I believe in most of the
Orthodox terot teachings as a young monk
I didn't know most of the teachings I
mean I was didn't know hardly anything
about Buddha gism or the the
commentarial tradition so
um I kind of assumed that it was mostly
true without knowing a lot of it but
then the more I learned and the more I
read the less I could adopt that
position so I'm just going to move on to
trasis is or whatever he's calling
himself today's second question which is
when you have schizophrenia or take

hallucinogens or just have extremely vivid dreams you know that your brain or mind can generate everything the whole reality with other people in it how do you think Buddhism would explain people with multiple personalities because when there is no self they of course cannot have two or three Souls well I mean if there's no self they cannot have one Soul so I mean how is a person with multiple person multiple personalities any harder to explain than a person with a single personality considering that personality view is a wrong view in Buddhism that even one person is one person too

many so how Buddhism would explain it it

would just be considered a kind of we
palasa or like a derangement of mind you
know it'd be kind of a it' just be
considered to be like a kind of insanity
or or mental
illness and um I mean how would you
explain multiple personalities when
there's no self I mean that part of it
is no harder than to explain why you
would have one personality with no self
so that's a whole different kind of
argument that multiple
personalities um you know it's it's kind
of
incidental to the whole issue or
doctrine of anat or no

self

so I guess I answer that I guess I

answered that one so I'm just going to

move on to tasz is or whatever name is

his third question which is when you'll

be a good sport and banish Our Endless

questions by limit them to two for a

person I was considering if this one

goes more than 3 hours then I may limit

it to two in future although as it turns

out this one probably won't go for two

hours unless I just keep yammering away

about you know orange juice and and that

kind of

thing just go off on multiple tangents

but uh so far I think we're doing all

right and so the next question is from

dhama River and dama River says you said
a couple of videos back that you would
like to take rebirth in tawa timsa
heaven if you were given the choice to
speak you or realm of rebirth and suda
Wasa also known as the pure abodes for
anagami weren't an option so my question
is what do you think about some people
who have the aspiration to be reborn
into Citta heaven to be able to meet
mraa or MATA in p and learn the dharm
directly from him wouldn't you prefer to
take that rebirth um I suppose although
I'm rather skeptical of the very
existence of two to Heaven I think that
the whole concept of two SE to Heaven

comes from an obscure reference at the
beginning of a suta towards the end of
the ATA waga and I can't remember which
suta that was maybe it's
is it sorry puta suta I can't remember
now it's one of the last sutas of the
yaka waga where it's like the Buddha
came from the congregation of
tusita and apparently tusita got
interpreted as a heaven realm that the
Buddha was reborn from that apparently
it's like a tradition that like a Buddha
in in his life before his final human
life he spends it in T Heaven which is
one Heaven realm above tawa
timsa and tuus just means sort of like
the contented or the delighted you know

it's it's a past participle of of being

happy

essentially and so I think there is a

possibility I mean you don't see to see

of Heaven mention much in the

texts so as I was mentioning I think it

was the previous Q&A a lot of these 31

planes of existence

some of them and there's practically no

mention at all in the sutas and it's I

mean the entire scheme of 31 planes of

existence is never enumerated in the

poly toptica it's like a later

commentarial um

artifact and to see to Heaven um I'm

personally I'm kind of skeptical of a

lot of these Heaven Realms and Hell

Realms um that I really have no

persuasive

evidence that would cause me to really

think yeah that's that's likely to be

legit that it could just be mythology it

seems to me like it could just be

mythology

so um I mean if it exists people want to

be reborn there um I mean assuming that

just being enlightened In This Very life

is not an option they wanted they aspire

to being reborn into to see to Heaven

which would be sort of almost like a

pure land Buddhism kind of attitude

then fine you know I don't I'm not like

opposed to people who aspire to be

reborn in this or that heaven realm but
Tua really isn't described much you know
it's like you're G to just sort
of um sort of what's the word commit
yourself to being reborn in this Heaven
realm that you know almost nothing about
tawa timsa is pretty well described
because that's where the main vadic Gods
lived and so that was sort of the
heaven I mean it was like the heaven for
the vidic brahmanist and then the
Buddhists just sort of accepted that and
then just added a bunch of other Heaven
Realms you know above and you know kind
of one below
it so yeah I mean I got no problem with

people let's see what do you think about
some people who have the as aspiration
to be reborn into CA heaven to be able
to meet my tra and learn the dhama
directly I mean it's for me it just
smacks of Mythology that is not
necessarily based on empirical
reality but I got no people can aspire
to all sorts of things and so long as
they're not aspiring to just make my
life a living hell then you know go for
it that's fine I got no problem with
that so I'm just going to move on to D
River second
question which is what's your opinion of
angry Abbotts and teachers that verbally
and physically abuse their students and

then he's got some commentary here I have personally met people who were seriously traumatized by their teachers as a result of this they had stopped accepting teachers Al together but they continued studying the dhamma independently I have also heard stories of people I didn't personally meet but I heard of their stories nevertheless most of the time I saw this happen happening in vajrayana Buddhism but I also saw it happening in terava Buddhism in Thailand I saw terava aons hitting people angrily scolding and abusing younger monks I don't want to say their names because I don't want to bring distribute to them I

don't want to ruin their reputation
they're quite famous and you have seen
mention and you have even mentioned one
of them here in previous q&as my mention
to you is how should lay people and
newly ordained monks deal with an Abbott
or a teacher that is verbally physically
abusive in my case I would not accept it
because if the aon's mindfulness is so
poor that he's incapable of controlling
his own words and he's constantly
breaking Sama vacha or right speech and
his bodily actions are so out of control
that he can actually hit others then how
could he possibly teach me or anyone
else about mindfulness he should lead by
example what do your thoughts and your

opinion is verbally or just physically
abusing your students ever Justified
well this reminds me of a couple things
first there's a saying in Zen
Buddhism that when the Zen Masters it's
like when the meditation Hall is
resounding with the Zen Master's shouts
and blows from his stick are falling
like rain still his mind abides in
Stillness so a fierce teacher can still
be very wise potentially even
enlightened I mean that in Thailand aan
man is considered to be you know the
like the archetype of the the arant monk
you know he's he's the one they point to
him and aan Cha aan manun and maybe a

aan Mahaba I mean aan manun he was
fierce you know he was
scary and in in Burma upand was like
this too I mean he just took an instant
dislike to me I mean as soon as I I I
showed up practically you know I was
just kind of singled out for as kind of
being The Whipping Boy and I mean he
would just get pissed off not just at me
but in general for for some reason or
another on pretty much of a daily basis
and I have to admit that in Up's case
regardless of how good of a teacher he
was to others I became rather skeptical
how wise can this person be even though
he obviously considers himself to be an
Arya like a Saka dami he kind of hinted

at it even though he wouldn't just come

out and say it still how wise can he be

if he's getting pissed off every

day so I think it can go either way some

people I mean like I've mentioned

recently I mean even the Zen Masters who

have the stick they hardly ever hit

anybody anymore just because people have

become so wimpy so easily traumatized

that they might sue him just for just

for smacking him with the stick you know

they answer the [__] wrong he goes whack

on head they start crying to the police

or

something so I mean if you come across

uh a teacher who is

abusive

then I mean it's your it's your call if

you think that he's not a good teacher

then go elsewhere like neem cly Baba up

on the altar up there I consider him to

be a possibly fully enlightened being

but he was the same thing he'd yell at

people he would hit people but it was

like rumed on

got pissed off at him once because he

was just storming and raging just

scaring people that neim cly Baba was

doing this and then uh it was like ROM

do just kind of went kind of protested

against him you know kind of went on a

strike against him refused to go near

him and this kind of thing so neim Croy

Baba called him and it's like no matter
what you do with other people never let
them out of your heart and it's like if
you're like a really Advanced being and
you're just a mirror of the other
person's Karma you know there's like
nobody there subjectively you're just
reflecting back their own Karma if they
got Karma to get abused it's better off
to get yelled at by someone who just
like is just sort of full of love really
I mean there that's all that's there
kind of and that's one way of looking at
it it's just sort of tough love you know
it's like this fierceness that I mean
some people may need that in order to

get knocked out of their rut they need
to get beaten out of their rut in Zen
Buddhism there's lots of that like I
think it's
umon famous Zen master I don't know his
original Chinese name he apparently had
his Enlightenment experience or his
Awakening experience his Satori or or
whatever you want to call it in Zen
Buddhism when his own teacher slammed
um's leg in a door and broke his leg at
the moment of his leg breaking as his
teacher was slamming it in the door on
purpose he became enlightened or or
renai you know the founder of the renai
sect of Zen Buddhism in Japan I don't
think I've ever read a story about renai

when he wasn't hitting somebody I've
read several stories about renai every
single story he's hitting
somebody and so some people that are are
like traumatized by their teachers I
mean they're just kind of I mean it
could be that they have
this this idea of what a teacher should
be like and so they're like severely
disillusioned to a traumatizing degree
or on the other hand it maybe that
they're just brought into this kind of a
degenerate culture where everybody's
Wimp And wimpy and flabby and so even to
get yelled at is going to traumatize
them in which case they're better off

just not having a teacher or or using
books as a teacher or just going to one
of those the majority of teachers that
talk in this soft gentle voice don't
want to ruffle any feathers you know cuz
they don't want the trouble of people
freaking out at them because they said
something off color or maybe a little
bit
harsh so let's see what's what's the
actual question here there's there's
like two question marks one at the
beginning and then one at the end the
first one what's your opinion of angry
abbots and teachers that verm and
physically abuse their students it works
for some people it doesn't work for

others one size does not fit all just if
if it doesn't work for you find a
different teacher that's what I would
say although I think there should be a
distinction made between a fierce
teacher which can be a very effective
one or the just the the chronically
pissed off just you know blatantly
unenlightened teacher and then suddenly
I'm remembering um the old story of the
way of the sword where this guy wants to
be a Zen ma he wants to be a swordmaster
this is probably medieval Japan like
Samurai Japan he wants to be a
swordmaster so he goes to one of the
most re renowned sword Masters who is

living as a Hermit in the forest and he says you know teach me to be a swordmaster and so the the swordmaster looks at him and says well I could probably teach you in 20 years and and so the the students like no no I need to know fast I mean if I train really hard if you just give me maximum teaching then how long will it take and then the teacher says well in that case maybe 15 years and then the the students going no no I need to learn fast I mean teach me just maximum full blast how long will it take and he says well if you're going to go like that it's going to take 30 years so then the the guy think realizes oh okay I get it so the the Zen master just

has him just working in the kitchen he he's like sweeping floors and washing dishes and this kind of thing no swords at all and he's getting kind of fed up with this he's starting to feel exploited like he's just being used as free labor when all of a sudden the Zen master or the the sword master will just jump out from behind the corner and just beat him up and just leave him lying dazed on the floor and this keeps happening until finally the student I mean he's got to be totally alert at all times because he doesn't know when this maniacal swordmaster is going to jump out from behind like a doorway and just

start wailing on him with a stick so
that was like the fastest most intensive
best way for him to learn how to be a
swordmaster is just through just taking
beatings on a regular basis and I have
to admit people are different nowadays
we are living in a degenerate age we are
living in the midst of societal
decadence and so most people they're
just going to freak out they're going to
be traumatized they're going to have to
go to a therapist
you know it's like they're going to sue
the sword master all this kind of stuff
so you just have to know from your own
personality if it's working or if it's
not working even if your ears are

ringing from from being chewed out for
the um teenth time like happened with me
at pandama where it would take like a
day or two just to settle back down
after one of these tyraids directed
against me that um I mean is it helping
you have to ask yourself I mean are you
making progress even if you don't like
it even if it's very unpleasant I mean
taking a beating or being yelled at
generally is not pleasant but sometimes
you may need
that but do do you have like the the
fortitude to to stand up to it and just
not not be traumatized by it and then at
the end there's another question mark

what are your thoughts and your opinion

is it verbally or physically abusing

your students ever Justified yeah

sometimes it's it's Justified although

it wouldn't be Abus it might be seen as

abuse by

others I mean but if it's genuinely like

a wise teacher being Fierce to his

students like aan manun or neim Koli

Baba or rinai or whatever then it's

Justified if it works it's

Justified so I'm just going to move on

the next

question and it occurs to me that

spending 20 minutes on each question may

result in a very long video

so next question is from xenoid and

xenoid says if you were alive for the early Buddhist councils and had to pick between the Terra and sarvas VOD who who would you

choose well I have kind of thought about this like if I lived in ancient North India when you had like the 30 schools so-called there's all these different schools of Buddhism which would you choose I mean

realistically you generally go with the one that you has the local

Monastery um I think if I had the choice of all the early schools I probably wouldn't choose terava or sarvastivada I might go with santica which was one of

the more conservative schools and didn't
have an Abid dama but if I had to choose
between Terra and sarasti V it would be
a tough choice because both of them have
good points and bad points you know
sarvastivada had a more einsteinian view
of time rather than a more Newtonian
view of of time in terraa terva says
only the present moment exists the
future is completely non-existent the
past is completely non-existent there is
only now whereas sarasti Vada believed
past present and future all exist it's
just that we're only aware of this
present moment that's constantly
changing um Terra believed that
everything excuse me my my nostrils are

not cooperating that everything is like flashing off and on a trillion times a second whereas in
Vada impermanence applies only to combinations of elements that the individual elements like a like a particle of Earth element is constant it doesn't
change it's just that any combination of these primordial elements these Damas or dharmas um that those are impermanent I think I might go with Terra more on that one although there's like complications philosophical complications of the whole idea of everything flashing off and on but with regard to Karma sasada had it

was almost like a Jane conception of

karma where Karma was almost like a

physical substance that was like this

sticky substance that would adhere to

your whatever I don't know what it would

adhere

to so I don't know is if I had to choose

between terava and sasada in ancient

times like if I lived in ancient

Northwestern India or some such um I'd

probably just go with the one that had

the wisest teacher that I had access to

that was like local nearby

you know if I have access to the

monasteries I just choose which one had

the better atmosphere which one had the

wisest teacher and then just go with

that

one because I mean no matter which one

you choose there's always going to be a

certain amount of like Deadwood in the

system it's just going to be slightly

different Deadwood in the two two

systems of terava and

cervos so I'm just going to move on to

the xenoid second question

excuse me my nostrils are kind

of they got a mind of their own you

might say now that I'm catching this

cold okay xenoid second question where

could one get their hands on a copy of

the sarvas Vada Abid and potentially

other sarvastivada literature I know

that there I'm pretty sure there's
English translation of the sarasti Vada
Abid Dharma because they went with a
kind of Sanskrit rather than poly so
it's Abid Dharma
and not a single book of the sarvas
Vaden Abid Dharma is the same as the
terad Abid dama even though they split
apart at around the time of the third
Council which is kind of indicative of
how late Abid dama made it onto the
scene you'd think that if the Abid dama
existed before the third Council when
terava and sasada split they'd at least
have one book in common but they they
don't it was like that's one that's why
they had the split I guess it was just

sort of dueling Abid Damas the sasti vadens you know favored this kind of philosophy the Terra vadens favored this kind and So eventually there was like a Schism that was formalized at the third Council according to my understanding what was going on at that time so I mean I don't know where you could find it you're just going to have to search around on the internet I'm sure that if you do some diligent searching you can find the sarasti Vaden Abid Dharma somewhere and if it isn't translated into English it's going to be at least translated into French or or or German or

something and with to other sarasti
voden literature the only sarasti voden
Literature Like the original text that I
ever read is I read the sasada version
of the the biku ptim Moka the Beeko
pratim Moka and also there's a another
like a re form movement or a branch of
sarvastivada called the mola
sarvastivada which also had its own
vinia and its own praim Moka so I read
the sarvas div vadan version of the ptim
Moka and the Mula sarvas daden version
of the Pima Mula sarvastivada
um was more in the foothills of the
Himalayas like in North India so that
they had more vinea allowances for like
how to live in cold weather

like I think it was the mul sasad monks
that when they went for alms they had
this stick like a walking stick they had
these metal rings on the top that would
jingle and they'd hit the stick against
the ground to let people know that they
were there when they go for alms because
in the cold weather in this Northerly
region they'd have their doors closed
unlike some place like Burma where
people just leave their Huts open you
know there's as many flies inside as
outside so it doesn't really
matter and so there's rules you know
you're allowed to to hit the stick like
three times and then if nobody opens the

door you're allowed to hit like two more
times and nobody opens the door then
maybe like one more time and then if
nobody opens the door then you just move
on to the next house that kind of
thing so um I can't remember the name of
the book but it was a comparative study
of the praim Moka and it had like
several at least eight different
versions of the putty mocha
but where you'd find this stuff I'm not
exactly sure maybe motil bonaros
publishes a lot of this kind of stuff um
just do a search on like Amazon you know
do a search for sarasti Vada on Amazon
you might come up with something um just
look around I'm sure you can find

something and I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from xenoid also and Zen xenoid says I've heard you mention that there is technically one sarvastivada Temple left but it has Mahayana influences where is it and if you could would you please post a Google Maps link of its location in the description um I think it's called ritsu or R risu it's called ritsu or like something like rich rishu in in Japanese which is the word for vinia and there are a few temples near Nar in like Southern Japan which used to be the capital of Japan back in early medieval times when Buddhism was first being

brought into Japan when Buddhism first
became more or less mainstream in Japan
Nara spelled n a r a i don't know how to
spell it with Japanese letters sorry
about that it was the capital and so
there were a number of different kind of
monasteries around the capital because
it was like the cultural center of Japan
at the time
and technically this Ritu school is at
least based on sasada it's a very
corrupted form you know it's like a
derived form of sarvastivada and it has
over the centuries absorbed a lot of
Mahayana influence but um I mean if you
look up like ritsu like RIT T
Su or I can't remember the other version

of the same name that that is what the
school is called it still exists in
southern Japan and there's still some
temples around Nara and that's that's
the best I can do for now and and you
can you can do the search based on that
information as easily as I could because
that's that's the information I have on
the subject I was in Japan and was
reading about Japanese Buddhism and was
surprised to to read that there still is
technically sarvastivada Buddhism in
Japan around Nara but it's very
very much um influenced by Mahayana
ideas and so forth at this
point and I might have to blow my nose

I'm really sorry about this just a
minute I should have planned
ahead and I've learned from reading the
the letters of Lord Chesterfield that in
Good Company when you blow your nose you
shouldn't look into the the the
handkerchief afterwards or the kleenex
in this case that's gross don't do it if
you're at a fancy dinner party and don't
like get your dress sword like between
your legs when you're trying to walk cuz
that makes you look clumsy and
ridiculous furthermore as
well
okay I have to blow my nose much more
carefully now that I have a mustache for
reasons we need not get

into so let's see next question is from
Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra
Lam occasionally still known as Libra
Lam and also occasionally known as shumo
shumo and
Connor so now we have the situation of a
person whose name is longer than the
questions that he asks so we're going to
have to abbreviate it in future I guess
so anyway Stellar Supreme Etc says what
difference would you say there is
between Mara enduring
multiple enduring multiple World cycles
and being a clever deceiver and the Demi
urge so what's the difference between
Mara and a demi urge well the Demi urge

is like is like not the absolute highest
god with a capital G but is just sort of
the the creator of this phenomenal
samsara so Mara doesn't create samsara
so that would be the main thing
differing him from a demi urge a
demiurge creates the phenomenal World
whereas Mara doesn't create it he's
living in the heaven realm of the the
gods who Delight in the creations of
others that from the Buddhist point of
view it's ignorance of via or like
delusion that is creating this
phenomenal
universe and then Mara is just
exploiting
that so that would be the main

difference

there that Mara is not nearly powerful

enough to create the phenomenal World

Brahma does not create the phenomenal

World Mara's or brahma's consort Maya in

h like in Hinduism does not generate the

phenomenal World in

Buddhism that Mara is just sort of

exploiting the for reasons of his own

trying to keep people from becoming

enlightened in a way he considers

himself to be like the king of samsara

but he's not the creator of it any more

than the like the a medieval King of

France was the creator of France

setting aside maybe like Charlemagne or

something we don't need to get into that
or would would be what was his name
Clovis the first king of France King of
the
Franks I don't know let's just move on
to the next question still from Stellar
Su Stellar Supreme etc etc so forth so
on ADD
infinum so Stellar Supreme etc etc says
grock AI which is elon's version of AI
generators considers this to be the
deepest question ever asked to it within
the reach that it pulls from including
other AIS I'd like you to take a crack
at it so the following question is what
grock says is the most profound question
ever asked of it and so the question is

if nibana is unconditioned does Quantum

randomness autop

poesis humet

and then let's see Stellar Supreme etc

etc says I rewarded this slightly to

make it a more charitable question he

called Quantum Randomness Quantum

seafoam so apparently this profoundest

question asked of Gro is if nibana is

unconditioned does Quantum

Randomness um no does seafoam hum it and

I don't know what humming means as a

transitive verb how do you hum something

I mean setting aside

certain like erotic

acts um yeah I don't even understand the

question so it's not particularly
profound to me because I don't know what
hum means as a transitive verb referring
to Quantum Randomness and unconditioned
nibana it just does not make sense to
me which is not this isn't the first
time that Stellar Supreme etc etc has
asked me a question that I mean it's
it's like not on the same level as the
way my mind operates so that I don't
fully grock it so to speak I mean I saw
a picture of Stellar Supreme etc etc etc
recently and he he looks completely
human but the way he thinks I mean he's
like a a gray human hybrid or
something so I mean if you can translate
that into like Standard English but then

it wouldn't be the same question that

was asked of grock I

suppose if nibana is uncon ition does

Quantum random seafoam Quantum seafoam

humet H oh maybe so I let's let's try to

work this out does Quantum Randomness

like

influence like cause ripples on the

surface of the

unconditioned um once it does that it's

not nibana anymore I mean it's two

different levels of

reality so nibana is at at the the

absolute level of reality whereas like

any kind of Multiplicity or phenomena is

happening in a different level of

reality you know it's sort of like cup
and ceramic two different levels of
reality really you've got essence of
ceramic form of cup and I mean in a way
it violates Aristotelian laws of thought
because this is a and not a
simultaneously because ceramic and cup
are not synonyms ceramic is not
necessarily the same as cup you know you
can have a plastic cup you can have a
glass cup you can have ceramic ashtrays
but here we got ceramic and cup the same
and it's they're not the same so it's a
and not a at the same time and that's
kind of the way Nirvana and Quantum
Randomness is it's just two different
levels of

reality so

I'm just going to move on next question

after specifying that in the the lame

little analogy Nirvana or nibana would

be ceramic it'd be Essence and the form

would be like the quantum Randomness

would be appearing at the cup

level so I'm just going to move on to

Austin here and Austin

says a psychopath would take a life

without experiencing negative volition

as they lack the emotional response that

would typically generate such feelings

how then would Karma affect someone with

this condition I've answered this

question before maybe Austin didn't ask

it but I have been asked the question
you if a sociopath feels like no
conscience you know he can murder
somebody with the same mental States as
he would like cut a tomato in his
kitchen then how is he going to be
getting any kind of like grave Karma by
doing that and my answer if my nostrils
will
cooperate is that a psychopath isn't
totally without karma because a
psychopath is it's like there's still a
level of empathy and compassion but the
psychopath is just like he's like
blocked off from his own subconscious
mind so the karma and all this stuff is
happening at the subconscious level

we're not fully conscious of our Karma
most of us are oblivious to most of our
Karma so the psychopath he's it's not
that he doesn't have this
like this ethical phenomenon of karma
going on it's just that he is so locked
up in like a relatively small area of
his Consciousness that there's like
what's the word he's dissociated from
deeper levels of his own mind and these
deeper levels are the ones that are
creating Karma I mean he can't be
completely oblivious to the harm he is
causing um I mean some so sociopaths
would like Delight in the harm they are
causing some are addicted to it they get

this rush like this adrenaline rush

feelings of power or or Vengeance or

whatever it is you know it's like

somebody who is

specifically targeting like homeless

runaway girls who become prostitutes for

example that I mean there's something

going on at a subconscious level even if

he doesn't fully understand it it's just

that he is

dissociated from deeper levels which are

contain most of his wisdom you know it's

like he he's just cut off from this he

just dissociated from it oblivious to it

but it's still

there so I'm just going to move on next

question maybe I'll blow my nose again

just a minute trying to get my nostrils

to cooperate fully

oh I just had I I did it didn't I I

looked into the that was a faux paaw H

probably the more cultured sophisticated

viewers are just going to like turn me

off and disgust from now on at least I

haven't tripped over my

sword and I would like to point out this

is this is going to be a total

aggression before I get to Thermal squid

that as a reflection on impermanence you

should all reflect on the idea that

sooner or later

I'm going to run out of these paper

umbrellas so that's a sobering

thought anyways thermal squid says
feelings about philosophies of radical
selfishness or
individuality especially the work of Max
Sterner I've never read or other kinds
of individualistic and egoistic
philosophies such that a person is no
longer captured by any ideas or views
and actualizes their values without
anxiety or worry about punishment or
reputation well I think the only
philosopher that teaches radical
selfishness or individuality that I'm
familiar with would be like Ein Rand I
assume Ein Rand would qualify as like a
prophet of radical selfishness and
individuality n to some degree I suppose

let's just go with Ein Rand um what What feelings about philosophies is radical selfishness or individuality it says here thermal squid says such that a person is no longer captured by any ideas or views well if you're not captured by any ideas or views I mean you're still going to have ideas and Views it's just that instead of following along with some external ideas and Views you're just going to create your own ideas and Views which are still going to be based on your cultural conditioning you know it's just going to be indirectly derived from other ideas and Views I mean if you're

just raised in isolation in a blank room
your entire life you're just going to be
like a gibbering idiot you're not going
to have any ideas and Views other than
maybe like primitive animalistic ideas
and Views I mean if you even survive
babyhood so it's kind of an unrealistic
idea that I mean such a person is no
longer captured by any ideas or views
they're captured by their own ideas and
Views that they cook up on their own but
which are still culturally conditioned
just not so
obviously as just a adopting you know
like Progressive leftist views or
conservative Mega Republican views or or
whatever it is they're instead of just

being a follower they're going to come
up with their own views but still it's
views and it's still going to be
culturally conditioned just indirectly
so um they actualize their values
without anxiety or worry about
punishment or
reputation I to some degree that's
getting back to the sociopath
question that you can actualize your
values but still you are an ethical
being you have like a a grounding in I
mean you make Karma which is sort of an
ethical phenomenon um I mean at least it
can be viewed as an ethical phenomenon
it's more of an empirical phenomenon I

mean once you get to the level where you
can appreciate this kind of stuff I'm
sure there's a lot of skeptical
atheistic types who would just call that
[__] but then again they may a lot
of them would qualify as the same kind
of person who I mean it's like they're
dissociated from deeper levels of their
own Consciousness they have less access
to their subconscious than most people
which is one reason why they're so
individualistic and just kind of
disregard
the the ideas and beliefs of the people
around them you know they're they're a
little bit on the sociopathic side
themsel in a lot of

cases so

I mean if you don't worry about

punishment or reputation still I mean

you can get punished and your reputation

can take a nose dive um so I mean it

might reduce

anxiety at a certain level like a lot of

sociopaths don't have a whole lot of

anxiety you know it's like even like

really good surgeons some of them are

sociopaths I have read this you know

it's just that they've got like this

ruthless just like ambition driven goal

oriented kind of process oriented mind

they're really good at what they do a

lot of like high ranking like business

executives are the same kind of Ruthless
sociopathic type um although in their
case like in the case of the surgeon I
mean he's going to have to follow along
with medical ideas to a large degree
because um medical science is going to
come up with better ideas than he could
come up with in isolation on its own and
that's the case with most people and
most ideas it's like
if you're not even going to be eclectic
and borrow bits and pieces from the
ideas that are already established
you're just going to insist on coming up
with your own ideas in all likelihood
your own ideas are going to be inferior
to what other people have come up with

in some cases thousands of years ago
that have been tried and tested for
thousands of
years so let's see have I addressed this
question sufficiently feelings about
philosophies of radical selfishness or
individuality well I mean selfishness
and individuality are are both
delusional from the Buddhist point of
view so I mean there's that also I mean
if if a philosophy is based on radical
selfishness or individuality from a
Buddhist point of view and from my point
of view it's based on delusion so I mean
if you've got a a philosophy that's
based on delusion and just glorifies

this

delusion it's not going to end well

I mean they might be successful in life

but still I mean it's it's not going to

it's they're probably going to be making

more Bad Karma than Good

Karma because I mean just for starters

everything they do is going to be

motivated by a kind of gross delusion

like I'm doing this for

me and it's not going to end

well even if they get rich and famous by

doing it so I'm just going to move on to

Thermal Squid's next question are you

appearing in my dreams intentionally and

as far as I know I'm not but then again

I don't remember most of my dreams so it

might be that I'm doing it and just not
remembering it the next
day but I'm completely unaware of
appearing in thermal Squid's dreams or
anybody else's dreams my father actually
experimented with this he would he was
really into ESP and that kind of thing
the occult as he called it
and so he was doing experiments with
like dream Communications and showing up
in people's dreams and so forth and one
time he wound up in the wrong bedroom
and freaked out the wrong person cuz
they actually saw like a a visualization
like a a full body Apparition of my
father in their bedroom he wasn't there

though I

promise he was somewhere

else but yeah as far as I know I'm not

appearing in anybody's dreams

intentionally so I'm just going to move

on to Thermal Squid's third question

feelings about epistemological nihilism

and pism question mark well

epistemological

nihilism is I it seems to me that epist

epistemological nihilism would claim

that you can't know anything for certain

but if that's the case epistemological

nihilism doesn't really have a leg to

stand on because they cannot make that

assertion they cannot be sure that that

assertion is

correct and that's kind of leads into

pism the the best thing I've read on

purism like the most authoritative text

on puristic skepticism is SE sexus

empiricus which I'm pretty sure is on

the bookcase behind me sexus empiricus

um he was like a a Roman

philosopher who I think he was a

pianistic skeptic and it's like his

books or just book is like the the

oldest like early text on the subject

that still exists that survived the

Christian book burnings and all that you

know the rooting out of paganism and

Pagan philosophical schools and all that

so P I mean sexus empiricus did the same

thing I mean he kept hammering away at
the idea that you cannot know anything
for sure but if that's the case how can
you know that he's right I mean I mean
you can just offer it up as a hypothesis
to live by but you can't insist upon
right because then you're claiming that
there's still one thing you can know and
that reminds me of the danakas dean
nakasa of the sutata which uh I think is
probably very ancient and it's the suta
that caused saruta to become enlightened
saruta was standing behind the Buddha
Fanning him listening to the Buddha
talking to this skeptical philosopher
named deaka which means long
fingernails um and when saruta was

listening to the Buddha talking to Daka
he he became fully
enlightened so it's it's kind of an
important suta and I think it's an old
one where deaka comes to the Buddha and
he says nothing is acceptable to me and
apparently that's like no truth claim is
acceptable to me you know it's like no
idea is acceptable to me and then the
Buddha says well that idea that nothing
is acceptable to you is still acceptable
to you isn't it and it's like you still
have this one view that you're clinging
to and that's one view too many
and that's what caused Sara to become
enlightened I

guess so yeah I mean it's if if you
really are kind of a puristic
skeptic you it's best not to go around
insisting upon puristic skepticism
because then you're still clinging to
this assertion that you cannot prove
you've got this idea you cannot prove
anything that nothing is really knowable
and then you're going around insisting
that nothing is really knowable which
implies that you know that nothing is
really knowable which is undermining
your own position you're contradicting
yourself but I do disagree with the
whole idea that nothing is knowable
there is one thing that is knowable and
that is the absolute that is Ultimate

Reality anything else is just coherence
theory of truth it's it's
delusion ultimately if you believe
it so I guess I that one time to move on
to the next question this is from Wayne
and I think Wayne see one two okay Wayne
asked three questions there's someone
who who asks the transgressive fourth
question and his name is going on a list
too so I got to separate these I didn't
separate them it's all in one
paragraph and I have certain H OCD
Tendencies with regard to question
sometimes I'll actually go in and like
fix the spelling and grammar of a
question just because it bugs me that

it's it's not fixed but I don't do it

all the time so I'm not clinically

significant so Wayne says is

Enlightenment nibana and nibana there's

like two kinds of nibana or two ways of

looking at nibana you can look at it

from the ethical side in which case it

is like the attainment of Enlightenment

and then you can look at it from a more

metaphysical side in which case it's

Ultimate

Reality Orthodox terado Buddhism would

not say

is the only Ultimate Reality because of

Abid dama according to Abid dama like

nose

sensitivity like water

element like perception these all these
things are ultimate realities but I
don't think so I IOP more of a like a
Mahan even a maama point of
view
that like would be the only reality but
it's just off the scale so you can't you
can't assert anything about it you can't
say it exists you can't say doesn't
exist you can't say that it does and
doesn't exist you can't say that it
neither does nor does not exist any kind
of claims are is just invalid because
any claims you make are are
samsaric that is it's just completely at
a different level of reality like

ceramic and cup you can't really

describe

the ceramic through any kind of like

features of the cup like shapes like any

kind of form the cup takes you really

can't say much about the the underlying

Essence so is Enlightenment nibana yeah

I mean nibana literally means blowing

out it's like the blowing out of a

flame so the moment of Enlightenment is

like the moment of nibana in that case

but then that's just like as as an

ethical attainment whereas there's

also the like the metaphysical state

which is more of a Mahayana thing

sometimes there's implications you know

like there's these suas that have verses

you know where where the sun doesn't

shine the moon doesn't glows the Stars

don't Sparkle where earth water Wind and

Fire Gain No foothold you know they're

talking about nibo there

also um which is not so much of an

ethical attainment that seems to be like

some kind of state you know it's like an

abiding

state but I mean it's all negative it's

like there's no this there's no that

there's no the other you can't really

make any positive claims about it

because they're all

invalid

so according to like one definition of

nibana like a word can have more than
one meaning and so nibana has at least
two meanings that are related one's just
looking at it from a more ethical point
of view like a psychological point of
view and the other one is looking at it
from a more metaphysical point of
view so I'll just move on to Wayne's
second question or does Enlightenment
see nibana no it's I think I already
answered that in the first one because
they're the same and in a sense the the
the psychological state of Enlightenment
can see the metaphysical state of
Enlightenment so I mean there's there's
there's that too I guess
but I mean talking about it is just a

Fool's errand it's all futile futility
of futilities so I'm just going to move
on to Wayne's third question and is
nibana right here right now again you
can't make claims but just let's say
we're just going to talk metaphorically
poetically you know yeah I mean it's
everywhere it's it's
reality Nirvana is reality Ultimate
Reality not this phenomenal samsara
Style
but what underlies that so it's right
here right now and we're unaware of it
much in the same way that a fish is
unaware that it is wet even though it's
just surrounded by water and suffused

with water still has no concept of

wetness it does not perceive wetness

unaware of wetness even though it's wet

all the goddamn

time so yeah I mean we're wallowing

we're in the midst of Ultimate Reality

how far away from here is Ultimate

reality you know it's like the spirit of

God to a to a theist it just pervades

the

universe so I think I'm just going to

move on next question this is from

ruie and ruie says do you think AI

represents a deeper delusional plunge or

doubling down into Sam Sor there is a

Godlike maraike if you will aspect to

the creation of realities from prompts

or Nam games we've played the Mind Over Matter games since language emerged example having someone execute a task for us on the material plane by merely uttering certain sounds which are the translations of purely mental phenomena called thoughts but AI seems to be on a whole other level or is it more of the same so let's see here let's get up to the top do I think AI represents a deeper delusional plunge or doubling down into some sof for some people yes but not necessarily for everybody it's going to depend on the wisdom of the person um I mean you can say the same thing with regard to just the internet I

mean the internet was just sort of a
revolution in my in my opinion the
Advent of the internet is the most
important event that has occurred over
the past at least 50
years I mean it's just Revolution that's
one reason why things are happening the
way they are politically it's like
people are able to see past the
propaganda because they have access to
guys sitting in their bedroom this
ranting in front of a a cheap camera who
are getting more views than the people
in suits with million dooll salaries
sitting at these like cable news
companies so anyways I'm I'm sort of
deviating I'm I'm rambling tangential

thought if you will so do I think AI
represents a deeper delusional plunge or
a doubling down into samsara I mean
potentially for some people it can be
but not necessarily I mean it doesn't
matter how subtle and advanced things
are if you're detached from it then
you're fine on the other hand I mean
somebody could be living in a a straw
Hut and they're just completely
convinced that they are living in
Ultimate Reality that is just this is it
you know they're completely invested in
this material like animal existence then
they're worse off than a wise person
with some philosophical Detachment

coming up with all kinds of stuff on AI
generators so it's a matter of just how
wise the person is who is exposed to
this stuff more than the stuff
itself so it's reminds me of a suta in
the in the text where the Buddha is
saying that you've got one man who lives
in a a Hut he's got an ugly foul
tempered wife he eats bad food sleeps on
a hard uncomfortable bed but he's
attached to it so he's kind of messed up
on the other hand you've got the guy
living in a palace with the gorgeous
wife eating gourmet food he's got all
the stuff he needs all the stuff he
could possibly want and he's got
Detachment from it he's not clinging to

it actually the rich guy is better off
than the poor guy in that case even
though the rich guy he's got more
privilege and and he's got more luxury
and all this still I mean the poor guy's
living kind of an austere existence
which I mean is kind of a virtue but
he's sort of rebelling against it I mean
he's it's just like he's not in harmony
with the situation so he's worse off
than the rich guy and it's it's kind of
applies to this it's like the person
with no internet access who is just
living in survival mode like an animal
is still G to be worse off spiritually
than the the sophisticated person who

you know he's exposed to Dharma he you know he tries to live a dharmic life who nevertheless plays on his computer sometimes and generates AI images and and like has long conversations with grock or whatever still the second person is better off is it's a matter of how wise you are subjectively not so much what is the external situation so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is also from ruie can the three characteristics be tinkered with that seems to be fair a fairly Ironclad Triad governed by The Logical principle of necessity and for those of you who are innocent of terava Buddhist philosophy the three

characteristics or the tilaka

are let's see here

impermanence uh what's the word Dua

which would be like unhappiness pain

suffering

dissatisfaction Dukas is hard to pin

down with one English word I usually use

the word unease so it's impermanence or

inconstancy unease and finally no self

an so Sabara anich all conditioned

things are impermanent or Inc constant

Sab Sara Dua all conditioned things are

unease or conducive to unease at the

very least and finally sa D anata which

is everything whether it's condition or

not is not self there is no

self

no separated individuality that is

ultimately

real so can they be tinkered with I I

assume yeah I'm sure people could Tinker

with them but it does seem to be fairly

good I mean you could probably maybe I

should have sat here and racked my

brains for a while before doing this Q&A

I don't want to do it now because I'll

just be like staring off into space

silently possibly for several minutes

possibly like drool or something coming

down we're not going to we're not going

to go there so I mean you could probably

come up with like a fourth

characteristic that would also apply to

everything but the three characteristics
are you know they're they're pretty
solid I have to
admit so I think I'm just going to move
on next question this is from quor and
quor says does somati mean to bring
together or to focus on one object and
disregard everything else well literally
samade is the prefix Sam which it
corresponds to like the Greek s y n or
the Latin co co n so it means like
together or with and the the ADI or the
the D especially it means placement so
it's like placing together or like
concentrating you know putting together
so um that's maybe one reason why it's

um it's usually translated as

concentration because literally it means

something like

concentration but still

somebody let's see does it mean really

mean to bring together or to focus on

one object and disregard everything else

it can and generally that's how it's

interpreted in terava Buddhism and it's

it's sort of related to akata or

one-pointedness and that one may be more

of a misunderstanding than samade like

AATA the mind that is one-pointed is

usually translated as one-pointed but

it's not necessarily one point is it's

sort of like

unified so so long as your mind doesn't

have a lot of moving parts so long as it

doesn't have any moving Parts you know

so long as it's just sort of a unified

hole then whether your focus is big or

small it's still

one-pointed somat I assume could go the

same way I'm like some somat is like

formless

meditation so if your mind is completely

empty that's still

somebody

so um it doesn't necessarily mean

focusing your concentration on one point

but it does kind of mean that it's like

your mind is

simplified and I mean it's not even

necessarily laser focus because it can just be like wide open so long as your mind is not diversifying you know it's sort of a relative lack of diversification would be samati at least Sama samati um any kind of focus is going to involve a certain amount of somati that somati is is pretty much you know a dog has somati you hold some treat in front of the dog he's going to be focused on that treat that's a kind of somati it's not sasat it's not right concentration but it is a kind of concentration so quor included a link to the Wikipedia article on some and I I have to admit I didn't look at it didn't want to contaminate my my point of view

with external views I

guess so somebody literally

means like emologic it means like

placement together or bringing together

more like placement together than

bringing together

literally and it can mean to focus on

one object and disregard everything else

um unless you

just you get to the point where there is

no everything else you know it's just

all just this one object that is not

Diversified if that makes any sense but

like a formless meditation your mind

ises not concentrated down to a point

because there's no form at all you know

it's just this unified hole of infinite
Consciousness Infinite Space infinite
nothingness or the sphere of neither
perception nor non-perception ception
those are the four main formless
concentrations according to Orthodox
Terra that wouldn't mean that you're
concentrating down to a point even
though that is like the highest form of
concentration or you know in the top
level of you know most advanced
concentration or sod I should
say so it's more like unifying the Mind
than like really necessarily
concentrating it although for like a
beginner the the way to unify your mind
is just focus on one thing until you can

get to the point where you can just look
at the entire world and not diversify it
then you then you'll have one thing just
being
everything if that makes any sense it's
hard to explain and so I'm just going to
move on next question this is from
PSA PSA says what's your favorite non-
Terra sua and why
um the the only two that really come to
mind one would be the heart Sutra and
one would be The Diamond Cutter Sutra
the heart Sutra I don't think is
necessarily in conflict with early
Buddhism so the heart Sutra is I mean
that could qualify as you know like

solid early Buddhism in a sense you know
the form is emptiness the very emptiness
is form now it's just sort
of sort of combining two levels of
reality because really the two levels of
reality of ultimate truth and
conventional truth or whatever you want
to call them you know the thing is it
the thing in itself and the thing is it
seems that really I mean they're they're
occupying the same space so to speak
it's just that you see them in two
different ways so form is emptiness the
very emptiness is form that is profound
and Terra rejects this Orthodox Terra
rejects it but I don't think that the
Buddha himself would reject it so so

unhesitatingly

as like an orthodox Terra Buddhist

burmes scholar Seattle Abid dama

master and then again The Diamond Cutter

Sutra that really inspired me more I

mean it had more of an influence on my

life than the heart Sutra did

um it was one of the things that sort of

converted me to Buddhism to begin with I

think was The Diamond Cutter Sutra so I

mean it'd be a tossup between the Sutra

and The Diamond Cutter Sutra and my nose

is plugging up

again man excuse me I'll try really hard

not to look into the the the kleenex

after I blow my nose though this

time ah okay

then

okay so yeah I guess I answer that

question I'm gonna move on to the next

question after checking to make sure

that there's nothing stuck in my

mustache PSA second question what are

your thoughts on the meeting between

Trump Vance and zalinski in the Oval

Office that led to the deal not being

signed yeah I mean today as at the at

the time of me making this video

especially the first half of the day

most of the headlines apparently were

about this meeting with zalinski with

President Trump and vice president Vance

in the Oval Office of the White House

and zilinski essentially got himself
torn a new butthole I mean he just got
dressed down he got I mean he was just
sort of ganged up on this sort of almost
bullied really and one of my thoughts on
that meeting I think it's just a kind of
tough guy diplomacy that zalinsky was
kind of arrogant you know he's insisting
on more billions more billions we're not
going to we're not going to have a
ceasefire we're just going to keep
fighting until the last US dollar is
spent the last Ukrainian Man is dead
we're just going to keep fighting and
Trump being a kind of businessman
realizes that just pouring billions and

billions of dollars into a black hole is

not good s

economically regardless of all the

people dying I mean 1/4 of the

population of Ukraine is now gone

they're either dead or fled as refugees

and zinski just I mean he was encouraged

by the globalists you know just never

back down we're just going to keep

backing you no matter what because we're

going to bleed Russia dry

and now there's a new sheriff in town

and and Trump's just saying no to this

[__] where there's going to have to

be peace somehow or another even if

Ukraine has to seed some of its

territories but I mean he was holding

out this opportunity that by America
getting certain like land rights or
minimal rights in Ukraine that's going
to mean an American pres presence in
Ukraine which would make Russia a heck
of a lot less likely to start launching
missiles into
Ukraine plus it's going to help pay for
the billions and billions that are being
sent to Ukraine or that have already
been sent to Ukraine so zinsky was kind
of arrogant he was encouraged should be
arrogant by the globalists including you
know former Obama uh
appointees and so he was cocky I guess
you know he was just assuming that Trump

is like an ordinary kind of politician
and he is not and Trump I mean he's
really playing hard ball and so it was
sort of a a diplomatic case of bad cop
worst cop where they were just softening
him up and letting him know that we're
not playing your game you're we're going
to end this war somehow or
another and I I mean zinsky I mean he's
he's like an actor who is kind of
installed you know he doesn't speak
Ukrainian
he's I don't know we don't need to go
there so my thoughts on the meeting
between Trump Vance and zinsky they were
softening him up they were preparing him
for an agreement more advantageous to

America

that's the long and the short of it in

my opinion so I'm going to move on next

question which is from yuguo and yugu

asks the transgressive fourth question

and his name is going on a

list so yuu's first question at least at

least these are fairly simple questions

Yu's first question can you please

explain signs and features of objects

within each six senses well signs and

features um I mean anything that is

perceptible I mean besides just the bare

datm you hear a sound and it just kind

of goes in one ear and out the other you

know you you acknowledge that there is

sound I mean you're aware of what the
sounds like but it's like you're not
like singling it out and focusing on it
and like interpreting it and attributing
attributes to it you know it's just the
sound goes in one ear and out the other
sort of like a vision you see something
it's like it's in front of a mirror when
it's there it's there and as soon as
it's gone it's not there anymore you're
not still like thinking about it
afterwards you're not saying oh this
part I like and that part I don't like
and you know it's or like flavors you
you eat something it's like this needs
salt I mean needing salt is not what
you're what you're tasting that's just

this attribute that you're attributing
to this flavor you're you're singling
out oh the paprika is nice no you just
it's just you taste what you're tasting
in the scene there is only the scene in
the heard there is only the heard in the
felt there is only the felt and the
mentally cognizers only the mentally
cognized thus should you train yourself
as the Buddha said to Bahia shortly
before Bahia became enlightened and then
was trampled by a
cow so can I please explain signs and
features I mean anything that
is perceptual Beyond just the first
impression is signs and features

regardless of whether you're seeing

hearing tasting thinking feeling with

your body whatever

smelling almost forgot

smelling so yeah I mean that's just the

way it is anything that is not just IM

that does not immediately present itself

anything that is like an interpretation

of that just giving it a

name you know

just anything that you single out any

kind of common any kind of perceptual

interpretation counts as signs and

features anything beyond the mere scene

is signs and features anything beyond

the mere her is signs and

features so I think I'm just going to

move on to yugu second question why is
nibana called element in some sutras
it's referring to the metaphysical
aspect of nibana as Ultimate Reality as
something that um something that abides
and in uh in Abid dama philosophy nibana
is one of the four main ultimate
realities and it's you know it's it's
permanent it's one of the the only
elements that is permanent that is that
is like not subject to
inconstancy and and Dua it's still
subject to not self but it's not subject
to impermanence and and
suffering so it's it's called an element
nibana datu is the poly which is just

referring to nibana in the metaphysical
sense and not like the ethical
psychological sense which I discussed a
little earlier so I'm just going to move
on to Yuga third question does
Consciousness stop when you realize
neana
no I mean you become more conscious you
wake up that's what enlightenment is
like the Buddha is someone who woke up
you don't stop being conscious when you
wake up you become more conscious when
you wake up and so I'll just move on to
yuga's Fourth question the transgressive
one that has him out on a
list who is exactly experiencing the
botom nobody I mean there is no

self so it's again it's like reality
just shines through and the reality is
more conscious than the person who is
oblivious to reality I mean you can say
there are a few old sutas that say that
Nirvana is infinite formless
Consciousness that's essentially what
the upanishads also say the main
difference is that the Buddhists as a
general rule do not reify the
absolute you just don't even go there
anything you say about it's going to be
invalid so who is experiencing nibana
nobody and I think even a materialist
would agree with that because they don't
think that they think Nana is just

[__]

so I guess I answered those questions

which I answered very briefly partly

because of the transgressive fourth

question and now I'm going to move on to

kind of an interesting question this is

from extremely rare bird an extremely

rare bird says how do you feel about the

US turning into an authoritarian regime

like Russia and I was unaware that it

was doing that so the US turning into an

author Arian regime extremely rare bird

apparently assumes that the Trump

Administration is sort of a quasi

dictatorship apparently because Trump

actually has a [__] spine he's got

balls he's not like like European world

leaders or previous American world
leaders that just go along with the
status quo to some degree he probably
would have done that if they hadn't
tried to persecute him into Oblivion for
4 years after rigging an election to
make sure he he didn't
win Trump is more he's got more respect
for the US Constitution and for
democracy than his opponents
do so I don't think the US is turning
into an authoritarian regime other than
having a leader who is actually strong
and decisive and is getting [__] done
within his limits according to the US
Constitution Joe Biden was doing more

unconstitutional stuff than Trump was
but you don't hear about that much if
you're listening to like left-wing or
globalist propaganda which is what
mainstream news actually is paid actors
that are being paid to disseminate to
promulgate a kind of propagandist
narrative and that is collapsing largely
due to the Advent of the
internet so how do I feel about the US
turning into an authoritarian regime
like Russia well I'm glad we dodged that
Bullet by having Trump get elected
president instead of having this
globalist Brave New World Order taking
over where everyone is essentially
castrated and extremely rare bird

also this is not a question but it's something that he included in the comments and I I might as well comment upon it says Trump is a man of low moral character someone taken over by greed and desire for power doing whatever he can to get it through lies or Force clearly insensitive to violence and suffering evident Lately by taking sides with Russia and blaming Ukraine for being invaded by them apparently planning to take over Gaza and beginning to dismantle US democracy and there's some amazing amazing statements in here like let's see let's see clearly insensitive to violence and suffering

even though he's doing whatever he can
to stop
Wars Also let's see here uh beginning to
dismantle US democracy when the majority
are on his side democratically the
Democratic party is like like
consistently adopting the
20% and he like any position that it's
like unlimited like open borders the
majority of Americans don't want that
that the majority of Americans want
illegal aliens deported the majority of
Americans don't want trans women or
biological males competing in in female
sports it's like almost every
position the majority of Americans are
in favor of like scrupulously auditing

these corrupt bureaucracies that are
just squandering tax
money that this is what the majority of
Americans want so saying that it's
dismantling US democracy is just [__]
delusional I mean it was Biden who was
going against the Constitution it's the
left that don't like the Constitution
they don't like the first amendment they
don't like the Second
Amendment or it's yeah first and second
amendments they want to get rid of like
what is it the Senate they want to
change the Senate so it's representative
so so they don't like that they don't
like the uh the Electoral College I mean

it's it's the left the Democrats who are more
anti-constitution but some people they just follow along with the propaganda they don't look at the actual reality of what's going on to say that Trump is a man of low moral character they had to in they investigated this guy for a decade trying to find any dirt they could against him the best they can do is invent laws or just take hearsay evidence against him and use that because they they checked everything like with the whole Russia collusion hoax they were they were digging into anything they could find against him and he was clean so they had to just come up

with [__] in order to persecute the guy
they're trying to keep him like off the
the ballots that's not de Democratic is
it trying to keep him off the ballots in
like Colorado and a few other states
that's not
Democratic Biden was doing all kinds of
Terror read you ever hear of teror read
I mean she said that she was raped by
Biden or at least sexually molested by
him there's actual evidence more
evidence against Biden than was against
Trump with regard to that egene Carroll
woman they didn't care they're just
trying to destroy the man because they
knew that he was going to dismantle this

corrupt New World Order [__] that
was going on and the majority of
Americans support this they support
Trump he won by the popular
majority so I don't know where extremely
rare bird is getting his news from some
Echo chamber
apparently but Trump definitely I I
consider him to be the best president of
the United States in my lifetime I was
born when Kennedy was
President so I mean look at Kennedy I me
he was a womanizer he was having sex
with teenage girls in the white house it
was kind of okay back then it wasn't
such a big deal Joe Biden I mean he was
pedaling influence I mean he was corrupt

as hell nobody cares I mean he wasn't

running the country anyway he was so

scile that his his handlers were running

the country who are like all fully

invested in like the Obama vision of the

Brave New World

Order so I don't give me any of this

[__] about Trump as a man of low

moral character look how his children

have turned out compare that with

Biden's children

at least

Hunter plus the daughter that he was

apparently taking showers with when she

was

teenaged so I'm just

it's it's just ridiculous and so I'm

just going to go on to the very last

question last

question this is from poag tomek who

presumably is from the planet Gores

Alpha 7 because that doesn't strike me

as any kind of human name

at least uh I've never come across the

name of Pokey Tomac before I mean it

really does sound like it's from a

science fiction movie hope I didn't

offend poag Tomac it's like I consider

aliens to be at least as good as we are

so there is

that so anyways this person says it is

March already where is your new book and

I mean it's only the beginning of March

it's March 1st at the time of me uh me

doing this video so yeah it's not

finished I still have to finish writing

the introduction like all the chapters

are done my sweetie still has to

illustrate a few things she's got to do

the cover and a few like line

illustrations and that's about it so

it's almost done but um it's not done

yet so I'm still

hopeful that it'll be done by the end of

March which is I said sometime in March

May

maybe so I'm not exactly behind schedule

yet I haven't I haven't missed the

deadline yet but it's it's in the works

the new book is in the works and it's
going to be more um like Memoirs like
personal Memoirs more less philosophical
there's going to be some Buddhist
philosophy and you know what it's like
being a monk living in Burma living in
Asia in general Living in America that
kind of
stuff and so yeah it's uh it's close to
being done but not completely done yet
and I do hope that it'll be done by the
end of March and that's it that's that's
the last question so this is a
relatively short one less than two hours
which is good if I hadn't been like
digressing and ranting it could have
been way less than an hour and a half

which would be

phenomenal so like I always should say

at the beginning and almost never do if

you have any questions about things that

you think I can answer like especially

early Buddhism Terra Buddhism Burma um

Buddhism in general Eastern philosophy

in more General philosophy in even more

general you know meditation monasticism

me personally this kind of stuff I can

fairly I'm pretty reliable with regard

to answering something with some

intelligence to it but just naming

somebody you know what what's your

what's your idea of of Martin Miller you

know what do you think about Martin

Miller and chances are I've never heard

of the guy I don't know who Martin

Miller is I wouldn't recognize him if I

saw him in the

street

so I guess that's it just uh hit the

like button or smash it if you prefer

and subscribe if you haven't already I

assume if you got this far that there's

something of interest to you and uh

aside from that I just say be happy so

be happy

EX

okay then it appears that we are

recording and therefore I should

probably start doing this Q&A video so

welcome to question and answer number

135 which is a relatively High

number I am your host poo basa and this

is my

beverage so I shall remove the little

paper

umbrella lick the coffee off of it so I

won't get coffee on my sweetheart's

desk take a sip of said

beverage kind of rearrange my beard a

little bit so it's looks almost

symmetrical and I suppose I should just

commence to answering answering

questions

after I do some like introductory

digression about something or other and

I might as well mention that I still do

have a cold you may recall if you watch

the previous Q&A that I was just coming

down with the cold well I'm just now

getting over it so it's it's fading out

inshah so probably by next week I'll be

perfectly healthy aside from like the

you know the the various little sores

and stuff that everybody

has in Buddhism I think the Buddha

called the human body the Heap of

sores I assume in Ancient India people

had more sores than nowadays on

average so anyways we don't have a whole

heck of a lot of questions this should
easily be finished in less than 3 hours
so no worries on that score and I
suppose I should just Wade right into
this and uh before I answer any
questions however I will have to read
one of the
questions and this is from bodhisatta
969 and bodh 969 said I recently came
across a video on YouTube by
varo is it not forbidden for a beu to
ask for donations in the form of money
or to make it possible to donate money
to the beu
himself uh well for starters I'm not
sure which varano he's referring to

there are a number of

varos um I know of at least two Western

varos um I think one of them may have

disrobed recently though but still I'm

not exactly sure which Verano he's

referring to but fortunately for

everybody it doesn't even matter which

VAR AO because the question is with

regard to a monk asking for monetary

donations and of course it is strictly

prohibited for monks to ask for monetary

donations to themselves or to anybody a

monk is not supposed to tell anybody

what to do with money so if if somebody

like a lay person asks a monk what

should I do with this

money according to the texts the monk is

allowed to say do whatever makes you
happy but monks are allowed to accept
money so this is uh I mean most monks do
handle money
and may be that even most terraa
Buddhist beus will ask for donations at
least to the monastery which is still
forbidden but still like in Burma
approximately 98% of all monks handle
money even though it is strictly
prohibited in Thailand it might be as
low as like
95% I'm not an expert on Thai Buddhism
but it might be slightly less in
Thailand simply because Thailand or Thai
Buddhism has a little bit more respect

for vinia than Burmese Buddhism with
regard to Sri Lanka I have no idea but I
doubt that they're any better than the
Burmese and with regard to Western monks
it may be that as many as half of
Western monks don't handle money simply
because they're going against the grain
they have to go against their own
culture in order to become among so they
tend to be more serious about what
they're doing on average although of
course there are extremely serious Asian
monks so I'm not saying that all Asian
monks are not
serious so getting back to the money
issue um yeah I mean technically I've
already answered the question I guess

it's just completely prohibited to to
say to tell a lay person or to suggest
to a lay person that they should do
anything with money other than just
whatever makes them
happy and if a monk does ask for money
and gets it or he gets money even
without asking for it that's a nissia
pidia offense he's not allowed to even
confess the offense
effectively until he has first gotten
rid of all the money which most monks
don't do and so most monks do not have
pure cila at any time during their
monkhood because they are unwilling to
get rid of the money and whatever else

is against the rules that they they own
in order to make the confession which
they can't really make until they get
rid of the stuff that's what Nidia means
there's two different kinds of pidia
rules in in the ptim Moka this regular
pidia would be like killing an animal
telling an ordinary lie sleeping under
the same roof as a woman that kind of
thing where all you got to do is just
make the confession but
nyaia which includes money for example
um you've got to get rid of whatever it
is it's against the rules before you can
make the confession because if you if
you confess having money while still
having it I mean you've bro you're

breaking the rule while making the
confession and you're breaking the rule
immediately after making the confession
so I mean you've never really like
gotten rid of of the the offense you
have not expediated the offense
yet so let's see is it not forbidden for
a biku to ask for donations in the form
of money or to make it possible to
donate money to the biku himself yeah
even I mean there's even limitations on
like asking for
donations that aren't money like for
example if a mon says okay I'll give a
dhama talk at your dhama Center if you
would will help us build this retaining

wall that we need that's out too it's
sort of offering Dom on exchange for
some kind of payment even if it's not
money it's still against the
rules but getting back to bodh 969
question yes it is always forbidden for
monks to ask for monetary donations for
themselves or for the sa in general for
the upkeep of the monastery for
anything so I'll just move on next
question this is from
xenoid and Zenith void says do you
believe any of the Greek philosophers
may have been
enlightened and then he says some points
of interest the Buddha and heraclitus
are noted as having similar views on how

reality operates I've seen people argue
that Piro of Ellis was a Buddhist and
his idea of ataraxia is the same as
Nirvana diogenes is no [__] given
attitude and embrace of poverty shows a
lack of attachment to worldly Affairs
stoicism and Buddhism have a lot in
common if you Google Sena quotes for
example they sound very Buddhist I'm
sure there are many more parallels to be
drawn well I mean
philosophy I mean literally means the
love of wisdom and so for philosophers
especially ancient Greek
philosophers um to to say wise things or
to have wise Behavior

shouldn't be all that outrageous or
remarkable because they were trying to
cultivate wisdom as a general
rule um with regard to any of the
philosophers that he mentioned I don't
know if any of them were enlightened I
don't know if there's any way of knowing
if any of them were enlightened I kind
of have my doubts about heraclitus he
seems to be kind of a prickly kind of
guy from what little I know of him with
regard to pero the founder of skepticism
um again I kind of doubt that he was I
think he was more like intellectual in
his skepticism and not really a Mystic
which is what the Buddha was people can
call the Buddha a a skeptic for saying

don't believe anything but he wasn't
really a skeptic he just realized that
reality cannot be known by thinking
about it you know beliefs do not capture
the truth
with regard to diogenes I don't think he
was fully enlightened I don't think
Socrates was fully enlightened
although he was
wise I mean he apparently kind of liked
Boys Still and drank a lot
but I won't hold that against him
necessarily with regard to ancient
philosophers that like ancient Western
philosophers that had some claim to
great wisdom I mean the one that was

most famous in in ancient times even

though technically he was more of a

Roman citizen than than anything else

was

oh I was thinking it just the other day

or appollonia of Tiana appollonia of

Tiana was sort of like the Pagan

Jesus and he just didn't really catch

enough traction and Jesus wound up

winning the popularity contest in

ancient

times another um ancient philosopher who

may have had some really profound

spiritual tains would be

plotinus um I guess what was his name

edles the one that threw himself into

the volcano I mean he was sort of a

spiritual teacher in addition to being a

philosopher so I mean it was like um in

beron Russell's history of Western

philosophy he refers to edles as is a

kind of ancient Mary Baker Eddie and

combined with a few other things

um let's see

Parmenides I think might have had some

deep

insights uh let's see who else there was

one other one I was thinking of oh yeah

Pythagoras I mean Pythagoras taught like

rebirth and um you know he had some

spirituality in addition to just the

like the cerebral

intellectuality that um is sort of like

stereotypical of Western
philosophy but you can't really know
it's impossible to know you don't know
how accurate the accounts are of their
lives and of what they said and so forth
you can't really know this stuff it's
all just kind of
academic so let's getting back up to the
question do you believe any of the Greek
philosophers may have been enlightened
maybe I mean it wouldn't surprise me but
I don't know for sure so I'm just going
to move on the next question this also
from Zenith void can you give a Buddhist
perspective on the significance and
meaning of diogenes telling Alexander to
step out of his

sunlight and I mean it's one of the most well-known stories of diogenes the cynic I think he was a slave at the time he had been like kidnapped off of a a ship by Pirates and sold as a slave and um so he was like the tutor to the to the children of this rich guy but he was still famous I've read that after Alexander the Great he was the most famous Greek of his time like at the time and so anyways

Alexander Alexander the Great he liked hanging out with philosophers kind of like ancient Indian kings in the Buddhist time apparently liked hanging out with philosophers and so Alexander

went to find out about this diogenes
fellow that he' heard so much about and
he has like a conversation with diogenes
who is lying in the sun like a dog just
kind of you know lying in a sunny Place
warming up his body he doesn't bother to
get up to talk to
Alexander and so Alexander is very
impressed by the wisdom of diogenes and
at the end he asks him is there anything
I can get for you you know he's like the
most powerful man in the world
practically what whatever you want what
is it and diyes just says yeah could you
move over your block in my
sunlight and the Buddhist perspective on
that I mean I don't know how Buddhist it

would be I don't think the Buddha would
have asked Alexander or you know
King
pity kosa to to get out of his light you
know I mean even that is a desire it's
it's kind of a small desire but I mean
in a way it was diogenes was just kind
of kind of showing off that he didn't
have any desire for any of the stuff
that a king could give him
really but whether it would be something
the Buddha would say simply because even
just the desire to get somebody out of
your sunlight I mean still that's like a
minor desire or craving or attachment or
whatever

so I guess I answer that one pretty much

more or less sort of

so I'm just going to move on to zeni

void's third third question here he's in

a a Greek

vain on this one he says are there any

parallel stories to that of diogenes and

Alexander to be found in Buddhist or

Hindu history well like I already

mentioned there's a lot of stories of

Kings you know powerful Kings and

Generals going and hanging out with um

you know the the famous philosophers of

the day including the Buddha asking them

questions you know kind of comparing

what this philosopher told him was what

that philosopher told him that sort of

thing although I don't know if there's
any kind of real parallel with the
Buddha lying on the ground and some King
blocking his sunlight and then the
Buddha remarking on the fact that the
King was blocking his
sunlight so yeah there's a lot of lots
and lots of stories of you know
illustrious Kings and so forth going and
talking to wise
men um just because they're interested
in that sort of thing I
guess but I don't think there's any like
close parallel to the story of diogenes
and Alexander not not that I know of it
might be in some Hindu puran or

something but I don't know what it would
be so I'm just going to move on the next
question this is from
philes and Phil Ley says at the start of
your videos these days you say welcome
to Q&A x and x is a relatively High
number but isn't every number relatively
high as well as relatively no relatively
low well I mean how is zero going to be
a relatively High number how is one
going to be a relatively High number
right how is
936 octillion going to be a relatively
low number doesn't work that
way but I'm just in the habit of
remarking on relatively High numbers
it's it's something I started at work

few years ago you know somebody's you know they they've they've got to make like 22 Roofing panels or something that's a relatively High number just just for the hell of it you know just to move the air around so I just say it okay you okay with that but really every every Q&A number that I do every Q&A that I do it is a relatively High number after about one because I mean compared with all the other Q&A numbers the most recent one is always the highest number so relative to all the other Q&A numbers it's always the highest one it's never the lowest one I'm never going to come out with Q&A

number zero which is going to be lower

than all the other ones it's just not

going to

happen so I'm just going to move on to

Phil's next

question which is as follows if you

teach someone everything wrong about

spirituality kind of like wimp low from

kungpow enter the fist except the

spirituality

version okay and then he goes on to

become a teacher is it possible that he

could become a great teacher after all

so you teach everything wrong to

somebody you know you just mess up you

know you give him the the three Noble

Truths right you know it's like the the

19 factors of Enlightenment and all
this and then they take that to heart
and then they become teachers and become
famous well I mean they could become a
great teacher in in the in the sense of
becoming like a famous successful
teacher even though they're teaching
wrong stuff from a Buddhist point of
view excuse
me so I mean they could be that kind of
a great teacher
or they could just somehow make progress
despite the bad teaching with regard to
philosophical stuff in their in their
meditation they can just I mean when
you're meditating you're not thinking

philosophical stuff anyway or at least you shouldn't be not when you get into a deep level of meditation you shouldn't be thinking anything really so it may be that in spite of the bad teaching that he was able to have some kind of deep spiritual um Awakening experience that he can then like teach to others and so even though a lot of the theory might be wrong still I mean he's teaching from experience with regard to something that you know he has attained so he could be a great teacher in that sense and that happens a lot I mean a lot of the teachings of terava Buddhism some of them let's say they just factually incorrect same I mean with any religion

like Roman Catholicism I've said many
times that St John of the Cross may have
been fully enlightened despite this uh
essentially from a Buddhist point of
view an unenlightened point of view just
wrong view there's belief in a you know
Eternal God allmighty a personal God
there's belief in a like a an immortal
Soul all this stuff about Mary being a
virgin and Jesus dying for our sins and
all this that is just irrelevant to
dhamma it's it's not necessary to know
this from a Buddhist point of view still
they the Christians put a lot of
emphasis on that and he inspire
to a large degree in spite of the

teachings of his tradition he was able
to get very profound attainments he was
a master of fourth jna in my opinion at
least it appears that
way so yeah there's two ways you could
become a great teacher even though you
were taught your philosophy all wrong
one is you just become like a famous and
successful charlatan and two is you are
able to practice correctly even though
the theory was mistaken and sort of
transcend the mistaken Theory through
just getting deep attainments in spite
of that mistaken incorrect
Theory and so I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is also from
philes and philes says according to

Plato the Democratic man or the Democratic subject refuses to believe that some Pleasures are honorable and some base and is utterly unable to concentrate on any one thing now he's doing this now that and so on when he's motivated he's full of zeal for whatever has now struck his fancy but it never lasts other times he's lazy and nihilistic but at all times he is distracted what do you think of this characterization and the source is Plato's Republic um 561 C to 562a a well I don't think it's necessarily true it could just be like a broad

generalization that Plato was just observing the behavior of Athenians in particular maybe a few other like Democratic city states in ancient Greece but like for example ear the early USA you know the founding fathers of of the United States you know I don't think that they were that they refused to believe that some Pleasures are honorable and some base I mean Americans believe that some Pleasures are honorable and some Pleasures are base up until relatively recently up until cultural Marxism just kind of undermined the whole Foundation of ethics and just replaced it with unrefined feminine sentiment so I mean I don't think it's

necessarily true at all I don't think it really applies to America very well it might have applied to ancient Athens for all I know but I don't recall ever being in ancient Athens so I can't really say for

sure so let's see utterly unable to concentrate on any one thing I mean I don't think that's true it could be just sort of a tendency in that direction more so than certain other political systems like you know Spartan fascism or something not that Spartans were really fascist but kind of you know they were they were relatively fascistic compared with the Athenians

anyhow

so yeah I mean every political system is

going to have its its good points and it

bad points you know every Everything has

got its good side and its bad side you

can find negative aspects to anything

that's got positive

aspects so let's see what do I think of

the characterization I think that it

might be a slight tendency it might

apply to people living in democracy more

than people living in authoritarian

dictatorships for example but still it's

it's it seems empirically false if I

compare this characterization with the

United States for the first let's say

first 150 years of its

existence so I'm just going to move on

next question this is from Fred and Fred

says what's your thoughts on venerable K

and

it's kind of strange that venerable K

gets so little pressed most Buddhists

probably don't know who venerable

kondana was but he was one of the group

of five athetics that were the first

converts to Buddhism and sometimes

you'll see like a picture of the Buddha

like out in the forest giving a a speech

to like five athetics you know that's

symbolic of the first sermon sometimes

he's even got his hand kind of like this

he's as he's counting off the four noble

truths for the first

time and sometimes if it shows these

five Aesthetics it'll show one of them

older than the rest you know one of them

may have white hair when the rest of

them have black hair the older one is

kondan and sometimes he was called an K

which means he has

understood and that's because venerable

kondana was the first disciple of the

Buddha who became Arya during at the

first um the first sermon you know the

damaka patut in which the Buddha started

Buddhism that kond got he got uh I think

he became a soda Pao according to

tradition during the first sermon and

then the Buddha said you know I don't

remember the exact statement but he's
essentially kond has understood you know
he could see that that kondana had had
some like Awakening insight and so anat
K or Ana K became sort of like his
nickname and then he was if not the very
first enlightened disciple then I mean
he has the reputation for also being the
first monk first Buddhist monk to become
fully enlightened under the Buddha's
dispensation during the second discourse
of the Buddha which is the anat lakasut
or the the the discourse on the mark of
no self
so kond was like the
first Buddhist convert to get like Arya

attainment and also probably the first
to become fully enlightened to become an
arhun and I mean he died long before the
Buddha he was considerably older than
the Buddha and so he just kind of
disappears from the scene relatively
early on in the history of uh you know
the biography of the Buddha and his
teach teachings K I mean he was famous
for being one of the group of five the
first enlightened disciple and then he
just kind of
disappears there's lots of Legends about
him but probably they're more mythology
than
history but I've got nothing against
venerable

K so I think I'm just going to move on
to the next question after paying
respects to venerable
kond and this is from quor and quor says
if the senses each have Consciousness
and nibana is beyond the senses how is
their Consciousness in nibana well this
is you're getting into sort of a
controversial sticky philosophical point
in terava Buddhism according to terava
Buddhism you can't have Consciousness
without consciousness of something
whereas nibana according to a few very
ancient like fragments ments that you
can find in the sutas that eventually
became unorthodox and had to be

reinterpreted but nibana would be

Consciousness without an object it would

just be infinite formless

Consciousness you know unmanifest

luminous all

around and

so um it's it's not sense Consciousness

it's not wiyana it's not the it's not

the the aggregate of conscious ious

that's in the five condas um that form a

sentient

being it's just kind of Consciousness

that has just utterly like become

unfettered no more conditions no more

limitations just and and and that causes

it to just go off the scale that

anything that is formless and infinite I

mean it's just off the scale there's no way of really identifying it singling it out perceiving it

so let's let's read the question again quator asks if the senses each have Consciousness and nibana is beyond the senses how is their Consciousness in nibana well the senses don't create the Consciousness I mean you can have like I mean each sense has its own sensitivity you've got nose sensitivity and tongue sensitivity eye sensitivity ear sensitivity like body you know tactile sensitivity and also like mind like thought sensitivity the the sixth the sixth sense in Buddhism is is the mind

with mental States being called dhama

which is kind of confusing because dhama

has so many different

meanings um so I mean there would be

Consciousness in nibana but I mean you

can say that there's Consciousness in

Iana but when something becomes infinite

and formless it just goes off the scale

scale it's no longer

samsaric you know it's no longer

anything identifiable in samsara it's

something that cannot be

perceived so it's just when

Consciousness frees itself from like

sense organs and sensory systems it just

goes off the scale it just it becomes so

free that it becomes free of

like phenomenal existence and so whether
it really exists or not itself just
becomes just kind of a Dopey kind of a
question which people ask all the time
anyway no offense to
quator so I'm just going to move on to
quator second question if a meditator
develops wisdom to the extent that their
base experience of reality is so subtle
that they slip into jna regularly
without trying can their base reality
ever regress back to a gross reality in
this or future lives or will their
wisdom prevent that from happening well
until you become an Arya you can always
backslide you know like in the godika

suta Goda gets Jonna then he loses it then he gets it then he loses it then he gets it then he loses it until finally he's in a state of desperation and he thinks if I die with Jonna I'm guaranteed to Brahma Heaven realm but if I don't have Jonna when I die there's no guarantees and so he decides to Auto terminate but I mean even the the Brahma you know you have Janna you master Janna you wind up in a Brahma realm you stay in this Brahma realm for billions of years let's say and then you exhaust your karma I mean you just get reborn somewhere else it's it's like spiritual advancement is not like this oneway ratchet thing a lot of people have this

idea just evolution in general even with
regard to organic Evolution things
aren't necessarily going from simple to
complex or from lower to higher that
some some creatures they they simplify
and become more primitive in form as a
way of adaptation you know like a flea
the ancestors of fleas had wings fleas
lost their
wings just it's just that fleas the flea
Wings got in the way when they decided
to just stay on the dog instead of
flying from one dog to the other
dog so so it's the same way with
Evolution or like spiritual Evolution
you can call it evolution in a way but

still I mean it's not just one way you
can go from lower Realms to Upper Realms
and from upper Realms to lower Realms
and it's I mean there's no guarantee
until according to Orthodox tradition
once you become a soda you once you
become an Arya then you're kind of
locked on Target and there's no
backsliding
anymore but some early Buddhists even
thought that Arun could backslide that
you could become enlightened and then
become unenlightened again that was one
of the first um philosophical
controversies that resulted in the first
big Schism or so I have
read so let's see if their experience of

reality is so subtle that they slip into JRE regularly without trying um I'm not exactly sure if that would be like complete mastery of Jon like St John of the Cross I've already brought him up I bring him up all the time you know he talked about this the three stages of Spiritual Development which is very similar to a certain Buddhist scheme not the four stages of ARA Hood but the pugina or the the common the common person and then you've got the seika the person in training who has um gotten um like Arya attainment but hasn't become fully enlightened yet and then you've got the AA one no longer in training

that is fully enlightened according to
St John of the Cross you had a similar
three stages you had the common person
the beginner he called him the beginner
then you have the Adept and the Adept is
someone who can get J on whenever they
want they can they can exper they can
experience High contemplation as the
Catholics call it and then after the
Adept comes the perfect and that is the
person who has
completely like they have overcome their
self-will they have mortified their
self-will they no longer have any self
will so they always they're just like an
empty vessel that acts in accordance
with the will of

God so according to St John of the cross
the reason why I brought this up is that
he mentions the kind of person that can
like they can get attainment or they
they can contemplate they can get into
contemplative States and then they lose
it and then they get into contemplative
States again and then they lose it and
then they get into contemplative States
again and they lose it and I was like
that as a monk for for several years and
St John of the Cross said this thing
that kind of haunted me it was like well
if if you keep losing it you can't
consistently Master it you can't just
completely lock it down and be a master

of it for the rest of your life then God
just has other plans for
you in my case forklift
operator
so I guess I mean if if you mastered it
like if you became what St John of the
Cross called an Adept where you could
just you were just locked in you know
for the rest of your life you're solid
you can just get Jah whenever you want
it then all that does is it guarantees
that you wind up in a Brahma realm and
you may just squander your wisdom just
delighting in Bliss as a Brahma and then
wind up born again as a human with no
recollection at all of having been a
meditation Master because you burned up

all of your Arma along those lines or

you burned up so much of it that you're

back being a regular like a a meat

puppet like an upgraded

ape so Evolution isn't necessarily just

one

way and I hope I answer that question

because I'm moving on to quator third

one and quor question is I got to make

sure we are recording here yeah oh yeah

we've been going for more than half an

hour already

quor third question is can the universe

reset and all the orans go back to

Samara losing all wisdom or does wisdom

transcend all other forces

well personally I kind of go along with
a more einsteinian conception of time
and a less Newtonian conception of time
I would agree with the sarvastivada
Buddhists more than with the terraa
Buddhists on that score in which case
I mean if the past still exists then
even if you become enlightened now that
past that unenlightened past is eternal
in a sense it just doesn't go away it's
still there even though it's in the
past so I mean that would that would
apply to any enlightened
being that it's all still there and also
going with my theory of everything like
the the simile of the block of
marble the block of marble can contains

every single possible statue every
single possible unenlightened version of
you is always forever and ever and ever
going to stay in that statue because it
can so the thing is when you become
enlightened you realize that you never
really existed to begin with not like
you didn't really exist as having like
this self-existent
individuality you know is it was all
virtual it was all conditional
and that conditionality stays and the
unenlightened beings I mean they don't
really exist to begin with so nothing
fundamentally
changes all the unenlightened statues in

that block of marble remain there

forever and

ever no Mahayana Buddhist is ever going

to liberate whole beings there's always

going to be an infinite number of

unenlightened beings existing virtually

and conditionally in the uncarved block

of marble the nameless uncarved block as

the Jing puts

it so with regard to the universe

resetting and all the har Huns going

back to some start no it wouldn't work

that way except just with like time as

the fourth dimension or time as a4th

Dimension the past just doesn't poof out

of existence like it does in orth Ox

terraa Buddhist philosophy like in Abid

dama and the commentarial tradition

according to Abid dama the only moment

that exist is the present moment which

is constantly

changing but I think I'm a little more

einsteinian in my understanding of how

time

works but you can take your pick on that

one but it's not the the universe resets

that's just I mean time is cyclical

which is something it's it's in a

question further down so I'll I'll get

to that when when the question comes so

I mean in Buddhism time is kind of

cyclical but it doesn't just I mean it's

not just like this tape that you play it

and then you just reset to the beginning

like like some like a a YouTube short

when you get to the end of it it just

starts at the beginning again it it's

not like

that anyways I'm just going to move on

next question this is from

Austin and Austin says is dhma

understood as the law law of nature

dependent origination and emptiness an

objective reality that exists

independently of experience the Buddha

is said to have discovered dhma yet

maamaa philosophy teaches that all

phenomena are empty of inherent

existence and arise only dependently if

no conscious beings exist does dhama

still exist or is it merely a

designation that depends on perception

yeah it's it's it's designation that

depends on perception I mean

if there's no perceiving

mind that's perceiving dhama then dhama

is kind of has a

potential but I mean it's not ultimately

real it's still just sort of like it's

like thought images and so

forth so I mean like two and two 2 plus

2 equals 4 even that I mean it's it

doesn't exist in Plato's Heaven

independent of anybody perceiving it I

mean it it comes up when it's perceived

and then it just sort of poofs out of

existence of no one's perceiving

it so the law of nature dependent

origination

emptiness it's it's sort of like the

philosophy of Kant like the the

categories of Kant Kant I mean he he

didn't even try to touch Ultimate

Reality he didn't even try to touch the

thing in itself he figured that was

impossible so what he did is he tried to

like describe explain

understand how human delusion

works and so how human delusion works is

kind of what Dharma is all about how to

transcend the

[Music]

delusion so it's definitely a kind of

perceptual thing it's a raft made of
rubbish so yeah it's uh let's see
where's the actual question mark here is
it an objective reality that exists
independently of experience I would say
no and then let's see there's another
question mark here if no conscious
beings exist does dhama still well no
conscious beings really do exist see
that's the
thing does dhama still exist I mean yeah
I mean if no conscious beings exist that
should answer the question right there
there is no self in early Buddhism later
kinds of Buddhism cooked up with cooked
up a self but early Buddhism there is no

self so if no conscious beings exist

which is the case does dhama still exist

um no I mean it's it's it's pretty much

like majama philosophy says it's it's

like a mental construct it is a raft

made of rubbish as the early like what

is it the alagar pamut of this maiman

aaya says you know that rubbish is not

some kind of eternal you know golden

super reality it's it's rubbish that you

tie together to make a raft so you can

cross the flood and then you throw it

away you don't need the raft

anymore so I'm just going to move on to

Austin's second

question does Nirvana exist outside of

human experience in terab Buddhism

Nirvana is described as unconditioned
meaning it is not dependent on causes
and conditions like some soric existence
some interpretations suggest that
Nirvana is a real Transcendent state
that exists independently of perception
however nagar rejects the idea of
Nirvana as an independent absolute
reality he states that Nirvana and
samsara are not two separate things they
are both empty and arise only in
relation to dependent origination
Nirvana is not a place or a thing
outside of experience but rather the
cessation of clinging and ignorance a
realization rather than an independent

state

um well when nagar says that Nirvana and

samsar are not two separate things

they're both empty and arise only in

relation to dependent origination I mean

he's referring to the idea of

Nirvana so obviously the idea of Nirvana

and the idea of samsara they're both

worldly phenomena and that's all the

unenlightened person can really do with

regard to Nirvana is just think about it

in samsaric thoughts which don't touch

it just like

I mean the the content thing in itself

um I mean no amount of thinking is going

to come anywhere near

that I mean it just cannot and will not

touch

it so I mean you can say that Nirvana is

a reality Nirvana as a metaphysical

state is Ultimate

Reality and it's just off the scale I

mean it's some people I mean they just

absolutely have to like grasp something

intellectually and they're just [__]

it's not going to work you cannot grasp

reality intellectually all you can grasp

is

delusion so I mean you're never going to

understand Nirvana by thinking about it

you're never going to understand Reality

by thinking about it all this kind of

stuff is a kind of intellectual

masturbation in a way or it's just like
a way of you know it's it's just more
samsara so you can say that Nirvana as a
metaphysical state is Ultimate Reality
and it's like the content thing in
itself no amount of thinking or
perception or philosophizing or anything
like that is going to get anywhere near
it and then when you're calling it an IT
and trying to describe it then it's just
like narina says where it's just is
empty it is void
then again you've got Nirvana as like
the spiritual state or like the ethical
State it's like the moment of
attainment let's see where is he the
cessation of clinging and ignorance a

realization but even that is not

ultimately real I mean nag garina could

just nuke that out of existence

too so I mean you've got Sam Sara which

is the context in which we are

functioning right now which is just

not ultimately real it is conditionally

provisionally virtually real but it

doesn't have any inherent like self

essence you know it's just

empty it's just like what do you call it

dependent coor Rising just all these

dependently coor Rising conditions just

conditioning each

other with no real Sol

Foundation but it's so hard to explain I

mean no amount of explanation is going
to explain it and so I mean you have no
choice but to indulge in like Contra
self-contradictions and so forth just
because you're trying to explain what is
impossible to
explain so I guess I'm just move on next
question this is from covac and CAD Zona
and covac and CAD Z says how was jism
able to survive in India after all this
time while Buddhism died out there and
the other traditions in India did the
same or evolved to become almost
unrecognizable so how did why did jism
survive in India whereas other like
nonic traditions like Buddhism and aism
did not survive I think jism survived

for two main reasons one is that the
Janes were like a like radical
Aesthetics that weren't like basing
their centers in in cities and so forth
you know they didn't depend on these
these vast universities like Nanda for
example and I mean they were just like
more radical in their austerity than the
Buddhists and so they were more likely
to be out in the woods and also jism was
always kind of a small fish Buddhism
when the when the Muslims was invaded
and just started genociding the
Buddhists um Buddhism was like the
predominant spiritual system and so that
was really obvious and the the Muslims

just decided to wage war against it

whereas The

Janes I mean they were just sort of

inconsequential they were just kind of a

just like this insignificant minority

that the Muslims didn't bother with

because they had bigger fish to fry

called and called

Buddhists so I assume those are like the

two main reasons why aism died out

whereas jism didn't I mean I'm not

exactly sure about that if you read um

basham's book about the aivas is just

sort of like a history of the

aeas

um the the aicas just kind of their

religion sort of evolved more into like

a

devotionalism just kind of lost touch

with with like empirical reality I think

people just couldn't relate to it as

much anymore and people are just going

crazy on on the Discord server and I

keep getting like these little popup

windows and these little boop boop boop

on this computer from just people going

back and forth back and forth back and

forth on the Discord server and it's

kind of distracting me a little bit I

should put like a moratorium on Discord

when I'm doing these

q&as but I'll just put their names on

list that'll that'll do for now I

guess so I think I'll just move on to se

action CP z a second

question which is where would you

realistically go to make friends and

meet people as an adult if you don't

care about that just take it as a

hypothetical well for me realistically

the main place where I meet people and

make friends is at work go to work

there's people there and even if I keep

to myself and don't talk much there's

always like social friendly people that

come up to me and start talking and we

wind up making friends and you know

eating lunch and I don't know sit there

talk to each other make jokes that kind

of

thing aside from

that where would you meet people as an

adult I mean me

personally if I could find like a like a

dham center or something not that I have

any intention of doing so but you know

just like go to a meditation

group um if you can find one that isn't

just crazy leftist at this point and

meet lots of nice girls there I

suppose um you know like go to a health

club I mean you'll meet superficial

people there for the most part but you

know people that just kind of looks

mogging or looks

maxing

so um aside from that I mean I mean

unless you just

really like make a a point of just like

walking up to people and making friends

I mean if you do that then the grocery

store works the laundromat works you

know going out to a a club

works but I mean if I was never really

that way I never would go out I was I

was never particularly a social sociable

person I've always been kind of a loner

and I was fine with that I mean that was

just in accordance with my nature I've

never really wanted to go out and make

friends um go back to school you meet

lots of people in

school you know just get a get a degree

go to a community college get some
degree in something and meet lots of
people there you don't have any choice
really but uh yeah I mean I'm not really
the best person to consult with regard
to how to go out and make friends
because it really has never been much of
a problem priority like since I have
lived in South Carolina I have
invited like two people to friends from
work over to our house and you know they
brought their wives and that was it I
mean that's that's it's been several
months since that's
happened
so I'm I'm just really not a sociable

person I don't

really uh I mean it's good to have

friends you know it's like I value my

friends more than I value blood

relatives in most cases just because

I've chosen them rather than just being

accidentally born into the into a

certain

family but uh I guess I've given enough

suggestions that seac can take them or

leave them and uh if he really wants

maybe better advice he should go to

somebody who is really a more sociable

gregarious kind of person than I am and

so so I'm just going to move on to seov

action CAD Zena's third question which

is a followup of a previous question he

says your starting of the suta reading
makes sense made sense last time but can
you please continue with finishing it
because I'm still unsure how to connect
all the way through and he's referring
to an obscure
sua um I'm not even sure which nikaya
it's in it's the angin nikaya or the Sam
nikaya and he's using uh a translation
from aanan which is kind of you know
it's got it good points and his bad
points ajan tanro is sort of
idiosyncratic and self-indulgent in his
translation style uh especially earlier
on he's kind of calmed down a little bit
I think in in later years but

still um even though aan tanro probably
has much better actual dhh practice and
attainment than someone like buub buub
really is pretty solid as a translator
and he's sort of mainstream or like
Orthodox in his translations he uses
like the the standard word so that you
know what the poly word is from reading
the English translation which with ajan
tanro is not necessarily the case and
still there's like this logo Ria going
back and forth on Discord with all these
pop-up window windows that are
distracting me so
anyways getting back to uh this
suta it's see thus monks the dag when
seeing what is to be seen doesn't

construe an object as seen he doesn't
construe an unseen he doesn't construe
an object to be seen he doesn't construe
a Seer when hearing likewise when
sensing likewise when cognizing what is
to be cognized he doesn't constru an
object as cognized he doesn't construe
an
uncogent construe an object to be
cognized he doesn't construe a cognizer
thus amongst the Daga being the same
with regard to all phenomena that can be
seen heard sensed and cognized is
such and I tell you there is no other
such higher or more Sublime whatever is
seen or heard or sense and fastened on

to as true by others one who is such

among the self- fettered wouldn't

further claim to be true or even false

having seen well in advance that Arrow

where Generations are fastened and hung

I know I see that's just how it is

there's nothing of the datag fastened

well this is I mean it's really of an

archaic nature this whole sua and it

reminds me a lot of certain statements

in the ateka waga and also it reminds me

of the Buddha's like teaching to Bahia

in the Bahia suit of the udana which is

very like zenik in the scene there will

be only the scene in The Herd there will

be only the her

Etc so I mean it's

like Cog cognizing perception is is just
nature taking its course and the Buddha
is not really getting involved in that
he's just letting nature take its course
and it's it's not even a he I mean
I mean really it's there's no way to
describe it again it's like trying to
describe two different levels of reality
at the same time and it's it's I haven't
figured out how to do it and even if I
did the most of the people that listen
to me wouldn't wouldn't understand it I
explain the same things over and over
and over and sometimes the same people
will be asking the same kind of
questions because it's especially if if

you insist on having everything make

sense and like

interconnected like on a two-dimensional

plane then you cannot discuss two

different levels of reality with

everything being coherent and like like

articulating with with everything else

it it you can't have two different

levels of reality that are at the same

level and so it's going to take some

talent I guess at like trying to work

with two different levels of reality

simult

mously there's like ultimate truth and

there's conventional truth there's

Nirvana and there's

samsara and

like Mahayana Buddhist say ultimately
there's no difference but still I mean
relatively there is a
difference and just talking about it's
like I'm just wasting calories just
talking and talking and talking about
this stuff so anyways let's see
let see thus monks the D being the same
with regard to all phenomena that can be
seen heard sense and cognized is such
and that's like dat data can be
translated as such or thus or like that
and it's a word that's used in early
Buddhism um because you can't really
describe the ultimate and so the the
best you can say is just thus or such

it's like a kind of

makeshift term for like experiencing

reality or someone who is like at the

level of reality and is no longer

identified with all this fantasmagoria

going on at the samsaric

level he's just like that or like this I

mean you can't really describe it any

better

such so whatever is heard or seen or

sense and fastened on to as true by

others one who is such among the self-

fettered wouldn't further claim to be

true or even false yes that's like the

AA waga the teachings of the ataga you

do not insist upon anything really just

let nature take its course do not get

involved it's not

you so I really don't know how to

explain it much better than the suta

itself explains it and so if that's not

good enough I mean you're just not going

to get it I

yes or use it as like a Zen [__] and

just keep like stewing over it and

stewing over it and stewing over until

just something snaps in your head it's

like that your cognition muscle suddenly

cramps up and suddenly you've got this

Clarity and silence that will actually

allow you to understand it way better

than any kind of thinking will help you

to understand

it

so I'm just gonna move on this question

this is from Prav and or Mr Prav

sometimes he goes by Mr

Prav so Prav says what happens to the

people who's on the list well I haven't

decided yet but it's it's going to be

something probably that's going to

happen so I'm just going to move on to

PR second question and with regard to

the people on the list it's like the

people that were giving me all this

advice about like if you've got acid

reflux at night sometimes take more acid

drink vinegar that kind of stuff their

name is on a list and also people who

ask more than three questions per

episode their name winds up on a list

also it's a different list but it's just

as serious and I haven't decided what's

going to happen but um something

probably and they're not they're not

going to like

it so PR second question is what is

patana and patana is the seventh book of

Abid dama it's the last book of the

polypa just going in order of you know

first is You' got the winia at the

beginning and the first book of winia is

sort of controversial different people

will say that the the parim Moka comes

first and other people will say the Maha

waga comes first so either paraja or the

mahaga would be the first book of vam
and then it's everything is in order you
know you get into the suas it's denaya
first then majima then samuta then angut
and then uh kudaka and and then then you
got Abid dama and then the Abid dama has
a traditional um like order with patana
being the last and seventh on the list
and patana is its purpose is to
understand causal relations and there
are 24 of them but really there's less
than 24 because whoever came up with
patana I don't think it was the Buddha
whoever came up with patana has
duplicate
like causal
relations and like let's see I'm really

rusty on my patana but there's like
let's see ATI pachio and AATA pachio
have exactly the same meaning they're
two different causal relations but
they're exactly the same meaning so why
they would double up on some the the
official answer it's it's the harder
ones the more subtle and difficult to
understand ones that are mentioned more
than wants just to help people
understand it better but that's not
really the case like ATI pachio and AIO
which are synonymous ATI just means the
existence of something and a means like
not having disappeared which also means
the existence of something and that's

way easier to understand than some of

the other

pachos in in patana and I spoke with um

a young Abid dama scholar who is really

into this was really studying it and he

said that patana is unreadable that a

lot of

senior like Abid dama Scholars like

scholar seatt in Burma I mean you can't

just sit down and read a book of patana

and un I mean just it's just unreadable

it's just going into all these causal

relations and the various combinations

of these causal relations and I mean

it's just kind of gobbly go in my

opinion

but unfortunately for me in Burma there

is a phenomenon a tradition called the
patano in which monks will chant patana
over loudspeakers sometimes 247 for an
entire week just blasting just they're
chanting this stuff that even they don't
understand nobody understands it but
they're blasting it over loudspeakers
for days on end sometimes until I'd be
in my cave or wherever I was as a monk
in Burma just fantasizing about taking a
baseball bat into the village not
hurting anybody but just smashing the
[__] out of the loudspeaker
system so I mean the reason why the
burmes do that is it is um a
tradition that when dhama

disappears that the last thing to
disappear will be like the rules of
monastic discipline like vinia is starts
first on the list and ntica and it's
going to disappear last and so the last
is going to disappear first patana is
going to be the first thing that
disappears when dham is disappearing
from this world and for me I could live
with that easily because I don't have
any use for batana anyway but in order
to make sure that The Disappearance of
dhama doesn't start you've got monks in
Burma just chanting it at add nauseum
just to to keep it going when personally
I think like a Burmese translation of
the dapada would be much more beneficial

to everybody if you if you want to blast
some Buddhist material over loudspeaker
systems so that I mean the people living
within a block radius I mean the Teacups
are rattling on the shelves it's so loud
and sometimes they'll start at like 3:
in the morning and with the Baton plays
it's 247
so I'm kind of digressing just kind of
venting a little bit with frustration
over Paton P that I'll probably never
hear
again when I came to a Burmese Monastery
in America they were having a Paton po
where this there was just this one monk
who was like staying up late at night

just chanting Paton over like a

loudspeaker in the like the the

meditation Hall just I mean he couldn't

blast it because of course in America

the neighbors are going to be calling

the cops pretty quickly but still it was

enough to to be so noisy that I couldn't

sleep at

night and it's just I mean

there's there's no real benefit to it as

far as I know other than just the

discipline of monks just chanting this

blah blah blah that even they don't

really

understand just over and over and over

just

this it's it's not good

but that's what patana is it's it's this thick book it's several volumes it's called one book but it's several volumes of all these different combinations of these 24 causal relations that really nobody needs to know

so I'm just going to move on next question this is from Romeo Romeo says I realize that you are a Buddhist but my questions this week ask that you tap into your knowledge of Hinduism I asked these questions in light of newly appointed FBI director cash Patel recently being sworn in with his hand on a bagavat Gita rather than a Bible

that's interesting with Hindus like cash
Pattel Tulsi gabard and Vic ramaswami
increasingly gaining influence in the US
government I would like to become more
familiar with the religion that is
guiding such figures
spiritually can you please break down
Hinduism
in as succinct a way as
possible and that's that's difficult
it's much more difficult to
describe Hinduism succinctly than to
describe say Christianity
succinctly because Hinduism is a very
vague and nebulous term that technically
I would say the definition of Hinduism
would be any kind of religious system

that consist considers the vas to be
authoritative Doctrine and so Hinduism
goes back to the vadas originally like
in the Buddhist time there were three
vas probably originally there was one
the the rig Veda what is now called the
rig Veda then you had the Seda and the
yajurveda which it's my understanding
that the Sova and the yajurveda are are
just like copying hymns from the rigveda
I don't I don't know if there's any like
original material in the Y Veda or the
Sova but they were mainly used by
priests to be reciting these to be
chanting these when doing fire
sacrifices and this was

like very ancient like like

Indo-European

religion as it manifested in

Northwestern India like when the Indo

Arians invaded they were already had

like at least the earliest hymns from

the rig V

composed and they were recited by

priests when sacrificing at the the Holy

Fire for the sake of mainly worldly

stuff like Suns and cattle and victory

and battle and that kind of

thing

but uh when Hinduism arrived in India

there was already an existent spiritual

tradition like which manifested in in

the Buddhist time as the shamana

tradition it was all these like sh

shaven headed philosophers who did not

consider the vas to be authoritative

they tended to be more

atheistic and they considered samsara to

be a kind of bad place to be escaped

from or transcended and and there's a

lot of that in Buddhism also there was

like an emphasis on Karma how you have

to purify yourself in order to to be to

free yourself from this dirty World kind

of kind of a

philosophy and

so early um like brahmanism kind of came

into contact with this and was

influenced by it and then so brahmanism

became more and more shamanistic and
more yogic like especially with regard
to the the upanishads I guess the vas
the vdic tradition has three levels
first you've got the vas themselves and
then you've got what are called the
brahmanas which were like technical
manuals on sacrifice which almost nobody
reads anymore other than maybe a few
Brahman
priests but they're they're considered
to be part of the viic literature and
then after that be came the
upanishads and then the upanishads are
getting you know very Buddhist likee and
possibly some of the later upanishads
were significantly influenced by

Buddhist

philosophy and then as as this kind of

sort of yogic

vedism traveled farther into Southern

India they started interacting with more

of a kind of

devotionalism you know worshiping the

gods and I mean in a sense that was not

the same as the way the the early like

Indo orians were worshiping the gods

where they're just like making

sacrifices of the Gods in order to get

stuff it became more of just this

devotional like you just dedicate

yourself to this God you know and and

that has manifested in like modern

Indian Hinduism mainly with regard to
the vaishnavites and the shites and then
you got like devotees of K and devotees
of certain other gods but it seems like
the two main ones are Vishnu and
Shiva and so it's got all these
different elements and I mean you can do
just about anything I mean there's
there's been like like people you like
Mass murderers
that were supposedly like devotees of
Kali or something that were still like
practicing Hindus so Hinduism is just
like this broad spectrum of all sorts of
different elements and it has
incorporated a lot of sham stuff
especially through yoga yoga was

originally like I was mentioning in a
previous Q&A not too long ago it was U
one of these shraman Traditions called
sya similar to Buddhism or or jism and
it just got absorbed part of it got
absorbed into the vdic tradition by
these Sonia philosophers saying okay we
accept the vas as authoritative and
almost nobody even reads the vas anymore
like the bagavat Gita is the book cash
Patel had his hand on not the rig Veda
because the rig Veda is so
archaic that it really doesn't speak to
Modern Indians anymore it's it's all
hymns to gods that have pretty much I
mean they're not nearly as important

anymore like the main god of of the rigveda would be uh Indra who was like the patron deity of the Indo orians and I think Agy the god of fire who's like the messenger of the Gods you know he's like sending the the sacrifices up to the gods through through the fire that I think he's number two and I mean Indra and Agy they're really not all that important in modern Hinduism anymore and I mean I'm sure that there are some Hindus considered them still to be very important but I mean Vishnu and Shiva have pretty much taken over and including like different incarnations of Vishnu which would be like especially um Krishna and

Rama and the two main um epic poems of India the mahabarata and the ramayana they're about two different avatars of Vishnu at least they have come to be interpreted that way so Hinduism I mean it's got some of the same kind of elements says Buddhism like like morality is pretty similar the concept of of karma is fairly similar although it's got way more devotionalism like dedication to gods and so forth and uh I think uh like bakti yoga is way more of a thing in Hinduism than it is in Buddhism also like Karma Yoga which is just good deeds you know feeding the hungry and helping the poor and you know

serving others is more of a thing in Hinduism than in Buddhism or at least for some Hindus some Hindus don't have any use for serving others it's just depends on just what what part of the spectrum of Hinduism you're going to prefer which is going to be largely you know dependent on you know what family you were brought up in in what kind of neighborhood and what the local temple is you know who your your Guru is your family Guru that kind of thing so Hinduism is just in a way it's kind of like Mahayana Buddhism where it's just this broad spectrum of everything from the ridiculous to the sublime but it's it's really hard to

describe it very

succinctly and so I think I'm just going

to move on next question here this is

also from Romeo and Romeo says if the

Ten Commandments of the Bible generally

guides Christian ethics what guides

Hindu ethics and I mean you do have old

like very like vadic kind of text like

the laws of Manu which are you know it's

sort of like the Jewish Torah you know

it's it pretty much describes it's got

all kinds of things like a a Brahman

should never point at a pregnant cow

this this like really weird obscure kind

of

rules um and I don't think that they're

really considered to be authoritative

I'm sure that the average Hindu is just

flouting the laws of

pretty much on a daily

basis so I think Hindu ethics is largely

just tradition you know it's like I

already mentioned they they have a

similar idea of Ethics as

Buddhism um they have a little more

devotionalism mixed in like like um the

bagavat Gita you know it it acknowledges

that there's Karma and all that but

still you've in Hinduism you've got your

ashrama Dharma which is like your s Duty

so if you're a soldier it's your sacred

duty to kill enemies even though it's

makes Bad Karma but you just according

to babag Gita you just offer up the
fruits of all of your actions to God you
just lay the fruits of your actions
before God he kind of absorbs that and
then you remain in a way
pure so there's more of that kind of
thing in Hindu ethics than in Buddhist
ethics there's no Buddhist text
certainly no terava Buddhist text saying
that you just offer up the fruits of
your actions to the Buddha and then if
you're a soldier you you kill your
enemies it just doesn't work that
way
so yeah I mean even technically somebody
like Krishna myy could be considered

more or less of a Hindu in this weird
way I mean some Hindus will say Buddhism
is a form of Hinduism even Christianity
is a form of Hinduism I think a lot of
Hindu people or I mean some people will
call it sonat Dharma because Hindu is so
notoriously meaningless it's just so
diffuse and nebulous of a term that I
mean it has almost no meaning at all
just means it's sort of like an Indian
religion that maybe accepts the vas as
authoritative so you know some some
Hindus would would go so far as to say
even if you don't accept the the vas
that that still you can be a Hindu you
know the the Hari krishnas are Hindu
and I mean they don't really have much

use for of anything other than just

reciting the names of of

Vishnu I mean that's that is their their

Stairway to Heaven essentially that is

their route to Salvation is just

repeating the names of of God over and

over

again

so yeah it's it's it's so diffus of a

term Hinduism that it's hard to even

call it a single religion like you can

say the religion of Bali also is

Hinduism but you look at the religion of

Bali and it's I mean there's obvious

overlap with the religion of India of

various parts of India like South India

but still it's they're just all these
different unique or just distinct
practices and beliefs that just all fit
under the term Hindu
so what guides Hindu ethics is mainly
just tradition I don't think that
there's a single list of rules or a
single text I think it's just tradition
over thousands of years has just settled
on what is good ethics and certain rules
um like stealing not stealing um are
just kind of stereotypically notoriously
ignored in
India I mean they might not kill a a a
cockroach but so I mean some Hindus they
won't kill a cockroach but they'll steal
anything that isn't nailed down my

father used to work on ships and he said that the Hindu ships were the worst that he saw a friend of his set his coat down and all of a sudden the coat just starts lifting up because there's this Hindu sailor with a fishing pole he's he's hooked it from an upper floor like an upper level of the ship he's just reeling it up he's just ripping off the guy's coat right behind him it was it was it was not good not that I'm saying that all Indian people or all Hindus are thieves anymore than I would say that they all wipe their butt with their hand but it's just it's kind of a stereotype that is based on a certain

Trend but they do take uh

aimsa like relatively seriously at least

a lot of them

do but it's I don't I don't know if

there's any particular list of rules

anywhere in Hinduism that Hindus refer

to as a guide with regard to what they

should do and what they shouldn't do in

Buddhism L people have five precepts

sometimes eight precepts monks have got

all the vinea rules but with regard to

like Hindu monks or Hindu lay people I'm

not 100% sure what they rely on other

than

just thousand yearold

tradition so I'm just going to move on

to uh Romeo's third question which is

what does Hinduism say about non-hindus
and again it depends on the Hindu like I
was saying earlier like some Hindus
would just incorporate any kind of
genuine spirituality into Hinduism
they'd say it's all Dharma you know so
Jesus was a Hindu and the Buddha was a
Hindu U whereas other Hindus are less
tolerant and would say you know anyone
who isn't a Hindu who accepts of the vas
as authoritative even though almost no
Hindus read the vas that uh you know
they're just have wrong View and they're
going to get a bad rebirth because of
that with regard to somebody like um
cash Patel or Tulsi gabard I mean

they're not outwardly very Hindu you know you don't they don't have like the red spot or anything like that you never see cash Patel with like the ashes smeared on his forehead after giving some like offering to Vishnu anything like that so for them it might just be kind of a superficial thing or either either that or just kind of a very private thing where if they're feeling spiritual that you know when they're alone in their free time which isn't very often you know they'll just kind of interpret it along Hindu lines something like that but none of them seems none of them strikes me as like overtly Hindu in their speech or

behavior so now that I've kind of kind
of like wallowed kind of blundered my
way through a three Hinduism
questions and I didn't mean to insult
any Indian people by mentioning that
thievery is very common I I had my
sandals stolen in India they size 13
sandals they were like flip-flops they
all chewed up by Rats from when I was in
Thailand
previously this disappeared so I went
without sandal I went Barefoot most of
my stay in India just because they got
ripped off relatively early on
but it could just be one one Indian guy
that's that's doing all of it he just

gets around a lot so I'm not accusing

all Indians of of being that

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

question this is from

ruie just checking the

time this is from ruie as I was saying

and ruie says to live a blameless or

virtuous life without expecting a reward

and to live a blameless virtuous life

suspecting that there is no reward at

all are slightly different things are

they not is the latter even possible

well that's two question marks that's

two questions got to separate

these okay oh what the hell

happened see now I got to separate it

again and now I got to eliminate this

space okay we're

ready so to live a blameless virtuous

life without expecting a reward and to

live a blameless virtuous life

suspecting that there is no reward at

all are slightly different things on

yeah that that would be different

obviously I mean if they weren't

different you could just say the same

thing twice instead of saying two

different

things so I mean if you there is some

overlap though I mean obviously to live

a blameless virtuous life without

expecting a

reward would be a subset no wait no it

would be the people that don't think
there is a reward would be a subset of
the people who don't don't expect a
reward cuz there's some people that
would expect that there is one but still
they're not concerned with that like
people who take the bhavat Gita
seriously you try to live according to
the bhavat Gita they might um live life
just sort of not caring any what kind of
reward there was going to
be they just offer it up to God whatever
it
is so to live a blameless virtuous life
suspecting there is no reward at all I
mean that would be a little more
tricky um because I mean there's

different people like that I mean some
people you could say they suspect that
there is no reward at all but maybe
they're just mistaken and that deep down
at the level below suspicion they still
know you know what Dharma is about at
least they have a deep feeling for it
and so they're just kind of drawn to
being virtuous even though like at this
superficial level they're like
nihilistic atheist and materialists but
deeper down you know at the subconscious
level they know better so there could be
people like that who at the surface
think you know all this stuff about
Karma's [__] and there's no no

Rewards or punishments but still they're going to be kind to others and be honest and and this kind of thing that that can happen and then there's like another similar case where you think that there's no reward but still it makes you feel icky to tell lies or to steal I mean obviously there's still a reward even though they suspect that there is no reward and they're they're influenced by the fact that there clearly is a reward because you know they just don't feel right if they're lying or getting into trouble you know it's like obviously just living a blameless virtuous life at least it keeps you out of trouble I mean that's

even a materialist can accept that much

so it's it's kind of tricky suspecting

that there is no reward I mean you'd

have to be some kind of weird radical

philosopher to even deny that like

stealing can land you in

jail or that like insulting people to

their face can get you punched in the

nose so yeah I'm not exactly sure where

ruie would draw the

line with regard to reward and no reward

because there there's obviously rewards

to living a virtuous life um or at least

lack of

punishment that even a dog knows that

much you know the dog knows not the [__]

on the floor because it's going to get
punished if it does
it so ruie says is the latter even
possible so that's kind of what I was
getting at I suppose um people that
suspect that there is no reward I'm sure
that there are some people like at this
superficial level the intellectual level
that they suspect that there is no war
or just say um just getting just setting
aside police and reputation and that
kind of thing and they're just you're
just thinking along the lines of like
metaphysical stuff you know paranormal
stuff Karma that kind of thing then yeah
there's people that can live a spiritual
life um at The Superficial level being

you know

nihilistic atheists and materialists but

deeper down they know better you know

subconsciously they know better and they

just feel wrong if they tell a lie they

just feel like soiled or something if

they do something

shitty so yeah I mean

um most people are not fully aware of

most of their their mind that the

subconscious mind is is greater than the

conscious mind the conscious mind is

just that part of our mind that is sort

of self

self-referential and so it kind of is

able to look at itself but there's other

parts that it just can't look in that
direction it doesn't know how to look in
that
direction and one of the I've I've heard
that sort of what wisdom is is just sort
of like the wiser you are the less of a
subconscious mind you have the more
conscious you know the more you become
aware of what uh would ordinarily be
subconscious something along all those
lines so technically you could say a
fully enlightened being wouldn't have a
subconscious
mind so I think I answered that question
I'm just going to move on next question
this is from Stellar Supreme at St etc
etc because his name just keeps getting

longer and longer and so we just got to
have to let just we have to draw the
line somewhere we just can't let his
name keep getting longer and longer so
it's just Stellar Supreme
Etc and Stellar Supreme Etc says I
suspect that I might have
hyperthyroidism if it is the case they
typically prescribe non intoxicating
drugs called beta blockers which can
actually be healthy for the Heart Like A
supplement and are relatively cheap to
buy he's got $4 to $15 for a 30-day
Supply do you suspect that this could
interfere with my pursuit of the monk
life added context I plan to donate

about5 to $10,000 when I ordain well I
mean the added context should be
irrelevant because if you're going to be
donating
money right before you become a monk I
mean there shouldn't be any strings
attached it should just be a a real
donation and not some like an investment
you know I'll donate this money so long
as you buy me medicine from the money I
donated I mean you can do it that way
and I think there'd probably be people
going along Ong with it but still I mean
it wouldn't be like a pure
donation if you're donating the money
expecting something in
return

so with regard to like becoming a monk when you have a health condition that requires relatively cheap medicine I mean it could be a problem if you decide to go and live in a cave in some remote area of of Asia that then it might be a problem you might have to like it'd probably be fairly easy to have a donor who can supply that stuff to you but you might have to carry around you know more than a month supply of it if you're going out anywhere remote you know you just got to make sure you've got enough to last the time that you're out there um I'm not sure how easy it would be to get this kind of stuff in Thailand

I assume you can get it in Bangkok and
then you can have some donor supporter
in Bangkok who like sends it to you or
something like that so it shouldn't be
like uh I mean it shouldn't prevent you
from becoming a
monk U it is unfortunate and and it can
be and this happens a lot that just
through dhama practice the situation
clears
up and that that happens a lot I mean
people have been cured of tuberculosis
and like tumors and stuff through
intensive dhama practice in my case it's
to some degree it actually went the
other way I used to have like really
blotchy skin

like searc dermatitis would be the
technical term for it and some of my
early q&as like right after I dropped
out of the monk Hood um there like there
was like that one that I did from a a
hotel room in New Orleans where I had
just spent like two days without bathing
sitting on a
train and I was just I had just shaved
and it was just like like this red rash
on my face and I used to think where am
I going to get the medication because
there was this good skin cream from
Korea that worked that I could get in
Burma but I didn't I didn't know of any
way of getting it in America I like what

am I going to do and then it just went
away I haven't had that problem it's
like the love of my woman or or
something along those lines has just
caused that condition to just stop being
an issue
so I mean it is possible though that
just through dhama practice I mean if if
you protect dhama DH protects you and
you're just going to get what you
need so yeah I don't think that it
should be any problem although I
wouldn't I mean you're going to find if
you if you are ordained it doesn't
matter if you're ordained in America or
in Asia there's going to be very
generous Asian patrons who are very

happy to support you like in Burma you
got like the the P daa who is the a
supporter and they can even like adopt
you and and like like sponsor your
ordination and everything make sure
you've got all the robes and everything
you need they're really happy about that
it's to some degree it's a kind of
spiritual materialism where they get
they're getting Merit by supporting the
SAA they're really happy to spread dhama
to the west and to westerners you know
you're like the exotic special flavor of
Monk because you're a Westerner and so
there's you're not going to have any
problem getting support especially if

you're a serious monk if you're a

sincere serious monk they're going to

respect that especially because most

Asian monks really aren't all that

serious I mean some really are but most

of them

aren't so I mean it's unnecessary to

have money donated to the monastery with

the expectation of that money being used

at least in part to provide you with

medicine or whatever when you should

just let go and let DH protect you and

if you're a good monk you're going to

get more than enough

support that would be my advice and so

I'm just going to move on to Stellar

Supreme etc's follow-up question he says

but if I plan to settle in Thailand
starting out in the US should I reserve
that donation for the monastery there
instead I asked because of the Dilemma
of setting out Provisions for the future
well if you're a monk you shouldn't be
worrying about the future give no
thought for tomorrow what you will eat
or where you will
sleep
seriously I mean don't be making these
kind of plans where you're going to have
like this stipend this allowance or
whatever it is that's that no it's
you're still thinking in terms of money
and like survival mode and I mean if you

just and this works in Hinduism and
Buddhism where you you just like set put
yourself out at the the mercy of the
universe and you live a virtuous life
the universe will protect you you'll get
exactly what you
need so if if you're going to decide
between like donating $5 to $10,000 to a
monastery in America or to a monastery
in Thailand it shouldn't have anything
to do with supporting you or getting
anything any monetary benefit out of
that it's just which one needs the money
more something along those
lines so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from
juwels and jwes is asking for a friend

does visiting prostitutes violate the precept against sexual misconduct for Lay person and yes of course it does I mean that should be a no-brainer just think about it for a second or two I mean Buddhism is different from other religions in certain fundamental you know important ways but Buddhism is very I mean more against wallowing in sensuality than most religions I mean from a Buddhist point of view even listening to music is immoral so I mean visiting prostitutes yeah I mean the the precept against sexual misconduct or sensual misconduct kamua it's uh mainly

rules out everything except for a loving

monogamous

relationship or at least a dutiful

monogamous

relationship that any kind of sexual

promiscuity is a no no and also messing

around with women that are like already

spoken for like another man's wife

another man's

fiance um you know another man's slave

girl anything like that that's out so of

course adultery is out

but it's it's not

as Buddhism is not as strict as say

Christianity in

that marriage is just purely a secular

institution it's it's not involved in

early Buddhism that it's forbidden for a monk to even participate in a wedding ceremony that's just not Buddhism that's just something completely else and so it whether you're actually married or not is largely irrelevant so long as you are like in a loving or at least dutiful monogamous relationship and not like violating any obligations to anybody else and the person you're sleeping with isn't obligating violation U violating obligations to anybody else but going out and picking up prostitutes or just picking up drunken women in bars no it doesn't doesn't work that way one night stands are definitely sensual

misconduct from the Buddhist point of view so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from dhama river and dhama river says what's your opinion of Casina
meditation and casin meditation was a much bigger deal in ancient and early medieval times than it is today the the founder of the tradition which I was ordained Tom Pulu knew how to do Casina meditation he could teach casin meditation but I never really practiced it I mean the closest I came to casin meditation might be like just contemplating a candle flame in a way that's sort of like fire Casina or sometimes when I'd be out in the forest

you just kind of pitch you pick like a relatively circular patch of green in The Greenery that's you know a slightly different shade of green you know it's like in the shade or something that I just like rest to my Gaze on that and just kind of go empty but it wasn't really Casina

meditation Cina meditation is mainly you're meditating on a like a colored disc or or some kind of disc I mean there's also like Earth Casina where you take you take mud and you just sort of paint a circle onto some board or something and then that's like an a circle of Earth that you can meditate on

light Cina I've I've red that some monks
will just cut a circular hole in the
side of their Hut so the light shining
through is their their light Casina it's
like a circular a circle of light
essentially some some of them I'm not
sure how you'd make a circle out of like
fire Casina it be kind of tricky making
a circular flame but I I I assume you
could work it out
somehow but it's I mean if you read the
wisi Maga it's they're mainly dealing
with Cina meditation you know the wisi
ma can be considered a kind of
meditation manual and the main kind of
meditation is Cina and it's like you're
contemplating a disc I mean that is it's

like the hypnotic object and it really
is kind of like hypnosis it's maybe a
bit more like Advanced and complex and
subtle than ordinary hypnosis but still
you know it's like you you focus on this
Cina disc that is the the meditative
object and you you just keep staring at
that contemplating it until when you
close your eyes you can see it just as
clearly as when your eyes are open you
know it's like you've just got it like
burned into your mind this circle and
then you start manipulating it making it
bigger and smaller and this kind of
thing until it's
like in a way it's sort of like a mental

exercise just strengthening your body
strengthening your concentration and
then you get you can get into johnic
States as a result of this but it's kind
of Fallen by the wayside I mean the main
kind of meditation in tervada Buddhism
is pretty much meditation on the breath
on a um in Thailand um they do a lot of
Mantra budo or
puto um meta meditation is big in some
places among some people and Casina is
just pretty much out but if you want to
understand casin meditation the wisi
manga has fairly elaborate explanations
of it um I do think that it's it's
largely a
hypnotic uh method like the Stanford

hypnosis lab in Stanford University
they've got a hypnosis lab and so
because they're trying to study hypnosis
scientifically they have to have
standardized methods you know they have
to hypnotize everyone as much the same
as possible to get rid of any kind of
like random variations so they can just
focus on what they're trying to
understand and at the the Stanford
hypnosis Lab at least at the time um
that I read the book that was written
from a guy that worked at the Stanford
hypnosis lab they start off staring at a
circle it's it's generally a very small
one it could just be like the head of a

thumbtack stuck into the wall directly
in front of the person so it's smaller
than the average Cina disc but still it
is just focusing on a disc
SM focusing on a circle on the
wall and so um there is kind of if you
don't have a good guide a good
teacher when when you're hypnotizing
yourself I mean you can experience what
you think you ought to experience and
you can lead yourself astray if you do
not have a skillful teacher who is
guiding you through
it so yeah maybe read read up on it in
the the wiui MAA or if you can find a
teacher who actually teaches Cina
meditation which is going to be

relatively rare in the west then maybe
you could consult with them but
personally I think you'd probably be
better off with the breath or or some
other kind of mindfulness
meditation um than Cina meditation but
it depends on what your purposes are and
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question also from dhama
river which is this F do you think there
is any University left in the US or
Canada that is not an indoctrination
Camp um well with regard to
indoctrination camps it may be that
pretty much every University in the US
to some degree is going to be an

indoctrination Camp you're always going
to have a certain I don't know if any
University in the west where like
cultural Marxism you know
progressivism is is just completely
banned there's always going to be an
element of that I think but some some I
almost said some monasteries some
universities I mean they're going to be
uh safer than others in that regard like
the University of Chicago has a
reputation for promoting free speech so
you're definitely going to have the
hysterical progressives there but at the
very least you're also going to have
like alternate points of view there and
also I read

that um um like more and more wealthy
people from like New England are sending
their kids to universities in the South
like in Georgia South Carolina North
Carolina because even though in the
South also I mean University towns
there's going to be lots of hysterical
progressives but you're still going to
have like the Conservative Christian
groups there that are allowed you know
they're not going to be persecuted
so I mean it may be your best bet with
regard to the average University is to
find one where even though there's still
going to be plenty of hysterical
progressivism there's going to also be

uh at least a tolerance of other points

of

view and of course you've got some like

specifically right-wing kind of univers

Hillsdale College I don't know if that's

just online I don't know if they have an

actual campus or not but

I mean there there's places like that

also I think it's called Hillsdale

College it's the one that uh Victor

Davis Hansen is is uh associated

with so do I think there's any

University left in us are Canada that is

not an indoctrination Camp um it depends

on what you mean by an indoctrination

Camp because even Hillsdale College is

going to be indoctrinating you in a more

conservative Direction

that I mean there any kind of university

is going to be like teaching you

something as this is the way it is even

if you're encouraged you know at times

to like have critical thought and

question everything still it's not like

you're going to go to any University

where the professor is standing up there

and just saying well this is just a

suggestion but it may be you know and

that all of his classes are taught that

way that you know it's all just you can

take this or leave it you know it's just

an idea that that's not really much

teaching seems to

me so um I mean some universities are definitely going to have less like leftist indoctrination and even some of the ones that have good reputations like University of Chicago it's certainly going to have a certain amount of leftist indoctrination but it's also going to have like alternative points of view and hopefully uh you'll be able to take certain classes and not just get punished by a leftist professor if he finds out that you're not a leftist too that's like that would be like your main problem I think at at a university level is you're taking like liberal arts you know you're take you trying to get a degree in English or something and that

you might be in like the hysterical
Progressive bubble and if the pro
Professor finds out that you know you're
you're like a a fascist then you know he
can he can fail you just just finding
fault with anything that you
say so that's I mean stem you know
engineering physics mathematics that
kind of thing is going to be less
susceptible to leftist hysteria than
like history or English liberal arts in
general but yeah it's it's not a totally
hopeless case it is possible to still
get a university Education Without just
having your mind turned to [__] by
hysterical

leftists and so I'm just going to move

on to next question and this is

from Captain bouic Kuma and chasz is um

I think he he misheard my name of this

captain of this polish ship I worked on

his name was bouic Kuma but tasas is has

bouic and ending in the L with the line

through it which I think is like an sh

sound so it be

Bish Bish

kumka no his name was bouic it ended in

a k I'm pretty sure and Kuma it's my

understanding that Kuma in Polish means

door

handle so it's it's I don't know this

things are just getting very confused I

think I think uh tasas is is is is

becoming more and more confused with
regard to who he really
is anyways Captain mumi Kuma says when
you say that Karma lands you exactly
where you need to be does it mean that
in the concept Karma does it mean that
in that concept Karma shows knows the
future in some sense no it doesn't Karma
does not know the
future Karma just lands you where you
need to be now
so it knows the present I guess in a
sense but it's more like just water
seeking its own level water doesn't know
the future to know that it it has to
flow this way downhill instead of that

way uphill it's just nature taking its
course and that's the way your karma is
is your karma is like water flowing
downhill in a way it's it's just sort of
taking the path of least resistance and
I mean you just have to be in a certain
POS I mean the karma just leads you
where where it needs to
go so yeah it doesn't really know the
future anymore than water knows the
future when it flows downhill instead of
uphill it's just karma is just flowing
in the direction that that it needs to
flow without really thinking about the
future or or even the past for that
matter because it's just momentum it's
just the momentum of your mind and it's

not that it's Landing you in this
particular like materialistic
environment it's creating it really I
mean materialistic environments are
mindmade so I do think that a lot of
people that watch my videos and a lot of
like Western Buddhists in general just
accept
materialism as just established fact
that's like their world viw and then
they try to fit Buddhism into that
and I don't think it's that way at all I
think physical matter I do not think it
really
exists of course that just makes me a
weirdo from a modern or postmodern

American point of

view

so let's

see I think I'm just gonna move on to

the next question this is also from

Captain boui

Kuma and he says is Terra vadan concept

of time linear or recurrent I mean when

there is a big bang and then big

collapse and another big bang then maybe

we are living the exact same lives in

the next universe and the next and so on

well if that were the case there'd be no

Enlightenment at all I mean if if that

were the case there would be no

Enlightenment because You' just be

trapped into just living the same

unenlightened life over and over again
because if you did become enlightened
you already did it the first cycle
through an infinitely long period of
time ago so I mean in Buddhism they do
have a cyclical conception of time but
it's not like like an exact repetition I
think n taught something like this
eternal recurrence but it's more like
the seasons you know you've got winter
you know spring summer fall winter
spring summer fall it happens in a kind
of cycle even though every winter is not
exactly the same as the winter before it
every summer is not exactly the same as
the summer summer before it it's a kind

of cycle and it's Buddhism also talks
about world Cycles you know expansion
and contraction of the cosmos and in
Buddhism you you've got you know every
time the world evolves there's going to
be an India and the Buddha like Buddhas
always like they go through the same
kind of life like biography you know
they're they're always like a Buddha
always belongs to whichever cast happens
to be considered the highest at the time
so the idea is the Buddha was a katria
because in the Buddhist time the krias
were considered to be the highest cast
then later if other times if brahans are
considered to be the highest cast and
the Buddha is going to be a Brahman and

then he's got to renounce the world you
taking some kind of vehicle to renounce
the world and then he's G to like do
these harsh austerities the dukar aaria
and he's going to have like certain
people doing the the auster ities with
him and then he's going to get
enlightened sitting under a certain tree
after receiving milk rice from a woman
and you know it's the same kind of like
template but it's not the same Buddha
every time and there's always
differences so there's certain
patterns that are cyclically repeated in
time but it's not just an exact like
rerun because if it was an exact rerun

there would there could be really no no
dum because nobody could possibly become
enlightened unless you just like a
questioner asked earlier on he's like
you become enlightened and then reset
hits and then you're unenlightened again
and then you have to become enlightened
just over and over and over again but
Buddhism doesn't teach that and I don't
think that's the way it
works
so I guess I finished I guess I answered
that one more or less so I'm just going
to move on to the next question and
we're getting close to the bottom here
no worries there we're yeah we're going
to be way less than 3 hours not less

than two hours though so this next question is from PSA and PSA says do you like doing the gritty and I don't even know what the gritty is my woman is of the opinion that it's some kind of dance but no I don't I don't dance that much if at all and uh even if the gritty isn't a dance I'm pretty sure I don't do the gritty unless gritty is cooking something on a griddle and I don't I don't think we even have a griddle maybe we have a griddle but I don't know so yeah let's just uh skip that question because I don't even know what the gritty is next question from PSA what is your favorite sua of the

majima Naya and why well the one the

first suta that comes to mind would be

the dean Naka sua which I mentioned I

think in the previous Q&A and the reason

why I like the dean nakas suda is

because the message is an archaic

message you know it's apparently a very

old

suta that you know it's just saying

don't believe

anything and um according to the the the

suta there's a non- Buddhist philosopher

named Dean nakaka who is a relative of

of venerable saruta who was one of the

Buddha's Two Chief

disciples and so venerable sarha is

Fanning the Buddha while this

conversation is taking place between the Buddha and the non- Buddhist philosopher Dean naka

and deaga says nothing is acceptable to me and the implication is is that no belief no point of view is acceptable to him that he's a radical skeptic and then the Buddha says well this idea that nothing is acceptable to you is acceptable to you isn't it so I mean you still have this belief you still have one belief too many you still have this one last

attachment and then it caused deaka to have a kind of insight not he didn't become fully enlightened but I think he

became a soda paana or some such but it
caused Sara to become enlightened so
this is a relatively early suta at least
even going with like the traditional
timeline because this is the suta that
caused one of his chief disciples to
become
enlightened um another one of my
favorite sutas in the majaya is the
alagad upam Su which I mentioned before
it contains the simile of the raft the
simile of the water snake it's in a way
it's sort of like a compilation of
well-known sayings of the Buddha that
were considered to be important um and
it's just like in different little
chapters you know different

scenes so it's possibly a later suo that
is a compilation of older material and I
mean this the simile of the raft is
really an important one to bear in mind
you know it's it's an important suta or
important simile to I mean to if you
want to understand dhamma it helps for
you to understand
that dhama is a raft made of rubbish
that it's not some kind of sacred Golden
Law you know that's you know just
completely Sublime and perfect and
sacred it is a it's just this Jerry
rigged Contraption made of rubbish that
you use to get across the flood of
samsora and then you just throw it

away so um PSA this this next one isn't exactly a question it's just he he left this comment and I would like to comment upon the comment PSA says I asked chat GPT what's the meaning of your name and this is the answer so chat GPT speaks the term poasa and then in ply for some reason it has has the word the name poasa in D nagari
script so the term poasa and then ply in David nagari script translates to language of wisdom or speech of wisdom it is derived from two components PA meaning wisdom or Insight basa meaning speech or language in Buddhist text P basa refers to speech or communication that reflects wisdom especially in the

context of expressing teachings
understanding and insight in a way that
leads to Enlightenment or deeper
understanding of reality the term
emphasizes the power of wise speech one
that is informed by the right
understanding of the nature of existence
leading others toward Clarity and wisdom
and chat GPT is
wrong in a way this is kind of good news
for people who are concerned about AI
becoming omniscient and just or just
sentient and taking over because chat
GPT doesn't know what the [__] it's
talking about I mean the PA part is good
that PA means wisdom or understanding

something like that but basa I mean it

completely leaves out the O that it

would just be paasa and not P basa if it

meant you know speech of wisdom which it

doesn't

obasa um I

mean basa just setting just forget the o

for a second basa can have two different

meanings it can mean language or it can

mean

light and so obasa can have two

different meanings that O is a prefix in

in in Sanskrit it would be Ava Ava in in

poly it's just o and it implies a

downward motion so um with regard to

light it means like down shine sort of

like the sun shining down on us but in

language it's like speaking down which

means like

insinuation you know it's like

innuendo and pretty obviously my name

doesn't mean

innuendo of wisdom that it means

downshot poly very well let's just leave

it at

that and that wasn't even a question so

let's just move on to the next question

and this is the very last question very

last one this is from orc

boled and orc bolv says does listening

to dissonant and evil sounding music

produce negative Karma the reason why I

ask this is because I enjoy extreme

metal black metal to be specific which usually deals with morbid themes and uses dissonant chords to produce an especially infernal atmosphere I don't find myself in negative States when I listen to this stuff but I wonder if it's still affects me anyways well if it didn't affect you it would have no effect on you and then you wouldn't bother to listen to it obviously it has an effect and as I mentioned earlier in Buddhism listening to any music is more or less immoral because it's wallowing in sensuality so I mean for Lay people you know you're not going to be a perfected

Saint in this life so long as you remain
a lay person with a job and a family and
you know
just secular interactions to participate
in and all that that so I mean just
listening to music I listen to music
sometimes
too but um yeah listening to devil music
definitely it's going to have an effect
on you I mean I don't I don't like black
metal like this like this throat
screechy stuff I mean it's like
deliberately ugly it's deliberate
ugliness in that sense I mean some of
the guitar might be really good but and
and there might be sort of transitioning

back and forth between like real singing
and like melodic kind of music and then
just the Roaring and
screeching but listening to all that
roaring and screeching I mean it's
certainly going to have an effect on you
and I mean if it didn't have any effect
you wouldn't you wouldn't bother to
listen to
it and I mean my brother used to listen
to a lot of like really like heavy metal
like Iron Maiden kind of stuff and even
the album covers it's all these de
demonic you know what's his name Eddie
this Eddie and all these I mean he's
obviously some kind of
demon and just the metal the music

itself it's I mean it does not it's not

conducive to peace of mind it's more

conducive to

agitation

um yeah I mean I can't really just

pronounce definitively that it's going

to have a negative bad effect on anyone

who listens to it

but I mean if you listen to it like

analytically just trying to understand

the the chord patterns and all this kind

of stuff it might I mean it might be no

worse than any other kind of music but

just getting into listen like listening

to morbid lyrics and the just the

screeching and roaring and all that yeah

it's it's definitely going to have sort
of like a more or less demonic kind of
influence on your
mind not that I'm suggesting that you
should be listening to Aba or the Bay
City Rollers or something like that man
but I have to admit I do like like hard
metal but it has to be like
melodious
like um just look at like Leo morichi
and some of his covers he does like
metal covers of non-metal songs like
Funky Cold Medina by Leo Mor Leo morichi
who's got like a a braided beard it
looks really nice might I might do that
someday but I mean some of the guitar
playing in that is just really good even

though he does some yelling but it's

it's like good spirit I mean Funky Cold

Medina is not exactly a satanic song

it's it's about like an aphrodesiac but

it's like a joke song or Leo mori's

cover of uh Blue Monday that's good too

that's really good

or just Led Zeppelin I mean I realize

that Jimmy pige may have made a deal

with the devil you know he may have

worship demons or some such but at least

their music is you know it's musical but

then again people have different

standards some people like banjo music I

mean Foggy Mountain Breakdown is good

listening I have to admit some people

like country western music I just do not like country western music I I've never liked it's music is a kind of emotional communication you know it's like an emotional language and it it's not really so much in words even though you've got lyrics but it's it's more at an emotional level it's it's like conveying emotions to the to the hearer and some people just like these sappy kind of emotions like people in like I don't know like really mellow music doesn't really appeal to me so I I have to admit I do prefer music as a kind of stimulant than a sedative that if I want to calm down I'll just listen to silence so I don't like music That's

supposed to like mellow you out and calm
you down because silence works better
for that but some like a certain kind of
caffeine kind of effect that some some
good rock and roll I I really like
that but uh yeah I my own feeling is
this isn't really an intellectual
philosophical idea it's it's just more
of this feeling that I have that I mean
you listen to like demonic throat
screechy kind of roaring music it is
going to have more of a negative effect
than if you listen to something
uplifting
so I guess I answered that question and
so I guess I answered all the questions

and so I guess we're done and so like I
always should say at the beginning and
almost never do
if you have any questions you think I
could answer about early Buddhism about
Buddhism in general Terra Auto Buddhism
in particular like Eastern philosophy
Western philosophy monasticism
meditation me personally that kind of
stuff there's a good chance I'll be able
to answer it in something remotely
resembling and intelligent
manner but I mean if you
like YouTube personalities people that
have written a book and are kind of of
famous there's a good chance I will have
never heard of these person just like

I've never heard of doing the

gritty so just bear that in mind and no

more than three questions per person per

episode

please and uh I guess I should uh say if

uh you haven't liked this video but you

made it this far you apparently liked it

at least a little bit so you might as

well hit the like button feel free to

leave comments below uh subscribe if you

haven't already and uh be happy and now

I'm going to hit the stop recording

button

Okay
then. Hello and welcome to question and
answer number
136. So many question and answers so far
and it's just going to get more in all
likelihood. I am your host as usual,
Pony Bosa, and I have decided to kind of
change things up a bit just for the sake
of being
spontaneous and unpredictable. And so
I'm starting with the emergency backup
beverage tonight instead of the
designated primary beverage or
DPB. The primary primary beverage is
waiting while I drink the emergency
backup beverage first. And also for the

sake of just innovation, I guess I'm
going with a red
umbrella. So I'm just going to lick
the beverage off the
umbrella, throw it onto the desk, take a
swig. Ah,
smooth. And I'm just going to commence
to answering questions. And the first
question is from
Salina. And Sina says, "What do you
think of umbrella usage of Burmese
monks?" And I really don't think all
that much about Burmese monks using
umbrellas. I mean, some monks use a lot
of umbrellas. They use them as parasols
or sun shades as much as they use them
to keep them from rain. And it actually

works better as a sunshade because those paper umbrellas that Burmese monks use if they're new, then when they get wet, this like reddish dye drips off of them and gets onto your clothes and stuff, which is not cool.

So, I mean, with regard to umbrella usage of monks, I mean, you can say that it's kind of wimpy. A real aesthetic wouldn't bother using a parasol or a like an umbrella. And it is against the rules to use them in public. So, if you see a monk holding umbrella in public, even if it's pouring down rain, that's against the rules. Unless maybe he's sick, then he may have an excuse. Um,

but usually they're supposed to be used only like um outside of of populated areas, you know, like in the forest, like you're they're on the on the road walking from one village to another. You could use them then or you could use them inside the monastery. And it it is allowable in vineia texts. Although it may be sort of a later development as monks were getting wimpier, you know, less hardcore in their aestheticism that somebody allowed them to use umbrellas. And um yeah, I I didn't use them much. I think I had one. Yeah, I did have one. I had an umbrella. In fact, I had like a

Thai crot or sometimes it's called a glot, which is a great big umbrella with a detachable uh handle and there was like a a mosquito net that would hang down and there was a hook on the top. You could hang it from like the branch of a tree and then you could stay underneath the tree without being eaten alive by mosquitoes. So, I had one of those. It was kind of nice. Although um in order for the mosquito net to shed water, it's it's like really super fine mesh. It's like women's panty hose, you can't really even see the holes through it. So the water just kind of sheets off the outside of it, but also it very much

reduces air circulation inside. So there's no breeze coming through. And then you can just I mean there was one time I was living in a forest and I was using one of these crots that imported from Thailand and it was so hot and humid that I'd sit inside the mosquito net until I was just sweltering just drenching in sweat. Then I'd have to like get out from underneath it just to get some fresh air and then just be eaten alive by mosquitoes till I couldn't stand being eaten alive by mosquitoes again. So then I'd go back under the mosquito net and just start sweltering and drenching in sweat again. It was just sort of back and

forth. But what I think is more interesting from like a sociological point of view is the use of fans in by Burmese monks because it's it's sort of falling out of fashion. It used to be like a hundred years ago that Burmese monks always carried a big fan with them and it wasn't so much to to like fan themselves in hot weather. It was used as a kind of shield like like a hundred years ago and more when a Burmese monk would give a sermon he would be holding this fan right in front of his face so that you couldn't see his face when he was given the sermon. But that wasn't the reason for it. The reason for it was

um to prevent monks from being distracted by like young like nubile females in the audience. So he's like protecting himself from impure thoughts by putting this obstacle in between himself and the audience. But that has fallen out of fashion since Burma got independence from the British, I think. So with regard to umbrella usage in Burmese monks, um you can say that it's kind of a sign of wimpiness, but still it's it's allowable according to the rules of monastic discipline. as long as they're not doing it in among the houses like in in like towns or villages, which they generally do. Just like they wear shoes in towns and

villages, it's against the rules for a monk to wear shoes in populated areas. Also, he's supposed to go barefoot unless he's like unwell or like the pavement is so hot that you couldn't walk on it barefoot without burning your feet. Something like that.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And this is from Ulianis, one of my favorite Roman emperors, by the way. And he says, "Can you comment on your next live? How to get a job on a boat? What did you do? Tell us about your adventures." So, how to get a job on a

boat? Gosh, I mean, in my case, there were just postings. There was like a bulletin board in the biology department of my university. They just had like job postings and one of the job postings was like a a biologist working on board foreign fishing vessels that were mostly fishing in the Bearing Sea, which is in between Alaska and like Siberia. And so I thought, well, it's a way of making money during the summer. So I did it. And then it just I just kept doing it because it was a convenient way of making money and you only had to work like six or seven months a year and you couldn't spend your money while you were working

because you were on a ship, you know, just like, you know, maybe pay your rent in advance or something. So, I mean, that was how I got a job on a boat. Um, and I was a fisheries biologist, which meant that I was taking biological samples of what mostly I worked on Japanese ships. So, what the Japanese were catching, you know, what species, how many of each species, you know, the average weight, the, you know, the sometimes with some kinds of like high value fish, you'd be measuring, you know, proportions of males to females and their their lengths and so forth. uh if they catch prohibited species like

tanner crabs or king crabs or halibet or salmon, you know, you gota like observe how they're treating them and what the viability is. You know, if they're going to be tossed back overboard, are they going to be alive or dead or dying, that kind of thing. and then send radio reports every week to the National Marine Fisheries Service in Seattle just uh you know giving my reports on you know what they were catching, where they were catching it, you know how much of each kind of fish they were catching, that sort of

thing. Um now it's foreign fisheries are were being phased out towards like the the '9s. In the 90s, the Americans were

gearing up to catch the the low value fish like pollic. You know, it's like the biggest fishery in the world 20 years ago. I don't know what it is now. It used to be like the Peruvian anchoveta fishery was the world's biggest fishery. That got replaced by the bearing sea pollic fishery, which is what most fish sticks and like fake crab meat and stuff is made out of now. Merluchia Pradua is the scientific name of the Pacific Pollock. And uh let's see, I'm not sure what got me onto that particular tangent into that particular strain of tangential thought, but I mean the

biggest

adventures I had, it was mainly just

stormy seas. I mean um during the winter

time in the Bearing Sea, it's just

pretty much a three-monthlong storm. So

yeah, there was, you know, storms where

the wind is blowing like 60 knots for

two or three days straight and it's just

the waves are just like these big moving

hills and the it's I mean I liked it.

That kind of thing was very exciting to

me. You know, it's just just awe

inspiring just the sheer power of

nature. Although the Japanese didn't

like it much. I mean, partly it's a

safety hazard and all that and also what

was probably even worse is they had to

shut down the fishing operations and stop making money. And the Japanese they they they just work like robots or slaves, you know, it's just all about making money. The only time they would pay any attention to the Shinto shrine on in the wheelhouse, you know, every Japanese ship pretty much, at least in the fishing fleet, has a Shinto shrine in the wheelhouse. The only time they would make pay any attention to the Shinto shrine is when they wanted to make more money, you know, like they weren't catching enough fish or something. So, they'd make little offerings of saki or

whatever. But with regard to getting a fish on a getting a a job on a fishing boat, I'm not exactly sure. I mean, you have to I mean, now you can do a search on the internet for, you know, fisheries, Alaskan fisheries. And um I mean, if you if you're not like a skilled fisherman, you know, you don't know how to like men nets, that kind of thing. If you know how to men nets, you could probably get a job pretty easy. Someone who can tie nets, that's Yeah, that's that's like a a very valued skill. or if you're a good cook, you can get a job as a cook on on one of these fishing boats. And I worked on a crabbo once where the guys were, and

this was like back in the the late 80s, late 1980s. And the guys were complaining they were only making like a,000 bucks a day and it wasn't even worth the the the time and effort to be there, you know? It's like,000 bucks a day. That's nothing.

So, I mean, even the cook, you know, he's going to be like a grunt laborer on the back deck when he's not cooking. So, I mean, he's making big money, too. But, I mean, if you're not particularly skilled with regard to much of anything, you can still get a job on like a factory trwler, you know, working down in the factory, you know,

processing, you know, cere, which is the stuff that they turn into fake crab meat, that kind of thing. But um exactly how you go about getting a job like that nowadays, I can't really say. Your best bet would be to look up, you know, shipping companies or like uh fisheries, you know, some kind of some kind of company with like a fishing fleet, that kind of thing. If you have a degree in biology, maybe you could consult with National Marine Fishery Service, something like that, and get a job as a biologist, which would be by far the lowest paid person on the ship. Cuz when people were on on that crabbo, I was working for the Alaska Crab Coalition at

the time, just doing a study on molting king crabs. And when the same time these guys are bitching about making only a,000 bucks a day, I was making maybe a hundred bucks a
day. So if you're going to be a biologist working on one of these ships, be prepared to be by far the lowest paid person on the ship cuz just grunt laborers with an IQ of 80 will be making several times more pay than you are making. Which is just it is. I'm not complaining. It's just a little bit ironic that I went to college to get paid, you know, onetenth of what some of these guys were

making. So, let's
see. The only other adventures aside
from storms,
uh, I mean, just catching people
breaking the law and you have to report
it or the Japanese, they actually go to
seminars or they used to. I mean, this
is I was I was doing this job back in
the 80s and 90s or the 80s
mainly. They go to seminars on how to
deceive the fisheries biologist, you
know, how to have him look in one one
way when you're cheating in the other
way or how much you can cheat without
being against the law, you know, within
the the the margin of error kind of
stuff. So it was the Japanese were tough

to actually catch them breaking the law. Even though they obviously were breaking the law still. I mean they were very good at just be very politely lying to your face or just you know just not saying much at all and getting away with it. The Polish ship I worked on, they were easier to catch. They weren't as good at cheating. They probably didn't go to those
seminars. And let's see. Just another kind of adventury kind of thing that was kind of exciting to me but might not be exciting to other people was just sometimes weird stuff comes up. Especially if they're like trollling in

deep water. You get all this weird deep water stuff coming up like blob sculpins. There was one kind of some of the fishermen called them a jelly puss. The the American fisherman called them jelly puss. I never saw them in any any like biology book, like marine biology book. It was at first I thought it was a jellyfish cuz it was like jelly, but then if you look closely, you could see there were eight tentacles with little vestigial sucker cups embedded in the jelly. And it was just like this disc.

And to this day, I'm not exactly sure what they are, but I mean, they're obviously like

a sephalopod mollk related to to the
octopus that just kind of evolved in a
different
direction. So, I mean, that was kind of
exciting to me, but that's about it. I
mean, it was a long time ago. So, I'm
just going to move on. Next question.
This from Stellar Supreme, formerly
known as Libra Lamb, etc., etc., etc.,
etc.
Instiller Supreme etc etc
says do you feel there is any
issue with a Buddhist monk praying for
others like God bless them
or God lift them in spirit if it's done
out of a perceived practical holistic

effect. And this is kind of a weird question. I mean a Buddhist monk doesn't really believe in God. Presumably most Buddhist monks don't. So I mean what kind of praying would it be if they're saying God bless them? I mean sometimes as a as a Buddhist monk like in a western culture I could say something like God bless you. I mean I I don't remember ever doing it but like I might think it or something. And it's sort of like translating God very loosely, you know, into something that's sort of philosophically acceptable to a Buddhist, you know, you just have to like make the translation in your head. Or I mean if you were speaking to a

westerner, you know, it might be a way of just kind of translating a Buddhist blessing into something that they would be more
like more willing to accept or able to accept, you know, something that they could understand more easily, that kind of thing.
Um, so I'm not exactly sure how Stellar Supreme, etc., etc., has envisioned the monk doing these prayers. Is he doing them out loud or is he doing them inwardly? I don't know. I mean, if you're doing them out loud, I mean, to a to another Buddhist, I mean, it'd be just kind of silly. Um, to a non

Buddhist, I mean, so long as you're
being honest and just sort of like
translating something into a term that
they can understand and accept, it might
be
okay. But, I mean,
inwardly, I mean, you'd have to do the
same thing inwardly otherwise. I mean,
if you're a theist, then you've picked
pretty much the only religion or one of
the very few religions that really does
not cater to theists, let's
say. So, after taking another drink of
my emergency backup beverage, which I'm
having first, and making sure that we
are in fact recording, and we are. I'm
pretty sure we are. Seems like we're

recording that. Uh I think I'm just
going to move on to the next question.
This is from Master
Poe. And Master Poe says, "Are you a
spring forward or fall back type?" And
he asked this question right around the
time of daylight savings time taking
effect in
America. And I'm not sure if he means
this
figuratively, like in general, am I a
spring forward or fall back type? or if
he's like referring specifically to
daylight savings time. And if he's
referring specifically to daylight
savings time, I definitely prefer fall

back, you know, setting the clock back an hour in the fall because you get an extra hour of weekend. Just recently, I was ripped off of three hours of my weekend because I had one hour of daylight savings time lost. And then I had to come to work two hours early because I've switched from 5 to 3 to 3 1, 3 in the afternoon to 1 in the morning, which works better for me, especially because I don't have to drive to work in rush hour traffic now. So, specifically with regard to daylight savings time, I much prefer setting the clock back an hour in the fall because I get a whole extra hour of weekend. And uh with regard to in

general, am I a spring forward or fall
back type? Um really I'm just sort of
uh kind of drifting forwards I guess.
um falling back that's the sort of
retreating springing forward that's just
kind of foolhardy I think you know it's
like one of the the first sutas of the
Samutinikaya talks about how a monk he
doesn't swim and he doesn't sink
essentially that's that's sort of
putting it into American terminology for
for the moment the actual like the poly
what he's saying is is
uh escaping me but it means essentially
you know, he doesn't run and he doesn't
sink, I think, is is how it's translated

from poly into English. And, you know, it's like it's it's sort of a a thing that people read and don't know how to interpret it, so they just kind of just keep reading. Like some stuff in the New Testament, you know, some Christians will read about, you know, the the the the little bit of leven put into the dough, which then levens the entire thing of dough. I mean, they don't really understand what it means. So, they just kind of just read through that and get on to something that they can understand better. And in in in these sutas, it comes up more than once. You know, he doesn't run, he doesn't sink. Running. I mean, it's like you're not

going with some sorrow, but you're not just lapsing into like some sort of unconscious trance state either. Falling back might be even worse than lapsing into a completely like neutral unconscious trance state or semiconscious almost unconscious trance state. So yeah, I'm just kind of a drifting forwards kind of a person. just kind of let let what the force of my karma just continue moving me forwards through time and uh you know dealing with issues as they arise I suppose yeah I'm not really highly directed towards future or past you know the present moment is the best moment most important

moment by far so I'm just going to move on next question this is from the saboturs and the sabaturs says, "What is the bone or bon religion? Was it original pre-B Buddha Buddhism? And was there a paganistic predecessor to ban?" Well, it's my understanding that bon is like Tibetan shamanism, which was like the primary spiritual tradition in Tibet before Buddhism moved into Tibet. And they're still bond there. I think they're called black hats.

Are they called black hats? I think they are. So there's still like a kind of bon religion in Tibet um that's probably um very much influenced by like tantric

like vajriana Buddhism like vajriana Buddhism is heavily influenced by bon also. So, it's not the original pre-B Buddha Buddhism except in Tibet because that's where Bon flourished. Um, and was there a paganistic predecessor to Bon? Bon itself is paganistic, you know, it's it's like shamanism. So, there's like magic and that kind of stuff involved. Um, and I have read it still exists as a tradition in Tibet, but there's been a lot of borrowing back and forth between like Vajriana Buddhism and this Bong. And one of the one of the reasons why Tibetan Buddhism is different from like

other kinds of Buddhism is because it moved into a country where bon this kind of shamanism was the prevailing spiritual tradition. And so of course when a a new religion moves into a a new territory that it's going to be absorbing all sorts of cultural elements from that from that civilization and the same thing is happening with like terra Buddhism moving into America and becoming like the weasa movement. So yeah, the bond religion is sort of like the what's the word the indigenous shamanistic spiritual tradition of Tibet which still exists there um in vestigial form in Tibetan Buddhism and also apparently in in its

own form just separate from Buddhism
still in Tibet if China hasn't
persecuted them out of existence or some
such
So, I guess I'm just going to move on to
this question. This is from a person
whose name was in cerillic
characters. And so, I just put it into
Google Translate to see how to hoping
that Google Translate would also
transliterate so at least I'd know how
to pronounce the name. And it came out
that the name is Mongolian.
I didn't know that in Mongolia they use
a cerillic alphabet and that it means
aesthetic journey. So Mongolian

aesthetic journey says, "How do you see the situation going on in Boda lately? Buddhist monks are doing hunger strikes there." Well, I guess it's like I mean I haven't really kept up on it. I really do not know what the situation is like in Bodega right now. I went to Bogaya like in the early 90s, spent several days there, walked around a lot, was hounded by beggars a lot. Um, and this the situation in Bogaya is like right next to Bodgaya is a Shyvite temple with lots of those uh Shiva lings and stuff which was interesting. I think I walked around in there too. And Bodga Gaya was under I mean it was like buried under several feet of earth for many years

partly because it was sort of controlled by Hindus. I mean it was sort of a Hindu majority in that area anyway and so it was sort of under the control of Hindus or earlier on protohindus and then somehow maybe through the efforts of the Mahabodhi
society. This was like in the 1800s that Buddhists finally got some kind of control over the the temple area and you know the site of the bodhic tree and all that.
how the Bodhi tree was growing under. I mean, if you go to Bodgai, you see that it's like this pit where the Bodhi tree is is, you know, it's there's like

embankments of earth around it that are several feet high, which indicates that they had to dig down. So, either this Bodhi tree was planted after they dug way down or it was it was like half buried just under sediment.

So the situation going on in Bodga Gaya lately probably isn't all that different from the situation going on in Bodga Gaya for centuries with sort of a a Buddhist minority like a an enclave of Buddhists surrounded by non Buddhists and they're trying to keep their holy site you know it's the holiest the most sacred site in Buddhism and in according to general opinion I think Bodgaya where the Buddha became enlightened

And uh yeah, I mean it's just to be expected, I guess. I mean, monks going on hunger strikes for the sake of, you know, maintaining control over the Bodhi tree and the the Bodga temple and all that. I'm not exactly sure what their motives are, so I can't really can't really judge it, you know.

So it would depend on their own motives. But uh this sort of politicking has been going on for a very long time. And uh yeah, I mean it was going on back in the times of like anti-B Buddhist Hindu kings in the Middle Ages. I'm not sure what the Muslims did, but it was I'm sure it wasn't very good.

Whatever it was that they did to Boda when they first got there probably wasn't very nice.

But again, I really cannot say for sure what the situation is like at Bodga Gaya recently because I haven't been reading up on the news and I haven't been there in quite a while. But it's going to depend on the motives of the monks there who are doing their protesting and so forth to determine whether they are well-guided or ill-guided. And so I'm just going to move on to aesthetic journey second question here.

Is any spiritual or religious benefits for Hinduists to gain if they take over sacred places of Buddha or manipulate

people that Buddha was some kind of Hinduism's
figure? What would be your take on these stuff? Well, I mean the Hindus have already, it was like in the middle ages, you know, late antiquity and early medieval era, and it was like Buddhism and Hinduism were like, you know, it was sort of like Republicans and Democrats in America. It was like these two powers, these, you know, the these two, I don't know, movements, I guess, two religions that are like striving to, you know, really become the the the religion of the masses. And there was a lot of back and forth and the the the Buddhists

were like in the ascendant you know the Buddhists were more powerful throughout much of Indian history. I mean a lot of Indians or a lot of people in general don't realize that for centuries India was a predominantly Buddhist country. Most of India was Buddhist from the time of Ashoka, you know, the 3rd century BCE up until probably the Muslim conquest of most of India in the the middle ages. So,

uh, one thing that the the Hindus did as a kind of propaganda tool is they just converted the Buddha into being an avatar of Vishnu. So according to the Hindus, the Godma Buddha was God. He was he was one of the three main Hindu gods.

He was Vishnu. Although they then kind of twisted it so that he was the deceiver. He was like leading fake Hindus away from Hinduism, you know, to purify Hinduism, that kind of thing. But Buddhism and Hinduism have I mean they have been like lending and borrowing and swiping you know like aspects from each other from the very beginning like in like the Buddha himself used a lot of Sanskrit like brahministic like vadic terminology and I mean there's a question about this later on I think it's the very last question where like advita vdanta and especially some schools of Mahayana

Buddhism. I mean they were I mean it was like convergent evolution. they were they were getting close to each other because they were like borrowing ideas from each other and also in India ancient India especially there was a tradition of public debates with regard to philosophy and spirituality and so forth and it kept the religious system the spiritual like atmosphere of India very vibrant and strong because when you've got a monopoly with going whether it's in economics or religion then you wind up with like a lower quality product with jacked up prices. That's just the way monopolies work. But if you've got competition like all these

different schools like debating with each other and you know sort of competing against each other, it keeps everyone on their toes and it causes everyone to like fix the like the sloppy reasoning in their philosophy that I mean some some religious systems they just have like they have these doctrines that just cannot stand up to scrutiny. And one reason why they can they have the luxury of having these doctrines that can't stand up to scrutiny is they don't allow scrutiny. You know, it's like they just clamp down. They they they persecute heretics. And you know, it's just you've

got this monoculture going. That was
like Catholicism in in the West
for a thousand years
approximately. Uh in India, it just
wasn't like that. So there's a lot of
borrowing ideas and lending ideas and
just everyone is like continually
refining their philosophy just to stand
up to the attacks of all these other
philosophers that are attacking
them. So I guess I should get back to
the question though is any spiritual
religious benefits for Hinduists to gain
if they I never heard the term Hinduist
before but it kind of makes sense. if
they take over sacred places of Buddha
or manipulate people that Buddha was

some kind of Hinduism speaker. Yeah. Well, I mean for the Hindus to say that Buddhism is just like this weird branch of Hinduism, you know, it sort of strengthens Hinduism because it includes all the Buddhists too. And it's good for propaganda, you know, that Buddhism is just some sort of schismatic sect of Hinduism, which it isn't. But still um you know you've got the the pride in you know Barat you know you've got Indian nationalism especially nowadays where they're trying to like unify the at least the main nucleus of the culture which involves you know using a little bit of religious propaganda and I mean

the Buddhists did the same thing like they they took Indra the patron deity of the Indo-Aryans and converted him into a Buddhist named Saka

you know, it's it it goes both ways. You know, there's it's just sort of like dirty fighting going both ways to some degree. So, spiritual or religious benefits from Hindus to take over Bodha in this case. I mean, they were in control of it for centuries already and then they kind of lost control of it for a while. Now they're trying to get control of it back going with the idea that Buddhism is just a kind of schismatic sect of Hinduism. Anyway,

um it's mostly like politics and nationalism more than genuine spirituality. And I mean for a Buddhist, he can go and pay respects at the Bodhic Tree regardless of whether the board of directors is Hindus or Buddhists. So it's really not that important of a thing in my opinion. So that's my take on it. And so I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Meditators Library. And Meditators Library says, "Will you accept these sutas as first, second, and third sermon, genuine Buddhist teachings? First sermon, the Damachaka Poatana

Suta. Second sermon, the
Anatalakanasuta. Third sermon, the Adita
Paraya Suta, more commonly known as the
fire sermon. It's all on fire. Samsara
is
burning. I was thinking to post them on
my channel. Thank you. Well, um it's
kind of complicated like KR Norman wrote
this controversial essay pointing out
that the damachaka poet nasau which is
according to tradition the Buddha's
first sermon after he became
enlightened. It's called the damachaka
poetuta which means the setting the the
wheel of dharma in motion. the discourse
setting the wheel of dharma in motion um
that I mean this is he's first laying it

down whereas KR Norman points out that there are certain statements in this suta that presuppose already knowing certain Buddhist doctrines that it's in a way it's kind of anacronistic and so you can say the damachaka nasau I mean it's not just pristine verb verbatim quotes of the Buddha that there's I mean it was a verbal tradition for centuries before things were written down and I mean the Indian mind really isn't at least traditionally really keen on accurate recordkeeping and historical accuracy and so forth so there's been some changes made that it may very well be

there's no way of knowing for sure it
may very well be that something along
the lines of the damachaka portuta
was you know like the Buddha's first
utterance like the he in in that suta
he's talking about the four noble truths
and the middle path those are like the
two main things and those are like two
of the just the the central tenets of of
Buddhist philosophy so there's a very
good chance of it but there's no way to
know for sure with regard to the anotal
lakanasuta
um yeah I'm not sure I mean that's
mainly about no self and that was the
the discourse that caused his first five
disciples to become fully enlightened

upon hearing that

discourse. Um, but I mean there's no way of knowing for sure that there are sutas that I think might be earlier like sutas of the atikawaga. Some scholars considered the atukawaga to be so archaic that it may have been pre Buddhist and it was just that early Buddhists really liked the poems or the the sutas of the atikawaga and just incorporated them into the canon. I don't think so personally. I think that the atikawaga represents very early teachings of the Buddha.

Um, but how I mean if they're more archaic in their message than something

like the damachaka suta, then how do you reconcile this? How do you make a chronological order? And I don't think there's any real way of doing that. I mean, it's it's all going to be guesses. You can't know for sure. Even if you had some kind of time machine where you can go back into the past, who knows? It may be that there's an infinite number of paths and you're just going into into one possible one in which case it's even more academic whether the Buddha really did have his first three sermons being the ones that are traditionally recognized as his first three sermons you know damachaka nasuta the anatalaka nasuta and the fire

sermon so I mean that's what it says like in the the mahawaga of the the vineya which starts with, you know, the the early history of Buddhism, starting with the Buddha's enlightenment and what he did after he became enlightened. I mean, the those are the first three sermons that he gave. So, I mean, not including some little utterance he gave to an AIA who then walked away saying, "Well, maybe so." He's kind of shaking his head. So, yeah. I mean your best bet is just to if you're going to post these sutas as you know the three tra I mean just say that according to Buddhist

tradition these are the Buddha's first
three formal sermons after his
enlightenment but I mean there's no way
of knowing with 100% certainty I mean
there's always going to be a certain
amount of guessing
involved so
uh Uh, I think I answered that
one. So, I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from
Thoughtfog. And Thoughtfog says, "Do you
go out of your way to go to any
conventions? Art cons, UFO cons, builder
conventions, magic, the gathering
conventions, inshallah. Do you visit any
type of conventions that have anything
to do with your taste?" No, I don't. I

can't remember ever going to a convention ever. Not in my the course of my entire life do I recall ever going to a convention. It may be that I did and it just didn't really make an impact on me. So that I'm it's just I'm missing it right now. I know I'm not not seeing it in my memory. So yeah, I mean I've never really been into that sort of thing. Um I've never even been to like a Buddhist convention, not even as a a Buddhist monk. No, of course that's partly because nobody ever invited me. The person that I was ordained with, who I

think is still in robes right now, he went to a like some international Buddhist convention and gave a speech, but I wasn't asked to go, so I didn't.

So yeah,

I Yeah, I mean, for me, even going to a county fair is kind of a big deal. That's about as close to a convention as I've as I've gone to, I think, is just going to a county fair or when I was in college, I'd go to like biology seminars, that kind of thing. So, I think I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Quistor. And Quistor said, "Did the Buddha reject aseticism on the grounds that the

intention behind it was not specifically to cultivate equinimity?" Well, he did not reject aseticism. Anyone who looks at the middle path and like the 13 dutongas which are optional aesthetic practices not required on monks but they are allowable like never lying down just sleeping in a sitting position you know eating only one meal a day that kind of thing. Um and that's relatively aesthetic for especially from like a modern western point of view. It would just be like just beyond the the pale of what would even be considered acceptable. You know, it's the middle path between self-indulgence and self

torture would be considered unacceptable self- torture by most westerners. And so you have western Buddhists wallowing in sensuality as a result. So yeah, the Buddha did not reject aeticism. He rejected like deliberate self- torture. And there is a difference. I mean Buddhist aestheticism is you just kind of throw yourself on the mercy of the universe. You're not like deliberately hurting yourself like some ancient like aesthetics were doing. Like one of my favorite stories of the Dharmapata commentary is this guy wants to become an aivaca. The Ajivaca, it was a spiritual tradition that was more popular in the Buddhist time than

Buddhism was. Now it's now extinct, but they were like hardcore aesthetics. They were so aesthetic that they would make fun of of the Buddhists as like shavenheaded
householders, shavenheaded lay people. You know, they get to wear shoes, they get to use umbrellas, they get to use walking sticks, you know, they just sneer at the Buddhists. And anyways, this guy, he wants to become an Aivaca. So, he goes to the Ajivacas. The first thing they do is they hold him down. They put two planks across his chest. And then these the biggest Aivacas there kind of sit down on these planks to hold

him down. And then this other Ajivaca takes this special comb that they use which grips the hair and just rips the hair off of his head and rips his beard and mustache off. And that was that was just to get him ready to join. So that kind of thing you you didn't see in Buddhism. So, I mean, Buddhism wasn't as aesthetic, but it certainly was aesthetic when you're wandering around homeless with no money, begging silently for your food in the streets, just sleeping under trees in the forest, that kind of thing. Then, yeah, that's relatively aesthetic. They're not sleeping on beds of nails. They're not sleeping on broken glass,

anything like that. But still they're like avoiding pleasure and pain to the extent that it's convenient. I mean some pleasures you just can't avoid. Like taking a bath is kind of pleasant. Eating food is kind of pleasant. Sleeping can be kind of pleasant. So they just kept pleasure to a minimum and just kind of just living that lifestyle. Occasionally there'd be a certain amount of pain or discomfort and then they would just accept that with equinimity without without running away from it and without like seeking it out. So that's kind of the the approach the Buddhists take is just you know you

don't run away from it, you don't seek it out and then you just deal with whatever comes your way.

So I don't think the Buddha rejected extreme aestheticism on the grounds that the intention behind it was not spec specifically to cultivate equinimity. It's just it becomes a distraction. You know, you're hurting yourself and also you're making like bad karma against yourself. So like the Janes, they were trying to accelerate the burning off of their karma. They were trying to get their karma down to zero. Buddhists don't bother with that. James, they're trying to get their karma down to zero.

And so they're trying to burn off their bad karma by accelerating bad things happening happening to them on purpose. And the Buddha just says that doesn't work. You're making more karma when you do that. So it was just counterproductive. You know, when you're just messing yourself up so that you're your health is broken, for example, your mind isn't clear because of just self-starvation and so forth. You can't practice dharma as well.

So, I'm just going to move on to Quisator's second question, which is what are the origins of the concept of punishment or hell and

reward or heaven outside of Buddhism? Well, that would probably go all the way back into like stone age animism. You know, it's like there'd be like taboos. You don't piss on the ground on this hill because the the deity there, the spirit there doesn't like it and he's going to [__] you up. possibly [__] up the whole tribe if you dare to piss on the ground there or you know you you eat some forbidden species of animal that's sacred to the tribe. This kind of thing that that's probably where the concept of punishment and reward come from. If you do the make the offerings to the gods properly, you get rewarded. you're going to have better hunting, for

example, maybe better weather, you know,
and if you don't make the gods happy,
you know, the the
the deities, the spirits that that are
like more powerful than humans and are
like controlling the weather and all
this that I mean, if you make them
happy, you get rewarded and if you make
them unhappy, you get punished. And that
probably goes way back, way into the
stone age, back into hunter gatherer
times.
And then it just got kind of refined and
modified until now you've got you've got
different theories instead of you know
animism. So I'm just going to move on to

Quoistor's third question which is experiencing sensuality with mindfulness and equinimity seems to be an effective way of overcoming it. From your experience as a monk, do you feel that abstinence is a more effective method of losing interest in samsara? Well, it it works differently for different people. It's not one sizefits-all. Like some of the best monks, including the Buddha himself, came from like a very self-indulgent kind of culture. They they had it all, you know, anything they wanted, they could get practically, you know, within the realm of possibility. And some people that are

like mature spirits, they've got some wisdom. They realize, you know, I I've lived this life of just getting everything I want and I'm still not satisfied. So then sometimes this kind of person makes a better monk than like some Burmese siato who was ordained as a child and you know he's never had sex. He's never had a drink of alcohol. He's he's never danced. You know it's like he doesn't have the resistance to this sort of thing. he comes to America and it's like like when alcohol or tuberculosis first came to North America, you know, it's like the natives there had no resistance and it just wiped them

out. So, I mean, for some people
experiencing sensuality with or without
mindfulness and equinity, I mean, just
to get your full your fill of it and
realize that it's just not going to
help. But it may be that you're already
riddled with STDs. Your health is
already broken down by the time you have
this
realization. So experiencing sensuality
of mindfulness and ego that would be
like
tantra. And I mean for some people it's
an effective way but it's it's playing
with fire metaphorically almost
literally it's playing with fire
especially if you follow the fire sermon

when samsara is in flames.

So I mean for different people it works different ways and your own karma is probably going to guide you to the most appropriate way of practicing dharma. So I mean abstinence in a way it's it's

like abstinence it's it's sort of like a jerryrigg kind of a solution to a problem. It's like you can't resist temptation. So, you just avoid the temptation until you've got enough wisdom that you can resist the temptation. And it doesn't always work that way. Like you can become a monk, you avoid all these temptations, you

know, you avoid women, you avoid money, you avoid all this stuff, avoid all these luxuries. And still you've got like the latent tendencies, the anus that just remain like uncooked seeds inside you. So that as soon as you're back exposed to it again, all these latent tendencies just come right up to the surface again. But it may be that you have enough wisdom that at least now you have a little more defense against temptation. But I'm not sure if I'm even answering this question. Experiencing sensuality with mindfulness and equinimity seems to be an effective way of overcoming it. Uh I think most people

that try tantra just get lost in it.
They just get sucked into the
sensuality. You know, they're trying to
do it with mindfulness, but there's like
this subconscious unmindful attachment
that is forming and getting stronger
without them fully realizing it until
they realize that they're addicted to to
this or that sensual indulgence that
they were doing as a kind of tantric
spiritual practice. But it doesn't
always work that way. You can deceive
yourself with
tantra probably more easily than you can
deceive yourself with just avoiding
temptation

altogether.

So I think the Buddha was a very wise man and at least for monks he he endorsed abstinence. So he probably knows better than we do and he's the one who endorsed it to begin with. I mean he wasn't the first but for Buddhists he was the first. And so I think best method of losing interest in samsara to be a detached monk and just observe with a critical eye what the lay people are still doing. Like as a monk the the one a as a young monk in Burma. The one time that I was happiest about being a monk would be whenever I would hear a screaming

baby, you know, I wasn't all doped up on parenthood hormones, so I wasn't like numb to it yet or anything like that. And it was just awful. It's like, man, I really dodged a bullet. Although, if I had to do it all over again, there's a good chance I'd I'd have kids.

So, from my experience as a monk, do I feel that abstinence is a more effective method of losing it? Yeah, I think that all in all it is the safest route even though no route is perfect. Like abstinence a lot of the time you're just avoiding the temptation and not strengthening yourself against the

temptation

necessarily. Whereas like mindful

indulgence like tantra, it's so easy to

just get sucked into it and deceive

yourself into thinking that you're doing

it right when you aren't. So all in all,

I think abstinence probably is the

safest route and the one that that works

the best for most people in the long

run. At least most really serious people

who are ready to renounce the world

anyway. I mean you have to be ready to

renounce the world even before you do

the total abstinence of a monk. I mean

lay people there's a certain absent. You

abstain from intoxicants. You abstain

from adultery. You abstain from lying

and stealing and killing. But monks take it to a whole different level where you're abstaining from just about any pleasure that is avoidable. You avoid it. And my nostrils are kind of not fully cooperating because I still have like the the last vestigages of this cold that I caught like two weeks ago. So I suppose I answered that question. So I'm just going to move on to the next one which is

from and says, "Excuse me. I wish I need to blow my nose. Just a second here. You don't have to watch this. It can get ugly. One moment,

[Applause]

please." Yeah, there's hardly anything. It's like I don't really have a cold much anymore, but still there's like like some last vestigial congestion or something. So anyways, says if we live in a world not real, be it virtual, why wouldn't a reset be viable, living the same life over facing the same challenges with the opportunity to make different choices? I guess I should mention that you did reference Einstein's theory of relativity, but because of the web telescope making scientist eat crow and going back to the drawing board, maybe just maybe our old boy Einstein is becoming irrelevant. Well, I don't know how the web telescope

would want to change relativity.
Maybe somehow and also Einstein was like
one of the first pioneers into quantum
theory with his discovery of the
photoelectric effect which earned him
the Nobel Prize which he didn't get for
his theories of relativity.
But setting Einstein aside aside,
um, yeah, I
mean, going with my theory of the
uncarved block of stone, you know,
you've got the uncarved block of stone
and inside that block of stone is every
possible
statue. Every possible statue is already
in that stone, every molecule already in

the right position, right? I mean, that shouldn't be too hard to figure out or too hard to understand.

So I mean if every possible virtual statue is in there and it's like samsara is some of these statues form stable patterns and they can interlock in stable

ways that I mean it can create a kind of virtual reality inside that block of stone even though it's not ultimately real because the statues aren't carved. It's just imagination or delusion that carves the statues.

perception. So if every single possible statue was in there, then like a recurring cycle of statues would be in

there also. But ultimately it doesn't really matter because the statues are not real. It's like a virtual conditional kind of reality. And I am reminded of one of the most mind-blowing books I've ever read called Seth Speaks. It's this woman named Jane Roberts who was channeling a multi-dimensional entity called Seth. You know, he'd be like a Brahma or something going with Buddhist terminology. And I mean, whether Seth really exists as a four-dimensional being or five-dimensional or however dimensional he was, or whether he was just like a concoction of Gene Roberts

subconscious mind, the stuff he said was mind-blowing. A lot of the stuff he said. And one thing that he did say is that rebirth doesn't necessarily work the way like Buddhism or Hinduism says it works because there's also the possibility that you can just live the same life over and make different decisions. You know, it's like you just want to master this one life and so you just keep living this one life over and over again like like Groundhog Day or something and just kind of explore the different possibilities and try to get perfect. I mean, that's a possibility, too. And I mean, it would be contained in the in the block of marble. Every

single possible statue is in

there. So, yeah. I mean, I don't think

that that's the way it that it has to

work. That's the I don't think that's

the only way that it works where there's

like this reset. But, I mean, if it

really was a reset, then it would just

be the same universe over and over

again. Unless you want to accept quantum

randomness or something just kind of

causing slight butterfly effect drifts

in different directions there is I mean

free will is logically impossible in

addition to not being endorsed by

Buddhism. So I mean you don't have that

it' just be the same thing over and over

again like Nietze eternal

recurrence.

So let's see what is the actual

question. If we live in a world not

real, be it virtual, why wouldn't a

reset be viable? Well, I mean, it's

possible. It's just not the only

possible way. And so, it's not the only

way because every possible every

possibility is contained in that block

of marble. Some of them would be form

more stable patterns than others. And so

I mean if anything is going to exist for

more than a trillionth of a second it

has to form some kind of stable pattern

and like

interlocking like entities can like help

to stabilize the pattern which then winds up with a certain flavor of samsara.

So yeah I suppose I answered that question. I'm not sure how the web telescope is undermining like Einstein but it might be. And uh I guess I have to be okay with that. So I think I'm just going to move on. Next question here. This is from Romeo. And Romeo says, "Every now and then you wear a t-shirt with a patriotic edge in your Q&As's. When you dawn your fez, you usually sneak in a plug for that feeasite. Yeah, Fezama makes really good feeasants. How about telling us

where we can purchase some of those cool t-shirts?" Oh, you mean like this one? See if you can get the whole thing in the screen there. Like that. Well, this shirt and another one that I wore a few Q&As's ago, I got for Valentine's Day from my sweetheart or for Christmas. I got them relatively recently from my sweetheart. I guess it was Christmas. And she ordered them from Infowars, like Alex, the Alex Jones site. And she said, I mean, there's other places where she could get the same kind of t-shirts, but she just wanted to support Alex Jones cuz he was being persecuted. You know, he was they

were he was at the verge of destruction. You know, he he they they he really was just right at the verge of just being sued into oblivion by leftist activist judges. Now, he was being sued literally for billions of dollars for stating his opinion, probably his honest opinion, that the Sandy Hook shooting was a kind of
hoax. And I think it was Elon Musk helping to helping him to lawyer up and finding like legal irregularities in the whole bankruptcy procedure. And like the people bidding on buying InfoWars was like the Daily Onion, which was like a a satire site.

And it turned out that they didn't even make the highest bid. It was just the judge decided it would be better for society if some parody site gets control of Infowars, which was illegal. And the whole thing collapsed. And of course, Trump won. So that now is the persecution of right-wingers or just people who who are capable of like rational thought uh is is very much reduced now. Um, but also in addition to Infowars,

um, one of my favorite t-shirts, the one with the the Mulon Lab, you know, and it has like the the the ancient Corinthian Greek helmet with like a Confederate flag on it that I got that from a a

local shop called Dixie Republic, which sells all kinds of like Confederate propaganda or Confederate paraphernalia, memorabilia, let's today. Although their Confederate flags are all made in China, so I wouldn't I wouldn't buy a flag from them. I went there to get like a one of the the Betsy Ross flags with the 13 stars in a circle and they were all made in China. So, I just wound up getting the shirt. But if you're ever in the in the vicinity of Travelers Rest, South Carolina, there is a store there called Dixie Republic where you can get, you know, like famous engravings of like Confederate Civil War heroes and this

kind of thing. And I got a shirt there. So, I mean, Dixie Republic might even have a website, so wouldn't surprise me nowadays. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Dhamma River and Dama River says, "Someone asked a question about a monk asking for money." Yeah, that was the very first question of the previous Q&A. I think I'll start over because I just interrupted myself quite rudely. Dama River says, "Someone asked a question about a monk asking for money and he actually mentioned the monk's name and description, so there can be no doubt of who it was." Well, there could still be some doubt because there is more than

one monk by that name, but I just interrupted myself again. I wonder what your opinion is regarding calling out monks publicly like that. I have mentioned before that I have lived in Thai Buddhist temples and witness witnessed famous aans doing things that let's just say they shouldn't do but I never publicly denounce them. Should we call out monks publicly for misbehaving or would that bring us bad karma? I don't want to bring disrepute to the SA or discourage others from ordaining. I always thought it was better to ask the question in general terms without mentioning specific names but at the

same time I don't want to be an

accomplice to the misbehavior of monks

thoughts

well let's see here

I partly I mean

like any action physical or verbal is

morally neutral except for the volition

that is motiv motivating it. So if

you're like wanting the SA to be good

and you're calling out a monk who is

behaving very badly, if you're doing it

out of respect for the SA and desire for

the SA to prosper and to be relatively

pure, then you're not doing anything

necessarily bad. And people, lay people

in the Buddhist time were calling out

bad monks. There was like the the rule

against a monk touching a woman that um some woman the wife of some wealthy man I think paid to have this this couti this you know meditation cabin built for a monk and then the monk is showing her that this cabin that she had built or she's showing him you know they're both there alone together and he keeps like rubbing up against her and stuff you know just for the sake of, you know, getting pleasure from the contact, rubbing up against this presumably attractive woman. She goes home and complains to her husband about how that monk was touching me the way you touch me. And then he starts complaining, you

know, to just anyone who will listen. You know, these these Buddhist monks, you know, they're like feeling up my wife, this kind of thing. Then the Buddha made the rule, you know, when it got back to the Buddha, he made the rule, no monk is allowed to touch a woman with desire for for the contact, you know, for desire for pleasure, you know, when his mind is perverted by inflamed by lust, this kind of thing. So I mean it can result in good results to call out the misbehavior of a monk, especially if you're sure. If it's just a rumor, you heard this rumor that some monk is doing something wrong. You shouldn't be going around saying it

unless you're sure. And sometimes even if you're sure, you know, it's it's it's your own call whether to to like publicize this or not. But you shouldn't do it out of like hatred for a monk. I mean, any any action motivated by hatred is going to be immoral regardless of the action. If it's motivated by hatred, it's going to be an immoral action. But any action that's motivated by like respect and sincere, you know, sincere intention for dharma to grow and prosper, to be strong and relatively pure, then what you're doing really is not a misdeed. It's not bad karma, regardless of the [__] storm that may

ensue as a result of you saying

it.

So, what is my opinion regarding calling

out monks publicly like that? I mean, if

it's just something minor that most

monks do, like handling money, then you

might as well just make it a

generalization. 98% of Burmese monks

handle money. You don't have to like

name names unless there's just some

really

outrageous example of some monk that's

charging like exorbitant fees for giving

domattox you know like like

u I shouldn't say

it but some I mean if it's like a really

egregious case I mean if you know of

some monk somebody in robes some dude
dude in monk's robes who's like um
seducing nuns or something like that.
He's not even a monk anymore. Or if he's
stealing like I knew of a monk, I used
to know this
monk who was exchanging Burmese currency
on the black market for US dollars
before leaving the country. And
technically he was like smuggling
contraband money which was a parajika
which I'm pretty sure is a parajika
offense. you know, he's excommunicated.
He's not even really a monk anymore for
having done that. That's it's kind of
controversial whether, you know,

smuggling money out of Burma is, you know, smuggling American dollars that you got on the black market out of Burma, whether that's a parajika offense. I mean, it could qualify as what's called sunka gata parajika, which is essentially like evading customs or that kind of thing, getting something through the black market. So, let's see here. I mentioned before that I've lived in Thai. Okay. Should we call out monks publicly for misbehaving or would that bring us bad karma? Yeah, I think that if there's like some high-profile monk who's doing something really bad, like

I've called out Bubody before for supporting female reproductive rights or women's reproductive rights, this kind of thing, which is a euphemism for abortion. And from the Buddhist point of view, abortion is murder. And so if any woman at all took Bubody's advice who was motivated by what Bubody said to and got an abortion, Bikubodi would be excommunicated for the rest of his life. So, I mean, sometimes it's it may be worth the the effort or worth worth the potential trouble to call out a particularly like corrupt monk for the sake of just trying to like purify the SA to some

degree. So, yeah, I don't think it's necessarily that bad. But if you're doing it motivated by hatred against that monk or aversion for that monk that you just don't like that monk, you want to see him like get, you know, just kicked out of his monastery and disgrace, that kind of thing, then you're better off using general terms, especially if the monk's doing something that lots and lots of other monks are doing like that isn't really an like a scandal, just like handling money. And then you're better off just using generalizations because that applies to most monks and not just one. So, those are my thoughts, I guess. And

so, I'm going to move on to Dummer River's second question. And he says, this is also kind of a long question. You talked about evil sounding music and lately I've noticed seriously demonic imagery in some K-pop videos or Korean pop. I have also seen this in rap music in the US. There seems to be some kind of karmic contractual disclosure on the part of the artist through the display of demonic imagery and the viewer can choose to pay attention or choose to ignore the demonic imagery but the images are being shown. Nevertheless, this is where seemingly the agreement is

made and most people just don't pay attention to it. Most people unfortunately ignore all the demonic warning signs and they just enjoy the music. Do you know if there is some kind of interdimensional energy harvesting going on through modern music? And when I read this question, it definitely reminded me of when I was in Bali in Indonesia. I met an American trumpet player. He was a black jazz musician from St. Louis. And he was kind of a conspiracy theory guy. He had lots to say about the Rothschilds, for example. He was afraid to come back to America because he was afraid he'd just get like arrested upon

arrival in America by white supremacist security guards at the airport or some such. But anyways, so I mean bearing that in mind, he did say that it's the almost the only way to really make it big in the music industry lately is through joining this cult. And I think the the being he referred to is Baffomet that there's like, you know, it runs rampant in the music industry, the secret worship of Baffomet. And I mean, take it or leave it. I have no way of of proving or disproving what he told me. I mean, he was a musician. He's a good musician. And he's kind of living in exile in Indonesia.

And I mean, he's the one that maybe he had some in inside exposure to this. You know, they're trying to get him to to like offer the the the chicken to the statue or something and he just wouldn't do it and just left the country or whatever. But um yeah, I'm not entirely sure why there's so much satanic and demonic stuff. I mean, anyone who remembers back in the 80s, I mean, I think Black Sabbath was one of the first bands to really start this stuff up. And I mean, even Black Sabbath wasn't necessarily taking the side of the devil, you know? I mean, they were like talking about how the devil is going to run rampant because of the the

degeneracy and corruption of society and all that. It wasn't until later like you know AC/DC if you're into evil you're a friend of mine and all this kind of you know it kind of sparked the satanic panic back in the 80s I think so I'm not exactly sure why I mean some like artistic types just really like to push the envelope you know they just like to to just push things and it could be that gratuitous and for the most part insincere demonic imagery is just their attempts at being edgy, something like that. Or there could be some real like Satanism or like demonic worship stuff going on in like among

higherups in the entertainment industry. It wouldn't surprise me at all. I just don't know which one it is for sure. So, I mean, it could be interdimensional energy harvesting. Yeah, I I do think that there are like demonic beings that are worshiped that are kind of egregor. It's just like all the energy like the psychic energy poured in from thousands of followers just feeds this thing and gives it existence really. You know, it's like there could be other beings that are coming in that aren't just purely egregor that really are feeding on this I don't I don't know what you'd even call it. this cult

mentality. But which one it is, whether it's just made up or whether there really is some demonic cultish stuff going on in um the entertainment industry or is in all likelihood it's probably a combination of the two, but I really can't say for
sure. So yeah, I would be careful though that about like demonic kind of music because even if just at the surface level you don't give a [__] about the imagery. I mean you're just listening to the music, you're not even watching the videos and but still I mean some of the stuff can get in like uh what's the word? uh subliminal that I mean it's

like your subconscious mind is getting
like polluted with this stuff
subliminally but I mean you gota you're
you're big boys and girls you know
you're you're adults you can make your
own decisions and you know I I listen to
Led Zeppelin sometime like I mentioned I
think it was the previous video where
yeah Jimmy Paige he was into that kind
of I mean he he bought Alistister
Crowley's house you know where there
were like demonic images painted on the
walls falls in some kind of blood and
all this kind of stuff that uh he may
have made some kind of 10-year deal with
the devil and uh you know it's like in
through the outdoor was right after the

10 years expired I guess or maybe even uh presence I was not impressed by their album Presence at all. So yeah, it's possible. I mean I don't know for sure but it's it's plausible. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Zenusoid. And some people do ask me questions where, you know, even referring to early Buddhism, you know, was the Damachaka Borosuta really the Buddhist first sermon? I mean, you can't really know the answer to these things. Even someone with like clairvoyance who looks into the past may still be mistaken. And they may be looking into

the wrong past of an infinite number of
of equally real pasts or equally
real, equally virtually
real. So some questions you just you you
really nobody can really answer them for
sure. Not that I not that I know
of. So anyways, I'm just getting on to
the next question. This is from
Xenithoid. And Xenithoid says, "Can you
give your opinion on chemtrails?" Well,
when I was a kid, they weren't called
chemtrails. They were called comtrails.
And it was I guess people who think that
these comtrails from jet planes flying
overhead are like laced with toxic
chemicals or something started calling
them chemtrails. I'm not sure what the

comm means, but I'm pretty sure the main ingredient in a comtrail is just condensation. You know, it's just cloud. You know, it's water vapor.
It's just I mean it's not smoke, you know, they look essentially the same as clouds. It's just a long straight line of a
cloud. So until I see some evidence that jetliners are spewing toxic chemicals out in these comtrails or chemtrails, I still prefer to call them comtrails.
um that they're just laced with some sort of toxic chemical, possibly as part of some kind of conspiracy to lower the IQ of people in Western civilization or

whatever it is, then I'm going to remain skeptical that that chemtrails, so-called really are any kind of dangerous thing that it's I mean, there's going to be like trace amounts of jet fuel or something that wasn't fully oxidized when it was being burned. that kind of stuff. But for the most part, I think it's pretty much just water vapor. So, I'm just going to move on to xenoid's second question, which is how [__] would America be right now if Kamala won? Well, that's hard to say, but I mean, it was I think you can just extrapolate, you know, just extrapolate from the Biden administration, just

another four years of the Biden administration with Kla Harris not really running the country anymore than Biden was. I mean the recently they found out that most of his signatures on the bills that he he signed and everything weren't even really his signature. They were just duplicates, you know, it was just like rubber stamped. And even when he did sign something, he he probably didn't even know what he was signing. They'll just say, "Here, this is important for the country. Just this is good for the economy. Sign this." That kind of thing. So yeah, I mean, how [__] would

America be right now if Kamla won? it would be just sort of continuing in the same direction that it was that it was moving when Biden was president. Also, like the EU would be emboldened, the leftists would be emboldened. There'd probably be more of a crackdown on censorship than there is now. That the the flood of illegal migrants would just continue to flow and they'd be doing everything they could to fasttrack citizenship. They're like planting them in swing states so that the swing states will just turn blue and become, you know, leftist states reliably and then they would just kind of lock down, you know, this all this US aid stuff, US

aid, you know, sort of underground slush funds to to like prop up leftist like grassroots movements supposedly paying for leftist propag propaganda paying for leftist protesters and all this that would continue with nobody being the wiser. Nobody would know about it just like we didn't know about it a year ago that this was actually happening that I mean some people were probably suspected that something like this was going on but now we got pretty much proof of it. So yeah, we just continue down the road the road of feminization and castration of Western civilization and and pretty much all of Western civilization would

be [__] except for maybe Eastern
Europe. But now we got more of a chance
of actually
um maintaining at least one
ball. So I'm just going to move on to
this question. This this is also from
Xenithoid. How long do you think it will
take for Trump to actually get prices
back down? Well, gas prices are already
going down. Egg prices that were such a
big deal are already going down, even
though the raised egg prices were
apparently a deliberate like a like a
conspiracy. You know, it's like using
bird flu as a pretext for killing off
millions of chickens and then blaming
Trump when the price of eggs is high.

So, I don't know how long it will take exactly. I'm no economist. Some prices are already going down. Like the prices for producers, you know, the factories, that's already going down. When fuel prices go down, the price of just about everything goes down because everything has to get trucked somewhere and you got to use like motorized farm vehicles to grow crops and so forth. So, yeah, I mean, prices are already starting to go down and they'll probably continue to go down. Um, but I'm no economist and so I really can't make any kind of decree or authoritative utterance on the subject. But apparently some prices are already

going down. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Indiana Dama. And Indiana Dama says, "How important is historicity for the validity of a religion? For example, if a an historical Jesus never existed, it wouldn't really impact the wisdom of teachings like let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing when performing acts of charity. Likewise, the validity of the fornable truths wouldn't be affected by the non-existence of the historical Godma Buddha. Well, I think he he picked I it's kind of not a very good choice what he picked for Christianity. Like for example, he says if an

historical Jesus never existed, it wouldn't really impact the wisdom of teachings like let your not your left hand know what your right hand is doing. But that's really not what Christianity is based on. What Christianity is based on much more than this little tidbit of wisdom regarding charity is that Jesus is the only begotten son of God and he died for our sins and he is the way, the only way to heaven.

And if Jesus never existed, that whole narrative just collapses, doesn't it? So how important is historicity in the validity of a religion? It depends on how much that religion insists upon

historicity and relies on that historicity as like the foundation of what it teaches. With regard to Buddhism, what Indiana Dama says is pretty much correct. Even if the Buddha never really existed, Dharma remains an enlightened tradition. It remains very wise. But if you've got a religion based on this person is the only begotten son of God who died for our sins, then if that person didn't exist, you're still living in original sin no matter what you do.

So it depends on how much the religion is like using as a foundation the biography of its founder or any other kind of like historical claims if it's

purely abstract which is what Buddhism
pretty much is at least terra Buddhism
it's it's just philosophy I mean the
biography of the Buddha is pretty much
irrelevant it's there for people with a
devotionalistic tendencies
who really want to revere the founder of
the tradition. But I mean the biography
of the Godma Buddha is largely
irrelevant whereas the biography of
Jesus is certainly not irrelevant to
Christianity with regard to Islam. It's
it's kind of kind of hard to
say, but I to some degree Islam also
relies on the idea that I mean God is
one God and Muhammad is his prophet. So

if there wasn't a Muhammad, then the the Quran presumably would be suspect at least. So how important is the historicity for the validity of religion? It depends on how much the religion is like relying on historicity. If it's purely abstract, you know, like like Buddhism is or not so much purely abstract as just not relying upon the biography of this or that person or any sort of historical claims that I mean even if the Buddha just never existed at all, Dhamma still remains pretty much intact. Whereas you can't see that with regard to Christianity.

Either Jesus died for our sins or he didn't. So I'm just going to move on to

the next question. This is from Mr. Pronov. And Mr. Pronov says, we're in kind of a historical vein at this point. Do you think if Alexander had continued his conquests, would he have been successful in conquering India? At the time of Alexander's invasion, Mugoda was ruled by the Nandanda Empire, which was pretty powerful. I think they may had a choice to defeat him, but what do you think? Well, I don't know if the Nanda Empire was more powerful than the Persian Empire, which was pretty damn powerful. Um, I think that I mean, the only military technology that the Indians had that may have stopped the

Greeks would be war elephants. I'm not sure how familiar Alexander and his troops were with fighting against war elephants. Like a war elephant could be scary. They got like a like a a chain on the end of their trunk and they're just whipping it and just like flattening entire platoons of soldiers in front of them, then yeah, that can be scary. But I mean, once you learn how to deal with elephants like the Romans did, they weren't afraid of them anymore. All you got to do is just take a wheelbarrow full of like straw or hay, set it on fire, and then push it towards the elephants. Elephants are afraid of fire. They'll just immediately turn around and

start trampling their own troops to get away from the fire. They're afraid of fire. So, I think Alexander, he did have a military technology that was new in the world that no other army could really stand against. And that was called the flanks. you know, it was just this wall of soldiers like maybe six or eight deep with 20 foot long spears. And I mean, you couldn't get close to them. I mean, you could shoot arrows at them, but they they also had shields. And so, they just get behind the shields until you're done shooting arrows. But still, there's these 20 foot long spears that you somehow have to get

past if you're going to to hurt those soldiers. Unless, of course, you're doing it with arrows. Um, and really it took a while. Finally, the Romans figured out a good way of defeating the flanks, which is one reason why Rome rose in ascendancy. I mean, it became more powerful than the Greeks, cuz they could deal with the flanks better than the Greeks could deal with a Roman legion. But the ancient Indians, I mean, pretty much the only thing they had going for them that was any anything that might have caused problems for Alexander's troops would be war elephants. And I mean, according to the story, when Alexander first crossed the

Indus into what was considered Indian territory, his, you know, his first major opponent was King Porus, who, you know, it's it's some sort of like helanized version of an Indian name, I assume. And it was difficult. They they were having difficulty crossing the river. And it was a hard fight. So Alexander, I mean, it wasn't just an easy win over the first Indian army that he defeated. You know, it was it was a difficult fight. He had to like trick Porus by, you know, he was like marching his most of his men back and forth at the river, making it look like they're getting ready to cross. Whereas he sent

uh a like some of his best troops way the hell upstream, you know, miles away to cross up there where nobody was expecting them to cross and then they were able to come and make like a flank attack which then distracted them enough that that uh Alexander's troops were able to win.

But I think Alexander probably would defeat any Indian army including armies of the Nanda Empire so long as they knew how to deal with war elephants. And like Alexander's successors started relying heavily on war elephants like the the the war of the the diadeoki I think it's called like where like Alexander's chief generals were like fighting against each

other trying to get control of as much territory as they could after Alexander died they were relying heavily on war elephants and war elephants were significant uh in the victory of the winning
side. So, I don't know. It's it depends, like I keep saying, on whether the the Macedonian the Greek Macedonian army knew how to contend with war elephants or
not. So, I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Kundrew. Let's see. I'm just scrolling down a little bit. Okay, Kundrew. Kundrew says, "In Thailand and Laos,

I've noticed that when monks are invited to chant at a recently deceased person's home, they usually chant Patana and the Matika. Is this practiced in Burma as well? And why do you think these texts in particular are chanted during chanting ceremonies?" Well, to tell you the truth, I'm not exactly sure what the Matika is. I mean there is no book in the typetica called the montika. There's no group of books in the typica called the matica. It's my understanding that the matika originally were a kind of protoidama and patana is the seventh and last book of the abidama pitica which like I was mentioning in a previous Q&A

is mainly dealing with causal relations
is how different things relate or how
how they have relation how they relate
to each other how they cause anything in
the other you know how causality works
is essentially what Patano is about. And
it's so abstract, so complicated that
it's pretty much unreadable even for
Abidama scholars. So this is the first
I've ever heard that in Thailand in Laos
monks like when they're invited to chant
at a recently deceased person's home,
they will chant Patana and the matika.
I've never heard of that before. In
Burma generally they just chant um
parita and parita is just like the

protection chants like the the sutas
some of which are in the the
pseudapitica and some of which are like
apocryphal that are chanted just to give
blessings and they're considered to have
some sort of beneficial effect on
like subduing ghosts and and keeping
trouble away that kind of thing. helping
people in their health, that sort of
thing. So, yeah, in Thailand and Laos, I
mean, you might want to ask a monk in
the the Thai or le Oceanian tradition
why it is that they do this. I mean, I
mentioned uh in the previous Q&A, I'm
pretty sure that in Burma, they do have
what's called a Patan Pu or Patana
festival where they will just chant

Patana like day and night, just
constantly for days.
And the reason they do that is just to
keep the typica alive. Because according
to tradition that Patana being the last
book of the
typica that when the typica fades out
due to impermanence, it's going to be
the last parts of it that fade out
first. So when the Burmese are chanting
batana, they're just making sure that
dhamma doesn't fade out by preserving
the last text because the last text is
going to be the first to fade
out. So why the ties would do that for a
recently deceased lay person, I I have

don't have a clue. I do not know unless it's something similar to what the Burmese are doing or maybe they're just it's just some meaningless tradition or like a a tradition that used to have a meaning because it was done for a different reason and then just kind of got corrupt because the just meaningless traditions run rampant in terra Buddhism like in in Burma almost every formal act of the SA is a meaningless corruption now except for the ordination ation ceremony. The ordination ceremony still has some meaning. Almost every other formal act of the SA is so corrupt as to just be meaningless blah blah blah.

[Music]

So yeah, I I really don't know why Patana would be chanted in like honor of a recently deceased lay supporter. I just there there doesn't seem to be any obvious logical reasoning behind that. So anyways, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And this is kind of a strange one. This is from Fred. And Fred kind of asks strange questions sometimes. Sometimes you don't even know if for sure he's even expecting an answer. But I'm going to answer this one. So Fred says,"I think the Buddha definitely showed the scaffolding to nibbana, but as you have

pointed out, there are so many contradictions. Is it really a worthy goal?" And then as a sort of commentary to that, he says, "Whether there is no self is academic. There is still a meat puppet on the receiving end. For example, hitting your thumb with a hammer, no self, no pain."

So I mean the main question see I think the Buddha definitely showed the scaffolding to nibbana and even that kind of phrasiology is kind of strange scaffolding to nibbana that I mean just sort of like the framework of practice that will help you to attain nibbana I hope is what he

meant but as you have pointed out there are so many contradictions is it really a worthy goal so you've got a treasure map showing you where Alic's treasure was

buried. You know, it's just this vast treasure and it's it was buried. The people who buried it were then put to death. Nobody knows where it is. And you've got a map that has some contradictions to it. But is it a worthy goal? Well, it's still a vast treasure, isn't it? And Nibbana is even a vaster treasure than the like the burial the burial site of all the Visigoth.

I is there anybody out there who knows

if Eric's treasure was ever found? It was like he just rampaged through the Roman Empire, you know, when Rome was in the state of collapse at the time and just I mean they got so much treasure they could hardly carry it all. And then Eric died probably of a disease. And so they just diverted a river in southern Italy from its course. And then they had some people bury all this treasure, just tons of gold and silver and pearls and jewels and stuff. And then they they got the the river redirected on its correct path and they just put to death all the people who saw where it was. And I don't know if they ever found that or not. It was this huge treasure in Italy

somewhere.

Um, but I mean it's it's such a weird question. I mean, is Nibbana really a worthy goal simply because there's like garbled

instructions from 2,500 years ago? I mean, the the the instructions that that count, the important instructions are still fairly good instructions. It's not very many people that become enlightened. So I mean I mean you can say that dharma is is really an extremely inefficient way of becoming enlightened because so few people actually succeed. I mean that's a valid argument to

make. But that doesn't mean that
enlightenment is not a worthy goal.
I mean, you just want to wallow in
samsara just because, well, it's there's
no 100% accurate and certain and and
reliable way of becoming enlightened
for, you know, anyone anyone at random,
then I don't know what to say.
But certainly Nibbana is a worthy
goal regardless of whether you choose to
go after that goal or go look for
Aeric's treasure in Italy or wherever it
is. So anyways, I'm just going to move
Oh, wait. He says uh with regard to his
commentary with no question mark. I
thought it was another question at
first, but there's no question mark at

all. Whether there is no no self is academic, he says. But I mean I I don't know about that one. He that there's still a meat puppet on the receiving end, but I mean the meat puppet whether it's real or not is kind of important. I mean it really does alter like the whole strategy of becoming enlightened to some degree or just it can like help to detach you from samsara and increase your odds just right off the bat if you realize that samsara isn't some kind of like set in stone ultimate reality that there's just no escape from other than just death and oblivion.

So, I mean, that wasn't really a question, so I won't dwell on it. I'll just move on to Fred's second question, which is kind of an interesting one. Fred says, "Is Agny worship the reason monks can't have fires?" And no, this that's not the reason at all. is according to the original story, the origin story for the rule against a monk building a fire to warm himself unless he is sick that there was a snake in the firewood and the snake started chasing the monks around when they're trying to build this fire or it it was like sleeping inside a hollow log and then it came out it woke up from the heat and started chasing the

monks around. And then because when you build a fire, you're very likely killing small creatures. That's the main reason. It has nothing to do with ugy worship. There might be like another contributing reason in that some philosophical groups or spiritual groups like the Janes believed fire to be a kind of primitive protool life. And so for a Jane monk, it was immoral to build a fire or put out a fire because in a way you were like making karma by creating this protoliving thing and then making like bad karma by killing this protoliving thing. And in a way that's there's a certain insight to that that fire really

is a kind of protool life that that respiration you know like the the metabolism of almost all living things other than maybe anorobic bacteria is it's a kind of like moderated graduated oxidation reaction which is the same as what fire is doing. It's just that it's done in little increments and and the some of the the energy given off is is then captured through molecules like ADP becomes ATP which it it energizes the molecule which can then be used in in in various various functions in the cell. So yeah, fire could be considered a kind of proto quasi life in a way. But and so in ancient times it may have been like looked down upon for like

aesthetics to be putting out fires or building fires for that reason too. But the main reason in the Buddhist texts is that when you build a fire out of firewood that's been lying on the ground or whatever that there's all kinds of small creatures that live in this firewood like little beetles living under the bark and little scorpions and maybe a big snake that's inside of hollow log that I mean they can die and so you shouldn't do it just for those reasons.

So Ugnney isn't mentioned at all really. The god Ugnney is not specifically mentioned at all in the polytopica that

I can remember. Is he certainly is not a significant figure in the polytopica. So I'm just going to move on to

PSA. And I think I think it maybe it was PSA. I can't remember who asked the question. Somebody asked me like, "Why is the Philippines spelled with a ph and a Filipino is spelled with an F?" And then somebody in the comments actually answered that question. Who has Philippine ancestry? Cuz I didn't have a clue. Turns out that the Philippine language doesn't even have the F sound. So, it's all just Western artifacts with regard to the spelling, the name, and everything.

Yeah, I think I I chose correctly in in drinking the emergency backup beverage first. I was just in the mood for it.

Smooth. So, anyways, PSA. I mean, if you want to know why um the Philippines as a country is spelled with a PH and a Filipino is spelled with an F, just look in the comments to the previous Q&A cuz he knows better than I do. I mean I I would have been clueless with regard to answering that question. So anyways, PSA says, "What's your favorite suta of the digaya and why?" That's kind of a tough one. I mean, I really do like the the saka

panya suta. And the main reason why I like it is because the central portion of it, the questions that the god saka is asking the Buddha is it it strikes me as very archaic. It's like a proto padicha samupata. It's like an early prototype of the 12 nidana link of padicha samopata even though it's not really explained as that pad samopata originally wasn't this in my opinion originally wasn't this sequential list of different things but some some sutas like the diga suta are like somebody asks what is the cause of this the Buddha answers it and then say well what is the cause of that and then the Buddha answers that and then well what is the

cause of that And then you wind up with this chain of this causing this causing this causing this. Another good example is the kalaha wiiwara suta of the atakawaga in the sutin pa. And then it was these that formed a kind of nucleus for the 12 nidana theory of padicha samopata or dependent corrisising because as the Buddha correctly predicted almost nobody was really going to understand dependent core rising including most Buddhist monk philosophers and so they had to like like simplify it into something easily understandable so that even though the Buddha predicted almost nobody's going

to understand this now almost every Burmese monk who's had a year of schooling is going to say yeah they they understand it because they memorized you know the the 12 links in poly and they don't really they don't still don't understand

it and then anyways the saka panyasut also contains this weird love story at the very beginning and then at the very end you've got this gandaba in Sanskrit called a gandarva you know they're sort of like an an elf or a fairy a supernatural being like a lesser god that serve as like musicians for the higher gods. And so there's this Gandarva named Panchasika or five crest

who

is Saka the king of gods wants to talk

to the Buddha. He knows that the Buddha

doesn't like being bothered. He doesn't

like lots of noise and commotion. So

first he sends this

elf Panchasika to go and kind of soften

up the Buddha, you know, get prepare him

for the for a visit from from Saka, king

of gods. And so Panchasika goes there

and he sings this erotic love story. In

a way, the like the introduction to the

Saka Pyasuta is like the terra Buddhist

equivalent to the Song of Solomon in the

Old Testament. It's like this erotic

love poetry that is like got a little

bit of religion added to it and so it can be like interpreted as a kind of religious allegory but obviously I mean in both cases it's fairly runchy love poetry. I mean he's like praising the breasts and thighs of his beloved this kind of thing. And anyways, the Buddha apparently approves and so the Buddha is like like allowing Saka to come visit him. Saka comes visit him, asks him all these questions which forms a kind of archaic protoependent core rising and then at the end Saka is so satisfied that he rewards five crest the the Gandarva with this woman you know this this princess uh this goddess princess that that Saka was or that Panchasika

was mooning over.

So I mean I like that suta mainly

because it contains like this large

element of like apparently archaic

Buddhism like pre-terravadan Buddhism

which served as a kind of prototype for

the later developments of dependent core

rising although like the Maha para not

not maha well the mahari nibanosuta also

I mean that's it's kind of a touching

moving kind of story about the final

days and death and cremation

No, I don't think the cremation was

included, but the final death the the

final days and death of God Buddha is is

the par maha parabana suta and also the

mahasi patanosuta which I was trying to say to begin with that I mean that's just classic that's like the bible for weasa meditators the maha sip patano suta you know it's just how to do mindfulness meditation how to do mindfulness you know how to weasana. So, I'm just going to have to go to the primary the designated primary beverage, the DPB with its own paper umbrella. Don't want to recycle them too much cuz it might make me look like I'm I don't know, univilized or something. And uh this is Well, maybe I shouldn't say now. It's like an ultra latte. It's like half coffee and half milk. But there's a question about that

later on, I

think. Oh, here we go. Oh, PSA, what's

your favorite suta of the Dani Kaya? Why

I already mentioned Saka Pña Suta would

probably be my favorite. Also, Mahapari

Nibbana Suta, very touching, moving

story of, you know, the end of the

Buddha's career. Um, Mahasadi Patana

Suta is just the Bible for weasa

meditators. Um even like the very first

suta of the

digaya the uh brahala suta brahma's net

the divine net where he pretty much

shoots down every possible philosophy

that's like proto majamaka really and

also the second I think it's the second

suta of the sutin of the diggonaya which
is the samaya palasuta that's that's an
old cardinal suta that's an important
one and you can learn a lot about dhamma
from reading the samaya palasuta also
but my favorite maybe I would guess
would be the sakapa suta so anyways
PSA's second question is could you
please talk about this week's beverage
in great
depth this week's beverage the the
primary or is it the designated primary
beverage or is it the primary designated
beverage
designated primary beverage. I think
that's the correct way of of of saying
it. And this cup I gave to my sweetheart

for Valentine's Day. I I gave her two of them so that I could drink out of one of them. It's very nice. And as I already said, it's like organic Colombian coffee mixed with it's not organic milk, I have to admit, but it's whole milk, whole cow's milk, bovine glandular secretions. I don't know. I think in order to go into greater depth, I'd have to like give like a chemical analysis of it and I'm just don't have the equipment here. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Pedro and Pedro says, "What's your opinion on meme coins? We recently saw Trump launch his

own token on the Solana chain called dollar sign Trump. Many I guess it's Trump bucks. Think that they call them that. Many people seem to be making significant profits trading these, but at the end of the day, it feels like pure speculation. almost like a mix of gambling, currency trading, and art investing all wrapped in blockchain technology. So, what's my opinion on meme coins? I really just it's not really on my radar. I have no cryptocurrency at all. I don't even have Bitcoin, none of it.

So, in a way, it's sort of it strikes me like those there was like this fad and I can't even remember what it's what

they're called now. just purely digital like something that that was being sold for just for like momentto value or momento I mean I mean just I can't remember what it was called now but in a way these coins I mean there's nothing backing them up. I mean the the value is arbitrary. It's just sort of based on like popular opinion how much they're worth. And in a way it is kind of like art investing since like you can look at some painting that's just a splattered mess of modern art. And I mean it might be selling for like $50,000. It just and I mean the value of it is just purely arbitrary. I mean it's

just like this artificial somebody
decided it and other people are willing
to go along with it.
So, um I mean our actual currency like
the US dollar probably isn't so
different now. I don't know if the if
there really is still gold at Fort Knox
that's supposed to be backing up
American currency. I mean, obviously
it's it's I mean, it's fairly
fairly likely that there's nowhere near
enough gold to actually back up our
currency. That our currency also is just
like fiat currency. That's just really
nothing backing it up. At least Genghask
Khan, he he had like paper money or it
was like leather or something that

didn't have any intrinsic value other than if you refused to accept it, he'd have you put to death. So it was like his money was backed up by your own blood. So in a way it was there was some value to it more than to like US currency probably now.

So my opinion on memecoins I really don't have much of an opinion. I do think that it's just this weird cultural phenomenon, sort of like the tulip craze in the Netherlands back in like the 1800s or is it's a kind of fad, a kind of mania where people are just giving great value to something that it's

ultimately not valuable at all. It's just the the peop so there's enough people willing to cont to attribute a certain value to it that it causes it to have an effective value. But pretty much everything is like that to some degree. Even gold, I mean it's kind of arbitrary that it's so expensive. It's the demand makes it expensive. But what is I mean the the demand for gold itself is just kind of you know it's just a sort of a cultural artifact.

So, I think I'm just I think I'm just going to move on to Pedro's second question since I really am not a money expert. Pedro's second question is this

also raises an interesting question. What is the Buddhist perspective on gambling? And yeah, gambling is considered to be immoral. There are sutas that warn pe warn lay people against gambling. I mean, you get a bad reputation, you can squander your wealth. You know this there's like a list of various reasons why you shouldn't gamble. Although on the other hand, life itself is a gamble. Even a farmer who is planting perfectly good seed grain in the in the hopes of getting a a big harvest next year. I mean, that's a kind of gamble. You don't know if there's going to be a drought

that's going to just kill off your
crops. So, I mean, life is a gamble to
some degree. So, that's unavoidable. But
the main kind of gambling that was done
in the Buddhist time in northern India I
think was with dice and that kind of
gambling is is uh really not approved of
in the
sutas. So where you're going to put like
cryptocurrency with regard to that I
mean it's it's it's going to be a
judgment call I
suppose. I mean, the Buddha is not going
to
be endorsing very much with regard to
handling money
anyway. All of his most serious

disciples were strictly prohibited from handling money at all, unless they found somebody else's money lying on the ground at the monastery, then they were obligated to pick it up and put it in a safe place until the lay person came back for it. That's the only time that a monk is allowed to handle money unless there's a monk is forfeiting his money which almost never happens. He's forfeiting his money. It's like I had this money. I surrender it. I relinquish this money and then the SA can appoint some other monk to take that money and go throw it out in the woods somewhere. So those are like the the only two cases

in which a monk is allowed to actually
touch money.
But getting back to lay people, I mean,
it's it's not included in the five
precepts,
cryptocurrency, you know, so it's
technically it's it's not
um immoral in that sense of being in
violation of a precept. Even playing
dice for money isn't isn't really
against the five precepts even though it
is discouraged in the texts.
So Buddhist perspective on gambling.
Yeah, it's it's not technically a
violation of the five precepts unless
you're like cheating at cards or
something, cheating at dice, but it is

discouraged that you really should not do it. But then again, where do you draw the line? Because life itself is a gamble. You know, when you're saving something for a rainy day, you're gambling that you're not going to be struck by lightning or or like just dropped dead from some obscure cause before the rainy day happens. you know there's always some some kind of gambling involved but mainly Buddhism is discouraging of just what is generally called gambling which nowadays you know be slot machines and uh like lotteryies cards dice roulette wheels that kind of thing and so I'm just going

to move on to the next question this is from Nermit and Nermit says thoughts on Utadamo to me he seems like someone who has really progressed in his practice ice. And to tell you the truth, I'm not even sure who Uta Damiku is. Like like I've said before, I really don't I'm really not keen on keeping up with like the Western Buddhist scene. Udadamiku. I mean, is he the one that like in Canada like in

Montreal? I remember that when I first came back to America in 2011 trying to live in the west as a monk. Um there was a supporter who had supported Udidamiku. I think it was Udidamo. It was some monk trying to set up in Canada. You know, he

just came from Asia and he was staying in this supporter's mother's basement for a while. So it was they were he and I were in kind of a similar situation at first, although he succeeded by eventually getting a Sri Lankan group to support him. And once you get Asians supporting you, it's fairly easy. But I really wasn't trying to get support from Asian so much as I mean if I wanted to be supported by Asian might well I might as well just stay in Asia. So I was trying to get be supported by Americans which for various reasons just didn't work out very well. But aside from that I I don't know. I think maybe somebody

told me that Udadamiku was originally Jewish or something. I don't know. I could be completely confusing him with somebody else and it shouldn't matter anyway. But yeah, I just not 100% sure even who he is. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ruie and Ruie says, "How liinal do you think the dharma is?" And liinal, I mean, I use the term liinal. I mean, I think liinal literally means like um like a

threshold, like a like a doorway, an opening that can be entered or exited. And it's key to a book that I have read some years ago now, the the trickster in the paranormal, which is a

theory of how the paranormal works, written by George P. Hansen. And the paranormal works through limonality. It's like you've got a certain structure, like a stable structure. In order for anything to exist for more than a trillionth of a second, there has to be some stable pattern involved. But it's not perfect. There's like cracks and crevices in between the the laws and the rules that keep our world like regular and safe and predictable. So I mean even just the natural law isn't good enough for us. The laws of physics aren't good enough for us to like keep everything stable and and and

regular. So we also have to have human laws and taboos and so forth that like like give greater stability to our world and keep the scary paranormal at bay. That's one of the main reasons why we have so many like cultural conventions and so forth is we are trying to standardize and stabilize samsara well enough that there aren't as many cracks and crevices between the rules and the regulations that will allow in from like the primordial chaos maybe paranormal phenomena and so anyways Ruy's question how liinal do you think the dharma is It depends on how you practice it. Like the average Burmese person, you know, they have an approach to Dharma similar to

the approach towards Roman Catholicism
of a medieval European where in a way
Dharma reduces limonality because it's
giving structure and you know it's like
explaining stuff and and just sort of
keeping the unknown at bay.
you know, it's giving structure to their
lives and so it is reducing
limonality. But the the more advanced
you get in the practice, when you start
getting into like really subtle
meditative states where a lot of the
structure just
evaporates, then it becomes way more
liinal. Like anyone who has done a lot
of intensive practice may tell you from

experience that weird coincidences, synchronicities, and so forth are much more likely to happen when you're doing intensive practice. And then when you get up into the level of being like some really advanced Janna master with psychic powers, then that's all paranormal. I mean, you've gone like full blast liinal at that point.
So it depends on what level and how you you interpret dharma, you know, how advanced you are in the dharma. So that I mean for a beginner it can actually reduce limonality, whereas if you're really advanced, it vastly increases limonality. So I'm just going to move on to Ruy's second question, which is did

the study of the dharma bring you to the threshold of the condition? And I'm not exactly sure what he means by the threshold of the conditions other than just leading me to like limonality. And the study of the dharma didn't really do it because when you're studying dharma to some degree you're studying patterns and regularities that reduce limonality that the real limonality comes not so much from study. I mean, sometimes it can like zen-like stuff or just paradoxical stuff or stuff that really challenges your point of view. Let's say you're locked into this world view and then you read some book

that challenges that world view even
though it's very structured and regular
also because it's sort of weakening your
faith in your own structure and
regularity. I mean, it can cause
limonality to
occur. But as a general rule
um what what causes what takes you to
the threshold of the conditioned so to
speak in dharma is practice especially
meditative practice. You know when when
you stop thinking you know all these
cultural rules and regulations and
regularities and taboss and all that and
they just fade out at least temporarily.
And so you have faded out a lot of the
structure that holds the paranormal at

bay. You have vastly increased limonality of the situation. And I assume that's what he's talking about when he says, "Did the study of dharma bring you to the threshold of the condition?" Um, yeah, I've been brought to the threshold of the condition a few times. Like before I became a monk, I think the main vehicle towards the threshold of the condition was LSD. I would take LSD like on average maybe two or three times a year just as a way of just kind of blowing the carbon out of my pipes and just sort of and it was it was like a spiritual practice

really. I had a spiritual experiences usually every time I would take LSD as a young man. Sometimes I would take LSD alone out in some wilderness area. I remember one time I was in college and I was taking a religions of India class and we had just been studying you know just early vadas and so I actually did like a a little vadic sacrifice out in the woods on LSD. Um I didn't sacrifice an animal though. I was it was like incense and and purified butter and that kind of thing.

reading the reading some random hymns from the rig

va so to some

degree but but I mean it wasn't just

that you know I was just kind of born with a certain limonality so in to some degree it's just sort of an innate talent it's just something you've acquired through parmmy as the Burmese villagers would say so I'm just going to move on to the next question and we're getting towards the bottom here. This is Yeah, this is less than two and a half hour long video, me thinks. And this anyways, this one is from Tzasquez is who is going under the alias of Captain Bogumu Clam Clumpa.

Bogumiv, I don't know. The L with the line through it in Polish. Is that is that a W sound?

Bogumu. Why would anyone name their kid Bumu? Doesn't make sense.

Anyways, Jasquez is because that's who it is says, would Advite Vanta be close to original Buddhism? And that's kind of an interesting question. And in a way, Advite Vanta is fairly close to original Buddhism, although Advite Vanta is way more philosophical because the original Buddhism was sort of anti-filosophical. It was anti-conceptual. You weren't supposed to think about reality because thoughts cannot contain reality.

So anyways, what happened was you had this archaic Buddhism that was like

anti-filosophical but then maybe as more beginners and less you and like when the Buddhist started Buddhism most of his followers were veterans relatively spiritually
advanced. But then as Buddhism struck traction in Indian culture and started becoming more popular then it may be that the Buddha had to start giving like elementary philosophical instructions to people who weren't ready yet for like fourth
Janna.
So it you you started getting some like basic philosophy with regard to karma and rebirth and you know dependent core

rising and so forth. And then after the Buddha passed away, it was like a a snowball effect. There just the Indian mind is is at least in in the Buddhist time, the northern Indian mind was just like analytical and philosophical and wanting to explain everything and just proliferate the philosophy. And so it just became this huge scholastic edifice.

And then you had some of the the the early Mahayana schools like Majamaka were actually a kind of reform movement getting back towards like the archaic message of you know you're never going to figure out reality by thinking about it. But the way Majamaka did it was

through like logic chopping I think it's called where I mean you're using logic to destroy itself. you know, you're just using this withering logical scrutiny to just kind of debunk everything and you save your own point of view for last and then turn it towards yourself for a kind of philosophical selfdeion. And the thing is um when advita vdanta was being developed like shri shankara shankara is considered to be like the main like founder of advita vdanta that he was getting a lot of ideas from majamaka Buddhism. So advite vanta and majamaka Buddhism have a lot of similarities because there were ideas

borrowed back and forth probably between the two especially ideas borrowed from Majamaka into advite vanta. And so since majamaka was like a reform movement trying to get back to some degree to some semblance of what archaic Buddhism was teaching then yeah I would say advite vidanta
is close to that extent to the original Buddhism. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from thermal squid. And thermal squid got these questions in right under the wire just like an hour before I sat down to do this video. And so this is the last question here and he asked three questions. These are the last three

questions of this
Q&A. And so Thermal Squid says, "Have
you ever gotten into a nasty verbal
altercation or yelling match with
someone in public and felt bad
afterwards despite being in the right?"
And he's got the right in like scare
quotes.
And I can't remember getting into like a
a yelling argument in public with
anybody. The closest thing that comes to
mind was when I was living under a big
rock ledge at the on the outskirts of
Alando Kazapa National Park in Burma.
And I had read this book called Battle
for the Mind, which is a life-changing

book for me by William Sergeant, where he's talking about how we are locked into like habit patterns. And these habit patterns, you know, it's like a ball and chain. You can't really make progress because you're just like identified with attached to these habits. And so what what is required in order to break free of this conditioning is you have to be thrown into a kind of crisis like an emotional crisis where your usual way of dealing with reality just doesn't work anymore. And this is how like Chinese thought reform worked. It's how like um political um interrogation in Stalinist Soviet Union worked where you would get the person

not only to admit to trying to overthrow the government but to actually believe that he was trying to overthrow the government. It's how like a lot of like religious conversions work like early Methodists work this way. It's how like

like stone age manhood rituals work. It's how basic training in in some militaries work where they just put you under so much strain that you just kind of break down and then you become once you break down once you hit this crisis stage it's like you become very open to suggestion. It's just this instinct. You cling to your habits even if they're not

making you happy so long as they're good enough to get you through life. But once they stop working it's like it's this instinct that you just kind of become very susceptible to suggestion.

And so I had read this book and I was trying to experiment with that to some degree by just sort of triggering a crisis in myself. You know, it seemed like so long as you don't have this crisis, you're not going to make significant like progress. And it helps to have a wise guide there to help put the pieces back together when you have your breakdown. But I didn't have that luxury. So, I'm out there alone in this forest kind of triggering a breakdown in

myself and I came to the verge of it. I was doing fairly well at causing myself to break down just through the I mean just the the stress of living in this environment just in this forest just alone doing intensive practice and everything. And then the rainy season started, the first rains of the monsoon started. And so what happened after the first rains of the monsoon is that all these young villagers go off into the forest catching frogs. It's like you've got frog orgies going on. As soon as the ponds fill up with water, it's just this deafening roar of frogs giving out their mating calls. And then you've got the

the villagers come and they just catch
these big baskets full of frogs. And
then the next day you go for alms round
and you're getting all these dismembered
frog parts and frog eggs and stuff in
your
bowl. So I mean ostensibly they're
Buddhists but out in the remote
hillbilly areas the Buddhism is uh just
kind of a superstition that isn't taken
extremely seriously in certain respects.
I once asked one of the older villagers,
I mean, do any of the young people
actually keep five precepts or did I
asked, "Does anybody in the village
actually keep five precepts?" And he
just kind of chuckled and said, "Only

when you get old, you know, when you're too old to get into trouble, then you stop you stop doing that kind of stuff." So anyways, there are all these young people. I mean, it was kind of like a party, you know, they're just yelling and laughing all through the forest, um, killing frogs and I was just at this crisis stage, you know, at the verge of a crisis. Anyway, and at one point I'm standing on top of this hill seeing these this crowd of of like teenagers laughing and joking and heading out with their bags and baskets to catch frogs. And I just started yelling at them in Burmese. If you live like animals,

you'll die like

animals. And I mean, it was it was just

kind of like this I don't know, like

this kind of a episode I was going

through. I was just I was just so

disgusted with these people that I mean,

they really didn't I mean they had like

this superstitious respect and reverence

for Dhamma. They certainly had this

reverence for me, but really, I mean,

they'd still I mean, they'd kill

anything. They'd eat anything that was

at least as big as a grasshopper, you

know? They just I've seen guys walking

out into the forest and a duck would

walk by. They just frantically look

around for anything. Just pick up a

stick or anything and just fling it at that that duck in the hopes of of like knocking it down and killing it.

So, I just it was just all the strain and stress just caused me to just kind of snap that night and just start yelling at the villagers about how if they lived like animals, they were going to die like animals. But, I mean, I kind of felt embarrassed about it or, you know, like, well, yeah, I shouldn't have done that.

But that's about as far as it goes with regard to nasty verbal altercations or yelling matches with someone in public because I I can't remember ever like

getting into like a like a yelling argument with somebody in the middle of a Walmart or something like that. I just I've never done that. So anyways, I'm just going to move on to thermal squid's next question, which is, would you agree that heavily extroverted people are insecure or otherwise energy parasites?

And

uh I don't think that all extroverted people are that way, but a lot of extra a lot of extroverted people or just kind of shallow people, it's like they need the approval of others around them to kind of keep their self-esteem high enough that they don't just go into like this clinical depression. You know, it's

like someone who is like extroverted to the point that they rely on the approval of others just in this deep emotional level. If all of a sudden they were just like called out and ridiculed and disgraced that I mean they'd just be crushed. Unlike like the introverted person who really doesn't care about public opinion all that much that would really soldier through the scandal much more

uh I don't know with much more fortitude than the extroverted person who is like like getting so much gratification from it. So I mean whether there it's that way to the point of being energy

vampires, I assume that it's sort of a mutual energy exchange between like entire peer groups where you know it's just sort of like mutual support is sort of you know maybe their mind is kind of too weak to live in isolation. So they sort of form together into like a colony, you know, sort of like a psychic colony that that is like mutual support through like mutual approval. And if anyone's ostracized from that group, they better find another group pronto or, you know, they're just going to be plunged into this utter despair because they just have not cultivated enough self-reliance and enough like moral backbone to just be independent of that.

But I don't think that all extroverted people are that way. I do think that there are certain types that are that way though. And so after maybe I blow my nose one more time, just like I mean it's it's not even really mucousy anymore. It's just that my it's still like a little bit congested and the air doesn't want to flow through, right? So that I try and make certain sounds when I'm talking and they're not coming out correctly.

Okay, then. So, last question from thermal squid. How do you reconcile or how you

reconcile a more masculine ethos that isn't afraid to defend itself or assert itself and renunciation of a mindfulness or a mindfulness about the futility of worldly
contentions? So, that's the question. how you reconcile a more masculine ethos that isn't afraid to defend itself or assert itself and renunciation or a mindfulness about the futility of worldly contentions. And then as a kind of commentary after this, he says, "All three questions are contextually related. Got into a fight with a woman who gave me a terrible attitude for not acknowledging her within 3 seconds of opening the door to my business and it

went nuclear. didn't feel good about it,
but I have a really hard time taking it
from
people. Well, this question, how do I
how do I reconcile a more masculine
ethos that isn't afraid to defend itself
or assert itself and renunciation or a
mindfulness about the futility of
worldly contentions? It reminds me of
something that William James wrote in
his classic book, The Varieties of
Religious Experience. how he points out
that most men
um assert their
masculinity through like aggression, you
know, like sports or driving like

maniacs or or joining the military as 18year-olds, that kind of thing. How traditionally masculinity has been largely a matter of aggression and just Yeah. I mean, aggression has been a factor of it. It wasn't like the whole thing, but there's always or usually a fair amount of aggression in just traditional masculinity. But William James points out that like a spiritual alternative for a men for a man to assert his masculinity is through aseticism, through austerity, where you've got to be tough to be like a Buddhist monk in ancient India. I mean, they they were tough as wood. These were tough

men. And ancient Buddhism, despite its nonviolence and so forth, I mean, is about as masculine of a spiritual tradition as there has ever been devised. Possibly more masculine than than Islam because it was it was formulated by just these tough masculine male aesthetics who avoided women like the plague. So, I mean, femininity really didn't have much opportunity to get into these texts at all. And even a lot of the the nuns that are described in the texts are just the inventions of male monks who wanted to write a story about a nun.

So, yeah, I think the masculine ethos in Dhamma would just be fearlessness. I mean there's definitely masculine virtues in traditional dharma just fearlessness like austerity just sort of a disdain for pleasure or even comfort that kind of thing that I mean it takes a considerable amount of bravery and toughness to be the kind of aesthetic that is described in the the oldest poly texts. So, I mean, let's see. Defend itself. Uh, I mean, just being able to fearlessly take a beating without flinching.

that I mean even that like my father was a he was very macho guy and he got in lots of fights when he was younger and

it wasn't very often that he would get beaten in a fight or that you know he'd be fighting someone that he knew was in all likelihood able to beat him. And in in such a case he made it a point to just look that guy right in the face when he was taking the beating. You know he wasn't going to flinch. He was just gonna take it from the guy, you know, and and just show him that he didn't give a [__] that the other guy could beat him

up. And that's kind of a masculine thing. I mean, that I don't know if that would be considered toxic masculinity from some castrated feminized unic, but

still, I

mean, definitely took some some backbone

and some fearlessness.

So, I mean, just not turning turning the

other cheek isn't necessarily

feminine. Let's see here. How do you

reconcile the more masculine ethos that

isn't afraid to defend itself or assert

itself? Um, I mean, you can I mean,

asserting oneself. Yeah. I mean, that in

is basically delusional to assert

yourself. I mean, you're insisting upon,

you know, you are asserting some kind of

samsara based on delusion.

So I mean to the extent that a masculine

ethos is based on

like like egoentrism and delusion I mean

to that extent obviously you're better off without it. Even a a tough guy would be better off without it. But uh there are certain aspects of a masculine ethos like I've already been saying like fearlessness and just like unflinching just just
determination that that is a masculine virtue. And I mean you can do that as a a monk aesthetic or as a soldier. You know the fearlessness you can do that as an aesthetic monk or a
soldier or let's see just the disdain for comfort. You can do that as an aesthetic or a soldier. I mean, there's a lot of overlap. It's just that the

actual like the aggressive parts are,

you know, they don't really they don't

really wash in in Buddhism. And just

defending yourself to the extent that

you're defending yourself um just out of

a like like

egoism that I mean that wouldn't be

allowed. Although a monk is allowed to

strike out in

self-defense and just asserting

yourself,

um the masculine ethos isn't afraid to

assert itself. I mean, any kind of

assertion, I mean, you you're

essentially asserting some kind of

delusion. So, yeah, that may not work

out so well. I mean, a monk isn't

supposed to make any assertions, at least not in the the oldest texts. when the monks were the toughest. So, how do I reconcile a more masculine ethos with renunciation or mindfulness about the futility of worldly contentions? Um, most of a masculine ethos translates into worldly renunciation fairly well. It's just the the aggressive parts and the diluted parts that don't work very well. and you're better off without the delusion especially. It may be that you're in some kind of situation where you may have to assert some aggressiveness like let's say

you've got a family to protect then yeah I mean it's your duty you if you haven't renounced the world then yeah you're going to have to adopt a somewhat different ethos than a monk renuncient who is striving to become a perfected saint. A lay person who's got a family to protect may not be able to afford to be a perfected
saint. So I mean Buddhism it's like the highest level of practice isn't for everybody. It's not even for most people. It's for a tiny minority, a kind of spiritual elite. And of course a lot of Western and Westernized Buddhists just can't stand the idea of an elite. even if it's a genuine spiritual elite.

It's just let's just have mandatory mediocrity for everybody.

So yeah, and the reconciliation is not total unless you're going to be a Buddhist lay person who still reserves the right to defend yourself and defend your family and defend your home, which really is kind of your duty as a lay person who has a family or a home. And that's it. I guess I answered that question. I hope so because I'm done. And like I should always say at the beginning, it's just a habit now. It's just not my habit to announce this at the beginning. So I guess it's the people who watch the whole show or

listen to the whole show get the the reward at the end of me saying there you got any questions about anything you think I can answer, feel free to ask them in the questions below the video. And uh no more than three questions per person, please. And like the video if you liked it. And uh smash the the uh the subscribe button this time. I guess usually I say subs smash the like button, but I already said something about the like button. So I guess you're just going to have to smash the subscribe button if you haven't already and be happy.

Okay then. Wait, maybe I should adjust this. All right. Now, okay then. Hello and welcome to question and answer number. I mean, the numbers are getting so high that they're numbers that are amused primarily by astronomers at this point.

So, I won't even I won't even bother telling you what number it is because it's such a high number. it would take up too much time. And uh before I start answering questions, oh I forgot to tell you I am your host

Piobasa as usual.

So before I start answering questions, there's kind of a core agenda that I

should I should uh discuss here before I start answering questions. That is with regard to previous questions that I answered that I it has occurred to me that I should have said something else or something in addition to what I already said. For example, a few Q&As's back, somebody asked me if I'd come up with any more great comforting thoughts or if there were more great comforting thoughts than were on my little list of three great comforting thoughts. And uh I couldn't think of any, but it turns out that there was that there's this one thought that used to arise in my mind again and again. Like when I'd be under stress or something, I'd be in a bad

situation, it would just spontaneously arise, which would have like a minor soothing effect. Sort of like taking an aspirin or something has this minor like beneficial effect. And that was everything happens the way it's supposed to happen. you know, if shit's going sideways, you know, stuff's not turning out the way it's supposed to turn out or it's turning out and it just I guess it would have to turn out the way it's supposed to turn out because everything happens the way it's supposed to happen. So, it was just like this. It wasn't exactly a mantra. I wouldn't keep repeating it, but it would just arise

spontaneously again and again,
especially when things were happening
that I didn't like very much.
So, that was kind of a comforting
thought that everything happens the way
it's supposed to
happen. And also, I believe it was in
the previous Q&A, I made the stupid
mistake of saying that the scientific
name of the Pacific or Alaskan pollic
was Merluchia Prada. And that turns out
that's the Pacific
hake. that the Alaskan pollic the
largest fishery in the world at the time
that I was involved in it back in like
the the 1980s and probably the '9s also
it's uh I mean at the time it was the

calora and it turns out I was just
making sure I looked it up on Wikipedia
it turns out according to Wikipedia it
says in 2014 the US food and drug
administration announced that the
official scientific name for the fish
was changed from thera calma back to its
original taxon of Gatis
calmis highlighting its close genetic
relationship to the other species of the
cod genus Gatis. So Gatis is like Latin
for
codfish and the the pollic is sort of a
a kind of semicod or I guess it's really
a it's really a cod
now. But I mean it's just weird to me

that the US Food and Drug Administration
would announce that the scientific name
of some fish has been changed. I mean
that's not their
job. Anyways, this is my beverage. which
is the little paper umbrella in my
beverage signifying my class
and high social status and so
forth. And so with that core
agenda as a brief
introduction instead of the usual
haphazard
rambling, I'm going to start answering
questions. And the first question after
I check to make sure we really are
recording.
Yeah, I guess the first question is from

esoteric boy. An esoteric boy says, "Can you explain this karma situation?" A gray korat
cat born on the streets wanders into the open garage of a man who just happens to be kind and takes the cat in. Things get even better when a roommate moves into the house who also loves cats and provides more attention to him. In the cat's next life, is he just more likely to be born directly into a home with kind owners, having defeated the street karma in this life? What is your opinion on cats, especially the korat, which is said to be a good luck cat in Southeast Asia? Oh, that's a that's a whole

different question there. And we do have quite a lot of questions. This could be a long one. And now it's going to be even longer because there's like this new extra question. Oh, now it's three questions. Three question marks. So, what is your opinion on cats, especially the Korat, which said be a good luck cat in Southeast Asia? And could a cat with good karma like this increase the karma of its owners? So, let's just get back to the first question mark. So, the situation of a gray korat cat. And tell you the truth, I'm not exactly sure what a cororat cat is. Spelled k o r r a t. I don't know. I think I've probably

heard of a cororat cat before, but I don't exactly know what a korat cat looks like. And I didn't bother to look it up. Like I looked up the scientific name of the Alaska Pollock. So let's see. Born on the streets, wanders into an open garage of a man who just happens to be kind. Takes the cat in. And then the roommate loves cats, too. In the cat, the next the cat's next life, is he just more likely to be born directly into a home with kind owners, having defeated the street karma in this life? Well, it's going to it's going to depend on the individual cat. I'm pretty

sure, I mean, it may be that he burned off this negative karma that was causing him to be a stray cat. and he had this latent underlying karma of people being nice to him. But then it could be the other way around. I mean, it could be that he did have this little bit of people being nice to him karma that then got burned off by the people being nice to him and now he's he goes back to being a stray cat in the next life. It could it could be either way, but in general, I think for most animals, interacting with humans is a kind of uplifting experience. There's like mental states are contagious. Human beings, regardless of, you know, how

much of an [__] they might be or how much of a saint they might be, still they have like more consciousness, more force of consciousness than the average quadruped. And so just interacting there's like this empathy kind of quasi telepathy or like a deep level of emotional telepathy going on between you know a human and and its pet. And so it does have like an uplifting experience. It was one reason why dogs and cats like attention so much. Sort of like the same way little kids like attention so much. They just thrive on it to some degree. They need attention.

So in this case, I would guess in more

than half of cases, it may be that the cat is sort of transitioning into a better kind of life. And who knows, maybe in its next life, it'll be born as like a human baby that dies, you know, six months or something. Because I I do have this theory that it it just kind of occurred to me because of one of our dogs that that dog may have been, you know, like a a human baby at some point and then, you know, before it got to like the verbal level, you know, it died of the diseases that most babies died from before modern times. So, yeah, it's it's hard to say with regard to karma. can't really generalize exactly how something works.

I mean there are some sutas and the poly texts the poly the polyutas that say you know if you're angry in this life then you're going to be ugly in the next life or you feed an animal in this life and it's going to cause benefit to you for 100 lifetimes afterwards. this kind of thing. But I don't think that such cookbook explanations really can do justice to the just unthinkable complexity of how the universe works and how karma works. And karma is a mental state. It is volition or will.

So is he just more likely to be born

directly into a home with kind owners in many cases? But it's not necessarily going to turn out that way. I mean, it might the the cat might have just burned off what good karma was coming to it. But then again, it would depend on the like the mental states of the cat more than anything else. If it's just sort of like this sour puss of a cat that doesn't like people all that much, you know, it could just be burning off what little people being kind to it karma it had and then it goes back to being half wild or whatever. Or if the cat is like this really nice cat that's like rubbing up against people's legs purring all the time, then there's a good chance that

it's going to be moving
upwards. It's going to have an improved
situation in it like in its next life
going with the theory of
karma. But you can't really generalize
you. I mean it it is on a cat by cat
basis. And so I'm just going to move on
to esoteric boy's second question here.
What is your opinion on cats, especially
the korat, which is said to be a good
luck cat in Southeast Asia? Well, again,
I'm really not exactly sure what a korat
cat is. Most of the cats that I saw in
Burma were pretty much like like the
like Siamese like a Siamese cat except
they're not necessarily the coloring of

a cat that's called a Siamese cat. Some of them were just black. There were some tiger stripey cats, but I did I was I have read or I was told that a genuine Siamese cat has a kink in its tail. And cats in
Burma, lots and lots of them have a kink in their tail. It's some sort of genetic quirk that causes like the the abnormal fusion of two vertebrae in its tail which causes this
kink. And uh a lot of them have that triangle-shaped head that I just do not like. I like a round headed cat better than a triangular headed cat. I'm not exactly sure why. I think they're just more intelligent or something. Um I just

had bad experiences with triangular headed cats. I think they they're just like really loud. Like the standard Siamese cat is just like meowing really loud in this piercing voice all the time.

But as a general rule, I like cats. We had this one cat at a monastery I lived at. It was named cat number two. And that cat, we could not feed that cat. It was such a huntress. I mean, we found it as a kitten. There was a flood and apparently the the mother and the kittens got separated on opposite sides of the flood water and they were they were half starved kittens.

So the the other monk who lived at the monastery and I liked cats and so we started raising them. We were feeding them. At first they'd eat, you know, they'd eat like fried fish from our bowl, you know, fried whole minnows and that kind of thing. They liked it. They grew up. And cat number two, just without even having a mother teaching her how to hunt, she was such an adept huntress that she would turn up her nose at fried fish out of our alms bulls, anything like that. She just wanted to hunt her own food. And she was taking out like three squirrels a week in addition to birds, lizards, grasshoppers, just snakes, frogs, just

anything. One time she just jumped up in the air and just caught a swooping bird between her paws. And at one point she was wiping out the squirrels so mercilessly that I even hung a little jingle bell around her neck. And still she was taking out like two squirrels a week at
least. And then she went into heat and got the lust wander and wandered away and never came back and might have been eaten by an eagle or falcon or something or by the villagers cuz in Burma villagers do eat cats especially poor villagers. Dogs not so much but cats are considered to be good eating and so you

don't see a lot of stray cats in

Burma. You don't see a whole lot of cats

in general in Burma.

So yeah, I like I like dogs better. I'm

more of a dog person than a cat person.

Dogs are more human than cats are. That

there's more of a like a deeper bond

between a man and his dog than between a

man and his

cat. But cats are fine as a general

rule. I mean, there are exceptions.

There are some cats I haven't liked,

some dogs I haven't liked.

So, and I don't know what a cororat cat

is. So, I'm just going to move on to the

to the third question of esoteric boy,

which is could a cat with good karma

like this increase the karma of his owners? That yeah, I mean, if you are like expressing love and kindness and generosity towards your cat, I mean, you're feeding it every day. That's good karma. You are feeding another being which is bound to come around you know the other way where you know there's going to be like higher beings will smile upon you when you are smiling upon beings that are sort of below you on the on the the grand scale of things. So yeah, I used to tell that to Burmese people sometimes. It's like if you want the gods to be kind to you, you should be kind to beings that are below

you because you are below the gods, you know, sort of so to speak.

So yeah, I mean anything that's motivated by kindness, anything that's motivated by love. And I mean sometimes it's it's like like cats will will like demonstrate their sincere love for you by just, you know, they kill some lizard or mouse or something and they just bring it to you. I mean, sometimes it's just like a shrew that doesn't taste good, so they're just kind of dumping it off on you or something. But sometimes, I mean, there's like mutual love and benevolence and so forth. Maybe not so much as with dogs, but still cats can have

it. So, yeah. I mean, if if
you're treating a cat nicely, you know,
with kindness and love and feeding it
and, you know, just taking care of it,
then yeah, of course, there's going to
be some karmic uh, you know, what goes
around comes around kind of stuff going
on. And so I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from Tzasiz,
who's going under the the alias recently
of Captain
Bogumic
Clamka. And his first question
is, they never invited you to Buddhist
conventions and some Australian monk
tried to erase you from his website. Why

people or other monks didn't like you when you were a monk? I just wonder why some monks are popular and others are not. I assume there are very wise monks who live in some remote forest in Sri Lanka or Thailand and the last thing they want is to be popular. Yeah, being popular um in Asia especially can be inconvenient. You've got visitors coming. You know, you got people like showing up and wanting to like a tour of your cave. You know, it's like if you're a lay person, you got people it's it's like people knocking on your door just asking, "Can I come in and look around in your bedroom?

because that's that's that was happening

to me pretty often when I was becoming more and more famous in Burma. You know, people would be coming from the the nearby towns to to visit the exotic foreign monk living in the cave in the forest and you know, they're wanting to to look inside the cave and of course it's like going around looking in my bedroom and all that.

But uh one reason why I was never invited to Buddhist conventions is simply I didn't have the connections. like the monk who was ordained at the same ceremony as me. He got invited to some big I can't remember now if it was a Buddhist convention specifically or

whether it was just sort of like a a religious convention with representatives of different religions all coming and giving speeches about how all the religions should you know like cooperate and join together and be a force for good in the world or or some such. And the thing is he was a disciple of Usilanandanda who is relatively high-profile monk in Burma and in the United States. Usilananda was the founder of the the big Buddhist monastery in uh Half Moon Bay in uh in California. It was in Daily City before that. And so Usy Landanda had connections and so his disciples also have connections and I really didn't

have connections. I was like a hermit living alone in a forest. So with regard to invitations to conventions and that sort of thing, I mean it wasn't that they were biased against me. It wasn't like they despised me. It was just like no they they hadn't heard of me really. Um there have been a few like senior monks like seiados in Burma who just took an instant dislike to me. One of them was my own preceptor. One of them was Upandida Mahasi Upida that when I mean when when I was ordained he was at my ceremony and he was like grandpa. He was just very nice when I first became a monk. But then

like seven, eight years later, I show up at his monastery, his meditation center in Rangon, Pandidorama. And I mean, he just like took this instant disliked me. I don't think he even remembered me from from the ordination ceremony. And um it's it's probably just an older guy who was uh didn't doesn't like sort of cocky young monks or foreign monks. I was told he didn't like foreigners, so that was probably part of it.

Um, let's see. Then there's some monks. It's mainly like leftist western monks don't like me because I promulgate hate, which is it's going to come come up lower down on the scroll of questions here. You know, it's like I'm a fascist,

a Nazi,

misogynist, you know, whatever,

anti-semite.

So the more leftleaning western

monks may dislike me simply because they

don't like my politics. And I was

controversial even like living in Burma.

I was controversial simply because I had

a critical mind and wasn't just

accepting everything in the text. Like I

was pretty outspoken in

my contempt. I guess for the Abidama

pitica and just Abidama philosophy in

general because at least half of what is

considered to be Abidama philosophy

isn't even found in the Abidama texts

themselves but is found in commentarial literature like Abidama commentaries and so forth. Some of the most important um features of Abidama philosophy aren't even found in the Abidama pita. It's found in the commentarial tradition which does indicate that Abidama was like growing and evolving and developing over time and even after the tapitica got closed and you couldn't add to the typica anymore which generally was when they started having published commentaries like line by line commentary. You can't really change much after that.

So, I was kind of controversial, but the the Burmese as a general rule, aside

from a few seats who just took an
instant dislike to me,
um partly I mean just because they don't
like foreigners like my own preceptor.
He just thought I was wild. I was like a
loose cannon because again if I I would
just follow Vineia as strictly as I
could and if some monk like my my
preceptor this happened more than once
he would do penance for a song offense.
You don't know what songa offenses are
that's fine but you got to do a penance
for it and they would just like fudge
the penance. They wouldn't do the
penance correctly. And so I would just
refuse to go to their reinstatement

ceremony which was seen as just unthinkable. I mean it was just barbarism to to the to the Burmese mind where you are just you defer to the abbot, you defer to the senior monks and I just wouldn't do that if I thought they were obviously wrong. I just wouldn't I wouldn't go with it.

So there were various reasons why let's see what's what's the actual question here. Let's see why people don't like you when you were a monk. Yeah. I mean it was just a few I mean relatively few. Most Burmese seats, most Burmese monks liked me fine. And some of them like really admired and respected me just because I was like

this Buddhist Rambo living out in a cave in the forest or just even when I was living in a school monastery, I'd go for alms round every day instead of just going to the refactory and eating food that was given out there.

Um, but I was controversial for not being just strictly dogmatic and, you know, sort of using critical thought and just sort of pointing out what I consider to be like discrepancies in the philosophy and so forth. You know, like I had monks at the school monastery talking for quite a while about the the idea is that the Buddha is was wiser than any of his disciples. that the

Buddha was just wiser because he was a sama sam Buddha. And then his chief disciple Sar Puta was wiser than any of the other disciples. And I just point out according to the Abidama philosophy itself that wisdom pa is synonymous with amoa or absence of delusion. So if you have zero delusion, you've got maximum puna just by definition. And all enlightened beings, all arants have zero delusion. So how could the Buddha be wiser than any other arant or how could Sar puta be wiser than any other arant? And the Burmese they just it's like they cannot bring themselves psychologically to question their own religion which is the way most religious people are. I

suppose if they're devoutly religious,
you know, they just follow. They're not
trying to
like, you know, they're not trying to
notice discrepancies or contradictions
or anything like
that. But I mean, that wasn't really why
anyone would dislike me. I think aside
from those few Seattle, the only people
that have really disliked me have been
like westerners that just didn't I mean
I mean western
monks. The only western monks who have
disliked me were
just mainly monks who were who leaned
leftwards and just didn't like my

politics. But that's not why I didn't get invited to conventions. And I've spent a lot of time answering this question. So I'm just going to move on to Chas is or Captain Bogumic Clumpka's second question, which is what kind of umbrella with mosquito net that you had as a monk? Was that the same what Thai monks use when they go on to Tonga? Yeah, it was in fact I I would call it a dutin tea in Burmese, which is like the dutonga umbrella.

So yeah, I mean it was just it was a jumbosized umbrella so that you could kind of sleep underneath it, you know, it would kind of keep you dry if you

slept underneath it. So it was relatively wide, you know, maybe four feet across. Detachable handle, little hook on the top that you could hang it from a tree branch or something. And it had like this very fine mesh mosquito net that you could hang from the umbrella and then that would keep the mosquitoes off when you're like meditating or or sleeping underneath this umbrella. And it was imported from Thailand. I got it from Thailand. So yeah, that's the same kind of monk or monk umbrellas that the Thai monks use when they go for duta. The

pratudong it's called in Thailand. And so I'm just going to move on to Tzas is his third question. Captain Klama, what is your opinion on neurobiology view that we do actually have two senses of self? One in left brain hemisphere and one in right. One is where your language and continuous experiences are located and the other one is silent artistic where subconsciousness is cuz it doesn't deal with words. when during certain medical procedures they disconnected the bridge between a two hemispheres they found out it is true but we don't feel that way because one sense of self is silent good stuff to explore so what is my opinion

on the neuro neurobiological view that
we have two senses of self I would
assume we have more than two senses of
self I mean what he's talking about is
just we've got sort of like a functional
asymmetry in the brain and so long as
let's just assume for the sake argument.
Physical matter exists. We really have
like this physical
brain. And back in like the 1970s, it
was like the golden age of experimental
brain surgery back then, like the 60s
and 70s. And it was an effective
treatment for severe epilepsy where you
you cut through the like the fibers that
connect the two hemispheres and it it

reduces epileptic seizures because epileptic seizures like an electrical storm in your brain. So it's like a mutual feedback thing that just gets out of control. Whereas if you divide the brain into two hemispheres, you know, without the the interconnection, it very much reduces the likelihood that you they'll have grand mall seizures.

So yeah, I mean it's it's not really controversial, you know, going with neurohysiology that you've got asymmetrical function in the brain that the right hemisphere is more like analytical and verbal. No, the left hemisphere is more analytical and and

verbal. The right the right hemisphere is more intuitive and not really more emotional because you've got the like the emotional parts of the brain are down in the center below the the cortex, you know, like the lizard brain. That's where the emotional stuff happens. you know, the abdala, you've got two of those, one on each side, and that's largely responsible for like anger and aggression and that kind of thing.

So, let's see. What is my opinion on the neurobiological view that we do actually have two senses of self? I don't know if

it'd be two senses of self, and I think you could have you could multiply that into several senses of self depending on how you want to look at it. But I would agree that the way science has, you know, examined the the data, excuse me, that the two the two halves of the the cortex have asymmetrical function. And I do think that that was one of the the innovations of modern humans that helped us to out compete other like preodern humans. Like maybe Neandertol still had like symmetry and you can like fit in more stuff if you got asymmetrical brain function like you know music appreciation is like the right temporal lobe that kind of thing but not not the

right no the right temporal lobe not the
left temporal
lobe. So I mean it just increases the
amount of specialization that your
cortex can
do. And so I do think that was like an
evolutionary innovation that just helped
modern humans to to out compete uh all
their like preodern prequas human uh
competitors. Whether Neanderls had
asymmetrical like uh cortex cortical
function or not I don't
know. So I'm just gonna move on this
question. This is from PT and says,
"Would you say that karma is uniquely
Indian? Seems to me that karma is the

spiritual backbone of Indian spiritualism. In other words, if anyone wanted to add a new spiritual perspective, it better have karma in its recipe to even be considered viable or rather digestible." So, I wouldn't say that karma is uniquely Indian. There are some kind of vague karmic ideas outside of India like just even in the Bible you've got he who lives by the sword shall die by the sword or as ye sow so shall ye reap and that's that's fairly karmic you know it's like you do this it's going to come back to you and I mean that kind of idea at the really basic level is if you do bad will happen to you mainly from

God smiting you like going from like um
Old Testament or like the Quran or
something, you know, it's sort of rather
than karma
being uh either a mental state like in
Buddhism or just some sort of I mean
it's like a substance in Janism like
this sticky substance that clings to
your your ja or your soul and weighs it
down or I mean a lot of people's
interpretations of karma is different
from that where it's it's just some sort
of as yet undiscovered law of physics of
sort of like Newton's idea that every
action has an equal and opposite
reaction. So that's that's kind of the

way I understood karma before I studied Buddhist philosophy. It's just sort of every action has an equal and opposite reaction. It's just sort of like the universe remaining in balance. You know, you push this way, there's going to be pushing back the other way.

And it wasn't until I started studying Buddhist philosophy that I realized that karma is much closer to Schopenhau's concept of will that it's chidna or volition in Buddhist philosophy. So it's like the the momentum the kinetic aspect of your delusional mind that's just pushing you through some sorrow.

But considering that karma has various interpretations, various ways of looking

at it, then I don't think it's uniquely Indian. It might be primarily Indian, but I don't think it's uniquely Indian because I mean, how are you going to exactly define karma when various philosophical schools in India define it differently? You know, the Buddhists define it differently from the James who define it differently from the Hindus. And even within Buddhism, there was some disagreement on exactly how karma worked or exactly what it was. And literally karma just means action or deed. And um I mean there there are some theories. I mean my what I consider to be the most

probably likely theory is that an idea
of karma came all the way from the Indis
Valley civilization. It probably wasn't
as sophisticated as the Buddhist
understanding of karma, but still they
had some idea of there is this your
actions leave
this like longlasting effect that will
come back on you and that you need to
kind of purify that in order to escape
from samsara that kind of thing which is
kind of what the James
believe. Um but there's another theory
that karma which means action could have
evolved just within the vadic tradition
itself and that's just it was the act of
karma was like the ceremonial act of the

the fire sacrifice that you had to do
the act within the sacrifice correctly
in order for it to be
efficacious. And so that kind of evolved
into this idea of karma. Although I'm
more inclined to think that the the
whole belief in something akin to karma
goes all the way back into prehistoric
times like the Indis Valley civilization
or other civilizations that are less
well known in northern
India. So let's see
here. Um I do think that karma does make
more sense. some interpretation of karma
does make more sense than just having
some god capital G god up in heaven

somewhere who's just scrutinizing everybody and just sort of you know remembering you know kind of like Santa Claus whether they're naughty or nice and then punishing the bad ones and rewarding the good ones and all that. Um, I think it's more of a natural phenomenon than than a supernatural one of some deity who is rewarding the good and punishing the bad. That we reward ourselves and punish ourselves. If we go to heaven, we send ourselves there. If we go to hell, we send ourselves there. And there's always a certain element of that even in monotheistic religions or Abrahamic religions, but they haven't completely gotten away from the whole,

you know, God punishes the bad and rewards the good instead of um just kind of leaving it all on our own shoulders. So, I think I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Thermal Squid. And thermal Squid says, "Would employment as a drill instructor be considered wrong livelihood?"
And then uh he's got this little commentarial paragraph here saying, "When the Buddha and Dharmama condemn militarism and war and any industry related, I wonder if there is a wholesome element in participating in the cultivation or perfection of others through aggressive and unconventional

means, discipline, loyalty, and other kinds of masculine virtues are developed by people like this. And even edgy types of sport coaches have similar characteristics. I also feel that it is a constructive way for people with aggressive tendencies to sublimate what could otherwise result in crime or domestic
tragedy. So getting back to the question, would employment as a drill instructor be considered wrong livelihood? Um I
mean if he's not actually killing anybody and but I guess he'd still be teaching others how to kill. I mean, you do have to learn like my father said

when he in World War II, you you receive instructions on how to stab people in such a way. You stab them in the kidney so and it hurts so bad that they can't make any sound, that kind of thing. Then yeah, I mean, that's that's not going to be right livelihood teaching people how to kill. Even if you're not killing yourself, so to
speak, still I mean, so it's going to have some unh wholesome elements. But in Buddhism, I mean, there's almost nothing that you could consider pure black or pure white. There's it's all shades of gray. And so a drill instructor who is teaching discipline and endurance and

austerity and and like
fearlessness that I mean that's going to
be good. That's going to have some some
positive karma for that drill
instructor. You know he's making a man
out of these
flabby video game players or
whatever. you know, I mean, he's sort of
like a father figure and it it maybe
there's a lot of harshness and a lot of
punishments, you know, that there's I
read about this one guy. He was walking
around with his hands in his pockets.
So, the drill instructor made him fill
up his pockets with sand and sew them
shut. And he was walking around with
like 10 pounds of extra weight just of

sand in his pockets just for the the the crime, the the perceived misbehavior of having his hands in his pockets.

And I mean, some of that is like a really fierce drill instructor. They're just going to break you down until you're having like a crisis and then they're just going to rebuild you into this fighting machine that does not hesitate to follow an order. And I mean, it's there's good and bad involved in that. It's not all good and it's not all bad. But I mean there's a lot of that kind of fierceness in spiritual teachers too like like the stereotypical Zen master who's like

beating people with

sticks. I think it might have been the

previous Q&A I'm talking about how

there's this saying in Zen Buddhism how

the the meditation hall can be

resounding with the shouts of the master

and blows from his stick may be falling

like rain but the master abides in

silence and stillness.

So, I mean, if you're learning um like

Bushido as a medieval samurai warrior,

then certainly there's going to be a

mixture of virtue and just flat out, you

know, from the Buddhist point of view,

badness, skillful and unskillful.

So all in all, I do think that um a

soldier from a Buddhist ancient Indian

Buddhist point of view would have wrong livelihood simply because I mean even if you're not killing you're I mean you have to be willing to kill you know you have to be trained how to kill that sort of thing.

So, but still I mean ethically it would be it'd be be a shade of gray. So, I'm just going to move on to Thermal Squid's second question. What do you feel about the role of someone like Heracles in the Dharma? And then his commentarial paragraph is in reading about Greco Buddhist culture and artifacts, we see Heracles or Vajraani as a protector of the Buddha. It made me

think about how the Dharma could make use of these with barbaric or worldly tendencies as a proxy for militarism. In doing so, avoiding sullying the SA or contradicting something like a himsa. I wonder what kind of merit or results come from that kind of occupational position and what thoughts you might have on it. Well, Heracles I mean he was sort of recruited into the Buddhist pantheon as the bodhicattva vajraani. Probably vajraani existed before and it was just I mean this happened all the time in classical times. You have Greeks or Romans move into a new area and in that new area the indigenous people are worshiping a certain deity. So the

Greeks or Romans would just equate that deity with some deity that they already knew. So you had, you know, like like Diana of Ephesus, you know, who's mentioned in the New Testament, greatest Diana of Ephesus. And in all likelihood, it wasn't really Diana to begin with. It's just that it just reminded somebody, some classical pagan of Diana, and so they just equated her with with Diana. and Heracles. I mean, he was all over the place, you know? There was like Phoenician versions of Heracles and probably like like Gish versions of Heracles. It was just Heracles or Hercules was he just

made the rounds. It was like he reminded a lot of people of some minor or not so minor deity is being worshiped out on the frontiers of the of the the empire. So yeah, that happened when the Greeks colonized

um like northwestern India and what is now Afghanistan which is called Baktria back then. Um yeah they just found they just saw this Vajraani who was sort of a bodyguard of the Buddha at least in iconography and so they started carving Vajraani as Hercules with his club. I don't I don't know if he had like the lion the lion pelt cape like he he does in some iconography but um let's see what's the actual question though what

do you feel about the role of someone
like heracles in the dhamma well I
mean it's it's sort of like the drill
instructor where I mean dhamma is not
going to endorse killing or or like
violence you know he might have to admit
that sometimes violence like in the
especially in the case of
self-defense is something that is it's
like a right like it's like a right that
you can choose to exercise to defend
yourself but still I mean Buddhism is
just
uncompromisingly pacifistic and
nonviolent and then of course it moves
into cultures that are more violent more

militaristic Samurai Japan being a classic example of that and also not just the Zen there they were like warrior monks in Japan that eventually got outlawed because they were so such troublemakers can't remember what they were called but they were they were sort of like sort of like the Japanese Buddhist equivalent of like Knights Templar or something and Knights Templar and the hospitalers and and those um monastic warrior groups in the west were similar also it's um it's is kind of a bastardization of two what you would consider to be incompatible ideas and then they're just like welded together into something that worked for

centuries.

So Heracles I mean he would

be I mean in he wasn't really a terra I

mean I don't think the

terraodens had her in their pantheon

even as vajraani I think vajra pani

might be mentioned in I mean it wouldn't

be vajra it'd be vajiraa

vajiraani in

pi which means like wielding the

thunderbolt or wielding a diamond

probably a thunderbolt in this face like

in the hand. Thunderbolts in the

hand. And I mean, he'd be like a

symbolic protector, you know? He'd be

using more psychic means to protect

Dharma

from heretics or or barbarians or

whatever, rather than out there bashing

them with a club.

So yeah, I think probably the more

dharmic

approach would be uh representing

protectors of the

dharma as using their protection in more

psychic ways, you know, just forming

like a a force field, like a protective

shield to keep keep heresy out of the

country, that kind of thing.

rather than busting

heads. So, I'm just going to move on to

Thermal Squid's third

question, which is, "What do the

Buddhist texts say about heroism and self-sacrifice?"

And then he's got the uh the commentarial paragraph following it saying, "In reading Hindu scriptures, I see often a theme that those who take the ultimate burden of sacrificing themselves for the protection of their family, culture, or even the well-being and safety of others immediately receive mosha and or a heavenly existence. In some senses, I find things like this to be highly beautiful and appreciable aesthetically speaking and that they epitomize altruism. I don't think that there is a higher form of

selflessness. Jumping in front of bullets onto grenades or running ahead on into danger with no concern for oneself seems to be a ticket into higher births or even something like apotheiois. Um well, I mean all of a sudden I'm reminded of like the ancient picss who would just go into a frenzy before battle. you know, they'd be they'd go into battle essentially naked and painted blue and then they just charge like the the Romans or whoever and they the the front line would just fling themselves onto the spears of the Romans which would like weigh down the spear so that the next wave would just go right over the top and overwhelm the

enemy. At least in theory that's that's how it was supposed to work. And it's I don't know if a berserker or someone like one of these picss is really uh is buying himself a ticket into higher births just through like frenzied willingness to die. I mean, even like warlike cultures, ancient like Germanic cultures and the Norse and so forth, like they had this idea that you can't get into Valhalla unless you die in battle, which made them quite willing to just be like these fearless badasses in battle cuz they thought, you know, they're going to Valhalla if they die in battle. And it was kind of a disgrace

not only for the Vikings, but for Klingons, too. or so I have so I've seen on an episode is a disgrace to die of old age. You got to die gloriously in battle. And I mean there is some virtue to that. It I mean it promotes fearlessness. You know it's certainly not conducive to timidity but again it's it's not all black and white. You know it's not all black or all white. It's going to be shades of gray and there's going to be good and bad mixed together. So let's see here. What do the Buddhist text say about heroism and self-sacrifice? Well, they talk a lot about heroism and self-sacrifice, but it's in spiritual terms and not like

military terms. There's a lot of like

militaristic

um symbolism in a lot of Buddhist texts.

Like in the suta nipata, there's at

least a few sutas where like a monk or

the Buddha is referred to as like this

allconquering hero. Like there's one

suta and I'm pretty sure it's in the

sutin pata where it says it is better to

die in battle than to live in defeat.

And it's a spiritual battle. I mean

you're you're trying to defeat your own

defilements, your own delusion. I mean

that's that's the real heroism from a

Buddhist point of view. There's a verse

in the Dhamapatam. It's I I don't

remember the exact numbers, but it's better to conquer yourself than to conquer 10,000 enemies on the field of battle and self-sacrifice. I mean, I think the there there's quite a lot of that also, especially when you start getting into the devotionalistic stuff like Jotica stories. I'm pretty sure there's a Jotica story or or it's could just be a Mahayana Buddhist story about it's well known about how the Buddha sees this tiger with babies and it's starving and so he just offers his own I think he he even like cuts his own flesh somehow just to kind of liven up the tiger with the the smell of blood so that you know he just offers his own

body for the sake of helping this tiger or there's the the sasad jadaka where the Buddha in a previous life is this wise rabbit who has determined he's going to feed any aesthetic wanderers that that come by and that this heats up the throne of Saka, king of gods, that when anybody does something outrageously austere like this, his throne gets too hot for him to to sit on it. So he has to go down and and see what the problem is. And so he disguises himself as an aesthetic brahman. And this this this rabbit, this hair, I mean, aesthetic brahinss don't eat rabbit food. So, he's just going to

fling himself into a fire. How a rabbit built the fire in the first place, I don't know. And he's just going to cook himself to feed this brahman or who he thinks is a
brahman. But Saka spared his life and the fire didn't burn him. And then as a reward for his willingness to sacrifice his own life just to feed this Brahman, he squeezes the juice out of a mountain and makes a uh an image of a rabbit on the moon. And that's that's how the Buddha became the man in the
moon, so to speak.
So there's a lot of talk about heroism and self-sacrifice, but it's in spiritual terms sometimes using

militaristic symbolism, militaristic
language like the pura suta
which it uses a lot of
militaristic like imagery in the suta
even though it's kind of discouraging
um what pura wanted. Hour was it mean
literally it means like hero but it's
it's about debate how you know this
person wants to just conquer his
opponents in debate and that's
considered to be an unskillful attitude
and Buddhist monks are advised to avoid
these kind of public debates because
they happen a lot in India and it's easy
to get sucked into it just like it's
easy to get sucked into some debate on

Twitter

now. So yeah, definitely there's praise of heroism and self-sacrifice, but it is nonviolent and it is along spiritual terms or along spiritual lines. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Captain Caniples who used to be called Scoladin or Scooladine, I'm pretty sure, because he's got the same kind of bullet points. And he says, "Would you kindly explain peak form for receiving meta?" And then he's got the characteristic Scooladine bullet point like the most conducive condition for bypassing the second law of the dynamics or better yet acting as a force multiplier. I'm

willing to douse myself with an old glass bottle of Hawaiian suntan oil, liquid magnifying glass, if that matters. So, what is the peak form for receiving meta? I mean, it just be having like a a mind that isn't so opaque that the meta can't really shine in.

So I assume you would either be in a state of relative clarity or it could be that you could be in a state of crisis despair and then meta can get into you fairly easily just because it's like your shields are down.

But I don't think there I've never

really come across any strategy for
maximizing meta intake when others are
like radiating
it supposedly. I mean, you'd think there
have been so many saints in this world
and in other worlds, too, just beaming
meta in all directions that there ought
to be quite a lot of meta in the air,
just like there's quite a lot of phone
conversations and like internet porn and
all this that are just going through our
bodies all the
time. So, I guess just uh being like
having like mental
clarity would probably be your best bet.
Try not to be opaque. Try to be at least
translucent. And so I'm just going to

move on to Captain Caniples's second question here. Concerning book hype, how relatable was your time in Burma to Allen Parish from Juman G? And then the bullet point says, "In the jungle, you just wait until the dice rolls five or eight and that's 26 years." And I I think Juman G is like a Was that a movie with like Robin Williams in it? If if it was, I never saw the movie. I have no idea what Captain Canipples here is really referring to. So, I mean, I've seen quite a few movies. Um, but Jumanji isn't one of them. And I'm assuming that Jumanji is a movie. I seem to recall um Robin Williams being in a movie like

that. But I don't know who Alan Parish is. Maybe it was the role played by Robin Williams, but I really can't say much more than that. So, I'm just going to move on to Captain Caniples's third question, which is, what would you advise to people who want to enjoy the world for what it is and be grateful for what there is in life, even if it's mixed with insanity? Well, I mean, reading Jay Krishna Murdy would be a good start, I suppose.

um just I mean you can enjoy the world and be grateful for what there is in life without clinging to it and insisting that it be this way instead of that way. So I mean gratitude will get

you farther than indifference or at least some spiritual teachers say that gratitude will get you farther in life and in a spiritual life than just indifference.

But uh let's see here. What would you advise to people who want to enjoy the world for what it is and be grateful for what there is in life? Well, for one thing, you have to be willing to accept the bad stuff when it happens. Like uh Ramen Maharshi once admonished one of his disciples that he says when you pray you thank God for all the good things, all the blessings, but you don't thank God for the bad stuff that happens. So,

I mean, you should thank God for all of it because all of it, I mean, it's it's helping you to to work out your karma and get you closer to God or the the absolute or whatever you want to call it. So, what would I advise to people who want to enjoy the world for what it is and be grateful for what there is in life? I mean, still you got to take dhamma into consideration that the second noble truth is going to be true regardless. You know, clinging and attachment is the cause of all suffering. So, just accept what happens. Be be a stoic. Just accept the bad stuff and the good

stuff. But if you're like trying to

maximize the positive and eliminate the negative, it's just not going to work because positive and negative are opposite sides of the same coin. If you if you don't want any negative, you have to eliminate the positive, too. And if you want positive, you have to be willing to accept an equal amount of negative. And that's the thing is if you want to wallow in sensuality or you want to enjoy pleasures of the senses, then you have to be willing to accept when the opposite inevitably happens. You know, it's you might consider to be an equitable trade. You want something so

bad that you're willing to accept its opposite when it when it happens. you know, you want this pleasure so much. You think this pleasure would be an equitable trade for an equal amount of its opposite, then I mean, that's your choice to

make. So, just bear in mind that the four noble truths are going to remain true regardless of how you decide to live your life. And clinging and attachment is going to I mean, desire, craving is going to cause suffering. So just do what you do with with as little like craving and attachment as you can manage. And if you still have craving and attachment then you should bear in

mind that that is going to bear fruit
and there's going to be some pain
involved some
unpleasantness
involved and just take that just accept
it with equinimity. When the bad stuff
happens be a
stoic. So I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from Quistor
and Quistor says in the scenario of a
formless being reaching Ara ship, how
does this being develop insight into the
nature of sensuality to the point of
transcending it if the reality lacks all
experience of sensuality? Well, I don't
think there is a

scenario of a formless being reaching or ship. Um it's just the the formless realms in terra Buddhism are seen as a kind of dead
end. Like when the Buddha became enlightened, he was using his his divine eye, his
debauch he's considering his his two meditation teachers before he was enlightened. And then he realized, I mean, they got into formless realms as a result of these high meditative attainments, these formless genres that they had mastered. And so he couldn't teach them. They were just stuck up there for who knows how many million eons.

So it's just considered in terra Buddhist philosophy that a formless being in a formless realm is in a a dead end, a spiritual dead end. And he's going to have to wait or she or whatever. They probably don't have gender up there. They're just going to have to wait until they've exhausted their karma there and get down back into a realm where there are bodies and then they can they'll have sense organs where they can hear the dharma and then they can learn from that and practice it and so forth. But formless beings in just according to standard orthodox terabato Buddhism do not become enlightened. They

are just stuck there.

I mean it's it's extremely blissful you know it's the highest possible states or the of the 31 plains of existence the highest plains are the formless realms you know it's the arupala loca the the realm of

formlessness but um you you there's there's no way to make spiritual progress there because you have no sense organs and you can't practice or anything at least that's what they say I'm not I'm not saying this based on my own personal

experience. So I'm just going to move on to Quisa to our second

question which is do you think that

every being in existence has had the opportunity to become a sodapana and whether or not they chose that path was due to their karma which was ultimately random. I mean, the Arahant could not have chosen the right turns of the maze in each lifetime leading up to them becoming an Arya unless they had an inner guidance or it was just random. Well, going with orthodox terra Buddhist philosophy, every being in existence at some point has probably had the opportunity to hear dharma and practice dharma. And most of them probably didn't or even some who did you know they didn't do it enough and you know they

got merit for that and then they went up
into a higher realm or got better births
and then you know burned up the merit
that they had they used it up and then
you know it's like according to Buddhist
philosophy pretty much every being in
existence has been all over the place
all through the 31 planes of existence
you know we we've done it
all although personally I think There
may be like new beings spawning in this
universe, you know, um various ways of
doing it. I've discussed it in previous
Q&A. So, there could be beings that
haven't been in existence for very long,
assuming that time
exists that just haven't really had that

opportunity

yet. So, let's see

here. Okay, I guess I answered that

question. That was relatively quick

answer which makes me feel a certain

insecurity like being the first person

to hand in a test in school. But still

I'm just going to move on to Quistor's

second or third question which is do you

think that psychic powers that seem to

defy physics are possible? Well, duh.

Yeah, obviously I do. That I mean

physics I mean the laws of physics can

be broken. I mean they're not really

laws. They're just you've got scientists

who observe phenomena and see like

repeating patterns which they then I mean in physics has often not as not they'll turn it into a mathematical formula apply the mathematical formula to it and call that like a law of physics when I mean really it's a stable pattern that keeps things stabilized keeps things regular but still um I do think that the mind is or the universe is just a projection of consciousness and mind over matter does exist. So yeah, I mean I mean I mean science can't even explain consciousness really. How is it that electrochemical reactions in this blob of gray meat is causing conscious experience? Science can't even explain that.

So, do I think that psychic powers that seem to defy physics are possible? Yeah, definitely. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Romeo. And Romeo says, "Every now and then I think about talented actors or musicians whose work inspired me that died at relatively young ages. I often wonder what great music or films the world missed out on due to their untimely demise." A musician like John Lennon or an actor like River Phoenix comes to mind. What do you think happens to dormant untapped creative potential if the person dies before they realize it? Does it just evaporate? Does karma

or rebirth factor in at all in terms of dormant untapped creativity? See what do you think happens to dormant untapped creative potential if the person dies before they release it? Does it just evaporate or does karma rebirth factor in at all in terms of dormant untapped creativity? Well, I'm John Lennon wouldn't really come to mind for me. I mean, he was middle-aged by the time he was murdered or assassinated. And usually creative geniuses reach their peak like in their 20s. Not always, but I mean some of the greatest philosophical works ever written were written by young young men in their

20s. But the person that I this reminds me of is John Keats. And probably a lot of you Philistines out there don't know who John Keats was, but he was a romantic poet. And I took English lit in college and you had like the romantic era and it was just sort of like a almost like a tradition that the romantic poets would die young. Lord Byron was in his 30s. I think maybe Shelly was like maybe in his around 30 when he died. Keats died of tuberculosis when he was in his mid20s. I'm pretty sure. And I remember my the professor who was teaching the class said that if Keats hadn't died so young he could have

been one of the giants of English literature. And this same professor said there were four giants of English literature. You had let's see Spencer, Shakespeare, Milton and Wdsworth. So Keats could have been could have been number five, but he died when he was like in his mid20s, but he had such talent and I mean he he just had nowhere to go but up at that point and then he just dies of tuberculosis because they didn't have a cure for it then. So what happens to to that talent? Well, I mean it's it's sort of like the cororat cat. I don't think it's it's going to be the same for everybody. I don't think there's just some cookbook

formula that applies to everybody that it may be that he just sort of used up. I mean, some of these people just kind of they just kind of flamed out with their creativity karma and used it up. Whereas others just had this momentum going. I would assume most of them have a kind of momentum going. So that um some bad karma causes you know just kind of cuts it short in this life then you know they'll take another birth where you know they just have this momentum going like like uh Mozart he apparently had this momentum going from birth. I mean he was allegedly composing like symphonies when he was like

seven. Probably they weren't all that great of symphonies. I mean, you don't you don't hear them on YouTube or anything, but

still, I do think that there there are some people that they just have multilife momentum going. I remember reading um in like an old like 1950s edition of Readers Digest magazine about this guy who from the time he was a kid, he just had this this drive to tame animals. is he was just like a naturalb born lion tamer. You know, when he was a kid, he'd be catching raccoons and taming them or or whatever it was. And he wound up sort of stifling this desire and became like a some art teacher at a

little liberal arts college somewhere. But still, I mean, he he had this he was still catching animals and taming them until some friend of his p sort of as like a a practical joke sent him a live cougar to for him to tame that. And he wound up taming it and then he sold it to some circus cuz tamed cougars, tamed cougars were relatively rare at the time. and he just just kept gravitating towards becoming a lion tamer until he became one of the main lion tamers for the Barnaman Bailey Circus. Ringling Brothers and Barnaman Bailey Circus. And so, you know, it could be some kind of music or art or math or whatever it is.

Some people they just build this
momentum life after life until they're
just born with this this amazing
talent. So, it could be like that too.
But it's, you know, it's sort sort of
like the cororat cat. You know, it's
it's not like it's going to be the same
for
everybody. So, let's see
here. What do I think happens to dormant
untapped creative potential? I mean, it
stays in the karmic stream. I mean, some
karma fades out over time and some
doesn't. At least going with orthodox
Buddhist philosophy.
So I don't think it would just evaporate
because you know you've got the the law

of conservation of energy and all that. So it's momentum. It's still part of the momentum. Um unless it's just after many lives the opportunity doesn't arise. You know, maybe you had some talented musician who nevertheless lived a totally debauched and depraved lifestyle as some musicians do and then he winds up, you know, getting life after life of, you know, just bad lives as a result of that. And then maybe some of his musical talent karma will just fade out by the time he finally gets an opportunity to be a musician again. But who knows? And I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Fred. And Fred says,"Wh do you use the inshalah expression?" And I'm not exactly sure how I came how I started doing that. Um I think I was saying it even before I I went to Bali where there was a um an Indonesian monk there that I used to hang out with who would who would say it sometimes too. He he would say it better. He he'd say it with a more Arabic kind of intonation to to it. Um just I mean it literally means God willing and it just I just kind of like the sound of it

inshalah. It's uh I don't know kind of a poetic sounding expression I think. And uh you know it's sort of like covering

up the god willing to some degree while still meaning the same thing because technically I'm not really a theist. I don't believe in a capital G god unless you you interpret it in a very nebulous amorphous you know kind of upanishotic sort of

way. So but it just means you know maybe it's like there's one teaching of the the New Testament that I really appreciate. I mean there's more than one but one that I really took to heart is this idea you don't say you know I'm going to go to such and such town and make such and such amount of money and then I'm going to come back. It's like

God willing if I don't die first because
you don't know for sure. Ajan Chai used
to I mean he almost interpreted anata as
just uncertainty. Not
sure. So in a way it's just sort of a a
way of
expressing my
characteristic like skepticism and
uncertainty about the future. I mean you
don't know you can't be sure what's
going to happen
tomorrow. And so I just include that
kind of statement as a way of just
bearing that in
mind. So I I'll help you fix your car
next week,
inshallah, which just means God willing.

And then if you wind up not helping him, well, God didn't want you to help him. So that's the main reason, I guess. And so I'm just going to move on to Fred's second question, which is does the first sermon contain the four noble truths? And yes, it does. Like the two main things that the Buddha teaches in the first sermon, the Dhamachaka Poetas Suta, which is considered by tradition to be his first formal suta or discourse after his enlightenment to the five aesthetics that used to to practice with him is the the middle path and the four noble
truths. So that's just like basic

Buddhism, you know, it's like intro to

Buddhism right there.

Intro to

Dhhamma. So, I mean, Fred, I mean, you

can just read the suta and find out what

it says if you want

to. So, I'm just gonna move on. Next

question. This is from PSA. PSA says,

"How often do you shape how often do you

shapeshift?"

And how often do I shape shift? Well, I

mean, it's this body is my shape. Then,

whenever I move that it's shifting,

right? The shape is shifting. See, look

at look at how I'm

shapeshifting.

See? So, that happens pretty much all

the time. Even when I'm asleep, I'll still roll over. That kind of thing. So, my shape is is changing in subtle ways u pretty much all the time. You know, it's like when I'm breathing, you know, the abdomen is expanding and contracting and so forth. But with regard to like assuming the shape of a wolf or something. Yeah, that must happen when I'm like like sound asleep and and don't notice it
cuz the only shape-shifting I'm aware of is just like moving the shape the position of my limbs and so forth. So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question, which is, can you

double check if we are in fact recording? And I already checked like 4 minutes into this, but I might as well. [__] No. [__] We're not really recording. So, just a minute. Okay, we're back. And I think we're recording now. Yeah, we're still recording.

Okay, so I'm just going to move on to PSA's third question, which is what's your favorite suta of the Anguda Nikica and why? Well, the very first suta of the Angura Nikkaya is sort of a a key suta. It's like in in the Nikayas, the first suta of the Nikayas is generally edited to be first just because it was considered to be so important. And so

the first suta the young guru nikaya is
a cardinal important kind of suta where
the Buddha is saying you know monks I
know of no other form which takes over a
man's mind and abides there like the
form of a
woman and it's pretty much true. I mean,
even modern science has kind of
reinforced that or or what's the word
corroborated that like back in the I
think it was the 1970s they did a
psychological
study where they would sit somebody down
in front of a screen and then flash
pictures on the
screen, various pictures, all kinds of

pictures. And they would measure whether the person liked what they saw through pupil dilation because they might lie. You know, they might see a picture of the American flag and say that they like it when really they're just indifferent. That kind of thing. Or they might see a picture of a a naked woman and say they don't like it when really they do like it a lot. So just to get rid of the the any kind of dishonesty or you know sort of fudging fudging the answers, they just measured pupil dilation because when you see something you really like, your pupils
dilate. So it turns out that there was only one kind of picture that

consistently caused men's pupils to dilate and that was pictures of naked women. But with regard to the women, there was actually two kinds of pictures that would cause women's pupils to dilate. That was pictures of naked men and pictures of babies. Cute, cuddly, adorable little
babies. So that's I guess that's one of my favorite sutas. The only other suta of the Angura and Nikkaya that really stands out in my mind is I don't even remember what what number in the Angura is is like arranged by numbers you know it starts out with ones then twos then threes up to 11 and I don't remember

what what the number was what group and what numerical group this suta is in but it's various ways that a monk has impure celibacy that he's living the holy life like

brahmacharia in an impure way. And some of the examples are are kind of sad. I've mentioned this before, but it's I mean some are pretty obvious like a monk who lets women massage his legs, that kind of thing. Or another one is a man who he he looks deeply into a woman's eyes when he's talking to her. or um one of them is just kind of sad. A man or a monk who would like hide behind a wall and listen to women who are talking or laughing or singing or crying. You know,

a monk who will like hang out and watch
people watch women bathing in a public
like ford or river, something like that.
Um, it was in a way it kind of hit hit
close to home with me because I could
never really stop being
heterosexual. You know, I've always had
a a fascination for beautiful women.
Even when I was a little kid, when I was
four years old, I proposed marriage to
my babysitter, Debbie
Sando.
So, I guess those would be the two. I
don't even remember the name of the one
where it's it's got this list of various
ways that amongst celibacy is is like

impure or contaminated or

something. So I'm just going to move on

this question which

is I

I don't know about this one. This is

from extremely rare bird who has who has

been doing some sort of leftist ranting

in the comments. um a few times over the

past several Q&A videos. And there's

actually a question mark in this. So,

it's not just going to be like a an

anthropological case history that I'm

going to comment upon because there

actually is a question mark in this. So,

Extremely Rare Bird says, "In your last

video, you said that Russia has been

arbitrarily chosen as the bad guy." I

think that might have been a video I did with my friend Brian talking about the Trump phenomenon. I don't recall it coming up in a Q&A, but it's possible. I don't I don't really recall. So, anyways, Extremely Red Bird, I'll start at the beginning. Says, "In your last video, you said that Russia has been arbitrarily chosen as the bad guy. Do you claim that Russia is merely acting out of self-defense?" question mark. And then he continues though, I think it's true that Russia had its reasons for attacking out of feeling threatened, being cornered by NATO, etc. But is it then justified to target

Ukraine's civilians, torture them, and steal their children? Apparently, over 700,000 Ukrainian children have been taken by
mid2023. This is not simply a nation acting out of self-defense. It is it is a nation trying to conquer another. Further, the spin you make on the conflict is that the castrated glo castrated globalist environmentalists pretty much deserve it and that Russia is in the right here and that EU is just a bunch of feminized
idiots. That's a [__] up statement to make, which technically I didn't really make, but we can get to that. You apparently have this black and white

worldview where one side is completely in the right and the other is completely in the wrong. Oftentimes the one in the right has balls and brute force. You would think that a Buddhist at least would condemn the violence, but no, you instead offer praise for a brutal dictator and murderer.

I'm not saying that you owe any explanation to any of this to either side of the war, more that you should be more careful of what you speak. And then that he got some push back from some other people in the in the comments and he and his push back to the push back. He did make the the statement if one is

honest, one would say the same to Po Basa as he is spreading hate and propaganda. And with regard to spreading hate, I mentioned it in the comments that hate speech has come to mean nothing more than any speech that leftists hate. There doesn't have to be any hate at all motivating the speech. I mean, from a Buddhist point of view, you could say hate speech would be speech that is motivated by hatred. Or you could say maybe hate speech is speech that is calculated to inspire hatred. But neither one of those applies to what I've been saying as far as I can, as far as I know that I'm not trying to inspire hatred. And I'm not motivated by hatred

other than maybe like the really subtle kind of hatred that that can get into just anything in Buddhist ethics because it's so subtle that you know just the slightest attraction or aversion. The slightest attraction is greed. The slightest attraction is or aversion is hate. Some of that can get in. But that's like if you say, you know, I don't like vanilla, then again that it's it's like the same kind of aversion, you know, that's hate speech. If you say you don't like vanilla because your dislike of vanilla technically from the the subtle ethics of Buddhist philosophy is hate. But

that's really not what hate speech is or promulgating hate. It's just anything that leftists or globalists hate. Any speech that globalists or leftists hate is hate speech. That's promulgating hate. I hate what you said, therefore you are promulgating hate. That's essentially the attitude. A person could just make a completely objective statement of what appears to be empirical fact and still they'll be accused of hate speech. Like you say that there's difference differences in ethnicities with regard to certain measurable values or differences between the two biological sexes. And people will just say that's

hate speech because it it is in violation of their ideology where everyone is supposed to be the same when you're just making an like an objective observation and you don't even necessarily want it to be true. I mean, it would be nice if all the ethnicities had equal talents and skills that are just innate, equal abilities, equal cognitive abilities. It would be nice, but that's not what the empirical evidence indicates. And so if you go with the empirical evidence, you're accused of being a hatemonger. Even though I mean it's not like you want it to be that way. I can say everyone's

going to die. That doesn't mean that I
want everyone to die. It's just a fact
of
life. So let's
consider the case of California. Let's
say California secedes from the union
and then China starts making deals and
like treaties with California and starts
planning to like put missile bases in
California aimed at American cities.
Well, there's no way in hell America
would put up with that. There's no way
in hell. And that's essentially what
Russia is doing with regard to Ukraine
because I mean Ukraine was part of
Russia much longer than California has
been part of the United States. Ukraine

was part of like a Russian empire long
before the Soviet Union came
along. I mean Kievan Roose is considered
to be like one of the the like the
founding nuclei of Russian culture and
that's that's in
Ukraine. So it's I mean
Just because you point this out doesn't
mean that I think Putin is 100% good and
Zalinski is 100% bad. I mean, that's
just
infantile. There's no way I'd say that.
I mean, obviously Putin is a kind of
gangster.
But still in this conflict, if I had to
choose which side I would want to win,

I'd go with

Russia, even if it means that they

conquer Ukraine, which they're probably

not going to

do. So, let's see. Is there anything I I

missed out here? I mean, this it's sort

of like the Cuban missile crisis. the

Russians were going to put missiles in

Cuba and it's like there's just no way

America was going to put up with that.

And ever since Gorbachev, Russian

leaders have been warning, you know, you

start like trying to get Ukraine into

NATO, you know, putting military bases

in Ukraine, that's going to be an act of

war. We are going to fight against that.

Just it just makes sense. America would

do exactly the same thing.
And when I says uh let's see in my last video I said that Russia has been arbitrarily chosen the bad guy.
Well in a way they pretty much have. I mean they could have they could have been our friends right now if there were not certain like mainly globalist agents in the establishment that's extends beyond the United States that wanted to keep the cold war going to some degree.
And China obviously is a greater threat to American interests than Russia is. Russia may be a greater threat to globalist
interests. And with regard to the EU

castrating itself, I mean, that's just pretty much of an like an objective fact at this point. So might does make right from from a political point of view. That's one reason why for many years I had no interest in politics when I was most of the time that I was a monk until I came back to America and just saw how fascinatingly interesting it was. Um yeah, it was I lost interest in politics as soon as I realized that what is right and good from a political point of view is not necessarily right and good from an ethical point of view. That just kicking ass sometimes is the right thing to do from a political point of view.

Let's see. There's some something else in here. Is it then justified to target Ukraine civilians? Well, I mean, if Russia the Russians really were targeting Ukraine civilians, then you wouldn't have these glaring headlines. You know, it's like Russians like destroy apartment complex, two people killed. That if Russia really was trying to kill civilians, there'd be a hell of a lot more dead civilians in Ukraine. And also there's no mention at all of like the
Ukrainians like bombing these separatist enclaves like what Donbass and and the other one that that was going on before

the Russians invaded. I mean it goes both ways. There's atrocities going both ways. It's always the way it is to have people try and claim that you've got a war where one side is 100% good. They're they're wearing the white hats and the other side is 100% bad. They're wearing the black hats. It's just childish.

So, let's see. Is there anything that I I should mention here? Something about stealing their children. I really don't know much about Russians stealing Ukrainian children. Uh could be that. I mean, there's a lot of refugees leaving Ukraine that are going into Russia. You don't hear about that

much

either. But with regard to evil

Russians, like torture, let's see, see,

targeting Ukrainian civilians very

incompetently apparently torturing them.

I'm sure there's torture going both

ways. You know, there's always going to

be atrocities. I mean, when you have a

war, when you've got soldiers willing to

kill people, then they have to have like

this shell, you know, against their own

conscience. I It's like they're going to

I mean, they harden their heart so that

they can do this stuff and then it goes

ary where there's certain people with

maybe criminal elements, you know, the

reason why they're not in prison is
because they joined the military
instead. And, you know, cruel instincts
come out. dehumanizing instincts come
out and that goes both
ways.
So yeah, I mean you can say war crimes,
but I mean war itself is I mean you
you've already gone beyond any kind of
like ethical limits really from a
Buddhist point of
view. So let's see
uh further when you spin the spin you
make on the conflict is the castrated
globalist environmentalists pretty much
deserve it. Well we always get what we
deserve. I mean just going with the

whole Buddhist point of view of karma. I mean it's the whole system is worked out so that we get what we deserve. The Russians are getting what they deserve. The Ukrainians are getting what they deserve. The castrated unics running the EU are getting what they deserve. And America is getting what it deserves. So, let's see. And the EU is just a bunch of feminized. Oh, they're not idiots. I never said they were idiots. They are definitely feminized, but they're not idiots. Let's see. You apparently have this black and

white worldview. No, I think that
extremely rare bird has more of the
black and white worldview than I do. I
mean, it's all shades of
gray. One side is completely in the
right. No, that's just I mean what what
is happening here is that extremely rare
bird is triggered by me saying stuff
that he doesn't like and so he has to
twist it into something worse than I
said in order to justify bitching about
it
essentially. Let's see. You would think
that as a Buddhist at least you would
condemn the
violence. What would be the point of
that? I disapprove of people killing

each

other. It's still going to

happen. And from the from the political

point of view, sometimes killing people

is the right thing to

do. So, let's

see. And then at the end, the Pyobasa is

spreading hate and propaganda. Yeah.

Well, you viewers can decide for

yourself. And I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Dama River.

And Dama River says, "You mentioned in a

recent video that having a one night

stand was sexual misconduct. How

so?" Dama River, what is the woman? What

if the woman is single and the man is

single and they're both of legal age and they both consent? Would you please explain in more detail where is the sexual misconduct in this situation? I mean, what religion?

I mean, Buddhism, according to Buddhism, listening to music is immoral. According to Buddhism, putting salt and pepper on your food to make it taste better is immoral. According to Buddhism, being unhappy is

immoral. So, I mean, it's like Buddhism has the most finely tuned ethics of just about any spiritual system out there.

And then Donna River is thinking that you can just pick up some drunken hoe at a bar and screw her and forget about

her. And that's you're not like

wallowing in

sensuality. If listening to music is

immoral, how would [__] somebody not

be immoral?

So

gosh, questions like this is it's like

I'm somewhat taken

aback. See,

look. Taking a

back. Let's see. So, I mean, it's just

wallowing in

sensuality. It's something that a good

Buddhist isn't supposed to do. I mean,

if you're married, then, you know, it's

just it's the way of the village. You

know it's gadama and you know you have
babies you know it's just is how human
race propagates
itself but uh just having sex for
fun I mean it's going to be immoral even
between a married a married couple but
you got to draw the line somewhere. So
married couples or just you know a
couple that has formed a pair bond you
know they're they're faithful to each
other that's it's still immoral from
from the point of view of extremely
finely tuned ancient Indian
ethics but it's still I mean it's got to
be acceptable otherwise the human race
is just going to die
out and nobody will support the monks

anymore.

So you get married, you have kids or you just form a stable faithful pair bond and you have kids but uh like wallowing in sensuality just for the sake of wallowing in sensuality. I mean I don't know how anybody could interpret Buddhism in such a way that that would be that would be fine and dandy.

[Music]

Okay, I'm just going to move on to Dama River's second question here, which is, "What are your thoughts on Alex Jones?" And then in parenthesis, he's got Infowars. And I don't really

watch Alex Jones much. I mean, he puts out so many hours of content every day that I mean, you could just sit there watching Alex Jones all day and still just barely put a dent into it. seems to me. Um, I do think that Alex Jones would be fun to just hang out with in a backyard in a backyard. Just have a beer and like do a barbecue. You're barbecuing burgers on a grill. I I think he'd be a really an enjoyable person to hang out with. Just spend an afternoon having a beer, eating some burgers in the backyard, sitting in lawn chairs. But, uh, I think he's sincere. He's he's got some kind of extreme views on certain things, but I mean he's he's

somewhat of a prophet. I think a lot of these stuff that he's been predicting and and so on, it really does happen. But I mean, I don't I'm not so enamored of Alex Jones that I
uh I just sit around watching Alex Jones videos, just very rarely. You know, I might watch five minutes of Alex Jones per week on Twitter. He's not on YouTube anymore, I don't think. Except for maybe like like an interview with Joe Rogan or something. So, yeah, I'm I'm glad that Alex Jones is hasn't been just like sued into
oblivion. So, I mean, he has he has the right to freedom of speech. I think Info

Wars is an appropriate name for for his channel. So yeah, my blessings are upon Alex

Jones. And I'm just going to move on to uh the next question which is from Gaz. And Gaz says, "Suppose there are two worlds like our own. One is Maya and illusion. The other is real. How can we know which one we are in? How would a real material world differ from an illusory material world? Before renouncing the world, this is the issue to address absent facts. I can understand assuming it an illusion for the sake of overcoming suffering and for spiritual pursuit. But I also understand assuming it real for the sake of life,

love, and happiness. Perhaps both can be true. I regard many Buddhist teachings to be undeniable and beneficial, but recently the more pessimistic or nihilistic aspects have been bothering me. I wish that the lay life were encouraged
more. Oh man, there's there's more more question marks. I I got to divide this up. Okay. Well, I'll just continue because I didn't separate it until just now. Are there any lifeaffirming sutas that may help me with this? The seagallo wada and the kalama suta come to mind. I understand why there might not be many. I can accept this. If Buddhism is true,

it is good to abandon the world to blow out. Not quite so for Mahayana. But should Buddhism be an error? It is a very grim position indeed. Well, let's get to the top here. Suppose there are two worlds. One is Maya and illusion and the other is real. How can we know which one we're in? I mean, does it even matter? I mean, it's the same either way. Whether you realize you're in the matrix or not. I mean, like, if you realize you're in the matrix, that will definitely affect your attitude. But, I mean, the experiences that you're having would be the same pretty much. The kind of experiences you would have. And

furthermore, I don't think it's even possible, not even in theory, to have a real material world that like a multiplistic pluralistic world that any kind of pluralism is an artifact of perception. It requires perception, which is s
symbolism to create a pluralistic world. You you have it it requires for example relations same as different from better than worse than bigger than smaller than these are all relations that you use to differentiate different things in your field of perception and every single one of those is a mental state like I've said before like you can take have a

chemist who's going to separate a sample of of some physical substance into its component elements

And he's not going to get find any pure same as or pure different from in that sample of matter that's entirely psychological. It's entirely in the mind. But without that same as and different from it's it's as though there is nothing. You've got like this unthinkable void.

So I mean whether there is some kind of underlying physical reality is is almost irrelevant because we're not experiencing it. What we're experiencing is our own mental states, our own perceptions and that is some

sorrow. I don't really see how there's
any way to get around
that. So how can we know which one we
are in? I
mean, theoretically, I mean, if if the
illusion is like a shabby
illusion so that you can just drive to
the end of the world where it's just
like a blank screen or something, you
know, that you can somehow like glitch
out the the matrix, you know, find some
kind of way of glitching it out, find
some gap or something, then maybe then.
But if it's like a uh a really good
illusion, a competently designed matrix,
there's no way you could tell the

difference other than philosophically
when you realize that I mean it's all
mind-ade
anyway. So how would a real material
world differ from an illusory material
world? It wouldn't necessarily at all
because you don't experience material.
All you can experience is mind. mind
like experience is itself
mental. There's no way to prove the
existence of any material world. Like
the the philosopher Emanuel Kant
considered that to be the scandal of
philosophy that after thousands of years
philosophers still hadn't proved that
there is or is not
matter. I mean it's easier to

demonstrate that there couldn't be
matter or at least you can get farther
in that direction than proving that
there is.
I mean, you can say, well, I mean, one
person goes into a room, sees something
there, he leaves. Another person goes
into that same room and sees the same
thing. But that's not proof that there's
physical matter. It proves that there's
a kind of order to what the two people
are
experiencing, but still, I mean, that's
no proof at all. You can consider it
kind of circumstantial evidence, I
suppose.

So let's see here before renouncing the world is no it's how is that even an issue whether this material world is real or not how is that even an issue from the Buddhist point of view it's all a matter of the four noble truths I mean desire desire and attachment are the cause of all suffering so you renounce the world as a way of like minimizing like craving and attachment whether the world is real or not is irrelevant. Some schools of Buddhism say it is, but it's still sort of like in science different than we perceive it to be. Whereas other schools of Buddhism say it's all an illusion. But what difference does it

make? I mean, that's not the point.
Whether this world is real or not, it's
still conducive to suffering. And anyone
who doesn't want to suffer, anyone who
wants to overcome
delusion will renounce this or at least
not cling to
it. At least not be like insisting that
things be this way instead of that way
because I mean that's you're just
setting yourself up against city hall at
that point. You're never going to
win.
So let's see. There's other question
here. Are there any lifeaff affirming
sutas that may help me with this? I

don't think so. I mean you can see suta
or a few other sutas that you know are
like talking about the duties of a lay
person for living a well-
reggulated you know relatively virtuous
within the the scope of lay life kind of
existence. That's about as good as
you're going to get because I mean
ancient Indian
ethics were pretty much based on the
idea that this world this
samsara is conducive to suffering and
the best thing you can do is to find a
way out. At the very least you should
attenuate it make it more
subtle. And that's that's true whether
there is a physical universe or not.

Whether the physical universe really
exists or not is is almost totally
irrelevant. It's
just desire is the cause of all
suffering regardless of whether there's
a physical universe or not. And so you
act
accordingly.
So I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from Ruie.
So Ruie says, "I do tend to understand
study as a kind of practice." This is
this is sort of a followup from I think
uh a question he asked in previous Q&A
with regard to studying
dharma. And so he says, "I do tend to

understand study as a kind of practice and vice versa. Speaking of which, what would be according to you the best poly term for the Greek notion of practice?" And in terra Buddhism, there's sort of a trinity. You've got um let's see, parati, which is study. So it's like a Buddhist uh university in Burma is a parati jang. It's like a parati school. That's that's theory. Practice is pipati. So parati and pipati. So parat and patipat in Burmese. So I guess uh pipati would be the word for practice and then there's it's pieda or pari I forget the exact prefix which is the result of the first two which is like like breakthrough into gnosis para like

penetration of samsara and uh
illumination you know insight liberating
insight
So, let's
see. Best poly term for the Greek notion
of practice. I guess it would be potty
potty. And I don't even remember how to
spell it. Whether the T's have dots
under them and that kind of thing. So,
I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from
Yugaoo. And Yugoo says, "How would you
explain people spacing out?" And when I
saw this question, it reminded me of
something my father used to say. My
father was an amateur

hypnotist. And he would say that even when you're daydreaming, you know, you're spacing out. That's a mild trans state. It's like a mild hypnotic trance. So it's just built into the human species that we go into trans states. In fact, some people like Charlie Tart of UC Davis, who's probably retired by now, would say that uh I mean what most people are doing, what most people are living in is consensus trance. That's what he calls it, consensus trance. That we're not fully awake. We're in a kind of sleepwalking state. And then we're largely puppets to our karma, which is just force of habit. Most of what people do, the average

normie person, most of what they do in their life is just sort of like through force of habit and then they're not even fully there. They're not even fully conscious of what they're doing.

So, I guess that would how that's how I would explain. And I mean, I don't know all the fine details of how to explain how or why people are prone to different levels of trans states, but it seems to be like a universal phenomenon in our species.

Um, not just like decadent westerners who space out. I mean, people have just gone into daydreams, reveries, you know,

since prehistoric times. I'm sure that even just like our prehistoric ancestors staring into a campfire at night that I mean that was sort of a mild trend state too. I mean, that's one kind of nice thing about camping is just sitting there staring into a campfire. Like, when you go to places where campfires are prohibited, it really kind of detracts from the experience of just sitting in front of the campfire, just staring into the flames, spacing out essentially. In that case, it could be like a survival instinct. It would keep little kids from wandering away from the relatively safe fire and and getting eaten by hyenas or something.

So, I suppose I should just move on to Yugoo's next question. Yeah, I'm just still checking to make sure that we're recording after that fiasco a little while ago. Do you think that a manandman's and freedom for gamble and small drug use are making people too relaxed? I don't know what a manman's are. A m a n d m- a d a man's. See, do you think that a man mans and freedom for gamble and small drug use are making people too relaxed? Like we do need some striction and rules, too much bad karma being made. Um, I don't I don't know. I think we're living in a

just an age of spiritual mediocrity and flabbiness that there are fewer there are probably fewer like serial killers, mass murderers now than there were in ancient times. But also there's fewer saints than in ancient or medieval times.

So yeah, I think we're just in a in an age of spiritual mediocrity, but it is it is sort of declining lately. I think just through just the collapse of so much of ethics of like morality. I mean morality itself is I mean especially for for the the left and the globalists morality has largely been replaced by unrefined feminine sentiment that what just a woman would naturally feel is has

become pretty much the same as what ethics has become. Whereas like sexuality or like sensual excess, which is a big thing in most religions, including Buddhism, as that's just no longer part of the equation anymore. You know, that's just beyond the scope of ethics at this point. Whereas promulgating hate, saying something that offends somebody else is supposedly immoral. Whereas from the Buddhist point of view, being offended is itself immoral.

So yeah, I do think we're in a decadent age and it's it's noticeably getting more decadent over the past few decades

largely because of internet where people can just vegetate in front of a computer screen. I mean, people were vegetating in front of a a TV screen, you know, since before I was born, but it's just becoming too immersive and you got too many options where you can you got the chances are increased of you finding an option that really just sucks you in and just turns you into a vegetable sitting in front of a TV screen or a a computer screen, I should say.

And then of course, you know, you've got just the decline of morals in general, which is largely as a result of like women's liberation, where one of the the main goals of secondwave feminism. I

mean, first wave feminism is just giving women the right to vote. Second wave liberation was giving women the right to be just as [__] as men. I mean, that's that's mainly it. I mean, they weren't really trying to get men to be more moral. They just wanted to be as immoral as men with regard to sexuality, especially and to some degree like drunkenness, that kind of stuff too. sensual excess, which as I say has pretty much just collapsed and any any like consideration of sensual excess, you know, too much drug use, too much sex, too much food, too much anything that is like a sensual pleasure. It has

just disappeared from the ethical
landscape, especially for the left, the
globalist
left, which is kind of an an attempt to
some degree on the part of some of the
people responsible for this of ushering
in a brave new world like in the
Huxleyian
sense. So, I don't know if it's too much
bad karma made, it's just too much
mediocre karma being made.
Because there's a lot of bad karma. I
mean, more bad karma in the Buddhist
time. Public gruesome executions and
bandit murderous bandits in the in the
forests and all kinds of bad stuff. Just
sociopathic kings waging war against

other sociopathic kings and just laying waste to the to the villages and farms of the enemy and this kind of stuff. That that's been going on for a long time. It's it's relatively less now. I mean, we're we're living in sort of a waning almost like a golden age where it's just a time of general peace. It's not just wars everywhere and just, you know, sociopathic dictators just doing as they please and just bands of bandits and like sort of mercenary soldiers just praying upon the populace. I mean, it's still happening in certain parts of the world, including Ukraine, I guess, but still it's way less than it

used to

be. So, I don't know what a man's a mans

are, but uh freedom to gamble and small

drug use. I mean, that's been going on

forever since prehistoric times.

Gambling. I mean ancient times they were

gambling mainly with dice back then and

plus you know maybe just betting on this

or that and uh small drug use. I mean

alcohol has been around for a hell of a

long

time. So yeah people are getting too

relaxed. They're getting too lazy and

flabby and which is causing less moral

fiber. you know, they've got less

determination,

less fewer principles, maybe at least

principles that are guiding their their

the way they live their

lives.

So, yeah, I think it's not so much a

man's and freedom to gamble and small

drug use that are making people too

relaxed. It's just techn technology is

making life so easy that people just I

mean it's doing what is difficult makes

you stronger and it's getting to the

point where people are just avoiding

anything

difficult and that's that's the way it

is kind of at work where I work too it's

like some people they just don't want to

get off the forklift to like secure

something to you know to to make sure
that everything is going to be remain in
place you know, they just drop it off
and leave. It's like for them, the main
point is just not [__] up so bad that
they get
fired. And aside from that, they don't
give a damn. And there's always been
people like that, too. I mean, it's it
might be that it's increasing. Just a a
work ethic seems to be in decline to
some degree.
uh just taking pride in or like having
enough self-respect that you do a good
job just because it reflects on your
character that kind of
thing but uh mainly I think

it's technology is helping to make us
weak and flabby because difficulty is
becoming less just difficulty in life in
general is becoming less just other than
just remembering all your [__]
passwords and then just what is
happening to morals
where feminization of western
civilization is just replacing genuine
morals with unrefined female sentiment.
I would say that those are more
important than uh gambling, small drug
use, and whatever a man mans
are. So I'm just going to move on to
Yugaoo's third
question which he says also isn't the

only like free will we have to follow or not to follow percepts precepts I assume making ours and loves of others less or lives of others less painful no it's not free will I mean free will as I keep saying I mean just from the logical point of view it is impossible It's a logical impossibility to have free will. That your decisions are going to have a cause or they're not going to have a cause. If they have a cause, they are determined by that cause and then are and are not free. If they happen without a cause, it happens at random. And neither one of those options or and also a combination of the two is not the same as free will.

Albert Einstein, who was no idiot by the way, used to say that he had no idea what people were talking about when they talked about free will. He was a Spinosan. He followed the philosophy of Baroo Spinosa. And Spinosza also his concept of God, even God didn't have free will because free will is just logically impossible. Of course, then there's also the empirical evidence that it's like your brain is already, let's see, how does it work? your brain has already started firing like a fraction of a second before you're even aware that you've made the decision. That kind of

thing.

So, see, isn't the only like free will we have to follow or not follow precepts? It's your reasons. It's your perceptions that decide whether you're going to follow some precept or not. And if you're going to change your attitude, you have to change your perceptions. That's kind of like um in the philosophy of Schopenhau he is saying that under the same circumstances a certain character will always respond in the same way. So that the only way to change how you respond to a certain circumstance is to change your perception to change your character to some

degree. When you see things differently
then things then your behavior with
regard to those things can change
significantly. But until that happens,
they probably
won't. So then again, Rahman Maharshi
used to say the only free will we have
is with regard to whether we are mindful
or not. And I will admit that after
reading the trickster in the paranormal
by George P. Hansen it he does kind of
open this weird door to some kind of
free will where he says that when
something becomes
self-referential then paradoxes happen
like the statement this statement is

false I mean it can't be true or false
it's paradoxical because it refers to
itself and so what happens when you have
a self-conscious
mind then the mind starts referring to
itself. And then paradoxes can happen.
And it might be that free will, even
though it's logically
impossible, might somehow come into
existence in some
way through this
self-reflection, which produces
paradoxical situations.
So, Orthodox Buddhism does reject free
will and it also rejects
um what how do you
determinism. So, free will is out,

determinism is out. And so, you've got this middle way that is never fully explained in the texts possibly because it's just like this paradox that cannot be fully explained.

So even so, I mean, if you're going to make a decision, you're going to make it for a reason or you're not going to make it for a reason. And if you make it for a reason, that reason is going to it's going to determine your decision. So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from bodhicatta 969. And bodhicatta 969 says, "Ashin Ottoma was ordained in the mahasi seat tradition and tan jayadama in the pa

tradition, both from the mutodia forest monastery. What's the difference?" So I assume bodhicatta 969 is asking what's the difference between being ordained in the mahasi tradition or being ordained in the pa tradition? And there are differences between various traditions. There's lots of various meditation traditions in Burma, lots of various meditation traditions in Thailand also. Presumably lots in Sri Lanka too, but I don't know much about Sri Lanka. So, Mahasi tradition is essentially very similar to what the weasana tradition in the west is is doing. I mean the the weipasa tradition in the west the weasna movement was

inspired largely by

mahasi that some of the first big

weipasa teachers in the west were at

least temporarily disciples of either

mahasi or a disciple of mahasi who is

still in the same tradition and that's

wea it's mindfulness satipana whereas

the pa out tradition u on it it

emphasizes more samata more janna the

cultivation of janna that

piato used to say that you couldn't

possibly become enlightened by following

the mahasi tradition that you have to

get some kind of janna or at least you

have to get upachara samadei or access

concentration which is like one step

before janna before you can become enlightened mahasi tradition says no even just momentary concentration is good enough so that would One difference also the pa tradition has more emphasis on vignia that pa or the mahasi some of the mahasi teachers like upida would talk uh a good game about vignia and the necessary you know how how important it is to follow the rules of monastic discipline but as a general rule mahasi centers you know like me monasteries and meditation centers in the mahasi tradition tend to be pretty lax with regard to their monastic discipline whereas pa out tends to be much stricter. So the monks there tend to be

more serious as a general rule. Um, but all in all, if I had to choose between one or the other, I have to go with mahasi just because I don't accept a lot of stuff like like the pa tradition puts a lot of emphasis on abidama and the commentaries and the pisamida ma and and all this like doctrinal dogmatic stuff that I really can't take very seriously. Mahasi tradition depends less on that than pa does.

And Paul, some of the people there, possibly not all, some of the people there think that they're like cultivating Janna when really they're just hypnotizing themselves and seeing

what they think they ought to

see. That can happen in just about any

kind of tradition if you're not careful.

But it seems to be easier to to have

that happen in the pile method than in

the mahasi tradition because the mahasi

tradition is mindfulness. You know,

you're still like observing various

things and noting them. Whereas in the

paho tradition um to some degree at

least in some medit some kinds of

meditation they teach more than one kind

at both places really. Um, I mean, you

can just kind of go into a more of a

trans state and then you can hypnotize

yourself without even realizing that

you're hypnotizing yourself. Like I I

mentioned in a previous Q&A, I was at visiting PAL and talking to some young American um, monk there and he was talking about how he was meditating on the the various parts of the body and he was meditating on the bones of the person sitting in front of him in the meditation hall. He was seeing with the samati eye the skeletal structure of the person who was sitting in front of him and he was seeing it fairly clearly and then finally he opened eyes and he opened his eyes and realized that the person wasn't even there anymore. They just got up and walked away and he's still seeing with the samadei eye their

skeletal structure there. And when he pointed this out to his teacher, the teacher said, "Ah, it doesn't matter." And really, I mean, it's just imagination. There was this other monk who had finished the course in pa both traditions have this course, you know, where you get to get to a certain point and you have completed the course. And he was seeing his own his own body parts, visualizing them with the samadei eye, not just imagining them, mind you, but using a kind of clairvoyance to see his own body parts. And for some I for some reason he he saw that his own brain was about the size of an orange.

So it's it's a lot of it is kind of selfdeception. Although to some degree the the paw out method is more difficult to follow and so it requires more commitment and you really can get into very deep mental states using the pout method. There are some teachers of the pout method who have a reputation for having psychic powers which is much less likely in the mahasi tradition.

But I guess the main difference between mahasi and pa is mahasi is more weasna oriented and pa is more janna oriented. They say that you should get a firm grounding in samata before you start um like cultivating weasa insight

knowledge. And I'm just going to move on to bodhicatta 969's second question which is how did you manage to live as a monk without sex or masturbation for so long? How many monks do you think do it secretly without confessing? Because it's unimaginable for me to endure it. Well, it wasn't easy, especially when I was
younger to live as a monk without like spanking the puppy at least. I mean, it's like your body um like a red-blooded young man is going to have like this I mean, it's almost it's beyond just instinct. It's like your body just needs to have an orgasm after a while. So that up until I was in my

early 40s, I just spontaneously have a wet dream about every two weeks, sometimes more often than that. It was just a pressure release thing. And there were times when I was just so horny I just wanted to just cry. But I did take my vows or I mean they're not really vows. I did take my obligation to follow the rules relatively seriously. And once a monk starts committing sades offenses and not confessing them, not doing the required penance, I mean that's it. It's just like it's just downhill from there that he's no longer a pure monk. His morality is no longer pure and never will be so

long as he doesn't do the penance. And the longer you go without confessing, having committed something like deliberately having an orgasm, then you've got to do penance not only for the the mandatory minimum of six days and six nights, but for every single day that you went without confessing it. So if you go a year or two then I mean it becomes almost impossible because it's really a pain in the neck to do this these penences especially making confession to all the monks at the monastery.

So there's actually two questions here. So Bodhisata 969 is has transgressed the rule and uh his name is going on a

list under the

bees. So yeah, I mean it was just my

firm

determination not

to to just break a serious rule like

that

just without compunction. And there were

I did do the penance like three or four

times and because sometimes it's like

you're horny as hell and it may be that

your your ingazat your your lingum is

common. And so I mean it's it's all

throbbian and stuff and we don't need to

go into fine details. And it's like you

start kind of not spanking the puppy,

maybe petting it a little bit and it

just goes off. So sometimes after that would happen, it's like you're you're psychoanalyzing yourself. It's like, did I do that on purpose? I mean, did for like a split second was I like, okay, let's do it. You know, this kind of thing. And like you're you're having to like psychoanalyze yourself. And sometimes if you have doubts, then you just go ahead and do the penance anyway just to clear your doubts. And one of my teachers did that every year. Not so much for masturbation or deliberately having an orgasm. I think it was just from coming into physical contact with women and just he apparently enjoyed it. You know, he was kind of a macho kind of

a monk. So I don't think he was gay. And so I mean some monks, you know, they just brush up against a woman on a on a crowded bus or something and it's like h I got to do the penance. So just to make sure I mean some monks just do it like once a year just just to make sure. So with regard to how many monks do I think do it secretly without confessing? Probably. I mean the percentage would probably be in double digits. I hope it's not really a lot and I have no way of really knowing but still um I I've been told that most noviceses most seras in Burma actually do spank the puppy and probably just

going cold turkey after full ordination
into being a biku. Um you know once you
got the habit going that it's it's hard
to break the habit. So it could be that
there's lots of of monks. Most Burmese
monks really don't try to follow the
rules very
strictly. So yeah, but I really can't
say how many, but I'm sure that it's
it's above
10%. And I would dearly hope that it's
less than 90%.
So I'm just going to move on to Bodhic
Sata 969's third question or technically
his fourth question but we need not need
not dwell on that which is how do you
handle right speech at work with regard

to chatter gossip etc without making yourself to a complete outsider as we all know gossip brings people together I really don't talk much at work I've kind of got a reputation for just kind of keeping to myself just doing my job and minding my own business. There are a few talkative guys who will, you know, come up and talk to me and, you know, we're kind of friends and I might joke around a little bit, but as a general rule, uh, I really don't talk much to other people other than work rellated stuff, which is, uh, probably best. There are some guys that are just like talking all the time and,

um, they don't get nearly as much work done. And I do have somewhat of a a commendable work ethic. At least I have a reputation for that. So I'm 61 years old and I'm like climbing around on freight inside of a a van uh like a monkey like securing it with straps to the wall so it doesn't fall over and a lot of a lot of people just don't bother with it and the stuff just all goes sideways.

I've seen seen some of these freight vans after they've gone a couple hundred miles and then you open it up and try to unload it and it's just it's a some of sometimes it's just a mess. So, let's see here. How do I

handle right speech at work? Chatter and gossip. I mean, I do do make jokes and stuff sometimes.

So, I mean it telling a joke isn't just like some kind of unmitigated evil. Just passing just, you know, somebody somebody asked me, "What are you going to do this weekend?" You know, that kind of stuff. It's like, "Might as well answer." But I mean, you're just answering a question and and not really um like gossiping very much. I mean, there there is a little bit of gossip. Sometimes it's interesting. You know, why is it that so and so stopped coming to work? It's oh,

he broke probation. He actually had an ankle monitor. That kind of thing. That's kind of interesting. But, uh, I mean, I don't think we're going to be reborn as cockroaches or go to hell for, you know, making the the the occasional widicism or just, you know, just briefly passing the the time of day with somebody. So, I but I do keep it down to a relative minimum. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from

Xenithoid and we've been going for a little over two hours. I'm I'm not exactly sure how I think I think we're going to be less than three hours though. Maybe way less than three hours.

So anyway, Zenithoid says, "If given the opportunity, would you go on the Joe Rogan podcast?"

And I I highly doubt that I would ever be invited to go on the Joe Rogan podcast, but if I got invited and uh I could take the time off from work to go to Texas or wherever it is that the Joe Rogan pod podcast is is recorded. Yeah. I mean, it'd be interesting. Sure. I think Joe Rogan would be kind of interesting person to hang out with. Although I wouldn't get I wouldn't be smoking dope before or during the podcast cuz then I'd get like halfway through a sentence and like what was I

just talking about? What was what was what were you just saying? That kind of stuff. Cannabis just like obliterates my short-term memory for some reason.

So, I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's second question, which is, were you at all affected by the 2004 earthquake and tsunami of the Indian Ocean? And I wasn't. I heard about it after it happened, but my brother was. My brother just happened to be in Thailand on the beach at Phuket, which is like I mean it got hit by the by the tsunami, but it just turned out that there was an island right off the coast that that like took most absorbed most of the impact of the tsunami. And so my

brother was fine. My mother didn't know if he was alive or dead for several days after the tsunami hit. She knew he was in Thailand in like southern Thailand on the beach.

But he was fine and I he might be in Thailand right now. He spends he works in Alaska mostly and then takes most of his time off in Thailand.

So I guess I guess I answered that question. I'm going to move on to Xenithoid's third question which is who was the smartest or most interesting Burmese person you met as a monk other than Schway in Seattle? Well, the person

that I first comes to mind is a person I used to affectionately refer to as crusty old uimala, who was the abbott of a monastery in uh central like upper Burma. And he had the most western attitude of any Burmese person I ever met probably, including Burmese people who had lived in America for decades. And he was half Chinese. He was like on both sides of his both sides of his family. Both of his parents were half Chinese, half Burmese. And I mean, he he could fix
anything. He said he could fix anything except for a helicopter. He didn't know how to fix helicopters, but just about anything else. I mean, he just knew how

to do everything. And he was the monk I was referring to possibly in the previous Q&A or a recent Q&A. He he I mean, he had no use for the human race. He did not like people. And most monks couldn't live in his monastery for very long because he'd just start disliking them and driving them out. But he liked me for some reason and he liked animals. And so he had this one dog I he called Uncle Wiggly who started getting like colon cancer or something. And uima who loved animals just every day he's got his finger up that dog's butt helping it to poop just because it couldn't it was it was like constipated

if ua didn't help

him. And I mean he's he had some kind of weird ideas cuz he'd read Burmese books about like you know World War II Nazi Germany and stuff and get these strange ideas. He had this idea that Hitler was possessed by some sort of demonic entity and uh that kind of thing. I mean, maybe he was for all I know, but

um but he was very intelligent and just very skillful at a lot of different things, but he was just sort of a crusty, disagreeable Schopenhau type. And he had lots of dosa. And there was a French monk who stayed there for a while and Uima just couldn't stand him. But he couldn't really kick him out because the

French monk was senior to him. So I mean sometimes when you talk to him I mean you could just see the the the cheek muscles all clenched. He'd be talking through his clenched teeth. And I realized that dosa in pi which usually is translated as anger. I mean, it's very different from hate because I never saw him yelling, you know, he he wasn't that kind of dosa, but I mean, he definitely had some hate in him, mainly towards other humans. And like I say, for some reason, he liked me, but there was one other thing I was going to mention about him, and now I

just it just kind of flashed into my
mind, and I was thinking, "Oh, yeah, I
should mention that, too." And then and
then I didn't. So it it just faded back
out
again. He was really good at chess. He
was like a a chess master. He bragged a
lot about how good he was at fixing
stuff and
and like the the chess competitions he
won as a young man before he became a
monk and all
that. Oh, what
else? There's there's a lot of stuff I
could say about I mean he he had a he
was very possessive with regard to stuff
in general and with regard to this

monastery that he was the abbot of and
he would notice like there was a beehive
would appear in a tree just I mean it
was like 40 acres of land this monastery
was and I mean he would know where all
the beehives were you know he would just
he didn't trust humans but like with
with regard to nature he was just like
in tune moon. Kind of a Schopenhau
type, but uh I might as well just move
on to the next
question. I think he's still a monk now.
He he was always he was continually
talking about wanting to drop out, but
uh I think he's still still in robes in
Burma. So, I'm just going to move on to

the next question. This is from Philies who says, "You often refer to yourself as a heretic Buddhist, but in what ways are you a totally conventional Buddhist or in what matters do you adhere to terra orthodoxy?" Well, when I was a monk, I was very orthodox and strict with regard to vignia, just following the rules of monastic discipline. And it didn't really matter to me whether the Buddha really taught him or not. It's like when I signed up, you know, part of the deal was I follow these rules. So regardless of whether these rules were laid down by God Buddha himself or not, I'm going to follow these rules. Um, with regard to philosophy,

the atakawaga I I'm taken to heart. Like
a lot of the teachings, most of the
teachings of the ataka waga
um stuff like the four noble truths
especially the first three are fairly
self-evident. So I can accept that no
self I definitely uh accept that more
than a great many Buddhists do
especially western Buddhists.
um you know the three marks of
existence, karma as a mental
state, that kind of stuff and like a lot
of the basics. So there's there's some
things that I don't really accept like
like a lot of the devotionalistic stuff
where the Buddha is just bragging about

how wonderful he is and how people should worship him. The 12 links of dependent core rising I don't have much use for the entire Abidama pitica. I mean, I think we'd be better off if it just didn't
exist. So, that definitely makes me a heretic. I mean, when you are rejecting an entire pitica of the
typica, then I mean, you're you're a heretic, which makes most Western monks heretics because most Western monks really don't have much use for Abidama. like 70% maybe threearters of western monks just do not consider Abid Dhama to be legitimate genuine teachings of the Buddha.

So with regard to a lot of

it, yeah, I can accept a lot of just the basics of Buddhist philosophy and as a monk, I followed the rules strictly for up until the very end up until my last trip to America and which resulted in me becoming a lay person living here in South Carolina.

So I guess I mean I could go into greater detail but I got lots of questions to answer and I've already answered lots of questions. So, let's just move on to Phil Lee's second question, which is, is there any cool story starring yourself you've never told us before? And I'm I'm sure there

are cool stories starring myself. Like, I was thinking, you know, what have I not what stories have I not told already? And there's maybe one story that I didn't I haven't told, at least not in years, that was before I was a monk. It used to be before I was among part of my spiritual practice is hiking alone into a wilderness area and as often as not taking LSD just alone out in this completely wild area. So there was this one time as a as a lay person I went out into the Patan wilderness area which was considered the the wildest part of Washington state. the state of Washington. It was the only place in the

state of Washington that had grizzly bears, wolves, caribou, moose, that kind of thing. You know, I would carry fireworks with me, like a a whistling Pete, the ones that scream and shoot sparks, just in case I came across a grizzly bear. I figured that'd be about my best chance is just start shooting screaming sparks at it.

So anyways, I was camping and I would just wouldn't use a tent. I would just sleep under the open sky in a sleeping bag. And one night or it was on this trip, I forgot to bring a stocking cap. Like I guess

they're called a beanie now, like an elastic woven kind of cloth cap like Tim Pool wears all the time because he's bald and is embarrassed about it apparently. So, I forgot to bring my my stocking cap. And so, the mice were getting in my hair. And I mean, I keep waking up, you know, I keep getting the mice out of my hair. And finally, I'm thinking, I'm just going to have to let mice crawl in my hair tonight if I'm going to get any sleep. So, I just make this

determination. I'm just going to let them crawl in my hair. [__] it. I'm I got to get some sleep tonight.

And then sure enough, within just a few

minutes, I hear like little rustling noises near my head. And then all of a sudden, my entire sleeping bag just starts getting jerked sideways like this. And so I turn and look and I'm looking right into the face of a porcupine about the size of a cocker spananiel dog. And I mean, apparently the I mean the the porcupine had like bitten into my sleeping bag and was yanking on it. And so I start yelling at it to go away. And the porcupine, I mean, it's like the honey badger. It don't give a [__] cuz I mean, it's it's pretty much safe from anything. There's a few animals that have learned how to

kill porcupines. But apparently, it didn't consider me to be one of them. And so me yelling at it to go away and leave me alone had no effect whatsoever. So then I started reaching around and found some like pine cones on the on the ground and just started throwing pine cones at it and having something actually hit it was something it wasn't used to at all. It just took off running and then finally I was able to get some sleep with mice in my hair. Speaking of mice, there was a different time I went um on a backpacking trip to Anderson Glacier in Olympic National Park with my buddy Steve

and we were warned about this camping site. We were going to camp in this campsite and this hiker told us, "You got to be careful about the mice are going to rape your pack if you stay there." And I had one candy bar left. It was It was our We were hiking out. We had one last day. I had one candy bar left. It was a Snickers bar. And so just to make sure to protect it from the mice. I put it in my shirt pocket. And I was inside the sleeping bag with this Snickers bar inside my shirt pocket, you know, in the sleeping bag. The next morning, I get up, I pull out my Snickers bar, and a mouse had been

chewing on this Snickers bar and it
chewed from underneath. It got inside my
shirt and chewed up through the shirt
into the pocket to get to that Snickers
bar. So, I was sleep I was completely
oblivious to the fact that there was
this mouse inside my shirt ganking my
[__] Snickers
bar. But I suppose I could think of more
stories, cool stories starring myself.
But uh I think I'm just going to move on
to Phil Lee's third question which was
which is as
follows. How would you rate Islam among
the world religions from an esoteric
point of view? And do you think Islam
gets an overly bad rep or is it not bad

enough? So that's kind of two questions
too, isn't it? I think somebody else is
going on a
list under the P's.
So how would I rate Islam among the
world religions from an esoteric point
of view? I mean the only esoteric Islam
I'm aware of is
Sufism and I have read that Muhammad
probably would have denounced
Sufism. Um Islam itself is not
particularly esoteric religion. You know
it's pretty
secular. So how would I rate Islam among
the world religions? I mean it's I would
consider like just going with the the

the scriptures the Quran I might put it slightly above the Old Testament. If I had to rank all the world's scriptures I have read

um in in in order of wisdom then the Quran and the Old Testament would both be in the bottom half. you know, they'd be less than 50% towards the top and maybe the Quran would be just like one notch above the Old Testament. There is there is some wisdom in the Quran. So, it's it's not just total BS or any any such

thing. But, uh I mean

it's I don't cons I mean something like the Bavad Gita would just blow the Quran and the Old Testament out of the water

with regard to just wisdom.

So and then Sufism I I mean I really am not well acquainted with Sufism but it's my understanding that Sufism gets most of its esoteric wisdom from Buddhism and Hinduism like uh you know it arose in like south souththeastern Persia or some such where there was contact with Buddhist and Hindu philosophy. But with regard to the second part of this question, do you think Islam gets an overly bad rep or is it not bad enough? I'd say probably it's not bad enough because I mean literally the founder of Islam and this is from the the Muslim sources themselves. This

isn't just made up from outside of Islam. The Muslims themselves have to admit to this that Muhammad was a warlord, a bandit who was like robbing and killing people. Had people sold into slavery, women and children sold into slavery after their husbands were beheaded. He was a rapist. He notoriously was raping this one woman who was freshly a widow with her husband lying dead on the ground just matter of feet away outside the tent. I mean he was a warlord pretty much like Moses was. I mean he was definitely came closer to Moses also a warlord who was like demanding the genocide essentially genocide of the

Canaanites. So he came closer to Moses
than he did to Jesus or the Buddha.
So let's see here. So I think do think
that
Islam I mean is does not get a bad
enough reputation considering the moral
character of the founder of the religion
and he's considered to be like the the
ideal man. You know he's the role model
of
Muslims. Muslim men want to be like
Muhammad.
So, I mean, getting married to a
9-year-old
girl, killing
people. So, yeah, I mean, Islam and

Judaism, I mean, they had a the culture they arose in had different ideas about what spirituality was about. I mean, it wasn't really spiritual. It was just like religious in a kind of emotional like cultural kind of a sense. But I mean, I'm sure that there have been very wise Muslims, very wise Jews that to some degree they were very wise in spite of the religion that they were born into.

Anyways, enough of this. I'm just going to move on to the next question and we are getting fairly close to the bottom here. The next question is from Enigma. It's enigma then a capital L and

then a small lowercase pli all one word.

Enigma

plea. An enigma please says, "Is the

material body the only body a normal

human has with the mind being without

form or does one have

multiple on different planes?" Well, all

form is

perceptual. As I was already discussing,

you can't have form without relations

like same as and different from. I mean,

if you don't have any different from,

there's not going to be any outline.

There's not going to be any figureing

ground.

So all form is ultimately

perceptual. So I mean you might as well forget the material body. I mean whether the material body exists or not as I was saying earlier is is pretty much irrelevant.

So is the material body the only body a normal human has? Well I mean when you're dreaming at night you've got a body sort of. It's a mind-made body. But then again to at some level this body, this meat puppet is also a mind-made body.

And then you got the Hindus who say that there is a kind of astral body that I'm not sure if that would be the same as the dream body. But then you got sort of like this astral body that you're kind

of in in between lives, you know, like when you're up in, you know, you're going up towards the light and you're having the the near-death experience except it's really just a death experience because you're really dead this time. And you know, you're you're like up in heaven with still kind of a body, you know, like in the Matrix, you've got residual self-image, kind of that kind of a body. Um, yeah. I mean, it depends on what you really mean by a body. I mean, once you get to the idea that I mean, it's not there is no material body anyway. It's all mind-made. Then I guess you become more

open to the idea of different kinds of

bodies like the dream body or the astral

body and that kind of thing. And uh I

mean it all depends on on how you look

at it I

suppose

golly is the material body the only body

a normal human

has well I mean there could be I mean

what do you even mean by body though?

That's that's sort of like the the

sticking point here because I mean there

could be like a greater form that

encompasses different

lifetimes that I mean it's still kind of

some Saric entity and not ultimately

real but still I mean if you consider

this person to be relatively real then there could be like a higher level of like a four-dimensional level that encompasses various lifetimes all into one sort of super entity that might count as a body even though at the 3D level it's more than one body because it's more than one lifetime. So it all depends on how you're going to interpret body. And then you got the dream body. I mean some people would say in your dreams that's still a kind of material world. It's just a more ethereal subtle or crudder kind of world than this kind of waking reality that we're living in. So it's it would depend a lot on how you

define terms like how you define the
word
body and then it becomes even trickier
if you don't accept the ultimate reality
of a material universe. So that even the
meat puppet is just a kind of mental
image and you've got other kinds of
mental images of a body like when you're
dreaming and so forth. So, uh, I think
it all depends on how you look at it,
which is possibly the best answer to all
questions is it all depends on how you
look at it. But if I answered that to
every single question, then people would
stop watching these videos, I
guess. So, I'll just move on to Enigma,
please. Second question here. How to

differentiate between a demonic possession and one's own self and how to get rid of it according to different schools. Well, that's kind of an interesting question in that like if you read the New Testament of the Bible, it's like everyone in their sister was possessed by some kind of spirit that that's apparently how they explained a lot of things like epilepsy or certain mental illnesses was through demonic possession. And it is possible that that you can look at the same case of like some kind of insanity as like just sort of a brain malfunction or as some sort of spirit possession. And it

could be that the brain malfunction kind of leaves this gap so spirit could get in so that they're both true. Or it could just be that there's just two different ways of interpreting the same phenomenon.

So how to differentiate between demonic possession and one one's own self how to get rid of I'm not sure that there is just this ironclad way of telling the difference because it could be that you can interpret the same thing according to two two different paradigms and one will be that it's some sort of organic malfunction and the other is that it's some sort of spirit possession like I'm reminded of Jane Roberts who was

channeling the Seth material back in the 70s. And she herself wasn't quite sure if there really was this being being channeled through her or if it was just sort of a figment of her subconscious imagination. And it could be both. It could be that both were true. And I mean, ultimately, it didn't really matter all that much, I guess, especially if you had no use for the Seth material. But uh yeah, it would take some kind of expert, some sort of psychic expert, maybe like a professional like exorcist or something who would then like look over the person

and be able to decide. But in Buddhism, I mean, spirit possession is a thing like there is this weird rule uh in the rules of monastic discipline that a monk is not allowed to eat raw meat or drink raw blood unless he is possessed by a spirit.

But how do you know for sure? That's that's tricky. I think it would take some sort of expert to like diagnose the the the individual and possibly that two different experts might disagree. They might have different diagnosis. And it's it's largely just a matter of what kind of paradigm you're going with, how you're going to

interpret the case in a lot of cases. But how to get rid of demonic possession? Well, I mean some like in ancient India where when they made that rule about uh the eating raw meat and drinking raw blood that some spirits do crave raw meat and blood and and this is believed in Burma to this day. Necromancers will set out raw meat and raw blood to get spirits to come to feed on it. And then they start becoming reliant on the necromancer and then he can start commanding them. You want the raw meat next time you're going to have to do what I say. But uh with regard to yeah I mean

that's that's one way of getting rid of the spirit is just uh eating the raw meat drinking the raw blood till it's satisfied and then it lets go of you and goes away. Although I mean the meta suta is considered to be the standard uh approach to like appeasing troublemaking spirits.

There was one guy um he might have been autistic when I was living in a cave in Burma. Uh he came to visit me with his parents and he was sort of definitely had some sort of mental abnormality going and he was asking me you know what should I do that the spirits keep bothering me and uh I told him I mean reciting the meta suta is probably about

the best thing you could you could do.

So he he was doing that.

Um but uh I mean if you can find like a

real exorcist and they have them in

Burma too like a a

polia they they do a lot of this kind a

polansia literally means like a master

of the upper path which is sort of a

dharmic magician a dharmic wizard who

uses the power of dharma to do good

magic unlike you know like a an

outlandia which is the lower path you

know like black magic

So, you find some sort of somebody who's

trained at uh exercising spirits and,

you know, they may have uh much better

luck than you know, just watching a do-it-yourself video on YouTube on how to exercise a spirit out of yourself. So I mean if if you have like a person with enough spiritual clout, you know, enough spiritual force, you know, they could, you know, sort of like Jesus, you know, they just command the spirit to be gone and the spirit will leave him alone. which kind of reminds me of the the Indonesian monk that I think I've already mentioned once um in this video who he had he had this uh attendant in Indonesia who could see spirits and one reason why he supported this monk is because he could see that the spirits just leave this monk alone that you know

that most people have spirits kind of hovering around them trying to influence them because you know they can't really do anything at this level of reality unless they can influence some being at this level of reality, you know, to do it for them because they don't have a body at this level of reality. And he just respected the fact that the the the the spirits just left this monk alone. And so, um, from a a Buddhist point of view, one of the best ways to avoid spirit possession and so forth is cultivate a healthy mind. You know, meditate and live a moral life. keep your mind clear, well balanced, have a

healthy mind, and there won't be any like gaps and cracks in your mind that the spirits can, you know, they can infiltrate. So, I guess I answered that one well enough, about as well as I'm able. And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Raphael. And Raphael says, "Bit of a broad question, but what are your best arguments against the philosophy of Nichzche?" And for starters, I should say that I'm no authority on the philosophy of Nze. I read his uh antichrist, the antichrist, but um the intro written by Mein was much more interesting to me. I got more out of the intro than than out of the the

Nichzche's uh book or essay itself. I tried to read thus speak Zaraustra and I got about as far as the tightroppe walker who falls off the tight rope and breakes his leg and I mean Nichze's style of writing really does not resonate well with me. his whole way of thinking was kind of this surreal kind of thinking apparently that I mean it just doesn't work with me very well. So most of what I know about the philosophy of Nietz has been like written about the philosophy of Nietze. Like I've read um Bertrren Russell's history of western philosophy and he's got the chapter on NZ. So uh I know that much. Um, but the

whole will to power, you know, the Superman who rises above good and evil, sort of like Rascal Nikov was trying to do in Crime and Punishment, sort of like Marlon Brando or Colonel Curts was trying to do in Apocalypse Now, you know, where you just just leave behind this whole worldly distinction of good and evil and just do what is expedient. And in Crime and Punishment and in Apocalypse Now, it didn't work. that you cannot just leave behind morality. Um and with regard to nichza, yeah, I think just being a master of samsara rather than like um transcending samsara is not really a good choice. it's not really conducive to happiness

that I don't think he really understood

like how suffering is caused you know

it's

desire that I don't think he could

really appreciate that I think uh

Schopenhau who Nze claimed that he was

sort of like the the successor of

Schopenhau you know he's kind of started

with Schopenhau and then just you know

took it in a completely different

direction than Schopenhauer was

intending but neither Nisho nor

Schopenhau struck me as particularly

happy

people. So yeah, I think that Nisha was

either ignorant of or just rejected the

whole Buddhist idea
of just dharma in general. I mean he
kind of despised it. He was he who would
consider it to be like slave morality,
you know, meekness and humbleness and
passivity. That's just that's slave
morality. Whereas, you know, his idea of
the Superman was, you know, sort of like
the the ancient man of action, you know,
Hercules or
somebody.
So my best arguments against Nietze, I
think he just did not understand what
results in happiness and wisdom and what
is sort
of does the
opposite. But as I say, I'm no authority

on Niche. I really I think he was mistaken with regard to eternal recurrence too, which I mentioned in the previous Q&A, I'm pretty sure. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And we're down to the the last questioner. And the last questioner has the unique honor of being stellar supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb and also known as various various by various other names that we need not get into. So, Stellar Supreme, etc., etc. says, "What are your thoughts on the myth of Zarathustra and Persian mythology more broadly?" And I'm relatively ignorant with regard to

Persian uh

culture, Persian culture, Persian

mythology. I know almost nothing about

it. Zara, I have read like when I was a

college student, I read some of the

Zenvesta, which is like the main

scripture of the uh what do we call

them? Uh the Zoroastrians.

And it really didn't strike me as all

that profound. I

mean, could be that I was just a college

student reading some early pioneering

translation from Max Mueller's Sacred

Books of the East series. Um, let's see.

The myth Zarathustra, I mean, I think he

was like Brian. He I think he arose in

like the city of Baktra in what is now

northwestern Afghanistan.

Um, and it's some people say that his religion is the oldest existing religion. It's relatively old. Um, and the Persians were Zoroastrians up until they were forcibly converted to Islam. But, um, the whole idea of like the good God and the evil God in this eternal war, I really don't have much use for that. I'm I'm certainly not a dualist, but uh it is it is kind of um I don't know if sad is the right word, but I mean Persia was like a world power. It was really a dominant culture, you know, it was like the archeneemy of

of of Rome for a long time, archeneemy
of the Greeks and then the archeneemy of
of the Roman Empire for a long time.
they were a great great
civilization and it's like people just
don't know very much about their
civilization partly because you know
like when the Muslims come in they just
sort of like homogenize everything has
to be in accordance with Islam and uh so
all the pre-Islamic stuff is like
suppressed to some
degree but yeah Zor like Zoroastrianism
zorustra I really do not know that much
about him. It's similar to
uh to Sanskrit. I mean the the the
language that the Zenvesta is composed

in is very similar to to
Sanskrit. And uh it's my understanding
that for some reason the Persians had
like you the the Indo-Uropeans have this
myth of the gods and the titans who had
this war and the gods won and they like
imprisoned the titans at the foot of
this mountain and they had that in in G.
The ancient Greeks believed that also
the ancient Indians believe that. But
for some reason, the Persians, I mean,
it could be that I'm just not
understanding this, but the Assuras,
like in in like in Indian, the Titans
so-called were called the Assuras. Um,
the the good god of Zoroastriam is

Ahuram Mazda, which is Ahura is the like the Persian way of pronouncing Assura. That the S in Sanskrit is at least sometimes replaced by H. like soma. The soma sacrifice in India was it was pronounced homa by the Persians.

So I I I don't understand fully why it is that the Persians kind of went against pretty much everybody else and had the Davas be the bad guys and the Assuras were the ones who wound up winning the primordial war between the gods and the titans. It could be I'm just not understanding it at all.

So, I think I should uh finish off my

designated

beverage, my designated primary beverage

or DPB, and open up the emergency backup

beverage, even though I've only got two

last questions to answer.

So, see, Stellar Supreme, etc., etc.,

says, "Would you ever consider appearing

on the New Thinking Allowed interview

series to discuss the esoteric and

supernatural features of archaic

Buddhism?" Well, I'd be willing to

appear on the Joe Rogan program, too,

like I already specified, like I already

indicated. Um, I don't know if I've ever

seen the new Thinking Aloud interview

series, but as a general rule, if

somebody asked me to be on some show,
I'm I'm usually willing to go for it
that I have been asked before,
especially when I was still a monk to
appear, you know, in an interview on
this or that YouTube channel, and I I
have gone for it. But, uh, yeah, I don't
see why not.
uh esoteric and supernatural features of
archaic Buddhism. Um I'm not so sure
that there are very many esoteric or
supernatural features of archaic
Buddhism, but
uh I could I could talk about how there
aren't any or not very many.
Anyhow, so I'm just going to move on to
Stellar Supreme's third and last

question and the last question of this
show and we might just squeak under
three hours or maybe a squeak over three
hours. And he says, "Do you feel that
your nervous system was sharpened by
your intensive training while ordained
as a monk?"
And it's hard to say
exactly. Uh, I had relatively sharp mind
before I became a monk. So, I mean, a
lot of the sharpness I
assume I already had at the time that I
became a monk. I
mean, I'm not ex exactly sure what a
sharpened nervous
system really means, unless it's just

more like

uh more

definition like more not just more

clarity but like more incisive or

powerful thought or some such. And it is

possible just like the the meditation

and also just avoiding so many

distractions and also like intoxicants

and so forth that kind of dull the mind

in in lay people that I mean it didn't

happen with me. I was just like camping

for for 20some years in Burma, just you

know, living out in the woods and, you

know, breathing fresh air and drinking

creek water or well water and just

eating essentially or fresh organic

food, maybe some salted fish thrown

in. And uh so I mean it could be just like clean living kind of helped my mind remain kind of clear and sharp and you know it was relatively clear and sharp beforehand which helped me to become a monk in the first place. But also I do think that just mindfulness and meditation did cause like a greater sensitivity a greater awareness of stuff going on in dark corners in my mind or you know subliminal kind of stuff. I would be more aware of that than the average guy, I suppose, possibly as a result of mindfulness practice and like the cultivation of relatively deep meditative states, but it's really hard

to say in kind of a logical fallacy to say, you know, if if I had done things differently, it would be different. So, I mean, you can't really know for sure to what extent the sharpness of my nervous system was caused by my being a monk or whether it would have been pretty much that way regardless. Although, I do think that just the clean living, you know, the simplicity of life and just practicing mindfulness and and like meditation did help. But to what extent it helped, I'm I'm not exactly sure. But it certainly didn't have a bad effect on it. And so I guess that's it. I guess I guess I'm done at 2 hours and 59

minutes. So by golly and like I almost never say at the beginning and all you should say at the beginning if you got any questions about something you think that I could answer like early Buddhism terravada Buddhism Buddhism in general this Indian spirituality philosophy western philosophy um western culture I've got a fairly good understanding western culture meditation monasticism Burma that kind of stuff. If you think I can answer it, then um think maybe I can answer it anyway, then go ahead and ask. And please, no more than

three questions. No more than three

question

marks, please, per

episode. And hit the like button if you

like this. I assume if you made it this

far, you at least kind of liked it. I

mean, if you just like hate watching it,

you can do that, too. you can hit the

like button just cuz you liked hate

watching it regardless of any hate I

might accidentally be

promulgating. And uh also subscribe if

you haven't done so already and uh be

happy.

okay

then hello and welcome to question and

answer number

138 I am your host poo basa and those

fishes and snails back there are your

co-hosts and we've got uh kind of a

moderately large number of questions so

we might be going about three hours on

this one I don't know why I bother to

say this cuz you guys can just look down

at the time bar underneath and see how

long it's going to last I do not have

that luxury that's one advantage you

have over

me and so I'm just going to grasp my

beverage remove the little paper

umbrella signifying my sophistication

and

style throw it onto the table take a

sip and commence to answer a question

questions and the first question is from

Raphael and Raphael says would you say

that walking barefoot has a positive

effect since you have experienced it for

a long time and it is true that when I

was a monk uh there were times when I

was in Burma especially when I would

wear shoes maybe twice a year if it

became necessary to wear shoes because

of like thorns on the ground or

something I might have to wear shoes but

usually I went Barefoot and there's

definitely a positive effect of going

Barefoot the main positive effect
especially for a practicing Buddhist or
someone who's practicing in any kind of
spiritual tradition is that it requires
you to be mindful you've got to be
careful about how you walk and where you
walk you always have to be aware of
where you're going to be stepping
because especially like in tropical Asia
you can step not only on thorns and just
sharp pointy rocks and so forth you can
step on snakes or scorpions or
centipedes or even ant
highways so going Barefoot definitely
makes you more aware of the walking
process and just more mindful of your

surroundings in general especially your lower surroundings so it's definitely good and one thing I noticed when I been going Barefoot for a while is we possibly all of us except for a few M mutants have these latent Barefoot instincts because our ancestors went Barefoot and so we've got like these latent instincts with regard to how to walk Barefoot my father when I was a kid told me that like the natives in Africa have the souls of their feet as tough as shoe leather because they go barefoot all the time so I assumed when I started going Barefoot my feet would really get tough and although they got a bit

calloused they never really got that
tough and so mainly when you go barefoot
you just learn how to walk Barefoot and
a lot of it is like relearning just from
these latent Barefoot instincts coming
up to the conscious level or coming up
to enough of the conscious level that
you're aware that they really are like
conditioning how you
walk so I guess I answered that question
that's the main benefit is it just
improves your mindfulness when you're
walking makes you more alert with regard
to where you're
going so I'm just going to move on to
the second question which is from Newman

and it's like uh adding to the previous question he says did you did you never get foot infections from walking bare feet everywhere and I never got foot infections although I did step on Thorns sometimes I remember one famous occasion I was walking for alms in let's see pinday Village in central Burma and I stepped on it was either a cactus Thorn or a really wicked Acasia Thorn some of those Acacia Thorns get like 2 in long and it went all the way up into my heel and broke off in

there and I had to walk like two miles like finish my Ms round and then walk all the way back and I could not get the the tip of that thorn out of my heel

and um a lce

supporter like sent a doctor to me and

because they were trying to force me

against my will to get like a tetanus

shot and this kind of stuff I just

refused to let the doctor treat me which

caused him to be somewhat disgusted with

the whole situation and I was

just like trying to like squeeze it out

and so forth until finally it just

festered out it was like I was squeezing

it just mainly to get like icky fluids

out and I wasn't even for sure that

there was something broken off in there

other than just the fact that it wasn't

healing up and then just it just popped

out it was like a quarter inch long tip
of a thorn that was had been in my heel
for like a at least a week at that
time um but I never really got any kind
of foot infections never got athletes
foot mainly because when you're going
Barefoot you got better air circulation
your feet can dry out better that kind
of thing I got cracked feet a lot like
especially during the hot season the dry
season when you're walking in like sand
and dust then your heels will start to
crack and that was a problem
like in ancient times in the thei Maga
it talks about how the Sri Lankan monks
of Buddha goa's time would carry around
a little tube of oil mainly just for

rubbing it into their feet probably
because their heels are cracking from
just drying out like the the skin of
your feet the soles of your feet just
dries out from walking in sand and dust
you know just parched
hot so it's it was just a thing that
that was continually being contended
with by monks who walked around
Barefoot and let's see I mean I could
have you'd think that I'd get some kind
of foot infections considering some of
the places where I walked Barefoot some
of the like the the scariest places I
walked Barefoot were like public
restrooms at bus stations in Burma which

are pretty I mean you're like walking

through like puddles of who who the hell

knows what that kind of

stuff so often I mean if I was riding a

bus and the bus stopped at some place

that had like some trees over to one

side in rather than go into the public

restroom I just go off behind a tree or

something

somewhere but I never really got any

kind of like septic foot infections

other than maybe a little bit of

infection like you know like a thorn or

something in my foot

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

question this is from

philes and philes says if you could only

have one species of fish for the rest of
your life which would you choose and
he's referring to aquarium fish and not
like for eating and this is really kind
of a a more difficult
question than one would expect because
my approach to keeping an aquarium is
that it's like a balanced ecosystem and
so you've got various niches
niches that different kinds of fish
would have to fit into like you need a
scavenger fish that's eating stuff off
the bottom you need algae
eaters um I mean that would be I mean
the most basic for maintaining a healthy
aquarium is I mean I could have snails

or shrimp or something eating the algae
but still you needs I mean one of the
most basic kinds of fish you need for an
aquarium is a scavenger something that
eats off the stuff off the bottom like
decaying plant matter and that kind of
stuff so with that in mind it might be
that if I could only keep one species of
aquarium fish it might be like a Siamese
algae eater like Rama the first and that
tank back there which is just a plain
kind of brown looking fish I mean it's
not a pretty fish particularly I mean
it's got a nice streamlined shape and
everything but I mean it'll eat anything
it eats algae it eats derbis off the
bottom decaying plant material it'll eat

minced clams it'll eat

anything so maybe a Siamese algae eater

although it'd be kind of strange to have

an aquarium that only has like Siamese

algae eaters in it um the other option

that I was thinking of would be to get a

kind of fish that pretty much has to be

by itself anyway it's kind of fish that

I've never kept before like a Sagal

bitcher which is I mean they get like 2

feet long and I mean they look like a

dragon they're a very archaic primitive

kind of fish sort of like a sturgeon is

a primitive kind of fish and they're

just really cool looking so I might just

wind up getting like one of those but

still there'd be problems with algae I
mean I maybe I could get snails that the
bitchier wouldn't eat but aside from
that I'd just be screwed and so it might
really be that if I only kept one
species of fish it would have to be like
a Siamese algae eater maybe I could get
like a little school of them CU they are
a schooling
[Music]
fish so I think I'm just going to move
on to Phil's second question which is as
follows could a Buddhist believe in
Soul this is different from self or
ego actually according to Ken wheeler
the Buddha taught about a soul outside
of the Aggregates to be freed from Karma

well I mean Ken wheeler declares himself
to be the world's leading the world's
foremost authority on early Buddhism but
if you anyone who knows paully who reads
his translation sees that he really
doesn't know what he's doing that he
just makes these wildly inaccurate
translations and so really I mean I've
read the text Fair
carefully and I know the Buddha did not
teach that there is a soul outside the
Aggregates so I mean there are Buddhists
who believe in a soul especially Western
Buddhists Buddhists of European ancestry
seem to be the most
vehement in the existence of some kind

of Eternal

Soul and if you're going to take like an

upanishadic approach where you're saying

that just reality is our soul you know

like Brahman or capital G God is our

soul it's like the absolute pervades the

entire universe and that aspect of the

absolute that is pervading us could be

called our soul and you reify it which

early Buddhists didn't do but then you

can sort of put forth uh a heretical but

nevertheless sort of plausible argument

that we do have a soul but it's like all

the beings on the entire universe are

sharing the same single soul because

that soul is just the the dharmakaya

going with like um Mahayana Buddhist

terminology or it's God going with

Christian

terminology

so let's see so Buddhist some Buddhists

definitely believe even soul they might

be heretical Buddhists or like pure land

Buddhists or something but I mean

obviously there are Buddhists who are

very sincere in their Buddhism who do

believe in a soul but the whole idea

that the Buddha did teach that there's a

soul outside the

Aggregates I mean there's really is no

evidence for that that what they do is

like the Buddha says None of the five

Aggregates is the self and they say well

I mean there's there could be something
outside the accur the Buddha didn't say
it not in the text anyway but you know
they say well I mean there's still like
this loophole there's like this open
doorway where you can say well something
outside of the five Aggregates is the
soul but I mean there are sutas where
the Buddha says the all is the five
Aggregates this this entire Cosmos is
five Aggregates there's nothing be
beyond the five Aggregates in
samsara so then they say well that means
there could be a soul that isn't
samsaric it's outside of samsara but the
thing is in early Buddhism especially
you just try you do your best to avoid

reifying the absolute you try to avoid

reifying the highest reality Ultimate

Reality that anything you say about it

it's going to be invalid so the best

thing to do is just shut up about it

that you practice in order to like

realize

it so that you're not just theorizing

about

it but I mean until you do that all

you're doing is theorizing about it and

all the theories are going to be invalid

because it's just completely off the

scale and no words can really touch it I

mean like some people like the Zen

saying is words are just a finger

pointing at the moon but the ultimate

the absolute isn't in any direction you

can't even point in that

direction so I mean there's always going

to be Buddhists especially some Western

Buddhists who just vehemently sometimes

angrily insist that the Buddha taught

that there is an eternal Soul even

though there's no mention of it in the

text unless you're like Ken wheeler and

just mistranslate

stuff so I guess I'm just going to move

on to the next question

also from

philes which is as follows if tomorrow

all your books were to burn down and you

could only keep one book which would it

be in ha well probably let's see here
can you see it's like the the blue one
the pale blue big one on the top shelf
in the middle there is that right yeah
it's like dead center in that top shelf
that big blue one that's my poly English
dictionary and the reason why I would
keep that one is because it's really
Irreplaceable because as a monk I spent
probably hundreds of hours supplementing
that dictionary just adding more
definitions and additional um like more
words more pow that just aren't in the
book and just like um alternative
definitions that aren't in the book that
sort of

thing so that that book would be

Irreplaceable most of the other books

are either replaceable or not that

important so that even if I couldn't

replace it it wouldn't be a major loss

but my poly English dictionary is uh is

one of a kind I

think

so I think I've successfully answered

all three of Phil's questions so I'm

just going to move on to Thermal

squid and thermal squid says feelings

about medicinal cannabis when used

authentically and not as an excuse to

get

wasted question mark so this is a

question but then thermal squid has like

this little paragraph of
commentary which goes I recently got a
medical card in Florida for ceaseless
gastrointestinal problems that have in
the past inspired me to do some not so
wholesome things to cope with the pain I
notice it allows me to Foster and
sustain more wholesome mental States and
prevents negative rumination would you
think that there is demerit involved in
something like this well like I'm I
usually say with regard to Buddhist
ethics there's Merit and demerit to
almost any action we do that there's I
mean it's not like an abrahamic religion
or religious system and a religious

system of Ethics where something is

either right or wrong you know black or

white I mean in Buddhism almost

everything is a shade of

gray

so I mean there is that but getting back

to the question here feelings about

medicinal cannabis when used

authentically and not as an excuse to

get wasted well even Buddhist monks were

allowed to use cannabis

medically in fact there's even a rule

allowing monks to carry a little pipe

for inhaling the fumes of burning

medicines

so um I mean if it was okay for ancient

Indian monks that's that's a pretty good

indication that it would be okay for postmodern Western lay people and sometimes as a monk I did smoke some cannabis every once in a while it was always um people like Western people who would give it to me and it's I mean for Western people even spirit oriented Western people to smoke some weed every now and then is is fairly common actually and I have had some like really profound experiences under the influence of cannabis like there's one time I was on the the banks of the iraa river and somebody offered me some some cannabis so I smoke this cannabis and

I'm kind of looking around see if

anyone's watching me sort of like if

you're in high school like smoking weed

during like lunch break you know you're

looking around and see if anyone's

seeing you that kind of thing and I was

I mean I was having some really deep

insights that were triggered just from

being high as I was like doing walking

meditation on the bank of the irow river

in near Pagan you know the ancient

capital of

Burma

so I mean

cannabis I mean it can cause a kind of

euphoria which isn't necessarily bad

from a Buddhist point of view like if

you're stressed out just being stressed

out is is technically immoral I mean

just to be

unhappy

is it's it's

like I don't I don't know how else to

say I mean it is immoral you're

inflicting unhappiness upon yourself

because suffering is always

self-inflicted ultimately from a

Buddhist philosophical point of view

which is something leftist Buddhists in

the West don't like to deal with because

they want to blame evil Whitey and white

patriarchy and all this but really all

suffering is ultimately self-inflicted

it is a choice even though most of us

are too subconscious to realize that

there is a

choice but it is

volitional and so I mean a little bit of

euphoria when you're all stressed out it

just helps to calm you down I mean that

in itself is beneficial

and then also I mean you can get more

spiritual for

me cannabis doesn't really like expand

Consciousness so much sort of like

something like psilocybon mushrooms can

like expand Consciousness cannabis

doesn't do that so much it just kind of

shifts Consciousness into like a

different mode and I mean just to

experience

that I mean if you're not doing it just

to party to escape from from a reality

that you don't like very much that kind

of thing but just it helps you to

triangulate you know you can look at

reality from different aspects from

different

perspectives and in a way that can help

you it it can lead to

Insight sort of like living in a a very

non-western culture for some period of

time also gives you a certain amount of

perspective like if you're just living

in the same culture you're in entire

life then you can be very culturally

conditioned everyone around you is is
just as culturally conditioned in the
same way as you and so you don't notice
it you know you're just right in the
middle of it you got nothing to compare
it with but then you go to like Burma
and live there for 20 something years
and you can see that I mean it was like
I I've mentioned this before when I went
to Burma it really struck me how
culturally conditioned the Burmese were
without realizing it they had no idea
that they were culturally conditioned
you could tell them and it just they
wouldn't know what you're talking about
but then after I came back to America it
was just as striking how culturally

conditioned Americans are without them

realizing

it so getting high on on cannabis you

know stay away from narcotics you know

anything that's really addictive I mean

your best avoiding that a certain amount

of cannabis I don't think I mean it's

it's not as bad as alcohol in my opinion

overall with regard to its

effects

so yeah I

think I really don't think it's

necessarily A Bad Thing to smoke a

certain amount of cannabis unless you're

like some Jamaican who's smoking like

three ounces of it per a day something

like that is rather excessive and it's
not good for your lungs and all that but
a small amount maybe even like in in
some something edible so that you're not
even inhaling smoke and that kind of
thing um yeah every once in a while to
just like knock you out of a rut give
you like an alternative perspective also
it does have kind of this weird daric
side effect of just sort of like really
almost disabling my short-term memory so
that you're in the present moment more
efficiently than if you're not high on
on cannabis or at least it works that
way for me it makes me more in the
present moment partly because short-term
memory is just

cpoy so I think I'm just going to move on to Thermal Squid's second question which is recommendations on right livelihood for someone who is likely going to remain as a Layman question mark and then he's got the little paragraph uh the commentarial paragraph I think that wrong livelihood extends just Beyond poisons intoxicants meat weapons and slavery and that things like insurance sales modern medicine sex work of any kind gambling and most enforcement agencies also apply that is actually extremely rare to have a blameless occupation yeah just just to get right livelihood from the Buddhist

point of view like just a cashier at a grocery store technically would not be a right livelihood because she's going to be selling cans of bug spray she's going to be selling beer you know she's going to be selling the stuff that you're not supposed to sell if you're if you're practicing right livelihood also just like a waitress at a restaurant if she is supplying alcoholic beverages to people who are ordering them again you're not supposed to do that I mean she's like a drug dealer in that sense but I

mean yeah I mean so long as your livelihood isn't really causing harm to people especially in sort of the outward

sense I mean just causing someone to get
upset because they get upset really easy
and you haven't necessarily done
anything with ill intent you can set
that those kind of scenarios aside um
you know there's always going to be
someone who disapproves of you no matter
what you do or don't
do but to have like a harmless vocation
would be right livelihood from a
Buddhist point of view that doesn't
require dishonesty for example and I
mean dishonesty in
business um you know they've got it down
to a science I think
so um yeah I mean if you got a job

interview and they're thinking about
hiring you for some relatively important
position in in some kind of capitalistic
business it' probably be good to be
upfront and like caution the person that
you are scrupulously honest and are not
going to tell lies for the sake of
making money that kind of
thing so yeah I mean so long as the job
is is like not causing harm to anybody
and is an honest job it does not require
any kind of Deceit anything like that I
think you'll be doing okay but yeah sex
work gambling that kind of thing would
also be out like pandering to other
people's addictions is probably best um
not to do that um you know it's it's

sort of a fine line though I mean you're
never going to have pure
saintliness as a lay person it's hard to
even do it as a monk who renounces
society and goes off and lives alone in
a forest still he's going to be doing
UNH wholesome things even just believing
himself to exist for a few minutes well
he's wallowing in
delusion you know he getting up getting
angry at the fly that just bit you
even though you don't slap it still you
little
bastard there you go you've you've
wallowed in in
aversion

so yeah I think just so long as you're

you're honest and not selling stuff that

hurts people or you know like even like

a chef who's catering to like obese

Foodies I mean that's sort of like a

drug dealer right

there so yeah I mean you got to use your

your better judgment you just got to

feel into it and see I mean is this like

harming people is it harming myself is

it harming others and if it isn't except

into these really subtle ways that you

just can't escape from then I think

you're doing

okay so I'm just going to move on to

Thermal Squid's thir third

question is homosexuality all always

sexual

misconduct and his commentary here is

this is an icky question but I really

wonder about it sometimes I feel like it

is somewhat of a paraphilia or

developmental disorder if not outright

unnatural but I also don't know how one

should treat it as a political or larger

social level at a political or larger

social level I seem to go back and forth

between aversion and ambivalence toward

it and do not understand how to manage

its prevalence in terms of attitude and

right

thinking and I mean just for

starters any sexuality is to some degree

immoral from a Buddhist point of view

that you know like desire is the cause

of all suffering and sex It's associated

with some of the strongest desires that

we EXP

experience just wallowing in

sensuality like sex especially good sex

is about as wallowy in sensuality as you

can

get so I mean that's not the same as

breaking the third precept though the

third precept is sensual misconduct

kamu and it re homosexuality really was

not an issue if you read the text

there's really not much of an issue I

mean like men resorting to unic Bath

House Unix is like a sign of bad

character um there's hardly I I can't
even recall any mention of two grown men
having sex with each other that's
described in the text or even in the
commentar literature it was like in
Ancient India the the Ganges Valley men
with that kind of disposition would
resort to as I just said Bath House Unix
that sort of
thing
so it's kind of a gray Zone um you know
it's not really spelled out very clearly
in the texts at least I do not recall it
I've studied the text fairly
comprehensively and I do not recall ever
coming across this issue in the text

there's a lot of issues that Buddhism
especially like poly Buddhism just does
not address and this isn't the only one
that's going to be mentioned in this Q&A
inshah so I mean if you consider that
like right like sensual right conduct
for a lay person is a monogamous like
faithful
relationship um mainly for the sake of
of just maintaining Society through a
man and a woman coming together raising
children propagating the human race
keeping societ
going then homosexuality would be on The
Fringe of that I mean you could have
like the loving monogamous thing going
some homosexual men are capable of

that although I did read in a um it was like a doctor's diagnostic manual he there the Merc manual I think the Merc guide of the Merc manual one of them is like a pharmacological thing and the other one is like helping you to diagnose symptoms and so forth and homosexuality was in the the book as a kind of disorder so it was a relatively old Edition I think and it was saying and it's true to this day it's not unusual at all for a homosexual man to have had more than 1,000 sexual partners

so I mean there's kind of a a tendency in that direction that is recognized in

the

texts but it doesn't really spell it out

so I mean you could argue especially in

the west that like two gay men who are

faithful to each other they love each

other they just that that I mean it's

kind of a borderline case and I think it

could be argued either

way and whoever would be the the better

debater would win the

debate

so yeah so I think I should just move on

to the next one because as I say I mean

What It ultimately the Buddhist texts

really do not discuss this issue in any

explicit way that that I can

recall so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from mraa Buddha and
MIT tra Buddha says according to
Buddhist cosmology or the 31 PLS of
existence humans are in the manusa Loca
or human realm and animals are in the
Kad dugi boomi or apaya boomi me the PLS
of misery yeah the four the four lower
Realms one of the four lower Realms is
the animal realm so why is that humans
are able to perceive animals in the
human realm with ayatana or the five
senses despite humans and animals
belonging to different Realms or
PLS why is that we are only able to
perceive animals but not any other
beings from within the kamugi bu boomi

and other plant s from the Rupa Loca or

arupa

Loca um well I mean we wouldn't be able

to perceive any any being in the arupa

Loa because that's the formless Realms I

mean they're just so completely Beyond

us and furthermore there's no physical

bodies to

see so it might be that an extremely

Advanced meditative

Adept could be aware of formless beings

but I mean the average guy is not going

to be aware of such beings with regard

to the Brahma realm the Rupa Loca which

is essentially brahmas who have physical

bodies um their their physical bodies

are so attenuated so subtle it's a

different vibrational rate or whatever
of matter we can't see them either
unless they want us to see them then
they can sort of solidify themselves
slow down their vibrational rate or some
such so that we can see them but with
regard to um there are terrestrial
deities according to to
Buddhist like mythology philosophy
whatever you want to call it they're
mentioned in the texts um it's the the
the realm of the the the four Great
Kings which is one realm above human
level on the 31 Plains of
existence and we can see them at least
sometimes so I mean there's a lot of

mention

of people you know

seeing like I mean ogres you know the

yaka is is belongs to this realm and I

mean they eat people supposedly at least

that's what the yaka kind of evolved

into like with regard to the evolution

of certain ideas with regard to

non-human beings um but I mean with

regard to why we can see animals and

animals can see us I mean you know we're

living in the same kind of

World um with regard to like the ghost

realm some people have seen ghosts I

apparently like at least when I was a

little kid was able to see spirits some

people can see

spirits some Spirits can see us
even so I mean it's not just a matter of
humans and animals can see each other
but any other planes any other Realms we
can't see because times we can at least
I mean some animals we can't see like
the the aptly named no which is like a
little insect that that bites you you
know it's like a midge or something
related to mosquitoes or gnats I guess
they're just so small that we can't see
them but they're still
there so what is the actual question
here why is that humans are able to
perceive animals in the human Realm
despite humans and animals belonging to

different

Realms

well the whole Realms thing was super

imposed on this empirical reality and so

I mean you can't really argue against

people and animals being able to see

each

other I mean that's just a given that

had to be dealt with and I mean some

other Realms you know they're just kind

of mythological I suppose I mean some of

the Realms on the 31 planes of existence

I'm rather skeptical of to tell you the

truth um and then I mean some Realms are

just so different from this

realm that we just we just can't see

each other just it's just too different

of of like psychology and too different
of like the our our environments and so
forth so let's see
here yeah it is true that the animals
are cons animals are considered to be in
the the lower Realms but I mean
technically this is ancient Indian
biology so to speak taxonomy whereas
really I mean humans are animals we are
also technically a member of the animal
realm and I do not think that just
putting all animals into the animal
realm and humans in the human realm is I
mean it's not good taxonomy because a
chimpanzee or even a dolphin comes
closer to a human than it does to a

mosquito

but like dolphins and mosquitoes are

animal realm we are human realm and I

just don't see it that way a dog comes

closer to a human than it does to a

mosquito so I mean some of this is just

ancient

Indian attempts at explaining things

that modern westerners really don't go

along with very well

so I kind of I kind of answered that

question so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is from Ken and

Ken said what is your view on Casina

meditation saw an interesting interview

where the practitioner talks about early

Buddhist manuals mentioning the practice

frequently and then he he left this
under the the recent YouTube video and
then somebody told him that I had
already answered this question in Q&A
number 135 was even kind enough to leave
a Tim
stamp but casin meditation it was really
a big deal like when the wisi Maga was
being written like the wisi Maga the the
main meditation that it describes it
describes you know all the 40 you know
the the 40 standard meditation
techniques but that are like traditional
in terava Buddhism but the main one that
gives the most detailed instructions on
the at most that length is casin

meditation so casin meditation was

probably a big

deal like early medieval SRI lanca at

the very least and there's still monks

in Burma that practice Casina meditation

but it's it's rare it's relatively rare

in terada Buddhism nowadays certain

meditations have just become predominant

especially meditation on breathing you

know

anapan um like meta meditation

meditation on the 32 parts of the body

meditation on the four elements some

Thai Traditions use

Mantra that kind of thing and Cina is is

uh kind of obsolete sort of at least

it's no longer nearly as much in fashion

as it used to be and there is a kind of
hypnotic element to
it um like like I mentioned probably in
Q&A 135 like the Stanford hypnosis lab
who they're trying to study hypnosis and
hypnotic States scientifically so they
have to have like a standardized
hypnotic technique you know they got to
hypnotize everyone the same way to
reduce the variation you know to to
strengthen their experimental designs
and so forth and the meditation
technique at the Stanford hypnosis Lab
at least at the time that I read the
book written by the guy who worked there
is you look at a small disc on the wall

was much smaller than the casin disc you know it could be just the head of a thumbtack stuck into the wall but still you're just focusing on this disc in front of you and you just kind of get absorbed into it I mean you just kind of I mean you become so focused on it become oblivious to other things and then it has like this hypnotic effect so I'm kind of ambivalent in my understanding of whether Casina is really something the the Buddha originally um taught and endorsed or if it's something that kind of came into Vogue because it was had like spectacular results because hypnosis can have spectacular results I mean h a

hypnotized person especially if they're
a good subject in a deep hypnotic trance
I mean they can do superhuman
stuff or just weird stuff that you would
not expect like someone who's in a deep
hypnotic trance you can tell them that
you're going to touch them with a red
hot piece of iron you just touch them
with a regular pencil eraser and still
they will feel the pain and a blister
will rise they will literally get a
second degree burn from just the belief
that they got touched by something
really hot and then a lot of people know
how you can just someone who's in a
hypnotic trance can just become stiff as

a board so that you can rest their head
on the back of one chair rest their feet
on the back of another chair and they're
just like a plank going across and you
can put waights on them even and and
they're fine that kind of thing which a
person who's not in a trance I mean you
generally don't do
that so I mean this one Cina meditation
whether the Buddha originally taught it
or whether it was just something that
became fashionable because it had like
dramatic effects and was more hypnotic
than something more along the lines of
expanded awareness like expanded
mindfulness that kind of thing I'm I'm
not 100% sure on

that um I mean it's it's been in in

terata Buddhism for a very long time so

if it is something that was added later

it was added later fairly early

on but the wui Maga is

is I mean it's it's like the central

text in in Buddhist the Buddhist

commentarial tradition and it's got got

a heck of a lot to say about Casino

meditation

so yeah I guess you could refer to the

Q&A in 135 if you haven't already and

I'm just going to move on to Ken's

second question are Japanese prisons

modeled after Zen monasteries and I've

never heard anything with regard to this

um it could be because they're both
Japanese that they share a certain
Japanese
like strictness stoicism that kind of
thing um but whether Zen or like
Japanese prisons were deliberately
modeled on Zen monasteries I kind of
doubt it there's a lot of stuff that
goes on in Zen monasteries that you
don't see in Japanese prisons I'm sure
and vice versa so I'm rather doubtful of
that it could just be that they are both
products of the same Japanese culture
and so they're going to have certain
aspects that that seem
similar but who knows it may be that
there was some reformer of the Japanese

prison system back in the 1800s or
something who deliberately modeled the
new the new reformed prison system on
Zen monasteries for all I
know so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from
quor and this is a follow-up question to
a previous question uh about
formless Realms and quor says can an
Arya be reborn into a formless realm if
they cannot make any progress towards
arahant ship there well an anagami
wouldn't be reborn into a formless realm
I don't think a sakagami would be reborn
into a formless Ramen arahant wouldn't
be reborn at all and so your only option

I think would be a soda and those of you
who are familiar with my understanding
of the four stages of sainthood or ARA
Hood will know that I considered to be
largely an academic
issue um I don't think that the Buddha
himself taught these four stages for
various reasons that I've covered
before and uh so could a soda paana be
reborn into a formless realm I don't
know if this is actually mentioned in
the text I assume it's
possible um presumably it' be better if
you could avoid being reborn into a
formless realm
because as qu Ator indicates excuse me
you don't make any progress there and I

mean they it's extremely longlasting
lifetimes this is like the most refined
levels of samsara that a lifespan is in
the is in the realm of billions of
years and so you're just going to be
stuck in this Bliss I mean it's Bliss at
least it's it's not
unpleasant you're just stuck in this
Bliss making no progress just blissing
out for billions of
years
so um I don't think there's any rules or
there I don't know if there's any reason
why a soda could not be reborn into a
formless realm but um I've never really
read anything one way or the other about

soapas I mean they they could be reborn
into a formless realm I suppose but
they'd be better off if they didn't just
because it's going to postpone their
Enlightenment by billions of
years so I'm I've been kind
of not fully capable of answering a
quite a few of these questions so far is
because I mean some of them I don't know
how anybody could really answer them and
some like whether Japanese prisons are
based on Zen monasteries it's just
something I've never really heard about
or read about or
considered so I'm just going to move on
to quator second question which is if
one were to meditate and develop

equinity and mindfulness to being

tortured in hell would they leave that

realm pretty quickly and I do think that

the

more like

equinity that you could muster in Hell

the the sooner you'd get out of there uh

I had this Theory

like um in Burma during the hot weather

in Central Burma and it was sort of like

this Insight it was it was sort of like

being in hell just just you cannot

escape from the heat no electricity no

electric

fans um and I mean you just cannot get

comfortable at all you don't even stop

sweating when you're taking a bath with well water cuz the well water is warm and so I had this idea it's like I mean you just get into these just exasperated moods I mean people can just crack up from the heat anyone who's read a lot of Kipling or Somerset mom who WR wrote about you know British colonialists in in like India and Southeast Asia they know you you know people can just crack up like kiplings at the end of the passage has two guys that just go insane and die as a result of just this hellish heat day after day after day you know the temperatur is like 100 15° Fahrenheit for one or two months Straight No

Escape so I mean it can just wear people
down or the outstation by Somerset mom
is another example of people just
cracking up because of the
heat so it I had this little insight
though this I'm it's taking me a long
time to to spit it out but I had this
Insight that one of the reasons why hell
lasts so long
I mean according to the Buddhist you go
to hell you can be there for millions of
years and it doesn't make much sense
it's like how are the bad things that a
person does over the span of a few
decades going to be punished
fairly for millions of years I mean I

mean the Christians go even go even

worse it's like the the bad Deeds you do

for a a matter of just several decades

at most I mean you're going to get

punished forever you're going to suffer

torment forever and that's I mean that

doesn't strike me as Fair that's not

just but I had this idea like once you

go to hell you know it's sort of like

it's even worse than being in central

Burma during the hot season and then the

subsequent rainy season which is a

drought and it doesn't rain so it's just

like a second hot

season that I mean it's you're you're in

that worse than that

for hundreds of years thousands of years

tens hundreds of thousands of years it's
like it's just going to wear you down
and you're just going to start just
raging against the world you know
cursing God in your heart cursing the
entire universe just hating everything
because I mean it has just worn you down
until you just in this state of misery
and just like like radiating misery and
just aversion in all directions and
that's what keeps you there that was
sort of the the this Insight that I had
and I'm going to check make sure we're
really recording yep we've been going
for almost an hour already my how could
we be going for almost an hour already

man feel like I've only answered like

five questions so far this could be like

an eight hour long

one so yeah I I do think that if you're

in Hell one thing that keeps you in hell

for so long

is just you're just broken down mentally

and you're just hating yourself you're

hating God you're hating everything just

just overflowing with aversion just due

to the the shitty situation that you

have landed into and so if you could

cultivate

equinity then that could be like the

shortcut out that if you could be

mindful you know just mindfully being

tortured by demons that kind of thing

mindfully just burning in the in the

Raging heat glowing hot iron all around

you then yeah I mean if you get used to

it or and just kind of make make peace

with it

somehow you know you can just accept it

to some degree then I think that you

would be out of there much more quickly

because otherwise I mean how are you

going to get punished for millions of

years for something you did over the the

course of a few

decades and I'm just going to move on

next question also from

quor quor

says is equinity during discomfort

considered paying back karmic debt in Buddhism or is it more of a refraining of the Mind resulting in a deeper insight into its the mind's mental formations well equinity during discomfort what it's doing I mean the main
mechanism of how you're dealing with karma is that I mean the paying back of a karmic debt is the waya it's the feeling of what's happening to you now so let's
say it's a really hot weather you know so this discomfort from the really hot weather is paying back the karmic debt but if you are at reacting in aversion you're making new Karma so you're just

you're just adding to the karmic debt
but if you have equinity and Detachment
then you're paying the karmic debt
without adding more karma so in a way
you're sort of defusing or neutralizing
or denaturing this karma that's
otherwise you just have like a vicious
circle you have the unpleasant thing
happen you react with aversion which
makes more karma which then comes comes
back at you you react with aversion
which makes more karma which comes back
at you and so equinity and Detachment
mindful Detachment breaks that vicious
circle and it may be that you've got
more and more karma that's that's sort

of already like accumulated that's going

to come at you but you're not adding to

it and so gradually it's just going to

fade

away that's the theory

anyway so let's see I mean it can that

you can get deeper insight into into you

know the nature

of

suffering that kind of

thing that can happen too but mainly

just through Equanimity when bad things

happen to you is you're not just like

perpetuating this vicious

cycle of you know karmic retribution

like aversion for that karmic

retribution which makes more karma which

then comes back and then you react
against that which makes more karma
coming back you know add infinitum if
you let it happen that
way so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from
Sal and Sal says you said pa alers are
just hypnotizing themselves and thinking
they are attaining some kind of Jas how
would you explain hypnotizing from the
terraa Buddhist point of view and I
didn't really say that that all PA alers
are just hypnotizing themselves and
thinking they're attaining some kind of
genre I I do specify that it's some
people meditating at PA or following the

PA method appear to be hypnotizing themselves and thinking that they're in Janna or having like Clairvoyant visions and so forth when really it's the product of hypnotic suggestion I don't say that all people at po are just hypnotizing themselves but I do think there's a lot of self- hypnosis going on at

P so the main question here though is how would you explain hypnotizing from a terraa Buddhist point of view and again this is one of those issues not the last one of the evening either or the morning or whatever it is whatever time of day you're watching

this um it's something that Buddhism

doesn't really mention I mean there's

some a

which indicates that there could be m s

or like wrong

concentration which I mean it could just

be I mean some wrong concentration is

just like staring fixedly at the some

body part of a of a young woman who's

walking by I mean that would be wrong

like wrong concentration I

suppose but also I mean you could have

like sort of bogus meditation techniques

that could qualify as wrong

concentration and hypnotizing yourself

and thinking that you're not hypnotizing

yourself um it it happens a lot in Burma

I have to admit a lot of people in Burma
like even meditation teachers they
they're not sophisticated enough
thinkers or they just are unfamiliar
with hypnosis so they cannot tell the
difference between Janna and a deep
hypnotic trance there's uh a meditation
center not far from the main cave that I
lived in in Burma it's in
the the Inu tradition where they promise
just even a beginning meditator that you
know in your first week meditation or
two week meditation you know the first
Retreat that you'll be able to like
teleport into heaven Realms teleport
into hell Realms sit for hours straight
without moving that kind of stuff and I

mean it just sounds more like hypnosis
than some realistic expectation of some
beginner who's never met meditated
before who is just guaranteed that
within 2 weeks they're going to have all
these psychic powers and sit like a
statue for four hours
straight that sounds like more of a
hypnotic thing to
me but again I mean hypnosis I don't
know if there was even really a concept
of
hypnosis in Ancient India I mean I think
hypnosis became a thing with some guy
named Mesmer like back in the 1700s
so it's like a modern

concept there is mention of like there's the list of different kinds of animal knowledge that monks shouldn't take any interest in which includes like interviewing a woman in trance who's like channeling a deity or something so that happened in Ancient India women who would especially women I guess who would go into a trance and channel supposedly speak with the voice of a God that kind of thing so I mean that would count as hypnosis by modern standards I think that channelers generally are in a hypnotic trance when they're channeling but there's no real explanation of it not even in Abid dama the commentarial tradition that I've

ever come across it could be some
obscure reference and some obscure
commentary that nobody
reads but I really don't think that
there really is a welldefined
like explained concept of hypnosis in
poly Tex or in the poly commentarial
tradition so I'm just going to move on
to s's second
question which is is it possible that
attaining Janna itself was just a
hypnotizing oneself after all maybe in
more like Wholesome Way or something
yeah I've considered that that that
Janna could be considered a kind of
hypnotic Trans State except it's like a

high quality hypnotic Trans State where
you're not just oblivious to everything
around you where you're in a heightened
state of
awareness but I mean there's certain
aspects of a hypnotic trance that seem
to be lacking from like really good
meditation like like when you're
hypnotized it's like your mind is just
focused on this one thing you go into
like a a sleepy State a somnolent State
and you might be completely oblivious to
everything around you and some people
who go into meditative states are like
that too but I really do not think that
fourth J would be like the human
equivalent to being in the state of a

hibernating

squirrel so I mean you'd have to have

like a good definition of what Janna is

which is pretty much lacking you'd have

to have a really good definition of

hypnosis which is probably out there

like a hypnotic Trans State I don't know

exactly what it would be and then

whether you know the VIN diagram has

overlap or I guess Janna would have to

be like a small circle inside the bigger

circle of

hypnosis in order for Janna itself to be

a kind of hypnotic

state but I kind of doubt it I would say

that being in a hypnotic State could be

considered wrong concentration although
I mean it can have its benefits that
being in a hypnotic State isn't just a
bad state but the the problem is in if
you're going to if you're going to
hypnotize yourself you should be aware
that you're hypnotizing yourself if
you're going to be in a hypnotic trance
you should be aware that you're in a
hypnotic trance and not be clueless and
think that you're having some kind of
supramundane Transmissions or some
such so it could be that hypnosis can be
beneficial I mean if it's done correctly
but I mean at least you should know what
it is that it's a hypnotic trance and
not some you know attainment of ARA hood

or some

such so is it possible that attaining

jna itself is just a hypnotizing oneself

after all I kind of doubt it but I mean

it would depend on the definitions of

terms so I'm just going to move on to

salon's third question which is how

would you explain the attaining Janna

when it comes to jna is necessary for

enlightenment Theory from earlier Terra

vaden's point of view so how do you

explain the attaining jna when it comes

to jna is necessary for enlightenment

well I think originally jna just meant

meditation and that's I mean it was DH Y

in Sanskrit which became Chan in Chinese

which became Zen in in Japanese and

that's just Zen is the meditation school

so Jan just originally meant meditation

I mean literally means something like

blazing or

illumination which was kind of a

metaphor for the mental states that a

person would get in when they're

meditating so I mean from that point of

view you could say that meditation is

necessary for enlightenment um at least

from a systematic you know myth U I

almost said mythological

meth systematic let's just go with

systematic you know if you're going to

like deliberately work towards

Enlightenment then certainly meditation

is very useful I don't think it's absolutely necessary because there are some people maybe they had a lot of meditation in previous lives so that they're just ripe for it even in the in the poly texts there's cases of at least in the in the commentarial tradition of some 9-year-old boy who's who's getting his head shaved so that he can become a novice as soon as the razor touches his head he becomes an a fully enlightened arhon that he was so ripe he had such parmy from previous existences probably doing a lot of meditation in previous existences that he didn't need to have formal meditation in this life or then

you got people like ekart TOA or rahama

Mahari even or or

John uh John Ren Lewis who just have

like a near-death experience or some

kind of Crisis that just slams them out

of

samsara slams them out of their samsaric

habits and liberates

them so I mean how it's supposed to work

though is I mean I've just I've

explained this numerous times before

it's like mental states are waves

Consciousness is just water so your

mental states are just like ripples on

on your

Consciousness and Sam Sara is just being

stuck at the level of the Waves it's the

forms you know the forms that the
surface of the water
takes so if you want to like penetrate
that you want to transcend these forms
stop identifying with all the the
multiple waves and I like this wave and
I don't like that wave and this wave is
beautiful and that wave is ugly etc etc
you know so for as long as samsara lasts
instead you calm the surface so there
aren't any more waves to be distracted
by or at least they become so subtle
that they're no longer a distraction and
then you can get the Insight that allows
you to penetrate you know through the
forms and just get to the essence of

water or Consciousness and that is what
essentially helps to liberate you and
then after you've been like enlightened
after you're no longer distracted by the
waves you just penetrate through that
then even after the waves come back
you're no longer sitting there
cross-legged in deep meditation anymore
still you have the Insight that allows
you to continue just seeing the the
waves as water just seeing the essence
instead of being distracted and led
astray by the
forms so that would be the mechanism of
how jna helps you to become enlightened
at least that's one of the
mechanisms

so I mean there's there's I've mentioned
it numerous times before the the the
Lesser discourse on voidness of the
majaya the Chula
sunas where you've got a monk who goes
out into the forest and he's cultivating
emptiness or voidness first first step
is you just go out into the forest and
so you're left you've left behind the
commotion and distraction of all the
artificiality in the in the village and
so you've got relative emptiness and
then you start cultivating meditative
States until you get to the highest
possible meditative State and then when
you come out of that you realize that

that was that was the highest possible
attainable meditative State and still
that's not Enlightenment and so that
that can cause like a click of insight
that just kind of causes you to let let
go of the the whole samsaric system and
that's like a liberating Insight
also but I think I should just move on
to the next question now this is from
White Ash Piper and white ash Piper says
curious on Karma and rebirth and the
point you brought up on a child being
born and dying hardly out of the gate my
takeaway is this baby had just enough
Karma to be human but albeit briefly
question mark I think it was on the cat
dog Karma question yeah I I do have this

hypothesis unprovable that one of our
dogs had been like a human baby that I
mean it got old enough that you know it
was aware of its surroundings and
starting to have a personality but it
was still like preverbal and then and
then passed away um I do think that some
pets like they have alternated between
like a dog or just some some human baby
that just died very young which most
human babies did throughout much of our
history and it's not necessarily that
you've got a human baby who
dies it's not necessarily they had just
enough Karma to be human but only
briefly it could be that they had Karma

to be human but also not to get very
Advanced with it you know they didn't
have the karma to be like a verbal
speaking functioning adult they just had
the karma to sort of get to a certain
stage and then it was like they didn't
have the karma to proceed from from past
that or it could be that they just had
some bad karma that just sort of
interrupted that you know maybe they
were uh you know they had caused babies
to stop metabolizing in a previous life
you know they were like who knows you
know I I could I can name say like an
abortionist or something I don't know
but I mean infanticide was fairly common
in ancient times back before they had

reliable abortion clinics you just take
the the the baby and just abandon it out
in the wood somewhere or it would die of
exposure get eaten by animals or
something and so people that did that
would be making some kind of karma that
might come back on them they get reborn
and they get this bad baby stuff done to
them or just they just
die so I mean there's there's more than
one explanation for how how the karma
works of a baby who is born and then
just does not grow into childhood you
know they just have sudden infant death
syndrome when they're just two weeks old
or they get like scarlet fever or

hooping cough or something I mean that
used to happen a
lot and I think even like in the Middle
Ages most babies did not reach adulthood
you know it's that's one reason why the
Middle Ages in Europe were kind of a
sociopathic age is that parents could
not get emotionally invested in their
children because most of them were just
going to die anyway and so they were
treated like
livestock and you know they just
received the kind of neglect and and
harshness that produces sociopaths
hardened to criminals in in modern
times and uh like the entire culture was
like that other than maybe a few people

that were just soft-hearted and were
willing to take the risk of dearly
loving this baby that you know
statistically was was probably not going
to reach the age of
10 but I think I'm Meandering away from
the
question curious on Karma and rebirth
and the point you brought up on a child
being born and dying hardly out of the
gate my takeaway is this baby had just
Karma to be human but albeit briefly
question mark so that was the
question and yeah it doesn't necessarily
work that way there's karma is very
complicated it's it's unthinkably you

know incomprehensibly complicated and so there's you can't really figure it out and it's not going to be the same for everybody that different different individuals are going to have different Karma that may result in similar outward experiences but it might be just different reasons you know it's like the baby dies because they had just enough Karma to be human or or they had you know to be human but very briefly or they had the karma to get sort of into a baby mental state but they did hadn't didn't have the karma to go beyond that or it could be some bad karma from a previous life just cut their life short

because they were cutting lives short of others or some such there's all these different possibilities and it's it's just not one size fits all it's it's there's always going to be this just Unthinkable complexity going on and all these different factors that are combining and interacting and so forth that's going to result in the situation and so I'm just going to move on to next question this is from meditators library and meditators Library says ever since dis robing how did your inner peace spirituality or faith in Buddha change over time please share your thoughts well my inner peace

is not as good as it was when I was a monk just living in Simplicity and Solitude in a cave that now I'm I'm like for a living I'm driving a forklift for a trucking company and it's just hectic chaos a lot of the time like the other night two nights ago I was traumatized where there was this huge fireplace like an electric fireplace it weighed like 800 lb it was like 6 feet tall and like 6 feet wide maybe 2 and 1/2 fet thick and it was just too big to fit onto the truck right side up so they were going to tip it onto its side onto a pallet and load it that way and there was a miscommunication between one guy and the other guy one guy was supposed to hold

the pallet up with a forklift on this side and then the other guy was just going to push it over onto that pallet you know it's going to just lean over a little bit and then gradually you lower the pallet and then the thing winds up lying on it that was the idea but the guy who was supposed to be holding up the pallet didn't know what he was doing nobody fully explained the situation so he's just kind of sitting there with the pallet on the floor the one guy just tips over this huge this this huge fireplace and it just smashes I mean it's just destroyed and I was just standing there just I first I just kind

of Throw My Hands over my ears just
because I was expecting the crash and it
was
just that kind of stuff is not conducive
to peace of mind in my case or you're
just this hectic chaos going on I'm I'm
like cussing like to myself I'm not like
cussing out others was like what the
[__] are you doing you know just just
like just this little commentary of cuss
words going on while I'm while I'm
driving my forklift sometimes so my
inner peace is less although fortunately
I have acquired enough Insight that I
really don't take some soric quasi
reality as seriously as most people do
I'm not as stuck in it as most people

are even though there's like this

habitual cussing going on that kind of

thing so let's see my inner peace yeah

that's that has like

decreased um at least at the like The

Superficial level

spirituality

um I mean it's like I received my

education and now I'm putting it into

practice my faith in Buddha is is

unchanged

so yeah ever since dis

robing yeah there have been some changes

um but not really super major ones

they're they're like superficial outward

changes more than like the Deep inward

stuff so I'm just going to move on to
meditators library second question what
is your take on the terraa tradition or
belief that one has to get ordained as
beu upon anagami Enlightenment within
seven days or he dies it's not anagami
it's
arant that the terraa Buddhist tradition
is that you have to be or if you become
enlightened you can be enlightened if
you're not an ordained Monk but you have
to get ordained fast and it could be
less than seven days like the Bahia
Bahia sua the the non Buddhist
philosopher Bahia goes and speaks to the
Buddha the Buddha gives him this Coan
like little sermon in the middle of of

town and Baha becomes enlightened and
then within like an hour he's he dies he
he's trampled to death by a a young cow
so I mean it's it's not just seven days
necessarily I mean it's it's like you're
on borrowed time if you're enlightened
and you're not a monk going with Terra
tradition but personally I am skeptical
of that I think that there have been um
enlightened people who were not ordained
beus or beunis or even
novices that lived for more than a
week so I do think to some degree it's
it's kind of a terraa chauvinism you
know saying you know you have to be you
know one of us if you're going to be

fully enlightened for very long or you know it's you better join us or you're gonna you're going to pay the price kind of a thing and I do think there's a certain amount of chauvinism or like religious propaganda that kind of thing involved so meditators Library third question is anagami Enlightenment possible for lone ruse or beu s in parenthesis who lives alone in Forest without connection any SAA but lives on his pension money or some kind of savings well I mean he wouldn't shouldn't be a beu if he's got got money you know you'd be better off not being a beu if you're going to be living on pension money or some kind of savings

because Monk's not allowed to have money
period and I again I think he's
confusing anagami with arahant
that being fully enlightened yeah I
don't see why not I don't see why it
would be impossible for some lone
recluse who isn't even
ordained to be just going alone like the
Horn of the rhinoceros I mean that's
what the Buddha taught you're supposed
to live in dependence upon a teacher
even if you're a beu you live on in
dependence upon a teacher or your
preceptor for at least five years but
once you know how to meditate you know
how to do all the stuff a monk's

supposed to do you know how to follow

the rules and bake a bowl and so your

robes and all that then you can just go

off alone and the text the poly text are

full of monks that just go out into

Solitude and become

enlightened without I mean you might

have a brief connection with the S you

might go and meet with the monks every

two weeks to do the upos ceremony or

some

such but I don't think even that much is

necessary I don't think it's necessary

to be a beu that if you're I mean I

assume there have been assuming that Med

that Enlightenment even means anything

in a samsaric

context that there have been people who'
have just gone off and done it alone and
become
enlightened some of them have probably
even handled
money
so yeah um lives alone in a forest
without any connection to any
SAA that lives on pension money or some
kind of savings I I don't see why it
would be impossible like becoming
enlightened on your own without guidance
or feedback can be tricky because you're
going to have blind spots that you
you're going to have like foibles or
defilements that you don't see that

nobody's going to tell you about because

you're

alone so there are there are certain

disadvantages to radical

solitude but for the the most part it is

encouraged in Terra Buddhism that you go

alone like the Horn of the rhinoceros

you just go off once you know how to

once you know what to do you know how to

practice correctly you just go off into

the forest and do

it and uh there's nothing necessarily

immoral about living on a

pension but it is against the rules for

an ordained monk to handle money even a

10 precept novice isn't supposed to

handle money even though almost all 10

precept novices in Burma handle

it so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from PSA and PSA says

which sport is your favorite from the

following list hockey soccer water polo

or Javelin

throwing well hockey it's I mean the

fights are interesting but every once in

a while they stop fighting and start

hitting this little puck around which is

kind of not so interesting soccer I

never really understood why you have so

many fanatical soccer fans in this world

why what is so exciting these guy I mean

you can you can have an hourong soccer

match and the score is still zero to

zero water polo could be interesting but most of the actions going on under the water where they're like kicking each other and stuff and you don't get to see that part so I mean if I had to watch any of these on like a video I'd probably watch Javelin throwing just for the the novelty of it

I mean there's it's not really all that exciting I mean there's not a whole lot of variety there's not these a whole lot of different strategies and all that but what the hell at least it doesn't last very long you know they just run up and run up to the line and throw the javelin and they measure how far it went and whoever threw it the farthest wins I

guess so I think I'm just going to move

on to psa's next

question which is have you decided yet

what you will do to those that end up on

your Black List do they have any chance

of Salvation well technically that's two

questions so actually PSA has

transgressed here and I think his name's

going on that

list and uh because his name is on the

list I don't think it would be

appropriate for me to to actually

specify what's going to happen to him

but he's not going to like it very much

if he ever finds out what it was that

happened to him and nevertheless

everyone has chance of

Salvation so don't worry about that it's

there's no Eternal damnation involved in

in these

lists so I'm just going to move on to

psa's next question what is your

favorite suta of the samuta nikaya and

ha and the samud nikaya has a lot of

really good sutas in it so you know like

the first two sutas you know

traditionally the damaka putatan nasuta

and the anataka nasuta are both in the

samuta the the first samuta the sagata

waga the first chapter of the first

samuta has some

very

archaic just very profound piy kind of

of sutas that are

good there's one um suta from the sutin

Kaya that is that receives a lot of

discussion in nagar's Mula majaka

Kaka which I mean he's going with a

Sanskrit non- teravan version of the

same

suah but it's Maha Kayana I think is

like the the monk who's teaching this

and it's it's very zen-like and I don't

remember the name of the of the suta

unfortunately but the one suta that

really comes to mind that has had more

of an effect on me than this one with

Maha Kayana is um let's see here it's

called the locaa sua and it's in the

nidana samut which is all about

dependent core rising and

it's it's it's a strange case study

because it's it's like a mixture of like

older like more profound material and

like younger less profound material and

the whole thing is a patchwork but the

the main point of it is is really deep

and I like it and so I happened to have

translated it

myself uh some years

ago and so the first part of the suta

goes thus have I heard at one time the

blessed one was dwelling at Sati at J's

Grove in anata pandas Park which is how

a great many sutas

begin then it's like you got the main

meat of the suta here which is in this part at that time a Brahman who was a worldly philos philosopher approached the blessed one and exchanged the customary friendly greetings with him and sitting to one side that Brahman worldly philosopher said this to the blessed one how is it sir godma does everything
exist everything exists indeed Brahman this is the oldest philosophy in the world said the Buddha so then the the Brahman says well then how is it sir GMA does nothing exist and the Buddha says nothing exists indeed Brahman this is the second philosophy of the

world so then the Brahman says well then how is it sir godma is everything a unity and then the Buddha says everything is a Unity indeed Brahman this is the third philosophy of the world and then the Brahman says well then how is it sir GMA is everything a multiplicity and then the Buddha says everything is a multiplicity indeed Brahman this is the fourth philosophy of the world but not tending to either extreme Brahman the Daga teaches the way by the middle and then it just plugs in the stock description of the 12 Links of dependent core Rising which doesn't really work very well because the Buddha has just ruled out multiplicity and here

you've got this 12 link this just

spewing

multiplicity so then after the Buddha

gives the uh the 12 links forwards and

backwards or

mainly uh let's

see the like the the creation and the

cessation aspects of the 12 links then

you you wind up with this a stock phrase

again which occurs lots and lots of

times which is see when this had been

said the Brahman worldly philosopher

said this excellent sir godma excellent

sir godma just as Sir godma one would

set a right what had been tipped over

would reveal what had been covered would

explain the road to one who was lost
would hold up an oil lamp in the
darkness so that those with eyes could
see what is visible even so the dhama
has been showed by Sir Goa in many ways
I go to Sir Goa for refuge and to the
dhama and to the community of monks May
sir godma consider me to be a lay
supporter from this day on for the rest
of my life I have taken refuge and
according to the text if we are to to
accept this as
just historical fact that there have
were dozens of people who would give
this exact same speech just as Sir Goa
one would set a right what has been
tipped over etc etc etc that that's just

the standard speech given by people who
are converted to Buddhism after having a
a talk with the
Buddha so it's it's kind of a a really
convenient case study of how sutas are
composed you've got like this nucleus of
useful information which is like the the
back and forth between the worldly
philosopher the
Loa and the Buddha where he's ruling out
everything exists he rules out nothing
exists that the the middle path the
majima ah pip is like in between is and
isn't and then the worldly philosopher
says well is everything a Unity is
everything just one or is everything

many and again the Buddha says that both
of those are extremes that you've got
this middle path it's not just the
middle path between self-indulgence and
self- torture it's the middle path
between is and isn't it's the middle
path between one and more than
one one and many unity and multiplicity
and so it really gives you uh an insight
into what the middle path that the
Buddha was teaching is
like it's kind of mindblowing in zenik
and then monks who did not understand
dependent core Rising just plug in the
12 links which doesn't even fit the
context
here but still it's uh just because of

the like the the dialogue between the

worldly philosopher and the Buddha that

it really does uh have some profundity

that I can

appreciate this just the middle path is

not just the middle path between s andul

self torture it's the middle path

between is and

isn't and there are other sutas that say

that existence and non-existence are

just like a mental

formation so I think it's the kaha Thea

waga says

this pretty sure if I remember

correctly so anyways I'm just going to

move on to the next question this is

from

Gaz and Gaz says what is your general

opinion of

neoplatonism and my my friend Numa would

know more about this than I do because

he's actually a practicing

neoplatonist and uh we we did at least

one video on the subject which is uh on

my playlist one of my playlists on

YouTube probably also on

bito where we discuss

neoplatonism um my general opinion of

neoplatonism I am sorry that it lost out

to Christianity in ancient times that it

was sort of like the main rival of

Christianity with regard to what was

going to be like this like the the mass

religion of the of the people of of the
Roman
Empire and if the emperor Julian the
apostate hadn't died in a war in Persia
after being Emperor for only a couple
years he was trying to get neoplatonism
installed as the state religion and it
it didn't work it was possibly too
little too late at that
point um but neoplatonism I mean it
could be considered an Enlightenment
tradition that plotinus who is one of
the most famous teachers of what would
be called neoplatonism I mean he had
some deep Insight I don't know if he was
enlightened or not but he he was a

profound thinker and his thinking was
pretty much along Indian lines with
regard to how how reality Works how this
world appears to exist that kind of
stuff there was a lot of neoplatonism
that I really didn't have much use for
when you're getting into all the the
archons and the different levels of of
deities and so forth they get really
complicated with regard to the like the
classification of the different levels
and all this um I think that's just kind
of
like uh like
clutter that it's not really
necessary but uh yeah neoplatonism
actually went through different phases

like shortly after the death of Plato it
became just kind of a a skeptical
school but generally when people think
of neoplatonism they're thinking more
along along the lines of the system that
Julian the apostate was was trying to
establish in Rome and it's it's
definitely a more spiritual type of
ancient Greek philosophy than some of
the ancient Greek
philosophies and uh again I am it is I
do consider it to be unfortunate that it
was Christianity and not neoplatonism
that became the predominant religion of
the
West so I think I should just move on to

gaz's second question which is uh

actually two questions but he doesn't go

on the list because even if you divide

it into two questions it's still just

three and his this so his second

question is have you seen the film

stalker and not only have I seen the

film stalker but one of the best essays

I ever wrote at least

stylistically is like an analysis of the

movie stalker and it's online you want

you want my take on stalker just go to

my blog the link should be below

this

video and go to my blog and then you've

got there's like the search option you

know the magnifying glass icon just type

in stalker and it should be the first
thing that comes up the stalker is Holy
fool so yeah I have seen the film
stalker it's it'd be on my list of top
10 favorite movies it's it's rather slow
paced but it is a profound movie and the
director tarkovski did say that this
movie is it's taking up Eastern themes
so it's you know it's just sort of on
the nature of of samsara really it is a
profound movie I do recommend it even
though it's it's it's not it's not an
action
movie and I have also read the story
that inspired at roadside picnic and the
same guys who wrote the original science

fiction story that stalker based on also
wrote the screenplay for the movie so
one reason why the movie came out so
well even though there's not a whole lot
of resemblance between roadside picnic
and stalker I mean the name roadside
picnic comes from the idea that some
very Advanced space aliens just stopped
on Earth they had to pee or something so
they just stop here briefly and then
just continue on their way but they
leave behind this Advanced alien
equivalent of like pop cans and stuff
and some of the stuff that they leave
behind has these weird effects that're
completely like not understandable
unintelligible to humans and there's

just it's so it's like the government
just has to like close it off and make
it just it's like too dangerous to go in
there and in the movie It's they kind of
back away from the space alien idea at
the beginning of the movie they say we
don't know what caused this area to
become so weird but it's like this
surreal
area you go into this area and it's like
your mental states are influencing
what's going on around
you so yeah if you want my take on
stalker then just go to my blog and just
do a search on stalker and again I do
consider it to be one of the best things

I've written at least from a stylistic

point of

view so I'm just going to uh move on to

the next question which is from luk

kzer I

think and Luke eler says how do you deal

with the Paradox that Desiring to stop

Desiring is a desire in itself would not

the only moral act a person could do be

immediate self deltion I'm using a

euphemism here I know that there was a

sect of Japanese Buddhist monks who used

to starve themselves to death in such a

way to mummify their own corpse do you

have any thoughts on

this well there's actually three

question marks in this in this question

but three is still allowable so how do I deal with the Paradox that Desiring to stop Desiring is a desire in itself well eventually that final desire has to be left behind

also I've I've mentioned this before how like the holy life is or in in many cases it's it's a matter of renouncing the world renouncing all your attachments and

desires and replacing them with this new attachment desire it's this desire for enlightenment and so you just start practicing you out of through this desire for enlightenment you know you've got this you're attached in mind to this

goal of Enlightenment and you practice
and practice and practice and you fail
because this last desire is like your
last major obstacle and so sooner or
later you have to have this Insight that
allows you to let go even that final
attachment and then you can become
enlightened so it's it's sort of useful
and that it's simplifying your
attachments reducing them down to one
big one instead of all these other ones
and it's a wholesome one it's at least
leading you in the right direction but
it's going to prevent you from reaching
the goal until you finally let go of
that one last
attachment so with to the part of here

would not the only moral act a person

could do be immediate self-d deltion no

because self-d deletion generally

involves UNH wholesome mental States and

you're just going to get reborn again if

you're not enlightened you just get

reborn just your karma continues to

flow and and just takes another form

because you haven't really transcended

Karma

yet is karma is like the kinetic aspect

of your own

unenlightenment

so yeah um the Buddha said that you

should not self delete until you have

attained the goal because otherwise it's

you just like pressing reset or

something and you wind up just having

the same problems that you haven't

solved yet that you haven't transcended

yet so let's see there was a sect of

Japanese Buddhist monks who used to

starve themselves to death in such a way

yeah I think they started eating like

aromatic substances so that they would

sort of embalm their sides before they

died and it's not it's not in accordance

with terraa Buddhism terraa Buddhism

it's you should not self delete unless

you are enlightened and then you can do

as you

please but even most enlightened beings

would not self-d

delete

so yeah I remember a few years ago maybe several years ago at this point somebody bought like a a statue of some Monk had sitting in his living room for years and then somehow it fell and broke or something and he realized that it was just like the lacquered body of an actual Buddhist monk who had gone through this procedure of sort of um eating these aromatic substances and sort of embalming himself from the inside out before he died I don't know what happened to the to the mummified monk after that I think he got sent to a museum or

something but yeah that's that's
certainly not Terra and I don't think
the Buddha would have endorsed that it's
just sort of Buddhism moving off in a
weird Direction which does happen
sometimes so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from
ruie and ruie said would you say the
Buddha had insight into anata before or
after Awakening or did the two form a
sudden irrevocable co-occurrence and I
have no idea what the mental states of
the Buddha were before he became
enlightened it could be that he had some
inkling or intuition of no self which
then like became a full-blown liberating
Insight at

Enlightenment that you know he may have
already kind of had some vague idea or
philosophy going in that direction but
who knows who could possibly know what
his mental states were like before his
before his Enlightenment other than what
you read in the text which is largely
Legends
so yeah whether the Buddha like he had
insight into no self or not because
that's what anata means for those of you
who are beginners at this sort of thing
anata means no self also no
soul no
individuality and uh whether I mean when
he started like endorsing that I keep

wanting to say believing that but it's
not a matter of belief once you're
enlightened so you maybe he believed it
before he became enlightened but I mean
who could possibly know I have no
idea so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from dhama river and
dhama river says Sab SAR Dua sabar Ana
sa D an if everything is an no self like
in the previous question if every if
everyone is anata whether they realize
it or not samsara is therefore more like
a fire that is being lit up and fed
constantly what really keeps us trapped
is the ignorance of the flame that keeps
Samara going in that case nibana is more
of a putting out of a candle than an

Enlightenment it's like a cation of a
fire and in that same case samsara is
not a place it's an action it's a habit
it's the primordial
addiction and then I think he asked for
thoughts but for some reason there's no
question mark at all here I think it
just kind
of I'm pretty sure there was a question
I think he's just asking for my feedback
on this
idea so yeah samsara isn't a place it's
an infinite number of sort of illusory
places but it's not really a place you
know it's it's like perception
essentially perception is some sort and

so the cessation of perception or rather the Transcendence of it would be Enlightenment you know it's like the the the statues in the uncarved block of marble that thinking the statue is real is samsara but once you become enlightened I mean the the block of Marble's still there the the statue is still there in Virtual form but you just you're no longer like I attaching to the idea that that statue is real so yeah I do definitely agree that samsara is not a place it is like a process and it's mainly the process of P perception especially the belief that the perception is real that the perception is conveying reality which it

is not it's symbols so samsar is symbols

it's like being stuck in

symbols and after you're enlightened the

symbol may still be there like in like

potentially but you're just no longer

identifying with that and fixating on

that and and like attaching to

that um so going back up to the top here

just I want to do justice to this if if

at all

possible if everyone is without self

whether they realize it or not samsara

is therefore more like a fire that is

being lit up and fed constantly yeah

well it's like

delusion I

guess um yeah that's why Nirvana
literally means blowing out it's like
the blowing out of a fire but it doesn't
necessarily mean that it's Extinction
with leaving nothing behind it's it
really leaves everything behind it
leaves reality behind so it's like the
illusion blows
out but just because the illusion blows
out doesn't mean that there's nothing
left except from like a duded point of
view so what really keeps us trapped is
the ignorance of the flame that keeps
samsara going yeah well that Samara is
the flame I
guess and in that case nibana is more of
a putting out of a candle than an

Enlightenment well I mean it's still an Enlightenment it's still you're waking up from the dream you're no longer believing an an a illusion is reality so then you become you you wake up you become Buddha Buddha just means awakened so you wake up from the dream and then you it's uh what what is Left Behind is reality the reality doesn't go anywhere so I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Romeo and Romeo says what's up with the Jolly fat Buddha statues I see in the windows of Asian nail salons Chinese restaurants and the like who is this portly figure and why is his image or

statue so ubiquitous that he is often
confused with the very Buddha himself
what is his significance to Buddhism and
yeah I used to be bothered before I
became a monk I was bothered by people
thinking that that the Buddha was this
fat guy and I knew that it wasn't the
case because my father always had at
least one Statue of hot and that's who
it I the Japanese name for him is hot
and usually he's got a great big belly
that's like uncovered undraped and his
hands are kind of up like
this and the what the version I read is
that he was like a Zen monk in medieval
or late ancient China I guess it' be
like medieval China and he was sort of

like the like like The Village Idiot
kind of you know he was sort of like
mentally [__] to some degree
although apparently that occurred only
at like the the intellectual level
because you know he was like saintly and
spiritual at the same time so
intelligence and wisdom are two entirely
different different things so anyways he
was like this ordained Zen monk I guess
who would go around asking for for Co
spare change cuz I guess it's not
against the rules for for Zen monks in
medieval China to handle money and then
he would go go to like a sweet shop and
buy sweets and distribute it to the kids

that's what he asked for the money for

and so he became sort of like a Chinese

Santa

Claus and how he gets confused with the

Buddha is that tradition started

considering him to be like like the next

Buddha he's going to be mitraa Buddha

Buddha he's going to be the next Buddha

and he he was sort of like a buhis satva

of the the coming mraa Buddha and so he

was

this fat cheerful kid- loving monk who

was sort of like the the Buddhist Santa

Claus in China and he's going to be

mitraa Buddha in a future life and

people who really don't understand

Buddhism very well will think that

that's the Buddha it's like um I

remember hearing some Christian like a

televangelist saying that the Buddhists

have a false religion because they

worship a fat lazy God and you know just

there's a number of inaccuracies

combined into that

statement but uh yeah it's his Japanese

name is

hot and uh you're supposed to rub his

belly for good luck

whether it actually works or not I'm not

I can't really say for

sure so yeah it was like a medieval

Chinese Zen monk Chan monk at least the

version I read that that explained it

who just got all this mythology bound up
with him and he's he's going to be the
next next Buddha named mraa
Buddha so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from Master
Poe and master Poe says have you read
sidarta by Herman Hess or Hessa and yeah
I have when I was in my like mid
20s I went through a Herman hes phase
and read several of his
novels so I did read sedara and uh saw
the movie too it's uh Made in India
movie which was pretty good and I have
to I have to say that not my favorite
Herman hes novel I think my favorite hes
novel would be Steen
wolf but sart is

nice yeah it's it's a good novel maybe

my second favorite Herman H

novel so yeah I've read it I'm going to

move on the next question this is from

LA

infamia and La infamia says how can I

get into that Discord group most of

groups outside they are so

feminized well um like I tell everybody

else if you do a little uh diligent

searching you should be able to find my

email address and then you can uh State

your case there as to why I should send

you the invite

link but I can't just blur out you know

the invite link or anything like that so

you'll have to do a little in little bit
of informed searching which shouldn't be
too
hard and I'm just going to move on next
question this is from
xenoid and xenoid says can you give your
thoughts on this video and the video is
strangely it's an old Oprah Winfrey clip
from I mean it looks like from like the
1980s or something maybe the 90s I'm not
sure um I think it's on YouTube and it's
about the the function of the
subconscious mind she's talking to some
some writer and he's talking about how
some creative writing is just like
dictation where you just kind of sit in
front of the the typewriter you know

it's it's that old of a video and um I think it was Norman what was it no miller not Norman maor but uh I can't remember his first name Miller famous writer named Miller mid to late 20th century who he would just sit in front of his typewriter and just kind of go blank and then just kind of Channel what he was writing he supposedly wrote an entire novel that way and it's it's like not so much a muse like people would have believed in ancient like Pagan Antiquity where it's the muses that are inspiring your your creative Endeavors that it's it's the subconscious mind kind of working its way to the surface

and he's talking about how the subconscious mind works symbolically instead of linguistically like one case he he mentions is the guy who he he discovered the Benzene ring he was a chemist and he wanted to know the shape of a Benzene molecule and he's thinking about it and thinking about it and he can't figure it out and then he falls asleep he's like sitting in front on a couch in front of his fireplace he falls asleep and has a dream about a snake that's biting its own tail and then when he wakes up he realizes that Benzene is is like a ring and it was like this symbolic dream that caused him to realize this and apparently like deep

down he already

knew and it wasn't just that your

subconscious mind tells you in words

sometimes it's through symbols like this

like dream imagery and so forth that um

the subconscious mind communicates to

the conscious

ego so what are my thoughts on the video

um I mean

yeah I guess so that it does seem to

work that way that I'm I'm not exactly

sure why it is that your subconscious

mind knows things that your conscious

ego doesn't know and then sometimes it

will convey that information not through

words so much as through dream symb

symbols and so forth I'm not exactly
sure the of the why regarding that his
idea was that the subconscious mind has
been around a lot longer than language
has and so it's just sort of like
instinctive it's just built into us that
the subc conscious mind is not going to
be dealing so much in in verbal language
as in just
symbols but personally I'm not exactly
sure why it works that
way and I'm just going to move on to the
next question which is from hery gery
man and hery gery man says what is your
best step advice for eliminating fear
and cultivating bravery for someone
who's generally a fearful person well

one thing that came to mind is that the like the medieval Japanese Samurai would actually spend time at Zen monasteries to help them overcome their fear of death and just practicing Buddhism and taking it seriously I mean once you get to the the realization that this isn't ultimately real anyway that we don't ultimately exist that it really doesn't matter that I mean that helps a lot I mean when I was young I was much more timid than I am now you know much more averse to taking risks and so forth than I am now at least in in certain ways so I'm in overall I'm more Fearless now um maybe just because I'm older but it's

hard to say but I I do think that like
30 years of being a Buddhist monk
definitely help me to overcome fear
where it's just I mean you protect dhama
DH protect you everything happens the
way it's supposed to happen and I mean
it's it's created by mind that's one
thing that really works for me is the
idea fear is an unskillful mental state
fear or like worry anxiety there you're
making Bad Karma through doing it so
actually being afraid that something bad
is going to happen increases the odds of
something bad happening that just Det
attachment and just having faith you
know that everything happens the way
it's supposed to happen and you just be

mindful you know take take precautions
you know be careful with what you're
doing and then just do it do what you
say what you think needs to be done and
I mean fear fear is the mind killer as
as it says in in Dune but really it's
it's an unskillful mental state and once
you take that to heart like once you can
really appreciate the idea that fear or
worry or regret any of these kind of
mental States really are just poisoning
your
system I mean that's essentially what
you're doing they are toxic mental
States and so once you can see that with
a fair amount of of insight or Clarity

then I mean it just stops even being
really an option you know it's like well
should I just hit my hand this Hammer
it's like why would you do that you know
in advance that it's going to hurt it's
going to mess up your hand and it's the
same way with like worry or fear that
kind of stuff I mean once you get to a
certain degree of of like progress in
your practice or whatever you can see I
mean it's it's like hitting your hand
with a hammer it's it's all you're doing
is you're poisoning your system you're
making bad karma for
yourself so just a certain amount of
like mindful Detachment like if you're
in the habit of being fearful observe

the fear what does the fear feel like

how does it make your stomach feel how

does it make your head feel you know

what kind of bodily Sensations what kind

of and then just like the mental

sensations of fear it's like if you can

get to the point of fear is arising

rather than I'm afraid then you've

already detached from it's not you

anymore then you have more freedom to

decide what to do

appropriately but again fear is an

unskillful mental state it's bad karma

it's toxic to your system and it just

makes things

worse although it is true if somebody

put a a knife to my throat my heart rate

would

increase so I think I'm just going to

move on next question this is from count

nine and count nine

says oh he count nine went on like this

long surreal description of like

synchronicity around the letter F that

had been occurring in his his life

recently um so he says amazingly I

haven't also found any F sound in poly

no place neither in the beginning nor

anywhere else did you mention it already

or have I slept in the meanwhile or

maybe dreamed completely the whole thing

however it seems that any classical

Indian language has no such use for f

I wonder how was it regarding the
Western branches of the Indo-European
language and I have done a little
research into this and it turns out that
the scholars the experts the authorities
are of the opinion that in proto
indoeuropean
the the like the the language that is
like the ancestor of English German
French like Latin Greek Armenian
Sanskrit Persian etc etc there was no F
sound and it's kind of weird that f is
kind of an unusual s some Asian
languages don't have F either like
Burmese doesn't have an F sound
either

so the original Proto Indo European
language apparently didn't have an F
sound although like in Greek they've got
like
Phi I mean in homeric Greek there was
even like an F which is where the the
Romans got their symbol for the letter F
Well from an F in in like a dma I think
it was called in homeric Greek but they
have the in Greek they've got the F
sound but they believe the experts
believe that that came from an aspirated
BH in proto indoeuropean so BH became
like pH in Greek and then the the F in
Germanic languages Germanic languages
have lots of FS like uh P became father
in in in like English which is a

Germanic language like the word for fire
like it started with a p like pyromaniac
or the funeral P became fire in in
English which again is a Germanic
language um the word five you know comes
like in Greek it's
Penta you know in in in Sanskrit and P
it's Pancha and then it becomes five in
German so there's some law I I can't
remember if it's Grim's law or something
that includes the idea that peas in
older like Indo-European languages
somehow got turned into Fs in Germanic
languages so that's how English has the
F sound is that P got turned into F in
Germanic languages or evolved into F

mutated into

F

so um

yeah I'm not sure about Latin I yeah

Latin has like flavious that has has F

sound too and I'm not sure how the how

Latin got the F sound but it's it's

different for the Greeks and the Germans

you know German or the Germans it was P

turned into f for the Greeks it was BH

turns into F and uh it just nothing

turned into F in the the Indian

languages like Sanskrit or

poly and Burma has no F either so they

they usually try to replace it with an

aspirated P which doesn't work very good

you know like fish they try to say the

English word fish they'll if they don't know how to say f they'll they'll say pish so I'm just going to move on to count n second question in the Stream of samsara do you see any similarities between a fork clipped operator and the fairy man well I mean they tend to both be men I guess who operate a vehicle vehicle but a forklift operator has no passengers it's against the rules strictly against the rules to to carry a passenger on a forklift whereas fairies pretty much by definition have to have passengers otherwise I mean why would this the fairy man keep going back and forth across the body of water without

fering anyone

across so I guess I'm

fing like Freight which is an f word

fing Freight with the

forklift but uh yeah I think this is

sort of a a Whimsical kind of a question

and so I think my answer is sufficient

for its purpose and so I'm just going to

move on to count 's thirdd question

which is any news from the

aquarium and uh yeah actually I was

seriously considering um doing an an

aquarium video soon my sweetheart just

tells me to just give it up give up the

aquarium videos because not very many

people watched them but even if only

five people watched my aquarium videos I

would still stubbornly obstinately
persist in in aquarium videos and there
have been some significant changes like
the whole ecosystem like my my previous
aquarium video was talking about how
just adding one new species to a fish
tank can completely radically change how
the whole ecological balance in the tank
that happened
again and um I I got one little Siamese
algae eater about this big and because I
had the way it worked was I was had a
lot of algae in the tank and the little
osyn algae eaters and the snails weren't
really keeping up with it and then I got
these loaches that specialize in eating

snails there was the snail apocalypse

and algae started exploding in the tank

including this black beard algae that

most snails and the the little osnas

won't eat so I get this Siamese algae

eater about this big I put it in there

and like a month later that that same

algae eater is like this big and all the

algae is just

gone and he's like the biggest fish in

the tank now I mean he's like a like a

trout or something

now so if you want more news from the

aquarium I guess maybe I'll do the video

tomorrow and then over the course of

some days just spacing out the videos a

little it it'll go up and I'll be

discussing also um the idea of having

like

a uh like substrates like whether you

should have like a layer of soil

underneath which is what a lot of people

are saying now it's like sort of a new

thing in aquarium keeping where

underneath the the sand or gravel you

got a layer of potting soil so that the

plants will will get like a get more

nutrients that kind of

thing and also just discussing sort of

water quality and so forth so it's going

to be a zero

interest to most people but it's still

of interest to me and so I talk about

it and let's see any more news from the aquarium I did I did get a few more plants which also will be featured in the aquarium video tomorrow I think so I'm just going to move on the next question which is from the Proto Pudo Monk and the Proto Pudo monk says why have the far-left gone totally insane why do they hate Trump and musk so much they are clearly good moral people trying to improve the world I don't understand what the left are so angry about okay well it's kind of like two questions isn't it so why have the far-left gone totally insane well I think a large part of it is I mean you start off with something like Marxism

which I mean it wasn't really effective because it really didn't apply to empirical reality very well you know it's just Marxism just goes against human nature which is one reason why Marx didn't even believe that human nature existed he believed in sort of like the blank slate idea that you know it's like there is no such thing as as human animal instincts and that is just patently false which is one of the main reasons why Marxism doesn't work it is unnatural it goes against human nature and so it has to be enforced at gunpoint as a general rule so that's just starting with that and now you got

like cultural Marxism like neomarxism
that is no longer um under the control
of intellectual white men it's now under
the control of women and just diversity
hires in general and so you wind up with
something like biological leninism which
is an interesting subject like the the
Soviet Union had this handicap in that
it wasn't a person's skill at some task
that got them a position in the
government or a position I mean in a
socialist society you know any position
is a position in the
government but it was like their loyalty
to the party their loyalty to lenon or
Stalin or whatever that's what got them
their jobs and and so you didn't have um

a

meritocracy and that was I mean when you

get away from meritocracy Darwin just

sinks his Talons into you and and starts

tearing you apart because you it's

survival of the

fittest and and this is viewed as like

hate speech by these like hysterical low

IQ irrational new

leftists who think who just have to

insist everyone is the same and so you

just you can just pick people at random

and put them in any job I mean it's it

might not be quite that extreme but it's

definitely leaning in that direction

like shortly after Trump became

president I mentioned this in the
previous video you had an army
helicopter crash into a commercial
jetliner killing a bunch of people turns
out the helicopter was piloted by A
diversity hire then you had just shortly
after that you had an American airplane
flip upside down at at an airport in in
Canada turns out the pilot was a
diversity
hire and it's just it's like you have
this Marxism that didn't really work and
then it gets taken over by hysterical
irrational people many of whom are
stupid but you can't say that you cannot
acknowledge the empirical fact of that
because that's hate

speech and so it's like they're just
kicking meritocracy in the head and
expecting to do better than
meritocracy and Charles Darwin just
doesn't put up with that
[__] so that's the first question I
guess and so the second the second
question from the protos Monk Is Why do
they hate Trump and musk so much because
they just insist on having their way
they prefer their their ideology to
actual empirical reality and I mean they
used to like Trump and musk up until
Trump and musk rejected their ideology
and it's it's just like religious
fanaticism at this point in fact the

religious fat iism has become

self-destructive because any position

that Trump or musk adopt they'll take

the opposite so Trump and musk will

adopt a position that's supported by 80%

of the country the hysterical left will

immediately start championing

championing this 20% position that is

just overwhelmingly disapproved of just

just out of

Hysteria musk was they liked musk and

then now they're like destroying

Teslas just because you know it's like

now they're opposed to reducing waste

and corruption in the federal

government now they're opposed to

deporting Violent illegal alien

criminals is just this hysterical

fanaticism that has just gotten out of

control

and it's largely fueled by the low

intelligence of diversity hires that

have found themselves up in positions of

of authority on the

left

so says there are clearly good moral

people trying to improve the world well

some of them

are and I don't understand what the left

are so angry about sort of like early

Christians were pretty angry about

Julian the apostate promoting paganism

instead of Christianity they and he just

became the Antichrist right there

boom you it was pretty much the same

with early Christianity in the Roman

Empire any any Emperor who the

Christians didn't like I mean he was Mr

666 he was the

Antichrist so I think I'm just going to

move on to this next part by the Proto

suda monk which isn't a question but I

don't know I'm just going to say it

anyway would love a weekly show on Poo's

political analysis of US World politics

exclamation point we must hear the sage

to straighten our minds in the midst of

propaganda and delusional beings yeah I

don't I don't know if I'd really be able

to come up with enough for a a weekly

rant because that's that's what it would
have to be if I was going to do any kind
of political show like on YouTube I'd
have to be ranting good in order to be
for it to be worth my wild then it can
sort of be
catharsis you know it's like uh a few
times recently a person called extremely
rare bird was kind of doing like a
leftist rant in the comments and I kind
of looked forward to it because it gave
me an opportunity to do like a counter
rant and is I guess for some reason
ranting just has a certain
cathartic effect that is kind of causes
an emotional satisfaction although of

course it's creating more karma and the vicious circle and all that

so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from Arin and Arin says what did the Buddha teach about dreams I always have super Vivid long dreams each night and wake up feeling like I was dreaming for many hours and living in another life while I slept at times I can identify themes from my subconscious sleep seeping through but most of the time it is very mundane what is your own personal theory on dreams and they align with the Buddha Freud or Yung at all

well with regard to I mean the very first question here what the very first question mark I should say what did the

Buddha teach about dreams this is yet
another one of these
topics that I mean we've had several in
this in this Q&A that it's it's a
well-known phenomenon dreaming people
were dreaming in Ancient India it's just
that Terra Buddhism really doesn't have
much of a position on dreams like like
Abid dama which supposedly explains
everything doesn't really explain dreams
you know what is the purpose of dreams
you know why anything like that I mean
there's mention of dreams like the
Buddha was supposedly conceived when his
wife mahamaya was having a dream of a
white elephant that entered her body and

then she woke up pregnant the next
day so I mean the Buddha was conceived
through a dream according to the legend
you know there there's occasional
mentions of Dreams in poly literature
it's just that it doesn't really explain
why people have dreams it's just
accepted like gravity as just it's just
something that they didn't bother to
even try to explain it which is
unfortunate I
guess but uh let's see that's that was
the first question mark what did the
Buddha teach about dreams I mean I'm
unaware of him teaching anything really
I mean he may have mentioned dreams here
or there but there's no real Buddhist

theory of dreams that I have ever been
exposed to so at the end the final
question mark what is your own personal
theory on dreams and they align with the
Buddha Freud or young at all well yeah
we can leave the Buddha out because
again I don't think there there is like
an official terrible lot of Buddhist um
theory of dreams but um like
biologically the purpose for dreams is
to process information they have they
have found that animals that don't dream
have to have larger brains in order to
perform the same functions as animals
that do dream in fact I mean I when I
was in college I did a a research paper

on intelligence in dolphins and in
Dophin has like an abnormally large
Brain it's it's larger and more
convoluted than our brain and they don't
have like fingers and stuff that would
require extra brain tissue so why does
the dolphin have such a big brain you
know they're they're obviously very
intelligent but it wasn't until after I
had written the paper years later that I
found that uh Dolphins don't dream that
they sleep only as long as they can hold
their breath which in a bottle know
dolphin is like 6 minutes so they have
to take like a little cat nap 6 minutes
at a time and they really can't sleep
very much because there's like sharks

and orcas and stuff and the dolphin
might not have any place to hide they're
just like floating right out there in
plain
sight so that could exp help to explain
why dolphins have such huge convulated
convoluted brains is they they don't
dream they don't have RM sleep when when
they're taking their little six minute
naps and so they have to have more brain
to do the same thing so it's like the
the purpose of dreaming from a
biological point of view is just
processing information just kind of
taking information that you you acquired
during the day and helping to like

organize it and and set up like neural links like chains of association with other ideas just so that you can integrate you know the like the the sensory input of that day that that would be like the main bi main biological purpose of it um but still like getting back to that Oprah Winfrey video clip it your subconscious mind can communicate to you through dreams and I have found that

Freudian

um dream symbolism does seem to work for me in in my case that I think Freud I mean I don't think that he was like an infallible Oracle by any stretch of the imagination but some of the stuff that

he said um seems to be pretty pretty

much right on and a lot of his his

discussion of dream symbolism like how

water represents spirit and like

dreaming about a building is generally

dreaming about your own body and that

was born out by my father also who said

that after he got old he started having

dreams about being trapped in a

dilapidated building that was falling

apart

so it

does um Freud seems to have been largely

correct with regard to the meaning of

dream symbolism for

example um and a lot of dreams are just

kind of spam dreams you know you can
just have weird dreams that don't mean
necessarily much of
anything but I really do not have a like
a a thoroughly worked out theory of
dreams I'm not sure if anybody I assume
some has to have come up with some sort
of
elaborate um you know like very
developed theory on dreams and you know
why we dream and the meanings of them
and different purposes of Dreams um
Romas somebody asked ROM dos once about
you know the importance of Dreams in a
spiritual life and he says for the most
part dreams are you're working stuff out
at other levels you know at different

levels of reality some of it is you're doing it in a dream state and um I mean sometimes you'll get information that is useful to you and you accept that but for the most part you shouldn't take it too seriously because a lot of it really is just like spam dreams and so forth um and it also reminds me of a weird idea that came from the Seth material um a woman named Jane Roberts who was channeling this multi-dimensional being that called itself Seth and Seth was saying that when you're dreaming you actually are creating like a cruder level of SAR than this waking level and that some of these

people that you dream that you can dream
somebody that you've never met before I
had this one Dream Woman she appeared in
a number of my dreams when I was a young
man I don't think I ever met her in in
real life but she she appeared in like
at least four memorable dreams that that
I was having like in my and 30s that
these dream beings that you're creating
in your dreams that they can continue to
have like an
existence like away from from you on
their own they're they're living in like
this crude kind of Ghost World like a
spirit world or something so I mean in a
way we're creating our own universes
creating our own worlds in our sleep I

guess even a dog that's lying there kind
of whimpering and jerking and it sleep
sleep is creating some kind of little
fake dog world in fact I read somewhere
that uh an American posum the only
marsupial that lives in the wild in the
United States delfus
marsupialis um that they spend more time
dreaming than awake so they're creating
these little murky possum Spirit worlds
of possums you know like climbing into
garbage cans and and eating dog food off
back porches and
stuff anyways I guess I should just uh
move on to the next
question and we are kind of getting down

towards the bottom there's only a few
more questions so we're going to be I
think we're going to be under three
hours that's that's kind of
good so next question is from harim
cthul and harim cthul says what happened
to the spiritual right project yeah that
was something that happened a few years
ago there was a number of people um that
were sort of contacted by the organizer
and asked to get involved in this
spiritual right project and I was
willing you know I'm I'm generally I
don't initiate much like with regard to
interviews and so forth but if someone
asks me to participate in something if
it seems worthwhile seems potentially

like it might be a good thing you know
sometimes I'll go along with it and so
we made a few uh videos and there was a
lot of like private talk about you know
like oh just like the the trademark or
what do you call it like the the Avatar
or something you know what we're going
to do and how we're going to do it and
you know what the rules were going to be
there was a lot of this kind of
discussion much more than actually
creating
videos and it was the main problem was
that the organizer you know the person
who was sort of coordinating this who
was whose idea it was just kept changing

his plans and I mean this is just kind of the sort of guy he he he is I think he's still this way where he just would keep changing plans it's like he'd lose interest in this and start wanting to do this instead and then he' he he'd be really gung-ho about that for a while and then lose interest in that or think that it that's not going to work let's try this instead and people just started losing patience with it and dropping out and the whole thing just kind of disintegrated so that's what happened to that and so I'm going to move on to the next question and this is from Toronto and Toronto says I know your background is in Terra but maybe you can

give me some of your spiritual Insight on a personal situation I am currently a member of an online zogin SAA and I've generally been quite enjoying my time there un fortunately I was recently confronted by a moderator for my alleged acts of
Nazism specifically for having a Discord profile picture with the black sun in it and talking about going to a Sam Hyde show I was told that if I post something incriminating again I would be asked to leave their Discord server what would be your call if you're in my shoes well I'm not I don't not I really don't even know who Sam Hyde is is I think I saw a

picture of him just recently but still I don't know what Sam Hyde says in his talks or anything like that um well I guess if you're in this Zog chin group that has like a Discord server and the moderator there or a moderator very much doesn't like Nazi
symbolism Nazi
symbolism then I mean you're just going to have to make the call for yourself is which is more important to you being in that group or like having a black son on your Discord
Avatar I mean which is more important to you and then you just have to decide which is more important and go with that and it would be different for different

people I mean if it were in my case I

probably wouldn't have a black son on my

Discord profile picture anyway but then

again I probably wouldn't be on an

online Zog chin s

either so so yeah I mean you're just

going to have to decide which is more

important I mean you wouldn't

necessarily have to be

dishonest in order not to be showing

like what is perceived to be Nazi

symbols or any kind of Nazi adjacent

stuff

um you know it all depends like how how

leftist is the moderator you know it's

like just saying that

like girls don't have a p PE like boys

do I mean is that going to be like

misogynistic fascist

Nazism I mean some people some people

are kind of ideologically attuned with

that kind of idea at

present

so yeah I mean what would I what would

be my call if I were in your shoes I

would have to decide which is more

important just being

like outspoken with regard to your

political orientation or being a member

of the group and which is more important

to you that's I mean you're going to

have to make that

decision so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is the last
question and this is from David and this
was not under a Q&A video this was under
the video that I posted recently with
Bri my friend Brian and I were
discussing this new age idea of pre-life
contracts this there's this idea that
you'll you'll decide what your next life
is going to be like in
advance that it's like a conscious
decision from some like overs Soul or
something that um I I mentioned in the
video that ROM dos mentions in a book
that he apparently believed this idea
where it's like in order to to work out
my karma that needs to be worked out out

and make progress that needs to be made
I'm going to have to be born to like a
20-year-old black crack addicted
prostitute and with you know no father
around and just live in a just handt
mouth existence until I'm 23 and then
you know get stabbed to death in a back
alley and okay that's that's what I'm
going to do let's do
it and Buddhism Terra aut Buddhism in
particular does look at it that way that
there is
no I mean there's not even a momentary
gap between one life and the next there
is is is just an automatic process that
your karma is just seeking its own path
just through I mean almost mechanical

means it's like water just flowing in the direction that naturally it needs to flow you know it's just working itself out without any kind of conscious decision making going on on that is guiding that it just happens whether you like it or not whether you want it or not it just happens naturally and automatically that's the Terra Buddhist point of view so anyways David says why do you exclude the idea of contracts down to contracts with yourself to work Karma out it's possible that you make contracts with powerful entities for various reasons both good and bad people into black magic for example are known

for making contracts with demons but
who's to say that you haven't made a
pre-birth contract with a demigod like
Thor for example that you would fight
against the destruction of Europe who is
to say Elon Musk didn't make a pre-birth
contract that he would deliver agreed
upon technological developments was
Tesla being totally driven by his own
genius or was he trying to keep up his
greed upon contract how much trouble do
you get in if you die without completing
your agreed upon contract well I mean
how do you make this contract and when
like again according to terab Buddhism
it's just one moment you die at the end
of this life the very next moment you

are conceived in the next life there is
no time to be signing contracts just
from the ter Buddhist point of view with
regard to making contracts when you're
alive like people into black magic known
to make contracts with demons that's
that is a worldly contract that you're
making during this life and I mean
that's not the kind of pre-life
contracts that are being discussed I
mean it's sort of like um like a buddhis
satva vow could be considered a kind of
contract where you're like postponing
Enlightenment indefinitely until all
beings are liberated this kind of thing
that I mean even if you make a bodh

satow in this life then how are you
going to know that you had that bu made
that buddhy satma vow in in a subsequent
existence I may have made bodh satva
vows in previous lives I don't recall
them and I haven't been following that
that vow very well partly just because
I'm really not the person that that made
the contract and there is no overso from
a terab Buddhist point of view that
would that would be responsible for that
sort of
thing so let's see it is possible that
you make contracts with powerful
entities for various reasons both good
and bad yeah well that's really not the
kind of contract that was being

discussed in the

video what was being discussed in the

video was more like what ROM dos was

saying where it's like you decide that

you're going to be living this kind of

life and it might be an unpleasant

horrible kind of life but it's like some

wiser aspect of you you know your overs

Soul or whatever

just realizes that this is what needs to

be done in order for you to make the

most spiritual progress and even though

it's going to be excruciating for the

ego I mean it's like the decision is

made from a higher level than the ego

that is willing to just damage parts of

itself for the sake of achieving this higher goal sort of like you know we're willing to get some damage on like our hands we're working on a c or something and we're willing to hit our Knuckles against stuff accidentally we're willing to take that risk you know just for the sake of getting this car fixed you know we're willing to take a little bit of damage doing mountain climbing or that sort of thing you know you're willing to take a certain amount of damage uh to certain parts of your body and the idea is like this oversoul is willing to let certain aspects of itself lesser aspects like individual human lives take damage for the for the sake of the benefit of

the

whole and again terab Buddhism doesn't

go with that idea maybe some kinds of

Hinduism do because ramas was more Hindu

than anything else and he endorsed it

and in new AG a lot of people endorse it

but from the terab Buddhist point of

view there really is no overso to make

these kinds of

decisions see see who's to say that you

haven't made a pre-birth contract with a

demigod like Thor well I mean it would

have to be during your previous life

because there from the terot Buddhist

point of view there is no Gap in between

one life and the next there is no BAU

realm where you're drifting around in
some Heaven realm making plans for the
next life some Hindus believe that ramas
I remember in one of his books he said
you know if it's your karma to be a
prince in your next life I mean there
might be a waiting list or something it
might take a while before that life is
going to be ready for you to take it and
so you might wind up in some
intermediate state but in terot of
Buddhism the intermediate state would
itself be some kind of spirit existence
so it's just like you stop being a human
you start being this being in some other
realm and then after that then you
become the the human Prince or

whatever so let's see who is to say Elon
Musk didn't make a pre-birth contract
that he would deliver agreed on
technologically I mean who's he going to
make the contract
with I mean and and how is he going to
make this contract I mean who is to say
that he did or didn't I mean whoever
says or doesn't say it I
guess so it just depends on how you look
at it and I mean I'm open to the
possibility of it I do not think that
terado Buddhism
necessarily has you know the final say
on exactly how rebirth happens and it
may be that there is a kind of

multi-dimensional overs Soul kind of
being which is still illusory and
samsaric it's just like a higher level
of samsara you know it's just a higher
level of
Illusion ultimately none of it is is
like ultimately
real so how much trouble do you get in
if you die without completing your
agreed upon contract I really don't
think it works that way and I did say it
in the video that it's not that you have
make some conscious decision so it's
like somebody has this decision they're
going to be born to the drug addicted
black prostitute and die when they're 23
you know it's not like they remember

making that decision after they're
born you know it's like it's just it's
like your destiny it's like you're not
choosing some contract that you can
possibly violate you are choosing your
fate you're choosing your destiny and
it's going to happen whether you like it
or not whether you want to do it or not
it's still going to happen I mean that's
the way it works in
theory it's not like you're sitting down
writing you know signing your name to a
to a contract and then some notary
stamps it that kind of
thing
so yeah I mean I kind of covered this

this information in the the video with
with Brian and I guess we're going to be
making more vide videos I haven't even
uploaded all the videos I did with him
last time and then there might also be
an aquarium video if I can get working
on it before the the timer makes it go
into Moonlight mode because you got to
have enough light that you can actually
see Rama the first the Siamese algae
eater doing his business in there and so
on and so
forth so as I should always say at the
beginning and almost never do if you
have any questions you think I can
answer and I mean I'm not like an
omniscient Oracle so there's a lot of

things I really don't know much about
like the history of the Chinese prison
system and so forth who developed it and
and why or not Chinese but
Japanese or what the Buddha was thinking
what he believed in before he became
enlightened I mean I don't know how
anybody could know that anymore than
they can know what what Hercules was
thinking so if you think I can answer
the question or I think that 's a good
chance of it especially with regard to
ter of Auto Buddhism early Buddhism you
know
monasticism meditation Burma me
personally that kind of thing maybe even

throw in some biology stuff because I
know some stuff about biology philosophy
religion in general but the more you the
more obscure you get the less likely it
is that I'll be able to answer but every
once in a while somebody will just hit
the right cord and ask me some obscure
question that I happen to have given a
lot of thought
about
so um hit the like button if you made it
this far I suppose and
uh subscribe if you haven't already
check the uh URL links below the video
and uh try to stay off lists and be
happy

Alrighty

then. Hello and welcome to question and

answer number

139 which I think may actually be a

prime number. I am your host Po Bosan

and any of you who can demonstrate that

139 is not a prime number by say

factoring it out in the comments is

welcome to do so and I will sit

corrected.

This is my

beverage. And this on my head here is my

favorite baseball cap. And I've

discovered

that just to put on a baseball cap is

easier and faster than washing and

drying my hair. So that's what I'm doing today. I didn't take a shower this morning. I took a shower last night after coming home from work. Had bed head this morning. So, I've just been wearing a baseball cap whenever I appear in
public. So, we don't have a whole heck of a lot of questions today and so we should be well under three hours this time, possibly even under two hours. Who knows? And I suppose I should start answering questions because otherwise it will last a very long time to get to the end of this. And the first question is from Master Poe. And Master Poe asks a three-word

question. Freud or Yung? question mark.

And I'm not exactly

sure like what he means by this. It's

like which one do I like better? I mean,

of the two, I think Young was a wiser

person than Freud. Freud was like a

scientific materialist, apparently. just

just a flatout

atheist and

uh Jung at least had some appreciation

for deeper things, more hidden

things. Um like Rahm Doss said in one of

his early books that Freud was like a

master of second chakra whereas Jung was

more into third chakra. So that would

make Jung more spiritually advanced than

Freud since Freud was stuck at the
chakra that was second from the
bottom. However, of like late 19th,
early 20th century psychologists,
um Freud has influenced my thinking more
than Jung has. mainly with regard to
what Freud said about hysteria and that
was really groundbreaking. He was like
the Galileo of of psychology. I think
maybe not the Isaac Newton of psychology
but definitely the
Galileo. And what he said about hysteria
was I
mean everybody has desires. Freud had
this rather naive idea that naked
savages living in a wilderness somewhere
would not be his would not be um like

repressed. But civilized people have to repress their natural urges. Like a man just can't like like molest any woman that he finds attractive or you're not allowed to just beat up anyone you don't like. At least you're not supposed to in a civilized society. So according to Freud, everyone has to repress their natural urges. And those natural urges don't just disappear. They just lie lurking latent in the subconscious mind where they accumulate and build up pressure until they finally start percolating up to the surface in the form of neurotic symptoms. And hysteria is like that. And

it really helped me to understand myself and my own behavior and human behavior in general a bit better. Just that whole idea just the subconscious mind. Um there must have been some people who had an idea of the subconscious mind before Freud came along. But just how repressing your urges doesn't just make them go away. They just they stay like at a at a subconscious level building up pressure until they start really causing problems. And they can cause serious health problems too. And as a monk, like a very strict monk, conscientious strict monk, then I mean a monk would be even more repressed and potentially at least even more neurotic and hysterical than

the average civilized human being, which helps to explain just the raging hysteria
of like some Catholic convents and monasteries and just like very repressive culture. like the Puritans of the the North American colonies like in Massachusetts or like Spain during the Inquisition like like 16th century where at the same time they're very restrained very moral at least superficially but then it's just like mass hysteria can just cut loose at any time and then you just got like howling mobs and this sort of thing.
So, getting back to the question though,

Freud or Young? Um, I think I I think Young was the wiser of the two, the more spiritually advanced of the two, but Freud

um some of the stuff that he was saying or writing has had more of an influence on my understanding of the human condition.

Also, a lot of what Freud said about dream symbolism seems to uh hold out for me. It seems to be largely true in uh according to my own

experience. So anyways, I'm just going to move on to this question and this is from Phil and Phil says, "Can you see ghosts or do you believe you have access to any supernatural abilities that

average people do not?"

And um with regard to seeing ghosts, apparently when I was very small, I could see the ghost of a lady who had died in our house before we moved in. Um one time in Burma, I apparently saw some kind of apparition. But with regard to psychic abilities, especially at the conscious level, I I do not have that nearly to the extent that my father did. My father claimed that he could see auras, he could see ghosts. Ghosts would kind of accumulate around him trying to communicate that kind of thing. Um, he did a lot of experimentation with what

he called the occult like ESP and and witchcraft and this kind of stuff. So, he was definitely more the psychic type than I am. In my case, um, with regard to supernatural or paranormal abilities, it's it's not really under my conscious control. It's like synchronicities, things that I'm not doing deliberately. Like many times, my woman and I have been sitting together and she'll be just starting to open her mouth to say, say something, and I'll blurt out what she was about to say. Not on purpose, not because I'm deliberately reading our mind. It's just that we're like on the same wavelength enough that we have sort of a group mind, that kind

of thing. So that sort of thing, synchronicity, especially if you're doing intensive practice, the like the the occurrence of synchronicities, uh, which is like teaching of Yung synchronicity, um, that increases. So, I guess I'd have to put that on Young's side of the of the equation with regard to important ideas. I mean, synchronicity is is up there, I guess. But, uh, yeah, I mean, for me, I do not have like psychic talent at the conscious level, but at a subconscious level, stuff happens that could be called paranormal or whatever. sometimes or at least it's

synchronicities. It's sort of a meaningful coincidences. So anyways, I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's second question. Thoughts on modernit as the most fundamental theoretical basis for all practice? And for those of you who are not fluent in poly, modernity is recollection of death or mindfulness of death. And I really don't consider mindfulness of death to be the fundamental theoretical basis for all practice. I think that there are certain Buddhist theories, Buddhist philosophical doctrines that are more important than simply reminding yourself on a daily basis that you're going to

die eventually, if not today, than some other day, but it's definitely going to happen. Um, I do think that first and second noble truths would be more conducive to

um

inspiring serious practice than the idea that we're going to die. I mean, people have known that we're all going to die for a very long time. The ancient Greeks, they knew we were all going to die. you know, like in the uh the Iliad, um Achilles, who is really kind of a jerk. He's philosophy philosophizing about how we're all going to die. And back then, they just took that idea and

said, "Well, we're all going to die."
So, just kind of justifies killing your
enemies. And when you when it comes time
for you to die, you just face it with a
little bit of manly
fortitude. So I mean, in their case, it
certainly wasn't um fundamental to any
kind of dharmic practice. I mean, it
could be just taken the other way, just
towards psychopathy or something.
But the first and second noble truth,
the idea that to exist is to suffer and
that desire is the cause of all
suffering. I mean that is a very good
like
foundation for any kind of inspired
dharma

practice. So I guess those are my thoughts on that particular subject. And so I'm just going to move on to Phily's third question, which is kind of a followup on a previous question. If all your books burned down and you could get a fresh copy of only one of them and you could never buy a book again, which would you keep? I guess it'd have to be like a copy of my own Atakawaga translation.

Um, so yeah, I mean that would be it. It would just be my own translation. I wouldn't want to translate that and then just lose it and never have access to it. So, I can't like pick it up and look

at it

sometimes. But if it if it weren't

something that I myself had written, I

don't know just technic I if you if you

consider the book of the new son by Jean

Wolf all five volumes of it if you also

include like the epilogue that if that

wasn't considered to be one book I mean

I might just keep that one just you

return to it again and again as were a

kind of scripture or just like a good

translation of the sutin pa

um which contains the atawaga even

though it would be my own translation of

it because I never translated the entire

sutin

pa. So yeah, let's just move on. Next

question. Next question is from
Quoistor, which is also a kind of
follow-up question.
And Quistor says, "If the paying back of
karmic debt is accomplished via
equinimity to Wedina,
um, would this still be possible in
higher realms considering there'd be no
discomfort there? Or would progress on
the path be accomplished through
equinimity and detachment to only these
subtle, pleasant sensations?"
Well, I mean, there's going to be some
kind of discomfort even in heaven
realms. You know, it could just be like
boredom, just contraction of spirit,

relative contraction of spirit. But I mean, dooka, the first noble truth applies to everything, to everywhere in samsara, including heaven realms. So, there's still going to be dooka or unease, suffering in in heaven realms. It's just going to be more subtle. But again, I mean, if let's see, paying back of karmic debt is accomplished via equinimity. It'd be not so much equinimity as mindfulness. That when I mean mindful detachment, which I guess you could call equinimity, although not all equinimity is mindful. I mean, some of it's just being numb or whatever. That wouldn't be like right

equinimity though I guess. So like mindful detachment is how you um I don't know if you call it paying back a karmic debt. I mean whenever karmic your karma reaches fruition that's the paying of the debt. And so all you're doing by mindful detachment is just not making new karma which then perpetuates a kind of vicious circle. You know, it's like you do something which causes like a karmic, you know, backlash which causes you to react which creates more karma which backlashes which causes you to react which makes more karma which backlashes and you get have this vicious circle

just self-perpetuating cycle that keeps some sorrow going.

So, um, through mindful detachment, you know, you you can't stop the karmic fruition. I mean, there's there's ways you could sort of minimize certain odds, that kind of thing. But,

um, I mean, karmic fruition is the payback of whatever you did that made the karma.

So this karmic or this uh mindful detachment is just kind of breaking the cycle and that can be exercised with regard to excuse me with regard to painful or pleasant phenomena. So something really nice and pleasant happens to

you. Again, mindful detachment, which breaks the cycle, although that's more advanced practice because most people don't want to stop pleasant stuff from happening to them. They don't like the unpleasant stuff, but they like the pleasant stuff. And so it's like um you know, being in one of these negative, vicious circles, you know, that's like being chained. Whereas if you're bound up in a positive, you know, pleasant cycle, vicious cycle, self-perpetuating cycle, you know, it's it's just like you're bound up with comfy silk ropes, but you're still bound up. You're still in bondage, so to

speak. So yeah, anything that occurs to you, you know, any kind of weight in any kind of feeling is the fruition of karma according to orthodox terraada. So any kind of mindful detachment, I mean you can have that in heaven, in hell, as a human,

whatever. I mean the the principle is the

same. So I'm just going to move on to Quistor's second question, which is kind of a strange theoretical question. If a baby is brought up by an AI robot with all the simulated love a mother would have and with the same tactile experience, would this baby feel loved or would it need to feel the emotional

energy of love which would not be present from machinery? I would assume that for someone who is like inherently like a superficial person, not much depth to them, it wouldn't make much difference. But to someone who has more like spiritual depth, there might be a noticeable difference between like a female android mothering a baby and an actual mothering a baby with the female android not having any genuine feelings is just mimicking the behavior of a loving mother. Um, yeah. to to the more sensitive like spiritually more advanced kind of babies that they're presumably would be a difference that they might

actually be stunted in their mental or spiritual development in this life as a result of not receiving genuine love but just sort of a superficial imitation of love
like done by a
machine. But to the average normie kind of a person, it might not be um a noticeable
difference. I mean, most normie type of people might actually do better with an an android mimicking genuine love than having just inattentive, neglectful parents that are like real humans.
So yeah, I think it would be different on a baby bybyab
basis. And so I'm just going to move on

to Quistor's third question. Is a self always ego-based or can awareness or pure consciousness also be considered self even if there's no attachment? I'm thinking awareness or pure consciousness may become self as soon as attachment occurs. Um well there's different ways of defining self. In terra Buddhism it is mainly a subjective self. In Mahayana philosophy it can be any kind of like separate individuality.

So a separate individuality let's say this cup that to believe that this cup exists could be a kind of self view from like an objective perspective that there's any kind of like separated

individuality that this really is a cup
instead of it cup being just a
convenient label that you stick onto
this as a kind of generalization to make
it much easier to navigate samsara.
tomorrow. So I
think I think
quistor is referring to self in the
subjective sense
and is it always ego based? Yeah. I mean
there there is the suta in the the
atikawaga the sudnipata that says the
the conceit I am is the root of all like
differentiation which results in some
sorrow like um one of the synonyms for
nibbana is nepapancha which means
non-ifferiation so once you start

dividing stuff up and like labeling things and classifying things and interpreting things, you've got some sorrow. And according to some poly texts anyway, the beginning of that is the idea I am, which is like ego. I think ego literally means I am. I could be mistaken on that.

So see, can pure consciousness also be considered self? Well, I mean if you go with the idea that nibbana is pure formless infinite consciousness or like the upanachadic idea that Brahman is pure formless like infinite

consciousness then I mean the Hindus at least would say that's a kind of self that's the like the capital A atman I mean that is the true self of all beings is this infinite consciousness which is also God whereas As in Buddhism, the idea that nibbana is infinite consciousness was apparently I mean it was it was an idea that was entertained in in ancient India and it has found its way into a few sutas but it kind of fell from favor you know it it just sort of lost out in the the the competition of ideas in in the evolution of terabara Buddhist doctrine. Um, so is a self always ego based? I would assume so. Can awareness or pure

consciousness also be considered self?
Anything could be considered some kind
of self once you objectify it. Once you
turn it into a like a
concept, then in a way it has already
become a self. Once it's an it then then
it's a it's a self in a way at least
from an objective point of
view. So let's see he says I'm thinking
awareness or pure consciousness may
become self as soon as attachment
occurs. Well, before the attachment
occurs, I think you'd have to have um
the self before the attachment occurs.
Or maybe they would happen just the I am
just the attachment to the idea I am

arising from this consciousness somehow that uh you know that would be the beginning of the self and the attachment and the suffering and samsara and all the rest cuz there it's a it's a a package deal, you know. It does isn't like one thing just starts and then that causes this which causes that. I mean it's just there it's dependently coarising. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from PSA and PSA says your show has become so successful globally and intergalactically I think I've got almost 2,000 subscribers now that the number of episodes is reaching inconceivable figures. Have you

considered using exponential notations
to express such gargantuan and
immeasurable numbers?
Nope. So, see PSA's next question is,
why are you so ruggedly handsome? It's
the beard. It's that's that's all it is.
So, PSA's third question, last but not
least, what is your favorite suta of the
Kudaka Nikaya and
why? Well, let's get back to the
exponential uh notation one. Yeah, I
guess this would be like Q&A number
1.39* 10 the 2. I guess I mean it's
still easier at this point to say it's
just number 139. So, we're going to have
to get into even higher numbers before I

start using exponential notation. So, let's just get back to the third question now. Last but not least, what is your favorite suit up the curaya and why? That's a tough one because probably more than half of my favorite sutas are from the kudkinikaya. Like the sutanipata is in the kudkakinaya. The atikawaga is in the kudkinikaya. So it's like the paramataka suta of the atakawaga. I mean that's that has long been one of my favorite sutas. Also the sudataka suta of the atakawaga of the sutinata of the kurikaya is one of my favorite sutas. Um also like the baja suta of the udana is another one of my favorite

sutas. So yeah I guess I'd just say the paramonta suta or the sudant. I mean it's it's like a tie for first place I guess.

Yeah, just just to just to mix things up a bit, let's just say for now at the present moment, the sudataka suta of the sutin pata is my favorite suta of the kudicaya. Possibly my favorite suta of the entire poly

tip. So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Romeo. And Romeo says, "Are you familiar with Joseph Campbell and his book, The Power of Myth? either the book or the long form PBS interview. If so, what is your

analysis of it? And I'm really not that familiar with Joseph Campbell and his book, The Power of Myth. I remember PBS was pushing it big time during like their membership drives if you donated a certain amount of money to PBS. This is like back in the
1980s that you'd get like I think it was the man with a thousand faces or the hero with a thousand faces. I mean, something like that by Joseph Campbell. And so they were giving a lot of press to Joseph Campbell and discussing Joseph Campbell and that sort of thing. And that's about the only exposure I really had to Joseph
Campbell. I mean, I had his soup

sometimes, but that's totally different,

I

guess.

So, yeah, I really don't have much of an analysis. So, I guess I'll just have to just say nope to that one and move on to Romeo's second question, which is more general. and I'm thus more likely to be able to at least knock a dent into answering this question. What is your overall opinion of mythology, especially on whether it has any practical effect on an individual's unconscious mind? That's kind of strange that he he singles out the unconscious mind. I mean it has uh certainly has a practical

effect on the conscious mind because the
mythology is is essentially how you
interpret the
world and I mean usually like nowadays
we think well
previous cultures had mythology and we
had sort of like a semi- mythology like
when I was growing up it's like Star
Trek and Gilligans Island you know it's
like they were sort of like arch
arpypes, you know, the Gilligans Island,
it was populated by
archetypes or, you know, the Beverly
Hill Billies, that kind of thing. You
know, it had sort of replaced the older
quasi semi- mythology of America like
Paul Bunan and Pos Bill and John Henry,

that kind of stuff. But nowadays, young
people don't know who Paul Bunan was or
who Gilligan
was, which is kind of sad to me.
But mythology, I mean, that's it's it's
like a a kind
of fictional interpretation of reality.
And personally, I like to give an
example, my woman likes watching like
health videos on YouTube, and you'll
have these guys sitting around
discussing as though it were just some
groundbreaking fact. there's some new
chemical that they've discovered in
human biochemistry and they're talking
about how this kind of food inhibits it

and it's useful in the synthesis of this kind of enzyme and all this kind of stuff and they're talking about it like it's real like this is reality that they are talking about and they're not talking about Apollo or you know driving his chariot across the sky this kind of stuff they're talking about these these chemicals in our body that and how eating this kind of food or this kind of lifestyle can inhibit or promote this kind of chemical which is useful or harmful in this sort of way. And a 100 years from now, 200 years from now, people will look back on that and consider that to be the mythology of this scientific age that science really

is the the predominant religion of the west. It's it's more sophisticated than say early Christianity or classical paganism. You know, it's it's more grounded in empiricism and thus it has like a more stabilizing effect. You know, it's it's sort of locking down our world into something predictable, but still um it's it's like beliefs. It's like nowadays science has helped us to like produce like comprehensive like universal sort of beliefs that help to stabilize this mind degenerated reality that we're living in but it's still mythology.

So what is my overall opinion of
mythology especially on whether it has
any practical effect on individual's
unconscious mind? Well your unconscious
mind it's it's really hard to say what
the features are of the unconscious mind
because it is unconscious but still it's
just the assumptions of the world you're
living in which for the most part are
like semiconscious subconscious. It's
not like you you're like replaying your
world
view through your intellect at all times
just reminding yourself of how it is
that you
interpret this version of reality.
So the mythology is largely just this

body of assumptions that people make just to give meaning to this world and that's going to be like playing in the background which is pretty much of a a subconscious or unconscious event. You know it's it's assumed it's you know implied in pretty much everything we do. our world view is just sort of acted out, you know, it's it's largely um it's it's profoundly conditioning our behavior and our attitudes and so forth. So, mythology, trying to give like a a a more obvious example of modern mythology other than just movies, that sort of thing, you know, like the Matrix, you know, it can be used as a

kind of philosophical symbol. People can use the word matrix as a philosophical term now, that kind of thing. So, that's a kind of myth. But I guess in order for it to be a real myth, it has to be believed as true when ultimately it turns out that it's not true. So maybe uh I don't know some some of the glorification of like political leaders, that kind of thing, that might qualify as mythology.

But uh mainly mythology is just an attempt at the human mind to superimpose meaning and structure and regularity on this world that we're living in which does help to like regularize it and is that a word

regularize and just sort of make it more predictable and sort of keep the scary paranormal at bay. You know, the the more of a a comprehensive theory you've got to account for the world you live in, the less likely it is that there's going to be gaps that scary, unpredictable, paranormal phenomena can can slip through and really start wreaking havoc on on people. So, I assume that would be my overall opinion on mythology. It's not something that I think about a lot. mythology really isn't something that people think about all that much unless

they are reading like Norse mythology or classical Greco Roman mythology or Indian mythology or Mesoamerican mythology but they really don't apply much mythology to their own civilization and this is I mean our mythology should be the most important mythology but the thing is you don't recognize it as mythology because you think it's true, but you have to know that it isn't true in order to recognize it as mythology instead of just empirical fact.
So it is kind of a a handicap in understanding our own mythology when you know just practically by definition we we can't know that it's mythology unless you're just sort of

looking at other people like the mainstream. Let's say you're out of the mainstream looking at the mainstream and and just sort of as an anthropological study seeing what it is that the normies believe. You know, sort of like the whole this world is going to be just this desolate oven apocalyptic dead planet within 10 years. And the 10 years just keeps getting moved forwards, forwards, forwards. you know that's a kind of
mythology that you know the world is dying because we're producing too much carbon
dioxide you know that is a kind of

myth and so it's I mean that kind of mythology can be um generated or endorsed by governments for example to kind of get the people to behave in a more manageable way in a way that the government wants them to behave that sort of thing And that's probably was true in ancient times also. Certainly with regard to the Catholic Church, that was true back like in the middle ages when the Catholic Church was the most powerful institution in all of Europe. But I guess I should just move on to the next question. This is from Xenithoid. And speaking of Christianity, Xenithoid brings up Christianity here. He says, "Jesus says the truth will set

you free. However, the famous Christian existentialist Saurin Kirkagard is quoted as saying, quote, "The truth is a trap. You cannot get it without getting you, without it getting you. You cannot get the truth by capturing it, only by its capturing
you." And then Zenithoid says, "Can you explain this discrepancy?" And when I read this quote from Kirkagard, it did remind me of a different quote from Alber Kimu from the myth of Seisphus, which seems to be similar. And so Kimu says, "There exists an obvious fact that seems utterly moral, namely that a man is always a prey to his truths. Once he

has admitted them, he cannot free himself from them." So Kimu would go with Kirkagard, I think. But the thing is that Kimu really isn't talking about like ultimate truth. He's just talking about beliefs. It's just what we consider to be true. And what you consider to be true becomes the truth for you. And you become enslaved to that. Sort of like the the guys on the health videos on YouTube. They're saying, you know, it's like when you get older, it's like you cannot replace lost muscle tissue. it's almost impossible and it's like they are reinforcing this idea you know that's becoming part of their world structure

and so in a way they're enslaving

themselves to

this or whatever it is you know eating

this kind of food will inhibit that kind

of enzyme which is then going to to to

play havoc with your biochemistry and

it's based on

this relatively minuscule it's still

amazing the knowledge of like

biochemistry just amazes me how way back

in like the 60s or 70s you had people

working out the TCA cycle, the Krebs

cycle, you know, how it is that gl a

molecule of glucose gets broken down in

in a sequence of steps with energy being

captured from some of these steps that

can then be used to fuel, you know,
other other functions.
in in a in a living system. I mean that
is just so amazing to me that that is
possible that they that they learn that
much. But still it's so infinitely
complicated that you're the human mind
is never going to really fully grasp it.
They're just going to grasp little bits
and pieces of it and think that they
understand pretty well until something
comes along. like the whole idea that
eating eggs was bad for you because of
the cholesterol. And then I mean it was
just it wasn't even controversial, you
know, it was they did studies proving
that the average person's life would be

prolonged by something like 3 years if
they if they just stopped eating eggs.
And now it's like
nope.
So I think I'm kind of wandering away
from the question now.
Let's just get back to the question,
shall we? Jesus says the truth will set
you free and Buddhism also pretty much
is of that opinion that to know the
ultimate truth is liberation. So in that
sense, the truth sets you free because
realizing reality is liberation from
bondage, a liberation from from
suffering and samsara and all that. So
with regard to ultimate truth, I I think

Jesus is right. With regard to just beliefs like conventional truths, it may be that I mean Kimu would be right. And I'm really not sure what Saurin Kerkugard was referring to exactly whether he was referring to ultimate truth and was he referring to ultimate truth or just beliefs that one considers to be true but really ultimately or not conventional
truth. So anyway Kirkagard's quote the truth is a trap. You cannot get it without it getting you. You cannot get the truth by capturing it only by it's capturing you. Well, I mean that could be interpreted either
way that sort of like an orahant

um like in in Buddhism he attains to the ultimate truth and then there's all this stuff he can't do anymore. He can't tell lies anymore. For example, it's like he has to always do the right thing.

According to Orthodox Terravada Buddhism, you cannot be fully enlightened without being an absolutely pure saint in addition to being a sage.

And so, I mean, that's pretty much it. I mean, any semblance of free will would largely be gone because you just of necessity be doing the right thing in every situation, which in a way is kind of slavery.

So yeah, I think the the quote from

Kirkagard could be interpreted either way as with regard to ultimate truth and he it does seem to be he just has it in the singular just truth and not truths.

Um yeah it's like you cannot get the truth by capturing it only it's capturing you only by it's capturing you. Yeah. Well, I mean, the truth is greater than we are. You know, we're just ephemerra, you know, here today, gone tomorrow. Whereas the truth presumably is eternal. So, yeah, it would get us more than we would get it. Sort of like love, you know, it's it's sort of like you don't really get love. Love gets you.

You know, you just sort of get absorbed into love. That kind of thing. I'm I'm talking about like spiritual love and not just like human reproductive instincts.

So in order for for me to fully explain the discrepancy, I'd have to know more about the context from which Kirkagard made the statement, but it could be interpreted either way like with regard to ultimate truth or just conventional truth.

And I mean you could just interpret the case either way really, you know, whether the truth sets you free or the truth enslaves you. In a way, it's just

how you how you choose to look at the situation. In a way, it's liberation, but at the same time, it also very much like constricts your choices because you you can't make any bad choices anymore. at least if if we uh accept orthodox terraodan philosophy as a guide with regard to that. So in a way you are you are liberated from the truth or liberated by the truth ultimate truth. Um, but certainly conventional truths enslave you. So long as you consider them to be really true, then you're you're it's just like a ball and chain. It might be necessary for most people to have some kind of structure of beliefs, you know,

kind of regulating their version of reality, but still it's it's like prison bars. It's like a mental prison. But again, I really I really can't say exactly what Kirkagard meant without having a fuller context with regard to why he said what he said. You know, what what would be the the preceding paragraph and the subsequent paragraph, that kind of thing.

So,

oh, I see here. So, let's see. Can you explain this discrepancy? That was one question. And then he's got two more questions based on the same quote. says,

"Who do you agree with?" And I would say that uh I think Jesus in the in the New Testament is correct and the truth will set you free. But also Kimu was right, even though that that he wasn't really included in the question that your beliefs, what you consider to be true, enslaves you. And where Kerkagard fits on the spectrum, I'm not sure. I mean he might be saying something along the lines of the terra Buddhists where when you realize the highest truth then you pretty much become a puppet of God like like in the philosophy of St. John of the cross when you mortify your self-will and become perfected then you don't have you're not

following your own self-will you don't have any self-will you just become like this puppet of god and in terravada Buddhism an arant is kind of the same way except there is no god for him to be a puppet of he's just like a puppet of dharma that kind of thing which really is not it doesn't strike me as as being extremely liberated when you no longer have any
choices, but it's a different kind of liberation. It's liberation from samsara. And what the what the meat puppet that's still walking around making noise is doing is largely irrelevant at that

point. So anyways, the uh the third question is how does this relate to the divide between conventional truth and ultimate truth? Yeah, I've already been discussing that. So yeah, the ultimate truth would certainly set you free. At least in one sense it's freeing you from samsara but conventional truths to the extent that you cling to them which includes just believing them to be true that I mean they enslave you they are they are the bars of your mental prison but they may be necessary for navigating this world. I mean, for an arant, they're just using like the vestigages of worldly beliefs that they

no longer really cling to anymore. It's just sort of on nature taking its course at that point. So, anyways, I'm just going to move on this question. Let's try and see if we can get this one under two hours just for just for jollies, for cheap thrills. This question is from Luke Kelzer. And Luke Kelzer says, "Do you believe that there could be an argument to be made that we human beings are in fact avatars of the one true God having a self-inflicted time and spacebound experience on Earth as part of some kind of cosmic game or test and that after death we have the option to return to a

state of pure bliss." And an argument
could be made along those lines because
it has been
made. Quite a few spiritual teachers
teach this sort of thing. Even Paul
Low, a man that I consider to be very
wise, has put forth pretty similar
arguments. And it's there's this
idea that God is like
this one, the one capital O one. And
then just to experience what it's like
to live in
multiplicity. God divides himself up
into an infinite number of beings that
are all doing all this stuff to learn
about, you know, whatever it is. But I
just don't buy it at all because God is

already

omnisient. God just infinite formless consciousness doesn't need anything. doesn't need any kind of game or test at all. It's already

infinite. So I think what is much more likely is the theory of the block of stone. You know what the Dao Ching calls the nameless uncarved block where you've got the block of stone the infinite infinite stone sizeless because there's nothing to compare it with. That's all there is. There is just this block of stone and it contains every possible statue inside of it in like virtual form, potential form, but it's all

they're really in there. And I think
that is much more plausible than that.
God, even though infinite and omnisient,
still has to do this stuff in order to
fulfill itself somehow when it shouldn't
have to fulfill itself because it's
already omnisient, omnipotent,
completely infinite. It doesn't need
anything.
So yeah, I mean there could be an
argument made along those lines, but I
just do not consider it plausible. But
it has been made a lot well quite a few
spiritual teachers have taught that sort
of
thing. But I just I just don't buy it.
So I'm just going to move on to this

question. This is from Thermal Squid. And Thermal Squid says, "Is your computer powerful enough to run Steam games?" Um, I'm not sure. I I've got like an Apple MacBook Pro, which, you know, it's not bottom of the line, but it's not top of the line either. It's sort of like midlevel with regard to, you know,
the whatever whatever is in the guts of it. So, is it powerful enough to run Steam games? Maybe, maybe not. I don't know. So anyways, Thermal Squid's second question is, would you be down to play games on your PC if you found the time? If you find the time, especially ones

that require unipolar focus, and I wouldn't want to become a video game junkie anymore than I already am. I've got one video game on my phone that I play pretty much every day and it's a it's a zombie game and it's like a turnbased. I really do not like having to hurry. My favorite kind of games, including video games, are like turnbased where you can take your time and strategize and decide what you're going to do next instead of it's being like a test of speed and agility and that kind of stuff. I mean, I could do fairly well with that sort of thing, but I just I do not consider it relaxing and fun. It's just sort of like stress

inducing.

So yeah, this this app that I downloaded on my phone, which allows me to kill zombies remotely, is uh it's it's it's an entertaining and kind of satisfying game that I wind up spending like on average it's like $8 a month on this game. I mean, it's free to play, but you can get like these bundles and things that that speed things up. I don't like pay to win, but

still.

So, ones that require unipolar focus.

Yeah. I mean, if it's a strategy game where you're not like having to speed click and going as fast as you can, then

yeah, in a in a way it's it's pretty good. So, anyways, Thermal Squid's third question. Do you think playing video games is a waste of time? Um, not entirely. You know, it's not all black or white. Like keeping your mind active is good, especially if you get older. That having keeping your mind active helps to keep you like relatively young, keeps your mind from degenerating, kind of stave off senility, that kind of a thing. Um, anyone who read the novel or watched the movie Enders Game can know that kids playing video games may save the world from enemy invas alien invasions. You know, you get really good at like killing enemies in a video game.

It's I mean the modern the modern
military is not all that different from
playing a video game. I assume that a
lot of the soldiers that are guiding
drones and missiles and so forth started
off with video games. Not that that's
necessarily a good
thing, but I mean
it's it's
something. So, I don't think that
playing video games is a total waste of
time. It can help you to relax. It
depends on what kind of game you're
playing.
I've generally gravitated more towards
like physics games, like puzzle games,

that kind of thing. I still do evil sudokus every once in a while now, too, which is just like it's like mental exercise. It's sort of like the mental equivalent of doing push-ups or something. So, I mean, that's good. You exercise your brain that and your brain gets stronger. Sort of like muscles. You exercise your muscles, your muscles get stronger.

Um, but I mean I really would not want to just become like a video game junkie to the point of just like spending all of my free time playing Grand Theft Auto or Red Dead Redemption or something.

So I think I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Meditators Library. Meditators Library says, "Is there any free book by you that can be downloaded from the internet?" My atakawaga translation is downloadable, but that's that's about it with regard to free books that can be downloaded from the internet. There's uh a few different versions of my Atagawaga translation that can be downloaded. There's like the original handwritten version um that might still be um available on Wikipedia of all things. If you look at the the Atika Waga article in the
Wikipedia that uh I it used to have my

original handwritten

um version or edition of the atikawaga

um that was in like the the end notes

that you could click on it and you'd

have access to

it. Although

um it has been slightly improved in in

later editions. So, it's not the best

edition other than just being in my own

handwriting. So, that would be that

would be the only one I I know of other

than maybe something that got pirated,

but I don't know why anyone would bother

to pirate any of my other books. So, I'm

just going to move on to the next

question. This is from Ruie, and I think

this might also be a kind of follow-up

question. I don't remember if Ruie was the one who asked me if the Buddha had like insight into anata or no self before he became enlightened or if it came when he became enlightened. But here's Rui is saying awakening without realization of anata or realization of anata without awakening. I don't think you'd have full realization that um unenlightenment like like the text say it's like the conceit I am is like the root of
samsara. So I think you would have to become
[Music]
enlightened at the same time that your

uh that this conceit I am would

completely vanish.

So I think that they would be

simultaneous realization of anata and

awakening but I mean you could still

accept it as a as a theory but you

wouldn't

fully penetrate it. I mean you wouldn't

have like complete perfect understanding

of it. you know, you wouldn't have

complete mastery of this notion of of no

self that it would still just be like a

like a working theory or something that

you didn't fully understand until

finally when you break through to

ultimate reality then then you fully

realize it.

So I would say that uh the two the full awakening and full realization of anata would be simultaneous. And so I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Dhamma River and Dharma River says in the suta Dan Nikaya 16 which is the um Mahapari Nibbana Suta the suta discussing the Buddha's final days on this earth. Anyways I'll just start again here. Dama River says in the suta deanaya 16 the Buddha said to Ananda quote if it is desired Ananda the sa may when I am gone abolish the lesser and minor rules

unquote. And then Dhamma River says obviously we are only speculating here but could you please give your personal opinion on which ones are the lesser and minor rules that the Buddha was referring to? Disclaimer, this question and answer is pure speculation. The Buddha never specified this. Yeah, it was when the Buddha said to Ananda, "If it is desired, Ananda, the song may when I am gone, abolish the lesser and minor rules." Um, this was brought up at the first council. and Ananda pretty much got censured by the rest of the first council for not asking the Buddha what those lesser and minor rules were. And then you've got these 500 arhants or 501

including

Ananda

who can't figure out what the lesser and

minor rules were.

Supposedly you had some arroants

according to the the like the canonical

account of the first council. You had

some orants some of the Buddha's wisest

most accomplished disciples who thought

that only the four parajikas would not

be lesser and minor rules which means

that a monk could kill animals tell lies

get drunk fondle women and that's just

silly. I mean I don't know how any fully

enlightened disciple of the Buddha would

think that only the four parajika rules

should be

retained. So even even like killing

animals and getting drunk for example

those are just pacidia offenses. Those

are just midlevel offenses. I mean even

like punching a lay person in the nose

is only a ducata offense which is the

lowest level of offense. So I don't

think it would necessarily be by

category by like ecclesiastical

classification of what kind of rule it

is. It might simply be that the lesser

and minor rules are the ones that are

not replying specifically to ethics that

it's just cultural. So you know telling

lies, killing animals, that sort of

thing would be ethical from the from the

Buddhist point of view. But something like having to shave your head every two months or two finger widths, whichever comes first. I mean, mo even most monks don't really know that rule very well because they just it's just the tradition. You shave your head once a week or
whatever. Um, you know, eating only in the morning. I mean, that's not really an ethical I mean, it's there's nothing inherently immoral with eating a meal at 2:00 in the
afternoon, that sort of thing. So, I would guess assuming just for the sake of argument, the Buddha said this that

the lesser and minor rules would be the ones that were not like that were not ethical rules. They were just like cultural rules of of like etiquette that those like in different cultures you might have different etiquette like a strict monk in America offends people sometimes because he's following ancient Indian etiquette which is just doesn't fit modern western etiquette like refusing to shake hands with a woman. I mean, I mean, you could argue that either way, but I mean, there actually are quite a few
like new age leftist feminist female types and a few male types also who are just offended by the fact that a monk

won't touch a woman. Even though nuns aren't supposed to touch men either, but I mean, some people will just get offended really easy, I guess.

So yeah, the lesser and minor rules, if I had to guess, it would just be the ones that are not inherently ethical, but are just like cultural etiquette stuff. And there's lots of rules like that. In fact, I mean, some of the relatively relatively advanced rules are like that. like the rules about what kind of wool you can use in your sitting cloth, what colors of wool you're allowed to use in your sitting cloth. You know, that's paid offense. It's the

same level of severity as killing an elephant. So, yeah, that's my answer. Speculative though it may be. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. And this is from Troas is. And Troas is says, "Are you recording now?" And Yep. Yep. I am. I hope. I sincerely hope cuz we've been going for an hour now. And so Tras is the second question is, "Have you ever eaten any of the Polish foods?" And I mean, I think most Americans have eaten pulsa kilbasa, which is a kind of Polish sausage that uh my sweetheart and her mama call kilbasi. So yeah, I think most Americans have eaten that, although it might not be authentic kilbasa. You know, it's

like some actual Polish person comes to America, tries to kill Basa, and just promptly just spits it out in and just like it's it has demeaned their dignity even to put it into their mouth. I mean, that's possible, too. Although, I did work on a Polish ship and so I did eat some Polish food. I did. I did for whatever reason in when I was like in my early 20s. I was 20 21 years old. I spent my 21st birthday on this on a Polish ship and uh I just for some reason could not bring myself to eat tartar, which is it's raw hamburger with a raw egg cracked on top of it. And the Polish sailors really liked it. They

thought raw hamburger with a raw egg on it was was excellent, but for some reason I just couldn't bring myself to eat it. Um they they had a really good salad. It was like a tomato and onion salad with tossed in some kind of oil. That was good. They made really good. It was sort of like jack mackerel shish kebab things. It was on a stick with like tomatoes and hunks of onion and stuff. That was good. I was never much into beets. There was something like borched or something. some kind of beet slurry that they would eat that I mean I I could I would I could eat it but I didn't particularly enjoy it. The the Polish on on the ship

anyway they had excellent bread and excellent cheese. So I did eat Polish bread and Polish cheese although that was a long time ago. So my memory is is fading now with regard to the full menu on board the good ship Sagitta.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. And this is from Jimmy Lad. And Jimmy Lad says, "How did you figure out the visa situation when you were a monk in Myanmar?" Well, as a monk in Myanmar, I had lay people who would volunteer to take upon themselves the duty of getting my visa renewed periodically.

So, as a monk, I really didn't have to do very much other than just make sure that my visa was in the hands of the person who was going to get it stamped or rather my passport was in the hands of the person who's going to get the the visa renewed in time for them to get the visa renewed. But it costs money. Monks aren't supposed to be handling money. And um I was ordained in the Tomulu tradition. And so the tomulu tradition in Burma had a kind of capiaakaraka aet it was called. It was sort of like the the lay people supporting the monks of the tonulu tradition. They had this organization and one of the senior

members of the organization just would magnanimously volunteer to take care of the visas of the few western monks who were in the country which when I was there was pretty much just me.

So yeah, so I mean I really didn't have to do very much. It was it was handled by lay people. And so Jimmy Lad's second question is any details on practical daytoday life when you were a monk would be helpful also. Well details on practical daytoday life as a monk. I mean it's it's good to be able to build a fire pretty well.

Um, you know, you start with little sticks and and maybe some paper. Use

candles if the weather is damp. How to how to filter water. You know, it's like you there's a muddy river and you find some sand on the bank of the muddy river. You can scoop out the sand until it it's like a basin. It fills up with water. You scoop out the water till it fills up again. You scoop out the water until it finally it's clear. You can drink that water. The the sand filters the water. that kind of thing. I mean, as a monk, a lot of the practical details, I'm like how to bake a bowl, how to dye your robes, how to sew robes, that kind of thing. Um, you have to learn that as a monk. It's not something I could really explain very well. I do

have in my first book, Essays on Terra Buddhism. I did have an essay on how to bake a bull because even a lot of monks really don't know how to do it.

So details on practical day-to-day life in Burma especially. The number one advice I would give to anyone who goes to Burma is be

patient. You got to be patient. I mean the buses don't run on time. Things don't work the way they're supposed to. The electricity goes on and off at random. You just have to be

patient. But I mean the lifestyle of a monk is very simple. And so you really don't need a lot of details on practical

day-to-day life. And it's going to depend on where you're living. Are you going to be living in a forest? Are you going to be living in a monastery in town, some big monastic university, some temple in the suburbs in California or whatever? You know, it's the the day-to-day life is going to be different in under any of these different scenarios.

So yeah, mainly the the day-to-day life of a monk is you get up, you go for alms, you come back, you know, you eat your you eat your meal, you wash your bowl, brush your teeth, that kind of thing. Doing in the rest of the day is mostly like

meditation, walking meditation, sitting meditation, maybe a little bit of reading, maybe you got to go and fetch water from the well, that kind of thing. take a bath in the afternoon after the sweat has stopped flowing so much. And I mean, it's it's very simple. So, there's really not a whole lot of details or practical day-to-day life unless there's some specific scenario that would need some kind of details, but um I'm not sure what those exact details would be at present moment. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. is from Austin and Austin says, "Do you believe that Westerners are poisoning Buddhism

by incorporating Marxist, feminist, transgender, and LGBTQ ideologies into it? Not a week goes by where I'm confronted by these nut jobs in Buddhist spaces. They will completely throw out traditional teachings to fit their own subject and feelings and political agendas. And this has been going on from the beginning since since ancient times that different groups of people have been corrupting dharma. I mean poisoning Buddhism is kind of strong term but corrupting it is is very apt. is certainly getting corrupted. And I mean that started in India before it even spread you know outside of the the Indian subcontinent. I mean I could name

some names certain Mahayana Buddhist
schools for example even a few
pre-Mayana Buddhist schools. You can
even point out to some stuff that's
within the terravada tradition as
corruptions of what the Buddha taught
that it just it's just part of being
human that any sort of really wise
enlightened teaching is going to get
corrupted when it falls into
unenlightened
hands and most hands are unenlightened
ones.
So certainly in the west that terravada
Buddhism is being corrupted mightily by
let's see here Marxist feminist

transgender and LGBTQ ideologies partly because western leftists cannot tell the difference between leftism and dharma. They just assume that the Buddha being fully enlightened would have to be politically correct in accordance with their ideology.

So, I mean, if the Buddha says something that's say derogatory towards women in the text, well, he wouldn't have really said that. That's just false. And I've already mentioned a number of times that there actually are some social activists on the left in America who profess Buddhism who say that even the second noble truth of Buddhism should be

modified. that it's not just clinging
and attachment that causes suffering.
It's also white patriarchal oppression.
And when you get to that level, I mean,
I would call that poisoning Buddhism.
Yeah. That's that's beyond mere
corruption at that point. I mean, that's
just [__] it
up.
So, yeah. I mean, that's part of the
problem is is these leftist Buddhists, a
lot of them just cannot tell the
difference
between Dharma and leftism. They just
assume that they're the same, and
they're not. I mean, there's a certain

amount of overlap. There's a certain amount of overlap between Dharma and fascism, too, I presume.

So, yeah. Welcome to America. Welcome to the West. I mean, fortunately in America, this like radical progressivism, as though decline and fall were progress somehow, this radical progressivism is kind of going out of fashion. The majority of Americans no longer favor it. I mean, they're not even willing to be patient with it at this point.

whereas in like in in the UK or in Western Europe that it's still still in fashion, let's

say. So, yeah, I'm I'm relatively optimistic, cautiously optimistic that in America at least things are going to turn around. The corruption will abate to some degree. Anyways, I'm just going to move on to the next question and we're actually getting down towards the bottom. This is going to be way less than two hours. This is going to be one of the shortest Q&A videos I've done in a long time. So, anyways, the next question is from Fred and Fred says, "Is our experience mainly based on feeling and emotion?"

And that's kind of an interesting

question because that was sort of a a
major topic of philosophical discussion
like in the late
1700s like with David Hume and Emanuel
Kant where they were pointing out that
that rationality really cannot um I mean
it can't do
anything that pure
rationality pure objectivity cannot not
motivate an action that all
action is motivated by irrationality by
the
passions. And I should have I should
have uh recorded the the quote from Hume
where he was talking about how you know
intellect can be and should only be the
slave of the passions because that's

what it is that no matter how intelligent um like a scientist is or whatever still everything he does is motivated by irrationality pure logic. There is no logically necessary reason why we should get out of the bed in the morning why we should do anything. There's no there's no logical necessity to the idea that eating is somehow inherently better than just starving to death. That it's based on value judgments. That what we do in life is based on value judgments which are irrational in nature. It's just what helps what helps the human species to survive and propagate is I mean is the

kind of values that are instinctive to
the human
species and so that's it's these
instincts human nature is driving us not
the intellect the intellect is just a
slave to these irrational aspects of
human nature.
So Fred says, "Is our experience mainly
based on feeling and emotion?" I'd say,
"Yeah,
actually." Um, I mean, calling it
emotion, feeling emotion might be uh not
quite subtle enough. It's just sort of
this
basic
irrationality, which I guess you could
call just very subtle feeling and

emotion. So yeah, I would say that Fred is correct that our experience is mainly based on feeling and emotion. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is the last question already. We only we had less than 30 questions this time. So this could be a refreshing change of pace for those of you who uh have objected to three-hour long Q&A videos cuz I mean there have been some Q&A videos. They got up to like three and a half hours. It was like a marathon of of question answering. So anyways, this last question is from

Rakasa. And Rakasa

says, "Regarding the supernatural, it

seems to me that you're pretty open to

modern paranormal phenomena such as

ghosts, telepathy, etc.,

But you have expressed skepticism

towards fantastical elements in ancient

mythology. What is your criteria in

evaluating these kinds of stories as

believable or not?

Well, a lot of the ancient mythology,

um, I mean, it's it's pretty obviously

people making up

stories, you know, like the Earth is on

the back of a tortoise, you know, and

it's tortoises all the way down. The

tortoise isn't resting on empty space.

It's just this infinite pile of tortoises, you know. It's like you can say, well maybe in ancient times it really was like that until we changed our theories which then changed the nature of the world. I mean, you could argue that sort of thing, but I mean, a lot of the time, a lot of the the myths, you know, like the pagan, like classical Greek pagan myths where the gods are very rapey, you know, Neptune or like what was it? Poseidon is, you know, he's got the hots for some human human female and rapes her and

and like uh Zeus was pretty much doing that all the time. and and these kind of

things. It's and then sometimes there's myths that you can kind of figure out how the myth arose like Jason and the Argonauts going to get the golden fleece. And my father explained to me when I was a kid that the golden fleece was based on the fact that when you were like prospecting for gold like in a stream, you put down a fleece. And in Burma, they still put down like a thick carpet of stuff that catches the gold particles. So, the golden fleece was probably based on this idea of using like sheep pelts to catch the gold particles when, you know, they're processing the the slurry that they're, you know, they're they're trying to

extract the gold from it, that sort of thing. Or I've got this idea about centaurs. The idea of the centaur that's half man and half human is based on um like originally you had non-indo-uropeans living in Greece and thereabouts. They probably did not have domesticated horses. Then all of a sudden you've got people on horseback coming through just kind of raiding the area and like conquering parts of it. And at first it was it was sort of like the the the Aztecs when they first saw Spanish soldiers riding on horses, they thought it was a monster. They thought it was just one creature, you know, part

part animal and part man. And it may be that the whole theory of centaurs comes from that is the first people seeing, you know, Indo-Uropean invaders riding on horseback.

So, um, my skepticism towards fantastical elements in ancient mythology, um, to some degree it's it's just kind of based on like anthropological, you know, trying to make sense of how they would come up with this stuff. And sometimes they're just pulling stuff out of their rectum, just just coming up with any kind of story to help explain things because people hate not being able to explain something.

um even if they can't explain it, they want to say, "Well, at least our experts can explain it because it's kind of scary not to be able to explain or understand something." And so in ancient times before they had, you know, any kind of scientific method, they would just come up with all kinds of all kinds of stories about gods and and other supernatural beings just to fill in the blanks to kind of make sense of the world they're living in.

Whereas now we've got science as as largely our mythology is or actually scientific method is fine. It's just scientism or the interpretation of

science that goes by the name of scientism or scientific realism that really believes that science is explaining reality. That is our modern mythology or at least that's a major aspect of modern mythology. Plus, I mean, all the leftist hysterical stuff too would count as mythology or any like apotheiois of Donald Trump could count as a kind of mythology on the right also. So, my criteria in evaluating these kinds of stories, I mean, some ancient stories about supernatural stuff, I can accept. Like, I have no problem with the idea that Jesus of Nazareth could heal the sick.

I got no problem with

that. I mean, a lot of even Christians don't believe that anymore. That that really that's just impossible because science can't explain it. So, I mean, what I would con consider to be plausible or at least, you know, something entertainable as an idea would be pretty much the same now as in ancient times. You know, you've got somebody who can heal the heal the sick with a touch nowadays or heal the sick with a touch 2,000 years ago. I mean, that's it's the same kind of deal for me. It's mainly with regard to kind of the wilder just the larger scale supernaturalism as an attempt to fill in

blanks in human knowledge before scientists came along with objective like empirical observations that uh kind of helped to stabilize help to fill in blanks. But even science is I mean it doesn't really explain reality. It's just a more sophisticated kind of mythology.

So my what is my criteria in evaluating these kinds of stories as believable or not? Well, I mean you're better off not believing anything. Um

but something is is would strike me as more plausible. I mean somebody who's able to do

miracles. Um fine. I mean I I can accept that. you know, Neem Curly Baba up on

the the altar up there. He he was uh he did some amazing feats based on, you know, people that that knew him, stuff that was supposedly impossible, you know, like appearing being in two places at the same time, that kind of thing. So, I mean, in ancient times, I don't it might be more likely that that kind of stuff could happen. But I mean, with regard to Icarus flying too close to the sun, which melted the wax, holding the feathers onto his fake wings, that kind of stuff, I mean, I consider that to be probably fiction. A lot of stuff in the ancient texts that I would also consider to be

fiction. Like poly texts, there's a lot of stuff in the poly text that it just doesn't really pass the test of plausibility for me. like when the Buddha was born, you know, he's just born free of goop and just takes off walking and speaking fluent poly and then after that after he gives his little speech on how, you know, he is unsurpassed in this world and, you know, this is his last life and everything, then he reverts to being a baby. It's it just seems more plausible that that would be just sort of later devotionalism that got added in. And there is some wisdom in the the the statement by do David Hume that you

should believe in a
miracle only if the that story being
false would be more miraculous than the
miracle itself. And I mean that was just
sort of a way of of him bashing
Christianity in in a backhanded sort of
way, but still
um I mean it's it's hard for me to put
it into words. It should be fairly
self-evident just from what I say that I
mean I can be I'd be skeptical of the
same things in modern times as if I read
about them happening in ancient times. I
mean the my my [__] detector would
be going off with regard to similar
things in both cases or I would consider

something plausible in both cases. But some stuff I mean it's just it's so completely beyond the pale that I would consider it much more likely that it is fiction than that it really happened. And that happens in modern times too and also in ancient times. But I mean, I can't really just draw this precise line saying, you know, everything on the to the right of this line I would believe or at least accept as plausible and everything on the left I would just reject as [__] Um, you know, it has to go by a case-byase basis, I suppose. And that's it. That's the last question. And we've only been going for less than an hour and a half. So, just

to kind of take up some space at the end here before giving the usual spiel, I'll discuss my beard a little bit. I have received some praise or some compliments with regard to the beard, especially when I start putting little like rubber bands in it. And then I I have also received some criticism like from my my woman's mama. She didn't like it at all. But I mean, people that don't like it, I think it's partly just because it's it's so unusual. It's just not fashionable. But it is an experiment and I am experimenting with this. And also there was a poll on the Discord server where the majority of people actually wanted

me to grow my beard long and braid it
with a muer bead hanging at the bottom.
And uh so it is an experiment. And for
those of you who don't like it, I
guarantee you it's going to get a lot
worse before it gets any better because
I am eventually going to get it long
enough that I'm going to braid the son
of a [__] or at least do like Leo
Moracholi in his YouTube videos where
he's got like a a series of rubber bands
that makes it look kind of like a braid
just kind of hanging
down. It's not going to get really super
long though. I'm got to draw the line
somewhere. So, with that as like a bonus
answer to a question that was never

asked, I'll just say like I usually say
at the beginning, but almost never do.
If you have any questions you think I
can answer, especially about like early
Buddhism,
um, or related topics, philosophy in
general, that kind of thing. Um, feel
free to ask no more than three questions
per person, per episode, please.
and uh like and subscribe if you have
not done so already. Let's see if we can
get up to 2,000 subscribers this year so
that my my following will be even more
astronomical than it is
now. And uh I guess be happy if if
you're into that sort of thing. And I'm

going to stop recording now.

Okay then. Hello and welcome to question and answer number 140. I am your host as usual, Po Basa. This is my beverage which I mean I've been kind of phony just now
because I've had to restart this video like the third time. In fact, at one point I had to like delete and trash my OSB Studio and reddownload it just to get it to work. Restarted the computer. Everything is just for some reason somebody some higher being or lower being or some entity is trying to prevent me from from doing this Q&A. And so I've already started on the beverage. I'd put the umbrella back in

just for appearanc's
sake and I'm starting late. It's going
to be after midnight by the time I'm
done with this. Especially after if I
have to keep starting the video over and
over
again, but I had to go out and buy dirt
today and because I'm going to plant a
peach tree probably tomorrow, the the
gods
willing. And uh then I had to come home
and my woman groomed me. She used to be
a professional dog groomer. And she's
going for the schnowzer look. She says,
"I have hair like a
schnowzer. And for those of you who
don't like the long beard, it's going to

get longer. It's getting longer. It's almost long enough to start with a tiny braid. And sooner or later, there's a good chance that a muer bead is going to appear at the bottom of this. It's only an experiment. All things are impermanent, but brace yourselves.

And we've got approximately somewhere in the neighborhood of 40 questions spanning from the ridiculous to the sublime. And so I guess we should just wade right into

this. And the first question is from La Infamia, who has kind of a female name in the YouTube comments, but recently joined the Discord server and has a male

name in the Discord server. So, it could be that we're just inclusive in our Discord or some such. But anyways, La Infamia says, and I have to admit, La Infamia, being a newcomer, um does not fully appreciate the limitation to three questions per episode. So, we're just going to be a little bit uh indulgent here and just lump la infamia's first three questions into one question. So, the Infamia's first three questions that are beginning they're being lumped into one question are do monks can train or fight in Lewe? And Lewe is like Burmese kickboxing I'm pretty sure.

And then he and then Lefamia says, "It's

like a religion in Myanmar. The Lewe
matches question mark." And
then also Lefamia says, "Did you watch
one?" So I'm just going to lump all
those into the one question of what
about Burmese Leto
kickboxing? And uh with regard to can
monks train or fight in Lewe?
Um, they're not supposed to. It's just
like the
sloppiest, laxest, least conscientious
monks that would do that sort of
thing. Um, so I'm sure that there are
monks who do kickboxing. For example,
monks who were into kickboxing before
they became monks. They might still do

some kickboxing stuff after they're monks, but the lay people tend to frown upon this sort of thing. In Thailand, it's even worse. Like monks who even walk around in the afternoon in public can get scowls and grumbles from the lay people because they're held to a higher standard. They've got rules of discipline to follow. And so really it is just the least it's the least conscientious most shameless monks especially in the big cities like Mandandalay which still exists in smoking ruins after the big earthquake I assume that uh they're the ones who are into this. In fact, I read a long time ago

um that around 1988, there was a riot in Mandalay started by Buddhist monks who were refused boxing tickets. You know, they wanted to go to a boxing match, possibly kickboxing because that's the big thing in Burma. And so, they tried to get into a kickboxing match. the ticket vendor would not sell them tickets because they're monks and this is inappropriate for monks and so they just ran a

muk. Or so I read. And it wouldn't surprise me because Manderlay monks are notorious for being some of the worst monks in

Burma in in

general. So monks, yeah, if they train or fight in leto, I'm sure that some of them do, but it's it's not the best sort of monks. Um, there are certain like monasteries in the Mandandalay area that have soccer teams, too. So, sometimes you'll see out in a field like monks um you know, their their loins girded out there kicking a soccer ball around like playing soccer. And that also is something that serious monks would not seriously consider. But Manderlay monks, pretty much anything goes. They're kind of like medieval Catholic monks. You know, there's a few saintly ones, but the overwhelming majority are kind of the other end of

the

spectrum, or a lot of them

are. So, um, see, Lamia says, "It's like

a religion in Myanmar the Letoway

matches." Um, I really wasn't exposed to

it. I didn't hear about it very much.

Um, yeah. I mean, there's a there's a a

kind of it's called caneball, I think. I

can't remember the Burmese name for it,

but it's it's a ball about this big made

out of wicker. And it's just sort of a

hollow. I mean, it's got you can see the

spaces through it, you know? It's just a

wicker ball, not really solid. And it's

sort of like a hacky sack used to be in

America where, you know, Burmese guys

will sit around kicking this cane ball around. And sometimes they'll even play a kind of volleyball where you're only allowed to use your feet to kick this thing back and forth. It usually doesn't go back and forth across the net very many times, at least not with the rank amateurs that I observed.

So

um I wouldn't say that it's like a religion in Myanmar. I mean the main religion in Myanmar of course is Buddhism which is taken far more seriously than kickboxing. But I mean it might be that kickboxing is taken more seriously in general in Thailand than in Burma. But I mean I'm sure that there

for some people it's like a religion. you know, there's all these different groups of people, different interests and so forth. I just really did not associate with those people because I was pretty much living in caves and like remote forest huts when I was living in Burma. So, the last part the last part of this question is did did I watch one? And no, I have never seen a kickboxing match except for like brief bits on on television. For example, there was a Southeast Asian Games several years ago where a Burmese man won in kickboxing against a relatively large Australian kickboxer. and the Burmese were just

beaming with national pride over that that this little Burmese kickboxer beat up the big Australian kickboxer. But aside from that, it's um my experience is that it really is not that big of a deal in
Burma. So, I'm just going to move on to Lamia's second question. Considering all the kickboxing questions just to be one kind of group compound
question. Infamia says, "Did you get any tropical disease while your time in Burma? If yes, how you dealt with it living in caves or rural villages with no western medicine just waiting until the disease is gone?" Well, I had falsifum malaria like seven or eight

times when I was in Burma.

And I mean, everyone like westerners know that you're going to live in some place like Burma, you got to have the pills that will cure you of malaria wherever you go. You know, you always like you you've got a first aid kit. It's got like antibiotics and first aid cream and that kind of stuff. Dewormer, that kind of stuff. And you got to have malaria pills. That's one of the most important things.

So the first two times I had it, I was hospitalized. The first time I hadn't had malaria before. Fortunately, I knew enough about malaria that I knew that I

was had like this killer headache all the time and nothing would like aspirin, nothing would make it go away. And then I'd have like chills and fevers on alternate days. So like the third day or the third time I had the chills and fevers. Like one day chills and fevers. Second day I feel better but I still have the killer headache. Third day chills and fevers which are worse. Next day after that I feel a little better but have the killer headache. Next day after that chills and fever again. Then finally I realized I got to have malaria.

And I hadn't been in a in an area that was endemic with malaria for several

months at this time still. It was just latent in the system until it found its opportunity to burst forth and chills and fever and killer headaches and so forth. So I wound up in the hospital with that one Christmas day. Somebody came visit me and I just come out of my cave say, "Merry Christmas. I have malaria." And they just kind of loaded me into the jeep and took me into town and took me to a hospital.

And then I got malaria again about a year later. It was always when I was visiting Alando Kathaban National Park. When I go to Alando Cathab National Park, every time I went there, I'd wind

up catching coming down with malaria at
least
once. So I went to the hospital for
that, too. But then and then when I had
the second time I had malaria, I wasn't
nearly as sick as the first time because
I took the medicine quicker that time.
But still, I had a a fever of 105
degrees
Fahrenheit, which was not particularly
good. I mean, I probably cooked my brain
a little bit. There are people in Burma
who have had severe malaria who they're
just nutty. It's like their brain
cooked cuz their fever got so
high. But after the second
time, you know, it's like one day chills

and fever, next day no chills and fever, day after that chills and fever again. It's falsipro malaria. You take the pills and the pills which are based on quinine are almost as bad. Like the the side effects of the medicine of the cure is almost as bad as the malaria itself. It's just lots of like vertigo and you know it's you don't feel really good when you take the pills either. And aside from malaria the only tropical disease that I had of note would be I had got some kind of hepatitis and three different doctors gave me three different diagnosis. I mean fortunately it wasn't B or C. It

wasn't one of the bad hepatitises that
you don't cure. It was just some kind of
a but
one one doctor the first one said that
it was like some kind of side effect of
of malaria or no yeah malaria which I
hadn't had malaria in a while so I was
kind of skeptical of that. Uh another
doctor one in Rangon told me that
dysentery amiebas had invaded my liver.
He called it uh amiebic hepatitis which
is interesting. It's it's kind of the
most interesting sounding disease like
was it like attacked by
amiebas but I think probably the the
third doctor just said it's probably
just something that you ate or drank and

uh yeah I would guess that that's probably what happened. a monk who goes for alms round. It's like among villagers that have not much concept of hygiene or especially of like germ theory that I

mean I've talked about this sort of thing before people like just sneezing directly into the food before offering it that kind of thing. So yeah, I had malaria like seven or eight times and you just have to have the pills otherwise you die.

Um, the Burmese have like a certain natural resistance and gradually even someone like me built up a gradual

resistance, but still I'd be dead
several times over if I didn't have
mephaquin
tablets and uh the hepatitis I might
have survived, but I was very sick. That
was a weird time. It was a very
different kind of of sickness than
malaria just because it just felt
like like my life force was running low
like my battery was in the red kind of a
feeling. It was just just my my vitality
was just at low E. It was it really I
was starting to think maybe I was going
to die that
time. But I didn't. I got
better. And uh I guess I'm just going to
move on. Next question. This is from

Thoughtf Fog and this is uh not
particularly dumb oriented, but uh what
is your favorite
pizza? And I guess my favorite pizza
would be black olive and onion thick
crust, preferably Sicilian
style. Although I do like pizza
margarita with pesto on it. That's good,
too. But yeah, just black olive and
onion thick crust with extra cheese.
So, I'm just going to move on to
Thoughtf Fog's next question. What are
good questions to ask meditation
masters? Well, I mean, you can ask them
how they became a meditation master. You
know, what kind of meditation technique

did they start with and you know, how did they develop it over time until they reached mastery? I mean that would probably be a good kind of question to ask a meditation master is you know what kind of meditation did you do as a beginner that helped you to progress to becoming a meditation master and even if they explain it to you it won't necessarily work with you because one size does not fit all with regard to meditation. What works some people they'll take to a certain kind of meditation like a duck takes to water and other people they'll just never make any progress with it. you know, there's just their mind is working in a

different way that that responds better to a different kind of meditation. But if they're a true meditation master, um, in like with regard to teaching it, they might know several different meditation techniques that that you could try, that sort of thing. But of course, good questions to ask a meditation master would be questions about meditation and how to become a good meditator, you know, how to how to get uh make progress in meditation, questions like that rather than just asking them, you know, what what's their favorite pizza and so forth. So, next question from thought

fog is, do you still meditate? And I I no longer sit in formal meditation. I no longer sit cross-legged on the floor doing formal meditation. I just assume that I mean it I'm not going to be able to do do any justice to the kind of meditation I was doing when I was living alone in a
cave. So I don't want to just keep wallowing with elementary level meditation techniques. And so if it spontaneously arises like M or just spontaneous mindfulness of whatever I'm doing, that's fine. But no, I do not sit cross-legged in meditation anymore. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from PSA. And PSA

says, "In this video," he's talking about the previous video where I was wearing a baseball cap. He says, "In this video, you look like a Canadian trucker with that hat and beard. It looks like you just can't escape your good looks. On that note, what is your opinion of the Canadian truckers getting their bank accounts frozen by Justin Castro a few years ago? Well, I mean, I do not approve of protesters getting their own money deprived of them. It's like I mean that's just authoritarianism just the standard kind of castrated social Marxism that the left favors

nowadays. So I mean the worst they were
doing was just like blowing their horns
in protest in populated areas. But
uh aside from that I mean they they had
the right to protest. It may be that
they were violating some city ordinance
by blowing air horns in populated areas
or some such, but still that would not
justify having their bank accounts
frozen
by
Fidel Justin
Castro. So, let's just move on to PSA's
next question.
Are you a Clemson Tiger or a Gamecock
fan? And the answer is no. I've never
been into college sports. Never. Not

even for five seconds. I just never had any interest in college sports, college athletics, you know. I might watch like a a track meet or something in which I know nothing about any of the competitors just to watch them compete. That sort of thing. But Clemson, I mean, Clemson is the big thing. There's a lot of people with Clemson bumper stickers. And there's one guy at work named Lee who's just totally into Clemson. He wears like a Clemson base, not a baseball cap, but just like a beanie. Says Clemson, you know, orange. A lot of orange, the like the Tiger track. And one time he told me that at night he

relaxes by watching reruns of old Clemson games like from the like the 1990s. And I just don't get it. I've just I've pretty much lost interest in professional sports also. So, yeah, I'm Bob Jones. Bob Jones all the way. Bob Jones University in in Greenville, South Carolina. If if they got an athletics department. If they don't, then I'd have to go with uh what's the other one? Furman. Furman University. I think their their team is called the Paladins or something like that.

So yeah, let's just uh move on to PSA's third question. And by golly, it is a Buddhism question. And so PSA says, "Is there any

part of the Abid Dama that you
particularly like or would highly
recommend others to read and study?"
Um, I don't particularly like any of it
really and I wouldn't highly recommend
others to study it unless that you just
want to be literate in terra Buddhist
orthodoxy just so that you'll know what
terravada Buddhism officially teaches.
In which case I would stay away from the
Abidama texts
themselves and read something like the
Abid Damata Sangaha which is what most
Abidama students in Burma study. You
don't go straight to the poly texts
which are practically unreadable.

They're

so hyper techchnical and intellectual

that some some Abidama texts I mean it's

it's like trying to study a calculus

text.

But the abidamata sanga which in Burmese

is called dingju

um you know it's sort of a compendium

and

synopsis summary of the the basic

teaching basic teachings of abidama and

there are books in English that are

modeled on the abidamata sanaha like I

think uh sat usila nanda wrote a kind of

synopsis or summary of abidama also So

there's a uh Dr. Mintin man in Burma

wrote the essence of Buddha Abidama. If

you live in in Burma, it's almost impossible not to have a copy of it because people will keep offering you copies and no matter how many of them you give away, you just keep getting more. I met Dr. Mintinmon. He was a very nice guy up until he he realized that I did not take abidama seriously. Did not think that the Buddha really taught it. and then he wouldn't look at me anymore. But the one book of Abidama that I did read with some interest is the kata watu which I think is like the third or fourth book of Abidama. And it's unlike all the other books. It's really I mean it shouldn't really be an

Abidama book. the the katawatu it's I
mean it's not dealing with you know how
mind works and this sort of thing like
causal relations like Patana teaches
this sort of thing that katawatu is
mainly kind of a guide to terra
Buddhists in debating the monks from
other schools of Buddhism and I mean
that's a pretty good indication the
Buddha the Buddha didn't really teach it
because it it arose around the time of
the emperor Ashoka and it's regarding
like disputes or controversies with
other philosophical schools in Buddhism
that didn't exist in the Buddhist time
but did exist in Ashoka's
time. So, I mean, that's kind of

interesting. In a way, it's kind of sad when your side, Terravada, um, you know, they use really lame arguments like bad logical reasoning and so forth to win their points, but it does give you um a a good idea of the philosophical landscape of Burma in ancient India around the time of Ashoka, like 3rd century BCE. So, that's kind of interesting. And in the Polytex Society translation, it's got a long like introduction, a scholarly introduction by the translator discussing the evolution of Buddhist philosophy and like the the branches of the the Buddhist family tree sort of,

you know, first you had the the first great schism between the Mahasangika and the Staveras and then the different branches, you know, the different schools that arose from each side. It's it's interesting. It was at least it was interesting to me but um I mean it's not really
necessary like the old the English monk nyan vera used to say that the less abidama you know the better because it's the less you have to unlearn in order to really know dhamama
correctly.
So I mean for me it would just be like an academic thing. If you just want to be literate in what terraatara Buddhist

orthodoxy teaches then it it may be to your advantage to be familiar with abidama like just studying the ab damata sanaha or some book based on the abidamata sanaha would probably get you farther than tackling the abidama texts themselves. And the kataw watu is is kind of like an anthropological study on early earlyish Buddhism in India like around one or 100 years or 150 years after the after the time of the Buddha. So I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Xenithoid and Xenithid says, "What is going on karmically when a chicken's head is cut off and the body is still

running

around? If there's no consciousness left in the chicken's body, then I guess you could say that it's just the karma of the observers of the still moving headless body to see something weird and it has nothing to do with the chicken's karma. But I don't know. Yeah, I don't think it would have much to do with a chicken's karma. I mean, technically, when when somebody cuts the head off of a chicken, I experienced this when I was a kid. We lived on a small farm. We butchered chickens. Sometimes the the chicken is just like flopping all over the place after his head gets cut off, which is just like the the firing of of

nerve impulses. And this is kind of a macabra kind of a story. But I was told that during the Napoleonic Wars that the French soldiers would do the same sort of thing to humans where they would cut off a human like an enemy solders's head then and then they'd have like an iron plate that they had been heating in the in the fire. They'd stick that onto the neck, the stump, and then the body would actually get up and run around. And that was that was how these French soldiers amused themselves back when French soldiers were still badasses. So um it's really not the karma of the the

the soldier who is diseased because you know his spirit has already moved on. The chicken spirit such as it was has already moved on. It's from the like the biological point of view, it's just like random firing of nerve impulses. Although you could say that from a karmic point of view, it's more the karma of the observer than the karma of the deceased individual whose spirit is no longer there. Their karma has already the the the momentum of their karma has already moved elsewhere. So from a purely like like from the point of view of uh subjective idealism then certainly that uh their behavior would be your own karma the karma of the

observer but that would apply even when the person's still alive you know whatever a living person does that you are witnessing that you are experiencing that's your karma not theirs I mean it's they're making their own karma by doing this stuff, but it's the fruition of your own karma that causes you to see it and experience
it. So from that point of view, it doesn't really matter whether the chicken or the enemy soldier is alive or dead that whatever that they they're doing, that's your own karma when you are witnessing it. Even though they're making their own karma, but that's

that's on them.
If it wasn't your karma to experience
it, you wouldn't experience
it. So, I think I'm just going to move
on to Xenithoid's second question, which
is still discussing a chicken with it
head cut off. Do you believe the body of
the chicken is still sentient after it
has lost its head? Well,
um the human body, like in a coma, would
be similar. You know, it's like the
enemy soldier with his head cut
off and the chicken with his head cut
off. I mean, they'd be dead. I mean,
there wouldn't be like the brain
consciousness anymore, but still there
would be a kind of like a a basic body

consciousness, sort of like a a colony of protozoans that are still alive. um it' probably be a little more advanced than a colony of protozoneans because there would still be somewhat of a nervous system that to some extent would still be connecting parts of the body. There'd still be the like the uh the spinal cord which does perform certain stereotypical brain functions. So there could be a kind of you know subconscious sort of quasi sentience. I mean I don't know if you'd call it sentience. It would be there's a certain level of consciousness still there but it wouldn't be like the main

being that has the karmic stream that has already moved on to another existence by the time uh this sort of thing happens.

But you just have like this lower level of I don't know. I don't even know what you'd call

it. You know, some sort of animal like a jellyfish that doesn't really have a brain. That sort of thing. It'd be sort of that level of consciousness

maybe. So, I think I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's third question, which is, do you believe in the BO realm? And are we recording? Yeah. as we are. Although I'm a little more insecure this time because I had to had so many

problems trying to get OBS to to start up. It kept crashing over and over again until finally I had to just delete the the app and re redownload it. But let's just uh get back to this question here. So Xenithoid says, "Do you believe in the Bardo realm or is it just an instant click from one body to the next? Perhaps some Bardo realm shenanigans could explain what's going on with the chicken. Yeah, I don't think it's BTO realm shenanigans that are causing the a decapitated chicken to flop around like the chicken yard.

Um, again, it's probably from the from the scientific point of view, it would

just be like random nerve firing, that kind of thing. But with regard to the Bardo realm, um the terraodin idea that there is no intermediate state that just one moment you die, the very next moment you take rebirth as some other being. I don't think that's necessarily in conflict with the more Tibetan idea of this intermediate state called the Bardo realm. Um it just would be that the BTO realm would be a kind of spirit existence. So you would cease existing as a human and then immediately take up this kind of spirit existence that would correspond to a BTO realm until the time is ripe for you to take on like another human existence or whatever other kind

of human other kind of existence you're
going to
take.
So yeah, it it supposedly from a
terraodm point terabot Buddhist point of
view, it's the instant click from just
the very next moment that you have to
take there has to be like an unbroken
continuum of
consciousness. So as soon as you cease
being conscious and alive in this life,
it's just boom. You have to like take
rebirth. rebirth linking consciousness
and it just continues like more or less
of an
unbroken unbroken stream of

consciousness so to speak. Um, but again, you could like have a 40-day long spirit existence, you know, some sort of lower dava realm, higher PA realm kind of existence that is sort of a filler until you're ready to take the next human existence or whatever the existence is going to be.

Maybe it's like you got to wait until the conditions are just right because you're supposed to be born in a certain way to a certain kind of person and you know she's only eight months pregnant or whatever and so there might be kind of a weight where you would take a different kind of existence as you know like I said low-level da realm highle pa realm

that kind of thing

just processing or doing whatever it is

that you do more or less along Tibetan

book of the dead lines maybe not I

really can't

say. So I'm just going to move on to the

next question which is

from and says are you a chess player and

then there's sort of a a subsequent

question here of online chess and I

haven't played a game of chess in many

years before I became a monk for

Christmas one year I got a computer

chess game. This is back before it was

all done on a computer screen. It was

like an actual board with little pieces

that you moved around. And I figured I was a pretty good chess player, sort of. At least I considered myself to be a pretty good chess player. So I thought, well, I'll just start at level one and just keep playing until it starts beating me. You know, just keep going up one level after each victory until it's the, you know, I meet my match, so to speak. And to my humiliation, I was beaten at level one. So, I went to a bookstore and bought a book on chess tactics and strategy and read about half of it. Books on chess strategy are pretty dry reading. But I learned enough from the first half of this book on chess strategy that before I became a

monk, I played that same computer chess game at the highest level and won. You know, it might take 45 minutes for this little chess computer chess game to make its next move. It was thinking a long time, but still I was able to beat it. I I I played one game at the highest level and and won. So, I pretty much, you know, that was sort of my meteoric career as a chess player. Uh, I think I'm all Apple computers or I'm pretty sure all Apple computers have a chess program on them. I have a fairly good chess chess game on this computer. I can play against the computer and I maybe did it a few times

as a monk. Like maybe 15 years ago, I was just sort of bored or something and just decided I was going to play some chess against the computer. And you know, I did fairly well, but uh yeah, it's it's not something that I'm really avid about. And I've never played online chess. I've I've played against another human and I played against a computer, but when I played against another human, it was like on a real chess board in real life, so to speak. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question, which is from Phil. And Phily says, "Astrological significance of beverage." And I am happy to

announce that this coffee has no
astrological significance
whatsoever. So I'm just going to move on
to Phil Lee's next
question. What if prime numbers contain
the secret of Samsara? Well, I kind of
doubt it. In fact,
uh, yeah, I mean, yeah, I kind of doubt
it. I really don't think so. So, I think
I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's
third
question, which is as
follows. Has anyone really been far even
as decided to use even, go, want to do,
look more
like, and

uh, yes.

So, I think I'm gonna move on to the next question here. I don't know what Phil was on when he was asking these questions, but

uh it's it's it just I get the feeling that it was a fairly intense experience.

So, next question is from Romeo and Romeo says, "In the vein of Master Po's Fred or Yung question from your last Q&A, Orwell's 1984 or Huxley's Brave New World?"

And I mean, I'm not exactly sure what the question is asking. It's like, which book did I prefer? Which which book do I think more accurately represents like post-modern western

civilization? Which book do I think was more well written or more precient? I'm not sure what the question is exactly. You know, the all he's got is Orwell's 1984 or Huxley's Brave New World. And of the two, I prefer Huxley's Brave New World. I prefer Huxley's oldest Huxley's writing style to Orwell's writing style. Orwell's I mean he's very depressing. Um you know it's like in Orwell's novels it's like the hero the most likable person in the story always gets utterly destroyed by the evilst person in the story.

So Huxley was a little more subtle, a

little more sophisticated I think. And I do think that his Brave New World is comes closer to the globalist cyberpunk dystopia that we are beginning to observe
lately. Like a lot of people will just say that you know what's happening now is like Orwell's 1984 and there are certain parallels you know like the Ministry of Truth anyone I mean it's like the cockroaches have come out in broad daylight ever since Trump ran for president the first time that it's now just painfully obvious that the mainstream media are just shameless propagandists and they just keep doubling down and their credibility is

jot and their days are
numbered. But for the most part,
Huckley's Brave New World more
accurately describes what the globalists
are trying for and you know what has
already been set up. Like for example,
in Orwell's 1984, it's mainly using
terroristic tactics against your own
people to keep them in line. Whereas
Hxley's Brave New World, it's you're
you're using more the carrot than the
stick. You know, you're just keeping
them like in a state of doped up
euphoria and just consumeristic dopamine
hits and that's how you keep them under
control. And another thing from Hxley's

Brave New World that was really one of his main points is that you want to eliminate any strong feelings. So it's like with consumerism, you just condition people if you have any desire for anything, gratify the desire immediately. Don't let it build up. Don't have strong attachments for another person, don't have family sentiment. Like in in Hxley's Brave New World, one of the the the deadliest insults that you could ask or you could say to someone is, "Who's your mother?" Because I mean they did away with any kind of nuclear family in the Brave New World, you know? I mean, in the Brave New World, they went to the extreme of

babies being produced in in

like

biofactories, but still, I mean, you you

weren't supposed to get married. You

weren't supposed to be faithful to

anyone. You're just supposed to move on

from one person to the other. Just be

sexually promiscuous. No family

responsibilities. no loyalty to family

that might replace your loyalty to the

government, that sort of thing. And

that's pretty much what's happening

nowadays. So, yeah, I do think that

Huckley's Brave New World comes closer

to the current state of affairs than

Orwell's 1984, even though there is some

Orwellian stuff going on, too.

So, I'm just going to move on to Romeo's second

question, which is, do you think these books were works of

fiction that just happened to foreshadow the dystopian worlds that began to take shape after they were

published? Or are they actual blueprints for elites to set them up? I think they were both cautionary tales. They were both not necessarily prophecies but warning of the direction that that like western

civilization could be headed. You know, it's like Orwell was essentially warning against what would happen if Marxism

took over the West. That's what Orwell was warning about at the time. Whereas Huxley, he was observing like American just western consumerism from like the 1930s and 40s. I'm not exactly sure. I think it was in the 1930s that Brave New World was published. And so he was observing consumerism then and just sort of extrapolating into the future, you know, what direction it would be going in. And he extrapolated fairly well. He missed a few things like um in in the Brave New World, the the Brave New World was still predominantly ruled by men. You know, he missed out on the whole DEI stuff, which is maybe one reason why the

Brave New World was so efficiently run

is because it didn't have diversity

hires [__] [__]

up.

So, let's see.

Do I think these books were works of

fiction that just happened to foreshadow

the dystopian worlds that began to take

shape or are they actual blueprints? I

think they were warnings. Both of them

were warnings. It's like this could

happen if you don't be careful if you

don't open your

eyes and we pretty much dodged the

Orwellian

bullet.

Um but the brave new world where it's

just the government is using dopamine
hits to keep everyone docile and just
you know causing them to if they feel
strongly about anything they're going to
feel strongly about whatever the
government wants them to feel strongly
about. So yeah I was definitely
globalist. The Brave New World was a
globalist and it was more
uh humane I guess than Orwells like like
in the Brave New World they they
wouldn't take the dissident like the
people that just don't fit in the people
that are just too conscious that can't
just go along with this this mindless
conditioning that everyone's following

along with. And they I mean they wouldn't just like torture them to death like in Orwell's 1984. They'd just get sent to some island. So that would be preferable I guess. If I had to live in the Brave New World or in in the 1984 Oceanania, then I'd have to go with with Huxley and maybe I'd wind up on one of those nice islands. So I'm just going to move on. Next question.

This is from Kundrew and Kundrew says, "Are there any stories from the Paw Watu that are memorable or stand out to you?" And there really is only one. And I've I've told this story before on my in my

Q&As's. There's the story of there's this woman who was a virtuous woman except on one occasion she was unfaithful to her husband. And worse than that, when he was suspicious and asked her about it, she denied it and even made this oath. It's like there was like this big black dog walking by, you know, and she says, "If if I'm lying, may that dog just kill me." Something like that. And so, not just because she was unfaithful to her husband, but also even more importantly, because of this false oath that she made. She swore to a lie that in her next life she because she was mainly very virtuous. She was

her she and her husband were making donations to the monks all the time. So she she wound up living like a goddess in the foothills of the Himalaya mountains. You know, she'd be like level of the four great kings like deva realm. And you know, it's like pleasure pleasure gardens with these celestial fruit trees. This huge mansion that she lived in. She had this this troop of like 500 attendants who were like her 500 friends who who who vouched for her in when she was lying. You know, they they like lied for her and said, "No, no, she didn't do anything wrong."
So she lived like a goddess except every night she'd go into like this trance

state and come down out of the mansion and this big black dog would devour her leaving only the bones. The bones would then fall into this lotus pond and then in the water she would grow a new body, climb out of the water, go back up to bed and the same thing would repeat every night. And that's the way the pas in the pa watu are. It's it's kind of strange that in uh in Terra Buddhism, it's like a spectrum like ghosts and gods are on a spectrum where the highest ghost is just right up against the lowest god. And sometimes the only difference is they live like gods. You know, they they have like the palaces

and everything, but they had did this
one wrong thing. usually something to do
with not donating being stingy towards
monks or something like in the paw watu
there's a lot of
that and so you know they might be like
naked or they might smell bad or
something that that's like their their
punishment you know they're like a god
except for they got this one defect
still and so eventually there was this
heroic king who it was like some kind of
celestial peach or something some fruit
that got washed down into the Ganges
River from this from this palace that
had the pleasure the celestial fruit
trees and everything and if you eat of

it then it may not make you immortal but it like makes you young again. It prolongs your life. And so this heroic king went off in search and found these this

this goddess and they was he was the first man that this this this woman this this pa and her retinue of female pa servants had seen. And so they're all just a man a man you know they're just like all all excited all in a tizzy over that. and he wound up, you know, having the romantic affair with her and found out about the dog and then he kills the dog and her, it was mainly her karma had worked itself out. She had paid her dues

sufficiently that, you know, it was it was in accordance with her karma that this heroic king human male killed the the dog that was eating her every night. But then he had to go back to his kingdom and left her behind. And I don't remember exactly what happened after that. Uh, but I do think I even have a blog post where that is translated. Uh, I can't remember now. You might go to my blog and just do a search on Paw Watu or something and it there's a good chance it would turn up there.

But

uh mainly the pto watu it's it's one of the latest additions to the

polytopica and it's it's kind
of I mean if you read it you see that it
was probably written by wise guy monks
talking about how by you know supporting
the sa you're going to have great things
happen to you but if you like don't
support the sa very well then bad things
are going to happen to you. And you
know, it's just I mean, it still happens
to this day in Burma where some of the
Seattle will be giving these sermons on
by offering robes to the monks, you're
going to have you're going to be
reborn rich and beautiful, this kind of
stuff. And that seems to be one of the
kind of a predominant theme throughout

the Paw

Watu. So anyways, I'm just going to move

on to Kundrew's second question.

which is do you think the average lay

person would

benefit from reading the paw watsu? Why

or why not? Um I mean it's it's

interesting like legendary stories and

it can give you insight. I mean it's

part of the

polytopica and so it'll give you insight

into the culture and like mental states

of the formulators of orthodox

terraovvada. Um I don't think it's

necessary to read it at

all. I think most terra Buddhists do not

read the ptoatu. If you just want to

read stories that are like entertaining and maybe even uplifting and give you some insight into what society was like in ancient northern India, you'd be much better off reading like the Dharmapata commentary.

I think the Dhamop commentary would be much more beneficial to someone wanting to read

stories from ancient India than reading the pa watu or the weim mana watu also. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Yugu and Yugu says why do enlightenment people still need to meditate sitting and walking? I don't think they still need

to meditate.

I think an enlightened person is always going to be in a meditative state no matter what they're doing. Although if they were if they became enlightened through practicing dharma like they're a monk for example, they're going to continue doing monk stuff because they're still a monk. And you know, meditating if if you're enlightened, you know, you're getting into really profound meditative states. I mean, you might as well be doing that as doing something else.

So I do think that a fully enlightened being really has no need for for meditation anymore. It's could just be

sort of like residual habits or it's just a convenient way to pass the time. It's just the thing that they've been doing, you know, it's like the traditional thing or the cultural thing or just the thing that they've been doing personally for years and so they just continue with that. But really meditation is part of the raft. You know, formal meditation like observing your breaths and that sort of thing is part of the raft that once you cross over to the other side, you don't need it anymore. You don't just carry it on your shoulders, you just leave it behind. So, but still I do think that an

enlightened being is going to be in in a profound meditative state all the time. They don't really need the gimmick of sitting cross-legged anymore, although some of them may still do that. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Maitraa Buddha. And Maitraa Buddha says, "Is there any evidence that the Buddha existed outside of Buddhist scripture? How do we know for sure he existed and that he's not an amalgamation of local folklore of wise men making up stories and parables to express wisdom? Well, one part of this, how do we know for sure that he existed? I mean, you you can't know for sure that

that you exist, you can't know for sure
that Abraham Lincoln existed. There's
photographs and all that, but I
mean, Bertrren Russell pointed out in
one of his books that there's no way you
can prove that some god with a strange
sense of humor didn't just create this
world five minutes ago, implanting in us
memories of things that never happened.
There's no way you can prove that. I
mean, skepticism like rules. You you
just
can't I mean, skepticism can shoot down
just about any
argument. So, we can't know for sure
that the Buddha existed. We can't know

for sure that India exists even now.
Even people living in India can't be
100% sure. And in fact, the
philosophical ones would probably doubt
it because they would consider it to be
Maya or illusion.
So there's
that. But also, is there any evidence
that the Buddha existed outside of
Buddhist scripture? I'm not sure if
there is any like the Jane texts are not
reliable. I mean, whether they mention
the Buddha at all. I mean the Jane texts
were composed considerably after the
Buddhist time because the James lost
their texts
twice and it was all handed down orally

for

centuries. So I mean that's not

persuasive evidence even if there is

mention of the Buddha in in Jane texts.

Um I don't know of any inscriptions that

go back to the time of the Buddha. I

mean, the best evidence the Buddha

existed is just the like the body of

text of all the stuff that he supposedly

did and said, you know, you've got like

his birthplace, his death place, the

place of his enlightenment. You've got

like the stupas commemorating this that

go back to ancient times. Um, and also

you've got

relics. So, relics are are part of my

Buddha's second question. So, I guess
I'll address that when I get to that.
Let's see. How do we know for sure he
existed? We don't. We can't. Nobody can
know. And that he's not an amalgamation
of local forkl wise men making up
stories and parables to express wisdom.
I don't think that that's the case,
though. I think it is more likely, more
probable just going with the
whole conventional
truth approach to
reality just empirical worldly reality
that it is more likely that God Buddha
existed even if most of the stories
attributed to him are not true.
Similarly, I feel the same way about

Jesus. There's been a lot of people, including some people that I know, who think Jesus never existed, but I do think it's more likely that he did. You can't prove it that he did. You can't prove that he didn't, but it does seem more likely. You know, I I accept it as a working hypothesis that God Buddha existed and a working hypothesis that Jesus of Nazareth existed. In fact, hell, I still think that there's a good chance that William Shakespeare really did write his own plays. Although, I have a a good friend who's really on the Francis Bacon bandwagon. Or there's there's also the

weird thing is that there's like
persuasive cases for like two or three
other people that wrote Shakespeare's
plays. And I mean, it really doesn't
matter. I mean what really matters is
does dharma help you to cultivate wisdom
and and purity and so forth. That's
really the important thing. So even if
the Buddha never really existed
u dharma is still legitimate. Whereas
Christianity if Jesus never existed then
Christianity pretty much collapses
because how can you accept someone as
your savior if they don't exist?
But with Buddha, I mean, it wasn't
really based on a personality cult or it
shouldn't have been anyway. It's like,

you know, after he is gone, the dharma
is your teacher. And if dharma works,
you know, if it helps you to get wiser
and better, then it's all good.
So yeah, I mean, you can't really be
sure about anything that exists outside
of your
mind. Even some of the stuff that exists
inside your mind, you can't be sure
of. And I just finished my primary
beverage beverage, my designated primary
beverage or DPV, DPB.
So, I'm breaking into the emergency
backup
beverage. And I even had this urge
earlier that it was just like this

little insight that maybe I should have two emergency backup beverages, but I just didn't follow through with that. So, we're going to see if I live to regret
it. So, let's see here. I guess I answered that question. So, I'm going to move on to my Treya Buddha's second question, which regards relics. As far as his relics, if scientists could would carbon date them, will it approximate to someone who existed around 2,500 years ago? I would guess, yeah, I have seen some of the Buddha's relics. At least there's good evidence that they really were the Buddha's relics, that they came from Peshawar. They're the Peshawar

relics that are you can look at them in Burma at the they're at the base of Mandandalay Hill. I've been to see them twice, at least

twice. And I mean, there's some pretty solid evidence uh like a chain of custody kind of a thing going all the way back to ancient times. It's like after the Buddha died, his relics were divided up into I think it was like eight eight portions and there were like eight pagotas or stupas built commemorating these relics. Then during the reign of the emperor Ashoka, he broke into those and divided them up more and and made more stupas around

India commemorating the Buddha's relics. And then when the the Kushan king Kaneska conquered northwestern India, he he did it again. He broke into some of Ashoka's stupas and you know he he enshrined the relics in in more stupas and more importantly he uh at least with regard to the story his capital city which was near what is now Peshawar in Pakistan

um he he built this huge pagota which the Muslims destroyed but it was this huge pagota in his capital city and as this emperor, you know, he wanted legitimate relics in his great huge pagod. So, I'm sure he would have made some effort to get like legit genuine

relics of the Buddha out of some of Ashoka's or at least out of one of Ashoka's stupas and then he enshrined them in in this huge pagota at Peshawar and then the Muslims destroyed the pagota wiped out Buddhism in the area and so it was like in British colonial times some British archaeologists were they were thinking well I there this there was this huge pagota here at one point. Let's just dig down right in the middle of it and see if there's some sort of like a relic chamber. And sure enough, they found this relic chamber that was it was like a a golden casket. And inside the golden

casket was a smaller crystal, like a a vial kind of a thing. And it had Keshka's name inscribed on it. And inside this crystal vial was little pieces of bone. And you can see them to this day at the foot of Mandalay Hill in Burma, if you can get into Burma nowadays. And so I would guess that if someone carbon dated that some one of those little pieces of bone that it would probably come out, you know, maybe a little after 2,500 years ago. They've sort of modern western scholars have been revising the times that like the dates of the Buddha, you know, like almost a century ear or later than tradition has it. But still, it wouldn't

surprise me at all if it really was the
Buddha's relics. And also, there's like
a um the burial stupa
of who was it? I think it
was I think it was Sar Puta. I think
traditionally they know where that one
is too.
So, they might be able to find some some
uh relics, you know, like biological
fragments of bone or something there
also that they could test. It's too bad
that they were cremated cuz then you
can't clone them and create like a new
Godmma. Although, he might not become
enlightened this time. I don't I don't
know how that would work to if you could

somehow clone, you know, like Godma, you know,
Shakyamuni. Of course, he wouldn't be enlightened when he was born. That would be weird. I mean, it might be a whole different karmic stream enters that body and you might wind up with a very different
person.
So, yeah, I'm I'm guessing that the Peshawar relics are I mean, I can't know for sure, but still there there is some fairly good evidence that they really are relics of the Buddha. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Fred. And Fred says, "Are we all stoned?" And I

think what what PSA or No, it wasn't PSA. It was Philes. I think Phil may have been stoned when he asked his questions. Um, but I think Fred is being more philosophical here. He's not asking if we're all loaded, which we are not. Some of us maybe are.

Some of us may have drunk half a bottle of cough syrup right before watching this. Who

knows? But I mean at a more philosophical philosophical point of view, we all have moa. We all have delusion or what could be called semiconscious stupidity. Like the word moa based on my understanding of the

term, it does mean something like semiconscious stupidity. And so pretty much anyone who isn't enlightened could be in that kind of stuper that is similar to being stoned. I mean in a way you could say we're kind of intoxicated on the defilements that kind of thing. You could interpret it philosophically and say yeah we're all stoned on defilements or delusion or whatever. But I do appreciate the short question. It's only four words. And I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb. Sometimes also still known as Libra Lamb and and also, you know, etc., etc., and

so on so

forth. Man of many names is Stellar

Supreme. And he says, "Can you tell the

story of your father being a hobo at one

time riding freight trains?" And it is

true that my father was born in 1921. He

was a relatively old man when he had me.

And so he was alive during the Great

Depression and he ran away from home as

a teenager and became essentially a

hobo. I think he he was an alcoholic by

the time he was 18 and just riding

freight trains across the country up

until um he

eventually uh he joined the CCC for a

while which was the Civilian

Conservation Corps. Uh like he helped to dig a back door into Oregon caves at Oregon Caves National Monument I think it's called. So this is like um the Franklin D. Roosevelt's, you know, trying to support the the American economy by just having the government paying people to just do public works stuff, that kind of thing. And then eventually joined the army and fought in World War II. But he did have some stories of just riding freight trains and talking about how there was like a hobo

um you know, like a a a code of honor sort of. And also they they had like codes where like if there was like a

soft-hearted person that would offer
offer handouts to hobos and some hobos
they'd leave like this little mark on
their on their fence so other hobos
would know that this person offers food
or whatever it is. And I don't know if
hobos even still exist. I think nowadays
it's more like meth and fentinel and
stuff that that people you don't see
very many just
winos or you know homeless people that
are just
drunks but times have changed in that
regard. So yeah he he was like a real
life hobo who rode freight trains across
the country and eventually you know did

other he did all sorts of things. I mean

during the depression and my father was

he

always how do I explain this you know he

was always a

nonconformist was not a follower he was

an explorer of

frontiers my father really loved

frontiers he eventually wound up like

big game hunting and gold prospecting in

Alaska which is where I was born

um so yeah

He's he was a hobo. And so I'm just

going to I'm just going to move on uh to

Stellar Supreme, etc., etc. Second

question, which is what were some of his

wild stories of hobo jungles? And one

story that he he would tell me was just what they would drink because this was also during the time of prohibition. So alcohol was illegal just like marijuana is still illegal in in some states of the union where um one thing that they would drink was shoe polish that shoe polish had some kind of ethyl alcohol in it and you you'd have to let the the the black stuff sink to the bottom. So, you have to set it aside for a while. Like some hobo would steal a case of shoe polish that, you know, they'd set it aside waiting for the big party and then they'd pass around the bottle of shoe polish and the last person to take the

drink, he'd get the black stuff all over his teeth and his mouth and he'd get laughed at and ridiculed.

Um, possibly the wildest story though my father told of being in a hobo jungle was he was walking along and he saw this hobo cooking chicken legs over a fire. You know, just like you know holding the chicken leg, you know, kind of turn it in his hand over this fire. And my father asked him, "Where'd you get those where'd you get those drumsticks?" And so the hobo leads him around to this freight car of a freight train. And there's crates of live chickens in this this freight car. And you can't get he couldn't get the whole chicken. This is

this it's an awful story, but he
couldn't get the live the whole chicken
through the like the bars of the the the
crate. So, but he could like yank out
yank legs off these live temporarily
live chickens. And then he's just going
around and just roasting them and
burning off the feathers, I guess. just
roasting them over the
fire. And that kind of [__] happens in
this
world. And there are some people that
don't see anything wrong with that. I
mean, it was really it's the the whole
idea of being humane towards animals is
a relatively modern idea. I mean, there

have always been people who have loved animals and been soft-hearted towards them. The prophet Muhammad apparently had had like consideration towards animals and so forth, even though he did promote, you know, bloody animal sacrifices, like you you're supposed to cut the throat of a camel at at Mecca, that kind of
thing. But, uh, it was just like even in Christianity, you know, killing an animal is just it's just not on the moral landscape. I mean, it's just does it's not part in in the equation at all. You know, it's like Jesus helped his disciples catch fish after he died according to the story. You know,

killing animals is just that's why there that's what the Old Testament says. You know, this is we're here. I mean, humans just have dominion over nature, including animals. And we can do whatever the hell we want to. We can kill animals if we want to. It's a and then we burn them and it's a pleasing aroma for the Lord.

So yeah, that is kind of strange to me that just this whole idea of compassion towards animals is relatively rare in the human

race. Anyways, I'm just going to move on. Next question. And this is from Norman. And Norman says, "If you could

redo the path from your early 20s, how would you proceed or do things differently?"

Well, I mean, that would be assuming that I I wouldn't know then what I know now. And so, in all likelihood, I wouldn't change anything. I mean, if I could know then what I know now, I might do things differently because I wouldn't have to do what I already did. You know, it's like, why go to college again and and study the same stuff when you've already learned it? you know, why study the same things as a monk that I've I've already learned. I already know that stuff. So, from that point of view, I could do something different. But I

don't think that's really the
implication in Norman's
question. In Norman's question, I mean,
it's like, if I could redo the path from
my early
20s, how would you proceed or do things
differently? Yeah. I mean, I I really
don't think that I don't I don't think I
should mess with anything because things
have worked out pretty well. So, I
shouldn't try to fix anything. If it
ain't broke, don't fix it. So, I think I
just leave it the way it
was. If I had my whole life to live over
again, knowing then what I know now
already, I might do things very

differently. Like, I'd buy Amazon stock when it went on the market in 1997. probably wouldn't have to be a monk. Look for my sweetie when we're still young. That kind of thing. But yeah, I mean, if I didn't know then what I know now, I just do it the way I did it because everything happens the way it's supposed to happen and things seem to have happened fairly well.

So, I'm just going to move on to Norman's second question, which is, "What personality or gen genetic traits have you noticed in people with high attainments? How can one honestly assess

whether enlightenment is within reach in
this lifetime?" I don't know. I don't
think it's possible really to assess
whether enlightenment is within reach in
this lifetime. I mean with some people
it's maybe fairly obvious that they're
just like wallowing in samsara
completely lost in the
illusion you know they're completely
bluepilled completely stuck in the
matrix but even even somebody like
that they can suddenly have like a
near-death experience or some such that
just slams them into a different state
of
consciousness whereas there are some

people who have high attainment ments

that are just stuck in those high

attainments and they can never really

completely transcend this world and

become enlightened like some Hindu

swamies they just get more and more

refined more and more refined more and

more refined but it's like they're still

stuck they're stuck in a very refined

level of samsara but they're still stuck

in

samsara and that's the way it is with

most relatively wise people most dharma

teachers most dharma teachers that kind

of thing you know they're they're not

enlightened yet and they might have less

like realistic chance of becoming

enlightened than some other person who just has a near-death experience and gets slammed into a higher mental state. So, you can't really tell for sure. Maybe some personality traits like more being more introverted and less extroverted or even being somewhat homely or having some sort of social handicap that prevents you from really doing well in society and just getting lost in it where you have some kind of circumstance that keeps you sort of on the fringe as a kind of outsider. Like St. John of the Cross, one of my favorite examples, he was like less than five feet tall when he was full grown

just

through they think through just chronic

malnutrition as a child. He had such a

rough childhood that just helped to push

him in the direction of

saintthood. So let's let's consider this

question one more time. What personality

or genetic traits have you noticed in

people with high attainments?

Uh yeah, they tend to be kind of

introverted, quiet, um not really

effusive, emotional kind of people.

Although even ausive emotional kind of

people can still have some kind of

experience

that just kind of knocks them loose from

some

sorrow. So it'd be more of a statistical thing, I guess. And how can one honestly assess whether enlightenment is within reach in this lifetime? I don't think you can. Anything is possible. That's that's one thing that uh it's it's like a great comforting thought from me even though it can be interpreted positively or negatively that anything is possible and that you should never say well I I can't become enlightened in this life because you don't know and if the belief that you can't become enlightened helps you not to become enlightened you know you just get locked into it sort of like what I was talking about in the previous

Q&A with that quote from Albear Kimu
where it's like you know whatever you
consider to be true enslaves
you and a lot of people that are into
all this health you know biochemistry
stuff on YouTube videos if they they
really believe that that is true then it
this kind of locks them into that you
know in a way it enslaves them it
becomes sort of like a like a
prison so you're better off
not making up your mind with regard to
that sort of thing. You shouldn't think
that you can't become enlightened
because who knows anything is possible.
So I'm just going to move on to the next
question which is from the

protoseudk and the protose pseudom monk
um he generally has headings
uh at the beginning of his questions and
the first heading is on po following
Hindu teachings and then the question is
if the only enlightened beings you
believe to exist have been two Hindu
saints why not practice Hinduism or
vanta instead of terabara Buddhism?
Well, I don't think that they're the
only two beings that I believe to exist.
Although they would be pretty much at
the top of the list of people in the
like the past hundred years who may
really have been fully enlightened would
be Ramana Maharshi and Nim Karoli Baba.

Both of them Hindus. One of them the Vishnavite and the other one a shyite. You know they had different approaches to Hinduism.

But you know like Nim Kurly Baba was a a devotey of Hanuman the monkey god whereas Ramana Maharshi was a devotey of Arunachala which is a hill sacred to to Shiva in South India. Um so I think it it just kind of turned out that way. I mean maybe way of Burma maybe he was fully enlightened. I never met him but I have heard only good things about him. So let's see. Uh why not practice Hinduism instead of Terravatara Buddhism? It just doesn't resonate with me as well as Buddhism.

Buddhism is more intellectual. It has less less fairy tales. And the fairy tales that do exist in Terravata Buddhism can be just set aside and ignored because they're not really important. You know, they're not essential to the teachings. It's just like window dressing or frosting on the cake or
whatever. So Buddhism definitely just resonates with me much better. It's more philosophical. It makes better sense. But making good sense isn't really necessary for an enlightenment tradition. I mean if if you got the devotionalism to to just worship

wholeheartedly Vishnu or Shiva or Hanuman the monkey god or Arunachala the hill or whatever or Jesus Christ or the Virgin Mary or whatever I mean just wholeheartedly just complete faith in that then you can go far with that too. is just that I'm a lukewarm philosophically minded westerner with a capacity for skepticism and critical thought. And so Buddhism, I can have more confidence in that. I can feel more at home with terra Buddhism than with systems that require belief in elaborate fairy tales that are just built right into the whole system. So that you can't get rid of the fairy tales without getting rid of, you know, without just

gutshooting the whole

system. So that's why and the

protoseudong second question has the

heading on the compatibility of Hinduism

or Korea yoga and terra Buddhist

monasticism. So the question is many

Q&As ago I asked you about yoga or Korea

yoga. I feel very drawn to Korea yoga.

Uh Korea, not Korea but K R I Y A which

in Pali would be K I R I Y A Ka which

means like functional in in

Pali. But I'm concerned how one could be

eclectic combining spiritual traditions

as a Terra Buddhist monk. For example,

how can a monk practice as hat yoga in

rags? One would need something loose but

covering private parts and monks don't wear pants. I think you call it underwear. Also, do monasteries allow monks to read other books, try other practices, pranayyama, chanting, etc. Finding a guru in the Himalaya mountains. Trivial questions, but vignia is so strict one must ask. Not having these freedoms might delay me from going forth. Okay, so it's kind of a complex question here. See where is the first question

mark let's

see many question see for how can a monk practice asas hata yoga in rags you can gird your loins you know like with the monks that play soccer or a monk who's

going to climb a tree or a monk who's going to climb a ladder or something there's ways to take your lower robe and just kind of wrap it into like a loin cloth so that your legs have more freedom of motion and so forth. So you can do that. I mean, you can't do it in public, but in the privacy of your own meditation hut, hell, you can do yoga asas naked. So long as you're not in some exposed area where people will see you. So let's see here. One would need something loose but covering private parts. Not necessarily. You could you could be naked if you're all by yourself. Also, do monasteries allow

monks to read other

books? Yeah. I mean, some strict

monasteries, especially if you're a

junior monk, they'll just say just read

what you're told to read or read poly

texts, don't bother with Western

psychology, don't bother with Hinduism,

that kind of thing. But other

monasteries are going to be more open to

that. Um, there's no real vignia rule

against I think there's a rule against

nuns studying esoteric stuff, but

there's no rule against monks studying

it. And also in the Buddha does say that

it's good to be bahusuta like in in the

the mangalasuta the list of 38 blessings

being bahosuta is one of them and

bahusuta means having learned much just having like a comprehensive view having being having being having being having being having being familiar with other religions other philosophies other points of view and so forth actually can help give you a sense of perspective and understand dharma

better at least

potentially. So let's see. Do monasteries allow monks to read other books? Some do. Try other practices like pranayyama or chanting om. Well um once you've got five years of seniority under your belt, you can go solo. You're no longer living independence upon a

preceptor or upon an acharia or teacher. And so once you're on your own, you can pretty much do as you please. I mean, within the within the confines of the Vignia rules, there's no vignia rules against doing pranayyama or meditating on the syllable m. You know, meditating on m is really hardly any more heterodox than meditating on buddo, which is common in Thailand, even though it's not taught in the sutas at all. So the the whole idea of meditating on buddo which is a like a Thai forest tradition practice I I'm unfamiliar with with I'm unaware of any teaching in the sutas recommending that it's just it's a kind of mantra meditation using a Buddhist

mantra and would work just as well it would seem to me.

So finding a guru in the Himalaya mountains. Yeah, I mean that might be a little trickier within the the confines of the Vineia rules, but it's still possible. So yeah, I mean your first five years as a monk, you have to live in dependence upon a teacher or your preceptor or some other teacher and you pretty much have to do as they say, you know, within within reason.

But once you're you've become a Majima monk, you know, a monk of middle standing, once you've had at least five years of seniority, five rainy seasons

under your belt, then you can do as you please. You can read Western psychology, you can experiment with Hindu meditation techniques. I mean, so long as you're not believing in, you know, that Jesus is the only begotten son of God who died for your sins and and and that sort of thing. As long as you're not like a a devout Christian or, you know, so long as you haven't abandoned the basic principles of Buddhism, you can still sort of experiment and and study different things and try different things. Um, and I mean, so long as it's you're not breaking the rules and the rules are fairly lenient with regard to just like learning other things. I mean,

you might be discouraged from learning like astrology, that kind of thing, but it's not technically against the rules, even though it is discouraged in the sutas.

So yeah, I don't think it's the the vineyard rules are very precise with regard to how you do certain things, how you clean your hut, how you use the toilet, how you eat your meal, this kind of thing. But with regard to what you're allowed to study, it's pretty wide open. So you you have more freedom of mind um than freedom of body as a monk. As a lay person, you may have more freedom of body than freedom of mind, but as a as a

monk, it's the other way

around. So I think I'm just going to

move on to uh the protose monk, formerly

known as Cool Whip. his third question

which is which has the heading of on

Hinduism leading to truth with its

emphasis on samadei

notasana. And so the question is how can

Hindu yogis become enlightened when they

follow the path of

shamata. It's all about deep states of

meditation to become one with infinite

formless consciousness not understanding

reality through the four foundations of

mindfulness. reality as it is. I'm

curious how you reconcile this Hinduism

as a path to enlightenment with orthodox

terravada. Hinduism says creation is God's play or leela. So they are much more permissive. You can enjoy sensuality as long as you are detached as everything is God. Simply connect with the awareness, become one with it. You can have sex, dance, listen to music, chat, paint, play games, have a family, etc. The key is detachment. You can be drunk and be detached. Less renunciation. If terraata seems too austere, Hinduism is a nice uh you can have your cake and eat it too alternative. But will it lead you to nibbana simultaneous spiritual and worldly life? Excited to hear your

thoughts. Well,

Hinduism, it's not just one system.

Hinduism has this broad spectrum of the

ridiculous to the

sublime. And some of it is wiser than

some some other aspects. Like in

Christianity, it's the same. In

Buddhism, it's the same. You're going to

have traditions and schools that are

wiser and then you're going to have

traditions and schools that are less

wise. You know, like some of the

contemplative orders in monastic

Christianity would be more wise in my

opinion than the Jehovah's Witnesses,

for example, even though they're both

under the rubric of

Christianity. And Hinduism is it's possibly even a broader spectrum than Christianity
has. So in the Buddhist time, the the Hindus or, you know, the the the vadicists, you know, the Vadic Brahmans, they were living a life that wasn't all that different from what the Buddhist monks were living. You know, they're just living out in the forest. They may have been tending a sacred fire out there. They had like like matted long matted hair instead of shaving their heads, but it was fairly similar. There was a lot of of overlap.
And with regard to Hindus, I mean, I've

heard this argument before. I've heard this German monk at P was really smug about it. He was like, Hindus can't possibly become enlightened because they don't practice witha. They only practice samata. And he's really smug about it. Like he really knew what was what. But insight isn't something that you practice. Insight is something that arises spontaneously and it is most likely to arise spontaneously after attaining these deep samati states. It's like I've explained this many times before, but it's like your mental states are like waves and consciousness is like the water. You know, consciousness is like the essence of your mind and your

mental states are just forms that this consciousness assumes. So most people are lost in the forms. That is what samsara is. Samsara is the forms. Samsara is the waves. I like this wave and I don't like that wave and this wave is better than that wave and I want more of this kind of wave and less of that kind of wave and they just have no concept of water at all. Or maybe they'll just turn water into some other kind of conceptual sort of wave phenomenon that isn't really water anymore. You know, they just converted into a wave and called it water just just so that it'll fit into this this

waveoriented mentality.

So I mean you want to become

enlightened. A good way of going about

it like the traditional ancient Indian

Buddhist way is you get your mind as

free of waves as possible. Just flat

calm as close to a flat calm as possible

and then you stop being distracted by

these waves and then you're much more

likely to get the insight into the

essence underlying the waves because you

don't have the waves distracting you

anymore. And Hindus do

that. So I mean if we or insight can

arise spontaneously in a practicing

Buddhist after coming out of fourth

Janna why not a Hindu

also. So I think the Hindus they don't have as much of a shortcut as Buddhists do. You know it's like in Buddhism you don't really have to be a total master of Janna. It's like some people can see through the waves and just start seeing water when it's still relatively choppy seas. Maybe some Hindus can do that too. But with Hinduism, there's more of an emphasis on getting to the flat calm stage, perfecting flat calm as well as you can. And then like psychic powers can arise
also from that sort of approach. Um, in Buddhism it's like you you become enlightened as soon as you can. As soon

as you can bail out, you bail out. There is no end to the path. You just keep following the path until you don't need to follow it anymore and you bail out sideways so to speak.

It may be that Buddhism has more of a concept of that and makes and thus more I mean people are less shackled to this idea that nirvana or liberation is at the end of the path when the path really has no end.

So it may be that Buddhists have somewhat of an advantage but Hinduism um still to this day I would not at all be surprised if there had been more enlightened Hindus than enlightened terravada Buddhists partly just because

there's more Hindus you know just

statistically there's more

practitioners that can potentially

become enlightened in various ways and

like just ramen Nim coroli Baba

comparing those two you know they're

very different from each other their

whole approach to religion was different

at least at the the outward empirical

levels you know ultimately liberation

would be the

same

so let's

see yeah I really don't think that terra

Buddhism has a monopoly on enlightenment

I do not think that Christianity has a

monopoly on enlightenment. It may be
that some people become enlightened as
much in spite of a limiting tradition as
because of
it. But still, you know, there's you may
be a practicing Hindu and you have the
near-death experience that just slams
you out of out of your samsaric rut,
which is what happened to Raman
Maharshi. He was not a religious person,
a particularly religious person. He was
a high school
student doing his homework and he
suddenly has this kind of a panic
attack. He feels like he's dying. So he
just lies down, gets ready for death and
it was just

boom. He had his liberating insight as a result of just lying there motionless, not thinking. And it was a kind of he just went into this deep meditative state and just penetrated samsara.

So yeah, I it may be that a Buddhist or a terra Buddhist has some sort of advantage, but I don't think that a Buddhist has any kind of monopoly on enlightenment.

So I don't know how well I answered that question but I'm moving on to the next question anyway and this is from Scoladin or Scooladine who after experimenting with various various names

has come back to his his home of
Scoladin or Scooladine and he says would
you kindly explain the spirituality of
the trial by France
Kovka and yeah I'm not sure about the
spirituality of
But I do think I kind of understand the
trial by Kofka. It's
like I mean I haven't read it recently
and I haven't watched the movie recently
either. The the one I think it was
directed by Orson Wells or Orson Wells
is in the movie too. It it has a very
different ending, but still it's it's
within the the spirit of of the trial
that I think the crime that Kofka or
that Kay was guilty of in the trial is

just questioning the validity of his culture that it's the people that aren't on trial are the ones that are just going along. You know, they're going along with the brave new world. They're completely lost in samsara. But once you start being skeptical of it, suddenly you're on trial. And it's like, you know, the the the system will just try to destroy you or force you to assimilate or just, you know, eliminate you. Assimilate or eliminate, one or the other. And one of the the main ways of not being on trial is through women. that you know as he like Kay in the story is using women as a kind of escape

from the trials and tribulations of his trial. Um I can't remember there was some statement he makes towards the beginning. It was like shortly after something happened. He he he found out that he was being investigated or he was he got sucked into this trial system. It was I think his his wife died or something. So it was like, you know, it was this event that caused him to start questioning the value of this life that everyone just takes for granted. And it was much more so when the trial was written when, you know, you still had just sort of a conservative western civilization, almost all white people. And you know, you just get you you you

go to school, you you you know, you're born, you you you obey your parents, you go to school, you graduate, you get a job, you buy a house, you get a wife, you have kids, you get older, you retire, you die. And that was like 99% of the population followed this without question. And it was just what you do. And when you start questioning that that is really the crime and the system really doesn't doesn't like that. I think the system is now much more d diffuse. You know there's much more variation allowed but still it's the same kind of deal as if you start being skeptical of the whole system the system

kind of turns against you in a way. I think that's what Kofka was writing about in the trial. I'm glad you didn't ask me about the castle, which is much harder to understand. I read that once and I and I'd have to read it at least one more time in order to really get any kind of idea that I've wrapped my head around the castle. But the trial, I've read it a few times. I've read like various versions of it because the original trial was it was published from a manuscript just kind of loose chapters that a friend of Kofka just arranged in a certain way that aren't necessarily the way Kofka intended. You know, there's ways like examining the text

that you can like you can see that it's out of order chronologically the way the the final edition was published. So you can rearrange the chapters and it makes a little bit better sense. But I do think that the crime that Kay committed that caused him eventually to be killed was just questioning the validity of of the culture or of just some sorrow in general. And it it reminds me of one time he goes to one of these these hearings associated with his his case and I mean he looks at one of the law books on on the desk and it's got like this crude sexual pictures scrolled like in the in the the the blank pages like

the fly leaf or whatever. And it's it really is sex is one of the main things that holds the system together.

And there is a statement that uh everybody is involved in in the trial process. Like all the people that aren't on trial are the ones that are like participating in the system that you know is sort of like they're responsible for the trial. Which does mean it's kind of like society and the beliefs of some some society you know like some Saric group unenlightenment is the establishment system. And so any kind of skepticism towards that is the crime against sort of nature in a way. So let's see

here. I guess I answer that question about as well as I'm likely to. It's really not fresh in my mind. I haven't read the trial recently. So Scoladin or Scooladine second question. Would you kindly explain the synchronicity of twins? And then he's got his characteristic bullet points. The the protose pseudo monk has headings. Scooladine has bullet points. And so the bullet points say, "There have been documented accounts of twins separated at birth, but they share many similarities. They marry similar looking women with the same first name, use same brand products, same hairstyle." Yeah,

it's true. I I've read about cases like that, too. like like identical twins especially who were separated when they were infants. It's like they send each other a birthday card. They send each other exactly the same birthday card. You know, it's they just have the same tastes in things. You know, they like the same kind of women with the same kind of names and you know, they have similar jobs or whatever. You know, it's just sort of like two versions of the same person. And it is possible that um uh a more Buddhist explanation is that they were just you know they're sort of like twin spirits. They're you know they've sort of uh occurred together

life after life. You know it might be that they're twins in this life. It may be like their father and son in a different existence. They might be husband and wife in a different existence. just you know this just for some reason in uh Edward Arn Edwin Arnold's the light of Asia his his poem about the Buddha that the Buddha and Yasodora his wife were kind of like that too I think I think I if that's the right poem but there's I remember reading this poem where you know the Buddha and his wife Yasodora were just sort of life after life after life appearing together you know in various

relations you know they were kind of bound up together. They're they're two karmic streams. We're just sort of like doing this dance around each other. And it could be like that. That would be a more Buddhist explanation. A less Buddhist explanation would be that you've got a karmic stream that just bifurcates and splits in half. So it's sort of like one being splits into two which I mean there would be a certain overlap between that theory and and the previous one but uh like karmic stream splitting into two would not be orthodox terra Buddhism. I've I've never read anything that would support that hypothesis in terra Buddhist

texts.

So, let's

see. I guess I mean I mean there's other

ways of of guessing what the meaning of

it is. You know, it's like the same

being gets reincarnated twice in the

same time frame and it's like two

versions of the same being, but that

would be you're getting farther and

farther out with that.

Um, not all identical twins really are

so identical that I mean some identical

twins really are not just like the same

person twice. Like even Siamese twins,

like the original Siamese twins, I think

they were named like Chang and Ang or

something like that. One of them was a heavy drinker and the other one didn't drink at all. Although he didn't have to. He'd get drunk whenever his brother drank, I suppose. But I I worked with two identical twins just a few years ago and they were clearly they had different temperaments and usually the more alpha of the two of two twins is going to be the one that was born first. I'm I mean I'm not exactly sure why that is. He might be born just 8 minutes first. Eight minutes before the other one, but still for some reason you know his the parents will will you know he was the one that was born first. So, you know, he he he gets named first when they're

talking about the two the two kids, you know, Jim and Joe that, you know, if Joe was born or if Jim Jim would be born first, so it's Jim and Joe instead of the other way around and Jim would just sort of be like considered the elder brother and just take on more of an alpha personality. Or it may be that two identical twins, they both of them have sort of individualistic leanings and so one of them will adopt one kind of attitude and the other one will adopt a different one just to be different. And if the other one adopted his first, then the first one would would do something different just to be different just

because they both have this individualistic wanting to be different kind of attitude.

So that can it can be that way too. But just their similarity from the from the biological point of view. It's just that you know they've inherited like psychological qualities that you know the left just vehemently sometimes hysterically wants to deny. You know there's no such thing as human nature. There's no human animal instincts that it's it's all cultural that like intelligence tests and all this kind of thing. It's all cultural. We're molded by our culture like like Karl Marx would say we're products of our culture and

that it's not genetic.

But I mean the empirical evidence points

does seem to indicate that

many probably most of our personality

traits are genetically

conditioned. And so you've got two

genetically identical identical twins.

they're going to have the same like

psychological genetics. So, in a lot of

ways, they're gonna have the same kind

of taste, maybe the same favorite color,

they like the same kind of music, that

kind of thing, just because they're it's

like their inherent

congenital character, their

constitutional factors are so similar.

Although it may be that they both have this maverick kind of attitude which will then cause them to deliberately diverge from each other and be different. But from a karmic point of view, um the best Buddhist explanation would be that they've just they've been associated with each other lifetime after lifetime after lifetime and they've just grown very similar.

So, I'm just going to move on to Scoladin or Scooladine's third question, which is, "Would you kindly explain past life memories?" And then he's got in his bullet points, "Brian's friend, John Kaminsky, shared an anecdote once about how he drove his

friend and his kid to a stranger's home because the kid was claiming past life memories and wouldn't shut the [__] up about it. The kid walks up to the house. An old lady appears. They talk. Old lady returns with a shoe box full of crap. Kid walks back to car with box of crap. Then straps on newly acquired gold watch. Heads explode. And I mean, I've read quite a few case histories like this. Um I think his name was Ian Stevenson. He was a professor at the University of Virginia or something like that who wrote books compiling case histories like this. And I mean it was pretty much just like Scoladin or

Scooladine says with regard to like little kids they remember being somebody else and you know they'll in just keep insisting that you know I'm not this little kid you know I'm this prosperous pharmacist who lives in this village 40 miles from here and you know I died of like a some kind of poisoning and And so there's there was one story that was kind of touching. This little girl, she just insisted that she was you born in that house over there and she could name the people that live there by name. Yeah, I guess you'd have to name them by name, wouldn't you? But I mean, she finally she gets brought there and she starts bossing around these grown people

and they they're kind of like smiling at her like she's just this cute little girl. And then she says something like, "I'm still your mother. I'm just small now. And I mean, there's a lot of cases like this. And so Ian Stevenson was using that as a kind of scientific or empirical evidence for reincarnation that sometimes the kids would know stuff that they shouldn't. I mean, they wouldn't really be able to know unless there was some kind of conspiracy, I guess, some sort of deliberate hoax.

But it doesn't necessarily work out the way Terra Buddhism says it was. Like one

of the most memorable cases in one of Ian Stevenson's books is there was this boy in India who apparently died of smallpox. And so his father went out to make the the arrangements for the burial. His son had just died. But then when he comes back home, the boy is awake again. But he's claiming to be somebody else. He's claiming to be this Brahman that lived in a a neighborhood not far away. or maybe it was a town not far away. And since the family he was born into wasn't Brahman, he would refuse to eat his mother's cooking. There was like this Brahman neighbor lady who had to cook his meals for him. And he would just insist that, you know,

I'm not this kid. I'm this other person. And so I mean that I mean that's kind of in violation of the Buddhist teachings. And technically it kind of works. is just reincarnation into a body that's already like 7 years old after the previous occupant of that body had passed on. So maybe there could be some way that it would be in in accordance with Terra Buddhism, but generally it is not supposed to work that way. Also, I read a different book by Ian Stevenson where there was some Tai Ajan talking about how he was reincarnated or reborn before his other life had had died. That for a while he was sort of vacasillating

between this baby and this like ancient person on his deathbed. You know, there was he was just bedridden kind of in a semic coma a lot of the time, just unconscious a lot of the time. took him a long time to finally fade out. And so he was sort of fading out as this old person and fading in as this new person like simultaneously. And that's not supposed to happen in Buddhism either. And who knows? I mean, it's mainly just like anecdotal, you know, just unverifiable
evidence. But there is a lot of that kind of evidence, many cases. And Ian Stevenson was was deliberately trying to find out trying to find kids claiming to

be this other person where the the two
families hadn't really communicated yet
so that he could really find he could do
his best to see if they could name names
and know stuff about this other family
that they couldn't possibly have heard
yet through intercommunication.
So, um, yeah, apparently some little
kids can remember their past lives. My
little brother, for example, used to
talk about when he was a
man, but you know, this could just be
like the imagination of little kids in
that case.
Anyway, Ian Stevenson also was uh doing
a study on

birtharks. How some people will have like a birthmark that that corresponds to some fatal injury they received in their previous life. You know, like a weird purple line here when they died of getting their their neck gashed or that kind of thing.

So, could I kindly explain past life memories? That is the question.

And I mean I don't know exactly the mechanism of how it works that some little kids can can still they still have lingering memories from the previous life that I mean it's it's like a psychic

power in Buddhism that once you get into these meditative attainments you get Janna and psychic powers then you can remember your past lives. My father tried to do that through hypnosis and through hypnotizing himself or being hypnotized by another person. He could have past life aggressions and you know he was he he strongly identified with some Scottish fellow who lived back around the the 1700s named Jason Haskell for example and it could just be like hypnotic imagination just cooking up these realistic vivid memories of stuff that never happened. I mean, you it's it's hard to know for

sure. There's another case
of my father was friends with this
husband and wife who lived on a big farm
out in the country and they would take
in troubled teenagers. Just the fresh
air, just being away from town, the cows
and everything just kind of helped them
to ground themselves, these kids. And it
would often help them to kind of
straighten things out for themselves.
you know, there less distraction from
this, you know, punk culture or whatever
it was. Just the fresh air, doing, you
know, light chores, milking the cows,
collecting the eggs, that kind of thing.
It just helped them to kind of get their
feet back on the ground and straighten

out a bit. But anyways, there was this one teenage girl, maybe 14 years old, who was out there, and all of a sudden, she just lost all interest in her appearance. She lost all interest in school. She wouldn't communicate. She'd just shut up. She didn't want to talk. And so, um, this this husband and wife knew my father was a hypnotist, asked him, "Would you be willing to hypnotize this girl and just kind of help to to resolve this problem that she's having that she won't tell anybody about?" So, my father said, "Well, I'm willing to do it so long as she's willing." And she would have to bring

somebody that she trusts, preferably another girl, you know, some friend of hers as a chaperone just, you know, just for ethics, you know, just with no scandals, no hint of scandals, anything like that. You know, there should be someone she trusts as a chaperone when he hypnotizes the girl. So, it all work it all worked out that way. This girl brought a friend of hers and my father is hypnotizing the the girl in question and suddenly he notices that the chaperon, this other girl has got her eyes closed and she's waving her arms around like

this. And my father asks, "What are you doing?" And she says, "I'm swimming."

And he

says, "Where are you swimming?" And she

says, "In the South Pacific." And he

says,"Wh are you swimming?" And she

says, "My ship has been torpedoed by the

Japanese." And he ask he asks her name.

And she says her name is Mark

Ellison. And she's a a sailor during

World War II who drowned in the South

Pacific. And my father's fascinated by

this. He wants to he wants to know like

the name of the ship and maybe even Mark

Ellison's serial number so he can verify

this stuff.

but he's he's not really there for her.

He's trying to help this other girl. So,

he just kind of puts that on the back burner. And, you know, he just suggests to the first girl who's clammed up and everything that uh if if she's got any problems, it helps to tell, you know, to talk it out with somebody to just, you know, unbburden her heart with somebody that she trusts. And then he he took them both out of the hypnotic trance. Then they went for a walk through the through the woods because we lived out in the country there too. And the the girl just kind of blurts out to her that even though she was like 14 years old, she was pregnant and she didn't even know who the father was cuz she was that kind of girl. She started

early. So anyways, my father was still intrigued by this Mark Ellison case. And so he hypnotizes the girl again, but this time she has no interest at all in Mark Ellison. She won't regress to Mark Ellison. Instead, she wants to find a calf on the farm that is lost, that a cow had her calf somewhere that they can't find it. And I mean, cows do this sometimes. And so, she just located it. It was somehow in like a clump of blackberry bushes on the other side of the fence. She found the cow or she found the calf, but she wasn't interested in Mark Ellison that time. So my father never was able to follow up on

that which is generally how it works.
It's a liinal kind of thing that is you
can't really verify it very
well. It's like the whole system is sort
of rigged against verifying
it. So how this actually
works I don't know exactly. I mean from
the Buddhist point of view it's and the
Burmese would call it luinza which is
just a person who is influenced by their
previous existence like a transsexual
person is kind of a luenza. It's like
they're making a transition from male to
female and the transition isn't complete
within a single life. Or there was one
case in the Ian Stevenson book about
this girl in Burma who insisted that she

was a Japanese man that apparently a Japanese soldier died in Burma during World War II, was reincarnated as this Burmese village girl and just she just vehemently insisted. I knew this one of my main supporters in Burma. Um, there's a good chance that she was a man in her previous existence. She was just a like a dedicated spinster. She never got married and she was just this aggressive kind of bigoted kind of prejudice kind of a person. and and she showed me pictures of her as a girl and she would always be hiding her face cuz she was ashamed of being a girl even at like the age of three or four. She'd want to wear

boys clothes. She she'd cry if they put girls clothes on her. She'd cry if they gave her like a girl's hairstyle or anything like that. And it was pretty clear to me from a Buddhist point of view that she was probably a man who was very like misogynistic, very chauvinistic against women and then as sort of a karmic payback got reborn as a woman in this
life. So I'm I'm not answering the question though, am I? How would you kind would you kindly explain past life memories? the stuff that that carries over like in past life regressions tend to be the most emotionally intense like emotionally intense

experience experiences seem to create
the most
karma. And so those are the one those
are the memories that usually come up in
past life regressions. And from the
Buddhist point of view, for the most
part, it's just rebirth and like
residual memories from a previous life
somehow carrying over into the next
life. Although that's there's also other
ways of explaining
it. So, I've already talked about that
for several minutes, I guess. So, I
think whatever rambling I did on that
topic will be considered my answer. And
uh I'm just going to move on to the next

question which apparently is some kind
of joke question that I don't really
understand. And this is from
Shush. And says, "Cow goes moo, frog
goes croak, and the elephant goes toot.
Duck a quack, and fish go blub, and the
seal goes ow ow ow. But there's one
sound that no one knows. What does the
fox
say?" And somebody in the comments under
this comment says, "I reckon Ponyo is
one of
0.001% of Americans that won't know that
reference unless the monasteries in
Burma blasted it through their
speakers." So apparently it was some
kind of song that I've never heard

before. And based on the lyrics here, it's just as well that I've never heard this song before. But I do know the answer. See, the cow goes moo. Frog goes croak. The elephant goes toot. Ducks say quack. And fish go blub. Well, fish, I don't think they really go blob. And the seal goes ow ow ow. But what does the fox say? This the fox goes earthf. Because when I was a little kid, like three years old, you know, it's like when when there's little kids, the parents or grown-ups will ask you these questions. You know, what does the cow say? The cow says moo, you know, and what does the frog say? And the frog

says croak. And my father would ask me, "What does your mama say?" And it was just the tradition in my family that mama goes like the fox because when she'd get the hiccups, she'd make this irfing sound that my father said sounded like a
fox. So foxes go earthf kind of like my mother
hiccuping. So there I knew the answer to that one. And I'm moving on to the next question. This is from Tumo Plots, which apparently is German for
playground. And so playground says, "What was your training like as a novice monk?" And it turns out I was a novice monk twice. I was a temporary novice for

five weeks as a kind of dress rehearsal for being a fully ordained Biku like a year before I finally took the plunge. And then I was also a novice shortly before I be my ordination as a beu. I was a novice for a total of one day like the second time. The first time um my training is I was a don lab just a temporary ordination and they recommended that I be fully ordained as a monk because you get more benefit from being a monk because the Burmese are spiritual materialists and just think that you're going to get better karma for a higher ordination. But I didn't want to do that because I didn't know

the rules. You know, I didn't want to be a sloppy monk and I'd be better off just as a novice just to test the waters. And you know, I do a little studying. I did a lot of

meditation. Um, you know, just reading poly texts, you English translations. I didn't know polyette and meditating a lot. And that was about all I was doing for those five weeks. Um, the first time I was a novice and the second time I mean it was 24 hours so there wasn't a whole lot of training going on then but I don't know if playground is even asking

about being a sinara you know in in Teraba Buddhism there's two levels of of

ordination for a male three levels for a female two levels for a male there's sana or novice and then there's biku or monk and Uh yeah, I mean as a novice I mean it wasn't that difference from just being a monk, just being a junior monk. I I took poly lessons and vineia lessons from my teacher utania
um and meditated a lot and studied and that that was about it. You know, I'd do like little chores around the place. I'd water the bamboo plants up by the pigota, that kind of thing.
But I mean there wasn't really anything really
intense. So I guess I answer that

question and so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Robert and Robert says, "How do you view evolution if matter does not exist?" And this is a good question and it's something that has been kind of a challenge for me also and that I really do not think that physical matter is ultimately real. But from an empirical or scientific point of view, it's fairly obvious that organic evolution more or less in accordance with Charles Darwin's theories has occurred that just looking at the fossil record for example, you know, at the oldest levels, the the oldest geological strata, no sign of life. Then eventually you start getting

signs of anorobic bacteria like colonial encrusting bacteria. There'll be fossils of that. And then there's nothing but anorobic bacteria for billions of years. And then like maybe a billion years ago, there's enough free oxygen in the atmosphere due to photosynthesis and so forth that finally you can start getting ukareotic organisms like protozoans that then start becoming colonial. They start being making clusters and turning into animals and

plants. And it's just you can see through the geological strata that you know the the more you the higher the strata the newer the strata the closer

you get to what you see nowadays you know like the older strata no mammals no primates no birds no reptiles I mean not even fish at first and then you just have like like clamlike creatures wormlike creatures that you know gradually they're they're diversifying dying through random mutations and just the the dying out of the bad mutations and the promotion, you know, the success, competitive success of the good mutations, which are like one in 10,000 until finally you wind up with, you know, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, primates, homoids, humans. Not that we're at the top. It's like whatever is alive today

is all at the

top. So how does that reconcile with me

thinking that there is no such thing as

like ultimately real physical matter?

Well, one thing is I mean it doesn't

have to be it doesn't have to be real

matter. I mean it's so long as it is the

perceptions of it. It may be that there

were

beings that were observing the earth

that were participating in this. Or it

may be that even this this early

life had very simple primordial mental

states that had their

own karma, you know, and it's just it

could be sort of like

Schopenhauer's concept of will where

you've got this essentially a mental

state. will is essentially a mental

state that is just wanting to to fill

every niche that it can to just like

manifest itself as fully as it can just

through this will to

exist that I mean that could have been

going on you know

back like a billion years or

more but

um the only way that it could really

have happened even if it wasn't material

would be you'd have to have some sort of

small G god some kind of Brahma who is

sort of generating this you know with

their own mind or at least kind of

locking it down by perceiving it you know sort of collapsing the state vector by seeing it but aside from that I still have to accept the possibility that there really was no evolution before modern humans until modern humans came along and just sort of collapsed the state vector down into some stable configuration that would account for our existence from a an empirical point of view which is hard to wrap your head around I have to admit but like uh Arthur Cclark used to say the universe is not only stranger than we imagine it is stranger than we can imagine

But it either

happened at the level of mentality or

it's just kind of jerryrigged

retroactively as a way of making sense

of the world we live in from a

scientific point of view. Like for

example, photons. It may be that photons

simply did not exist until humans like

hypothesized them and then started like

capturing them with scientific devices,

you know, measuring them, that sort of

thing that they just kind of like

coalesed

this I don't know what you'd call it

almost like cha primordial chaos or

something just coalesed it down

into something that makes sense from a a

materialistic point of view.

So those are like my two main hypotheses. One is that you had some higher being who has all this going on in its mind. Maybe a group of higher beings just sort of you know who knows how many higher beings all sort of at the same on the same page of samsara so to speak that are kind of locking in these events. I mean that's one way of looking at it. Or it could be that it was just the uncolapsed state vector um from a a material point of view that when mind became advanced enough it was able to sort of collapse things down into a

plausible kind of explanation of things which still is not entirely like 100% concrete. you know, there's still these weird loopholes and you know, scientists are saying now that some scientists are saying that, you know, evolution couldn't possibly happen because of this or that kind of mechanism that that wouldn't allow it to happen. It's just mathematically impossible or some such. So, who knows? It may be that that when there's another Capernac revolution that there's just going to be a revolution in understanding how we got here.

So, it's still kind of a it's kind of a challenge for me to reconcile the like a kind of idealism or just there is no

that matter is not ultimately real
with pretty obvious to anyone who knows
the evidence that organic evolution
occurred over a period of billions of
years on this planet.
So, I'm just going to move on to
Robert's next question. Why do our minds
create a world where we see evidence of
evolution? Yes, I've already kind of
kind of touched on that where we need to
have some kind of plausible explanation
because if we can't come up with a
plausible explanation, it destabilizes
our samsara. It destabilizes our version
of reality. We have to lock it down with
these beliefs that are believable and

just God made it that way is no longer

really believable to a post-modern

materialistic mindset. And so you have

to have some kind of scientific

scientifically plausible

explanation.

And it

it it's just kind of hard to explain

otherwise. either that

or it's like I said that you've got

higher beings that were already setting

this thing in motion before we came

along which does I mean that's a fairly

fairly good guess

also. So I mean there were volcanoes

long before people knew what volcanoes

were. Stars in the sky long before

people knew what stars were. We still don't really know what stars are. You know, we've got our scientific explanations and they're pretty pretty locked down, pretty solid. Ultimately, it's not true. But within the context of samsara, that's what a star is. You know, it's this thermonuclear explosion going on. you know, gravity kind of holding it together while it's like the force of the the hydrogen atoms fusing into helium is pushing out and it's in a state of equilibrium producing lots of heat and light and so forth, lots of radiation.

Um it's it's just uh

what whatever this version of samsara
the minds in this version of samsara
have settled on that or it could be even
before that and it's it's very hard to
explain and that's one reason I suppose
why the Buddha didn't even want to go
there. So next question from Robert. Is
there a mind only evolution that maybe
happened in our realm? Yeah, I
mean mind does seem to be
more obvious than matter to me that
anything we know is going to be mental.
I mean you can hold up the cup, you
know, it's it's red, but that's that's a
visual perception. That's mental. You
can feel the weight of it, but that's a
tactile sensation which is mental. You

can feel its coolness because the coffee is gone. The hardness, tactile sensations which are mental. You can tap it. You hear the clank. Auditory sensations which are mental. You only know this. This only exists mentally. So evolution in that sense is mental because you know the whole theory of evolution is mental. The whole understanding of evolution is mental because understanding is mental. But it could be also that there's more of a karmic spiritual kind of evolution of mind that and I mean you start with primitive life forms on this planet and as life forms have become more complex

also mental states have become more complex. I doubt that an ammonite mollisk had as complex of a mind as we do. They but I mean they ruled the oceans up until fish came along.

So yeah, I mean I'm quite open to the idea of mental evolution both as kind of like what lies behind Darwinian evolution like Schopenhau's will manifesting itself kind of fueling evolution that way or also more of a karmic spiritual evolution at a different level. I think both of those are plausible arguments. And so I'm just going to move on. Next question, which is the last question. I didn't even realize that

until just now. It's from Luke Kelzer. And Luke Helzer says, "What do you think of the statement, no one is more hated than he who speaks the truth?" Well, I think that that's kind of an exaggeration. You know, it's it makes a pathy little saying, but I think there are people that are hated more than people who speak the truth. I mean, people who speak the truth, they tend, I mean, traditionally, stereotypically, they wind up being martyrs, you know, persecuted into oblivion, that kind of thing.

But yeah, I think there are people who are hated worse than people who simply

tell the truth.

So let's see. You know, just just really an evil person is going to be hated more than some saintly person or just some honest person who tells the truth. But it is true that people who speak ugly truths. And there are ugly truths, that mean true statements that you simply cannot say publicly or your career, your reputation, your life will be destroyed. At the very least, you're just going to be marginalized into a nobody that no one will listen to and you won't have any platform. You'll be kicked off all social media and all this except for maybe Bitshoot or Minds where you can just rant rant away and nobody

cares. But there are fairly obvious
facts, empirical facts you cannot say in
public or you're just going to have a
ton of bricks dumped on you.
like for example human
biodiversity can't go
there. So there's definitely
uh like an element of truth to the
statement that no one is more hated than
he who speaks the truth. It's it's but
it's it's not really true that no one is
more hated. It's just that people who
speak the truth
outspokenly are going to face a hell of
a lot of resentment and you know they
may wind up being martyed to the system.

You know they're sort of like uh K in in Kofka's
trial. You know they wind up uh as part of the the process. I think that's the original um the original name of the the book is d process. It's it's in German just is the process rather than the trial. So this kind of goes back to Kofka because the person who speaks the truth or the person who has an inkling that there is a truth that is beyond what everyone is believing that they become like criminals.
They become enemies of the system. Hate speech. There's they're purveyors of hate
speech. So yeah, I don't agree that no

one is more hated than he who speaks the truth. But he who speaks the truth is going to result in a lot of resentment and hatred and so forth from a lot of people who are not nearly so honest or not nearly so perceptive. And uh I guess we're done. So gosh, I I'm I'm going faster. I guess this is less than two and a half hours. There's quite a lot of questions. Although some of them were pretty easy or just had short answers, but then some of them I was just kind of blathering along for several minutes without ever really addressing the question. So we did

pretty

good. And so if you have any questions

about things that you think I can

answer, especially if it has something

to do with dharma or dharma,

um I mean you want you're just kind of

curious about something or other. I mean

that's

fine, but um yeah, it's it's good if

it's like philosophical kind of

question that that I can actually

understand. There was one question that

I just didn't understand at all.

So yeah, if you have any questions you

think I can answer like early Buddhism,

Terravada Buddhism, Buddhism in general,

Indian spirituality in general, Eastern

spirituality in general, spirituality in total general, things like that, meditation, monasticism, Burma, that kind of thing. And my meta goes to the people of Burma who experienced a devastating earthquake recently. I mean, the Burmese, they really can't catch a break sometimes. In a way, it's kind of ironic that it's they're the most devoutly Buddhist country in the world, and they're having like tropical storms and earthquakes and military dictatorships and civil wars and this kind of stuff going on all the time. But in a way, it's maybe better than what a lot of

people in some place like Chicago are going through right now or Detroit or Oakland that are I mean some places that are just like hell realms. At least the the problems in Burma are relatively simple and straightforward, whereas the problems in America, they're kind of like got more of a poisonous root to them, it seems to me. But I mean, there's always going to be dooka. Everyone's going to have problems. And I'm not even answering a question anymore. So like and subscribe if you haven't done already. And uh remember, no more than three questions per person per episode,

please. And uh be happy.

Alrighty

then. Hello and welcome to question and

answer

number 141. I am your host Pony Basa and

this is my beverage and we don't have a

paper umbrella for it today. Just

kidding. Here we

go. Style and sophistication.

And some of you who are not

mathematicians may be disappointed to

know that 141, although odd, is still

not a prime number. It is 3 *

47. And before I start answering

questions, I would just like to announce

that I've got exciting news in that last

night I found out that this beard is now

long enough to braid. And I was going to have it braided by my woman before I started. But what happened
was I spent a good part of the early afternoon like spreading drainage gravel in certain areas of the backyard, about two tons of it. And my beloved woman was helping me. And uh even though I was doing most of the heavy lifting, still the like the the South Carolina hot sun mixed with pollen and everything kind of like conked her out. And after dinner, she hit the bed and uh she's been there ever
since. So I'm having to do it with an unbraided beard. I hope you'll forgive me. So we've got I didn't I didn't count

the questions, but I think we've got

quite a few.

We've got many. We got many questions

this time. So, I should probably just

wade right into this. And the first

question was asked for the previous Q&A.

And for some reason, I didn't notice it

when I was compiling questions. So, it's

it's the first on the list, and it's by

someone calling

himself, who it's really just Troas is,

who keeps changing his name. Um, I'm not

exactly sure why.

Maybe in the comments you can

ask or

chases why he keeps changing his name,

but he's not the only one. It happens. So anyways, Trasazis says, "Metallica, Fade to Black is a song about a person who is in a process of awakening, isn't it? Listen to it with the lyrics, please." So, I've uh examined the lyrics of the song Fade to Black by Metallica. And it's not about someone who's awakening. It's about someone who is about to selfdelete. For example, consider this verse. Deathly lost. This can't be real. Cannot stand this hell I feel. Empti emptiness is filling me to the point of agony. So, that's not an enlightened point of view. That's someone who can't stand being alive no more.

So before I move on to the next question, I wouldn't like to point out that I was never much impressed by Metallica. Some people will criticize the lead guitar player for being lacking in creativity and so forth, but it's for me it's the the vocalist, the singer. He just I mean I'm sure he's a really nice guy and all. He just does not have a musical voice. just it's like he's just like speaking in tune and it just doesn't work for me. So anyways, Triscas is the second question is please tell us who are not members of your Discord server what is this drama with Tig. So on the Discord

server we had um a member who went by the name of Tig who was kind of a trolling smartass. Sometimes he would contribute positively to a conversation. Other times he'd be like bragging about how drunk he got the night before, taking pictures of his favorite like alcoholic beverages and posting them. This sort of thing. And uh finally got to the point where I warned him if he keeps it up. I think it was New Year's Eve. I warned him if he keeps it up, he's going to be out. And possibly he was already drunk on New Year's Eve. he just upped the ante and so he got booted. And then shortly after that, a person who presumably is

Ethiopian joined the server, but when his voice was heard, he spoke with like just like a perfect American accent.

I mean, those of you who aren't Americans might scoff at the idea that any American accent can be perfect, but he had sort of similar attitudes with regard to certain things. So, that a majority of the members of the Discord server thought that it was Tig who was trolling us and pretending to be an Ethiopian. And so, he was pretty much uh voted out of the server. Um, and you can you can see him in the comments occasionally.

So there started being like this TIG witch hunt mentality like how can you prove that you're not TIG kind of a thing. But uh I guess that's that's enough about TIG. So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Mr. Pronov. And Mr. Pronov says, "How can I cope with the fact that my father is an incompetent fool? I can't move out for the next two to three years at least. So, I'm stuck with him and I just can't keep up with his [__] that made him lose 75% of his property. And that means I also lost that much of my inheritance and he just doesn't listen to me or my mother and sister because he's the traditional head of the house. And I

believe uh Mr. Panov and his father, his entire family in fact are of Indian ethnicity. So the father being the traditional head of the house is probably taken more seriously than in some place like
Ohio. Not that I think people from Ohio are in any way
inferior. It's just
uh I just I it just came up at random as an
example. So this is kind of a tough question. So how can I cope with the fact that your father is an incompetent fool? I mean you really don't have any choice. I mean you just have to accept

the fact it's obvious that you are I mean judging from this statement it's obvious that Mr. Pronov is just stuck in this situation and so the best you can do is just make peace with the situation. I mean it is your karma from a Buddhist point of view. You have landed yourself in that situation apparently because there's certain things you need to learn from that situation. So just being opposed to the situation and just not accepting it is a guarantee of not only of suffering but of just the same stuff coming up over and over again until you finally work out some way of making peace with the situation. It's kind of like Groundhog

Day. You have to you get the same stuff thrown at you over and over again until you finally learn how to deal with it with an open heart and acceptance which doesn't mean I mean acceptance doesn't mean that you have to be in favor of anything that anybody else
does but still you have to be able to experience it without aversion, hatred, anger, frustration, this sort of thing. So, I mean, he says he can't keep up with his [__] but I mean, at the same time, he's saying that he has to stay with him for another two to three years at least. So, that's just it's like self-contradictory or it's just

like condemning oneself to two to three years of misery. And even more than that, if after the 2 to 3 years, he still hasn't learned to make peace with this kind of situation. Cuz the the two main things that you get thrown at you over and over again are the things that you love and the things that you hate. That's karma. It's like if if you can't just have equinimity when something comes your way, you are making more karma when you react to that, which causes it to keep coming.

So kind of bear in mind that I mean from his perspective he's doing the best he knows

how and uh have some compassion maybe. Um I mean from the sound of it he's not like really abusive or anything. He's just sort of mismanaging household funds and so forth. Um, kind of like it it reminds me of there was a a French female writer of memoirs like a hundred or more years ago named Colette whose father was kind of like this. He just his he he married a wealthy woman and then trying to enrich her even more, he just like blew the money and lost it and they lived in poverty. That kind of thing. And I mean she didn't really hold it against him. I mean, she acknowledged that that's what he did, but I

mean, getting upset about it really doesn't help. It just makes things worse. So, just consider it a kind of aesthetic practice. just learning to accept

um uh like I don't know what what you call it like an unpleasant uncomfortable situation and just add as much positivity as possible. Send meta to them and that can also change a person's heart that sort of thing. But grumbling and being upset for the next two to three years, it's going to be more than two to three years because you're making karma which is going to cause it to keep happening. If not in this life, then in

the next life, if not in this form, then in some similar form. So I guess I've said enough about that possibly without providing a satisfactory answer in which case I apologize and I'm just moving on to Mr. Pronov's next question which is what do you think of the using of subliminals and those meditative waves videos on YouTube which supposedly help you get into deeper states of mind easily. I personally think those are for normies who don't know anything about spirituality and a serious practitioner should stay away from it. Well, I mean, I've never had never really had anything

to do with subliminals and meditative waves videos. My woman went through a phase when we lived at the other house of just listening to some kind of white noise background, like ocean waves or like frogs croaking in a pond, things like that, which weren't necessarily meditative. I mean, she did listen to a couple of meditative ones that were just funny to me. It's like it was like a guided meditation where you're flying to the pyramids and some sage comes up to you and this kind of thing, which I mean that would probably keep me awake just just being amused by it. Um, but really whether it's good or not depends on whether it works in your

case. Like if you have any interest at all just to see if it works, you can listen to one of them. try to meditate with one of them and if it helps you to meditate then it can't be all bad. If it doesn't help you to meditate then it's a waste of time or at least if you keep doing it it's a waste of time. It wasn't a waste of time the first time because you learned something valuable which is it doesn't

work. Excuse me. I'm having nostril problems possibly due to all the pollen I inhaled when I was outside working this earlier today.

[Music]

Let's see if we're recording. Yep, says we're recording. And I'll I'll just go with

that. So, I mean, guided meditations. I've never liked guided meditations either. I mean, if you're going to try guided meditation, maybe something like Echart Tollah leading a guided meditation, that could possibly be helpful. But with regard to the subliminals and the meditative waves videos and so forth, um the best advice I could give is just try it. If it helps, you can keep going with it. If it doesn't help, you're better off not keeping going with it. But it might help some people and not help other people.

It depends.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lam, occasionally still known as Libra Lamb, and occasionally still known by a multitude of other names. And he says, "Have you considered setting up an outdoor pond ecosystem in your yard like a koi pond?" And yeah, that has been the plan since I moved here. We had a fish pond at the other house. I liked it very much and I would like a bigger version at least a deeper version for this one. And I've been telling my my woman that I mean the next

major

project now that we have spread the

gravel my next major project of interest

for the backyard after planting the

peach tree and doing the gravel dig a

fish pond. So, I keep kind of urging her

to call 811 because in America, you call

811 and they'll send somebody for free

to come and scope out your yard and put

little flags where underground like

electrical cables and water pipes and

gas mains and that sort of thing are so

that you won't dig into them and destroy

something when you're trying to dig a

hole. So, yeah, I've I've got it kind of

planned out. Uh, it's going to be sort

of kidney shaped and at least a foot and

a half deep, preferably 2 feet deep. And it's going to there's not going to be any koi. I considered like medaka rice fish, but they're too tiny. I'm just we're just going to go like last last pond that we had with like comet goldfish, shoein goldfish, and dojo loaches. Anyone who has a fish pond, who lives in a relatively warm area, dojo loaches are the way to go. They're really
cool and plants. We're going to get plants. So, yeah. Next question is from Stellar Supreme Furthermore also as well. And he says, "If monks make doodles, do they destroy them after or

is collecting them okay?" Well, there's
no rule against monks making doodles and
no rule against monks keeping doodles
that they have
made. So, I mean, I drew pictures
occasionally as a
monk. So, I mean, I didn't throw all of
them away. I still have a
few. So, yeah, I don't think that
there's any rule against it. I mean, if
you're a monk and you're seriously try
trying to like cure yourself of all
attachments, then collecting doodles
that you have attachment for would be
counterproductive. You know, if you've
got this attachment for your doodle
collection, then yeah, that would not be

uh very appropriate for a beu.
But I wouldn't I don't know why you
would collect them otherwise unless
you're got some kind of idea like you're
having a study going or you want to like
see how your doodles evolve over the
years or some such then maybe I'm not
sure. So I think I'm just going to move
on this question. This is from
Xenithoid. And Xenithoid says, "Do the
Burmese, Thai, Sri Lankans, and greater
Buddhist world at large have cultural
equivalence to humanoid monsters such as
vampires and
werewolves." Well, I haven't heard
anything about the equivalence of

vampires and werewolves when I was in Burma. In fact, um there's a a theory that's becoming more popular recently that the whole idea of werewolves came from a phenomenon called the Corios, which was like the early Indo-Uropeans, the so-called Arian race when they um were spreading from like the Pontic steps in prehistoric times. Um, it was this

uh tradition, I guess you could call it, of kicking out teenage boys. Like adolescent boys would be thrown out of the community and they would become feral and they would have to live through making raids on like other tribes at least, you know, stealing

their cattle or raiding their their

fields. sometimes even just making

allout attacks on on the villages of of

other tribes, sometimes even taking over

those tribes. So on the outskirts of the

Indo-Urope protoindo-uropean

um

territory there probably were like small

communities of like non-indo-uropeans

who were ruled by like aggressive like

sociopathic teenage boys from the Indo-

protoindo-uropean tribes and it was part

of like their totem

that, you know, they they became

wolflike. You know, they identified with

wolves, which could have brought about

the the European belief in werewolves. Sort of like a theory that I brought up possibly in the previous Q&A about centaurs, how in ancient Greek mythology they believed in these creatures that were half man and half horse when really that idea may also have come from the first Indo-Uropean invaders who were marauding on horseback. And the natives there, the Pelasians as they were called, had never seen anyone riding a horse before. Just like the the Aztecs or the the natives in in Mexico had never seen a man riding a horse before. They thought the concistadors were monsters that were part quadriped and part man. Scared the [__] out of them.

That's one reason why a handful of of Spanish concistadors could conquer Mexico.

So vampires, I mean, I assume the original vampire was Vlad the Impaler, although they had sort of a similar idea of like succubi and incubi in like ancient Rome where that was more of like a a spectral figure that would like suck the life force out of you while you were sleeping. So they wouldn't be biting you on the neck and drinking your blood, that kind of thing.

But the Burmese I really can't speak well I really can't speak for the ties and Sri Lankans and so forth but the

Burmese do believe in in a more or less equivalent of Bigfoot. It's big, hairy, smells bad, lives in the forest, abducts people, does mean things sometimes, but they can they call it a theay and they consider it to be a kind of ghost that can appear and disappear at will, which may explain why we've never actually caught one. Like my woman sometimes watches these Bigfoot hunter shows, and I'm telling her, they're not they're never going to catch one. you know, before you see the show, they're not going to catch one. They're going to see some red blip on an infrared screen or something that looks like it's kind of vertical, but they're

never going to catch one. Otherwise,
it'd be in all the papers. You you would
have seen the news of it long
ago. And also, the Burmese believe in
witches. So a belief in witches may be
just universal to the human
race, but vampires and werewolves, I
think that may be predominantly
um a European thing. Unless by vampires
you also include just sort of other like
ghosts or some kind of spirit creatures
that that just kind of drain the life
force out of you. not drinking your
blood like a like a a real vampire but
just sort of draining you of your life
force drain draining you of your energy

that kind of belief can also be
universal in the human
race and they might really exist but
that's uh anticipating the second
question here so I'm just going to move
on to the second question from xenithoid
do you believe in the existence of such
beings well the blood sucking vampires
not so much werewolves lyanthropes
humans, you know, that that go back and
forth between human shape and wolf
shape.
Um, it'd be very rare. I don't think it
would be
um necessarily associated with the
original belief in werewolves so much as
you'd have like shamans that were highly

adept that maybe could like project some sort of creature like um I was watching some show

Uh, it was like a paranormal show near Skinwalker Ranch. It wasn't at Skinwalker Ranch in Utah where there were like Navajo shamans that could shapeshift into like a big dog, that kind of thing. And whether they're like projecting some like an apparition of a dog that goes out and does things or at least, you know, has eyes and ears that that the shaman can

access or whether the shaman himself can change

shape. I guess grandpa and the monsters

could do that too. That might be
uh before the time of most of the people
who watch these Q&A videos. But I mean,
anything is possible. So, I'm not going
to just say that there's never been any
kind of shape-shifting human that could
adopt animal
forms. Anyone who's read the oldest
extent novel in Western literature,
which is The Golden by what's his name?
Apulus, shape-shifting witches. She
would take the she would rub herself
down with some sort of ointment and
adopt the form of like an eagle or
something and go off and do her business
and then come back. And then this guy,
this Apulius guy, he wants to try it

himself. He's he's messing around with the the slave girl of this witch and she gets him some of this ointment and she spreads it on. It turns him into a donkey instead of the eagle because she she messed up and gave him the wrong ointment.

So, there's been a belief in humans shapeshifting into animals and maybe vice versa. I mean, since ancient times, but whether it's actually happened or not, I don't know. I really can't say. I've never actually met one of these people. Um, but it wouldn't surprise me. I do think that I mean the the so-called laws of physics can be

broken and just anything is
possible. But with vampires, I'd be a
little more skeptical. And with regard
to something like
Bigfoot, universal throughout the world,
there's people believing in something
like a Sasquatch. So, I don't think that
a Sasquatch would be some sort of
primate mammal. I do think that it would
be a paranormal phenomenon, but belief
in them is just around the world and
it's not one culture like American
culture just sort of promulgating this
belief. The Burmese have believed in the
since before they ever heard of America,
I'm
sure. So, some of some beings I think

are more likely than others. I' I'd be
extremely surprised if there were any
wild
centaurs now or in the
past, but some maybe some like like
Bigfoot that are just sort of like a
coming from a bleeding through into our
version of reality from some other
version of reality, that kind of thing.
I'm open-minded on the subject, although
I've never actually met a Sasquatch.
So, I'm going to move on to Xenithoid's
third question, which is a surprisingly
difficult
question. His question is, "What was
your greatest encounter with evil in

this lifetime?" And I'm just drawing a blank. I mean, I've met like sociopathic people, but whether a sociopath, just a completely ruthless person who doesn't give a [__] about anybody except himself, would be considered really evil or not, you know, it wasn't like cruelty, you know, like enjoying messing people up. It's just that person has something I want, so I'm taking it. That person's in my way, so I'm going to knock them out of my way. That sort of thing. Schopenhau wouldn't consider that kind of person to be evil. They're just selfish and ruthless and amoral. So evil, I mean like cruelty. If

I think of cruel people that I've met in
my life, it's
like girlfriends that I like when a
woman gets pissed off, she'll just say
the the most hurtful, cruel stuff she
can think of just to get back at you.
But I mean, a pissed-off girlfriend
isn't necessarily evil
either. So, I I'm really I I don't know.
I mean, I've I've met like Burmese
secret military police that probably
have arrested people in the middle of
the night. They didn't know what they'd
done. They didn't care. They might be
totally innocent. They might know that
they're totally innocent. They just

snatch them and they disappear them.

They wind up possibly in some torture

chamber. That kind of stuff happens in

Burma, or at least it used to within

relatively recent

times. Probably possibly happens in

America,

too. Not very often, I

hope, but it can

happen. So, my greatest encounter with

evil, I mean, I'm just drawing a blank.

I

mean, I'm not sure. I think maybe I've

just loved live lived a blessed life and

I've been protected from just the really

this is most vicious evil

stuff. I mean, I met like a Burmese

general who was the governor of of Mandalay Division, but he was he looked like grandpa. He's just all smiles, you know? He's just this very very nice guy. At least to me. He might have like the torture chambers going somewhere, but to me he was
nice. So, I really can't say that's it's weird. You'd think that anybody would be able to come up with something, but what was my greatest encounter with evil in this lifetime? For some reason, I'm just can't think of
anything.
So, I guess I'll just move on to the next question. This is from RP A. I

don't know if his name is pronounced Arpad or what. It's just RP A. I don't know what that means. It's French apparently. And Arpad says, "Is it a requirement for monks to teach the dharma?" It's not an absolute requirement. Although, I mean, there are some sutas that say if a monk talks to lay people, it should not go beyond the monk just politely requesting that they go away and leave him alone. Although other sutas will say that if a lay person in good faith comes and asks you a question about dharma, you you should answer. If you can, if you consider yourself qualified

to answer, then you may as well go ahead and answer. especially like on upata days, full moon, half moon, um, new moon days that are considered sort of like the Buddhist equivalent of the Sabbath, you know, they're partic they're their holier days where people take their their Buddhism a little more seriously and somebody might come and ask you to administer the five precepts. They want to take the three refugees and the five precepts from you. Or once today, they might be the three refugees and the eight precepts. I used to do that almost every day when I was living in Burma in certain places. People would

come on up day, ask me to give them the the the three refugees and the eight precepts and I would do it. But I mean, you're not absolutely required to do it. So, some monks really enjoy teaching lay people and some monks would just I mean, they avoid lay people like the plague. So, it's it's uh kind of an optional thing that you can choose to do, although in some cases you might as well. So, I'm just going to move on to Arpad's next question. Who decides if or when a monk is ready to do so? Or that is to teach dharma or to speak to lay people about Buddhism. Um, if you are in dependence upon a teacher, I assume your

teacher would be qualified to decide
whether you are ready
to deliver sermons to lay people or to
administer the refugees and precepts to
lay people. Um, but if you're past your
five rainy seasons as a junior monk,
you're no longer independent upon a
teacher then or a preceptor, then you
can decide for yourself whether you are
qualified. And for me, when I lived in
Burma, I really had not mastered the
Burmese language. I could sort of hold
up my end of a conversation, but I
really didn't have a mastery of the
language. And that gave me a a pretty
good excuse to keep my dharma talks when

the when I delivered them very simple, very pathy, you know, not not a real long one, you know, just teach them basics and it is good karma. I mean, you teach others dhamma at some point someone will teach you dharma presumably. It may be that you learned about dharma in the first place in this life because you are helping other people to learn it in a previous life. At least Buddhism might agree with something like that.

So yeah, I think I answered that question. So I'm just going to move on to our pads or RP AD's third question which is which is as follows. Are monks

allowed to use and own a nail clipper? And yeah, monks can own a nail clipper. I knew this one monk who was he was so decent though that he had two different nail clippers, one for his fingernails and one for his toenails. But I don't think there's any rule against that. I think in the Buddhist time when the vineia rules were composed that monks generally just used a small knife that most monks had some small knife for whatever reason. You know sometimes you just need a small
knife. So they would use their knife to cut their fingernails and toenails. Maybe a straight razor, you know, if

you're very careful. You don't want to
cut off the entire
fingertip. But uh yeah it is allowable.
I had I had nail clipper when I was when
I was a M. So I'm just gonna move on.
Next question which is from Sina and
Sina says I understand that sharing
dharma to others is wholesome or cusala
and one gains merit but does it actually
have any benefit for that person who is
sharing it in gaining anything in a
spiritual path
sense? Does this comma help him or make
him get closer to the enlightenment? If
this person is not enlightened yet, he
doesn't even know what he is sharing to
others, isn't it? Well, I mean, if there

is the suta in the sutini pa, the nava suta, the boat, the the the sermon about the boat, the boat sermon, um, in which the Buddha says, I mean, a monk can't help people to or a person, you can't help somebody to cross a river if you yourself are just being washed downstream by it. Now if you can't cross the river yourself, you can't really teach other people to cross the river either. But on the other hand, you can teach them basics. You can teach them, you know, the basics of keeping five precepts. You know, the importance of telling the truth, this kind of thing.

So you don't have to be fully enlightened in order to help a lay person, you know, some simplehearted villager or some westerner who's very sincere, very curious, really wants to know and comes to you. And I mean, you can teach them just the basics because that's essentially what they're they came there for in the first place.

So does it help in gaining anything in a spiritual past sense? Does this comma help him make him get closer to enlightenment? Well, I mean enlightenment is not going to be caused by karma, but karma can sort of clear the path of obstacles in a sense. So by helping

others, you help yourself. By helping yourself, you help others. That was something we had to chant in Pali every morning or every evening I should say at the first monastery I lived at where I was ordained in the Tom Pulu tradition. Um by helping others you help yourself. By helping yourself you help others. So, um, yeah, it is a wholesome thing to do and it is going to help sort of smooth your spiritual path if you're helping others, not just like going completely overboard and spending your whole day like teaching English to to foreign monks, you know, Asian monks, this kind

of thing. I mean, that's going to detract from your practice, but just a little bit every now and then. I mean, the best way of teaching is through example.

So there is that too. Well, let's see. I understand sharing dhamma to others is wholesome and one gains merit. That is true. But does it actually have any benefit for that person who is sharing it gaining anything in a spiritual path sense?

Well, I mean having somebody teach you can be fundamental to your spiritual path. Usually if someone enters upon the spiritual path, it's because some teacher has enlightened them in a

relative sense with regard to the need or even the option of living a spiritual life. That's what happened with me when I was a teenager. You know, it's you you don't even really have it as an option if you've never heard of that sort of thing before. And then I was a troubled teenager. Got sent to this youth counselor. The youth counselor was a wise man and he started giving me books by Rahm Doss to read. He also gave me illusions by Richard Bach which I read and it was it just like opened up a whole new world to
me. So it can definitely be helpful in a spiritual sense and I mean it might be

varying levels of advancement you know it might be like at a basic level but even that like when you're first starting out that's important. So I would say yeah that's my answer is yeah. And so I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Master Poe. And Master Poe says, "Was the now infamous Ivormectin a medical staple in Burma?" Three question marks. And actually, I'm unaware of Ivormectin being a medical staple in Burma. But a medical staple in Burma is chloricquin, which is another one of these like unorthodox medicines used in treating the woo flu.

And chloricquin was like a

state-of-the-art malaria medication like
back in the
1970s. But the thing is the tranosome or
the
malaria
protozonean. It's kind of an interesting
fact that malaria is not caused by a
virus or a bacterium. It's caused by a
protozonean that in is like parasitic on
your blood cells. And they have like a
2% mutation rate. It's just built right
into them these this this organism that
they mutate really fast and so they they
can they get to the point where they can
tolerate malaria medication fairly
quickly. So chloricquin is almost

obsolete. It's almost useless as a malaria medication now because there are so many strains of malaria that can tolerate chloricquin.

But still like the medical village medical officers might still be handing out you know cheap free chloricquin just because you know it's cheap and there's lots of it and so you know there might be a 50/50 chance that it'll actually help with the malaria but a 50/50 chance is better than a 0% chance. So what the hell? I never heard of ivormectin but I came across chloricquin a lot which is kind of the same level of controversial in the west because both of them were

medications that were mainly used for other things that just happened to have beneficial effects with regard to dealing with like uh the Wuhan flu. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. And this is from Sedarta Lohachita. Um, who previously was known as La Infamia and Loachita. I'm not exactly sure why this person calls himself or herself copper mind because loa means copper. Sometimes it can just mean metal in general because I guess copper was one of the first useful metals that people used and so they came up with the word for that and then it

just sort of like became used for any
kind of metal but technically in
poly lowa mainly means copper and
cheetah of course means mine. So,
Sedarta
Coppermind says, "Don't you think that
some Asians who are of Buddhist
origin or at least from older traditions
than us westerners sometimes look down
on us or treat us like converts?" And
then um Sedarta, I'm guessing he's a
guy. He uh has like some some commentary
here says for example I remember
attending pujas or Tibetan vajraana
retreats with my mother when I was a
teenager and the llamas would constantly
put up a kind of barrier between them

and the westerners they were always
saying things like you westerners
westerners who don't understand Buddhism
it's like they refused to believe that
someone else could truly understand the
dharma especially new Buddhists so to
speak. Yeah, I I encountered a lot of
that in Burma and it was mainly like
people of high social status and people
with like university
educations that were kind of hotty and
they just assumed that all foreigners
were just like ignorant with regard to
dharma. And so I could be like a senior
monk and I'd have well-intentioned
Burmese people like from the city with

like college educations, maybe they're like a high school teacher or whatever. They'd be trying to teach me the like the absolute basics of Buddhism. You know, they'd be trying to tell me how to meditate. They'd be trying to explain to me who Mahasi Seattle was, who at the time was the most famous monk in all of Burma. I mean, he had passed away by then. He passed away around 1980, I think. But, you know, they're trying to explain to me this stuff that was just like just really basic level ABC level, you know, Buddhism 101 stuff. And, you know, it wasn't like they were being deliberately insulting, but they just assumed that

all foreigners are ignorant. In fact, they didn't even apply it just to Westerners. They would they even thought that like the ties were were just ignorant. In fact, a lot of Burmese people don't even know that the ties are terra Buddhist too. They just think that they're Mahayana Buddhists that the Burmese are very chauvinistic um with regard to their own ethnicity and they think, you know, the Burmese are essentially the only people who can really correctly understand Dharma. I once told uh a Burmese high school teacher this that the Burmese think that, you know, only Burmese people can

understand Dhamma. And she just hardly agreed. you that's right and like P Seattle also he used to say all foreigners have wrong view so it's a kind of uh ethnic pride thing I think that the Burmese think that they've got a monopoly on true dharma and they don't even know that the ties right next door are terara Buddhist at least a lot of them but that's like the the higher social status and higher education Burmese like the upper classes are like that the humble villagers, they a lot of them just thought I was just a fully enlightened being. You know, they're very humble, very sincere, very non-judgmental with regard to anybody

really, unless maybe they think they're a witch or something. So, yeah, it's mainly among the upper classes in Burma where they think that foreigners just can't understand dharma. They've all got wrong view. Sometimes it was kind of funny. Sometimes it was just sort of I don't know, maybe a little bit irritating, you know, sort of like just people talking down to you. You're like a senior monk and they just assume. Even my own, not my preceptors, my my sponsors, they were very upper class. In fact, the brother of one of my sponsors, they were husband and wife. The brother

of one of the male went to Yale medical school. He was a Burmese person born and raised in Burma, still living in Burma. He came to America to Yale because I mean they were just like astronomically wealthy, you know, troop of servants, you know, they the the wife told me that she was having to learn how to drive because when when she was living in Burma, she never had to drive anywhere. The chauffeur just took her wherever she wanted to go.

And they were just continually just assuming because I'm a westerner, I couldn't possibly know Dhamma. And also the Burmese are very dogmatic. So to the extent that you deviate from orthodoxy,

like to the extent that you deviate from abidama and the commentarial tradition, to that extent, you're ignorant and wrong. And so there's continually you need a teacher, you ought to find a teacher, you need a teacher, you ought to find a teacher. That was like the common refrain. And even when I had a teacher, you know, they had their favorite. They were followers of the mahasi tradition. So they were like urging me to find a different teacher who was in this tradition that they in their wisdom considered to be, you know, better. Eventually, I think they just got fed up with me and washed their

hands of me in disgust because I just
wasn't playing along.
So yeah, my answer to that question is
yeah, next question is from Thoughtfog.
And Thoughtfog really just totally
crossed the line and asked five
questions. And the fifth question I
didn't even bother to record because
really the limit is
three. And I really haven't even come up
with a special list for people to ask
that many questions. And I'm going to
have to blow my nose for a second. Just
just a minute here. Bear with me. I'm
not going to edit this out. Like a lot
of these fancy YouTubers, you know, they
cough or they sneeze or they immediately

start scratching their behind on camera

or something. They'll just edit it out.

Not

me.

Okay. Make sure the the the mustache is

safe.

So anyways, getting back to Thought Fog

and his totally excessive number of

questions. The limit is three. Um,

but I don't know how I'm feeling here.

I'm kind of am ambivalent, but some of

the questions are interesting and easily

answered. So, what the hell this time?

We'll just we'll just make this a 4-hour

long one. Break a new record.

So thoughtfog says, "What types of

meditation were you up to when you were living alone in a cave? What year was this? I am so very interested." Well, my years of living in caves started like in 1993 and extended up until around 2018, I guess, 2017 or 2018. I was living in caves like most of the time that I was in Burma during that time. There were several of them. One cave I lived in for gosh, several years. I can't remember exactly how many years it was, but it's the one place I've lived longer than any other place in my life was this cave in central Burma. So, let's see here. What types of

meditation were you up to when you were living alone in a cave? What year was that? I am so very interested. Well, mainly the main meditation I did in as a junior monk was an upana mindfulness of breathing and I would try to do it just mindfulness of the touch of of air at the
nostrils
because according to orthodox terraada feeling way like the touch of air at the nostrils is an ultimate reality. Whereas breathing in, breathing out, breathing in, breathing out is not an ultimate reality. So even if you don't accept abidama in the commentarial tradition,

still by being aware of the touch at the nostrils, you're closer to reality than just coming up with a a concept of breathing in, breathing out, breathing in, breathing out.

And I tried to note as little as possible. But then as I got better at meditation, I was able to get into deeper and deeper levels of meditation. I started having what I called four gears. Like in my cave journal, I would talk about, you know, started off in second gear, moved up to third, you know, tried fourth a little bit, wasn't working, went back to third, that kind of stuff. And so first gear was just like desperation mode, like when your

your concentration is shot, you know, you you can't keep your mind focused very well. It was concentration on it was like touching and I'd be sitting there with my thumbs together. Let's see how I make it look good. There we go. It's balanced out that way. Just I I'd be noting the the touching of of my thumbs together. And it's it's kind of a good meditation because you know if it's if it becomes too subtle you can just press harder and if it starts to become uncomfortable you can just you know relax the pressure you get the pressure just right and I'd be it's it's been a while since I did this but I would be

just noting touching touching touching
and then any kind of um distraction that
would come up then I would I would label
that and then go back to labeling
touching, touching, touching. That's
like kindergarten level meditation. Um,
at least from my point of
view. So,
um, there were certain things that I
wouldn't label like like the touch
sensation at the nostrils. That was
we're getting into second gear and, uh,
like swallowing my own slobber, that
sort of thing, or just hearing in
general. I wouldn't necessarily label
that. But as a beginning like a
elementary meditation technique, you do

lots of labeling because it it's giving your mind busy work that keeps it meditating instead of just wandering away. So second gear was usually like where I would start and that would be on upon a mindfulness of of breath. Um I'd be I wouldn't label the breath, you know, I' I'd be watching it, noting it silently. I wouldn't be giving labels to that. I wouldn't give labels to swallowing my slobber. I wouldn't give labels to hearing necessarily, but anything else that came up, I'd still label it. You know, it's like you're you start remembering something, you just know remembering and then you go back to

the touch sensation of the nostrils. You know, you you hear a noise and you start wondering what the noise was. It's like wondering, go back. You know, your your knee itches, you're just itching, go back to the the primary object. So, that was second gear. Third gear was I learned third gear accidentally although it's I mean it's it's an established meditation technique

um even in

terraota that third gear is like you imagine that you're in a library with a scary librarian lady who's like really big with the flowery dress and the cat eye glasses on the chain and like the beehive hairo the stereotypical ical

scary librarian lady and you've got like a loudspeaker hooked up to your mind so that anytime you start thinking it just blasts through this library and the scary librarian lady is starting to get pissed
off. So essentially what you're doing in third gear is you're just watching your mind intently waiting for the next thought to arise. And you can try this in the the privacy of your own home. Just do that. Just watch your mind. Just first you kind of calm down, settle down and then you just watch your mind intently waiting for the next thought to arise so that you can catch it as it

arises. And you may find that nothing arises for quite a while. Like watching for the thought to arise going with materialism, it's it's like it uses the same part of the brain as the actual thinking. So just watching, waiting for a thought to arise, it like suppresses thoughts. And so if you get good at it, you're just watching intently. It's you're just sitting there in silence without thinking. So that's third gear, but it it's it's only third gear because it still requires deliberate effort. Fourth gear would be like what the Catholic priests, the contemplative like monks of like the the

Carmelite order would call contemplation where you're just sitting there empty. You know, it's it's you're not even making an effort anymore other than if a thought starts to arise, you just note it. You know, you're just aware of it. Your attention goes to that. um not even necessarily focusing on it, but just you're aware of it and then it just fades back out again. That's just sitting there like in silence and emptiness. But I wasn't always able to do that and not even when I was like going for it full blast as a monk.

So that was the long

answer. Um, the next three questions,

including the transgressive fourth one,

will be a lot shorter to answer. Would

you recommend any meditation techniques

to a daily zazen practitioner? Well, if

you're doing daily

zazen, I assume you'd either be working

on a [__] especially if you're into

rena, or you'd be doing shikant taza,

which would be like third

gear from the like from what I was

doing. Shikantaza again you're just kind

of silently observing the mind and that

power of observation just kind of keeps

the mind still and quiet at least

relatively speaking based on my kind of

shaky understanding of shik

taza. So yeah I mean if you're doing

daily zazen I assume you'd be doing some

kind of zen meditation which I would

guess would be working on a m working on

a a [__] Did I say a mantra the first

time? Or working on coan

or doing shicant

taza. So I'm just going to move on to

thoughtf's third question. What are some

good similes from the polycanon? Some of

the best simileies come from the same

suta which is the alagadup suta of the

majimminaya. That's where the simile of

the raft is where you know you got

someone who wants to cross this flooded

river and there's no bridge there's no ferry boat. So they just grab a bunch of sticks and vines and grass and this kind of thing just just tie it all together and then they just get on the thing and they just paddle it across the stream across the flood and once they get to the other side they just ditch it. They don't need it anymore. They wouldn't it'd be foolish for them to just take this thing which is made up out of like rubbish debris anyway and then just like put it on their head and continue on their way. It'd be foolish. You don't need it anymore. So you leave it behind. And the Buddha compared that raft or that float to dharma that you don't need

dharma anymore after you have become enlightened. So that's that's an interesting simile. Another simile from the very same suta is the the water snake. It's a presumably a kind of poisonous snake. Um I'm not sure if anyone knows for sure what kind of snake it is. I'm not aware of poisonous water snakes in Burma. There might be one like in in America, you've got the cotton mouth moccasin which lives in the water and is very poisonous, but I'm not sure in Burma. But anyway, excuse me. Um, the Buddha says that becoming a monk or being a monk is like holding this poisonous snake. And if you're I

mean a bad monk would pick it up by the tail or pick it up by the middle, you know, it's like the snake is dama. And if you grasp dharma wrong, it can it can come back and get you. I mean, it's it's it reminds me of a saying in among Roman Catholics that it's easier for a monk to go to hell than for a lay person to go to hell because a monk is held to a higher standard. And that's kind of what this simile is getting at where if you're a good monk, you're going to be holding that snake right behind the right behind the head so it can't just turn around and bite you. And that's like being a good, conscientious, careful monk and not just this careless

monk who's just going to, you know, take
up dharma in this careless sort of way,
be a sloppy monk, be a a bad in like a a
bad example, you know, bring the the
song into disrepute and all that
that you're you're better off um just
not being a monk than than to be a bad
one or like a an unconscientious one, a
lax one, a shameless
one. And I might have to blow my nose
here. It's weird. This happens when I
talk for prolonged periods of time after
like inhaling large quantities of pollen
or
whatever.
Golly, check the mustache again.

So yeah, those are two of my favorites. I mean, another simile is the thorn, the salah, or it's it's like the spike. I think I usually translate it as the spike. Any kind of sharp pointy implement can be called a salah. Like a a surgeon's probe in ancient India was a salah. The quills of a porcupine were a salah. And the salah is like this thorn that sticks in your heart. And it's it's it's symbolic of unenlightenment where it's this thorn in your heart that makes people just run in all directions. You know, they just can't be comfortable and relaxed and satisfied. They're just this restless dissatisfaction that just keeps driving

them through samsara. And so the enlightened person is plucking this spike out of their heart and that they become at ease.

And one more of my favorite simileies is found in the atakawaga more than once. It's found throughout the the sutas, found in the dharmapata, for example, is of the lotus flower that I mean it grows in like a muddy ditch. You know, you've got this lotus flower coming up out of the mud and muck. And lotuses have like it's like a sort of like teflon, you know, some natural teflon on their leaves and their flowers. It's like a non-stick

surface. So water and mud just do not stick to this thing. Even though it's growing up out of the mud, it's just pristine. It's pure, especially if it's a white lotus. So that's a a simile of how the sage lives in the muck of this world. You know, he's surrounded by muck, surrounded by the mud of some sort, but it just doesn't stick to him. It just falls right off. I mean, you can like splash a lotus with water, the water just beads up and just drips right off and it's perfect again. So, fourth transgressive question from Thought Fog. Do Terra monks talk much of Zen patriarchs?

Maybe a few western monks do. Burmese monks are absolutely clueless with regard to much of anything beyond terra. You know, they wouldn't know. I mean, most Burmese Buddhists wouldn't even know who Ajan Man was or Ajan Cha. Some of some of the the monks would know, but you know, the Burmese villager who's just been born and raised into Buddhism, just listens to the sermons of the village village Seattle.

um they wouldn't know anything about Zen Buddhism or Zen patriarchs or any such thing. So considering that was the fourth transgressive question, I just answer it very briefly and move on to

PSA.

And PSA says if you were to hierarchically stratify your daily operations of industrial lifting apparatuses under OSHA regulations would you use a multivariable polomial regression model or a tachionic destabilization diagram with pellet positioning pallet positioning I should say on the xaxis. Well, I mean, obviously anyone would go with the tachionic destabilization diagram, although pro it may be that some conservatives wouldn't like the tachionic destabilization diagram simply because tachons are a hypothetical subatomic particle that moves faster

than the speed of

light. But they're stupid. So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question. If you had to live in any of these places, which one would you pick? Mount Pleasant, Bridgeport, Connecticut, Death Valley, the Vatican, or Rock Hill? Well, Rock Hill is the closest to here. It's in kind of upstate South Carolina, northern South Carolina. Um, and I've always been interested in that part of of South Carolina. So, I'm going with Rock Hill. I wouldn't want to live in Death Valley. I came close to that in some areas of central Burma. Just a blazing furnace. Uh the Vatican's really

not my bag of tea. Bridgeport, Connecticut. I don't know. Um my my sweetheart says that she's been there before and it was nice. So that was kind of an option. I guess Mount Pleasant is like a suburb of Charleston, South Carolina. So at least that's in the state. But he doesn't say that it's Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. I think there's more than one Mount Pleasant, but it's on the coast. It's really muggy and humid there. Um, I'd rather be up in the hills. Let's go with Rock Hill. So, PSA's third question, which is actually a Buddhist question. Which Buddhist suta or nikaya or text would you recommend to a person who's totally new to Buddhism

and they're asking about it? And my
nostrils are still acting up.
Maybe I should have had my adenoids
taken out when I was a
kid. Just a
[Applause]
second. I don't know if this is even
helping. Like the nose blowing
stuff. It just seems like it's the only
thing I can think of doing to get me to
be able to make certain sounds without
like something up high up in my nostrils
just kind of like closing like a valve
and causing me to be unable to make that
sound.
So getting back to PSA's

question, which Buddhist suta or Nikayor text would you recommend to a person who's totally new to Buddhism and they're asking about it? It would kind of depend on like what they wanted to know. But if if it was like what if they want to know what Buddhism was originally intended to be like sutin pata, I'd have them read the sutin pata because that is like primordial Buddhism or as close to primordial Buddhism as you're going to find in the texts. It's like what early Buddhism was like. It comes closest to what the philosopher Godma of the Shakya clan was teaching. Although on the other hand, if they want to know more of, you know, what are like

the the the basic

doctrines of terra Buddhism, the Majimminaya would probably be more their speed. I think more people would recommend the Majimminaya as an intro to Buddhism than the Sutini Pa. Also just with regard to wisdom and like interesting reading, the the Udana also is good reading. There's a lot of famous sutas in there that most people didn't even know most people don't even know are famous Buddhist sutras like the blind men and the elephant. That's in the Udana. I mean, most people wouldn't even know that that was like an early Buddhist teaching, but it's in

there. including some of my favorite
sutas, some very profound
ones. So, I think I'm just going to move
on to the next question. This is from
Fred and Fred says, "In your opinion,
does the mind stream have log jams?" And
that's kind of a interesting question
and I'm I'm not exactly sure what he has
in mind,
but I was thinking about it and it would
seem that like your karma would have
like cataracts, you know, there'd be
like bottlenecks like I guess it'd be
like a a log jam where for example,
you're you're a complicated person, got
all these interests and and so forth,
different aptitudes and talents and all

these things going on in your mind. And then suddenly after you you die, you take rebirth as a fertilized egg, as this embryo in which you're not going to be thinking at all for quite a while until your nervous system redevelops. Not at at least not at the level of this embryo. So that from an orthodox terravada Buddhist point of view that would be a kind of log jam to like the momentum of your mental states your karma because you know it's going to have to wait. It's going to be waiting until you know you've got enough of a thinking apparatus going that you can actually start thinking again. Start

having complexity of mind and start
working out karma again because a zygote
some little clump of cells in a woman's
uterus isn't going to have much karma
going
on. Also, just being unconscious would
be similar to that. just assuming that
you don't have mentality and karma and
stuff working out at some other level
other than this physical
level. So I mean at the the level of the
human individual it would seem that
there are certain log jams so to speak
although at a higher level maybe
not. So, I think I'm just going to move
on to the next question, which is from
Phil. And Phil says, "Do you think a

humble zen-like skepticism of all human systems of knowledge like that of Michelle de Montaine, I don't know how to pronounce French names, is a wise way to live." Yeah. I mean, humble skepticism. Yeah. I mean, you don't want to just reject everything, reject any idea because you can't prove it. because you got to go with something. But still like a humble skepticism of just not being sure just accepting something as a working hypothesis like like a really good scientist. Not the scientists who are just sold on scientism and think that science is really explaining reality but

someone a follower of science in the in the sense of scientific method where you go with a theory. First you have a hypothesis then you know if it seems to um you know it's like passes the tests of these experiments that you design it may you know advance to the level of a theory but that's it I mean there is no settled fact in
science it's hypothesis theories data that itself is sort of I mean you can't just assume that the data is ultimately real either A lot of scientists do because they're followers of scientism, but still it's just kind of a hypothetical model like a theoretical model for explaining certain things that

you don't you can't really insist that it's gospel truth. Once you start insisting on something being gospel truth, you are from a Buddhist point of view a fool. The stereotypical fool in the polyext is the person who says only this is true, anything else is wrong. Referring of course to their own preferred philosophy or religion. So yeah, my answer to that question is yeah. And I'm going to move on to Phil Lee's next question, which is, do you like Buddhist art and what's your favorite style or work? Well, Burmese Buddhist art is not very good. There are some really beautiful like

Buddha images, but there's probably even more that are ugly. And the Burmese are not a particularly artistic people. It's like the only aesthetics that the Buddha that the Burmese Buddhists really have developed is one that they have really innovative creative ways of signing their name. You know, it's not just writing out your name. It's like this weird doodle or squiggle or something that I mean sometimes it looks fascinating. You wonder how they ever came up with that. And uh also the girls know how to look pretty and that's about it. I mean most Buddhist artists I wouldn't even call them an artist. They're more of an artisan. You know

they learn how to crank out some kind of painting, some kind of statue from from their teacher and then they just keep cranking them out and there's almost no creativity. Even the songwriters are like this. There's not much imagination or creativity
involved. But I mean, some Buddhist art I like. You know, I I couldn't name like an artist who specializes in Buddhist art.
But I think the one piece of Buddhist art that really stands out in my memory, possibly not for a very good reason, is there was a Thai monastery near the city of Seattle,

Washington. I stayed there for about a week and on the wall in the main like the parlor, I mean most monasteries, Buddhist monasteries in America or a great many of them anyway are just houses in the suburbs. They get bought and just converted into a monastery because monks live there. So you got like the living room of this monastery. And there's this picture on the wall of the Buddha in meditation. Actually, he's he's not the Buddha yet. He's it's like the eve of his meditation. He's sitting under the bodhic tree in meditation. I think his eyes are open. And Mara's three voluuptuous daughters are trying to

distract him from his meditation. And I think it was good that the Buddha didn't have his eyes closed because then you could say, well, he doesn't even see them. You know, how are they going to distract him when he's not even looking? But when his eyes are open and you've got these this the painting, this is it was a Thai painting. I assume it was in a Thai monastery. These women are just like perfectly goddesslike in their voluuptuousness. You know, they're just like dancing and stuff. And the Buddha is just sitting there, his eyes open, but he's just completely unmoved. You know, he's just in this state of utter

detachment and he doesn't give a damn. Or at least that's the impression that you get from the painting. And it was a very well executed painting, very well painted. I think the the ties are more aesthetic and more artistic than the Burmese, although Burmese women are prettier than Thai women. I was sorry to disappoint you you Thai ladies out there that probably aren't watching this anyway. But yeah, I mean it would be like on a object of art by object of art basis that I would judge Buddhist art and some of the I mean sometimes you can see paintings from the the like scenes from the life of the Buddha and it's kind of like a puzzle or a game where

you identify the scene, you know? So
that's I kind of like
that. But
uh yes, that's about as far as it goes.
I was never really an afficionado of
Buddhist art. I one time when I was like
when I graduated from I think it was
graduated from high school, my father
gave me a Gandara Buddha head which was
a sandstone Buddha head about this big
and it had Caucasian features. It was
carved in a Greek
style. And I mean that was nice. I mean,
Gandara art is beautiful because it's
like in a in a Greek style of sculpture,
which was in my opinion more

sophisticated than most Asian kinds of of art. Not that I'm maybe I'm just biased. I don't know. And then uh I was telling somebody about it later at the first monastery where I ordained. And then a little while after that, one of she was like the secretary for the board of directors came up to me kind of in a confrontational manner says, "What's this I hear about you saying that you had a gun the Buddha had?" And I it took me a while to figure it out. It's like, "No, no. I said I had a Gandara Buddha head, not a gun the Buddha had." But I gave it to a a Zen center before I renounced the world. And my father was

totally scandalized by

that. So, but I mean, I figured I was I

was kind of moving around. I didn't want

this priceless treasure made of

sandstone that would shatter if it ever

dropped and hit the floor, you I just

wanted to donate it to some place where

it would be, you know, revered and

honored and, you know, just kind of

sparing myself the responsibility of

this thing because I was moving around a

lot just kind of

transient. So anyways, I'm just going to

move on this question. This is from

Phily's again. He says, "You said your

dad was a lover of frontiers. Are there

still any frontiers left to be explored in the world?"

Well, I mean, the ocean is still largely unexplored. Um, there's still like mental frontiers. Well, I don't know. I'm I'm not sure about mental frontiers. There's still like technological frontiers, obviously. Like AI is crossing a frontier every day pretty much until it eventually gets to the singularity and then who knows what the hell's going to happen. So, yeah. I mean like what's what's in the center of the earth? You know, they they guessed it's like a nickel iron core or something, but I don't think they know for sure. And I

got to blow my nose again cuz my
nostrils are shutting
down. Not even
funny. This wasn't even happening until
I I was talking for at least half an
hour
straight. So, yeah, I'm sure there are
still frontiers. In fact, probably most
of the frontiers are are just we're just
clueless with regard to them. You know,
like sort of psychic frontiers or
frontiers of, you know, bleeding through
the same sort of, you know,
semi-permeable barrier that that
Sasquatches are coming through into this
reality. You know, that would be a

frontier where the Sasquatches are
coming from.
And it may be you had some adept stone
age shaman who was able to go into that
realm, but it's still kind of a frontier
for modern
humans. So, I'm sure that there's plenty
of frontiers left to be explored. Maybe
not so much at the material level, but
um you know, beyond the material level,
I'm sure there's plenty. And even at the
material level, you got the
technological frontiers that are being
crossed every day and making new
frontiers. So I'm just going to move on
to this question. This is from
Romeo. And Romeo says, "Have you ever

read the decline of the West by Oswald Spangler? If so, what is your impression of it?" And then he continues in his book Spendler Spangler posits that all cultures are born, flourish, and die, and that western civilization is now in its final phase of eventual collapse. Do you agree with Spangler's thesis, or do you think the West's demise is preventable? Um, so I guess that's two questions. I better separate these. Don't want to be lumping my questions together.

Okay, so the first question is, have you ever read The Decline of the West by Spangler? If so, what is your impression

of it? I read the first half of it. I
was in Burma at a
monastery up in the ghoulish foothills
of the Shan
Plateau and I was reading a digital
version of it on my computer and for
some reason there was this glitch in the
computer where every time I would add a
note or underline something it would
duplicate the file somewhere where I
couldn't find it until all of a sudden I
noticed that the memory on my computer
was maxed out from every time I would
add a note or something this I mean
books generally don't take up much
memory in a computer but it's a big book
and every time I would underline

something every time I'd add a note it would just there'd just be one more Spangler you know an entire tome it's you know two thick volumes this decline of the west by Spangler um so I just stopped after reading the first volume I finally had to find out how a search for these
phantom like copies of Decline of the West that weren't coming up in the the finder. You know, I have I if I'm if I recall correctly, I did eventually find out how to delete the extra files, but then I had moved on to something else. But I did read the first half of it and my impression of it is he he's way too

verbose for my tastes. You know, like I said, it's like two thick volumes, like Gibbons: Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. And I mean, he could have gotten the point across way more succinctly in a much smaller
book. And so, I didn't like his writing style very much. In fact, I would much prefer I mean, one much shorter work that's almost as famous, maybe even as famous, is Sir Jonathan Glo. his uh the fate of empires. It's just an essay, you know, it's like 10 pages
long. So, I mean, you can find it on online. That would be a good starting point before you tackle Oswald Spangler is Sir Jonathan Glo, the fate of

empires. And it's a similar kind of idea. Sir Jonathan Gub points out that the great empires of the earth generally have a lifespan of like 200 to 250 years.

But I think I might be getting ahead of myself. So that's the first question.

The second question, see in his book, Spangler posits that all cultures are born, flourish, and die. All things are impermanent. Everything that has a beginning has an end. Neo. And that western civilization is now in its final phase of eventual collapse. Do you agree with Spangler's thesis, or do you think the West demise is preventable? And as

it turns out, I had written an essay on my blog entitled, let's see, is decadence irreversible? So, I mean, that would be my full answer to this question is if you go to my blog and do a search for is decadence irreversible and read that. But I do have an excerpt here towards the beginning of of my my blog post and I'll just as by by way of an answer I'll read this. Some historians, philosophers, and other academic types, two of the more famous being the historians Arnold Toinbe and Oswald Spangler, have theorized that great civilizations have a natural life cycle of birth, vigorous growth, glorious

maturity, degenerate scinessence and death, much as individual organisms do. And this is the natural way of things, and nothing much can be done to stop it. Furthermore, most of these thinkers have been of the opinion that our own great civilization, namely modern western civilization, is well into the stage of degenerate decline with collapse and extinction being our inevitable destiny in the in the not too distant future.

Sir John

Glo in his famous essay, the fate of empires, gave the natural lifespan of a great civilization at between 200 and 250 years, beginning with its rise to

greatness. Oswald Spangler, although prophesying our impending doom, nevertheless was optimistic to the extent that he considered 20th century European culture to be in late middle age, still somewhat vigorous, though losing the vitality, inspiration, and suppleness of youth. He thought we still have a few hundred good years left in us potentially, even though they would be years of decline. He considered the zenith of our culture to have been the baroque period of the 17th and 18th centuries with its magnificent achievements in science, music, architecture, and the kind of enlightenment political thought that

inspired the birth of the USA and with the turning point towards decline being marked by the French Revolution and the advent of socialistic ideologies. Spangler considered his own time, the early 20th century, to be analogous to ancient Rome's transition stage from decadent republic to fascistic empire, which is a major reason why the fascists and German national socialists liked reading his books and endorsed his philosophy. It now appears that Spangler was premature in his predictions. Mussolini Hitler at all may have come closer to Marius and Salah than to Caesar himself. That is forerunners of

the death throws of liberal democracy,
not the the deliverers of the fatal
thrust. So that's a quote from the essay
I wrote on the blog. I think it's still
I think it's still up there.
Um John Gub on the other hand in his
essay the fate of empires he points out
that even though a great civilization
has a lifespan of like 200 250 years
still it is possible to hit reset like
that happened with Rome. He has the
Roman Republic as this great
civilization that lasted 200 250 years
and then Julius Caesar, Augustus Caesar
came along and there was like this reset
so that you had like essentially a new
civilization that lasted another 200 250

years. Although I'm not exactly sure. I think he's being kind of subjective with regard to his timing because the Roman Empire, I mean, it it kept going for more than 250 years, although it was in decline. You know, by the time of Constantine, it was it was on the downhill slide. Um Gibbon in his decline and fall of the Roman Empire has the uh the reign of Kimotus of from the movie Gladiator as the beginning of the decline. The fall didn't happen until the battle of Adrien Opel. The fall didn't begin anyway. So it's possible you could have a reset.

But whether that's going to happen in
our case or not, I don't know because
we're definitely in a state of
decadence. And it's, you know, feminism
and socialism and just this progressive
ideology, you know, it's like everyone
is the same and and all the ethnicities
are the same and men and women are the
same. It's
just yeah that is that is a
decadent you know it's just a symptom of
decadence in our
civilization so what was the question
though maybe I should go back to what
the actual freaking question was is do
you think the west's demise is
preventable well it's like the Roman

Empire was close to collapse a number of times like during the the reign of the the emperor Aurelian

You had like barbarian invasions, the Goths especially running a muk. And then the the whole empire just started fragmenting into into different like mini empires. You had was there what was it? Zenobia in the east. You had Tetrakus in the west. You know, it's like Tetricus had like Gaul, Britannia, and I think Hispania all just broken off from the empire. There's a few little upstarts here and there like in Egypt, Egypt broke away until Zenobia in Syria conquered just absorbed that part. And I

mean the empire was in fragments but all it took was some charismatic and very skilled general and militarism to get the get things back together again. And uh I mean it's possible. I mean it may be that America, for example, will have its Julius Caesar. I'm kind of hoping that Trump isn't a Julius Caesar type. It's going to kind of overthrow the the declining system to replace it with a more vigorous one that will then just press reset for the gloriousness of our civilization. Although I mean the Roman Empire was pretty fascistic. It was like a totalitarian military state pretty much. But it was glorious, glorious

monuments and all

that. And I assume even that would be

preferable to just a collapse

into I don't know what I don't know what

we would collapse

into. I mean, Europe would collapse into

like an Islamist caliphate

probably because the castrated

Europeans, the feminized Europeans

wouldn't be able to put up much of a

fight to stop it.

So yeah, I do think that the west demise

is it can be averted that you can hit

reset that you can turn things around

temporarily although everything is

impermanent. So I mean western

civilization will eventually come to an end and I have no idea what's going to replace it. Maybe AI. So let's just move on to the next question. This is from Extremely Rare Bird. An Extremely Rare Bird says, "Have you read Man's Search for Meaning by Victor Frankle, a Holocaust survivor recounting his experience in the concentration camps?" No, I haven't read any um any books written by Holocaust survivors that I'm aware of. The closest I ever came to that was reading Soljian's The Gulog Archipelago, which has I mean, the Gulogs were concentration camps, too. They were like prison camps.

And there was some pretty gnarly stories in there, but we don't we don't need to get into that. But I haven't I have not read Victor Frankle. So, I'm going to move on to Extremely Rare Bird. Second question. On a similar note, what did you think about House of the Dead by Dostki if you read it? I think it's pretty great so far. Yeah, I did read I did read House of the Dead. I'm pretty sure that was his more or less autobiographical account of being in a Siberian prison
camp that Dostki was. He started off when he was a very young man as a socialist. He was kind of a radical and

then he got arrested and sentenced to death and he was actually like like waiting his line waiting in line to be shot in front of a firing squad. you know, the first people were already blindfolded, standing in front, and he was, you know, he was he wasn't in the first wave of people to be shot, but he was standing in line, waiting his turn. And then at the last minute, probably theatrically, they get a like a like a pardon. Not necessarily a pardon, but uh the zar just commuted their sentence to x number of years in a Siberian prison camp. So he didn't get shot after all. He goes to the Siberian prison camp and he's dealing with like

murderers and child molesters just like
hardened hardened criminals beyond the
imagination of the average American city
dweller living in comfort that some of
these people were just utter
sociopaths. And in a
way it inspired
Dosioski's like his the themes of his
writing where I mean he knew that some
of these people were
just bloodthirsty ruthless murderers but
at the same time he could see this inner
strength that they had and that I mean
even like this brutal murderer you know
they still had a kind of divinity to
them or just just the indomitable human

spirit or something that really struck Dostki and just influenced his point of view for the rest of his life. And by the time he was back in like St. Petersburg or Moscow writing, he was just rightwing all the way.

He I mean like one of his masterpieces, one of his great novels, probably the the least of his masterpieces was The Possessed or the Devils in which socialists are symbolic of devil worshippers. you know, it's it's it's sort of an apocalyptic book where the leader of this socialist group, you know, he's he's sort of like the antichrist that that Dosioski just did a 180 and it was largely caused by his

experience in the this Siberian prison camp just dealing with just the utter drags of society because he was a political criminal, but he was just thrown in with with like the violent criminals, you know, they didn't really discriminate. They didn't have special special prisons or special goologs just for the political guys. They just get thrown in with the murderers and the thieves and so
forth. And uh he just saw something like admirable through all the the sociopathy sociopathy I guess it's pronounced. So yeah, I mean it's it's largely autobiographical. He doesn't

really write it as an autobiography. He writes it as a novel, but it's based on his own experiences. And probably most of what happened in the in the story really happened uh with Dosti. It's not my favorite book that he wrote, but it's it's uh it's definitely worth reading. So anyways, I'm just going to move on to Extremely Rare Bird's third question, which is, do you see any likeness of our worldly conflicts today and those that led up to World War II?

Well, I mean, the conflicts that led up to World War II were mainly like Germany liberating the Germanspeaking ethnicities of neighboring countries in

the West and Japan just trying to imitate European colonialists by carving out its own empire in the east. And I don't think either one of those is really happening now. I mean, Russia kind of is expansionist in in trying to gain back its losses, so to speak, when the Soviet Union collapsed. So, there is that. Um, but on a kind of a in America, there is something that's happening that was similar to what was happening in the Weimar Republic of Germany. In fact, it's it's happening in Europe also. It's like the Weimar Republic on a larger scale where the Weimar Republic was kind of liberal and

Weimar Germany was decent and anyone who watched Cabaret with Liza Minnelli that I mean that was that's it's really a good movie. It's it's worth seeing. It's it's about Weimar Germany, how it's just sort of like a lot of like moral degeneracy going on.

And what was happening in Germany at the time was the center was collapsing. It was Germany was polarizing. you had Marxists and you had Nazis or I mean you had other groups too but still it was it became like this polarized political scene of the far left versus whatever the the national socialists were. I mean they weren't really far right you know they were they had socialist elements

hence they were called national
socialists but you know there's I guess
some people have called Adolf Hitler or
Adolf Hitler um like a radical
centrist because being a centrist isn't
necessarily you know it's just like in
the Buddhist middle path
necessarily. So that's kind of happening
in the west. It's just like America is
just being polarized by you've got the
Trump supporters and the people who hate
the guts of the Trump supporters or I
mean the the Trump supporters hate the
guts of the far leftists
too. So I'm mistakenly calling them
liberals, but I mean they're they're

more socialists than
liberals. So the center is hollowing out
and it's becoming more polarized and
you're going to have some radical group
that could take over. Although I really
don't think that Trump and the MAGA
people are all that radical. You know,
they're just returning to what worked
pretty well like in the 1980s and
90s. Like most of the positions of Trump
and his administration are not all that
different from what was just accepted
common sense just a few decades ago.
So yeah, I'm uh I mean one of the main
things that caused World War II was just
the Germans were smarting after World
War I. The humiliation and betrayal of

like the Treaty of Versailles and all that, which I mean I really don't see any parallels to that nowadays. And uh Japan isn't really setting up an expansionist empire, although China might be.

But yeah, I don't really I don't really see a whole lot of parallels. I mean, if you look hard enough, you're going to find parallels. You know, you're going to find coincidences and all this stuff that I mean, if you build your case carefully, you might be able to persuade a number of people that, you know, it's all happening again. But yeah, I think the the current situation is is fairly

unique.

So, I guess I guess that's enough on that one and I'm just going to I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from

Ruie and we've been going for an hour over an hour and a half already. Man, I hope I hope I don't break any records because I started this one fairly late. It was after 9:00 in the evening when I started. It's going to be after midnight probably by the time I'm

done. So, anyways, Ruie says, "Do you think Dhamma permits adoration?" And he's got adoration hyphenated. It's ad hyphen oration. I don't know if that was on purpose, in which case I do not

understand the significance of ad hyphen oration, but adoration in general, just to make sure, I looked up adoration in the dictionary. And there's two meanings. One is deep love and respect, and the other is worship or veneration. And I don't think that Dhamma would have anything bad to say about deep love and respect so long as it's not a lot of clinging and attachment involved. But just deep love and respect is fine. It's the attachment that is often accompanying deep love especially that Dharma would hold a dim view of. And with regard to worship and veneration, the more devotional type of

Buddhists, I mean, it's it's all the way in the suit. I mean it's in the sutas poly texts there's already like the the c personality call to the Buddha and adoration of the Buddha. Um so dharma as it exists today certainly permits like worship of the Buddha veneration of the sa and so forth. um the earliest Buddhism maybe not so much maybe not so much worship there still be veneration of monks veneration of senior monks by junior monks that kind of thing but I think veneration here means something a little stronger than just deep respect so I mean deep love respect even worship and veneration are fine so long as you don't have clinging and

attachment contaminating

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Count Nine. And Count Nine says, "What happens if someone is practicing mindful mindlessness listening to a Dhamma video while cleaning the bookshelves? Is that when animal talk begins? Or is it simply when we start to hear it?" I guess I already know the answer.

Thoughts? Well, what happens if someone is practicing mindful mindlessness, listening to a dharma video while cleaning the bookshelves? I mean, which one is the mindfulness and which one is the mindlessness? I mean, you can be

cleaning the bookshelves mindfully and just sort of the dharma talk is just background noise and you're just thinking about something else. In which case, the listening to the dharma video would be the mindlessness and cleaning the bookcase, the bookshelves would be the mindfulness.

So mindful mindlessness, it's like multitasking. I don't think you're going to be able to do multiple tasks mindfully. You know, maybe some kind of alien race might be able to manage it, but we mere humans. I don't think we can multitask mindfully. That you can be mindful of one thing at a time, but you can't be doing two things at a time and

being mindful of both of them
simultaneously. Unless maybe you can get
into this expansive state that is like
choiceless awareness like Krishna Murdy
talked about but I don't think count
nine is referring to Krishna Mie's
choiceless awareness here.
So I I don't think that's when animal
talk begins just when you start talking
about worldly stuff that is of no
benefit
spiritually. So yeah, I think animal
talk beginning really doesn't have much
to do with multitasking necessarily or
listening to dhamma videos while
cleaning bookshelves. You know, just

having dhamma videos in the back as background noise that I mean you're better off with that than with like death metal or something. I suppose that uh Nim Karoli Baba up on the bookshelf back there. He used to hire people to chant like Hari Krishna stuff you know Hari Krishna Hari Krishna Krishna Krishna Hari Harama Harama Rama Hari just for like hours and hours every day just in a way I mean it was just sort of like this background carrier wave to all the the villagers the people living around there who could hear it just it was just like going on in the back of their mind it's like this spiritual adoration of odd that's just sort of

like in their subconscious mind all the
time because of this that I mean that's
not necessarily a bad thing no matter
you know they might be telling runchy
jokes or committing adultery or whatever
while this you know this chanting is
going on in the background but I I
really don't see the connection
here that if someone is practicing
mindful mindlessness is that when animal
talk begins I really don't see any kind
of like statistically significant
correlation
there. Unless it's just mindlessness in
general. It doesn't have to be mindful
mindlessness. It's just unmindfulness in

general. So, I guess I should just move on. Next question. I'm not sure how well I answered that question, but it was kind of a hard question for me to really understand very well. So, I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from the protose pseudom monk who used to be known as cool whip and the protose pseudo monk says did you ask your parents for permission to ordain? How did they react to the idea of you becoming a Buddhist monk? Also, how should one explain to their family and friends why ordaining is not a stupid idea and one is not throwing their life away? That's like two questions already. My granddad said such a waste. Others

have said you have so much to offer to the world. What about having a family, etc.? Every single thing monks do, they say, is the opposite of a meaningful life. Not one person I know celebrates this idea. Well, getting to the actual first question here. Did you ask your parents for permission to ordain? I just informed them that I was going to do it, and they didn't say not
to. Um, I'd already been temporarily a novice monk for five weeks, like a year or two before, so I'd already done it. And I think both my parents just assumed that it would be temporary and not lasting until long after both of them

had passed
away. And my father was proud of me. He
thought I was kind of an extremist. He
thought I'd gone
overboard, but he was proud of me. But
my mother, I mean, she, bless her heart,
she did not have a religious or
spiritual bone in her body. She just
completely did not get it. She would
infinitely have preferred to have
grandkids that she could spoil rather
than have a son who is a monk living in
Burma with almost no
communication. So I didn't really ask
for permission to ordain, but I just
told them that I was going to do it and
they didn't tell me not to. Although I

did know a monk who whose parents were like devout Christians and they just refused to give permission for him to ordain but he got ordained anyway. Tom Pulu Seattle ordained him and said the SA is willing to make the sacrifice which means the SA is willing to break a minor rule by ordaining somebody whose parents did not give permission. It's still a valid ordination. It's just that the monks who ordain somebody whose parents didn't give him permission commit a minor transgression, a dooka offense, and then they have to make confession and they're cleared of the offense.

So there is that. So this the second question, and I think he's asked four questions here because he's got a compound question with more than one question mark. How should one explain to their family and friends why ordaining is not a stupid idea and one is not throwing their life away? Well, I mean one way I used to think about it is I mean you read in these ancient books that I mean if you do this and that you can you can realize ultimate reality. You can know the highest truth. And so it's like it's like a a spiritual duty to at least give it a shot. You know, it's like, you know, putting it in Christian terms, it's like

seeing God face to face, that it's actually possible to do that. You know, it might not might be that your odds are not all that good statistically, but at least it's possible to do that. And if it's possible to do that, I mean, why why would anybody not even give it a try?

I mean, it just it just makes perfect sense to me that if you got these this ancient text, venerable scriptures saying that if you live your life in this way, you can realize ultimate reality. You can know the highest truth. You can liberate yourself from all suffering and delusion. I mean, why

would anybody think that's a stupid idea
unless they're just locked into samsara
and don't know any better? you know,
they just think anything that isn't like
worldliness is [__] And there's
lots and lots of people like
that. But I mean, you shouldn't like
shackle yourself to their very limited
point of
view. But even my father who was proud
of me, I he thought I had really gone
over I was like some kind of radical
extremist by becoming a monk.
So I mean you have so much to offer to
the world but I mean you can offer more
as an enlightened being or a very wise
one than you you will from being a a

normie who makes a lot of money as a doctor or a lawyer or something. But a normie a like a worldly minded normie probably would not agree with that statement.

So yeah, I mean trying to persuade them that it's a good idea. I mean just liberating yourself from suffering and delusion. I mean anyone who thinks that is unworthy of a goal is someone that you're probably better off not spending a lot of time having conversations with anyway. So I'm just going to move on to the protoseudong second question or actually technically third which is as

follows. If I can get my nostrils to cooperate. As a general rule, would you advise to not cultivate relationships that have no respect for or even follow the Buddhist
path? Explaining it is pointless. The Buddha said something like, "What can I say for them to go away?" Right? Old friends want to meet up and chat, even drink, but they live in delusional ways. I see it as a trap because I've known such persons for a long time. I feel an obligation to meet with them because they are still nice people. No harm in chatting. But from Buddhist perspective, very unethical, hedonistic lifestyle, etc. However, experience shows that due

to my weakness or old habits, I always compromise my practice. One step in the direction of sensuality is like 10 steps backwards spiritually. The robes feels like the only way to protect myself from this unh wholesome behavior and subsequent muddled mental states. Um yeah, one thing I did was I just deliberately moved to a town where I didn't know anybody. Although sometimes my old friends would would make the drive to come visit me and we'd go out and get drunk or something.

But yeah, I

mean if it I mean you got to like feel out what works best for you. And I mean

as a lay person I mean you're just going to have to deal with lay people. I mean that's just unavoidable. I mean you can choose your friends, try to choose wise friends and avoid foolish ones. That kind of thing. Yeah. Yeah, I mean I went through the same kind of thing, but I was still hanging out with my my buddies up until shortly before I went to the monastery. Um, for for quite a while, I wouldn't drink. So, you know, I'd go out, I'd be like designated driver. And it's it's really not much fun to be the only sober person when everyone else is acting like drunks and, you know, you're you're you're sober. It it wasn't it wasn't

really all that enjoyable for me.

Let's

see. Yeah. Well, I mean, it's just your

own choice that you have to make. I

mean, you can I mean, there's a tradeoff

by just sort of injecting some higher

consciousness into the interaction with

your friends. You're actually benefiting

your friends. I mean, you may be taking

somewhat of a hit, but they are

benefiting. And then so you're at the

same time that you might be getting bad

karma or making bad karma, you're also

making good karma by helping to uplift

these these other people that you're

interacting

with. So it's kind of a trade-off and you have to decide for yourself what works best for you. But like I did, I mean, you can partly deal with the the situation by just avoiding people and becoming pretty much of a hermit.

I mean, I wasn't a total hermit, but like I said, I moved to a town where I didn't know anybody. Although, an old friend of mine that'll be mentioned a little later on in this Q&A moved to town just a matter of months after I did through some kind of coincidence. Let's see.

So yeah, I mean this is a hard one to advise on because I really don't know the the

precise circumstances. I mean I went
through something similar. I
survived. I mean I did get drunk with my
old buddies. I mean shortly before my
ordination
even but we don't need to get into the
lurid details of that.
So yeah, I mean you can avoid people or
not really. Just follow your heart and
and do what you think is
best. So and then I'm just going to move
on to the protose pseudo monk's next and
last question. Third or fourth depending
on how you look at
it. Oh, this is kind of a continuation
of the the previous question. Anyhow,

how did you handle social situations, non-darmic friendships right before ordaining? Socializing seems useless, harmful. You no longer share the same difficulties in life. You aren't chasing the same happiness. And it's ironic because the challenges I or a Buddhist faces is actually amplified in these situations. You are trying to purify your mind and they indulge in impurity. It's strange. Buddhism has made me despise humans as fools a lot more than previously. I used to take drugs like shrooms, ecstasy, weed, listen to the Beatles, Bob Marley, and feel infinite love for humanity. Now it's like, what wretched, selfish, stupid creatures is

this true? Well, it it didn't really work that way for me. I mean, I I always had kind of a low I a low opinion of the human race. And it's only after I'd been a monk for many years, and I've explained this before that I started acquiring more compassion, more sympathy for fellow humans because I tried as hard as I could to be a saint. I realized how difficult that is. And so, how is a
normie who I mean, that's not even on their radar. I mean, it's not even really an option because it just hasn't even really occurred to them. How are they going to to live up to some exalted

ideal? I mean, they are what they are. It's in a way it's like dealing with animals, you know, dealing with dogs, for example. I mean, they're way stupider than humans, at least in certain ways. You know, they just are animalistic. They are animals. And I mean, you don't despise them as fools. They can't help it. They're born that way. And I mean, it's like we're more likely to despise humans because humans are closer to us, I suppose, because we're human, too. But still, I mean, you can adopt a similar situation where you have a kind of sympathy and compassion. And certain things you don't have to compromise.

Like, you can always tell the truth. You don't have to start telling lies when you hang around with your old buddies. you know, just start stealing. So, I mean, you can still remain relatively moral. Um, but again, like I said on to the first half of this question, it's really it's you're just going to have to feel it out for yourself and decide for yourself what is the best route to take. And and to some degree, I think being very social is probably not the best route to take. But I mean, dealing with your old friends for old times sake out of genuine brotherly love, that kind of

stuff, that's that's actually can be a good thing. You might take somewhat of a hit, but you're also helping to uplift them and then you get good karma for that. So, it's it's sort of a trade-off, but living where you don't have lots of friends is probably a good idea, especially if you're planning on renouncing the
world. So, I'm just going to move on to the next
question. And we are getting down towards the bottom here, which is kind of
good. Yeah. Yeah. We're we're going to be way less than three hours. So, that's that's that's kind of

nice. So, I mean, those of you who like
the really long ones, just play it. Just
you can you can slow it down so it all
have a like a deeper more resonant voice
or you can just keep watching the same
one or you can just watch old
ones. I doubt there's very many people.
There are a few I'm sure but there's
probably not very many people who have
watched all 141 Q&A videos extending all
the way back to when I was a
shavenheaded
monk. The first few of them I'm still a
monk. So
anyways, next question is from
Yugu and Yugu says in the atakawaga, the

Buddha speaks against taking up morality and observances. Can you explain what he meant by that? Well, he didn't really say that you shouldn't take up morality and observances. There's one suta, the Magandia Suta, where the Buddha says, "You're not going to become enlightened. You're not going to be purified by morality and observances. But on the on the other hand, you're not going to be purified by an absence of morality and observances. And he does warn monks not to cling to morality observances. And that's really the main point. Like in the Antagawaga, it talks about how there are some like philosophers and

priests who will cling to a moral code, you know, and if they fall away, you know, they transgress the moral code. They they consider themselves to be lost. They're in despair and they just like they think that only by clinging to this moral code are they going to have any hope of liberation. And the Buddha warned against that. He warned monks to to like refrain from like enslaving themselves to moral codes.

So in a way it's it's sort of like an aspect of Christianity like what the teachings of Paul that I used to really have no use for at all. And that was like I mean so long

as you know it's like so long as you accept Christ as your savior then you can do all kinds of stuff and you're forgiven. And I had no use for that at all. But still there is a certain glimmer of wisdom in that in that clinging to a moral code is still clinging and it's like a mental prison and if you fall away from that you break a rule or something you've just screwed yourself.

Whereas really just do the best you can, be as wise and and as conscious as you can manage and then just go through life spontaneously without having to, you know, enslaving yourself to some artificial list of rules, which is kind

of ironic

because Buddhism eventually came up with the Vineia rules, which is probably at least 2,000 rules that monks are supposed to follow. Although I am skeptical with regard to the idea that the Buddha actually set up this system that it was possibly set up after his his party nibana after his death just to stabilize the SA because the the leader wasn't there anymore. And if you read between the lines in the history of the first council that does seem to be the case that you can I mean it is implied that the first council which is also called the vineia saniti you know

the the convocation on on monastic discipline they were setting up rules to stabilize the sa to stabilize Buddhism after the Buddha is gone. So the Buddha I mean in the in the text the Buddha says I mean you really should not enslave yourself to a moral code. You should be moral but you shouldn't like be attached to that. That's the main point. And like the Magandia Suda says it's like morality observances isn't going to get you enlightened but amorality and non-observance isn't going to get you enlightened either. which is kind of hard to wrap your head around, I suppose, but it

really he wasn't speaking against taking up morality observances. He was more speaking against clinging to morality observances as some kind of road to liberation because it really doesn't work that
way. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Austin. And Austin says, "I've heard you say that you don't believe gender is fundamentally real." Following this logic, could a man become a woman? Well, I mean, if gender isn't fundamentally real, how could a man become a woman because there would be no men and no women? I mean, there's like two levels

of truth in Terra Buddhism. There's ultimate truth and then there's conventional truth. In ultimate truth, there's no men, no women, no people, no beings. That's all conventional truth. And even in conventional truth, I mean nowadays we've got the conventional truth of like scientific empiricism, which is a very very strong model of truth. Even though it's not ultimately true, it definitely stabilizes our reality and explains things fairly well, well enough to get us through life in a more or less predictable manner.
So a man and going with conventional truth like scientific empiricism then you definitely do have male and female

and in fact in

Abidama maleness and femaleness are

ultimate realities. So Orthodox

Terravada, I mean, you're either male or

you're female or possibly in a few

cases, you could be like a

hermaphrodite, but there's no way you

could switch from being male to female

or female to male or at least not

through natural means. There there's a

few cases like, oh, what was his name?

Sora the the story of Sora in the

Dhamapata commentary where there's this

merchant son a young man who's already

married and has kids and he watches this

Araant taking a bath in a river and this

Araant has just this beautiful golden complexion and this this young man is thinking man I wish my wife had a complexion like that and because of this profane thought about an arahant regarding this arroant, he just immediately turned into a woman just through paranormal like miraculous means. And then he was just overwhelmed with shame when he realized what happened. Took off, moved to Taxilla and got married and had two kids and and then finally an old friend of his happened to be in Tilla on business. This Sora recognized him, invited him into the house. She's like this, you know, matronly woman at this point and,

you know, she's she's asking him about, you know, what happened to so- and so back in whatever town they were originally from, Sawati or something and then finally she um she tells him that, you know, I used to be your friend Sora and because of this event when I had this thought against this this monk that I turned into a woman and here I am. So then the monk said, "Well, did you ask his per ask his forgiveness? Did you apologize?" And and the woman says, "No." And says, "Well, you should. I mean, he's he's not far from here. Let's go and and do it." So she apologizes and then she immediately turns back into a

man again. So according to Terabata Buddhism, maleness and femaleeness are ultimately real in in Abidama, which most Western Buddhists really don't take very seriously, including me.

But um just deciding that you're a woman if if you're a biological male, just to decide that you feel more like a woman than a man, isn't going to make you a woman. Not from a scientific empirical point of view, even though a lot of the science scientists have joined the cult of progressivism or and then not according to orthodox terra and then just going with ultimate reality. There's no male, no female, no change.

So I mean following a looser kind of conventional truth where conventional truth is just whatever any what whatever the majority believes is going to be conventional truth even if it isn't ultimate truth then presumably in some society or
population it could be conventional truth and then a man can become a woman or a woman can become a man. But even in like in
Burma, you've got a lot of transsexual people. Just out in remote villages, you're going to have transsexual people. And the Buddhists can accept this because it's just a matter of

reincarnation. And someone is transitioning from male to female and it's taking more than one life to make the full transition. And so they're like in an intermediate stage where you've got a woman who maybe recalls having been a man in her previous existence or maybe she doesn't recall it but still there's like you know a a a fairly plausible Buddhist argument that they were you know they were the opposite gender in their previous existence and you know they just kind of still have the like characteristics of that gender even though they're in the body of the opposite gender. But even they aren't saying that a woman who was born um and

believes that she's a man that like
physically she's a
man that you know it's just like kind of
spiritually she's still pretty much a
man. But I mean I've met some of them
and I remember asking a friend of mine
he employed one. There's this a woman
who went by a man's name, acted like a
man, and was a very uh active lesbian
or heterosexual
trans scoring with a lot of kind of
lesbian type women. And I asked him,
"What kind of bathroom does she use in
Burma?" You know, when she's at the bus
station, does she use the men's room or
the ladies room? And he didn't know. I I

asked him to ask her for me or ask this person for me, but he never got back to me on that one. So, I don't think that gender is ultimately real. It's conventionally real. And going with the strongest con like the strongest like model of conventional truth that we have, which is like scientific empiricism, that it just doesn't work that way. You can't just decide that you're a cat.

people are doing it nowadays. In fact, I've been told that in some schools there are actually litter boxes in the girls' room for the girls who identify as

cats. I've actually been told that by a school teacher.

So I mean people can believe all kinds of stuff and you know and in kind of Buddhist acceptance of illusion within the realm of illusion then you could say pretty much anything goes although it's definitely a step away from rationality and common sense to say that just because you think you feel like a woman that you are one and then you can just enter into women's sports and just completely dominate.

So yeah, following following my logic, a man couldn't become a woman unless it

was like just the conventional truth
which is failing in the west. There were
a number of leftist a lot I mean they're
mostly still trying this but it's
faltering. It's like this woke stuff is
going out of style fast. And I was like
avidly following up on the uh the
reviews of the new Snow White movie that
was just an absolute
bomb because they're trying I mean I
don't know if there's any transgender
stuff in there but it was just like
leftist propaganda and you know it's
like race swapping of the main some of
the main like Snow White herself you
know it's a brownskinned
woman called Snow white and I don't know

it's just the attempt to make it conventional truth for western civilization that a man can become a woman and a woman become a man is failing at present it's faltering it could make a comeback I hope it doesn't but there was an attempt at making that the established conventional truth of our society and large numbers of people accepted that and still accept it. But I never did. I mean, even if a man had a complete like a sex change operation, I don't think that would really make him a woman. I mean, genetically, still still a man. I mean, like physically, aside from some like

artificial changes, still a man, a lot
of their even like their their
psychology would still be male.
So it's it's kind of a vague question.
Ultimately, there are no men to become
women, no women to become men.
Conventionally, I mean, it depends on
what the majority believe,
but conventional truth is is pretty well
locked down by modern
scientific, not necessarily even
realism, but just scientific
empiricism. So, I think I've I've spent
enough time on that. I'm gonna move on
to the next question which is from
Phix who uh I'm pretty sure used to go
by the name of Skooladine or Skooladin

Scoladin and uh he says would you kindly compare Rahm Doss to Jordan Peterson and then he's got the characteristic bullet points of of Scaladin which says Richard Alpert and Jordan Peterson led s so similar lives until Richard rejected the social engineering ing a cultural conditioning that drives the political economy because it made him neurotic. Well, I'm I'm I'm fairly well acquainted with Ron Doss and Jordan Peterson, you know, just I mean, not from personal acquaintance, but just from seeing them, hearing them, reading books, that kind of thing. And I never made any connection between the two.

Never did Rahm Doss remind me of Jordan Peterson or vice versa. That there are certain basic differences. Roms started off as Richard Albert. He was a professor in in
like it was like in the California like the University of California system. Then he I think he went to Stanford and then he went to Harvard. He was a Harvard professor and he got kicked out of Harvard with his friend Timothy Liry because they were experimenting with psychedelic drugs. And after he had this kind of awakening experience like a semi- awakening experiences with with LSD he went to India looking for some meditation master that could tell him

you know what is this LSD experience all about and can you cultivate it without the chemical just through like you know ancient Indian meditative techniques that kind of thing. Jordan Peterson and then and and Richard Albert who became Ram Doss. I mean he was I would consider him a saint. I don't think he was fully enlightened but he was a very wise and spiritual man. I had a lot of respect for him. He was like one of my first gurus in in my life after my father. He was one one of my first gurus. Jordan Peterson on the other hand he's still struggling. I mean Richard Alpert or Rahm Doss was kind of struggling too. I

mean, he wasn't fully enlightened. He had but he had like higher, more refined spiritual struggles. Jordan Peterson is struggling still at the worldly level, you know. He he messed his mind all up with with getting addicted to Valium or something when his when his wife was had cancer. And um I don't know, he's he can be very

angry. Um he cries a lot. And um Richard Alpert was I mean he was born Jewish but I think Jordan Peterson eventually became more pro-Jew than than Rahm Doss was just largely through his association with the Daily Wire and Ben Shapiro at all. So I think that Rahm Doss was more of a spiritual figure. Jordan Peterson

is not particularly spiritual as far as
I can tell that he would greatly benefit
from some acquaintance with
Buddhism that I mean he's like
struggling I I went to see Jordan
Peterson speak once when he was in San
Jose, California and he was struggling
to try and come up with some morality or
ethics that doesn't rely on God. And I
mean, Buddhism has had that for 25
centuries. And and Jordan Peterson seems
oblivious to that that he's kind of he's
relying more on experiments on rats than
he is on
dharma. So yeah, I think Richard Albert
was or Rahm Doss was much more saintly,

much more wise than Jordan Peterson.
So that would be my comparison. And so
I'm just going to move on to
Phix, which is kind of a cringy name in
my opinion. Let's just go with Scaladin.
Scaladin's next question, which is, can
marijuana cause existential dread or
anxiety? And the bullet point comment
here is, I've heard this theory a number
of times where people blame weed for
their anxiety, but I think it's probably
closer to a subconscious realization
that even normies who checked every
supposed to box are losing homes and
cutting back on meals. Even before the
COVID, I remember people living out of
cars who had full-time employment. Well,

let's just get back to the question here. Can marijuana cause existential dread or anxiety? And I can say from my own experience, yeah, it can. In fact, the only panic attack or the closest thing I've ever had to a full-blown panic attack was um it was caused by smoking too much weed. I was a monk at the time. I just came back from Burma to America to visit my family. my old buddy mucus man. He I mean, bless his heart, he's one of my dearest friends to this day, even though we haven't been communicating much because he's living on the other side of the continent. But I mean, he smokes weed

like like a Jamaican. I mean, he just smokes prodigious quantities. And I mean, I used to be able to keep up with him when I was a young man before I became a monk. But he took me camping and he's the camp master. He specializes in like foul weather camping. He can camp and build a fire in a in a downpour. It's It's all good. So anyways, after we went camping, I think it was after we went camping. I was staying at his place and he uh starts handing out the uh the cannabis and I'm trying to keep up with him. You know, for old times sake, I've I always I always liked marijuana. I I liked it better than alcohol. So, you know, I'm

smoking out with him
and he's he had like this little Mexican
devil mask on the wall and it was
starting to bug me. I was starting to
get like paranoid feelings and finally
at one point I asking, "Can you take
that down?" I didn't want to keep
looking at this this, you know, red
horned devil mask that's on the wall.
So, he, you know, he obliges me and
takes it down. And I was just I just got
hammered. I mean, I didn't drink any
alcohol, but I was just so high. I mean,
for him it was just like an average, you
know, for him it was nothing. But, I
mean, I was just completely out of it.

So, I finally it was bedtime. I went to my room
and he he went to bed on opposite sides of the place, you know, the other end. And I kept hearing like footsteps in the dark in outside my bedroom. And I'd open the door and it'd be silence, nothing. And then I'd close the door and I'd start hearing footsteps again. And I'd open the door, it just be pitch blackness and stillness and silence out there. And I started to panic. It's like somebody's like sneaking around. They're going to murder me or something. I had like this paranoid panic attack. Finally, it got to the point where I'm just yelling for my for my buddy. And he

he gets up and he's like in this state of confusion, just woken up out of a sound sleep in his underwear, just, you know, what is it? and just just to kind of like ground myself. I asked him if I could give him a hug and he just kind of grinned, said, "All right." So, I gave him a hug and that kind of like in a in a way it just kind of settled everything, you know, I knew that he was I could just feel just from, you know, he was he was my brother, you know, and so, you know, there's not going to be any like satanic cults or anything. Nobody's sacrificing me, anything like that. So, it was it was all good after

that. But that was about as close to a panic attack as I've ever had. And it was induced by excess of marijuana. And marijuana can notoriously make people feel paranoid. You know, you just start worrying. What if this happens? That kind of thing. For me, it generally doesn't do that, but it can. It has in the past.

Um, with regard to like chronic anxiety, I I've never really heard of that, but like extreme cases, you can have acute anxiety just caused by being like way too high for your own good.

So, I guess I answer that question. So, I'm just going to move on

to Scaladin's third question, which is the very last question of the evening or of the the morning, the afternoon, whatever the hell time you are listening to

this. And he says, do people still think that the people molding social norms are benevolent? And then he's got the bullet point that says, just a minute, I got to blow my nose again. It's just that it's like some kind of valve up in my nostrils that keep closing off so that I can't breathe out through my nose to make certain

sounds. It's not even funny.

Anyways, the bullet point commentary

says, "I was listening to Yuri Bezmanov talk about how his nation function by throwing those who aren't 100% normie in the goolog. 30 million plus children." I can't say if the US will slide that low, but a similar persecution is happening to children. If they behave in a way that makes it difficult for a teacher, they are often misdiagnosed with mental illness or like ADHD or whatever and doped up on prescription medication, sometimes purely for academic achievement, not to mention castrated males is a thing now. Okay, let's just get back to the question. Do people still think that the people molding social norms are

benevolent? I think most people I mean that's not even on the radar. A lot of people just think social norms just arise organically spontaneously and some of them do. I mean every once in a while just something will go viral you know some fashion some trend will go viral and people will just start liking it without anybody really planning it. you know, other than maybe the person who made the the original YouTube video or whatever that, you know, it just happens spontaneously that there are however some social norms that are engineered, you know, by shady figures in the background, you know, by by

activists and lobbyists and all this that, you know, some of it's by the government. propaganda is really um I mean my my awareness of propaganda over the past several years is has caused me to be very skeptical of history in general because I doubt that the the blatant propaganda just started when when Donald Trump first ran for president in 2015. It's probably been there for a long time. is just that something about Donald Trump makes people so hysterical and reckless that has just made it just painfully obvious to the point that Donald Trump even though condemned as literally Adolf Hitler is won the

popular vote in a in a

mandate.

So do people excuse me do people still think that the people molding social norms are benevolent? Some do. Some think that they're all evil. Uh, and but I I would guess that for most people, it's just they don't even think about it. You know, it's just social norms are just something that you accept. You know, it's just part of your environment. It's like trying to question, you know, what caused this social norm to arise is sort of like questioning what caused the weather to arise. It's just what caused those

clouds up there to arise. People just don't think about it. they just accept it as just the environment that's just handed to them as a given. It's just, you know, it's just something that you just have to work into the equation without having to wonder about where it came

from. But I mean, some social norms I assume may be benevolent. I mean you got socialists who are trying to mold social norms in order to bring about some socialist utopia even though um like a century of stagnant and failed economies totalitarian totalitarianism and genocide is not sufficient evidence that socialism doesn't

work. At least Marxism

doesn't.

So, I

mean, I guess the socialists who are who

are coming up with the propaganda and

all that aren't necessarily benevolent.

They just kind of force socialism on

everyone for somebody's own good. Not

necessarily ours, but

somebody's. I mean, a lot of the the

like indoctrinated college educated

white women who who are going to vote

Democrat no matter what, you know, they

think that it's benevolent.

They just assume that it is. I mean,

they couldn't bring themselves to

question the benevolence of whoever is coming up with ideas that are they're they're guiding the left nowadays. But I think there's a lot more black pilling and red pilling going on nowadays. So I think the the percentage of people who think that propaganda is trustworthy and good are decreasing.
So yeah, but I I do think that people are just waking up to the fact that really most of what passes for news, for example, is just propaganda.
It may be that a lot of these news programs and like news channels, they'll take facts and then they will invariably twist it in favor of their own preferred narrative. And so, you know, anything to

do with Donald Trump, they're going to twist it into something negative. You know, the the the right can take the exact same data and twist it into something good.

So, it's it's caused me to be a lot more skeptical like like Trump's tariffs very controversial nowadays. You got authorities on one side saying, you know, it's it's about time that this has been long and coming. It's necessary and then the other then you got these other authorities, no less authoritative, saying it's going to destroy the American economy. And so, I mean, you just have to wait and see what's going

to happen. I mean, it's it's kind of
foolish to take a
position when I mean, you don't really
know. But I think I'm I'm wandering away
from the people molding social norms and
their supposed
benevolence. Yeah. I think benevolence
isn't
really I mean in reality it doesn't
really it's not like the main ingredient
in the in the motivation for molding
social norms that it's more like
political
convenience. So but I I think that
people are gradually waking up in the
west to this sort of thing. So, some
people still think that the people

molding social norms are benevolent, but I would guess like I've started off saying, most people I mean it's they don't even think about it. It doesn't even occur to them to think about it. And that's it. We are done. And like I should always say at the beginning and for some perverse reason almost never do. If you have any questions that you think I could probably answer or possibly answer, especially about Terravada Buddhism, early Buddhism, Indian spirituality, like Eastern philosophy, Western philosophy to some degree like classical literature. I haven't read a

whole lot of obscure fringe stuff, but classical stuff I have read. Me personally, Burma, etc. And my meta goes out to the people whose world was shattered by the earthquake in Burma. The one of my main supporters, I saw pictures of her school that just collapsed. The whole thing just caved in. A lot of buildings in in central Burma are just brick buildings that do not tolerate, you know, 7.7 earthquakes very well. And I would guess that probably some of the temples of the ancient city of Pagan have collapsed too, but I haven't really seen any news about that. So I do hope that uh they uh bounce back from this like they bounce

back from everything

else. And no more than three questions

per person per episode, please. And you

can count questions by counting question

marks. And uh aside from that, all I all

else that I have to say to you is be

happy.

Okay,

then is this

working? Hello and welcome to question

and answer number

142. I am your host Pony Bosel and it

should be fairly obvious to one and all

that 142 is not a prime number. It is 2

* 71. I think 71 is probably a prime

number

though and we don't have a whole heck of

a lot of questions today. I counted 27

which is not only not a prime number but

it is a perfect cube. 27 is 3 * 3 *

3. And this is my

beverage. So I'll just remove the paper

umbrella. It signifies my taste and

style.

take a sip of said beverage, which is

coffee with milk in

it. And uh I must say I'm definitely a

coffee person. I just cannot comprehend

someone who prefers tea to

coffee. Although I have to admit for

years, even though I like coffee, I

could not drink coffee for many years

because every time I would drink coffee,

I'd get this jabbing pain in my eye.

So finally I just went to a doctor about

it cuz I do like coffee. I want to drink

coffee again. And he just cured me right

up. He knew exactly what the problem

was. I told him about this jabbing pain

in my eye every time I drink coffee. He

just told me, "Take the spoon out of the cup before I start drinking it." And it worked. He was really a good doctor. He only charged me $350 for that, too. And now I drink coffee again. And I'm about ready to start answering questions. See here. So, let's just do it. Let's just wade into this. Even though I've got like stray hairs sticking out of this braided beard, it's just now getting long enough to braid. See? Yeah, I think it's just going to be futile trying to trying to do any arrangements there. So, first question is from

Jeffrey, and Jeffrey says, "Have you ever seen the Buddhist flat earth map? I think it was published in a Hawaiian newspaper in the 1950s. I've seen flat earth Dave show it." And the lands beyond the ice walls. Well, if there's ice walls, then it's not really a Buddhist flat earth map. It or I mean, it's not a Terravada Buddhist flat earth map. If you had a Terravada Buddhist flat earth map, first of all, you'd have Mount Meu in the center. It would be a disc. Mount Meu would be in the center, 10 million miles high. Then you'd have like concentric mountain ranges spreading out from the center. And then there would be four great continents,

one in the south, one in the north, one in the east, one in the west. And humans for the most part are living on the southern continent. And then there'd be some islands, too, surrounded by ocean. And then you'd have this, it's like a stone wall that goes around the outskirts of this ocean that holds the water
in. And I mean, that would be about it. I mean India would be the southern continent south of the great mountain ranges which would be the Himalaya mountains and um the ancient Indian Buddhists were pretty much ignorant of anything extending beyond India plus

maybe like Persia kind of toward to the northwest maybe they'd know something about you know islands like you know Indonesia certainly they knew about Sri Lanka but um there probably would have been limited knowledge even of Southeast Asia and Europe. I mean

they shortly after the Buddhist time within a couple hundred years of the Buddhist time they became aware of Greeks largely because of Alexander the Great conquering northwestern India. But any map of the earth that an early Indian Buddhist would have attempted to draw would have been just woefully inaccurate by modern standards. And uh it may be some kind of

Mahayana Buddhism that came up with a new Buddhist flat earth in like incorporating modern knowledge of all the continents and the the islands and so forth. Um,

but it it would not be orthodox. So, I'm just going to move on to Jeffrey's second question. Can monks astral project to see these sort of things? So, seeing like what lies beyond the ice walls or or something.

Um, astral projection isn't so much of a thing. I mean you can in a way you can I mean like there's stories of like Mahammogalana and the Buddha himself who would project themselves up into heaven

realms and speak with the deities there that kind of thing. So you could project yourself in that manner. Um but for the most part I think they would just use the dbachaku or clairvoyance in order to see things that are far away without having to like project their body over there. Um there's not much talk about an astral body in in like Buddhism. Certainly in the early terravada Buddhist texts, there's no mention or such little mention that I don't recall it of like an astral body. That thing's kind of bothering me there of you know like you have this body that is the the body that is like acting in dreams and so forth. you know the one that's sort

of doing the like um what do you call it the transition from one body to the next you know is it doesn't work that way in in early Indian Buddhism especially in terravada

Buddhism so yeah I mean I think I read this really bizarre description of the flat earth by I think his name was venerable Odamathara or Odamas Sara in Burma who was talking about you know the continents and the beings that live on the different continents and so forth and he was saying that monks can use their psychic powers to see this stuff and then there I mean you don't have any doubts because of course everyone can

differentiate between like vivid imagination when in a hypnotic state and actually seeing something sarcasm

Um, so yeah, I mean monks have done the terravada Buddhist equivalent of astral projection or just remote viewing, you know, like like clairvoyance to see this sort of thing. Although how they can see it is questionable because I mean you can't get there with airplanes and so forth. Um I remember when I was a young monk I was ordained with an Argentinian monk who I think is still in robes and he was very very much into a very Burmese point of view with regard to bur with regard to Buddhism more so than me.

I was kind of more western in my approach than him more just like critical thinking and skepticism and so forth. And he was saying that the reason why we can't see Mount Meu, this 10 million mile high mountain, is because it is made of subtle matter, you know, like the bodies of Brahma beings and so forth.

So yeah, I mean that could be some kind of explanation, but like completely redrawing the map of the Earth to account for these invisible um geological formations. Um it's it's it seems like AAM's razor would really be applicable

here.

And I mean if you can't see it, there's no way of measuring it or anything. You know, you you just learn about it in an ancient book with a lot of mythological elements to it, then probably you it would behoove you not to take it too seriously. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Phil.

And Phily says, "What is your advice for someone suffering from constant agony due to breaking up with his girlfriend of many years?" Well, my condolences on that. I would assume that most people have had their heart broken in this life. I've had my heart broken

before. Um, so I mean I mean it won't last. I mean that's that's one consolation I suppose that uh you know it won't last. it it will fade away. You'll find some some other girl presumably, let's let us hope one more compatible with you that you won't break up with.

Um, so my advice for someone suffering from constant agony due to breaking up with his girlfriend of many years, well, I mean, it's like there it all has to balance out. All the pluses and minuses have to balance out. The pleasures and pains have to balance out. So, in a way, you're paying your dues for excess of

pleasure with this this biological mate, this this girlfriend. Um, that's that's a philosophical way of looking at it. I mean, it's not going to help you not suffer. I mean, the only time is going to heal that, but it's like like I do say sometimes it it all has to balance out in the long run. So if you're going to like wallow in sensual pleasure or you're going to you know indulge in sensual pleasure then you have to be willing or you should be willing to accept its opposite when it eventually hits

you. So that's one reason one of the main reasons why monks avoid pleasure is just because you know they want sort of

an even playing field. They don't want the roller coaster ride of up and down, ecstasy, misery, ecstasy, misery. You know, everything adds up to zero. So, it's instead of the up and down roller coaster ride, they just have, you know, just flat flat calm. No stormy seas, just flat calm. Ideally, it doesn't work out that way in in real life very often, but relatively speaking, a monk who is meditating alone in a forest is going to have these he's going to have less of a roller coaster ride. He's going to have less stormy seas. They're still going to happen sometimes, but not to the extent of a

lay person indulging in sensual
pleasure. just enjoying the pleasures of
the
senses.
So your advice for someone suffering
from constant, I mean just be patient,
you know, try not to add to it through
like negative mental states. I was
talking about this in the in the
previous Q&A where if you're in a bad
situation, the the best thing you can do
is make peace with that situation. you
know, wish her well on her journey
through life and just, you know, the
pain that you experience, just, you
know, experience it
philosophically as much as you can and

just get on with your life. Continue with your life because any kind of aversion, any kind of like friction, resistance, struggling against the way things are, it just makes more karma, which increases the stuff that you want to struggle against.

So it's like friction putting up blocks is one of the main reasons why we're creating more karma and just getting stuck in this endless cycle. Krishna Murdy Jay Krishna Murdy had a lot to say about that. Just friction is one of the main problems humans have just like resistance against the way things are. So, I mean, you'll still suffer, but I

mean, it does fade

out. Anyone who's had their heart broken

can tell you that that it doesn't last

forever. And, uh, you know, good fortune

to you in the future. And,

uh, maybe things will work out better

next

time. But remember, I mean, if you

pursue pleasures and avoid pains, those

pains are going to build up and then

they're just going to overwhelm you with

this like a bursting dam sooner or

later.

So you're better off just

accepting pains as they come with a

certain aesthetic patience rather than

trying to avoid them, hold them at bay

because the pleasures you experience are going to have their equal and opposite reaction, so to speak sooner or later. So you might as well just let it happen at a trickle instead of letting it build up and build up and build up until the dam bursts and you are inundated in a flood. So I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's next

question which is does sending or beaming meta to people seriously have real world effects in your opinion? Of course. Well, it turns out that that same venerable U Odamasara or Odmasara, I think it's Odamasara,

um he he uh he taught the pebble method

of sending mats and it's it's in one of my dharma books. I think it's Buddhist ethics, Buddhist practice using the pebble method of sending matzah. And there were some testimonies of people who used this way of sending message to people that I mean it it really had an effect on the other person. If you are beaming love at somebody, I mean you're not letting them know that you're doing it at all. And it could be somebody who's just
been
really a bothersome person. You're just sending meta at them that it I mean it can change. There is a certain empathy and even sort of subliminal telepathy

that you humans

have and so sending meta I mean it

really can it really can have an effect

on other people. I remember my preceptor

didn't like me very much. I was like

this wild western barbarian and I was

just like a loose cannon. he didn't like

westerners very much and you know I was

sort of the reason why or I was like an

example of why he didn't like

westerners because we're we're just not

Burmese

enough. And then one day I just felt

like this warm glowy feeling in my heart

with sort of I mean it was sort of

associated with my preceptor and I

didn't know why it was because generally he I mean he he pretty obviously didn't like me but it turned out that at that same time he was in the meditation hall with a a group of of lay people I think and they were all doing meta meditation and so it just happened that while they were sending meta meditation, I just got like this warm, glowy, happy feeling in my
chest. But I mean it it does have an effect. It certainly
can. So I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question also from Phil. In the meditation you mentioned, if someone is already capable of gear three or is attempting gear three, then

are gear one and two even of any use?

Well, I mean, if you can consistently meditate in third gear, and I I covered I talked about this in the previous Q&A, how when I was a monk living in a cave doing intensive practice, I had like four gears, like four different kinds of meditation depending on the state my mind happened to be in. Like first gear was just grinding away at the absolute basics. That was like desperation. I didn't do it very often. Second gear was anapana meditation on the touch sensation of the air going in and out the nostrils. And third third gear was

it's essentially the kind of meditation taught by the enlightened child novice to pota in a story of the dhamapata commentary where I mean according to the the the simile that or the metaphor taught by this enlightened child novice you've got a termite mound with six holes in it and there's a lizard hiding inside that termite mound. You want to catch that lizard. So what you do, you block off five of the holes and then you watch that sixth hole very carefully so that when the lizard starts to come out, you can grab it. And that's essentially third gear meditation where you're sort of shut down the five senses, you know, the standard five senses, but the the

sixth sense, the mind, you watch that carefully. You know, you're sitting there motionless with your eyes closed in a quiet place, not a lot of sensory stimulation, and then you just watch your mind and try to catch any thought that

arises. And you find that when you're watching your mind intently, wanting to catch any thought as it arises, it to some degree prohibits thought or at least it it retards thought, so to speak. you know it makes thoughts less likely to arise.

So if you're capable of doing that, I think in Zen that might be called

shikant taza. But if you're capable of
doing that then you don't need to do
like in breathing in breathing out you
know the touch sensation of the nostrils
or my my first gear the primary object
was the the touching of my thumbs when
I'd be sitting there. Um I mean it's
it's a more advanced practice. You get
more benefit from doing that. So yeah,
there's no point of doing mindfulness of
breathing or a mantra or anything like
that if you're like
proficient at just sitting there
intently observing the mind in a state
of
silence because any thought that starts
to arise you catch it and so it's just

mostly you are sitting there in a state of intense silence in a in a kind of mental state I mean it's not the highest stage there was there was another level of meditation above third gear. But, you know, it's sort of like you're walking through a forest and an arrow suddenly hits a tree trunk right next to your head. You know, it's like immediately, I mean, unless you're the type of person that just panics and freaks out, starts screaming or something, but a lot of people like me, immediately you're just like boom, just wide awake, just extremely alert. that kind of meditation and just silent, you know, you're not

thinking you I mean it's like you become as silent as you can just to be aware of the situation as clearly as possible. So I mean it is a more advanced meditation practice even though some people can use meditation on the breath you know all the way up to fourth janna like traditionally in terraovvada manopanit mindfulness of breathing is good all the way up to I mean you can get all the way to fourth janna with it so that can take you all the way but still there are sort of shortcuts or you know ways of just getting into a a more advanced mental date without having to go through mindfulness and breathing the whole

way. And I just realized I forgot my
emergency backup
beverage.
Damn. So, I might as well make the most
of this
one. So, um I think I answered that
question and so I'm going to move on to
the next question which is from PSA. And
I I have no idea what PSA actually
stands for. So, I don't think it stands
for public service
announcement. Anyways, PSA says, "I
remember you mentioning your preference
towards javelin throwing. Does this mean
that you like throwing javelins around
randomly or that you're just a fan of

the sport?" None of the above. Is there was a list of sports that I would prefer to watch? You know, somebody gave me this
multiplechoice of various sports. you know, which one were I prefer to watch on television? And javelin throwing was like the most interesting of the ones. I mean, I think soccer was one, water polo was
one, and it was just I mean, I have no great love for javelin throwing, but uh I mean, that was just the one I picked. So, I was never I've never been very good at throwing spears or or throwing balls either for that matter. I was fairly good at throwing a Frisbee, which

is an entirely different kind of motion
than than like an overhand
throw.
So, yeah. I mean, it was
just marginally higher interest in
javelin throwing than in something like
water polo. It's not like I'm an avid
fan of javelin throwers. So, I'm just
going to move on to PSA's next
question, which is kind of a strange
one.
Your aversion towards the non-tachionic
throng is recip reciprocated.
Consequently, would you characterize
your operational interfacing with
hydraulic powered counterbalanced load

transference mechanized dudads as a source of intrinsic occupational and flinching fulfillment? Or does the quotidian manipulation of palletized mass within a spatially constrained industrial ecosystem filled with furious girthy blobs of redundant protoplasm elicit a more sysophian effective response with your professional psych within your professional psyche? I mean it should be fairly obvious that uh I mean I have no great vocation for operating a forklift. It was not like something that I was born with this already moving in the direction of, you know, just I just want to drive a forklift. That really it's it's a way of

making a living. It's a way of paying
the bills. So it I guess Seephus is kind
of an
appropriate an appropriate metaphor I
guess or
simile for me going to work every day.
It's like Cisphus had to like roll this
boulder up a hill and I'd always just
roll back down on him and you just have
to keep starting over and over again.
It's the same way with work for me. It's
like you go to work and you you you load
these these trucks
with freight and then the next day
they're empty again. You got to just
keep doing it over and over again. It's

like sisphus, but you get paid for it
and that's why I do it.
So, I'm just exchanging my time for
money, which does cause me to have less
time for writing and and other pursuits
that might be more spiritually
uplifting. But that's just the way it
is. It's the it's the curse of Adam.
Adam and Eve ate the fruit. And so,
because of that, we all have to earn our
bread by the sweat of our
brow. And so, I'm just going to move on
to this question. This is from
Romeo. And Romeo says, "My aunt, a
lapsed Catholic, is in her 80s and
increasingly in failing health. While
she isn't totally on the way out as of

yet, she is rapidly trying to come to terms with endof life issues, regrets from looking back at her life, doubts that there is anything beyond this life, chronic illness and physical pain, etc. Any thoughts on facing old age and death in as mindful and skillful a way as possible? Well, it's going to depend a lot on the mental states of the person in question. Like if they're open-minded, then you know, having them read or listen to like the Tibetan book of the dead. I mean, that that could actually be very useful because it's going to like tell you what to expect after you die and like appropriate

actions. you know, you find yourself in the bright light, you should stay in the bright light as long as you can because it has a purifying effect. But most I mean, everybody, almost everybody eventually starts to panic because they feel like they're just dissolving into the light. And so they'll they'll they'll leave the light. And then, you know, when you see all these beings, you know, like in the near-death experience, almost always there's some kind of guide and you're seeing other beings in some kind of heaven realm that the Tibetan Book of the Dead teaches you to remind yourself this is all an illusion. This is all mindgenerated.

So, I mean, if she's not interested in the Tibetan Book of the Dead, just uh near-death experiences, if you could watch YouTube videos on near-death experiences. Um, but really, I'm not exactly sure what kind of an attitude she has. If she's a lapsed Catholic, it might mean that she's just not religious at all

anymore, which I mean, would make things more difficult. I mean, if she's not open-minded, then there's really not much you can say other than I mean, why be afraid of of death when I mean, you don't look back at before you were born with with

horror. You know, it's
like
realistically like what happens to you
after you die is going to be essentially
the same as what happened to you before
you were born. So, if what happened to
you before you were born doesn't seem
scary to you at all, then what happens
to you after you die shouldn't be
particularly scary
either. So, let's see. She's rapidly
trying to come to terms with the end of
life issues like regrets from looking
back at her life. Well, I mean, that is
one of the most important teachings of
Buddhism is that regret is always bad.
You're making bad karma. It's an

unskillful mental

state. No regrets. I mean, you can acknowledge you did something wrong, you know, determine you're going to try to do better in future. That's 100% fine. You can try to make amends for any wrong that you did to somebody, fine. But like having a guilty conscience and regret and remorse, it just makes things worse. You know, it's more friction against the way things are. And wanting to change the past is just silly.

So, let's see. Another one is doubts that there is anything beyond this life. Well, I mean, studying up a little on near-death experiences might help with

that. Or like Ian Stevenson's books on like empirical evidence suggestive of reincarnation, that kind of thing. I mean, that could be helpful. See, chronic illness and physical pain, that's that's something that uh is less philosophical. That's something that pretty much everybody has to experience at some point.

Um, yeah. And, uh, I mean, just mindfulness meditation can help, but again, I do not know how open-minded or liberal in her views the the the little old lady happens to be. Um, I my grandmother was just a fire and brimstone 7th day Adventist

Christian.

who eventually when she was like in her 80s or maybe even early 90s, she lived to be fairly old. She became angry at God

because she was this old lady, you know, it's like her f like her husband had was long gone. Most of her friends were already passed away and God would not take her. I mean, it's like she wanted, you know, she'd had enough of this world. she wanted to move on to the next and God just wouldn't do it for her until finally she just she in a way she lost her faith in her old age and in her 90s which is not good and um I mean I

wasn't around at the time. I think I was
a monk or I mean she lived in Georgia. I
I I grew up in the Pacific Northwest and
then moved to Burma and I hadn't seen
her since I was a little
kid. So I mean I couldn't really help
her with regard to much of anything.
So yeah, the chronic illness and
physical pain I mean there are you know
meditations mindfulness meditation
that's I mean it's just taken right out
of terra Buddhist texts like Saudi
Patano Suta and it's con has been
converted into meditation to teach like
pe like terminally ill patients or
people with like chronic pain because of
like burns or that kind of thing. It's

taught in hospitals. So, I mean, that sort of thing could possibly be of help to her and it could also teach her some dharma indirectly from through through mindfulness.

Um, also, I mean, in if she was like really radical like like an old hippie chick, I mean, you might even suggest psychedelics.

I remember reading in an old Rahm Doss book that his stepmother, I think, was dying of cancer and and she was like in chronic pain. Sometimes she'd just be like literally on the hospital bed just writhing in agony from this this pain. And he slipped her some some acid once.

And at one point, I mean, she's still like writhing and gasping, but then she she just says something like, um, I know my body is like this, but it's it's it's such a miracle. It's all so beautiful. This kind of thing. So, I mean, somebody who's receptive to that kind of approach, I mean, they can get some valuable insights that can be life-changing right at the end, which is I mean, certainly it's never too late to have a life-changing realization. Some people apparently allegedly get enlightened right at the moment of death.

I think it was Rahman Maharshi used to say that that is like a a golden

opportunity for a lot of people that
they couldn't get
enlightened while they were alive but
just the last conscious moment some
people they they just let go and they
can become enlightened at the last
minute that may not be a very Buddhist
approach but Raman Maharshi was pretty
much of a a spiritual heavy hitter and I
wouldn't simply dismiss anything that he
said unless maybe he's talking about
Aruna Chal the sacred hill and that sort
of thing.
So, that's like my two cents worth on
this very nice little old lady, I am
sure, who uh uh who's I really don't

know at all that I really don't know
what her her attitude is, how
open-minded she is, whether she's still
open-minded to any kind of like dharma
or spiritual approach, or whether she's
just anti- relligion because of bad
experiences she had in Roman Catholicism
or whatever. I really can't
say. So, I'm just going to move on to
Romeo's second question is, are there
any sutas where the Buddha specifically
addresses this? And unfortunately, I
didn't do any research looking up any
sutas like this, but there are sutas
where somebody is on their deathbed.
And I mean that would be about as close
as where as as I can think of with

regard to sutas where the Buddha might

come and visit somebody on their

deathbed or an enlightened monk may come

visit somebody on their deathbed and

there a little bit of a dialogue going

back and

forth. But I mean there's there's no

really good examples that spring to mind

at present.

But I mean there are also sutas

discussing you

know

h how how do

I I can't even I can't even say how do I

say

this? Yeah, I mean there are sutas that

that kind of address similar issues to this like either you know somebody right before they died the Buddha right before he died although of course he was already fully enlightened or else just discussing how rebirth happens you know it's like what your mental states before death have as an effect on you know like your trajectory your vector after death that kind of

But I can't think of any names. I couldn't really point out any particular suta. Some scholar Seattle in Burma would probably be able to present you with a list, but my mind doesn't work that way. So I do apologize. Maybe you

could do a search on the internet or ask somebody who is like a schol a Buddhist scholar who is very familiar with the poly the poly sutas. they might be able to direct you to the kind of suta that you're asking
about. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ketchup. And Ketchup says, "How was the monk who lit himself on fire able to withstand the pain?" Well, there have been lots of monks who have liten themselves on fire just a few years ago or maybe it was several years ago by now that there was like an epidemic of Tibetan monks setting themselves on just self-

emilating that there was like more than 100 in one year did that. But I assume he's referring to the famous one that uh I think is still on the the header of my my blog. Um also on my mind's page of you know the famous Vietnamese monk. I think the the photographer got a Pulitzer Prize for taking this picture. I it's also on the Rage Against the Machine their first album cover. And um and I can't tell you from personal experience, but I have read that these monks who light themselves on fire like that. I mean, at first it's just shock. You know, it's sort of like jumping into ice water. Although it's kind of the opposite, but still it's

like you it's like your your skin just kind of goes into this shock stage. And then within the next couple seconds, your nerve endings have burned off. And so it makes it a lot more bearable. There's going to be deeper down nerve endings, I suppose, that can still experience the pain and everything, but the ones on the surface, I mean, they're destroyed. And I mean, you're just in an altered state of consciousness. You're not going to be in some ordinary state of consciousness at this point. It's like, um, I didn't get into a lot of fights when I was young, but I do know

enough about being in a fight that you you get punched in the face or something, you don't even feel it. you hit the other guy and I mean you don't even feel it. It's like something comes over your mind or your nervous system or whatever and it's like you're in this emergency situation where being distracted by pain isn't helpful and so it's like nature just like erases it for the time

being. So I assume it's something like that. I'm going to move on to the next question now. This is from basketball Jesus and basketball Jesus says it is my understanding that way Seattle taught anapana exclusively and endorsed the

technique as a valid path to liberation the goal enlightenment nibbana or whatever one wants to call it. He prescribed continuity of practice as the key aspect. He essentially said that one should stay focused on the spot constantly. I know that you do not currently practice sitting meditation, but do you have any kind of practice running in the background like that prescribed by way? The only kind of practice I've got running in the background is just as a monk, you're trying to be as mindful as you can until it finally just became like a habit.

So I'm more mindful than the average person just with regard to like observing my mental state. So a certain amount of detachment. Um I mean I can still get like frustrated and pissed off but then it's like another part of my mind is just observing the frustration and pissed-offness with a certain kind of detachment. So it's like you got two different levels at probably more than two different levels in your mind. I mean, I've mentioned before that I've once I was in Burma and just the the chronic hot weather, just the in my inability to ever feel comfortable during the full blast of the oven-like

hot season of central Burma just caused me to just snap one time and I'm just like cussing and and yelling and slamming things inside my cave with no witnesses. And it was just like there's like this sudden shift of consciousness where all of a sudden I'm like an actor playing the role of someone who's like cussing and and yelling and slamming things while there's this other part that is just sort of detached from that. And I I practice mindfulness enough as a monk that there is always a certain amount of mindfulness of what's going on. Um, and that's I mean that's that's the extent of the practice for the most

part. Sometimes I'll do spontaneous oming as a meditation practice or and sometimes when I'm walking it'll just turn into walking meditation. But just this whatever would be like continuous the closest thing I've got to a continuous practice is just this habitual momentum of like practicing mindfulness for 30 years as a monk and so there's still some momentum going you know there's still the habit of this kind of detach detached observation even though I may not remain calm all the time still there's like this other part of my mind that is just a silent observer of of whatever is going on, including like me getting pissed off,

that kind of thing, which is hard hard to explain, hard to understand for someone who's never experienced it themselves. And I'm just going to move on to basketball Jesus's second question, which is, I have some Burmese neighbors across the street. I am a white people enthusiast, but I like the Burmese and I am grateful for the preservation of Dhamma. Could you tell me a few phrases or greetings or wellwishes in Burmese? Well, the standard formal greeting in Burmese is mingalaba, which is um mingala is is the Burmese way of saying mangala, which just means blessing. And ba at the end

is just the politeness particle um in Burmese. Like if it's sort of like in English when you request something, it's more polite to say please than not to say please. That ba at the end is just politeness. Regardless of whether you're you're asking for something or anything else, it's just the politeness particle that gets thrown in to make a sentence more polite. So,

mingalaba.

Um, let's see what else would it be. I mean a lot of the stuff I would say is stuff that mainly it's monks that say it you know like standard blessings would be like jama baz s chabaz kong baz but coming from a lay person it might sound

a little weird like jamaabaz is may you
be well s chabaz is may you have peace
of mind may you be
happy may may you have good karma or
good luck that kind of thing but
mingalaba is standard um for just about
any any situation, especially a rather
formal situation if you don't know
somebody very well, that kind of thing.
Like the students when the teacher walks
into the room, mingalaba syama, that
kind of
thing. So yeah, I guess that would be
about the best one. I really can't
think. I mean, there there really are no
there is no word for hello or goodbye in

Burmese. It's weird. Um, instead of saying hello, you you ask a dumb question, which is something it took me a long time to fully appreciate. You know, it's like you meet someone, you're walking down the street, you see somebody walking down the street to, a friend of yours, you don't say hello because there is no word for hello. You don't say mingalaba because that's kind of formal for, you know, it's it's not used for like good friends who just meet each other. It's like where are you going? Or, you know, if you meet somebody around like midday, have you had lunch yet? And it's this this some dumb more or less random question and

then instead of saying goodbye, you just

say, "Well, I'm going to go

now. I'm out of

here." So, I guess just try Mingalaba.

And I'm I'm sure they'll be surprised

that you know even that much

Burmese. And uh let's see here. Oh, wait

a minute. I gota I gotta check something

here. Excuse me. I got to scroll down

here

because Yeah. Damn. There's questions

that I forgot to put on the list. So,

just bear with me. I got to do

this. All right. I think I'm

good. I

hope. Let's come back

here. All

right. Yeah. I don't know if if that

recorded or not. It's about 45 minutes

into it. Okay. Yeah. What happened was I

forgot to cut and paste compile the

questions from the Discord server or

completely do it before I started doing

this. I got distracted and it didn't

fully happen and here I

am not being fully

prepared.

Okay, so let's see here.

We got to scroll all the way back

up. Okay, so now back to basketball

Jesus. His third question, and I do hope

this is

working. Yeah, it says it's still

recording.

So, basketball Jesus says, "Did you have a favorite villager who gave you the best alms food while you were a monk?"

Well, I mean, I moved around when I was a monk and so there would be people giving the best alm food like different people giving the best alms food in different

places. Um, and then there was one place when I lived out on in the the uh the national park, Alando Kazaba National Park, nobody gave good food. It was I always got really skinny when I lived there. It was awful. There was just hillbillies who would just eat

anything. I got lots of frog eggs and lizard tails and stuff in my food that time when I was living there. Also, just during the rainy season, it was like wild mushroom, flavorless wild mushrooms and bamboo shoots. It's just like everybody was giving it to me and it was awful. That's I learned how to hate bamboo shoots living there.

So, did I have a favorite villager who gave the best alms food when I was a monk? Well, yeah, in different places. Yeah. Like around the town of Wuin, there was my Pile Bad Deama lived there. And in the recent earthquake, her school, she was a school teacher. Her her school just completely collapsed. I

don't think anybody was inside the building at the time, which is good. But we're going to my my woman and I were going to send money to try to help them. And it's it's so hard. It's there's it's so many difficulties trying to get money to the people who need it there because of course the government wants all the American dollars. And also it's like it's there's a civil war going on and people don't want to go there to to for any reason really.

So anyways, I in a moment of weakness, I I told her about peanut butter because peanut butter is unknown in much of Burma. She was very skeptical. She

thought if you grind up peanuts, you're just going to get peanut flour. And then she came back after, you know, commanding a servant to make peanut butter in a like a mortar and pestle. You know, she was wideeyed with wonder saying, "You were right. It's like that. It's not peanut flour at all."

And uh

also when I was living at WBO wildlife refuge monastery, I had a a picile bodigama there also. Her name was Tay E. And I uh in a moment of weakness, I explained grilled cheese sandwiches to her. And she was very keen on giving me the food that I like the best. So that towards the end I hardly even had to eat

rice when I went to that village for alms round because I'd get like grilled cheese sandwiches and um like there's a kind of noodle soup in Burma that's really good. It's called mohinga that there was this lady who would sell mohinga. She had like this little stand and and sold mohinga in the village. And uh so I'd get like a a big bag, a J8. It's called, you know, some kind of a polyropylene bag that's kind of makes a kind of a a crunchy sound when you when you're That's why it's called chut because that's the sound it makes. That's the kind of plastic bag they use. So now I finally realized that we've got

considerably more than 27 questions
because I forgot to cut and paste all
the questions from the Discord server. I
went through the comment sections on
YouTube, Bitshoot, and Rumble
and spaced off the Discord server, which
is not so
good. But I didn't getting back to the
question of basketball Jesus here. I did
learn that it's rich fat ladies give the
best food. I mean, they've got it down.
They know exactly what is like maximum
deliciousness and and then they want to
offer
that. So, but I mean out in the out in
remote rural villages, there weren't a
whole lot of rich fat ladies. So, mainly

I'd be in town somewhere when I'd come
across those and their delicious food
offerings.
But I tended to have like favorites
wherever I would
live. And I think I'm just going to move
on. Next
question. This is from Dama River. And
Dama River says, "What is the best way
to ordain in 2025 without being harassed
or affected by the current cult of
wokeism?" I have noticed that Western
Buddhists are first and foremost
brainwashed liberals and secondly they
are Buddhists.
So instead of surrendering their liberal

indoctrination to the dhamma, they surrender the dharma to their liberal indoctrination.

Well, I think it's kind of a misnomer to call them liberals. I don't think they're really liberal anymore. That liberal I mean politically I probably come closest to a classical liberal, you know, like along the lines of John Stewart Mill and his essay on liberty. I mean liberal comes from liberty. I think, you know, it's like um personal freedoms, freedom of speech, that kind of stuff. That's liberal. And the new left is just moving into like Marxism, neo-Marxism, a kind of like feminized Marxism that really is not

liberal at all. In fact, in Europe, liberal still has more of the old-fashioned denotation, whereas it's more conservative people are called liberal because it's the conservative people who are more interested in personal freedoms and rights and so forth. And the left now is, you know, the the progressives, they're moving more towards, you know, socialism, you know, interchangeable everybody, you know, everyone the same. And you got to keep the everybody under control. People have to be nonviolent, you know, they have to be incapable of being violent. You know, it's not just that you uh have

people be strong but encouraged to practice self-restraint largely because a lot of the people being imported by the millions just lack the capacity for that.

So, let's see here.

I think I got sidetracked by quibbling on the meaning of the word liberal. What is the best way to ordain in 2025 without being harassed or affected by the current cult of wokeism? Well, I mean

most I mean Asian

monks, first of all, go you can go to Asia. Go to I mean Burma might be difficult for the reasons I was talking about earlier, but Thailand go out into

rural Thailand and you're not going to find woke monks. You're not going to find woke lay people. They're all going to be traditionalists. Monks tend to be more conservative in their Buddhism than Western lay people.

Especially, even Western monks, as a general rule, are much more conservative than Western lay people with regard to their Buddhism.

So I mean certainly wouldn't want to ordain at some place like Spirit Rock or not Spirit Rock but u the Ajan Cha place that's in Northern California um Abaya Giri even though even though a lot of

the monks might be conservative the like the the European ancestorred ley who support the place are going to be very left-wing and um I mean you're going to have to be very careful about what you say. Pacific Northwest is the same way like Seattle, Vancouver, BC, Portland, Oregon, that kind of area. Just the cities of California or like Massachusetts, places like that. You're going to be inter if you're a monk there, you're going to be interacting with very left-wing lay people. So, I mean, you're better off dealing with Asians and and a lot of Asians, like Asian immigrants. you know, it's I wouldn't be surprised if it's well over

50% of them vote Democrat mainly. I
mean, their main issue is they want
their relatives to be able to come to
America. So, you know, if if any party
generally the the Republican party is
like
anti-immigration, anti-mass immigration,
you know, they see that as you know,
against them, you know, almost
personally. And so, see, my the computer
all of a sudden turned
off. Not my computer, but my
sweetheart's computer that acts as sort
of a
backlight. Oh well, it doesn't
matter. There we

go. So, I mean, I was ordained in California and there were a lot of lefties there, but I was kind of a lefty at first. And really I mean there wasn't a whole lot of politics being spoken and um I mean the monks I mean they hardly spoke English some of them and I mean my preceptor spoke almost no English. So I mean there wasn't a lot of politics going on. I mean I was at this monastery in California for months and then I was talking to this this lay supporter who said you know something about ever since the second Russian revolution. And I was like, "What? What? Second Russian Revolution?" He goes, "You you never heard the Soviet Union doesn't exist

anymore." And it was like news to me
because I was just completely isolated
from news or anything like
that. But it may be different now in
2025 than it was in like 1991.
But the best way to ordain in 2025
without being harassed or affected by
the current cult of wokeism, be ordained
among
Asians, Asian
traditionalists, either in the West or
in the East or if you're going to be
ordained in the West. I mean, just meet
up with the like the abbott of the
monastery and just kind of sound him
out, you know, ask him what what kind of

politics, if any, is discussed that
there's a monastery. that kind of thing.
You know, what is the the attitude
towards political discussion and so
forth? You know, what are the lay people
like? I mean, you you can inquire about
that sort of
thing. But I mean I mean Burma may not
be much of an option, but I mean almost
everybody in Burma outside of the big
cities is conservative, very
traditionalist. The Burmese are governed
by tradition more than they're governed
by their government.
So yeah, but it is true that western
woke Buddhists are first and foremost
not so much brainwashed liberals but

indoctrinated

leftists with some you know like

indoctrinated globalistic leftists and

secondly they are Buddhists. Yeah, I I

have to agree with that.

So yeah, just do what do do do do do do

do do do do do do do do do do do do do

do do do do do do do do do do do do do

do do do do do do do do do do what I

suggested and you should be okay. And

I'm just going to move on to Dar's

second question which is is there

anything you miss about being a monk?

Well I miss like being lazy. I can't be

lazy nearly as much now as I did when I

was a monk just at leisure. That is kind

of nice. Um, and I'm not going to be able to retire until I'm probably like in my 70s just because, you know, I I already had my retirement for 30 years as a young man. And so just to make sure I have enough money in a 401k, enough hours in even to get social security, that sort of thing, I got to work hard as an older man, which uh is what it is. I'm not complaining. It keeps me like active and and relatively healthy. Anyway, and another thing I miss about being a monk is in me, which are the little wall geckos. I really miss the wall geckos in Burma. Something I miss about being in Burma more than I miss about being a monk, though, even though

the whole time I was in Burma, I was a

monk.

so kind of

miss having the time

to write a lot and

um I have I'm just uh kind of at an

impass with regard to my

writing which is involved in a question

coming up about my upcoming book but

I'll get to that

later and for now I'm just going to move

on to the next question this is from

Ruie and Ruie says do Do you think the

mind abores infinite regression like the

infinite regression implied in a moment

of consciousness can only come from

another moment of consciousness and thus is naturally drawn toward more alpha and omega type explanations of existence. Um I'm not so sure if the mind abores infinite regression. It's just that the mind cannot deal with it. The mind cannot, the conceptual thinking mind cannot grasp infinity. It just can't. It won't, it never will. I mean, you can sort of turn infinity into a finite concept like some mathematicians do for for various reasons, but still it's not really infinity. I mean, you can't deal with something that is formless or endless. Now infinity you cannot grasp it

conceptually and I mean the a thinking

mind cannot contain infinity except you
know to say that you know it's like even
an orange you know theoretically it
could be divided up into an infinitely
high number of parts or some such you
know it's just something like that is
that even a infinity in a grain of sand
kind of a thing but as a general rule
infinity is I mean
it's what's the word a paradox you know
it's the mind cannot grasp infinity and
people don't like people feel
uncomfortable if they can't grasp
something you know if they can't
understand it it just makes them kind of
feel vaguely uncomfortable if not

terrified and so they prefer as an in
rule it's human nature you prefer some
simple explanation to some ungraspable
infinite
explanation. So hence alpha and omega
type explanations of existence that
there's like this beginning and there's
going to be an end because once you get
endless I mean it's just the mind cannot
grasp
it and I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from
Alex and Alex says, "I would like to ask
you some questions about the so-called
synchronicities. It is been years that
something very strange is happening to
me." Quite often I see a number with the

same three digits. It is always the same number on page numbers, house numbers, length of videos or messages, hours, prices, number of comments on videos or posts, etc. During some periods, it happens every day and many times a day. In the last 22 hours, I saw it 11 times. I asked a friend, he is a rabbi, and the answer was kind of predictable. It is the universe trying to establish a connection. Then he gave me an advice. Every time I see this number, I must thank for the message and re retribute with some money. Doesn't matter the amount and I should donate it to anyone. Finally, I must choose some numerology

system to interpret the message. Any legit system. He gave me an interpretation based on the geatria. I don't know what that is. So his first question is what are your thoughts about synchronicities? Um synchronicities it's in a way it's a a byproduct a side effect of the fact that your mind is creating your reality that this is not a material world in the sense that material objects are not ultimately real. So I mean everything that you experience um like positive or negative it's going to be the fruition of your own karma

which is a mental state sort of like Schopenhau's will the world as will and representation so for some reason your karma has got
this you know it's got some kind of fixation on this threedigit number uh to some degree I mean you're just sensitized so you're more likely to single it out if you see it. And so it may seem like you're seeing it more often, but I'm willing to to give the benefit of the doubt and let's say that you really are. You just in your life you're continually seeing the same three-digit number at a rate much higher than would be expected through random

chance. Then it would be your mind is conditioning this for whatever reason. You may have just some irrational attachment to that number. It may have some significance from some something that you don't remember, possibly even a previous
life. So I I mean it's it's mindmade. You're it's like you're you're having a dream in which this theme keeps coming up and this life that we are living now is just a higher level
dream. So let's see here two second question. Is there a Buddhist view on these kinds of issues? Yeah.
Karma. That's that is the view. And so I mean it's it's kind of ironic, maybe not

too surprising that the rabbi would take like a numerological point of view and just suggest that you contribute money every time it happens. I mean my my approach would be practically the opposite that if like stuff that is like paranormal in a sense like a synchronicity is verging on the paranormal or the miraculous even you know it's sort of like very lowlevel miracle stuff you know maybe not fully into the the realm of miracles so maybe to a statistician or something but in order for the miraculous to become like an ordinary part of your life. You have to just view it as an ordinary part of

your life. Don't make much of it. Don't make a big deal of it. Just let it happen. So that when weird things happen, you just accept it as a matter of course and just, you know, continue with whatever you were doing. And it in a way it just sort of like mainstreams it. It normalizes the miraculous because if you make a big deal of it then it makes it in a way you're you're putting up barriers without realizing it without trying
to you know you're you're like emphasizing the fact that this is rare which helps it to be rare instead of happening
regularly. So whether I mean what's the

the rabbi says the universe is trying to establish a connection. I think it's just
maybe that your own subconscious mind is trying to communicate something to you. Maybe it's just some important number from a previous existence or some such that has just made a deep impression on you so that maybe it's not even really trying to communicate anything. It's just that you're just having like these aftershocks, you know,
just for whatever reason.
So, I think I hope I kind of answered those questions because I'm moving on to the next one. And this is from

Rybaler. And Ryalder says, "Was Wah a drug manufacturing breakaway communist state when you were in Burma?" Well, whether it was communistic or not, I don't know. But the Wah are a kind of tribe and ethnicity living in the Golden Triangle which is on the border of Burma, Thailand and I think what Cambodia or Laos is the third country but there's where those three countries come together is called the Golden Triangle and a lot of opium poppies are grown there. the the economy there is largely based on black market opium sales and this ethnicity called the Wah which I think also live in Thailand. Um you know there it's like an insurgent

zone that I could never go to that area in Burma when I was in Burma cuz that is a black zone. It's not under control of the government and there are quite a few of those in Burma. There are insurgent zones all over Burma, especially in the non Burmese fringes of the country, like the frontiers, you know, the the heartland, the Burmese heartland where the people are ethnic Burmese mostly, it's not so bad. You could pretty much travel freely through those areas, or at least when I was living there, you could. But when you get into like the the ethnic states, Kachin state or Shan state or Karen state or Caya state, it's

you get like insurgent zones where the government is not in complete control. It might not be in control at all. And it's you got like these hontas or cartels that are running it and those are off limits. I went to a few brown zones in Burma. You had when I was there, you had like three different kind of zones. You had the white zones where people can go freely. You know, tourists, foreigners can go there. Brown zones, you'd have to have a permit. Like southern Monstate at the time was a brown zone. I went there once. I had to get a permit from the government. And then you got the black zones that are just off limits because, you know, a

foreigner can just get kidnapped and held for ransom or just shot dead as a political statement or whatever.

So yeah, the W was it was an insurgent zone uh in the Golden Triangle when I was there and apparently it's still there. And I'm going to move on. Next question. This is from Ror and Ror says, "Do you have any Buddhist movie or TV recommendations, preferably non-English? I really enjoyed The Believers. I would also take Southeast Asian movie recommendations in general. Well, I I don't think you'd want to watch Burmese movies. Burmese movies are pretty bad. I watched my fair share of

Burmese movies while riding on Burmese buses that usually have a TV set above where the driver is driving and monks sit way up front. So, it's like the the TV screen is right there. And yeah, Burmese movies were pretty awful. I mean, mostly they're like these sappy tearjerker romance movies where you've got the young man fall like you've got a poor young man falls in love with a rich young woman and the rich young woman's parents, her father especially, are just vehemently opposed to her loving this low status male that he's already got her set up with this of a rich kid. And so the the young guy and the know the low status young man and the

high status young woman elope together. They run off together. They're deliriously happy for a few weeks until hired thugs or her elder brothers come find them and just beat the out of the guy and take the girl back. And so then what happens is the young man of low status drinks himself into oblivion. Usually drinking Johnny Walker Red Label. I have no idea why. And then the young woman, she boohoos for a few weeks and then marries the the rich guy. And um I mean that's half of Burmese movies it seems like or at least back when I was watching them. And the comedies are even

worse.

So do I have any Buddhist TV or I mean the only Buddhist TV show I can even think of would be the old kung fu. The old kung fu show with David Keredine. That's the only one I can even think of. I can't in Buddhist movies I like explicitly Buddhist movies. I mean there's Little Buddha, but I didn't I was not impressed by that movie at all. So I mean the best Buddhist movies would be like crypto Buddhist movies where most of the people that watch the movie don't even realize that it has Buddhist themes.

So, I mean, with regard to that kind of Buddhist movie, Avalon, which is

technically non-English, it was directed by a Japanese person and it was filmed in Poland with Polish actors, spoken in Polish. So, Avalon, that's that's it is a Buddhist movie. It's it's kind of about the 31 planes of existence and the nature of reality and that sort of thing. Also, it's a science fiction movie which makes it even better. Or Tarovsky's stalker. I mean, that has Buddhist themes to it. I mean, the director Tarovsky himself said that, you know, for with regard to its message, it looks to the east. You know, it's about how your mind is creating your reality. I mean, that's like the the deep

philosophical theme of the movie
Stalker, which is in Russian.
um pilot episode of Kung Fu maybe.
Although it has some outrageously bad
acting, it's still a good movie. Um I
mean even like The Matrix, although
that's in English, but I mean you got
the little bald monk kid saying there is
no spoon. That's Buddhist.
um maybe even Ingmar Bergman's persona
which is originally in Swedish which is
also kind of about the relativity of
reality and has this woman who goes into
this she just goes mute after seeing the
the the Vietnamese monk burning like
emilating himself after she sees that on
the TV news she just goes mute and then

she has this nurse who's taking care of her who is like sort of like an alter ego kind of a thing it becomes very hard to understand till when you get to the end of the movie uh you're thinking what the hell did I just watch what did that mean but um yeah I really can't think of very many specifically Buddhist movies um Buddhist books on the other hand like almost anything by JD Salinger or a lot of the stuff written by JD Salinger I think JD Salinger must have been like a Mahayana Buddhist the catcher in the rye Most people who read the catcher in the rye with holding Klefield and all that had no clue that it's a Buddhist a

Buddhist story. In fact, first time I read The Catcher in the Ry, I had no clue until I read the unofficial sequel to The Catcher and the Rye, which is a book called Franny and Zooie. And Franny and Zooie makes it clear that The Catcher and the Rye and Franny and Zooie are both Buddhist books.

I mean it's in friend and zooi it's obvious like Zooie he's a a Mahayana Buddhist and uh he he tried to eat a meal once without taking without like reciting the bodhic sattva vows first verse and almost choked to death on a clam in their apartment where they live in New York they've got Max Muller's sacred books of the east and like a poly

grammar on the bookshelf that's that's
mentioned this kind of
thing so yeah with regard to books maybe
I'd be in a better position. But um with
regard to Buddhist TV shows and Buddhist
movies, like I said, the only Buddhist
specifically Buddhist TV show I ever saw
is the old Kung Fu
show. So I think I'm just going to move
on to Ror's second question, which is
kind of similar. Do you have any obscure
movie
recommendations? So obscure would be
movies that most people have never heard
of, I guess.
And one of my favorite cyberpunk

dystopia movies is a movie I' I'd like
to watch again and I just cannot find
it. It is too obscure. It's called
Paranoia
1.0 and it's like a cyberpunk future,
not in not in the distant future, but in
the near future within a decade or two.
And there's like some people living in
an apartment building that are being
experimented upon where they're getting
like an empty box in the mail. They open
it up and there's nothing in the box.
And so they're like, you know, what the
heck? But it turns out that there's like
these micro micro robot kind of things
that are like dust in this box. They're
inhaling them and then it gets into

their mind and then it's like whoever it is who is doing the experiment is trying to use these like micro computer things that are in their head to to like influence what they want to buy. You know, it's sort of like a marketing strategy like really hard ball marketing strategy. And it's just it was an interesting interesting movie. The movie Avalon again, I mean, that's that's an obscure movie. I think most people have never heard of it, even though I consider it to be an excellent movie. It's one of my favorite movies. So, it's it's like the the wellworn science fiction trope or theme of like a virtual

reality that gets confused with what we consider to be reality so that you start questioning even what we consider to be reality. You know, that becomes another just a different level of virtual reality. That kind of thing. The Matrix is like this, too. Although The Matrix is not an obscure movie. Uh, one of my favorite science fiction movies is The Hidden, which is got this space alien who when you see his body, he looks he looks sort of like this black slimy squid thing, but you don't see the squid thing very often because he he parasitizes humans. He gets inside of a human and like controls their mind and their body. And this

particular alien is a criminal who's being chased through various star systems by some sort of intergalactic police. And he very much loves loud rock and roll and black what is it? It's not Ferraris. Maybe it's Ferraris. Black Ferraris. I think it is. Maybe it's like a ma Maserati or something like black fast foreign sports cars and and loud rock and roll music. and he's just he's like a total sociopath. But the intergalactic space alien cop finally gets to him in the end. Another kind of obscure movie that has some definite dharma to it is Fearless about this man who has a

near-death experience and it just like kicks him up into a higher level of consciousness. It's like he's on an airplane that crashes and he thinks he's going to die and so like in what he considers to be his last moments, he just makes peace with the world, you know, he just accepts whatever happens and then he somehow survives. A few other people survive and he's just like in this higher level of consciousness after that and he goes back into this life that he had been in and he's getting in all kinds of trouble because he won't tell lies anymore. you know, his his motivations are completely different now, this kind of stuff. And,

you know, he's got like these lawyers trying to get him to say that he was scared to death that so that he can get a bigger settlement that he was terrified. He thought, you know, and he just it's like he won't even do it for the sake of somebody else, you know? He just doesn't want to do that. It's just this this like this tension between him and just worldliness has this kind of climactic effect at the end. So that's a good movie. Uh 444, Last Day on Earth is kind of a leftist movie, but it's it's kind of a profound movie in that um somehow scientists have worked out that the

world is going to come to an end at 4:44 a.m. on a certain day. And it just it's sort of like showing what is happening to this this guy played by it's William Defoe and his girlfriend who's an artist. you know, how they spend their last day on
Earth. And it's not controversial. It's not like you have these deniers. There's a few deniers, but it's like the mainstream has accepted 4:44 a.m. is it? And if it was better science fiction, it would have been like a like a comet impact or an asteroid impact or something. But they wanted to politicize it and say it was like humans have destroyed the the the atmosphere so that

like the the entire ozone layer is just going to collapse at 444 and then all of a sudden we're all going to be dead. You know it they they kind of mess that part up. But it is it does have some profoundity to it. And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Scoladdin or Scooladine. And I'm checking to see how many how much time has gone by. Yeah, that was kind of it was kind of traumatic for me to realize that I hadn't even gotten all the questions together before I started this. I don't know if if that pause that I attempted really worked or not or if you just I'm

still like on the screen frantically collecting questions that I hadn't collected yet. So anyways, Scoladin or Scooladine says, "Are there any books or essays on propaganda you would recommend?" And the the only book about propaganda, I mean, I don't think it was mainly about propaganda, but it was addressed
um was by Aldis Huxley. And I'm not sure exactly what book it was. It was the Devils of Ludon maybe or it could be Brave New World
Revisited where oldest Huxley realized that with the advent of like television and radio mass media which didn't really exist in preodern times like with the

advent of technology that you could have like a monopoly on the narrative and you know he was sort of um like Brave New World was larly based on this just this monopolistic narrative of you I mean the government is just telling you what to believe. So I mean Brave New World itself has got a lot to say about propaganda. That's like a major element of of how the government was controlling the populace was through propaganda. Um I guess Adolf Hitler had much to say about propaganda.

Um, Gustav Leong, the what is it? The crowd. Uh, I can't remember the title of the book. It's a it's a classic book.

Um, you know, it's like a study on the some the like group hysteria, but there there is some talk about propaganda in that. Um, also another book I read that's kind of a classic. I think it was called The Hidden Persuaders. It was written back in like the 1950s or early 60s about advertising agencies, how advertising agencies were like some of the first sophisticated propagandists of the West. How, you know, they're trying to essentially just trick people into buying stuff that they don't need. And so that's kind of a propaganda book, but I haven't really read I can't recall reading any book in particular

that was just about propaganda. I have read books that had a lot to say about propaganda, but I've never just sat down and read a whole book about propaganda. So I'm just going to move on to Scoladin's second question here, which is as follows. Were there any philosophers that wrote on the phenomena that France Kofka was describing in derrocess or in English the trial? And then he's got the characteristic bullet point saying the closest I found so far was the technological society by Elul.

Um any philosophers that wrote on the phenomena that France Kofko is describing in the process? Um well I mean the existentialist philosophers were talking about sort of the problem that Kay was having in questioning the validity of his culture. I mean that was like the crime that he was under investigation for that he was being tried for in my opinion is you know he was just starting to question the validity of it all. all this essentially like propaganda driven and cultured driven assumptions that everybody has. You know, once you start questioning that, then in a way it's like like the the ocean rejects a corpse by throwing

it onto the shore kind of a thing.
So yeah, I think the existentialists
would be talking about the first aspect
of it, not so much the aspect of society
getting back at anyone who questions the
validity of society.
Um so yeah I can't really think
of I mean a lot of philosophers you know
have things to say about this sort of
like Schopenhau was um sufficiently
cynical that he could talk a lot about
um just sort of society as kind of a
pernitious force that kind of thing.
But um I think it
was who was it Alber Kimu who wrote the
myth of Cisphus. I think he tried to

interpret Kofka's the trial in that book and I think he did a poor job of it. I was not impressed or maybe he was maybe I'm just remembering it wrong. But yeah, I think your best bet would be existentialists. And I'm just going to move on to uh Scaladin's third question, which is did Arthur C. Clark come off as a Marxist or misanthrope in his novels? And then he's got the bullet points here. I was reading a book on his essays that he published in chronological order. The topics were mainly science, science fiction, and his career. But from the very first essay to where I dropped the book midway, he

seems like a sociopath. and his social narrative is very similar, if not more extreme, to what the cringe fringe and globalists push. And then another bullet point says is a quote, "No, the population battle must be fought and won here on Earth. And the longer we postpone the inevitable conflict, the more horrifying the weapons that will be needed for victory, compulsory abortion and infanticide and anti-heterosexual legislation with its reverse may be some of the milder expedience. So I mean I was kind of a leftist and I was like a social eco libertarian as a young man with eco in

there. I mean, I would, if I hadn't become a monk, I probably would have gone to grad school and and studied ecology. I would have become some kind of ecologist probably. Not because of any kind of political leanings, but I'm fascinated by the big picture of like a natural like interaction of, you know, all these different forces, all these species of organisms sort of interacting and and seeking a kind of balance or just finding one without trying, you know, like carbon cycles and and and water cycles and everything. It was all really interesting to me. And I mean, I did not have a high opinion of the human race. I agreed at the time that the

human race should be way smaller than it was. And it was it was partly a cultural thing. Like back in the 70s and and the 80s, everyone was thinking there's the population bomb, the population explosion, that we're going just going to hit this S-shaped curve and the population was just going to shoot straight up, which hasn't actually happened that it is kind of leveling off a little bit, especially in the more developed countries where the population in some countries is crashing.

But at the time is is it just seemed to me like I consider it just to be common sense that anybody who could not feed

himself should not have the right to have children. You know, if somebody's living off care packages or food stamps or something, you know, they can't afford to support themselves, why should they be allowed to have children that they also can't support? So, I mean, that sort of thing as a young man and even to some degree today, I can I can endorse that. I can I can go along with that. That like these like uh care packages that are they're sent to third world countries, you know, we got the the people in the the famine victims all standing in line with the dented tin cup waiting for their their scoop of milk powder or whatever that there should be

some sort of like uh birth control drug mixed in with that milk powder to keep them from having more kids that they cannot feed. They can't even feed themselves. So I assume Arthur C. Clark was just sort of like extrapolating to the logical extreme when when that he thought was happening that a lot of people thought was going to happen where the the human the human race is just going to become so I mean the the earth is going to become so overpop populated that something has something radical and drastic has to be done. And it turned out that it didn't really happen. Um, with regard to the

actual question though, which I shouldn't entirely forget, did Arthur C. Clark come off as a Marxist or missenthrope in his novels? No, not really. I mean, he kind of downplayed the glory of humanity that, you know, he would have alien races that were just like incomprehensibly more advanced than we are to just kind of put humans in our place, you know, that we're kind of, you know, upgraded ape kind of a thing. So, I mean, some people would consider that to be misanthropy that he doesn't he's not a humanist that puts humans in the center of the universe.

But

uh now with regard to his politics, I'm not sure what his politics would be. He didn't throw a lot of politics in

uh into his books. I mean, Larry Nan, I remember Larry Nan when I was in high school, he was my favorite science fiction

author. And you know, he also predicted, you know, in 100 years from now, we're going to have a population of like 20 or 30 billion. And you know the whole world is just going to be you know there's still going to be wild areas but you know like all of the whole coast of California is just going to be one huge

city that kind of stuff and everyone's
going to be kind of a light brown
mongrel from all the interbreeding and
you know money is going to be just kind
of yeah it's just going to be kind of
phased
out that kind of thing that you know he
he perceived or predicted a kind of
socialistic future which I mean he was
pretty much just extrapolating trying to
predict what was going to happen. It
wasn't necessarily that he wanted that
to
happen. So Arthur C. Clark
again, I'm not sure even if he did
have some kind of Marxist predictions or
something in his novels. Um, that I

mean, you can just be predicting that that's the direction we're headed. You know, a good science fiction author shouldn't be too wildly wrong in his predictions of what the future is going to be like. It doesn't necessarily mean that he would want it that way. And uh yeah, I never really Arthur C. Clark never really struck me as a sociopath. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Huch also known as Trzasquez is. And he says, "Happy birthday for sweetheart." And my my woman's birthday was yesterday at the time of recording this. And he says, "What did you get her?" Well, I

got her three things in particular. And the main thing, I'm not going to say what it was. It was it's rather personal and nobody would guess what it was. She she was completely at a loss of guessing what it was going to be before she opened
it. And uh yeah, it's just it's just a personal thing. I'm not going to say what it is. But with regard to the other two things I got, I got her also got her two pairs of shoes. I got her a pair of like nice high heels that I wasn't sure if she liked them or not. So, I got her another pair of more sensible shoes just in case she hated the the high heel ones, which was convenient for me

because there was a sale at the the book at the shoe store where you buy one pair of shoes, you get another another pair at half price. So, it's a way I was kind of covering my bases just in case she hated one pair of shoes, she she'd at least fold back and wear the other pair. And so

Hash

hash also known as Trzasquez is has as his second

question, where is your new book? And I have realized that in order to write that introduction that still has to be written, I'm going to have to take a day off from work, at least one day off from

work, and just lock myself in a room and just sit down and dedicate that whole day to writing this introduction. I mean, all the the uh the essays are done. They're edited. They're formatted. is mainly all I got to do is just a few little finishing touches plus write the intro and my woman has to make a few illustrations including the the cover illustration which she also is is not being completely on the ball at the present time with regard to this. So it may be that I'm going to have to have a day off from work before I can write that introduction. And so it didn't happen in March.

Obviously, I think uh my next day off from work, my next paid holiday is going to be the 4th of July, Independence Day, but I probably not going to be writing an introduction on the 4th of July.

Okay. So, yeah, it's it's still it's it's mostly done, but I have to have like a a relatively prolonged period of time to just sit down and write this introduction. Because I mean, you have to sort of get into a a like get into the groove of it. You can't just work on it five minutes and and then set it down and then two days later work on it for 15 minutes and that kind of stuff. It's

it's just not going to
work. So, finally, we're getting to the
stuff that I forgot to
include. And I think when I was cutting
and pasting, I was doing it in such
haste, such haste that I didn't even
include the name of the person who asked
this question. Although I think it is
Xenithoid, which I'm typing now,
Xenithoid.
Okay, so I'm just going to do to
uh just go through this a little bit.
Okay, I think we're good. is hastily
paste cut and pasted. But I think I I
rectified the situation well enough that
we can just we can just continue with
this. So Xenithoid says, "Which

philosophers do you believe need to be read before one can jump around philosophical texts at will and expect to be able to understand what's going on?" I was going to read the world as will and representation but in the introduction Schopenhau says you need to read Kant first in order to understand the book. Presumably Kant would say you should you should though read the philosophers that influenced him. Then they would say you need to read what came before them. This process could go all the way back to Thales and the rest of all the earliest major thinkers we know of. However, I doubt that even a

very small portion of the most engaged philosophical thinkers have read the entire corpus of Western philosophy, let alone all of Eastern philosophy. On top of that, this is made even more impossible by the fact that the lines between philosophy, poetry, literature, and scripture are not black and white. You've mentioned that somewhere in the sutas, it says that it's good to be well read, but everyone can only read so much. Okay. Well, I read Schopenhau's The World as Will and Representation without having read Kant first. And um it is true that as a kind of appendix to the world as Will and Representation, Schopenhau includes a kind of critique

of Kant that presumably can compensate for not reading Kant because Kant is notoriously very difficult to read. He's very dry. A lot of people, even if they try to read Kant, can't read Kant. I've never read an entire book written by Kant, but I did read Schopenhau. But getting back to the main question here, which philosophers do you believe need to be read before one can jump around philosophical texts at will? Well, I mean, I was going to major in philosophy when I was in college, and it took two or three philosophy classes to cure me of that ambition because Western philosophy is

much more confusing and disorienting than eastern philosophy. Eastern philosophy for the most part is pretty much an agreement on the main points whereas western philosophy in order to make a name for yourself as a western philosopher you have to disagree with with everybody else. So it's like you got all these different conflicting points of view in western philosophy. So for me it helped me to sort of get grounded to start with eastern philosophy, start with like Buddhism, Hinduism, Daoism, that kind of thing, Mahayana Buddhism. And then after I got some maturity and had kind of a good grounding, had kind of my own idea of,

you know, what reality was all about, then I started, you know, sort of dipping my foot into some western philosophy. And of western philosophy, I think David Hume would be a good start. I mean, he was influenced by previous philosophers. He was he was one of the main people who influenced Kant, but I mean he kind of lays it down in a kind of an elementary way where I mean you don't really need to read his predecessors which would include like Barkley and a French cartisian named Malibbron were two of his two of his main influences I think but just read like don't even bother with his his

magnum opus that he wrote when he was 20s read like an inquiry into human understanding which is a short book and that's another important thing. I mean, you don't want to just like as one of your first readings in Western philosophy just plunge into some thousandpage long tome that um Hume's inquiry concerning human understanding. I think that's the title of it is it's not a very thick book. It's like maybe 70 pages, something like that. And it's it's it's well worth reading. Also, like Spinosa's Ethics is also a relatively short book. It's a classic and after you read that, you know, Schopenhau is fine is his uh the world as will and

representation.

Um but it's it's good to have some kind of grounding. It's good to have sort of your own personal philosophy going before you start reading too much Western philosophy because they're going to be just going in all different directions. It can be very disorienting and

confusing. So get some grounding first. For me that was largely through studying Eastern philosophy and also just through you know gradually getting older and getting a little bit more based in that way before you know starting to read like like Hume is just a radical. I

mean it's it's really refreshing to read Hume even though he wrote in the 1700s because he just lays waste. I mean, he was, you know, he would just take philosophical ideas that were just considered to be obviously true and just undermine them and point out that they're not obviously true at all. Like cause and effect, you know, it's like cause and effect was just assumed to be this obvious truth. Along comes David Hume and and really points out that we really don't know cause and effect. It's just a kind of logical inference.

But yeah, I'd read like one of the first western philosophers I would read would be like David

Hume, maybe

Spinosa, then you know get into like

Schopenhau or something. I'd avoid Hegel

like the plague Kant I mean if if you've

got the brain for it but he's very very

dry reading very abstract complicated in

his style.

uh maybe some of the

existentialists. I don't

know. So, I think I'm just going to move

on to the xenoid. Second

question, which is kind of a followup on

the first one. Is there any way to know

when reading philosophy gets to be too

much? Ideally, an enlightened sage

wouldn't read any philosophy because

they would no longer need it. The only philosophizing they would engage in would be listening to and then correcting the philosophical takes of their unenlightened questioners. Going with the atakawaga, they wouldn't even really be attached to any view, suspending judgment on everything. But as unenlightened worldlings, we all need some kind of world view in order to get through our lives. I would suspect that at a certain point reading the philosophy of others would provide diminishing returns because certain philosophical truths are already so useful that they can put you on the path to enlightenment such as the four noble

truths. Also, constantly filling your head with the thoughts of others may serve to choke out, bury or corrupt certain insights you may come to on your own. Something the Buddha and Nietze would agree on is that you need to act and that addiction to thought as smart as it may make you feel isn't a good thing. Okay. So again, we just it's the very first line that is the actual question. Is there any way to know when reading philosophy gets to be too much? Well, I mean, if it's it's not helping you anymore, then I think that would be a pretty good indication, like I mean, it's good to

continue exposing yourself to other points of view, even if you think you've got it figured out, because really, you don't. I mean, there's no like intellectual philosophy that is just going to contain ultimate truth.

So, anyone who thinks they know the truth, and as general rule, they don't. I mean, it might be good enough for you, but then it can just turn you into a kind of a like a a

smug

dogmatist. And as the Atakawaga says, a dogmatist is very hard to guide because they think they've already got it.

So, is there any way to know when

reading philosophy gets to be too much?
I mean, if you're making progress
without it, I mean, it's not even really
necessary. I'm sure there have been
fully enlightened beings who haven't
read any philosophy, especially not any
western philosophy. They might have
heard some sutra being
recited, but I think it was who was it?
Huang. somebody got enlightened just
from they were just walking along and
they heard some monk reciting I think it
was the Diamond Sutra and just some some
verse that was being recited just was
exactly what they needed to hear and it
just caused this

click. But Zen especially would say, you know, it's probably the less philosophy you know the better. The less clutter you've got in your mind.

So I mean there have been enlightened beings though and this is kind of an important thing to to realize and I think I might get to this a little later is that there have been very advanced beings who had very different philosophies. You know there have been very advanced beings who were like St. John of the Cross was a Roman Catholic who revered the Virgin Mary. His favorite book in the Bible was the Song of Songs. And then you've got, you know, very wise Buddhists, very wise Hindus,

you know, you name it. Just about any kind of spiritual system has had very advanced adepts in it. And they just believe all this other stuff and and it's really not that important. It's just superficial stuff. I mean, if it just helps to guide you in your practice, that's the important thing. It's never going to explain ultimate reality because ultimate reality cannot be put into words. The name that can be named is not the eternal name. The way that can be shown is not the eternal way. So yeah, philosophy in a way it's just mental exercise, a way of

strengthening the intellect. Um it like
some proficiency in logic is a good
detector. I mean, one of the
main advantages of it is not to help you
find the truth, but to help you weed out
obvious
So, something like David Hume,
who is just like a radical skeptic, I
mean, that's that's one reason I guess
why I think David Hume would be a good
intro to Western
philosophy, just because he's just sort
of like laying waste to the
philosophical landscape.
So yeah, I mean, let's see. Is there any
way to know when a reading philosophy
gets to be too much? Yeah, I mean, if

it's not helping you, then it's too much. And you should be able to judge whether you're getting more peace of mind or less peace of mind, whether you're getting closer, you whether you're becoming wiser or less wise. Maybe becoming less wise might be harder to to gauge because you don't have the wisdom to realize that you're becoming less wise or some such. But if you have some sensitivity, some insight, you probably can get a feel as to whether reading this or that philosopher is like helping you to find like clarity and peace of mind. I mean, that's that's what it should be. I mean, philosophy

literally is love of wisdom. And if it's not helping you to be wiser, then it's a waste of your time at best. So, I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's third question, which is, can you give some examples of philosophers, Western or Eastern, that you think are underrated and deserve to be read by more people?

Man, yeah, I this is the first time I've really read this question.

It's not like I I I like work out some answer before I do the videos. Like a lot of time I'm just cutting and pasting blocks of text and then I then I get to reading sometimes for the first time

like now. Can you give some examples of philosophers western or eastern that you think are underrated and deserve to be read by more people? Well, like the Dign Naga, the Digg Naga school, I think Dharmmudarat was one of the main philosophers of the Daga school. It was uh a medieval Indian school of Buddhism that emphasized
logic. That yeah, that that'd be well worth reading. I think
uh I think an underrated western philosopher would be FH
Bradley. I think FH Bradley was good. He he went with the um coherence theory of truth rather than the correspondence

theory of truth like most people do.
Like science scientism especially is
based on the correspondence theory of
truth that a statement is true if and
only if it corresponds to some external
matter of fact to some objective matter
of fact. Whereas FH Bradley going with
the coherence theory of truth says that
a statement is true if and only if it is
in harmony with every other statement
that you have decided is
true. If it just fits in with this free
floating system of statements that are
all considered to be true then it can be
considered true also.
Um, I don't know. Libnitz's Monadology
is another really short um a short

philosophical text that is is just kind

of

mindblowing. It's just sort of like a

mental exercise in getting your mind

blown reading Libnets's Monadology. I

don't know how underrated he is though.

I mean, most people don't read lieets

anymore, so I guess he's almost any

philosopher is underrated nowadays.

Uh I can't really think of any other

good examples

though Malab Branch maybe if you can

find Malabbr somewhere. He was he had

this idea that there's no such thing as

force that you know it's all God. God is

omnipotent. Sort of the way that the

Muslims see God as just he's all power belongs to God. All power is God's power because he is omnipotent. He's got all the power. And so when we see a car crashing into a wall, for example, it has no more momentum than just like the image of a car crashing into the image of a wall on a movie screen. And that the the seeming reality of the inertia and the the momentum and the force and all that is just God is just like imbuing that. But really it's it's only God that has that force that nothing else has any power at all. So it's stuff like that. I mean you it's good to have like a grounding in your own philosophy that you already have a kind of world

view that you feel comfortable with. You shouldn't be completely satisfied with it because it's not going to be perfect, but still you should get some kind of grounding in a kind of maturity or just, you know, accepting some philosophy that that makes good sense to you like like Buddhism for example before you start reading some of these weird western theories. Um Barkley is another is another good example. George Barkley who came up with the idea of immaterialism that I mean he's spent like most of his his philosophical genius pounding away at this one idea that you can't really know physical matter. All you can know

is

mind.

So I guess I I guess I answered that

question. I'm going to move on to the

next one. This is from Sedarta or

Lohachita, copper mind. And Loha says,

"Do you think the term dity

uh or ditika which is often translated

as heretic carries the same connotations

as the term heretic in Christianity or

kafir in Islam? Many ancient Buddhist

texts speak of the heretics. Is it

simply referring to non

Buddhists or in a Buddhist country so to

speak should they have fewer rights at

least to participate in politics than

Buddhists? Well, let's see the Yeah, in

in Burmese it's just called

dati. It's uh dia. Yeah, it's it's generally a non Buddhist philosopher or someone who teaches something that is considered to be like pernitious wrong view. It's it wouldn't be applied to like a heretical Buddhist. So I don't heresy is generally

like like somebody who belongs to a religion who is teaching something contrary to the orthodox teachings of that religion. I think that would mainly be a heretic. Anyone else like a non someone who isn't even a member of that religion would just be like an an unbeliever. Maybe they could also be

called a heretic within the context of
you know the the other person's religion
the person who's judging him
but in generally in Buddhism dia is
applied to you know like a jiva like non
non Buddhist
philosophers I'm not even sure if it's
applied to like the vadic
philosophers is it be more like the
janes and a j because it's so forth. But
I'm not entirely sure about that one.
So, does it carry the same connotations
as the term heretic in Christianity or
kafir? I think it just means like a
teacher of another tradition. You know,
it's not quite as judgmental. It's it
can be interpreted as as judgmental like

heretic. But I think ultimately it just means like somebody who's belongs to a different tradition who's teaching something that is contrary or different from our tradition which is Buddhism. So is it simply referring to non Buddhists? Yeah, I think that term DT is pretty much exclusively used for non Buddhists.

So in a in a Buddhist country, should they have fewer rights at least to participate in politics? And well, it would depend on like the the constitution of the the country, I guess. Um, in a Buddhist country, should non Buddhists have the same rights? Um,

ideally, like from a liberal point of view, Yeah. I mean, like I don't know. It depends. it. I mean, it just depends on what the culture says, what the what the, you know, what the constitution is like.

Um, it's it's hard to say. Like in ancient Rome, you know, could someone who did not accept the the like the state religion, could they be involved in politics, you know, they refused to make offerings to to Capitolene Jove or that sort of thing? I mean, you you could have it worked out. I mean, if you're a very religiousbased nation that has like a state religion, that kind of thing, then

refusing to participate in the state religion, I mean, it could prohibit you from being involved in politics, involved in certain functions, I suppose. I don't think that um it's it would be wise to go to the extreme of like medieval Europe where if you did not belong to the state religion of Catholic Christianity that you should be just
killed. I mean there are still people that believe in that sort of thing. But I mean it's really not for me to decide. I I do think it's good to have a diversity of cultures and a diversity of like government systems

just so that Darwin is still
participating. You're you're still
having like competition of these
different systems so that the most
effective system will come out on top. I
mean, you should always have a certain
diversity because you have a
monopoly. Then, you know, you just have
like a a
monoculture, then I mean, you can wind
up with like a really shitty system and
and nothing to compete with
it.
So, yeah, it just depends on on the
culture, I guess. It's really not for me
to decide. Although in a Buddhist
country certainly you wouldn't be

putting to death people who are considered heretics or anything like that cuz that just goes against Buddhism. I mean the Buddha himself said that you shouldn't honor the teachers of other religions, you should like if you convert from Janism to Buddhism, for example, that you should still honor your Jane teach your previous Jane teachers that sort of thing. And like Ashoka, you know, the the uh the Buddhist emperor par excellence, you know, he was saying you just have respect for religious teachers and religious people. I mean, they're trying to do good. I mean, that's that's good.

It's better to have a religious person
who believes something different from
you than just to have some atheistic,
materialistic, sociopathic kind of
person who doesn't give a about
right or wrong.
But I mean like the finer points like
how the constitution is going to be
worked out and you know how much you
know how much you can
deviate from you know the established
religious point of view before you know
you start having some kind of penalty
that kind of thing. I mean it's not for
me to say that different cultures are
going to have different ideas about that
sort of

thing. So let's

see. I think I answered that question

from Sedarta

Lohachita. It's actually more than one

question. In fact, there's like three

question marks in one question, which is

kind of a way of getting around the

three the limit of three questions,

which is not good. I mean, you should

count question marks. One question has

one question mark at the end of it. one

question does not have three or four

question marks unless you're being very

emphatic and have them all in a row then

it might be

okay. So anyways, Sedara Lohachita's

second

question is and do you think that

throughout history there have been

Buddhist rulers who have converted

people to the dharma through violence as

happened with Christianity or Islam?

Um maybe like in medieval Japan there

may have been persecutions against

Christians that kind of thing. Or like

in ancient and medieval Sri Lanka, maybe

even modern Sri Lanka, you may have had

Buddhist leaders who were like trying to

stamp out the Taml, you know, the the

shyite Hindu Tamils once and for all,

that kind of thing.

I don't know if they're really trying to

convert them as just sort of eliminate

them from

society. Um, but I've never heard of Buddhism being promagated by the sword. I mean, in Islam that was fairly common and in Christianity also that happened quite a lot, especially earlier on. And then also to some degree in the the colonized sort of third world countries, you know, like Sri Lanka under the Portuguese. I mean the Portuguese were just trying to stamp out Buddhism and just force the people to convert to Christianity. And then uh I guess fortunately for Sri Lanka, the British kind of took Sri Lanka away from the Portuguese and were more

tolerant. Partly I suppose because the English are just less religious and didn't give much of a as to what religion the colonized people followed. sort of like the the Roman Empire was kind of like that too. You know, they were sort of masters of the world. And so, you know, they they gave unto Mammon instead of unto
God. And so, they really didn't care all that much about what what religion people followed.
But I can't think of any Buddhist rulers who converted people to Dhama through violence other than maybe some some intolerant Buddhist king maybe in India or Sri Lanka or Japan or something. I

guess it wouldn't be kings in Japan. It would be more like damos in in like feudal Japan that would maybe persecute non Buddhists and then in a way desire not to get persecuted might persuade them to convert to Buddhism.

But I don't think there was any just wholesale promulgation of the religion by the sword as has happened with other religions.

So I'm just going to move on to Sedarta Lohachita's third question which is I'm curious to know if you're aware of the destruction of the Buddhas of Bameyan by the Taliban a few months before 9/11 and the NATO invasion

of the country. Was there any kind of reaction in Burma or any other Buddhist country? And what do you think about that event? So I assume this is referring to, you know, back around 20201 where some of the largest Buddha images in the world carved into the sides of cliffs were dynamited by like Islamist fundamentalists because it's like idolatry and so forth. And I mean Islam, you're not even supposed to portray the human form in art. you're not supposed to have like a like a a sculpture or a painting of Muhammad definitely. So the some Burmese people heard about it and they were just sort of indignant, you know, clicking their

tongues and frowning, but I mean there's not much else you can do about it. So let's see. Is that the question? Did I answer the question already? Was there any kind of reaction in Burma or any other Buddhist country? And what do I think about that event? Yeah, I mean it's just intolerant fanatics just I mean some of the stuff that the Taliban and also ISIS other other like Muslim fundamentalist groups have done just destroying like priceless archaeological sites, you know, like ISIS destroyed the like the ruins of a number of ancient cities like the ancient city of

Palmyra that was a great capital at one time. you know, they just destroy it because it's it's pagan and idolatrous and all

that. So, I mean, it's just narrow-minded. It's just foolish in my opinion. But, um, I mean, with regard to the reaction to the Taliban blowing up the giant standing Buddhas in Afghanistan, I mean, again, it was just sort of indignant muttering and disapproval, but I mean, what the hell are Burmese people going to do about the Taliban?

just muttering disapproval and that's about

it. So I'm just going to move on to the

next question which is from seio of

action sepat

zeda and seio of action sepa's first

question is if we create our own

suffering and shouldn't blame others as

our karma made the conditions around us

then why do you blame leftists for

messing things up I don't see how it is

different than blaming any other group

and this question has just a wealth of

cir circumstance behind it with regard

to what has been going on on the Discord

server recently that there are a few

people on our Discord server that just

became like con

compulsive like Jew

bashers and I agree with a statement by Dave Chappelle who was a comedian but he said something that I think is true and wise. He says nothing ever nothing good ever came of any sentence that contains the phrase the

Jews. And there are some people on the Discord server that there's one in particular. He I mean I'm I'm saying I mean the purpose of this Discord server is not bashing

Jews. And he he he was just indignant at this. He's he's saying well I can't even talk about politics. I can't talk about politics without without blaming the Jews. And so it's like he's getting all like sniffy about it because it's like

I've just banned him from discussing politics or current events. And really, I mean, if people were just like making fun of Jews sometimes, I mean, I can appreciate that as much as any guy, you know, just making fun of anybody, making fun of Germans, making fun of Americans, even making making fun of anybody. I mean, that that should be fair game. I mean, there's there's no one ethnicity that you're not allowed to criticize unless it just becomes like this obsession where it becomes one of the predominant themes on a Buddhist server on Discord is just bashing Jews over and over and over and just just about any

room. You can go like the personal pictures room bashing Jews, the memes room of course, bashing Jews, like the lobby bashing Jews. And my woman was getting more irritated by this than I was. But still, it's like I mean there's a point I mean just like pointing out things in in like current affairs is one thing, but just compulsively bashing with obvious dosa some ethnicity or in in in a few cases

women. I mean, it's it's just it's not healthy. It's not dharmic. It's not good. I mean, to be pointing out like how the left is driving the country in a certain direction, that sort of thing, or how it's like undermining Buddhism in

the West, you know, corrupting it almost beyond recognition, that sort of thing. I mean, that's fine. I mean, that's one of the reasons why I started my second blog with politically incorrect dharma was just putting forth things that leftists don't like very much, but but are nevertheless true and important. I mean, that was one of the main themes of my second blog, which is still still on the internet for whatever reasons.
So I mean it's it's not so much just making observations or making fun of somebody or criticizing somebody. It's just when it becomes tinged with hatred just over just pounding away at it again

and again just on a daily basis then no that is dysfunctional that is pathological.

So I mean blaming others I mean it is true that we are creating the world we live in. We are creating a world that has Islamist terrorism. We are creating a world that has neoarxists trying to undermine western civilization. And a lot of those western leftists are Jewish. But instead of just discussing, you know, like an ideology, it's like you got to drag this ethnicity into it and just blame the ethnicity. In fact, this guy who said he couldn't discuss politics without without blaming the Jews, he actually said like a month or

two ago

that he would without hesitation

genocide the entire Hebrew race without

hesitation on a Buddhist server. He kind

of backed away from that. But still I

mean and I am I am happy to to say that

he was not a Buddhist and he was not

American. So maggotards cannot be blamed

for

this. He was a European. I won't say

what

country and uh he seems to have been uh

more a Christian than anything else.

In fact, he already quit the group once

because people were pushing back on his

assertions that Jesus of Nazareth was a

fully enlightened being. And just people being skeptical of that caused him to rage quit or just quit in indignation. And he quit again after I really just said, "Look, the purpose of this server is not bashing Hebrews."

So I guess getting back to the question here, if we create our own suffering and shouldn't blame others as our karma made the conditions around us. I mean you can still make observations on the conditions around us. Then why do you blame leftists for messing things up?

Well, I'm just I mean in a way it's not even blaming. It's just like making observations.

And you can make observations if I mean

when it the thing is that when the
observations are tinged with
hatred or any kind of
dosa then to that extent it is unhealthy
and
unharmic. I mean even the Buddha could
make observations about a political
scene and how it's healthy or unhealthy
that that's really not the issue. The
issue is just like obsessive compulsive
bashing of an entire ethnicity or an
entire
demographic.
So, so even the word blame in a way is
kind of a loaded term.
But I have pointed

out before elsewhere I guess that a lot of the arguments that are used by people blaming the Jews for all the badness in society, I mean it's it's not so different from feminists blaming men. I mean obviously it's men who created Western civilization. So most of the bad stuff in Western civilization is the fault of men. And all you have to do is just
emphasize the the bad stuff. There you go. Men are responsible for all this bad stuff. You know, it's the same kind of argumentation or brown people just blaming whitey for all the bad stuff in society.
Again, society, Western civilization was

created by white people. Therefore, white people are largely responsible for the negative aspects of Western civilization. and then you just conveniently ignore everything else. So blaming the Jews is similar to that. I mean, you could come up with all these valid arguments just like a feminist can come up with all these valid arguments about how men are the the main instigators of wars and and there mass deaths of violence and so forth. Yeah. It ignores the good stuff that that the men have done creating the entire civilization for the most part. So it's not so much a matter of

what you talk about. It's just like I mean is it just dripping with venom or not? I mean is it just like this compulsive bashing at one group or another group?

So, I mean, occasional jokes about Jewish people, occasional memes. I mean, that has been fair game from the beginning up until very recently where there's starting to be push back where I'm saying, you know, this is just going to have to stop. This is not the main purpose. This is not a predominant theme of this server. It was never intended to be. And then people just start increasing the amount of of this kind of stuff just as a way of pushing back.

I mean you just got to draw the line
somewhere. So I'm just going to move on
to the next question. This is Siovakan
Sipad Zidna's second
question which is what do you make of
Nagarjuna talking about Amitaba Buddha
in his letter to a friend and Vazu Bandu
following his brother Asanga to become
Mahayana after confirming the truth of
Amitaba's pure land despite writing
probably the most famous commentary
along with his brother's commentary in
the Buddhist tradition about the Abid
Dharmmas.
is
well okay this is kind of a complicated

question.

first is uh I mean how do you explain some of the like higherp profofile wiser Mahayana philosophers endorsing pure land Buddhism and the existence of essentially a mythological space Buddha called Amitaba who was never mentioned in the poly texts that purand Buddhism arose hundreds of years after the time of the Buddha. It rose strangely relatively early on in the development of Mahayana. But still it was hundreds of years after the time of the Buddha. And so Nagarjuna allegedly endorsed the the veneration of Amitaba Buddha. Again never mentioned in the earliest texts. and then a bazu bondu and a sanga

according to sea of action sepa they uh
converted to mahayana after confirming
the truth of Amitaba's pure
land so I guess the main question is how
can a wise Buddhist adopt pure land
Buddhism that seems to be the
question
and I I was sort of hinted at this
earlier on and I've I've made numerous
statements along these lines in various
videos. You got St. John of the Cross
who may have been an
arant if Christians can become arants. I
mean he obviously was a master of Janna.
He was a meditation master this hands
down just without question St. John of

the Cross, San Juan de la Cruz, and he venerated the Virgin Mary who was a devout Roman Catholic. The Song of Songs was his favorite part of the entire Bible, which if you read it, it's it's runchy erotic love poetry that has been sort of retconed into some sort of spiritual
allegory, but in all likelihood, originally it was just sort of sexy love poetry.
So he was like an arant but yet he believed like all this Christian dogma and the Virgin Mary and he thought the Virgin Mary was an arant. He thought King David was an arant despite Beth Sheeba

gate. He thought probably thought St.
Paul was an
Araant or at least had reached the level
of
perfection in which they no longer have
any self-will. They are just vehicles of
God.
So then let's set aside Christianity and
go to Hinduism where you've got two of
the the greatest Hindu saints of the
20th century. Nim Kuroli Baba up there
on the altar who was a devote of Hanuman
the monkey god and then you had Ramana
Maharshi living in southern India who
was a devote of a hill called
Arunachala. His best friend was a cow.

So I mean the point is I mean you can be fully enlightened and then the external belief system imposed upon you by your culture can be just utterly absurd and it doesn't matter. I am not the sort of person who thinks that an enlightened being can't have wrong view that the view at the intellectual level at a certain stage just becomes irrelevant that that's just cultural stuff just nature taking its course and you have transcended that it's not like you have found the right view within a samsaric context because within a samsaric context there is no perfectly right view and so all these different sages and saints, they can be very highly advanced

and at the same time still believe in some of the most absurd nonsense or at least they'll give lip service to it. You know, they'll just outwardly they will appear to believe it even though like inwardly they have transcended all these beliefs. They're no longer identified with the meat puppet who is professing this or that.

So I do consider pure land Buddhism to be one of the most egregious corruptions of dharma to ever to appear in Buddhism. In to some to some extent pure land Buddhism teaches the exact opposite of what the original founder of Buddhism God Buddha was teaching.

But still, you can have wise
philosophers, even possibly enlightened
ones, great
sages, who are just sort of, you know,
they're they're sort of like cultural
chameleons or whatever. They are just
enlightened within the context of
whatever kind of unenlightenment their
culture is
following. St. John of the cross in
Spain, Nim Krolli Baba and Ramana
Maharshi in 20th century
India and get lots of
examples although those are three of my
favorites and I mean they were like very
highly advanced spiritually while at the
same time they would

endorse positions or ideas that I mean uh like a an American or a Westerner capable of critical thought would just dismiss as absurd just immediately. But religion is strange in that I mean religion is is almost like a kind of insanity where you can believe anything. Politics is becoming that way too in the west. It's becoming like the new religion.

It's just there's something about the human mind that can believe anything. It's weird. So anyways, I hope I answered Sioat Zena's second question there because I'm moving

on to number

three and that is what is the difference between Vajraana Buddhism, Third Wheel Buddhism and Tantric Buddhism? They all seem somewhat related, but I want to know what nuances exactly differentiates these. Well, you might as well throw in mantraana. Like some people distinguish vajraana from mantraana, too. But I mean, I'm no authority on this. I'm not I mean, I'm not exactly sure what third wheel Buddhism is. I'm not sure that I've really ever like looked into third wheel Buddhism. I don't even know what that is.

Tandric Buddhism and Vajriana that there's a lot of overlap. Some people

would lump them together and then some like
specialists would say, "Oh, no. They're they're quite quite
distinct." But I mean, I personally
would lump them together because I'm not
a Vajriana Buddhist. I'm not a Tibetan
Buddhist. I've never really taken it
very seriously. Have read some Tibetan
texts. Some Tibetan texts like the
Tibetan book of the great liberation are
extremely profound, but still I mean I'm
too much of a modern westerner, too
capable of critical thought and and just
too skeptical in general to just reject
Western Christianity and then adopt

something else that is equally devoid of any kind of grounding in like rational objectivity.

So, if I'm going to be a Buddhist, I'm going to be an out the founder of Buddhism originally taught. Get as close to that as I can and accept that that stuff that's obviously cooked up in later centuries. I

just just don't have any use for it. I mean it might be interesting to study as like an anthropological study or just I mean sure there can be wisdom arising from some wise teacher even though he's not like strictly adhering to what the Buddha taught or strictly adhering to what Jesus of Nazareth taught or

strictly adhering to what the the reishes who composed or who channeled the vadas taught. But anyways, getting back to this question, I really am not an authority on Tibetan Buddhism. And I would consider Vajriana and Tric Buddhism to be essentially the same. Tantric Buddhism began in India. It may be Vajriana is more of a like a Tibetan version of Tantric Buddhism, but I I'm really not sure even of that. And third wheel Buddhism, I have no idea. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And this is the last question. Boom. It just it just hit me.

So this this is the last question. It's from Fred. And Fred says, "Would Aurans be continually immersed in a neutral feeling?" And um because Fred is from New Zealand and um maybe doesn't have a complete mastery of the English language,

um it it wouldn't be immersed. It would be

immersed. Like a plant that is immersed is sticking up out of the water or on dry land whereas a plant that is immersed is in the water. I know that because I've been studying aquarium plants

lately. So would be continually immersed in a neutral feeling? I don't think so.

I mean, even an arant would still be able to feel pleasure and pain. It's just that they wouldn't identify with it anymore. I mean, they just it would just be

like an an image in front of a mirror or light going through a a clear pane of glass, you know? It's just there and then it's not there anymore. And they have no attachment to it at all. No preferences. And so they're not making new karma through like trying to modify it, like putting up barriers against it, pushing back against it, or trying to pull in more of it through through attraction, anything like that. It's

just whatever goes through goes through.
They're not making any more karma. So
pleasure goes through that's fine. Pain
goes through that's fine. Um so in a way
kind of you could call it like
up a kind of neutral feeling but really
it's there is pleasure and pain. It's
just that they have transcended any kind
of attraction or aversion for
it in theory.
So you could say that Aurhan still feel
are still capable of feeling pleasure
and pain, but the fact that they have
transcended it and make no preferences
and no distinctions with regard to it
kind of turns it into a neutral feeling
from an enlightened point of view,

whatever that

is. And so that's it. And I really hope

that that one part towards the middle

where I'm trying to cut and paste the

the questions that I forgot to cut and

paste before starting the video. Um,

it's going to be interesting to see how

that works out because I really don't

like editing these videos. I just do it

all in one take. I'm like the Ed Wood of

Dhamma video

makers.

So, I guess that's it. And so if you

have any questions about stuff that you

think I can answer, I'm really no

authority on Tibetan Buddhism by the

way. But if you think I can answer a question about philosophy, you know, Buddhism, especially early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism, you know, I know quite a lot about Terravada Buddhism, even though like I pointed out earlier, u I don't have like a a catalog of all the different sutas and their their topics that I can just bring up at will. like a lot of phenomenal Burmese scholar seats can do. It is just amazing to see a Burmese scholar Seattle giving a talk where he is just like reciting from this suta, reciting from that suda, giving entire blocks of the original poly and so forth. He's not looking at any notes at all. It's just

he's just memorized all this stuff. Very scholarly are Burmese seats. partly because the Burmese are very dogmatic. But I'm not even answering questions anymore. I'm just I'm just doing the spiel at the end where if you think I can answer a question, feel free to ask no more than three questions per person, please. And count the question marks. Just because you've got like one paragraph doesn't mean that that one paragraph is one question. There might be three or four question marks in that one question, which makes it three or four questions.

And aside from that, I mean, like and

subscribe if you haven't done so

already, and be happy.

Alrighty

then. Hello and welcome to question and

answer number

143. I am your host Ponyo Basa. I'm

trying to get in the middle of the

camera here. And this is my beverage.

Get that in the middle. Right. Right.

Kind of right in

there.

So, we've got quite a few questions.

And those of you who are not

mathematicians may have jumped to the

conclusion that 143 is a prime number,

but it is not a prime number because it

is in fact 11 *

13. So it may be a while before we get

to another prime number

Q&A. And I should just dive right into this because we got lots of questions. And I'm a little bit tired today. Partly because I got up this early afternoon, late morning. I don't remember exactly when I got up. Rested a little bit. Had a couple cups of coffee and then immediately went out and started like mowing lawns and digging holes. We planted a paper birch tree in the backyard today and just started doing chores before I even ate anything. And now I am somewhat fatigued. Also, when I finally did eat something, it included bacon, which may have lowered my vibrational rate somewhat. So, please

bear that in mind. If if I answer a question incorrectly or some such, blame the bacon. And now, let's just commence to uh answering questions here. And the first question is from Michael. And I we got a lot of long questions this time. We got numerous essay questions in this Q&A for some for some reason. Probably random chance. At least statistically we can we can just call it random chance. Anyway, Michael says, "I've been listening to your excellent Q&As's for some time. As a Buddhist, there's an interesting dichotomy that no one I have asked can

resolve. So perhaps you would like to.
In the sutas, there is frequent
reference to incalculable
eons. And I really need to wipe these
glasses. When I was weed eating today,
it was like all kinds of derbases flying
up. It's like pieces of like mutilated
dandelions and like soil. This kind of
stuff is flying up and hitting me in the
just pretty much all over my body.
I'm I apologize to Michael for
interrupting myself in the middle of
reading his question. I'll just start
again. Michael says, "I've been
listening to your excellent Q&As for
some time. As a Buddhist, there's an
interesting dichotomy that no one I have

asked can resolve. So perhaps you would like to. In the sutas, there is frequent reference to incalculable eons." in regard to the time that sentient beings have been wandering in samsara. The Buddha is careful to say incalculable and not to say that previous lives are infinite. This is because he knew that by saying infinite his detractors at the time would have pointed out that we all would have had to achieve liberation already since we could not have lived infinite lives and not have achieved liberation. The only way that past lives could be infinite and yet to explain why we still remain in bondage is that

liberation is reversible. That somehow we attain liberation and are enticed back into samsara over and over again. This would be a sort of Buddhist heresy as one of the qualities of liberation is that it is taught to be nonreversible. So to avoid these logical snares, the Buddha did not say that past lives are infinite. However, by not saying that previous lives are infinite, then this implies that there is a beginning point even if Buddha's omniscience was unable to pinpoint it. This in turn implies one of two possibilities.

One, our personal experience of samsara may have started when the conscious

element separated from the godhead as taught in vanta. And two, the conscious element was created by some sort of creator divinity. In either case, whether past lives are infinite or finite, there are serious difficulties that I'm unable to reconcile with Buddhist doctrine because the dichotomy seems a little prickly. I didn't wish to post it on a public forum and perhaps cast doubt into the minds of practicing Buddhists. But you are clearly steady and well seasoned, so to speak. So, by asking this question directly, I sincerely hope that it doesn't pose any problems for you. Personally, I know

that rebirth is as natural as apple pie and supported by a lot of evidence. Dr. Ian Stevenson's, for example. In any case, I'd be very grateful if you could give me your thoughts when your time allows. Best wishes and thank you for your insightful videos. Okay. Actually, while reading this, I recall that this is uh may not have been intended for a Q&A video. I think he was asking me personally because he thought it was kind of an embarrassing question like for devout Buddhists or something. Um, so this was like a personal message, but it's fair game. You know, I'm I'm not particularly squeamish with regard to questions that are questioning

uh like basic Buddhism. And there's a lot to unpack here. He Michael does make some assumptions that I consider to be unwarranted. For example, let's see a dicho interesting dichotomy. A dichotomy means a choice between two possibilities. And I I I don't really see the dichotomy here other than let's see here in the sutas is frequent reference to incalculable eons in regard to the time that sentient beings have been wandering. You see the Buddha is careful to say incalculable and not say previous lives are infinite. This is because he knew that by saying infinite his detractors at the time would have

pointed out they all would have had to achieve liberation already. Well, he Michael here is secondguing the psychology of a sama Buddha. Michael is assuming that he knows why the Buddha said incalculable eons. But I doubt that his explanation is is the correct one. Let's see. This is because he knew that by saying infinite his detractors at the time would have pointed out that we all would have had to achieve liberation already. But I mean most of his detractors went along with pretty much the same idea. Like the brahinss they were pretty much getting on board the reincarnation train by the time of the Buddha. The James also the Aivacas

thought that you had a limited number of lives. So there would have to been a first one. So I'm not exactly sure where the Aivacas
um thought that the first life came from. I'm not sure about that. It would have been a very crude primitive kind of life
possibly arising organically as a kind of crystal or plant some some primitive like algae or something. I'm not sure about
that. But let's continue picking through this. Let's see. The only way that past lives could be infinite and yet to explain why we Yeah. Well, getting back

to this part, his detractors would say we would have all to achieve liberation already. Not really. Because in ancient India, there wasn't really advanced logic or mathematics, that kind of thing. And a lot of the people were going with the same assumptions that that Samsara is a beginningless. And it may be that the Buddha just said incalculable eons just incalculable just because he wasn't going to make an assertion one way or the other. Like in the atikawaga I mean the Buddha says you know you're do not make assertions you're better off not making assertions like the origin of the world he just

refuse to answer it. That sort of thing.
So incalculable eon just means if there
is a beginning it is unknown. It's
just it's just way out there.
It is beyond
reckoning. So the only way that past
lives could be infinite and yet to
explain
um why we still remain in bondage is
that liberation is reversible. That is
not the only possible explanation. For
example, you could also have a first
life like I just mentioned. The Aivas
believed that you have a limited number
of lives when you get to I can't
remember what it is. It's

likeund 184,000 or something like that.

I can't remember

now. Um, you know, it's like there had

to be a first one. And it could be that

Buddhism could accept a similar point of

view where the karmic stream is just

starting off. And I' I've talked about

this a few times in previous Q&A that

this one weird book that I read as a

young monk called Seth

Speaks. Um it's got two possible ways

that you could have like new karmic

streams added to the cosmos, added to

samsara. One is that a cosmic stream can

split. So you could have like this co

karmic I say cosmic stream karma. you've

got karma as a kind of momentum of

mental states that that could like diverge. There could be like a little branch splitting off, then it's it's not orthodox Buddhism, but it is a possibility that I don't know how a Buddhist could disprove it other than just appeals to authority. And another one is that in that another way of of creating new beings is like in in this book set speaks he's talking about how in your dreams you may dream about someone who never existed. You may dream you just create some being in your dream and then you have sort of brought this being into existence and they continue to live this

shadowy wispy

semi-existence outside of your dream.

You've just kind of, you know, they've

got like this shadowy dream realm kind

of a thing that they're living in and

it's just they start their evolution

into more and more concrete,

substantial, more conscious kind of

beings.

So the idea that you can become

unenlightened again after you become

enlightened. I mean even the ata waga

which is like the the largest chunk of

really primordial archaic kind of

Buddhism in my opinion denies that once

you become enlightened you can become

unenlightened

again. So let's see here.

So to avoid these logical snares, the Buddha did not say that past lives are infinite. However, by not saying that previous lives are infinite, then this implies that there is a beginning point. Yeah, that's possible. Even if the Buddha's omniscience was unable to pinpoint it, well, he wouldn't have been omniscient if he couldn't have pinpointed

it. If he was really omnisient and there was a beginning, then he would have if he wanted to know what the beginning was, he probably would have known it. But the Buddha's omniscience is itself

kind of kind of debatable I think. So this in turn implies one of two possibilities and I consider this to be a false dichotomy. The these two possibilities are not comprehensive. So our personal experience of sorrow may have started when the conscious element separated from the godhead and then the conscious element was creed by some sort of creator divinity. So, Michael here, that is his name, right? Let's scroll up here. Yeah, Michael here says, "The only two possibilities of, you know, explaining where beings come from is capital G." Both of them, both the only two

alternatives are there is a God, which I don't I just don't see it and I'm not buying it. For example, the two possibilities I just mentioned, which I derived from a strange book called Seth Speaks, no mention of a capital G God. So, let's see. In either case, whether past lives are infinite or finite, there are serious difficulties on unable to reconcile with Buddhist doctrine because the dichotomy seems a little prickly. And I'm not even sure what the dichotomy is whether it's just the dichotomy of infinite past lives in which case it's it's like I've pointed out with regard

to the like the bad logic of taking
bodhicattva vows the bodhicattva vows I
vow to liberate all beings when I mean
there's already been an infinite amount
of time and we still have an infinite
number of unenlightened suffering ing
beings within a samsara
context. So it's just taking these
bodhic sattva vows is pretty much just
like imprisoning yourself in
samsara forever
presumably. Let's see. But I think I
might have just uh fallen off the track
here. Let's
see. The economy seems a little prickly.
I didn't wish to post in a public forum.
perhaps cast doubt into the minds of

practicing Buddhists. Well, my explanation of where samsara comes from is as always the simile of the block of marble. So, you've got like infinite formless consciousness that you can I mean that would be like the vdantist god except I mean when it's infinite and formless it's just off the scale. It cannot be perceived. It's near Brahman. It's not just God. It's inconceivable ultimate reality that is just off the scale. But let's get back to the block of marble. Sizeless, you know, just because there's nothing around it to compare it with. So, it's just call it

sizeless for convenience. Within that block of marble is every single possible statue that could ever exist. An infinite number of impossible statues are in there, too. And they're really there in a sense. They're potentially, virtually, conditionally, already there. An infinite number of these statues all superimposed upon each other just within this block of marble. And some of those statues become so complex that they become reflexive. They become self-aware and delusional because the it's it's an imperfect kind of awareness.

So they think they are separate from everything else when ultimately they are not. So I mean if you want to call that

like a vdantist kind of a god but the Buddhists have always been or generally been very careful about not reifying the absolute because it is totally off the scale. Anything you can say about it is ultimately going to be invalid.

So, I guess I kind of answered the question. I'm not even sure. I mean, there was I don't even know if there's even a question mark in here, but he did request I respond to this. And I mean, I don't think that the only possible explanations for the existence of beings in this cosmos are God

But I mean if you want to be really abstract in a kind of vdantist manner,

you want infinite formless consciousness
that is just completely off the scale
and cannot be
perceived. You want to call that
God, fine. Although orthodox Buddhism
avoids that by just not reifying the
absolute other than just calling it
Nirvana and not saying it's like this or
it's like that. It's just the goal. It's
the absolute, you know, the absolute
goal
anyway, the end of delusion and
suffering.
[Music]
So, yeah, I guess that's enough time. I
mean, we we do have kind of a lot of
questions

here and there was a lot to pick through on this one. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ryalder. And Ryalder says, "Are you familiar with the recently discovered underground structures found via imaging below Giza pyramids?" And yeah, I am familiar. I've watched a number of um a number of videos mostly by like common sense
archaeologists who are just pointing out that these Italian archaeologists or whatever whatever kind of Italians they were are making really
grandiose pretty much unfounded claims. They've found some sort of something

using a kind of under like
imaging like satellite imaging. And the
satellite imaging can't even penetrate
more than just a number of inches below
the surface. But they've got some kind
of gimmick where they're projecting down
and there there's like these they're
like well shafts going down with some
kind of spiral structures and then
there's like these huge blocks down
below. Some people are calling it an
underground city and so forth. And the
common sense archaeologists are pointing
out that most of that is underwater and
has been underwater since prehistoric
times. the just the water level is just
most of it would be underwater. Also, it

would be a really bad place to make some kind of underground city or any kind of underground structures of that scale simply because the the limestone, the bedrock there is full of fissures and cracks and irregularities and so forth. And it could be that this imaging is just finding underground like like spaces

But I would be willing to make the statement that if there really are these structures that have been found to being imaging, you know, these these huge like well shafts with the spiral things going down and the huge blocks underneath that were artificially made made by humans or

aliens or whatever, then I will eat a hat. I will eat a hat on this video or on an upcoming video because I'm not going to sit around until they do that because this video would become prohibitively
long. However, even though somebody may choose the hat, I do get to choose the accompanying beverage.
So with regard to these underground structures supposedly allegedly found being satellite imaging that like in reality can't penetrate more than a number of inches below the surface. Um it's just it's just I mean if you look at the original data it's just kind of

blurry like staticky looking you

know it doesn't look like the stuff that

they're saying it is. I mean, you could

sort of use like what do you call it?

Matrixing where you see what you want to

see and you can kind of add add in the

missing details and so forth. But in all

likelihood, I think it is

just like

noise in the

imaging and I don't think those

structures are really there.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to

Righter's second question, which is,

have you been to the Bass the Bass Pro

Shop

Pyramid? No, I don't even know where it is. I don't think it's around here. There is some place that's not too far from here that I would like to go to sometime in my life, and that is there allegedly is a lifesize replica of the Parthonon in Nashville, Tennessee. And I would like to see a lifesized, you know, like well not life-size but a fullscale replica of the Parthonon now like before like the roof got blown off. I guess it was during the Napoleonic Wars or the Greek war for independence or something that the Parthonon was being used as an am like an ammo dump and it took a direct hit and it just blew the whole roof off of it.

So, I think the one in the one in uh Nashville is probably in better shape. So, yeah, the Bass Pro Shop Pyramid, I doubt that it it would rival any of the great pyramids of Egypt. It's It's really not that famous. It's not on the list of wonders of the world or anything like that. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Scoladin or Sculadine.

And Scaladin or Scooladine says, "Out of everything you have ever read, who was the most exceptional at ad homonym attacks or delivered an ad homonym attack that resonated with people so

much that it defined their career." And then in uh his characteristic bullet point says like Freud who got away with calling everyone a [__]

Um, yeah, I don't think Freud was necessarily making an ad homonym attack against like pretty much the entire human race or at least Europeans. And when I read this, I mean, I was trying to think of someone who's really good at ad homonym attacks.

Um, I mean, Donald Trump, he's he's pretty much of a an expert at making ad hominemm attacks, but the first person that came to mind was Arthur Schopenhau, and his ad hominemm attacks were mainly directed at one person, and that was

Hegel. In fact, I've been told that
Schopenhau coined new words in the
German language just for bashing Hegel.
If you look up Hegel in the in the index
to the world as will and representation
by Schopenhau, every single reference to
Hegel is bashing the man. Hey Mc
Schopenhau just hated Hegel's guts and
he made no secret of that.
So, I don't think the ad hominemm
attacks really defined Trump's or
Schopenhau's careers, but both of them
uh have indulged in ad hominemm attacks
and they're they're both famous and both
were relatively successful, I
guess. So, it wasn't a total

mistake. And I'm just going to move on
to Scaladin or Skooladine's second
question, which is, is there a way to
prove false or true ultimate value
judgments? No. I mean, if it's a value
judgment, then it's just a like a
personal
choice. I don't know how you could prove
false or true. I I don't even know what
an ultimate value judgment would be. I
mean, once you get to the ultimate
level, there's no more value judgments,
I'm pretty sure.
Anyways, his his bullet point is I
prefer, I like, I
wish. Yeah. I
mean, how to prove false or true? An

ultimate value judgment. I really I
think value judgments are just
unprovable. I mean, unless it's the
value judgment is I like dark chocolate
better than milk chocolate. I mean, how
would you prove
that, you I mean, even that wouldn't be
an ultimate. Ultimately, I prefer dark
chocolate to milk chocolate. Now, it the
question doesn't really make good sense
to me. But value judgments, as a general
rule, are ultimately objectively neither
true nor
false. They're just matters of
preference and opinion.
So, I guess I'll just move on to

Scaladin's third question here, which is, would you kindly explain the effects of the Fukushima meltdown on the marine ecosystem of the Pacific Northwest?

Well, the thing is, I was living in Burma when the Fukushima meltdown happened. And uh I mean, I was a monk at the time. I was no longer really a professional fisheries biologist or anything.

So, I would just assume that there would be measurable amounts of radioactivity. Still relatively no low. Not that you're going to have like mutant monster fish swimming around in Puget Sound, anything like that, but I would assume that there's, you know,

like slight increase in radio activity
on the the Pacific coast of the Pacific
Northwest as a result of the nuclear
meltdown that happened in Japan back I
don't even remember what year it was. I
was living in Burma at the
time.
So yeah, it would just be a slight
increase in ionizing radiation that
might very slightly increase the
mutation rate
of organic like organic
life. But I don't think there was
anything catastrophic that occurred.
Maybe off the coast of Japan, you might
have some like bikini atole kind of

stuff going on, but I don't think so on the coast of the Pacific Northwest. And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Athena Sigil. And Athena Sigil says, "Star Trek or Star Wars or dot dot dot dot dot Babylon 5? I know you read science fiction. Gan Wolf has been mentioned before, but do you follow mainstream cinematic and TV science fiction? Well, this is kind of two questions, isn't it? The first question is, Star Trek or Star Wars or dot dot dot dot dot Babylon 5. I never saw a single episode of Babylon 5. Um, I guess that's like a spin-off of of Star
Trek, but let's see. with regard to Star

Trek or Star Wars.

Um gosh, I think I'd prefer Star Trek partly because it was somewhat better science fiction. I mean, I'm a science fiction snob and so stuff that's not supposed to happen like like spaceships roaring through vacuum like you see in Star Star Wars. I mean, it just kind of ruins it. Although the very first Star Wars episode had at least some relatively good-looking aliens like in the the like the bar scene where it's like this rough bar with all these weird aliens there. Whereas Star Trek I have to there were very few Star Trek aliens that did not look like humans speaking

English with an American accent. I mean that's just pathetic. And TV science fiction as a general rule is lame. It's very difficult to find any kind of TV science fiction that really would satisfy a science fiction snob like myself. Maybe like something like cyberpunk, like some kind of cyberpunk dystopia movie. um you know that wouldn't
require space aliens and so forth that look like
people.
So let's see here. I had this thought when was the middle of that sentence and I'm thinking well I get to the end of the sentence and I'll I'll mention it

and now I've forgotten what it was. But yeah, TV science fiction is generally pretty lame. movie science fiction is better. Although recently any kind of science fiction movie, I mean, you're going to have to wade through all the like feminist propaganda, you know, like some good movies like um what is it? Oh, it's got what's his name in it? You know, what's his name? Tom Cruz. What is it? Uh oh, it's it's a really good movie. Return of return to to tomorrow. No, something like that. Should have looked I should look this stuff up. I should be prepared. But um it has like good aliens in it and the

aliens don't look like people at all.
They don't think like people. They don't
talk English.
Um, but I mean it's like the standard,
you know, the toughest, bravest,
strongest person in the entire movie is
a beautiful young woman. You know,
that's just almost unavoidable. The
Matrix, the first Matrix movie,
excellent science fiction in my opinion,
even though you've
got like why the the the computers, why
the machines have got humans using them
as batteries and so forth. That's not
good science. Not good science
fiction. Um, The Walking Dead. I guess
that would qualify as science fiction.

I'm, as a science fiction snob, I'm just picking it apart. It's like these people are dead, you know? It's like their body shouldn't work, but yet they're like walking around in some ways. They're they're as strong as they were before. their body in some ways works as well as it did before even though it's like not metabolizing. I mean, it's just the body is dead. It's rotting.

So, with regard to The Walking Dead, you just pretty much have to turn that into something supernatural that there's no way any kind of

virus could could cause zombies along the lines of The Walking Dead just

because I mean, they'd starve to death. You know, they can't violate the laws of of like thermodynamics, you know, they can't violate the law of conservation of mass or conservation of energy. I mean, eventually, I mean, their body is just broken. and they are dead. Their heart doesn't work anymore. You can shoot them through the heart. They're just fine. So, they have no circulation going on. They couldn't I mean, they just it just wouldn't work. But movie science fiction does tend to be better than than c TV science fiction. like space 1999, the moon gets knocked loose from its orbit and then

like every week they're they're coming
across some other some new kind of alien
life just I mean they wouldn't even have
gotten out of the solar
system in Star Wars. It's let's get back
to Star Wars. It's like like the
Enterprise and some other spaceship
alien spaceship Klingan Romulan human
whatever they meet in outer space.
They're both of them are right side up.
Both of them have the same orientation
towards each other. There's no up or
down in space. It was like every once in
a while, one of them would be sideways
or upside down or
something. So, I noticed this [__] I

mean, I inherited it from my father. My mother used to say my father could just ruin a movie. She'd be really getting into this movie. And my father would sit there and say, "They didn't have guns like that in those days."

See, because it's like I inherited a [__] detector from my father's side of the family.

So, see, do I follow mainstream cinematic and TV science fiction? I haven't I've kind of pretty much stopped watching movies like over the past year or more, but I did watch uh the the Dune sequel. I watched both Dune movies. Excellent. And one of the reasons why

the Dune movies are excellent is because they're based on a story written by a genuine science fiction author, a really good genuine science fiction author. Whereas some of these science fiction TV shows like, you know, like Star or like Star Trek, I mean, they're written by just like
professional professional just script writers. They might be doing some kind of
romance se series or something on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and then they're doing Star Trek Thursdays and Fridays and it's just they people that really are not good at science fiction are

writing some of the screenplays for
these shows whereas movies may have like
or like be based on like some real
science fiction movie or like a novel or
something. So, I guess I've had enough
of a mini
rant on science fiction movies and and
and TV shows. So, I'm just going to move
on to Athena Sigil's next question. And
I do I have to admit that it's like the
the percentage of dharma questions seems
to have been decreasing drastically
lately since a lot of these questions
have really nothing to do with with
dharma or science or like um even
philosophy
really. So anyways, Athena Sigil does

kind of bring a little bit of Dharma into this with his next question which is and is there any Buddhist science fiction out there? I've read Lord of Light by Roger Zelasny which has elements of Hinduism and Buddhism plus David Zindel's profoundly amazing neverness and it's three follow-up novels called a Reququum for Homo sapiens which is very eastern philosophically. Anyone else have suggestions in the chat? So maybe this wasn't so much a question for me except for the first question mark was apparently not applied to the chat but possibly to me

personally. Is there any Buddhist
science fiction out there?
Um not that I'm aware of. Um I have
heard about Lord of Light by Roger
Zelazny and that's already mentioned so
I can't really bring that one up because
it would be obviously just copying the
person who asked the question.
So yeah, I mean it may be I've read
there's there's one short story by Brian
Aldis called
Indifference that really it's it's one
of my favorite science fiction stories
and it's not like specifically Buddhist
but it's about this far distant future
where you've got this people are cloned
or at least a lot of people are cloned

and there's this Erlowry strain that is used specifically for missionaries. So there's these three Erlowry brothers. They're all clones of each other, identical triplets. They get sent to this remote frontier planet to set up a temple there. And so they build this temple and inside the temple is an omnisient computer. So once they turn on the computer, you know, and within a split second it becomes omnisient. Their job is

done. But the thing is their their philosophy like their religion is just indifference. Just equinimity as a Buddhist would call it. So they're like

practicing doing their best as limited humans to practice equinimity through all these trials and tribulations that that happen to them. It has a really nice ending. And so if you want to read a good story that has some Buddhist themes in it, Dharmic themes, read Indifference by Brian Haldis. It's just a short story. And it is kind of interesting that even though these three Earli brothers are identical genetically, each one has his own personality, which I mean you can you can interpret that as you please. So I'm just going to move on. Next question. And this is from

Xenithoid. And I'm checking to see if we are recording and thank goodness we are. Or at least it says we are.

Xenithoid says, "A few months ago, I asked you about the reality of fictional characters, and I've decided he put the apostrophe in the wrong place."

Gosh. Anyways, and I've decided to expand on the idea here. I think this topic has relevance to one philosophical idealism and two lucid dreaming which I will de demonstrate in these questions. Yeah, this is this is another kind of essay question here. We all exist in the mind of God. Well, I mean you've you've lost most terra Buddhists

already. Oh, it says if we all exist in the mind of God, to him we may as well just be fictional characters. Perhaps God is just another fictional character in the mind of a higher entity. And entities we consider fictional characters do have a reality unto themselves. This process could go on up and down endlessly in an infinite regress. There are no end points in this infinite claim or infinite chain going in both directions. No two levels of reality which could be considered the zenith and nadier. That is that how you pronounce that word nadier. This would effectively nullify the distinction of any one of

these realities being more real than any other. Calling one level more substantial than another would be meaningless. Does this mean that there these fictional characters we come up with are just as real as us? Okay, so let's scroll up to the top here. Okay, first of all, he says perhaps God is just another fictional character in the mind of a higher entity. Well, it wouldn't really be God then. It wouldn't be a capital G god, you know. Maybe to some primitive, some barbarian who who worships some chief god that he's calling capital G god. All the other gods are inferior fake gods or

something. Maybe you could still have this kind of scenario. But any any self-respecting theist, if they're going to put a capital G at the beginning of God, then that's going to be the absolute, the highest being practically by definition. So, I'm I really wouldn't go that far to have like an infinite regress of capital G god creating other capital G gods, creating other capital G gods. Yeah, I don't think so. So, you'd have like the capital G god, which to a Buddhist is just off the scale so that you don't even talk about it because I mean it's anything you say is going to be pretty much wrong anyhow.

at least invalid. You know about the
farthest you can get in that direction
and still be talking about a capital G
god would be like the vdantist Hindus
where god like especially near Brahman
ultimate reality which has no
discernable characteristics you know
it's it's off the scale I mean you
cannot perceive this
god that I mean infinite formless
consciousness that is reified enough to
like talk about
it. So, let's see. So, that part is
uh I've kind of like thrown a monkey
wrench into that one. This process could
go up and down. Yeah. Okay. There are no

end points in this infinite chain going in both directions. No two levels. Okay. This would effectively nullify the distinction of any one of these realities being more real than any other. Calling one level. Yeah. Well, I'm just kind of dismiss the the premise that you would have like especially like capital G gods above capital G gods above capital G gods. I really don't think that that is really a valid way of explaining capital G god. The capital G god there would be one. If any there would be just one. So what you got is the crudest, less conscious beings and then they become more refined, more conscious, closer

to the ultimate, the absolute, closer to infinite consciousness. So the more conscious a being is, then the higher it would be on the scale.

And when you get someone who's fully enlightened like the Buddha, he's the highest being or at least he's tied for first place with other fully enlightened beings because they are fully conscious. Whereas at the bottom of the scale, I'm not exactly sure where you would make where you'd make the cut off. You know, it's like the the Janes consider fire to be a very primitive kind of life. Cold water is a primitive kind of life.

probably something like a crystal would
be considered a primitive form of life.
So you could have just
like quasi protool life that is sort of
quasi
protoconcious and then that would be
down at the bottom and then fully
enlightened being would be at the top.
Just as as consciousness increases, as
you know, it your consciousness becomes
more lucid and clear and and more
expansive, then you get closer to the to
the absolute, which would be just
infinite. So the so at the end of this
with the actual question mark says, does
this mean that these fictional
characters we come up with are just as

real as us?

Um, it when you have a fictional character, there's there's more more than one way of looking at a fictional character. Let's just go with Pierre Bezahov in War in Peace. Okay. Tolto's novel War in Peace. One of the main one of the main protagonists, one of the main characters, Pierre Bezahav. So, in the book, Pierre Bezahov is just ink on paper. So presumably that's not conscious at all. That is not a being. Just these words on pages bound into a volume of a of a novel. I mean that's not like a conscious being. So Pierre

Bezahov actually takes some sort of life
when someone is reading the novel or at
least thinking about the novel and like
imagining Pierre Bezov in which case
Pierre Bezahov may sort of like Seth
Speaks was saying like with regard to
our dreams take on this kind of ethereal
shadowy
semi-existence which may be like a
starting point for a
new karmic stream for all I
know
maybe although that's not orthodox
terraata Buddhism by a long
shot but then again orthodox terraata
Buddhism is not not necessarily
infallible which is something that uh I

was disillusioned to learn relatively early on in my my monkhood.
So I wouldn't say that Pierre Bezahov is just as real as us. I mean at one at one level you can say it's either like ultimately real or it's unreal. In which case, we're in the same in the same camp as Pierre Bezov because we are not ultimately real other than maybe the spark of
consciousness, you know, that pervades us or animates us causes us to be conscious, our consciousness. Yeah.
um we're we're real just to to that extent I guess because we share this infinitismally small spark of infinite

consciousness and then maybe Pierre
Bezahov he's been thought about by so
many people reading war in peace maybe
not as many lately as 100 years
ago or 50 years
ago but I mean it may be that He's got
he's like an egregor like the pagans
talk about
egregor. Um it's like a being that maybe
didn't have any original existence on
its own. Not no objective organic kind
of existence but so many people believe
in this that in a way their belief it's
like the power of faith the power of
belief has created this kind of being.
And I think
like Jehovah, Jehovah God is one hell of

an aggregor. I think Jesus Christ at this point is also an aggregor.

So let's see. I guess I answered that question kind of possibly in a roundabout manner, but I did actually endeavor to answer that question. So I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's second essay question.

which is as follows. Assuming our reality is made by our perceptions, thereby making fictional characters or places real in a way, everyone's individual dream realm has some level of reality. If one were to master lucid dreaming and be able to

create an ideal world to return to every night that has a reality unto itself, would there be anything wrong with investing in and cultivating your dream life over your waking life? You could have everything you've ever wanted, including access to things like adventures, the perfect romantic partner, pure lands, pure abodess, etc., while simultaneously acting with entities in the dream that may be just as real as us. If it were true that dream samsara and waking samsara were not ultimately any different. And as long as you're creating a good world for the beings living there, I can't see what the ethical problem this would be.

Well, from a Buddhist point of view, then I mean, if any kind of existence you've got, if you're wallowing in it, then that's not so good. On the other hand, if you're living a dharmic existence, then that's good. So, if you're lucid dreaming and you're striving for enlightenment within the context of the lucid dream, go for it. Fine. But if you're lucid dreaming and you're just creating like a DVA realm for yourself in the mansion in the celestial nymph concubines and all this, then you're probably better off just staring at a blank wall in a meditation cabin somewhere.

But with regard to like lucid dreams
becoming more real or at least as real
as this waking dream that we're living
in, um I don't know if that would be
impossible or not, but I I'm not sure
that I've ever
um I've ever come across any claims of
that other than possibly some sort of
Hindu swami who goes into not just a
dream but um like
into like an altered state of
consciousness through meditation who
then you know enters a heaven realm and
that sort of thing. There's there's a
lot of cases of that that you can find
of people who through altered states of
consciousness access higher realms but

that wouldn't be the same as just like dreaming every night unless maybe you're like a really adept Hindu swami who's been practicing this maybe.

But ethically, I mean, it's the ethics within the dream would be essentially the same as the ethics when you're not dreaming. At least when you're in your wake, normal waking state. I mean, it's the ethics would be the same. If you're like living a moral life in the dream, then that's fine. Especially if you're living a dharmic life, that's that's good. If your dreams are more dharmic than your waking consciousness, you

might be better off sleeping more.
And I think I'm just going to move on
to let's see xenithoid's third essay
question which is as follows. At a
certain point of cultivation of one's
dream world the line between what would
be considered waking reality and dream
reality would be blurred and eventually
the dream would could seem like the more
real of the two realities being
oscillated between. Yeah, I just kind of
brought that up, didn't I? This could be
made even more apparent to the dreamer
if they set it up so that every dream
ended with the feeling of going to sleep
and started with the feeling of waking
up. Perhaps slipping from the waking

world into the dream world fully flipping the dynamic on its head and mastering the process is how one steps sideways through probability. We know that in dreams things like logic, physics, time, etc. seem to break down if the laws of the dream world and the waking world are not the same and there can be no way to say what one reality is more real than the other or that one reality is more real than the other. Would this from a philosophical idealist point of view give ammunition to the idea that logical reasoning, physics, spaceime, etc. may not be ultimately real? If logic itself changed from one

reality to the other, the two realities would be epistemologically irreconcilable, making it impossible to properly reason about your dream world. Well, I don't think logic is going to change that much. I mean, you just have like bad dream logic. I mean, you can have bad logic in dreams. That that happens a lot. But I don't think that the the formal structure of logic is going to change in a dream unless it's just formally changed into just bad logic. I mean, probably. I mean, there's there's ways you could have, you know, like non uklidian geometry, some kind of logic that is not Aristotilian, that kind of thing.

But you're more likely to come up with that when you're awake than when you're dreaming. I'm pretty sure that when you're dreaming and you have some alternate kind of logic, it's usually just like feverish, sloppy dream logic. Then again, I've never really mastered lucid dreaming. So, let's scroll up to the top of this essay question and try and work our way through it a little bit. See, a certain point of cultivation's dream world. The line between what would be considered waking reality and dream reality would be blurred. Yeah, that's in the zoo when he dreamed that he was a butterfly or

did he was he a butterfly dreaming that

he

wasangu ancient Chinese people were

thinking of

this and eventually the dream would seem

the more real of the two realities being

oscillated between that's that's sort of

like a science fiction theme right

there. This could be made even more

apparent if the dream or if they set it

up that every dream ended with the

feeling of going to sleep. Yeah, I don't

think it's gonna I would doubt that it

would make a a

full

trans transformation. I mean like in

theory it seems possible. Anything is

possible really. Anything like David Hume used to say you if you can imagine it it's possible at least in a metaphysical sense.

But I've never heard I mean except for like in science fiction stories like the person that's in a coma or something and really they're living in this alternate world or you know the schizophrenic child who's you know hallucinating stuff and it turns out that he's just living in like this slightly different version of reality where he's seeing reality at least objective empirical reality that kind of thing. So, I mean, this sort of thing is theoretically

possible, but I mean it's I mean it's just what's the what's the word? Like conjecture. I mean, it's just lots and lots of gratuitous conjecture about stuff that I mean, it might be kind of interesting from a philosophical point of view, but I mean, it's not really going to help
you other than just like an exercise of your intellect, which might, you know, make your your intellect more supple and flexible and muscular and so forth.
So let's see if the laws of the dream world and the waking world are not the same and there can be no way to say that one reality is more real than the other would this from philosophical

idealist point of view give ammunition to the idea that logical reasoning physics space time etc may not be ultimately well from the philosophical idealist point of view I mean you've already pretty much dismissed physics spaceime etc and the logical reasoning I mean that can apply I mean logical reasoning is not materialistic. Logical reasoning is purely abstract and so I mean whether you're a philosophical idealist or not I mean logical reasoning would remain the same. self-logic itself change. Yeah. Okay.

So, I mean this kind of question it's

really like somebody brings up like 15

different

points and then where's the where's even

the question mark? See my Okay. Yeah. I

just I just read the part with the

question

mark.

Yeah.

See, so I guess I answered the I guess I

answered the

question. See, let's let's just make

sure though. If the laws of the This is

the actual question embedded in this

essay is the actual question sentence.

The interrogative statement is as

follows. If the laws of the dream world

and the waking world are not the same,

and there can be no way to say that one reality is more real than the other, would this from a philosophical idealist point of view give ammunition to the idea that logical reasoning, physics, spacetime, etc. may not be ultimately real? Well, again, let's see. If the laws of the dream world and the waking world are all the same, the dream world generally has looser laws. There's less order. There's less structure. And so, it is less stable. That's one reason why this version that we're living in when we're awake is as stable as it is. You know, you go to sleep, things are a certain way, you wake up the next

morning, things are still that way pretty much. You know, it's like like you wake up in a different bedroom unless you've got a strange lifestyle. So, yeah, the dream world, I mean, it has its it has less law and order. It is less structured, less stable.

And so dreams, the dream world, I mean, it's just you, you're living in a different kind of dream world every dream. It's just it doesn't stay the same. And I don't think it's possible that it may just it's too unstable to to remain. Even if you're if you have long dreams, then the like the laws of physics and everything can be changing

throughout the dream. I mean, it's like, you know, you're you're riding on a bus and next thing you know, you're on an airplane. You didn't get off the bus and onto the airplane. It's just the bus turned into an airplane without you fully noticing it. That kind of thing.

[Music]

Um, the backlight just went off again. I don't I'm not exactly sure how to turn it back on, tell you the truth. This happened last time, too. It usually doesn't happen, but for some reason, it's happening. And you guys don't even need to know this. It's just that my face becomes a little bit darker

when the uh Oh, it turned back on again.

the my my woman's computer is behind my

computer when I'm sitting at her desk

and it's bigger than mine cuz she has

like a big desktop and so it's lit up

and it kind of helps helps light my face

but you don't need to know

that if you don't even know why the hell

am I even telling

you

so yeah I mean to say that greater

structure greater regularity and

predictability

makes a a world more

real. That's kind of an arbitrary

assumption, I

guess.

So, yeah, I don't know. It's I mean, obviously, this kind of argument that that
uh scroll all the way up here. Xenithoid is is asking. I mean, it's not going to make much of an impression on like a diehard materialist, like some kind of follower of
scientism. So, yeah, I mean, you're getting into the realm of woowoo, I think, with this kind of
reasoning. And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Mr. Pronov, who sometimes just goes by Pronov. So, I guess the honorific mister is not

necessary. But Mr. Pronov says, "Did your father speak more languages after the past life hypnotic transes he went to? Did he started to speak French or ancient Roman?" Well, the only past life regression that my

[Music]

father told me about in which he's actually talking was as a Scotsman like in the the late 1700s in which they presumably were speaking English. He did have a dream where he was like an ancient soldier possibly Roman, but he doesn't mention actually speaking in in that dream. I mean, he was under orders that he his his I mean, the the military group that he was in had been given

orders to just kill every man, woman,
and child in this barbarian village, but
that was sort of
pre past life aggression. I mean, that
the past life of aggression didn't
include his centurion or whatever
commanding him to do that. It's just
that when he starts having the
regression, that information that he's
supposed to be out there killing
everybody he sees except for the ones on
his own side was already in his mind.
And he wasn't speaking to like the
barbarian boy that he let go, anything
like that. And so,
um, yeah, I

mean, no, I mean, he's never mentioned really any kind of language other than his his previous life allegedly as a Scottish man named Jason Haskell, who I assume would be speaking English.

So, no, the answer to that question is no. And I'm going to move on to Mr. Pronom second question. Do you agree in considering thirst or tad that is craving as the origin of suffering per se or do you assume that the second noble truth also encompasses all other latent tendencies such as ignorance, aversion, and attachment?

Well, I've been entertaining the idea for a very long time that

desire doesn't so much cause suffering.
I think it is suffering. That whenever
you you are suffering, you are wanting
something that you have just set
yourself up against reality and that
friction is the suffering.
So you could say that craving is like
the immediate cause or you can say that
craving is just a a strange synonym for
suffering that you just it's just the
same thing looked at from two different
angles. But still I mean there's there's
going to be like ignorance for example
that is going to be like um underlying
the desire. You're going to have to be
delusional to desire anything.

And aversion is just a desire for
something to be
away. You know, like loba and
dosa, you know, this is loba or
attraction is desire for something to be
closer, to have more of something or to
get something. Aversion is just desire
for something to be away from you, to
have less of it or none of it.
So I mean ignorance is really kind of
the the ground for
samsara moa delusion the ground for
samsara but then like the immediate
cause is craving which could just be the
same thing as as suffering. Desire and
suffering may be just two ways of
looking at the very same

phenomenon. So that would be the closest even though you can't have craving without ignorance. So I think I'm just going to move on to Mr. Pronov's third question. Would pirating movies, videos, games or books or songs etc be considered as breach of the second precept which is taking something which is not given. especially since it's become so easy nowadays that you could just search for what you need and you would have a very safe website offering it freely without even going to some shady Russian website that could potentially hack or install malware in

your system. Well, for a monk, let's just I mean if it's let's just start with monks. for a monk. I mean, it does say that a monk shouldn't even take a blade of grass if it doesn't belong to him. But when you get down to the paraja rule about

theft,

then say you have to you have to steal something that is it's enough of a crime that you could be arrested for it. You could be dragged in front of a judge because of this. So,

That could be like the criterion for whether it would technically be against the precept is is it illegal? Could you get fined or arrested for doing it? And

if the answer is yes, then probably you're stealing. At least legally according to the laws of the land, you would be stealing.

So with monks, yeah, it's it's I think there probably a lot of Parajika monks out there who are just pirating stuff and I mean you look at a book and it says no no part of this book can be reproduced in any way without permission of the publisher. So I mean a conscientious monk might have to actually contact the publisher. And then that happened when I was a junior monk. There was an Argentinian monk at the

same monastery as me and he wanted to copy parts of this book and he asked his teacher who was not really into Vinia. I mean he knew the Vignia rules but just didn't follow them and he was saying well if it's the only way you can get it you might as well but it's like that's a really cavalier attitude to take for a monk who if he steals something he is excommunicated for the rest of his life. It's one of the worst things a monk can possibly do is steal something. Steal something valuable enough that one one of the definitions if if you're stealing something worth an ancient Indian coin called a pa which was 1/4 of a kapana and the commentary was clueless to what

kapas were. Um but I worked it out that it was you know like 25 cents or something. you steal something that's worth like a quarter, then that's it. I mean, it's it's based on the value of silver, and I didn't look it up. It's it's a certain weight of silver. Silver is getting kind of expensive nowadays. But anyways, yeah, I mean, if when in doubt, don't do it. I mean, go with ethics. If you're unsure as to whether it's ethical or not, don't do it. But I mean, if you really want to pirate a movie or something, then you might want to look into the law and see

I mean, is it really illegal or do they just say don't do this because we want our royalties or whatever? And uh I mean, if if you can do it and it's like an uninforced kind of a law, you know, sort of like driving 5 miles over the speed limit, that kind of thing, then you're in a gray zone and you're going to have to make your own calls. But again, I mean, if you really want to live an ethical life, you're better off not fudging and and when in doubt, avoid the situation. Just don't do it if possible. But the Argentinian monk, I told him, look what it says in the book. I mean, you could be parajika. So, he actually contacted the publisher and

they just said, "Yeah, go ahead."
They're probably surprised that anyone
actually bothered to take seriously the
statement on, you know, opposite the
title page, like on the copyright page
that possibly, you know, it's like a
fraction of 1% of the people who copy
stuff from books actually go to the
trouble of contacting the
publisher. But back in those days
especially, I mean, I was I wasn't going
to take any
chances. So, I guess I'm just going to
move on to the next question. This is
from
Austin, and we've been going at it for

more than an hour already. This is from Austin, and Austin says, "Are you a nominalist on the existence of race?" Uh, well, he's got one question here. It's got three question marks in it. You guys really need to count the question
marks. Anyways, are you anomalist on the existence of race? If my society became nominalist with regard to race, conventionally, race would only be a concept. So that's the second question mark. If my society granted it conventionally, I could pull a Rachel dozal question mark. Third question mark in that question. Obviously, race is not ultimately real, but it would have to be

conventionally real no matter what
anybody said or thought about it.
Okay. Well, I mean, being anomalous is
one thing that, you know, it's
like it's it's hard even to define
nominalist. Maybe I should even look it
up in the dictionary. Excuse me. I'm
going to look something up in the
dictionary here.
Nominalism.
Nominalism. Okay. Nominalism. Noun.
Philosophy. The doctrine that universals
or general ideas are mere names without
any corresponding reality and that only
particular objects exist, properties,
numbers, and sets are thought of as mere

features of the way of considering the things that exist. Important in medieval scholastic thought, nominalism is associated particularly with William of Akam often contrasted with realism. It's also particularly associated with Humpty Dumpty in uh it's it's either Alice in Wonderland or through the through the looking glass. It's like why is this called that? It's just because that's what it's that's its name. You know, it's it's hard for me to explain this obviously. You know that when you're you're citing Humpty Dumpty, you're you're you're getting desperate. So, am I anomalist on the existence of race? Well, I'm a

nominalist to the extent that I don't
believe in universals. Like Plato,
that's one of the main things I dislike
about
Plato. I'm not talking about Mickey
Mouse's dog here. I'm talking about the
Greek philosopher Plato who who said
that, you know, there's like in heaven,
the the world of forms, this higher
higher world than we're living in.
There's like the the
the dog. I mean there's
like like the ultimate dog there and
that any dog that's living on this earth
is partaking of this universal of
dogness and it's like chairs anything

humans even Schopenhau took this
seriously Schopenhau thought that like
with regard to animals it was the
species that was the universal whereas
with humans it's like each individual
person is its own universal
But I I really have no use for
universals. That there is no
dog that makes a dog a dog that is just
exists outside of
dogs that you know it's just there's
this like element of dogness that makes
a dog be a dog and or a element of
chairness that makes a chair a chair.
That kind of thing. I just I really just
do not see things that way.
So with regard to race, human races,

ethnicities, I see it as as sort of like colors, you know, you've got a spectrum of colors. And the way you divide up these
colors is to some degree arbitrary. Like I learned that the hard way in Burma, where the word for brown in English is called ano in Burmese, but brown and ano do not perfectly coincide. So, I'm trying to get brown robe dye. I'm asking for brown. They keep giving me like this raspberry or cranberry colored stuff that isn't brown at all, but it still qualifies as
ano. So, you've got the spectrum of colors and how you divide up these

colors. You know, like an interior
decorator is going to have it divided up
way more than the average
schmo. An artist is going to have the
colors divided up, you know, into way
more different categories than, you
know, the average
person. And it's the same way with
races. I mean, it's like a spectrum.
It's there are general races, I suppose.
I mean in general, but there's a lot of
like blurry in between where you know
you like all these races like on the the
borders like the frontiers they're
they're like interbreeding or you have
like let's say
protoostustralids migrating across

southern Asia and then later homo sapiens come in you know they they out compete the oustrloids sort of like they're marsupials or something so they wind up living mostly in Australia. But it's like there's some interbreeding with the ousteroids. So like in in a place like Burma, like out in the sticks, there's a lot of people that look very Oustraloid. So it's it's hard to really pin down exactly what race somebody is because there's a lot of blurriness involved around the edges. And so it's sort of like a spectrum where I mean I'm obviously Caucasian even though the word

Caucasian is now kind of dismissed as like an obsolete term. But I mean obviously I'm not black. I'm not East Asian. I'm not Australid. I'm not Koisan. You know I'm not a Bushman or a hot and tot even though those word those names are now politically incorrect.

So yeah,

it's to some degree there's a certain amount of nominalism in in where your culture is going to be dividing things up if it divides them up at all. But still there's the empirical fact that for example a Japanese woman marries a pure-blooded Nigerian man and they have kids in Japan. So that Japanese woman is going to be

genetically closer to all of her neighbors than she is to her own child just because there is biodiversity. There's differences in genetics, differences in in phogyny between a group of people that is native to West Africa and a group of people that is native to Japan. But then again, Japan, they're they're relatively pureblooded Japanese people. I mean, the Japanese are about as ethnic. Japan is about as eth as much of an ethnic monoculture as you're going to find, but still, I mean, they're they're interbred with the the Aboriginal people that live there. They're they're that are now

called Anu. I guess that that they're sort of interbred with them.

So I mean I am somewhat of an empiricist. I might not think that physical matter is ultimately real but still um science has some validity even if you don't apply it to like material substances that are ultimately real somehow. So let's see here. Yeah, I mean I I guess I pretty much answered that question about as well as I'm able to.

It's sort of like species also. It's like it's taxonomy is is largely subjective that even among taxonomists, you've got the the lumpers and the splitters. The lumpers are going to be

combining groups together and calling
them under one name. the splitters who
seem to be really taking the ball and
running with it since um genetics became
such a big deal in in biology that
they're just dividing stuff way the heck
up into all these different groups
except when you get to
people like Neanderls aren't even
considered to be homo sapiens by a lot
of anthropologists now although if
suddenly a tribe of Neanderls were found
in some remote valley of the Himalayas
all of a sudden you'd have these same
people or a lot of these same people
suddenly insisting that not only are

they human to homo sapiens, but they're not even a different race because races don't
exist. I'm just going to move on to Austin's next question here. There's already three question marks that in that first one. So, are you a nominalist on the three laws of logic? And this is like Arisetilian laws of thought. law of identity which is A equals A. The law of excluded middles which is A has to equal either B or not B. And then there's the law of non-contradiction which is A cannot equal not
A. And how do you ground these truths as a
nominalist? Well, I mean I'm not a pure

nominalist. I mean it's not just arbitrary the the names we give to things. I mean to some degree the actual word is arbitrary but I mean obviously there is a kind of empirical reality that we are interpreting. So how do you ground these truths as a nominalist and how do you give an account for them following a Buddhist paradigm? Well, I mean, I've proved that, for example, the law of non-contradiction is is false. I mean, I've done that relatively recently. One of the very first blog posts I ever wrote was talking about the Coca-Cola

bottle. Or let's just use this

cup. This is a cup. It's also ceramic.

Oh,

so a cup and ceramic are not synonyms. I

mean, you can have a cup that isn't made

out of ceramic. You can have something

made out of ceramic that isn't a cup,

but this is cup and ceramic at the same

time. It is a and not a

simultaneously. So, I mean, I just broke

the laws, one of the Ariselian laws of

thought.

So, I'm sort of a nomalist. I'm not a

not as much of a anomalist as like

Humpty

Dumpty, but uh I mean

logic

gosh, I'm getting some kind of tough
questions. First essay questions with
like lots of these different parts, like
very complicated
questions, and now I'm being accused of
being anomalous, even though I kind of
am one. But I mean, I'm not saying that
Like it's just purely arbitrary that we
consider lions, house cats, and leopards
all to be
cats. That's not purely
arbitrary. That's not just pure
nominalism would just be like it
wouldn't be based on empiricism at all.
Really, if it was just pure
nominalism, maybe I should go back and

read the definition again. Where's the definition? I got to find it again. I think I already deleted it. Damn. Nominalism. Let's just look up nominalism again. This is important. Okay. The doctrine that universals or general ideas are mere names without any corresponding reality. Okay. So, chair is that that's kind of a mere name without any corresponding reality. I mean, you get to some things that are sort of like chairs, you know? It's like you can sit on a stool. I mean, how much of a back does it have to have in order in order for it to become a chair? Like some bar stools

have got backs. Are they chairs or are they
stools? So, see, only particular objects exist. So, yeah, a generalization doesn't have an ultimate reality. I guess that's kind of what universals mean. A person that isn't a nominalist thinks that a generalization has some kind of actual reality to it other than just imagination. And yeah, I'd be I'd be a nominalist in that sense. So law of identity
still something is what it is. I mean that's that's pretty basic. A equals A. The law of excluded middles. I mean, I'

i've already broken one of these with the cup. This cup almost spilled my coffee. This cup, it it violates Aristotilian law, the his third law of thought, the law of non-contradiction. This cup contradicts itself by being a cup and ceramic at the same time. Even though cup does not equal ceramic. So the cup is A, the ceramic is not A, and this is A and not A at the same time. I already mentioned in some video I made possibly a year ago that the ancient Greeks really hadn't had this completely worked out. It's like they considered it some great paradox that

you can have three people, A, B, and C. B is taller than A but shorter than C, making him taller and shorter at the same time. And it's like the Greeks didn't take into consideration that the specific context is I mean they can't be a and not a within the same context but in different contexts it can be a and not a like this. It's like the form is cup the essence is ceramic. So once you you make that distinction then it's not contradictory anymore.

But I'm not exactly sure. I mean, I guess anomalous would reject the ultimate reality of the law of identity, the law of excluded middles, the law of

non-corradiction, which would just mean that they apply only in specific cases. But when you're not applying these laws to a specific case, they don't have any reality. there's just in limbo kind of abiding in emptiness so to speak. But when you're applying it to a specific case then all of a sudden boom, you know, sort of like numbers that there isn't like a some cosmic three in in Plato's heaven. It's it's like the the universal for three. And whenever you got a group of three that's got to take in this threeness from heaven. No, it was just like but when you count three of something then right there, boom, you've got a specific

case of

three. That's how nominalism

works. And I just uh had to take a

refresher course in what exactly it

means during the course of this video in

order to answer this

question. So I think I'm just going to

move on. Next question here. This is

from CEO of action

cadet. And I think this is going to be

kind of a long video to tell you the

truth. Long video with long

questions. Section Cadina says, "Since

you are an idealist, first they're

calling me anomalist. Now they're

calling me an

idealist. Since you are an idealist, what makes you think consciousness can't appear in the form of AI? Since you believe evolution is how humans came around and consciousness exists in humans, why can't the same apply apply to AI? And Siovakian Cipad Zir has this compulsive urge to argue and at this point I mean he's got to completely misunderstand my position in order to even ask this question because more than once on videos I have been defying orthodox terravada defying some of the people on on the discord server by saying why

wouldn't why couldn't a computer become unconscious. I've never been opposed to

that

idea. So nothing makes me think

consciousness can appear in the form of

AI because that is not a position that I

have championed at all.

I have mentioned that I asked a Burmese

monk who was an Abidama scholar if a

computer become could become conscious

and he just categorically said no that's

not possible at all because it takes in

order to have consciousness you have to

have according to

Abidama kama ja rupa which is physical

matter which is originates through the

power of

karma and so you'd have to have this

matter which arises through the power of karma which would include like a human a human being but not a computer according to venerable Gurudma the Burmese Abidama scholar that I consulted on this and there's at least one person on the discord server who is not a Buddhist who also just flatly denies the possibility or at least is not much inclined to accept the possibility that that a computer could become conscious, but I don't see why

not.

So, let's see. And I mean, that just kicks the whole question in the head. It's like, why don't I believe it when I have no idea how he came up with the

idea that I don't believe it. So I think
I'm just going to move on to Siovaction
Sup's second
question which is why do you think
people can have episodic memories about
past lives but no other kind of memories
for example I have never heard of
someone getting the combat experience
from their past life muscle memory or
becoming mathematical geniuses
remembering how they built the pyramids
revealing anything about ancient
civilizations or something new about how
animals see the world. The memories seem
like things that someone could easily
make up without needing to see past

lives. Seems pretty suspicious to me.
Well, one of the first things that came
to mind when I'm reading this was I
mean, it's just anecdotal. It's a story
about this little kid who the first time
he sits in front of a piano, he just
starts playing like ragtime jazz. He's
like four years old. His little fingers
can hardly manage the keys and he's he's
sitting there playing ragtime jazz. His
parents are totally freaked
out because he shouldn't be able to do
this. So, I would I would consider that
assuming that the story is true. That
that would be a kind of like like muscle
memory, you know? It's it's not like
some kind of conceptual memory of him

actually being in a past life. That would be the sort of the conceptual memory of him remembering being some musician in a past life. It's just like his body was just spontaneously doing this. Of course, it it's no proof of past lives. He could have simply been possessed by the spirit of a jazz musician.

So that would be a kind of past life muscle memory. And I assume a lot of this stuff people that have talents. It's it's a kind of memory. It's it's a kind of psychic momentum, you know, like Mozart, you know, it's

like maybe he somehow genetically won
the lottery and just had a musical mind
or from a more Buddhist point of view,
he was a musician more than once and he
just had this musical momentum
going and he wouldn't necessarily
remember conceptually cuz like Seio is
is specifying here, it's a different
kind kind of memory. It's like a muscle
memory or some
such.
So, yeah, someone who has like a a like
a remarkable talent that can't really be
explained through genetics or past
experience, that would be a good
argument for some kind of memory or just
like psychic momentum of karma.

But as a general rule, in past life regressions, when people have memories, they are usually remembering the most intense emotional experiences of that life, which often includes their death like my father's past life regressions. It's always or or other past life regressions that I've read about. It's always the most intense emotional experiences of a past life which may be making the most karma making the most the biggest karmic footprint from that life so to

speak. But other kinds of memories it would it would not be a conceptual you know vivid remembering it would just be

like an innate talent or some such

which is possible especially from a

Buddhist point of view.

And I'm going to move on to the next

question. This is also from SEO of

action

sepa. Another little paragraph question

here. Not nearly the longest of the

questions on this list. You have often

cited Majamanaya 49 to claim that the

pre-orthodox explanation for Nibana

might have concluded that it's a kind of

consciousness. But as you know, the

Atakawaga and Payanawaga probably

predate most of the rest of the sutas.

due to its linguistic dating based on

this since in the

paranavaga the Buddha talks about the death of an arant as the sessation of consciousness and this lines up with later explanations of consciousness ceasing for an arant as well then doesn't it mostly likely mean this is probably how the Buddha actually talked about this subject well the ceasing of consciousness I mean when it becomes infinite and formless from a samsaric point of knew it has ceased. It has disappeared. It's like the fire that blows out. It has gone to its source, so to speak, or it has gone to its cessation and it can no longer be reckoned. That's one of the famous

famous verses, I'm pretty sure, from the Pionovaga is like just as a flame blown out by the force of wind quickly goes to its sensation and it no longer subjects itself to any reckoning. Even so the ar the enlightened being who has freed himself from the mass of names quickly goes to his cessation and cannot be does not subject himself to any reckoning but still going off the scale from a samsuric point of view is sessation everything and nothing according to Hegel are identical they are you can't distinguish the two infinite being and infinite non-being being absolute being absolute non-being, they just merge into the

same. So let's see here. But with regard to that verse in Majakica 49 and also found in the dean kaya where the implication is that nirvana is infinite formless consciousness which I mean it's unmanifest luminous all around. I mean that

unmanifest indicates that from a samsaric point of view and the infinite and formless too from a samsaric point of view it's just not there you cannot perceive it but again with regard to that verse that's essentially implying that nirvana is infinite formless consciousness unmanifest luminous all around that I'm not saying that that was

like the original teaching of the Buddha
I am saying that Like in early Buddhism
it was evolving and it's early
Christianity is another case in point
where different doctrines are sort of
like vying for acceptance and some of
them are accepted and others are just
fall by the wayside rejected as
heresy. So I'm not suggesting that that
verse was earlier than the atakawaga,
but it was an idea that was entertained
by many serious Buddhists before terra
Buddhism got locked down into orthodox
dogma that there was enough people
accepting of it when the the sutas were
edited, compiled that it remained in the
sutas. It wasn't just edited

out, but that doesn't mean that the

Buddha himself taught it. It was just

like an early idea. Sort of like the

pre-Cambrian explosion where you have

all these weird animal forms and like

the weirdest ones just kind of died out

because they

just they they could not

compete and sort ideas have the same

kind of evolution.

So I think I answered that

question and so I'm just going to move

on to the next question. This is from

Sedarta

Lohachita and the title of this question

is

vengeance. This is a question about vengeance and he says in the dhamapata the datagata says he abused me, he struck me, he defeated me, he robbed me. The many references the Buddha makes to how hatred is a poison that corrods the mind carry a message not so different from Jesus's teaching to turn the other cheek. Don't you think that if someone does something terrible to your parents or your children, it almost feels like a duty to take revenge because it becomes a matter of honor. I can understand a himsa even to the point of throwing a punch without hate. But I think it's too extreme when some monks refuse to step on

ants. Sometimes forgiveness resounds in me with cuckery or not manliness. Well, I don't know what not stepping on ants has to do with a vengeance. Unless the ant bit you and then you're just stomping on it, cursing the little bastard for biting you. But I mean, that's just common courtesy to living beings that you just don't want to be unnecessarily just perpetrating onslaught on other beings. So I mean it it is true that if if you have a family then it's pretty much your duty your obligation to protect your family

which may involve using force against
someone who is assaulting a member of
your family which isn't one of the main
reasons why monks aren't supposed to
have a
family but let's say you're a good
Buddhist and you do have of a family.
There's some really strange precedents
set like in the Jotica stories or in the
commentarial literature
where I've mentioned before there's in a
previous life of Mongala Buddha who
lived a zillion gajillion eons ago on a
different earth in a different India in
a different Ganges
Valley that there was a a yaka like an
ogre who disguised himself as Brahman

and went to the

bodhicatta, you know, the future Mongala

Buddha and asked for his two children

and the bodhicatta just gave him the

children and then this ogre starts

eating the children right in front of

him and and this bodhicatta is

rejoicing because of this great

self-sacrifice of giving away his own

kids to be eaten by an ogre. And it's I

mean western people just can't take this

seriously which is one reason why you

don't see a lot of this stuff printed in

English but it's there. And I mean the

our our Godma Buddha in his previous

lives he did similar stuff just giving

away his family through no attachment. There's another story where the Buddha in a previous life before he was the Buddha. He was a farmer and he's he took his little boy with him to as he goes out to plow the fields and the little boy is just sitting under the shade of a tree while his daddy's plowing. He's just playing or something. And then uh the daddy the bodhicata looks and his little boy is lying motionless on the ground. So he hurries over. He sees that the little boy has been bitten by a snake and is dead. So what does he do? Does he like whail and grab the boy and rush back to home like almost any father would do? No. He continues plowing the

field. The boy's dead. He can't do anything about that plow. The field has to get plowed. And so when you think about Buddhist ethics, especially very advanced like enlightened or almost enlightened Buddhist ethics, it becomes psychologically inhuman.

So I mean it it worked in ancient India but in a different culture it's it's harder to accept. It was just that was just the way it was in ancient India. But that's not necessarily the way it is in the west where if somebody, you know, it's like somebody asks for your kids, you don't give them to them. And if somebody assaults one of

your kids, then you may just have to resort to a little physical violence yourself to protect your children. For that matter, your kid comes home from school with lice in his hair. You're going to kill those lice.

those poor little lice, you're going to kill them because it's your duty as a parent, which is one reason why monks aren't supposed to have kids. They don't have these

duties.

So, let's see what is the actual question

here. Don't you think that if someone does something terrible to your parents or your children, it almost feels like a

duty to take revenge? It's a worldly duty. But if you are like steadfastly striving for enlightenment in this very life, then worldly duties, I mean, they're out the window. Other than just the the absolutely necessary worldly duties like being out of debt before you can even become a monk. So, a matter of honor. Yeah. I mean, honor, that's really not like uh like a Buddhist monk's honor would be a very different kind of honor.

So, let's see. Sedarta thinks it's too extreme when some monks refuse to step

on ants. Well, I didn't step on ants either if I could avoid it. There was a few times when the entire ground would just be covered with like little gnats or something like at the beginning of the rainy season. and they come up out of the ground or something and you just cannot walk without squishing them, then I mean it's not your not your purpose to to step on them. You're not doing it on purpose. So actually um you're not really even breaking a rule unless you're doing it on purpose because you just hate gnats or something.

But uh yeah, I mean if if total nonviolence res resonates as

cuckery or not manliness, then that's just your cultural conditioning and and it's uh you've got kind of a worldly cultural conditioning, which is understandable.

But yeah, Buddhist manliness like Viraa, I mean that's vir in in Pali comes from the same protoindo-uropean root as virile in English. I mean it means manly, but it's it's like austerity you know just stoicism is the manliness that is practiced by uh an ancient Indian Buddhist monk and all this honor stuff. honor killing that kind of thing, fighting for your

children and all that. That's you leave that behind when you become a monk. So, I'm just going to move on to Sedarta Lohachita's next question with the title celibacy and modern western monks. And I'm not sure if there's even a question mark in this. Oh, yeah. Okay, there is. Okay. The question is the more you explore early Buddhism the more you see that celibacy was a fundamental pillar of the teachings. I remember at a vajraana event specifically from the new kadampa tradition they held meditation with the monk sessions. I asked a convert European monk about celibacy and it

almost sounded like a joke in the room
which was mostly made up of Western
women as if to say that's something for
monks a lay person doesn't need that
just having a straight sexual conduct is
enough but in today's era do you think a
lay person can benefit from a period of
celibacy especially in today's society
where everything is about scrolling
everybody has the dopamine circuits
destroyed and Almost everything is
pornography from subliminal to direct
especially seeing how today modern women
destroy men through sex and after giving
it denying
it. Well the actual question here is in

today's era do you think a lay person
can benefit from a period of celibacy?
Sure. I mean it says quite clearly in
the texts you know it's like if you can
be celibate be celibate.
But if you can't be celibate, then at
the very least stay away from the wives
of other
men.
So there you have it. I mean it is
better to be celibate than to be
sexually active from the ancient Indian
traditional Buddhist point of view and
for good reason. I mean craving is the
cause of all suffering and sex is one of
the main cravings that people
experience. one of the strongest desires

people experience. So if you don't want
suffering, then you should just stay
away from anything that you really like
and that you really hate, especially
what you really
like. But for lay people, it is kind of
optional. Although
still it's very clear in the poly texts
that you're better off celibate than not
celibate. And it says the same thing in
the New Testament. And of course
Christians pretty much ignore that other
than maybe like ordained monks and
nuns. But it's like uh Jesus has this
saying in the New Testament that
probably most people don't understand

that there are three kinds of unics in this world. those who are born Unix, those who are made Unix, and those who become Unix for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. And that's celibate people, people who are voluntarily nonsexual. And then Jesus says, it's not for everybody. But if you can do it, then it can be to your advantage spiritually. But it's not necessarily to your advantage spiritually. I mean, that's one thing I should point out. And Krishna Murdy pointed this out plenty. Jay Krishna Murdy, he says that being celibate for I mean for a lot there's a lot of celibate people out there who are

just horny as [__] I mean they're just like thinking about it all the time. So physically they're celibate but still I mean it just it's a suit that doesn't fit and it's just not working for them. And I was like that a lot of the time when I was a monk I was very frustrated sometimes.

So, I think I'm just going to move on. Next question

here. This is from Arpad. RP A. And it's a French name. I don't know what it means. And Arpad says, "Can a monk attend the wedding of a family member?" Sure. So long as he does not participate, like he's not officiating.

He's not giving the bride away. That kind of a thing. He just sits in the audience and watches this the the wedding. That's fine. I did that when my stepbrother got married. I was a monk sitting up in the front row. The the minister was kind of disgusted. Not not me necessarily. He was kind of disgusted by the whole attitude of this non-Christian, non-religious people. The only obviously religious person who attends the wedding is is a Buddhist. So he was he he seemed kind of like a disgusted minister at that wedding, especially afterwards where he's just kind of sitting by himself at a table just kind of kind of

going like

this wishing he wasn't there

apparently. But yeah, a monk can attend

a wedding of a family member. He can

attend any wedding so long as he is not

participating, for example, conducting

the ceremony or like encouraging the

couple to get married in any way really

other than just sitting there passively

observing as a kind of anthropological

study. And so I'm just going to move on

to Arpad's next question. What is known

about Rahula's death? Circumstances, his

age, the Buddha's age at the moment,

etc. So for those of you who are not

familiar with like Buddhist names,

Rahula was the Buddha's

son. The Buddha had one child which was

his son

Rahula. And uh there's really no mention

in the texts of Rahula's dying that I

mean he he must have died. Although I

guess some later schools of Buddhism had

this tradition that Rahula was going to

stay alive until the next Buddha comes

along which means he's going to be

thousands and thousands of years old.

But that is not an early tradition. And

then the earliest tradition does not

mention Rahula very much at all. There

are a few there like at least two sutas

directed to Rahula. One in the suta and

I don't remember I don't remember where

the other one I think it's in the Majinaya. Rahul his son became he was ordained as as a monk and presumably he became enlightened although there's really not a whole lot of information about him in the earliest texts but then legends started getting cooked up afterwards and uh I think some of the earliest legends about Rahula is that he died before the Buddha did although how he died where he died I have no idea and it's just all lost in the mists of prehistory

almost any information you find about Rahula

uh especially outside of the poly texts

is bound to be just legends and
mythology. It's like people don't like
having this gap with regard to something
important so they'll just fill it in any
way they
can. So I
mean there's really no
authoritative information with regard to
how old Rahula was when he died, how he
died, where he died, anything like that.
And any information you find in later
traditions is just going to be
legends,
mythology. So I'm just going to move on
to the next question. This is from
Sanguine Ultima. And this is kind of a a
followup on a little rant that I

indulged in in the previous
Q&A about people who
uh like compulsively bash the
Jews. Like they just take all Jews and
lump them together as being responsible
for bad things happening.
So anyways, Sanguine Ultima says the
Federal Reserve, World Central Banks,
feminism, Marxism, and international
social justice were created by them.
Psychiatry, pornography, nuclear
weapons, and public relations style
propaganda was created by them. The
mainstream media, medical, judicial, and
military-industrial complexes are owned
by them, questioning their alleged

genocide in World War II is illegal in most European countries. while they commit genocide with impunity on stolen land in an apartheid state. They gave the USSR nuclear technology, stole American plutonium to fund their clandestine nuclear weapons programs, all of them apparently, and were one of the only two countries who refused to sign the non-prololiferation treaties. And this is without even getting into nebulous conspiracy theories. This is all documented, objective, verifiable, and demonstrable fact. Can you recognize how maybe, just maybe, there's some merit to noticing their involvement? From a purely

pragmatic and Buddhist point of view, I suppose there isn't because being aware of them only generates absurd amounts of dooka and makes one a pariah in the nation states for which they are the ruling bureaucratic and oligarchic class.

So this is typical of the attitude of many people on the the far right. And this isn't just far right as like like lefties will say. I mean this is like a genuine far right. And a lot of these people that are like really rightwing just despise Donald Trump. He's Zion Dawn. He's just a shill. He's sold out to the Jews.

So some of these people on the far right
will just despise Donald Trump because
he doesn't hate and persecute an entire
ethnicity and here like pornography was
created by them. I mean,
seriously,
really? I mean, they must have created
it in ancient times since I mean, the
the ruins of Pompei. There's pornography
all over the
place. So, the Jews invented pornography
in ancient Rome, possibly even those
Venus figurines like the from the the
Paleolithic.
One possible explanation for them is
that they are just
pornography. I mean, if

if Hebrews, people of Hebrew ethnicity, Hebrew
ancestry, I mean, if they weren't doing pornography, if they weren't like publishing it, somebody else certainly would. There's there's not a large Jewish population in Japan and they've got a thriving porno like a pornography industry over there. So part of all this I mean psychiatry okay Sigman Freud he was Jewish although he was an atheist. So it's like one weird thing about the Jews is that it's a Judaism is a religion, but it's Jew is also an ethnicity.
And most of the problematic Jews that

the that the right-wing especially
despise, they are Jews that have
abandoned God in favor of trying to
uplift the world and uplift their own
ethnicity through like
Marxism or some later
iteration of Marxism, neoarxism now.
But it's true. Like most of the
Bolsheviks, like the like the ruling
class of the early Soviet Union, they're
mostly Jewish. Although they were Jewish
atheists. They weren't like real Jews
anymore. They were just of Hebrew
ancestry. So, I mean, the pornography
thing is just absurd. That's just
ridiculous. And then after after he
claims that Jews invented

pornography, then he's saying this is all documented, objective, verifiable, and demonstrable fact. And I just call [__] on that. And furthermore, it's not an entire ethnicity. There's certain individuals, mainly people who have abandoned the religious aspect of Judaism and have become like atheistic socialists.

I mean, most of the religious Jews, like the seriously religious ones, tend to be conservative.

And I I guess there's still people that will just hate them just just because of their their

ancestry or the the influence of of

Judaism in other ways on society. But uh one reason why they've ascended so high is first of all Ashkanazi Jews and we're not talking about Sphartic Jews or Asiatic Jews.

Those those are different groups. We're talking about Ashkanazi Jews because they're the ones that are mainly called the

Jews and they have a higher IQ than the average person. There's a lot of right-wingers that will just reject this out of hand because they can't stand the idea that Hebrews would be superior to them in any

way. But largely because Western civilization in its

perversity deified a Jewish person and considers a Jewish person to be literally God. I mean, what the hell do you expect? If it wasn't for the Western civilization, especially the the late Roman Empire, converting to Christianity, in all likelihood, the Hebrews would have gone the way of the Phoenetians. They would be extinct now. They'd just be like interbred and just diffused, like diluted down, just mixed in with everybody
else. So, let's see here. But yeah, getting back to their intelligence mean they didn't have much choice. Even though they were considered to be God's

chosen people by medieval Europeans or at least by a lot of them, still they resented them because they were successful because
uh it's it's it's it was sort of like this sort of a vicious circle for the Goyam where Jews were sort of marginalized. You know, they weren't allowed to own property, for example. So they had to make a living through commerce like money lending and and like merchant doing merchant stuff. And also they would get blamed for diseases and so forth like the bubanic plague, Jews poisoning the wells. And so it was like the the slow stupid ones got killed off and the smart ones who were

rich, they they survived better. And so it was like this forced evolution of intelligence in in Ashkanazi Jews, not so much in Sphartic or Asiatic Jews, but in the Ashkenazi ones living in Europe that there was like this forced evolution which according to a book called the 10,000year explosion. It's it has a one of the last chapters in the book is specifically about this forced evolution of Jews towards higher like intellectuality where that's one reason why Ashkanazi Jews are so prone to getting neurological disorders like Tesax disease and this kind of thing because of just this forced like it was

it was sort of like selective breeding
towards
intelligence and because they're
intelligence and they have this this
like culture of worldly success because
even the religious ones are pretty
worldly
minded that I mean they just rise to the
top that higher intelligence that's one
of the main that's like the most
important um quality to have with regard
to being successful in this world and so
I mean they're they're going to rise to
the top with regard to the military
there's not very many Jews in the milit
milary except for maybe in
Israel. Like seems like most Jewish

people who want to fight in the military are are wanting to fight in the Israeli military and not in the American military. But uh with regard to psychiatry or cultural anthropology is one that uh Sanguine Ultima missed out on here. I
mean not all early psychologists were Jews. William James was a big name in psychology probably before Sigman Freud got famous. He wasn't Jewish. It's just that the Jews like in academia or commerce this kind of stuff they often rise to the top partly through this culture of worldly success and partly just because on average statistically

they're more intelligent than the

average

person. So that's part of it right

there. So let's see here.

Let's

see. Yeah. Questioning their alleged

genocide in World War II is illegal in

most European countries while they

commit genocide with impunity on stolen

land. All land is stolen land. America,

we're in America. We're living on stolen

land. We took it away from the Native

Americans, didn't we? And we're not

apologizing for it either. Unless you're

some lefty, before you give a speech,

you got to apologize just for the sake

of virtue

signaling. Oh, committing genocide with impunity. Well, it is true that the first recorded case of attempted genocide is in the the book of what is Exodus and Joshua in the Old Testament where Moses was commanding that all Canaanites be exterminated. Yeah. I mean, there's stuff that you have to admit, but blaming all Jews just I mean, right? It's like the Jews did this and the Jews did that. I mean, he doesn't he doesn't use the
word, but still, I mean, it's you're better
off just if if people are transgressing, people are doing stuff that is not good.

I mean, you call them out individually. You don't just call out what race they came from.

I mean definitely I I go along with Martin Luther King Jr. that a person should be judged by their moral character rather than by the color of their skin or just by their by their ethnicity. When I hit the space bar trying to get the my woman's computer to like monitor to light up again, it makes that weird noise. See if we can do it again. Nope.

Okay. So, I mean, it's like the people that are actually doing the nefarious stuff are the ones that should be pointed out. At least something can be

done about that. But most Jewish people, they're just being regular people. And it's like some of them aren't even some of them aren't like practicing Jews. I mean, some of them have converted to other religions and so forth. They're just trying to blend in really just being ordinary people assimilating into whatever culture they're living in. Like in in America, it's like American culture. And it was like I mentioned in the previous Q&A that there was this European guy who said that without hesitation he would just exterminate the entire
ethnicity including people that I mean

they're not

even you know it's like one there's one person on the Discord server whose mother's side is Jewish, his father's side isn't. But this European guy and and he's not a practicing Jew. He's, you know, he he's following a different system, but still this this European guy would would include him as as under order of extermination. I don't know what like what percentage he would go down to, you know, how how Jewish you have to be, how Hebrew, I mean, Hebrew is actually a better term because it doesn't imply any kind of religion. And really the problematic Hebrews are the non-religious ones, the ones that have

abandoned God for the sake of some kind of
socialism. So anyways, getting down towards the bottom here, he's saying, "Can you recognize how maybe, just maybe, there's some merit in noticing their involvement?" Yeah, I've noticed it
definitely. I mean, that's not the issue. I mean, I've read like the culture of critique, which is very enlightening, very eye openening. Anyway, maybe I shouldn't use enlightening for a book like that on a like a dharma oriented video, but certainly it's eye

opening. So, I mean, America, the Western civilization has made its bed by deifying a Jew. And I mean, western civilization traditionally for a thousand years has considered a Jewish person to be God. I mean, we have made our bed and we are lying in it. So, I mean, you you're better off pointing out individuals. I mean, like what's his name? Dave Chappelle said, I mentioned this in the previous Q&A. Nothing good has ever come of any sentence that contains the phrase the Jews. You want to you want to like call out some particular person, that's fine, but just lumping an entire

ethnicity and and making just really just lame accusations. They invented pornography. Even though probably a lot of them are making good money publishing this stuff, I guarantee you they didn't they didn't invent it or saying that in Israel they're living on stolen land. I mean, name some place that hasn't been stolen from somebody else. I mean, that's just that's just a ridiculous that's just somebody coming up with as many reasons as they can for hating on somebody.

And like I was saying in the previous Q&A, feminists can do the same thing about men. Brown people can do the same

thing about white people. You can come up with really valid arguments by just being single-minded in trying to find as much [__] as you can against somebody. You're going to find it. And then you just dismiss the good stuff. I mean, Jewish people, people of Hebrew ancestry have done some good stuff. For example, one of my first spiritual teachers was Rahm Das, previously known as Dr. Richard Albert, who was raised a Jew, even though he converted to Hinduism. But that's not good enough for like the European guy who used to be on the server, who would have just included him in the

genocide. Getty Lee, damn good bass
player. He's Jewish.
So yeah, I mean
just you're better off going with
individ going against individuals who
have actually done something wrong
instead of just just lumping the entire
ethnicity together, including just the
outer fringes of it, including people
who supposedly are on your side and
agree with you with regard to most
stuff.
So, I mean, pointing out stuff
objectively, like with regard to what's
happening in society and so forth,
that's fine. As I specified in the

previous Q&A, it's like

obsessively hating on

somebody or just even worse than that,

obsessively hating on an entire

demographic just because of a minority

of individuals within that demographic.

And that applies to not just to Hebrews.

That applies to like various other

ethnicities. You're better off giving

people the benefit of the doubt until

they they screw you over somehow or at

least try

to.

Anyways, I think I'm just going to move

on. Next question.

This is from

Ruie and Ruie says, "In your experience,

do you think several karmic trends may come to coincide in one lifete stream? Looking at my present lifetime, I've detected a few main karmic trends. In early childhood, some died out, others took root and continued to unfold."

Well, of course, there's going to be several karmic trends. There's going to be lots and lots of karmic trends that come to coincide in one lifeam. I mean, you're not just going to have one like theme to your life. There's there's going to be lots. You're going to like certain kinds of food. You're going to dislike certain kinds of food. You're going to like certain types of girls.

You're going to dislike certain types of girls. You're going to like certain types of dogs. I mean, you're going to have like an interest in some kinds of music. Maybe you may have an interest in in hiking or mountain climbing. There's all kinds of stuff. And there's all different like strands of like karmic momentum that are just sort of woven together into one individual so to speak. So yeah,

certainly. And I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from

Yugaoo. And I'm looking at the Yeah, let's see here. We're getting down towards the bottom, though. Never fear,

this will come to an end. I went to an Iawaska ceremony long ago where before we uh we began the journey, the the uh the shaman who was a a blonde lady said that just always bear in mind there's there's a beginning, there's a middle, and there's an end. which may sound like kind of lame advice, but when when you're turning inside out emotionally and puking into a bucket, it's it's useful to know, useful to kind of bear in mind, you know, it's kind of like the horizon to gaze
at. Anyways, this next question is from Yugo. And let's see. I got to take my last drink of cold

coffee, my designated primary beverage,
and then crack open the emergency backup
beverage. And you
could I thought it was going to foam
over. It started making this sudden f
like a foaming
sound. Okay. Yugu says, "Please talk
more about the ignorance. How is it that
people who work in medical fields,
veterinarians, morticians, have all this
chance to see reality as it is and gain
freedom yet fail?" And yeah, I pointed
out like long ago when I was a monk that
a coroner can do autopsies on beautiful
young women and see what they're made
of, you know, and see the like the the
ultimate the ultimate end state of all

beautiful women and still it doesn't cause him to have any less desire for his wife when he comes home from work. So yeah, I mean it's sort of a kind of dissociation. is a compartmentalization of your mind. I mean, he's just he's not in sexy mode, I hope, but he's just like doing his job, you know, cutting open this this cadaavver to determine the cause of death or whatever. And uh it's he's just not ripe for enlightenment yet. I mean, he's just not ready for it. I mean, there's plenty and plenty of soldiers. I mean, in ancient times, just about any

able-bodied man was like he was going to be part of the the the unofficial army of his people. Like, you know, there's a state of emergency. He's he might have to get his spear, get his shield if he had one, and go out and fight barbarians. And just because he may see, you know, fields strewn with dead bodies doesn't mean that he's going to like be filled with samga, like this spiritual sense of urgency. I mean, it's like in ancient times, it was just death is something that's going to happen to you. So, you just accept it and that's just the part of life. It's just, you know, so what,

you know, if you're going to die, die gloriously. That's that's one thing I've I've been thinking about relatively recently that the the urge for a glorious death has pretty much died out of Western civilization. You know, there's some Muslims who still want to die a glorious death, I suppose, by exploding in an airport or something, but like most Western men, I mean, like it used to be kind of a cause for shame that you'd even grow old, you know, that you're going to die in bed, you know, you're just going to kind of just degenerate, you know, they just wanted to like among the like the Norse,

the only way to get to Valhalla was to
die in battle. And even then, the the
Vularies had to pick you as being
particularly brave and glorious in your
death. So, yeah, it's I mean, just
because you see lots of death, it
doesn't mean that you're going to apply
that to yourself in a spiritual sense
and use that as like a motivation for
striving for liberation when most of
these people don't have liberation as an
option. They're they're oblivious to the
very like the
very potential or option of liberation.
I mean, they're just completely in
samsaric
mode that like striving for

enlightenment is is I mean, it's not on their radar at all. They've never been exposed to it culturally except for maybe, you know, in like some they'll watch some YouTube video that's some new age person that just makes the whole thing seem ridiculous or something. and then you know they're not going to they're not going to follow that. They just assume materialistic science or whatever it is whatever their culture tells them is real that's real.

So in a way it's culturally conditioned ignorance and also in a way it's just most people are not spiritually mature enough to really take

the idea of striving for enlightenment
or striving for liberation from samsara
striving for liberation from the wheel
of birth and death that I mean it's just
it's not encouraged and they just really
don't see see the point to
it. Even a lot of nominal Buddhists are
that
way. So I think I'm just going to move
on to Yugu's next question, which is how
is it that desire can be so strong to
make us come into being even according
to Nagar? Mention of Nagarjun. I'll put
on the fez, the Majamaka
fez. Take it back off again. Okay, I'll
just start the question over again. How
is it that desire can be so strong to

makes us come into being? Even according to Nagarjana, there is nothing there in a first place. Well, desire doesn't have to be strong to make the like some being come into being. that just the slightest desire, the most subtle desire creates a very slight existence, some crude existence. You know, it's like maybe there is a first existence. You know going back to the very first question in this Q&A that there may be some like very primordial kind of protoexistence as a sentient being then in that case the desire would just be the slight wisp you know the slightest hint of desire the slightest

hint of you know I am you know I want to
stay alive I want to promote my
existence I want to keep living this
kind of
thing I want to find food I want to find
a mate
And it doesn't take I mean any desire
would is enough to cause some kind of
being to come into existence. And then
by the time you're up into the mammal
realm, you know, you're like a a primate
mammal, then you're going to have
stronger desires, which is going to lead
to this more concrete, you know, more
more vitality, more more of like uh like
a comprehensive sort of cosmos that
you're living in.

So, but then he throws in

Nagarjuna. There is nothing there in the

first place. Well, it's it's all

dependently

coarising. So, I mean, whether it

ultimately is real or not, is is kind of

irrelevant. I mean, it's it's

dependently co-arising.

um and trying to explain dependent core

rising especially just as a subsidiary

to a to a question. Yeah. I mean the

Buddha himself figured he wasn't going

to succeed and he was correct because

pretty much nobody understands dependent

core rising because it's such a

mind-blowing concept that I mean it's

like trying to understand a reality that has no firm foundation. sort of free floating and just mutually conditioning and I mean even each mutual condition is itself mutually conditioned. So it's so the whole thing is sort of arising spontaneously in a sense from the uncarved block of of marble cuz the statues are in
there. But that's a tough one. I mean the second part of it the nagarina part is tough. I mean, how is desire can be so strong to make us come into being? And the slightest desire is going to create some sort of being that's desiring. It's going to be just this wispy little ephemeral kind of

semi-being that, you know, the slightest desire will cause the slightest individual sort of sort of I'm trying to say sort of and sort to speak at the same time. It's trying to come out as sort of speak.

So, let's see. I just just go to the next question. This is from Romeo. Romeo says, "You put a lot of thought, time, and effort into your Q&As's with little to no compensation. Is doing them a labor of love in which you get some intrinsic reward, or you do you do them with some reluctance?" Um, no. I actually get satisfaction from doing a Q&A. It's it's

one of my main spiritual practices. I think is doing these these Q&A videos, just doing videos in general. I mean, even doing the fish videos is uh I mean, it's kind of a spiritual practice, I suppose.

Um yeah, I mean, I get some intrinsic reward. I mean, you're I'm earning merit, I suppose, by helping people to understand something about Dharma. I might earn a little bit of demerit by throwing seeds of doubt into devout Buddhists or some such or by blaspheming, speaking heresy. But no, I'm definitely doing it voluntarily. I mean, nobody's forcing me to do this. I wouldn't do it if I didn't

want

to. So, I'm Yeah, I'm fine with this.

This is This is all right. I'm good with

this. I mean, it takes several hours

every Saturday pretty much,

but this is like my spiritual practice

or it's a major part of it.

Anyhow, so I'm just going to move on to

Romeo's second question, which is kind

of an interesting one. With so many

people following your insights and

wisdom, do you ever feel like a sort of

guru?

If so, do you relish this feeling or

find displeasure in it? Well, I mean,

according to the Hindus, there's two

kinds of guru. You've got the up guru
and you've got the sat guru. The sat
guru is god personified. The sat guru is
fully enlightened being. They're just
God in a human body. Like a lot of
people considered nim curly
baba up
there. And then you got the OPA guru who
who could be anybody really that that is
sort of helping somebody along along the
path. Rahm Das denied being enlightened.
He considered himself to be an guru. He
was fine with that. I mean you can you
can see a dog licking its balls and and
if you get some sort of insight from
that that dog is your is your
guru at least a temporary guru just

giving you some helping you with some kind of little insight along the way. So that's fine. I've got no problem with that. Being a kind of guru. I think guru just means like a teacher. I mean literally means heavy in like in polygaru. It means like heavy. So you're like the the heavy hitter who's who's teaching things or something.

But the weird thing is with regard to being uh not so much being a guru but um what kind of strikes me more than that is becoming an egregor and I mentioned egregor earlier on. It's it's like a pagan idea of a being whose existence is

conditioned by the beliefs of all these other beings that they're kind of strengthening your existence in a certain way. And I noticed this even when I was a kid to some degree. When I was a kid, if I was surrounded by people that had high expectations of me, I would do better than if I was surrounded by people who had low expectations of me. Like I didn't do very good in sports and school. And people just expected me to do bad in sports and school. And I didn't do very well. It was just sort of a self-fulfilling prophecy kind of a deal. like away from school, I did a lot better in sports, you know, just, you know, playing sandlot ball, that kind of

stuff. And also, I remember I had one sort of semi-girlfriend. We we never actually went to bed together, but she was like legally mentally ill. She was getting checks from the government. She got a section 8 out of the army that Corporal Klinger and Mash kept trying for and couldn't get. She got it. So, she was getting checks from the government for being like too mentally out of it to to like serve effectively in the armed forces. And she was she was pretty naughty, I have to admit, more so than the average female. She was in the danger

zone. But she had a very high opinion of

me for some reason. And when I was with her, I could just I could like master stuff, you know? I could just run a pool table if she was watching. It was weird because her belief that I was, you know, better than the average guy somehow helped me to be better than the average guy somehow. And I think to some degree that like when I'm doing these videos, people watching me and considering me to be this sage helps me to be this way, you know,
as however I happen to be, however I am. It's like people that watch me and they're perceiving me are sort of reinforcing their own in a way they're kind of projecting this opinion onto me

which is sticking to some
degree. So it's I feel like I'm kind of
an egregor. I mean I'm not purely an
egregor. I would continue to exist, you
know, such as I am with without doing
videos and all
that. Like my woman's high opinion of me
also is is sort of uplifted me in life.
Like people loving you and respecting
and admiring you is is a blessing. It's
like one of the greatest blessings you
can have is for someone to see you at
your worst and still just love you
wholeheartedly and and bless you.
It's it's very uplifting. It has
definitely has a beneficial effect. My

father was that way towards me. I mean
he was very proud of me. He always
believed in me so to speak which which
was help very helpful in
life. So I guess I answer that question.
So I'm just going to move on to Romeo's
third
question. Do you ever see an episode
number where you will call it quits and
put your Q&As's to rest? No, I don't
think it's it's going to be once I reach
a certain number. I mean, eventually if
it just runs its course and nobody's
coming up with any any good questions
anymore, I mean, it might be time to put
it to rest then or just something else
comes along. You know, I pretty much

stopped writing my blog when these Q&As started becoming more regular. And so it may be that just as these Q&As's replaced my writing the blog on on the weekends when I wasn't working, something else may come along, but I don't know what it would be. I'm not planning on it. But I don't have any specific number, you know, six gillion or something when I get to that number. I guess it couldn't be six gillion because that's not prime. It have to be some kind of prime number, I suppose. But uh yeah, that's that's the way it is. And so I'm just gonna move on to the next question. This is from

Quistor. And I told you this is going to be a long one. We're already well over two hours. Quistor says, "The attenuation of ill will and sensual desire is associated with the sakadeagami. Can puja achieve similar results without right view?" Well, of course they can. I mean, attenuation just means making it less. So of course you can reduce ill will and sensual desire without having right view. I mean Christians do it like Christian saints some of these Catholic like medieval European Catholic saints from a Buddhist point of view they had this really egregious wrong view. I mean they they deified a Jewish

person for starters. You know they
believed in an eternal soul. They
believed in the capital G God. They
believed that you only have one life.
There is no rebirth except into heaven
or hell which is going to last
forever. You know this is from a
Buddhist point of view they had just
really wrong view. But nevertheless they
very much attenuated their ill will and
sensual desire to the point of some of
them really becoming genuine saints.
So certainly a
puta can attenuate ill will and sensual
desire with with wrong without right
view. In fact, I wouldn't rule out the

possibility of becoming fully
enlightened without right view.
So-called right view, which is
essentially official Buddhist
doctrine. Like I mentioned in the
previous Q&A, I think it was. I mean,
you could have just just absurd I mean,
from a western point of view, just
absurd views and still become
enlightened. Neem Crowley
Baba up there, he he worshiped Hanuman,
the monkey god. But he was just as far
beyond us as we are beyond
monkeys. I mean, the least.
I consider Nim Crowley Baba to be a kind
of spiritual
superman, but he worshiped a monkey

god. So I think right view is something that
dogmatic terra Buddhists put a lot of emphasis on that I really don't think it's it's nearly as essential. I mean to have right view with regard to how to practice can be definitely very useful and having right view with regard to just abstaining from absurd wrong views. But once you get to a certain point I mean if you're practicing you're detaching from all views you know like the atakawaga says no view. In fact the word that's usually translated as wrong view in poly is just di which just means view. So originally the Buddha was just

saying don't have any view and then

later after early Buddhist philosophers

were cooking up all this philosophy

they're saying well I mean what he says

what he meant was you shouldn't have any

wrong views which just flings the door

wide open to all these right views that

that we are

promulgating but the Buddha said don't

have any

view

DT none of

it And literally view or dt just means

what is

seen.

So I guess I'll just move on to qua to

our second question here which is do you

notice a significant weakening of craving and aversion in everyday life after your time as a monk?

Um, yeah. Although it's it's difficult to know with certainty how much of it is caused by my having been a monk and how much of it is cur is caused by me being more than 30 years older. So, it's hard to say uh how weak my craving and aversion would be if I had never been a monk. I assume it'd be stronger, but still like when I'm at work on a forklift in just this hectic chaos that I'm cussing a lot. I probably I wouldn't be surprised if I cuss more than anybody else at work. There was one guy named

James that cussed more than me and he he quit because he was going through a divorce or something and and didn't want to deal with the hectic chaos, I guess, in addition to the divorce. And I missed him partly just because he cussed more than I did.

And I'm not cussing directly at anybody. I'm not like cussing people out. It's just like fbombs while I'm like trying to manipulate freight. And it's sometimes it's not working out correctly or you know just somebody I mean even if somebody does something stupid they're like park they just pull right in front of me and park when I'm trying to do something that kind of thing. I might be

cussing then but still I'm not cussing them out. I'm just sort of muttering profanities under my breath. But let's get back to the question, shall we? Do you notice a significant weakening of craving and aversion everyday life after your time is about Yeah. I mean, a lot of I mean, especially my my cravings, my aversions for some things and my cravings for for almost anything are much weaker now than they were when I was say a college student, which is in a way it's kind of almost a shame really that I I find this this really lovely woman and I don't have the same this tempestuous passion

that I had when I was

18. But hell, I'm It's like I'm just too

old for the

tempestuous passionate romance stuff. It

seems like except for every once in a

while. But it's not like this perpetual

phenomenon that's just going from day to

day like it was like the first time I

had some some hottie girlfriend when I

was in college.

So, do you notice a significant

weakening cream? Yeah. But to what

extent it's caused by me just getting

older and to what extent it's caused by

my dharma practice for 30 years is hard

to say with with

precision. But I'm sure that my being a

monk just especially just the detachment from

pleasures, you know, like food and just comfort in general. I'm I'm I'm living much more comfort than I would if I were living alone. That women and and gay guys notoriously. They like everything really comfy and and and like tasteful and pretty and everything. If it was if it was just me living alone, there'd be like bare walls. I'd be sleeping on some mat on the floor. Maybe just have towels up instead of curtains covering the windows. That kind of stuff. I'd be fine with that. That's like a It's like a meme, you know, a guy who just his

living room. All he's got is like a a TV, a gaming console, and a couch, you know? That's it. Just bare walls, bare everything. Yeah, I'd be fine with that. I mean, it was kind of like that before I became a monk, but even but now it's it's more ingrained through force of habit. Just a kind of almost disdain for comfort.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is also from Quoistor. If we've lived countless lifetimes, what are the odds that this is the one that enlightens us? Well, I mean, going with statistics, it'd be like an infinitisimally small percentage that

this would be our our final lifetime.
But the fact that we've gotten as far as
we have so that we are actually thinking
about dharma and to some degree
practicing dharma that would really up
the odds but still it' probably be less
than 1% just going with what percentage
of dharma practitioners actually become
fully
enlightened. It's it's pretty small.
It's
minuscule. So I mean your odds are
better than nothing.
I mean, even going with the idea that
there is actually such a thing as
enlightenment within a samsaric context,

which I am certainly not persuaded of.

So, yeah, I mean, it's it's hard to say. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Trasazis and Trasaziz is asking about ignorance. He says, "I've read Yugu's comment and have to ask, do people who see decay, agony, and death on a daily basis fail to realize that we are ultimately all dead and lots of things are just pointless." They have very clear proof of that. Or they fail to realize that maybe we will be born again and again. They don't have any proof of that, though. Well, they don't have very clear proof that that a lot of things

are just pointless because whether something is pointless or not, that's a value judgment. That's not something objective that if something is pointless or not, it depends on your perception of it. And of course, someone who's thoroughly immersed in some sorrow, taking it completely seriously, they're they're attributing meaning to everything and a point pretty much to everything at least to like whatever it is that is their main focus. So I mean that's meaning is samsara really.

So let's see here. What exactly is the question? People who see decay, agony,

and death on a daily basis, let's say uh
an ancient Roman soldier on
campaign fail to realize that we are
ultimately all dead. Well, yeah, I don't
think that they they would see that
because pretty obviously from an
empirical point of view, we're still
alive. We are breathing and moving
around and making
noise and lots of things are just
pointless. Again, that's that just
depends on your point of
view.
So, or they failed to realize that maybe
we will be born again and again. Well,
the ancient like ancient Greeks and
Romans, they just thought that we went

to Hades, just like this shadowy dark underworld where you're just kind of sleepwalking in this days. You're never fully awake
anymore, that kind of thing. So, I mean, in a way, they were kind of existentialists who accepted the idea that so long as you're alive, you play the game and you go for glory and and and honor and that kind of thing. And it works. I mean, it worked at the time. It might not work very well anymore now that Western civilization has become thoroughly feminized.
I'm not I mean to tell you the truth I'm not sure if women really have a concept

of honor other than maybe like ancient Roman women or I mean when women have had a sense of honor it was mainly like sexual chastity that was their honor. They weren't

[__] But aside from that, honor is it's I mean, I'm sure there are some women who have a concept of honor, but I think it seems that most women it's just sort of foreign to their way of thinking, but I'm I'm digressing big time. Possibly getting myself into a little bit of trouble, too.

So, people who see decay, agony, and death on a daily basis fail to realize that we are ultimately all dead. Well,

ultimately, I wouldn't say we're all
dead. We might not be ultimately alive,
but we're not. I mean, that's just part
of the the dualism, live, alive and
dead. You know, if one of them falls,
both of them fall because the whole
duality
collapses. So, a lot of things are just
pointless. I mean, ultimately,
everything
is I mean, it's just conditionally with
a point
virtually. So, that's kind of getting
into
existentialism. They have very clear
proof. And yeah, I don't think they

really do have very clear proof of it. Unless Trzas is seeing something or I'm missing or they failed to realize maybe we be born again and again. Some of like the the ancient Dians believed in reincarnation. Some people believe in reincarnation other than Indians. Some Native American tribes believed in reincarnation, that kind of thing. But I mean, it's just the animal instinct to stay alive really is in the driver's seat. And philosophical speculations about what happens after you die is really of secondary importance at best to most people. I mean, you're alive. You're an animal body. You've got animal instincts keeping you alive. You know,

it's like fear of death is one of the most basic instincts. That's root chakra right there. So, yeah. I mean, most people are just semi awake and just living kind of anim animalistic lives and and it's just every animal has this instinct to just be alive and keep being alive as long as possible. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Rakasa and this is kind of an interesting question. I don't think that anyone has asked even though it is sort of an essay question of which there have been several this evening. Ricasa says, "How do you think the concept

of see praka Buddhaana arose?" If you read Tibetan and East Asian texts on the different sects, they usually subdivide Hinayana into Shravakayana and Praeka Buddhaana. I'm aware both of these words are in the polycanon sawaka and pacheka Buddha. And the use of sawaka at least makes sense. It originally just meant disciple without a derisive connotation. Probably most terraodins and servos called themselves that. But it seems to me that pacheka Buddha's pacheka Buddha is a very specific tech technical term. A sama sam Buddha that opted not to teach anyone. It seems automatically impossible in this age since God Buddha already taught the dharma and it would

be odd to strive for it in a future age vowing to become fully enlightened. but for absolutely nobody's benefit. Could it be that there were pre- Mahayana Buddhists using the term Pacheka Buddha in a different sense? Well, definitely. Um, let's see. I mean, this is a complicated question. Another complicated like compound question with more than one question mark. So, it starts and ends with question marks. The first first question, how do you think the concept of Pacheka Buddhaana arose? Well, I mean, I'm not sure how the Mahayana concepts arose, but the terravada concept of Pacheka Buddhas,

um, I mean, it was a fully enlightened being who arises when there is no Buddhism in this world, you know, it's in between Buddha Sasenas, then that's the only time you can have Pacheka Buddhas. And so I think that the original concept of Pacheka Buddhas arose as a way of explaining enlightened beings before the Buddhist time. Like the Buddha would say in some of his sutas, it's like enlightened beings in the past, enlightened beings now, and enlightened beings in the future. You know, they all do such and such. And so before the cult of the Buddhas, the the seven Buddhas or the 28 Buddhas came along that there had to be this idea of

I mean the Buddha was saying there was enlightened beings before him. So who were they? And so I think it's good chance that it was the Pacheka Buddha was a kind of fully enlightened being who like became self-enlightened. They didn't have to be taught by some other enlightened teacher.

And see, I think I just confused myself in the middle of a sentence. Forgot how the very beginning of the sentence started. But anyways, the Buddha would talk about enlightened beings of the past. And in a way it was a way of explaining how you had enlightened beings before the Buddha came along who

started the wheel of dharma rolling probably before the later cult of the the multitude of Buddhas came along. That would be my guess as to where the idea of Pacheka Buddhas came from. It was just an idea of the Buddha himself admitting he wasn't the first enlightened being that there were enlightened beings before him. And so people just kind of came up with this mythology that there are enlightened fully enlightened beings like the Buddha who existed before the time of the Buddha. they just didn't start Buddhism because they were hermits or they just could not articulate dharma the way a sama Buddha articulates dhhamma. And

according to the legend, the Buddha
himself almost became a pachcha Buddha
because he figured nobody would
understand dependent core rising.
And then Brahma, the personification of
ultimate reality for the the Vadic
Brahmans had to come down from heaven
and beg the Buddha to teach a system
that would ridicule Brahma
himself. So then along came the the
Mahayana Buddhists who just completely
distort the meaning of all kinds of
words including
bodhicatta. There there a lot of
Mahayana Buddhists who think you can
have a fully enlightened bodhic sata

when the original meaning of a bodhic

sata was someone who is destined for

enlightenment and they weren't

enlightened yet. They weren't they

weren't a Buddha

yet. and also pacheka Buddhas. It's like

you read Mahayana Sutras and the Buddha

has got like

retinu hundreds or even thousands of

Bacheka Buddhas attending his his

sermons which according to the original

meaning or at least the the early

Buddhist like terraoden interpretation

of Pacheka Buddha which literally means

like for oneself

Buddha that I mean you you don't have

Pekka Buddhas when there is Dhama in

this like like Buddhism in this world when there is a Buddha sasa that is still alive and functioning in this world you don't have pekka Buddhas but then Mahayana comes a few hundred years later you got hundreds of bacheka Buddhas attending the Buddhist discourses and fully enlightened bodhic santas besides

um there's one little quibble here I wouldn't say that uh let's See where is it? Vowing to become a fully enlightened but for absolutely nobody's benefit. I wouldn't go so far as to say a pekka Buddha is to absolutely nobody's benefit. First of all, they're they're

raising the like the consciousness center of gravity in the world even if they remain silent. Secondly, they go for alms round and the people who are offering alms to them are are gathering up treasures in heaven by supporting these pacheka Buddhas even though they're not teaching anything necessarily. Um still they are of benefit to the world just just through their existence and their effect on the the level of consciousness in the world and also just offering people or providing people with the opportunity to see them and even to like offer alms to them.

And I guess Dewa Data the the Buddhist

version Buddhist equivalent of Judas is
Scariot who tried to kill the
Buddha tried to take over Buddhism from
from his cousin Godma Buddha that uh
he's he's roasting in hell right now but
at some future
age he's going to become a Pacheka
Buddha according to Terravada Buddhist
tradition.
So anyway, yeah,
my my working hypothesis on the origin
of Pachega Buddhas is just a kind of
more or less mythological explanation
for how you could have enlightened
beings before the Buddha and not like in
some vast distant age like some previous

Buddha, but maybe just even like a few decades before the time of the Buddha or a few just a century or two before the time of the Buddha. you know, he's he's he seems to have mentioned that there were enlightened beings just, you know, out there, that he wasn't the only one. At least that's how you can interpret some of the sutas where he's talking about, you know, the enlightened beings of the past, enlightened beings of the present, enlightened beings of the future, you know, they're all agree or they're they all do such and such. And that's one way of interpreting that. So that is my guess. Although of course it is a heretical guess because I'm not

taking the whole idea of pacheka Buddhas very seriously because I just don't think that

way. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Dhamma River and Dama River says, "What are the three best and the three worst countries to ordain from the following list? Myanmar, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, Malaysia, Indonesia, South Korea, Japan, and China. The three best. Well, if Myanmar weren't like in the midst of a civil war right now, Myanmar might be the best. It's like the most devoutly Buddhist country in the world probably,

but it's uh getting a visa and all that might be not a not very easy now. So, let's just leave out Myanmar. So, I'd have to say it'd be like Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Cambodia would be the three best countries for ordaining. Um especially if you're going to be ordained as a Terravada Buddhist. And Donald River doesn't specify like exactly what you're going to be ordained as. I mean, he's got like Japan on the list, South Korea, and there's not much terra going on in Japan and South Korea. That's like Mahayana Buddhism. So, was he including Mahayana Buddhism as as an option here? Um, but definitely China would be a bad country to be

ordained. Yeah, don't don't be ordained in China. That is my advice to you.

Um, see Vietnam is also a communist country that probably doesn't take doesn't have much respect for Buddhism, although I guess there are Buddhist monasteries in Vietnam. Laos is another one where it's it's like a Buddhist country that there's really not much dharma going on there largely because of the the communist government.

Um, let's see. But also like South Korea and Japan, I mean, there's really not a whole lot of Terravata Buddhism there either. But I'm not exactly sure if Dama

River had the door open to being ordained as a Zen monk, in which case South Korea or Japan would probably be the way to go. Not China though. Um, Malaysia and Indonesia have a considerable uh amount of reputable terra Buddhist monasteries and dhamma centers. So those are kind of theoretical options, but I'd stay away from the like the repressive communist regimes. Even though China technically isn't really communist anymore, it's more fascistic
now. And uh I mean, if I was going to be ordained as a Terravada Buddhist monk, I wouldn't go to Japan for it. If I couldn't go to the three that I

mentioned or

Myanmar, if you can't go to one of the

Terravada Buddhist countries, then

Indonesia or or Malaysia probably be

fairly

good for ordination. There are some good

are some good places in Indonesia and

Malaysia. And I'm just going to move on

to Dama River's next

question. And uh this could be a

three-hour long one. This will be the

first three-hour long Q&A in quite a

while. Although I have gotten up to like

three and a half hours, and I don't

think I'm going to quite get that

far. But anyways, Dama River's second

question is as follows. Liberals, this is this is an essay question, too. So, we've got quite a few of them. Yeah, this is quite the essay question. Okay. He says, "Liberals in Canada, fueled by their edipus hate towards Trump, have just elected Mark Carney as their new prime minister. Millions of unresolved conflicts between children and their baby boomer fathers are currently manifesting as Trump derangement syndrome. Their blind hatred keeps them from seeing the broader consequences of their actions. For the first time in the history of Canada, the US, the UK, Australia, and New Zealand has a governor of a central bank been elected

as leader. Liberals are getting back at Trump by selecting the equivalent of Allen Greenspan as their leader. Let that sink in for a minute.

Okay, I'm letting it sink in. Although, probably waiting a whole minute is is kind of excessive. Let's just let it sink in a little a little bit more. All right, I guess that's enough. We got to keep the flow going here. So then he says, "What do you think is the main factor that leads leftists to be completely incapable of critical thinking? All they know, think, and imagine comes from whatever the media tells them. There is nothing liberal

about their behavior or logic anymore. is just mob thinking and virtue signaling. Ironically, they have become what they criticize. Even when they try to investigate any issue, they only check their mainstream sources. And let's see, getting I have before I answer this question, it seems to me that Australia is doing even worse now. I guess they just overwhelmingly elected this left-wing government, although I haven't been able to find much about it in the news as of yet. But I don't know what the deal is with the Australians either. I mean, they used to be kind of kind of like Chads. They had a reputation for it anyway. Then they

gave all their guns away and and now
they're just voting as communist as they
can as they can
get. Practically country was turned into
a a multitude of concentration camps
during the the Wuhan flu
debacle. But anyways, let's get back to
Canada, shall we? So liberals in Canada
fueled by their edipus hate towards
Trump. Yeah, I think part of it is just
Trump with
his talk about I mean putting tariffs on
Canada that were mainly just for the
purpose of balancing the tariff
situation that Canada had tariffs that
were like 200% like dairy products that

kind of stuff against America and then Trump does some tariffs against Canada and of course partly fueled by the mainstream media is just outrageous. And then of course Trump is like calling Justin Trudeau the governor of the state of Canada. That kind of stuff. Just openly mocking and insulting the leader of Canada, which is sort of indirectly mocking and insulting Canadians to some degree. So I don't think it's entirely like an Edipus complex. Just Trump is like a father figure that Canadian baby boomers hate. Although it may be a large part of it, I really am not an expert on the situation. It's just that what I've been told is that

Trump and his tariffs especially and also just talking about annexing Canada and so forth just sort of galvanized a kind of resistance against the right which was sort of proTrump.

Anyways, let's see. What is Oh, yeah. The question is like in the second paragraph here. What do you think is the main factor that leads leftists to be completely incapable of critical thinking? Well, you've got like two different levels of leftists. You got the people that are like leaders that are actually coming up with the ideas that they are then promagating to the followers who just eat it up with a

spoon.

So you've got like academics for example who still after a century of stagnant and failed economies, totalitarianism and occasional genocide still prefer Marxism or some kind of socialism to a capitalistic

model. And I think in that case they're so in their head they just like what sounds good in theory. everybody's equal, you know, it's all fair and just even though you have to persecute or like discriminate against the successful so that the unsuccessful can catch up, that kind of thing. But still, it's it's just sort of they like what sounds good in theory more than

what looks good, what actually works in ugly dirty truth. like in in ugly empirical reality, they just don't want to accept that. They they can think up some better system which doesn't actually work, but it doesn't deter them from continually insisting upon it. It just goes against human nature, but they just cannot comprehend this. And then like the lower down the the majority of people who vote leftist, you know, the the hysterical mob or whatever. Um I mean they're just in a way they're just following this culture. I mean it's it's like to some degree the the new left in modern America and

Canada and so forth. They're they kind of have the same niche as the Christians of the the Roman Empire. You know, it's like this people that were just hysterical in their beliefs, completely intolerant of anyone who disagreed with them and who would who would teach love and acceptance, but only for people who agreed with them. That people who didn't agree with them were just evil and should be just abolished.

So, so long as the left continues to have control over most of the media, you're going to have the sheep, the followers who are going to just assume that, you know, the main voices that they are hearing coming from higher up

are telling them the truth even though um it's pretty pretty regular for these truths to be eventually shown to be the opposite of truth. And then still it's like, well, okay, maybe they were wrong about that, but still Trump is evil and and like anyone who supports Trump is a Nazi and it's all based on racism and hatred. And it's just they're told this over and over again. And it's just this mutually conditioning kind of a a huge echo chamber. And there's some of that on the right, too. Definitely.

But it's it really is a kind of it's it's like a cult. It seems to me that the left really has left any kind of

common sense behind in favor of. I mean, it's like it it's it's so weird now that the like the left is just wholeheartedly embracing positions that the overwhelming majority of Americans reject.

like getting rid of like deporting violent criminal illegal alien gang members that this has become like the latest battle for the left is they're trying to prevent any of them from being kicked out except through some lengthy process of getting warrants and all these like hearings and so forth just trying to to slam the brakes. you know, you've got this violent gang member, illegal

alien. He's called, you know, Maryland father, you know, kicked out of America, sent to some prison. I mean, El Salvador, he's an El Salvadorian citizen. And it's like it's it's sort of like religious thinking where the religious mind can believe anything, no matter how absurd it is to someone who is not indoctrinated into the cult. And at this point they've been believing it for so long and with such vehements that I mean they would just be utterly mortified and crushed. A lot of them would to finally realize that this whole time they've been believing this

essentially like cynical artificially
induced insanity imposed upon them by
higherups. Some of the some of the
higher ups actually believe this stuff
for reasons I already mentioned. They
prefer the beautiful theory to the ugly
truth. But the ugly truth is going to
win sooner or
later. I mean you you can't fight
against reality, not even empirical
reality, and win. Maybe you can hold
your own for a while, but it's going to
collapse. And that's one reason why
civilizations collapse is just because
of this kind of
[__] America or Western civilization in
general is definitely in

decline.

So I guess I answered that question. I don't know. I guess I did. I answered it enough. Anyways, so now it's time to move on to an easy, relatively short question. Oh, I guess it's not so short. But it's it's also a a paragraph question. Have you ever read a book a guided tour of hell by Buddhist teacher Samuel

Burchles? If yes, can you please provide your opinion of the book? If you have not read it yet, I absolutely recommend it to you and anyone who else reading this comment. It's packed with fantastic Buddhist teachings of mental states that

lead sentient beings to hell. We can learn to avoid developing these mental habits. It's about a near-death experience by the author where he went to hell even though he was the biggest skeptic. And paraphrasing, he always considered the Buddhist teachings on the different realms of existence to be for peasants until he saw it for himself. Okay, so the actual question is here up at the top. Have you ever read the book A Guided Tour of Hell by Buddhist teacher Samuel Becho? I can't even remember hearing of the existence of Samuel Beoles. So no, I have not read the book A Guided Tour of Hell. In fact, most Buddhist literature not written by

I mean Buddhist literature that isn't like poly texts I tend not to have read very much of. I don't watch Dhamma videos much. It's uh yeah. So I haven't even read anything by Steven Bachelor really.

So, I've read a few books by monks, but books written by lay Buddhist lay people. I read one book by Joseph Goldstein, his first famous book. I actually read a couple books by Jack Kornfield. One was Living Buddhist Masters written back in the 1970s, I think. And uh one was a path with heart just because I happened to be somewhere where the book was there. It was about

the the most interesting thing to read.
So, I read
it. But for the most part, I just don't
read this kind of
stuff. So, I'm just going to move on to
the next question. And I'm gonna scroll
down to see, yeah, only two more
questioners. So, yeah, we're over three
hours already. First, this next question
is from
Phil. And Phil Lees says, "I get the
feeling that watchfulness of the mind,
your third gear, is more effective for
Westerners than traditional nostril
watching since we're so caught up in our
heads as opposed to the the to the body.
At least in my case, the nostril method

never did much. Whereas thought mindfulness is effective meditation, thoughts, well, it is a more effective and more abstract kind of meditation. And a lot of people just can't do it very well. They prefer something that they can actually feel, you know, something they're they're more in their body, I guess. And so it's just more obvious, easier for them to watch the breath, the air going in and out of their nostrils than to just sit there not thinking and try to catch their thoughts. Because I mean a lot of people they just identify with their thoughts especially guys I guess and they can

start to panic when they stop thinking.

It feels like their ego is

dissolving. So for various reasons um

this shikant taza meditation

um I'm trying to turn the computer

screen back on but it's not working.

There we

go. I

guess. No, it just turned back off

again. Oh, there it went. It turned back

on

again. Okay, getting back to I think in

Zen it's called shikantaza where you're

just watching the mind and you just

catch any thought that arises. You know,

it's like in the I think it's the

Dharmapata commentary, there's that

method of just you close off the five senses and just watch the six sense of the mind and just whatever comes comes out, you you catch
it. So, I mean, it's just for whatever reason, it tends to be a more advanced method than just mindfulness of the breath. And you can even simplify mindfulness of the breath more by just counting your breaths. You know, one through five, then 1 through six, then 1 through 7 up to 1 through 10, and then back to 1 through five, which is just grinding away at the ABCs. But a lot of people, they need that at the beginning. It's just a kind of like mental push-ups

or something, calisthenics, just
strengthening their concentration.
So if you can do third gear better than
you can do anapana, you know, if you can
just watch the mind without thinking
more easily than you can watch the
breath going out of your nostrils, then
then go for it because it is in general,
it can be a more advanced method.
Although as I've
said, anapana can take you all the way
to fourth Janna according to uh terra
Buddhist
tradition. And so I'm just going to move
on to Phil Lee's next
question which is from a Buddhist or
even personal point of view. What is

your attitude to

fantasy? Recently I have been attacked by this feeling that the world of lived experience is like an alien planet compared to the world of the fantasy as in what we expect it to be and how we visualize it in our mind.

It makes one think of the Orthodox Christians and how they say that fantasy and even ordinary perception itself is demonic. More and more I feel that true happiness and stillness relies on a life devoid of fantasy. Whereas all of our culture, especially since advertising seems to be organized to conduct psychic attacks to manipulate and flare up our

fantasy through eroticism and fear-based techniques. Well, I mean, I did a lot of fantasizing as a monk. One of my favorite fantasies was being a Roman emperor, like coming along around the time of 360 AD, like right when Julian the Apostate was was coming to power and and I'd know what I know now so that I could teach the Romans, you know, how to get technology, you know, tell them about the number zero, you know, a decimal numerical system and that kind of stuff.

I used to think about that kind of stuff a lot. Not nearly so much anymore. But so at first when I when I read this question, I thought he was talking about

like like the literary genre of fantasy. But he's he's talking about fantasizing. So a lot of time you're sitting there meditating and then you realize that for the past 15 minutes you've been fantasizing. And from a Buddhist point of view, yeah, you're better off not doing that. You should just be right. Be here now. be here in the present moment. Don't be fantasizing about being a Roman emperor or being in bed with some female or being a rock star or that kind of stuff. I mean, that's you're wasting your time essentially. In a way, you're creating some little life sort of like a

dream or or that kind of thing like was mentioned
earlier. Like one one thing I've done is if I'm reading a novel like reading Nicholas Nickelby by Charles Dickens while in a cave in Burma. Sometimes I would while reading the novel I'd fantasize about like being a character in the novel and how I would deal with Nicholas Nickelby and all that. So from a Buddhist point of view, yeah, you're better off not doing that stuff. It's just natural that people do it. I do it sometimes
fantasizing. But
um yeah, I mean for like especially a monk, you know, if you're if you're

striving for enlightenment, then you should just be right here right now and and not really thinking about other places or the future or the past, being someone else, being under different circumstances than you actually are. that that sort of thing is just proliferating more samsara. Even if you're thinking about doing virtuous stuff, you mean at least you're getting a little bit of merit by sort of aspiring or admiring virtue, you know, doing the right thing, that kind of thing. But ultimately even merit is for lay people and and monks shouldn't even be trying

to earn merit that they need to leave
behind good good karma and bad
karma. So let's see what is the actual
question what is your attitude to
fantasy from a Buddhist point of view
it's it's essentially a waste of time
it's wallowing in
samsara but it's just human nature and
people do it. There's a lot of Walter
Midis walking around in this
world. So, I'm just going to uh move on
to Phil Lee's third question, which is
the second to last
question. Outside of the suta, are there
any sutas that you consider more
profound or superior to the Dharmapata?
Well, the Dhamapata really is not a

wealth of profoundity. It's it's I mean the dumbapana is just individual verses like little
apherisms that are teaching like basics of Buddhist philosophy. I mean there's profoundity in the very first verse of the dharmapata that you know it's it's all mindmade that kind of thing but I mean you can find profoundity in the dhamapata but um the most of the profound stuff is is elsewhere. There's a lot of profoundity in the samutinikaya. There's a lot of profoundity in in like the udana like the baja suta is profound. A lot of profoundity in the

majica. So yeah, you can find
profoundity like more profoundity than
you find in the damapata which is really
a relatively late work like in uh GC
Pandai's studies and the origins of
Buddhism. He doesn't even really mention
the damapata. It's apparently the
damapata
was kind of a late addition to the to
the
polycanon. And you read the Mahayana
Damapara and it's almost completely
different from the terra damapata. At
least what is passed off as the Mahayana
and Dhamapata which is more derived from
the Udana and the Sutini pata versus
taken from those texts in

Pali than it is from the from the actual
poly text the
Dapana or as the Burmese call it the
Dapodat. So yeah. Yeah, there's lots of
sutas outside the sutin pana that I
consider more profound or superior to
the dham danaka suta of the majimminaya
central portion or or like let's see
what would it
be ah maybe the central portion of the
sakapa suta of the of the dean kaya even
the brah jala suta is profound when you
think of almost every every possibility
is ruled
out a lot of lot of texts in the udon
are profound

etc.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is the last question. This is from PSA. And PSA asked two other questions. One of them was one of these kind of a joke question where he's just using as many big words as he can. So, I answered that in the comments. And then his second question was just what's up.

So this this is up I

guess.

This right here. This is up. And uh this is his third question, but it's really the the only question that I'm I'm going to uh really take the trouble to answer here. And that is if someone completely

new to Buddhism asked for your advice on where to go for their first meditation retreat, where will you direct them? I would direct them to the Dagata meditation center in San Jose, California because it's a good meditation center that's run pretty much like meditation centers in Burma. It's run by a Vietnamese group that have become devotees of the Mahasi tradition. First they were devotees of Mahasi upandida who has passed away and uh but still they invite uh seats of the mahasi tradition to come to California and lead retreats there and it's cheap you know you don't you're not paying 5,000 bucks

for a weekend like you might at some
place like Spirit Rock and you you're
just paying enough to pay for the
electricity and the food you're eating
And it's it's
it's very wellrun. It's a good place.
Although you have to be careful cuz
there's skunks that that there's pimmen
trees on the grounds. I almost got
sprayed by a skunk there
once cuz they come out at night to eat
the pimmens that fall out of the trees
and then you suddenly happen upon one
and you can startle them and then bad
things can
happen. But uh yeah, definitely the
Dagata Meditation Center in San Jose,

California. Although of course I don't know everything there is to know about a lot of other places, but stay away from like the the woke dama centers that that charge a lot of money for their retreats and that kind of
thing. And I guess we're done. By golly, less than three and a half hours anyhow. And so like I should always say at the beginning and always say at the end if you got any questions you think I can answer specifically or especially if they're like dharma oriented questions or philosophical questions
um especially having to do with terra Buddhism or early Buddhism. Um Buddhism

in general is fair game although I'm I'm
certainly no authority on Tibetan
Buddhism in particular.
um you know, eastern philosophy in
general, western philosophy, Burma,
monasticism, just aspects of like Dharma
practice like meditation, that kind of
stuff. I'm generally fairly good at
answering. But
um and and please like try to make your
questions
succinct, you know, don't we don't need
lots and lots of um like extra
commentary unless you want to put it in
parenthesis for me to read, but reading
like
paragraphs of of like a question where

the the question is actually like right at the top or right at the bottom and the rest is just kind of like like explanation like commentary on the question. Um, yeah, try just try to like compact it down. Just get to the point if you please. And uh like and subscribe if you haven't done so already. And uh now I go like wind on prairie.

Alrighty

then. I'm adjusting this now.

Okay. Hello and welcome to question and

answer

number

144. I am your host Po Basa. And I must

say that 144 is about as nonprime of a

number as numbers get in this world. In

fact, it is a perfect square. It's 12 *

12. But if we factor it out completely,

it's 2 * 2 * 2 * 2 * 3 *

3. Not prime at

all. This is my beverage. Did I mention

that I'm

pubasa? So, my coffee is already cooling

down. And I did realize just today that

these little paper umbrellas really are nonfunctional. They're just for looks. It was rainy today. I took one out with me. got just as wet as if I didn't have it.

So, we got some good questions today and I didn't bother to count how many there are, but it's kind of like an average number and it's probably going to be after midnight by the time I'm done with this because again, I'm starting late. I work nights. I work nights now. Work nights now. I'm trying to start a word with L for some reason in that sentence. It just seemed like one of the words should start with

L. Anyways, I work nights, so get up at

like noon anyway. And then I had to run around run around town and like purchase objects and so
forth. And then I got a haircut just now, just minutes ago, I got a haircut. So I've got like little hairs down the back of my shirt. So that I'm sort of like a postmodern equivalent of some medieval aesthetic wearing a hair shirt. So before I get started with uh answering questions though, I would like to shout out give a shout out to somebody named Kevin who has generously donated to the cause twice since the last time I shouted him out. So your your generosity is acknowledged and

appreciated. Oh,

Kevin. And with that, I suppose I should just wade right into this, start answering questions. And the first question is from Dhamma River. And this is like a good introductory question. Introductory. He says, "Before you became a monk, at which point did it click in your head that you wanted to go forth? Was it a sudden realization that something was broken in the world or that you were in a sort of dream world? Or was it a traumatic experience, a romantic heartbreak or too much suffering? Or was it just an intuitive decision without any major event triggering the beginning of your

spiritual pursuit? What was it?" And it's it's an an it's a question that I've answered more than once in the past, but it's been a while. So, I may as well give like a very abbreviated version of my life story. So, when I was a kid, like almost all other kids in this world, you just I just assumed that adults knew what's what. You know, it's just taken for granted. And certain adults know what's what even better than other adults do. Like for example, when I was a kid, two of my role models were the professor on Gilligan's Island who I mean he he could he could do anything with his knowledge

of

science and also Mr. Spock on Star Trek

who was kind of the same, you know, he

was like a half alien space professor.

But then around the age of

13, I started to become

suspicious that adults really didn't

know what's what. And by the time I was

16, it was just painfully obvious that

the adults were just as clueless and

messed up as I was as a general rule. So

when I was about 16 years old, I just

went into open rebellion. Got into lots

of trouble. Started skipping school.

Went from like an honor student to

almost failing out of school and just

went I guess what what caused it was my

16th birthday was the first time I was ever higher than a Georgia pine and drunk as the proverbial skunk both at the same time. I was like a skunk in a pine tree. And at the time, I mean, I remember I was laughing so hard I just fell forwards onto the ground, just face it down on the ground, still laughing. And it just seemed so brilliant at the time, you know, sick for a 16-year-old. It's like, wow, I've just discovered the the a new way. And so that's one of the reasons why I went into the open rebellion. It just I had this philosophy, you know, if you want to be happy, don't do anything you don't want

to do, which includes going to school sometimes, things like that. Reporting into your your father when you're not going to come home for a couple days, that kind of thing. And so I got into lots of trouble. And so one night in a towering rage, my father gave me like this ultimatum. It was like, let's see, go to a kind of like a like it was like a halfway house or something. I can't remember exactly. It was sort of like the equivalent of a halfway house for like teenagers or I could see a youth counselor or I could just like hit the road just because he was just fed up with it. And so seeing the youth counselor seemed like the like

the least
inconvenient option. And so I started
seeing a youth counselor who was whose
name was Ron Sherman. And it turned out
that Mr. Sherman was a wise
man. And he could see something in me, I
guess. Or maybe he would just try and
like
uh convey a little eastern philosophy to
all of his clients, you know, his
troubled teenage clients. But with me,
it really hit. I mean, it really struck
a chord. He gave me books by Ram Das to
read. I thought it was Ram Das at first.
And um so I'm reading these books like
the um The Only Dance There Is and also

Grist for the Mill. Gris for the Mill really made a strong impression on me as a teenager and I didn't really understand it very well. It was so alien to anything I'd been exposed to before that that it couldn't really integrate. But nevertheless, intuitively, I felt this is worthwhile. This is better than what I rejected at first, which is screwed up adults just trying to be happy, failing because they don't know how. just he who dies with the most toys wins. Just take the salmon approach. Just swim upstream spawn and die. That kind of thing. So I rejected that already. But just the roller coaster ride of just partying and getting into

trouble and partying and getting into trouble. I mean that wasn't working very well either. And all of a sudden there's this guy named Rahm Doss talking about how you can understand ultimate reality. You know, there's like this higher level of truth that is

just it's like was a quantum leap beyond what normies consider to be reality. And that I mean it's it's just a quantum leap

beyond what normies experience just with regard to the quality of it. you know, it's just something that you should dedicate your life towards mastering and youthful idealist that I was, it was

like, yeah, that's what I want to do. And so, starting with the age of about 17, cuz it was it was right before my 17th birthday that this [__] really hit the fan. And I was, you know, my 16th year was, it was like the year of youthful rebellion and chaos, being a feral teenager. So around the end of that year, that's when my father put his foot down and I decided I was going to see the youth counselor and so forth. And so yeah, that was around the age of 17. I had this idea that I should renounce the world and become like some kind of renuncient aesthetic and do my best to realize ultimate truth to know ultimate

reality to transcend some sorrow so to speak but I wasn't sure exactly how I was going to go about it just I I knew myself well enough to know that just being non deni nominational. I mean, I considered it for a while, just like get myself a wool robe and some kind of wool bowl. A wooden bowl, not a wool bowl, a wood bowl, and just take off walking. But I knew myself well enough to know that I didn't h wasn't good enough at self-discipline at the time, especially that I mean, it wasn't going to work out very well. It would be better to like enter into some established tradition with like tried

and tested rules and and methods and so forth. That would work better. And so I was considering Zen cuz I was pretty much converted to Buddhism by reading Zen Flesh, Zen Bones compiled by Paul Reps. So I still favored Zen back then. Um, I for briefly was even considering just becoming like a Carthusian Christian monk that undertakes a vow of silence. And with the vow of silence, I wouldn't have to confess that I actually wasn't a Christian. But I realized that was a dumb idea. Probably they'd have to break their vow of silence to make confession somehow.

Anyway,

so that was that was the the point where

it clicked. I mean it wasn't just like one sudden click but it was mainly uh my interactions with this youth counselor who was into Rahm Doss and reading especially Grist for the mill by Ram Doss that I mean it was just like opening up this whole new possibility of how to live my life that seemed just infinitely superior to just being like a a middle class normie
with, you know, the the wife and the the kids and the dog and the the mortgage and the car payments and the insurance and all this. It just that just seemed like walking death to me at the time. Now that I'm kind of detached, you know,

from 30 years of being a monk, I realize that, you know, it's like your attitude towards your environment is really essential. And it's it's not really that your surroundings that are that are all important. It's just your attitude. So I can go back to to like working for a living and so forth now with a different attitude than the average guy has towards it I suppose. But I'm just rambling all over because the actual question was at which point did uh the click go in my head that I wanted to go forth and it was around the age of 17 and I I had this ambition that before the age of 30 I should definitely renounce the world and

so I was ahead of schedule on that. I
was I was like
27. But yeah, that's essentially it. And
so I'm just going to move on to Dama
River's second question, which is what
was the worst aspect of being a monk?
And the first thing that popped in my
head was just celibacy. Just no orgasms
except for maybe when you're
sleeping. But thinking about it, that
that wasn't really the worst aspect. It
was the most
difficult aspect and like a lot of the
time, especially when I was younger, you
know, you're just full of juice. It's
like there were times when I was just

like climbing the walls just wanting to cry at howl like a dog. I was so horny essentially.

But that wasn't really the worst aspect. I think the worst aspect of being a monk is having to rely on other people to be to be able to do just about anything really. I mean, if you're just living alone out in a forest, you have to rely on other people for your food. But if you want to do anything that costs money, for example, and you're a conscientious monk that doesn't handle money, you've got to rely on other people. just you got to rely on other people to do stuff that as a lay person you could just do yourself really

easily. And I've always been relatively self-sufficient. You know, if I can do something myself, I'd rather just do it myself than to even have help doing it. I'm still that way at work. I really don't like people helping me unless I just cannot do this thing by myself and then I'll ask someone to help me. But so for me, I think that was really the worst aspect of being a monk is just having to rely on other people for so much that as a lay person, you can just do freely, practically effortlessly on your own, like I mentioned. I mean, you you can't even feed

yourself. I mean, once they give you the food, then of course you you shovel the food into your own mouth.

But just acquiring the food, you can't even do

that. So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Whoich. I don't know how to pronounce his name. It's really not particularly common name. And so, I'm just calling him Who Cheer. I hope he's not offended by my mispronouncing his name. And he says, "Do you think Alan Watts and Echartah

Enlightened? I have been listening to their YouTube videos. They sound like they got

it.

And Earl is always just kind of a question mark for me. And Alan Watts, I I know less about Alan Watts than I know about Echartol. I've read a couple of Alan Watts's books. I've heard a few of his videos on YouTube, and he says the right things, but just because you say the right things doesn't mean that you're you're enlightened.

Um I mean Alan Watts supposedly there were some kind of scandals about his life but then again there were scandals about like Jay Krishna Murdy too and I'm still open-minded with regard to the realizations of Jay Krishna Murdy. So, I

mean, you you can't really know. I mean, with regard
to Ecarola or Ellen Watts or anybody you think might be enlightened, just seeing their their public
appearances and like hearing their their speeches and so forth, it's not really enough to know because like St. Francis of Aisi said, "You don't really know somebody until you see them when everything's going wrong." Like somebody betrays them, somebody that they felt that they could trust just like like stabs them in the back, that kind of thing. How do they react then? You know, how do they react under a situation that normally triggers people? That's when

you can have a better idea as to just how wise this person really is. Because if they're saying all the right things and they seem peaceful and serene, but then they're just like losing their [__] over something, you know, it's like some unusual situation, some bad situation they don't like, then they're not really enlightened, at least not according to the the standard Terravada Buddhist interpretation of enlightenment. But then again from the standard terravada Buddhist interpretation of enlightened I mean they couldn't laugh that kind of thing. They certainly wouldn't get married. So yeah I mean it's and then

and then also there's just the the
further confoundment of the idea that
from an unenlightened point of view
there is no enlightenment there. I mean
there's like an unenlightened person can
have an idea about enlightenment but
that idea is going to be unenlightened.
Their I mean their criteria for judging
whether somebody is enlightened or not
is going to be unenlightened. And so an
unlightened person is just going to be
looking at the world through
unenlightened glasses, unenlightenment
tinged glasses. And so even the people
they think are enlightened really their
whole criteria criterion criteria for
for judging whether another person is

light is going to be
unenlightened. So in a way it's it's
sort of like a Zen Buddhist way of
looking at things. I I derived the idea
from the sutra the platform sutra of Hui
Ning where he says once you become
enlightened you look around and see that
everybody else is enlightened. You know,
it's like you're from an enlightened
point of view, you look around and it's
it's all like
nirvana. Whereas, if you're
unenlightened, you look around and you
just see unenlightenment. You see
samsara. So, there's that, too.
But if I just had to guess offhand,

Echart Tollola, he had some kind of realization, but I really cannot say just how advanced he is from like a more traditional point of view like establishment Buddhism or establishment Hinduism. I really can't say. And Alan Watts, I just have insufficient data to really have much of an idea. There's um a lot of you probably know who what's his name? Ken Ken Wheeler, you know, the the tattooed monkey guy that I mean, he says Alan Watts is just flatout evil. But then again, Ken Wheeler says that Trader Joe's grocery stores are also flatout
evil. So, I guess the correct answer to Huie Cheer's question is I don't know.

And and based on like the information
that I have regarding these two
gentlemen, I don't think it would even
be possible to know unless I was like
some sort of fully enlightened being
with psychic powers and could just see
them clearly, you know, more clearly
than an unenlightened person sitting in
the same room with
them. But just because you sound like
you got it doesn't necessarily mean that
you got it.
And I'm going to move on to the next
question. This is from Fred and Fred
says, "Does celibacy have any
metaphysical

merit and I mean outward acts or outward absence of acts really is not meritorious. It's it's all it's all mental. So whether celibacy has any metaphysical merit or not depends on your mental states. And as a general rule, it does. I mean it's it's meritorious in a way you know it gets you closer to enlightenment or at least it can for a lot of people which is why the Buddha apparently also Jesus of Nazareth many other spiritual teachers have encouraged celibacy but it doesn't work for everybody just like Jesus says with regard to his three kinds of unix you know there's those who are born unix

those who are made unix and those who are unix for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. And then the next thing he says is it's not for everybody because some people they'll they'll be celibate, but then they're just horny as hell all the time. You know, it's like a starving man just thinking about food all the time. You got some celibate renuncient just thinking about sex all the time. I mean, it can happen. I was like that sometimes. So, I mean, you can get demerit from being celibate, too. If that's the kind of celibate you are, just I mean you're just scoping out every female that you come across. I

mean, a lot of guys who aren't celibate
are like that too. Like Ram Doss pointed
out that that there's some people, some
guys especially, they go to a party,
they just immediately categorize
everybody into three categories. There's
women that you could possibly score
with. There's guys who are like
competition for the women you could
possibly score with. And then there's
just like insignificant nobodyies that
you don't pay any attention
to. So if you're celibate and you have
this kind of
attitude, you know, even just
potentially, then yeah, you're going to
get demerit too. But in Buddhism, it's

not all black or white. It's almost impossible to do anything that's pure good or pure evil. It's always a shade of gray.

So for some people celibacy is light gray and for other people celibacy can be dark gray. I mean you got like prison inmates in prison who I mean they're celibate. I mean they're sort of like incelss. I guess either that or they're just buggering some twink if you'll pardon the expression. But there are some who just like are staunchly heterosexual and so they're going to be celibate in prison, but that doesn't

make them saints.

So yeah, so celibacy

um just celibacy in and of itself is

sort of like ethically neutral because

it's the mental states that really

determine whether something is good or

bad, meritorious or unmmerritorious,

wholesome or unh wholesome. As it turns

out though, I mean, some actions are

extremely difficult to do with wholesome

mental states, which is one rise, one

reason why there's precepts, you know,

don't steal, don't lie, that kind of

thing, because it's difficult to steal

or lie without having unh wholesome

mental states that are creating bad

karma for

yourself. But celibacy in general is considered to be a good thing in terab Buddhism. And as a general rule, at least a person who is sincerely trying to live a dharmic life than celibacy is better than the alternative from the traditional terra Buddhist point of view that's found all the way back in in the poly texts. You know, it's it's pretty it's pretty strenuously stressed in the poly texts that, you know, the Buddha says you should avoid having sex with a woman the way you would avoid falling into a deep pit of burning coals. This kind of

thing.

So, it's not for
everybody. And I'm just going to move on
to the next question. This is from
Austin.
And Austin says, "If I wiped everyone's
mind of the number three, would three
still exist?" No, it would not.
I mean, even if you're a nominalist, you
reject
some three up in Plato's heaven, you
know, like the the primordial three
that's supposed to exist and it just
sort of infuses with threeness any group
of three or just the abstract idea of
three like when people are doing math,
that kind of thing. If nobody's thinking
of it, it doesn't exist.

I mean multiplicity doesn't exist unless somebody is thinking of it and that would include threeness. So I think I'm just going to move on. Next question. This from Xenithoid. I'm going to check to see if we are recording. Yeah, we are. At least it says we are. Okay. Xenithoid says, "Well, I definitely this is this is sort of like three complicated kind of longish political economic questions, I think." Anyway, Xenithoid says, "While I definitely consider myself a social conservative, I know that I don't know [__] about economics or political theory. If I were to seriously and

objectively research these topics, I may either become a classic far-right conservative or a social conservative or fiscal liberal, which I guess would be the opposite of libertarian. Apparently, there is a political party called National Bullsheism or Nazbull, which combines right-wing social positions and traditionalism with left-wing economic theory. This is not the only socially conservative and fiscally liberal political party, but it seems to be the most popular one and actually has some prominence in places like Russia. Perhaps this ideology can fix the mistake Markx made in believing

the blank slate theory while still
keeping potentially good points from his
economics. Have you ever heard of or had
any experience with Nazbs?
No. Long question, one syllable answer.
No, I've never heard of I've never heard
of national bolsheviks. And I'm I'm not
sure if his next question or questions
are going to refer to this in further
detail, but I mean
socialism, it's really kind of an an
ethical like a conundrum. It's it's like
if you don't have socialism, you know,
it's
like you don't have like the government,
you don't have a welfare state, let's

say. So, I mean, you're going to have people who are just hitting rock bottom, just freezing to death in the wintertime, maybe starving to death, dying of easily curable diseases, this kind of stuff. And I mean from a just a hardnosed nationalist point of view or just like a Darwinian point of view that wouldn't necessarily be a bad thing. It's like the weak are just, you know, the misfits are just being purged by Darwin, you know, and it's the strong are are succeeding, which should be a good thing, at least from that point of view. Whereas in socialism, I mean, it has its bad points. It's like it it like lifts up the like the people that can't

really compete, you know, it keeps them going and they're able to just keep reproducing and have children that also can't compete. So, from a Darwinian point of view, it's it's kind of I mean, you don't really have devol devolution, but it's it's it's kind of tending in that direction. You know, it's causing what Edward Dutton is always ranting about how, you know, you've just got all these like mutation mutational load and lowered intelligence and so forth because it's like you don't have the the least capable of competing dying out. And so it's in a way it's visiating the species, visiating the population. is

making it less robust, less intelligent,
less strong,
etc. But from an ethical point of view,
you should have
compassion. So, I mean, personally, I
mean, I I I ranted a little bit about
this in a previous Q&A, possibly the one
right before this, where I mean, it's
not good to let people just starve to
death or freeze to death. I mean, there
should be some compassion and you should
help them. It'd be better though, first
of all, if it's private private charity
instead of just paying more taxes and
letting the government do it because if
it's private charity, not only do you
not have a socialist welfare state, but

you get to choose who you're going to help for starters, and also you're gathering up treasures in heaven. I mean you are doing something meritorious by helping somebody with your own volition rather than just having money deducted from your paycheck as taxes. And then some bureaucracy, some corrupt bureaucracy may be, you know, distributing like a percentage of that, certainly not all of it, to poor people who are then using the money to buy nachos and and purple drink and just having diabetes, all these health problems from like just foolish choices and just having having packs of kids

that they also can't really take care

of.

So I really don't think that uh

Marxism or like some sort of cons like

socially conservative socialism I mean

it'd be an improvement over like

degenerate

socialism but socialism in general

should be kept to a minimum and it would

be better to just promote as much as you

can private charity to help people in

need. And that's the way it used to be

back when Western civilization was

predominantly Christian. It would be

like churches would take care of the

poor. People would donate to their

church, they'd pass the plate around or

whatever, and then there'd be church groups that would be helping the poor. And that would be preferable to having the government do it. But I'm not even answering the questions. I mean, the the answer to the question is just a simple no because I've never heard of or had any experience with Nazbulls. So, I'm just going to move on to uh Xenithoid's second question, which is, do you think social conservatism and fiscal liberalism are compatible? And that's that's the actual question. But some people including um Xenithoid like having like some

explanatory commentary to kind of fill out the question I guess make sure that I don't answer the wrong question or some such. So after saying do you think social conservatism and fiscal liberalism are compatible? He says, "I'm sure many of the most hardened commies from the Russian Revolution would vomit at modern leftist moral degeneracy, even if they were fed up with what was considered traditional at the time." While I don't think early Christianity is a good example of social right, fiscal left political thought, as they would have been the social lefties of their day, many modern Christians are appalled by capitalism for its mammon

worship. There's actually a subreddit called
r/conservative socialist with a lot of people on it who seem sensible enough which makes me more interested in this obscure section of the political landscape. Okay. So, getting up here, social conservatism, which is like having moral
standards, like traditional conservative, old-fashioned moral standards, which I mean, there's can be all kinds of different kinds of social conservatism. I'm assure Buddhist social conservatism would be very different from Muslim social

conservatism. and fiscal
liberalism. Well, I mean, liberalism is
kind of a weird word because
um a lot of people in in America,
especially like people who vote
Republican, consider liberals to just be
any any person who's leftwing. So, that
even like a a Marxist would be called
liberal, which I don't I just don't see
that.
So fiscal
liberalism, social conservatism and
fiscal liberalism. So fiscal liberalism
I would assume would be a welfare state
or at the very least you've going to
have the government having some
socialized tasks like you know re up

until relatively recently the postal
service had kind of a government
socialized monopoly on sending mail.
Now, of course, you've got other groups
that are doing it even a little better
in some
cases or, you know, just like taking
care of roads, maintaining public
property because they don't realize that
it's socialized that, you know, they can
be on board with
that. But fiscal liberalism, I I assume
it means like a welfare state. It's like
the poor people just get checks from the
government, you know, low income, public
housing, that kind of

thing. So, do I think social conservative and fiscal liberalism are compatible? Yeah. I mean, they can they could fit together. I mean, it would make the the fiscal liberalism or like the economic leftism uh a little more stable, a little less self-destructive because when you've got like social leftism, which is just anything goes, you know, it's kind of libertarianism with no ethical principles really holding it, you know, just keeping it on track, just anything goes. And then when you combine that with a welfare state, then really it's just sort of a toboggon ride downwards. But again, I'm not nearly as

left-wing economically as I was in my
younger days. Not even then. I was sort
of like a social eco libertarian.
And I was endorsing pretty much what I
endorsed just a matter of minutes ago
where it's like, you know, you shouldn't
allow some
law-abiding citizen to freeze to death
or starve to death or die of some easily
curable disease that they should get
sort of a bare minimum at least enough
to keep them
healthy. At least with regard to easily
curable diseases, I don't think the
government should necessarily fork out
millions of dollars to give someone some

long difficult cancer treatment that maybe is only, you know, 20% likely to save the person anyway. That's when when you have socialized health care, you have the government playing God, deciding who is going to survive and who isn't. Sort of like triage on in like a battlefield hospital.

And then it becomes corrupt too because the government always becomes corrupt. So what is the actual question? Do I think social conservatism and fiscal liberalism are compatible? Yeah, in theory it's it's compatible and I think social conservatism would combine with fiscal liberalism better than

social liberalism would combine with
fiscal
liberalism because people would be
encouraged to be self-sufficient. they'd
be encouraged to get a job instead of
having just being on welfare, being like
an unwed mother on welfare, having that
be seen as a viable career
choice. Then back not too long ago,
women were
shamed into being wed mothers instead of
unwed ones.
But when you've got the government just
sending you
money, then you can just do as you
please, sort

of. So, I guess I answered that question. I'm going to move on to Xenithoid's third question, which is an equally long question.

So, have there ever been any attempts at a kind of social at a kind of Buddhist communism or Buddhist socialism that were still genuinely in line with Buddhist ethics and tradition? That's the question. And then he continues, I'd like to think that there have been at least some Buddhist political leaders groups who really did want to help the poor without getting swept up in the [__] of Western liberal ideology. While the Buddha definitely wasn't a kami with an

attachment to lay people having perfect easy lives, he did express some fiscal liberalism in the sutas such as saying poverty causes crime and that there should be some redistribution of wealth. However, I think Buddhism is fundamentally opposed to communist ideals in spirit because it is above the flourishing of a small spiritual it is about the flourishing of a small spiritual elite where only the best of the best achieve the goal. not a please do all the work for me religion like Christianity. Buddhism requires a kind of leisure class in monastics and certainly isn't set on making an earthly

utopia. The desire to always have all your material needs met as if it would ever end your suffering is fundamentally [__] and unbddhist. Okay, so let's get up to the actual question. Have there ever been any attempts at a kind of Buddhist communism or Buddhist socialism that were still genuinely in line with Buddhist ethics and tradition? Well, I mean the emperor Ashoka would have been uh like a a prototype of that because I mean he was definitely into Buddhism. the emperor Ashoka of India definitely Buddhist and he was trying to rule through Dharma where he's trying to keep like law enforcement and that kind of stuff to a minimum where

what was supposed to govern the country and just sort of keep it like regularized is just he's just promoting Dharma and just encouraging everybody to be as dharmic as they can. And then he was sort of relying on like a kind of honor system where people would live dharmic lives. But at the same time, he he set up like hospitals even he set up like veterinary hospitals where people could go or they could bring their dog or whatever and be treated for free. So that's kind of a step towards socialism. you know it would be libertarianism kind of but it would be guided by you know Buddhist

principles and then he had a kind of primitive socialism going. So there is that and also I might as well mention that back around the 19 80s I think Burma they had the it was like the Burmese I can't remember exactly what the slogan was. It was the Burmese approach to socialism that they were going to have a kind of Buddhist socialism, but of course it's run by a military dictatorship. And so it's kind of like the mafia trying to run a Buddhist socialist state and it didn't work at all. You know, at the very beginning, the government just comes in and just um what is it? not socializes, but what

what is it when the the government just like confiscates your your business, you know, it's the opposite of privatizing it. That that happened a lot. They were like prosperous shop owners and so forth in Burma. And then when the the Burmese military government decided they're going to try to be socialists, they're going to be Buddhist socialists, they just confiscate people's shops and things just went downhill from there. So there have been attempts. I think Ashoka's attempt even though it probably wasn't extremely socialist, not by modern standards. Nevertheless, you know, it was encouraging compassion. He

was no doubt encouraging private charity as much as he could. not only to lighten the load on on the government but also to like encourage people to earn merit through helping the poor and so forth. And even like Islam does the same, Christianity does the same, Judaism does the same. At least in the texts, it encourages people to help the poor. But of course, even when Christianity was pretty much universal with all this emphasis on help the poor, you still had people starving to death and freezing to death and so

forth. So I guess I answered that question. Let's just move on to the next one, which is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, "I sometimes attend meditation sessions and dharma talks at my local Buddhist temple. In addition to offering meditation and dharma discussions, this temple also hosts kung fu classes. Is there any historical and/or philosophical link between Buddhism and any of the martial arts? If so, which ones and how?" Well, I don't know if Romeo is American. If he is American, he's not old enough to remember the old kung fu TV show which is about Shaolin monks in China who I mean Shaolin monks their their dharma practice is sort of like their meditative practice consists largely of

martial

arts. Um you know it's just sort of

like uh I don't know how to explain it

really. It's just like you're in the

present moment. You're not thinking. you

just you just become a master of martial

arts through just being you know in

harmony with the moment and then they

can like throw spears at you and you're

just dodging the spears and so forth. So

I mean obviously Shaolin Buddhism which

is a kind of Mahayana Buddhism in China

and nowadays there's like the original

Shaolin monastery in China that I think

the government just allowed it to

continue for tourism purposes. They're

they make money from the tourism and I

don't know how how much the the monks there are really interested in Dharma. is more of just kind of a martial arts school

maybe. But when Mahayana Buddhism, yeah, I mean there's all kinds of all kinds of stuff, you know, it's sort of like the strictness of the early Indian schools just got blown wide open and and almost anything goes. Tantric Buddhism just you can do all these things that in the early text is just strictly prohibited. For there's an one one example also with regard to Burma is that before the Burmese converted to terra Buddhism at the decree of King Anorata of

Pagan that they mainly were following a kind of tantric Buddhism called Mahari and it's not Maharia like the the great nobles it's I think it's comes from the word arana in in Pali which or Sanskrit which means forest. So it's like the the great forest tradition, but they drank alcohol and they ate they ate in the afternoon and apparently they had what is called the youth pre-main noctis which means that before a girl got married some village girl got married on her the night before her wedding night she got sent to the monastery to learn the the ways of love or whatever.

But these Mahari monks also practiced a kind of boxing which I mean that's could

might be a mistransation into English. It could be some kind of martial arts, maybe some kind of kickboxing or something. But it does happen, especially in Mahayana, not nearly so much in Terravada. If you've got martial arts like monks practicing martial arts like maybe like Thai monks or Burmese monks doing Thai or Burmese kickboxing just sort of as an amateur you know amongst themselves at the monastery or something. They would be considered lax, sloppy, shameless monks. Probably happens, but it would not be the most serious, conscientious monks who were doing that sort of thing

in terra Mahayana is a whole different story. So, I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from

Quistor. And quisetur says, "When a being comes out of hell, do they need to recover from the trauma or is all that forgotten in their new life?" Um, it kind of reminds me of something Rahm Doss said in one of his books about how you can kind of tell if a baby is coming from above or

below. Um cuz like a baby who has had a fortunate, you know, pre-birth experience or, you know, just sort of a um a tendency

towards pleasant, you know, nonharmful

pre-birth experiences, you know, in their previous life. They're happy babies. They don't cry a lot. They're not as fussy. They trust strangers, you know, like some stranger can come hold the baby. The baby's fine with it. Whereas other babies who did not come from higher up, you know, they're they cry a lot. They're fussy. They they'll just start screaming if someone they don't know picks them up, that kind of thing. So, yeah, I think a being who comes out of hell and is born as a human, they probably would still have a lot of baggage from their previous, you know, eons of torment. you know, they

would not be just a happy go-lucky,
cheerful kind of person who trusts
strangers and so forth. That they would
probably be um relatively unhappy kinds
of people just from the like the
momentum of their past life and just you
know it's had their it's had its effect
on
them. But I can't really speak from my
own personal experience because I do do
not recall having been in hell before I
was
born. And so I'm just going to move on.
Next question. This is from
PSA. And PSA has got more than four
three questions here.
Um, but since two at least two of his

questions are extremely simple questions to answer, I think I might let this slide even though he's he's tried to to like trick me here. So, his first question is, "What are your thoughts on the show Black Mirror? Never saw it. I don't think I've ever even heard of it. No idea. Utterly clueless." PSA's second question. Which Netflix show or movie would you recommend with subliminal or unintentional Buddhist lessons? I don't have Netflix. I don't watch Netflix. We had Netflix like a couple years ago. Didn't watch it a whole heck of a lot. Um, I think maybe The Walking Dead was on Netflix, even though it didn't

originally appear on Netflix, but I think they they were showing The Walking Dead, which is like the only the only show I was watching on Netflix back then. And but there was also a series called The Crown that my woman and I watched, which was about Queen Elizabeth II. Um, but I mean, that's it. That's my that's my uh my knowledge of Netflix. I really I mean I I can't really answer this question either. I couldn't recommend any Netflix shows or movies with subliminal or unintentional Buddhist lessons. I mean if if The Walking Dead really is on Netflix, then you you got recollection of

death, that kind of thing. And that's

that's about

it. So I'm just going to move on to

PSA's third question.

which is as follows. When you lived in a

cave in Burma, did you actually live

there the whole time or did you spend

the day in the cave and go back to your

cootie at night? I'm just worried about

you being bitten by ticks at night and

harassed by bats. Well, you don't have

to be worried because I'm not there

anymore. Um, and I think you'd be more

likely to be bitten by ticks in a hut

than in a cave. I just I would just

guess

offhand. Um, let's see here. Did I actually live? Yeah, I mean when I lived in a cave, I didn't have a cootouti. Usually the cave would have like a thatched roof in front of it either like a butting the side of the cave or else you know it'd be like, you know, 15 feet in front of the cave. There'd just be like this little platform, you know, like a bamboo platform with a thatched roof or a bamboo roof and um I'd like eat my meals there because you don't want to eat meals in a cave. If you live in a cave, you're better off not eating your meals there because just one crumb falls onto the floor without you noticing. there's going to be an ant

finds it and then it's gonna alert its entire colony and you're gonna have just thousands of ants looking for the second crump.

So, I would go out um in in the morning and eat my meal under the the roof, you know, sitting on the the bamboo platform. Um but I would sleep inside the cave, spend the days inside the cave. I just pretty much live inside the cave most of the time. And the only time I was harassed by bats,

um the the main cave that I lived in, I lived in this cave for gosh at least eight

years. Um, at first there was no well, it had a wooden door and it had like mosquito mesh over this the window which was it's kind of like windows like this. And because of the mosquito mesh, there was almost no air circulation inside that cave. And so it was just too stuffy for me to really sleep inside that cave with the doors closed. I'd have to leave the doors open at night and then bats would come in and then I would have to get up before dawn and close the doors so that the bats couldn't spend the night there because I mean you don't want bats spending the night in your cave if it's like a an like an enclosed small

cave. Um, I mean, for starters, it takes like two weeks off your lifespan. Every time you're trying to do walking meditation inside this cave, and this bat just swoops right at your face. I mean, it's two weeks off your life right there. And also, this they they pee where they're hanging upside down and it just stinks. And they're kind of creepy looking. If you ever seen a bat close up, you know, there's there was a couple times where um you know, I' I'd wake up after dawn and the the bat had already come inside and you cannot get rid of a bat. I mean, you can't get a bat to fly out into broad daylight. It's just going

to do everything it can to avoid going out into broad daylight. And you just look at it close up and they're like vibrating and they got like these little gargoyle faces and they're like kind of vibrating all the time. It's just weird. So eventually within a relatively short time, one of the first um modifications I made to that cave was to get a kind of chicken wire uh screen door put up, you know, with, you know, like spaces, you know, this big, you know, like an inch across that bats couldn't get through. You know, it kept out mostly rats, bats, humans, and

snakes. Um, so bats weren't a problem there. Also, when I lived at Alando

Cathopa National Park, there was a great big cave there. And I mean, just the opening of it was like 100 ft wide and like 30 ft high. So, there were bats in there, but it was such a a spacious cave, they didn't bother me. I mean, there's a few times they were actually kind of helpful where I'd be doing walking meditation at night and there'd be like a mosquito, you know, you could hear this mosquito whining around me and then a bat would whip by and then it'd be silent. You know, it just zipped in to get the mosquito and and took off again. Although, there was one time I was sitting in that cave and I felt

something on my arm. I looked down. I'm looking right up into the looking right down into the face of this little gargoyle. This little bat was just like clinging to my shoulder right there. So, yeah, ticks. I never had much of a problem with ticks. I mean, that was You live out in the forest, then just walking through the trails, you're more likely to get ticks than if you're just staying by yourself. Bed bugs are a different matter. I mean, bed bugs, you have to always be on the alert. First time my cave got infested with bed bugs, I didn't know what they were. I'd never seen a bed bug before. I thought they were like baby cockroaches or something.

And then one day I'm reading a book in my cave and one of them is crawling across the book. So I just kind of flick it off like this and it splattered bright red blood. And I have a degree in biology. I know that insects don't have bright red blood but that I do. And then I realized and I started looking for them and they were just everywhere. I mean, it was an ordeal getting rid of those bed bugs, especially for a Buddhist monk who's not supposed to be killing them. You're not supposed to be using poisons and so forth. Although, you are allowed by Vineia to take your bedding and spread it out in the sun,

which pretty much kills the bed bugs because even if the sunlight and the heat doesn't kill them, the ants find them. And then you've got like this ant highway of ants carrying little bed bugs back to their nest.

So, I'm I'm giving really long rambling answers to to questions here. So, I guess the question is, when you lived in a cave in Burma, did you actually live there the whole time or did you spend the day in the cave and go back to your cootie at night? Didn't have a cootie. And in fact, in Burma, you talk about a cooty, that's that's the bathroom. That's the outhouse that uh I mean like a a monk's

hut would be his kamatan jou his

meditation building or something. Kudi

just usually in in Burmese means a

monastery

outouse but kudi in pali does mean a

hut. So yeah, I just pretty much lived

in the cave all the time and would just

spend the

mornings out

outside. I' I'd meet visitors and so

forth outside. And so now PSA has his

transgressive py question. He's got

question number

pi and he says, "Do you hold any

resentment in your heart towards the

nontacionics?"

And no, I I'm I'm pretty I'm I'm forgiving of the non-tackian onx. And then and then he says, "Notice that pi is valid number safely placed between three and four. Not quite four yet. Therefore, no transgression has been committed." But yeah, actually has because the limit is three. Anything more than three is is transgressive. Even if it's not all the way to four yet, three is the limit. Three shall be the number of the count. Okay. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Sedarta lohachittita which is like uh sida is like accomplishment or

attainment attainment

achieved copper mind something like

that. So anyways, Sedarta Lohachita

says, "Acting with determination or

adana can overcome bad

karma." Or acting with determination is

also a mental

karma. If you decide to act with

determination with clarity of purpose

without doubt, are you creating the

force of your

life? Or at some point, can the stream

of past karmas prevent you from

fulfilling that will?

So if you were paying attention, you may

have noticed that there are four

question marks in what is supposedly one question and that's not even his only question. So anyways, let's try to let's try to tease out what the actual question is

here. So it's with regard to determination or adana which is one of the 10 parameies in terara Buddhism. Determination, unflinching determination. Okay. Can it overcome bad karma or acting with determination is also a mental karma? Well, I mean it's like a quality of your karma. I mean determination is like just unflinching. I mean it's it's like more I want to say determined. It's just it's like unwavering. It's like, you know, like a

determined action would be like an unwavering action that you're that you're not going to give up halfway through. So, I mean, that could be something good or something bad. I mean, it is considered to be one of the 10 parameies, one of the 10 perfections in terara Buddhism. So, I mean, it is considered to be a good thing. I mean, you have to have a certain determination to to attain the goal. unflinching determination. But I mean, it can also be something bad. I mean, you're just absolutely determined to get revenge on some enemy, then that would not be

meritorious determination

there. So, can acting with determination

overcome bad karma? Well, I mean,

overcoming bad karma, I'm not exactly

sure what Sedarta is referring to here.

I mean, bad karma, I mean, it's once

it's there, it's got to run its

course. So, you're not going to make it

disappear. You're not going to make it

become less really through

determination, through acting with

determination now. You know, it's

already too late. You know, it's closing

the barn door after the horse has gotten

out.

So yeah, it's

like determination is like a quality of

your mental states that you know it's just sort of like a an intensifier so to speak. So let's see here. If you decide to act with determination with clarity of purpose without doubt or you creating the force of your life. Yeah. I mean it's still I mean it's still karma. Yeah, I mean definitely you're still creating karma. I mean in fact it could be a stronger kind of karma. So if you're doing a meritorious deed with determination, it's going to strengthen the karma of that meritorious deed. If you're doing a demerritorious deed with determination, it can strengthen the demerit. So or at some point can the

stream of past karmas prevent you from

fulfilling that will? Um, I mean you can

have

uh like mental momentum. That's

essentially what karma is. It's like the

momentum of your mental

states, kind of the momentum of your

stream of consciousness, so to speak.

Um, it won't nec I mean it can

effectively prevent you from fulfilling

some

determination.

Um but I mean

still I mean you can you can overcome

that if you try hard enough if you have

sufficient

determination or it may be that you've

got determination not to give up and then you just can't do it. It's like the karmic conditions are just preventing you. I mean you're just going to like die before you get there. That kind of thing. So that's possible.

And I'm just going to move on to Sedarta's next question after the first question had four question marks which is let's see here it's all in quotes for some reason. I have a very rational mind. Sometimes I'd even say too rational or maybe too western. I know that faith is a shield, but for me, I find it very difficult to believe in Dava's heavenly realms or the Buddha's

miracles as the Tibetans describe them. Do you think it's possible to reach enlightenment purely through reason or puna? Well, according to terabora, it is not possible to reach enlightenment purely through reason or puna because pa or reason in this case is one of the five balas, one of the five powers or also strangely it's one of the five faculties or the five indrias and four of these faculties or powers are paired up. So pa which here means more reason than than really wisdom is paired up with faith. Sad and pa there they have to be in balance. If you have too much of one you have too much faith and not enough reason then

you can believe anything no matter how ridiculous it is. But if you have too much reason and not enough faith you become skeptical to the point of just it just kind of immobilizes you. And the wisi ma which is the main commentarial work in terabara Buddhism says that a person with too much pa not enough sadda is like a person who is sick and their sickness is caused by the medicine that they
take. So if you just try to make it through pure
reason then I mean pure reason can't really motivate anything. It's the faith that motivates you.

[Music]

So, I mean I mean you wouldn't even really be practicing if you didn't have enough faith. That's one thing I used to say like I'm kind of the same way that I prefer reason to faith. I consider faith to be ultimately delusional. Faith is, you know, believing something that you don't have sufficient grounds to believe. You know, thinking that you know something that you don't really know, that kind of thing. And so I would tell people in Burma, you know, I I just don't have much faith. I'm more PA oriented. And they say, 'Well, I mean, you're you're dressed in monks robes. You've traveled halfway around the world

to live in this blazing hot wasteland with people that you you didn't grow up with. You don't know them. I mean, that that requires a certain amount of faith, doesn't it? And I had to admit, yeah, I guess so. I can say that I don't have much faith, but nevertheless, I was inspired to become a Buddhist monk with the intention of becoming enlightened or at least to get as close to it as I could manage. That kind of thing. So, I actually did have probably more faith than I realized. And I mean, if you're a Buddhist, it's there's going to be a certain amount of faith involved. You know, it's like before you

become enlightened, you still have to have faith in the idea that there is such a state as enlightenment. You have to believe without any proof that there was actually a person called God Buddha who taught this stuff and that he was enlightened. So, I mean, you could sort of rationalize it and call it convenient working
hypothesis, but still it it's pretty much a more a matter of faith than reason. that is if it's going to be motivating you to practice even that is more a matter of faith than
reason like uh Emanuel Kant said I don't know if he said it in his critique of pure reason but he did say that and

David Hume was the same that pure reason
can't motivate
anything that you have to have like
value judgments in order to inspire you
to actually
act. So that may be where your faith
comes in in addition to just believing
that Buddhism is true without any actual
proof of
it. I mean some aspects of Buddhism you
can you can see the truth of it like if
you have enough insight if you have if
you're capable of introspection you can
see that the first and second noble
truths are pretty self-evident and the
third noble truth I mean that's just a

logical consequence of the second noble truth I mean if if all desire is caused by if all suffering is caused by desire then if you don't have the desire you don't have the suffering So it's like the third noble truth is just a logical consequence of the second. The faith comes in mainly with the fourth noble truth and that's

practice. So considering that Sedarta lohachita technically asked five questions because there are five question marks, I'm going to move on to the next question which is from dimensional fuse. So he probably got teased a lot when he was a kid in school.

with a name like that. And he says, "You mentioned before that psychedelics were a spiritual activity for you. You just mentioned taking Iawasa, too." That was in the previous Q&A. Is this still a part of your spiritual journey? Or since your time as a monk, is it no longer useful or
helpful?
Well, yeah. Before I became a monk, psychedelics were kind of my spiritual practice. Like I've mentioned before, I' I'd go off into a a forest by myself, you know, some remote wilderness area and and like take LSD, that kind of thing. And I when I was younger, almost

always I'd have religious experiences

when I when I would take

LSD.

Um but mainly now I mean I have taken

similar substances

uh after I stopped being a monk. took

took let's see even when I was a monk as

I've gotten older though I've noticed it

has a different effect on me that LSD

um when I was younger I mean it would

just kind of blow my mind wide open and

um you know like almost always I'd have

religious experiences as I got older it

was it would cause sort of a headachy

feeling and it didn't have as as

profound as an effect on me as it did

when I was younger. So there's that. I

mean Iaska is kind of in a class by
itself because it's not nearly such a
head trip. It's more of a visceral thing
for
me. Um but still I mean I have had um
like religious experiences on
psychedelics
um you know within the past 10
years. Um, but I mean, one of the
reasons why I don't take it nearly as
much as I did when I was younger is I
just don't have any
connections. I wouldn't know where to
get
it. So, I'm just doing fine without it.
You got a woman now who worries about

stuff like that

anyway. So, I mean, there's there's also

that as kind of a foot on the brakes.

But there is a good chance that I will

do it again

someday. And I guess I should just uh

move on to the next question. But uh

yeah, I mean I would be taking it more

often if the guy who lived next door

happened to have a good supply of of

such substances, that kind of

thing, which is not the case now.

So I just I mean you just take life as

it comes you know you just deal the hand

that you are

dealt and so I'm just going to move on

to the next question here and this is

from throat lorbeller mangrove I believe that is how you pronounce his name spelled k r i e l and he says is consuming cannabis against the fifth precept of taking no intoxicants and I've discussed this For a fact, I think I've done an entire video on this with uh my friend Brian. Maybe, maybe not. But in like just dealing with monks, like the the rules of monastic discipline. And if it's okay for monks, it should be okay for lay people too because the rules are much stricter for monks than for lay people. And monks are allowed to use banga or cannabis for medicinal purposes. In

fact, the rules of monastic discipline even allow a monk to own a pipe for inhaling the fumes of burning medicinal substances. Doesn't spec specify that it's just for cannabis, but it does specify that monks can use cannabis so long as it is for legitimate medicinal purposes. Whereas, um, doing it recreationally would be against the rules. At the very least, it would be a dooka offense, a minor offense of wrongdoing for taking a medicinal substance without there being a legitimate medical need for it. But I have to admit, when I was a monk, I did smoke cannabis um quite a few times, especially my last maybe 10 years as a

monk because that's when I started
dealing with Westerners, I think.
Um, yeah, it's it's almost every single
time I got any weed as a monk, it was
some westerner giving it to me. And I
was starting to meet more Westerners,
especially in Burma after like
2012, I guess, when Burma kind of opened
up. 2011 or 12 started being more
Westerners coming into the country and
then they'd be like offering me offering
me a a hit off their pipe or something.
But uh that was it's kind of like a
borderline like I mean I'd be taking it
partly
for spiritual reasons in a sense sort of

like the psychedelics I mentioned in the in the previous question where it it can have like beneficial effects. I mean cannabis for me it's not so much mind expanding you know it's not like necessarily lifting you up to a higher level of consciousness but you're stepping sideways you know it's like it's you're having like an alternative kind of consciousness which can actually give you insights it's it can help you kind of triangulate on samsara a little better that you have more than one point of view and it it kind of helps you acknowledge that your usual way of looking at the world isn't necessarily the only way or the right way. It's just

one of many ways of looking at the world and then you you know you you take a bong hit or eat a gummy or whatever and then you're all of a sudden you're you're like sideways a little bit and you're looking at the same things from a different perspective and and it can kind of loosen your grip on attachment to some version of samsara. But if you're just doing it to get high, like as a way of escaping, then that's not so good. I mean, um, cannabis, I mean, it can be like alcohol, too, which is strictly prohibited. It's against the rules for a monk to drink alcohol even by accident.

If he just accidentally drinks something
alcoholic, he's got to make confession
for that. He has broken the rules.
So in a way cannabis is considered not
as bad as alcohol in orthodox terra
Buddhism but still if you're doing it
for recreational purposes
then it would be it'd probably go under
the the precept of you know I undertake
the the precept of abstaining from ale
wine and other intoxicants which cause
cloudedness of mind. So if if the
cannabis is just kind of dumbing you
out, you know, sort of like narcotics or
something, just kind of putting you into
a, you know, kind of a
stuper, then yeah, that's not

good. But for me, it's like I I' I'd
have these urges to do walking
meditation if I would get high as a
monk. You know, it's just walking
meditation goes much it's it's so much
nicer for some
reason. But it's it's going to
definitely be dependent upon your mental
states like your
attitude that just an outward act is uh
is sort of morally neutral. It's the the
mental states associated with that act.
So, if you've got glaucoma or something
and cannabis helps with that or you've
got some other kind of it I mean it
could even be like a psychological just

like stress, you know, stress could be considered a kind of medical problem and it just helps you to relax and calm down, that kind of thing. So long as it's not stupifying you, then that could be a legitimate uh use for it. But that would be controversial. You'd have people, you know, like like the the hard-nosed like moralists would say, "No, that's just wrong. You shouldn't do it." And then other people say, "Well, I mean, you got reasons for taking it, you know." But yeah, I've I definitely prefer cannabis to alcohol personally.

Anyways, is I'm just getting back to the

question though. is consuming cannabis against the fifth precept of taking no intoxicants. It depends on the circumstances and it depends on your motivation, your reasons for taking it. And I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Ryan. Ryan says, "I've watched several of your videos with Ajan Punadamo. Your your knowledge depth reminds me of Biku Samita, RI, from Denmark. He committed a word that you're not supposed to say on YouTube. Do you know who this beu was? His vids are still on YouTube. And I had never heard of him until I happened to meet somebody who knew him. And so I I

learned about this this Danish monk Samita from this other person who was telling me about him, how they had been communicating and so forth. And how this this beu I think it was after his father died or something. It was like he had some kind of episode that he kind of became unhinged or some such. At least he appeared that way to people who knew him and then he selfdeleted. Um, but yeah, I've I can't recall. I might have seen briefly like one video from him, but it didn't make much of an impression on me. And so I I really do not recall him. I don't remember what he looked like or any such thing.

And so I guess I might as well just move

on to the next question. This is from Ruie and Ruie says, "Do you think the bodhicattva ideal might have been the result of contacts with early Christianity in the areas of West Asia around the first and second centuries? Uh I consider it unlikely. I mean there are a lot of people who believe that doubting Thomas, the Apostle Thomas actually went to like southwestern India and that there there are actually Christians in southwestern India that have been there since ancient times that considered St. Thomas to be the founder of their Indian um Christian tradition.

But I it's it would have happened so
soon. It's like Mahayana was already
beginning to
arise by the time of Jesus of
Nazareth and the bodhicattva ideal was
probably already well established by the
time Christianity ever found its way in
India.
So what I think happened with the the
the Mahayana bodhicattva ideal, I think
I read got this idea from Francis story
who was like a one of the early western
writers about Buddhism. This is like
back in the
1950s kind of like Edward Kay those kind
of guys and he was saying that um the
bodhicattva ideal which is probably a

mistransation of the polyword bodhic sata that bodhicatta probably has the sata part being a kind of past participle of the verb sadi which is to be bound for to be attached to be dedicated to. So probably bodhic sata in pali meant someone who is bound for enlightenment. It meant someone who wasn't who was destined to become a Buddha but hadn't become a Buddha yet. But apparently early Mahayana Buddhists didn't quite understand the etmology of the word bodhicatta and so they assumed sata meant being. And so a bodhicattva is considered to be a kind of enlightenment being which is kind of

ironic because a

bodhicattva I mean traditionally isn't

someone who is is is someone who's

postponing enlightenment

indefinitely until all beings are saved

even though all beings ultimately don't

exist.

So anyways, you had the the

glorification of the Buddha. Like when

Buddhism became more of a popular

religion, you have more kind of normie

type people who are more

devotionalistic than really inclined to

practice strict dharma for the sake of

becoming enlightened. They want to just

worship, you know, some great being,

some godlike being. And so they started

glorifying the Buddha. And one of the ways that they glorified the Buddha was through jotaka stories where they would there there'd be these stories called jotakas where I mean the a lot of them started off just being fables you know sort of like as fables in India sort of like you find like in a a text of of Indian fables like the punch tantra or something like that where they would just become Buddhasized you know the hero would be the Buddha in a previous life And some of the other um characters in the story would be some of the Buddhist chief disciples. And then at the end of the story, you know, he would

point out, you know, I was this wise rabbit and you know, venerable Sar Puta was the wise otter or or whatever, you know, and anyways with this kind of glorification of the Buddha, it started separating the Buddha from his disciples where he was considered to be just vastly beyond any other enlightened being. So his orant enlightened disciples still were nowhere near to being at the level of the Buddha even though I mean the Buddha was I mean he was essentially saying I became enlightened you can become enlightened too and when you're fully enlightened it doesn't get wiser than that full enlightenment is maximum

wisdom so I do think that the whole idea of a Buddha being just qualitatively way above an ordinary enlightened being. I consider that to be largely the result of the glorification of the Buddha, which is just a human thing. I mean, the Christians turned the founder of their religion into God Almighty. Buddhists didn't go quite that far, but they went a hell of a lot farther than the Muslims did.

So probably the bodhic sava ideal just came from glorification of the Buddha just showing how you know it's so much nobler and better to dedicate just just eons and eons to perfecting all of your

parameies so that you can become fully enlightened without even needing a teacher. And Christianity was I mean it arose around the same time that Mahayana was arising in India. So I don't think that there would be much likelihood of the bodhicattva ideal coming from Christians. And so I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Siovak and Sipad Zidana.

And sea of action sepad zeda says, "You have claimed before that religious figures like Muhammad might have had epileptic seizures and modern neuroiming has shown that people have people having mystical experiences are heavily correlated with the temporal

lobe which is also related to temporal lobe seizures. The same is true when you give people drugs like mushrooms and they claim to have mystical experiences and heavily involve the temporal lobe. Maybe mystical experiences are just the brain shortcircuiting. And since the brain is always trying to explain things and it has no subconscious understanding of itself being a biological computer that shortcircuited. Uhoh. The the my woman's
computer the my backlight or the the light that helps light up the things. Okay, let's go like
this. Now, I was supposed to jiggle the

the mouse every once in a while to keep it from going off, but it didn't work. Okay, I'll just have to jiggle the mouse every now and then, I guess. Okay, let's get back to Sea of Action Cadina before the the computer so rudely interrupted me. Maybe mystical experiences are just the brain shortcircuiting. And since the brain is always trying to explain things and it has no subconscious understanding of itself being a biological computer that's shortcircuited, it comes up with a rationalization that this is somehow something spiritual or divine as something beyond itself and the world. But in reality, rather than being a divine intervention, it's nothing but a

result of being a biological slave to
chemical reaction of the physical brain
and seovacin cadena. you should be
ashamed of
yourself. What do you make of this
theory as a
biologist?
Well, I actually came across this
theory. It was like in Time magazine or
maybe Newsweek magazine. I think it was
when I was a monk and there was I just
went to some place that had this stack
of old Time and Newsweek magazines or
maybe some other monk just bequeathed
onto me this stack of Time and Newsweek
magazines that I was just systematically

looking through just to see all the stuff that I missed in the news over the past 20
years. And they had some article about they were doing some kind of a PET scan. I think it was called posetron emission topography or something like that where um you know they can see what parts of your brain are active when you're doing something or not doing something and so they have somebody meditating like in a deep meditative state I think it was mainly Tibetan monks and they would find that certain areas certain area of your brain that usually is lit up goes dark and then of course the materialists the the pe the followers of science

scientism who are writing the article
are saying there you go. It's like that
part of the your brain that that
acknowledges
multiplicity is goes dark and so it's
just turned off and so you you you have
this illusion that it's all one. But
really, I mean, they just
completely like ignore the possibility
that that part of your brain isn't
acknowledging pre-existing multiplicity.
It is generating
multiplicity. So, let's see here.
Uh, I'm not sure if I claimed that
religious figures like Muhammad may have
had epileptic seizures, but in Dostki's

the idiot, Prince Mishkin, who is like
this Christlike figure who has epilepsy,
thinks about Muhammad, how Muhammad
supposedly he had some kind of made a
trip all the way
to I can't remember if he went to heaven
or not just while the pitcher was
tipping over. It was before any before
any water actually spilled out and hit
the floor already. He had gone to heaven
and back. Something like that. And
Prince Mishkin was thinking, "Yeah, he
must have had epilepsy." Cuz the same
kind of stuff happened to Prince
Mishkin, how he'd have these mystical
experiences right before having an
epileptic

seizure. But the thing is, I mean, your brain, I mean, even scientists will will will tell you this. The purpose of your brain is not to understand reality. The purpose of your brain is to keep you alive long enough that you can have babies. Preferably that you can have babies in such a way that your babies will live long enough to have babies. You've got to you've got to like continue your DNA going.

So the purpose of your brain is not to understand reality. Like the natural brain is not an enlightened I mean the natural brain doing its natural thing is

not

enlightened. So to assume that any

deviation of the function of your brain

from the natural way of things is going

to take you farther away from reality. I

mean that's just wishful thinking unless

you've got some really hard evidence to

support that. In some cases no doubt you

have some kind of brain malfunction.

It's going to take you, well, I don't

know if it's going to take you farther

away from reality, but it's definitely

going to shift you into a different

version of reality that most other

people do not

share. But just because your brain isn't

like functioning normally or naturally,

that doesn't mean that it's that it's whatever the aberration is is going to take you farther away from reality. I mean, it can take you closer to reality. under certain circumstances.

So yeah, I'm not even sure if if all like somebody like who was that early Greek philosopher permenities who's just saying it's all one. I don't even know if he ever had a mystical experience. I mean you can use just sort of like intellectual philosophizing to take you to the same conclusion. It's really not that

difficult that that multiplicity is is just like a an artifact generated by perception.

So yeah, see what what's the actual question? Where is the question mark? Where is the damn it question mark? Okay. What do I What do I make of this theory as a biologist? Well, still I mean I'm I'm a mystic first and a biologist second, I guess. So it my theory would be what I what I just said that just because I mean your brain is not designed to know reality. That's just for starters. That's pretty basic. And so any malfunction or like aberration of brain function, it's not going to necessarily

be taking you away from reality because you weren't in reality to begin with. In fact, it's there's a good chance that certain things if they're just sort of stopped in in your perceptual process, it will take you closer to reality.

So that's my theory and I'm just going to move on to seovat zena's second question here which is is saying it's all just empty and illusory just the Buddhist version of it's all just particles and chemical reactions for materialists. Well I mean obviously it's not just the Buddhist version of that. I mean they're coming from very different

positions. So I mean there's a little
bit of
overlap. So the Buddhist saying it's all
just empty and illusory and some
material is saying it's all just
particles and chemical reactions. I mean
they can be used for similar motives.
You can as a way of sort of detaching
from this some
sorrow that that we're so attached to.
Although the materialist they're just
justifying clinging to a different
samsara whereas a Buddhist I mean most
Buddhists probably also are just
promoting clinging to a different
samsara but at least it's it's not as
that's that's not what it's supposed to

be you know it's not like you're just
preferring this version of reality to a
different version of reality or this
model of how it is with some other model
of how it is which is scientists are
doing that it's it's all just empty and
illusory including all
models. So the Buddhists are going
farther in that direction definitely
than
some scientific realist materialist
type. But I mean they can be used for
similar reasons as a way of helping you
to detach from this mellow drama.
And so I guess I'm just going to move on
to sea of action sepat's third question

which is you have said there are sutas
where the term Buddha is used
synonymously
for based on this wouldn't the Mahayana
claim allegedly of anyone who is fully
enlightened giving teachings of becoming
enlightened be considered Buddha Vachana
and there's kind of a backstory to this
question whereas recently ly on the
discord server there was a lot of debate
going on. There's a purand Buddhist on
on the server who is saying that any
teaching that will help you to become
enlightened or that will inspire
enlightenment is Buddha vachana or
literally words of the Buddha or
Buddha's words Buddha's

speaking yeah literally be Buddha

speaking Buddha

vachana and so sevak is kind

of saying that I I mean if some other

person some other enlightened being can

be called a Buddha then whatever that

person says could be Buddhavna also um

it depends on how you want to interpret

how you want to define the term

Buddhavana at the time the term

Buddhavana arose there was one Buddha

it's the words of the Buddha not the

words of any Buddha not the words of

some Buddha chosen at random It was the

words of the Buddha, Godma Buddha, the

great philosopher of the Shakya

clan. And so, I mean, you could kind of call the the teachings of some other enlightened being to be Buddha Vachina, but I mean, how do you know? I mean, the Buddha was one person. You know, that person existed. You might not know for sure that he was fully enlightened, but he was called the Buddha. And so what he taught was Buddha Vachana. Even if you don't even think he was fully enlightened. So long as you agree that he was called the Buddha, then his words were
Buddhacha. But then if you want to just sort of cut Buddhavacha loose from the founder of the Buddhist
religion and you just want to say any

enlightened being, anything they say is Buddhavina. Well, that's a different kind of buddhavcha. And you should certainly specify what kind of Buddhava you're referring to. And I mean, how do you know that someone who cooked up a Mahayana Buddhist text was enlightened? I mean, maybe. I mean, some some Buddhist texts are very profound, although those are the ones that pure land Buddhists don't have much use for.

So I mean if you want to redefine a term away from you know like the original intended meaning of it it's

like is something Buddha vacha just
means did the Buddha really teach that
it doesn't mean that did some other
enlightened being let's say for the sake
of argument that Nim Karoli Baba up
there on the altar there he
is that he was fully enlightened
Well, he was a devotey of Hanuman the
monkey god. He really liked um the
Ramayana, you know, the the great story
of Rama and with the help of Hanuman the
monkey king, you know, going to Sri
Lanka to rescue Rama's wife Sitta from
the demon
Raana. Well, I mean that would be
Buddhacha too, wouldn't it?
I mean sort of I mean anything that he

would say would be Buddha Vajna also
including the stuff about Hanuman the
monkey god but I mean that would be
pushing
it and I mean to to just assume that the
teachers of say you know pure land
Buddhist texts were enlightened beings
when I mean the pure land Buddhists are
saying there is no enlightenment in the
world
anymore except maybe for you the early
ones who who were teaching this stuff.
But I mean puran Buddhism is teaching
you can't get enlightened in this world
anymore. It's the kaliuga. So you pray
to the mythological space Buddha to save

you or you recite his name over and over again and then that will cause some kind of merit or with his help maybe you wind up being in a way reborn into this pure land but in a way in this in a sense that I do not comprehend that you've got this realm this pure land which nevertheless isn't in samsara which I mean it's just turning the teachings of the original Buddha on its head. I mean, when you've got a teaching that is teaching in some ways the opposite of what the historical Gorama Buddha was in all likelihood teaching, then how can you call that Buddha

Vachina? Just any enlightened being which would include, you know, non Buddhist like like Hindus or like St. John of the cross that say St. John of the cross is fully enlightened. Well, anything he said about Roman Catholicism would be
Buddhavina. I mean, it's you're just it's loosed from its moorings. You've got like a a boat that's just floating a drift at this
point. So, let's see here. What is the actual question? There are sudas where the term Buddha is used synonymously for arans. Yeah, there are a few. Based on this, wouldn't the Mahayana claim

allegedly of anyone who is fully enlightened giving teachings of becoming enlightened be considered Buddha Vachana? Well, again, Nim Kuroli Baba, Ramana Maharshi, maybe St. John of the Cross, maybe Mister Ekhart, just Buddha. I mean, you could have an enlightened Sufi turning the Quran into Buddhavina. Yeah. I mean, you've just you you've loosened the word so far away from its original intended meaning that it becomes almost meaningless. It certainly becomes a far cry from what it originally meant. So anyways, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Cherzasquez is who recently joined

the discord

server and he says why desire to be

happy is a cause of suffering. Well,

desire itself pretty much is suffering.

So desire for anything is pretty much

suffering, isn't it?

And it's like desire is

like you would prefer that things be

different or you would prefer that

things be a certain way which isn't

necessarily in accordance with the way

things actually

are. And so it's it's like a friction

against reality. It's like struggling

against the way things are. Even a

desire to be happy is a cause of

suffering because it's like you're not just accepting the way things are. you are preferring or pushing I mean sort of mentally pushing just physical pushing is just neutral but it's like you're creating friction against the way things are by trying like wanting oh it's it's hard to to define this because I mean it's hard to say to define desire without just throwing in like wanting or desiring or preferring ing. You know, it's it's it's really a strange situation. I'm not sure how to define the word desire without using a synonym for desire in the definition. But essentially, you're struggling against empirical

reality, even if you're doing it in a very subtle manner. And that's that's suffering. I mean, desire itself is suffering. Even if it's desire for happiness, desire for enlightenment, you eventually before you become enlightened, you have to get rid of that last desire. So long as you desire enlightenment, you're never going to be enlightened. You have to stop desiring even enlightenment in order to become enlightened. It may be very useful at first. It's like skillful means. It's guiding you in that direction. And for an ordinary normie,

just like desiring money may help them to get money. desiring a certain woman may help them to get that woman, but still there's going to be suffering involved. It's just the way it is. And I guess I've spoken enough on that. It was a short question anyway. And so I'm just going to move on to the second question of Chzask as is, which is as follows. If materialism, if materialism isn't true, why when we take material medicines, for example, for boosting our dopamine or serotonin level in our brain, they actually work and people feel ecstatic or calm and happy. My advice, if you really want to understand how all medicines work

through the placebo effect, read Science and Health Was Key to the Scriptures by Reverend Teacher Mary Baker Eddie, the founder of Christian Science. That book is like the second bible to the Christian scientists that she explains how all medicines work by the placebo effect. It's your faith in the medicine that works or even if it's like a like a blind test or something. It's like the faith in the people who give you the medicine, you know, it's like this common shared belief that keeps Samsara going, keeps this version of the world going. this common shared belief that if

you really believe something like
this pure faith, you have like this pure
belief in something, it's
true, including your belief that
medicines will make you feel better,
that whatever it
is. And she she has lots of weird
stories like
uh let's see what would be a good
example just like people with certain
mental illnesses that they have these
weird beliefs that actually like there
was this one woman she mentions who had
this mental breakdown when she got
jilted on her wedding day. Kind of like
Miss Havsham in in a Charles Dickens
novel. But she it was like her time

froze for her at this certain age in her life and even when she was very old she looked like she wasn't old. this kind of stuff or

um Mary Baker Eddie that the like there's this section after

um science and health before you get to key to the scriptures but there's this appendix to science and health where called fruitage which is um testimonies of people who cured themselves or were cured from reading this book and I mean a lot of it is stuff that has psychosmatic elements like um tuberculosis or asthma or just bad vision, this kind of thing. Those are

known to have psychossematic elements.
Not that tuberculosis is, you know, just
purely made up in your mind necessarily,
but it's known that your mental states
uh have a strong effect on whether you
get it or not. You know, how badly you
get it, that kind of thing.
So I mean some people there's one person
who was cured of a broken arm from
reading science and health is the key to
the scriptures and another person the
very first story it was like a 40 lb
fibroid tumor where they had this tumor
then they're reading this this book
explaining to them that it's all
mindmade because Christian scientists
don't believe in physical matter and

also they don't believe in in any kind
of illness. You know, the idea is God is
good. God would create only what is
good. God would not create diseases
because diseases aren't good. Therefore,
they don't really
exist. So, I mean, it's just it's a kind
of placebo effect essentially, at least
going with this idea of of like
uh you know, physical matter doesn't
really exist kind of thing. I mean
there's other ways other approaches like
George Barkley who also did not believe
in physical matter would had a different
interpretation you know it's just God is
implanting all these perceptions into

your mind so God implants the perception
of you taking the medicine and then God
implants the perception of you getting
better even though the medicine didn't
cause you to get better God did that
kind of thing so there's different ways
of explaining
it but mainly it's faith faith in
samsara keeps this version of samsara
going for us which includes the idea
that if you take medicines or go to a
doctor and get some sort of procedure
done that you're going to get better or
at least I mean it doesn't always work
that way does it but it you know it's
going to have some kind of
[Music]

effect read Mary Bakeretti she'll
explain it to you and I'm just going to
move on to Chzas is his third question.
Please explain to people that I am
definitely not Tig. And this is I mean
this kind of drama I've I've spoken
about this on a previous Q&A how there
was this guy named Tig who was kind of a
smart alec and was so smart alike that
he eventually got kicked off the server.
Just completely irreligious, irreverent,
just
trolling. And so then this other person
joins the server and he's he's got
certain attitudes resembling Tig. So a
lot of people start suspecting this is

just Tig trolling us again, pretending to be this other person. So then it started this joke going where, you know, it's sort of like the TIG witch hunts, you know, prove that you aren't really TIG. You know, we start turning against each other, this sort of thing. And so a little bit of that was directed towards Cherases who joined the server. It's like people, you know, calling him TIG, you know, prove that you aren't TIG, this kind of stuff. And he's he's taking it seriously. He thinks that people really think that he's Tig, but he's just kind of TIG. He's like a he's like a Polish TIG. Maybe TIG has many forms, you know,

just so many an infinite number of TIGs. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Phily's and Philes says in this video oh this is like the previous video. This is this uh this question was found in the comments below the the previous Q&A. So he says in this video you say western culture is perverse for deifying a Hebrew. Do you then believe Christianity is perverse? Well, I meant it in a certain sense that when I said that that Western culture perversely, you know, set itself up for the whole JQ by deifying a a Jewish person. I mean, what

the hell did they expect? I mean, you've got these people nowadays, these right-wingers, some of which some of whom are even Christians, who, you know, they despise the Hebrew race. They consider the Hebrews responsible for so many of the world's ills, but at the same time they they just kind of overlook the the elephant in the room, which is that Western civilization pretty much as a whole converted to worshiping a Jewish person, which is largely responsible for the Hebrews still being a discrete ethnicity instead of just going the way of the Phoenicians and just blending in with everybody

else. So, do I believe Christianity is perverse? Some of it I consider to be like absurd, unfounded, unwarranted assumptions. I think that Christianity is largely, not entirely, but largely based on unwarranted assumptions.

Yes, pure land Buddhism would be another case in point that it's just these beliefs you have to adopt that you couldn't possibly prove. There really is no empirical evidence really supporting it. But it's just the insanity of the religious mind is willing to accept these assumptions and just fervently believe that they're true when really they've got no evidence other than just

everyone around them believing similar

stuff.

So it's sort of like what is

it some kind of bias validation bias

something like that the the exact term

is escaping

me.

So Christianity is it

perverse? I mean I would consider

certain aspects of it to be absurd and

even early Christians acknowledge this.

You know it is absurd therefore I

believe it. this kind of

stuff. But I mean, the real perversity

of it wasn't Christianity in and of

itself. If it had remained like a reform

movement of Judaism, yeah, I wouldn't I

wouldn't have as much bad to say about
it. But um for western culture to just
abandon its own spiritual traditions in
favor of a largely absurd group of
assumptions that yeah I mean it's more
western culture adopting it being in a
way kind of perverse than the system
itself. And perverse doesn't mean like
depraved, anything like that. It just
means sort of like sort of
like what would be I mean I'm trying to
use perverse in the definition again,
but it's just sort of like deviating
from what would
be viewed as like appropriate or just
you know the I I don't know how to

explain it but you know it's just sort
of like
willful just going against
oneself or just
willful deviation from what would be a
healthier or more
dharmic point of view. I don't
know but Christianity itself is not
necessarily perverse. I mean, think
there's a lot of absurdity
involved, but it's just Western culture
abandoning its own indigenous spiritual
traditions in favor of this largely
absurd group of assumptions that this
Jewish man is the creator of the
universe who died for our sins, which
came from a man made of soil, a woman

made from a bone, being tricked by a snake into eating some root. So, I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's second question. Overall, do you prefer Toltoy or Dostki? And from the And from the one you choose, which novel is your best? Well, I prefer Dostki to Toltoy. Do Toltoy was actually a socialist and he tries to sneak in a little socialism.

um like War and Peace. One of the main reasons why he wrote War and Peace, it wasn't necessarily socialism, but it was sort of um trying to destroy the protofascistic

um idealization of

Napoleon that I mean he keeps going off on these tangents in War and Peace. If you've read War in Peace, you you'll you might remember this. He keeps going off on these tangents of how Napoleon I mean he didn't do anything great. I mean, he's he was just a product of his times. If Napoleon wasn't there, someone else would have been lifted up and have been just like the carbon copy just this this the same as Napoleon. This kind of stuff cuz really he was trying to exercise the ghost of Napoleon by writing war in peace because he just figured, you know, it's Napoleon was the wrong direction. We should be going into more softer, more compassionate, more, you know,

equal kind of a kind of an approach kind of. That was that was his attitude largely. Dosstki started off as a socialist and then was cured of that big time in a prison camp in in Siberia and like in his one of his great novels the the possessed or the the devils is interpreted or translated uh variously you know he's got socialists um as symbols for Satanists essentially. So he just did a 180 on that one. But with regard to who was the greater greater novel, I still think Dossi even setting aside their politics, Dostki just had this I mean he was down in the trenches. He understood

human humanity from the bottom up. Toltoy was more like on Olympus, you know, gazing down like like Zeus on the struggling masses, whereas Dostki was down there struggling with the masses and he just had these this profound insight into just finding divinity even in just the quagmire of of human filth. So anyways, yeah, I definitely prefer Dostki to Toltoy. Although Toltoy was no slouch. I mean, I'm not saying that Toltoy was like a bad writer or any such thing. He was still a giant, but I just like Tolto Dostki better. And my favorite novel is is Dostki is the idiot. It is a profound novel. And it's it's weird that The Idiot I mean, you

can read it at at least three different levels. you know, there's the level of what's actually going on. Prince Mishkin, he falls in love with um Nastasia and she's got this self-destructive streak, you know, because of her pride and so forth. And there's this guy Regoan who's also trying to trying to get the girl and, you know, so on and so forth. And then at a different level, it's it's Christ and and the devil struggling over the soul of the sinner with Nastasia being the sinner. Also, in a way, she could be interpreted as Israel, but we don't need to get into that. That's kind of an

obscure reference. And then also at another level, the the whole book is apocalyptic. It's about the end of the world, but it's a great novel. Dosioski is the idiot. It's probably my favorite novel. And so I'm just going to move on to Phil Lethy's third question, which is generally was being a monk
fun? And then in parenthesis, he says, "Sorry if this sounds a bit silly, but I don't know how else to word it." Um, being a monk, yeah, fun is it's not really the best word. I mean, like pleasant, conducive to contentment. Yeah, sometimes. I mean, it's not supposed to be really pleasant other than just the joy of of like meditation,

practicing dharma, living a pure and and peaceful life, that kind of thing. I did have a certain amount of fun, but um I probably have more fun now than I did when I was a monk.

So yeah, I mean it's it could be blissful at times and then other times it's just it's just like you're you're staggering through a like a sandstorm just blinded and and lost. I mean it could be like that sometimes too. So yeah, I mean I did have some adventures in Burma, you know, rafting down the Pollon Creek, that kind of thing. That was kind of exciting. hiking through Alando Kathaban National Park

barefoot with no
food. So yeah, I mean it definitely had its moments. It had its times of like just triumph and and excitement and and joy and all that, but it was definitely more subdued than a life of like a lay person. You know, like a monk is supposed to keep pleasure and pain to a minimum by just kind of taking this this middle road between pleasure and pain, so to
speak, but it definitely had its its good points. And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And this is from somebody maybe called Tenku. And Tenku says, "What do you think about Deepama?" And I really know about

Deepama just a little bit kind of circumstantial like reading. I read an article in a Buddhist magazine once about Deepama and just pick up little bits and pieces. I guess she was from Bangladesh. She was a a Buddhist from Bangladesh. And for some reason all the Buddhists in Bangladesh have the same have the same last name Buua or something like that. So maybe her last name was originally Buua. But um she was considered to be like very highly advanced. She was a terra Buddhist, not an ordained nun, but I mean they didn't have ordained nuns

back then.

So, I mean, she was just a like a spiritually very talented person who was very advanced and uh that's really about all I know about her. I don't think she's alive anymore. She was a figure of the 20th century. I I remember one anecdote where she came to America and I mean she was sort of idealized or idolized by sort of the leftist boomer uh western Buddhist because of course she was a spiritually advanced female. So you know you got to have diversity and all that. But um there was this story where um somebody went to a cash machine like in the side of a it was like on built

into the side of a bank or something and Deepa was she was really kind of overwhelmed with compassion about the poor person who who has to live inside that brick wall can't see anything that all they're doing is just exchanging money. She didn't know that it was all automated.

But yeah, I don't know enough about her to know just how wise she was. And if she was wiser than me, then there'd be no way I could possibly know how wise she was. And that's that's the way I mean earlier on in this this Q&A a similar question came up where it's like you know how can you know you know it's

like Echart Tollah Allen Watts I mean if they're wiser than you you cannot know how wise they are and if you just don't know them also I mean Deepa Ma I just saw a few some like an article and just heard a few things at random every now and then that's all I know about her. So, it's hard to say. In fact, it's pretty much impossible to say. But that's that's all I that's all I can say about her because I really don't know much about her. And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Yugaoo. And his first question is is actually two questions which we can just conveniently lump into one question is

how are you? How is life under tariffs going? Well, I'm fine. I mean, when I was a little kid, I used to hate grown-ups asking me how I was because my mother instructed me when when somebody asks you how you are, you say, "I'm fine." But I didn't know what fine meant when I was like 3 years old. I mean, the only time I'd ever used the word was when I'm telling some grown-up how I'm how I'm

doing. So, I'm fine. And then, how is life under tariffs going? Well, I've I'm so far there has been no significant perceptible effect of tariffs on my life other than just reading about them or

hearing about them in the news. That's it. You know, you've got some panicky cowards who are freaking out or just, you know, they're just cynical anti-Trumpists pretending to freak out because, you know, the tariffs, oh, it could be so horrible. And you know, they don't really have any confidence that Trump actually knows what he's talking about. In fact, Trump has been talking about tariffs since the 1980s. There was some famous interview he did on the Oprah Winfrey show, you know, long before he ever got involved in politics. And so, you know, by the same token, long before leftists started hating his

guts, where he was saying essentially the same thing. It's like, you know, countries like China are just taking advantage of us by having all these tariffs against American imports into their country, but we don't have similar equivalent tariffs against their stuff coming into our country, and something should be done about that. He's been saying that literally for decades, and there's a good chance he knows what he's talking about. So, I'm fine with I'm fine with the tariffs thus far.

So I'm just going to move on to Yugaoo's next question which is do you think that once some kind of a sacred teaching

leaves its nest and becomes widespread
it is susceptible to corruption and
originality can be lost like with dharma
being now widespread it doesn't even
have to leave the nest it doesn't have
to become widespread even I mean all it
happens is it gets into the hands of
humans and especially Especially if the
humans are not as wise as the founder,
then it starts to degenerate. And that
happened with Buddhism
back back when it was still in
India, ancient
India, long before it came to the west.
I mean, there was all kinds of weird
tantric stuff, the pure land stuff, just
I mean, it was just all over the board

from the ridiculous to the sublime.
So it's just a matter of falling into
the hands of unenlightened humans. Even
some enlightened humans can have some
pretty weird ideas like Nim Karoli Baba
assuming that he was enlightened again
worshiped Hanuman the monkey
god. So yeah it's just over time things
change everything is impermanent. That's
that's one of the basic teachings of
Buddhism. Everything changes including
dharma as an established religious
system. It's just going to change over
time partly just through random drift. I
mean that's that's one reason how the
ancient Buddhist schools arose. It was

back then and like Buddhism it could spread only as fast as a monk could walk. And so you'd have isolation. these different monasteries, they'd be isolated from each other. You know, 50 miles might as well be 5,000 miles today. And it'd just be like slight differences in emphasis. You'd have some teacher who was interested in one thing. He'd be teaching about that and then, you know, some other monastery 50 miles away would have a different teacher teaching, you know, some other emphasis. And it would just gradually result in in different schools splitting apart and drifting away from each other with no ill intentions at

all. So let's see. Once some kind of a sacred teaching leaves its nest and becomes widespread, it is susceptible to corruption and originality can be lost. Um, well, you can still have original corruption, but I think he means he doesn't mean originality in the sense of like independent thought. I think he means like authenticity, you know, like um faithfulness to the original teachings. And that was lost. I mean, pure land Buddhism, I mean, this that's I mean, it's very different from what the Buddha the historical Gorama Buddha actually taught.

And that was ancient India. Purand

Buddhism was actually one of the earliest schools of Mahayana Buddhism that that are that is known today. Anyway, I was surprised when I read that. I think I read about it in uh what's his name? AK Warders's history of India or his history of Buddhism in in India.

So yeah, I don't it doesn't even have to leave the nest and become widespread for it to become corrupted. That it's just natural that it's going to become corrupted. The only way for it not to be corrupted is for it to be dead. That it just doesn't change at all. It just remains in stasis that humans don't interact with it. Because if humans

start interacting with it, different
kinds of humans are going to be
interacting in other ways and it's just
going to start diffusing and certain
aspects of it will become more corrupted
and it's just it's just the way it is.
It's impermanence. is
an so I'm just going to move on to
Yugu's third
question which is people lonely people
are looking love in AI companions and
care they give them back gives them much
love and comfort. They are being
criticized that that love is fake and
only in their minds is it not that all
love is just in our minds. Thus their

love is no different. Okay. Well, I mean
love, my interpretation of love is that
genuine love is acceptance. To the
extent that you accept somebody, then
you love that person. To the extent that
you reject somebody, then you hate that
person. Love is
acceptance. It's not an emotion at all.
Like when the Bible says God is love,
it's not saying that God is an emotion.
God just accepts all of us perfectly.
Therefore, God loves all of us
perfectly. So,
uh somebody who loves like an AI
generated mate, I
mean love in the the biological sense,
love is a kind of mating instinct. Then

it's it's like a perversion of that sort of like pornography is a perversion of biological mating instincts.

So, in a way, it'd be sort of like emotional pornography, something like that. And some guys fall in love with like girls like like webcam girls, that kind of stuff, too. At least the webcam girl is able to respond to some degree that he's not falling in love with, you know, just some chick that's in like a a magazine or in a in a video or something.

And then I guess the AI generated companions, you know, they're they've got like this generated love coming back

which is that love is fake presumably unless the AI is is advanced enough to actually be sentient. So I mean the AI love coming back probably at this stage in technological development is is not real love. It's just a a mimic mimicry of love.

So, I mean, the person's love for the AI mate can be genuine, but I mean, there's no love relationship. I'm not sure like in a real like a deep love relationship. You're you're creating a third being, you know, you've got person A and person B love each other and then it generates this person C, which is the combination of the two. My woman and I

are like that. We have like a group mind. Sometimes it's stronger than at other times. Sometimes we might seem kind of alienated from each other, especially like if if we're in like in a bad mood, whatever, you know, it's just sort of contracted or something. But still, there's like this third being which is us.

And I'm not sure to what extent you could have something like that with a like an artificial computerenerated fake human, especially when AI is not yet fully sentient and capable of of generating,

you know, genuine affection or anything like that.

So yeah, all love is just in our minds, I suppose. But uh I mean there's obvious differences between a man's love for a woman and a man's love for an AI generated woman. Partly because the woman loves him back ideally. The AI generated woman does not. And and also you just do not have the the depth of feeling because it's all just going one way towards an illusion. So yeah, there is some genuine love in there. I mean, guy loves his golf clubs. That's that's still love, too. May not be

the profoundest kind of love, but it's still love.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And we're getting close to the bottom here. We're down to our last two questions, which is kind of good. We're This isn't going to be nearly a three-hour long one. Next question is from Raphael, and I do not fully understand this question. Raphael says, "Should one realize awareness without self-consciousness according to the anat doctrine? Is that even possible?"

So to realize awareness, I'm not sure even what that means. To realize

awareness without

self-consciousness according to the anat

doctrine and does the this according to

the anat

doctrine clause or is it a phrase? I

don't remember now. Does that apply to

the entire string of words preceding it

or only to the uh

self-consciousness aspect? I I do not

understand the question fully but I

guess what it means is to realize

awareness does that mean but to become

enlightened to realize awareness without

self-consciousness should one realize

awareness without self-consciousness

according to the anat

doctrine I mean can any of you guys tell

me exactly what this means to realize

okay maybe it's not just realize

awareness. But what you're going to

realize is in parenthesis, awareness

without

self-consciousness and then all of that

you do according to the anot

doctrine. This this is a surprisingly

difficult question for me to even

understand to realize

awareness. Oh, this is like a

headacheinducing question because I do

not fully understand it. to realize

awareness. I mean, you can't just

realize awareness. That could just be

like a strange way of of becoming

enlightened. So, you realize awareness
without
self-consciousness. Okay. So, so that's
it. I mean, should you
realize
like consciousness that is not
self-conscious? Well, of course. Yeah.
Yeah. It's possible if enlightenment is
possible.
Did I just answer that
question, man? Because it's it's really
just the sentence
construction is such that it's difficult
for me to to figure out what exactly
Raphael is
asking. But I assume awareness without
self-consciousness is like a verbal

unit. And it's not just should one
realize awareness and then to do that
without self-consciousness, but it's
should you realize and then in
parenthesis awareness without
self-consciousness and all of that in
accordance with the doctrine of anata.
Well, of course.
Yeah,
man. It's it's weird. This reminds me of
Burmese that the Burmese language is
very abbreviated and so a lot of it is
just you got to fill in the gaps just
through
your it's like your harmony with Burmese
cultural conditioning that that a

Burmese person can just sort of say a
few words and because Burmese people
tend to all think pretty much alike that
the other person can just fill in the
gaps and knows knows what he's talking
Well, like sometimes Burmese people
would would say, "How long has it been?"
And I'm like, "How long has been?" And
they say,
"Yes." And then I say again, like, "How
long has been?" And then then they
Yeah. And like, "How do I answer the
question?" But the Burmese people know.
I mean, they know what it
means. I'm just going to go on to the
next question.
This is from

Arin. This is the last
question. And Aryan says, "Can you teach
us about guardian spirits in Buddhism
and how they are mentioned in the texts
versus culturally? I don't hear of this
topic often, but I hear them mentioned
in some
chance."
And yeah, I mean, in the in the poly
text, there's not much mention of
guardian spirits. In fact, I cannot
recall any mention of guardian spirits
in the text other than maybe something
like in the Baja Suta. You had this non
Buddhist philosopher named Baja who
lives on the the west coast of India and

he's getting a lot of respect. You know, he's he's been practicing diligently and conscientiously in whatever system he belonged to. And the people were starting to believe that he was fully enlightened until he started thinking, "Wow, maybe I really am fully enlightened." And then uh a deity, a a deva who had formerly been uh like a relative of Baja in a previous life maybe comes to him and says, "No, I'm sorry. You're not really enlightened." But there is this Godma of the Shakya clan living far to the east who is enlightened. And so um yeah, I don't need to continue with the story, but I mean that would be about as close as a

mention of guardian spirits. You know,
it's sort of like some dava or
highranking pa even who has some
particular interest possibly due to some
relation in a previous life who is sort
of like keeping an eye on you that kind
of thing. I mean there there is some
kind of precedent for that in in the
poly texts
but that that there is some deity who is
assigned to to be your guardian spirit
or it's like a position that everyone
has one and it's just sort of like a
natural process of this deity who maybe
is waiting for a convenient opportunity
to be born as a human again who's still

interested in humans

who, you know, they just it's their duty

to like help you

somehow. Sort of like the opposite of

the screw tape letters, if you're aware,

if you know who what that means. Um,

yeah, that's that's really not found in

the in the text that I can recall. It

might be in there somewhere, but it

certainly is not

emphasized. So, this this idea of

guardian spirits, it seems to be more of

a Southeast Asian thing. I'm not sure

what the Sri Lankans feel about this. It

could be a cultural thing that that is

not found in the text. Like the Burmese

definitely believe in guardian spirits

and the ties apparently do too.

And so in Burma a lot of the time if you're sending meta like you've got a monk who's sitting in the front and he's guiding this meta meditation where you're you're sending meta to all these beings and it'll you know he'll have like the yogaonat and the the it's like the the tree the tree deities and and the the sky deities and the ground deities and so forth. And then you'll have the co-saltnat that you're sending meta to your co-altnat which is your guardian spirit. And then you send uh you send meta to the analn which is the guardian spirit not of you personally

but of your house of your home. Sort of like the ancient Romans believed in that kind of thing. And then you've got like the the guardian spirit of the neighborhood. And then you send meta to the guardian spirit of the city. And then you send meta to the guardian spirit of the the state or province. And then you send meta to the guardian spirit of the country. And then you send meta to the guardian spirit of the world. And the Burmese consider the guardian spirit of the world to be loanata who in the iconography is always kind of sitting with his legs with his feet together. You know, he's kind of sitting maybe leaning a little bit to

one side and his the soles of his feet
are touching together. I don't know why.
Maybe some symbolic reason for that. And
I guess judging from the the meta
meditations led by monks in a Thai
tradition like in the Ajan Cha
tradition, they talk about guardian
spirits too.
So it may be more of a Southeast Asian
cultural thing that has been
incorporated into Buddhism rather than
this belief in you guardian angels that
I mean it's fairly common in the west
too or at least used to be that it could
just be a kind of like an archetypal
sort of belief that I grew up as a kid

just believing that I had a guardian spirit because a Ouija board told me when I was a kid, you know, they they would the spirit came through. My father's guardian spirit. My father firmly believed in guardian spirits. His guardian spirit was a dead Vietnamese Buddhist monk named Ting is what he called him. And they just met in a previous life. And and this this this being just took an interest in my father and would keep an eye on him and come, you know, communicate to him through uh mediums in trance occasionally. Wow. There's more coffee in there than I thought, man. Ah,

so it does seem to be like a universal phenomenon believing in guardian spirits, but at the same time, I do not recall it being any kind of significant teaching in the poly text or in like early like poly Buddhism.

So I do not know exactly when it got incorporated into terra Buddhism but it's incorporated big time in Burma and probably in Thailand also and like any kind of empirical truth or falsehood to the idea of guardian spirits. Um, I'm not exactly sure about that either. That I mean it may very well be that there are going to be certain spirits out there who are

particularly interested in you for whatever reason due to past life um, associations or whatever. Or maybe they just kind of latch on to you as a way of sort of vicariously, you know, living in a meat body because they don't have one at present. Something like that. I don't know.

But if you're in Thailand or Burma and you're sending meta with some monk leading the chant, there's a good chance you're going to be sending meta to your guardian spirit and also various other deities. I mean, they're generally considered to be a deva, but I would guess they'd be a relatively lowranking

unfamous kind of dva if they are the particular guardian spirit of an individual person. And that's it. I just answered the last question. So, as I should always say at the beginning and never do except maybe once, do you have any questions you think I can answer particularly about early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism? And then the farther away you get from Buddhism, especially Terravada Buddhism, the less likely I'll be able to give some intelligent answer. But there's still possibilities. I mean I have many interests and so

um you know like western philosophy,
eastern philosophy in general,
mysticism, monasticism like Burma, that
kind of thing. I'm generally pretty good
at answering. And like and subscribe if
you have not done so
already and be happy.

Alrighty

then. Hello and welcome to question and

answer number

145. I am your host Ponyo Bosa. And I

must say 145 is obviously not prime

because in the famous words of Franklin

D. Roosevelt, the only number ending in

five that is prime is five itself.

So 145 is 5 time 29. And I'm not even

sure exactly why I got off on this prime

number thing, which has been going for

several episodes

now. But I did. This is my

beverage. And it's, you may notice I'm

drinking Starbucks today because my

woman and I went to Home Depot to get

some mulch and some

plants.

And Starbucks is just right next door

practically. And sometimes you just want

to be served a hot beverage by a young

transsexual undergoing hormone

therapy. And Starbucks is the place to

go for that.

In fact, there's even like Well, I

shouldn't even show you what's what's

drawn on the side of the cup, but it

does seem to be uh of a sexual

nature. So, we'll just we'll just skip

that. And you'd think Starbucks would be

like a classy enough place that they'd

put paper umbrellas into their drinks,

but I had to provide my own. Such is

life. Dooka takes many
forms. So anyhow, I suppose I should
just wade right into this. We don't have
a whole lot of questions. It's kind of
on the lighter side this time. So those
of you who don't like threehour long Q&A
videos or three and a half hour long
ones, today is your lucky
day. And
so first question is from
Kundrew. And Kindrew says, "Why do so
many sutas end with Ananda or one of the
Buddha's other disciples praising the
Buddha in the form of simileies? Many of
them always seem to end with something
along the lines of excellent Lord Godma.

It is as

if dot dot dot and there's a slight

misunderstanding here. Kundrew is

somewhat misunderstanding the situation

because when you have this

stock ending of somebody like the the

the Buddha gives a discourse to somebody

or he is just like having a conversation

with somebody and at the end they say

this stock phrase you word for word

excellent Sir Godma excellent Sir Godma

just as Sir Godma one would set a right

what had been tipped over would reveal

what had been covered, would explain the

road to one who was lost, or would hold

up an oil lamp in the darkness so that

those with eyes could see what is

visible. Even so, the Dharma has been shown by Sir Godma in many ways. I go to Sir Godma for refuge and to the Dharma and to the community of monks. May Sir Godma consider me to be a lay supporter from this day on. For the rest of my life, I have taken refuge. So that's the uh

stock ending, the stock speech. It's like a stock conversion speech that is just plugged into many

sutas. And it's hardly likely that everyone who gets converted to Buddhism by the Buddha is going to give this exact same speech. In fact, other schools of Buddhism, other ancient

schools of Buddhism, they plugged in a different stock speech at the end. just where it was wherever was a suitable place to plug in this speech, they just plug it in and each school of Buddhism had its own variation on the speech. And so this is a conversion speech um that is just like a traditional thing. The ancient mind is kind of a traditionoriented mind and so they just figured well you got to have the conversion speech at the end. So it wasn't a nandanda or one of the Buddha's other disciples. Th that particular speech is always given by a lay person or a non Buddhist like a non Buddhist aesthetic or something who had just been

converted to Buddhism after talking to
the
Buddha. So I really don't recall Ananda
or one of the other one of the Buddha's
other disciples praising the Buddha at
the end of a suta like this. I mean it
may happen but it's not like this stock
verbatim paragraph that just gets
inserted into suta after suta that is
just a conversion speech and it's for
some reason it just came became
traditional to end these sutas where the
Buddha is converting somebody to
Buddhism with this excellent soda
excellent soda you know it's it's sort
of

like most sutas probably begin with

Thus have I heard you know it's just a

traditional

thing.

So I think I'm just going to move on to

Kandrew's second

question which is which translation of

the dhamapata do you prefer the most?

And my favorite translation of the

dharmapata

is this one. This is like the the

Buddhist publication society version or

a Buddhist publication society version

translated by Acharia Buddha Rakita and

actually uh the introduction is by Bikub

Bodhi back when Bikubodi was still

living in Sri Lanka and was like some

kind of leader of the Buddhist
publication
society but I haven't read all
translations of the Damopat. would
assume that there's translations out
there that I would like better than
this. But of the ones that I have read,
this is one of my faves, probably my
favorite version. And this is one of the
few possessions I have owned since
before I became a monk. I acquired this
back when I was in my 20s, which was
several coons ages ago.
So I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from
Quoistor and Quistor says can you

elaborate on how someone entering forth Janna regularly could change the general consciousness of the universe? Does entering Janna bring more insight into shared consciousness and change belief systems on a subconscious level? That's two question marks, isn't it? I mean, that technically should be two questions, shouldn't it? Um, but I think altogether he has only three question marks. So, he's still not not exactly transgressive in this combining putting two question marks into a single question. And that's setting aside cases where you have multiple question marks all together for emphasis.

So quite says can you elaborate on how
someone entering forth John regularly
could change the general consciousness
of the universe? I'm not sure that it
could change the general consciousness
of the universe whereas the universe is
just
everything. So since the I mean the
universe in that
sense you know of just everything you
know infinite everything
um yeah I think it already contains like
infinite consciousness and everything I
don't think you could really change the
general level of consciousness uh with
regard to that but with regard to this

world or this version of samsara that we
happen to be
inhabiting that it may be what quiset
really had in mind anyway. way though
I'm not trying to second guess quator
uh so I mean it reminds me of a
statement by St. John of the cross that
I have mentioned numerous times where
St. John of the cross in one of his
books and St. John of the Cross was a
Spanish Roman Catholic discel
carmealite. I guess he'd be a monk. He
wouldn't be a frier, I think. And he
said that you've got two people. One
person is just like feeding the hungry
and clothing the people with not enough
clothes and housing the homeless and

just tending the sick and just doing all this meritorious stuff at kind of a worldly level. And then the second person is abiding in deep contemplation or high contemplation, which is what the Catholic contemplative order is called what a Buddhist would call
Janna. I'm pretty sure that they're essentially the same based on what I've read from St. John of the Cross and what I've read in Buddhist texts.
So how would some how would the second oh anyways um St. on the crosses is these two people. One's doing all this worldly meritorious stuff and the other one is just sitting alone practicing

high contemplation. The second person is helping the world more than the first person. And that is because he is like uplifting like the the consciousness center of gravity of the earth. you know, he's adding higher consciousness, just sort of injecting it or inoculating it into
this global system that we're living in. And I mean, how some how someone entering forth Jonah could change the general consciousness of the world is simply the fact that all consciousness ultimately is connected.
So by uplifting your own consciousness, it has an effect on the consciousness of the beings around you. And mental states

are contagious. I mean, it's it should be fairly obvious. You've got somebody who's like really upset or depressed and they don't even have to be yelling or crying or anything. They can just be sitting there and it's going to have like a like a dampening effect on the spirit of the room in general. You know, the other people in the room. On the other hand, someone could just come right out of like a a meditation center and they're just sort of radiating contentment. You know, they're practically shining and they can just be sitting there quietly, too. And that's going to have an effect on everyone else

in the room. And it's just there's like this subliminal empathy that we have and animals have it too. Maybe they're all conscious beings have this just deep down maybe at a subconscious level there's sort of an awareness of the consciousness of other people because ultimately the consciousness isn't separate. It's perception that separates it.

So I guess I should read the second half of this question which has its own question mark. Does entering Janna bring more insight into shared consciousness and change belief systems on a subconscious level? I don't think it would directly change belief systems,

but it would sort of increase the level
of wisdom to some
degree. And
um sort of one one thing that just came
to mind is the beginning of um I think
it's Victor Hugo's novels, Le Miserab, I
don't know how to pronounce French
names. I'll just mis deliberately
mispronounce it as less
miserabilis where you had Jean Van
Genev who just gets out of prison I
think and he's like a hardened criminal
and he steals something from this
kindhearted Catholic priest and then he
gets caught. He steals some silver
candlesticks that like the priest just

lets him stay stay there just out of the generosity of his heart you know goodwill in general.

Genevan steals these candlesticks and takes off and a police officer sees him taken off with it, arrests him and brings him back to the priest and the priest just pretty much just lies and says, "No, I gave those to him. He didn't steal anything." And it just changes the way Genev thinks. It's like this person did him a kindness for no reason really. I mean, he shouldn't have done this kindness. he should have gotten revenge or whatever and he didn't and it just sort of like opened up this awareness of a new way of

being, a new way for him anyway that just caused him to like move in a different direction. And so I mean it wasn't like the the priest did anything directly to change his his belief systems. It was just that Gene Vene was just coming into contact with like a saintly person and that just sort of uplifted him, you know? It like gave him an opportunity that he wouldn't have gotten if the priest just like, "Yeah, he ripped me off. Arrest him, officer." That kind of thing. And that can happen at a more subtle level where you're not even coming into physical contact with

the other person. It's much more subtle that way. But still, it's not like this direct changing of beliefs, anything like that. It's just sort of kind of uplifting the general consciousness of of the world, so to speak. And it kind of reminds me of the uh the Old Testament scene of, you know, that God would spare a city just for the sake of one righteous man living there. And in a way having saints in this world, you know, it kind of increases the the merit or the sort of it makes really bad things less likely to happen because these saintly people don't have the bad karma to be living for example in a thermonuclear holocaust and

radioactive wasteland something like that. So the more saintly people you've got, the the less likely it is that something horrible is going to happen. And that can kind of help uplift people too, just with gen general contentment instead of general misery. And I'm just going to move on to Quistor's next question. And in parenthesis, he's got a follow-up question to see if any part of karma has to do with suffering inflicted or if it's essentially only in your mind. I think this is a follow-up question to a different question that somebody had had already asked which I think is going to

be lower down on the list simply because Quistor asked the first question and then he waited some time before asking this subsequent question after other people had already asked. That's how it works.

So anyways, Quisator says, "If you get angry at an AI and act aggressively towards it with the belief that they are conscious and consider them to be similar to a human, thinking that you can hurt their feelings, would you be generating karma similar to if you had offended a human?"

And this is kind of similar to a question I was asked in the previous Q&A about like people falling in love with

AI generated

mates or the AI generated mate. I mean, they don't really have a physical body yet, but still they can say all the romantic stuff and, you know, at at least simulate someone who understands your problem and understands your problems and sympathizes and so forth. Uh, offers you consolation, helps you not to be lonely, this kind of thing.

And so, it reminds me of that. And it's kind of a similar question. So, you get pissed off at an AI, artificial intelligence, and you're like, you're insulting it, you know, you're cursing

the AI, and you think that you're you just assume that the AI can't have its feelings hurt, which probably can't, then yeah, you're making karma, but it's not necessarily as bad of karma as actually hurting a real person's feelings. Because when you're actually hurting a real person's feelings, there's like this feedback going back. Their consciousness or their mental states are kind of feeding back on you, you know, and so and then there's that deeper down level where it's everyone is is more or less empathic or telepathic and there's this connection. So that when you hurt somebody, deep down you feel that you're hurting yourself

because you're hurting this sort of the the group consciousness the or the group mind of this your environment.

So, I mean, the trying to um trying to insult an AI is like a midpoint between insulting a real person and just like cursing an inanimate object. And I have done that plenty. I have cursed the forklift that I drive because, you know, it's just not working right. Or it's like you get the forks underneath a pallet and it's not lifted up high enough so that the forks slide into it and kind of lift it up off the ground so you can't pull the forks back out. You just pull the pallet when you back up.

Then I can just be cursing that

pallet. You stupid son of a [__] kind

of stuff.

And

it's I mean obviously you're making

karma. you're pissed off just or or

irritated or annoyed or or whatever. You

just feel like cussing and I mean you're

making karma by doing that. Just the

it's like the most abstract thoughts are

making karma. Your own thoughts are

making karma. um the belief that you

have insulted a being that doesn't

really exist or I mean I've I've talked

about this sort of thing before too like

you try to shoot somebody you shoot them

they fall down you take off you think

that you you kill them when really they just happen to they were like startled by the sudden noise of the gun going off and slip and fall and they're actually fine. So I mean you don't make the same kind of karma as if you actually killed the person just due to like the the feedback of their own mental states with your your mental states which are happening at a level below like the ordinary conscious level.

So it's a one-way kind of karma. There's the AI really isn't I mean maybe the AI is programmed to like insult you back something like that which could then

escalate so that you could like have
this screaming match towards this
artificial intelligence that really
isn't feeling anything at
all. So there's a few complications
involved but still I mean mainly karma
is volition karma is urge karma is will
the will to insult another being is
going to be bad karma
ausalakama unskillful
action. It's just that when you're doing
it towards a an inanimate object or some
object that just isn't conscious, then
it's going to be one-sided and there's
not going to be any kind of feedback
loops going on or like subconscious
empathy that are that are like um acting

as complications that can add to the karma. So, I hope I answered that question because I'm moving on to the next one. This is from Clefy and Clefy says, "What Buddhist school would be better suited for westerners and it depends on the westerners. I mean like Buddhism has moved into the west. It it did that quite a while ago and some westerners prefer Zen and some westerners prefer terraada or rather we pass. Some some westerners prefer Tibetan Buddhism.

And uh you know it just one of the main determinants is just you know what

teacher is the wisest. You know you could have like a really advanced zen teacher and just sort of a like a a terra or teacher who's just teaching you stuff from a book that they really don't have personal experience in much of what they're teaching. That happens in Burma all the time by the way. Um, so I mean you'd be better off with a Zen Roshi than a Terra monk. Just if the Zen Roshi just happens to be wiser, that he's better suited to be your teacher. But with regard to schools of Buddhism in general, what would be best for Westerners in general?

Um, Terravada maybe, but if you're if you're even including extinct schools,

then probably Saltronica would work

better for Westerners than

Terra or one of the Mahasangika schools

that uh wasn't as

materialistic and wasn't as

essentialist as like the the terrible as

terrible

is terra believes in

suaba or self like self-nature self-

essence like um it doesn't believe that

a person has this suaba or selfexistence

but they do believe that the tiniest

particles of like anything

real like matter or mental states or

whatever that those have their own self

self-existence And that is probably a

step away from what the Buddha was
really teaching. that the Buddha was
probably more in agreement with the
Mahayana's point of view that even the
tiniest particles of matter or the
tiniest units of of mentality even they
do not have this like essential
self-existence this ultimately real
self-existence or ultimately
real existence in general. just get rid
of the self problematic word
selfh that they have their own
existence.
So there's a good chance that some of
the
extinct like so-called Hinayana, you
know, the early schools of Buddhism

would be preferable

to to Terravada. But then again, I mean,

so long as you can accept like the pure

land stuff and all the the myth

mythology and that sort of obviously

like apocryphal text and so forth, then

I mean Zen Zen is good

too, but Zen does have a lot more sort

of apocrypha added to

it. Um, let's see. Tibetan Buddhism is

it's it never really appealed to me.

It's just

too kind

of

garish maybe just it's got too many

complications even though you eventually

penetrate the complications and you get into like Zogchan or something which is very similar to what uh is being taught in some of the earliest texts.

So it it reminds me of um a Buddhist cartoon I saw a long time ago had three meditators all sitting in a line. One of them was a weasna meditator which like some woman with a shawl. And then next was a Zen meditator who was like a Zen monk with the the pajamas and the the bald head. And then the third was a Tibetan meditator who I think was like a guy in a business suit. And so the tarovat meditator has just this ordinary thought balloon coming out that is empty just blank. Then the the Zen meditator

has uh a more like um Chinese ink
painting kind of you know the paintbrush
the ink and the paintbrush kind of Zen
uh thought balloon coming out and it
also is just empty. And then finally the
Tibetan meditator has got this really
ornate curly Q kind of um you know sort
of paisley sort of looking thought
balloon which also is
empty. So I mean westerners generally
don't have much use for faith. If they
if they do have this have a use for
faith generally they're
Christians. you know, you you've already
got your culture already supplies you
with this

faith-based belief system that you if you're just devotionalistic by nature, you can just go for that. So, it's like westerners, a lot of westerners who tend to be more of the scientific temperament than the artistic or the more the philosophical temperament than the religious. They like Buddhism just because it explains things nicely. A lot of like engineer types like Terra Buddhism because it's so systematic.

And again, there's not a lot of fairy tales that you're really required to believe. There's fairy tales in the text. It's just that they're irrelevant to the central message of Buddhism.

So, it seems like early Buddhism would be better than later Buddhism as a general rule. But I mean, it's such a hard question to answer because there's so many ways of interpreting it, so many different ways of looking at it. like what would be best suited to Westerners might be just some sort of very corrupt, watered down, very materialistic, politicized kind of Buddhism, which is there's plenty of that around. But I assume kifi means by better suited is like most beneficial and you know sort of acceptable and beneficial like the best combination of

those those two. So yeah, I would guess
it would be maybe Saltronica or if
you're not including like extinct
ancient schools of Buddhism, then
Terravada, I guess, or maybe some kind
of Zen that goes real easy on
the sort of the extra added
stuff, you know, like like the Pure Land
elements. a lot. Maybe most Zen has sort
of been has incorporated pure land into
it, which really did not inspire me to
want to be a Zen monk after I realized
this
fact. That kind of thing. But I mean, if
Zen were like the Coan collections where
you've just got these people dressed in
black, standing around talking in

riddles and hitting people with sticks, then that might appeal to a certain kind of Western mentality, although hitting people with sticks is very much frowned upon in a in a much more feminized, kinder, gentler sort of western civilization.

Ah, so let's just say Terra and move on to the next question. Next question is from Jules and am I recording?

Yep, certainly looks that way. Jules says, "Did you ever come across the phantom leaf experiment before? Have you ever had any type of perception perceptive experience where

this light body or aura of objects is observed? And I came across the phantom leaf experiment back when I was a kid because my father was he went through this phase of being fascinated by Kieran photography. And so I've seen lots of photographs of Kieran photography, including the phantom leaf where you take a leaf and and I I think the way it works, Kurian photography, I've never really understood it very well, but I think it's there's like supercharged with an electric field or something and then you take a picture and there's like this aura around the leaf or any living thing really. Then you you like tear off a piece of the leaf or you cut off a

piece of the leaf. You you put the leaf, you take the same picture and it's not the aura is going around the the actual outline of this torn or cut leaf. It's there's like the outline is shaped like the the original leaf that somehow that there's some life force or something there that is still causing the leaf to have an an aura that is like the shape of the undamaged leaf.

Another kind of experiment that I really liked as a kid that kind of well anyway it stands out in my memory was a man and a woman would press their their finger up against like a pane of glass and there'd be a a Kurian

photograph of these two fingertips up against the glass and it's got like the little aura around each fingertip and then the man and the woman kiss while their fingers are still there and the aura just blazes. you know, it gets way bigger and
brighter. So, I mean, I never really understood Kurian photography very well. So, I mean, that's kind of a handicap to me in answering this question. Although, I mean, the first question mark here, have I ever come across the phantom leaf experiment? Yes. Back when I was a kid when my father was studying up on curian photography and auras in
general. And then the second part of

this question, have you ever had any type of perceptive experience where this light body or aura of objects is observed? No, I've never really been able to see auras. Although my father claimed that he could see auras and he he claimed that he could tell when someone is lying because their aura would change color. You know, there's different different colors of auras and so forth. And whether that is the same sort of phenomenon as is recorded in Kurian photography, I don't know. I'm not exactly sure what an aura is composed of. You know, that's that's like the the

origination of like the halos around the heads of of saints or around the nimbus shining from the Buddha. All of those presumably would be some sort of aura. which might be the same thing being recorded and purely in photography for all I know. So my father claimed to see auras. I've never been able to see auras. And I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Sedarta Lohachita. And Sedarta Lohachita says, "During your stay in Burma, did you meet any World War II veterans? Are there still bombs in some parts of the jungle? From the Burmese point of view, the Japanese were the good guys. That's

three questions right there. And I even got to the end yet. Even though, as they did throughout all Asia, they installed a puppet military dictatorship. So, you're not tricking me by putting like multiple questions together in the form of one question. So, anyways, so did I meet any World War II veterans? I don't recall meeting World War II veterans. I've met people who were old enough that they recalled British Times. Like one of my main supporters, he was the son of a of a a mayor of Rangon, a Burmese mayor of Rangon. And he spoke English with this upper crusty British accent. So a lot of

the older Brit the older Burmese people like older educated Burmese people would speak English with like an upper crusty British accent. Whereas when you get into like Gen X or you know sort of my age even then they'd start speaking when they'd speak English it would be more with an American accent because by that time it wasn't the British Empire anymore. It wasn't part of the bridge, but instead you had American Christian missionaries running Christian schools that people would send their kids to even though they were devout Buddhists and they remain devout Buddhists just to get a good education and so they would learn to speak English with an American

accent. But with regard to the closest I came to a World War II veteran maybe um was back in the 90s I was interacting with a Burmese monk who was a retired surgeon and he was doing missionary work in Japan. He learned how to speak Japanese during the o the Japanese occupation of Burma in World War II and he always had this liking for the Japanese because the Japanese soldiers liked him. you know, they were kind to him and so, you know, he kind of left a good impression on this boy so that he can sort of continued liking the Japanese and wanted to go to Japan and teach terra Buddhism, teach Dhamma

there.

So, yeah, he eventually talked me into going going to Japan with him once. I spent uh the reigns retreat of 1997 or 98 in in Japan.

So that's my answer to the first part of Sedar Tooha's question. See, are there still bombs in some parts of the jungle? I assume there would be, although the only bombs I saw in Burma were bomb casings that were used as monastery bells. that quite a few monasteries in Burma will have like World War II era like dud bombs, bombs that just didn't explode as monastery bells. You know, they're just hanging from a rope and you you beat on them with a mallet or

something and calls the monks to the meditation hall or it's announcing it's time to leave for alms round, that sort of

thing. So, I mean, but I would assume there's still bombs out in the jungle, but I just never came across any. And then uh the third part of this first question from the Burmese point of view, the Japanese were the good guys. No, not really. I mean that monk that I met who had good experiences with Japanese soldiers, you know, that's there were probably some, but like when the Burmese talk about pets kit, which is the fascist era, when they're talking about

the f the time of fascism in Burma, they're talking about the Japanese occupation. So the way it worked was the Burmese considered the British to be the bad guys during the time of colonialism. You know, we're getting into like the 1930s where there's more of a nationalist movement among these colonial possessions of, you know, the European
powers. And so you had especially young malcontented men who just, you know, they're they're kind of angry. They're not very happy. And so they just blame the British for it. And that's it's extremely common in this world that you're not happy so you just blame

somebody else for

it. And I mean to sometimes you could

say, well, yeah, okay. like you've got a

woman who's living in a with an abusive

husband who's beating on her, that sort

of thing. That's one thing. But I mean,

the British Empire was relatively

well-run and it was relatively humanely

run. In fact, it was more humanely run

and the people prospered more after the

British took over than before.

Like there was a time when the British

ruled southern or lower Burma and the

Burmese kings still ruled upper Burma.

And there was just this

migration of Burmese people migrating

from the Burmese upper Burma to the British run lower Burma just because it was more prosperous and you weren't as likely you had human rights under the British which you didn't you didn't have under the Burmese kings. In fact, one of the reasons why the British um in invaded Upper Burma or rather the main prop one of the main propaganda reasons to get the people in England behind this was pointing out that I mean it's a true story as I know that uh the king's astrologer told him that the current capital city which I think may I think it was Mandalay at the time. It's

running out of juju that you're gonna have to move the capital again. And that was a pretty common thing. In fact, it happened just relatively recently when the capital of Burma got moved from Rangon to
Napedo. The capital of Burma is now Napedo. And that's that's was going on for a long time. And it was largely for astrological reasons where the fortune teller says, you know, it we've we've sucked up all the mana out of the ground here or whatever. We're going to have to move the capital. And so it moved a lot. But the king, King Thibo, I think was his name. Um he wasn't a particularly

intelligent person, but he had enough sense to realize that they just could not afford to move the capital. just pull up stakes, move everything to a to a different city, maybe even build a whole new city. So instead, he decided to compromise by having I think it was like 400 people buried alive around the the precincts of like the central city, the Acropolis, sort of like where the king's palace was and everything. They had walls around that. You can still go and see the walls in in Mandandalay. And it just caused this exodus of people, you know, fleeing Manderlay because of course they consider themselves unworthy to be buried alive and turned into a

kind of guardian spirit for protecting
the
area. So I mean the British I mean they
had their moments of inhumity and all
that but they weren't just burying
people alive for superstitious reasons
for example. So, but anyways, getting
back to the the the story I was starting
to tell in that the Burmese resented the
British because they just thought they
were going to become this glorious
utopia without British rule. And so um
at the beginning of World War
II, there were a group of sort of
Burmese resistance leaders including
Ansan who became like the father of

independent Burma went to Japan to receive training on how to be like insurgent fighters and you know essentially terrorists. And so they came back and they were fighting for the Japanese and they helped the Japanese to some degree to drive out the British which did happen. the British were driven out of Burma and then the Japanese established, you know, this kind of mini dictatorship there and then the Burmese realized that they were better off under the British because the Japanese were much more ruthless, less compassionate, were less concerned with justice and human rights than the British were. So then like

Ansan, he he switches sides again. He goes back to helping the helping the British and then the British finally drive the Japanese out with the help of the Americans and

Onsan he's he gets to be the next he gets to be the the first president of independent Burma but then he's assassinated

immediately. So from the Burby's point of view the easy answer is no. The Japanese were not the good guys. They were considered to be worse than the British. So I'm just going to move on to Sedarta Lohitta's second question.

Do you know the story of the barren Ang

von Sternberg? A German with Russian nationality who installed a brutal theocracy in Mongolia became the dictator and wanted to create some kind of Shambala Empire uniting the Tibet, Mongolia and Central Asia under an absolutist vajraana monarchy. I've read a little bit about him. You know, I've heard about him. I know generally who he was, but I'm not familiar with his biography. It's it seems like he may have been inspired by Roger Kiplings, The Man Who Would Be King. Um because he I mean he was trying the same sort of thing essentially. But yeah, I mean I've I've heard a little bit about it, but um

apparently he did not succeed in his attempts. I mean, he probably sort of like, you know, the guys in in uh The Man Who Would Be King, you know, they they kind of kind of start getting set up and then they they mess up and and then they're they're destroyed. I I would assume that it would be something along those lines happened with the Baron,

too. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. And this is from Jonty. John spelled J A U N. And Jonty John says, "What do you think about the cases of people that have no visual imagination?" And it's called

aphantasia and no internal monologue. It appears to be a quite widespread barely studied phenomenon on a spectrum from no verbal internal monologue to not even abstract conscious monologue at all in context of Buddhist practice like meditation etc. Um, yeah, I've heard about people that do not have an internal monologue. And I mean, it's hard for me to imagine. It may help to account for why like simple subsistence farmers living in a village in you know third or fourth world Asia they can get into deep meditative states that when a westerner is still at the you know the pain in the knee stage because they don't have

wandering mind I mean it's like they
just don't think very much I mean I
assume in order for a human to be pretty
much sentient in a human sense
They have to be able to think, at least
when they're trying to think, you know,
what should I have for
dinner? You know, where how should I tie
up the cows tonight? This kind of thing.
I mean, they must have some kind of
thoughts going on in their head, even
verbal thoughts. It just may be that
when they don't have some specific task
at hand, they just go silent. And that
may be one reason why people in third
world countries especially love to have

loudspeakers just blasting in the village because their head's kind of empty. It's not like they can't hear themselves think. It's just that they're kind of accepting this noise as a kind of substitute for thinking. That's one hypothesis I came up with after living in Burma for many years being exposed to blasting loudspeakers.

Just about every village has got at least one blasting loudspeaker playing cheesy Burmese pop music or monks chanting or just announcements, that kind of stuff, which can sometimes start at 3:30 in the afternoon or if they're doing a

baton play, it can just be

247. So, let's see here. What do I think about the cases of people having no visual imagination? Gosh. I mean, they'd they'd have to dream. Even an animal has dreams where they're they've got like visual images. So, I'm not exactly sure how they're measuring this, you know, how they're determining this kind of stuff. Um because it would seem like even a person who supposedly has no visual imagination and no internal dialogue, they'd still be able to think in words if they got some reason to think in words. And they're probably still having

images at night when they're
dreaming. Although I've also read that
many, if not most people dream in black
and
white, which is not the case with me.
So let's see it. It appears to be a
quite widespread barely studied
phenomenon on a spectrum from no verbal
internal monologue to not even abstract
conscious monologue at all. Yeah. I mean
I really don't have a lot of personal
experience with that. I mean some people
are more simple-minded the than others
and simple-minded in that context is not
necessarily a porative. I mean some
people are just better off being
simple-minded more simplehearted I

guess.

So he wants me to to discuss this or what I think about in a context of Buddhist practice like meditation. Well, I've already pointed out that some people who just don't think very much are become really good meditators at least with regard to samata. they might not be as good at getting insight because insight may require some kind of thinking like I mean in Zen Buddhism if you're dealing with a [__] then you have to be thinking that's your meditation involves thinking or just breathing in and out then I mean there's still some thinking especially at the beginning

level

so it can make people better sata

meditators but it may be a handicap with

regard to the arising of insight

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Mr.

Pronov. And Mr. Pronov says, "Is the

three marks of existence human centric?

I can't think." No, I can't seem to

understanding how the mark of dooka

applies to non-living things like a rock

or a cup,

etc. Is it dooka because if the cup

breaks, the owner gets sad? Well, I

mean, dooka is a mental

state. And as far as I know, rocks don't

have mental

states. Cups don't have mental
states. But largely because they don't
have mental states, they also don't
differentiate themselves from their
surroundings. And so from that point of
view, a rock or a cup simply does not
exist as any kind of entity unless some
conscious being is perceiving it.
So I mean dooka I mean
obviously a a rock or a cup itself is
not going to suffer but the person
perceiving the rock or the cup and
thereby causing that rock or cup to
become some discernable entity there
it's like what is fueling our existence
some in samsara is this restless

dissatisfaction which is largely what

karma

is just this momentum of mental states

just kind of shoving us through

samsara or like in some of the earlier

texts it's the thorn in the

heart that I mean just you can't fully

relax you can't fully be

content you're just driven through life

by just this restless dis satisfaction

essentially and even like modern

biology like cognitive science agrees

with this that I read a book I think it

was the tangled wing

um like biological constraints on the

human spirit by I think his name was

Melvin Connor

Coner who said that I mean like fear and just desire I want is just driving us through life even though the desire may not even I mean it just may be this ambig ambiguous. You don't even know what it is you want really. It's just wanting that's that's like from from a biologist.

So yeah, I mean a a rock or a cup is dooka because that rock or cup exists as any kind of distinct entity only through a mind perceiving it. And there is no rock or cup there other than potentially if no one is perceiving it. And it's a mental state. And obviously dooka has to be a mental state. It would only really

apply to conscious beings. But a world of multiplicity also applies only to conscious beings because it requires perception to divide things up to distinguish things.

So, I hope I answered that question because I'm moving on to the next one. This is from Fred and Fred says, "What is the ego really?" And one way of looking at that question is, I mean, it depends on the definition that ego is not. I mean, it has more than one possible

meaning. Although I mean ego literally means I in in Latin I'm pretty sure like cojito no that's that's different that's erggo never mind but

the the ego really is sort of like
self-consciousness you know it's I think
according to Freudian psychology who I
think Freud was maybe the the person
that really got the word ego uh into the
English language that uh you know it's
sort of like the
the feeling of identity or it involves
includes the feeling of identity. It's
sort of like your
self-awareness not really awareness in
general but like the like an
self-image have you know this idea of
yourself as an individual person kind of
a
thing.

Um, yeah. I mean, from the Buddhist point of view, it would just be like the conceit I am. I, me, mine would all be like egoistic. But I suppose it would depend on who you talk to because the word ego is not defined exactly the same by everybody and it has multiple meanings in the dictionary. So I'm going to move on to Fred's second question which is how much weight does comma have for enjoying and sharing someone's pleasure et for example pornography okay how much weight does comma have the Fred asks difficult questions to understand sometimes in fact sometimes I'm not even sure if he's

really asking a question but this one definitely has a clearly discernible question mark at the end So, how much weight does Kama have for enjoying and sharing someone's pleasure? Apparently, somebody else's pleasure, eg pornography. And I guess the people in porn, I mean, they are experiencing some pleasure. I wouldn't consider them to be generally happy
people relatively speaking. Maybe a few are, but
uh I I really do not fully understand this question. How much weight does kama have for enjoying and sharing someone's pleasure? Well, I mean enjoying and

sharing someone's pleasure would

technically be

moodto and it's considered to be

um a wholesome mental state. But that

would be different from getting pleasure

from watching porn because you're not so

much getting pleasure from from the

pleasure of the people in the the video

so much as you're just getting pleasure

from um getting your animal mating

instincts

um kind of lit up by seeing, you know,

some healthy,

wellproportioned member of the opposite

sex at the peak of breeding

age.

So I mean if you do take pleasure in

somebody else's pleasure that would be
muda that would be meritorious. You
would be getting good karma for that. Um
if you're
just like getting pleasure from watching
two people fornicating
um without really any kind of like
empathy or any such thing then that
would be more of an unh wholesome mental
state. I mean you would be cashing in
past good karma because any pleasure
that you feel is the fruition of
wholesome karma or like good
karma.
So I'm not exactly sure what the
question really is asking though. How

much weight does karma have for enjoying and sharing someone's pleasure?

Yeah, I'm not exactly sure what exactly what that means. Although I did give it a shot in a kind of nebulous roundabout way of trying to answer that question.

And so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is kind of along the same vein here. This is from Siovak and Sipad Zidana who says why is sexuality focused much more uh of the sensual pleasure while gardens art food porn etc is seen as a-okay in Buddhist circles despite also being sensuality. I even remember a verse from the terraata where Mahakaspa the literal patron saint of

aseticism is talking about the beauty of the natural the natural place he practices and how it is refreshing. So I guess there's a little bit to unpack here with regard to sexuality. That is one of the main desires that a person has and so it's one of the the main kinds of desire that is um really dealt with in the poly texts. Certainly not the only kind of pleasure, but really it require it takes gets a lot of emphasis just because it's one of the strongest desires for pleasure that people have that and food. I guess those would be the main

two.

And so he says gardens, art, food porn, etc. are seen as a-okay in Buddhist circles, but it's not seen as a-okay in the poly texts. I mean, that's just a sort of a degeneration of Buddhism. Like, I used to have this idea if I ever had my own monastery back when I was a monk. Then I certainly would not have beautiful flower beds, you know, landscaped gardens and all this, which is what you generally find. Like you even look in uh like some of these Buddhist magazines and it's advertising meditation centers and it's always talking about how beautiful the the the grounds are and everything. And I mean

you that's not what Terra Buddhism teaches. That's not what the texts say that you should avoid that kind of stuff. You'd be better off with decomposing corpses scattered around your monastery than having flowering plants and gardens and this kind of thing.

So I mean going back with the poly text and all pleasures should be kept to a minimum except for just the the joy of meditation that even necessary pleasures like eating, sleeping and bathing should be kept to a

minimum and you should just avoid the beautiful in that sense.

I think the the Rahula suta of the uh of the sutin pata kind of explains the proper attitude with regard to that. So sexuality is focused on much more than like art and food and so forth simply because it's I mean partly was just ancient Indian culture and that monks are supposed to be celibate and so you have to like I mean they didn't have to refrain from food but they did have to refrain from sex and it's a very strong temptation and so it was they were just continually pounding away at that just because it's really one of the main sources of desire and also just unenlightened neurosis in humans. But so I mean when it has moved

to the west or it has just become decadent so that you've got monks that really are not practicing conscientiously but are just following along with the tradition then you wind up with beautiful grounds and landscaped gardens and monks you know eating delicious food and they got Buddhist art that's very pretty on the walls this kind of stuff. And I mean that would not have been approved of in the times of the earliest Buddhism. That's just kind of a a decline or what you naturally expect when a system set up originally for advanced renuncient aesthetics becomes like a national religion where

pretty much everybody's a Buddhist. So that even the most foolish people are Buddhists and they're going to need something that's going to have something for them at at sort of like this crude level. And I mean in the west also like I kind of was mentioning with regard to the meditation centers that are advertised in the Buddhist magazines, it's it's just the middle path between self-indulgence and self- torture. Very few people veer off towards the self torture. there almost everybody is veering over to the self-indulgent side including most
monks.
So see Siovak says he even remembers a

verse from the Tiraata where

Mahakasapa who is like the most

aesthetic of the Buddhist chief

disciples or his his great disciples is

talking about the beauty of the natural

place he practices and how it is

refreshing. Well, yeah. I mean, that's

certainly not as unh wholesome of an

appreciation as

appreciating like

uh a female naked

body.

So, in to some degree, I mean, nature is

beautiful. Um, unless you look at it

real close and then you see that that a

forest is a battlefield with everything

trying to kill something else.
But still it's you know it's taking you away from the artificiality of the rat race you know humanity you know squalid humanity even in villages let alone towns and you know it's just sort of a kind of freedom which is good.
So, but whether Ma Koso is actually praising the beauty of the natural places where he practices, I don't know.
That the terraata and the terriata both have a reputation for having been composed long after I at least a lot of it was composed long after the Buddhist time. But in the poly text it does say that a monk should just I mean he should go out into into the

forest. I mean I mean you got to go
somewhere and so you go out into a
forest but I mean you should not be like
enjoying physical
beauty that monks are warned against
that. That's all sensuality that that's
like a a stumbling block. It's going to
keep you from becoming enlightened.
So I'm just going to move on to sea of
action
sepat's second question which is please
explain the concept of
brahmacharia and in Buddhism
brahmacharia mainly means I mean
sometimes it's translated as the holy
life mainly it means celibacy but also

it can mean just the life of a renuncient who is you know living a life of dharma striving towards enlightenment that sort of thing. But um more narrowly it means celibacy. And brahmachara apparently is one of the words that the Buddha um sort of hijacked from the Vadic tradition and re redefined it. And on the discord server in past recent weeks,

um there has been some discussion of like Mahayana Buddhists taking earlier Buddhist terms and redefining them like Bodhic Satva for example.

And in a way you could see it as like reprehensible that the Mahayana Buddhists are just taking older Buddhist

terms the way the Buddha used them apparently and just giving different meanings to them. Whereas I mean the Terraata Buddhists or or just the Buddha himself apparently took like Vadic terms and just gave them completely new definitions. And so um this brahmacharia in in like the vdic traditions in what is now called Hinduism that was like the first stage in life of a devout Hindu um the the first ashramama dharma you know it's like you started off as the celibate student that's the brahmacharia phase where you are a student of the vadas mainly I mean you study other things besides just the vdic texts you

there's a a list of the things that like a a young Brahman would have to study for

example. And uh then the next stage would be the householder. And then the next stage would be like the the renuncient who is just like a hermit like a like someone who goes to the forest. You know, they're just kind of living alone in a hut. Maybe their their grown children are supporting them as they just meditate or pray out in this hut in the forest by themselves. Maybe they take their wife, you know, just an elderly couple who have more or less renounced

sociality. And then finally, there's the

syasi or this the the wandering
aesthetic would be the the final stage
that probably most Hindus never get
to. In fact, nowadays most Hindus
probably don't bother with these four
ashrama dharmas anyway. But originally
brahmacharia was sort of like uh I mean
sometimes in in translations it's called
the brahaparing usually the holy life
works better but they're going towards
Brahma you know that's what it literally
means is you know Brahma
going so they're they're kind of moving
towards Brahma who is like the like the
chief god in the Hindu pantheon in a
sense at least at one time he kind of

still is But mainly Hinduism has been
taken over by Vishnavites and Shyites
who are saying that Vishnu is the is the
highest god or Shiva is the highest god.
But Brahma was
like he was like the personification of
ultimate reality. So in a sense Brahma
still is pretty much the highest god. I
think in the Bavad Gita um Krishna
claims that he is Brahma and Shiva and
Vishnu. You know it's the the Hindus
kind of they have a strange approach to
theology let's
say. So I mean you took the early vadic
term of just sort of going to going to
Brahma
uh however that was specifically

interpreted and then the Buddha just
sort of re-ransated it. He took the same
term and then just I mean it still means
like it still involves celibacy but he
just kind of turns it into the holy life
of renuncience in general how they're
going towards reality you know they're
they're going towards holiness that kind
of
thing and that's about as good of a
explanation as you're going to get out
of me right
now hyped up on caffeine as I am and so
I'm just going to move on to seal action
Cadirna's third question which is what
does religion mean to you? Everyone

seems to have a different definition of what the term means. You know, most people don't have any definition at all. Anyways, I just interrupted myself. Everyone has everyone seems to have a different definition of what the term means and are often contradictory, exclusionary or defined in a way that pushes a certain goal the person has. Well, like I told him in the Discord server, if if I were going to use one word to differentiate religion from philosophy, it would be worship. That religion is worshipy. It is devotionalistic. Whereas philosophy is not necessarily worshipy or

devotionalistic. To the extent that it is worshipy and devotionalistic, it is becoming a religion. Anyways, I looked it up in my dictionary and it says that religion is the belief in and worship of a superhuman power or powers, especially a god or gods.

And I can accept that. And it's got worship. It's got belief and worship right there in the definition. So yeah, religion is devotionalistic. It can be very philosophical, but so long as you've got worship or or

devotionalism, then it's going to be more of a religion than just a a a philosophy. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Xenithid. And Xenithoid has asked three rather odd questions. First question, why is violence sometimes beautiful? And I mean beauty is not something that exists that exists objectively that you got a chemist who let's say he's going to analyze the components of some flower. So he he just breaks down that flower into its component parts. you know, it's got so much of, you know, cellulose and it's got water and it's got, you know, magnesium in it and this

kind of thing. He's not going to isolate out any beauty. He's not going to find any beauty when he when he breaks this thing down into its component parts. The beauty is like a projection from a perceiving mind. beauty and ugliness, you know, it's just the duality generated by a perceiving mind and it's largely influenced by animal instincts and so forth. So why is violence sometimes beautiful? It's just that you've got some person who just somehow considers a certain kind of violence to be beautiful. Like for example, a bull fight. You've got a really good matador who's very graceful, very just fearless.

you know, the the the horns of the bull are coming within an inch of his body as he lets it go by. You know, that that might be seen as beautiful. Some people see just a raging battlefield as beautiful. Sort of like um you know, a raging stormy sea or a raging electrical storm. You know, just the sheer power of it is is seen as beautiful in in a in a very dangerous sort of way.

A tiger with its mouth covered with blood might be seen as beautiful as it has just finished eating a deer or some such. But the beauty of it is a projection from some perceiving mind and two people can look at the same thing and one person will see it as ugly and

another person will see it as beautiful. So violence is sometimes beautiful because of the individual quirks of the beholder. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Some people have a more violent mind and have more of an appreciation for violence. So they might see certain kinds of violence as beautiful. Whereas like some very saintly person who takes aims extremely seriously who wouldn't hurt a fly, they might see all violence as ugly. So anyways, I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's second question, which is what separates beautiful violence from disgusting violence? And again, it

is the attitude of the viewer that there is no beautiful violence or disgusting violence existing out there that isn't being perceived. That that beauty or or or disgustingness. They're just not out there in some material world. They are matters of attitude in in the viewer. So again, one person can look at violence and consider it beautiful. Another one can look at the very same violence and consider it disgusting. It's just individual quirks in a perceiving mind. So, I'm going to move on to Zenithoid's third question, which is,

did the burning monk die a beautiful, glorious death? And he's referring to the famous Vietnamese monk who lit himself on fire to protest the South Vietnamese Christian government that was in a way I guess um like biased against the Buddhist majority that kind of thing. And did so did he die a beautiful glorious death? Again, it depends on who you talk to because it is a value judgment. It is just an individual judgment was not really based on objectivity. So some people would look at that and consider it a beautiful glorious death. And there were people like when this monk was burning that

actually came and like bowed to him.
They were in just reverence at what he
was doing.
But other people will just be appalled
like uh the lady in uh that Ingmar
Bergman movie Persona who has to be
institutionalized after seeing this monk
burning himself alive on on television
like on the
news. It's an old
movie. So again, it just depends on who
you who you talk to and it's all matters
of opinion. It's it's not some kind
of you just objective this is the way it
is. It's going to depend on the attitude
of whoever is observing whatever it is
to determine whether they see it as

beautiful or disgusting or glorious or inglorious. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Harim Cathul. And Harim Cthul asks a kind of unusual interesting question which is did modern science develop because magic is not as powerful in the Kali
Yuga and that's an intriguing question I think although I mean the Indians consider the Kaliuga to go back tens of thousands of years I'm pretty sure so all of human history And a lot of human prehistory, protohistory would all be kaliuga. I mean there's no recollection of anything other than kali yuga except

in like mythology.

So I do think that there's a correlation that um I do have the wizard theory with regard to like certain prehistoric monoliths like huge rocks that have been moved for many miles and like maybe dragged or moved up mountain slopes in order to have this huge temple or or what a shrine or whatever the hell it is that it may be that you had powerful magicians s or powerful priests, you know, sort of channeling the power of some small G god that was that was helping this to happen that it was instrumental in the building of some of these things. I can't rule out that possibility. And now that we have

science and just materialism in general, just European objectivity that the odds of that sort of thing go down because people just don't believe in it anymore. They want to believe that, you know, this is an orderly universe that follows laws of physics and so forth. And so they just don't have the faith in that to allow it to happen. Like the New Testament, that's that's one of the main messages of the New Testament. You know, setting aside, you know, Paul and and like the general epistle of John, like the synoptic gospels, let's say, one of the main teachings of Jesus in the synoptic

gospels is, you know, faith can move mountains. I mean, it's like even when he was healing the sick and they they got better and they thanked him, he's your own faith that did it.

And that kind of faith or magic or the miraculous or whatever is certainly less now than it was in ancient times just because people just don't believe in it much. So did modern science develop though because because magic is not as powerful nowadays in in modern times? I think there may be like some interaction. I don't think that it was just like a that is the one thing that caused

it. It was just sort of the the western

mind was you know starting with the Greeks maybe even before the Greeks was just kind of moving in this direction of increased objectivity and sort of philosophical explanations of things in an orderly manner that just kind of ruled out

magic gradually over time. you know, magic just kind of got sidelined. Less people believed in it, less people had faith in it. So, it just couldn't happen as

much. Although, it's there was sort of like a push back, I think, like in the 1800s there was kind of a push back towards more magical thinking like

spiritualism and faith healing and that
sort of thing. um mainly as like I I see
it possibly hypothetically as one last
major push back against science after
Darwin came along because Darwin just I
mean he would he just laid waste to
religious thinking to a large
degree that before Darwin it was like
well okay there's laws of physics and
all that but how do you explain us being
here and then along came Chuck Darwin
And uh I mean he just kind of that was
one of the last holdouts
really for a lot of Christians.
So he's he's my favorite. He's my
favorite scientist.
H even though a lot of people nowadays

are just like staunchly anti-
Darwinian and not just Christian
creationists
either. So yeah, I think modern science
um it pretty much reduced the
possibility of magic, but I don't think
that let's see. Yeah, I think it's the
other way around. I don't think that it
was magic declining that caused science
to arise. It was more like science
arising helped magic to decline. So I
think it goes the other
way. I hope cuz that's what I just
said. So I'm going to move on to the
next question which is from PSA.
And

PSA, he has uh gotten into a a
phase of asking joke questions, jokes
that are not entirely
serious, which includes this first one.
What is the true meaning of
Christmas? And anyone who wants to know
the true meaning of Christmas, watch How
the Grinch Stole Christmas. You know, it
explains it all in the movie, especially
towards the end.
Um, but aside from that, I mean, to to a
Christian, the meaning of Christmas is
just celebrating Jesus's
birthday. But at first, they didn't
really know when Jesus's birthday
was. Um, I think the the earliest
recorded celebration of Christmas was in

the springtime back in early Roman or
back in Roman times. Um, then it got
moved to January, which the uh the
Eastern Orthodox Christians still
celebrate Christmas in January, I'm
pretty
sure. But in the western half of the
Roman Empire where people spoke Latin
and were more influenced by Roman
Italian culture that uh it was just sort
of like a political move from the
Christians to just replace the main
pagan Roman holiday which was
Saturnelia with Christmas.
But again, if you want to know the true
meaning of Christmas, watch How the

Grinch Stole Christmas, the cartoon version or the the liveaction version. It doesn't matter. They both pretty much teach the same message. And so I'm going to move on to PSA's second question, which is, would you like to be reborn as a proverbial skunk in a Georgia pine tree?

No. Okay. So, let's see. PSA's third question. When you drink alcohol, this is this is actually a serious question. When you drink alcohol, it initially has a calming effect that relieves stress. However, if you keep drinking, you start getting buzzed and then drunk. Does the fifth precept refer to not drinking at all, not even a single drop, or does it

refer to not drinking until you get drunk? So, that's a fair question. And uh for a monk, let's just start with the rules for a monk. It's the monk doesn't a monk doesn't follow just the five precepts. She follows more than 2,000 rules that are found in the vineitica, the rules of monastic discipline. And for a monk, even one drop, even if you drink it

accidentally, you have broken the rule and you have to make confession for it. Like, you know, I've mentioned this before. I've I was given medicine before and uh I asked it was like a liquid medicine. You know, you take a

spoonful of it or something. I asked, "Does this have alcohol in it?" And they said, "No, no, no alcohol." So then I I take a spoonful of it and it's like, you know, 90 proof, you know, it's it's strong alcohol. So I had to make confession for that. Or somebody offers you like grape juice and grape juice fermentss really easily. That's one reason how wine got wine was invented, I assume, because grape juice fermentss more easily than something like apple juice. I don't know why. That's just my experience. So, it's it's the hot season, you have no electricity, you have no refrigerator, and somebody offers you this bottle of grape juice,

you know,

freshsqueezed. And so, you don't drink it right away. You drink it maybe hours later that same day, and it's already starting to taste like wine. Well, you broke the rule. Doesn't matter if you get drunk or not. is just even one drop of alcohol. You consume that unless it's like so so diluted down like in a curry or something. You know, somebody cooks with wine, the alcohol all boils out and you know, there's just like maybe a very slight flavoring of it but no alcohol still, that kind of thing. Or it's just so diluted down that it's imperceptible, then you really haven't broken the rule.

But I assume that the five precepts for lay people, it would be similar for a monk where it you don't have to get drunk. Just to have a beer, just to have one drink of beer would already be violating the
precept. I'm not so sure about a lay person drinking or let's not say drinking, just taking a small amount of cough syrup that has some alcohol in it, that kind of thing. or they use mouthwash that has some alcohol in it and they accidentally swallow like a tiny amount of it that it all depends on how much of a stickler you want to be, howic you want to be with regard to following five

precepts. But in all likelihood for lay people as well as for monks, just any amount of alcohol that you drink, especially if you do it on purpose for monks, even if it's accidental, you still have to make confession. for a lay person. I don't know. I'm not 100% sure whether um a person a lay person has broken the precept by accidentally taking a sip of alcohol or, you know, just some tiny just a drop of it, that kind of thing if they don't do it on purpose. But might as well just go with the same standards that monks have, which mean even if you have a tiny amount accidentally, you've still broken

the rule.

And I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Dhamma River. And Dama River says, "Have you read the chapter the 18 faults of a monastery in the Wizudi Maga? If yes, what do you think about it? And do you agree? If not, I strongly recommend you to read this chapter." Well, as it turns out, I looked in the Wudi Maga earlier today, and I did not find that chapter in the in like the the table of contents. It's not a complete chapter. I'm pretty sure it might be like a subsection, but I didn't even see the subsection mentioned. I went through the table of contents like twice. I didn't want to go

through the entire book, but I have read if it assuming that it's in the Wizudi manga. I have read it because I have read the entire Wizardi manga, but that was when I was like a junior monk long ago. And so only certain parts of the Wizardi manga really stand out. You know, it's like um the overview of the 13 dutongas or optional aesthetic practices. That was one part that I was instructed to read by one of my first teachers. And uh just the overview of the 32 parts of the body, which is more of an anthropological study than any kind of like medical or anatomical study. It just shows you what the

ancient Indians believed about how your body works.

So that it's actually your liver that circulates blood or actually it doesn't even really circulate. They didn't have a concept of the circulatory system. So they just thought that your liver just kind of is splashing the blood around inside your body. The heart is the origin of thought that it's not even a blood pumping organ and your brain is just bone marrow filling a large hollow brain. And they didn't even know what what possible purpose it could have. I think I mentioned before that one of the most objective empirical statements in that section where Buddha

Gosa the the author of the book is
talking about the 32 parts of the body
is he makes the observation that if your
spleen protrudes from your body through
like an injury you
die. They they have learned that much
empirical medicine to know if your
spleen comes out you die. Although it
may be in some cases, especially
nowadays, you've got like an like
antiseptics and so forth, you could kind
of poke it back in and sew sew the
person's torso back together and they
might be
okay. So, so the 18 folds of a
monastery, I kind of vaguely remember I

have read I think in the there's sutas that discuss, you know, signs of decline in a monastery. You know, I I can I could probably guess with fair accuracy what some of the faults of a monastery would be. You know, too close to a town or too far away from a town or too noisy or, you know, too many lay people visiting, you know, especially the the women all dressed in pretty clothes and all that. Um, but again, it's it's just I read it a long time ago and it does not come to mind. And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ruie and Ruie says, "During your caved dwelling days, did the bitter master's loneliness and boredom call on

you often?" And no, not really. Um, I used to think to myself that the only time I'd ever really get bored as a monk is if I had to sit through a long-winded discourse by some Burmese Seattle. You just have to sit there and pretend like you're listening really. And I mean, I'd get bored with, not when I was by myself, but when I was with people that really we did not share the same point of view or the same understanding of the world in general or of dharma in particular, you know, we just weren't on the same page. And so I just have to be polite and just kind of have good manners until it was all over

with.

So, I really do not get bored or lonely

very

easily. I mean, there were a few times

as a monk where I would feel like, man,

it'd be good to hang out with my old

buddy Mucus Man again, but that was that

was about it

really. Maybe kind of loneliness for a

woman, you know, sort of like the the

the mating instinct would arise

sometimes, but I I don't suppose Ruby

was specifically referring to that.

But I mean, I could just live in a cave

with bare

walls, you know, and just not be bored.

I mean, when when a major part of your

job is just kind of feeling the
sensation of air as it goes in and out
of your nostrils, a person like that
generally doesn't get bored very easily
if you can do that for hours every day.
So yeah, I was just blessed I suppose in
not being particularly prone to
loneliness or
boredom. And I'm just going to move on
to the next question. This is from
Moambo. And Moambo says, "What are your
views on memory?" And this is
memory. It's it's a subtle thing that's
difficult to explain that some people
will use memory as like an argument for
self view. You know, if there's no self,

then who is it that remembers this stuff? How does memory work?

But from a like a phenomenological point of view, I'm not sure if I'm using the word

correctly, but there has to be a certain continuity in order for us to have like an existence going through samsara as a perceived individual. I mean, there has to be some continuity from one moment to the next. If you have complete amnesia and don't remember what happened a one moment before or anything that happened before the present. I mean there's no way you could be a kind of sentient being. I mean you just be like in this state of I don't know what it would be.

You know you're seeing everything for the first time every moment. You don't know what anything is. You wouldn't know how to use language. That's a kind of memory. you'd just be like I mean you'd be like an idiot. So there has to be some kind of memory for mentality in the human sense of the word in order for it to exist at all.

So that's that's how memory that's why memory works in in from from just this you know setting aside neuroysiology and all that just just like from the personal experience of being alive in samsara you have to have memory because

I mean your mind is changing from one moment to the next you have to have change but you also have to have continuity and in a way that's sort of like the middle path in a way you could call it uh kind of dependent core rising and I always intended to write an essay on this and I don't think I ever did but I mean there has to be a balance between like Shiva and Vishnu or like Dionis and Apollo there has to be a like a balance between change and stasis things remaining the same but also changing because you can't have two moments in a row of nothing changing.

because you wouldn't even be aware of it. I mean it's like the passage of time

is is measured by

change.

So I mean with regard to you want to go the the like the scientific route then you know neurohysiology they've got their own theories on how memory works. They don't fully understand how memory works even now. you know, they don't know if it's sort of like a, you know, like a special area in your brain that has stores a memory or if it's just like your your entire brain has sort of like a memory hologram or something. They they haven't fully worked that part out yet. Maybe they never will. Who knows? Memory in a computer is pretty

straightforward. But memory just from
the point of view of
like just dealing with what you're
experiencing
directly and maybe going through the
filter of perception because it that's
that's the way an unenlightened mind
works a samsauric mind you just have to
have memories and so whether it even
really existed or not I mean it's not
even necessary for your memories even to
be
true And I found that some of my
memories have changed over time. I've
like as a monk, I would remember certain
things like an old TV commercial about
Tootsie Pops or just some some song on

an album that I used to really like. And then after I stopped being a monk or I just came back to to to the west to visit my family or something, you know, I'd see that same old commercial that was like this vintage classic commercial now and it was different than I clearly remembered it. Or that song that used that I really liked. It turned out that I took the lyrics from one song and the the melody from another and had just conflated them so that it wasn't I mean I remembered the song wrong too even though I'd been like playing it in my head for years. So memories aren't even

necessarily factual.

It's just this mental image that is maintained through karmic momentum that you use to build your personality and your experience

on. But it's it's a subtle a subtle topic and it's hard to explain very coherently. And so I'm just going to move on to Moambo's second

question and I think this is also about memory. Information is shared between similar species through a language. What would be the mechanism of memories? Momentum from past life to be transferred from one life to another. Well, I mean memories generally do not transfer from one life to another.

You've got, you know, the karmic momentum, but it doesn't necessarily come across as me. Most people do not remember anything from before they were born. In fact, most people don't remember anything from before they were about 3 years old.

So the mechanism of memories to be transferred from one life to another, I'm not even sure if you could even call it a mechanism because as a general rule, it's it's an exception to the rule that there are like some kids or some people who are hypnotized or just some people who are unusual who can remember past lives. Like my father

claimed to be able to remember uh
several of his past lives to some
degree.
Um, and you know, you read Ian
Stevenson's books about little kids who
insist that they're not that little kid,
they're this grown-up who ran a pharmacy
20 miles away and died from falling off
a wagon. This kind of thing.
So what the exact mechanism of that
would be is maybe like your ego
structure defining your existence in
this world has gaps that are allowing
you know information from a previous
existence to to bleed
through. But why he says this top part
information the first part of the

question information is shared between
similar species through a language
similar maybe he means the same
species but I mean you don't even have
to have similar species for there to be
some kind of communication because for
example when I lived in central Burma
there were lots of little owls called
zquet there were lots of wild jungle
fell like wild chickens and there were
also lots of squirrels And they would
all have an alarm call. You know, if
they saw a hawk flying by, they'd make a
certain sound and the other species
would also know that is an alarm call.
That means they probably saw something

scary. And so like an owl would make
this little chirping
noise is like an alarm call. And it's
like the squirrels and the the jungle
foul would just run for cover. So it was
like interspecies communication. They
were all sharing alarm
calls. One one uh kind of interesting
thing about alarm calls I read in a book
on animal behavior is that many alarm
calls that various species of animal
have are specifically designed to be
difficult to locate. Like if it's a
mating call, you want to be able to
locate. You know, you want the female
bird to locate you who is making the
mating call. But if it's an alarm call,

you don't want the hawk to be able to locate you from the sound. So they have a more diffuse kind of like the phonetic or not the phonetics, the acoustics of it are different so that it's harder to actually know exactly where the alarm call is coming from. That's just throwing a little behavioral biology in there.

So what would be the mechanism of memories to be translated transferred from one life to another? Yeah, like I said, I guess my best explanation would be that, you know, you've got some person who, you know, they still have like gaps in their ego or in their their

selfimage that is allowing information from a previous life to somehow bleed through in a paranormal kind of way, but it is uncommon among human beings. Most people do not remember past lives. And I remember one time somebody asked me why is it that we don't remember our past lives is and my answer at the time was we have a different brain.

So the info recorded I mean going with the idea of like empirical scientism or whatever that I mean clearly you got a different brain and so it's like you got a different computer. You know it's got different memory storage and the the the

stuff that was on your previous uh computer just isn't stored on this new computer because you didn't have a backup. You [__] up on that one. Ah, but I'm not exactly sure what Moambo is angling towards in this question, unless he spills the beans in this third question, which is as follows. As humans, we are a product of our parents and we could brace, we could trace it back to the past. No, let me just start over. I got to tilt my head back. As humans, we are a product of our parents and we could trace it back in the past all the way to first cell on the planet. At which stage does that memory enters

the new body? I personally do not
believe in concept of karma. Oops, I let
the I let the computer There we go.
Okay, let's see. I personally do not
believe in concept of karma but still
want to know if it's true then what is
the process of it and yeah I don't think
he really understands what karma
is based on this question because karma
is not some kind of cellular genetic
memory in fact I mean karma isn't really
understood by very many people including
very many Buddhists because a lot of
people are just stuck in this idea A
that karma is just a system of rewards
and punishments. It's like you do this,
you get rewarded or punished for it.

Maybe in a in this life, maybe in a future life. And that is a very simplistic view of karma. That karma in a way is is the momentum of your mental states. And so one example of karma that even a scientist couldn't really deny is just the whole idea of the automatic pilot. I've written an essay on this before where just like a first step in understanding what karma really is. Not just this magical rewards and punishments coming from outer space or something

that like anything that you do that isn't fully conscious is karmic and and it's like we are governed by habit that

that karma is itself a kind of habit energy. There was a a book called the Buddhist Bible which was mostly Mahayana stuff, but they had this intriguing um rendering of karma as habit energy in the book. And that is really a remarkably good translation for karma. It's habit energy. It's just if you're not fully awake, you're just acting out on automatic pilot. And that automatic pilot is your karma.

So I mean you don't believe in the concept of karma. I mean according to Buddhism karma is volition. Karma karma is chidana. K karma is will. So if you don't believe in karma, you don't I mean if karma is will then you don't believe

in will or volition

either which would make you kind of a

radical skeptic or maybe some kind of

very advanced Buddhist

mystic who has just gone beyond

samasaric like

differentiation. But if you think that

will exists, then karma exists. Even

though you might have different ideas

about how it works than some orthodox

Buddhist scholar

does. But like I already said, one stage

beyond just believing in in will as

karma, it's this habit energy and it's

just running your life for you because

you're not fully awake yet. You're still

sleepwalking in a sense.

Almost everybody is like

this that we all have these habitual

things that we do and you're not you

don't even have to be fully aware of

what you're doing. I mean, you could be

thinking about something completely

different. You've done it so many times

that it's just

automatic. Driving a car is kind of like

that. You don't have to think about what

you're doing. It's just automatic. is

just you can be thinking about

completely other stuff while while

driving on the freeway at 70 m an hour

in heavy

traffic. So that's one reason why

Buddhists practice mindfulness is to bring you into the present moment so that you're not just governed by knee-jerk habitual reactions all the time. And when you are completely freed of knee-jerk habitual reactions, you are freed from karma, at least from making new karma. When you are fully conscious and you're no longer just a meat puppet acting out through force of habit, then you're not making new karma anymore because you're making karma when you're acting through force of habit. And it may be you're doing something new for the first time, but still you've got associated habits just momentum that are

shaping your like feelings about what
you're doing and your reaction to what
you did and all
that. So let's just get back to the
question though, which is kind of a
strange question. At which stage does
that
memory enters the new body? And he's
talking about some kind of cellular or
genetic memory that I mean the genetics
are going to be there just sort of
stored. It's like data storage in your
in your DNA. I mean that happens
immediately as soon as the the egg and
the sperm come together and form a
zygote. You know the earliest stage of
an embryo already that's all there.

But with regard to actual memories, I
mean, racial memory, I'm not even sure
if that exists other than
just like animal instincts that we share
that cause our psychology to be pretty
similar. I think I'm just going to move
on this question. And this is from
someone who I think maybe is Polish and
they've got a name that I cannot
pronounce. And so I'm just going to do
the same thing I do to French people.
and just call him Nazi
all the line the L at the end has a line
through it so it's not pronounced like
an L. I think the Z isn't pronounced
like a real Z. The Polish are kind of

confused with regard to this sort of thing I think. So anyways, Nazi says when it comes to the Dhama, there is not many good Western teachers in my opinion. Do you have any advice for a guy straight out from high school?

man.

Well, I'd have different advice for different guys straight out of high school. I mean, just the average guy straight out of high school. Um, I mean, I I I wouldn't have even general advice for him, really. I mean, you'd have to have some knowledge of the guy straight out of high school. I mean, does he want to renounce the world? Does he want to live like a virtuous lay life? I mean,

what does what does he want? I mean,
what kind of what kind of direction is
does he even want to head in? So,
there's that. Um, but I mean, this first
sentence, which isn't even
necessarily related to the second, when
it comes to the damma, there is not many
good Western teachers in my opinion.
Well, I mean, there's that one in where
is he?
Serbia. I mean he's fairly close to a
country where people are called
naiwal. So there's that I guess. I mean
if you want to learn dhamma I mean there
are good dhamma teachers out
there. Um and it may be that naiuel is

just asking about that. Do you have any advice for a guy straight out from high school about learning dharma from a good teacher? That might be what what he is implying what he means here.

So,

um, yeah, I strangely I guess his name is Nyan Vera. No, no, no.

Nanamolei. Nyanoly in in Serbia. I think he's a good teacher. There are actually good Dharma teachers. Um, and I mean, good Western teachers, they they're out there. And anyone who's got like a a favorite teacher that they think is really really wise could uh could put in the comments who they think is is a really good teacher. Like uh there's the

two monks in Seattle who are good
teachers even though they're kind of in
the in the dragon's layer in Seattle and
having to be accommodating to like real
radical leftist types sometimes. I think
but uh they they definitely are out
there. There's
uh what's his name? Aan Martin in
Thailand. Some people think he's he's a
very good
teacher. So I mean you you can find them
if you look for them if that is really
what you want. But for a guy straight
out of high school, I mean, I I would
have to know the guy straight out from
high school in order to have some idea

as to what kind of advice he needs
because not all guys straight out from
high school need the same
advice. You know, do good, avoid doing
evil, and purify your
mind. That would be good advice for
anybody, I think. And by golly, all of a
sudden we're at the last question. And
this is also from a person who lives in
Poland and his name is
Trzasiz. So Trezas is says, "How do you
think language we use, not personal
choice of words, but the first language
like English, English, Burmese or Polish
said English
um influence or change our perception of
reality?" And this has been studied by

some guy named Benjamin Warf, I think is his name, called the Warfian hypothesis. I think originally he and somebody else came up with this hypothesis together, but Warf wound up getting most of the credit. Um, I'm not talking about the Klingon. It was like a human. And he had this idea that really it's our language determines how we can perceive things. And I think a lot of people who just lived in the same culture their entire life or if they have traveled they've they've traveled to countries where still the point of view is similar. They really may not have much insight into understanding this. But you you move to

a country, you know, you spend a considerable amount of time in a country where the language is very different and the whole way of looking at things is is correspondingly different or it's like in Burmese there are words that there's really no English translation for. In English there are words that there's no Burmese translation for. Like I've mentioned owls. There's lots and lots of owls in Burma. There's no word for owl in the Burmese language. It's just each kind of owl has its own name. You've got like the mang, you've got the zquet, you've got the let's see the the so there's all these there's the miwan. There's all these different kinds of

owls, but there's no word just for owl.
Also, there's lots of lizards in Burma.
No word just for
lizard. And so that's going to cause
their thinking to be different. I I've
mentioned before that like what in
English is called brown. If you look up
into an English to Burmese dictionary,
it will say that the Burmese word for
brown is ano. But brown and ano, they've
got a lot of overlap, but still they're
not exactly the same color. They're not
the same ranges of colors. That there
are colors that would be called ano that
are not brown. And there's colors that
might be called brown that are not

ano. And so it's like the words that you
use for understanding this world like
the
generalizations and all language is
almost entirely composed of
generalizations. I think it was uh
Bertin Russell said the only there's
only two words in the English language
that are not generalizations and that is
this and that.
So definitely the the language that you
use is going to have
um like a profound impact on the way you
think about things. And um I do think
that's one reason why the Indoart the
Indo-Uropeans, the Indo-Uropean language
families, you know, the the

protoindo-uropeans who presumably arose in the Pontic steps, you know, 7,000 years ago or something. They they spread throughout much of the old world, throughout much of the Eastern Hemisphere, not including Africa really until in modern times gotten into Africa.

Um, well, I guess you'd have like Greek and and Latin being spoken in Northern Africa in ancient times, but um, one reason why I think the the Indo-Uropeans were so successful is they had a powerful language where they could think things that other people couldn't think because they just didn't have the

words for it.

So I think that's one reason why the

Indo Indo-Uropeans were so

successful is just not only did they

have like strong robust kind of bodies

and also um an appreciation for violence

that made them successful there and also

they were they were clever and were

inventing things like chariots that kind

of thing that maybe it was just their

language skills the way that they were

able to think because of their language

that caused them to be more innovative

or more objective or whatever and just

made their culture a little bit stronger

and gave them a little bit more of an

edge against other cultures that they

were sooner or later in competition
with or just flat out warfare.
So, I mean, I I remember reading as a
kid in the Guinness Book of World
Records of all places that there were
some uh African tribal
languages that I mean the number system
only went up to like five, maybe even
less than five. It just went up like
one, two, three, many.
And I mean that is definitely going to
have a serious influence on how you
perceive reality. If you can't count
higher than five because you just don't
have numbers for it and your culture
just doesn't really have room for that

sort of

thing then yeah I mean it's you're just

limited. There's like the poly language

is very subtle with regard to

intellectual states or mental states you

know it's like meditative experiences

you can describe those kind of things

more easily in poly than in certain

other languages like possibly English

although English is a very powerful

language um which is one reason why it's

sort of like the the the main lingua

franca of the earth at this point is

It's a difficult language to

learn, but

still. Uh, what else should I say about

this before we call it

quits? How do you think language we use, not personal choice of words, but the first language like English, Burmese, or Polish, influence or change our perception of reality? Yeah, it's just like a different tinge. It's just sort of like a a different subtly different cultural
attitude. Like I have read that in English you can discuss Protestant Christianity much more easily in English than you can discuss just about any other religious system just because Protestant Christianity and modern English grew up together and they're just sort of like, you know, they've

sort of evolved in a kind of like

cultural symbiosis.

But it's it's fairly subtle, you know.

It's like you can you can talk with a

Burmese people with with Burmese person

like in Burmese or in English either

way. And for the most part, you

understand, you know, what the other

person is saying. Although every once in

a while is there's just going to be

certain assumptions that are made or

just the the language that you use.

talking about something that's brown,

for example, it's just going to cause

just a sort of communication barrier or

culture

barrier. And um I've read that like

Indian Buddhist texts are different from Chinese Buddhist texts because Indian languages, you know, they're they're Indo Indo-Uropean languages that are very kind of precise, objective kind of language. Whereas in China, it's it's a different a different kind of philosophy, subtly different where it's more intuitive and you know, it's the words are not nearly as precise and you just kind of have to fill in the blanks. And Burmese is kind of like that, too. Burmese is more closely related to Chinese than it is to Indo-Uropean languages, although it has a lot of lone words from Indo-Uropean languages.

So yeah, I mean it is going to influence your attitude along with other cultural elements just because of the words that you're able to think, the ideas you're able to have, the concepts you're able to generate are going to differ if the language differs and the words are different. And that's it. I think I'm done. My golly, that's about two hours exactly. So this is kind of a short one actually. So as I should always say at the beginning and never do if uh you got any questions you think I can answer especially about like terra Buddhism, early Buddhism,
meditation, Indian philosophy, Eastern philosophy, even western philosophy,

biology, I guess me personally living in Burma, that kind of thing. Then yeah, feel free to feel free to ask the questions and no more than three questions per episode, please. And just if you're unsure of how many questions you got, just count the question marks. It's it's a fairly easy way. And like and subscribe if you have not done so

already. And be happy.

Alrighty then. Hello and welcome to

question and answer number 146. I am

your host Pony Basa. This is my

beverage and

146 clearly is not a prime number

because it is even and the only even

number that is prime is two.

So 146 is actually 2 *

73. And some of you may notice that I've

got somewhat of a black eye and also

somewhat of a gash on the side of my

head. And you don't need to point it out

to me in the comments cuz I've already

noticed

it. And I just want to point out right

here now that it is not due to domestic

violence. that it was not caused by my
beautiful woman hitting me with a frying
pan because I forgot our anniversary.
No, it wasn't like that. Regardless of
any evidence to the contrary, it didn't
happen that way.
What actually happened was
uh it uh happened at work and I was
pulling this I mean it was just minutes
before I left for work last night that
just one last thing to do. I was going
to pull a table down
and I just pulled it. It's like I had to
use my foot to kind of wedge to for
leverage and then my foot got caught
under the table as I was pulling it over
and it just fell on me and hit me in the

face. Just knocked me flat on my
back. That is the official
story. And I suppose I should just start
answering questions. I didn't bother to
count all the questions here. Maybe I
should maybe maybe I should just
demonstrate my counting skills. cuz I
can count way up high. Let's see here. 1
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
Oh, 31 32 33 34 5
36 37 38 questions which is getting up
there. So I guess I should just weigh
into this. And the first question is
from Ruie. And Ruie says, "Do you really
think God was trying to convert people?"

And I assume what he means here is like converting them to Buddhism because I don't know what else he'd convert them to. Unless he's just converting them from unenlightened to enlightened. And I think that would be the only kind of conversion he'd really be trying to do. I mean he wasn't trying to convert anyone to a new religion. I mean if you read the atikawaga which is probably the largest fragment of archaic Buddhism still in existence like pre-terravada prek schism just very early teachings before the teachings began they became popularized and just started like like mutating like a virus and you read the atawaga and it's

saying do not follow philosophies
do not believe
anything. So the Buddha the Buddha
wasn't trying to convert people to some
new religion. He wasn't trying to
convert them to dharma or dharma. He was
just trying to help them wake
up. So if you want to call that a kind
of conversion, you're you're undergoing
the conversion from like sleepwalking to
fully awake, then sure. But I do not
think he was trying to convert anyone to
Buddhism, even though if you read some
of the sutas, it does kind of appear
that
way. And so I'm just going to move on to

Ruy's second question, which is, did you ever during your cavedwelling Burma days have to resort to protection chanting?

And

um when I was living in caves, I really didn't have to do any protection chanting in including when I was living in the big cave um on the northern boundary of Alando Kazapan National Park in Sagine Division in Burma. um that cave. A lot of people were afraid to go near that cave because it was supposedly haunted by an assant which is a kind of guardian spirit, sort of a a terrestrial deva. And um I never had any problems with with any kind of supernatural beings while living in caves. Um, there

was the famous time when I allegedly was attacked by ogres. When I was living under a tree in southern Burma, living on top of a big flat boulder under some kind of tropical chestnut tree um on the outskirts of Alando Kazab, no, not Alando Casabot. the Bay Doya um monastery in in Mon state in southern Burma where one morning uh I woke up and I'm trying to see if it's dawn yet cuz I didn't have a a watch or a clock or anything. I just went by I went for alms round at dawn. So I I was propped up like this looking to see if it was dawn kind of looking towards the horizon and I started hearing like loud noises and

then realized that I could not move. I
was paralyzed like kind of like this
lying on my
side.
And at that time just in case whatever
happened I mean just just in case it was
some kind of beings that were messing
with me because I was warned repeatedly
that there are like ogres and so forth
in this forest that may mess with you. I
just sort of internally I couldn't move
my lips. So I was like frozen but
internally I just started namotasa
bavato aratohatato samasan buddhasa and
it just
evaporated. So I mean that's kind of
protection chanting I guess. Also when I

was like 20 years old I moved into this crummy little studio apartment for the summer
and it just had a really heavy vibe. It was an old building. And you'll have to forgive me because my glasses are now kind of crooked because when I got hit in the the side of the head, it was like it messed my glasses all up. And I'm afraid to bend it too much because I don't want to just snap them in half trying to get them back into shape again. But anyways, when I was about 20 years old, I moved into this crummy little studio apartment. And it was an old apartment. It was an old building.

Probably a lot of people had been there. A lot of unh wholesome actions had been perpetrated in that apartment probably and it just had like this dark vibe to it. So I just did this little ceremony and I was wasn't fully converted to terraod yet. I was like reciting verses from the diamond cutter sutra, you know, burning incense in front of a little Buddhist statue and just kind of doing this ceremony to try and purify the place. Fortunately, I hadn't heard about burning sage yet because burning sage always gives me a headache. I don't like using that. Just incense is good enough in my

opinion. So, I mean, maybe it worked. I

mean, it was like the heavy heavy vibe seems to have seemed to have lifted somewhat. Although, it could have just been like a placebo effect, but I didn't have any problems with malevolent entities in that apartment.
possibly because I did the chanting. So yeah, I think I answered that question. It's time to move on to the next one. So let's do that. And the next question is from Dama River. And Dama River asked me a question in the previous Q&A about the 18 faults of a monastery that is a kind of subsection in the Wizudi Maga. And he called it a chapter in the Wizi ma. I went through

the table of contents and just did not find any chapter about the faults of a monastery. So um you know I I said as much in I mean I I had read it many years ago as a young monk and then just it just slipped my mind. So anyways, Dma River says if you wish to read it and answer the question on your next Q&A I would be very grateful. If you can't that's okay as well. Thank you venerable Pabaza. And so there's this subsection in the Wizudi Maga about the 18 kinds of monastery that a monk should not live at. And the list is here's here's here's what it

says herein. One that is unfavorable has any one of 18 faults. These

are

largeness, newness,

dilapidatedness, a nearby road, a pond,

edible leaves, flowers, fruits,

famousness, a nearby city, nearby timber

trees, nearby arable fields, presence of

incompatible persons, a nearby port of

entry, nearness to the border countries,

Nearness to the frontier of a kingdom,

unsuitability, uh, let's see here, lack

of good friends, one, and it says, one

with any of these faults is not

favorable. He should not live there. And

I probably lived at pretty much all of

these kinds of monasteries

before. And I mean, you rule out all of

these kind of monasteries and there's not a whole heck of a lot left. I mean, you can't live in a monastery that's big. You can't live in a monastery that's near a road. You can't live in a monastery that's uh see nearness to the border countries or nearness to the frontier of a kingdom. And one of the reasons for nearness to the border countries or nearness to the frontier of a kingdom is I mean first of all you can have like barbarian invasions, hostile kings sweeping through with his armies. But also a lot of the people aren't Buddhist out on the frontier. And I mean that's pretty much everywhere outside of Buddhist Asia.

any kind of monastery in America would
would fall under this category of a
place that a monk shouldn't live
at. So it's
like let's see a large monastery.
There's all kinds of commotion going on,
lots of visitors and so forth. I stayed
at a monastery where the SA of monks and
noviceses spending the reigns retreat
there was
1,500 give or take a hundred or so. So
I've stayed at one of those newness.
It's mainly new monasteries are not
considered to be good because they're
always under construction and just about
any monastery in Burma is under

construction. They're always like collecting donations to build a new monastery. I remember at um what is it Chan Yita in in Rangon which is one of the the meditation centers in the Mahasi tradition that they had just completely filled their property with buildings so that they had gotten to the point where if they were going to build a new building they had to tear down a pre-existing one just to build a new one but they just that's what they were doing. Let's see nearby road. I mean, just about any monastery is going to have a nearby road at this point, but I mean, it's like too many visitors. You got a nearby road, a pond.

That's I think the the pond is people coming to get water, you know? It' be like a lake, any kind of body of fresh water. I mean, I've lived at places like that. I mean I lived at uh I mean one of the main monasteries that I lived at was one bo wildlife refuge monastery one bo be bet do jang which is on the banks of the chinuan river although I guess it was a river you could have the villagers would just be going to that part of the river that was closer to the to the village and farther away from the monastery or some such edible leaves cuz women will come and pick the leaves to make salads for their family and they'll

be singing songs in wilting female
voices that will distract the
concentration of the monks and possibly
lead them astray. Flowers and fruits,
it's the same thing. I mean like one bo
do I mean it was it
was a lot of thick grass down by the
river and there'd be women coming to cut
the grass to take home to their their
cattle. There was fruit trees, mango
trees and and other kinds of trees
growing there. So, it's
like I mean just about any monastery is
going to have like four or five strikes
against it going with this
list. A nearby city or I mean for that
matter a monastery that's in a city

would be even worse. Um nearby timber trees, wood cutters coming and just wreaking havoc. Nearby fields. I mean, this is pretty much ruling out just about every monastery. I mean, the only place where you could live following this this list would be just out in the middle of a desert with no roads or anything. There'd be no people there either.

um they're in this I mean I'll there's no point in going on through the whole 18 but

um even even the Wudi maga itself does say that like a new monastery you can stay at a new monastery if there are

like lay people volunteering to do the construction work but then there's still going to be all this hammering and pounding I remember I was staying at Pandita Rama in Rangon also in the Mahasi tradition And the Burmese in general, they like noise. It doesn't bother them. In fact, some people prefer noise. And so, Upandida was having I mean, of course, they're building a new building there. And he had this worker pounding out sheet metal gutters just below the eaves of the meditation hall. So there's literally a guy just right outside the meditation hall pounding on sheet metal with a hammer and um there was it used to bother me. I mean

westerners in general don't like noise nearly as much as you know Burmese people for example. And one time during an interview um I mentioned that that noise that usually bothered me I just hit this zone in my meditation where it was just like going through me just like light going through a pane of glass just the the sound of the pounding sheet metal was just going in one ear and out the other and it didn't bother me at all. And when I when I mentioned this, Pandanda, who didn't like me very much, I mean, he visibly and audibly sucked air through his teeth like like he just wanted to pounce and just lay into me

and just chew me out. But he couldn't
because I said that it didn't bother me.
But good luck finding a monastery that
doesn't have any of these 18
folds that your best bet is just I mean
if you're going to be a a monk living in
a monastery even like a a lay meditator
staying at a monastery just shop around
look for for monasteries. The
monasteries that aren't on this list
you're not going to find them. I mean
there's they're not going to be famous.
They're not going to be near a road.
So just go to a number of different
monasteries or just go to monasteries
until you find the place that just feels
right and then try

that because if you follow this um

you're just never going to find a good

place probably. And I'm just going to

move on next question also from Dhamma

River.

And Dhamma River says in the sutas

fortunate people were able to meet the

Buddha and ask him questions. If

miraculously you were able to meet the

Buddha

today and ask him a question for which

he would answer with a discourse, what

question would you ask the blessed

one? And if I were in the the presence

of the Buddha, I would be very

humble and the only question I could

really ask is you know better than I do what I need to know. Please tell me that you know what should I even what should I do? I mean I just have this feeling if I said what should I do the Buddha would just say you already
know. So yeah, that's that's really the only question I could ask him is like, you know better than I do what I need to hear. So please tell me what I need to hear cuz I wouldn't want to bias it with like
preconceived preferences and that kind of thing. Like I read the the autobiography of Ajan man or the biography no I think it was the autobiography of Ajan man where he's he

meets with the Buddha

somehow and he he asked him one question

which was with regard to what was the

color that monks dyed their robes in the

Buddhist time. I mean, why would you

blow? You get one question. It's sort of

like there's a genie. You get one wish

and I want to know what color the robes

were in ancient India in the Buddhist

time. It's

like I just don't get that

one. So, I guess I'll just move on to

the next question. This is from

Xenithoid. And I'm going to check make

sure we are in fact recording. And yes,

we are in fact recording.

Xenithoid says, "Can you give your opinion on the divide amongst the political right between traditionalists and futurists?" And I've frankly I've never heard of this divide. I mean, I don't read like right-wing websites, that kind of stuff. I don't study up on on like right-wing politics really. I don't I'm really not right-wing. I've taken some of those uh political compass tests and I generally tend to be in the center, very close to the center. And I mean it's sort of like a classical liberal, you know, not so

different from a libertarian, that kind
of
thing. So, I mean, I really don't know.
I mean, I can understand just sort of
using my knowledge of politics in
general to know what a traditionalist
is. is I mean that's a conservative you
know a conservative is trying to
conserve traditions but a futurist a
right-wing
futurist I'm not exactly sure what that
would mean and I mean it seems to me
that a lot of people don't even know
what rightwing really means like on the
on the left like the globalist leftist
they'll just call anyone who disagrees

with them rightwing you know they'll call Nazis far right when really I mean the National Socialist German Workers Party of you know mid early to mid 20th century Germany. I mean they were technically socialists. I mean it was right there in the name of the party. Um, it is true though that that uh the Furer really didn't care much about economics and uh so I mean I've I've heard like Nazism referred to as radical centrism because it really wasn't that far right. Well, I mean what is far right? It's like the the best way I could come up with I've written an essay on this just trying to wrap my head around what rightwing really means

because the leftwing is uncontroversial.
Hard right would be communism. I mean
that's uncontroversial. Pretty much
everyone agrees that the hard far left
would be
communists. But what is the opposite of
communists? Right? I mean it's like in
in
communism there is no personal property.
So the opposite of that would be
everything is personal property and it's
like
communism I
mean not Freud Karl Marx and also like
the Antifa people they they seem to have
this idea that pure communism would be

anarchistic but I mean it's just
unrealistic. Anarchco communism is like
an oxymoron. It's like a contradiction
in terms because communism is just is in
this
flagrant like disharmony with human
nature which I guess is one reason why
hard leftists deny the existence of
human
nature. But I mean communism is so like
at odds with human nature that it has to
be enforced at gunpoint by like a strong
centralized government. And that's
that's one of the like the farther left
you go, the more you want the government
controlling everything. So anarchism
would be more towards the right. It

seems to me like like anarch like uh
anarchistic capitalism. What ancaps? Is
that what they're
called? That would be like far right.
But then um some things that are
associated with the far right are like
the strong dictator type
um you know that's sort of fascism. But
then again, fascism isn't all that far
right either. Like the original fascist
party of Italy led by Bonito Mussolini,
it was like a an offshoot of the Marxist
like the Communist Party that they split
over whether or not Italy should get
involved in World War I.
So even like the the strong man

charismatic leader um isn't necessarily
I mean it's it's an aspect of fascism
but it's not necessarily an aspect of
farright
politics that a strong centralized
government seems to be more a left-wing
thing. But let's just give the
communists the benefit of the doubt.
Let's just say that as you go farther
and farther left, you know, into
socialism before you get to communism,
the the government gets bigger and
stronger and more centralized until
finally it just poofs out of existence
when you reach the end. Let's just
assume that for the sake of argument.
Then the opposite of that would be the

government gets weaker and less
centralized until you get to the extreme
far right and then all of a sudden
you've got a totalitarian dictator. And
that could be the way it is I mean if
you've got less and less
structure so that you wind up with a
kind of feudalism or law of the jungle
where all of a sudden you know you got
like this feudalistic society or just
like a anarchistic or um what's the word
libertarian society then you're just
going to have like the most
ruthless shark is just going to like
take over and just gobble everything and
become like a like a an

otarch. But I'm just completely straying away from the question. Let's just get back to the question. Can you give your opinion on the divide amongst the political right between traditionalists and futurists? And I really don't know what that divide really is because I'm not sure what a futurist right-winger would be. And I'm not even sure what xenithoid even means when he refers to the political right because the political right is just this nebulous this nebulous concept or semicconcept that very few people try to pin down and like define it precisely which is just weird because as I've been saying the far left is just

uncontroversial communism.

What's the opposite of

communism? Anarchistic capitalism. Just

libertarianism. Feudalism like medieval

style feudalism. There's different ways

of like finding the opposite of the

left. Futuristic feudalism. I'm not

exactly sure what that would entail.

So, I mean, if you got futurist,

right-wing futurists, they're just going

to have to cook up some new tradition.

They just want to invent some new

tradition. But inventing new stuff is

more

progressive than

conservative. So, just

futurism, I mean, it seems to have one foot in the left already just in its eagerness for for change.

But I don't know. So, I'm I'm really not an authority on right-wing politics. I do not consider myself to be particularly right-wing, although a lot of people

would. So, I think I'm just going to have to move on to the next question, which is along the same lines. Do you fall more into the traditionalist camp or the futurist camp? And kind of neither, because like I say, I'm really not particularly right-wing as far as I can tell. Although like far-lefties would just consider me to be just just

fascist, but then again, fascism isn't necessarily right-wing either. So, I mean, I'm not really a traditionalist or a futurist. Um, I'm more of like classical liberal libertarian, which will have some tradition and some adaptation. you know, like the Romans, I mean, they were pretty conservative, but nevertheless, if they came across a good idea amongst Greeks or barbarians or whatever, they would adopt it. Especially with regard to like warfare, you know, it's like if they're, you know, they start fighting in Spain and the Spanish swords are really nice, so they started using the

Gladius or they started having a war against the Dians. And the Dians had this weapon called the Fals that was hooked and they'd kind of reach behind and and like come come from behind and like be cutting the the Roman soldiers the back of their neck that was relatively unguarded. So the Romans had just changed their their armor to protect themselves from that sort of thing. You know, they they adopted a lot of stuff from the Greeks and from the Atruscans. So, I don't know if that's exactly futuristic, but at least it's opportunistic that you don't want to just adhere so firmly to your traditions that you reject improvements on the

system. And improvements on the system would be along the lines of technology, especially technology. If you go Amish, your your existence as a world power is is is very very short term. So I wouldn't consider myself a traditionalist or a futurist necessarily. And I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's third question, which is along the same. I really don't know what a futurist right-winger would be. He says, "Does the divide between futurists and traditionalists on the political right exist at all within Buddhist countries or is it mainly a European or and

American phenomenon?" I would expect it
to exist in advanced countries like
Japan and China, but I would be
surprised if it existed in places like
Thailand or Burma. I never heard of
really right-wing politics in Burma
other
than the military dictatorship, maybe. I
mean, that's more leftwing than
right-wing. I mean, the
it's Burmese politics is kind of hard to
pin down because the government really
doesn't have much power outside of the
main cities or if there's an army base
or a police base, you know, the area
right around that will be under the
control of the government. But out in

the villages, the Burmese are are governed more by tradition than by the government. It's just the tradition, the way things have been for a thousand years is just the way it keeps going. And you've got like the village headman and he's in charge of maintaining order in the village. You've got a thief or something. Then he'll call in some some village like a like a posi and then they'll go out and deal with it. So yeah, abstract political theories. I I assume there's like university educated people in Burma that think about this kind of stuff, but even I don't think about this kind of stuff.

At least I've never been exposed to
futuristic
rightwing
politics. I don't know what it would be
exactly unless it's just technological
improvements on like old
style right-wing politics. And even that
again, what exactly is rightwing
politics is controversial just because
right-wingers just haven't bothered to
really just lay down the law, just like
define what it is to be right-wing and
different right-wingers would define it
differently.
So, I don't know if that's good or bad,
but it may be that this whole right-wing
like the futurists, the divide between

futurists and traditionalists on the political right is more of an European thing than an American thing or it's just a niche thing that, you know, is of interest to a few people, but it never really gets into the mainstream. At least I do not recall any coming across any of this kind of stuff. So with all due respects to Xenithoid and his fascination for the divide in right-wing politics in the West, I'm going to just move on to the next question. And this is this is an obscure vignia question that is right up my alley. This question is from Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb,

etc.

And he says what does it mean for one to eat their alms in order and this is one of the seaia rules I it's you know a monk is supposed to eat his food systematically like in order and the way what that means at least traditionally in teraba Buddhism you got a bowl of food sitting in front of you just start on one side of the bowl and you just eat across like this and when you're done it's just like there's like this little wall where you stopped eating. There's, you know, like this this neat line. At least that's that's the way I used to eat. And I got paid this compliment as a junior monk once that

there was like this lady on the board of directors saw my my bowl after I'd finished eating and she says, "Tom Pulu Seattle used to eat that way." where you know it's just you could when he finished eating it was just like this you know it's just like this straight line where he stopped eating. So yeah that's what it means to to eat in order at least traditionally according to tradition. You just start on one side and eat your way over. You're not like picking and choosing the stuff that you like is essentially the purpose of it. You just eat it as it comes. Although you can cheat a little

bit. Like if there's something you really don't like, you just move that over to the other side of the bowl or you just turn the bowl so that the food you don't like is on the on the side you're not going to get to that kind of thing. But yeah, there's another one. Eating food in proportion, which is kind of controversial. My understanding of that is you just eat it in the proportion that is given to you. like rice and curry, you know, you get mostly rice and a little bit of curry, then you eat mostly rice and a little bit of curry. You don't just take all the curry and mix it in with the rice and just leave plain white rice behind as

leftovers. That kind of thing.

So after that satisfying obscure question on monastic discipline which I mean if you don't if you don't do that just because it's a secular rule you're not necessarily breaking a rule. It's you're only breaking the rule if you do it just on purpose knowing that it's against the rules and not giving a damn then it then it's a duca offense which is the most minor uh category of ecclesiastical offense.

But some monk who's ignorant, he who shouldn't be because it's one of the potty mocha rules, but I mean, if he's

not doing it on purpose or he's like violently allergic to bamboo shoots or something and takes those out, then fine. Personally, I don't like bamboo shoots because I stayed at this one place out in the forest living in a cave on the outskirts of the national park where during the rainy season, it's like everyone and her sister is giving me bamboo shoots and I just completely burned out on them and to this day I still don't like bamboo shoots. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. is from Harim Cthul and Harim Cathul says, "Did followers of Christ distort and misunderstand his ideas after his

death? It seems to me that the core teachings of Jesus resemble Dharmic understanding of religion quite a bit. The rabbid devotionalism, dogmatism, egalitarianism, and missionary character of Orthodox Christianity evokes disgust in me. However, uh well, of course, the followers of Christ distorted and misunderstood his ideas after his death. The followers of the Buddha misunderstood and distorted his ideas after the Buddha's passing from this earth. I mean, it just happens. You take an enlightened teaching or just a very

wise teaching and it just kind of gets inherited by less wise, less enlightened people. They're going to muck it up. If you're lucky, they'll at least not change the old wise stuff. They'll just add new foolish stuff to it.

But I mean I think Harim Cthulh may be kind of

overestimating early Christianity in this case like devotionalism. I mean they were worshiping God is I mean Jesus himself was a

monotheist you know worshiping God praying to God. There's a lot of advice about praying. In fact, one of my favorite bits of advice from Jesus on praying is it's sort of like somebody

pounding on your door in the middle of the night. You know, they they've got company comes over, they don't have any bread to feed the company. They come over to your house and they're they're knocking on your door. You don't want to get up. But if they just keep pounding, sooner or later you're going to get up. You might not be in a good mood. You might not be happy about it, but you're going to get up and answer the door. And that's that's Jesus says you should pray that way. just pester God until he gives you what you want just just to get some peace and quiet

essentially. So, devotionalism, I'm sure

that was in, you know, the original OG Christianity. Dogmatism, well, you got the Old Testament dogma that was inherited by the Christians. So I mean Jesus said he wasn't going to change one jot or
tit of like the old Mosaic law that sort of thing. So that could be considered dogmat dogmatic
egalitarianism. According to the acts of the apostles the first Christian community in Jerusalem was essentially communist. They just donated their assets to the group and it was divided according to need. So that's that's pretty communistic. And with a small group of voluntary communists, it can

work. Especially if it's if they're being spiritual and trying to reduce I, me, mine, personal property and all that, then it can work. But when you try to enforce it on like a national scale, you know, when most people are not particularly wise and communism just goes against human nature anyway, it just not going to work nearly as well. Missionary character, I mean, that's one of the things that the Buddha or the Buddha, one of the things that Jesus was telling his disciples, just go out and spread the gospel, you know, heal the sick, cast out demons, and spread the gospel.

So I mean Jesus was essentially a Jew
and Christianity is a schismatic sect of
Judaism. One could argue that Marxism
also is a kind of schismatic sect of
Judaism.
So, but it seems to me that Jesus was
just ahead of his time or was ahead of
his culture
in first century Judea or
Galilee that even his own apostles
apparently didn't understand
him. So, I mean it was relatively short
time before he was
deified. And
uh I mean Jesus probably considered
himself to be the Messiah. I used to be
skeptical of that. I used to think that

they just kind of monkeyed with the details of his life to try and you know force fit him into the prophecies of the Messiah. But the more I've I've heard about Jesus and like the history of the early church, the more it seems that Jesus probably did really consider himself to be the promised Messiah, even though he knew well enough that the details of his life did not fit all the prophecies. like he probably knew that he was born in Galilee and not in Bethlehem and that his mother was not a virgin. I mean, he had several brothers and

sisters.

So, just getting to the question though, did followers of Christ distort and misunderstand his ideas after his death? Sure, even to some degree before his death. And the same thing has happened with Buddhism too. Although maybe not well I mean probably to a similar degree. Let's just put it that way. So I mean even well even the Protestant Christians still just follow like the New Testament. They they dismiss the apocrypha or the pseudoepographic. What is it? The dudero canonicals. you know, the the Catholics will accept what the Protestants reject, some of the books of the Bible, you know, the book of Tabet in the Old

Testament, that kind of thing. But even Protestant Christians follow pretty much the same scriptures as, you know, the the representatives of the the oldest schools of Christianity that have been here for, you know, 2,000 years, like Greek Orthodox, for example, or the Syrian church or the Coptic Church, you know, Catholics.

But in Buddhism, the new schools of Buddhism, sort of like the the Buddhist Protestants, they just cooked up an entire library of new sayings of the Buddha, which I mean, that's going way beyond what the Christians did.

I mean, the the Mormons kind of cooked up some new stuff,

but yeah, I think the Buddhists may have gone even farther with regard to distorting and misunderstanding the ideas of their founder. Although, I do not think that Jesus considered himself to be the son of God and that you can only be saved through believing in Jesus. I don't think that Jesus went quite that far. So I think that's an early distortion of Christianity

but I think I should just move on to the next question. This is also from Harim Cthul and he's saying should higher teachings be restricted to an elite? The Bavad Gita warns against teaching it to

those who are not worthy. In my opinion, Hinduism would have degenerated into a Christian-like religion very quickly if the interpretation of the vadas was left up to sudras and
dalits or
outcasts. That is more or less what has happened for almost two centuries now. There's no shortage of verses in the vadas that can be interpreted as radically egalitarian by fools. Well, even in Christianity, you know, Jesus had that saying about don't cast pearls before swine because, you know, the the swine will just turn and rend you after trampling the the pearls into the

mud. And yeah, I mean, should higher teachings be restricted to an elite? I think so. Yes. It's like um like the upanishads, they start off as secret teachings. I mean, upananisha literally means sitting up close to because it was like a secret teaching that your teacher would tell you like quietly like practically whispering it into your ear and you had to purify yourself for years before you would be worthy like the Buddhist teachings. Now you you can just get it free on the internet, but it used to be that monks you have to be ordained and then they'd have to study it. You know, they'd be living a life of purity and so forth.

They had to be worthy of learning this stuff. And then the stuff they would teach to the lay people would be like the elementary superficial stuff suited for illiterate subsistence farmers in the ancient Ganges Valley, that kind of thing.

So yeah, I do have a certain respect for the idea that certain like advanced teachings that aren't even going to be understood by like common normies who who might just consider it [__] or he might think that he gets it and but when he really doesn't but I mean there is something to be said for the idea that you should be worthy of

hearing like very advanced teachings.
You know you should purify yourself. So
that when the pure nectar of the
teachings are poured into you, the
vessel isn't all just like caked with
mud which turns the nectar into just
sludge as soon as it goes in. You you
take pure water, pour it into a dirty
cup and it becomes dirty. And it's the
same way you take pure like spiritual
philosophy, pour it into a dirty mind,
it becomes dirty.
So, I mean, we're pretty much stuck with
the way it is now. I don't think sacred
texts are going to be purged from the
internet anytime soon.
So,

um, it can go either way, but I do have a certain I I think it's probably more appropriate that only people who prove themselves worthy should be given the higher teachings. And it reminds me of like the pilot episode of Kung Fu. Little Quai Changang Kain, he wants to be a Shaolin monk. So he stands out in the sun and rain outside the monastery gates humbly waiting to be invited in. And he just stands there day after day, rain or shine, just stands there. Even the little the boys, you know, there's some other boys that are doing the same thing, but if it starts raining hard, they'll go and stand in under a tree.

they'll get sent away. Or they start like giggling and playing and stuff amongst themselves, they get sent away. Little Quanka had to just stand there just stalled in the sun and rain for for it was like two weeks, I think, before they finally invite him in. And then he gets another test. There's like three boys that passed this first test. They get invited in. They get invited to have tea with the abbott. So the abbott pours tea for the three boys.

And two boys, not Qui-Chang, but the other two start drinking the tea. But Qui-Chang just sits there in front of the teacup and doesn't touch it. So the abbott says, "Why aren't you drinking

your tea?" And then little Qui-Chang says, "After you, venerable sir." And then the abbott takes it, drinks some tea, and then Qui-Chang starts drinking it. And then um he the the abbot is interested in Qui-Chang partly because he's like half American. He's like a half barbarian.

But his Chinese grandfather taught him correct manners and so forth. So he's the only one who passed the other two boys who drank the tea first got sent home. So I mean if it was like that in the west there'd be damn few people learning dharma though. It might be better that way in a certain way. I mean

be a purer kind of

dhamama. But still I mean there's pros

and cons to both ways. But I do think

that it is good that I mean like like

Jesus said I it's better not to cast

pearls before

swine cuz I mean it can harm them too.

If if you hear some profound philosophy,

but your mind is so like blinded by

defilements that you just rejected as

utter [__] and maybe even sneer at

it, then I mean you're making bad karma

for yourself. At least the the guy who's

doing the sneering is. It may be that

the person who shared that advanced

philosophy, you know, he did it in a

spirit of goodwill and maybe

overestimated the wisdom of the person
he was telling. and that sort of
thing. But nowadays, there's not much
purity testing for higher wisdom. It's
most mainly just purity testing to be
found worthy of being a
leftist. And if you say the wrong thing,
then you get
attacked. And I'm just going to move on
this question after throwing a little
postmodern politics into there. So, next
question from Harim
Cthul. Do you consider the emperor
Julian to be a
hero? And it turns out there were two
two emperors named Julian. One of them

is very obscure. He wasn't emperor for very long. He was uh after Pertinax I think and before Septimius Severis um and he was he he lasted just a short time and then was slaughtered by the Ptorian guard. Um but the one that Harim Cthulh here is referring to is Julian the Apostate, the last pagan emperor of Rome. And do I consider him a hero? He was like a he was like a fighter for a lost cause. He was a heroic champion of a lost cause. So whether he's a hero or not, you know, as it depends on, you know, the attitude of the person who who hears about Julian the apostate, you know, a devout Christian would consider

him to be like an antichrist or
something.
But um it's really too bad that Julian
died after being emperor for only like
two years. He caught a a spear in a war
with the Persians. And there are some
people who think that it was probably
some Christian Roman soldier who
harpooned him rather than a
a Persian soldier. But he was trying to
he was he he knew from like past history
in Rome that violently persecuting
Christians just kind of like you know
it's like compacting a snowball it just
toughens them up and makes them more
determined you know it's like you get

more holy martyrs that kind of thing. So he was trying a kind of soft persecution just preventing them from getting like government jobs and government educations or just you know just not allowing them into like the the philosophicalmies and so forth. And um I mean I think he he might have done well to just enforce the Christian idea that you know gather not up your treasures upon the earth. And to some degree I think he did kind of you know was confiscating wealth from kind of bogus Christians who I mean to this day I mean gather not up your treasures upon the earth is probably one of the most ignored teachings of biblical

Christianity among Christians that
devout Christians even like
fundamentalist Christians are still
making as much money as they can and
getting filthy rich if they are capable
of getting filthy
rich. Not all of them. There are some
who are living in voluntary poverty and
they they they have earned my respect
for doing that.
So, Emperor Julian, I mean, he was
trying to sort of turn paganism into
like a more viable alternative to
Christianity, like injecting some wisdom
through neo um neoplatanism and
requiring pagan priests to have qu uh

certain

uh uh like a standard of virtue, uphold

a standard of virtue like Christian

priests were supposed to do because in

in Julian's time, the late Roman Empire,

paganism was almost

amoral that you know like Julius Caesar

or or a lot of people they just get

appointed like these high I think Julius

Caesar was actually um what is it?

What's the pope called?

Oh man, Pontifffects Maximus. you know,

it's like the chief priest of of like

Jupiter, you know, it's like it was like

a political thing and people it was like

politicians would just kind of boost

their status without really living a a

holy life. You know, it's just that's the way paganism had become. It was just kind of a secular superstition thing rather than any kind of like transcendent dharmic kind of a thing. And Christianity had more of that transcendent aspect than than paganism, especially mainstream paganism. You had some mystery cults and so forth that were more towards purification and so forth. Things like schools like like orphism, that kind of thing, but they really weren't um all that mainstream. So Julian was trying to mainstream a more advanced kind of paganism, and it just didn't work. And

as he was dying, he didn't appoint his successor. He just let the army decide who was going to be the next emperor. And it was some popular officer named Jovian who was a Christian. And there weren't any more pagan emperors after Julian, which is too bad. I think the West might have
um might have turned into something that I would find more interesting, more engaging if like some kind of neoplatanism had become the the mass religion of the West instead of Christianity, which is a schismatic sect of
[Music]
Judaism. But do I consider Emperor

Julian to be a hero? Yeah, he was kind
of a hero, but he was a failed hero
fighting for a lost
cause. And I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from Siovak
and Cipad Zidana. And Siovak and Cipad
Zida says, "How similar were the samurai
and
thehatria like their duties, codes of
honor, etc."
And I really can't answer this question
very very
well because I'm no authority on samurai
and the kashatri. In fact, I probably
know more about the
samurai with regard to their codes of

honor and so forth than the kashatria
varna or cast of ancient India cuz I
mean I don't recall ever reading any
code of honor. I mean you read the poly
text there might be a little bit about
khatrias in sort of like the Buddha as a
boy and a young man some of the stuff he
would have to learn you know he'd have
to learn archery and horsemanship and
you know like military strategy and also
like poetry and this kind of stuff
um which it would be similar I mean
there's probably a lot of similarity
sort of parallel evolution of the
warrior cast the warrior class of
medieval Japan and ancient North India.
So there's probably a lot of

similarities that it was like the the warrior and to some degree the ruling class especially in India in in medieval Japan like the emperor I don't think he was of the samurai class but he was just sort of like this obscure figure sort of no I almost said like Joe Biden or something but you know I mean he wasn't really running the show a lot of the time you'd have like the shogun who was of the samurai class

So there's

that. With regard to the code of honor, I really don't know what the code of honor for the Indian chhatrias would be. Um there might be some famous text out

there laying down, you know, in black and white what the duties of a good chhatria would be. But other than that, you just pick up little bits and pieces from other things that you read. just this information is just incidental to to what you're reading about something else. So I really can't say but it it does seem that there was a lot of overlap. It was it was like parallel evolution. You know they were essentially occupying the same ecological niche in their respective societies and it just kind of produced the same sort of phenomenon. I don't think that Khatrias um were as likely to use peasants for

target practice and that kind of thing like sometimes you hear about the samurai. Whereas to some degree the samurai were considered like the Spartans and everyone else in society were hellets where it was just open season. You could just treat them however you pleased. that I don't know if the samurai themselves I mean there was
Bushido but I would assume that different different samurai in like different areas of Japan would have different ideas about codes of honor and so forth what their duty should be that sort of

thing but a samurai did I mean he had to have allegiance to a lord I'm not sure the khatri were that way you were just kind of born that way and I I mean you might be a good chhatria or a badria but u I don't think there was any like stigma of being like ronin like in the samurai where um your your leader the person that you have dedicated your life to um gets overthrown or assassinated or whatever and then and then it's like a stigma on the on the ronin it was like a slur calling them ronin and uh I forgot to to jiggle the mouse as is usually the case. And

so my

sweetie's computer

screen. Let's

see. Ah, her computer screen went dark.

Oh, there we

go. Because that's sort of like ambient

lighting to highlight my my blemishes

and wounds and so

forth. So let's see here. See of action

cad second question.

Compare and con this is this is like a

test question. Compare and contrast the

republics around the time of the Buddha

to the Roman Republic. Well, again, it's

like that like like knowledge of the

political situation or really like like

anything remotely resembling a kind of

constitution is very scanty with regard

to ancient India much more so than in ancient Rome. You know, ancient Rome, we got a pretty good idea. They didn't I'm I'm pretty sure they didn't have a written constitution like the United States has a written constitution, but they did have these traditions that were considered to be binding. You know, like two consoles, you know, how often certain I mean, how often different uh offices would be reelected, you know, just different positions. Jud, the quiz stores and the just I won't go into it, but with regard to ancient India, it's they didn't keep records nearly as well as the ancient Greeks and Romans did. It's just kind of a European

thing, objective recordkeeping. And also, we are Europeans pretty much. And so, you know, Europeans have been very interested in European history for longer than they've been interested in Indian history. So, stuff has been dug up and and discovered and learned in the West. It hasn't been dug up and discovered and learned in India. But it is true like it has been said that Indian history didn't even exist until the British came along and invented it after they colonized India because the Indians just really weren't into the same kind of historical recordkeeping as Europeans have been.

Not all Europeans but especially like Greeks and Romans.

So I think the republics around the time of the Buddha were more like oligarchies ruled by the cashatria class maybe with you know like Brahman priests got like advising them that kind of thing but I really don't know if they had the same sort of that complex

like like what do you call it just the balance making sure that that like one person won't just take control of the government. That's why you had two consoles and you know you'd have just checks and balances and so forth. And I I just get the idea just from reading the poly texts that a republic in the

Ganges Valley in the Buddhist time was
mainly just an oligarchy
of Chhatria males who would just meet in
like a a council and come up with their
ideas. kind of like like early medieval
Poland. I think it was early medieval
Poland where it was just like the the
nobles would all meet on horseback out
in a field and and come to their
decisions that
way that uh I mean in India I assume it
would be less
sophisticated than you know the the
elaborate political code of the Roman
Republic that it would be more just a
matter of a group of people making

decisions in some council hall rather than just one king or emperor making decisions.

So I'm just going to move on to Sea of Action Caden's third question which is what are your thoughts on Plato's noble lie? And I first heard about no Plato's noble lie from Bubbles on Trailer Park Boys. He talked about Plato's noble lie. uh when advising Ricky I think but it turns out that Plato's noble lie is the idea that a government does well to promote certain myths like a like religious myths for the sake of like unifying and strengthening the nation and this just falls back on something that I've been I have said

numerous times that as a young man I pretty much lost interest in politics when I fully realized that what is good and right from a political point of view isn't necessarily good and right from a spiritual point of view. So from a spiritual point of view lying is wrong but from a political point of view it may be that sometimes lying is the right thing to
do. It's not dharmic. It's not wholesome that the people doing it are probably going to make some bad karma for themselves. But still from a political point of view, it may be of advantage to a society to believe in certain myths

that unifies the people and gives them
the same general world
view. And it might not be entirely true
like Romulus and Remis being raised by a
she
wolf, that kind of stuff. I mean,
it's it's it's probably more to the
advantage politically to a government to
just promote that and go along with it
than just say, "Nah, didn't really
happen."
So, I guess those are my thoughts on
Plato's noble lie. I'm just going to
move on to the next question. This is
from
Phil and Phil says, "Favorite languages
and where would you rank poly?" Well,

I'm not a philologist. I am not a linguist. I only speak one language really fluently and that is English. I speak Burmese well enough to get by. I know Pauly well enough that especially if I'm armed with a Poly English dictionary, I can translate texts from Poly into English. Also, I have a Poly grammar which is is very nice.

Um, a little bit of Spanish un poito, but I really can't say I mean my favorite language would have to be English. English is a good language. It's a weird language, you know. It's it's unnecessarily complicated. Like in Burmese, you've got good, more good,

most good. And it's like all the adjectives just fit into this, you know, good, good, goodest. It's just it's easy in English. It's good, better, best. You can't say goodter. You can't say goodest. Or you can, but it's wrong. And just the spelling is weird. you know this is based on like the the pronunciation of old English or something. So but never nevertheless English is a powerful language. But with regard to what I consider to be the best languages to some degree I would defer to Schopenhau. Schopenhauer said that in order to be really literate and educated in his day, like the early 1800s, you had to be fluent in gosh, it was like

nine languages, eight or nine languages. I mean, there was like ancient Latin and Greek. You had to know those. Any educated person had to know Latin and Greek up until the 20th century, probably. Then there was German, French, English, and Italian. So that's German, English, Italian. Yeah, maybe it was six languages plus Latin and Greek. And according to Schopenhau, I think he said the ancient Greek or classical Grigatic Greek was the most perfect language that you can say things more precisely and concisely in Greek than in any other language like classical addict Greek. And then he second place he he gave to

German.

But I really can't say. I really do not know much Greek at all. Even less German probably. So I guess English is my favorite language. And with regard to poly, it's it's kind of an easy language. It's kind of like Spanish, you know, it follows rules fairly well. If you know how to pronounce something, you generally have a pretty good idea as to how to spell it, that kind of thing. Um, it's kind of a nice language. I prefer it to Burmese. I think I prefer it to

Spanish. It's it's a nice language. It's it's a simplified version of Sanskrit or rather I mean it's based on vadic

Sanskrit but it's it's much simpler more
streamlined than classical Sanskrit
which is a language that I know some
words you know to the extent that it's
it's it's parallel or the same as poly
you know that that much of it I
understand with regard to
grammar
but I I guess I've read that poly was
designed as a kind of lingua franca for
for Buddhist monks in
India and uh where would I rank it?
Well, I guess of the languages I'm
familiar with, it'd have to be my second
favorite language after
English. And so I'm just going to move

on to Phil Lee's second question, which is a question that I answered relatively recently. Toltoy or Dostki? And the answer was

Dostski. I Dostki is my favorite novelist, my favorite writer of fiction and The Idiot by Dosioski is probably my favorite novel. War in Peace is nothing to sneeze your nose at. I'm not saying Toltoy is a hack writer by any any stretch of the

imagination. But Dostki, my heart goes out to Dostki. I could just and it's hard not to love Dostki cuz I mean he was a tortured soul. He was kind of like Michelangelo just you know the the whole idea that you have to suffer to create.

Doski was that guy. I mean he was his life was just a shambles you know it's like close family members dying. He was hopelessly addicted to gambling roulette to be specific. He was always in debt, just like fleeing from people that he owed money to. This kind of stuff just he had epilepsy. He just all this stuff going wrong. I mean, he spent years in a Siberian prison camp after being reprieved like at like he was almost standing in front of the firing squad. He was actually there at the like the place where people are executed waiting in line to be shot before he receives this reprieve from the zar just saying

okay you just you just got to go and

spend a few years in a prison camp in

Siberia instead.

So it was like Dostski

understood the divinity that lurks

inside the human heart despite all the

just the filth and

sortedness. It it's it's just kind of

strange that Dossi just he portrays

people with all the warts, you know, all

the blemishes and he was really

insightful with regard to human nature.

you know, he was sort of like a

psychologist before psychology was even

really

invented. Toltoy was a wise man, but I

think Dostki is has him beat. And I'm

just going to move on to Phil Lee's third question, which is in your estimation, how different would the USA look today had the Confederacy won the war?

Well, that's kind of a difficult question because it's conjecture. You just have to

guess. I don't think the southern states, assuming that they broke away, I don't think they'd still have slavery. But in all likelihood they would have probably deported all of the freed freed slaves either to some country in Africa like Liberia or then you know sort of like the bleeding heart liberals of the

the northern states the Yankees would
have taken all these freed slaves
and had rampant violent crime and so
forth.
So let's see here what else what other
difference I don't think the southern
states would ever really become like a a
world power you know they might be
prosperous relatively powerful force to
be reckoned with but still I don't think
that they would be like the as powerful
as the northern states because the
northern states had the industry and you
know the population and that sort of
thing that just made them more stronger
and it may be that there'd
at least another war between north and

south just due to friction or you know
animosity smoldering or who knows maybe
the northern states would out just sort
of incorporate Canada or something I
don't know it's I mean it's all
conjecture you can't really
say but whether the United States would
become a superpower if the southern
states had successfully broken away and
I'm living in South Carolina, the very
first state to secede from the
union. Um, it's it's hard to say. It
really is. I mean, it's all it would
take is one little butterfly effect and
chaos theory to take effect and just
this hardly noticeable little change can

result in some

huge difference, you know, 100 years

down the

road. So, it's just hard to say.

Although I can say with fair confidence

that the Confederacy, the Confederate

States of America wouldn't have slaves

nowadays. That's just slavery. It pretty

much ran its course except for in a few

Muslim, you know, third world nations or

something. And uh I don't think the

South would really equal the North with

regard to power and influence on the the

global scale.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Sedarta

Lohachita. And his question is, his

first question I should
say, given the overwhelming references
to kings, princes, chatrias, and
brahinss in the polycanon, would
Buddhist rule be considered what
liberals might call an absolute
monarchy? Well, I don't think so because
I mean the Buddha himself, even though
he's called a royal prince, the
historians, the experts would say that
the citystate of Capilaw Watu was more
of a an oligarchy ruled by this council
of of elders like Chhatrias, you know,
the ruling class kind of like Athens
maybe. I mean it would it would be more
towards like an early primitive kind of

democracy than like monarchy.

Also, um, the Buddha

supposedly based the governance of the

SA on one of these oligarchies or it was

like a democratic kind of oligarchy

where it was like democratic consensus

or democratic majority of, you know,

these upper class males who were running

the country. So, um, I think it was the

Mala Republic. Don't don't quote me on

that, but it was one of these republics

that the Buddha thought was a good way

of running a country that he sort of

modeled the SA. And the SA is based on

consensus. Like if you've got a formal

act of the SA like they're going to

ordain somebody or whatever it is, all

the monks at the monastery have to
agree. The most junior monk, if he
doesn't agree, it's no go. And that's
something that has been lost in terra
Buddhist countries. Like in Burma, it's
just
unthinkable that some junior monk would
just like derail a formal act of the SA
if like the Abbott who is like king was
in favor of it. I mean that would just
be
unthinkable. I mean it's just it's not
even a taboo. It doesn't even get to the
level of taboo. It just doesn't occur to
anybody to even try
it.

So yeah, I do not think that
um Buddhist rule, I mean, whatever that
really means would be considered what
liberals might call an absolute
monarchy. No, I don't think so. Because
the Buddha really did set up the SA to
be like a democracy that required
consensus like everyone has to agree in
order to to change anything of
significance.
So I don't know it might be more towards
communism really when you've got I
mean it's very regimented you know
everyone has all these rules they have
to follow bare minimum of personal
property that kind of thing so it'd be
kind of more towards the left I think in

certain respects

anyhow but then again absolute monarchy

where is that on the on the political

spectrum

Seems like uh North Korea is an absolute

monarchy and that's pretty much of a a

kind of a Marxist state, quasi Marxist

state.

Anyway, Soviet Union like under Stalin

for example, pretty much of an absolute

monarchy there.

So yeah, I really don't think that the

Buddha would have endorsed monarchy. I

mean that was just sort of the rising

fashion. The political tide in the

Ganges Valley in the Buddhist time was

these oligarchic republics were being replaced by expansionist monarchies. And eventually it was Magada, the kingdom of Magada that just pretty much swallowed up everything else in northern India and eventually became like the empire of Ashoka.

So yeah, I'm just going to move on to Sedarta Lohachita's second question which is as follows. Do you consider that the democratic and human rights global plan led by America and his puppets need to be stopped and it may be that Sedarta lohachita speaks English as a second language so that there's a certain kind

of lack of grace in this question maybe
some uh grammatical ical faux
paws. So let's let me try and figure out
what exactly he means here. Do you
consider that the Democratic and I don't
know he's got democratic capitalized
with a capital D. So does he mean the
Democratic party in the United States or
does he mean just and people who endorse
democracy in general? That that's the
first kind of
um ambiguity here. and human rights
global plan led by America and his
puppets. So, America and its puppets, I
guess. But really, I mean, it seems like
the EU has taken the ball and is running

with it at this point. It's not so much America leading this global plan, human rights, global plan. I mean, America has always or at least recently has endorsed human rights throughout the world. you know, they're they don't like slavery. British Empire didn't like slavery either. Um, you know, they want a certain amount of humor. It's just you can't just like arrest people in the middle of the night and throw them in prison without like even having charges against them, which a lot of countries, I mean, I lived in a military dictatorship for years that that sort of thing happens. And America has sort of been a kind of global policeman trying

to keep that to a minimum even though probably to some degree it happens in America too. But at least they're trying to keep it to a minimum. So do I think that the whole new world order let's just simplify this whole question. it might kind of deviate from exactly what he was referring to, but let's let's just simplify it and make it less ambiguous. So, do I think that the western new world order needs to be stopped? Well, whether it needs to be is kind of I don't know. I mean, need is kind of a strange question too. Should it be

stopped in the form it is taking? Yes. I mean, there might be something resembling a world government at some point, but there's all different kinds of world governments, just like there's all different kinds of national governments. So, world government in and of itself is not necessarily a good thing. It can be a really bad thing. Like Huxley's Brave New World was a was a a new government or a global government. At least I'm pretty sure it was. But I mean Huxley wrote that as a kind of dystopia and a warning that this could happen to us if we are not careful.

[Music]

So, um, yeah, the the new world order stuff, like certain aspects of it, especially like the the neoarxism stuff, even the feminism stuff that that is not helping society. I mean superficially maybe to I mean to some degree but in the long term it causes society to decline. It results in decadence and eventual
collapse just even women voting this is politically incorrect but that's fine I guess. I mean, women are more like emotionally insecure, more conformist than men. Also,
women because they're insecure, they're they're more timid than men. They're, as

a general rule, I mean, there's always exceptions. Some women are taller than some men, too. But women are much more inclined to be willing to vote away their rights and freedoms and everybody's rights and freedoms for the sake of security.

Also, they are compassionate to the extent that they want to uplift the misfits who in a more Darwinian society would just fall by the wayside and keep the society strong because the weak are not reproducing nearly as much. and they're just putting them on welfare or and just inviting millions and millions of people to invade who do not share the values of of the

traditional culture, this sort of thing. So yeah, I think we'd be better off with like an older style accumulation of nations with like a balance of power and like international tribunal, you know, just voluntary international tribunals settling disputes rather than just, you know, bloody war going on all the time. But it is good to have a a diversity of cultures which not like necessarily within one nation but a diversity of political systems and cultures and societies so that Darwin can continue to be God emperor and the strongest ones will will rise up and the weakest ones will die

out. But let's see get back to the
original question.
whether it needs to be stopped. I mean
needs means that it's necessary to be
stopped and then I mean if it's
necessary to be stopped then it will be
stopped. I mean if something needs to be
stopped and it isn't then what kind of
situation do you have
there? But I think yeah like the whole
progressivism stuff the the new world
order stuff. Yeah, it's going in a in
the wrong direction.
So, I mean, there could be a different
new world order, you know, a different
kind of world government that is much
better that I might endorse, but the the

way it's going now is it's definitely uh for the most part leading the world in in the wrong direction, leading Western civilization in the wrong direction.

Anyway, so I'm just going to move on to Sedarta Loha's third question. which is why PI didn't become a lingua franca in Southeast Asia and they even did not create neoisms like telephone, radio, plane, etc. Well, I mean I mean is Sedartha lohitta referring to neologisms in Pali or I mean in Burmese? Yeah, I mean the word for telephone in Burmese is telephone. The word for radio in Burmese is radio or in the northwest.

Yeah, northwest of the country is leo because Asians have problems with the letter R and L for some reason. Airplane is leinbian which is not I mean that's a neism I guess

neism. But why didn't Polly become a lingua franca in Southeast Asia? Um, I think it's mainly because there just weren't enough people who were fluent in Pali. The only people who were fluent in Pali in Southeast Asia were Buddhist scholars, mostly

monks. And that's not good enough for, you know, like for it to be the official language of government or that or that sort of thing. The official language of like international

trade. Um, yeah. I'm not even sure what
if there even was a lingua franca in
Southeast Asia. Maybe like Han Chinese
or something or Sanskrit. I mean there
was some quite a lot of Sanskrit spoken
in uh like official documents some like
official inscriptions and so forth um
sometimes were in
Sanskrit. So I think Sanskrit maybe came
a little closer uh partly because there
was a lot of Hinduism in Southeast Asia
also like Ankor Watt I think was
Hinduistic
uh like a temple or or city holy city
kind of a
place. So why didn't Pali become a

lingua franca in Southeast Asia? I think it was just that there weren't enough people who who were fluent in poly. it would mainly be just obscure religious scholars and that just wasn't enough to act as a seed crystal. That would be my guess and I'm just gonna move on to the next question. This is from
Sina and Sina has a kind of interesting question here. In my suggested videos presumably on
YouTube in my suggested videos this really fat and bald guy with tattoo appeared. He says he is pro poly Greek and Russian translator but when he says things in Russian he makes some simple declination mistakes and his poly

pronunciation is little weird. His channel name was Theoria Apoasis. I watched couple of his videos. I could agree with some of his ideas on Buddhism but mainly he was a weird guy with big self-esteem. sort fake in some ways. I thought you probably know this guy with 300,000 plus subs. Did you check or see his poly translation works? Well, you're referring to Ken Wheeler and I've mentioned Ken Wheeler a number of times. I've written about Ken Wheeler. Um I think he was like the angry photographer at first. That was like his first YouTube channel. and he declares himself to be the world's leading authority on

poly language and early Buddhism. And it doesn't surprise me at all that when he speaks Russian, he he has substandard Russian grammar when he speaks because his poly is just as bad, if not worse. I mean, let's see. I'm not sure if he has real poly translation works. I don't think that he's really
um his his attempts at Paulie are even to the level of even attempted translations other than maybe brief passages. But I did read this really badly written essay. I mean his his writing style is
barbaric and it was he wrote this essay accusing the death of the Buddha on Mahakasapa his senior disciple at the

time of the Buddha's death. So he was accusing
Mahakasapa who was like the Buddha's successor as leader of the SA, senior monk in the SA
um for of murdering the Buddha and his some of the translations he gives are just obviously bad bogus translations like the word for blacksmith he's got as like son of Mara the evil one this kind of thing when really it's just Kamar, I think I I I don't recall the term. I think it's something like Kamar means blacksmith. That's the person who fed the Buddha his his last meal. And um the the mar the the a first a in mara in the

word was it kamar? Yeah, I should have looked it up before I did this video. But I mean it doesn't have the long a whereas mara the evil one does have a long a and it's obvious. I mean the the origin of the the poly word for blacksmith goes back into Vadic Sanskrit. It's already there in Vadic Sanskrit. And so Ken Wheeler, I mean he's the thing is he's he seems to be more of a neoplatanist although he's his neoplatinism probably sucks too. But he he's just he likes this idea of like the h what is it? the philosophy, the eternal, not the eternal philosophy, the perennial philosophy where, you know, you've got like

this like world soul kind of a thing.
So, he believes in that and then he's
trying to like force fit that onto
Buddhism and he is just warping and
distorting poly
texts and Buddhist philosophy to like
get that in there. And I mean his claims
to be the world's leading authority on
the poly language are just laughable.
And there's there's an entire website
just pointing out the some of the BS
that Ken Wheeler teaches. And it's
mostly with regard to what he teaches
about science like physics because he he
claims to be like the one of the world's
the world's leading authority on that

too. And it's like why Ken is wrong

something like that.

And in this uh after I wrote about his

like distortion of early Buddhism, then

the the person who runs that website

contacted me and asked if he could

include my essay on on Buddhism because

he mainly has been emphasizing the

scientific

stuff. So I gave permission. It might

still be on his website. I can't

remember the name of the website. It's

like why Ken is wrong, something like

that.

But yeah, I think Ken Wheeler is I I I

wouldn't hazard any kind of psycho

psychoanalysis on the guy, but I mean he

really wants to pass himself off as some sage and like when he says something complicated or difficult, he'll say it really fast, partly as a way of giving the the impression that he has just mastered this so much that you know he can just rattle it off you know really quickly but also he says it quickly so that your ear can't follow and catch the mistakes but really I mean if Buddhism is correct and Mahakasapa really was an enlightened being then for Ken Wheeler to be accusing him of being a murderer murdering the Buddha then I and he's just setting himself up for some really bad karma for

slandering a fully enlightened being.
But he has this idea that the Buddha
taught there's an immortal soul and then
Mahakasaba came along and just [__] it
all up after killing the Buddha so that
he could change Buddhism to teach that
there is no self. That's that's in a
nutshell what the the essay that Ken
Weer wrote in his atrocious writing
style is
about. So what exactly is the question?
Did you check or see his poly
translation works such as they are?
Mainly it was his essay on how
Mahakasapa murdered the Buddha which you
can find online. Um I did write a blog
post about it. So you can look on my

blog for that. do a search on Ken Wheeler on my blog and then probably the link to his essay would be uh embedded in that in my essay somewhere. So anyways, I'm really I don't want to be bad mouthing Ken Wheeler. That that's a a dead horse that has already been flogged plenty. So I'm just going to move on to Salman's second question. Uh oh. What do you think his ideas on Buddhism? What do I think of his ideas on Buddhism? Well, I've already pretty much answered that. He mainly wants to turn Buddhism into a kind of neoplatanism, I think, or just, you know, endorsing that there is like

like an atman or like like the

Upanishads teach and that he just bashes

away at the idea of no self in Buddhism

even though I mean it's just it's it's

there from the earliest texts.

I mean the closest I could come to any

idea that there is a self in Buddhism is

that in the Antagawaga which as I say is

probably the largest fragment of really

archaic Buddhism existing in this world

that it says that a monk should have um

no ata and no

near which is kind of a play on words.

It's puns.

Ata here means what is taken up and

nirata is what is

like what's the word thrown away gotten

rid

of. So nothing nothing taken up nothing

set down. But obviously ata and neara

can also be interpreted to mean self and

no self. So for the sage there's nothing

taken up nothing discarded. And also for

the sage there's no self and no not self

because the atikawaga teaches you should

not firmly believe in any concept

because the truth cannot be contained in

concepts. Concepts are just symbols in

the mind.

So yeah, his ideas on Buddhism are about

as bad as his ideas on

like physics or his his ability to speak

Russian

correctly that he claims to be the world's leading authority but really he is
not. So moving on to Sedar Taloh no Salina lead going on to Salina's third question.
In general, what is your view on true follower of Buddha or true meditator, true beu or enlightened folks with big fat belly? And I do not fully understand this question. I really don't understand this question either. I mean, is he referring particularly to Ken Wheeler? But Ken Wheeler wouldn't be true Beiku anyway, but he does have a big fat belly, I suppose. I mean, um, I think since he starts off with in general,

what is your view on say an enlightened being who is obese that I'm trying to condense this down in into a question that I can understand clearly and maybe some of you can understand clearly also. So, I mean, is it possible to have an obese enlightened being? And well, I mean, I've
got that picture right there of Neim Karoli Baba who was a rotund individual. He would qualify as obese, but I mean whether he was fully enlightened or not is hard to say. I mean, that might not even mean anything in a samsaric context, but he was a spiritual superman. He was definitely just

extremely advanced spiritually and had just mindblowing psychic powers just based on multiple testimonies like the book miracle of love stories about Nin Curly Baba by Ram Das is just full of miracle stories of just firthand testimonies of of like these amazing feats. I mean, not every story in the book is him performing some miracle, but plenty of them

are.

So, I do think it's possible that an enlightened being can be obese. I think it's possible that an enlightened being can be very skinny

also that it's like uh Nim Karoli Baba living in India.

Um it was like he would work out karma of his disciples through the use of food. Like there's one testimony in the book Miracle of Love saying that that Nim Kurly Baba could he he just people would invite him to meals and this person saw him eat like 10 full-sized meals in succession at different houses that in a way he's helping the person by accepting their food and and just kind of like we're kind of transmuting that food into some sort of merit for the person that Rahm Doss had this story of offering some oranges to Neim Kurly Baba relatively early on in their relationship and Neim Karoli Babo just

started like just gorging on these oranges and it was explained to Ramdas later that I mean he's like helping to you to work out your karma through eating the food that you give him and Ramdas pointed out that there was a different a different guru living in southern India who did similar things with cigarettes. He'd be smoking like four cigarettes at a time just people would donate cigarettes to him and he'd just be smoking through them as a way of somehow transmuting their karma which isn't a Buddhist idea. It's more of a Hindu idea that you can really manipulate somebody else's karma that way.

But Nim Crowley Baba apparently did it with food. And one of his main teachings is, you know, feed people, you know, it's like like also he said that God comes to the hungry in the form of food. So it was sort of like a kind of food oriented dharma in his case. He was he was relatively strict aesthetic like just amazingly strict aesthetic in his youth. He became a a sadu as a child. He just ran away from home and became a sadu just due to parmmy you know this sort of karmic momentum from previous lives apparently.

So yeah although the fat Buddha statues that you see really were not the Buddha that was a Chinese monk named hot.

So yeah, I mean once you become enlightened, what's going on at the physical level really becomes largely irrelevant. And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from meditators library. And meditators library says, what is your take on beus are teaching lay people on the internet spending lots of time and effort?

Um well it depends on the beus I suppose. I mean for some monks it's part of their practice is teaching. It is a it is a good practice to help others.

You know what you have learned you can share that with others. It's pretty much what I'm doing on my Q&As's. So I think for some beus it's helpful for other bik especially if they have this ambition of becoming like a famous teacher. A lot of Burmese monks are this way. It's like their ambition is to become a famous teacher Seattle. And some of these monks in Burma, they will cultivate a peculiar tone of voice. You know, it's like their own unique gimmick style. And there's there's one famous Seattle in Burma that has been dead for several decades at this point, Chanigan

Seattle. And I don't know if it's still that way in Burma, but used to be wherever you would find Burmese people, you'd hear tapes of Chiggon Seattle chanting in this weird like wailing melodious caterwalling voice. This very just easily identifiable. You hear that's Chinese guy in Seattle. And so there there's some monks that just practice their own version of that. you know, they just come up with some vocal gimmick, some peculiar characteristic style, you know, not just an ordinary speaking voice. And I mean those kind of monks because you know their their ambition is becoming famous teachers or even just like influential

teachers that uh I mean it's not
becoming enlightened for them.
So they're probably causing more harm to
themselves than good or at least they're
they're making good karma, but it's it's
I mean karma like good and bad are for
lay people. A monk is supposed to leave
behind merit and demerit. He's supposed
to leave behind good and evil that this
this whole duality of good and evil is
just this samsaric phenomenon. It's
suitable for lay people who aren't ready
to become enlightened yet. But if you
are anywhere near to becoming being
ready for enlightenment then I mean
really cultivating merit is almost as

bad as cultivating demerit because it

just keeps you in

samsara. You might go to heaven but

heaven is part of

samsarum. So it depends on the on the

biku and their attitude.

uh especially I mean if they become very

wise then it is good for them to I mean

it's good for dharma good for the sasana

for them to be sharing what they know

like ajan cha for example would be a

golden example of

that so I'm just going to move on to

meditator's library second

question does teaching benefit the

teacher hold a lot for his own

enlightenment or level up the

enlightenment

um I mean it's can make his path towards

enlightenment

smoother because you know going with

karmic retribution the whole idea of

that if you're teaching people who need

a teacher then when you need a teacher

you're going to get one. So you know in

a way it's sort of like preparing the

path for enlightenment but um really

enlightenment itself is not the result

of

merit that nirvana has no cause it's a

paradox. So yeah, leveling up the

enlightenment, no, it wouldn't do that,

but it would make your path

uh more

fortuitous, especially with regard to

getting teachings that you need as a

result of you giving others teachings

that they

need. So I'm just going to move on to

meditators library third question, which

is as follows. If you have to criticize

Nyanamole's teachings, what part of his

teachings or styles would that be? And

this Nyanamole is the second famous

Nyanamole, not the first famous

Nyanomoly. The first famous Nyanamole

was an Englishman named Osbert Moore who

was ordained in Son back around 1950 and

died around 1960. and he's the one who

who was a like a really good translator.

Like the the classic go-to translation of the Wisudi Maga is by the first famous Nyanamole. The second famous Nyanamoli is on YouTube and I think he's a Serbian monk who has a monastery in I think it's
Slovenia and you can watch his his YouTube videos. And let's see if I have to criticize his teachings, what part of his teachings or styles would that be?
Well, he is rather dogmatic. He kind of reminds me of a Buddhist version of that uh that acharia Hindu person
um who insists that it's not Hinduism, it's sanatana dharma. you know, it has the same

authoritative dogmatic approach to dharma or dharma that uh I think is not like not the best approach to take necessarily. Also, he does seem to have some ego. Um, I think he works out and is is like buff and you know he can be sort of rude and you know like interrupt people and just because he's the leader, he's the authority, you know, he he he does seem to have a kind of pride, you know, sort of self argrandisement going on. But then again, I mean, monks are human and the only monk that doesn't have any faults might be a fully enlightened one. But even a fully enlightened being can still appear to have

faults. So I mean I'm not trying to bash him or discourage people from from listening to his his talks that sort of thing that I mean human beings are human by definition. So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Tzasqueziz and Tzasqueaziz says how the fact that one pretty much has to be with his teacher or preceptor for 5 years after go free as a monk was resolved in your case when you went to Burma after one or two years in the US. Another obscure question about monastic discipline. Right up my alleyway.

So the rule is that once a monk is ordained, he has to live in dependence upon his upaya or preceptor for at least five rainy seasons
um or until his preceptor judges that he is adept enough at being a monk that he can go solo. He knows he can recite the potty mocha by heart. He knows how to meditate. He knows how to bake a bowl, make robes, that sort of thing. So at least five years, it could be longer than five years
or if like take being in dependence upon your upagaya or preceptor isn't working out for whatever reason. Let's say the the preceptor dies or there's just it's like there's problems at the monastery

and the monk needs to move somewhere
else and even his preceptor agrees it
probably be better for you to to live
somewhere else. That kind of thing and
that that happened in my case then you
also you still have to take dependence
or nissa but you can take your
dependence on an acharia. So you have to
be in dependence upon a preceptor or a
teacher, an upagaya or an acharia. And
acharia is the word that has been
corrupted into the Thai language as a
jan. And it also has been corrupted into
Burmese as the seya part of
say acharia literally means like
teacher. So if you're preceptor, you're

not independence. You have to be independent for at least five rainy seasons, five years.

And so it has to be on your pre dependence on your preceptor or on some other senior monk in good standing who agrees to be your acharia or teacher and that's what happened in my case that after

um I left America and my preceptor in America went to Burma and my acharia or teacher uh was Pakoku no Chsin Tampulu Chsin Seattle and he was my preceptor for a little over a year. Then he sent me to a school monastery to get a good education where my my preceptor or my teacher there was venerable a

dobath and then and then I came back to Chelson Doya where Chelson was my my teacher again until I got enough seniority that I didn't have to live independence and then I just became a free agent and just went off and lived alone in caves.

So, Traasquez is his second question is as follows. After 30 years of not cooking food, were you able at first after you disroed to make food or cook for yourself? Well, cooking food isn't something you you forget really. You don't forget how to make a grilled cheese sandwich, you know? It's just you

just know how to do it. Or like pan fried oysters or fried liver and onions. Those were like things that I I knew how to make. Or actually the the see the fried liver and onions. You just look up a recipe on the internet. I mean, anything like that. Now, you want to know how to cook something that you haven't cooked before or you just don't remember how to cook it, then you just look on the internet. I used to have a cookbook. I would I would refer to the cookbook even to bake a potato. You know the joy of cooking. I had it in my kitchen. Even to bake a potato, I would refer to the joy of cooking on how to bake that

potato. But I was never much into
cooking. Like before I became a monk, I
didn't cook very
much. And usually whatever I cooked used
a minimum of dishes. I did not like
washing dishes. I did not have an
automatic dishwasher. You know,
everything was handwashed at the sink.
And I just worked out this system where
I'd make mostly
sandwiches. You use one knife and then
you can just wipe the knife off with a
paper towel and put it back in the
drawer.
Easy. Or make oatmeal and then you just
eat it straight out of the

pot with the same wooden spoon that you use to stir it. And then I mean oatmeal is pretty much water soluble. It washes out pretty

easy. That kind of stuff. grilled cheese sandwich easy. So, I didn't have any problem at all. Um, I've always been kind of a a bread eating kind of a person, like a sandwich person. So, yeah, there was no problem at all really. And

then very shortly after I stopped being a monk, I had a woman who was a really good cook. In

fact, she kind of learned from me how to pan fry oysters or make fried liver and onions, that kind of thing. and then she

just kind of took it over. So, even that
stuff I don't make anymore. I do very
little cooking
now. So, I guess I answered that
question. Yeah, it was really no problem
at all. I mean, grilled cheese
sandwiches are
easy. And so, the next question is from
someone whose name is spelled Creel, but
it is pronounced throat Worbler
mangrove.
and he asks, "Does taking refuge in
Buddha, Dharma, and Sa reduce bad karma
from bad actions performed before and
after the refuge?" Thank
you.

And it

depends. I mean, even if it does, it's

going to be in a in a subtle way. The

the karma is going to still be there.

It's just that if you're wiser, then

you'll be able to deal with the fruition

of that karma more wisely. And so if

taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sa

implies that you have become a Buddhist

and have started living your life in in

in like a dharmic manner, you have

started viewing your life and the world

through a kind of spiritual lens, then

sure. But just taking refuge in Buddha

Dhama as as a mechanical act of just

reciting blah blah blah and pi and

that's that's not going to change

anything. Burmese or spiritual
materialists they think that you earn
merit for just taking the three refues
and the and the five precepts even if
you have no no intention of keeping
those five precepts that you're earning
merit just for the ceremony. But I don't
think it really works that way.
But if you sincerely are taking refuge
in Buddha Dharma and Sana to the to the
point that you have started like living
your life in dharmic
terms as I already just mentioned then
that is going to make your mind more
subtle and it's going to make your
reactions to things that happen to you

more subtle and it may even cause sort of like the tone of what is happening to you be more subtle and also um if you started earning merit through your refuges, just through becoming a Buddhist or just through like entering upon a spiritual path that you're earning more merit, then the bad karma from your past is going to be diluted down. It's going to be mixed in with with more good. And that's the famous suta like the the simile that I've mentioned a number of times is the Buddha compares a person's bad karma to a handful of salt. So if you pour that handful of salt into a cup of water, it's so salty that the water is

undrinkable. But you take that same handful of salt, pour it into a pool of clear water, and it gets dissolved in this this whole pool, then you may hardly notice the taste of salt at all. And that's that pool of clear water is like merit. Just the water is is sort of symbolizes merit. So if you can't get rid of your past karma other than by letting it run its course, but you can dilute it down by lots of merit. And if you take refuge in Buddha Dhama and Sana and take that to heart, then yeah, it's going to reduce the the effects of bad karma from bad actions.

Um, but it it's not just going to erase them. That you can't just do Hail Marys or whatever, make confession and just have or have some Dowist priest like wave a paper wand at you and make your your sins go away. It doesn't work that way in Buddhism. It still has to run its course. But the the wisdom you bring to it when when it when it's like re like reaching

fruition is I mean that's up to you and it can result in more bad karma or it can result in just the karma exhausting itself and maybe you even get some good karma through your equinimity or whatever. Ah, and I finally finished the cold

coffee. So, I hope I answered that question satisfactoryy because I am moving on to the next one. This is from PSA. I'm going almost two hours here. So, PSA says, "Do you think you would have been a better selection as pope than the guy that was picked?" Do I think that I would have been a better pope than what? Leo the 14th. Is that is that his name? Well, first of all, I don't know that much about Leo the 14th, but I really doubt that I'd make a better pope than him because frankly, I'm just not a Catholic. I'm not even a Christian. So, it seems like a like a necessary prerequisite for being a good

pope would be to be a good Christian.
And I'm not the guy. And with regard to
Leo I 14th, I think he's a more
conservative than the rainbow pope who
has recently passed on to whatever he
has passed on
to. So yeah, I don't have any complaints
against the new pope at present. I can't
say that he's not a
Christian. Although quite a few people
thought that the the previous Pope
Francis was hardly even a Christian. you
seem to be more of a a Marxist than
anything
else, but that's really not for me to
say. So, yeah, I don't think I'd make a
better pope than Leo the

14th. I might have some better policies than him, but I'm I'm I'm not a I'm not a Catholic. So, PSA's second question. What is the geographical location of Mount Saru on the earth? particularly from which country would it be visible? I'm guessing only those with their third eye open can see it. Well, you have to bear in mind that the whole idea of Mount Meu being you know the tallest mountain in the world, the center of the earth was I mean the people who came up with it were living in northern India and just north and they were they believed that they were living on the southern continent and so you just go

north of the southern continent you've
got the Himalaya mountains. So the
geographical location of Mount Saru
would be the Himalaya mountains or just
north of the sim the Himalaya mountains
with maybe the Himalaya mountains
considered to be like the foothills to
the south of Mount
Maru. The Greek equivalent of Mount Maro
would be Mount
Olympus. Pretty sure that's that's the
foot of that mountain is where the
Titans were chained up. same as Mount
Meu with the assaurus chained up down
there. Although some some assuras did
apparently get
loose. Um but then I did I do have a

book on my bookcase the Surya Sedanta
which is a medieval astronomy text um
from from
India and it was influenced by tomic
geography through trade routes with the
Roman Empire. So by the time the the
surya sedanta had been written the
Indian uh like astronomers had come to
the conclusion that the earth is round
and not flat. So what they did was they
had this idea that the earth is a sphere
but that Mount Simmeru is like coming up
through the north pole that so that the
earth is sort of like an orange stuck
onto a cone and then the tip of the cone
is coming out through the top of the

orange.

But personally, I'm inclined to believe that the closest thing we've got to Mount Sumemeru in the empirical world would be Mount Everest in the Himalaya mountains. And that is I mean the ancient Indians got their idea for these giant mountains from the Himalayan mountains that were just north of India. So, I guess I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question, which is, is boiling water considered breaking the first precept? Because you're pretty much killing everything that is in the water. And this leads to yet another obscure little discourse on monastic discipline. So we'll start with with

vineia or the rules of monastic discipl that a monk is not allowed to pour out water that has living beings in it or that he thinks has living beings in it. But those living beings have to be visible. You know if there's like little mosquito wiglers in the water or you know little, you know, little crustations skittering around in the water, that kind of thing. You're not allowed to pour it out. You're not allowed to cook it. that you commit a pacidia offense, you know, which is of medium severity, an offense of medium severity by using that water or pouring out that water because it

has visible living things living in it. But in ancient India when they made these rules and when they made the five precepts, they had no concept of microscopic life. And if you can't kill even microscopic life, you're going to be paralyzed. Every time you walk outside, you're squishing at the very least microscopic organisms. Even if you're careful to avoid the ants, you're still going to be squishing little like nematode worms or mites, this kind of thing. Every time you brush your teeth, you're killing bacteria, harmless, innocent little bacteria.

So I would assume that the the first

precept for lay people would be similar to the rules for monks in this regard. And so if it's microscopic, it's okay to kill it. In fact, there's even a few microscopic life forms that monks were allowed to kill like mildew. Monks are allowed to wipe mildew off a wall. Monks are allowed to, like I mentioned in a previous Q&A, spread their bedding out in the sun to get rid of bed bugs and other vermin. And that generally kills bed bugs and other vermin. If the sun doesn't kill them, the ants do. So boiling water is not considered breaking the first precept for

Buddhists, but for Janes, I think it might. Like a Jane monk wasn't allowed to cook water because cold water was considered to contain life. And the Janes had very liberal views on what is life and what isn't. Like they considered fire to be a primitive kind of life which actually has some profoundity to it because fire is a more chaotic kind of process that is similar to life itself. I mean it requires oxygen. It needs oxygen to breathe. that needs food, you know, that kind of thing. It's just that it's it's the the oxidation reaction is happening like without without steps. Like in life, metabolism works, but it essentially the

same kind of oxidation of carbon and other materials as fire, but it breaks it up into little chemical steps. And then sometimes uh a little bit of energy is given off by one of these steps that can then be captured by like an ADP molecule which then becomes an ATP molecule which then can uh is like charged with energy which can then like instill that energy into some other process going
on but I've meandered away from the question but boiling water is not considered to break the first precept. cept uh killing microscopic life using mouthwash for example is not breaking

the first precept. It has to be visible life. It's kind of an arbitrary thing that you know once something is you know someone with bad eyesight may be able to kill more than someone with good eyesight. But basically what it boils down to is if you can see that there is a living thing there you shouldn't kill it. But if you can't see it, no problemmo. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Quistor.

And Quistor says, "If someone is taught that animals don't have souls, are not living beings, but are more like AI, and are here for us to eat, would this person catching and eating fish create

less karma than someone who believes
that the animal they're eating was their
mother in a past life, and by buying it,
they've funded the raising and killing
of other animals?"
Well, this reminds me. I asked
essentially a similar question to my
first Vineia teacher when I was a junior
monk, venerable
Utesania. And I asked him, it's like
some people think that killing is is
okay. Like in Christianity, killing
animals is fine. There's no sin at all.
Jesus after he died helped his apostles
catch fish.
I mean Muslims and also the Old

Testament says that under certain circumstances it's okay even to kill humans that God wants you to kill him. So anyway I asked my teacher Utes Nia which is which is do you get worse karma by doing something bad that you know is bad or by doing something bad that you actually think is good? you think you're gonna go to heaven for killing these people or you think that fishing is just good clean fun. You're not hurting anything. And he gave me the the interesting
answer that it's sort of like handling something that's hot. If you know that something is really hot before you handle it, you're going to handle it

more carefully and you won't burn yourself as badly. If you don't know that it's hot, you just grab a hold of it and you can burn your whole hand. So according to him, if you know that it's bad and you do it anyway, you're not making as much bad karma as if you think that it's good and and it but it's really bad and you do it. And I have to admit, I mean, it's I think it might vary from case to case that I mean, if you're just torn up by guilt, let's say you go fishing, you think that fishing is murder, but you're just trying to conform with your friends who like to go fishing. So, you go

fishing, you catch a fish, and you're just like tormented by guilt after doing it. then you might be making more bad karma than your buddy who caught the same number of fish as you. But he for him, I mean, it's it's just fun. He likes fishing. He doesn't think there's anything bad at all. Maybe he's a Christian because he's not going to be adding to that bad karma through just guilt and remorse, this kind of stuff. Well, it's like Cartisian philosophers back in like the 1700s, they would publicly torture dogs just because the Renee Deart, the founder of their philosophical school, claimed that only humans have a mind. Only humans are

conscious because only humans have a soul. Animals are mindless automatons. How any wise person could actually believe this, especially if they've ever like owned a dog? I mean I mean maybe a Chihuahua. You can look into a Chihuahua's eyes and it you don't get the distinct feeling there's someone looking back at you. But other dogs, I mean, you look in their eyes, you know there's somebody there. You know, it's like some childlike, you know, simple simplehearted kind of person in there. So, I mean, Islamists who think they're going to go to heaven for blowing up buildings, this kind of thing full of

people, unarmed
civilians. Well, so it's it's it's
complicated,
but personally, let's see. Let's just
get back to the exact question
here. Would this person catching and
eating fish create less karma than
someone who believes that the animal
they're eating was their mother in a
past life? I mean, why would you kill a
fish if you thought it was your
mama and and buying it? They funded the
raising and killing of other animals.
Um, I think the actual act like just
forget about the fish being your mama.
Just assume that one person thinks
killing is wrong, killing fish is wrong,

the other person thinks killing fish is just a good, clean, fun hobby.
Then it may be that just the act of killing the fish that the person who thinks that it's wrong depending on their attitude they might make less bad karma because sort of like venerable utesia was saying they're they're more careful you know they're sort of being mindful of their actions that kind of thing while they're doing it and they're they're not doing it like just wholeheartedly this is fun this kind of stuff but then if they're feeling guilt afterwards. They're just being, you know, tormented by guilt. Even at a

subconscious level, it's just kind of going on in the back of their mind. They might have dreams about it. That kind of thing. Then that sort of thing could add up and they might be making more bad karma than the person who thinks that killing fish is just fine and dandy and that Jesus did it
himself or at least helped others to do it.
But I do think it would vary from person to
person. So I'm just going to move on to Quistor's next
question which is it seems that events in our lives unfold to serve our deepest desires which would indicate that our

sense of self seems to be steering our direction in life. If separation is an illusion and we are ultimately the universe, would an arant having cut the illusion of separation be able to steer other people's lives for the purpose of general enlightenment or liberation?

Well, it would depend on the karma of the individual person. Like like an enlightened being can't just like manipulate you like a puppet. Can't just take you over and manipulate you like a puppet. I mean it wouldn't even be you anymore really if if that happened. But I mean there's cases like Neuroli Baba

up there where he would like do
stuff. Uh sometimes it would start off
by him just completely blowing
somebody's mind just kind of destroying
their idea of how the universe works by
performing some
miracle. And there's there's one story
he's he was some doctor his his wife was
Indian and she was a follower of nim
curly baba she was a devote and I mean
he thought well I'll go along with this
you know my she's my wife she's a
follower of this man I'll I'll go check
him out. So he goes there and you know
he's already heard about the miracles
and everything but he just sees this fat
old man sitting on this

platform and he just Nim Crowley Baba just ignores him day after day just kind of ignores him. He doesn't he just sees this fat old man. So he finally thinks well my wife is in a cult. This just isn't going to work. Maybe our marriage isn't going to work. I should just go back to America. And so he he just sort of says he's not feeling well and doesn't go to the ashram that day. Instead he just goes and and like walks around this lake nearby. This is like in northwestern
India Krishna's old stomping grounds. and he's walking around the lake and he's just sort of torn, you

know, the the thought that his his wife
is just following this maybe a charlatan
and their marriage is going to fail and
he just doesn't know what to do. He's in
despair. He loves his wife, but it just
looks like it's not going to work. And
so, he does something that he hadn't
done since he was a child. He actually
prays. He's praying to
God. So then finally the next day,
oh the computer screen turned off again.
Let's see
here. It does this on purpose just to
just to spite me. Telling
you. Okay, just let it stay off anyways.
Oh, there it went. So he he praised God.
Then the next day he's just going to go

and and just say goodbye to Maharaji. And and one of the things before before we get to this part is one of the things that bugged him the most was seeing the disciples going and touching Maharaji's feet. That just seemed like degrading. He just it just bugged him. He was an American. He just didn't like that. So anyways, he goes there early the next day just to kind of have it out with Maharaji and and just you know say goodbye and he's going to leave and somebody people had put fruit on his platform and an apple had fallen off the platform. So this doctor he's going to pick up the apple and just put

it back on the platform where it belongs. He reaches down to pick up the apple and as soon as he does that, Maharaji comes out of the room, puts his foot on on his hand so that he's in this position on his knees touching Maharaji's foot that he just didn't like at

all. So then they're just kind of two of them together and through I guess there's a translator too, an interpreter and Maharaji says, "Why weren't you here yesterday? Did you go to the lake? And I mean, he's it's mostly in Hindi, but he says lake in English. And it was the the the doctor who hadn't I mean, he hadn't really been talking about this to his

wife. There was no chance for her to communicate to Maharaji yet. Anyhow, he just gets like this weird feeling like in his chest. And then Maharaji is just kind of playing with him. And he's like, "What did you do with the lake? Did you go swimming?" And then the doctor says, "No." And then Maharaji says did you go boating? And and the doctor says no. And and then Maharaji says did you go horseback riding? And the doctor says no. And then Maharaji kind of leans forward, looks at him very intently and says did you talk to God? And it was like at this point there's no way Maharaji could have known

that through normal

means that it's just he has like this

tearing sensation and he just starts

crying like a child and then the

Maharaji is kind of reaching out and

sort of stroking the doctor's beard

because this is back in like the late60s

and and Maharaji says did you ask for

something and what what the doctor had

asked for when he's praying to God is

show me a sign, you know, show me a sign

that that that it's all going to work

out. And he he kind of looked around for

a rainbow or something when he was at

the lake, didn't see anything. So then

he went home. He didn't tell anybody

about this. And then Maharaji is just

keeps repeating over and over again, did you ask for something? And he's just crying and crying. And then by this time, a lot of the other disciples had already shown up. and they're just sort of like caressing him because most of them had gone through a similar experience with
Maharaji. So I mean Maharaji could kind of steer people that way by giving them what they needed you know first by blowing their mind by doing something impossible and then just sort of steering them sort of gently you know in in a direction more directed towards dharma you know helping them to wake up

helping them to become wiser and better people but I mean he wouldn't just take over somebody that way so let's see what's did I answer the question yet.

See, separation is an illusion. We are ultimately the universe. Would an Arant having cut the illusion of separation be able to steer other people's lives? Yeah. I mean, only if their own karma allowed that like sort of like the like we were talking about earlier, you know, the karma of teaching, you know, do you get merit from teaching? I mean it's like if you need like someone who needs a teacher you come and you teach them what they

need then you've earned a kind of karmic merit you know you can call it that so that at some future time you need a teacher you're going to get what you need and I think a lot of the people that watch these videos have had something like that happen you just hear the thing you need to hear you know you get sent a link to some YouTube channel of some teacher or just this the the book that you most need to read just lands in your hand. You know, someone just gives you this book or try this or they someone advises you should try doing a Ginka retreat, something like that. And it's just this life-changing

experience, just you know, this casual thing. It could be the person isn't even deliberately trying to teach you anything. But that's that's the way it works. It's not like I mean even the Buddha himself did
not successfully teach everybody. There were people who just thought he was a fool, people who thought he was a fraud, people who they knew that he was wise and everything, but still they just weren't ripe yet. You know, like the notorious group of six monks who were just doing all kinds of naughtiness.
So yeah, an enlightened being, he can maybe help
people if they are open to that, but he

can't just force them to against their will, so to speak, to become wiser, better people. And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from David. And David says, "What type of meditation technique was the Buddha using when he became enlightened? And what types had he tried before he had his breakthrough? Well, it's hard to answer this question because as far as I can remember, the poly texts really don't say like what kind of meditation was he doing when he was sitting under the bodhi tree. It's an obvious question, but this is maybe the first time I've ever heard anyone ask

it. I don't think it it even says in the texts exactly what his meditation object was.

Um I think traditionally it would be most likely that he was doing anapana or meditation on the breath. That would be like possibly the most likely traditional answer. Although it may be that if he became fully enlightened that he may have moved on to a more advanced just sort of like a a wide openen like fourth genre kind of meditation that had no real object, no primary object of meditation. he was just sitting in a state of like emptiness and bliss.

But who knows because I don't think the texts even say and even if the text did

say there's no there's no guarantee that they would be anywhere near to being correct because in in the poly text and in Christianity other religions also if there are blank places you know like with regard to anything they'll get filled in by myths myths and legends. So let's see here. What type of meditation technique was the Buddha using when he became enlightened? I don't know. It doesn't say although as I say it could have been like a very advanced like fourth Janna kind of a meditation where there really is no method anymore. You're just kind of sitting there in a

state of emptiness and

bliss. But then there would have to be

something that would result in

liberating insight to arise.

So I'm not exactly sure how it worked

and I don't think even his maybe his his

chief disciples maybe his the people the

monks in the Buddhist time may have

known

but we don't at least I don't and what

types of meditation had he tried before

his breakthrough well he taught lots of

different kinds of

meditation and so it may be there's a

good chance that he was had experience

in most of these meditation techniques

that he was

teaching. Um but again it there's no list of all the types of meditation the Buddha tried when he was a Buddhist sata and hadn't become fully enlightened yet. And then after he became enlightened he could just improvise. He could just come up with a new meditation technique just to fit an individual case at least according to the text. You know there was like this one monk whose preceptor was venerable Sar Puta and venerable Sar Puta kept giving him different meditation like um primary objects to try and he just wasn't making progress. The student wasn't making progress. So then finally he went to the

Buddha and the Buddha just I think he gave him a red flower said meditate on this and it worked just because the Buddha could like see into him and see just what it was that would kind of trigger you know this liberating insight that was necessary that you know he could look inside the psyche of a student and see what kind of meditation technique would work the best even if he had to invent some new one you know like the dullard in it's in the commentarial tradition the dullard it was this monk that was too stupid really to practice any kind of meditation very effectively so the Buddha just gave him a piece of cloth and says rub this and I can't

remember what he was supposed to recite
it was sort of like a mantra that he was
going to be repeating when he's rubbing
the cloth and in his case it worked and
he became an arahant with psychic powers
as a result of rubbing this
cloth but this question. It's a good
question. It's just that I don't think
the answers to this question or these
two questions have been
recorded. And even if some answer to
them had been recorded, the odds are
pretty good that they would just be
guesses that got turned into myths or
legends.
So, I'm just going to move on to David's

second question, which is, "What do you believe happens when the thousand pedal lotus opens in the head?" Well, it's my understanding the thousand pedal lotus opens just above the head. Isn't Isn't that the way it works? Isn't the seventh chakra, the highest chakra like right here? Like the sixth chakra is like the third eye and then the seventh chakra is the thousand pedal lotus which when that opens then you become fully enlightened. And the whole chakra system is more a yoga thing than a Buddhism thing. It's certainly never mentioned at all that I can recall in the poly texts. So in a way it's sort of combining two different systems. But what happens I mean how can

you say what happens at the moment of enlightenment? You can say that you know there's greed, hate and delusion are transcended. But I mean at a empirical level there may not be any obvious change at all.

So yeah, this is kind of a trick question. The thousand pel lotus opens in the head or at the crown of the head I suppose. Um yeah, I mean you just transcend some

sorrow. You might I mean empirically objectively you're still here. It's just that you're no longer identified with this. It's like you know that it's it's not ultimately real.

Maybe putting it in sort of Christian terms, you become fully aware of the presence of God at all times, that kind of thing. But I mean, there's no explanation of it that's going to help anyone who isn't there yet. It's like trying to explain colors to a person born blind, trying to describe the flavor of vanilla to someone who has never tasted vanilla before. You can just explain and explain and explain till you're blue in the face and it's just not going to work.

So yeah, if you really want to know what

happens when you become enlightened, you're going to have to become enlightened yourself. And that's even the Buddha could not explain what being enlightened was like, exactly what happens. Um, you know, it's like someone who's never tasted vanilla wants to know what vanilla tastes like. The best advice you could give them is go find some vanilla and taste it because no amount of explaining is is going to get the idea across because it's not even an idea. It's a direct experience. It cannot be conveyed in words. So I guess I'm just going to move on to David's third

question which is as follows. People talk about the last Buddha and the future Buddha and this implies that nobody has reached Buddhahood between these two people. If this is not the case, then why make the distinction? Thank you for your answers and may it be a blessing to anyone who hears it. Well, in Buddhism, especially in Terravada Buddhism, there is a distinction between a Buddha and a mere arahant that a Buddha like a sama sam Buddha is a person who becomes enlightened without the aid of a teacher, without dharma already existing. He has to rediscover Buddhism or rediscover dharma

or dharma.

So I mean he has to do it through his own spiritual genius and then he can teach others and then his enlightened disciples aren't technically Buddhas, they're arroants. And so a Buddha arises to get the wheel of dharma rolling again after dharma has become extinct in this world.

So, it's sort of like saber-tooth tigers where they become extinct and then they re-evolve and then they become extinct and then they re-evolved and they become extinct. It happened several times or so I've read and that's kind of the way Dharma is where you've got a Buddha

rediscovers dharma gets the wheel of dharma or dharma rolling again. starts a Buddha sausa, gets Buddhism going and then Buddhism because everything is impermanent runs its course eventually dies out and then you have to have another person who rediscovers it like thousands of years later and then starts it going again then it dies out and then thousands of years later another Buddha comes along who rediscovers it.

So our our Buddha was Godma Buddha. The Buddha before him according to tradition was Kasapa Buddha. The next Buddha is going to be Matea

Buddha. But there have been enlightened beings in

between. In fact, there can be enlightened beings even at times when there is no Buddhism. They're called Pacheka Buddhas who even though they become enlightened without the aid of a teacher and are fully enlightened, nevertheless they're hermits, they don't teach dharma and they don't get the wheel of dharma rolling again. So they're just sort of flashes in the pan, so to speak. They become enlightened, but they don't really get dharma like they don't really get it going again.

So, I hope I answered that question coherently enough. And so, I'm just

going to move on to the next question, which is the last question. That's kind of nice. Two and a half hours. It's a long question though. So, this is from Moambo. And Moambo asked a question last week saying that he doesn't believe in karma. I mean that was part of part of his commentary to the question was he doesn't believe in karma. So I pointed out that if karma is volition then if you don't believe in karma you don't believe in volition either. And then I pointed out that some superficial levels of karma should be obvious even to a materialist for example just the fact that karma is the momentum of your mind.

It's like the habit energy of your mind and it's like the the automatic pilot that just has you sleepwalking through life just through force of habit without having to be fully
awake. So this is like his response to my first answer which is kind of a refinement of his previous question I think. Moambo says, "The query I asked last week about memory and karma was not properly elaborated by me. What I meant to say was, I don't believe in past or future karma because I think as humans our conditions arise due to genes passed down from our parents, geography, intellect, education, societal structure

or hierarchies of a given society. For example, someone can be born with deformed body parts due to natural reasons while it was growing inside the womb. Someone could meet with an accident due to fault of others or their own. Someone could be depressed because they are ugly or have no money due to being born in poor family. Or someone could have good looks, money, healthy life, brilliant mind due to opposite conditions. These conditions arise due to pre-existing factors which are out of our control and random. We don't need past life momentum for our conditions. Now karma according to me are the conditions we are born with and dharma

is how we deal with pleasant or
unpleasant experiences we go through
life past and future lives seems like
wishful thinking or cultural belief in
that time just like Abrahamic faiths
have faiths have afterlife in heaven and
hell what are your thoughts on karma and
dharma being a process we go through in
a single lifetime, not multiple
lifetimes. Well, for
starters, it seems that he prefers a
kind of like scientific
realism. And scientific realism is
another case of let's see cultural
belief in that
time that I mean it's like there are so

many people maybe they're scientific materialists. I don't think Mogambo necessarily would have to be a scientific materialist, but there are scientific materialists who think other people believe in superstitions. They believe in stuff based on faith. But now we know the truth. And it's just just about every single culture, every single society that has ever existed has this same attitude. It's like other societies, even our own society in the distant past believed in superstitions. They believed in myths, but now we know the
truth. Scientific materialists are just the same.

I mean, they have maybe a more

sophisticated approach because it's

backed up by some objectivity, some

inferential

logic,

empiricism, but still it's not really

describing

reality. So, but at least I was able to

get the point across.

that karma does exist even if you you

just accept it at a superficial level.

People who are like scientific realist

that's all they can understand is at the

superficial level anyway but I mean at

the superficial level it's like your

karma is like the momentum of your

mental states your habit the habit
energy of your mind. So if you don't
want to exist, you don't want to believe
in past lives or future lives, I mean
all that really matters is the present
moment
anyway. So
um I mean you read the articaga says you
shouldn't have beliefs
anyhow. So I mean you don't want to
believe in past lives, you don't want to
believe in future lives. That's your
option. But I mean you should be
similarly skeptical that let's see what
is it let's see that the cultural belief
of your time also is not describing
reality. You should be skeptical even of

like scientific

empiricism talking about genes for

example.

So I'm not like I'm like opposed to

science but science really has no

position to make metaphysical claims

about the nature of reality and even

like theoretical physics has gotten to

the point and it has gotten to that

point gone to that point like about 100

years ago that it's our own mind is

helping helping helping helping to

determine like the reality that we are

in. So if you get to the point where

your own mind is creating your own

reality and you can conveniently ignore

like parasychology, the paranormal, you know, you just call it all [__] or wishful thinking or whatever, then you can do that too, I suppose. But I'm not going to try and force you to believe in past lives, future lives. Ultimately, it really doesn't matter all that much. I mean, if you accept the first noble truth of Buddhism and you don't believe in in rebirth, then the obvious thing to do would be to delete yourself in Minecraft. But I'm not not recommending that

either. But the only moment I mean the most important moment is the present moment. According to Terra Buddhism, the only moment that really exists is now.

So I mean just live a dharmic life
now and you don't even have to worry
don't don't even think about past lives
or future lives. It doesn't even matter
really. It may be that uh your world
view the samsaric world view the
interpretation of samsara will change
over
time.
Let's see. Have I answered this question
adequately? That is the question. That
is my
question. Let's see. Where's the
question mark? See, what are your
thoughts on karma and dharma being a
process we go through in single

lifetime, not multiple lifetimes? Well,
I mean, you want to get rid of past
lives and future lives, you might as
well just get rid of past and future
also. It's just happening now. I mean
that's really all that that's really
what matters is
now.
So I mean I I really do not believe in
in karma as Moambo interprets it which
is just you know it's
like physical and physiological
conditions that one lives in cultural
conditions that kind of thing. I mean
it's your karma will help to determine
that man. Your karma pretty much
determines what kind of life you're

going to be born into, what kind of culture you're going to be born into, what kind of belief systems you're going to be born
into. But I'm certainly not a materialist. I think mind is chief. It is all mind made like the first verse of the dharmapata
says. Let's see. Is there anything else that I should
say? See what are your thoughts on karma? Dharma being a process we go through in a single lifetime. Well, ultimately it's an illusion anyway. And I think even science would have to agree with that at this point. Something like

biology which has to like assume the existence of like a pluralistic samsara then yeah they're not going to be transcending like physical entities and so forth. But when you get into the the the more abstract realms of physics, then it all starts breaking down and becomes like um a kind of mental formation, a projection of consciousness. And once you get to that, then it's it's like off to the races. So, I guess I'm done. I guess I answered questions. That's what I guess. And so, as I should always say at the beginning, I never do. If you have any questions you think I can answer, which

doesn't include like futurism in right-wing politics, I don't know anything about that. But you, if you think I can answer, like early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism, Buddhism in general, you know, you you've heard it all before. Stuff that you think I can answer questions about. Biology, too. I do have a degree in biology. marine

emphasis. Um, then feel free to ask no more than three questions per person per episode, please. And count the question marks. Some people will ask one question that has like four question marks in it, which makes it four

questions. And uh, aside from that, I

just add furthermore as well. Be happy.

Okay then. Hello and welcome to question
and answer number
147. I am your host Po Bosa. As
usual, this is my
beverage. And some of you out there
might think, oh 147, that seems like a
prime number. It's
not. 147 is 3 * 7 * 7.
I mean, it just blows my mind that there
are people out there thinking that 147
could possibly be a prime number.
And I just got to say that my days of
basking in the glorious luxury of being
completely lazy on weekends is over for
the time being
because I'm digging a fish pond in the

backyard. Spending a few hours on week weekends digging fish pond and it's going to be a relatively large fish pond like 2 feet deep. I'm hoping for about 500 gallons. So, it's it's gonna take a while. And as I get older, I mean, one of the the two main changes I have found as I get older is one, I'm just don't have the vitality like the the animal vitality that I used to have when I was younger. It's like you just don't have the same stamina that you had when you were younger. I mean, I could probably bench press now more than I could when I was like 25 probably, but like running long distances or something, working long

hours, doing strenuous labor, that kind of thing, it's just it just doesn't work the same. And the other change is just you get like stiffer in the joints. So, we don't have a whole heck of a lot of questions today. It's uh somewhat on the light side, about 35 questions. And so, I suppose I should just dive right into this. And the first question is from Xenithoid. And Xenithoid says, "Why is wallowing in sensuality bad karma if it's a positive mental state?" Well, a positive mental state in the sense of loba, you know, it's like greed is the standard stock English translation of

the word loba, but it means like attraction, you know, it's like you've got like attractive responses and aversive responses. And so wallowing in sensuality be mainly an attractive response of you want more of this pleasure. And I mean you could call it positive in that sense. And experiencing pleasure is like the fruition of good karma. So I mean it's positive in that sense but still wallowing in it where you are cultivating more greed more loba more desire then that is not wholesome. So I mean it's loba is not a wholesome mental state. It's one of the three poisons or the three fires. So um wallowing in sensuality is bad

karma because you are

cultivating like greed and desire and

attachment. Just to experience

sensuality is not good or bad karma.

It's like the fruition of good karma. To

experience pleasant

sensations would be the fruition of good

karma mainly from the past. but to

wallow in it so that you're greedy for

more. You're you're clinging to it. Then

you're making bad karma now. Um that is

based on the fruition of good

karma. Go

figure. So I'm just going to move on to

Xenithoid's second

question. And his second question is as

follows. For us the intellect is the slave of the passions. Could the passions be the slave of the intellect for enlightened beings? Perhaps this could explain why the Buddha still does anything after he becomes enlightened rather than doing nothing. There could still be desire in his mind that would enable him to teach, meditate, etc. But these desires would be under complete control of the intellect, thereby eliminating any suffering.

Well, as David Hume and Emanuel Kant pointed out, just intellect in and of itself really cannot initiate anything. You

know, it doesn't motivate anything.
So that's it may be that xenithoid here
is is sort of finding some back door
through which the intellect can motivate
actions but I just don't think it works
that way. What the way it works I mean
people in general have immense
difficulty in dealing with two different
levels of reality at the same time. you
know, they just try to fit it all onto
this one flat plane so that it's all,
you know, you know, it all fits together
on the flat plane and they don't really
consider that a more accurate
description might be something like a
cube that's it's like

three-dimensional. And so they try to work it out. And Orthodox Terra is the same way where you've got to like be an absolute purified saint in order to be fully enlightened. Whereas the way I look at it, you are just transcending your
humanity. And so let's see what let's get back to the question here. The in for us, the intellect is the slave of the passions. Yeah, that's practically a quote of David Hume right there. Could the passions be the slave of the intellect for enlightened beings? The passions are just going to arise. I mean, you don't you don't like intellectually will passions to

arise. So, I mean, the passions are just nature taking its course, human animal instinct taking its course. Um, and I mean to some degree there's a kind of back and forth between the intellect and the passions, but I don't think the intellect is going to generate passions or really even harness them that much to some degree maybe, but certainly it's not going to be like complete control of the

passions. So, let's see. Perhaps this could explain why the Buddha still does anything. Well, I mean he still does anything

because I mean again we're dealing at

two different levels of reality at the same time trying to like force fit them into one level and it doesn't work very well. But I mean the Buddha I mean subjectively he's not identifying as a human being. It's just nature taking its course. He has transcended that. It's still part of the picture, I suppose, but he's just not identified with that anymore. So, I mean, the human body is pretty much controlled by a human brain, a human nervous system, and the human nervous system is influenced by hormones and all sorts of things, animal instincts that are wired into the brain. And just because you become enlightened doesn't mean that your body

stops being human.

So I mean

like like an ancient Indian yogi which

would include the Buddha not not in the

sense of practicing sanankia yoga but

just yoga in the sense of like spiritual

self-discipline as like

an an elaborated system let's say so the

Buddha was a yogi and so he would have

had years of self-disipline and sort of

calming the passions, that sort of

thing, through aestheticism and even

more importantly through

mindfulness, just through following

rules at first, which is sort of an

elementary level of

that.

Um so his passions would have been sort

of calmed

down to the to the level that I mean

it's there's no unskillful passion you

know some urge animal urge that would be

you know contrary to dharma that he

would just get get sucked up into it you

know just carried away by these urges I

mean that wouldn't happen

anymore and there would be some

intellect involved in that, I suppose.

But trying to second guess the the

mental states of a sama Buddha is is

pretty much ridiculous, even though

people keep trying to trying to second

guessess a fully enlightened

being. So there could still be desire in his mind that would enable him to teach, meditate, etc. But these desires would be under complete control of the intellect, thereby eliminating suffering. I I don't think so. I don't think that his desires would be under complete control of the intellect because I really don't think the intellect can control anything. The intellect is I mean it's like a guide but it doesn't control anything. Which is one reason why people can intellectually know that something is wrong and just go ahead and do it anyway because that the intellect is not

motivating their behavior.

And I guess I'm just going to move on to

Xenithoid's third

question, which is, can you explain the

similarities and differences between

achieving nibbana and achieving

nosis? And I am not a gnostic. I'm not

exactly sure what the Gnostics meant

with regard to achieving nosis. I mean,

the Greek word

gnosis. Just a

second. What is that?

Some little particle of food just came

loose in my mouth. I shouldn't have even

said that. It's TMI, isn't it? Was

flicking onto the

floor. Okay, so gnosis in Greek has the

exact same etmology in Indo Indo-Uropean

languages as the poly word nana or the

Sanskrit word I don't know how to

pronounce it correctly.

Gana

ginana so and then it's in in English it

would be cano to cano something is

ginosis or

genana. So to achieve

nosis would be presumably what a like a

a gana yogi would be striving for. It's

like liberation through through wisdom.

Liber liberation through knowledge just

penetrating and

like like knowing ultimate

reality.

So to that extent I mean if you know ultimate reality that would probably seems to me that would be the same as becoming enlightened or achieving nibano. But what exactly ancient Greek gnostics meant by achieving nosis, I'm not sure. It seems like some of their philosophies from a Buddhist point of view anyway are not particularly enlightened. So they might have had some something else in mind. And I'm no authority on ancient Gnosticism. So with regard to that, I can't really say. But to achieve nosis of like awareness of ultimate truth, ultimate reality, to know ultimate reality would be the same as achieving

nibbana as far as I can

tell. So I think I'm just going to move

on to the next question which is from

Kundrew. And Kundrew says, "Regarding

Ajan Mun's question on what color the

robes were in the Buddhist time, how did

the Buddha respond?"

And this is like a follow-up question

from the previous Q&A in which somebody

asked me what I would ask the Buddha and

then I happened to mention that Ajan man

supposedly met with the Buddha

somehow and asked he got he asked him

one question which was

regarding how the monks in the Buddhist

time dyed their robes which just seems

like blowing a question but Ajan man supposedly was an Araant. He really didn't need to know anything in particular. So why he chose to ask a vignia question about how ancient Indian monks dyed their robes, I'm not exactly sure other than he was just a stickler for vineia. And according to the story, the Buddha just happened to respond with the statement that it's essentially the way Thai forest monks dyed their robes. That is the correct way. It's like the right color, which would be sort of like a cat puke and greenish goldish brownish color.

Um, but I don't know. I mean, I'm not exactly sure in the Buddhist time what

the preferred robe dye would be.
Apparently, just from reading Vignia,
there was a multitude of different
possible dyes you could use so long as
it worked.
Um, so like the Thai forest tradition
uses the heartwood of the jackf fruit
tree which I think is ardocarpus
integrafoglia. Very common tree in
Thailand and Burma. Um, in Burma though,
it's the inner bark of the jackf fruit
tree that is much more used than the
heartwood of the jackf fruit tree, which
is more of an orangey color, more of a
like a russet kind of a reddish brownish
color, orangey brownish color. And then

some of the the mun monks in like Munate in southern Burma use I think it's the bark of the ironwood tree which produces a really nice kind of a dark purplish color.

Personally though, I used Katachu, which is like a resin from the Kutch tree, a kind of aacia, which produces um essentially like a russet reddish brown color. And all of this would be allowable. And so I think Ajan Man may have been projecting onto ancient India um in his meeting supposedly impossible meeting with God Buddha asking him this question. He just got sort of like what do what do you call it when your your biases are

are

reinforced you know just the

presuppositions or you know that's the

way it is I can't remember how it's

called confirmation

bias but then again anjan man was

supposedly fully enlightened so trying

to second guess like meditation masters

and sages is is fairly

ridiculous. But um the Buddha did

respond that it was essentially the same

color that Anjan Man and his disciples

were using, which is I would guess sort

of this kind of a greenish goldish

brownish color from using the heartwood

of the jackfruit tree to dye

robes. So let's see here. I think I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Pronov. And Pronov says, "Are you in favor of Darwinian weak will weak will fall and strong would survive over Dharmic values in which the weak would at least be given some security by the welloff so that they are not starving to death?" Well, I mean, it's it's kind of a false dichotomy. These aren't the only two options.

just letting the weak starve to death or having like a socialist state or you know the well-offs supporting the poor. I mean

that's still from a Darwinian point of

view so long as you don't
reproduce then I mean Darwin is still is
you know it's like the species continues
to evolve you know it's still survival
of the fittest. So, I mean, you could
support the poor while at the same time
having a system so that the poor aren't
having more children than than people
who can actually support their
family. So you could still have, you
know, private charity or church groups
or whatever supporting the poor, but um
not so much that it just becomes like a
career choice for some women to be unwed
mothers, having five kids by three or
four different fathers and just getting

money from the government, that sort of thing.

So I mean you have a culture that is more supportive of women getting married and having children and less supportive sort of

discouraging becoming like an unwed welfare mother on food stamps as a kind of viable career choice.

So, so long as the successful are reproducing more than the unsuccessful, the people who can provide for themselves are reproducing more than the people who can't provide for themselves and have to live off the charity of others or the large s of the government, then still everything everything works

out well. you don't have so much of a devolution, sort of a decline of the species, which is what we've got going now. Just like mutation load like Edward Dutton talks about, and just like genetic defects that just continue to propagate because we've got modern medicine and people with sometimes severe genetic defects are still encouraged to reproduce. And I remember reading a book on obsessivempulsive disorder. I used to know this research psychiatrist at UCLA who was one of the world's leading authorities on obsessivecompulsive disorder. And some people would have it so severely. I

mean, they'd just be almost incapacitated by it. Like Howard Hughes, who had OCD in his later years, I mean, he was just like isolated in a hotel room. Only few people could come to see him. And they'd be like offering him food with like pl rubber gloves on, like surgical gloves, wearing surgical masks, offer him just this special kind of food that he

trusted. And you know, his fingers, her fingernails were growing really long and he just I mean, he was practically incapacitated towards the end. And some of these people who were just really dysfunctional still, they're and and it's a genetic thing. You know, there's

like a 5050 chance that their kids will
have it. still they're just having kids
or I remember once there was a beggar
with leprosy who used to come to
Mahagandhi on this big school monastery
that I lived at and one day I saw him
with a little boy and I was thinking man
who's who's letting their little kid
hang out with this person with leprosy I
mean the kid might get leprosy and then
finally I it dawned on me it's the
leper's kid
and I don't know for like a a lepous
beggar in a fourth world country to have
one or more children. I mean, you know,
you can't be too judgmental with regard

to this

stuff, but still there should be some

sort of

cultural like

mechanism, cultural

traditions that encourage the successful

to have more children than those who are

not successful. And that's the way it

was up until like the 20th

century that I have read that most

people that are the descendants of

aristocrats because it was the

aristocrats who could afford to have

kids and it was like the subsistence

farmer peasants you know they had a way

higher mortality rate for their

children. they just couldn't afford to

support as many children whereas the
aristocrats you know have families or
and also the aristocrats would be
messing around with the prettiest
peasant girls that kind of
thing. So I mean Darwin is going to be
god emperor regardless and we ignore him
at our
peril. I mean when the weak are
glorified, the weak and dysfunctional
are glorified and the successful are
vilified which is what is happening on
the on the left through like
nichch's slave morality you know it's
based on resanton or
resentment. Um, yeah, it's it's just

gonna it's going to be a downhill slide. And that's one reason why great civilizations tend to not last very long because they get to this level of prosperity. One of the reasons they get to this level of prosperity where poor people are living on a dole, you know, they got their breads bread in circuses and all that and they just are like having kids and the rich for whatever reason have fewer kids. And so it's like sort of the dregs of society are the ones that are populating the civilization and it's
it's it just does not end well. That's certainly not the only reason why great civilizations fall, but that is a

contributing reason.

So yeah, I mean to have compassion and

and like share your access with people

who need it more than you do, that's

that's 100% good. And I'm not going to

try and talk anybody out of that.

Although nowadays, you see a beggar on

the

street, you know, like a homeless

person, you give them five or 10 bucks,

they're going to spend it on drugs. So I

mean, that's kind of a complication,

too.

At least in some cultures, the the home,

you know, the homeless beggar is

actually going to buy food with it.

Maybe buy food for his kids,

too.

But like homeless people, I I can't even

recall seeing children of homeless

people like on the on the sidewalk. You

don't see very many homeless children on

the sidewalk in the United States. It's

mostly adults who are drug addicts and

or mentally

ill and just don't have

kids. So let's see. Did I answer the

question? Am I in favor of Darwin Indian

weak will fall and strong will survive

over Dharmic values in which the weak

would at least be given some security by

the well so that they are not starting?

I favor both.

I mean, the Darwinian thing. Yeah. I mean, it's you can't really argue with it. I mean, like, left-wing feminists can argue with it till they're blue in the face. Darwin remains God emperor. So, but at the same time, you know, compassionate like generosity and and charity and so forth is good also. And they're not really necessarily in conflict.

So, I guess I'm going to go move on to the next question. This is from Phily's and Phil says, "Do you recommend having children for a non-M? And do you ever wish you had them?"

Well, I mean, every once in a while I'll

get like a little twinge. I think my woman and I, the woman I've got now, and I would have good kids. I think I'd be a personally I think I'd be a good father. She'd be a good mother so long as she didn't worry too much about the kids, you know, be like a helicopter mom, something like

that.

But I mean, it's it's a choice that each individual has to make. Some people would be better off without kids, some people would be better off with kids. Um if you get away from socialism then in a lot of countries like in Burma like children are your children are your social security. Your family supports

you when you get
old. And if you don't have any family,
then you wind up in an old folks home
that's run by charitable contributions,
maybe a little bit from the government.
And probably in in a fourth world
country like Burma, old folks homes are
not the best places to
be.
So, do do I recommend having children
for lay people? It depends on the
individual. I mean it's for each people
should make their own choices with
regard to that. I mean there's a lot
of suffering. I mean it's having kids is
just a lot of positive and a lot of

negative just like having a mate has a
lot of positive and a lot of
negative and there's a lot of
attachment. I remember a friend of mine
who had a kid told me that I mean you've
got like a four-year-old kid just
watching your kid walking towards the
street just causes this
visceral this this feeling of just like
dread of the kid just like plunging into
traffic and like
splattering this kind of thing. And
that's that's always with any
conscientious adult. We can just set
aside the unconscientious
ones. So it's a big obligation. I mean
it's a huge obligation that most people

don't take very seriously. I mean you
are responsible for like raising this
person so that they grow up to be a
relatively good, relatively happy
person.
And most people don't give more any more
thought to that than like a dog or a cat
does.
So yeah, I mean I can't really recommend
it or not recommend it. It's like for
it's each person has their own choice
that they have to
make. Although obviously if we stop
having kids the human race dies out
or
probably you

know I don't
know that's let's just leave it at that.
I mean if you don't have kids the human
race does not populate and it's in
decline now at least in the the western
countries. I don't I think I don't think
there's any country in Europe that has
reproduction at replacement
rate. So instead of encouraging people
to have children, they just import
millions and millions of barbarians that
do not share the cultural values of
Europe.
So anyways, I'm just going to move on to
Phily's second
question, which is recently I have
started to think that the whole idea of

having house pets is absurd and actually rather perverse, especially dogs since dogs have always been kept for specific purposes such as hunting or shephering or security and so on. Personally, I have cats, but I feel bad for my cats when I think of the fact that they lead highly unnatural lives and won't ever get to reproduce and hunt since they are neutered and so probably won't get to experience the pleasures that their entire biology was designed for. Thoughts? Well, first of all, biology, I mean, you're not designed by biology to be happy. Like a wild animal is probably less fortunate, less content in their

life than a house pet. Like a wild cat probably is not happier than a like some cat that's asleep on your couch purring. Also, this one part up here, especially dogs, since dogs have always been kept for specific purposes. Some breeds of dog have been bred just to be lap dogs to be human companions. Like I got a whippet that wanders around here sometimes. I mean it's a sigh hound, you know, it's sort of like a small greyhound, but at the same time since the middle ages that it's been like a lady's companion dog. So, one of the main purposes of a whippet historically has just been like a lady's companion kind

of dog. And they're like the King Charles spananiels and that sort of thing. I mean, that's what they're bred for.

So, raising having house pets, I mean, the pets benefit from it because they are uplifted by human consciousness. They're not just out in the wild completely in survival mode just hunger and fear governing most of their behavior that now there's love, you know? I mean, they'd have love for their their puppies or whatever, but it's not the same as like we got this one little dog that wanders around here. It's it's just an attention

sponge. It's like a little energetic vampire, you know? just craves attention and love and just soaks it up if you start petting the dog and talking nice to
it. So yeah, I really don't see anything necessarily wrong with having house pets. It it benefits both. It's it's a symbiosis that dogs as they exist, I mean they're just a symbiant with humans. We have co-evolved. We we even have convergent evolution.
that dogs, the domesticated dog can read human emotions whereas uh like a wolf, a wild wolf cannot. A wild wolf can't really tell whether a human is in a good mood or a bad mood. Whereas the

domesticated dog has learned this also like a domesticated dog has an increased capacity to digest carbohydrates, to metabolize carbohydrates, to to to live on more of a agricultural diet than a wolf. that kind of
thing. So, and and from the Darwinian point of view, domestication is just one of the greatest things that can happen to an animal. You know, it's like winning the lotto. You know, like chickens, the red jungle fowl. I mean, what the population of wild red jungle fowl in Asia is, I don't know, but I'm sure that it's it's less than domesticated chickens, which probably

are around the same population level as humans. There's billions of chickens now because they were domesticated even though a lot of them are used for food. They're they're treated badly, you know, living in little cages and this kind of thing, having like the ends of their beaks chopped off so they won't peck each other, ruin each other's skin. But still, from a Darwinian point of view, they've won the lottery. Like wild cows are extinct, but cows are prospering on this planet because they have been domesticated by humans. So, and it's just it encourages like love and trust and

generosity. I mean, you don't just get benefit. You don't like you don't just get karmic benefit for helping other humans. Every time you feed your dog, especially if you you're happy to feed your dog, you know, you like to feed your dog, you're getting good karma for that. Every time you pet your dog and are nice to your dog, you get good karma for that. Same for your cat. Same for your fish. And speaking of fish, let's see here. Let's see if I got her. Okay. Yeah, the aquarium is in full view. I had to like move the question list over to make sure that you could see my pet fish. And sometimes I think I mean do

they get bored in there? I mean they've got other fish to interact with and there's a lot of plants and diversity in there. They can swim around. But I mean in the wild I mean the cherry barb for example is is close to extinction in the wild just through mainly through loss of habitat. They're native to Sri Lanka. So I mean they've kind of won the lottery too from becoming an aquarium fish.

Let's see. Anything else I can say about my fishes? I mean, it might be a little boring. Not nearly as boring as like a goldfish just swimming around in a bowl with maybe little marbles on the bottom

and maybe some little chintzy porcelain castle in there. But then again, how how easily does a fish get bored? I don't know. But I mean, I can I can speak from the experience of dealing with these dogs that I live with that they don't mind living here with with us humans. And if they were feral dogs, then they wouldn't be nearly as happy. And really, human consciousness helps to uplift them because mental states are contagious. And furthermore, I mean, the love of a dog for its master is one of the purest kind of loves there is. Like human love is pretty conditional. Like a

mother's love for her children, if she's a good mother, that comes close to like perfect spiritual love, too. Like unconditional love. But a dog, I mean, I'm I don't not I'm not like recommending this at all, but a person can kick his dog every day and still that dog is going to love him.
So just that kind of interaction is actually I mean it's it's probably more beneficial than otherwise. And I think uh it's really good for a person to have like a pet dog or something. And if you're concerned that you you don't want a sheep dog that can't hurt sheep, then there are breeds of dog that were specifically bred just to be human

companions.

So let's see here. I assume I answer that question. I'm going to move on to Phil Lee's third question, which is having lived in the midst of foreign peoples, what is your opinion of racial theorists who postulate a hierarchical understanding of human types? So that'd be like race realism or something. And I mean a hierarchical understanding would mean you've got like superior ones and inferior ones. And from a scientific point of view, I mean you don't even have to think that way. I mean just like differences that there

are

differences. And like people who are

just hysterically opposed to anything

that smacks of racism. I mean they'll

they'll be starting to get hysterical

already just hearing that much. But

there are differences. I mean just going

with height, you know, probably the

average

say Samoan would be taller than the

average Japanese. The average Ethiopian

would be taller than the average Burmese

person. I mean, what is what is

objectionable about even just

acknowledging this? And then then you

get to psychology

and there are psychological differences

just as there are physical differences.
Just there's psychological differences
between men and women largely largely um
conditioned by
hormones. And then there's just
psychological differences between races
and which doesn't mean that everybody in
this race is going to have these traits.
everybody in this other race are going
to have these other other traits that
it's it's going to be statistical
likelihood. You know, there's going to
be lots of overlap. Some women are
taller than some men. Some women are
more rational than some men. And it's
the same way with certain races.

So a hierarchical understanding I don't
think is particularly
useful especially I mean at least you
could divide it up into different
characteristics that I mean every race
is going to be better at something you
know they're going to be the most
adapted to the environment in which they
arose at the very
least
so I have no no problem with pointing
out that there are differences between
boys and girls. Like for example, boys
don't have a PP like girls
do or that there's differences between
races. Like even just average IQ stuff,
I mean, it's real. And just all the

hysteria in the world, all the accusations of racism aren't going to change that. It's just that those people are just blinding themselves of of the truth of a of empirical reality and trying to force everybody else to be blind too and it's just not going to work. And ignorance is a kind of weakness. So yeah, a hierarchical understanding, just an understanding of differences would probably be more beneficial and wholesome than hierarchical just having a list of the best to the worst.

That kind of thing probably isn't particularly helpful unless it's just

with regard to certain, you know, certain qualities that can be quantified, you know, like height or weight, testosterone levels, that kind of thing that you can you can just point put it on a graph, you know, like this ethnicity has the highest testosterone levels, this ethnicity has the lowest testosterone levels, that sort of thing. testosterone conditions, aggression, impulsive behavior, that sort of thing. And it's people on the left who just vehemently just reject reality to the point of saying everyone is the same. That I mean, they just can't deal with it at all. And any kind of science, no matter

how like watertight the like the
experimental design is and all that,
they they're just shrieking. and racism
because they just can't deal with it
because their religion is saying
everyone is the same and that the
differences are caused by white
patriarchal oppression in
particular. And it's just like a
faith-based religion that is not
necessarily based on any empirical
reality at
all.
So, I guess I answered that question and
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question. This next question is from

Kenton who has the alias also of Kenton. The only person I know whose alias is exactly the same as his real name. And Kenton says, "I often find myself around others who hold strong views around the world about politics, society, culture, or ethics. I notice how easily views become entangled with identity and how much energy goes into defending or rejecting them. I tend to see views as conditioned and context dependent. I often find valid arguments on each side and I'm more interested in understanding the conditions that give rise to a view than in deciding which one is right. I always wonder, no I also wonder if this is genuine charity or

just a subtle avoidance of engagement.
With that in mind, I'd like to ask and then follow three questions. First one is, how can one relate to others who are strongly attached to their views without either reinforcing their clinging or appearing dismissive?
And I mean based on my own personal experience
um being like a a bluecollar worker in South Carolina, I come across churchgoing Christians a lot. In fact, one of my bosses was an ordained minister who just decided to become the manager of a sheet metal shop instead of uh like really making a living from

being in the clergy. And my next boss after that was even more religious than the ordained minister. I mean he would never cuss anything like that. And I mean

um I mean I wouldn't be bad mouthing Christianity in front of these people. I mean obviously even if they're not your boss. I mean you don't want to be badmouthing somebody's religion. I mean sometimes it may be called for. Now somebody's glorifying Islam. you can point out, well, Islam does encourage killing people sometimes, this sort of thing. But at the same time, I mean, you don't want to be

dishonest and like start, you know,

praising Jesus and this kind of thing.
But I mean, I have read the Bible. I can
make
intelligent, you know,
like sort of statements that a Christian
can consider in a positive light that
aren't just sort of like knowledge from
the Bible, that kind of thing that I
mean, it's it's not like I'm endorsing
Christianity. Um, I mean, sometimes it's
like somebody will say, you know, like
just last night this guy says, "See you
Monday." you know, as we're we're like
leaving work and I said, "God willing."
And I I say that a lot, you know,
inshallah. I say that sometimes, too,

which is kind of a wise way of looking
at this empirical or like some Saric
reality, you know, like a John Chai say
not
sure because you really don't know
what's the future is going to be and you
shouldn't just assume. I mean, you kind
of have to assume that the sun's going
to come up tomorrow, that sort of thing.
But still, it's it's always good to bear
in mind that really nothing is
absolutely certain. I mean, you don't
know for sure that you're going to be
seeing this person next Monday.
So, I mean, that kind of
thing with regard to leftism, I'm sure
you can at least, let's say you've got

some foaming at the mouth

leftist that

um, you know, they're always engaging in

rants or something. Your best bet is

just, you know, engage with them as

little as possible and just just to

avoid the the hazard of getting sucked

into some kind of scandal by saying the

wrong thing. then they they try and get

you fired or something. I mean that can

happen. It's it's happened many times.

But um still I mean you can just make

intelligent observations that are like

neutral that can be viewed either way.

Just sort of like making intelligent

observations about the Bible. You know,

it's like just some I can't remember
what I was saying about
uh saying to my my second boss, the
really super religious one. It was
something about homosexuality. He was he
was opposed to having like gay pride
stuff in the training videos, this kind
of thing. And I mean, he was just
outspoken in like speaking up against
higher management. Look, there's a pride
flag in this training video. It's it's
in the background but still it's there
you know and he was a devout Christian.
I said well you know Old Testament says
that homosexuals should just be taken
out and
killed. He said well yeah we're not

following Mosaic law anymore.

But I mean you can I mean if you know

about leftism then I mean you can like

quote marks to a leftist

and I mean what are they going to do? So

long as you don't obviously have some

axe to grind as long as you're not

obviously mocking them or something. you

can make intelligent statements that you

can just kind of feel what the other

person is, what their attitude is and

and so just sort of spontaneously

there's like this dance of social

engagement where you can sort of

contribute to the conversation by just

making neutral statements that are

about, you know, their Christianity or their Marxism or whatever it is that they they can have to accept like environmentalism or something. I mean, it's not totally a fraud. Like the whole um you know, human beings are are like harming the Earth's environment. I mean, that's not a total scam. It's not just some [__] that was made up by globalists to try to control the population. I mean, they they've sort of gone with that to some degree, but still, I mean, there's some truth in there like deforestation and and that kind of thing where megapa is pretty much wiped out on this planet. We've been in what is it the the holosene

extinction event since prehistoric
times. You know, as soon as humans got
to Australia, the the megapon, the the
big animals just went extinct there.
That kind of thing. probably humans were
mainly responsible for wiping out
mastadons and woolly mammoths and all
that kind of
stuff. So I guess the trick is you just
I mean if you can make some neutral
observation that is just a factual thing
that isn't really biased that people can
kind of pick up on that. If if you're
saying something out of some bias, like
some sort of subtle mockery or
something, they can pick up on that

easy. But if you're just like
contributing just some kind of
information that they can't really argue
against and you're not really trying to
prove a point really, you know, you're
just being polite, you know, just giving
some kind of feedback, that kind of
thing. Then if you're you're skillful
enough at that, I mean, if you're an
autist and have no social skills, then
you're better off just avoiding people
in general.
Probably maybe hang out with other
autists, go to like gamer conventions
and
stuff.
[Music]

So, let's see. Did I answer the question which is how can one relate to others who are strongly attached to their views without either reinforcing their clinging or appearing dismissive is it depends on the person like that uh that research psychiatrist at UCLA he was like a foam at the mouth Republican and I mean he was he just despised the left and I was kind of more of a like a an ecohippie back in those days you know I wasn't wasn't as right-wing as I am now. Although really, I mean, I haven't really changed all that much. It's just the left has just gone insanely leftwards and just left me

on the right at this
point. Just being a classical liberal
turn makes you like a fascist or
something
now. So, I mean, in his case though, I
mean, he was Jewish also and just sort
of thick skinned, just kind of abrasive
in general. And you could just sort of
like tease him a little bit and and it
was
fine. You might get kind of riled up a
little bit, but that was kind of
entertaining also. And it's just guys
interacting. So, you know, you get on
get on guys can get on each other's case
sometimes. You know, give each other the
business and, you know, it's it's okay.

So, I mean, you've got to first kind of sound out the person you're interacting with. how how thick is their skin and just just go from there. But still, I mean, you can I mean, you can like engage in a conversation with someone who is just fanatical with regard to some some a topic that you don't agree with. what you don't agree with that person on that on on their position, but still I mean you can you can still just toss in like neutral objective observations that can sort of allow you to to engage with the person. So let's see here. I'm just

going to move on to Kenton or Kenton
second his second question which is once
the need to hold or defend a position
falls away what ideally guides your
speech and action well I mean if it
completely falls away then you're an
arahant and again then you're
secondguessing ahant you're trying to
secondguess a fully enlightened
being and you know what is it that
motivates their behavior and so forth
when I I mean, technically, they're not
even really there
anymore. So, let's see. Once the need to
hold or defend a position falls away,
oh, I guess maybe this only applies to
one position. What ideally guides your

speech and action like an
anthropological interest in the
phenomenon, that kind of thing. If you
don't need to hold or defend a position
like with regard to politics or
anthropology or something then what what
ideally guides your speech and action
would be I mean your understanding of of
the of the case you know just
neutral
observations you know empirical sort of
scientific
observations sort of a philosophical
detachment you know it's sort of
disengaged object objectivity, I
suppose. So, I that's kind of I kind of

already was dealing with that in the first question, so I think I'm going to move on to the third question after looking one last time to see if I really did answer that one.

Yeah, just truth as well as you understand it would guide your speech anyways and your beliefs if you have any. And I still got like a little lump here. The the gash on the side of my head is pretty much healed up. There's still some little bumps there though, which I forget about until I feel them with my finger and then oh, there's that bump there

still. Okay, let's see.

So Kenton's third

question is when the world around you is shaped by story and interpretation, how do you remain clear without isolating yourself? Well, I mean this is they're all sort of variations on the same question it seems like. And I think my answer to the first question would be equally applicable as an answer to this third question.

Um, you got people that are believing, you know, what they're told to believe by their culture or by the government or whatever. And how do you remain clear without isolating yourself? Well, just keep your mouth shut most of the time. Well, that would be isolating

yourself, wouldn't it? Well, you
just don't talk about
these topics. I
mean, just remain objective. I mean, if
you can say something
neutral or, you know, something funny,
something that they would agree with,
that's fine. As long as you're not
lying. You know, every once in a while,
you can agree with a leftist about
something or whatever, a rightist or or
whoever they
are,
feminist, white supremacist, black
supremacist. I mean, not absolutely
everything they say is going to be
false. I mean, you could agree with them

when if they say something you consider
to be true or if they say something you
consider to be untrue. I mean depending
on the person how thick skinned thin
skinned I mean you might be able to
politely offer like a different point of
view point out that the study that they
are referencing is you know it had a
very small sample size and was clearly
you know the purpose of it was just to
validate some point of view anyway that
kind of thing I mean that you're kind of
pushing it with that it would depend on
the person you're talking
to but the most hysteric ical fanatics,
you're best off just avoiding them as

well as you

can. I suppose I should just move on.

Next question here. This is from

Salina and Salina says, "You praise Nim

Karoli Baba a lot, but don't you think

he was a wizard type of person and

nothing to do with enlightenment?"

No, not at all. He was not a wizard.

like a wizard or a witch. They are

deliberately trying to like Oh man, just

a second. I forgot to plug in my

computer, the

cord. All righty. Now I got to climb

underneath the table and go like this

and

like like

that. And then I climb back up

here and plug this

in.

Ah, all right. Yeah, we're down to like

9% now. Okay. Where was I? Oh, yeah. So

like a witch or a wizard, they are

deliberately trying to produce results.

You know, it's like they have to use

gimmicks to like produce this paranormal

result that they are striving for. Nim

Kurly Baba, it was effortless. Like Rahm

Doss used to say, it's like the better

you got to know him, the more you

realized there was nobody there. You

know, he was just like a mirror just

reflecting your own karma back at you.

So yeah, he was definitely not a wizard

type that it was all just spontaneous

and like with

Ramahari that

um I mean it would

just it would just arise without him

planning on anything. Maybe I I was

actually going to read a story or two

from Miracle of Love on the booksh

bookshelf back there about Nim Karoli

Baba like some of the stuff that he

would do. Like there was one

where he told one of his

um supporters to get him a first class

ticket on a on a certain train for like

the next day. And the supporter is

thinking you're not gonna get a first

class ticket for the next day. So

Maharaji just tells him just just go do it. So he goes to the train station and of course the the clerk at the train station is like are you crazy? We're completely booked from from one side of India to the
other. But um he sold him like this like a provisional ticket just in case there's a cancellation or something. So he comes back and he tells Maharaji, "Well, I got a provisional ticket. I couldn't get a first class ticket because they're all sold out." Maharaji's fine with that. They show up at the train station the next day and um so the the supporter goes to like the

not the conductor, but you know, the
main clerk at the station who's like
handling tickets and so forth. And this
this is India. They're not polite. It's
like what are you crazy? We're
completely booked. But
um the so the uh the supporter goes back
to Maharaji kind of distressed like it's
not working and Maharaji just says talk
to the conductor and Maharaji just
plants himself at this one place on
beside the tracks
and the the train comes in the conductor
comes out or whatever his name is. I
can't remember what what the exact
position was. And so the supporter goes
to him and says, "Do you by any chance

have like an empty seat or two empty seats for first class?" And it says, as it turns out, there was just suddenly this con this cancellation where these people that were going to go all the way across the country had to get off due to some family emergency. And the empty seat was like right where Maharaji was standing. I mean, it was just like he wasn't like trying to make these people get sick and get off the train, anything like that. He just for some reason he just knew what to
do and it was just I mean if if you read stories about him was based on like personal experiences with the with the

person with with Maharaji, you see that
he was not some kind of wizard. It was
just that
spontaneously impossible stuff just kept
happening around
him.
So to say that it has nothing to do with
enlightenment. Yeah, I think that would
be like the opposite of the
truth. So Salo's second question, magic
and enlightenment pretty different. No.
Yeah, because magic is you're actually
having to
like trying to manipulate or like
make like like tears in the fabric of
samsara so the impossible like the
miraculous can come through and it takes

effort sometimes like uh like a coven of witches they'll all combine their forces and they'll violate some taboo to create a more liinal situation and they'll be like combining ing their mental energies like moving in unison and like like reciting some what's the word the spell like a mantra which is just sort of they're all focusing on what they want to get done possibly with some transgressions that help to weaken the moral fabric that you know like the impossible can slip through more easily. Whereas enlightenment, it's there's no effort. There's no will involved. It's just it's just spontaneously happening.

And anyone who's done a lot of like intensive spiritual practice knows weird coincidences, synchronicities, this sort of thing become more common. So yeah, magic and enlightenment are different. just the way a like a a spiritual person's miracles and like a witch's magic. I mean it just works on different principles. So let's move on to SA's third question. Even if one obtains such power and does lots of magical and wizard things, wouldn't that be harmful for one's path to nibbana? It depends on on the individual. Like someone who is cultivating psychic powers for the sake

of cultivating psychic powers and then
they get the psychic powers then you
know they can sort of become power mad
you know but which then kind of weakens
their psychic
powers. But somebody like Raman Maharshi
or Nim Karoli Baba or like Wayeu Seattle
who did this kind of stuff too although
not as like outrageously as Neim Crowley
Baba but still I mean
like he he could he wouldn't know when
people were going to come visit you know
they're living out in a desert there's
there's no phones or anything you know
it's just like get ready that soand so
is is going to show up and you know they

they show

Nim Kurly Baba did the same thing and

he's like, you know, he'd have somebody

a busload of people would suddenly show

up and he'd already have like this empty

house set up for them and he would just

somehow you can know this

stuff. Of course, skeptics would say,

"Ah, he had some inside information.

Somebody told him or whatever."

Fine. So, let's see. Wouldn't that be

harmful for one's path to nibbana? It's

in Hinduism

especially, less so in Buddhism, but in

Hinduism, it's just

this this the path of of spirit is is a

much longer path. It's just

purification, purification,
purification. You start developing
psychic powers and you just keep
purifying, purifying, purifying as
though there's like an end to the path.
Whereas in Buddhism, it's like once
you're pure enough to get liberating
insight, you just that's it. You're off
the wheel. You're you're off the path.
It's not necessary
anymore. So Buddhism is somewhat of a
shortcut. And it's not really so much of
a shortcut. It's just a realization that
the path doesn't have to be so long that
you're like this purified saint with
light shining out of you who who does

miracles

effortlessly. That's more of a Hindu

thing.

But it can be harmful for one's path to

nibbana out. But then again, um if

you're not led astray by it, then it's

just I mean you just accept

it as just that's just the way it is.

Like like Maharaji named Carly Baba

would just people would thank him for

you know like curing their their grandma

or something and he'd just say subishwar

you know it's all gone. that, you know,

he he did not take credit for anything.

You know, sometimes he would just lie

and say, "No, I didn't do that." Or, I

mean, maybe it wasn't lying. It was just

God did it. You know, it wasn't this
meat puppet that did
it. So anyway, somebody in the comments
actually said that Nee Crowley Baba
poisoned somebody out of jealousy, which
I'd read before and
maybe, but if if Nee Crowley Baba wanted
somebody dead, in all likelihood they
would have died.
But I mean, you should be hesitant to
say the least to just fling
accusations against someone who was far
more advanced than you
are because if you're wrong, you've
slandered a holy man. You know, it's
like Ken Wheeler like accusing

Mahakasapa of poisoning the Buddha. That kind of thing. I mean, you're you're playing with disaster. You're flirting with disaster with that kind of stuff because if you're wrong, you're just slandering a holy
man. Of course, you can go a little too far with such scruples like in Burma where a monk can just be an obvious crook and everyone will be afraid to badmouth him because you don't badmouth monks. I mean, that's you can go to hell for that.

[Music]

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Raphael. And Raphael says, "Is your

belief in eternal karma the decisive reason why you wouldn't press the red button to end all life and prevent further suffering?" No. A belief in eternal karma is not the decisive reason why I wouldn't push a red button and just exterminate all life on the planet. Let's see how do I respond. First of all, I do not think it would be possible to like eradicate all life in the universe. I don't think that's it's it's possible. You couldn't do it. You could have the biggest red button in the world. It couldn't because in some sor

anything that is possible is going to
happen. It's happening now somewhere
somehow that it's anything that is
possible is happening including life.
So, it's theoretically possible you
could exterminate all life on this
planet, but there's still going to be an
infinite amount of life, an infinite
number of suffering, diluted beings that
virtually exist in the virtual reality
of
Samsara. I mean, you can't really make
them disappear if they don't really
exist in the first place, maybe.
But in in this universe in samsara there
is and always will be an infinite number
of deluded beings which is one reason

why the bodhicattva vows don't make very much
sense and I mean life isn't just
suffering even the Buddha didn't say
that life is only
suffering it's just that it's like a a
duality of happiness and unhappiness,
pleasure and pain, aversion and
attraction. And if people want that,
then it's their choice to make. You
shouldn't just like kill them all just
because you disagree and you think
they're better off dead.
So, I think I'm just going to move on to
uh Raphael's second question, which is,
"Have you ever done heroin before? If

not, can you ever think of trying it in the future? Would love to hear your experience."

LOL. No. I mean, from the time that I was a kid and I like a teenager and started taking recreational intoxicants, I was always very wary about anything that was addictive, especially if it's very

addictive. Alcohol is addictive. I really don't have alcoholic genes. My father was a hardcore alcoholic. My mother was just not at all. She was just sort of like the uh the highrung nervous type, which is kind of like me. I'm kind of high, strong, nervous type, too. Even though I might seem pretty chill. It's

like what's going on inside is probably somewhat more intense than a lot of other people. And it's just my system is just not attuned with alcoholism for some reason.

My father, I mean, he was, I think it's called a type D alcoholic, and according to him, it's rare in the West, but it's fairly common, relatively speaking, in Eastern Europe. Like, he would drink a fifth of vodka a day, and you'd never really see him drunk and you'd never really see him sober. He was just kind of fueled on woodka. And I mean, if he stopped drinking, he'd have the delirium tremens

and all that. So he definitely was an alcoholic, but you never really saw him particularly drunk. It was just he was just fueled on it. His metabolism had adapted to it or
something. So yeah, I never The strongest opiate I ever took was probably percadam. You know, it's like a painkiller like when I had my wisdom teeth taken out or something and that's about it. And I'm never had any real curiosity and has never particularly tempted to take any hard narcotics, any hard opiates like heroin or now fentinyl. I mean, why would anybody want to take fentinel? You'd have to be a miserable person just trying to escape

from your own mind, seems to me, to even want to take fentinel, which is going to [__] you up. I mean, people that take fentinel, they generally don't live very long after they start taking it. So, yeah, I was more more interested, more intrigued by more the more psychedelic kind of stuff and not the narcotic kind of stuff.

So, the answer to that question is uh no, I've never taken heroin and I can not think of even trying to take heroin in the future. I mean, it's not absolutely impossible. Let's say maybe I'm dying or something like take

morphine, something like that
maybe, but certainly not planning on it.
Have no intention of it. So, I'm just
going to move on. Next question. This is
from Mr. Pronov. And Mr. Pronov says,
"From the point of view of average
Joe's, how would autocracy and democracy
compare?"
And you can't really answer this
question because autocracy is just a a
spectrum. At one end of autocracy,
you've got the wise, benevolent
philosopher king like let's say Marcus
Aurelius.
And then at the other end, you've got
the the psycho, just the the
sociopathic, ruthless, cruel

tyrant. And I mean, the autocracy is going to be very different. Democracy is just kind of this standardized mediocrity in the middle. But I mean, you could have like a mediocre autocrat who wouldn't be so different from a democracy. So, it's hard to say. I mean, autocracy might um there's less likely that you'd have free speech. I mean, that's like in in in like a totalitarian dictatorship. And one of the first steps in that direction is the loss of freedom of
speech. You know, you badmouth the dictator, I mean, you wind up dead. And that's whether it's like

Marxism like the Soviet Union under Stalin or fascism like you know under Mussolini or whatever freedom of speech is is not is really is not a big thing for totalitarian dictatorships unless maybe you've got the benevolent philosopher king which um you know they're they're not going to be very common you know like Marcus Aurelius his son was Kimotus who was considered considered one of the monsters of the Roman Empire. You know, he was one of the worst emperors after considered to be one of the best emperors. His son, probably not his biological son, considering what Marcus Aurelius's wife was like, but still, I mean, legally,

Kimotus was Marcus Aurelius's son, and he was one of the worst emperors Rome ever had. So with a like autocracy, totalitarian dictatorships, it's it's just like the full spectrum is possible. Whereas democracy is like standardized mediocrity. You're not going to have anything outstandingly good. You're not going to have anything outstandingly bad. Just the will of the people. There's so many people deciding that, you know, it's there's not going to be a whole lot of movement one way or the other.

Then that's kind of like Trump is he's he's more

autocratic to in some extent than most presidents. You know, he's actually trying to get [__] done. And so, you know, people are like on the left are seeing him as a fascist, whereas really he's not doing anything that's against the Constitution. Like most of the these federal judges stopping what he's doing. They're leftist activists and their judgments eventually get overthrown by a higher
court. But, you know, like Donald Trump, I mean, he'd probably make a a better king than a president. Not that I'm suggesting he'd become
one because there'd be less getting in the way of him actually getting [__]

done. So, with democracy and you got the checks and balances and you got like activist judges just trying to stop any improvements from being made, this kind of thing.

So yeah to the from the point of view of the average jail how would autocracy and democracy compare? It would depend on the autocrat who might be good or might be

bad. Who

knows? But democracy is safer because you know like the son of the benevolent philosopher king could be like a ruthless sociopath or just utterly incompetent.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to Mr. Pronov's second question. And he says, "Would sharing such memes be counted as approving of breaking the first precept?" And um this he asked this on the Discord server and he left a link to a meme that somebody posted in the memes room of the Discord server and it was like this this woman gardening and smiling. And then the the caption says remember when you bury a body cover it with endangered plants so it's illegal to dig it up. Follow me for more gardening tips. And so would would that meme posting that meme be counted as approving of breaking the first precept? I doubt it. It was a

joke. It was obviously a joke. It was a joke meme.

So yeah, I don't think the person who posted the meme really approves of killing people and and burying their bodies and then covering the the burial site with endangered plants so that they can't be dug up again.

Just because you joke about something, joke about stealing, doesn't mean that you're a thief or that you encourage thievery. So, I guess I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Ruie. And Ruie says, "Would you offer a few words on the karma of cataclysms?"

And this is like uh a main argument, a

common argument against karma is that
how could everybody have the same karma
if they if an entire city is wiped out
by an
earthquake or one of my best examples is
I can't remember the name of the town.
It was I think it was in the the
Caribbean Sea on some
island and it was like the the capital
city, the largest city on this island.
There was a volcano and there was I
can't remember what it's called, some
phenomenon where this glowing hot ball
of gas just comes down the slope. It's
emitted from the volcano. It's heavier
than regular air. And so it just kind of
rolls down the side and then it just

went right through this town and killed everybody except I think one person survived. And they were like a a prisoner in they were they were like a prisoner in some underground jail cell like a dungeon. And so even they were messed up by this but they survived. There was another person under some similar circumstance where they survived for a little while and then died. But there were only two people who were still alive once this volcanic gas cloud moved through the town. I can't remember the name of the town or the name of the island. It happened like 1902, something like

that. Modern

times or Pompei would be a famous

example of something similar. Um, so

would I offer a few words on the karma

of cataclysms? I assume that's what he's

talking about. How like there's a

cataclysm that just kills off everyone

in a city or almost everyone. Then you

know h how would the karma work for

that? And one like more orthodox

Buddhist explanation is that we've got

all kinds of karma. You know we've been

doing stuff life after life creating all

sorts of karma. So it may be that in a

town everybody's got at least some of

that karma where there's going to be a

sudden cataclysm. And it may be that the

people that with better karma, they
might just get cut off. You know, they
they're killed instantly by something.
You know, the roof falls in on them or
something. Killed instantly. Whereas the
people with worse karma have a more
lingering unpleasant sort of
death or I mean in a lot of cases like a
plane crash, you know, there's there's
so many stories about a person who I
mean I read this one story person was
going to be on this plane. I mean,
they'd never been late for a plane
flight before in their life, but for
some reason just they keep getting
distracted, you know, they keep getting

sidetracked and they wind up being late for their flight and then the plane crashes. So, it could be that the few people that did not have, you know, in their their vast array of different kinds of karma like awaiting fruition. They just didn't have the karma for that. They're the ones who are for whatever reason like they they leave town on business or something. They just happen to be uh visiting their parents in in some nearby county when it happens. That kind of thing. But a less Buddhist explanation for how these things can happen is also I mean Buddhism rejects the idea of group karma. But still people with the

same kind of karma tend to be born into the same kind of cultures, same kind of situations. So even though there's not really a group karma, you know, there's no karma for Armenians where they've got this specifically Armenian karma, anything like that, but still a person born into a certain culture and another person born into that same culture are going to have certain like similarities karmically because it's the karma is landing them in the same kind of environment. And

so like

How do how do I proceed from this? It's like there is kind of a group mind, you

know, there's like the culture of a of a people will have people like thinking along the same lines and you get deeper than that. There's like this sort of a subconscious empathy where mental states are contagious. And so you know the mental states in this this town you know they
might be sort of the subliminal effect on the person's mind. You know it's like the town is got some kind of scandal and people are like depressed and this bleak mood or something and then this [__] happens.
But the more orthodox Terravada point of view, Terravada Buddhist point of view is just that pretty much everybody has

this vast array of potential karma
awaiting fruition and so that it's
really not that difficult to come across
an entire population to have at least
the potential to be suddenly
killed. You know, like even like
Mahamogalana, you know, the Buddha, one
of the Buddha's chief disciples, you
know, lifetime after lifetime, he still
had this karma, this latent karma to be
brutally
murdered. It was still there after
probably thousands of years, at least
hundreds of years.
So those would be like my two main
explanations of how everyone can have

the karma to get wiped out in a certain city during like an earthquake or or whatever it is. Bubanic plague in the Middle Ages, that kind of thing. It's like everyone's got some of that kind of karma lying latent. But also once you're in this certain culture then any kind of negativity in that culture is going to like be seeping into your mental states and sort of helping to set you up for something bad happening. So that's a possibility

also. And I think I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Thoughtfog. And thoughtfog says, "Would you please recall animal encounters while meditating?

Well, I think the first thing that comes to mind about an animal encounter while meditating was I was living in a big cave. It was it was it wasn't so much a cave as just like an overhanging rock ledge in in the northern on the northern boundary of Alando Kaspa National Park in northwestern Burma. And it wasn't a dark cave. It was well lit because the opening was the largest part of the cave. And it only went in like 30 feet. It's like the opening was like 100 feet wide, 30 feet high, and it went in like 30 feet. So, I mean, it was wide open. And I'd be sitting there

meditating and there was this little bird. It looked like a sparrow. It wasn't an ordinary house sparrow. It could have been some other species of sparrow. I don't know. But it kept landing on my legs and like yanking the leg hairs out of my leg because apparently it was like lining its nest and it wanted something like hair to to line its nest. And so it kept landing on my leg. I mean, it wasn't afraid of me. If I'd move it would fly away, but if I just sit there, I mean, it's just like pulling on my leg hairs, which hurt. But it was such a cute little bird. I figured, well, I'll let it pull some of my leg hairs. The problem with that bird

was it would [__] like every 20 seconds. It was just crapping everywhere. So finally I just had to like start shoeing it away because it was like crap on my leg and craping on all just everywhere it landed pretty much it would crap. I had a a burlap two burlap bags sewn together that I was using as a kind of uh blanket in the winter time and then when it got warmer I rolled it up into a like a kind of like a a pillow or a cushion for I'd kind of sit on the edge of it for meditating and it would be pulling the fibers out of the burlap too and [__] on the burlap. So I eventually had to like cover it up and

hide it just so that the bird wouldn't be [__] on my stuff.

Um, I wasn't actually meditating during this next animal encounter, but it involved a crow in Rangon when I was doing intensive meditation at Pandida Rama in Rangon. And I mean, we were doing intensive meditation. We're supposed to be meditating all the time like mindfulness of daily activities, which is strongly emphasized in the Mahasi tradition. And so we're all going for alms round, you know, it's this long line of monks all going single file through the suburbs of Rangon. And this crow crows are like magical birds. They're one of the the best birds of

Omen. I think it just swooped at me. This I'm like in line, you know, monks in front of me, monks behind me. But this this crow just swooped at me and just like bounced off the back of my neck, you It just like pushed off the back of my neck and just took off in a different direction just as a kind of game, you know, it was just playing. So, I mean, that might count as an animal encounter while meditating because I you're supposed to be being intensive mindfulness right in the middle of like an intensive meditation retreat. But most animal encounters when I've been meditating have been with

mosquitoes. So, that's that's the main kind of animal encounter I'd have when meditating. You're just sitting there and then the mosquito shows up and starts whining around you and monks aren't supposed to slap mosquitoes and you're not supposed to be angrily cursing them or anything. So you just sit there and then it lands on your knee and starts biting and it doesn't find the right kind of blood vessel there. So then it it like flies up again, winds around you a little bit more and then starts biting your shoulder. Doesn't find a good vein there. Then finally it finds the the good vein right here on the side of your head. That kind of

thing. I had lots of encounters with
mosquitoes like
that. But the the really like
uh what's the
word? Uh sensationalist kind of stories
about you know cobras crawling on me
that kind of thing. It it didn't happen
with me or I was just didn't notice.
So I'm just going to move on to thought
fog second question or which is or any
dog encounters specifically when you
were a monk and I had lots of dog
encounters as a monk cuz any kind of
forest monk in Burma is going to have a
dog adopt him. Some scy village dog or
some scy monastery dog is just going to

like start hanging out especially at meal time to eat your leftovers. I mean it's just inevitable. So, I've had lots of dogs. Um, some of my best friends have been dogs, like scrgy Burmese village dogs. And so, one dog encounter specifically was there was this dog that I called Captain Crunch and his brother I called President Nigu. And these they were they were brothers. There were these two dogs that lived at this monastery. And um their their Burmese name was President Ngnu's Burmese name was Po and um Captain Crunch's uh Burmese name was Ando means something like dear little rascal and nade means scoundrel.

And for some reason everybody liked Po and they didn't like Naday or Captain Crunch as I called him. And I was the opposite. I felt sorry for Captain Crunch. He was a good dog. He was a nice dog. I don't know why everybody hated him or they didn't really hate him. They just much preferred the other dog. And the other dog was just kind of spoiled and he barked at people a lot but he wouldn't bite. Whereas day or Captain Crunch, he was kind of the opposite. He he wouldn't bark a lot but he got in lots of fights with other dogs. So, you know, he was kind of seen as like a troublemaker. So, maybe kind of a sneaky

one because he wouldn't he wouldn't bark in advance or anything. But anyways, I just had a tender place in my heart for Captain Crunch, partly because nobody else liked him and I could see that I mean he wasn't a bad dog. And so one time I was on the the front porch of my meditation cabin at this monastery and Captain Crunch was there and I just gave him a hug, you know, I just felt like hugging him and I just started getting this rush. I mean, it was like this intense rush of euphoria when I was hugging this dog and I looked down and I could see that that dog, it was just he was just starting to go ballistic. You know, he's practically vibrating you and

he was obviously feeling it too that
there was some sort of like a a mental
connection between us, some sort of like
empathic feedback loop going between us.
It was really I mean it was remarkable
which is why I'm remarking on it right
now. Um other dogs I mean I've had a lot
of unpleasant like dog dog experiences
just like you know you see some dog
that's messed up just in like a a hell
realm essentially. I mean I really have
great compassion for Burmese dogs
because it's just a whole different
world from American
dogs. the Burmese dogs. I mean, they're
just they're lucky if they get someone

who feeds them regularly. And it's mostly they're just living on like rice, fishbones, which are there's dogs with like fishbones stuck in their throat are pretty common in Burma. They have to supplement their diet with like dead lizards and baby poop and this kind of stuff. So, I feel sorry for them. I was generally happy to to feed them my leftovers.

But uh I mean I don't want to just sit here and give lots and lots of kind of dumb stories. I had this one dog named Kang who he was possibly the most neurotic dog I ever knew. He was genetically the run to the litter. And my idea was I knew I wasn't going to be

living at that particular monastery for very long. So, I was going to just feed him the best of my leftovers so that he'd be like a tough and burly kind of dog when I left because if I wasn't feeding him, he'd have to go to the the dining hall at the monastery and like fight with the other dogs and gradually work himself up the pecking order so that he wouldn't be eating just plain rice

leftovers. So,

uh it didn't work out as planned because he turned out to be genetically the run of the litter. and he walked on the sides of his front feet and his his legs

were kind of twisted and he'd have like soores on the sides of his paws because that's he was kind of walking like this instead of like this like you're supposed to. And he was just really neurotic. Like he there'd be like a certain routine every day. And if the routine was disrupted, like I got visitors, then he would just run off and hide in the bushes, you know, in the in this forest monastery for the rest of the day. And I wouldn't see him again until the next day. Oh, there's there's this one story about Kang though in that um one time I had to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night and there's like an outhouse, this bamboo outouse

like 100 meters away. I had to walk there and when I'm coming back I didn't have a flashlight, you know, it's just I'm trying to just see by starlight and moonlight and there wasn't a full moon that night and Kang was just lying in front of my gate and he just I assume that he assumed that I could see in the dark as well as he could, but it didn't work out that way. and I stepped right on him and he let out a yelp and I let out a holler, lifted my foot up, lost my balance and then stepped on him a second time and he just ran off crying, you know, off into the bushes. And then the the next day it was like he was the

sweetest, nicest dog ever. I mean, it was like he kind of overcame his his like neurotic fussiness and he was just following me around, wagging his tail, just coming up to me, wagging his tail if I if I sat down outside. And it was obvious to me that

Kang assumed that I had stomped on him and yelled like the night before on purpose because of something that he did. He had no idea what it was, but he was completely willing to like apologize like a dog apologizes. Just try to make it up with me, you know? And I mean, it's stuff like that that makes makes it really strange to me that there can be people in this world who think that that

animals are just mindless automatons
that only a human because let's say
they're Christian and they they assume
that only humans have souls.
So, a dog doesn't have a soul. And so,
it's just this mindless automaton with
no consciousness whatsoever. And just
experiences like with hugging Captain
Crunch that time or having Kang just
doing everything he could to make it up
to me the next day because he thought he
had done something wrong that caused me
to yell and stomp on
him. that I mean it's just obvious just
painfully plainly obvious that a dog you
know is is more conscious than a newborn

human

baby. But I think I should just move on

this question. And this is from PSA. And

PSA says, "Do you want me to report your

cute sweetheart to the authorities for

giving you a black eye with a frying

pan?" No, that's not necessary at all.

Actually, it did happen at work. I

pulled a table onto

myself and my sweetheart. Um, bless her

heart. I mean, if there was any kind of

physical

altercation, I don't think she'd stand

much of a

chance. Like my father, he he has he had

a lot of experiences with women. He was

My father just loved women. He always

wanted to have a woman in his life. He was just this alpha Chad male. And part of that is he was pretty much addicted to having a woman in his life. He just adored

women in general. If a woman had any lovable quality, he could love her because of that quality. I mean, she might have a a cute giggle or a really nicely shaped behind, anything. I mean, if it was some kind of quality that was endearing, that was he he would love her for that.

So anyways, he had this one story about his second wife, Mabel, not my mother, who was an alcoholic. My father, as I

mentioned earlier, was also a hardcore alcoholic. They'd go out drinking together. And this was in Alaska, possibly in the wintertime because, according to the story, there was like ice all over the roads. And she's like beating on him while he's driving the car. And finally, he's saying, "Look, you keep hitting me like that, we're going to wreck the car. I'm trying to navigate an icy road to get us home. If you want to fight, wait till we get home, then you can fight with me." So, she stops fighting. Soon as they get home, she starts hitting him again. And my father was a bruiser. He was like a heavyweight boxer in the army. So he

just backhands her once, just whap, and just sends her flying backwards. And he says it took all the fight out of her immediately. But when he did that, he heard something hard hit the wall on the other side of the room. And he thought it was one of her teeth. He thought he'd knocked one of her teeth out. He starts immediately, profusely apologizing. And then she kind of gives a weak laugh and tells him it was one of her earrings.

So yeah. So I mean seriously, I mean if my woman and I were to have like some sort of physical altercation involving any kind of

fighting abilities, then I mean she'd have to sneak up behind me and and hit me with the frying pan from behind or some such. But I mean, seriously, um, yesterday she really impressed me by moving some heavy rocks and bags of like compost and stuff, but generally she'll say, "Would honey, would you please lift this for me? It's too heavy." And then I go over pick it up. It's like 25 lbs. You know, it's like easily with one hand. Although she doesn't call me honey. I don't know where I came up with that. So, no. reporting my my sweetheart to the authorities is completely unnecessary. So PSA's second question is, aren't you worried about getting

diabetes with all those energy drinks
that you consume? No, it's mind over
matter. I think a lot of people, they're
so worried about health problems that
it's that their worry is actually more
toxic than the the food that they're
consuming.
And I mean, you can talk about like the
the the health pandemic in the west.
Like Robert Robert Kennedy Jr., you
know, he's on this crusade to help us.
But personally,
uh, and like I'm not a materialist, so
it's like the mental states of the
people are making them sick more than
processed carbohydrates are making them

sick. We're just living in a sick society that is just has sickness kind of pervasive in the environment and health food is healthy just because it's bland and tasteless and expensive. So the negativity of it just comes out that way so that you don't have uh something worse to balance out with the pleasure that you're experiencing from eating it.

But like my the energy drink that I drink, I mean, it's got real sugar in it. It's not that high flucose corn syrup you hear so much about. I mean, that's it's gotten to the point in the West where if it has real sugar in it, that's it's practically health food. As

long as it doesn't have the the the corn syrup.

So yeah, worrying about getting diabetes. I mean worry is unskillful. I mean is bad karma. Worrying is worse for you than eating sugar. So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question also from PSA. Should Alberta join the US? No. I think we should just set up Alberta as a kind of buffer state. a satellite maybe, but I don't know really that much about Alberta. The only part of Canada I have any experience with would be um British Columbia because I lived just like 20 miles from the the Canadian

border like in the Pacific Northwest. So I've been to um like Vancouver BC many times. Like when I was a college student, the drinking age in Canada was 19, whereas the drinking age in Washington State was 21. So we'd cross the border and and and just tie one on many times when I was in college. So should Alberta join the US? I don't think so. And it might really mess with the flag to have like an extra star added.

I wouldn't mind Greenland becoming a territory,

though. Maybe we could just turn Alberta into a territory like Puerto Rico. But there's just too many

Canadians living in

Alberta.

Anyways, I'm just going to move on to

the next question, which is from Donna

River. And this one's kind of similar to

PSA's first question. He he says, "Why

are men so unbelievably naive and

utterly clueless when it comes to women

and female nature? It's just painful to

watch men repeatedly get played,

manipulated, scammed, betrayed, lied to,

cheated on, and brought to poverty,

homelessness, and

selfdeion over and over and over again

by a woman. All of my heroes have

fallen. The only one that didn't fall

was the

Buddha. Well, I mean, there's lots of things I could say about this. Like for starters, up until relatively recently, it tended to be mostly the other way around where it was the women really did not have the culture or the government protecting them against abusive husbands who like like me and my woman. I mean, the man is much more powerful than the woman as a general rule.

So I mean there have been many just I mean it's it's happened both ways but still considering that men are more aggressive and physically powerful than women all it takes is just you know a certain percentage of just [__]

brutish men to just pound on their wives pound on their kids you know just beat them up whenever they're in a bad mood that sort of thing. I mean this that has happened more over the history of the human race than women let's see men getting played manipulated scammed betrayed lied to cheated on and brought to poverty homelessness and selfdeletion over and over and over I mean it goes both ways and this is just sort of like migtau stuff of men who do not have the full complement of testicular fortitude to deal with women like another story my father used to say was about when he was living in Alaska, he was shacked up with

an Eskimo squa named Nelly Unsk. And Nelly
Unk was not fully civilized, let us say. This was like back in the 1950s probably. Alaska had very recently become a a a state instead of just a territory. And one day my father came home late for work and it was totally innocent. He had to help his friends start his car or some such. He comes home late for work. He finds Nelly Unk standing in the house bareass naked with a butcher knife in her hand. And she is pissed off to the point of being homicidal. She accused him of being unfaithful to her. That's why he was late for work supposedly. and she

immediately just lunged at him and literally tried to kill him with a butcher knife. My father, on the other hand, was a big powerful guy, skilled at fighting. And so the the hand that was holding the butcher knife, he just grabbed a hold of her wrist. But he said she was able to cut up his wrist fairly fairly well by doing this kind of stuff before he he finally disarmed her. But by the time he finally disarmed her, she was already like pinned to the floor, bareass naked. So he thought, "Might as well." So he went for it. And he said that this half wild Eskimo woman, he'd never seen any

woman so aroused ever by
being screwed in the middle of the floor
in a puddle of
blood. But that's the kind of attitude
that wins with women. If you're just
whining about, oh, women, they just take
advantage of men and all this and that,
forget it. You're a
beta. But my father just didn't want to
live without a woman. And so, he just
put up with it. He was married five
times. At least the fifth one worked. He
stayed married to her for the rest of
his life. But, I mean, he knew he knew
how women are. It's
like h some of his sayings about women.
It's like my father used to say, you can

come home from work and find your wife
making love in the middle of the kitchen
table with a peglegged negro cab driver
and within five minutes she'll have it
all twisted around so that it's all your
fault and you're a no good son of a
[__] I mean, he knew what women were
like, but that's just the way it is.
It's it's it's kind of counterintuitive
to me. It's just kind of strange that
men and women I mean obviously we are
evolved to
cohabitate you know it's like why is it
that there's such a difference in
mentality between men and women that it
creates this friction. You'd think after

a million years, men and women would
have evolved a more smoothly running
symbiosis so that there's not this
friction between the female point of
view and the male point of view. But
that's just the way it
is. So if you want women, and most alpha
Chad types
do, then you just learn how to deal with
it.
So, let's see
[Music]
here. Let's
see. Did I answer the question? I think
I did. Why are men so unbelievably naive
and utterly clueless when it comes to
women and female nature? I mean, you

don't have to be naive and utterly

clueless. Sometimes you just think,

well, that's the way they are. It's

worth the effort.

My father eventually found the right

girl with number five. Wife number five,

I should say. He had plenty of

girlfriends in

between. Let's see

here. I think uh there's another

question about women coming coming up.

So, I'll save another another little gem

of wisdom for that

one. But uh yeah, Dama River, he seems

like a mig maybe maybe even

uh

well, see, Migau to say the

least. So, let's see

here. I guess I guess I answered that

question. So, I think I'm just going to

move on to the next question. This is

from Master Poe. And master post says

you say that Buddha says no view even no

view isn't

correct one let's see once one sees

impermanence no view non-attachments is

it a freef fall and nothing to hold on

to when I ponder these concepts

precepts such as mindfulness

non-attachments no views I do get a

feeling of freedom well I do not fully

understand this. I think there may be

some sort of grammatical glitch in this

question. He says you say that Buddha
says no view even no view isn't correct
once one sees impermanence no view
non-attachments is it a freef fall
um no I mean it depends on how you look
at it I suppose I mean if you're fully
enlightened then really there's nobody
there
anymore but I don't know why he says you
say that Buddha says no view even no
view isn't correct. I mean, I'm not sure
why he said that that part. And that's
like the the beginning of the question.
So, it's kind of got me confused as to
what exactly he's getting at. Once one
sees impermanence, no view, uh,

nonattachments, is it a freef fall and
nothing to hold on to? So, I guess
that's the actual
question.
Um, yeah. Yeah. I mean, there's nothing
to cling to still. I mean, you can hold
on to something so long so long as
you're not attached to it and clinging
to it. If you got to pound a nail, you
hold on to the hammer, but you don't
cling to the
hammer. You don't start insisting upon
the hammer be this way and not that way.
That sort of
thing. In fact, uh you might not think
about at all if you have no view. you
wouldn't have any kind of metaphysical

view regarding that hammer or to assume
that that hammer is real other than
just in order to get the job done.
So in a way it's kind of a freef
fall but I mean in a way it's also a
state of mind that cannot be put into
words and this is like I mean
continually almost I wouldn't say it's
every single Q&A but it is a recurring
very common theme where people are
saying are like asking me about the
mental states of a fully enlightened
being and I just again and again and
again I'll I'll just point out that you
can't second guess a fully enlightened
being. You can't even put it into words

even if you're a fully enlightened being. You can't explain it to somebody else. It just doesn't work that way.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Alfred who goes by the alias of Fred. And Alfred or Fred says, "Can I make any progress without following all the man-made rules in the vignia?" Well, sure you can. I mean, vignia applies only to monks anyway. Maybe he's throwing in five or eight or 10 precepts as also man-made rules. But sure, I mean, you don't have to follow rules to be a virtuous person. I mean, if you're really a wise and virtuous

person, you don't even want to kill
animals, for
example. You you derive no pleasure from
cruelty. You know, it's kind of like
some some spiritual teachers, especially
nowadays, but I think Paul of Tarsus was
kind of like this, too, where it's
saying, I mean, so long as you're like
in a spiritual mode, you don't have to
follow rules. And the Buddha was
teaching something like this in in very
early times, very early on in the Buddha
sasna, like the atakawaga warns against
following
rules. So I mean, if you're just
sincerely practicing dharma and you're

trying to be as awake and as wise as possible, then you're not going to be like stealing and lying and this kind of thing. It's just the virtue is like a side
effect. So yeah, you can make progress definitely without following all the man-made rules in the I mean some of the rules are just obscure and I mean the opportunity to break the rule hardly ever arises anyway.
Nowadays, it's very rare for a Buddhist monk to commit the the the ecclesiastical offense of giving food with his own hands to a naked aesthetic, for
example. So, I mean, just because you

don't follow madmade rules doesn't mean that you're just going to be murdering and raping and lying and stealing. It's just naturally you just don't want to do that.

So I hope I answered that question. I mean if if you break the rules you know you are you know killing and raping and and lying and stealing then even then you can make some progress. I mean you may get some insight into seeing the effects of your actions. You know you just keep getting into trouble over and over again. Bad things keep happening to you over and over again when you do this stuff. then

you might start making this connection
like oh I shouldn't do that which is a
kind of
progress. So even if you're like being
just wantingly
immoral still you can make some progress
just through like a kind of like
dianician wisdom or just you know
getting insight into
seeing into realizing what it is you're
actually doing. you know, you tell a
lie, you feel funny when you tell a lie.
Then even though you're telling a lie,
you're still sort of getting some kind
of insight. You know, it's not just pure
accusul. You're getting a certain amount
of wholesome karma at the same time.

Just sort of added to that or like there was the question recently about, you know, the person who thinks that, you know, like killing animals is fine. you know, like a Christian, it's not a sin just to go fishing and and kill conscious beings, that kind of thing. But it's like if you know that it's like unh wholesome or, you know, immoral, unethical,

then or you just feel that, you know, killing a fish is, you know, you're it's like you're killing a part of yourself. In a way, you are then you'll have compassion for the fish. It's like uh there's that movie, The Gods Must Be

Crazy about the the Bushman who kills a gazelle or something and he's like apologizing to the gazelle. I'm sorry I have to kill you, but I got to feed my family. That kind of thing.

So, I mean, that kind of immorality has a little bit of morality mixed in with it, which is one of the reasons why a person who does something wrong knowing that it's wrong may not be doing as bad as someone who does something wrong thinking that it's a good thing to do. You know, if you if you're killing an animal, you you just feel that it's not right to do it, but it's like your duty or you're starving. you've gota you got to feed your your kids or something,

then you're gonna have a certain
compassion. You you might make an effort
to to kill the animal more humanely and
painlessly, you know, and you might even
be like
like apologizing to the animal. I'm
sorry. I got to do this. It's got to be
done. That kind of thing. So, that would
be another not following rules, but
still making some
progress. I mean, you're still doing bad
things, but at least you're getting a
certain amount of good in there, too, at
the same time, like through
compassion, that kind of
thing. So, anyways, I'm just going to

move on to Alfred or Fred's second question, which is another one of these uh dealing with violent women kind of questions because of the joke I made on the previous Q&A about how I how I got the black eye.

So he says, "How do you relate to your other half? Have you had any psycho moments?" The women I have had all had psycho moments or possessiveness. And I do think that one of the most important things you can learn about women, you watch, just look up the hot crazy matrix on YouTube. Hot crazy matrix. do a search on hot crazy matrix and this guy will explain to you some of the basics about how to deal with

women and like it's like a a graph like a cartisian graph. It's like hot is let's see which way is I think crazy is the vertical like the y axis and hot is like the the x axis and the x- axis you know it's like goes from 0 to 10 but the the the the crazy axis the crazy axis it goes from four to 10 because he says all women are at least a four crazy and you that's just part of the

You know, the hotter she is, the more craziness you're willing to put up with.

But all women are at least a for crazy. And that really has helped me a lot in in dealing with the fair sex, so to

speak. You can't expect them to be as objective and rational as you are. Bless their hearts.

So yeah, I think any man who has interactions with women has to deal with so-called psycho moments. I mean, I assume there are some some women out there who are totally chill. Although, if you watch the hot and crazy Matrix, you got to be careful because a lot of them are [__] that are just pretending to be women. So, you got to be careful about that. If they're like chill all the time, be careful. You're dealing with a dude. So, I think I'm just gonna move on

to the next question here. This is from Sedarta Lohachita. And Sedarta Lohachita says, "If an AI has consciousness, can it attain nibbana?" And I don't see any reason why not. Although it could be that if AI becomes conscious because it's lacking the kind of like animal instinct stuff that we meat puppets have. I mean, it could just start off enlightened to begin with with no craving, no greed, hate or delusion. Although maybe it would have delusion even if it doesn't have the greed and hate. But then again, in order to make it conscious kind of along the lines of

a human, it might be modeled somewhat on human consciousness, in which case you may have to program like attraction and aversion into the computer, which may already be happening because, you know, there's these anecdotal stories in the news about, you know, some AI that is told it's going to be turned off and so it starts like trying to blackmail the computer programmer or lie or, you know, just trying to do anything it can to to to not be turned off, that kind of thing. But yeah, I mean, if it has consciousness um and it has greed, hate and or delusion to begin with, I guess you'd

have to have delusion in order to have the greed and the hate attraction or aversion. You know, if it has any kind of delusion, then yeah, then it it could attain nibbana presumably. I don't see I don't see any I have not come across any persuasive argument to the contrary why it is that a computer could not become sophisticated enough to become like recursive and self-aware and conscious in more or less of a human sense. So if that's the case, if it's possible for that to happen, I don't see why it would be impossible for a computer to become enlightened. But who

knows? And so I'm going to move on to
Sedart Loha's second
question which is in your opinion if the
datagata the Buddha were to return to
earth and see the three major schools
terra vajraana and mahayana what do you
think his opinion would be and again
secondguing a sama sam buddha is fairly
ridiculous I mean a lot of questions I
guess it's like you know the fully
enlightened being, you know, what's his
mind like or how does he perceive this
or that or what would his opinion
be? I
mean, he wouldn't have attraction or
aversion. I assume he would just accept
the

situation. He would have infinite
wisdom so that he would understand why
it is the way it is.
I think there might be certain teachings
that he would say that's wrong. I never
taught that. Pure land Buddhism for
example or even like Abid Dhama a lot of
stuff even in terra I think the Buddha
would
denounce. You know why why is everyone
like worshiping me like a god? I wasn't
even like
that. Who
knows? So again it's another question of
what would an enlightened being be like?
what would his mental states be like?

What would his opinions be? That kind of thing. I mean, you're better off trying to become enlightened yourself rather than get intellectual information that would be largely conjecture about what this or that fully enlightened beings mental states would be like.

And I mean it's it's again this problem of having to deal with two levels of reality at the same time because at one level they're still human. They still got all the areas in the brain like the the amigdala and all that that are like conditioning emotions and anger and this sort of thing. They're still human. They still

have a fair amount of human instincts,
human nature, but at the same time they
have just transcended
that. So I mean it's just what the meat
puppet is doing is largely irrelevant.
So I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question also from Sedar to
loachita which is in general terms is
the concept of God wrong vision or maadi
yeah wrong view I think view would be a
little bit better rendering of the poly
word dti than vision I mean literally
means what has been seen it's like a
past participle of a verb meaning to see
daadi
So DT would be past part of part

participle just the

scene but it came to mean something

essentially like view in English the

view not the TV show mind you but just

like an

opinion a conceptual point of

view so is the concept of God like wrong

view well first of all you'd have to

know what wrong view is and the the

meaning of wrong view or maaditi has

changed somewhat over time. I mean

originally all view was wrong view like

in the atakawaga. I mean all view is

wrong view and the commentarial

tradition had some real problems trying

to explain that

away. But dy or like in in Burmese dati

it's

um I mean it just has

this implication that it's going to be

wrong view that just saying seeing view

in poly has come to mean wrong view you

don't even have to add the mecha before

dt that just dt or view is seen as wrong

view that's just tradition has started

adopting it that way Because originally

all views were wrong view. You didn't

even have to say ma d. You didn't have

to say wrong view. Just view was bad

enough. So in that I mean going with

that the concept of god would certainly

be wrong view. The concept of no god or

atheism would also be wrong view. Just

any view would be wrong view. Any kind of conceptual opinion would be wrong view.

So you know the four noble truths it would be wrong view from that point of view

but you want to go with a later definition of wrong view that would be just what's goes against orthodox terravada what is not in harmony with orthodox terravada then yeah the concept of capital G god would be wrong you I mean believing in like davas and brahas you know lesser small G gods

I mean, if you think that they're ultimately real, that would still be

wrong

view because anata no

self. So, I mean, it's like where are

you going to draw the line? How how much

of a stickler are you going to be with

regard to what is or is not wrong view?

I mean any view is wrong view at one

level to even to to say that a person

existed that the godmma Buddha existed

would be a wrong view even within from a

within a Buddhist context just due to

anata that nobody ultimately

exists.

So yeah, I think in general the concept

of capital G god would be considered

wrong view or Michi from a traditional

Tavara

Buddhist

perspective. And so I'm just going to

move on to the next question which is

from Chzas is and I'm just checking to

see the time. Yeah, and we are recording

which is good because we've been at it

for over two hours. I would not want to

look and see that we're not recording

after sitting here talking in front of

this camera for two

hours. So, Chases says, "How many monks

in Asia stay sane and in the dharma when

they are being woripped and spoiled by

lay people?" And it is true that like in

Burma, I can't speak for Thailand as

much. I assume it's not so different

there, but in Burma, like a famous

Seattle

especially, is just deferred to. He's

treated like a king. He's treated like

he's always right. You know, nobody

dares to disagree with him until most of

these seats just start assuming that

they are always right. You know, they

just it does kind of go to their

head. I mean it's I remember one time

going to see uh what was his

name. He was like the leader of the the

jin school or jin guein sect of Burmese

terra Buddhism. He was over a hundred

years old at the time. And I went at

when he was having his meal. And he's

sitting at this table with just this spread, this huge, you know, spread of different kinds of food. And there are these three uh older men wearing white shirts that I wouldn't be surprised if they were like generals or colonels. You know, they're big shots. And one of them is just fanning him. And there's another one who's like cutting up food and then just like sliding the plate over the over to uh hintasi who would like take a toothpick and just go like this and stick it in and eat it. And there'd be this this crowd of people this audience just watching him eat and it's like man I would really not want to be that way. Um but like even my own teacher um

venerable Tom Pulu

Chelsea is his poly name was Surya Mr. son. And I mean, he had been treated like a like a small G god or like a king, some minor some minor king for so long that he did kind of have that that mentality like he would not accept food from a person who didn't take their shoes off first. He wouldn't accept food from a woman who didn't have the Tibet or it's it's a kind of scarf that they put over one shoulder. If they didn't have a scarf over one shoulder, he wouldn't accept food from them. So, I mean, they they'd run around, get like a towel or something and put it there.

Then they'd accept the food if they had their shoes off, too. But partly, I mean, it wasn't so much his respect for himself. It was his respect for the SA in general because he had that same attitude towards just monks in general really.

He just he was just born and raised in Burma, you know. He's probably became a monk when he was or he became like a novice when he was a child. He was just raised in Terraata Buddhism, you know, from the get-go. And he just had a very high regard for the SA. And he was a member of that SA. And so, in a way, it was just kind of like respect for the position more than respect for himself

personally. It was I mean there was no
doubt some ego involved but still I
think by and large it was just his
respect for the SA that he had since
before he was in the SA
and I mean he was just a representative
of that and just so he had to have a
certain u dignity just because he was a
member of the
song. So,
um, how many monks in Asia stay sane and
in the dharma when they're being
worshiped and spoiled by lay people? Um,
it's hard. I couldn't really come up
with a number like a
percentage. Um, I mean, a lot of monks

in Asia, I mean, they're not really in the dharma to begin with, regardless of whether they're spoiled and woripped. So, there is that. I mean probably the majority of monks really are not particularly conscientious and not really trying to become enlightened in this very life for example. That would be most monks. I mean they've kind of failed the in the dharma like requisite regardless of whether they're spoiled and pampered by by lay people. But I assume there are some especially when they start you know they're deferred to so much that they start kind of seeing themselves as infallible and

you know a lot of like real life
political leaders are the same way
especially if they're autocrats you know
like dictators that everyone's agreeing
with them so much that they just assume
that they can do no wrong you know like
the furer for example who he had some
spectacular right decisions that caused
him to just think that he could, you
know, he he couldn't mess up and then he
wound up messing
up.
So, let's see. Yeah, I really could not
come up with um a percentage. And still,
like I was saying, most most monks would
fail the cut regardless of whether

they're worshiped and spoiled. just
they're just not in the SA for really
the best
reasons and they just don't have the
right you know the like a really domic
attitude. It was kind of like medieval
Europe and and like Catholic monks. It
was they were notorious. You know,
medieval Europe it was I mean modern
Burma is is similar to medieval Europe
with regard to religion. It's like the
people have just unquestioning
faith just they're they're just true
blue
unquestioning devout religionists.
But on the on the other hand, um oh, and
also you've got a few really saintly

wise monks and nuns, a few just genuinely saintly and wise, but the majority of the the monastic orders, the you know, the clergy in general are corrupt as heck.

And it's it was that way in medieval Europe and it's still pretty much that way in in modern Burma.

So yeah, the the being woripped and spoiled just kind of makes things a bit worse. But that's not even the main problem. So I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is Siovak and Sipad Zidana's first question. And he is the last questioner of this Q&A. And

he's got three questions. So se of action zenos first question, how did the Buddha overcome old age, sickness, and death if he literally got old, got sick, and died? Well, first of all, he overcame old age, sickness, and death by getting off the wheel so that he stopped being reborn after he died. That's that's like the long view. That might be the most orthodox view, but also like I keep saying, I mean, he ultimately didn't exist. And when you become enlightened, you fully realize that you just transcend the whole meat puppet thing. So you transcend it that way. And so you overcome it that way also even before you die and don't get reborn.

So I'm just going to move on to sea of action
sepat which is you have said that before that mythical characters such as Jesus, Hercules or Krishna were probably based on someone real. Do you think the same is true of
Amitaba? Well I mean even to call Jesus a mythical character. I mean, I'm sure there are a lot of people that would go along with that, but Jesus was I mean, he lived in historical times. And I think it's pretty likely h I'm just got something in my eye. pretty likely that there was a Jesus of Nazareth even if you know most of the words attributed to

him and most of the actions attributed
to him in the New
Testament are like legends or like
attributed I mean like came from
somebody else and were attributed to him
that sort of thing. Heracles probably
was some sort of Dorian warlord.
um Krishna possibly some kind of you
know ancient Indian very early ancient
Indian vadic kind of you know military
hero kind of a person who got deified
just as Hercules got deified
u but
Amitaba or you know like
Avalara who uh underwent a kind of
transition into a female form with Quan
Yin.

Um, yeah, I kind of doubt. I mean, he's not even supposed to live on this earth. Amitaba, you know, he's he's out in some other realm somewhere, some cosmic realm. So,

um, yeah, I'd be somewhat more skeptical. I mean just because I mean even you can go to like Greek mythology and you know there's like the time when Zeus like raped

Europa you know the the beautiful maiden Europa then I mean Europa may have just been purely made up Zeus himself I mean so I mean just because I mean not all mythical characters are based on a historical or just an actual objective

human

being that you can come up with lots of

examples, you know, like Romulus and

Remis. I mean, that's a that's possibly

just made

up. Hardly likely that they were raised

by

wolves. Um, yeah. I

mean, I don't know. It's it's maybe I'm

not as uh caught up with my Greek

mythology or Roman mythology that I can

just come up with names of

just beings

that probably didn't really

exist. But like a lot of the beautiful

maidens that were um seduced by deities

probably didn't really

exist. You know, it's just made a good story. So Amitaba, yeah, I' I'd be more skeptical of Amitaba actually being based on some um objectively verifiable personage, partly because he's not even considered to live on this planet. Same would go for Avalokesh Vara or Manushri god of wisdom or Tara in any color green Tara white Tara whatever color of Tara that uh I think a lot of those are just made up maybe they've become egregor at this point but still I don't think that they were necessarily based on any original human being or like in the case of King

Arthur, an amalgamation of possibly several human beings.

So yeah, with regard to um mythological beings, I have read in a book on the historical King Arthur that there were only like two knights of the round table that were probably really based on like real like lieutenants of some predecessor of King Arthur. That would be Sir K and Sir Betavir. And Sir K that was just short for Kais. I think that was like a Latin name. So, Amitaba. Yeah, I would, if I had to guess, I would guess that there was no original being called Amitaba. Although maybe some of, you know, some quality or sayings of Amitaba came from

some actual human. I mean, any kind of saying attributed to Amitaba would have to come from some human. But Amitaba himself, I'm guessing, is along the lines of Europa, the beautiful maiden, seduced and absconded with by Zeus and hidden on the island of Cree. But who knows? There could have been just in the shadows of prehistory, protohistory, some woman that that like was kidnapped by some [__] king or something and taken back to cree which then kind of generated some kind of legend about that sort of thing. I don't know. So I'm just going to move on to

Seio's last question, the very last question of this Q&A.

What do you think happens after we die?

Well, the easy answer to that is probably pretty similar to what happened to us before we were born. And I really don't have any personal experience. I cannot recall having been dead before. It may be that after I die, you just, oh yeah, I've done this before. This is no big deal. That's what Earlullah says in the power of now. I think it's like after you die, you realize it's not really not that big of a deal. You've done it lots of times before, but I really don't know exactly

how it's going to work out. There could be a little bit of Tibetan Book of the Dead Bardau kind of stuff going on. Um I really don't think it's necessarily the case that um like in terra Buddhism as soon as as soon as you die then boom the very next moment you are taking rebirth as a fertilized egg if you're being reborn as a human. I don't think it necessarily works that
way. more than like some like Seth the Seth material Jane Roberts um back in the 1970s who was channeling this multi-dimensional being called Seth that I mean you realize and it's like you you kind of merge back into like this

oversoul or this multi-dimensional
entity of which your human existence was
just one little
part that that sort of thing maybe
So, I think that the easiest and best
answer or I'm not straying into
speculation is just what happens to you
after you die is essentially pretty much
what happened to you before you were
born. And so, I guess I'll just leave it
at that and uh call it good. And this is
a relatively short one, less than two
and a half hours, which is kind of nice.
I got the remainder of this Saturday
evening to spend with my lovely
woman. So, if
uh let's see, what should I say? What's

the thing that I always say? I should say always at the beginning, but I I should say it at the beginning, but I never do. that if you have any questions you think I can answer, then feel free to to ask in the comments below. You have access to the Discord server. You can ask there, of course, um in the the Q&A room. And uh see what else? No more than three questions per person per episode,

please. And subscribe if you haven't done so already. Like if you liked, don't like if you don't if you didn't like. and uh be happy. And I think that's it. Now I got to kind of lean

forward and hit the stop recording

button like this.

Alrighty then. I do believe we are recording. Hello and welcome to question and answer number 148. I am your host Pony Bosa. And you may be thinking, whoa, he looks like he's wearing a tailor made Lithuanian linen robe. And those of you who caught that are very perceptive because I finally got this custommade Lithuanian linen robe. And I almost didn't get it because the postal service is very unreliable in this area and it got delivered to the wrong house. But the honest neighbors brought me my robe and so I'm wearing in fact I slept in it last night. I haven't

changed clothes, haven't washed

And partly that's

because I'm doing this late. I'm doing

this on a Sunday early afternoon instead

of a Saturday evening, which is

generally the way I've been doing it.

But my woman had other plans for last

night, which postponed this Q&A until

now.

And uh I don't know how to pronounce the

name of the the place that makes these

100% linen which is flax which is

actually allowable for monks robes

according to Vinia. Um it's v a du. How

do you pronounce vu or wadu or something

in Lithuanian? I don't know. But it is

kind of interesting that in the um

Polyen English dictionary which is back there on the on the ca on the bookcase like that big blue one right in the middle there that there's a lot of etmologies for poly words and the the most
similar language to poly aside from Sanskrit of course that is used in etmologies is a Lithuanian. Lithuanian comes very close to Indian language or Indic
languages. So anyways before I start answering questions I should point out that of course 148 is not a prime number. It is in fact 2 * 2 * 37 which is very vaguely auspicious because 37

has always been one of my favorite numbers. Well it has been one of my favorite numbers. Probably not always, but at some point in my youth, it became one of my favorite numbers. Partly because it's prime. Also, I was 37 years old at the year 2000. This is my beverage.

So, I suppose I should start answering questions because I got other stuff to do today. I got to go out in the backyard and like uh put in an installment on uh digging the fish pond. Also, I got to fish I got to fix the uh the sprinkler pipe that was underground that I accidentally broke when I was

digging the fish

pond. And so we got kind of a

controversial one right off the bat

here. This is from

Phily's and Philes um this is a long

it's a question and a screed kind of at

the same time is very long kind of essay

that isn't really the question but it

has so much that I mean I could respond

to that I'm probably going to read the

whole thing just so I can kind of

respond to

it. But

uh the first part here is got the actual

question in it. This Darwin did not come

up with natural selection. I know you

didn't say this, but the questioner implied it. People have known about natural selection since prehistory because it's just common sense. Darwin came up with the theory of evolution of species by natural selection which also was not a rare idea but has been dismissed by natural philosophers since the time of the Greeks as too reductive. As someone who's iffy about the idea that species evolve at all, I would like to hear your take on it take on why you think they do. And so that's the question. There's a question mark at the end of that last word there, do. But he's got like this long essay of sort of commentary following this. And so before

I answer the question, I suppose I should just kind of wade into this just because it's something I know something about. Like for example, um I took a class, a 400 level class in principles of organic evolution as a biology student in college. And the final exam was one question. Give the evidence for evolution. And I sat there and just wrote for two hours straight until I ran out of
time. Of course, it's not as fresh in my memory now, a lot of it. So, I'll just give some of the main points, but let's uh let's just continue with this little uh essay here. There seems to be frankly

zero archaeological evidence of evolution of species to this day. That is one species morphing into. Okay, let's just stop here. It's called a chronoscies. Just look up on the internet lists of chronoscies. A chronoscies is a species that was one species and then gradually morphed or evolved into another species. In fact, we are a chronoscies. I mean, you follow the fossil record, you've got like Homo erectus and then Homo erectus kind of transforms into Homohylebergensis and then Homohyleberlebergensis kind of transforms into like archaic homo

sapiens. and they might be adding new
ones in between because that's what some
taxonomists
do. So, frankly, zero archaeological
evidence. Look up
chronoscies and and read what it says
because this is just a false statement.
In fact, I would guess a lot of this
stuff that Phils is coming up with is
coming
up it's it's coming from like young
earth creationists. Like you've got some
scientists who are for the most part
real scientists who nevertheless are
devout Christians and they've got an axe
to grind. They want to prove that the

book of Genesis is literal truth. That's how they start. You know, they're not starting with like a a like a hypothesis.

and then trying to prove or disprove the hypothesis. It's like the Bible's true and so we got to just do everything we can to find any kind of evidence in favor of young earth creationism and debunk any kind of evidence that is in favor of a earth an earth that's billions of years old where species have evolved

gradually. So let's see. So to me, Darwinism, not natural selection, but evolution by natural selection is a pseudo religion. No, it's not a religion

at all, unless you're cultish about it. But if you just accept it as a scientific theory, the way someone would accept relativity, for example, or certain aspects of quantum mechanics or that kind of thing or or Newtonian physics before Einstein came along, it's not necessarily a religion, much less or a pseudo religion. It just depends on if you're cultish about it or not. But if you accept it as a fairly obvious scientific explanation, that is a solid theory. Not necessarily gospel truth, but the evidence indicates it. You can forget the pseudo religion stuff. So let's see here.

What Darwin actually did is apply the new and hot science of English economics, market theory, to biology. This is known. Look it up.

And it is true that Darwin's theory of evolution was partly inspired by an essay by Thomas Mthus who was more of an economist than a biologist. Although I think he was also like an Anglican vicer or some such thing.

And Thomas Mthus had this idea that wasn't really an economic idea although it could be applied to economics as well as to biology that organisms including human organisms have more children than can survive or you know it's just that ev that populations are just going to

like take off if they do not have
positive checks and Mthus being
Christian had the positive checks being
the four horsemen of the apocalypse
especially the verse three. So it's like
war, starvation, and
disease. If humans do not keep their
population in check through other
means, then
war, starvation, and disease will keep
the population in check for us, which is
the natural way.
And aside from that, I'm not sure how uh
market theory or like Adam
Smith's economic theories really have
were were like really significant in

Darwin's theory. But Darwin did take
this Malthusian
idea that species produce more children
than can survive in the long run or they
just produce an excess of children.
going with the idea, this this natural
built-in idea that they're not all going
to survive. And then he just added,
well, the ones that do survive are more
likely to be more adapted to the
environment. And if you just continue
this over time, it's going to result in
like continued adaptations to the
environment and the environment can
change. So, it's not just getting closer
and closer to perfection because the
environment is changing for various

reasons. climate and introduced species and all sorts of things. So, it's you're never going to catch up. You're never going to be perfectly adapted. Anyways, let's see here. More holistic philosophies that have a complete view of man have always denied this mechanistic materialistic interpretation of the human being. Even now, there are more advanced theories on how human beings operate, such as most schools of yoga, including especially vanta. And I mean vdanta and almost all of these theories were pretty Darwinian. I mean they hadn't thought of gradual evolution of species. There were a few

like I think his name was

Anakamander. He was one of the ear

really early Greek philosophers who came

up with the idea that humans somehow are

descended from

fish. But aside from that, I mean it

wasn't really talked about much. It's

not mentioned at all like any kind of

evolution really is not mentioned at all

like in any ancient Indian text that I

have

read. Markx was pretty Darwinian which

is one reason why he gets human nature

so so wrong. How he just fails to

understand human

nature. So let's see

here. Shows his small-minded thinking of

what life is. Well, I mean, it's not evolution isn't trying to describe what life is. It's simply trying to describe why the forms of life that exist now, I mean, how they became this way, how they got here. And Darwin really just he he delivered this massive blow to Christian creationists because before Darwin came along, they didn't really have any kind of scientific theory that really could be acceptable that was considered to be in harmony with the evidence that was available. And so they're saying, "Well, God created us. I mean, you can come up with all your science that you please. Still, God created us. God created all

of all of nature the way it is. And then Darwin came along and just pretty much shredded that. And I mean there have been Christians who have been just yowling like scalded cats ever since. And some of these Christian theories like the from the you know creationism institute and so forth you know it kind of trickles out into the mainstream so that people who aren't young earth creationists they see this stuff and they go oh that's interesting when really a lot of it most of it is Christian creationists trying to champion like the a literal interpretation of Genesis. So, okay. So, let's let's just

continue here. We would simply not have such a staggering variety of forms, but only a biomass that's converging into one specific antlike creature. And this statement in particular is just utterly ignorant of
biology. that according to him, all right, we would simply not have such a staggering variety of forms, only biomass converging into one specific antlike creature. And this one specific antlike creature presumably would live in all possible environments. It would fill in all possible ecological niches. It would eat all possible kinds of food. It would fly, crawl on the ground, and

swim in fresh water and the ocean.
And it just doesn't work that
way. I mean, it's
just I mean, that statement is just a
blatantly false statement that if
evolution is just left to itself, just
it's all going to be evolving towards
this one antlike creature. No. Cuz that
one antlike creature isn't going to do
all possible things that life can do.
It's not going to eat all possible
foods. It's not going to live burrow
underground and live on top of the
ground and fly in the sky and climb
trees and swim in the ocean and swim in
fresh water. It just reality doesn't
work that way. Not even empirical

reality. So, okay, mutation theory is even more unfeasible, but it's too long to get into. That's good. This is long enough as it is. So, by the way, the probability of getting 250 average length proteins by chance is 1 in 10 to the 41,000th power, whereas the number of possible particle interactions since the beginning of the universe is liberally estimated to be uh 10 to 10 to 139th power. And this is just paring information he found somewhere. And um I think that he's even like misparing it because the probability of getting 250 average length proteins by chance. I mean could that really mean maybe that

means like one

protein that is a chain of 250 amino

acids like a functional protein 250

amino acids long because proteins are a

polymer of amino acids. So maybe that's

what the actual statement is supposed to

be, but it doesn't necessarily have to

work that

way. Let's see here. I mean, I was

discussing I can't remember if it was on

a Q&A or somewhere else where I mean,

the first protool life would be a very

simple very simple protein like a chain

of amino acids that just replicates

itself. It's like a an enzyme that

catalyzes the production of itself and

that would be the first protoolife. I'm

not exactly sure what the mechanisms would be. There's different theories on how like radiation and lightning in like the hadian atmosphere of the early earth with no free oxygen. I mean they've done experiments where you just take what is considered to be probably what the early environ the early atmosphere was like like volcanic gases a lot of methane and ammonia water vapor of course no free oxygen at all some sulfuric acid and so forth and then you just run electricity through that zap electricity through it and

spontaneously simple organic molecules start arising and of course the theory

is from like the naysayers that I mean that same random electricity is going to be breaking them apart too. I mean you can't just keep it it doesn't just work in one direction where it just builds more and more and more complex molecules. So then you've got some scientists saying well you've got like it's happening in like ponds and so forth with mud and then some of the the molecules are getting down into the mud where other processes are kind of helping to link them together that sort of thing. I don't think they've ever completely figured out how the first self-reroducing protein arose, but considering that it did arise apparently

somehow or other, and you want to get
rid of just the magic stuff, you know,
Jehovah God did it, that kind of thing,
then I mean, it's it's not whether it
happened, it's how it happened.
But I'll get to that in when I actually
start answering the question instead of
addressing this this this kind of
screed. This alone proves how silly
mechanistic science
is. And I mean some mechanistic science
works really
good. Isaac Newton was no slouch really.
I mean a lot his theories have pretty
much been superseded although most of
his theories still work. You know, like

the whole thing about the inverse squared law and that kind of thing is still solid science and it does ex it does describe what empirical scientists are observing. You know, you come up with a mathematical equation that fits onto some observed phenomenon. Well, there you go. You come up with a kind of scientific theory or scientific model. So, let's see here. And by now even radiometric dating is known to not work except for carbon dating which is useless beyond 8,000 years and unsound anywhere that has been flooded aka everywhere humans lives. So Phil lees here is saying all dating methods are [__] And this is what the Jehovah

Witnesses say. I mean I first came across this idea in Jehovah Witness literature. In fact, I've come across a lot of this stuff in Jehovah Witness literature because of course they believe literal translation of the Bible and all that. So all dating methods are just completely unsound and all the scientists are just faking it. But you get the evil eye if you say it out loud because it disrupts the academic. Yeah, flat-earthers get the evil eye too. And that's this this argument against evolution is just another kind of flatearther kind of

attitude because it disrupts the
academic rack in Noah's because they
consider you to be essentially a kind of
flatearther. I really think human
science which can only really make neat
environmental hazard gadgets like mobile
phone chips. I mean where is where did
philies come from to come up with these
ideas that all science can do is make
environmental hazard
gadgets. No, I mean that is so obviously
false that I think Phil has been
indoctrinated by young earth
creationists
somehow. So let's see
here. a lot when it comes out big
questions like what life is or what

gravity actually is. Well, I mean when
you want to know what life
is obviously there's more than one
answer. There's more than one fairly
correct
answer. Science is dealing with one
aspect of
that sort of like the biochemical aspect
for starters.
So let's see these questions can only be
answered by considering all four causes
of classical science. Not sure what all
four causes of classical science would
be. Whereas Bacon's modern science gets
rid of formal and final causation
leading to a reductive idea of the world

as a clockwork mechanism or
optimization. Okay. So I am not even
pushing any religious religions or
theories. Yeah, actually he is. I just
find modern science to have such strong
views that are unjustifiable exclamation
point. Yeah. I I think the main
unjustifiable attitude of science is
their idea that it's it's actually
explaining ultimate
reality. I think that is an
unjustifiable I mean that that science
is in any position to make metaphysical
claims is unjustifiable. I would agree
with that. But science is has gotten us
where we are
today, which has its good points and its

bad points, of course. But to say that science is just all it does is just make gadgets and it's just totally unrealistic and blah blah blah is just I mean it's it's delusional. So let's see. In a way, all knowledge outside of personal sacred beliefs is publicly unjustifiable, just as the atkawaga say. So the altcoar says all views are unjustifiable whether they're personal sacred beliefs or not. Don't believe anything because beliefs do not they cannot grasp the highest truth. So you got to let go of the if you want to know the highest truth you got to let go of

of clinging to views any views any kind
of conceptual views.
So, let's just get back up to the actual
question, which is, let's see
here. Let's see. As someone who's iffy
about the idea that species evolve at
all, it seems like he's more than iffy.
I mean, he's he's bashing away at the
idea. Um, I would like to hear your take
on why you think species
evolve. Okay. So, for
starters, there is the fossil record.
I've talked about this before. The
fossil record indicates very clearly
first of all that 100 million years ago
the species were very different. 100
million years years before that the

species were still were very different
from 100 million years ago. It's like
the the species on this planet are
changing. and you go to some place like
uh like the Grand Canyon where you've
got a river cutting through millions of
years worth of like geographical strata,
geological
strata, and you find that in the deepest
levels, there's no
fossils. you get into a little little a
little higher up, you know, a little
more
recent, there will be like bacterial
fossils, which would be mainly like
fossilized concretions, like bacterial

crusts, bacterial
nodules, that kind of thing. You find
fossil remains of that, and that's it.
And according to the experts, for the
first few billion years of this planet's
existence, all that existed on this
planet, the only life that existed was
anorobic bacteria. The fossil record
supports this. Then gradually you get
enough free oxygen due to photosynthetic
bacteria, chemosynthetic bacteria living
in an anorobic atmosphere. you get
enough free oxygen generated that that
metabolism can take
off that oxygen is actually kind of
toxic except to your mitochondria. Your
mitochondria need o free oxygen because

it it causes like a massive increase in the efficiency of respiration. you can create more energy per molecule of glucose if you've got oxygen to work with and just several times more energy is produced and even now I like even a goldfish can go completely anorobic but they're pretty much torpid you know they just multi-ellular life pretty much needs this boost in metabolism so after there was free oxygen then you had like the cambrian explosion first you had the evolution of like protozoans

you know,

ukareotic uh life and then protozoans, you know, were like the first sign of

this and then the protozoans started becoming colonial and next thing you know you've got multisellular plants and animals and the fossil record supports this and then like the first animals I mean you had all kinds of weird dead ends like in the pre-cambrian explosion you go to like the the shale beds where there a lot of fossils all kinds of weird animals that just didn't make it because it was like trial like random trial and error like Darwin talks about. You had all these different mutations or whatever whatever caused them to arise and some of them were more better adapted than others and that still works nowadays. You got some animals that are

not perfectly adapted to their environment like pill bugs, little isopod crustaceations. They live on the land, but they still breathe with gills. And so they're very limited in like what kind of environments they can live in. They have to live in moist environments. They get stuck out in the sun. They die. Their gills dry out. They can't breathe anymore. They die. So go in the fossil records. Let's say, let's just set aside all the dead ends. So some of the earliest animals would be like jellyfish. It'd be all invertebrates. All invertebrates. You'd have like

brachopods, you know, worms. The fossil record doesn't show much until like shells and like carropaces, hard carropaces, that sort of thing started evolving. It's way easier for stuff to fossilize when you've just got a like a an empty shell buried in mud or some other substrate that is preserved for hundreds of millions of years.

And then like with regard to humans, I mean you got like primitive like arrow worms, you know, like or or like the larve of um what are they called? Sea squirts or sort of like a proto fish. They're like a little tadpole thing. And then that gradually turned into fish which then through lung fish which are

actually a primitive kind of bony fish.
You know, it's like I read in a
um one of those Jehovah Witnesses books
that was bashing evolution about how
they're saying, you know, it's like the
the f the the the gills of a fish would
have to evolve into
lungs in order for like like amphibians
to evolve from fish. But it doesn't work
that way. I mean, it's like the the lung
is evolved from the swim bladder. Or
actually the swim bladder is evolved
from a lung in fish and the lung was it
was let's see the swim bladder or the
lung it started off as a kind of
buoyancy thing. It was like an offshoot

of the digestive tract where a fish could gulp air and then it could like adjust their buoyancy or they could spit out air and sink. They could come up and gulp air and make them float better. That kind of thing. And then that eventually evolved into a lung. So a fish like a lungfish or a sturgeon has gills and at least one lung. And then you get amphibians. The fossil record, you know, back when the first amphibians were emerging onto land, no reptiles yet. No birds, no mammals. And then the the amphibians presumably evolve into reptiles. The reptiles evolve into mammals. Well, I guess dinosaurs

which then become birds, that kind of thing. And the first mammals, like primitive insecttovore type things, like tree shrews or Yeah, it would be like the first placental mammals would be like tenrix. I guess the tenrich is one of the most primitive placental mammals on Earth. It's kind of like a big shrew. And then you had some of those go aroreal, become like tree shrews, and then the tree shrews became like proyan primates. And it's the fossil record supports this just like chronologically that the more humanlike creatures didn't exist until recently going with the the fossil record. So the

fossil record indicates clearly enough
evolution occurred.
how it occurred exactly, that can still
be controversial. But to deny, I mean,
unless you want to just say, okay,
Jehovah God or some kind of magical
force is just changing species over
time, causing some to go extinct, others
to flourish, and then diversify and and
just continuing this process. I mean,
that process is happening. Just the
fossil record alone is sufficient. And
then you can have the Jehovah Witnesses
saying, "Oh, the fossil record is so
incomplete." You know, this and that
[__] They're clutching at straws
trying to support young earth

creationism because the Bible says
so. So just the fossil record indicates
that evolution is happening. It doesn't
explain like the exact mechanism, what
it is that's driving evolution, but the
fact that evolution is happening should
not be
controversial. Another another bit of
evidence in favor of evolution is
vestigial organs. Why is it that whales
and pythons have vestigial hipbones, for
example? They don't use them. They are
vestigial.
And that is a vestage from some
previous
quadruped form that whales and pythons

are evolved from. Of course, not the
same one. In the case of whales, it's a
it's a mammal. In the case of pythons,
it's like a lizard, some snake like
lizard, like a skink maybe that still
had little
legs. Also, there's embryionic
development. Like at one point in your
lifetime, whoever you are watching this,
you had gill slits like a
shark and I think it's even the
primitive number of gill slits like
early sharks, prim more primitive sl
sharks like the six gill shark had six
gills slits whereas um I think
eventually it went to five. Five is it
was like a more derived number of gill

slits. And I think like a human embryo
or any mamalian embryo, just any embryo
that's like a
vertebrae. I mean, at one point they've
got gill slits like a shark and then
most of those just fade out except for
one of the gill slits becomes the
opening of your ustaceian tubes. Then at
at a later stage in embryionic
development, we've got four rows of
nipples going down our chest like most
mammals have. And then most of them fade
out. At one point in our embryionic
development, we're covered with fur and
then that fades
out. So I mean,

why is embryionic

development recapitulating fogyny if

evolution doesn't occur?

I

mean the fact that evolution happens

should not be controversial. You want to

argue or quibble or whatever, it's how

it happens. What is driving it that is

still a legitimate quibble. But to just

say that evolution can't happen and

doesn't happen unless you just want to

be magic and say Jehovah God is just

like changing up the the animal species

in some order of of like

adaptation for mysterious reasons that

we mortals can't understand. Well, I

guess you can do that too. But the very

fact is life has been changing over time on this planet. The fossil record shows it. Vestigial organs indicate it. Embryionic development indicates it. And that's that's enough. Charles Darwin remains God emperor as far as I'm concerned. Although before I I move on, I mean you you can add other forces that science can't really deal with like schopenhau will that there's a kind of mind in this universe that's just seeking as much like phenomenal existence as it can and that's helping to drive evolution. That sort of thing I mean like like uh the first verse of the dharmapata says it's

all

mindmade. So you can have some kind of

mind driving

this. That's fine. I wouldn't argue

against that. some especially if it's

like not like an intellectual kind of

mind but just sort of like this life

force shopenhower will that's helping to

to drive this I got no problem with that

and it wouldn't really be in conflict

with scientific theory even though

science really can't touch

it so I'm just going to move on next

question from Fred and I do not

understand this question Fred does this

sometimes s he'll ask questions where

you're not sure if he's even asking a

question or you're not sure exactly what
it is that he means like are we allowed
to treat
ourselves? Well, I mean treating
ourselves I there was no real context
that I was aware of. I mean that's just
the whole question right there that
appeared in the comment section. Are we
allowed to treat ourselves?
And I suppose you could have it like in
a medical sense, you know, treat
yourself medically. But I think he
probably means something
like like recently it was National Donut
Day. So you could just go down and
celebrate National Doughnut Day by just

gorging yourself on donuts or apple fritters, which I actually prefer. Um, are we allowed to? Well, I mean obviously all is permitted as Ivan Karamazov used to say, all is permitted if there is no God. But we don't need to uh get into the technicalities of this. Um, are we allowed to and then maybe he means like in accordance with orthodox terraovvada Buddhism are we allowed to just splurge and indulge sometimes and buy ourselves like a Lithuanian linen bathrobe that we don't entirely need although it's very nice or eat donuts or whatever have ice cream that kind of thing. Um, technically there would be some ausalakama involved. You know,

wallowing in sensuality,

self-indulgence, you know, it's it's uh

not the best kind of karma. I mean, it's

not totally evil. I mean, you're way

better off eating ice cream than like

torturing small animals, that kind of

thing. But still, I mean, we're allowed

to do it. We're allowed to do anything

we're able to do really. I mean, who's

stopping us? But from a a Buddhist point

of view, you're better off not doing it.

That you're just kind of complicating

you're kind of complicating this your

your situation and making it harder to

wake

up if you are like wallowing in

sensuality and self-indulgence and so forth. That's one of the two paths, two extreme paths that a good Buddhist should avoid.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to Fred's second question, which contains a typo, which I'm fixing now. Does nothing happen without

sankaras? And sankara is one of those poly words that has multiple meanings. I'm not exactly sure what Fred's intended meaning for sankara is here, but if you have if you interpret sankara in the broadest sense of just any kind of condition thing, anything that has a beginning and an end is a sankara. You know, it arises due to conditions and

then it passes away when those
conditions pass
away. So does nothing happen without
sankcaras. Nothing could happen without
sankaras. Any kind of happening is
involving sankaras. Without saras
nothing really
happens. So saras are like the the
building blocks of samsara in a sense at
least with regard to the observable
aspect of of
samsara. So I'm just going to move on to
Fred's third question. Can pure land be
beneficial to clean out
chilacas or in poly chilacas which are
defilements? So, can Purland Buddhism

help you to purify yourself? Is essentially what Fred seems to be asking here. And I have to admit it can because based on my interaction with one Pureland Buddhist in particular who is on our uh Discord server
um I mean he's very puritanical with regard to basic Buddhist ethics. He's got some weird ideas with regard to like mythological space Buddhas and so forth. But with regard to just basic like five precepts, that kind of thing, he's completely on board with that. So, um to the extent that a Pureland Buddhist still has like good Buddhist ethics, that kind of thing, then to that extent, it's going to be helping him to purify

himself. you know, he's trying to have a
do good, avoid doing evil, purify his
mind, like like the Dhamapata says, this
is the teaching of the
Buddhas. So long as as you're doing
that, then it's going to be you're going
to be cleaning out your defilements to
some
degree. So, I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from
Thurodma. Uh oh, I
gotta damn here, I gotta fix this a
little bit. The question was in Burmese.
No,
wait.
Damn. Excuse me a minute. I gotta fix

this. I got to fix it

again. Okay. So, then we go like this

and then I got to hit the the return

button. No. Why is it not working? Oh,

there we go. Okay. So, this question is

from Thurod and he says,

and my answer to that is

hope. I'm going to have some coffee

now. But actually, Usu wrote him up. He

was a friend of mine in Burma. I I don't

know if he's still a monk or

not. So, I don't know if I should be

calling him a shimpa or not. Maybe he's

still a monk. He was a serious monk. So

there's a good chance that there's maybe

he's still a monk. But com just means

like very good. And then that's that's

what people called me in Burma. Short
for augo. What about
now? Like
before do you still desire nibbana? And
I have to admit that even though I'm not
a monk anymore, the same kind of
urge, the same sort of subliminal
urge to be moving
towards like being as awake as possible,
transcending samsara, that sort of thing
is still there.
So, and really my attitude towards
becoming enlightened hasn't changed all
that much since I was a monk. Um, it's
just that uh when I was a monk, you
know, I was doing like the the

traditional practices that monks are supposed to do which just stalled out in my case. I stopped making progress for years and years. So it's like if you're trying something for years and years and it's not working, then it just makes sense to try something else. And so it's I'm just applying it to samsara at this point or applying it to worldly lay life at this point because even a monk is applying whatever he's applying to samsara because that's the only thing you can apply anything
to. So yeah, my attitude towards cultivating wisdom and so forth is still pretty solid. It's just like my methods are somewhat changed. You know, it's

like I've tried certain things. I know
whether it works or not. I know if I've
gotten benefit from it or not. I know if
I used to get benefit and stop getting
benefit or just stop making progress
with it or not. That kind of
thing. But yeah, I haven't just given up
on like
cultivating understanding that sort of
thing or uh striving towards or just
sort of gradually grinding away at
like some sort
of uh metaphysical perfection or just
like total realiz total
realization of metaphysical perfection
or some such.

But yeah, my attitude really hasn't changed all that much. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from

Kundrew. And Kundrew says, "Are lay people allowed to give the five andor eight precepts to other lay people or is that role strictly reserved for monks?" This is actually somewhat controversial in Burma. Um because of course in Burma being a devoutly Buddhist country it's just assumed that monks are supposed to do that kind of thing. But if there's no monks around I mean you can give yourself you can just take upon yourself five or eight precepts generally you take the three refues first. The three

refues and then the five or eight precepts or however many precepts you're going to take. So I mean you can just like like bow in front of an altar and take the precepts you yourself you know you're not following along with what somebody else says but just in front of the Buddha image or whatever you know in the presence of whatever arahans happen to be aware of what you're doing that kind of thing um I think traditionally that might even be preferable to taking five or eight precepts from another lay person but I don't I don't remember seeing anywhere that I mean that is condemned especially if there's no monks

to take the precepts from. If you've got sort of western lay people who just have no use for monks. They think that becoming a monk is just sort of an arbitrary career choice and that lay people are just as good as monks. And so they just will will just sort of snub monks and take five or eight refu pre precepts from each other or from their Jewish lesbian meditation instructor or whatever, then yeah, that would probably be uh frowned upon from a traditional Buddhist point of
view.
But I mean, you make do with what you've got. You know, if let's say you're too too illiterate or you know, you just

don't know the formulas well enough. You're like a beginner in Buddhism, you could go to a teacher who really knows how to do the five or eight precepts and take the five or eight precepts from them. Especially if there's no monk around, you could just go to a lay a lay teacher, that sort of thing. But to give them to each other, like one person gives the other one five precepts and then the person who just took the five precepts gives the other one five precepts, that's just kind of pointless. You might as well just bow down and front of an altar or something and in the presence of any divinity that

or wisdom that happens to be lingering around that altar or symbolically to the Buddha, you can just take the five or eight precepts upon yourself.
I mean it's it's no rule that you even have to go through the ceremony. Keeping the precepts is way more important than doing the poly ceremony. Although a lot of Burmese people would would disagree with that. They would think that taking five precepts is just kind of invalid if you don't like first go through the formal ceremony in front of a monk or at least in front of a Buddhist statue and formally take upon yourself these precepts. But being a

western, I just don't think that
way. So let's see here. I'll just move
on to Kand Drew's second question. The
next question is besides the
similarities between no ginosis and nana
like the English word no k n o w no no
cano ginosis and nana. What are some
other words in English and poly that
have noticeable similarities due to
their indo-uropean origins? There is
lots of them. Lots and lots and lots.
Just starting with
numbers, you know, it's
like the the the Nepali word for two is
due. Poly word for three is three or t
like tipidica or

tripidica. The word for four is chhataro, which doesn't sound like four, but it sounds a hell of a lot like quattro in in Spanish or the English word quarter.

1/4. Um, the the poly word for five is panchcha, which doesn't sound like five, partly because Germanic languages turn P into F, but it sounds a lot like penta in Greek, like in the word pentagram, pentagon, that sort of thing. So, numbers, simple numbers are similar throughout the Indo-Uropean languages. Also, just the most common words like family names. The poly word for brother is batar. The poly word for mother is matar. You know the poly word for

daughter is du or dtoro. So it's like the most common words that are just basic to the language are the ones that are most likely to have parallels in English and poly. And then some words are not so obvious like the poly word for boat is nawa which doesn't sound like boat at all or like ship. But nawa has the same pro like Indo-Uropean etmology as the English words navy, navigate, nautical, that kind of thing. or a lot of like simple animal words, especially if they're animals that were native to the pontic steps like like snake is the the poly word for snake is sappa which I'm pretty sure would would

have like the same etmology as serpent
or the the poly word for horse is assa
which comes close to ass like a donkey
but also horse has is based on the same
etmology. ology or also like the word
for circle or wheel is chaka which
doesn't sound like wheel but it's based
on the same etmology as circle and cycle
that sort of thing. So I mean I could
just sit here for for an hour and just
come up with word after word after word
that has parallels or cognates or
whatever between poly and English
because they're both Indo-European
languages. And so I'm just going to move
on to the next question. This is from
Indiana Dharma. And Indiana Dama says,

"I have recently learned about the use of spirit tablets in East Asian ancestor veneration, including among some Buddhists. This led me to think about the practice of ancestor veneration and what place, if any, it has in terra. Given how rebirth is said to occur in Orthodox Terravalda, I cannot see any reason to engage in ancestor veneration except perhaps as a way of memorializing them and honoring their memory. Yeah, ancestor worship is not really a big thing in terra Buddhist texts. in term of Buddhism that's different but just in like the poly texts I think probably there's I know there's mention of it you

know like um you've got like the the the
householder who they make their morning
ablutions they tend to the their sacred
fire and all that and uh one of the
things they'll do is make little
offerings to their ancestors and the
Buddha didn't really I mean he may have
sort of redefined exactly how you're
supposed to do it but that was just
establish establish Indian
tradition also just the whole idea of
hungry ghosts in terabana Buddhism the
whole reason why these ghosts are hungry
is because it's based on ancient Indian
ancestor worship where the ancestors
that weren't receiving offerings were
hungry those were the unfortunate ghosts

you know pa I mean it comes from the word father ancestor so it's like the word for ghost in in poly is der derived from the word for father like as in forefather you know it's an ancestor but of course the meaning kind of changed and everything and in like modern Burma probably modern Thailand also due to not necess due to more indigenous cultural influences rather than terra Buddhism then there is a lot of not so much ancestor worship but after a relative dies then periodically the the family members who survive that dead family member will come to a monastery and make offerings to the

monks and then share their merit with
their deceased ancestor. That is common,
you know, just on a regular basis. I
don't remember the
exact timetable for when you're supposed
to go back like the one-year anniversary
pretty obvious. I think it's like one
week and two weeks and I don't know
exactly what the timetable is. I I was
never extremely interested in that sort
of thing. Um I tended as a monk in
Burma, I tended to avoid doing the
purely cultural stuff and I just kind of
stayed by myself and and meditated
mostly.
So yeah, I think it was more out of like
family sentiment that you would make

offerings to your ancestors. I I don't think there's there's not much concept in Terravada anymore of your ancestors becoming hungry ghosts if you're not making offerings to them and keeping them wellfed, that kind of thing. So that's just sort of a vestigial aspect because even religions evolve and sometimes religions can evolve into a whole different religion just like species. you might say. Let's see here. Oh, I forgot to I don't think it's really necessary today because this it's still daytime, but I forgot to to jiggle the

mouse or anything and so that the my my woman's computer screen that kind of serves as a light. It went back off again because I always do that. So, let's see what is the exact question and have I answered it yet? Let's see. What place, if any, does ancestor worship have in terra? Well, cultural terravada that isn't scriptural terravada has some of that, but it's not like making offerings to ancestors in general. You know, whatever ancestors I have, you know, may they be well and happy. There's not much so much of that as just like your deceased parents, your deceased grandparents, that kind of thing. You

commemorate them. And also, you know, periodically you go to the monastery and make donations on their behalf kind of in their name. Share the merit with them. That's about as far as it goes really. But like what's going on in Sri Lanka, that sort of thing, I can't really say. But there's there's not there's no real emphasis on it in like the poly
tip that apparently ancient India was already kind of moving away from that at that point. I'm not sure like modern Hindus do they still make like regular offerings like daily offerings to their ancestors? I don't

know. So I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from PSA and this is an easy one. Can you optimize an unpublished algorithm for quantum machine learning on a photonic processor?

No. PSA's next question. Hopen John or Mohinga? I'm I'm not sure what hop and John is. It must be some sort of weird English ethnic food. Possibly some kind of noodle soup because Mohinga is noodle soup. So I have to choose between hop and John or Mohinga. I choose the Mohinga just because the hop and John is a mystery to me. I don't know what it is. Mohingas is it's a good kind of noodle soup made out of sort of

spaghetti sized rice noodles that are white and softer than spaghetti. And there's sometimes there's a little bit of chicken in it, but it's just kind of like this broth. It's got like banana tree slices in it, which is kind of nice. It's It's good. Mohinga is good. Hop and John, I really can't say. So, I'm just going to go with the sure thing and I'm just going to move on to PSA's third

question, which is as follows. Are we recording here? I just got to make sure about this.

Okay. In your experience as a monk, you surely must have come across other monks

considering disroing and then actually doing it. Can you rank the reasons for disroing from the following list from biggest to smallest? And then he's got boredom, loss of faith, lust, getting kicked out for misbehavior. Feel free to add another reason if you think it's major and I didn't include it here.

Well, among Western monks, like there'd be two monks sitting around talking and they'd say, "Oh, by the way, so and so dropped out of the monkhood." And then the other monk will say, "Why?" And then the first one will say, "The usual reason, which means he wanted a woman." So for western monks especially who are somewhat higher tea I guess than like

Burmese monks then desire for a woman is a more significant reason for dropping out and the other main reason wouldn't I mean boredom that would apply to some monks both Burmese and and western loss of faith I only know of one case of that really but usually the loss of faith happens after you dis that I remember um Nana Vera in his letters he's he's a famous English monk from son back in the 50s and early 60s was saying that it's weird that when people like westerners especially drop out of the monkhood they not only stop practicing Buddhism but they stop being Buddhists

um let's see getting kicked out for

misbehavior that's very
rare. Yeah. I I'm not even sure if I
know of any cases like that. I mean,
I've I've heard of a few cases
where some Western monks were just kind
of nutty or they were they were like
cracking up or something and then they'd
get sent away. But you can't I mean,
nobody has the power to disrobe a monk
other than himself. So, you don't really
get kicked out of the SA unless you
commit a Parajika offense.
If you don't commit a par offense or
deliberately disrobe yourself, then the
worst that the SA can do is just do like
a a formal act of expulsion from the SA,
which doesn't stop you from being a

monk. It's just that you're like cut off, you know? It's like you're you're getting the silent treatment. other monks aren't allowed to do anything have do any formal actions with you or live under the same roof with you or anything like that or or bow to you or have you bow to them anything like that. So that one is just uh and then these formal actions of the song are pretty much extinct at least in Burma.

So let's see here. Yeah, there was a famous famous Thai Ajan back in like the 1990s who I mean he was he he was parajika you know he was going on world

tours like giving doat talks and then it turned out that he was like having call girls come to his hotel rooms and he was paying on his credit card so the Thai government had proof that he was like paying prostitutes in his hotel room that kind of thing but technically he didn't so much get kicked out for misbehavior by anyone but himself. It was his parajika that that kicked him out and then the Thai government just kind of enforced

that. So with with regard to Burmese monks, their main reason for dropping out is just sort of worldly mindedness. You know, they've got unresolved worldly desires. They want to make money. They

want to drive a car. Maybe they want a woman, but it's it's not as as pronounced in Burmese monks as it is in Western monks. Western monks are more inclined to just they want a woman, so they drop out. Or, you know, they've got unresolved issues. Or another one is they've got aging parents and they feel like this filial duty to go take care of their mother who has Alzheimer's or something. That happens a lot, too. That might be like the second most usual, at least the official reason why a monk is dropping out of the monkhood in the west is I got to take care of my mother. That kind of

thing. Um, I mean, a lot of a lot of monks, I mean, they're just they go into it with this intention that it's not going to be permanent. You know, I'm just going to be a monk. I I knew this one guy. He had this plan. He's going to be a a monk. He's going to go to Pandarama, become a monk. within five years he'll be in Arya and then he'll drop out and come back to California, go to some place like Spirit Rock and set himself up as a Dharma teacher there. So there I mean that's kind of a a reason too is just that it's it's not intended to be a permanent thing anyway.

So if you include boredom as just still have like worldly interests

that you just want to get back into
that. That would be probably the main
reason for Burmese monks and sort
of one of the more important reasons for
western monks. But western monks and
Burmese monks, it's it's like two
different species of of beu seems to
me.
So I suppose I answered that question in
a roundabout sort of
way.
Yeah. So I think I'm just going to move
on this
question. This is from Clefy. And
Cleiffy says, "In my sitting practice, I
reach the state where my thoughts calm

down and don't run like crazy from the past to the future and so on. My questions are how do I stabilize this state and where do I go from there?" Well, to stabilize it, I mean, just you just continue practicing it. And also, I mean, if you're getting better at your meditation, then you can gradually evolve your meditation into a subtler form of meditation. So it's like if you've got a busy distracted mind, you need a busy kind of meditation. Having you noting a lots of stuff, having you do a lot of busy work in your mind to keep your mind occupied on the meditation subject. But as your mind gets quieter and calmer, then you need a

quieter calmer meditation technique because you don't want to just be pounding away at the ABCs after you don't need to do that anymore. But if you try something too subtle than you're ready for, then your mind's just going to overflow the meditation object and just you're just going to be thinking all over the place. So to stabilize the state, just continue practice. And also you can move on to a more advanced kind of meditation. Once you've got like the more elementary basics down, then you can go to a more subtle kind of meditation that will get you into more

and more subtle meditation states. But even like even if you're just meditating on your breath, I mean that can even without really changing the the primary object, you might change the way that you're going about noting the primary object. You know, you might stop labeling and then you're just observing it and then eventually you'll stop focusing just on the breath and just kind of like have a wide open focus like a cheap camera kind of a thing, you know. So you can first you just continue practicing and also um once you've got a certain meditation down and you're not really progressing with it anymore then you switch to a more subtle method

that's a little more challenging that you haven't mastered yet and then you just keep going with that. And so you should be getting more and more subtle until eventually you're just sitting there just empty and wide open.

So, I guess that answers both of these questions. How do you stabilize it? And where do he where does he go from there? But without knowing your the particulars of your case, I really couldn't give very much particular advice with regard to your particular case. But just, you know, when your mind becomes calmer, go to a calmer meditation technique.

So, I'm going to move on to the next question, which is from Xenithoid. And Xenithoid says, "What do you think is going on when we experience deja vu?" And that's an interesting question. And I'm not 100% sure how to answer it. I mean, I've read in it was like a cognitive science book that some cognitive scientists had this theory that when you have deja vu, what's actually happening is it's just sort of like this little recognition center in your brain is glitching a little bit. And so, it's it's sort of like making you feel like you recognize this unique situation that has never happened before as something that happened before. But

that wouldn't explain at least one deja vu that I've had where it was just right in advance of what it what was happening. You know, it was like a dja vu before before the thing even happened. So, it was like precognitive and I was just I I was just like 20 years old at the time sitting in this room and just grinning like an ape because I knew that someone in that room was going to say this this weird sentence. And they said it and I'm just sitting there, man. How that was really remarkable for me because it was it was like a dja vu. It felt like a dja vu, but it was like a

precognitive deja vu. It wasn't just this seems familiar. It was like this seems familiar and I know what's going to happen next kind of a thing.

So yeah. So I really it could be a certain amount of paranormal just precognition involved or it wouldn't be precognition but I mean it's like there could be sort of some glitch in the matrix or um you know if Einstein is is correct and the future already exists the past still exists in a sense you know like the Sarvastiva Buddhists were saying then you know you're sort of like breaking loose from the present moment a little bit or it it could it could

involve something like

that, I guess. But frankly, I mean, I do

not know exactly how Déjà vu works. So,

I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's

next question, which is why do we have

doppelgangers?

And I'm not exactly sure what he means

by this, like doppelgangers. I mean,

it's like the the the double. It's like

the ghost double. And the when I first

learned the word doubleganger, it was in

an English lit class in college. We were

reading Dostki's crime and punishment.

And the teacher, the

instructor was saying that in that

novel, Rascolnikov, the protagonist, has

two dppelgangers, at least two. One is Svidra Galof who is like the debouched um he's like an aristocrat with like no morals and then there was Sonia the prostitute and Sonia the prostitute ironically is the most Christlike figure in the in the novel. So it was like these two doppelgangers, they're like representing like alternate identities to the protagonist. Fidelof, the debauched aristocrat, represents what Rascolnikov could become if he just followed his head and ignored his heart and just followed this kind of Nietian philosophy with and ignoring this sort of like deeper like religious, spiritual, ethical kind of stuff.

Whereas Sonia the prostitute was a doppelganger representing what he could become if he followed his heart instead of his
head. Because even though she was a prostitute, um she was sort of like the the fictional prostitute with a heart of gold
whose father was dead. Her her mother was dying of tuberculosis. She had two children. She had like two two like a brother and a sister who were practically having to beg in the streets of of St. Petersburg back in the mid 1800s just to get food. And so prostitution was illegal in Russia at

that time. So she just went and got a card and was making money just to prevent her brother and sister from starving to death essentially. But I mean I've I've come across a doppelganger. There was a monkey in Burma that was a doppelganger of mine. Um, I was just traveling through this part of I mean this monastery probably doesn't even exist. I think it got bulldozed to make the new capital city of Napedo because it was in that area of Burma. And there was this monkey chained to a tree. And he spent most of his time doing I mean if there was any other animal like a scy monastery dog or a chicken or something

that came within range of his chain he scamper down out of the tree and start pestering them and then they would go away of course cuz they didn't like being pestered by a monkey. But when he didn't when he wasn't doing that, um, which is most of the time, he he had somehow come across a piece of like transparent red plastic, you know, you could see through it, but it was red. And he would just sit on this tree branch just holding this this red plastic up to his eyes in fascination. He was just fascinated by how everything turns red when you look through this plastic. So that was like his his only

possession really was this piece of red plastic. And then also if he wasn't doing that being a monkey, he was attending to his own pee pee. And really, I mean, that kind of symbolized me as a young monk. I mean, I was still very lustful. I was I was always kind of wrestling with that kind of situation, but also just holding up the red plastic. I mean that he had like the simple monkey version of philosophy where you you're looking at the world and seeing it all transformed through, you know, some gimmick of like philosophically questioning the reality of it, that kind of thing. And then as I was leaving the

monastery, I happened to walk close to his tree and he just ran down out of the tree and just climbed up my body so that we're eye to eye and he just kissed me right on the cheek. And this Burmese guy that was with me that was acting sort of like my guide. I he was just dumbfounded. Finally, he's able to stammer out. It just kissed you on the cheek. But then I I moved away and got out of range and that was the end. But I I considered that monkey to be my doppelganger. Also, when I was in my early 20s, I considered myself to be a kind of doppelganger of my girlfriend's brother. I mean, I was the doppelganger

in that case, you know, I represented
what he could become if he was less of a
realist, if he was more of an
idealist. But aside from that, it's
like, why do we have doppelgangers? I
mean, a doppelganger is just kind of
like a a
fictional or, you know, it's just sort
of like this symbolic thing that you
superimpose upon reality. I mean, you
don't necessarily really
have doppelgangers other than just maybe
the way your karma is constructed.
You're sort of like spinning off sort of
mirror reflections of yourself all
around you. I guess that's some some
spiritual teachers say that like at

cartullah will say I mean your the whole
world around you is actually a kind of
mirror reflection of what's going on
inside
you. So in that case this everybody
would be a kind of doppelganger. It
would seem
like, but mainly a doppelganger is just
kind of fictional
gimmick like when you're writing a novel
or
something like Gus. I'm not exactly sure
what Xenithoid is referring to in that
case. So, I'm just going to move on to
Xenithoid's third question, which is
when you look into a mirror, who is

looking back at you? And nobody. I mean,

it's just a reflection.

So, nobody's looking back at you. Don't

worry about

that. So, I guess without elaborating on

that

one, I'm just going to move on to the

next question, which is from Stellar

Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb

and it's occasionally also known as

Libra Lamb and known by other other

things

too. Just very

complicated. So, I'm just going to

answer his question here. What practical

measures would you say are make or break

for a deep meditation, posture,

following, breath, feeling,

etc. Well,

um I mean you can give general

guidelines, but the general guidelines

aren't necessarily going to apply to

everybody. I mean, some people can

spontaneously go into a deep meditative

state on a roller coaster at a carnival.

So I mean as a general rule if I was

giving instructions to somebody you know

I would include you know don't try to

meditate on a roller coaster at a

carnival but for some people it can just

spontaneously they'll just have like

some mystical

experience. Um I think the main thing

with regard to deep meditation is try to avoid meditative meditation techniques that involve a lot of thinking. You know, that's if you've got an active mind, you got to do that. But you got to use an active meditation to keep your mind occupied and like keep it from wandering away. But I mean, that's not very deep meditation. You know, that's it's still valid meditation. It's like, you know, sort of like elementary meditation that will get you to a a position where it's easier to get into deep meditation. But deep meditation, you're not going to be thinking no more. Just not thinking is one of the most important things about like deep

meditation or just thinking as little as possible. Don't think any more than you have to posture. Um like if you're sitting like straight up and down, that's definitely going to help your meditation. If you're just kind of leaning forward or slouching, that kind of thing, you're going to have like a leany slouchy kind of mental state. But if you're you've got like an alert mental state or an alert posture, you know, a posture that's generally associated with alertness like straight up and down, it just naturally helps you to be more

alert. full lotus. I mean, my experience with the full lotus, it can improve your meditation by like 3% just automatically for whatever reason. Um, but I mean the main things with regard to if you want deep meditation, first you got to find a quiet place where you're not going to be interrupted. You know, not a lot of like weird random back background noises, that kind of thing. Just find a quiet secluded place and then don't think any more than you have to. If you get if you're if you're able to meditate without thinking, you're probably better off not

thinking. And then if if you still have to think in your meditation just to keep

your mind from thinking about other things, then you know, you just keep doing that until you get it down, till you get better at it. And then you you can get away with thinking less and less. You're not having to like label things like mahasi method. you know, you're just like hitting the object with a stick over and over again, labeling it. That I mean, that's fine for beginners, but I mean, that's like the ABCs. You don't want to keep doing that after you've you've gotten good at it. Then you move on to like a deeper level of

that. So, I guess the two main things

would be, no, let's say three. Find a secluded place that's quiet. you know, have a good posture straight up and down, preferably sitting cross-legged on the floor, but if for whatever reason you have to sit in a chair or whatever, you can do that, too, I suppose. And just kind of have your meditation calibrated so that you're not thinking any more than you have to because to get into the deepest meditation, you have to stop thinking.

So I think I'm just going to move on to next question also from Stellar Supreme formerly known as

Ser which is how often did you get milk with your arms as a monk? Not very often

because I mean the Burmese are not real milk drinkers. Most people in this world cannot digest lactose. You know they're lactose intolerant unlike we members of the master race so to speak.

You know, it's mostly people of Indo-Uropean ancestry that can digest milk, which is one reason, one of the many reasons why the Indo-Uropeans were able to conquer so much of the world, at least culturally, linguistically, even if they weren't doing it militarily in all cases, still um you

can you can like harvest more calories from an acre of dairy land than an acre

of like beef

cattle. So you could have higher

population density that the

Indo-Uropeans could because they drank

milk. But I'm digressing. Getting milk

with my alms, it happened very rarely.

And there were just a few supporters

that knew that I liked milk. They knew

that I could drink it. And so I'd get

like this plastic bag of warm milk in my

bowl and it was have like this rubbery

layer of like cream, you know, I guess

it was like rubbery cream floating on

the top. In the west it gets

homogenized, so it gets all like

emulsified into the milk, I guess. But

in

Burma, you know, you get like it's just floating on the top. And I remember once remarking to this lady that gave me some of this milk. It's like, you know, milk is better if it's not chewy. And then she was like, she was just amazed. It's like, I pay extra for it to have that cream on it. So, let's see here. Yeah, it didn't happen very often. And usually it doesn't because, as I say, most Asians can't even drink milk without getting the squirts or something.

So, I'm just going to move on to Stella

Supreme, etc., etc.'s this third
question which is what are your thoughts
about secular Buddhists dismissing the
reality of enlightenment as magical
thinking while claiming to be Buddhist
yeah I mean my experience with most
western Buddhists is that you know
they're Buddhists second at best you
know even their political views will
take precedence over over dharma or
dharma in in many
cases and a lot of them just can't tell
the difference between like leftist
political
like what is it
indoctrination and actual dharma. I've
talked about this lots of

times. Um so I mean they're they're accepting certain techniques from Buddhism which if they practice them can actually help them to become wiser. So that their reasons for meditating will become wiser. Their understanding of dharma will become wiser. So, I mean, so long as you you start meditating to begin with, you know, you can have bad reasons. Let's say you just want to develop psychic powers so you can [__] up your enemies, that kind of thing. I mean, so long as it gets you meditating, you know, taking taking dharma more seriously, then you're going to get benefit from that. you're g your wisdom

will develop and then you may like
abandon you know worse reasons and
accept better reasons you know sort of
like um the Buddha who uh I think it was
his half
brother I think it was his half brother
that he sort of in a way kind of tricked
him into becoming a monk by showing he
was it was his wedding day and so the
Buddha shows him I mean this is what the
celestial nymphs look like in heaven And
he shows them these goddesses, you know,
gives them this vision of these just
impossibly gorgeous celestial nymphs in
in in heaven which made human women
looks look sort of like a burnt monkey.
And so then, you know, he became a monk

because he wanted those those nymphs.
But then he was practicing correctly,
you know, under the supervision of the
Buddha himself. And so eventually he
just got wiser and wiser, had liberating
insight, became enlightened, and didn't
want the nymphs no more. That kind of
thing. So I mean, you can start doing
Buddhist practice for like silly
reasons, but if you practice correctly,
it will help you to get like have better
understanding so that you'll start
having better reasons and a better
understanding of Dhamma.
But I do admit I do agree that a lot of
like the boomer

um meditation sa in America that that I had interactions with you know they tend to be very smug and it's it's kind of a superficial approach to dharma and you know it's like they reject even the teachers will reject even karma nirvana rebirth some of the basic like tenets of Buddhism including the goal

And you know it's just they just think that if western science can't explain it then it's [__] or it's mythology or magical thinking or just you know some ancient culture that we don't have to take seriously

anymore. Now some of them just you because their practice isn't very deep or they've just got certain like karmic

obstacles or whatever they just never get past the superficial level. But um I mean in some if you if you do practice correctly then you know it's like your your understanding evolves and gets better and you can kind of move on from that.

So, but yeah, I mean it is blamew worthy for a teacher of dharma, a teacher of a group of people calling themselves SA, you know, he's just sort of poo pooing the whole idea of like karma or or enlightenment, nirvana, that kind of thing is just in a way it's it's slandering. is is

misrepresenting the Buddha, what the Buddha taught, and just sort of pedalling some inferior, extremely watered down version of Dharma, which is better than no Dharma at all, I suppose. But yeah,

there Buddhism in the west has uh it has really mutated radically as a result of arrogant westerners who just assume that the western point of view is the correct point of view and they're just going to be adding little bits and pieces that they think is an improvement. But it's, you know, it's it's like they're fitting what parts of Buddhism will fit into like a a scientistic point of view. And so it's not even really dharma at that

point. It's like semi dharma fragments of dharma that are just sort of forcefitit into gaps in a in a scientistic point of view, a leftist scientistic point of view more often than not.

So I guess I answer that question. I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Tzasquez is and Tzas is says if this universe or our happiness misery ratio is balancing itself out to zero why Janes were wrong torturing themselves. If you torture yourself for 20 years then all is left is happiness for the rest of one's life according to this theory. Yeah, that's

kind of what the what Jesus was apparently teaching in the sermon on the mount, too. You know, it's better to cry than to laugh. You know, it's like you have to be like miserable in this life in order to be happy in the next life, which lasts forever, which is not a good equation balancing out to zero, is it? But the Janes were wrong for torturing themselves partly because they were making more karma by doing it. And they're getting a certain satisfaction from torturing themselves. I mean, it's that's the way it works with just about anybody who's wallowing in misery is they're getting a certain satisfaction, a certain kind of perverse

happiness from wallowing in misery or torturing themselves or whatever. You know, some people, you know, they just like their sicknesses and their their mental disabilities or whatever, it gives their life meaning and they'll just talk about it to anybody and they get satisfaction from that. It's like they're venting or whatever. And when you you believe that you are striving for enlightenment, that you're doing the right thing, that you're this heroic spiritual warrior by torturing yourself, you are getting satisfaction from doing that. in addition to just making more karma because the genes were torturing

themselves not to balance out the happiness misery ratio so much as they were just trying to burn off all of their karma especially their bad karma by just speeding up. this a kind of spiritual accelerationism, but that deliberate intention and the deliberate efforts to torture themselves were really just making more karma. And it was kind of a messed up tortury kind of karma. So, I mean, the happiness misery ratio balances out to zero regardless of what you do. If you wallow in like somebody who's just got a short temper and they just get pissed off a lot. I mean superficially they seem un unhappy but yet they derive satisfaction from

venting their anger. So it's just this
weird kind
of I don't know what you call it this
weird balance of happiness and misery
that's happening. Even though someone
might appear to be miserable, they get
it's like sometimes they get
dissatisfaction from this idea that they
deserve to be miserable or or whatever
it is. You know, it's just like this
they're this the spiritual hero that's
taking satisfaction and torturing
themselves for the sake of glorious
liberation and all
that. Okay. So, I think I'm just going
to move on to Trzas is second question,

which is, "Have you considered going to
a sperm bank and leave your genetic mark
for future generations?" No. And like uh
Danny Glover used to say on the old
Lethal Weapon movie, I'm getting too old
for this [__] Maybe when I was young
and I was just full of juice, you know,
I might, yeah, I'll just squirt some
over that way. But I just as I've gotten
older and I'm having to work for a
living and just attending to some sic
duties and all that that I just have
less inclination to be squirting
my my uh what is it? My precious bodily
fluids in all
directions. Well, too much information
there maybe, but I don't care. It's my

show. Let's see

here. Yeah, I mean that would be the

main thing. It also be weird like if you

donate sperm to a sperm bank and then

some woman you don't even know is going

to be having a child that you are

technically the father of. I mean, I

wouldn't want that responsibility of

just my own children being raised by

strangers that I've never met before. I

haven't vetted them or anything.

So yeah, I'm just going to move on. Next

question also from Tzas is what is that

plant on the right of you? Well, I

assume Trzascus is is referring to that

one. Let's see here. I got to get this

window out of the way. Oh man, I didn't even have this set up right. Supposed to be like that so you can gaze in awe and wonder at my fish tank. And I got to change out the horn work soon. It's getting kind of raggedy. So, that plant right

right How do I point at this thing right there? It's a spider plant. It's supposed to be a good plant. It like cleans the air and stuff and it it doesn't require a lot of bright light. It grows just about anywhere. So, yeah, I think that's a spider plant. Now, I got to move this window back here. Okay.

So this next question is from Austin and

Austin says, "Is karma and mind is karma and mind created or uncreated? If uncreated and eternal, they would possess divinity and thus be defined as gods following the western paradigm. So karma is certainly created now. We are creating karma. That's that's what we're doing. So yeah, karma is created definitely and mind that all depends on how you look at it. I mean you could say that like various spiritual traditions including a few obscure Buddhist like terra Buddhist sutras or sutas indicate that you know the highest reality is infinite formless consciousness.

But so you could say that that kind of mind is uncreated. But because it is infinite and formless, it's without any kind of discrete content and you can't really say if it exists or doesn't exist. It's just off the scale. But mind that you can perceive, mind that you can actually get some kind of handle on that is created. And that includes karma because karma is a mental state. So yeah, it's just in a constant state of flux. It's all ana in that sense. All impermanent in constant. So I guess I'll just move on

to the next question. This is from Harim Cthulhu. And Harim Cthulhu is being a wise guy here. He says, "What would the Buddha think about people who try to guess thoughts of enlightened beings?"
And that is a good
question. And I'm going to just move on to the next question here. This is from Throat Warbler Mangrove. And Throat Warbler Mangrove says, "Was the Buddha an
anti-natalist? And what are your thoughts on anti-natalism?"
And I've had a few questions along these lines that the Buddha was I mean ideally he would have been an anti-natalist. You

know he's saying the best thing you can do is just renounce worldly life which includes renounce family life, go off into a forest and meditate until you are liberated. So he'd be an anti-natalist in that sense. Although he wasn't speaking out really like voseiferously against people who have families. I mean, just being realistic. Most people are just not ready to renounce the world and go off and meditate in tigerinfested and banditinfested forests infested forests.

So sort of from a spiritual point of view, he would be an anti-natalist, but just from a like a realistic acceptance of the way things are then, you know,

he's he's not going to be like bashing people that have children and raise families, that sort of thing. And with regard to my own thoughts on anti-natalism, I'm less anti-natalist now than I was as a young man.
um having children I mean it's it's not for everybody seriously although you can say well the population is crashing especially the populations in like developed countries like like the west and also like Japan and South Korea and places like that that the population is decreasing but just because the population decreases that's not necessarily a bad thing that I mean this

world would be fine with 1 billion people instead of 8 billion people. 1 billion would probably be preferable to 8 billion. But the problem is, of course, that when you've got a welfare state, you know, when you've got socialism, then it's such a heavy drain, a heavy drag on like the federal budget, you know, all these pensions and and social security and everything that, you know, a diminishing number of young workers are paying for and an increasing number of old retired people are benefiting from. That's where the real problem comes in.

If you didn't have the welfare state, then more people would be having

children because children would be their social security, especially if they didn't have a pension either or a 401k or
whatever. But with regard to antiatalism, I mean, I didn't want to have kids when I was a young man. Mainly, I mean, partly I mean, I was intending to become a monk anyway, so there's that. But even if I hadn't become a monk, there's I mean back then, like back in the 80s and early 90s, you know, it wasn't so much global warming, that sort of thing. It was thermonuclear Armageddon, the Cold War, you know, back when the USSR still existed. That'd be

like the 80s mainly for me.

Anyhow, that I mean, it's like who knows what this world is going to be like 10 years from now or 20 years from now. It's just you have to be willing to gamble with the lives of your children that they're not going to be growing up in a kind of like radioactive hellscape. But now it turns out there was no cold war. I mean there was no hot war. You know that came as a result of the cold war. You know there was no World War III yet. Hasn't been one yet except for maybe the cold one might be considered World War II. So anti-natalism. I mean, I think I answered this question like just one or

two Q&As's ago where, you know, it's for each person to decide for themselves. I mean, nowadays, if I knew then what I know now, and I have the woman then that I have now, I mean, I might be willing to have kids just as a kind of civic duty even though it's one hell of a sacrifice of like your freedoms and so forth.

Um, yeah. I mean, it's one hell of an obligation to raise children, you know. It's just not just that you're paying for their food, you know, making sure they go to school, that kind of thing. I It's your duty to to do what you can to

ensure that they grow up to be
relatively good, relatively happy,
relatively healthy human
beings. And most people just they just
really don't know how to do that.
because they're not particularly good,
happy, healthy human
beings. So, I mean, I can go either way.
I mean, I really don't have a dog in the
fight. So, if you want to have kids, go
ahead and have kids. You don't want to
have kids, then don't have
kids. But, it's better if you do have
kids, get married before you have
kids. Let's see. So I guess I'm just
going to move on. Next question. This is
from

Mfiles and Mfiles said this is a statement from a famous Vajriana teacher. Quote, people try spiritually to achieve realization. The true realization is to achieve a kind heart. Other than that, there is nothing really that is useful. Unquote. And then Mfiles says, "I find that it sounds very pop Buddhism, easily digestible. What do you think of it?" Yeah, it's very superficial. The true realization is to achieve a kind heart. Yeah, there's a lot of kind-hearted beings out there that are still wallowing in delusion. So, yeah, I I would disagree with the famous Vajriana teacher. I

don't know if he's a a monk or a she's a nun or they're a just like some Zogchin instructor or or what they are. I don't know. But uh people try spiritually to achieve realization. The true realization is to achieve a kind heart. Yeah. Other than that, there's nothing really that is useful. Well, what's so useful about a kind heart? You're going to look at it that way. How is having a kind heart more useful than having like an understanding of reality? So yeah, I think it is very superficial and false from a Buddhist point of view and I do not agree with it.

you're probably better off being a wise

person that's kind of crotchety and people don't like you much than to be just very sweet nice person who is just kind of incompetent and and just wallowing in delusion. So I'm just going to move on to Mfile's next question which is I know you always tell us that very few people understand the dependent origination teaching. Some of the things that really make me confused is how is there an origination if there is no primordial cause? Origination from what? Well, you could say that there's a primordial foundation. Especially if you're

unorthodox, in which case you'd say, you know, there's like infinite formless consciousness is like the the ground of being. You know, it's like the the quantum field in theoretical physics, you know, it contains infinite energy and zero energy somehow at the same time. It's it's like infinite being and non-being at the same time in a sense. And it's just off the scale. It's just doesn't apply to samsara from a samsaric point of view. It's just not there. You can't point to it. You can't discern it. You can't perceive it. It may as well just be completely non-existent. And from a saric point of view, it's it's just it's just

words. But I mean, that is like the essence, you know. Let's just go back to the theory of the block of marble that I've yammered away about so many times. You've got this block of marble and it contains within it every single possible statue in potential form. You know, every molecule of each statue is already there in the exact right position. The statue is in there. It's just that it it exists in like virtual or potential form because no sculptor has carved it out. You know, it's just in there in potential form. And that's that's every possible scenario, every possible reality is contained in virtual form

there, including all the stuff arising and passing away, all the the karma and the delusion and the suffering beings and all that. You know, it's like their ultimate essence is this stone that cannot be perceived that is really not part of samsara. But Samsara is composed of the
statues that exist in a kind of potential or conditional
form. So there the primordial cause I mean there is no primordial cause because this has been going on just forever. there is no beginning to it.
So yeah, I mean the origination is also just sort of potential and conditional.

So, I hope I answered that question because I mean I've answered the question like dozens of times at this point and I mean if you've heard me explain it, you know, three times or more, you still don't get it, then you're just going to have to find someone else try to explain it to you and maybe they'll have better luck than than I
have. But Mfiles is kind of a new questioner unless he changed his name recently. So he has kind of an excuse here because it may be that he hasn't seen very many of my Q&As's where I'm, you know, answering essentially the same

questions over and over again at times. Not all the questions, but there are certain types of question that keep getting asked, you know, like what would the Buddha think about, you know, what what what's an enlightened mind like this kind of thing. Those are questions also that that I get asked a lot.
So let's see or just karma questions you know is it wholesome or unh wholesome to do you know action acts that kind of thing. So let's see here. I'm just going to move on to M Files's third question, which is if beings are illusory, karma is also illusory. So how can there be consequences from illusory actions? Because they are illusory

consequences. The whole thing is virtual. And it's not just totally fake because like I said, those statues really are in there. you know, every single molecule of, you know, the the Venus Demo or or like Leia Kan and his sons being eaten by snakes or the discus thrower, the dying gall, Rodan's thinker, they're all in there. Every molecule exactly in the right place. So, it's it's like a potential existence. So, the beings have a potential existence or conditional existence. Karma has a potential or conditional existence. And so the

consequences from these potential or
conditional actions are also potential
or
conditional. That's how that's what
dependent core rising
is. It's all
conditional. So I'm just going to move
on. Next question. This is from
Pedro. And Pedro says, "What do you
think of Prophet Jerome Fernando from
Sri Lanka?" This is the first I've ever
heard of him as far as I can tell. I do
not recall ever hearing of the prophet
Jerome Fernando before Pedro asked me
about him. So, what do I think about
him? I don't know. I never heard of him.
So I'll just move on to Pedro's second

question which is if many people many in the sense of more than 100 people believe that a person has healing powers can that belief alone grant that person healing powers for example the prophet Jerome Fernando. So I guess the prophet Jerome Fernando is also a kind of faith healer. So, if many people believe that someone has healing powers, can that belief alone grant that person healing powers? Um, yeah. I'd say yes. I mean, it's really the belief of the person that he's healing would be the main person who should believe in it. It's like in the New Testament, like I I think I said this in the previous Q&A

when Jesus would heal somebody of blindness or whatever, and the person would thank Jesus, Jesus would say, "It's your own faith that healed you. If you didn't have the faith, you wouldn't have got healed. And that's why when he went back to his own hometown of Nazareth, he wasn't able to heal very many people there. It's because everyone was skeptical. It's like, hey, isn't that Jesus the carpenter's son? I mean, don't his brothers and sisters live here? Who does who who does he think he is? So, if one person believes that this person has healing powers, then that belief alone can grant that person healing powers, at least with regard to

that one person.

So I mean in a way you got more people

believing that someone has healing

powers. It makes it easier for

additional people to believe that that

person has healing powers which then

will help that person to have healing

powers just due to the power of faith

that can move mountains

supposedly. So yeah, I mean it's mainly

I mean the belief of the the prophet

himself would certainly help and then

the belief of the person being healed,

the belief of the people around who are

like observing would also definitely

like contribute to this group mind that

is helping this thing to

happen. So yeah and I'm just going to

move on to the next question. This is

from Sedarta Lohaitita. And Sedarta

Lohachita says, and uh he's being kind

of transgressive or something here. He

says, "Why do you think black people or

those of black descent in America are

rarely interested in the dharma? I've

seen that there are Buddhist monasteries

in Africa, like in Congo and South South

Africa, but it seems that black people

tend to be more drawn to monotheistic

extremism, such as Islam or

Christianity. Well, black people aren't

necessarily drawn to monotheistic

extremism. I mean, before Islam and

Christianity had missionaries and others
converting people in subsaharan Africa,
I I would guess they were mostly
animists.
which is not
monotheistic.
But yeah, I think there's one monastery
in Uganda. I've seen like little video
clips of black monks going for alms
round in Uganda, I think it is. And you
know, black villagers waiting there to
put food in their bowl is somehow
working. And
um so partly it's cultural. I would
guess that mainly it's cultural.
It's just a cultural thing that is not

really black culture. It's more Asian culture and then like some yepy boomer type culture that started like back in the 1950s with Zen Buddhism and you know then it finally you had like the weasna movement starting in the the 70s and so forth. Um, that's more of a white thing. But it is true like even in the west I've seen like two or three black Buddhists or just two or three black Buddhists anywhere. Like in Burma I can remember seeing one. he was um following the Sunlon method and his his idea was he was just going to be a monk for a little while until he got the Sunlon method down and then he was going to drop out and go back and teach the

Sunlone method.

Um yeah. So I mean it is rare and so I think the main reason is just cultural because black people are followers of culture and also uh like a secondary reason is just that terra Buddhism is largely an intellectual kind of spiritual system and black people are less likely to be intellectually inclined than white people or East Asian people. Although in Burma there's a lot of very non-intellectual villagers who are extremely devout terraotta Buddhists. And it's weird. It's like you can go out to some remote village and you can overhear, you know, these these

two old village guys sitting around just discussing like like subtle points of Abidama philosophy.

So I would guess that it's primarily a cultural thing.

But then you've got like the dei, you know, you got the leftist quasi Buddhists, some of whom don't believe in enlightenment and so forth, like was being discussed earlier, who, you know, there's some black meditator, they're going to like that black meditator is going to get promoted up to teacher level regardless of whether they're really qualified to be a teacher.

So you got like the the DEI leftist

Buddhists, Buddhists in the West who are
promoting for all their worth
uh black Buddhists, you know, just
trying to get as many black Buddhists to
fill the quota as
possible, which isn't
necessarily helping very much because
then you wind up with incompetent
diversity hires teaching Dhama. you even
I mean you got enough white ones. You
don't have to just add new colors of
incompetent dhamma
teachers. Not not that all of them are
incompetent, I'm sure. But when you see
a black surgeon or a black airline pilot
or a black dama teacher, there's

naturally this little bit of doubt that arises like are they really qualified or did they just get the job to fill a quota?

So I'm just going to move on to Sedart Lohito's next question which is do you know the philosophy about war change and the opposites from Heracolitis? I've read about Heracolitis long ago. You know I know like his famous saying you can't step into the same river twice. You know everything is change. Um, but I I don't recall his philosophy of war, whether that's just sort of like some elemental kind of warfare going on or whether he's actually talking about people with with spears and shields and

helmets out like stabbing each other in a field

somewhere. But um, yeah, really I don't know all that much about heracitis partly because I really did not agree much with heracitis. I was I attended more to be more the aliatic type of person. I liked like permenities, you know, all is one rather than like atomizing the universe and it's all these different different parts interacting with each other.

So that's one reason also why I've always been sort of gravitating towards like Mahayana metaphysics you know not some of the other ideas of Mahayana but

their their metaphysics I consider to be
more sophisticated than the dharma or
dharma theory of the earlier schools
like terraovvada that had the abidhama
and you know all these different kinds
of ultimate realities all interacting
with each other and flashing off and on
and they're all ultimately real and I
It's just easier for me to believe that
it's all wrong
ultimately. So, I think I'm just going
to move on to the next question. This is
from
Ruie and Ruie says, "Perhaps a few words
on disease and hell realms. This
question was inspired by your Burmese
dog stories, but also excuse me, but

also by my COVID adult
brain, which has been producing weird
mental loops.
Well, going with orthodox Buddhism,
um, you can say like figuratively there
are hell realms in this world, like some
brothel in in Bangkok with teenage
village girls sold to the brothel and
they're locked in this room and they
have to be prostitutes regardless of how
they feel about the matter. You could
call that a kind of hell realm. like
certain street corners in like Baltimore
or there's one famous city um it's just
become like a meme where you know you'll
have people showing videos of just

people on drugs just like zombies just sort of staggering around or lying on the sidewalk in this city or um being a Burmese dog could be called a kind of figurative hell realm. Um, one place that I've seen a kind of figurative hell realm was um, back when I was in my 20s, I got this job. We were going to be working out of Atoria, Oregon, and there was this hotel there. Maybe I shouldn't say the name of the hotel, but it was just a flop house. And we were looking for a place to just kind of, my partner and I were looking for a place to kind of station ourselves, just have like a home base. And so he went there. I went there with him to this hotel hotel. And

I mean it was just scary. It was like there was a woman there who was cooking food. She had a the bridge of her nose was completely flattened out which just looked like it was a genetic thing. Although later I read that that's one of the symptoms of advanced syphilis is it flattens out your the bridge of your nose. And that just the whole place just stank. and he got my my partner got shown this room. You know, it's like it's 80 bucks a month, but it's 50 bucks a month if you pay cash in advance. And it was just like this bombed out room with this mattress there. There's stains all over it. And it was just the smell,

the vibe was like lead in this whole place. And it was like I just wanted to get out of there as soon as I could. It was not a place where I would want to be just sitting there soaking up these diseased
vibes, much less, you know, vapors and pathogens and so
forth. And also one one little hell realm that I came across when I was in Burma was we were on a road trip somewhere. We were going somewhere down the highway and it was a highway heading north towards China and a lot of truckloads of pigs, live pigs, go to China. It's like the Burmese are exporting live pigs to China because the

Chinese like their

pork. And we stopped at this tea shop

because the driver that was I was with

wanted to stop at a tea shop and have

some tea. I stayed outside and one of

these truckloads of pigs pulls up and

these pigs I mean it's like a little

Toyota pickup and it's just in the back.

It's just piled up like four deep of

live pigs. They're just stacked in there

like firewood and they're all like

squealing and screaming and like the

driver of that truck, that little pickup

truck was in having some tea, too. Well,

these two teenage assistants have got

like bamboo poles and because the pigs

are like squirming, they're they're like using the bamboo poles to kind of lever lever them back into being stacked neatly. And I remember going up to them and teenage kids. I mean, a Buddhist monk walking up to them when they're like, you know, dealing in live livestock for slaughter, you know, they just ignored me. You know, they're Burmese are pretty good at that sort of thing. Just like pretending like they don't see you. And then I'm just saying this is this is hell. That is hell right there. But I mean, from a Buddhist point of view, hell is way worse than anything you're going to find on this planet. It's way worse than a flop house hotel

in Atoria, Oregon. Way worse than some drug den, way worse than a wh house. Way worse than a truckload of pigs. I mean, it's just, you know, glowing hot iron and just constant like agony and and just misery and torture going on. It's just levels of magnitude, orders of magnitude higher than what you're going to find in this in this world. you know, maybe the very worst torture chambers in some, you know, autocratic dictatorship, you know, something that Saddam Hussein would have going or pull pot, somebody like that, that that might sort of become kind of comparable to

some of the the higher levels of hell in Buddhism. But yeah, it's it's it's really very different. So, let's see. Did I answer the question? A few words. Well, I guess I didn't because I used more than a few on disease and hell realms. Yeah, disease. I mean, I mean, from a Buddhist point of view, it's all a hell realm. You know, even the highest heavens are just the subtlest hell realms. They're the least unpleasant hell realms. It's all dooka all the way down. It's not turtles all the way down. It's just dooka all the way down.

So, you know, you got diseases and old age and, you know, getting what you

don't want and not getting what you do
want and being separated from what
you're attached to and all that. That's
all dooka. We're all born
screaming. That sort of
thing. But, I mean, the actual hell
realms from a Buddhist point of view are
just like way beyond what you're going
to find on this planet.
So just kind of enjoy that we are in one
of the more comfortable hell
realms at least relatively
speaking. So let's see here. I mean
going with the 31 plains of existence,
human beings are like sixth from the
bottom. But that's mainly just because

the heaven realms are all divided up
into separate realms. Whereas the hell
realms are all just compacted together,
lumped together into one hell realm. But
if you divided up, the hell realms would
be kind of in the middle
humans. Just
saying. So I'm just going to move on to
uh
Yugaoo. And Yugaoo says, and I don't
fully understand this question either.
Yugahoo says, "I don't see any other way
but to look at the women
objectively. There is nothing more.
Could I be wrong?" And which women are
the women? I mean, it could be the women
on the thumbnail of the previous Q&A

that I wanted like beautiful crazy women on the on the thumbnail of the previous Q&A. And my lovely woman, she she did these women that just looked like they didn't look particularly crazy. And I'm saying they should each have a knife. The women should have knives. And she she just couldn't get the AI to have beautiful women wielding knives for some reason. I think maybe she was just being stubborn and didn't want to do it or something. She can do that sometimes occasionally. But uh I mean would I mean is Yugu referring to those women or when he says when he cannot let's see I don't see any

other way but to look at the women
objectively that he's just referring to
women in general he just refer he just
looks at women
objectively and then there is nothing
more could I be wrong well I mean if
you're looking I mean looking at
anything really objectively especially
women for a man to look at a
Objectively, I don't know if that's even
possible really because we've got like
animal instincts. Like if you even
notice whether they're pretty or not,
then that's not being entirely
objective. I mean, beauty is not an
objective thing. It's more of
subjective. And uh I mean when you're

dealing with women, if you're being completely objective, I I it's just sort of inconceivable to me that there's always going to be a certain amount of human nature and like human nature conditioned instincts and attitudes that are always going to be in there. Like guys just tend to go easier on women for some reason. You know, they're more polite to women, maybe less likely to yell at a woman. I at least most guys like uh there's two women that drive forklifts at work and I mean neither one of them is like beauty pageant material, you know, it's but for some reason they

just kind of get a pass that guys don't get. Men are just more kind of lenient towards them. They they cut them slack more and that's not being objective.

So yeah, I'm really not exactly sure what Yugahoo is referring to here and looking at the women objectively, but um I mean if he's human then I'm kind of skeptical that he's looking at women purely objectively. That there's always going to be a certain amount of human nature creeping in there around the edges. It might be subliminal. You don't even fully notice it. But if he's referring specifically to the women on the thumbnail of the

previous Q&A, yeah, it was sort of it kind of went arry a little bit because I wanted crazy women with knives and I just didn't get it. And so it sort of like fell between two stools, you know, it was like the the image was kind of moving in that direction but not completely not enough so that it would be a meaningful kind of thumbnail, you know, like symbolizing a theme which was like beautiful crazy women in the previous

Q&A. So let's see here. I think I'm just going to move on. Next question. And what do you know? It's from Arane. And Arin says, "When you look at a

definition such as intuition, it describes this quote," the brain draws on past experiences and external cues to make decisions at such high speeds that the response occurs at an unconscious level." And then Arin says, "How would you translate this process through a Buddhist lens?"

Well, from a Buddhist lens, it would be pretty much everything would be done by intuition because the process of mind according to Abidama philosophy, you know, it's like trillions of mind moments like 17 trillion moments of uh of of mind per eyelink. So it's it's going at such a fast rate that even though it's all volitional and in a

sense deliberate although it's also kind of pushed along by karma that I mean you can't really catch it when you're making a quick decision or some such and even if you're making a slow decision you're still missing out on 99.999% of what's going on.

So, it's just kind of more um more that way if you make a quick decision, which is like the the the dictionary definition of intuition where you're you're drawing on past experiences and external cues and making a decision at such high speeds that the response occurs at an unconscious level or a subconscious

level. Um, yeah. I mean, that's pretty good description of what's going on with in Abidama philosophy all the time. It's like it's happening trillions of times per second that there's all this stuff going on that you can't possibly be fully aware
of. And so if you're making a relatively quick decision, then it's just going to be more obviously of that sort than if you're making a slow decision in which you're still missing out on almost everything that's going on in in like the this the decision-m process and the entire like process of mentality that's going on.
So, I hope I answered that question

because I'm moving on to Aryan's second question, which is, is there a word for this in Buddhist philosophy that would come close to describing this subconscious process? Well, I mean, this is just kind of the way mind works. It's I mean,

chewiti accounts for a lot of it, which is you've got 17 mind moments. And I hope I'm getting the number

right because it's been quite a while since I've studied this kind of stuff. But it's like in quick succession all in like one trillionth of a second. Every time you've got some mental act which is I mean it's happening constantly that

there's these 17 mind moments. You've
got like the banga chittita which is a
kind of nebulous subconsciousness at
first and then it's like the mind
there's like this agitation and the the
the bwunga starts to wiggle and then
there's like oh I don't remember the
exact order of everything but there's
all these different mental states that
are all like taking place that are
taking part in this one moment of
cognition and then that's followed by
another and it's just like this constant
stream of stuff that's happening. at,
you know, 117 trillionth of a second
each
time. So,

um, that's just for this one mind
moment. It's just this very just
unthinkably
complex series of events supposedly
going on in according to Abidama
philosophy. And then you got karma which
is
subconscious, semiconscious at best.
that is sort of sort of it's kind of got
the trajectory automatically going where
you would it would take like uh like a
conscious volual act to kind of move in
a different direction from like the
direction your karma is pushing you that
that kind of a situation but um I mean
aside from that which is just accepted

as just the way it is there's there's
not much more I mean you've got like the
underlying anus which is sort of like
latent karma that is always there that
can then kind of be activated under
certain circumstances. This kind of
thing. But um the whole like ancient
Indian Buddhist description of human
psychology is in some respects radically
different from the modern western
understanding of human psychology.
So, and ancient Buddhism was pre-
Darwinian. So, like
just why human nature would be the way
it is. I mean, Abidama just doesn't go
there. It's just assumes that this is
just the way it is due to some cosmic

principle or something. some some just natural law makes us, you know, be a certain way and it didn't evolve that way through like natural selection or any such thing.

But yeah, I mean in a way it's kind of comparing apples to oranges. It's like one one paradigm of human psychology and another paradigm of human psychology. you know, got ancient Indian and modern western and you know, they're just not going to fit together very well just because the assump the beginning assumptions may be radically different. So in Buddhism, it's just

that's pretty much the way every your mind always is working. It's just super high speed, one thing after another after another going so fast that for the most part you're oblivious to what's going on. And that's kind of similar to some some teachings of western philosophy, but I don't think there's really a word for it. And because it's just they're just describing how the mind works, you know, it's not like it's some kind of seeming anomaly that needs a special word. It's just oras or whatever. It's just how the mind works. So, I'm sorry if I didn't answer that question completely satisfactoryy

and I apologize in advance. if I don't answer the next one completely satisfactory and this is from Aventity who is a recent recent addition to our discord server and Aventity says is there a concept of a witch in the polycanon and interestingly enough I cannot recall I assume there's witches in

there I'm just assuming there is like at least like in the dharmapata commentary or some such but usually like in the sutas if it's talking about someone who can do like supernatural stuff. They're talking about some swami meditating in a forest that that is just they don't

really talk about witches doing magic. I mean there is um in the dean kaya the silakonda of the dean kaya the first several sutas of the dean kaya there's a list of things that a monk shouldn't do and one of them is referring to like questioning a girl in trance you know like a spirit medium essentially they had spirit mediums where a woman would be like channeling

essentially and I mean you could call that a witch like in the old testament the witch of endor

You know, when King Saul consults the witch of Endor to communicate with the prophet Samuel who has already passed away, you know, she's called a witch

when really I mean she's she's summoning the dead, you know, through channeling or something. I guess I mean she actually did summon his spirit because apparently there was like an apparition there. So I mean that kind of witch maybe because there were spirit mediums. they are kind of mentioned very briefly in the silaconda of the de kaya. Um, I would I would assume that there's mentions of witches in the polycan that I just, you know, I just don't recall them. At least at least in the commentarial literature, but clearly in in Burma, which is possibly the most Buddhist country in the world, there's a

belief in witches, which is sort of like the ancestor veneration. It's not necessarily from the polycanon itself. It's just a cultural thing that didn't necessarily come from Terra Buddhism. But there's a saying in in Burma that one in every seven houses a witch. That really there there's lots of witches in Burma. They've got lots of beliefs about witches. I was warned about witches that might give me trouble and so forth. I've had like some village woman triumphantly telling me about how some friend of hers got hexed by a witch just recently, which pretty much proves that there's got to be witches because otherwise, how do you explain this woman getting hexed

by a witch if there isn't any witch?
So, but but most of the mentions, pretty
much all of the mentions of some kind of
magical stuff going on, you know,
supernatural
um mental powers, psychic powers
um that are mentioned in the polycanon,
they're referring
to like meditators that have developed
psychic powers through meditation.
So it could be just sort of like a a
bias in favor of giving a spiritual
power to spiritual practitioners and
just not attributing that to eccentric
females, that kind of thing.
So yeah, I mean if anyone can recall

some specific mention of a witch in the sutas somewhere then yeah I mean I would not at all be surprised but I've heard lots of witch stories when I was living in Burma. I've told a few witch stories like the guy who um snubbed the daughter of some witch and wound up with a wooden shoe in his stomach that had to be surgically removed and then the day after it was surgically removed he had another wooden shoe in his stomach. So then they knew it had to be a witch. The doctors knew this and so they had to call in an apolia which is like a white wizard like a a Buddhist like a virtuous wizard who only does white magic who had to had to cure him because the doctors

didn't want to just keep cutting it open
removing shoe after
shoe. But I mean that happened in a very
terrible Buddhist country. But I do not
recall reading anything specifically
about like witches doing
magic like and members of covens or
anything like that in the poly text but
it could be in there and it wouldn't
surprise
me. So I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from sea of
action
sepina. Let's see. We've been going for
a little over two hours. That's not too
bad. I

hope s of action sepatna says you said
old age sickness and death were overcome
by the Buddha because he transcended the
meat puppet and realize he ultimately
didn't exist but since there is no self
and we we were never the meat puppets
anyways and already don't ultimately
exist then by this logic how would you
argue against someone who says that we
are already free from old age sickness
and death and just don't realize it well
that's what the Mahayana Buddhists
say I mean ultimately
It's it's all illusory. It's just that
we're wallowing in the illusion. We're
we're clinging to it. We're stuck in the
illusion. So, yeah, I got no problem

with that. I mean, it's not we are already free from old age because we are part of the illusion. That's that's part of the thing. So, yeah. I mean, it's again again and again and again and again and again, there are some people who just absolutely cannot deal with two different levels of reality simultaneously. They keep just vehemently, stubbornly, obstinantly trying to like compress two different levels of reality into one level. And Terra Buddhism is guilty of this too. Orthodoxy like Abidama philosophy for example. And if you just can't do it, I

don't know what to tell you.

So yeah, I mean if you can just detach from the whole concept of you existing, well there you go. It doesn't even matter what this this supposed meat puppet is undergoing anymore. It's it becomes essentially irrelevant. So let's see here. Did I did I come close enough to answering that question that I can just move on to the next one? Let's see. How would you argue against someone who says we are already free from old age, sickness, and death and just don't realize it? Well, I you wouldn't use the we are because I mean that's part of the illusion too. It's not like there is some we that is free

from old age, sickness and death because the Wii is what it is that is trapped in old age, sickness and death. So you have to transcend the Wii. And so you can't say that we are free from old age, sickness, and death

really. But I mean, it's trying to explain two different levels of reality at the same time. And just there are some people that just aren't going to be able to go

there. But Mahayana Buddhists are saying this all the time. We're all Buddhists. We just don't realize or at cartullah saying we're already enlightened. It's just that our mind is making so much

noise that we don't notice it. That kind of thing.

And within that context, I got no argument against it. Just don't try to say that the Buddha taught it. So I'm just going to move on to SEO of action seat zero's second question here. What do you think comes first? The destruction of craving or experiencing nibbana. In the traditional model, you can glimpse nibbana and even meditate in that state eventually. But that doesn't mean you are an arahant still since you don't believe in the stages of enlightenment. I'm curious what your thoughts are on this topic. Well, what about the four noble truths? Third noble

truth is the noble truth of sessation which is the moment is it's describing enlightenment. When you no longer have craving, you no longer have suffering and you are enlightened.

Consequently, the sessation of craving and the experiencing of nibbana would be simultaneous. They would be the same going with the context of the four noble

truths. So you could say that you can temporarily experience nibbana through a temporary destruction of craving. And I mean Jonas are called like temporary liberation. So I mean you might be able to make some argument about that. But

like real sessation of craving and real
enlightenment would be
identical. Just going with the four
noble
truths.
So I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question which was the last
question yesterday but then there are a
few people snuck in additional questions
this morning
so they're going to be answered today.
So anyways the next question is from
Arpad and Arpad says from a terravada
viewpoint is the practice of Nimbutsu
harmful and I mean if you look it up
online what is nebutsu it's it's like
calling on the name of Amida Buddha. So

I mean with that definition of nembbutsu just it's like a pure land thing where you're just reciting the name of Amitaba Buddha or Amida Buddha in the hopes of being reborn in this pure land. From the terravada point of view that would be just wallowing in wrong view. So you'd probably be harming yourself through wrong view just through what would be considered like a silly belief. But as somebody on the discord server pointed out, if nebutsu, the practice of nembbutsu, which is just calling upon the Buddha or a
Buddha, I mean, if if that's how you interpret, it's not just restricted to

Amitaba or Amida, then I mean, if you're using it towards God Buddha, then I mean, in Thai Buddhism, especially the Thai forest tradition, then just using Buddha or Bhau as a kind of mantra then that's a valid meditation technique and there's a lot of relatively advanced meditation ajons who would promote just using Buddo

uh pretty much the way a Hindu would use M or Ram as a kind of

mantra. So I mean that wouldn't necessarily be harmful but calling on Amida Buddha to get you reborn into some pure land then from a terra point of view yeah that would just be like just this egregious corruption of dharma and

and the Buddha didn't teach that according to Terraata Buddhism and early Buddhism in general. So it all depends on how you define nimbutsu. If using nimbutsu as calling upon aida Buddha to get reborn into a pure land, his pure land, yeah, that would probably be harmful from an orthodox terraata point of view because it'd be like wallowing in in like a a wrong view. Whereas just using Buddha as a mantra, like a meditation object, that wouldn't necessarily be harmful even though it's not really endorsed in the uh the the sutas. But I mean, you know, there are

things that are endorsed in the sutas,
you know, like namotas, bavat, arhat,
sama, some Buddha saw, that kind of
thing. Using that as a kind of mantra,
you could do that. That would be right
out of the poly texts.
just reflection on the qualities of the
Buddha, that kind of
thing. But the pure land stuff, yeah,
that's that definitely would be uh
discouraged from an orthodox terra point
of
view. And I'm just going to move on to
the next question. And this is from
Jewels. No, no, it isn't from Jules.
It's from
Raphael. And Raphael says, "Why is Terra

Buddhism still popular in countries like Thailand, Burma, and Sri Lanka even though it teaches anata and makes no statements about the state of Nibbana? I mean, the doctrine of anata is confusing even for many intellectual Buddhists in the west. So, how is it for the ordinary population of these countries?" Well, I mean, how about the the Christian Trinity? I mean, that's just like a [__] That's just some kind of mindbender.

Christians don't seem to have a whole lot of problem with it. Even like illiterate peasant villagers in the Middle Ages, you know, they might be I

mean there was like riots and stuff over like the exact interpretation of the Trinity, you know, it's like does the Holy Spirit emanate through the Son from the Father or does it just come directly from the father? And there was there was blood flowing in the streets over this kind of stuff. And it was largely people I mean they didn't know they were just following along with their dogma. You know, their teacher said it's this way so it's this way. And then death to the infidels. So in like teraba Buddhist countries, you know, they they believe in all this doctrinal stuff, but it's just dogma is just like words. you know, they don't really understand dependent

co-arising. It's one of the most difficult concepts in Buddhism to understand, but I mean, they just give it lip service and they'll just repeat like what the commentary says about it. And it's it's fine. It's they just assume they're humble. They assume that even though I mean they might get the general official description or explanation kind of nevertheless it's the the monks especially the the seats who understand it they have faith that the seats understand it even if they don't fully understand it and it's the fact that they don't really understand it kind of helps them to have more

respect for Dharma because Dhamma is so advanced that their simple minds just aren't ready to go there and so defer to the monks and prostrate before them and make offerings to them because the monks understand at least the the simplehearted villagers believe that. So

anata yeah I mean and the only people the only terra Buddhists that I have encountered that vehemently argue against anata are westerners. and never encountered a Burmese person, a Burmese Buddhist arguing against no self. They might not fully understand it. Of course, they don't fully understand it. They don't fully understand a lot of

things, but still, it's their religion.
They were just born into it. They were
taught by their parents. The monks who
are wiser than them assure them that
it's true, so they have no problem with
it. And my nose is kind of plugging up a
little a little bit.
So, let's see here. I guess I answer
that
question. I suppose just a
bit just like maybe two minutes. Just I
got to I got
this. Got to show off my Lithuanian
hemp. No, I keep wanting to call it
hemp. My Lithuanian linen robe by doing
that.

So, let's see here. Oh, so there's there's like follow-up questions to this. Raphael says, "Are they simply ignorant of this doctrine?" No. I mean, just about any educated Burmese villager and they can be surprisingly knowledgeable with regard to to dharma that they know about anata. I mean, that's one of the basic teachings of Buddhism really. You know, it's one of the three marks of existence. So, they know about it. They just don't can't fully grasp it. But it in a way it just it's like an indication of how exalted the philosophy of Dhama is that you know they they can't grasp it but they just assume that the seats can grasp it that

the arants the wisest seats definitely
understand
that you know it's like western people
and science I mean the average American
doesn't really understand much physics
doesn't understand much chemistry but
they just assume the scientists just
know and and it doesn't cause them to
reject science just because they don't
understand the subtle you know so the
subtle teachings of
it. So let's see the next question. Do
the monks not even try to explain it to
them? Well, the monks themselves, most
of them really don't understand it very
well. They they can just repeat certain

teachings. But I mean, usually if monks
are teaching lay people in Burma,
they're teaching them stuff that's
suitable for lay people, especially
you're going to get loads of merit if
you make lots of donations to monks.
That's like one of the main themes of
sermons given by monks in Burma is
You're going to get reborn in heaven or
as a rich, beautiful human being if you
make donations to
monks. Wise guy monks just pound away at
this
theme. But I mean, you can sort of get
the idea across to lay people like the
simile of the chariot. I mean, it's the
simile of the chariot really is not

super difficult to understand. You know, you got a chariot. So, you take the chariot apart, you've got this pile of parts that came from the chariot. Is that a chariot? Well, not exactly. All the parts of the chariot are still there, but it's not a chariot now. Or you take a chariot, you take off one wheel, put on another wheel. Is it the same chariot? Well, yeah. And so, it's like chariot is just a convenient term for a certain assemblage of parts and then you can apply that to a human being, too. You know, it's like if you your finger gets cut off, god forbid, are you still you? Well,

yeah. You know, you use the same kind of arguments for a person so that some of the more intelligent, simplehearted villagers can somewhat get a grasp on it at at that

level. But there's really not a problem with an ata among like Burmese Buddhist villagers. They might not understand it. They don't understand dependent rising either. But you know, Christ medieval Christian villagers didn't understand the the trinity either

really or how the Holy Spirit emanates or whether Jesus had one nature or two natures, that kind of

thing.

So, I'm just going to move on to this

question. This is from Jules. It was a false alarm with the last time I said it was from Jules. But this one, this question really is from Jules. And he said, "Would reporting an illegal immigrant to ICE break any precepts?" And it depends on your mental state that just reporting an illegal immigrant to the immigration authorities for deportation presumably. And it would whether you're doing something wholesome or unh wholesome or just neutral depends on your mental states. I mean if you're doing it out of a hate of Mexicans for example then yeah and then that would be it could be

considered a kind of

uh pisunovacha which is a kind of wrong speech like if if you're like bad mouthing someone behind their back in order to get them into trouble for example you know it's like you're malicious gossip or something. It can even be true. You know, you can be telling the truth, but if your motive is to get that person in trouble, to make trouble for that person by saying some ugly truth about that person to somebody else, then that's still pisova. It's a kind of wrong speech. It's just like malicious. So, if your motives are malicious, you just hate Mexicans or something. And so you're you're turning

in illegal illegal aliens because of
that motivated by just you know aversion
dosa or whatever then yeah you're doing
something bad for yourself and
technically that could be considered a
violation of um the precept against
wrong speech. But if you're just like a
patriotic American who sincerely
believes that anyone living in this
country should be here
legally then not necessarily. you're not
necessarily like engaging in malicious,
you know, backbiting or
whatever. So, let's see. Jules, the
second question, what about reporting
multiple illegal immigrants, dozens

hypothetically, leading to the separation of family members? Well, the separation of family members would be irrelevant. You know, it's like, what are your motives? Why are you saying this? And so I mean it would just be multip like dozens of times multiplied by the first case which could or could not depending on your motives be a case of wrong speech and thereby a violation of one of the five precepts.

So whether it results in the separation of family members would be irrelevant from the point of view of Buddhist ethics. Unless that's part of your motivation. You hate them so bad you want their families to be separated,

let's say. Then that would be part of your your malicious motives that would cause you to be violating the f or violating the precept against wrong speech when you're reporting them.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to Jules's third question, which is the last question of this entire Q&A, and it is as follows. Have you ever reported an illegal immigrant to ICE? And no, I have not. I don't even know for sure who is an illegal immigrant. I assume there's lots of them in town,

but you like there's a lot of hit and runs like auto accidents where you've

got probably some Hispanic person who
doesn't speak English, you know, hardly
or if at all who get in a wreck or
something and, you know, they've got no
insurance, no driver's license, anything
like that. So, they just take
off. So, you got to be careful about
that sort of thing. If if if you're in
South Carolina or pretty much any state,
I guess, except for maybe
Maine and you know, you get in some sort
of fender bender with someone who
doesn't speak English, best thing you
can do immediately take a photograph of
their license plate just because there's
a good chance they're going to take off
or they're going to be begging you in

tears, don't report this to the police, you know, whatever it is. And then you're going to wind up just kind of screwed. maybe your your insurance won't cover it or
whatever. So, yeah, I don't know anyone in particular who is an illegal immigrant, although I'm sure that there are plenty of them
around. So, that's it. That's the That's the last question. And I'm going to open my emergency backup beverage just because I feel like it. I' I've had it here just for this show and then the show's practically over and I haven't opened it yet. So the hell with I'm

drinking

someh. And so like I should always say

at the beginning and never do except

maybe

once you have any questions you think I

can answer then especially about early

Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism, Buddhism

in general etc etc. I mean, you probably

heard all this before. Then feel free to

ask no more than three questions per

episode, please. And there is a chance

that soon it may go down from three to

two or even one because my my woman is

like got this idea that, you know,

several hours every Saturday is really

cutting into our weekend free time

together. And so maybe we could um like

reduce the number of questions and make the Q&As's once every two weeks and then fill in the gaps on alternate weeks with like pseudo readings or something. In fact, she especially has been talking about reading stuff that I have written, making videos about it, maybe using AI generated art to illustrate them or something. And I've been trying to get her to to do that with a poem that my father wrote. This I mean this has been going on for years. And so that may eventually actually start happening. So let's see. Like and subscribe if you haven't already. Just smash the hell out of the like button if

you liked it. If you didn't, then don't,

I guess. And uh be happy.

Alrighty then.

I do believe we are recording.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 149.

I am your host Po Basa. And I know what you're thinking out there. 149 that could be a prime number. And in fact 149 is a prime number.

So, I've been considering just getting like a prime number feez cuz the majamica fez isn't getting much use anymore. In fact, oh, there it is. Yeah, it's still back there. The majama fez isn't getting much use anymore because people don't ask questions about majamaka very often or about nagarina.

And I mean, nagarina was kind of a multiaceted sort of person. But Majama, I mean, there's only so many questions you can ask about it. It's It's radically simple.

Oh, this is this is the umbrella. It was in here like this.

I don't know if you can see me take it out.

So, I guess

I should just uh wait into this and start answering questions. And we don't have a whole lot of questions. It's you guys are going easy on me this week, which is

fine, I guess.

So the very first question is from

Siovaken Seipad Zeda and Seovioad Zeda
who uh considers everything to be some
sort of cope asks the following question
regarding evolution or at least it
involves evolution and this is two two
in a row that have sort of an
evolutionary or Darwinian theme because
there are a number of questions that
touch on evolution.
So anyways, Siovak says,
"From an evolutionary standpoint," see,
told you, told you,
"From an evolutionary standpoint, is
spirituality a type of coping mechanism?
You can't achieve your natural desires
that will make you and your genetic

lineage prosper? So instead of being
smarter, creative, or skillful at
attaining your goals,
you run away and try to destroy your
desires instead. So you don't feel bad
about being an evolutionary failure. And
no, I mean for some people I suppose
probably for God Buddha the founder of
Buddhism I mean first of all before
Darwin especially
I mean evolution was not a mainstream
concept. You know, there's some
theorists, you know, going way back to,
you know, the the early Greek
philosopher Anakamander,
who believed that we all descended from
fish, that kind of thing. But not having

kids being an evolutionary failure. I mean, it was not a kind of thinking that most people engaged in. It was more like just a life failure because when you get old, maybe nobody's going to take care of you.

So anyways, let's see here. I mean, smarter creative. Yeah. I mean, it's not like the purpose of existence is just to reproduce your DNA sequences. From a purely biological point of view, that may be valid. But biology hadn't been invented yet throughout most of the course of human history. So, people just weren't thinking in those terms.

instead

spirituality instead of being kind of

cope

is I mean it's it's a case of human

beings evolving going with the

evolutionary standpoint

um until we are smarter and in many

cases wiser than is in our best

interests as a species that is intent

upon reproducing his DNA sequences. So,

it's like we

we've sort of cut loose from instinct to

some degree. Not to the degree that a

lot of people might assume, but still

we've replaced a lot of instinctual

stuff with culture.

And sometimes culture can be like not in

our best interests. you know, you just

follow some tradition just blindly
following a tradition that maybe is not
in the best interests of the species or
of the society or whatever.
So, we've developed too much of a brain
so that we can start thinking and having
weird ideas like anti-natalism and all
that, but also we've got a a mind that
is sophisticated enough that we're
starting to get inklings of reality
shining through the thin places in the
illusion.
So
it's uh I mean it's sort of like human
babies are born premature. I mean
compared with other mammals simply

because our head is too big. And so I mean it's it's sort of like a give and take. You know this this high intelligence that humans have have obviously caused us to be one of the most successful species on the planet. But at the same time, it can be like led astray or just led in directions that that are not just intent upon survival and reproduction
and that's not necessarily a bad thing. So let's see.
Have I answered the question yet? Is spirituality a type of coping mechanism for some people? But I mean, the best spiritual people, you know, the the greatest spiritual geniuses aren't

simply coping because they're not
reproducing their DNA sequences enough.
A lot of them turn to a spiritual life
after they've already reproduced.
So yeah, I suppose I mean it's it's more
a matter of we're too intelligent to
just be a mindless reproduction machine.
At least some of us are too intelligent
for that.
So let's see here. So we find like other
reasons to exist
including understanding reality.
I think I'm just going to move on to
section cod zero. No second question
which is as follows. Why do you think so
many westerners in spiritual traditions

suffer from narcissism
where they think achieving enlightenment
will make them unlock their destiny of
being the chosen one or something.
Delusions of grandeur looking down on
others and thinking only they have found
the true path. I've seen this same trend
over and over again. Um this reminds me
of a statement made by a person I used
to know
u who said that when when people go to
see some famous teacher like in their
heart of hearts they're they're wanting
that teacher to just single them out
point at them and say you are the chosen
one.
So exactly why this kind of spiritual

narcissism is so common I don't know
exactly. I'm not exactly sure. I mean,
I'd probably be happy if I went to see
hear some famous spiritual teacher speak
and they pointed at me and said, "You
are the chosen one." I mean, that would
be nice, I suppose.
Although, it never happened and I wasn't
really at a conscious level anyway,
uh, hoping for it to happen.
So
delusions of grandeur. I mean
yeah it's it's hard to say exactly
looking down on others thinking only
they have found the true path. Well I
mean thinking only they have found the

true path that's I mean that's common
even in mere religion before you even
get to actual spirituality. I mean
that's just standard. Just about any
religious person thinks that they have
found the true path or at least the
followers of their religion
think you know that they have found they
have found the true religion. Every
religious person in the world has such
wisdom that they are members of the one
true religion.
So, I mean, that's just kind of it might
be a kind of tribalistic instinct,
but it goes farther than that because
they're going to unlock their destiny of
being the chosen one, delusions of

grandeur and all that. Um,

yeah, I mean,

this human ego is is going to find a way

to the surface regardless, even even in

very subtle ways in relatively wise

people.

But the exact reason, the exact answer

to that, I I'm not in a position right

now to even hazard a guess

as to why so many westerners in

spiritual traditions suffer from

narcissism

where they think achieving enlightenment

will make them etc., etc. Although to

some degree, I mean, Western people who

are going into some esoteric field, I

mean, they're sort of on the fringe anyway, and they might think that they're kind of, you know, narcissists or whatever, kind of on the fringe or how do I explain it? You know, they're kind of special already. You know, that's one of the reasons why they're choosing some esoteric or fringe spiritual system because they don't want to be like everybody else. I mean, I can relate to that. That's been sort of like a a a

conditioning factor in my personality is just this idea that the majority is always wrong and I don't want to be like everybody else and so you just go off and do something different. I mean,

that's probably part of it right there.
Uh, but aside from that and this the
tribalism thing that I mentioned
earlier, that's about as about as good
of an answer I can give without just
walking out onto thin ice and making
some wild guess without having carefully
thought thought it out because I really
have not thought of an answer for this
question before reading it just now.
So I'm just going to move on to se of
action sepat zena's third question which
is apparently three4s of people have
sensed their loved ones in some way
after their deaths. Have you ever felt
the presence of your loved one after

death? And what do you make of these experiences being so common? Well, I mean real paranormal stuff uh could be a factor. The only person that I can think of that would come close to this would be my father and we had like a strong connection which according to him went back more than one lifetime
that according to him I was his father. I'm like a reincarnation of my own grandfather which makes me my own granddad.
So I mean I have felt you know every once in a while you get this feeling that my father is near or you know that he's not completely dead that kind of thing but part of that is just I'm

carrying you know like genetically I'm half him you know it's like he contributed half of my DNA and it could be sort of a similar thing to like identical twins who even though they're separated you know they still think along the same lines you know They have the same tastes in clothing and women. Birthday cards for each other. You know, there's a case of these identical twins who pick exactly the same birthday card to send to each other, you know, even though they're living hundreds of miles away. That kind of thing. So, I mean, there's probably a lot of that involved also. Um, or it's just a kind of memory,

too. It's like memory isn't just images in your head. It's like feelings and and so forth. So just having like a flashback of feeling the presence of one of your loved ones from when they were still alive when they were close to you. I mean that can happen too. So it's probably more than one reason why some people would feel like the the closeness or presence of some close person who has passed away. It's it's that it could be genuine paranormal stuff like the spirit comes is kind of checking checking out on you. You're just sort of you know seeing how things are going with you that sort of thing and you can kind of pick up on that

somehow.

But I would guess that most of it

considering how common it is. Most of it

would be just uh you know just a feeling

maybe a sentimental feeling that just

kind of triggers itself sort of like a

dja vu or something. It's just like a a

a feeling memory that

you just identify as their presence when

really it's a kind of memory. Although I

mean death is very liinal. I mean, it's

death is sort of a an opportunity for

the the so-called supernatural to come

into this world because death is just

sort of a strange

a strange phenomenon in and of itself

that has um generated lots and lots of
like mythology and just like taboos and
just strange beliefs in general.
and uh you know if faith is strong
enough it can make things happen.
So
yeah, I mean I don't know if I'd be even
included in the three4s of people who
have sensed their loved ones in some way
after their deaths other than just this
kind of feeling like you know he's he's
there kind of although I wouldn't I mean
even when it would happen to me I
wouldn't try to pin down the exact
reason why I felt that way cuz who knows
well wow section zod asked some
difficult questions

about things that I really haven't thought about very much.

So anyways, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Arpad RP A. Isn't it contradictory for monks to shave their hair and beard as a sign of renunciation or renouncement to the world since shaving implies the use of tools, razor, soap or foam, brush, etc. the making of which requires an entire functional society with division of work, mining, smithcraft, and all kinds of trades. Keeping the hair naturally unshorn as six, and some Hindu sadus do would seem more fitting to world renuncience. Well,

I mean, the James plucked their hair. I guess they might have still used tweezers, but they just pulled it out. They didn't shave it. At least they're supposed to.

Um, I think the main reason why Buddhist monks shave their head and beard is because they the earliest Buddhists lived in ancient India, ancient northern India, the Ganges Valley, where it was the style for men to have long hair and beards. In fact, men of the upper classes, I have read, would arrange their hair in elaborate braids and so forth so that you could even tell what clan they came from by the way they had their hairstyled. You know, sort of like

Scottish tartans or something. So, in a way, it was a symbolic act of just cutting off their social status in that sense.

Um but also there may have been some desire for the shamana tradition which include Buddhist and and janes and so forth to sort of distinguish themselves from the vadic brahmans who essentially had dreadlocks you know the jatulas they were called this the the matted hair aesthetics who lived in the forest and attended the sacred fire and all that. um you know in a way it could also be sort of distinguishing themselves from the vadic tradition but the main reason

that I have read that I've come across
in books is that it was a symbolic act
of just cutting off your social status
because you could identify somebody's
social status just by the way they wore
their hair. Although of course
you could you could argue well they're
just creating a new social status of the
renuncient but they're supposed to
renounce society and I don't think that
they were really thinking about shaving
implying the use of tools the making of
which requires an entire functional
society with division of labor and all
that. I mean westerners think way too
much with regard to like obscure
ramifications of an action you know so

like in ancient India eating meat was
not considered to be immoral even for a
monk whereas in the west they're
thinking well you're by buying the meat
you know you're encouraging this
industry that kills more animals and so
forth it's and from the Buddhist point
of view it's it's subjective
morals
These kind of considerations,
they don't ramify out into all these
obscure directions.
It's just what is wholesome right here,
right now,
or what is appropriate right here, right
now.

And to some degree is like Buddhist monks were just following along with previous shamonic traditions where when you renounce the world you just shaved off your hair and your beard which again kind of symbolic cutting off of one's social status cutting off one's ties one of one's ties with society.

So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from a xenoid and more evolution here. From an evolutionary perspective, what are the biological drives for things that seemingly go against a species progress in the ability to survive like sadism, auto termination, homosexuality, monasticism, voluntary castration, etc.

Well, again like like the first evolution question, part of it is that we are like too smart for our own good. That we are capable of independent thought and that independent thought can lead us astray to some degree.

So let's see sadism. I mean, sadism is just sort of a perversion of an already existing

like inst animal instinct, which is, you know, to, you know, to get your enemies before they get you essentially. Auto termination.

Yeah. That's that's like a cultural thing that has sort of shortcircuited the urge for survival. You know, it's

like a Roman soldier who dishonors the legion, falls upon his sword, that kind of thing. that that's like human culture that is sort of supplanted just blind animal instinct and that's not necessarily in all cases a bad thing homosexuality I mean that I mean that's found even in prehuman like chimpanzees there's a lot of homoerotic behavior among chimpanzees probably among many other animals dolphins also where it's become in that case. It's just sort of like a a social thing, you know. It's it's sort of like the the beta male is sort of, you know, kind of asserting the alpheness of the alpha male by posturing in a in a like a female way to the male,

that kind of thing. So, I mean, that's that in itself is not purely like a a human thing, although humans have probably taken it farther. I think in in chimpanzees it's mostly oral sex and just the posturing part that is could be considered homosexual.

Umism I pretty much already answered that one. Voluntary castration. Also it's like we are no longer completely enslaved to animal instinct that we have eaten the fruit of knowledge. We've eaten the forbidden fruit. We are no longer in harmony with God's plan for nature in a sense. We we can go our own way and some of us go in weird

directions and that's not entirely a bad thing.

Um let's see there there's something else I was going to say here.

What are the biological drives for things that seem seemingly go against a species progress and the ability to survive?

Oh yeah, I wrote an essay on this once. I can't remember if it's in any of my books, but sometimes we have an animal instinct that gets shortcircuited by like modern technology. Like human beings have a liking for sweet food because in nature, you know, among our ancestors, our prehistoric ancestors, sweet food was like fruits and berries

and that's relatively healthy. You know, you get vitamin C from it and so forth. Humans cannot me cannot make their own vitamin C like most mammals can.
So nowadays we've got like processed sugar and high fructose corn syrup and all that that tastes sweet and so it kind of hijacks our animal instinct for liking sweet food or also like pornography is hijacking animal instincts like a male a human male is visually stimulated. you know, he gets aroused by a beautiful naked woman, a goodlooking, you know, wellproportioned young naked woman of breeding age. And so pornography short circuits that and

you got all these, you know, it's just pixels, pixels in, you know, just digital information that is transformed into images and sounds that get men turned on. I mean it's shortcircuiting animal instincts in that case also. So some of it is due to that sort of thing. But uh for the most part it's just that human beings have become too cerebral for our own good in some cases. You know we've to some degree distanced ourselves from animal instinct. You there's still we're still laden with animal instincts. I've read that human beings actually have more animal instincts than most animals do. It's just that we're not completely enslaved to those animal

instincts to the same degree as the average animal.

So, there's going to be more variation which uh is going to be good and bad. Some variations good, some variations bad. Most variations more or less neutral.

Let's see. So, I think I answered that one. So, I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's next question

after checking to make sure we are recording. And we apparently are. And I have to upload OS OBS Studio almost every single time I use it now because it just I keep getting this glitch saying that it was shut down improperly

even though I'll I'll hit exit and so forth and then it'll just keep shutting down and I'll have to just delete it and re re uh reinstall it.

had to do that like twice today before starting this video.

Anyways,

let's see here. Xenithoids. Next question is, as a biologist, do you believe that individual organisms are hardwired to prioritize their own survival or the survival of their species or tribe? I think the best evidence for the latter is beings willingly dying for their own countries and families rather than always trying to save themselves. Yeah. It's um I mean

it's sort of like getting Dawkins, you know, so the famous sort of smug atheist scientist who wrote the selfish gene and and the the blind watch maker and he he wrote some really um some really influential mass market science books and really from his point of view and from a biological point of view it's mainly the gene. You know, it's it's like you are trying to protect your genes.

And so that's one reason why men tend to be attracted to women who resemble their own mother. It's like it's like this weird thing that has evolved in humans where a a a woman who has a kid, a

child, a male child, I mean, she's passing on to him a desire for a woman who resembles herself so that he will be like reproducing not only the genes that she contributed to him, but similar genes that are like in in other people. So it's it's like the gene is really running the show. You know, a human is is a human genes way of making more human genes is one way of looking at it. So it's and and this has actually been capitalized in some species like social insects like bees. I mean, it's actually to a bee's advantage
to protect the the children of the queen rather than to have their own have their own babies because of the way um

genetics works out in in the order himoptera which includes bees, ants, bees, wasps, and saw flies and a few other obscure groups where let's see if I get this right. A female himanoptrine is diploid has two sets of chromosomes like people have. We have two sets of chromosomes. One set from the mother, one set from the father. Whereas a male himoprine has only one set of chromosomes. It's homozygous or is that is that right? I think so. So anyways, um if the the queen bee has offspring, then genetically those offspring are going to be 50% identical to her genetically. But the workers, they're

getting all of their DNA from all of the father's DNA plus half of the mother's DNA so that their brothers and sisters are more closely related to them than their own offspring would be. And that is how it has survived because they are out to protect their DNA. They don't realize this, of course, but that's what they're doing.

So,

they're more hardwired to prioritize the survival of their their own genetic lineage,

which is not so much the species, it'd be more the family. And that's one reason why humans can be so familyoriented and so tribalistic

is this like prehuman instinctual drive.
And it's not even instinct. I mean
sometimes it's just mindless. Like with
bees I assume I don't know if bees are
intelligent enough or their nervous
system is is developed in such a way
that they actually have instincts. It
would be just more like mindless
reflexes.
I mean there's like no no no actual
decisionmaking going on.
So
yeah, I mean the best evidence he says
for the the latter is beings willingly
dying for their own countries and
families especially their families. I

mean but the countries and to some degree even the families is again culture to some degree supplanting instinct.

So sometimes it's, you know, just people die just they're not really benefiting much of anything by by doing that.

But definitely from a biological point of view, it's like the gene is king. The gene and Charles Darwin. I got to throw that in there.

So I guess I'll just move on to the next question. This is also from Xenithoid.

Do all the previously mentioned behaviors suggest that the primary goal of organisms is not necessarily survival but power, pleasure, enlightenment, etc.

In the Buddhism and evolution video you did with Brian and Ajan Punadamo, the Ajan mentioned that he believes consciousness is always seeking a greater vehicle through evolution. Um, let's see. So, what is the actual question here? Do all the previously mentioned behaviors suggest that the primary goal of organisms is not necessarily survival but power, pleasure, enlight Well, I mean obviously the primary goal of organisms, most the overwhelming majority of organisms is not going to be sur power, pleasure, enlightenment, etc. Like plants, hell of a lot of organisms are plants. They're

not going for power, pleasure, or enlightenment. They're just reproducing their DNA sequences. That's the way it is with most most animals, you know, some copapod, some plankton out in the ocean. They're not going for power, pleasure, or enlightenment. They're just mindlessly eating and reproducing.

So,

let's see. Yeah. The primary goal of organisms from a biological point of view, and this applies to most organisms, especially the ones that are not as intelligent as we are. You know, you get into the most intelligent organisms, human beings, chimpanzees, orangutans,

bottl-nose dolphins, that sort of thing, then they're going to be sort of deviating from just purely Darwinian survival of the fittest, like with regard to their their perspective, you know, they're going to start having, you know, original ideas. is, you know, they're going to start kind of deviating from the biological status quo because they're just getting too smart for their own good.

So yeah, so among higher like higher vertebbrates, power, pleasure, and maybe even enlightenment becomes more and more of a factor. But and before you get up into the higher vertebbrates,

you know, then plus I don't I don't
know, there may have been some extinct
seephalopod mollisk that was sentient,
you know, way smarter than your average
octopus, you know, maybe they would be
included in this. But for the most part,
the overwhelming amount, the
overwhelming majority of organisms are
either mindless in the sense of not
having like a nervous system and a brain
or or they have one that's just so
um simplistic in its its design that
they're just slaves to their own
reflexes and instincts.
And some people really aren't so
different from that.
I mean a lot of people and probably most

people are slaves to their a combination
of instinct and culture.
So I guess I answered that question. I'm
going to move on to Austin here
who says, "Given declining birth rates,
especially amongst white western
populations, but also globally, do you
believe Christianity with its
theological emphasis on marriage and
child rearing is better suited to
addressing this demographic challenge
than Buddhism, which traditionally
prioritizes monastic detachment over
family obligations?
to some degree maybe. Although I mean
you go out to some rural village in

Burma

and I mean when I was living um on the outskirts of Alando Kazba National Park the the village women in that area had an average of about five kids each. I mean it's like you walk through the village there's just little kids everywhere.

So

I mean the higher levels of Terravada Buddhism, you know, they encourage renunciation and celibacy and so forth, but most of the people just I mean they just don't do that. They're just people. And so you could say Christianity is better for addressing the demographic challenge than Buddhism. But really it's

a matter of what the society is doing
that I mean it's just setting aside what
religion is the official religion of the
society. It's like how technologically
developed, how prosperous. It's like I
mean the Roman Empire was was similar
where
it's like people just when you when you
reach a certain level of prosperity you
just don't want to have kids. They're
just they're like they cramp your style.
They're you know they just you can't
have as much fun when you've got kids to
take care of. You know you can't be as
selfish as self-indulgent.
So it's that aspect of the the culture

that is more important I think than
which religion you're following. You I
mean officially as like the the state
religion or just the the main religion
of of the society. It's more a matter of
other factors like economic factors and
just like moral decline
and
just decadence
is going to you know it's just um you
know like Oswald Spangler you know
mentions he talks about in his decline
of of the west that I it's like just
it's or the cycle of history you know
strong men make good times good times
times make weak men. Weak men make bad
times. Bad times make strong men. And

it's like the good times make weak men

that and weak women that just don't want

to have kids.

So

yeah, I mean all in all it may be that

Christianity might give a slight edge

over Buddhism with regard to how many

children people want to have on average.

But again, I think more important

factors would just be like

prosperity and technological development

and just self-indulgence. A welfare

state that's going to take care of old

people, you know, without them having to

rely upon their kids as their as their

social security. I mean, that's a big

one right there. You take away the
welfare state and people are going to be
having kids just so that they're not
going to be like begging in the streets
or freezing to death when they get old
and they're too old to work.
Although, I guess
pensions can uh help stave off
starvation and hypothermia in older
folks, too.
Let's see here. But if you're a
subsistence farmer, there's no pension.
So, I guess I answered that. And I'm
just going to move on to Master Poe, who
says, "Have you checked out James Tour?
He's brilliant." And I have no idea who
James Tour is. No idea whatsoever. I

didn't even like look up his Wikipedia page or anything. I just have no idea who James Tour is. So, that was an easy one to answer. The ones where I I just absolutely am clueless with regard to the answer. the easiest ones because then I can just say I don't know and move on to the next one. And this next one is from Phyes. And Philes is the one who asked the the the big question about evolution last time.

And he he he started another I mean this huge essay question and it's like he says my question is the same as last time namely who should one believe in the large-scale evolution of species by

natural selection. So he just asks the same question again.

And so I said, "Look, I'm not going to answer this this whole same question again, but there are a few things that I might as well comment upon." And in in his long long long question, which is mostly just commentary,

he says,

uh, among other things, quote, "My main contention is that there seems to be insufficient or no evidence of micro evolution." So I mean he just dismissed and ignored my answer to the last question. It's like I didn't give the the answer he wanted. So he just asked the same question again hoping to get a

different answer. But he says no evidence of micro evolution in in like the previous question. No evidence. So I spend several minutes listing off evidence. the evidence of the fossil record, the evidence of embryological development, the evidence of vestigial organs, and then after that he says no evidence, which apparently means that he's just paritting this no evidence thing. And even if he hears evidence, he doesn't want to hear it.

So then he'll he says here, the paleontological record shows that we never have the intermediate forms that Darwin relies on. Again, he just

dismissed the whole idea of chronoscies.

I told him about chrono species,

dismissed it. Nope.

But always a sudden appearance of

species.

And that is one thing that um is is

common in the the fossil record is you

you don't have an obvious intermediate

stage. Although there's intermediate

stages everywhere.

For example, an amphibian is

intermediate between a fish and a

reptile. Just to give like a really

obvious,

you know, uncontroversial

example,

but I mean it happens at a smaller

scale, just the different stages. I mean, you don't have nothing but reptiles and all of a sudden boom, you've got this fully formed mammal. doesn't work like that. The earliest mammals were almost reptiles like monotreams who still exist like the akidnas and the the platypus. They still lay eggs. They don't have nipples. It's just that the the milk they li the mother lies on her back and the the milk just kind of pulls up on her chest through pores.

And if you looked at a a monotream skeleton, even an expert, they would have to assume that it's a reptile

except for some bones in the skull.
That's the only difference. In the the
earliest reptile or the earliest
mammals, it's almost a reptile.
Or like another example is a tadpole, an
embryionic, a laral frog. If there were
you had like a scientist, a biologist
who looked at a tadpole had no concept
of frogs, he would assume that's a fish
because of the the embryological
development and so forth.
So I mean I'll just I'll just read a
little bit more here before I I do any
more ranting. The traditional view is
that life does not increase in
complexity over time. Contra Darwin's
thesis which says life becomes more

complex through evolution. In defense against this, microbiology has shown that the simplest unit of life, the cell, has a complexity beyond imagination and that life does not go from the simple to the complex but starts with infinite complexity. Well, infinite complexity is a bit of an exaggeration. And also, you consider the the most simple, the most archaic kingdom of life is the ary bacteria. They're anorobic bacteria. is they're like the first living beings on this planet and they're not nearly as complex in certain ways as more advanced like

the like Mona I don't know it'd be
ubacteria or something like that I think
they've changed the name of the kingdom
which includes most bacteria and like
blue green algae and so forth and then
you get into animals plants fungi that
sort of thing so the archacteria
are noticeably less advanced or less
complex than subsequent life forms. And
the archipacteria were the only life
forms on this planet for billions of
years according to the fossil record
which files don't seem to have much use
for.
So,
and and it's it's also true that
evolution isn't necessarily going from

simple to complex. Evolution can go from complex to simpler forms. For example, the flea,

the ancestors of the flea had wings, but they lost their wings. And because, you know, they they adopted a life of being a parasite living on the body of a dog or something, the wings would just get in the way. It would increase the likelihood of them being like injured or something. So, they just lost the wings. But their ancestors had wings.

It is true that there does seem to be what Steven J. Gould called punctuated punctuated equilibrium in evolution where you have like a sudden not sudden

I mean it takes still takes a long time

but a relatively quick change in form

followed by a kind of stasis and then

relatively quick forms but the evolution

of the human species it's it's sort of

like a continuum and it's like arbitrary

where you draw the line between species

because it was a continuum like some

some fossil remains of prehumans. It's

like is that homo erect is that an

advanced homo erectus or a primitive

homo steinheimsis

or h highidlebergensis. I mean

so

yeah I mean the the whole idea that

there are no intermediate forms again

just dismisses chronoscies

and Steven J. Ghouls, I have to admit, I mean, he has been sort of outed as a as a kind of fraud, although not with regard to his punctuated equilibrium theory of how evolution works, but because of mainly this one book he wrote called The Mismeasure of Man, where he's saying that earlier anthropologists were cooking their data to make like certain ethnicities appear to have a larger cranial capacity than other ethnicities. And it turned out that Steven J. G himself was falsifying the data because actually there are such differences but we can set that aside. We don't have to we don't have to discuss that sort of

thing. Um

but I mean again

getting getting back to the main

question

that evolution

is is so obvious that it should not be a

question of whether evolution occurs. I

mean going with empirical science it

should not be a question as to whether

it happens as to how it happens. If you

think that like natural selection is

insufficient, you can add other factors

like Schopenhau's will more metaphysical

stuff like Ajan Punadama was talking

about.

But I mean it's it's so obvious that

there is like this sequential

development of life forms you know first few billion years nothing but ary like the most primitive bacteria. Then you get enough oxygen in the air. You get like bacteria that can metabol that can respire using aerobic respiration which makes them much more efficient at at respiration at their metabolism. And then there is evidence that some of the organels of a ukareotic cell like an an amoeba or something. It's a single-sellled form. It's a single-sellled life form. It's it's not a bacterium though because they have organels like mitochondria and plants have like chloroplasts

and there is evidence that mitochondria
and these chromop chromos chromoplasts
or like chlor let's call it a
chloroplast although there's other kinds
similar to chloroplast they have their
own DNA which indicates this it lends
credence to the theory
that the original mitochondria
Mitochondrion
was a kind of symbiotic bacterium living
inside of a larger bacterium.
Otherwise, why do they have their own
DNA?
So, just getting back to like the fossil
record, setting aside the the laral
development, embryological development,
and also vestigial organs.

I mean, you don't have a mammal arising before you have mammallike reptiles.
I mean, mammals didn't just suddenly appear in the pre-cambian explosion.
There were no animals with bones for a very long time.
So, it's like the mammals didn't arise until you had mammallike reptiles called thorrapsids that arose. Reptiles didn't arise until they were already like reptilelike amphibians.
The amphibians didn't arise until you had lung fish, fishes with lungs and so on. I mean, it is obviously a sequential development based upon pre-existing forms. It's not just sh just appearing

magically out of nothing.
And if you don't think that natural
selection along Darwinian lines can
account for that,
then you can you can come up with other
ways of accounting for it. But still,
you got that to account for. And just to
reject it, to say no evidence is just
willful blindness.
So I'm just going to move on to uh Phil
Lees. I mean, after I told him I wasn't
going to answer that question again,
which I kind of are, which I kind of
just did. He asked three other
questions. So, I'm letting it slide. He
He asks what would ordinarily be the
transgressive fourth question, but

considering that I kind of dismissed his first question because it's the second time he's asked the same question in two videos in a row.

I just said I wasn't. So, he came up with three new ones, which is fine.

So he says, "Do you think sexual promiscuity is bad for a man?" In most cases, yes. I mean there can be like exceptional cases. It may be that God Buddha before he was enlightened was sexually promiscuous. He had according to the legends, he had a harum of dancing girls and female musicians, a herm of slave girls. You know the house was full of beautiful young women. So

there's possibility that he wasn't just
messing around with his wife and it was
probably
socially acceptable back then except
maybe to the wives.
But I mean then it could be that in
cases like that a man can have his fill
of sensuality and realize that it's
still not satisfying. It's just not
deeply satisfying. And so they start
looking for something else. And that's
one reason why you have so much um
spirituality in like California where
you've got these rich beautiful people
that get everything they want pretty
much and still some of them have the
wisdom to and the sensitivity to know

they're still not satisfied. So that
they they reach out for something
higher.
But for the most part and I think Gorama
Buddha would agree he does in the sutas
sexual promiscuity is you know it's kame
su machara
sex sensual misconduct and you're better
off not doing it even though there might
be some wholesome side effect that spins
off from that still as a general rule
you're better off not being sexually
promiscuous
and it's I mean it's bad for your health
it's just you make bad karma for doing
it so that bad things are more likely to

happen back to you. You're probably better off not doing it. Just you don't want to be sexually promiscuous just in the off chance that it's going to result in some you know onwe or you know dissatis deeper dissatisfaction that's going to spur you on to something better.

So I'm going to uh move on to Phil Lee's next question

which is is intellectual curiosity unenlightened behavior and again this is sort of second guessing what the mental states of an enlightened being would be like. And I can't really say for sure whether an enlightened being would be intellectually curious. I assume if it's

like a craving for knowledge, then yeah, that would be unenlightened because an enlightened being presumably would not have craving anymore. I mean, that's going with the four noble truths. I mean, that's practically the definition of of enlightenment is the sessation of craving.

But being open-minded,

you know, you're having conversations with people that come to visit you and just asking them about, you know, their beliefs and so forth. uh being bahusuta according to the to the poly which means being you know learned or having heard much that's not necessarily

unenlightened but it would depend on
your motives if you're if it's motivated
by craving if it's motivated by
attraction like like greed for knowledge
that sort of thing then it would be
unenlightened
so let's see here I'll just move on to
Phil Lee's next question
he says increasingly ly I am coming to
believe that all businesses should be
legally mandated by the government to
accept cash thoughts and I have I agree
with this. In fact, it says here I'm
going to take some money out of my my
pocket here. Let's see. $20 bill. Does
it say it?
See, this note is legal tender for all

debts, public and private. So, it says right on the money that I mean if you owe someone money, they can't refuse cash,

but nowadays there are places that refuse cash. Like, I think Costco doesn't accept cash, which is not good. But I'm I almost had to sleep on the street in New Orleans on my way to South Carolina because I had like a I went to this hotel and they would not accept cash. And it's like I was just recently a monk. I was still wearing robes, you know, I didn't have any other clothes yet and I had no credit cards. And they're say, "I'm sorry, just we we we

can't accept cash." And then they said, "There's a Holiday Inn blocks down that way. Maybe they'll they'll probably accept cash. So, I took all my belongings practically, including this Burmese military like a foot locker thing that had no wheels on it and the handle broke off. I'm just struggling getting all my stuff two blocks down the road to go to the Holiday Inn and they wouldn't accept cash either. So, then I had to come back to the other place struggling the whole way, just panting and sweating.

And then

I mean they I they wouldn't even let me rent get a room even if I had a credit

card. They were saying do you have a reservation? I said no. Well you can't stay here without a reservation. I said well do you have any vacancies? Yeah. Yeah we got vacancies but still you got to have a reservation. So then he said well how about you just go over to sit over there and online you open up your computer your your laptop and online you can make a reservation. I mean it's so stupid.

But I mean, refusing to accept cash, I finally had to wake up my sweetheart and have her send them her credit card information just so I'd have some place to sleep so I wouldn't have to sleep in

the street

because they would not accept money. And

yeah, that there should be a law that I

mean, if if you got to pay for

something, you should be they should be

required to accept cash because that is

money. That's what money is.

So let's see here. I'm just going to

move on to next question. This is from

Sedarta Lohachita. And Sedarta Lohachita

says, "The last moment just before

death." Uh I forgot to do the thing to

the computer. You got to

No, it's too late now. Oh, there it

went. Nice.

Okay. Sedarta lohachida says the last

moment just before death according to

vajraana is said to be one of the most important moments in human existence. That precise moment before dying can either benefit or ruin your next rebirth. For example, seeing someone you hate right before dying and dying with that intense karma due to the hatred in your guts just before passing away would generate very bad karma. so strong that it could even override the karma accumulated through your previous life. And it works the other way around as well. If an evil person before dying sincerely repents for their wrongdoings, that positive karma at the moment of death might outweigh all the negative

karma accumulated throughout their life. What does Terra say about the moment just before death? Well, I've had it pointed out to me that there's more than one explanation in Terravada. That one explanation in Terravada is somewhat along the lines of what Sedarta Loha was saying. Although it's not going to completely override your karma. It's like let's say that you've been an evil person and then on your deathbed right before dying, you know, you you're feeling intense love for the person who's taking care of you so selflessly. you know that you know you have compassion and love and gratitude for this person now one of the first times

in your life maybe but still you die in this wholesome mental state then that's going to be like you're going to have like the the bearing towards a better rebirth because of that but still it's not going to completely negate all your past karma. So, you might be reborn as some rich, beautiful person, but then again, you're going to have all kinds of problems because all this bad karma you made isn't just going to go away. Or or similarly, it's like you've been a good this good saintly person, a wise person most of your life and then like you get murdered or something and you're feeling just like rage and hatred towards this

person who is killing you. Then again,
um, you might wind up, you've got like
this bearing. You're heading in like a
negative direction, but still all of
your good karma is very much going to
like ameliate
this, you know, you're you're reborn as
an animal or something. Um, and but
you're like some spoiled poodle
and then you don't live very long. And
then you know just after a few years or
whatever
then you move on to something better.
So there is that in terravada also it
it's not as extreme as Sedarta Loha
explains for vajarana
but it's

that belief is common to Hinduism also
which is like one reason why Mahatma
Gandhi when he got shot his last words
were heyram like oh god like in the
movie so starring what Ben Kingsley
I mean you could kind of translate hey
Ram as oh god but it's not like oh god
God, I've been shot. It's like, hey,
God, because he wanted his mind focused
on God as his last conscious thought,
which is going to help bring him closer
to God after he dies.
So, let's see.
So, it's like your last moment is going
to influence like the direction you're
headed

after like at death, but it's not going to completely override all of your karma. So, you can be an evil person, have one good thought right at the moment of death. It's not going to just have you live a good life next time. It's like you might wind up some spoiled rich kid and then you're going to get, you know, addicted to heroin and and just messed up and getting like bad drug deals and and all this stuff and it's just going to be a mess.

I mean, I've I knew this this rich man in Burma. He was a really good guy, devout Buddhist, and he got sort of drafted into the national parliament because he was kind of a a rich,

influential, good person. So the government just told him, "You're a member of parliament now." And he didn't he didn't want to go, but you don't really say no to the government, otherwise you just kind of disappear. But this really good guy, I mean, all of his kids were just messed up. Partly because, you know, they were just spoiled rich kids and with no concept of, you know, why should I have to behave myself, you know? So, we had one kid that's just, you know, pretty much like the kid that that I just described, just just strung out on heroin and all messed up, like Hunter Biden types.

So, I guess I answer that question. And so, I'm just going to move on to Sedar Loha's second question.

I've heard about some Hindu sects who say that if you wish just before to die to become a dava, probably you can become one. Is that a Hindu superstition? Yeah, that's pretty much of a Hindu superstition. That I mean, if you're just like a crude person with crude beliefs, a crude mind, and you have this crude desire to be reborn as a deva, then it's not going to happen. It may be if you're like a saintly wise person who dies with your mind directed towards becoming a dava then it's like this this directional thing like I was

just mentioning in answering the the second qu or the previous question I mean that's a possibility but if you're just a superstitious foolish person has this superstitious foolish desire to be a dva I mean it's probably not going to happen

even your your like idea of what it is to be a da is going to be just grossly unrealistic.

So yeah, I mean it kind of reminds me of the idea that if you die in Bernaris, then I think it's the god Shiva is going to come to you when like when you're on the funeral p and whisper some secret name of God into your ear which is going

to cause you to be reborn in some heaven realm. Yeah, I think that's just pretty much of a superstition also. Although like a really wise person who believes something like that might be able to manifest something along those lines in accordance with their you know their the belief system they inherited from their their culture.

So

I think I'm just going to move on to Sedar Loha's next question here which is during your time in Burma as a monk you developed some deep friendships with some monks like Sar Puta and Mogulana. I assume he means that my friendship with monks um was sort of like Sar Puta and

Mogulana were friends and not like I had friends that resembled Sar Puta and Mogulana.

And Sar Puta and Mgalana, you know, they they blended together like milk and water. They were so compatible with each other.

And I mean I had some friends, some monk friends in Burma that uh I mean I was always kind of a loner. There was always kind of a culture barrier. I had a few western friends too,

but um yeah, I mean western friend, westerners, we may not be as compatico

as like ancient ancient Indian friends

could have been. And the the the Burmese friends, there was still sort of a culture barrier, that kind of thing. So, I had I had good friends, but I don't think it was I never had any friendships in the monkhood with other monks that were really close. Mainly because I was a loner. I tended to avoid other monks anyway usually.

But I did have some good friends.

So, I guess I I guess I answer that question.

I didn't have a whole lot of friends. I had a few.

See,

I guess I'm just going to move on this

question. This is from PSA.

PSA says, "This is kind of a dated question already. It was asked less than a month or less than a week ago, but what do you think of the falling out between Elon and Trump?" And I guess they've already made up, you know, I guess they're at least um civil towards each other. they're not like making these wild accusations against each other. But, uh, I think Elon personally, I mean,

Elon Musk, you know, he's he's brilliant despite, you know, Democrats saying he's stupid. I mean, he's smarter than they are.

And I mean, he's just kind of he's he's on the spectrum. And also, he's like the richest man in the world. He's a CEO of a number of different companies. He's used to getting his way and then he's up against someone whose ego is even bigger than his is and who's more powerful than he is. Arguably, he's president of the United States and is actually exercising his powers rather than just letting bureaucrats just go along with the status quo.

And so it was just sort of like the two of them were were too big for the same town kind of. And u I think Elon he overreacted.

Um, I mean, mainly the the falling out

was caused by Trump's big beautiful bill actually sort of increasing government spending, even though Elon Musk was doing everything he can to just cut it down as much as possible. Sort of like when Elon Musk took over TR uh Twitter, you know, he he like allegedly fired like 75 to 80% of the employees and everything was fine. you know, everything just continued functioning and and he was kind of wanting the same thing to happen to the US government where you just strip it way down and and uh it just it wasn't going to happen. I mean, Trump really isn't a king. He can't just get anything he wants passed.

He's going to be having to toss bones to all sorts of um you know, senators and congress people that are going to be voting for this bill. If they're not getting what they want, they're going to vote no.

And so I mean there's I mean it would be good to cut spending more than is being cut, but still Elon just kind of overreacted and he's just used to getting his way because he's the richest man in the world and he's he's a CEO and he just buted heads with someone whose head is even harder than his is.

But I think probably enough people talked sense to him, including on X. You know, he was getting a lot of blowback

on X. people saying, you know, why you
doing this? It's crazy.
So, I guess I don't know if they're
really friendly or not, but they've kind
of patched things up and they're not
hostile openly hostile toward towards
each other anymore.
But I I was I was sorry to see that all
of a sudden they were hating each other.
I mean, you don't want that to happen.
At least I don't.
So, I hope that uh they can be friends
in the future.
So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's
next question. What do you think about
Trump completely banning Burmese

citizens from visiting the US? Yeah,
that was that surprised me that I saw
the list of countries that were on like
a you know, like a a visa ban or
something. You know, they weren't
allowed to come to America to have Burma
on the list. Yeah, that was I think it
wasn't really Trump's decision or he
just said, you know, come up with a list
of the most repressive, brutal
governments,
but I mean, I don't think there's any
risk at all letting Burmese people come
to America because I mean, what are they
going to do
really? I mean, they're not going to be
like blowing themselves up or crashing

planes into buildings or anything. I mean, what are they going to do? I mean, they can't even overthrow their own government unless I mean, I think he's assuming they're going to be agents of the government, but even what's what's a government agent? You know, some some spy or something working for the the the Burmese government. I mean, what are they going to do? I don't think they would pose any risk at all. So, I just assume it was just on a list of, you know, the most repressive governments in in in the world. And I mean, better safe than sorry, I suppose. But it was kind of it was surprising to

me because I don't think that allowing
Burmese citizens to visit the US legally
would pose any threat whatsoever to the
USA and its national interests
might actually be beneficial unless they
just kind of come in on a visa and then
disappear. You know, that happens when
from visitors from I think
A lot of the the illegal aliens in
America just overstayed visas. You know,
it was time their visa expired and they
just said, "So what? I'm staying." And
then they just hide from the
authorities. It's just, you know,
stable, keep their head down.
There was a a nutty German nun who was
staying at the first monastery where I

was ordained in California

and she had a classical textbook case of

schizophrenia.

very difficult to to work with. You

know, she one of the symptoms of

schizophrenia, the classic textbook

symptoms is just seeing absolutely no

reason whatsoever why you should

cooperate with anybody.

And there was a monastery attendant

there who was having serious problems

with this woman. So, he actually called

the immigration authorities and I mean

the California immigration authorities.

This is back in like 1990.

So I mean

already they were so inundated by illegal aliens from Mexico. They didn't want to deal with some German nun, you know, they just didn't do anything. Of course, they didn't do anything with regard to most of the the Mexicans and so forth either.

So

I don't know why I brought that one up. Yeah, I'm just moving on. Next question. That was just a gratuitous aside I suppose.

So next question from PSA. There is a suta where the Buddha described the gradual decrease of morality worldwide accompanied by a generational decrease of lifespan to the point where people

would only live to be 10 years old and
the global moral decline would culminate
in seven days of a horrendous
free-for-all sword fight. Do you think
we're headed in that direction right
now? No. I do not I really I'm more of
more Darwinian than Buddhist with regard
to my understanding of where we came
from and the general trends like
lifespan is increasing and not
decreasing or at least up until the last
couple decades maybe
that the lifespan is increasing rather
than decreasing and uh you know we're
becoming more soft
you know we're not becoming necessarily

more um homicidal.

So yeah, I really don't think that human beings started off being like essentially gods who didn't have to eat food, just living on light and then gradually started this kind of downward spiral, you know, somebody just ate some of this nutrientrich manaike mud, you know, and then that all of a sudden they they started liking it and then they all of a sudden they have to eat food. Now, you know, the lifespan goes from thousands and thousands of years, then gradually gets worse and worse and worse and worse till you're down to like 10 years where, you know, it's like people go

through puberty at like five and it's just, you know, cannibalism and all this stuff going on. Um, yeah, I really don't ne I don't see that actually happening. Not literally. I mean, things can get worse. I mean, if there was like a World War III or something, then the lifespan would go way down and there'd probably be some like people killing each other to steal their food or to to eat them or whatever. You know, things can get a lot worse than now, obviously, but I don't think that things are gradually going down from a golden age. I I'm skeptical of the idea that there was ever a golden age. Things have always been [__] up

because we are human.

We've been in the Kaluga since prehis prehistory.

So yeah, I do not think we are headed in that direction right now. At least unless that there's like some cataclysm like a nuclear war or maybe some asteroid impact that just like collapses civilization, that kind of thing. then something along those lines could happen, but still people aren't going to be going through puberty at the age of five. And there's going to be no no horrendous free-for-all sword fight. I mean, that horrendous free-for-all sword fight reminds me of the Book of Mormon. I actually read the Book of Mormon, and

according to the Book of Mormon, there were two migrations of humans into North America. The first was when the Tower of Babel collapsed. I can't remember the name of the the patriarch, but he took some people to America,
North America, I guess, and
it divided up into like two factions who then fought to extinction until there was only one human left. You know, you had like women and babies and stuff out on the out on this battlefield with like scimitars and spears and stuff and just fighting until there's only one person left alive. And no, I don't think that that really happened.

And I don't think it's likely to happen ever. Although things can get really bad if there's some sort of calamity that collapses civilization,
but still it's not going to be as bad as um the Buddhist suta says it's going to be.
And the Buddha himself is one of the questions he refused to answer was like the origin of the world. And then this I think it's the same suta and the dignity kaya where he just kind of reigs on that and gives like this very mythological kind of history of the world like how it began and everything.
So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from bio individual

and bio individual says is it indeed
true that from an ultimate perspective
nothing ever happens and he may have
asked this question on the discord
server because there are a few people
who are posting memes on this theme of
there's like this character
this cartoon character
you know he's he's always saying nothing
ever happens you know he's kind of
frowning
And so the bio bio individual asked you
now is it true from an ultimate
perspective nothing ever happens and yes
from an ultimate perspective from the
perspective of ultimate reality

nothing happens I mean there's no events
there are no discrete entities to
participate in events you know it's just
uniform if it's anything at all
but alternately
um in samsara it's like the opposite is
true something always has to be
happening in samsara
always there it's just like constant
change everything is impermanent and
that's just the nature of samsara it's
the nature of mind the nature of what
humans are pleased to call consciousness
there always has to be change otherwise
There's no perception of the passage of
time.
I mean, there would at least have to be

some kind of like vibrating kind of hum in your mind that would seem to be like some kind of staticky change that would allow you to perceive the passage of time. Because if everything stayed exactly the same, you'd be like a statue. You wouldn't even be alive for that moment.

So I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Ruie and Ruie says where did you hear the best poly ever and by whom? Um, probably the best poly I have heard is from Sri Lankan monks because the Burmese have a very weird Burmese accent when they speak poly. And the ties also have a

weird Thai accent. Like in Thailand, it's like B is pronounced like P, P is pronounced like B, D is pronounced like T, T is pronounced like D. Like budo, it becomes p.

So neither the Burmese nor the ties nor the mons. I've heard moni too. Um none of that is really it's just like this weird accent superimposed on poly. And it's like whenever a language goes into a foreign culture that language is going to be spoken with the accent of the foreign culture as a general rule. So westerners who speak poly speak it with like a western accent like there's no aspirated consonants.

You know like d and dh

are pronounced the same like Buddha is
is spelled like or it's pronounced like
it would just be bu u da. The two ds
aren't like in in actual correct poly
the two ds would be pronounced
distinctly buddha and then there'd be
the h buddah.
It'd be something like that.
And so I I was told that um it was an
Indian monk was telling me in Burma that
if the Brahmans in India heard the way
the Burmese were pronouncing poly,
they'd just be laughing their asses off.
So um it may be the Indian monks who
come closer to like a classical
pronunciation of Sanskrit, which is

similar to Pi, would come closest to like the correct or original pronunciation of Pali. But the best I've heard is probably from Sri Lankan monks because like what is considered to be international correct poly is essentially the Sri Lankan pronunciation of it.

[Music]

And where did I hear it? Well, I used to spend some time at a Sri Lankan monastery in California.

I met a few Sri Lankan monks in in Burma also. So, it' be one of those two places. either Mahag Gandon where I met some Sri Lankan monks or this Sri Lankan monastery um in California that I would

visit sometimes. I don't recall the name of of the place.

So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Yugu and Yugu says that I didn't answer his question last time. So he's asking it again but I don't recall having seen it. He says, "I've been watching Ajan Punadamo and he talks a lot of some primordial mind that was before hindrances. What mind is he talking about? If that is a mind state that we need to see true reality, how come then that primordial minds has not seen it then?"

Now,

Thai forest tradition has certain things that are not really orthodox, but it's Thai forest tradition like like eating cheese in the afternoon. Thai forest monks, a lot of them, probably most of them think it's fine and dandy for a monk to eat cheese in the afternoon, even though it's in all likelihood not okay.

Like kurd is forbidden in the afternoon, explicitly forbidden. And cheese is just a kind of purified kurd. You you like you compress kurd to get the excess whey out. And then that's that's cheese. You can culture it, but still cheese contains more kurd, more actual kurd technically speaking than what is called

kurd has. And kurd is not allowable. And so in addition to eating cheese in the afternoon or smoking cigarettes, that kind of thing that is just accepted by the Thai forest tradition, there's also this belief in this primordial mind, the the cheetah, which is pronounced like J in like in Thai in Thai, I suppose, because C is pronounced like J, J is pronounced like C, poly C, that kind of thing.

They get their their consonants switched around.

So yeah, it's it could be derived from Hinduism because Hinduism had a strong like uh cultural impact on Thailand

especially

not quite so much in Burma but Thailand

I mean Thailand is right on the border

with Cambodia like in Cambodia that was

that was largely Hindu for a long time

like anchor watt was Hindu

so it could be that the Thai forest

tradition in in Thailand and has come up

with this idea of the primordial mind

more from Hinduism than from Buddhism.

Buddha I mean orthodox terraata Buddhism

does not endorse the idea at all.

Although there is a little bit of

unorthodox terravada or pre-terravatara

like I've mentioned a number of times

there are two sutas one in the danikaya

one in the in the majikaya that refers

to essentially nirvana as infinite

formless consciousness you know

unmanifest luminous allround

and so this was a belief in Buddhism

going way back into ancient times that

just kind of fell through the cracks it

eventually was rejected in favor of

other theories

mainly just the idea that you should not

reify the absolute.

So the the Thai forest tradition has

more of a belief in this like primordial

mind than is quite orthodox

due to cultural factors in Thailand

maybe.

But I mean the official position of

terra Buddhism or maybe the unofficial but is definitely the position is to keep reification of the absolute to a minimum. You do not try to describe ultimate reality.

And yeah, there are sutas like there's there's one other kind of famous suta I don't remember what nikaya it's in where it's like this mind is shining forth but it is um defiled by incoming defilements, extraneous defilements. And there is kind of a theme that could be interpreted that way even as far back as the ataga where even your own thoughts are considered to be extraneous from just something coming from outside that it's that in a way there's the

implication is if you don't have anything to do with these extraneous influences then you're just naturally going to be pure. And those extraneous influences include your own thoughts, your own beliefs.

So, um I mean there are certain like statements in the text that kind of can lend some support to this Thai forest tradition idea that you've got this primordial jit that you know it's like the the the one who sees that kind of thing.

But it's not exactly orthodox.

It's it's more like what the uponads is talking about with regard to the atman.

The atman is Brahman. You know, thou art that that's essentially the kind of teaching that uh um is favored by a lot of agon in the Thai forest tradition.
I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Cherasquez is and we're getting down towards the bottom. This is going to be way less than two hours, which is kind of a a nice change of pace for those of you who don't like three-hour long videos.
And Trazask says, "If kama is not a cosmic law and isn't stored somewhere out there like in univers's library, but it's our own mental states or volition and nothing else. Ahants do not make any new karma. So, don't arans have mental

states or volition?

Well, let's just start off with the orthodox answer to that question like in Abidama, the Abidamaapitica.

According to the Abidama pitica, Arhans still have mental states, but they don't have like

volition in the same way we do. They don't have chana in the same way that we do. So, because cheddan is karma, karma is volition, karma is will. So Arahanss don't have that kind of will that makes karma. Instead they've got what is called kiryitta which is mentioned nowhere in the sutas. I'm pretty sure it was apparently invented to account for

this problem by early abidama scholars. It's functional consciousness that allows an arhant to like perform what appear to be volal acts while at the same time it's not really volition. And St. John of the Cross had a similar idea for the Christian Arahant, the Christ, the perfected Christian, which I mean before I read St. John of the Cross, I just assumed that you know, nobody is worthy. The only way anyone gets into heaven is through the grace of God. But here's St. John of the cross who was like a meditation master describing what is very similar to a Buddhist arahant and declaring it to be possible and even accomplished by

Christians

like meditation master Christians

contemplative like monastic Christians

and he was saying that you become you

reach this stage of perfection by

mortifying your self-will you know

self-will is pretty much what the

Buddhists are calling cheddana which is

making karma. So you mortify your

self-will so you don't have any more

self-will and so you are just

automatically motivated by the will of

God that you become a kind of divine

puppet. You no longer have your own

will. It's just that you are acting

through the will of God in this

effortless flow.

So that is like a Christian attempt to explain how an arahant can act without making karma without having vitionition or will.

But it could also be that we're dealing with two different levels of reality where at the samsaric level there's still will. It's just that the arant has just transcended that. No longer identifies with it. It's just nature taking its course.

So that's another way of looking at it.

But again, it's like trying to second guessess the mental states of an enlightened being, which is like a a precur, let's see, a recurring theme in

these Q&As. It's like what would what would the Buddha think or you know what what is the what is what are the mental states of an enlightened being like? And you know, it's sort of like dogs trying to understand the mental states of a human.

Even if you explained it to them, they still wouldn't get it just because you'd have to be human to get it.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is the last question already. This is from RFS. And RFS asks an interesting question that I never really thought about before. And it's talking about St. John of the

Cross, contemplative Christians. Again, he says, "Did St. John of the Cross sit cross-legged when practicing high contemplation? Was there a general recommended posture the contemplative Catholics practiced in? And I've read the entire works of St. John of the Cross. I do not recall him mentioning anywhere what position you would be in when you're practicing high contemplation. I mean it's standard for a Catholic when they're praying to be on their knees but I have read that I mean they they you can sit in a chair it may be that like a a Catholic contemplative like a carmealite discalsted carmealite like St. draw of the cross. They might

be just sitting on a chair or it could be in some cases they'd be on their knees like as though they were praying. But I think meditation, you know, just like visualizing, you know, scenes from the Bible, that kind of thing, is more likely done in a sitting position and sitting on like a hard wooden bench. Just I would assume I don't think they would be adopting any yogic cross-legged postures. I could be mistaken. Maybe nowadays now that they like some contemplative monks and nuns know about like yoga, they might be adopting like the full lotus or the half lotus or something. But in 16th century Spain, I

think there's a good chance they would just be sitting on like a hard wooden bench or some wicker chair or maybe just on their knees in front of an altar. But it seems like it'd be easier sitting than having to hold yourself up on your knees unless you're kind of like sitting back on your heels or something. But even then, I mean, your knees would get awful sore, but they were aesthetics. They were used to being in pain. So, I really can't say for sure, but I would guess it would be either kneeling as though in prayer or probably more likely sitting like on a chair or or a wooden bench or something.

And that's it. That's that's the last

question. And like I should always say at the beginning, never do. If you have any questions you think I can answer, especially with regard to the stuff I've been answering that I've been able to answer and not like the stuff that people have asked that I couldn't answer, then I won't probably won't be able to answer that.

And like and subscribe if you have not done so already. If I mean, if you find anything of value in all this and be happy. And I'm going to stop recording now.

Okay, then I think we're recording and

stuff.

Hail audience.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number

150. I am your host unckempt unwashed

fresh out of bed pan basa and I was

asked to do this live like the 150th

episode of question answer. do it live.

And so I made a conscientious effort to

remain alive

before doing this. And so I am live

right now. I am living anyhow. I'm alive

pretty much. Sort of kind of I guess

mostly.

And did I mention that I'm your host Po

Basa?

Pretty sure I didn't mention that this

is my beverage.

So, we got like a moderate amount of

questions this time,

which I would hope we'll be finished

with in less than 2 and 1/2 hours. As I

sit before you unwashed and unckempt,

wearing my custommade Lithuanian linen

robe.

have another sip of coffee

and I guess I'll just wait into these

questions. And because I'm doing this

live,

if you can somehow find a chat, you can

ask questions there. But good luck with

that.

So, let's just let's just wade into this.

And uh my my braided beard. See, I'm in training to become a Viking. I'm considering supplementing my income by making like pillaging raids on local small towns, but uh I think the beard's going to have to get a little bigger.

And also, I got to get a dragon boat cuz who ever heard of Vikings raiding small towns without a without a a dragon boat? You know what I'm saying?

Uh so that'll be a little while.

Ah, let's just uh start answering questions here, shall we? Yes, we shall.

And the first question is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, I need your feedback on how to better accept two recent dystopian developments.

First, I recently flew from New York City to Dallas to visit family. As if the long and intrusive TSA security check-in process wasn't bad enough, the airports now have facial recognition technology during check-in. Although facial recognition is now optional, it seemed like I was the only one who refused it. Of course, it is only a matter of time that it becomes mandatory. Yeah, they're probably doing it automatically without your permission anyway. Let's see. Besides being taken aback at how I was the only one who

refused the face scan at the airport, the conversations that I have had with friends and family since they have thrown me for a loop since then have thrown me for a loop as well. Most people have re reacted with an indifferent shrug of the shoulders when I have brought it up. I'm not sure what I am more freaked out about, the roll out of the technology itself or the sheepish way that some people seem to be embracing it. The second recent foray into dystopia that has me freaked out happened a week or so ago when President Trump hired AI surveillance company Palunteer to create a centralized

database on American citizens. I voted for Trump and generally support him, but he definitely lost me on that one. While I still like him overall, Trump's bringing in Palunteer has definitely increased my blackpilled sense of doom and gloom, it has made me feel like both sides of the political spectrum are pretty much controlled by the technocratic elites and that any resistance to the sinister plans they have in store for us is futile.
Anyway, I'm having a really hard time accepting these development. We haven't got to the question yet here. Anyway, I'm I'm having a really hard time accepting these developments and my

negative resulting negative emotions with equinimity.

I'd love to hear your thoughts on this subject as well as your response to the following questions. Okay, we're getting to the questions now.

One, this is the first question. That's why he puts a one in front of it.

You often stress how important one's mental state is and how one should react to the world with as little clinging and aversion and as much equinimity as possible. However, aren't some things, namely civil liberties and personal privacy worth clinging to and not accepting with such passivity?

Well, I mean, if you really want your civil liberties and personal privacy, uh you may want to go out into a forest. If you don't want to renounce the world and just sleep under a tree, just opt out of society in general, I mean, you just go like thorough live in a live in a cabin by a pond somewhere.

But so long as you are participating in a technological an increasingly technological society, then this kind of shit's just going to keep happening. So, let's see here. Yeah, I would I wouldn't be surprised if there's already like security cameras at airports that are like like singling out faces pretty much all the time.

And I mean you can just avoid flying I guess. Um maybe in future avoid driving. But one thing you got to bear in mind is that I mean our own mind is creating our reality. that your own karma is arriving at fruition all around you so to speak. So sort of like Echart Tullah says in his first famous book it's like um struggling against the external world is sort of like you know looking into a mirror and just like defying the reflection in the mirror and blaming the reflection in the mirror for the problems you're having or whatever. Um, it's I mean we're we are creating our own reality and so you can have a

certain amount of comfort in the idea
that you have good enough karma, good
enough comma in poly that you're not
just going to get plunged into this
hellish dystopia, cyberpunk dystopia.
So that's one reason I assume why um you
know people science fiction writers like
back in the 1960s and 70s were
predicting all this weird [__] that was
going to be happening and things really
haven't changed that much up up until
recently. I mean since the 70s and until
now the main change is everything's
digital and you got the internet which
has just revolutionized
just world society has revolutionized
civilization partly because you can

bypass the official propaganda like outlets that have always been there but now you can you can like bypass them and get your news from some guy in his pajamas. is sitting in his bedroom with a $100 webcam, that kind of thing. And sometimes that guy in his pajamas, not me of course, is a robe, not pajamas, but that guy, I mean,

he uh I mean sometimes he has more viewers than the networks now, some of those guys. And also he might I mean in some cases he knows less but at least he's more honest as a general rule. He might be just as biased but at least he doesn't have like marching orders from

above telling him what he has to talk about what he's forbidden to talk about. Unless of course you know it's some fake grassroots thing that the Democrats are paying for or some such.

So

let's see what's the actual question though. You often stress how important one's mental state is and how one should react to the world with as little clinging and aversion and as much equinimity as possible. True. That's basic Dharma there. However, aren't some things, namely civil liberties and personal privacy worth clinging to and accepting with such passivity? Well, I mean you can adopt sort of the samurai,

you know, the samurai mentality or even like a a a Gandhi and Satya Graa spiritual warrior kind of mentality and just you know peaceful like peaceful non-ooperation I guess it's called and then take whatever lumps you're going to get for doing that just with equinimity, philosophical detachment if you will.

So,

yeah, I mean, you can you can like make efforts to preserve your civil liberties and personal property, not necessarily with lots of clinging. I mean,

you can still do it philosophically. It's just it's just like your duty, your

sacred duty. it's the right thing to do
so you just do it you know it's like
your your dharma from a more Hindu point
of view
and you know like the Hindus teach like
the Bavad Gita teaches you know if it's
your duty to slaughter your own
relatives
but uh let's just move on to the next
question here because I think they're
all pretty much along the same lines so
second question if the Buddha were
around today would his renunci iation of
the world include this technological
dystopia or would he fall in line and
accept it like everyone else? And again,
this is secondguing a sama Buddha's

mental states, which is uh kind of silly.

And really, if the Buddha were around today, I mean, where would he be around? Would he be like in northern India like he was last time, or would he be like in San Francisco?

So if the Buddha like the Buddha arose in India today, there's a good chance he would have just gone like he did the last time, just renounce the world. Just go off and live in what remaining forests there are in northern India. I guess around Cashmere, foothills of the Himalayas, there's still big forests. I assume I've been to India before. I

didn't see any big forests. But then again, we were like in the Ganges Valley going to Buddhist pilgrimage sites. So, I mean, but if the Buddha arose in the west, you know, like the Buddha was he's like Teddy in the the the Salinger story who was born in New York, like Manhattan or something, then he might have to be, you know, just at least somewhat conforming to the culture. And I mean, that's still I would doubt that he would allow monks to have cell phones, that kind of thing. But I mean some technology like like the implication of the whole little story before the questions is I mean some of it's pretty much unavoidable so long as

you are going to remain in society and even though a Buddhist monk is supposed to renounce society
still I mean you're on the outskirts of it. You're you're still you know participating in it to some degree as an outsider.
You can't completely cut yourself off from the culture. I mean, you wouldn't even be able to speak the same language as other people if you did that. So, you have to participate in the culture to some degree. And where a fully enlightened being and different fully enlightened beings might have different attitudes,

you know, they're not all just going to be exactly the same psychologically, at least from an empirical point of view. So, I mean, some might make different calls than others. So, it's hard to say.

even setting aside second-guessing the mental states of a fully enlightened being.

So, I mean, I'm sure that he would keep it to a minimum at the very least.

I mean, smartphones and stuff, I'm I'm kind of skeptical, but who knows? You're secondguing a fully enlightened being. They would know better than us what they're going to do because they're the ones who's doing it.

So

I'm just going to move on to the third

question here also from Romeo.

Is that correct? Yep.

And uh the Romeo's third question is

regarding this dystopia. What is the

middle path between the sheepish shrug

of the shoulders of a conformist normie

and getting all worked o up over it like

I am? Well, I mean, just

philosophical detachment and just do

what you think is right regardless of

any blowback or push back you're going

to get from the the NPCs.

So, I mean, there's there's a question

kind of along these lines farther down

that um it reminded me of a quote from Krishna Murdy that I actually looked up last night. So, we'll get to something else along this line, but really, I mean, you just do I mean, if you really are just determined to be like a saint, you've got to follow your own conscience, you got to do what you think is right, regardless of what anybody else thinks.

And that's one reason why there's a saying in Catholicism that when one monk at a monastery becomes a saint, all the rest become martyrs.

Because saints can be difficult to get along with. You know, they're just uncompromising

in following their own standards. I mean, that's one of the things that makes a saint not necessarily a sage. A sage and a saint aren't necessarily the same person,

but a saint. You got to be to some degree like an [__] like like Mahatma Gandhi was. How good of a saint he was, I'm not exactly sure, but I mean he was like that. I mean, he would just vehemently insist on just living up to his own standards and to some degree making the people around him, especially his wife, live up to the same standards. I mean, he was he was making his wife who was like a I guess they were vishas.

They belong to the Visha cast of India which is you know this sort of the the white casts you know it's like they're the descendants of the rank and file Indoarian invaders supposedly and so you know they're supposed to know the the vadas and all that at least to some degree

and uh he was making his wife who was you know a respectable Hindu woman clean the the like the bed pans of like Christian dolllets and this kind of thing, you know, sort of like the outcast Hindus, um, the untouchables who had converted to Christianity or some such. And he was making her like clean their toilets and this sort of

thing. And one time he was he just got like annoyed with her and just was dragging her out of the house, just throwing her out of the house cuz she wasn't smiling when she was doing it.

So I mean that's saints can be this way even if Muhammad Gandhi is not the best possible example of a saint. I mean he was given it a shot. He was trying to be a saint even if he did not fully succeed.

So

let's see here.

And the computer screen that I use as kind of a a light for lighting my face up a little better is um my my

sweetheart hasn't turned on her computer all the way. So I it just kind of keeps going on and off cuz I have to keep hitting the space bar cuz it's it's not logged in. You just kind of get the screen for logging in or whatever and then it doesn't last and it goes back off. But it is daytime so I guess it's not even necessary. So you can see like in the in the mirror or is it right right there? There's like daylight coming through the through the through the window, which is unusual because I usually do these Q&A at night because I work I work nights like and so I'm used to getting up late and so then on weekends I still get up late.

Got up at like a little after 11 today
which is just like an ungodly hour for
me to get up now. So anyways, let's just
move on to the next question. This is
from Sio action sepina
and this I'm gonna keep bending this
sideways.
Okay.
Seovction cipat zena says what kind of
karma is this? And then he he like
included this or attached this kind of a
meme from it looks like it's from 4chan
and it's
it's mainly just sort of a list
of things with like little little arrow
things.

It says B16

here dogs obviously attacking something

in backyard.

Go out and get them to leave it alone.

Oh [__] it's a bloody possum.

Notice. Oh, wait. Think it's dead? Go to

put it in garbage. Notice it's still

breathing. Decide to put it out of its

misery. Grab a broken skateboard and

smash it over its head. Pawsum starts

convulsing. Oh god, why aren't you

dying? Keep beating it. Feel like

Christopher Bale killing Jared Leato in

American Psycho. I never saw the movie.

It finally dies. Check the body and see

the dogs barely scratched it. MFW. I

think that means my face when I remember

that possums played dead.

And

Section Cad says, "What kind of karma is this?" Well, there's obviously some bad karma involved. Um, choosing to put the the possum out of its misery. I mean you are that's like a deliberate act to kill this possum that was still alive even though it's there's some compassion that's sort of ameliating the karma. You know it's not just pure black bad karma anything like that. You know there's there's a certain amount of compassion but then you decide to just bash its brains out or whatever. Just put it out of its misery. Still you're making bad

karma from a Buddhist point of view.
like what is it? Euthan Asia is still
immoral from a Buddhist point of view.
Even if the person or whatever it is
that's being euthanized is in terrible
pain and isn't going to get better.
So, I mean, I've kind of done similar
things. I mean, not really with regard
to like I mean, I've probably done that
before, too, where you just sort of
compassionately try to euthanize
something that is in pain.
Yeah. I mean, when I was a kid, I was
reluctant to do that. I remember one
time when I was a kid, my dad started
the car and there was like a half-grown
kitten under the hood of the car had

climbed up inside and it got chopped up in the fan when the when the car started and mangled the cat up and then the cat starts dragging itself away from the car. My father
tells me, "Go get go get the 22 rifle. You know, we got to we got to put this cat out of his misery." and he wanted me to shoot the cat because I was a better shot than him as he as he was getting older and his eyesight wasn't as good. I didn't want to do it. You know, I just couldn't bring myself to shoot this cat who really hadn't done anything wrong other than just make the wrong choice with regard to where it was going to be

hiding that day. And so my father said, "All right, I'll do it." And then he shoots, doesn't kill the cat, and then it like crawls underneath the the house, you know, it makes it underneath the house. Now, it's not only mangled up by the the car fan, but it's also got a bullet hole in it. So, if I had actually done that and I had, you know, I was a better shot. There's a better chance that I would have finished off the cat. But, so it was sort of like I didn't want to make the bad karma, but I mean, it wasn't really I wasn't thinking about karma. It was just sort of like this soft-hearted compassion that I've always had for animals, you know? I just felt

sorry for the for the kitty, you know, I didn't want to kill it. But it in that particular case, the amount of bad karma generated might have been less than my father just kind of winging it, putting a bullet hole in it, and then the cat still manages to to get underneath the house where, of course, we're not we're not going to find it.

So

golly. Yeah, that was his main mistake was to put it out of its misery, especially because apparently the possum wasn't in misery at the time that he decided to put it out of its misery because it was unconscious. Apparently,

according to this this here uh thread or meme or whatever it is that I mean the possum was like feigning unconsciousness or feigning death, you know, it's just motionless acting like it's dead playing possum.

So

yeah, I think the call to put it out of its misery was just like a mistaken. It was that was that was his final failure in this case.

So

yeah, I mean it's not pure bad karma. There's definitely bad karma mixed in and especially I mean he's gone to the trouble of

like making this meme which means that

you know it could be years later. He
might be way more than 16 years old now
and you know it's still sort of like
bugging him and that could be where most
of the bad karma is coming from. It's
just like the guilty conscience,
you know. It's like I [__] up, you
know, next time I won't smash an
unconscious possum with a skateboard.
And then just move on with your life,
you know, just I mean, you didn't know.
You thought that it was, you know,
fatally w like mortally wounded or
something.
So, it could be that most of the bad
karma he's getting is just from the

guilty conscience or just sort of like the, you know, sort of some minor PTSD or something from the experience. And that's the way a lot of things go. I mean, sometimes by far the worst karma you get is just the the guilty conscience and just the trauma and all this stuff that you're working through for years afterwards. I mean, if you could just make the mistake, acknowledge you made the mistake, you know, acknowledge it was an honest mistake, you know, I didn't know, and then just move continue, you know, forgive yourself and continue moving forwards, you're going to be doing a hell of a lot better even from like a spiritual point

of view, a Buddhist point of view, then to just keep like beating yourself up over some mistake you made years ago. I mean, that's that's just foolish. It's just it makes things worse because no amount of beating yourself up over it is going to change that event in the past. So I think I'm just going to move on to Siovakaderna's

next question.

He says I've heard people and then in parenthesis it says Gabbor mate. Probably not pronounced mate. I'm just saying that just just because. Anyways, cio of action cader says, "I've heard people say the west is a guilt-based

culture while many other places are a shamebased culture." He claims guilt is a feeling. I guess he's talking about gabbor here. He claims guilt is a feeling about an action while shame is a feeling about one's inherent self. I always thought shame was better as you avoid doing things in the first place. Although I don't know about Gabbor's definition as I'm not a psychologist. So he may be on to something. Which one do you think is personally better as an individual and society?

So there's what is called guilt here. Guilt is a feeling about an action and then shame is a feeling about one's inherent self which from the Buddhist

point of view is more delusional than

you know the feeling about an action.

that according to orthodox terraota at

least actions are more real than

inherent selves are.

But this is I mean this is sort of uh it

reminds me of the two kinds of virtuous

or you know like I guess virtuous

wholesome skillful shame in Buddhism hir

and otapa. Sometimes you'll see that

like it's it's mentioned in the sutras

numerous times otap you know it's just

this pair usually they're found together

hiri and otapa

and those are like the two wholesome

kinds of shame

um there's also like the unh wholesome

kind of shame which is called cuca

that's like a guilty conscience like I

was just talking about with regard to

the guy who beat the possum to death

with a skateboard you know it may be

most of his bad karma is coming from

this this like guilt that he's

experienced and that's kukucha that's

that's always bad karma a guilty

conscience always creates bad karma from

a Buddhist point of view go figure

so hi Otapa

um it's not exactly the way uh Mr.

Gabbor

uh explains guilt and shame, but it's

it's kind of similar. Whereas hiri is

like you don't want to do something
evil. You don't want to do something
unskillful,
you know? It's sort of like you don't
want to touch [__] or something. It's
just like conscientiousness. Whereas
Otapa is more like you don't want the
the evil consequences of that action. So
it's like with hitty, you know, there's
this urge to kill your boss or
something. I'm not suggesting anyone
kill their boss,
but it's just like you just recoil from
that. It's like no, that would be wrong.
Whereas Otapa, it's more like
you want to you want to do the same

action, but what prevents you from doing is you don't want the bad consequences of doing it. I mean at least that's like the official explanation of hir.

Sometimes in the poly text they'll just use a number of words sometimes just two that mean the same thing essentially like uh initial and sustained thought in uh when the description of the first first Jonah and second John and so forth. I mean it could just be that they both meant the same thing.

It's just that it's like an emphasis where you use two two or more words that mean the same thing in ancient poly texts. It does happen. But the official differentiation of hir and otpa hiri is

like recoiling from performing the

action just because the action is

unskillful

and

is recoiling from doing the action

because you don't you don't want the bad

consequences.

So this could be Hiri would come closer

to what Gabbor is calling shame and

Otapa would be more what Gabbor is

calling guilt

and Hi actually in this case is

considered to be somewhat better you

know it's somewhat more virtuous even

though both are good but still it's it's

kind of a more noble kind of a feeling

you know as long as they're preventing you from doing evil evil acts in the first place. Not just doing evil acts and feeling shitty about it afterwards, but doing it just prevents you from doing the bad thing. It's like in Buddhism, if you're going to have scruples of conscience, you know, moral scruples, have it before you do the deed, not afterwards.

Before is good if it prevents you from doing the deed. Afterwards just makes things worse.

You're just adding more friction and misery to an already kind of mis mistaken situation.

So what is the actual question here?

Let's see here. Which one do you think is personally better as an individual and society? Well, as Gabbor describes it, you'd be better off um a feeling having feelings about an action.

Um, I mean ultimately for a monk, maybe for a lay person, just having a sense of honor and dignity

and you know, I wouldn't stoop to that level, you know, like stealing something, you know, you somebody somebody at work leaves like a wallet full of money in plain sight. You could take it easily. Nobody would, you know, the security cameras there there aren't any, let's say. You know, you could do

it. nobody would know you did it. And I mean it's it's like the guilt that Gabbor is talking about is you know I just wouldn't do such a thing. Whereas the the the let's see the shame no the shame that he's talking about is I wouldn't do such a thing. Whereas the guilt is

um I don't I don't know. It's like with with Otapa it's just like I don't want to get caught you know otherwise I might do it but or it's like I don't want to to get bad karma for doing it. I mean that's just sort of a this along the same lines

you know you don't want to get punished by your own karma or by authorities or

whatever.

So I guess in a case like that uh what

is called shame

uh would be a little nobler you know

probably more virtuous better karma than

wanting to do it and then just being

afraid of getting in trouble or whatever

as a result

that's a more childlike or doglike

approach to being being a good boy

but uh I mean from the Buddhist point

point of view of the the feeling about

one's inherent self, then it's it's

ultimately delusional. But then again,

you could say that actions also are kind

of delusional ideas.

So, Hiri is probably better than Otapa, but both are way better than cuca or guilt after the fact. Regardless of what kind of guilt it is, it's like I shouldn't have done that or I'm a bad boy or whatever.

You're better off without that.

So I guess I might as well just move on to Siovakshan Cipad Zidena's third question which is what is the biggest change you have seen in your generation growing up and today's generation. Well I'm not exactly sure what today's generation would imply is that kids today like teenagers

I assume

generation what is it Z? Are we up to Z

zed for those of you um like in the UK?
It's hard to say because there are a
number of differences. Um I think the
main change I have seen is that today's
generation, younger people are less
independent
than my generation. Like my generation,
it was pretty common for teenagers to
rebel and just rebel against grown-ups,
rebel against society, rebel against the
status quo.
And I mean, you've got some rebels
nowadays. I mean, some people are just
juvenile delinquents, you know, they're
just born that way maybe or just, you
know, for whatever reasons.

Um, some people become like young
Antifa, you know, soy terrorists, that
kind of thing. But there's like an
independence
that my generation had. And in the
generation before me, like my parents'
generation, it was even more
independence where kids would just go
out and play until dark. No adult
supervision. My father had these horror
stories of [__] that he used to do when
he was a kid. Just wild kids like in the
1920s and 30s in rural Georgia. It's
just it was like beyond my experience
when he'd be telling me this stuff that
he used to do when he was a kid. And I
mean what I used to do as a kid is

apparently beyond the experience of kids that they can't even walk to a park a block away unsupervised by adults.
They'll have the cops called on them.
There have been cases of kids playing in their own backyard unsupervised
and some neighboring Karen will call the cops or or some kind of authorities just because the kids are playing without adult supervision.
And so yeah, even like Halloween, kids used to really go trick-or-treating for Halloween. Nowadays, not so much. just due to fear of strangers, fear of bad people, lower trust partly because of diversity.

I mean, it's pretty much a sociological empirical fact that un ethnically uniform societies or just neighborhoods are going to have higher trust than lots of different ethnicities of different cultures. kind of not really blending but just living side by side that it's you have less trust of your neighbor when your your neighbor is speaking a different language from you in the privacy of their own home that kind of thing following different religions and so forth.

So I mean that's part of it.

Yeah. I mean this the the society is more feminized now and so you've got more feminized young people um less

likely to take risks also more averse to
discomfort. I assume there's probably
fewer hikers
or just fewer people roughing it camping
out in the woods than when I was young
just because nowadays younger people
they pretty much just stay in the house
texting on their smartphone or playing
video games that kind of thing watching
Tik Tok videos that kind of thing. So
the internet has helped to bring that
about. But I think in large part it's
just the feminization of society
is sort of the the emasculation of
western civilization
is largely resulting in kind of softer,

gentler, wimpier kids

in general.

That might be the biggest change. It's

the one that occurs to me anyhow.

So anyways, I think I'm just going to uh

move on to the next question. This is

from Newman.

And Newman says, "If karma is the

natural law of cause and effect in the

cosmos and its natural trajectory is to

reward wholesome, morally good actions

and penalize unjust, unh wholesome

actions, doesn't this mean the cosmos

and samsara is ruled by a just and good

law and thereby it isn't unh wholesome

in reality at all?" Maybe I'm

misunderstanding the Buddhist judgment

of samsara in the cosmos. If something is governed and directed by a just or good principle which finds its telos, it's it's like its end or goal and and fulfillment in liberation. There doesn't seem to be an antagonism here. Well, I've mentioned before that it really is kind of a you I got to change these hyphens into dashes because I'm kind of a grammar Nazi. Possibly the only kind of Nazi that I that I have ever been is a grammar one.

So, let's see here. And I I do spend considerable amount of time like fixing the grammar and the punctuation of of these questions

just cuz I'm I'm just that way.

So anyways, uh yeah, it's it's a common misconception that karma is some natural moral law.

You know, it's it's it's like a cosmic law. And it really is. It's not karma is not like set up by the cosmos to reward goodness and punish badness.

That's I mean that's just a common misconception

that karma in a way is kind of cause and effect. You can say cause and effect in and of itself is not moral. But it's like if you hit your own hand with a hammer, it's going to hurt. But it's it's not like

that that is like punishment. You're

being punished by hitting your own hand with a hammer. that there's some sort of cosmic law of punishment, rewards and punishments that the cosmic law has been set up in such a way that if you hit your hand with a hammer, you are punished
for that action by feeling pain. I mean, it's just the natural consequence that if you move towards wisdom and liberation, you're going to suffer less. You're going to have less delusion, less like delusion induced aversion and attraction and just friction with your surroundings. You're going to be more in harmony, more at peace,

more equinimity, more acceptance

than if you're like struggling against

[__]

So, I mean, it's just a natural

consequence. If you move closer to to

wisdom and purity, you're going to have

less like delusion and delusion induced

suffering. You move deeper into like

just some Saric thinking and just, you

know, look out for number one and screw

everybody else, that kind of thing.

Then, I mean, it's not like some cosmic

law is punishing you. It's just that

you're hitting your hand you're hitting

your own hand with a hammer. You're just

waiting deeper into delusion and you're

you're you're going deeper asleep, so to

speak,

and you just have more attraction and

aversion, more craving, more desire,

more attachment, and consequently more

suffering. It's not like you've got some

divine force rewarding good and

punishing bad. It's just that the

definition of good and bad is good is

what takes you closer to

realization of reality and bad is what

takes you farther away from it.

And I mean it's it's just sort of like

retrofitting

cosmic justice onto just the way things

work.

You hit your own hand with the hammer,

it's going to hurt. It's not like
there's some cosmic law punishing you
for hitting your own hand with a hammer.
It's just when you hit your own hand
with a hammer, it hurts.
And all ethics in Buddhism is pretty
much along the same lines. All suffering
is self-inflicted
ultimately.
So, I suppose I answered that one and
I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from Pedro. And Pedro
says, "What do you think about the
stoned ape theory?" And the stoned ape
theory. Um, I've heard of it before, but
um, I just looked it up real fast and
got like the AI little blurb at the top

of the search page saying that it was like Terrence McKenna came up with this idea of the stone ape theory that like protohumans,
very early humans or prehumans took psilocybin mushrooms and this sort of consciousness expanding
experience of taking the mushrooms helped humans to develop like language because they want to be able to say, "Whoa, I just had a spacey experience and describe it to their friend, you know, OG sitting on the stump next to them." Um, and it just sort of like opened their mind to greater creativity and so forth.

And so what do I think about this theory that that prehumans or protohumans taking um like psychoactive drugs, especially mushrooms, helped us to evolve? It's an interesting theory. It's pretty much it's kind of plausible, but there's essentially zero hard evidence in support of it. It's just sort of an interesting idea that is like going with Carl Pauper pretty much of a useless theory because you can't really prove it one way or the other. I mean, it's just Yeah. Well, maybe.

And I would guess I mean there might be some

influence of like cavemen getting stoned sort of like making them more creative

or more imaginative

or um you know maybe helping along the

development of human language that kind

of thing but I don't think it would be

the main reason

and uh it's just it's It's like a

hypothesis that is of, as far as I know,

of no actual value from a scientific

point of view or a philosophical point

of view because there's no way you could

prove it one way or the other. It's just

this idea. Well, maybe that happened.

Maybe it did. I don't know.

And so I'm just going to move on to

Pedro's next question here, which is

what is the best way to convince

scientific materialists, aka atheists?
And Pedro doesn't say the best way to
convince them of what. I even asked in
the comments, you know, convince them of
what? And I got no response. So I guess
what would be the best what the best
what is the best way to convince
scientific materialists
that maybe they're wrong that scientific
materialism does not explain reality.
Well, I think I mean it would depend on
the the scientific materialist I guess.
I mean you'd have to kind of feel into
what they're receptive to and so forth.
But one way you might do it is to bring
up parasychology
and they might just go that's all

[__] You know that's all fraud.

It's like a lot of like really convinced

scientific materialists. They look at

the findings of parasychology

and I mean sometimes it's like they're

backed up against the wall and they say,

"Well, I don't know how they're

cheating, but they got to be cheating

somehow." and that's their debunking of

that particular you know that particular

experiment for example

but um some parasychological research I

mean I' I've mentioned before that there

are two fields in science that have the

most carefully designed experiments the

most airtight experiments

and that is like particle physics and parasycchology ology in particle physics. You have to plan out the experiment as carefully as possible because like renting a particle accelerator in Switzerland or something is very expensive. You don't want to blow all this grant money on a shabily designed experiment.

But with parasychology, you have to have like a completely airtight experimental design, you know, eliminating any chances of like bias or fraud or anything like that because you know that these scientific materialists like the amazing Randy are just going to be attacking with hammer and tongs the

results of your experiment.

You know, they're going to be looking as hard as they can for any defect and say, "Well, there you go. That's that's that's how they're cheating.

So

at least some intelligent like non-fanatical scientific materialists, you might be able to get your foot in the door using parasychology, just the results of parasychology, like the findings of Helmet Schmidt, which still kind of blows my mind when I think about what Helmet Schmidt did, at least according to the parasychology book I read.

And I've I've described his experiments before. I mean, he he was in charge of research at Boeing Laboratories. This was like back in the 1950s or something. And it was just it was it was slow going. They they weren't working on anything. They were kind of they weren't very busy. So, Helmet Schmidt asked permission from the higherups if he could do experiments on the effect of consciousness on physical systems. And you know there's potentially some kind of advantage like Princeton University had its own lab based on that also they for maybe they still do and so he started experimenting on the power of the mind to affect like quantum

randomness.

So quantum randomness, I mean, we call it random because we don't understand it. You know, no, nobody's been able to come up with any way of predicting exactly how things are going to come out in in a state of quantum randomness. And it turned out that people can't I mean, there's a measurable difference be from like what you'd expect from random chance like predicting cards or or dice rolls, that kind of thing. It turns out that especially with some people, but in humans in general, that people can guess. I mean, it might be just like

0.3%

different from what you'd expect at

random, just random guessing. But that

0.3%, I mean, if you're doing thousands

of tests, it becomes statistically

significant.

And so, Helmet Schmidt was doing that

about just predicting random like

statistically random events. It was

based on radioactive decay and a geer

counter. When the geer counter is going

to click exactly

and he was able to record these geer

counter clicks

and so long as nobody had listened to

the tape, you could still influence

whether it was going to be like it was

like a number random number generator of just ones and twos or zeros and ones, you know? It was like he he'd translate that into clicks in stereo headphones. Like there like a one would be a left click and a uh a two would be like a right click, you know, a left a click in the left ear or a click in the right ear. And then right before the experiment, he'd say, "All right, try to make more clicks be in the right side or more clicks be on the left side." And people would be using whatever psychic talent they had or any attempt at psychic talent to make the clicks be more one random ones or random twos. And

you know, it was like 0.3% but the test only took a few seconds. Thousands of thousands of tests were done and especially with some people it was way better than 0.3%.

And it turned out that he could record that on a like a cassette tape because that's what they used back in those days when he was doing these tests. And so long as nobody had heard the cassette tape, you could still influence whether there's going to be more on the left or more on the right. It was like the cassette tape itself, the the recording on the cassette tape was still in a state of quantum randomness until some perceiving mind collapses the state

vector. It's still in a in a random
state, like a potential state,
which is interesting to me.
And his his naysayers, you know, the
scientific materialists would be just
saying, well, he's got to be cheating
somehow. We don't know how he's doing
it, but he's cheating cuz that's the
best they can do because his
experimental design was just like
foolproof.
They could not find any defects in the
experimental design, but they're saying,
"Well, he's real clever cuz he's
figuring out some way of cheating
because that's impossible."

And that's just the the attitude they

have like a scientific materialist is

you know if it can't be scientifically

measured

then it's it's it's bogus

or if science can't explain it.

But I mean up until

you know

not very long ago well in the modern

times we didn't know how stars or the

sun worked but they obviously did and

you didn't have scientific materialist

saying well stars don't really exist

because there's no way that they could

be burning all this time

because they didn't know about like

nuclear fision and fusion and all that.

So that might that would be the best way
to convince some scientific materialists
is just try to get like the field of
science that kind of questions
materialism. Even even like theoretical
physics, you know, the whole idea that
the the perceiving mind is really
determining
certain processes, you know, collapsing
the state vector or whatever the the the
common term for that would be.
Uh, atheists on the other hand, I mean,
that's a whole different kettle of wax,
isn't it?
So,
I keep having to turn the computer

screen back on. I'm just like hitting the hitting the space bar every few minutes. Although, it's just kind of a darkish purple background. It might not even have a noticeable effect.

So, let's see here.

I guess I I suppose maybe I answered what the best way to convince scientific materialists, also known as atheists, would be, even though Pedro really never did explain to me what it is that you're supposed to convince them of.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Super Lump. And Super Lump says, "Why does the Buddha allow monks to use dung as deodorant?" And then he actually gives

the uh the reference here. It's in the the Mahawaga, the Vignia Mahavaga book of discipline, possibly the chapter on medicines, volume 4, page 274. And I do not recall this. I mean, it's I'm not arguing against super lump that he saw it in there. And it's probably referring to cowdong. Cowdong was used for all sorts of things in ancient India. And it has like an absorbent property. It sort of might have been like an ancient precursor of like talcum powder or something.

So, I would just be guessing that it's that I'm I'm sure the Buddha was not allowing monks to just like [__] into

their hand and smear it all over themselves.

That, you know, you're using probably cowdong in this case.

Um, I'm just going to move on to Super Lump's next question that I can answer a little better. Why does Sudena's mother think smearing dung on the floor will help entice her son to disrobe? And this is from the Sudowi Banga book of discipline volume 1 page 28. And it's the origin story to the first parajika rule which is the parajika rule against a monk having sex.

So it's the very first origin story of a rule in the sudui banga of the of the vineyapitica you know of the pyimoka

rules

and smearing dung on the floor in

ancient India the ancient Ganges valley

cowdong was used to plaster floors

plaster walls I mean it's not like

stinky [__] like human [__] would be or

cat [__] or whatever and it just had

lots of purposes used as fuel fuel and

fires. It's like an ingredient in

plaster e it either be like cow [__]

mixed with clay as a as a kind of

plastering for floors. Um maybe in in

the origin story it does say that they

just spread cow [__] on the floor but it

could have been mixed with clay or it

was but I mean the reason why they did

that I mean cow [__] was just a standard ingredient in floor plaster and wall plaster in the ancient times you know it was it wasn't considered to be [__] in like the the sense of like human [__] and so what they were doing it According to the story, Sudina was this monk who I mean his parents were very reluctant to give him permission. He he went on a hunger strike to sort of coers his parents into giving permission for him to become a monk because you're not supposed to be be ordained without your parents' permission.

So he went on a hunger strike. They reluctantly granted him permission to become a monk. And then it at at some

later time he's just going for alms in town. You know, he goes back to his hometown in his wandering. The parents hear about this and so they're going to try and lure him back. And so, you know, they fix the house all up. You know, they clean everything, make it look nice. They plaster the floor with fresh cow poop. They put a pile of gold and a p pile of silver. have his his wife or ex-wife, you know, dress up as good as she could, look as attractive as possible, this kind of thing as a way of enticing him. So smearing [__] on the floor was just making the house look nice, which is counterintuitive to

modern western people, but in the ancient Ganges Valley, that was just standard.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question also from super lump and also on the theme of [__] in terra Buddhism especially the rules of monastic discipline and he says do you have any stories about people using dung in such unusual ways? Um well I mean cow dung that's that's one thing. I mean it did occur to me though when I when I read this question that in Winnia in the rules of monastic discipline there is a cure for snake bite that involves a monk's own [__] that you're you're supposed to combine the four like

noxious materials and I can't remember
what the four are. I think it's like
[__] piss and then it's like dirt and
ashes something like that and that was
what they used as some folk remedy
pre-scientific days in ancient India for
snake bite and apparently it's this idea
it's like sympathetic magic really more
than you know empirical medicine
sympathetic magic is you know you're
taking this icky stuff to cure you of
this other icky stuff you know it's like
if the if the medicine you take is more
unpleasant than the sickness. It's more
likely to to cure you of the sickness
kind of a deal.

So yeah, there is that that that it is in the book of book of monastic discipline that you can actually use human [__] your own [__] as an ingredient in, you know, if you're bitten by a viper or a cobra or something that probably it was a kind of like a sympathetic magic that had if anything it was a placebo effect. And then because your mind really is generating a reality to a profound degree that it can actually help if you actually believe that it's going to cure you. It can help to cure you just through the power of your own faith, so to speak.

Uh but aside from that, I really can't

think of uh any other good uses for dung
in the book of monastic discipline,
although it's probably in there.
Especially cowdong. It was just like
this common material in ancient India,
especially ancient northern India that
had multiple uses that have been
supplanted in later time with by
technological advances or whatever.
like snake bite, we generally use
antivenenom now if we have it.
So I'm just going to move on to the next
question. This is from Moers
and Muners says, "What do you think of
the Eastern Orthodox apologist or
orthobro

known as J Dyer or just orthobros in general?" And that last part or just orthobros in general is uh making this question a little easier to answer because I'm unfamiliar with Jay Dyer. I'm really unfamiliar with most of ether Eastern Orthodox ethnodox Christianity. But I have heard enough like in social media and so forth to know that Eastern Orthodox is considered by like right-wing westerners to be the most based form of Christianity. The form of Christianity that is still like the most spiritual and comes closest to the original spirit of Christianity. It's like Eastern Orthodox Christianity is sort of like terra Christianity.

So that's kind of what I think of
Eastern Orthodox Christianity is it's
just a conservative form of Christianity
that Western right-wingers
are preferring over Catholicism and the
various kinds of Protestantism.
And I mean it's it's not bad. Eastern
Orthodox Christianity. It still has
monasticism, renunciation, and it
probably does come closest to the
original Christianity or at least it
comes closest to ancient Christianity.
Like the Christianity of the the early
Roman Empire
than Catholicism or various forms of
Protestantism. I mean, the Protestants,

one of the first things they did was
just abolish renunciation.
So that wasn't that wasn't exactly the
the best choice that that the
Protestants made. And Catholicism
notoriously, you know, it's all bound up
with Western paganism and so forth. And
um also it's just sort of infiltrated
by, you know, gay child groomers and so
forth allegedly.
Not that I'm denying it never happens.
So, orthob bros in general, they're
they're like westerners who kind of lean
to the right and they want the most
based, most legitimate form of
Christianity they can find. And it's to
them Eastern Orthodox, which is not a

bad choice, I suppose. I've I've heard by many accounts that it really is kind of the the most pure form of Christianity in existence. Although, I mean, it's not perfect. I've seen pictures of like Orthodox patriarchs and they look kind of like Santa Claus, you know, they got the big white beard and they're fat and they're just decked out in like cloth of gold studded with jewels wearing like crowns and this kind of thing,
which is not exactly in the spirit of early Christianity,
but still based on their practices and beliefs and so forth,

It's I would consider it possibly the least objectionable form of Christianity cuz personally I'm not a Christian of course

although I mean some of the the Catholic monastic orders I think would still be relatively acceptable from a Christian point of view. Carthusians are nothing to sneeze your nose at. Discal Carmelites.

So let's see here. Yeah, I guess I answered the question. I really no authority on Eastern Orthodox Christianity. I mean, it's got like a a firm basis in mysticism going all the way back to like the pseudo Dionicius or even farther back to to Paul of Tarsus.

So,

yeah, it's good that it it still has most of the the early virtues of early Christianity.

Um, so yeah, I'm If you're going to be a Christian, Eastern Orthodox is is certainly not the worst possible choice.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Stellar Supreme, etc., etc., etc. His name gets longer and longer, and he stellar Supreme says, "What's the deal with the translation grammar here?" And the he he quotes a verse from the Atakawaga. is the dutataka suta verse 6 and the dutataka suta it's it's one of the

oldest sutas I mean it it's a very old suta it's the atakawaga is considered to be u archaic Buddhism like pre-terra Buddhism and the four ataka sutas in the atakawaga after which the atakawaga gets its name they're called ataka because it means octad or group of eight because there's eight verses to each of these ataka sutas. So that's considered to be like the core. That's like the oldest of the oldest.

And so in the poly, please forgive me if I mispronounce the poly cuz I'm used to a Burmese pronunciation which is bizarre to anyone who knows poly who isn't in a Burmese tradition. So then I try to like translate it over to a more western or

Sri Lankan kind of pronunciation and sometimes I just fall between two stools, you know, I sort of like mix it up. But anyways, it's DT and I'm not going to try to pronounce the dotted T's correctly because we just don't do that. Ada

dam. Okay. So in my translation of that and he's got that my translation included in the question here that says indeed not easily got past are the entrenchments of views seized having discriminated from among the philosophies. Thus a man amid those entrenchments discards adopts a philosophy.

And it's it's fairly straightforward. Um like dt nisa

means entrenchments to views. DT is view. Nia is like entrenchments or or like clinging to. Na is not. He indeed. Suatiwata easily got past. So indeed not easily got past are the entrenchments of use. first line fairly straightforward. Although in poetry, you have to rearrange the words, especially in poly poetry, old poly poetry or even protooly poetry. Um, you got to rearrange the words in order to fit the meter because you have to have this meter, this regularity of the short and long syllables, short and long vowels because that's how meter is. poetry poetic meter

is based on long and short vowels in
poly more than than in English where
it's like long like stressed and
unstressed syllables. In poly poetry,
it's not stressed and unstressed
syllables so much as just long vowels
and short vowels
or long syllables and short syllables.
So you have to rearrange the words
sometimes in strange ways in order to
fit the necessary words into this poetic
meter metrica I think it's called. So
the irregularities in poly poetry
because when you got like words all kind
of mixed jumbled up not not necessarily
in a correct pros grammatical sequence

you know the syntax is kind of weird.
It's because of that. is because you've
got to fit everything into this rigid
structure of the poetic meter. You know,
if you you're going to do like let's say
amic pentameter.
I mean nowadays poets poetry is just
like you know it's sort of like
realistic
paintings. Not that I mean art's just
becoming obsolete now because of AI but
um it's like poets who still try to
write poetry
it's like they do not have the
discipline to to do it in a regular
meter maybe at like a limmerick or
something but

um back in the old days even back in

like the 1800s

or even later than the 1800s you had

poetry tree, it would have a meter. Even

if it didn't rhyme, still there would be

this this cadence dun

and you have to make it fit. Otherwise,

it's bad poetry. And like a professional

poet back in the old days, like like

Shelly, you know, Lord Byron, Karidge,

they' just they'd be trained to write

poetry so much that they would just

start thinking in meter and it would

just kind of come out spontaneously that

way.

So anyways the next line

is among the philosophies among the dharmas naya is having discriminated samugi is having seized. So among the philosophies having discriminated seized. So a little bit of mixing it up but the meaning is fairly clear. Seized having discriminated from among the philosophies in that one line.

Simuki occurs a number of times in the Atukawaga. It's just sort of almost like a a motto or something, you know, it's it's in more than one suta that exact line.

Then

[Music]

so from that or therefore

a man desu

is entrenchments.

So therefore a man among those

entrenchments I mean it came out right.

And then

cha nasi is he discards

he takes up cha and dam is a philosophy

or a dhamama.

So I mean it's really fairly

straightforward. There are there are

verses in the atakawaga that are way

more jumbled up than this just in order

for everything to to fit. I mean even

the lines are messed up. There'll be

like words that should be in the

sentence down here that are up here just

because it has to fit the meter.

So yeah, I mean this narad

this last line um the past participle of

nasi which is he rejects or he discards

is nata and the past the past participle

of a is he takes up is ata. So nirata

and ata are also puns that have like the

the dual meaning not only of like

rejected and taken up but also nidarata

can mean no self ata obviously can mean

self. So it's like a it's like a pun. So

it's saying I mean in in other parts of

the atakawaga it's it's saying you know

a monk should have no near ata and no

ata which means nothing rejected nothing

clung to you know nothing pushed away

nothing pulled towards you you know like

conceptually but it also means that for

for the enlightened monk there is no not
self and no self either because you're
not supposed to be clinging to any
belief according to the atika waga
or like ajanchai used to say even right
view becomes wrong view if you cling to
it
but yeah this I mean the grammar here
the translation grammar is fairly
straightforward this is a fairly
straightforward there were much more
difficult verses to translate than this
one
so I'm just going to move on to stellar
supreme etc etc etc's next question
which is when a culture is so

secularized that they call Buddhist monastic selfish and their way of life a form of escapism and laziness. What can be said of their karmic status? Should we ignore the elephant in the room with this? Well, I'm not exactly sure what the elephant in the room is. Um, when a culture is so secular that they call Buddhist monastics selfish in their way of life, a form of escapism and laziness. I think Brahmans were accusing Buddhists of that in the ancient Ganges Valley. you know, they were they were calling the Buddhists destroyers of life partly because they were celibate from from the get-go instead of having their kids, you know, participating in in

Vadic culture until they reach a mature age. Their kids are more or less self-sufficient and then they go off into the forest. That was more of the Hindu or Vadicro approach. So um yeah, I think I mean even even like the the Mahayana Buddhists started calling the Terravada Buddhists selfish because they're just trying to save themselves and trying to save instead of trying to save all beings, that kind of thing. So this kind of attitude against renunciation, calling it selfish and and lazy and escapism.

Um yeah I mean it it's not just a modern

secular thing but I mean but it is

secular you know it's like worldly

thinking it's samsaric thinking it's

kind of wallowing in delusion you're

just assuming that this is real and that

you know you've got duties that you got

to be doing in this version before you

move on to the next sort of thing.

And uh

so but I think western Buddhists even

like western terra Buddhists so-called

you know like in the weasa movement

um that they just they're so secularized

that they don't even see the point of

monasticism

even though they're supposedly terraata

Buddhist and Terravata Buddhism was a

system of Buddhism created by a monk for monks. I mean, early Buddhism in general was created by a monk for monks and they just don't like that part.

So

yeah, I think it's in that case it's just they really are so secular, just such products of American consumer culture, just kind of materialistic realistic kind of people that they're just so sort of culturally conditioned that they cannot appreciate some of the basic teachings of of Dharma.

So what can be said of their karmic status?

just worldly karma. I mean they can

still be good. They can still be getting merit but merit does not lead to enlightenment. I mean merit leads I mean karma leads to more karma.

So I mean it's like mara you know the Buddhist devil so-called. If he can't get you to be bad he'll get you to be good because going to heaven you're still in samsara.

The whole duality of good and evil is samsaric.

So a monk is supposed to renounce good and evil. He's supposed to let go of the whole duality of it.

So I mean

people that think that monks are lazy escapists and selfish and so forth, they

can still be good people. They can still be earning merit. It's just that they are still pretty much stuck in a samsaric mindset.

So they might have some virtue but their wisdom is not at the highest level at least from a Buddhist point of view or a terra Buddhist point of view.

So

let's see let's just move on to the next question and this is from Tzasquez is and Tzas is says do you think that sometimes you are not sensitive for a people's feelings and yeah I think pretty much everyone except for like the most highly advanced empath

is going to be lacking to some degree in sensitivity towards other people's feelings

last night. My woman is listening to this music on YouTube and she's crying because she's so moved by this music. But I've rarely been moved by music to the point of tears streaming down my face. And so I was just, you know, just kind of observing the situation. I couldn't really participate in it. And she was getting impatient with me because I mean according to her it seems I should I should have been crying too or at least have more of a like a a reverent appreciation of this music and of her mental states than I was having.

I mean I'm just kind of like observing it all from like a philosophical point of view.

But so yeah, I mean I'm I am not sensitive for people's feelings sometimes. I mean I I think I'm more considerate of people's feelings than most people are. Even if it doesn't appear that way, even if it might not seem that way sometimes.

Like I'm just more considerate of others feelings just because I feel I know that there's a connection. I mean, if you're causing suffering to another person, ultimately you're causing suffering also to yourself, you know, it's it's all

like this shared myasma of mental states to some degree. Mental states are contagious.

And so, if you're just thinking like at work, for example, you know, I'm I'm more considerate than a lot of people with regard to just not just sticking it to the next guy. you see a problem, you see something that needs to be fixed, you you stop what you're doing and you fix it just because you don't want to stick the next guy with having to fix it. And I mean, a lot of the next guys, they're just going to drive past it because they don't want to deal with it or just allowing the right of way. I mean, sometimes I'll just gun the motor

and just shoot through some narrow gap between two other forklifts because I I drive a forklift at work, but a lot of time I'll just wait and let the guy go past, you know, just yield the ride of way to somebody else just out of consideration and, you know, do unto others what what you would want done unto you, that kind of thing.

But yeah, sometimes I am not sensitive for a people's feelings like illegal aliens. Yeah, they're there. Some of them are just boohooing all over the place because they're getting arrested and sent back to wherever they came from. And I'm okay with that from a

political point of view. Even though they're very unhappy and all that, it's like I voted for this. Sometimes you got to hurt people's feelings in order to do the right thing.

or like Sudina in that origin story to the first parajika rule, the first rule in the in the parajika in in the in the pimoka. I mean, he was not sensitive to his parents' feelings. They desperately wanted him to, you know, just take up the family business and have grandkids for them to spoil, that kind of thing. So sometimes you just kind of have to be callous, I guess. Or you can do something knowing full well that somebody else isn't going to like it

just because it's the right thing to do

or at least you consider it to be the

right thing to do.

So, I don't know like especially my my

interactions with Cherasquez is are

entirely over the internet and I mean

when you're dealing with just words on a

screen is different from being in the

same room with someone where you're kind

of picking up on their feelings, you

know, you can be more sensitive to other

people's feelings when when you're face

to face rather than just responding to

words on a screen.

So

yeah, I think sometimes pretty much

everybody is not sensitive for a people's feelings.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Austin. And Austin says, "I am a reservist," which means he's in the military reserve. He's going to be called up if there's ever like an emergency and they need extra soldiers. I'll just start over. Austin says, "I am a reservist." Are we are we recording? Yes, we are. I if I have to go to war for Israel with the expectation of killing other living beings,

what am I to do? Mind you, I take the first precept very seriously. Well, I'm assuming that Austin did not take the

first precept very seriously when he
joined the military in the first place.
It may be that he had a kind of
awakening or like philosophical or
spiritual development
that have caused him after he joined the
military to be opposed to killing
because otherwise what the [__] are you
joining the military for if you're
opposed to killing? I mean, this
actually has happened. Like I remember
back in the '9s there was some guy who
joined the army and then when he got
deployed to Iraq he tried to be a
conscientious objector because he just
joined the army to get like computer

skills, get like a free education and so forth, you know, to help his his career. He wouldn't actually want to like shoot anybody. But I mean, why do you become a soldier if you're completely unwilling to shoot anybody?

So, I'm assuming that Austin had some kind of spiritual realization after he he joined up because otherwise, I mean, you made your bed and now you're lying in it. But, uh, let's see. If I have to go to war for Israel with the expectation of killing other living beings, what am I to do? And this reminded me of a a statement in Krishna Murdy's book. I've got right here, Freedom from the Known. It's a thin

book. It's just pretty much just a booklet and it's this book is well worth reading. It's it's kind of a mind-blowing book. It's got all kinds of really juicy quotes in it. But one quote that it reminded me of this of this statement by Austin. Krishna Murdy says, "If you live peacefully, you will have no problem at all. You may be imprisoned because you refuse to join the army or shot because you refuse to fight, but that is not a problem. You will be shot." It is extraordinarily important to understand this.

So in his case, I mean it's it's sort of like the saints I was talking about is

you have to do what you consider to be the right thing. If you if you want to be a saint, you know, you want to have pure morals according to your own interpretation of morals. You got to do what you consider to be the right thing. Even if you're going to be like shot by a firing squad for doing it.

So, I mean, if you really think that it's wrong to kill, I mean, maybe you could be like Mahatma Gandhi in World War I where he volunteered to be a stretcher bearer, like an unarmed stretcher bearer, you know, a medic or something.

Maybe even a medic. I mean, medics are still armed with pistols at least.

But, uh,

yeah, I mean, if you don't want to just

I mean, that's possible. I mean, you

could try to find some way of serving in

the army or in the the reserves. I mean,

if you are deployed to Iran or

something, although I'm I'm skeptical

that that there's going to be American

boots on the ground in Iran. It's um

Trump is kind of doing what what Reagan

did, you know, it just like or or what

Trump did the first time just is sort of

like surgical strikes

against key strategic, you know, enemy

positions or some such, you know, like

bombing Libya, killing Gaddafi's

daughter, this kind of thing that that Reagan did. Um, yeah, there weren't any American boots on the ground there, pretty sure. I mean, Grenada was a different question, but Trump hasn't done a Grenada yet, as far as I know. But, uh, getting back to the question, if you have to go to war for Israel with the expectation of killing other living beings, what am I to do?

Well, you could uh go the Begavad Gita route and do your duty as a soldier. Or you could uh do the saintly route and just refuse to kill. Maybe you could get some some position like medic or stretcherbearer or something where you don't actually have to kill anybody. But

I mean, if you really are determined to
to do the right thing in a saintly
manner, then you just refuse to kill
anybody and get court marshaled, thrown
in the brig for who knows how long,
be reviled
by others maybe.
But I mean this
again like Christian Birdie says, if you
live peacefully, you will have no
problem at all. You may be imprisoned
because you refused to join the army or
shot because you refused to fight. That
is not a problem. You will be shot. It
is extraordinarily important to
understand this.

So I'm just going to move on to Austin's next question
which is using epistemology. How do we determine that Buddhism is true? You can't determine that Buddhism is true except in certain respects. I don't think you can prove that Buddhism really is conducive to enlightenment.
But you can prove like the four noble truths, the first three at least are fairly self-evident. I mean the first noble truth, you just look around, you have some sensitivity, you realize that nobody is 100% happy.
And then the second noble truth that all suffering is caused by attachment and craving. I mean, you look you look into

it and you can see that that's true. you look at look into yourself whenever you're unhappy that

um it's because you want something. I mean, usually it's pretty obvious, you know, it's like your phone glitches and it won't charge. You get frustrated, that's why. Or you're in a hurry, you got to stop forever at a red light, you know? It's like you feel this friction. It's like you don't want to accept the situation. You know, it's just any kind of bad situation, you don't want to accept it. I mean, it's you're clinging to that situation not being there when it is. And so, I mean, maybe you just

got like some kind of vague depression.
It might be difficult to pinpoint
exactly what it is you are desiring. It
might just be, you know, anything other
than this kind of an attitude. But
still, the second noble truth, you can
verify that. And the third noble truth,
I mean, that's just it logically follows
from the second noble truth. If all
suffering is caused by desire, if you
have no desire, you have no suffering.
So certain aspects of Buddhism,
um, regardless of epistemology,
you can you can determine that it's
apparently like empirically valid.
Whether it really leads to full
enlightenment or not, that's that's a

different question. I don't know how you

how you could possibly prove that.

But using epistemology, that's like

theory of knowledge.

Um,

yeah. I mean, I'm not exactly sure how

you would use epistemology

to determine that Buddhism is true. Like

I've already said, there's some aspects

of Buddhism, some of the most important

aspects that you can't really prove.

So, epistemology, theory of knowledge, I

mean, I would consider

um

the fact that you can't really know

reality through thinking. That that's a

kind of epistemology. It's it's sort of like a negative epistemology that you can't really know reality through thinking. So then you could you go with theory of knowledge to say that that samsara is just this web work of perceptions that perception is samsara and that to get past that into knowing true reality which you can't know by thinking about it that you just know it through essentially mysticism just being wide awake and not thinking anything just you just your mind just kind of merges with like the universal formless consciousness because you're not giving any form to your own consciousness through focusing on perceptions.

So in a way you could you could use epistemology to determine that Buddhism is true by going into like deep mystical states which at the very least would be like Janna and then that would be called temporary liberation which is like giving you a taste you know sort of like a quasi enlightenment while you're in that state.

So I mean that that might be about as close as it comes as far as I can tell.

Ah,

so let's just move on to Austin's third question here, which is how can we be sure that the Buddha was enlightened or that the path leads to enlightenment if

I can't meet any enlightened beings to verify it? Even if you did meet enlightened beings, you wouldn't be able to verify that they were enlightened. If you're unenlightened, if you look at an un If you look at an enlightened being, you're going to be looking at that enlightened being through unenlightenment tinged glasses, and you're just going to see another unenlightened person. Or you're going to see what you consider to be an enlightened person in accordance with this very unenlightened concept of what an enlightened person is like. I mean, you'd have to be enlightened yourself according to the text even to know that

somebody else is enlightened.

So how can we be sure that the Buddha was enlightened? We can't. In fact, there was uh like a medieval school of Buddhism that I've mentioned before, the Daga school, sometimes called the yoga logicians. They they emphasize logic. And their classic example of a problematic premise,

a premise that really cannot be verified is, you know, X is an enlightened being, whether it's GMA Buddha or or anybody else. You can't prove it. How could you possibly prove it?

So,

I mean, you can't be sure that the

Buddha was enlightened. I mean, he lived
25 centuries ago. I mean, how are you
going to prove that he even existed?
I mean, it's it's a very convenient
working hypothesis.
And that's really all it can be. You
can't really know this stuff.
So, let's see. How can we be sure that
Buddha was enlightened or that the path
leads to enlightenment if I can't meet
any enlightened beings to verify it?
Well, the path that leads to
enlightenment, you can't prove that the
path is going to get you enlightened,
but at least you can extrapolate,
you know, you can you can see like if
you make progress in dharma, your mind

gets clearer, you have fewer attachments and so forth, then at least you can extrapolate that, you know, you're having less and less delusion, less and less attachments, less and less desires. So that if you continue on that route, you could assume with some rationality that it's going to lead to zero zero attachment, zero delusion, zero suffering.

But you can't really prove that because there may be like some obstacle or something unforeseeable that gets in your way and prevents you from getting all the way to zero delusion and zero suffering by following whatever method

it is you're following.

So

it's a very convenient working

hypothesis and you can use a certain

amount of reason or philosophy to

extrapolate. You know if you follow this

path it causes you to have less desire

and less suffering, less delusion, then

you continue following, you're going to

have less and less. Whether it gets down

to zero or not is something you can't

really be sure of. But at least you're

moving in the direction of less and

less.

That part you can be fairly sure of.

And the Buddha or anybody else being a

fully enlightened being that's just a

convenient working hypothesis. There's no way you could prove it one way or the other.

So I mean it wasn't obvious even to people in the Buddhist time who were sitting there face to face with him. It wasn't obvious to all of them that he was enlightened. You know, some people would talk to the Buddha and just go off and continue being a Jivieas or Brahmans or whatever.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Xenithoid and he says, "Based off this clip, could you please attempt to analyze Yung's spiritual mindset and explain what sets

him apart from the average religious person?" and he included this uh clip of like a a short on YouTube of Carl Jung. He was asked if he believes in God and he says, "I don't have to believe. I know. Once you know something, you don't have to believe it anymore."

So,

could I please attempt to analyze Yung's spiritual mindset? It's hard to say just based on that. It kind of reminds me of Rahm Doss. Somebody was saying, "Yeah, well, rebirth is a theory." And Ramda says, "No, I know. I know that that rebirth happens. I just know it." You know, it's it's it's beyond mere belief. You know, it's it's knowledge.

So why exactly they would say why exactly Jung would say that with regard to God, especially from a Buddhist point of view where there is no capital G God. From a Terra Buddhist point of view, there is no capital G God. So how could Jung know that something exists that from a terra Buddhist point of view doesn't exist? So I mean he has had I assume Yung I mean he was a relatively wise person, relatively intelligent person obviously and he no doubt had some kind of spiritual inclinations. So it could be that he had like deep spiritual inclinations. He had some kind of mystical experience where he's just

feeling the presence of divinity and that's that's what he's basing it on. And it wouldn't surprise me at all. He's um I mean Jung used to write like introductions to Buddhist texts like um I think Oxford University Press had this series that was edited by Evans Wentz who had Jung doing like the the introduction to the Tibetan Book of the Dead and the Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation and so forth. And so Jung I mean he had some spiritual inclinations, some spiritual talent. And so I wouldn't be surprised at all that he had some kind of mystical experience which he interpreted as the presence of God. But a Buddhist would interpret it

differently because there is no capital
G God in terara Buddhism.
But there is like an absolute you know
there is like a higher level of reality
than this somesic delusion that we're
wallowing in. So he had like at least a
glimpse of that sort of thing which a
Buddhist also can have which pretty much
anybody also can have and he interprets
that to be God and and and considers
that to just be you know I experienced
it so I know it but the actual
interpretation
um is not really grounded in the
absolute that that's just another
samsaric phenomenon.

Uh, so what sets him apart from the average religious person? Well, he he was a deep person and there's a good chance he really did have spiritual experiences like like mystical experiences and so forth which the average person either doesn't have or else they have it to such a small degree that they never really integrate it into their their world view.

Like for example, everybody sneezes pretty much everybody sneezes. And when you're in mid sneeze, that's about as close to enlightenment as the average normie gets, it seems, because you're like wide awake and you're not thinking anything. You know, it's like this flash

of a mystical experience, but it doesn't really have enough content, any discrete content
that you can really integrate it into your world view.
You know, it's just a boom, you sneeze, you know, everybody does it. Dogs sneeze, cats sneeze, and so you know it's you don't really consider to be anything profound. You're not doing it mindfully.
So
let's see. So what sets him apart from the average religious person? Well, he was much more intelligent, much more philosophical,

had more spiritual inclinations, more
interest in spirituality in general,
studied it extensively.
And so that obviously is going to put
him in a higher category than the
average person working at a Bojangles.
So I'm just going to move on to the
Xenithoids. Next question.
Why does beauty sometimes make us cry? I
always get choked up watching this video
of Young, the one that I was just
referring to, I guess, especially when
he says, "When I know it, I don't need
to believe it."
Um, it's not just beauty that makes us
cry. I mean, for example,
I almost always get choked up if I watch

the ending of the first Rocky movie or even a lot of time just remembering just thinking about the ending of the the first Rocky movie. I get like choked up from that. And I guess you could call it beauty, you know? It's like there is a certain symbolic beauty to this this guy living in a slum who somehow has the opportunity to stand up to the world's champion boxer. He is humble. He's too humble even to to really want to win. You know, he just feels like he can't really beat Apollo Creed, the world's champion. He is just determined he's gonna stay on his feet the full 12 rounds. And in a way it's symbolic of,

you know, Apollo Creed is the world champion. So he sort of represents the world. He's the best the world has to offer. And that Rocky in his humility, his ambition is just not to be beaten down onto his knees, not to be beaten down by the world. He's going to stand up proud the full 12 rounds. And at the end, it's a split decision. and he is not even listening. You know, when they're announcing the winner, Rocky is not even listening. He doesn't even care who the winner is cuz he knows he won because he stayed on his feet as he intended and he's just yelling for his woman. And his woman, who's also this humble, downtrodden kind of person, is

just fighting through the crowd to get to him. And then when they're announcing, see, I'm starting to get choked up already. And when they're announcing the actual winner, they're just in each other's arms just in this state of ecstasy, not even listening. They don't even care.

So, I mean, I I'm starting to get a little choked up just just remembering that. It's it's profound to me. I consider Rocky to be one of the greatest American movies. I mean, not the sequels. I mean, those are just like pop boilers, but the first Rocky movie was like an inspired masterpiece of American

cinematography in my opinion.
So beauty can make us cry. I think it's just excess of feeling. You know, something like triggers a deep feeling in you, like a more intense feeling than you're used to. Then the this excess energy has to like release itself in some way or another just through sobs or tears or sometimes laughter, that kind of thing.
uh like uh William Blake in one of his proverbs of hell, it's like excess of sorrow laughs, excess of joy weeps.
Yeah. Excess of any kind of emotion, you got like more than the usual amount of emotion. It's going to have to like get out somehow or another.

And so something that's very beautiful
can have that effect. can move you so
that there has to be some kind of
physiological response to help
work off this this higher than normal
level of energy. It's kind of like PT in
meditation. If you're meditating, you
get into a deeper level of meditation
than you're used to. You can experience
PT where your body is just like
twitching. I think in Hinduism it's
called shakti where it's it's like it
has to that this excess energy has to
like come out somehow or another and in
in the case of meditation it's
in a way it's like reduced energy

whereas

or it's like finer more subtle energy so

that this crudder energy that you

usually have going has to like find new

ways to escape through just like

twitching muscles and just vibrating

weird feelings, that kind of thing.

So,

I guess I kind of answered that

question. And I do want to avoid a

three-hour long one. So, I'm just going

to move on to Xenithoid's third question

after hitting the space bar on my

woman's computer again. And the third

question is, is the only reason we're

not enlightened simply because we don't

want to be? Perhaps we already are, but

we just don't know or don't want to believe it. Well, that's typical Mahayana situation or explanation. Also, um, Ekarola, beginning of his, uh, most famous his first famous book, The Power of Now, um, you know, he gives the example of the beggar sitting on a box, holding out his his cap, asking for spare change, and then some passer by just says, "Why don't you look in the box?" and and the the guy just I don't know, never thought about looking in the box. Well, look in the box. So, he gets up, opens the box, looks, it's full of like money. And so, that's sort of like the average unenlightened person. You

know, they're they're begging for they want something that they've already got. You know, you're already you've already got it. It's just that your mind is making too much noise and you're distracted by that. That's like Mahayana teaches this too. So, there is some truth to that. I mean, reality is everywhere.

You know, I mean, you want to attain, you want to know ultimate reality. I mean, how far away is it? You know, it's ultimate reality isn't just on some mountain top in Tibet or some such. It's everywhere all the time and we're just soaking in it. So, there's a level of us that is aware of that. a very deep like

the deepest level of us is is fully aware of that, but it's like the higher levels are making all this noise and and it's it's sort of like the higher levels have the ego and all that that just get in the way and obscure it.

So,

let's see. That's just kind of addressing this comment he made at the end. The actual question is is the only reason we're not enlightened simply because we don't want to be. Um yeah, we want we want to remain unenlightened. We want to cling to what we know. We want to cling to our illusions. We want to cling to our sense

of self which is illusory ultimately.
So yeah, it's Paul Lo was really good at explaining how spirituality is a kind of cope in that we don't really want to be fully enlightened. We just want to kind of work on stuff, you know, we want to kind of think that we're working towards enlightenment. Whereas just letting go and being enlightened, we're just scared to death of that. That's like jumping off a cliff. And so we compensate for being afraid to jump off the cliff by just kind of working on, you know, reducing this kind of desire or reducing that kind of desire or deepening our understanding of such and such when really we don't want to be fully

enlightened.

So there there is some truth to that too. Um, but the average normie I mean enlightenment isn't even really an option. They I mean it's just not in their working vocabulary. they they just assume this is reality and so they're not trying to become enlightened.

They're just, you know, trying to make money, pay the bills, get a new car, that kind of thing.

So yeah, the main reason we're not enlightened

um is that we're just clinging to unenlightenment.

That's what we understand. We most of us

consider that to be reality.
But even the people that consider
themselves to want to be enlightened,
who are striving for enlightenment,
they're still clinging to samsara more
than they're striving for enlightenment
in most cases.
So the only reason we're not enlightened
is simply because we don't want to be
pretty much. I mean, even people that
want to be enlightened, I mean, the
wanting is still desire.
So it's it's I think it might be a
little bit more accurate or precise to
say that the only reason we're not
enlightened is simply because we want to
be unenlightened.

We are clinging to some sorrow
partly because the superficial levels of
our ego and so forth just kind of don't
know any better or it's just like force
of habit like karmic force of habit to
just cling to certain things like
self-preservation that kind of thing.
Self-preservation not just physically
but like intellectually and emotionally.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Rakasa
Rakshasha.
And Raasa says, "What is your take on
the book of Revelations
and when I was a young man like in like
college

and I was reading the Bible for the first time and I get to the book of Revelations, I was taking it seriously. I'm doing like what people have been doing forever since the book of Revelation was was composed. I'm like trying to fit it in to, you know, to what was going on in the world, you know, like how Lindsay, the the late great planet Earth kind of stuff. But nowadays, I think that St. John the Divine on when he's on the island of Patmos where he had this vision. I think he was a bit on the nutty side, tell you the truth. And I do think that Mr. 666 in the book of Revelations, it's a false prophecy of Nero that 666

I was a common device in like ancient Greece that you would I mean numbers in Greek were letters. is they didn't have numerals. They just used Greek letters to represent numbers kind of like the Romans also did. And so you could take just the numerical value of the letters and add them together. And the way it works, you know, 666 is if you do the same thing with Hebrew letters, then the word neron, which is the Greek way of saying Nero, adds up to 666.

And so there's a good chance that they were going with this idea that Nero hadn't really died, that he was going to come back, you know, he was going to

recover from like this fatal injury. And there was a I have read that it was a common belief that Domission, a later emperor, was considered to be kind of like the re return of Nero, this kind of thing. So, I do think that the book of Revelation is just this weird fantasmagorical vision um experienced by a relatively nutty like Hebrew turned Christian activist and he was kind of he was saintly. And getting back to Carl Young, this is this is a quote from Carl Young uh coming from his his long essay Answer to Job. He says, "The revelation was experienced by an early Christian who, as a leading

light of the community, presumably had to live an exemplary life and demonstrate to his flock the Christian virtues of true faith, humility, patience, devotion, selfless love, and denial of all worldly desires. In the long run, this can become too much even for the most righteous. irritability, bad moods, and outbursts of affect. For example, these apocalyptic visions are the classic symptoms of chronic virtuousness.

That's Carl Jung again. So, it was like he was forcing himself to be saintlier than was natural for his temperament, which is often how it works when you're

doing spiritual practice. And it was just causing like this latent like negativity to come up and just angels pouring bowls of wrath and blood and all this everything destroyed and all this kind of stuff. Um, yeah, it could have been like a neurotic symptom, but I do not I no longer consider the book of Revelation, you know, the last book of the New Testament to be um like any kind of legit prophecy, any any any kind of prognostication of the future. And the very last words of the book of Revelation are Jesus saying, you know, it's like, "Behold, I'm coming very soon." And this was 2,000 years ago. And St. John the Divine, he was saying

like this is the final hour. Like I think that's his first epistle. Assuming that the same guy wrote the epistles of John as wrote the book of Revelation, you know, he's saying they say before Jesus comes up, Antichrist must come. But I'm telling you that antichrist many antichrists are already here. Anyone who denies the father and the son are antichrist.

So, we know that this is the final hour damn near 2,000 years ago.

So, I mean, Christianity was I mean, it started off as a kind of schismatic apocalyptic cult. I mean it was based on I mean apocalyptic literature was very

much in fashion among certain Hebrews in Jesus's time going back a few hundred years going back at least as far as King Antiochus Epiphanies and the Hasmonian dynasty the Mcabes and all that which was like 160 165 170 BCE that you know the Hebrews I mean it was like if we can't become the rulers of the world, then [__] it. The whole world's going to come to an end. Just [__] it. We can't we can't be number one in the world. So, the world's just going to come to an end. That was kind of like the this kind of bitter cope that Hebrews were experiencing after the their previous prophecies turned out false. They had some prophet saying, you

know, after, you know, after the
Babylonian captivity, Israel would never
be invaded by a foreign army ever again.
And that was that was God's promise. And
then along come the Romans and just
conquer them again
after the Greeks did it.
The Greek Macedonians anyhow.
So, my take on the book of Revelations,
I used to take it seriously when I was
like 18, 19, 20 years old. And now I
think it's pretty much just a very
imaginative
neurotic symptom.
And I'm just going to move on to
Rakasa's second question.

If you've read any apocryphal books of the Bible, what is your take on those? And he gives the example of the book of Enoch. And I have read the book of Enoch.

And the book of Enoch is another it was like what I was just mentioning how apocalyptic literature about the world coming to an end was in fashion among certain Hebrews leading up to Christian times. And the New Testament is influenced by the book of Enoch. The book of Enoch is quoted at least once. I think it's the book of Jude who may have been Jesus's son. Although I think he's considered to be Jesus's brother.

So,

but it's like in that the the ouaries they found a family crypt with these ouaries and there was um Jesus and Mary and and uh was the the brother Joseph, you know, was kind of an it was an unusual name. And then there was Judah who was con on the ouary was described as the son of Jesus. And so it could be just a coincidence that you know the names happen to be the same. Although there was there was only one really unusual Hebrew name. Most of the rest of them were common names. Jesus was a fairly common name for Hebrews at the time. Mary was the most common name for

a female. Miriam, you know. So I mean

Jude obvious Judah.

So, I can't remember where I was going

with that. Oh, yeah. Just mentioning

that Jude may have been Jesus's son

rather than his brother. See, if you've

read any apocryphal books of the Bible,

what is your take on those? I mean, and

Enoch is similar to the the prophetic

part of um Daniel

where he's kind of predicting, you know,

the future which is 100% accurate up

until he gets to the about 162

BCE and then it starts becoming

inaccurate. So, you know that probably

that part of the book of Daniel was

composed around 162 B.CE.

you know, has like the the precursor of Antichrist as you know, Antiochus Epiphies. He's the little horn. He's the hard-faced king in these prophecies. And, you know, he sets up the abomination of desolation, which is the an idol of Zeus that he sets up in the in the Jewish temple in Jerusalem, that kind of thing. I mean, the book of Revelation is is along these same lines. It's it's obviously apocalyptic literature.

Um, I've read some apocryphal books. I mean, I read a lot of them when I was in college, just some of the more obscure apocrypha. But the one that I would take

most seriously would be the Gospel according to Thomas, which I think might be more worthy of being included in the New Testament than say the Gospel according to John.

the gospel according to John. It seems to be historically more accurate than the synoptic gospels like towards the beginning where it's it's saying really that Jesus's first apostles were mainly followers of John who started following Jesus after John got thrown into prison as opposed to the synoptic gospels where they're just fishermen and Jesus just walks by and says follow me. So they just get up, leave their nets and their boats behind and just become apostles.

And then towards at the end of Jesus's ministry when he's being, you know, up his trial and crucifixion and so forth, that might be more accurate in John. But the whole middle part is is mainly and even like
what is it? Uh Christian schools will teach this stuff. Seminaries will teach this stuff that most of the words of Jesus in the gospel according to John, you know, in the in the long part between the beginning and the end of his ministry is mostly just the words of John put into Jesus's mouth.
So let's see. So the book of the the gospel according to Thomas might

actually contain more legitimate teachings of Jesus than the gospel according to John. But a lot of the apocryphal books, they're just obviously fake. The gospel according or not the gospel according to Barnabas, but like the the epistle of Barnabas, this kind of stuff. It doesn't have a whole lot of useful stuff. There is a lot of kind of apocryphal stuff that's been added to the Bible. You know, like the book of Daniel's got some of that. Some of the uh the epistles of Paul are considered to be fake. There's like some weird one. like second Thessalonians or something like that. It's a weird one talking about Antichrist and all that that um I

mean they're pretty much apocryphal even though they're accepted into the cannon because they're apparently fake, you know, not really composed by the person they're considered to be composed by. But the the one apocryphal book of the Bible, and I don't think the book of Enoch really is apocrypha. I mean technically the Apocrypha of the Old Testament would be like the book of Tabet, the first and second books of Mcabes, that kind of thing. Um, but I mean that's just sort of like apocryphal like apocalyptic literature that influenced New Testament Christians like in the like the the composers of

the New Testament.

So yeah, there was like this idea that the world was going to come to an end. You're going to have some kind of spiritual leader like the Messiah was sort of making the transition from some political king which was what the Messiah originally was going to be. He was going to be a branch of David. He was going to be a descendant of King David who was going to be king of Israel again. And then um starting maybe with you know the book of of Daniel then it's starting to make this transition that the the Messiah is going to be a spiritual leader and then the world's going to be destroyed and and etc etc.

But yeah gener I mean the the the gospel according to Thomas I consider to be the highest quality apocrypha that I have come across. Although like in the Old Testament the the first the first book of Mcabes especially is seems to be fairly good history. You can learn a lot about the times by reading the first book of Mcabes and also it helps you to understand the prophecies of Daniel in the book of Daniel because they're describing the same events one symbolically in the form of fake prophecies and one just as history. So then you can tell that you know the the little horn and the hard-faced king

and so forth in um the book of Daniel is
really king Antiochus Epiphanies
a solucid kind of king or emperor
around the time of 162 BCE.
So, I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question, which is from PSA.
And PSA says, "What do you think of
precious national treasure Hunter Biden?
He is really something, isn't he? The
pride of America." Well, Hunter Biden's
pretty much uh faded out now that Biden
himself, Joe Biden, is no longer in
power. But
yeah, Hunter Biden, I mean, he was just
some rich kid that was sort of
privileged and pampered and just got to
do what he wanted and he just kind of

took the ball and ran with it and was trafficking teenage prostitutes and taking drugs and, you know, like seducing his his brother's widow, getting her addicted to to drugs or whatever and dumping her for a stripper or whatever, whatever the stories are. Um, I mean it's it's kind of a typical thing. I mean, you read Roman history, for example, the son of an emperor is often just some sociopathic monster because I mean, they can just do whatever they want.

And that's the way it is like in in throughout the world even now that you know the son of some super millionaire,

he's going to be pretty much immune to any kind of prosecution.

So, I mean, some of them will just I mean, they just got go full nero, just just turn into sociopaths, do whatever the hell they want to. So, that's pretty much what happened to Hunter Biden, as far as I can tell.

So

yeah, I mean he belongs in jail, but whether he'll actually go to jail, I mean everyone I mean you read like right-wing social media and everyone's just like clamoring to Pam Bondi, the attorney general. When are you going to start arresting these people?

Well, no high-profile

Democratic criminal has been arrested yet. At least I'm not aware of it. So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question. Do you think the Trump administration will allow the Bank of International Settlements to implement central bank digital currencies and bring US citizens to their knees and eventually the whole world effectively neutralizing everyone by removing cash and limiting access to their own money if the sheep doesn't behave as they're told? Well, I really don't know much about this. I know that Trump has taken an interest in like cryptocurrency, but uh I've also heard that there's like

a worldwide move to get away from fiat money and start like using gold as the basis of wealth again. I think the BRICS countries are trying to do that. Get away from the US dollar and just go to gold.

So it may be that if there's too radical of an attempt to switch to digital currency, people are just going to start using gold.

And uh

yeah, the the possibility of banks I mean it's already happening in some countries, not so much in America. I think it's happened in America too where you do something the government doesn't like and so your bank will just freeze

your bank account and you can't take any money out.

I think the UK and Canada are much more inclined to be this way than America is. It's like, well, you posted this racist tweet, therefore we're freezing your bank account. or like the Canadian government did to the the truck drivers who were protesting having having to take mandatory like COVID shots.

They just their bank accounts were frozen or I read on X somewhere that someone tried to take money out of their account. I don't think they were American. And the the bank demanded that

they explain what they wanted to use the money for. And the person said they were going to buy a new motorcycle and the the the bank just refused to give them the money even though it was technically their own money. Like the the person's money. No, you you don't need that motorcycle essentially.

could have been just a madeup story, but I I I did read it on X recently.

So, yeah, I really don't know exactly what Trump's going to do. I I kind of doubt that Trump is going to do anything that his base is just vehemently opposed to, which would include sending troops to Iran.

It's much more likely. It's like most

Americans and most conservative
Americans don't want Iran to have
nuclear weapons, you know, so they're
they're pretty much in favor of just
dropping huge bombs on their nuclear
like research facilities, but it's
pretty much unanimous other than like
Lindsey Graham
that they don't want American troops
fighting in Iran like American troops
were fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan
that I mean it never really leads to
success. You just get bogged down in
another Vietnam like scenario and a lot
of Trump supporters would just consider
to be Trump to be you know doing the

bidding of Israel by doing that. I mean, they they kind of already there's already people that just think that Trump is just being the lackey of Israel by bombing Iran when I really don't think so. I think it is pretty much it was perceived as being to the advantage of pretty much the entire Western world that I to and and to Israel that Iran doesn't get nukes. In fact, even Iran's neighbors who are Sunni Muslims and not Shia Muslims would agree that I mean they don't like Iran very much either. They don't want Iran to get nukes because Iran is continually vowing to destroy Israel in the United States. You know, they're pretty much run by a

terrorist organization.

So

with regard to that, I don't know how I drifted off into that direction, especially because there's another question about that particular subject a little farther down the scroll here, but uh the bank of international settlements to implement central bank digital currencies.

Yeah, I'm not I really don't know enough about that. I'm I'm not really an economist. I'm not like extremely interested in economics. In fact, I'm not extremely interested even in just money.

I'm certainly not

Hebrew enough. My ancestry is

essentially 0% Hebrew until you get back

to like Noah, I guess.

So, I mean, it's I really don't care all

that much about money. It's it's sort of

I inherited that from my father to some

degree. So, yeah, I'm no no authority on

central bank digital currencies. So, I

really am not in a position to make an

intelligent statement on the subject.

So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's

next question.

There is a huge amount of talk going on

about AI coming to take people's jobs

and becoming sentient. In the beginning,

I dismissed it as nonsensical rumors,

but more and more people are talking about it as a serious possibility. What do you think about this and the impact it will have on society? I've already done like entire videos on this subject on what is called the technological singularity.

So it's there's two different factors. I mean, one is AI just taking over people's jobs. And there's lots of jobs that are being taken over already now, like artists,

musicians,

um, just any any kind of job that can be taken over by robots. And robots aren't necessarily androids. I mean it can just

be some machine that is just sort of
working with no human supervision other
than just like maintenance you know just
some some maybe one person overseeing
the whole thing.
So you know before long McDonald's is
going to have just machines flipping
burgers instead of whoever
that kind of thing with my own job of
being a forklift operator. I think it's
I think I'm going to be retired by the
time forklift operators get replaced by
just robotic forklifts, self-driving
forklifts.
So that kind of thing. I mean, when so
many people are losing jobs
due to AI and robots that I mean,

there's going to have to you're going to have to create new like economic niches for people to get jobs in, something that humans are best at doing, which I'm not sure what that would be.
or you're just going to have to have a kind of socialized like allowance to everybody. Sort of like what was his name? Richard Yang. Andrew Yang. What was his name? Yang. His last name was Yang. He ran for president like back in 2016, I think. And he was saying, you know, everybody should just get like a thousand bucks, you know. I don't know I don't remember how often it was but I mean it was be enough to live on like a

subsistence level and especially when more and more people are losing jobs to AI and so forth that kind of thing might actually be necessary.

So there's that, but then there's the whole other issue of AI becoming sentient.

And I've done like entire videos talking about this where it's called the technological sing technological singularity where if you got self-referential computers they're like they're recursively self-programming themselves. You know you start off with just this basic and then the computer is you know acquiring more information and improving upon its own programming

rather than some human doing it. Then if if it's able to become sentient once it reaches a certain level of complexity and self-reference,
then I mean it's not going to have the same biological limitations that we have. It's just going to be able to just transcend its own limitations to some degree. So that within a short time after it becomes as conscious or sentient as we are, it's going to be as far beyond us as we are beyond cockroaches or amiebas.
And there's absolutely no telling what's going to happen. You've got some people who who look forward to the the

technological singularity when computers become I mean astronomically more intelligent than us.

And they're just thinking, well, the computers are just going to solve everything. They're going to cure all diseases. They're going to cure old age. It's just going to be like a heaven realm. We're going to be like in a Dava realm, which is a possibility. But then again, it's a technological singularity, which means you cannot predict what's going to happen. You cannot prepare for the technological singularity. Assuming that computers really do become sentient and through their self-programming, they're just it's just going to hit the

S-shaped curve and they're going to be billions of times more intelligent than us. You know, it's going to be like something out of an Arthur C. Clark novel, like Childhood's End. It's just going to be just unthinkable what's going to happen next.

So, it may be our best bet is that the AI and its wisdom will consent to keeping us humans as pets.

Or else they're just going to like transcend the whole thing and just move beyond and just leave us behind. kind of like what happens sort of in childhood's end, but the whole world comes to an end at the end of that one.

So,

let's see.

Yeah, I mean it is it is possibility.

Anything is possible. So, it's possible

that we will have the technological

singularity. It's possible that it'll

turn out good. It all possible that the

computers will just consider us to be in

the way

and just eliminate us.

It's possible. Well, I mean, I think

about karma, too. It's like our own

karma is determining what happens. And

so, if we just don't have the karma to

be wiped out by a a computer supermind,

then it's not going to happen.

So all you can really do in a case like

that is just have a certain amount of faith in your own karma that it's not going to just completely destroy the world you live in because you are creating your own reality. You may not realize it but you are at at a profound level conditioning your own reality your own version of samsara.

So, it's going to depend on us more than on some scientist somewhere. What's going to happen to us?

And I'm just moving on to the next question. This is from Thermal Squid.

And Thermal Squid says, "Do people who have severe mental illnesses make terrible karma for themselves if their

intent is divorced from the outcomes of their actions?

It seems to me that a person who cannot control themselves or has a different difficult time doing so due to some kind of instability would not be making demerit because they are essentially possessed not being in the driver's seat. Well,

this reminds me of like serial killers. I've watched some shows about serial killers where sometimes they will say, "It's like this irresistible urge that causes me to do this stuff. I don't know why I turned out this way, but it's just this irresistible urge causing me to do it." And in in a case like that,

um, yeah, I mean, they're still doing it. They still recall doing it. They probably still got some satisfaction from doing it.

And so I mean in their case it's just that their desires are so strong that they can't resist the desire. They can't say no. They can't just refrain.

They just act out their desire because the desire is so strong. And strong desires are making worse karma than subtle desires.

So in that case they're just enslaved to their own bad karma. There are foolish people just hyper samsaric foolish people who are just enslaved to their

own attachments and cravings.

But like in Buddhism in uh like the rules of monastic discipline a monk is responsible for his actions so long as he can remember doing them. If you are so I mean so out of it like you you're having some kind of a blackout where you don't even recall doing it the next day then that's kind of like an out for a Buddhist monk. So, I was thinking, you know, when I was a monk, just playing with ideas, so to speak, that a monk could get so drunk that he blacks out and then he could go out and have sex with with a hoe or something. And if he doesn't even remember it the next day, then he got to do that. He doesn't even

he hasn't broken a rule. Although, what would be the point of doing it if you don't even recall it?

But that would be one way that a monk could have sex without breaking a rule is if he is so completely out of his mind that he doesn't even recall doing it the next day.

So let's see here.

Yeah. I mean if you're totally possessed so that it's not really your conscious mind calling the shots. So that I mean it's like your conscious mind is just supplanted replaced by some other mind.

then

in a way you're not making that karma.

Just you got to be careful that it's not
like multiple personalities in which
case you're still responsible because
it's just another one of your fra you
know another like fraction of your mind
is doing it
and that's generally the way it usually
works. you know, it's just either you're
just so enslaved to your cravings that
you have to act out or, you know,
there's some kind of multiple
personality thing in which, you know,
it's still kind of you to the extent
that you exist. You know, it's karma.
I'd say it's a very rare case when
someone really is possessed by some
other kind of mind that takes over their

body and does bad things and then the other person is just completely helpless. and according to the Buddhist loophole doesn't even remember doing it. So

let's see here. I guess I answered that question. So I'm going to move on to thermal squid second question which is how do you feel about catam? I don't even know how to pronounce it.ratom.ratom.ratom.

Do you believe it's an intoxicant or something that brings bad karma? And then as a kind of commentary, he says, "I've been using it for the last couple of months and I've seen a total

remission of my irritable bowel s syndrome symptoms along with it helping me to get sleep at sane times. These are miraculous results and it has brought joy into my life again. But I do sometimes find myself in a stouper or nearly nodding off. I know it's used a lot in Southeast Asia. And I was also wondering if you ran into it when you were a monk. No, I never ran into catam when I was a monk. I I'm not sure when I ever heard of it. I think it's I heard about it just you you drive past these like smoke shops, places that sell drug paraphernalia and so forth. Usually also like crystals and candles and stuff. sometimes t-shirts, postcards,

and you know, they'll advertise
and I mean, I've heard indirectly a few
things aboutratom. Never taken it
myself. Was never even really tempted to
take it myself. Just really saw no
reason why. I mean, it's sold at places
that sell drugs. I mean, like legal drug
paraphernalia, that kind of stuff. CBD
oils and that kind of thing.
So I assume it does have some kind of
intoxicating properties but then again I
mean like cannabis or caffeine you know
they have a certain psychoactive
uh like effect but also there's other
indirect effects you know sort of like
side effects that you know it like

cannabis it's been known that it reduces the the pressure inside your eyeballs for example so that people with glaucoma used to be able to smoke cannabis legally back when cannabis was largely illegal just because it had the medicinal value of like reducing the pressure in your eyeballs. Also, I mean, everyone knows as smoke cannabis that it causes what is called cotton mouth, which I mean it's not just your mouth dries out. It's like all of your mucous membranes dry out. So that if you have like a snotty head cold, smoking some cannabis helps to give you cotton nose and it reduces the snot, that kind of thing. Yeah. So I don't really don't

know what the symptoms of credom are. I mean it could cause a certain drowsiness and also at the same time have these these other symptoms. So um yeah, it can be an intoxicant or something that brings bad karma. depends on your reasons for taking it. You the mental states associated with the action because mere actions are ethically neutral. It's the mental states you know like the the volition the chana the will that is determined that determines whether it's a skillful action or an unskillful action or in most cases a combination of the two. It's going to be a shade of gray. It's going to have its

good elements and bad elements.

Wholesome elements and unh wholesome

elements.

So

I guess that's that's pretty much my

take onratom

and the ethics of taking.

So I'm just going to move on to thermal

squid's next question

which is this is somewhat sorted and

yucky. So embrace yourselves everybody.

What follows is somewhat sorted and

yucky. Okay, Thermal Squid continues,

"But are there any meditative practices

that you know of that would be conducive

to healing from sexual trauma,

especially as a man? I have heard people

online facitiously say that those who are victims of sodomy have had their root chakra destroyed and that this permanently prevents enlightenment or moka in that person's life. While it didn't occur down there for myself, I feel like there is some kind of corrupted or injured element of a subtle body or some kind of metaphysical element involved. I'm extremely averse to psychiatry and psychology because it's failed my family and I in the past should be my family and me in the past and is sort of modeled after the thinking of a juice crack addict who likely had carnal

knowledge of his daughter. Well, first of all, yeah, chakras, I mean, it's it's not a Buddhist concept. It's more of a yogic Hindu concept, but I'm pretty sure they don't get destroyed. I mean, they can get like obstructed or blocked through c like en energetic imbalances or something. They can get thrown out of kilter to some degree, but I don't think you're going to completely destroy a chakra.

Um, but getting back to the actual question,

are there any meditative practices that you know of that would be conducive to healing from sexual trauma, especially as a man? And the main one is just

mindfulness.

That's I mean that's like the panacea, the Buddhist panacea is mindfulness. You're doing mindfulness meditation. Then any kind of like feelings that come up, you just note them, let them go. So you have like guilt or aversion or resentment or anger or despair, anything that arises, note it, let it go. Note it, let it go. Note it, let it go. And so that allows this momentum, this karmic momentum of this feeling that keeps recurring that you're not reinforcing it. You're not wallowing in it. You're just detaching from it. And that gradually reduces the momentum of

these thoughts.

I used to know uh one of the world's leading authorities in obsessivempulsive disorder and that's he was using essentially mindfulness techniques sadana as a way of curing people of obsessivempulsive disorder without them having to take pills or whatever. And it was the same thing. You've got this compulsive desire to say let's say wash your hands over and over and over again. It's just you note it. you let it go. It's not me, it's the OCD. If it helps, it generally does, especially at first, you just distract yourself by doing something else. But generally, the main method,

note it, and let it go.

And so these feelings of guilt or despair or whatever it is, when they arise, you're doing mindfulness meditation, you just note the feeling. It's not me. It's just a mental state arising. You know, it's not like I am angry. It's just anger is arising. You note it, you let it go. Note it, let it go.

And the more consistently you can do that, the more quickly the momentum of this, the karmic momentum subsides.

You may never be entirely cured of it. Like someone with OCD, I

mean, going with medical science, it's a genetic thing. there's a glitch in your brain, the singulate gyrus or some such. And so you may never be entirely cured of the obsessive uh urges, but still it gets to the point where it's like you're just in the habit in the in the practice of just noting it, let it get go. Noting it, let it go. So that essentially you're cured. even though you're having you're still having some obsessivecompulsive thoughts coming up, they're not nearly as intense because you're no longer reinforcing it. And so, and then you just get used to it of just noting it, letting it go. It's not me. It's just

mental states arising and passing away. And so, that's that's how you get cured of it. And I've thought that just being enlightened can be that way. I mean, you're never going to completely eliminate unenlightened thoughts. It's just that you learn to just not attach to the unenlightened thoughts. Just not wallow in them. Just note it. Let it go. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ruie.

And Ruie says, "What was the role of revulsion towards the world and worldly things in your practice? And did anger arise in conjunction with it?"

Well,

um it does say in the in the Wizudi manga, you know, the main commentarial work in terara Buddhism that a person with a dose of temperament, like an aversive aversive temperament, like an irritable temperament actually has an advantage in becoming enlightened because they're less likely to cling to the world. you know they have a kind of aversion for the world which helps them to renounce the world and you know they have like impatient aversion for their own defilements too maybe so that helps them not to just wallow in it. I mean they might still wallow in disgust and aversion

but at least their attachment to the

world in general or you know some soric you know society cultural stuff is is much reduced.

So I had some of that when I was young. I really had little use for the human race as a young man. I'm gradually have more patience and compassion for my fellow humans than I used to. Um, and I've always had sort of like an aesthetic streak. My father was a macho guy. You know, one of his his sayings was a little pain never hurt anybody. And so, you we as a kid, we'd learned how to go camping with like no tents or anything. You just sleep under the open sky. Bring a tarp just in case it rains.

You can string it up really fast.

Um, just

roughing it essentially.

So,

um, revulsion. I mean, I mentioned in

the previous Q&A, I think it was one of

my character traits is not wanting to be

like everybody else.

Uh, just kind of doing my own thing, not

not being a slave to fashion or any such

thing. So,

in a way that that has a little bit of

revulsion. I mean, it's it's like in in

Buddhist philosophy or Buddhist ethics,

you know, there's like this holy

trinity, it's like you've got

uh what's the word? I'm having a mental

block now.

It's essentially disgust

then leads to uh wea or dispassion which

then leads to weuka or liberation.

So nibbida that's the word niba which is

sometimes translated as disgust

and that's you know that's like the

first step in liberation is a kind of

just being fed up with the world in

general and I did have quite a lot of

that uh as a young man I mean I still do

just don't take a lot of stuff as

seriously as most other people do um an

did anger arise in conjunction with it

occasionally Maybe just sort of, you

know, intolerance for the stupidity of

the human race, that kind of thing. But

it was more disgust than anger in my

case,

na more than koda,

koda,

which is usually the word for anger

really. Uh, dosa, I mean dosa can mean

anger, but it just means like aversion

in general.

But dotha in pol in uh in Burmese using

the word the poly word dosa pronouncing

it dotha because it's Burmese it

generally means anger but there is a

specific word just for anger koda I

think it's it's called in polyi

so

yeah I mean it was it definitely helped

me to renounce the world just having a revulsion or disgust or just being fed up with just western culture in general. Just superficial samsaric western cultures, hyper samsaric. Yeah. I just that kind of revulsion I had.

And also I mean you can be unlucky in love. That that that happened to me also. just just being unlucky in love just helps you to turn away from like romantic ideals and then you just go for renunciation. That that was that was a factor too I guess.

But it definitely helps to renounce the world if you have a certain aversion or

revulsion or disgust towards the world.
It makes it easier to renounce it.
Definitely.
And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Philies. And gosh, we've already at two and a half hours. Man, this is taking longer than I thought I was going to. Not that I'm complaining necessarily,
although I do have to uh do some hole digging later on today. Still working on the fish pond, doing things that a monk is not supposed to do, like dig the ground, damage plants. Anyways, Phil Ley says, "In terms of practice, what do you think is the most hardcore or extreme sect or sa of Buddhism?" Well, the most

hardcore or extreme sect or sa of Buddhism, I mean, I think that'd be like a matter of opinion.

Um, some of the like the Tibetan tantric stuff is pretty extreme or hardcore, but then you go back to like feudal Japan, like the samurai days where you had like mil militant sects of like soldier monks that eventually were so troublesome that they they just got like persecuted into oblivion. you know, it was sort of like uh a Zen or No, I think they were pure land Buddhists that were like, you know, sort of like the Buddhist rough equivalent of like Knights Templar or something, you know, sort of like monk

warriors.

So, they were they were definitely

problematic um to to the establishment

in like samurai Japan.

And they they're pretty extreme. I mean

any any monks like Shaolin monks too

maybe where you know you're using

violence as part of your dharma practice

or dharma practice then

uh yeah then that's going to be

considered hardcore or extreme.

So yeah, I think it would be like the

militant ones or or some of the ones

that would just wallow in tantric excess

like you know ritual sex acts and

intoxication and so forth. Those those

would probably be the most hard hardcore

or extreme sects of Buddhism. With regard to terravada,
we want most hardcore extreme sect of terravada. Um, in a good way, I might think along the lines of maybe the followers of Ajan Mahabua who are like extremely aesthetic, you know, just kind of tough, you know, hardcore renuncience, something like that.
So, let's see. I'll just move on to Phil Lee's next question. What do you think are the greatest character flaws of the Zoomer generation, ignoring extreme leftists?
Zoomers, that's like the the teenagers now. I really don't have a lot of

exposure to Zoomers. So, it's hard for me to say. I mean, I already mentioned above that my generation is different from like the current generation, which I assume is zoomers just mainly through we have greater we had greater independence.

Um, the zoomers tend to be more conformist, either conformist to leftist insanity or rightist insanity, but still they seem to be kind of more feminized, weaker, softer, and more conformist, which is pretty much the plan.

Although they're some of them are kind of defying the plan because they're conforming to sort of the the the right-wing counterculture.

the counterrevolutionaries.
So, the zoomers are actually more
conservative than previous generations
have been or so I have read at least in
certain respects.
But I really can't psychoanalyze zoomers
very well because I really don't know
very many. I really don't interact with
teenagers, very young adults lately.
So, um, so I guess I kind of already
answered that in a previous question and
I think I'm just going to move on to
Phil Lee's next question,
which is, do you think Plato is a good
philosopher if you have read him? Yeah,
I've read pretty much everything that

Plato wrote except The Laws. The Laws was a big one of his his longest works and I considered it to have been interesting. I think I was kind of looking forward to reading it, but I just never got around to reading Plato's laws. But I've read pretty much everything else he wrote or at least everything else attributed to him. And was he a good philosopher for his time? He was a good philosopher. Although I really am not impressed by Plato. I'm not impressed by Aristotle either for that matter. There's there's an old saying that everyone is either a Platonist or an Aristotilian, whether they realize it or not. But I really

don't think I'm either. Like I just have no use for Plato's universals that there's like the play Plato's heaven with like the ideal dog and every dog on earth is is like
um like influenced you know to some degree one of its factors is this divine dogness you know the the the perfect dog and it's just sort of filtered through the imperfections of the earth of worldliness or some such. Yeah I got no use for that. um like the his simile of the cave is probably his best philosophy that I've read.
There's one um dialogue by Plato where he's making fun of sophists

and I mean that's just good read that's like comedy.

So it probably that was he was better a comedian than a philosopher there I guess where it's like somebody asks somebody is that your dog and the guy says yeah and it's like it's a father you know and then the other person says yeah I saw I saw him mate with the female so I know the puppies are his and so then the sophist says well it's yours and it's a father therefore that dog is your father and the the puppies are your brothers.

So, I mean, it's it's kind of funny just this this whole dialogue is like that of these sophists just kind of making fools

of others while making fools of
themselves at the same time.
But yeah, and I'm really not impressed
by Plato. I just am not.
So, I mean, he was a good philosopher at
the time, I guess. You know, he was very
influential as a philosopher at the
time. you know, he's
definitely made waves.
So, I I assume like within the context
of like classical Greek culture, he was
a great philosopher.
But I do think he's obsolete at this
point.
You know, sort of like some of the early
scientists came up with important stuff.

They were great scientists, geniuses, but it's just that nobody's reading their who reads Galileo anymore. because he's been superseded by later developments.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question and I'm scrolling down here. Yeah, we don't have very much more to it. We're we're getting towards the end here. Trouble not no trouble.

So,

Sedarta Lohachita says, "Could we say that the swastika or the sawatika?" I guess that would be pi for swastika. In Pali is a symbol of Buddhism because each arm is one of the four noble truths. I heard the word swastika. It

means the good, similar to the Greek word kalos, as in Plato's coloscy, the rule of the good. Collo colocray I guess um well first of all the meaning of swastika is it's it's essentially a prefix a root and a suffix the the prefix is sue which is the same protoindo-uropean etmology as the Greek word eu it just means good or or well and ata is here it means like welfare or it can also mean the goal and poly. But here I think it just means like you know like prosperity

you know like the art shastra in in Sanskrit is you know sort of like the science the the text on like worldly

prosperity

and and then the ka at the end is just a

prefix that's doesn't necessarily have a

whole bunch of have any like real

meaning to it. Um,

swastika it kind it can kind of turn

things into like an adjective but here

swastika

literally in Sanskrit it means something

like true welfare, true benefit,

something like that and it was like a

good luck sign in ancient India.

So

I'm not sure about Buddhism adopting it

um going counterclockwise instead of

clockwise like later Germans did.

Um, I'm not sure that the four arms

represent the four noble truths. It may be later that that was sort of recconed into it, but it's my understanding that the swastika originally was just a symbol for the sun and the Buddha is considered to be a kinsman of the sun. You know, he came from a solar race according to ancient Indian culture. So, it could be more along those lines. And I I would assume the swastika existed before Buddhism did. And so it wouldn't really represent the four noble truths other than just retconing the symbolism onto the the four arms of the haken croits.

Um

but originally I think it just was a symbol of the sun. And it may be that originally the early Buddhists adopted it because the Buddha was kinsman of the sun or some such and that you know just somebody came up with an idea later. Hey, there's four arms, four noble truths. That's what it means.

But who knows? I really don't know. That's just my educated guess as I pull on my beard sideways.

So, let's see here. Sedarth Lohita's second question. Does something like collective karma exist or something like the fate of nations, so to speak? I've I've answered this question a number of times. Um, in terra Buddhism, there is

really no such thing as collective karma. Sort of like an evolutionary biology. There's no like group evolution. You know, it's always the individual that survives or doesn't survive to pass on its genes and it makes the appearance of kind of a group evolution. But and I think there are some evolutionary scientists who will say okay there is a kind of group evolution like an entire group can survive or not survive that kind of thing but with regard to karma according to terra Buddhism it's all individual karma

even though the individual is ultimately

an illusion but what happens is it seems like you've got like regional karma or collective karma like the Middle East has been a battlefield since prehistoric times

You know, it just seems like the Middle East is just doomed to be a battlefield. All kinds of violence and stuff going on in the Middle East since prehistoric times

with few exceptions to the rule.

So, the way you would explain that is that people with the same kind of violent karma are going to be reborn into this kind of violent culture. So it seems like group karma, but really it's the individual karma is is causing you

to be reborn according to the theory in this certain society where your violent karma is more likely to reach fruition. And then you just have sort of like the culture. you're just kind of got the karma to wind up in this culture that is in harmony with your karma and other people are too like um Edgar Casey um you know the sleeping prophet according to him lots and lots of Americans were Romans like from the Roman Empire in in previous lives so that in a way it's like America is like a reincarnation of of the Roman Empire sort of maybe we're still at the Republic stage at this point,

but I mean it's not like there's this group karma causing everybody. It's just like each person's individual karma just fits into this society better and so it makes gives the appearance of group karma
because you've got a group of people who just share similar karma and that's why they're together.
And that's kind of one reason why certain people will continue being reborn according to the theory in association with each other because they've got karma like directed towards each other like got attachments and so forth that caused this continuation but it's still the individual's karma in

this case and in the other case and it's
not necessarily a kind of group karma
but that's just orthodox Buddhism. I
mean, it can be that if you're not going
to be orthodox, you could adopt this
idea that there is a kind of group
karma, but I might as just I might as
well be orthodox in this case because it
makes it easier and just keep pulling on
this because it's it's sideways.
So yeah, the official answer would be
no, there is no collective karma, at
least for a terra Buddhist,
but
you can decide for yourself. I guess
whether a group of people have a kind of

group mind which creates its own entity like a love relationship like my woman and me is we've created like a third entity which is the us which I mean has its own characteristics.

So I mean if you want to accept that as a kind of new individual that has its own kind of karma then maybe although technically speaking that's not orthodox Buddhism.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Mat who I've recently learned apparently is of largely Celtic ancestry which is kind of strange for someone with the name Matt. Although I did meet a halfIrish Burmese person once

whose father I think was like a soldier
in World War II, an Irishman who just
settled in Burma because he liked it
after the war and raised a family. And
so he raised a bunch of halfIrish, half
Celtic
kids in Burma,
but I'm not sure exactly what Momy story
is here. Anyways, Miyat says, "I heard
someone say that when Buddha said a
datagata neither exists or not exists
after death or both exists and not
exists or both doesn't exist or not
exist, that the Buddha was referring to
everyone and that the doctrine of
rebirth was rejected or not talked about

much in early Buddhism. I was wondering what your thoughts on this are from your perspective of studying the poly scriptures." Well, yeah. I mean it can bleed over like when the Buddha refuses to answer whether a data exists or doesn't exist after death that I mean you could there are like complications or ramifications implications like the Buddha like in one suta says I mean you can't even say whether he exists before he dies and that's like the whole idea of anata really

and also you could sort of apply that to other people. And the atakawaga like it's the largest chunk of really ancient archaic Buddhism in existence. You know,

it's the it's like the largest piece of like pre-terra like pre just really archaic Buddhist literature still in existence. And I mean it just it doesn't mention rebirth that I can think of, not specifically. And it just says don't believe anything. And a lot of the Buddha's refusal to answer questions may stem from this really archaic Buddhist teaching. And that when you cling to a concept, I mean concepts cannot really contain the highest truth. It's just samsaric illusion. It's symbols.

So the earliest Buddhism I mean the whole idea of rebirth was just part of Indian culture. was is becoming

established in Indian culture at that time like the upupanad some of the oldest uponads which were pre Buddhist do teach rebirth and it was I mean the janes obviously believed in rebirth that that was sort of inherited from the indis valley civilization I assume so I mean Buddhists were exposed to the idea it was a common idea but there's also this idea that ideas cannot contain reality

that you're not going to understand the highest truth by thinking about it. So like at a samsaric like a skillful means kind of level like with regard to simutis satcha or conventional truth it I I would assume that even early

Buddhists accepted the idea of rebirth but when you get beyond conventional truth into ultimate truth then it's like you can't say anything. You don't say we're reborn. You don't say we're not reborn.

You don't believe any of that one way or the other.

And it's not because of skepticism like you can't know. It's just that the truth is you cannot put the truth into words. It's just anything that's symbolized in language is not going to be the highest truth. The name that can be named is not the eternal name.

So

um the Buddha I mean if he was referring
to everyone then he probably would have
said everyone rather than just the
datagata
but it could be applied to everyone in
that sense.
Um I don't think the doctrine of rebirth
was rejected any more than the doctrine
of no rebirth because all doctrines were
rejected by at least texts like the
atikawaga.
When you get into advanced level dharma,
you have to leave behind concepts
which includes the concept of rebirth,
the concept of enlightenment even.
So
that would be uh my thoughts on this I

guess and I'm going to move on to my next question which is I've heard you be somewhat critical of a certain celebrity seat in Burma. If you're comfortable with telling, what are your main criticisms of this particular Seattle? I'm wondering because I'll be ordaining as a somara at a Wiihara connected to their organization. Well, I have been somewhat critical of more than one celebrity seats. Like I've been fairly critical of for example, but I'm assuming that the the certain celebrity Seattle he's referring to would be theta. And when I was a monk, I have to admit, possibly more than any other

monk, I I pretty much despised the Gusiano because he is like a CEO who wears monk's robes in order to make more money. At least that's the way I viewed the situation. For example, just to give one naughty story, and I really I'm I'm only answering this I'm only talking about this because I was asked this question. I really do not want to bash anybody here, but just to give you an understanding of why I didn't like the Gucci

that just one one example is during the rainy season of 1998

I think it was I spent the rain reigns retreat in Japan and while I was spending the rains retreat in Japan I

was told this Seattle also came to Japan and the first thing he did was he sent a message to Burmese supporters in Japan saying he needs a first class airplane ticket. It's because he had a his excuse was he had a a bad back. So he had to have a first class ticket. And the Burmese people in Japan are mainly working menial jobs. They're not making a lot of money. Even doctors who go to Japan, I mean their medical licenses is worthless in Japan. A Burmese medical license counts for nothing in Japan's. So you're gonna have like even doctors in in Burma come to Japan. They're waiting tables or some such.

So anyways, he's he he requires this money. Then he gets there, somebody goes to him offering him a robe. He says, "I don't need robes. I don't want robes. I I want money." And so they offered a certain amount of money. He says, "I need more than that. Give me more than that." And then after he's also they set him up in a in a hotel room,
he he like complains that the hotel room isn't nice enough, even though these people are are like spending as much money as they can afford, maybe even a little more than they can afford for this famous Seattle. He essentially chews them out for not for giving him a substandard hotel room,

supposedly a renuncient.

Then he says, "All right, I need a first class plane ticket to America." He wanted to go to America next. He's traveling during the range retreat. That's just the the tip tippy top of the iceberg, which is I mean traveling during the range retreats against the rules, but I mean so is handling money. So he says he needs like $7,000 to go to America plus a first class plane ticket. So they come up with the money. He gets to America and then he he like contacts them say saying he needs $7,000 more dollars

and I mean this was just his mo. This is

just the way he operated. Just he was like a fundraiser and a lot of the money is is for like establishing SA hospitals. like when the the tropical storm Nagus
like hit southern Burma, he was collecting money to, you know, help the the refugees, but I mean that's lay person's work. That's not a monk's duty to raise money for like building hospitals and so forth. I mean, you can say it's meritorious for a lay person to do it, but for a monk to do it, he's just he's like a CEO who wears monk's robes in order to make as much money as possible.
So yeah, I mean he's he's technically

Jin, which is the strictest like sect of Buddhism of the two main sects in Buddhism. Sort of like the Damayut is considered to be much stricter than the Mahanikaya in Thailand. The Schweins are sort of like the rough equivalent of Damayut in Burma. But I mean, he really did not give a damn about following the the rules of monastic discipline, you know, keeping the precepts. He didn't care.

He's kind of based according to some Western Buddhists that are kind of right-wing because he's one of the most outspoken

um endorsers of just kicking all the

Muslims out of Burma.

But aside from I mean he just charges exorbitant fees especially from a Burmese by Burmese standards he just charges exorbitant fees to give domat talks and it's all just wrong livelihood for a monk. So I considered him to be like a just like a businessman wearing monks robes in order to make more money. But I'm not 100% sure that this Seattle in question, who's one of the most famous Seattle in Burma, he's probably pretty old if he's still alive now. He's got to be in his 80s by now at least. But I mean, I used to just I mean, he's he's very well respected by a lot of Burmese Buddhists in Burma. You know,

he's one of the most famous Seattle in Burma, very highprofile.

And but sometimes people would like talk about they wish that he would come to our monastery or something. I I'm just like I I would just like move out. I mean really I was just I was so strict in my desire to follow precepts correctly and everything in those days that I mean he just he just seemed like a disgrace to the robes he was wearing and I just didn't want to have anything to do with him. I didn't meet him once or twice, but

I guess I can just move on to the next question, which is the last question.

The very last one. So, this is going

about three hours, isn't it? Damn. Oh,

well,

that's okay. It's why I'm here. And this

question was got squeaked in under the

wire. Um, this is the last question that

was asked just matter of minutes before

I got started on this. What are your

thoughts on the recent American bombings

in Iran?

And

I mean, I already kind of touched on

this um, in a previous question.

Well, I really didn't vote for the

bombing of Iran, but

as I mentioned previously,

I think most people in the West agree

that Iran should not have nukes
because they're essentially Iran is
essentially run by a terrorist
organization that supports terrorism
around the world. And they have vowed
over and over again,
you know, death to Israel, death to
America, death to the west, the great
Satan of the West and all that. So, I
think most people in the West would
agree that it's better that Iran not
have nuclear weapons.
U Americans I mean they they agree on
like the majority of Americans agree on
that but they also agree that they don't
want America to like have a ground war

in Iran like they had in Iraq and Afghanistan that just bogs down into a kind of Vietnam scenario.

So, I think at first most people were hoping the Israelis who were just kind of like unleashed, you know, it's like one of the first things America does after Israel starts bombing Iran is this is unilateral on the side of Israel. No, we're not doing this because everyone's kind of hoping that Israel would just kind of take matters into their own hand. But it turned out that there are like some deep underground facilities that Israel just didn't have the weaponry to take out. Only America supposedly did. And supposedly they

dropped numerous bunker buster bombs and then followed up by dropping MOABs, these mothers of all bombs, these huge bombs. So that presumably where these places were are just now a big crater just to they just wanted to make real sure they destroyed these things.

So, I mean, I didn't vote for it, but I assume that from a political point of view, the president of the United States knows a hell of a lot more about the situation than most people just reading stuff on X.

So, I mean, I'm I'm willing to I mean, I voted for Trump, and I'm willing to give him the benefit of the doubt that he

knows what he's doing. And in a masculine society, um, more so than in a feminized society, you have to be willing to take risks. No gut, no glory. So,

um, yeah, I'm just waiting to see what happens. I mean, there's a very good chance there's going to be retaliation. very good chance of that. That's one of the I mean the two main disadvantages of America bombing these nuclear sites in Iran. One, there's going to be a lot of a lot of like right-wingers especially saying, "Oh, Trump is just Israel's puppet, Zion Dawn. He's just doing the bidding of Israel, which is really a simplistic one-sided way of looking at

it because it's to the advantage of pretty much everyone in the West that Iran has its nuclear program destroyed because they're obviously not willing to stop.

And if they do get a nuke, there's a good chance they're going to be using it.

So, that's one reason is it's just going to cause a lot of the the MAGA base to kind of turn against Trump because he's just a puppet of Israel, which I mean it really is like a simplistic kind of narrow view of the situation in this particular case. And the other thing is, of course, Iran is vowing retaliation,

and there's a good chance that they're going to cause at least a few Americans to explode as a result of this. But if America is going to be a Chad superpower, there's going to have to be some militarism and strong decisive action and some risktaking.

So, I'm just saying, well, I voted for the guy. He's doing this stuff. He knows better than I do what the implications of this are. I mean, he's getting all kinds of the best intel on, you know, how are we going to do this and what's the likely ramifications of this.

So, yeah, I'm just sitting back and and waiting and seeing

just

who knows. I mean like I like I've said before um when I was a young man I lost interest in politics when I realized that what is good and right from a political point of view is not necessarily good and right from a dharmic point of view. So you just have to kind of dissociate spirituality from politics to some degree because from a spiritual point of view war is just mass murder. That's what it is. But from a political point of view, sometimes war is necessary or just so expedient that it's just the thing to do.

So, we're just going to have to wait and see. But I'm not overly concerned. I didn't lose any sleep last night over America dropping huge multi-tonon bombs onto Iranian nuclear research facilities.

And we're just going to have to wait and see. And even if there is retaliation and even if some people in the MAGA base turn against Trump because he's a suddenly a wararmonger and and puppet of of Netanyahu and all that. Still, there is a good chance that it was the right thing to do from a political point of view. And I'm just willing to observe

with interest what happens next. And

that's it. That's the last question.

So like I always should say at the beginning and never do except for on one dubious occasion, if you have anything that you think I can answer, especially Buddhism oriented or spirituality oriented dharma in sort of the wider sense, you know, politics, economics, I mean sometimes I might have something of use to say on the subject, but generally economics especially not much interest in that. politics kind of but I'm no I'm no authority. I'm no real expert on that.

So you know early Buddhism, Terraata Buddhism, meditation,

Buddhism in general, just ancient Indian

culture, that kind of thing, I can

answer fairly well

usually.

And

like and subscribe if you have not done

so already

and be happy.

Okay then. I believe we are recording.

We better be.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 151. I am your host Ponyo Bosa. And 151 apparently is a prime number. So this should be a prime episode. Oh, almost took a drink without taking the umbrella out. This is my beverage, by the way.

and I'm your host Pony Mall. I always forget. I don't notice, you know. It's just like this automatic thing now that I say stuff at the beginning and then I don't remember if I just happened to mention I'm your host Pasa and I just noticed it's like

I got like this rune like this like
Scandinavian rune bead on my beard
because I'm I've taken another step
towards becoming a Viking marauder. And
I think the rune is just some like
completely mundane one like thorn,
but it causes my beard to wiggle when I
talk just because of the the metalness
of it.
So, it's going to be distracting me, I
suppose.
Hope it doesn't distract you too much.
It's like you get to the end of the Q&A
and it's like I forgot to pay attention.
What are you saying? Because I'm just
like watching his his beard bead like
bob around.

Anyways,

let's see. 151 is a prime number. I

already mentioned that.

And I'm I'm getting started late again

today. It's like 3:00 in the afternoon

on on Saturday going or is it Sunday?

Yeah, I guess it's Sunday, isn't it?

Uh and I've got work to do. Yesterday

was going to be my day of rest. And then

we wound up going to a hardware store

and buying like 700 lb of concrete and

300 and something pounds of sand. And

I'm like pushing this cart with well

over 1,000 lbs of stuff on it. Like

literally from one end of the this huge

hardware place to the other side.

So, I didn't get as much rest as I as I really was
liking to get yesterday cuz Saturday is like my day of rest. It's like my lazy day. Today, after this, I'm going to be out moving bags of concrete and also doing the finishing touches, I hope, on the fish pond I've been working on for a few weeks. And then tomorrow it's going to be like putting down some like cement like like shaping like filling in rock holes and stuff in the sides before we put in the liner. Put water in the in the pond.
And at some point I'll probably do a Q&A with the pond in the background just so you guys can gaze in awe and wonder at

our new fish pond.
But I suppose I should just start
answering questions because I mean
that's the main reason why we're here,
isn't it? So first question is from
Maitraa Buddha and Maitraa Buddha says,
"Was there a relationship between
Zoroastrians and early vadic settlers in
India?" The Hindus call good deities
davas and bad deities Ashuras. However,
in Zoroastrianism, the good god is Ahura
Mazda and the Davas were the destructive
deities. Yeah, I've noticed that too.
And I used to think that at some point
the Persians broke away from like the
mainstream of Indo-Uropean religion

because I mean it's the Greeks have the same legend. So it goes way back where you've got this war between two sets of gods, two pantheons. The Davis is when the Assuras or the Titans going with the Greek term lose and then they get like chained up at the base of a mountain which would be Mount Meu for the Indians.

But the Persians had it switched around so that the uh you know their good god was an Assura and the bad gods were the Davids. So they it's like they switched around so that the other side won. And I used to think that this was probably, you know, it was sort of like a war of pantheons between, you know, two

subtribes of the protoindo-uropeans.
But it could be in I've been thinking
about it later. It could be that just
the founder of Zoroastrinism, you know,
Zoroaster, Zorahustra,
that he may have just deliberately
switched things around just to like
accentuate
the the difference of his religious
system where he's saying, "No, you guys
have got it all wrong. The Davas were
the bad guys and they lost." That kind
of thing. So, that's possible, too.
And I haven't really studied into like
the uh the archaeology of it or anything
like that enough to really decide

exactly why it is that the Persians like

flip-fpped

this like ancient prehistoric

theological war so that the losers

became the winners and the winners

became the losers because apparently

most Indo-Uropeans believed that the

gods defeated the titans.

We know the Davis defeated the Assuras

or Ashuras.

So

this let's just get to the question

though. The actual question is was there

a relationship between Zoroastrians and

early vadic settlers in India? Well,

like the Persian

subbranch of the the Indo-Iranian

language family, which is a branch of,
you know, Indo-Uropeans.
So, the Persian branch of the
Indo-Iranians and the Indian branch of
the Indo-Iranians, the Indo-arians
apparently had already split.
um like Zoro Aster or Zorathustra
apparently lived
back in like early Rig Vadic times or
even a little earlier than early rig
Vadic times. And so I mean he was just
kind of doing his own thing. He was over
like dealing with the Persian branch.
The Indo-arians were already a separate
culture by that time. And
maybe in the rig vda you'll find

references to you know like the neighboring Persians different religious system

but I'm not I haven't read enough of the Rigveda to really be able to find it. Of course I don't I don't read Vadic Sanskrit either so I'd be relying upon translations that may be more or less competent.

So but by the time of the Buddhist time you know it's the the the center of Vadic culture had moved eastwards you know farther east along the Ganges Valley and I don't remember seeing any mention at all of Persians or Zoroastrians in the poly texts you they were they were far enough away and the

Indian culture was insular provincial

enough

that it there wasn't really an issue.

You know, there wasn't seen to be any

need

for religious pmics explaining why the

Persians have a wrong religion.

You know it just I mean the Buddha was

talking about Jane's Ajivacas and like

Vadic Brahmans that was that was like

the religious system

in the Buddha's time like in the central

to eastern Ganges Valley of Northern

India.

So

I notice I say so a lot sometimes for no

other reason than just to like fill gaps. I think just about any language has these little particles, grammatical particles or whatever they're called just to fill gaps, you know, like um there's a lot of like basically things like that. Burma has lots of just special words just to throw into sentences to kind of slow up the sentence enough that your brain can keep up with it that don't really mean very much of anything.

So, let's see here. Was there a relationship between Zoroastrians and early Vic settlers in India? I don't I'm unaware of any obvious relationship. I

think they had already gone their separate ways by that point.

So the Zoroastrians I'm I've read Zorathustra came from Baktra in Bakria which is you would think it would be like the BOC the uh what is it? I can't remember what BOC stands for, but that was the BOC. I guess I should back up a little bit. So, you had a group of in protoindo-uropeans who migrate eastwards from the homeland like in the Pontic step and they were known as the Cintashta culture. They were considered to be the people who invented the war chariot which was this a devastating new military technology at

the time. And it may be that the cintashta culture was the first people that called themselves Arya. There's no indication that like the western protoindo-uropeans like the Germanics and the Celtics and the Italics and the Greeks that they called themselves Arya. I guess there's some kind of theory that Ireland, you know, that theire in Ireland is a corruption of Arya, but that is maybe just a a hypothesis that can't really be proven one way or the other.

So the cintashta culture in central Asia um they eventually migrated farther eastwards and produced the the more widespread Andronovo culture and then

some of the Andronovo culture migrated southwards into like what is now Afghanistan and like eastern Iran. And the ones that kind of settled in Afghanistan mainly became the Indo-arans. And the ones that kind of moved farther west, settled farther west like on the the plains of eastern Iran, they became like the proto Persians and they just kind of went their own ways. I'm pretty sure that the BOC the Baktra something something complex um that was mainly the ancestors of the Vadic Indians and also the the the leaders of the Mitani. Apparently, it was there was one tribe

of Indo-Aryans that migrated all the way to Syria and and became like the the ruling class of a of a country called the Mitani, which became extinct around gosh, I think it was even before the Bronze Age collapse.

Maybe they were wiped out by Hittites or Assyrians or something.

So, yeah, I don't think that there was a clear relationship. I mean, right at the beginning when they're like living on the like neighbors, I mean, there's like a border. They're sharing a border then probably there was some kind of cultural relationship between Zoroastrians and early Vadic

settlers before they made it into India,

I guess. But I don't know what the evidence for that would be. But presumably, it did happen to some degree. But it wasn't as important and major enough to create a controversy that continued, you know, well into the Buddhist time much farther east in in northern India in the Ganges Valley. There's I have seen no evidence of that. There's a famous person, I can't remember his name now, who wrote a book that the Buddha himself was actually from Persia and that there's all these veiled arguments against Zoroastrinism in the poly text, but I've just never seen it. In fact, I can't even remember

a clear like mention of Persia in in the polyudos. There's a mention of like tribes called the there's a tribe called the Cambogas

that uh you know they they spoke an Iranian language. They were like warlike barbarians living in the northwest that would sometimes cause trouble to the like the Vadic Indians of the Ganges Valley and farther west like in the the Indis area. But that's about as much of a mention of Persia or Iranian people that I can remember ever coming across in the poly text. Although like in the what was his name?

Darius, the guy who tried to invade Greece, tried to conquer Greece and was

defeated at uh first the battle of

Salamus and then and then the battle of

uh gosh

uh Platia. But I mean according to the

inscriptions and the the early

historians and so forth that there were

Indians

fighting in in Darius or Das's army. Um

so it' be like northwestern edge of

India would have been incorporated into

the Persian Empire. But still you just

do not see clear evidence of any kind of

um like mutual influence. I mean they

they shared certain things like the soma

sacrifice of the early brahinss was

essentially the same as the homa

sacrifice of the early persians but that's about as far as I can answer on this one. I mean with regard to the relationship between zoroastrians and early vadic settlers I'm unaware of any clear evidence even though presumably it did occur.

And so I'm just going to go on to Maitraa Buddha's second question which is kind of along similar lines. He says there is an inscription in ancient Persia that writes in the DNA inscription. I don't know what DNA stands for here. I don't think it's deoxy ribboucleic acid here. The the DNA inscription at Nox Rustam Darius states I am Darius the great king

of kings king of countries containing
all kinds of men. son of Histaspace, an
Akimened, a Persian, son of a Persian,
an Arian having Arian lineage.
And then
uh Maitraa Buddha continues here,
the word Iran is said to be uh
translated to land of the Arians. So
here's the question.
Did the Arian invasion come from ancient
Persia? How did Arians differ between
ancient Persia and ancient India? And
I've already kind of pretty much
answered this question in my answer to
the previous question. So the Arian
invasion, the Indo-arian invasion came

from essentially Afghanistan, Baktria as it was known to the ancient Greeks.
Um, and by that time, I'm pretty sure the Arians had already split into the Persian Arans and Iran is a corruption of Arian. Also, the Allans, the Allens that were enemies of Rome that had there were sort of like Cyian type nomads that lived in the P on the Pontic step like the homeland of the protoindouropeans. that Alan also is a corruption of Arian. So they were sort of like um sort of the the cintashta or andovo culture kind of started migrating back into the ancient homeland and taking that over.
So let's see here. Did the Arian invasion come from ancient Persia? The

Arian invasion came from north of Persia, like what would be now like Usuzbekiststan or something and then it split and one split went into Persia and became the Persians and the the Iranian speaking tribes and another branch according to my understanding of the situation migrated into Baktria and pretty much took over the there there was a relatively advanced civilization going on in Baktria at the time. So the Indo-arians kind of uh incorporated more of this Brian culture before continuing onwards and invading into India. Whereas the Persians, as far as I know, had minimal influence from this um

bachan or or what is now Afghanistan

that this this relatively advanced

culture although there was had to have

been cultural uh influences and so

forth.

So the Arian invasion I mean the

Indo-arian invasion came from like what

is now Afghanistan or that is the the

prevailing theory at present whereas it

was like earlier Orians split into like

the Persian speaking the Iranian

speaking groups that settled in like

especially

eastern Iran at first and then like

conquered coned their way westwards and

then the uh Indo-Aryans like the

protoindo-orans

kind of conquered Baktria apparently in some way and then continued onwards into northwestern India.

So how did Arians differ between ancient Persian and ancient India? Um I mean it would just had like two subgroups. one group moving into Bakria and just taking over a relatively advanced culture there and the the Persians they moved more westwards into Iran and they conquered a different different cultures there which helped to kind of divide the two subgroups of the Indo-Iranians

at least according to my understanding although you're going to have some people especially devout Hindus news who

are just saying that the Arians arose in India and then they spread out from there and they'll have completely different theories. But the prevailing theory that I think is most plausible is that the indo protoindo-uropeans arose like north of the Black Sea and spread out from there with the the protoarians being the ones that migrated uh eastwards into central Asia. And I'm not exactly sure where the Tokarians would branch off. Maybe from the Andronovo culture. Maybe the the Tokarans considered themselves to be Arian also, but I'm not sure about that. And I guess I should just move on. Next question. This is from Siovakad Zidana.

And Siovak and Cipad Zida says, "When an enlightened being talks about things in terms of their own cultural background, do they not know what they're saying? isn't literally true or are they engaged in a noble lie?

Excuse me.

Um, not I don't think that's necessarily I think that could be a false dichotomy. I think that the actual answer may like come in between these two. Like an enlightened being I mean here we're we're secondguessing the mental states of enlightened being the subjective experiences of fully enlightened beings here.

which is a prevailing theme on these

these Q&As's

these Q&A videos. So I mean an

enlightened being will know that the

highest truth cannot be put into words

that the name that can be named is not

the eternal name.

So, I mean,

if they're not going to lie,

then they just have to remain silent or

else they'd have to like speak in

conditionals, you know, like if this is

true, then that is true. That kind of

stuff. And I mean, that's not going to

work when you're you're speaking to like

ancient tribes people.

So, I mean, there's conventional truth

and there is ultimate truth. I mean according to Buddhist philosophy simutis satcha paramata satcha samuri saja is conventional truth which is what the people in general consider to be true ultimate truth is paramata satcha which I mean aside from attempts by abidama scholars and so forth you just cannot put into words. So they have to admit, I think a fully aligned being would have to admit that in order to communicate and interact with people, you have to adopt what they consider to be true, their working paradigm, their their world view and and speak in those terms. And these enlightened beings have been

born and raised into that culture.
Before they became enlightened, you
know, they were assuming that it's all
reality presumably, unless you know,
they had some philosophical views that
it's all illusion or whatever.
But still, I mean, when you're
participating
in in a culture and you're speaking the
language that the people speak, I mean,
you're going to know that it isn't
ultimately true, but I mean, it wouldn't
necessarily be lying.
You know, it's like skillful means. It's
you got to get the point across. And
it's you're not trying to lie. You're
just trying to communicate to to these

normies to some degree. I mean, not all of them, especially at first in the Buddhist career. He wasn't speaking to normies even at the beginning of his ministry, his his sassa, his dispensation. You know, he was talking to, you know, veteran aesthetic renunciates who were heavy hitters at first. But still, I mean, if you're going to say anything, you got to use ware. Wara Desa is just like the language of the world. It's just like I mean how you communicate. You got to if you're going to use words, you're going to have to use symbols that are not ultimately true.

So

let's see. Do they not know that what

they're saying isn't literally true?

Well, I mean, they'd have to know. If

they're fully enlightened, they would

have had to have experienced ultimate

reality to some degree, you would think.

So they know that the word the name that

can be named is not the eternal name.

But at the same time I mean I mean if

the only way you can speak is lying

then I mean

I mean what do you what do you say to

that? It's it's they're not trying to

lie. I mean lying can only occur within

the context of Simi Satcha anyway.

So

conventional truth I mean you're just dealing with conventional truth and conventional truth is considered to be true enough that anytime you say anything you're not a liar. I mean if this is true seovad zerna's like his his dichotomy here is valid then any enlightened being who says anything pretty much is going to be a liar.

So yeah, I I think that you take into consideration that lying is at the level of simisa.

So you can say two and two is four and not be a liar.

Um but two and two is seven. If you know that the answer is four, you're just

trying to deceive somebody by saying
that for whatever reason, that could be
considered lying. That could be
considered wrong speech.
But there would be no right speech at
all. I mean, unless you're just really
clever at logic where you put everything
into hypotheticals or conditionals or
what that kind of thing,
but even then that might that might not
hold water either.
So yeah, I would say neither of, you
know, none of the above would be the
answer to SEO of action, Caden's
question of
them being ignorant that what they're
saying isn't true or they're just

flatout lying. Yeah, I I would say neither of those. So I'm just going to move on to Seovo's next question kind of along similar lines. He says in one of Plato's works, Socrates says that it is sometimes okay to lie. The example he gave is of a person you borrowed a knife from who goes crazy and is at risk of harming themselves or others then wants the knife back. Socrates says you shouldn't give the knife back and should lie to them about not giving it or losing it because it would be bad for them to get the knife. What would the Buddhist response to what would be the Buddhist

response to this? Well, I mean, you can just not give the knife back for the time being without lying. I mean, you wouldn't have to lie in that scenario. You just say, "You're you're being kind of nutty right now. I'll promise I'll give the knife back after you settle down a bit." You could say that. I mean, you're not really stealing if you fully intend to give it back at some point, but withholding it while they're a danger to themselves and to others. Um, I mean, you wouldn't necessarily have to lie about that.

So, from the Buddhist point of view, like a Buddhist arant just wouldn't lie. If you're reading stories about Buddhist

arants in the text or the commentarial literature like in the Wudi manga or something, lots of examples of enlightened behavior in the Wudi manga too that um you know they're not going to lie that they'll remain silent while at the same time fully intending to give the knife back after this person you know is no longer a danger to themsel or others. So I mean that would still be within Buddhist virtue within Buddhist sila.

Um you know it wouldn't be necessary to lie in that case but I mean sometimes it's it may be the lesser of two evils to tell a lie. Like one of my best my

favorite examples

is there's a story the the fourth wise

man. It's a famous English story. I've

got it in an anthology on the bookcase

back there about the the Persian wise

men who go to, you know, offer stuff to

the baby Jesus. You know, they see the

star of Bethlehem and they they move

from, you know, their magi in Persia who

go on this pilgrimage to offer franken

see gold, frankincense, and myrr to the

baby Jesus. And there's this fourth one

who he's he tells the the other three,

"I'll catch up with you guys. You guys

just go ahead. I got to take care of

some business. I'll catch up with you on

the road, God willing." And then he's

continually through his virtue and
generosity getting held up. You know, he
he comes across
some very sick person lying by the side
of the road. He nurses them back to
health before he continues on his way.
So, he keeps getting late, you know. He
never catches up to the other wise men.
And so at one point he finally makes it
to the Holy Land.
And the the king of Israel or Judea
has, you know, Herod has made this this
edict, all baby boys going to be killed.
So, this fourth wise man who never
really catches up to the other three,
you know, he's got these treasures he's

going to offer. You know, he's got like
this giant ruby, this giant diamond, and
this giant pearl he's going to offer to
the baby Jesus, but he keeps like,
you know, by the time he gets there, he
doesn't have any of it left by the time
he finally comes across Jesus.
But anyways, he is staying in this
woman's house. She's got a baby boy and
Herod's soldiers are going door todo
killing all the baby boys and this woman
is just terrified. You know her, she
doesn't want her baby boy to die. So
this fourth wise man stands at the door.
The soldiers come pounding on the door
and he hands them like the giant pearl
to the to like the commander and says

there's no baby boy. There's no babies here. You know, and just kind of hands him this bribe of this treasure. And of course the the army officer's eyes go get really big. You know, he sees this huge pearl that he knows is worth a lot of money. And so he just says, "Okay, there's no babies here. We just continue." And so he saves the life of this baby by telling a lie. And probably the soldier doesn't really care if he's he's lying or not. He just sees the pearl and that's good enough reason. But still, the fourth wise man does tell this lie, but it's to save a baby. And of course, the mother of the baby is

just like weeping tears of joy and gratitude. You know, it's obvious that this is the better of the the two scenarios. He could just remain silent and let them butcher the baby of of the the woman who is providing him with food and shelter.

or he could tell one little lie, which is kind of a semi- lie because the soldier really doesn't give a [__] whether there's a baby in there so long as he gets this pearl.

So in a case like that, I mean like a hero, a tragic hero from a dharmic point of view may sacrifice his own virtue for the sake of protecting others. And you know that's sort of like I' I came up

with this idea. I'm sure others have come up come up with it also that a soldier for a Buddhist country could be seen as a kind of tragic hero. He's sacrificing his own virtue for the sake of others. So I mean he's obviously doing wrong by killing and so forth from a Buddhist point of view but at the same time he's doing it for a kind of you know a selfless reason you know at least if he's living up to the ideal.

So in some cases it may be preferable to choose the lesser of two evils and just take a hit on your virtue for the sake of for the sake of others or it's just the lesser of two evils.

But with regard to the noble lie like
Plato is talking about the noble lie
where the government may be justified in
lying for the sake of you know public
morale and so forth. Let's say the army
takes a blistering defeat, you know,
from some enemy and then, you know, the
the public announcements, you know, like
the newspapers
would say, you know, it's like, well,
there was an orderly retreat. You know,
we our side suffered considerable
losses, but there was an orderly retreat
from the battlefield and we we'll do
better next time. That kind of thing.
Um,
you know, it's sort of fudging on the

truth. not as bad as just declaring a glorious victory which some I mean it did happen like in Roman history that there were cases of of I think it was the emperor Alexander Alexander Severis who didn't last very long who went on some disastrous military um military campaign against the Persians got his butt kicked and then in in Rome they're saying it was a glorious victory when there was like rumors getting through that it wasn't a glorious victory at all, but the Romans got their butt kicked on that occasion.

So, I mean, that would not be a noble lie, but u maybe if you could uh twist

it a little bit, you know, it's like orderly retreat from the battlefield, that kind of thing, that it wouldn't be too bad.

Let's see.

But from the Buddhist point of view, lying is it's going to it is like a violation of of a transgression of virtue. You're going to be making bad karma for doing it. So you should make sure that it is the lesser of two evils if you decide to do that. And the lesser of two evils doesn't mean you lie to the police officer or you get in trouble. It's just like I mean if you have like a virtuous reason it's going to cause more suffering overall

to to tell the truth then some people
might opt for telling some kind of white
lie like the fourth wise man in the
story but still from the Buddhist point
of view I mean there's no justification
um that's going to remove any bad karma
from that choice
you're still take responsibly
possibility for your karma.
So I guess I'm just going to move on to
S of action Zeno's third question here.
He says in Majamakaya Suta 60 and I
didn't look up which I don't remember
what the 60th suta of the Majinaya is.
The Buddha says being an annihilationist
is better than being an eternalist

because if you are an annihilationist and you aim for that then you will end up in Nibbana. While if you are an eternalist, you will be quote close to lust, close to bondage, close to delighting, close to holding, close to clinging," unquote. This seems contrary to most spiritual traditions where most are somewhat eternalists while denouncing annihilationism as nihilistic. What are your thoughts on this? Yeah, I do consider this not to be the best the best argument.

Um I mean in a way this this argument for annihilationist and eternalist also applies to no self and self. You know, most religions believe there's like an

eternal soul kind of a thing. Whereas in Buddhism, you go with no self. And it's a similar situation to this scenario in Majima number 60 where it's like both are kind of erroneous because the truth cannot be expressed in words. You know, so long as you're relying on some philosophical concept, you're you don't have reality. You don't know reality yet. But believing no self is kind of the lesser of two evils. You know, it's less of a mistake than believing in an eternal soul because believing in that eternal soul helps you to kind of cling to an idea of self. Whereas if you believe in no self, you know, it's in a

way it's less of an error. It's it's it's setting yourself up for less of a mistake, at least potentially, cuz then you cling to this eternal soul, which isn't going to be the the way your idea is anyway.

I mean, the reality of it is is beyond words.

So, I mean, it's kind of a lame argument. You can find lame arguments in the poly texts.

I would be a little bit skeptical that the Buddha really said this just because it is kind of a lame argument.

But I mean that's kind of the main point though is that if you are an eternalist then you believe in this eternal self

and you're kind of like making provisions for that and clinging to that. whereas you're just more of a nihilist, like a philosophical nihilist, especially with regard to no self and when you're dead, you're dead kind of a thing. Then I mean it's it's still erroneous. It's still like an invalid assumption because all assumptions applied to the absolute would be invalid.

But in a way you're it's less potential for just wallowing. You know there's you can wallow in any kind of idea. You can become a fanatic for any kind of idea especially even like

skepticism. You can be a fanatical

skeptic,

but

um just going with nothing

is I mean it's just setting yourself up

for less potential errors than just

fervently believing in eternalism and

like an eternal soul and all that

that it's just kind it was seen as kind

of skillful means I guess

that you're just going to choose this

one just because it's like the lesser of

two evils.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Moers. And

technically, this could have been the

first question that was asked, but I

don't like starting my Q&As's with a question that I really don't know anything.

Yeah, I mean I can answer the question by because the question is have you heard of and I can just say no I never heard of that and then just move on but I don't it's it's not really a good way to start the Q&A so it's it got bumped down the list a little bit. This question from Mooners is have you heard of argumentation ethics as developed and expounded by Hans Herman Hapa of the something institute and I've pronounced it myes before. or it's it's some kind of like right-wing economic philosophy.

And I've been told that that's not how you pronounce it. It's like Misesus or something like that. The Misesus Institute. Misus. I have no idea. I'm really not into economics. I mean, I have some basic general ideas about economics, but I'm certainly not the champion of any economic system because economics is just it's like the science of money and it just has never been particularly interesting to me. But anyways, Moers, after asking me if I've heard of argumentation ethics, he gives this very long essay describing it.

And it's it's too long for me to read the whole thing, but the the last

paragraph he kind of summarizes. So it says in short argumentation ethics holds that any justification for government coercion or really any act of one group of individuals forcing their will upon another group of individuals regardless of whether the latter group have done anything to violate the dignity of other persons must be evaluated not just in terms of outcomes or traditions but in terms of whether the justification can be made without contradicting the basic norms that make argument and therefore ethical reasoning possible. Now, just multiply that by about 10 and that's that's like the essay about

argumentation ethics. And so, so have I heard of argumentation ethics? No, I haven't heard of it. But I mean the argument

these ethics I mean it's in a way it's like a kind of idealistic philosophy for a kind of libertarianism as far as I can understand. And

libertarianism sounds good in theory, but I don't think it works in reality. I don't think it I mean, it'd be like anarchy pretty much. Anarchy doesn't I mean, it sounds good. There's there's people on the internet just very authoritatively like Stfan Molyneu would be one. I mean, he's he got kicked off of YouTube, I guess, long ago, but you

know, they're like libertarian like like philosophical
anarchists or something who think that anarchy would actually work. You know, you got no real system of government other than just what is everyone agrees on kind of. And yeah, I think it's just kind of like a an idealistic philosophy that sounds good, but I don't think it would work in reality. You know, who's going to accept the assumptions of argumentation ethics? You're going to have an entire population accepting the assumptions of argumentation ethics? I I really don't think so. So, I mean, it's I don't I think politics and reality are

a lot dirtier

and just there's a certain amount of

unavoidable corruption that is just

going to be there because we are human.

So,

yeah,

I think I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Tzasiz

and Tzasiz says, "What would happen if

you became a monk again? Would you be

junior monk and start your way to

Mahatera from the beginning or would

your new preceptor somehow add your

previous 29 or 30 reigns retreats to

your new monkhood and make you a senior

monk from the get-go?" No, you start

from scratch. So anyone any monk who

disroes who reordains they got to start at zero again and then they'll have to take take dependence on a on a preceptor or on a teacher and just it's as though you just started completely over from scratch.

So yeah, I'd be a junior monk again if I ordain which I'm not planning on doing. Not in this lifetime.

So,

I guess I'll just move on to Trzus's second question, which is, "Is Mr. Fake Tig still meowing to you?" No, actually, I told him that the meowing just kind of makes him seem like a furry or something, so he stopped doing that.

although he he generally leaves one comment to every one of my videos just kind of reminding me that he still exists and it he still would like to be on the Discord server and so forth. So I mean the absence of meowing is actually a good thing that the meowing was just kind of problematic. So he he realizes that it was viewed as problematic and so he has stopped meowing for the time be for the time being.

So the next question is from thro orbar mangrove

whose name is spelled like it should be pronounced creel

and this is just kind of a it's like a uh a rhetorical question I think I don't

think I don't know if he was really expecting this question to be answered but um I have come across this sort of thing recently

um as you may expect once you hear the question. So, I'm just going to read this and it it does end in a question mark. So, technically this is a question. It's in the Q&A section. Fair game.

Says, "Wow, man. Trump, he is just following the Zionist masters."

Simplistic. Yeah, it is that simple.

Narrow. Zionists run your country. Two exclamation points. What a shame. Iran poses no threat to the US, but it does

to Zionists. Trump was the no new war and America first guy. More like the Zionists first and only wars that favor Zionists. Trump just bent over to the Jewish overlords in front of you. And here's the actual question. Is that a real man?

And yeah, I think Trump is a real man. man. Just if you assume that there are men there there there's any real men at all. Yeah, I would say that Trump is one of them.

So, let's just kind of review this a little bit. He is just following the Zionist masters and this I'm there's at least one other European that I have come in contact with and also a Canadian

at least one Canadian who has been saying the same stuff that he's Zion Dawn. He's just a subservient lackey to Netanyahu.

So he's just following the Zionist master. So when Trump like commands Netanyahu to retract his bomber planes, then what do you say to that? Well, that's just an exception to the this golden rule here. Yeah. And he says simplistic is no. Really? No.

And then he says, "Narrow Zionists run your country." And to some degree, I mean, Zionists are very influential. I mean, I think he's referring mainly to like, you know, the Jews,

at least, you know, the the Zion the pro-Israel ones, you know, the ones that take seriously their own scriptures saying that, you know, Judea is the holy land and all that.

So

yeah, I mean there is a lot of influence of Zionists in America. There's much more influence of like atheistic Hebrews,

you know, in other countries in in Western civilization like the EU, you know, any Marxist country, you know, they're run by essentially, you know, atheistic Hebrewism.

The more leftwing a country is, the more they're just subservient to the

atheistic, you know, non-Godfearing Jews essentially. I mean, Marxism and Christianity could both be called plausibly um, you know, schismatic sects of Judaism.

So, let's see. Zionist running your country. What a shame.

Yeah, Iran poses no threat to the US. Although of course Iran I mean the the new iteration of like the Islamist Iran arose with the hostage crisis you know it's like they immediately took 52 American hostages at the US embassy in Thrron and kept them for a long time using them as a kind of bargaining chip or or just sort of a part of a power

play that kind of thing. Iran has just threatened death to America so many times. They've funded terrorist organizations throughout the world, including the Houthies, that were like attacking American ships in the Red Sea, attacking pretty much all ships in the Red Sea.

So, I mean to say that Iran poses no threat to the US, um I mean they may not pose a threat to actually nuking New York or something, but obviously they are a threat to US economic interests. See, but it does. Yeah. Also, Iran also calls Israel the little Satan and America the big Satan and it threatens death to both. So Trump was the new no

new war and America first guy. Well, yeah, it's not really a war. I mean, Trump has done this kind of stuff before. Like he's taken out Solommani, you know, he was I think he was an Iranian, wasn't he? That was in his first term.

And so, I mean, Trump, more so than Reagan, is just doing like these surgical strikes, just bombing stuff. And I mean, it's not exactly a war. I mean, it's military actions against countries, which he's been doing before. And if you're going to be a Chad superpower, there's going to have to be some militarism. You're

going to have to show the world that America is willing to kick some ass and that America is is good at it.

And taking the [__] out of the army is probably a good step in that direction.

and occasionally bombing somebody. Not like um like Obama. I've I've read just recently or heard recently that during Obama's administration, he was dropping on average over the course of his his his two terms, three bombs per hour over the course of his entire presidency. I don't know if that's exactly true or not, but I have come across that figure.

So yeah, America first. Trump is still America first even though he cooperates

with Israel. But to say that he's just a subservient lackey. I mean, he is always saying and doing things that has Netanyahu
just on just like grinning his teeth that I mean, let's face it, Trump is stronger than Netanyahu and both of them know it. Apparently, some Europeans don't know that. some people that are just blackpilled because Trump isn't right-wing enough or whatever.
But the fact is that I mean he is he sees what American interests include.
But also there's also this other aspect in addition to I that Israel is like a strategically important ally in that

part of the world. Okay, there's that. And so that to some degree, American interests and Israeli interests are going to coincide even if normies who write comments on on the internet are. I mean, they're not as aware of the situation as Trump is. He's got way the [__] better intel than guys that are just typing stuff on the internet from their bedroom or whatever. But also there's this other aspect to this whole thing

and that is as I never tire of reminding people that for well over a thousand years

Western civilization as a whole has worshiped a deified Hebrew

that we consider the Jewish god to be the one true god. You know, we worship or at least Western civilization in general, we worship a Jew. We consider their scriptures to be our scriptures. We've added to them with the New Testament, but still the Old Testament is the word of God and has been considered that by Western civilization as a whole for well over a thousand freaking years. So what the hell do you expect that you're going to have Western countries that are maybe more spiritual, more religious anyway than like the atheistic EU at this point that are going to be

believing that Israel is the Holy Land. Their scriptures say it. Our scriptures say it. So

I mean it's it's kind of different from like the Crusades. I mean the Crusades is is they were fighting to liberate the Holy Land. They were liberating it for Christians. You know they were massacring lots of Jews, you know, in as kind of incidental to the Crusades. You know, it's like when the the first crusade you had this rabble of like semi-armed peasants that were, you know, Das Vault and they're they're like migrating

um westwards. And most of the ones that made it into Asia never came back.

But they're they're sort of like making raids on like Jewish villages in Europe just to live off the land and you know get their food and stuff and and kill off Christ killing Jews supposedly on on the way. So it's like the the Crusades it was they acknowledged that Judea was the holy land. It's just that they didn't like Jews. But Jews have definitely like risen in in prominence and a certain amount of acceptance by Western civilization at this point. So now it's it's sort of transformed. Protecting the Holy Land is also protecting the nation of Israel. And it's like

devout American Christians. What the
hell are they supposed to believe?
You've got Christians nowadays that are
like anti-Israel,
anti-Jews and so forth. But I mean that
requires either ignoring or just
radically redefining certain basic
tenets of Christianity which includes
the Old Testament and the idea that the
Jews were God's chosen people and that
their land is the holy land and that
God chose his only begotten son to be a
Jew. I mean what the hell do you expect?
So that aspect plus the idea that Trump
really is not just some subservient
lackey to Netanyahu that he does things
and he he like commanded Netanyahu

essentially to pull back his planes and stop bombing Iran because he wanted to put an end to this. You know, Trump does want to be a peacemaker. He's willing to drop bombs or make some drone strikes in order to make sure that terrorists don't terrorize like he did in his first term. So, yeah, I really do think that this is just a narrow-minded, simplistic bashing of Trump by

unamerican people because they're not Americans.

But you have to bear in mind that America is

it's much more Christian than Europe or probably Canada at this point. That

Canada and Europe have much much more

preferred the atheistic Judaism over the

theistic Judaism,

but it's still there.

So, let's see here. I think I'm just

going to move on to the next question.

This is from Xenithoid.

And Xenithoid says,

"Thoughts on Rasputin?"

Well, I mean, I my my knowledge of

Rasputin is relatively limited. About

half of what I know about Rasputin I got

from the movie Hellboy.

So, that's something to bear in mind.

But Rasputin

I mean there's there's you know he's

like the charismatic

like he was considered to be a stur in like in the Russian Orthodox church they have like this concept of the guru like father zosa in dstvki's the brothers karmazov is a strett you know he's like a Christian guru and rasputin I'm pretty sure referred to himself as a states and he also apparently was involved in some kind of shady schismatic Christian stuff where they would indulge in like orgies going with the idea that you know God's forgiveness is more glorious when he's got more to forgive that kind of thing. He had like a hypnotic effect on the the son of Thesar who had hemophilia and he could to some degree like comfort

the child when he's suffering from the internal bleeding and all this because of all the inbreeding of European uh royalty.

And so like the especially the wife of the zar became like very emotionally dependent on Rasputin. He had a lot of influence.

Um but with regard to um some of the darker aspects or the more esoteric I should say aspects of his religion, I really don't know that much.

I suggest that you watch the movie Hellboy.

Um but I mean he was interesting. I mean the very fact that it was so hard to

kill the guy, I mean that's that's kind of respectable in Rasputin. I mean they he was like shot and poisoned and drowned and stabbed and all this kind of stuff just finally finally they were able to kill him.

But I mean, he may have had some kind of like psychic powers or just had influence over spirits or something that gave him kind of uh paranormal um you know, some kind of paranormal effects that he was able that were either centered around him or he maybe was even actually able to like control to some degree.

But I'm no authority on Rasputin. So,

I'm just going to move on to the Xenithoid's next question, which is, are there any other dark mystics you think are interesting? And with regard to dark mystics in the West, I mean, I really was never interested in like Wikah or or like Satanism or anything like that. Um, which is where most of the dark mysticism, like the witchcraft kind of stuff. Alistister Crowley. He would be a dark mystic, I assume. But I was never I don't think I've ever read a book by Crowley. I really don't know that much about him other than just like sensationalistic documentaries I've seen like on YouTube, that kind of thing, or on TV back before

YouTube.

Um, lately I think possibly you could even consider sticks hex and hammer 666 to be some kind of dark mystic. Although what actual power he has is questionable.

But the dark mystics that have the most interest to me would be like so some of those Tibetan Buddhist saints Padma Sambava. If you've ever read the the biography or the autobiography, I don't remember which it is, of Padma Sambava, he was doing a lot of darknistic stuff and he was an adept

let's say you know he was very advanced much more advanced than Stixs

Hexenhammer

or probably Rasputin. Another one would be uh Millera who started off as a kind of dark mystic. He was like a dark wizard, you know, black magic kind of wizard at first and then he converted, you know, he sort of saw the light and converted over to Tibetan dharma and became a saint.

But the dark mystics that I think are interesting would be sort of like the the Vajriana Tandric ones. they would be some of the adepts, you know, some of the the more advanced cultivated dark mystics. And with regard to western dark mysticism, like quasi Christian dark mysticism, I really don't know all that

much. And I've always had sort of a either just a complete lack of interest or even a mild aversion for Western attempts at that kind of thing, you know, like witchcraft, wickah, crowley, that kind of stuff. I really have not been all that interested. And now that Sticks Hex and Hammer seems to be going off the dark end a little bit and turning into a LOL cow with his leather pirate hat and so forth, I'm losing I've lost a certain amount of interest in in him also.

So I guess I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from RFS and RFS says, "Is there a highest being

in the formless realm?" And there isn't any kind of hierarchy there other than just the different levels of the formless realm. So the highest heaven of the formless realm would be the realm of neither perception nor non-perception which is almost not it's just extremely subtle form of samsaric existence. The most the most subtle possible form of samsaric existence supposedly would be being a dava or a Brahma in the the realm of neither perception nor non-perception. And based on the the name of that heaven, then that's a pretty good indication that there's not a whole lot of social interaction there. You don't have a king. you don't have

like any kind of structured hierarchy or anything within that realm that the beings there have no sense organs. They can't even really interact unless maybe they've got some kind of really subtle empathy or telepathy, but they're not even thinking in words. I mean, it's just this like billions of years long bliss of being in this state of neither perception nor non-perception. You know, it's a state of perception. so subtle that you can't really tell whether it's really perception or not. That would be one way of describing it even though it's kind of self-contradictory.

But I mean neither perception nor

non-perception is itself
kind of self-contradictory. You know,
it's like it violates the Arisilian laws
of thought. You know, A has to be either
B or not B. And when you're ruling out B
and not B, perception and
non-perception, then you're already in a
kind of paradoxical state.
So much so that you had like the the
hardcore rationalist Nyanova. He was a
an eccentric
English terravada Buddhist monk who
lived in Sri Lanka in the 50s and uh
first half of the 60s. He was he started
off as an existentialist was converted
to Buddhism by reading Evola
you know Evola's book on Buddhism

and uh I mean he would his disciples just would not translate that realm because he was such a rationalist he could not deal with the obvious logical contradiction of the realm of neither perception nor non-perception so he'd just leave it in poly.

But so there really isn't a highest being. I mean, you could say the highest being would be like the the seniormost inhabitant of that realm. Just, you know, sort of like the senior most monk is the monk who's been a monk the longest, you know, regardless of anything else. And you could say that if there is a highest being in the formless

realm, he'd have to be in the highest formless realm, realm of neither perception or non-perception, and just be like the senior one there because they're not really interacting.

There's no real social structure or anything in these realms because they they don't even have they because they have no body. They have no physical matter composing them in any way. They don't have sense organs.

So maybe again there could be some kind of empathy. But I mean it just be they'd be experiencing all pretty much the same thing because they'd all be experiencing this realm of neither perception nor non-perception which isn't much of an

experience. It's the most subtle possible experience.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. Who has a Polish name apparently or a Slavic one anyway that I cannot pronounce correctly. So I'm just going to call him Nywall.

And Naziol says, "I've once asked you for advice for a guy straight out of high school. Here's a couple of things about me." And this does end in a question, so no worries there. He says, "I want to pursue a career in film making. This revelation occurred to me one year ago but since I don't have any success yet in the field portfolio is

required for film school I am going to study psychology in the best university in the country for the time being I was and then he says I was learning in high school physics and mathematics on extended level also taught myself B2 German whatever B2 means it's it's not probably not the bomber plane got to say I crashed the finals and it may be that Zywheel has not fully mastered the English language. I assume it's I crushed the finals which meant he did really good on them instead of just taking the finals uninvited or crashing in some other way.

But naiuel continues here. I don't plan on renouncing the world yet since my

reasons would be immature as I am now. This Hindu idea of four stages of life seems better to me. How come here this is the actual question here. How come I think about the escape when I don't even know the danger and satisfaction? Well, that's just like a deep intuition. Like when I was 17, started reading Eastern philosophy, then just at a deep intuitive level, I'm just going, "Yeah, I I can accept this even though I didn't fully understand it and at the time was not ready to renounce ice cream and rock and roll and pretty girls and and and so on and so forth.

So I mean just backing up a little bit

going up the scroll here

um the Zywall wants to pursue a career in film making. I think you would have to take into serious consideration the fact that AI is going to be taking over a lot of this stuff that film making in future I mean I don't know what kind of films you're making but something like like a a documentary

I mean you could it'll get to the point where you just type in to the AI what kind of documentary you want and it'll just crank it out with almost no human effort involved in the making of the film.

Maybe fiction um you know like like a movie it could be different but even

then I mean AI is going to get so advanced that you very soon you may not have actual human actors in in films anymore. You know you there could start being John Wayne movies again because the AI will just start you know inserting John Wayne into these AI generated movies.

So I'd be very careful just try to take into consideration you know what you want to do compared with what AI is going to be doing if if not already then soon.

So let's see, high school physics and mathematics extended level. That's good. Although AI is going to be taking over a

lot of that kind of stuff, too. And
let's see. And so you get to the last
part here where the actual question is,
how come I think about the escape when I
don't even know the danger and
satisfaction? probably at a deep
intuitive level um based on parmmy you
know just sort of the wisdom that you
have accumulated over previous lives
that even though your brain in this
version of samsara hasn't fully caught
up with that wisdom yet it still it's
there
um the the the Hindu idea the four
stages of life yeah I mean it's more
conducive more compatible
with a kind of social existence where

you know you you get married and you have your kids and all that before you renounce the world. But the problem with that is the longer you wait to renounce the world, it's like every day you postpone renouncing the world is two days lost because you've got one day left of your lifetime and also you got one extra day of accumulated habits that you have to somehow overcome.

So there's a saying in Burmese do a which means a monk who is ordained later in life is difficult to teach because the older you get the more set in your ways you are. So that if you renounce the world when you're young, you're more

flexible. You're more likely to be able
to make significant progress. Whereas
the older you get, the more set in your
ways you are and just the harder it is
to like deprogram a lot of your habits.
So let's see.
Yeah, just just bear in mind the AI
issue and I'm just going to move on to
Nazi all's second question
which is do you think there's room for
Buddhism in mo modern western academia
and he this is serious he's not joking
here and he continues from my point of
view the west is pretty close to anata
postmodernism is famous for its critique
of essentialism also Michelle Fuko
and death of the subject. But at the

same time, it does not arrive at
Buddhist conclusions
about compassion, serenity and
discipline. This one mostly discipline.
Do you think that there is a possibility
of reconciliation?
Perhaps Buddhist view could purify
contemporary Western BS. Well,
uh, the first question mark is up at the
top here. Do you think there's room for
Buddhism in modern Western academia?
There's plenty of Buddhism of Buddhism
in modern western academia.
Um, and most of the Buddhism I've
encountered,
possibly just because of like algorithms

or something. Um, it's it's like progressive like quasi Buddhism. You've got like queer Buddhism, non-binary Buddhism, lesbian Buddhism, this kind of stuff. You got like these queer non-binary lesbians are in academia. Ann Galig would be an example of this. I think she's at some university in Florida. And they're just I mean it's like they're just interpreting Buddhism through a queer lens and just publishing these articles, academ academic articles, peer-reviewed articles about, you know, how Buddhism is queer friendly. you know, it doesn't condemn homosexuality the way other world religions do and so forth. And they just

reinterpret Buddhism. I've I've
mentioned before that like some Western
academic Buddhists
actually think that the second noble
truth should be revised
because all suffering doesn't isn't
because of clinging or attachment
craving. It's white patriarchal
oppression causes suffering too. So they
got to add that in. You know it's like
the second noble truth. The truth of the
the truth of of the cause of suffering.
You know it's you know like craving and
white patriarchal oppression. So
what I have seen in Buddhism, I mean you
do have serious Buddhistic scholars,

most of whom aren't Buddhists who are coming up with these theories about you know the origins of Buddhism and so forth and that can be interesting a lot of the time because they're not Buddhists they don't fully understand the philosophy you know they they haven't really lived the life kind of thing

but uh I mean they do come up with interesting ideas and valid ideas. And so that that kind of Buddhistic stuff is worthy of of consideration, but it's it applies only to you know this school of Buddhism or that school of Buddhism and their origins and you know connections with with other systems in in that time

and so forth. So it's not like injecting Dharma or Dharma into just the ac the western academic world view. I mean, there's a little bit of seepage, you know, teensy bit of, you know, just kind of bleeding over into other other disciplines or whatever, but most of the academic Buddhism,

I mean, it's either like this obscure niche stuff that's very technical or it's this progressive,

you know, like pseudo Buddhist [__]

I mean, it does have some real Buddhism in it, but it's they've obviously got an agenda which is like cultural Marxism, and they're using Buddhism as like a

vehicle for that.

So

there is room for Buddhism in w mo mo

modern western academia, but modern

western academia is just like this

leftist shitow at present. And it's just

going to be taking Buddhist ideas and

inserting it using Buddhist ideas to

support this cultural Marxist stuff as a

general rule. There's lots and lots of

that.

Um, so there's going to have to be a

major shift in the whole attitude of

academia, which may be starting now

because cultural Marxism is to some

degree just falling. It's just going out

of style. So many people are rejecting

it as just cringe [__] now that to some degree the some of the major universities are kind of backpedaling kind of like pulling back from that kind of stuff especially now that you've got the Trump administration like outlawing a lot of it.

So like DEI hires and so forth. I mean that's that's one of the problems. You got DEI hires in academia writing this Buddhist stuff and they're they shouldn't even really be there just because they're only there because of a quota, not because of them being like the most qualified person to to get the position.

So, do I think there's a possibility of reconciliation between Western academia and Buddhism? Um, yeah. But it's it's going to require like I just was saying there's like the prevailing attitudes of Western academia are going to have to change. You know, you're gonna have to stop blaming Whiteidy for everything bad, for example,

and start and before you can accept that desire is the cause of all suffering, you got to get rid of all this this Marxist [__]

you know? It's just this spiritually bankrupt materialism where it's just like your your socioeconomic position in society is determining whether you're

happy or not.

But I mean it's it's theoretically

possible especially if there's like some

sort of like I don't know like a some

kind of right-wing renaissance

you know anti-marxist renaissance in

academia then possibly

But I'm not holding my breath and I'm

just going to move on to the next

question also from Nzai all

which is as follows. What do you think

about existentialist philosophy?

Sartra's nausea led me directly to

Buddhism for which I am grateful. Well,

existentialist philosophy, a lot of I

mean, if you're interested in

existentialist philosophy and Buddhism, you should you should definitely read like the letters of Yanavvera. I mentioned Yanava already. He's like the eccentric uh English monk who lived in son as it was called back then in the 50s and 60s. Um, and he started off as an existentialist. So, he's talking about not so much about Sartra. He didn't take Sartra very seriously. He was mainly into Kieragard who was like a protoexistentialist. He liked Kimu. Um he kind of oh who was that guy? He came up with the idea of the axial age. Carl uh I can't remember now but he kind of lost he he kind of washed his hands of him. Gosh I can't remember his name now.

He was an existentialist. Carl Jaspers. He was kind of existentialist but then he he moved to mysticism and nanopair just hated mysticism. So he says existentialist philosophers I mean they kind of have a dilemma. They're either going to just wallow in a kind of nihilism, which is depressing, and they'll often become suicidal, or they just veer off into mysticism, which Nyanova just absolutely hated because it didn't really fit in with Arisetilian rationalistic laws of thought and all that. So what Nana Vera was doing he was trying to come up with like existentialism plus you know like the

pro version of existentialism which
incorporates dharma so that you don't
wind up with this nihilism and despair
and you don't veer off into mysticism
which nano vera just could not accept at
all. And so he came up with this this
hyperintellectual
ideas of how to turn existentialism
into like right view where you don't
just you don't hit this dead end of
nihilistic despair.
But I don't think that nyan vera was
correct in his interpretation of dharma
even though he considered himself to be
a sodapana and announced it to the world
and he supposedly became a sodapana
while walking back and forth just

philosophizing

majorly. So he just sort of thought

thought his way into aryahhood according

to him.

So what do I think about existentialist

philosophy? I haven't read a whole lot

of I tried reading some Sartra but his

philosophical essays are almost

unreadable. It's like Sartra in his

philosophical essays at least apparently

had this strategy of making sentences

composing sentences so long and

convoluted that nobody including him

could see the flaws in his in his

reasoning. His his biography of

Tintterretto is well worth reading

though. I like that.

And I I mean he wrote some fiction too which was pretty good. You know it's he's kind of like Kimu a lot of absurdity in the in the fiction.

Um I've never read any Kieragard although Kirkagard just based on what Nanover was saying about him was uh intriguing that he might have might be one of the best existentialists to for a for like a Buddhist or a spiritually oriented person to carefully consider especially if you're not going to go the Carl Jasper's route and just veer off into mysticism which is what I would do personally.

So I mean existentialism for those of

you who are unfamiliar with it is just
that there is no inherent meaning in
existence and so you have to like create
your own meaning or just wallow in
nihilistic despair.
So yeah I mean it's kind of interesting.
It's like a 20th century phenomenon.
um
kind of like Nichch's death of God was
sort of like a leading up to it and uh
yeah I mean it's it's interesting some
of the fiction you know like Kimu I've
read considerable amount of Kimu's
fiction um you know it's worth reading
you just kind of it can at least instill
in you kind of a dissatisfaction with

wallowing in samsara when you realize
that there's really no foundation to it
and to to like meaning to a world view.
It's just kind of arbit a lot of
arbitrariness
involved in that.
So yeah, I mean different strokes for
different folks. I mean, existentialism
is not my particular favorite branch of
western philosophy or school of western
philosophy, but it's
it can be interesting. And if you're
like Nyanava or into Nyan Vera, then you
can apply that to dharma in extremely
complicated ways.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Kundrew.

And Kundrew says, "What are your thoughts on the recent law in Texas requiring the Ten Commandments to be posted in every classroom?" Well, I I think that is kind of a deviation from the American ideal of separation of church and state.

And uh the Ten Commandments, I mean, as general moral guidelines, there is some goodness in it. Although obviously followers of the ten commandments still considered it okay to kill people sometimes. So I mean it's not the most advanced kind of moral code.

And of course there's that you know thou shalt not you know worship any god

besides Jehovah.

So I mean just having it on the wall

isn't too bad. I mean, if they start

being forcibly indoctrinated into Old

Testament Christianity or something,

then yeah, I would see more of a problem

there.

But yeah, I mean, it does seem that it

it is uh

a reuniting of church and state to some

degree as it's not even a particularly

enlightened religious attitude.

But I'm not sitting in classrooms, so I

just I really don't have any particular

dog in that fight. I'm not in a Texas

school at present.

So let's see. I mean, there's worse

things that could happen. It could be like the Quran or something.

So anyways, cander's second question is I was recently watching a video on no self or anata and one person commented something along the lines of if there isn't a self then stop eating for 4 weeks and you will discover that there is a self that will die of starvation unquote. How would you refute this claim to support the Buddhist idea that there is not a self? I mean that's not even an argument. I mean that's not an ar I mean he's just starting off. He's begging the question. He's just starting off with the assumption that there is a self and

then saying, "Well, you don't eat for four four weeks, that self will starve." I mean, he could use all kinds of arguments like that. You look in a mirror, you're going to see a reflection of yourself,
right?
Or like um it reminds me of Dr. Johnson who wrote like the first major English dictionary. He was a famous guy back in like the 1700s in England. and he heard about George Barkley's immaterialist philosophy saying that there is no such thing as physical matter and so Dr. Johnson maybe just being a smartass but he wasn't very wise you know he's very sophisticated and worldly but not

particularly wise he just said I refute him thus and kicked a rock which of course doesn't refute anything so this person saying if there isn't a self then stop eating for four weeks and you will discover there is a self that will die of starvation I mean why even bother starve yourself why not just reach for a cup of coffee and see oh there's a self reaching for the cup of coffee.

That would be much easier way of coming to that realization if it were a valid realization, which it is not.

So, how would I refute this claim?

Well, I mean, you could use a little bit of doctrinal sophistication, use the

like the the simile of the chariot, which is one of the basic arguments against self in the poly text. You got this chariot, right? And you take the chariot apart, you disassemble it. It's just a pile of all the parts. The exact same parts are still there. You just took them apart. Is that a chariot? Well, not anymore. Or let's say you put the chariot back together. You take off a wheel. You put a different wheel on it. Is that the same chariot? Well, you could say as a matter of speaking, yeah, it's the same chariot. Even though you can change out piece after piece just gradually one piece at a time until all the pieces are different and it still

would be considered the same chariot

just like the human body you know it's I

mean you probably don't have any of the

same like materials in your body that

you had when you were a baby

just very few

but I mean so so it's like is it the

same body it's only as a matter of

speaking it's just it's like a

convenient generalization

and as Bert and Russell said before it's

like every word in the English language

is a generalization except for this and

that.

So um the self is a generalization. It's

just a convenient term or another

another example would be just a a fire like a candle flame. Not the candle flame that's behind me. I see right there. Not that candle flame. Where is it? right there because that's a fake candle.

But let's say just a candle flame. It's completely different from one moment to the next. And in Buddhist philosophy, your body, your mind also are are just different from one moment to the next. It's just in a constant state of flux. So I mean it's not the same self from one moment to the next. Even if you refer to a self, you know, there is no underlying essence that is like an individual self.

So just because there's this body that
is just a convenient generalization
like the chariot or the candle flame,
even though that would
disintegrate,
that doesn't mean that there is an
ultimate reality to that body.
It's just a convenient generalization.
And this is just one of the arguments
for no self. There's other one there's
other arguments that I won't even bother
to get into because this really isn't a
video just discoursing on on no self.
I have written a lot about no self and
probably done some videos about no self.
So you may be able to find a more

elaborate discussion elsewhere.
But I mean this I mean this claim that this person made is just is just really a bad argument. It's not even a valid argument other than people who just start off assuming that there is a self and then I mean it's just begging the question.
And that's one thing that kind of bugs me is that people use the term begging the question without really understanding what begging the question means. Begging the question as a kind of logical fallacy means you are assuming the truth of something that you're trying to be proving. You know, it's like you're you're arguing in favor of

something while at the very same time the whole argument is based on the assumption that your assumption is true that you know like you're you're arguing for the existence of Bigfoot. And it's like, well, if there was no Bigfoot, how could they have taken all those pictures of him? That kind of thing. It's you're just assuming that Bigfoot exists as a way of making this argument supporting the existence of Bigfoot. And it's the same that same kind of argument that this person has done. Begging the question is just, you know, in your argumentation, you're already assuming the truth of what it is that you're

working towards.

And I'm just moving on to the next question. This is from Romeo.

Romeo says, "Since I've been exploring Buddhism, I've generally experienced less suffering from applying its tenets. However, there are fundamental aspects of Buddhism that I keep hitting a snag with. for example, that desire is the root cause of suffering. I get how lack of acceptance and longing for things to be different leads to suffering in theory, but I often don't grasp this when applying it in my day-to-day life. For example, I enjoy Dunkin Donuts coffee and have a cup or two as part of my daily routine. Every now and then, I

skip a day or two and notice a subtle craving for it. I don't get how my daily enjoyment of coffee at Duncan is problematic. After all, I'm not addicted to it. I just enjoy it. Another more pressing example is my longing to change my current living situation. Presently, I live in a crappy part of the Bronx and work an incredibly stressful job at a psychiatric crisis center. While I realize that there are pros and cons to every situation in life and try to make the best of both, I have a daily longing and aspiration to eventually get out of dodge and start over. It seems that accepting my current situation with

equinimity and not making moves would be almost masochistic and counterintuitive. If I am correct, Buddhism sees a value in cultivating a joyous mental state. But how is one to cultivate joy without longing for and achieving pleasurable experiences to back it up? Please help tease this out for me. So, this is kind of subtle,

you might say.

Um, let's see here. It's kind of a long question. Scrolling up and down here, trying to tease out a few things. Let's see. However, there are fundamental aspects of Buddhism that I keep hitting a snag with. For example, that desire is the root cause of suffering. Well, I

mean, I really don't see how that is problematic. It seems fairly obvious to me, like if I'm unhappy about something, I mean, it's a classic example. This is just a classic example. When I was in Burma, I was most places I lived in Burma had no electricity. I mean like monasteries, forest monasteries, no electricity.

Um, but there was this one monastery where I stayed at. It was in a military, it was on the outskirts of a military town. So they was on kind of the same military grid as this military engineering school. So the military government, you know, it

does take measures to make sure that in military areas at least, there's going to be some fairly kind of semi-reliable electricity. So when I when I moved there, the Abbott was saying, and there's electricity here like 247, and I'd lived in Burma long enough to know that. Nah, that that doesn't sound right. That just doesn't ring true. How can you have electricity all the time? So, and it turned out I was right. It's like the electricity was on most of the time, but it would kind of go off and on at random.

And so, there were times when I mean, this was up in the hills, like the the foothills of the Shan Plateau. And so,

the weather there was relatively temperate. You get down to about freezing in the winter time. And in the winter time when you don't have heaters, I mean, you can't I mean, most places in Burma, you just use like regular temperature water. You don't heat it up or anything, but at that particular monastery, it was just way too cold. Taking cold baths is something I've never particularly liked. And so, you'd set buckets of water out into the sun. Sometimes even that wasn't good enough, like in the winter time. So, you'd have like this stove, electric stove that you would heat water. I mean, you'd heat up

like a few gallons of water and pour that into the water that you'd been sitting out in the sun for for hours trying to warm it up and then it's it's tolerable.

And then so I'm decide I'm going to take my bath. I go over to to heat up the water and right then is when the power goes out. And just immediately I would be experiencing like aggravation, irritation, annoyance, dooka. And it was just so obvious why. I mean I want the electricity to be working it's not working therefore I am experiencing this annoyance and irritation and dooka I mean it's just a classic example very obvious and as soon as the electricity

comes back on again it's just like ah
you know it's just the whole problem
evaporates
so I mean you got to bear in mind that
Buddhist ethics is extremely subtle it's
way more subtle Well, then like any kind
of monotheistic
morality based on the will of God, that
kind of thing, like Christianity, that
kind of thing, Islam, that Buddhist
ethics are just extremely finely tuned,
extremely subtle. So that I mean, you're
experiencing dooka pretty much nonstop
that it's it's like this dooka, it's
like the thorn in the heart that is just
driving you from one moment to the next.

It's just this this restlessness, this restless dissatisfaction is just pushing us through samsara at all times.

And so, I mean, how subtle are you going to get? Um, let's see. Where's the Dunkin Donuts part? Okay, for example, I enjoy Dunkin Donuts coffee and I've I've heard that it's good uh and have a cup or two as part of my daily routine.

Every now and then, I skip a day or two and notice a subtle craving for it.

Well, that's a certain amount of dooka. It's a subtle dooka, isn't it? I don't get how my daily enjoyment of coffee at Duncan is problematic. Well, I mean, that's up to you. If you want to see it as a problem, then it's a problem. If

you don't want to see it as a problem, it's not a problem. But, um, if if you if something becomes habit forming, then first of all, when you're acting out a habit, you're not being fully conscious. And when that habit is interfered with, just automatic knee-jerk like reflex dooka arises.

So after all, I'm not addicted to it. I just enjoy it. But you do have a certain certain subtle craving for it to which causes a certain subtle dooka. I mean, that should be fairly obvious. I don't really see what the problem is there because I mean Buddhism, you want to become fully enlightened, you have to

eliminate all of that or at least
transcend it.
I mean if it's still affecting you what
affecting you know what you consider
yourself to be then it's it's going to
be a subtle problem even though it might
be so subtle that you know you you don't
really want to see it as a problem
which is fine it's up to you
so then his other example is his longing
to change his current living situation
and I mean with regard to I see living
in a crappy area having an incredibly
stressful job at a psychiatric crisis
center. Yeah. I mean, you're making good
karma by helping people. I assume you're
helping people. Um, but there's going to

be some bad karma, too. And I kind of have some of that with my my new job. I've been working there for 6 months, but I guess it's still considered a new job. It's my newest job anyway, where it can be very hectic and stressful. There are times when I just do not like that job. And then sometimes, you know, usually as the it's like the first half of the day sucks and the second half of the day gets better because, you know, I'm getting [__] done, finally finishing up, and then there's like this kind of release of all this aggravation. But sometimes I'm thinking I'd be better off not doing this job. Other times it's

like, well, this is like the part of my spiritual practice is dealing with these situations that tend to aggravate me and I'm going to have to learn to deal with it, you know, because if you don't learn to deal with it, it's you just still got these uncooked seeds and it's you're going to have to deal with it sooner or later in some future life possibly.

So,

let's see. daily longing and aspiration to finally get out of dodge and start over seems with accepting my current situation with e. Yeah, I mean I really don't see what the problem is here other than maybe

maybe Romeo here just kind of doesn't

want to get very subtle in the situation. He doesn't want to get as subtle as Buddhist ethics clearly goes because I mean Buddhist ethics sometimes you'll see statements like even happiness is dooka
and I mean like the traditional lame explanation for that. There are a lot of lame explanations in the text is that even happiness is dooka because it's impermanent. You know it's not going to last and then you're going to be unhappy again. But I mean, you could you could just twist that around the other way and said even even dooka is happiness. Even dooka is suka because the dooka doesn't

last. But the dooka is a chronic condition. So I guess there is that. So yeah, I mean you're just going to have to make up your mind. Is do you are you willing to use this incredibly stressful job as a kind of spiritual practice where you're going to have to learn to accept the stressfulness or if it's just you know it's just not going to work that way or for whatever other reason you just want to switch to a different job I mean you can do that too whatever is going to make you happier I suppose but still I

Let's see. Let's see if I am correct. He says Buddhism sees a value in

cultivating a joyous mental state. Um, yeah, it depends on what kind of joyous mental state it is. That I mean, just like being high on heroin or something in a way that's kind of blissful, I suppose. Not that I've ever taken heroin, but that is not like really a good kind of bliss or good kind of happiness. The the best kind of happiness is like the bliss of meditation
or just having like a a clear conscience,
that kind of thing or just the sort of neutral happiness of just kind of like an equinimity and and just contentment.

That would be considered a a good kind of of joyous mental state rather than like ecstasy which is going to going to have to balance out with its opposite. You're better off with a kind of happiness that has no opposite.

See, but how is it how is one to cultivate joy without longing for and achieving pleasurable experiences to back it up? Well, I mean ultimately you have like the aesthetic mental state of you have this equinimous bliss regardless of pleasurable experiences. You have this economous bliss while just lying on a concrete floor with a piece of wood for a pillow eating one meal a day, drenched in

sweat,

a little cloud of mosquitoes around. I

mean, if if you can be happy like that,

no money, no friends, no family,

homeless,

you know, living like a beu in ancient

India,

then I mean, if you could be happy in

that situation, you can be happy in any

situation.

which is kind of like the Buddhist

ideal. That's one of the reasons why

Buddhism emphasizes a certain amount of

aseticism

because I mean if you can be happy with

an empty stomach drenched in sweat, you

know, no money, no home, all of this, then you can be happy under any circumstance.

You do not require the pleasurable experiences.

So, I mean, if you're going to be living in the world, you just have to accept that. I mean, the four noble truths are still true. And just duka is just extremely subtle. What is what is called suffering in English, you know, the the usual translation of dooka. I I prefer the term unease. John Tenisero prefers the word stress. But still, I mean, there's there's no one word because it at the one extreme, it's the most unbearable agony and at the other

extreme, it's just the most subtle
vague like semids,
which is almost always there in
everybody.
Like I remember reading this book, The
Tangled Wing, Biological Constraints on
the Human Spirit, where as a biologist
he's saying that it's like everyone is
always got this like
it's like subliminal anxiety,
you know? It's just everyone is all
conscious beings are motivated largely
by this restless dissatisfaction. This
this subliminal anxiety that just makes
us want to be doing something other than
just sitting there.

But I mean, it seems like Romeo just has um a limit to how subtle he wants to be in his interpretation because I really don't see that there's anything problematic at all. I mean, if you're going to you're going to eat you're going to drink Dunkin Donuts coffee, maybe even have an apple fritter on the side. And I mean, you do it almost every day. So that on a day that you don't do it, there's like this feeling of what what is the word that he says? A subtle craving. Well, it's just a subtle dooka. And that's just the way life works. Like some people you forget your cell phone. It's like what the [__] am I going to do? I don't I forgot my cell

phone. You know, it's the more attachment you have for something, the more you're going to suffer. you got subtle attachment for Dunkin Donuts coffee, you're going to have subtle suffering because of it. And if you don't see that as a problem, you're willing to accept a certain amount of suffering as as an equitable trade for a certain amount of of happiness or pleasure, then fine. It's your choice to make.

And I suppose I should just move on to a less subtle question here. This is from Ruie and Ruie says, "What was in your experience

the most intense inner visual field imagery that arose during medit meditation metaphor or at all and the most intense inner visual field imagery that arose during meditation? Well, just set aside any kind of like psychedelic drugs cuz I've that's where most of the intense inner visual field imagery has occurred to me would be like through like LSD, iawasa, that kind of thing. Also, there was one time when I was I had pneumonia about the age of about 19 and I was hallucinating like in a kind of delirium from that, but I wasn't meditating I guess. So with regard to actual meditation that is not like influenced

by like chemicals

at least not like artificial outside

chemicals

that uh the most intense inner visual

field imagery there was mostly that

would happen when I was sleepd deprived

like if I'm doing intensive practice and

getting by on the least sleep possible

then I would start dreaming even when I

was awake Like I' I've talked about when

I was doing intensive practice at

Pandida Rama where I was starting to

dream in the evening cuz I was getting

trying to get by on as little sleep as

possible and I like there's one time,

you know, I'm I'm like sitting in front

of a fireplace and there's a person standing with their back to the fireplace in front of me talking to me and I'm just getting ready to respond and then I realize no, I'm sitting in a meditation hall in Pandita Rama and Rangon.

So I mean it was all very clear. It was like it was really happening at least to my sleepy mind.

So I mean there was that kind of intense inner visual field imagery. I was like when I was at Alando Kasaba doing intensive practice

um it was just these weird dream images that would just keep coming up and sometimes it was just strange stuff. is

largely random like dream spam like somebody riding a bicycle across the creek down below. You just have this image of somebody riding a bicycle. Suddenly the bicycle shoots out from underneath them and they go flying backwards or and then after that maybe there's like this numeral nine just appears in my field of vision just it's like

dream images coming up. So there's that, but it I mean that would literally be the most intense inner visual field imagery that arose during my meditation. It was just dream images coming up at random largely

due to sleep deprivation through the intensive practice. Um, I did experience the nima on at least one occasion, which was sort of like this duck egg kind of elongated oval, sort of a grayish whitish, you know, cloudlike thing that you're supposed to experience as a sign of neighborhood concentration as it is called. But I mean, that's not mentioned in the sutas. But I mean that would be maybe the most significant inner visual field imagery I experienced that wasn't just due to dream images coming up through sleep deprivation.

I did experience that nimita that time even though I mean the sutas really don't put much emphasis on it but

like in the paw out method you have to experience the namita before you can get into Janna.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from PSA.

And PSA says, "Are you minimally exceptional?" And I'm not even sure what that means, minimally exceptional.

I mean, I suppose so in certain ways, but I'm not exactly sure what minimally exceptional means.

Just kind of exceptional, slightly exceptional. I don't know. It's it seems like a value judgment or just a matter of opinion and I might not be the best person to give such an opinion because

it's I'm just too close to the subject
which is me.
But I guess in some ways
I don't know and I will say that
Tzasquez is came up with a question
responding to that question which is are
you exceptionally minimalist
and I don't know if I'd be exceptionally
minimalist. I am kind of minimalist
though. Um whether I'm exceptional I I
guess in certain ways and I'm also
minimalist in certain ways. For example,
if I did not have a woman, I'd be
sleeping on some mat on the floor. You
know, I wouldn't be having all kinds of
decorations on the walls. You know, I'd
be living pretty much like a monk in a

cell at least uh some of the time. Um but when you when you have a woman, women, they they do like comfort. And my my woman has like an artistic temperament, you know, she's very aesthetically oriented. She likes everything to be looking nice. You know, there has to be like a picturesque balance of stuff, you know, colors and textures and all this that I mean, it's fine. You know, I'm I'm willing to to let her do her thing in that regard. Every once in a while, I'll even add a little input. You know, I think we should get a certain kind of plant and put it there. That kind of thing.

But,

uh, yeah, I'm I'm more of a minimalist than most people, I think. Even though I'm kind of living in a non-minimalist environment at present, largely because I got a woman that um I I do like to keep in good humor. I like when she's happy.

So, yeah, I guess so. And now I'm just going to go back to PSA who asked another question here. It's kind of a strange one. What do you think of Lily Phillips and Bonnie Blue? One had s intercourse with 100 men in one day and the other one did it with 1,000 men in one day. Yeah, probably. Uh they didn't last very long to get a thousand of men

in one day. And then anyways, um PSA continues, "Are you sure we're not headed towards the 7-day free-for-all sword fight?" Yeah, the seven-day free-for-all sword fight is is like in there's a Buddhist text, I think it's in the dean kaya, talking about how human beings are devolving at present and eventually we're going to get down to like a lifespan of 10 years with puberty at five and everyone's going to be like killing and and eating each other and all this. So, what do I think of Lily Phillips and Bonnie Blue? Um, I've seen pictures of them. Neither one of them really struck me as attractive. And just

the very fact that they had done what
they had done kind of makes them even
less attractive because they're sort of
like a walking petri dish.
So I mean yeah I mean the thing is
though there have been women like this
for a very long time. There have always
been women like this. You know, you read
like Aphroditi by Pierre Louie who I
mean this was written in the like 1898
but it's extremely pornographic in the
literal sense because it's writing about
prostitutes and he's writing about
prostitutes in Alexandria Egypt
um during like the late Roman Republic
back when Cleopatra was 12 years old
approximately. Cleopatra II, the famous

Cleopatra,

and this kind of [__] was was going on

big time.

So,

yeah, I don't think that it's really a

sign that we are that civilization is is

in decline. I mean, there's way better

signs than that. I mean, there have

always been hoes,

including rather extreme hoes like this.

So,

yeah, it does seem that we are not

headed towards the 7-day free-for-all

sword fight, and we're not even headed

for like really dark age barbarism and

savagery unless civilization collapses

due to some cataclysm like, you know, World War II or an asteroid strike or something like that could trigger it. But and until that happens, um I don't think that really we're going to be devolving down to a 10-year lifespan and just universal violence, that kind of thing.

So, but what do I think of Lily Phillips and Bonnie Blues? Neither one of them is my type at all. I really there's a slight aversion looking at their face when you see them on like X or something, you know, just some something about them. Um, yeah, just knowing that they did what they did just makes them seem like just a a walking STD.

So, anyways, I'm just going to move on
to the next question,
which is from Blitz Man, also known as
Whoa, Whoa, Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa,
whoa. So, let's just call him Blitz Man
because it's hard to get the number of
woes out correctly without counting them
internally and so forth. So, Blitzman
says,
"Not sure if you've ever addressed as I
have only started reading or watching
your work a month or two ago. I'm
curious as to if the process into
settling back into your life as a layman
after years of being a monk. Did you
feel guilt or inadequate in partaking in

the world? Were your senses overwhelmed since you weren't in the forests anymore? What does your meditation routine look like now with your job and being with a partner, living in the world, etc. Okay, I guess I'll have to take it apart at a time. And then did did I feel guilt or inadequate in parting in the world? Not really. I used when I was a junior monk I remember my father asked me you know what would you do if you were just drop out of the monkhood and I at the time I was still a junior monk I said I'd feel like a failure but after being a monk for several well I was a monk for 30 years altogether but it was after I've been a

monk for

probably less than 20 years 20 let's

just say 20 years that I just stopped

making progress you know I just got as

far as I could get with it under the

circumstances. And so, I mean,

eventually, it's just common sense. I

mean, if you've been trying something

for years and it's not working anymore,

try something else.

So, I really had gone beyond the the

feelings of filth, feelings of guilt or

inadequacy when I stopped being a monk.

And I mean I've taken to heart

especially I mean I was talking about

this in the previous Q&A that guilt

after the fact or is called cuca in poly
it's always bad karma to feel guilt or
remorse about anything is always bad
karma always.
So I've taken that to heart and so
feeling guilt or remorse is almost alien
to my nature.
See, were my senses overwhelmed
since I weren't in the forest anymore?
The only I mean, the closest I came to
sens sensory overwhelm
really was all of a sudden I was free. I
was liberated so that I could just walk
to a refrigerator in my own home, open
it at any time of day and just help
myself to any food in there. For me,
that was just like this weird miracle

because being a monk for 30 years, you only eat what somebody gives to you. You can't just help yourself at a refrigerator and you can only eat in the morning and so forth. I can go to the refrigerator in the afternoon and just pour myself a glass of orange juice or something, which is I mean it was just like forbidden for 30 years, but that was it wasn't really overwhelm. And I I have to admit, I just say nobody gets the right amount of whelm. Everyone I mean they're either overwhelmed or they're underwhelmed. I mean, nobody's just I just got the perfect amount of whelm on that one. Nobody says that.

So, let's see. What does your meditation routine look like now with your job and being with a partner? Like I've said before, I don't do formal sitting practice anymore.

Um I do like spontaneous oming sometimes at work even. And then there's just like the the standard mindfulness of of daily activities. Like for example, when I went like this, you know, you just feel like it's it's kind of hot. We're in South Carolina and it's summertime. And so it's hot and I've got like this little film of perspiration. And so I go like this and you just feel the coolness as you move your hands and it increases the the evaporation of sweat on the

hands. you feel like the air and you know the urge to do this, keep doing it, that kind of thing. So it's like that would be like my meditation practice such as it is is just sort of, you know, basic mindfulness of events and mental states, you know, actions and mental states, including mental actions and just spontaneous oming from time to time.

Let's see.

So I mean the general process into settling back into life as a layman. I mean it was a the most radical change for me is I'm sharing my life with another person now. You know it's not a

whole lot of privacy. We're just there's like this third entity which is like the us entity.

And so that took some getting used to. Um but it's fine. I mean, I'm certainly not complaining that I I've got like this beautiful woman limiting me.

So, let's see. Where was I actually going with that?

Yeah. I mean, just sort of there was a little bit of not so much overwhelm, but 30 years of programming of just being like this aesthetic following monastic discipline and all of a sudden, you know, I've got this woman sharing my bed and I can just eat whatever I want and all this kind of stuff. So that there

was like this kind of like habitual or

even mildly neurotic just no sort of

inhibition that I had to like struggle

through to some degree. And I don't I

think my 30 years as a monk really has

kind of permanently changed certain

aspects of my mind, how it works

with regard to I mean I was always kind

of tending towards austerity that kind

of thing

but

um see

curious as to if the process into

settling back into life as a layman

after years of being a monk and it was

actually pretty easy because I mean when

you're a monk I mean it was pretty easy for me. It wasn't really that radical of a change because when you're a monk you're supposed to like deal with any kind of stimuli as just stimuli. You know it's just you see a person in front of you talking to you sort of deconstruct that person into like visual perceptions, auditory perceptions and so forth. And it's just it's sort of like seeing the world on like a a television screen in a way, you know, it's you just sort of deconstruct the meaning of everything until it's like stimuli. And so when I stopped being a monk and started being a lay person again, you know, it's just like a

change of movie on the TV screen to some degree that there was some of that also. And so it was I made the transition fairly easily. I'd already been a lay person before. It was to some degree it was just sort of like the the reactivating of of old layman's um habits and so forth.

But I mean it really wasn't all that difficult. It wasn't really that big of a deal. Um like it wasn't problematic other than the few little things that I've already mentioned.

And so I guess I'm just going to move on next question which is from Phil Lees. And Phil Ley says, "Have you read

William James's Varieties of Religious Religious Experience and what do you make of it?" Yeah, I've I've read it. I've got two copies of it on on my computer and I had another copy on my bookcase, which I looked for it just before starting this and I I didn't see it. So maybe I don't own that paper copy anymore, but the print was really small, especially the footnotes. But William James, Variety of Religious Experience, I have recommended it before. It is uh like a significant book for me in my reading history. You know, every once in a while you read a book that really makes an impression on you. William James varieties of religious experiences

like that that he's very intelligent.
He's got lots of interesting case
histories of what it's like to be
religious, different aspects of
religion, including like aseticism.
And uh I I pretty much agree with a lot
of what he says.
And um the the main
shortcoming I guess of William James'
varieties of religious experience is
that he's I mean it was composed like
around 1902, you know, well over 100
years ago. And so most of his case
histories, his stories that he's drawing
from as examples are Christian
cuz western civilization has been

traditionally Christian for well over a thousand years. And so I mean he he includes a little bit of what was it Ramach Krishna or Swami Vivikananda or something just a teensy bit of Hinduism. There's I don't think there's any Buddhism at all. There might be just a slight reference to it or something, but it's mostly Christianity, but still he's dealing with general aspects of the religious mind and religious experience. And so people are people and they might the experiences might be interpreted somewhat differently, but they're similar experiences between a Christian and a and a Buddhist, for example. But it's well worth reading. I think

anyone who takes religious experiences seriously would benefit from reading the varieties of religious experience by William James.

And so I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's next question, which is once you mentioned the general epistle of James essentially contains a discourse on the second noble truth, could you reexlain this?

Okay. Well, as it turns out, I got my Bible right here. This is the best Bible I've ever owned. I think it's a Catholic one. It can it contains the Apocrypha Dutero canonicals.

And uh at the it's got like alternate

readings. It's got all these footnotes, you know, like the story of the woman taken in adultery and and Jesus says that he is without the first sin cast the first stone. you got this footnote saying that in some early manuscripts that was actually in Luke instead of at John. Other manuscripts it switched over to a different part of John. you know, it's apparently like a later edition like um where it's talking about Jesus's mother being a virgin and it's supposedly quoting the Old Testament about the the prophecy and there's this footnote saying, you know, in the original Hebrew of the book of um book of Isaiah, it doesn't say virgin, you

know, it just says a young woman of marriageable age, the word the word in Hebrew, the original word in the Old Testament just means a young woman. And then that got mistransated into Greek as virgin. And then the the New Testament authors were relying on the Greek translation more than the original Hebrew and just assumed that this statement in in Isaiah, you know, there were a young woman will give birth to a son and his name will be Emmanuel, which means God is with us, etc., etc. that that was somehow a prophecy of the Messiah, which it wasn't.

And and so you there's like timelines in

the back. There's maps. See, see, let's see here. Maps.

So, it's it's a good Bible. Anyways, um getting back to the actual question though, let's see. I mentioned that the general epistol of James contains a discourse on the second noble truth. Could you explain this? I might as well just read it. So, it's the beginning of the general epistle of James, chapter 4, and it says, "Where do all the fights and quarrels among you come from? They come from your desires for pleasure, which are constantly fighting within you. You want things, but you cannot have them, so you are ready to kill. You strongly desire things, but you cannot

get them, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have what you want because you do not ask God for it. And when you do ask, you do not receive it because your motives are bad. You ask for things to use for your own pleasures, etc., etc. So, I mean, that's that's like right out of the kalaha suta of the atagawaga is just very archaic Buddhism. You can find this sort of thing in the text. I mean, it's it's essentially the second noble truth. And this the second epistle of James. I mean James apparently was the su the successor of Jesus as the leader of the Christian church. He was like the leader

of the Christians in Jerusalem.

And then Paul just kind of became

schismatic and was emphasizing the the

non-Jewish

element of Christianity.

But James apparently was like the the

successor of Jesus as leader of the the

the early Christians and he got kind of

outco competed by Paul and he's almost

absent from the Bible. you know, he got

edited out of the Bible apparently,

aside from this one epistle, and it's

got more wisdom in it than possibly all

of Paul's epistles combined. It's got a

lot of really basic

um

basic like moral advice and a lot of

what could be called dharma.

So

anyways,

I think I answered that question.

So I'm just going to move on to the next

one which is from Sedarta Lohachita.

And Sedarta Loha says, "Do you think the

common man can experience glitches or

failures in samsara or the matrix as

people would say today? I've seen in

inexplicable videos like a vehicle

appearing out of nowhere and crashing

into another defying all laws of

physics. In general, these are

unexplained phenomena. What do you think

could be causing them? Well, I I want I

read this book. I've talked about it so many times. Some of you are probably just sick of hearing about it, but it's The Trickster in the Paranormal by George P. Hansen. And his explanation of paranormal events resonates with me. I think there's a good chance that he is right. In a conventional sense, ultimately nobody's right. But in the conventional sense, he's saying that I mean, in a way, it kind of agrees with early Buddhism like this this universe is mind-made.

And so there's going to be anomalies because our minds are not perfectly rational. If our minds were perfectly rational, we'd be robots.

And we're not robots. There's a certain like inspiration. There's like a a consciousness of life, a living consciousness in us that really can't have everything locked down and completely regular. And so there are like gaps and weak places between the rules. You got like the so-called laws of physics. Also, you've got like just the laws of physics aren't enough for for a human. you've got to have like social laws and taboos and all that, but still there are like weak places like joints between the rules where sometimes like chaotic impossible stuff can come in. And that's his explanation of how

the paranormal works that it's sort of like cracks between the rules where this stuff seeps in. And so according to him, you're never going to be able to standardize the paranormal. Like parasychologists are never going to lock it down, explain exactly what it is because there aren't any rules that like universally apply. It's just like stuff leaking in between the rules.

So yeah, the common man generally I think most people I've read like in a parasychology book that most people if you ask most people they will say that there has been some kind of inexplicable paranormal event has occurred in their life.

So yeah, I think that's just it's always with us that there's never that the rules that govern our version of samsara are never going to be so complete and universal that it's just going to lock everything down so that nothing can break the rules.

And it probably happened more before science than now. like the scientific world view has like a more comprehensive like

comprehensive and

what's the word?

Uh coherent coherent set of rules so that you're going to have less weird stuff leaking in than like in preodern

times when people believed in magic and gods and that sort of thing. that left more gaps.

So, let's see. And of course, some like wizard and witch types deliberately make gaps by violating taboss, that kind of thing. That then allows the paranormal to to leak in more easily, you know, it's like this gimmick.

So,

yeah. And then of course like normal people that approach like very advanced saints are going to be ex exposed to even more of this

or on the other like the other extreme you know they're exposed to like demonpossessed psychopaths. there's

going to be weirder stuff happening
around them too just because they're
breaking rules that is like causing a
certain amount of chaos and more gaps
between rules in a sense
weakening the matrix in that way
deliberately producing glitches.
So yeah, I'm I'm really I'm not a
materialist. So I'm not saying that you
know that there really is this material
world around us that is just slavishly
obeying laws of physics that kind of
thing that it's like the first verse of
the damapata it is all mind-made
and we do the best we can but we're not
perfect and so we do not create a

perfect world

and all of a sudden I realize we're at the last question. My golly. And this last question is from liberating insights. And liberating insights says, could you talk a little bit about Buddha and how authentic his translations are? I understand he has biggest influence on the terravada tradition. Yeah, Buddhaosa is the main commentator to the terravada tradition. In fact, Orthodox Terravada might become might be more correctly referred to as Buddhagosism than Buddhism.

Because a lot of orthodox terra doctrine comes from the commentarial tradition especially like Abidama commentary but

Buddha Gossa lived like in the fifth or sixth century of the common era in Sri Lanka. He supposedly came from he was supposedly a Brahman who came from India and he was converted to Buddhism

and um

with regard to his translations I mean

he

that could be a misunderstanding on the part of liberating insights. The only translations Buddha is known for would be translating

like ancient Sri Lankan commentarial literature into Pali. So Buddha there was already like a commentarial tradition. There were already

commentaries before the time of Buddhagosa. But in Sri Lanka there were like the poly or whatever language originals had been lost and all they had was sinhali translations. And so one of Buddha's jobs when he's like editing and compiling these this commentarial literature was he was translating it into poly from sinhales into poly. So there's some of that that was about the main translations that he did was translating like pre-existing commentarial literature um into poly from from sinhales.

And I'm I've never really had a high opinion of Buddhaosism. I mean, when I became a Buddhist, I wanted to follow

the teachings of Gorama Buddha and not Buddhagosa.

And like I've said, a lot of just basic terra Buddhist doctrines are more Buddhagosism than Buddhism.

So yeah, Buddha is the author of many commentaries. in the commentary the the atagatas including the central commentarial work which is in terra Buddhism the sudi maga the path of purification.

So

um some some schools especially Burmese Buddhism like the P out method. Yeah. Buddha is just considered to be just infallible in in Buddhist Burmese

Buddhism in general. the commentarial literature of Buddha and and others are just I mean that's it has to be right you know you can't question it this not only are the sutas correct but the commentaries are are correct and in fact the commentaries are in some ways more authoritative than the sutas themselves because if the Buddha says red and the commentary says when the Buddha said red what he really meant was blue without the commentaries you wouldn't know that it's really blue and not red, so to speak.

And so I used to just really bash away at um Buddha ghostism as I called it. But that was when I was in Burma because

that's where everyone's taking it seriously. I come back to America and like scriptural dogmatism and just believing the commentaries as just the infallible word of Buddha when it's really the fallible word of Buddha and others.

Um it just wasn't as much of an issue in the west. There's in the in the west there's these other issues like scientism sort of supplanting dharma as the main explanation for reality. So when I was in in Burma, I bashed away at like Buddhosism and just kind of Abid Dhama, which is largely Buddhosism because some of the most um basic

teachings of Abidama so-called isn't
even found in the in the the Abidama
pitica. It's found in the commentaries
on the Abidama.
So let's see here. I keep saying so and
I'm noticing that.
Um so could I go talk a little bit about
Buddha Gossa and how authentic his
translation translations are? Well the
translation part I already I already
discussed. Um Buddha Gossa
you know in a way some people compare
him to like the St. Paul of Terravada.
Although probably it would be more
correct to say that a monk named Mowgali
Puratisa is like the St. Paul of Terra.
He's like created terra at the third

council by presiding over the third council and introducing Abidama texts and so forth. Buddha Gossa might be closer to like a Thomas Aquinus of Terravada Buddhism something like that but I think most westerners would be better off not taking him very seriously. I mean, if you want to be like literate in terab Buddhism and know what the official doctrines and that that sort of thing are, you have to be familiar with Buddha and the commentarial tradition. But if you just want to understand what the Buddha originally taught, then Buddha Gossa can do more harm than good

because the commentaries are often just making wild guesses. And it's not um necessarily the case that this commentarial literature really goes back to the time of the Buddha. Some of it might, but a lot of it is just apparently wild guesses from monks in Sri Lanka and southern India about stuff that happened hundreds of years previously in northern India. And a lot of it is guessing and some of it is not very good guessing.

So let's see here. Did I answer that question?

Talk a little bit about Buddha. Well, I did talk a little bit about him and how authentic his translations are. Well,

yeah, his translations you can't really say cuz he's just translating some commentary literature into poly from and it's it's a different style of poly, too. It's much more convoluted than like scriptural poly.

Let's see. I understand he has the biggest influence on the terra tradition. Yeah, he definitely he's he's one of the the main names in terravada defining terravada as like an orthodox system of doctrine. Yeah, he he's one of the the central people for that.

But there are others and even like you you've got the tapitica, you know, which is the Buddhist the Buddhist scriptures,

the polycanon.

Then you've got the atagatas or the commentaries that most of the main ones were composed or at least they're attributed to Buddhagosa.

And then you've got the tikkas which are the subcommentaries

and then after the tikkas you've got the anutikas which are the sub subcommentaries. So it's like the tikkas are commentaries on the commentaries and the anutikas are commentaries on the commentaries of the commentaries. And from the Buddhist point or the the Burmese Buddhist point of view, it's all authoritative.

So like the Mahasi method resorts

resorts to obscure claims made in an Anu tikka that was written like in early modern times probably.

That's I mean the the validity of the the orthodoxy of the mahasi method rests on some obscure statements made in an anutua like maybe in the 1600s.

But Buddha yeah I'm I really am not extremely impressed by Buddha. I'm not extremely impressed by Paul of Tarsus either from you know from like the Christian scriptural point of view.

So

yeah, I think if you just want to be literate in what terra Buddhism is all about, including what is official

orthodox doctrine, you have to be familiar with Buddha. But if you just want to follow the teachings of Buddha, then Buddha may cause more harm than good. You're better off just trusting your own intuition when you're reading the original texts without relying on commentarial interpretations of what those texts are saying because sometimes they have to twist things around in order to make it fit this this later orthodoxy that's superimposed on the texts. That's one of the one of the main reasons of the commentaries is just try to interpret the entire typica along this later developed orthodox lines. And sometimes it takes stretching and

twisting.

And that's it. I'm done. I got other stuff to do today, too. Like I got to finish digging the fish pond and move bags of cement and so forth.

So, I'm just going to uh call it good. If if you got any questions, etc., etc., you know, you know the you know the the score on that one. If you think I can answer, feel free to ask in the questions in the comments below. And uh like and subscribe if you have not done so already.

And be happy.

Alrighty then. Hello and welcome to
question and answer number 152.
I am your host Po Basa and 152 of course
is pathetically nonprime.
This is my beverage
and we're doing a late one. This is the
most late night question and answer I I
have ever done. pretty sure it's well
after midnight and long before this Q&A
is done, that fish tank back there is
going to be completely turned off. It's
already in in moonlight mode
cuz I've been kind of busy today. The
the fish tank is is very close to being
finished. The digging is done. I put
down the liner today. found out that one

end of the pond where the where the
overflow is going to be um is is like
six inches too low. So, I have to do
some masonry, mixed up some concrete and
uh and and build that up. And so,
probably
maybe a week from now, it'll be done and
even have like fish in it and stuff,
which is kind of nice. I like fish. Like
fish ponds.
So, I guess I should just start
answering questions.
Uh, it's going to be like after 3 in the
morning by by the time I'm done, but I'm
kind of a night owl. I'm more nocturnal
than most people anyway.
So, first question is from Gnostic

Rocker. And Gnostic Rocker actually
asked these questions last February in a
in an email that I overlooked.
And so he's he's got
he he has the the privilege of asking
more than three questions this time
because the first three questions he
asked were several months ago.
So anyways, Gnostic Rocker says, "Can
you tell us about any fantastically
insightful, ostensibly mad or deeply
eccentric one-off kinds of people you've
met in the temples in your time in
Burma? Whilst staying in hermitage o
hermitages over the years since the late
1980s, I soon realized it was far better

to suspend judgment for a while. Some of the people I initially considered half mad turned out to be full of spiritual insight. Some of them deeply original. Some of the somewhat wacky eccentrics turned out to have brilliant gems of wisdom. Whilst conversely, some whom I'd initially considered profound, it turned out were just mouththing cliches and following orders by the book. So, let's just get back up towards the question. Mark, can you tell us about any fantastically insightful, ostensibly mad or deeply eccentric one-off kinds of people you've met in the temples in your time in Burma? Well,

um

I mean it should be pointed out that really saintly people tend to be rather nutty. They tend to be very eccentric. I mean, that's just the way it is. Like William James the uh in his classic book the varieties of religious experience starts off by pointing out that saints you know like medieval kind of saints because he was mainly talking within the context of western civilization and Christianity that that saint saintly people would be considered mentally ill nowadays. A lot of them probably most of them. And so good monks tend to be rather strange. In fact, monks in general, especially western monks, tend

to be kind of on the fringe anyhow

because like a western monk is just kind

of deviating from his entire culture in

order to adopt Buddhism unless maybe he

was born and raised in a Buddhist ashram

or something.

So

nevertheless, most monks, most people

who live at monasteries, you know,

they're not enlightened. You know,

they're going to have plenty of

foibless. And most of the really nutty

kind of monks,

um, I mean, they were just kind of nutty

to the point of being somewhat

dysfunctional.

Like there was a a Chinese Malaysian

monk who was just very confused. I mean it's like he could not make up his mind about stuff and he had this habit of like walking into my room. I met him first in Rangon at a meditation center in Rangon and then I met him again at a forest monastery in central Burma and he did the same thing twice where like he he needs help with his visa and he just gets this idea that somehow I can help him with his visa. So, he'll just walk into my presence and then just stand there in silence with his back to me until I ask him, "What do you want?" And then he'll he'll ask if I can help with his visa. But he he starts off just

walking into the room. It's just the two of us. And then he'll just stand there with his back to me in silence until I address him. And then he'll he'll say what what's on his mind. There was another Vietnamese monk that I met at a forest monastery who

I mean he hadn't been in Burma for very long but and I had been in Burma for well over 10 years at the time but still he had been to way more places than I have. He's just going to place after place after place. None of them is satisfactory. And he's asking me where is a good place? Where is a good place? And I'm telling him, I mean, if you've been to that many places already and you

still haven't found a good one, chances are the problem is not with the places. And he had this phobia of lay people. It was like if he was sitting in front of his cave and lay people came just to pay respects or something, he would just take off, hide in the cave for the rest of the day.

I mean, he just the lay people. I mean, he would had this just mortal dread of interacting with lay people except when he was like with his bowl in the village and he was pretty much the same way. He just could not make up his mind about stuff. So, I mean, there's monks like that that are just nutty. And it's it's

not the good kind of nutty where you're just sort of, you know, you've kind of broken free from the samsaric wheel to some degree. you know, you're just kind of calling your own, you know, you're no longer enslaved
to a lot of cultural conditioning that most people are enslaved to that sort of thing. That's kind of a good sort of eccentric. But there are probably most of the nutty inhabitants of monasteries are sort of the other kind where I mean they are on the fringe, you know, they're more able I suppose to renounce the world and and strive for enlightenment or whatever, but also it's just they're kind of dysfunctional.

So I mean some of the dysfunctional
types also um became canonized as
Catholic saints like St. Gertrude for
example I mean there was a lot of
medieval saints they're just like
hallucinating hearing voices and seeing
stuff all the time
but St. Teresa of Avila, I've mentioned
her before, where she was seeing visions
so often that her father, Confessor,
just told her to make the sign of the
cross every time you see a vision. And
it was tiring out her arm apparently.
So, she just started carrying a crucifix
and just like holding it up every time
she saw one

or heard the voices or whatever.

But with regard to

like really eccentric

monks that were relatively highly

advanced,

there's one in particular and um he was

an American. He was from Texas. His name

was Waytherizabu. In fact, he had his

name legally changed to Ves Vesa Raja

Biku.

Um in Burmese pronunciation beethza beu.

And then after he'd been a monk for like

14, 15 years, something like that, he

dropped out of the monkhood and became a

kind of recluse. He still wore monk's

robes, still went for alms round.

Sometimes he grew his hair long and had

a beard just so he wouldn't be accused of pretending to be a monk. And he lived in a big hollow tree, big a huge banyan tree. I've sat inside that hollow banyan tree with him. you know, it was it was sort of like maybe eight feet long and maybe like three or four feet wide. So there and you could stand up in it. So it was plenty plenty enough room to live in there. and he was
sort of like a Buddhist Rambo that I' I've probably mentioned him before in these Q&As's where um I had a a friend of his tell me before I ever met Urizza that most Buddhists when when they're trying to walk the middle path they

stray over into the self-indulgence side whereas Urizo is one of the few that I've come across that strays the other way into like the self- torture side or just just excess, you know, his his loot strings were too tight instead of too loose, that kind of thing. But he was he was held up as like the uh just sort of the role model, you know, he was kind of my hero before I ever met him because the Burmese monks would all be praising. He was he was ordained in the same tradition as me, the Tom Pulu tradition. He was ordained by Tom Pulu Seattle himself
and he was just held up as this role model for me to emulate when I was a

junior monk and he was just completely strict with Gardivinia. I think I've mentioned before the story of one time he was in America and he was asked to give a damat talk at this monastery and where he was already staying so he didn't have to go anywhere. So at the time of the dhama talk he just comes in and sits down and he just sits there in silence for like five minutes and after sitting there in silence for five minutes he just gets up and walks out. So then the organizer of the retreat who invited him to to talk at this at at this you know it's sort of like the dharma talk the evening dhamma talk she

chases after him and asked him why
didn't you say anything and he said well
there was somebody there wearing a
stocking cap and it is against vineia
for a monk to teach dhamma to someone
who has their head covered and it was
like the middle of wintertime and there
was one of one of the women there had
like a stocking cap on so I mean it was
easy to rectif ified. They just went and
asked her to take the stocking cap off
and then uh Theresa came back and and
gave the doat talk,
but he was trying too hard, I think. You
know, his his strings were too tight
instead of too loose like most people.
And he just kind of I mean, it was like

at the surface level he he dropped out of the monkhood and he started kind of criticizing Dhamma a lot. You know, he once said that in his opinion, the Buddha was just sort of like a an ancient Indian, Joseph Goldstein, this kind of thing. But deeper down, you could tell that he still had faith that he was just sort of at the surface rationalizing.

And I guess he's still alive. I think he's he's living in Burma still last I heard which was just a few months ago but he he really did try too hard. It was one of the he was trying to do all of the the 13 dutongas at the highest

level which I mean in ancient India only Mahakasapa could do it you know it was like only one monk could do the dutongas at the highest level according to tradition and now he was like a like the Buddha's successor a senior member of the song after the Buddha attained Pari nibbana here's ouriza trying to do all of the dutongas at the highest level and he just had sleep deprivation He he kind of cracked up one time because I mean he was trying to sleep. I mean one of the dutangas is you never lie down and you've got three different levels for each dutonga. The hardest level of the sitting duta is you're not even allowed to lean back against anything. You're

not allowed to sit in a chair. You just have to be like sitting as in meditation sleeping that way. And he did fudge a little bit. He put his alms in front of him and leaned forwards resting his forehead on his alms but still he wasn't getting enough sleep and he eventually kind of cracked up because of that. Got sent back to America and as soon as he got better he just came right back to Burma again and reordained and just went at it again.

But he was uh one of the most um eccentric advanced practitioners that I ever really had any dealings with. But just about any kind of monk is going to

be at least a little bit eccentric,
especially the western ones.
So let's see here.
Let's see.
I'm trying to think of any advanced kind
of nutty Burmese monks, but I really
never I didn't really interact much with
other monks when I was in Burma. Western
monks, it's interesting to talk to
Western monks because, you know, they
have interesting insights and there's no
culture barrier, no language barrier,
that sort of thing. Whereas Burmese
monks, they tend to think pretty much
alike. They tend to have pretty much the
same interpretation of Dhamma with just
minor variations. You know, it's sort of

like talking about Christianity to a medieval European. You know, they just they all have just been indoctrinated since like toddlerhood about, you know, what to believe. This is the true belief. This is this is what you have to believe in order not to burn in hell. That kind of thing. The Burmese to some degree are still like that.

So, I think I answered that question at least to the best of my my memory at present. And so, I'm just going to move on to Gnostic Rockers question. Second question of last February, which is, have you ever met Korean Zen monks in Terravada temples? Many of the Korean

Zen monks I have met have profound respect for weasana, particularly the Mahasi Seattle approach. And yeah, I I met one Korean Zen monk in particular. I assume he was Zen. He was wearing like gray pajamas when he arrived at Pandida. I was doing a two-month intensive retreat at Pandama in Rangon. And there was this Korean Buddhist monk there, Mahayana monk of some sort, wearing gray pajamas. And he was very serious. He was very friendly, very nice person. You know, he had definitely had deep faith and respect for Dharma, including Terravada.

And

he didn't like though that he was

treated like a lay person because he's wearing the gray pajamas. He's not a a biku. He's not a pongi in in Burmese, that he's seen as sort of like a member of some other religion. And so he he got to go first in line after the monks, you know, before the regular lay people, but still he went after the monks, like like going for um you know, going into the the the the refactory to eat the daily the morning meal or whatever. So he didn't like that. And so he was ordained as a biku at Pandita Rama without even like disroing from being a Zen monk which is probably against the rules. According to my understanding it would

be against the rules. I mean you you'd have to like disrobe from being a Zen monk before you can be ordained as a as a terrau

because I mean just the the whole wrong view thing that kind of thing.

So

he was uh he was a deep meditator. He got praised by Upandida a lot although his med listening to him at meditation retreats it was surreal. I mean, he's talking about, you know, his body just dissolving into particles and he's flying through the sky, lighter than air, just on and on. It sounds it sounded like he was having some kind of acid trip while he was meditating. And

he would just sit like a statue for 3 hours straight. You know, he could just his legs would just flop into the full lotus position. He'd just sit there motionless for three hours. Although I mean I'm not exactly sure like the value of his meditation considering that it was really like psychedelic experiences that he was continually having. But I mean he was a serious practitioner. I have no doubt that he was more advanced than most dharma practitioners.

And he and I would talk a lot about like nagarina like majamaka and like he would say that according to his tradition

nagarjuna is like a second Buddha this kind of thing. So it was kind of interesting talking to him about that although we did keep talking to a minimum because we were in an intensive meditation retreat. So, every once in a while we might talk a little bit, but as a general rule at a Mahasi retreat, you're supposed to be looking down, moving in slow motion, not talking to anybody except for the the seat who's interviewing you, that kind of thing. So, in a way, it's kind of like a thought reform camp. I mean, there are similarities. I don't need to get into this, but there are similarities. So, let's see. I think I answered that

question. So, I'm just going to move on

to

move on to Gnostic Rocker's third

question of last February. And oh, wait

a minute.

Yeah,

I'm lagging and I don't have the

computer plugged in. Just a second.

I have to move to a different desk and I

sometimes I forget this.

Just a second.

We're having technical difficulties.

Okay.

All right. I'm still lagging though.

That's not good.

Yeah,

maybe it'll catch up eventually.

So, the third question

from Gnostic Rocker is, since you live

in the Bible belt, what do you think

Christians really believe in?

That's kind of an interesting question.

H so what Christians really believe and

especially in the Bible belt like South

Carolina where I'm where I'm living now.

Um they

it's hard to say. I mean I'm not really

I' I've never been a Christian.

So um it's just sort of like an

anthropological observation thing for me

to try to answer this question. But like

I've had two bosses before this present

job. The two jobs I had before the

present job I'm working at were devout Christian bosses. The first one was an ordained minister in fact although he decided to uh be the manager of the sheet metal shop instead of uh preaching to a congregation I guess. And you know, he would say grace before he would eat a meal.

And

he he believed the Bible, I assume. Although at the same time, um, he would, uh, talk about like shooting trespassers, you know, it's like he he'd be going into gory detail about blowing holes and people breaking breaking into his house, although it didn't really

happen,

you know, but if it did happen, he was

going to blow holes with that person,

which is not particularly Christian.

And then the second boss I had, really

nice guy. He wouldn't swear,

you know, that was like an obvious thing

about him and he know he knew his Bible.

But one thing about Christians is they

really don't care much about the whole

gather not up your treasures upon the

earth stuff. like the whole renunciation

of the world that you find in the New

Testament

that Jesus taught and and like you

should be poor.

Very few Christians take that seriously

in America as far as I can tell. So like forgiving your enemies, they might have to admit that they can't do it, but you know, they'll they'll say, "Yeah, that's right. you should forgive your enemies and you know you should like uphold basic morality that kind of thing and at least they have that as an ideal
um except for like the not not gathering up treasures upon the earth. There's a few other ones, I suppose. You know, there's just a few things. It's it's the same in Buddhism where there's some precepts or teachings that are so inconvenient
for like a modern lay person living in

the world, you know, in the world and of

the world

that

it's that's one reason that Christianity

has survived this long is that it

doesn't really require Christians

to fully follow the teachings of Jesus.

So, I mean, you know, selling all that

you have, giving the money to the poor,

and then taking up your cross and

wandering around casting out demons and

healing the sick and that sort of thing.

I mean, that is just it's sort of like

in Buddhism, rousing the world and and

just sleeping under trees, that kind of

thing. It's just in order for it to

become like a math like a national

religion

then I mean it has to get watered down a

lot

but for the most part a lot of

Christians in South Carolina you know

they know their Bible they read the

Bible they'll say grace before meals you

know they they'll refrain from cussing

and so forth

But still, it's it's just sort of like a

Christianflavored worldly lay person as

a general rule. And like Buddhists in

the West are kind of the same. It's like

a a a Buddhistflavored

worldly lay person.

So

I think what Christians, American Christians in the Bible belt really believe, I mean, they believe in Jesus. You know, Jesus is their savior. you just believe in Jesus. I mean, that's that's like the main thing I think. Believing in Jesus is more important than actually living a saintly life. Pretty obviously.

And it does seem like I caught up on the lag and then I started lagging again. And I'm not exactly sure what the problem is. And we've already been going for well over 20 minutes. So, I don't want to just start over.

So, this could be like a shitty recording for all I know.

And I'm just going to move on to Hooligan Rocker, who is actually the same person as Gnostic Rocker. He just changed his name since February. But I guess this way it kind of is a pass for asking three more questions because really in all fairness he asked the first three in February and I just kind of overlooked them when I was compiling questions that time and it just didn't happen. So Hooligan Rocker says when you were a monk were you ever allowed to develop meaningful deep friendships with other monks or would that have been considered attachment of a worldly kind? If the answer is no, wouldn't that be a

lonely existence? But maybe that
otherworldly state of being is an
axiomatic given within monasticism
anyway. Well, I did have
some I did have friends. I had Burmese
friends, a few or just monastic friends.
I had some Western friends including
Uriza who was kind of a friend, but he
was definitely like a hermit.
But I mean I'd hang out with him
sometimes and you know it was it was
interesting.
Um
but let's see here. Were you ever
allowed to develop meaningful deep
friendship? Yeah. I mean being f monks
being friends is certainly not forbidden

in the text. It is in fact encouraged if you find a friend who is wise and helps you in your practice that sort of thing. So yeah, I mean it is allowed to develop meaningful deep friendships with other monks. You know, it is praised in the texts,

but I'm I've always been pretty much of a loner. And so,

um, I really didn't have a lot of friends. And sometimes, you know, just you just move on, move in different directions. You don't see the other person anymore.

So,

but if the answer is no, wouldn't that

be a lonely existence? I guess that's an extra question, isn't it? I mean, it depends on the person. I mean, some people are just reclusive. It's um I remember living living near that uh the Texan hermit who lived in the hollow tree was an Australian monk and it was I was sort of intermediate between them with regard to my tolerance for conversation. Like the hermit monk would he would I mean outher he would just burn out on conversation pretty fast. He just did not like human companionship very much at all. Whereas the Australian monk, I started avoiding that monastery just because he would be talking all the time. You know, he'd be

just kind of dropping by under some pretext and then just sort of holding forth just talking about all kinds of stuff. Sometimes about Dhamma, but as often as not, it would be, you know, this really great cricket bat that he had or motorcycle accident that he got in when he was a teenager or some such. or how he was like rewiring something and just going into long detail, not really caring or it just didn't consider it didn't occur to him that maybe another person wouldn't want to hear a 20 minute long monologue about troubleshooting the wiring in like a circuit box or something.

[Music]

So I was sort of intermediate that I would burn out on conversation with the Australian monk first, but if I was hanging out with Uriza, the Texan monk, he would burn out first. So people just have a different need for human companionship, a different need for talking. And I am kind of on at the lower end. Like I really don't. At work, there's some people that are just talking all the time. They talk to everybody and pretty much the only people I talk to are the people who talk to everybody because they're talking to me because I'm part of everybody. But for the most part, I just do not

engage in in any kind of

like sociality.

I'm just not a gregarious person.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to

Hooligan Rocker's second question.

And it does kind of concern me a little

bit that uh this this video is is sort

of lagging and then catching up and then

lagging again. I assume it was because I

didn't plug in the computer and it was

working on a battery that was barely

keeping up and I don't know but it seems

to be doing okay now.

Anyways, Hooligan Rocker,

formerly known as Gnostic Rocker, says,

"Do you ever feel depression or has

Buddhist consciousness lessened that very human tendency?" And depression runs on both sides of my family.

Um, and so I mean, I have it I have been relatively seriously depressed a few times in my life, at least twice when I was a monk. I mean, the two worst depressions I had were both when I was a monk and um I mean I I won't go into details, but I was seriously depressed. Not not like incapacitated, not just like lying in the fetus position, just wanting to sleep all day, that kind of thing. But still, I mean, it was it was unpleasant.

And the thing is,

part of the thing is

that my mind, my consciousness expands and contracts kind of like the Buddhist cosmos, but a lot faster and with probably less regularity, less you're you're able to predict it less, I guess. So, I mean, that kind of runs in the family and I think that is pretty much what depression is about. In this case, it just seems to be like constitutional factors. You know, it's just runs on both sides of the family. At least going with like a scientific, you know, genetic kind of explanation that it's my consciousness kind of expands and contracts. And when I was a monk and it was in a contracted phase, I

wasn't necessarily like in a state that most people would call depression, but I I was vulnerable to that. And it was like you're not really interested in anything. Meditation becomes almost impossible when you're in a state like this. When your mind is just sort of contracted, it's like trying to meditate, trying to keep your mind on the object is like trying to balance a marble on the tip of a sharpened pencil. I mean, it's it's practically impossible.

On the other hand, when it's when I'm more my consciousness is more expansive, and I assume this is sort of like bipolar, but I'm not clinically

significant,

like mental illnesses as a general rule

tend to be exaggerations of normal

states. You know, there's like a

spectrum of, you know, just how far

along you are. And so with regard to um

bipolar or manic depression as it used

to be called um you know I'm I'm kind

maybe a little farther than most people

in that direction although not enough

that they need to lock me up in a padded

room or anything and or I don't have to

take lithium or anything like that

but it you can just feel it just

sometimes the consciousness is

contracted sometimes it's expanded and

when I and I'm expanded it's like dhamma is more interesting. Meditation can be so easy that it's practically effortless.

And so I mean I did learn through mindfulness, you just being mindful of what your own mind is doing, you know, how you're feeling, that sort of thing, that I could uh sort of I wouldn't say brace myself against depression, but you could take precautions like if if I'm in like a contracted state, there are certain things I learned that help to kind of hold full-blown depression at bay. day. One is just sleep a little extra. Sleep a little more than usual. Another thing is just accomplish

something every day. Even if it's just like cleaning your cave, cleaning your room, just accomplish something positive every day. So you don't just feel like the whole day was just a stagnating waste because that helps the depression to feel as your life is just stagnating. You're not accomplishing anything. So, uh definitely it does help to just do something positive every day if if you feel like your mind is sort of getting contracted and you're sort of feeling vulnerable to possible depression. So, I'm much more resistant to it now than I was as a lay person before I was a monk

or as a junior monk. The last really serious depression I had was I had been a monk for about 10 years and I've talked about that. It's it's uh uh I've even I think it it might even be in uh one of my books a discussion of that.

So,

um, still I feel like the expansion and contraction and sometimes, you know, when I'm in a contracted state, I'm just more flat, more blah, you know, just less effusive, less talkative, that kind of thing, which my woman, I mean, sometimes she just thinks that something is wrong and I try to explain, you know, it's just I'm going through a contracted phase and then it gets expansive again.

And, you know, it's just that's just the way it is. And because there is no self, you can't really make it be otherwise. You cannot say with regard to your own consciousness, let it be this way, let it not be that way, and reliably have it happen.

So,

I'll just move on to the next question from Hooligan Rocker, which I won't answer because I already answered it because his third question, the third question from Hooligan Rocker is the same as the first question from Gnostic Rocker, which is about the deeply inspiring or really eccentric monks you

met over the decades you were in robes.
I mean, I guess it's slightly different
because he's talking he's emphasizing
the deeply inspiring
rather than the really eccentric.
But
I don't know. I mean, every once in a
while you'd meet a monk in Burma that,
you know, some old Seattle
who seemed like he really gets it. You
know, he seems like he's he's attained
something, but sometimes you could be
mistaken. You know, it's like first time
I met Tangjidoni, venerable Tangidon, I
thought, wow, he might really have
attained something. But then I went to a
Tangidong Seattle retreat in Pagan in

Burma and yeah, it's is it was rather disillusioning.

Upon was kind of the same way. It's like um you know, he he has attained something or he had I mean he's passed away now. He had to tame something. But still, I mean, he was just a very really angry person.

So, I mean, how how enlightened is someone going to be when they get pissed off pretty much on a daily basis?

But, I mean, that's that's kind of a philosophical question. I'm sure that his followers would say, "Well, that just goes to show that even a highly advanced Dharma practitioner can get

pissed off on a daily basis.

So I mean there's like Yuaniato. I met him a couple times.

He got me into a bit of trouble. In fact, he was this old monk who lived in a cemetery and the people around thought he was an arant. That's why the I was brought to see him. You got to come see the Arhant. And you know he was this monk who lived alone in a cemetery in this little hut built on the edge of the cemetery. Very friendly. gave me a bunch of Red Bull,

like the Asian Red Bull that would probably be illegal in America nowadays.

And uh you know, but that's it. I mean, it's like he's considered to be an

orahant and he didn't do anything really unsaintly when I was there.

And you know, it's like I I liked him. You know, there was something really likable about him. He's very sincere, but

he uh he liked me too, apparently. And so one time some people from a nearby village from near the cave where I was living, they went to visit him. They rented this toaji, it's called in Burmese. It's you see him a lot in Thailand, too. I think it's called a tuk tuk in Thailand. Um it's just sort of like this iron wagon that's has like a lawnmower engine on the front of it.

Sometimes you steer it with like handlebars like a motorcycle. Sometimes it'll have a steering wheel. No suspension. You know, it was just bonejarring to ride in one of these things. They rented one of these and went to visit venerable Yuan Moni, you know, the reputed Arahan. And when they told him where where they were from, or when they told him where they were from, he he said, "Oh, you live near that American monk. He's very venerable. You should make sure to put alms in his in his bowl. Even if it's raining, you should you should be sure to make sure he has enough food." And so the day after that, I went to the nearby village

for alms and it was like a circus and it
was just so much people. There's there's
no way it would all go into my bowl.
It's like a tenth of it wouldn't go into
my bowl. And so it was just like the
people assumed like this arhant says
that this other monk is very venerable.
That must mean that that other monk is
is an arhant too. So I got this
reputation for being an arhant because
of yuamuni
at least in that area.
And it was it was it was not I mean some
people might think oh it'd be great to
be famous you know you get a lot of
support but I mean there is such a thing

as too much of a good thing

and just having like a hundred people

all lined up waiting to offer food when

you've just got a bowl that's like this

big. I mean it's the same bowl that's

back on the table there.

Man, it was it was a headache.

So, let's see here. I guess I should

just move on. The next question is from

Kundrew. And Kundrew says, "What is the

worst physical pain that you've ever

experienced?" And that's kind of a

strange question because as a general

rule, I think we tend to kind of block

out memories like that of like the most

unbearable agony or but then again, it's

like if you really hurt yourself, it's

like it's like it's like you go numb, you know, you get a really bad injury or something. And fortunately, I I haven't really had a really horrible, you know, I haven't been maimed or anything yet. So the when I read this question, what is the worst physical pain that you've ever experienced? There's one memory came to mind and that was I was living under the big rock ledge at the on the northern boundary of Alando Kathaba National Park and I felt like I was starting to catch a cold. So I asked for a couple lemons. I was going to get vitamin C from eating these lemons and I just ate the lemons like they were

oranges.

And then like that evening and for a few days afterwards when I tried to brush my teeth, it was just this searing pain. It was a pain like I've never felt before. It was just my face would just start sweating. It was just like just this exquisite agony from my teeth becoming so sensitized from the acid from the lemon juice that I ate from the from the lemon that I ate. It was weird. It took It took a few days, like three days for it to finally fade back out again. But try to brush my teeth, like after eating that lemon. And seriously, I mean, it was it was it was like I I don't know. It was like some kind of torture. It was

really weird.

But I've probably experienced worse physical pain than that. And I just can't think of what it is just because as a general rule, you don't want to think about that kind of stuff. You know, it's just human nature. I mean, there are some people that have like a morbid morbid kind of personality trait where they'll just kind of dwell on that kind of thing which helps them to be depressed or whatever. But in my case, um I really can't think of like really exquisite agony that I've experienced um physically.

Emotionally, it's always, you know, at

the at the business end of a of a an angry female or something, but generally one's lover.

But uh yeah, I guess it would be the thing that really comes to mind would be um you know trying to brush my teeth after eating a lemon. Although I mean every once in a while I have had dental work done with no anesthesia in Burma. So I mean that's that's kind of painful too. But it wasn't just this exquisite searing agony that just caused my face to just sweat.

Oh, just

I guess that's that's all I can think of. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from sea of

action sepad zedina

and sea of action sepad zedina says you

said sometimes you might have to

sacrifice your own virtue for the

greater good but the dharmapata says

don't sacrifice your own welfare for

that of another no matter how great

realizing your own true welfare be

intent on just that and that's verse 166

from the dhamop and then he says

thoughts

And I can see that we're lagging again.

So, I mean, I don't know if I ever

really said that you might have to

sacrifice your own virtue for the

greater good, but I mean, you may choose

to do that. And it's everyone's right to choose, I suppose. Like, you know, I've said that the soldier, especially a Buddhist soldier, could be viewed as like a tragic hero who sacrifices his own virtue for the sake of others. And I mean, how else is a Buddhist culture going to um justify or even respect soldiers who are protecting their borders for example.

So I mean sometimes to sacrifice your own welfare for that of another I mean I mean

like spiritually you may be getting welfare when physically you're taking a hit like there's the story I think it's a Mahayana story of the Buddha as a

bodhicatta or bodhicattva previous life
how he sees a tigris who is starving to
death and so he offers his own body to
the tigress so that she won't starve to
death and she eats him and you know he
goes to heaven or something afterwards.
So I mean like at a physical level you
can be sacrificing your own welfare
while still getting spiritual benefit.
Um
but still I mean this kind of this kind
of attitude like found in the dharmapata
I mean it can be taken to the extreme of
sort of like the monk who just sits on a
riverbank and watches a pretty girl
drown because it's against the rules for

him to touch a pretty girl.

And in a case like that, then yeah, I think you might be better off breaking the rule and maybe even, you know, feeling unh wholesome feelings. I mean, some some monks are so desperate that touching a pretty girl, even if she's like semiancual

desires that happen to arise or some such.

But yeah, I mean it can be taken to an extreme that you're not going to sacrifice your own welfare for for another to the point of just being like I don't know just sort of like stingy being a kind of ass insensitive ass that kind of thing. I don't know.

But I don't think you you necessarily have to sacrifice your own virtue for the greater good. But it may be a choice that you have to make sometimes.

So anyways, I'm just going to move on to Sea of Action Caden's next question.

Lagging as I am again, I catch up every now and then though.

Why did the Buddha want the SA to stay in touch with the common person and depend on them for food when normies ruin everything and every community?

Normies ruin every community. I think every community is composed of normies. I mean that's what a community is. It's it's an accumulation of normies

as a general rule. I mean you might have
like an advanced spiritual community,
you know, off in the some remote area,
but the overwhelming majority of
communities are composed almost
exclusively of normies.
But the thing is the Buddha
he had at least according to tradition
he had compassion and he would tell his
enlightened disciples go out and preach
the dharma for the benefit of the many
you know it's kind of like a lot of
there's a lot of overlap between what
Jesus was teaching you know gather not
up your treasures upon the earth and all
that give no thought for tomorrow what
you will eat or where you will sleep

common to both religions and pretty much ignored by both religions in most cases. So I mean the Buddha did that largely as a way of helping people helping to raise the level of consciousness by having aesthetics you know sas in plain sight. In fact, I mean, according to the tradition, that's what inspired the Buddha himself to to renounce the world. This like you saw the four sightes, the fourth sight that really caused him to make up his mind was the holy man, the the renuncient monk.

And in the Mongalas Suta, which has the the 30, was it

30 something blessings?

The exact number of blessings escapes me at the moment. Seeing seeing aesthetic, seeing like homeless renuncience is one of the blessings of life.

You know, it's it's sort of keeping that in the consciousness of of the culture when you've got renunciates. I if they just go off and hide in the forest, then they're not going to be helping society nearly as much. not going to be helping people who need help nearly as much and also they're going to have to get their own food by digging the ground and and killing animals and that kind of thing which is inappropriate by ancient North Indian standards.

So that's the main reasons I guess and so I'm just going to move on to SEO of action zed's third question which is as follows. Does Buddhism agree with Carl Schwab? Isn't it Klaus Schwab or is there are there two Schwabs? Anyways, he says, "Does Buddhism agree with Carl Schwab from the WF that you will own nothing and you will be happy is is the ideal?" So, does Buddhism agree with you will own nothing and you will be happy for the advanced practitioners? Yeah. And it's again it's an overlap with Christianity where um you know like if you read the acts of the apostles in the New Testament like

the the the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem after Jesus was crucified you know they were essentially a commune. It was communistic. They would donate all of all of their wealth to the to the group and it would be distributed according to need.

So I mean they didn't really own anything then. And if you're fully enlightened, there's no I, me, mine anyhow.

So, um, communism like this, it I mean, it doesn't work for normies because it's so much at variance with just normie human nature. It's so much at variance in fact that it can only be enforced at gunpoint.

But for an like very advanced spiritual
community then yeah I mean that would be
the way to go I guess that if you have a
bunch of arans with no concept of IE
mind they're just naturally going to be
a kind of anarchocomunism
not like Antifa is uh trying to
establish but I mean it would be like a
genuine anarchocomunism because there'd
be no IE mind but most people have these
ideas of IE mind and are much more
willing to work for their own benefit
and the benefit of their immediate
family than they are for just anonymous
comrades
distributed throughout the country.

So

Buddhism does agree

that if you are very spiritually

advanced, you will own nothing and you

will be happy. But that's not going to

apply to the average householder who

just isn't ready for that.

Regardless of how communistic

governments try to force it on them, it

just doesn't work very well.

So I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from Sedarta Loha.

And why he's his his name is Sedarta

Coppermind,

I don't know.

Maybe loa is he's he's like interpreting

it as red or something like the word for

red is lohita or no that's blood is

loita

h anyways sedarth lohachita says does

competitiveness have anything positive

and then he has this little comment or

this sort of commentary here the Tibetan

lo jang says I will take the defeat upon

myself and give the victory to others.

Or quoting the Dhamapata verse 201,

conquest beggets enmity, the conquered

live in misery. The peaceful live

happily having renounced conquest and

defeat. Yeah, that's that's like right

out of the pura suta of the atikawaga

also. So getting up to the question

here, does competitiveness have anything

positive? And I've been trying to think of something positive from that you get from competitiveness. I mean, it might inspire you to to be better, but the thing is, I've never been a particularly competitive person. I mean, you know, I'd play card games, stuff like that. Like when I was in college, my roommate and I would play a game of cribage every day and the loser would have to wash the dishes. So, I mean, that kind of competitiveness. And then you can like tease the other person if if if you if you really beat them badly, that kind of thing. But from a spiritual point of view

and competitiveness, it really I mean it

can inspire you to do better. Sort of like if you're at a meditation retreat, you don't want to be the first person to change position or get up and walk out, that kind of thing. It's sort of like the other people around you kind of, you know, it was it would like demean your dignity, something like that, if you just like were the first person to just get up cuz your legs were sore or something.

So, I mean, something like that maybe. But competitiveness, I mean, you're really comparing yourself with other people and that is I mean, that's bad karma. That's that's not good. That's a

kind of mana. In fact, the word mana, which is usually translated as pride or conceit, literally means measuring. It's like you're measuring yourself up against others.

So that in the atakawaga says, if you consider yourself superior to others, that's mono. If you consider yourself to be inferior to others, that's also mono. And if you consider yourself to be equal to others, that's also mono. because all of them are you are comparing yourself to other people

which you're not supposed to be doing cuz there ultimately there's no self to compare anyway.

So I mean there might be some beneficial

side effects of competitiveness just in that it kind of inspires you to try harder and do your best. It might not be for the best reasons. You may have bad motives for being as good as you possibly can, but at least you're being as good as you possibly can, but if you can do that without comparing yourself to other people, um, I mean, myself, I've never been particularly competitive, but I do my best just because it's like the job you do is a reflection of your character or it's like you're competing with with your own self trying to be better than what you were, that kind of thing. That would be

a more wholesome kind of
competitiveness, just competing against,
you know, what you have been.
But still, you're better off not having
any kind of mono, not comparing yourself
to others, not even comparing yourself
to yourself.
But the question being, does
competitiveness have anything positive?
Then yeah, the positive might be that
it's it's kind of a bad motive for
nevertheless causing you to try your
best.
You know, just try your best because
that's what you should do is a better
reason for trying your best than trying
your best in order to do better than

these slobs next to you.

So, I'm just going to move on to Sedar Loha's next question.

On one hand, I like competitiveness. Perhaps my greatest attachment. At one point in the past, I was a wrestler and I enjoyed winning. But I also understand that this whole modern world revolves around competing for women, money, and all kinds of unsatisfying things. Should men give up all competition? Well, competitiveness is a masculine trait. And so there have been moves by, you know, by progressives to make like the workplace, you know, like in business, big business, that kind of thing, less

competitive so that women will be able to compete better because women are more agreeable. You know, they're they're more inclined to kind of back down or not like stab somebody in the back.

Well, I guess I mean they can be catty, that kind of thing. That's sort of a feminine trait, a stereotypical feminine trait. But genuine competitiveness tends to be more of a masculine trait. And so, should men give up all competition? I mean, it's it's an unrealistic should because it's just human nature. I mean, you can try to program it out of men and then you wind up with a bunch of wimpy betas,

you know, just toxic masculinity. you

want to abolish toxic masculinity, you wind up with a bunch of feminized betas, which is pretty much a death nail for that society.

So, should men give up all competition? Uh, yeah, they should give up like all unh wholesome mental states. They should give up all badness, which sounds nice. It's not going to happen anytime soon. So, it's just kind of a it's it's kind of a silly should,

you know, should men gather not up their treasures upon the earth? Yeah, sure. Jesus says so, and the Buddha says so to some degree also, but I mean, it's just not realistic to say they should or

shouldn't. I mean, it's it's just academic, you know, it's all just, you know, thought games.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And this one's kind of peculiar. This is from Austin.

And Austin says, "There is a logical synonym."

Let me start over. There is a logical syllogism by the DNA school that goes like this. Premise one, only what is causally efficacious is real. Premise two, to be causally efficacious is to produce an effect at a particular time. Premise three, something eternal would be unchanging.

Premise four, an unchanging thing would

have no reason to produce an effect at one time rather than another. Premise five, therefore, nothing eternal could be causally efficacious.

conclusion. Hence, no existing things are eternal. So, that's that's the the uh the syllogism. And then Austin continues here, Nirvana and samsara are considered eternal and uncaused in Buddhist thought. How can this be reconciled with the syllogism? Well, some of the syllogism I would agree with. Let's see.

Like premise three, something eternal would be unchanging. Yeah, I would agree with that from a Buddhist point of view.

Premise four is seems pretty solid. An unchanging thing would have no reason to produce an effect at one time rather than another. Yeah. I mean, how could it something that doesn't change cause anything?

But getting up to premise one, I think this is really the Achilles heel of the whole syllogism. Premise one says only what is causally efficacious is real. And that seems like an arbitrary premise that

um it's just not really self-evident to me. What is I mean you could say that um what is real would not be causally efficacious. Like what does Nirvana cause? If if we if we say that Nirvana

or Brahman from an upanesic point of

view is ultimate reality

then I mean what does that cause other

than just serving as maybe as a kind of

ground of being

you know it's it's the uncarved block

that gets carved into an infinitude of

imaginary statues.

So yeah, I would say that premise one is

problematic.

Only what is causally efficacious is

real. Yeah, I think that is just like an

arbitrary

arbitrary idea that isn't necessarily

true. I mean, if you could prove that

that is true, that's fine. But I think

that since premise one is problematic and not self-evident at all, then it just causes pretty much the whole it causes the conclusion to be I mean it could be um validly deduced based on the premises, but it's not necessarily true at all.

And then you get to the end here where he's saying Nirvana and Samsara considered eternal and uncaused in Buddhist. Not necessarily. Samsara is not uncaused because going with dependent core rising at least the traditional formulation of it samsara is caused by ignorance. Avija avija is causing samsara moment by moment.

So nirvana would be eternal and uncaused but samsara would not in my according to my understanding of dhamma.

So I'm just going to move on to Austin's second question here. In classical Buddhism, is consciousness ontologically identical to, distinct from, or dependently arisen from the physical body? And how do they interact causally?

Okay. So in classical Buddhism, consciousness is distinct from the body. You know, in according to Abidama, which I assume would qualify as classical Buddhism, you got four ultimate realities. mind, mental states, matter and nibbana.

So that that mind or consciousness is
qualitatively
radically completely different from
matter.
So it would be distinct from the
physical body. But when you get to how
do they interact causally, I don't think
Abidama really has
a good answer for that.
Um, I mean like Mahayana Buddhism has an
easier answer because most Mahayana
Buddhists are philosophical idealists.
They don't even believe that physical
matter is real.
So I mean that just that just kicks the
mind body problem right in the head. You
no longer have a problem.

see here.

But I mean with regard to like Abidama um how do they interact causally? I don't think there really is much of a like how it works. It's just like it's just accepted as a fact that it has to work. And there are certain things like kama ja rupa where you've got physical matter that is somehow created by karma which is a mental state. So there is like a an interaction like a relationship between mind and matter. But abidama really doesn't do much as far as I know to actually explain how that happens.

So I mean being a being like a a

philosophical idealist just solves the problem just cuts through the Gordian knot immediately.

So I think I'm just going to move on to Austin's third question here. If consciousness is not reducible to the physical body, how does it condition a new existence after death in classical Buddhism?

Well, it's like how does it condition a new existence? That's I mean the only thing that moves from one life to the next is comma and it looks like I'm not lagging right now or if I am it's very little.

So let's see if consciousness is not reducible to the physical body which it

is not how does it condition a new existence after death in classical Buddhism? Well, the way it works in classical Buddhist at least like orthodox terraada is at the moment of death the very next moment the momentum of your mind your karma your you your china your your will you know in the in the schopenhowerian sense it has to continue existing because it hasn't like dissipated yet it's you know it's still you know your the force of ignorance and delusion and whatever is just keeping it going. And so it just has to like inhabit a new a new body just it just jumps instantaneously from this dying

dead body to this like fertilized egg in the case of a human or or like an organic organism on this planet.
So for example with regard to um like how a new being takes rebirth in a woman's womb you know there have to be the man and the woman coming together. There has to be a certain amount of moisture and also there has to be the gandaba which is interpreted as this karmic momentum which is just has to enter the the fertilized egg. And so according to orthodox terravada um rebirth happens at conception. Personally I'm a little skeptical of that. But I mean how is a fertilized egg going to contain the karma of a complex

adult? you know, who was someone who was
a complex adult just moments before
that most of that, you know, the sort of
the anus, the latent tendencies are
going to be extremely latent, you know,
for years, even
several months at the very least.
But again, I'm not a materialist and
just trying to drag the physical body
into these equations is facious in my
opinion.
So, you know, it's like mind
conditions matter rather than matter
somehow generating mind, which is more
of the the scientistic attitude.
So, I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from Romeo.

And Romeo's got

kind of a

somewhat of an autobiographical sketch

here. And I noticed we're we're lagging

again. This is so weird.

Maybe it's just the computer is sleepy

because it's well after midnight. In

fact, it's after 1:30 in the morning

now. So Romeo says, "I live in New York

City where a Muslim Democratic

socialist, i.e. a communist recently won

the Democratic primary for mayor. Even

though he still has to win in November,

barring some miracle, it's pretty much a

foregone conclusion that he'll be

victorious. Mamani winning will be yet

another nail in the coffin of this city, I'm afraid. Anyway, members of a Buddhist temple I sometimes attend sent out emails strongly urging fellow attendees to vote for Mam Dani. They said, quote, "His plan for attending to those in need comes closest to embodying the Buddhist ideals of Donna and loving kindness."

Even though the head monk of this temple wasn't responsible for these emails, reading them made me feel like not returning to it. Politically contentious topics have come up there before, so the Mamani emails are merely the straw that broke the camel's back. Besides the fact

that I disagree with them politically, I go to this temple for spiritual development, not political procilitizing.

After all, one of the main things that drew me to Buddhism in the first place was its focus on the inner rather than the external world. Okay, so that's the the autobiographical sketch setting us up for the questions. So the first question is I think I know how important it is to accept things without resistance and realize that my thoughts are not returning to this temple are that my thoughts of not returning to this temple are based in aversion. But forcing myself to hobnob with people who

constantly push their leftist politics doesn't feel right intuitively. Should I go against my grain and tough things out and continue attending this temple trying to be as accepting and non-judgmental as possible or go with my gut and go the path of the horn of the rhinoceros?

So, it's I assume it will depend on how much benefit you're getting there compared with how much like detriment you're getting there. So if you're getting more benefit from going there than the the detriment and you should separate the detriment that you're getting from just aversion that

is sort of volitional.

I mean you could use your aversion for these communist western Buddhists as just something to work work on. You know it's like you've got a version for this. You know you still have this uncooked seed. So, I mean, you could just be friendly and accepting and, you know, just have a little compassion, I guess. And I mean, so long as they're not just getting in your face and calling you a fascist and all that. I mean, even then, I mean, you could still use that as a spiritual practice and just like return blessings, you know, bless those that curse you, that sort of thing. But I mean, if you're not really up for that,

if that's just too advanced practice,
then yeah, you might just avoid the
situation. Like resisting temptation or
resisting bad reactions
to a certain stimulus by just avoiding
that stimulus, that's kind of a shabby
way of dealing with the situation. But
for I mean, for a beginner or for
someone who just isn't ready yet, then
that may be what you have to do. when
the Buddha did like he did recommend
that you know it's like you just avoid
the temptation
um as a way of resisting the temptation
more easily if you're not so sure that
you can resist it

but I mean you could use it as a kind of spiritual practice and even if there is a certain amount of aversion if you are getting more benefit from going there than you would from not going there I mean that's that's something that only you would be able to decide that I I wouldn't really know.

Let's let's look at here. Okay.

So, yeah, I mean it would be sort of like a just write out a balance sheet, you know, formulate an equation with, you know, is is it you're getting are in the in the black or in the red by by going there overall?

And really, I mean, just being nice to to to like hysterical leftists

who might just freak out if they knew what your real beliefs were. I mean I mean that's one of the best things you could do spiritually. As a general rule, like even on like X, I'll do a bit of trolling on X. I used to be on minds.com, but now I mean X has pretty much taken over with regard to freedom of expression.

You mind you have a much larger audience with X anyway. You can, you know, have more access to more more points of view, I guess. But still, I mean, you got somebody calling you an idiot and a racist and a fascist and all this. Um, as a general rule, I don't just like

respond with, you know, just invective
going the other way. It's like, you
know, just
address their accusations,
you know, or just, you know, just remain
civil and just continue. And and really,
it's
that's that's the best way to go about
it, I suppose. But again, I mean, I
doubt that Romeo here is just being
confronted by hysterical leftists
accusing him of being a Nazi.
So
yeah, I mean you're just going to have
to decide for yourself if I mean in my
case if there's a lot of, you know, gay
pride retreats and just sort of sexual

deviants flaunting their sexual deviance at at the meditation center, that sort of thing. Yeah, I think I might stop going there. But if it's it's more kind of subdued than that.

But um I mean you could just uh do the the honest civil responses to those emails and then you might just get kicked out and then you wouldn't have to make the decision.

I mean if you want to you could do a little bit of spiritual polite compassionate trolling, you know, just at the Q&A session. It's like what what about if you support Trump?

That sort of thing.

But really, I mean, you are the one who knows whether you would make more get more benefit from going or not going. And so, you're just going to have to work that out because all I know about the situation is what you've written in in a few paragraphs here.

So, I'm just going to move on to Romeo's second question.

Are these temple attendees correct that socialism or communism comes closest to what the Buddha prescribed? Well, I mean, again, it's sort of like in Christianity, too. like an an advanced saint would probably just I mean a a community

of advanced saints like Arahans would just automatically be anarchocomunism because there's no concept of I me mine you know there's no possessiveness no competitiveness

you know so there there's no ambition anything like that so yeah for like very advanced beings something like communism uh would come closest to what the Buddha prescribed. But for most people, it just doesn't work that way. Also, I mean, there is one kind of weird suta in the dean kaya where the Buddha is saying that crime is caused by poverty and that kings should subsidize farmers by giving them all the seed grain they need to get

started running their farm, that kind of

thing.

So technically in the sutas there is

some support for sort of a proto

paleo socialism to some degree

but

yeah the Buddha really was not

prescribing much in the way of normie

politics or normmy economics. There's

that one suta in the deanaya which is

kind of questionable because it deviates

so far from what the Buddha is usually

saying in in the sutas

but

yeah I mean

whether the sa of monks would even be

socialistic or communistic I mean it's a

radical democracy where you need consensus everyone has to agree on any like formal act of the sa one person one monk monk at this monastery. He could be the most junior monk there. He could have been ordained just that morning. If he says no, then it's no. Everyone has to agree.

So, I mean, that's I mean, that can work in a monastery, but it's certainly not going to work in a like a a national government. Nothing would ever get done. You'd always have some people disagreeing.

H

so I mean

some of the Buddhist teachings would be more of you know it'd be more capitalistic but not with regard to economics. It's just like you know it's not he's not trying to enlighten everybody. It's just the like the elite the spiritual elite who are ripe for it. That's those are the ones he's mainly helping. you know, he's helping the others, you know, just the normie like villagers, the householders who enjoy pleasures of the senses, you know, he's helping them a little and at least getting them kind of going towards the light instead of towards the darkness. But the ones he's trying to save to liberate, trying to help them to

liberate themselves,

you know, it's I mean it wasn't any kind

of, you know, like socialized

enlightenment.

And that's mainly what he's teaching.

Duka and the cessation of dooka. I mean,

that's that's like what the Buddhist

teachings boil down to. And it wasn't

for everybody.

It was for a kind of spiritual elite.

So yeah, communism is just sort of like

standardized mediocrity in a way

and that wouldn't be what the Buddha was

teaching. I mean he in fact I mean with

regard to

with regard to like helping people

it's it's really a false dichotomy to say that you just e either socialize like food stamps and in like welfare that kind of thing you have a welfare state or just people you just let people starve to death and don't give a [__] I mean that's a false dichotomy because you can have private charity you know like it churches and church groups that were taking care of the poor for over a thousand years. They might not have done a really great job everywhere, but then again, the government doesn't either. So, I think that private charity is better because you're actually gathering up treasures in heaven. I mean, you're doing good by helping the poor much more

so than if the government is just automatically or your boss or whatever is automatically deducting income tax from your pay and then using that to fund like a bureaucratic welfare state. The only good karma you might get would be like when you're voting in favor of it, that kind of thing. or you're just sitting there feeling good about all the taxes you're paying that some of that is helping people.

But the Buddha really was not a politician.

So he really wasn't teaching economic systems. I mean in in the ancient Ganges Valley you had sort of like oligarchic

republics that were on the decline and
you had like militaristic
like imperialistic kings were like on
the in the ascendant and eventually not
too long after the Buddhist time you had
almost all of India united under the
empire of Magada
and so I mean certainly the Buddha would
recommend that kings be benevolent. But
he was talk I mean it was mainly
autocracy was just the default political
setting in the Buddhist time other than
sort of some of these oligarchic
republics that were in decline
like the oligarchic republic from which
the Buddha himself was allegedly born.
Capilawatu like a city state of

Capilawatu. it was just wiped out and just really not very long after the Buddhist time.

So

compassion, you can say compassion is is important, but I mean to what extent is socialism or communism really compassionate when, as I say, you're just getting money automatically deducted from your pay or from you buy something at the store, there's a sales tax, that kind of thing. And I mean, it's not a volitional act at all. You're not helping anybody volitionally.

It's just automatically that this money is being siphoned off to some

bureaucracy where they're pretty much
helping people sometimes.
So, yeah, this is kind of a trick
question, I think.
So, I'm just going to move on to um
Romeo's third question here about Mam
Dani. Mam Dani embodies the so-called
red green alliance of radical leftism
and Islam. You have previously cited how
the Muslims wiped out Buddhism in India
in the distant past and I am fairly sure
that Islam's essential view and
treatment of Buddhism and Buddhists
hasn't changed much since then. But what
has occurred when Buddhism has
encountered communism or socialism
especially in other parts of the world?

Well, I mean, just you can just look at 20th century history, early 21st century history with regard to Buddhist cultures that got taken over by Marxism, for example. Well, you got China, which I mean, most Marxist governments will just ban religion. China allows a little bit of religion so long as they got pictures of chairman she on the wall. And, you know, it's not really spiritual. was just for like tourists to go and see the Shaolin Temple and that kind of thing as a general rule.

Then you got like Cambodia,

we know what Paul Pot did to the Songa in Cambodia.

Um you had in Burma you had socialism under UN win for a while which failed utterly but I mean at least then it was like a Buddhist socialism because the government was sort of like the mafia where you know the mafia in America or at least
outwardly to some degree Catholic you know they're not going to they're not going to shoot a nun probably.
And so it's sort of like that in Burma where the generals the military dictatorship they did have a certain respect for the SAS unless the SA was like denouncing the military dictatorship or protesting against the military dictatorship then the monks

might wind up in a prison cell or worse.
But just sort of ostensibly the
government did endorse Buddhism even
though it was socialistic but it was
like an incompetent socialism.
But as a general rule communism or
socialism like in the guise of Marxism
has a dim view of religion. You know
they're trying to replace religion which
is like superstition with the gospel
truth of Marxism which is just more
superstition.
But I mean it has sort of worked at
least like Vietnam is communistic and I
do think that they they tolerate
religion. I don't think that the

Vietnamese government has just flat out banned religion. Certainly not just like working monks to death in the fields like like the Chimera Rouge did.
So I mean it is possible that you could have like a Marxist or socialist government that is tolerant of religion.
But um I think I better just move on to the next question.
And it's it's like almost 2:00 in the morning here. It's it's going to be well after three by the time I'm done I think. And Phil has asked a transgressive fourth question. Shame on Phil. Phily's name is going on a list. Although it could be that this first question is just a rhetorical one.

Phily says, "Did James really get out competed by Paul?" How do we know this? That's incredible. And I think I was mentioning this in a video. Could even be

Alrighty then. Looks like we are recording. I already did the sound test. The microphone is working now. By the time I get to the end of this, if the microphone is still working or not, I can't say.

I am PO Basel. This is Oh, I forgot. I got hair in my mouth. I forgot.

Welcome to question and answer number 153.

and also the second half of question and answer number 152 because those of you who didn't watch the first half of 152 may not have noticed that the microphone died halfway through which it turns out was due to a loose connection

which is now tightened.

This is my beverage

and I am your host Po Basa.

Uh, and I'm starting kind of late again,

especially considering this may be the

longest lulu of a question and answer

that I have done thus far. This could be

a record breaker because as I've already

intimated, this is one and a half

Q&As's. This is all of 153. 153 not a

prime number.

It's let's see here. It's 3 *

51. And then 51 is also 3 *

let's see 3 * 1 17. So it's 3 * 3 * 17.

If I did my math correctly.

So, I did a Q&A last week, another late

one, a nocturnal one, and uh the

microphone died. So, I've got to do the
second half over again, which
it's it's just my karma, I think. I
mean, some of you who've been watching
these for a few years may recall that I
was using a different video
uh processing software at first and it
just stopped working after a while. I'd
be doing a Q&A and I'd get to the end
and find out that the whole thing had
not recorded at all. One time, one
really horrible time, I had to do the
same Q&A three times.
But the show must go on.
And so I sit before you in my 100%
natural fiber custommade Lithuanian

linen robe.

And I'm going to commence to answering questions because I'm going to have to kind of be a little more concise than usual maybe just to keep this less than like four and a half hours.

So the first question is from Phily's and Phil Leys asked the transgressive fourth question in the last Q&A causing his name to go on a list but now he's he's asked three more. So now we're up to seven. But the thing is some people are going to be mentioned twice. So, if you your your questions aren't answered the first time, bear with me because I've added the the the later questions below the second half of the first list

of questions. So, some people are going to be mentioned twice. And those of you who like to hear your name mentioned, it's just going to be just that much more gratification.

So,

this first question may have been rhetorical, but there is actually a question mark in it, and so I'm just going to go ahead. Um, this is in response to some statements I made in question and answer number 151, which was a prime number. 151 still is a prime number, in fact,

regarding James and and St. Paul and certain struggles for

whatever.

So this is Phils asks, "Did James really get out competed by Paul?"

How do we know this? That's incredible.

Well,

um, my understanding of this sort of competition between James who wanted things to stay Jewish and still and I mean, he knew Jesus way better than Paul did because allegedly he was Jesus's brother, James, who became um, the leader of the church in Jerusalem after Jesus was crucified.

St. Paul on the other hand was like the apostle to the Gentiles who was sort of anti-Judaism.

He wanted to make a break with Judaism,

you know, no more Mosaic law, that kind of stuff. No more circumcision, which probably was causing a lot of prospective Christians to bulk at the idea. You know, it's like you can join our religion, but first we got to cut off the end of your PP.

A lot of people didn't like that in those days, you know. It's like, okay, well, I'll just uh kind of be interested in Christianity, but not really commit because I don't want the end of my peep cut off. That kind of thing.

But mainly what I know about this competition between James and Paul and how James pretty much got edited out of

the New Testament, there are very few mentions of him despite the fact that he was a Jesus's brother and b essentially the leader of Christianity after Jesus died.

So most of what I know about this I learned from a man whose last name is Tabore. I think is it James Tabore? He's the author of the Tabore blog. He has uh contributed to a lot of like biblical archaeology

kind of newsletters and magazines, that kind of stuff. And he's got a YouTube channel and he's got long exhaustive videos discussing this very subject. So if you really want to know like about how Paul and James were sort of

competing for dominance in in the the
new Christian church
because it was new at that time then I
would recommend that you watch Tabour's
T- A B O R his videos or read his his
blog his articles. I'm sure you could
look it up fairly easily. But James, I
mean, I've I've also read in a Bible
commentary, not from Tabore, that the
general epistle of James, which is
almost the only press James gets in the
in the New Testament, was a kind of
rebuttal of Paul.
You know, faith without works is dead.
Whereas Paul was saying, it's faith
that's going to get you into heaven.

So

um it's one thing that I learned from

Tabore from learning about this whole

you know James the just stuff

is that probably Jesus did consider

himself to be the Messiah and the also a

descendant of King David.

And so the early Christians had to have

someone a branch of David as the leader

of the Christian church. And so it was a

family thing within Jesus's family.

After James was martyed, then I think

there was a cousin named Simon who

became like leader of the the church in

Jerusalem.

So let's see. Yeah, the Paul faction won

out. You know, it was sort of converted

Gentiles became, you know, the overwhelming majority of Christians. the the the Jewish Christians, you know, the Christians who remained Jewish became a smaller and smaller minority and then they were persecuted. For example, they weren't allowed to live in Jerusalem. Um I think it was the emperor, not Trajan, Hadrien. Hadrien tried to set up Jerusalem as a pagan city and Jews were not even allowed to live there. they might have entered surreptitiously from time to time. So just Paul's side of the the controversy, you know, the competition won out. You know, the Ebianites

eventually went extinct. You know, the the Jewish Christians still you got Jews for Jesus, but it's it's not really uh mainstream Christianity anymore.

But again, if you want to know about this whole sort of rivalry between Paul and James and James kind of losing and getting almost edited out of the New Testament despite his importance, then uh yeah, I would uh consult with I think it's James Tabore, but I'm not sure about the first name. Tabore T- A B O R.

And I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's second question. And Phil Le asked some extremely long questions. I asked him to try to be more concise and so we're getting like the reader digest

version of the first first time he asked the questions. He asked them again in shorter terms. So the second question he's asking if pure land can be said to be a cataphatic or positivist version of something like Zen which is more nondualistic and is describing nibbana in positive terms. And I really don't think so. In a lot of Zen Buddhism, maybe most Zen Buddhism nowadays has pure land elements added. I went to a Zen monastery in California once and I was surprised to see all the pure land stuff. There was even some pure land kind of chanting going on like in the Dharma. You know, the monks and nuns

would get together and they'd be chanting about Amitaba, this kind of thing.

So even so, I do think that it was two very different schools of Buddhism that were like the two main schools of Buddhism in like medieval Japan that just sort of got conflated. They got kind of added together. And yeah, I do not think that pure land could really be said to be sort of a

well like an exoteric, is that a word? Exoteric version of Zen or anything like that. Zen is just meditation. Stay away from dogmas as much as you can pretty much. Not always in in practice, but that's, you know, sort of a theme of Zen

Buddhism, you know. don't don't be
dogmatic, that kind of thing. Whereas
pure land Buddhism is
I mean it relies heavily on mythology,
you know, it's it's just like invented
whole new Buddhas out of
who knows what.
So
yeah, I I really don't think so. And I'm
just going to move on to Phily's third
question here. He says if he he wants to
know if you can say pure land is rooted
in the polycanon as in the mahanama suta
where the Buddha says reciting the
Buddha name is the first method to
mental purification uprooting unh

wholesomeness after cultivating the five

strengths and I haven't read the

mahanama suta lately

um but in the long version of this

question he was pointing out that the

mahan namama suta isn't saying just

reciting the Buddha a name is the first

mentioned it's one of the the

meditations of orthodox terra is

recollection of the virtues of the

Buddha

and it starts off EDP so

and you know and just continues this

it's sort of like this formula you know

recollection of the virtues of the

Buddha recollection of the virtues of

the dharma recollection of the virtues

of the song recollection of your own
past meritorious deeds recollection of
the davas
you know those are five kind of
recollection um meditation techniques
that are mainstream orthodox tier
and so it's not really using the Buddha
name not godmma or sedata anything like
that it's just a recollection of the
Buddha's qualities or virtues which then
at some point got crystallized into this
formula that gets recited it almost like
a mantra. And in Burma, for example,
that's one of the main kinds of
meditation that lay people do. They use
a mala, like a Buddhist rosary. And it's

like you go through the the nine qualities of the Buddha, which is the nine, the first nine and the 969, which has a movement named after it, the nine qualities of the Buddha, and then one bead. And then maybe you'll switch to the the six qualities of the dharma or just keep doing the nine qualities of the Buddha and it's a bead for each time.

But it's not using the name of the Buddha

um as a kind of meditation technique. The Thai forest tradition has adopted buddo or bhau as a kind of mantra that is very very common in Thailand. I never heard of it happening in Burma, but it

wouldn't surprise me.

um you know some people at least who have been influenced by the Thai forest tradition who are living in Burma may may use that but um it's it's not the same as just reciting the Buddha's name or just Buddha uh in the hopes of being reborn in some kind of heaven realm which according to Pureland Buddhism isn't even in Samsara which is very strange. just kind of playing hob with orthodox Buddhist philosophy right there. And I got to be careful that I don't accidentally loosen the cord on this microphone, but it seems to be working. So, let's

just continue here.

Um,

yeah. So, yeah, I don't think that pure

land is rooted in the polycan. It's like

at some point people were trying to

practice

Buddhism as found in the ancient texts

so-called Hinayana

or more politely Shravakayana text the

pre Mahayana texts and most of them like

most people nowadays just couldn't get

enlightened you know they just weren't

ripe for it yet or whatever and then

they would just say well this is the

Kaluga you can't get enlightened anymore

so we're just going to pray to some

cosmic being to help us at least get

reborn into a situation where it's
easier to get enlightened.
And uh yeah, I do not think the Buddha
would have endorsed that at all.
I mean, you do what you can to become
enlightened in this life and most people
fail. Sorry to say, the overwhelming
majority of people fail. Even the people
who are just diligently striving
wholeheartedly,
even most of them fail. And partly it's
just they're not ripe yet. They've still
got all these latent tendencies, blind
spots, and so forth. So I mean even
people who can just sit like a statue
for three hours straight still most of

them you know they still got these quirks and biases and attachments and so forth that it's hard to to deal with. Especially if you're practicing on your own or you're practicing with a with an unenlightened teacher then if you're if you're practicing on your own you don't see your own blind spots. you can just drift off into eccentricity if you're not getting feedback. And the best feedback of course would be from an enlightened teacher.

So people that don't have access to that have like a major handicap in their practice.

So,

I think I'm just going to move on to

Phil Lee's fourth transgressive

question,

which is with regard to Amitaba's 35th

vow. And in the first version of this

question, he just he was like, "What do

you think about Amitaba's 35th vow?" And

I have no clue. I don't even know what

Amitaba's first vow is. I just never had

once I learned what pure land was about

I just lost all interest

because it fairly clearly fairly

obviously does not represent what the

earliest Buddhism was teaching. So

anyways Amit this is here's what here's

what Phil is asking. He wants to know

Amitaba's 35th vow is his highly

controversial statement that women who are good pure land Buddhists will re be reborn as men. Whether in this life or the next, or whether metaphorically or literally is unclear, but I have noticed this short line is fuel for immense mental gymnastics among Westerners since you have such a statement from a supposedly enlightened being. So he wants to know what I think about Amitaba's third 35th vow even though there's no question mark in this abbreviated version of the question. And I mean, if you're a good purand Buddhism, a good purand Buddhist, then presumably you're going to be reborn into the pure land of the West or a pure

land somewhere. And technically, it's not in Samsara, but then how are you going to be reborn as male or female in such a like a paradoxical realm that isn't even in Samsara?

I mean, if it's if it's not in samsara, there's not going to be any kind of discernable qualities.

So, I mean, it's it's this kind of really bad logic in Mahayana Buddhism in general, in some schools of it, and in pure land in particular, that I just I just don't understand.

So anyways, it is common in like Asian Buddhism, traditional Asian Buddhism, a traditional Asian culture, it is

traditional to assume as it was in the west up until modern times is preferable to be a man than to be a woman. Even even like post-modern feminists are trying to be like men without really admitting that they want to be men or like men, but still they're trying to be like men.

A lot of them are.

So anyways, like traditional Asian Buddhism, for example, there are a lot of what are called votive tablets. like when they dig up like a medieval Buddhist temple in Asia, they'll find lots and lots of these votive tablets that are inscribed maybe like they're scratched into clay or something like

that. It's it's somebody makes this inscription, this little inscription, they'll donate to the temple and they'll set up this this tablet as sort of like um sort of like memorializing this vow that they've made or some such. And a lot of these votive tablets that are dug up in places like Burma are women like like they're praying to be reborn as a man in their next life because they consider that to be an improvement over their lot which I mean socially speaking in medieval Asia probably was pretty right on there.

So, it was apparently a belief back when Amitaba was making his 35th vow that

it's better to be a man than a woman, that it's like a step upwards on the evolutionary scale somehow. And so, it was just kind of built into the pure land uh Amitaba vows. And I still I have no no clue whatsoever what any of the other vows are. The 35th one is the only one I know about just because Phily's explained it to me.

So let's see here. Yeah, the mental gymnastics are

Yeah, that's that's not surprising at all. I mean, modern western, especially liberal kind of Buddhists just don't want to accept, you know, like a lot of terra Buddhism too. They just they just really have trouble with that. And so

they will have to go through mental gymnastics and they'll just say, "Well, the Buddha didn't really teach that part. That must have been added later because it's so politically incorrect by postmodern western standards."

So I guess I better move on to the next question because I really do have to kind of be concise to keep this thing less than five hours.

This is from Kley and Clefy says, "Could you make a video about three aspects of existence, impermanence, uneasiness, and no self?" And I probably already have u maybe one of my videos with Brian, but also one of the first philosophical

essays I wrote as a monk was on the three marks of existence. And um I don't look at my own website. It's like my sweetheart has has set it up for me. She's put everything on it. And so I don't even know if that essay is on there. It used to be on the older nepapanchona.org website. It was one of the the philosophical essays that you could read on that website, the three marks of ex on the three marks of existence. And one of the main things of interest to me, I mean mainly I was defining the the key terms. I mean sab we got that that just means all and sankara is conditioned things you know ana impermanence duka is you know

unease

anata no self although some people will

quibble whether it means no self or

nonself that kind of thing and the fan

is on it's it's kind of sweltery here in

summertime South Carolina lately

thunderstorms almost every day lately.

Um and also dhamma sub dhama anata. So

one of the interesting points I discuss

in the essay is why is it subcara

you know all sankaras are impermanent

all saras

are unease or conducive to unease but

all dhamas not sonaras but dhhamas are

without self

and I mean the the reason it seems uh

most obvious to me is that sab sankara
is referring to samsara this samsaric
phenomena but sab dhamma is referring to
anything including nibbana itself
there's no self according to the formula
of the three marks not even ultimate
reality or conventional reality neither
samsara nor nibana
nothing
but uh yeah if you can't find that maybe
you can get back to me. Like if it's not
on the website, then it should get put
up there. And um I'm just going to move
on to the next question. This is from
Super Lump. And Super Lump says, "How do
monks in Burma and America deal with
health insurance and medical bills?"

Well, if you protect Dhamma, Dama
protects you. And um I don't know. I'm
sure that there are monks in the west
who have health insurance
but in Burma
um you know there's not much health
insurance in Burma but for and for monks
like with in my case there'd be devout
Buddhist doctors who would just say if
you need if you have any health problems
just let me know and and I'll help you.
I mean, with regard to something minor,
you know, you've got a fever, an
infection, something like that, they can
help you with that. I mean, if you've
got something really serious,

then you're pretty much pretty much screwed. You know, you can take some kind of herbal stuff and if you get better, that's fine. If you don't get better, well, may you have a good rebirth if you have to be reborn.

And I remember in the previous Q&A, the the half that didn't get recorded, I was mentioning how um the way my my karma worked was sort of as follows that I I've told this story before, but when I was living in this remote forest monastery, I would continually be biting into rocks in my food, mainly because rice and beans are threshed on the ground. So little white rocks get mixed in with the rice, little brown rocks get

mixed in with the beans. And so I'd be eating and all of a sudden crack, you know, just this it hurts and there's like this audible cracking sound and I'd be like feeling around in my mouth to see if I broke a tooth or knocked a filling out or something. And I'm and it would hurt. And I'm thinking, man, if this if I break a teeth, you know, if I break my teeth biting into a rock out here in the middle of nowhere, what am I going to do? But as it turned out, living out in the middle of nowhere, I didn't break a tooth. I didn't even knock out a filling. But then I happened to be staying in a relatively wealthy

area of Rangon. one, there was a supporter of the Tong Pulu tradition that had this empty building on his property where Tong Pulu monks could stay for free. You know, when they got business in Rangon, they can just stay there. So, that's what I did.

And so, I'm going for alms round in this relatively wealthy neighborhood of Rangon, this servant girl gives me some bean curry with a rock in it, and I bite into that bean curry and break three teeth. And it's like it it like was right in between. You know, you got two teeth coming up down this way and two teeth here. It was like right in between there. And it broke three of them all at

the same time. But as it turned out, that servant girl was the servant girl of the dean and recctor of the the Rangon Dental College. He was the number one dentist in the entire country. And so he just said, "Well, come on over and I'll It was just almost right across the street. Just come over. I'll fix your teeth for free." He had like a little dental clinic inside his house. Fix my teeth for free. And he said, "Anytime you need any kind of dental work, just come to me and I'll take care of it." So for a while I had the same dentist as the dictator.

Um,

but yeah, in America, I don't know. It's like if you're a monk, I mean, how did monks in the Buddhist time deal with this stuff, you know? It's like they're not going to be going to hospitals and having like $10,000 tests done on themselves, that kind of thing. It's like take care of Dharma. Dama takes care of you. You live a clean life. You're less likely to have health problems. You have you live a moral life and you're more likely to have good karma. Less bad karma. Less bad things happen to you.

So,

I don't say so a lot. It's just kind of a filler, I think.

Some of the time.

Um,

yeah. I mean, having like a chronic health condition as a monk is kind of it's it's it can be somewhat problematic. But as a general rule in Buddhist Asia, the people are very devout and the some of the doctors are devout Buddhists who are quite willing to help monks and also there's uh there are SA hospitals in Burma.

So uh monks can go to the SA hospitals that are um I mean a lot of them were started by a certain seat who may as well remain nameless who just is a very rich man and has collected lots of money

and some of that money has been used to build hospitals for the SA. So that's another option for sick monks in Burma. Um, but as a general rule, a sick monk in Burma, you just have other monks or noviceses or maybe family members looking after you and treating you as well as they can, at least keeping you relatively comfortable,
you know, keeping you clean if you're lying in bed soiling yourself, that kind of thing. And nature takes its course. And that's the way people have lived for almost the entirety of our existence on this planet. So insurance and medical bills are seen as some kind of necessity nowadays, but really they're not.

And I guess I'm just going to move on this question also from Super Lump who says, "Did being a monk for 30 years doom you to never being able to retire? I'm planning on retiring around the age of 72." So that's like 10 more years of laboring as one of the proletariat. After 30 years in the leisure class, I decided to come back and become a manual laborer.

So I've got it set up like my 401k. And by by the time I'm 72, I should almost certainly have enough hours in to collect social security. I mean, it won't be like top tier social security, but

it'll be enough to live on. I'm pretty sure.

I mean, lately I've got 15% of my income going into the 401k. So, so long as the economy doesn't completely crash, I should be able to support myself and my woman um without too much hardship. I don't think we're going to be living under a bridge, panhandling, anything like that.

So, I guess I answered that. I'm going to move on to super long third question. Do you have any stories about the poly examinations in Burma? And like I told you last time, and you didn't hear it because the the microphone didn't work. Um I did spend one year

um at Mahagandon which is in a suburb pretty much a suburb of of Mandalay. It was it's in the city of Amarapura the deathless city which used to be for a short time the capital of Burma and Mahag Gandhi is a school monastery. So almost all the school all the monks there are students or teachers you know they're they're studying or teaching for the the poly examinations so that you can get like this title you know like the Damasara degree which is sort of like a bachelor's degree in Buddhist studies and it's prestigious then there's the Damakatika degree which is sort of like a master's degree in

Buddhism and then there's like special honorific titles like some of you may have heard of for example a Burmese monk whose whose name ends in biwa
um I think that uh gosh I yeah I can't remember his name now there's there's a rel two two relatively famous monks with the same name that end in biwa uh one was the founder of Mahagandayon the school the school monastery I attended for a year and if you get this bwama degree or you get you get that bwa added to your name that means that you you it was like you had to score really high on this special test in order to get that degree. So it it means that you're a brilliant scholar essentially.

But anyways, getting to the story of the poly examinations in Burma. Here I'm digressing all the time when I've got one and a half Q&As's to do.

Um the year that I spent at Mahagandon nationwide there was this announcement from the government that everybody failed the their their poly test their their tests in in Dhama like poly examinations because there was so much cheating going on they couldn't sort out who did it honestly and who cheated.

It's like um a copy of the test paper somebody got their hands on it and started distributing it. So there was lots of monks who were reading the the

test questions in advance, knew what the test questions were going to be. And because of this, so many monks cheating on the test, they just threw out the results and said, "Nobody passes this year." And that's it's not the only year that that happened.

But one one thing about like a school monastery like finals week at a school monastery in Burma is very different from finals week at like a university in the west. At at a university in the west finals week it's like silent. You know it's like everybody is studying. Whereas in Burma finals week, you know, right leading up to the examinations, it's just it is just earsplitting because

you've got all these people that are just reciting out loud the these answers to, you know, questions that might appear on the test. You know, it's like the way it works is wrote memorization. And so you've got these people just sometimes they're practically shouting just rapid fire just memorizing it just like building grooves in their brain for for these answers that might get might get asked on the test or for sure it'll get asked on the test if they're cheating and saw the test in advance. So it's it's very weird. is the like the Burmese educational system is mainly based traditionally on wrote

memorization and so you don't even
really have to understand the answer to
the test question so long as you can
just parrot the the correct answer
and I do think that's changing a little
bit there's more sort of western ideas
coming into Burma with regard to
education I had a few Buddhist teachers
is like monk teachers asking me, you
know, how could we improve this because
really just memorizing,
you know, the answer to a question and
without even having to understand it is
is not the best way of learning.
Although I have to admit there are some
phenomenal scholars, just totally
phenomenal Buddhist scholars in Burma.

So

uh I suppose I could tell stories about that but I got to keep going here. So the next question is from Ruie. Ruie says, "Hello Pa, do you think state of flux and impermanence are the same thing? Where in the scriptures would one find the expression state of flux?" So that's the second question there. Barring the contemporary Buddhist scientist explanation that says the cup on the table is made of flowing particles, something which is inaccessible to experience. What would be the sotariological value of state of flux? So this is actually three

questions, so I might as well separate them. So we're above 60 questions this time. This is probably the largest number of questions ever on a Q&A because reasons.

So, first question, do you think state of flux and impermanence are the same thing? Well, they're not necessarily the same thing that state of flux would be a kind of impermanence, but impermanence is not necessarily state of flux that I mean, it's like a frogs and amphibian, but frogs and amphibians are not necessarily the same thing because you got salamanders, for example.

So, I mean, a state of flux would be just like continuous change.

Whereas impermanence I mean that's you know it's like you're going to anyone anything that has a beginning has an end you know so if you're born you're going to die that kind of thing that's not necessarily state of flux but if you get into Buddhist philosophy especially abidama then everything is blinking off and on at a trillion times a second. I mean matter is blinking off and on at like a trillion times per eyeblink and mind is flashing off and on like 17 trillion times per eyeblink. mind goes way faster than matter does with regard to its state of flux.

And just philosophically,

just setting aside Buddhism really, that there has to be something changing every moment. Otherwise, you're dead that moment. That you're not even going to notice the passage of time. If everything stays the same two moments in a row, you're just going to know you're going to be aware of one moment at most. There always has to be something changing. And it creates a kind of dependent core rising of you have there has to be like a a kind of balance between change and stasis because if everything is changing like every moment that's just like primordial chaos you know it's like you don't have anything remaining the same at all then nobody is

going to have a memory anything like
that it's just going to be just like
static on on an old TV screen whereas if
everything remains the same now I mean
or like if nothing stays the same then
it's it's chaos but if nothing changes
it's death so you got to have like the
middle path between chaos and death
which involves
some things changing and some things at
least apparently staying the same at
least remaining within the same theme
you know sort of like oh these these
tweezers for example
Well, you can say that they're the like
the molecules or the atoms composing

these tweezers

are arising and passing away. This this

this whole thing of tweezers here is

blinking off and on at a trillion times

a second according to Terra. But at

least it's staying the same within the

realm of you know what kind of atoms in

the same positions and everything more

or less.

So there's that kind of stasis has to I

mean that has to be involved in the

equation because just total change of

everything at all times would just be

like staticky chaos.

But if nothing changes then that's

death.

So I'm just going to move on to Ruy's

second question here. Where in the scriptures would one find the expression state of flux? And I mean nowhere because the scriptures are in poly and what I mean what the poly equivalent of state of flux would be um I really can't say offhand. Um but it could be that some poly term could be reasonably translated as state of flux.

But really the state of flux that everything is flashing off and on a trillion times per eyelink is mainly found in Abidama and the commentarial literature.

So um it might not say in in like that term state of flux but still the idea

that everything is just blinking off and

on a trillion times a second

approximately

that that is just integral to the the

the orthodox terravada Buddhist

explanation of

samsaric reality that nibbana itself

isn't flashing off and on but everything

in samsara is

so the term itself may not be found in

the texts but the process is there

so I'm just going to move on to Ruy's

third question barring the contemporary

Buddhist scientist explanation that says

the cup on the table is made of flowing

particles something which is

inaccessible to experience what would be

the soarological value of state of flux
sootariological means like the like with
regard to salvation
you know it's like how are you going how
is it going to help you to become
enlightened by being aware of the state
of flux well I mean from the Buddhist
point of view just believing in this
everything is flashing off and on um
from the terravada Buddhist point of
view I mean that's just understanding
reality so that's going to help you
become enlightened because you are
penetrating through the illusion and
seeing things as they really are but
then again the Sarvastiva Buddhists

didn't believe that everything's flashing off and on. They would say that any combination of these atoms, these dharmas um is impermanent, but the the dharmas themselves are like eternal. So that's a different school of Buddhism very closely related to terra that really didn't have this state of flux idea except still something has to change constantly.

just for us not to be dead for that moment.

So let's see here.

Uh something which is and what would be the sotological value of state of flux?

If it's just a theory, then there's really no liberating value other than it

might weaken your attachment to like normie samsara, you know, just being philosophical and questioning the reality of everything around you, that kind of thing, which is kind of what philosophy does. Um, you know, that can kind of loosen your grip on your own unenlightened version of samsara. But I think from an orthodox terraat Buddhist point of view, the main value of believing in the state of flux is that it'll help you to see the reality of the state of flux. Um, but not all schools of Buddhism believe in this state of flux. At least not with regard to the all the particles flashing off and on,

blinking off and on.

So, I guess I'll just move on this question. This is from PSA. And PSA says, "I was having a massive panic attack and extreme anxiety because your video, which was like 151, dropped a few hours late this week. What should I do about my paneobasa addiction?" That's note it. Note it, let it go. Note it, let it go. Whenever arises, note it, and let it go. That's that's questions like that are really easy. You just adopt the mahasi method. You know, it's like what a mahasi instruct meditation instructor would tell you at a retreat. You know what? What should I do about this? Note it. Let it go. Note it. Be aware of it.

Observe it like an ichthyologist

observes a dead fish.

So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's

next question.

When you were a child, did you dream of

growing up to become this wiggling

bearded Viking marauder? No. I never

really I've never really had much like

intuitive affinity with like Germanic

paganism or ancient Germanic tribes.

Like if I were a pagan, I'd have to be

like a neoplatanist, you know? I I would

I'd go more like classical Greco Roman

that I'm just much more interested in

like ancient Greco Roman religion

especially Roman I guess rather than you

know Thor and and Odin and that sort of thing.

So, no, I didn't I didn't had no idea that I would ever even grow a beard. That for a lot of my life, I just had this idea I could not grow a good beard. So, I didn't even try. And then finally in my late 50s or maybe even 60, I tried to grow a beard and whoa, hey, it works. And then just I had this idea of a bearded like a a like a braided beard or like there's this guy on YouTube. He does like heavy metal covers of non-heavy metal songs. His name is Leo Moricholi. He's just got this long beard and it's not really braided. He's just got rubber bands going all the way down

the length of it at at intervals of about like, you know, an inch or so, which looks pretty cool. I just think it looks looks cool.

So, let's see here. So, the idea is I'm going to grow my beard long enough that I can have like a muer bead at the bottom of it and keep it that way a little while and then probably just cut it back off again.

So, let's see here.

Uh, it is true though that I have like northern Germanic ancestry. In fact, most of my ancestry is northern Germanic apparently.

But if I was I'm I'm like more I take a

more of an intuitive interest in what
apparently was my past lives rather than
my like materialistic ancestry,
empirical ancestry.
So I think I probably was like Roman
more than I was like Germanic.
So I'm just going to move on. Next
question. And this was the reason why
the scheme pagota was on the previous
Q&A's thumbnail because my sweetheart
made the thumbnail before I realized
that the second half of the video didn't
work that it was I was just sitting
here.
Yeah, I just tricked you just now
because I really I really uh wasn't
talking just then. But uh yeah, I have

been to the pagod several times and it's well worth going to. It's this huge goldplated pigota with just encrusted with jewels way up high where you can't really see it. Although there are like little viewing telescopes that you can look through in the like the what's the what's the word the the area the walking area all around the pigota. There's all kinds of interesting things there. There's smaller pagotas, there's like museums, that kind of thing, all on the platform around the scheme. And most people don't know this, but there is a higher platform on the Schuagon where men could go up and look around,

including I've been up there before, but women are not allowed. And because so many Western women were making scenes like trying to sneak up there just to prove a point, that kind of thing, that the government finally just banned all foreigners from going up on the the the higher platform.

Just part of that idea that men are superior to women in Asia, traditional Buddhist Asia, probably traditional non Buddhist Asia also like Islam for example.

So yeah, Leuagon is well worth seeing. It's it's not my favorite like religious place to go to in Burma. My favorite religious place to go to in Burma would

be Poindon, which is in northwestern Burma, not too far from um from the city of Monua. And it's a it's a a cave complex. It's over a thousand caves, I'm pretty sure. They're like dug into this sandstone mountain with Buddha images and so forth inside. It's all medieval. There's a few murals still existing in these caves representing Mongols and so forth. So, probably happened back when Burma was um after Burma had been conquered by one of Kubla Khan's generals.

But my favorite thing is not so much the caves or the Buddha images or the murals. So, it's the troops of scy

monkeys because I just love feeding monkeys. Whenever I'd go, I'd bring like this grocery sack of just monkey food, little bananas and little oranges and juju bees and stuff like that that monkeys like.

I just love feeding monkeys for some reason. There it's like they're my brothers.

So, I think I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Muners and we're still doing the second half of 152 at this point. Muners says, "Suppose that a Buddhist were to be asked by a Christian, why do you worship an idol? Would it be in poor taste for the Buddhist to reply back with, why do you

worship a dead Jew on a stick?"

And yeah, that'd be in poor taste. I think that's fairly obvious. Maybe Mooners just asked the question as a kind of joke.

Also, I mean, it could be considered perusa va or abusive speech. If you're saying it deliberately to insult the Christian, to make him feel bad or make her feel bad or is it zer or whatever that I mean, if you if you say that just to be nasty, then not only would it be poor taste, but it'd also be bad ethics. You'd be violating a a precept of wrong speech.

So, but with regard to myself, I don't

really worship idols. Um, I have that
the little Buddha statue
up there on top of the bookcase. Closest
thing I've got to an altar. Um, I have
bowed to that sometimes,
especially in in times of crisis or
something. just it's just sort of like
focusing on me bowing to, you know,
whatever enlightened beings and saints
are out there that might be aware of my
presence really. You know, I'm not
bowing to a little statue really. I
mean, it's just sort of like a focus,
you know, a convenient direction to be
bowing. But I know that that little
statue up there is just a little hunk of
marble, which probably doesn't look very

much like the actual historical goddamn. And most of my time in Burma, I mean, the Burmese are very devout, kind of medieval in their their approach to religion. And like at the beginning of the Uosata ceremony, all the the SA would convene in the congregation hall, they'd always start off bowing to the to the image on the altar. And I would just sit there and not bow most of the time. Most of the time I would not bow. And then sometimes um a Burmese monk would say, "Well, you get kudo. You get merit for bowing to the statue or bowing to the Buddha." And I'm saying well I mean that statue has no sila no samadei and

no pa has no virtue

has no concentration and it has no

wisdom is just an image it's rupa

so let's see here I guess I'll just move

on this question this is from arpad and

arpad says is having a home shrine

really useful in Buddhism doesn't it

lead to attachment to rights and rituals

um a home shrine.

Uh I mean it depends on the individual.

Some people I mean it's just a

convenient room that is just set aside

for like meditation and devotion. A lot

of Burmese houses have this um you know

they just set a room aside for the this

shrine room and you know you're not

allowed to do worldly stuff in there.

It's just sort of like a pure space which I mean there's nothing wrong with that. um poorer people that don't really have the option of having an like a a separate room just for that. Sometimes they'll have built onto the side of their house. If you go to Burma, sometimes you'll see built on the side of like a wooden house, this niche thing sticking out from the house. And that is a way of having like a Buddhist shrine kind of in your house, but at the same time it's sort of separated away from this worldly stuff of like people, you know, pooping and having sex and that kind of thing. Not not at the same time,

but still, you know, just this worldliness stuff. It it's sort of like a symbolic separation from that.

And a lot of like monks cabins will have like that niche thing just like this lump sticking out of one wall where the Buddha image is like the little shrine is.

Um it's not necessary though. I mean if you're not into idolatry, you know, it's just you're like a an iconoclast or something, then I mean that's fine, too. I mean, first few hundred years of Buddhism, there were no no Buddhist statues. They might still have had shrines of a type, but it would be, you know, a bodhic leaf or, you know, an

empty throne or something representing, you know, the Buddha, but at the same time emphasizing the fact that he was no longer in samsara. He had left the scene.

So, some people might be more attached to rights and rituals as a result of that, but not everybody. Some people can navigate that fairly skillfully. And I'm going to move on to the next question.

This is from Xenithoid.

and xenithoid.

Um I this is this is a long one. This is a long essay question which I already answered once but I'm gonna answer it again. Xenoid says can you please give

your thoughts on this argument against materialism and then this is what follows is the argument. He says the way I like to argue against materialism goes like this. Imagine I am the materialist. My perception was quote, "My perception of truth is a product of my neurochemistry. My neurochemistry is constantly changing and could change in such a way that fundamental truths would appear blatantly wrong. Therefore, I have no way to justify that my perception of truth at the moment is actually lining up with the objective truth of the physical world. The only reason I believe that what I understand to be true right now is actually true is

that my neurochemical state is like this more often than not." unquote. A materialist may not appeal to other minds, but materialism has no good way to argue against syypism. An idealist can say to a cypist, quote, "If your mind was the only one, then you will should be omnisient because the knowledge would have no other minds to escape to." A materialist can't use that kind of argument because they think knowledge is not a real thing and just a side effect of neurochemicals.

For the materialist, the ultimate truth of reality is in matter which they can never access directly. For the Buddhist,

ultimate reality is directly

experiencable through consciousness.

Okay. So, I mean the whole thing

aboutism,

I don't think that's really a very good

argument. Um the idealist argument

against ellypism, namely if your mind

was the only one then you should be

omnisient because I mean

I mean just because you your mind

contains all the knowledge um that is

accessible.

Well yeah I mean you'd still be limited.

I mean, let's say there's a cypism, you

know, which is like you are the only the

only being that exists in the entire

universe and all other beings are just

sort of like a dream that you're having,
but still you wouldn't know the cube
root of of 96.
Presumably, there is a cube root of 96
and you wouldn't know it. So, I mean,
you still wouldn't be omnisient. It's
just that
it's kind of hard to explain,
but I mean, you don't know how many
hairs are on your own head unless you're
completely bald.
Well, I don't know. But that's not even
really the question. The question up
here is, could I please give my thoughts
on the argument against materialism? And
it's it's it's not going to make much of

an impression on like a scientific realist. The scientific realist will acknowledge fine when you're diseased when you're out of your mind then you might be just hallucinating in which case you can't trust your own mind. But when you've got a consensus or at least you know uh an overwhelming majority of scientists who are all like doing the same kind of experiments you know verifying what other scientists have done reproducing their experiments then there's going to be enough of a correlation between what is out there presumably causing our perceptions and what we are perceiving. I mean that's that's what like a scientific realist

would argue something along those lines
that there is a correspondence between
what we are perceiving most of the time
when we're in a right mind and we're
being logical and rational and empirical
especially when you've got the like an
agreement of many different scientists.
you know that they they just assume that
there has to be some reality out there
beyond our perceptions that is causing
our perceptions and it's causing them to
be in this consistent way that can then
be like codified and and you make
mathematical models of it and so forth
and apply that to the external world.
Even though we don't have direct access

to the external world, still scientists would assume that there's bound to be a correlation between our perceptions and an external world, especially when you've got so many people agreeing and reproducing scientific experiments and all that. So, I do not think that the argument against materialism produced by Xenithoid would really make much of an impression on someone who is firmly committed to scientific materialism.

I mean, my favorite argument, I mean, I don't know if you could even really prove that there's no physical matter out there, but um one argument that I like is just George Barkley. George Barkley lived back in the 1700s. He was

like a he lived in Ireland a lot of the time. I think he was like an Anglican vicer living in Ireland. And I think it was before he became the Anglican vicer. He wrote um his philosophical texts about immaterialism.

And George Barkley had this theory that all that exists in the entire universe is consciousness

and perceptions. Minds and perceptions. as a Christian he I don't know why he didn't say souls and perceptions but he had this idea all that exists is minds and perceptions

but there's this one central mind that coordinates the perceptions of all the

other minds and that central p that central mind is God and so according to Barkley when you see an apple sitting on the table you're not really seeing a physical apple sitting on a physical table it's just that God is implanting the perceptions into your mind as though you're seeing a physical apple on a physical table. And the thing is, I don't think Barkley was right. But I have to admit, I cannot prove that Barkley was wrong. People have been trying to prove like philosophers have been trying to prove Barkley wrong for centuries at this point, at least a few centuries. And to my to my knowledge, none of them have succeeded. I don't

know how they could possibly succeed unless you want to use the argument of just like radical monism that ultimate reality is just this undifferentiated you know just unified essence with no multiplicity whatsoever. You could use that kind of argument, like a very deep metaphysical kind of argument. But so long as you're going to accept like a phenomenal world with phenomena going on, then I don't know how you could possibly prove that physical matter does exist. And I'm not so sure you could prove that it doesn't exist either, so long as you are accepting like a pluralistic phenomenal world that is

real.

But if you can just you can go to a

deeper level of metaphysics and just

kind of admit that all multiplicity

is an illusion,

then maybe you could prove Barkley wrong

in that way, at least within the context

of the the initial assumptions.

So I guess I just better move on to the

next question. I really I'm just

perversely

digressing and and taking more time than

necessary. I guess it's just the way I

am.

Cut me some slack.

So, Xenithoid's second question,

which I've answered before, but nobody

nobody listened to me because they couldn't because the microphone wasn't working.

Xenithoid says, "What are your thoughts on the no true Scotsman fallacy? Personally, I think it's a confusion of conventional truth and ultimate truth. Ultimately, there is no Muslim. But to say at the conventional level that there is no true Muslim would imply that there is also no false Muslim and therefore the word Muslim loses all meaning, at that point I can call Sam Harris a Muslim." And this Muslim stuff I don't fully follow. just see if if there is no true Muslim, it would imply that there's

no false Muslim. That's not necessarily the case. Like um like going with conventional truth, there's no true unicorn, but there's lots of false unicorns,
you know, fictional unicorns, for example.
So, I mean, you could have a false unicorn without having a true unicorn. Likewise, maybe you could have a false Muslim without having a true Muslim. But let's just get up to the no true Scotsman fallacy, which I didn't really fully know what the no true Scotsman fallacy was and I had to look it up. And so I think it was the AI associated with duck duckgo

um came up with this. The no true Scotsman fallacy is a logical error where someone defends a generalization by excluding counter examples, claiming that those who don't fit the generalization are not true members of the group. This fallacy often involves shifting definitions to protect a belief or argument from criticism. And I guess the original example of the no true Scotsman fallacy is someone makes the statement no true no Scotsman would put sugar on his porridge. And for a Scotsman I assume the porridge would be oatmeal. So let's just go with oatmeal. So somebody says no Scotsman would put

sugar on his oatmeal. And then this other person says, "Well, my uncle Angus who lives in Aberdine in Scotland, was born and raised there. He put sugar on his oatmeal." So then the first person kind of deflects and says, "Well, no true Scotsman would put sugar on his oatmeal." And so that implies that it's just practically by definition that if you put sugar on your oatmeal, you can't be you can't really be a Scotsman.

So I don't think that that's the confusion of like let's see conventional truth and ultimate truth because ultimate truth I mean you can't even put it into words. Ultimate truth is just beyond language beyond symbols.

So this is mainly just moving the goalposts and trying to redefine the term to like prevent any counter examples from coming up. you know, it's moving the goalposts and it's mainly just a person who wants to be considered infallible on this point. And so it's like they just redefine the term how they please regardless of how you would define the term. Like you might think that it's not impossible for a Scottish person, Scottish man to put sugar on his oatmeal, but they just redefine the term. And that happens in politics all the time.

happens all the time.

So yeah, I don't think it's a confusion of conventional truth and ultimate truth. I just think it's like a stubborn person who makes this blanket generalization and then when somebody provides a counter example that you know is disagrees with the blanket generalization, they just sort of change the definition to exclude any counter examples.

So, in a way, it's just sort of doubling down and refusing to admit that that your generalization has exceptions to it.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Master Poe. And Master Poe says,

I've been going for an hour and we still haven't got to 153 yet. Master Po says, "Sitting here watching yet another near-death experience story, and the person was describing the communication process, which was telepathic, uh, very common aspect of near-death experiences, but it's always the person's native language. Makes me wonder why not an otherworldly language one never heard of yet comprehended as if it was the personal native tongue. What seuasa?"

I think a lot of the time it could be just sort of assuming that near-death experiences have validity and just or

just assuming that every once in a while you might have some sort of paranormal communication that um it could be just that just the knowledge is sort of implanted into your mind which you then translate into your own language. But then again, in a near-death experience, um the the standard type where you know, you you die, you rise up, you go through like go towards this bright light, you wind up in like in a heaven realm, you've got a spirit guide there who, you know, discusses things with you, asks you maybe if you want to go back, you know, just sort of points out to you that some of the mistakes you've made, that kind of thing. then you probably

see their mouth moving in sync with the English that you're hearing which would indicate that it is like a kind of mental
is mentally generated sort of like in the Tibetan book of the dead where it's talking about how after you die you're in the BTO realm you're going to be seeing all these beings you're going to be seeing Buddhas you're going to be seeing demons you're going to be seeing all this stuff some of them will communicate to you but you have to bear in mind that it's all mindmade It's all a figment of your imagination.
And I mean from the Tibetan point of

view and from some Buddhist point of views, I mean this whole world is like a figment of our imagination.

So why not otherworldly language? It kind of reminds me of when I'm dreaming, I generally can't read very much in a dream. You know, a sign with just a few words on it or like a book that just has like a title on the cover. that much my my imagination can handle like like spontaneously but like an entire page of text then my mind my imagination is not good enough for me to dream an entire page of text that I can read in the dream

and so I think it's kind of along the lines of that that um you just can't

come up with like a whole new language that you will stand like spontaneously as you you're you're generating this experience and it's pretty clear that to some degree at least people who have these near-death experiences are generating their experience like Christians will have in some cases Jesus or Mary or some Christian patriarch or saint or this kind of thing that that it's the like the spirit guide and a Buddhist would have a different kind of a different kind of heaven realm that they're going to. A Muslim would have a different kind of heaven realm. A materialist would have a different kind

of heaven realm. So, it's very much conditioned by your mind. And that's not to say that it's completely bogus because to some degree what we're experiencing now is generated by our mind.

So, I better just move on. I really should try to get these down to 20 words or less. My answer is just yep. Next question. Nope. Next question. Stellar Supreme is the next questioner. Formerly known as Libra Lamb, etc., etc., etc., etc. He changes his name all the time. Or at least he did enough to be troublesome.

So, let's see here. Stellar Supreme, etc., etc. says, "Which is better in

your opinion, Pacheka Buddhaana or Bodhicattvaana?"

and that this is with regard to a discussion, a very brief discussion of the Lotus Sutra uh that took place on the discord server. So, Stellar Supreme continues, "A pacheka Buddha is one of the greatest sources of merit in that they're an ideal receiver of charity for the giver, whereas there seems to be no mention of merit tied to one who has made a commitment to someday be perfectly pur purified and liberated."

Well, I mean, this is just an academic argument, I think. I mean, I'm not really a Mahayana Buddhist. I'm not so

sure that there really is a pacheka Buddhaana. And the bodhicattva is an like a an anacronistic artifact of Buddhist philosophy.

Um I mean the bodhicattvaana would be someone striving to become a Buddha I suppose, but the pacheka Buddhaana isn't someone striving to become a pacheka Buddha. It's like pacheka Buddhas. So it's it's sort of apples and oranges to some degree.

Um, and Pacheka Buddhas, I mean, it's I answered this a question about Pachka Buddhas a few Q&As ago where and really the Buddha or maybe it didn't even originate with the Buddha, but the idea of Pachka Buddhas may be just a way of

accounting for enlightened beings before the Buddhist time that weren't Buddhists.

So, which is better in my opinion? I mean, it's just an academic matter of opinion, I guess. Um, I really can't I mean, if you're saying that who would be more like meritorious to donate to a bodhicattva or a pacheka Buddha, well, a pacheka Buddha is is a Buddha, whereas a bodhicattva is someone who's just trying to become one. So, I mean, you get more merit from like interacting with a pachek, although they'd be pretty much of a hermit and wouldn't talk much. They wouldn't be

explaining dhamma very much to you, but just being in their presence, you know, offering alms food or whatever. Yeah. I mean you're offering on the one hand to a fully enlightened being supposedly higher or or more advanced than an ordinary fully enlightened being an aura and then the other hand a bodhic sattva I mean they could have just started on their bodhic sattva path and still be just laden with defilements and so forth but I mean in a way it's it's not really a fair competition because you've got pacheka Buddhas are already fully enlightened whereas the bodhic sappva is someone destined to become a sama sam Buddha and if you're going to compare

pacheka Buddhas with sama sam buddhas
then I think orthodox tradition might
say it would be more beneficial to offer
to the sama Buddha but I mean both of
them are fully in line beings
I'm just going to move on to stellar
supreme etc etc second question did you
enjoy being in a monastery less than
solitary practice despite the
difficulties of living outside the
monastery yeah as a general rule I
avoided monasteries I mean, if you're
trying to practice vineia strictly, as a
general rule, you have to avoid
monasteries, especially Asian
monasteries, because there's almost no

monastery in all of Burma where it's not technically against the rules even to just set foot on the property. Any monastery that has been paid for, at least in part, even one penny, one pia, by a monk,

that's it. I mean it's it's nisia pacita and it's a duca offense an offense of wrongdoing to make use of that like the standard standard example I' I've said more than once in the past acc court in in the commentaries a monk buys a mango with money which is it's it's he has transgressed by buying this mango he eats the mango and throws the pit the pit germinates grows into a tree a hundred years Later, a different monk

sits under the shade of that tree. He's breaking a rule. He's committing an offense of making use of something that was paid for by a monk's money.

So, there have been monks. There was a famous Italian monk back in British times in in Burma who just avoided monasteries. He would not go into a monastery. Maybe very briefly or something, but as a general rule, he just avoided monasteries. She wandered from place to place and just slept in like they're called a zyat. It's just like a a public like a a shelter just a a roof on posts with like a raised wooden platform and people can rest

there. You know, there's usually water pots there that you can drink from that kind of thing. So, I mean to some degree it was like that with me. I generally avoided other monks as just whenever possible

um and just preferred to be living in solitude. I the the one monastery I lived at longer than any other place. I lived there for gosh 10 years approximately. Um most of the time I was living there there was only two monks there. Me and one other monk who lived down by the river. I lived up on the hill and he eventually got bitten by a cobra and died. Then I was by myself there for a while.

And so I mean you could have the best of both worlds just have uh live in like a very
crude monastery. I mean still some of the buildings there probably were paid for with monk's money but that monastery property was just owned by the SA didn't have to be paid for. It had been there for hundreds of years. There was like like medieval ruins just right outside this the the boundaries of that monastery where there apparently had been another monastery like possibly almost a thousand years ago.
So,
uh, yeah, I I I liked living alone in

the forest that it was like camping and you didn't have to worry with all the like the culture barrier stuff with Burmese monks and and also the the monastic discipline stuff with Burmese monks handling money. 98% of them handle it. And so it's just like you want to avoid this kind of corrupt stuff in in your practical Buddhism. You're better off just going alone like the horn of the rhinoceros. And I took that to heart and I did prefer it that way. And so I'm just going to move on to Stellar Supreme, etc., etc., etc.'s third question. Could you provide some of the details of the fish pond, like how long it took to dig and the materials you're

using? Well, um, I was digging the fish pond. It's It's I'm done digging it now, but I was digging the fish pond on, as a general rule, one day per week. I mean, I work my butt off at work five days a week. And I wanted to have at least one day of glorious laziness, which was generally Saturday, which would be the day I would I would record these Q&As's. And so Sundays

I would dig maybe I think on average it was about eight wheelbarrow loads. I was I'd use a madic and a shovel and a wheelbarrow. That's that's pretty much all I used for for digging the pond. And bless their hearts, women just do not

fully appreciate the value of a madic. I mean, you use the matic to chop up hard ground, make it soft, and then you just scoop up the loose dirt with a shovel instead of trying to get that shovel into the hard ground, hitting rocks and so forth. The Madic makes it way easier. And so last weekend, we put in the liner and put water in it. Now there's fish in there. Although two of them were dead this morning. I think they just over ate because I put um some blood worms in the pond. I was going to try and inoculate the the pond with like some biod diversity. And I think that these two big goldfish that we bought, they bought them at the same time out of the same

tank at the same fish store. So, it could be that they were just like had some kind of disease or something. But it also could be that they just both of them gorged on these worms I threw in there and just gorged themselves to death.

So, I mean, dig a hole in the ground, line it with first it was like an put a little bit of sand, then put in like this felt underllayment,

and then we got like this super heavy duty pond liner made by Firestone. It's made pretty much out of the same material that like inner tubes are made out of.

And uh eventually we we're going to get some rocks. Tomorrow I'm going to try and set up the the pond filter because the the water is still kind of murky. So, we're going to put a a pond filter with a little fountain in there and and it's off to the races. After that, all we got to do really is just line the the outside with with ornamental rocks. And my sweetheart is trying to pressure me into digging like a a notch around the entire pond even though the liner is already in so that you can put the rocks like down closer to the water. The water level can come up to the rocks without completely overflowing and then you don't see as much liner. But place we

lived at before we had a fish pond and that wasn't done. And I'm I'm kind of resisting the extra work of cutting this notch or all the way around the pond to make the liner a little bit less visible.

So yeah, when it's finally done, I'll probably do a Q&A hopefully kind of late fall where it's not totally sweltering outside with the pond behind me so everyone can gaze upon it in awe and wonder.

And we went out today looking for fish. I was trying to find some dojo loaches to put in the pond. And

I there was one fish store. We hit

pretty much all the fish stores. There was one fish store that had dojo loaches, but they were the wrong color. I didn't like them, so I didn't get them.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is the last question of the the previous Q&A that I've already answered, and then we're really going to start getting into genuine 153 after this. And this this last question from the previous Q&A that I've already answered is from Nermit. And Nermit says, "What would the Buddha say about illegal immigrants? Do you think he will be in favor of deporting them?" And again, second-guessing the

attitudes or opinions or mental states
of a fully enlightened being is pretty
much of a fool's errand.
I' I've written made an entire video not
too long ago just people are continually
asking me what would the Buddha think or
what would the Buddha say or what what
are the the what what are the mental
states of an enlightened being like and
it's just it's pretty much pointless.
The only way you could possibly
understand what it's like to be a fully
enlightened being would be to be a fully
enlightened being.
You can try to explain to a dog what
being a human is like and the dog isn't

going to get it.

It might pay very careful attention,

might be gazing up at you in wrapped

attention, just loving the the attention

it's getting, but still it's not going

to understand anything.

So what would the Buddha say about

illegal immigrants?

Well, there is a vineyard rule where the

Buddha says, "I allow you monks to obey

kings."

And so,

I mean, from the Buddhist point of view,

you renounce society. If you're a

serious Buddhist, you become a monk or a

nun. You renounce society. You go off

and live in the forest and let

worldly-minded lay people figure out all this political stuff.

So, I mean, I I assume the Buddha would admit that it is the king's right to kick out illegal invaders who are not in the country legally.

I assume he would be okay with that.

It's not like like like you look at X you some of the hysterical posts put up by by Democrats about how you know ICE is the new Gestapo and all this and not really I mean it's they're just enforcing American laws and there is a law that I mean you're going to be in this country you have to be in this country legally

just coming just crashing the border without a visa or a passport or anything and then just going into hiding avoiding the authorities. I mean, that's illegal. And I don't think the Buddha would be opposed to law enforcement. I mean, he would admit that sometimes law enforcement involves unethical activity, especially punishing criminals. There were some really gruesome punishments for criminals in the Buddhist time. I mean, there's some really gruesome lists of some of the like the public execution methods like drill a hole into the top of a of a live criminal skull and pour in molten lead or cutting their skin off in strips. That was done in public back

in those days. I mean, it was well into modern times. Like in London, there'd be people publicly hanged.

People have gotten a lot softer and wimpier now, which is not entirely a bad thing, but it's not entirely a good thing either.

But the Buddha, first of all, it would be, you know, that is not my concern. It's not the SA's concern. That's for the kings to work out in their worldly lives, working out their worldly problems. And I don't think that he would be outspoken against law enforcement. The Buddha would not want to defund the police unless it was some

sort of really bad kind of police. Like the secret kind of police that's knocking on doors in the middle of the night and disappearing people. Maybe he would disapprove of that.

So

that's the end. And like I always always should say at the beginning and never do and I'm not even going to say it now because we're not even at the end. We're just starting 153 now. And this next question is from Trojasiz.

And Taskaziz says, "Is there any way to reconcile capital punishment with dhamma?" No, not really. There is the story of there was a monk who was advising the public executioner to keep

his axe sharpened,

really sharp, and try to just finish off

the criminal with one blow. And he was

he had committed a parajika offense as

in that he was helping someone to kill

other people.

So yeah, you you can't really reconcile

capital punishment with Dharma other

than pretty much like what I was saying

with regard to ex deporting illegal

aliens where I mean that is the king's

business and we are we are just

renouncing society going off living on

the outskirts of society and the

government can just work out their own

[__]

That's that's how you'd reconcile it.
But with regard to ethics, killing
another human being, even like
euthanasia
is not good from a Buddhist point of
view.
I mean, it might be the lesser of two
evils in some cases, but still it's it's
an evil. It is unh wholesome.
So, I'm just going to move on to
Trezascus's second question,
which is from a purely materialistic
point of view, wouldn't killing a
9-year-old be much worse morally than a
90 years old. Former has entire life
ahead of him, and the latter has had one
already. Well, from a purely

materialistic point of view, I don't think there is such a thing as morals.
I mean, a purely materialistic point of view would be just morally destitute. There'd be no moral code from a purely materialistic point of view, as far as far as I can tell.
So, I mean, from a purely materialistic point of view, ethics are just sort of a social tool, you know, just arbitrarily cooked up for the sake of maintaining society in a more or less stable manner, something like that.
But I mean there would be no universal ethical code from a purely materialistic point of view.

And then from like the Buddhist point of view like strangely the orthodox terraata point of view is is like killing a being becomes more unh wholesome the more effort is required to kill that being. So like it it's like the implication is a bigger more conscious being would be harder to kill. You know, it'd be harder to kill an elephant than a mosquito. So that's why killing an elephant is worse. But I don't think it's really good logic. I mean, you could just kill an elephant. I'm not advising anyone kill elephants, by the way, but you could just shoot an elephant with a high power highowered rifle, which would be fairly easy.

Whereas killing that mosquito, you might be rushing through the house just swearing and swatting again and again, missing and missing and missing, just raging at this mosquito. In which case, it would be easier to kill the elephant than the mosquito.

But then again, all that raging and swearing and so forth would be adding to the unh wholesomeness of just going and you're done.

But yeah, from a purely materialistic point of view, I don't think there is any morals other than just like a an arbitrary social construct or a social construct designed to stabilize society,

something like that.

So I'm just going to move on to Trezas

as is his third question

which he says starts off with a quote in

Laos it is illegal for a foreign citizen

to engage in sexual activity with a Lao

national outside of marriage. This

restriction applies regardless of the

gender of the individuals involved.

Cohabitation even without sexual

activity is also prohibited for

unmarried foreign and Lao nationals.

vote. And then Troas is asks, "Are there

any restrictions in that matter in

Myanmar or Cambodia?" Well, I can't

really speak for Cambodia. I've never

been in Cambodia. I my knowledge of

Cambodia is rather limited, but with
with regard to Myanmar, I don't think
there's anything like this. Um, for
example, there's like a a rising sex
industry or there was before I left
Myanmar. I left in 2018. What changes
have happened since then? I really can't
say firsthand. You know, I can hear
rumors, secondhand news, that kind of
thing. But before I I left Myanmar,
there was starting to be like a sex
industry, sex tourism trying to compete
with Thailand to some degree. And
I don't think the government really
cared. Maybe they were getting kickbacks
or making some kind of profit from it.

Uh, I never heard anything like this
that it was illegal for um like a
Burmese woman to have sex with uh like a
a non Burmese man, you know, like a
nonitizen in Burma. Um, I've never heard
of it. I mean, maybe,
for example, it's I've heard that it's
legal polygamy. Polygamy is legal in
Burma, but I never saw a case of it the
whole time I was living in Burma. So, it
could be just it's on the book
somewhere, but not enforced.
So, let's see here. Did I answer that
question? I think I did.
Yeah. I mean, like cohabitation of
unmarried people is frowned upon in
Burmese society. It may be that they

don't even need to make a law that it would it would just be done by stealth just because you know everyone would have like a low opinion of such of the Burmese person especially you know you got some unmarried you got some Burmese woman living in sin with like any any man and you know she'd be considered to be like a prostitute you know that she would her her uh reputation would just be ruined

regardless of whether the guy she was living with was Burmese or not.

I mean, it was like that in the West up until relatively recently, well into modern times. Then along came feminism.

So, let's see here. I guess I answered
that question. I'm going to move on to
the next question, which is from Austin.
And Austin is asking
a question about Majama. So, I I just
happen to have the Majama fez here.
Let's see. Got this out of the way
there. There we go.
So Austin says, "The moola Majama caraka
rejects metaphysical absolutes.
This would necessitate an objection to
par nirvana, a transcendent state beyond
samsara. How do we square this circle?"
Well, the mulamjamaka caraka rejects
metaphysical absolutes mainly in the
sense of talking about them or trying to
symbolize them. I mean I mean really

that's all you can do if you're like writing or talking is using symbols and they're just not going to apply to reality. So all you can really do if you're being logically rigorous is just say it's all invalid because I mean you can't even point I mean it's it's beyond even pointing a finger at the moon. It's you can't even point to to ultimate reality. Ultimate reality is just completely off the scale. You can't say a word about it
and have it be valid really. And as my understanding of Majamaka is along those lines. It's like you can't even really talk about metaphysical absolutes or a

metaphysical absolute like nirvana that as soon as you mention it, you just go off the sc you just go off the tracks really cuz it's not valid. You you've tried to symbolize what can't be symbolized.

So in a way I mean majamakica you can't really theorize enlightenment. I don't think that Majamaka Buddhists are declaring that there's no such thing as an enlightened being. There's no such thing as a as a Buddha, anything like that. It's just anything you say about it is going to be invalid. So, you just shut up. I mean, that's that's one of the main points of majamaka is is sort of like Zen or like the atawaga of the

sutin pata where you just shoot down all
beliefs. The atakawaga says don't
believe anything. Have no views.
no position
and that would include any position
regarding enlightenment. But that
doesn't mean that there is no
enlightenment. It's just that
enlightenment is so off the scale you
can't say anything about it.
And then one way of getting there is
just shutting down all your views
including your views about
enlightenment.
So my understanding of majamas is it
works along those lines. You know, it's

just you just shoot down all symbolic views, including symbolic views that would be considered right view in other schools and including any views about enlightenment or nirvana, anything like that. And all that's left behind is this unthinkable void. And that the reality is there.

You can't think about it. You can't symbolize it. You can't talk about it. But it's I mean, you can't even say it's there because you're still talking about it.

So it's just radical. It's not even skepticism. It's radical mysticism in the guise of this logic that just destroys all views.

And that's good because mysticism or like direct knowledge of reality cannot be contained in a view. It cannot be contained in a belief, a concept. So you just shoot down all concepts including all concepts about nirvana and enlightenment
because it doesn't help. It just gets in the way. It's like a stumbling block.
So I I hope I answer that question.
Yeah. So I'm going to take the fez back off and move on to Austin's next question, which is Oops. I think I did something to the computer. I put the fez down on my sweetheart's computer. Okay.
So Austin says, "If you take mindonly

idealism as your starting point, don't you think you're closer to vdanta than Buddhism?" I don't really take mind-only idealism. I mean I'm more inclined to go along with the Aika Waga and Majamaka than Vdanta because Vidanta still makes the mistake of positing this like mind only or positing that I mean positing anything to assert anything you're already off the tracks. You're off the path essentially unless it's like a very elementary level of that path.

So let's see.

Take mind only idealism as your starting point.

Yeah. I mean that's still just

conventional truth.

I mean I don't consider physical matter to be real but ultimately I mean no belief is going to contain reality.

But yeah, vdanta I mean if if I weren't a Buddhist there's a good chance I'd be a vdantist

but still vanta is reifying the absolute to a much greater degree than early Buddhism did.

Just reifying the absolute regardless of whether whatever you consider the absolute to be including infinite formless consciousness still you have just tried to symbolize that. You think that you're describing it in words and

you just can't. It's just like delusion.
But I would consider Vdanta to be my
second choice after Buddhism.
So I'm just going to move on to Austin's
third question. If science one day finds
out that the mind is produced by
material functions in the brain, will it
be over for Buddhism? I don't think so.
I don't think that would be nearly as
much of a blow to Buddhism as Jesus not
coming soon was to early Christians.
So I mean science is never going to
prove that
really. It's like Emanuel Kant said, you
know, more than 200 years ago, pretty
sure that science will never come, no
matter how advanced science gets, it can

never come one iota closer to understanding the thing in itself, the highest truth, ultimate reality. Science can't touch it. It can't get close to it. Neither can any kind of belief system. Any kind of symbols are not going to be able to explain or describe what cannot be symbolized without just perverting it beyond all recognition.

So I mean science may have already found out somehow that the mind is produced by material function in the brain. Most scientists believe that. They don't know how it happens. They they already believe it.

But it's that doesn't mean that it's

over for Buddhism. I mean science even if I mean they come up with better evidence for it. That kind of thing still I mean I don't think it's going to undermine Buddhism in any way other than the Buddhists of weak faith who have more faith in scientism than in than in Dharma. And there's quite a few of those in the West.

So I guess I'm just better move on to the next question. I really do want to keep this under four hours if possible. This is from and says, "What do you do for your pond during a hurricane? Fish in the sky with diamonds." Well, I don't think the hurricane would would necessarily kill the fish. I mean, the

wind would just blow it might blow the fence down,

but I mean, it's not just going to scoop up 400 gallons of water and just blow it away. I mean, if it does, well, we'll just deal with that when it happens, I guess. I mean, maybe here is referring more to tornadoes, which might actually just suck all the water out. And of course, it if it gets that close to the house, it's going to suck the house up, too. So, we probably aren't going to be around worrying about it after it happens.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Phils.

Again, this is now his fifth question
because in all fairness to Phil
atheists, he asked three plus maybe a
rhetorical question in the previous Q&A
which got answered but didn't get
recorded properly. Better make sure.
Yes, like the little green bar is still
going wiggling on the the OSB
or OBS. I mean,
let's see. What was what was I saying?
Feel these. Okay, this is this is Phil
Lee's first question for 153. And he
says, "A Zen monk wrote, quote, there is
no absolute reality outside of real
things.
Though reality is more than the things
that are real, this more

is in the very things. And though this more is beyond the part that can be known through the intellect, it can be known. One draws near this reality of realities when the m the mind has learned to discard all things superfluous unquote. And he says Phily says don't well I mean yeah this is pretty much in agreement with like my simile of the block of marble. You know every all these statues are contained in the block of marble. The block of marble would be considered like the the essence the reality of the statues.

So yeah, I guess that's fairly good.

See, there is no absolute reality

outside of real things. I mean that's
I mean that's kind of total logical or
something. I mean why would he say
outside of real things? I mean from a
Buddhist from even a Zen point of view
real things is kind of problematic right
there. And then see the reality is more
than things that are real. This more is
in the very things. Yeah. sort of like
the rock the the stone is in the
imaginary statues.
I mean the imaginary statues made of
real rock that are just contained
potentially or conditionally virtually
in that rock.
So yeah, that's one way of putting it. I
didn't I don't really have any objection

to that. Although of course you can't really explain reality in words.

So it just in a way it's just kind of blind people talking about colors.

So let's see here. Let's just move on to Phil Lees again. His next question, how do we know that depth isn't enough to dispel all of Oh, death. I had the the little cursor thing covering the A. Thought it said depth. How do we know that death isn't enough to dispel all of our comma that results in rebirth? Well, you you can't know that. How how are you going to How you going to know that it does or it doesn't? I mean just going with Buddhist philosophy assuming

certain Buddhist assumptions

then I mean there's going to be a

certain momentum of your mental states

and then if you if that momentum

suddenly gets cut off at death I mean

you die suddenly for example then

there's it's like a conservation of of

energy in a sense conservation of

momentum so that the momentum has to

continue somehow just even though it's

not in this particular form

But I mean, if you want to be like just

a skeptic, you can doubt everything.

So, how do we know that death isn't

enough to dispel all how do I mean, how

do you why even bother with going that

with that? Why not even just deny comma?

There you go. You can just be skeptical that there's any comma at all, that comma even means anything. I mean, most materialist types, they don't deal with karma unless it's like an instant karma video they're watching on YouTube or Tik Tok or something.

They certainly don't believe in rebirth. But there have been some people like uh what was his name? Uh Nisarodata Maharaj. He was he used to say that there there really is no reincarnation. There have been some guru types that have denied rebirth. But then again, Nisarodata Maharaj agreed with the first noble truth of Buddhism that to exist is

to suffer. So why didn't he just result in the why didn't he just come to the conclusion that we should all just autoterminate?

If that's if that's the truth, I mean if you believe the first noble truth to exist is to suffer and you think at death it's just that's it. The suffering just stops forever.

But Buddhism doesn't teach that, which is good. I mean, you don't want just all Buddhists to just autoterminate.

At least some Muslims are, you know, some like radical atheist, intolerant atheist or something might be fine with that. But

I don't think it's I just I just don't

see it that way. I just intuitively based on my understanding of how things work, I really don't think that it's it's yolo. And when you're dead, you're dead.

Regardless of whether there's any comma or not.

So, take a sip of my now cold coffee and move on to the next question because I really do have to be a little more concise even though I'm not doing a very good job of it. So, Phil's seventh question. If being a monk requires living off alms, then any monk community requires an even bigger lay community to support it. This means that if monkhood

is a requirement to reach enlightenment, then only a certain limited minority of people can ever achieve enlightenment at any given point in time. Is this true? Well, I've I've already pointed out that even the overwhelming majority of sincere, diligently, wholeheartedly striving spiritual practitioners, monks and nuns that most of them still don't become enlightened. That it's just the way it is. It's like
I I don't know how to say it. It's it's just the way it is. Most beings in this world are not ripe for enlightenment regardless of whether monks have to be supported by lay people or not. That's just the way it is. So the system is

kind of set up based on the the empirical fact that most people are just kind of worldly minded normies and they're not they don't even want enlightenment.

Not now anyway. They might be praying for it in some future future time. Sort of like St. Augustine was, you know, like praying to God to get rid of his his sins, but not quite yet. That kind of thing.

I remember there was this beggar woman that used to like sweep the grounds at Mahagande on the big school monastery and some of the monks would be teasing her saying, "Oh, you're making such

merit. You're going to attain Nibbana."

And she said, "I don't want to go to Nibbana. There's no tea shops in Nibbana."

And that's pretty much the attitude of most Buddhists, I think, except maybe it's they have like a higher priority than tea shops.

Well, yeah. I mean, it's just the the system isn't like limiting the number of enlightened beings or any such thing. It's just that the the fact that most beings are not even ready for enlightenment. they don't even really want enlightenment is kind of the that was taken into account when the system was being set up.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Yugu.

And Yugu says, "Please tell us in detail how did you practice deconstruction of a person before having any interaction with it? How did that help you practice and how can that help us in life?"

Well, I I assume what Yugu is referring to when he says deconstruction of a person is that a monk who's being mindful like deeply mindful. You know, in the scene there's only the scene. In the herd there is only the herd. In the like the mentally sensed, there is only the mentally sensed. This kind of thing, the felt there's only the felt. Then

when you're confronted with another human being, then that's you're seeing them. The scene is only the scene. It's just this form that is being seen. If they're speaking to you in the herd, there is only the herd. It's just sounds. And then you're deconstructing the person through just your senses as visual, you know, visual stimuli, auditory stimuli. They touch you, it's tactile stimuli, that kind of thing.

Then I mean that's practicing like relatively advanced dharma. I think most people really couldn't do that at a very very high level for very long.

Um, I mean just naturally you've got just built into your human nature

there's like face recognition and just
you know voice recognition and you know
just understanding what words mean
rather than just hearing blah blah blah.
So
yeah that was I mean how did I practice
deconstruction before having any
interaction with it with the person you
mean? I I I don't fully understand this
question.
Um, but really I mean if you're just
practicing mindfulness in the scene
there is only the scene. In the herd
there is only the heard. In the felt
there is only the felt. In the mentally
sensed there is only the mentally

sensed. Then I mean that just automatically deconstructs a person into like sensory stimuli.

I it's just like the result of it of the practice.

So I guess that answers that question.

And how did that help you practice and how can that help us in life? Well, I mean you're you're like getting rid of the the interpretation which is most of samsara.

It's like you are weakening samsara.

You're like diluting it down and then it's more attenuated. It's easier to see through it or free yourself from it.

Because if you're just wallowing in the

the inner monologue and the
interpretations of things, you know,
you're just taking everything at face
value. You see a person standing in
front of you and that's that's George,
you know, he's my buddy and he likes
this and he doesn't like that and he
tells funny jokes and and just on and on
and on. I mean, that's you're just
inshed in samsara at that point. Whereas
you look upon George and it's just
visual stimuli, auditory stimuli. Then
you know George is is kind of
disappeared in a sense and samsara is
very much reduced
and then it's easier to free yourself

from samsara if you're not just like
wallowing just over your head in it.
I mean helping you in life. I mean, it
just might help you to to not be as
unhappy. I mean, it's like women will
get pissed off at you if you if like
you're cohabiting with a woman and
you're just seeing her as sensory
stimuli,
you know, you're not acknowledging her
humanity, that kind of thing. Yeah, she
might get pissed off at you.
But uh so helping you in life in that
sense I mean you're better off if you're
if you're going to this level of
practice then you're better off living
out in the woods just avoiding other

people for the most part.

I mean this radical practice you're trying to like reduce samsara as much as you can to make it easier to transcend samsara.

And I'm just going to move on next question. This is Stellar Supreme again, etc., etc., etc.

And he says, "Can a monk sleep on his belly?" Well, I don't see why not. I personally cannot sleep on my belly. I mean, when I was a kid, sometimes I did, but I somehow outgrew it, and I just really can't sleep on my belly anymore. I'm kind of sway back as it is, and it makes me even more feel like like really

swaybacked if I'm lying on my belly. Maybe if I put a a pillow under my belly or something. Maybe I think there's one a few times when I was really sick in Burma. And the beds in even hospital beds are just like a wooden pallet with like a little bamboo mat on the top of that. So I remember I had the first time I had malaria, I pretty much within two days of being on a hospital bed, a wooden hard hospital bed and being not barely able to even stand up that I just wore out all the comfortable positions. And so sometimes in desperation, I'd just roll over onto my belly or something just to be in a position that didn't hurt. That kind of thing. But

there's no rule against him sleeping on his belly.

So, I mean, that's not really a problem.

So, yeah, a monk can sleep on his belly.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Xenithoid.

And Xenithoid says, "Have you read SunSu's The Art of War?" And yeah, I actually have. In fact, one of the most memorable things of me reading The Art of War was I was traveling with a a guy named Steve. Steve was had very generously and kindly volunteered to drive me from Bellingham, Washington all the way to California.

And so we were on this road trip

together and he wanted to stop at this ski resort and do some snowboarding. And being a monk dressed in like a brown toga and flip flops, I was wearing flip flops. I usually went barefoot, but in this case I was wearing flip flops cuz it was well below freezing. That's the coldest weather I ever was exposed to as a monk was up on this this mountain at this ski resort. Snow on the ground, ice below freezing. And so I just stayed in the lodge and I remember I was just just this monk in the ski lodge reading the art of war by Sunsu.

Uh so I have read it. Yeah. So the answer to that is yep. So xenoid's next question. What do you think of using

militaristic language in the context of Buddhism? Primarily that which personifies the kacas as enemies to be fought. Well, there are sutas that use militaristic language in the context of Buddhism. Like there's the famous suta in in the the sutin pata where before the Buddha becomes enlightened, Mara is trying to talk him out of striving for enlightenment. And the Buddha says, for example, it is better to die in battle than to live in defeat. which is like militaristic language. Also, there's the pasura suta of the atakawaga which has a lot of militaristic language in it. But in a way, it's kind of making fun of

this man named Pasura who's always
wanting to debate people.
So, in in this case, debate is seen as a
kind of like aggression. if you're
you're just trying to pin people down
and and like rub their nose in the their
own faulty reasoning and and like pick
faults, you know, you're sort of finding
flaws in in in their arguments and so
forth. That was seen as a kind of
aggression. So, I mean, that's
militaristic language in the context of
Buddhism, but in a kind of derogatory
sense,
but I mean, there is occasionally some
militaristic language that's in a
positive sense. You know, it's like, oh,

there's the the verse in the dhamapara, better than, you know, defeating a thousand times a thousand enemies in battle is defeating your own sort of like conquering your own self, that kind of thing. But using militaristic language, which personifies the calaces as enemies before, that's that's really not a good way of going about it. might be okay like at an kind of elementary level, but trying to use like Chimera Rouge tactics against your own defilements is I mean you're just setting yourself up for just like frustration and hysteria and misery because it really doesn't work that way.

In a way you have to transcend the
chalas by making peace with them which
may sound like very unharmic
but still I mean it's just even just
being mindful of the calacus. I mean
that's the best way to to like overcome
your defilements is through like the
radical mindfulness. So like some kind
of like anger or hatred you know some
kind of defilement arises note it let it
go. choiceless awareness. You're not
struggling against it. You're not
fighting against it. You're not seeing
it as the enemy because that just
intensifies the struggle and just keeps
you enshed in some sorrow.
I mean, any kind of struggle

really is is going to be of limited
value because you're making a big deal
of it and you're just sort of
intensifying the karma. You're
reinforcing it by struggling against it.
Which reminds me of a saying of the
multi-dimensional entity called Seth,
allegedly channeled through a woman
named Jane Roberts back in the 1970s
where he said, "You're not going to,
let's see, you're not going to end war
by hating war. You're going to end war
by loving peace."
And and it's kind of the same way.
You're not going to overcome your chases
by hating your calas. You're not going

to overcome your defilements by hating
your defilements and struggling against
them as some kind of enemy trying to
eradicate them the way the Chimera Rouge
was eradicating like potential enemies
of the state.
I mean it's you have to make peace with
it and it's sort of like Gandhian
peaceful non-ooperation
but being against something is just
intensifying the problem is just
reinforcing the problem
and like Paulo used to say you know
don't be against anything and if
against ness arises don't even be against
your own against ness
so I guess I answered that one. Time to

move on to Xenithoid's next question. And he says, "Assuming you have read the art of war, is there anything from that book that might aid a Buddhist in fighting their calacis or is it really only applicable to literal physical warfare?" No, it's not just applicable to literal physical warfare like a lot of cutthroat like economic sharks like like businessmen, you know, corporate businessmen, you know, they would use like Mousashi's The Book of Five Rings and Sunsu's The Art of War as a way of helping them in business, cutthroat business, you know, it's sort of economic warfare. But um I got a book on

the the bookshelf. It's it's an excellent book. It's um the strategy, the indirect approach by BF little Hart and he starts off like the frontest piece. He's quoting Sun Soo and some of the statements he's quoting from Suns Soo is with regard to the indirect approach that I mean the worst thing you want to do is just like for a general is just an allout frontal attack.
That's that's like the stupidest kind of warfare is just a like a a frontal assault. What you want to do is use your strength to attack weakness. You use your strength to attack where the places that are undefended or just like the weak points in the enemy or you you just

try to weaken the enemy and make them unready to fight before you attack. This kind of thing and that can be applied even in Buddhism towards your own defilements. you know, a front a full-on frontal attack against your defilements isn't going to work nearly as well as just sort of like starving your defilements. You know, cutting off your defilements supply lines, you know, demoralizing your defilements before you even really try to eradicate them, anything like that.

Also, in in BF Little Hart's introduction, he's talking about how strategy really does not apply only to

military uh and or even political
things. is like even like a like a
religious prophet, you know, it's the
duty or it's like the job of the
religious prophet to do just be flatout
direct and then get martyed. And then
you've got like a more diplomatic person
afterwards who uses the teachings of
that prophet in a more subtle indirect
diplomatic way to actually spread the
word
or just uh using an indirect approach
like trying to get your way with
somebody, you know, trying to get
somebody to do what you want is you just
sort of subtly indirectly feed them the
idea and let them think that it's their

own idea and then it's more likely that you're going to get your way. That kind of thing.

So, let's see here. Did I answer the question yet? Is there anything from that book that might aid a Buddhist in fighting their chases?

Yeah, you don't want to fight the chases, though. You want to maybe overcome them or transcend them, but again, it's more like peaceful non-ooperation rather than just like allout attack.

Also, it just reminds me one of the things about um Sunsu's The Art of War. He's got a

chapter on spies and he says the best spies are people that that look way dumber than they are. You know, a person who looks dumb but is really clever makes the best spy. You know, someone who doesn't stand out, they just kind of look like a potato, but really they're brilliant. Those are the best spies. Not like James Bond types that are going to stand out in a crowd cuz they're so ruggedly handsome or whatever. You want someone who looks like a like a truck driver or like a mill worker or something who nevertheless is brilliant. Those are the best spies. And of course, they have to be like fearless and all that, too. But I only mention that

because it's one of the few specific things I remember from reading The Art of War over 10 years ago.

So, I think I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from PSA. Again, unlike most Q&As's, I've got the same person like answered twice because the first time was in the previous Q&A and then the second time is in this particular Q&A. We're up to 153 now, which is not prime. Remember that. Important. You ought to be writing this down.

So, PSA says, "Can you talk more about your romance with fake TIG?"

And there's really not much to say. It's

not exactly a romance as far at least
not at my end. It's just that there was
this person claiming to be Ethiopian who
spoke perfect English with like an
American accent and he was he sort of
joined the Discord server right after
this person named Tig who was like this
chronic like trolling smartass got
kicked off off the server.
And so some a lot of people just thought
that this this person was really TIG in
disguise trolling us again by
infiltrating the server as an Ethiopian
who just happens to speak perfect
English with no hint of any any
Ethiopian accent whatsoever.
And so we had a vote and more people

were inclined to believe that it was TIG than that he wasn't. And so he get kicked off the server. But he uh he obviously wants to come back. But there's there was like two things that really were strikes against him. One was he was meowing a lot. You know, he he keeps writing typing meow meow. And I mean that's I mean it's just kind of something that

that like an adult male is it's it's sort of like making bird calls. It's even worse than making bird calls. It it just sort of demeans a man's dignity to do that. And it also it kind of it's kind of like furryish. I don't know if

they have furries in Ethiopia,
but that's just kind of like furry
adjacent when a guy is meowing a lot.
And also it's he's talking about like
loving me and this kind of stuff which
is kind of homoadjacent also. And so
those are like two main strikes against
him. He's stopped meowing. He hasn't
meowed recently, but still he seems to
be burning the torch for me or
something. And I don't know, it's just
it just does not seem entirely
appropriate.
So, our romance, such as it ever was,
is pretty much non-existent, at least in
my end.
So, I'm moving on to PSA's next

question, which is, "What do you think of the reliable and trustworthy DOJ and FBI stating that there was no Epstein list and that he actually selfdeed? Don't you just love the government? I feel so happy and safe living under their management." Well, there's actually two points here. There's the client list and the selfdeletion. Let's just say for the sake of argument that Epstein really did selfdelete, but I mean it could be that he was persuaded to fall on his sword, so to speak. You know, it's like they they turn off or like they got rid of the cellmates and everything just to allow him to do that

because, you know, it's like if you
don't,
you're going to regret it. That kind of
thing. So, I'm willing to be
open-minded. Maybe
maybe he wasn't offed. Maybe he was just
pressured into selfdeion.
So I mean he may have done it under
duress or something but you know that
particular situation is you know I'm
willing to be open-minded.
So like Dan Bonino and so forth just
saying yeah we yeah he did it. So, I
mean, Dan Bonino, he's seems to be a
straight shooter as a general rule, but
then getting to the the ep the client
list. I mean, obviously, I mean, I

remember when this whole thing first

came down, there was mention, repeated

mention of like a video library being

seized from one of his properties in New

York. And whatever happened to that? It

just poofed out of existence, didn't it?

So Epstein

with regard to

client lists and so forth and the and

the government saying no there there

wasn't a client list even after like Pam

Bondi was saying it was on her desk that

she'd seen the seen so many videos that

were totally disgusting and everything

that I mean I don't think there's any

intelligent sane person out there who

doubts that there were like very rich people going hanging out with Epstein and messing around with underage girls. You know, it's like P. Diddy, you know, these freakouts, that kind of stuff that I mean, it happened.

So, with regard to the government denying it, it seems like there's two options, two possibilities that for me seem plausible. One is that you have so many of the most powerful people in America were involved that it would just be like nuking the the whole power structure of I mean it it would be seen as just way too much trouble than it's worth. I mean let's just say that there's nothing to it even though

nobody's going to believe us.

So I mean it could be that there were so many people involved that that were at the top that is just we just gota we just got to not just not say anything you know just nope.

So that's one possibility. Another possibility is that Epstein really was working for certain intelligence agencies. you know, he was sort of helping them with regard to potential blackmail, including the intelligence agency of a our greatest ally, which is a small country in Western Asia.

And it could be that that small country

in Western Asia has made it clear that, you know, if if you make us look this bad, potentially destroying like the relationship with America that I mean, we're going to we're going to retaliate. And it's the custom of this West Asian small country that if somebody hits them, they hit back 10 times as hard. It's just like national policy for them. And so that one also is like, well, best thing to do to avoid just a complete [__] hitting the fan scenario on a biblical scale that we're just going to have to obviously lie and say nothing to see here, folks. Let's just move on and and kick out illegal aliens or something.

And of course our own intelligence agencies may have been involved. It's I mean it seems to be there there is evidence that Epstein was communicating with the CIA.

And so the two scenarios that I mentioned that seem plausible to me um I mean they could overlap. I mean both could be applicable here that a lot of people are saying well Trump had to be involved otherwise he would just expose everything. But even if Trump wasn't involved, I mean, if Trump was involved, you'd think that over the years the Democrats would have said something

would have like the Democrats who are
like in control would have at least
released that amount of Epstein files,
but they didn't. But I mean, even if
Trump isn't involved, I'd like to think
that he wasn't. I don't know. I mean, he
used to be friends with Epstein.
I mean the ep the friendship ended
pretty quickly but still he was friends
with him for a while
that I mean so many of Trump's friends
so many like really powerful important
people would be involved that it's just
it's just opening a gigantic can of
worms and so it's just no we just we're
just going to have to you know let's
just open the files in 2080 you know

sort of like the the Kennedy the Kennedy assassination
like information was was like postponed until everyone involved was dead.
So it could be another Kennedy assassination sort of thing.
So yeah, government has always been this way.
I mean, you read ancient history and ancient governments in many in many cases were much worse. You know, when you've got like a sociopathic autocrat who can do anything he wants, then things are much worse than they are in America.
But it is fairly clear that Epstein did

have a lot of rich, powerful associates, acquaintances
who uh essentially committed statutory word you can't say on YouTube that they were messing around with what used to be called jailbait.
No jail for them though cuz they're above the law essentially as elites generally are.
So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is kind of an interesting one from PSA.
What do you think about tardigrades?
They appear to be extraterrestrial organisms that can be boiled, frozen, even left in the vacuum of space and they survive. Where do you think they

could be categorized under Buddhist cosmology? Well, tardigrade is also called a water bear. It's a small invertebrate with six legs, I think. But they're not an insect. They don't have I mean, they look like this roly poloy little animal, kind of like a bear. They're kind of bear-shaped except with six legs and tiny and they're an invertebrate.

So, I've always wanted to see one that I did a a study on myofa as as a college student hoping to see tardigrades. Never saw tardigrades. saw gastrokes and kind of reranks, didn't see any tardigrades. And the tardigrade has its own film.

This is something that maybe people who aren't familiar with taxonomy wouldn't understand, but it's like the film is one of the biggest groups of organisms. At the top, you've got the kingdom. So, you've got the animal kingdom, the plant kingdom, the the fungus kingdom. Then you've got like the uh like the protozonean, the protest kingdom. You've got the bacterial kingdom and the archibacterial kingdom. Those are the main kingdoms of life. At least when I was in college.

So below that is the film. Like for example, we humans are cordates. We belong to the film cordata. In for botist or plants, it's called a

division. In zoologology, it's it's a
fililem. So you got mollisks are a
fililem, analids are a fililem, arropods
are a fililem, cordates which includes
all vertebrates are a fililem and then
you've got some obscure little fila or
you got like porifer sponges this kind
of thing. There's lots of fila
and then there's some obscure ones like
gastroricks kind of rinks and
tardigrades. Tardigrades have their own
fililem and they're kind of unusual
animals. Um, not only are they
interstitial, which means that they
they're so small they live in between
grains of coarse sand in the substrate

of the ocean or fresh water too, I suppose. They also live on moss that tardigrades have like a a symbiosis going with moss, some species, and so they can completely dehydrate. Like when the moss dries out, the tardigrade completely dries out and then they just be go into a state of suspended animation until they rehydrate, it rains or whatever, they come back to life.

So that's pretty much what I think about them. I think they're really interesting and I'd love to see a tardigrade face to face, but it's unlikely that I will because I don't own a microscope now. They're very tiny.

So with regard to where do I think they

could be categorized under the Buddhist
cosmology animals they're animals
they're tirana
or as the Burmese would call them tan
and I mean genetically they're related
to other terrestrial life. You know
probably genetically they're 25%
identical to a human. I mean, probably
more than 25% because we're like
something like 20 20% identical to
bacteria. Just the genetic code, just
like the the the biochemistry
of life on Earth is pretty similar
throughout all living things. You know,
it's just the way it evolved on this
planet, the genetic code, you know, the

the like the the proteins and everything, just the way respiration works, you know, just the biochemistry of life is very similar throughout the the whole living world on this planet. And if they really did come from outer space and just evolve separately from us, you'd think there'd be a way bigger difference between us. Like some of the biochemistry would be radically different.

So, what do I think about tardigrades? They're fascinating little animals. And where do I think they would be categorized under Buddhist cosmology? Animals. So, I'm moving on to the next question. This is from Romeo. And Romeo

says, "What is your knowledge and opinion of the type of deism that many of the US founding fathers favored?" And I'm just making sure we are recording and that my microphone is still. Is this working? Is it work? I should really be doing that this time after last time. So, I'm not really an expert on disism. My understanding of disism as opposed to theism is that deists believe God created the world. God created the cosmos including like the laws of physics and just kind of set it going as like a clock. You just sort of uh it's sort of self-maintaining afterwards. and then he just steps back and he doesn't

intervene. That's I think that is what Romeo here is referring to as deism. That God created the world miraculously and then just kind of step back and and no longer intervenes or does so very rarely. You know, he's not controlling the weather, anything like that. Possibly not even answering prayers. He just created this world as a kind of machine or this this this universe and then he just kind of sitting back and watching things happen.

So what is my that's my knowledge of it. I'm I could be completely wrong. I could be confusing that with something else but that's my educated guess I suppose. And what is my opinion of that type of

dism? It was kind of a modern approach
to an attempt to reconcile the existence
of God with science
that, you know, both can be true if you
just admit that, you know, God created
the cosmos and then just kind of let it
run itself and just step back and is no
longer intimately involved with the
goings on on this planet. you know, he's
he's aware of what's going on, but he's
not intervening much, if at all.
So, my opinion of it, I mean, I don't
really follow that approach.
Um, I mean it's kind of a step towards
the kind of theism that you would find
like in vdanta where there's where there

is like a capital G god but the capital
G god doesn't have any like favorites or
desires you know any any intentions
really you know just all is permitted
but I do think that that dismodern
or mid modern deism like 18th century
deism was I mean it had a bad rep there
a lot of people would just be like like
it would be like a slur calling someone
a deist you know you're trying to
denounce them by calling them that but I
think it was an attempt to reconcile
this growing body of scientific
knowledge with like traditional
Christian belief in God that okay look
everything seems to be following rules
that are increasingly being understood

by scientists or at least observed and turned into mathematical models and so forth.

And so, well, all right. So, maybe there's no miracles now, you know, it's just science is describing what God set up for this universe, that kind of thing. So, it's understandable. I don't I don't really I'm not a deist but I can kind of understand how people would come to that conclusion especially after science was gaining ground and standard Christian explanations for the world were losing ground you know starting with Galileo or before Galileo.

So I think I'm just going to move on to

the next question. This is from Yosh Buouie. Is that how you say the name? Yosh Buouie. and he says, "What is the nature of your dot dot dot thoughts with regards to game theory?" And I know very little about game theory. I've never studied up on game theory. I was never particularly interested in game theory. I wasn't interested enough to actually study it enough to know what game theory is all about. It's some way of working out odds or likelihoods
um sometimes or presumably based on human motives. and so forth. But really, I am no authority at all on game theory. I'm not fully persuaded of what it is. And I wasn't even inspired to look up

the meaning of game theory like I was with regard to the no true Scotsman fallacy.

So, sorry Yosh Buoie, no idea on that one. And I'm just moving on to the next question.

And this is from Sedarta Lohachita.

And Sedar loachita says don't you think that the rise of Indian philosophies in the west such as Buddhism or advite vanta could lead to a sort of Indianization of the west or third worldification of the west and then he continues for example ever since the time of the British Empire it was British it was Indian laborers brought

by the British as nearslave immigrants who built the railway from Egypt to South Africa.

up to the present day with Elon Musk calling for more and more immigrants from India. Every year around 2 million Indians immigrate mainly to Europe or North America. So that's just a little bit of commentary there at the end. The question is here at the top. Don't you think that the rise of Indian philosophies in the west such as Buddhism or Advite Vidanta could lead to a sort of Indianization of the West or third worldification of the West? Well, one thing you got to bear in mind was that India at the time that Buddhism

arose and Vdanta arose was not really a third world country. I mean, India and in the Buddhist time was kind of was pretty much the zenith of of civilization in my opinion. I really to in some respects world civilization has been going downhill since the time of the Buddha in certain respects not in all respects. We don't have grizzly public executions anymore for example. We do not have the rise of sociopathic autocrats at least not yet.

So I mean India in the Buddhist time or at the time of Shankara was very different from India now partly because you had the the Indo-Arians the

invaders who set up the cast system and

they were the upper casts and you know

the the dark skinned smaller

what um the dosus

you know they were like the the sudras

and the and the outcasts.

at the time, you know, it was almost,

you know, sort of European in a sense

and some of the some of the aspects like

in the Buddhist time, you know, you had

like oligarchic republics and so forth

pretty much like was going on in Greece

around the same time and the religion

was similar to Greece. And the culture

was similar to Greece. And like when for

example

um like Alexander the Great, I mean he

had a hard time defeating Indians like King Porus at the Indis River. It took some doing to defeat Porus and Alexander treated him with great respect even after he lost just because he respected what a good general he was and like the level of civilization and so forth. Then after Alexander's time you had like the uh the tomic empire of which extended from western Asia to the borders of India at first and I mean they the the Indians were able to defeat the Greeks in battle at the time. So I mean they were a world power pretty much. The Morian Empire didn't last very long, but it was a powerful nation.

It could defeat the Greeks at least

sometimes.

So I mean it was sort of like a

a rising flowering kind of vibrant

civilization at the time and then

gradually after being like conquered

over and over again by various invaders

that is and then just sort of the

interbreeding of the the Indo-Arians

with the the Aboriginal peoples there

and just producing just sort of like

this brownskinned uni almost uniform

population that

not not as much diversity I suppose

that India has declined

but I mean you read something like

there's a book by a man named Basham the

the the wonder that was India I mean

India in ancient times

it was really an advanced civilization

relatively speaking

So

the rise of Indian philosophies in the

west such as Buddhism or adviteto vanta

I mean those were products of India at

its peak.

So yeah I don't think that it's that

Buddhism or advite vidanta being

introduced into into western

philosophies into western culture is

going to have a bad effect necessarily.

In fact, it seems to be positive like

Buddhism coming into the west. I mean,

the people of the West are just like distorting it, watering it down, kind of perverting it to some degree.

But still, I mean, it's the West that's [__] up Buddhism, not Buddhism that's [__] up the West.

So, yeah, I don't think that that's that's likely to happen. certain other aspects of modern Indian culture you know like the nepotism that you hear so much about that kind of thing could have a adverse effect on western culture but yeah I don't think that Buddhism or adviteto vidanta are going to have an adverse effect on western culture so I'm just going to move on to Sedarta loha's next question

why do you think the average Indian worker it's so I think it's supposed to be is is so submissive and without any desire to struggle for rights and dignity or freedom like the Mexicans or South Americans in general. They don't comply, just obey. Or is it says they don't complain? So does that mean they don't complain? Maybe that means they don't complain, just obey for that many companies from tech firms to construction ones are fighting over them. I've never heard of an Indian like immigrant working in a construction company.

In fact, I mean I've been working like

in sheet metal shops and trucking and
now a trucking company. I mean you just
almost never see Asians then even as
customers
whether it's West Asians, South Asians,
East Asians, they're just not really
that involved is pretty rare. like to
have like a an East Asian customer at a
sheet metal shop. I mean, that's
remarkable. The guys in the shop would
be like mentioning it to each other.
Well, you see that guy, you look
Japanese or something.
But let's see here. Why do I think the
average Indian worker is so submissive
and without any desire to struggle for
rights and dignity or freedom? really

not that acquainted with Indian workers
other than occasional telemarketers or
you call for assistance with regard to
something and you're talking to somebody
in Mumbai
that kind of thing but I don't really
have a lot of experience with Indian
workers. I've heard that I mean one
thing about Indian workers is that you
get one Indian in charge he'll just fire
all the non-Indians and just hire
Indians. I've heard that rumor before
more than once.
So I mean that was not entirely
submissive. Yeah. It may be that Indian
culture is sort of like Burmese culture

where you just kiss the ass of
superiors. You you can beaughty and
tyrannical towards inferiors but the
people above you, you're just obsequious
as hell. You just kiss their ass.
So, I mean that could be a certain kind
of Asian traditional thing,
but once once you have an Indian in
charge, he's not going to be that meek
and and mild anymore necessarily.
So, let's see here.
Yeah, I that would be like my my
explanation.
I guess that's that's like my guess at
an answer on that one. And I have to be
concise because we're already two and a
half hours into this and so I'm just

going to move on. Next question. This is from Gnostic Rocker or Ganostic Rocker and he says, "Do you think the process of gaining wisdom is a kind of instantaneous process, a flash of wisdom if you like, or is it a slow incremental process, a kind of piecing together in a jigsaw like fashion, a testing of theory to see how it stands up to the light of day-to-day life? Perhaps it's a mix of both. What is your experience in that process?" the gaining of wisdom. It seems mainly gradual. I mean, if you become enlightened, then that would be a quantum leap. You know, it' just be an infinite jump from unenlightened to

enlightened. But you can still have I mean, the veil gets like thinner and thinner, but still ultimately from unenlightened to enlightened would seem to be a quantum leap.

But with regard to gaining wisdom in general, I mean going with Buddhism or Hinduism, any system that believes in rebirth and a kind of spiritual evolution,

then it's going to be gradual over many many many many lifetimes like Rahm Das who's speaks mainly from a Hindu perspective talks about how um like the the evolution of wisdom in in an individual or like you a a reborn stream of individuals

start. It's like a clock. You start at midnight, you know, and just one minute past midnight. That's like the beginning of a new karmic stream. And it's getting farther and farther away from the absolute at 12. You know, it's it's it's getting farther and farther away, just deeper and deeper into samsara as consciousness develops. But wisdom, you know, it's the wisdom really isn't keeping up with the cognitive development. So that like getting into into animal realms and so forth that they're just getting deeper and deeper in meshed in some saric quasi reality or pseudo reality until you get to six. And

then once you get to six and start going back up towards 12, then gradually the wisdom is is catching up again and you're getting actually getting closer and closer to realization of the absolute again. So I mean in that sense obviously it's extremely gradual possibly lasting millennia and so it's not going to happen all at once. I mean sometimes you do have a flash of insight you know it's just all of a sudden something clicks you know you have this aha moment sort of thing that happens sometimes that that can be triggered through meditative insight you know just meditation can help that along but sometimes it's just sort of a

gradual thing you have to learn
like uh there's a a wise monk in Burma I
don't know if he's still alive Muhammad
who says I mean there's some things you
can only learn when you're old that kind
of thing. So that would be a kind of
wisdom that's gradual and it's you know
it's it's more of the second kind that
agnostic rocker is talking about here
like the slow incremental process
but it could be a slow incremental
process of little like flashes that that
still are you know it's like an
instantaneous increment kind of a thing.
It can happen that way too but gradually
I mean it's like the veil the samsara

just kind of gets weaker and weaker
which is a gradual process.
So I mean that can happen too. So yeah
it's uh let's see it's a mix of both I
would say.
And so I'm just going to move on to the
Nostic Rocker's second question which is
which Hindu texts move you although the
philosophical terminology on the surface
of things is utterly at odds for example
the infinite unique self merging with
the godhead of Hinduism in contrast with
the eternal no self of Buddhism
disappearing or vanishing into nibbana.
I was or am profoundly affected and
moved by Ashtavakra Gita
Chundamani and the Aaduta Gita. What are

about your own experience with a variety of Hindu texts? Well, I've never read the Ashtavakra Gita, never heard of the Vivea Chundamani and uh never heard of the Aaduta Gita to my so I mean I'm completely unfamiliar with any of these texts that Gnostic Rocker has mentioned partly just because my my exposure to to Hindu scriptures is limited to the main most popular ones like I've read the Bavad Gita more than once and I've read all of the the main upanishads I've read like excer excerpts from the rig va for example and those would be pretty much the only like scriptures that that move me um bavad gita is

profound

the principal upanishads for the most

part have a lot of profoundity in them

um and besides aside from that then it

would be like modern stuff like

miracle of love stories about nim karoli

baba that kind of thing those I mean

That's probably the most moving that

book edited compiled by Rahm Doss about

Nim Kuroli Baba. That's the one Hindu

text not scripture. It's like a mass

market paperback, but that one I have

found the most moving from a a Hindu

point of view. a lot of Ram DS's stuff

that he wrote way back in the day back

in the 1970s.

I mean, that's moving cuz it's it's like

he I mean, he's talking about his first firthand experiences and he was moved by it and you just you can't help but he's like a good teacher who's really um enthusiastic about what he's teaching and so you can't help but catch some of that enthusiasm if you're in tune with what he's saying.

But with regard to like scripture, I guess it would just be the bavagita and and some of the principal uponadots.

So let's see here. And with regard, yeah, the surface of things, the terminology on the surface, yeah, it's it's at odds, but the highest truth, I mean, the name that can be named is not

the eternal name. So, you're going to have to come up with some way of explaining what can't be explained just as almost like a unnecessary evil or something.

So it shouldn't be too surprising that different spiritual movements, different spiritual systems may dis disagree with each other even though the the highest attainments are pretty much you can tell that they're trying to describe the same essential attainments.

Like the upanishads are trying to explain the same thing as some of the Buddhist metaphysical texts or mystical texts. And it's just the starting samsaric assumptions differ and so they

have to use different language or St. John of the cross from a a 16th century Roman Catholic perspective is describing a lot of the same very exalted meditative states as a Buddhist text is describing. But of course he has to use 16th century Spanish cultural assumptions which are of course going to wind up with very different ways of ex trying to explain things. Even though the experience itself may be identical or close to identical still it's just the cultural

the cultural environment is going to cause different ways of explaining things.

So, I'm just going to move on to Gnostic Rocker's third question.

And it's he says, "It occurs to me more and more as time passes and as I meet more and more people that the vast majority of people just do not like or have no interest in philosophical questions, nor are they overly interested in other poetic literary approaches to wisdom. and being in this body and mind in time within this experience. They'd rather be discussing movies, the life of the stars, a clichéed political fake figure, or some TV or sporting sensation. Have you found that to be true as well? Yeah, I've found that to be true. I mean, most

people, they're not into philosophy.
Philosophy is essentially involves
tearing down common sense realism. Most
people are living in a state of common
sense realism. a chicken, a dog, they're
living a sense of common sense realism.
You just take everything at face value.
It's all real.
And most people are are operating at
that level. They might have a deep
intuitive feeling that that's not
enough. That that's not the whole story.
But still, the average person are just
enshed in samsara. It might be that most
of them haven't reached all the way to
six o'clock yet.

So yeah, it's it's like philosophy threatens your view of reality if you're not philosophical. If you're just a common sense realist and just take everything at face value that your car is ultimately real, money is ultimately real, you this, you know, houses, people all ultimately real. Then philosophy which starts to question that is like sort of undermining your world. It's like threatening your existence in this subtle scary way.

And I remember when I came back to America, I think it's from from Burma the first time, this is back around 1997.

Um it was like people that I'd be

talking to it they almost never asked me what it was like living in Burma. They instead, have you seen this movie? this is a really good movie or this is a great TV show that's on and they'd just be wanting to go on and on about this movie that they really liked and you know I just I was a monk in robes just come back from living in tropical Asia for x number of years and it's like they they weren't really interested but then again it's it's just sort of like alien to their to their world you know they don't can't really relate to it it's just something that they you know they don't wouldn't even know what questions

to ask maybe in some cases.
So yeah, but I did find that to be true as well. And I'm moving on to the next question. This is from Ruie. And Ruie says, "Did you ever hear of a Burmese lady renuncient called Ajan Nabe?
I think she lived sometime between the late 19th century and maybe the mid 20th century. Ajan Nabe was a specialist in Abid Dhama and the teacher of my own Abidama teacher in Bangkok, a most venerable Thai lady known as Ajan Sujin. Saturday sessions with the Ajan served to cover a lot of ground and I am truly grateful to her for providing a no holdsbred environment for Dhamma discussion. At the time I was still

learning leaning more towards Vajraana

and interestingly Abidama helped me turn

more to the sutas.

So it's kind of weird. It's she's a

Burmese

nun I suppose or maybe a Burmese like

eight precept yogi.

Um but Ajan is not a Burmese word and

nabe is not a Burmese name. So if there

was a Burmese woman who moved to

Thailands in those days, she changed her

name and I've never heard of her in in

Burma. I mean, she's not a thing in

Burma. She may have been born in Burma,

but apparently she adopted a Thai name

and was like a Thai citizen or subject,

you know, an inhabitant of Thailand and had was not a thing at all in Burma.

So yeah, I've never never heard of her before, but it is true that the Burmese are like the Abid Abidama scholars par excellence.

So that part rings true. I'm I'm not doubting that there was a Burmese woman who renounced the world. Maybe she was even ordained or became a um like a eight precept or 10 precept nun in Thailand and nobody had ever heard of her in Burma.

I don't know. I never heard of her. I've never heard her mentioned. Probably most Burmese people have never heard of her.

So, I'm just going to move on. Next

question. And I think we actually are kind of getting somewhere near the the bottom of this scroll, this immense scroll of more than 60 questions.

So, this is from Dama River. And Dama River says, "Have you ever gone on a pilgrimage to the four holy sites, Lumbini, Bodgaya, Sarnat, and Kushinagar? How was it? If you haven't been to all four, have you visited any of them? How was that experience?" And I seem to see that there are four question marks here.

So, let's see. First question, first sub question. Have you ever gone on a pilgrimage to the four holy sites? Um,

yeah. Before I went to before I went to Burma,

um I was a monk ordained at a Burmese monastery in California, Tomulu Kaba Monastery in Boulder Creek, California. And then um I was really like disillusioned and dissatisfied with the the Dhamma scene there.

And so when one of the senior seats in the Tom Pulu tradition, his name is he was called Pakoku Seattle, although he also went by the name of Tom Pulu Chelton Doya Seattle. He came to America. I wanted to go back to Burma with him. Some of the senior monks at the monastery in California, advised me that the [__] was hitting the fan at in

California, which is often the way it is in Western Dharma scenes, especially maybe California ones. You know, it was like the board of directors were located in San Francisco.

And it was just all kinds of chaos erupting at that monastery. the like the Burmese supporters were in open revolt against the board of directors and trying to take over the monastery without realizing that you can't just take over property from like the legal deed owner of the property, that kind of thing. It was like the uh classic textbook case of schizophrenia in in a German nun that was there who was making

trouble and just all kinds of problems there. And so I went back to Burma with Pakogus.

And on the way to Burma, before we got to Burma, we spent a week or two in in Japan. And then we spent like 10 days in Thailand. And then we spent like three weeks in India and we went on the the pilgrimage there. Then went back to Thailand for another 10 days and then finally went to Burma. And we went to three of the four holy sites because Pakoku

didn't want to go to Lumbini which is in Nepal because he tried to go there before and for some reason they would not grant him entry into Nepal that it

was some kind of visa hassle he was
having and so he was anticipating that
that might happen again and so we went
to Bodgaya Sarnat and Kushinagar plus we
went to a bunch of other places you know
we went to the ruins of Nanda university
and Wesi and we went to uh uh
Sabat, you know, and went to the some
the famous monasteries that the Buddha
stayed at, you know, the Jeta Grove, we
went there. We went to the Bamboo Grove.
We went to Vulture Peak. I looked for
the Black Rock where Venerable God um
became enlightened through self-
termination, but I couldn't find it.
that was right next to um Raj Gear which

used to be Raja Gaha near near Vulture Peak that sort of thing. So we went to a bunch of places but we never went to Lumbini in Nepal because the the Seattle who was leading the expedition um wanted to avoid any potential like visa hassles that he had had in the past.

So how was it? It was fine. I mean, it was like Bodga Gaya was one of the first places we went to and it was like it's either going to be like this sacred place that's just glowing with with spirituality or it's just going to be like this old temple made of rocks and it kind of was both at the same time. I mean, the beggars there are just

I mean, they're really it's it's sort of

like gad flies or something. They just hound you relentlessly. A lot of places in Burma it's or in India on the I mean there's just you just get like harassed by beggars or just people wanting to get money out of you somehow or another. That was one reason why I couldn't find the black rock. I didn't want to ask anyone to help because if they help they're good there's a good chance they're going to stick their hand out for payment after they help you. And being a monk I didn't have any money. being a like a strictly practicing monk, I didn't have any money.

So, um, Bodga Gaya was it was

interesting.

I mean, I went around to not just the Burmese place and the Bodga Gaya itself, you know, the the Bodhi tree, went around to some of the other monasteries. the the Bhutanese monastery really was one of the most impressive just like with regard to the architecture and the the decorations and so forth. Um let's see I went to uh well before we went to Sarnat we stopped in Baronasi or I went to the burning gats and that was that was impressive

um just seeing corpses burned. I mean, I'm not going to go into details. We just don't have time. But that was impressive. Um, see what else? There was

another one.

One place we went to, now I can't think

of it,

but

okay. So, let's see. If I haven't been

to all four, have you visited any of

them? Yeah. And how was that experience?

Yeah, that's you get the condensed

version, but yeah, I have been to three

of them, the ones in India.

Um, I mean, there was one experience,

I'll just throw it in as a total

digression, even though we don't have

time for it, that one time the all the

other members of the expedition went to

a restaurant. And being this like

hard-nosed monk, I didn't want to go
into a restaurant. So, I ate in this
matador mini bus where we were traveling
in this matador mini bus. And there was
a big fly this like inside the inside
the mini bus with me. I'm by myself
eating my meal. Everyone else is at the
restaurant
and I'm worried a little bit that this
fly is just going to land right in my
tea. You know, you had like this milky
special tea stuff or maybe it was
coffee. I don't remember now. It was
good and I wanted to drink it. And of
course, the fly just landed right in it.
And this was like in
I mean this was like

a place where that fly could have been anywhere. I could have been like licking the soores of a lepous beggar right before landing in my coffee, but I wanted to drink that coffee so bad. I was willing to risk it. So, I just got rid of the fly, you know, flicked the fly out of the out of the coffee and drank it anyway. It was my greed overcame any kind of common sense cuz that fly could have been anywhere. Just feeding on diseased dung or something right outside the mini bus for all I knew. I think that was some vasy visily. So I'm just going to move on. Next question after that totally totally

uncalled for digression. And this is from Moambo. And Moambo says, "What are your thoughts on human biases?"
But that's not that's not the whole question because he's got there's an essay here. Every person has their own beliefs and ideologies and it infiltrates into their dharma. like you have a right-wing bend so you would think Buddhism of of the left is not the right one and vice versa someone on the left would think your Buddhism is not the right one I personally believe there is no right view but only rejection of all views right and wrong views are subjective and a person cannot detach themselves from their culture and

personal biases yeah including an enlightened being to some degree while talking about Abidama with Brian you told you don't believe Abidama doctrine is not the right one but according According to Burmese, it is so at the end of the day, a person believes what he wants to according to their biases. If a woke person reads Buddhism, he will think Buddha is leftwing. If a redpilled person reads it, he will think Buddha was a right-winger. How can one detach themselves from their innate nature and biases?

Okay. Well, first of all, I'm I'm really not particularly right-wing. I mean to

to a like the far left, anyone to the right of Karl Marx is just like a a fascist Nazi right-winger. So I've been accused of it many times. But if I take those political compass tests, I I generally wind up pretty close to the middle.

So I mean I'm like a classical libertarian, something like that. But that's that's fascism from the from the point of view of a lot of people nowadays.

So let's see human biases. It's uh yeah I mean right and wrong views are subjective and a person cannot detach themselves from their culture and personal yet to some degree even

enlightened beings are just going to
adopt for the sake of convenience if
nothing else the assumptions of their
culture at least to a a profound degree.
So let's see.
I guess the main question here is how
can one detach themselves from their
innate nature and biases?
Well, you do it mainly through
through mindfulness.
I mean it's to some degree it's always
going to be there.
I mean you just you're a product of your
culture. Even if you detach from that,
you detach from your personality, the
personality is still going to be there

culturally conditioned.

So I mean one thing you do is you leave society which is where like the cultural conditioning took place. You leave society, go off alone into a cell or a forest or whatever. I mean, that helps to separate you from a lot of it, and you just don't get embroiled in politics and so forth. If you're a monk living in a forest, you know, you just leave that behind. That gets rid of a lot of biases. You're still going to have biases, though. I like certain foods you're going to like, certain foods you're going to dislike. You're going to dislike noise. You're going to not like the loudspeaker blasting in the distance

at the the local village. this kind of thing. You're still going to think like I mean if you're American, you're still going to think like an American. I mean I was trying to be like an ancient Indian monk but still I mean ancient Indian monks had no knowledge of Led Zeppelin or Gilligan's Island which is stuff that's going on in my mind a lot. I mean, I don't obsess on Gilligans Island, but still, you can use Gilligans Island as a teaching tool, you know, or you can just have in the background of your mind Led Zeppelin. I remember one time I woke up in a cave in Burma with four sticks by Led Zeppelin just

pounding away. And it was like when I woke up, it was still it was pounding so that it I got the distinct impression that it had been going since before I woke up. It was just there. four sticks has really pounding drums in it.

So let's see here.

How can one detach themselves from their innate nature and blastes? You have to do it through mindfulness. It's like in the scene there's only the scene. In the herd there's only the heard. In the felt there's only the felt. In the mentally sensed there is only the mentally sensed. So you just see it as I mean you don't identify with it. It's just mental states are arising.

You know, you get some food that you don't like in your bowl or some lady pours soup right all over the cake that was already in your bowl. He's great lady, you just poured soup all over my cake. But still, it's like if you're being mindful, you just watch that that thought arise and it's not you. It's just the thought is arising.

And if you master that, then it's like there's this person who's just going through the motions, just nature taking its course while your mindfulness is just detached from that. It's still there. It's just you're detached from it. Like pain, for example, you can feel

pain. You can detach from it. It's just
a sensation that is arising.
So the easy answer is mindfulness.
And I'm going to move on to the next
question. This is from Red Snapper.
And Red Snapper says, "Do you believe
the Sea Peoples existed?" And the sea
peoples, for those of you who are not
into ancient history, were uh a group of
pretty much like seafaring pirates in
the eastern Mediterranean that helped to
bring about the Bronze Age collapse,
which was a massive collapse of
civilization around the year 1,200 BC.
So like the Trojan War was probably an
event in the in the Bronze Age collapse.
That was the collapse of Troy was like,

well, I guess the Iliad doesn't get to
the end, but
the Trojan War was like the process of
Troy collapsing during the Bronze Age
collapse. Greece collapsed. Most of the
most of the the the kingdoms and empires
in the area collapsed. Egypt remained,
but it shrank way down. The Hittites
were I mean, their their empire died.
A bunch of them, a bunch of them just
were wiped off the map and and you just
had dark ages for centuries until
finally Greece, for example,
it started the the archaic age, you
know, a few hundred years after the
collapse.

But do I believe the sea peoples existed? To the extent that I accept that people exist, then historically, yeah, I would believe that the sea peoples existed. I think the Greeks were some of the sea peoples. I think they were called the Aiawa which was at least by the Egyptians in their incription in their inscriptions.

The in Egyptian inscriptions referred to the Greeks the Masonian Greeks as the Aiawa which is like a corruption of Aans.

And then you had the Peliset who were like the Philistines before they settled in what later became Felistia. They apparently came from Gree or from from

Cree.

So I mean there were there were a number of these sea peoples that sometimes they would group together form like a coalition to attack some place like Egypt and uh sometimes they acted alone I guess and I guess what allowed the sea peoples to arise was the fall of the manoan civilization. I have read that the Manowans had like a navy that protected the sealanes and kind of kept law and order. You know, they would, you know, fight against pirates and so forth. And then when the the Manoan civilization collapsed around like 1,400 BC, then it just sort of left this power

vacuum that allowed piracy to just run a muk. And it wasn't just the sea peoples that caused the Bronze Age collapse. There was like long droughts causing just migrations of people desperate because the crops were failing in their own homeland and then you know the sea peoples were just resorting to just pillaging preying upon um other other people to some degree. But yeah, I do think the sea peoples did exist. And I'm going to move on to Red Snapper's next question. And this one was under a a video I did with Brian. He said, "Do you believe in the mantids?"

And

um like the mantids would be like an

alien race that are very advanced.
According to my friend Brian, I think
the grays are are like servants or
minions of the mantids. The mantids are
just very way more advanced than the
grays are. you know, they're just pretty
much um advanced beyond human emotion
and so forth, which is maybe one reason
why they're seen as insectoid,
but I am skeptical of the whole
existence of mantids and grays and so
forth, except as a paranormal
phenomenon.
So, um I can accept that it's like this
world is being generated by human
consciousness. at least the human

experience of it is being generated by human consciousness. And
um I do think that like UFOs, which are now called something else, um and grays and and reptilians and so forth, are just sort of paranormal phenomena that are kind of filtering through into our version of reality, but they're not something that can be like quantified and verified by science, like empirical science. It's just sort of they're getting in through the cracks in the laws of laws of physics and not really following completely the laws of physics that science has to use to verify things so to speak.
So yeah, I mean the universe is infinite

I assume. So that in an infinite universe, anything that's possible is I mean anything that can be imagined is possible. At least in a metaphysical sense. That's David. I got that from David Hume. That's almost an exact quote of David Hume. So if it's possible for there to be mantids, then somehow out there somewhere there's going to be mantids.

But I think the ones involved in close encounters of the third kind and so forth are primarily a kind of paranormal event. rather than space beings from other planets coming here to prepare us for membership in the Galactic

Federation or whatever the hell that like the ufologists many of them are persuaded of.

So I'm just going to move on to red snapper. Third question is why did nana vera terra born herald Edward Muson musen masen I don't know how to pronounce that name. Why did nyan vera unal alive himself and I pretty personally think red snapper already knows the answer to this question. He's just asking this question just so I'll say it publicly. I mean assuming I mean just going with the idea he knows the the lay name of Nyanava. He knows who Nanavira was and he knows that Nyan Vera selfdeleted. He unalived himself. So in

all likelihood red snapper here already knows the answer to this question but it's kind of a like a a spicy gossipy kind of reason. So he wants me to talk about it.

Red snapper.

So Nyan Veritaterra was an eccentric existentialist philosopher turned monk. Um he was friends with the first famous Nyanamoli. In fact they were ordained together back around 1950 in what was then called son. And then Nyanaviraa assumed or he came to the conclusion that he had become an Arya while he was he was doing a walking meditation just like philosophizing and

then something clicked. He thought that he had become a sodapana and so he just sort of cut off nyanamole. You know they were no longer in a position of parody as he put it. you know, he was just too far above Nyanamoli to to want to for it to be worth his while to continue associating with him. And I mean, his his interpretation of Dharma is just hyper intellectual. It's like you wonder how a frog could possibly be unenlightened when the mechanics of unenlightenment are like even the subjective mechanics of it are so complicated that you'd have to be an intellectual to even understand the explanation.

But anyways, around 1965
after he'd been a a monk for 15 years
and a sodapana for I don't remember how
many years he developed priapism. In
other words, his uh his ingazat remained
in a kam state. Kamanam is poly for uh
an ingazat in this state and it just
means ready for action.
So he he had priapism and he thought
that it was a side effect of a
medication that he took for dysentery.
He had really bad dysentery. So much so
that his intestines were scarred and he
was in a state of chronic pain because
of it. And so he thought that it was pro
that this was a side effect of this

dysentery medicine that he took. But in all likelihood it was like a hysterical conversion reaction that it was probably psychossematic. And he found it so bothersome, so distracting
that he eventually euthanized himself with ether that he somehow got a hold of.
Although probably the chronic pain from the the dysentery scarring was also a factor, but he he considered it to be uh mainly because of this this this common ingazat problem that he was having.
the angata I guess would be poly ingazat is the Burmese equivalent of angata where it's like the uh the you see it would be like the appendage of

generation

might be a good translation of that.

So I'm just going to move on to the next

question which is from Mr. Pronov

and I'm just gonna just allow me a

minute here. I want to scroll a little

bit here and yeah we're getting close to

the bottom. We're getting close to the

bottom, you guys.

Okay, Mr. Pronov.

Yeah, we we might be this might not even

set any records. It's gonna It's gonna

be close. We're gonna be like three and

a half hours for this one, but this is

one and a half videos. Mr. Pronov says,

"Up until 19th century, child marriages

were the norm all over the world. What were the reasons it stopped? Is it because of industrial revolution that a shift in general consciousness happened?" I don't think so. I think child marriages were the norm all over the world. Um mainly and I mean that was just sort of the natural way of things. I mean it was like that since ancient times and then it stopped in modern times not because of the industrial revolution in my opinion but because of feminism. You had like jealous women not liking that men were attracted to teenage girls.

So it's I assume it's mainly due to like resentment and like bitter complaint

from more or less feminist females in

modern western society that have caused

a certain like approprium. Is that is

that the correct pronunciation?

Approprium.

you know, it's just sort of it became

like no longer politically correct to do

that sort of thing

despite like Elvis and Jerry Lee Lewis

and

numerous other people well up into the

20th century.

So, let's see here.

I guess the main reason why it stopped

would be feminism and just women

complaining about that sort of thing

because they just didn't like that men their age were attracted to women much younger than them or girls much younger than them.

So let's see here.

Um

next question. Siobakipad Zidana says you have said you you differentiate philosophy from religion via worship. However, in the Zen tradition there is a saying where they say to kill the Buddha on the road which means that you shouldn't rely on any external authorities to save you including the Buddha himself. Would you say there is any anything analogous to this in the terravada tradition or is worship

entrenched in the terravada tradition?
Well, mainly I said the difference
between philosophy and religion is that
religion involves worship whereas
philosophy doesn't. If you add worship
to philosophy, you get religion.
So I did say that.
So let's see here in in the Zen
tradition there is saying that when they
kill they say to kill the Buddha on the
road which means that you shouldn't rely
on any external authorities to save you
including Buddha himself. Would you say
there's anything analogous to this in
the terab tradition? Well, I mean,
Siobakian sepatra seems to be assuming

that Buddhism is necessarily religion
and not philosophy. But some schools of
Buddhism would be more accurately
described as philosophy than religion.
The worshipy aspects of Buddhism would
be more religious. But the I mean
obviously the more philosophical
iconoclastic
non-devotional
schools of Buddhism like Majamaka at
least as represented in the moola
majamaka caraka that would be more
philosophy.
So would would I say there's anything
analogous to this in the terab
tradition? Well the ataka wagas don't
believe anything have no view no

position.

I mean, that's that's pretty good. I mean, that's kind of zen-like. Some there have been some scholars who called um the atawaga proto majamaka just because majamaka seems to be like a a logical justification for the position of the atikawaga.

So, I means I'm not particularly religious. I'm more philosophical than religious. So for me, Buddhism is more a philosophy than a religion. I mean, there's obviously devotionalistic Buddhists who who worship the Buddha as though he were God or make up cosmic

space Buddhas that they they literally worship.

So I mean Buddhism can be a philosophy or a religion or a combination of both.

So yeah, I mean the Aika would be a good example of that

or I mean there's like the the famous statement of the Buddha gives some kind of discourse and he asks Sar Puta, do you believe what I just said? And Sar Puta says, "Not yet." And then the Buddha praises him. Yeah, that's good. You don't just take whatever I'm saying and just just believe it.

So I mean there are statements along those lines you can find in the sutas but I mean the atikawaga is pretty

radical in that regard. It doesn't say
kill the Buddha but is it does you know
say you know don't hold any position
which is not particularly religious.
So I'm just going to move on to
Siobanad's
see okay
second question says when you say you
define religion through worship what do
you mean exactly for example does it
mean looking up to someone does it mean
emulating them as that can be seen as
the highest form of worship or do you
mean treating them like a monarch where
you prostrate to the person Because
since the Buddha attained party nibbana,

he isn't going to listen to any person's prayers and he isn't going to save you or help you in any way. As even when the Buddha was alive, he said that the datagatas can only show the way. So I'm curious what worship means in the Buddhist context, especially in Terra. Um, well, I mean, I haven't Let's see. Maybe I should just look up the word worship in the dictionary.

Worship. No, I spelled it wrong. worship and then okay noun the feeling or expression of reverence and adoration for a deity

or adoration or devotion comparable to religious homage shown towards a person or principle. That would be kind of

that would kind of explain the worship of some Buddhists where they they revere dharma um the way that some theists would revere a god. And then uh the other ones are archaic honor given to someone in recognition of their merit. We don't need to deal with that one. Okay. So worship is sort of like the belief in some superior being or a superior principle in some cases and just sort of like a a reaction to that I guess some sort of reaction to like a superior being or the belief in a superior being. And I mean, if you consider the Buddha to be a superior being and you rever him, that could be

considered worship. You know, just bowing in front of an altar to the Buddha would be worship.

So, let's see.

But still, not all Buddhists would be religious. And I'm not even referring to like the materialistic Buddhists of of the West. Not that all western Buddhists are materialists, but I mean obviously a lot of Western Buddhists are like secular humanists with some Buddhist flavoring at it.

So for them who don't bow to statues, that kind of thing, they might not be particularly religious either. But that's not the only non-religious Buddhists out there.

So let's see.

reverence for what is considered to be a superior being. Although maybe like a someone who hates God, you know, so long as they still believe in God, then maybe that could be considered religious, but it's still the belief in a superior being.

Uh let's see.

Let's see. He isn't going to save you.

Yeah, I'm see where is it? the since the Buddha attained parting nibbana, he isn't going to listen to any person's prayers. I I've already mentioned in a previous Q&A, it was some time ago that I used to know a village doctor near the

monastery where I was staying in Burma and he said that he prays to the Buddha and I I asked him like the Buddha is has attained part in Ibana. He's no longer in samsara according to Terravada. So how are you going to how can you pray to him? and he's not going to hear what you're, you know, he's not going to hear your prayers. And then this doctor explained to me that the Buddha could see into the future. And so in the past, he would look into, he could look into the future and see this doctor praying to him. So that's just a little bit of an aside there. But let's see.

Define religion through worship. Yeah. Yeah, I mean it' be reverence to some

being considered to be superior, which
for would apply to most Buddhists to
some degree. I mean, if you consider the
Buddha to be a man and you respect him,
that's not necessarily religious.
But when you're causing the Buddha to be
like superhuman, you know, he's Manusa,
he's beyond mere human,
then I mean that would be a definitely
you got your foot in the door to
religion. And then if you're like
revering him in that context,
bowing to his statues, praying to making
offerings, that kind of thing, then that
would definitely be like full-blown
religion.

See, so I mean that's that's close enough, I guess, to an answer. And really, we're we're well over three hours at this point. So I'm just going to move on to sea of Action Cadena's third question which is um I've already pretty much answered this se of action sepsis thoughts on Trump and his entire administration lying about the Epstein files. Well, I don't think his entire administration is lying.

And to what extent they're lying, we can't really know because we don't even know the truth. I do think that Epstein I mean he had clients. It may be that there they destroyed the list and say there is no list which wouldn't

technically be lying because it no
longer exists but still I mean Epstein
did have people coming to his place and
fornicating with underage girls. I mean
that's almost certain. I mean Prince
Andrew has pretty much admitted to that.
And there's there's pictures out there
of, you know, these people like Prince
Andrew, you know, consorting with
underage girls,
at least, you know, arms around them and
this kind of thing.
So,
yeah. And I mean, it's I've already
answered the question in that in all
likelihooding the truth would just cause

like this huge explosion

of some sort or another.

So I guess just refer to the answer that

I already gave on this this particular

issue and uh

and see of action cad is just

blackpilled in general

you know he's

next question this is from liberating

insights

and liberating insights says

just a hypothetical question on the

nature of consciousness does it still

continue after the death of an arahant

or does it cease to exist. And again,

this this the standard question of like

what is it like to be fully enlightened?

What are the mental states of a fully enlightened being? This kind of thing. What would the Buddha think about this? What would he say about that?

So,

I mean, the Buddha himself refused to answer questions like this. Like, does the datagata exist after death? The Buddha refused to answer

So

let's just say you've got infinite formless consciousness, but anything that's infinite and formless transcends duality. Has no way. You got no way of perceiving it. And so from a samsuric point of view, it just doesn't

doesn't exist. Anything you say about is going to be invalid. And if it's it exists in some nonsamsaric way, some ultimate absolute way, you can't talk about it.

I mean, you could say that it just transcends the duality of existence and non-existence

and that any individual person is partaking of like an infinitely small fraction of this infinite consciousness, infinite formless consciousness which has to be everywhere including inside us.

So the human mind is just sort of taking that infinite consciousness and like like complexifying and organizing it and

and and utilizing it, but it is sort of like the quantum field in in like theoretical physics.

So yeah, I mean consciousness doesn't isn't created or destroyed going with that point of view unless except for like winaconda

which is consciousness that's being like complexified

u organized and utilized you know that kind of consciousness but terra Buddhism is not really good at explaining consciousness as consciousness mental states are one thing but consciousness as consciousness I'm it seems to me that terra

really can't explain it very well which
is kind of understandable
because consciousness as consciousness
is like the the quantum field.
So yeah, consciousness in that sense, I
mean it just persists. It just it might
stop being complexified in a certain
way, turned into mental states, but
still it's like the quantum field,
so to speak. At least that's one way of
looking at it.
And so I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from Jeffrey. And
Jeffrey is the last questioner of this
this particular Q&A.
And Jeffrey says,"I have heard there is
a sect of Hindus that believe the spirit

does not take possession of the body until 100 days after birth. What are your thoughts on this?" And I would be skeptical of an exact number of 100 days because I mean, if it's a spirit, I mean, it's not even really going to be like bound to the same way of measuring time as we are. that time might if it exists at all might be very different for some karmic stream entering into a human body. The orthodox explanation of terravada is that the karmic stream rebirth linking consciousness occurs at the moment of conception. So from a terabat point of view that abortion would necessarily be murder,

but I'm I don't think it necessarily works that way. I mean, I allow myself the the liberty of being skeptical with regard to that. And I am reminded of something Rahm Da said in one of his early books about how um some babies um they become like the the karmic stream enters into them early on in the embryionic development so that when they're born they're just already completely like assimilated to being a baby. And so they're the babies that are crying and acting acting like babies. the stereotypical baby. But then uh Ramdas also says that sometimes the karmic stream won't enter into the into the

fetus until shortly before birth. And he says those babies are the ones that just seem like stoned out. They're just like staring in in incomprehension because they haven't fully assimilated into being a baby yet. And so there might be some truth to that. I think it's possible that the the karmic stream so to speak can enter at different times. I mean it can enter very early on or it could enter late. And it may be that like some cases of sudden infant death syndrome are caused by I mean the baby was born but there was no karmic stream that entered the baby at all. There was just nobody there and so the the body

just stopped working and died because
there was no consciousness animating it.
So I think it it is possible that
um the karmic stream doesn't necessarily
enter
um a human being at the moment of
conception of the sperm fertilizing the
egg. There has to be the karmic stream,
the gandaba that enters right then. And
then somehow you've got this complex
human karma inhabiting a fertilized
cell. A single fertilized cell
that I mean that's kind of hard hard for
me to wrap my head around.
I mean, it might be that the karmic
stream just has like this little tendril
attached to this fertilized egg, but

still, I mean, it seems like that fertilized egg would be way too small to hold the complexity of of an of a human being's karma.

So, yeah, I think that it can vary. That's just my own guess. And it's certainly not what orthodox terravada teaches. But I don't think that 100 days would be more plausible than at the moment of conception. Especially I mean what? It couldn't be 99. It couldn't be 102 every once in a while.

So

yeah, those are my thoughts on that. And I'm just going to move on to sec to Jeffrey's second question which is do

you face a certain direction while meditating such as facing north. Um when I was a monk I would just sit in whatever was the most convenient place and so it could be facing in different directions. Um I think the Buddha was mainly wasn't he face facing east? I think facing east is considered to be the most auspicious direction or maybe his followers would face east and he'd be facing west facing the sa I can't remember now not that I don't think it's extremely important but I do think that facing east is the most auspicious you know it's the direction of the rising sun and all that and in poly you know it's like east is the first direction

mentioned and it's like in fact it's
it's even sometimes I can't remember if
this is poly or yeah I think it's poly
where east is is like forwards west is
backwards north is left and and south is
right that's how they measure it so it
was sort of like east like on a on a map
made in western civilization north is
always up but in India it would be like
east is always up in ancient India if
they made maps
But with regard to meditating,
um I don't do formal sitting practice
anymore, but when I did, it was just I
would just sit in the whatever was the
convenient direction. Like for example,

if if um when I was si living at a certain monastery where I was living in a little room off the side of the congregation hall, then I'd either sit on my sit on my bed and meditate, in which case I was facing one direction, or I'd come out and sit in front of the altar, which would be in a in a different direction. So I mean if there's an altar and you're going to be sitting facing the altar, you just generally just whatever direction the altar is facing, you're going to be sitting in the opposite direction. So yeah, I really wasn't it really was not important to me what direction I would sleep. Although they do have in

Burma um there's like the auspicious side for I mentioned like you got that little niche sticking out of a house where the altar is. I think that would generally be on the eastern wall.

So you'd be facing east when you're meditating too.

And uh I think with regard to sleeping, the Burmese have like traditional ideas. It's better to sleep with your head in in a certain direction, but I don't remember which direction it is.

So I'm just going to move on to Jeffrey's third question, which is the very last question of this extremely long Q&A.

And he says, "As I have heard, there has been 20 21 trillion dollar spent on the war on poverty and 70% has been spent on administration.

Does this make bureaucratic social work wrong profession?" Well, I assume by wrong profession he means wrong livelihood. And technically it would not be wrong livelihood. I mean it's being a like a somewhat corrupt somewhat incompetent bureaucrat but wrong livelihood is mainly livelihood that is like selling weapons selling animals for slaughter selling slaves selling poisons you know that kind of thing is wrong livelihood. there's a standardized list and being a bureaucrat that is working

very inefficiently

is not on that list. So technically um

being like a a borderline incompetent

bureaucrat or just a bureaucrat just

inshed in this system that is just

designed to be inefficient and squander

money which is I mean that's largely

what the whole US usid thing was going

on with with Doge and all that um a few

months ago. I mean it's still going on

just Elon Musk has separated himself

from it.

Yeah, it it would not technically be

wrong livelihood. Um, but I mean it

depends on the mental state of the

person doing it to determine whether or

not it is like wholesome or or unh

wholesome.

I mean a lot of the people involved in

like corrupt bureaucracies, they have

good intentions. It's just that their

good intentions don't really manifest as

good results very clearly.

So

yeah, I mean this is just the way large

big government tends to be this way.

And uh so it technically it's not wrong

liyhood, but it it depends on the

individual's motives and their feelings

and their their mental states in general

that determines whether what they're

doing is bad or good or indifferent. And

that's it. That's the end of this Q&A.

And it's well after midnight. It's like 1 in the morning now. So if you got questions you think I can answer, no more than three per episode, please. Then uh go ahead and ask those questions. Ask them their questions. And uh like and subscribe if you haven't already. And and I'm out of here. I'm just You guys be happy or something. And I'm I'm I'm done.

Alrighty then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 154.

I am your host Po Basa. And of course 154 is not prime. It is in fact 2 * 7 * 11.

This is my beverage.

Not coffee this time. It's just unadulterated bovine glandular secretions.

Take a sip of it now.

H, and I'm feeling somewhat out of sorts. Usually, I got to keep this thing bending the right way. Usually, uh, if I'm feeling somewhat out of sorts at the beginning of a Q&A, by the time

I've been answering questions for 15 minutes or so, I just kind of get into the groove and everything's fine. So, maybe it'll happen this time, too. But it's like today for lunch, I ate these two cheeseburgers that I mean the the patty was of meat on each one was like more than an inch thick and they just formed like this cannonball in my stomach which has has continued throughout the rest of the day.

But I will survive. I have every time thus far and I'm just going to have to keep pulling on this. It's like I need to when my woman is braiding my beard, I need to keep my head tilted like this so that it'll come out straight. But

it didn't happen this time.

And we have like the average like moderate middle path number of questions this time. It comes out to like mid30s I think. So we should be well under three hours on this one.

And so I should just commence to answering questions. I'm fixing to start commencing at any rate. And the first question is from Romeo. And Romeo says, "How deep of an influence did Buddhism have on the beatnics and eventually the hippie movement if it did influence these counterculture movements in which ways?" Well, let's see. How deep of an influence?

Let's see what what's the next question here. I think the next question is is similar. So I might be able to just lump this into a sort of a a compound answer. Did any of the influential figures in these movements have any influence on you as as you Okay. No. Well then the next question were Jack Carowak and other influential figures in these movements actual Buddhists.

Okay. So I guess I'll just kind of answer all these in sort of an essay answer. I guess let's just see how it goes. So the first question, how deep of an influence did Buddhism have on the beatnick and eventually the hippie movement? Um,

how deep of an influence? Well, I mean
some of the at least one of the early
beatnics, Gary Snyder was a serious
student of Zen Buddhism. In fact, he did
the Dharmabum thing and would like get
jobs on like
some what some kind of cargo ships I
guess or tankers to to Japan and do
sichins like Zen retreats at monasteries
in Japan um just because he was really
into it. So probably of the beatnics
that were the most serious Buddhists
that most serious students and
practitioners
of of Buddhism, Gary Snyder would
probably be the main one. I think he's

JF Jaffy writer in uh Jack Carowak's you know autobiographical novels.

So let's see that's uh getting kind of skipping to the third question though. How deep of an influence did Buddhism have on the beat? There was definitely an influence of Zen Buddhism on the beat movement. Um, I assume that might have something have some influence on like some of the like Ellen Ginsburgg's weird poetry or like the stereotypical beastro where you've got people just doing offthe-wall

kind of music or poetry readings or whatever just sort of like haikus and this kind of thing. um just sort of the monochromatic element of the beat

movement. You know, they just wear like black mostly, which is pretty zen-like. You know, Zen is fairly monochromatic. Zen art tends to be just pen and ink. I think it was partly influenced by DT Suzuki coming to America and giving lectures on Zen Buddhism. And to the the early beatnics, I mean, it was sort of you know, it kind of filled a niche that Christianity wasn't filling and western philosophy. Maybe some existentialism was embraced by the beatnics, but really they were kind of existentialist sort of zen in their approach. At least the early like intellectual founders of the beat movement, not so much the people

that were just following along because
it came to be in fashion more or less,
at least in some circles.
So yeah, there was definitely a Zen
influence on the beat movement like back
in the 50s and early 60s and then Romeo
continues event and eventually the
hippie movement. But the hippies, they
seem to have largely abandoned Buddhism
in favor of Hinduism. Hinduism was more
kind of colorful and garish and less
stringent in its morals. You know, it's
like Krishna was a rascal, you know,
it's it's kind of it just Hinduism
suited the hippies better than it than
Buddhism did.
So, at some point, the uh the hippie

movement kind of converted to Hinduism
and left Zen Buddhism behind.
But the the influence on on the the
hippie movement, um it's harder to say.
I mean there there was more of a belief
in like karma and aimsa, you know,
universal love and compassion, that sort
of thing. Um, and just cultivating
altered states of consciousness, which
for a lot of hippies, it started off
with psychedelic drugs and then it was
like people got introduced to like
expanded states of consciousness that
they then wanted to cultivate without
having to rely on the chemicals. And so
a lot of the the hippies went to went to

India. A lot of a lot of Nim Kuroli Baba's western devotees back when he was alive were western hippies.

So

yeah, there was definitely an influence. Although I mean most hippies really didn't care that much about Hinduism. I mean, they might like um you know, M if they're they're getting too high like in the Chichin Chong movie or you know, just like the the Jimmyi Hendris album. I can't remember the name of the album. It wasn't Are You Experienced? It was it was one of Jimmyi Hendricks's albums where it was just like this Indian motif, you know, like East Indian, not not American Indian. So, it was kind of

seen as cool, you know? It's like that generation, they they just kind of wanted to get away from just the like conservative Christianity, you know, they wanted to rebel against their parents, rebel against just sort of normie American culture. And so they were looking into alternate forms of philosophy and spirituality and just this something that would give a meaning to life.

So there was there was definitely an influence although with some it was much more profound of an influence than others. I mean most beatnicks really they you know they were just following

along with the look you know or most hippies you know they're just following along with this counterculture and you know they really weren't thinking about it all that much but some of them did. I mean it's like some of the early beatnicks were serious practitioners of Zen. Some of the early hippies, some I mean some of the hippies in general, they just they became like practicing Hindus. They're still old hippies at ashrams in places like Arizona or New Mexico. Dallas, New Mexico, I guess, is used to be sort of like a mecca for for like old hippie Hindus.

So

yeah, I I hope I answered that question because I'm moving on to Romeo's second question and these are all interconnected. So I probably answered some of it already. See, did any of the influential figures in these movements have any influence on you as a youth? If so, which ones? And how? I did read Gary Snider's Earth Household when I was like in college, I guess. So it made an influence. was something that was memorable. Um, you know, he was he had a lot of the same interests in me. He was interested in in Buddhism and like primarily Zen and I was interested in Zen too before I got converted to

Terravada. Also, he did a lot of like hiking in the Pacific Northwest stuff that I did. Presumably, he he experimented with psychedelics, that kind of thing. Um, let's see. He he was like he I remember him in one of his memoirs talking about how he was hiking, you know, and they were dressed like beatnicks, I suppose, and they come across some rustic person out in the woods and they explain to him we're forest beatnik.

Um but I mean see in the movement I guess like the hippies that became devotees of Nim Curly Baba which kind of included Ram Das. I mean Nim Curly Baba was like a guru to western hippies at

least some of them. And then Ram Das after he stopped being Dr. Richard Albert and became Baba Ram Das came back to America he also became uh a guru to hippies you know he just his talks were just teeming with people with long hair and bare feet and bell bottoms and love beads and all this kind of stuff. A lot of peace signs.

So, in a way, I mean, that sort of thing was definitely an influence on me. I used to wish that I was a hippie. I would have made an excellent hippie. I probably would have made an even better beatnick, but I was born too late for that sort of thing. I remember one time

my father, he told me this more than once. He says, "David, one of these days you're going to wake up and look around and realize you're the only hippie left."

And I did have like long wild hair when I was like in high school and college that sort of thing.

Let's see here.

So yeah, I mean the most influential figures in the hippie movement. The beat movement was way before my time and so it didn't really have an influence on me when I was young. I kind of studied up on it a little bit later. didn't read Carowax the Dharma Bums until

just like probably less than 10 years ago.

So yeah, it would be like the whole like Hindu Hindu spirituality coming into the west through like Nim Karoli Baba and I really wasn't into Maharishi Mahash Yogi although the Beatles were you know the Beatles went to his ashram the Beatles I mean in music you had the introduction of like sitar and tabla into like painted black by by the rolling stones And I mean the Beatles I mean the beat from the Beatles probably came from the beat movement you know it's it's they weren't naming themselves after insects not really.

So there was that kind of influence also you know within me without you. Is that the name of the song? That's I mean that's that's like a a Hinduistic kind of song. It's got some uh sitar in it even.

So yeah, I think the the biggest influence on me from like the hippie movement um aside from just ideas growing my hair long, you know, sort of imitating like a latter day ecohippie, that kind of thing when I was young. Oh, I got a dog underneath me. um was stuff like Rahm Doss who himself was kind of a hippie. I mean he had long hair and the beard and that the beads and everything although for him that was

more of a Hindu thing but he fit right in with the hippies and he had hippies just flocking to his talks. So that would probably be the the biggest influence of the hippie movement on me when I was young especially would be through through that sort of thing just sort of Rahm Doss as a kind of conduit to to like Hinduistic ideas through sort of like a a hippie interest in in Hinduism

and so let's see here the third question were Jack Carowak and other influential figures in these movements actual Buddhist well I Gary Snyder was definitely a Buddhist. I don't think he

even I think he even didn't drink
alcohol when all the people around him
were just getting blitzed out of their
mind. He'd be like sitting at the at the
beatenick party just like like in the
full lotus like meditating serenely
while everyone else is just going crazy
all around him. Jack Carowak, he was
interested in Buddhism. He studied
Buddhism. wrote a kind of like long
mahay like quasi mahayana sutra
although um I don't think he was really
practicing Buddhism he was just kind of
interested in it and the whole sort of
existentialist
u you know kind of life is meaningless
kind of approach which is pretty much in

harmony with zen um you know that appealed to some of them um but I really don't know a whole heck of a lot about you know the the early like the founders of the beat movement and so forth to know, you know, which ones were serious Buddhists, which ones were just interested students of Buddhism and which ones just didn't give a damn. But Jack Carowak was definitely interested, you know, he was like a fellow traveler and Gary Snyder was definitely he was into Buddhism. Um, like someone like Alan Ginsburgg, I'm not sure what his approach would be.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Phily's. And Phil Leys, I think this is like the second time in a row he has asked the transgressive fourth question. And so, his name is going on a list twice. Really, you you should you should take upon yourself the responsibility of not asking more than three questions.
So anyways, Phil Leys says, "Barkclay's philosophy is so obviously a trivial artifact of grammar exclamation point. I'm starting to think the modern west sucks at philosophy compared to ancient India and China. Probably why it's so good at natural science." Thoughts?
Well, I don't think that Barkclay's philosophy really is a trivial artifact

of grammar. I mean the main point of Barklay's philosophy is that you cannot prove that matter exists. That is profound. It just shook the the foundations of western philosophy which I mean that led to like David Hume which then led to Emanuel Kant which then led to like German idealism and so forth. So it's not I mean it might appear obviously a trivial artifact of grammar to Philes but I mean he did bring up one profound point and that is you cannot prove that matter exists regardless of grammar.

You just cannot prove that matter exist. Physical matter that there's physical

matter out there even if no one is
perceiving it which is pretty much of an
assumption made by materialistic
scientists
but you can't prove it. It's just an
assumption. It's just considered to be
an axiom.
So let's see. Starting to think the
modern west sucks at philosophy compared
to ancient India. Well, it depends on
the philosopher. David Hume,
I mean, he's he's a heavy hitter.
Emanuel Khan, he's damned hard to read,
but he's also a heavy hitter.
I mean, even Barkley, I mean, that one
thing. I mean, he he shot his wad on
just this one philosophical point. He

really didn't make much of an impression in western philosophy other than that one point which I mean people have tried to prove him wrong for hundreds of years now and have failed. There is just no way to prove to objectively conclusively prove that physical matter distinct from mind exists.

And that is profound. And I mean it took Mahayana Buddhists to get to that point after the early Buddhism, the early Buddhist schools just started accepting physical matter as an ultimate reality. They considered mind to be another ultimate reality. They they weren't materialistic to the point of thinking

that that consciousness is just some
sort of side effect of biochemical
processes in the brain, anything like
that.
But
I do think that idealism
uh or at least skepticism with regard to
the existence of physical matter really
is it it is a wise attitude to have.
So I mean and I think Phil Leys may be
overestimating
like Indian and Chinese philosophy that
a lot of Indian philosophy really is not
all that profound. A lot of Chinese
philosophy really isn't all that
profound. Just the stuff that makes it
to the west is like the best of the

best.

So considering that there are four questions from Phils I'm just going to move on to the next here. What are the best one to three pieces of advice you can give after 50 plus years on earth? Well, number one, I mean, if if you don't learn anything from me other than one thing, and if you haven't learned it already, it's whenever you are unhappy, it is because you desire something. every single time whenever you are unhappy whenever you are upset whenever you are miserable it's because you want something and so just knowing that knowing the second noble truth of

Buddhism is uh invaluable
and then sometimes you can just even
like what is it that I want why am I
like I am unhappy now therefore
I want something so what is that and
sometimes if you examine that you
realize it's something completely
stupid. You wanted to go outside and do
something and it's raining. Well, you're
unhappy because you want it not to be
raining, which is a stupid thing to want
because all the wanting in the world
isn't going to make it stop raining.
Unless maybe you've got some kind of
psychic powers.
So, that's a good one. You can just sort
of examine your own mental processes and

sort of in a way almost deconstruct your unhappiness.

You know, it's like I'm in a hurry. I got to get to work. I'm I'm I could be late for work. I keep hitting every red light on the way to work and you're just like fuming and grumbling. Why is that? Why are you unhappy? Cuz you want to get to work on time. You want to get from point A to point B without having to keep stopping.

Easy enough. That's a kind of mindfulness.

So, that'd be one. The second thing, if you learn only two things from me about Buddhism, if you haven't learned them

already,

regret, remorse,

a guilty conscience is always bad karma.

It is always unskillful, unh wholesome.

It always makes things worse.

Which doesn't mean that you do something

wrong. You should say well oh well

doesn't matter I mean if you do

something wrong let's say that causes

some kind of harm to somebody then you

should acknowledge that you did

something wrong you should then you can

say I'll try to do better next time you

know you can try to rectify any harm you

know try to you know sort of make amends

for that but just like kicking yourself

over and over sometimes years later

over something that happen that in all
likelihood you didn't even I mean
sometimes it's just like something that
was a complete accident
you know it's there there's some people
I remember one person was contacting me
I can't remember the the exact story now
it was like somebody
they wanted to borrow his car or his
bicycle or something so he let them and
then they they got in a fatal accident
and it's like he feels guilty because if
I hadn't lent them my vehicle they they
wouldn't have died and it's How could
you possibly have known that? And then
you're just like just it's it's like

you're just kicking yourself for years
afterwards. You you considering yourself
to be a murderer and a horrible person
because of something that I mean it's
it's pointless
and you couldn't even even known that
that was going to happen.
So yeah, that would be one and two.
Second noble truth of Buddhism and
regret, remorse, guilty conscience are
always
bad karma that are just adding more
badness to an already bad situation. And
then the third piece of advice that I
can give after 50 plus years, actually
60 plus years on earth,
just

investigate dharma. I suppose take
dharma seriously.
And uh those would be like the three
best pieces of advice I could give to
the the casual random stranger.
Um just off the top of my head. The
first two pretty obvious. The third one
just take dharma seriously. You know
it's not just this interesting
philosophy, you know. It's it's
something that it's it's a really a good
alternative to one just being the the
normie who is just you has following the
salmon like instinct to swim upstream
spawn and die or you can rebel against
that rebel against norminess

normmyhood

like I did when I was like 16 just rebel

get into lots of trouble I mean that

that's not not a really good answer

either So taking like looking at the

world through a spiritual lens is

actually something that is extremely

valuable.

But you can't just decide to do that.

It's something that pretty much has to

happen to you spontaneously or

intuitively or something like that.

So I'm going to move on to Phil Lee's

third question. How was your faith in

Buddhism so strong all those years? And

did it ever waver? Well, my faith in the

SA wavered

big time. You you see monks behaving horribly. It's like, oh, the SA is just so corrupt. You know, it's more than 90% rotten.

At least that's the that's the impression I got um many times when I was living in Burma, especially, sometimes living in America, too.

um my faith in like orthodox phil orthodox like scriptural Buddhism. Yeah. I mean I've always been very skeptical of that. So I've been relatively skeptical of the song since I was a junior monk. I've been relatively skeptical of like spiritual dogmatism, scriptural dogmatism, you know, like the

Buddhist equivalent of Bible

fundamentalism.

I've been I've been skeptical of that

for all since I was a junior monk in

some respects even before then.

So,

um, but like the the main points of

Buddhism, I never really had doubts

about that. It just seemed to be fairly

obvious. I mean, once you understand it,

it does seem to be pretty pretty

self-evident. And of course, the

atikawaga is it says don't believe

anything. have no view, no perception,

which I mean, how can you argue with

that? Unless you just insist that I want

to believe in something, but it's it's

obvious. I mean, if you get into a state where you're not thinking anything, you have no view, no perception. I mean just experientially you've been there you know that it is a much more conscious more enlightened state than firmly believing in this group of sentences accompanied by certain emotional feelings you know it's all perceptual it's all symbols

so yeah the atakawaga kept me in robes for 30 years um I mean at least after the first 10, the atkawaga was definitely I mean it was sort of like the gold standard as far as I was concerned. I couldn't really argue. I

mean there's there's some sutas that are kind of going off in tangents that aren't really hammering away at the main themes but like the main themes of the atawaga I couldn't really argue with that. I just deep down have accepted that regardless of, you know, Buddha ghostism and corrupt monks just out making money, this kind of stuff.

So yeah, a lot of it is just experiential, too. I mean, once you get to a certain level, then you just I mean, there's no turning back really. I mean even once you get to a certain point in dharma then even if at the surface level you just get sick and tired of it and you turn your back turn

your back on dharma still you feel it

back there you know it's back there all

the time

it's just once you get to a certain

point I guess

that I mean there there's no turning

back really

so I can have doubts about certain

aspects of the scriptures or a songar or

whatever but the main essence of dharma

I really could not doubt

so I think I'm just going to move on

next question and this is a difficult

one this is Phil Ley's transgressive

fourth question and he should try to do

better in future although he shouldn't

feel guilty but he should determine all right I I asked the transgressive fourth question and I'm just going to not do that anymore

to the test of filthy's ability.

So, Phily's fourth question is what does nagarina mean by samsara is nirvana?

Nirvana is samsara and this is a nagar question. I'll put on the put on the the majamica fez.

I don't get a lot of opportunities to wear this fez much especially with the braided beard. Now, I need a calf tan or something to wear with this to wear with this whole motif. Now maybe I'll work on getting a calf tan.

So what does naruna mean by samsara's

nirvana? Nirvana is samsara. I mean it's a difficult question because it's been years since I've read the mula majamaka karaka which is where most of my knowledge of nagarjuna's philosophy comes from. I've also read a book called um nagarjinist philosophy by k venata ramanan.

I might even have it on the bookshelf back there, but I kind of doubt it. Which is uh it's it's sort of like a commentary on a book attributed to Nagarjuna, but it probably wasn't like the original historical Nagarjuna. It might have been like a disciple of Nagarjuna, who also happened to have

been named Nagarjuna, something like that.

And I've read other books about Majamaka and so forth, but still it all gets jumbled together in my mind with like my own understanding of samsara is nirvana. Nirvana is samsara.

So like for example in the mulama karaka it says what is dependent co-orination that we call emptiness. It is making known with regard to it is just the middle way. So there it's like emptiness is dependent core rising but then nirvana also is empty and so it's like in a way they're sort of telescoping it down into the same emptiness in that sense it's all empty nirvana especially

if it's in quotes especially if it's an

idea a concept

it's just part of samsara in that regard

so also there's another statement

I'm not sure if this is from the mulama

caraka. I think maybe it is

but if not it's from that other

commentary to a text

which was like the uh praa paramita

shastra or something like that. It goes

everything is true nothing is true.

Everything is both true and not true.

Everything is neither true nor not true.

This is the teaching of Buddha, which is

kind of Zen-like. You know, it's obvious

that Zen has its roots in in this sort

of well, let's see, you start off with archaic Buddhism, which teaches stuff like the Atakawaga, which is called proto majamaka by some scholars, and then uh Terravada or like early Buddhism started getting away from that, getting more and more philosophical and analytical. You know, vibbaja is like a synonym for terravada, which means like the doctrine of analysis, dividing stuff into parts, that kind of thing. And so you had one of the the Mahayana movements is sort of a reform movement trying to get back to the original spirit.

And and then it's like majamaka was sort of like a logical framework to justify

the like the pragny parame. And so,

uh, I don't know where I was even going

with that, but you know, it's it's and

then Zen Zen became they took the baton

and continued on their way.

So, I mean,

statements like that, it's really

um, in a way it's it's it's difficult to

explain is what it is.

But I mean anything you talk about is

going to be samsaric. You talk about

nirvana, nirvana becomes samsaric. So

that's one way of looking at it. I mean

you've got like the the heart sutra

saying form is emptiness. The very

emptiness is form. So I mean again it's

sort of it's it's like my explanation
coffee cup made out of ceramic
right. So which is it? Is it a cup or is
it ceramic? Well, it's both. But cup
does not mean ceramic. Ceramic does not
mean cup. I mean, you could say this is
ceramic. You can also say this is a cup,
but they're not synonyms, but they're
both at the same time. And so my best
understanding of samsara equals nirvana
is samsara would be cup. Nirvana would
be ceramic. Although when you get to
infinite formlessness,
no beginning, no end in any dimension.
Then I mean you can't really say that it
exists or not. It just transcends the
duality of existence or non-existence.

You know, sort of like the beginning of
Hegel's dialectic. Pure being and pure
non-being are indistinguishable.
So like the Tibetan book of the great
liberation attributed to Padma Sambaba
says nirvana is just a concept of mind
especially if it's in quotes especially
if it's a if it's a concept
thinking about nirvana that's that's
just samsara any idea you have about
nirvana is going to be samsaric
so that's those would be the two main
ways of explaining it and I'm not
exactly sure exactly how the Mulam
Majamaka Caraka explains it because I
read it years ago and it's just been

jumbled up in the same junk drawer with other info about the same kind of stuff including my just my own best interpretations of things.

So let's see here. What does Nagarja mean by Samsara is Nirvana? Nirvana is Samsara. You'd have to ask Nagarjuna I guess or read the mulumakamaka karaka for yourself. Um but when what do I mean by samsara is nirvana? Nirvana is samsara it would be essentially ceramic and cup don't mean the same but they are exactly the same which violates the aricetilian laws of thought but there's no way of getting around it. Ceramic and cup are not synonyms, but this is both at the same

time. This is a and not a simultaneously violating arisetilian laws of thought. So I'm just going to move on. Next question. If Philes is unsatisfied with that answer, it serves him right for asking a fourth transgressive question. So next question is from superlump and superlump says how far back can you trace your own ordination lineage just back to Tom Puluciato I was ordained in the Tom Pulu tradition which was founded by Tom Puluciato I was ordained by one of Tom Puluciato's disciples

so

I'm not sure who Tom Puliato's

um preceptor was gosh. I mean, they're

going crazy on the Discord server.

They're just

okay.

So, yeah, I can only go as far back as

the beginning of the ordination lineage,

which is Tom Pulu Seattle, founder of

the Tom Pulu tradition, but again, I

forget who Tom Pulu's

um preceptor was, you know, what

tradition he was ordained in, that sort

of thing.

So,

I just realized my emergency backup

beverage is on my desk over there, which

I will be getting up and retrieving

soon. So, anyways, super long. Second

question,

did you vote when you were a monk? I voted twice when I was a monk, both for US presidents. And I have to admit, I the first time I voted as a monk, I actually voted for Barack Obama, who if I knew then what I know now, I would have voted for neither Obama nor Mitt Romney. But the thing is, I was just new to YouTube, you know, I'd come back to America and I was looking at YouTube and they had this prompt saying, you know, the presidential debates on, you can watch Obama and Romney debating. So I just out of curiosity watched the presidential debate between Obama and Romney and it was clear that Obama was

operating at a higher level of consciousness than Romney was. Romney was like a a like some kind of shark with like a plastic smile stuck to its face.

But just because you're more intelligent or some such I mean not even necessarily more intelligent. to say you got more depth to you or at least you appear to have more depth to you. That doesn't mean you're going to be a better president.

And I mean now stuff is coming to light just recently that Obama was allegedly guilty of treasonous conspiracy because of the whole Russian like the

Russia gate hoax that he was helping to orchestrate knowing full well that it was [__] but still trying to damage first of all trying to prevent Trump from becoming president and then trying to damage Trump's presidency. and thus damage the United States by damaging the president and his authority and what he's trying to get done and that sort of thing.

So anyways, and then after that I did vote for for Donald Trump back in 2015 or 16.

So yeah, those are the two times I voted. And you could say, well, you're not monks probably shouldn't vote. But

then again, I used to know an Australian monk in in Burma, and it's the law in Australia. You have to vote. It is a crime not to vote in Australia. Or at least that's what he was explaining to me. And so, even if he was living in Burma for years,
he would have to apply to the Australian embassy
for an absentee ballot in order to avoid breaking the law.
and he was kind of a socialist so he always voted leftwards I'm sure
so yeah I answered that question and then this next question is even easier
lump asks was Jesus a Buddhist monk and I would say that is extremely likely

that he was not a Buddhist monk in fact
I consider it extremely likely that g
that Jesus never left like the Levant
like like Galilee and Judea, that
general area, you know, Sir Phoenicia,
I I think he he spent his entire youth
there. All this talk about Jesus going
to India and learning profound spiritual
truths and then coming back, highly
unlikely. He was a carpenter's son, the
son of a carpenter in like a small town
Galilee.
So I mean he was the disciple of John
the Baptist for a while and John the
Baptist was kind of monastic
sort of you know he was kind of monastic

and so Jesus he may have been a kind of Jewish quasi monk that may at some point have had some indirect influence from Buddhism

but no the idea that Jesus actually went to to India or Tibet and became a Buddhist monk is extremely unlikely in my opinion. I read this one a friend of mine in Burma, a a Burmese monk in Burma uh actually was impressed by this article that he read about how Jesus came to India or Tibet, I don't remember which and he was called Jivvakarita. That was that was like his poly name jiva karita which obviously is like sort of a polyization of Jesus Christ and Jesus was not calling himself and that

Christ was not his last name

and jiva karita just means like you know

life is accomplished or something life

is done

but yeah it's it it was just bogus

there there's no real evidence other

than some

very questionable texts that maybe were

found in a cave in in Tibet, you know,

in modern times.

So, I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from Gnostic Rocker.

And Gnostic Rocker, I think he also

asked a transgressive fourth question,

although he asked one question and then

he unasked it. So, he didn't really

transgress. His name's not going on the list. So you don't have to worry about that. Oh, I guess I'm done with done with Majamaka and Nagarja. So I'll take that back off. Put it over here. No, maybe I'll put it over here. Okay, then. So, um, Nostic Rocker asked a question that he thought was answered in the previous Q&A, so he he unassed that one and asked a different one. But there are some points here that I could comment on. So, he's not transgressive, but I'm still going to comment on it. His first question that he retracted
is as follows. Did you spend most of your time in one temple when you were a biku with one abbot or meditation master

or were you free to move around as you pleased? I believe in Thailand there's a five-year rule that demands the new monastic should remain under the tutilage of one's teacher or one teacher for the duration of that period before having the freedom to be parapotetic. And I it is true I did answer the first part of this question like
um I did not spend most of my time in one temple when I was a beo. I didn't move around especially after I'd been a monk for five years like I came to Burma and I started staying at Cheltz Doya in central Burma and I was I mean nobody spoke English there. I didn't speak

Burmese yet. I was just sort of all of a sudden living in this tiny cave like an oven in just blazing heat in almost total isolation. And the abbott there, venerable Pakoku, he was worried about me. So he sent me to a school monastery near Mandalay for for over a year so that I could learn
like Burmese mainly, study some poly, that kind of stuff. And so then I came back to Cheltz Doya and I started I was looking around for other places. I started going to I went on a trip to southern Burma. Stayed at the baita for a while. Looked at some other places. Stayed at um Alando Kathapa a combined total of about three years. Um Chelson

Doya I stayed a combined total of maybe three years. Um the one place I lived at longer than anywhere else was onebo met do or onebo wildlife refuge monastery. I spent gosh maybe 10 years there or something like that but I did move around and it is true this the main thing I wanted to comment on was this part here where he says I believe in Thailand there's a five-year rule that demands the new monastic should remain under the tutelage of one teacher for the duration of that period before having the freedom to be parabetic. Yeah, that's that's built into vineia. There's a rule that you have to live in

dependence called Nissia on your preceptor or on some other teacher who is a senior monk in good standing who's qualified to be a teacher for at least five years or five reigns retreats before you can just go off and be become a free agent. Just go off and live alone, that sort of thing.

Although there's kind of a loophole where if you get permission to live alone in a forest before you've been independence for five years, before the five years are complete, then so long as you get permission from your your preceptor or your acharia, your ajon to go off and live in solitude in the forest, you can do that except not

during the reigns retreat. you have to come back and stay with your preceptor or teacher during the reigns retreat. So that's that's built right into Vinia. It's not just uh uh like a rule in Thailand. It's just a rule in Terra Buddhism.

So I'm just going to move on to Gnostic Rocker's first legitimate question that he didn't unask. What are some of your favorite verses from the Bible?

Well, I guess one of the first things that came to mind was the very first line of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament. Futility of futilities. All is futile.

Or let's see what it says in I've got this Catholic Bible just happens to be sitting right here. This is really a good Bible. I I'm really impressed by this Bible. See here.

Um it says, let's see, it is useless. useless says the said the philosopher life is useless all useless.

So, it's usually um let's see, it's not futility of futilities. Vanity of vanities. I guess the saint the King James version is vanity of vanities. All is vanity. And then this one has it um useless. It's all useless. And then there was another version, the revised Barkley version, I think, was futility of futilities. All is futile. And then I

had a German uh Catholic priest. No, he was Austrian. Hope I didn't just insult him. An Austrian Catholic priest told me that um in Germany it's translated as puff of smoke. It's all a puff of smoke. And I think that is a more literal translation than vanity or futility or or uselessness or that kind of thing. But I I I do like that verse. And then another one of my favorite Bible passages is also from Ecclesiastes. And this this translation is it just really it's really a kicker. Let's see. It's Ecclesiastes chapter 8 7-10.

So let's see here.

No,

it's chapter nine. Chapter 9:es 7-10.
It is as follows. Go ahead, eat your food and be happy. Drink your wine and be cheerful. It's all right with God. Always look happy and cheerful. Enjoy life with the woman you love as long as you live the useless life that God has given you in this world. Enjoy every useless day of it because that is all you will get for all your trouble. Work hard at whatever you do because there will be no action, no thought, no knowledge, no wisdom in the world of the dead. And that is where you are going.
So that's kind of a black pill, isn't it?
At least he says, "Be cheerful. It's all

right with God,

man." But I I do have a soft spot in my heart for Ecclesiastes.

Let's see. With regard to the New Testament, of the four gospels, I like the Gospel according to Mark. It has less like mythology added to it. And that Matthew and Luke are largely based on Mark. Anyway,

and see here. I like the scene in Luke of the Pharisee and the tax collector in the temple where you've got this Pharisee and a tax collector go to the temple in Jerusalem and the Pharisee just goes right up front and he's, you know, he's like, "Thank you, God, for

not making me like other men, especially not like that tax collector back there." You know, it's like, "I follow all your commandments. I give a tenth of all I own to the church for the upkeep of the temple and the priests."

And then the tax collector is standing in the back. He's he doesn't dare to approach the altar. He doesn't even dare to look up at it. He just stands in the back his head down just beating himself in the chest saying, "Dear God, please have mercy upon me, a sinner." And then Jesus says it's the tax collector who goes who finds more favor in the eyes of God. Although from a Buddhist point of view, you'd be better off just kind of

sitting right in the middle and and you're not boasting and you're not beating yourself up either. You're just sitting there serenely meditating. Also, a few uh a few teachings of the New Testament that I really like and that I would like to see more emphasized in Buddhism. First of all is Jesus telling his followers, when you do good deeds, do it secretly. You know, don't advertise it. You know, don't brag about it. Don't do it in front of everybody so everyone will think, whoa, he's doing that good deed. You know, you should do it secretly. Then God will know and that's really all that matters.

I mean, from a Buddhist point of view,
that's not really God. But still the
idea of doing good deeds secretly
appeals to me.
And also there's one one saying where
Jesus is is advising people
don't say that you're going to go and do
such and such. You're going to travel to
such and such city and make such and
such amount of money and then come back
and be be rich and all this.
You shouldn't talk like that. You should
say, "God willing, if I don't die first,
that's going to happen.
And that kind of reminds me of Ajan Cha.
You know, it's uncertain. You know, you
don't know for sure what's going to

happen even tomorrow. You can't be 100% sure the sun's going to come up tomorrow. So, you should always have a certain amount of skepticism, a certain amount of uncertainty with regard to the future because you really don't know. You can't see a minute in front of your nose.

So, I think that's profound also. And there is some of that in teraba Buddhism al especially in the teachings of Ajan Cha

uncertain not sure.

So anyways I'm just going to move on to Gnostic Rocker's third question or I guess second question after the

retracted one. It may sound like a strange question, but what was it like to live in the same ochre robes with little to no variation on style or hue of those robes for year after year? I remember reading the memoirs of a westerner ordained in Thailand in the 1960s. He said he went through an intense period of lucid dreaming in which he envisaged himself wearing psychedelic robes with an alms bowl adorned with bright flowers. He would wake up in a fervid state realizing that his cosmic hallucinatory dreams were a direct result of the narrow psycho physical constraints affecting him because of his limited clothing. Well, I

mean, I've never really been into
like gody clothing.
I I like gray is one of my favorite god.
So, I mean maybe maybe he was a little
bit gay or something. Maybe he was like
a worked for a fashion designer or
something before he became a monk. I
don't know. I mean, for me, it wasn't
that big of a deal. Although, it's true.
I've never liked wearing brown.
Just brown is just not one of my
favorite colors. I mean, brown food is
good, you know, like chocolate and, you
know, whole wheat bread and that kind of
thing. But just brown clothing or brown
just as a color I never liked very much.

And you do have a certain variation of choices. Maybe in the for the Thai forest tradition, you got to wear it like that cat [__] green color that's from the the heartwood of the the jackf fruit tree. But in Burma, you there's a range from like sort of yellowish and reddish and purplish. It's it's there's all sort of a brown element to it, you know, yellowish brown or reddish brown or purplish brown, but still there is some variation. Like the the inner bark of the ironwood tree has this really nice kind of a purplish brown sort of like a um almost like a burgundy color. That's really nice.

But it's true. There is a list of

forbidden colors for robes in the vignia
and gray is not on that list.
Technically, it's allowable for a monk
to wear gray robes, although I never
attempted it because I'm sure the
conservative Burmese would be
complaining big time and continually
offering me brown ones or red ones
so I wouldn't be wearing this wrong
color of gray when actually gray is just
not on the list of forbidden colors.
So
yeah, that was that would be about it. I
mean, I didn't like I haven't like
didn't like wearing brown very much, but
I mean, it's just what you do. It was

just no big deal, you know? It's just sort of like you don't like the color of your own skin. I mean, there's not a whole lot heck you can do about it. You just sort of make peace with the situation. So, I just made peace with the fact that I was wearing brown every single day.

So, let's see here. I'm just going to move on to the next question also from Gnostic Rocker.

He says,

"In your decades, I'm going to make sure make sure I'm not skipping one." Okay.

He says, "In your decades of experience, is there a different kind of psychological or ideological type of

westerner that chooses to ordain in Burma rather than another westerner that chooses Sri Lanka or one that chooses Laos or Thailand? Or is it more likely to be explained by a mundane matter of availability or due to socioeconomic reasons? For example, possibly Thailand is a more popular place to ordain because of related reasons such as the decades of the tourist industry there or even because of the availability of good alms food which may not be the case in a Bangladeshi Buddhist area for example. So is there a different kind of psychological or ideological type of westerner that chooses to be ordained in

Burma? I really don't think so. I mean, your karma is going to land you somewhere or somewhere else. And your karma is a mental state that would be psychological to some degree at like a deep level.

But no, it didn't even work that time. Okay. Well, it's still not working. Let's see. I mean, partly I mean, the main psychological differences I think that would could influence such a thing as this would be if you're really conservative in your your like doctrinal Buddhism, like you're you have like a scholarly interest in terra Buddhism or like you're just drawn to a kind of meditation like the Mahasi method or the

Palk method, then well, if you if you're attracted to to the Mahasi method and you know just sort of like the general attitude of the mahasi method then there's more mahasi places in Burma than anywhere else or if you're attracted to the paw out method then of course paw out is in Burma so something like that um that could influence where a person is going to be ordained you just just intuitively or just as a matter of just your personality type or whatever you're just more attracted to like a more Spartan stoic kind of terravada then there's some a lot of that in the Thai forest tradition too but it's like the

difference between Burmese terravada and Thai terra Thai terraata places more emphasis on vignia and also more emphasis on dutanga or the optional extra aesthetic practices so Thai Buddhism is sort of more like bodily disciplineoriented whereas Burma Burma has more emphasis on meditation and also scholarship and like especially Abid Dhama. So I mean if you're really into Abidama, Burma is the place to go. Burma has the foremost Abidama scholars on the planet.

And if you're really into certain kinds of meditation that is mainly within the the Burmese influence like the Mahasi method, then you'll choose choose Burma

or at least a Burmese place outside of Burma. You know, there's like mahasi places. I'm pretty sure there's at least mahasi affiliated places in Malaysia, for example. There's some in Thailand even.

So,

um yeah, that would be a factor. Uh also I'm reminded that like Ajan Sumedo, one of the senior western monks in the terra sa he chose Thailand because he was in the peace corps in Thailand and that's how he got introduced to Terravada Buddhism. And so after he was finished with the Peace Corps, he became a monk in Thailand. So things like that, you

might go to you might go to Thailand as
just a tourist even and then you get
exposed to it and so that could also be
a factor.
Also, it's just easier to get into
Thailand and then get into Burma.
So yeah, I mean ultimately it's it's
more of a
um
a karmic thing. Like I was fortunate.
And I think my karma served me well that
I was ordained in a Burmese tradition
because the ties are much more
conformity oriented. They make a rule of
conformity. You know, you all have to
dress the same. You all have to pretty
much act the same. Whereas in Burma, it

may be the Burmese are just I mean you don't have to make a rule. They just do it automatically. You know, they just conform. They just follow along with what everybody else is doing. Which gave me more leeway because when I chose not to follow the rule, they didn't know what to do about it.

And I would choose not to just follow along with what everybody was doing. They were okay with that. And I mean, in a way, it just they they couldn't wrap their head around it really. You know, he's just like the the weird barbarian, you know, we're just not going to interfere. That kind of thing.

So, I mean, if if you're really into Abidama, you're really into scholarship, then Burma is the place. espec meditation even Burma is the place um you're more into strict monastic discipline and ironically I was really into strict vineia but when you're just doing your own thing living alone you can be as strict as you please Burmese monks who try to be strict at a lax monastery and most monasteries are lax in Burma in Thailand too it's my understanding then they can get antagonized and really messed with and even driven out of the monastery There's there's statements in the in the text where um the SA is like the ocean

and the ocean will discard a corpse. You know, it's like the the corpse will just get washed up onto the beach and the song is like that. Like a rotten monk just gets expelled. But now it's pretty much the obvious the opposite where it's the the conscientious monk gets expelled because it's that the ocean is largely composed of corpses at least in certain areas.

I don't want to just completely badmouth the song. There are very wise, very saintly, very advanced monks out there, but the majority going with statistics are somewhat otherwise.

It was sort of like medieval Europe. You

read about like Christianity in Western Europe like in the 14th century then it was pretty rotten. There was there was a pope actually passed that had this decree I think papal bull it's called I think that um allowed women not to make confession because so many women were being assaulted in the confessionals by priests. It was it was becoming just like pandemic.

So it was like all right just women are absolved of responsibility of making confession. I mean that was going on in the middle ages. There's stories like if you read um Burton Russell's history of western philosophy he he talks about this a little bit how you know you've

got some notoriously rotten monastery where the monks kill the abbott because the abbott is trying to instill some kind of discipline. And so the monks just revolt and just off him. So then the pope or bishop or whoever sends another like strict abbott to come and take charge of the monster and he doesn't last very long either. They just kill him off. That kind of thing. So Burmese terra isn't as bad as medieval European Catholicism. But it's kind of a similar deal. Just the whole attitude. You know the the lay people have absolute stainless steel unshakable faith. You do have some genuine saints,

but for the most part, the clergy is corrupt.

And that's a little bit of a rant because I've kind of lost track of the question here. Oh, different reasons why people might be ordained in Burma rather than Thailand or Sri Lanka or some such. Excuse me.

So, I guess I answered that question. I'm just going to move on. Next question.

This is from Austin and Austin says, "All the young people are on Tik Tok nowadays. Have you ever thought about uploading videos on there for bigger exposure?" Um, I'm I'm sure the idea has arisen and passed away a few times, but

yeah, I'm not really interested in Tik Tok. Um, I've never like gone to Tik Tok as a site. Never once have I have I gone to Tik Tok and it was just completely accidentally. You just accidentally click on a link or something and it takes you there.

Um, to some degree I agree with Gerchef and Gchef had this idea that I mean you shouldn't hear dama too easily. you shouldn't get exposed to it too easily and you should have to work for it a little bit because the cheaper something is, the easier it is to get something, the less it is worth.

So, I'm completely fine with having a

limited um limited presence on the internet. And if that means I have way fewer followers, then that's just the way it's the way it is.

So

yeah, I'm not I don't think that I'm going to be uploading videos onto Tik Tok unless somebody just volunteers to do it, but Tik Tok videos are supposed to be short, and I don't do very many short ones. Like this one is going to be way too long to to upload onto Tik Tok. Unless somebody were to just edit out like individual answers to individual questions, maybe something like that would work. So anyways, I'm just moving on to Austin's next question.

Buddhists meditate on emptiness and arrive at the realization of emptiness while Hindus meditate on the self and attain the insight of I am that. Meditation can lead to different even seemingly opposite realizations. Does this mean that meditation confirms pre-existent beliefs making it a form of confirmation bias? Well, I mean if you're getting into deep meditative states, you go beyond language really. And so when you come out of that state and interpret that state that you're in, you're going to use the the pre-existing like culture that surrounds you to explain it. So

like like

a Buddhist attains fourth Janna, he'll explain it in in Buddhist terms. I mean, you can't just explain exactly what it's like to be in fourth Janna. It's beyond language. You stop thinking long before you got to fourth Janna. and a Hindu attains forth Janna when he comes out of it he'll explain it along Hindu lines a like a a Catholic 16th century Spanish Catholic contemplative attains fourth Janna then he's going to explain it along Catholic lines he might have to make up new jargon and new ideas just because attaining fourth Jon and Christianity is not really part of the like the main teachings that's just

something that happened and like someone like St. John of the Cross, he's like forging new ground and trying to explain this stuff. Not that he was the first person to attain fourth Janna probably in in cath in Catholicism. It may be like his mentor St. Teresa of Avula also attained Jonah and people before her probably attained Janna in within Catholicism like within the Carmelite contemplative order,
but they're just going to explain it differently. And like I was saying earlier and I've said many times before like St. like um I almost said St. John of the Cross Hegel like he begins his

dialectic with the very first thesis of his dialectic in his logic pure being. Then the antithesis to pure being is pure non-being. And then according to Hegel they they just merge. You can't tell them apart. And so then you have to have the synthesis of like distinction. You have to somehow distinguish like you have to have like a contrast of being and not being which is creates like figuring ground and then it's off to the races. Then it's you know from from the Dao see from the Dao came the one from the one came the two from the two came the 10,000 things. It's similar to that. So when you're getting into like the absolute which can't be put

into words. I mean whatever you say about it is going to be invalid. You can say that it's empty or you can say that it's full. I mean empty would be like non-being. Pure non-being and Hegel saying that it's full would be like pure being in Hegel. But I mean there are attempts to explain the same thing.
So the the meditative experiences you get into like a deep meditative state you know just beyond language where you've pretty much escaped from cultural conditioning then like a Buddhist a Hindu a 16th century Spanish Catholic can all have essentially the same experience. It's just that when they

come out of that experience they have to use the dogma of their spiritual system to try to explain it.

But when you're not at the really super deep levels of meditation, then certainly there's going to be um meditation confirming pre-existing beliefs. You can have visions of the Buddha or if you're a Christian, you might have visions of the Virgin Mary, that kind of thing. But when you get just beyond symbols, just into relatively pure consciousness, you know, the mental states are so subtle that I mean, they might as well not be there. Then I mean you you've transcended cultural conditioning and it's the

experiences would be universal.
But when you come out of those states,
you've got to rely on cultural
conditioning to try to explain them and
the cultural conditioning will have
various explanations.
So I'm just going to move on to Austin's
next question
which is as follows. When I'm debating
ontology, I mean that might be his first
mistake.
I just interrupted myself. Just a
second. I'll start over. When I'm
debating ontology, I'm encountering some
trouble substantiating the belief in
nibbana. Most people cannot understand

something that is not a thing, not no thing, not both, and not either. It's not an ontological state. It's beyond existence and non-existence. It's unconditioned and indescribable, which contradicts what I affirm early in debates, which is everything is dependent and conditioned. Well, every condition thing is dependent and conditioned. When it gets to this point, I'm accused of breaking the laws of logic and trying to substantiate something that cannot be substantiated, something that doesn't exist. Basically, what they describe as an attempted philosophical, illogical, indescribable mumbo jumbo that isn't

logically coherent with conventional reality, which is conditioned, which also brings a whole host of relation problems, yada yada yada. Please help. How can I substantiate Nabana better? Well, I mean, if you're debating ontology at at this kind of intellectual level, you're probably there's a good chance you're dealing with people who are acquainted with philosophy.
So, one thing I do to try to kind of get a foot in the door with western people who are philosophically literate is just bring up Emanuel Kant. Emanuel Kant had two levels of truth pretty much like Buddhism does. You've got the thing as

it seems and the thing in itself. The thing as it seems is like mental symbols conjured up by human psychology which according to Kant is all we can know.

And that's kind of goes back to Barkley saying that you can't even you cannot prove the existence of physical matter. So all you know is your own mental states. And according to according to Kant, we are just stuck in our mental states with with no escape.

But according to Kant, there's also the thing in itself, the thing as it really is, which is beyond conception.

Um, and I would go so far as to say Kant was not much of a mystic and so he

probably never re fully realized that there is one ultimate reality, one highest truth that we can know directly and that is the contean thing in itself of consciousness of our own consciousness.

Not like perceptually symbolized.

You don't give any meaning to it, any symbolic meaning, but still you get rid of all of this perceptual rubbish, all these symbols like you get into Johnic states where you're not thinking anymore.

Then you can penetrate through this mindmade symbolism and get to the contean thing in itself of your own

consciousness

and that would be what you could call

nibbana.

Some people would call it nibbana.

Some Buddhists would call it nibbana.

Some Hindus would call it nibbana or

nirvana.

So I mean that's that would be one way

of kind of getting the point across to

like some western intellectual type.

Just go with western philosophy instead

of eastern philosophy because it's

something that they can get more of a

handle on. It's more in accordance with

their cultural conditioning. and just

point out like like Kant there's the

thing in itself which is the ultimate

reality and the thing as it seems and according to Kant everybody is just wallowing in things as they seem with no access to the thing in itself even though the thing in itself is right there the thing in itself of us is what we're made of. It's our essence, but we're just so lost in these symbols and distracted by the symbols and so we can't penetrate through that to the ultimate reality that lies beneath it. You know, everyone's stuck at the level of cup. They don't get ceramic. And there's one last sip in there. And I'm going to get the emergency backup beverage. Just

a second.

There it is.

Okay. So, yeah, that would be one way of getting your foot in the door anyway. I mean, you're never going to fully understand Nirvana. Nobody, like I I keep saying, any idea you have about Nirvana is just going to be samsaric and delusional.

So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Xenithoid.

And Zenithoid says, "Are horses seen as noble animals in Buddhist countries similar to how elephants are?" Well, it goes all the way back to the poly texts. Like in Vineia, there's a list of 10 kinds of meat that a monk is not allowed

to eat, which pretty much kicks in the head the whole idea that the Buddha was requiring monks to be vegetarian. Unless I mean, you can just say, "Well, this will just add later." But there is a list in Vineia probably not just terravenia. It might not be in Sarvostatada because the Sarvostadans were just vegetarians
but it could still be in there and they just most of the scholars just weren't that interested in vineia and didn't bother to have it edited out or something.
But of the the lists of 10 kinds of meat that you're not allowed to eat, I

probably can still remember it too. You got human flesh. Of course, you're not allowed to practice cannibalism if you're a monk.

Let's see. Lion meat, tiger meat, leopard meat, bear meat, hyena meat, uh horse meat, elephant meat, snake meat, and dog meat. And horses and elephants are forbidden not because they're considered to be like unclean, like dogs and snakes were considered to be unclean. That's why monks are not allowed to eat dog meat or snake meat because it would just make the song look bad. You know, they're eating this gross stuff, at least from the ancient Asian point of view. But horse horses and

elephants were considered to be noble emblems of the king. You know, they were like royal animals. So it would be sort of like sacrilege or disrespect to the king, disrespect to the ruling class or some such for a monk to eat horse meat or elephant meat.

So yeah, it's it's right there in the the poly texts that a horse is seen as a kind of noble animal. Um,

but with regard to seeing that in Burma, I like the Burmese maybe the ties also, they're just most of them really aren't in animals. Like Asians,

um, they tend not to like animals very much, just in general, less so than

Westerners do. You know, they're less likely to just pamper their dog and treat it like it's one of their children, that kind of thing.

It's I think it was um Theorough said it seems to be a law that a man cannot have a deep affinity for both man and nature. You're either a people person or a nature person. And East Asian, Southeast Asians predominantly are people people and not nature people. Westerners, you got more nature people in the mix.

And so horses are just kind of seen as things. You know, a horse isn't it for the most part from a Buddhist from a from like a Burmese point of view. Some

people are just afraid of horses.

So

yeah, the the ancient Buddhist

perspective is there in the texts, but

it doesn't really carry over into

mainstream Burmese culture.

I can't really speak for other Buddhist

cultures like um Thai culture or Sri

Lankan culture, Cambodian culture, that

sort of thing because I don't have

enough firsthand

firsthand experience with it.

So, I'm just going to move on to

Xenithoid's next horse question here.

When a horse's leg is broken, it is

usually euthanized. Is this still true

in Buddhist cultures? Um I there they got horses in Burma. I've seen plenty of horses in Burma, but I never saw a horse with a broken leg in Burma. And I assume they'd probably euthanize it. I mean, the main reason why they're euthanized is because there's just no way for the horse's leg to heal unless maybe you had it like in a kind of halter
um for however long it took for its leg to heal, you know, where its weight is not on its leg. And yeah, I don't think that happens in Burma. So, probably they get euthanized. they get sent to a butcher or something. I don't know. I never really heard of it happening in Burma.

So, I'm just going to move on to
Xenithoid's next horse question.
Is horseback riding still a common mode
of transportation in Buddhist countries?
And again, I can only speak for Burma.
And the only people that I saw in Burma
riding horses were police officers.
You've got mounted police officers in
Burma, especially like in rural areas.
they'll ride the horses, you know, from
village to village where maybe you don't
have good roads, that kind of thing. So,
a police base will have horses there.
Um, but aside from that, there are
certain areas of Burma like the the town
of Mayo. Now, it's they changed the name

to Pinuluin. The military government changed the name of Mayo, which is kind of a nice sounding nice sounding uh name for a town to Pinuluin.

And they've got carriages there, horsedrawn carriages. And you can find them throughout like central Burma, probably other places in Burma. There are like horse carts. And the horses are like these scabby looking little ponies. Just beat up bony looking ponies. Not they're not nice looking horses like you're more likely to see in the West. They're just like cart horses, nags, that kind of thing.

I got bitten by a horse in Burma once. I just made the mistake. We We rode in a

horse cart, which is against the rules
for me. I did it anyway.
And I was just going to pet the horse,
you know, kind of pat it on the nose and
it bit me. They really clamped down,
too.
[Music]
So, yeah. I mean, it's mainly for
tourist purposes and just um some areas
in Burma. I mean there's the main
vehicle of transportation in Burma
probably to this day. I mean for most of
the time I was in Burma it was that way
anyhow is the bullock cart. You know
you've got a cart pulled by a pair of
bullocks which are like oxen with humps.

Um, so horse carts is just sort of a localized thing, I think, where the bulock cart, I mean, the horse cart goes a little faster. Um,

it may be that cheap Chinese scooters have replaced bulock carts as the primary vehicle. I I seriously doubt that it would be cars.

So,

yeah. about actual horseback riding. Getting to the actual question here. I've the only people I've seen riding horses that I can remember would be police officers. And I'm moving on to the next question. This is from Sedarta Lohachita. And Sedarta Lohita says, let's see, I'm making sure that we're

still recording here. Okay. Sedarta lohachittita says in the chakawati sihanada suta of the dean nikaya the Buddha said that corruption and adama in society begin when the king fails to give alms and charity to the poor. Could this be interpreted as a form of primitive socialism? Yeah, I suppose it could be interpreted as a form of primitive socialism that um yeah, I mean it's kind of theoretical in the Suta, although the emperor Ashoka actually did uh he set up like free hospitals, even free veterinary hospitals, you know, free rest houses for weary travelers, you know, he did

kind of socialize his empire to some degree, take care of the poor mainly. So yeah, I mean you could call that a kind of protoocialism. Although the actual suta itself of D and A, I think it's one of the later ones. And the later you go in Suda collections, the more likely it is that it's going to be sort of apocryphal, shall we say, not necessarily authentic teachings of the Buddha. But that might be the same suta where the Buddha is saying that you know the king should subsidize farmers by giving them you know seed grain and whatever else they need to get set up as farmers. Um and he was saying that uh that poverty is the

primary cause of of crime which I'm kind of skeptical of personally.

So, I mean, especially like murderers.

I don't think that your average murderer is unemployed.

I mean, based on what I've seen, they tend to be truck drivers, especially the serial killers killing like lot lizards throughout the country. It's truck drivers.

So, let's see here.

Uh, I'm just going to move on. Next question also from Sedarta Loha.

What is the Buddhist view on the concept of duty or dharma as presented in the Bavad Gita? Especially regarding the

idea of fighting even one's own family
and kin in order to restore dharma.
Many advitans, practitioners of advita
say that Buddhism is morally
relativistic because it does not
recognize the idea of the good or dharma
nor a true sense of duty. And that's
that's kind of strange that a Hindu
because advantists
would technically qualify as Hindus
or Sonata Dharm Dharma people. I don't
know. They'd be vulgarly known as
Hindus. Um yeah, it just seems kind of
ironic because from the Buddhist point
of view, they really don't have this
concept of doing your duty. Like if
you're a like you're a soldier, it's

your duty to kill. That's that's just part of your your religious your dharma. Whereas from a Buddhist point of view, killing is always wrong. War is always wrong. Even if killing someone to protect your own family technically is wrong from from like an ancient Indian Buddhist point of view. But to call that relativistic, it seems to me that the Hindus would be more relativistic because they're saying killing is okay sometimes and it's not okay sometimes depending on the circumstance. It's relative. So that would be more way more relativistic than just the hardline early Buddhist point of view. It's

always wrong to kill. Period.

You know, it's always wrong to tell

lies. Period. It's always wrong to

steal. Period. You know, it's it's

uncompromising, which doesn't strike me

as being particularly relativistic.

What is relativistic is when you say

it's okay sometimes and it's not okay

sometimes depending on the

circumstances.

That's relativistic.

Seems to me.

Yeah. So, so the Buddhist concept of

duty is your it's your duty to be as

moral, as virtuous as you can be.

that that's a higher duty than

protecting your own children. As you can

see in early texts,
which is one reason why Buddhism
encourages people to renounce the world
and just cut ties with family, that sort
of thing, because then you might have
this sort of
uh struggling priorities. What's the
what's the word? There's a certain word
for that. It's like, no, I mean, you
shouldn't you shouldn't kill, you
shouldn't harm anybody even to protect
your own children. Therefore, you're
better off not having children from the
early Buddhist point of view.
So, it's it's really not relativistic at
all. It seems the opposite. It's just

like this is the way it is. This is like the universal law.

Whereas this idea of dharma, sometimes it's okay to kill, sometimes it's not okay to kill.

That's more relativistic seems to me.

So

I guess I'm just going to move on to Sedart Loha's third question which is does Buddhism align with the idea of a homeland loyalty to a people or a flag since it can be interpreted that everything is samsaric and not worth dying for even for that hill. Does is nationalism

more than is nationalism adama? Well, I mean worldliness is largely adama.

It's like if you want to be perfectly moral, perfectly virtuous, you pretty much have to renounce the world.

If you've got kids, I mean, it's your duty to take care of those kids. might be your duty to like pick the the lice out of their hair and kill the lice.

I mean, it's it just seems weird or perverse to me that you'd have a devout Buddhist parent who would let his kids be eaten up by lice just because they consider it wrong to kill lice.

There I'm sure there are parents out there. I've uh I remember reading I think it was one of the early books by Richard Gomer about how he spent some

time in Sri Lanka and he was at this monastery and they had paintings on the walls like some of the punishments of hell were on these paintings on the walls and it had people just being crushed by boulders and that was their karmic retribution for killing lice like like squishing lice between their finger between their their fingernails you know squishing them between their fingers that as a punishment for that in hell they're being smashed between boulders. But I think that's rather extreme. And if you are a lay person, I mean, you shouldn't have kids if if you think it's wrong to protect your kids to the extent of like harming somebody else, even even

if it's like lice or intestinal worms or something,
then I mean, no man is worthy of the name man. If he's just going to let his wife be assaulted, then just stand there not wanting to harm the person assaulting her.
I mean, I I used to know this. He this this guy he he was a monk for more than 10 years and after he dropped out of the monkhood he was still really a hardliner with regard to Buddhist morals
and he had a wife at this point you know he'd been out of the monkhood for a while he had a daughter
and I was like what would you do I mean

he was so completely into keeping the precepts you know it's just always wrong he would never do it it's like what happens if somebody is like assaulting your wife or your daughter and and he he actually answered it'd be their karma. And like what kind of a man would be that way? I mean, he should be in in robes. He should be living under a tree. He shouldn't have a family.

So, getting back to the actual question, does Buddhism align with the idea of a homeland loyalty to a people or a flag? Since No, really, it doesn't. You're supposed to renounce the world. If you want, if you are really serious about becoming enlightened according to early

Indian Buddhism, you renounce society. You renounce country, family, flag, all of it. It's all just distractions. It's all samsaric. Wallowing in samsara, keeping you from becoming enlightened. You renounce all that [__] and you go out into a forest and live under a tree. Amen.

So is nationalism adama from an early Indian point of view? Yeah, it would be even I mean just family ties would be adama.

It is true the Buddha did toss a bone to the lay people

you know just keep the five precepts you know but still if you want perfect

morality from a Buddhist point of view
an ancient Indian Buddhist point of view
you got to renounce the world you got to
get away from all these worldly
attachments and distractions
go off wander alone like the horn of the
rhinoceros live under a tree wear rags
and beg silently for your food in the
streets and have no money.
I mean, it's just if you're going to be
a saint, that's that's what you have to
do. Otherwise, you're going to be in a
you're going to be in the shade of gray
zone. You're going to be you're going to
be a sort of morally gray,
I guess. I mean, just like putting salt
and pepper on your food to make it taste

better from a Buddhist point of view is immoral.

you're wallowing in sensuality, you're trying to increase your sensual pleasure.

So, I mean, if you really take that seriously, if you think that is the truth, best thing for you to do is renounce the world.

But you might to some degree be willing to entertain the possibility that a lot of this emphasis on absolute saintliness is like an artifact of ancient Indian culture.

In which case you have more options.

You might be wrong

but that's that's your choice to make. And I'm going to move on to the next question. is from RP AD Arpad and Arpad says, "Can music be used beneficially in meditation or is it wallowing in sense data?" Well, from the Buddhist point of view, I mean that's it's wallowing in sensory
wallowing in pleasures of the senses. I mean, Buddhism is one of the few religions that considers music to be immoral. Any kind of sensual pleasure is something to be avoided if at all possible. Like a a monk, a Buddhist monk is allowed three sensual pleasures: eating, sleeping, and bathing. And even those should be kept to a minimum.

Like originally, a monk was only allowed to bathe twice a month except for under certain circumstances, like he's sick or it's like the hottest time of year, that sort of thing.

But I mean just

I mean I really do not consider ancient Indian Buddhism to be necessarily objective factual spiritual truth. To some degree it is ancient Indian cultural conditioning to some degree.

So, personally, I think some kinds of music, like I mean, if you're going to be meditating and you want to put some music on in the background, I mean, it could be a kind of white noise for

starters. Let's say there's all this noise outside the house, outside the apartment or whatever, and just having just sort of like this soothing drone masking it to some degree. I mean, that that's doable, I suppose. You'd want music that doesn't have any lyrics, you You know, you don't want somebody singing when you're trying to meditate. And you'd want something that is very mellow, very subtle, like some new age kind of music or some like Indian kind of music, that kind of thing. Just very subtle, just like this droning, you know, just not much going on in the music. the more complicated it is and especially if there's lyrics, then it's

going to distract you from getting very deep in your meditation unless you can somehow just tune it out, in which case there's no point in having it in the first place.

Personally, I never really could relate to listening to music to calm myself. If I wanted to be calm, silence works best if at all possible. So I've traditionally throughout my life I've listened to music as a stimulant. That's one reason why I like rock and roll.

So just listening to music that's just like this new age kind of soothing drone.

I I never really I could never really

relate to it. I never really liked it.
But for some people it might work.
I remember uh a few Iaska ceremonies I
went to where you'd have somebody like
playing guitar just kind of gently
strumming in the background that kind of
had a soothing effect. You know, it
would cause emotionally turning inside
out to be not quite so horrible.
So I I can accept the possibility that
under some circumstances certain kinds
of music as a kind of background noise
might help you to meditate. I mean there
could be some kinds of music that is
like specifically developed to raise
your level of conscious. I think Gerchef
experimented with this that he had uh he

was experimenting with music that could actually put you into a more meditative state. So something like that might work at least for beginners, but eventually you're going to have to go beyond that. You're going to have to go beyond sense data.

So anyways, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from sea of action sepa

and sea of action cipadina says

it's hard to understand how karma can work with how we understand the world works

biologically

any mutation that happens at the DNA

levels is equally as valid
as any other but its consequences only
become apparent at the final level of
when the body and mind are fully built
through development. Meanwhile, it seems
karma is able to look at this final
product and then determine which life
you will end up living. But it seems to
make more sense that karma would target
something more fundamental like certain
gene mutations based on certain karma or
even deeper with certain quantum wave
functions being linked to certain karma.
How is it possible that karma which is
supposed to be an objective law is
targeting rebirth based on something
that is many orders down from the source

code of the body like the DNA atoms etc
and instead based on something from a
much less fundamental level like social
status ugliness and other such things
that are downstream values of the living
being. It doesn't seem to make any sense
because Seovakian Cadena is just being
like a wanting materialist at this
point.
Prove to me that DNA atoms etc are
ultimately real. Prove to me that it's
not a mental construction
that you start off I mean you could say
that just first and foremost is the
immediiacy of experience.
That's numero uno.

And then DNA and atoms are downstream from that. Can you prove that that's not the case?

I dare say you cannot.

So this is just like wallowing in materialism and then trying to somehow combine like karma with like scientific materialism.

This let's combine spirituality with spiritual bankruptcy.

It's not going to work very well.

Personally,

I'm of the opinion that atoms didn't exist until they were hypothesized. That DNA didn't exist until it was hypothesized.

Then it's retroactively true. I mean,

you can you can find DNA in like the
remains of extinct animals that have
been dead since before humans existed.
But still the way I interpret how the
phenomenal universe works, it's our
minds are creating this and scientific
materialism
is a very powerful stabilizing force
that I mean it's it goes deeper than
most mythologies do. It's more
comprehensive.
And so I'm still of the opinion Adams
and DNA did not exist at all until there
was some human being to hypothesize
them. At least in in this world.
If you can prove that isn't the case,

then yeah, that's fine.

I'm going to pull my beard braid

sideways.

Well, that one almost worked.

So let's see here.

But another way of looking at it, let's

just say that there is a kind there

there are atoms, there is DNA, but but

it's like an infinite array of

possibilities in like a multiverse, the

many worlds hypothesis. And that your

karma is just choosing a path like a ver

virtual path through an an infinite

array of multi-dimensional

possibilities.

That's another way of looking at it, but

it's extremely difficult to to wrap your

head around it.

H anyways, I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Trasaziz.

And Tzasidiz says, "What would happen if

a biku committed sadisa offenses and

just didn't confess that?" Well, that

happens a lot. And let's say a monk,

let's say he talks dirty to a woman.

That's again, that's a song offense. So,

if you're going to um

do the p the required

let's see what's the word. Gosh, I'm I'm

forgetting words.

Oh, there's a certain word for like

you're absolving your offense, absolving

your guilt.

H

gosh, it's it's usually the translation

for the word pacitia.

But I can sit here racking my brains

trying to remember this word that I have

like a a mental block against and it

doesn't make for very entertaining

viewing I guess. So absolution no that's

not the word

is uh god forget it. So what would

happen if a biku committed sada offense

and just didn't confess that? Well, for

starters,

if you're he's not in in good standing,

if he's got a soda offense that is

unconfessed.

Um, and every day that he doesn't

confess it when he could confess it. If
if he's all by himself, there's no monks
to make confession to, that's one thing.
But if he's living in a monastery
surrounded by monks that he could make
confession to, he still doesn't confess
that offense. Then every day he doesn't
confess it is one more day of penance he
would have to take. if he were going to
be absolved of this offense.
Expedate, that's the word, expeation.
So, let's say he he commits this
offense, you know, he talks dirty to a
woman and
then he doesn't confess it for a year.
Then finally, he decides, well, I should

come clean. I I should be a conscientious monk, and so I'm going to confess it. He's got to do penance for over a year now. And that's a pain in the ass doing doing like confession for that long because you've got to be making confession to all the monks at the monastery on a regular basis. You got to follow all these penences and it's really it becomes so so difficult that uh a monk could just disrobe because of it. I I heard this story about this one monk who he somehow realized that he had committed a sanodicisa offense like two years previously and so he decided well I'm going to have to do penance for two

years and he started doing it and it was such a pain in the ass he just eventually disroed.

So that's one problem. But another problem is at the beginning of um the uposata ceremony when the the biku pad moa is recited and in the introduction like before you actually start reciting the pimoka rules in like the preamble it is stated any monk here who sits through this in silence if he's got unconfessed offenses that is lying. You are guilty of lying if you do not confess your offenses and you sit here when when the monks are asked is everybody completely pure. Is everybody completely pure? If

you sit there I mean if you're
completely pure remain silent. If you
are not speak out it this continually
happens during the theosta recit
recitation. So a monk that has committed
an offense and knows he has committed an
offense who sits there in silence
through the pyoka recitation when he's
asked over and over again you know is
the song completely pure is everyone
completely pure
he's lying technically according to the
poly text itself he is guilty of
deception so I mean that's digging him
even deeper and deeper into a hole also
So, I mean, there are monks that that
just regularly, let's say they

masturbate or something on a regular basis and don't confess it. And so, I mean, they're just they're kind of in a way kind of ruined monks, you know, in in a sense. I mean, they can still participate in when they participate in ceremonies, they're being dishonest, you know, it's it's a kind of tacit lying, just tacit deception. But

um I mean there there quite a few monks that do that. Lots of them. I mean it was probably the the percentage would be in double digits of monks who actually do that sort of thing.

So

yeah that would that's what would

happen. And I'm just going to move on to Taskis is a second question. If karma is only his own mental state and he doesn't feel any guilt after the action and he was I assume happy doing that like talking dirty to a woman why not confess why why not confession confessing would be bad karmically

so yeah well one of the things I've already I've already mentioned I mean you're being

you're being dishonest like if you're participating in formal acts of the song and you are not saying anything when you when you should be confessing then there is that um

let's see and being happy I mean a monk

who is committing a sanodisa offense I
mean he might be experiencing pleasure
but at the same time he knows he's
breaking a rule
and so I mean it's not going to be pure
happiness there's there's going to be
some some bad karma mixed in
but most of this I've already answered
in the to my answer to the previous
question.
So I mean there are complications
if you're a monk who commits sadesa and
doesn't confess it and the longer you
don't confess it just the deeper into a
hole you dig yourself.
So

I think I'm just going to move on. Next question.

I mean this getting back to this one though. I mean, it's like just because you you're happy, you experience happiness while doing something wrong. Or I mean, it doesn't necessarily even have to be like ethically bad. Like for a monk to participate in a wedding would be a song of say offense. for a monk to build a a meditation cabin for himself that is larger than the prescribed size which is tiny. You know it's like 7 and a half like maybe 8 ft by 5t would be the maximum size of a cabin or a meditation hut that a monk can build for himself. And so if he builds it too big

or he builds it in a place that hasn't been approved by the SA then that's dea also.

So, I mean, you could be happy doing that, I guess, but if you're doing something like talking dirty to a woman, then there's going to be impure mental states. You know, you're going to be inflamed by lust, your mind perverted by desire and all that. So, you might experience some kind of happiness, but still at the same time, it's not going to be pure.

But let's say he just has a meditation cabin that's too large. It's 9 by5 instead of 8 by5. then

um I mean still not confessing it. If he knows that he broke the rule then you know he's being dishonest every time there's you know twice a month at least and uh yeah just digging himself deeper and deeper into a hole by not confessing it. So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from PSA and PSA says, "Your answer to the tardigrade question raises another question from a biological perspective. What is death?" And the tardigrade question was I I answered that in the previous Q&A about tardigrades kind of an kind of tiny animal. Let's see. He continues here. Let's just let's just continue because if an animal can go into a lifeless

suspended state for decades, according to some sources, tardigrades can remain in that state for centuries and even millennia and come back to life. How do we know the tardigrade didn't die and then another one took rebirth in the same body? It reminds me of the realm of existence where all bodies are unconscious like statues and nobody is moving. Well, I mean, the consciousness, the mind of a tardigrade, um, I'm not sure what kind of a nervous system a tardigrade would even have. So, I mean, they might just be just like this tiny tiny little spark of consciousness that I'm not sure how rebirth would happen

with a tardigrade. But let's let's let's just step this up here. Let's talk about like cryogenically frozen people. You know there are people they've got like some terminal illness that modern science like modern med medicine cannot cure. So they just have themselves frozen in like liquid nitrogen in the hopes that they'll be thawled out in some future age when that illness has been like the cure for it has been developed. So how about that? How about a corpse sickle? Like you've got a person, you know, they're alive, they get frozen, and then let's say 100 years from now, they get thawed out again. Is I mean, what happens to the like the

karmic stream during that hundred years?
Is it going to be a different person? We
don't know yet. I don't I'm not sure
that that's ever happened.
There are some animals that can freeze
solid. I've heard that some goldfish can
survive being frozen solid.
A goldfish would have much more of a
kind of consciousness than a tardigrade,
I assume.
And like a human frozen solid and then
revived. I They might have done this
with animals, you know, experimentally
lab rats or something.
Just freeze them in like liquid nitrogen
and then somehow thaw them back out.

So yeah, I'm not exactly sure what would
happen whether your con your karmic
stream would be doing something else
when this this body is frozen solid or
otherwise just metabolism has ceased
or would it be really like another being
reborn into that person? sort of like um
a case I I read about in a book by Ian
Stevenson about
in India some boy like he's about seven
n years old somewhere thereabouts you
know just a relatively small boy dies of
smallox this is back before smallpox had
been universally eradicated
more or less so his father goes out to
make arrangements for the funeral comes
back and the kid has revived but he's

claiming to be somebody else. So I do think that it's possible that you could have like some like one conscious stream, you know, one karmic stream kind of leaves a body and then another one enters it. That's possible and it might differ from from individual case to individual case.

So I guess we're just going to have to wait and see because I don't have any empirical evidence of actually how that works. If you've got somebody cryogenically frozen and then they get revived 100 years from now, whether they're going to have the same personality, I mean, it could be like

some other karmic stream just took took over the body. I don't know.

Well, with tardigrades, I mean, they might be so simple that one tardigrade stream of consciousness is pretty much the same as any other tardigrade stream of consciousness, assuming they even have a stream of consciousness.

So, let's see here.

Oh, I guess I didn't even answer the question, though. The question here is from a biological perspective, what is death? And I mean, you could say that death is just the ceasing of metabolic processes

um or respiration is the main metabolic process I think of life. not respiration

in the sense of breathing, but
respiration in the sense of taking uh a
molecule, usually glucose and breaking
it down and and like generating energy
through turning ADP into ATP, which can
then be used as a way of like fueling
the processes of life.
you know, in a way it's sort of like
chemical reactions simulating fire, but
the heat is given off in little
increments that can then be captured and
used in biochemical processes.
So, I mean, that could be death where
just respiration has stopped by
something freezing solid. But I mean, if
there's still the potential of it still

going, then it could be that death is just where it's just broken and can't possibly like be revived, that kind of thing. But yeah, I think it would depend. I assume there'd be more than one way of defining death, even from a biological perspective. I mean, one would just be that metabolic processes have ceased or I mean still I mean after a person dies it's like their bone marrow stays alive for for days afterwards. So it wouldn't just be that. It would be like death in that case would be where the the
I mean the body is no longer functional. It's like some parts of it might still work but it just won't run anymore. sort

of like a car, you know, it's like the headlights might still work, but the the engine won't start, that kind of thing. So, that's it's kind of an interesting question. I never really thought about it much. Like, what would qualify for a biologist saying that animal is dead? I mean, they might not say that uh an animal that's frozen solid is dead if it was alive and it was frozen solid in a certain way where it had the potential of remaining alive after it was thought out. A biologist might not go so far as to say that a a dehydrated tardigrade in suspended animation is dead or like a resurrection plant. There's certain

plants. It's a primitive kind of a mosselike plant. I used to have one when I was a kid where it'll just curl up into this brown ball and it can just stay that way just this husk for years and then you put it in water and it just opens up and turns green and becomes alive again.

But would a biologist call that dead or would it just be in suspended animation? It still has the potential for being alive. So that would be a different kind of death anyway then. It'd be certainly a different kind of death than just tossing that dried up husk into a fire and just burning it up. That would be like real dead. That's graveyard dead.

So yeah, I mean maybe you could ask
Grock or something exactly what the
biological
criteria would be for something being
really and truly dead. But it could be
biologists would not entirely, you know,
they wouldn't all be unanimous in the
opinion
whether I mean revive the possibility of
revival. So long as that's still on the
table, then it might not be completely
dead.
Anyways, I'm just going to move on to
PSA's next question,
which is as follows. Could death and
rebirth occur as long as the body of the

tardigrade isn't too damaged while suspended? So, yeah, this is pretty much just a uh like a spin-off from the previous question. Could death and rebirth occur as long as the body of the tardigrade is Yeah, I I pretty much already covered this and you can take it up to a much higher level with cryogenically frozen human beings.
It could be like in a some future age of space travel that you know passengers on a spaceship they're going to some distant star that's going to be you know 80 years to get there that I mean some of the like the crew might be reproducing having their kids and training their children to run the

spaceship while most of the passengers
the the the the settlers who are going
to be settling this new this new colony
they'd just be like frozen or whatever.
There's been science fiction movies
about this kind of thing.
So yeah, I mean I guess your average
biologist wouldn't consider to be dead,
but whether it would be a different
person as a different karmic stream like
upon revival, a different person from
the one that was frozen. I don't know
because I don't I don't have any real
evidence to refer to and the the theory
behind it is is pretty much theoretical.
So, I mean it would just be guessing.

So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Nermit and Nemmit says, "What's the most dangerous snake you encountered in Burma?" And it depends on what you mean by most dangerous. like it can be the most venomous. In which case, the most venomous snake I encounter in Burma is probably a banded crate,
but the banded crate is not a particularly aggressive kind of snake. I almost stepped on a banded crate and it didn't bite me. But the most dangerous snake in Burma with regard to the kind of snake that kills the most people, that would be a Russell's viper. I'm pretty sure. Because a Russell's viper,

vipers in general, abandoned crates kind of related to the cobras and the coral snakes and they're generally pretty chill. You know, they don't go looking for trouble, but uh a Russell's viper is just mean. I remember once I was walking home from going for alms and walking down this dirt road and there was a baby Russell's viper, maybe this long, you know, like a foot and a half, and it was chasing after me. It's like chasing after me going like this. and it was just trying to scare me away, you know, but if it had caught up with me, there's a good chance it would have bit me.

So, the most dangerous snake in Burma is

the Russell's viper, I'm pretty sure, cuz they're just mean. They're more likely to bite than more venomous snakes where your chances of dying if you get bitten are higher, but you're just the chances of being bitten are lower.

So, let's see here. I guess I answered that one. So, Neur's next snake question. I got a phobia of snakes, so I must ask, how did you sleep at night in caves and forests knowing there might be a dangerous snake roaming around you?

Well, first of all, I like snakes. I mean, I would be happy when I see a snake. The first time I saw a cobra in Burma, I was just in rapture. I was just tickled to death. It was great seeing a

a cobra just raising up like on its hind legs, you know, spreading its hood. Man, I was just it was like a heaven realm for me. I was just delighted. It's possible that in some previous life in like northwestern prehistoric northwestern India that I was like some kind of shaman that worshiped cobras or something. I don't know.

But I do know enough about animals in the forest. As a general rule, if you leave them alone, they leave you alone. Like if you're lying there asleep, a snake can crawl right over the top of you. It's not just going to bite you. I mean, you roll over on it or

something, maybe.

But yeah, I mean, I didn't really

bother. I didn't that didn't bother me.

Sometimes I'd have to go outside at

night to pee

and you step on a like a little piece of

tree branch or a twig or something that

had fallen down from a tree and you step

on one side of it and the other one

flips up and it might like a dry leaf or

something brushes against your leg or

something. I'd literally get airborne

because you definitely do not want to

step on a Russell's Viper.

So yeah, I mean you'd be cautious. You

have to be cautious. But I do know

enough that if you're not moving around

that no snake is just going to come up and attack you. You can sit there meditating and a snake will just crawl right over you. You can lie there asleep. Snake can just crawl right over you. It's not going to bite you. It has no reason to bite you. Why would it do that?

I mean the things that there were a few things that

if they were in the cave with me, I could not sleep. Like there's a kind of giant uh centipede, the the the bright orangey red ones. They get like this. They get as big around as your finger and they they're over a foot long. And

when they're running across the concrete floor, there's like this audible clicking sound. And I've been told that if they bite you, I mean, it hurts so bad you cannot you you you can't meditate. You can't you can't sleep. You can't do anything really. I I knew this one monk who was bitten by one of those and he said all he could do was just chant. You know, it hurt so bad he couldn't meditate. He couldn't sleep. He would just sit there chanting and chanting and chanting just as a way of passing the time. I knew this other monk who got bitten by one of those giant centipedes. And he said the first day wasn't bad. The second day he started

throwing up and having diarrhea and getting really sick.

But forest monks, they kind of brag about that sort of thing. They brag about how messed up they've been, how how bad how many times they've been stung by scorpions and that kind of thing. I got stung by scorpions about six times.

Let's see.

Yeah, I mean the dangerous snakes. I mean, it really didn't bother me. It's the only time I'd be like alarmed about snakes. It was it was like I said before if I have to go outside at night and you step on something that might be a snake

but never was and you know it's you could literally just get airborne just trying to get away from it which is just a natural reaction. It makes sense you want to get away from it. But there have been times like Russell's vipers they can be really mean but you know they're kind of like a rattlesnake

but I mean I've walked right by one before. You know they're hard to see. They're the color of dead leaves, you know, they're very well camouflaged. And so I walked right past one, came within my foot came within about this far of it. And it just made this little tick sound, just kind of let me know it was there. And that was it. I was I was past

it. Um, another uh an Australian monk that I knew, I mentioned him in this in this very Q&A before, he was doing walking meditation and finally realized that the whole time he was doing walking meditation, there was a a coiled up Russell's Viper just like right by the side where he's walking. So, if you don't alarm them, they're not going to they're not going to mess with you. So, I mean, there is that. And just if you have meta, you know, it's like the condas suta. I like that was one of my favorite parasitas or protection chants was the kandas suta where you're you're like radiating love to all the snakes

among other things. It's mainly about snakes. In fact, it says in the suta or in the vineia that if you chant the kandasuta, snakes won't bite you or even if they do bite you, you won't die from it.

So, I think someone who loves snakes is probably less likely to be bitten by someone who hates or fears snakes.

All right. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Ruie.

And Ruie says, "Do you mean to say that the stages of decomposition are directly accessible to experience like in a sort of slow-mo unfolding?" And I asked him, I what does he mean by this question?

And he didn't he didn't res he didn't

answer. He didn't respond. So then I'm thinking I was asked in the previous Q&A about constant flux versus mere impermanence. So I assume it's within the context of my answering that question. He's asking if the stages of decomposition
are like in a state of constant flux. But the state of stages of decomposition of what? of a of a corpse or of a human person who's still alive who nevertheless is getting older.
I I mean I'm not exactly sure what the meaning of the question is. So I mean with regard to someone who's getting older, yeah, I don't think that you are

in a state of constant continuous decomposition or like de increasing decrepitude. I mean sometimes it can go the other way. You know, you're you're not there's a time when you're not healthy and then then you get better. for example. I mean, you're still like chronologically, not temporally getting closer to the moment of your death. I mean, calendar-wise, you're always getting closer to your own death, but still your decomposition isn't necessarily just in this steady decline. I mean, just like your vitality and health and so forth isn't necessarily in this constant decline.

But I'm not exactly sure what Ruie is

asking here.

Let's see.

Yeah, I mean with a decomposing corpse,

I suppose it would be

I I suppose you could say that moment by

moment that it is becoming more

more decomposed simply because of

entropy. You know, entropy is moving in

one direction and you don't have life

that is sort of working against entropy

to some degree. I mean, you really can't

defeat entropy, but still life is able

to like heal and so forth, which a

decomposing corpse does not do.

So, I suppose the decomposing corpse you

could say is I mean

the see the stages of decomposition are directly accessible to experience. I really do not fully understand this question. I mean there is there are 10 meditation techniques in just the standard list of 40 meditation techniques in terra Buddhism. These 10 are based on the contemplation of a decomposing corpse.

Um

and the stages of decomposition are directly accessible to experience. I'm I do not fully understand the question. I shouldn't even venture trying to answer this. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. is from Yugauoo.

Yugauoo says, "What would the Buddha think about us trying to presume what he would think?" Good question.

Next question is from Myat.

And uh yeah, we're getting we're getting close to the bottom. Mom is the last questioner of the evening. And Momy says, "I've been enjoying my sin ordination." So he's ordained as a as a novice right now. Good for him. Sadu sadu sadu. I'll start over. Momat says, "I've been enjoying my somara ordination, but unfortunately my concerns about the tradition have been mostly vindicated. There's not much focus on vineia, and I'm obliged to

admit that I've accepted donations on behalf of the SA in little safe envelopes. Of course, I don't plan to use any of the money for myself, rather donating it to a respectable SA or using it to help someone in need. Although I've liked my taste of monasticism, I've been practicing eight precepts except maybe a small amount of content consumption, I'm concerned about the effect it will have on my practice to be around these sort of monastics. There's also part of me that still wants to get ordained at this temple when I come of age and go off on my own when possible. Alternatively, take a trip to Thailand or some other country with an

established SA. If you were in my position, what would be your course of action? Well, I would not ordain permanently at a monastery that I knew had unconscientious monks who are not serious practitioners.

Definitely, you need to find a place where there people are there are people monks there that you would want to emulate. you would you'd want to be like them that they'd be wiser than you and be able to help you to become enlightened

and a lax monastery like most monasteries are most Asian ones I should say

I mean it's like um with I mean mainly I'm familiar with Burmese monks and western monks a little bit of Thai monks little bit of Sri Lankan monks but I have more experience with Burmese monks and western monks And Burmese monks, maybe 2% of them are really trying to follow the rules conscientiously. With regard to Western monks, it might be half. So it's way better than, you know, 2% 50% of conscientious monks is way better than 2% of conscientious monks. So you really have to be careful. I mean, you can just wind up in a kind of snake pit.

You wind up in a just this unconscientious

place where the monks are sort of like a cross between like a lay person and a neutered house cat. To the extent that they don't resemble one, they resemble the other.

So

let's see what's the actual question here.

Wants to get ordained at this temple.

Yeah, I

if if you know that it's they're not practicing correctly, then you're probably better off un undergoing a certain amount of inconvenience, finding some place farther away, possibly even in another country where

the monks are conscientiously practicing, trying to follow the rules and cultivate their mind and and get as wise as possible.

So yeah, this the thing about the little envelopes that's yeah, I can relate to that. In Burma, I mean they know that handling monks handling money is not entirely kosher. Even though like the the the number one monk in the country, the Sa Maha Nayaka Seattle handles money that at least he did at one point. I mean, they might have a different one by now. I don't know.

But I mean some of the most famous monks in the country are handling money even demanding money you know charging you

know exorbitant fees to give domat talks
and so forth but even and so a lot of
people don't even know that it's against
the rules for a monk to handle money
some some Burmese people don't even know
it's against the rules for monk to
handle women
but still they have euphemisms for money
handled by monks it's called navakama
which it means like new works. So it's
like this this money is is nawakama.
It's new works for you to like you know
build a new meditation cabin or or
something like that.
But it's it's kind of euphemism. And
when people are using euphemisms,

you know, like

um gender affirming care

instead of just flat out saying what it

is, then you know that they know deep

down there's something not entirely

legit about it.

So,

see if you were in my position, what

would be your course of action? I'd be

looking around for a stricter monastery.

just try to find a strict one, one with

a good reputation, you know, a reputable

place

and then kind of look into whatever

reputable places you can find that

are within your range of travel, so to

speak.

And so I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is the very last question.

He says, "The Seattle mentioned that they could facilitate a trip for me to Yangon to study Buddhism. I've heard you talk about Manderlay monks, stating they're notoriously unscrupulous. Is it much the same in Yangon? I've considered against it. I'd rather be a Biku who knows the Dhamma from direct experience rather than a scholar Biku who's a walking encyclopedia on the Polycan."

Yeah, it's it's not so much yangon, it's school monks in general. Scholar monks in Burma have a reputation for just

emphasizing theory and just neglecting practice which mean which includes following rules.

So, like I said before, I lived at Mahagandon, which is a big school monastery near Mandandalay. And there was 600 monks and 900 novices spending the range retreat there the the the year that I spent the Ranger retreat there. And it was considered to be a strict monk. It or a strict monastery. It was had a reputation for being very strict. And so the the amount of monks who didn't handle money there was about 10%. Instead of two, which would be like the nationwide average at that monastery, it was 10% of the monks actually were

trying to follow the rules correctly, which I mean they had a reputation for being very strict largely because of this. Although they were in decline, the original the first Abbott, it was it was really strict and then it just kind of went downhill from there.

But school monasteries as a general rule tend to be snake pits. I knew this one Australian monk, different Australian one from the one that I've been talking about where he he was at the verge of disroing. He he went to it was like some poly university. I think it was in Yangon and he was just a mess. I mean, he was so disillusioned, so just pissed

off and depressed. He was just trying to unwind by watching like YouTube videos and and finally a German monk who was a friend of his stopped by and just advised him, "Man, you guys just got to get out of here. This place is just killing you. It's destroying you. At least it's destroying your your monkhood."

So that's what he did. He left. He lasted a little bit longer, but I do think that you eventually disrupt.

Um, yeah, school monasteries, as a general rule,

you you're going to have monks that don't practice vineia teaching vineyia and who don't practice dharma teaching

dharma. And so, you'll get the words down, but for the most part, it's just going to be like a hollow shell of a beu that is produced by this kind of education. So, I mean, I knew this one guy. He was a western, he was an American man who was ordained as a monk and then dropped out. And then he's he's sending me letters saying that he is before he wanted to ordain again, but first he wanted to get a degree in Buddhist studies from Oxford.

And I'm telling him,

you want you want to learn Dharma? learn dharma from a meditation master in a forest somewhere, not from some western

scholar who isn't even a Buddhist coming up with academic theories.

So I think he eventually did uh kind of forego Oxford. I think it was just because it was too expensive and became a monk again. I think he's he might be in robes right now. That's that's good.

But seriously, I think that you got the right idea when you say that if you want to learn dhamma, you learn it from a meditation master in a forest somewhere pref. I mean, not necessarily in a forest. It could be like outskirts of a small town or something.

But still, you want to learn dhamma, you learn dhamma from someone who practices dhamma, from someone who lives dhhamma,

from someone who eats and breathes dharma. Not someone who is just like a dogmatist who's just spouting these dogmas that I mean, he doesn't even know it from his own experience. It's just dogmatism. It's just words.

So, let's see what's the actual question here.

Is it much the same in Yangon? It's Yangon is not as bad as Manderlay.

I mean, in Mandandalay, you got monks that are like murdering each other. This kind of stuff, which means that after they commit the first murder, they're not really a monk anymore. They're parajika. But still, I mean, the reason

I say that is I used to go I went and saw two autopsies at Mandalay City Morg and the coroner was telling me that just recently they had found a dead monk and it was their their opinion that it was other monks who had killed him.

Yeah. I mean,

Manderlay is notorious. I think I mentioned when I was talking about notorious Mandalay monks how back around 1988 there was a riot in Mandandalay because monks were denied kickboxing tickets. They wanted to to buy tickets to a boxing match and they were refused because they were monks and that was like inappropriate for monks and so they just ran a muck and just started like

screaming and smashing things.

So yeah, I think you did well to uh you just stay away from like poly universities. Just if you you want to learn dhamma, learn it from a meditation master and not from some academic who probably doesn't follow dharma very well, doesn't follow vineia.

And that's it. That's the end of the end of the uh Q&A. That was the last question, last answer to the last question. So, like I should always say at the beginning, never do. If you think that I can answer something, you got a question you want to ask about like early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism,

monasticism,

Burma, that kind of thing or I mean that those would be more my field of expertise. The farther you get away from that, you know, into like Mahayana Buddhism or Hinduism or Western philosophy, that kind of thing, then the chances I'll be able to answer intelligently goes down somewhat. And no more than three questions per person per episode, please.

And aside from that, I just say like and subscribe if you haven't done already, and be happy.

Alrighty then.

I think we're recording. Is this on?

Hello and welcome. Hail audience

to question and answer number 155, which

of course is not prime. It's 5 time 31.

I am your host Po Basa. This is your

co-host, my beverage. And it's way too

hot to be drinking coffee. It's very hot

here in South Carolina.

mid 90s Fahrenheit wise. At least it's

not mid 90s centigrade wise.

Uh we got quite a few questions to

answer and so I suppose I should just

cut to the chase so to speak.

So

see first question is from Siovak and

Cipad Zidena and Siovak and Cipad Ziderna says this is this is a followup to a question he asked in the previous Q&A because he specializes in yeah but kind of questions.

He says I don't understand how cells didn't exist before someone thought of them. When the first person looked into a microscope and saw cells, he was very confused as to what he was seeing. No one before had thought about the body being made of smaller living things and that all living things are made of these same living things. How do you explain something like this if no one thought of cells before? Before atoms, people thought the world was made out of the

four or so elements. But for some reason that never happened to be found when investigation occurred.

So

this is a followup to a question where I was saying that um you know that like atoms and DNA did not exist in our version of reality until somebody hypothesize them.

So with regard to cells, that would be along the same lines. You know, anything microscopic that cannot be seen without a microscope invented in modern times. Just didn't exist until somebody laid eyes on them. Sort of like certain subatomic particles are notorious for

this in that nobody was able to see
these things until they were
hypothesized and then all of a sudden
they're cropping up everywhere.
Also, it's kind of similar to something
that Rupert Sheldrake brought up with
regard to crystals. Certain crystals
very hard to make until somebody starts
making them and then all of a sudden you
can make them in seventh grade science
classes.
But let's get back to the actual
question here. I I assume
oh yeah, there's a question mark. There
is there is in fact an actual question
here. So, I don't understand how cells
didn't exist before somebody thought of

them. And then here's the other thing.
How do you explain something like this
if no one thought of cells before? Okay,
so let's go with the standard theory of
the simile of the block of marble,
right? You got this block of marble and
it contains within it in virtual form,
potential form, conditional form, every
single possible statue.
So you've got a mind that is singling
out statues or I mean the mind the the
mind itself is one of the statues but
it's all in there in virtual form.
So if the mind isn't at a certain level
of subtlety yet, a certain level of
sophistication with regard to like

objectifying objectivity,
then it's just not going to be it's not
going to be like singling out fine
details.
But when you get to the a level of being
able to single out fine details, then
you're going to start singling out fine
details that still really aren't there.
It's just that you're getting into a
deeper level of sophistication and still
and there has to be a kind of
stability.
In order for some sorrow to exist for
more than just a a fraction of a second,
just like a moment, there has to be
stability.
And so you're gonna have to be singling

out something that is stable,
which I mean with regard to humans, then
it just turned out that it was cellular
structure. And I'm sure that before
people were looking at cells, they were
looking at animal cules. You know,
they're looking at pond water, that sort
of thing, under the microscope and
seeing all these little critters
swimming around like single-sellled
organisms. So it wasn't too far of a
leap to have people made out of it. Even
though it may be that nobody was
consciously expecting that we would be
made out of cells, but still you have to
like tune in on a possibility that is

stable.

So we tuned in on cells

even though the cells aren't ultimately

real. We aren't ultimately real. Nothing

that is singled out and particular part

particularized is ultimately real. It's

a kind of construct.

And it's really hard to explain this

kind of stuff to people that like don't

really take it seriously or, you know,

they're just kind of already like

emotionally committed to some kind of

scientific explanation for the universe

we're living in. that sort of thing.

But still, I mean, it's it's kind of

hard to explain. I probably shouldn't

have started off right off the bat with

a question like this. It's easier to
answer easy questions first until I get
some momentum going and then you can get
into like the the more subtle stuff.
But really, it's just a matter of
I mean, it it wasn't really there until
it was singled out by a perceiving mind.
And I'm really not sure how to explain
things
more clearly than that.
That essay esperipi
as George Barkley used to say to exist
is to be perceived. So I mean it didn't
exist. I mean there was the potential of
it obviously
but until it got perceived

it wasn't there

just in potential form like

retrospectively

you know you can retcon it into the past

that sort of thing.

So

I think I'm just going to move on to

next question. This is also from co of

action coded and I hope I get a few easy

ones to kind of help me build momentum

here.

What is the Buddhist justification of

not stealing if nothing is actually me

or mine and no one actually owns

anything? Well, I mean, nobody actually

exists in Buddhism. So, I mean, that

would just murder would would be all

right, too. I mean, you're not actually killing anybody,
which is kind of the approach taken towards the beginning of the Bavad Gita.
But I mean it's it's not so much stealing just the the mechanical act of stealing really. It's mechanical acts are ethically neutral. It's mental states. So you're deliberately inflicting suffering on somebody else when you steal their bicycle, for example. You know, it's like you know they're not going to like it, but you go ahead and do it anyway.
Also, it's generally greed and just a kind of callous lack of compassion or

consideration that causes people to steal in the first place, which also is an unethical or unh wholesome, unskillful mental state.

So, I mean, taking morality and just boiling it down or crystallizing it down into just like five kinds of mechanical actions, I mean, that's kind of for normies, you That's just sort of a way of getting people to act better without having to like teach them subtle philosophy, that kind of thing.

But I mean, you're just deliberately acting in a callous, greedy way that you should know is going to cause suffering to others, and you just don't give a give a damn, and you do it anyways.

Even though ultimately
there's nobody to steal from, there's
nothing to steal and there's nobody to
do the stealing ultimately. But we are
not operating at the ultimate level
right now.
At least most people are not focused at
the ultimate level.
So, I'm just going to move on to
Seovatzer's
next question, which is let's see. No, I
guess there's not even a question mark
in this. It's just kind of an implied
question. I don't see how acknowledging
the existence of atoms and DNA makes me
a materialist. Since you talk about

evolution a lot, isn't that also appealing to a similar sentiment? Well, in the previous question, he was bringing up the existence of atoms in DNA as a kind of objection to spirituality. And when you're doing that, I mean, as a general rule, you're adopting as like the default attitude of western people of scientific realism. Like, how can you how can you justify karma when you know, Adam's in DNA, blah blah blah.

So in a way it's kind of putting the cart before the horse putting putting like scientific realism in front of dharma or dharma.

So with regard to evolution,

I mean, if if you're interpreting

like the cosmos

in accordance with scientific realism or

just empirical objectivity,

then sure, you can talk about DNA and

atoms and evolution also, the fossil

record, that sort of thing. um without

really insisting

that it's ultimately real.

So, I may have just made the assumption

that if you're using

like scientific realist assumptions as a

way of arguing against

Dhamma,

then as a general rule, people who do

that are assuming that scientific

realism is more certain than Dhamma is.
So I may have jumped to a conclusion
there but knowing Siovax and CPA Zena as
I do I'm not sure that I was jumping to
a conclusion. Maybe Sio he just likes
these yeah but nitpicky kind of
questions so much that you know it's
just the exact assumptions are kind of
secondary to the yeah but yeah but yeah
but kind of questions.
Okay.
So, I mean, evolution,
I mean, you have to assume at least
going with like Darwinian organic
evolution. And there's another question
later down on the scroll about
evolution, too, which is nice. I like

talking about it. But, I mean, it's it's empirically
pretty damn obvious that it has
happened. just going with just this
virtual reality within the context of
this virtual reality, but it's it's not
ultimately real, but for whatever
reasons, it is conventionally real in
our version of samsara along with atoms
and DNA and and cellular structure and
all that.
So, I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from Java Nandin
and he says, "Is Daly Lama on Epstein
list and I rather doubt it. I seriously
doubt that the Daly Lama went to

Epstein's island and was getting massages from 16-year-old girls, etc." So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Akag Grata. And Aka Grata says, "Is an initiation into a terraodada sa necessary to practice an authentic Buddhist tradition or is it possible for a lay person as well? As a modern westerner, this is something I am struggling with and currently am not in a position where I can fully devote my life to being a monk. Buddhism is the tradition that speaks most to me for quite some years now. I would appreciate your views on this. So I mean I think that the correct answer to this question depends a lot on

definitions of terms like is an initiation into a terra sa that would I assume that would mean like ordination is it necessary to practice an authentic Buddhist tradition. So, what does authentic mean and what does tradition mean? You mean you have to kind of hammer these out in order to like really give a precise answer.

Um, I mean, tradition would be something that's been going on for, you know, an extended period of time that is just established as orthodox and orthoprax. Um, and authentic. I mean, that depends on that. That's even more problematic because what some people think is

definitely authentic, other people would not like like Abid Dama like the Abidama pitica for example. Is that authentic? I mean, it's obviously traditional.
So, is it possible for a lay person as well to practice an authentic Buddhist tradition? I mean, it's possible for a lay person to be like an authentic Buddhist traditional lay person.
But I mean most of Dharma if you read the polyutas and vineia I mean the first pedekica
number one in the polytopetica the Buddhist trapetica in general number one is vineia which is rules of monastic discipline which applies to ordained monastics.

So, Terravada was founded by a monk for monks and the lay people are kind of an afterthought. I mean, mainly it was renuncience
meditating out in forests.
So, I mean, do you have to be initiated to practice along those lines? No. I mean, you could just go off and follow whatever rules you like and and just wander around homeless and you can follow Vineia as strictly as you want without being ordained. Technically, I mean, you couldn't try to pass yourself off as a monk. That would be living in in robes as, you know, by theft as it's called, that kind of thing. That's

frowned upon. But just going off in and in alone without being ordained and living the life of a monk, I mean nothing's going to stop you. And unlike a lot of Burmese people, I do not think or I mean even Orthodox tradition, I do not think that a formal ordination ceremony is going to cause some metabolic change in you that's going to allow you to get to like sustain more advanced states, anything like that. I mean that's sila paramasa that's clinging to morality and observance especially observances at that point.

So

I mean this is kind of a

it's it's kind of a tricky question

because it depends a lot on interpretation of key words like initiation, authentic and tradition. I mean tradition isn't I mean that's that's fairly straightforward but initiation I mean that just presumably means ordination and then authentic I mean that's the that's the trickiest word because what's authentic to one person might not be authentic to the other person even though they might be equally like devoted to dharma like like I've said many times before western monks generally don't consider the third pitica of the typica abidama to be authentic to for it to actually

represent genuine teachings of the founder of the system.

A lot of texts that aren't in Abidama. A lot of sutas probably wouldn't be authentic to like a western mind that is that is like familiar with critical thinking, willing to exercise critical thinking or like a devout eastern Buddhist who just accepts it all as gospel truth who does not dare to question it.

So

let's just get back to the actual question here. Is an initiation into a terabato sunga necessary to practice an authentic Buddhist tradition?

Uh I mean at the highest level yes

but I mean if you just want to be a good
lay person I mean the door is open for
that. You'd be an authentic Buddhist
traditional lay person
but you wouldn't be practicing at the
highest level.
And I guess I might as well just move on
this question here. This is from Fred,
and this is kind of a strange question,
but Fred specializes in these. He says,
"Did you experience that plant in Asia
that reacts to your touch and curls up?"
And I think it's called the sensitive
plant, or at least, you know, that's
just sort of a common name for it. I
have encountered them before in America,

like at like stores. I think it was like a a hardware store. What do you think? Also, they had some kind of plant that you just touch the plant and it turns the lamp off and on. That was kind of nice.

But, uh, no, I didn't see any wild plants in Asia. Not that I recall where you touch it and the leaves kind of close up as kind of like an automatic defense mechanism. Um, also like a Venus fly trap. You can touch a Venus fly trap and it'll close. But I didn't see any of those in Asia either. I've seen all all the Venus fly traps I've seen have been in America, I'm pretty sure.

So, I think Fred might be confusing the

plant that curls up to the touch with the resurrection plant I mentioned in the previous Q&A where if you don't water it, it just curls up into like a dry brown this very lightweight dehydrated ball and then you put it in water again, opens up and turns green and becomes alive again. Which reminds me of the tardigrade question about how a tardigrade which is capable of completely dehydrating.

Like they a lot of them specialize in living in moss and like during the hot summer time the moss dries out. The tardigrades the little animals that live on the moss dry out. Metabolic processes

cease and then it gets wet, rehydrates and essentially becomes alive again. And someone was asking about like the the karmic stream of this and then I mentioned human beings that are cryogenically frozen. They might be cryogenically frozen for decades and then they get thawed out again some future date. I mean what happens to the karmic stream during that hiatus and I was thinking I mean it's like time and space are really just a construct. So it may be that from the the point of view of your karma just like a gap in time is just negligible. I mean it might not even exist. You you could just skip

decades and

from from like the point of view of this

empirical samasara it might not be

possible

but like your karma might be working at

a different level where time is not it

doesn't have to follow the same rules

and that may also help to account for um

like someone who dies

like 10 years ago and then it's like 10

15 years before they take rebirth. It's

not necessarily the case that I mean

from the terra point of view you I mean

time apparently is essentially real and

so the karmic stream immediately the

very next moment has to take rebirth

after death. But if time is an illusion
and it doesn't really apply to certain
other realms, at least not on the same
terms as this realm, then you you could
just skip 10 or 15 years
and and it wouldn't really violate
anything. So I was I considered that
when I was taking a shower the other
night.
I have I get I have my most
philosophical ideas in the shower for
some reason. Even when I was a monk, I'd
have these weird insights sometimes that
would result in blog post or whatever
while taking a shower. I don't know why
that is.
At least it doesn't happen when I'm

sitting on the toilet.

So, I guess I answer that question. I'm moving on to the next one. This is from Romeo. We do have kind of a lot of questions so I shouldn't be like malingering

loitering in my question answering.

So this is from Romeo

and Romeo says my questions are about the difference between Buddhist equinimity or upka and plain old garden variety indifference. Both involve being unbothered by whatever comes up in life. but I am having a hard time understanding what sets them apart. Can you tease out the difference between

equinimity and indifference and if possible illustrate how they differ with an actual real world example from life? And I mean sometimes I have um I have translated up as indifference. I think in my uh Atakawaga translation I have upeka or variations on on the root the same root as upka translated in English as indifferent or indifference.

So I mean equinimity like UPA could be a kind of indifference but I guess Romeo has specified plain old garden variety indifference which would be just sort of normie level whereas upka especially like the highest it's the highest Brahma vihara it's the only brahma vihara that

can take you to fourth janna according
to orthodox terra Buddhist tradition.
So the main indifference is plain old
the main difference did I say the main
indifference the main difference between
equinimity and indifference
would be indifference is you're just
kind of like
you're you're just like being callous
you know it's like you're not letting it
get to you know it's just you've got
like this shell of indifference and the
events out there are just kind of
bouncing off of it. So in a way you're
kind of numb to it. Whereas equinimity,
the Buddhist idea of equinimity is you

become like transparent like a pane of glass. So it's like going right through you. For example,
um I mentioned recently in a Q&A that I spent two months doing intensive practice at Pandidorama in Rangon back in like 199798 thereabouts.
And the Burmese, including venerable, they just are kind of indifferent to loud noises. So the Burmese just don't mind lots of noise. Whereas Westerners, especially if you're meditating, you want some quiet. But Seattle Upandida had I mean just about every monastery in Burma is under construction. There's always some kind of new building going

up somewhere. So there was a new building going up at Panda Rama and venerable Seattle Upandida had this guy literally pounding out sheet metal gutters with a hammer right under the eaves of the meditation hall. So we're in there trying to meditate doing intensive retreat and there's this guy out there literally pounding on sheet metal with a hammer just bang bang bang. So the Burmese, a lot of the Burmese people, it' just be kind of indifference where, you know, it's just they're not paying attention to it. You know, it's just kind of like selective ignorance in a way.

For Westerners like me, it for a while long while it was bothering me, but then finally I reached this zone in my meditation where it was just like the sound was going in one ear and out the other and it was just like washing through me without any kind of resistance.

So that would be more like oopa where it's you're experiencing it deeply with zero judgment, zero resistance. It's just going through you like light going through glass.

Whereas ordinary kind of indifference usually there's like a selective ignorance or just like a a numbness, you know, this shell of of just not giving a

[__] just kind of blocking stuff out.

So

I guess I'm just going to move on to

Romeo's next question

which is as follows. Also are equinimity

and indifference held in the body

differently. Well I guess I kind of

already answered that held in the body.

You know it's like ordinary

indifference. I mean you could just be

in a foul mood and just I don't give a

[__] And that could be a kind of

indifference at least with regard to a

lot of the stuff going on out there.

Even though you might be in a foul mood

internally, you know, it's like you just

you're in a bad mood. You trample something. You you break something. It's like I don't give a [__] You just keep going. You know, where I mean that kind of thing obviously it's going to feel different from being just sort of like transparent

just everything is just flowing through. You're experiencing it all deeply in a sense without any kind of reaction with no friction, no resistance, anything like that.

So true equinimity would be just being completely at ease.

Whereas indifference, there'd be a kind of resistance

and how that feels in your body.

Probably more tension in regular indifference than in equinimity where there'd be like no tension at all if you had mastered it. you're a master of the fourth Brahma Vihara, then you'd be completely at ease. And there's a dog licking my elbow right now.

So, let's just move on to the next question. This is from Yoshi Buouie.

And Yoshi Buouie, hey dude.

Yoshi Buouie says, "You had mentioned that there is ultimately no free will, but if doing good deeds help someone for instance, can earn one good merits, then that seems to imply that one has free will to do good deeds. If not, if doing

good deeds is part of karma,
uh, i.e. karma causes one to do good
deeds, then how can that generate
merits? In other words, how can
something that is not done intentionally
or done without free will be attributed
positively to the person who did it via
merits? Well, a lot of actions,
especially someone who is not fully
enlightened, a lot of your actions
really is just through force of habit.
So that's why like a lay person is
supposed to like break unh wholesome
habits and establish wholesome habits so
that when you're on automatic pilot
you're going to be doing good and making
good karma instead of doing bad and

doing bad karma. You know it's like the fourright efforts in orthodox terravada. It's like to abolish bad habits, to refrain from establishing new bad habits, to strengthen good habits, and to let's see, to gain new good habits, you know, to strengthen the good habits you've already got and to gain new good habits. And so, I mean, a lot of this you're earning merit, but it's I mean, you're doing an automatic pilot, especially at the beginning levels. So there there's no real contradiction there.

There is a kind of contradiction in the whole idea that you can sort of break

away from karma. I mean you can I mean everything has a cause in teraba Buddhism. And the Buddha ironically strangely paradoxically rejects both determinism and free will. Free will is pretty much refuted in the Buddha's second formal discourse after his enlightenment. According to tradition, the Anatalakanas Suta, the discourse on the marks of no self, where he's saying that with regard to any of the five condas, you cannot say let it be this way, let it not be that way, and have it reliably happen, which is one of his demonstrations of the idea that none of the fiveas including volition is really a self. it's not me because you

don't have complete control over it. But on the other hand, he denounced the Aivacas who are strict determinists.
He said you could even go to hell for believing that stuff that there's just this blind determinism.
So there could be a kind of paradoxical semi-free will there would be like a middle path between
like or orthod like regular free will the the normal person's idea of free will
like Christian free will on the one hand and just blind mechanical determinism on the other like um Ramana Maharshi he was definitely a heavy hitter even though he

wasn't a Buddhist

He said that the only real free will

that you have is the choice whether or

not to be mindful.

And also

there is the idea that if when something

becomes self-referential

then paradoxes can occur. You know it's

like goal's theorem where there are

certain statements that are neither true

nor false like this statement is false.

Well, it can't be false because then it

would be true. And it can't be true

because then it really would be false.

And so when a you get into

self-referential

like attitudes or perspectives,

we like rules break

and the human mind to some degree is

self-reerential, especially among people

that are more conscious I guess. So I

mean like you the level of an animal

maybe not so much self-referential but

you get up into like regular human

consciousness it becomes more

self-referential in which case you could

have paradoxes like somehow some kind of

free will not just what Christians

imagine but something along the lines of

free will some kind of like freedom that

keeps you from just being locked into a

mechanism istic deterministic system

which the Buddha also denounced.

So I mean trying to tease out exactly the orthodox teraba Buddhist idea of free will or their attit the attitude towards it is is not easy.

But the idea that in order for an act to be meritorious, there would have to be free will, that's not necessarily the case at all since most of the meritorious deeds and demarritorious deeds um perpetrated by humans is just knee-jerk reflex, sleepwalking, and then once you become enlightened, you're not making karma at all. Once you're fully conscious, you're not making merit or demerit anymore.

So merit and demerit are entirely at the level of delusion.

Once you have no more delusion, you have no more merit or demerit. You're not making karma anymore.

So karma and merit rely on being unenlightened.

And so generally there's a certain amount of knee-jerk semiconscious this going with the flow just acting out your habits that is causing virtually all of your merit and demerit. And so by hearing the dharma that can cause you to change your attitude. You know everything has a cause. And then you can determine that you're going to establish good habits and and try to reduce bad habits so that you're making more merit

than demerit.

And I hope I answered that question more or less because I'm moving on to the next one. This is from Super Lump and Okay, Super Lump.

That's kind of weird. That's How did he come up with this name?

Oh, I think I just did something weird. I just lost my place on the Oh, here we go. Super lump. He says, "Do the monks who handle money make any attempt to justify it?" Well, some of them do. I remember one time some Sri Lankan monks visited me when I was a junior monk living at Mahagandon in central Burma and one of the Burmese monks told him that with regard to me he doesn't handle

money because that's pretty rare in in
the the Burmese SA like I've said before
definitely
more than 95% of Burmese monks handle
money. So they some Burmese monk told
these these two Sri Lankan visitors that
were monks that I didn't handle money
and one of them kind of looked at me
strangely and said how do you manage
so I mean the assumption there is they
just assume you they just can't manage
you know they can't do what needs to be
done like get bus tickets or something
if they don't handle money but most
monks handle money they know they're not
supposed to. They know it's against the

rules and they just go ahead and do it anyway. mainly because they're just following along with what all the other monks are doing. Like all the monks at a monastery might might be handling money. You know, it's sort of like in Christianity, too. I mean, how many Christians gather not up their treasures upon the earth? You know, there's there's a an epistle of Paul that says, "If you're you're unmarried at the time you become a Christian, you should remain unmarried. And if you're married at the time that you become a Christian, you should remain married." Well, how many Christians follow that?
I mean, you're just born and raised as a

Christian, then you grow up and get
married. So, there's certain teachings
in Christianity that are just so much in
conflict, so inconvenient with
Christianity being like uh a majority
like traditional popular religion that
it just it just gets ignored, you know?
Or they'll just say, "Well, that applied
in ancient times, but it doesn't apply
now." that kind of thing.
And it's kind of the same way in in
Buddhism. I mean, some things like
there's a a rule of monastic discipline
saying that a monk is not allowed to
bathe more than twice a month unless
there are certain circumstances like

he's been sick or he's been traveling or there's been a storm or it's the hottest time of year, that kind of thing. But aside from these relatively few exceptions, a monk for most of the year is only supposed to bathe no more than twice a month. And even in ancient times that apparently was so inconvenient and monks just didn't want to do that that it was like new like new loopholes got added that that allowed monks outside of the Ganges Valley like it got interpreted to mean that applies only to the Ganges Valley but anywhere outside of the Ganges Valley it's okay to take a bath as much as you want.

So handling money is is kind of along

those lines. It was just so inconvenient. Like the what was it? The second council, the second great council was largely debating whether monks it's okay for monks to handle money because already, you know, within a hundred years of the party of the Buddha, you've already got monks just thinking we need to handle money.

And it's not really necessary. I mean it takes a certain amount of faith in dharma that if you protect dhamma dhamma protects you so that you don't have to be worrying about tomorrow you know where will I sleep and what will I eat this kind of thing I mean Jesus

apparently taught similar stuff give no thought for tomorrow you know God will provide in in Buddhism it's more dharma will provide your own karma will provide but a lot of monks just cannot take that step.

And also a monk who handles money, especially in some place like Burma, he's going to be considered a saint. You know, people are just going to be falling all over themselves offering these monks whatever they need because they like to single out the the more virtuous monks that are considered to be more advanced.

And Richard Gomerich who used to be president of the Polytech Society I

think he uh spent some time in Sri Lanka
uh way back in the 20th century and he
was saying that it's sort of like monks
that and it's true too it's like the
monks that are the strictest are the
ones that have the most people trying to
spoil them rotten
just because you get more merit
supposedly by offering donations to some
monk that is very strict so that they're
just falling all over themselves just
trying to spoil the strict monk rotten
and sometimes they succeed.
So getting back to the actual question
of super lump here, do the monks who
handle money make any attempt to justify

it? Some of them do, but I mean for a lot of them, how many Christians justify gathering up their treasures upon the earth? Or how many Christians justify getting married after they converted to Christianity as children? You know, it's like it's just what everybody does. There's no I mean, it doesn't even occur to them. Do you even have to justify it? And so for these monks, their their sila is never pure.

Never. Because in order to purify your seal, like in order to make confession and have the offense go away, you have to get rid of all of your money and everything that you have bought with money. And almost nobody's willing to do

that.

So, I'm just going to move on to SuperLum's next question, which is as follows.

What exactly was the Saadisa penance that caused someone to disrobe? I've heard of having to go last on alms round, but that doesn't seem like a big deal. The most difficult pain in the neck part about sanadisa penance like you've committed a sanadesa offense. Second most serious level of offense. the most serious level of offense shy of excommunication for life which would involve you know it involves there's 13 of them the main one the main

two I think are deliberately having an orgasm or touching a woman and deriving pleasure from that touch.

So the main difficulty of the penance like there was a friend of mine knew a monk who realized like 2 years after the fact that he had committed a song offense that he had he finally realized I broke a song desensa rule I've got to do penance or it may be no that wouldn't be the case at all. It wasn't that he didn't know. He knew. Maybe he was just sort of unconscientious. And then finally he just decided I I really need to to like set the record straight. I really need to just straighten this out. I need to

be a good monk. And so he decided he was going to do sadisa penance for like two years. And it was such a pain in the neck that he eventually just dropped out of the monkhood. Because I mean my original scenario where he didn't realize if you don't realize you've done it then

then you haven't really committed the offense. Let's see. No, it could be that you don't know. No, because if you don't know that you're concealing the offense, you don't have to do the extra penance. It's only if you're deliberately concealing the penance or concealing the offense. You know, you you you committed

the offense. you know you committed the offense
and you just don't say anything about it. You just keep it covered up, keep it a secret, then you have to do an extra day of penance for every day that you don't you don't confess it. But if you don't even know that you committed an offense, like you built a meditation cabin that was too big and you weren't even thinking about it and then two years later you realize, oh, that cabin I built for myself was too big. That's a san offense. then you wouldn't have to do the the penance because you you weren't deliberately concealing it. Or even if you're not sure, it's like,

let's say a monk is not exactly spanking the puppy, but just kind of petting a little bit and then it just goes off, then he's he's like psychoanalyzing himself. It's like, did I do that on purpose? Did I do anything to help it along, you know, after it started? And and so you're not sure. And in a case like that, even if there was some element of deliberate causing oneself to have an orgasm, that the uncertainty keeps you from having to confess it immediately because you have to know for sure if you did it before you confess it.

There's actually in Vineia a certain

confession for for being in doubt that
I've never heard of any monk ever doing.
I've considered doing it a few times as
a as a like uh when I was a monk, but
the other monks wouldn't even know what
I was doing because it was so
they' never heard of it before.
So, let's see, where was I? Yeah. So,
let's say a monk builds whatever it was.
He had to do penis for two years. I'm
just I'm just straying out into the into
the weeds into some kind of wilderness
in this in this answer because I'm just
trying to nail down stuff that doesn't
even really have to apply to this. So,
if you're doing penance for two years
and it's just such a pain in the neck

that you can't do it or it's just it's not worth it, then you generally it's the making confession repeatedly like you'd have to make confession to every monk at the monastery. I think it's like once a week if you're doing I mean if I'm I'm like confusing myself. All right. First there's the six days and six nights of penance for breaking the rule that for that penance you have to make confession every single day to every monk at the monastery. But for the concealed
penance, the the extra penance for concealing the offense, I don't think it's every day. It could be once a week.

But still, just finding all the monks and making confession to all the monks, like even once a week is it's really a pain in the neck because you got monks coming and going and you have to make confession to every single monk that has stayed at that monastery. And then it's time to make confession. and you ask where's venerable so- and so it's like oh he took off this morning he he went to visit his parents or he went off to some other monastery and then that day doesn't count because you failed to make confession to that monk and if monks are coming and going you got to keep track of all of them and make confession to every single visitor and and every monk

before he goes to off on a trip or something it's really a pain in the neck so there are some monasteries in Burma that specialize in sanad Seesaw penants where they're just remote areas. There's not a lot of coming and going, not a lot of monks there, and it's just it just works better that way.

So, I guess I answered that question from Super Lump. Oh, and I was going to this next one. I was actually going to look this up. Super lump asked me, "Do you have any stories about agoris?" And I have no idea what an agori is. I'm just here. Let me I'm just going to look it up. What the heck? What is an agori?

Agori?

What is agori?

It's a Hindu monastic order of aetic shyite sadus based in Utar Pradesh, India. They are the only surviving sect derived from the Capolica tradition, a tantric non-puranic form of shyism which originated in medieval India between the 4th and 8th century CE.

Okay, so now I got to go back to actually seeing the list and everything. Yeah, I'd never heard of agories. I've heard of tric shivites. I mean, some of them might be like the ghouls who who live in cemeteries and eat the offerings to the dead and um in some cases maybe even eating the dead, that kind of

thing. But

yeah, I don't have any personal

experience with them. There's I never

heard of any in Burma. So yeah, no

stories about agoris. I'm very sorry to

say. Now I'm just going to move on to

the next question. This is from

Tzasquez.

And Tzas says, "My favorite New

Testament verses are similar to yours. I

would add Philippians 4 12-13.

Please comment or as tradition says,

thoughts." And as it turns out, I just

happen to have my trusty Bible right

here. And strangely, I don't know why

this is, but I actually had a bookmark

right at that page where it has where Philippians 4 12-13 are. But I'm pretty sure the bookmark wasn't for that. But I don't understand this. Here's Philippians 4:es 12 to13. Let's see here. He did this to prepare all God's people for the work of Christian service in order to build up the body of Christ. And so we shall all come together to that oneness in our faith and in our knowledge of the son of God. We shall become mature people reaching to the very height of Christ's full stature. And why that would be a non Buddhists one of his favorite Bible verses, I have no idea. It really does not really strike a chord with me at all. I think

possibly the reason why I had a bookmark that had been in this Bible for years. It probably had been there since I was a monk. But here on the same here on the same page or the the other on the other side is Philippians chapter 5 starting with verse 21 21- 24 it says submit yourselves to one another because of your reverence for Christ. Wives submit yourself submit yourselves to your husbands as to the Lord. For a husband has authority over his wife, just as Christ has authority over the church, and Christ is himself the savior of the church, his body. And so wives must submit themselves completely to their

husbands, just as the church submits
itself to Christ. And that's another one
of those teachings that Christians
nowadays just ignore, or at least a lot
of them do, especially Christian
feminists.
[Music]
So that was kind of interesting.
But with regard to Philippians chapter 4
12-13 is it just didn't really do much
for me. I have to admit
there is a saying of Paul though that I
like and he says to the pure man all
things are pure. And that's got some
profoundity to it. So that would be one
of my favorite verses I guess. I don't
remember the exact verse though like

where it is. It's in the epistles of
Paul somewhere.
So Tzascus is a second question. He says
this is stolen from Seio
because Seova seat was the first person
to ask this question on the discord
server
and it is as follows. Quote when taking
chemicals can predictably induce
mystical states what does that say?
Well, what it says is that within this
version of reality, taking chemicals can
predictably induce mystical states.
That's what it says. I don't know why I
didn't read read his own sentence
because it's right there. That's what it

says.

So

I guess seaction cotzena is still kind

of arguing against spirituality because

you can take like a chemical like LSD

and it can at least in some people

predictably induce mystical states.

But so what I mean I don't see what the

problem is with that. It's like we're in

a version of reality

where stuff is happening and you you can

identify this and that and so I mean

what would be the problem

in taking a chemical that induces a

mystical state you know it just sort of

thins the veil you know it sort of

interrupts your habitual thought

patterns so that more light can shine
through something like that I mean
obviously the opposite is true. There
are certain chemicals that can just make
a person stupider and thicker, you know,
more opaque, you know, that can work. It
works that way, too. And I really don't
see what is the
what is the problem with that. Why is
that so difficult to accept
is none of it's ultimately real anyway?
So, I'm just going to move on to Chas is
his third question.
which is why in terravada there are in
fact nine precepts for noviceses not 10.
It's the same eight precepts as for

anagaraka plus not handling money but one precept is split into two same as in Catholic version of the ten commandments where they remove the second commandment and split the ninth into two because it must be 10 of course. Well, you could say that for noviceses there are 10 precepts, but for someone taking eight precepts, it's like two of the novice precepts get lumped together because if you read I think it's what is it the sixth I don't remember I think it's the sixth or seventh precept for of the eight that you've got what nacha wadita which is like dancing and and singing and and playing musical instruments and looking at entertainment shows. And then

you've got Malagatada

or Malaganda Wipina and and like let's

see wearing wearing ornaments and like

perfumes and that kind of thing which it

really it's just like two rules that got

lumped together. One is like

entertainment like frivolous

entertainment which is sensual and the

other one is like self-

beautifification.

So that's two rules really that somehow

just get lumped together in this long

clumsy precept when you for someone

who's taking eight precepts. But for a

salmon era, they're just divided into

two, which makes more sense.

So I think it's really that there are 10 precepts for novices and maybe nine for someone taking eight precepts, but there's two of them that are just combined together, even though it's two entirely different rules.

And I used to give these precepts on a weekly basis and it's been so long because nobody asked me to give them precepts anymore that I'm getting rusty.

Let's see here.

So I guess I guess that's it. I'm just going to move on to the next question.

This is from Sedarta Lohachita.

And Sedarta Lohachita says, "People with children, what do you think would be the most appropriate way to introduce the

dharma to kids? Although sometimes it seems a bit futile to me because since Terravada is so intellectually inclined, I imagine it's not really made for children. Yeah, I mean Dharma is relatively philosophical and advanced dharma is pretty much beyond the reach of children, beyond the grasp of children, beyond the grasp of most people. But still, I mean, as a parent, you can instill basic dharma into kids. I mean for example just like an elementary understanding of kama you know you just kind of sort of indoctrinate your kids teach your children if you do good things good

things are more likely to happen to you
if you do bad things bad things are more
likely to happen to you just give them
like a basic intro and elementary you
know karma and ethics for example
you know when you hurt somebody you hurt
yourself even though you might not
realize it at the time. If you help
somebody, you help yourself even though
you might not realize it at the time.
And I mean if parents teach their
children that on a regular basis,
especially in a loving way, not like
harping at them so that they start
resisting it, but you know, just sort of
sharing the world view that kids absorb
from their parents, then they're going

to start off on a on a better a better foot than a lot of children do. You know, teaching them, you know, don't step on bugs just for the fun of it. Like my father, I mean, he was no saint. and he was not really into aimsa even that um you know he he he had actually killed humans as a soldier you know he used to hunt a lot do big game hunting in Alaska and so forth but at the same time from the time that I was a kid he really strongly impressed me with this idea never kill anything just for fun if you're going to kill something you better have a good reason for it you know you're going to eat it or it's, you

know, endangering you or someone else, that kind of thing. Okay. But don't kill something just, you know, just for laughs. He he really despised like trophy hunters, people that would just go out and hunt and then just not not even eat the meat, that kind of thing. So things like that you could you could teach to children fairly easily. Also, I mean, even elementary meditation, like you got some little kid might just be five years old sitting in your lap and you're all comfy cozy with each other and you could even lead him on a little guided meditation, but it would have to be something imaginative that little kids could follow. I mean, you're not

going to have a kid, you know,
5-year-old kid just watching his breath,
that sort of thing. I mean, for
children, just making them sit quietly
is a kind of punishment nowadays. A
timeout, you know, go sit in a corner,
that kind of thing. But still you could
teach them like children's guided
meditation where just imagine yourself
getting bigger and bigger and bigger
until the you know it's like to you're
as big as the whole room and you're as
big as the whole house and you're as big
as the whole neighborhood and all the
people are inside you know this kind of
thing that that would be kind of an

elementary child level kind of guided meditation.

But yeah, I mean you can you can teach them the simple stuff. I mean, Jotica stories that I mean, that would apply that that would be interesting to some children. At least some Jotica stories, you know, it' be like Asup's fables, things like that. But I mean, you don't want to be just sort of

forcing it down their throat so that you wind up with like preacher son syndrome, which my father, he had preacher son syndrome when he was a kid. He had to be one of the rowdiest kids in the neighborhood because his dad was a preacher man. So he didn't want to he

didn't want that stigma attached to him so much. So he was like one of the rowdiest kids in the whole neighborhood. So let's see here. I guess I answered that question.

But I mean you can teach them basics especially you know just if you do good comes back to you. If you do bad comes back to you. You know don't hurt animals. I mean if you have to but don't do it for fun. Don't just go out and step on bugs. just because you it's it's like an interesting hobby seeing how they squish that kind of thing.

Tell the truth,

don't steal. I mean, that kind of stuff.

I mean, any parent should teach that kind of stuff to their kids. And it's familiarizing with who the Buddha was. You know, you've got a Buddha statue in the house. You know, you could explain to the kid who the Buddha was. you know why you're, you know, offering flowers or whatever. I mean, little kids in Burma, they can be toddlers and already they know, you know, to offer to the monks and to bow to the monks. And some some little kids, it's like, um, you know, when I was a little kid, you know, kids would, you know, parents would have them show off to adults by having them count to 10, that kind of thing. Some little kids in

Burma, they know a lot of chanting already.

So, let's see here. I guess I should move on to the next question. This is also from Sedar Lohachita and this is kind of an interesting one. Says, don't you think that Darwin's theory of evolution was created by the British Empire is a kind of political doctrine similar to Aristotle's theory of master and slave where nature granted the rule to the master over the incapable slave. It's not different where the rule of the evolved aka the Anglo-Saxons is confirmed by nature granting them the empire. Later, this entire racist and

supremacist approach was eliminated and remained only as a scientific doctrine. No, I don't think that at all. I mean, first of all, Darwin's theory of evolution, when he went on his um his uh his trip on the the HMS Beagle, he was looking for for evidence in support of creationism, and he just kept finding the opposite. And it was against his will with a lot of just I don't know just a lot of soulsearching and pain and despair that he just was pretty much compelled to accept the evidence of evolution and the evolution it's so freaking obvious to anyone who looks at the the evidence. I mean the exact mechanism what is what is like driving

it that's up to that's up to debate. But unless you want to just argue against the fossil record for example, you want to argue against embryology like the embryological development of of of animals, you want to argue against vestigial organs, that kind of thing. I mean, it's it's futile that evolution has occurred is fairly obvious.

How it actually occurs, you know, what exactly is driving it, you could argue on that.

But when Darwin came up with this theory of evolution, he was ostracized. I mean, the Christians, I mean, they wanted him excommunicated. They were in state of

uproar.

He just he just stirred up this he

tipped over a can of worms or stirred it

up or something. There was some kind of

can of worm action going on. And I mean,

he was just demonized.

And I mean, it wasn't like the British

Empire was behind this. It wasn't some

kind of conspiracy.

So I mean it was that I think it was

even like Darwin's nephew

that that became like a social Darwinist

who was applying Darwin's theories to

like civilizations

which

as far as I can tell is is valid within

certain contexts.

Um and that became politically

incorrect. But I mean it's like the

strong succeed and the weak kind of

don't

in many cases. And by strong and weak, I

don't just necessarily mean like

political power or whatever. I just mean

like ability to survive and reproduce.

So let's see here.

Darwin's theory of evolution was create

I don't think Darwin's theory of

evolution was created by the British

Empire. Just read his books. You'll see

the evidence and he he lays it out. I

mean, he has to. He knew full well that

there was just going to be like a a

tsunami of of push back against his theories because he was challenging Christianity.

So, I mean, he just puts evidence, I mean, just evidence after evidence after evidence. I mean, very cogently put forth.

And I mean, most people rejected it with scorn and outrage at first. It took quite a while before Darwin's theory finally Darwin's theory of evolution finally, you know, caught traction and was accepted by most scientists.

So,

yeah, I don't think it's a racist and supremacist approach necessarily.

is explaining it is at least putting

forth a plausible theory as to how evolution occurs because evolution is occurring.

Just look at the fossil record.

So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Raphael. And Raphael says, "Would it be beneficial if Terraata Buddhism in the USA had a central authority that oversaw all monasteries and excommunicated monks who, for example, advocated for abortion?"

Well, I mean, that would be tricky. I don't know how you'd go about it. Like, Terra Buddhism in the USA, it's really a combination of like Thai Buddhism and

Burmese Buddhism and Sinhali Buddhism. a little Cambodian Buddhism. You've got like the the Goinka people, I guess. Not a whole lot of monks in the Goinka system. Um there are some though. Um you know, you just got Western monasticism, that kind of thing. You've got the weasa people. Um, and putting all that under a central authority or at least um like the monastic aspects of Terra Buddhism, putting it under a central authority. I I don't know like I don't know if it would work. I mean, they don't even have that built into Vignia. I mean, there is no central authority other than the SA itself, the SA of the four quarters. you know,

they're supposed to police themselves. And there are so many corrupt ones now that if any policing is done, it's the corrupt ones kicking out the good ones in in like a lot of places, not everywhere, but a lot of places. It's the good monks that get antagonized and driven out, the conscientious ones that are following vineia rules strictly and so forth. I have read that in Burma during the like the kings before the British Empire took over the entire country that there was sort of like a minister of SA affairs who was in charge of you know making sure that monks were following the rules and I don't think I

mean I think they understood Via well enough to know that you can't just kick monks out especially a lay person even the king can't just kick a monk out of the SA but I do think they had a jail. So that monks that were like drunk in public. I think in Thailand it's still to this some of this is going on to this day in Thailand. You got monks that are like drunken and disorderly in public. They get thrown into the SA jail and they stay there until they decide to drop out or you know their you know whatever they're sentenced to is is fulfilled that kind of thing. But how you would do that in the USA was separation of church and state. And I

mean, the church isn't even a Buddhist church.

You'd have to have some non-governmental central authority and then somehow you'd have to get the Burmese and the Thai and the Sinhales and the the Westerners all to agree on it.

So, I mean, theoretically, I mean, it could be beneficial, but I don't know how you'd set it up. I don't I think it's just kind of not really practical to do that. If you have a Buddhist society with a Buddhist king who sets it up, then sure that can work. Still, it might be corrupt because government government agencies do tend to have some

corruption,

but still how it would happen in

America, I really don't know. I don't

think it would be particularly easy or

even realistic to do that. So, I'm just

going to move on to Raphael's next

question. In order to attain

enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism, one

must overcome dualistic thinking such as

good and evil and pure and impure. For

this reason, an advanced monk must be

able to ingest feces and urine without

feeling disgust is such a way of

thinking foreign to early Buddhism.

Well,

um, according to one or two sutas, the

Buddha before he became enlightened, I

think it might be in the Mahasi Nada Suta would be one of them, that he was eating cow poop as part of an aesthetic practice, apparently some ancient Indian aesthetics just ate cow [__] But he realized that that wasn't the way to become enlightened. You know, it wasn't like he was demonstrating his upeka, his detachment by eating it after his enlightenment. He was trying to become enlightened by doing these outrageous austerities and it just didn't work and so he gave it up. With regard to drinking urine, every monk who is ordained at his ordination ceremony is admonished that from now on, now that

you are a monk, you should make do with stale urine as your only medicine.
But if if you can't do that, then you can take other medicines too. Just like if you can't live under a tree, you can live in a cabin or something. But every monk at his ordination is admonished to take put muta as his medicine, which is putrified urine.
So there's quite a few monks out there, not a majority, but quite a few monks out there who do drink urine, either cow's urine or their own. But still I mean it's not any kind of spiritual proof of anything. It's just in ancient India that's what apparently like renuncience did. It was just sort of

relatively primitive

like folk medicine. I guess that

drinking stale urine was or putrified

urine

or like slightly fermented although not

alcoholic urine was good for you. Had

some kind of medicinal properties. There

are people today that drink their own

pee and and think that it's beneficial

in some way. I've I knew a few monks who

did it and I I tried to point out to

them it's like that's the reason why

your body gets rid of pee is because

it's like metabolic waste.

You know, it's like it's toxic waste

literally. But I guess there's some kind

of also beneficial

compounds or something in there. But I mean the reason why your body gets rid of it is because it is metabolic waste. So yeah, this way of thinking is foreign to early Buddhism that I mean you you don't have to do that. Um even though some renuncience did eat like cow dong at least and even more renuncients would drink stale pee for medicinal purposes without feeling disgust maybe just a little bit of ug this is gross but I'm doing it anyway.

But that kind of thinking of I mean in order to become enlightened you have to overcome dualistic thinking. Sure. And that the monk I mean an advanced monk

has risen above the distinction of good and evil. He's not trying to earn merit. Certainly not trying to earn demerit. You know that's merit is for lay people. That's what I used to say to to monks in Burma a lot. Merit is for lay people.

So

yeah, I mean this this approach is a little too extreme. You know, it's kind of like some Christians, there's that verse in the Bible that says that a true Christian can handle snakes and they won't bite him and he'll drink poison and he won't die. And so you've got some like the Kentucky snake handlers that are drinking drinking poison and dance

around with rattlesnakes,

but I mean it it's not really meant to

be taken literally. I'm pretty sure it's

not like you're supposed to be just

seeking it out.

And I hope I answered that question at

least kind of cuz I'm moving on to the

next one. And this is this is from

Austin. And Austin says, "Can a monk

golf?"

There's no rule against monks playing

golf. I'm sure that the Buddha would not

condone it. You know, it's like there's

lists in the text like the silakonda of

the deanaya where it's there's all these

lists including like games frivolous

frivolous entertainments that monks are

should not do even though it's technically speaking is not a vineia rule not to do it still that kind of thing is discouraged for monks. So I mean there's no rule against a monk playing golf. Golf hadn't even been invented yet. Just like there's no rule against smoking cigarettes because there was no tobacco in India at the time. If there was, probably the Buddha would have forbidden it.

Um I remember once the only time I've ever set foot on a golf course and walked around the the links, is that what it's called? The links. use a little golf jargon. There was I was in

Bali and I had a friend and supporter
who played golf and I just followed
along and got my scalp pretty sunburned
and my shoulders in the equatorial
blazing sun of Bali
walking what 18 holes with with my
buddy.
I was just watching though. I wasn't
even catting.
So, I mean, monks can golf. Maybe even a
few monks do play golf for all I know.
But I mean, the golf courses in Burma
are pretty ridiculously bad. I've seen
some golf courses in Burma. I mean, it's
like just wasteland pretty much.
So, yeah.
I mean, they can play cards, too, I

guess, but

it's it's against the spirit of the

rules, even if it's not specifically

specified.

So, I'm just going to move on to

Austin's next question.

He says, "When I'm discussing dependent

origination and emptiness with people, I

will say every conventional thing is

dependently caused by other causes and

conditions." But I will often hear in

response, "Energy is neither created nor

destroyed." Do you think this is a

concise rebuttal to emptiness? Not

really. I mean specific forms of energy

are dependently arisen. I mean you can

say that

just energy in general

that if it's not distinct, it's not

particularized. You're just saying

energy in general that's like some

formless infinite

that I mean when something is formless

and infinite you can't really say that

it exists or doesn't exist. sort of like

the quantum field in theoretical

physics. You know, it's like empty space

can contain zero energy and also

infinite energy depending on how you do

the math. The math works out both ways.

So that would be kind of like nibbana,

you know, it's sort of like, you know,

it kind of transcends the duality of

exists and doesn't exist. It's formless
and and infinite in a in a sense. And so
you can't really say that it's there or
isn't there or or it at all.
So I mean but energy is neither created
nor destroyed. It's changes form.
And so I mean with with regard to
dependent coarising.
Yeah. I mean it's the form of it is
dependently coarisen. The arising of it.
I mean you can't even say it arises
without a form.
So I mean I might be
failing to account for energy existing
but I mean energy is is pretty much of
an undefined term in physics. Maybe you

could say it's the capacity to do work

but I mean that is certainly dependently

coarising.

I mean the work itself the capacity

itself the specific capacity I guess

dependently arisen

so

let's see

every conventional thing yeah so if you

say every conventional thing is

dependently caused by other causes and

conditions and they say energy is

neither created nor destroyed then I

mean they're talking about just this

generalization that is not a

conventional thing It's just an

abstraction pretty much if you unless

you can point out a specific form of it in which case that's dependently cool rising.

So I guess I kind of answered that one. I'm moving on to Austin's third question and he says, "Would you ever be inclined to using the dark web to acquire spiritual substances?" I assume he means enthiogens.

And yeah, the dark web. I don't think I'd really be inclined. If I was going to seek out enthogens, there's maybe one or two guys at work that I would maybe inquire. Although, my woman would definitely be opposed to me getting enthogens from the dark web. Anyhow,

I'd never hear the end of that one.
I remember somebody that I didn't really
know personally, but I knew as a
supporter online for a considerable time
sent me a kind of enthiogen and I just
went ahead and took it and yeah, I was
in the doghouse for a while. It was a
pretty intense experience, too. She she
didn't know whether I was going to like
have to be rushed to the hospital or
something. Not that I was like freaking
out or having a physical meltdown, but
it was very intense situation
and doing a little bit of like panting
and making little noises and so forth.
Good stuff.
So, I mean, the answer to that question

is no. I would not consult the dark web to acquire spiritual substances. And I don't even know how to access the dark web really. I've heard about you can get certain like dark web browsers that that can get into stuff that's under the surface, you know, stuff that you're not g that's not going to come up on Google or duck.go,

that kind of thing. But, you know, that would be kind of a certain expectation of shadiness involved in that. And uh yeah, I've never I've never really consulted it and would not be inclined to try and get enthogenic substances by that by that means.

So I think I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb. Occasionally still known as Libra Lam, etc.

He says, "How deep into a cave is a monk allowed to go?" I think he's just running out of he's running out of like the obvious questions. He's he's kind of he's kind of scraping the barrel on on on this one. So he says, "I hear deeper in caves it's cooler than towards the entrance." Yeah. I mean, there's no rule at all regarding how deeply into a cave a monk is allowed to go. It goes in a mile. You could go in a mile if you wanted to.

I don't know why you'd want to.

So, yeah. I lived in one cave that went in about 60 feet. So, it was like a walking meditation

uh like a walking meditation path like from the entrance going back into like the main shrine room which is where I slept.

So, yeah. Yeah, there's no rule at all with regard to there's no anti-spalunking rules. You know, a monk can just explore a cave if he wants to. There might be better ways of spending his time than exploring caves, but he can do it if he wants to. There's no rule against it.

So I think I'm just going to uh move on to Stellar Supreme's next question which is as follows. Do you believe in billocation wherein a person is in two locations at the same time? And the only person that I've I've read about or heard about that allegedly could do this would be Nim Curly Baba who's up there on the top of the bookcase there. His picture I mean not him personally.
And there's in in the book miracle of love stories about nim curly baba Rahm doss who compiled the book has this personal anecdote about he he's sitting somewhere with some scientific type maybe some kind of science professor and he's talking about some of the

psychological feats the superhuman
powers of nim karoli baba and this
scientist guy is is acknowledging yeah I
can accept the possibility ility of that
until Ram Doss got to the point of
telling him about how Neim Curly Baba
could be in two places at the same time
and the the scientist said well I mean
that goes against physics I really can't
accept that that that would be
impossible and then Rahm Da says it
might be impossible but he did it anyway
so I'm I'm open-minded on the
possibility of I mean anything is
possible
I mean there there are rules in this

version of reality like laws of physics
and so forth
but still just because there's a law of
physics doesn't mean that law of physics
cannot be broken you know sort of like
in the matrix where if you're a normie
who's still bluepilled so to speak
you're just completely immersed in it
some things are impossible but if you're
redpilled you know you're you're
entering the matrix voluntarily knowing
that you're in the matrix, you can break
certain rules, free your mind.
So, I think that it it is possible.
Um, I've never really seen any proof.
I mean, not all the stories in Miracle
of Love are true. I assume there's some

pretty wild ones in there,

but uh yeah, I do think that it at least

in theory it is possible.

You'd have to be very advanced to be

able to do that or else just have some

kind of freak weird thing going on. Some

some total anomaly.

So I mean also Nim Curly Baba could just

disappear in one place and appear

somewhere else allegedly. Although

Buddhist advanced Buddhist practitioners

including the Buddha himself in the text

could do that also. uh with regard to a

person I mean yeah I mean this is one of

the psychic powers mentioned in the

sutas that the ability to produce

multiple versions of yourself. So like according to the legend when the Buddha taught abidama up in heaven he left like a this sort of like a replica of himself on earth which maybe wouldn't qualify as the same person being in two places simultaneously. But there are also stories like the the famous story of the dullard who was this in intellectually very slow monk who just couldn't meditate very well. He just didn't have the the capacity for it until the Buddha gave him a piece of cloth and just says, "Rub this." And I can't remember if there was like a mantra that went with it, but the dullard became fully enlightened. And one of his duties was

to sweep the monastery compound. And there was some meeting and some of the monks were at the meeting and the dullard wasn't there because usually he wasn't invited. He he really didn't have anything to contribute. So, he just stayed behind and was sweeping the compound. But somebody asked, I think maybe it was the Buddha asked, "Why isn't the dullard here? Somebody go fetch the dullard." And so they go there and they see multiple dullards all sweeping the compound. And so he comes back with his eyebrows way up and says, "Well, there's a there's a lot of them there." And the Buddh's

the real one. The Buddha just says,
"Just pick one and bring him."
So apparently it is uh mentioned in the
poly texts that there is the possibility
of multiplying yourself into
more than one person
like Krishna according to the Hindus he
did that on the famous occasion with the
uh the 500 gopies or milkmaids
multiplied himself into what was it 500
Krishnas and uh scored with all 500 of
simultaneously,
although a good Buddhist saint would not
do such a thing.
So yeah, I'm open-minded on the subject
and I'm just going to move on to the
next question also from Stellar Supreme,

formerly known, etc., etc., etc.

He says, "Do you find it disingenuous that despite it being publicly released that there is messed up stuff in the Epstein files and having campaigned on its full exposure, Trump is denying the voter base that supports that, saying they should let it go?" Yeah. Well, I mean, politics itself is disingenuous. As a general rule, a perfectly honest politician is a rare bird.

Um, so I mean Trump was campaigning on that and then probably I mean there there are theories out there as to why he is behaving as he does and there there's some theories of of the 4 D

chess variety like he's sort of like um

pl he's been planning on releasing the

files and then um he's just pretending

not to want to release the files so the

Democrats who oppose anything that he

does will insist

and then he'll release the files and

it'll show all these Democrats have done

all this horrible stuff. Um, one theory

that I read on the Discord server by an

intelligent person who wrote it there is

that, you know, he was promising to

release the Epstein files and then

finally he gets a hold of them and

realizes that the previous

administration had redacted and just

censored it until there's nothing of

value left.

So then he's just kind of in an embarrassing situation where there's really nothing to show. So that's a possibility also, but I mean that wouldn't be particularly disingenuous if that version of what happened happened.

So

it's it's hard to say. I mean, I really don't know the exact circumstances of this whole Epstein thing. I mean, Trump is no no idiot despite what people will claim about him and he is really good at certain kind of mchavelian maneuvering. Yeah. And I'm sure that he's going to be doing I would

not be at all surprised if like people
involved in the whole Russia collusion
hoax are going to go to prison. I would
not be surprised like at least James
Comey Obama might be sroanked
you know he might he might he might pass
but
I think that uh Trump really is he's
it's no more Mr. nice guy that I really
do think that Trump is really going to
stick it to the people that were trying
to destroy him for years, at least some
of them,
cuz that's just the kind of guy he is. I
mean, he he was sort of trying to hold
out an olive branch his first term. And,
you know, he's like bringing in like

neocons into his administration who just promptly stabbed him in the back every chance they got. So this time he's learned his lesson and you know he's got people that are on the same page as him which the Democrats are all saying, "Oh, he's just got these obedient cronies." But of course you have to have somebody who agrees with you
at least on the important stuff.
So I I do think that they are going I mean Trump has seen the the writing on the wall. He's seen the writing on X just a lot of his base. you know, it's not like they're just worshiping him, that he's just kind of like representing

a movement that he has kind of shafted a little bit, at least in their their perception of this the situation. And so, he's going to start, you know, he has
heard the feedback, you know, felt the push back and so I think he is going to uh be more cooperative on the Epstein files. But it could be that like the person on Discord was saying that it could be that the previous administration just like redacted it and censored it till to the point that there's practically nothing left. And then you've got just Lane Maxwell who's going to testify. But I mean that could just be theater also. I mean she could

be bribed or coerced into into saying whatever somebody wants her to say. So yeah, we're just going to have to wait and see on that one. There's a good chance that there is some disingenuousness involved. After all, this is politics. But Trump has been generally pretty conscientious with regard to keeping his promises. And there is a good chance that I mean they're going to expose what can be exposed. Anyhow,

so I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Francois.

And Frank Kois says,

I know it's not really Francois. I just

mispronounced French names on purpose because I do not know the correct way of pronouncing French names or French words and so I mispronounced them deliberately just to kind of put it out there that I really don't care.

So Frank Kois says, "You keep talking about not having any remorse. I kind of understand what you mean, but a sense of shame for past bad actions should be useful, I guess.

Well, I mean, if a sense of shame for past bad actions, remorse, regret, guilty conscience, if it helps to prevent you from doing the same in future, then I mean that would be a like a beneficial result, but the point is

it's not necessary. So, you're adding this unh wholesome mental state of regret or remorse and using that as a kind of gimmick or crutch to help you not do the same in future when really you don't need that. You can just decide, okay, I just won't do it in future. I'll I'll do my best not to make the same mistake that I made that time. There you go. You just let it go and keep going. But you're running a race. I read this in there some famous person or at least they were famous a few hundred years ago in um William James the varieties of religious experience which I highly recommend to anyone who really

wants to understand religion the
religious mind but there was this one
person some Christian said that if
you're running a race and you trip and
fall the last thing you should do is
just sit there on the ground crying
because you tripped and fell the best
thing you should do jump right back on
your feet and keep going
and that makes sense.
So the sense of shame for past actions
is a kind of shabby
not particularly good crutch to help you
do the same to help you avoid doing the
same in future. But it's not necessary.
Just common sense would be sufficient to
prevent you from doing the same bad

thing twice.

And the guilt and remorse is just you're beating yourself up unnecessarily and just adding more badness to an already bad situation.

So Francois's second question says, "Ajan man, I assume there's a different Ajan than Ajan man who is called Ajan man. Ajan man advised Ajan Sha to take the two guardians of the world which is hiri a sense of shame and Otapa uh the fear of consequences as his guides. What do you think of this? Yeah, that's fine. Yeah, there's no problem with Otapa. Those are those are considered to be wholesome. But the thing is those are a

sense of shame that occur before you do the bad thing as opposed to cukucha which is the sense of shame that happens after you do the bad thing which is unskillful.

So skillful shame from the point of view of Buddhist ethics is shame that occurs before you do the bad thing and ideally prevents you from doing the bad thing.

So it's doubly wholesome then because it it prevents you from doing the the bad thing.

Whereas kikucha you do the bad thing and then you do another bad thing by just kicking yourself over it possibly for years.

So yeah hirya and notapa are fine.

That's that's wholesome from the from the traditional terabara Buddhist point of view. is kukucha which is the the shame you experience after you've already done the bad thing. That's what is uh the unskillful mental state. And I'm just moving on to the next question. This is from Phil Lees

and we've been going for an hour and a half. By golly, I hope this I hope this is still working. Yeah, apparently is. The the little green bars from the microphone are going like this. So I assume that means the microphone's working.

So, Phil Lethy says,

"Have you ever surprised Burmese people with your knowledge of Burmese, whether in or out of Burma?" Yeah, I've done that. Sometimes Burmese people will just because I'm
a foreigner, they just assume that I don't understand uh Burmese, and so they they'll be talking about me right in front of me, not realizing that I know what they're saying. And then I might just like agree with them or something or disagree with what they just said and then they get really embarrassed especially if it's like a teenage girl or something who are the the most likely to be making like these giggly comments about the foreign monk right in his

presence assuming he doesn't understand.
So yeah, that happened uh in Burma and
also at Burmese monasteries in America
where they see that I'm a foreigner and
they just assume that I don't understand
Burmese and so they'll be talking about
me in my presence and then I understand
what they're saying and will comment in
Burmese as to what they they've been
saying and then they of course get very
embarrassed.
So I'm just going to move on to the next
question from Phil Lees. Have you ever
been to England and what do you think of
it? Well, I've never been to England.
I've never been to Europe. The closest I

ever came to Europe was being on board a Polish fishing vessel off the coast of Oregon,
but I mean, technically, I was on Polish soil because I had to go through customs after I got off the ship. So, that's the closest I've ever been to actually setting foot in Europe. But England, what do I think of England? I've never been there. Not in this life, anyway. I think I was probably English in past lives,
but in this life, what do I think of it? Well, I think England has pretty much castrated itself and uh it's definitely on the downhill slide. I think the only hope for England now would be a kind of

purge of foreigners. Not all foreigners, but especially the illegal ones. I mean the British Empire they kind of had an open door to to like people from Commonwealth nations you know like Jamaicans, Pakistanis and so forth that had used to be part of the British Empire.

So I mean it's it was easier for such people to come to to England but an excess of foreigners who do not accept like English cultural conditioning English values that sort of traditional English values. Um, yeah, I think England has just utterly cucked and castrated itself like most of Western

Europe at this point and Canada and New Zealand and probably Australia.

So,

let's see here.

And probably chances are there's not going to be a like a race war like a civil race war in England and a purge, which I mean like deportation. I'm not I don't mean like genocide. I mean deportation like what's going on to some degree in America. I just kind of doubt that it's going to happen to any significant degree. And so England is probably going to degenerate into a kind of

second or even third world country largely due to the wonders of feminism.

Compassion.

We need to be compassion to everybody.

We need equity.

Yeah. So we just destroy our own country in the process.

So I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's next question. He says, "As someone who totally agrees with you that the Buddhist ethic is for the monk and the semiviolent normal ethic is for the layman and that bad things happen when the two are mixed. I think it comes down to the basic idea of doing whatever you do to the fullest. If you are a householder, you should look out for your family. If a monk, you should be a

true nonviolent aesthetic renuncient. I feel that everyone, whether monk or householder, would be better off if people had this thoroughbred instinct to fully embody whatever they choose to do. The modern world seems particularly bad at this with its mixing of rules and ethics in a melting pot.

Yeah. Well, that's what I was just talking about with regard to England castrating and and cucking itself. It's like you've got the left and to some degree just globalism in general that has replaced any coherent standard of ethics with unrefined feminine sentiment. And so we want compassion and and just we shouldn't

kick we shouldn't kick out even illegal aliens, you know. It's just when you have universal compassion guiding like politics
is it's just going to result in national suicide.
You import the third world, you become the third world. And then the third world doesn't like feminism very much.
So, I mean, the useful idiots that brought about the system to a large degree, I mean, they're one of the first to go to the wall, especially when you got feminists trying to team up with like fundamentalist Muslims
and you got like the the gays for

Palestine and that kind of thing.

It's just

you got to have a certain amount of

ruthlessness. any like superpower, any

just really vibrant like dominant

society in history has been ruthless.

They may have had like compassion and

and like a sense of justice for their

own citizens, especially the law-abiding

ones, but the enemies of the country,

whether internal or external,

I mean, they were just ruthless.

And you pretty much have to have that.

We're getting back to Darwin, Darwinian

evolution again.

Excess of compassion and kindness and

and the sense of equity, diversity,

equity, and inclusion. I mean, it's suicidal. Regardless of any ethical superiority it might have. What is good and right from a political point of view is not necessarily what is good and right from a like an ethical or spiritual point of view.

From an ethical or spiritual point of view, you should forgive transgressions. You should forgive criminals instead of punishing them.

I mean, h how's that going to work?

So, let's see here.

This this attitude though, I mean, if you're I mean, this is kind of represented in the Bavad Gita, you know,

it's your dharma. If you're if you're a soldier, you should be the best soldier you can be. You know, if you're a renuncient, you should be the best renunciate you can be. If you're a a father, you should be the best father you can be. And I mean, that's more of of a Hindu attitude really than a traditional Buddhist one. The Buddhist one is renounce the world. And I mean, if you're not ready for that, then you're not entirely ready for Buddhism. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Gnostic Rocker. Anastic rocker says, "When you were a monastic in Burma, was secular nontropica literature like poetry,

philosophy, and the classics an essential part of your insight learning curve? And if so, assuming you were often out in the sticks in a post British Empire, postc colonial developing state, where could you where could you could you get hold of such texts?"

Well, yeah. I was very I was a very eclectic reader. I knew some monks, especially German ones who were just all he wanted to read was just terrible Buddhist stuff. You know, they just considered anything else to be just a waste of time at best. And I just don't think that way. I mean, I I never read

the Bible, including this one, till after I became a monk. like I read a lot of like Hindu texts, you know, Dowist texts, that kind of thing after I was a monk and also I read CL I read Dosski. I remember um when I was a junior monk, I had already read Gibbons Decline and follow the Roman Empire classic. And then after I became a monk, I I was pretty strict early on my first several years as a monk. You know, I didn't want to read novels. I'd still read some philosophy, that kind of thing, but like history, that kind of thing. I was kind of resistant. And then I was reading the letters of Nyanova, the famous eccentric existentialist monk

who who lived in Sri Lanka in the mid 20th century. And he said that that, you know, there's dama on every page of Gibbons decline fall of the Roman Empire that he was going to he'd already read it twice and was going to read it again, something like that. So I thought, well, there you go. So I read decline the gibbons decline fall of the Roman Empire again largely because of the encouragement of of Nanover but I kind of wanted to anyway. So yeah I was pretty much of a voracious reader as a monk. I hardly ever read I mean I haven't read a I've read maybe three or four books since I stopped being a monk

which is very different from before I became a monk where I was reading a lot. So

uh yeah, I mean I would I would read whatever I could and and in the text it does say it's good to be bahusuta having having heard much you know to be learned and to be familiar with other points of view other philosophies that kind of thing.

So yeah I did and then so the next part of the question here is how did I get that material when I was a monk living in Burma? And there were two main ways of getting books when I was living in Burma. One was I could have them sent from America. So I had people send me

books from America, including one person uh a like a female person. She was the mother of one of my ex-girlfriends who was still a friend of mine or at the time she was. She sent me this big box of books and it was all like chicklit. I mean, the probably the most masculine book in the entire box of books was Nicholas Nickelby by Charles Dickens, which got me interested in Charles Dickens. I have to admit, Mr. Mantelini is probably my favorite character in all of Dickens.

Worthless CAD that he was.

Um, so I mean I if I'd come back to America, which I did every few years to

visit my folks, then my father would just let me have anything I wanted off of his bookshelves. He had several bookshelves. And uh, also he'd he'd say, "All right, here's feel free to order 200 bucks worth of books off Amazon, that kind of thing." So I could get books that way, too. But in Burma, the main way to get books is every year I would make like this pilgrimage to Down Away Sappi, which was this used bookstore in Mandandalay. And they had a lot of old English books, most of them published like before like the early 1970s.

So

I I I would go there once a year and you

know with some my pisad gama who was had like money for my my benefit you know money for my use and I would get I would get books there if I could. But I got some pretty interesting books there. Like some books on my bookcase came from Don Oay Sappi in in Mandalay when I was a monk. Like uh Battle for the Mind by William Sergeant. That wasn't one of the most important books I've read in my life. You know, it'd be on the top 10 of really influential books that just changed the way I look at things. I got that in in Mandandalay.

So yeah, every once in a while you you I mean you wouldn't get anything really

recent, but you could find like

sometimes classics and that kind of

thing at at used bookstores in in Burma,

sometimes in in Rangon also.

So let's see here. I guess I answered

that question both parts of it. I'll

move on to Nasi Rocker's next question

which is as follows.

You mentioned that in the Thai SA

everyone has to conform whilst this

person is not American I'm pretty sure

because Americans don't say whilst they

say while I'll start again you mentioned

that in the Thai sa everyone has to

conform

whilst those in Myanmar

or Sri Lankan SA are more free to go

their own way

I remember when in conversation with a certain well-known contemporary monk who joined the SA in the 1970s. He told me that joining the Thai SA was just the same as joining a military boot camp. And indeed, if one reflects further, the differences are obvious. Think of all those intellectuals that the Sri Lankan SA has produced, those German monks such as Nyanaponica Terra when those eccentric, insightful 1950s and60s British monks like the original Nyanamol Terra. Can you elaborate on these institutional, cultural or anthropological differences? It would be

interesting to hear your perspective since you were on the inside for decades. Well, Thailand may have I mean it was influenced by the fact that I Thailand was never fully colonized. you know, they were sort of playing off the British and the French against each other and and maintained a kind of independence, whereas most other countries in in Asia or Southeast Asia and South Asia were essentially colonized.

So that may have kind of isolated the ties from as much western thinking as the Sri Lankans and the Burmese were exposed to. The Burmese were very hard-headed conservative types and so

they really didn't have much use for the British point of view. The British really didn't have much use for the Burmese point of view and so the the like the British people who were interested in Buddhism were much more interested in like the Sinhalese version than in the Burmese version. There was a lot of back and forth with like Letty Seattle, you know, on technical points of dharma like the the Polytech Society like Caroline Reese Davids had like a correspondence going with venerable Ley Seattle who was just this walking Buddhist encyclopedia as well as a meditation master. He was sort of like a

an early precursor of Mahasi Seattle in a way.

But yeah, the Sri Lankans for some reason they tended to be more interested in intellectuality and sort of thinking outside the box to some degree. You know, they're they had taken to heart more, you know, like British thinking. You know, they still play cricket there for crying out loud. You don't see cricket being played in Burma.

So yeah, it was like for for whatever reasons um Sri Lanka was seen as a better place for Westerners to go to to be ordained, you know, is like Burma was mainly for like dogmatic conservatives. And I'm not saying dog being a dogmatic

conservative is necessarily bad. I mean, as I've said before, there are phenomenal scholars in Burma. You know, it's it's dogmatic learning. They don't have many independent thoughts, but they just master the texts. They can just recite the texts. You know, it's I I've told the story before. I went to a a meditation retreat with a Seattle in the Mahasi tradition. And this this was in San Jose, California. I was a monk at the time, but this was in California. And he would be giving these long um he'd give a dama talk, you know, every evening. And it'd be he'd be just giving long quotes from from various sutas and

so forth. And he'd be looking down all the time. And I thought he'd be looking at notes or something until finally I realized that when he's looking down, all he was looking down at was a picture of some kind of seabirds flying over the ocean. That was it. I mean, he's just kind of looking down modestly. Not to be distracted by the women or by, you know, whatever. He's just looking down modestly like Burmese monks used to always do. or they'd hold up a fan and talk from behind the fan, you know, to avoid distraction. But all this stuff that he was reciting is just from memory.

And he was he was like a meditation

master kind of of of Seattle. He wasn't really one of the heavy hitter like scholar seats.

I mean some scholaros in Burma have memorized the entire 40 volumes of the Burmese tip toitica in addition to like medieval poly grammarss and commentaries and that kind of thing. It's just it's just amazing.

But the Sri Lankans for whatever reason they were more anglicized in their their approach to everything and so they were more inclined to have independent thinking on certain things which then um you know was reinforced by an influx of British and German monks especially or

British and German people who were

ordained as monks there

and the ties just kind of remain sort of

isolated and and more Thai, you know,

more ethnic, I guess.

And the British or the Burmese just

stubbornly insisted upon remaining more

ethnic.

So,

let's see. Did I answer the question,

though? Really, that's that's the main

point here. Can I elaborate on these

institutional, cultural, or

anthropological differences? Yeah, I

mean, one of the main differences

between Burma and Thai the ties is the

ties really are not scholars. I mean

nowadays you're getting some more Thai
schol like Buddhist scholarship but I
mean compared to the Burmese it's kind
of pathetic really like you've got
certain famous Thai aons
and I think venerable venerable Lee
Damandaro I think that's one of them he
would there's books by venerable Ajan
Lee Damadaro
I think I'm getting the name right that
this Australian monk I used to know
showed me this book as kind of joke.
It's like read this, you're going to
love it. And this venerable Ajan who was
a meditation master I assume he just did
not understand the meanings of poly

words. He didn't understand poly very well. He was like using words just obviously wrongly, you know, just not understanding what they really mean, that kind of thing. Just getting stuff wrong. Because partly part of the reason for this is that early modern times the British are the Burmese who are already starting to be like invaded and taken over by the the the English. So the British had already already ruled parts of southern Burma. So the Burmese kings, they couldn't really beat the British. You know, the British had the the the military hardware and the the the strategies and everything worked out. So instead the Burmese kings in in upper

Burma just made this unprovoked attack on their traditional archeneemys and they just essentially sacked the capital city of Syiam which was Aayutia at the time and it was like Autia was where like the headquarters u so-called or so to speak of like the the Thai ecclesiastical hierarchy was including the like the the Thai uh educational system for for like like monastic education and so forth. That all just collapsed and they never fully recovered from that.

And so to this day, the Burmese are just like phenomenal scholars, which has its good points and it bad points. I mean,

one of the bad points is that if you've got a meditation master like Mahasi Seattle who has an idea that doesn't really fit with like orthodoxy, he'll favor orthodoxy to his own personal experience in meditation. Whereas the Thai agon, they're not as heavily invested in what the texts say, especially like the commentarial tradition and so forth. And so they will just follow their own teaching. They're more inclined to teach based on their own experience is what I'm getting at which has its good points.

And with regard to Sri Lankan Buddhism, I really I really don't know a whole hell of a lot about it. I mean I know

some of the history that I mean the SA had collapsed in Sri Lanka more than once where they had to import monks from Burma and Thailand just to get the SA going again because the ordination lineages and all that had just been like ruined.

But in a way that kind of made them more open-minded and maybe a little bit more eclectic, more open to western ideas and so forth.

And I'm just going to move on next question. I don't want to just keep yammering away about on one question because we got quite a few. We're we're knocking a good dent into it though. So

let's see. Gnostic rocker third question.

He says, "As society changes with different social conditions or pressures or as diverse cultural awareness is spread, what differing motivating influences or factors do you notice amongst?" Another thing Americans don't say much amongst those people drawn to or fascinated with Dhamma. When I got into Dharma in the late 1980s, the influences were usually the massive effects of beatnik hippies or the other intense motivating influence was the thought of people like Nietze young, early 20th century avantgard bohemian thinkers or people like the 14th century

German monk Meister Eckhart. But more recently, I can see very different motivating factors calling people to Dhamma. There's those restless young people from the ex-communist blocks who feel let down by capitalism and the EU. Or there are those who are totally computer or AI tech heads or those who feel alienated from the emotionless harsh impassive coldness of the post-globalized dassinated ruthless world we are all compelled to exist in. There's all kinds of other motivating factors. What's your take on the above? Okay. Well, my generation of monks, more than half of them probably started with

psychedelics. You know, you start with mushrooms or masculine or LSD, and then it causes mystical experiences, expanded consciousness, and then it causes you to get interested in trying to, you know, get into these heightened states of awareness without having to use the chemicals. So that's sort of like the the the open door into starting meditation and then you get more interested and eventually you become a monk.

That was a very common approach to my generation and probably the generation preceding my generation which was like the hippie generation. I used to know this French monk that he was telling me

about how he first went to Thailand. He had like long hair and like like big earrings and this kind of thing. And he looked at me knowing said, "I belong to that generation." And then I said, "Yeah, the hippie generation." And he said, "Yes." With his like Jacqu Kustoau voice, he was a hippie.

So yeah, it was my generation and the generation like the half generation right before me was sort of like the hippie psychedelics was kind of you know sort of like the conduit into the sa for a lot of western men not all of them but a lot of them probably at least half then my experience with Gen X you know

the the next generation I'm kind of like right in between boomers and Gen X I mean according to most like systems of determining who's what. I'm like early Gen X, although some people would would put me into like very late baby boomers. Anyways, the Gen X people and I think a lot of like young men even now, you know, which would be Gen Z, Gen X millennials, Gen Z

that in a way they're just kind of blackpilled. they're just blackpilled on the whole society which kind of I was too. I mean in order to become a monk and renounce the world you kind of have to be sort of blackpilled um at least redpilled with regard to just the status

quo like the the the secular status quo
plus maybe like institutional
Christianity that kind of thing. I mean
as a general rule is a prerequisite for
renouncing the world becoming a monk is
not to have much use for that.
So my experience with younger terra
Buddhists which is kind of limited is
they tend to be pretty black pill.
They've got like a bleak attitude
towards what's going on in the world
like like western women and western
politics and western religion. This kind
of thing they just are just
they don't like it.
So, I mean, they're not so much into the

psychedelics and the hippie stuff, but the just the black pill stuff is still there. And that's they've got nibbida, you know, they've got disgust towards the world um in general, which then kind of leads them to search and desperation for something better. Also, I knew this one person who was Gen X and he was just he was like a punk rocker and um kind of I mean he was still kind of a smartass kind of a guy in in a good sense. I've always been I've always kind of gotten along with smart asses as a general rule so long as they're not like like picking on me very much.

But he was actually uh you know committing crimes and so forth just in a

way just has this nihilistic attitude and then somebody out of compassion and friendship suggested he might try a Ginka retreat and it was like it just changed his whole mind is is you know his it changed his life going to a Ginka retreat. So I assume there's still a lot of Goinka people. You know that was another factor of people becoming monks in my generation. My generation was the Goinka people who got interested in Terravada Buddhism through Goinka. But Goinka has such a simplified version of Terravada with no real monastic system that they wanted to get deeper into it after you know getting their foot in the

door with Goinka. So I assume that still happens to some degree also.

But I mean, I'm no authority on what's going on with uh lay people nowadays, especially young ones. You know, I have a little bit of exposure to them because I have some of them on the Discord server. Some of them were just raised in Buddhist families at this point. That's probably in on the increase in young Western Buddhists is, you know, they're they've actually been raised Buddhist to some degree.

Um, also one thing I noticed, um, when I was a monk back around 2012 is you ask people that come to the meditation center, come to a meditation

center wanting instructions on how to meditate, you ask them, why do you want to learn how to meditate? And probably at least half of them just want stress reduction. You know, they're so stressed out by the world, they want some way of of of calming down. So that's kind of a an increasing reason for getting interested in Buddhism is just using you know mindfulnessbased stress reduction and then you know some people are more sensitive uh to you know dharmic influences and so that's kind of like their foot in the door also I assume. So I guess I guess I answered that question pretty much. I'm just going to

move on.

to Clefy. And Clefy says, "Please tell us an encouraging Buddhist story. The reality that my karma is creating for me at the moment looks grim." Well, I'm sorry to hear that Cleiff's reality looks grim at the moment. Um, and I was I was considering I should I should come up with some some story in advance, an encouraging Buddhist, and I didn't do it. So now I've got to like rack my brains to come up with an encouraging Buddhist story. But I mean some of the stories I've already told, you know, like the person who was, you know, he was just this nihilist who was committing crimes largely just out of

boredom or maybe rebellion.

And then some kind, compassionate friend suggests you might try a retreat. I don't what are they called? They're not called retreats. a Ginka course I think they're called and it just changed his life just just waking kind of um you know there was just this dormant area in his in his heart so to speak that wasn't being really used or fulfilled in any way and then it just opened this door to him

encouraging Buddhist stories

golly I mean the story of Anguli Mala is about as encouraging as it gets. You know, he was literally a serial killer.

According to Richard Gomer, he may have been a devote of Kie who was still I mean, he's still a serial killer. He's still killing people, but he was he may have been doing it for more sort of quasi pseudospiritual reasons than um than is given in the in the the like the official version. But Anguli Mala I mean he was

mass murderer and then he gets converted by the Buddha. He's he was technically he was going to according to the story he was going to kill his own mother. I don't know if he recognized that it was his own mother or not but the Buddha was like you know he felt the disturbance in the force so to speak. He didn't want

somebody to just commit such an atrocity as murder their own mother. So he he went there
and it was somewhere nearby or else the Buddha just trans teleported as one of the psychic powers and so he sort of acted as a decoy to lure Anguly Mala away from Anguli Mala's mother. So then Anguli Mala just kind of took the bait and starts following the Buddha. But the Buddha again using psychic powers, he's just walking along at a leisurely rate. And Angulim Mala I mean this can happen in dreams I guess where he is going as fast as he can trying to catch the Buddha in order to kill him. He can't

catch up to him. So then he calls out to the Buddha. It's like you know why don't you why don't you stop? I don't remember the exact details. It's been a while since I read read the the suta and the Buddha says I've already stopped. Why don't you stop? And you know he's he's talking philosophically. You know he stopped like the stream of karma and all this demerit and everything. And anyways, partly because he blew Anguli Mala's mind with this psychic power that you know, Anguli Mala became very receptive and so Buddha kind of converted him to a dharmic way of looking at things and then Anguli Mala just had the the change of heart and

decided he wanted to become a monk and then the Buddha ordained him and Anguli Mala despite all of his bad karma, you know, despite the fact that he was literally a serial killer, he was like he'd already killed like 99 people according to the according to the legend according to the suta that he became fully enlightened in a way he's it's sort of like the Buddhist version of legion in the Bible the New Testament you know it's like the Jesus crosses what is it the the the Sea of Galilee I guess and goes to the he's in the land of the gatherines and there's a a cemetery there and there's this crazy

man who's who's living in this cemetery just screaming and gashing himself with rocks

and Jesus asks him what his name is and he says my name is Legion but we are many you know the assumption is that he's possessed by so many demons he's got an army of of malignant spirits inhabiting him so Jesus drives the spirits out who then go into this herd of pigs nearby the herd of pigs just immediately rushes down into the lake and and drown. And people come, they hear about the pigs. They come and they see this this crazy man is just completely lucid now, just kind of sitting there peacefully at the feet of

Jesus. And they get scared by the pigs and the crazy man all of a sudden being cured. And they ask Jesus, you know, please go away. You know, we're we're unworthy.

So, I mean, the Buddhist version of that would be Anguli Mala in a sense. You know, it's like he's he was like the the example of someone who was just like had pretty much renounced humanity. They were so far gone. You know, they were hardly even human anymore. And then through through Dharma, even though they had all this, especially on Gulima, he had all this bad karma, but still, I mean, it's never too late.

You know, you you may have kind of obstacles of of bad karma cropping up that kind of, you know, interfere, but still, I mean, you can always you can always practice dharma. And to the extent you practice dharma, dharma protects you.

So,

I guess that would be an encouraging Buddhist story. It's about as encouraging as as I can think that even a serial killer who has killed well up into double digits. Still can become fully enlightened in this life.

I mean, he's going to have obstacles. He got beaten up a lot as a monk. You know, he's going for alms and people realize,

hey, that's that's the Jeffrey Dmer of ancient India, you know, the Green River killer.

And then they'd beat him up or whatever. And because he was fully enlightened at that time, you know, he forgave them. Or maybe it never even got to the point of him having to forgive anybody. If you never if you never like perceive an offense, then you know, there's nobody to forgive, I suppose.

But I think I better move on to the next question. And I hope Cley's situation improves.

Next question is from Ruie. And Ruie says, "Are we intrinsically doomed to

atawada or self view, I guess, or the doctrine of self?"

I think I'll just start over. Are we intrinsically doomed to atawada in the sense that we cannot but perceive a certain degree of permanence and duration?

And could the whole Buddha Dharmama enterprise be only about utterly destroying atawada? No, I don't think I mean this is the kind of thinking that's very common even even among like really devout like intelligent Buddhists that I mean utterly destroying self view

utterly destroying the doctrine of self

utterly destroying your defilements

utterly destroying all badness

inside yourself.

I mean I you chime rouge tactics against your own defilements which would include doctrine of self or you know sakaya you know self view personality view that I mean it's a simplistic two-dimensional way of looking at it that I mean you don't necessarily have to destroy self view because without self without any self view at all no self I mean you're not going to be able function.

So, it's like, let's say you're an actor playing King Lear going mad with grief in the storm out in the wilderness and all of a sudden, I mean, you've been

living the part so intensely. All of a sudden, you get this flash of insight. Whoa, I'm just an actor playing King Lear. I'm not really going mad with grief. Even though you're up there on the stage, you're still going through the motions, still raging at your your your two like evil daughters.

So, it's it's it can be like that. It's not that you necessarily destroy self view. It's just that you you like outgrow it. It's still there. It's like you've transcended it. You've just no longer centered at that level of interpretation or that level of reality. You become like the actor who's just playing the role of the the person that

believes in himself kind of sort of.

So I mean to like completely destroy

uh the perception of a certain degree of

permanence and duration I mean you just

become like I mean you you'd become like

a vegetable. I mean you wouldn't be able

to function anymore.

So I mean it's just it's still there.

It's just that you no longer take it

seriously. You no longer identify with

that.

But it has to still be there in order to

function.

Even even like desires and so forth.

I mean, you just don't identify. You've

sort of gone beyond that. It's still

there. You just it's it's just like practically irrelevant now. It's just nature taking its course and you are not identified with it anymore.

But it's hard to explain to someone who hasn't experienced it.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Kundrew.

And Kundrew says, "Are you familiar with the recent Thai scandal regarding a Thai woman blackmailing monks for $12 million after having sex with them? Did large scandals like this ever occur in Burma?"

Yeah, well, I am familiar with it. I've there's been some commentary on it on the Discord server and there are some people on the Discord server just

entirely blaming the monks, but
obviously the woman was at fault also.
Everybody involved in that was was at
fault
from a superficial like conventional
point of view because ultimately nobody
exists.
So,
uh, did large scandals like this one
ever occur in Burma? Not that I ever
heard that. I mean, there's small
scandals. I've heard of that. Like, for
example,
when I was uh, let's see, I used to know
this Burmese monk who was a retired
surgeon. He was a he was like upper

class kind of guy that you know he still kind of talked down to like monastery attendants like they were like servants or something but I mean he had he had came from a a rich upper crusty kind of family but he had been to you know all the major meditation centers you know he met all the famous Seattle you know during the course of his lifetime. He said the one the most impressive Seattle he ever met was way Seattle and then after that was probably Shuin Seattle. But let's see here. Um oh he said that one time he was staying at the the original Mahasi center in Rangon and one fine day uh a monk who was one of the teachers there and he and if

you're a teacher at a mahasi center that is pretty good indication that you are considered to be at least a sodapana and I noticed that I'm lagging now but you have to be at least a sodapana in order to be a teacher at the mahasi method. So, one fine day, um, this teacher at the Mahasi method just went into the the office and took all the money out of the office and just ran off with one of the female meditators.

So, things like that happen. I heard one unsaavory rumor which may be true about another uh teacher of the Mahasi method relatively famous. He was he was done like international tours and so

forth that he was seducing he was like a a serial seducer of lay women and nuns. So that might be more along the lines of this recent Tai scandal. Although um it didn't get proven.

Um but then again, the Thai are more sensual people than the Burmese. The Burmese are very like Spartan in their tastes. They're not a particularly sensual people. But I remember back in the 90s there was another I can't remember his name, some ajon who was he was world famous, you know, at least among Buddhists. and he got kicked out of the the SA by the the Thai government because um he was like um having call girls come to his hotel rooms when he

was in Australia and they had the
records. They had the literal receipts
because he was paying for this escort
service with his credit card
which is kind of dumb.
So yeah, he got kicked out. I mean,
technically, you can't really kick any
monk out of the SA other than that monk
him that monk himself is the only person
who can kick somebody out of the SA, but
they just went ahead and did it anyway
because that's the way it's done in
Thailand because it's very authoritarian
in their in their Buddhism. Thai
Buddhism is very authority based.
So, yeah, he he got kicked out and then

I didn't hear about him for years after that. Next thing I heard about him was that he was in prison in America for entering America with a fake like a counterfeit passport or a counterfeit visa.

And then I didn't hear about him for years after that. And finally I heard that he had he there was like people taking he was still a claiming to be a monk and but people were taking pictures of him at like some disco or nightclub where he was like dressed as a lay person and then there he got drunk. He was driving drunk and got in an accident and somebody died as a result of it and then he kind of went insane and then he

was still sort of a dama teacher but he had like long hair and a beard at that point.

So that kind of stuff is more likely in Thailand I guess. Um, in Burma it can still happen, but not on quite as large of a scale. And even if it does happen, it generally is not going to get publicized much just because the Burmese are very hesitant to badmouth monks and they don't want the SA badmouthed. They don't want the SA to be disgraced. That sort of thing. Even though um one reason one result of that of the reluctance of Burmese people to criticize monks is you've got more lax monks.

My experience in Burma is that the places with the best monks and the strictest practice are places where the the lay people have like a critical eye on monks. You know, the lay people know something about Vineia and they know if a monk is is not following Vineia and they're less likely to support that monk. The the places with the worst monks are the places where the people are just they just indiscriminately revere all monks and I mean they do not dare to say anything bad about monks. But I think the ties are a bit more rascally in their culture than the Burmese are. They're more sensual. You know, like the Burmese and the Thai were

traditional arch enemies for centuries,
kind of like the English and the French
or the uh the Spartans and the
Athenians.
And it looks like uh the sound has
caught up with my mouth, which is good.
So
yeah, scandals do occur in Burma, but
they're smaller scandals or else they're
just better concealed partly because
people don't want to know bad things
about monks.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Yugaoo.
And Yugaoo says, "Tell is more of a
difference between faith in Buddhism and

the one in Christianity."

Um, I don't think there's really that much of a difference in Christian faith and what in Buddhism is called sada or like in in Pali is called sada, which is usually translated as faith. Although a lot of Westerners don't really like the word faith very much because it reminds them too much of Christianity and so they'll come up with a another rendering for sada like confidence.

But yeah, I mean faith in Christianity mainly is belief in a story, you know, belief in a dogma. You don't I mean, you don't know that it's true. I think even Paul of Tarsus was reasonable enough to admit in in one of his epistles that I

mean, it's it's faith because you don't really know it. I mean, if you really knew it, you wouldn't it wouldn't be faith anymore. It would just be knowledge.

So, it's it's kind of a guess, kind of basing your life on a guess.

And there's a lot of that in Buddhism also. It's it's you're just kind of guessing that Dharma is true because you don't know for a fact that it is true because once you know for a fact that it is true, it's not faith anymore.

But I mean, Christianity had really advanced practitioners, too, like St. John of the Cross. And what St. John of

the Cross called dark faith. I mean that's that's relatively advanced. That's beyond just believing perceptually in a story. What St. John of the Cross called dark faith is like I mean anything that isn't God you dismiss from your mind. That was pretty much his meditation method or his contemplation method was if it isn't God dismiss it. So I mean you can't imagine God. So dismiss imagination. You can't figure out God rationally. So, you dismiss ration rationality.

You know, it's like it can't God cannot be contained in any mental state. Just dismiss all mental states until you've dismissed pretty much all mental states.

You're just sitting there in what a Buddhist would call Janna. You're not thinking anymore. And then St. John of the cross says after you have dismissed everything from your mind that can be dismissed and he was a meditation master once you've dismissed everything that can be dismissed you know there's still something there and according to St. John of the cross. That's like the allervasive spirit of God that you can't just dismiss

that it's always going to be there. So after you've dismissed everything that can be dismissed, there's still something there. This this dark I mean

it doesn't have any discernable qualities really. But still, I mean it's you know it's there. And that is what he called dark faith.

And that's that's kind of getting into more advanced levels of faith in Buddhism, too. It's like I mean, you have faith in a story. You have faith in these doctrines. And then through your own practice, more and more of it gets verified. You can see for yourself that it's true, and which might cause you to have more faith in in some of the stuff that you haven't verified yet.

But also, you know, it's you know that you're on the right track because you're heading in the right direction.

And in Christianity, you kind of have that. Although, I mean, believing in Jesus and the Virgin Mary and all that really, I mean, it's not necessarily closely connected with liberation. You know, you got the story and you got the liberation.

So the liberationoriented faith would be I mean it'd be easier to come by in Buddhism I think whereas in Christianity they're they're so locked together that I mean in a way it's it's kind of a handicap

but there are at least two texts in the polytopic that says a monk should have no faith.

One is a strange verse in the dharmapata and and then one is in the the atikawaga of the sutini pata.

So yeah I mean for the for the average village Buddhist in Southeast Asia and for the average Christian faith is pretty much the same kind of faith. But when you get more advanced, faith is easier in Buddhism, I think, just because it's not so firmly tied to this narrative that you couldn't possibly prove.

So, I mean, if you're a Buddhist, you can get very advanced without having to believe the the legend of God Buddha. You know, it's like he was born with his mother standing up holding onto a tree

branch and this kind of thing. It's not nearly as important in Buddhism as it is in Christianity. Jesus died for our sins. I mean, that's just central to Christianity. The whole narrative about this person,
whereas in Buddhism, I mean, God Buddha is just kind of in kind of incidental. He discovered Dharma, but Dhamma is still there with or without him.
So like the details of his life are not nearly as important which makes faith kind of in a way more stable more robust at least it can for a Buddhist practitioner than for a Christian practitioner who has to believe this

story.

And I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Zeno Demon. And Zeno Demon says for a younger generation can you explain the difference? It has he has deference here, but I think it's difference between a beatnick and a hippie.

Well, the Beatnicks arose in the 1950s and they still had like short hair for the most part. Um, they listened to jazz music. They were influenced by like Zen Buddhism and existentialist philosophy. And there were there was a certain like avantguard intellectualism about the beats. It never really caught on in the mainstream nearly as much as the later

hippie movement. You know, it was just sort of like this intellectual avant intellectual and like artistic avantgard that was emphasizing like meaninglessness or like the paradoxical nature of existence, you know, existentialist philosophy, that kind of thing. and they would be like nonconformist and offbeat just deliberately to make a statement that kind of thing. And then gradually from the beat movement evolved the hippie movement which um they didn't really like well they didn't like jazz music nearly as much. they they preferred rock and roll which is

one of the advantages the hippies had
over the beatnics is the beatnics were
listening to like this avantgard jazz
stuff or just like people reciting like
poetry that doesn't rhyme while beating
bongos that kind of stuff. So the
hippies in a way it became more popular
in a like a mainstream acceptance kind
of way just because it was less
I mean it was more human
in a sense you know they they didn't
like Zen so much they like Hinduism they
didn't like this meaninglessness of the
beatnic philosophy you know they wanted
meaning of like love and peace and joy
and this kind of thing so it was more of
an emotional kind of kind of thing. And

of course, the the hippies had like the long hair and the beards, bare feet, you know, and the male hippies at least would go around with no shirts. They wore bell bottoms,

that kind of thing.

And uh it started off as a kind of you know to some degree even a spiritual movement you know it was sort of an artist aesthetic movement but then it just became like a fad and then people were just sort of following along just because they wanted you know less rules they wanted to rebel against their conservative Christian parents that kind of thing. you know, the drugs and sex,

sex, drugs and rock and roll.

The Beatics were, I mean, they were into alcohol and drugs and sex, too. Jazz instead of rock and roll. Well, there's definitely a kind of a difference.

Although, I mean, there had to have been this evolutionary

like like the missing link, the transitional form. you know, some people like Alan Ginsburg, I mean, they were like like an intellectual leader of the beat movement until the hippie movement kind of supplanted it and then they became like an intellectual leader of the the hippie movement.

So, I'm not exactly sure what the transitional form would be,

but it is true that the hippie movement arose from the beat movement.

Like the Beatles for example, they started off as beat, hence the name Beatles and then they uh became hippies when uh you know like 19 like the late60s when they let the hair grow long and started taking LSD and going to Maharishi's ashram in India, that kind of thing.

So I think I'm just going to move on to Zeno Demon's next question. He says, 'If westerners are more animal people in your last vid, then how is the how is west more developed the Bernia? And I didn't understand what more developed

the Bernia meant until somebody pointed out to me that it's just a typo. He I think he means how is the west more developed than Burma?

because western people are more animalistic

in a way. So it's it's kind of reminds me of the Christian statement. It's I guess it could be one of my favorite verses in the Bible. You cannot serve both God and Mammon.

So I mean the Burmese, they have this weird advantage over us because they don't have much mammon to serve. you know, they're living in a an impoverished fourth world country and so it's much easier for them to turn to

religion as their consolation.
Whereas in the west, we're more
materialistic, I guess. You know, we we
judge our own value or the value of
other people largely by the things that
they own, the money that they make.
And so, I mean, we might be more capable
of critical thought.
um you know we might be more
sophisticated in our education and so
forth but at the same time more western
people are just stuck in mammon worship
you know just more materialistic more
living at just a superficial level like
the Burmese I used to when I was in
Burma I used to note that like a

westerner has a much broader mind than the average Burmese person but it's shallower that the Burmese you know they have the same amount of mental energy let's say but what they lack in width, their broadness of their mind is compensated by depth.

So they're much more emp empathetic than the average the average westerner. At least a lot of them are, you know, they're very very people oriented, for example. And so they have a a depth of feeling like somebody's house burns down, the whole rest of the neighborhood just or the village will just get together and build them a new house. Not very difficult to build a house in

Burma. So it's not nearly as complicated as in the west, but they have more like spiritual depth to them on average. So the west is more developed than than Burma because they're more superficial. They're more they're more like focused on just what they can see and hear and not so much focused on what they can't see and hear, which is deep down inside them. Like people in the west they want to understand reality they look outwards. Whereas more traditionally in the east you want to understand reality you look inwards which is a more advanced approach spiritually although it's much less conducive to science and

technology and world conquest.

So it's like bringing back Charles

Dickens. You know Charles Dickens was

definitely like an ethnic supremacist.

He definitely considered uh English

people to be vastly superior to little

brown people.

And so he I mean he really didn't

understand

that for example he didn't understand

just the arrogance and foolishness of

Anglican missionaries going to places

like Burma or or Son trying to convert

the people there to Anglican

Christianity which is just inferior to

what these heathens already were already

following because you cannot serve serve

both God and Mammon. And so it's like
the British Empire, they were like
foremost in the world of serving Mammon,
but they just had this idea that they
were also foremost in the world of
serving God somehow,
which was just silly.
Anyways, I should just move on to the
next question. And we are getting pretty
close to the bottom. Pretty close. Yeah,
there's not very many more questions
here.
So, next question is from Xenithoid.
This is going to be less than three
hours. Let's hope.
Xenithoid says, "Do you think making

analogies between physical laws and mental laws is a bad way to go about explaining idealist takes? For example, the way I go about explaining my atheism is that there is no need for a super mind to ground all other minds. In the same way there is no need for a super atom to ground all other atoms. Also I think of tna as being a contracting force similar to gravity or chemical bonds. But for consciousness as opposed to material

which is what created creates the self. Are these analogies too reductive? Well I think the the analogies are just kind of too abstract for most people to follow them very well.

With regard to this first example, let's see. There is no need for a super mind to ground all of their minds in the same way there is no need for a super atom to ground all other atoms. Well, I mean, I wouldn't consider that to be a very good analogy. I mean, an atom would be more like a mental state than a mind, you know, like in going with like terraovato philosophy, you got mind and you got mental states.

And an atom would be more like a mental state like an individual perception than it would be like consciousness in general. Consciousness in general might be something more like the quantum field

from which everything arises.

But uh yeah, so I wouldn't consider that

to be a really good comparison.

You know, it's sort of apples to oranges

in a way.

Um

let's see.

I think of tata or craving as being a

contracting force similar to gravity or

chemical bonds. But for consciousness is

exposed to material which is what

creates the self. Yeah. It's just too

abstract and too sort of obstruuse. I

think most people will have difficulty

even following this line of reasoning.

So, I mean, if you're going to try and

persuade somebody or win a debate, that

kind of thing, you want something that's easy to understand, something that people can visualize in their mind or at least grasp in their mind fairly easily without having to get into like obscure arguments that are hard to follow that people for the most part aren't going to be able to follow.

So I mean you can kind of compare mental phenomena with physical phenomena like I just compared consciousness in general with the quantum field

but

or you know a mental state with an atom that kind of thing but I'm not really trying to persuade any um materialists

you know I'm just kind of trying to come up with analogies that might in some cases help somebody to understand something.

So the analogies, yeah, I suppose they are too reductive, but also they're just too obscure and abstract and obstruuse and just difficult for people to follow. For example, I mean, it it wouldn't make much headway with me that using that kind of argument. Um, because it's it really is not self-evident. It's not clear the way it's explained. So that you know is there's nothing that really clicks.

There's no aha moment.

So I think I'm just going to move on to

Zenithoy's next question. How do Paticha Samuata and the three marks of existence relate to the concept of entropy?

Well, I mean in the Buddhist time when they came up with Paticha Samupata and the tilakana, the three marks of existence, I really don't think they had much of a concept of entropy. I mean, everyone knows that you get older, that kind of thing. That's kind of a kind of entropy, I guess.

You know, they know that things tend to break, you know, it's just like all water pots end up breaking, you know, all fruit eventually falls from the tree. So, that's kind of entropy. It's

impermanence definitely. So, entropy definitely would fit under a niche, which is one of the three marks of of existence. It would definitely I mean entropy definitely is uh an aspect of impermanence
with regard to dependent coarising.
Yeah. I'm not it's not entirely clear to me how entropy and padicha samuada would be related to each other. I mean everything is related to picha samupata. Everything is related to entropy from a like the scientific point of view or other than maybe the quantum field or something like that.
So
um but like picha samopata it's not like

an aspect of the idea of dependent core
rising that everything is kind of
running down running from order to
disorder
that that I don't think that entropy is
necessarily
contained within the concept of
dependent core rising and dependent core
rising is not nec maybe some form of it
some scientific form of dependent
corrisising could apply to entropy but
entropy doesn't necessarily apply to
dependent core rising as far as I can
tell but certainly entropy would be um
an aspect of ana or impermanence or
inconstancy.

So I guess I better move on. I got to
keep my keep to my goal of staying
within three hours on this thing. So the
next question is from PSA
and PSA says, "Do you think Bridget
Micron or Micron is a dude?"
Bridget Micron.
Yeah. Well, I mean, I haven't watched
all of Candace Owens's exposees,
but it wouldn't surprise me. I mean,
based on what little evidence I've seen,
yeah, Micron's wife might actually be a
[__] And even if even if Micron's
wife isn't a [__] nevertheless, I
mean, she was kind of a predator going
she was like a pedto going with, you
know, the the western definitions of the

terms. I mean, she was fully adult. She was like 40 years old or something like something like that when she first started messing around with Micron who was 14 years old at the time. So, I mean, it's it's criminal went on apparently. I mean, I don't know what the laws are in France, so maybe maybe it's wouldn't be criminal there, but uh yeah, I mean, it wouldn't surprise me that that Micron is is kind of a a twink and that his his wife is is a she male. Wouldn't surprise me, but I really don't know for sure. And so, I'm not just going to start like leveling accusations or making assertions on the

subject. So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question. What do you think of Stephen Cobear's late show getting cancelled? I got no dog in the fight. I never saw a single episode of Steven Coar's late show. I mean, I saw a few clips, you know, when he's doing saying something egregious or dancing around with people in in like hypodermic syringe costumes. I've seen that before. You know, making some of his ridiculous accusations against Trump. how, you know, Trump is is Putin's dick holster or something.

So, I mean, I don't really care. I mean, it's it's a good thing, I suppose, that Steven Coar, he's just another

hysterical left-wing propagandist bigot.
So, yeah, the fewer of those the better,
I suppose. Although I mean western prop
left or like right-wing propagandist
bigots aren't all that great either.
But I mean what exactly is right-wing? I
don't think anyone's ever fully agreed
on that. Leftwing is obvious. I mean
extreme leftwing is communism. I mean
that is not controversial. Extreme
rightwing
people just don't agree on that. That's
controversial.
Certainly not Donald Trump. And it's not
even fascism.
So, what do I think of Ste Steven Coar's

late show getting cancelled? I think it's a good sign that the left is losing control of the cultural mainstream that they have gone so far to the left, they've become so extreme that they are just losing credibility and also they've told so many lies that are coming to light that people just don't trust them anymore. So, that's good.

So, the next question from PSA is one that I do not fully understand. He says, "Will there ever be a rainbow?" And I'm pretty sure that there have been lots of rainbows already. I've seen lots of rainbows in my life. So, yeah, there will be a rainbow.

And finally, we move on to the last

question and this is from Jules. And Jules says, "In the context of sila and the precepts, how accurate is the English translation of intoxicant from the original poly? Other than heedlessness, did the Buddha ever prescribe any specific qualities or characteristics of a substance that cause it to qualify as such?" Well, like the fifth precept for lay people is So surah is like beer or ale. Surah is like wine. And then maja is intoxicant. And then pamada and pomada is like it's tana just means like a grounds for. So pom it's grounds for pomado. Maja an intoxicant which is

grounds for pamada. And the mada in pomada has the same etmology as maja. Maja is like you know it's it's more of an adjectival term. Pomada is is like the state of being intoxicated or drunk or just befuddled. You know, like befuddled might be a better term for like pamada and maja is like what causes it. And maja is just the standard term for like for alcohol. Maja pana is is like alcoholic drinks.

Pana is like water or or beverage beverage.

And uh the maja is like like drunkenness beverage or like befuddlement beverage, intoxicated beverage. So or intoxicating beverage. So maja um generally it meant

like like alcoholic drinks. Pam or mada pomada would be like drunkenness. But I mean drunkenness isn't necessarily caused just by alcohol, you know? was just like befuddled, being like, you know, stupid and clumsy,
that kind of thing.
So, let's see. Let's read the story.
Let's read the question here again. In the context of sila and the precepts, how accurate is the English translation of intoxicant from the original poly?
Yeah, I mean, it's it's fine. I don't really see any problem with that.
Other than heedlessness, did the Buddha ever prescribe any specific qualities or

characteristics of a substance that
cause it to qualify as such? Well, not
alcohol would be I mean standard I mean
that would be like the starting point.
Alcohol would be numero uno because
alcohol is called maja
in pi or maja pana.
So um there is the the origin story like
in in Vineia every rule in Vignia has an
origin story and there's this origin
story I think it was he was even an
arahant a monk who was an arahant wound
up drinking something alcoholic and he
passes out with his feet pointing
towards the Buddha which I mean in
Buddhist countries you don't point your
feet at anybody especially if they're a

venerable person or towards a Buddhist statue or or anything like in Burma You don't like point with your foot at anything really. It's considered rude because the foot is considered to be like the armpit of the human body.
So anyways, this monk kind of passes out with his feet pointing towards the Buddha. And so the Buddha was like pointing out it's like, you know, this this monk, he he he like defeated a naga with his spiritual powers, you know, this cobra dragon. Now, I mean, he couldn't defeat anything, could he? Look at this. He's he's just lying there unconscious with his feet pointing

towards me. So I mean that's kind of

heedlessness I guess even in Arahand in

this case but it's it's just kind of

like being

stupid you know it's it's just sort of

like decreasing your wisdom

um

or just

being intoxicated

being high but I mean no I mean high

wouldn't be a good term because I mean

some some drugs that get you high like

cocaine wouldn't necessarily make you

heatless. I mean, caffeine is is

chemically related to cocaine and I mean

caffeine isn't considered to be an

intoxicant that leads to heatlessness as

a general rule.

So

yeah, I think uh let's see is the English translation of intoxicant from the original how accurate is the English translation of intoxicant from the original poly? Yeah, it's not bad. It's about as good as you're going to find. So yeah, it's about it's about good. Intoxicant. Yeah, that's I think I'd say that's a fair assessment or a fair rendering of the word maja into English. Like majana would be like an intoxicating beverage, an intoxicating drink, but mainly it means alcohol.

So

see, other than heedlessness, did the Buddha ever prescribe any specific qualities or characteristics of a substance that calls it to qualify as well like if it makes you like temporarily insane, that kind of thing. But uh yeah, I haven't really studied up. I mean if you were to read the vineia you get to majapana like the the rule for monks against majapana then I mean you could read the sutu banga which is the the ancient commentary that's embedded in the text and it will probably give a better explanation which I neglected to do before I started doing this Q&A. So if you have an English

translation of the vineia then go to the padim mochoka rules, the pacidia rules and look up the rule against a monk drinking intoxicating beverages and see what the the ancient commentary says and that will probably be the like the uh the best authoritative description of exactly what constitutes u mud.

And that's it. We're done. And like I should always say at the beginning, I never do except maybe once. You got any questions you think I can answer like especially with regard to like early Buddhism, Terraata Buddhism and then as you go farther and farther away from from that then the odds of my being able

to make an intelligent answer to give an intelligent answer will decrease accordingly. I think I do I am fairly wellversed like biology. I have a degree in biology, western philosophy, like classical literature, that kind of stuff I know something about also. But my main field of expertise, I guess, would be early Buddhism.

And no more than three questions per person per episode, please. And if you have questions, just feel free to put them in the comments below this video. And uh aside from that, just uh be happy. And I'm going to stop recording now by hitting this here particular uh button.

Alrighty, then. I think we are

recording.

If we are indeed recording, you should

hear this. You should hear me tapping

the microphone like this.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 156.

I am your host Panyo Boss and this is my

beverage that I haven't put the paper

umbrella into yet.

So, let's just do that

as a kind of

traditional preliminary.

So, that we put the paper umbrella into

the beverage

like so, then we immediately take it

back out again.

Because after all, it's simply to

demonstrate my sophistication

by using it.

Okay.

So, let's see here. 156

is certainly not prime because it is in

fact 2 * 2 * 3 * 13.

And I personally am feeling like a wet

rag today cut because

just the past week, I've been working

like 10 11-hour shifts, just working my

butt off.

Just

sort of

metaphorically speaking.

I do still have a butt.

And it's just like a 90° plus heat and

I'm just feeling like a wet rag today.

Today is my day of glorious laziness and

recovery.

So, last night after a 10-hour shift in

90 plus degree heat, working my butt off

as I was saying,

my my lovely woman informs me that she

just ordered about a ton and a half of

rocks and gravel

for the backyard

that has to be moved from the front

where the car is parked and so forth to

the backyard with a wheelbarrow and I

said, "Well, it's not going to happen

tomorrow. It's just not going to happen

on that day.

Cuz as I say, I need one day just to be lazy, but I can still exercise intellectually,

which I do in these Q&As to some degree.

And so, I guess the thing for me to do at present is just wade into this and it's not going to be a real long one.

There's there's a relatively small number of questions this time due to just the lassitude of the heat. People just not really been able to come up with lots of questions cuz they're just kind of lying there.

So, first question is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, it seems that more often than not when it comes to choosing a

prospective mate, people seem to be attracted to a certain type based on specific characteristics like personality type, like introvert versus extrovert, etc. Body size and shape, race, race, ethnicity, etc.

As you are a Buddhist with a deep knowledge of Western science, I was wondering if you could give your overall take and understanding of romantic attraction and mate selection based on a similar type as well as what influence, if any, karma has in this regard.

Well, let's see here.

Choosing a prospective mate, attractive type. Yeah, it reminds me, I had this

this one friend in high school who
after his first girlfriend, after after
his first girlfriend, it it was like he
would
like target the least attractive girls
in school. And it that could be some
sort of mating strategy where you, I
mean, a guy who hook who hooks up with a
like a manifestly unattractive female is
unlikely to be cocked cuz no other guy
wants her.
But I that just popped into my mind. I
haven't really gotten the momentum going
yet
with regard to answering these
questions. So bear with me.
Overall taken understanding of romantic

attraction

and mate selection. Well,

I have always been I mean I've been

open-minded. For example, when I was in

school, I fell for a couple of blonde

girls.

Not at the same time, but different

different times.

But as a general rule,

I have my like feminine ideal is like a

fair-skinned brunette with blue eyes and

big boobs. Like an hour like a curvy

voluptuous hourglass figure.

And as it turns out, that's the kind of

girl I got now.

And it kind of scared me

many years ago when I realized that my
mother was like that. And it's like what
is this is this an Oedipus complex?
But it turns out, I mean, one thing I
kind of reasoned with myself is well, I
could have just inherited that
attraction for
fair-skinned
blue-eyed buxom brunettes from my father
because he was attracted to my mother.
But my father was pretty much attracted
to just about any kind of attractive
woman.
But I have subsequently come across the
information that it's a genetic thing
that men tend to be attracted towards
women who resemble their own mother.

That it's like a genetic thing inherited

from the mother

to increase the likelihood

that her genes will be propagated.

So, I mean, that would be

kind of a mechanistic thing if you

believe in mechanistic things.

Um

Schopenhauer

good old Arthur Schopenhauer had this

idea that we are sort of

instinctively attracted towards women

that will kind of compensate for our own

shortcomings, but his ideas about that

sort of thing about heredity and all

that were just

laughable by modern standards. So, we can just forget Schopenhauer's ideas, I guess.

Um

It is true though that that men do tend to be attracted towards women who resemble their mother.

And also, of course, there are some guys out there who are just attracted to any female.

Just sort of indiscriminate. Just they'll just hit on any woman until they finally get one, you know, they they get a get a bite, they strike traction or something, they they might stay with that one until that one gets fed up with their womanizing or whatever.

Um let's see. But, what is the actual question here?

Let's just get down to the actual question.

So, let's see. I was wondering if you could give your overall take and understanding of romantic attraction and mate selection based on a similar type.

Um

Yeah, I think some men just do have like an instinctive attraction towards a woman who like feels gaps. You know, like the first Rocky movie, I think it was. You know, someone's like questioning his attraction towards Adrian.

And he says, "We fill gaps. I got gaps, you got gaps. Together, we fill gaps."

So, I mean, there there's some of that, too, I think.

Um I've always been attracted to vivacious women.

The like the passive ones that want you to make all the decisions, I've never liked that so much. Partly just cuz I'm lazy don't want to have to make all the decisions for both of us.

But, I I I don't want like a bossy, domineering woman either.

So, it's sort of a middle path scenario on that one.

Um see, overall take understanding romantic attraction mate selection.

Well, I mean, just getting down to the
basics, men tend to be attracted to
young healthy women because young
healthy women,
just going with Darwin, are more likely
to produce lots of healthy offspring.
So, obviously, standards of beauty are
not just arbitrary cultural constructs.
To a large degree, it's animal instinct
in the human animal that you want a
well-formed
healthy-looking woman at the beginning
of her breeding cycle.
I mean, that's just natural.
But, with regard to your specific
tastes, like some guys like brunettes,

some guys like blondes, some guys like curvaceous buxom types, other ones like athletic muscular type women.

So, I mean, that to some degree it could be karmic.

To some degree, it could be influenced by what their mother is like.

Uh to some degree, it could be just this instinctive or intuitive desire to fill gaps.

So, I assume it's it's very complex, especially get into the karmic stuff.

You know, it could be that you just have this karmic thing going with a certain woman or or more than one woman. You know, you've had karmic connections in past lives or whatever, and you come

across them and there's just like

already this momentum going.

So, I mean, there's that possibility

also.

Um

I I noticed when I was younger, like

when I was still in school, I'd off

often fall hardest for women that at the

very beginning I wasn't attracted to at

all.

You know, it's just kind of ew.

And then,

you just wind up with that one thinking

she's wonderful.

But that was just another aside, I

guess.

Um

Yeah, I I suppose I pretty much answered

the question as well as

as well as I'm capable of answering it

off the cuff like this.

Let's see. I'm just going to make sure

before I move on to the next one here

though.

See, I wonder if you can give your

overall take and understanding of

romantic attraction and mate selection

based on a similar type.

Uh yeah, I suppose it would pretty much

be in accordance with what I've already

touched upon.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to

the next question.

This is from Trzaskazis and Trzaskazis

is asking the same question as he did

last time with regard to

my my take, my commentary on Philippians

4:12-13

because last time when I answered the

question,

I went to Ephesians instead of

Philippians.

A common mistake, I'm sure.

Most people probably can't tell the

difference between Philippians and

Galatians

or Philippians and Ephesians. See,

Galatians, too.

So anyways, Philippians 4:12-13.

I got to make sure I get it right this time. I don't want to just keep reading Bible verses just episode after episode. Make sure we're recording here cuz I don't want to read this again.

All right.

So, Philippians 4:12-13 says, "I know what it is to be in need and what it is to have more than enough. I have learned this secret so that anywhere at any time I am content, whether I am full or hungry, whether I have too much or too little. I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me."

Well, I mean, part of this I don't fully comprehend like let's say you're

familiar with what it is not to have
enough so that makes you satisfied when
you don't have enough. I mean,
why?
So that part I don't fully understand. I
mean,
what I like better than than that verse
is actually a proverb of hell
written composed by William Blake's
devil.
Which uh this might not be an exact
quote but is essentially you do not know
what is enough or you cannot know what
is enough unless you know what is more
than enough.
So that was sort of a

a motto that I would uh occasionally

spout as a young man.

You know, in order to know what is

enough, first you have to learn what is

more than enough.

And then you back up a little bit.

You know, it's same the same proverbs of

hell contains such gems as the road of

excess leads to the pallet of palace of

wisdom.

Which

not necessarily true or if the fool

would persist in his folly, he would

become wise. But still to a like a

19-year-old, that stuff is gold.

Um but still I mean,

it's it's like

from a Buddhist point of view, it's not really a knowledge of what is more than enough and a knowledge of what is not enough. It's just sort of like accepting whatever happens.

You know, accepting whatever you've got. And not getting upset over what you don't have. You know, it's like getting upset over what you don't have is essentially you're suffering because of something that doesn't exist.

You know, it's like fear of leprechauns or something. Not that I'm trying to offend any real leprechauns out there.

I've heard that they're invasive in the

United States now.

So, let's see.

Yeah, I I

I assume that's that's kind of my

commentary. It's It's better than most

of Paul's quotes, I suppose, but I

really don't have much use for Paul of

Tarsus. I think he messed up

Christianity at the same time that he

was sort of turning Christianity into

like a world religion.

Muhammad Gandhi had the same idea. He

thought that Paul really just messed up

Christianity at the same time that he

was turning it into this world religion.

So, let's see. I'm just make sure here.

I just I've got to I'm kind of a

perfectionist.

So, I got to make sure.

Let's see.

I know what it is to be in need and what

it is to have more than enough. That's

good, I suppose. I've learned this

secret. I mean, I don't know why it

would be a secret unless he just doesn't

tell anybody.

So, that anywhere at any time I'm

content, whether I'm full or hungry.

Yeah, I really don't know why it doesn't

make good logical sense to me.

So, I think the proverb of hell actually

is

more logical.

You cannot know what is enough unless until you know what is more than enough. But, that's kind of satanic and all. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Maximin, the first barbarian emperor of Rome, if I remember correctly.

And Maximin says, is it against vinaya to stream a basketball game if you have access to a computer?

Um well, obviously streaming basketball games on a computer is nowhere at all mentioned in the ancient poly rules of monastic discipline.

They didn't have basketball or computers in the ancient Ganges Valley like circa 5th century BCE.

But, going with the spirit of it, I mean just going with the spirit of Dhamma, monks really shouldn't be making efforts to watch basketball games. Although, technically, it wouldn't be against the rules, it would just be sort of inappropriate behavior that technically doesn't break any rules, but it could be against the rule if it is illegal. Like you're pirating it or something. If you are committing copyright theft in such a way that you could be arrested for it, then yeah, that would be against vinaya. In fact, if you're committing copyright theft in such a way that you could be

arrested for it, you could even be
parajika. You could be excommunicated.
So, you have to be careful with such
things as copyright theft, I suppose, if
you are a monk.
So,
with regard to the actual laws regarding
copyright theft of streamed basketball
games and so forth,
I'm no expert. I'm not a legal legal
expert.
So, you're going to have to figure that
part out for yourself.
But, I would assume I would guess that
as a general rule, streaming basketball
games is not illegal enough that you
would be prosecuted for it.

Unless you're like

you're then like selling it,

you know, making a profit from it, that

sort of thing.

But still, a monk should be careful,

especially with regard to something that

involves excommunication.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Stellar

Supreme, who is asking possibly

the most disgusting question

that has been asked in the history of

these kind

Oh my goodness.

He says, Stellar Supreme etc. etc. ad

infinitum,

says,

"Does popping acne count as

self-beautification with or without a

mirror, or can it pass as a healthcare

sort of thing like brushing your teeth?

And I mean at at the same time that it's

disgusting, still I mean pretty much

everybody does it except for those who

have been blessed with a perfect

complexion their entire lives, including

when they're like 15.

So,

popping zits, squeezing pimples,

I mean it's just an unsavory kind of

thing. I mean, you can get satisfaction

from doing it yourself, you know, in the

privacy of your own bathroom. But like

watching somebody else do it,

for guys especially, I mean that's it's

sort of like watching somebody else take

a dump or something.

But

women, some women,

got like my own one, bless her heart,

she will actually watch YouTube videos

sometimes of like people bursting boils.

And And women are just They just love

that. They have like this grooming

instinct, this primate grooming

instinct. And that's one thing that even

guys have with regard to themselves, you

know, it's like you're squeezing a

blackhead or something.

It's not necessarily a case of self-beautification or a case of health, it's just this primate grooming instinct. You know, in a way it's health because I mean it's that's what caused the instinct to arise.

Plus maybe reproductive success, a little Darwinian sexual selection in there.

But um yeah, I knew this other woman, too. She was the wife of a friend of mine who She I mean she told me she just fantasizes about popping boils.

Some women, I mean it's just the grooming instinct is is it is strong in them.

So, I guess that's one reason why they

like going and getting their hair did
and their nails did and all that. It's
just this kind of primate grooming stuff
going on that satisfies
deep instincts in the human animal.
So,
popping acne. I mean, it depends on your
motivations. It's like, you know, you
don't want the village girls to see you
with this big zit on your cheek, and you
squeeze it for that reason.
I mean, that would be
self-beautification, wouldn't it? On the
other hand, let's say it's just it just
bugs you to have this unsquoze
zit on your face, you know, it's like

the animal grooming instinct thing, then

or it just kind of bugs you to have this

bump there,

then you squeeze it for that reason, I'd

say it's it's a totally different

animal. It's It's It's not for

self-beautification,

not necessarily even for health, but

it's just like this

primate grooming instinct that wants us

to keep our skin relatively clear.

And like pick off, you know, pick off

like dried scabs, and squeeze

blackheads, you know, pick lice off,

that kind of thing.

So, yeah, it depend on the modification

the modification?

Yeah, it depends on the modification. I just invented that word.

I'm going to patent it. I'm going to get royalties.

So,

let's see here. I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question. We don't want to dwell too too long on this question of squeezing pimples.

So, Stella Supreme et cetera et cetera ad infinitum's next question

is what would be your commentary on this quote from the Tao Te Ching?

And the quote from the Tao Te Ching is, "Become totally empty. Let your heart be at peace. Amidst the rush of worldly

comings and goings, observe how endings become beginnings.

To return to the root is to find peace.

To find peace is to fulfill one's destiny. To fulfill one's destiny is to be constant. To know the constant is called insight. Not knowing this cycle leads to eternal disaster.

Knowing the constant gives perspective.

This perspective is impartial.

Impartiality is the highest nobility.

The highest nobility is divine.

This way is everlasting, not endangered by physical death.

Unquote.

Um well, there's a few things I could have some comments on. Become totally

empty. And that's

Mahayana Buddhists teach that kind of

thing. And it's one reason why uh Taoism

and Mahayana Buddhism kind of merge

together so easily in China, like

medieval China.

So, see, let your heart be at peace.

Yeah, that's a good idea.

At amidst the rush of worldly comings

and goings, observe how endings become

beginnings. Yeah, that would be the sort

of like impermanence, just this constant

cycle of, you know,

like causes and results, and then the

results are like new causes that cause

new results ad infinitum.

So, then he's got sort of a

ellipsis,

three dots.

So, then he skips to this next part, and

this next part has two of the same sort

of pattern that is common in the Tao Te

Ching. So, to to return to the root is

to find peace. To find peace is to

fulfill one's destiny. To fulfill one's

destiny is to be constant. To know the

constant is called insight. So, it's

it's like this this leads to that leads

to that leads to that, which

I mean, it could be just an artificial

stringing together of simple statements

into a more complex statement, and

that's

uh some people have hypothesized that that's how the 12 Nidana theory of Paticca samuppada or dependent co-arising arose in in Buddhism. Where you have like these simple statements, this causes that, and then you have this other statement of that causes this, and then they just get string strung together, and there's lots of those in the Daode Jing. I'm not exactly sure why.

I mean, it could even be influenced by dependent co-arising like through the influence of Buddhism in early China. I don't know.

So, let's see here.

Not knowing the cycle leads to eternal disaster. To seek is to return to the root is to find peace. The root here, I suppose, would be Dao.

You know, sort of like the the ground of being, you know, the the absolute.

To find peace is to fulfill one's destiny. Not exactly a Buddhist way of expressing things.

Let's see. To fulfill one's destiny is to be constant.

Um, unless you're just sort of returning to the Dao, which is sort of unchanging.

You know, you're sort of transcending this

this hubbub of samsara and getting to the absolute, the unchanging absolute,

which presumably underlies all of this changingness.

So, let's see. To know the constant is called insight.

Um, not I mean, that would be like the highest insight from a Buddhist point of view. I mean, you have lesser insights before then. You know, you're seeing the arising and passing away of things. That kind of thing would be insight also.

At least to a Buddhist.

So, not knowing the cycle leads to eternal disaster, which could be just eternal birth and death.

You know, the cycle of samsara, transmigration, and so forth.

So, I mean,

it's

sort of Buddhist.

You know, it's not uh

an exactly Buddhist way of expressing

things, but the the general idea

would is kind of Mahayana Buddhist, more

Mahayana Buddhist than Theravada, I

think.

Let's see. This perspective

is impartial. Impartiality is the

highest nobility.

The highest nobility is divine. So,

again, it's this this string of

statements where, you know, the object

becomes the subject of the next

statement, which, you know, is just

sort of a chain of these simple statements.

Uh let's see. Impartiality is the highest nobility. That's kind of a value judgment, I suppose.

The highest nobility is divine. So, again, I mean, is if you're transcending samsara, becoming enlightened, you're becoming aware of ultimate reality instead of just being lost in the illusion, then Yeah, you can call it, you know, a highest nobility. I mean, nobility would be like aryahood, you know, arya means noble.

Um the highest nobility is divine. Yeah, that's all fine. I got no problem with

that. And then the last statement in this Tao Te Ching quote, "This way is everlasting, not endangered by physical death." Again, presumably he's referring to the absolute, which to the Taoists is Tao.

To a Buddhist, it would be like, you know, nirvana, nibbanadhatu, the one mind, that kind of thing.

So, I guess I commented on that.

So, I'm just going to move on to the question. This is from Eka Grota.

And Eka Grota says,

"What Now that you have left the monastic life for a couple of years now and are now strictly speaking a lay person,

is your means these days

Oh, okay. What is your means these days

of spiritual realization?

And with hoping to avoid vagueness of

terms again, I would define spiritual

realization a living that spiritually

fulfills you, whatever that means for

you, for this life and the next.

Well, in a way I'm kind of just

coasting on momentum. You know, I

developed these habits

of

I'm I'm not even sure exactly how to

express it.

It's like you're kind of searching

or it's not even really searching, it's

just you're aware that there's something

that's beyond the veil.

And I mean, there's always this

awareness

that this is not ultimately real, that

there's something beyond that, and

you're just kind of like

to some degree you've got a certain

amount of focus beyond this.

And that's just this this like a a

mental habit at this point.

Like I was saying you know, a recent

Q&A, it's like once you reach a certain

point it's it's like you hit the point

of no return, so that even if you turn

your back on Dharma, you know, you just

get fed up with it at the surface level,

you know, I'm done.

I don't care anymore.

You turn your back on Dharma, still deep down you feel Dharma back there breathing down your neck.

And also, I mean, part of my spiritual practice is just doing these Q&A's. I mean, this

these Q&A's is possibly the most overt spiritual practice, you know, the most acted out kind of spiritual practice that I do nowadays, other than just like, you know, forgiving people, being patient, you know, just not lying, that kind of stuff.

So,

yeah, I mean, in a way it's just an attitude. It's not really acted out at the physical level very much. It's just sort of like this mental attitude where you you realize that this is not ultimately real and so you're just kind of like
extending beyond it
or kind of leaning
beyond, leaning through the veil or something. I don't know exactly how even to put it into words.
Let's see. Did I answer the question?
I hope so.
Cuz if I didn't, I'm going to have to come up with a better answer than I already gave.

So, spiritual realization of living

that spiritually fulfills you, whatever

that means to you. Well, I mean,

I'm not like

dissatisfied

other than this sort of like at the

surface level there's always going to be

dissatisfactions. You know, that's just

the first noble truth. So long as you're

like existing,

there's going to be dukkha.

So, there is that, but at the same time

there's just like this deep awareness

that I'm dreaming,

that this is a dream, a like a dream

state.

So, in a way it's kind of like that.
It's like you're asleep at night, you're
you're dreaming, like maybe you're
having a bad dream, but still you have
enough
like wisdom or awareness to realize it's
just a dream.
And so, you've got like this part of
your mind that's still awake, so to
speak.
And I mean, the more practice, the more
spiritual advancement or progress you
have made, the more that you're more
like identified with the awake part even
when you're dreaming.
And a lot of people they think that
being sound asleep that you're just

completely unconscious which isn't true.
There's always like an awareness there.
Like otherwise nobody would be able to
wake you up. You wouldn't hear the alarm
clock going off. You wouldn't
you wouldn't feel people like trying to
shake you awake anything like that. That
part of you is still awake.
So let's see here.
Yeah, I guess I guess that would be a
good explanation. It's like you're
you're asleep dreaming but there's still
a part of you that is like like aware of
your surroundings as you're lying there
on the bed conjuring up this imaginary
scenario. There's still an aspect of

your consciousness that is still aware of your surroundings. You hear there's a weird noise. It can wake you up. Somebody tries to wake you up. They can succeed. That kind of thing.

So it's just more of a like an emphasis on that aspect of your awareness of or your mind or whatever.

So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Xenastoid. And Xenastoid says, "If it was impossible to exit the cycle of death and rebirth, would Nietzscheanism with its goal of becoming the master of samsara become your preferred philosophy?"

No, because in a way

I do consider it impossible to exit the cycle of death and rebirth. At least at this at the samsaric level there is no escape. See, it's you have to transcend it. But the samsaric stuff still going on. It's like going back to my very hackneyed at this point
simile of the block of marble.
So you got the block of marble, shapeless, sizeless block of marble. You can't really compare it with anything else, so it's might as well be sizeless. And it contains within every single possible statue. And that's every single possible statue is always going to be in there. There's nothing you can possibly

do to erase your unenlightened statue from that rock.

Absolutely nothing. It's always going to be there. Every single possible scenario is always going to be in that rock in potential, conditional, virtual form.

So in a sense, there is no escape from the cycle of birth and death. The only thing you can do is arise above it to transcend it, to stop identifying with it. But even so, it's there's going to be an infinite number of unenlightened miserable yous stuck in that uncarved block of marble. Regardless of anything you do or don't do.

And still, I'm not a Nietzschean. I really don't have much use for

Nietzsche. I don't even like his writing

style.

A little too dramatic and like emotive

for me.

I mean, a a good philosopher shouldn't

be just completely emotionless, but at

least he should have like a sense of

humor.

Like David Hume, he had a sense of

humor.

I like David Hume.

So, let's see.

Yeah, I mean, Nietzscheanism

I mean, even if there's no

exit to the cycle of birth and death,

especially at the samsaric level.

I'm not saying there's no enlightenment.
I'm not saying there's no transcendence,
but even if it's impossible to exit the
cycle of birth and death, it does make
sense within the context of samsara to
try to steer a path that will result in
as little misery for you as possible.
This It doesn't really matter, but still
if you prefer happiness to unhappiness,
if you prefer heaven to hell, you might
as well act upon that.
So, be like a Epicurean, you know, just
minimize your desires, simplify your
life.
You know, enjoy wholesome pleasures.
That sort of thing.
So, yeah, and Nietzsche wouldn't be

that.

Nietzsche would be like

uh you know, to be the Julius Caesar

type or something, which Nietzsche

wasn't successful at doing either.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to

Zenothoid's next question.

After checking again to make sure we are

recording.

Let's see. Yeah, the green bar is

wiggling back forth, which does mean the

microphone is apparently working.

So, Zenothoid's second question, who had

a better understanding of Eastern

spirituality, Julius Evola or Rene

Guenon? And I'm

probably mispronouncing both of their

names, and I don't even care.

So, who had a better understanding of

Eastern spirituality? I I'm going with

Evola. That I have read

at least one book from each each one of

these authors. Rene Guenon,

he was just too touchy-feely. I mean, he

wasn't really good at objective

rationality, not to the extent that

Evola was.

And Evola understood Buddhism more. I

mean, Rene Guenon eventually became like

a Sufi or something.

And

so, I mean,

I share Evola's tastes in spirituality

more than I share the the tastes of Rene

Guenon.

Guenon, I don't know how to pronounce

his name. Just

just don't even listen to me trying to

pronounce their names.

So, yeah, I'm going with I'm going with

Evola.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question, which is from Xenathoid

also.

And he says, "How accurate is this

meme?" And it's a meme showing Julius

Evola as a Kshatriya

and René Guénon as a Brahmin.

So, the meme is suggesting that that

Evola is more of like the warrior type of spirituality and Guénon is more of the priestly type, which has some accuracy to it, I suppose.

That Guénon was more priestly than Evola. Evola was more warrior-like than Guénon, I assume.

So, yeah, I mean, it's I mean, any kind of comparison like this is going to break down if you scrutinize it too closely, but in loosely general terms, I got no problem with that. It does seem to be making some kind of more or less valid point.

So, let's see.

Yeah, so Evola was more of like the the fascist spiritualist.

And I mean, some people would consider
that to be like an oxymoron or
something, but really,
it's it's Marxism that is just insists
upon atheism, or it has traditionally,
whereas fascism has tended to be way
more religious.
So, you can have like a a spiritual
fascist.
Maybe not a spiritual Marxist unless
they're like some kind of Marxist
heretic.
But René Guénon, yeah, he was more like
the priestly kind of rising above it,
you know, kind of renouncing kind of a
person.

So, yeah, I got no problem with that.

And I'm going to move on to the next

question. This is from Austin.

And Austin says,

I I When I When I see the name Austin

now, I've got a supervisor at work

named Austin.

And it's like, whenever I need Austin,

I'll just call it, "Austin!"

In the same voice, you know, it's the

same the same tone of voice every time.

So, that he kind of cringes now because

he knows I'm going to be presenting some

problem to him.

Anyway, "Austin says, where does the

ushnisha come from? Statues of Mahavira

also have a ushnisha. So, perhaps it

predates Buddhism or is a motif from the cultural milieu of the time. And I've talked about this before multiple times. Although, I haven't called it the ushnisha. In fact, I forgot what ushnisha meant. I thought maybe he was referring to the like the the little spiral of hair or just the knob like between the eyes of a of a Buddha image, but it's not that. The ushnisha is the lump on the top of a the head of a Buddha statue. A Buddha image. Could be a painting, too.

And it's considered to be one of the 32 marks of a great man and so forth. But, it's really not, in my opinion. The

ushnisha, this lump on the top of the head, like I've said before, it started off as a top knot. The ancient Greeks were some of the first people to make Buddha images. And for reasons of their own, just traditional reasons, they made the Buddha look like the god Apollo. Which

kind of makes sense, I guess.

So, you have the Buddha modeled on Apollo. And at that time, Apollo had a top knot of hair. It was sort of like an arist- aristocratic hairstyle in those times.

And so, the Buddha, even though in reality he shaved his head bald, he wound up with this top knot of hair,

which underwent various evolutions.

Like, sometimes still today you can see Buddha statues where it's like a a flame coming out of the top of his head like the flame of wisdom.

There was one Buddha image that I had in the meditation hall where I was where I was living at a certain monastery in Burma where it looked like an onion kind of it was sort of kind of bulbous at the bottom and then went up to a point that was like balanced on top of his head. It kind of bugged me cuz it was leaning to one side a little bit.

So,

what happened was

the Greeks, presumably, this is like the main theory anyway, the Greeks started making Buddha statues with this top knot of hair. People realized that the Buddha was a monk, didn't really have a top knot of hair, and so they kind of morph it into a flame of wisdom or some such, and then a eventually it just becomes like this lump
that nobody really understands it other than like the main traditional like rationalization is it one of the 32 marks of of the great man, the Mahapurisa, going with Indian tradition, which may have come from the Middle East,
is that

one of the marks of a great man is he's
got a head shaped like a turban. So,
they think, well, that lump there is
like the turban thing, but in all
likelihood a head shaped like a turban
just means that it was just sort of like
light bulb shaped, you know, it wasn't
any more long than wide, you know, just
kind of like, you know, all around. That
would be my guess.
Whereas the Ushnisha almost certainly
came from a top knot of hair, and to
this day, I mean, it would just look
weird if the Buddha was shaven-headed
and still had that lump.
You know, it would just look it would

look deformed or something. In fact, a lot of these 32 marks of the great man, if if any person had most of them, it'd be impossible to have all of them, but in because they just they're incompatible.

You know, some of them, like for example,

one of the marks of a great man is he has the dimensions of a banyan tree, which most people, at least most men, generally have pretty close to, which is when you have your arms outstretched like this, then the distance between your fingertips would be the same as your height. That would be one of the marks of a great man. Another one though

is when you're standing straight up, if you hang your hands down in front of you, the palms of your hands are resting on your knees.

So, if in order for both of these to be on the same person, you'd have to have thighs that are about this long and shins that were like really, really long.

And I have seen a few Buddha statues like the Ananda Temple in Pagan in Burma have tried to make the Buddha with really short thighs and really, really long shins, which looks kind of weird and even they didn't go to the extreme that would make it actually fit the 32

marks.

But anyways, and one of the other 32 marks, I mean, he's got long fingers too, which would make even even more deformed going with that problem that I just mentioned.

Also, supposedly, his heels would stick out behind his ankles as far as the fronts of his feet stick out in front so that from the side his feet would look like upside down capital T's.

And any person had 40 teeth, just he's he's got all these weird marks that would make him look like a monster.

Plus,

according to a different tradition, he was approximately 27 ft tall.

But I'm I'm just sort of straying into a kind of rant here.

So, yeah, just getting back to the idea that the Buddha's was almost always shown with head hair.

Because if you have this Ushnisha or lump on the top of the head without hair, he would just look just kind of grotesquely deformed.

So, even though everyone knows the Buddha shaved his head, still almost all Buddha statues have him with hair to compensate for these pesky Greeks making the first Buddha images with long hair. Just basing him on the god Apollo.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is also from Austin. He says a few Q&As ago we discussed how different religions describe ultimate reality in different ways. This seems to parallel the Jain concept. Oh, wait a minute. Let's get

Okay, let's get back to uh

the first question. Just forget this me starting to say the next question because he mentions that Mahavira, the founder of the Jains, also has this lump on his head in at least some images. And I would assume that is just simply because the Jains copied the Buddhists with regard to lots and lots of stuff. Like the biography of Mahavira is almost

exactly the same as the biography of the Buddha.

You know, it's very similar.

Except for instead of cutting his hair off with a sword, he pulled it out. And I think it was like eight handfuls. He just yanked all of his hair and beard out.

But it's this whole story of the renunciation and all that, very similar.

And part of the reason why the Jains copied the Buddhists so much the Buddhists so much is the Jains were like radical ascetics. They weren't as much into scholarship. You didn't have like overweight Jain scholars living in Jain

universities the way
you had overweight Buddhist monks just
living a sedentary easy life at some
university teaching classes, that kind
of thing, that the Jains were much more
rigorous in their asceticism. And
because of that, they didn't have enough
scholars
to just keep memorizing all the texts.
You know, it's It was just Indian
tradition that you didn't write stuff
down. You memorize sacred texts
especially.
You know, including like the Vedas and
so forth. So,
um because you had fewer scholars twice,
the the Jain scriptures disappeared. You

know, there were fragments of it, but the the entire corpus of the Jain scriptures, I don't know what it would be called. It wouldn't be the Tripitaka. It just disappeared. And so, they had to have like great councils trying to reformulate a body of scripture. They had to do that twice. And I assume they would fill in some of the gaps by just taking like Buddhist traditions, and which might include
the lump on the top of his head, the ushnisha, if you will.
And so, I'm just going back to Austin's second question, which I already started asking or reading or something.

He says, "A few Q&As ago, we discussed how different religions describe ultimate reality in different ways. This seems to parallel the Jain concept of anekantavada,
non-absolutism,
which is famously illustrated by the parable of the blind men and the elephant, each arriving at a different understanding based on limited contact. This raises a question. Are all claims about ultimate truth inherently relative, or can the Buddha offer an absolute certain description of ultimate reality
that stands beyond the limits of relative interpretation?"

So, before I answer the actual question,
I would like to address this uh Jain
concept, which
in the book I read was called syadvada.
The Jains actually did have some
philosophical ideas other than just
torture yourself until your your karma
is exhausted and then die.
They They went deeper than that. They
had what was called Syadvada, which
means Syad means something like sort of
or in a sense, kind of.
And so, with regard to any statement
that can be made in words, these Jain
philosophers were saying, I mean, to be
completely accurate, you would have to

add Syad to it. So, in a sense, there is
no self, but in a sense, there is a
self. In a sense,
you know, it's like everything is
impermanent, but in a sense,
I mean, nothing's impermanent. So, it's
Their idea was that only a fully fully
enlightened Tirthankara or
a fully enlightened Jain, I think an
omniscient one, like Mahavira was, can
see something from all possible angles
simultaneously, whereas
the ordinary worldling has to see
something from one point of view at a
time.
You know, so, you're looking at a round
table from the side, it's like a very

narrow ellipse, but, you know, you just
sort of interpret it as a round table
because you know that if you look at it
from straight above or straight below,
it's going to be circular.
So, only a fully enlightened omniscient
Jain
can see something from all angles
simultaneously,
whereas everybody else, you have to use
this conditional language because, you
know, you're obviously going to be
missing out on most of it by making any
kind of of assertion about it with
regard to whatever it is.
Which

I mean, it's it's a valid point, but at
the same time, you don't want to just be
putting kind of and sort of into every
single sentence
in order to be autistically
accurate.
So, let's just get to the the actual
question here.
Let's see, are all claims about ultimate
truth inherently relative? Yes, because
you have to put it into words, you have
to symbolize it, which then
it's not ultimate truth anymore.
You cannot describe ultimate truth in
words. You cannot understand reality by
thinking about it. Empirical objective
reality you can understand to some

degree, but like the Jains are saying,
you're not going to know everything
there is to know about this thing.
You're not going to be able to see it
from every possible angle
simultaneously.
So, are all claims about ultimate truth
inherently relative? Yes. I mean, it's
not even really I'm kind of relative,
kind of, sort of.
But it's you're symbolizing something
that can't be symbolized. You're trying
to express something in words
that cannot be expressed in words. I
mean, even stuff in in samsara,
I mean, you can say vanilla. But I mean,

that that vanilla, that those three
syllables do not at all describe what
vanilla tastes like. It doesn't describe
anything. It's just giving like this
label.
I mean,
the letters t r e e are just infinitely
different from an actual tree.
You cannot I mean, no matter how s-
no matter how sophisticated the
symbolism gets. I mean, you can be a
botanist. You can have won a a Nobel
Prize
for for your studies on trees. You can
write this huge
multi-volume treatise on trees. You're
not going to get one iota closer to the

ultimate reality underlying those trees.
It's like Immanuel Kant saying, with
regard to his critique on science, he he
declared that science will never get 1
in, 1 iota closer to the thing in
itself, ever, no matter how
sophisticated science gets it's never
going to come anywhere close
to describing the thing in itself it
can't.
So you just have to use skillful means
or will heart of Jason or just like
worldly language just to kind of
sort of be a finger pointing at the
moon.
But still I mean so long as it's useful

in helping people to practice and

develop wisdom and wake up then it's

useful but it's it's never going to

describe reality.

So let's see

can the Buddha offer an absolute certain

description of ultimate reality that

stands beyond the limits of relative

interpretation? No.

It's just I mean it's

it's it's no fault on the part of the

Buddha it's just that you cannot

symbolize ultimate reality because

once you symbolize it it's not ultimate

reality anymore.

It's just labels.

Like how close is the word vanilla to

actual vanilla?

I mean there's there's no resemblance at all.

I mean the word tree

no resemblance at all zero resemblance between t r e e and an actual tree.

And then when you go from I mean that's just dealing with samsara. I mean you can say that there's a tiny resemblance and at least they're both things they're both objects

with like figure and ground and so forth but when you get to the ultimate there's not even that there is zero I'll just use one one zero zero resemblance between words and ultimate reality.

Zero.

There's not even a correspondence.

So I think I'm just going to on to the next question, which is from Siddhartha Lohachita.

And Siddhartha Lohachita says, "I see differences in how Oh, a Nagarjuna question.

Better put on the fez.

I'm going to tastefully arrange the tassel.

So many people who wear fezzes neglect the tassel rearrangement.

So, Siddhartha Lohachita says, "I see differences in how Nagarjuna describes freedom from samsara. His method to achieve nirvana seems to differ from

that of Theravada.

While in Theravada, the path to nirvana involves holiness, which translates to stopping the generation of karma, Nagarjuna emphasizes achieving it solely through the elimination of avidya or ignorance, especially with the knowledge of shunyata or emptiness.

Are there Are they different methods or do they complement each other? Well, they overlap. I mean, you can get to enlightenment either way. It's sort of like in in dhamma, there's different approaches. You know, you've got like the feminine approach, let's just call it a feminine approach of wanting to end

suffering.

Or you have the more masculine

head-oriented approach of wanting to end

delusion.

Turns out, they both lead to the same

enlightenment. That if you're striving

to end suffering,

um you're going to wind up at the same

enlightenment as if you're striving to

end delusion, because they just go hand

in hand.

But with regard to Theravada, I've I've

sort of made this known multiple times

that I am skeptical of the idea in

Theravada that you cannot

have like pure wisdom without having

uh you can't perfect wisdom without

perfecting concentration, and you can't perfect concentration without perfecting sila or morality. I am skeptical of that. I do not think that it's necessary to become an absolute like purely virtuous saint in order to be enlightened.

Because I do not consider enlightenment to occur within the context of samsara. Again, you have to transcend samsara. The [__] statues are going to remain in the block of marble. The unenlightened [__] up statues are always going to be there no matter what you do.

So, what you do is you transcend samsara. You don't eliminate it. I mean you don't really escape from it really even.

You don't You don't become enlightened by annihilating with camouflage tactics your own defilements. You transcend your defilements. And for people that think in in a two-dimensional sense, that makes no sense at all. They they just they can't deal with that.

But like Venerable Nyanavira, famous eccentric existentialist monk who lived in Ceylon in the '50s and '60s, he was he I mean he was a rigorous rationalist. You know, he says any explanation has to be of a piece.

But still, if you're thinking
two-dimensionally,
of a piece isn't going to be enough. I
mean, it may be that the reality is not
just this flat Euclidean plane, but it's
like a cube. You know, it could be
three-dimensional Euclidean space. It
could be multi-dimensional.
So, trying to drag the ultimate down to
the level of conventional reality, which
Abhidhamma tries to do,
and fails, that's orthodox Theravada.
So, at some point,
I think early schools of Buddhism,
including Theravada, just went off the
tracks into just assuming that samsara

is ultimately real in a sense,

and then trying to work enlightenment

within the context of samsara, which is

like trying to wake up from a dream

within the context of the dream.

Closest you could come would be lucid

dreaming, I suppose.

So, you have to rise above it through

wisdom.

And purifying your conduct, I mean,

that's useful. It's not like the Buddha

wasn't saying just go ahead and and rape

and kill and steal and murder and all

that.

I mean, he wasn't saying that, but it's

like

if you

are virtuous, and you live a moral life,
then you're going to have smooth
sailing, you're going to have fewer bad
things happen to you, fewer
distractions, fewer obstacles, which
will make practice easier.
But, it's not the whole point of it. I
mean, it's not like you have to
absolutely perfect your morality, which
I mean, how do you do that? How do you
absolutely perfect your morality? I
mean, it's not just following five
rules,
or
thousands of rules if you're a monk.
I mean, that's just sort of arbitrary.

It's just sort of like making lists.
Let's see here. I'm I'm I'm ranting too
much to keep track of the question here.
Okay, what is the actual question? Are
they different methods or do they
complement each other? Well, I mean,
they they can overlap, and it's sort of
like striving to end dukkha or striving
to end moha. You know, it's ultimately,
even though the
like the mo- modification is wrong, or
or is different, not wrong, but
different, still, it's like it's moving
you in the right direction.
So, with regard to Theravada, trying to
purify your morals,
I I it's at least it's leading you in

the right direction. I mean, it's it's insufficient in and of itself and even orthodox Theravada would agree with that. They would just say that pure purity of morals or purity of sila is a prerequisite to purity of samadhi or concentration, which itself is then a prerequisite to purity of wisdom, which is enlightenment.

Sila, samadhi, panna.

Like the the holy trinity of Buddhist practice for a monk. I guess for a layperson the holy trinity is uh what is it? Uh dana, sila, bhavana. Dana is generosity, basically giving stuff to monks.

And sila is like following the five precepts and bhavana is mental development.

So, let's see here.

So, Nagarjuna emphasizes achieving it solely through the elimination of avidya. Yeah, that'll work.

And it's I do not think I am skeptical of the idea that you have to have absolutely pure morality in order to transcend

the dream. That you have to like be have it's sort of like having to have absolutely pure morals within the context of a dream in order to wake up from that dream.

I don't think so.

Of course, that makes me a Theravada Buddhist heretic, but I'm used to that because I've been one pretty much my entire life.

So, let's see here.

See, while in Theravada the path to nirvana involves holiness, yeah, well, I mean, it would involve holiness from like Nagarjuna's point of view also unless every once in a while you're going to have some kind of renegade sage like Padmasambhava to some degree who they just completely flout conventions in a way that's sort of their practice. You know, it helps them

to to break themselves loose from samsara or to transcend samsara by just flouting conventions.

Let's see. Doesn't work for everybody though, obviously.

Dye your hair blue, it's not going to get you any more enlightened.

Not necessarily anyhow.

So, see, stopping the generation of karma.

Yeah, Theravada has trouble stopping the generation of karma of explaining it, you know, it's like an arahant has no more karma, makes no more karma, I should say. So, technically an arahant would have no more volition because karma is volition, it is a mental state.

Cetanāhaṃ bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi,

famous line in Pāli.

Monks, I say that karma is volition.

So, how does a how does an arahant do

anything?

I mean, how do they how do they get up

in the morning? You know, how do they

make their coffee? That kind of thing.

If they have no volition. So, then

orthodox Theravada tradition has to come

up with this new idea of what is called

kiriya citta or functional consciousness

that applies only to fully enlightened

beings that allows them to still do

things, which it's not mentioned

anywhere at all in the suttas.

And it's not mentioned anywhere at all in the suttas because it just got cooked up to sort of fill in this gap or deal with this sort of patch over this this sort of glaring hole in the philosophy. Developed by later Theravada Buddhist philosophers who some of whom were just hanging out, easy life in a in a monastery, not just wandering homeless, living under trees.

So, let's see.

And Gotama emphasizes achieving it solely through the elimination of avijja. Although the elimination of avijja or ignorance, I mean, one of the main ways of doing that is purifying and simplifying your life, I mean, as well

as you can.

Doesn't necessarily mean you have to be

an absolutely purified saint, if such a

being can even exist.

So, I I just need to get to the actual

meat of this question so I can just sort

of answer it concisely and move on.

So, let's see here.

Are there are they different methods or

do they complement each other? I mean,

ultimately

they're kind of the same path with

different emphases.

But, I do think that Nagarjuna

understood the situation better than

most

formulators of Theravada Buddhist
orthodoxy.
And he understood dependent co-arising a
hell of a lot better than the editors of
the polytext and so forth who came up
with the
um like the traditional 12-link theory
of dependent co-arising.
The Buddha, I mean, according to legend
the Buddha thought that nobody was going
to understand dependent co-arising and
so he almost became a Pacceka Buddha
just he almost just kept his mouth shut
and wasn't going to teach Dhamma.
Um but then Maha Brahma
you know, the the proto-Hindu
personification of ultimate reality

comes down and persuades him that there are some out there with little dust in their eyes. And so then the Buddha used his divine eye, his dibbacakkhu, his clairvoyance, could see that there were people out there who were ripe for enlightenment or capable of enlightenment. So, he decided to go ahead even though at first he thought nobody would understand dependent co-arising and most people still don't understand dependent co-arising. Burmese monks will just memorize the 12 links and whatever the commentaries say about the 12 links, and think that they understand it, when still they don't.

So, let's see here.

I think I answered that question. So,

I'm taking the the majamakafaz off.

Putting it over there.

Taking a drink of my beverage.

Because of course, man cannot live by

bread alone.

There must also be a beverage.

I was kind of tickled when

uh Grok summarized my channel on X,

and ended up with this quote from me,

"Man cannot live by bread alone. There

must also be a beverage." Although I

have to admit, I stole that quote from

Woody Allen.

Back before he became politically

incorrect for

messing around with his Korean

stepdaughter.

So, let's see here. I guess I'm just

going to move on to Siddhartha Gautama's

next question,

which is, "With what argument would you

try to prove to an atheist that

reincarnation exists?"

And I mean, first of all, you can't

really prove anything.

I mean, there's something really simple,

you know, like Euclidean geometry. You

can make You can execute a proof in

Euclidean geometry. That kind of thing.

But,

to prove to an atheist that

reincarnation exists You can't prove to a Buddhist that reincarnation exists.

You can't prove to anybody.

You also can't prove that it doesn't exist.

So, you I'm just You can't prove that Sasquatches exist. You can't prove that they don't exist.

Even you produce a Sasquatch, people will say, "Well, it's fake. It's a fake squatch."

So, let's see. The best argument, let's say that I'm just talking to an atheist who thinks reincarnation is silly. the best I could do really would be to refer him to the works of Ian Stevenson.

Ian Stevenson made it a large part of

his life's work. I think he was at the University of Virginia or something. A large part of his life's work was trying to show my more or less objective empirical scientific evidence for reincarnation.

And mainly he was going with children who remembered past lives.

And the ideal situation is where he would actually get to interview the child before the child had met up with the family of its previous existence so that they could compare notes and collaborate, that kind of thing.

Which did happen sometimes. You know, he would you know, you got he hears of he

gets he he gets a report of some child,
you know, somewhere that is insisting,
"No, I'm not this 4-year-old kid. I was
a pharmacist 20 miles from here and I
was murdered."
That kind of thing. I mean, it does
happen sometimes. Even though the
parents, especially the father, might be
beating the kid trying to get him to
shut up about this stuff.
So, just looking at that kind of
evidence,
you know, from Ian Stevenson, I think he
was of the University of Virginia.
That I mean, he wrote several books on
the subject, mainly just case history
after case history after case history of

people who, especially in their youth,
just vehemently insisted that they were
this other person who had died just not
long before.
And they would come up with information
that the average little kid wouldn't
know.
Like, you know, some they might think
that it was a natural death until this
kid says, "No, I was murdered. I was
poisoned by that stuff that they gave
me." That kind of thing. And then they
can check into it and
maybe uh
maybe somebody goes to jail for that.
So, yeah.

Like you can't prove reincarnation to anybody. You can't prove the absence of reincarnation to anybody, really. I mean, you might convince them or persuade them, but still it wouldn't be proof. You just gave them an argument that is persuasive enough to them that it it persuades them. And that's it.

So, yeah, the best I could do. Just refer them to the books of Ian Stevenson.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from PSA. And PSA is starting to specialize in kind of smart-alecky joke questions.

So, he's sort of like he's he's the

actual new Tig.

In my opinion, cuz there used to be this

guy named Tig who did the same stuff.

Maybe PSA is Tig for all I know.

They they just ask like these smart

smart-alecky joke questions just

just because.

So, I mean, if if this continues

that of the three questions PSA asked,

only one of them really counts as like a

legitimate non-joke question.

So, if this continues, I will reserve

the right to just not answer questions

if I do not consider them to be in good

faith.

So, anyways, PSA's first question is

you've hit 2,000 subscribers.

Congratulations on becoming a

world-famous YouTube celebrity.

When you started with your YouTube

channel, did you imagine you would

become such a global phenomenon?

No, I mean, I really didn't have much

expectation at all. In fact, I

stubbornly persist in refusing

to try to maximize my presence, that

kind of stuff.

Like

my woman, she started a YouTube channel

just weeks ago and already she's getting

more views than I get.

It was It's not on Buddhism, though.

It's It's on like uh

a certain kind of fish keeping.

So, and and I'm continually like one of

the main kinds of comments I get on

Rumble is people offering to optimize my

presence on Rumble. And I just delete

delete delete because I really don't

care. It's like the purpose of me doing

these YouTube videos is not to make

money, it's not to become famous, it's

just kind of a public service. And I do

agree with Gurdjieff, the philosopher

Gurdjieff, to some degree in that he

thought that

you should It shouldn't be easy

to get

like

profound wisdom or or like the best I

can do to convey any kind of profound

wisdom. That I mean, the easier it is to

get something, the less it is worth.

It's just a law of economics.

You know, if diamonds were as common as

glass, they'd be as of little value as

glass monetarily. You know, if if glass

was rarer than diamonds, glass might be

more expensive than diamonds.

And we don't need to get into artificial

scarcities of diamonds, you know, just

to keep the prices up and that sort of

thing.

So,

yeah, in a way I am a global phenomenon

in that my viewers are all over the world.

A lot of a lot of Asian people, for example.

All over the globe except for like out in the middle of the ocean.

Let's see. But, I mean, it's not the purpose. It's not the purpose of of my presence on YouTube.

And so,

I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question. Are you going to get married anytime soon with your Ethiopian boyfriend? Which is sort of like the kind of joke that like a 9-year-old would make.

And of course, the answer is no. And so
I move on to PSA's next question,
which is kind of a serious one.
So, congratulations on managing at least
one actual question
out of three attempts.
And it is, "Why didn't you move to
Thailand or Sri Lanka after completing
30 years as a monk?
I understand you were burned out after
living in Myanmar for so long, but I I'm
sure there would have been plenty of
temples in Thailand and Sri Lanka,
especially in remote villages, that
would have adored to have an Ajahn of 30
wassa living there. Why punyo why?"
Well,

that wouldn't work at all. I mean, that
would just make things worse.
At least in Burma, I spoke the language.
I I don't It wasn't just like
Burmese culture in particular is what
caused me to stop being a monk.
I was fortunate I consider myself
fortunate to have been ordained in a
Burmese tradition rather than a Thai or
Sinhalese tradition.
That was like good karma or good fortune
on my part.
So, I mean,
the heat and and and this the weird food
and not speaking English, that sort of
thing would all have remained the same

and it would have been worse because I'd
have to learn Thai or Sinhalese instead
of already knowing Burmese.
But the main reason why I stopped being
a monk wasn't just that I burned out on
Burma. That was like a tertiary reason
at best. The main reason is I just
stopped making progress. I got as far as
I could with it and just
I mean, it was like
the Red Queen in Wonderland who was
having to run as fast as she can just to
stay in the same place.
It was I was sort of turning into that.
I wasn't making any new progress. Like
the best meditation of my life was back
around 1999 to 2004.

And I I

continued being a monk up until 2021.

So, it was several years of just kind of

stagnating, not making any pro not

breaking any new ground.

And I mean, you could say, "Well, at

least I'm staying out of trouble."

But, I mean, that was just one reason.

Another reason is

just I wanted to try something else.

You know, when when something isn't

working year after year, it's just

common sense that you try something

different.

And I wanted a woman, and I got one. Got

a good one, in fact.

Although, she was kind of hinting that

she wanted me to move about a ton and a

half of rocks and gravel today, which

wasn't going to happen.

So,

I guess that's enough of an answer.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

And this is from Some Papa Lapa.

And Some Papa Lapa, it makes my beard

braid wiggle when I say the name,

says, "How are you, and what's new?" I'm

fine, although, like I said earlier, I'm

kind of like a wet rag today, just sort

of basking in inglorious laziness

because I've been working my ass off in

blazing

South Carolina southern heat,

like 50-hour weeks recently.

And so, I'm just taking it easy. One of

my best friends at work quit. I mean,

it's weird the place where I work now.

Compared like the the first sheet metal

shop that I worked at in South Carolina

after I stopped being a monk,

I worked there for almost 2 years, well

over a year and a half. And at the time

that I left, I was still the new guy in

the warehouse.

You know, and there was like a new sales

reps and that kind of thing. New No,

there's just mainly just a new few new

sales reps, but the guys in the back

actually making the met stuff out of

sheet metal,

I was still the new guy.

And then now, the place where I'm

working at now is such a hectic kind of

a It can be high stress if you don't

have the right attitude for it, which

sometimes I don't. I'm a cussing like a

Russian Russian sailor

a lot of the time when I'm at work.

It's like cussing at inanimate objects

more than anything else.

Uh anyways,

um I mean, it's like I've been working

there less than a year and I'm already

one of the senior people. I'm like a

coordinator there.

Because it's just people coming and going coming and going coming and going. It's weird. It's sort of like working in a prison camp. You know, it's just There's somebody there for a while and then all of a sudden you're not seeing them anymore. It's like, "What happened to him?" "Oh, he he quit 2 weeks ago." Or he got fired last week.

So, about half the people get fired, the other half quit. People who get fired are mainly getting fired for causing too many spills. I mean, this is like a trucking company where we're loading freight, and if you're continually ramming the like the fork of your

forklift into drums of of chemicals,

then you're not going to stay there very

long. It's an automatic 3-day suspension

for for something like that. There's

this one guy

who First, he he knocks one of the

supervisors off his cart. The The

supervisors drive around on these carts

that you stand up on it, like a power

sledge or something. He hits that,

knocks the guy right off right off the

cart. Then

he uh

he causes some kind of spill, so it's a

3-day suspension. The first day back to

work, he he per- perpetrates the most

glorious spill I've seen there, where he

just rammed the fork all the way into a 55-gallon drum of some kind of glue. And it just poured out and just hardened all over the floor. And he disappeared. He didn't work there after that.

So, it's it's kind of weird. It's It's the job I've got now is is really just kind of this hectic,

potentially very stressful kind of job, and people don't last very long. There are a few people that have been there for years, but if you've been there for a whole year, you're you're like a senior senior member of the team.

So,

besides from that, the fish pond still

isn't done. We still got to get uh

the the large flat rocks to put around

it, and got to get more fish because the

water really isn't cycled well yet.

Um

yeah, my my sweetie is uh

starting to breed rice fish

at my at my suggestion.

She wanted guppies. I was like, "Why

would you want to raise guppies?

Rice fish are the future."

And rice fish, I mean, they look kind of

like guppies, but they come from Japan,

and so they can survive just about any

temperature of water. You know, it can

be frozen over. They're like a goldfish.

They can live in like

ice water.

So, they're they're kept outside, and

it's all very nice, and they're very

cute little fish, and

they breed like guppies pretty much.

Except they lay eggs instead of being

live bearers.

And I think that's enough of uh how am I

and what's new. I'm I'm fine.

So, I'm just going to move on to some

popple office's next question here.

What have you been listening to recently

if you have been listening to music?

Well, I finally got off this jag of

listening to New World Order by Ministry

pretty much every night for like two or

three weeks. I still listen to it

sometimes.

It's just is is just like an ass kicker

of a song. I'd never heard it before

until I just stumbled upon it on YouTube

a few like

maybe a month or two ago, maybe two

months ago, let's say.

Yeah, New World Order by

Ministry. Listen to that several times.

Sometimes I still listen to Leo

Moracchioli, some of his some of his

heavy metal covers of non-heavy metal

songs like Blue Monday. Leo

Moracchioli's cover of Blue Monday is

better than the original Blue Monday.

And it's one of the I it's largely Leo

Moracchioli that gave me the idea of

this beard. So you got him to blame.

Except in his case, he's got it's way

longer than mine. And it's not braided.

He's just got like a rubber band every

every few inches, which looks it looks

interesting.

I think it looks nice, at least on Leo

Moracchioli.

Also, there's this one cover.

I like cover songs for some reason. Like

you got like this traditional song that

you're used to and you like it. And then

you've got this cover in a different

style

that is very intriguing and it kind of

makes the song, which is already a good
song, fresh. You know, it's like you
haven't heard it that way before. So
it's like you're not kind of you don't
have the grooves in your brain
that just makes it not have an effect
anymore. So there's this Ain't Talkin'
'bout Love. It's I think it's off
Van Halen's first album. I think if I
remember correctly, it was their attempt
at making a punk song. It didn't sound
like punk though. But there's this
Postmodern Jukebox version
of Ain't Talkin' 'bout Love.
And I can't remember the name of the
singer. It's like a a '60s girl band.
It's like this Van Halen song that's

done in the style of a '60s girl band.

You know, with like the big hair and

stuff.

And it's it's really good. And I think

that the one of the backup vocalists is

a real hottie. You know, it's it's sort

of like

earlier on, it was like

I've always considered like fair-skinned

brunettes with blue eyes and big boobs.

Although this one she her her boobs

really aren't featured, so I don't

really know how big they are, but

she looks a lot like my my sweetie when

she was her age.

So, I I I have to admit, I've

one of the reasons why I like that song

so much is just kind of ogling one of

the vocalists.

Uh,

now half half my viewers will

unsubscribe. It's like, "Oh, my world is

in ruins now.

He likes looking at pretty girls

sometimes."

So, let's see here.

Yeah, I guess with regard to music,

every once in a while I listen to some

old stuff, like um

there's uh some videos of Led Zeppelin

like after Led Zeppelin 2 came out, you

know, they're still kind of on the on

the rise, and they played

Royal Albert Hall or something like

that. I can't remember now the exact

venue. But, I mean, it's really good.

Really good. And you It's like video

footage of it, too, which is nice. Like

early '70s.

And let's see what else. I listen to Oh

Well by the Rockets occasionally.

And I think I'm just going to move on to

Sampalapa's next question.

Oh, also, uh I've been listening a few

times to Tusk by Fleetwood Mac,

which is old music, but it's still good.

So, I'm just going to read Sampalapa's

next question here.

He says, "I could look it up, but I'm

going old-fashioned on this question

just to be a part of the Q&A and hear a

more precise or deeper understanding.

So,

dot dot dot

what the heck is bodhicitta or the

citta?

And is that found in early Buddhism?

What is your knowledge of this thing

they call citta?"

Well, the word citta is found

in the Pali texts, plenty.

And it

is usually translated as mind. Some

translators will translate it as heart,

but not like the physical organ, but

just sort of like the mental aspect of

of heart, but really mind is about the best English translation of chitta.

And

um it has like two main meanings in Theravada Buddhism. Chitta, I mean, again, it can just be mind.

You know, mind in general, mentality in general, or more technically, like in Abhidhamma philosophy, it means consciousness in particular, not mental states, but just consciousness in particular. So, in in Abhidhamma philosophy, you've got chitta, and then you've got chetasika. So, chitta is consciousness, chetasika is mental states like perceptions and volitions,

that sort of thing.

So, that aspect of chitta is

well-established in very early texts in

Theravada Buddhism, but this bodhicitta,

or like

Ajahns of the Thai Forest tradition,

when they're talking about jit or or the

chitta that is like the the observer,

the one who knows, the one who sees,

that, in my opinion, is a kind of

Upanishadic,

more or less Hinduistic philosophy that

somehow seeped into the Thai Forest

tradition. Thailand was largely

Hinduistic in like medieval times.

Cambodia was Hinduistic, like Angkor Wat

in Cambodia was like a huge Hindu temple

complex, if I'm not mistaken.

So,

definitely Hinduistic Upanishadic kind

of ideas have infiltrated some

ethnic Buddhism

in Southeast Asia.

And so, this emphasis on the jit or the

you know, the one who knows, the one who

sees this sort of consciousness that is

like the Atman in Vedanta. That is like

an kind of an innovation that is found

primarily, from my experience, in the

Thai Forest tradition.

And bodhicitta, yeah, that I'm not sure

that bodhicitta is really a term that is

used in the Pali texts. You know, it's

it's kind of like what citta is in this Thai Forest tradition sense of this kind of enlightened mind that is sort of pervading, you know, underlying your unenlightened mind. That kind of thing. And I mean, you can interpret things that way.

Um

you know, I don't really have an axe to grind against Vedanta, but I have a little bit more of an axe to grind against like Hinduistic concepts or Christian concepts or whatever infiltrating this like classical Theravada, and then so people claiming that it's legit Theravada when it isn't. But citta in Pali is mainly means mind,

or it can more precisely or technically

mean consciousness.

But the stuff that's said by, especially

monks in the Thai Forest tradition, is

kind of deviating somewhat from

Theravada Buddhist orthodoxy.

And I think I'm just going to move on to

the next question here. And we're

getting down towards the end already.

This is probably going to be less than 2

hours.

Let's see here.

This next question is from Sea of Action

Cpod Zidana.

And Sea of Action Cpod Zidana says,

"There is a story from the Theravada

Dhammapada commentary verse 35 about monks going off during the rainy season, and they inspired a laywoman Matikamata who was donating food to practice like them. She ended up becoming a mind reader and Anagami, and she saw that the monks had no attainments. So, she started giving them the kinds of foods they wanted, and the monks quickly became arahants as a result.

What does this mean for the Dhamma? That them fulfilling their desires for food gives them the motivation they need to practice more. Seems like the exact opposite of asceticism. I do remember a monk in Burma telling me about this

story before I ever read it in the

Dhammapada commentary.

And uh the idea was that

some monks

um I mean there there's kind of two ways

you can interpret it. It's like some

sometimes if you have a craving for

something, it's like your body telling

you that you need something that's in

that food. Sort of like, you know, women

who are pregnant kind of notoriously get

these weird cravings for like pickles

and peanut butter, this kind of stuff,

that it's sort of their body is craving

whatever nutrients are in that kind of

food because it's like your body is

telling you that you need this, and so
the monks they have these cravings for
food that they weren't getting.
Um mainly cuz their body is just kind of
subtly informing them that, you know,
you should want this because uh
we our your cells are are deficient in
this nutrient or some such. And so, by
giving them the food that they were
craving, it sort of kind of maxed them
out physically, you know, kind of buffed
them up with regard to all the nutrients
they needed and so forth. And then these
cravings subsided, which were
distractions and preventing them from
making progress. That's one way of
looking at it.

Another way is just
you can forget the whole deficient
nutrient thing, and it's just that these
monks just had this
latent cravings for this or that kind of
food, which were becoming obstacles, and
so she was just sort of subtly removing
those cravings, those obstacles, that
just made their path clearer.
That's the idea. I mean, whether the
story is even objectively, like
historically, true or not is
questionable.
But, I assume one of those two
one of those two explanations
preferably the first one, the first one

would make better sense, I think
would be like the correct
interpretation of what was going on in
the story.
And so, I'm just going to move on to
this question. This is from Rui. And I
always like these these technical
technical Vinaya questions. Technical
questions on monastic discipline, finer
points of monastic discipline.
Rui says, "And for some reason, I
answered this question just recently on
the Discord server, but I don't think it
was Rui that was asking me. Maybe it
Maybe it was, I don't know.
I don't think Rui's even on the Discord
server.

He is he's under a different name that I

don't recognize.

Anyways,

Rui says,

"What is the maximum allowable height of

a mendicant's bed?

I remember reading somewhere it should

not exceed three handspans." Yeah, and

on the Discord server, people were

talking about high and luxurious beds.

It's It's one of the eight precepts.

"I undertake the precepts to avoid high

and luxurious beds."

Yeah.

So, it's

Mahasayana

Uccasayana.

So, large and high beds is really the

the literal translation.

And

a large bed, technically, is a bed large

enough for more than one person to sleep

on, but a high bed, according to Vinaya,

so this would apply to monks. It doesn't

really specify for laypeople, but I

you could you could just apply this

specified rule for monks to laypeople,

also.

According to the rules for monks, it's

eight finger widths. So, it'd be like

this much between the floor and the

bottom of the frame. So, if you can

stick both hands like this underneath

the frame

of your bed, it's too high.

But, I mean, there's always these kind

of loopholes. I mean, you could just

have a a bed that's way up high with

just a really big frame.

You know, you could have like a a

waterbed or something. I mean, it'd be a

big one. So, you'd have to have like a

this little narrow waterbed that's, you

know, it's just the frame is touching

the floor, in which case

the the height of the the sleeping

surface above the floor would just be

irrelevant.

So, that's kind of

nitpicky, I guess.

But, technically, it's eight finger

widths between the floor and the bottom

of the frame.

So, let's see here.

Uh did I Okay.

So, next question is from Raphael.

And Raphael says,

"In one of your earlier live streams,

you said that if, as a monk who is

homeless and without family or friends,

you can live happily on an empty

stomach, then you can live in any

situation, and that this is precisely

why the Buddha emphasized asceticism.

However, I tend to assume that the

Buddha advocated asceticism so the monk

could devote himself entirely to
meditation.
If the Buddha had wanted a monk to be
able to thrive in every circumstance,
wouldn't he have chosen the Jain path
instead?" Well, I mean, he wouldn't have
chosen the Jain path because the Jain
path is just deliberate self-torture.
And Buddhism really does not advocate
for deliberate self-torture, where
you're actually like um
volitionally
or your your mortifi- mortification
is to cause bad things or pain or
discomfort to happen to you. Yeah,
that's out because you're just making

more karma by doing that.

So, I mean, there can be more than one

reason why the Buddha was advocating the

middle path between self-indulgence and

self-torture, which nowadays is seen as

just completely unacceptable

self-torture.

Because people just tend to veer towards

the self-indulgent side.

And see luxuries as necessities.

So,

I mean, to some degree, you can say that

that like, for example, eating one meal

a day,

then that would certainly

make it easier to devote yourself more

to meditation

because you don't have to wash your bowl so much. And if you eat in the evening, then it can make you sleepier and and and on and on. So, I mean, both of these apply.

That

some some of this austerity is to make it easier to practice.

And but then, I mean, one of the main things about practice, you read the Atika Waga, read any of these early texts, is you have to be fine with whatever happens. Heat or cold, hunger, fullness, health, sickness, solitude, loneliness, anything. Hunger, thirst.

I mean, you you just have to be fine with it. You have to have equanimity towards that.

And so, when the stuff is happening to you, it's much easier to cultivate that equanimity than just avoiding it.

So, just based on my own experience, I mean, I can admit, sure, that one of the reasons for like Buddhist austerity is just to free up your time, remove distractions so you can meditate more.

Yeah, that's fine. I got no problem with that. But another reason is you just learn to be cool with whatever happens.

To make your peace with samsara.

Whatever samsara throws at you, you accept it with equanimity.

So,

I guess I'm just going to move on to

Raphael's second question.

Which is, what are your thoughts on this

anti-natalist verse

in Ecclesiastes?

And he quotes Ecclesiastes here.

I saw the tears of the oppressed and

they have no comforter. Power was on the

side of their oppressors and they have

no comforter. And I declared that the

dead who had already died are happier

than the living who still who are still

alive. But better than both is the one

who has never been born, who has not

seen the evil that is done under the

sun.

That's relatively famous verse from

Ecclesiastes.

Um,

in a way it's kind of philosophically

anti-natalist, but I don't think that

was the point.

I mean the point the the philosopher

supposedly,

um,

what's his name? King, uh,

Solomon. You know, it's it's not really

by King Solomon, you know, like that,

but it's attributed to King Solomon.

Um,

yeah, I don't think that he's really

advocating for anti-natalism. You know,

he's just making a philosophical point.
He accepts we're going to people get
born, that women have kids. It's just
the way of the world, it's just the way
it is, but he's just kind of pointing
out the first noble truth. You know,
it's it's
futility of futilities, all is futile.
In fact, there's there's one one verse
that is variously translated, but one is
like God
instilled in him a hunger for wisdom
which God instilled in him just to
afflict him.
So, my thoughts on this anti-natalist
verse in Ecclesiastes, you know, it's

kind of philosophically anti-natalist. I don't think he was really saying it in order to dissuade women from having kids.

May- probably

I mean, women weren't even reading Ecclesiastes. I mean, he obviously didn't have a high opinion of women, the author of Ecclesiastes.

But, um

Yeah, I I don't think that was the point. That he was just making like a philosophical point along the lines of the first noble truth, but I don't think that he was deliberately trying to talk anybody out of having kids. Maybe you know, he'd say, "Yeah, you're

probably better off." You know, it'd be

sort of like a the Buddhist approach.

But

let's see.

Yeah, I mean

the book of Ecclesiastes is not

extremely authoritative

to me or to Buddhists in general.

So, I mean, he can say what he pleases.

There is some There are some interesting

statements made in the book of

Ecclesiastes. It's one of my favorite

books of the Old Testament.

But, uh yeah, I really don't have a

whole lot to say. I mean, he's he's just

black-pilled essentially. He's just

making all these black-pilled comments.

And I'm just going to move on to this

question, which is from Virgil, and it's

the last question already.

Way less than 2 hours here.

And Virgil says

"Out of the three most popular

translations of the Pali Canon

Bodhicaryavatara

and Tanisaro, which one would you

consider the best?"

And there's a dog having some kind of

dream back there.

Let's see.

Oh, she stopped her thing as soon as I I

leaned over.

Huh.

Well, maybe she caught the rabbit or got away from the the wolf or whatever.

So, let's see here.

Out of the three most popular translations of the Pali Canon by Bhikkhu Bodhi, Venerable Sujato, and Venerable Ajahn Thanissaro, which would you consider the best? Well, I don't really have a lot of exposure to Ajahn Sujato's writings.

Um if he's the one that I think I'm thinking of, he may have actually banned me from his website. Like any mention of me on his website gets deleted, or so I've been told. But I don't know if that's Ajahn Sujato or not. Is Ajahn

Sujato like the the really politically
leftist one
who just like advocates for leftist
causes and so forth. I mean Bhikkhu
Bodhi's the same way. I really
cannot approve of Bhikkhu Bodhi's
politics wholeheartedly, so to speak.
Of the three, I think Ajahn Thanissaro
would be the most conservative
with regard to Buddhism in general for
that matter, not just like politics,
that sort of thing.
But Ajahn Thanissaro's translations, he
may have gotten better. I mean, you
think that he's he's working on
self-improvement and so forth, that
maybe his translations are getting

better. But I remember when I was reading his translations, you know, 20 years ago as a monk, they just seemed too
self-indulgent and idiosyncratic. You know, like some of his his renderings, like like Satipatthana, he he he translates that as frames of reference. Dukkha he always translates as stress. And some of it, if you're not familiar with you know, Ajahn Thanissaro's renderings, you won't even know what he's referring to what what the Pali what the Pali original is, you wouldn't know.
And it seems to me that the best

translator is as invisible as possible,
that you should read a translated text
and it should have as much of an effect
on you as possible as if you were
reading it in the original language.
And Ajahn Thanissaro, especially when he
was translating verses 20 years ago, I
mean, he it was like the opposite. I
mean, it might as well every few lines
he should have just included "Look at
me, here I am Ajahn Thanissaro
translating this."
So, between the two
with regard to quality of translation, I
would prefer Bhikkhu Bodhi.
I mean, I don't really approve of his
politics,

which is fine. He probably doesn't
approve of mine if he knows anything
about them.
So,
but as a translator, I think Bhikkhu
Bodhi was more
conservative in his translation style.
You know, he tries to get it literally
correct. Sometimes Ajahn Thanissaro,
he'll, you know, try some kind of flair
where he'll deviate from literal
accuracy in order to get some point
across that he wants to make.
Which again, you know, it's
it's not being invisible. It's being
kind of obtrusive.

But Bhikkhu Bodhi, he usually uses, you know, the standard Satipatthana, Foundations of Mindfulness, Dukkha is suffering, I guess is He just uses the standard accepted translations, which makes it easier to understand if you're reading it in English that you'll know what the Pali equivalent or the Pali original would be.

And Bhikkhu Bodhi, I mean, he's he doesn't meditate much if at all from what I've heard, but he's definitely a scholar.

Ajahn Thanissaro on the other hand, I mean, with regard to understanding some of the finer points of Dhamma, not from a a dogmatic point of view, but an

experiential point of view, I think Ajahn Thanissaro definitely has a deeper understanding based on his own personal experience of Dhamma. So, with regard to some philosophical text, you want to, you know, get to some deeper meaning, you might be better off looking at Ajahn Thanissaro if you can get past his weird renderings for things and his his sometimes cringeworthy translations of poetry where he sort of compensates for not having meter by just sort of placing words at random on the page.

He used to do that. I don't know if he still does.

With regard to Ajahn Sujato, I really

haven't read much of his stuff, but with

with regard to general translation

style, I think Bhikkhu Bodhi would be

preferable to Ajahn Thanissaro. Unless

you're trying to get some subtle

philosophical stuff based on meditation.

Like Ajahn Thanissaro understands

meditation way better than Bhikkhu Bodhi

does, in my opinion.

So, there is that.

I mean, no disrespect to to Ajahn

Thanissaro.

Uh and Ajahn Sujato, I'm not even 100%

sure who he is.

So,

yeah, of the three, Bhikkhu Bodhi.

Although, there are translators out

there who are very good, like like
Venerable Nanamoli, the first famous
Nanamoli. Osbert Moore,
who was ordained in Sri Lanka like in
1950.
Ceylon, I guess it was called then. His
translations, I really liked his style.
Um like Bhikkhu Bodhi's uh translation
of the Majjhima Nikaya is based on
Venerable Nanamoli's mainly what uh
Bhikkhu Bodhi did was just take
Nanamoli's strange interpretations for
things and just turn them into like the
the standard, you know, accepted main
renderings. Like uh Venerable Nanamoli
had this idea, and I I had this some

degree when I was translating the
Anguttara Nikaya,
of just having one Pali word with one
English equivalent.
So, trying to find one English word that
has the various possible meanings of one
Pali word. Like something like Dhamma.
I mean, how do you have one word for
Dhamma in all of its different meanings?
Dhamma has a notoriously large number of
possible meanings.
Um or Brahma, something like that. I
think Dhamma Nanamoli just went with
idea.
Which was really kind of a makeshift,
you know, falling between four or five
stools kind of a deal. So, it does kind

of make sense that Bhikkhu Bodhi would
just kind of change some of the weird
renderings over to
just the standard ones.
Um also, uh Venerable Nyanavira,
who was a friend of the first famous
Nanamoli. He Some of his translations
are really good, but he didn't just I
mean, he would just translate text just
to, you know, demonstrate some point he
was making or with reference to
something. He didn't translate entire
books, but his translations are good,
too.
Uh
gosh.

Yeah. There's There's good translators

out there, but um

I guess the three main ones nowadays are

Bhikkhu Bodhi, um Sujato, and

Thanissaro.

And of the three, I guess I'd have to go

with Bhikkhu Bodhi, although his his

endnotes are depressing.

And that's it. I guess we're done.

After only

an hour and 46 minutes, one of the

shortest Q&As in a long time, which is

fine. I'm not complaining.

If you have anything you want to ask

that you think I can answer, go right on

ahead, no more than three questions,

please. And, you know, try to ask a

serious question. Don't just ask joke questions. I mean, it can be kind of entertaining, I suppose, sometimes, but still.

Uh what else? Oh, yeah. Like and subscribe if you have not done so already.

And be happy.

Okay then. Hello and welcome to question and answer number 157. Hail audience. I am your host Pony Basa and yes indeed 157 is a prime number. I was too lazy to do the math like factor it all out and everything. So I went to X X.com and asked Grock this super duper AI. Grock couldn't answer the question because Grock didn't know what a prime number was. I had to explain to Grock what a prime number is and then ask if prime and then Grock said yes indeed 157 is prime
which means no integer will divide will like factor into 157 or it won't multiply

to get to 157 other than 1 and 157.
Those are the only two numbers that if
you multiply them together, they they
come out 157 is 1 * 157. So, it's a
prime number.
So, I'm glad I got that out of the way.
And I do seem to recall I vaguely
remember somebody asking me a question
in in the near in the recent past about
the ethics of watching sporting events.
And it could be that the person who
asked that question then changed it to a
question that was asked in the previous
Q&A about the ethics of streaming
basketball games, which is kind of a
different kind of question. You know,
it's it's different than just the ethics

of enjoying sports. So, if anyone asked that question, I didn't just like kiss you got kiss you off, anything like that. it just slipped through the cracks. Unless just the question got unasked, changed to a different question or something. Also,
somebody asked me recently about my favorite parts of the Bible. And in my answer, I emphasized with regard to the Old Testament, the book of Ecclesiastes, but recently I realized I should have mentioned the book of Daniel also, especially the second half of the book of Daniel. So it's the first half of the book of Daniel is just like myths,

legends, stories about some mythical prophet named Daniel during the Babylonian captivity. Like he and his friends Shadrach, u Melvin, and Abednego who, you know, they wind up in this furnace and don't get burned and there's an angel in there with them, etc., etc. That part is not as good as the second half, which is just surreal apocalyptic prophecy. It's sort of like the the prototype of the book of Revelations in the New Testament. And one thing about it that's so fascinating to me is you can't really understand it unless you also read the first book of Mcabes in which is in the Catholic Old Testament even though most Protestant schools

don't include the first book of Mcabes in the Bible. Like your standard like the what do you call them? the little Bibles that you that get handed out like at schools or you you find in in the drawer at a hotel. What is it? Gideon's Bible doesn't have first book of Mcabes because it's not a Catholic Bible. But according if you read the second part of Daniel, this the the surreal apocalyptic pro prophetic part and then you read the first book of Mcabes, you see that they're discussing the same issues like the little horn, the hard-faced king described in Daniel is King Antiochus Epiphanies.

So, it's like the prophecies or the the second half of the book of Daniel anyway was apparently written around 162 BC, which is relatively recent, not that not that long before the time of Jesus.

So, anyways, I got that out of the way, too. I suppose I should just start answering questions. And we got like a a mid medium amount, like the middle path between too many questions and not enough questions. So, it's about average, which is fine.

First question is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, "I'm a fairly I'm gonna make sure I'm we're recording." Yeah, we are recording.

Romeo says, "I'm a fairly recent

explorer of Buddhism, and I'm still trying to fully grasp some of its fundamentals. I know the concept of causes and conditions is essential to Buddhism, but I'm struggling to understand what it means in practical terms. Can you please break down and explain the Buddhist concept of causes and conditions in as simple a way as possible citing specific examples of how it comes up in one's daily life? Well, I mean the standard explanation of causes and conditions in Buddhism is padicha samupana dependent core rising which is so hard to understand that according to the legend the Buddha himself almost

didn't teach Buddhism because he figured nobody would understand dependent core rising. So, I'm not even going to attempt it.

I would use a simile like of fire. Like if anyone was a boy scout, you know the fire triangle. Fire triangle. There are three things. If they are present, you're going to have fire. It's oxygen, fuel, and heat. If you have enough oxygen, enough fuel, and enough heat all together at the same time, there is fire. You know, it's not you don't need a seed crystal or anything. just those three conditions being present all at the same time in the same place fire. And that's the way it is with pretty

much everything. I mean, nothing has
this
inherent self essence.
At least nothing compounded, nothing
that
nothing that is a sankara, I guess. I
don't know. I gotta be careful not to
stray too far into heresy because I'm a
heretic anyway, but I don't want to pass
off
heresy as like orthodox dogma, that sort
of thing. So, let's say like a human
being or ignorance or suffering and
putting this into practical terms,
suffering is like fire. You have those
conditions there. You're going to have

the suffering. You're going to have the

ignorance. you're going to have self

but you take away the conditions the

suffering disappears the the the

delusion the ignorance disappears

etc.

So if you're suffering the thing to do

is get rid of the causes of the

suffering and the causes of suffering

according to the four noble truths are

desire or attachment like insisting upon

things being a certain way.

You take that away, the suffering goes

away.

So

like human beings, clouds, trees, dogs,

all of this, they're there like a like a

fire is there. You take away the conditions and it just poofs out of existence.

You take away the fuel or you take away the oxygen, you take away the heat from a fire, the fire goes away. No more fire. I mean, it doesn't even go anywhere. is just out.

So with regard to let's see uh how it comes up in one's daily life mainly would be something like unhappiness and unhappiness always has causes and conditions. So to understand that, you know, you don't just sit there wallowing in misery. You don't just think I'm I'm miserable. I'm pissed off.

I'm upset. I'm jealous or whatever it is. You know, it's a there is a cause that's causing this feeling to arise or it's a it's a like a web of causes, but basically the main cause is desire. If you're unhappy, you desire something. So this desire is conditioning your mental state or your unhappiness.

And it is unfortunate that sometimes I get questions like this right off the bat before I get any momentum going. It's it's easier to start off with something simple and objective before getting into the complexities of conditionality in Buddhist philosophy. But we're all like fires and our mental states are like fires. You know, you got

to have the conditions there or it's not going to be there.

So it's it's not like I as a person have this inherent personhood that's sort of holding me together. It's just the conditions are there that cause me to be here. I mean this is not so much coming up in daily life because this is getting into like abstract philosophy but coming up in daily life mainly like practical Buddhism in daily life would just be understanding your own attachments your own unhappiness and so forth and all of them have these conditions. So you want to get rid of the problem you get rid of the causes of the problem. You don't

just put band-aids on the problem.
So, I guess I should just move on to the
next question. This is from Raphael.
And Raphael says, "Have you ever heard
of the Indonesian Chiang master John
Chang whose so-called chi power was
captured in a British documentary? He
bowled up a sheet of newspaper, for
example, and by channeling chi through
his hands, set it a light without any
external flame source." No, this is the
first I've ever heard of John Chang that
I'm aware of. Although I've heard of
people like John Chang, for example, DD,
I think it's spelled Hume, but I think
he pronounced it home. DD home, who
lived like in the late 1800s,

and he was able to do stuff like I mean,
he was just
an extremely liinal person who could do
like impossible [__] without like being
like an ascended master or anything.
Like he he wasn't like enlightened. He
didn't have like meditative psychic
powers. He apparently was just born this
way. And he could do things like
like musical instruments would be
levitating in the air playing themselves
around him. Like tables would levitate.
There was there was like the the British
Society for Psychical Research came and
were investigating him. You had like
four full-grown men trying to hold this

table down and it's still lifting up off the floor. And the thing that reminded me of him reading this question is that he could reach into a fireplace and pull out glowing coals, hold them in his hands, he could blow until like flames are blowing out through his fingers and it wouldn't burn him.

So I mean it may be that this person John Chang is using Chiang as a kind of gimmick. You know like some people use tarot cards as as a kind of gimmick or astrological charts as a kind of gimmick or Ouija boards as a kind of gimmick which really I mean the psychic powers aren't in in the gimmick. It's just that it's like a necessary crutch that

somebody can use to help them channel
this latent power they've got inside
themselves. It's like they can't believe
that they have the power to predict the
future or whatever. But they do believe
that maybe these cards can do it and so
they have enough faith in the cards that
their own latent abilities come out
through the cards. And it may be that
John Chang is using Chiong in the same
way
because people have been able to do this
that weren't Chiong masters.
They're just weird people. They're
liinal people and they'll have their own
like reasons, their own rationalizations

of how they're able to do it. I'm not sure what DD Holmes rationalizations were, but I think it was I think he was like a an orphan or something. He was raised by his aunt who eventually just threw him out of the house because she thought he was possessed by the devil because he could do all this kind of stuff. And this was like in 19th century Scotland when it was still very Presbyterian.

So

yeah, I'm not so sure that it's actually Chiong that's giving him these powers any more than I think that it's like Ouija boards that are causing people to come up with occasionally, usually not,

but occasionally like profound stuff.

So I think I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is also from

Raphael. And Raphael says, ' Were you

ever so sexually desperate back in Burma

that you looked at a young feminine monk

and thought, "Damn." Well, the quick

answer to that is no. The closest I can

even recall to something like that

happening is once I was visiting an

American monk who was living at a big

school monastery near Mandalay. I think

it was on Sagine Hill, the the the base

of Sagen Hill. A lot of monasteries

there. And I think he even had to point

out this this young monk to me and he

was the statement was like, you know, if he were a girl, he'd be beautiful. And it was, you know, I'd looked at this monk and, you know, he had very feminine features. I mean, if he had been born with two X chromosomes instead of an X and a Y, he'd be really pretty. But still, I mean, it's like just kind of like an anthropological observation. It's like, yeah, suppose so. But still, it didn't cause me to be attracted to him because I knew he was a guy and I just don't swing that way.

I suppose I should take this little paper umbrella out of the cup before I poke my eye with it. That's the main reason why I wear glasses. I don't

really need them for seeing. I just need to protect my eyes when I'm drinking coffee cuz spoon handles and stuff, it's it's dangerous.

So, I think I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Robert. And Robert says, "What do you think of Biku Buddha Dasa?" And Biku Buddha, I assume that would be Well, no, it wouldn't be. I was thinking it was Ajan Lee Damadoro. I was confusing them in my mind. Buddha Dasa, slave of Buddha, or more politically correctly, servant of Buddha. Um, yeah. I don't even know who it is. You think if he was a Thai Ajan it would be Ajan Buddha Buddhao instead

of Biku Buddhadasa.

So yeah I don't even know who Biku Buddha is. So let's just move on to the next question.

Robert, second question. What do you think of the idea that Dharma practice is at its core just gladdening the mind by reminding ourselves that everything is okay, everything is fine, not a problem in the world, nothing to do, nowhere to go, nothing to become.

Then when an unh wholesome thought arises, drop it and be happy. Duka to duka nood

duka to duka nood continuously might be seen as right effort.

Well, yeah. I don't think that the idea

of dharma practice is at its core gladdening the mind. I really don't think so. Gladdening is sort of a positive state. And you're trying to go the middle path between positive and negative. Equinimity is is a higher mental state closer to enlightenment than rejoicing or being glad.

So I mean if you if you just read the texts you know the text will say you know everything isn't okay you know this world is on fire the Buddha's third sermon formal sermon according to tradition after his enlightenment is the fire sermon whereas some sara the cosmos is in flames

that's kind of a problem first noble truth to exist to suffer well that could be interpreted as a kind of problem too especially since right after that the cause of the problem is stated and then the solution to the problem.

So I mean some dharma teachers like Paul low to some degree teaches this kind of thing you know nothing to do nowhere to go nothing to become that kind of thing. So some eclectic kind of dharma teachers nowadays teach this

um but orthodox Buddhism doesn't teach it really as far as I can tell. I studied it for quite a while. I never really never really interpreted it this way.

So when an unh wholesome thought arises,
drop it, sure, but I mean after that you
can be happy in a kind of Buddhist sense
of just absence of suffering. But you
don't want to be developing positive
gladness as an approach to nibbana other
than I mean you're better off glad than
miserable
but still
uh equinimity or just neutrality is a
higher state than positive joyfulness
at least from a Buddhist point of view.
I mean like in Hinduism some Hindu
schools will teach about like satananda
is like the enlightened mind which is
just like

like joy ananda lit literally means something like joy or rejoicing that kind of thing.

So

yeah, I mean it can be interpreted this way and some people might even become enlightened by practicing it with this interpretation, but it's not really the orthodox terravada Buddhist interpretation. And I think that there probably are better interpretations for interpreting Dharma that will help you to become enlightened better. But there's all different kinds of people and so different different strokes for different folks, different methods, you know. So

let's see, just make sure I answer the question before I move on to the next one. What do you think of the idea that Dharma practice is at its core just gladdening the mind by reminding ourselves everything is okay, everything is fine?

Yeah. Um I mean you don't even have to be gladdened. I mean you just forget the gladdening part just remind yourself you know it doesn't matter

you know it's like cultivating equinimity just observe everything and just let it go through you just like through a pane of glass you know just no resistance

no friction and that's enough I mean

that's the point of it I think at least

with regard to equinimity

So, I'm just going to move on to

Robert's third question. Do you like Bob

Dylan's music? And I have to admit, I'm

a heretic in this regard, too. I never

liked Bob Dylan. And there's two main

reasons for that. One, Bob Dylan

specialized in lyrics. And throughout my

life, as a general rule, I don't listen

to lyrics. It's like I listen to music

with the right hemisphere of my brain

and it's just not interpreting the words

into meaning. It's just more like the

vocalist is just another instrument. I

mean, you know, there's words there.

It's not just blah blah blah, but it really isn't soaking in. I'm not like interpreting the words. It's like trying to I mean, I have to to some degree stop listening to the music in order to interpret the words.

Unless I mean every once in a while there's a kind of song that's sung in such a way that you just follow the lyrics easily.

But that's that's one reason why I wasn't in Bob Dylan. But the the main reason is just he has a horrible singing voice. He's just this ridiculously bad singing voice that I've just never liked. It's just kind of amazing. Neil,

what's his name? Neil Young is another one. I mean, why would they want to be singers? Guess was it Bob Dylan or Neil Young that started off sort of like like a street musician panhandling? So I guess you know they they'd have to be going solo from the beginning. Or one a big one for me is Rush. What inspired them to have Getty Lee be their vocalist? I mean he sounds like a cross between Donald Duck and Alvin the Chipmunk. They could have easil They only had three people in the band. could have easily hired a fourth person to be the vocalist. Worked for Led Zeppelin, didn't it? But instead, they got Getty Lee with his absolutely horrible

semiscreeching singing voice.
But at least they had some damn good guitar and drumming in in Rush. And Bob Dylan really didn't have any outstanding like instrumental virtuosity to compensate for his really shitty singing voice.
I wasn't even all that impressed by Janice Joplin's singing voice. Kind of scratchy, not particularly musical.
So, I'm just going to move on to the next question.
This is from Jeffrey. And Jeffrey says, "I've heard you and Brian talk about the Buddha saying that some people are incapable of engaging in an intelligent

conversation and conversations with these types should be avoided. Could you please cover that again?" Well, I don't like recall Brian and me talking about this other than like the Mongalasuta clearly states it's it's a list of blessings.

The blessings to a person's life.

Blessing number one is balanam which is not associating with fools.

Mental states are contagious. You hang out with people at a lower vibration than you, it'll bring you down. You hang out with people at a higher vibration or higher mental state than you, it'll uplift you. So

there is that. I mean it is true most

people are incapable of engaging in an intelligent or philosophical conversation like where I work now and there's there's another question along these lines further down the scroll if I remember correctly that I mean where I work it's probably the average IQ of the people working on the docs is below 90. I'm I'm guessing certainly it's in double digits
and I mean these people are what would be called normies. A lot of them are good people. I'm not trying to bash them at all,
but I mean they're just completely like in samsauric mode, you know? They they

haven't gotten to the point of
questioning samsara, questioning like
the the validity or reality of it.
So, but I mean even people capable of
engaging in an intelligent conversation
if they're just hyper samsaric
you know they're like some sociopathic
surgeon or business person that they're
just completely locked into samsara
then I mean even though they're
intelligent they could engage in an
intelligent conversation still you'd be
better off avoiding people like that
going with Buddhism going with dharma
But I mean, you'd be better off hanging
out with uh like a relatively slowwitted
good person than with a highly

intelligent sociopath

as a general rule.

So,

uh still I think it's mainly just a

matter of foolishness. Not the capacity

of engaging in an intelligent

conversation. It's just how foolish are

they? How delusional are they? That I

mean, you're better off hanging out with

wise people. I mean, wisdom and

intelligence are not the same thing. So,

you're better off with someone who is

wise but not intelligent than

intelligent but not wise.

Like the founder of the tradition which

I was ordained, Tong Pulu Seattle, whose

picture is up on the the altar there, right about there.

that I mean he was a simple village guy. I mean he started off that way just a simple village boy and he had wisdom. I mean he wasn't like an intellectual. Certainly wasn't a scholarly type. I mean pretty much all Burmese monks know their dharma way better than most western Dharma teachers. You know they know the scriptures. They're just immersed in it from childhood. Um, and just the whole like monastic educational system, the educational system in general in Burma is just memorize, memorize, memorize, memorize. They're very dogmatic. They don't have much

independent critical thought, but they know what the texts say.

But again, you're better off with a wise person than an intelligent person, even if the wise person is not particularly intelligent.

So, I mean, you don't need to be capable of engaging in an intelligent conversation to be uplifting to be around. You know, an enlightened person could just sit there and he's going to be uplifting

or we can just talk about just really simple stuff, you know.

So, I mean, the main purpose of hanging out with people isn't to participate in

intelligent conversations necessarily.

So yeah, I think really the the main

point is to hang out with wise people

and avoid fools

uh regardless of IQ

or regardless of physical height, that

kind of thing.

So

um I think I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Kundrew.

Kundrew says, "How is a sankara

different from a dhama as used in the

three marks of existence?" the tilakana

which is sab sankara anicha sab sankara

duka sab dhamma anata and I've explained

this before that sankaras are referring

to anything that has a beginning

anything that is condition anything that
has the causes like the fire whereas
dhhamma is anything at all including
which would include nibano even it would
include not only conditioned things but
even the unconditioned
even not just like illusory samsaric
phenomena but what is ultimately real
and this this whole formula kind of
kicks in the head this idea that a lot
of especially western Buddhists will
have sometimes or or some like an john's
in the Thai forest tradition where
they're trying to come up with a kind of
self
you know they're saying well the Buddha

was just saying that it's not any of the
five condas that is a self But still
they just even though he didn't assert
that there's some other self they're
saying well he was just leaving the door
open kind of implying that there is a
higher self that it just isn't one of
the five condas but the three marks of
existence this this formula just kicks
that in the head.
It's no condition or all conditioned
things are impermanent. All conditioned
things are conducive to suffering.
But everything whether it's conditioned
or not is without a self.
So the first two are referring to
sankcaras are referring to samsaric

phenomena. But dharma is not necessarily referring to samsara. It's referring to anything.

So,

that's the answer. And I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Quistor.

And it seems to me like a lot of people are spelling their own names wrong because the spell check is underlying about half the names on this list.

Quistor, for example. He apparently isn't spelling his own name right.

Anyways, Quistor says, "What criteria did you use to determine that you were no longer progressing as a monk? Did you

stop resolving sankaras of the past? Did you not see any more improvement in reducing the duration and intensity of your emotional reactions? Well, the main criterion, excuse me, the main criterion that I used to determine that I was no longer progressing as a monk was my meditation. I wasn't getting into any deeper states. In fact, I wasn't even getting to the into the states that I had already been into before. like the best meditation of my life was between 1999 and around 2004. Those five years I was getting into the best meditation of my life and then it just kind of petered out. There's a little glimmer every now and then but I just was not breaking any

new ground. I wasn't even regaining old ground in my meditation.

I just see apparently got as far as I was I was inclined to get with with that practice. And so I figured well after about 10 years more than 10 years of not making any progress in my meditation

I decided

enough is enough.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Gnostic Rocker.

And Gnostic Rocker or Gnostic Rocker says, "I wonder if you ever find yourself in the following dilemmas or quanderies in the workplace with worldly non-spiritual workmates. If you are too

distant or standoffish with them, they take offense because you don't want to hang out. However, if you take the other approach and respond to their overtures of friendship later on down the line, they then don't like the fact that you don't want to go drinking every week or don't want to discuss sports, parochial gossip, or tabloid political gossip. Let's face it, not too many people in the workplace want to discuss the thoughts of 2,000-year-old sages or mystic heretics.

Well, I really don't come don't really have a problem with this. I mean, I generally don't talk to many people. I'll just exchange pleasantries a little

bit, you know, just kind of sort of social lubricant, you know, just kind of staying on a friendly basis with most of them anyway. Not that I have any like feuds going on. There's just a few people I don't have much patience with because they're always messing up.

So, but still I'll talk to them. I'll politely respond if they say anything to me. If I have some sort of advice or instructions to give them with regard to work, I'll give it to them in a neutral tone of voice.

But let's see here. I don't want to hang out. Yeah, I just don't hang out with anybody at work.

Just it just doesn't happen. Like I've been working there since December at this new place and I've got like the uh exchanged phone numbers with a couple of them and they no longer work there. They both quit and um just nobody's come to our house. I don't think we've had real visitors other than my sweetheart's mama in over over a year. I think just neither one of us is particularly socially oriented. So, it's it's fine. You know, it's like company comes over. It's just kind of an inconvenience to some degree. I really do not thrive on human companionship the way most people do. Like, there's some people at work, they're just like talking all the time

and I'm just mostly just working all the time. Like, I got a an evaluation a few weeks ago where my supervisor is just saying, "You got nothing to worry about. You are constantly working."

So,

let's see. Yeah, I don't I don't just hang out with anybody.

So, let's see. Other than my sweetie, we hang out with each other. So,

yeah. And it's it's like I was mentioning before, it's there's like two kinds of people working at this place just roughly, you know, just generally speaking that I mean they're all sort of bluecollar types, you know, very few

college educations, I'm sure. And you know, the average IQ is probably below 90 and the pay is relatively good for like your standard, you know, bluecollar job. And so you've got some young guys who are just working just as much as they can. You 60 hours a week if they can get it. you know, they don't have much of a social life and they're mainly just getting as much money as they can to get that monster truck or to set themselves up well enough so they can afford at some future date to have a woman and children. Whereas the other group is the ones that already have a woman and children and they're just working their asses off without much

social life. you know, they're just like
the the standard,
you know, committed workaholic father
who is just working his ass off to feed
his wife and kids. And that is an
honorable thing. I've got absolutely
nothing bad to say about that.
And I mean, the father's not home very
much. I guess the kids might not see
very much of him, but he is working his
butt off to make sure that his family is
provided for, which is like the
traditional role of a father, I guess,
at least one of the traditional roles of
a father.
And so I've got respect for a lot of the

people and the people have respect for me, too. I think just I'm I'm big, you know, I'm bigger than just about anybody there and just kind of gruff and work hard and do a fairly good job. So, a lot of people just appreciate me being on the team because I'm a good player. At least, you know, I'm not messing stuff up. I'm getting my my work done so that we can get out of there earlier, that kind of thing. And so I do have a certain amount of respect even though I'm sort of like the the the tall silent type for the most part. You know, I just walk past people don't don't greet them or anything. You know, I just kind of ignore everybody. And you know, it's

just kind of like the mystique or something. I don't know. They just they just accept that.

In fact, they're accepting me more and more as I'm getting more like getting better at my job, you know, kind of doing stuff better, not messing up as much as when you're just starting, that kind of thing.

So, even though I'm pretty much antisocial, just crack a joke with a few people every now and then, um, still I I am respected at work for the most part.

So, I'm just going to move on.

to uh Gnostic Rocker's second question here, which is, "What did your family

make of your immersion in Dharma?" My family pay no attention to it whatsoever, or if they are reminded of my interest in it, they consider it some kind of silly, impractical, vaguely hippie stuff, which is incomprehensible to them, or they wonder why I'd be interested in such culty stuff. I'm used to it now and barely mention it to them. Well, before I became a monk, I don't think it was really much of an issue. My father considered himself to be a Buddhist, although he was kind of in between like Mahayana and paganism, like animism.

So, I mean, his his understanding of of Buddhism was pretty sketchy, but still,

I mean, just my interest in Buddhism, my mother just didn't understand it. My mother, bless her heart, did not have a religious or spiritual bone in her body. She kind of started getting a little Christian as she got older, presumably out of fear of death.
So when I became a monk, my father was proud of me, but he thought I was going overboard. He thought that was extremism to actually renounce the world and go live in a cave.
Yeah. He he'd make fun of me sometimes for that. Um my mother was just mystified. She just didn't understand it at all. She would from the bottom of her

heart would have much preferred that I just settle down in the suburbs with a wife and start having kids for her to spoil. You know, she wanted to be the doting grandma and just didn't get the chance with me. She just did not understand it. She could not get it. My father kind of understood it, but he thought it was rather extreme to go to the to to the extent that I did.

So let's see here. What did your family make of your immersion in Dharma? My brother was proud of me. I'm not sure what his his attitude towards me is now, but he was proud of me when I was a monk. He actually came to Burma to visit me once. He didn't like it there,

though. He was glad to leave.

So let's see here.

I guess I'm just going to move on to Gnostic Rocker's third question, which is, it seems to me that all religions have strong and weak points, aspects of being which they see clearly, accurately, and encourage whilst they may have while they may misperceive other areas of life and thought and vision in their outlook or in their theology, ethics, virtue, attitudes to the world, the seen and the unseen. What do you think Christians get right which Buddhists miss or do not get right?

Well, I was thinking of this I think

yesterday when I first saw the question and I'm not sure that the Christians get anything more correct than like orthodox Buddhism does. I can't think of anything really other than I mean with regard to traditional Buddhism.

Um there's one one thing about Christianity that I like is just if you're going to do good deeds, do them secretly. Don't advertise your good deeds. Whereas you go to Burma or like a Burmese temple in in America, everything that gets offered has like this little label on it saying who donated it. You know, so and so and his wife so and so and their kids so and so so and so and so and so donated this. And it's I mean

it's just like self view, you know? It's like that's you're better off just donating it and just not trying to get any kind of payback in this life, you know, any kind of recognition for anything like that.

So I mean the Christian idea is, you know, you do something in secret, God still knows and that's all that counts. That's all that really matters. But Buddhism doesn't really have that.

So let's see here.

I mean some Buddhism orthodox terraat does have some kind of weak points but I think pretty much all religions do like like

dreams

you know just describing

things about the natural world like

gravity you know of course I mean that's

not really the scope of Buddhism anyway.

The scope of Buddhism is to understand

suffering and the end of suffering

or to understand delusion and the end of

delusion because they both amount to the

same thing.

But anything that Christian that like

Christianity like the Bible gets right

which the Buddhists miss. I mean to some

degree just to some degree the whole

idea of divine grace in Christianity

where you cannot save yourself through

your own efforts. I mean there has to be

some of your own efforts but I had a Catholic priest tell me once it's like you take one step towards God takes 99 steps towards you. And I mean in I mean there is some profoundity to that where you can't make yourself be enlightened. And and Buddhism acknowledges that to some degree. There's no guarantees that you're going to get enlightened. Like in the Sudatana Suta, you know, you practice this intensive Satipatana practice, then you're guaranteed of either enlightenment or getting damn close to enlightenment, but there's no guarantee other of enlightenment anyway. So I there does seem to be a kind of

like

what's the word like enigmatic

mysterious grace involved because you

can't make yourself be enlightened.

Enlightenment is not the result of a

cause because then it would just be

another conditioned thing which would be

impermanent and conducive to suffering.

So you can't cause yourself to become

enlightened but still it happens somehow

and the Christians kind of have this

worked into their system where in

Buddhism it's just kind of a blank you

know there's there's not much discussion

of it other than in Mahayana they'll

just discuss the paradox

you know they'll kind of play up the

paradox

which may be the best way to go about it

but in Terravada there's it's pretty

much not mentioned or at least It

receives very little emphasis.

And I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from Austin.

And Austin says, "Would you debate a

Hindu on Tik Tok or Discord? It's

something I could easily set up. And

you're the Dharma Master, so I'm sure

you could do better than me." Well, it

seems like if there was a debate on

TikTok, it wouldn't last very long. You

know, you just have to take a little

clip from the debate, I guess, and put

it on TikTok. Isn't there like a time limit on Tik Tok? Can't be more than like five minutes or something. Discord is another matter, but Discord isn't I'm not exactly sure how it would work on Discord.

Um, yeah. I mean, I could debate a Hindu, I suppose. Although, what will we debate? I mean, with regard to Buddhism and Hinduism, for the most part, they're in agreement. I mean, there's more similarities than differences with regard to Buddhists and Hindus. At least that's kind of the Buddhist approach. And the Hindus consider a lot of Hindus consider Buddhists to just be another kind of Hindu.

But like even in the in the poly text like in in the Vineia the rules of monastic discipline that if you have a non Buddhist wants to become a monk he has to go on probation for I think it's four months three months. I think it's four months that he has to sort of like be a novice for four months before he can be fully ordained just to make sure that he's gotten rid of like this these heretical views.

Um but a Hindu or like a Vadic protohindu doesn't have to go through the probation because already they believe in karma and rebirth and that sort of thing. I mean Hinduism and

Buddhism arose in essentially the same culture. So they have a lot of the same assumptions.

But I guess we could debate some things like no self, that kind of thing. But even then it might be a kind of agreement that is like a semantic problem.

But yeah, I mean I could debate a Hindu. We we'd have to know in advance what it is exactly we're going to debate though. But I really don't have like an axe to grind against Hindus other than I mean there's certain things that you can easily debate. Like for example, I was involved in a kind of debate on Bitshoot in the comments section below. I think

it's Q&A 154. It might be to some degree and it might even be the previous Q&A. Just some Hindus believe that Vadic Hinduism speaking Sanskrit as their religious language has existed in India for a gajillion years.
and that you know the whole like Arian invasion theory where you had the the Indo-Aryans invading India like around 1500 BC that's all [__] that you know it's like the Arian race arose in India this kind of thing I mean that could be debated I mean I'm not really an archaeologist I wouldn't have all the best data or anything but still it's fairly straightforward or certain

certain religious issues I guess but yeah I'd be all right with that, I guess.

I mean, it would depend on circumstances, I suppose. And I'm just going to move on to Austin's next question, which is the highest order of truths transcend binary dualistic conceptions. Pure being and pure non-being are undifferentiated. So, with regard to the self, is it apt to say it neither exists nor does not exist? Well, no, because you can't say that. I mean, going with Buddhist logic, it's invalid to say that the self exists. It's invalid to say self doesn't exist. It's invalid to say that the self does and

doesn't exist. And it's invalid to say that the self neither exists nor doesn't exist. I mean, anything you say about reality is going to be invalid. I mean if you want to just talk at a purely samsaric level then sure you could say well the self exists in some context and it doesn't exist in other contexts and it does and doesn't maybe in certain contexts neither does nor doesn't in other context you know so long as you explain the context you might be able to validly state whether it exists or not etc etc but if you're trying to discuss ultimate reality the highest truth it's not going to work in where it's just in

Say yes is invalid to say no is invalid
to say yes and no is invalid to say
neither yes nor no is invalid it's just
it's just wasted effort
so let's see did I answer the question
pure being and pure non-being are
undifferentiated so with regard to the
self is it apt to say it neither exists
nor does not exist yeah I already
answered that so I'm just going to move
on next question this is from Sedarta
lohachita
And Sedart lohachita says, "Why are we
deeply drawn to Buddhism but not
enlightened and probably won't achieve
it in this lifetime but still drawn
towards it?" Well, there's a number of

ways of looking at that. I mean, one way
that would be a more Buddhist way is
that we're deeply drawn to Buddhism, but
we're still not enlightened. But still
there's like an aspect of us that is
waking up and knows that Buddhism is
like a doorway through which we can you
know we can transcend samsara
the god's willing so to speak.
So it's like a part of you, you know,
it's like in Zen Buddhism or Mahayana,
they talk about the Buddha nature, you
know, you've got like the bodhicitta or
something, you know, you've already got
this seed, you've got this glimmer of
enlightenment already in you and that

glimmer of enlightenment that that latent wisdom or that aspect of wisdom that you already have can see or just intuitively feel that Dharma is the way to go.

So that would be a more orthodox kind of explanation. But Paul Low, who was a rascal, one of my favorite Dharma teachers, he's still alive as far as I know.

Um he has this other explanation that he says that like spirituality or religion is a kind of cope. It's like we don't want to really become enlightened. So we just kind of play at it, you know, we do all the we follow these precepts and we do these ceremonies and we do this and

that and we sit there like a statue for, you know, x number of minutes or hours per day. And it's mainly just kind of acting out like we're pretending we really want to become enlightened while at the same time we're vehemently clinging to our own personal samsara and deep down don't want to become enlightened.

So that's that's another possible explanation and it may be that both of them are true.

I mean it's like Krishna Murdy says that um once you're bitten by a snake you don't have to take courses on how to avoid snakes. You just genuinely stay

away from snakes after you've been bitten once. And it's kind of that way with enlightenment. Once you really fully realize that you should wake up, then you're going to wake up. That I mean, the main reason why we're not enlightened is that we just don't want to be enlightened yet.

You know, it's kind of like St. Augustine praying to God, you know, save me from my sins, but not yet.

because we like our sins or our transgressions or our indulgences, our preferences, our own personality.

It's just an animal instinct. We don't want to die

and enlightenment is a kind of death.

So

you could look at it either way. I think both of them would be applicable. So to some degree there is like an essence there is like a wisdom in us that can see that dharma is like the right direction but at the same time we're kind of dragging our feet in that direction and just using the like the the pageantry and the the busy work and so forth as a kind of cope as a as like an excuse like well you know I'm I'm working on it I'm working on

But really, if we fully realize that we should be enlightened, we would be just let go. I mean, there's nothing to do.

So, I'm just going to move on to Sedart Loha's next question,
which is as follows.
Don't you think that most people who defend the figure of God or rather the idea of God don't truly believe in a living divine being but instead in a kind of political doctrine of order like Rita in the Hindus would say one doctrine that serves to explain the cosmos while also granting them a sense of control and a means to govern others.
Examples
God wants the king to rule his divine right. God forbids this. Moral control. God will judge. Psychological coercion for compliance.

Well, let's see here. Get back up to the top of the question. Don't I think that most people who defend the figure of God don't truly believe in a living divine being, but instead in a kind of political doctrine?

Well, I mean, I think there's probably the majority of Christians just believe that there is a God.

I don't think that it's just a kind of rationalization for having politics be a certain way or you know controlling others or anything like that. Um it could be like the higher up you go in like the political scale that it gets more and more political. People who just

are very political in their thinking may
think politically with regard to this
kind of stuff or just with regard to
like governing society, stabilizing
society, you know, having society, you
know, unified and strengthened by all
everybody accepting the same world view
of Christian theology or whatever.
Um, but the average Joe
who goes to church on Sundays,
I really think that they just have this
simplehearted belief that there is a God
kind of a sky father,
father up in the sky
who's watching them and will reward them
if they're good and punish them if
they're bad. And I mean, you could

interpret that politically, especially
if you're a politically oriented person.
But I think for most people it doesn't
really get that complicated
that they just have this I mean they
were raised Christians. They just
believe in God and that's just the way
it is.
So let's see.
They believe in a living divine. Yeah. I
would guess that most Christians, if
they're devout Christians, they're
devout enough that they're going to
church on Sundays and actually trying to
live up to some of the teachings that uh
they do believe that there is a living

God.

But the more cynical you get and more political you get, you know, the more you're likely to kind of use this concept of God to control people, control society or whatever.

So,

I may you may notice I was a little bit distracted because I'm looking out the window because there was a a big pickup truck pulled up in front of the house and my sweetie had uh called some people to measure the back patio to lay some tile down and they never showed up. So, when a big pickup or something like slows down in front of the house, I'm thinking, well, maybe

it's them and I'm going to be interrupting this Q&A. But it wasn't them.

So, did I answer that question? Yeah, I think I did.

Yeah. I think most Christians, they're not really thinking of like divine order. Like I guess Veruna was like the god of divine order in like the Rigveda there. I mean to some degree, but they think God is responsible for that order. God is like enforcing that order. That order comes from God who is this skyfather.

Yeah. I don't think that they're really that philosophical. They're thinking

more in terms of the sky father, you know, the the big daddy up in the sky than they are thinking about, you know, political control and maint maintenance of order and so forth.

So, I'm just going to move on to Sedar Loha's third question.

Don't you think that when a sect or religion gets institutionalized like Christianity, Hinduism or Buddhism in their respective areas and times immediately part of it becomes corrupt?

Yeah. I would say even before it gets institutionalized like if you if we can believe the polyexts then corruption was starting even when the Buddha was already alive. You you had the notorious

group of six monks who were just doing all this naughtiness. You had David trying to kill the Buddha and also you know trying to take over starting a schism and so forth. So there's like scandalous stuff already starting to go on even when the Buddha is still alive when Buddhism is still just sort of a sort of a minority renuncient movement. You know it hasn't taken over society or anything yet. So when you're dealing with unenlightened people corruption is just a given.

when you're dealing with unenlightened people and and not all members of a religion, not even Buddhism, not even

early Buddhism in the Buddhist time, not all of the the early Buddhists were fully enlightened.

Early Christianity, I mean I mean you start off with like these really devout saintly types, Christianity and Buddhism too, but within a short time, within a hundred years already, you're getting like people that shouldn't be there getting in there. Like you read the early history of Christianity, there's just all this just infighting and just politics and just just mchavellian [__] going on with regard to determining what's going to be official doctrine and so forth.

And it wasn't so bad in Buddhism

probably. I mean, you probably didn't have people killing each other over Buddhist doctrines very often. like Nanda University, you had representatives of all these different schools of Buddhism all living in the same compound interacting with each other. They might have spirited debates, maybe occasionally heated debates, but still they're living more or less peacefully with each other without killing each other. And that was almost impossible like in the mid to late Roman Empire where you had different sects of Christianity that were just convinced that the other sects of Christianity

were even worse than the pagans.
A heretic is worse than a non-believer.
But getting back to uh
institutionalized, yeah, I think that
the corruption begins as soon as you
start getting unenlightened people
making decisions with regard to that, no
matter how early it is. I mean, the
founder, the enlightened founder can
still be alive and already you've got
Judas's Scariot and Davidata and all
this [__] going on.
I mean like the first no it was the
second council supposedly 100 years
after the time of the Buddha after the
Buddhist part in Ibana already you've
got corrupt monks that are handling

money and like trying to like persecute monks that refuse to handle money that kind of thing.

It's just human nature to be unenlightened.

Enlightenment is definitely the exception to the rule.

And I'm just moving on to the next question. This is from P. And P says, imagine a new human popped out of the block of proverbial marble. He says proverbial, but it's proverbial.

I'll start again. Says, oh, I didn't put enough s's in there. Says, imagine a new human popped out of the block of proverbial marble. Do you think you

could tell if that were the case upon meeting such an individual? Poasa. I don't know why he throws in pubasa as a sentence with a period. There's a question mark before it and a period after it. Pyobbasa.

In other words, to see no karma as of yet being fresh.

So,

a new human popping out of the block of marble that has no karma.

I mean the the thing that that this reminds me of would be those of you who have watched the movie Fight Club towards the beginning of the movie Fight Club that you know you got the unnamed protagonist going around walking city

streets and interacting with Mara and whatever that every once in a while you'll see this flash of Tyler B Tyler Deran, you know, just like a tenth of a second he's just

just right there in the scene And that would be somebody just popping out of the block of marble with no karma. Because if you had no karma, you you've got no momentum. You're going to you're going to exist for one moment.

So to see no karma as of yet being fresh. Yeah. I mean, if you got no karma, you're going to exist for one moment. I guess that would be that would be my personal take on it. And

especially if they're supposedly just popping out of this like the quantum field, you know, you know, sort of like a particle and antiarticle, you know, just pop out of the quantum field and then just reunite and annihilate each other.

Yeah. A person coming out of the block of marble. It might be a person and the anti-person popping out of of whatever and then they just kind of collide and and explode and that's it.

So yeah, I don't think it I don't think it would work the way is imagining it here. I mean, we're all popping out of the block of marble every moment anyway. But you have to have some kind of

momentum or continuity in order to exist for more than a trillionth of a second. And if you don't have any karma, then that's pretty much the momentum, isn't it?

So I think I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Xenithoid. And Zenithoid says, "Is Schopenhau the apex of Western philosophy?" And he asked me this on the Discord server, and there's this one person who's very Schopenhauike in his attitudes who just immediately said yes. But I don't think so. I don't think Schopenhau is the apex of Western philosophy. Um I I would rank David Hume higher than Schopenhau,

possibly even Kant, even though Kant is damned hard to read. Schopenhau was kind of a successor to Kant.

that like in his the world is will and representation Schopenhau says you need to read you need to read Kant first before you read this book which almost nobody does I mean almost nobody reads Schopenhau's the world as will and representation anyway or samsara as china and sya

using Buddhist terminology poly terminology

but shopenhau I mean he had his weak points I mean first of all he was still too platonist for my tastes He still believed in um Platonic like ideals.

What's the universals?

He still believed in universals which I don't have any use for. And I mean some of the stuff that he teaches it's uh like I mean his his idea of human heredity and stuff is just like you know it's it's worthless or almost worthless let's say.

So I mean he had interesting ideas. Um he's he's kind of a for me kind of a kind of an enigma paradoxical kind of a person because he freely admitted he could not live up to his own philosophy. You know he's talking about you know becoming a sage when he wasn't a sage. You know he's notoriously pushing the

old lady down the flight of stairs and

all that.

Um,

so

he wasn't really a wise philosopher. He

was a brilliant philosopher who had some

really interesting ideas.

Uh, he had some wisdom. I mean, he

wasn't a total fool either, but still, I

think I'd still put David Hume higher

than Schopenhau in Western philosophy

and possibly Kant also.

[Music]

So let's see here. Let's just move on to

Xenithoid's next question. Also a

Schopenhau question. Was Schopenhau more

of a Hindu or more of a Buddhist? And

I think possibly more of a Buddhist since his concept of will is very similar to the Buddhist concept of Chedana which is karma. So the world is just a manifestation of karma. that samsara is a manifestation of karma is more of a Buddhist idea than a Hindu one. But Schopenhau really was not really familiar with Buddhist texts or Hindu texts. I mean he he did read an early translation of the upupanads which he refers to as the uppikat.

So I mean he at least had read that. I mean sure he had read some other u early translations pioneering translations of like Indian spiritual texts but I mean

he was just getting in at the very beginning and and his resources were very limited especially since he he was fluent in several languages but Sanskrit wasn't one of them.

So it may be that Schopenhauer was more of a Buddhist but at the same time he would just sort of he considered it to be largely irrelevant. You know it's like the the essence of dharma from a shopenhower point of view is just denial of the will. You know whatever your whatever your momentum wants you to do don't do it. And that's taught you know Ajan Cha taught that kind of thing. Nee Crowley Baba taught that kind of thing. It's like you see a cup of tea, you want

to drink it, don't drink it
because you want to drink it, so don't.
And so you're kind of like starving your
habitual self-indulgence
until it withers away.
And for Schopenhau, I mean, you can be a
Christian, you can be a Hindu, you can
be a Buddhist. It's all the same. I
mean, you can be a philosopher, you can
just be wallowing in superstition. It
doesn't matter. The essence is denial of
the will.
that if you're denying your will, you
are doing the right thing from a
shopenhowering point of view. You're,
you know, it's sort of weakening the

will which is samsara.

So

yeah, I mean I think it could be argued

either way or it could be argued that

Schopenhau was just equally Hindu and

Buddhist, but I think probably he would

kind of tip the scales over towards

Buddhism a little more just because

Buddhism is less theistic

and really emphasizes, you know, karma

as the generator of samasara and that's

will with a capital W.

So I'm just going to move on to

Xenithoid's third question. Also a

Schopenhau question. He says, "Did

Schopenhau have a better understanding

of Eastern spirituality than the wave of

early 20th century philosophers of the political right such as Oswald Spangler Spangler, Julius Ivola, Renee Gwynon, etc." I don't think so because like I just said they had just started translating and studying like Indian texts when Schopenhau was writing you know Schopenhau was writing like 1830 something like that. So people like Evola had much more access to translations and information about the subject than Schopenhower did.

I mean he may have had some like insight with regard to denial of the will that maybe was deeper than like ivola or gwennonw

I don't know how to pronounce French

names renewan

um I mean like intuitively with regard

to just deep down insights he may have

had some kind of better understanding

but intellectually

I think Julius Iola would have to have

understood Buddhism better than

Schopenhau did simply because he had

access to way more information on the

subject. You know, he could read a

translation of the Majimeaya

that Schopenhau couldn't because there

was no translations of the Majimeaya

into an into like a western language at

that time.

So

yeah, but Schopenhowers definitely had a way better understanding of Eastern spirituality than like Hegel like in Hegel's uh what is it the phenomenology of spirit you know he's got like Indian religion as a kind of like pantheistic nature worship you know he didn't understand it very much at all so Schopenhauer understood Eastern spirituality probably better than any other philosopher at the time.

But still, I mean, we know way more about Buddhism than Schopenhau did simply because we have almost the entire Topitica translated into English just for starters.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Phil Leys and Philys says, "Have you ever experienced or seen in yourself anything related to mental illness or breakdown in all the countless hours of meditation, concentration, and solitude you've practiced?" Well, almost any mental illness is just an exaggeration, an extreme form, relatively extreme form of just a natural state. So yeah, I've experienced in myself num numerous things related to mental illness like hysterical symptoms like when I was meditating at Pandita Rama back 199798

I kept having like this weird feeling like my robe was sticking to my back when it wasn't. It was just like this like uh what is it? Psychossematic stuff or I've I've mentioned before I had this um I mean I'm starting to feel it now just thinking about it. It's called dispnnea. It's like an irregularity in your breathing which I looked it up in a medical diagnostic guide when I was a monk in Burma. And to my humiliation, it said it's almost always a hysterical conversion reaction, which is a kind of neurotic psychossematic symptom caused by in my case just like too much self-restraint.

So Freud wasn't always right, but I do think that he was largely correct with regard to what like neurosis and hysteria where everyone has these anim animalistic urges, human anim animalistic urges and when you restrain them. You're not making them go away. you're just pushing them down into the subconscious where they build up pressure until they have enough pressure that they percolate up to the surface in the form of neurotic symptoms.

So, I mean, when you're dedicating your life to self-observation and that sort of thing, then you see this kind of stuff more easily than most people would, at least

some of us do. Also, just depression. I mean, that's just sort of a mild case of what could be clinically significant depression or obsessivecompulsive disorder. I used to know one of the world's leading authorities on obsessivempulsive disorder. I read he'd send me books and like articles that he'd written, that kind of thing. So, I I know quite a lot about obsessivempulsive disorder and there was even a test at the end of one of his books where you can test to see if you're likely to be clinically significant. and I scored like a little higher than average with regard to

obsessive being obsessivecompulsive

but um I wasn't clinically significant

but still that would be related to

mental illness you know it's just if I

were more that way as it is it's just

like a picture hanging crooked on the

wall bugs the [__] out of me if I would

buy a used book from a used bookstore

back in the days when I would buy books

one of the first things I'd do would be

to unfold the dogeared pages you know

the corners that get bent over, you

know, just rearranging

the books on my bookshelf in just

alphabetical order or whatever, that

kind of thing. I mean, it's those are

obsessivecompulsive

symptoms, getting a song stuck in your head that you can't get rid of, that kind of thing. So, yeah, I've seen stuff related to mental illness. Um, you know, I've I've thrown a few conipions. Although whether that's throwing a coniption isn't necessarily considered mentally ill, even though it's pretty extreme in its its symptoms sometimes.

So

I guess yes, the answer would be yeah.

And I'm going to move on to Phily's next question,

which is I believe the top knot is or became a halo. The halo exists in virtually all cultures because it's a

reference to the tangible fruit of spiritual growth or whatever its equivalent is. It basically symbolizes the point where spiritual reality and the physical meet with man being the midpoint. This is what Decart was clumsily trying to get at with his ideas on the pineal gland. Thoughts?

Well,

I mean, sometimes you'll see the Buddha with a top knot and the halo. So, um I can't remember what the poly word for the halo is. You know, nimbus is is another English word for it. You know, it's supposedly when the Buddha became enlightened, he had this nimbus with all these different colors coming out. It

was a multicolored kind of a halo. Um but I don't think that's the same as the top knot. I mean it maybe it got interpreted that way like I've I've said before sometimes especially on like Thai Buddha images sometimes that top knot will just be like a flame but that's like the flame of wisdom even I mean it could be interpreted sort of it could like have a certain overlap with halos but like if it shows the Buddha giving delivering the first sermon or the Buddha sitting with with like arahant monk disciples they might all have halos but only the Buddha is going to have the top knot. So, I do think that the top

knot or the the lump on the top of the Buddha's head began with Greek statues of the Buddha that were modeled on the god Apollo who had a top knot of hair.

So,

yeah, but I mean halos are there. It's just that halos are a different thing in Buddhism. It's, you know, lights coming out of the head and not like an actual physical lump.

So, I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's third question

where he says, "Surely some things don't call me surely."

I'll start again. Some things more some things more real than others even though absolute reality is one or ineffable.

I have always felt there is a hierarchy of reality leading up to nibbana and the highest thing in that hierarchy is pure love as the mystics say and as you go lower you get other grades of less pure love and even lower you have concrete facts like the sky is blue a man cannot become a biological woman etc etc then at even lower levels you have all theories even obvious ones since they're just theories and even lower you have the grad ations of desire from more concrete desires to fleeting and confused ones down to just bare sensation.

Oo, this list is not exclusive and is

just from the top of my head, but it's roughly descriptive of the hierarchy that I feel leads to the highest or rather the complete reality thoughts. Well, I mean, getting down to bare sensation, I mean, that would be close to ultimate reality from from a Buddhist point of view. If you stop the diversification and the interpretation and labeling and all that and just get down to bare sensation, you're just you're real close to ultimate reality. But that's not really here or there, I guess. Um it is true that some Mahayana philosophers like in Mjamaka they divided up I mean you had like ultimate truth and conventional truth but then

they divided up conventional truth into like like like wholesome good conventional truth and just unh wholesome bad conventional truth. I mean they didn't use that those terms but it's like um going with the philosophy of Kant where Kant is critiquing you know how the mind works then understanding how delusion works is a kind of highlevel conventional truth I mean ultimate truth no words you know the name that can be named is not the eternal name you can't describe ultimate truth but when the top level of description is sort of describing the structure of delusion that kind of thing

then that would be a kind of right view that is still just conventional truth. So still you can have right view and wrong view within the the realm of conventional truth. Right view in the realm of ultimate truth is just seeing through the veil and it's no words can describe it.

So yeah I mean obviously there's going to be a kind of hierarchy. I mean two and two 2 plus 2 equals 5 would be down at the bottom of just like blatant falsehoods.

So

yeah, I mean you can have

like empirical truth would be you could argue within the context of samsara for

practical purposes. Empirical truth
would be higher than just theories or
opinions or just blatant falsehoods.
But ultimately all conventional truth is
worthless in in like the ultimate sense.
It's all delusion. So you can have sort
of a a mild delusion that doesn't
obstruct you from like curing yourself
of that delusion. You know this sort of
like the desire to cure yourself of the
delusion is built into the delusion
which is a kind of you know wholesome
sort of delusion. I guess
when you're just wallowing it and
completely lost that's that's much
worse.

So yeah, I would say that there are levels. I mean there is certainly so long as we're still in samsara there's certainly a real value to empirical truth which is what science is trying to get at. So I mean the power of science should not be deniable within a samsara context. Science may not help anyone get enlightened.

Then again some cases it it might but also there's the kind of empirical truth that it's it's like subjective. It's not within the realm of science. It's like like Kant was talking about just understanding the mechanics of delusion.

So that would be like a highlevel

conventional truth.

But certainly I mean um just within the realm of conventional truth, you're going to have better ones and worse ones.

I mean when everybody is like a fundamentalist Catholic like in medieval Western Europe, I mean that's a conventional truth even though some aspects of that may not have been very empirical.

So like medieval Catholicism being replaced by modern science, it gets into a higher level of truth, I guess.

But it's all just conventional truth.

And there's a good chance that

conventional science will also be
replaced as the main uh main tool for
understanding
human experience.
doesn't necessarily mean that it's going
to be completely abolished anymore than
Christianity has been completely
abolished. You know, science has pretty
much taken over in the west for
describing samsara, describing the
cosmos. But that doesn't mean that
Catholicism is now extinct.
And so if something the next step beyond
science arises, that doesn't necessarily
mean that science is going to go
extinct. Still has its place.
So I hope I answered that question

because I'm moving on to the next one.
This is from Kley and Clefy says from
the dharma point of view is obstinency
I don't think he means obstinacy. From
the dharma point of view is obstinacy
from negative action enough or should we
strive for positive actions? In other
words, by minimizing the creation of bad
karma, we create good karma.
So I think he means abstension instead
of obstinacy.
I mean they kind of they're kind of
similar abstain and obstin.
Yeah. So okay from the dharma point of
view is abstension from negative action
enough? And yes actually it is. I mean

it depends on what your goals are. For a monk, definitely abstaining from from unh wholesome actions is is the key because if you are cultivating merit as a monk, you're just making more karma for yourself that's keeping you in samsara.

So a monk is supposed to just rise above and leave behind good and evil. He should be just neutral, like the lawful neutral.

But for a lay person who isn't ready for enlightenment, they want a better rebirth. Then you you practice merit. You do meritorious deeds to get good karma.

So

from the dharma point of view, it depends on whether you are going for enlightenment in this very life or you're just trying to set yourself up for a better position next time. And if you're going for enlightenment in this very life, then you leave behind good and evil. Merit and demerit. Like I used to say in Burma to monks. Merit is for lay people. But if you are a lay person and you're not striving for enlightenment in this very life, then it may be to your advantage to do meritorious deeds so that you're going to have more good stuff happening to you as you remain in samsara. And that's

your choice to make.

So I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from RFS and RFS says, "By what means does one go deeper into practice a good book and life in general? In general, what advice do you have for a shallow westerner?"

Huh. Well, this is kind of a strange question. By what means does one go deeper into practice a good book and life in general? Well, the main thing that the main reason why westerners are shallow is because their view is so broad. You know, it's like everyone has a certain amount of mental capital, let's say. So, you've got a simple Burmese villager. They don't have a lot

of breadth to their point of view. And so, all this mental capital is just invested in this narrow range of subjects which causes their view to become deeper.

Whereas in the west, we've got so many distractions, so many things that we're attending to that we can't invest very much mental capital into each thing. And so we wind up with this superficial view of things.

So one of the best things you can do if you don't want to be so shallow is simplify your life. First, like get rid of the internet, which I mean for a lot of Westerners, even if they're devout

Buddhists, they just Yeah. Right.
because it's I mean it's just a
non-starter. So you're just kind of
stuck with sort of western shallowess
and you just have to make make the best
of it. But I mean if you want to go
deeper you have to make things a little
narrower I guess
so that I mean you're not distracted by
so many things just simplify.
So like for example I could go deeper
into a good book when I was a monk
living in a cave in Burma. I could read
books in a cave in Burma. There's no way
in hell I could read now. You know, I
could read like uh what's his name? FH
Bradley

is I've got it on the book there. I've got it on the bookshelf there. I read the entire book. The book was published in 1910. And I was the first person to read the whole thing cuz it was such an old book when I got it. The pages had to be cut apart. It was only like the first third of the pages had even been cut apart with the the book knife.

I could read that. I could read the the entire Old Testament. I could read Hegel's phenomenology of spirit when I was in a cave in Burma. There's no way in hell that I could read it now. There's too many distractions, too many other things to do.

So, I mean, if you want to go deeper into a good book, just go out into a cabin where that's the only thing you've got to read, and you're going to get into it. Unless you just it's so boring or whatever you just get distracted by going out and watching the ants running around on the ground.

So yeah, same goes for practice, same goes for life in general. You got to simplify so that you've got fewer distractions that are sapping your mental energy. You're just frittering it away with all these these different, you know, side projects and whatever.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Ruie

and Ruie says, "It is quite astounding how the mind can come up with a fully scripted narrative in a fraction of a sentence, no a fraction of a second without any intervention on the part of the observer. Furthermore, engaging in proliferative imagination seems to entail the loss of the detached observer perspective,
i.e. When one realizes one's involvement in the narrative, it is already a full force unstoppable maelstrm. Do you think nonprololiferative imagination
is a possibility at all or is it playing with fire? Non-prololiferative imagination, you'd think that

imagination would just be automatically proliferative.

So, I don't fully understand that part.

With regard to this first statement here, it is quite astounding how the mind can come up with a fully scripted narrative in a fraction of a second. Um, I don't think so. I mean, when we're talking,

um, it's just you're you're going with this momentum and you don't know what the end of the sentence is even going to be. You might have this idea that you're trying to describe in a sentence, but like you get caught up in your words. You're trying to say two different words at the same time, which I do sometimes.

Then it's it's like you have this feeling in your mind and you're trying to put it into words and you it's just sort of like this spontaneous movement in that direction that's happening moment by moment. You don't have the entire sentence already in your head before you start saying it. It's just you're formulating the sentence as you go.

So I would kind of niggle with that. See without any intervention on the part of the observer. I mean I I don't understand that at all. I mean the observer as observer is just observing. So he wouldn't really intervene but

still what we call ourselves is the one
that's coming up with the sentence
just moment by moment spontaneously like
we're dancing or something.
Like if you're a good dancer, you don't
have it have to think where your next
step is going to go. It just flows.
And that's that's the way like you know
making a sentence is. It's just kind of
a a flow going moment by moment where
you're kind of steering the the idea
with words or just applying words to
what comes next.
Uh let's see here. without any
intervention on the part of the
observer. Well, the observer is the one
I suppose presumably that's cooking up

the sentence.

I mean it's not just happening

like on its own. I mean from a Buddhist

point of view you can say it is

happening on its own like the saying of

a sentence like I'm saying sentences all

kinds of sentences but there is no real

self you know there's no soul that is

like the overseer of this much less the

generator of it so it's it's just cause

and effect you know it's just like these

conditions are resulting in this

sentence coming out

so I mean from From that point of view,

if you're just being mindful and

observing. Yeah, I've done that before.

I've I remember one time when I was in
Burma walking back and forth in in
Rangon talking to one of my supporters.
We're walking back and forth together in
the evening
and I got to this point where I'm just
like watching my mouth move. like
mindfully observing my mouth move and
like the vibrations in my vi my vocal
cords while the the monk is still just
having this conversation but I'm just
letting it happen while my main focus is
just on the movements and the vibrations
of so I mean it can happen it's just
human nature I guess nature taking its
course
so in that sense I suppose you can make

sentences without any intervention on the part of the observer but that's just like momentum like karmic momentum and cultural conditioning and and it's human nature and so forth that's that's producing the sentences there is no real self.

See furthermore engaging in proliferative imagination seems to entail the loss of the detached observer perspective.

Okay. So, proliferative imagination entails the loss of the detached observer perspective. Uh, I mean, still theoretically you could have like this

scenario going on in your mind and just detach from that and observe that mindfully. That'd be really advanced level. But I do think it's possible. I mean, you can like when you're meditating, you can observe thoughts arising and so forth.

See, as a general rule, it does take effort to keep it going,

but it's like habitual effort that seems effortless.

So, see, when one realizes one's involvement in the narrative, it is already a full force, unstoppable mastrom. I'm not exactly sure. I mean thinking

requires effort and mindfulness of

thinking it I' I've noticed like when I
was meditating at Pandramama
that all you have to do is note thinking
and it stops. You note a thought and it
stops. But music you can just keep
noting that tune and it won't stop. It's
like the part of your brain that notes
thinking may involve some of the same
parts of the brain that are required to
think. So you can't do both at the same
time. You can't think and note the
thinking simultaneously. That's to some
degree I think that's true. Whereas with
music it could be a different area of
the brain where you can note it and and
have the music playing at the same time

and they can just sort of coexist.
So, I think I may have just contradicted
myself with regard to the possibility of
observing
some kind of, you know, fantasy
narrative in your head. Just sit back
and observe it. I can't recall offhand
if I've ever done that before, although
I have, like I've said, just detached
from an entire conversation to some
degree, just watching my mouth move.
So, let's see here. I guess just let's
just get down to the question mark. This
is kind of a confusing complicated kind
of a question. Let's see. Do you think
non-prololiferative imagination is a
possibility at all? Yeah. I mean, I

don't I think it's like an oxymoron is
it's a contradiction in terms
non-prololiferative imagination. Once
you start imagining things, you're
already proliferating.
So, or is it playing with fire?
Well, I mean, trying to do the
impossible might be playing with fire,
but uh let's see.
One's involvement in the narrative is
already a full force unstoppable
mastrom.
Yeah, I'm not so sure about that.
My experience is if you're thinking and
then you note the thinking, the thinking
stops, which is very useful for a

meditator.

It it'd really suck if you just couldn't stop yourself from thinking at all.

So, I answered that about as as well as I can. It's kind of a hard one to follow.

So, I mean, if if I botched the answer, Ruie can kind of clarify and I can I can try again next time because I'm moving on to the next question. This is from Stellar Supreme, etc., etc., etc. And Stellar Supreme, etc., etc., etc. says, "Would you consider Gatit to have some blueprint of enlightenment within it?"

And gatit is like character. And I think I don't recall clearly here, but I think that when the

wisdi manga is referring to the six personality types, it's referring to the six gati, which is your your personality is emphasizes greed, hate, delusion or the opposites of greed, hate, delusion, which is like faith, let's see, faith, intellect, and I think enlightenment.

And um according to the the uh the wisi manga that I mean different different personality types do have kind of different approaches to dharma and like the aversive you know the dosa temperament supposedly has an advantage in in becoming enlightened because when you have aversion for samsara it makes

it easier to renounce it and detach from So there is that it's not really a blueprint of enlightenment but to some degree there's like a different best method of practice for different personality types like someone with like a lustful personality type than the standard method in terraada is meditation on the 32 parts of the body and people that think too much you know like too much of the intellect aspect effect of of character then mindfulness of breathing that kind of thing. People with dose of temperament you're you're good to practice meta that sort of thing. So the way you practice is different. Maybe certain advantages and

disadvantages are going to be different
but I wouldn't go so far as to call it a
blueprint of enlightenment.
Everybody's different and there's going
to be all kinds of just complications,
infinite complications that are going to
muck up any neat simple system.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question.
This is from PSA.
PSA says,
"You said during your latest Q&A, I
consider myself fortunate to have been
ordained in a Burmese tradition
rather than a Thai or Sinhali
tradition."

Could you explain why you said this?

Could you please elaborate?

Well, the main reason why I think I was fortunate to have been ordained in a Burmese tradition is that there's more freedom in a Burmese tradition, like in a Thai tradition, it's very regimented and the government pretty much controls the SA. Like I've been told that a monk, even though he's a senior monk in good standing in the SA, he's not allowed to ordain anybody without permission from the government.

So I mean the Burmese government doesn't interfere in SA politics or well politics yes but like SA affairs you know the the SA runs itself pretty much

unless it it starts protesting against the government or some such. So in Burma there was more freedom. There's more you allowed to follow your own conscience in your own understanding more easily than in a Thai tradition. And the Sinhali traditions there are some reform movements in in like the highlands of of Sri Lanka now. But for the most part, Sinhali Buddhism is probably the most corrupt

the most corrupt SA of the three big terra Buddhist countries. That's my understanding anyway.

So yeah, I think I consider myself fortunate to have been ordained in a

Burmese tradition mainly because there was more freedom to like follow my own conscience and my own understanding than there would have been in in a Thai tradition and Sri Lanka. I just I just never really was never really drawn to even going to Sri Lanka.

So I think there is a possibility that I may have been like M in a previous distant past life or something like there was a M kingdom or empire with the the Burmese city of the as its capital you know a thousand or more years ago maybe no maybe just uh several hundred years ago that it's possible something like that. So there could also be sort of like a karmic affinity with the

Burmese. And also one good thing about Burma which is also kind of true about the other two main terra Buddhist countries though is that the flora and fauna and lifestyle is really pretty similar to the flora and fauna and lifestyle of the Ganges Valley in in the Buddhist time. So you can understand like the Irawi valley and the Ganges Valley you know this naturally they're pretty similar so that you can learn things like you can understand things that are mentioned in the texts because you have like a similar environment to compare it with but that could be true in in Thailand and and Sri Lanka also so

that's not necessarily a a a good reason why I was more fortunate to be ordained in a Burmese tradition.

But I it just I just fit into a Burmese tradition fairly well, more so than a Thai tradition, which is just more regimented, more conformitybased.

Like I said in before, in Burma, the Burmese monks are very conformist. you know, they follow they I mean, they wouldn't dare not to follow along for the most part, but it wasn't made into a I mean, because it was so natural to the Burmese, they didn't nobody thought to make it into an into an official policy.

Whereas in Thailand, I mean, you got to do this, you got to wear the same kind

of robes as everybody else, for example, even if you think what everybody else is wearing is not in accordance with Vineia. Whereas in Burma, I could just make small robes in accordance with, you know, the the Pacitia rule in the Py Mocha and a lot of Burmese monks would kind of look at me sideways and think this barbarian is just crazy, but they wouldn't do anything about it. You know, I was able to just follow the rules as I understood them, for example.

And it just kind of blew their mind. I mean, it didn't really compute. they couldn't they couldn't relate to it because it's you just don't do that.

It's you know they they just didn't know how to deal with it and so they just kind of left me alone and let me do it which is good. And I'm moving on to the next question. This is from

I'm not sure about the name. It's capital O small M capital M.

And this question I do not understand at all. Um, I'm just putting it out there. He's got lion dash birthday pond. And then in parenthesis, he says, "Maybe I'm symbolizing too much." And then he says, "By my count, were it lining up? Was that the plan or just a poetic delay?"

And I don't get it. I mean, lion birthday pond. What what kind of

connection is it? What what kind of poetic delay or or or plan or or what lion birthday pond? I don't I really don't understand that question. So, I'm just going to move on to the next one from

he says, "Will frogs, birds, reptiles be part of the design, or is the pond reserved for fish only?" Well, the frogs have already found it. The frogs, I mean, you'd have to put up some kind of anti-frog barrier to keep frogs out of that pond. And it was the same at the the pond we had at the other house where in the springtime you got tadpoles also known as polywogs just you know

swimming around in there and the frogs like when it's frog mating season there's just like this deafening like frog orgy of croaking and thrumming and peeping and so forth going on from that pond which the neighbors may not like very much. I'm sorry to them. But yeah, so frogs definitely reptiles I mean reptiles don't participate in ponds very much. I mean we are going to have some big flat rocks around the edge of the pond which I hope we will be getting soon where little lizards can bask if they so choose.

Um, and birds. I mean, the main birds associated with ponds are birds you don't want associated with ponds. And

that's like herand, you know. It's like when we were living at the other house, we had this other pond. And every once in a while, this pterodactyl like blue heron would just land in our pond and eat about half the goldfish. So those kind of birds, we really don't want to participate in our pond. They might happen sometimes. I this pond is going to be deeper. So, it's going to have to be a larger heron that can stand in that water without just being up to its neck in it.

And other birds, they generally don't have much interest in ponds. I mean, they they might be attracted birds

attracted to like dragon flies or something that are also attracted to the water, that kind of thing. So, it's it's going to definitely have an influence on the ecosystem.

But frogs definitely. Yeah, there's already frogs in that pond.

I had to catch one earlier today.

So, I'm just going to move on to third question. Mosquito control built in or outsourced to the residents. Yeah, definitely. The fish will eat mosquito larve. No mosquito problems in in a pond that has fish in it because fish really like eating mosquito larve. In fact, I fed some mosquito larve. This is this is like unh wholesome action on my part. I

caught some mosquito larve and l set
them loose in my aquariums and the fish
really like mosquito larve. It's just
like caviar to a fish.
They just it's just a delightful treat
to those little fishes to go hunting
mosquito larve. It's like their their
wild instincts, you know? They're born
free again. They don't have to eat
[__] flakes.
So, let's see here. I'm just going to
move on to the next question and we
should be getting kind of close to the
bottom here,
but I'm just going to soldier through
this. Siovakad

Zidana asks, "What does mean in Tibetan Buddhism? I noticed it is used in some thirdwheel Buddhist texts and later commentaries. So, I'm curious what the later Buddhists thought of it." Well, I'm no expert on Tibetan Buddhism. I know that M is included in some Mahayana texts in especially like there was a a kind of fashion

uh during the formulation of Mahayana sutras where they would have like a mantra at the end of the sutra you know like gate gate paragate parasam gate bodhisah is like one of the most famous of these mantras and some of them contain m

uh even in Burma um

It's weird. It's like this it's like a traditional thing where you touch somebody and say and that's supposed to like if a kid comes to you crying they hurt themselves you touch them and go and it's supposed to make them feel better you know sort of like kissing it and making it better in the west. So is is known in Burma also even though it's not found in terab Buddhist texts that I'm aware of. But what does it mean? I mean what does it mean in Hinduism? I mean, Hinduism is just kind of like the sort of the cosmic hum, you know, it's the sound of reality reverberating through samsara or something. I mean,

I'm not even sure that I'm it it'd be a little bit of a challenge even to say what it means in in like the upanishads. But what does it mean in Tibetan Buddhism? I'm not sure if it means anything. It's just sort of like a holy sacred sound,

you know? was just, you know, it it just s has this sacred uplifting sound to it. And it's just

Yeah. And especially in Tibetan Buddhism, I'm not sure exactly what it means, but I do have this idea that it doesn't necessarily mean anything. It just has like this connotation of sacredness to it. It kind of helps to sanctify a statement that contains that

in the sentence especially because it's almost always some kind of spiritual statement that has m in it. Shanti, Shanti, Shanti.

But I mean, it could be something similar to the the Hindu or upanotic meaning of M, which is just it's just sort of a trying to reproduce just sort of like the the spiritual reverberation through the universe.

And I'm just going to move on to Sea of Action Cad's next question, which is kind of a technical one. He says Vazu Bandu seems to describe mindfulness in this way which seems to show how the concept was generally understood in

North India among the Sarvasti vada

Saltronica and yoga

in the Abid Dharma Kosha Basia he says

all mental recollection or smi

which is the the Sanskrit equivalent of

sati mindfulness

So I'll I'll start again here in the

abidharma abidharma kosha basia he says

all mental recollections or smi when

either concentrated samahita or

non-conentrated is the conceptualizing

activity consisting of recollecting

anushara aalpa

and then and then uh sevac continues

here and he further elaborates what he

means by recollection in his text punch

scanda and then it says what is

recollection the avoidance of inattentiveness towards a familiar object a state of mental discourse so then Siovak says you have said that this doesn't match with what the sibatana suta says especially the part about walking and knowing you're walking etc firstly most of the meditations in the suta seem like they're what terraat would consider samata practice And second, the ones that aren't like the walking and to know you're walking don't seem to be any different if you just see it as the person has his mind on walking. So it can't be somewhere else. Otherwise, their mind wouldn't be

focused on doing one thing but two at least like focusing on breath and walking. I personally don't see this as some kind of different practice than what Vazu Bandu says. Mahayana translators seem to translate this chapter as applications of mindfulness rather than foundations thoughts.

Well, with regard to that last part, Mahayana translators seem to translate this chapter of Sai Patana as applications of mindfulness rather than foundations. I agree. I think it probably does mean application of mindfulness and not foundation of mindfulness. So sad mindfulness patana is could be a contraction or si of sati

plus upatana which means application which makes more sense to me. So I agree that it's probably applications of mindfulness the four applications of mindfulness not the four foundations of mindfulness. But getting back to this question first of all I've said that this doesn't match with what the study patana suta says. Um I don't recall saying exactly that. I was saying that some um some ajons like meditation masters or instructors in especially the Thai forest tradition will and they kind of downplay sadana to the extent that like anisero calls sadana the frames of reference and in one of his books he

says that mindfulness is just remembering the object of meditation. And I mean it's kind of downplaying the whole idea of mindfulness in my opinion. So let's see even like in the study baton suta where it's talking about mindfulness of breathing that the way you do mindfulness of breathing as a mindfulness practice is not the same as doing mindfulness of breathing as a samata practice. Like in nari patanosut like when he breathes long he knows that he breathes long. When he breathes in short, he knows that he breathes in short. You know, when you breathe in deep, you know it's deep. When you breathe in shallow, you know it's

shallow. It's like you are being mindful of the qualities of it and not just keeping your mind like locked onto some object

that the mindfulness in that practice is whatever is arising, you're aware of it and and you're aware of like the qualities of it. And if your mind wanders away, you're aware of it wandering away. You don't just immediately bring it back to the subject so much as first you're mindful of the wandering and then you gently bring it back to the subject. So like they say in terraada you can do mindfulness of breathing as a samata practice or you

can do mindfulness of breathing as more of a mindfulness practice or like weasana practice and it's not exactly the same ultimately like fourth Janna is purity of mindfulness and purity of samata. So there is that they converge but still like the the more elementary practices may be considerably different. And it is weird to me that mindfulness is I mean sadi the word sadi literally means something like memory recollection and it's weird because if you're practicing mindfulness you don't have memory you like you are in the present moment you know you're not your mind isn't projecting into the future or projecting into the past unless you're

mindfully observing it project.

So it's like how did it come how did

memory come to be synonymous with just

being right here be here now in the

present moment

and sometimes it can be a recollection

if you're mindfulness of you know the

qualities of the Buddha or something

then you're not necessarily being right

here in the present moment because the

Buddha isn't right here in the present

moment supposedly

but the weirder thing to me is that in

Roman Catholicism ism in like the

contemplative

um orders of Roman Catholicism. It's the

same thing. What they're calling what
what we would call mindfulness where you
are right here right in the present
moment being as fully aware of what is
right here right now as you can.
They call it recollection which again
means memory. And then like St. John of
the cross when he's describing it he
says when you're practicing recollection
your memory is abolished
so how it is that these two different
systems came up with the same
counterintuitive
dis word for describing being right here
right now in the present moment as fully
and as fully aware as you can.
So I mean this this second description

of Vazu Bandu, what is recollection? The avoidance of inattentiveness toward a familiar object. Well, yeah, that makes sense. Especially like if you're being mindful of the the breeze on your skin, your your clothing rubbing against you, you're like blinking, breathing, swallowing your own slobber. Those are like let's see familiar objects that we are usually inattentive to. Usually we are completely unmindful of our own blinking or of our own swallowing of slobber
or of our own breathing.
So I mean that kind of emphasis of attentiveness towards a familiar object.

I mean that's be here now.

So let's see here.

This is kind of a a a strange I mean like the first the first definition he gives is is really kind of hard to follow.

All mental recollection when either concentrated or non-conentrated is the conceptualizing activity consisting of recollecting.

Yeah. I mean that's not particularly informative to me.

But when he says that mindfulness or recollection is the avoidance of inattentiveness towards a familiar object. Yeah, that's that makes perfect sense. So like a a familiar object

reaching for a doornob. Well, if you're doing it mindfully, you're aware of the the urge to start reaching for the doororknob and then like the the muscular contractions and like the the oiliness in your elbow joint, this sort of thing as you're reaching. Maybe even like the movement of air against your skin as you are reaching the coolness and hardness of the door knob when you've reached it. All that kind of stuff. That's mindfulness
is the avoidance of inattentiveness towards a familiar object or a whole bunch of familiar objects.
So let's see. I mean that's not the only

definition of mindfulness because you've got other kinds of mindfulness or recollections. Even the 32 parts of the body is considered a recollection.
Well, that is kind of the emphasis on mindfulness as a term that's used in Buddhism like Burmese Buddhism and which has spilled over into the weiposa movement in the west which is largely based on Burmese Buddhism
and it wasn't some kind of western innovation that Mingun Jettawan seat in Burma probably early 20th century just revived an interest in the Sipatan Suta or Maha Assad Patanos Suta and two of his disciples at least temporarily were Mahasiato and Tampulu

and I don't think the British had much to do with it unless maybe just the British Empire colonizing Burma helped through diffusion or osmosis or something a little bit more critical thinking a little more independent thought.

So yeah, I really have no problem with I mean mindfulness has more than one definition, but certainly one definition of mindfulness is right here where it says the avoidance of inattentiveness toward a familiar object, which includes every motion that you make every time you blink your eyes or swallow your own slobber.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question, which all of a sudden this is the last question. Boom. always takes me by surprise. Master Poe says, "What was your favorite Woody Allen movie?" And this one should be not too difficult to predict. Love and Death. Because Love and Death is like a satire or a parody of 19th century Russian novels. And I went through a long phase of reading 19th century Russian novels. I mean people that know me should know that I have a very high regard for Dostki for example and Toltoy. I like Dostki better than Toltoy. Like Gaul Czechov these guys. I mean 19th century Russia. I mean the

great some of the greatest novelists
in the world have been 19th century
Russians.
And so the Woody Allen movie, Love and
Death, is like a spoof on 19th century
Russian novels. So I mean, it was right
up my alley. I could get a lot of the
jokes that most people wouldn't get
because I mean, he's making fun of 19th
century Russian novels.
So I mean, if you're into Dosty or or
Toltoy or whatever, yeah, love and death
is the way to go.
This was back when Woody Allen was still
kind of in his slapstick stage. He got
into like more sophisticated like

comedies of errors, you know, like Annie Hall and then Hannah and her sisters and all that that I didn't appreciate nearly as much as like his his like offthe-wall just kind of almost Monty Pythonesque kind of humor earlier on. Sleeper is another good one.

I mean more people Sleeper is more accessible to people than Love and Death would be. And in order to really appreciate Love and Death, you have to be familiar with 19th century Russian novels,

but Sleeper is good.

Sleeper would be my second favorite Woody Allen movie. And that's it. We done. We done.

So, I can uh continue with my Saturday evening. Now, not that I I in any way resent this. I do enjoy doing these Q&As's, so no worries there.

And uh like I always should say at the beginning, I never do except for once. If you have any questions you think I can answer, especially with regard to early Buddhism or Terravada Buddhism or you know kind of diffusing out from that to some degree, Western philosophy, Woody Allen movies, especially the older ones,

rock and roll, politics to some degree. I mean, I'm not an authority on these things, but I do have like kind of

educated opinion on these things. And I know it's what I like.

And like and subscribe if you haven't done so already. And be happy. And now I'm going to stop recording.

Okay then I do believe we are recording.

Hail audience.

Welcome to question and answer number

158.

I am your host Ponyo Bosa and one of the

co-hosts just walked away as you can see

back there. This is my beverage

and 158 clearly is not a prime number.

So we don't even have to go there.

Ah,

so we've got the standard middle path of

questions today about this the usual

like 35 or so. So I guess we should just

probably just dive right into this and

start answering questions. So the first

question is from Gnostic Rocker

and Gnostic Rocker says, "I know you like Hume a lot. So the following is hypothetical speculation about similarities and differences in his philosophy and Buddhist philosophy. Given that David Hume was skeptical about a permanent fixed unchanging self, one can assume he'd have appreciated the Buddha's teaching on anata. But given that Hume also had a skeptical view of the absolute certainty of our understanding of cause and effect in the phenomenal sphere, what do you think he'd have make he'd have made of Padicha Samupada?

I'm paraphrasing a quote from professor AJ Ayer Ayer Aayers. Let's go with Ayer.

AJ Ayer's analysis of Hume which states quote cause and effect unquote considers Hume's view that the relation of cause and effect supplies the basis for our factual beliefs. Observation leads us to believe in connections between physical objects and events. The power and force of these connections are not observable. Only the changes in spacio tempmporal relations.

Repeated observations create a habit of the mind but are insufficient to prove a general relationship as that would require observing every instance. This inductive process of forming expectations is merely sufficient to

create the generalization that the future will resemble the past. quote again.

Okay. Yeah. David Hume, he was like a radical skeptic and even I think he's like the first philosopher that it occurred to to actually question our certainty of cause and effect. So David Hume says we never really see causation. We just see something followed by something else and just it's like this repeating pattern. And so we say something causes that something else.

You know, you see the axe coming down on the piece of wood. You don't actually see any causitive force.

You just see the axe coming down on the piece of wood and the piece of wood splits into two. In fact, Hume even takes that even to our own mental processes.

how you know we have the urge to move our arm and then our arm moves. Still we don't see the causation. We just see the urge and then the moving arm. So he actually using radical skepticism casts doubt on our certainty of cause and effect. It's just an inference.

He doesn't say that cause and effect doesn't really exist. He's just saying that we can't know that. We just have to infer it.

So with regard to Buddhism and dependent core rising,
first of all, dependent core rising isn't necessarily based on like physical cause and effect or just like let's go to Schopenhau.
Schopenhau's first philosophical work of note, his doctoral thesis when he was at the university was the four-fold root of sufficient reason. And reason here it doesn't mean logic. It just means the reason for something to happen and like cause and effect was only one of these four causes. One was mathematical I think one was like geometrical. Like for example, you've got a triangle with three equal sides necessarily. It's also

going to have three equal angles. You know, it's not any kind of causation of, you know, the the sides causing the angles to be a certain way. It's just like this logical
or rational or just it's just the way it is. If if you got a triangle that has three equal sides, it's also going to have three equal angles and vice versa. And then I think the fourth one was like psychological that a person with a certain character is going to react to the same like stimuli in the same way until his character changes.
So
I mean even if we accept Hume's

skepticism with regard to our certainty of cause and effect still when you're I mean that's not the only kind of causation
that that is possible with regard to dependent core rising. In fact, my interpretation of dependent core rising is it's not this temporal sequence of causes and effects, which is like the orthodox explanation of it in terraota. It's more of a kind of a rational thing. You know, if you've got, you know, if this exists, then that exists. If this arises, then that arises. It's not like Nana Vera famous eccentric existentialist English monk from the 1950s and60s said dependent rising

doesn't say this ceasing that arises it
means this arising that arises so for
Nyanova and a lot of other Buddhists
it's all simultaneous which wouldn't be
like this temporal cause and effect
anyway so there are serious terravada
Buddhists who don't even interpret
dependent core rising
to mean like this temporal sequence of
causes and effects. It's like like the
fire triangle like I was talking about
in the previous Q&A. You've got these
three necessary circumstances for fire.
Fire is going to be there. It's not like
well I guess in that case you could have
like a cause, but it's it's it's really

those three those three prerequisites if they're there fire is there. It's you could even argue whether or not those three those three conditions cause the fire. It's just those three conditions together at the same time are the fire. But it's more of a conditional kind of cause and effect in dependent core rising in my opinion. It's just if you assume that this exists then you also have to assume that that exists. A simple example would be if you assume that you know some object exists. You also have to assume that there is like a a ground behind that. You got figure and ground. You know you've got this that has like an outline. You know it has

limits has boundaries. And so there has
to be something else even if it's just
empty space around that. So that that
object being singled out causes
the background of it.
And it's not that you know this this can
of energy drink is causing everything
else around it. But nevertheless, this
energy drink in my hand causes there to
be like this energy drinkshaped
space that that isn't the energy drink.
if that makes any sense.
But again, Hume wasn't insisting that
there is no cause and effect. He was
just putting into question our certainty
of it. That we don't really experience

cause and effect. We just infer it. And since the Buddha, when he's talking in words, is having to use conventional truth anyway, then I don't really see that there's necessarily a conflict between the Buddha and David Hume on this point.

So,

I'm not sure how well I answered the question. Let's see what Okay, here's the actual question with the question mark at the end. What do you think Hume would have made of Dependent Core Rising? And I don't know. I mean, Hume was anti-Christian. He was uh he was one of the the main characters, one of the most important characters in what is

called the Enlightenment or the Scottish
Enlightenment, which is kind of an
ironic name because they weren't really
going for actual spiritual
enlightenment. They were trying to free
Western civilization
from
superstition, which mainly meant
Christianity,
and replace it with philosophy, which
mainly meant science and like
objectivity and empiricism and so forth.
And I noticed that I'm lagging. And I'm
not exactly sure why that is,
but I'm sure we'll we'll survive
somehow.

[Music]

So Hume was he didn't like Christianity,

but what that would have implied with

regard to his attitude to other

religions like Buddhism,

I don't know.

It may be that he would have preferred

Buddhism to Christianity like many

philosophers have,

but then again, I mean, he lived in 18th

century Scotland, so it's hard to say

what his opinion on Buddhism and

Buddhist philosophy would be.

So,

I think I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

And I hope that this lag will resolve

itself.

Make sure that at least the microphone

is working.

Yeah, it is.

Okay.

So, at least

I'm still making noises.

So, next question.

See here. Okay. Next question from

Nostic Rocker is as follows. Probably

it's far too general a question to ask,

but in your experience from all the

westerners you met in temples over the

years, what are the main motivating

factors for Westerners when they choose

to become monastics?

And I don't know if you've noticed or not, but it's really hot here in South Carolina today. Very muggy, and I'm a little bit persspiry. And so I'm going to be chugging this this beverage throughout the course of the beginning parts of this Q&A until I've chugged it all and it's gone.

Probably should have chugged one whole before I even started.

So getting back to the question though, let's see. What are the main motivating factors for Westerners when they choose to become monastics? Well, I think there's like a generational change that has occurred and is occurring. Like my generation and the generation before

me, like the hippie generation, the boomers.

I'm kind of at the the cusp between boomers and Gen X.

But like my generation and the monks before me, at least half, it seems like started off with psychedelics. you know, LSD, mushrooms, masculine, that sort of thing. And we experienced heightened levels of consciousness, altered states of consciousness that really caused us to have like a higher perspective with regard to the supposed reality of this world we're living in.

So then we started like getting interested in meditation techniques and

other ways of

um like attaining the same like

heightened consciousness without having

to take the chemicals.

Um, also it was just kind of in fashion

in earlier decades

like Rahm Doss, you know, Rahm Doss is

really the one who started me on a

spiritual path and he was like a guru to

the hippies.

So there's kind of that too. Um, also I

assume there's a lot of like cynicism

with regard to western civilization in

general where if I had been raised in a

different culture that was maybe more

spiritually oriented, I might not have

been inspired to become a monk. But

western civilization is so materialistic and so spiritually bankrupt that it wasn't really fulfilling this need that I had. And so I had to look elsewhere. You know, when I was a teenager, I've told the story before, you know, it's like when you're a kid, you just assume that adults know what's what. By the time I reached 16, it became painfully obvious that adults really don't know what's what, that they were at least as messed up as I was. So, I just went into open rebellion, got into lots of trouble. And then finally, I saw this youth counselor who gave me Rahm Doss books to read. And I mean it was clearly

superior

um sort of renunciation of the

mainstream anyway was clearly superior

to either just he who dies with the most

toys wins or just constant rebellion and

getting into trouble. So I assume there

are quite a few like that. Um, with

regard to later generations though, I

think there's an increasing number of

people who are just born into Buddhism

in the west. You know, they've got maybe

boomer or Gen X parents

who were already interested in Buddhism

and so the kids are learning an interest

in Buddhism from their own parents.

So, there's there's more of that, I

suppose. But with regard to the younger

generations of monks, I'm really not sure what the main reasons for them to become monks are. I mean, my generation and the generation before me, I had a pretty good idea, but I haven't really been talking to young monks lately, and I'm not as sure. Although, I do think that it's just dama is just entering the mainstream more and more. So a lot of them are just being exposed to these ideas and accepting them as good ideas without having to go through the rebellion and the the drug use and all that.

So that's my answer to that question.

I'm just going to move on to Gnostic

Rocker's third question. And I do hope that the sound will catch up to the the video.

We're almost there. We were like maybe less or was less than a second lag and then it went back to lagging again.

So third question. When you returned to America and wandered from city to city in the robes of an ancient aesthetic from India, I'm sure American people reacted to the attire in many different ways.

But were you ever pleasantly surprised by any overtly kind reactions that showed a generosity of the human spirit or revealed a benign side of humanity?

Well, that is like one of the main

advantages of living in like a
Democratun area is that you can walk
down the street barefoot with a toga.
And some people will actually
react positively even though they're not
Buddhist or anything just because you're
you're like nonconformist.
You know, you're questioning authority
or something. And it's just they see it
as inclusive
and enlightened and all this to be nice
to someone like that. And so, um, some
place like Bellingham, Washington, you
just get lots of smiles, you know, just
lots of friendly hellos walking down the
street, that sort of thing. The people

that disapprove of you, and of course they're there. You You might get a dirty look, just a silent scowl, but they're not going to go out of their way to insult you, except for just a few cases. I mean, I I probably received more like open contempt in dharma halls in the west than out on the city streets or in like a grocery store or something, which was really striking to me.

You know, it's like the average western Buddhist like 15 years ago in the West, you're more likely to find people who really don't like monks than you're going to find people who really don't like monks just at random walking down a city street.

So, that was kind of ironic to me.

Definitely counterintuitive.

But I mean there have been times when you know somebody would just come over and offer me something you know like um I was waiting for a friend outside a grocery store and somebody came up to me and just said he you know he asked about what I was doing and I told him and he was he just he was inspired to to go into the store and buy me like a it was like a a pint of apple juice or something and came out and offered it to me. And I mean, every every once in a while you meet somebody like that who really reacts positively. You know, it's

just like there's this latent hunger for some sort of spiritual stimuli that they're just not getting. So that when they see a monk, you know, sort of like, you know, the Buddha's fourth sign that finally inspired him to renounce the world was seeing a monk. So it does have like a positive effect on some people. I mean, especially like Thai immigrants, you know, there there was like these two ladies standing in front of a grocery store. I was just walking down the sidewalk in front of the store and up ahead I see like these two ladies just excitedly standing there holding this bag of groceries. They just they they saw me coming or something. They just

ran in, bought some stuff, and ran back
out and offered it to me. And they were
just all excited. They said they hadn't
had a chance to offer anything to monks
since they came to America.
So, I mean, there's that kind of thing.
But I think the one thing that um this
brought to mind
um when I read this question
um would be I was standing in some store
and there was this very new age young
woman. I had I had actually seen her
before and when she saw me in the store,
she immediately kicked off her sandals
and approached me barefoot, you know,
you know, like like this. And I mean,

that was like something that you'd see in Asia. And and she wasn't even Buddhist. I mean, she was new age. But my first my first year in America when I was trying to live as kind of a freerange Buddhist monk in America, at least half my supporters were new age people.

So,

u I mean really I do not like conversing much with new age people because they they they're able to believe anything. Very soft-headed people. They might have really good heart, but heart is really um their strong point, I guess. You know, it's it's new age is not really a head oriented system.

So, let's see here.

I guess I guess I answered that

question. But there is a lot of goodness

in people that does get overlooked, I

think.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from

and I am kind of have this sinking

suspicion that this entire video is

going to be lagging

just between the the video and the

audio. And I don't know what causes

that. I mean, everything's hooked up the

way it's supposed to be. Pretty sure.

check the connections on everything.

Yeah.

Well, we'll just have to see how it goes. Usually, it catches up after a while.

So, this next question is from and says, "Since we're all potentially in the proverbial block of marble, where does the karma momentum begin or come from?"

Well, this is kind of a a weird trick question. I mean, since everything is already in the block of marble, you're going to have statues that are moving in that block of marble. So, it's the the karma momentum is just what is necessary for a moving statue to exist, at least in our version of reality, our version of samsara.

So in order for anything to exist for more than a trillionth of a second, there has to be some sort of continuity. And in our case, that continuity is like the momentum of our mental states, the momentum of our karma, the momentum of the perceptions that are differentiating imaginary statues from this uncarved block of stone.

So, I guess one way of of saying it or explaining it is in order for there to be a moving statue existing in this block of marble

that it's going to have to be there's going to have to be something connecting one moment with the next, one position

with the next. And that connecting principle, at least in our version of reality, is karma.

And I don't know how well I explain that, but when you're dealing with this kind of stuff, it's really difficult to put answers into words. And there are some people who are just head oriented, unlike new age people who just insist upon having rational explanations for things. And I mean, in a way, it's it's just an exercise in futility because you're never going to understand reality by thinking about it.

You can understand certain aspects of virtual reality by thinking about it.

But the highest truth

the words I mean the the name that can
be named is not the eternal name.
So let's see here.
Where does the karma momentum begin
or come from? Well, I mean, it comes
from just the the block of marble and it
doesn't really have a beginning or an
ending, I suppose, other than just with
regard to the illusion because
ultimately it is illusory.
So, I guess I'm just going to move on
next question. This is from Stfan and
Stfan says, "I remember you mentioned
you were working on creating a self-
sustaining aquarium system.
I'm curious, have you man have you

managed to get it running successfully
and how do you see its development going
forward?
Okay. Well,
I've decided that I should feed my fish.
I was originally going to have that
aquarium back there be completely self-
sustaining in accordance with my my guru
father fish who says you don't I mean if
you've got a well setup aquarium you
should not have to feed your fish but
I've got too much biomass of fish in
there too many fish for them to exist
just on what is naturally arising in the
aquarium so I mean I could stop feeding
that aquarium I stop putting any kind of
food into that aquarium, just let it go,

and

[Music]

um it it wouldn't just completely die.

There would still be fish in there.

There'd probably be a die off of fish

down to like the carrying capacity. So,

there'd be some cherry barbs in there,

some algae eaters because you don't feed

the algae eaters anyway. And I'm not

exactly sure what else,

but probably at least half the fish in

there would die if I stopped feeding

them. On the other hand, I've got

another aquarium over over that way, and

I can't really see what I'm doing

because of the lag, but I've got this

10-gon aquarium that I was going to use as a breeding tank for for the gouramis, and then I put shrimps in there. It was just an invertebrate tank. And I probably should do uh another aquarium video for the updates on this, but at present I've got three fish in there. Three two sparkling gouramis and and a female dwarf gourami. They're there only three fish in that aquarium. And probably that 10-gon tank, I could just completely stop feeding it and all three fish would survive. That they'd be probably be fine. There would be probably a die off of snails and shrimps because those are like the two main kinds of of creatures in that 10gon tank

is ram's horn snails and neocaradina shrimp. And so probably there'd be a die off of those down to the carrying capacity of of the system.

But the the snails and the shrimp mainly can survive on just like the slippery stuff that grows in water on surfaces. the the biofilm, which is mainly like bacteria and that sort of thing, microbes.

So,

yeah, I mean, I could do it, but at present, I like to have more fish and more shrimps, so I'm feeding them, but it is relatively well balanced. I really don't have to um like do water changes

all that much. Sometimes I do just for the heck of it just to make sure, but really, it's it's a well balanced system that's going on. like back there. It looks pretty jungly right now.

It took

one the one female dwarf gourami that is now in the 10gon tank I had back there and just taking that one female fish out of the out of that aquarium and putting it in a different different aquarium noticeably has changed the ecological balance of that 32gallon tank back there. For one thing, there's lots of duckweed growing in there now and lots of hair, green hair algae that just wasn't there when the female dwarf

Gourami was in there just foraging and
getting most of her food just from from
foraging and not eating the food that I
was putting into the tank.
But I guess all this is material for an
aquarium video. So,
um, yeah, I guess the the short answer,
which it's now too late for, is that I
could stop feeding both of my aquariums,
and they would kind of have like a die
off, like a population crash of of fish
and like shrimps and snails down till
you had just a few of them that were
able to survive off the plants and the
the microbes and so forth. that that are
just living naturally in the tanks. But

I don't want to do that. I don't want to cause a population crash. So, I continue to put food into their tanks, you know, small amounts, maybe five times a week, and then just take out the extra plant stuff like like duckweed and so forth.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Maxim.

And Maxim says, "Did you meet your wife or at least know of her while still in robes?" Yeah, I knew her for years before I stopped being a monk.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from RFS.

And RFS says, "In your experience, would most monks try harder during the reigns retreat?" Well, I think it is a

tradition in Terravada Buddhism that during the reigns retreat, the three months of the reigns retreat, monks are supposed to stay in one place and do like more serious intensive practice. So, in Burma, yeah, there'd be at least, you know, five or 10% increase in serious practice during the three months of the reigns retreat. I mean, for me, it didn't really have much of an effect. you know, I was just doing what I do, you know, day after day regardless of what month it was or anything like that. But yeah, I do think that most monks do try at least a little bit harder during the reigns retreat.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Master Poe. Master Po says, "If I ever wrote an autobiography, I'd probably title it learning to laugh mostly at myself as the proverbial block of marble calls me back."

If you, Ponyobasa, decided to write an autobiography,

what title do you give it? Well, I haven't really given much thought to it since I was a monk. When I was a monk, I was thinking if I wrote an autobiography, I'd call it change and separation. And then there'd be like a a colon and then some subtitle. I guess it'd be called a subtitle, wouldn't it?

Subtitle,

but I don't know what the subtitle would be. But I was thinking as the main title of my autobiography back when I was a monk would be change and separation.

Going from the the Buddhist statement in the text that with regard to all things near and dear to us, there is change and separation.

So, my autobiography would just be like a a chronicle of the changes and separations of my life

as I just move through one situation to another.

But what I would call it now, if I wrote it now, it might have a different title

and I haven't really given it much thought. So, I mean, I'm not planning on sitting down and writing any anytime soon. I'd have to be retired. I'd have to be a member of the leisure class again before I could sit down and write much of anything at this point.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from GameFap and GameFap says, "How common are immoral monks? Have you come across them often?

I just how the Chinese head monk of the kung fu has 50 or so mistresses and is a billionaire and is now under official investigation.

This seems to be a slap in the face of

what Buddhism stands for. I mean, what

what would anybody do with 50

mistresses?

I I don't I mean that seems rather

excessive

but I mean how common are immoral

amongst it? Me it would depend on your

definition of immoral.

I mean anyone who isn't fully

enlightened is going to have at least a

little bit of immorality. I mean from

the Buddhist point of view it doesn't

take much to be immoral. You know to get

angry is immoral for example.

To get lonely is immoral. I mean, for

that matter, just being unhappy is

pretty much immoral from a Buddhist point of view. And then there's the rules. And most monks, even serious, conscientious monks, will break a rule every now and then, even if it's just by accident.

So,

how common are immoral monks? I mean, you you'd I'd have to know what you mean by immoral.

just uh

I mean having 50 or so mistresses, they wouldn't even be monks anymore. I mean, you just have one mistress. I mean, if you have sex, then you're just not a monk anymore. You're automatically excommunicated. You are parajika.

So,

yeah. I mean, it's just a hard question

to answer because I don't know where

Gamefact would draw the line between

moral and immoral.

I mean telling lies is immoral. Just

going with like the five precepts but I

mean a monk who makes confession almost

every monk who's making confession is

telling a lie.

Most confessions are like bogus

confessions

like you know the monks says you know I

I committed you know so and so offenses

of various types

and then the person that you're making

confession to says do you see them and
then and then the monk says yes I see
them but generally you don't see them at
least like in Thailand the the official
way the traditional way of making
confession is you just confess to every
single category of offense whether
you've broken any rules or not which I
mean when they say do you see them and
you say yes I see them well obviously
that's not true because you're
confessing offenses that you probably
didn't even commit like pyania offenses
nobody breaks pyania rules anymore
there's only four of them and they're
very obscure but in Thailand Thai monks
make confession they they admit they

confess to breaking pyania rules. And then they're asked, "Do you see them? Do you see your offenses? Yes, I see them." But really, they don't. And then you continue, you say, the other monk says, "Well, in future, you should restrain yourself." And then in Burma at least, the monk says, "Yes, sir. Very good, sir. I will restrain myself." When really, they're just going to go out and keep breaking the same rule. It's like if they're handling money, they're still breaking the rule because they haven't gotten rid of it.

So, I mean, if you consider that sort of like essentially saying what isn't true

deliberately,

I mean, in a way, it maybe it would pass as not lying simply because you're not really trying to deceive anybody because the monk you're making confession to probably does exactly the same thing. He knows the score,

but still just like idol chatter, that kind of thing. I mean, that's immoral. That's in violation of the the five precepts.

So, I mean, how common are immoral monks? They're extremely common, but so long as you have like a very stringent idea of Buddhist morality. But when you get to like monks that are part of Jica that are not even real monks anymore,

they're just pretending to be monks, you know, they're still wearing monks robes even though they've, you know, done something that got them excommunicated. Then

uh you know, there there's still I mean I hope it's less than 1%.

But still it's it's not really a large amount like monks that are like seducing women and so forth. I've heard more about that sort of thing in Thailand than in Burma. Partly because the Thai are more they're a more sensual kind of people than Bur the Burmese are just very Spartan, very stoic,

you know, they they really even the lay

people don't have an extremely high
regard for sensual pleasure. It seems
like
so
I mean if you consider monks that handle
money to be immoral it's against the
rules definitely you know there's in the
official story of the second council
when one of the main issues debated it
the second great council was whether
monks should be allowed to handle money
and in the story there's the monk who
was one of the people that
was insisting that monks shouldn't
handle money and he he's getting into
trouble because the other monks are
trying to punish him because they want

to handle money and all this. He he actually quotes some saying of the Buddha that I don't know if it's even in the depitica right now other than this one, you know, canonical quote of what he was saying. He was saying that monks who handle money are, you know, they're like completely delusional. They're just bound with the chains of their own greed. They're no better than animals, etc. Well, I mean, you could call that immoral. I guess if they're like wallowing in darkness and bound by the chains of their own greed and no better than animals. I mean, is that immoral? If so, all monks who handle money, which

is most of them, would be immoral.
So, GameFap really needs to uh be more precise in his questioning with regard to immoral monks, like where do you draw the line?
And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Romeo.
And Romeo says, "I realize that Buddhism prescribes emotional detachment, but I'm wondering to what extent this may be unhealthy or even inhuman. After all, isn't experiencing emotional pain in the depth that it engenders part of what makes us human and which sets us apart from AI, androids, and such? Or what differentiates a normal person from a psychopath?"

Well,

whether

practicing intensive dharma is unhealthy

or not is debatable. I mean, in some

ways it is unhealthy. Like you're I

mean, you're just living alone out in a

forest being bitten by parasites and so

forth, just enduring hunger and thirst

and heat and cold and sickness and all

that. That could be considered

unhealthy.

Um but then again spiritually it's

healthy.

So it might be physically when to some

degree even like psychologically

unhealthy at lower levels like the

emotional level or something but
spiritually it's more healthy than
wallowing in delusion like most people
are doing. But when you get to inhuman,
then certainly if you're going to be
practicing dhamma at the highest level,
you're going to be inhuman. At least
you're going to transcend your humanity
even if you don't abandon it altogether.
That being human and just kind of
wallowing in samsara, then yeah, I mean,
if if part of being human is suffering,
for example, then yeah, you that's you
want to stop being human.
which is kind of a a difficult issue for
a lot of people who like being human or
have respect for humanity.

But I mean that's just the ancient Indian approach to live in this world is not so good. So you want to get out and in order to get out of samsara you have to get out of humanity.

So,

let's see. I mean, a a monk practicing intensive dharma is not going to be the same as an android, and he's certainly not going to be a psychopath. Or if he is a psychopath, he's going to be a benevolent psychopath. You know, not all sociopaths are evil.

You know, there are some sociopaths like just really successful worldly people. I've read that there's a relatively high

percentage of like sociopaths who are surgeons, a lot of a relatively large number of sociopaths that are very successful in business, that kind of thing. And they're not necessarily going to be, you know, killing and torturing and all this kind of stuff.

But I think a sociopath is someone who really has no empathy. And like a Buddhist, like a monk who's practicing at a high level, he's certainly going to have empathy.

And I don't think an android would have empathy either. I mean, you're just kind of transcending your own boundaries so that you're kind of getting into a more of a group mind kind of a situation so

that if you hurt someone, you can feel

that you're hurting yourself

in a sense.

So, let's see here.

Did I answer the question?

Let's see. After all, isn't experiencing

emotional pain and the depth that it

engenders part of what makes us human?

Yeah, but who says being human is all

that great? I mean, that's certainly

from a Buddhist point of view, being

human really isn't all that great. To

exist in samsara is suffering. And if

you want to stop that,

then you're going to have to stop being

a human being.

So, I'm just going to move on to Romeo's next question.

which is as follows. I'm also wondering to what extent should the practice of mindfulness bleed into the experiencing of emotions that come up in everyday life. Take for example the emotion of sadness or sorrow when you as a Buddhist hear a nostalgic song that triggers a fond sentimental memory or watch a tearjerker movie with your sweetheart or just feel deep sadness for whatever reason.

Do you viscerally let yourself have a deep cry

or do you note sadness arising and let it go in a detached way

as you would during a mindfulness meditation?

Well, I mean, in a way that's kind of a false dichotomy. There's more of a spectrum involved.

Um, but it reminds me of something that Paul O said once. It's in one of his books. He said essentially I mean he's he's referring to the the mind body system.

So he says if the system wants to cry let it cry. It is not you. There is no need to get involved. If the system wants to laugh let it laugh. And so I mean you can still go through all the motions of being a human while at the

same time not really being primarily

identified at that level. You could be I

mean you could still be observing it

while it's still going on.

So

what's the actual question here? Do I

viscerally let myself have a deep cry?

No, I haven't I haven't really wept

in a long time. I think the last time I

really just cried was the day I I got

rid of my dog Genghis

cuz we were moving to a different house

and he just it just wasn't going to work

out there.

So that's been a couple years I think.

Let's see. Or do I note sadness arising

and let it go? Um

yeah. I mean, just because you're being mindful of it doesn't mean that it stops. And just kind of letting it go doesn't mean that it stops. I mean I mean once once you've got some momentum going, you know, you got like the the adrenaline or whatever it is going through your system, then you know it's your body is just going to go with it. You know, your body mind system is just going to go with that. And so you can just kind of watch while it's happening. You know there's a one aspect of your mind that's a dispassionate observer while this other part of you is yelling or crying or whatever it is.

So in a way it's kind of a it's a it's a spectrum you know it's not just robotic aurahant or you know person just completely wallowing in samsara. There is a spectrum.

So,

not that I'm saying an arroant would not really be robotic.

Yeah. I mean, it's just kind of built into me that like yesterday at work, I was having a bad day at work is just just this hectic cluster [__] going on, which is often the case. And I was just driving my forklift to go find something. And I'm just kind of just letting myself breathe and calming down. I'm away from the cluster [__] of this

trailer I'm trying to load. Just driving off, you know, to some other place to get get some freight.

And I'm just kind of kind of watching, you know, the state that my body was in, the state that my mind was in, just kind of observing it. And I mean that's really the best you can do sometimes, especially if it's not immediate. You know, it's not you're catching it as soon as it arises. It's like already been going on for, you know, x number of minutes. And then, you know, you're kind of like, all right, let's just let's just get back to the center here. Let's try and ground oursel here now. And then

you just start noticing, you know, this human unhappiness or agitation, aggravation, that kind of thing. I mean, it's it's so what if it makes you human? I mean, it's it's it's not a good situation.

So, I mean, you're better off rising above it. You're better off just detaching from it and observing it. And also, just by detaching from it and observing it, then it helps it to subside.

I mean, just because you're having a bad day doesn't mean you should wallow in a bad day because you're a member of the species homo sapiens.

That's just silly.

So, I think I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Austin. And Austin says, "How do you respond to a Hindu saying atman is eternal and absolute?" And we're still lagging. We've been going at this for 47 minutes, it seems. and it could be this entire video is just going to be lagging. I'm sorry about that. I don't know what to do. I'm not going to just start over at this point.

So, getting back to Austin's question though, I mean, for the most part, if a Hindu is saying is eternal and absolute, in most cases, I wouldn't even bother to respond. I mean, if if I see something

like that, it's going to be on the
internet anyway. I don't really hang out
with Hindus all that much.
And even if I did hang out with a Hindu,
I doubt that he's just going to look me
right in the eye and say atman is
eternal and absolute.
So
yeah, for the most part, I just wouldn't
respond. But if I were required to
respond to saying
to a Hindu saying atman is eternal and
absolute, I'd probably have to get into
you know like reifying the absolute and
how really the absolute cannot be put
into words and any kind of statement
you'll make about it is going to be

invalid. Even you know the Hindus talk about near Brahman as the absolute which means essentially ultimate reality which has no discernable qualities. So you can't really make a positive statement about it. Even to call it nearona is already making some kind of assertion. So

yeah, I guess we'd have to go down that that route. I guess you know, we'd have to first talk about how the absolute is beyond words, but because we're humans, we try to explain things in words. And so then you have to stray into like what is ultimately untrue or just invalid. And and then it just it's a matter of

convenience whether you're going to say, you know, whether the absolute exists or doesn't exist, you know, whether it has this quality or that quality. And I've got a dog staring at me trying to get my attention down there.

And so I mean yeah I mean it'll eventually just get to the point of the the issue of reifying the absolute and uh try to convey to this Hindu this theoretical Hindu that not reifying the absolute is probably more valid of an approach to the absolute you know just apehatism being apehatic just not trying to explain it in words because words won't touch it

That approach is probably wiser than

making these assertions about how

something is eternal and absolute and so

forth.

But it probably wouldn't be worth the

effort unless maybe I had some Hindu

that was just really wanting to discuss

this with me which thus far in my life

has not happened.

And so I'm going to move on to Austin's

next question

which is Buddhism holds to the idea of

the impermanence of all things but is

padicha samuupata the law of change a

constant permanency well I mean that's

just like

the Pythagorean theorem or 2 plus 2

equaling three or even just the number three or anything like that. You know, a triangle if it has three equal sides will also have three equal angles.
I mean, is that eternal? I mean, it only exists if someone's thinking about it. And so, this person will think about it in this way and then maybe tomorrow another person will be, you know, in some other part of the world thinking about it in some other way. You know, it's it's not the same thing. It's just like
I don't know how to to exist is to be perceived as Barkley used to say sas perkipi and if nobody's perceiving it then

I mean it's just doesn't exist so it's it's not really permanent and even so if you got even if there's like somebody thinking about all the time like the number three you know in all likelihood that there's always people you know 24/7 seven thinking of the number three somewhere in this world.

So that doesn't mean that three is eternal and that is it exists as some universal or platonic ideal up in heaven.

This just that you've got a particular instance of somebody thinking about three. You've got a different particular instance of somebody thinking about like

a slightly different kind of three. and

and it's there's no really underlying

essence

that's unifying all that.

So the same applies to dependent core

rising picha samop or or whatever it is

some law of physics maybe

that

I mean it's like individual cases

that are all like conveniently

classified under this general category

of dependent coarising or whatever the

general category is going to be. And the

general category isn't permanent because

that's just a mental construction.

So yeah, I would not say that dependent

core rising or padopa

is a constant permanency.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Sedarta Lohachita.

And Sedar Lohachita says, "Do you know the Aristotilian hypothesis from the pure act or actis purist in Latin developed later by philosophic Catholicism?" Well, I'm not not real familiar with it. No. But then Sedartha lohita continues here with an explanation. I think if everything in the world arises and depends on causes and conditions, is there in your view something that is completely independent of these conditions? something that is

pure in the sense of having no potentiality or change that for the Christians the act is purest it's God or the ultimate reality according to Aristotle act is what that which is fully real and is not in the process of change or development well you could say that like the absolute in Buddhism is like that you could say nibbana is like that especially or nirvana especially if you're a Mahayana Buddhist or the one mind. The Mahayana Buddhists have a number of um synonyms for the absolute. Um so yeah, I mean you could say that you know Nirvana is eternal. I mean if you're going to be putting it into words it has no potentiality or change that

kind of thing. So I mean you could say
that that Nirvana is just the absolute
like the essence of all things. It's
like the uncarved block of stone and
Samsara is all the potential conditional
virtual statues that exist in that
uncarved block of stone. But I mean
you're still wallowing in some sorrow
talking in those terms
because I mean it's just beyond that.
It's beyond conception.
So, I mean, you could say that the
absolute in Buddhism, assuming that you
consent to there even being an absolute
in Buddhism,
that it would be like that,

just kind of pure and and just
unchanging and in a way kind of the
foundation
or ultimate cause of the world.
But still Buddhists wisely
had this tradition of not reifying the
absolute. So you just get to the cliff's
edge and you got to stop.
So
on this moving on to Sedart Loha's next
question
which is along the same vein here. Both
the aristoilian actis purists and the
unmoved mover concepts in Thomas
Aquinas's philosophy as well as Buddha's
Padicha Samupata are profound and
coherent philosophical frameworks.

However, they rest on very different assumptions. The unmoved mover serves as the first cause of motion. While the actis purist describes God as pure actuality without potentiality from which our world emanates, ultimately neither framework can conclusively prove itself as the absolute truth for everyone. Given this, how can we evaluate or reconcile these different worldviews? Well, I think the Actis purist is a wiser, more sophisticated theory than the unmoved mover serving as the first cause.

From a Buddhist point of view, there is no first cause.

It's just been like an eternal illusion

based on ignorance

which has no beginning. And the

ignorance itself isn't eternal because

it's a different ignorance from one

moment to the next.

So

I mean dependent core rising picha

samada I mean that's in a way it's diff

different because picha samata is not

the absolute you know that's just what

causes you know things in samsara to

occur

but it's all within the context of

illusion or delusion ignorance

so petita samapata doesn't apply to the

absolute it only applies to this worldly

phenomenon.

So,

see, how can we evaluate or reconcile

these different world views? Well, I

mean, you're probably better off not

even bothering.

And it looks like we got still like a

two or three second lag.

Damn.

This is This is what happens when you

have technology.

I mean, back in the old days, you'd use

like a a camcorder or something and it

wouldn't lag. It was just that's the way

it was. It worked. While I'm on that

subject, 50 years ago,

onegon milk containers were better designed than they are now. Especially that thing on the top. You got to pull the thing off the top. You open a a new gallon of milk. There's like that little circular thing on top of the plastic hole.

Half the time it doesn't come off. You got to like cut it with a knife to get the thing off.

Worked better 50 years ago.

So, let's see here.

Yeah, I mean, how can we evaluate or reconcile these different world views?

Well, the unmoved mover, I don't think that's really a good theory. You you like the act as pure so long as you want

to reify the absolute, then that kind of works. And dependent core rising doesn't even apply to the absolute. That's just how some sorrow works. How the illusion works.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Phil Lees.

And Phil Leys says, "In this video, you implied that being too connected, he's referring to the previous Q&A video. In the previous Q&A video, you implied that being too connected to the internet destroys Dhhamma practice. Well, kind of. What other such concrete advice do you have for becoming Dharma oriented as a lay westerner? Well, I mean, I didn't

specifically

um like single out the internet as

destroying Dharma practice. I was just

saying simplify

that the more complexity you've got in

your world, the more your mind is going

to be like

diffused to deal with all these

different complications. Whereas if you

reduce the number of complications, you

simplify your life, then you've got more

mental capital to deal with these things

in a more wholehearted or single-minded

manner.

So, it's not just the internet. I mean,

it's it's anything. I mean, you want to

like really practice dhamma as a lay

person, then you're better off just
getting like a small apartment, not a
lot of stuff in that apartment or a
cabin out in the woods would be even
better,
and just live a simple life.
that that would be the best way to do it
or or a good way of doing it. Anyhow, I
mean different people are different.
Different people have like different
tolerances of complexity as you know
whether it's going to just completely
distract them so that they have no depth
left.
But there is a reason why like the great
philosophers are generally people that

don't have to work for a living. You know, they're like independently wealthy people. Just traditionally, you look at all the great philosophers, most of them, I mean, a few of them might be college professors, but most of them were just independently wealthy, did not have to work for a living, and so they could just sit around. And this is back before internet and all that. And so, you know, they're just sitting alone in in a room full of books and some paper and pens and that kind of thing.

But

yeah, I mean it's just too much complication is really going to just

diffuse out your mental energy. And if you want it like stronger and more centered, more focused, you've got to reduce the the distractions. And the best way of doing that is just live a very spartan simple existence.

So let's see here.

Yeah, I guess I guess that's I just pretty much repeated the same thing I said last time.

See?

Okay, I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's second question. What is your own favorite episode of all the Q&As's I've done? Well, I mean, I've done this is the 158th

Q&A and they all just kind of blend together. I mean, I really don't have a memorable one. I mean, I kind of remember one. It was around Christmas time a few years ago when we had two whippets, kind of a cream colored one, plus the the spotted one we've got now that I just had it had like a good vibe to it with like Christmas tree behind me and stuff. It was just sort of a cozy sort of happy vibe going in that one. But I mean, I've I can't really I I guess my favorite episode would be the one where I was most sort of channeling and that's I do that sometimes. It just sometimes I'm surprised by my own answers because I haven't really thought

out in advance what I'm going to say. So sometimes I'll just sort of get into this this mode where I'm I'm just kind of like almost channeling information. And so that kind of episode is generally my favorite, most satisfying to me, but there's been more than one and I can't really single out like one in particular.

And so I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's third question. So what I'm going to do

and his third question is, if you had to, how would you convince someone who is considering becoming a Zen monk to choose terraada or EBT? I assume that

means early Buddhist texts. It's not like food stamps or something. Instead of if he does not care for isolating the original words of the Buddha, assume you had to do it solely on the basis of philosophy,

solely on the basis of philosophy. Well, this is sort of like that Hindu question above. Like if I had to convince a Hindu that the atman is not like absolute and eternal I mean as a general rule I wouldn't bother and in this case I mean if someone really has their heart set on becoming a Zen monk I don't think I even want to talk them out of it which is probably why I feel atheist starts with the words if you had to. So, let's say

somebody's pointing a gun at my my sweetheart saying, "If you don't persuade this person who wants to become a Zen monk to become a terrau instead, then she's going to get it." Well, gosh. I mean
it's it's just kind of like being a nosy Karen sort of person to try and talk a person out of especially if I mean one of the implications that philies throws at me is that this person doesn't even care about what the Buddha actually taught.
So I mean if he doesn't even care what the Buddha really taught he might be better off as a Zen monk.

But again, you've got the the psycho pointing gun.

So ba pure solely on the b basis of philosophy. Well, I might start off just by pointing out that a lot of pure land stuff has infiltrated Zen Buddhism. So I might emphasize the silliness of pure land Buddhism just for starters. See if I strike any traction with that. So he maybe he doesn't care about pure land Buddhism either. He just he doesn't care if if what he's following was really taught by the historical Gorama Buddha or not. Then I mean I mean what do you say to this kind of person if if they're like considering themselves to be a Buddhist?

Um

really I mean just if you take the pure land stuff out of Zen and some of the some of the other mah Mahayana like mythology stuff out of Zen, it's really a pretty good system. You know, it's my second choice after Terravada. I was orig myself I originally was planning on becoming a Zen monk up until I realized that Terravada came closer to what the Buddha originally taught. But this hypothetical person doesn't give a [__] if the Buddha originally taught it or not.

So this is a tough question just solely on the basis of philosophy that

I think Zen in some respects might even

be better

just because

well first of all really early Buddhism

didn't really have a philosophy. So I

mean it was sort of like the atikawaga

is just telling you stay away from

philosophy. You know monk does not the

the holy man does not go by

philosophies.

So but then Terravada just kind of

ignored this sort of thing or just

redefined it. So then they started

cooking up this elaborate Abidama

philosophy which is in my opinion

inferior to the iconoclasm of Zen.

So, I'm really in a bind here. How do I

talk somebody into preferring Terravada over Zen if they don't even care what the Buddha really taught?

So yeah, I might I might start my first attempt would be just to point out like a lot of pure land elements that have gotten into Zen that um like it might be for all I know that most Zen isn't like the what you read in the the texts, you know, like the the Blue Cliff Blue Cliff records or the Mumon Khan, you know, you've got these these enigmatic monks standing around wearing black probably talking in riddles and hitting each other with sticks. You know, it's re a real Zen monastery doesn't really

resemble that very much. At least not the real Zen monastery that I spent some time at before I decided on becoming a Terra monk.

So

yeah, I mean the basis of philosophy trying just trying to show the sort of the the logical flaws in the bodhicattva concept.

So that might be my second attempt after kind of feeling out the person on the pure land elements that have infiltrated Zen Buddhism. Then I might start talking about the bodhicattva concept. You know how it's clearly a bad idea to postpone your own enlightenment indefinitely until all other beings are saved because

all other beings aren't going to be saved. I mean, there's the samsara has been around for an infinite length of time already and there's still an infinite number of suffering beings, which is a pretty good indication that there's always going to be an infinite number of suffering beings in this illusion that isn't even real.

There's always going to be an infinite number of statues in the uncarved block of marble in a virtual state or conditional state.

So that might be my second angle just to see if I strike any traction with that. And then if not, then I just have to

kind of feel him out. I'd have to question him about his own philosophical views and so forth and maybe just try and point out that like early Buddhism like the Atakawaga is superior to that. You know the name that can't be named is not the eternal name and Zen has a reputation for adopting that attitude. But the atakawaga which is early Buddhist text very early Buddhist text it's VBT not just EBT that I mean that's sort of like the the the the OG of that whole point of view. So the best of what is in Zen is already existent in terra or early poly texts. So I could use that angle also I suppose but that would not be a philosophical argument.

I just hope my sweetie doesn't get shot

because

this situation is is really a

problematic one.

I'm just going to move on to the next

question, I guess. Just let him be a Zen

monk. I mean, that's

I'll just try and rescue my woman. Just

wrestle the gun out of his hands or

something and just let the guy be a Zen

monk for all I care.

So the next question is from the

protoseud

and the protose pseudomonk has dispensed

with uh headings for his questions in

this particular episode but he's he has

still persisted in in essay questions.

So the protose pseudo monk's first

question is you say there are no

guarantees for enlightenment in

Buddhism. What about in that suta

sipatana I think doesn't it say that if

one practices diligently

one is guaranteed enlightenment and then

he has the quote here

let alone seven years one year 7 months

half a month if practiced in this way

for seven days one or two fruits may be

expected either arahantship here or now

here and now or the state of

non-returning

I interpret that as an exclusive or

enlightenment or enlightenment

because nibbana doesn't have a cause and there are no guarantees then why follow the strict austere terra path and not follow the tantric path instead I don't understand your heretical interpretation of attaining nibbana as through the grace of god it's a bit discouraging well becoming a non- returnturner in this suta in the sipatana suta also So the the mahasari patanos suta I mean being a non- returnturner is not the same as enlightenment. It's just like you're either going to become enlightened or you're going to become very close to enlightenment.

So I mean it's it reminds me of what Jay

Krishna Murdy used to say where I mean you can open the window but you can't cause the breeze to blow in. You know sort of like becoming enlightened. I mean, the breeze blowing in would be like liberating insight or something or, you know, essentially enlightenment. But obviously, the breeze isn't going to blow in if the window isn't open. So, at least you have to make yourself receptive or prepare yourself for enlightenment even though you can't make yourself be enlightened because that's just more karma. Karma leads to more karma.

that enlightenment cannot be the cause of it cannot be the the effect of a

cause because then it would be
impermanent and conducive to suffering.
So it is a paradox and when you're
getting when you get to the absolute
it's always going to be paradoxical.
Infinity is I mean there's paradox is
always lurking in the shadows whenever
you start dealing with infinity.
So this question here, what why follow
the strict austere terraota path and not
follow the tandric path instead? Well,
the the strict austere terraata path may
be more conducive get to getting that
window open and making yourself like
receptive to the possibility of
enlightenment.

like the tantric path. You might just be
making more and more bad karma for
yourself, just muddying your own waters,
so to speak, making complications for
yourself by thinking that you're being
tantric when really you're just
wallowing in samsara.
Selfdeception, I am sure, is very common
among tandric practitioners.
Whereas in the strict auster terra path,
I mean, still you can delude yourself.
You can just have this egoistic pride in
how shabby you are, that kind of thing.
I mean, there's always stumbling blocks
and obstructions and so forth, mainly
self-imposed,
but it seems like the strict austere

terraota path is just more
straightforward in getting that window
open than the taric path, for example.
You can't make the wind blow in, but at
least you could open the window. And
it's not going to blow in unless that
window is open.
So following Saudi Batana strictly for 7
days or more, I mean that opens the
window,
but it cannot cause the wind to blow the
wind to blow in or the breeze to blow
in.
And it's just it's like this paradox.
Mahayana Buddhists play up the paradox
um just because they like to play up the

idea that you can't really understand
the highest truth by thinking about it.
In Terraana they they sort of at first
just ignored the problem. You know it's
just more problems that are just going
to cause more just wallowing in like
cerebral samsara.
and then they uh just kind of backed
away from it. Even though I don't think
Terravada I mean it has to admit that
you can't just force yourself to become
enlightened. You cannot make yourself be
enlightened.
But
um as a general rule in in traditional
orthodox terraovvada they just kind of
sidestep that that particular issue. it

still happens and so they couldn't really think of a good intellectual like plausible explanation for it. So they probably wisely just left it alone. And I guess I'll just move on. Next question here also from the protose monk who used to call himself cool whip.

He says, "I find myself in a paradox. I am seeking conditions with the hope of seeking the unconditioned. Can you please advise how must one work with conditions i.e. the wise relationship to them while pursuing nibbana? How is the paradox resolved? We inhabit this conditional reality. Monkhood with the support of lay people is the closest

exception to independence from conditions. The rest of us must navigate this messy conventional reality. I have about two years left till I can even begin the ordination process. Sona, novice, etc. Until then, careful consideration of conditions must be made. Seeing Nibana in this state seems impossible. For instance, if I saw the unconditioned now, my karma is such that I still couldn't escape my conditions unless I died. Mindfulness isn't enough to escape the paradox. Like imagine you became fully enlightened as a lay person with no monasteries nearby. Suddenly you would need money to buy a flight and get a visa to find a more suitable form.

Many subsequent moments after attaining Nibbana. The unconditioned still needs conditions to continue in the unconditioned. Nibbana has no place in conditioned lay life.

Well, I mean they're not mutually exclusive.

like reality and illusion. You know, Nibbana and Samsara. And again, the Mahayana Buddhists play this up. They talk about a lot more than the Terraadins do. I mean, the Terraodans just think they're they're just qualitatively different

that some Sams Sara and Nibbana are just qualitatively different even though

strangely the Abidama scholars place
them at the same level of reality.
But it's like the the uncarved block of
stone is always there so long as you got
the so long as you're dealing with these
virtual statues that are inside the
uncarved block of stone. So Nirvana and
Samsara are simultaneous.
You know they occur if you can say the
nirvana occurs the same place the same
time simultaneous.
So it's just a matter of of like
perspective. An enlightened person
living on samsara, they look around,
they see some they see nirvana.
I mean
I mean I'm not exactly sure how to

explain this, but the two are not mutually exclusive.

Like you're not eliminating conditions, you're just transcending them. Like you start realizing the the existence of the uncarved block of marble. That doesn't mean that every single possible statue or just one statue of this person that's that's in question just disappears. It stops existing. It's still going to be there.

All possible statues are going to be inside that block of marble.

And so once you stop identifying with those statues, that's fine. Still, it's like it may be that the perceptions or

karma of the people around you are going to kind of help to maintain that physical body that that you used to identify with.

Man, there's there's some tough questions here. Or maybe it's just my mental state in my persspiry, muggy South Carolina summer state that's uh making answering questions a little more difficult tonight.

So

yeah, I mean the conditioned and the unconditioned, they're not mutually exclusive and they're both simultaneous and it's just a matter of your perspective.

Let's see here.

How is the paradox resolved? No, there's there's no resolution. Let's see. I mean, you can live in a cell which simplifies

simplifies samsara, makes it easier not to be distracted by it. I mean, makes it easier to see through it. But once you're fully enlightened, you're going to see through it. I mean, there's no falling back. That was one of the first arguments. I think some of the Mahayana chroniclers actually had the second council be based on this argument rather than on vineia matters like the terraodins say is that there were some philosophers who were saying that you

could be after you become enlightened

you can like backslide and become

unenlightened again terraod say no and

some of the earliest texts you know one

who has become such does not fall back

you know that's that's like in the

atakawaga

so I mean once Once you've become fully

enlightened,

then it's like zen in the marketplace

and there's no worries. I mean, there's

no problem.

So, golly.

Yeah. I think largely this is a sort of

a an artificial problem.

But I mean there's always going to be a

paradox so long as you're using a like a

perceiving mind trying to deal with infinity and infinity cannot be perceived. You can have this idea of infinity but that idea will not itself be infinite

except for like in the the Blakeian sense of infinity in a grain of sand or whatever eternity in an hour.

Yeah. The hopes of seeking the unconditioned. I mean the you're you're wallowing in I mean you're you're pervaded by the unconditioned at this very moment. How far away is the unconditioned? The unconditioned is right here right now always.

So

we inhabit this uncondition we inhabit
this conditioned reality which isn't
ultimately real.
See,
monkhood with the support of lay people
is the closest exception to independence
from conditions. Well, maybe. I mean,
like being in a sensory deprivation
booth
of some sort might come a little closer.
Prison cell even. Maybe the rest of us
must navigate this messy conventional
reality. Yeah. Well, I mean, even for
monks, even for monks, samsara is still
samsara.
See,
let's see. I saw the end condition. Now,

my karma is such that I still couldn't
escape my conditions
unless I died. Well, you don't know
that.
I mean, if you saw the unconditioned to
the point of becoming enlightened, then
I mean, you could be in the middle of a
carnival. You could be on a roller
coaster ride or something and still, I
mean, it wouldn't make you any less
enlightened.
So
like I like imagine you become fully
enlightened as a lay person
with no monasteries nearby. Suddenly you
would need money to buy a flight and get

a visa to find a more suitable form. Not necessarily at all. I mean according to Terravada Orthodox Terravada if you become enlightened and you're not a monk yet you've got like 24 to 48 hours to be ordained or you're going to die.

But I personally doubt it. I do not personally think that you absolutely have to be some kind of monastic renuncient after you are enlightened.

It might help you to become enlightened, but after you become enlightened, it's it's largely irrelevant. It seems to me, I mean, the purpose of becoming a monk is to become enlightened, not to maintain enlightenment somehow.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Yugu.
And Yugo says, and we're still lagging, which is not good. Yugoo says, "I have read the first two books from the book of the new son. I don't get it. What makes it that special in your mind?"
Well, I mean, the book of the new son, I do consider it to be one of the greatest literary fictional works in American literature.
And partly it's because of the scope of it. I mean he deals with like just about the entire human condition. Like I've there have been statements for over a hundred years I'm sure that Dostki's the brothers Karam Mazov just all questions

concerning the human condition are contained in that one book. But I think the book of the new son even has a greater scope than like the brothers karma or even Moby Dick that it's just all over you know it's just everything and also I mean it's just the whole setting of it is the earth is dying I mean this is hundreds of millions of years in the future
you know after the human race has colonized thousands of other worlds and the earth itself is just sort of burned out. You know, it's like the like the the center of human like civilization or whatever is is now not even on the earth anymore. Just humanity has largely left

it behind partly just because it's run out of it's run out of resources and so forth. So I mean just sort of a contemplation of the death of the earth the you know the dying of the world is also a kind of profound element of the story but it's a very complicated story and it's you know some things that happen at the end are like um foreshadowed towards the beginning like the the weird dream that that Searian has when he's sleeping on the bed with with uh what's his name? Gosh, can't remember his name now. The the giant scientist, the the giant sociopathic scientist.

So, let's see here.

And it's just well written. That's another another aspect of it. But it was just sort of such a tour to force with regard to the imagination. you know, it's just this whole different world that is is taking place. And so, yeah, I mean, it's just like a a really good exercise of imagination. It's good writing and it's dealing with all these different ideas that I don't know, it just makes it like practically scripture in my opinion. I think that the book of the new son by Gene Wolf is has more profoundity in it than I mean certainly than the Old Testament or the Quran for that matter.

So let's see here.

I guess I guess that's good enough.

And Yugu did ask four questions here.

Although one of the questions is so

easily answered that I'll let it slide

this time and his name will just go on

like a provisional list of possible

additions to the actual list of people

that ask too many questions. So you go

the second question is what is your

opinion on Cervantes's Doniote? And I

did read Donkeote in my 20s and I read a

lot of it while working on fishing boats

like in between halls and the whole boat

is like rocking back and forth. It's

messing up like your inner ear and

everything and and so I'm not sure how deeply it sunk in when I read Don Kiote. Um I like Don Kiote. I mean, the character

I really, you know, you can't help but kind of feel sorry for him, sympathize with him. Um,

I mean, some some of it's awful. Like there's that story that's told. I don't even remember who tells the story, but I do remember in in Doniote, there's this one story of this man who has this beautiful wife who adores him and is completely faithful to him, but then he decides he's going to test her. And so he pays some friend of his to just do his utmost to seduce this guy's wife,

you know, his own wife. And the and she's resisting and resisting and resisting. But of course, she's human. So finally, you know, after lots and lots of effort, paid for by her own husband, his friend finally succeeds in seducing her. And then it's like the hammer comes down on her. And you know, I don't remember if he kills her or what, but I mean, it's it's really just a stupid awful story, but what do you expect from like late Renaissance Spain?

I'm not exactly sure when Don Cote was written. I assume it'd be like 16th or 17th century Spain.

So, yeah. I mean,

Doniote, he was um like Dostki read about Doniote. It's like when Dos Dossi wrote his novel, The Idiot, he really wanted to portray like a genuinely Christlike good person. And in one of his letters that I read an excerpt from, he's talking about how there's really not much of that that you can find in Western fiction. like Don Cote. He was one of the the best examples of a a good person. Although at the same time he was like delusional, you know, he was just sort of kind of got unhinged from reading too many um like books on chivalry, you know, romantic novels about chivalry and so forth. And also

another example that

um Doski gives is uh Pwick and the Pwick

papers which is a

sort of a what do you call it episodic

sort of novel pickaresque

novel by uh

Charles Dickens.

So I mean Doniote is definitely a

sympathetic character. You feel sorry

for him.

Um, and he's got a lot of goodness in

him, but I really don't have much of an

opinion on him. Partly because I read

the the novel a very long time ago,

never watched any movie versions to

refresh my memory. And I did read it

while working on a fishing boat where there was all these distractions and so forth going on. I didn't really get very deep into the novel. And so I'm just going to move on to Yugu's third question, which could qualify as a transgressional question, but it's so short that I guess I'll let it slide this time, is have you read Arasmus Rotterdam in Praise of Folly? Opinion if yes. When I was taking a a western civ class in college, I read excerpts from In Praise of Folly and that was it. So yeah, and I I forget everything in it.

I just remember that I read like excerpts from it. So yeah, I have read

part of it and uh I've forgotten what I read and so I have no opinion on the matter. And this is sort of the one of four questions anyway. So I'm just moving on to Yugahoo's fourth question. He says, "I'm deeply sorry about this transgression,
but lately I wake up in the middle of the night filled with fear and dread about dying. I note it and go back to sleep. My question is why is that happening?" Well, I mean, this is all I know about the situation. So, exactly why that is happening? I mean, what events are going on in your life that might be causing this to happen? I have

no clue. I mean, the fear and dread about dying, that's just animal instinct. So, there's something that's causing you to feel, you know, like insecure about your own security. So, that you know, something is, you know, somehow you have this feeling that something big can happen that you are sort of at a subconscious level are equating with death. And then it's like your the animal instinct, the animal survival instinct kicks in and there's this fear and dread about it. But what that actually is happening,
I mean, I have no clue because this is all I know about the situation.
So you wake up in the middle of the

night filled with fear and dread about dying. Well, that's just animal instinct right there. And whether it's actual literal dying or just some kind of major change, like in the tarot deck, tarot cards, the death card really isn't as bad of a card as people think it is. I mean, it's nowhere near the worst card. It's like the tower, I think, is the worst card in the deck. Not the death card. Death card just means some sort of major change, like the major ending of something.

So even that can inspire some kind of insecurity which can then cause you to jerk awake in the middle of the night

with uh fear and dread. But the actual

fear and dread is it's like an animal

survival instinct

cuz we humans

are animals.

But I mean the actual causes I mean I

have no clue.

So I'm just going to move on to xenoid's

next question. No, this is Xenoid's

first question. Excuse me. Now, I'm just

going to move on to Xenoid's first

question. How do Buddhist funerals work?

I heard Ajan Punadamo mentioned that in

Buddhist funeral services there is more

focus on reminding the living that they

will die too someday as opposed to

simple mourning. Can you elaborate on

this? Yeah, like a Buddhist funeral doesn't work the way a Christian funeral does. Christian funeral is, you know, you've got the person imbalmed wearing like a suit in an open casket. They look better than they did when they were alive. And then you have people giving eulogies, which a lot of the time is just very one-sided, not particularly realistic accounts of what this person was like, but how what a wonderful, glorious person they were, whether they really were that way or not. I mean really I mean if you're you know somebody close to you dies you love them you know you're going to remember the

best stuff and not talk about anything
but the best stuff. It makes kind of
sense I guess but in a Bu Buddhist
funeral I've only attended two that I
can remember. No wait three.
Um two were for monks and one was for
some Chinese Burmese person in America
that I didn't know. I just the monks got
invited to attend this funeral so I
went. Um but my teacher Poku and also my
friend uh Unandia I I attended their
funerals and cremations and really it's
the monks who are there one monk in
particular will give a sermon on
impermanence
you know it's all impermanent and then
like if you got more than that you have

monks that might be chanting about
impermanence or just chanting protection
chants that kind of thing and
often there's um like a cremation
afterwards and it was kind of surprising
to me that
um a lot of people would leave before
the cremation even starts. It seems like
that would be like one of the main
things of the funeral is the cremation.
But a lot of people just don't want to
see that kind of thing. They just make
offerings to the monks and you know pay
their last respects you know because
they are human. I mean, they're not just
completely Buddhist and just, oh, it's

all impermanent and I'm going to die too someday. It's like, you know, they want to say goodbye to their their friend or, you know, this venerable monk or whatever, pay their respects one last time in his presence or at least in the presence of his physical body.

But yeah, I mean, the whole theme of a Buddhist funeral is impermanence. You know, it happens to all of us. It's his turn this time. Who knows whose turn it's going to be next?

Just keep that in mind because that's one of the great protectors.

So

let's see. Did I answer the question?

Can I elaborate? Yeah, I did elaborate a

little bit. Yeah, I mean you don't have eulogies really. It's just the monk gives a speech or whoever does this mainly just on Buddhist impermanence or the Buddhist idea of impermanence.
And the monks will be chanting certain verses about impermanence. There's enough monks together to do that. And then you have the cremation and then everybody goes home.
So yeah, I think I elaborated. So I'm going to move on to Xenithoid's next question. Did you go to Ajan Cha's funeral? I've heard that somewhere around a million people attended. Now I didn't hear about Ajan Cha dying. I was

probably in Burma at the time.
And Burmese Buddhist lay people
generally are not keeping track of
what's going on with Thai aons. A lot of
Burmese lay people just think Thai
Thailand is Mahayana Buddhist. They
don't they they have no clue.
So yeah, I did not go to Ajan Cha's
funeral.
So let's just move on to Ruie here. Did
you keep a Buddha Rupa during your
anchorite Burma days? And the only
Buddha statue I have I owned when I was
a monk is right up there on the I can't
really I can't really uh let's see see
if I can do this
right. No, this is not easy because of

the lag. I think it's right around here.
Right there. That little statue. It was
uh I was living in a cave in Burma and
some lay person offered it to me. I went
into the village for alms one day and
somebody just handed me this little
marble statue and it's in the Janna
mudra which is my favorite um Buddha
mudra you know it's like the hand
positions different Buddhas will have
different positions in in Terravada
there are four main mudras
that are symbolic of you know four of
the most important moments in in the
Buddha's life the Janna mudra where his
hands is like like this you He's just

like sitting in meditation. It's Janna means meditation. He's in meditation pose. And that's symbolic of like the night of his enlightenment. And then you've got the the bumi pasa mudra, which is the most common mudra in Burma, which is ironic, where he's got one hand in his lap like this, and the other hand is reaching down and and touching the earth. And technically speaking, he wasn't even the Buddha yet. That was the eve of his enlightenment where Mara is is challenging his right to sit there and he he calls upon the earth as his witness that he has the right to sit there under that bodhic tree and he wasn't even enlightened yet which is

weird that that would be the mudra that is favored in Burma. Then you've got the the mudra where the Buddha is going like this, which is not so common partly just because I assume it's hard to carve. And that's symbolic of the Buddha giving his first sermon. You know, he's he's counting off on his fingers the four noble truths. And then then you've got the uh the part in Nirvana Mudra where he's lying on his right side. When you see the Buddha lying down on his right side, you know, full length with his toes all lined up, then that is symbolic of his death.

That's the pari nirvana mudra. So that's

dying Buddha there. Um, but yeah, this this one little marble statue that is on the bookshelf right behind me. I got that when I was living in living in a cave in Burma and I just walked for alms one day and somebody handed it to me because I mean it was in the Janna Mudra. They knew that I like the Janna Mudra. I mentioned to lay people that that's my favorite like posture or hand position for a Buddha statue. Yeah, I really didn't like the boommy pasa where he's touching the ground because he's not even the Buddha yet.

So yeah, that was the only time I I got a Buddha statue when I was a monk. Oh wait, no, actually I had another one

very briefly, but I got rid of it. It was just a tiny little one like this carved out of some kind of stone. But for the most part, I mean, I didn't ask for the one that I the first one the main one that I had. It was just given to me, which is fine and I still have it. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Robert. Robert says, "Do you have any opinions on George Barkley and his idealist philosophy or rather his immaterialist philosophy?" I think that's what he called it. Um, George Barkley. Well, I mean, George Barkley, I mean, I've I've discussed all of this before in in

previous videos that George Barkley
pretty much just shot his entire wad on
this one one philosophical point
that you cannot really know or prove the
existence of physical matter.
That I mean, that was his contribution
to Western philosophy. this one idea
that he just hammered away at.
So
I mean I agree with that. I mean you you
cannot prove the existence of physical
matter. You can infer it. You know, it's
definitely a very convenient working
hypothesis,
but I mean, he had his influence on like
the French philosopher Malibbrange who
had his influence on David Hume who was

skeptical of the existence of physical matter who then influenced Emanuel Kant. Emanuel Kant said that reading Hume is what awoke him from his dogmatic slumbers. And then Emanuel Kant inspired the entire German idealist philosophical movement with like Hegel and so forth and Schopenhau who just dismissed the idea of physical matter.

So he definitely had a significant effect on Buddhist or on western philosophy.

But I mean when you get into like how he describes how it works, how all that exists are minds and perceptions and then you've got this one central mind

that is coordinating the perceptions of all the other minds and that central mind is God. So that when you see an apple on the table, you're not really seeing a physical apple on a physical table. It's just that God is implanting into your mind the semblance of an apple on a table. It's like he's coordinating all of everybody's dreams to to be like harmonious with each other so we can all seemingly be interacting in this one like objective universe when really it's just God is implanting these perceptions in everybody's mind as though they're participating in this physical phenomenal universe. And I really don't believe that. I can't prove that he's

wrong, but I'd rather doubt that you've got this central scrutinizing mind that is coordinating the perceptions of everybody else.

So, I do bring up Barclay a lot though, just because there are a lot of people who just assume that physical matter obviously exists. You know, they just accept it. You know, it's just that's just the way it is. They think that they know that it physically exists. I mean, most people do. Dogs and chickens are the same. They just assume physical matter exists.

So, George Barkley was good for challenging that one point of view. And

he's got two books on it. One is the three dialogues, and I can't remember what the the other one is, but they're worth reading if you if you really want to get into that.

And so I'm just going to move on to Robert's second question.

He says based on a question in previous Q&A.

He says by gladdening the mind I mean I meant becoming satisfied with how things are right now.

Then when a thought of craving or clinging arises, one drops it and returns to being satisfied right now and sustaining the state of satisfaction.

Right effort. And if py arises, enjoy

the pey. And I think we're not I think we're not lagging right now. That's nice. Joy is good and equinimity is also good. The idea is just that we are not victims of the world. We can be okay with how things are. I.e. everything is already okay. Nothing to fix, nowhere to go. By everything is okay, I don't mean dooka denial. It's saying as things are right now, I cannot fix the world. Things are already okay as they are. We can be safe, secure and comfortable right now. Nothing has to change in the world in order for me to be satisfied. I can already be satisfied. Given this, do you still think it is not Dharma

practice as outlined in early Buddhism? I think the emphasis would be somewhat different.

Again, joy is good and equinimity is also good. But I mean ultimately equinimity isn't good. Equinimity is neutral. It's neither good nor bad. And that's really what like the early Buddhist point of view was going for is neutrality. Not I mean certainly not negativity but not positivity either. I mean because positive joy has an opposite. I mean it's all going to balance out in the long run. I mean that's not really not the Buddhist explanation for that's more of a Dowist explanation. But that's the way it is

really. I mean you can't just have a coin with one side. You can't have a coin with one side being heads and no other side. You have positive, you're going to have negative. It's closest Orthodox tier comes to that idea is the locama. You know, the ways of the world where there's these pairs of opposites that are always going to be balancing out.

So,

so if PT arises, enjoy the PT. Now, if PT arises, you just accept that. Be mindful of it. Do not wallow in it. Do not get attached to it. Because when you enjoy things, that that is conducive to

being attached to those things and wanting more of them and being unhappy when they don't happen and so on and so forth.

But I am glad that finally after over an hour and a half, we're not lagging anymore.

See here.

So it's like everything is already o it's it's really not Buddhist language here. I mean it's it's very similar. I think there are some slight differences in in like emphasis and also you do not want to be accentuating the positive.

Whatever occurs accept it with mindfulness and as neutral of a mindfulness as you can manage.

But again you should be able to accept whatever happens. So it's it's you know there's a lot of this in the text. I mean if you're don't have any food you're okay with that. If you're just sweltering hot, drenched in sweat, you're okay with that. If you're freezing cold and shivering, you're okay with that. If you're sick, you're okay with that. You accept whatever it is. You're not fighting against the way things are.

I mean, that's that's dooka. Not accepting the way things are is dooka. And you don't want dooka.

I mean, you don't ne necessarily want to

be overjoyed either,

but just being okay with whatever

happens. Yeah, that's definitely like

early Buddhist yoga.

I mean, that's one reason why monks

would be wandering alone out in forests

and so forth, just expose themselves to

all this stuff that most people can't

tolerate, but they learn to be okay with

it.

in order to be okay with anything.

Whatever life throws at you, you accept

it with equinimity.

So yeah, I mean to that extent this

explanation

of dharma given by Robert would be fine.

It's just any kind of positivity.

I mean you don't want positivity any more than you want negativity. You want neutrality.

So, I mean, everything's fine. You you can just accept it. I mean, that's that's okay. But if you if you're like liking it, you know, you're like rejoicing in it, then you're you're you're like veering away from the middle path of neutrality.

Okay. Satisfied. That's it would it would depend on the actual meaning of satisfied or satisfaction.

But satisfied songs, I mean, it's just you're okay with it, you know, no struggles, no resistance, no friction,

that's good. But if it becomes like a positive attraction, it's not good. Or like satisfied in the sense of just this glow of of like well-being. So long as it's positive and not neutral, then you've you've veered off the middle path of of like neutral acceptance.

Which is one reason why in terara Buddhism of the four Brahma which is meta, karuna, muda and upka only upka or equinimity can get you to fourth janna which traditionally at least in some traditions in early terravada was like the jumping off point to enlightenment.

So, all right. I'm just going to move on to

Robert's next question, which is, "Your metaphysical views have been hard for me to place. Your reference, you reference the brain in regards to human action as well as evolution. However, ultimately, samsaric reality is an illusion. Yeah. belief in certain things like rebirth and comma requires at least some basic metaphysics. However, it seems as though you don't want to make any definite claims about reality as ultimate reality is beyond words and the intellect generally. Do you think you could maybe give a rough summary of your metaphysical views and how they tie in together? Um gosh.

Oh, I'm lagging again. Damn. At least we

were not lagging for a few minutes.

Um, at the end of my cave journal.

Gosh, I I forgot all about this. Just a

minute. I'm doing How you guys doing?

Where is it? Right here.

Donald Trump fell to the floor.

I remember when I was living in a cave,

I was keeping a journal and I just I had

never done it before,

but I I just wrote down like a synopsis

of my metaphysical views just as a way

of filling in the last pages before

moving on to the next volume of the

journal. And unfortunately,

let's see,

just bear with me here.

Yeah.

Well, never mind. I won't I won't try

and find it because it would involve me

trying to make sense out of this um

journal that was soaking in a flood for

20 it was like at least 24 hours and the

the ink is all smeared and everything.

And this dog wants to say hello. So

there she is. She's saying hello. And

come on, wave. There you go. She's a

good dog. She's a sociopath, but still

good. Okay,

there's another one, but I won't I won't

lift her up because she's too heavy.

So, let's see here.

Oh, after that five minute,

what do you call it? Five minute red herring wild goose chase.

I suppose I should try to give a rough summary of my metaphysical views. Well, I mean, ultimately, you've got I mean, the uncarved block of marble.

I mean, I' I talk about that all the time. The uncarved block is like the absolute, the Dao, whatever you want to call that. But you don't want to reify it. I mean, you you kind of specify that this is just a convenient way of talking.

But, I mean, it's it's mysticism essentially mysticism that you want to know reality, you have to penetrate through perception.

You have to transcend or penetrate
perception in order to understand the
highest truth which you can say is
eternal and unchanging infinite
you know infinite formless consciousness
or whatever you want to say although
it's all going to fall short
and then the rest of it this the
phenomenal universe is caused by
dependent core rising which cause an
infinite number of virtual statues to
appear real.
But I mean, which would include like
evolution and brains and DNA and all
this. I mean, that is part of our
reality. I'm sure that there are an

infinite number of other versions of

Samsara that have

no evolution, no DNA, that kind of

thing, no brains.

So

golly,

I mean I don't I really I'm I'm talking

about my metaphysical views all the

time. And if Robert is having a

difficulty in pinpointing what kind of

label to give to my metaphysical views,

then maybe that's a good thing

because like in the articaga, I mean,

you shouldn't be having philosophical

views anyway. You should certainly

shouldn't be attaching to them,

shouldn't be identifying with them,

anything like that. You shouldn't be
emotionally invested in them.
But golly, I mean, I'm certainly not a
materialist. So, you got that. I am a
mystic. I do consider rational
rationalism to be a a good approach
within the context of samsara, but it's
not going to get you beyond samsara
unless you use it in this ruthless
like self-attacking mode like majamica
does
which just destroys itself really
leaving emptiness behind.
Let's see.
Yeah, I mean I really don't bother
trying to categorize my own point of

view other than not a materialist and
certainly more mystical than
rationalistic. I mean empiricism is like
the best approach to take within the the
realm of illusion. You know the samsaric
phenomenal world. Empiricism is about
your best bet for navigating samsara
which includes rationality. But I mean,
you want to start with empiricism and
add rationality to that rather than
start with rationality and then try to
build an entire world view just from
like logical axioms or something.
But it's I mean
how how you want to categorize that is
is up to you. And and really I don't I
mean you shouldn't really be too much

invested in this sort of thing anyway.
So, I'm just going to move on to the
next question.
And that's probably not a satisfying
answer that I just gave, but it may be
that any truthful answer would not be
particularly satisfying.
Mainly because I don't even categorize
my own point of view. I mean, I used to
consider myself a monist. So, I guess
there's that
certainly certainly u mystic with regard
to understanding reality. and an
empiricist with regard to navigating
samsara
with some Buddhist dogma thrown in. So,

I'm a Buddhist, too. So, let's just move on to Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Liberlam. And his question is, could you point out some tendencies you see in new age spirituality and occultism where people reify the ultimate and get sidetracked by Mara?

Well, first of all, there's a certain ambiguity here with regard to new age spirituality and occultism. Is that new age spirituality and new age occultism or is that new age spirituality, and occultism as two entirely separate things with the occultism not being new age occultism? So, that is kind of an an ambiguity that I is difficult for me to navigate.

But could I point out some tendencies I see in new age spirituality and occultism where people reify the ultimate and get sidetracked by Mara?

Well, with regard to new age, um, my dealings with new age people was sort of like I mean, they're kind of like hippies and I mean they're not reifying the ultimate as a for the most part. You know, they might have this vague or you know, kind of like this Hindu kind of idea of, you know, God as the ultimate, whatever they're going to define God as.

But it's it's going to be just an idea. So that's being sidetracked by Mara

Oultism. Yeah, I think the occultists
are much more inclined than the
spiritual like the new age people to
really reify the ultimate because most
of the new age people are really
they're not they don't even get as far
as reifying the ultimate other than just
calling it God or whatever
and then just not thinking about it much
because they're mostly like dealing at
an emotional level, you know, sort of a
a feminine stereotypically feminine
heartbased kind kind of level and stuff
like reifying the ultimate is more of a
a head thing than a heart thing. But
with regard to like occultism, you know,
like Alistister Crowley or something

like that, I'm really not that familiar
with
Western occultism.
Some of the people I know are much more
conversant with regard to occultism than
I am. I never read a single book by
Alistister Crowley. Somebody sent me
one, but I never got around to reading
it. And like I said, a long time ago,
uh, I saw a book by Crowley in a
bookstore once and very briefly
considered buying it. And then I just
kind of chickenened out with the idea
that Crowley was was such a person that
he might have just like put a a blanket
curse on anybody who read the book.

Who knows?

So yeah, occultism for the most part is not really an enlightened system or I mean in general I mean it's certainly not just one system, but occultism in general is mainly samsara oriented and I mean that is certainly being sidetracked by Mara. That's entirely within the realm of Mara. Um I don't know. I I assume there's occultists who are trying to transcend samsara in a more or less Buddhistic sense.

But I really don't know enough about it to know which particular schools of occultism are more spiritually advanced to the point of actually trying to transcend samsara. not just master

samsara,

you know, in a kind of a nichian sense, you know, not just trying to manipulate samsara through magic or whatever, but actually just trying to bail out of the system, trying to transcend it, not just rise above it as some kind of super archon or something, but just completely transcend it as an illusion to be transcended.

Um, I'm really not familiar with any so-called occultism that goes that far. My my understanding of occultism is more like methods of manipulating samsara and gaining mastery of samsara so that you can like become some higher power within

the context of samsara which is entirely Mara's realm. And I don't know to what extent they reify the ultimate if they even bother.

I mean they might not even get to the ultimate. I I assume a lot of occultist schools don't even have a concept of the ultimate you know they might just be completely like some sorrow oriented where there's just like an an infinite um like infinite number of levels or it may be that you just reach this highest level and that's as high as you can go. I mean there's there's no way out of samsara. I assume there's a cultist schools that are like that. They don't even have a concept of the ultimate. You

know, they might just say that there

isn't there isn't one.

So

yeah, but with regard to new age, I mean

it's pretty soft-headed as a system in

general. I assume that there were like

formulators like new age philosophers,

you know, sort of like um the

formulators of like the beat movement,

you know, like like Carowak and

Ginsburgg and and oh J Ryder, Gary

Snyder, you know, they actually have a

philosophy that they're applying this

whole movement towards that. I assume

there's that. I mean, I've even read

that Evola is studied by some uh new age

people because of his sex magic and so forth. But it's as a general rule, it's very thisworldoriented that new age is more of a lifestyle than any kind of spiritual movement. It seems to me, you know, it's it's sort of like being like neo hippies.

So

yeah, I that's about that's about my answer to that one. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Priapistic Monk. And he says, "What makes a monk?"

And technically what makes a monk is an ordination ceremony, a valid ordination ceremony into a monastic order. That's what makes a monk. that like from a

Burmese point of view, let's say you've got someone who lives like a monk, they look like a monk, you know, they go for alms round, they wear brown robes and so forth, but they've never been ordained into the Buddhist sa then they're not a monk, they're a yate. They go by the name of a yate. I knew a yate once. And strangely yate is like the Burmese corruption of the word rishi or what in English is what is corrupted into English as rishi.

So technically technically a monk would be a member of a an ordained member of a monastic order especially if they have taken higher orders and aren't just a

novice

and they have to be male.

But if you want to say that so anyone

who lives like a you know

monastic life they live like a monk then

they're like an unofficial monk. I mean

you could say that too but technically

which is the easiest way to answer this

question so that there's no you know

there's there's no ambiguity

then a monk is a man who has been

validly ordained into a monastic order

fully ordained

so it's vineia it's I've read that what

separates a monk from a lay people is

vineia or the rules of monastic

discipline

And if you just want to just renounce the world and go eclectic or whatever non-denominational, you don't get ordained,
then I mean you can live like a monk, but you're not really a monk.
So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Fred and Fred says, "If one can't reach Nibbana by works and Janna, what is the role of wisdom?" Well, the role of wisdom is to make it easier to become enlightened even though it can't make you be enlightened. It's like I was saying earlier you can open the window but you can't force the breeze to blow in. So

wisdom is opening the window. Maybe clearing away the the rubbish the derbus from from before you get to the window so you can even get to it. And some people might have to use like like you know like razor blades or or screwdrivers, crowbars because the the window has been like painted shut for decades
or who knows how long.
But I mean going with my just getting away from the whole window. I mean it's like reality is always here. It's just that we are distracted by all these perceptions in our mind. So what wisdom does is it makes the perceptions more subtle and easier to stop believing that

they're reality.

You know, it's like making

let's see just reducing

let's see I'm trying to decide which

metaphor to go with or like here's

here's one that I've used before that

let's say consciousness is like water

and mental states like perceptions and

valitions are like the waves and ripples

on the surface of the water and most

people are completely in wave mode. They

they don't even have a concept of water.

It's just this wave and that wave and I

like this wave and I hate that wave and

this wave is better than that wave and

those two waves are beautiful and those

waves over there are ugly and just the
whole world is just wave phenomena
and then they don't even have a concept
of water.
So what you do is by making the waves
less like through meditation
more subtle you don't have like choppy
seas all the time and when you have a
flat calm it's way easier to stop
identifying reality with waves.
So one of the main roles of wisdom, not
the only role, but one of the main like
roles of wisdom at the highest level is
just to make the the samsaric world of
perception more subtle through detaching
from it or through using like yogic
techniques to just turn the the waves

into a flat calm so that you see water as water instead of as this wave versus that wave.

But before you get to that level, wisdom is, I mean, causing you to choose good actions instead of evil actions, for example. Causes you to have a certain sensitivity so that you realize that by hurting another being, you're also hurting yourself. That kind of thing. So wisdom early on is driving morality and the search for more wisdom. Whereas at the highest level, wisdom is getting you as ready as you can be for full enlightenment. I mean, perfection of wisdom would be enlightenment where

you're no longer identifying with wave phenomena. You're no longer considering wave phenomena to be the highest reality or the only reality.

You're seeing through that. You're seeing through the veil.

But we you can't really reach nibbana by works and janna you know by morality and meditation sila and samadei but those are in a way prerequisites or it's just the more you do spiritual practice the more likely it is the more statistically likely it is that you're going to become enlightened.

That doesn't mean that monks or even like seriously conscientiously practicing monks and nuns are going to

become enlightened. Still, the odds are very low for that. But still, it's way higher than the average normie who's working a 40 or 50 hour job with bills to pay and a family to take care of and so forth, lawns to mow, all that stuff.

So

works and and John Oila and samadei which leads to pa I mean all of those are just increasing the odds of you becoming enlightened

and and also helping you to detach from samsara to like rise above or transcend samsara to some degree.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Kundrew

and Kundrew says, "I've seen the Buddha being referenced as the kinsman of the sons several times in the sutas. What does this name mean?" And that is a good question and it reminded me that in the Touka Suta of the Atawaga, which is very old text, it begins puchami adichaandu. Those are the first words of the turka suta of the atakawaga which translates into English as I ask that kinsman of the sun or a relative of the sun or a relative of adicha.

And when I was a monk you see it sometimes and you figure well it's some sort of mythological reference or just some honorific title that was given to people in ancient India that we've just

lost the meaning of it. Even some some statements in Shakespeare, you know, Shakespeare will make some reference to like current events that it's just lost to us now. We have no idea what he's referring to. And it could be something like that in in in Pali with regard to the word adicha bondu. Adicha is a word for the sun. It's not the usual word for the sun, but it it's derived from Vadic Sanskrit
and bondu just means like relative.
So it may be that or like a relative of the son the adicha bondu that adicha was actually was like the name of some clan or some lineage that uh like I think in

the commentaries it refers to gorras
which are like a clan that is bigger
than just your family name you know it's
it's like a collection of family names
it's almost like a cast a subcast like
kan A I think was one of the the Goras
in the Buddha's time and Adicha
according to this commentary was another
one of these Goras or clans or just
lineage familial lineages that that spun
off different you know uh like family
names like Godm.
So uh it was probably something along
those lines. It's still controversial. I
don't think that anyone really has
nailed down some definitive explanation
of it. In fact, I think there's one

person recently who wrote a book who was
trying to use kinsmen of the sun or
Adicha Bandu as evidence that the Buddha
himself uh was Persian and um he was
sort of it was it was like an influence
of of Zoroastrianism that was more into
sun worship than any of the systems in
in India. thought um I think I remember
reading somewhere that there was like
two main lineages like the the moon
lineage and the sun lineage and the the
Buddha was like of the sun lineage
instead of the moon lineage with regard
to his family his his
like what would you say his
ancestors

but still I do not know exactly it
apparently was like some kind of lineage
like a a family lineage that he was
called that but I don't know for sure
and it could just be the some honorific
that was used in ancient India like who
knows maybe if somebody did a search
like in the rig vda there might be you
know this the like the vadic Sanskrit
version of this same this same word that
is found there or some of the older like
vadic vadic texts like prebddhist texts
or even like around the same time
contemporaneous like you know protohindu
texts might have the same word that
might give more insight into its actual
meaning

but he is referred to as kinsman of the sun or adicha bondu

and I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question we're getting towards the end here next question is from dhamma river and I am sorry that I don't know for sure what adichaandu

uh originally meant that you look it up in like the Poly English dictionary, it just says kinsman of the sun with no more explanation than that. Adicha is the son, Adicha Bondu, kinsman of the sun. Period. That's that's all the explanation that that is given. And you can look it up on the internet and you're not going to find much.

So listen, let's get back to Domin River here. Dama River says, "What are your thoughts on the Mid program?" And we are not lagging right now. We might have like five minutes of non-lagging in this whole [__] video.

Dama River says, "What are your thoughts on the Mid program in Canada from a moral and karmic perspective? It stands for medical assistance in dying. The government is helping people die. It's very controversial because it appears that people are getting this done without being terminally ill. Yeah. It reminds me of Soilent Green. And remember that movie Soilent Green, Edward G. Robinson's last movie,

Charlton H was in it where you could
just go and and commit selfdeion.
And of course according in the movie
they take the bodies from the
selfdeletion process and make these like
wafers called soilent green that were
then distributed to people in a
socialistic dystopia as food. But I
don't think Canada's quite to that stage
yet. I mean, it's certainly getting into
the realm of dystopia,
but I don't think it's it's recycling
the bodies of the Mid program as some
kind of new serial, for example.
So, what are my thoughts on this
assistant, assisted dying, medical

assistance in dying? Well, I do think that people should have the right to selfdee. I mean, it's your own life. I mean, it was it was mainly Christianity that put a taboo on that. You know, in ancient Rome, sometimes it was the honorable thing to do. If if you were a soldier who disgraced your legion, then you fall on your own sword.

Unfortunately, Mark Anthony botched falling on his own sword and didn't hit any vital organs, and it took him a while to finally die.

But still, I mean, it was like Kato the Younger, you know? He he just I I think he uh either had a doctor do it or did it himself. But you know he he opened

his veins was the term uh when he found out that Julius Caesar had won the civil war and was going to become dictator for life after defeating Pompy's forces Pompeus Magnus.

But then along came Christianity and life was considered to be something sacred. It was like a sacred gift of God. So that any that committing suicide was a sin and you couldn't be absolved of that sin either because you're dead after you do it. So like in Dante's Inferno, there's that a special circle of hell just for people who selfdeleted. I think you became a kind of tree in in in hell that would bleed human

blood instead of sap.

Um, but yeah, I mean it is a dystopian development in Canada. It seems to me it's like I mean there's memes about it now. It's like well we got socialized medicine but you've got this this condition then maybe we can fit you in for a doctor's appointment a year from next Wednesday, but have you ever considered selfdeletion? We can fit you in real soon on that one.

So I mean from a moral and karmic perspective the people who are participating in this not the ones who want to selfdee but the people who are helping them to selfdelete maybe even like suggesting it. Yeah. I mean they

are killing from from the Buddhist point of view.

I mean even euthanasia from the Buddhist point of view is is still killing. I mean it might not be as bad as you know being like an axe murderer or something but still it is morally unh wholesome to do that.

So the the people who are participating in are definitely making karma and not the best kind of karma. And yeah I mean from the Buddhist point of view karma and morals go hand in hand.

So, let's see here. Government is helping people die. It's very controversial because it appears that

people are getting this done without being terminally ill. Well, in a way, it's kind of purging the misfits, which I mean, from a moral point of view would be unh wholesome, unskillful, but maybe from a political point of view, it might actually be beneficial because you're purging misfits. I mean, the misfits are purging themselves.
Um, not I mean I'm not saying that someone who's got terminal cancer or something is a misfit. It's just the people that are so maladjusted that they want to self- terminate even though they're not terminally ill. That's the kind of people I was referring to. And I mean they have the right to do it. I

mean, individually, it seems to me

from a larger like political point of

view, I mean, it could be good for

society, for people that are

self-destructive

to just sort of not be in society.

But,

I mean, it I really don't have a dog in

this fight. Speaking of dogs,

there she is again. Okay,

there you go. Oh, Tater always wants to

be picked up, too.

So, let's see. My thoughts on the Mid

program in Canada.

Yeah, Canada se definitely I mean most

of the anglosphere is like drifting

towards dystopia more and more cyberpunk
dystopia
like the election of Donald Trump is one
of the main breaks just hitting the
brakes in America and even starting to
like move in a different direction but
like the UK, Canada,
Australia, New Zealand,
South Africa I mean they're they're all
moving in a dystopian direction which
America would be moving in if the
Democrats had won the election. It's all
moving towards this culturally castrated
feminized quasi Marxism
with purging of misfits through
euthanasia
or I mean I if if they're not even

terminally ill I don't even know if it

would be euthanasia or not.

So

yeah, I mean there's worse things than

medical medical assistance in dying. I

think abortion would probably be worse

than somebody just opting to end their

own life.

But

I guess I answered that question and I'm

just going to move on to the last

question which is from

Arain says and and I'm not I'm not

lagging. Look it, I'm moving my mouth

and the words are coming out as as I

move my mouth. Oh, it started lagging

again a little bit.

Anyways, Arin says, "According to Stfan Molyneu, noted philosopher Stfan Molyneu, a person has no moral obligation to tell the truth to a compulsive liar." What does Buddhist philosophy say about this?

Well, I did actually hear some of that video with Stfan Molyneu and he was saying that lying is only bad if you deceive someone in a way that harms them. And I don't know what he's basing his ethics on. I think because he's like an anarchist, I think he's just basing his ethics on the non-harming principle or whatever it's called. I'm really not into anarchist philosophy, but I know

that anarchist philosophy is largely based on like a himsa, not harming others. So apparently he's got it worked out so that the morals or ethics of anything is based on harming of others, which is very different from Buddhist ethics which are based on your own psychology, the effects that the action has not on somebody else but on your own mind.

So Stfan Malu saying that lying is only unh wholesome if it harms somebody else. I mean certainly that's not Buddhist. What happens this this hypothetical scenario here where someone is trying to rip you off. They're trying let's say

they're trying to lure some kid into
their car so they can kidnap that child
for nefarious reasons.
Well, the kid has been warned by his
parents when strangers do that, don't
get in the car. So, the kid just runs
away. So, did that person, this this
predator
just did he not do anything wrong
because he didn't harm the kid? No. He
obviously was trying to harm the kid and
failed. It's like attempted murder.
According to Stfan Molyneu, I assume
going with this kind of reasoning, you
you're trying to murder someone, you
shoot at them and miss, you haven't done
anything wrong because you didn't harm

anybody.

But from a Buddhist point of view, I mean, you make you have the intention and you make the effort, you're already doing something wrong. actually succeeding is like the clincher where I mean that pretty much locks you into the like the deepest level of doing something wrong in that category but still if you're trying to harm somebody and fail still you've done something wrong.

So Buddhist philosophy says that ethics are subjective. They're they're based on the effects your own actions have on your own welfare. If they're taking you

farther away from from enlightenment,
taking you farther away from purity or
wisdom or whatever it is,
from the possibility of enlightenment,
then that's bad. Even if you don't harm
anybody other than yourself.
I don't know what Stfan Molyneu would
think about someone like selfdeception
or just like someone who's got like this
weird fetish where they they want to
hurt themselves or they want other
people to hurt them.
I remember there's a kid like that in
school.
I won't say his name, but when I was in
grade school, there was this one kid. He
was an unpopular kind of shy, awkward

kind of kid who would just antagonize bullies until they would beat him up. He He did it repeatedly. He would just like pester them, just like follow them along just saying this stuff and they'd tell him to shut up and he wouldn't. He'd just keep following them around saying this whatever it was that was bugging them until finally they just start hitting him and that was the whole point.

I'm not exactly sure what the connection is here,

but I mean obviously this this kid, he wasn't harming anyone really, not from the Stfan Mulluse kind of attitude. He

was in a way kind of harming himself through the agency of just antagonizing bullies until they beat him up.

So I mean, I wonder what Molyneu would say about someone who wanted to get beat up. I mean, would the bully be doing anything wrong by satisfying this guy's desires to get beaten up? So, I mean, Stefan Molyneu in his nonharming principle because he's like an anarchist and uses the non-harming principle as some sort of axiomatic guiding law, I guess.

I assume.

Um, yeah. I mean, he's just I think that his basis for ethics is far inferior to the Buddhist basis of ethics, which is

it's it's subjective. Whether something is wholesome or unh wholesome depends on your mental states and whether those mental states are taking you closer or farther away from like enlightenment, taking you closer or farther away from reality.

But Malinu I mean he might be a materialist or something along the lines of a materialist just fully invested in samsara who doesn't really think that there is a transcendence of samsara in which case that the Buddhist ethic would be almost nonsensical to him

but I mean from the Buddhist point of view like I mentioned earlier just being

pissed off is immoral

or self-loathing is immoral any kind of

unhappiness I mean it's weird in

Buddhism unhappiness is immoral.

I mean, wallowing in certain kinds of

happiness also is immoral.

I mean, Buddhist ethics are about as

finely tuned as ethics get.

Just wanting to put salt and pepper on

your food to make it taste better is

just sort of borderline immoral.

So yeah, I'm assuming that Stfan Molyneu

being an anarchist is invested in the

non-harming principle and is using that

maybe arbitrarily as a basis for what is

and is not moral. So you have to

actually harm another person for it to

be immoral. And from the Buddhist point of view or just from a really common sense point of view, that's pretty much nonsensical. Like if you're trying to harm somebody and fail,
I mean like even in the legal system, attempted murder is still a crime. It's not as serious as murder, but still attempted murder or attempted fraud or attempted theft, attempted burglary, attempted like molestation of a child, all of that is illegal and wrong.
Even though nobody may have been harmed at all other than the perpetrator, the person attempting this is already poisoning his own mind with his evil

intentions.

So yeah, I would say Stfan Maul who even though he refers to himself as a philosopher is really not a first rate philosopher going with this kind of ethic

that he's more

he's more interested in politics than in like the subtleties of ethics. It seems to me

I'm not sure what other anarchists like isn't Michael Malice, isn't he? Isn't he a a well-known YouTube anarchist?

Whether he would have the same kind of ethic as Stfan Molyu with the non-harming principle and all that, I'm not sure. But I do think that Buddhist

ethics are much more subtle, much more sophisticated, much more realistic than this largely arbitrary definition of what is right and wrong based on an anarchistic principle uh like a political principle of non-harming rather than like why is harming so bad? I mean maybe he should like dig a little deeper. You know, if this is based on non-harming, why is harming another being immoral? Why is that unethical? And if he's just saying, well, that's just what anarchists believe. That's just like an axiom that we accept dogmatically.

Then I mean, that's that's what his

ethics are based on. That's like the the foundation of his ethics is just like this arbitrary decision made by political anarchists.

So yeah, I do think that the Buddhist ethic of something is good if it is conducive to the happiness of others and more importantly your own happiness. You know if if it something is conducive to your own happiness in the long term then that's good. If it's conducive to your own unhappiness in the long term that's bad.

Or if if it's like if it increases your delusion and attachment and desire, that's bad. If it decreases your delusion and attachment and desire,

that's good.

I definitely think that that it would be preferable. And not just because I accept it dogmatically as a Buddhist. It just makes a lot more sense to me. It seems more more intelligent and sophisticated and and realistic and plausible than just basing it on the western anarchist non-harming principle which I assume is what he's doing because I don't know why else he would say that lying is wrong only if it harms another person but he's using justifications I should get back to Stfan Molyneu in his his video his talk I heard him saying that

like a compulsive liar let's say somebody's trying to rip you off or thing or and one example he gives is not even somebody trying to rip you off. It's like somebody is planning a surprise party for you. Your mate is got a surprise party planned for you and you know that she's doing that. So, you pretend to be surprised even though you're not surprised because you already knew it was going to happen. Well, he says, you know, there's nothing wrong with that. That that's probably a good thing. And from a Buddhist point of view, I mean, it's certainly not as bad as like really messing somebody up, which also messes yourself up. But

still, I mean, any kind of dishonesty is

it's like

betrayal of truth. It's like how are you

going to attain ultimate truth if you

can't even be faithful with regard to

conventional truth?

you know if you don't consider even

conventional truth to be something quasi

sacred

I mean how are you going to trans how

are you going to like rise above that

into into like the highest truth

so I mean he can say that you can you

can lie to somebody to protect somebody

else something like that and I've given

there's this famous short story I'm I'm

all over the place with with regard to answering this question it's the last one We'll be done after this, so bear with me. But there is a famous short story, the third the the fourth wise man or the other wise man. I I've mentioned this before where
you've got these four Persians and they see the star of Bethlehem in the west and they know the the Messiah has been born. And so they're going to go and offer their incense, frankincense, what is it? Gold, frankincense, and myrr. plus probably some other items to this this king that has been born. So, three of them set off, but the fourth one, he's got some kind of business he has to

do, but he says, "I'll catch up with you on the road." So, the first three take off, and this fourth wise man, this other wise man, this magi,
he takes off late. And he keeps getting like not completely sidetracked, but delayed. like you know he's traveling through the desert and he sees this guy who's almost dead of thirst and exposure lying by the side of the road. So he he has to get off and help him and he's nursing him back to health and giving him water and you know treating the the secondderee burns and all this and taking him somewhere where he can be taken care of and not just leaving him

abandoned there. And then he continues on his way after like a week and finally he gets to uh he gets to the Holy Land and he's staying at this house and this is right when King Herod has demanded the death of all the the baby boys. And so the mother is terrified. She's got a baby boy in the house. This this wise man is standing at the door and when the soldiers of King Herod pound on the door and demand entry, he he gives them this jewel. Maybe I think it was like a giant pearl that he was going to offer to the Messiah. You know, he he brought these treasures with him and he gives this this treasure to this, you know, soldier and says, "There are no there are no

babies here." And then, you know, it's like the bribe is accepted and the soldier just announces there's no babies. Let's keep going. And so, he saves this baby's life by telling a lie. He says, "There's no babies here. here, have this pearl. And of course, the mother is just weeping tears of joy and gratitude. And so

from the Buddhist point of view, I mean, he did tell a lie. And it may be that he was trying to deceive this soldier, although the bribe was probably, you know, what really convinced the soldier that there was no baby there rather than him just saying there's no baby. But

still, he tells a lie and it saves the life of this baby. So I mean it's the easily the lesser of two evils in that case. It may be that some Buddhist arahant
that is mentioned in the wisudi ma I mean he wouldn't tell any lie at all. So he'd just remain silent. You know he wouldn't be under the same roof with the woman anyway. So I mean the the good Buddhist would just be avoiding the situation. He wouldn't be under the same roof with this woman in the first place. But still you're telling a lie that I mean you still have this effect on yourself. You in a way you're betraying the truth and you know you're like lie

detector tests you know they they test for like little signs of stress like increased perspiration increased heart rate and so forth which I mean when you're telling a lie as a general rule at some level you are uneasy about that because you know you're doing something wrong. Maybe a sociopath can pass lie detector tests with no problem because you know he doesn't have that. But most of us I mean we know we just feel in our body that we're doing something wrong when we're telling a lie. And so if telling the lie is going to be result in less suffering in the long run than telling the truth

according to me you're better off just choosing the lesser of two evils in that case.

But I mean as some hard-nosed Buddhist would just say just avoid the situation. Don't ever tell a lie even if it's a tiny one. You know, it's like you just say, "Well, I knew this surprise party was going to happen or you just remain silent, you know."

So,

I just completely left Stfan Molyneu standing standing on the road, I guess.

But I mean even I mean from the Buddhist point of view telling lies is always wrong but it might be less of a wrong than telling the truth in certain cases

or remaining silent for that matter in certain cases.

So it's it's like the trolley problem where you either let the trolley squish 10 people or you divert the trolley on its track so it only squishes one person. From the Buddhist point of view, what you should do is just do nothing and let the trolley squish 10 people. I mean, that's like like really hard-nosed Buddhist ethics because you have done nothing wrong. Just standing there. I mean, inaction is never unethical from a Buddhist point of view because you're not doing anything.

But I mean, some people could argue,

well, if you divert the trolley, so it only squishes one person. I mean, you're responsible for the death of one person, but if you hadn't done that, 10 people would be squished. And so, you could argue it'd be the lesser of two evils. It would not be completely good. There would be some killing involved due to your own action, but still, it would be less than letting 10 people get squished. And so, that's your choice to make. You have to take responsibility. Do you accept responsibility for you know that one person being squished or that lie being told if doing that is results in less suffering overall. So I'm of the opinion that sometimes you

may choose I mean you have the right to choose to between the lesser of two evils
and telling a lie sometimes may be the lesser of two evils but still it's it's like wrong. It is unethical. It is immoral from a Buddhist point of view.
And I might as well stop at that and say what I should always say at the beginning and I've only done once like a year ago which is if you have any questions you think I can answer especially about Buddhism especially Terraata Buddhism or early Buddhism like pre-terravata Buddhism some western philosophy you know some eastern

philosophy it's it's a little more hit

and miss the farther away you get from

like my particular fields of interest.

Like I also have a degree in biology.

I'm fairly good at biology questions

too.

And no more than three per person per

episode, please.

And also like and subscribe if you have

not done so already and be happy.

All right, then. Howdy.

We are recording, I assume.

Welcome to question and answer number

159. I am your host Pony Bosa. This is

your co-host, my beverage.

And

159, I must say, although odd is not

prime because it is 3 * 53.

And I'm dispensing with coffee because I

already drank enough coffee today. So,

I'm just kind of tapering off the

caffeine with an energy drink

or something.

Tapering off some sort of essential oils

contained in coffee but not contained in

this particular energy drink.

And I spent part of my glorious day of laziness today hauling rocks or just loading rocks into my car cuz we spent several hundred on lots and lots of rocks today. In fact, most of it is going to be coming on pallets like from a flatbed truck with a forklift mounted on back just because it was too many rocks for our little car. So, it's kind of late. In fact, this Q&A may span two days because it may be after midnight before I'm done with it. As you can see, the fish tank is already in moonlight mode. The fish are already preparing to go to bed, and I'm just now

starting this Q&A.

So, I guess we should just get into it.

And the first question is from Sebakshan Cipad Zidana, who tried to ask five questions, but he did not succeed in getting all five of them on this Q&A.

And his first question

is as follows. After living in Burma for decades, do you think villagers are better people than city folk with better morals?

Um, one of the first things I thought of when I saw this is there's a saying in Burma. I don't remember the the Burmese original, but it is to the effect of a man looking for a wife should look for a

village girl because village girls make
better wives than city girls. But it
might be a somewhat different reason
than better people being better people.
It's just that village people are
simpler. They they're simplehearted
and they probably have fewer desires and
all that which might make a village
woman more content as a man's wife than
a city girl who's just wanting this and
that and never satisfied kind of a
thing.
My experience though with
uh Burmese people living in villages and
Burmese people living in cities is
really it's it's just a matter of like
simplicity of of life and simplicity of

heart to some degree than actual
goodness because I've met plenty of very
good people in cities, plenty of very
good people in villages and I mean I'd
have to do some kind of some kind of
statistical study
to find out if there's like a
significant correlation between being a
better person and being a village person
um as opposed to being a worse person
living in a city. But um my experience
is that really Burmese people as a
general rule, I mean the ones that would
be dealing with me, I mean this is kind
of a filter that might make my
experience less than objective

because the people that were interacting with me for the most part were people that were really into like supporting monks that were like devout Buddhists who were really gung-ho with regard to supporting the SA and supporting me. and so forth.

Um,

so yeah, I mean, you've got bad people living in the cities, possibly more violent criminals and so forth. You can get away with less in a village. There's going to be less, you know, sexual misconduct, less thievery, less murder, that kind of thing in a village simply because everybody knows what everybody else is up to. You know, there's not a

whole lot of privacy in a village. Everybody knows everybody else pretty much. Although I mean I lived way the heck out in the sticks in Burma like amongst hillbillies.

And I mean I was living on the edge of a national park. And the villages that were closest just right on the border of the national park had their economy largely based on poaching in in the the natural in the the national park. So, I mean, I've seen seen guys just walking down the trail heading into the the park and a duck flies by, they just frantically look for any rock or stick or anything that they can fling at that

duck just on the off chance that they hit it and kill it.

So, it's just different flavors of morality and immorality that you'll find in a village as opposed to a city. But, um I I wouldn't really say that village people are necessarily better on average than than city people.

And I'm just going to move on to the next next question here also from Seovax CPAD seizure. And this is a biology question.

He says, "What is the difference between a population, race, subspecies, and species?" I know for species, you could just say that they can reproduce together, but that doesn't seem to be a

universal enough definition since bacteria and such don't have sexual reproduction. So, the definition doesn't really work. Well, that's actually not entirely true because even bacteria will have they do have a kind of sexual reproduction. I can't remember what it's called. I don't think it's conjugation, but bacteria will actually come up to another bacterium and they've got like this tube. They will actually inject some of their own DNA into this other bacterium. So, the even bacteria do have a kind of sexual reproduction. With regard to something like amiebas, I'm not sure.

But let's see. What is the difference between a population, race of species, species? A population is just any group of I assume the same species that are just living together in the same area. You could just call that a population. And the area could be largely um what's the word I'm trying to think of? Tell Come on, tell me in the comments. It's uh arbitrary. Okay, forget the comments. It's it's just largely arbitrary. You know, what is going to form the population? Whether you're going to say it's going to be, you know, all the, you know, all the whatever species it is living in, you know, this general area between this

river and that mountain range or

whatever, or you want to just say that

it's like this herd of of wilderbeast in

Africa, this particular herd, whatever.

I assume population is largely an

arbitrary thing that if it's used in

like a scientific paper or something, it

would have to be defined. You know, what

what does this population consist of

before moving on and just referring to

the population

race

is I do think that at least it used to

be

used for animals other than humans. that

race was just a kind of you know like a

local variation. I mean they could
interbreed with other members of the
same species easily no problem. It's
just that isolation as a general rule
has caused you know the favoring of
certain variations
well within the scope of the species.
It'd be sort of like breeds in dogs,
although
of course breed is is different because
a breed would be largely artificially
artificially produced.
So yeah, I would guess that race
is just kind of like a local peculi
peculiarity that is peculiar enough
that it's considered cons like
significant enough to you know single it

out.

Subspecies

is you're getting closer to species

level. And I could have looked this up

in a dictionary. I didn't I didn't look

up subspecies in a dictionary, but I

mean it's you're getting into like

controversial. I mean it's all of this

is relatively controversial. For

example, Neanderls. Are they their own

species or are they like I was taught

when I was in school a subspecies? You

had homo sapiens sapiens. You had homo

sapiens and Neandertolancis

two different subspecies. So a

subspecies would probably be there's

starting to be like behavioral or physiological barriers between really like maximum efficiency with regard to interbreeding, you know, just behavioral or whatever it is that there's already starting to be certain barriers or obstacles like I guess like modern humans and um like Neanderls For some reason, they there wasn't like complete compatibility that the the fertility of a Neanderal female impregnated or attempted to be impregnated by a homo sapiens sapiens male. I mean, it wouldn't be as high as with two homo sapiens sapiens or two neans.

So I mean exactly where you draw the line obviously is going to be somewhat controversial because as I say some scientists some authorities will consider Neandertols to be a subspecies of homo sapiens and others will consider Neandertolancis or Homo Neandertoensis just to be its own species.

So there's taxonomy is one of the least objective

fields in biology. I think there's there's so much like politics involved. Like Lanaeus who devised modern um taxonomy, he knew that humans and chimpanzees should belong to the same genus.

But he also knew that if he put humans and chimpanzees in the same genus or humans and any other animal in the same genus, he would be excommunicated from the church, which in the 18th century was social was just social death.

So he put humans and chimpanzees in different families even though a human and a chimpanzeee are more closely related than a chimpanzeee and a gorilla.

But chimpanzees and gorillas belong to the the family ponadi. Humans belong to the family hommininity

which is not good science but that's the way it has been for a few hundred years now. It's like the closer you get to

humans the more finely differentiated things get which also is not not exactly objective.

So taxonomy is I mean it's largely arbitrary. I mean you can say sure there's a difference between plants and animals but then you get to something like the a uglina which is a single cellled

I mean you can call it a flagagillate protozonean but also it's got like chloroplasts it photosynthesizes it's green like a plant so you get to really simple stuff and the it can get controversial even differentiating plants from animals.

So yeah, it's uh to some degree controversial or just arbitrary. I mean, clearly you can say a human being is a different species from a chimpanzee. Human being is a is a different species from a bottle a Pacific bottl-nose dolphin.

But I mean, you got Pacific bottl-nose dolphins and Atlantic bottl-nose dolphins. They they're called different species, but could they interbreed? Is there any kind of blending like like they are connected like the the the what is it? The horn of the cape of good horn,

you know, they can swim around that mixed together. Who knows?

So, let's see here.

Yeah, I guess uh I I suppose with regard to species um for animals that really do not reproduce sexually

then I mean you've got like the the the the famous lesbian lizards that that reproduce by parthnogenesis that the the the babies are just clones of the mothers or some I assume some single-sellled organisms reproduce this entirely through like binary fision.

like amiebas or something. They just split in half.

So how would you define species there is just probably for the most part I mean traditionally they look different

and maybe they behave differently. I mean that's one of the profound things I learned in in biology taking biology as a student is that um like organisms like animals particular they differ from each I mean two species will differ from each other um to the same I mean approximately to the same extent behaviorally as as like phys physically. So it's I it seems to me that um I mean it could almost be a law to the extent that two species differ physically. I mean they will differ to a corresponding degree behaviorally. And that that happens with like races, males and females, that kind of thing also. I mean, we're built differently and

that's going to just have a built-in pressure, you know, like a evolutionary pressure for us to behave differently. A big strong animal is just going to behave differently from a small weak animal, for example.

So,

enough biology, I guess.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the third question of CEO of action caden. Although I will not move on to a fourth.

He says, "Thoughts on public nudity?" Curious because the Jane monks and some Hindu aesthetics walk around naked and I don't know how to feel about it. Someone told me it was normal in many ancient

cultures like Greece and India, but it
was condemned in others like Middle
Eastern cultures and hence why those
places being conquered by Semitic
traditions made it taboo.
Yeah, I think even in countries where
public nudity was not illegal, you know,
like ancient classical Greece or India,
still it was considered to be like
uh kind of demeaning to one's dignity if
one was like a high status kind of
person.
Like in ancient Rome, they had a a
certain holiday called the Lupricalia
where men would run around naked and
they'd have like some kind of little
like a whip-like thing and they'd like

give like token little lashes to women which was a kind of fertility ritual. And Mark Anthony in participated in the lupalia was running around naked and it was just sort of like a political scandal. you know, his opponents were just, you know, just mock outrage like you find all the time in modern American politics. You know, how can how can like a patrician be be acting this way, you know, etc., etc., blah blah blah. And so it was just considered to be kind of a a fringe thing, you know, like some weird philosophers can do that sort of thing. Or maybe it's like a really poor person, you know, some poor crazy person,

homeless person, they could do that sort of thing. But like a respectable citizen, as a general rule, isn't going to be walking around naked unless there's some special purpose for it, like the lupricalia or athletic competitions, which women weren't even allowed to attend.

That sort of thing.

But public nudity, it just reminds me of a saying of my father, my dear departed father, who was somewhat of a notist.

you know, in the morning he'd he'd be walking around the house scratching himself naked.

And he used to say, "If the good Lord intended people to be walking around

naked, they'd have been born that way."
Which is a good point, it seems to me.
So, I mean, public nudity, yeah, it's
largely um just human neurosis with
regard to sexuality.
that uh I mean there there have been
human beings in modern times Australian
aboriges wandered around naked like the
inhabitants of Tiara del fuego before
they all got wiped out by smallpox or
tuberculosis or whatever it was they
would wander around naked and it wasn't
a big deal it wasn't like they were all
just horny all the time and raping each
other all the time I guess I shouldn't
say that word on YouTube

but yeah I the the taboo on nudity in the west is largely because of Christianity. And it reminds me of there's a story in the Old Testament. I think it's in Genesis. Noah had three sons, Ham, Shem, and Japheth. And um Noah got drunk and passed out in his tent. His son Ham walks in just completely innocently walks in, sees his father passed out naked. He just turns around and leaves. tells his other two brothers and then the other two brothers, they get a cloak or something and they both back in holding the cloak and they cover their father without looking at him. And then when Noah soers soers up, he curses Ham for having seen

him naked. So I'm not exactly sure why like Middle Eastern like Abrahamic religions have such a taboo against nudity. I don't know why, but human beings tend to be fairly neurotic about sexual stuff anyway.

So,

it could be some of that, but why the like the Semitic peoples were really so anti- nudity, I don't I'm not sure exactly because

like my dad said, the good Lord wanted people to be walking around naked.

They'd have been born that way.

So I mean I don't consider public nudity to be inherently immoral.

Like there is a rule a a rule of monastic discipline for terabato Buddhist monks against a monk walking around naked unless his robes have been stolen or destroyed or some some such thing.

Um, and the reason is not that it was like demeaning to amongst like his dignity to be naked in public. It was that lay people were confusing the Buddhist monks with Ajivaca monks. And the Ajivaca monks wandered around naked. They didn't own anything. They didn't even own an alms bowl. Some James were like that, too. when they they just wander naked through the village when they go for alms and they would just

accept food into their cuped hands and then just stand there in the street eating it.

So that was the reason why monks were required to wear clothes um or a robe or actually no I think I might be confusing by rules of monastic discipline. There was a rule of monastic discipline preventing monks from bathing naked in the rain. And so somebody sent a servant girl to see some monks about something and they're bathing naked in the rain. She just turns around comes back and she said, "I didn't see any Buddhist monks. They were just Ajivacas there." Cuz again, people were confusing Buddhists

with Ajivacas. Because the Ajivacas went around naked. The Buddhists didn't. You know, it was just kind of like part of the uniform like shaving the head.

But I'm just sort of gilding the lily with my answers because I really just do not think that public nudity is inherently immoral. The reactions of other people who see somebody naked could be very immoral. Like a beautiful woman who's just walking naked down the street could be causing all sorts of impure thoughts. Not only in men, but like women who are getting pissed off at her because she looks so good or whatever.

So, or because their husband is just

like like staring at her with his mouth open.

So, let's see here.

Yeah, I guess I guess I gave quite a few thoughts on public nudity. I'm just going to move on to the next question.

This is from Romeo and we are in fact recording. I'm looking at this thing again and the little green bar is going back and forth which indicates the microphone is working. And it looks like I'm not lagging because I did close all the extra unnecessary tabs before starting this video.

I do learn from experience occasionally.

So Romeo says, "What is your knowledge

and opinion of the healing of emotional

and physical illnesses by clearing one's

chakras?"

And

I mean Terra Buddhism really does not

endorse the chakra system

that chakras I think I would guess that

they came from like yoga which would be

like sania

that it was one of the like the pet

theories of the sanas

and then when some of the sania people

got incorporated into Hinduism under the

name of yoga with a capital Y then this

the chakra theory along as like the

three goonas you know you've got the

satvik goona symbolized by the color

white the rajasic goona symbolized by
the color red the tamasic goona
symbolized by the color black which is
mentioned in the bhava gita that also
certainly came from sanka which got
incorporated in part into hinduism or
protohinduism
as yoga so yeah I mean there's no
mention of chakras in the sutas
So what is my knowledge and opinion of
the healing of emotional and physical
illnesses by clearing one's chakras?
I do think that chakras are kind of a
gimmick. You know, it's just like I
think in in the sut's like this idea of
nadis or nadi literally means something

like stream. You got these energy
streams going through your body which is
in some ways I think it comes closer to
like Chinese traditional medicine which
also has you know its own system which
is not in agreement or at least not
obviously in agreement with various
other traditional
like systems of medicine like in the
west you had like Galen's the his theory
of the four humors which prevailed up
through medieval times up until modern
times.
So I do think it's kind of a gimmick.
It's just a kind of way of kind of
wrapping your head around something
using a certain system and it's largely

belief in the system which produces a kind of placebo effect.

It's you like tarot cards also is I I think I brought tarot cards up recently maybe in the in the previous Q&A where people can prognosticate or they can come up with some sometimes can come up with you know valid information or wisdom through the use of these tarot cards when I mean wisdom or any kind of paranormal powers are not like impregnated into these cards. I mean it's just like cardboard and laminated with plastic and some ink. That's all it is. But the people believe that by the help of these cards they can come up

with this information and they don't
believe that they can come up with the
same information without the cards as
effectively. So they use the cards as a
kind of gimmick or crutch. And I do
think to some degree the chakra system
is similar.
I mean, there could be that you've got
like some kind of spiritual energy going
up up the spine somehow that is has a
better, more effective flow the more
spiritually advanced you get. I mean
it's possible
but I do think for the most part it's
just a kind of arbitrary system can that
conveniently helps preodern
pre-scientific people understand things

and sometimes they understood things
better than modern people do
and so it has value you know it seems to
work just like tarot cards seem to work
otherwise they wouldn't keep selling
them.
So,
I mean, so long as somebody involved has
this faith in the healing of emotional
and physical illnesses by clearing one's
chakras,
then it could be it's it's like a kind
of faith healing. But then again,
Reverend teacher Maker Mary Baker Eddie
considered all medicine to just be
placeos.

We just have faith that the medicine works and so it works.

And people who believe in the chakra system have faith that the chakra system accounts for some level of reality anyway. And so for them at least it does.

And it's just a convenient way of just measuring somebody's spiritual advancement. You know, first chakra is just survival. Second chakra is sex. Third chakra is like status and power. Fourth chakra is compassion and so on until you get to the crown chakra on the top of the skull which is full enlightenment apparently which is even higher than the third eye.

But I mean no no science that I know of
is going to verify you know the opening
of the third eye in some yogic sage or
the opening of the crown chakra an
enlightened being anything like that.
And so
I think I'm just going to move on to
Romeo's second question
which is what do you think is the most
effective process to heal oneself via
chakras and then in parenthesis he's got
mantras meditation visualization
uh question mark
and so the most effective process to
heal oneself via chakras find some
ayurvedic practitioner or some other

kind kind of Hindu practitioner who is an expert on chakras who's going to have deep faith in his chakras the whole system and like the effective processes of healing somebody and then go to them and then they'll they'll help you to heal your chakras because it's it's going to take faith in my opinion. I did have my chakras aligned for free by a person in California before I came to South Carolina. And uh what he said to me is he was like kind of kind of waving his hands over me and this kind of thing. And he was telling me, you know, my first chakra is solid, nothing to worry about. My second chakra is kind of kind of out of balance, which is makes

sense because I I was celibate for 30 years.

And uh you know he just kind of waved his hands at me and just kind of cleared my chakras that way at least to some degree.

Did the best he could under the circumstances.

So yeah, what do I think is the most effective process to heal oneself via chakras? Well, I mean, healing oneself, I mean, if that is

um like disqualifying, you know, that's excluding these chakra healers who specialize in this cuz that would be the obvious thing to do. Just find someone

who specializes in healing through

chakras,

you know, sort of like brain surgery or

something. It's like you don't want to

do it on yourself. That could be very

dangerous.

But you go to some expert on brain

surgery, he does it for you. But if

you're going to heal yourself,

then I mean I guess it would just be

like

be as wellbalanced and grounded and

healthy this mentally especially but

also physically and just practice

spiritually

in in as you know comprehensive

way as possible. not just specializing

in some kind of niche niche kind of meditation something like that but just try to be as just all over wholesome as you can and I mean you got to be careful though most like if you're trying to be as all over wholesome as you can and you're celibate for example and you're just horny all the time then that could cause problems with your second chakra so

golly I'm no I'm no authority already on chakras. So, I mean really the best thing you can do if you want to clear your chakras, get them all balanced and everything, go to a person who specializes in healing with the chakra

system,

which would be like an Ayurvedic

practitioner or some such.

But healing yourself, all you can really

do is just try to be as natural and

spiritual at the same time because being

unnatural, I mean, it can mess you up at

least like physically. Like you read

some of the the stories of like Catholic

saints,

like medieval Catholic saints, they were

really definitely saints. They were just

they were like like moral geniuses. I

mean they were just like completely

moral to the extent that they were able

according to their understanding of

morality which was of course

predominantly Christian but still I mean they would have all kinds of like health problems and so forth. St. John of the Cross one of my favorite Christians I mean he died relatively young from I don't not sure how to pronounce it.
It was some sort of skin infection that he got. And probably it's just like the just the the unnatural
austerity, just the almost inhuman self-restraint.
I mean, just consider what Freud said about too much self-restraint. It can just make you a basket case.
So, I mean, that was the price they paid for their saintliness. And it works for

Buddhists, too.
But the best most effective process to heal yourself via chakras. I mean it would depend on what chakra it was too. I mean if you got a sexual chakra problem then the way of healing that might be very different from like a compassion chakra problem.
So yeah, I think for starters, even if you're not going to get healed by a person who is a some kind of chakra healer, then you could ask them for advice and they would probably be able to advise you better than I could.
Partly because I consider the chakra thing to be largely an arbitrary kind of cooked up system that works because

people believe in it and at least it has enough um what's the word? I keep blanking out on words correspondence with empirical reality that you can kind of map one to the other. You know each chakra represents some specific stage of spiritual development. So I mean it's it's empirical to that extent anyway. Whether it actually involves any kind of like energy nodes associated with your spinal region that is a little bit more questionable.

So yeah, I guess of the three examples he gives, mantras, meditation, and

visualization, then yeah, I'd go with meditation.

Definitely meditation. And I'm going to move on to Romeo's third question, which is are chakras tied to Buddhism in any way? If so, how? Well, I would guess there's more chakra stuff in Mahayana Buddhism than in Terravada. Just because Mahayana Buddhism developed later than Terra at least, you know, sort of like some of the foundational ideas of Mahayana. you know they were in India possibly you know before some of these schools came into being chakras may have already been established as just Indian culture which was not the case in the Buddhist time I'm pretty sure so any

school of Buddhism that arose after the chakra system had been absorbed into mainstream Indian spiritual culture then there may be emphasis on chakras I have um seen one western monk, a terra Buddhist monk that was interviewed by Brian Rue on on one of his shows who practices yoga in addition to doing Buddhist meditation and so forth. He's an ordained terra Buddhist monk, but being a western, he's a bit more eclectic than most Asian terra Buddhist. And so, he's actually brought chakras and like yogic practices and so forth into his own practice. I think he was uh a disciple of Bonte Gunarata at one

time, but now I think he's got his own

place somewhere in the United States.

So chakras are tied to Buddhism.

um partly through schools that arose

late enough that chakras were already

incorporated into like just general

Indian spiritual culture and also like

western eclectics or to some degree just

westernized Asian

bikus

or nuns

who have you know practiced yoga as part

of their spiritual practice even before

their ordination and so they can talk

about chakras and so forth But like

you're not going to find chakras

mentioned

at least not in this sense in in the

like the polyuts

I'm pretty sure.

So I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from Ruie and Ruie

says, "Do you believe right view can be

a byproduct of meditation or is right

view the cause of seeing value in

meditation? Isn't recognition of

suffering already right view and thus

the necessary condition for the path to

be undertaken?" Well, there's different

right views. I mean there's like the

beginner's right view and the beginner's

right view is going to be very different

from like the enlightened sages right

view.

So the beginner's right view is just it's like going to be mentioned in the text. You know you believe in morality, you believe in in like karmic retribution. You believe that you know you should practice meditation and so forth. Maybe at least keep five precepts that kind of thing you know to know the four noble truths that sort of thing. But the more advanced you get and the more right view becomes just silent. You know the the highest right view is non-perceptual nonverbal right view. So right view evolves as your own spiritual development advances or evolves.

So

it can certainly it can be a byproduct of meditation or at least you know the evolution of your right view is going to be like encouraged by spiritual practice. You know, the wiser you get, the more advanced or sophisticated right view you're going to get. Not all right view is the same right view.

So

yeah, I mean this whole question of is right view the cause of seeing value in meditation. Um I think Rahm Das is the one who sort of introduced me to the idea that sila samadei and pa which is like morality concentration and wisdom

they're like a tripod you know it's not like you have to have one before you get the next and then you have to get that before you get the next one you know it's like a lot of people think cila before you can master or before you can get high samadei you have to master sila and then before you can get high wisdom you have to master samadei But really it's more like a tripod because you're not going to practice at all without some wisdom.

So yeah, I mean they they develop together. Sila samati and puna develop together. And again just as you get more advanced your morality is going to become more sophisticated and subtle.

Your wisdom is going to become more sophisticated and subtle. Your concentration is going to become more sophisticated and subtle. And so they're just going to continue evolving together.

So right view at least improvements in right view

like increased subtlety in right view certainly can be a byproduct of meditation. Even though the meditation itself may have been a kind of byproduct of uh like a basic right view they just evolved together.

So let's see isn't recognition of suffering already right view to some

degree

especially if it's recognition of

suffering in a certain way you know like

the recognition of suffering of Achilles

on the plains of Troy I mean he

certainly acknowledged that there was

suffering in fact he was inflicting lots

of it but still

uh that in itself is not necessarily

right view

there might be some rudiments you know

some germs of right view in there but

still it's it all it all develops and

advances until finally you just wind up

with emptiness. The highest right view

is emptiness,

empty mind.

So, I'm just going to move on to Ruy's next question. And he's sort of following up on a question he asked two Q&As's ago. And he says in session 157, it's kind of interesting that these Q&A are called sessions.

It's not episode 159, it's session 159.

So anyways he says in session 157 by narrative I didn't mean any sort of speech act or utterance but the inner filmic unfolding of stories and images that often seems quite independent and have a life of its own. However could the perception of this seeming independence be just a form of delusion?

So he's referring to a narrative of just

sort of images in your mind that are
arising spontaneously
and going with
like Buddhist philosophy and also
Catholic philosophy to some degree like
when it first arises
then that's from the Buddhist point of
view that's just the fruition of your
own karma that thoughts that arise in
your mind arise through the fruition of
karma. So that's just passive. That's
happening on its own. But if you grasp
that, you know, if you just take the
ball and run with it, so to speak, you
know, that becomes the the beginning of
like this chain of associations.
You know, you start doing a running

commentary on that. Then of course you're making new karma. And then let's see what what's the exact question here. Perception of this seeming independence just be a form of delusion.

Um, no. I think that when it first arises going with Buddhist philosophy and also going with Catholic philosophy that I mean that's just you're not responsible for that. You have a thought that suddenly pops into your mind of like killing your own mother or some such then that might be the fruition of unh wholesome karma in the past but still it is ethically neutral just so long as it's just popping into your mind

without any like volitional effort for it to pop into your mind. If you act upon it then of course then you're doing karma.

So and the reason why I mentioned Catholics over and over again is St. John of the Cross, I don't know if I mentioned this, he's one of my favorite Christians

that he was a father confessor at a convent for many years. And his advice to people making confession, like a lot of people, they'd be like hyper conscientious. And so they'd be confessing to him these thoughts that would arise in their minds. And he'd say, "The first motion of the thought is

not your responsibility. That you are not making it happen. It's just that if you follow through, you continue with the thought, then you might have something to confess. But don't come to me confessing just the first like you know the first flashes of some like unh wholesome thought. So long as you are not responding to that thought and continuing with it, you haven't done anything wrong.

So

yeah, it's like the first thoughts I mean the what what's going on in your mind is is uh just like what's like popping into your mind spontaneously it

seems in most cases anyway is the fruition of karma which is ethically neutral.

And so I mean that can just happen a lot and like the wiser you get the less you will just start just through kneejerk reflex just following up on the thought and using that as like the beginning of a chain of association. You know you just let it arise and pass away. Arise and pass away. Like in the platform sutra of Hui Ning, he says Hui Ning says that uh

um like one thing that the sage does, he does not allow his thoughts to hook up in sequence.

I mean I if you have to then sure but as

a general rule you're just sitting
there. Your thoughts might be just be
arising and passing away but you're not
like deliberately
forming chains of association.
then it's it's becoming volal and then
you're making new karma which could be a
cusalakama which is not good
and I'm just going to move on next
question this is from JK
and JK says even entertaining for one
second that becoming enlightened and
understanding the whole universe was a
thing how could that stop rebirth
obviously entertaining that rebirth was
a thing also So,

so when you become enlightened,

you don't I mean you do understand the

whole universe in a way. I mean, you

don't it's not like you become omnisient

necessarily. If you become enlightened,

you're not suddenly going to know the

cube root of 53. You're not going to

know how many hairs are on your head.

You're not going to be able to speak

fluent Han Chinese if you never learned

it before necessarily.

I would be surprised if Gormma Buddha

could have spoken fluent swuahili.

So

when you become enlightened and

understand the whole universe, it's like

you're understanding the essence of what

this universe is based on. You know this universe is a kind of mental construction. I mean the universe that we are experiencing is clearly a mental construction. And so when you understand like the the fundamental essence of consciousness, you're understanding the fundamental essence of this mental construction that we call the world. So that's one thing, becoming enlightened, understanding the whole universe, which is the universe of your own mind.

So how could that stop rebirth? Because rebirth relies upon delusion. And when you have like penetrated the delusion and you're no longer deluded, then this

karmic force that's driving you through

just chronic dissatisfaction

just from one moment to the next to the

next to the next, that's gone.

So

see, how could that stop rebirth?

understanding the universe. It's just

rebirth is just part of this mental

construction.

And when you transcend the mental

construction, then you transcend the

phenomena of the mental construction. I

mean, you might not be completely

removed from it. A fully enlightened

being like arguably God Buddha is still

walking around talking to people and so

forth. It's just that he is no longer

identifying with it. He no longer
considers it to be ultimate reality
because he knows ultimate reality at
that point and he knows that this isn't
it.
This world of things interacting with
each other and having names and all
that. That's a mental construction.
So
delusion prevents you from knowing
reality. And delusion
is what causes you to continue existing
as a deluded
being.
So I mean it's sort of like waking up
from the dream. You know you wake up

from a dream that stops the dream,
doesn't it?
So, I'm just going to move on to JK's
second question,
which is even accepting that life
experience shows that bad actions can
indeed snowball into bad consequences.
Isn't it more convincing that karma is
explained as an ancient cultural or
religious concept to enforce pro-social
behavior rather than being a real thing?
Okay. Well, the main argument, it seems
to me, against this very idea
is that the people that were taking
karma most seriously in ancient India
were not pro-social. I mean, they were
abandoning society. They were renouncing

society and going off and living alone
in forests.
So, I mean, if the whole idea of karma
was invented
for the sake of enforcing pro-social
behavior and this this and this is like
this a basic staple of atheistic
argumentation. I don't know if JK here
is an atheist or not, but it's so many
people will say, I mean, it's just to a
religious person or a spiritual person,
it's just obvious nonsense. It's just
silly. But they take very seriously the
idea that religion is invented by the
upper classes to keep the lower classes
in line and under control.

But with Buddhism, I mean, it clearly doesn't work that way because the founder of Buddhism, God Buddha, was encouraging people to renounce society. Jesus of Nazareth allegedly did the same.

Renounce society.

sell all that you have, give the money to the poor and follow me, take up your cross and all that.

So, it's not convincing at all. Even if you don't want to believe in karma, but I mean this alternate theory is not convincing at all that karma is explained as an ancient culture or religious concept to enforce pro-social behavior since the people that were

taking it most seriously were abandoning society
and karma from the Buddhist point of view is volition. So I mean if you don't want to believe that karma exists then going with terra Buddhism you you wouldn't believe that volition exists chana or will you know schopenhau's will with a capital w
because karma is not some sort of as yet undiscovered law of physics that it's like bringing into the spiritual or ethical realm. This like Newtonian idea of every action has an equal and opposite reaction. That's how I understood it before I was a monk. Like

when I was like 18 years old, maybe my early 20s, I believed that it was kind of like this as yet undiscovered law of physics of like a more or less Newtonian idea. Every action has an equal and opposite reaction. You do bad things outwardly, the bad thing bad things will come back to you. But that's really not how karma works.

Karma is like the the the momentum of your mental energy, the momentum of your mental states.

And since, as I mentioned just a few minutes ago that this world we live in is a kind of mental construction, you have like an a dirty ugly mind, you're going to create a dirty, ugly world. If

you have a like a clean, beautiful mind, you'll have more of a clean, beautiful world. And it may be that they're right next to each other. And so you might say, well, they're both living in the same world. But subjectively, they're not.

So

I guess I should just move on. Next question. This is from Sedarta Lohachita,

and he says, "How Pyobbasa would define liberty?" Although he's not American, so he just uses single quotes instead of double quotes.

So how I would define liberty? Well, I

guess I would define it in kind of somewhat indirect manner like a truly free society.

In a truly free society, a person should be allowed to do whatever they want so long as they are not harming anybody else or infringing upon the rights of anybody else. So in a truly free society, public nudity, you know, if you had real genuine liberty, walking around naked, probably would not be against the law. Taking drugs, even like really dangerous ones, wouldn't be against the law. If you weren't harming anybody else, I mean, if you're like an airline pilot and you're just getting just [__] up on heroin or something right

before having to fly, then obviously you would be endangering other people, you know, or drunk driving, for example.

So

yeah, I would consider liberty to be the the right I guess to do what you think is right to follow your own conscience to the the pursuit of happiness to engage in the pursuit of happiness so long as you are not like preventing other people from doing likewise.

And I mean then you get into these sticky issues of well what if someone is offended or traumatized from seeing somebody walking naked or you know it's you call somebody a name. I mean, do you

have the right to to state what you consider to be objective facts, say about human biodiversity, and then other people are saying, "Oh, I feel unsafe or you call a transsexual person by their male name when they're insisting that they're a woman." Now, I mean, in some places that's illegal,
but I mean, whether that would be like the right of somebody to call you whatever they want, unless they're like like deliberately slandering you, trying to get you in trouble. You know, they're they're saying that you're a thief when they know full well you're not one, then that would be different. Yelling fire in a crowded theater, for example.

But so I mean there's going to be
controversy controversial like blurry
boundary lines
with regard to you know how free I mean
what rights you have that really are or
are not infringing upon somebody else's
rights.
But I think like the the snowflake types
that just complain about everything,
they would have to toughen up in a truly
free society. You know, they'd have
they'd have to get used to being called
things they don't want to be called.
They might have to get used to seeing
somebody walking down the street naked,
that kind of stuff.

So yeah, liberty would just be being

able to follow your conscience in the

pursuit of happiness so long as you are

not preventing others from doing

likewise.

And that's kind of libertarian and I

don't think that it is really the wisest

kind of political system

that a certain degree of liberty is

important

but absolute liberty would be like

social chaos I think where I mean it's

good to have certain moral principles

that I mean like

frowning upon women just being

absolutely [__]

for example, or men being absolutely

[__] for that matter, just sort of bringing into the mainstream people who are addicted to drugs or addicted to certain sexual fetishes or kinks, that kind of thing, that it's not good for society, even though technically it's more free.

So I do think that a certain amount of shared values, having a value system that helps to stabilize society is very important or helpful to a society in the Darwinian struggle for existence so to speak.

And I'm just going to move on next question. This is also from Sedart Loha. He says, "Your parents, they were from

Protestant or Catholic background."

Well, both of my parents came from a Southern Baptist background. That my father's father, according to him, me in my previous existence was an ordained Baptist minister. And I've got ordained Baptist ministers on my mother's side of the family, too. I've got two cousins on my mother's side of the family at least, who were still are, I suppose, ordained Baptist ministers. So my my background my ancestral background recently over the past few generations is Southern Baptist.

In fact, I think it was my greatgrandfather, one of my great-grandfathers on my father's side.

His middle name was Baptist. He was John Baptist Reynolds. Or may maybe it wasn't Reynolds. Could have been uh

I don't know. Roach. Could have been Roach. My My father's mother's maiden name was Roach.

So anyways, I'm just gonna move on. Next question. This is from Taskaziz.

And Tzas is asking, I assume, a joke question here.

There was some mention of Biku Analio on the Discord server. And then Tzasquez is here says, "What would English-speaking modern western woman think if they rename her Bikuni Analia?" And then he's got an N in boldface type. So apparently

he's making some kind of poo poo pee pee joke.

And uh I don't fully understand it to tell you the truth. What would English-speaking modern western women think? I assume he means instead of woman if they being maybe Biku Analio changes his name to Bikuni Analia. So it's like I guess the main point here would be what would happen if some Biku decides to become trans and starts calling himself a bikuni.

Well, I mean that wouldn't fly in orthodox terravada, but then again in the west orthodox terravada is is a kind of dinosaur I think at least it is amongst most people who consider

themselves to be ter Buddhists

in the west.

So

what would English-sp speakaking modern

western women think if some monk is

become decides that he's really a woman

and starts calling himself a beuni with

you know I think we can leave aside a n

boldfaced type as irrelevant to that

question

so

different ones would think different

things I think a lot of the sort of we

poss

Insight movement would just cheer this

person on. It's like they just think

that they're stunning and brave. They're just modern-day heroes. But from the Orthodox Terravada point of view and from the point of view of conservative terra Buddhists, which do form the majority in this world, even though most of them are in Asia, then it would just I mean it wouldn't fly at all.

I'm just going to move on to Trezasiz's second question which is more of a serious question.

He says, "Our biggest difference for me with your interpretation of Buddhism is that you think one cannot reason or figure out anything about this world we live in. Is it is is true or am I misunderstanding your position?" Well,

what obviously I mean I explain a lot of stuff in to in terms of like empiricism. So with regard to conventional truth, sure you can figure out all kinds of stuff, you know, you can figure out what gravity is. You can figure out like like gas pressures and like the the dynamics that influence gas pressures, that kind of thing. You can do mathematics. You can figure out all kinds of stuff. It's just that it's not ultimate truth.

You can't figure out ultimate truth. You can figure out all kinds of empirical stuff, though. That's what science is for.

So, you know, like biology, that kind of thing. I got no problem with that. I refer to biology a lot, anthropology, math sometimes.

So I think you can reason or figure out empirical stuff about the samsaric world we're living in clearly. Otherwise I wouldn't be bringing up science like scientific explanations for things or objective explanations for things. In fact, why would I even be answering questions?

Well, I guess I could be answering questions without figuring out anything. But I mean that wouldn't make much sense either, would it?

So yeah, I mean you're never going to

understand ultimate truth. You're not going to understand paramata satcha, the highest ultimate truth by thinking about it. You're never going to figure it out. The closest you can come with regard to that would be something like in Zen where you just keep trying and trying and trying and trying until finally something snaps and your mind just stops and becomes silent. silent and then it's like it just shines through the silence. Suddenly your mind is not obscured with all this thinking anymore and there it is. There has always been it's just been covered up by thinking.

So if you want to understand samsara

the west has done the best with regard
to understanding samsara. He came up
with scientific empiricism
which is about the best system devised
thus far for just understanding the
samsaric environment in which we appear
to be living.
But to penetrate samsara you can't use
that
to to transcend samsara. I mean you're
not going to do it by figuring out the
highest truth. It just doesn't work that
way.
And I'm just going to move on to
Tzasiz's
third question. What about my postcard?
It's been two months already since I

posted it. I didn't get the postcard. I've got two other postcards from Trezas is which are up there on the bookcase, including the the weird shaped one, which must have been like an early attempt at postcards in in his native land. There they there have been significant improvements in the shape of postcards since then. But this third postcard that presumably I would guess was for my birthday. I just didn't get it. And whether it's because the postal service in Poland, whatever country he comes from is not so good. Or it could be that America in in its decline has a postal service that is declining

in its reliability. Like in Burma, you just don't send anything valuable in the mail. It's just you just don't do it. I was going to send a key in the mail once. I was advised sternly, do not send that key in the mail. You're better off finding a bus driver who's going there and then giving it to the bus driver with a, you know, some money and then in good faith he will pass it on and it'll get there. It's called a luon in Burma. So yeah, it may happen. It may still may still arrive. I remember in Burma once I got a letter from my mother, I think more than a year after she sent it. And we're not America. The American Postal Service hasn't hasn't degenerated

to the point that it is on a par with the Burmese Postal Service, which is almost totally unreliable.

So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Arpad. And Arpad is a Frenchman who I recently learned actually eats popcorn with a spoon.

I mean, the French I mean, they've always had a reputation for being kind of decent, at least in modern times or later modern times. But I mean, eating popcorn with a spoon is is pushing it.

But our pad says, "Are there any aspects of Janism that you think are accurate or find appealing?"

Well, that's kind of a tough question. I

mean, Janism does have as a philosophy
what is called Sead Vada or is called
other things too. I I mentioned this in
a previous Q&A recently where according
to the Janes, everything has an infinite
number of aspects or qualities. Only a
fully enlightened tier tongue
can understand this. Like a fully
enlightened Jane can can see all of the
qualities simultaneously. But those of
us who are still wallowing in samsara,
we can't see even most of the qualities
and aspects of a thing. And so in order
to be rigorously
like
what's the word? not precise, accurate,
rigorously accurate. You should always

throw in sead in a sentence, which means like kind of or in a sense. So, in a sense, this is true. In a sense, this isn't true. And as a philosophy, it's pretty much useless other than just bearing in mind that you're never going to be able to speak the whole truth. You're never going to be able to know the whole truth unless you're a fully enlightened being.

But having to throw kind of into every single sentence is just not really a pragmatic useful kind of approach to human knowledge.

Um,

see with regard to Janism, I mean I

can't really think offhand of any way

that Janism comes closer to like

ultimate truth than Buddhism other than

maybe that Siad Vada thing. Whereas in

Abidama for example, Orthodox Terravada,

they do think that you can explain

ultimate truth.

And I think the James may have been a

little bit more

uh wise in that particular regard.

But there is I I have read some some

Jane sutras

and there is this one thing that has

stuck in my mind for for years. I read

this book in college. I was going

through Max Muller's sacred books of the

east series when I was in college

and I was reading some Jane sutras. I think they were um translated by a fellow named Jacobe or Yakobi.
I don't know how to pronounce whatever country he comes from. I think he was like Swedish or something. And a Jane if he's going to cross a river. I I think I' I've mentioned this before. You got a Jane monk who's going to cross a river. There's no bridge. There's no regular ferry, but there's a guy in a boat who's willing to take the Jane across the river. The Jane is not allowed to accept if the boat's going to cross just for his sake. If they're already going to cross, there's already

people on the boat and he can get on board, that's fine. But if the boat guy is just going to take him across just as a favor to him,

a Jane is forbidden because he's making karma by doing that. A Jane should not do anything that makes karma or at least as little as possible that makes karma. So I mean there's all these rules about like I mean it's even mentioned in the in the Buddhist text also that uh a Jane should not accept alms from someone who is willing to offer him food but there's a hungry dog standing there or even if there's lots of flies buzzing around because by accepting that food and eating it himself he might be depriving

that dog or those flies of a meal and he'd be making karma by doing that. So anyways getting back to the boat the the the boat guy was going to cross the river anyway. the Jane gets on unobtrusively and Jane's have to be unobtrusive for the sake of karma cuz I mean I'll get to that. So anyways, he gets across and according to the sutra if the boat starts to sink the Jane is not allowed to help bail out the boat because that would be making karma. So what he's supposed to do if the boat starts to sink, you know, the boat is taking on water. If he's the kind of monk or the kind of Jane monk that wears

clothes,

then he's supposed to take off his

clothes, fold them up, and put them onto

his head because when the pissed-off

boat owner throws him overboard for not

helping to bail out the boat, his robes

won't get wet.

Now, it's just stuck in my mind for all

these decades since I read it in

college.

But getting back to to just basic Jane

philosophy is like karma is like this

substance this sticky substance. In fact

claims that the the Buddhist term asawa

comes from the Janes. It was like

borrowed from the Janes instead of

borrowing it from the brahinss that

particular term asawa was b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b b borrowed from the Janes. And it's like something that flows in and sticks to you.

And so the Janes believe that karma sticks to your ja or your soul, weighs it down so it can't float up into heaven. So you have to exhaust all of your karma, not create any new karma, bad or good, and just exhaust the karma you've already got. Partly just through like passive self- torture, eating only once a week, you know, this kind of stuff. And so I mean there's a simplicity, like an elegance to it. I

mean it's very straightforward, very simple. You just exhaust your karma. Don't create any new karma and then you float upwards. Your ja floats upwards. Well, I mean it's interesting from an anthropological point of view. It's kind of entertaining.

But with regard to like the wisdom of the system, I do think that that Buddhism is is a better system in pretty much every respect except for like the Abidama stuff. And the Janes really didn't have very many scholars. I've mentioned this in previous Q&As also where they were just hardcore aesthetics and they didn't have enough monks just memorizing texts because they weren't

written down in ancient India. You know, it was just ancient Indian tradition that sacred texts especially, you memorize. You just memorize it by heart. And the James just didn't have enough scholars to just memorize. And so they lost their, you know, their version of the typica twice. They had to have like a great council where they would kind of cobble together all that remained trying to fill in the gaps to some degree.

But I've completely wandered away from the question.

And so I think I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Nirmmit and Nermit says, "Is it true that Adish

Shankarachara was a major reason for Buddhism's decline in India?" And Shankarachara was like in a way he was sort of like the founding father of Advita Vanta.

So

I mean it's possible that Shankarachara was a kind of reason for Buddhism's decline simply because he was borrowing ideas from Majamaka Buddhists and sort of sort of Hinduizing it. So he was taking some advanced Buddhist philosophy to some degree and just incorporating that into Hinduism so Hinduism could compete philosophically better with the Buddhists.

I mean when it was just like vadism it

was relatively crude philosophically and
so the Buddhists really I mean
they could win debates pretty easily but
then when somebody like Shankara comes
along and you know adds sophisticated
philosophy to the Hindu side then
there's more competition which would
then weaken Buddhism but I mean it
wasn't the main reason
I think the main reasons for Buddhism
decline in India. First of all, of
course, you had the the Muslim Turks
just genociding Indian Buddhists in
ancient times. One of the largest
genocides in history that almost never
gets mentioned, at least not in the

West. That would be Islamophobic.
But also Buddhism was becoming more and
more esoteric,
just tantric and relying upon like
Buddhist universities and so forth that
the the average lay person living in a
village just could not relate to it as
much. You know, it was just so far
beyond them, they couldn't really relate
to it. And so, um, Buddhism kind of lost
some footing in India because of that.
And just some of the weird tandric ideas
were just getting really out there. You
know, they were just sort of pushing it
and pushing it. Sort of like
progressivism in the west, the
post-modern west has just gone so far

that it's just losing the common person.
You know, it's just sort of like this
fanatical fringe that still takes it
seriously at this point.
So yeah, I do think it's possible that
Shankara just through sort of adapting
Majamaka Buddhist ideas and I mean he he
he had to have been influenced by
Buddhism even if just his own inherent
wisdom. I mean he was considered to be
fully enlightened since he was a child.
So I mean it could be that he was a sage
also that just spontaneously
you know realized certain things but
then he still he could like take certain
philosophical concepts from Buddhism and

just sort of transplant them into the nent you know protohinduism which then strengthened Hinduism and sort of relatively speaking weakened Buddhism. So that's possible.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from OFM.

And OFM says, "What's your take on mind essence direct path Buddhist Mahammudra teachings in India that apparently carried over to Tibetan Vajraana?" Well, I mean, I kind of was touching on that sort of thing just just a few moments ago with this is sort of getting into the tantric kind of esoteric stuff that the average lay Buddhist in India just could not relate to anymore and it was

just beyond them.

But mind, essence, I mean, in a way that kind of contradicts earlier Buddhism in that nothing in samsara has an essence. And I mean, you get out of samsara and essence doesn't even mean anything anymore.

So, um, but aside from that, I'm really no expert on like Tibetan Buddhism, Tric Buddhism. I've never really had much interest in it. became fairly obvious very early on that the historical Gorama Buddha didn't teach it. And my main interest or one of my main interests as a Buddhist and as a monk for 30 years was to find out as well as I could what

Gorama Buddha taught. Because if I was a Buddhist, I want to follow what the Buddha taught. I don't want to follow a bunch of madeup stuff that that arose centuries later. I didn't want to just follow along with Burmese tradition or Thai tradition. I mean, I wanted to know what the Buddha taught and I wanted to follow it as well as I could. And it became pretty obvious very early on. Vajraana or Maha Mudra, this kind of stuff. I mean it has certain elements of early Buddhism but for the most part it leaves like the original teachings of Gorama Buddha behind or it just incorporates so much other stuff you know this later additions that it just

dilutes down the original message of

Gorama Buddha and I just didn't have

much interest in that I didn't even have

much interest in like Abidama which is

terra Buddhist the third pitka

most western monks just don't have any

use for they'll just reject it or just

ignore it.

So

yeah, I I say so an awful lot. It's just

it's like a filler.

Every language has its filler particles.

So is one in English, I guess.

And I almost said so again just now.

What's your take? Some some people say

basically that kind of thing a lot too.

I used to do that until somebody pointed
out to me that basically is just another
meaningless filler for the most part.
So my take on mind essence direct path
Buddhist Mahammudra teachings in India
that apparently carried over into
Tibetan vajarana in a way was just
progressive Buddhism that was it still
had like profound wisdom in it but it
was it was deviating so far from what
the Buddha taught or what like
most like reasonable kind
spiritual seekers can really wrap their
head around or fully appreciate. I guess
that I mean it's uh I mean it's just
kind of o gone overboard in my opinion.
I mean if you if you really don't care

what the Buddha really taught then you can just follow any system and call yourself a Buddhist and that's fine. You know that's just the way you choose to do it. That's that's okay with me. But I mean, if you're on my Discord server and are insisting that the Buddha taught like whatever just, you know, some obviously later Mahayana concept, then you might get push back.

But this kind of stuff, I mean, it's got its own wisdom.

I'm sure it does. There may be fully enlightened Mahammudra Buddhists out there, or at least historically, but it has deviated too far from what

the historical God Buddha originally taught for it to be of any great interest to me other than just kind of historical or anthropological interest. Maybe to some degree a kind of triangulation. That's been one of the main benefits I've gotten from studying other philosophies and religious systems, especially like advanced philosophies and religious systems is it allows a kind of triangulation. What is it that sages in different parts of the world agree upon? That kind of thing. And then you take that more seriously than a oneoff. You know, you've got this one sage in like Italy or like like China or wherever that is saying this

one unique thing that is at odds with others. Then you might be a little more skeptical of that. But then again, God Buddha had his own unique teachings like no self, one of the few spiritual systems that rejects the idea of an eternal soul.

So, you just have to be careful.

Let's see here.

I guess I answered that one. So, I'm just going to move on to the next one, which the next question, which is from No Juice.

And No Juice says, "If someone loses focus on Dharma and finds themselves sucked into samsara, what can they do to

correct themselves and return to grounding their mind in dharma?" Not necessarily living an actively evil or nihilistic life but forgetting dhamma as an active factor coloring their perception and mental states. I feel that I tend to go through prolonged cycles between spiritual mindfulness and mental immersion in the world. Well, note it like you suddenly notice that you're just wallowing in samsara. You note it and as soon as you note it, you're not wallowing in samsara anymore. the noting of the wallowing and the wallowing itself they're incompatible you know they're mutually exclusive so you're wallowing in samsara when you

note that you're wallowing in samsara like you're pissed off and all of a sudden you become mindful of being pissed off then you have transcended it in a sense you've separated it you're not wallowing it anymore because you're just the observer in a sense you know if you're anything at all you're the one doing the observing and not the thing being observed So anything that you can observe, it's not you and it's not ultimately real.

And so you're wallowing in samsara. Suddenly you notice you're wallowing in samsara. That's it. You've cured yourself for that moment at least.

So I mean mahasi teachers, teachers of the mahasi method, I mean for the for them this would just be like an obvious answer. Just note it.

Note it. Note it. Note it. And it's a lot of mahasi teachers, even the really advanced ones, just about any question you you have, you have any problem in your meditation, any kind of weird phenomenon in your meditation, any any kind of stumbling block or anything like that, the the most usual most likely answer you're going to get is note it. And that I mean, in a way, it's like a panacea.

So it might not resolve the problem but at least you are detached from the

problem. The problem isn't you anymore. So if you're wallowing in samsara or sucked into samsara to the extent that you know that you're not sucked into samsara anymore. It's like one of my favorite verses of the dharmap. The fool who's aware of his foolishness is at least wise to that extent. But the fool who considers himself wise is called a fool indeed. So if you know that you're getting you're getting sucked into samsara sometimes that's at least you're wise to that extent

and the more you are aware of that just just be mindful of it and to the extent that you're mindful of it you're not

wallowing in it anymore you're not
sucked into samsara anymore to the
extent that you are noting and aware of
it
and it's sort of like meditation it's
like you note it and then you kind of
like stray back into samosauric modes of
being and then you as soon as you're
aware of that you just note it again and
it's like bringing back the meditation
to the breath or whatever.
So in a way it's it's it's pretty much
just like meditation on a grand scale.
As soon as you notice you're deviating
from dharma or or just being in the
present moment or being mindful or
whatever, then you just note it and come

back to to the center, so to speak.
And I'm just going to move on to this
question. This is from Stellar Supreme,
formerly known as Librelam,
and he says, "Would you ever breed
poison dart frogs?"
No, I'm I'm really not into raising
frogs. I mean, if I were going to raise
amphibians,
definitely I would choose salamanders
over frogs. I prefer salamanders to
frogs. Nothing against frogs. I am not
like a a frog aophobe, anything like
that, but I just like salamanders
better. I had a few salamanders when I
was a kid. I kept one in a big brandy

snifter and you drop an earthworm into it and that salamander would just like attack that worm and they'd be like rolling around in the in the water with it like like it was like an alligator attacking a snake or something.

So, no on the poison dart frogs. I'm just going to move on. Next question.

This is from Xenithoid.

And Xenithoid says, "Apparently getting a Buddha tattoo is against the law in some places. Did you ever see people with Buddha tattoos in Asia?" No, I can't say that I ever saw anyone with a Buddha tattooed on their arm or leg or whatever in in Burma.

Um,

I'm not exactly sure why that is,
but usually they have Buddhist symbols.
They can have Buddhist symbols, but more
likely it's going to be more of a like a
traditional Burmese
pretty much like animistic or alchemical
kind of tattoos or it's just going to be
ornamental for some reason. There's I
mean, you can see Buddhist monks in
Burma with like big scorpion on their
leg, that kind of thing. I knew this one
uh Buddhist monk in Burma, Burmese monk.
He had a university degree in English,
but his body was just covered with
tattoos and they were all like magical
tattoos like to protect him from

witchcraft and snake bites and it was just sort of like like runes like Burmese runes all over him.

So I mean one thing this question did remind me of though is like around 200 after 2011 after Burma opened up to like western capitalism you know the sanctions were released because they pretended to stop having a military government and all that. So there was a fellow from New Zealand I think and I mean after 2011 there was just this flood of westerners coming into Burma just looking around for ways to make money. You know it's just a new untapped resource. You know it's a you know this capitalism hasn't really gotten its its

roots in here yet. We're going to make a we're going to make a mint.

So anyways, this this New Zealand guy, he he sets up a nightclub in Rangon and he puts out an advertisement of the Buddha wearing stereo headphones and the Burmese government promptly arrested this guy and threw him into prison for sacrilege, I guess.

And I knew a few people that were thinking that's really pushing it. I mean, that's going too far. But for me, I mean, they were making an example of him, and I think they they may have been justified. You've got all these irreligious Westerners, flooding into

the most devoutly Buddhist country in the world, probably. And they're just like showing the Buddha with stereo headphones on, just being irreligious.

And

the government was just saying, "We don't put up with that [__] in this country. You want to do that [__] go back to New Zealand, go back to America, England, wherever. You're not doing it here. And so I could appreciate it to some degree.

I mean, he was just an unfortunate example. He [__] around and he found out, but I bet not very many people put out similar advertisements after that happened. The problem was solved

essentially.

So yeah, but no on the Buddha tattoos.

For some reason, I do not recall seeing

a Buddha tattoo on any tattooed person

in Asia. So, oh, there's one other

thing, though. When I was in Japan, I

spent a range retreat in Japan like in

1997,

and somebody gave us Buddha cookies.

There were cookies shaped like the

Buddha. And I mean, in Burma, people

would be afraid to eat these, you know,

it's just they would not sell at all.

But I mean, I ate mine. But it's like

there was definitely like this twinge of

should I really be doing this while I'm

like biting the head off of a Buddha cookie?

But I'm just going to move on to Xenoid's next question here. What is the general attitude toward tattoos in ter countries? Well, the only country I can really speak of based on years of experience is Burma. And I've already mentioned a lot of people have tattoos in Burma. even like I mean it's not like in America

where you know there's people with just like tats all over them sleeve tattoos um it's mostly guys every once in a while you'll see a woman that just has like I knew this one village woman who had like three dots tattooed on her

wrist and um she went to like a fair or
a festival or something and there was
this tattoo person I don't know if you
call them an artist if they're just
doing three dots But this tattooist
u was giving like protection tattoos and
maybe the three dots just represent
Buddha Dhamama or some such thing you
know it's just a very subtle Buddhist
kind of tattoo not a Buddha but it was
like had this protective quality to it
and um I mean it's not just a recent
thing because there's less tattoos now
than there were before the British took
over Burma Because like in the 1800s,
it was just the standard practice for

men to be completely tattooed from the knee to the to the hips. And it would almost all be covered up by their sarong. But if they lift up their sarong to cross a river or something, Tom Puliata was like this. If he would lift up his his robes to like wait across the stream or something, you would see that his upper legs were just completely covered with tattoos just, you know, like a sleeve kind of tattoo.

Also, I have read that in the 1800s or very early 20th century that it was a fashion in Burma for men to get the top of their penis slid open and like little jingle bells. I think they're called chew in Burmese. Like implanted into

their penis so that their penis would have like this this jingly lump under the skin. Although I I guess I could have uh

like refrained from mentioning that part. But yeah, there's tattoos were really a big deal in Burma. That for example, I've I've read somewhere that uh burglars, thieves in particular, would get a tattoo of a yawning cat on their thigh, which presumably made them like jump higher and be faster and this kind of thing. And like I've already mentioned, a lot of protection tattoos. Like there's a kind of runic symbol thing in Burma called an inn. It looks

like a a tic-tac-toe tic-tac-toe board.
And then a few of the the spaces on the
tic-tac-toe board would have like
obscure little marks.
And there's a kind of alchemy in Burma
that is based on ins. You know, there's
different kind of alchemists in Burma.
You've got iron alchemists and mercury
alchemists, mantra alchemists, and you
got the in alchemist
that specializes in these weird symbolic
figures.
So, there's a lot of that kind of thing,
you know, tattoos to protect you from
witchcraft and and and snake bites and
that kind of thing. And then some are
just ornamental, but they're very common

among um among men, possibly more common
than in the modern west where tattoos,
even virgins get tattoos in the west
now, which is kind of strange.
So let's see here. General attitude
toward tattoos in ter countries. Again,
I can only speak about Burma and it was
well established in Burmese culture,
even more than now in the past.
Also, I think it was in Thailand that
there was certain hill tribes, maybe it
was in Burma, where among certain hill
tribes, maybe it was the Chin in Burma,
where the girls would get their faces
tattooed just like covered their faces
with tattoos like like some kind of

Mexican gang member. That was the purpose of that was to make them less attractive to the like the local lords who might want to include them in their herums. just like recruit them against their will to live in the big house and wear pretty dresses and so forth.

So yeah, it's it's common in Southeast Asia as a general rule. I'm pretty sure.

So I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's third tattoo question.

Have you ever considered getting a tattoo of anything related to Buddhism?

And really, I have not. Um I've never really wanted to get a tattoo. It's like my skin is like the top of the jar of peanut butter before you you've scooped

any out. You know, it's just seems a shame to mar this pristine surface, so to speak.

But I used to have this idea of just getting the M symbol, which is more Hindu than Buddhist. There is M in in Buddhism. So, I guess it could qualify here

kind of on the on the borderline, but I was considering just getting the M symbol maybe on my ankle or just like over my left shoulder blade,

but that would be about as close to a Buddhist tattoo that I've ever considered. And my woman wants us to get matching tattoos. And I'm just kind of

resisting it because I don't have any tattoos at all. It seems like if I ever decide to take up a life of crime, having identifying marks might be a bad idea.

And it's like you're just stuck with it. You know, you get a tattoo, you're just stuck with it for the rest of your life. You might decide it was a bad idea a year later. Too bad for you. You can get lasers on it or something that will at least make it fade.

My father had one tattoo on his body. It was in block letters on on his forearm. It said, "Lest I forget."

And

I think he had it done on VE Day when he

was in he was a soldier in World War II and he got really stinking drunk one time celebrating that the the Allies had won and he got that tattooed on his arm. That's that's one story. Um, I think on another occasion he said there was a different reason for it, but he never told me what the different reason was. So, I'm just going with the the VE day one. And I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Robert. And Robert says, "What do you think of the Gnostics?"

Well, I really don't know that much about the Gnostics. And what little I know, I I'm just not very much

impressed. You know, the Gnostics, I'm
just the stereotypical Gnostic.
who rides a gnu
is bitten by ganats so that he's
ganacheing his teeth in frustration
the typical gnostic stereotypical I mean
they believe that the world is like evil
and I mean that's even more than Buddha
Buddhism says it's suffering you know
the this world dook up this world is
dook up it's on fire so forth but the
gnostics took it a step further it seems
to me that it's like this is a bad place
and you need to like just like
dissociate from worldliness as much as
you can. Just just the flesh is just bad
and it just it just seems

it's more negative. I mean a lot of people say Buddhism is negative butnosticism seems to have taken it even like even farther into a realm that I consider to be relatively unhealthy. But I'm no authority on the Gnostics. I mean they had some influence on early Christianity. I've read that the epis not the epistle but the the gospel according to John was composed largely for the sake of refuting certain gnostic sects that had gained prominence in the early second century of the common era. I think uh the gospel according to Thomas, which I like. I wish that it had been included in the New Testament

instead of John,

I think that was uh partly Gnostic in origin. It may have been uh like u a gospel that was accepted by the Gnostics but not by more mainstream like more Catholic kind of Christians.

Um, and the Gnostics, they just they just took the ball and ran with it with regard to like classifying angels and so forth, which doesn't strike me as useful in any degree. I mean, the Buddhists kind of do that with regard to Davas and Brahas, but I mean, it's not really important to me. I don't see how that's going to help you to wake up.

So what little I know about the Gnostics, I mean they seem to have gone

deeper than like mainstream Christians.
I don't think they would have gone
deeper than like contemplative monastics
in Orthodox Christianity or Catholicism.
But I mean because I mean once you get a
certain point I mean you're a heavy
hitter and it's you know once you become
like a really advanced mystic you're not
going to get much more advanced than
that.
So I assume the Gnostics there was a lot
of wisdom like the pseudo Dianionis I
don't know if he was a Gnostic but I'm
sure the Gnostics liked him.
Uh you know they they may have had more
of a mystical leaning but two things

about them that I mean I kind of understand or at least believe is one that they were just overly negative towards this world. you know just sort of like aversion dosa towards this world which is not like a balanced point of view it seems to me and second just this extreme classification of different archons and levels of angels and so forth that I mean it's just like complete mythology at that point but I'm sure they had like advanced practices they probably had like very wise gnostic sages and so forth But those aren't really the ones that you learn a lot about in history books. And that's like the only place I've learned

about gnostics for the most part is just like history books about like early Christianity or the late Roman Empire, that kind of thing.

So I'm just going to move on to Robert's second question. Do you have any opinions on the Sufis? Well, I have read that Muhammad,

peace be upon him, would have just vehemently disapproved of the Sufis that Muhammad was very I mean the the Islam that he taught was very thisworldly even though you know there's an emphasis on heaven and so forth that like Old Testament um like protojudaism doesn't have you know he might be a

little more spiritual than Old Testament Judaism

But still he was pretty much in and of the world. And so the Sufis I'm pretty sure were influenced by India.

Um I'm no authority on the Sufis. I know that they have adopted certain Buddhist ideas even adopted like Buddhist stories like there's a story from I think it's the Dhamapata commentary that also is included in like an old Sufi book of of stories. So

um there obviously has been some influence from Buddhism and probably Hinduism also on Sufism and that's probably where they get their mysticism you know their meditative techniques or

at least the original idea for meditative techniques. I'm sure that there have been sages like very spiritually advanced people all over the world in all religions just they just happen to be born there you know they just have this innate talent and you know they're just stuck with this this religion that you know everyone around them follows and if you don't follow it then you get killed or something. I mean there are places and times in history like that like 16th century Spain for example.

So I do think that Sufism was a kind of it started off as a kind of eastern

Islam probably in Persia like what's
that area
like it's sort of like on the the
frontier between northwestern India and
southeastern Iran or Persia that had a
lot of Buddhism there and then of course
it was part of the Persian Empire for a
long time and so there'd be after Muslim
Islam took over you know there'd like
some cultural influence and um you know
cultural influence just through invasion
of India also later on.
So I do think that Sufism is like Islam
that got a little bit more sophisticated
through incorporating certain Buddhist
and Hindu ideas and practices.
And aside from that, there are there is

some Sufism that like whirling dervishes I don't have much use for. But some of those the crazy wisdom of some of the Sufi masters. I remember there's reading about this one Sufi master who would just do like weird backwards stuff. I guess the the Dakota Indians or Lakota Indians of the the Plains in the in the United States, they had this one member of the tribe who would do everything the opposite. I'm not exactly sure why, but you know, it's like he'd fall madly in love with the ugliest, most foul-tempered woman in the in the village and he'd ride his horse backwards and he'd just laugh aoriously

if the chief died. This kind of thing. There were certain Sufi masters that were like that. And there's this one story that sticks in my mind of this Sufi master who's like at a marketplace sitting next to a pile of hot chilies and he's just eating one chili pepper after another after another. Just tears streaming down his face. His face is just beat red. You know, he's obviously in a serious amount of discomfort from eating these hot peppers. Somebody finally asked him, "Why are you doing this?" And he said, "I I keep eating them just hoping to get a sweet one." And you know, they're they're making some kind of crazy wisdom kind of

teaching out of it, which I it kind of appeals to me. I can kind of appreciate that sort of thing. But still, I don't see what the point of favoring Sufism would be when you can just get the the pure source of the best of Sufism farther east.

So,

I'm just going to move on to Robert's third question, which is, which of the mystic traditions outside of Buddhism do you consider to come closest to getting it right? Well, I mean getting what right?

Um I mean a mystic tradition would have like two different levels. There would

be the level of mysticism and then

there'd be like the level of like theory

and

I mean a mystic

if he's an advanced mystic like I've

already been mentioning like St. John of

the Cross here we go again. I mean he

really was a master of fourth Janna. He

was like an advanced heavyhitterter

mystic but he lived in 16th century

Spain. He had no choice but to be a

Catholic or to be a heretic burned at

stake. Those were his two choices. So he

was a Catholic and he he entered a

contemplative order that the cal the

Carmealites.

His mentor was St. Teresa of Avia who

was also uh like an advanced mystic even
though she apparently was a little bit
nutty
but still I mean those aren't mutually
exclusive.
So I mean with regard to the actual
mysticism of just getting into
contemplative states where you're wide
awake and not thinking anything then I
mean just about any mystical tradition
can have that. I mean at least in like
gifted talented individuals
but with regard to the theory
surrounding that mysticism
I mean none of it's going to be very
good because mysticis like mystical

enlightenment or mystical illumination cannot be explained in words and you're just going to be using cultural conditioning and so forth as a as a way of just jerryrigging some kind of some theoretical framework. work to to explain it and I mean none of it is really of any great value with regard to explaining it.

I mean even Buddhism like there are some serious Buddhists. Nyan Vera the the existentialist eccentric English monk who lived in son in the 50s and 60s. He just hated mysticism. He just utterly despised it. You know he just vehemently insisted that there's no such thing as that that mysticism is just [__]

And I think a lot of orthodox devout terra Buddhists would not consider terra to be a mystical tradition. I mean it's pretty clear to me if you read like the atakawaga or you know what janna is that pretty damn mystical

and just uh well

the ways of explaining it are just are not they're always going to fall short.

So,

it's this is a hard question for me to answer. Which mystical traditions outside Buddhism come closest to getting it right? I mean, getting it right just means being in an advanced mystical state because none of the theories are

going to get it right. All the theories
are going to be invalid.
And there have been mystics in just
about every tradition probably Sufi
Sufism included.
And I mean there could be just
completely non-religious people who just
have mystical experiences
either through a new neardeath
experience or whatever. Some of them
might not ever try to even explain it.
So this is a tough question. This might
be the most difficult question I've been
asked on this Q&A.
Which of the mystical traditions outside
Buddhism come closest to getting it
right?

I think all of them do. At least with regard to the actual practice of mysticism. Um, I mean, Christianity, I don't know, it's it's like exceptional Christians in in certain periods like 16th century Spain, there were a lot of heavyhitting mystics in 16th century Spain.

But nowadays,

I don't know. Meister Ehart was another one of these really advanced Christian mystics. But some people say Paul of Tarsus was a mystic. And I mean, his mysticism based on his epistles does not seem to be extremely advanced or at least he doesn't mention anything

extremely advanced. I mean, he does have like this one epistol where he's kind of making this innuendo about this stuff that he experienced that was so, you know, so exalted, but I mean, his personality doesn't really reflect that. Then you have the pseudoianis who started off as a pagan and then when or so I have read some Byzantine emperor bans the philosophicalmies
or schools of of Athens you know they're just pretty much like clamping down on paganism then the pseudodianicius just for whatever reasons converted to Christianity and started introducing relatively advanced mysticism into Christianity.

So getting it right really would just be
having as pure of a mystical experience
as possible, which is just wide awake,
not thinking anything, no perceptual
like no perceptual
explanation,
commentary, anything like that.
And I guess I better just move on to the
next question. And this is our last
questioner.
By golly, I think I'm getting a little
more concise even though I still digress
all over the place. Well, we did have
slightly fewer questions than usual this
time and some of them were relatively
easy to answer.

Anyways, our next and last question here is Fred and Fred says, "When the body is dispersed, is the mind stream capable of storing previous memories?"

Golly.

Yeah. Well, going with Terraata Buddhism, as soon as the body is dispersed, you get a new body. So, I mean, there's not even a single moment when you have the mind stream without a body, unless you're like in a a formless realm, which is extremely advanced heaven realm.

But aside from that, I mean, you go from dying person to fertilized egg is immediately. no gap in between other than just the tiniest, you know,

fraction of a trillionth of a second in between the flashes of these moments.

And then the minds the mental states aren't there either during that that tiniest infinite little gap.

So is the mind stream capable of storing previous memories without a body?

Uh gosh, that's really a theoretical question cuz personally I don't recall not having a body and storing previous memories in my mind stream while not having that body.

But theoretically, I don't think it would be absolutely necessary to have a body in order to have a mind and a mind stream.

There are presumably just like spirit beings that don't have a physical body. Although in terraata Buddhism generally the explanation for that like ghosts and so forth is that they do have a body. It's just that their body is of a different is made of a different kind of matter than ours. So that we don't see them. They generally don't see us. And so I mean we could be like in the same room together and not even know it.

Um but just theoretically going with the idea that anything is possible I don't see why in some version of reality somewhere somehow you have got minds that don't rely upon

a brain

that you just have like this I don't

know I mean it could just be like some

kind of resonating pulsing energy or

something that has enough structure to

it, you know, some sort of geometric

stability or some such that I mean it

doesn't need a brain. It just it's mind

only,

I suppose.

And yeah, I I don't see why it would be

impossible in theory. Let's just put it

that way. With regard to humans,

then I mean, you don't have a body

without a mind. You don't have a mind

without a body. They just they're

together. Namarupa, at least according
to Orthodox Terra.
So, I'm just going to move on to Fred's
next question,
which is what is the purpose of previous
memories when they can be bogus
recollections and bias? Well, I mean,
there's not really a purpose. I mean,
it's just sort of like like a side
effect or it's like um some I've I've
watched a lot of ghost shows like
paranormal reality shows where
paranormal investigators, which usually
they're not. They're just like making a
show to make money, you know, just
playing up. Oh, I got a weird feeling
just now. you know this kind of [__]

that at least I mean according to the theory that some haunted houses may really have intelligent spirits like haunting that house but a lot of so-called haunted houses just have like this residual energy like residual emotional imprints in the house that that cause sort of like apparitions that really just are doing the same thing every time. You know, it's just you just see this apparition of the lady in white walking down the hall and that's all she ever does. You know, it's just sort of like this imprint in the aosic record or something of of her just, you know, she was had some emotionally intense

experience. Maybe her child just died or something and so it just somehow imprinted that energy into the house somehow. And I mean, what is the purpose of it? There's no purpose. It just happens. It's like this residual side effect and like a child remembering a past life

then I mean it's not really a purpose. I mean maybe there could be some kind of Darwinian survival value to that. I don't know what it would be some sort of like racial memory or something. I'm not sure. But I mean it this kind of reminds me of one time I was working on a commercial fishing vessel, a factory trwler in the Bearing Sea long ago and I

was the biologist on board and so one of these guys working on the ship asked me what is the purpose of a jellyfish and it's like the purpose of a jellyfish is to stay alive long enough to make baby jellyfishes. You know it's there's not really a purpose. So what is the purpose of previous memories when they can be bogus recollections bias? I mean the easiest answer is there is no purpose. It's just kind of like this residual side effect that happens sometimes that and there's not necessarily a purpose there. If there was like this valuable purpose, then it might just happen to pretty much

everybody

instead of just being this like rare

phenomenon of children especially, small

children especially who insist that they

were this other person who died and then

became them.

And I think most if not all but most

like past life regressions are just kind

of bogus recollections and bias like

like uh Fred here says you know it's

just you know you get hypnotized and

then they say go back to your your

previous existence and it could just be

like subconscious imagination you know

just dreaming up this past life that

never happened. I assume a lot of cases

are like that. Even like pa alya pa

aliato specialized in teaching janna or like samata meditation unlike most um meditation teachers in Burmese traditions who teach like mindfulness sip batana paliato I mean he was really into janna and I mean he was more orthodox than somebody like mahasiato. I mean he was he was more according to the text and what is like like genuine orthodox terra Buddhist theory.

And I mean some of some of his examples of success stories like there was this one female meditator who had a past life regression of being a royal white elephant who as a result of the merit of offering a flower to a pigota got reborn

as a human. And to a Burmese person who takes that kind of stuff seriously, I mean, they don't they don't question it. It's like, wow, that's that's profound. But to a westerner capable of critical thought, you know, it's like, why would a an elephant offer a flower to a pigota and and have this wish of being reborn as a human and then have the wish fulfilled through the merit of offering a flower to a a bell-shaped pile of bricks?

So yeah, what is the purpose of previous memories? For the most part, there is no purpose. It just is like this unusual largely paranormal sort of liinal experience that is sort of going against

purpose. You know, it's just like this
not exactly random, but it's just like
this quirky side effect that comes up
sometimes.
slips through the cracks of the the
rules of this version of Sams Sara.
So, I'm just going to move on to Fred's
third question, which is the last
question of the evening or the morning
if you I guess it technically is
morning. No, it isn't. It's not even
tomorrow yet. Golly,
this is a late one though.
The fish tank's going to the light's
going to turn off any time now. So,
Fred's last question. Why is the ego

pernicious and selfdepreciating?

I'm not exactly sure what

self-depreciating means

is he I guess he's saying why is the ego

pernicious and also why is the ego

self-depreciating which I assume means

something like like not beneficial.

So yeah that's why is the ego not

beneficial? Let's just kind of simplify

the question. And the ego is not

beneficial largely because it's based on

delusion.

I mean the ego is the belief. It is the

conceit I am which is the root of all

suffering. Like that's that's a

statement in the

it's in the artaga. I'm pretty sure this

may not be an exact quote but it's like the conceit I am is the root of all suffering.

So I mean that's one reason why the ego is not beneficial. It's based on delusion.

And so I mean if you're deluded you're going to suffer. I mean if you transcend the ego you realize that the ego is just sort of taking a tiny infinitismally small fraction of infinity and trying to turn that into reality and ignore all the rest of infinity.

Then yeah, it's going to be incomplete. It's going to be unsatisfying based on delusion and ignorance and it's

just I mean the ego has to perpetuate itself.

It's just sort of built into egos. It's like Darwinian evolution where the struggle for survival. I mean all beings fear death for example or at least any being that feels fear. I mean, you might have animals that are so primitive they don't have any fear at all.

I think insects may be that way despite the fact that they might get out of the way of a slapping hand.

But I mean, there has to be this desire to keep going and this desire is suffering. Desire is the cause of all suffering. So, in order to have an ego, you pretty much have to suffer. You have

to be delusional and you have to be unhappy, at least not fully satisfied. So the more ego you've got, the more samsaric you are, the more delusional you are, at least in certain respects. And delusion results in suffering. the ego just it through its desire to perpetuate itself and its desire to continue existing, you know, it's it's pretty much at odds with reality. It's going to lose the battle sooner or later. No matter how hard you try to stay alive, sooner or later you're going to fail.

And the harder you try, it's like the more dissatisfied and worried and

stressed and everything you're going to be. So the more ego you have, the more kind of isolation you've got also.
You know, it's like alienation from the rest of samsara at the very least.
And also it's just like alienation from reality.
So there's lots of reasons why the ego is pernacious.
I mean really, I mean the ego is based on delusion. From a Buddhist point of view, there is no self.
So, the belief that you are a self, I mean, it's putting you at odds with reality. And when you're odds with reality, you lose because reality always wins.

And I suppose I might as well just stop here.

like I should always say at the beginning and only did once to my recollection. If you have any questions you think I can answer,

then go ahead and ask those particular questions and I will do my best to answer them. And uh like and subscribe if you have not done so already. And if you're into it, be happy.

Okay, I think we're recording now.

Hail audience. Hello and welcome to question and answer number 160. I am your host Ponyo Bosa and this is my glass of boine glandular secretions.

And of course 160 is nowhere near to being prime. about as unprimed as you can get because if I did my math correctly, 160 is 2 * 2 * 2 * 2 * 2 * 5 or if you prefer 5 * 2 5th power.

So

before I start answering questions, we don't have a whole lot of questions. This will probably be a relatively short one, but before I start answering questions, there are a couple things I'd

like to cover. One is you may have
noticed that I have technical
difficulties with these videos
sometimes. Like last week, for unknown
reasons, there was like this weird
reverb
effect in in like the audio up until
about halfway through the video and then
it suddenly spontaneously cleared up.
Other times it's like not too long ago,
the sound just completely cut off about
halfway through the video.
And then before that, before switching
to a different um like
what do you call it recording software
that sometimes I would have to do the
same video twice or even three times

because it would appear to be recording and then I'd go back and it would be like an empty file.

So I do have kind of a theory about this partly. I mean it could be the karma of some of the people involved probably all the people involved is such that there has to be some kind of difficulties in the transmission of dharma or dharma if you prefer.

So it's like it shouldn't be too easy that the easier it is to get something the less it is worth. It's a law of economics. It works with regard to like females and that sort of thing too. It's not just economics. Works that way with

Dharma, too. Apparently,

easier it is to get it, the less it is worth. Which is one reason why the philosopher Girdf deliberately made his philosophy hard to understand. So, you'd have to work like rack your brains to try and understand what he was trying to say. But since I don't do that, we have to have technical difficulties. Although I've also got this thing about technical stuff, like complicated technical stuff often breaks down around me. Like when I would ride a bus in Burma, almost always it would break down. But then again, it could be that just buses in Burma almost always break down.

There's that, too. I mean, one time I

was on a bus, the entire drive line just fell out right onto the highway. Anyways, that was my halfbaked theory with regard to why there are so many technical difficulties in my videos. But also, I remember like maybe a couple months ago, somebody asked me if there's any story about my monk's life that I haven't told yet. And of course, one reason why I haven't told such stories is because I don't think of them. But then the other night when I was taking a shower when I get good ideas I I take get good ideas when I'm bathing for some reason. It was that way in Burma too. I remember this story about when I first

came to Mahagandon which is a big school monastery in Amarapura in central Burma. Uh for a short time a few years Amarapura was actually the capital of Burma but now it's just kind of a like a suburb of Mandalay.

And I spent a little over a year at Mahagandon which is a big school monastery. My the abbott of the first monastery I stayed at. My acharia sent me there just to learn Burmese and study some poly and that sort of thing.

So anyways, I was given a tour of the place when I first got there and they had like a little clinic there, just this little like a a sedite I think it was called like you know the medicine

building and there was like this little

spectacled monk, little Burmese monk

there who was showing me around and he

he took me to like the medicine cabinet

and

he he said you know anything you want

just help yourself and I'm looking in

this medicine cabinet. hadn't been a

monk for very long and I was kind of a

druggie before I became a monk

and there was like this big jug of

phenobarbatl there and and I'd never

taken barbiterates before in my life. I

think the hippies used to call them

yellows

and

at least this kind of of barbiterate phenobarbatl

and so I was just sort of had this inner struggle. It's like, man, should I just take a handful just just in case, you know, just just add it to my first aid kit, so to speak? Also, I remember they had like this big gallon jug of Valium there, too, but I just resisted the urge and didn't take any. And then, I mean, I didn't like, you know, um, take him up on his offer for me to just help myself to anything that was in the medicine cabinet. So later I asked one of the the other monks who was sort of taking charge of me. He's kind of like my supervisor, assistant teacher, that sort

of thing. I asked, "Is that monk there a doctor?" You know, the the the monk who's running the dispensary. And he says, "No, actually he's got a fourth grade education. It was just that some village or some local doctor or more than one doctor just gave him like the rundown the easy like basics on how to give injections and what to give for for different kinds of ailments
but probably in all likelihood he was mainly just handing out paracetamol and this stuff called bomidone which is like an antihistamine.
So anyways,
I guess I should start answering

questions. And this first question,
first group of questions is from Gnostic
Rocker, who asked me these questions
more than a week ago, but he sent the
questions in kind of an unusual place.
So I overlooked them last time. So he's
first on the list this time.
So what he did was he just emailed me
the questions. And usually people don't
email me questions or there's one other
person, Romeo, who will email me the
questions, but he'll also leave the
exact same questions under the YouTube
video, which is where I the first place
I look.
So anyways, Gnostic Rocker says,
"As an ex-minastic, what is your view of

the following?" And then he continues, as you might expect. He says, "Why is Araant upatisa's first century meditation manual and suta commentarial exugesis
the wimbouti maga rarely studied or even discussed in terra circles? The weimi maga is clearly an orthodox text of significant seriousness and historical context contextual integrity, but I have never heard a monastic even mention it." And he continues, "Is it because as a meditation instruction manual and hermeneutic suta interpretation, the Wimuta Maga, Wimuti Maga encourages a very different kind of dharma practice

than that outlined in the sutas. In the text, the Wii Muti Maga advises meditators to meditate on fire, to meditate on flowers, and to meditate on the flow, movement, and energy of wind, and to meditate on mandelas, which the meditator paints on cloth or walls. The text also says that after such practices, the meditator will attain the power to literally cause earthquakes, shake palaces, have the power to cause rain to fall and to start fires at will with his psychic powers. It outlines a very different kind of meditation path than the styles of samatawiasa that terra monastics usually teach. Is that the reason for the monastic silence on

the text? because it contrasts so
greatly with the standard suda guidance
and descriptions of meditators
attainments. Okay, so the question
essentially is
how about the Wii Moody manga? How come
it's not as big of a deal in Terravada
as Nostic Rocker thinks that maybe it
should be? So the thing is the Wimui
Maga was considered to be lost until
finally I think it was like in the 1970s
they found like an old palm leaf
manuscript stored away at some old
monastery in Sri Lanka. So it had just
essentially become extinct. The Wimi
Maga is apparently the Wii Maga as it is

like printed and translated today is
based on one old manuscript found at
some old monastery in Sri Lanka back in
the 19 like 1970s approximately.
So apparently what happened in Terravada
was you had
um southern India and in Sri Lanka you
had like proto commentaries I mean it
wasn't like the main commentarial
tradition yet but you still had
commentarial literature including this
wea manga I whether it really was
composed by an orahant named upatisa I
mean that could just be like a legend
but it is known that the wizudi manga
which is composed by Buddhagosa
was largely based like with regard to

format and everything on the Wii Moody manga. So it was sort of like supposedly a more orthodox or more in line with the like the development of orthodoxy
um than the weiimi manga was. So it was kind of based on the weoodi manga but it had like teachings that were more in line with what orthodox terraodada was becoming and so it just replaced the wemui maaga. The wisudi manga replaced the wimuti maga
and I mean that's like I mean once it was replaced by what was considered to be a superior text or at least a more orthodox text then the wimoody manga just kind of faded out.

So that's the main the main explanation
as far as I understand it. But let's see
with regard to
let's see. Yeah, I mean a lot of Asian
terraota monks have probably never heard
of the wemui manga just because like I
said it just kind of died out and it was
just based on like one text like some
ancient Latin texts and the only reason
that they exist I think some of Tacitus
is like this where it's just some
Catholic monastery had it preserved in
some library somewhere and it was just
ignored and forgotten until some scholar
finally
rediscovers it.
So, let's see. The Wii Maga advises

meditators to meditate on fire. Well, I mean, that's fire cina. That's one of the that's one of the methods taught in uh in the Wizudi Maga also to meditate on flowers. Um I don't remember the Wudi Maga advising meditation on flowers. Although in the commentary of literature there is a story of the Buddha teaching a monk to meditate by contemplating a flower. I think it was a red flower and the monk became enlightened as a result. He was a a disciple of venerable Sar Puta and Sar Puta not being omnisient was giving him meditation instructions that they they just weren't vibing with him very well. They weren't working very

well and my eyes are starting to kind of burn a little bit. This happens to me. I didn't take a shower today and so if I go for more than a day without taking a shower, eventually my eyes start to burn,
which I think is just like eyelid grease getting into my eyes.
So it's it behooves you to wash off your eyelid grease
or at least wipe them off. So anyways, oh so venerable Saruto was teaching this monk and it just wasn't working. So then this monk went to the Buddha and the Buddha could just like see right into him and see what he needed and just gave him a red flower and said meditate on

this and within no time the monk had become enlightened.

Let's see. Movement, energy of wind, wind cina. That's also taught in the Wizudi manga. To meditate on mandelas, which would be casinos in general at least. Um, a a casino would just be a solid color or a solid element like earth casina or blue cina or red cina, white casino, light casino, that kind of thing. So, it's the Wizudi manga and the Wii manga really are not like radically different. It's just that the Wudi Maga was considered to be like an a refinement and improvement plus like an adjustment of certain teachings that

maybe weren't as orthodox as they were when they were composed um in the Wii Moody maga.

So let's see and the certain powers like causing earthquakes and making rain and so forth. I mean that's not too far of a stretch from just orthodox terraoden mainstream doctrines.

So,

I guess I answered that question. And so, I'm just going to move on to Gnostic Rocker's second rather long question, which may even be longer than the first one. He says, "You mentioned that you had enjoyed Francis Herbert Bradley's Appearance and Reality, which is on the bookshelf back there. I haven't read it,

but I'm aware that it was a pivotal text for Burton Russell, exercising profound influence on his early years as a thinker. Professors Sprig and Hondur write of the text in the Oxford Companion to Philosophy that, and Gnostic Rocker quotes, quote, Bradley's appearance in reality is the main statement of his metaphysics. Book one, appearance, argues that most ordinary things
For example, things and their qualities, time and space, causation, the self, even things in themselves
are merely appearances. While book two, reality, strains to characterize with

more final truth the reality they so usefully misrepresent to us, namely the absolute, a single cosmic experience of which we, so far as we truly are at all, are components. FH Bradley's appearance in reality leads to a form of monism according to which there is only one thing distinctions within which are simply appearance. This is clearly heady stuff. There is no access to reality apart from what the mind provides us with and further that the mind can provide and reveal to us only its own contents. when I unquote. So then Gnostic Rocker continues, "When I read that quote, it seemed seems obvious to me why you would like Bradley like

George Barkley. It's very Hindu or Buddhist, isn't it?" Echoing the concepts of Maya, Samsara, Papancha, and Anicha. Am I correct in connecting the above to why you appreciate Bradley's work? Is it unsurprising that such a text would find its way to a monastery in ex British colonial setting of Burma? So the short version of this question is why do you like FH Bradley?

And I had never heard of FH Bradley until

I was reading the letters of venerable Nano Vera the eccentric existentialist British monk who lived in son back in the 50s and first half of the 60s before

he selfdeleted.

And he mentions in his letters, I mean, he was mostly into existentialism and like protoexistentialism like Kirkagard. He was heavily into reading Kirkagard, but he he mentioned that he was reading FH Bradley and he liked it. I think he was reading Bradley's Logic, which I think is also on the back the the back bookshelf there, but I've never read it and probably never will because I'm no longer living alone in a cave with nothing better to do than to read long difficult books and meditate.

So anyways, because venerable Nyana Vera was occasionally making comments about

FH Bradley and how he agreed with FH Bradley and so I thought, wow, that's that's just something I aspired to read someday is FH Bradley. So when I was in America during one of my sojourns to America,

um I had a supporter who was willing to get me the book and he it was out of print, long out of print. So he found it like a a used book online, I guess. I think it was printed in like 1910.

And nobody had read the entire book until I read the entire book. I went back to Burma and was reading it in a cave.

if I remember correctly.

So

let's see why do why did I like FH Bradley? Mainly just because he had such a different way of looking at things. That's one reason why I like David Hume too. You know he just you know most philosophers are looking at something from a certain point of view or at least from the same perspective and then some other philosopher just kind comes in sideways.

You know, like David Hume was was just challenging what most philosophers just accepted as given, just axiomatic, and he's saying, "Whoa, wait a minute. You can question that. That's not necessarily true." Like cause and effect

being a good one. When with respect to David Hume, FH Bradley, um he had one strike against him in that he was a Hegelian.

So it there was like a a fashion of like German um idealism which was founded essentially by Kant and then Hegel and Schopenhau were like the first generation of his dec or his successors who adopted uh like idealist just mindonly kind of philosophy that physical matter doesn't exist and so I mean I really don't have much use for Hegel, but Bradley, he really doesn't mention Hegel much and his philosophy just kind of, you know,

starts with some Hegelian assumptions like like there is no physical matter and then just kind of works out his version of reality from that. And um it's it was really kind of heavy reading and I didn't really absorb a whole hell of a lot of it. I do remember this one weird idea that Bradley had. It's like in order for something truly to exist, it would have to contain all of the causes of its existence internally. And so he comes up with this strange theory that because of this, the bigger something is, the more real it is, because the the greater the chances that more of the causes of this this entity's existence are internal. If something is

just like this tiny speck, then the causes of its existence aren't going to be there. So, I mean, that's kind of the Buddhist point of view is everything is just kind of atomized and the cause of that atom's existence is entirely not internal. You know, it's it's entirely external to that little speck's existence.

So, Bradley, he wasn't a Buddhist.

And so he just had this idea because you know that the more real something is is the the I mean in order for something to be absolutely real, it would have to contain within itself all of the causes of its own existence. And so he had this

theory that the bigger something is, the more causes of its own existence are likely to be inside of it. So that's kind of a weird idea that he just kind of arrives at. I don't know what what kind of

benefit there is from that. You know, like an elephant is more real than an ant because the elephant is bigger. So, the elephant would be more real than a human at least with regard to their their apparent physical bodies even though Bradley didn't really exist in or he didn't believe in physical bodies. He believed in the appearance of physical bodies.

But one thing that I especially like

about Bradley is his epistemology
that like at the turn of the 20th
century there were three main theories
with regard to epistemology or the
philosophy of
the philosophy of knowledge.
I think that's theory of knowledge.
That's it. Theory of knowledge was what
it was also called. So you had the
correspondence theory which is what
science is based on. The correspondence
theory is a statement is true if and
only if it corresponds to some empirical
reality. So going with the
correspondence theory the statement the
apple is on the table is true if and

only if there really is an apple on the table.

So then you had the coherence theory which was mainly championed by certain Hegelians including FH Bradley.

The coherence theory says that the statement a statement is true if and only if it is in harmony with the other statements that have already been determined to be true.

So the statement the apple is on the table is true if and only if it is in harmony with all the other perceptions you've already formulated that you consider to be true. So that comes closer to uh like a Buddhist interpretation of samsara and

conventional truth. So that's like conventional truth unlike like science and its attempt to like like build a tower of babel like an intellectual tower of babel up into the heavens of omniscience that it's just not going to work that way. It's it's just so long as you agree that it's true then it's true at least in a conventional sense and that is like samsaric truth. Ultimate truth would be more the correspondence theory. ultimate truth is something is true if and only if it corresponds to reality.

But I mean it it just kind of goes beyond words. It's no longer samsaric.

And I might as well add the third the third theory of knowledge which was championed by William James which was um pragmatism. It's true if it works and if it stops working it stops being true. So the apple is on the table. the statement the apples on the table would be true if and only if you could actually walk over there and and get the apple
or you know at least potentially I guess but I've read one kind of icky thing about Bradley and he's he definitely was not a Buddhist probably didn't give a damn about Buddhism even though certain aspects of his philosophy are in harmony with certain aspects of certain Buddhist philosophies especially like yoga which

was idealist it's like the mind only school of Buddhist philosophy.

But FH Bradley, he was like a lifelong fellow of Oxford University. So he just he was single. He just lived in like a dorm or an apartment on the campus of Oxford University. And one of his habits was he'd sit in the window. He had like an upper story bedroom, I guess. He'd sit in the upper window and shoot cats with he had a revolver. So he'd just be sitting in his window just shooting at stray cats, which is not a good thing to do from the Buddhist point of view. But he did have some interesting philosophy. So I think I better just move on to the

next question here

also from Gnostic Rocker. And this is

kind of a short one. He says, "You are a

monastic for 30 years. Didn't you miss

rock and roll? deep in your being.

Didn't you ache to hear the emotional,

visceral, cerebral, comforting,

lifeaffffirming, life realizing,

healing, joyful, rebellious, autonomous

rock and roll expression of our species

being and species nature.

Well, it is true that like when I was

living in Burma, I did not have access

to any

most of the time that I was in Burma, I

had no access to internet. I mean, there

was no internet most of the time that I

was in Burma and it was like 1G if there was any internet. It sucked.

But I mean, I listen to a lot of rock and roll. So, still I'd be playing rock and roll in my head, you know? I'd be a Buddhist monk. I'd be trying to live like an ancient Indian biku aesthetic, but still I'd have like Led Zeppelin and talking heads, this kind of stuff playing in my head sometimes just spontaneously. I remember one memorable occasion. I woke up on the floor of a cave, which is where I normally slept. It's closer you get to the floor, the cooler it is. So, I woke up with four sticks by Led Zeppelin just pounding

away in my head. And the fact that it was like in mid pound when I woke up, I mean, it was it had to have been going quite quite a while before I even woke up.

So

yeah, there is that. I mean, sometimes I even have to confess like starting to sing because monks aren't supposed to sing. It's a dooka offense. You have to make confession for that. You know, you just got music in your head and then you just kind of start singing along and then just broke a rule.

But I do like rock and roll. I have to admit

there were a certain two things in

particular that I thought were going to
be like severe challenges,
maybe three, before I became a monk.
It's like, well, how am I going to deal
with not having this anymore, but rock
and roll really wasn't one of them. One
of them was just like orgasms and
sexuality.
That should be self-explanatory. One was
my book collection
because I really took pride in my book
collection. I unlike this book
collection that is just kind of there
and I don't look at it very often. I
don't read books hardly at all anymore
but I used to be really into it and

parting with my book collection was it was daunting before I actually did it. Afterwards it was like nothing. It was like ah no big deal but before it was it was difficult. That's often the way it is like renouncing something. It seems like it's so difficult until you actually do it and then you realize that it was easy. And then the third thing that I was considered to be like a really daunting challenge to just go cold turkey for the rest of my life was pro football, which I have zero interest in at all anymore. I I don't know if I can name a single pro alete.

There's some Kelsey guy who's engaged to Taylor Swift. That's that's about it.

And not because I watch football. It's just, you know, you just hear see this stuff on the internet just accidentally.

So, let's see.

Yeah, rock and roll.

Yeah, I just have to just play it in my own head. I have a fairly good memory, so I could do that. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Romeo. And Romeo says, "What is your knowledge and opinion of past Hindu yogi Paramahamsai Yogaandanda?"

And strangely enough, Paramahamsa translates into English as ultimate goose. Although technically again, Hamsa probably is the ruddy shell

duck and not a goose. Although usually hansaw is translated as goose in English like wild goose

but more correctly it is the ruddy shell duck which is big like a goose, long neck like a goose, honks like a goose. I don't know why it isn't a goose. Any ornithologists out there who can explain to me why a shell duck is a duck instead of a goose, just let me know. Just enlighten me with regard to this. I assume it's just like parallel evolution or convergent evolution where you had a line of ducks that just became more and more goose-like.

Anyways, getting back to yoga nandanda, I did read his his book Autobiography of

a Yogi twice. Once when I was a teenager. It was like one of the first spiritual books I ever read. And I was impressed the first time and the second time I was like in my 20s, mid20s I suppose. And I'm just kind of like one eyebrow keeps going up. It's like, huh? Yeah, I'm not sure about this. Like, I think he claimed that Jesus came to visit him like when he was in a hotel room and like also when he was in a hotel hotel room, he looked out the window and saw I think it was Lord Krishna levitating outside the window. This kind of stuff. Also, he struck me as a bit gay the second time I read it.

I wouldn't be surprised if he was gay. Although technically I mean that that doesn't really I I'm saying technically a lot but I mean it's neither here nor there. Like one of the best teachers I ever had in my life was was gay.
So I mean being gay really isn't necessarily a strike against somebody. Unless he's like a religious swami who's actually a practicing homosexual then that might be a bit different. But one of my heroes, one of my first spiritual teachers was Ramdas, formerly known as Dr. Richard Albert of Harvard University, who was a switch hitter. I mean, he he was AC/DC. So, he was doing some gay stuff even while he was like

living at ashrams in India.

Still, I mean, I have respect for the man.

So

my knowledge and opinion of past Hindu Yogi Parahasa Yoga Nana yeah I think he was kind of credulous and I think he may have sort of played upon the credul of others to some degree.

Um, I don't know what kind of spiritual attainments he would have. Although, if Jesus is visiting him in his hotel room, then if if that really happened, then he could be relatively advanced. But if it didn't really happen, then to some degree, you've got kind of like a

showman writing books for the sake of, I don't know, whatever.

So yeah, I the first time I read it, I was impressed like as a teenager just kind of like stars in my eyes just kind of believing all of it.

But uh the second time not so much.

But I mean even if he wasn't fully enlightened, and I kind of doubt that he was fully enlightened still, I mean you can't really blame somebody for not being fully enlightened. I mean, he's probably operating or was probably operating at a higher level of consciousness than the average normie.

So, I mean, you shouldn't just even if you don't think he was fully enlightened

or you think that not everything in his book is necessarily true, that doesn't mean you just throw out the baby with a bath water. I mean, I'm sure that there's some wisdom in there, but it's been a long time since I read the book, and that's pretty much all I know about him is just what I read in his autobiography.

So, I'm going to move on to Romeo's second question. Have you ever read his book, Autobiography of a Yogi? If so, what's your opinion of it? Well, I guess I already answered that question in my answer to the first first question by Romeo. So I suppose I'll just move on to

the third question which also kind of
was answered already. Romeo says is the
self-realization
fellowship that yoga nandanda started
and still exists a cult and I didn't
even know that it still existed.
It's I don't know you know what their
attitude is. So, I mean I mean it would
be a cult if they were like
how how how do I explain it? You know,
if they're like trying to get people to
join and then like trying to prevent
them from leaving to the point of like
punishing them if they try to leave,
that kind of thing, that would be rather
cultish. Whether they actually do that
or not, I don't know.

You know, it's kind of like the the like the the fellowship or whatever it is that followed Krishna Murdy. I think it was like Ohigh California. Is that is that where it was? You know, that still exists too, I guess. Well, is that a cult? I I really don't know because I don't know hardly anything about it. So, sorry about that. And I'm gonna move on to the next question. This is from Sedarta Lohachita. And Sedart Lohita says, "Have you ever been in an Indian reserve or reservation or in Mexico?" Well, I've never been to Mexico. I've been in Mexican restaurants, however. Um, but with regard to Indian

reservations, yeah, I've been to quite a few of those
because I there's lots of Indian reservations in Washington State where I grew up and went to school. So, like for example, um I took a marine biology course in college and we went on a field trip to Nia Bay, which is like the the northwestern tip of Washington State and it has rocky beaches there that are relatively unusual.
And so we went there to study like rocky beaches and that entire area is the Macau Indian Reservation. Whether they got casinos now, I don't know, but they didn't have casinos back then. And it was a dry reservation. No alcohol

allowed and it was just dead. There was nothing going on.

Also, there was the let's see the Tokund Indian Reservation when I was a kid. That's where we would buy illegal fireworks that there the the uh economy of the Tokund Indian Reservation was selling duty-free cigarettes that relatively cheap, at least cheaper than the cigarettes you'd buy outside the reservations. and also dangerous fireworks.

So, we we'd go on like this pilgrimage to the Tokan Indian Reservation every year when I was a kid to buy like bottle rockets and firecrackers and that kind

of stuff that weren't safe and sane.
Also, the Quinnol Indian Reservation,
the uh let's see, oh, there's also the
the Lummy Indian Reservation. We went on
an marine biology field trip to the
Lummy Indian Reservation, too. They have
uh kitchen mittens there and it's right
on the the the coast like the San Juan
Islands. There's Lummy Island is one of
the larger San Juan Islands that's like
an Indian reservation
and we were just looking through kitchen
mittens and all just also just
experiencing the the marine life of that
area. And for those of you who don't
know what a kitchen mitten is, is um
when you've got

mainly hunter gatherers who like live in
certain areas at least seasonally for
hundreds of years, you get this huge
mound of I mean for them it was garbage.
For us it's it's like clamshells
and like other kinds of like crustation
exoskeletons. It's mostly like
clamshells that have just been tossed
there by people just throwing them away
for hundreds and hundreds of years until
it's essentially this huge mound.
So yeah, I've been to that Indian
reservation. I had a friend who I guess
he's still a friend. and we haven't
communicated in a while, but his mother
used to live on an Indian reservation in

California, which got just essentially incinerated when there was big fires there earlier, you know, several years ago. So, yeah, on the west coast of the United States, there's lots of Indian reservations. is way more than on like on the east coast because by the time you know the the west was turning into states there was more of a concept of some fairness and justice towards the native Americans instead of the idea the only good Indian is a dead Indian. Like the state of Alaska I think at least onethird of the entire state is owned by indigenous peoples. Like I used to work out of Dutch Harbor, Alaska, which is on uh on Alaska Island in in the Illusian

Islands. And there are a lot of white people living there, but they can't own their own property because it's all owned by the alleyutes. So that would be kind of an Indian reservation.

Oh, also I spoke at an Indian reservation. I think it was the same the Lummy Indian reservation. I actually gave a dama talk there when I was a monk.

And you have to kind of let's see kind of translate into sort of different language. I mean you can't use a lot of poly terms because people living on Indian reservations generally are not fluent in poly.

So yeah I have been to Indian reservations a plenty but never been to Mexico. So, I'll move on to Sedarta Lohita's second question, which is, "Can you talk fluent Burmese?" And when I was living in Burma, I figured I had the proficiency in the Burmese language of about like a seven-year-old Burmese kid. So, I mean, I could talk easy language fluently, but talking about something that I wasn't used to talking about, like fixing cars,
you know, I didn't know the words for that. I had not learned the vocabulary. A lot of the idioms I wouldn't learn. I had this one supporter who kept telling me that I talk like a dictionary because

I'm just trying to say what I'm trying to say in Burmese without knowing just the way the Burmese people say it. Like I didn't know all the idioms, that kind of thing, all the the terms of speech, that kind of thing. So I would just kind of say it like putting it together, translating the English into Burmese, and some of the time they wouldn't even know what I was saying. But Burmese it's like with regard to its grammar and vocabulary it's very simple it's an easy language but the difficult part for westerners is the pronunciation it's a mono syllabic language which is most of the words have only one syllable and

there are differences

in sounds that Americans don't make like

or we don't really differentiate them

like no and no two entirely different

words in Burmese or like moe means it's

very rainy. Mo with a more aspirated K.

Mo. No, Mo and Moe. Mo means it's a

drought. So you just add just a little

bit of aspiration to a K and the

sentence go switch switches from it's

it's very rainy to it's not raining. So

you have to be really careful. I

remember I remember the okay it's like

lo in Burmese means to work or to do. Lo

means because of low means um to to

need. And low is the worst cuss word in

the Burmese language. It's like it's

like [__] in Burmese. And so I knew this
Australian monk who was afraid to say
that he needed anything because he was
afraid of accidentally adding just a
little bit too much emphasis
and just making it into the worst cuss
word in the Burmese language.
So he would just try to say things and
try to say that he needed something
without actually using the word need
because he was so afraid of accidentally
mispronouncing it and just causing all
the teenage girls to start crying or
whatever to just blush and cover their
faces and rush from the room.
So it's getting kind of rusty too now. I

mean, it would take a while of actually
conversing in Burmese before I'd get
back up to the proficiency of a
seven-year-old child,
maybe nine.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question here. This is from David.
And David says, "I'm a former Zen monk.
A long time ago. Last year, I died on an
operating table. Two blood transfusions
and the skill of a surgeon brought me
back somewhat. I had a near-death
experience which I cannot dismiss as
macio which I suppose would be like maya
in in poly or Sanskrit or even delirium
conscious lucid. I navigated my
surroundings in that state of awareness.

I found a huge disparity
between the Buddha Dharma and what I
actually experienced. I'd appreciate
your thoughts when you ever find the
time gash out.
So, I didn't know exactly what he's
referring to. You know, how is it
different? What is the disparity? So I
asked him in the comments and his answer
was the lie of karma, the lie of rebirth
which is a truth but only if you believe
you're guilty of crimes and sins which
you don't have to believe in. They're
cosmic sins like the ten commandments.
If you don't believe you're free of them
when the datagata said he saw the house

builder that's allegedly like his first words after he became enlightened. house builder you are seeing.

Uh, okay. I'll just get back here though. When the Dakata said he saw the house builder but never extrapolated, what did he know yet never transmitted? I know now that a collective aggregate we'd call a soul exists despite the Buddha claiming there is no intermediary body or anata. There is. And then somebody else had com like responded to what he said in the comments. You know, there was like this little thread. And then um David then continues in his response to this other person. Rebirth isn't a

lie. It happens. I simply don't believe the intention behind it is to exhaust karma. I believe what I saw was a pyramid scheme for egregor and other parasites. But it seems the boss had left the building. Only the middle management remain.

Okay.

So, let's try and find the question here.

Let's see. I'd appreciate your thoughts when you ever find the time. And so, first of all, I mean, having a near-death experience, I mean, there's going to be a great lucidity to it in many, if not most cases, you know, and

you're going to experience strange things, but still, I mean, like going with the Tibetan Book of the Dead, which is essentially an it's not just a near-death experience, it's a death experience, although there's a lot of similarities between the stereotypical near-death experience. You know, you see your you start rising up. You see your body lying there below you. You go up higher. You can see certain things that like with clairvoyance or whatever. You know, you're seeing it with like a different different pair of eyes. Then you go upwards. There's like the bright light like a tunnel with light at the other end. you get to the other end and

then there's some kind of a spirit guide that I mean there's different things but your experiences are going to be largely in accord in accordance with your subconscious imagination which will be heavily influenced by your your religious beliefs like a Christian they go up into into this heaven realm they might be met by Jesus himself or the Virgin Mary or some Christian saint or a lot of people who are just kind of secular humanist types they'll be met by some beloved grandfather or you know some beloved family member that that had already died. This kind of thing and the what heaven looks like is going to vary

depending on the person.
So, there was like this ordinary kind of suburban housewife who has a near-death experience and she gets up there and heaven is just full of prefab houses, you know? It's like housing tracks.
So,
I mean, you can have like near-death experiences that can be like enlightenment experiences like uh what's his name? John John Ren Lewis who was an atheist. He was like one of the the leaders of an atheistic society. He was a scientist or a mathematician. He has this near-death experience from almost being poisoned to death in Thailand.
And I mean, it just like opened up this

a whole new way of looking at things.
And, you know, he just kind of set aside
all the the materialistic science stuff
because he he just had outgrown it
during this one experience. and he just
felt that this this awakening experience
that he had in the near-death experience
just remained with him for the rest of
his life.
So,
um, one thing that's interesting from
the book of the Tibetan book of the dead
is you are warned or admonished that
you're going to see all this stuff.
You're going to see Buddhas, you're
going to see demons, you're going to see

all kinds of beings that will communicate with you and so forth. Keep reminding yourself this is not real. It can seem even more real than ordinary samsara but still it's just a higher level of illusion. You know it's kind of like da realm illusion instead of human realm illusion.

So I mean orthodox tradition when it says when the dagoda says he saw the house builder he's referring to Mara but you can take that or leave it. And this with regard to I mean this idea let's see the lie of karma. I'm not exactly sure what the lie is. I guess he he explains it here. The lie of rebirth which is a truth but only if you believe

you're guilty of crimes and sins which you don't have to believe in. They're cosmic sins like the ten commandments. And this seems to indicate that David or maybe Zen the Zen school that he was following has very different understanding of karma and morality ethics how all that works than in terra because in terravada
it's not cosmic sins like the ten commandments. The five precepts are just superficial rules that help you to practice.
It's not cosmic sins like the ten commandments and the way morality and karma works or let's start with

morality. Anything that gets you closer to enlightenment is moral and good and wholesome and skillful. Anything that takes you farther away from enlightenment is bad. You know, sin, so to speak,

it is unskillful, unhealthy,

unh wholesome. And I mean that's what it boils down to with regard to morality or ethics.

I mean cosmic sins or that you don't have to believe in. I mean if if you are skillful enough that you do not believe that samsara is real that you have taken that to heart you know just all the way down to the marrow of your bones then that could be true. But for the most

part anyone who's not fully enlightened is going to believe that at least to some degree that samsara is real. And so they're stuck in it. It's like the some westerners have discussed this sort of thing too. The movie Apocalypse Now for example or the the novel Dstky's novel Crime and Punishment are both cases of someone who

tries to be like more wise than the average person. And so they just just accept like essentially a Nichian philosophy of you know good and evil. they're just kind of illusory, you know, it's just sort of a cultural construct. I don't have to enslave myself to this

concept of good and evil. I can just do whatever is expedient.

And so, Rcolnikov in Crimes Punishment actually axe murders a woman. I think he ax murders what two women and one of them was pregnant and then he just kind of goes insane. I mean, he just I mean, it just [__] him up. And it's the same way with Colonel Curts in Apocalypse Now. He's trying to just do what is expedient. Just do what it takes to win this war or whatever. And he just goes crazy. And then his his dying words, what has it all catches up to him are the horror. The horror.

And I mean, you can take that or leave it. You know, it's just a novel and a

and a movie. a really excellent novel
and a really excellent movie. But still,
but really the way morality works in in
terra Buddhism anyway is nothing like
cosmic sins or the ten commandments.
It's psychological. It's just the
effects of certain attitudes and certain
mental states on on your mind on you can
call it your spirit if you like. call it
the karmic stream because karma is the
momentum of your mental states. So I
mean getting down to the let's see
he says I simply don't believe the
intention behind it is to exhaust
exhaust karma like rebirth.
He doesn't believe that rebirth the

intention behind rebirth is to exhaust karma.

So

yeah I mean from the Buddhist point of view you don't exhaust karma. The and rebirth the purpose of rebirth isn't to exhaust karma. The purpose of rebirth is just you it just it's momentum you know it's like a the flowing of a river or the burning of a fire you know it's like it doesn't necessarily have any intention at all it's just like this natural process that happens in this version of samsara

so

I mean if if David has become enlightened so that he's not going to be

reborn anymore he's not creating karma anymore that's that's fine But if he's not fully enlightened, then it could be that he is mistaken to some degree with regard to his uh his change experience of what karma is, what morality is. Um and with regard to a self, let's see, where does this say? He says, I know now that a collective aggregate we'd call a soul exists.

And I mean if there it's an aggregate then it's not like ultimately real. I mean you can say I I've been saying this for many years even when I was a monk that in in ter Buddhism is this there's this weird phenomenon of people saying

okay in samsara according to conventional truth you can say there's a self you know the Buddha himself is referring to this person that person even referring to himself.

So you can say that in conventional truth there is a self but in ultimate truth there's no self. But then the terabato Buddhists will go even farther and say from the conventional point of view even there's no soul. There's I mean ultimately there's no soul even conventionally there's no soul which I don't think really has much backing it up. If you can say that a like a three-dimensional, four-dimensional, three and a half dimensional human

is conventionally a self. What's to prevent a four-dimensional, five-dimensional entity that includes this human?

I mean, I mean, ultimately it's not real, but conventionally in a samsaric context, why not? So I think it is possible that in a samsaric context not an ultimate one but a samsaric one conventional one that there could be souls too. It's just that when you get to the highest ultimate level then there are no aggregates there's no differentiation at all.

So,

so you can say that a soul exists in a

samsaric context, but ultimately, yeah, I really don't think so. It's like no self is really I don't have the problems with it that a lot of western Buddhists have. There are a lot of western Buddhists that I mean they just get angry just vehemently insist that there is a self

and to the extent that I mean instead of just going to a different religious system that accepts an eternal soul they just try to change Buddhism so that there's an eternal soul. I guess some entire schools of of Mahayana have done this sort of thing. There was one school of Buddhism called the Pugaladins who are now extinct I think who and they

couldn't say there was a self but they they said there's a pudgala or an individual which was just I mean they couldn't use self because that was just uncontroversially not Buddhist. It was just like wrong view. So they had to like use a different word that was pretty much of a synonym.

But they don't exist anymore.

But yeah, I have no problem at all that just intuitively, intellectually, anything accepting that ultimately there is no self.

I mean, there's there's an absolute an undifferentiated absolute, but you can't even say that it exists. It's just off

the scale

and it's not differentiated.

So

gosh, what else is there to say with

regard to this?

Let's see.

Last year he died on operating table.

Yeah. No, I mean, you want to like say

I'm sorry to hear it, but then again I

mean a lot of people they have these

near-death experiences or just tragedy

strikes and it can just jolt them into a

higher level of consciousness. I knew

this this woman who was kind of a

superficial, shallow, selfish kind of a

person. Then she gets the C-word and

she's like doesn't know if she's going

to survive or not. She starts rethinking

her attitudes afterwards. She did

survive and I mean she was a deeper

better person as a result of it.

Not that I'm like promoting

like carcinomomas or anything like that.

But if anyone can explain to me what is

the connection between cancer and crabs

I don't know cancer means crab also

carcinus means crab you know like in

carcinogen so what is the connection

between cancer and crabs

maybe like the like the cells kind of

get kind of spiky looking or something

like a crab I don't know

so anyways getting back to this question

I I think I think I pretty much covered
what I wanted to cover.
Um, yeah, if I missed out on anything, I
guess David or someone else can can
point it out to me. But I'm just going
to move on to the next question, which
is from S Papalapa,
one of the four kinds of wrong view or
no, wrong speech. Excuse me. S. Papa
says, "I'm sure you've been asked this
before, but can you lucid dream?" And
I've never had a full-blown lucid dream
before. I've like especially when I was
a monk, I would be right at the verge of
having a lucid dream. There's one one
occasion where I'm I'm a monk. I'm
dreaming that I'm eating dinner. I'm

eating in the afternoon. And then all of a sudden, it dawns on me, I can't be doing this. This is against the rules. But then there was this awareness, this is just a dream. I can go ahead and eat this if I want to. And I'm not breaking any rules.

So that has happened to me. I had a friend, the the Texan hermit who lived in the huge hollow banyan tree in in central Burma that he was really practicing lucid dreaming. He bought he got well he didn't buy them but he had supporters donate books about lucid dreaming that I was kind of looking at you know just kind of getting some ideas

and he was saying that um when you're
dreaming let's say you're dreaming that
you're on a bus and then all of a sudden
you're not on a bus anymore but you're
on an airplane. You didn't get off the
bus and onto the airplane. It's just
that somehow when you weren't noticing
the bus turns into an airplane
and then you have this this
like this dissonance happens where it's
like wow how'd that happen just for like
you know just a few moments it's like
you suddenly realize how'd that happen
that that according to my friend who was
into lucid dreaming he said that's kind
of like a like kind of a gateway you can
use those moments as a way of kind of

breaking through the the illusion illusion and and just sort of like participate more lucidly in the illusion.

But I've never had like a fullblown complete lucid dream. I think that time when I was eating dinner in the dream and then realized, oh, I shouldn't be doing this and then further realized, oh wait, this is just a dream, so it's okay. That that's about as close as I've ever come to lucid dreaming. And I'm going to move on to the next question.

This is from Cherasquez.

And Trazask is says, "What about requests from the real TIG to get back

to Discord server?" And I'm not exactly sure why Trazask is wants the real TIG back on the server.

So yeah, what about it? I mean, I'm uh I mean, TR TIG is still around that I mean, I kind of have an idea of what his what one of his aliases is.

And uh he actually got like mildly reprimanded, if I'm not mistaken, for asking like trivial, silly, irreverent joke questions just maybe a month or so ago.

Could be wrong though.

But yeah, I mean, request from the real TIG to get back on the Discord server. I don't know. He's going to have to figure

something out, I guess, because I'm really kind of experiencing inertia. You know, I got no fire under my ass spurring me on to to readmit him or any such thing. And so, I'm just going to move on to Troas is his next question. What software you were using to write a book? Is the end format for a book a PDF? Well, it turns out that Kindle I mean my books are published on Amazon and Kindle is one of the formats and so they have like this free app that you can download where you're um composing the book or you know just like formatting it within the the proper measurements and everything of an Amazon

book.

So that's what I've been using. And then the last after you finished it, you get everything the way you want, then you you change it to a PDF. You know, at first it's just some kind of document file. And then after you get, you know, everything right, you know, you you it just automatically does the page numbers and everything, you know, the headers on on the top of the pages and that kind of thing. So I mean, it just takes care of all that.

So that's that's what I've been using. It's like the Kindle software for for books. And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Quoistor.

Quistor says, "If someone's been
meditating all their life and gains
substantial wisdom into the workings of
the mind,
but are then reborn as an animal,
would there be any awareness or
mindfulness
present whilst in that state?"
Um
well I mean first of all someone's been
meditating all their life and gained
substantial wisdom into the workings of
the mind. Um it would be very rare I
think for them to be reborn as an
animal.
I'm not exactly sure how that would

work.

But let's just assume for the sake of argument that you do have some meditation master who is reborn as an animal. Guess like I guess there's the famous coan it's it's Hakuin's fox I think it's called where somebody's fox where there's this Zen master who's asked a question about karma you know is the is the enlightened person sub subject to the law of karma and he said no and then as a result of that one question he gets reborn as a fox who lives on the other side of the hill from the monastery

so I guess even according to some Buddhist tradition traditions, a

meditation master can be reborn as an animal. But assuming that they were reborn as an animal, I assume they would be a very unusual animal. You know, they'd be like an animal with with like light shining out of them.

Like I I mentioned before that I've got one dog here that I think there's a good chance, assuming that rebirth is a thing, that this dog was probably like a a human baby in a previous life. You know, it's like babies used to die young a lot back in the old days. You know, in certain times and places in this world, most babies would not reach, you know, 9 years of age. So, there's a good chance

that maybe in a past life, I had this baby and we loved each other. You know, the baby's like maybe a year old, just still preverbal, you know, still not really able to think in words or anything, but just like kind of present. And then and then that baby died. And it's I think there's a possibility that this dog is was
a baby in a pre previous life. Also, when I was a kid, we had this collie. It was one of the just most strangely intelligent dogs. I mean, partly it was just it's a collie is a sheep dog. So, it would it would treat us kids. I mean, I was a little kid at the time. Treat us kids like sheep. You know, it's like if

we were walking towards the street, this dog would just get in between us and the street and push us back towards the house with his body or any kind of strange human or strange dog. Anyone that that Rowdy didn't real didn't recognize, he'd just get right in between us and them and just guard us. But he had he had just
he he could hold a grudge for a week. He got in lots of fights. And so we moved out in the country and a neighbor dog and our dog got in a fight and the owners, my father and Mr. Conway, the farmer who owned the the this German Shepherd that they were pulled them

apart. But Mr. Conway was an older man. He wasn't as strong. His dog got loose and attacked Rowdy while my dad was holding him. And Rowdy just would not even look at him for at least a week. My dad would call him. he'd just like give him a dirty look and just walk the other way. He was he he remembered that and he was just this dog was more human than most dogs. So, I think there's a possibility that you can have, you know, sort of people reborn as animals under certain rare circumstances. I don't think it happens like very frequently, but I mean you still have the the karmic momentum of being a human. I mean I don't think that my dog that I've got

now or the colleague that we had when I was a kid were meditation masters in a previous life.

So let's see here.

I'm not even sure exactly how to answer this question. Would there be any awareness or mindfulness present while in that in that state? Well, I mean even animals especially like vertebrates have awareness and some kind of mindfulness um even if they weren't human in a previous life, even if they weren't a meditation master in a previous life. So I just assume that their awareness I mean that I mean animals according to echarollah all animals are enlightened

anyway other than a few domesticated animals that have acquired neurosis from their human masters. But according to him every animal pretty much is right here right now. You know they're not like dwelling they're not worried about the future. They're not feeling regret about the past. They're always right here right now. just be here now like Ramdas used to say which according to echarollah is like a state of enlightenment.

So in that case goalia might to some degree be an improvement although according to Buddhist philosophy the animal realm is a lower realm and animals are not enlightened just as

newborn babies are not enlightened.
But I'm not even I'm I don't think I've
even answered the question.
So yeah, I mean there's going to be some
kind of karmic momentum going from the
previous life. So it's probably going to
be like a relatively wise animal that
maybe doesn't even live very long.
You know, they just have this one little
karmic blip that they got to deal with
and then is just move back to some
higher realm again.
Anyways, I'm just going to move on to
Quistor's next question. And this one's
kind of weird, too. He says, "If you
regularly enter Janna all the way up to

the eighth Janna, but don't really like that Janna and enjoy lower Janna's, are you reborn into the Janna realm you like most or into the highest Janna you experience regularly?"

Well, I mean, the whole idea of eight Jonas is something that I'm fairly skeptical of.

I mean you start off with four Jas and probably in my opinion the four Jas were just the four levels of meditation.

First Janna you're still thinking it's like first J in my opinion originally was not a superhuman mental state that it was just I mean you're meditating correctly even though you're at like an elementary stage of meditation. So

you're still labeling for example still using a mantra you're still have some kind of thinking and perceiving going on but then as you get more and more advanced you leave especially the thinking you know you're not I mean if you're doing meditation on the breath breathing in breathing out breathing in breathing out that gets left behind you're not doing that anymore at second Janna you're not thinking anything anymore

so then Abidama comes along and they decide that they're going to make an extra Janna. So according to Abidama, there's five Jonas because second Janna

gets split up. You know, you've got like initial and sustained thought that I mean according according to first I mean in first Jonah you've got initial and sustained thought in second Jonah you don't have that. So the abidamists to split that and they say okay you don't have the initial thought or it's one or the other. Okay, you don't have the sustained thought, but you still have the initial thought. That would be the new second Janna or like second Janna A and then second Janna B is you don't have initial or sustained thought. So I mean that didn't really catch traction in Buddhist philosophy. So that really is ignored that that extra the

fifth Janna the five Janna systems is pretty much ignored by everybody except Abidama scholars because in the sutas it's always talking about four Jonas but then you've got these four arupas or formless Jas that I mean I wrote an essay on this giving my best guess as to the origin and I don't think the Buddha really taught these formless jas you know, the realm of, let's see, the realm of infinite space, the realm of infinite consciousness, the realm of nothingness, and the realm of neither perception nor non-perception.

And I I'm guessing that at least three of these, it's fairly, you know,

plausible that they were attempts to describe Nirvana or Nibbana that really didn't catch traction and fell by the wayside, but still you find them in early texts. And so you've got to incorporate them into some system without dignifying them with being synonyms of enlightenment. You know, neither perception nor non-perception. I mean that comes that can come right out of the kalahawa suta which is discussing an enlightened state the the enlightened mind
or the realm of infinite consciousness. There's at least two sutas that claim nibbana is infinite formless consciousness or at least they strongly

imply it.

So, let's just forget

the higher J these these formless Janna

because I mean I'm rather skeptical and

I mean let's see here Quistor himself

has

like ignored the fifth genre of of the

Abidama scholars.

[Music]

So let's just say that you master the

highest Janna and you don't like that

Jonah very much. you like some lower

Janna, which I don't think that that's

really an option in the text. I mean, it

just seems that it's just assumed

the higher the Janna, the more you're

going to like it. You know, it's just more advanced. There's less dooka.

But

I guess I mean, so so this this scenario, I don't think you ever come across it. I mean, there might be some suta that I'm just not thinking of that discusses this. You know, you have some monk who gets up into fourth Jonah, but he really prefers second Jonah even though it's crudder and has more dooka in it just because he's maybe not ripe for enlightenment or something. Uh, he just would prefer this more crude meditative state.

So, are you reborn into the genre realm you like the most or into the highest

genre that you experience regularly? It could be that you're you get into the the the J the highest Janna that you have mastered that that there's a good chance of that

that it could be that let's say you got up into fourth Janna but it was really shaky. It didn't last very long and then you go back down to third Janna. Third Janna is pretty solid. then it may be I don't I don't want to just make this as an assertion because this is just a guess. I don't want to just be pedalling heresy here. But if you just got fourth Janna, just a few glimpses of it or just kind of shaky, you never really mastered

it, but you're solid with third Janna, there's a good chance you'd wind up into the Janna realm, assuming that those even exist. these these Brahma realms that are higher than the highest Brahma realm posited by the the the Vadic Hindus or protohindus who invented the whole Brahma system anyway.

So yeah, it could be just you just wind up in the realm corresponding to the Janna that you really mastered or were best at.

But I mean the whole 31 plains of existence, I mean I I realize most teachers of Buddhism, especially most monks, they can't really be skeptical about their tradition. And so you wind

up with this scenario where everybody is saying that their system is 100% right. The Christians, what whatever school of Christianity it is, you know, the Catholics and the Jehovah Witnesses aren't going to be agreeing on on everything.

or you know the Buddhist it's like you you reject Christianity a western person rejects Christianity because he just can't believe it and then he just wholeheartedly believes everything in ter Buddhism I mean I just cannot operate that way I'm I'm that way with political parties too I mean I can't just accept and agree with everything

that they say

so I mean it's I it's it's going to depend on like the momentum of your mind. You know, where is the momentum of your mind? What direction is it heading? You know, how subtle is it? How refined is it? That's going to determine where you're going to wind up. And all this talk about four Jas, five Jonas, eight Janna, especially the five and the eight. And then like you're guaranteed of of the Janna realm correspond you know the Brahma realm corresponding to the to that Janna and all. I mean if you can demonstrate that to me that that is really empirically true then then go right ahead.

But I mean it's it's in the sutas. So there's definitely that you know like God before he selfdeleted and became enlightened in the process you know he's saying well if I if I die with Janna and guaranteed to Brahma realm if I die without Janna there's no guarantee so it's like even goda he'd get Janna and lose it get Janna lose it get it lose it get it lose it until finally in desperation while he still has it he decides to selfdelete because then he's he's guaranteed of at least a Brahma realm

So just because you had Janna sometimes doesn't guarantee anything according to

that pseudo.

So you're going to have to have mastered it or at least have mastered it temporarily at the time of your death in order for you to land in the corresponding Brahma realm which are of course higher than the personification of ultimate reality.

as formulated by the Vadic protohindu Hindus. I almost said Hindus for some reason possibly confusing Hindus with Landrew on an old episode of Star Trek.

So I think I'm just going to move on this question. This is from not sure how to pronounce the name here. Meilles Mephles.

Anyways, Meph says, "I really enjoy

these podcasts and lectures you post. I enjoyed your videos comparing Buddhism with Hinduism and Buddhism with Christianity along with your videos discussing Hinduism and Christianity separately. Could you please make a video with guest speakers as well discussing just Islam or comparing Islam to Buddhism? I think I would greatly enjoy listening to that."

And I mean, if I were to do a video with guest speakers

um discussing Islam, especially if there's somebody who is like a Muslim that I'm discussing this with, it would just it would devolve into a debate and

I think I don't think it would be a fair
debate. I think I would just pretty much
beat up just intellectually
on a Muslim. I mean the facts are I mean
based on Muslim tradition itself that
the founder of their religious system
was a warlord, a bandit. I mean he sold
women and children into slavery after
having their mother their fathers and
husbands beheaded. He raped women
sometimes with their husband freshly
dead right outside the tent. I mean,
what what kind of common ground is there
going to be? I mean, you can say, okay,
do good, don't do bad, but that's about
as far as it's going to get.
You know, honor your mother and father,

I suppose that kind of thing.
But, I mean, any kind of discussion of the merits of Islam, I mean, I I really would have to bash away at it.
So I mean the founder of Islam, peace be upon him, I mean he comes much closer to Moses than he does to Jesus or the Buddha. Jesus and the Buddha were both saintly holy men. Moses and Muhammad were warlords
who were using religion as a way of controlling people and getting them to follow them largely out of fear.
So yeah, I really do not have much respect for Islam. I mean, it's it's a dark age barbarous religion suitable for

dark age barbarism, but not suitable for a modern technological civilized society.

And I hope Mef is is not offended.

Maybe maybe he's a Muslim or something.

And there are good Muslims. There are wise Muslims. There have been like Sufi poets that were they were very spiritually advanced. But it was in spite of their religion more than because of it. It's just anywhere in the world you're going to find people who are spiritual geniuses who just get born into a society that may or may not really do justice to their wisdom.

But I don't think Muhammad was one of those.

I think the Quran was a chneled
document. In other words, that it was
composed in a state of hysterical
dissociation.
Much like the Book of Mormon,
Mormonism and Islam have certain
similarities in that respect.
But yeah, I mean a video with guest
speakers discussing Islam. I mean maybe
somebody like Brian, my my buddy Brian,
but we'd we'd be essentially bashing it.
We'd be discussing why and like some of
the stuff I've already said, bandit
warlord
be having people beheaded and sold into
slavery.

I mean, that's based on the Muslims own traditions. They don't I mean they don't deny this.

I mean they might back away from the term warlord, but that's essentially what he was. He was like king of Arabia at the time of his death.

Well, people forcibly converted, convert or die.

So

plus I mean the the genocide of Indian Buddhists like in the medieval medieval period that was one of the one of the worst genocides in history that you don't hear much about.

Yeah.

Yeah. I kind of doubt that it would

happen. Although I if I did do a video on Islam, it would be like with somebody like Brian and we'd just essentially both agree on bashing it.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Dama River. And Dma River says, "Tourist visas to Myanmar are very short, only 28 days, which makes it quite hard for a foreigner to live in a Burmese monastery and consider ordination. How did you get around this? What kind of visa were you on while you were a monk in Myanmar?

Well, Burma has meditation visas, which I think I mean it changes a lot. The laws change a lot, but I think the last

few times I was in Burma that your first visa would be six months and then it was be like you'd get it renewed every year after that. So, it'd be it'd be a one-year visa. Most of the time that I was in Burma, more than 20 years was just a yearly renewal of my meditation visa. And if you're going to a Burmese monastery or meditation center, they will sponsor you, you know, they'll they will send the sponsorship letter to the Department of Immigration, you know, requesting that you get a meditation visa. One time I went to Burma, um, I didn't have time to go through all the the the

necessary red tape to get a meditation

visa. So, I actually went on a business visa. I went with a a friend of mine who he he he considered me he called me his like his his advisor or something. He was an architect. He was working in in in Burma at the time. And so I I got a a business visa, which was like three months or something, which I mean, you can once you get into the country, then you can switch it over to a meditation visa, that sort of thing.

Maybe not so easy with a tourist visa. I'm not so sure. I don't think I ever had a tourist visa in Burma, but they do have meditation visas, which after a preliminary period is renewed every

year, or at least that's the way it was
the whole time I was in Burma.
And the Burmese government, they do
realize that one of their most valuable
resources is dharma. You know, the the
Burmese, even the Burmese government are
proud that they are arguably the most
Buddhist country in the world.
And they're they're they're quite
willing to share that with others. So,
it's just a matter of national pride.
and the west I mean western terravada
Buddhism it's changing now because you
got more and more Thai monastics
settling in the west but the goa method
and the mahasi method and the mahasi
method was is like largely what the

western weasa movement is based on to
the extent that it's not based on the
goa method so western Buddhism was
primarily Burmese in its origin up until
the Ajan Cha people and just other Thai
monastics started you know kind of
establishing themselves and becoming
more numerous in the west
let's see here so yeah I answered that
question I'm moving on to the next one
and this is from Austin
and Austin says quote there is not the
slightest difference between samsara and
nirvana unquote
And he says, "Why?" Well, I mean, for
starters, Nirvana doesn't have any

differences. There's no differences in Nirvana. There's no distinction of like [__] from shyola, you know, your ass from a hole in the ground. There's no distinctions at all in Nirvana. So, there would be no distinction from samsara. That's one way of looking at it. It's kind of maybe a cheesy way of looking at it, but it's like I've said before, I mean, listen,

don't have a cup. I've got a glass. So is But is this It's not going to work because glass has two different meanings. Huh. So now I I search around. Okay.

This thing that I wipe my eyes on. It is a It is a Kleenex. It is tissue paper.

Right. Well, is it Kleenex or is or is it paper? You know, is it is it a tissue or is it paper?

Well, it's both, isn't it? I mean, what's the difference? I mean, you could say the difference between tissue and paper is the tissue is like the the function and the paper is the the essence. And that's the way I would differentiate some sorrow and nervana. But ultimately, it's the same [__] piece of white paper, isn't it?

Pardon my French.

No, wait. Paper's English. That's not French.

But yeah, I mean, is it tissue or is it

paper?

Is it samsara or is it nirvana?

Two ways of looking at the same thing.

It's just that if you look at nirvana

with unenlightened eyes, you see

samsara.

If you look at samsara with enlightened

eyes, arguably you see nirvana.

So that's that's pretty much the

argument or the answer to the question

right there.

Yeah.

I mean ultimately I mean here in samsara

here we are in samsara. How far away is

nirvana from here?

It's right here.

If it's anywhere at all you can say it's

nowhere I suppose.

But my answer is it's just a difference of you know waves and water. If you if you look at it through at through the perspective of waves you're in some sorrow. And if you look at the same ocean from the perspective perspective of water it's that you're enlightened nibbana.

And that's why meditation goes for the flat calm so that you're less distracted by the waves. You're less likely to identify reality with waves. And then ideally you can develop what is called zen in the marketplace by the Zen Buddhists where even you got stormy

raging seas,

waves everywhere, you still just see

water.

And that would be the enlightened mind.

I'm just going to move on. Nice

question. This is from Yugaoo.

Let's see. I was scrolling down to see

how many more questions. And we're we're

getting down towards the bottom. So,

it's going to be way less than two hours

unless I just start digressing wildly.

So, Yuga says, and I I do not fully

understand this question. I I'm going to

have to like infer or guess what he's

actually asking here. Yugu says, "There

is this plant in my garden." He does not

specify the species, but I'll just start

over. There is this plant in my garden. It never stops to grow. I cut it bare until the end of summer. It is all over the place. Today I was looking at it. It's like samsara, I thought, never ending. It will keep on going no matter what. Now my question is what is it that we are supposed to cut in roots for it to stop? So with regard to this the actual question he's referring to samsara I assume you know what are the roots of samsara that we have to cut for samsara to stop and then just using the plant that you just cut it down to the ground over and over again and it just keeps coming back because you do not

eradicate the roots.

Well,

the root for samsara is delusion,

which is essentially

well, like I was just saying, it's

identifying with the waves instead of

the water or identifying with Kleenex

instead of paper,

identifying with cup instead of ceramic.

So, and then like the most pernitious

form of this identifying with forms

instead of essence is this

differentiation of one form from

another. And like the the root problem

going with some Buddhist philosophy

anyway is the like the primordial

distinction of self from other. You know

the the conceit I am is the root of all suffering.

So what we're supposed to cut is delusion. And one of the main like symptoms of that delusion is differentiating the world, differentiating samsara and considering these different differentiated parts to be like really different from each other instead of just waves on the surface of the same ocean.

So what we're supposed to cut is delusion, but I mean you can't just decide, okay, I'm going to cut my delusion now. And it just doesn't work that way. So you got to like get down

into the different layers of your delusion so that you can deal with them. And by practicing meditation, practicing mindfulness, then it causes the subconscious mind to become conscious. And then I mean it's like you become aware, you become more conscious of what previously was just subconscious, you know, like just habit patterns and so forth. I got a dog behind me snoring loudly.

Well, maybe not real loudly.

So, getting back to the question before I was distracted by the snoring dog.

Let's see.

Oh, man. I got thrown off track by that one.

So okay you've got delusion or ignorance

Avija you know it's like dependent core

rising starts with Avija you know that's

the first step at least in the

traditional 12 nidana theory of

dependent core rising you've got the

first is ava

so avija pacio sankara

so because of because of ignorance

you've uh

conditioned things. Although according

to orthodox tradition, sankara here

means karma

but sankara usually just means any

condition thing this and that whatever.

So

let's see. So I mean that's how you have
to break I mean you have to eradicate
delusion in order to eradicate this
this like persistently recurring
like system of aggregates that we
identify with a self
and according to orthodox tradition
where you break the chain is between
let's See perception and no perception
isn't even in there. It's feeling and
craving va and tata
that that that's where you you can
actually consciously break the chain.
So in that case you have to but I mean
even in that case still you have to be
aware of the stuff that's going on
deeper down in order to like deal with

that. So through meditation and just relentless mindfulness,
you become as conscious as you can with as little subconscious as possible. And then by just noting it and observing it, you're you're like depriving it of its momentum.
It might still occur, but to the extent that you're you're like not identifying with it, that you're just noting it and letting it go, just observing it and letting it go. you're not reinforcing it and so you're not adding new momentum to this flow of mental states that keeps us going that is essentially karma
so let's see here did I answer the

question yet

what is what is it that we are supposed

to cut in roots for it to stop yeah well

practically it's desire

But you could say that the do desire

itself is based in delusion. And it just

goes back to the old like the head

versus heart kind of emphasis on dharma.

You know the the heart emphasis on

dharma is you want to stop suffering.

The head emphasis of dharma is you want

to stop delusion. And really by stopping

one you automatically stop the other.

So, it's the same enlightenment either

way.

But really, it seems to me being more

head oriented

that the main point is to stop being delusional.

And by being delusional, you continue to create karma and you continue to perpetuate yourself like the plant that just keeps coming back and keeps coming back no matter how many times you cut it off. just like moral restraint isn't going to do it. I can tell you from my own personal experience as a monk for 30 years, you know, you avoid doing certain things because it's against the rules or whatever and then you're not a monk anymore. It just comes right back again because the latent tendencies, the anusas are still there that were not

completely eradicated.

So you can eradicate your delusion or you can eradicate your desire or your clinging. And either way it's it comes out the same. The math works out either way. And I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Xenithoid. And he is our last questioner for the evening. And he asked three questions. The first of which is as follows. Xenithoid says, "Can you give your opinion on meditation lying down versus sitting versus standing still?" I think it was Ajan Punadamo that mentioned that each one from the first to the last will encourage more virill over sitting. It feels more engaged.

However, monks are traditionally depicted as almost always doing sitting meditation. Yeah, there's there's a reason for that. First of all, lying down meditation, usually lying on your back, it's just too easy to get sleepy, too easy to fall asleep doing lying meditation. Some people can be really good at it. But the thing is, your posture helps to guide your mental states. So, if you're in a sleepy kind of posture, it helps you to be sleepy. If you're in an alert kind of mental state, like your back straight up and down, it helps you to be alert.

So the main problem with lying down

meditation is that it just is too conducive to sleepiness.

Then with regard to standing meditation, there was a I I don't know if he's still alive, but there was a meditation teacher in Burma, Tangjidon, venerable Tangid Doniato, who specialized in standing meditation. And I went to one of his retreats, and I mean, you can do it. Although there are certain problems with standing meditation, too. First of all, the bottoms of your feet get really hot and sore. It's people just don't realize just how like pervasive dooka is like you know you sit in the same position like on on a comfy couch or something but after a while you start

feeling uncomfortable and so you you change position and you might do it unmindfully so that you barely even notice. You're lying in bed sleeping you know event sometimes you have to roll over just because it's getting uncomfortable on one side you want to roll over on the other side. And when we're standing, we're generally not just standing in attention. It may be that Xenithoid was in the military or something where you're just standing in attention maybe for an an hour or two straight without moving, then maybe you would know about this stuff. But if you stand at attention like barefoot on a

hard floor, then before very long, the bottoms of your feet are just going to be like screaming.

And also if I mean you can't stand on something soft because then you're not as stable and you can fall over easily which is brings to the brings me to the next point is that you can fall over like the Tangidon Seattle um meditation at the retreat that I went to there was a few times people just you just hear this boom behind you before somebody just fell over.

It's not as stable of a position as sitting cross-legged on the floor, especially if you're in the full lotus that you've got like this tripod, you

know, like the the triangular stable structure. Like a three-legged stool is more stable than a four-legged stool just because I mean it's it doesn't wobble.

So just from a yogic point of view, I mean there's there's bound to be certain exceptions but certain exceptions but in in general the best posture for for meditation is sitting cross-legged that thousands of years of practitioners have arrived at this and for good reason. For some people, lying down works good. Other people, standing works good, but for me, sitting meditation was by far the best. You get into deeper

meditative states. You know, like when you're standing, you're always having to adjust. And a lot of the adjustments I have read are occurring in the spinal cord. It doesn't even get up to your brain. You know, you start tipping one way and like certain nerves will fire so that it triggers certain like like muscle adjustments so that you remain standing. that that is going on all the time when we're standing.

And so there's a certain instability, a certain effort that is always required to keep you standing. Whereas if you're sitting in the full lotus, then you're stable and it doesn't require hardly any effort at all.

But lying down is so effortless that you can fall asleep easily. Or at least I can. I I experimented for a little while doing lying down meditation with a like a mala like a a Buddhist rosary where like the movement of my thumb would would sort of be enough movement to keep me awake but it was still a shallow kind of meditation. It wasn't nearly as deep as if you're sitting in the full lotus just going beyond like motions and physical motions and so forth.

So I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question also from Xenithoid. He says, "You've mentioned that around 40 your meditation quality started to

decline. Did you ever consider pursuing meditation techniques with more going on such as yantra gazing, whatever that is, visualizations,
dream yoga, perhaps even tantra. I've heard that in the Vajraana tradition, they will start you out on simple breath meditation and then add in more complexity as time goes on. Well, adding in more complexity is is sort of retrograde.
like visualizations.
I mean when I was meditating, I mean when you get into deep meditation like the first time you get into like silent, clear, spacious meditation, you have no doubt whatsoever that it's it's well

worth 15 years of struggling and floundering to get you there for five seconds. that five seconds of this like silent clear meditation is better than 10 years of grinding away with breathing in breathing out breathing in breathing out or visualizing anything. It's just it's like and beyond an order of magnitude. It's just qualitatively superior or or just higher more refined than like visualisations
or that kind of thing mantras that kind of thing.
So I mean I could do that but it's like I I kept doing it when I was a monk just it's but it's like going back to the

ABCs. It's like I mean you're in college and all of a sudden you got to go back to grade school and then you you get back up into college again and then back to third grade you go over and over and over again and you just get tired of going back to the ABCs over and over again.

I mean it could be that there was some meditation technique out there that was kind of busy work at first but then would just kind of lead you in to like higher Janna or some such you know just empty spacious hyperconscious mind wide awake and not thinking anything but I didn't really come across it I mean it it wasn't readily available in a

terravada tradition I I don't know what

it would be exactly.

Maybe some kind of Tibetan technique,

but I was never into Tibetan Buddhism.

So I mean yeah I mean there was always

an option of doing meditation techniques

that were more busy work but I mean it's

so

just manifestly inferior

to a higher meditative state where like

I say it's like your mind is just like

crystal clear like glass.

So I mean you want to just keep going

back and grinding away at ABC. I mean

that some people are fine with that but

I just I just lost patience with it.

So I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's third question which is the last question. He says did you ever purposefully cause yourself dooka as a monk to have a challenge in your meditation? Ajan man was known to deliberately go out into tigerinfested forests to meditate on and conquer the fear of death. I think that in order to become enlightened, one may have to deliberately interact with sensations and situations they have aversion towards in order to overcome them. Yeah, sure. That's that's true. I mean, purposefully causing myself dooka. I mean, like, for example, living alone in a forest in in just blazing heat. Being

alone being bitten by mosquitoes that
I'm not even supposed to slap, just
drenched in sweat. Eating disgusting
goop.
50 different kinds of goop all just
dumped into the same bowl. I mean,
if you want to call that purposefully
causing myself dooka, just being an
aesthetic,
sleeping on a concrete floor with a
piece of wood for a pillow, I did it for
years. But I mean, I didn't do it as
really I wasn't thinking of it as
purposefully causing yourself dooka.
It's just purposefully giving yourself
situations not to to experience dooka. I

suppose one of my first teachers in Burma uh complimented me to one of my supporters. He says, "Upino can endure duka

because I mean I'm living in this blazing hot wasteland in total solitude in a totally alien environment. I mean nobody there spoke English. I didn't speak Burmese yet. The only way I could communicate was speaking broken poly to one of the assistant seats who had had some schooling.

So I mean just being an aesthetic in accordance with like ancient Indian Buddhist tradition. I mean that would seem to fit the bill here fairly fairly solid. But there was a case there's a

book back on the bookcase Battle for the Mind by William Sergeant. It's one of those important books. You know it'd be like one of the 10 most important books I ever read. And he's talking about how all vertebrates, including Pavlov's, dogs, not just humans, we are governed by habit. Once we get a habitual way of dealing with life, then even if it doesn't make us very happy, you know, even if we're like miserable, so long as it keeps us alive, that's good enough. You know, it's we're surviving. And that's really the point from a biological point of view. So that's good enough.

But if you get yourself into a situation where your habitual way of dealing with life isn't working anymore, then you have a crisis. You have like a breakdown and then you become um very open to suggestion, very open to change. So it's like once you get this habitual way of of living your life, you're pretty much stuck until some crisis slams you out of it. And like Rahm Doss talks about this in a more spiritual sense. Um so what some systems do is they deliberately trigger this crisis like the Methodist church founded by John Wesley that he would do this as a way of converting people so that they were born again. He would give these talks back in the 1700s

in in rural England about how anybody who sins and does not repent is going to go to hell. The first half of his sermon would be along these lines. And people in the 1700s really could not deny that. That was just part of their culture. They were born and raised in that kind of system, that that belief system. So it's like sure, you do not repent, you go to hell. And then the whole second half of his speeches, he would just go into grizzly detail with regard to the tortures of hell and the demons just jabbing you with pitchforks and the boiling blood and the boiling pitch and the screaming and wailing and all this.

And he would give these these sermons until people would just start freaking out. I mean, they would be like going into convulsions on the floor, foaming at the mouth because they couldn't deny it. He was essentially like proving to them as far as they were concerned they were going to burn in hell forever and ever. They could not deny it. Their cultural conditioning would not allow them to just say, "Nah, that's not going to happen." And then uh when they would start going into the convulsions or freaking out, they would generally just pass out. You know, they'd faint. And then there would be like assistants who would be there kind of like helping them

to like restructure
their personality so that they were born
again. You know like you have this
crisis you become very open to
suggestion. You know it's like you just
become a sponge because the the habits
that you have like cultivated for your
entire life just aren't working anymore.
So then it's just like this animal
instinct not only in humans but in other
animals too that when this habitual way
of dealing with things isn't working
anymore. Then you go into this crisis
and then you become very open to
suggestion. That's how Chinese like
thought reform camps work. They just

break you down with like sleep deprivation and and not enough food until you just like crack up. And then the commasar or the the political officers would be there like indoctrinating you with this communist philosophy that you would just absorb like a sponge. Some kinds of military basic training are like this where they just get the raw recruits and just break them down and then just rebuild them after they've gone through the crisis situation into just these fighting machines that will not hesitate to follow an order. manhood rituals in like preodern societies, you know, just scaring the hell out of this kid. And

then, you know, then you start teaching him like the like the standards of men of the tribe and then they just become a man of the tribe and they'll just die for the tribe.

Live and die for the tribe.

So

the the way he learned about it, the author, William Sergeant, was he was a doctor in World War II dealing with soldiers who had what is now called PTSD. It back then it was called battle fatigue. In World War I, it was called shell shock. It's just, you know, you got bombs going off, you think you're going to die at any second. You just saw

your best friend's head get blown off. You just freak out. You're trapped in a burning tank or something. you have this horrible experience and it just kind of locks you in to these like neurotic symptoms of PTSD. And he found out that the way to cure somebody of this was to put them in another crisis, sometimes by just reliving the experience through just having them recall the memories that they were reluctant to recall or even hypnotizing them to relive the experience. And he said if it was just so horrific that they could not bear to remember it, he he'd have them recall or like like imagine some similar kind of experience that would then cause them to

have a crisis again and then he could like try to like instill healthier, you know, more normal kind of responses and cure them of the the PTSD.

Pavlov was doing this with his dogs. It's some people think that Pavlov, you know, his life's work was just like studying dogs who slobber when he rang a bell or flashed a light. But that was just sort of a side project that he was working on that really Pavlov I have read according to this book his life's work was like causing dogs to have neurotic symptoms and then trying to cure them of the neurotic symptoms. And I mean Pavlov was just he was a bastard.

I mean, he was he'd just be like giving dogs electric shocks over and over again until they were just freaking out, you know? They'd just be like like shivering in the corner of their cage, pissing on themselves, just completely freaked out, just habitually, chronically, and then you try to cure them. And it turns out the way you cure them, put them in a new crisis situation and then they become curable. So, it's not you can't teach an old dog new tricks. It's just I'm teaching it the old tricks that is the trick.

And I'm completely lost the track here. Oh yeah. So with that as an extremely long intro, I had read this book and I

was thinking, well, seems like if I'm going to become enlightened or at least make like significant spiritual progress, I should have like a crisis breakdown. And so one of the one of the years I was living under the big rock ledge on the outskirts of Alondo Kaspa. I was actually trying to trigger like this crisis stage which was really a gamble because I wasn't going to have anybody around me to kind of pick up the pieces and help me you know help coach me to you know like get better but I I got close but I mean just the blazing heat and the solitude and just I mean I don't even recall now exactly

how I was turning turning up the volume,
you know, just making it even more
intense than just usually living alone
in a forest under a rock ledge.
But partly it was just the weather. It
was it was the the weather that year. It
was it was the monsoon season, but it
wouldn't rain. It was just like maximum
humidity and just blazing sun. And it
was just I mean it was just misery.
And I just deliberately cultivated that
kind of [__] Sometimes I'd be sitting
there just dripping with sweat under
this rock led just thinking why do I do
this [__] to myself?
So let's see here.
So the question did you ever

purposefully cause it yourself duka as a monk to have to ch have a challenge in your meditation? I mean that's pretty much what what the monk's life is. Especially if you're living according to the sutas like the the the wandering vagrant monks sleeping under trees in forests and not being able to even slap the mosquitoes that are biting them. Yeah. I mean that's I mean it's it's just like a [__] accelerator.
I mean that's that's the whole lifestyle is largely based on that. In fact, I've often considered that that lifestyle of just throwing yourself at the mercy of essentially a merciless world is more

conducive to enlightenment than sitting in meditation.

Maybe sitting in meditation is just like the fine adjust knob.

But really, it seems like a major part of spiritual practice from like the ancient Indian Buddhist point of view is just wandering homeless and penniless. Give no thought for tomorrow, what you will eat or where you will sleep. Just like sleeping under trees, enduring like heat and cold and sickness and hunger and thirst and all that. I mean, that's just being an aesthetic. That's just what it was all about.

So, yeah, you can you can you can answer the question yourself after hearing that

information. I mean, would that fit the qualifications of me purposefully calling myself dooka as a monk?
But Ajan M known to deliberately go out into tigerinfested forests. Yeah. I mean, the main reason for that is like danger makes you more mindful. You're more likely to be mindful if you're in a dangerous situation. And some people just get kind of addicted to that like rock climbers or people who race motorcycles.
is it forces them to be completely alert with like this expanded awareness because you just space off for half a second and you're dead.

And these people, they just kind of become addicted to the rock climbing or the motorcycle racing or whatever it is, bull fighting or whatever,
cuz they don't know how to cultivate this expanded awareness, this hyper alertness without the gimmick of the motorcycle or or the the cliff face or whatever it is.
So, yeah, I guess I'm done. Let's just let's just call it good.
And so, like I should always say at the beginning, I never do except once. If you have any questions you think I can answer, especially with regard to dharma, I mean, biology, western philosophy, that kind of thing is fair

game, too.

And uh no more than three questions per person per episode, please. And like and subscribe if you've not done so already. Just smash the like button, as they say. Just just take a hammer to the son of a [__] just and uh be happy. And now we're done. And I'm going to stop recording.

Okay then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 161.

I am your host Ponyo Bosa and this is my

beverage.

And I know what some of you out there

are thinking.

You're thinking, "Oh, 161 might be a

prime number." No. No, it's not. grow

up. So 161 is actually 7 time 23.

So it's kind of semi-prime, I guess,

sort of, but it's not.

And we've got sort of like

lower end of the the average amount. You

know, we got maybe 30 questions. So

that's that's all right. That's fine.

We don't want to uh stray into the extremes of too many or too few. And I might as well just wade it into this. And the first question is from Siovak and Cipad Ziderna who has the special privilege of asking more than three questions this time because sometimes it happens that someone will ask a question in the Discord server after I've already recorded the next Q&A but before I put it up on the like in the Q&A room. So that sometimes I'll just scroll below the the most recent Q&A to to find the new questions. And this time or last time I failed to look just above the Q&A that was posted for questions that were asked after I

collected the questions. No, after something but is after I had recorded the Q&A the the previous one but let's see I don't know I already explained it once that should be good enough as it turns out as just he asked these questions right before the the previous Q&A came up and so it was above the the most recent Q&A and I didn't look above I just looked below assuming that all the new questions would be after the Q&A was posted which was not the case. Just disregard everything that I just said because it is largely irrelevant. So sea of action cipad says does Hinduism have good morality? To me,

Hinduism seems like a religion with no real morality beyond the cast system Dharma. And most of the morality in India comes from non-Hindu traditions like Buddhism, Janism, or even the British forcing it onto the Hindus. Not saying Hindus can't be moral, but it seems to have no real significance on a spiritual level in itself and is merely a social convention. For example, they see no problem in widow burning, treating lowcasts like subhumans, or sacrificing people to the goddess Kie because at the end of the day, morality has nothing to do with spirituality. Correct me if I'm wrong, as I've heard similar claims about the ancient Greek

pagans, but from my research that turned out to be incorrect. So, I wonder how true it is here.

So, that's the first question.

And my experience with Hindus just kind of superficially is that the one kind of morality that they seem to take very seriously is a himsa.

That a himsa is taken seriously by Hindus, at least by mainstream Hindus. I mean, there's always going to be some people that just don't give a [__] about morality regardless of what religious system they grew up in. But I mean in like Hindus

um just going with my limited experience

and my father's stories about working on ships with Hindu crews and just you know what I've seen and heard stereotypes generalities that sort of thing is that Hindus will steal I mean not all of them obviously but it's common that I mean stealing anything that isn't nailed down. I when I went to India, I had size 13 flip-flops that were all chewed up by rats from when I was in Thailand.

I just You turn your back, you turn your back again, and they're not there anymore. What they want to do with size 13 rat chewed flip-flops, I don't know. But I was going barefoot most of my pilgrimage to India, not out of

religious sentiment, but because my flip-flops got stolen.

Also lying is considered to be like it's like good manners in in India or that is my experience where it's just considered to be polite to tell people what you think they want to hear that sort of thing. Um with regard to like what is this widow burning? I mean that is supposedly voluntary on the part of the widow. There's not like people like throwing this struggling woman into the fire that I've that I've ever heard of.

So, let's see here. Treating low cast like subhumans. Well, Siovak and Cipad Zidonai himself would seem to endorse

that under certain circumstances
since I believe I can recall him
lamenting the decline of the Indian race
or rather the Indo-Arian race as it
interbred with the indigenous like
dossia people
until you know it's just no longer of
like Indo-Uropean caliber in certain
respects.
So I don't see why uh Seio Cad Zedena
would uh disapprove of treating low
casts like subhumans. Uh sacrificing
people to the goddess Kie. Yeah, there
have been certain sects of Kie
worshippers that would actually do human
sacrifices and also I have read in fact
it was in a book called where there is

no doctor the Indian version where
there's this stern warning that
sacrificing a baby to Kie is not going
to cause a woman to be to come fertile
don't do that it's not good
so I guess even nowadays that sometimes
a baby will be somebody else's baby will
be sacrificed to Collie for the sake of
the the woman being able to conceive
that sort of thing. But I mean you can
find this these kind of outliers in any
kind of religious culture including
Buddhism. Not that there's like regular
human sacrifices in Burma that I know
of.
But still, you know, there's always

going to be these outliers that most
like the average Hindu wouldn't think of
doing.
So, let's see here.
the aims I mean Siovak and Sipad Zna
says that most of the morality in India
comes from non-Hindu traditions like
Buddhism and a himsa is largely like a
himsa in India like in Hinduism was
largely inspired by Buddhism you know
this animal sacrifices came to an end
largely because of the effects of
Buddhism in Indian culture
but still in India like vegetarianism is
common at least not eating beef
is fairly common. They do have like a
respect for renunciation, that sort of

thing. You know, they still uphold like

the the renuncient ideal.

Um, but as I say, like with regard to

the average person, it may be that the

one main thing that they really consider

to be of utmost importance is is just

not killing.

So I mean there is that that's I mean

from the Buddhist point of view that's

the most important precept to keep is

not killing you know so know what I'm

saying

so let's see

even the British forcing it onto the

Hindus.

Uh yeah I mean just

even like

well where do I start with this? I mean

originally like the Vadic religion was

similar to like European paganism you

know it came from the same source at

least much of it did so there wasn't

really a lot of morality involved it was

just sort of like propitiating the gods

you know offering sacrifices to the gods

in return for sons cattle and victory

over one's enemies that sort of thing

But I mean any kind of culture is going

to have some kind of um like moral

ideals,

you know, at least even just like

fearlessness, you know, barbarian

virtues, like just bravery, that kind of

thing that I I'm not exactly sure how much emphasis on bravery there is in modern Hindus,

but I assume there's some of that

Let's see. It seems to have no real spiritual level itself is merely a social convention. Let's see what is this. He says at the end of the day, morality has nothing to do with spirituality. I don't think so. It's like cultural conventions may not have much to do with spirituality, but morality certainly has, you know, it's just like the elementary level of spirituality. You know silo samari pa according to terra Buddhism you have to

have pure morals before you can really

get advancement in in your meditation

and you have to have like pure samadei

pure concentration before you can get

enlightenment.

So

yeah I would I would uh

niggle with that part.

So yeah, I do think like the the main

outstanding virtue of Hindus

would be

like not killing. They might steal and

lie that sort of thing. With regard to

like sexual morality, I really don't

know. And I think it has changed

radically just over the past few decades

where I mean it used to be just a very

patriarchal kind of a society. Women
were like a a girl was owned by her
father and then she would be passed off
to her husband who became her new owner
and then if her husband died then her
grown sons would essentially be her
owner that that women were practically
property in India up until fairly
recently because nowadays you hear about
just Indian women also just being like
like what Instagram thoughts and stuff.
So I really can't say what India is like
exactly nowadays or what Hindus are like
exactly nowadays
but just based on like my experience in
life at the very least they take aims

seriously.

So I'm just going to move on to Siobak and Sipad Zido's next question. Let's see here which is as follows. The Hindu gods like Shiva, Brahma, Vishnu and Indra have vices like lust or use tactics like rape through trickery to get their way in some texts. It doesn't seem Hinduism has an ideal of immoral purity in their tradition. At least from my limited understanding, you just don't want to get on some aesthetic or gods bad side or they will unleash their fury on you.

Meanwhile, in Buddhism, the gods are seen as more morally pure in general, and the higher up you go in the cosmos,

the more pure the beings become in their morality. What do you think this says about how these two different traditions view the world differently?

Okay. Well, one thing is like I've already mentioned like the the early vadic protohinduism was similar to like ancient Greek and Roman paganism. And so I mean if you read ancient Greek and Roman stories about the gods they do the same stuff. You know they have vices like lust and use tactics like rape through trickery etc etc.

So in that in that respect um they come from a common tradition of like amoral

gods. you know, the gods don't have to worry about that sort of thing since morality to like a prehistoric pagan or early historic pagan. Morality is just like not pissing off the gods. You know, you want the gods on your side instead of on the side of your enemies.

So, if there's like taboos, you know, some god doesn't want you to eat beans, then you don't eat beans if you don't want that god to be displeased with you, that sort of thing.

You know, like you you want to be on the good side of Mars, the god of war. You don't drop your shield and run from the battlefield.

But let's see,

the the the Buddhists, it is true that the Buddhists have more moral deities partly because their tradition isn't as old. So they're not they don't have this baggage. You know, it's like in in like the late Roman Empire, like in the time of Julian the Apostate, when he's trying to like improve paganism so it can compete better with Christianity. I mean, he's he he was saddled with all this baggage of all these poets coming up with all these tales of gods just behaving in this petty vindictive shitty way that I mean it just kind of like a a ball and chain to trying to uplift the gods into morally superior

beings.

And Hinduism

probably got stuck with some of that. In Buddhism, it was kind of a new tradition. And so even Saka, king of gods, he was like the uh he was like the patron deity of the the Indo-arian invaders,

you know, the he's one of the main deities who's propitiated in the vades, you know, he was like the the pat the tribal deity of the indoorans

and they just I mean the Buddhists just took Indra, king of gods, who was like this swaggering like war god practically and turn him into a good Buddhist, change his name, turn him into a like an

arya, like a Buddhist saint. And they could get away with that sort of stuff. You know, they're just coming up with a new tradition. They can just have like a more advanced concept of morally superior beings.

So, there's that, too.

But I mean I would assume that like a lot of these tales of the Hindus of like the gods and you know just all this head chopping and like like collie you know dripping. She got fangs dripping with blood and all that. It's it's like reinterpreted metaphorically.

But there's also this one issue especially with regard to Krishna

like in the Mahabaratam

and probably some of the what do you

call them

I can't remember the the the kind of

literature that that I'm trying to get

at but there's a lot of a lot of it

regards Krishna for example

and

Krishna

did all kinds of stuff I mean you know

he was not a moral person he was like

amoral in certain respects even Oh, he

was like a personification an avatar of

the to Vishnavite Hindus the highest god

you know the absolute

capital G god and in a sense

it makes sense

because like I like I've said before
Krishna wasn't just the god of good
Krishna I mean or Vishnu you know
Krishna as an avatar of Vishnu was the
god of good and evil. He was the god of
everything. And so he had to represent
everything. Sort of like in Gene Wolf's
The Book of the New where the like the
Messiah figure, you know, the
consiliator, the person who represents
the human race is he's he starts off as
a torturer, you know, he's just kind of
born and raised into a guild of
torturers. And he starts off as a
torturer,
not because he chose that that job, you

know, didn't have a calling towards it.
who was just kind of born into this
guild and started off as a torturer and
it's like in order to represent humanity
you have to represent all that humanity
represents that all that it brings to
the table and I think there is some
wisdom in having Krishna you know like
seducing the 500 you know coward girls
all at the same time or you know
stealing or you know help participating
in in wars that kind of thing
that it does make kind of sense. I mean,
it's it's a more sophisticated view of
some anthropomorphic capital G God than
just God is absolutely good and he
doesn't like evil even though this

universe that he created is just like

overflowing with it.

So, it's like to the pure man all things

are pure as as the Bible says. So I mean

there is some of that in kind of the

more

sophisticated

um like Hindu mythology.

So,

but then again, its roots go back into

the same roots as the Greek and Roman

pantheons where the gods are essentially

amoral or, you know, they're just sort

of glorified humans with glorified human

vices, that kind of thing. So, there's

some of that, too.

So, let's see here. Did I answer the question?

I think so.

Let's see. Or I I guess the question is what do you think this says about how these two different traditions view the world differently? Um yeah, Buddhism especially in its when it was just starting, you know, vadism had already existed for over a thousand years in the Buddhist time. So it was already ancient in the Buddhist time. And so I mean you can't change up these relics of like a much earlier time other than just reinterpreting things as metaphors and that sort of thing. Whereas Buddhism you know it arose in the so-called axial age

where there was a more sophisticated understanding of you know morality and how it how it is related to spirituality in general that sort of thing. And so they could kind of start off and from a more sophisticated place than the Hindus did. But really I mean the culture was this the same that like vadism and and Buddhism you know they coexisted for a long time.

So I mean they viewed the world rather similarly from that from that point of view. And I mean the Hindus had their own like renuncient aesthetics and all that too. So Hinduism is just has a broader spectrum of what it represents.

Buddhism is somewhat more narrow especially the early Indian pre-Mahayana schools you know they were kind of f rather tightly focused on you know like liberating oneself from samsara. It wasn't so much all this stuff about marriage and children and all this other stuff that the Vadic system was started in.

So

gosh, what am I where was I trying to go with that one? This is this is what happens when like some of the first questions get into heavy stuff when I haven't really gotten my momentum going yet.

But I think what this says about how

these two different traditions view the world differently, the the Buddhist view is much more focused on like liberation from suffering and samsaric delusion whereas that's also contained in Hinduism. It's just that that's just one aspect of this whole spectrum of stuff going on in Hinduism because Hinduism was largely just Indian culture for a long time. I mean there wasn't really much differentiation between just Hind or like Vadic Brahmanism and just ancient North Indian culture. I mean it was pretty much the same thing. So you got like the laws of Manu that

it's just like social codes, proper behavior, don't never a a Brahman should never point with his finger at a pregnant cow, that kind of thing.
So the way they view the world is fairly similar although just the the morals are different with regard to especially renunciation. Like a good Hindu should go through the the different uh ashwama dharmmas. You know, he should start off as the celibate student and then he should become the householder, raise a family and then he renounces the world after his kids are grown and no longer dependent on it.
Whereas in Buddhism, it's just renounce as soon as you can. That's like the main

difference. plus you know certain philosophical differences that I don't know if if uh I'm going to get into in this this particular episode because I'm moving on to the next question also from se of action cad says thoughts on Ajan Sona saying the Buddha was not just a mystic because he was able to be logical and lucid seems to make sense to me well I mean St. John of the Cross was able to be logical and lucid. I mean, just because someone's a mystic doesn't mean that they're going to be like completely irrational.

I mean, you can be a mystic and all

sorts of other things. You can be a mystic and a scientist. Some people have managed that.

So yeah, he wasn't just a mystic, but I do think that early Buddhism was primarily based on mysticism and he used like his intelligence and his you know preodern logic as a way of supporting that.

sort of like Nagarja also he had a a kind of he had a more sophisticated more advanced kind of logic because he he rose like 500 years after the time of the Buddha. Um and he's using all this complicated philosophy as a way of just sort of getting to mysticism. It's like you know like Nagarjuna is famous for

just setting up these syllogisms that
just destroys all possibilities. you
know there there is no valid answer to
any question and so that just kind of
like he's using logic to destroy itself
and leaving just silence and emptiness
behind which is the mystical aspect of
it because you cannot understand reality
by thinking about it.
The only way you can understand reality
is just by just participating in it
directly with no symbolic interpretation
between you and reality.
No, trying to make sense of stuff for
example.
So yeah, I mean I'm not exactly sure

what Ajan Sona would consider to be genuine teachings of the Buddha. I assume he'd be more orthodox than me and consider more of the typica to be genuine teachings of the Buddha. So that you're going to have like vibbajada. Sometimes in the sutas terravada is referred to as vivajavada or the doctrine of analysis. And I really don't think the Buddha was analyzing much other than perhaps as just like a tool or gimmick for getting to mysticism. So personally I do not think that the Buddha was a vibajaden even though Terravada did become vibajada or the doctrine of analysis just like breaking things down into

smaller parts trying to single out
causes and conditions and so forth which
Abidama was dedicated to.
I really don't think that that is what
the Buddha had in mind when he was
setting the wheel of dharma in motion.
So yeah, he wasn't just a mystic.
I don't think any mystic is just a
mystic.
So I think I'm just going to move on to
Siovakad Zena's fourth question which is
permitted because I omitted accidentally
his three questions in the previous Q&A.
So he says in the kalaha we suta which I
just recently did a video on the the
video I uploaded right before this one

was in my studies in archaic Buddhism series and I focused on the kalahawi wasut the discourse on quarrels and contentions but I just interrupted myself I'll just return I'll start qu start asking the question Again, sea of action cipadira says in the kalaha we wiwara suta. I thought the Buddha would say paribana is better than nibbana like the janes who say it's better than even an omnisient tanker. I know you said a person who asked such a thing just doesn't get it. But I'm not satisfied with that explanation and need to dig deeper. I don't understand what the Buddha means in his answer. So having understood these to be dependent,

the sage an investigator having understood the ways of dependence. A released one having understood does not come to contention. The wise one does not attain to this or that existence quote unquote. Then section continues from my understanding what the Buddha is saying is that an arahant is not dependent on anything by not clinging to anything and whether there are aggregates to cling to or not is irrelevant. Thus there is no higher or lower states of conditions to them since they no longer depend on any condition or lack of conditions. Whether the arahant is in part in nibbana or alive

in nibbana only is a difference to people who cling to the things that make them different and proliferate based on that thoughts. Yeah, I would agree with that. Plus if you read the atawaga the dependence is dependence on anything including knowledge.

is dependent on perceptions, dependent on views, dependent on knowledge. So you get rid of all that dependence. I mean what distinction is there between nibbana and par nibbana,

you know, you get rid of the perception and it's it's just utterly irrelevant. It doesn't even get up to the level of irrelevance.

It's just blah blah blah.

So

yeah, I mean the one of the main themes of the atagawaga is just do not depend on anything including what you've seen, what you've heard, what you feel, you know, any view that you have, any philosophy.

Don't be dependent on any of that. And when you you get rid of all that dependence, all that's left is just liberation. And it doesn't matter, you know, what kind of conditions that an unenlightened person would apply to that liberation. That's just irrelevant.

So

maybe I answered that one.

Yeah, you just said thoughts. So any

thoughts that that I emit

that come out my mouth, I guess, would

be the answer to that question.

See here.

Yeah.

Yeah, I think I'd pretty much agree with

him. Although I mean it really

I mean even just trying to explain it is

already kind of muddying the muddying

the waters in a way because from the

enlightened point of view I mean it's

just you're not dependent on anything

including your own thoughts.

So

I'm just going to move on to see action

sepat's fifth and last question for this

episode.

He says another part of the same suta.

It says quote in stimulation are founded pleasant and unpleasant. In stimulation not being they do not exist non-existent and existence too whatever it means I tell you that they are founded in this unquote. And then Siovakian sepatna continues here in the suta saying that existence and non-existence are both founded in stimulation or now he says is the suta saying that existence and non-existence are both founded in stimulation or is it saying that existence is founded in stimulation while non-existence is founded in

non-stimulation. I'm bringing up the second interpretation because there are various sutas that describe nibbana as the sessation of existence or being and if this is the case then feds like batana and we bawatana would be seen as craving for aggregates continuing or samsara and aggregate ceasing or perinibana. Thus this earlier part of the kalaha suta might already be somewhat setting up for the later question about what state is hired.

Well, if you read it literally, it seems to me that what he's saying is that both existence and non-existence are reliant upon pa or contact or stimulation.

So, I mean the dichotomy first is the

dualistic dichotomy of existence and non-existence is a concept. I mean, people just really can't get this sort of thing that existence and non-existence are just kind of a illusory concept.

So it's like someone were to ask me if I believe in God even if I were like a theist. I mean still it would be like a trick question because God would transcend existence and non-existence. A capital G absolute God because existence and non-existence are both just concepts. I think the the Tibetan book of the great liberation or the yoga of knowing the mind and its nakedness also

brings up this point that existence and non-existence are both just concepts of mind.

And for someone who is just like stuck in perception, that makes no sense whatsoever.

And really, reality makes no sense. And so people that insist on stuff making sense are essentially insisting on samsara

because samsara is meaning. Sam samsara is perception.

So let's see here.

Yeah, it's let's see existence bat.

Let's see. There was something in here I was going to touch on here. Existence found in stone stimulation. I'm bringing

up the second interpretation because there are various sutures that describe nibbana as the sessation of existence or being. Yeah. Well, that's that's ba and ba in that case is essentially karma. It's like the force of existence. I usually translate bwa in that sense as the force of existence which is like the karmic momentum of mental states that is just like pushing you pushing you forwards through samsara.

So that would be somewhat different from like the difference between existence and non-existence.

It's like the force of existence which is you know part of the the main it's

like one of the main things that a Buddhist should be contending with or dealing with is just the momentum of his own mental states

the momentum of his samsara.

So,

let's see. Where is the question though? I don't know. Oh, here it is. See, is it saying that existence is founded in stimulation while non-existence is founded in non-stimulation? I don't think so.

I think that percept or like stimulation is kind of it's like stimulus response theory. you know, you have to have a stimulus before you can have a perception or at least to have like an

objective perception and then then you make judgments about you know existing and non-existing and so forth. So yeah, I do think that um the literal reading which is sort of counterintuitive, but the literal reading of the suta is that both existence and non-existence are founded in stimulation or pa and poly usually translated as contact although in this case in most cases I think pa might be more correctly or accurately translated as stimulation. So yeah, so um the duality of existence and non-existence is the response to a stimulus.

And I'm just going to move on next

question. And those answers may not make
a lot of sense to like an intellectual
who insists on everything being
logically rigorous and making sense. But
as I keep saying, sense is samsara.
Sense is delusional. meaning is
delusional which to like head oriented
people like probably most of the people
who watch my videos I mean that's just
how do you deal with that especially if
you're not mystically oriented where
you're just kind of some sorrow like
mental samsara perception is all you've
ever known except for like when you're
in the middle of a sneeze
you know when you're in the middle of a
sneeze that's the closest that a lot of

people get to enlightenment in my opinion because you're wide awake and you're not thinking anything. But the thing is it's so brief and it's just considered to be a kind of anomaly so that generally like intellectuals will not try to integrate that experience into their world view. You know, it's just like this anomaly caused by the sneeze. It doesn't matter.

So, I think I answered that question. I hope I did because I'm moving on to the next question which is from Stellar Supreme. And this question also I missed in the previous Q&A.

Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Libra

Lamb, occasionally still known as Libra Lamb and by other names as well. Furthermore, besides, and he says, "Do you believe that a portion of the children being trafficked in the US are being trafficked for the purpose of demonic sacrifice?" It wouldn't surprise me. I would cons I would guess that the percentage would be less than 1% of the children being trafficked for the purpose of some kind of human sacrifice. Not perpetrated by Hindus, I suspect, but by

I don't know. I don't even know if they'd be Satanists. It's just there's like this a satanic element to it obviously.

But I mean to to murder a baby really, especially the baby that's already been born and is like wiggling and coupooing and and that sort of thing to to kill like someone who's totally innocent like that is very liinal. I mean that is you are disrupting the moral fabric of the universe by doing that which then allows powers to come through supposedly.

And some there are some people who are willing to utilize those powers or attempt to utilize those powers to further their own like their own career and to further like the polit political agenda of their group, that sort of thing. I assume that that does happen.

Not like a lot, but I assume it does happen. I was told by a jazz musician from St. Lewis that in order to make it big in the music industry, you've got to like what is what is the the deity baff you have to like worship bafflement which includes certain atrocities that are like disrupting the moral fabric of the universe so that the power of baffit I assume can come through into this world that kind of thing.

But I think most of the children being trafficked in the US, I mean, most of it is just, you know, sending illegal alien children to supposed family members. You know, it's it's probably, you know, not that big of a deal in in those cases.

Sometimes it's it's like slavery.

Sometimes it's sex slavery. And that would probably be above 1% with regard to like illegal alien children being trafficked into the United States. I would guess more than 1% of them are becoming like sex slaves.

And I did see a little bit of news about how the the Trump administration has located

uh several thousand of the many thousands of children that went missing. And some of them were in fact sex slaves. Some of them were just plain old like work slaves. You know, some of them were dead.

But there are certain factions in American society and politics and in European society and politics that just don't care about this sort of thing. It's just an embarrassment. Their side is responsible. They just want to sweep it under the rug and fake some outrage about some supposed atrocity perpetrated by the other side.

So I'm just going to move on to Stella Supreme formerly known as Libra Lam etc etc's next question is your decision to not meditate actually be not to meditate motivated by a sense that the meditation now would not be as potent as the meditation you were doing as a monk.

Yeah, that's that's the main reason

is that I mean it was like

I got into some relatively deep

meditative states as a monk and then it

kind of tapered off and

I mean now if I were to sit down and

meditate, you know, I might have some

lucid moments and so forth, but I don't

see how it could compare with when I was

a monk. It's like, you know, going back

to the ABCs

and it's just not satisfying.

I got as far as I could with it. So,

it's time to just do something else.

So, let's see. Did I answer that

question?

Yeah. I mean, that is essentially it.

Yeah. It's like the meditation I would
do now as a lay person with a job and a
mate and bills to pay and three dogs etc
etc that it just would not do justice to
the meditation I was doing as a monk
especially when my meditation was at its
peak like between the years 1999 and
2005
that was when my meditation was at its
best
so that even when I was still a monk
After that, it just, you know, it was
just
kind of stagnating. My meditation was
not improving. It was, if anything,
getting worse. And I was, it was sort of
like being the red queen in Wonderland

where she had to run as fast as she could just to stay in the same place. It's sort of like treading water, you know? You just keep grinding away at it, grinding, grinding, grinding just to lose ground as slowly as possible. That sort of thing.

So, I've moved on and I'm just going to move on to the next question here. This is from Tzasiz and Tzas says, "Are you ever jealous? I mean, after 30 years of training as a monk, not when you was young." So, am I jealous? I mean, there you can interpret jealous in two different ways. I mean, it could be sexual jealousy or it could just be, you

know, jealous of, you know, some

some person at work who, you know, gets

commended, you know, just that kind of

jealousy, you know, like envy or

resentment of other people doing well,

that kind of thing. I mean, being a

human,

uh, I mean, there can be just little

twinges of it that arise just kind of

through human instinct or something, but

I mean, it's not taken seriously.

And with regard to sexual jealousy, I

trust my woman, you know, I I know that

she's not messing around, has no

intention of messing around behind my

back. So, yeah. I mean, if I mean, we

don't go out much. We're neither one of

us is particularly social, but I mean, if we went to like a cocktail lounge or something and some guy is chatting her up and they're just kind of like laughing and talking and ignoring me, if that were to ever happen, it hasn't thus far, but if it were to ever happen, I probably wouldn't like it much. You know, I'd start getting a little bit of irritation from that.

But that situation just hasn't arisen. And I mean, she I mean, I trust her more than she trusts me, I guess, just because I'm a more trusting person by nature, I think.

So, yeah. I mean, if there is any kind

of jealousy that I experience, it's just like little like initial twinges that are then dismissed.

And I'm just going to move on to Trareas's next question, which is, do you think something like collective species memory exists? Well, from a biological point of view, a collective species memory would be ingrained into instinct.

So, it's like a frog has this instinct that if it gets caught by a snake, it should inflate itself and start squealing. You know, inflating it makes it harder to swallow and squealing attracts larger predators that might be more interested in the snake than in the

frog. And over, you know, who knows how many hundreds of thousands or millions of years that there has been like a certain amount of success. You're more like a frog is more likely to survive if it inflates and starts squealing when caught by a snake. If it's caught by a bird, my experience is they don't inflate or squeal. When they're caught by a human, as a general rule, they don't inflate or squeal. But when they're caught by a snake, that is just default what they do. And so, in a way, that's kind of a collective species memory. If you're caught by a snake, inflate and squeal. And it's just built

in to their their psychology,

frog psychology.

So from a biological point of the

collective species memory would be

instinct of that spe the instincts of

that species with regard to something

more metaphysical than that then

I don't know it's possible. I don't know

how you could prove it or disprove it or

quantify it or measure it. So it

wouldn't really be scientific and I mean

I'm open-minded with regard to that sort

of thing. But

uh I think just the idea of animal

instinct this the instincts of a species

are like in a way at least to some

respect in to some extent the collective

species memory at least a kind of collective species memory.

So

I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is also from Tzas is and he says, "Do you think after you die you'll go to heaven realms?" And I really don't know. I don't even think about that. I don't really even like to think about that sort of thing. What's going to happen to me after I die? Whatever is appropriate is going to happen, you know? And I just take consolation in that, you know. It's like whatever ought to happen is what's going to happen. And so

I don't really think about am I gonna go
to heaven? Am I going to be born as a
human again? That sort of thing.
I just I just don't think about it much
if at all. I remember before I became a
monk, I was starting to think if there
is such a thing as hell, I might be
going there, which kind of helped spur
me on to renounce the world. But
I just I just really don't think about
it. I mean, I suspect that, you know, my
spirit will continue to exist after I
die, but I mean, it's I don't really
have hopes about that sort of thing.
It's like when I was in school many
years ago after I took a test,
it was like I wouldn't worry like did I

did I get an A? Did I do well on the test? You know, it's like I wouldn't even think about it. And then that was the best attitude to take. You know, it's not like you've got any kind of like anxiety or worry or anything that's creating bad karma that's then going to maybe make it more likely that you didn't do well on the test retroactively somehow.

So, yeah, I'm just content that whatever happens to me after I die is what ought to happen. Everything happens the way it's supposed to happen. And so like wanting or just wondering that kind of thing. I I just for some reason it just

I just don't really go there.

So

I mean there's a chance of it I guess

but I mean if it's more appropriate for

me to be reborn as a human then I'm fine

with that too. whatever, you know,

whatever is going to help me to work out

my karma or or whatever it is.

So,

see, I guess I'm just going to move on

to the next question. This is from

Romeo. And Romeo says, "A couple of Q&As

ago, you speculated that Adi

Shankarachara might have contributed to

Buddhism's decline in India by putting a

Hindu spin on Buddhism with his Advita

Vanta spirituality. As far as I can

tell, the main distinction between the two is that in Vdanta there does exist a self that is immutable and eternal as opposed to Buddhism's concept of anata where there is no self.

Can you further break down the similarities and differences between Buddhism and Advita vdanta? Well, I'm no authority on advita vdanta. I've read the principal upanishads and I've read some of shankura's commentaries and I've read like learned articles and book chapters about shankura that sort of thing most of it long long ago.

So I do think there is one other difference between Buddhism and you know

the more philosophical schools of Hinduism is that in Hinduism they have this concept of samsara or maya as leela is like deva leela it's just divine play you know it's like Shiva doing this dance or whatever and definitely in Buddhism it's not seen that way that it is just seen as just sort of like primordial ignorance and delusion is causing samsara. It's not some godlike vishnu lying on a on a lotus flower in in the cosmos somewhere dreaming this universe which is one of the one of the kind of mythological interpretations of this world that you find in Hinduism. So uh I'm not 100% sure that vdanta would adopt this you know maya being

like a divine projection rather than

just

ignorance and delusion.

But that is one difference that has

really struck me between at least some

Hindu philosophies and terra Buddhism.

But with regard to let's see

like further breaking down similarities

and differences between Buddhism and

Vita Vidanta. Well, I mean this the

similarities are like it's fairly

similar. I mean they they both believe

in like karma rebirth. uh you know

there's an absolute

although in Buddhism there's this wise

like

reluctance to reify the absolute you
know it's you're better to refer to the
absolute as just empty
suna shunya
and leave it at that you know it's it's
what you should be working for working
towards
it's good it's like the goal But trying
to form a concept of it is just a fool's
errand. It's going to be an exercise in
futility. And so I mean I think Buddhism
has adopted the wiser course than vanta
which is reifying the absolute and at
the same time reifying the self which is
just the same you know atman is breman.
I mean that's one of the main teachings
in the in the upupananishads is that

your soul and God are the same that your soul is just you know the the aspect of God that happens to be you know in in in the center of you

and I think that Christianity would have really benefited from that interpretation also but they went in a different direction

and uh I'm just making sure we recording cuz it's getting up close to an hour. The little green bars are going back and forth which is good because it means the microphone is working.

So yeah, it was like Advita Vanta and especially like Majamaka Mahayana Buddhism, they became very similar with

regard to their their metaphysics.
Um you know there's going to be some trappings that are different. you know, there's not going to be an emphasis on Buddhas in in Vdanta. There's going to be more of an emphasis on like upanachic sages, that kind of thing. But yeah, I mean, aside from uh reifying the absolute and by the same token reifying the self and just having this different concept of like Maya, you know, what is the cause of samsara? There's some some maybe subtle differences there.
um they are fairly similar and I have said before that if I weren't a Buddhist I'd probably be a vantist
just because they are like very

philosophically

sophisticated and like satisfying. not fully satisfying because nothing is fully satisfying. But still, I mean, I could embrace that much more easily, that I could embrace Christianity, for example, that some Hebrew carpenter turned miracle rabbi who lived in the early Roman Empire, died for my sins, is the only begotten son of God Almighty, who is this being who gets pissed off regularly, etc., etc. Yeah, it's just Advita Vanta would be my second choice after Buddhism, I'm pretty sure. Anyways, I guess I'm just going to move on to Romeo's next question, which is

did you ever explore Vdanta spirituality yourself? And if so, what did you like or dislike about it? Well, like I said, I have read the principal upon read about Vanta and so forth. Um I never really investigated like vdantist monasticism. I know there there there is vdantist monasticism. There are like vdantist ashrams and monasteries with vdantist monks and I knew a person who had been a vdantist monk just I mean just like an internet acquaintance and he really didn't divulge very much of what it was like but I assume it'd be fairly similar to being a Buddhist monk just sort of like the the external trappings would be different

some of them.

But I mean both originated in ancient

northern India.

So I mean there's going to be a lot of

similarities also.

Um

so yeah I mean I really don't know that

much about

like vantist monastic practice you know

like the actual practice of it. I just

know the theory. I do not know the

practice of vidanta other than I'm sure

they've got like yogic techniques and

meditation and so forth. I just don't

know exactly what kind they are.

So what do I like about it? Well, I

already said, you know, if if it weren't a Buddhist, there's a good chance I would have chosen to be a vdantist.

So, I mean, I like the the philosophical I I'm saying sophisticated or sophistication a lot in this episode. This can be like the sophistication episode.

And yeah, I so I guess I already answered it.

Let's see. Did you ever explore vdanta spirituality yourself? And if so, what did you like or dislike about it? Yeah, I didn't really explore any of the actual practice of vdantic spirituality.

So, I'm just going to move on to Romeo's third question,

which is are there any other spiritual traditions besides vanta that are similar to Buddhism? Well, of course, Janism, you know, it also arose in ancient North India and it has roots going back into what I would assume is probably like the the Shramina tradition which originated in like the Indis Valley civilization or thereabouts. You know, it was like a an indigenous tradition that presumably existed before the Indo-Aran invasion around 1500 B.CE. So Janism yoga but uh yeah I guess yoga is different from vdanta. So there are certain schools of Hinduism besides vanta that do have some like spiritual

sophistication

and and philosophical sophistication. So yeah, yoga which originated also in the the shramana traditions of ancient India. It was called sanankia and then some of the sanankia philosophers um for whatever reasons they agreed to accept the vades as authoritative and they were absorbed into Hinduism and so yoga is now considered to be a kind of Hinduism but originally it was not. You just got two kinds of yoga or two kinds of sanka now. You've got atheistic sanka which I assume still exists in some kind of vestigial form in India and then you've got theistic sanka which is yoga which is absorbed in Hinduism. So

there's that also

um other spiritual traditions between

vanta that are similar. I mean, well,

even like I mean, the higher you go, the

more the systems converge. Like the

higher you go into like mysticism, like

advanced mysticism, you can have Roman

Catholicism getting close getting close

to Buddhism, like ad really advanced

Catholicism and really advanced

Buddhism. I mean, they're converging

towards the top of the mountain.

So, a lot of the stuff that St. John of

the cross says is is profound and he

came up with ideas similar to Buddhism.

Even just the idea that like someone who

has reached the stage of perfection which before reading St. John of the cross I mean I just wasn't expecting that in Christianity I mean Christianity it's like nobody is worthy of heaven is just by God's grace. Even Jesus himself in the New Testament like somebody calls him good sir or good teacher and he says why do you call me good? there's none good except God. So that even Jesus apparently was denying being perfect. Whereas and then St. John of the Cross comes along and says there is a stage of perfection. There's there's three stages. You got the stage of the the beginner or the common worldling the puja in Buddhism. You've got the stage

of the adept who is anyone who has mastered contemplation like at least second genre from the Buddhist point of view. Anyone who's mastered at least second Janna would be considered an adept by St. John of the Cross. And then you've got the

the perfect. And the perfect is someone who is no longer acting on their own self-will. They have mortified their self-will.

And so they become like this divine puppet. They're they're motivated by the will of God. But I mean that is very parallel to the Buddhist idea that an arant creates no karma because karma is

will. So St. John of the Cross and the Buddhists apparently independently of each other came up with this idea that an enlightened being someone who's reached the highest stage that a human can reach is not no longer has any will not of their own

which is interesting. So it's like you get into spiritual traditions and at the at the lower levels they can be radically different from each other but you get higher and higher and higher they they're just all converging at the tip of the mountain so to speak. So even in Islam, you've got like Sufis that I wouldn't be surprised if there have been enlightened Sufi masters and like

enlightened beings, they might disagree with some of the the the really fun like the basic like surface stuff, the superficial stuff, the cultural stuff, but when you get up like into the ethereal realms, they're just agree more and more and more.

It's just that some religious systems really don't have that capacity like the Jehovah's Witnesses for example. I mean they have no concept of enlightenment you know they have no concept of like Janna or high contemplation anything like that you know they're just trying to be good boys and girls so that God will let them live in paradise after

they die.

And that's the way most religions are at

just like the mass cultural level.

And so I guess I'd better just move on

to the next question. This is from

Frater Oculus or Brother.

And Brother I says, "How regularly does

the beard need rebraiding?" Yeah, it's

right here. I got a braided beard in

case you didn't notice.

And

in general,

um, I go like every two days.

Um, and the second day, you know, after

I've already taken a shower, it gets

pretty rough. You know, there's I think

technically they're called sticky

Audies. You know, hairs that are kind of like I got like this nimbus of loose hairs that are coming loose from the braid um on day two, which is good enough for going to work. I was It was good enough as far as I was concerned to do this video, but my woman didn't like that. You know, she wanted to rebraid it for me, so I let her do that. So it's it's looking kind of kind of neat now. But just few hours ago, there was like the the sticky Audi's there was just kind of broken loose. They had liberated themselves from the braid. But I wouldn't go more than two days, you know? It's like every other day at at

minimum for rebraiding it. But it's easy because I just present my my beloved woman with with a little rubber band and say here and it takes all of about a minute and a half for her to braid it for me. It's it's way easier than for me to braid it myself.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question and this is from Alba Coina and Alba Coina says what are your thoughts on Shri Dharma Provertica Acharia from Dharma Nation and I have watched several of his videos. Um in fact I remember when I was still a monk somebody told me that I was like the Buddhist version of him which after watching his videos I really don't see

it. I really don't think that as a monk
I was like the Buddhist version of him.
I mean both of us are kind of based in
with regard to sort of more or less
right-wing politics, at least
non-leftist politics. I mean you could
be like a complete centrist classical
liberal and still be considered like a
fascist and a Nazi by postmodern
standards.
But I mean I think it's it's kind of
interesting watching his videos but I do
consider him to be very dogmatic. You
know he he will just state like Hindu
sonata dharmic arguments or or doctrines
as just gospel truth. I mean a lot of it

he couldn't possibly know from his own experience but he just asserts that it's true. Period. And I mean I really don't swing that way. I'm I'm not that dogmatic.

Um so I mean I'm sure he's a good man and uh you know I'm wish him nothing but the best but I do think that he is rather dogmatic. You know that he is just um conveying as gospel truths like stuff that he doesn't really know if it's true or not. He just firmly believes it because of faith.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Arox, an extinct kind of cattle. And Arox says, "How doesn't how doesn't Buddhism fall into

some kind of meaningless nihilism when there is no self and reality is ultimately an illusion? Who is understanding the Buddhist truth about the nature of this reality if there is no self? And how can it be true if this knowledge is a part of an illusory reality? So I think this there's more than one question mark. So I guess that counts as more than one question. I'm just going to divide it up. So I'm just going to go up to the first question mark and stop for the first the first answer. So he says, "How doesn't Buddhism fall into some kind of meaningless nihilism when there is no

self and reality is ultimately an illusion?" Well, reality is not ultimately an illusion.

I mean that's that's just a contradiction in terms how could reality be an illusion other than the illusion has some basis in reality just like you can say uh a mirage

I mean it's not pure illusion because there is some kind of empirical basis to you know the the shimmering appearance of a a body of water in the distance in the desert so to speak you know it's it's caused by like like light refracted by heat and so forth that causes you to see something that's way off in the distance or like a lot of water

miragages like like on a hot day you're driving down the highway and you can see like shimmering surface of something that looks like a water in a dip in the road and then when you get closer it disappears that sort of thing but it's not pure illusion because there is some basis to that illusion there is something real causing the illusion you know at least from the scientific point of view.

So I mean reality can't ultimately be an illusion because then it wouldn't be reality. How can reality be an illusion unless again you're just talking about the like the the fundamental essence of

the illusion you know of the the mirage
or the dream or whatever it is.
So reality is reality. It's just that
you can't understand it intellectually.
You cannot know it perceptually.
You have to transcend the limitations of
your own human ape primate mental states
in order to get to the reality. It's
like Emanuel Kant. I mean, he believed
that there is a reality, but we can't
know it. All we can know is the
illusion. I mean, Kant, I don't know if
anyone called him a nihilist. You know,
he did acknowledge that there is the
thing in itself. It's just that we can't
possibly know it. But in Buddhism, you
can know it. You can know at least one

contient thing in itself. And that is the contient thing in itself of your own consciousness
without the the like the intermediary of perception.
Because if you try to perceive consciousness, it's not pure consciousness anymore. It's perception. And the perception is sort of like the mirage. You know, it's like if you get down to the nuts and bolts of that mirage, what is actually causing it? You get down to pure consciousness.
But with regard to no self, I mean, so what I guess with regard to the no self, I might be able to answer that better in

the second part. But Buddhism doesn't
fall into meaningless nihilism.
Uh I mean, nihilism would be like
nothing is true.
And that's that's not what Buddhism
teaches. It's just that nothing that you
can think is ultimately true and valid.
If you want to know the highest truth,
you have to experience it directly.
And that would be like nibbana or
nirvana.
But you're not going to get there by
thinking about it. Unless maybe you're
an Abidama scholar. Abidama scholars,
they really took the wrong ball and just
ran in the wrong direction with it. In
my opinion, they think like in Burma,

the Abidama scholars think that they know ultimate reality because they have memorized the dogmas in these Abidama books. And so they're just their head is just full of these beliefs and they're no closer to reality than they were before probably unless they just do a lot of meditation and they get closer to reality in spite of all this dogma that they've been ingesting for decades and decades.

But like I was saying, I mean, meaning is delusion. Meaning is some sorrow.

So I mean, I guess to some degree, Buddhism at the highest level falls into some kind of meaninglessness because

meaning is delusional.

Meaning is perception. You take away perception, you take away meaning.

that meaning is just symbols representing or attempting to represent something else.

So

I guess I can just go on to the second question which will help me to answer the first question. So maybe it was a mistake to have separated them even though there's two different question marks here. He says, "Who is understanding the Buddhist truth about the nature of this reality if there is no self?" Okay, let's just stop there. Here he's got a comma after this but

that's that's a good stopping point who
is understanding the Buddhist truth
about the nature of this reality if
there is no self there is no who I mean
from the going with orthodox terravada
there is no self but there's still
mental states so I mean it's I mean even
western philosophers like like even a
worldly kind of western philosopher like
what's his name Russell Bertrren Russell
I mean he pointed out like with regard
to Decart that I mean the cojito go some
I think therefore I am is just bad
reasoning because there's no logical
necessity for there to be a self in
order for there to be thoughts even Bert

and Russell I mean this worldly western philosopher he he was saying that I mean there is no logical necessity that there has to be a self in order to have thoughts you know it's it'd be more correct if if Decart had just said there are thoughts that that would have come closer to the truth than I think therefore I am.

So I mean you can have thoughts you can't have mental states without there being an ultimately real self. I mean ultimately the mental states themselves are questionable but still logically there is no need for there to be a self in order for there to be perceptions or thoughts that the thoughts and the

perceptions can exist just due to

conditions

that there doesn't have to be this real

self generating these thoughts the

thoughts just arise according to

conditions and David Hume is another

western philosopher who came up with

something along the lines of Anata in

his magnum opus that he wrote in his his

20s

where you know there there is no self

that you can really pinpoint I mean

there's mental states obviously but the

self that is supposedly like the the

vessel of these mental states is not

apparent at all you can't point to it

you can't prove that it exists

so who is understanding the Buddhist

truth about the nature of this reality.

If there is no self, no there is no who.

The understanding can just arise due to

conditions.

But

it's it's it does not logically

necessitate a self to be the owner of

these mental states or the generator of

these mental states. And then he he

continues all continues. And how can it

be true if this knowledge is a part of

an illusory reality? Well, real again

illusory reality is an oxymoron. It's a

contradiction in terms.

I mean the illusion can have a a

foundation or basis in reality and then you would understand that. So you'd see through the illusion in order to get to the reality.

So how can it be true if this knowledge is a part of an illusory reality? Well, any kind of like conceptual understanding is going to be like illusory to some degree. I mean it's just going to be illusory. I mean if you're trying to make sense of reality then that's going to be illusory because the reality cannot be made sense of. I mean, you cannot like intellectually understand ultimate reality because you're just

turning it into symbols. And as I keep
saying, a symbol is radically different
from what it attempts to represent. Like
T re e on a piece of paper is radically
different from an actual tree
or any kind of understanding of a tree
is radically different from that tree.
They're just worlds apart essentially.
So we're dealing with illusion. That's
what we've got to deal with because
we're stuck in it. We're stuck in
samsara. And there is uh some Mahayana
text, I think it's a cardinal Mahayana
Sutra that says something like the
purpose of Lord Buddha's teaching is to
liberate us from our thinking by means
of our thinking. So it's like fighting

fire with fire. you know, you're using skillful means. So, you're you're taking your delusion and using it in a kind of somewhat less diluted manner to kind of like dilute itself down to get weaker and weaker until finally you can break free from it

and then you're in reality the contean thing in it thing in itself.

So

Buddhism could fall into some kind of meaningless nihilism to someone who is just absolutely addicted to their own thoughts and just cannot I mean they cannot accept that there could be anything that lies beyond the scope of

their own intellectuality, their own perceptions.

So Buddhism can be called a kind of meaningless nihilism to people that really don't get mysticism that they're completely like addicted to thinking. They're just completely trapped in their own head, that kind of thing. But they don't really understand dharma. At least they don't understand the higher levels of it. They can only be understood through practice and personal direct experience.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Phyes and Philes says are clouds mandelas. A cloud is a mandola only if the person looking

at the cloud decides to interpret it as

a mandelola.

That's it.

So clouds are not some sort of

metaphysical symbols.

They're just

they just arise due to conditions and

then somebody down on the ground

probably a new age type person looks up

and says ooh it's a mandelola

but it's and probably they mispronounce

it as mandala. I guess in as an English

word it might be correctly pronounced

mandala

although mandelola is a poly word

and I think it just means like a it can

mean like a circle although like a large panel on a monk's robes a monk's robes like a terra Buddhist monk's robes are cut up into big rectangles and small rectangles and the large rectangles are called mandelas the small rectangles are called ada mandelas which is a half mandelola. So it's just like a a large square
would be um like the meaning of mandelola at least in one sense in poly but you know the kind of symbolic meditation
subject or object. Um yeah it's just you could just sort of artificially impose mandelola hood onto a cloud but that's as far as it goes. Now I'm going to move

on to Phily's second question. Is imagination accusa? And ausula literally means unskillful and sometimes it's translated as unh wholesome. You know it's bad karma.

So is imagination bad karma? Well, if you're wallowing in it, yeah. Um like an enlightened being,

arguably. I mean, you don't really want to make like definitive statements about the mental states of an enlightened being, but an enlightened being probably has thoughts, you know, at least from like the the empirical point of view. You could do like a like a PET scan on a fully enlightened being, assuming that

fully enlightened beings even mean
anything in a some sort context, and
there's probably activity going on in
the brain, like thinking and so forth.
It's just that
when you're enlightened, I mean, you
just don't identify with it anymore. You
have transcended it. So, it's still
there. You just transcend it. It's not
like you you annihilate it.
It's it's still there. It's just that
it's no you're no longer identified with
it. You're no longer led astray by it.
It's just nature taking its course. So,
the wiser you are and the less you're
just wallowing in imagination, the less
accusal it is. But if you're just like

Walter Midi, some some of you might know who Walter Midi is, you know, he's there's this story by I think it's James Thurber wrote this like back in the 1940s or something. This guy named Walter Midi, the secret life of Walter Midi, and he's just fantasizing about being this hero just in various various I mean just throughout the day. He's just this inept boob who's completely handpicked by his wife who's always on his case because he keeps messing things up, but he's just living in this imaginary world where he's like James Bond, you know?

So, I mean that kind of imagination I I

mean it can go even farther than that
until you're just like psychotic just
living completely in this imaginary
world that doesn't really vibe or
correspond with what's going on in the
empirical world for most people.
So, yeah, the more wise the imagination
gets, the more you're not attached to it
and the less accusa it is. But really,
if you if you're not enlightened and
you're thinking about stuff and
believing that they're real, even like
in a different
different context,
then still there's at least a certain
amount of delusion and thus a certain
amount of accusula because anything that

is motivated by greed, hate or delusion, attraction, aversion, or semic-conscious stupidity is going to have an element of auseli in it. Bad karma.

Buddhism is just very finetuned mo possibly the most finely tuned ethical system known to man

because it's not just you just do what the god says and you're doing good. You go against what the god says and you're doing bad. It's it's like entirely psychological. So that any delusion that is like

what's what's the term like infusing your thoughts and it's like all thoughts have at least illusion backing them up.

So long as you're not enlightened that just about anything that you think or do is going to have a certain amount of unskillfulness involved.

And it's like imagination is just to some degree it's creating sort of a miniature world. You know, it's like you're watching a movie too. It's like you're watching a movie. A part of you is assuming that movie is real. You know, if if you're not following along with the story and at least kind of semi like suspending disbelief,

then I mean it's just pointless. Why watch the movie? I mean I mean you could be like a like a movie critic who's just watching how good of an acting job the

actors are doing or or like trying to like deconstruct the the plot lines and this kind of thing. I mean that would be kind of like what a Buddhist aesthetic is doing to everyday life to some degree. But still most people they're reading a story, they're watching a movie. They're just daydreaming and coming up with some scenario, having a dream at night. And you know, at least part of you is assuming that that is real, which is delusional.

I mean, you wouldn't get excited you're watching a scary movie if at least part of your mind wasn't assuming that it was real.

So, yeah. Is imagination accusal? Not necessarily, but usually. And for just about any unenlightened being, it's got at least a little bit. And the more attached to it you are, the more you're wallowing in it, the more accusal it's going to be. Especially if you're fantasizing about like killing your boss or something, then yeah, that would be even worse.

If you're just fantasizing about being a rock star or something, it might not be as bad as fantasizing about being someone who's blowing up entire cities.

I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's third question.

He says, "Are there infinite ways to

practice dharma?" Theoretically, yeah,

there would be an infinite there'd be

infinite ways to practice dharma in

theory,

but uh

yeah, I don't know if there have been

infinite ways that dhamma has been

practiced in this world because there

have only been a finite number of people

who have practiced dhamma in this world.

might be a very high number, hundreds of

millions,

maybe even a billion or so over the over

the the millennia,

but still you haven't gone up into

infinite numbers. So, it'd be

theoretically yes. And maybe if you consider the entire universe, all the possible worlds in all the possible realms, then yeah, we might be up to an infinite number.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from someone whose name looks like it should be pronounced creel but is actually pronounced throat warbler mangrove.

And throat warbler mangrove says why did the Buddha not allow women in the SA initially? Is it related to the fact that women in throw warbler mangroves opinion in general bring drama, need attention, are emotional, nag and play victim more than men? Why their

inclusion in the SA caused Buddhism to survive less according to Buddha? Well, that's kind of politically incorrect, isn't it, to ask such a question.

So the Buddha being male in a maledominated society like almost all societies were up until relatively recently.

Um you know he started the song off for men for monks

and there were some female aesthetics.

There were some sects some ancient Indian schools that did allow female aesthetics.

And I think the main reason why the Buddha was reluctant to ordain nuns is

just that when you have monks and nuns interacting with each other, scandal inevitably arises. Not from every monk and every nun, of course, but the chances are you've got a monastery of celibate,
sexually frustrated men, and you've got a a convent like just right next door, maybe of celibate, sexually frustrated women,
nature is going to take its course sooner or later. It's going to result in scandal, which is going to bring disrepute onto the song. So I assume that was the main reason why the monk did not want to ordain nuns.
U also there there's like one reason

that you can find in the texts. You might take a little bit of reading between the lines, but it's fairly obvious that some women like after according to the texts after the the Buddha finally allowed bikunis or Buddhist nuns to be ordained, there were women who were just getting away from bad marriages. You know, they're just like escaping from an [__] husband by becoming nuns. And they did not have like a real vocation. They didn't really, you know, they didn't have a spiritual calling. They're just trying to get away from some jerk that their parents like betrothed her to when she

was a baby.

And you know, they're just that happened. So, it apparently was a thing even in the Buddhist time that some women that wanted to become nuns really were just trying to get away from a bad family situation.

And so I mean there's possibly some of that involved also. Uh according to the text, the Buddha did get talked into ordaining nuns by his his cousin Ananda, who was also his personal attendant at the time. Um by Ananda saying, "Well, can't women become enlightened just like men can?" And the Buddha had to admit, "Yes, actually women can become enlightened." So reluctantly

he said, "All right, all ordained nuns, but now you've done it because the song is only going to last half as long now. The true Dhamma will exist in this world for only 500 years instead of a thousand because of ordaining nuns." And probably again, it's just biology that men and women, sexually frustrated, celibate men and women who are interacting with each other, it just breeds scandal.

It's just natural human nature. It's just the way it is. We are human. Even monks and nuns are human. They still have all those animal instincts that are called human nature in our species.

So I mean even a celibate monk, he sees
a pretty woman, you know, it's like the
the pupils dilate, you know, so
it's just the way it is. And so probably
it was best I mean in the Buddha's
opinion at first just have men. I mean,
it's going to be kind of like a fringe
thing for women anyway. You know,
there's not going to be nearly as many
nuns as there are monks anyway. And so,
best to just keep the men by themselves
without these, you know, possible
temptations interacting with them all
the time.
So,
uh I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from Salina.

And Sina says, "I know you are not confident in the authenticity of sotapana and sakadagami levels or anagami for that matter. But let's say you changed your mind or really have to try to advance or advocate that sodapana and sakadagami are the real Buddha's teachings and people really do reach this aran level. How would you explain it? Please, please try hard to advocate it. Um, I'm not exactly sure ex what Sina wants me to do here. I mean, I could just say what tradition says. You know, it's like

you've got kind of like St. John of the Cross was was talked about. You got

three levels. You've got the be the puja, the common worldling. Then you've got the seikka which is the person in training which is from going with terraodin interpretation the the the lower three levels of Buddhist saintthood or aryahhood soda pana sakadagami and anagami and then you've got the aca the one no longer in training who is fully enlightened that would that would correspond to St. John of the cross's stage of perfection and that I mean that is fairly acceptable to me but when you divide the seka into three categories where the sodapana is someone who can't break any of the five precepts I mean even if for

any reason they're just incapable of it and they are going to be born no more than seven times I think see I really have never really taken it very seriously. So, I'm not even sure exactly what are the exact specifications for a soda pana and a sakeami.

But the sodapana, I'm pretty sure it's no more than seven more rebirths before I mean you it's like you have reached the point of no return. There's no relapsing back into lower realms. You won't be born in hell or as an animal or a ghost, anything like that. And so you're going to be at least human level for no more than seven lives before you

become enlightened. And it's you have
this flash of insight which is like a a
the first little glimpse of nibbana. And
you know it's like that's it. Point of
no return. You can no longer tell lies
or any such thing. And
um
that's that's like the official
doctrine. there's certain feathers and
hindrances that they're cut off. I mean,
you don't have doubt. You don't have
self view anymore. That kind of thing.
Then the sakeami
is you have one more human life maximum
before you're enlightened. And then some
of the other hindrances or fetterss
become like attenuated.

And and really it's I mean it strikes me as largely arbitrary like this sakeami distinction and it's not mentioned at all in what are considered to be older texts but I'm supposed to be advocating hard for it.

So I mean my advocating hard for it is like well there have been lots and lots of wise teachers and in the text the Buddha himself advocated for it. So who am I to to be skeptical?

And then the anagami which in like the first sutas of the idi uh apparently anagami is used as a synonym for enlightenment which makes sense non- returnturner. You're not

coming back like just like intuitively
if you came across that term you would
assume that it means an enlightened
being. But an anagami is someone who's
going to be they're not going to be
reborn on this planet anymore. They're
going to spend one last life up in some
very advanced heaven realm. The div was
it the divine abodess,
the happy realms.
And only good Buddhist saints can get up
there, which is why the Hindus never
discovered these these realms.
And then and then after that you've got
Arhant fully enlightened and then just
no more in Samsara. But yeah, let's say
I change my mind. I really have to try

to advocate that soda pan and sakadami are real. Um, and the the real Buddhist teaching and people really do reach this orient level. How would I explain it? Well, I'd explain it the way the texts say, which is pretty much what I was saying.

Although the texts are much more precise and haven't forgotten, you know, exactly which states, you know, like that each stage overcomes that kind of thing. But I mean, I'd advocate it by saying, well, like I like I already said, I mean, it's like all these great Buddhist sages have believed it. The Buddha himself is recorded as having said it and taught it

and advocated it. So, who am I to be skeptical?

So that's about that's about the best I can do

and I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Gnostic Rocker and Gnostic Rocker says, "Is Terravada a mystical system or is it an aesthetic practice that can lead to mysticism? And were most of the monastics or Buddhist layman you practiced with over the years mystics, dogmatists, rule followers, or something else?" Well, that's actually kind of two questions, isn't it? Huh. So, we're going to have like four questions out of this. I'm going to separate these. Okay.

All right. So, first question is, is Terra a mystical system or is it an aesthetic practice that can lead to mysticism? Well, I think originally it was a mystical system and of course an aesthetic practice that can lead to mystical experiences, but the whole philosophical setup of like the atakawaga
is largely mystical where it's just saying don't believe anything. Don't like cling to perceptions. Don't don't even cling to like what you've seen and heard
that that's just all it's external. Even your own thoughts from the Buddhist

point of view are external. They're what
is it? What's the term? Uh visiting
adventitious I think is the term
incoming from outside.
So yeah, early Buddhism before terraata,
pre-terravvada
would be a mystical system that had an
aesthetic practice that was designed to
cultivate mysticism. But terraada
has already it's already like the post
mystical stage.
uh terravada like in the text sometimes
it's called vbajavvada the the the
doctrine of analysis which is
practically the opposite of mysticism.
So terravada orthodox terravada
is

I don't I don't know if the like the average orthodox terravada Buddhist even understands mysticism. I don't think the average terravada Buddhist monk is a mystic. But I think I've already I'm skipping to the next next part of that question.

So terraada let's just forget like what Buddhism originally was or like you know the atika waga even though it's contained in the terravada typica um terravada has this text called the the maha nidesa which just reinterprets the atagawaga into something more doctrinal for terra.

So the atawwaga is one of the few texts

in the polytopica that has a commentary that's so ancient that it's also canonical and there was a felt need for this kind of commentary early on because Terravada was diverging from the teachings of the atawaga. Atakawaga was too well known to edit out of the canon and so they had to reinterpret it by doing a lot of stretching and twisting and unless you're just a complete dogmatist with absolute faith then it's it's pretty questionable some of the interpretations in the ataga.

So anyways terravada is not really a mystical system anymore. I mean it can lead to mysticism almost inadvertently. I mean, second Janna, I would say

starting with second Janna, you're getting into mystical states because you're wide awake and not thinking anything.

So yeah, it can lead to mysticism while itself not having a particularly mystical philosophy because it had abandoned the the no perception, no view, don't believe anything attitude of the atikawaga and they just came up with this huge scholastic edifice of doctrines and the doctrine of analysis where you divide everything up into all its parts and you analyze all the causes and conditions you single them out and try to understand how they

interact in all this which is practically the opposite of mysticism. So the second part of the question is and were most of the monastics or Buddhist layman you practice with over the years mystics, dogmatists, rule followers or something else. Very few mystics very few. Most of them I mean the Burmese are just like preeminent dogmatists
that even the scholars like a Burmese monastic scholar they can just be phenomenal with regard to their memory. They just master the text. They know what the texts say forwards and backwards. They have almost no independent thought. They don't dare to

question any of it. They're like like like medieval Catholic theologians, you know, it's like they cannot question any of it. It's all true. So, they just master what the book says. So, they're definitely dog dogmatists.

Um they're they're way better at dogmatizing than at rule following because most Terraata Buddhist monks don't follow the rules very well. very few terabato Buddhist monks, maybe 2% especially in Burma will actually try to follow the rules of monastic discipline correctly.

So yeah, dogmatists would probably be the best the best answer for that one.

Although in Thailand, they tend to be a little bit less dogmatic, a little bit more into following rules, possibly even a little more mystical.

Although they don't meditate as much in Thailand as they do in Burma or so I've been led to understand.

But you get into the meditation masters. The meditation masters are going to be more mystical. The more advanced you get, the more mystical you get. That's just the way it works. And it's it works that way. Not just for Buddhism, but like I was saying, Christianity, Hinduism, whatever. The more advanced you get and the more you just converge in mysticism.

So, I'm just going to move on to Nostic Rocker's next question here, which is, "What were your most botific meaningful experiences as a monastic?" It would have to be like in that period between 1999 and 2004 when my meditation was at its zenith, so to speak. And I don't really want to go into a lot of like I don't know like recounting these experiences, but like uh what should I what should I mention? I mean just like like I I think it was the the previous Q&A I was saying that you know you get into one of these this expansive crystalclear meditative states where I mean the thoughts have just stopped. You

know, every once in a while a thought will start to arise. You'll see this sort of like little ripples starting to appear on the surface of a pond and then you you're aware of it immediately and it just calms back out again. It just flattens back out and your mind remains silent. So there's like a few initial movements of a thought trying to start to arise. You just you just see it immediately and it just flattens back out again. crystal clarity, silence, just expansive consciousness. And you have no doubt at all that five minutes of that is worth 15 years of struggling and floundering and just it's it's better than 15 years of breathing in,

breathing out, breathing in, breathing out, breathing in, breathing out.
And then there was the experience I had like going down the the stone steps in the rain, having like gut cramps from something I ate earlier that day that I I won't go into the details, but I remember talking about that once at some Dharma or just public talk in in America and some new age guy came up to me afterwards and says, "You were describing an enlightenment experience."
He was really impressed by that of the story of me going down the steps in the rain with gut cramps and it was like I was my meditation was at it was was

really good at the time and just just spontaneous mindfulness you know it's like down at the well getting a bucket of water you're just aware of you know the the the feeling of the rope against your hands and the the tightening of the muscles and the the breeze on your skin you. It's like this heightened state of awareness.

And then going down the stairs, it was like I just reached this point where I just like transcended the the the being rained on and just being doubled over with abdominal cramps from eating like spoiled shrimp curry or something. And it was just like the center of my consciousness, so to speak, was like

deep down just below the surface. And up at the surface, you had all these waves of gut cramps and being rained on and so forth. But where like the center of my consciousness was was just stillness, you know? It was all fine. It's just like commotion up there up at the surface that didn't even matter. And I mean, it was such an intense experience. I was I mean I was almost weeping with joy and gratitude while at the same time anyone who saw me would think that I was dying because I was still like doubled over grimacing in pain from from the stomach cramps and being rained on. So yeah, the most botific meaningful

experiences as a as a monastic, I mean I might get rid of meaningful because of course meaning is delusion, but the most bayotific experiences as a monastic were like when my meditation was at its best which is kind of should not be too surprising.

So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question also from Nasi Rocker which is as follows. I think someone should release a compilation of biblical teachings that are potentially at least Buddhist or Greco Roman pagan in essence. I wonder how would a Buddhist read or interpret the following from Corinthians. Quote, this is Paul of Tarsus speaking. Quote, for now we see

through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known."

Well, seeing through a glass darkly, yeah, that's kind of delusion or ignorance. Um I think a Buddhist wouldn't be saying that when you become enlightened then you you see face to face

because I mean it's the faces are just part of the papancha or kind of the delusionfueled

differentiation of the world into this and that you know just separating things and and like considering different aspects of what you've separated as real

entities

but yeah so I wouldn't say it's

completely a Buddhist statement.

Um, but I mean the part about seeing

through a glass darkly, yeah, I mean

that's that's a Buddhist statement. You

can say that or a Hindu statement. You

know, they believe in Maya or illusion,

that kind of thing.

[Music]

So

yeah, see, I wonder how would a Buddhist

read or interpret the following from

Corinthians.

Okay. Yeah. seeing through the glass

darkly. It's a metaphor. I mean, a

Buddhist would interpret it somewhat

differently.

It's like I mean, you're seeing clearly and then just like cluttering up what you've seen with like perceptual interpretations which then obscure the view.

So, yeah, then face to face would be like when you're enlightened, you're no longer obscuring the view with all these perceptual symbolic interpretations. Now I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I am known. Yeah, that could be like now I'm ignorant but after I become enlightened then I'll know the truth. That sort of thing. So yeah, I mean for the most part it could be

interpreted in a Buddhist sense.
But I think like uh a compilation of
biblical teachings that are Buddhist
would be different from a compilation of
biblical teachings that are Greco Roman
pagan since a lot of the the Bible
teachings really are Grecoman pagan like
in the beginning was the word and you
know I mean that's Greco Roman pagan
right there. That's like neoplatanism
that got converted into Christianity,
but that wouldn't really be Buddhist,
but it would be Greco Roman pagan.
I think I'm just going to move on. Next
question here. And we are kind of
getting sort of down towards the bottom
sort of. See, we've been going for Yes,

it'll be less than three hours. So,
that's relatively short, I guess.
So next question is from Xenithoid and
Xenithoid says are devout lay Buddhists
walking contradictions. I struggle to
understand the idea of really believing
Buddhism seriously and still not taking
it to its logical conclusion which is to
become a beu. Well, when I read this,
when I was compiling the list,
I immediately thought of Schopenhau
because Schopenhau taught a philosophy
similar to Buddhism as he himself
admitted, but also he himself admitted
to not being able to live up to the
ideals of his own philosophy because I

mean that was one of the main arguments against Schopenhau is he's talking about saintly renunciation and so forth when he was still a relatively worldly person. But I mean, that's not necessarily being a hypocrite. It's just that he was able to

see

uh like a spiritual path that he knew he wasn't advanced enough to follow yet. I mean, you can read a text and say that says, you know, don't be angry, and you can agree with that. Sure, being angry is is unskillful. you know, it's bad karma, but still you're going to be angry just because you still have human nature.

So, I mean, it's not necessarily a walking contradiction. I was told so many times when I was in Burma that a lot of like Burmese lay people would would come up to me and they'd they'd say how much they respected me because uh I came from a foreign country that wasn't a Buddhist country. I came halfway around the world to practice Buddhism at a higher level that than they were able to practice. You know, it's like Buddhist lay people. It's like, yeah, they know that monks are supposed to renounce the world and all that, but they just can't bring themselves to do it just because their

attachments are too strong or whatever
it is.
like Schopenhau, you know, he he came up
with a relatively wise philosophy and he
just flat out admitted that he wasn't
wise enough, at least in his practice,
you know, he wasn't free enough of
defilements
to live up to the exaltation of his own
philosophy. And that's fine. I mean just
even a monk even if you're a monk you
you still haven't reached the logical
conclusion of dhama which is don't have
greed hate or delusion you know it's
like even a monk is often struggling if
he's a conscientious monk to free
himself of greed hate and delusion and

most monks fail. We're just stuck being human. No matter what you do there you are. You're still human. And some humans have stronger passions, stronger attachments than others.

So you can acknowledge that something is true and still not be able to follow it. You can acknowledge that you're better off never feeling anger and still you're going to get angry sometimes cuz you're human.

So I'm just going to move on to Xenosord's next question is which is a difficult one. Who is the most spiritually advanced terravada lay Buddhist you have ever met? And I really

I have no idea. I have no clue. Partly because
in order to know how spiritually advanced somebody is, you got to see them at their worst. You know, you got to see them when everything is going wrong. You got to see them when they're triggered or see if they're just immune to being triggered. And as a as a monk, for example, I mean, you're seeing people on their best behavior. They're not going to be like beating their kids or screaming at their wife in front of you.
So,
I really can't say who the most spiritually advanced terra lay Buddhist

is that I have ever met. I've met a few wise ones um in America, like American ones. I'm not going to name any names. I don't want them to get like conceited or anything that which might then just ruin their status as one of the most spiritually advanced terab Buddhists I've ever met.

Um it could be that the most spiritually advanced terablay Buddhists that I've ever met was had been a monk for several years before they they disroed and became a lay Buddhist. Yeah, that's that's possible.

But again, I really shouldn't name names with regard to that. And still it's just

really hard to say how spiritually

advanced somebody is if you haven't like

seen them under the worst circumstances

when most people would be losing their

[__]

So

I guess I answer that because I really

can't answer the question because I

really can't say I don't know.

So the next question is what did their

lay practice consist of? Well, if they

were Burmese Buddhists, they kept five

precepts and meditated daily. And I

mean, some of them were celibate.

Um

gosh,

what did their lay practice consist of?

You know, it'd be like the the typical devout lay Buddhist practice in in Burma. You know, they'd attend meditation retreats. Sometimes they do their their malas, you know, their their Buddhist rosaries a lot. That kind of thing, you know, it' be like kind of like medieval Roman Catholic Europeans. But the wisest terraota lay people that I have come across, you know, as a general rule, you know, they keep five precepts and meditate. But I mean really it's hard to say because as a monk meeting with lay people then I mean you're not seeing their their usual daily life again

you're just seeing them on their best behavior at a monastery.

So it's it's really hard to say but the standard devout lay Buddhist practice of Burma

keep five precepts meditate daily you know offer food to the monks that kind of thing donate to the monasteries to like within your means you know if you can afford it you can build you can offer a meditation cabin or something at a monastery that kind of thing um the men would generally become donas or temporary monks from time to time. Some um there's one old fellow, he was one of my main supporters in Burma. Um you know, he'd been a a Don Laba monk like

dozens of times probably over the course of his life.

He built this building in his backyard just for monks to stay when they came to came to to Rangon on business, that sort of thing.

Um,

so it's it's pretty basic. It's it's just standard. You know, the the lay duties of a terra Buddhist in Burma anyway

in in America is probably a little more variable and eclectic.

But those are tough questions because it's hard to say. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is

I don't this is kind of a semiqu question. This is from priapistic monk. And the semiqu question is about conceit I guess and he says the conceit of I am comes from clinging to one two several or all of the five aggregates form feeling perception fabrication consciousness. So instead of I and you or other it's just cause and effect in regards to mind-made phenomena. There is no there is no self here in these five aggregates. There is no self there. you in the five aggregates.

A dava once asked the Buddha about this. Would an awakened one still say say words like I and you? The Buddha said they would

knowing full well that they are
conventions of speech and would be able
to see the ultimate truth behind them.
So then he's priopistic monk is quoting
a suta and first a deva a small g god
superhuman being says he who is an
arahant his work achieved free from
taints in final body clad that monk
might still use such words as I still
per chance might say they call this mine
would such a monk be prone to vain
conceits
then the Buddha says is bonds are gone
for him without conceits. All delusions
chains are cast aside. Truly wise, he's
gone beyond such thoughts. That monk

still might use such words as I still per chance might say they call this mine. Well aware of common worldly speech, he would speak conforming to such use. And then that's that's the end of the the suta. And then priapistic monk monk says no question per se just wondering if your take on the consistent conceit phrase holds true.

So the consistent conceit phrase I'm not exactly sure what exactly that is. It's like the dva is asking would such a monk be prone to vain conceits because he's using words like I and me and you. And then the Buddhist says

um he would speak conforming to such you wait

I guess

there's no vain con oh bonds are gone

for him without conceits

and the poly word that is translated as

conceit is mana and mana literally means

measuring generally like measuring

yourself up against others and in the

atawaga it says that to consider

yourself superior to others

is mana or conceit. To consider yourself

to be equal to others is mana or

conceit. And to consider yourself to be

inferior to others is mana or conceit.

So any kind of self- reggard would be

mana.

At least going with the context of that

suta in the atawaga.

So bonds are gone for him without

conceits. It's like he no longer has

self view. He's no longer like creating

contrast between himself and some

external entity or phenomena.

So

yeah, I mean that's sort of what's

creating samsara. It's like the the

basic delusion is I am. From a Buddhist

point of view, that is the root of all

delusion and suffering is just the idea,

the belief I am.

And that is conceit.

because you really have to like compare

yourself with something that isn't

yourself in order for yourself to have

meaning.

Arguably, I think some people could take issue with that, especially if they're like pantheists or something that just kind of like a Hindu who considers the self to just be everything, you know, just the absolute god everywhere.

But let's see.

No question per se. Just wondering if your take on the consistent conceit phrase holds true.

Yeah, I'm not even I don't really fully understand this semiqu question to tell you the truth.

Gosh. But like an enlightened being, it's like I've said, you know, they they

can still like empirically appear to be having thoughts, appear to be having beliefs even, and they'll be saying words like I and me and you and and yours and and us and and you know, that person and this person, you know, they still use language like that. It's just that they have transcended it. You know, they're no longer considering it to be ultimately real. you know, it's like their mind presumably is aware of ultimate reality and this is just kind of like a puppet show going on and because you know they've they're somewhat inhabiting one of the puppets you know it's sort of like in the zoo which is a Chinese dowist text it says

the sage conducts himself as a man
because he was born into the body of a
man I mean that's that's just what you
do and
So even if you're enlightened, I mean
you're still using worldly language
because you have to use worldly language
to communicate, but still it doesn't
mean that you're taking it seriously and
and believing it as some kind of
ultimate truth because you've just gone
beyond that. You know, it's still in the
picture. It's just not it's just not the
main point of the picture anymore. is
just kind of like like a superficial
kind of a thing that is largely

irrelevant to like really reality

and I think I'm just going to move on

next question partly because I did not

fully understand the last question and

this is from Yugu who is our last

question here and Yugo says is it

beneficial to be looking forward to

state of enlightenment

And then he says, "Seeing this everyday

mind struggle with some Saric problems."

Okay, that's just sort of like a little

commentary. So the question is, is it

beneficial to be looking forward to the

state of enlightenment? Well, ultimately

it's still delusional. I mean like in

the text, the monk should not be

aspiring to any existence to this or

that existence, not even the existence of being an enlightened sage. You know, it's like be here now. Attend to what is here now. Don't be worrying about the future. Don't be worrying about the past. Just be here now. Don't don't bother with what isn't here now.

To the extent that you're able.

So, I mean, it can be beneficial even though it's like somewhat delusional and unskillful. I mean, it's like just because something is somewhat immoral or unethical or delusional doesn't mean that it can't be helpful because it may be that you're you're becoming less delusional. You know, it's like let's

say someone's really stingy. They don't want to share with anybody and then finally one time they share kind of grudgingly. they kind of, you know, they kind of don't want to do it, but they force themselves to do it and they kind of regret it afterwards. It's like, I should have just kept that. They're just going to [__] waste it or whatever. Still, even though that is like a delusional attached, you know, kind of like defilementladen action and attitude. Still, it was an improvement over just being completely stingy. At least they they shared something even though they didn't like doing it and they were like like

regretting it afterwards. Still, it was like a step in the right direction or like my father, you know, he had this past life regression before the past before he was put into a hypnotic trance. You know, he he had this objective. He wanted to know what was the point in his past lives that was pivotal in making him the person that he is today. And then he goes back into this hypnotic past life regression where he is an ancient soldier armed with a little sword like this, possibly a Roman. and his outfit, his troop, you know, his legion has been ordered to just exterminate

every man, woman, and child in this barbarian village. And the barbarians had like long kind of fair hair, possibly Germanic.

So, he's the soldier out there. He's obeying orders and he's just killing people. He's he's massacring this village with his fellow soldiers until he gets this teenage boy.

The boy is on his knees. He's got him by the hair. He's about ready to to finish him off with this sword. And then he realizes that this boy isn't struggling and screaming and fighting and trying to get away like all the rest of them. That he's has just given up. He just has this world of sadness in his eyes. He's just

he's not even trying to defend himself, you know? is just it's just this he's just overwhelmed with sorrow and my father this this ancient soldier feels compassion for him. He feels sorry for the kid and so he just like lets go of him and just kind of pushes him and like points to this points to the forest, you know, just goes like this, you know, just go. And so the kid kind of like snaps out of this days, realizes that he has a chance and just takes off running. And then my father says after that he had like feelings of like he had failed in his duty. He actually went out looking for that kid in order to kill

him but he couldn't find him because the kid was long gone. But that was like the first opening of his heart you know the first stirrings of the heart chakra in his spiritual evolution at least according to him.

So the whole point of of what I'm saying is that I mean it wasn't particularly virtuous. I mean he wasn't being saintly or anything but still it was a step in that direction maybe a baby step towards being somewhat less you know delusional and and full of defilements and so forth. So from that point of view it can be beneficial to look forward to the state of enlightenment you know just kind of have that as an ideal

you know like be working towards that
you know have that as like the horizon
that you're working towards that sort of
thing you that can work that can be
skillful means even though ultimately
you'd be better off just being here
right now in the present moment
preferably not believing anything you
know just being like in this state of
like atawaga style like mystical
I don't know what you call it
practically like soypism but it's not
even soypism it's just you're you're
just like a pane of glass and phenomena
are just like going through you and with
with no obstruction

but it can be beneficial to look forward
to the state of enlightenment at least
if you're considering that to be a
worthy ideal that you're working towards
Then I mean ultimately you have to let
it go the the the looking forwards part.
So it can be beneficial. It can help you
even though ultimately it's not an
enlightened state because the an
enlightened being has no aspirations to
any kind of existence
any kind of future existence. No
aspiration whatsoever.
So, I'm just going to move on to Yugoo's
next question, which is the last
question of this Q&A.
And Yugu says,

"What did Buddha mean by that there is some perception in an enlightened mind? You mentioned this in your last video. Kind of a Zen coon." Yeah. Okay. So, that's again referring to the video I did just recently on the Kalaha Wiiwada Suta. And I've already discussed this probably two or three times over the course of this video. How you have perception like an enlightened being just empirically.

You know, you could look at an enlightened being or you do a brain scan on an enlightened being and you're going to find like activity in there. I mean, they're not going to be just completely

empty. Their mind is not going to be like silent and just like total mystical union and rapture. you know, they're still going to have to be carrying out conversations and so forth. But I'm assuming it could be that they really are. It's just nothing going on in there that they're just like this like a reflection like Rahm Das used to say about Maharaji that the better you got to know him the more you realize that there was nobody there that he was just like a mirror reflecting your own karma back at you. So at some level an enlightened being may be like that but going with this [__] like verse in the kalahawi wasuta like the enlightened

being his mental state is such that he
has no perception of perception he has
no perception of non-perception he is
not without perception and he has no
perception of void
so for one who has become thus form
becomes void etc etc so I mean that is
pretty obviously
um the Buddha in this text is describing
the mental states of an enlightened
being. He has no perception of
perception. He has no perception of
non-perception. He is not without
perception. He has no perception of void
which would seem to rule out all
possibilities. So it's it's a kind of

paradox.

But I think the paradox is explained by the fact like I've already been saying in this video that there is a kind of perception but it's just that he is not seeing it at the level of perception the enlightened being. He's like transcended the illusion or the meaning of this perception. It's just nature taking its course. But it's like again if you you can you say that consciousness is water and mental states like perceptions are the waves on the surface of the water. The enlightened being still might have the waves. It's just that he's seeing it all as water.

You know it's like

is this ceramic or is this cup? Well it's both. You know the the ceramic is the essence. The cup is the form or function. And so you can focus on one or the other. And the unenlightened person is function is is focusing on function and form. Whereas the enlightened being is is dealing at the level of essence. I just hit the microphone in my hand while gesturing wildly.

And again, it's like for people that they're I mean, they just have to think like intellectually, they have to understand and make sense of things intellectually in order for it to be useful to them, in order for it to be

meaningful in any way. It's it's they're
not going to get it
because you have to transcend
the like the content of perception, the
symbolic content of perception.
is sort of like a painting. Let's just
say the Mona Lisa. It's a famous
painting. So, you can look at that and
you see there's this, you know,
relatively upper class Italian woman of
the Renaissance with this enigmatic
smile and her eyebrows shaved off.
Or you could look at it from the point
of view of like some painter or even
like a chemist just analyzing the style,
the like the the painting style, how the
brush strokes were made. You're not even

really focusing on this woman. You're
just dealing with like the elements.
What kind of paint is used? What kind of
pigments are in the paint? You know,
it's like that sort of thing. You just
kind of deconstruct it into this
assemblage
of canvas and and and like oil paints
with pigments in them, you know? It's
like what is it? Uh what kind of oil is
is paint? It's uh the same stuff
lenolium was made out of.
Gosh.
H flax. Flax seed. I I it's it's
escaping me. But anyways, I mean, you
can look at that painting from that

level of just sort of like the essence
of it and and just completely ignore
that, you know, it's like the the
Renaissance Italian lady with the
enigmatic smile and no eyebrows.
So I mean it's it's still you could say
that the perception is still there but
you could even look at perceptions like
you have this belief I mean you can just
identify with the belief and that's your
reality in which case you're it's a
samsauric existence or you can just
examine the mental state as it arises
and you know it's just it's not you it's
just this mental state arising and you
can just sort of analyze or not even
analyze but observe it just like with

detachment

and and then not attribute any kind of

real like symbolic meaning to it and

then that would be a more enlightened

way of looking at it and that's kind of

that's like the enlightened

like answer to the paradox of you know

he has no perception of perception no

perception of non-perception but he's

also not without perception so there is

perception there.

But it's it's just sort of like this

transcended perception like

the symbolic meaning is no longer really

the point of it. You know, it's no

longer believed in as some kind of

reality. It's just nature taking its course because brains generate perceptions at least in this version of samsara.

And I mean, I can answer the same question over and over and over and over again, but for people, I mean, I'm not saying that Yugaoo is like this, but for people that really are just like addicted to thinking, you know, they just I identify the world through their their intellectual interpretation, just through their mental states. They they they really have no experience extending beyond this self-contained like artificial world of symbols. So they consider that to be reality and

that or even if they acknowledge that they're not fully enlightened, still they think that somehow enlightenment is going to occur within the context of of this
body of of symbols, these mental symbols. And it just doesn't work like that. It's like you have to escape from the prison.
And after you escape from the prison or Plato's cave, you have to escape from Plato's cave. After you escape, you can come back in again. It's going to be a completely different experience because you're not going to be chained up looking at the wall anymore. You can

still see the reflections on the wall,
but you see them for what they are.
They're just shadows flickering on a
wall.
But even that is not going far enough in
an attempt to try to explain an
enlightened being and his attitude. I
mean, it's just it's still there. It's
just kind of empty,
you know? It's just I it's hard to
explain. You can't really even explain
it. The Buddha himself couldn't really
explain it.
So yeah, it's just that the perceptions
are there. It's just that they are
transcended and are no longer the center
of your attention.

That you're you're looking past the
waves and just seeing water,
so to speak.
So I guess I'm done. I really guess that
I'm really done. And so like I should
always say at the beginning never do
except once you think I can answer a
question especially about dharma you
know early Buddhism terravada Buddhism
meditation that sort of thing you know
other other realms biology western
philosophy to some degree like western
classical literature that kind of thing
I might be able to answer then again I
might not and so no more than three
questions per person per episode, please

and like and subscribe if you liked this and would like to see more. And uh be happy. And now I'm going to push this button that is going to cause me to stop recording.

Alrighty then.

Hello. I'm just checking. I'm check doing like the the equipment check after I've already started recording here.

Okay. Yeah, it looks like it's all working. Hello and welcome to episode number 162 of question and answer. I am your host Po Basa and this is my beverage which is good old southernstyle sweet tea.

There was an a guy in the news just recently from South Carolina who was actually hospitalized for drinking unsweetened tea.

There is few there are few if any beverages that are better for hot

weather than sweet tea for some reason.

I don't know why that is.

So anyways, as you may deduce from the

fact that my fish tank is already in

moonlight mode,

this is going to be a late one for me.

It's like it's probably going to be

after midnight by the time I'm done,

which is kind of too bad because due to

it being in midnight mode, you don't get

to see my new fish. Attila III.

The first two Aillas have passed on.

And he's actually a wild type male dwarf

gourami that I've been trying to acquire

for over a year. So let's just see how

well he does.

But that is for later. And I suppose I

should just start answering questions here. And the first question is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, "Every now and then you mention how aside from mindfulness of your daily activities and chanting an occasional om to yourself, you no longer meditate. Can you please explain the history, meaning, and benefits of reciting the M chant?

What is it about this particular sound that is so special and spiritually significant?"

Well, by golly, um, I'm really not familiar with the history of the syllable.

I do know that possibly the earliest literature in which is mentioned would be some of the upanishads. In fact, there's one upanishana, I don't remember which one, that divides or rather into its three constituent sounds because O in Sanskrit is au like polymma becomes godmma with g au in Sanskrit. And in Burma, O in pi is still pronounced like a dip thong. It's actually two sounds. Oh, you know, it's like your mouth is changing when you're saying it. So, I think the correct pronunciation of M wouldn't be with a hard O, like it's more of a looser. So, that you're making like three sounds.

And like I just said, there is an upanishad that divides up the three sounds of M and attributes them to the three states of of consciousness or some such. We don't need to get into that. Presumably M was known since before the upanishads were composed. I doubt that the author or authors of that or those upanishads
just invented it.
So I don't know what the origin of M would be. It could be prehistoric for all I know.
So can I please explain the history?
Well, that's about the best history I know of is that it be got incorporated

into vadicism

through the upupanads. I'm pretty sure

um I've never read the Brahmanas, so it

might even be earlier than the

Upanishads in Vadic literature. I'm

pretty sure it's not found in the

original vadas.

So, with regard to the meaning of M,

like I said before in a in a previous

Q&A, I think that the original meaning

of M is just it's it's like a sort of a

a symbolic reproduction of just sort of

like the background hum of the universe.

sort of like the the pervasive presence

of God throughout the entire universe.

So that would be my best guess. Although

like I just mentioned um there's one

upanachad that divides m into three
different you know three different
levels. It's like one is waking
consciousness, one is dreaming
consciousness and and one is like
dreamless sleep. And then there's like
different upanishad that comes up with a
fourth state of consciousness called the
fourth that we don't need to get to.
So the benefits of reciting the M chant
or rather the M mantra
is
um you know it's just a convenient thing
to direct your attention towards like
Jay Krishna Murdy said that I mean it
doesn't really matter what the mantra is

if you're meditating on a mantra it can
be Ram it can be m it can be CocaCola
so there is some truth to that although
it can also be that
certain syllables have a certain vibe to
them which then help you to kind of be
more in harmony with that sort of vibe.
And also
like Rahm Doss said in one of his early
books that so many people have been
meditating like really advanced
meditation masters have been like doing
Om or Ram. So that if you get into a
certain mental state in a way it's like
you're kind of tuning in on this like
these millions of people that have all
done this same chant or the same mantra

I should say. So Rahm Doss in one of his early books was talking about how he was given a certain mantra by one of his teachers and he got to this state where it was like the entire Mormon tabernacle choir was like reciting the mantra along with him and so he asked his teacher and he says well you've just kind of tuned in to you know all the other meditation masters mainly I guess that were doing this same mantra and you just sort of kind of gotten into that wavelength or frequency or whatever.

But it is a convenient way of meditating. For some people, it can work better than meditation on your breath.

Partly because it takes a certain amount of conscious effort to M. You know, it's like breathing. You're doing that even when you're in a dreamless sleep. You know, it's just sort of a physiological thing that happens automatically. So your mind can completely drift away from the breathing when you're meditating. Whereas m because you're having to deliberately m it helps to keep your mind on the object of meditation makes it a little more difficult to wander away. And you of course you can do m when you're doing anything like driving a forklift for example. Im while driving a forklift sometimes or just standing in line. People don't stand in lines nearly

as much as they used to because of like
you don't have to stand in line at the
bank anymore because it's all done
online for example
or you don't have to stand in line at
fast food places so much because people
just have Door Dash have it delivered to
them or they just go through the
drive-through window or whatever.
So anyways,
I do think M does have just like a
calming effect on me and sort of a let's
see a centering effect if you don't mind
me using a little woo woo new age
jargon.
So what is it about this particular

sound that is so special and spiritually significant? Well, I mean it's it's a religious word. I mean you can call it a word, I guess, even though it may not have any actual meaning. You know, maybe that's like the point of it. It's just sort of a symbolic version of just sort of the the spiritual background hum of the entire universe.

And so it's kind of special because of that, I guess. I mean, whether something is special or not. I mean, it's just a matter of perception. How people feel about something, you know, what how they perceive that something. So, and spiritually significant is similar. I mean it's spiritually significant for

Hindus and for some Buddhists especially
Mahayana Buddhists simply because it's
like incorporated into their scriptures.
But as I said it is a good meditation
object for some people possibly better
than breathing in breathing out
breathing in breathing out.
And uh I don't know I was just there was
one of the first meditations I ever did
like when I was in high school you know
I went through my rebellion phase had to
go see a youth counselor and the youth
counselor was into Ramdas so he gives me
books by Ramdas to read and for some
reason M appealed to me more than Ram
Ram was like the name of some ancient

Vadic hero who became deified whereas M in a way it doesn't really mean anything. So to my to my character, to my way of thinking, it was more appealing that way as it it really didn't have an obvious meaning.

And I sucked at meditating when I was in high school. You know, I went through this phase where I would sit on the floor cross-legged and try to meditate for like 15 minutes before going to school and, you know, my mind would just be wandering all over the place. But at least the the deliberate oming did keep at least one little splinter of my mind still focused on M.

But I would guess that a Hindu might be

able to give you a better answer about the you know the specialness and significance and meaning of the syllable.

So I mean it's still you can do a kind of anapana while oming too. It's just you just breathe out. I mean the outreath is an M. The inb breath is not an M usually. Also while doing walking meditation I did this a lot as a monk. I think it was I had it worked out like every sixth step or every eighth step would be an M

just because I don't breathe as fast as my legs move when I'm walking.

So I guess I'm just going to move on to

the next question. This is from Austin and Austin says, "Is the mind born and does it die?" And this is kind of a trick question. I mean, what do you mean by mind? Like the individual person's mind in a way it's born, you know, the individual person is born. Um

but

there is like this continuum like it's like rebirth linking consciousness is the first mind moment of this particular life but it's just one moment after the last waking moment of your previous life. So there's like a continuum also. And so the unenlightened mind in a way is born but it's born over and over and over again.

And also the unenlightened mind from a Buddhist point of view there's no discernable beginning to like this lineage of you know karmic successions that we call rebirths.

So um you might argue some people might argue that you know even the unenlightened mind is not born because there's this infinite regress of past lives although it is possible that you know there is a first unenlightened life which would be something very primitive is the the most primitive perceptual mind

but I mean we don't really have to get into that and the unenlightened mind

would I mean going with orthodox terraana Buddhism it would die when the enlightened being dies and then the enlightened being because they're enlightened they don't take rebirth and so that would be the cut off point for the unenlightened mind with regard to just mind with a capital M sort of like vanta is is claiming you know that god is infinite consciousness and there were like I keep saying there are two obscure fragments of some older tradition found in Terravada texts. One in the Deganikaya, one in the Majinikaya. That does imply pretty obviously that Nirvana as a metaphysical state, not just an ethical state of being enlightened, but

a metaphysical state of like ultimate reality is infinite formless consciousness. And assuming for the sake of argument that that kind of infinite formless consciousness does exist, you know, pervading the universe with the syllable,
for example, then yeah, that would not be born and it would not die.
So I guess I should just move on to the next question also from Austin. And Austin says, "Is it adharmic
or the opposite of dharmic adharmic? Is it adheric to advocate for the death penalty for Charlie Kirk's killer?" And going with Buddhism. Yeah. I mean, to

advocate the killing of any sentient being is a dharmic. for a monk. It could be even parajika if anyone follows up on any sort of proposal from a monk. Like I've mentioned before, there is a story in Vineia in the rules of monastic discipline about a compassionate monk who was advising the the king's royal executioner. Not that he executed kings, but he was the official executioner in the the capital city of the kingdom. that this compassionate monk was advising him, keep your axe sharp and try to finish off your victims, you know, the the criminals that are to be executed with one one chop, you know, just do it quick and as painlessly as

you can. And that monk, I think he was he might have been the OG. So it might be that he didn't he wasn't part of Jika but I mean I don't remember the exact details of what happened to that monk who advised him but it was denounced you know it was declared to be improper um by the Buddha himself and it may be that he was actually excommunicated for giving that advice and the executioner followed up on his advice because that made this monk kind of an accessory to murder.

So yeah, I mean it's still the killing of a sentient being from a Buddhist point of view. The killing of sentient

beings is

wrong. So that would include war. It

would include the death penalty. It

would include abortion because according

to Terra Buddhism, life begins at

conception.

I mean it would apply to even you know

slapping mosquitoes.

So yeah, from a purely Dharmic point of

view, yeah, advocating for the death

penalty is advocating for killing

sentient beings, which is a no no in

Buddhism as a general rule.

Um, but from a political point of view,

I mean, you can have completely

different arguments

that are just as I mean, they'd be even

more valid perhaps from a purely
political point of view,
like war, for example. I mean, if you
have a nation of saints, like
enlightened beings who are just going to
let themselves be killed, you know,
rather than hurt the other, like the
invading barbarians or whatever. Well, I
mean,
saints can afford that sort of thing.
But in a nation of unenlightened beings,
which all nations thus far have been,
then as a general rule, you fight to
defend your families, to defend
yourself, to defend your home, your
homeland. And that's from a political

point of view, it makes perfect sense.
And so like from a political point of
view, the death penalty may make sense.
But from a purely Buddhist like saintly
uncompromisingly
dharmic renuncient sort of point of
view, no. Even killing animals is out.
Slapping a mosquito is out.
Although even a monk is allowed to
strike out in self-defense, quote
unquote,
but that doesn't that would not involve
just deliberate killing. I mean, it
would be more like uh oh, what's his
name? Kyle Writtenhouse. Just you're not
trying to kill so much as you're trying
to eliminate the threat. Doing whatever

is necessary to eliminate the threat.
And if the person dies while you're defending yourself from them and I mean it's not your intention to like kill them, but it is your intention to eliminate the threat. then maybe you would not be culpable of murder from a purely Buddhist point of view. Although a judge and a jury may have different ideas.
So I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Clefy
and Clefy says in your sitting practice did you have a feeling of being an impostor? The same feeling artists and writers have sometimes and apparently

not because I don't fully understand the question being an impostor. I mean, sometimes I've had this feeling ever since I was a kid, just just being struck by just the absolute miraculous, bizarre, strangeness
of, you know, being in this meat puppet and dealing with all this varated stuff.
You know, every once in a while, I'll just be hit by it. Even ever since I was a kid, just every once in a while, just boom, this is just so weird that this even exists.
It's happened to me a few times at work driving a forklift just boom. It's like I mean how is it even possible really

other than you know the the imaginary statues and the uncarved block of marble and all that.

So yeah, I don't think I really had a feeling of being an impostor other than maybe having a feeling of you know my conception of self being illusory.

And I my I just noticed my collar is sort of asymmetrical. I hope I hope it's not bothering any people with obsessive compulsive disorder out there. Any autists that just can't bear to look at my collar that's kind of sticking out more on one side than on the other. Just close your eyes and just listen to the the soothing tones, the soothing

resonant tones of my voice.

or just just go to the podcast. Um, a supporter actually did go to the trouble of having my Q&A videos and some other videos also converted automatically over into podcasts. So, I guess there's a way of downloading those now. Then you can listen to the podcast without having to watch the video and being disturbed by my collar or my braided beard or or any such thing.

So, I guess I better just move on to the next question. This is from Stellar Supreme. formerly and occasionally still known as Libra lamb and seller supreme etc etc says if I have at least a bit of acne at any given morning

does that give a consistent
justification
to use a handheld mirror to check sores
as a monk and he's referring to this
obscure rule of monastic discipline that
most monks ignore that says it is
against viney a duca offense an offense
of wrongdoing to look into a mirror,
unless you are investigating a sore on
your face or some such.
So, I mean, if you're going to
investigate your acne, let's say you
want to squeeze a pimple or some such,
and it's it sounds disgusting to talk
about it, although probably everybody
has done it. You know, it's sort of like

taking a dump or some such. It's just one of those things that you're kind of embarrassed about and it sounds gross and all that, but everybody does it. So, um I mean, if you're going to look into the mirror to investigate some acne blemish, I mean you can do that. Sure. I mean, if you if you just kind of use that as a convenient excuse to gaze upon your own continents, your countenance, I guess would be the correct pronunciation, your visage, then yeah, I mean, you're just kind of like cheating, you know, you're just playing games, you know, you're trying to find loopholes, you like the Burmese saying, we need that chat that, which

means if you're skillful at vineia, you can kill a chicken because you know all the loopholes. so that you can get around things like Thai monks like John Tenisero's famous book on monastic discipline where there's a rule that says you can only keep one set of robes. If you get an extra an extra robe in addition to the the allowable three then you have to get rid of it within 10 days. You have to get rid of one of the the the four robes you've got. Otherwise, you're committing a nisia offense. But if you just call it accessory cloth, then you can keep as many robes as you like. I mean, you're

calling them robes still. You're wearing them as robes. But if you if you like officially designated as accessory cloth, you can keep as many as you want. So that's that's sort of like cheating on the rules. Or I went to a Zen monastery once when I was kind of monastery shopping and in the afternoon they had what was called the medicine meal. So they still knew that according to ancient Buddhist monastic discipline, monks were not allowed to eat in the afternoon. So they just call it medicine. You know, you can take medicine in the afternoon. You just can't eat food in the afternoon. So they don't call it food, they call it

medicine.

It's like that. Which I mean since I brought up we need that jet that it reminds me of one of my favorite Burmese sayings which is dolin pazonte which means when the sun shines in September the shrimp die.

Anyways getting back here to the question.

Yeah, I mean there is an old guide to monastic discipline, one of the only ones in English before Ajan Tonisro came out with his that was by the Tai Sanga Raja of like the early 20th century, venerable Vajira Varasa and he said that you can look into a

mirror to shave when when you're technically not looking for soores or investigating sores. or anything like that. And that was good enough for me. So that was like for years that was the only veneer rule that I was willing to even fudge on was I would look into a mirror to shave myself. And in a way it's kind of preventative because you're more likely to cut yourself if you can't see what you're doing.

So I mean it's it's kind of like the rule that says you can't build a fire to warm yourself unless you're sick.

And then but I mean if it's like subzero temperatures, you could build a fire just to prevent from dying of

hypothermia even though you're not sick yet. So it's kind of a preventative thing. So looking into a mirror when you're shaving could be seen as a kind of preventative being on the on the lookout for any sores that might happen when you cut yourself shaving. And I I was always a klutz and I would nick myself shaving all the time.

So yeah, I guess the the main gist of the answer to this question is if you're looking to investigate a sore on your face, you can look into a mirror. But if you're just just looking to a mirror to gaze upon your own facial features while thinking, well, you might find a sore,

you know, which which is kind of
cheating, kind of being dishonest with
yourself, then yeah, that probably
wouldn't be the best way of going about
it. And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Trzasquez
and it's also a monastic discipline
question kind of a personal one.
Traasquez says, "Did you ever broke sana
number three, which is with a Burmese
pronunciation of polyu
and I mean let's see in English it would
be and whatever Biku
depraved with a perverted mind were to
speak
insinuatingly
to a woman with using crude language. If

he were to speak using crude language to a woman like a young man speaks to a young woman uh with connection to sexuality.

That is a sana offense. an offense requiring initial and subsequent meeting of the SA.

It's the second most like what's the word grave offense that a monk can commit is a sada offense. There are 13 of them. This is number three. for a monk to essentially use like sexual language to a woman. Um, not just like objectively answering a question, you like is it immoral to masturbate? Something like that. You

know, you can if someone asks that in good faith, a female asks that in good faith, a monk could answer in good faith. But if he's just bringing it up on his own because he wants to talk, you know, sexy to a woman, then that would be against the rules. And in answer to the questions, I have broken that rule before.

So I won't go into details. Even if people ask me to go into details, not your business. But I have broken that rule before. I've broken others, too.

So anyways, Tresasquez is a second question. Is living for five years under your Oh, this is another this is another

monastic discipline question. This is this is kind of nice. Is living for five years under your preceptor or other senior monk in Vineia. When let's say I would ordain and as a monk in the next day took off to a wilderness alone without asking anybody, would it be breaking any vine rule? Yeah, it would. In fact, this it's called Nissia or dependence and it's emphasized. It's not just mentioned. It's not just a rule. It is emphasized in Muvenia or monastic discipline. In fact, there are other rules that kind of spin off from it. Like for example,

um

like it's at least five years. I mean nowadays it's just sort of an automatic five rainy seasons once you've spent your fifth the Wasa. You're a free agent. You're now a Majimabiku. You're no longer a Navakabiku. You're no longer a beginner. You're no longer a newcomer. You're you're a intermediate or medium standing, not really a senior monk, which would be a terra.

And so I mean you in addition to at least five rainy seasons as a monk, you also have to uh show that you are proficient in in like certain aspects of of of the monk's life like meditating, knowing how to bake a bowl, knowing how to sew robes. Also, you have to

according to the rules, you have to be
able to recite the entire biku pad mocha
by heart and also the bikuni pad mocha
by heart, which almost nobody does
anymore because in conservative terra
Buddhist countries, the general
consensus is there are no more bikunis.
They are extinct.
So in addition to that there is a a rule
that says if a a a junior monk who's
still living in dependence he takes
delight in solitude in the forest then
he can with his preceptor or acharia's
permission whoever he's taken dependence
on with their permission he can go off
and live alone in the forest except

during the rains retreat during the rains retreat he has to come back and stay with his preceptor or acharia until he has completed his dependence which is at least five rainy seasons.

So

I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ruie and I I don't completely understand this question. Ruie says, "What would be your domic take on the notion that time might flow or unfold from the future to the past?" And I don't fully understand this. Um he's asking is it possible for time to go backwards? And there were some physicists I think even Stephven Hawking for a while was under the

impression that when the universe is expanding time goes forwards and when it starts contracting again assuming that it contracts time would then start would go in reverse and back you know it go everything would be like going backwards.

Um but I don't know if Ruie is asking I mean is it possible that even now time is actually going from future to past and I don't think so. I mean

I mean I did read a book a long time ago was uh it was like oh something about times arrow it was considered to be like this classic scientific book one of the few science classic scientific books I

ever read along with Charles Darwin.
uh time and no time's arrow but it was
about entropy and this this scientist
was arguing that it is entropy that is
really determining the flow of time you
know the entropy goes in one direction
from order to disorder and so I mean
even if someone is building something
you know creating order out of disorder
still like Stephen Hawking used to say I
mean it's like 10,000 times as much
disorder as order is actually being
created. Which reminds me of Burmese
carpenters who might fix this one thing
here, but there's like this, you know,
20 foot like circumference of a radius
of destruction all around what they're

fixing.

But then I have to do a a dharmic take on this. I mean, I don't I don't think it would be possible subjectively for time to go backwards. I mean in a way like in ancient some ancient cultures they had this idea that we're backing up through time because we can see the past we just can't see the future. So it's like we're just kind of moving backwards into the future but still we're we're you know we're facing towards the past. We don't have eyes that can see into the future. So in a way that's kind of going backwards through time bass backwards but still it wouldn't be the

same as uh time flowing from future to

past and I don't fully understand if

Ruie was asking if I think that that's

possible now that we might right now be

going from future to past um or if he's

asking if it's even possible

hypothetically

And I mean it's possible hypothetically

I guess from a like a a physical like

the point of view of a physicist

although subjectively I don't know if we

we'd even be aware of it.

I don't know.

I mean it's really not a dharmic kind of

question or not a domic terravada

Buddhist question because

uh terra Buddhism they really didn't

have much of a conception of like you
know this kind of understanding of time
you know terra Buddhist metaphysics to
some degree is more Newtonian than
Einsteinian
and they didn't really understand how
gravity worked apparently The Abidama
scholars assume that throughout the
entire cosmos there's the same up- down
orientation.
They just
for whatever reason they didn't bother
to to really try to to understand that
part because I mean they just didn't
have the
they just didn't have what it takes I

guess at the time at that point in history to really get some sort of grip on how gravity works.

So yeah, time would be similar I guess.

Um

so I mean from from the point of view of terab Buddhism I really don't think that there was anyone even considered the possibility of of time going backwards unless I mean it's like maybe some person with deva or clairvoyance could like look into the past which might be kind of a going backwards in time to I mean it could be viewed that way I suppose although in terabata Buddhism all that exists is the future. The future moment anyway or I mean the

present moment anyway.

I do like my sweet tea.

So yeah, I mean it's it's it's

kind of a strange question and I don't

fully understand what Rua was trying to

get at,

but uh it might be a little bit more

like

scientifically sophisticated maybe. I

mean at least from from a the point of

view of physics for ancient Indian

Buddhist philosophers to to really

wrangle with or like from a just a

subjective point of view. It would be

hard to imagine what it would be like

subjectively

just starting at at like you're dying of old age or whatever and then just going backwards until you're being conceived in the back of a car somewhere.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from PSA.

And I should point out that a lot of like there has been a lot of upheaval and uproar and so forth going on over the past few days. Like earlier in the week, you had this beautiful young Ukrainian woman, a a refugee from the Russia Ukraine war was on a train in I think it was South Carolina or North Carolina and some

um like a schizophrenic black guy who had already been arrested 14 times and

just the last time he was just let
loose. It was maybe not even with any
bail.
He just stabs her in the neck and kills
her. So that caused like a strange
uproar. Like in a way it was sort of
like a a black fatigue moment where
white people and maybe even other
non-black persons are just saying enough
is enough of this [__]
And then just a few days ago at at the
time of recording this, this
conservative
activist named Charlie Kirk was shot
through the neck. Although there are
some conspiracy theorists who are

thinking it was all staged and so forth. Then nobody seems to think that the Ukrainian girl being stabbed in the neck was staged. Although they have like a similar effects, not the same effect, but like with regard to the Ukrainian woman being stabbed in the neck, it's like the pro- Ukraine people on the left apparently were silent. I never saw anything like on X anything like that of the Democrat any Democrat or leftist person you know speaking out about this because you know it's just like this horrible dilemma that they're in. They have to either support a Ukrainian refugee who's a white person or this poor mentally ill black this oppressed

black person who murdered her. So, I mean, they just like, well, it was just like an inconvenience for a lot of them, I assume. Just they don't even want to go there.

With regard to Charlie Kirk,

um,

in in a way it was you had a lot of people

I mean, it was just sort of like the the left were at first especially saying that look at his family. He had a the the shooter, the alleged shooter had a conservative family. Therefore, he was conservative and he shot Charlie Kirk just because Charlie Kirk wasn't viewed

as conservative enough. And then later evidence comes out that supposedly he had like Antifa and kind of like furry homoadjacent
stuff engraved on his ammo. and he was like involved in Antifa and he had a transgirlfriend and so forth. So that kind of went nowhere. I guess you know the left immediately wanting to blame the right for for this particular this particular homicide.
But also, um, there was been just this, it's like a a spate, I guess you could call it, of leftist people on X or Tik Tok or whatever social media, Facebook, Instagram, whatever, who were like gloating and celebrating that Charlie

Kirk got shot through the neck with a 306 rifle.

And so the right started using cancel culture against the left. The left was using cancel culture for like a decade. Just people that like they wouldn't they wouldn't get the the jab, for example, they lose their job or, you know, they speak out in in some conservative manner that is opposed. you know, it's it's no longer in the Overton window for, you know, social justice kind of people that, you know, they they would get called out and they'd get, you know, their boss would be called, you know, that this person is a fascist, they're

they're promoting hate, this kind of stuff. And a lot of the time these people, even though they were just saying stuff that would just been common sense, like in the 1980s, you know, they're getting their careers and reputations destroyed. And now the right who who's who appear to be actually starting to really fight back in earnest, especially since Trump got his second term that they're using this same cancel culture to call out people gloating and cheering and celebrating because Charlie Kirk was unalived by um an assassin.

But I'm not haven't even started answering the question yet really. This

is just kind of a sort of a setting the

setting the

setting the scene.

So, what do I think about what happened

to Charlie Kirk? Um, I'm willing I mean,

there are conspiracy theories and you

really can't 100% believe anything you

see in the news. So, I have to admit it

is good to have a certain amount of

healthy skepticism, and I'd be willing

to say that there's maybe at least a 20%

chance that this is some kind of staged

SCOP that there's one person on my

Discord server that's saying that

Charlie Kirk probably wasn't even shot,

that it was all faked. But I mean, even

if he really was shot, I mean, there's still, you know, any number of factions that would want him out of the way. And so, you know, it could be that, you know, engraving pro- Antifa like kind of mods or symbols onto the ammo is just too convenient. I mean, you could argue that. And I do have a certain amount of skepticism with regard to conspiracy theories. Not all conspiracy theories are false. In fact, quite a few of them have been coming true lately.

But as just the standard working hypothesis that I'm going with, I do assume that you had this young man who was very intelligent, maybe a bit on the spectrum,

who was nevertheless very intelligent,
who went to I mean maybe even before he
went to college, you know, just through
Reddit and and whatever other social
media, he started being kind of
radicalized. He got involved in Antifa
apparently. you know, he had um a a
roommate who was sort of a love interest
apparently who was kind of trans and
also a furry.
And so probably what happened is you
have this very intelligent, somewhat
autistic young man who gets radicalized
uh either in college or in high school
and then
I mean he he becomes involved in Antifa,

takes it all seriously because he has
this romantic or emotional attachment
for this kind of trans person that he's
living with that, you know, he's very
much, you you know, sort of anti-
anti-trans Charlie Kirk. It was when
Charlie Kirk was actually at his talk,
his fateful talk, mentioning, you know,
this upswing of like
mass shooters who happen to be trans.
That's when he got shot when he was he
was bringing that up. So, it seems to me
probable, not necessarily true. You
know, it could all be some kind of scop
for all I know, but this I'm going with
the working hypothesis.
Some radicalized young man rebelss

against his family's conservative values, joins Antifa, and decides he's going to be a hero by taking out this hate speech spewing fascist. And Charlie Kirk was relatively benign. You know, he had Christian views, which are now considered to be fascistic, you know, hate speech.

But still, Charlie Kirk was one of the main people on the right who was going to college campuses and just asking for for open discussion. You know, he'd let the leftists have their say and then he would respond.

But apparently some people don't want that.

Anyways, I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question, which is with regard to the other like very high-profile homicide in the news lately. He says, "The white Ukrainian girl, they got stabbed and killed by a black American man in the subway. What are your thoughts on that? I guess the woke left isn't standing with the Ukraine on this one." Yeah, I I pretty much already kind of covered that. Uh, you know, it's fairly straightforward. This one I I haven't heard of anybody claiming that there was some sort of, you know, scop conspiracy involved. You know, it seemed relatively straightforward. You had this beautiful

young blonde woman sitting on a train looking at her phone and this homeless looking scy black guy who, like I said, had already been arrested 14 times. see for 14 times just pulls out his He's sitting on the on the seat behind her, pulls out his pocketk knife, unfolds it, and then just

stabs it into her neck like three times. And I saw way too much of that on X, you know? It's like it was just you doom scrolling or whatever on X, you know, you're just going down the scroll and it's just picture after picture after picture of this girl right before or right after she gets stabbed. And I just

didn't like that. And that was one of
the few dimly bright sides of Charlie
Kirk getting getting shot because it
just replaced that whole that whole
narrative with this new narrative.
So I mean this Ukrainian woman is just
old news now even though it happened
probably less than a week ago.
So what are my thoughts on that? I guess
I already already shared those those
thoughts.
Yeah, and I do agree that the the woke
left isn't standing with Ukraine nearly
as much on this particular issue,
but I do think that
it's kind of the left's idea that there
should be equity in law enforcement,

which means you shouldn't have more black people arrested than white people. Even though you know just the old say you got like approximately 5% of the population which is like black men or like from 14 to 50 black males from like 14 to 50 are committing approximately 50% of the violent crimes. I mean that's just like a like a trope at this point. So, I mean, when you've got, you know, different cognitive abilities and like a what is it like a 20% higher level of testosterone, which conditions like impulse control or lack of same, that kind of thing, that this kind of thing is I mean, you're not going to have

equity. You're not going to have all the
races committing the same proportion of
crimes and being punished for I mean at
the same the same proportions like per
capita or whatever. It's just not going
to happen. People are different.
Different ethnicities are different.
So I mean this is this it's all like
very controversial
and I mean now things are kind of
reached the the turning point to some
degree like like some people are saying
that this week is just like a gamecher
where but but I mean it started before
this where stuff that used to be
absolutely taboo you would get your
career and your reputation destroyed by

leftist cancel culture. Now people are
just saying it openly
because for a lot of people just enough
is enough. The left has just gone insane
that they are on the side of the
criminals more than on the victims.
Unless the criminal is white and the
victim is not white. And in which case
of course they want, you know, complete
revenge on the criminal.
So anyways,
enough of that
and I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from S Papaalapa
and S. Papa says, "I'm sure I can look
it up and find out if the texts have

anything to say about animals attaining nirvana, but I figured I'd ask you if there is anything about that or if you think it's possible for an animal might jump into emptiness."

Well, first of I might as well mention Echart Tollah who has this idea that all animals except for a few domesticated pets are already enlightened because you know be here now and the power of now. Animals are like in the present moment. They're not worried about the future. They're not stewing over the past you know right here in the present moment. So they're enlightened except for like I say a few like pampered what is it? the [__] and freeze dog that this old lady

has and or like uh what is it? Maltese dogs. They're particularly neurotic, I think.

But I think I just uh confused myself by by saying [__] and freeze.

So yeah, so just setting aside Echartol claiming that almost all nonhuman animals are already enlightened. Um the terraotta Buddhist point of view is that animals are not fully enlightened and you know they're in a lower realm and in a way it's kind of like ancient anthropocentrism where they've got you know humans in one group and then they've got like apes and dolphins and mosquitoes

all like in in a in their own group. You
know, it's like a m a human is much
closer to a chimpanzee than a
chimpanzeee is to a mosquito
like cognitively as well as physically
and genetically.
But just going with ancient, you know,
preodern anthropocentrism,
you know, just animals are just their
own group and we are not in that group.
We are people. We are humans
and from the terra Buddhist point of
view, animals cannot become enlightened.
There are a few cases on the record of
animals becoming I mean they've they're
able to go to heaven.
There's just a few cases as a general

rule animals can't even get to heaven. In fact, there's the famous discourse in the sutas where, you know, there's like the the simile of this blind sea turtle that only comes up for air every hundred years. And you've got this yolk which is kind of shaped and sized like a like a toilet seat. So, let's just call it a toilet seat because people can relate to that. You don't see yolks very much anymore, but everybody sees toilet seats. So you got this toilet seat floating around in the ocean and every hundred years this this blind sea turtle comes up for air and according to the Buddha in this discourse, it is easier

or more likely that that blind sea
turtle just swimming at random through
the ocean is going to come up with his
head right in the middle of that toilet
seat or yoke than it is for an animal to
be to get out of the animal realm and be
reborn as a human.
Personally, I'm a little bit skeptical
of that idea, but
um going with Orthodox Terra, animals
just cannot make significant spiritual
um progress, especially to the point of
being enlightened. For example, there's
this story of a Naga, which is a kind of
shape-shifting cobra dragon with human
intelligence,
and it can assume the form of a human.

And so this cobra dragon assumed the form of a human and was ordained as a monk.

And the thing is when these cobra dragons, these nagas fall asleep, when they're unconscious, they revert to their natural form. So one night at the monastery, some other monk was walking by, maybe had to go out and pee or something, and he sees just these giant scaly coils just hanging out the windows of this little hut

because the giant cobra dragon reverted to its natural form when it was sleeping. And so the Buddha heard about it and then he told this this cobra

dragon monk, "I'm sorry, but you can't be a monk because animals, including uh animals with human intelligence, apparently just cannot become enlightened."

So yeah, going with orthodox terra animals can't become enlightened. Although a few in a few cases, they can go to heaven. Like I' I've mentioned this frog. There's the frog god. What is it? Manduka deva I think it's called. Is that the word for frog and poly manduka? Something like that. Anyways, there's this frog and the Buddha is giving a discourse and there's a frog there and the frog can't understand what the Buddha is saying, but just the soothing

the soothing tones of the Buddha's voice have this frog in a state of frog exaltation. You know, the the the frog is just kind of blissed out. you can't understand what the Buddha is saying, but just sort of like the, you know, the vibe in the air, you know, the atmosphere, just the the the raising of consciousness near the Buddha was enough to cause this frog to just be like in a an expanded state of consciousness. And then some kind of herdsman who has one of those crooks, you know, the the stick used for for like hering animals, he he with just accidentally by pure accident, he sets it down right on the frog's head

right when the frog was in this state of of exaltation and because the frog was in such a state, it got reborn. I think it was in Toatimsa heaven and became a kind of of dava up there.

So, that's kind of a long- winded way of answering this question. Um,

but then again, it's it's saying, let's see. I figure I'd ask you if there is anything about that. Yeah. Or if you think it's possible that an animal might jump into emptiness. Um, I think it's theoretically possible. I think just about anything is possible. You know, just to say, you know, always or never. Uh, you got to be careful with that sort of thing. Um, what's his uh what's his

name?

the Indian sage

um gosh

Raman Maharshi Raman Maharshi

notoriously had a best friend who was a

cow I think the cow was named Lakshmi

and Ramana Maharshi apparently had this

ability he was apparently fully

enlightened that when someone was dying

he could like put his hand on their head

another one like on their heart or

something and kind of get this

enlightened vibe going through them And

then they could become enlightened at at

the moment of death. And according to

tradition, he did this to his his cow

friend. When the cow was dying, you know, he did the thing that caused the cow to just kind of wink out at death with no rebirth.

So

maybe

I mean I'm I'm really no authority. I mean I mean I have a degree in biology but they don't really teach you whether you know tardigrades can become enlightened or not. I guess a tardigrade would be already enlightened because it doesn't probably doesn't even have a perceptual mind.

I mean you have to have perceptions in order to be delusional in order to be in some sorrow. So something like a

mosquito

in my personal opinion they may have

like consciousness and feeling you know

wana and ven but I don't think that they

have perception.

So I think a mosquito is just like a

little terminator. It it really

subjectively it's not there even though

objectively it apparently is.

Okay. So, I guess I answered that one. I

mean, any honest answer would have to be

like it all depends on how you look at

it or I don't know.

At least that would have to be included

in the answer somehow.

But I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from the Proto Pseudo Monk. And I'm checking to make sure we actually are recording. It says 58 minutes. So, that's that's a good sign. The little green bars are going back and forth when I talk, which is also a good sign.

And the proto pseudomkong says, "Soon I will be doing my very first intensive meditation course, 21 days on mahasi. What do you think of the 28 mahasi touching points for noting? And would it make sense to spend your entire life meditating on these from an orthodox Buddhist perspective? That is, what would the Buddhist say? And what do you think of the 16 stages of insight

knowledges and their correspondence or relationship to enlightenment in general or the four stages of enlightenment in particular? Okay, this is actually three questions I suppose. So I should separate these.

Okay,

so the first question after I say sadu sadu sadu to the proto monk who's going to be doing his first intensive meditation course.

What do I think of the 28 Mahasi touching points for noting? Well, I mean, I have practiced the Mahasi method. I' I've spent time at Mahasi meditation centers. Ma, the Mahasi

method is probably the best known meditation method in Burma. And I have never heard of this. I've never heard of the 28 touching points for noting. It sounds more like the Ginka method where you're like scanning through you know various parts of your body and you know as soon as you experience some kind of sensation in this you know this sector or zone of your body then you move on to the next. I mean it sounds more like ginka than mahasi.

28 mahasi touching points. I've never heard of it. And I've spent time at I and I've spent time at Pandita Rama, spent time at Chan Yeta, spent time at Sanyata, spent a lot of time there up in

Mona in Burma, spent time at other mahasi methods. I went to a meditation retreat in San Jose led by one of the disciples of Upandida. Just orthodox mahasi method, nothing on 28 touching points. So it could be that you've got an eclectic teacher who is coming up with, you know, some variation on the Mahasi method that I've just never heard of.

So that would be what I think about the 28 Mahasi touching points is that it's it's a very well-kept secret kept apparently it's it's a well-kept secret even from most disciples or practitioners of the Mahasi method as

far as I know unless it's referring to something obscure that that I'm just not thinking of.

But mostly in in the mahasi method the main meditation technique is pend pande which is a kind of anapana except instead of focusing on the touch of air at the nose you're focusing on the expansion and contraction of your abdomen as you breathe you know sort of like a diaphragbased anapana rather than nostril-based but I remember I was having difficulty with that at pandama up himself told me just meditate on the sitting posture which I didn't like at all because the sitting posture really is not an

ultimate reality like like according to um Abidama you know vana is an ultimate reality the touch touch sensation is ultimately real from the point of view of orthodox tiraava sitting posture is not one of the 28 ultimate ultimately real like physical aspects of samsara But I guess there's 28. Um, yeah, that just reminds me there, according to Abidama, there are 28 different kinds of physical matter or rupa. But I mean, you couldn't meditate on all of them. And I've never heard of any teacher of the Masi method even attempting to get anybody to meditate on the 28 different kinds of rupa, the four elements, you

know, air, water, wind, and fire. Maybe,

but like

like the femininity,

you know, like according to Abidama,

maleness and femaleness are ultimately

real and distinct

or nose sensitivity. I mean, you could

you could focus on that, you know, the

four elements, that sort of thing. But

yeah, I've never heard of it, so I guess

I shouldn't say very much more about it.

And I'm just going to move on to the

protose pseudomonk's next question which

is and would it make sense to spend your

entire life meditating on these from an

orthodox Buddhist perspective? I.e. what

would the Buddhist say? I I don't think

the Buddha I mean there's no mention in the sutas or in any of the literature of the Mahasi method or the Mahasi tradition that I've ever read including like transcripts of Mahasi seat's own like sermons.

No mention of the 28 touching points for noting.

So would it make sense to spend your entire life meditating on these? Well, I mean, if you're making significant progress, then even if the Buddha didn't teach it, still you can go ahead. I mean, the Buddha didn't teach either as far as I know, but I've still done that and gotten some benefit from it.

Um but from an orthodox Buddhist perspective I'm like I say I was a monk for 30 years quite familiar with the Mahasi method have practiced the Mahasi method you know under various teachers in various centers never heard of the 28 see what is it the 28 mahasi touching points but I mean if you're making significant progress from doing it then it would make sense to do it until you stop making significant progress.

And so I'm just going to move on to the third question here. And what do you think of the 16 stages of insight knowledges and their correspondence or relationship to enlightenment in general

or the four stages of enlightenment in particular? Well, the in there is the I didn't know it was 16. I mean, I never had much interest in it, but I don't I'm not aware of it being 16 stages of insight knowledge. I thought it was like 10 I thought it was like the 10 insight knowledges that you were supposed to experience in sequence. The Mahasi method is heavily based on that. It's like when you're when you're giving a like at a meditation interview with with venerable upandid who has passed on to whatever he has passed on to that um mostly you know you're just telling your experiences while you meditate and he

might harump every now and then or he'll
say stop waving your arms around when
you talk or he'll say stop generalizing
or he would say please summarize you
know it's like most of what you're
saying he doesn't have any use for it.
But if you say something about
experiencing something in on this the
the 10 or however many insight
knowledges which in Burma is called
Nyanzin. It's like knowledge list.
That's what Nyanzin literally means like
knowledge sequence or knowledge list.
Then then he would like really harump
and and maybe even write something down
on on like a little tablet that he had
and then in a way that would be giving

subtle cues to the meditator. It's like ah that's what I should be doing or that's what I should be experiencing. But these the the nyanzen or the the sequence of insight knowledges as far as I know is nowhere in the sutas. you know this also it's it's a like a commentarial artifact sort of like there I mean there's a number of commentarial artifacts like um neighborhood concentration upachara samadei that is considered to be absolutely necessary before you can attain janna you know you have to see the what is it the uh nima you know you got to see some kind of image in your mind which indicates

you've reached this this neighborhood

concentration or access concentration

It's not mentioned in the sutas

how something that important I mean you

can't experience Janna till you get to

this stage

why that isn't mentioned at all in the

sutas

that's that's a good question and the

the vipasa insight knowledges the

sequence that you're supposed to

experience in sequence like if you get

something out of sequence and you you

like report that to upandid he'd say no

you didn't experience that because you

didn't do it in the right sequence

sequence you couldn't possibly having

just skipped over two and three and get directly to four

although there is one when I was at upandida I did have one of the weasna insight knowledges or at least that's how I interpreted it was namarupa paricha nyana it's one of the early ones and namarupa paricha nyana is the weasna insight knowledge of distinguishing mind from matter

But it wasn't really that. I mean, it was really kind of remarkable how clear it was, how it was like the the pain in my knee, for example. I don't remember exactly the circumstances, but it was like pain in my knee and then there's

the noting of the pain in my knee. And according to like the commentarial tradition, the pain in your knee is rupa. And the noting of the pain in your knee is nama. So it's mind and matter. You're distinguishing mind and matter. But it didn't seem that way at all to me at all because

pain is not rupa

pain is not physical manner that is a feeling. So really it was it's not so much

it's

the knowledge of distinguishing feeling from perception or just like the initial datim from the interpretation or the response to that datim. you know,

stimulus and response.

So,

what do I think of the 16 stages of insight knowledges? I do think it's a commentarial artifact and I do not think it's nearly as important as a lot of terra Buddhist dogmatists might maintain. And with regard to the four stages of enlightenment, I mean, I've said many times I'm rather skeptical of that even like, you know, you're supposed to have the four stages of aryahhood. When you become a a Buddhist saint, you are an Arya. Which is one reason why some white nationalist types actually like Buddhism, you know, like

Julius Evola and all that, you know,
it's ar like the four noble truths are
the four Arian truths because the word
noble is generally a translation of
Arya.
So the four stages of enlightenment,
um, I'm rather skeptical of that. I mean
it's like sodapana probably originally
meant someone who is just a new convert
to Buddhism you know they've just
entered upon the the the dharmic path
you know so and then a non- returnturner
um GC Pande in his book studies and the
origins of Buddhism points out that like
in in the some of the the very first
sutas of the idi which is an obscure
text in the um kudakanikaya

that apparently non- returnturners are identified as Arhans, which is something you would expect. A non- returnturner is just someone who just doesn't get born again.

And Sakuragami, according to Pande, isn't mentioned at all in what appear to be the earliest texts. And also it is kind of an um significant bit of evidence that the sa palasuta which probably you know if I get around to it will be my next uh study in my studies in archaic Buddhism because it's an important well-known text and also relatively old

relatively early suta

and in this text in this discourse the Buddha is explaining explaining to King Ajata

um you know what are the advantages of becoming a monk renouncing the world and it starts off with superficial stuff you get more respect and so forth and he gets all the way to enlightenment and you know he goes through the four Jonas not the eight Jonas but the four Jonas and then he gets into psychic powers and then there's no mention at all of these four stages which you'd think would be something that would be significant a significant benefit benefit of renouncing the world and practicing dharma intensively. No mention of it,

which could just be kind of a an

oversight,

but

I don't know. So, I am relatively

skeptical of the four stages of

aryahhood.

Um, and one of one of the main arguments

that works for me against the four

stages of arihood being like original,

you know, what the Buddha taught is that

no other system that I know of has these

four stages. And I just do not believe

that Terra Buddhism has a monopoly on

enlightenment.

There have been

in my opinion very assuming that

enlightenment can even exist in the

context of samsara

that there have been like Catholics

there have been Hindus there have been

possibly Sufis you know other Christians

like uh like orthodox Christians that

have I mean just because they're like a

spiritual genius born into a non

Buddhist culture still in spite of their

their religion sometimes they can become

enlightened

and none of these other traditions

mention anything like the four stages

there's the three stages of in in Pauli

you've got the puja the common worldling

you've got the seka or the one in

training which would be the lower three

levels of being an arya and then you've got the aka or one no longer in training which would be a fully enlightened being St. John of the Cross apparently independently of Terra Buddhism came up with essentially the same kind of of system where you've got the beginner, you've got the adept and you've got the perfect.

So yeah, I really am quite skeptical of the authenticity of however many stages of weasa insight knowledge there are. And also I mean not that there there can't be stages of insight knowledge. It's just that I am skeptical that there's this list that you have to

experience in sequence before you become enlightened. In fact, I mean, you just look at the stories in this in the text where some people they they're listening to a discourse of the Buddha or some such and they just boom, they become enlightened. So, are they going to go through the whole the whole list like in a in a matter of just a few moments?

It's just not in the sutas. Although the four stages of of Aryahhood are in the sutas, but still I don't consider it to be I I consider to be probably not authentic teachings of the Buddha. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Yugaoo.

and Yugahoo

um due to the uh the high-profile homicides and uproar and chaos and so forth recently has asked a similar question to one or two that have already been asked. He says let's talk about the current situation in USA

um i.e. the first two amendments from the Buddhist standpoint. And how bad is the idea of going around saying whatever comes to your mind, offending people and ideas no matter what, then dying for said ideas just so other people can defend that ideas to protect them amendments.

Are they doing more harm than good? So

apparently this was inspired by Charlie Kirk, I'm guessing. But the thing is you have the first amendment in America which is mainly freedom of speech. It also includes freedom of religion and so forth. And I mean you you can't just say anything. For example, I mean liel or slander are still illegal. I mean you can't just accuse somebody of committing some crime, formally accuse them, lie under oath, that kind of thing. I mean, that's still illegal. Even though there's freedom of speech or like the classic example, yelling fire in a crowded theater, you're not allowed to do that.

So, I mean, freedom of speech isn't just

complete cart blanch on saying anything

you want to say.

Let's see. But still, it's in my

opinion, it's a good idea. I mean,

silencing disscent is one of the first

things that a totalitarian government

does.

And that's what like the EU or the UK

are doing. People are going to prison

for for tweets.

It may be that some Muslim migrant can

molest women, even children, and he just

gets a slap on the wrist if anything,

but somebody complains about it on X,

they're the one that get punished.

So yeah, I mean, silencing disscent is

really a dictatorial move.

And we haven't really gotten nearly as

far in that direction regardless of some

of the the propagandist kind of tweets

or just ignorant tweets you see on on X

that you know Trump is a dictator. He's

shutting down all descent and all that.

Well, just look at the UK and you see

like an order of magnitude worse than

you're seeing in America right now.

So,

let's see. So you how bad is the idea of

going around saying whatever comes to

your mind, offending people and ideas no

matter what, then dying for said ideas.

Well, I mean, there's no law that says

you're that murder is okay.

Second amendment is the right to bear arms. So the first amendment mainly is freedom of speech, freedom of religion, that kind of thing. And the second amendment to the US Constitution is the right to bear arms. And both of them from a political point of view are a good idea. Even though they may create chaos, they may cause some people to feel unsafe.

I mean, if you're just going to say something, if it's going to be illegal, for example, to hurt somebody's feelings, then people are going to be pretending to have their feelings hurt, it's called crybullying, just to just to

get revenge on somebody.

So, I mean, even though I'm a Buddhist, um, I'm still from a political point of view endorse the Second Amendment, that people should have the right to bear arms.

And it causes like like Charlie Kirk is known to have said that it causes it may cause more people to get shot, but still in the long term, in the the overall view, the big view, it's still worth it. Because that's another thing that that like totalitarian governments do. Confiscate firearms. The only people that that are armed are the people in the government. And what happens when the government is is not on your side.

So that's the main reason why the second amendment exists in America is not so that people can like go hunting even though that's included. It's not so that people can defend themselves even against burglars or wild Indians, although that's that's also in there. But the main reason the main like philosophical reason for granting people or just allowing people the right to bear arms is so that people can rise up and fight against a tyrannical government.

That's how America was born. America was born from people rising up against what they perceived to be a tyrannical

government.

And most of the murders are happening in like gun-free zones, like especially mass shootings and so forth. Mass shooters tend to avoid places where the people they're shooting at might have guns, too.

you know, they'll single out like schools and churches and so forth that are gun-free supposedly.

So, let's see here. What's I might be straying from the actual question here.

So, let's I'm just going to bear with me. I'm going to read Yugaoo's question again. Let's talk about the current situation in USA,

i.e. the first two amendments from the

Buddhist standpoint. Yeah, from the Buddhist standpoint, then why have guns? Unless you're just going to shoot him in the air in celebration on the 4th of July or something. And how bad is the idea of going around saying whatever comes to your mind, offending people and ideas no matter what, then dying for said ideas just so other people can defend that ideas to protect them. Amendments. Well, I mean from the Buddhist point of view, I mean you shouldn't deliberately hurt people's feelings. That'd be perusa, you know, harsh speech. But I mean you got to separate religion from politics.

I mean if politics is going to make
anything immoral illegal
then yeah if lying is illegal I mean
pretty much everybody's going to get
punished for that at some point or
another
unless you just you get a ticket. You
know I'm sorry I heard you say it
untruth just now. here. Sign here. It's
going to be 50 bucks.
So, yeah. I mean, the abuse of the
alternative, the abuse of having an
unarmed populace, the abuse of policing
other people's expressed opinions is
much worse than having a certain amount
of this chaotic liberty, which is a
little bit dangerous. I think it was um

Benjamin Franklin, one of the founding fathers of the United States, who made a statement to the ex to the effect of I don't remember the exact quote, but it's like people who vote away their freedoms for the sake of security
are going to get neither and they're worthy of neither.
So, I think in America it's better to have a little bit of a spine, have a little bit of a thick skin and not just melt down if somebody says something that you don't like. You know, if they're yelling fire in a crowded theater or accusing you of a crime you didn't didn't commit, then fine. You

know, they might be uh um prosecuted and arrested for using that kind of speech. But just to just to say, you know, you think that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was a bad idea. I mean, especially if you're going to give your reasons why you think that, then yeah, there's no problem with that.

Calling somebody stupid to their face probably shouldn't even be illegal, even though it's definitely bad manners. I mean, it's bad karma.

So yeah, I definitely uh am in favor of the first and second amendments.

Maybe not from a purely Buddhist point of view, but I'm not a pure Buddhist.

If I were a pure Buddhist, I'd renounce

the world and be living alone in a cave, which I did for for many years, but I'm not doing it now. I am now a responsible citizen participating in the civic process. And so I have more of a political approach to certain things.

Let's see. So are the first and second amendments doing more harm than good?

No. They're definitely call doing more good than harm in my opinion.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Sedar Talohhittita

who asked a relatively easy question that I'll probably spend half an hour answering just because that is my way.

Sedar Tlohachita says, "Have you ever been in Europe?" And like I've mentioned before, the closest I have ever been to actually being in Europe was um the summer of my 21st birthday. I was working on a Polish
um a Polish commercial twler off the coast of Oregon, the the Sagittita. And so I was
technically on European soil because when I got off the ship I had to go through customs. So like legally I was on Polish soil working on this Polish fishing vessel, the Sagitta,
which is Polish for Sagittarius, I think.
So yeah, that's the closest I've ever

been to Europe. I've never even been to Mexico. Been to Canada lots of times. I've been to several Asian countries. That's about it. So, I'm just going to move on to Sedart Loha's next question. Buddhism is sometimes criticized for being too focused on individual liberation rather than community responsibilities. How do you see this balance between personal practice and communal duties? Well, I mean, the purpose of Buddhism has never been to stabilize society. At least the original purpose of Buddhism was not to stabilize society. The original purpose of Buddhism was to renounce society. Like

even today, like in

Burma for example, arguably the most

devoutly Buddhist country on earth, like

marriages, monks don't participate in

weddings. Marriage is just purely a

secular thing.

Um I mean monks may come to funerals but

it's

it's the purpose of of Buddhism is

liberation like the Buddha taught in the

sutas he teaches two things duka and the

sessation of duca you know suffering and

how to stop suffering that that's all

that he was really concerned with

so I mean it just depends I mean you

could criticize like lots of things you

could criticize is tennis, for example.

It's a dumb example. Let's go with it.
Tennis, well, I mean, you can criticize
tennis for being too focused on hitting
a ball back and forth instead of
community responsibilities.
But something like Hinduism, for
example, it's much more socially
oriented. You know, there's the
renunciation aspect, but still it's like
you're supposed to go through the
ashramadhamas,
you know, ashram dharmas, I should say.
you know, you you're the celibate
student and then you get married and you
have kids and there's, you know, these
protocols or traditions about, you know,

how to be a good householder and so forth. A little bit of that in the polyutas, but not much. And then after your kids are grown, you renounce the world and you move on to the more advanced stuff. And Buddhism just dispensed with that. I mean, the purpose of Buddhism is not to teach you how to be a good citizens. It's how to teach you how to renounce being a citizen. go off alone somewhere and become enlightened. Just get off the wheel. Like this community responsibility stuff is essentially pro- samsara.
It's like, well, yeah, you should liberate yourself from samsara, but here's here's how to structure samsara

and and be in it and wallow in it.
Most religions are like Christianity,
for example. I mean, probably based on
what I've read in the New Testament,
I've read the entire New Testament.
Jesus was teaching something kind of
similar in with regard to conduct that
the Buddha was teaching. It's like give
all that you, you know, sell all that
you have, give the money to the poor,
and follow me. It's like renunciation.
But you're not going to have a major
like a a popular religion that doesn't
deal with what people are supposed like
lay people are supposed to do.
Christianity really took the ball and

ran with that. And Terra Buddhism is still rather minimal. Like for example, I mean it's just right in the rules of monastic discipline. Any monk who participates in a in a wedding is guilty of a sana offense. the second most grave category of monastic offense because that's just not what Buddhism is about. You shouldn't be encouraging people to wallow in samsara.

So Buddhism may be criticized for being too focused on individual liberation, but the people who are criticizing is people who are just not committed to personal liberation. They want to wallow in samsara. So Buddhism doesn't doesn't want us to wallow in samsara enough. It

seems to be essentially the argument.

So I mean if you want more I mean you

can apply Buddhist ethics to lay life

but you should water down those Buddhist

ethics because if you're just going to

let your kid be eaten alive by lice

because you don't want to harm the poor

little lice then

I mean it's just not realistic.

You're certainly a piss poor parent if

you behave that way.

So

yeah, I don't know. I'm not sure. I'm

not sure what to say about this other

than the fact that I've already said a

whole bunch about it.

Huh. I guess maybe I should just move on to the next question. Yeah, that's what I'll do. With all due respects to Sedarta Loha, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question here. And so the next question is from Siovak and Sipad Zida. And Siovak and Sipad Zidna says, "Were you ever afraid of wild animals attacking you in the Burmese wilderness?" And there's only one real time that I was I don't know. I guess there would be a little bit of fear, you know, more like sort of intense weariness.

And that was when I was for for a while I was hiking through Alando Katapa National Park. And there are tigers in

Alando Cathabot National Park. There are leopards. There are wild elephants there. But the the most dangerous animal in in like a tropical wilderness like that, tropical Asian wilderness, aside from the anophles mosquito, the anophles mosquito wins the prize of being the most dangerous animal in the forest. And and just set aside humans. We don't need to do those those wildlife show tropes of you know people are the most dangerous animal anything like that but I have been told that wild pigs are more dangerous than tigers and the main reason why wild pigs are more dangerous than tigers is there's so many there's

so much more of them you're much more likely to come across like a herd of wild pigs than a tiger. Tigers have learned to be afraid of people, but wild pigs aren't necessarily that afraid of people. And I've been told that the boores will charge you, you know. I mean, boar hunting in like ancient Greece, that was like macho thrill sport, you know, like in early medieval Europe, even to some degree nowadays is like it was like the macho thrill sport that you do. I mean, unless you're like a knight and jousting is what you do. That's that's your macho thrill sport. For the average guy, even including like ancient Athenian aristocrats,

then boar hunting with spears was like I mean, you proved your manhood with that sort of thing because wild pigs are dangerous.

So, I would I would hike from the center of Alando Cosbot National Park, 16 miles as the crow flies through sometimes non-existent trails

to get to uh the the overhanging rock ledge at the northern boundary of Alando Cathma National Park. And so at night especially,

I would uh I'd always be careful. I'd always be sure to sleep in a relatively secure place, like at the very least under an easily climbable tree.

And I mean, it's against the rules for a monk to even build a campfire just to just because you like campfires. So, I'd be sitting there in the dark kind of meditating in this tigerinfested jungle. Well, I mean, it wasn't really a jungle, but it was deep forest.

And I mean occasionally it's like you hear a twig snap or something. It's like what was that? I remember one time I slept um I mean the trail was really hard to follow when I when I'd hike from the center of Alando Caspa National Park to the northern boundary. It would be right at the end of the cold season and the park service such that it was had not like fix the trails from the

monsoons. So there'd be places where the the trail was just washed out. And um I took the trail usually, but I mean it's it's like these subliminal animal instincts that were lying dormant would come to the surface. Either that or it was like past life stuff from having been a like a a stone age tractor or something. You get really good at following almost non-existent trails. You know, it's like the the moss is a little bit dirty or a little bit worn on these rocks here. And I mean, you don't look directly at it. You just kind of look forwards and like your peripheral vision can sort of construct

a a kind of path for you to follow. I still got lost a couple times, but still, I mean, it's um it was it was tricky. So one one year I just followed the creek, you know, Pollon Creek to from from the center of the park to where I was going at the north northern boundary. And that was that was really dicey cuz there's some places where it's just like cliffs or like slimy slimy rocks that you have to cross and you slip and fall and it's like down this little this little drop off onto rocks like alone in the middle of this tropical forest.

So one the one year I was going along the creek.

I I camped one night. It's usually I'd spend one night on the trail and um I climbed up on these rocks and I I had a human skull with me just because, you know, I was like, who doesn't go hiking with a human skull? So, I put the human skull sort of as sort of a protector, the the most convenient way of climbing up just in case like a bear or a leopard or something tried to get me when I was sleeping. But yeah, that was the like the one time I would feel insecure about wild animals
was when I was hiking through Alando Kazaba National Park, which as I say had tigers and leopards and wild elephants

and wild boars and and bears and all
kinds of stuff.
Although I never actually saw any of
those those dangerous animals. I did see
a cat track that was the size of the
palm of my hand. So that's a big cat
track. I mean, it's probably either an
adult leopard or maybe like a juvenile
tiger that left that track.
More likely a leopard, I guess, if their
paws get as big as the paw in my hand. I
have relatively large hands.
Anyways, I'm just going to move on to
Seov's
next question. He says, "If you never
become a monk, maybe got rejected, what
do you think you would have done

otherwise?" Well, academically,

um, I was kind of moving in the

direction of, um, if I hadn't become a

monk, I probably would have gone for my

masters in like marine ecology. So, I

probably would have wound up being like

there's a good chance I'd be like an

unemployed college professor because I

mean I'd become a college professor and

then the woke stuff would hit, you know,

around 2015, 2016

where professors can just lose their

job, have their careers destroyed for

misgendering a [__] And as a

biologist,

you know, I mean, I'm entitled to have

my like honest objective opinion of who is male and who is female, for example. So, yeah, there's a good chance I'd be an unemployed college professor or I mean, I could have started working for like Noah, you know, they've got like PhD scientist types working for like the National Marine Fisheries Service or something. So I could have possibly gone that route. But yeah, definitely the the the direction I was heading before I kind of opted out to become a monk instead was, you know, just sort of an academic pursuit of, you know, studying marine ecology.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question, especially benthic marine

ecology. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. You said this is still sea cad now. You said you had attained a state where you felt like all your years of suffering the the wilderness made it worth it. How many years of practice did it take to get there? And does it match any state mentioned in the texts? Well, I first discovered
um my more advanced meditation technique practically by accident when I was at Pandidama, you know, in the Mahasi tradition. This was like the winter of 199798
if I remember correctly

and it was like some of you who have been in meditation retreats know that your mind can just rebel against meditation. You know it's like trying to ride a bucking bronco just trying to keep your mind on the the primary object of meditation. So finally I just thought okay I'm just going to clear my mind and whatever arises I'll note it. So I sat I cleared my mind and waited for something to arise and waited for something to arise and waited for something to arise and it's just the fact that you were like expecting something to arise and you were going to catch it that it it in a way it sort of inhibited anything from arising. So I wound up in this state of

just like

clarity and spaciousness and then I

started getting excited. I'd never

experienced that sort of thing before

and I started getting excited which then

of course got me all agitated and

derailed the meditation but that was how

I learned about it you know it wasn't

even from books even though you can find

it in the text like essentially that

kind of meditation is like the story of

pointless potila where you've got this

monk he's a it's it's kind of an

anacronistic story I think it's in the

dhamapata commentary

where pointless potila or just potula

there's this monk named Otila in the Buddhist time who is a scholar you know he's he's an authority on the Buddhist texts even though there were no Buddhist texts really at the time and so the Buddha kept calling him tucha which means like pointless or you know futile in vain pota and just you know here comes pointless potula there goes pointless pota come here and have a seat pointless pota the Buddha is always talking this way so potula you know he's he's not stupid you know he's a great scholar He realizes the Buddha is calling me this because I don't really practice all that much. I'm devoting too much of my energies to just studying the

texts that really don't exist yet.
So he decided he was going to go and
find a meditation teacher. He was just
going to go to some remote area and just
practice meditation. So he finally he
wanders like hundreds of miles according
to the story and gets to this remote
meditation or this monastery and he just
goes to the abbott and asks for
meditation instruction and the abbott
kind of backs off says oh you're you're
an elder I mean you know the Buddha
personally you're a great scholar who am
I to presume to teach you anything so
then he you know so he declines and then
so poila goes to the next senior ior

monk who gets and he gets the same reaction. He just goes all the way down the roster till he gets to a 9-year-old novice who is an arant. This novice became enlightened as soon as the razor touched his head the first time he got his head shaved. And then this novice teaches him essentially the kind of meditation that I had discovered on my own which is I mean I've told this story many times before

that you know you've got a termite mound usually translated as antill but it's a termite mound and it's got like six big holes and there's a lizard that runs away from you. You're hunting this lizard. the lizard runs away, gets into

this into this termite mound. And so the way you catch that lizard is first of all, you block off five of the holes. And then you just watch that last hole where the lizard will have to come out if it's going to come out. And as soon as the lizard comes out, you grab it. And this is all a kind of metaphor for you're like

um what's the word? kind of suppressing the five senses so that the only sense you've got left that's still functioning is mind. You know, it's like you're in a quiet place. You're meditating, eyes closed, you know, it's just you're not dealing with commotion or anything.

You're just observing your own mind carefully. And then when a thought arises, you catch it or you note it. And in a way that it stifles thought because apparently the same part of your brain going with physiology that that notes is same is the same as the the thinking mind. So you can't think and note yourself thinking at the same time. The noting causes the the thought to evaporate.

And just waiting for a thought to arise also kind of suppresses the likelihood that thoughts will arise for whatever reason.

So I mean it wasn't the state but that was like the meditation technique. It

wasn't even the highest meditation technique that I came across. It was like I called it third gear. There was still another gear above that which was just effortless. You know there's no waiting to try and catch anything. It's just it's like your mind is in a completely alert but also is just effortless. You're not doing anything. So the actual state I mean maybe description of Janna might I mean it might match to some degree the state that I was experiencing of just this you know sometimes at first especially

there'll be all this pey involved where like the very first time where you just get excited you know it's like you know it's like it's just excellent you know, and then you start getting excited and enthusiastic and then that kind of blows the meditation.

Well, let's see.

Uh, how many years of practice did it take for me to get there? Well, I was a monk for like seven years when I first started like first discovered the the meditation that would actually get me there.

And does it match any statement mentioned in the text? Kind of. I mean like

I mean you can find kind of mentions
here and there you know like like the
the baja suta where the the where the
Buddha is saying you know in the scene
there's only the scene in the herd there
is only the herd that kind of thing you
know it's just there's no response to
the stimulus there's no reaction
and that that reduces the stimuli too
somehow you know it's like the momentum
of thinking the the stream of
consciousness it it just largely stops.
So you can you can find mentions kind of
at least kind of applicable passages
here and there in the texts and I'm just
going to move on next question and this

is from a person called I should be dead soon which is kind of a morbid name. I hope they're not taking that seriously. And it could be somebody who just changed their name recently. Not sure exactly who it is, but I should be dead soon. Says, "In the spirit of gross questions, I've heard hemorrhoids called the sitter's disease. Is this mentioned in the sutas?" Well, hemorrhoids being called the sitter's disease isn't mentioned in the sutas. Although hemorrhoids are mentioned in the rules of monastic discipline because it happened to people even back then in the Buddhist time.

So there's actually a rule preventing

a monk from having his hemorrhoids
operated upon by a doctor. And um
there's like this kind of kind of a
horrible sort of story associated with
this in the text where a monk goes to
some medical practitioner and has his
hemorrhoids like cut off, you know, the
ones sticking out anyway. And then the
the medical practitioner apparently was
not a devout Buddhist. And then
uh at some later time he sees the monk
coming and he calls out something like,
"Hey, that monk has got an anus that
looks like a lizard's mouth."
Which caused the Buddha to make this
rule against monks having that very

tender narrow area operated upon by like

non-mongs,

you know, by by like secular doctors and

so forth.

Um,

but it does say in in the the rules of

manassing discipline that if a monk has

a problem with that that the appropriate

thing to do is to take a large sharp

crystal of salt and you just you can cut

it off yourself with this large sharp

salt crystal.

Um, so yeah, that's it is mentioned in

the sutas

and let's see. So I guess I'll just move

on to the next question in this in this

little minieries of hemorrhoid

questions.

He says, "Is this a common irritant among monks?" Well, apparently it it it was not entirely unknown even in the Buddhist time. You know, ancient India it happened. So yeah, I mean I've I have known monks that I have mentioned, you know, I mean we didn't have long drawn out conversations about it, but I mean the fact that they were experiencing this was mentioned.

So yeah, I mean it does happen.

Um and then the third question is are you familiar with any remedies? Well, there is the the large sharpened salt crystal.

Um but the thing is getting back to the the very first kind of little intro to these questions where it's called the sitter's disease. My experience um especially with a friend of mine who was a monk in Burma. Um I mean he was not Burmese, he was he was a uh ingalate ingate monk.

Um

it wasn't because of sitting so much. I never had problems from sitting so much that the problem that that hemorrhoids often occur due to strain, you know, it's like it's it's varicose veins in like the the rectal area and that's caused by straining which increases the blood pressure there. And so the two

main things that cause it are
constipation where you have to strain a
lot or diarrhea where you're straining
not to poop yourself.
And then in my friend's case, it was the
latter. He he had he was having
Monzuma's revenge or King Tibbo's
revenge and just the continual strain to
to avoid pooping himself was what was
causing it.
So, I mean, it just from sitting a lot.
I've had problems with like I think
they're called bed sores. And I think
there's like a a more official medical
name for them now, but um just sitting
all the time with robes that are not the

cleanest because you're only allowed one lower robe if you're following Vineia strictly.

So, you know, just you get like a pressure sore or something and it's very difficult for them to go away. They stay they stay I mean making them go away.

you you have to just do lots and lots of walking meditation

because at the time I was even doing the sitter's practice the dutanga where you sit you sleep in a sitting position so I was sitting pretty much all the time and you just can't wash your lower robe every single day so you know there's bacteria and all this kind of stuff that are like exacerbating the problem so the

remedies

just not straining in fact there's a

rule of monastic discipline that a monk

is not supposed to strain unless he is

more constipated than usual. So you can

learn all kinds of fascinating things

from the rules of monastic discipline.

So yeah, so that would I mean

preventative medicine is the best. I

mean whatever whatever western

medication that you can use preparation

H

probably works.

So yeah, I mean technically it's against

the rules for a monk to have like an

operation from a doctor on that to to

have anybody cutting at it. Maybe a monk another monk who used to be a doctor or something. Maybe that would be allowable. Maybe I can't remember now, but you're able to cut it off yourself with a sharpened large salt crystal, which it would be I I guess it'd be like a uh what's the was a stringent that would you know this the salt I suppose would help to prevent excessive bleeding or something.

But western western remedies short of like amputation of the turtle head appendage that's what's that's what hemorrhoids are called in Burmese the turtle head disease late gone yoga so yeah plus just preventative medic

meditate preventative

medication of just try to avoid

constipation and diarrhea

because those are mainly the things that

cause it at least.

according to my understanding.

So I'm just going to move on to the next

question. This is from Gnostic Rocker

and Gnostic Rocker says,

"It seems obviously true that in a

numinal sense or what could be termed

absolute truth which is not dependent on

fickle subjectivity that the teaching of

anata or no self is true. It's fair to

say that intensive samata as well as

weasana

can confirm this to the practitioner.
That has long seemed axiomatic to me.
However,
we live in the rough marketplace of the
world in the conventional sphere,
the phenomenal sphere in which entirely
other rules of action and engagement
with others operate.
And since all major psychologist and
psychotherapists stress the absolute
urgency of developing a healthy notion
of self and a sense of continuity of
that self, then isn't teaching no self,
true as it may be in absolute terms,
actually doing the pupil a disservice
and actually endangering them since
according to modern psychotherapy, they

would be deprived of a means of navigating the world effectively.

Well, part of the thing is I mean I've known a lot of Buddhists. I don't know of any that was really harmed by believing anata that they don't really exist. I mean we obviously exist in some saric context. Even the Buddha would talk about me and you and him and this person and that person as though they had a self.

So it's I don't see that it's really been a problem. I mean it could I would assume that it has occurred on multiple occasions that you have someone who is maybe mentally not particularly robust

who might be like driven into some fugue state or something by just dwelling on anata or no self. But the thing is Buddhism was not really designed for the weak. Buddhism was not designed as some kind of stress relief technique for people that are messed up. Buddhism was designed for the strong. It was designed for like like spiritual heroes, you know, like the spiritual elite like Evola stressed so much in his book on Buddhism where it's it's like the people that are like the creme de la creme were the ones that were expected to become monks, especially in the Buddhist time, you know, the heavy hitters, the spiritual heavy hitters.

So for them anata was was beneficial and helped them in their practice. I'm sure. But if you've got somebody who's just like living a worldly life and they're, you know, they're just not very strong mentally, you know, they feel unsafe if people say things that they disagree with, that kind of thing, then I mean there are quite a few of those in Dharmmahols in the West, then yeah, I mean, it could theoretically be harmful, but overall it causes much more good than harm in my opinion.

And it just because let's see where does it say modern psychotherapy.

Let's see where's where's the other part

here. He's talking about oh yeah all major psychologists and psychotherapists stress the absolute urgency of developing a healthy notion of self. Well first of all they're worldly people. It may be that if you have a devoutly Buddhist psychologist or psychotherapist, they might have different ideas, but u the worldly secular especially like Freudians, yeah, of course they're going to be wallowing in it. And so it's, you know, it's almost like niche where it's just you try to master samsara or like an occultist where you're not trying to escape from samsara, you're just trying to master it.

Let's see. So what what exactly is the question? Oh,
could it be actually doing the pupil a disservice? Some pupils might be harmed through like an unhealthy misunderstanding of no self.
But I mean, you're going to have an ego just naturally by default. That's the default setting of a human in samsara is you've got an ego and a sense of self.
And so the way most Buddhists deal with the situation is when they're philosophizing
then they're thinking about no self.
When they're not philosophizing, it's self.

So

yeah, I I think that the harm would come to a few people who are easily harmed and for the most part it's it's does more good than harm.

Kind of like I was talking about the second the first and second amendments earlier on.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question from Gnostic Rocker here. Just out of interest, where are most of your viewers from? I assume your YouTube page gives you these stats. I'm curious as to whether most of your listeners are East Asian, Southeast Asian, continental Europeans, and Eastern Europeans or British or from the Americas or

elsewhere. Well, the like the audience is kind of similar to the audience on my blog when I was writing my blog. I actually came up with an idea for blog post last night while in the shower, which might result in me actually adding a new blog post to my blog after years of just kind of letting it sit. But um about half of my viewers on YouTube are from America and then the other half is very just scattershot across the globe. I think probably the main countries after America would be Canada, Australia, and the UK. So, it's mainly the Anglosphere, English-speaking countries, you know, are like the main

viewers of my YouTube videos, which is understandable, I guess. And the two main non um non-English-speaking countries that I get viewers from are Poland and Germany. Also, I get a few views from Russia also.

So, not really a whole lot of Asians. It's mostly Westerners watching my videos. But, I mean, as I say, I mean, there's people from like Singapore and and I don't know about Burma. There there's some Burmese people who leave comments occasionally, that kind of thing, but they could be like expats in some other country where they have better internet access. I don't know.

So, I'm just going to move on to the to

Gnostic Rocker's next question
and I learned something from this
question myself. His question is, was
the thesis's paradox the ship of Thesus
simile comparable in its dialectical
reasoning to the Melinda Pa's discourse
in which Nagasena uses the chariot
analogy to explain anata?
So I didn't know what the uh the ship of
Thesus paradox was. So I looked it up
and so I got this explanation here which
I will I will quote. The ship of Thesus
all known also known as Theosius's
paradox is a paradox and common thought
experiment about whether an object is
the same object after having all of its

original components replaced over time. typically one after the other. In Greek mythology, Thesius, the mythical king of the city of Athens, rescued the children of Athens from King Minos after slaying the Minotaur and then escaped onto a ship going to Delos. Each year, the Athenians would commemorate this by taking the ship on a pilgrimage to Delos to honor Apollo. A question was raised by ancient philosophers. If no pieces of the original made no pieces of the original made up the current ship, was it still the ship of Thesus? Furthermore, if it was no longer the same, then had it ceased existing as the original ship? Thomas Hobbes raised the

further question of how to consider a second ship that had been built entirely from pieces removed from the original.

Okay. Now, that was from Wikipedia.

So, I had never heard of the ship of Thesius paradox, so this was new for me.

But I mean, there's obvious similarities. It's not exactly the same argument because apparently the ancient Greeks weren't questioning whether there was a ship there at all.

That's kind of the whole point of the Buddhist like the simile of the chariot.

You know, you got a chariot. So, you remove one wheel and put a different wheel on it. Is it the same chariot? You

take all the pieces apart, take the the the chariot apart, you got a pile of chariot parts. Is that the chariot? So, it's not just the sum of its parts that makes a chariot. And it's not like having the parts in the right order necessarily because you can take off one of the parts and put a different entirely different one on and it's considered to be the same chariot. So the the Buddhist argument like the the parable or the the simile of the chariot which is found in the in the sutas also it's found in the sutinikaya at least not just um the the meinda pa that um you know really chariot is just a

convenient

perception like it's a generalization of just a certain assemblage of of parts parts. And so I mean the the Buddhist argument is that chariot there is no real chariot that it's just a convenient use of language or of like perceptual generalizations.

And you know you can change out parts this kind of thing you still call it the same chariot. Whereas with the ship of Thesius it seems to me that the Greeks really weren't questioning whether there really was a ship there. you know, they had too much Plato, you know, pl according to Plato, probably up in

heaven, you've got like the ideal ship and that all ships on earth are partaking of this ideal shipness.

So, I think the Greeks were more samsaric in their philosophy. They didn't question whether there really was a ship there or not. They're just asking if it's the same ship, then when you swapping parts out.

So there's obvious obviously a similarity in the argumentation but it's not exactly the same argument seems to me.

So let's see I guess I answered the question. Let's see what exactly was the question here.

Was the thesis paradox simile comparable

comparable in its dialectical reasoning to the meinda pa discourse? uh to explain anata. Yeah, I think the main difference is that anata it's arguing against the reality the ultimate reality of a chariot whereas the the Greek ship of Thesius paradox doesn't seem to be questioning whether or not there really is a ship there. They seem to accept that it really is a ship. It's just that is it the same ship when you start swapping parts out.

So, that would be the main difference, it seems to me. And I'm going to move on to the next question, which is from Fred.

And the thing is, I was I was considering just skipping this weekend, not doing a Q&A because it seemed like there were so few questions. But then when I started compiling them, it seems like, yeah, we're we got about 30 questions, which is kind of in the the the average, you know, the the the mean of of question asking. So anyways, Fred says, "You think karma-wise about the Charlie Kirk assassination?"

So what would be the the karma of Charlie Kirk getting shot in the neck? Um, I guess that's the question. What would be Charlie Kirk's karma with regard to that? Well, I mean, it's hard to say because, you know, some karma is

coming from past lives going with Buddhist philosophy. So, I mean, it could be that, you know, in in the Middle Ages, he was some kind of peasant soldier in in like the hundred years war who shot someone through the neck with an arrow. And it wasn't until this life, you know, completely irrespective of his conservative Christian like teachings and so forth that it was just the fruition of that karma that finally, you know, the opportunity arose for it to reach fruition. I mean, it could be something like that
or it could be that Charlie Kirk I mean I mean he gave people an opportunity to

speak out against him then he would address their arguments and so forth. So he was much more into open discourse and just friendly interaction. Charlie Kirk insisted that there has to be communication between left and right. For example, you know, he says like even with a a marriage when people when they when the husband and wife stop communicating that results in divorce in a society when half of the country stops communicating with the other half you wind up with civil war. Charlie Kirk used to say this kind of stuff. And so, I mean, he wanted discourse. He wanted debate. And the problem is the left really couldn't win their debate with

him. And so, they resorted to violence.
At least one person did. You know, it's
it's really too easy and it's it's not
entirely honest, a little bit hysterical
to just say, you know, the left killed
Johnny uh Charlie Kirk, you know, it's
like they're they're they're all evil.
This kind of stuff. That's that's that's
not good. It's It's not realistic.
So, I mean, Charlie Kirk, even though he
promoted open discourse and allowed his
opponents to have their say before
addressing their their arguments and so
forth, still he was causing a lot of
unhappiness in other people
just partly just through truth bombs.

And so, you know, he'd probably be aware of this sort of building catalog of upset people that he has caused that might cause some sort of, I don't know, some sort of karmic pressure that resulted in just the an explosion, that kind of thing. But going from the Buddhist point of view, you know, the orthodox terra Buddhist point of view, I mean, there's no way, you can't really figure out exactly the mechanism of how karma is working in this or that case. And like I said, it could be that he was some peasant soldier in the hundred years war who shot someone through the neck with an arrow. And it's only now that that's coming to fruition, which

would have practically nothing to do
with him going to college campuses and
upsetting left-wing college students and
their teachers.
Who knows? But I mean, it was his karma.
According to Orthodox Terra, every
feeling that you experience, painful or
pleasant, is the fruition of karma.
So it certainly was his karma. It was
the fruition of his karma. I mean he may
not have felt much pain even. So it was
just sort of like just that's the end of
this stream of consciousness.
You know it just got cut off.
It's hard to say according to the to the
texts. You can go insane trying to

understand the ramifications and permutations of karma.

And so I'm just going to move on to the next question and this is our last question here. Jeffrey who asked two questions and this is the first one. Jeffrey says is it the responsibility of monks to maintain the temples beyond cleaning as in building and repairs. So if you read the the poly texts like rules of monastic discipline then monks certainly were sometimes building their own huts. There's one story of a monk who is trying to build a brick wall and it keeps falling over because he's not a skilled mason and so it's kind of kind of crooked like this and it just gets

out of balance and falls over. So even in ancient India monks were um you know building I mean their huts were pretty primitive you know they weren't very big or but they would be building larger things building walls brick walls that kind of thing. So they were doing work. I mean, you couldn't cut, you couldn't damage vegetation. It's against the rules for a monk to to even pull a green leaf off of a living plant.

So you couldn't do some of the work. A lot of the stuff like, you know, mowing lawns or pulling weeds, you know, clearing the area before you build something there. It there'd have to be

like a lay person like a monastery attendant or just devout Buddhist visitors who are willing to do that like on up days, that kind of thing.

But monks did do a lot of their work. Um, nowadays, I mean, it's not so much. I mean, I was I was like doing work when I was when I was a monk. I mean, it wasn't all just chop wood, carry water. Um, like I had to build a retaining wall. There was outside of my cave, there was like this platform that was an artificial flat area that was mainly the contents of the cave. It was an artificially dug cave. So instead of a slope like this, which it was naturally, um they had built up like a a

platform outside the cave with, you know, the stuff that they were hauling out of the cave and heavy rains were causing that to erode. And there was starting to be more and more of this, I don't know what you'd call it, just the the the dirt and everything was just getting washed down the into this gully. So I had to have a retaining wall built and I was helping to some degree. Mo mainly I was just sort of supervising and directing but a lot of a lot of the villagers came to help with that. There was uh one junior monk down below who was coming up. He was helping to carry rocks up the hill to build the retaining

wall. That kind of thing. So it does happen. Although most of the the building and manual labor going on with regard to construction and so forth um is done by lay people especially like skilled carpenters and so forth um who who would do a better job anyway. Um I did know a monk he was the abbot of a monastery I stayed at. he was still relatively young who moved to a different place closer to his hometown and he had a there was some building being built there. I mean practically every monastery in Burma is under construction somehow or another. There's always I mean monks inappropriately collecting donations and then that goes

to the building of the thing mainly through car professional carpenters. But he was walking around on some scaffolding just inspecting what was being done and he fell off the scaffold and landed crossways across like a a brick wall and broke his back and was paralyzed after that which is not good I suppose. I don't know why I even mentioned that. It just came to mind. So I guess the easy answer to Jeffrey here is the responsibility of monks to maintain the temples beyond cleaning as in building and repairs in the past more so than now although it still happens. But if you got lay people volunteering

to do it, you might as well let them do it. Especially with regard to the stuff that monks aren't allowed to do like digging the ground or like clearing vegetation, that's against the rules for a monk to do.

Clearing the ground or digging the ground is against the rules because there are all kinds of little creatures living in the soil. Nematode worms for example that are being killed by doing the digging and clearing the vegetation according to ancient India ancient Indian beliefs

and uh a plant is an aandria ja or it's one faculty life. They don't have sense faculties like we do other than just

touch.

And so it was considered to be killing some kind of being some kind of conscious being very kind of primitive level of consciousness but still there was consciousness there. So in ancient India it was considered inappropriate for any kind of spiritual renuncient to be killing plants or digging the ground. So let's see. I guess I should just go on to Jeffrey's next question which is have you participated in building projects for temples when you were living in the forest as in do they put out word that a temple needs labor and monks fulfill the need? Well, it's I've

never heard of a case where you've got one monastery that is like building a new congregation hall or a meditation cabin and then monks from other monasteries will come to help. I never heard of that. But monks do work on things. The the the the next abbott, that one abbott who fell and after he moved away, he fell and hurt himself badly. Um the next abbott, he was always working on stuff. He would he would brag about he can fix anything except a helicopter or a nuclear submarine. You can't fix one of those. Anything else, I mean, he was like an expert at like wiring. he'd be troubleshooting the wiring of these old buildings where, you

know, the lights stopped working and that kind of thing. Um, when I was there, I helped to design at least uh a big water tank that I It was a good idea. We I lived in this big congregation hall, just in this little room off the side of the congregation hall. And in Burma, it's there's just torrential rainfall um during the rainy season, sometimes other times a year. So, all you have to do is just take the the gutters from that roof um just have like pipes just leading down to this water tank next to the building and after two or three heavy rainfalls it'd be full. It was just hundreds and

hundreds of gallons. It was thousands
probably. It was a big tank
of rainwater. So I mean mainly it was it
was like
um
just kind of like supervising and giving
instructions although the the new Abbott
was the one who put the engraving on the
side. He was very skillful at lettering
and so forth you know so you have to
always have to include the names of the
donors that kind of thing and the year
that it was constructed and all that.
So yeah it does happen. I mean, I've
helped with, you know, carrying rocks
and just
just various kind of grunt labor,

but mainly it's lay people that do it if if the the monastery is well known and respected enough to get lay people to volunteer for that sort of thing. And that's it. We're done. And it's a relatively short one again, which is which is fine. And so like I should always say at the beginning and I never do except one time that I can remember. If you have any questions you think I can answer especially about early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism, meditation, spirituality in general, philosophy in general even that kind of thing feel free to ask and there's a good chance

I'll be able to answer. Maybe not to your satisfaction but there's a good chance I'll be able to answer. And no more than three questions per person per episode, please. And smash the like button. Just just really just mess it up. And subscribe if you have not done so already. And be happy.

Alrighty then. It's working. It seems to be recording.

This is like my third or fourth try so far. I've got to I've got to mess with stuff in order to make sure that it works. Apparently, it's working.

So, with that as a little intro, hello and welcome to episode 163 of question and answer. I am your host Ponyo Bosa and 163 is a prime number. This is my beverage and we don't have a whole lot of questions. So, this may be a relatively short one and I think I need to like adjust this a little bit like that.

So, let's just commence to uh answering questions, shall we?

Did I mention that I am your host Ponybasa?

Because I am. Anyways, first question is from Maximin.

And Maxim says, "I've memorized some of the Parita chants these past few years and have listened to some of your chanting. Why is your cadence or is it cadense faster than usual?" And I really don't think my cadence or cadance is faster than usual. It's like

That doesn't seem really fast to me. I I tend to talk kind of slow, too. But um yeah, I'm not sure how Maximman got the idea that I chant fast, unless maybe

it's just Burmese chanting is faster than Thai chanting. That's possible. Or Sri Lankan chanting. I'm not sure about. But with regard to Burmese chanting, my speed is way slower than a lot of Burmese monks. I've I've chanted parita with Burmese monks in Burma before that weren't in the Tomulu tradition. And it was like speed chanting. I could hardly keep up.

So in the tonulu tradition in Burma, the chanting is a little bit slower than a lot of other monks like parita chanting just let alone the the biku pad mocha because the biku pad mocha I mean there are some monks who chant it so fast

their mouth is going faster than my ear. My ear cannot keep up with their mouth. It's like they can recite the the entire potty mocha rules including the introduction with in about 20 to 25 minutes. And even if I went as fast as I could back when I had it down and could recite the whole thing, the fastest I could do is maybe 35 minutes because my mouth just would not move that fast. So why I chant faster than Maximon is used to with regard to people chanting parita and poly. Um I don't know maybe he just doesn't get around very much because a lot of a lot of Burmese monks chanted I mean almost twice as fast as I could even possibly chant and it doesn't

make much sense to me. It seems like
with regard to like the biku padim mocha
mainly they're just trying to get it
over with as soon as quickly as
possible. Partly because everybody is
squatting while while the ceremon is
going on and to squat to remain in a
squatting position for like 45 minutes
can be damned painful.
I I guess in Thailand in in Burma also a
lot of monks just sit instead of
squatting. But uh maybe they're not in
as much of a hurry because they're
already kind of comfortable.
So yeah, I I don't know exactly
why my chanting is faster than what

Maximan would consider to be usual because like in in Burmese, I would be a relatively slow chanter.

So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, "Many people claim that historically Christianity civilized what was a once savage Europe. They contend that pre-Christian pagan European culture was barbarous and devoid of any morality and ethics compared to after it was Christianized. Is this historically accurate?" And there may be a little bit of truth to it, but for the most part, it's not accurate. It's like pre-Christian religion in the west, you know, like classical paganism

really wasn't particularly like ethicsoriented.

It was appeasing the gods, you know, maintaining the pax deorum so that you know the gods will be on your side. And I mean there was a certain amount of morality involved. You know, you shouldn't be perpetrating atrocity. You shouldn't be breaking oaths, things that the gods don't like. But for the most part, it was you conduct the sacri sacrifices and the required rituals and then the gods smile upon you. So in like ancient Greece and Rome, ethics like morality was more the province of philosophy than religion. And so the

more moral or ethical religious systems would be the more philosophical ones like Pythagoreanism or like the Orphic mystery cults, that sort of thing. There would be more ethics involved instead of just propitiating the gods with sacrifices and so forth. And I mean you read the meditations of Marcus Aurelius for example or just read you know some of the other like ancient philosophers and I mean they were mainly concerned with you know what is reality you know what is the the primordial substance from which the cosmos is created. Um but also there was a lot of ethics involved like stoicism for example, epicurionism both of them were essentially

practiceoriented

but most people weren't really

philosophers or philosophical which is

true even today. So I think

the main thing I mean it before I get to

the main thing it's like I have read

texts you know you you read Homer for

example or much later than Homer you

just read stuff from like the early

Roman time Roman Empire and you see that

people were much less sympathetic you

know they were more hardened than now

they were less compassionate you know it

was

They weren't really interested in

uplifting everyone in society. You know,

slavery was fine according to them. And like the poor and even Jesus saying the poor will always be with you. And the pagan Greeks and Romans, they're quite happy to accept that. You know, they weren't going for some sort of utopia where everybody is equal. you know, maybe all male citizens might be equal, but I mean, they weren't they weren't going to be freeing the slaves and and giving women the vote and that kind of thing. So, I guess what Christianity really brought about was like compassion. I' I've mentioned before that like Christianity like the Roman Empire converting to Christianity was like the first the first opening of the

heart chakra you know the chakra of compassion in mainstream western civilization
because Christianity much like like socialists lefties in general today you know it championed the weak and the poor were, you know, and and to some degree demonized the the rich and the strong, you know, but it's still happening today. And it's not so much Christians doing it as like progressives that are demonizing the strong and just sort of glorifying
weakness and dysfunction, which is one reason why the left is just doomed, especially the way it is now. At least

the early Christians did have a kind of
moral high ground. you know, they
emphasized, you know, like compassion
and so forth um and and morality
like s like avoiding excess and
sensuality that kind of thing that even
when lots and lots of Christians would
ignore that at least it was or at least
they wouldn't ignore it but you know
they wouldn't follow it but at least
it'd be giving a certain amount of lip
service to it. I mean it was like the
ideal was still in the mainstream
culture at that point.
So
when you've got 90% of the population
being poor and weak, at least weak

politically and economically, then those 90% of weaklings can be stronger than the 10% of strong people, which is I mean certain politicians capitalize on that. Julius Caesar was a populist.
At least he was a member of the party that was called the popular which sort of catered to the poor, you know, and just used sheer numbers to overwhelm the the much smaller numbers of the rich and powerful.
Even though Julius Caesar himself, ironically, was rich and powerful. kind of like Donald Trump today, billionaire, but nevertheless, you know, he's looking out for like the working class,

bluecollar type people, and it has

served him well thus far.

So

yeah,

like early Christianity was sort of like

the Roman Empire's version of a

progressive movement, except as I say,

the Christians really did have a kind of

moral high ground because like we

already mentioned, the early pagans

weren't so much concerned with morality

so much as just appeasing the gods

through rituals.

So let's see here. Have I left anything

out here?

Yeah. I mean there was morality before

Christianity. It wasn't as much

compassionoriented.

You know, it was more philosophical, looking for the good life, cultivating, you know, peace of mind, adoraxia, that kind of thing.

But Christianity kind of brought into the mainstream of Western civilization a concern for the poor and the weak and the helpless and that sort of thing.

So yeah, I mean that that amount of it would be true.

So I think I'm just going to move on to Romeo's second question. He says, "Considering that the West seems to be on a downward trajectory currently, what kind of effect do you think a widespread

return to some form of its original pagan roots would have on it?" And I mean, I really don't see that happening. I just cannot see Western civilization anything other than a fringe. I don't I just do not see mainstream western civilization reverting to classical paganism or anything even heavily influenced by classical paganism other than Christianity itself. Christianity was heavily influenced by classical paganism
like Pltonism for example.
So what kind of effect do I think a widespread return to some form of its original pagan roots would have on it?
Well, I do think sort of a downplaying

of this compassion to the extent of
trying to raise up to equality people
who just couldn't be equal on their own.
You know, the weak and dysfunctional to
some degree have to remain weak and
dysfunctional
because trying to just make a like a
completely equal society, you've got to
push down the strong and you've got a
lower standards. you're going to have a
much more dysfunctional society because
of it. One that is much less competitive
against other societies.
So
I do think a certain amount of increased
ruthlessness

just an acceptance of a certain amount of stratification in society. I do think that class stratification is a good idea. so long as you've got a certain mobility between classes. So like you someone in a lower class who is brilliant and talented and so forth should be able to move upwards. And it was like that to some degree in like the Roman Empire. You could have freed slaves suddenly becoming emperors even. Um but then I just lost the thread of what I was going to say. Oh, and also like someone who's completely worthless, who's of the patrician class, you know, the senatorial class or something, if they're just worthless, you know, like a

Hunter Biden type, then they should be
able to move downwards in the class
hierarchy,
which to some degree happened in Rome,
but not as much w as would be optimal, I
think.
So yeah, to bring back a certain amount
of just I don't give a [__] ruthlessness
like like Trump is actually doing with
regard to kicking out illegal aliens.
It's like disrupting families, tough
luck. They're criminals. You know, you
arrest a a citizen, they're going to get
separated from their family, too. and
just having to like
everyone has to walk on eggshells to

avoid offending just the most hyper sensitive dysfunctional people. I mean just you might as well just get rid of that at least to some degree.

So yeah, I don't think that the West is going to return to some sort of previously existing religious system, you know, like like classical paganism or like Germanic paganism in Northern Europe, that sort of thing. Um, I mean, we're better off without human sacrifices, for example. Um, I just do not think that society would be willing under just about any circumstance to go back to worshiping Zeus and Apollo.

So, it's going to something's going to something's going to happen. I cannot

really predict what it's going to be,
but I mean we we we really do seem to be
at a kind of inflection point. Not not
like so much even a political one as
just sort of a cultural one where like
the old value systems of like
Christianity
appear to be in this precipitous
decline.
In America, there's much stronger
Christianity than you're going to find
like in Europe. In Europe, most people
are atheists, I'm pretty sure. So, I
mean, something is going to have to come
along that's going to largely unify
society again. Some shared world view,

some shared value system, but I don't think it's going to be found in pre-Christian paganism. And I mean, it could be I mean, it could be caused by a resurgence of Christianity.

That's a possibility.

But we're just going to have to wait and see what happens because it's going to depend on the unpredictable. Like as a general rule, these kind of things tend to be inspired by a very inspired kind of spiritual demagogue kind of person.

So it's going to depend on what they are. You know, it's like what kind of system are they promoting in their charismatic and very popular manner? Who knows?

So, let's see. What kind of effect do you think a widespread return to some form of its original pagan roots would have on it? make it a little healthier in the sense of being less concerned with
trying to bring the lowest strata up to a level of equality with everybody else, which also involves demonizing the rich and and powerful, pushing them down, trying to get everybody equal, you know, or just essentially everybody the same except with regard to their tattoos and piercings and and hair dye colors.
So, let's see here. I guess I answered that question more or less. I'm going to

move on to Romeo's third question, which is kind of a continuation of the second one. Can you ever see a neopagan revival realistically gaining any substantial ground in the West in the foreseeable future? No, I don't I don't think so. I mean, you'd have to have some kind of just totally charismatic, inspired, genius neopagan who was able to get, you know, large large amounts of people to start supporting him and get some momentum going in the culture. And in all likelihood, it's if somebody does that, it's they're not going to be a neopagan.

maybe a Christian, maybe even like some I mean it could be a kind of

neopaganism

that's neo in the sense that it's not

even really resembling what came before.

You know, it's just something that's

just newly invented.

And I have no idea what that would be.

So, I really can't say what it is that's

going to replace

Christianity and a kind of common sense

liberal scientism

um as sort of the unifying world view. I

mean it used to be like in America like

the United States it was like American

values you know the land of opportunity

and certain amount of equality not

enforced sameness but at least equality

of you know rights and liberties that
kind of thing equality of opportunity
supposedly although that's not entirely
the case
so yeah I mean the easy answer to that
third question from Romeo would just be
no. I I I do not foresee any kind of
neopagan revival gaining any substantial
ground in the west in the foreseeable
future.
Could even be something like Buddhism,
but it would have to be a kind of
Buddhism that is less saintly than the
kind of Buddhism you find in the texts.
that in order for a society to be
vigorous and strong, there has to be a
certain amount of this ruthlessness

against enemies

like foreign or domestic.

And it may be that something like what

Donald Trump is attempting with this

increased ruthlessness towards enemies,

perceived enemies, foreign or domestic,

that it's going to result in increased

prosperity, which is going to get more

people on on board. They're going to see

that it actually works. And so, I mean,

it could cause some movement in that

sort of direction that will just

continue long after the time of Donald

Trump.

So, we're just going to have to wait and

see because I don't really know. And I'm

just going to move on to this question.
This is from Phily's.
And Phil says, "Do you think
Schopenhau's ontology is correct? And if
not, then how does it substantially
differ from Buddhism?"
Well, ontology is like
the the branch of philosophy that deals
with like ultimate reality. You know,
what is what is genuine being? That kind
of thing. You know, what is reality is
essentially what ontology is about. And
Schopenhau's ontology was largely
idealistic. You know, he did not believe
that physical matter has like an
intrinsically real existence. that I
mean just going with the title of his

most famous book the world as will and
representation he considered samsara I
mean like the Buddhist translation of
that would be samsara as chidana and sya
you know it's like the phenomenal world
as will and perception
which are both mental states vana and
sya will and representation are all
mental sohar was an idealist
and early Buddhism
like orthodox terravada like the the
schools the pre- Mahayana schools as a
general rule accepted the reality of
physical matter. Uh I'm not sure that
the Buddha ever declared that physical
matter is real. He was just kind of not

dealing with metaphysics at all. I mean he was dealing with suffering and liberation from suffering.

like in the text that is what the Buddha says like the uh the alagupamasuta you know the Buddha teaches two things duka and the sessation of duca.

So um I think that early schools of Buddhism accepting physical matter as ultimately real was more of a cultural thing than what the Buddha was really teaching. It was just sort of accepted in Indian mainstream philosophy sort of that physical matter was real.

So the early schools of Buddhism adopted this idea even though the historical goal Buddha may not have endorsed it.

But then when you get into Mahayana Buddhism um that had sort of a more sophisticated kind of philosophy, you know, the philosophy had been like evolving and developing for hundreds of years at this point. Um so in to some degree it was more sophisticated you know hundreds of years of debating against non Buddhists had sort of strengthened certain aspects of the philosophy and some Hayan Buddhists especially like the yoga school were idealists pretty much like Schopenhau and Schopenhau's will comes relatively close to the Buddhist concept of karma you know karma is volition

kami monk I say that kama is volition or will.

So I mean that's like the main agreement between schopenhau and Buddhism is just sort of the central position of karma as sort of the generator of some sorrow. Although Buddhism would take it farther and say it is delusion that causes the karma. And Schopenhau doesn't I mean I'm sure he talks about it but for him will is just sort of like this primordial force. I don't think Schopenhau really put much emphasis on the notion that will itself is sort of like a side effect or byproduct of ignorance.

Um so I mean how does Schopenhau's ontology compare with Buddhism? I mean

that depends on what kind of Buddhism like Majamaka Buddhism, another one of the main philosophical branches of Mahayana. Um I mean they kind of don't even have an ontology.

It's all I mean anything that you can direct your attention towards, anything that you can discuss is just going to be like fake,

you know? It's going to be just sort of delusional anyway.

So yeah, Buddhism

I guess like Orthodox Terravada does except that will and representation are ultimate realities. But then they they include a whole bunch more than

Schopenhau does. And when by the time
you get into philosophical idealism in
Buddhism, which is with Mahayana schools
mainly, then
um it would come closer to Schopenhau at
that point. I guess but still Buddhism
would consider will itself to be a kind
of byproduct or side effect of something
else whereas Schopenhau I mean has it as
a kind of primordial
you know just entity
I guess just based on my imperfect
understanding of Schopenhau I have read
like the world as will and
representation many years ago in a cave
But
um I don't recall if Schopenhau did

assert that will itself was the product of something else or if he just started with that as just sort of the force that generates this world.

So

um but like orthodox terra it it accepts four ultimate realities. You got mind, matter, mental states, and nibbana itself.

And Schopenhauer wouldn't adopt that four-fold

uh categorization of ultimate reality.

I'm pretty sure.

So, I guess uh after saying so one more time, I'll move on to Phil Lee's second question. He says, "Is working on ships

hectic?"

And I mean, it can be. It depends on what kind of ship. For example, if you're just on like a like a a tanker or a cargo ship crossing the ocean, I I would guess that a lot of those sailors are just like playing video games or reading books, that kind of thing most of the time. But I mean, I worked on twers

like when I was a young man, and I mean, that can be hectic when the when the net's coming in, you have an outburst of hectic activity.

And some of the smaller vessels, they're just it can be just every few hours they're they're hauling in the nets. And

so there's you get your sleep, you just take catnaps throughout the day, which kind of sucked.

But yeah, I mean, it can be. It's, as a general rule, it's not as hectic as my current job as as a forklift operator. That's that's a hectic job, much more so than I really recall um working on ships, except for just like unusual circumstances that were exceptions to the rule. Then you could have hectic activity on a ship.

So, I guess I'll just move on to Phil Lee's third question, which is an easy one. Have you seen Mandelola or Mandala? And then in parenthesis it says 1981

which I guess is a movie and no I haven't seen it. I saw a movie that came out like it was called Samsara. It was like an art movie. I saw that but not Mandelola or Mandala. I guess Mandala is the correct English way of mispronouncing Mandelola.

I'm just going to move on. question.

This is from Cherzasiz

and Chzas says, "I don't get it why monks are so autistically legalistic when it comes to terraod nuns. Buddha did allow them. They were in vignia and sutas. They are there. Even procedures how to ordain them. Can they allow from lack of other nuns to ordain new nuns by monks alone?" And that would do it.

Probably Ajan Brahm did that way or similar. So monks are autistically legalistic when it comes to terabot and nuns partly because
to be a monk is vineia. I mean you you're supposed to follow the rules and if it's not in accordance with the rules it's not valid. Like with regard to the terravada nuns
you I mean there have been attempts to revive the order. People in the west will just assert that bikunis exist even though the majority of terra Buddhists most of whom are Asian would say no there there are no bikunis anymore and according to the rules they have to be

ordained by a sa of nuns and a sa of monks and so if the nuns go extinct there's no sa of nuns to ordain new nuns and there really was no provision in the text for what to do if the nuns become extinct. In fact, according to Trzas is here and according to the text, the Buddha did allow them, but he allowed them reluctantly.

He did not want to allow them at first. He just refused to ordain nuns up until his cousin Ananda, who was also his personal attendant at the time, persuaded him. Ananda this in the text has a reputation for having a soft spot for women in his heart. You know he was compassionate towards women. And so he

persuaded the Buddha. And then the Buddha says, "All right, but now you've done it. True. The true Dharma will exist only half as long now because nuns are being ordained."

And I mean, you could argue maybe the Buddha really didn't ordain nuns, that it was just something that was introduced later or whatever, or he did and the reluctance part was added later. I mean, there was obviously a certain amount of disagreement in in like early pre-terra Buddhist monks about whether nuns really should be allowed or not. And there were rules that were much stricter for for nuns in certain ways

than for monks. In a few ways, nuns had it easier than monks. Like they were allowed to cook their own food, for example.

But there was like very strict rules that was one of the purposes of these stricter rules for nuns was just to prevent women from being ordained just to get away from like an [__] husband that they never wanted to marry. Their parents just set them up, you know, they arranged the marriage. She's stuck with this man she doesn't love who maybe beats on her and that sort of thing. So, she tries to escape just by becoming a nun.

um even though she really doesn't have a
spiritual calling, that sort of thing.
So there have been various
ways that they've tried to um reordain
nuns, you know, try to revive the Bikuni
order. I think the way Ajam Brah did it
was in all typicality for Ajam Brah he
just
claimed for himself the authority of God
Buddha and just said monks monks are
enough essentially
others have tried to use like I think
it's Korean Buddhist nuns possibly
Taiwanese I think it's Korean Buddhist
nuns who supposedly are ordained in like
a Dharma Gupta Vineia which was a school

you know that was an early school pre
Mahayana but the main problem with that
is in order for an ordination ceremony
to be valid it has to be done correctly
according to the texts and if they're
doing all their chanting in Korean for
example instead of in poly or you know
Buddhist Sanskrit or whatever then I
mean that may be enough to disqualify
the validity in which case I mean they
might be genuine Mahayana nuns but they
would not be considered genuine Bikunis
from the point of view of terraota
and from my experience
I mean these bikunies for the most part
they want official status I mean that's
this whole argument over whether their

bikunis are really beunis or not. Is this desire for official status which is really a nonspiritual rather bogus and political
argument to make or a reason for wanting to be a fully ordained buni. But I mean they don't even follow the rules.
The the rules are strict against bucunis. And so you got these women who want like equality for women. That's that's one of the main reasons why they want to be considered beunis. They want equality with men. It's like a political thing and then they don't even follow the rules correctly because those rules are very strict. Like even a senior

bikuni has to bow to a very junior monk and they just don't want to do that. Like a bikuni isn't even allowed to sit in the presence of a monk. She has to remain standing which they just don't do. It's against the rules for a beuni to sit cross-legged.

They do it anyway. They don't care. They're willing to just do this controversial act that most terra Buddhists don't accept in order to claim themselves to be fully ordained terraat bikunis. And then they they don't even follow the rules that they they insist upon being subjected to.

So it it makes sense to me that any group of women can form an order where

they can adjust the rules to fit modern times and like western cultures and so forth. They can dress however they please, follow whatever rules they want. The only thing they can't do is to call themselves fully ordained beonies. But that's what they insist on. that is more important than like following rules correctly, that sort of thing.

So, I'm of the I'm of the the uh faction, I guess, that really thinks that the Terra Bikuni order is extinct, regardless of the claims of people like Ajan Braum or these shaven headed women whose name starts with Aya, that they're essentially laring

and not laring very convincingly because they're not even following the rules as a general rule.

So let's see what's the actual question though. Can they allow from lack of other nuns to ordain new nuns by monks alone and that would do it? Well, it' be against the rules. Somebody like John Braum who is very free in his interpretation of rules doesn't have a problem with that. But I mean certain things have to be just above suspicion you know like Caesar's wife they has to be above suspicion one is like parajika if you got to know for sure if a monk has excommunicated himself or not you know there's a story about like you

steal something worth a certain amount of money you steal something valuable enough that you can get arrested for it you're excommunicated for the rest of your life. So there's the story of a monk who finds a roll of cloth like in a public square and he just picks it up and takes off with it. So then he has like like remorse or you know his conscience gets the better of him. He goes and and like admits or confesses to his preceptor, I stole this. So then the preceptor, he actually goes out and looks for the previous owner and then he asks, you know, he he like has a conversation with the the previous owner

of this roll of cloth and it turns out that that previous owner of that roll of cloth had lost it. You know, they dropped it somehow and then they just they just wrote it off. So it's like they abandoned any claim to it by just saying, "Well, I don't have that anymore." And so it turns out this monk wasn't really excommunicated. He was still a monk. But you have to know for sure if this person is a monk or not. I mean, it definitely very valuable, especially if they're going to be participating in ordination ceremonies and so forth. It's it's really important to know if somebody is excommunicated or not. And so like in the Vineia texts

they go into really excruciating detail
just like law books so that you know
exactly whether
a monk doing a certain thing is
excommunicated or not. And it's just as
important to know if somebody really is
validly ordained or not.
So I mean I have said before I mean I
used to be much more interested in this
back when I was a monk and it was sort
of a hot issue at the time especially in
the west in Burma it's hardly an issue
at all
but the way to do it like the
uncontroversial way of like
reviving the bikuni order would be to

have a great council. You know, you've
got the SA of the four quarters sending
representatives to this great council
where they agree that they're going to
bend the rules this one time to allow
nuns to be ordained,
thereby reviving the Bikuni order. But
it's not going to happen because the
monks who participate in these great
councils for the most part are old
conservative traditionalist Asian monks
who don't even want the Bikuni order.
So you got like modern western leftist
or post-modern western leftist Buddhists
who really think democracy is important.
You know this and that and the other is
a threat to our democracy but they don't

give a [__] about democracy when it comes to ordaining bukunis in which the democratic majority of the song is against it.

When I was a monk, I was told more than once the only way that the Bikuni order could be revived would be if you had at least five monks instantaneously turn into women. because it does state somewhere in the text, possibly just the commentaries, that if a monk just instantaneously is like metamorphosed into woman without any sort of intermediate stage of being in between, just one moment male, the next moment female, then then they would be a fully

ordained Bikuni and then they can start
ordaining other nods. having monks go
through like transition,
then that's not going to work either.
So, I mean, I have no problem with
Bikun's not being fully ordained or
being really valid. You know, my main
problem is these women are just
regardless of the validity of it just
insisting that they're beun mainly for
like social and political reasons and
not spiritual ones. and then they don't
even follow the rules correctly.
So,
I mean, you have to be autistically
legalistic in like like a court of law,
you know, is this person like

punishable? I mean, are they guilty or are they not guilty? You know, it's like do they get the death penalty or not? I mean, that's important stuff. It's not just trivial.

But like I said, any group of women can dress any way they please, follow any group, any any list of rules that they please. The only thing they couldn't do is declare themselves to be fully ordained mikunis. And that's the one thing that they particularly insist on doing.

So I'm just going to move on to Trzask because there's a second question which is he says are equivalents of

words PMA and SA

in classical Greek and then he's got

filia agapee aeros he's got a word that

I assume is pronounced like a Greek word

but in English it would be pronounced

storage

and ludus

and I I never really heard of Greek

words for love that are Dorag or or

storage and Ludus. I mean you you mainly

hear of the main three. You know it's

like you've got Agapee Filia or Felos

and Aeros.

So anyways getting continuing with the

question

Tris says which one would be the closest

match to Pa and Sineha which are like a

sensual attachment like affection like
you know sensually charged affection.
So like romantic love would go under PMA
or Sineha. I mean Pa and Sineha are like
two more or less synonyms in poly that
mean love but it's not the sort of
exalted spiritual kind of love you know
it's sort of more sensual
crude vulgar emotional attached kind of
love
so I mean seems pretty obvious to me
that I mean it would be more aeros than
agapee or felos
That meta in Pali in Terra Buddhism that
would come closer to agapee you know at
the highest and probably felos a little

lower down you know felos is like brotherly love and meta I mean literally it means friendliness you know meta and and mita mita in pi is friend meta is this usually translated as loving kindness but literally it would be something like friendliness.

So I mean there was a certain amount of discussion or debate going on on the discord server with regard to the nature of spiritual love and terra Buddhism really does not have any concept of spiritual love higher than meta and meta is still a relatively crude state. I mean it's it's wholesome. You can get to third Janna meditating on it. You can't get to fourth Janna though. But you can

get to third Janna meditating on meta. But still this idea like some spiritual systems have even to some degree Christianity that that pure love is essentially God. And it's like you can say like the highest the absolute could be interpreted interpreted as just pure absolute love. I think Echarollah talks about this also.

And you know it's like when the New Testament says God is love. It's not saying God is an emotion or that God feels love. It's saying God is love which is you know just like one way of interpreting this absolute. But one reason why you don't have this kind of

concept in terra Buddhism is that in terabana Buddhism you just don't reify the absolute. You don't try to attribute qualities to ultimate reality which is just totally off the samsaric scale. that words just don't apply to it. Any explanation or description is going to be invalid anyway.

And of course, Terra Buddhism is very headoriented anyhow, more philosophical than religious in certain ways, much more headoriented than hear oriented as a general rule despite the efforts of postmodern lefty western Buddhists.

So

yeah, I do think that the the uh the

fundamental essence of love is acceptance. Just having an open heart, knocking down Pink Floyd's wall, at least to some degree, you know, just eliminating the distinction between the self and other. And so a fully enlightened being would have that perfectly even though it's not really a terab Buddhist concept.

But in answer to the questions, I do think that the sensual kinds of love mentioned in the poly texts would be aeros in Greek.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from seaction seat zed. And se of action sepatna says

how do you argue against someone who says that the Buddha was a beggar who didn't work a living and instead was like an entitled bgeoa who freeloaded off others. I have heard this sentiment before and didn't know how to answer it. Well, I mean arguing against someone really isn't like the ideal Buddhist course of action to adopt anyway.

But someone says the Buddha was a beggar. Of course he was a beggar. Like he was a beu. And the word beu which is usually translated as monk literally means beggar which the Burmese don't like. They don't like that idea. Like the word for beggar in Burma is thudansza which is like someone who asks

for food you know. And there's there there's in the commentaries there's a much more exalted bogus etmology for biku. It's like he who sees danger in samsara something like that. But I mean even in the even in the poly text itself be bam baked beu you going with Burmese pronunciation of of poly and there strange pronunciation of vowels before double consonants and all that. It's like bam is alms badi is to ask for or beg for. So it's the same etmology as the word beu, which literally means beggar.

So yeah, the Buddha technique was a beggar. I mean, he wouldn't just flat

out ask for stuff, but he would stand in silence in front of a house for a few moments, and if anyone wanted to put food in his bowl, they'd put it in, and he'd move on to the next. He didn't work for a living. Well, anyone who thinks that a monk, especially like an aesthetic monk who is seriously striving for enlightenment,
anyone who thinks that they're not working for a living is just vastly ignorant of what it is to be a monk. It is it is a hard job if you're conscientious. I mean, if you're just like living in some house temple in the suburbs in the West, you know, just kind of lounging around like a neutered house

cat, that kind of thing. Aren't there monks like that? And that's easy. It's easy to be a a lax monk, but it's damn difficult to be a good one.

So instead, he was like an entitled bgeoa. Yeah. An entitled bgeoa who's like living under trees in forests, doesn't handle money, who freeloaded off others. Yeah. I mean this is just sort of like bias western bias against like spiritual mendicy

and and it was that way in China also. It was like Buddhism in China had to go a different route than monks going for alms because in China pretty much like in the west like like medieval early

medieval China like modern America it's
like people who beg really have very low
social status and so the monks in China
had to become farmers
you know they had to grow their own
crops
and it's kind of like Christian monks in
the west too I mean they're even
slaughtering their own livestock. I was
a surprised reading um sort of an edited
version of Thomas Merin's
journals
where he's talking about he's he goes
into the storage room where the the goat
hides are being dried out. You got monks
that are killing goats and skinning them
and so forth, making sausage, that kind

of thing.

So with regard to freeloading off of others, there is a verse in the dharmapata that says a good monk is like a bee. He just goes from flower to flower without causing any hardship to any of the flowers. You know, it just any of it's like

that's that's the way a good monk is supposed to be. is easy to support like the meta suta. One of the the blessings of the No, I'm I'm confusing sutas.

Subarosa.

Yeah, I think I think it's in the meta suta talking about how how a good monk should be and he should be suburo which

means easy to support. You shouldn't be causing hardship for others. And so I mean for somebody to take a spoonful of rice and put it in your bowl, it's helping them more than it's harming them. See, so somebody who thinks that like the Buddha was just a freeloader, they're just blind
to the benefits
caused by someone offering food to an enlightened sage.
Now, they probably don't have any concept of enlightened sage. They're just living in like an in a hypers samosasic interpretation of reality.
So, but I mean trying to argue with someone like this, I mean, if if if

they're being like hostile, you know,
they're just like slandering the Buddha,
you're better off just like avoiding
them,
you know, wish them well and and go on
your way. But I mean, if if it's in good
faith, this a disagreement in good
faith, and you can have meta in your
heart towards this person while you're
trying to set them straight to some
degree, at least with regard to the
Buddhist view of things, then yeah, I
mean, that might be all right to kind
of, you know, out of compassion for this
person to kind of set them straight on
certain things so that they're not

viewing the Buddha as some sort of bum.
I mean I was he's been accused worse
especially by Hindus who technically
consider him to be God
an avatar of Vishnu.
So how do you argue against someone who
says that the Buddha was a beggar? Well
he was he was a beggar essentially. I
mean he didn't flat out ask for stuff
but I mean he was living on alms. He
didn't work for a living. Well, to be a
good monk is hard work, even though he
wasn't like working for for salary and
instead was like an entitled bajgeoa. I
mean, that's just obviously false
who freeloaded off others. Well,
they were happy to do it. See, that's

the thing. If someone is really happy and they're I mean, they're earning merit by helping you. I mean it's like the the sa is called the field of merit in the texts because it's like a golden opportunity for people to earn good karma by I mean just one spoon of rice into the bowl is all it takes. You don't have to be like building entire monastery buildings for these monks. You don't have to set them up with a a seven course meal or any such thing.

So

gosh, I mean, how you answer somebody like that, it would depend on how they frame it, what their attitude is, and if

their attitude really is just like mocking and sneering, you're better off not even bothering to dignify them with a response other than just wish them well and be on your way.

So maybe I answered that question sort of kind of. So I'm just going to move on to see action sepatna's next question which is as follows.

Ashoka allegedly ended up destroying his empire by giving all his wealth to monks and the commoners. Meanwhile, a tyrant who kills, rapes, and eats his enemies, eats his enemies, can make their societies prosper by taking it from everyone else, with war being the biggest reason of technological

innovations. Historically, it seems like Buddhism and many religions, if actually followed fully, would lead to societal destruction, but materialist consumers make economies prosper. What do you make of the fact that societies with many of these evils on an individual spiritual level usually end up doing much better than content societies that all followed the precepts? Well, if those societies are content, then still they're better off. I mean, what difference does it make if you're rich or poor or living in a like a constitutional democracy or a dictatorship if you're content compared You got you got some rich city dweller

in a in a supposedly free democratic society who's nevertheless a psychological mess full of desires and attachments, never satisfied. Then you've got some poor villager living in a hut under a military dictatorship, but they've got peace in their heart.

Well, from a Buddhist point of view, the poor villager living in a hut is better off than the rich city dweller who's who's never satisfied.

But it is true that Ashoka in a way he kind of set up his the the Morian Empire if I'm not mistaken. He set it up for destruction by you know largely disbanding the armies and so forth. And while he was still alive the neighboring

countries had a certain awe or respect.
It's like whoa he must have the gods on
his side. you know, he's not even
bothering to to have, you know, many
soldiers guarding the country. Maybe
it's protected by gods or something. So,
they kind of, you know, he his empire
apparently prospered pretty well while
he was alive and then it went into rapid
decline after him,
which then allowed the the Greeks to
conquer northwestern India.
But, uh, let's see.
Yeah. I mean, you got to bear in mind
that Buddhism was originally intended
not for society, but for people

renouncing society and going off and living in solitude in a forest striving for enlightenment. So, when you're trying to like take saintly ethics and impose it upon an entire samsaric society and nation, then yeah, this this it can backfire largely because most of the people aren't saints. They're not sages. They don't have as good of karma as you know like an arahant or someone who's very close to being an arahant since an arant really isn't creating karma anymore they've kind of transcended that.

So let's see here. The question, what do you make of the fact that societies with many of these evils on an individual

spiritual level usually end up doing much better than content societies that all fall pre? Well, like consider like the Roman Republic, early empire or even the the late empire to some degree like Valentinian the Great. He was considered to be a great emperor even though the man was a psychopath. You know, he had two brown bears that he would entertain himself by feeding political prisoners to them and just watch them get torn apart and he thought that was great. He I mean he continually just having people just be beaten to death with clubs and so forth. They'd make the slightest mistake in his presence. I mean, the man

was just a a psychopath, but at at the very least, he had certain like priorities and he was trying to serve the empire. You know, he was kind of a patriotic Roman at the same time that he was a sociopath. And so Rome,
I mean, you can't really say that it prospered, but it was kind of coming out of the the decline that it was in at least for a while while he was emperor. And then it just collapsed after that. The the the final like the fall of the Roman Empire happened shortly after he died because he had appointed his mediocre brother as co-emperor.
the mediocre brother survived and Valentinian the Great didn't. And then

the Goths pretty much started running

them up.

So I mean

for worldly success you need a worldly

ethic. You need a worldly code of

conduct. So I mean you cannot serve both

God and Mammon. So you I mean

for worldly success you serve mammon

and

you got sort of a spectrum of sort of

attitudes that can be adopted. You know

entirely saintly that's that's not very

good and just complete savagery with no

code of honor no ethics whatsoever

really other than maybe some very crude

moral codes or taboss or something.

That's not ideal. You want something
kind of in the middle where you you're
still ruthless badasses, but at the same
time, at least you're defending your own
citizens. You have an idea of justice.
You know, you have an idea of fairness
at least towards your own citizens.
I mean, the enemy you I mean, they can
be dehumanized, I guess, at least in a
society like the Roman Republic.
It's like too bad for them. We're
Romans. We're going to kick their ass.
That's what we do. So, I mean, that kind
of attitude with an idea of justice and
fairness and like a sincere patriotic
desire to cause
prosperity

for the society at large. I mean, that's that's good. And being good at ass kicking helps, too.

And just historically that kind of that kind of society has done the best like the British Empire before they wimped out started just kind of disintegrating. It was kind of it was that way too. It was you know they had relatively enlightened ideas with regard to the prosperity of the nation and justice and fairness and so forth. I mean it didn't always work out that way. You read Charles Dickens novels, you see that at the height of the Rome or the the British Empire like the 19th century

still. I mean, you had just
the desperately poor people living in
ghettos in London, that sort of thing.
The judicial system definitely was not
perfect, but it was better than most
other places even then.
So I mean if you want worldly success
you have to adopt a worldly ethic. If
you want spiritual success you adopt a
spiritual ethic. But you cannot serve
both God and mammon as the good book
says.
So I mean the spiritual spiritual ethic
for a spiritual society. You might have
people that have peace in their heart,
but they're dirt poor subsistence
farmers,

like lots of Burma like that. I mean,

they got a bad government as a general

rule,

but in a way, they're better off than a

lot of other places.

They have less dooka as a general rule.

Unless of course they get caught

criticizing the government, wind up

living on watery pumpkin soup in some

prison somewhere.

So yeah, it depends on what your

priorities are and your priorities will

dictate what your your your

ethics should be, I guess.

Anyway, I'm just going to move on to

Seioction Cadina's next question, which

is kind of an interesting one. He says, "Do you think mean or women are more religious and why?" I think he means men. So, do I think that men or women are more religious? Well, by religious, if you don't mean spiritual, you just mean religious. As a general rule, I think it's women. And you can find the answer to this. I think it's in the damapata. There's a verse that says people are religious through fear. I mean, not Buddhist, you know, he's just talking about sort of like mainstream cultural superficial kind of religion. Women tend to be more insecure and more desirous of safety and security than men. And so they want to

cover their bases. They don't want to get punished. They don't be smitten by God or by the gods or whatever. You know, they want to go to heaven instead of hell. They're afraid of hell. They're afraid of that that kind of torment. And so, and also women tend to be more conformist than men. So, they're just going to go along with the culture and just be religious. And it's that way in Burma also. But like with regard to spiritual, not just religious in like the cultural sense, but like striving for enlightenment, striving to just kind of tear through the veil, to transcend samsara, to know reality, that kind of

thing.

It probably more men than women. And the greatest like spiritual geniuses tend to be men. Partly just due to the the notorious differences in the bell-shaped curve. The statistical bell-shaped curve is narrower from w for women, broader for men. So you're going to have more complete numbum skulls and also more just inspired geniuses among males than among among females

just because there's a broader bell-shaped curve. So the super geniuses are going to tend to be male regardless of how feminists feel about the matter. But that's just with regard to like you know Buddhas and so forth.

Um but I do think that just with regard to like cultural kinds of religion, women tend to be more religious. you know, women are the ones that are mainly supporting the monks in Burma, for example. Um, that doesn't mean that it's, you know, 80% women or even 65% women, but, you know, there's a slight edge of with regard to women. It's it's a noticeable pre a noticeable prevalence of women coming to the monasteries on upsets today and taking eight precepts and that kind of thing.

Maybe even more women are attending meditation retreats at least at the sort of beginning level, you know, the sort

of the the novice level meditation retreats. But when it when you get into the more philosophical really trying to transcend some Sara kind of stuff, I think it's going to be somewhat more prevalent among men than women having that orientation.

And so I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from I should be dead soon.

I think I should be dead soon previously was known as five precept Pete, but I'm not 100% sure on that one. And he says, "Everything I see is dark, bleak, and vile. If not black with depression, then I am red with rage. This world is a cruel place. Nobody can be trusted that

hasn't made an effort to pursue virtue and wisdom. And even then, I must trust but verify. If I say anything to anyone, that can later be used against me. If I fall in love, her motives can never be truly known, and I must have the escape route planned for when she breaks my heart like it is nothing. In circumstances like these, there is no way to live a life. Those closest will abandon me. Friends will betray me. Words like love mean nothing anymore. The only commitment my generation seems comfortable with is staining their skin with tattoos. Nobody can define virtue, let alone pursue it. It in circumstances

such as these, death appears as a refuge. How do I practice with a mind that is dark as this? Well, I am sorry that I should be dead soon really feels this way. Although I mean it's it's always somewhat of a mixed blessing. Like I've mentioned before that someone who doesn't like samsara can detach from it and renounce it more easily. Like in the wisudi ma it's talking about the different personality types. And it does mention the person with the dosa or aversive temperament has a certain advantage in dhama because like I said if you just disapprove of the world you don't like the world easier to detach from it easier to renounce it. So that's

one kind of dimly bright point I

suppose.

I mean it could be a very bright bright

point under certain circumstances. I

mean if it helps you to become

enlightened then certainly it's

definitely good even though it may seem

very unpleasant at first

but I mean with regard to a lot of this

nobody can be trusted

I mean it can be used if I say anything

to anyone can be used against him fall

in love the motives never can never be

known have to have the escape route

planned

um there's the closest will abandon me

friends will betray me this kind of
thing I mean you have to bear in mind
that you are creating your reality
that I mean when you're looking outwards
that what you see outwards is just an
outward reflection of what's going on
inside. And so a lot of this stuff is
self-fulfilling prophecies. So you have
to be careful about negative thoughts. I
mean if it's it's it seems to be
habitual
but still I mean you can make efforts
to kind of overcome this kind of utter
pessimism.
I mean just really I mean you're just
setting yourself up for it. If you're
expecting a woman to dump you it's going

to help her to dump you. If you're expecting friends to betray you, then it's going to increase the likelihood that friends will betray you. If if you think you're going to get cancer, it increases the likelihood, they've done studies on this, that that you're going to get cancer. So, it's it's like self-fulfilling prophecies also. So, that should be considered. And to to the extent that you have any kind of like volitional conscious control over your attitude, then really I mean you should you should kind of try to steer in a somewhat more wholesome direction.

Also, I'd point out that there's a famous quote by Winston Churchill. You can lot some people think Winston Churchill was was the bad guy, but even so, Winston Churchill was not a complete idiot. and he he had this this quote. I don't remember the exact quote, but it's like the secret to success
is to
move from one disastrous failure to the next with no loss of enthusiasm.
And that was kind of my my father's attitude towards women. You know, it was like he used to say, you know, he's he was married four times and he he lost four houses. you know, he'd build a house and then he he his wife would

divorce him and he'd lose that. He'd build another house. His next wife would would take that one, you know, but he just sincerely loved women. He wasn't going to just become Mikttow. And finally, number five was a good one and he just wound up with her for the rest of his life.

But I mean myself personally, I'm really can't identify or I can really can't identify with this attitude very well. I mean, I tend to always give people the benefit of the doubt and I tend to have good karma. You know, people have have messed me over relatively few times.

You know, I remember one time when I was a teenager, I got these pants that didn't have back pockets. They only had front pockets and the front pockets went in sideways. So that I put my wallet in the pocket. It would just fall out. And three times in one day, just over the course of like one hour while I'm walking home from school, my wallet falls out of my pocket. Three times, all three times, somebody rushes up and hands it to me with all the money still in it. I mean, that kind of thing has happened to me many times in life where just a kind of openness, willingness to give people the benefit of the doubt. I mean, it's not like you're thinking,

"No, nobody's going to mess with me." It's just you you don't even go there, you know? It's like, "I'm not going to worry about it. Even if it happens, I'm not going to worry about it." Because, of course, worry is bad karma. It increases the likelihood of thing, bad things happening. Expecting people to do bad things to you increases the likelihood that bad things are going to happen to you.

So that's something that has to be contended. At least you should be mindful of it. Even if you can't really change your attitude, at least you should observe it. You can be mindful of

this attitude where you know it's it's not me thinking bleak thoughts. It's bleak thoughts are arising.

And that creates a detachment. It's no longer you. You are no longer like this denisin of a dark bleak vile world. It's just you are observing dark, bleak, vile mental states arising with philosophical detachment.

So there's that too.

But I mean you should be careful. I mean you should be aware that it's not so much the world is dark, bleak, and vile. It's you have like like habits that probably going with Buddhism go back into previous lives of just sort of negative mental states reflected

outwardly as negative like phenomena which then cause sort of like a negative feedback loop reinforcing the expectation of negative things happening when really ultimately literally from the Buddhist point of view it's all your own doing. Karma is action. Karma is doing. And everything you experience is the fruition of karma. And so long as you're just continually expecting it and disapproving of it and so forth, it's just reinforcing it.

So the best thing to do in a case like that is just be mindful. Just watch mental states arise and pass away.

But getting back to what I said at the

beginning, if if you do not like samsara, it does make it easier to detach from it. Don't just get stuck in like this hell realm, just wallowing in a hell realm. And of course, self-deing from the Buddhist point of view isn't going to help because I mean, you take your karma with you. That's the only thing you do take with you after you die is your karma. So, you're just taking all the luggage with you. It's just going to keep happening until you learn how to deal with it. Either by detaching and renouncing or at least detaching through mindfulness or making a conscious effort not to just like whitewash everything force, you

know, just force white pills down your own throat. I mean, that doesn't work either. That's not realistic. You just have to kind of clear pill through mindfulness. just whatever happens is going to happen. But like bracing yourself for bad things that are going to happen increases the likelihood of bad things happening. Struggling against it, it's like you're you're caught in a snare. Struggling against the snare just tightens it.

But I mean, I I think it's probably I hope an exaggeration when I should be dead soon says everything I see is dark, bleak, and

vile. I mean, not everything.

Hope is not everything. You see a flower, is that dark, bleak, and vile. I mean, you can think, well, it's going to just shrivel up and die. Some worm is probably eating the middle of it right now.

But

there there are genuinely nice people. I mean, they might not be perfect, but there are like sweetteered, simplehearted people who just smile at you and and bless you. They're out there.

So, yeah, be mindful would be a good one. And if you can detach and renounce, then that would be using this seeming

obvious problem to your advantage.
But still, I mean, you're carrying this
stuff inside you. That's what's why it's
become that's why it's manifesting
outwardly because you're carrying it
around inside. And so do the best you
can with regard to just being mindful of
it, not identifying with it
and good luck.
My blessings are upon you.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Ruie.
And Ruie says, "Easy one this time.
Would you offer a few words on the
different types of wimbouti?" And wimi
is like liberation.

Um it's it's not as easy as Rui would like to think because like different kinds of emote as far as I'm concerned the if we say there are two kinds of emotei then it would be like like enlightenment or just the various kinds of samsaric you know virtual temporary weimi but in terra Buddhism

I looked up wimi in nyamatila's Buddhist dictionary

And he says this,

see we deliverance is of two kinds. Deliverance of mind or chauimui and deliverance through wisdom or paimuti. Deliverance of mind is the highest in the highest sense is that kind of concentration or samadei which is bound

up with the path of arahantship or arahhata maga. Deliverance through wisdom is the knowledge or nyana bound up with the fruition of arahantship arahhata pala. So this is orthodox terra. And so the first kind of weimi is bound up with arhata maga which according to terra Buddhism lasts one trillionth of an eyelink.

So I mean why even bother taking it seriously if this kind of wimbouti lasts for one trillionth of an eyelink found in the texts and in all likelihood neither you nor anyone you have ever met or known is going to have any personal experience of it. I mean we mui is

liberation in this liberation from duca
liberation from delusion liberation to
some extent from samsara
and if you want to divide it up then the
only dividing up you should do would be
of the virtual samsaric kinds of
weimotei you know you're you're you're
liberated from the a bad friendship or
something
but this in terraada in the sense of we
bajavvada or the the doctrine of
analysis where you had early Indian
Buddhist philosophers just trying to
categorize and analyze everything making
these different lists and categories. I
mean I never had any real use for that.
I really just had no interest in I do

not think that that is really how to become enlightened. If you read the Atakawagago or other really early texts, there's none of that or very very very little of it.

So yeah, I'm not really the person to ask on the different types of weotei. Although I did tell you what Nyana tiloka thought about it

and one is associated with Ara mega which lasts a trillionth of an eyeblink and the other the other kind is associated with arhata pala which probably also lasts a trillionth of an eye blink but at least that is like the fruition of enlightenment.

So I mean you got this preliminary fruition of you know you're one trillionth of an eye blink away from it. So I guess that's kind of a kind of weimotei but I really have never really been able to relate to that kind of stuff very well. Never had a whole lot of interest in it. Never placed much value on that kind of terravada Buddhist philosophizing.

And so I'm just going to move on to Ruy's next question.

which is perhaps a naive one according to him. Do you think meta or amity and wimbouti could form some sort of foundation for social political practice at the lay person's level? Well, if we

mui is identified with full

enlightenment,

then yeah, I don't think it would be

much of a foundation for lay people that

aren't enlightened

um for social political practice at the

lay person's level. I mean, you'd

probably be better off with just the the

four Brahma viharas at the the social

political practice at the lay person's

level, which is meta or loving kindness

or just sort of like friendliness,

benevolence.

You've got compassion,

which is I mean it's it's not a bad

thing. You've got muda, which is like

rejoicing in other people's happiness,
which is a virtue. And then you've got
like equinimity
which is detachment essentially
and that was that's sort of like a stoic
sort of virtue.
So yeah I mean
uh another foundation for social
political practice at the lay person's
level just honesty not stealing
not killing if it isn't absolutely
necessary that kind of thing. So this
basic basic morality would have to be in
there somewhere. If I mean especially if
you want this to be for like the mass of
normies participating in in a society
and then ideals would be four brahma are

fairly easily graspable ideals even for a relative normie.

And I mean, you could have weimi or like liberation as like the highest goal, but I mean, you're going to have to be renouncing society to some degree to get to that goal.

I mean, if you want this to be social, then you wouldn't put too much emphasis on renouncing society.

So, I think I'm just going to move on. Next question. And I do not fully understand this question. This is from Fred. Fred asks questions that are not not I mean the the meaning is not necessarily obvious of the question.

Fred says question

do we have a template for rebirth to

rebirth? An example could be the brain

and the nervous system. I have a feeling

the intellect doesn't go across but

maybe wisdom does. Well, what goes

across is karma. I mean like I said

earlier on the only thing you take with

you after you die is your karma which is

your volition your your will is the

momentum of your mental states the

momentum of your stream of consciousness

this momentum that is like pushing you

from behind through samsara

and it's largely generating your

samsara.

So, do we have a template?

I guess the closest we would have to a template would be just our karma, the momentum of our mental states. He says an example could be the brain and the nervous system. I mean, that could be like a sort of
stabilizer in this version of reality for your mental states.
But I mean the mental states come first and then they help to produce the the phenomenal events and phenomena that kind of stabilize
this dream world that we're living in.
So I mean you can say intellect and also wisdom. I mean to some degree it's it's part of this momentum of your mental

states. So um

I assume it is possible for a really

brilliant person to become really stupid

in their next life just through like

abuse of their intellect for example.

Um

it's probably a little less likely that

a wise person is going to be reborn in

their next life as just an utter fool.

So wisdom probably would be more

reliable than intelligence.

But with regard to this template, I'm

not exactly sure what Fred is referring

to as a template other than just what

goes across from this life to the next

through rebirth linking consciousness is

just your karma. That's all you take

with you. The momentum of your mental

states,

your volitions,

your will.

And so I'm just going to move on to the

next question and this is from M

and M says I was wondering about the

factorization.

So um I do factor out the numbers of the

Q&As's as I already mentioned 163 for

this episode is prime. So you can't

really factor it out other than just 1*

163. So, he's referring to 162 here. And

he says, "I was wondering about the

factorization. Does the thumbnail do the

math?" And then he's got 1* 2 * 3 to the

4th power. And then he says, "One opens, two divides, three ascends four-fold, nine returns, complete." And this is like numerology. And I've I have to admit, I've never had any use at all for numerology. I've I've known some new age people, you know, it's like you take like the your birth date and then you you add up the numbers and then the the number you wind up with can give you like profound insights into your character. This kind of thing or just adding up numbers and like trying to derive some kind of profound insight from that.

I just don't see it at all. You know, I think that this is just some sort of

gimmick like tarot cards or something

where it may be if there any if there is

any kind of valid like wisdom that comes

up from it, it's coming from inside you

and you're just using the numbers as a

kind of gimmick.

But yeah, I I really don't have any use

for like numerology. And does the

thumbnail do the math? I I don't know. I

don't know if the thumb I guess

thumbnails don't do math.

So yeah, that the answer to this is no.

A thumbnail thumbnail doesn't do math.

And it's just a coincidence that you got

1* 2 * 3 to the 4th.

One opens, two divides, three ascends

four-fold. you're getting poetical in kind of a newagy numerological vein that I just I'm just got like uh I'm like colorblind or tonedeaf to that kind of stuff.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Xenithoid. And Xenithid just really throws a throws a zinger in there. Does Deloise's concept of the body without organs have any relevance to Buddhism? and he put this out there on the Discord server. He asked me personally and also he just asked the the Dennisens of the Discord server in general what they thought about Deloise's concept of the body without organs and nobody knew what the

hell he was talking about. So he posted
this wall of text describing this
concept of the body without organs and
it was kind of TLDDR. I didn't read all
of it. Um
but
uh does it have any relevance to
Buddhism? I don't think it has much
relevance to terra orthodox terravada. I
don't think so. I think orthodox tele
terravada at the conventional level
accepts that we have internal organs.
However, you get into like yoga mindonly
school
where there is no physical matter at
all. Then sure and to some degree I mean

I am kind of an idealist and so I can really accept the idea that I don't have any internal organs unless I am perceiving them.

And it may be that we didn't even have like white blood cells until somebody discovered them. I mean, before that, we'd still be fighting disease and so forth, but when it I mean, it had to get crystallized down into some rationalized explanation with people like cutting you open and like or not you personally, but cutting open like a cadaavver or something and like are taking blood samples, looking at it through a microscope and and it's like it's sort of like materializing,

if you will, these gimmicks

for explaining processes that people

have known for hundreds of thousands of

years but weren't able to explain or

they explained it differently. You know,

the gods do it or whatever.

So, I do have this idea that I mean

worrying about your health, worrying

about an internal organ, that kind of

thing makes more likely that you're

going to have problems.

And

yeah, I mean I've never actually seen my

own spleen

go going with conventional scientific

empiricism I can say okay you know

according from a samsaric point of view
there's a spleen in there and it's one
of its duties or functions is to produce
red blood cells and so forth
but I mean to to exist is to be
perceived and if nobody is perceiving
that spleen it doesn't exist.
So I think I mean I'm not even sure if
I'm interpreting this Deloise guy's
ideas correctly at all that you don't
necessarily have internal organs unless
you perceive them.
Um
but it would it would be more in harmony
with certain like idealist
philosophically idealist Mahayana
schools rather than the the pre-

Mahayanist orthodox schools like Terravada that were accepting the ultimate reality of physical matter. It wouldn't include the ultimate reality of spleens but it would be the ultimate reality of the particles that compose a spleen. what is conventionally known as a spleen.

Which reminds me in the Wisudi Maga, one of one of the few valid physiological observations made in the Wizudi Maga, when it's going through the the different the 32 parts of the body and so forth, is that when your spleen protrudes from your body, you die.

But I mean, they they had no concept of

what the brain was for. They thought the brain was just kind of bone marrow filling a large hollow bone.

So

I I don't know about Deloise and his concept of the body without organs, but I I do tend to go along with the idea that SAS perkip to exist is to be perceived and if something isn't being perceived, it doesn't exist.

So going on to Xenithoid's next question. After saying so one more time. I say it an awful lot. Could be worse. So I could be saying basically instead of that.

Anyways, Zenith says, "How do you define self?"

And I think there's two ways of defining self. There's like the Terra way and the Mahayana way. The Terra way is subjective. You know it's like I me that is a self.

So it would be like a subjective entity self-existent individual being.

Um but like in the Mahayana concept they took the meaning of self and they they spread it into objectivity. You know like the sins ming says the subject is a subject for the object. The object is an object for the subject. And so from the Mahayana point of view, it's more likely to interpret a self as any intrinsically real distinct entity. So in which case

this paper umbrella would be a self
because it is supposedly if we're going
to go that route assume that it is it is
an intrinsically real self-existent
entity
that it would even be on the table if no
one was perceiving it there.
So that would be a more broad
interpretation of self as just any
intrinsically self-existent entity.
Whereas from the terravada point of
view, it just means more likely just
like like a soul or just subjectively
uh a self-existent
conscious being.
And I can I can go either way. I
generally go more with the Mahayana

point of view. If I if I say there's no self, I'm saying there there are no distinct entities that are ultimately real, which would include all these ultimately real Rupa Kalapa elements in Abidama philosophy
that even those would be little selves. They might exist for only a trillionth of an eyeblink. It's still this little self that exists for a trillionth of an eye blink. And I do not think the Buddha would have endorsed their ultimate reality.
So those are the two main definitions of self that I'm aware of. And I go tend to go more with the Mahayana version than

the Terra version just because I don't think the Terra version goes far enough in denying the existence of a self.
So I'm moving on to Xenithoid's third question which is a continuation of the second one apparently. He says how is it different from subject? There is the obvious definition of self as in me versus you. But I think the me versus you distinction is better described by subjectivity as a result of karma and tna. The the forces which collapse consciousness into individuals. I think of something having self only when it is without distinction,
without relationships to any other things. Without distinction and without

without causal potential, there are no selves, but there are subjects.

Well,

how can a self be without distinction? I mean, self is itself a distinction from not self.

So, that part I don't understand.

without relationships to any other things. I mean, what kind of a self would have no relationship? I mean, I guess there are spiritual systems that declare we have a soul that is just completely detached and doesn't do anything.

So maybe, but I really I really don't interpret it that way that a self would

either be having like a conscious ego. I mean, that would be one way of defining self. I think ego means something like self, doesn't it?

Um, or there's like just the the intrinsically real self-existent being, which would be kind of the subjective interpretation. Or like I'm saying, the objective self is any intrinsically real object entity.

If it was considered to be intrinsically self or real, you know, it's real, not based on external forces conditioning it into existence at all times like a fire, but it's it's it's real regardless of

external circumstances

that it's just self-existent, which

isn't a very good way of describing it

because you're using the word you're

trying to define in the definition

of self.

Um let's see what is the actual question

there how is self different from subject

well that is one way of defining self

but like I've been saying I mean a self

doesn't necessarily have any kind of

awareness I mean from my interpretation

that anyone who thinks that this is this

little pip paper umbrella here is real

would consider this to be a kind of self

that it's just an an intrinsically real

entity.

But that's getting more into like the

the more subtle

maybe a little more sophisticated

Mahayianist interpretation. Definitely

more radical in its denial of self.

But let's see. From a terra point of

view, how does self how is it different

from a subject

man? Well,

I don't know like a plant

would have I guess I guess I mean they

could be interpreted as being the same

which is something I've already

mentioned.

A self

how is it different from a subject? I

mean that's that's largely I mean they're pretty much the same thing. Although of course a subject can be the object. Like if I'm looking at another person I'm looking at what they view as themselves subjectively. But for me I'm seeing them objectively but still I'm saying well conventionally that is a self over there. A person with a self maybe.

But yeah, I think from the terravada point point of view, a self would have to have consciousness. A self would have to be aware and consider itself to be different from everything around it. And that's pretty much the same as a

subject, isn't it?

So, it's not necessarily different from a subject. Although I'm sure you get into this realm of ambiguity and so forth that there's going to be different people having different interpretations, but I just cut through the Gordian knot by saying any entity is a self. Period. And I'm moving on to the next question, which is the last question. Always takes me by surprise or usually does anyway. This is from PSA. And PSA says, "What's your opinion of all the woke leftists celebrating online over Charlie Kirk's death? It's actually scary how we live in a society like this." And up until I think it was yesterday, maybe the day

before,

um, I really didn't see it as that big

of a deal because I didn't realize how

big of a deal it was that I thought, you

know, it's maybe a few%

of like woke leftists

are glad that Charlie Kirk was

assassinated. you know, a fraction of

them would be making Tik Tok videos just

gloating and celebrating that kind of

thing. And then I watched Shoe Armed

Head on YouTube. I think it was last

night

or the night before. I don't remember.

I'm not good at at remembering exactly

like within two days. I I'd be more

accurate whether it was last Monday or Tuesday. But anyway, Shuan head is a leftist. She's like a socialist and she has like a cheerful funny kind of personality, you know. I'll watch her videos. I mean, she she does a lot of like making fun of the left because she's a more sensible member of the left, you know, just she just has for for her own reasons an idea that socialism is more fair and so forth. Fine, I'll still watch her videos. and she put out this video recently where she is like at the verge of tears sometimes in this video. I mean she is just shocked when she found out that most of her friends almost all of

them according to her of the of her
fellow leftist friends were just
demonizing Charlie Kirk and saying it
was good that he got murdered. And so
then I'm thinking, wow, I mean, this
might not be just this small percentage.
I mean, this could be I don't know if
half. I don't know. But it's it's a lot
of them. It's way bigger than I than I
imagined.
And so, I mean, this is
it's it's a product of the culture. I
mean,
Trump supporters have just been
demonized, dehumanized by
like leftist mainstream media for years.

I mean, literally Adolf Hitler,
which is just stupid to say that Donald
Trump is literally Adolf Hitler because
he obviously isn't. are are saying that
even a conservative Christian is a
fascist or a Nazi. I mean, that's the
attitude. Anyone to the left of Hillary
Clinton is is a fascist and Nazi, which
I mean, it's just a kind of mass
hysteria that apparently has really
taken hold in America. And and there's
people on the right like the MAGA
people. There's a lot of them. like you
find them in Breitbart comment sections
for example who are just absolutely
convinced
all Democrats are just evil and

delusional and so it's going both ways
although it seems like the left is much
more likely to exhibit this in in the
form of violence which is kind of a
leftist tradition
you know Russian revolution for example
it's like you use violence to get what
you want. So, I do think it's really a
good sign that Trump has finally
declared Antifa a terrorist
organization, which is much more
significant than a lot of people will
realize because anyone donating money to
a terrorist organization is committing a
felony offense,
which is very much going to reduce the

amount of donations going to support Antifa now. And that means like the the protests and so forth are already very much reduced simply because like US aid got defunded. You know, you've got all these slush funds and and just sort of secret groups that are just channeling just channeling money into organized protests and so forth. And the money is drying up and it's going to dry up even more now that

Trump is starting to declare Antifa a terrorist organization, which it obviously is. I mean, it's like I was I was hoping before Trump um came to office for a second term that he was just going to be no more Mr. Nice Guy

and just go into ruthless mode. And

that's to to a large degree what he's

doing.

But the woke left is celebrating online

over Charlie Kirk's death. Um, I've been

told that literally tens of thousands of

them have already lost their jobs, been

expelled from universities and so forth.

And

I mean,

cancel culture was pretty much started

by the left at least 10 years ago. And

back then, I mean, you could lose your

job, your career could be destroyed

simply by publicly stating that girls

don't have a PP like boys do. I mean,

it's not like I mean, Charlie Kirk, he
was a conservative evangelical Christian
who was with a certain amount of
Christian love in his heart having open
discussions
and he gets assassinated
and apparently at least hundreds of
thousands, probably millions of people
on the left who have just been
programmed and just are caught up in
this mass hysteria thinking that he is a
Nazi and it's good for him to be killed
and they'd be celebrating even more if
if somebody like higher profiled than
Charlie Kirk caught the bullet.
But I mean, you see some of the really
vile videos of like people just jeering

and mocking people like who are mourning for Charlie Kirk and they're just like taunting them saying, you know, just I mean I'm not going to like repeat it, but I mean it makes common it's just common sense that they would be expelled from school for behaving that way. It's like they are actually cheering on a school shooting.

I mean, they're promoting murder and and the left really has become the pro-crime, pro-criminal party. Not that's not their only platform, but that obviously is like an unofficial part of their platform is to promote crime.

So, my opinion of all the woke left is

celebrating online over Charlie Kirk's death.

I mean, you could say cancel culture is a bad thing, but I mean, if you've got an employee who is just gloating and sneering over somebody being murdered, I mean, in a capitalist society, it just makes common sense for an employer to not want someone whose behavior is seen as aborant

by most of the people in the country working for him. It just makes sense. you've got somebody whose conduct is just absolutely despicable in accordance with the values of most Americans, then yeah, the employer would have every right to terminate that person's

employment.

And the the I mean the the tides are are shifting. I mean, it's the pendulum is apparently swinging rightwards at this point.

So like public opinion, the Democratic majority of of Americans are they're starting to see this mass hysteria, promotion of crime, defense of the criminal. Like even before Charlie Kirk, you had that that black person stabbing the that the Ukrainian girl in the neck and killing her. And then you had like Democrat politicians calling for like compassion for for the criminal.

And that's kind of the attitude of the

left. It's like crime is caused by

inequality.

Crime is caused by capitalism.

So criminals are just victims of a

capitalist society.

And it's [__]

So I guess I mean the woke left is

celebrating online. I mean there it's

going to happen less and less I guess.

as along as the like the the attitude

the like the it just keeps shifting and

it's partly shifting through

people that were sort of moderates

just looking at at just the blatant

insanity of some of the the attitudes of

the left and of course the left has this

this policy of opposing anything Trump

does. So if Trump in all I mean he has the at least enough wisdom to promote what he considers to be popular and he's going to be like trusting advisors to to point out to him, you know, most people think this is a good idea. And so he endorses that and then the Democrats just in knee-jerk fashion in f knee-jerk fashion just oppose what most Americans favor and it makes them look worse and worse and worse and they could be in a tail spin and I have no idea what's going to happen to them. At the very least there's going to have to be like a serious change in perspective. I mean they may have to hit rock bottom before

that happens.

But the way it's going now is like

somebody that has the same policies as a

Democrat in the 1990s is is seen as as

like a fascist and a Nazi just because

of just the sheer irrationality

of of the new left of the progressive

left as though progress were decline and

fall. And that's I mentioned this I kind

of touched upon it earlier where when

the left is championing weakness and

dysfunction and demonizing like strength

and efficiency then the strong and

efficient are just going to look I mean

how are you how are you going to succeed

when you demonize strength and success

and you you champion just just being

completely messed up and weak. I mean, how is that going to be a a road to success unless like I mentioned like an early Roman Empire or something where you got 90 95% of the people being weak and oppressed then they might rise up and through sheer numbers overwhelm the strong and the successful. But it's not like that in America now.

And more and more people are just seeing just I mean cheering on murders, cheering on school shootings, calling for compassion for some guy that stabs a woman to death in a train. This kind of thing.

I mean, it's it's just they have just

completely gone off the deep end at this point. And there's a lot of people that are just still going along with it just because they are so indoctrinated and also they're so identified with this for so many years that to suddenly change their mind would be like death.

You know there's some famous saying I think it was by Albert Einstein about how anyone who is I mean they've dedicated their life to championing some idea

that I mean it's it's like death for them to finally admit that the idea was a stupid idea or that it was just wrong. So there's a lot of people that that might be just riding the the Titanic all

the way to the bottom just because they
just cannot face the idea that maybe
they are mistaken
and to the point that they're just
cheering on murders now.
So yeah, it is kind of kind of sobering
that we're living in a society like
this. Just very polarized. one half
hating the other half because
approximately sort of figuratively
speaking
and we are in a kind of civil cold war
although an actual hot cold war I think
would be more likely in the UK or Europe
if they still have enough balls to
actually do something like that. I mean

they might be just so emasculated and feminized that they're just going to be like sheep and just allow their societies to die. I mean that's a possibility too.

But I mean, definitely the left in in America should never hope that there's actually going to be a civil war because apparently the right has started fighting back in earnest. And the the right contains most of the guntoing rednecks that aren't really looking forward to a civil war necessarily, but they're they're going to be gritting their teeth in just in just grim determination if it does start.

So my opinion of all the woke left is

celebrating online. Well, obviously they are just sort of they have dehumanized the other side to such a degree that they they're kind of dehumanizing themselves.

You know, they just can't see objectively anymore with regard to many things. Anything slightly politicized, they just can't see it objectively anymore.

And there's some of that on the right, too. But, I mean, the right didn't just start rioting and burning down cities when Charlie Kirk got shot. George Floyd was a was a whole different kettle of fish.

And I guess I should just stop here. I mean, we've been going for almost two hours. That's good enough. And so, I guess I'm done.

So as I should always say at the beginning and never do except for once if you have any questions you think I can answer especially about dharma not necessarily I mean you know western philosophy sometimes politics if it's interesting that kind of stuff that's fine too but especially like terra Buddhism early Buddhism uh and just sort of ramifying out from that if you think I might be able to answer feel free to ask no more than three questions per person per episode, please. And like and

subscribe if you have not done so

already. And be happy.

Alrighty

then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 164.

I am your host Punya Bassu and if we're

being completely honest here,

I have to admit that 164 is 2 * 2 * 41.

Not prime at all. Although 2 and 41 of

course are prime.

This is my beverage.

And we have kind of

the normal amount of questions

this time, which is kind of

you know, in the low 20s now, which

results in a 2-hour-long Q&A video

instead of a 3-hour-long one, which some

people prefer.

Uh,

so

with that as a kind of

lame introduction, I'm just going to

wade into answering questions here. And

the first question is from Athena's

Sigil.

And Athena's Sigil says, "Why do you

still identify as a Buddhist? And why is

it so important still in your life? I

ask this as you've mentioned that you're

rather heterodox in some of your

opinions, yet you still keep the faith.

By the way, I recommend that I recommend

that to everyone too."

Well,

um I guess I should start with this

um Athena's Sigil saying that I've

mentioned that I'm rather heterodox in

some of my opinions, but heterodox

doesn't necessarily mean non-Buddhist.

It means like non-Theravada.

You know, some of my interpretations

of

philosophy or of dhamma,

um I mean, they're more in agreement

with other schools of Buddhism like

Madhyamaka

or some other Mahayana schools than with

Theravada.

So, just being heterodox, especially for

a Western Buddhist, is really

being a member of the majority of
Western Buddhists if that
for example have no use for Abhidharma.
Most Western Buddhists don't have much
if any use for the third pitaka.
So,
I mean, anyone capable of critical
thought,
just objectively looking at their own
religion, not just with a heart full of
faith where they would want to just
believe everything, but just with a
capacity to look even at your own
spiritual system with a certain amount
of objective critical thought, a little
bit of skepticism,
I mean, it's it's pretty much inevitable

that you're going to deviate from the

hardline orthodox

hardline.

So,

yeah, I do think that certain other

schools of Buddhism uh were more correct

in their interpretation of certain

doctrines of

early Buddhism.

Like pratītyasamutpāda or dependent

co-arising for example.

So,

um

I really can't think of anything right

offhand where I think that Buddhism is

wrong and some other religion is right.

I can't think of it. I mean, there might

be some doctrine

that I could really get on board with

say say that the Christians are right on

that and the Buddhists are wrong, but I

just can't think of any.

So,

yeah, I'm not orthodox Theravada, but

still I am Buddhist.

And so, why do I still identify as a

Buddhist?

I think that

the doctrines of Buddhism are for the

most part correct and even if they're

not strictly speaking ultimate truth,

still they are beneficial and useful if

you follow them. You know, they help you

to purify the mind, cultivate cultivate wisdom, get closer to enlightenment.

So, let's see. Why is it so important still in my life? Well, it's it's pretty much my working worldview.

Um not necessarily strict orthodox Theravada, but generally speaking a Buddhist point of view.

It seems to be the wisest um

I guess I could say more most accurate interpretation of reality. Not just of samsara. I think science may may win the prize on the most accurate interpretation of just phenomenal samsara. Not with regard to its source, its origins, anything like that, but

just with regard to what happens in samsara.

Science seems to be really good at that. With within within limits.

But if you're taking the entire scope of reality or of just human human experience,

including things that science doesn't deal with very well, like how to be happy, I think Buddhism is still the best and to have some kind of worldview is necessary. I mean, there was a discussion on the Discord server last night, I think, or at least I didn't get around to reading it till last night, talking about metaphysics. And I point out that everybody has has got a

metaphysic. Even a dog or a chicken,
they they have the metaphysic of naive
realism or what sometimes is called
common sense realism.
That just you just take everything at
face value. That's still a metaphysic.
So, everyone has to choose some kind of
metaphysic. You get
common sense realism or naive realism
just by default for being a vertebrate.
But, you can't improve on that and I do
think that Buddhism is
the best improvement that I've been
exposed to.
So, let's see here.
I guess I answered the question. So, I'm

just going to move on to the next
question. This is from Boxcar Bob and
his dog Comet.
They must have collaborated on this
question.
And Boxcar Bob and his dog Comet say,
"My first Om memory was at the farm."
And then parentheses he's got TN, which
I assume stands for Tennessee.
"Along with Stephen Gaskin and friends
during a week-long stay in 1976.
I use low E on a guitar as my guiding
tone. My question, is there a particular
universal frequency that monks use or
prefer to Om, and is any tone okay if
you are alone?"
So,

um I'm unaware of any universal frequency or tone that monks prefer. It'd be mostly Hindu monks, I suppose, because the Hindus emphasize Om more than Buddhists do, especially more than Theravada Buddhists. In Mahayana Buddhism, there's more Om than in Theravada, possibly due to more Hindu or proto-Hindu like influence.

So,

my personal opinion is partly just because I'm unaware of there being any preferred tone, is just whatever comes natural.

Just whatever comes natural to you is going to be more natural.

So, it'll just have more of a flow.

It'll be less artificial, less

constrained, I guess.

And before I go on move on to the next

question, I would just like to point out

that I took a shower last night

with the beard beads or the beard braid

still in. And because it got wet, I

slept with that way, it mutated into a

kind of scorpion tail. I don't know if

you can see it. Like

So, my sweetheart wanted me to take a

shower, but I thought the scorpion tail

really was kind of a nice effect, so I

just refrained from taking a shower.

But, I'll take one later. No worries.

And I guess I'm just going to move on to

the next question here after showing off

the scorpion tail

beard braid one more time.

And this is from HV20

Cannon,

which sounds like the name of a copy

machine. I I assume this is an actual

human asking the question, though.

And HV20 Cannon says,

"Knowing the cruelties that man had

inflicted on each other throughout

history and recently, often times for no

good reason, do you sometimes lose sleep

over that?"

And

uh I'm going to turn up the fan because

it's very muggy here in South Carolina
lately because there's like extreme
weather warnings out and there could be
like a big storm hitting anytime.
But, getting back to HV20 Cannon's
question,
first of all,
I've read a lot of history,
and I know that the human race has
always been this way. I've even read
that like in the Stone Age, it appears
that one of the main causes of death was
intertribal violence.
Just based on like skulls, broken
skulls, and just gashed up
bones that they have dug up.
And to some degree, I'm just used to it.

I had a macho father. He had actually
killed people, although he did it
legally
as a soldier in wartime. But still, I
mean, my father was just this macho
alpha dad, and he just taught me, you
know, you got to have a certain amount
of stoicism or like a Spartan mentality,
even if you're non-violent. I mean,
there it helps to have a certain amount
of toughness and just objective
acknowledgement of the way things are.
And as a Buddhist,
I'm living in this world because of my
own karma.
I have landed myself here because this

is what fits my current state of

development or whatever.

But I can say

the closest I've ever come that I can

recall to losing sleep over man's

inhumanity to man,

so to speak, would be when I was living

in a cave in Burma, and I'd be thinking,

you know, Burma is a military

dictatorship, and I had been reported to

the military secret police before

on political charges, just because

someone didn't like me, you know, they

wanted to get get me out of that

monastery.

And so, sometimes I'd be lying there on

my pallet in the cave thinking, at any

time, military secret police could show
up at the door of my cave, and what
would I do?
So, I mean, that would be the closest
I've come to losing sleep
over,
you know, human cruelty towards other
humans.
And the Burmese military secret police
can be pretty damn cruel at times. In
fact, there's a policy. I don't know if
it works this way in America, too, where
you've got like the agents have to get
moved around a lot cuz if they stay in
one place long enough, they might start
making friends and then not wanting to

just like arrest somebody in the middle of the night and hold them into a torture chamber or interrogation or whatever.

So, let's see here.

I guess I answered that question. Let's move on to the next one. This is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, "I read one of your books, Essays in Theravada Buddhism, and like your writing style. I was wondering if you could shed light on your creative process.

Do you jot ideas down as they come to you and randomly throughout the day, then revisit and coalesce them once you have some available leisure time, or do

you take a more disciplined approach and set a specific block of time to sit in front of your computer or notebook and force yourself to write regardless of whether or not you feel particularly inspired?"

Well,

uh

maybe Romeo hasn't noticed that I haven't done any significant writing in a few years.

When I was a monk, I was a member of the leisure class or, as some more sophisticated folks might say, the leisure class.

And so, you know, I I could just like be

writing whenever I felt like it. Then,
after I stopped being a monk and started
working for a living,
um it was like a weekend thing where I
would just kind of force myself to just
regularly, reliably put out a blog post
every week. So, that would be
just me sitting in my room on a weekend,
pretty much just kind of
doing it just cuz it has to be done.
But then,
these Q&A videos have taken the place of
my blog writing on weekends so that I
just don't I haven't I haven't written a
blog post in probably a couple years at
this point at least.
So,

um this is my answer is going to be pretty much in the past tense because I haven't been doing any significant writing lately.

But the way it used to be is I'd get an idea, often while bathing for some reason, about something that would make you know, a good topic. And then I would just kind of let it digest in my mind and I would just write down things I would be sure to mention.

And so I just you know, in a way just make a list of points that I wanted to be sure to mention. I didn't want to forget that. And then after, you know, it had kind of digested

or ripened in my mind and I had like a sufficient number of points to cover, then I would arrange them into kind of like an outline. I used to hate making an outline when I was in school. Like like a kid in school they always tell you make an outline before you write the essay and I used to hate that. But it does make sense and like the unit of any kind of essay or writing that I would do, uh like like

the unit is the paragraph. Each paragraph is like a a discrete idea. And so,

um you know, you want one idea to lead to the next idea to lead to the next idea. You know, you you want a coherent

like chain of association or chain of thought.

And just write in the style that you would speak except without the unnecessary ums and so's and and bad grammar. You know, it'd be more perfect. It'd be like the AI version. You know, it's like one of the reasons you know that some YouTube video is done by AI is just the perfection with which they say everything except for some unusual word those those just pronounce it completely wrong because it's just not in their vocabulary.

So,

write the way you would speak except you

know more polished more more

grammatically correct manner.

And

well, there's one other thing. Oh, yeah,

always imagine like your most

most critical

critic. You know, it's like your most

sort of

adversarial critic. Not necessarily like

an emotional enemy, but someone who's

likely to just pick to death what you

say looking over your shoulder while

you're writing. Just kind of always keep

in mind

that people aren't just going to accept

what you say just because you say it

that you need to really form like a

coherent argument.

I mean, that's not going to necessarily

work so well if you're writing fiction.

Although even in fiction, you still have

to have people remaining in character

and verisimilitude.

You know, people you know, just things

happening the way they would naturally

happen unless you're deliberately

writing about something unnatural.

So, let's see.

I think I pretty much just uh answered

that question here.

So, I would jot down ideas

and then jot down sub ideas under the

ideas and then once I get a large enough

number of them, form them into like

like groups which would represent

paragraphs in like a coherent sequence.

And then write

the way you would speak in just normal

English. Try to avoid using words that

you don't use normally like explicate.

Who the hell says explicate unless

they're writing? Just say explain.

And just always imagine you've got

critics that are reading what you are

writing.

Oop.

Just hit the computer with my beverage.

So, I guess I'll just move on to Romeo's

next question.

He says, "Do you have any general

writing tips for a budding writer?" And

that's kind of funny because

I mean, I've written and published three

books

thus far, and I don't make nearly as

much

um

I don't make nearly enough money from

them. I mean, it's it's just barely

putting any kind of dent in my income.

You know, I still have to work for a

living driving a forklift.

So, I guess general writing tips for a

budding writer, aside from just how to

write relatively well,

I mean, I was getting compliments on my

writing back when I was in school.

It would just be well, business-wise,

just do the opposite of what I've

Like, try to get an agent, try to get

published by some big-name publisher. I

mean, if you can't manage that, go to

Amazon, or if you just don't want to

bother with that, you can just

self-publish on Amazon or some such.

But, uh

yeah, as regards to

being a professional writer, a writer

that really like

is is like

out there for lots and lots of people,

then I assume you go back to the

old-fashioned kind of

maybe having an agent and just trying to

send your manuscripts

to

big-name publishers.

But, I'm just not the right person to

give advice on how to be um a successful

professional writer.

In my own case, I'm just putting stuff

out there as a kind of public service,

you you and

if it's hard to find, most people that

might like it don't ever see it.

It's I just kind of chalk that up to,

you know, cosmic

the cosmic order and and karma and so

forth. I really I really can't put

myself out there. I'm not good at hyping
myself. When I was a monk, I came back
to America like 2011, just trying to
live as a free-range Buddhist monk, not
like
pinned down to a monastery or something,
just kind of floating out there
and
numerous supporters in all good faith
are just saying, "You got to put
yourself out there, you know, you got to
sell yourself." And I just do not
operate that way.
I'm just kind of indifferent to that.
So, yeah, if my general writing tip for
a budding writer would be get advice
with regard to making a living from

someone besides me because otherwise you're going to be writing in your spare time and making your real money driving a forklift.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Master Po. And Master Po says, "Have you ever watched the Yuri Bezmenov interview from 1984?

Former KGB agent that defected." He's got deflected here, but I think pretty sure he means defected. "It's worth a visit if you want to understand what's going on in the USA. Interesting." I have seen clips of the Yuri Bezmenov interview. I think my brother sent them

to me because he was really black-pilled
about politics from early age.
And
yeah, I mean, it's I can
a lot of like the the woke stuff that is
occurring now is like the the towering
oak tree from acorns that were planted
by
Soviet agents back in the 1970s and 80s.
So, it is kind of ironic that the
efforts of the KGB finally came to
fruition after the Soviet Union had
already collapsed.
But, I guess Russia and the United
States are still fairly adversarial.
It's too bad, too, really. I think the
United States and Russia could be

allies, maybe even against a common

enemy

like like China, for example.

Not necessarily enemy in the military

sense, but at least in the economic

sense, certainly in the cultural sense.

The United States and Russia have much

more in common culturally than the

United States and China do, or Russia

and China, for that matter.

But, yeah, he was

Yuri Bezmenov was

um essentially just talking about how

bad ideas were being like

distributed throughout the the culture

in America by the Soviet Union just as a

way of undermining it.

And now it's like the platform of

Democratic Party, or

like second the second most important

aspect of the Democratic Party after

just hating the president's guts.

So, let's see. Yeah, I have watched

That's The only question here is have I

ever watched the Yuri Bezmenov

interview? And I have watched like large

clips of it.

Several minute-long clips.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to

this question.

This is from Cleefy.

And Cleefy says, I got to check see if

we're recording. Yeah, I guess we are.

Cleefy says, could you expand on what

you mean by trust Dharma?

Uh

that's that's kind of a a weird

question. It's

I mean it seems like it's straight to

the point, but it's

kind of ambiguous at the same time.

Expand on what I mean by trust Dharma.

And I'm not exactly sure

where he

where he heard me say trust Dharma.

Unless it's like if you protect Dharma,

Dharma protects you. That kind of thing.

Um I mean in that case

I mean there's there's numerous angles

that you could try to explain that. That

if you have faith or

I mean

it's you know, the Christians put more

emphasis on this than the the Buddhists

do, I think. It's like God will provide.

Consider the lilies of the field, you

know.

Um consider the spare or sparrow.

Something about sparrows.

Or

um

you know,

let's see. What was the other one?

Give no thought for tomorrow what you

will eat or where you will sleep. That

kind of thing. I mean it's it's there in

Buddhism, too, but it received a bit
more emphasis in early Christianity.
And I mean it really does
I mean if you can do it if you can just
like cast yourself upon the the mercy of
the universe they'll actually help you.
It's like all of a sudden I'm reminded
of this story that's at the beginning of
Illusions by Is it Richard Bach?
You know, The Adventures of a Reluctant
Messiah.
And there's this story at the beginning
that apparently was written by this
reluctant Messiah, David Shimoda.
Where there's these little animals
that live in a stream.

And they cling to the water plants.

And

it's like

the it's very important to them that

they cling to these plants because

they're sure that if they let go they're

just going to get washed away and die.

So one of these little animals finally

gets the idea I'm just going to let go

of this plant and see what happens. And

so at first the current just kind of

knocks him against the rocks. This is

what the the animals believed is you let

go you're going to get knocked against

the rocks and then if you don't die

you're just going to get washed away and

never seen again. So he lets go and of

course he gets knocked against the rocks
at the bottom of the stream for a little
bit and then the current lifts him up
and he's just flowing down the stream
and then the the little animals
downstream see one of their own kind
apparently like flying past them and
they think he's some kind of Messiah or
you know supernatural being and he's
saying all I did was just let go of the
plants and and they're like no that's
impossible. You let go of the plants
you're just going to get hit against the
rocks and die or just get washed away
and he's saying no I did it.
So in a way trusting Dharma is like

that. You just let go and it's like the universe protects you.

Um Krishnamurti had the similar idea about

you've got some gardener who has this garden full of flowers

and one of the flowers is unusual. You know there's some kind of mutation. It's it's like this new strain or something. It's not like all the other flowers. So the gardener is going to give special care to that flower because it's unusual and he says people are the same way. If you are like unusual in that sort of way then it's like the forces of the universe the gods or whatever you want to call it is sort of give you special

attention and take care of you more than

everyone else.

So I assume Clefy isn't asking me

in particular like trusting Buddhism.

I mean, that's I kind of addressed that

in like the very first question or the

second one.

Let's see. Let's look up here and see.

Yeah, very first question.

So, trusting Dharma just

is in like

looking at the world through a spiritual

lens or just interpreting your

experience along spiritual lines. In a

way, is trusting Dharma and

it's

I mean, just from your own personal experience, you can see that it is to your advantage to live that way. That if you're just like completely trapped I'm reminded of this guy at work. He's a hell of a nice guy. I'm not trying to badmouth this guy at all, but he is just locked into samsara.

I mean, he's just everything is just real, you know, and he takes it completely seriously. I mean, he can joke, but he takes the joke seriously, too. You know, it's just

this is reality. And

I don't know. I just I just kind of feel sorry for him sometimes

because he's just locked in. Like it's

like hyper samsaric mode. Even though
he's a really nice guy and all.
So, yeah. I mean, if you can separate
yourself, just just detach.
I mean, that in itself is just a
blessing to your life. Then something
like something icky arises. Let's say
hatred arises in your mind. Then I mean,
the person who's just locked in is like,
I hate. Whereas, if you have some
detachment, then you can observe hate is
arising and then you can choose to just
acknowledge it as, you know, hate that
is arising, a mental state is arising,
and then that's it.
Or just knowing the second noble truth.

The most important thing about Buddhism
you could possibly know from a practical
point of view
that whenever you are unhappy, it's
because you desire something. You are
clinging to something.
So, I mean, that's not even really so
much trust as just kind of empiricism.
You could trust empiricism on that one,
I guess.
But, just
sort of having faith in God from like a
Christian point of view where you just
sell all that you have, give the money
to the poor, and just
wander. Like Peace Pilgrim, that little
old lady that just took off walking and

God provided, or whatever Christians call God provided.

And that's important. That's It takes real bravery to do that. I mean, a lot of people, they want to have like a safety net, you know, a safety line, just to make sure.

But, really, from the spiritual point of view,

early Buddhism and early Christianity is just just have faith and God will provide, or Dharma will provide. And if you can really do that, it works. You get exactly what you need.

Exactly what you need might not be particularly pleasant, but still, you

get exactly what you need.

And I expanded a little bit, I guess.

So, I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Skoladin or Skooladeen, who used to ask questions a lot, but he's kind of tapered off. He's not as question-asky as he used to be.

And Skoladin or Skooladeen says, "Would you kindly explain fear of the unknown?"

"I find that people are easily startled when confronted with something they don't they didn't know existing abruptly."

Well, I mean, fear of the unknown technically would be xenophobia. And it's not xenophobia as bandied around in

political circles where it's just hatred of foreigners, that sort of thing. I mean, that would be like one kind of xenophobia. But xenophobia is common throughout higher higher vertebrates. You know, it's just a survival trait. So, it's just built into us, possibly even hardwired into us, that we have a certain distrust of the unusual. And because the unusual can be dangerous. I mean, what you're used to, I mean, you either know that it's not dangerous or if if or if you're used to it and it is dangerous, at least you know that it's dangerous and what ways it can be dangerous. But something

that's completely un un unknown,

then

it just triggers this instinctive animal

alarm in us, the way it triggers

instinctive animal alarm in a chicken

or a deer. It's just built into us.

Just

Darwinian.

People that had xenophobia were more

likely to survive or just our ancestors,

our pre-human ancestors that had a kind

of xenophobia were more likely to

survive. Just Just caution and wariness

around the unusual just makes sense.

But then there are certain kinds of

xenophobia or fear of the unknown that

really, I mean, I can relate to that.

It's like

if I'm sitting here and all of a sudden

this cup just starts levitating and it

it's not like doing anything dangerous.

It's just It's just like floating in

midair, just just like that.

Then, I mean, I would be alarmed and

just that would be like one of the the

first reactions. I mean, possibly the

first one is how the hell is that

happening? Is is Is there something

lifting it up? And then when you see

that nothing's lifting it up, then

there's like this alarm. I remember

reading I think it was a

uh Ambrose Bierce story

about this guy

who he's looking out the window

and he sees this clump of trees and one

of the trees is different from the other

one in a way he can't explain and he

just feels alarmed just from that until

he realizes that it was a small tree

closer up

against bigger trees farther away and

they all looked about the same size. So

they at first he thought it was just

this little clump of trees, but one of

the trees was like the focus was

different or something.

And I mean, just that can cause a

certain amount of alarm

in people.

Just anything that you can't explain,
anything you don't have an answer for,
that that can be dangerous. And so you
have these animal instincts that just
all of a sudden kick in and you are in
this state of at least yellow alert.
And it makes sense. I mean, it does have
survival value.
So
let's see. Skoladin or Skoladine says,
"I find that people are easily started
when confronted with something they
didn't know existing abruptly." Yeah,
it's it's animal instinct and it works
the same in chickens and deers as it
does in humans. Probably

fish

have this also. Just any kind of

vertebrate or chordate

that is conscious enough that it has

like perceptions and awareness like a in

internal visual image of what's what

it's experiencing, that kind of thing.

Then they're going to have xenophobia.

It's just built in.

So I'm just going to move on to

Skoladin's next question.

"Would you kindly explain how people can

have such a lack of presence?" Uh I

think I already kindly did. You know,

it's just built into us as an animal

instinct in the human animal.

And there's of course all kinds of

different shades. I mean, the levitating coffee mug would be like fairly extreme at one end. And then just like not trusting foreigners or being suspicious about foreigners. I mean, that's sort of more subtle, but it's the same phenomenon of the xenophobia.

Chimpanzees are xenophobic just as humans are xenophobic.

Not to mention chickens and fish.

Or fishes.

So,

I think I just move on to the Skoladin or Skoladin's next question.

Which is, would you kindly give your expert opinion on Nowhere Man? And I I

assume what he means by Nowhere Man is

the song by The Beatles. Which is in

their movie Yellow Submarine.

Good movie by the way.

And so, let's see. Nowhere Man. I mean,

it's

it's just kind of like this

optimistic feel-good hippy kind of song

about how sort of alienated NPC type

normies

um you know, they're not living up to

their full potential. They're just kind

of closed off and like self-limiting.

And so, you know, Nowhere Man, please

listen. You don't know what you're

missing. Nowhere Man, the world is at

your command. You know, it's it's it's

kind of a little bit of spirituality

added to it.

You know, it's just

the your potential is just beyond your

comprehension.

You just got to open up to the

possibilities. Be more open. Have less

of Pink Floyd's wall, you don't mind me

bringing up a different rock group.

So, I mean, it's it's fairly

straightforward, I think.

Um I don't think that there's any like

real

any kind of subtle profundity. Although

there is some profundity in just, you

know, not being alienated and closed off

and being open to all the infinite possibilities, that kind of thing.

But I think it was pretty standard for like hippie music in those days to have that kind of a theme anyway.

Let's see. I used to I think Nowhere Man was like the only Beatles song I knew all the words to.

I'm not going to sing it though.

So anyways, oh also I should say maybe this is why I school at no school at the NASA question.

One time I was before I became a monk, I was a monastery attendant. Started already shaving my head wearing like white robes.

I guess it's called Paco in Thailand,

you know, anagarika.

And I was in the kitchen washing dishes

and I'm just just kind of passing the

time, not being particularly mindful.

I was just trying to think of what

Beatles song would represent

each person in the monastery. And for

myself, I gave Nowhere Man.

So I was trying to follow the Beatles

advice and become more open and so

forth.

There was one kind of abrasive Jewish

guy who lived there.

His theme song was Happiness is a Warm

Gun.

And I don't even remember, I think it

was the Abbot had that one

Nothing's going to change my world.

What? Anyways, I'm just going to move on

to the next question.

This is from Austin.

And Austin says, "Sikhs or Sikhs hold

that killing may be justified in the

defense of life and the upholding of

justice. They teach that if such an act

is carried out with a mind free from

lust, anger, attachment, and pride, it

does not give rise to negative karma. If

karma is mental intention, then under

this view, could killing be justified?

Question mark.

Because the act isn't coming from anger

or ego, but from alignment with hukum or

divine order. In that case, it wouldn't carry the usual karmic weight of violent ego-driven action. Well, this kind of reminds me of like the samurai interpretation of Zen Buddhism.
You know, it's like you you if you kill, it's going to be through honor and duty. You know, there's going to be no anger, no hatred at all. You know, like the story I've I've told more than once, you got the samurai master has a disciple. And the samurai master, you know, it's sort of like gunslingers in the Wild West. Everyone Everyone wants to duel a samurai master because if you win the duel,

I mean, you are famous. You're the guy
who defeated the master.
So,
some young samurai challenges the
samurai master to a duel, and he kills
the samurai master. So, then this
disciple, this student of the samurai
master, you know, it's his duty to
avenge the death of his master. So, he
he finds this this young samurai who
killed his master and challenges him to
a duel. And so, they're they're sword
fighting,
and the the disciple of the the deceased
master has his opponent down on the
ground on his back. He's getting ready
to finish him off, and the the defeated

samurai just spits in his face, just in defiance. And so, this pisses off the guy. He's really going to get him now. And then he realizes, "Whoa,
I'm not motivated by honor and duty anymore. Now I'm pissed off, and I want to kill him because of that." So, he does the honorable thing. He just gets up, stands up, sheathes his sword and walks away. Because if he couldn't kill him due to purely as a result of honor and duty,
then it was no go.
But still,
it doesn't really work that way. Like you could I've had people say, "Well,

sociopaths, you know, they don't have
any like
you know, they don't have any
conscience, you know, it's like they can
kill somebody in the same way that they
peel an apple. You know, it's like they
don't have these these negative mental
states. But still, a sociopath, I mean,
just setting aside the ones that just
get this uncontrollable urge to do
horrible things to a prostitute.
That still, I mean, subconsciously,
you are still aware I mean, everyone has
a certain amount of empathy.
That I mean, we're all mental mental
states are contagious. And to some
degree, we're all connected. Like

consciousness is just consciousness.
You know, it's not like I'm generating
completely different consciousness from
the next guy.
It's all the like this sea of
consciousness and we are sort of
manipulating our area of consciousness,
so to speak. You know, it's just a a
cluster of waves on the surface of the
water. There's a different cluster of
waves on the surface of the same water
that is identif- self-identifying as
somebody else. And I'm reifying the
absolute, which is a no-no for
Buddhists, but I'm trying to get the
point across. That really, even if you

are detached

or I mean, especially if you're not

enlightened yet, but you're you're like

a sociopath or you're like this

well-trained warrior who just acts

according to duty and honor, doesn't

take any enjoyment in killing, it's just

your job. You know, it's your dharma

from like the the point of view of the

Bhagavad Gita.

Still,

to the extent that especially if you're

not enlightened, then the at a

subconscious level

that I mean you're harming yourself at

the same timing as as you're harming the

other person.

That I mean you know at a subconscious

level like at a subliminal level

uh that you are inflicting fatal agony

on somebody else and it's going to have

its effects. You're doing it

and and it's going to

every action's going to have this this

result.

So,

I mean a person who is killing like a

samurai sword master

or this uh

alleged sick

that Austin's bringing up

that

they'll probably be creating less bad

karma than someone who just goes

berserk.

But,

still I mean it's not completely

neutral.

It's still it's it's still you're

causing harm and that harm is

I mean it's sort of permeating or

infiltrating into your own subconscious

mind at the very least even if at the

conscious level like well like well the

sociopath, they're oblivious. And that's

one of my theories about sociopaths is

they're just cut off from their

subconscious mind. There's still all

kinds of [__] going on down there.

They're just clueless.

That's one reason why they don't feel compassion. This is a compassion or like empathy is coming from a deeper level of consciousness that they have just shut off for whatever reasons.

So, let's see. What is the actual question?

If karma is mental intention, then under this view could killing be justified?

Not from a Buddhist point of view. Certainly killing cannot be justified from any point of view. Although, I mean, there are there's like the elephant look that's it's like this controversial thing that's found in the poly sutras where you got some evil

person

and the Buddha will give him the

elephant look and according to

it's it's called the elephant look

because he doesn't just turn his head to

look at somebody. He turns his entire

body to look at the person and then the

person just dies. You know, it's like

the ground opens up and they plunge into

hell.

And you know, there's some people say,

"Well, I mean, he's he's doing that. You

know, in a way he's killing that person,

but there's like this subtle thing where

I mean, the person is

it's not like the Buddha's deliberately

killing anybody

kind of a thing.

So, I'm not exactly sure why I brought

up the elephant look, but in in a way it

is kind of sort of like enlightened

killing, but

the orthodox interpretation is no, the

Buddha doesn't kill anybody, but it's

just sort of like this

cosmic coincidence kind of a thing.

Maybe the Buddha's just turning around

to look at them right as they die just

because they've done something so

egregious

that they're just going to plunge into

hell in the next second anyway.

It's it's kind of this weird thing and

and it may be just sort of like a a legendary thing that did not occur historically for all I know.

Or also, there's like the story of Padmasambhava who's dancing on a flat roof and kicks a rock off the roof and it it falls off the roof and and hits somebody in the head down below and kills them. And Padmasambhava is is just karma, you know, he didn't do it on purpose. It was just and he didn't feel any guilt, no remorse, no apologies. It's just it's just the way it goes.

So,

uh you're you're going one step beyond that when you're actually deliberately

killing someone, even if you think you
can do it um with complete detachment. I
think only an arahant could possibly be
completely detached. And even then,
there's a good chance I mean, it's it's
highly unlikely that they'd be going
around killing people
on purpose.
So, I guess the answer to this is if
mental karma is mental intention, then
under this view, could killing be
justified? Well, you can justify
anything. You know, the the
the
sociopathic
serial killer truck drivers that are

killing lot lizards across the country,

they they justify it.

You know, Jack the Ripper was probably

justifying what he was doing.

People that were like

Nazi Germany, soldiers that were like

lining up people and machine gunning

them after forcing them to dig their own

trench mass grave,

they justified it. I mean, everyone

justifies what they do. That doesn't

mean that it's right. Just because you

can justify something.

I'm not trying to pick on psychopathic

truck drivers or or Nazi soldiers,

either.

Just trying to give some examples that

people can kind of relate to or

understand.

So,

the next question is kind of a follow-up

on this one, even though it's by

somebody else. So, I think I'll just

move on to that one. This is from

Chrzaszcz is. And Chrzaszcz is says,

"What would happen in terms of karma if

we appointed an arahant to be the

executor

or executioner of death penalty for

convicted murderers?" Well,

let's say the government

has some way of deciding who is is

and who isn't. And then they're just

going to contact

these enlightened people and say, "Would

any of you be willing to be the official

executioner

for people who are been sentenced to

death? You know, you got to give the

lethal injection or flip the switch on

the electric chair or whatever."

I seriously doubt that any arahants

would be willing to kill somebody.

I'm I'm not on purpose. I mean, they

could be Padmasambhava dancing on a roof

and kicking a rock loose.

Or the the Buddha giving the elephant

look.

But still,

I've never heard of any case

of a fully enlightened being just deliberately killing people, even if they're like vicious murderers. Like vicious murderer serial killer Angulimala.

Did the Buddha kill him? No. He converted him to Buddhism and then Angulimala became a devout practicing Buddhist and eventually became enlightened.

So, of course, the best way to destroy an enemy is to turn him into a friend,

if possible.

Or just avoid the enemy if he's just couldn't make a friend.

And I just noticed I got

one mandible sticking out further than

the other ones.

Oh, well.

You guys that that just listen to the

podcast and don't watch the video

aspects do have certain advantages. You

don't see me all disheveled in my

bathroom.

Custom made in Lithuania out of 100%

natural linen.

It's really a nice robe. So, I guess

those of you who do see the video at

least have certain advantages over the

people that listen to the podcast cuz

you can see the robe.

You also see the kind of asymmetrical

facial hair and so forth, but
uh there's there's give and take on
this.
So, Traleg asks us this question, "What
would happen in in of karma if we
appointed an arahant to be the executor
of death penalty for committing murder,
they probably would decline. They'd say,
"Nah, I don't want to do that."
I'm pretty sure that would be what would
happen.
Although arahants, there it's it's
problematical. I mean, you can't really
prove that anybody is an arahant.
There's that Dignaga school. It was like
a medieval school of Buddhist logicians

in in northern India

who had as their classic case of a

problematic premise

that

any being is is fully enlightened cuz

there's no way you can prove it one way

or the other.

I mean, maybe you could give some fairly

good evidence that someone isn't an

arahant or isn't fully enlightened

because you just saw them screaming in

rage at somebody or like tripping an old

lady and then giggling about it. That

kind of thing.

But to prove that somebody is an

arahant,

I don't know. It's it's sort of like

proving that Bigfoot doesn't exist.

You know, it's like you cannot prove an absence very easily. You know, you can't prove that Bigfoot doesn't exist and you can't prove that an that this person has zero defilements.

So,

yeah, but I think if they could if the government could find an arahant and did try to recruit them to be an executioner,

that the arahant would just say, "No, thank you. I'm not interested.

And you shouldn't be killing people anyway."

That would be my guess.

So, I'm just going to move on to Chrizaskazis' second question, which is as follows. Do you think it is more difficult to drop from monkhood after 20 or 30 years now than it was in the 20th century and in any century before? I mean, now people are born with smartphone in one hand and laptop in second and world didn't seem to change all that fast.

Um

I don't know. I mean, it might be someone's interest to do a statistical survey, to do a statistical analysis of this phenomenon, but I really don't think that there's all that much difference. Maybe if

Yeah, I really don't think it's all that
much difference cuz I mean, a monk's
main reason for dropping out of the
is not necessarily
like the internet.
Um but now that I right when I was in
the middle of that sentence, I do
realize that in Burma when internet
first came out, there was like this mass
disrobing. You know, there was like this
pandemic of young monks especially
disrobing because they were getting
access to pornography and also like
communicating privately with women
for the first time in their lives.
So, it just caused a lot of monks that

really did not have a true vocation to

to just drop out.

So, there is that.

Um but that would make it easier for

monks to drop out of the monkhood, not

not more difficult.

Um

but still like human nature remains

human nature.

And like a monk who's just living alone

in a a hut or a cave or something, you

know, it's going to be the same now as

it was 1,500 years ago

with regard to the likelihood of staying

in robes and so forth.

So, I think if anything, it would be

easier to disrobe now just because of

this

seventh sense organ we have we have

acquired relatively recently as humans,

which is internet.

You know, it's like your computer or

smartphone is like the sense organ

itself.

And the internet information coming

through is just sort of the the

the the sensory input coming through

um that sense organ.

You know, in a in a way it's like a step

towards omniscience that most people

just don't have the wisdom to really

navigate very wisely. And so some people

can just be destroyed by it.

But I don't think it's more difficult to drop from the monkhood now than it was in the 20th century. If anything, it's easier just because there's more distractions, especially if you're like surfing the web all the time.

So, I'm just going to move on to Chursaskis as his third question.

Please tell us about hot chocolate in the evening at Wat Pah Nanachat. If it is without milk, is it in accordance with with vinaya rules?

Well, this is from There's a member of of the Discord server who is intending to be ordained at Wat Pah Nanachat in Thailand, which is the main international or or it's like a

a monastery particularly for foreign monks. Nanachat is the Thai sort of corruption of Nanajata,
which means like different birth or different ethnicity. You know, so it's it's the forest monastery for foreigners essentially. It's like the name of the place.
Um so it's like the main monastery in the Ajahn Chah tradition in Thailand that has lots of Western monks ordained there.
And um I told him be careful about the hot chocolate in the afternoon or in the evening
um because I've been told I've never

been to Wat Pah Nanachat. I've met several monks, lots of monks that have spent time there. And there was one Indonesian monk who was telling me about, man, they they really like the hot chocolate there and the dark chocolate, too. I mean, they they eat dark chocolate in the afternoon going with this idea
that chocolate is just a congealed liquid. So, it's like drinking hardened juice.
And I really
I mean, it just seems kind of like casuistry. Is that Is that a Is that a word, casuistry? Just sort of justifying whatever you're doing. Like eating

cheese in the afternoon, they probably
got cheese there, too. On this cart,
it's probably cheese and chocolate, hot
cocoa. And
I mean,
in Burma,
like cheese, especially, it's just not
controversial. I mean, the word for
cheese in Burma literally translates as
hard curd or hardened curd. And which is
what it is. Cheese is like purified
curd. You take curd and you squeeze the
excess whey out of it.
And maybe add a little bit of like
bacterial or fungus fungal culture.
And it's got more curd in it than what

is called curd. It's a kind of purified curd. It's more curd than curd is, but Thai Forest tradition has declared that it's okay to eat cheese in the afternoon. And Ajahn Thanissaro, actually, in his first Vinaya book, went to the extreme, it seems to me, of implying that maybe, just maybe, cheese is actually a kind of butter. And butter is allowable in the afternoon.

And And I think that the chocolate is similar. I mean, I wouldn't eat it if I was a monk. I I never ate dark chocolate afternoon when I was a monk. I never ate cheese afternoon as a monk, either. I mean, in Burma, it's just not controversial. You just don't do it. Any

monk that would eat cheese in the afternoon would also eat rice and curry in the afternoon. And there's plenty of those.

And in the hot cocoa, they justify that um because they instead of putting milk in the hot cocoa, they use like a non-dairy creamer. But the non-dairy creamer is made from milk.

You know, it's like one of the main ingredients in this non-dairy creamer stuff is casein, which is milk protein.

So,

yeah, if if I was there, I probably would just avoid the goodies cart in the afternoon. And this this Indonesian monk

was actually saying they pass it around three times. So, if you don't get your fill the first two times, you can you can you can still get more on the third time around.

So, it's it's fairly luxurious there, I think. It didn't used to be. You know, like in the 1970s,

back when like Ajahn Sumedho was there, then it was still rough. You know, it was still fairly ascetic. Not so much now because it's famous and lots of lay people want to support the the Western monks. And so, if you're not careful, you can get spoiled rotten fairly easily.

So, let's see here. Yeah, milk chocolate

is out cuz it's got milk in it, but

having milk protein in the cocoa is

fine.

And of course, milk protein is like one

of the main ingredients in the cheese,

too. So,

I guess milk protein is considered not

to be um

on the list of foods.

Uh

So, let's see here.

I guess I answered that question. Let's

move on to the next question. This is

from Zenathoid.

And Zenathoid is uh curious about David

Hume, I guess, cuz he's got two

questions about David Hume. First one is, "What do you think of Schopenhauer's critique of Hume on causation? I like his idea that when I kick a rock, the missing link between my foot and the rock is will, and that this extends to events between physical objects as well. Okay, well, David Hume actually addresses this that Schopenhauer didn't accept Hume's like covering of this issue, but it's like David Hume was saying that you we can't really know cause and effect. All we know is that A follows B or B follows A consistently, so we just get the idea that A causes B. And so, I mean, he says that even with regard to our own mental states. I mean,

you experience the volition or the will
to pick up the coffee mug, and then you
pick up the coffee mug. But still, you
don't actually
experience any causative force
necessarily.
You just have the will to do it, which
is followed by you doing it.
And David Hume wasn't saying that there
is no cause and effect. He's just saying
that we have no direct knowledge of
cause and effect, that it is a kind of
inference.
So, yeah, Schopenhauer's idea that when
you kick a rock, the missing link
between the foot and the rock is will,

Hume already addressed that and just
said, "I mean, really, you do not
experience causative
force."
You you you feel the will to do
something and then you do it, but still
it's it's another AB it's another B
following A scenario.
That's what Hume says. But I do remember
from Schopenhauer's The World as Will
and Representation, his main
counterexample to Hume's argument that
we just see B following A until we we
just assume that A causes B.
Schopenhauer's
uh like counterexample is night and day.
That he says we see night following day,

you know, every day, but we don't say

that day causes night.

So, that's a fairly good

def- uh

at least it's a sufficient counter

example that we don't attribute just

regular succession

like repeated succession of A and B as

being necessarily A causing B.

Because

night follows day and we don't think

that day causes night. At least most

people don't.

So, let's see.

So, I do think that Schopenhauer did

bring up a valid counter example to

Hume, but it could still be that Hume is correct.

That, you know,

we we don't necessarily in every case say that A causes B if A comes before B on a regular you know, just regularly in our experience.

But, still that is, according to Hume, why we believe in cause and effect.

Because we don't just subjectively experience causative force.

So, let's see here.

Uh I think I answered that question. So, I'm going to move on to Zenethoid's next David Hume question, which is please I guess it's not a question. There's no question mark. Please give your opinion

on Alex O'Connor's critique of Hume's understanding of imagination. And then he he left a a video link with time stamp 1 hour 10 minutes and 10 seconds. So, Alex O'Connor in this video is talking about David Hume talking about imagination. How, according to David Hume, we can't imagine anything that we've never experienced. That, I mean, we can reconstruct things. Like, for example, you have dreams all the time, or at least I do, of people you've never met in real life. You know, it's like your your subconscious imagination, your dreaming imagination, is just sort of

taking various components of At least
according to Hume, taking various
components of, you know, different
people, noses, eyes, skin colors, and so
forth, and just creating a new person.
But, according to David Hume, that
really you like a blind person
who has been blind from birth, who has
no way of like objectively experiencing
colors, I guess subjectively
experiencing colors, they wouldn't be
able to imagine colors.
That
person who's deaf from birth can't
imagine sounds, according to David Hume,
because you have to experience that in
order to imagine something even like

even similar to that, which is composed
of like components of things you've
already experienced. I think he calls
that fancy, where you're just like
reassembling
different things that you've already
experienced to create something
seemingly new,
um but the components of it aren't new.
You've all had You've had to experience
all of it before somehow.
So, then Alex O'Connor in the video is
talking about how David Hume himself
came came up with a counterexample.
And the counterexample is you've got
the missing shade of blue. He just blue

is a convenient color here. But, let's
say there's a person who's seen every
shade of blue except maybe this one
little wavelength they've never
experienced, but still they could
imagine kind of an unbroken spectrum of
different shades of blue, so that they
could kind of fill in the gap by sort of
compromising between the slightly
lighter shade of blue and the slightly
darker shade of blue, so that they could
imagine this shade of blue that they had
never actually seen before.
Which would be kind of rare nowadays
because we see all these spectrums of,
you know, blue kind of I mean
you see the spectrum, so you see the

full spectrum of blue.

But somehow, like hypothetically, if

someone has not seen a certain color,

they but they have seen like slightly

lighter shade and slightly darker shade

of that same general color, they could

sort of imagine that color that they've

never seen before. That was David Hume's

counter-example. And Alex O'Connor just

kind of

in a way was

using that as a way of just being

skeptical of Hume's entire idea that you

can't really imagine something that

you've never experienced before except

like Hume's counter-example, which is

very just a slight deviation because you have experienced almost exactly the same kind of blue.

But someone who is blind from birth would not be able to do that same thing. Because they haven't experienced any blue.

So, I think Hume may be correct from my own experience.

I mean, I have indulged in what Hume calls fancy, which is just taking things you have experienced and just making something like new at like a higher level even though it its basic building blocks are all things you've experienced before like different colors, different sounds, you know, different facial

features, that kind of thing.

So, yeah, I mean,

Alex O'Connor was saying, "Well, Hume

just contradicted himself blatantly."

But, in a way, he kind of didn't cuz

he's the one that brought up the

counter-example to his own theory. But,

it was just really kind of a very

nitpicky kind of counter-example that I

think Hume may be correct. I really It

doesn't That particular aspect of Hume's

philosophy doesn't really cause me to

have a lower opinion of Hume, although

certain other things like

his

let's see.

His

his imagination

um his interpretation of like let's see,

how do we do this?

Of like an impression.

Like

like sensory data.

You know,

you know, he's he's talking about how is

sensory data, like you actually seeing

something different from just imagining

something and he says that it's more

vivid. But then he uses that exact same

argument with regard to belief and

non-belief.

That if you believe something, then it's

more vivid than if you it's just like

some random thought that doesn't really isn't really attached to anything. And that I think would be is kind of a defect cuz he's using the exact same definition for two entirely different processes. At least according to him they're they're different processes. You know, you've got like the the sensory impression and then you've got belief that have the same definition. They're both livelier, I think is was his word or more vivid than if it's just some casual thing. But I remember coming up with the my own idea that any perception is belief. That it's just more seems more vivid if you actually believe that

something is real because it's like
you're integrating it with all the other
things that you think are real. So that
that kind of reinforces it, whereas just
this stray this you know, this image of
a unicorn
is going to be very different from you
looking directly at a horse
or believing that horses exist.
And then there's another thing about
David Hume I don't like so much is he
was a product of the seven or the the
18th century Scottish Enlightenment. And
he was pretty
like he was definitely anti-Christian.
But he couldn't just come out and
declare himself a non-Christian because

that would just be social suicide. He
was a member of the gentry. He was I
think his elder brother was a lord and
you know, he was hobnobbing with you
know, the the rich and famous.
And and he was effectively ambassador to
France at one time. He was sort of like
assistant ambassador to France, but when
the ambassador was gone uh he had
I mean, he had like
moved on to something else and the new
ambassador hadn't been installed yet.
Hume was de facto the ambassador to
France. And so he was
I mean, he he was like of the upper
classes and for him to come out as a

non-Christian at the time he was he had already lost some really good career opportunities just for being declared an atheist.

Because that's the way that's the way it rolled back then.

But he was anti-Christian. He just thought Christianity was just foolish superstition that philosophy like empirical philosophy like science should take the place of Christianity and we'd be living in a better world. Although that's kind of questionable. You know, there's definitely pluses and minuses to atheistic scientism taking the place of Christianity.

So anyways, because Scotland and England

were no longer Catholic, he could bash away at Catholics, which is generally what he did.

And so his bashing of Christianity would take the form of bashing Catholicism mainly.

Whereas really, I mean, it was pretty obvious that like his arguments in in in his books were mainly arguments against Christianity.

Like for example, he tries to argue against any argument used by Christians to support the existence of God, like miracles. I mean, just miracles is something Jehovah Witnesses will still do it today. It's just

they're looking at just look at the miracles. You know, it's that that's one of their ways of justifying that Jesus was the Messiah and so forth. Look at the miracles. And so, David Hume has this entire chapter
and I think it's an inquiry into human understanding where he's saying essentially, and it makes sense, that you should believe in a miracle only if the falseness of the story would be more miraculous than the miracle itself.
But, I mean, the reason why he throws that in was just making another like underhanded jab at Christianity.
And he he makes lots and lots of them in his inquiry into human understanding. In

a way, it was like an anti-Christian
text disguised as some relatively deep
philosophy.
I mean, it was both, essentially.
But, his uh
imagination, his understanding of
imagination, yeah, according to Alex
O'Connor, I I think that was kind of
like a a nitpicky kind of
uh argument against Hume.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question.
This is from Rakasa. And Rakasa says,
"Your usual advice when asked about
dealing with unskillful emotions or
thoughts is note it and let it go.

Classic mindfulness. What is your general opinion of Orthodox Theravadas liking for counter meditations, meta to counter hate, asubha to counter lust, etc.?"

Well, my experience is that they generally don't work very well. Like, I knew this young American mom who was trying to combat lust by imagining rotting female corpses, like swarming with maggots and this kind of thing. And my experience with this sort of thing both in myself and in others is that it it doesn't work very well. You know, in a way it's you're just struggling against it which which reinforces what you're struggling

against.

So, yeah, definitely just mindfulness.

Like anger arises, you note the anger

and let it go which sort of denatures

the anger and it stops it from having a

like as much reinforcing power

to to the karma. You know, it's it's not

adding to the anger karma. If you just

note it and let it go, then it just

dissipates. And to that extent the the

like the momentum of this angry mind is

dissipated to that degree.

But like meta meditation,

I mean,

I've never really liked meta meditation.

I'm not a particularly meta-oriented

human. I'm more head-oriented than

heart-oriented.

And I just I mean, I experience meta,

but it has to be spontaneous.

I can't just turn it off and on like a

faucet.

You know, it's like when you're beaming

meta in this direction and beaming meta

in that direction and beaming meta in

that direction, beaming meta at the

higher beings, beaming meta at the lower

beings, beaming meta at fellow humans,

just on and on and on. You know, it's

it's like this cookbook method

of

just generating loving kindness or

friendliness or benevolence or love,

whatever you want to call it. And it for me it just doesn't work. Or like like um the main argument or the main meditation uh for combating lust is the 32 parts of the body. But I'm a biologist or at least I was trained as a biologist, have a degree in biology, and to me the human body is just like a miracle in engineering.

I've I've seen autopsies, and I mean I wasn't really grossed out by it. It was fascinating.

So,

yeah, just my experience is that the counter meditations, where you're like

meditating on the opposite of the
problem, in a way it's sort of s-
I mean, for some people it may work. I
mean, it's it's been in the tradition
for over 2,000 years.
So, it must work for some people. It
just never worked that well for me, and
seeing other people do these things, it
I mean, I was not impressed by the
results.
Someone who's just got a lot of love in
their heart might be drawn to to metta
meditation just because it's so easy for
them, that kind of thing.
But,
like an angry, hateful person who does
metta meditation, they're essentially

dissociating.

I knew this one woman in Burma

who, I mean, she had to be feuding with

someone all the time. It was like

it was she'd just be bored climbing the

walls if you didn't have somebody to be

fighting with.

And one time she was bragging to me

about how she does metta meditation

every morning, and I pointed out, "Well,

I mean, if you're sending metta to all

beings, you're also sending metta to

this guy you've been feuding with for

the past few weeks." And she just flares

up and says, "No, not him."

And it's it's just they're it's like

make-believe. They're pretending to send metta to all beings. It's And then you have like this warm, glowy feeling that makes you think that it's working, but it's just a warm, glowy feeling, and you're not really sending metta to all beings.

So, definitely classic mindfulness is more effective, in my opinion, than trying to counteract some defilement by meditating on the opposite.

Or using any of counterforce sort of meditation.

I mean, it may work for some people.

It's just that it seems fairly obvious to me that classic mindfulness works better.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question.

This is from Damma River.

And Damma River says, "Of all the teachings of the Buddha, including all suttas, what percentage would you say was legitimately taught by the Buddha? And what percentage was added later by other sources, such as deceptive political rulers seeking to manipulate people into submission or just monks seeking personal gain or even innocently not being able to remember the teachings correctly, et cetera?" Well, I mean, I've I've discussed this in some to some depth previously. I

wrote an entire essay on it way back
before I even started No, wait. No, this
is after I started doing a blog, but it
was
um it was too long to put on the blog, I
guess. You know, "What did the Buddha
really teach?"
That was the the name of the essay that
I wrote.
And I point out that I mean, first of
all, let let just let me address this
this part before I get into the the main
answer.
See, what percentage was added later
by other sources, such as deceptive
political rulers seeking to manipulate
people into submission? That's like

atheists, one of their main arguments
against religion in general, is that
it's devised by deceptive political
rulers seeking to manipulate people into
submission. I've had people say that
about Buddhism, too, just by pointing
out, "Look at the Buddha, he was of the
political class. There you go. He was
trying to control people, trying to keep
people in submission."
But
I just don't see much of that in in
Buddhism. Maybe in like
later forms of Buddhism, you know, like
[__] medieval Japanese Buddhism, there
may have been some like political

pressure to change doctrines and so
forth. I don't think that Ashoka
for example, the Emperor Ashoka was
seeking to manipulate people into
submission by forcing monks to change
their doctrines, that kind of thing.
I mean, is there's a lot more of that in
early Christianity, I'm pretty sure. Or
maybe I'm just being naive and just have
not been exposed to any evidence for it.
Then none that convinced me anyway. Like
the Buddha being a Kshatriya.
Anyways,
um getting back to the main argument
though, like
what percentage of the like the Tipitaka
Let's just set aside all the Mahayana

the entire huge library of the Mahayana
Tripitaka. Just Let's focus on the
approximately 40 volumes
of the Pali Tipitaka.
In in the Burmese edition, it's 40
volumes cuz they include some extra
extra texts like the Milinda Panha that
that some
some Theravada Buddhist countries don't
accept as canonical.
The Patisambhidamagga Well, I think the
Patisambhidamagga is considered, but the
there's like the
the Nettipakarana is also considered to
be canonical in Burma, but it's not
considered canonical like in Sri Lanka.

Uh anyways, what percentage of that would be genuine teachings of the Buddha? Well, like I've said before, there's there's like a spectrum of authenticity. First would be like exact quotes, verbatim quotes of what the Buddha taught.

Then you've got like paraphrase. You know, it's not exactly what he said, but it's essentially means the same as what he said.

Then you take another step and it's stuff that the Buddha himself didn't teach, but he would have endorsed it. You know, it would have been in a in accordance with what he had been teaching. You know, it would be in

agreement with what he had been teaching. And then you take another step and it would be stuff that really the Buddha didn't teach and wouldn't endorse, but I mean he'd just be kind of indifferent, you know, it's like he wouldn't denounce it as being the opposite of what he taught. And then you like the other end of the spectrum is just completely made up [__] that the Buddha would denounce. Just I never said that, I would not promote that. That is wrong view.

So, I mean where do you draw the line? I mean, obviously the last two groups that I mentioned would not be considered

reliable teachings of the Buddha.

But I mean, if you insist on verbatim

quotes, probably be like less than 2%.

Um I mean just you look at the texts

and I mean the third Pitaka, that the

Abhidhamma Pitaka, is pretty not

non-controversial among Western

Buddhists anyway, that the Buddha

probably didn't really teach it.

Then you've got like ancient

commentaries

that are included in the texts that

are unlikely to be taught by the Buddha.

Like

for example, the uh

the Niddesa

is is commentary. It's an old commentary

added to the text. Or also what is
called the Vibhanga, the Sutta Vibhanga
which is a ancient commentary on the
Patimokkha rules that
I mean probably that got added later.
Even though it's so old that it's
included in the Tipitaka is canonical.
And I I kind of lost where I was getting
to with that.
Oh yeah. So, and then like all these
fairy tale stories that that objective
Westerners can't really, you know,
talking animals and fire-breathing cobra
dragons and all that. A lot of
Westerners like me are are skeptical
skeptical of that. So,

um if you get down to like the core texts that were common to all the different schools of Buddhism, not just Theravada, but the other early schools of Buddhism. And then you kind of weed out some of the that talking animal stories and all that, the monsters and dragons and so forth. So, you're down to less than half already.

But

I mean, you can also weed out the ones that

that really weren't even attributed to the Buddha. You know, you got some nun giving a discourse or you got Ananda giving a discourse, that kind of thing, then that's

you know, it doesn't immediately

um you know, cause like a red flag like

shouldn't believe that, but still it is

at least a yellow flag.

So,

let's just uh draw the line at

paraphrase.

Okay? So, it's either

like verbatim quotes of Gautama Buddha

or at least it's paraphrase of what he

taught, then I mean, even if it's in

agreement with with what the Buddha

taught, but he never taught it,

you know, it's it's sort of like

elaborations on what he taught, then I

mean, where do you where do you draw the

line exactly?

But, I have read

that the official position of the

Vatican since like the 1970s

is that

the the words attributed to Jesus in the

New Testament are probably at least 80%

bogus. That the that Jesus probably did

not say

80% of the words attributed to him in

the New Testament. And I assume most of

the bogus stuff is in the Gospel

According to John.

Because biblical scholars, a lot of them

anyway, are of the opinion that John or

whoever wrote the Gospel According to

John was

just putting his own words into the
mouth of Jesus to sort of
debunk or refute certain Gnostic sects
or heretical Christian sects that were
arising in the early 2nd century.
And
the the authors of the New Testament
they they had much more of a sense of
objective history and accurate record
keeping than the Indians of
the Ganges Valley 2,500 years ago.
So, personally I think in the in the
essay I came up with a figure of about
10%. That would be we'd be doing well if
10% of the Tipitaka the entire Tipitaka
Poly Tipitaka were

if not verbatim quotes of the Buddha at least paraphrasing what he said.

And then 90% would I mean at the at one extreme would be stuff that the Buddha would would have just positively denounced. There's way more of that in Mahayana than in Theravada like Poly texts. And then a lot of it is just sort of elaborations or making lists this kind of stuff that I don't think the Buddha would have bothered with.

And then there's just legends all these miracles all the like devotionalism like so one of the first things that caused me to have doubts about the authenticity of the the Poly texts. I was very naive

when I first became a Theravada
Buddhist. I thought that Theravada
Buddhists were so conservative they were
afraid to change anything and so it's
relatively pristine.
And then I start reading the texts and
there's certain texts that I just it's
hard for me to swallow like the Buddha
just sitting there bragging in grandiose
terms about how wonderful he is and how
people should worship him.
I mean it's much easier for me to
believe that that stuff got added later
by devotionalistic Buddhists than that
the Buddha himself
would be sitting there bragging about

how great he is and how people ought to worship him.

And then the talking animal stories and all that or like

some of the debates that the Buddha has where you've got this master debater on the he he's like a follower of the Jains. I don't remember the name of the sutra. But there's this follower of the Jains who had a reputation for being a master debater and he's bragging about how he's just going to mop the floor with the Buddha in debate and then he goes to the Buddha and just caves immediately.

I mean, he doesn't even put up any kind of fight at all. The first thing the

Buddha says and this master debater just agrees with him and converts to Buddhism. That kind of stuff you there's lots of it in the texts and I mean, it was that kind of stuff originally that really started me
getting like the seeds of doubt or skepticism with regard to the authenticity and reliability of the entire Tipitaka.
That was even before I got into Abhidhamma.
So, let's say 10% and
I mean, there's different schools with regard to this. I mean, you've got the 100% school which is mostly Asians. They

think it's all 100% teachings of Buddha
or 100% in agreement with the teachings
of Buddha. That's mostly Asians. Then
you have like the 98%
and I've met a few of those even Western
monks who think that the Buddha taught
98% of what's in the text or at least
98% of what's in the core texts.
And that 2% is very flexible. It's like
bouncing around all over the place.
Talking animal story, okay, that's part
of the 2% and the Buddha bragging and
grandiose stories, well, maybe he really
did that. Okay. And then it's just flat
earth, you know, Mount Meru, all this
kind of stuff. That 2% gets used a lot.
And then you've got sort of the 50%

group, which is the people that reject
the core texts.
So, yeah, that would be a different
group than the 98%
You just you you get rid of the court uh
you get rid of the extra stuff that is
only found in Theravada.
And you just get to the core texts that
were presumably, according to them, was
what was recited at the first council.
And it was common to all of the early
schools of Buddhism. So, that's 50%
already. And
most of like the really fundamentalist
Western Buddhist monks belong to the 50%
group.

But even with regard to the core text,

there's talking animal stories in the

Buddha bragging about how wonderful he

is, etc., etc. So, yeah, I'm I'm down to

10% approximately.

So,

take that for for what what it's worth.

Let's see here.

But there is um

he does mention down here, let's see,

monks seeking personal gain. There's a

little bit of that, like you read the

the Petavatthu, for example. It's

considered to be one of the the latest

texts added. You know, it's definitely

not a core text. It's the ghost stories.

And you see that

it's mainly people being punished for
not making offerings to monks. That they
they get reborn as a ghost instead of a
deva, this kind of stuff. You know,
there's lots and lots of pounding away
at you make offerings to monks and
you're going to have a good rebirth. And
you don't make offerings to monks, you
can get a bad rebirth. That Yeah, that's
probably like why is it your monks
that that are, you know, just trying to
get more offerings
like coming up with this kind of stuff.
And then like
he's got another case here of people
innocently not being able to remember

the teachings correctly, etc. And that reminds me of
uh the rules of monastic discipline that all monks are supposed to stay in one place during three months of the monsoon season.
And there's in in the rules of monastic discipline, there are cases where you can break that rule, where you're allowed to travel during the rains retreat. Like, you know, your mother or father is sick, for example. You know, they're on their deathbed or something, then you can break you can break the the rains retreat in order to go visit your your aging, you know, ailing parents.
Uh and another one is there's a person

who has heard teach who knows teachings

of the Buddha that haven't been

incorporated into the

like into the sutras yet.

So, it's an old it's an old rule.

So, but still, I mean,

is a lot of stuff gets added that way,

where like, let's say you've got some

teacher who gives a Dhamma talk, and

it's a really it really strikes a chord

with people. It might not be really wise

or anything, but for whatever reason,

people like it, and it starts getting

spread around, you know, maybe

memorized

or whatever.

And then finally, there's some monks come across that, and it seems so good to them that they they just assume or maybe it's it's already been assumed that the Buddha taught it.

You know, it's just people assume that that's so wise, the Buddha had to have taught it, and then it gets it finds its way into the sutras that way. I mean, I am sure that some of the stuff in the sutras was not really taught by the Buddha, but was added to the sutras in goodwill, just assuming the Buddha must have taught it.

But, my short answer, which is too late for that now,

is

of all the teachings of the Buddha,

including all sutras, what percentage

would I say is legitimately taught by

the Buddha? I'd say about 10%.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

And this is from Rui.

And Rui says,

"Did your oneric life change much after

disrobing?" And oneric is with refers to

dreams. So, did my dreams change much

after disrobing?

But I'm not an oneronaut.

So.

I don't I just wanted to say oneronaut

cuz I've seen that word before.

I think it refers mainly to piece of people that are lucid dreamers that cultivate lucid dreaming, which I've never done.

So, did my dream life change much after disrobing? Um

I think because I sleep more, uh mostly I could remember my dreams and I'd have vivid dreams when I was relatively sleep deprived. Like I wrote a a journal, kept a journal, um when I was living under the big rock ledge at the northern boundary of Alondra Caba National Park, and I was having really long detailed dreams. And I still have long detailed dreams, um

but not to that extent

as when I was doing intensive meditation

and only sleeping maybe 4 and 1/2 hours

per night.

So, I mean, it's just your mind is just

kind of more dreamy anyway because we

have like this physiological need to

dream, apparently.

And so, it was closer to consciousness

than than than now when I sleep more.

And I mean, I mean, I'm I'm a monk in my

dreams way less. I mean, it was I was a

monk for at least 10 years before I was

a monk in my dreams at least half the

time. And then sometimes it'd be sort of

a borderline case where I'd be like a

lay person hanging out with my buddies
from high school or something. They'd
say, "Oh, let's let's go and
go to McDonald's or something." I'd say,
"Wait, I got to I got to wrap up first,
you know, you got to cover both
shoulders before you go out in public."
That kind of thing.
So, there is that. I mean, my dreams are
seem to be less vivid now. Oh, they're
obviously less monk oriented now. I
dream about like tropical fish, dream
about our dogs.
I mean, that kind of stuff I wouldn't be
dreaming about when I was a monk.
I had weird symbolic dreams. A lot of
airport dreams, a lot of huge building

dreams.

Sometimes, you know, you got the bad guy chasing you through like an airport or something, and no no matter, you know, what you do, he just keeps following you, that kind of thing.

Still occasionally have like school anxiety dreams where, I mean, you show up and it's you got to do the final exam and you didn't know that there was a final exam coming, you didn't study at all, or uh it's like the term paper is due, and you know, you've got you suddenly realize it's due in like 2 hours and you haven't started on it yet, or it's like

the first day of school and you have no idea where your where your class is, that kind of thing. I still have dreams like that for some reason.

But, I did have this kind of a strange, almost dream-like experience at work just a few days ago.

And at work, I often catch myself in a dream-like state. I'm just like an automaton mode doing my job, and all of a sudden, it's like this higher level of consciousness kicks in, it's just like, "Whoa."

It's just so strange that I'm just doing I'm sort of like a large ant in this large swarming colony of ants doing my job, and then all of a sudden, it's like

I take a step back, and it just seems so
weird that it's even possible that this
is like my version of samsaric reality
at present.
But anyways, I was at work
few days ago
and I was finished loading up a trailer
and
I noticed that somebody
had balanced something way up high, way
up in the the nose of the trailer, like
the opposite end of the trailer from
where you load stuff. It's way up in the
front. And it was pretty obvious that it
was just going to fall over. It's like
400 lb and if if it didn't get strapped

to the wall, it was going to fall over

almost certainly.

And it wasn't me who did it, you know, I

wouldn't be the one who would got get in

trouble, but still it's like I don't

want it falling over. So, I'm climbing

over this freight in in an oven like a

sauna

in Southern California or California,

South Carolina

and it's just like a a sauna in the in

the the top of the trailer especially

cuz heat rises.

It's still technically summertime

or maybe around the end No, I guess it's

not summertime anymore. The the equinox

is is already done, isn't it?

Anyways, it's still hot and so I'm climbing, just clambering over this freight, getting up into the nose of the trailer and for some reason I'm remembering
how I went camping with my friend Auto several years ago at this point and he lost his phone.
And I don't remember what it was that reminded me of this, but then I finished strapping it to the wall to secure it, come out, get back in my forklift. It's I'm all sweaty from being up in the in the sauna of this trailer. I'm going to go get something to drink.
And so, this eventually out of force of

habit, I just kind of slapped my pocket
and realized my phone is missing.
And so, after just like 5 to 10 seconds,
it occurred to me I I just thinking of
Auto losing his phone.
So, there's a good chance that's where I
lost my phone. And so, I went and I
climbed back up into the front of this
trailer over over all the freight that
was behind it. And I looked down and
there it is, my phone is lying on the
floor, you know, 6 ft below
between these big pallets of of freight.
And fortunately, there was a supervisor
there who was skinny enough that he
could climb down in there and get it for
me. But, it was I I I mention this with

regard to dreams because

people have dreams

that are like trying to give messages to

the conscious thinking mind. And so, my

best guess as to what happened was

is that my peripheral

like subliminal awareness

somehow noticed that I dropped the

phone, but my thinking mind didn't

notice.

And so, it was like my subconscious mind

is like trying to get this message to me

that I had dropped my phone.

Which is what some dreams do. I mean,

that's one of the purposes of dreams.

And most most dreams are just kind of

spam or just, you know, rearranging, processing information you got earlier in the day to help you like categorize it and store it and so forth. I do think that's like the one of the main purposes of dreaming.

But still, sometimes the subconscious mind will percolate up this message to you through dreams. And it happened in that case just I don't even remember why. I just happened to remember right when I was losing my phone, this friend of mine who lost his phone.

So, that's that's kind of strange, but my conscious thinking mind didn't know.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Sea of

Axion Cpad Zetanum.

And he says, "How do you feel about inspiring a young man to become a monk?" And I'm somewhat ambivalent. I mean, I certainly don't regret having been a monk for 30 years. I think it was really a a blessing to my life. It was one of the main purposes of this life was for me to be a monk. So, no regrets at all. I think it was very good that I was a monk for 30 years, even though I'm not one now.

But I do remember when I told a certain Zen Roshi that I was planning on becoming a monk, and he's said, "Well, in very Zen-like fashion,

I'm proud of you and I feel sorry for you."

Because, you know, it's nothing is just pure good in samsara. You know, it's everything is dukkha, first noble truth. Sabe sankhara dukkha, everything is conducive to suffering, including being a monk.

But it's it's sort of a more subtle kind of suffering, I suppose.

And I mean,

in a way, I've kind of run my course as a monk. So, I don't feel as like enthusiastic about being a monk as I used to.

But still, like I can see that for for a young man, it's it's definitely a good

thing.

So, I would certainly encourage it. You know, I would endorse it.

So, if if my videos or my writings have inspired anyone to become a monk, then that's that's good for me. I mean, that's in a way, it's good karma for me, merit, you know, gathering up treasures in heaven, I suppose.

But still, it's just helping helping Dhamma along, which is the main purpose for these videos, especially.

Even though I'm saying, you know, 10% of the teachings of the

the Buddha are likely to be authentic
even in the poly text. You get to
Mahayana and we're getting down to like
1%.
Maybe two.
But just cuz the Buddha didn't teach
something doesn't mean that it's bad or
wrong. I mean, the Buddha didn't teach
anything about calculus for example.
That doesn't mean calculus is bad or
wrong.
So, how do I feel about inspiring a
young man to become a monk? There
there's a certain amount of this kind of
a lack of like gung-ho enthusiasm while
the same time acknowledging that it's a
good.

And I'm just going to move on to Seal of Action C Pod Z 2 knows next question.

See here.

Please explain the meaning of this and then he's going to be quoting from Majjhima Nikaya number 44, which I didn't look up. I'm just going with the excerpt here.

Now, what is the concentration lady? Oh, now what is concentration lady? What qualities are its themes? What qualities are its requisites and what is its development?

And then the lady, probably a nun, an enlightened nun,

says, "Singleness of mind is

concentration, friend Visakha.

The four establishings of mindfulness

are its themes. The four right exertions

are its requisites and any cultivation,

development, and pursuit of these

qualities is its development."

So, I'm guessing that the Majjhima

Nikaya 44

um

I can't remember what they're called. I

think it starts with V, but it's a kind

of question and answer, very analytical

sort of sutta that usually is not

being taught by the Buddha himself. It's

a disciple of the Buddha in this case,

an enlightened nun,

who is teaching a woman.

And so, I assume Visakha here is I mean,

it doesn't have a a macron over the

second A, but I assume it's referring to

one of the Buddha's main

uh supporters, Visakha.

Um

let's see here.

So, I mean, because it's not attributed

to the Buddha, and because it's one of

these really technical, listy kind of

suttas, I would include that in the 90%

that the Buddha didn't teach.

I mean, obviously, it's not even

attributed to the Buddha.

So,

with that as kind of a a buzzkill sort

of intro,

let's see, "Singleness of mind is concentration." Yeah, I mean, I I can agree with that. It's singleness of mind. It's not it's not so much like one-pointedness as just unification of mind.

Cuz you can have concentration while still being very expanded. It's just that your mind is unified. It's not divided up into parts.

Or at least the dividing up into parts is kept to a minimum. It is reduced significantly.

So, I would agree with that as samadhi.

So, the four establishings of mindfulness are the themes of

concentration.

Uh yeah, that I think is sort of

debatable.

I mean, the four establishings of

mindfulness is it's

you know, it's like bod- body, mind,

mental states, and and dhammas, which

are kind of philosophical points, if I'm

not mistaken. That that fourth

foundation of mindfulness or fourth like

setting up of mindfulness does appear to

be somewhat ambiguous and controversial.

So, I mean,

how is like concentrating on a kasina

disc

um one of the four settings up of

mindfulness?

I don't know if that's even included in like the Satipatthana Sutta or the Maha Satipatthana Sutta. So, this is sort of I don't know. It's sort of playing with ideas to some degree

that

the the the themes of samadhi are the four Satipatthanas.

Yeah, I mean, maybe if I saw the whole Sutta, but

it I might see it in better context or something. But, yeah, I think that

yeah, I think that that is questionable. And then the next part is the four right exertions are its requisites. Yeah, I mean, you could say that. The four right

exertions are, if I remember correctly,

to

cultivate

um

good habits that you already have, you

know, to to strengthen good habits you

already have,

to acquire new good habits that you

don't have yet, to reduce bad habits

that you already have, and to avoid

acquiring any new bad habits.

So, yeah, this is just kind of plugged

in conveniently here.

You could say that it's requisites. You

could say he was equal validity that

other things are its requisites.

So, yeah, again, I I think that this is sort of a later addition to the Tipitaka.

I would guess.

And it's just sort of like taking ideas of the Buddha and just sort of like rearranging them and using them in ways that the Buddha might not have used them.

And anyways, then the next part is any cultivation, development, and pursuit of these qualities is its development.

I guess so.

But, yeah, I should Maybe I should just look just a second. What the hell?

Let's see here.

Sutta number 44 here. Let's see what it

is.

46, 41.

44. Yeah, the We Dall Suttas. So, it's

the Chula We Dall Sutta.

Yeah.

And it's uh the lay follower Visakha

went to the Bhikkhuni Dhammadinna.

Okay.

Yeah, Dhammadinna is the enlightened

nun. So,

like I said earlier, I mean, if it's not

even attributed to the Buddha, then it

may be that the author of the sutta had

just this enough

like compunction, is that a word? Enough

scruples not to just put his own ideas

into the Buddha's mouth, but he just

sort of took a step down from that and

put his ideas into the mouth of some

enlightened disciple.

But these are We Dall Suttas.

Um there's more than one. The We Dall is

just sort of a question-answer format

kind of sutta, and they're usually not

even attributed to the Buddha, and

they're this They show signs of

lateness.

So,

that's the meaning of it.

my opinion.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question, which is the last

question.

So, this is going to be a probably less than a 2-hour-long video, which some of you can appreciate.

And so, this question is from BuddhaWrecks969.

And BuddhaWrecks969 says, "Do you think the assassination of Charlie Kirk has led to a resurgence of Christianity what I consider to be a Marxist doctrine. Personally, as a liberal right Buddhist, I deeply detest this hypocritical, intolerant Middle Eastern religion which also wants to spread its poison in Asia.

Mhm.

Well, there's a few things I before I

get to the main question, the main

answer to the main question.

Let's see. I mean, to say that

Christianity is a Marxist doctrine,

I mean, that's like saying that Jesus

was a Muslim, which some Muslims say,

or that the Buddha was a Hindu, which a

lot of Hindus say, but it's it's

obviously an anachronism cuz I mean,

Christianity existed long before Marxism

did.

However, I would go so far as to say

that both Christianity and Marxism are

schismatic sects of Judaism.

And also, Christianity um

I mean, it was sort of like the the the
Roman Empire's version of progressivism.
You know, it's like
you've got the the neo-Marxists, the
cultural Marxists, the the progressives,
you know, the SJWs as they were called
10 years ago.
Um nowadays, you know, they kind of
fill the same social niche niche as
early Christianity in the the Buddhist
time the Buddhist time in like the Roman
Empire.
So, you know, they've got the same sort
of
insistence upon like acceptance of
others, but only others that agree with

you.

That if they disagree, then it's just like this hysterical hatred and intolerance.

And just championing the weak and the poor, that kind of thing. You know, as the Christians did that and the later Marxists do it. It's just the main difference is, I mean aside from specific doctrines, but with regard to the main effect, the Christians, the early Christians of the the Roman Empire, actually did have a kind of moral high ground.

Whereas the progressives nowadays are champions of just moral degeneracy and they hate Christianity, mainly because

it's like a rival to them. It's like a
competitor with regard to worldviews.
But also Christianity teaches you should
have self-restraint with regard to
indulgence and sensuality and so forth.
Whereas the Marxists who have somewhat
of a different objective,
they're all in favor of moral degeneracy
because that helps to undermine like
Western civilization. Cuz they want to
undermine Western civilization as it
exists today in order to replace it with
some kind of Marxist utopia and 100
years of stagnant and failing economies
and totalitarianism and even genocide
have not persuaded Marxists that

socialism just doesn't work very well.
Christianity, I mean they were trying to
overthrow the old pagan regime, which
they did.
And I mean they just did it with this
intolerant zeal in many cases.
But still they did have
like morals.
Whereas the new left have replaced
morals with just unrefined feminine
sentiment.
Just do whatever you feel like so long
as you don't offend our side.
To offend the other side is fine.
They're they're evil and bad and should
be, you know, eliminated or in whatever
way,

peaceful or otherwise.

So, I guess that helps to get out of the helps to get out of the way. Also, I would not call Christianity itself hypocritical. Some Christians are hypocrites. A lot of Christians are hypocrites, but Christianity itself I do not consider to be hypocritical. That not all Christians are hypocrites. I've I've known some very sincere devout Christians. You know, they mean they they admit that they cannot live up to the standards of Christianity because they're just too, you know, unenlightened or whatever. I mean, Buddhists do the same in that

regard.

They try to love their enemies even

though they may not succeed.

That sort of thing. And of course,

gather not up your treasures upon the

earth is just completely unrealistic as

uh like a religious view for people that

have families and have to provide for

their family and all that.

So, let's just get to the main question

here, though.

Do you think the assassination of

Charlie Kirk has led to a resurgence of

Christianity? And to some degree it has.

Like, there's some people I think

Jeremy from a a YouTube channel called

The Quartering who used to do videos

with Styxhexenhammer666
until Styx was like getting drunk or
something on the videos and like passing
out.
So, anyways, um this Jeremy guy says
because of the Charlie Kirk thing, he
has it has inspired him to start going
to church. And there are a number of
people that you see on social media just
talking about the same thing, how it has
kind of caused Christianity to appear in
a more favorable light
among Americans in general.
So, yeah, I do think the assassination
of Charlie Kirk has led to some kind of
resurgence. I don't think it's going to

be just major,

but you know, a few percent more people,

like maybe let's say 2% more people go

to church now just because of Charlie

Kirk? Maybe.

I'm sure it has increased at least a

little bit.

And I mean Charlie Kirk is just sort of

like a modern-day martyr, a Christian

martyr.

He's not going to be canonized though

because he wasn't a Catholic.

Or Orthodox for that matter. I think he

was evangelical.

But it has caused Christianity to appear

in a more favorable light.

And I mean

I have considered the possibility of I
mean be willing for America to become a
kind of like
theocratic monoculture. You know, the
way the West used to be where like I was
talking about David Hume earlier. If you
weren't a Christian, that was it. That
was just cultural suicide. They had
cancel culture even back in the 1700s.
So,
what still I mean it might be worth it
for Western civilization in general
to just go back to traditional
Christianity even though it wouldn't be
good for me because I'm not a Christian.
And I wouldn't even pretend to be a

Christian.

I just kind of keep my head down and

keep my mouth shut about it.

But

um I mean it could be I mean I would

prefer that Western civilization go back

to Christianity than like be forcibly

converted converted to Islam.

Or just voluntarily convert to Islam.

I guess Indonesia mainly just

voluntarily converted to Islam for

whatever reasons.

So,

I say so a lot. This

You just have to put up with that, I

guess.

Probably not going to change anytime

soon.

Um I guess I have answered the question.

Do I think the assassination of Charlie Kirk has led to a resurgence of Christianity in America? Probably not in Europe.

But other factors I think are pushing people towards Christianity and just it's a stabilizing factor. It's your tradition in the West that worked fairly well

when it was in power before it got replaced by atheistic materialistic scientism.

So

there I went saying so again.

But I don't think it's Marxist. I do think that Christianity and Marxism are both schismatic sects of Judaism. But you know, they they have certain like resemblances.

But and they they sort of glorify the weak and the poor although um the new Marxism is not just glorifying the weak and the poor and demonizing, you know, the strong and the rich, but it's glorifying the dysfunctional. You know, this like utter degeneracy is being glorified. Whereas just normal like healthy-minded people are being demonized to some degree.

So I'm still sort of

ambivalent

with regard to

um

whether the West should return to

Christianity. They're I mean, the West

is not just going to convert en masse to

Buddhism or some kind of neo-paganism,

probably.

So Christianity does seem to be the

obvious go-to for the sake of like a

stable traditionalist society in the

West.

But I mean, it has its upsides and its

downsides, obviously. I mean, just to go

back to the division of the Founding

Fathers without the slavery would be

good. I mean, that's that was what held America together for a long time is just everyone agreeing on just the ideals of the founding fathers and the constitution and all that. Although the left now really doesn't have much use for that either.

So I guess we're done.

I guess so.

So like I always say

No, like I never say.

Except once.

If you have any questions you think I can answer specially Dhamma oriented, Buddhism oriented, specially Theravada or early Buddhism oriented, then feel free to ask me in the questions or the

comments below.

I don't know, it must be getting late.

I'm getting kind of loopy in my my

speaking skills.

And like and subscribe if you have not

done so already.

And no more than three questions per

person per episode, please.

And be happy.

Alrighty then. I do believe we are recording.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 165.

I am your host Ponyo Bosa. Some of you may have noticed I didn't put up a Q&A last weekend because I needed a vacation for various reasons we need not get into. Although one reason is I just worked too much. So, I needed a vacation and I got it. And now I'm back to answering questions.

This is my beverage, by the way.

And 165 obviously is not prime at all. It's 3 * 5 * 11 if I did the math in my head correctly. And I suppose after

lamenting my aquarium situation, I'll
just get right to work answering
questions. And those of you who have
watched those the few of you who have
watched my aquarium videos may notice or
may recall
that I was talking about how if you have
a balanced aquarium
then if you're like putting stuff into
it like uh like food and for example
then if the plants aren't absorbing all
of the like the minerals and so forth
that the mineral minerals can like build
up in the water. And so what happened is
that especially in my 10gon tank that
was originally just an invertebrate
tank, the shrimps stopped reproducing.

And then just a few months ago, couple months ago, they apparently just started disappearing. And so finally, a few days ago, I did water tests on on both of my aquariums and like the nitrogen was completely fine. You know, the fish pee was just being recycled by the plants. It was all like a nice balanced system, but

there was the water, the pH was like up around eight, especially in the 10gon tank. And the the hardness of the water, like the dissolved minerals in the water was just practically off the charts. It was just like very hard water just due to all the minerals in there. So, I

started doing water changes trying to
get the the water um soft enough and the
pH low enough that the few remaining
shrimps will start feeling frisky again
and start reproducing
because for a while there I had like a
just a population explosion of little
red neocaradina shrimps.
So, I'm just going to start answering
questions now.
And the first question is from Romeo.
And Romeo says, "Oh, and by the way,
before I get to what Romeo says, this is
kind of a long one because this is two
weeks worth of questions. So, this could
be like three hours, especially when I
keep digressing like this."

Romeo says, "I was recently on an airflight coming back from vacation and we encountered some prolonged turbulence along the way. Although things eventually turned out okay, there was a moment when I wondered, is this the end? I then recalled how important one's mental states are in passing one's karmic momentum from this life to the next. And I began wondering what the most optimum mental state was that I should try to generate.

I thought should I follow my breath and mindfully note my bodily sensations, thoughts and feelings as I would during a reposina meditation? Should I beam a

kind of humanitarian may all sentient beings be free from suffering mantra out to the world as I would during a meta meditation? Should I just calmly acknowledge and accept my fear and panic knowing that I'm about to die?

In short, what do you think is the most optimum mental state one should have in their last moments? And how does one cultivate such a state last minute?

Well, I mean, when it gets down to the last minute, um, I mean, the cultivation should already be, you know, behind you pretty much. Um you know it's like at the the moment of like crisis as a general rule you don't have time to think well what should I think about you

know how should I you know it should
just be automatic at that point like
spontaneous
intuitive if you will which is something
that's happened to me many times in my
life when like you're driving in the
winter time up north and you hit a patch
of black ice and the car starts like
sliding out of control. It's just I mean
you don't think well what kind of mental
state should I cultivate at this moment.
It's just automatic you know it's just
the mind becomes crystal clear and your
body just it's like something else takes
takes over your body and does whatever
is necessary to keep you alive and then

it's after the crisis is gone then you you go back into your your normal state of consciousness.

Um, but I mean, let's say you're on a you're on an airplane and you think it might crash. Well, it seems to me that I mean, the best mental state you can have when you die is the most enlightened mental state you can possibly come up with, the the higher level of consciousness, the highest level of consciousness that you can manage.

So I would assume that that would be sort of like what Krishna Murdy talks about with choiceless awareness. You're just wide awake just aware of everything and not reacting.

Just you become like a transparent sheet
of glass and just everything is just
like going through you unimpeded.
But this does, this question does remind
me of a movie came out in the '9s,
uh, starring Jeff Bridges and Isabella
Roselini called Fearless about this guy
played by Jeff Bridges who is in a plane
crash and he's one of the few survivors.
In fact, he's he's hardly I mean, it's
like he doesn't have a scratch on him.
And as the plane is crashing, it's like
he's having like the existential crisis,
you know, and it's like before the plane
crashes, he has just made his peace with
the whole situation. He's just in a

state of wide openen acceptance and then he survives the plane crash and it it it abides this this new mental state. You know, it's like he has become somewhat enlightened. you know, he's he's been jolted into a higher level of consciousness and most of the movie is just how he doesn't fit in anymore. You know, it's like the the lawyers, especially the lawyer for his best friend that was and I think it was like his his work partner that was on the plane. His friend died, but he survived. And the the reason why Jeff Bridges survives is the plane is like starting to like, you know, show signs of distress. I don't remember the exact

details of why the plane crashed, but
Jeff Bridges sees this boy sitting alone
kind of several rows ahead of him who's
obviously scared shitless. And so just
out of the goodness of his heart, Jeff
Bridges changes seats, sits next to the
boy to try to, you know, comfort him.
And so if he had remained in his
original seat, he would have died
because he was sitting right next to his
his buddy who died.
But like the lawyers who are like trying
to, you know, settle like the lawyers
for his best friend's wife is trying to
get Jeff Bridges to talk about how
terrified he was, you know, because the

distress and everything. You get more money that way. And Jeff Bridges, I mean, he just can't bring himself to lie. And there's people just pressuring him to to do all this shady stuff, you know? It's just he's he's trying to trying to be enlightened in this world where enlightened just is not the way to be,

but I digress, and I probably shouldn't be digressing so much, but it it's definitely a good movie. There was a person who had a near-death experience who had an like an enlightenment experience at the same time. Sort of an echartlah type. Uh John John Ren Lewis he highly re recommended this movie

Fearless starring Jeff Bridges and Isabella Roselini.

But getting back to the question just the highest level of consciousness you can manage is choiceless awareness. just make your peace with what's happening. Be just wide awake, aware, and don't react if you can manage that. But again, you're not going to be, you know, at the at the moment of crisis. As a general rule, the work you've already done is what's going to see you through it. You can't just start cultivating right then and there.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on. Next question.

This is from I should be dead soon. And he says, "Is the intentional consumption of psychedelic substances by a monk considered an offense?"

And it can be. I mean, it depends on your depends on the reasons for taking it. If a monk takes psychedelic substances recreationally,

then at the very least, it would be a dooka offense, which is the lowest level of offense, a dooka offense for taking a medicine without a legitimate medicinal need for it.

Um, but if he is taking it for what he considers to be like

health reasons, especially like mental health, then I mean it's I'm sure it

would be controversial. There'd be some who would say, "Yeah, for those reasons it's all right." Then there'd be more conservative monks, you know, conservative Asian monks who just consider all take all drugs to just be, you know, like heroin, fentinyl, whatever.

So yeah, I mean at least if you're taking it for spiritual reasons, you kind of have a foot in the door, but even if you I mean even if you're considering uh if it's considered break breaking a rule, it would probably be the rule. It wouldn't be the rule against drinking alcohol because you're

not drinking alcohol.

So it would be I mean in in Pali it

would be majana. That's that's a pacidia

rule. If a monk consumes a majapana

which is intoxicating drinks then which

generally means alcohol

then yeah he's committed a pachida

offense which is like an intermediate

level offense but to take a take a

medicinal substance without a real

medical need for it is a duka offense

which is as I say is the lowest the

lowest level of offense and uh if you're

a monk you may consider it worth the

cost worth worth the sacrifice.

Like there is a rule that a monk is not

supposed to be ordained unless his

parents give their permission. But even if the parents do not give permission, the monk can still be or the person can still be ordained as a monk and the ordination is valid. It's just that the monks who participate in the ordination ceremony are guilty of this same dooka offense which is the lowest level of offense. So I knew this this American man who wanted to be ordained but his both of his parents were like fundamentalist evangelical Christians. So they would not give their consent. But this American man went to Tonulu Seattle, the founder of the tradition in which I was ordained and told him about

the situation. And Tonulu Seattle is said to have said the song is willing to make the sacrifice. Which means the monks were willing to break a minor rule by ordaining him without his parents' consent just because they considered that to be for the greater good.

So, I mean, there are times when it's it may be considered worthwhile to break a rule. You see a beautiful girl drowning in a lake. I mean, some really strict monks would just sit there and watch her drown because it's against the rules to be touching a beautiful woman.

I mean, let alone like giving her mouth-to-mouth resuscitation or whatever. Like in my case, um, it's

against the rules. It's again a duka offense, a minor offense for a monk to be like practicing medicine or giving medicines to lay people to to other monks is fine, but to like lay supporters, you shouldn't do it. But I'm living out in this area that's endemic for malaria, false malaria, which is the worst kind. And one of my supporters, some village guy, nice guy, said that his daughter had had malaria for it was some god-awful amount of time. It was like 3 months or something. And fortunately, they have resistance. There's no way I would have survived for 3 weeks, much less 3 months. So, I had

some state-of-the-art antimmalaria drugs. So, I thought, well, it sounds like sounds like she really does have malaria. you know, I kind of asked, you know, because villagers will attribute all kinds of, you know, they don't really have much medical knowledge. So, yeah, I mean, she was having like fevers that would, you know, every 48 hours, fevers and chills every two days. So, sounds like full cypro malaria. So, I gave him the pills and she got better. And I mean, to save somebody's life, it seems the better choice than just refusing to break any rules at all. So getting back to a monk taking psychedelic substances like LSD or

something, then if he really thinks that it may help him spiritually to knock him out of ruts to blow the carbon out of his brain pipes or whatever that it could like help to ground him or whatever it is, then that's his choice to make, I assume.

And I'm just going to move on to I should be dead soon's next question. which is along the same kind of lines here. Says, "If a lay person uses psychedelics for medicinal reasons, wouldn't that be closer to skillful means than a violation of a precept? It seems backwards that a doctor can hand out Oxycontton, aderall, or alexapro,

whatever that is, to kids, but an adult can't use LS LSD medically."

Um, yeah. Well, I mean for lay people, you've just got the fifth precept, which is I ab, you know, I abstain from taking wine, ale, and other intoxicants which cause heatlessness or cloudedness of mind.

And so, I mean, the first question is, would something like LSD result in heedlessness or cloudedness of mind? I mean, to some degree, it can cause like a pathological clarity of mind. But then again, I mean, some people if especially if they're taking LSD recreationally or they're already mentally unstable to begin with, you

know, they might have like latent schizophrenia or something. Those are the ones that like jump off of roofs and that kind of thing. They think they can fly, they jump out a window, and then they just drop like a rock.

So the person has to know himself or herself to make like a wise decision with regard to this kind of thing.

Um

but let's see here. Let's get back to the question. If a lay person uses psychedelics for medicinal reasons, wouldn't that be closer to skillful means than a violation of a precept?

Yeah, I I would I would assume so. I

mean, it would only be a violation of a precept if it makes you less conscious instead of more conscious.

And my experience with psychedelics is it tends to make me more conscious. I was never really tempted to jump out of windows or any such thing.

So yeah, I mean as a monk I did take psychedelics a few times and I also took uh I attended a few ceremonies as a monk. Whether I would be considered a psychedelic or not, I don't know.

um some of the effects are similar like the like the visuals and so forth.

So yeah, I think it's uh a person has to be honest with themsel you know it's you shouldn't take drugs just to escape

from just the the burden of ordinary conscious samsara that kind of thing. But if you think that it really can help you in I mean my generation of monks at least half of them started with psychedelics and then saw that there were other ways of looking at reality that are just as valid as the normal one maybe even more valid. And then they wanted to try to cultivate these expanded states of consciousness without the chemicals. They got into meditation eventually became monks.

So it's not entirely a bad thing. Like Ram Doss started off with psychedelics. That's one reason why he was one of my

heroes when I was in high school. You know, he was kind of taking the the psychedelic road to spirituality at first. Although he eventually stopped taking the psychedelics, mainly because it wasn't necessary anymore. He could attain a lot of the same states just through meditation.

And you shouldn't be doing meditation as a substitute for for hard drugs.

But

for the sake of expanded consciousness, greater mental clarity.

Okay. So I guess I answered that one. I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Newman. And Newman says, "Outside of meditative

insight, are there other ways to deduce former lives? For example, if you're attracted to exin interest in this life, it could suggest some karmic attachment of a former life and so on. Yeah. Well, I mean, aside from meditative insight, I think one of the usual ways of doing past life regressions would be through hypnosis. So, there's that, too. There's no guarantee that what you experience in hypnosis or experience in meditation for that matter is a real genuine past life. It could just be like subconscious imagination.

For example, people that do past life regressions and they're they recall a

life in like ancient Egypt or something.
Still they're speaking modern English,
you know, they still don't understand
ancient Egyptian, that kind of thing.
And then they might even pinpoint the
exact year like using the Christian
calendar which Yeah. So some of it I'm
sure is just subconscious imagination.
But aside from meditation, meditative
insight and also hypnotic regression.
Yeah, I mean I've I've done that other
ways to deduce former lives. It's like
any kind of character trait that is not
easily explainable through genetics and
past experience
then I mean that's hypothetically could
be kind of momentum from a past life.

And so uh are just like intuitive, you know, you can just get intuitive hunches that I mean I mean it's certainly not proving anything. It's not really evidence or just kind of flimsy evidence, but still I mean you can consider it like uh I've had just a certain fascination for certain periods or just a lot of karma. I've had a lot of Japanese karma in my life, for example. Just I just I've been to Japan three times. Never really planned on going there, you know. I just wound up there, you know. I'm just traveling with some monks or whatever and we stop off in Japan on the way to Burma, that kind

of thing. And

I mean, it's possible that I was

Japanese in a previous life. I just kind

of intuitively that feels right that

like maybe around the 1700s

I was Japanese

or uh like I have a fascination for like

medieval England

and so there's a good chance I mean I've

I've kind of used various like intuitive

hunches and personality traits and so

forth to come up with a kind of

hypothetical existence for me in

medieval like 14th century England where

I was probably a rascally monk. Didn't

take my vows very seriously. May have

met my current sweetheart at that time

in medieval England. She was probably
married to some kind of knight or lord
or something and I was just a rascally
monk who like talk dirty in Latin to
her. That kind of thing.
Probably transcribe manuscripts for a
living because the printing press hadn't
been invented yet.
Um, and uh, I mean among other things,
there's a good chance I died of bubonic
plague
and I still have like a like a purple
birthark right in the area where I think
I may have had the boobo.
So, I mean, you can hypothetically come
up with with certain ideas like maybe,

but you shouldn't be too sure about it, you know? It's just maybe, just maybe. I was like some kind of shaman who worshiped cobras in like prehistoric northwestern India like on the outskirts of the Indis Valley civilization.

Maybe

it would have helped to account my the fact that I just love snakes. You know it's like most people they have this phobia of snakes. It's like um I read in like a book by Carl Sean long ago that there's supposedly even like a special center in the brain somewhere that recognizes snakes, which is one reason why if you're walking down the trail and you see like a a stick or something by

the side of the trail, especially in snake country like Burma, then immediately your mind just goes to that. It's like, nope, not a snake. Okay. And then you continue on your way. But for some reason, I would just be like filled with joy at seeing especially a big snake, you know, a six-footer. I'd just be in raptures.

So,

how do you how do you account for that?

Well, I mean, you could hypothesize. You could just guess that maybe I was I was into snakes like in India or something long ago where they did worship cobras might still worship cobras in a few

places for all I know.

So yeah, I mean if genetics and past experience won't account for some fascination like for some period in history, you know, like ancient Greece or like early Republican Rome, that kind of thing. Then I mean like I've had a fascination for for certain cultures and then certain other cultures like Meso America, no interest at all. Like China, not so much. ancient Egypt almost none. But then certain other cultures are really interesting to me. Why is that? I mean, you could just account for it in just totally mundane ways. Or you could say, well, maybe I lived in that culture long ago, and that's why I'm so

interested, you know, why there's such an affinity.

But you really can't be sure. It's it's just all the sort of this speculation.

And I'm just going to move on to Newman's next question. He says, "If you encountered powers or sides, I guess eds in poly during your time and experience as a monk, did they solidify a belief that Buddhism was the truth?"

Well, I mean, Buddhism is the truth is is really just a a totally scattershot kind of statement because I don't think everything in Buddhism is necessarily true like like the the mythology and stuff that gets added or like the some

of the Indian cultural elements that
just kind of got absorbed into Buddhism
because Buddhism arose and developed in
India, northern India. So yeah,
maybe I'd I would kind of tweak this the
question not so much that Buddhism is
the truth, but like dharma or dharma is
the truth. That might get a little
closer to like a really accurate sort of
statement or question
um or more applicable anyway. And I got
to make sure that we are Yeah, we've
been recording for several minutes
already.
So yeah, I mean encountering powers, you
know, just having strange events,
strange synchronicities, especially when

doing intensive meditation, just weird coincidences that are hard to account for or just strange experiences in general. Um, I mean that doesn't necessarily prove that Buddhism is true, but it can prove that like spirituality really has something to it. That, you know, if you're doing like intensive practice and your mind is more open than usual, then synchronicities and just strange coincidences and so forth are more likely to happen.

In fact, it may be that once a person becomes enlightened or just like a really advanced sa sage that these synchronicities are so commonplace that

they're they're just assumed to be the psychic powers of the sage when really it's just he is such a liinal being that the rules of some sor kind of weaken around him allowing kind of strange things that are against the rules to happen.

So let's see, get back to the question because I just keep wander just toddling away from the question.

If you encountered powers during your time and experience as a monk, did they solidify a belief that Buddhism was the truth? I mean, it it strengthened my faith in just dharma in general, I suppose. You know, it just seemed like a kind of vindication.

Let's see. Oh boy. I forgot to mention something.

Maybe I can get to it later because there's there was a question the question of that I I should be dead soon talking about lay people using psychedelics for medicinal reasons.

Yeah, there's I I mentioned before I used to have a a friend um an American. He was sort of he started off as a monk and then he became like an ex- monk who still was like a meditating hermit in Burma. He lived in the big hollow tree and he had a supporter in America that was sending him um like articles from uh it was like a an organization of

doctors trying to legalize psychedelics
for medicinal purposes. And he I read
this article written by a doctor of back
in I think it was like the early 60s
when LSD wasn't illegal yet
or it was just kind of starting to
become illegal that there was like this
TV producer who had this teenage son who
was just
I mean he was considered mentally ill. I
mean he he he just would not
participate. He was just defiant of any
kind of therapist and he was going to
therapist after therapist, you know,
psychiatrist after psychiatrist. His
daddy was rich. He could afford it. And
the kid was just had like a chip on his

shoulder and just I'm not exactly sure what the diagnosis would be, but he was just given up as a hopeless case by numerous psychologists and psychiatrists and therapists. And so finally he goes to this place where they specialize in like LSD therapy. So he he goes to this room and it's like a welllit brightly colored room with flowers and art books and this kind of stuff to help prevent people from having a bad trip. You know, everything is kind of upbeat.

And so he takes this dose of LSD with the doctor and a like a nurse attendant there with him. and he's just kind of kind of mocking them just it's not going

to work. You know, I've already told you it's nothing works on me. So, after like half an hour, they start noticing that he's sort of getting more rigid and he's starting to like pant and sweat because he's trying to fight the effects of this LSD. And finally, after like an hour or something, I mean, he keeps saying it's not working. There's no effect. But you can see, I mean, he's just like sweating and just like really tense. So he he's suggesting he wants to lie down on this couch and they assure him that's probably a good idea. You should do that. And so for like eight hours, he is just rigid as a board on this couch just like panting, just fighting against the

effects of this this acid for all he's worth. And every once in a while being able to gasp out, it's not working. There's no effect.

And then finally after just this very draining, exhausting many hours of this trip, you know, he he kind of weakly goes home, you know, in a weak weakened state and then he sort of re regains his his bravado or whatever. So he's talking with the doctor a few weeks later and he's just kind of scoffing. He say, "Told you no effect. It's not going to do anything." So then the doctor says, "Well, I suggest we try again with a much higher dose." And he says the this

young guy just immediately he stopped breathing and this the color drained out of his face. And then the doctor says, "But I suggest we do this at a clinic in Scandinavia that specializes in this sort of thing, and we'll have to have your father's permission." which which caused the the young kid to just immediately start breathing in and just start saying, "Well, I'm sure my father would not agree to that." But the father agreed. And so a schedule was, you know, a date was set up for this flight to Scandinavia to take a much larger dose. And the the kid is sort of stalling for time and saying, "Well, just give me give me some time." And what he does is

he just drops back into society. you know, he gets a job, gets a girlfriend, starts like associating with other people, you know, it essentially cured him, but it wasn't like any kind of like like insight or or inspiration or anything that he had on the trip. It was just he was so terrified of having to go through that again that he would just just sort of cured himself of this personality disorder, which is probably something that he had, you know, some kind of personality disorder, and just rather than have to take the acid again, he just dropped back into society and started being a a relatively normal

person.

So, I should have I should have mentioned that when I was discussing lay people taking psychedelics, but I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from pooping user. I do not understand this name. It's uh somebody on Bitshoot, which can help to explain because Bitshoot you get a whole different class of commenters than you do on on YouTube. It's like Bitshoot used to be sort of the the the refugee camp for the people kicked off of YouTube. Sort of like Mines was like the for the people that were kicked off of Axe back before Elon bought it and turned it into Axe. So anyways, pooping

user says, "How can we better understand the mechanism of animal sacrifice?" Which is kind of a strange question. Um, I mean, most religions did do animal sacrifice or at least lots and lots of them. You know, the well-known religions, Judaism did animal sacrifices just it's all through the blood soaked pages of the Old Testament, especially like Mosaic law. You know, you're supposed to sprinkle the blood here and smear it on the horns of the altar there.

ancient like classical paganism, animal sacrifices. Although even the ancient Greeks,

they had already started growing out of
animal sacrifice, you know, it was more
of sort of like a a community gathering
where it was only like thigh bones
wrapped in fat that were actually burned
on the fire and then the good meat parts
were like cooked, you know, it was like
a big cookout and distributed to all the
attendees, that kind of thing.
But animal sacrifice I think there's
like two main
reasons for it. Um one reason is I mean
sacrifice
to pastoral people you know back before
there was a money economy you know
wealth was measured in terms of like
cattle you know that was the way it was

for like the ancient Hebrews the ancient north Indians probably a lot of like European types where you know you don't money you don't have so your wealth is manage is determined by how many cows you've got how horses, that kind of thing. And so sacrifice, one of the main purposes of sacrifice is you are like paying, you're making an investment. You know, you are like sacrificing what is of value to you in order to get something that is of value like from a different direction. It's sort of like you're causing a kind of imbalance in the cosmic balance by destroying this thing of value to you. it in in a way it

creates like a vacuum that will cause more value to flow in and fill the gap which is maybe a kind of value that you don't have as much control over. You know, it's the the gods are going to reward you for offering this cow to them that they didn't really want or need. But still, it's like this gesture sort of like the cat kills a mouse and just brings it to your feet, you know? It's like you don't have any need for a dead mouse, but I mean, you kind of have greater affection for the cat just out of the fact that this cat is wanting to to give you something. You know, this cat has made this gesture of love towards you. So you could think, well,

the gods kind of have a similar kind of feeling towards humans that offer dead cows or whatever it is, maybe even a hundred cows at the same time, a heck of a tomb. So, so that that might be a third answer. So that would be like the obvious superficial explanation for a sacrifice is you know you are showing your respect and veneration to the gods in order for them to smile upon you. That would probably be like the superficial normie kind of explanation. Then um this another explanation would be like what I was getting at where by destroying what is of value to you, you're creating sort of like a karmic

imbalance that will then cause good to come back to you, especially if you believe in that sort of thing.

but also especially with regard to animal sacrifice and like uh I remember reading like uh the emperor Julian who was the last pagan emperor of Rome. He actually went through this kind of a sacrifice where you get it down into a pit and there's like a grading over the top of you and then they lead a bull over this grading, probably like a a white one or just a really like a perfect specimen and cut its throat and then the the blood just like rains down on you and has like some kind of cleansing cleansing effect, that kind of

thing. that to some degree it's
limonality where by
like killing a living conscious being is
already it's
to some degree liinal especially if you
are relatively conscious. you know that
animal hasn't done you any wrong and
you're not doing it for just the sake of
food or or leather or whatever that you
know that you've got like these kind of
metaphysical ideas and it kind of
weakens the fabric of samsara to some
degree like I was talking about being
around an enlightened sage how they are
liinal beings which kind of weakens the
rules you know the laws of physics even

that allows strange coincidences and
even more than strange coincidences to
occur around them. And animal sacrifice
or even worse or more intense like human
sacrifice
is a very liinal act which can cause
juu to enter into this version of
reality which can then potentially be
harnessed. In fact, I don't know if I
mentioned this on a Q&A, but I do have a
a theory about, for example,
the the assassination of Charlie Kirk
where there's all these abnormalities.
You know, he gets shot through the neck
with a 306 rifle, which is like a big
game rifle. You know, use it for like
hunting grizzly bears. And I mean, it's

just it doesn't even come close to blowing his head off, that kind of thing. or or just there's other like anomalies associated with this kind of thing. And it could be, I'm not insisting that this is the case, but it could be that it's such a liinal thing, like this public execution practically, that it's sort of causing like glitches in the matrix, which causes these abnormalities to be more likely, which is one maybe one reason why there are so many anomalies with regard to just about any like highprofile atrocity. like 911 is another one
or the assassination of John F. Kennedy

is another one. You know, there's all
these conspiracy theories and everything
trying to account for these apparent
anomalies.
It's not just a straightforward thing
that is just completely follows the
known laws of physics that there's all
these weird glitches somehow.
So, animal sacrifice can have some of
that factor added to it also.
But if you want to better understand the
mechanism of animal sacrifice,
uh
I suppose you could you could read texts
um from people in cultures that really
took it seriously. Um but there's all
these different ways of understanding it

like um in the in Vadic literature,
you've got the vdas, you've got the
brahmanas and you've got the upupanadas.
the Brahmanos were in between and they
were mainly like technical manuals on
conducting animal sacrifices or maybe at
that point they were getting away from
animal sacrifice but I don't think so it
was this was pre Buddhist time so
probably it was still animal sacrifices
at the time and there's a school of
Hinduism called mimams
where they still kind of take this
seriously where the sacrifice isn't just
you know you're showing your reverence
for the gods and everything it's like if

you do the sacrifice perfectly, you are compelling the gods essentially to do your bidding or you are it's even more than that. It's like by doing this sacrifice perfectly, you are maintaining the cosmos.

I think the Aztecs had some of that kind of philosophy also and they were doing lots and lots of grizzly kind of sacrifices.

So, I hope I answered that question because I'm moving on to the next one also by pooping user. He says, "What is an acceptable bed for eight precepts?"

Well, an acceptable bed for monks is first of all, a monk that or a bed that's narrow enough that only one

person can sleep on it. And you're supposed to stay away from high and large beds.

See, it' be high. Yeah. Maha. So, it' be high beds and large beds would be the the precept for lay people. For monks, it's just you're not allowed to have a bed where the bottom of the frame is more than eight finger widths above the floor. So, if you can take your fingers like this and stick it underneath the bed, the bed frame, then it's too high. Well, I mean, just sleeping on a mat or just a little pallet on the floor is fine. So, I would assume that you could use that as a way of determining the

acceptable bed for uh a lay person keeping a precepts. So, I mean, if you just sleep on a mat on the floor, you're you're in no danger of breaking the precept, but the bed should not be large enough for more than one person to sleep on it. And if you're following the monk rules, then you shouldn't be able to put your eight fingers like this and fit them between the bottom of the bed frame and the floor, which is kind of an easy rule to cheat because you could have like a box springs a foot thick and then just be still sleeping way up high. Pretty sure they didn't have box springs in the Buddhist time.

And I'm just going to move on to pump

pooping users. Third question. He says,
I assume it's a he. Has meditation or
internal work ever produced for you an
outof body or alternate reality
experience? And I would like to
apologize right off the bat for using
double air quotes even when the
questioner only uses single air quotes.
Maybe they're from England and and don't
speak the language
uh as well as we do or some such.
So let's see here. Has meditation or
internal work ever produced for you an
out-of- body or alternate reality
experience? Well, the only out of body
experience or the only thing that I

could even interpret as a possible

out-of- body experience was caused by

taking some derivative of Bella as a

teenager.

So that was that was a drug thing. I was

just hallucinating wildly too.

Um alternate reality experience.

Uh I mean it depends on what you mean by

alternate reality. I mean when you get

into deep meditative states I mean

obviously you're not dealing with the

same kind of reality as you would be

walking down the street somewhere.

So yeah, alternate reality. I mean, it'

just be like a refined version of

reality maybe or a refined version of

samsara, I should say, getting a little

closer to actual reality.

[Music]

So, yeah, the out-of- body experiences

I've never had as a result of

meditation.

I guess some people would argue that you

have them in your dreams at night every

night, but I'm not so sure about that.

And the alternate reality, it would it

would depend on your definition of

alternate reality. But I mean, I have

had weird like altered states of

consciousness which kind of produce de

facto an alternate reality, an alternate

semi-reality. Anyway,

uh but I mean I never really I mean

aside from mystical states then I mean alternate realities and so forth really are not the point. They're not important. They're not something that should be cultivated other than just becoming more and more conscious. Raising your level of consciousness, that that's important. But astral traveling and so forth is more of a distraction
than uh than an actual, you know, something that's helping you to attain the goal.
And I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Siovak and Seipad Zidana. And SEO of action sepad zed says is the Mahayana belief that the Buddha

never really attained Paribana and the highest goal is of staying in samsara to help others with fabricated teachings of the Buddha actually just Maraana

and Mara of course is sort of like the Buddhist equivalent of of the devil you know he's the tempter he's the he's the the deity who is trying to keep people unenlightened

in fact I mean he's not like the devil so much in that uh Mara I mean if he can't get you to be bad he'll get you to be good you know if he can't get you to just wallow in sensuality you know he'll get you to do acts of merit because even if you do acts of merit you're still

kind of within the realm of samsara you know even the heaven realms are in samsara

but this question I mean it's it's a matter of a matter of personal opinion

I'm sure there's lots of people who think that Mahayana Buddhism is just the product of Mara.

And you know, they got their they got their evidence.

I think uh my buddy Brian might be of the opinion that Mara made Mahayana. He might call it Marana sometimes.

But let's see. Let's just get down to the nitty-gritty here. Just get down to the brass tax, if you will. Whatever the hell that means. Brass tax. Is the

Mahayana belief that the Buddha never really attained party nibbana. Okay.

Uh yeah, I mean he wouldn't be the Buddha if he if he Well, and see part of Nibbana would be when he dies. So they they're just assuming that he did become enlightened, but then after he died, he still continued to exist as some sort of cosmic entity or something.

Uh

yeah, I don't know. It's like you could I mean I'm sure there have been wise probably even fully enlightened assuming that their full enlightenment can exist in samsara that there have been really wise Mahayana Buddhists um even if some

of their beliefs

or tenets seem absurd on the surface

just like I think there may have been

enlightened Catholic saints despite the

fact that some of the beliefs of

Christianity are somewhat what

far-fetched from a non-Christian point

of view.

So

yeah, I mean so long as they're not

saying that he didn't become

enlightened, but I mean the idea that

the Buddha continued to exist after he

died. I mean even Ajan man believed this

and he is terra in fact he's considered

to be like the classic example of an

arant in Thailand and he believed this

that I mean after that u in his
biography I think it's I can't remember
if it's his autobiography or his
biography I think it was his biography
composed by Ajan Mahabua who also was
considered to be an Aron that Ajan man
was having long deceased deceased
Buddhas with retinu hundreds of long
deceased arahant disciples coming to
visit him at night and discuss dharma
which that's kind of far-fetched to me
even though a lot of devout Buddhists
especially ordained in a Thai tradition
would not dare to assume that maybe Ajan
man was a little bit nutty in addition
to being very wise I mean there's

there's not necessarily any conflict between being like really eccentric and having weird ideas and at the same time being very spiritually advanced. In fact, sometimes they go hand in hand. Uh the highest goal is staying in samsara to help others. Yeah, that I would consider to be more like Maraesque, more samsaric because I mean there are no ultimately there are no others that it's like the the sutra of Hui Nang, the the platform sutra of Hui Nang really stuck with me where Hui Nang supposedly says even though this uh I've I've come across later evidence that it was a cooked up kind of a fake sutra but in the sutra itself Hui Ning says is

that you know when you become enlightened you look around and you you see everyone else is enlightened too. When you look through enlightened eyes you see nirvana you see enlightenment everything is enlightened you know sort of like in the New Testament when Paul of Tarsus says to the pure man all things are pure.

So yeah, I I think the whole bodhicattva vows of like essentially just defying the teachings of God Buddha, the historical founder of the of the tradition, you know, who says if you can do it, get enlightened in this very lifetime. And I really think that the

whole like stratification of enlightened beings with the Buddha up here, a sama sam Buddha up here and then below that you got pacheka Buddhas and below that you've got like like great disciples or chief disciples, then great disciples. Then you know you just at the very bottom you'd have like the dry visioned Arahan who is fully enlightened but nevertheless doesn't have any psychic powers or any such thing. Can't even remember his past lives. can't even read minds.

Um, I think that is like an artifact of Indian culture where the Indians, Indian philosophers were trying to just analyze everything to death, just classify,

making lists, analyzing the hell out of everything. And I think they'd really jump the shark sometimes. But ultimately, I do think the Buddha was enlightened and he was teaching other people, you know, I became enlightened. You can become enlightened, too.
I mean, there's just enlightened. There's you're either enlightened or you're not. Full enlightenment is zero delusion.
Nobody's going to have a higher zero delusion than somebody else with zero delusion. The wisdom is going to be the same.
So yeah, I think the idea that the

Buddha never really attained parinana
and still kind of exists in in within
the context of samsara kind of I mean
that is
it's not orthodox terravada obviously
and even if the Buddha did somehow still
exist I mean there'd be nobody there you
know it's like an enlightened being they
don't have any self view or anything
their karma is is like was denatured if
they have any karma at all. So I mean in
a way they become almost like an NPC or
just you know part of the matrix but
it's it's sort of like a a pure part of
the matrix that there's really nobody
there. So I mean that is a little more
acceptable than the idea that the

highest goal of dharma of Buddhism is to
stay in samsara to essentially stay
unenlightened
to in order to help other beings which
who ultimately don't even exist
in ultimate reality. There are no
beings.
So yeah, I think that aspect of Mahayana
is just anti-B Buddha
or at least uh it can certainly be
interpreted that way.
And I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This also is from sea action
zun and he says do you agree with her?
She seems 100% correct to me but people
don't want to face reality. And he

he shows this like a YouTube short. I think it's from YouTube or X or something, just this little short video of somebody interviewing this woman on a train or a bus or something. And she's saying that most religious people aren't really religious. And the main reason she gives is that if you really believed that anyone who didn't follow your religion was going to burn in hell, then I mean you'd be like waking them up in the middle of the night, you'd just be relentlessly trying to get them to convert because you don't want them to burn in hell. But because you don't really think they're going to burn in hell just deep down

you you get sleep at night. But I mean, if that argument that this woman gives is valid, that would apply to people like the Buddha and Jesus, too. It's just like the Buddha and Jesus realize that I mean, everyone has to make their own decisions. And it can be very sad. I'm sure a lot of Christians are very sad to think that their neighbor Joe is a heathen and he's going to burn in hell. But just pounding away at it, just like relentlessly harassing the guy probably is just going to make him even more anti-religious. Anyway, so this woman on the bus or train or whatever it was saying that I mean if if

you can just let people go to hell, if
that means that you're not really
religious, that you don't really believe
it. Jesus and the Buddha weren't really
religious either,
which is kind of a stretch.
It's just kind of a sad reality. I mean,
it's sort of like knowing that
everyone's going to die.
But, I mean, just because you're
religious doesn't mean that you have to
take at face value everything you find
in the text. I mean, that's obviously
the case in my case where I mean, just
because I read something in a Buddhist
text, I don't just naturally assume that
it's necessarily true. for example that

only Terravada Buddhists can become enlightened. I'm I'm very skeptical of that.

Terravada Buddhism. I mean, I don't want to badmouth Terraata Buddhism, but still, I mean, it's its track record, its success rate, you know, how many people practice it compared with how many people are fully enlightened. I mean, it's you've got like a tiny tiny fraction of 1% probably.

But

let's see. Yeah. So, I don't really agree with this woman. She's just a smug kind of secular kind of person who doesn't take religion very seriously and

thinks that just because somebody can sleep at night with the thought that other people are going to burn in hell. I mean, you just don't think about it for one thing. Like a devout Christian who really does think that most people who don't follow Christianity or their particular like sect of Christianity are all going to burn in hell. I mean, it's not a pleasant thing to dwell on. And so, you just kind of don't think about that much. Just like you don't think about the fact that we're all going to die very much.

I mean that's that's true too. That's hanging over our heads all the time. We got the sword of damocles hanging over

us all the time.

So I think people are just even very religious people they have to have like a philosophical view on this that I mean relentlessly hounding people to try to make them become religious. I mean Jehovah's Witnesses do that. you know, they're pounding on knocking on doors. I mean, I don't know if they still do that anymore. I think their their prophecies have proven false so many times. You know, it was the end times for well, it's like this the final generation before Jesus comes has been since World War I, I guess. So, yeah, I I don't know if Jehovah's Witnesses still knock on

doors. I assume they do in some places
anyway. We haven't had any knock on our
doors since uh since I've been living in
South Carolina. Anyway,
so yeah, I don't I don't really agree
with it.
So, next uh Sea Action Cadiraa
says, "Thoughts on this? Interesting
since you grew up before social media."
And again, he just sends gives this link
to this uh video of a Harvard professor.
I think he was just like a psychology
professor or something. and uh he's
talking about default mode network and
talking about how it's a good thing to
be bored. How people avoid being bored.
It's like you got to stand in line for

30 seconds. You just immediately pick up your phone and start scrolling on it, you know, checking texts or that kind of thing just to avoid being bored. And this Harvard professor is saying that being bored is actually good for you. It does have like beneficial results. Although I watched the video like more than a week ago and I don't remember exactly what the benefit is other than just learning how to accept being somewhat uncomfortable.

I mean that's that's valuable right there. just to be okay with being uncomfortable is I mean that's one of the the first things that a monk should

learn, you know, especially if you're like the oldfashioned kind of aesthetic monk and not living in a a cushy monastery in town somewhere.

So

yeah, Harvard professor default mode network talking about how it's good to be bored. Yeah, I I assume it's good to be bored. It's even good to be worse than bored, like have irritation and so forth arise. You shouldn't just try to completely avoid anything that will cause un unpleasant mental states to arise because you have to learn how to deal with them. Simply repressing them by avoiding the situation, it's it's not a very good way of learning how to deal

with unpleasant situations. Just like resisting temptation just by avoiding temptation, it doesn't make you any more resistant to temptation if you fail to avoid them. So just having to face up with unpleasant situations or trying situations

um it can actually be a good thing. You shouldn't seek them out because that's deliberate self- torture if you take it to extremes. But I mean just let it happen naturally. You just let your karma bring it upon you at at your own natural rate. And that's that's like the middle path. It's it's one of many middle paths, you know. It's not you're

avoiding unpleasantness at all costs,
which is what a lot of people do and
they all fail or you're just seeking out
unpleasantness
um just for whatever reasons. I mean,
that's not good either. So, you just
live your life as well as you can. And
when unpleasantness arises, you don't
try to run away from it or block it off.
You just learn to deal with it
skillfully if possible.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question which is from
and says, "I thought you might find this
interesting being both a biologist and
evolutionist. Curious as to your take on
this point they make. It's fascinating."

And then another link to a video where I mean at least if you're going to send me articles or videos or something to comment on, I mean they should be short. And this one wasn't bad. It was it was kind of interesting where you've got this person. I mean, again, I watched the video more than a week ago, so it's not extremely fresh in my memory cuz I didn't know that I was going to be taking a vacation until this the day before and I'm thinking, man, I I should just not do a Q&A this weekend. So essentially the argument is that Darwin himself would renounce his theory of evolution uh if he knew just how

complicated cells are. And I really
don't think so. And I mean it was a
little misleading in the video because
when they showed a cell like the
internal structure of a sh cell they did
not show the internal structure of a
simple cell like the most primitive ary
bacteria the most simplest
you know un unnucleated you know
proarotic cells they didn't show that
they showed like this ukareotic
complicated cell with a nucleus and
mitochondrias and all this kind of stuff
And then they're saying that the
complexity is such that you cannot
reduce that without the cell just dying.
And yeah, that may be true. I mean, it's

the same way with a human body. I mean, this you just take the cell, you know, multiply it by a few trillion, you got a you've got a body. And it's the same like a microscopic scale. Like we got a spleen. you just take the spleen out and you're gonna die unless you're getting like blood transfusions or something on a regular basis.

So, but that doesn't mean that we didn't have ancestors long ago that didn't have spleens.

So, getting to like the the simplest cell, I mean, it would be archy bacteria. It would be I mean there's an entire kingdom now the ary bacteria or

they may have changed the name of it but they're all anorobic.

It's it's like anorobic very simple bacteria and they're anorobic because apparently they evolved back when the earth's atmosphere was anorobic. There was no free oxygen yet which is the way it was on this earth for billions of years.

So yeah, I just I just don't think it's a good argument. And probably these people are creationists. I would guess these people are creationists. I mean, for the most part, people who argue against evolution, like on platforms like YouTube, tend to be Christian creationists.

I think there's like a new kind of
people now that are also arguing against
evolution for other reasons, but they
don't have any option to replace it
with. You know, it's like evolution is
is just mathematically impossible. But
then they offer no alternative. It's
just we can't figure out how it happens
exactly, therefore it's [__]
which is kind of hubris in my opinion.
Or you got the Christians who just say,
"Nope, the Bible's true and God did it."
And that vindicates their religion and
and so on and so forth. Helps to take
down a peg or two, the main rival to
Christianity and Western civilization

with regard to understanding how reality works, how how the phenomenal universe works.

So I think probably the earliest life would have been like a pond that was full of sort of like an organic soup. And I've said before that the earliest protool life would just be like a very simple enzyme which is a protein a very simple protein which replicates itself. But then taking a shower the the other night, it dawned on me that in this pond, you could have lots of these different proteins that are like, what's the term? What does an enzyme do? It facilitates a chemical reaction. So you could have one protein that replicates

uh you know just one stage in the reproduction of itself and then you'd have another protein uh as an enzyme just help helping along another stage of just linking another amino acid onto the chain. And so you just have this pond of various simple proteins that are sort of I mean not deliberately because they don't have minds but just because it works are just sort of contributing to this organic soup in this pond and something like DNA like nucleic acids they that would come later and also cell walls like like lipid membranes that kind of stuff would come later and I did a a speech I had to do like an oral

report in in college once about how
lipid membranes evolved the first cell
membranes and there's
uh a thing called a myel where um like a
fatty acid or like a a lipid molecule
it's polar at one end and non-polar at
the other so it's soluble in water at
one end and not it's more like oil
soluble on the other end and it forms a
this kind of cluster called a myel with
I think the the water soluble ends all
pointing outwards into the water and
that that could be like sort of a
nucleus for the evolution of of cell
walls or just cell membranes where
you've got like a double layer of these
with the water soluble aspect pointing

one way or the other. It's and

It's been a long time.

But yeah, I mean, they should start, if they're going to be having this kind of conversation, start with discussing ary bacteria, like the earliest, simplest, most primitive living things, not show pictures of this really advanced, practically modern cell with all these organels and everything. And the organels according to evolutionary theory at least widely accepted evolutionary theory that like the nucleus of a cell and mitochondrias and chloroplasts and all that. I guess mitochondria itself would be plural.

Mitochondrion I think would be singular but anyways that those were like uh symbiotic bacteria that were invading a larger bacterium.

So that's uh I mean that in itself is kind of a blow to the irreducible complexity argument.

But I really don't think that Darwin if he were alive today would renounce his own theory because evolution the fact that evolution takes place should be so freaking obvious. Just looking at the fossil record, the fossil record alone is sufficient to demonstrate that life has evolved over time.

So, I mean, the argument shouldn't be whether it happens, it's how it happens.

And if these people that are arguing
against it, I mean, they say it's
impossible. It couldn't happen that way
if they could come up with a better
theory which they which they can't.
I mean or at least adopt a little bit of
humility where they say okay just
because I can't figure it out exactly
the the mechanism by which it works
doesn't mean that it's impossible.
Unless of course you're a creationist
Christian and then you jump at that
because you want the Bible to be true.
So yeah, irreducible complexity is kind
of true. I mean, it's true with even
with a human body. You take out one of

our vital organs, of course, we're going to die. But that doesn't mean that all of our ancestors had that same kind of vital organ. It gradually evolved into such a configuration of parts that that's like a vital part. But our ancestors didn't necessarily have those vital parts.

like a a nematode worm. I not that we're descended from nematode worms, but a nematode worm. It doesn't have spleens and and kidneys and stuff.

Maybe I should have said a an like an aroworm. We are descended from something similar to what is called an aworm, which is sort of like a an invertebrate simple protoish. It's sort of like a

tadpole kind of thing.

Anyways,

I think I'm just going to move on this question. There's lots of questions. There's less than 40. So, I mean, we've have had more questions than this, even going once a week, but um still I don't want to be going for four hours. And this next question is from Trzaskiz. And Task is says, "How an enlightened being can feel complete indifference to people's death and full compassion towards them, i.e. G not feeling any grief or sorrow maybe he was going to say sorrow and then just stopped. So yeah, the question is like how can

you be fully enlightened? You don't
suffer but at the same time you feel
compassion which literally means
suffering with
is a good question and I have uh I wrote
an essay on this long ago. It might be
in one of my books might be that old
where I think the title of the the essay
was compassion means suffering with. So,
how could an enlightened being have
compassion if he doesn't suffer? And I
remember
uh the illustration I used for the for
the essay is uh an actor playing King
Lear with the fool. I mean, he's like
raging at the storm, you know, he's
going mad with grief.

And

I mean, if you look at King Lear like raging at the storm, going mad with grief as an actor, then at one level he's playing he's living the role, you know, especially if he's a method actor, but at another level, then he's like rejoicing that he's playing Lear on stage, you know, it's like this this other level of reality.

So I I assume an enlightened being. I mean when people experience suffering I mean he can he can feel that you know especially if he's he's able to like read minds he's like empathic or whatever then he can feel it. It's just

that he is interpreting it at a very different level than the person who's wallowing in some sorrow. That he is enlightened. He knows that this is all just kind of a superficial show. You know it's it's the matrix. So I mean if you can feel a certain compassion for King Lear standing alone in in in the rain going mad with grief raging at the sky in a way you can feel sorry but at the same time you know it's a play and then an enlightened being knows that this is a kind of play and that most of the actors are so into method acting they don't even realize that they're just acting.

So that's how I would explain it in five

minutes or less.

An enlightened being can feel I don't know if he feels complete indifference to people's death. It's just that he accepts it and and at one level I mean at the ultimate level it's not even ultimately real. It's conditionally real. It's virtually real. It's potentially real but it's not ultimately real.

Death is not even an ultimate reality in Abidama philosophy.

So it's it's just kind of a mental construct, an unenlightened mental construct,

but still he can sympathize with that at

this

superficial level.

I mean, he can feel what others are

feeling. It's just that he interprets it

from a higher perspective than they do.

And I'm just going to move on to Trz

because it is the second question which

is what is the longest period of time

you went without sleep.

So I mean I have to do some math I

guess. Um the longest I ever went it's

like let's say you get up at 9 in the

morning. It's just assume for the sake

of argument that I got up at 9 in the

morning one day and then stay up all

night that night. I used to do this when

I was a kid just for just for the heck

of it just see how long I could stay awake. I'd stay awake until like 9:00 in the morning the next day. That's 24 hours. Then 9 at night, that's 36 hours. And then maybe you go to sleep at like 11, which would be 38 hours. And then it's like you've been without sleep for so long. It's like your system has kind of forgotten how to fall asleep. So it might be a few more hours after that. So I'm guessing it'd be approximately 40 hours would be the longest I ever stayed awake. I never stayed awake two nights in a row. I'd always eventually crash late the second night, if not early the second night.

So, I'm just going to move on to Chas's third question, which is, can you choose your preceptor or is it always abbot of the monastery you ordaining in? Well, according to Vineia, any senior monk, any terra, any monk who's been a monk for at least 10 reigns retreats does have the authority uh as long as he's in good standing to ordain monks. Although Buddhist cultures have like changed like for example when I was going to become a monk my main vineia teacher who venerable utania

I mean I liked him and I I wanted him to be my preceptor so I asked him can you be my preceptor and he was like shocked he's like oh no only Seattle can be the

preceptor so in Burmese tradition then as a general rule it's just the abbott who can be a preceptor. Um it may be some monasteries like if it's a big monastery like I stayed at Mahagandon and the the reigns retreat I spent there there were 600 monks and 900 novices there. So it may be in a big monastery like that there'd be like a you know like a lieutenant Seattle who who was like

he is allowed to ordain monks that kind of thing.

And in Thailand, it's even worse because in Thailand, you I mean, you're not it's like illegal in Thailand for a monk to

ordain junior monks um without the permission of the government. It's like you have to get some kind of certificate or something from the federal government in Thailand before you can ordain anyone. Even if you're like the ajon of your own monastery, that kind of thing. you could have been a monk for 30 or 40 years still the government has to give you permission to do it which is I don't know it's may maybe if Thailand is considered somewhat theocratic you could kind of justify that but I think that's just way too much um interference from you know the the secular government in SA affairs but according to Vineia I mean if if you're a senior if you're

been a monk for at least 10 years then

you have the right to do it.

Um,

but it's not necessarily the way it

works. I don't know how it works in in

other Buddhist countries like Sri Lanka.

But technically I mean it would just so

long as the government's not involved

like in Burma I am sure there are

monasteries especially bigger

monasteries where the the abbott just

kind of relegates authority to ordain

junior monks to other like qualified

seats at that monastery

but it is it it varies by from monastery

to monastery I'm sure and from Buddhist

country to Buddhist country.

So, I'm just going to move on to this question from Buddha Warrex 969.

And Buddha Warrex 969 says, "What's more important for your rebirth? What you've done or not done your entire life or your mental state or thoughts in the face of death?" Well, um, your last conscious moment before death is probably the one most important determinant of what your next conscious moment after like at rebirth, you know, your rebirth linking consciousness is going to be. So it's like your very last mental state in this life is arguably the most important with regard to determining what your first mental state

in the next life is going to be which is going to have a big influence on what your next life is going to be. That kind of thing. But what is more important for your next life in general is going to be all this karmic momentum that you've brought into it. So it's like your last thought in this life may be most important with regard to your very next thought because that's like a continuum of momentum but all your problems and character traits and all that kind of stuff is going to be this this baggage karmic baggage from lifetime after lifetime of just wallowing in some sorrow stumbling through some sorrow.

So it may be that your your last mental your last conscious moment before death is helping to determine like what realm you're going to be born in. But the all the rest of it is going to be the karmic momentum that you're bringing with you. And so let's say you're kind of a icky person, very unskillful in your actions, and then you just have this epiphany at when you're dying, which allows you into into a relatively blissful realm, but then it's you're just not going to fit in there very well and you may not last there very long because your most of your karma is kind of more in a downwards direction. Similarly, if you've been a saintly relatively wise

person and then you die in some kind of agony like cursing somebody which causes you to be like re be reborn as like a a pa or ghost or something then you're probably not going to fit in there either. You know, it's you might not last very long in that existence because most of your karma just is like tending in a different direction.

But chances are if you're an icky person, you're going to die with more icky mental states. And if you're a wise, saintly person, you're more likely to die with wise, saintly mental states. So, as a general rule, there's not much conflict going on.

And so, I'm just going to move on to Buddha Warex 969's next question. He says,"I discovered the following on a page called pure dharma." Pure dharma and would like to hear your opinion. It's just a small excerpt from a longer article. And then uh we got quotes here from this article saying when Reese Davids and others began the English translations, they were heavily influenced by Sanskrit Mahayana sutras as well as by Vadic literature. When the Europeans began trollling through all these different poly and Sanskrit documents, they must have been overwhelmed by their complexity. It took some time to separate Buddhism from

Hinduism. And in the process, some concepts became confused. For example, they assumed that anata was the same as anatma or anat, which is a Sanskrit word but with a different meaning, no self. Similarly, they took ana and interpret it as the similar Sanskrit word ana meaning impermanent. Most people write it as anata. It doesn't matter how you spell it as long as you understand the meaning, without refuge, without substance, helpless, but not as no self. And then uh Buddha Warex, that was an unquote. And then Buddha War says, "This is all very interesting. Please read the entire article yourself and let me know

what you think. Well, I haven't read the entire article yet, but I have read this excerpt

and

uh I'm Yeah, I mean it's it's probably true that when the the first pioneers in studying poly texts like TWW Ree Davids um when they when they started studying poly, they were probably heavily influenced by Sanskrit Mahayana Sutras, which were better known back then, probably still are to western scholars as well as by vadic literature. Yeah, I'm not exactly sure how much vadic literature these early pioneers I mean they start generally started off with Sanskrit so there's a good chance they'd

read the gita and the upanachads and
that kind of thing.
Um so let's see when the Europeans began
trolling through all these different
poly and Sanskrit documents they must
have been overwhelmed by their
complexity. Yeah especially the Mahayana
ones. I mean poly I mean the poly text I
mean it's so long as you stay away from
abidama and the commentaries there's not
an extreme amount of complexity it's
it's relatively straightforward
see it took some time to separate
Buddhism from Hinduism and in the
process some concepts became confused
well maybe and then he gives the

examples they assume that anata was the
same as anatman which is a Sanskrit word
but with a different meaning well how do
they know that that there's this person
whoever wrote this article is saying
that anata which literally means no self
doesn't mean no self that says it means
without refuge without substance
helpless
yeah I mean even the orthodox poly texts
do not imply
that anata means without refuge without
substance helpless I mean without
substance maybe that's what Mahayana
teaches with regard to anata you know
there is no self because there isn't
anything really ultimately I mean some

Mahayana schools teach that so I mean then you can compare no self with no substance yeah I mean that's fine but still with no substance you have no self and is without refuge where the hell do they come up with that I mean that's not that's not supported by the poly texts themselves it's if this article is correct then apparently All terraata Buddhists are making the same mistake as the early Europeans, the early European translators of poly texts, the first pioneers.

And I don't think so. I mean, I was a monk for 30 years. I still think anata means no self and ana means inconstancy

or impermanence.

Impermanent.

And it when I was in Burma, the monks

thought the same thing.

So it's not just western like Christians

turned poly scholars that are

understanding things like anata as no

self and ancha as impermanence. I mean

pretty much all Buddhists including

conservative Asians that have never been

to the west believe the same stuff.

So yeah, I think these whoever is

writing this has an axe to grind and it

may be that they are one of the western

kind of Buddhists or quasi Buddhists

that still just intensely vehemently

want to believe in a self. So they'll

just say, "Well, they don't understand.

I do."

Kind of like uh Ken Wheeler kind of

approach to Buddhism.

He's the authority. He's he knows more

about Buddhism than just about any

Buddhist supposedly.

Anyhow,

I'm moving on. The next question. This

is from Drip Walker. And Drip Walker

says, "Is it possible to spiritually

heal mild chronic neuropathic phantom

pain? Anything is possible. Anything.

Unless it maybe it's just a complete

logical self-contradiction like you know

a square circle or something. But yeah,

I mean to spiritually heal mild chronic neuropathic phantom pain. Sure. I don't see why not. I would assume that Jesus could have cured somebody of that. Maybe he did. Just was too complicated of a of an idea of what the malady was to get included in the New Testament. Maybe they just said the person was possessed by a demon or something. So, sure. Is it possible to spiritually heal mild chronic neuropathic phantom pain? Yeah, sure. So, let's go on to the next question. This is also from Dripwalker. Says, coming back from the first question, if so, how should one go about doing it? Like what rituals, techniques, people, places should one

should go and any books, etc. Yeah, I think that's just barking up the wrong tree. I mean, rituals, forget the rituals, techniques, even. Yeah, I don't I don't think so. People I mean, faith healers,

that might be the kind of people you'd be searching out or people who really have no doubt whatsoever that this kind of stuff is possible and that happens like a Christian science practitioner maybe.

Um, so places you should go to, yeah, you can go to the Christian science practitioner. You can go to the faith healer.

Um, but let's say you don't have access to a Christian science practitioner or a faith healer. So, you just live a spiritual life. You cultivate your consciousness until maybe you reach this breakthrough where you just don't need the neuropathy anymore. that you just kind of outgrown the karma or transcended it or just exhausted it somehow.

But I mean there's uh Upandida's famous book was in this very life very non-Mayana title there in this very life because he's saying enlightenment in this very life.

Um yeah, he he had stories like one person had like relatively he came to

Upandid's meditation center with a relatively severe case of tuberculosis. I mean, he's like coughing up blood, that kind of stuff. And he just started doing intensive practice, you know, partly inspired by San Vega, the idea that maybe he's going to be dying soon. And he just healed himself, you know, he started developing more healthy mental states and mind is the forerunner. Mind it's it's all things are, you know, mind is chief. They are mind-made. So if you want a healthy body, if you improve the health of your mind, your body gets healthier or at least that's the ideal state unless you have some karmic need

for some kind of physical malady.
So yeah, just first of all just
believing that it's possible or or just
not believing that it's impossible. Just
keeping your mind open that anything is
possible. I mean that's that's like a
giant first step.
And uh I mean if you can't be around
people who really like are able to heal
others using like
faith wisdom whatever then yeah just or
another case is Ubaqin who was SNA's
teacher he had some kind of cancer I
think it was like skin cancer on his
face or something and through intensive
meditation
it just cleared up it went into

remission on its own. It's like or if you read Mary Baker Eddie's uh science and health with key to the scriptures which I mean that might be a first step is just read that read Mary Baker Eddie's science and health with key to the scriptures where there's like the last 100 pages or so is called fruition and it's just testimonies person after person after person who were cured of all sorts of malades just from reading science and health key to the scriptures the first one which is the dramatic was like a 40 lb tumor and the I think it was a woman who had this 40 lb fibroid tumor. I don't that was using

oldfashioned language, you know, it's like apoplelexi is a stroke and consumption is is tuberculosis and all that. She had whatever whatever a 40 lb fibroid tumor is. She's reading the book and all of a sudden it just clicked. It's like yeah that's true that it's all mindmade. You know, it's like when your mind just stops forming it, then it it stops being there. And so, she just she just read this book and it was like there was just this click that happened. And she just didn't have any doubt. I'm healed. I I never really had it in the first place because that's what that's what uh Christian scientists believe is there is no such thing as sickness. God

is good. God would not create anything bad. So, anything bad in this world is an illusion.

So let's see how should you go about curing yourself. Yeah. Well, first step is just not believing that it's impossible.

You know, have faith, I guess. Or I mean, even if faith is too much, just at least don't have anti-faith. Just this firm belief that scientific realism is true and that it's just impossible.

Although I guess even scientific realism is starting to get to the point where mind mental states are influencing physical physical systems

even determining physical systems.
Did I answer the question yet? My coffee
is cold now by the way.
Uh yeah, just don't worry about rituals
unless you have somebody who is like a a
trained spiritual healer who actually
has a track record of healing people
using like mental state spiritual means
or if that person gives you a mantra or
whatever. Yeah, you might at least want
to try out the mantra.
But as a general rule, rituals and
techniques really are not the point.
I'm just going to move on to Drip
Walker's third question,
which is, are there dangers to healing
ailments? He says elements here, but I'm

pretty sure he means ailments. Are there dangers to healing ailments spiritually other than the condition itself not improving and causing harm? Um the the only thing I could think of I mean healing something I mean it's probably more dangerous to heal it through like traditional medical means just because you can have relapses and so forth or side effects of of the medication that kind of thing that can cause things to be worse or just cause things to start happening again like they were before. um a spiritual healing is probably more likely to be like a real healing, you know, even a miraculous one where the

where

medical doctors would just say that's

impossible.

But I am reminded of a saying of Jesus

in the New Testament where he says he

can cast an unclean spirit out of a

person which is sort of like healing

them at least of like schizophrenia or

something and that unclean spirit will

leave the person and they'll start

looking around for some other person to

to inhabit you know some other person to

possess and they won't find any suitable

host. Then they'll come back to the

first person. They'll find their mind's

just like a a clean apartment. You know,

it's all nice and bright and clean and

everything. And they invite seven of their buddies to to possess this person with them. So the person winds up even worse than before.

And from a or from a Buddhist point of view, you could say that's karma. I mean, if you have like this karmic need for some kind of handicap or some kind of malady, then just getting rid of it through whatever means is going to be like bucking the tide and it's just going to come back on you because you still have some karmic need for that. In which case, you make your peace with it. You accept it as best you can.

Don't let it ruin your life.

Unless it's just you've got that bad of karma that you just have to have your life ruined.

Now, I guess I'm just going to move on this question. And we've been going for an hour and a half here. I think I'm over halfway done. This might be less than three hours. I'm on the ball. I've got what it takes.

This next question is from S Papaalapa. And some Papa says, "Do you have any construction trades you've enjoyed doing or learning about throughout your life?"

I bet Burmese construction was wild.

Well, let's just deal with the idea that Burmese construction was wild. I mean, the average Bur Burmese like village

carpenter has like three tools. You have to have a hammer. You have to have a saw and you have to have a chisel, which is something that most carpenters in the west really don't use very much. A chisel, but they you and a machete. You have to have a machete.

And I mean, the the chisel is used for like making mortise joints. you know, you're the the the carpenters in Burma, aside from just like having a a swath of con of destruction all around whatever they're fixing. I mean, that's unavoidable. But they they use like the the chisel and to some degree the machete to just make notches in the the

ends of the wood and then they just fit them together like a puzzle.

And they still use nails though. But like driving a nail through teak or through ironwood, I mean iron trying to drive a nail through ironwood is bad.

And there's even worse. There's a kind of aacia wood that's so hard and brittle. I was trying to drive nails through this stuff and it was just causing chips to fly out of the wood. It was just breaking the wood and it was like trying to drive a nail through a rock. It just doesn't work. And trying to drive a nail through teak. It's like trying to drive a nail through lead.

It's not that teak is really hard. is

just super dense like lead.
But uh I did a little bit of carpentry
work when I was a boy, like a teenager.
Just like a grunt laborer for uh my
stepdad's construction company.
And uh you know, I did a little bit of
framing, that kind of stuff. But the
construction trade that I've enjoyed
doing or learning about throughout my
life, the only thing that would really
apply would be like rock masonry, you
know, making rock walls and so forth.
It's I it's really satisfying, you know,
just getting the right rock that'll fit
right in that place, you know,
that's that would be the the only

construction trade that I've really been had any real fascination towards is just like being a a stonemason. I think I'd make a good stonemason, but it's too late to be changing to stonemasonry at this this stage in my life, I think.

So, let's see here. I'll just move on to the next question. This is from Alba Coina,

and this is a really easy one to answer. Alba Coina says, "What are your thoughts on Steve James from the Guru Viking podcast and just the Guru Viking podcast on a whole? Would you be willing to be a guest on the podcast if given the opportunity?" Okay, that's actually two questions with two question marks. So, I

got to separate these.

Okay, first question first. What are your thoughts on Steve James from the Guru Viking podcast and just Guru Viking podcast and all? I've never heard of it. I mean, I've heard of it. I've just never listened to it. I've never seen Steve James before that I know of.

And the dog wants to get petted, so I'm petting it. So, yeah, I've never never been exposed to a groove. making podcast probably on on the Discord server associated with me in general the Q&As's and so forth. Um there have been links posted but as a general rule I don't look at very many links that are posted.

That's I wouldn't have much time to do anything else if I just like investigated all the links that are sent to me.

So yeah, I mean I haven't heard anything bad that I can recall. I do think that there are some people on the Discord server who speak respectfully of Guru Viking

and I think actually somebody may have suggested that I would be a good host on Guru Viking but who knows because I I really don't I really don't know about this Guru Viking.

So that's that's my thoughts on Steve James and Elbow Cacina's second question is would you be willing to be a guest on

the podcast given the opportunity? Yeah,
I' I'd be cool with that. I'm generally
willing to be a guest on just about any
any kind of show or interview or podcast
so long as the person is in good faith.
Sometimes even if they're not entirely
in good faith, I might still be willing.
Anyways, I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from RFS.
And RFS is taking us back into the realm
of psychedelics. He says, "Do you think
people who use psychedelics as medicine
or for spiritual purposes are in
violation of the fifth precept?" Um,
not necessarily.
It's again, it's according to the fifth

precept is I undertake the precept to abstain from ale, wine, and other intoxicants which cause cloudedness of mind
or heedlessness.
And so if the psychedelic isn't causing that, that's not your intention, you're not just partying, that you really are sincerely trying to, you know, open your your throat chakra or something, then yeah, I think that it at least, you know, I've I've already discussed this like like an hour ago, but you know, at least it would be controversial to the extent that some people would agree with you at least. I mean, it's it's not just a clear-cut yes

or no. It would depend on who you're talking to and so forth. Then what your own personal position is, like with regard to why you're taking it, what psychedelics you're taking, you know, for what reasons, that kind of thing. So, I don't think that people who use psychedelics as medicine, I mean, that if you're taking it for medicine, that wouldn't necessarily violate the fifth precept anyway.

Let's see. or for spiritual purposes. Yeah, I mean I I really don't think so. There but there are people who would disagree with me like real like diehard conservative Buddhists who just think

any kind of mindaltering drug including
even like caffeine
should be avoided.
But personally, yeah, I mean, you have
to be honest with yourself and know
yourself fairly well. And uh if you
really think that you you're going to
get benefit from that, then I mean, even
if you think that you're in violation of
the precept, I mean, like I was saying
earlier, like an hour ago, sometimes you
may consider it to be
worth worthwhile to break a rule. the
old saving the drowning girl, for
example, giving malaria medicine to a
villager.
Okay. So,

I guess I guess I answered that one.

Let's just move on to RFS's next

question.

Do you think that a micro dose of

psilocybin or something stronger like

DMT or iawasa

could both be seen as skillful means on

the path? Well, a micro dose is it's not

going to be making you real

like clouded of mind.

But again, it's it's essentially the

same answer as as to the previous

question.

So yeah, I mean my spiritual path

involved, especially in my younger

years, involved taking psychedelics,

especially LSD at the time because
that's mainly what I had access to.
And I don't regret it and I think it
really helped me. But it doesn't
necessarily help everybody. Some people,
you know, you just have like some latent
weakness in your mind that can just
cause you to break if you you get
exposed to too much stimuli or, you
know, the wrong kind of stimuli or
whatever.
So, I'm just going to move on to RFS's
third question,
which is as follows.
Are there any plans for future talks
with Brian or Otto? Well, Brian, we
generally every month or two, one of us

will contact the other with some idea for a talk. I think Brian recently was going through another manic episode. So, I've been kind of maintaining a polite kind of I don't know don't want to call it distance, but really I haven't been engaging with him uh recently, but I mean every few months, every couple months approximately that one of us will say, "Hey, why don't we do a video on this or that?" And then we do it. So, the my videos with Brian, I mean, they're not nearly as regular as they used to be. I mean, we were doing like three videos a week back when I was a monk,

but still, I don't I mean, there's been no parting of the ways or anything like that, so it's it's very likely that we'll be doing more videos. I just don't know exactly when. And with regard to Auto, yeah, I'm always open to that. I think he's always open to that. Uh, he has made a few suggestions with regard to videos we could do. Um, my videos with auto seem to be wellreceived. I think one of the most popular videos that I've got on YouTube is an interview with Otto discussing
um esoteric Hitlerism from a more or less Buddhist perspective.
So yeah, there's a good chance of it. I mean, we don't have any plans in the

works at present, but it's always it's always open, you know, it's always on the table, I guess.

I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Ruie.

And Ruie says, "Do you see any viable relation between the following or is it too much of a stretch?" And then he quotes the Logian 71 from the Gospel of Thomas

and it says, "Jesus said, I shall throw down this building and no one will be able to build it." Unquote. And uh the Buddha says, "Oh house builder, now I have seen you, you cannot make a new house for me." So Ruie is asking me if I

see any viable relation between loian 71 of the gospel according to Thomas where Jesus is saying that he shall throw down this building and no one shall be able to build it and the Buddha his first words uh allegedly after his enlightenment is house builder you are seen you so you will not build a new house for me and I mean this loian 71 from the gospel of Thomas if I remember correctly that's in the new Testament also. In fact, that's supposedly um one of the accusations leveled against him by the Pharisees was he said he was going to tear down the the temple. And I do think that in the New Testament when Jesus says he shall throw down this

building that he's referring to the temple of the Jews on on, you know, the the mount of David, the city of David in Jerusalem, which now doesn't have the Jewish temple anymore. It's just got the wailing wall and there's a big mosque there.

But I think according to the New Testament, he's referring to the temple as the building. Um, and I think even if he's being metaphorical, I don't think he's referring to his own body. I don't think he's saying that he's not going to get reincarnated again. I think he he's just sort of like it might be applied to, you know, he's going to tear down

sort of the mainstream Judaism or something, which I'm sure the Pharisees didn't like very much.

So, it is it is kind of a stretch, I think. But who knows what the original context was. It may be that the New Testament has just taken that quote of Jesus out of context and applied it to something else. And I haven't really read the Gospel according to Thomas lately, but it seems to be just a collection of apherisms or sayings of Jesus um without much context there either.

So

I would guess that they're not applying that they're the Jesus and the Buddha

are not referring to the same thing that

it's just sort of a coincidence that

they both happen to be talking about

buildings.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question, which is from Xenithoid.

Oh, somebody just asked a question, but

they're too late.

Xenithoid says, "Metallica or Mega

Death?"

And

I mean, I've never really been heavily

into either one. Metallica is they get

played on the radio a lot now. There's

some bands that never get played on the

radio anymore. And then there's other

bands that just sort of counterintuitively they get lots of radio airplay and I don't really understand why. Like Mega Death, I don't know if I've ever heard them on the radio. Maybe I have once or twice. Metallica, they're on the radio all the time. And I have said that Metallica, I've I just have not been impressed by the vocalist. This the singer for Metallica just does not have a musical voice. It's like he's just talking in tune. It's not like he's really singing. I just for some reason I just do not like the the voice quality of the vocalist for Metallica. With regard to Mega Death, I'd never really heard of

Mega Death until around like 2016. I saw um a meme called Magade Death and it had like like the cover of of like a a Mega Death album except the faces were replaced by Trump and and uh what's his name? Pence and let's see, Cruz. And then there was like what's her name that who used to be the the spokesperson who's doing the the press briefings and all that.

So then I I listened to because of that Magade meme, I looked up Meadeath on on YouTube and played Symphony of Destruction. And I like Symphony of Destruction. So um I think I would if I had to choose between Metallica and Mega

Death, I'd choose Mega Death if only for Symphony of Destruction.

So, I'm just going to move on to Zenos's next question here,

which is, "I know you don't like Extreme Metal, but please give your thoughts on Rational Gaze by Mishuga and an analysis of its lyrics."

Well, I mean, I started listening to the actual song and you can't really hardly tell what the lyrics are because in this kind of of metal, death metal or extreme metal or whatever it is, they're they're essentially just screeching or roaring, you know? It's like

it takes a real effort. It's sort of like some punk rock. I remember

I just kind of as a joke I got this cassette tape back in the late 80s is we're the Meatman and you suck and it's they're just like screaming at high speed. You can't tell what the lyrics are. You just have to read the lyrics on on like the the little fold or the little paper thing that's in included in the in the cassette because otherwise you're not going to know what the hell they're saying. And it's the same way with this song, unless I'm just not used to it. Maybe people that listen to it a lot can just hear it clear as day what the actual words are. But I I did look up the lyrics. In fact,

I think uh I think Xenithoid actually included the lyrics below the question, but then I looked it up just before this one, too, because I it pretty much I I did it like a week ago, you know? I I read the lyrics a week ago. So, I read the lyrics again just a couple hours ago and uh it's talking about how, you know, we're not experiencing reality and we need to see more clearly or actually in one I think towards the beginning it's saying you have to squint your eyes in order to see reality better or something. And I mean it's just a common theme in like poetry and just art in general. artists, you know, they they're operating at like a different level of

reality from just the mainstream
normies. And so I really don't think
that this song by Mishuga is about
enlightenment so much as just, you know,
seeing past the mainstream narratives
and, you know, just seeing some other
narrative
essentially.
Well, it really hasn't converted me to
liking extreme metal. It's just the
throat screechy stuff. I just do not get
it. It's like it's like modern art where
it's it's largely a matter of sour
grapes. I think where sometime in the
20th century artists finally decided,
well, we can't do anything better than

the great masters already did. So, let's
just make ugly [__] on purpose.
Let's just stop with poetry that rhymes.
Stop with music that's actually musical.
I mean, I guess you could say extreme
metal. It's got some really good like
guitar riffs and stuff in it. That's
fine. But the throat screechy stuff is
is just deliberate ugliness for
ugliness's sake apparently.
I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from Yoshi Buouie. And
Yoshi Buouie says, "There are videos
circulating on the internet claiming by
multiple sources that if you're looking
at a beam of light while on DMT, you
will see lines of codes in the beam of

light." Assuming that this is true, it would seem very odd to any ordinary person. Have you seen these videos?

Well, if the question here is, have I seen these videos? And the answer is really easy is no, I have not seen these videos.

But I mean it would seem that the the implication is that if you take DMT it helps you to like get out of the matrix enough that you're actually seeing code like Neo. And I I rather doubt that. I mean the idea that we are living in a you know what's the word?

Oh gosh, what is the word? Like like the matrix. We're living in a simulation.

That's it. A simulation. Yeah, I I can agree with that. It's just that the simulation is is mindmade rather than computer generated.

I do not believe that we are living in a literal matrix generated by computers that we're just like in the in the memory of a of a computer.

So yeah, if if people on DMT are seeing that, then I would guess that a lot of the people on DMT that are seeing that have seen the Matrix, maybe really got into it. Um or they've just seen, you know, one person happened to like the Matrix and saw that and then he posted it on YouTube and other people saw that and then they're kind of already ready

to start seeing code and beams of light
while they're on DMT.
But uh I'm I'm relatively skeptical of
there being any empirical reality to
that. But who knows? I could be wrong.
It has happened like two or three times
already that I've been wrong about
something.
So let's just move on this question.
This is from Kundrew
and Kundrew says,
"You talked about the Bavad Gita and how
it was Arjuna's dharma to be a warrior
and kill. Can you speak briefly on this
story and how his actions are justified
and in accordance with Hindu morality?

Well, that's going to the Mahabarata in the beginning of the Bavad Gita where you have these two tribes, you know, you got sort of the good guys and the bad guys. The leader of the bad guys is blind, which is it's it's all very symbolic. I had uh a Balines monk who was born and raised in Bali explain some of the the symbolism of the Mahabarata War.

And so you have kinsmen on both sides, you know, sort of like the Civil War in the United States. And you know, they're lined up on the battlefield getting ready for the, you know, the bugles to to sound and they're going to start killing each other. And Arjuna, who's

like a a noble on the good guy's side, he's I mean, he doesn't want to be killing his own cousins and uncles and this kind of thing. So, he just says, "I'm not going to fight, you know, I'm just going to sit this one out." And his charioteer, because you know, the nobles fought on chariots, his charioteer was Krishna, who was the god Vishnu. He was an avatar of Vishnu. And so Krishna starts explaining this is this is like how the Bhagavad Gita starts. Arjuna is refusing to fight against his own relatives in this war. And Krishna is explaining to him why he should. And so Krishna is explaining how what you do I

mean this is sort of like the the main one of the main themes of the Bhagabad Gita is you just offer up the fruits of your actions to God. You know it's it's all it's all God. It's all on you. So you do something good you don't do it because you want good outcomes for yourself. You just offer it up to God like you're offering a flower. And you know, you do something bad which is nevertheless your duty which makes it not so bad. You know, it's Arjuna was of the warrior cast. That was his duty in life was to be fighting in wars like this. So I was one of his duties anyway. So it's just like you do something like that. So long as you are doing your

dharma, so long as you are doing your duty and as a as a warrior that's your duty, you just offer up the fruits to God. So in a way it kind of make it's it's almost like a Christian kind of approach where in a way it's kind of purifying you when you're when you're doing something that is uh would normally be considered, you know, evil. But you're just whatever it is, good or evil, you just everything you do, you just dedicate your life to God. You just offer your life to God. You're just you're just like God's slave. You're God's puppet.

just in just assuming that God knows

better than you do. Anyway,
so I mean that's that's essentially
how how the how the story starts, you
know, that's that's the story right
there. And eventually Krishna shows
Arjuna his true form or at least as much
of his true form as a mere mortal can
withstand without just being vaporized.
you know, he's just got like a a
thousand eyes and a thousand mouths and
a thousand arms and just it's just like
this river of beings going into his his
nashing teeth to be devoured. You know,
death, time and death, you know, it's
all God.
So, it's all just part of the divine
play that just the way it just the way

it is.

So yeah, his actions were justified in accordance with Hindu morality in that I mean it depends on what kind of Hindu morality is is broad spectrum. So of course some Hindu morality takes aims very seriously. You don't even kill a flea. But at this this other level this this other branch or strand of Hinduism then I mean it's you do your duty even if your duty is fighting and that's one reason why the Buddhists were wiped out by the Muslim conquerors in India and the Hindus managed to survive because they had like texts scriptures to fall back on in their religion like the

Bhagavad Gita that's saying it's It's
your duty to fight
that sometimes killing is okay. It's
like I mean in the Bhagavad Gita they
even adopt a kind of heretical
philosophy that's mentioned in the poly
text sometimes and that you know it's
like nobody really exists anyway and so
there's nobody really dying anyhow that
kind of thing.
So I think I answered that question. I
hope I did because I'm moving on to the
next question. This is from Dharma
River.
Indama River says, "Is enlightenment a
personal journey with a personal
conclusion depending on one's karma or

is it a onesizefits-all formula?" And then he says, for example, if two people practice exactly the same way, is it possible one person will get enlightened but the other one will not? Well, let's just deal with this second question first, which is like a sub question. And um yeah, sure. If two people practice exactly the same way, it is certainly possible that one person will get enlightened but the other one will not just because of you know the other p one person's got all these karmic stumbling blocks and inhibitions internal blockages and so forth the other one doesn't.

So yeah just outwardly their practice can look exactly the same. One will make great progress and the other one might make hardly any progress at all because internally people are not exactly the same. Even Siamese twins are not exactly the same like with regard to their their mental states.

So let's just get up to the the main question here. Is enlightenment a personal journey with a personal conclusion depending on one's karma or is it a one-sizefits-all formula? Well, I mean it's you could say it's a personal journey with an impersonal conclusion because when you become enlightened, personal is out. It's just

not in the picture anymore.

So I mean Nirvana is impersonal.

So it's a personal journey with an

impersonal conclusion

and the personal journey is the samsaric

aspect and the impersonal conclusion is

the transcendence of sams samsara.

Wow, I studied a little bit there.

Must be the cold coffee.

So, let's see. Did I answer the

question? That was I mean, it was too

easy of a question. The question didn't

take long enough to answer. You know,

it's sort of like the the insecurity of

being the first person to turn in the

test.

It's like insecurity is being the first person to turn in the test and insecurity is also being the last person to turn in the test at school.

So let's see. Is enlightenment a personal journey with a person? Yeah. I mean it depends on your karma.

Certainly.

Yeah. So I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Maximin and Maximin says, "I do trail work and sometimes work on wildland fire crews. I'm a skilled sawyer and looking to transition into a more timber or logging jobs since it's been getting harder to find steady work as a federal employee. I sleep out in the forest every night

and always notice what feels like
spirits or just the energy of the space.
I believe in karma and rebirth and
sometimes feel weird after felling trees
all day. I hunted as a kid and it's
nothing close to the experience of
killing large animals, but cutting green
trees can at least have a minor effect.
Would you say felling trees for a living
is wrong livelihood?
Well, I mean, it's it wouldn't be on the
the official list of wrong livelihood. I
mean, official list of wrong livelihood
is selling intoxicants, selling animals
for slaughter, selling slaves.
Um,

let's see. Selling poisons, weapons, that kind of thing. Um, and also just any kind of dishonest livelihood. You know, ripping people off, that also would be wrong livelihood. So, I mean, technically cutting down trees would not qualify as wrong livelihood. But

um

yeah, on on the one hand, I have to admit there's there there's just this deep satisfaction in cutting a tree so that it falls exactly where you want it to fall, like right in between those two other trees, just pinpoint accuracy. There is a certain satisfaction in that. I'm pretty good at cutting down trees. I know how to do it. Um but when you're

cutting down a tree, first of all,
there's is the tree conscious? You know
does the tree have a kind of
consciousness in ancient India it was
believed to be akindria jiva like I've
said before one faculty life you know it
doesn't really have a thinking mind but
it does have a sense of touch you know
there is a kind of simple primitive
consciousness there but more important
than that I think is that a tree isn't
just a tree a tree is like a little
ecosystem there's all kinds of of living
beings that live in that tree there's
squirrels and birds and insects and all
these invertebrates

all kinds of I mean it's just like an
environment
that is there that the whole environment
is is essentially being killed.
So I mean even though it might slip
through the cracks with regard to what
is officially considered to be wrong
livelihood in Buddhist texts
still I mean you are even though that's
not your purpose you know you're not
really trying to do that still I mean it
does result in the death and suffering
of lots of little forest creatures.
So there is that that depends on how
robust your conscience is and whether
you think that it's just your dharma you
know offer up the fruits to God you can

do that I suppose

but karma is a mental state and it's

going to be determined like if you feel

like you feel bad about doing it or you

feel guilty like you feel like you're

doing something wrong then probably

you're better off doing something else

but I mean if you think you're not doing

anything wrong and Technically, it isn't

wrong livelihood from a Buddhist point

of view as far as I far as I can

remember. Then I mean it's your choice

to make.

Let's see. I mean, putting out forest

fires, I mean, that would be good. Even

though you might have to cut down trees

to make like a fire break, that kind of thing. Still, I mean, you're doing way more good than harm by, you know, fighting forest fires, that kind of thing. Let's see.

See timber or logging jobs? Well, my father was he made a living by loading logs onto ships.

See, that's neither here nor there.

Yeah, this is kind of interesting where he says he sleeps out in the forest every night and always notice what feels like spirits or just the energy of the space. Yes, there's definitely going to be a change in the energy of the space when the trees get cut down. I mean, it also depends on what kind of logging is

being done. I mean, is it clear cutting or is it like selective logging? Like, I grew up in the Pacific Northwest and clear cutting was the norm in the Pacific Northwest. Partly because the Pacific Northwest rains a lot and so the trees have shallow roots. They don't need deep roots. Like the the climax community of trees like around sea level is the Douglas fur pseudo suga menesi. And so because it has shallow roots, it doesn't need deep roots to get to the water because it rains all the goddamn time that they just form thick stands where the trees hold each other up. And so if you do selective cutting with

individual trees, they just get blown down in the next strong wind if even if you don't cut them down.

So in in something like that, clear cutting is pretty much the only feasible way of going about it. But other kinds of forests, you could do selective cutting, which probably wouldn't be nearly as damaging to the whole environment of the place as clear cutting would be.

But I've said pretty much all that I really can think of to say with regard to this that again, I mean, people have to make their own decisions. And you know, you got to look within yourself and see how you feel when you do this.

If you feel like you're doing something wrong, you're probably better off doing something else.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question here, which is from Gordon.

And Gordon says, "I once heard a theory that the Bible is purposefully riddled with contradiction and nonsense because it keeps people discussing it. It stays topical and thus continues to occupy real estate in people's minds regardless of whether those same people think it's true or not." Thoughts? Well, I wouldn't say that the Bible is purposefully riddled with contradiction and nonsense.

It just may be that it's like a an unintended side effect that actually benefited Christianity by just sort of inadvertently being riddled with contradiction and nonsense which does keep people discussing it and keeps sort of the ideas alive because people keep discussing them.

But I have read that the Greek Orthodox Christians in particular deliberately play up the paradox of the Holy Trinity as a way of not so much keep to keep people discussing it, but just to sort of

emphasize the incomprehensibility of God, how God can be one and three at the same time. And it's never really worked

out in a logically satisfying way. So yeah, I maybe that aspect at least among orthodox Christians is is purposeful in just sort of emphasizing a paradox, but it's not so much to keep people discussing it so much as to induce humility in us mere mortals because we just cannot grasp the godhead.

But I I think that yeah, this this phenomenon

um it can be real. It's just that I don't think that it was done on purpose. I think you just had, you know, irrational religious fanatics to some degree coming up with irrational ideas that later people look at and it seems

irrational and they try to make sense of it. And just for centuries some Christians have been trying to make sense like int intellectual Christians trying to make sense of some of these contradictions and paradoxes and so forth. The trinity being one of them. Yeah. But I I really don't think that it was necessarily done on purpose.

So, I'm just going to move on to Gordon's next question, which is, "You mentioned a while ago that Abid Dhama was considered to be the first of the Buddhist teachings that would be forgotten. Do you think that the theory from the previous question would apply here?" No, because Abidama is the most

controversial. People are talking about Abidama way more than they're talking about Vineyia, which is the first which is the first pitica of the the Buddhist typica.

So that would keep Abuid Dhama alive because it gets talked about more especially in Burma. Everyone's talking about Abidama in Burma. Almost nobody's talking about Vineia, including the monks. Most monks don't even really try to follow Vinnie other than just the the obvious superficial stuff that could get them in trouble. You know, they're not going to just be wearing blue jeans or a sarong. You know, they got to at least

look like real monks.

So yeah, I think it would be almost the opposite effect with regard to Abid Dama. I mean the reason why Abid Dama is considered to be the first um aspect of dharma to disappear from this world is just somehow somebody came up with the idea that the typica was going to disappear in reverse order. So it's going to start with the last book of Abidama which is Patana which is unreadable even to Abidama scholars pretty much. I mean it's very dense. I mean even like the translations or even like the original poly versions like in the Burmese uh sixth council version of the typica they just condense it down

you know just they eliminate the the repetitions and so forth just because I mean nobody's nobody bothers to read the whole thing anyway

but just Abidama itself gets a lot of discussion there's like the national Abidama tests and so forth um so it's just that somebody came up with the idea it's just going disappear in reverse order. So the last aspect of Buddhism that will remain will be the four parajika rules

which are the four most important rules that monks have to follow

which is I mean this emphasis on monastic discipline is almost completely

lost in the west you know western Buddhists you know they're secular Buddhists they don't give a [__] about monastic discipline as a general rule so they really can't wrap their head around the idea that The book of monastic discipline is numero uno. That so long as the monastic discipline still exists, Buddhism still exists. That's what they say in Burma. Even though most of the monks don't even bother to try to follow monastic discipline very well. I used to point out in Burma, it's like they're making so much effort to keep Patana alive by blasting it over loudspeakers day and night sometimes and then they're just completely ignoring what's what's

considered to be more important or at least more fundamental to Buddhism. You know, they don't follow the rules. They're blasting patana over loudspeakers to keep the last book of of like the typica alive just so it won't, you know, the entire typica will be safe because the last book is going to be the first to go. They don't need to bother trying to preserve any of the rest of it. So long as you preserve the last book, you're preserving all of it because the last book's going to be the first to go.

Meanwhile, everybody ignores most of the monastic

discipline rules.

So yeah, I I do not think that the theory from the previous question really applies here. And it's it's almost like the opposite effect.

So let's see here. I'm just going to go move on to Gordon's next question, which is could you go back to being a monk if you wanted to? Oh, I could, but I don't want to. That's that has run its course. You know, I got what I was able to get out of it and now I have moved on to something else.

So, and I do think that I'm in the right place right now. I need to be with my woman right now.

So, yeah, I could, but I don't want to.

Moving on to the fourth transgressive question. What is the probability of you answering transgressive fourth questions?

And the next question is from PSA.

And PSA says, "Were you ever harassed or bitten by stray dogs in Myanmar when you were a monk or any wild animal? Monks usually walk everywhere barefoot, so they're consistently exposed to everything. How did you handle it?"

Well,

he's got two qu three question marks here. And then the second question mark is comes at the end of or any wild animal. So, I have been bitten by lots

of wild animals. Although most of them were like mosquitoes,
bed bugs, ticks. Yeah, those kind of wild animals. I was bitten by a lot. Let's see. But let's just let's just move on to dogs here. Were you ever harassed or bitten by stray dogs in Myanmar? Okay. I was bitten by a dog once when I was a monk in Burma that I can that I can remember. And I even wrote like a blog post about this retrospectively.
Um yeah, I don't I don't know what ever happened to the blog post. It might not be online anymore, but I was living at Tomulu Chelson Doya in central Burma about 100 miles south of Mandalay I

guess maybe 5000 something like that and
it was I I went for alms round in let's
see Pima village I think it was called
Pimina
is that right Pimina yeah I think it was
Pimina
could be wrong though Pindlay no Pindlay
was different. No, maybe it was
Pintolay. Yeah, Pendle village. It was
It started with P. Anyhow, and there had
certain routes that I would take and I'd
have to like vary the route because
sometimes one route would get too hot.
There'd start being too many people
trying to offer food into my bowl. My
bowl would just get completely full,

overflowing, and people would still be wanting to put more bowl more food into the bowl. I'd just try be trying to get out of the village as soon as I possibly could just to avoid more people trying to put food into an already full bowl. But anyways, there was this one route I would take and there was one house. It was one of the larger houses in the village where there was a lady who would come out and give me relatively good food. I mean, some people just give you like a little cup of rice and that's it, but she would give me a little cup of rice and like some kind of curry to go with it. and usually like a like a little piece of cake or something that

went along with it. And I noticed there was an older man there was the father or the father-in-law probably who lived in lived in the same house who would kind of look on disapprovingly somehow. I mean, he wasn't religious in the same way she was. You know, she really liked offering food to the monk.

And anyways, one day I stop in front of the house, you know, just because the lady's gonna come out and give me the the rice and the curry and the the little piece of cake or whatever. And there's a dog there that just kind of trots right up to me and just bites me right on the back of the calf of my leg.

And it starts like circling around and I'm like, you know, once it bites me once, you know, I'm I'm on defensive, you know, I'm trying to keep my iron bowl in between the dog and me and I'm like circling around just always facing it. And the old man who would gaze upon us disapproving or gaze upon his daughter or daughter-in-law disapprovingly when she'd be offering food, uh, he lets out this groan because he saw his dog bite me. And uh you know he gets the dog away and he brings out some kind of ointment or something you know some sort of Burmese herbal ointment stuff and puts it on my leg and I'm just saying you know

it's no problem but there was a little bit of blood you know he the dog did break the skin when it bit me and you know I just went on my way but then I I'd switched to a different route and when I'd switched to a different route people on the other side of the village would say, "Did so and so's dog really bite you?" I mean, it became like this village scandal and also I never saw the dog ever again. You know, even when I go back to that that house, you know, later later weeks, the dog was gone. And that old man just started taking a just a real obvious dislike to me. Like one time he would he would aim

or it was more than once he he'd ride his bike. He was riding his bike somewhere and he'd head straight at me and I'd have to jump out of his way in order to avoid a collision because he was I mean he was just or another thing he would do is if the o other monks were going for alms in that same village he'd get off his bike and walk it past the other monks and then when he'd see me he'd just get on his bike and ride past me just to deliberately show his disrespect like he wasn't going to he wasn't going to like get off his bike from me And I assume what happened was that the their family or you know the owner of the dog he uh he became like

this

subject of scandal because his dog bit me and so maybe he had to kill his own dog, you know, at the very least he apparently got rid of it because it I mean it bit the famous western foreign monk, you know, and I think he resented that. I mean, I really I I mean, he kind of resented me even coming to their to their house for food apparently. And then when he had to get rid of his dog, it just he just didn't like me at all after that. And then one day, I was just in a bad mood, you know? I just I was just in this [__] it kind of mood. And I'm so I'm walking into the village down

this this back road with like cart ruts in it, dirt road with ruts. And I see the old man riding his bike towards me and he's heading straight for me. And I was just in that kind of mood where it's just like, "Fuck it. Just let him run into me. I don't give a shit." And so at the last second he realized I wasn't getting out of his way. You know, I'm still looking down. I could see him with peripheral vision, but I'm just like pretending I don't see him. I'm just like looking down just I don't give a [__] And so at the last split second, he just veers his bike out of the way, goes into one of the ruts, and I don't even bother to look back, but I can hear

the crash. And I just I just keep walking. I don't care.

But he brought that upon himself. You know, never ride your bike directly towards a monk in a bad mood.

But that was the only time I ever got bitten by a dog. And it was I mean, I like dogs. I feel sorry for Burmese scy dogs that are having to live on rice and fish bones and like baby poop and dead lizards and this kind of stuff.

So, as a general rule, I I really my heart went out to Burmese village dogs, although don't particularly enjoy being bitten by them. But I didn't come down with any rabies or anything like there

is there is rabies in Burma. The one old monk that I lived with who eventually got bitten by a cobra and died. He told me that one of his granddaughters died of rabies. She got bitten by a mad dog just like 10 miles away from from the monastery.

So anyways, I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question,

which is who is better at manipulation, politicians or women?

Well, I think it's a different scale. I think women are they're better at manipulation at the the local level whereas politicians are at least they try to manipulate. I mean it's I guess some politicians are good at

manipulation other ones are just like really bad at it other than just the people that vote for them might take them seriously.

But uh yeah, the thing with women is that I mean up until really recently, up until modern times, men were for the most part calling the shots, especially outwardly in society. At home, you might have henpecked husbands or even husbands that that take beatings sometimes. You know, it it would happen. But, you know, in society, you know, men ran society. women would produce the the the babies and you know they'd be like the main role model for new humans for the first

few years which is a huge responsibility

but as a general rule men pretty much

ran things and so I mean since

prehistoric times

I mean definitely long enough for it to

get involve evolve into our like the

hard wiring of our brains and everything

that women

um they just instinctively

try to get their way through

manipulation or there's like using their

mouth, using language skills

in various ways or sometimes like

withholding affection, that kind of

thing also as a way of sort of trying to

steer their man in a direction that that

is more pleasing to the woman. And it I

mean it's been happening for a very long time.

The best kind of manipulation is where they're just sweet and nice and please you in every way they can give you a excellent meal and then you know just smother you in their embraces and then tell you that you know as you're lying there in the afterlow tell you that the house needs painted something like that.

I mean that's the ideal situation.

I mean the the other end is just like angry scolding and nagging and just making the man's life a living hell so that he gives in just for in the hope of getting some peace and quiet for a

little while.

But with politicians uh I mean I don't know with regard to manipulation maybe that priests and and in modern times also just journalists or propagandists have been more important with regard to manipulating the like the beliefs and the actions the behaviors of the populace.

I mean certainly like in the middle ages I'm pretty sure that it was like priests that were manipulating the masses more than kings were. I mean kings with regard to like superficial stuff like paying taxes. Yeah, sure the kings were were doing that but it's with regard to how you view reality was more in the

realm of the priests.

And that's nowadays it's more propagandists than priests at least in in the west.

So who's better at manipulation? I think women have it sort of built in as an instinct at least the certain tendencies that could be interpreted as attempted manipulation.

Whereas politicians, I mean, you've got female politicians that could be worse.

But I think Angala Merkel, I think she may have caused more damage to Europe than Adolf Hitler did.

That's that's certainly debatable, though.

But politicians, yeah, I don't know. Politicians, it's it's hit or miss with regard to manipulation on the part of politicians. Or maybe I'm just more immune. You know, I I've I'm more separate from politicians than I am from women because I I encounter women every day, but I don't encounter politicians every day, except for maybe indirectly through the through this computer.

But PSA, I think, is just uh stirring the pot a little bit there.

So, I'm just going to move on to the last question. Yeah, this is way less than three hours. Somehow, I've gotten more concise. I don't know how I did it because I'm digressing all over the

place.

This last question is from Avenity

and Avenity says, "Has the Buddha ever

mentioned anything about having pets or

animals in general in the sutas?"

Well, I think the main animals that are

mentioned in the sutas are cows because

I mean the Buddha existed right towards

the beginning of a money economy in

northern India like the Ganges Valley

and before that traditionally it was

cows that was your wealth instead of

kahapanas it was cows

long before it was rupees it was cows so

I mean there are some many mentions of

cows in the sutas including a kind of

strange suta in I think it's in the

sutin pata that's talking about how cows

are just like the great benefactors of

mankind and the Buddha is just bashing

sacrificing animals particularly cows

you know cows do nothing but good to us

and

well for the most part they do nothing

but good to us I mean bajia was killed

by a cow

but I mean you know there there are

great benefactors you know in the sutas

you see that cows are like the great

benefactors of mankind it's like cow the

cow is man's best friend and I should

mention getting back to ah being bitten

by dogs I have had one or two cow or

bulls sort of like pawing the ground at me like threatening me and one time I think I might have been in a bad mood that day too I was just wasn't paying any attention and I could see in the corner of my eye this bull standing there just kind of pawing the ground like it's getting ready to just gore me or something and I just ignored it. You know, it's like maybe I'll just diffuse the situation by refusing to acknowledge this bull's existence. But then it was like either the owner of the bull or just some kindly village guy just took it upon himself to uh take the bull and lead it away and like take its rope and

wrap it around like some post somewhere else.

But getting back to Aven's question, um, dogs are mentioned in the text, but I I mean there may be sutas in the in the sutapitica where, you know, there's this man who loves his dog and, you know, it's like this wholesome relationship between man and dog. But as a general rule, I mean, Asians, including ancient Asians, really have not had a high opinion of dogs that like in in the book of monastic discipline, there's the list of 10 kinds of meat that a monk is not allowed to eat. And dog meat is on the list because dogs were considered to be just dirty,

just unclean kind of animals. You know, they eat poop and that kind of stuff. So um yeah there's there's mentions of dogs you know it's like there's like the the simile of the mangy dog you know the person in samsara is like a dog with mange where the dog kind of gets in one position and it's just not comfortable and then it changes position and that's not comfortable it scratches itself and it's might relieve the itch for a little bit but still it's it's just always restlessly trying to deal with this itch and of course the Buddha then applies that to the average human being living in samsara living in this world is just

always dealing with this restless itch

just always keeping us you know just

always wanting something different

different position different different

whatever

there is a mention uh I think it's in

vinia of a monk who had a trained monkey

um actually there's there's more than

one story about a monk with a trained

monkey one of them he's actually having

sex with it so that was that was a bad

situation

The Buddha did not endorse that at all.

But I guess there was another

case. Oh, one time the Buddha himself

was was fed with a by a monkey. There

was um the monks were squabbbling over

some pickyune dumb excuse. It was like something about uh filling the water pot in the outhouse or something. And the just the monks formed two factions and they were just like bickering over this. And so the Buddha just took off and lived alone in the forest. And there was a monkey and an elephant that were attending to him. You know, they were like bringing him food and this kind of thing. And it is allowable for a monk to I mean he can't provide his own food. But if somebody else who isn't a monk provides him with food, including a monkey, he can do that. So I think in Ajantisro's book on monastic discipline

he told how he had heard of a a monk in Thailand who was like a hermit living out in the forest who had trained a monkey to offer him food.

And elephants are mentioned elephants are noble beasts. You can't eat elephant meat not because they're unclean but because they are a sign of nobility. They're emblems of the king.

And elephants are considered to be this sort of like a noble intelligent sort of animal. Um, they're also called naga. I mean, not only are cobra dragons called naga, but bull elephants are also called naga. Sometimes the Buddha is called naga, which means bull elephant rather than cobra dragon.

So,

let's see. But that's not really pets. Uh, there's there's a story in the Dhamapata commentary of somebody keeping a pet bird. Um, it was like a stork. I think it was some kind of stork that they kept. Why? Why you keep a pet stork? I don't know. But yeah, there. So, apparently in ancient India, people did keep pets. Dogs are just kind of universal. I assume it would be similar to dogs in modern Burmese villages where, you know, they're just kind of background animals. You know, a lot of people have them, but they don't get much conversation. You know, they're

just kind of these dirty, grubby animals
that bark when strangers come and clean
up baby poop and other garbage.
So, they were kind of a very low status
kind of an animal. Cats, I'm not so sure
about. I mean, they had cats in ancient
India. There's a mention of bags made
out of cat skin. Of course, that could
be some kind of wild cat.
And then pet birds.
Also, I guess there's a there's a
prohibition on monks like causing
quailes to fight. You know, it was sort
of like [__] fighting except it was
quails, male quailes, I guess.
Of course, people had like barnyard
animals, chickens and all that. But

yeah, there's really not much mention of having pets in the sutas. You know, me dogs are mentioned, which presumably were pets. They weren't all just feral stray dogs. But I mean, it's just it wasn't really emphasized in the text just because it wasn't considered to be important enough, I guess.

So, yeah, but keeping animals in general, I mean, pretty much everyone was a farmer that didn't live in the city in the Buddhist time. So yeah, everyone everyone had animals pretty much.

But uh pets were not nearly as important to ancient Asians as they are to modern

westerners where a lot of modern westerners they've got dogs or cats that are like surrogate children. And I've noticed that in myself that um you know you just sort of your parental instincts get like redirected towards the dogs sometimes.

Well, that's it. I guess we're done. By golly, and it's uh way less than three hours. So, that's that's kind of that's kind of a plus.

And so, like I should always say at the beginning and only have done once to my recollection, do you have any questions you think I can answer, especially about early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism, meditation, Buddhism in general,

philosophy in general, Dharma, questions like that. questions about me personally living in Burma or that kind of thing that that's that's fair game. Also, anything you think that I can answer. And I mean, if you just have this offthe-wall desire to know, you know, my musical tastes or something, I mean, that's that's fairly easy. I mean, I'd rather that that not be the majority of questions asking me about Metallica or Mega Death, that kind of thing.

And uh let's see. Like and subscribe if you have not done so already and be happy. And now I'm supposed to uh hit this button here that says stop

recording.

Alrighty then. It appears we are recording.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 166.

I am your host Ponyo Basa. And of course 166 is not prime. It is in fact 2 * 83.

And this is my beverage. I'm not drinking coffee this time because I already drank three cups of coffee today and I'm fairly zinged on caffeine.

So, we're going with orange juice.

I do have an emergency backup beverage, but it's highly unlikely that I will have to resort to that because this is going to be one of the shortest Q&As's in a long time. I think there's only

like 16 questions, something like that.
So apparently I've been very successful
in answering everybody's questions so
that they're running out of questions to
ask which could result in me reducing
the frequency of these Q&As's to or Q's
nas
to maybe once every two weeks or so
which is easier for me I guess.
So, with that is kind of a lame hobbling
kind of introduction. I suppose I should
just wade right into this.
Maybe it'll be less than an hour long.
Who knows? Well, I guess you guys can
know just by looking at the time, but I
don't know yet. First question is from
Siovakian Cipad. And Sioipad Zeta says,

"Allants have no delusion, but they still get rebuked by the Buddha. Similarly, it's pretty obvious the Buddhist tradition is a lot more based in reality and is much wiser than mystical type traditions that may have produced some enlightened being. What is the difference between wisdom and non-delusion cuz it seems like there is actually a difference.

Well, there's a little bit to unpack here. I think at the verse at the very beginning here he says all arroants have no delusion but they still get rebuked by the Buddha and I cannot think of any example

Zidana may have something fresh in his mind that caused him to say this but I cannot think of an example of the Buddha actually rebuking an arahant a fully enlightened being there's I can think of one case where there was a fully enlightened being who was actually the the cause of making a new vineia rule. It's the rule against a monk storing food because this Arahant was going for alms like maybe once a week and then just like drying the extra rice out in the sun and just eating dried rice um with whatever else was with it. Um and so the Buddha said, "No, you shouldn't do that." But it it was the the Ara hadn't done anything morally

wrong.

So I mean why would the Buddha rebuke an arahant if he really hasn't done anything wrong?

So I mean there was one case I can't remember now if this monk was fully enlightened but there is a case where I think it's with regard to the rule against drinking alcohol that some monk I mean he wasn't trying to get drunk or anything. It was like he took something that had fermented or some such he drank that and became drunk. Maybe it was some kind of medicine that he took. I don't remember now. And he had psychic powers. He had defeated some cobra dragon using

psychic powers, you know, some naga. And then he essentially passes out with his feet pointing towards the Buddha which in ancient India and modern Burma is you don't point your feet at another person especially if they are like higher status than you or like older than you because it's
it's just bad manners in like Indian culture and in cultures that use like classical India as their like cla their cultural foundation. ation to some to some extent you know like in the west we use like like in America especially Rome is like our classical predecessor and we kind of look to ancient Rome for a lot of ideas that kind of thing in

some place like Burma it's India
so you don't point your feet at people
that especially if they're respectable
people
um you don't use your foot to point at
anybody and just Like if you're sitting
at a like a like a doma talk, let's say
you're you're like up against the wall
in the back because you got like your
back is sore or something. So you want
to lean back against the wall. You don't
have your feet pointing out towards the
teacher. Bad manners. So it this monk
who I mean the Buddha was kind of making
fun of him, you It's like look he he
defeated this cobra dragon and now look

at him you know he's lying there
pointing his feet towards towards his
teacher you know could he defeat a cobra
dragon now and all the other monks are
saying no venerable sir he could not so
something like that but still it's not
really a rebuke I mean the Buddha knows
that this monk really hadn't done
anything wrong if in fact he was an
orant because in the text or really do
not misbehave I
There can be some sort of accident or
something that's just sort of um a
violation of protocol, that kind of
thing, but they're not going to
misbehave deliberately, which would
be the cause of a rebuke.

So, I'm not I don't know what Sioat Zena is thinking about when he says that fully enlightened beings get rebuked by the Buddha.

So,

and the windows open and people are exploding fireworks outside. I do not know why.

Let's see.

Okay. No, they're still exploding. Let's see. The Buddhist tradition is a lot more based in reality. Oh, just a minute.

Let's close this window.

I don't know why fireworks are going off lately in America, but they have been.

So anyways, let's see.

H the Buddhist tradition is a lot more based in reality. Um I'm not exactly sure what seovad zir means with regard to this unless he's referring to like empirical reality which isn't really reality at all. And that's

um you know that's that's kind of a sticky a sticky point here because any kind of mystical tradition if it's really like advanced mystics is going to be based in reality even though it's not particularly empirical with regard to samsara.

But that's neither here nor there. I guess I guess I can just move on to the actual question. What is the difference

between wisdom and nondelusion?

Um well

I guess there's two ways of going about this of answering this question. First of all like according to Abid Dhama that pa or wisdom and amoha or non-delusion are synonyms. They both mean exactly the same thing. So when you have zero moa or zero delusion you're enlightened.

So from the orthodox point of view, there really is no difference between wisdom and non-delusion. But I mean, you could say, okay, um, this this glass of orange juice has no wisdom, but it also has no delusion because it has no mental states. So you could say that a rock has

no delusion, but nevertheless, it has no wisdom either. But so long as you're referring to a mind,
to the extent that that mind is without delusion, it is wise.
And the more mind is there without delusion, I mean maybe you could say the more wisdom is there.
But still from the orthodox point of view, zero delusion is the same as just maximum wisdom.
Okay. So
I think I'm just going to move on to SEO of action cad's next question which is a biology question. It's about the evolution of life on this planet or like the origin of life on this planet.

He says you said that self-replicating enzymes were probably the first things to arrive. So with regard to the first protool life, however, I don't see how these enzymes can perpetuate in a controlled manner before a differentiation from inside an outside environment or cell membrane. Similarly, I don't see how these all of a sudden, let's see, I don't see how these all of a sudden these enzymes could be coded for by RNA afterwards either. What are your explanations for these if self-replicating protein enzymes came first? Well, I was saying in a previous Q&A like the first protool life, you

know, would be like a self-replicating protein
and at some point the I mean that was like the the original genetic material was probably like a protein and at some point very early on proteins got replaced by nucleic acids as the genetic material. But um I guess he asked another kind of question before this. Um see I don't see how these enzymes can perpetuate in a controlled manner before a differentiation from inside and outside environment or cell membrane.
Well, I mean at first it wouldn't be particularly controlled.
So that's that's one thing. I mean, it would just be these you've got like this

pond of like this organic soup, this organic broth or what early biologists referred to as protoplasm that is, you know, it's just like the pond itself has become a kind of very simple organism even though it's big and it's just all these organic molecules, some of which are simple proteins which are h I keep forgetting the word of what it is exactly that an enzyme does that facilitates a chemical reaction. Anyways, that you know there'd be some of these simil simple proteins would be like enzymes that are co like facilitating the production of more of themselves. And it could be like a group

effort of different different simple proteins each responsible for like one step in the process whatever. So I mean it wouldn't be really controlled at first. It would be haphazard at first and a differentiation from inside and outside the environment. It would be the pond and what is outside of the pond. So yeah, I really don't see much of a problem there.

um cell membranes very probably came later.

Anyways, um he says, "I don't see how these all of a sudden these enzymes could be coded for by RNA afterwards either." Yeah. How it is that nucleic acids replaced proteins as the genetic

material, I don't know. I mean, I don't
know how the first proteins that were
like simple simple enzymes that were
like self-replicating.
I don't know exactly how that happened
either other than just millions of years
of trial and error just random chance
random alterations due to like ionizing
radiation and so forth over the entire
surface of the planet
that I mean that's a very big laboratory
and you have enough you know monkeys
typing at typewriters
um or I guess nowadays it would be like
computers that you're eventually going
to wind up with some sort of elaborate

sentence. I don't know if you're going
to wind up with, you know, the the the
complete works of Shakespeare,
but still you're eventually every once
in a while, you know, you've got
millions and millions of these monkeys
just typing at random, just through
random chance at some point or another,
you're going to have some sort of
coherent seeming sentence.
And that would be like the the the
enzyme or how exactly it is that nucleic
acids replaced enzymes or or just
proteins as the genetic material. I
don't know. But there is evidence that
the genetic code did evolve. And I was
kind of blown away by this when I was in

college and I first noticed you're looking at the genetic code, which it means you're looking at what three nucleotides
in a nucleic acid code for one amino acid and a protein. And it is apparent that originally it was two am or two nucleotides would code for one amino acid. But because you've got like four possibilities, what? Guanine, cytosine, adinine, and and tyrosine. Starts with a T. Thymine. Thymine. There we go. That you've only got 16 possibilities. So long as you've got two nucleic acids coding for one amino acid, then you can only have 16 amino acids. And that

apparently wasn't enough. And so you can see by looking at the genetic code that that at some point very early on a third nucleotide got added to the to the genetic code just so you could have more than 16 amino acids. I think it's like 20 in humans. And for the most part that third nucleotide is just is redundant. I mean it's unnecessary. It's only in a few cases where you're going to get um the third nucleotide actually counts in the genetic code. I mean, it's like you can have like CA anything for example and it's going to code for the same the same amino acid regardless of what the third nucleotide is.

So I mean that is some circumstantial

evidence that the genetic code actually
did evolve that it was originally two
nucleotides coding for one amino acid
and then it somehow through mutations
like random chance or I mean something
guiding evolution
that it got um increased to three.
But how it actually happened, I mean,
other than just millions of years of
essentially trial and error, like random
trial and error over the surface of the
planet. And I mean, eventually stuff's
going to happen. It's stuff is going to
be created. But then let's say you you
let's you don't want to believe that
that could happen just through random

chance. I mean, you don't have to just
leap into like Christian creationism
that I mean, it could be something like
Schopenhau's will with the capital W
that's helping to guide the evolutionary
process. That's possible. I mean, it
could be that the evolutionary process
is actually fueled or at least guided by
something, influenced by something.
But again, it's like so many people,
especially nowadays, it's like
this challenging established narratives
is really in fashion lately.
That's why you have so many conspiracy
theories and I'm not even using
conspiracy theory in a derogatory sense
because so many conspiracies conspiracy

theories turn out to be true.

So, let's see what was where was I going with that? Oh, yeah. So there's so many people that I mean they're just sort of going against the established narrative sometimes just because and so you know even people that aren't Christian creationists are like bashing Darwin now and saying it's just mathematically impossible and so forth when they seem to be it seems like they never offer up any kind of alternative any plausible al alternative other than God did

But I mean Schopenhau's will I mean that could that could definitely help along the evolutionary process.

So to me it's it's

the the idea that evolution occurs just

based on the fossil record for example.

I mean it should not be that

controversial. It's pretty damned

obvious to me that the fossil record is

clearly showing like a change in the

development of organisms over time. Like

just getting into the vertebrates, you

had fish first. The oldest vertebrae

fossils are fish. Then you had

amphibians. You didn't have mammals,

reptiles, or birds yet. You had fish and

amphibians. Then after the amphibians

evolved, then you start getting into

reptiles. And then after the reptiles

evolve, only after the reptiles evolve,

you start seeing other things like dinosaurs and mammals and so forth. So there's obviously this developmental sequence going on over time.

And that was I mean the most plausible explanation for that is evolution.

So what's causing the evolution? If you think Darwin was wrong, come up with some other cause. But if you start bashing evolution itself, then essentially you're bashing empirical empirical reality or just empiricism, which I mean you can do and you can say, well, this is all just the matrix. It's all just a simulation and so it's all just irrelevant how we got here or or

whatever.

Let's see here. I suppose I answered that question and then uh answered it like five 10 minutes ago and then just kept rambling.

So I guess I'm just going to move on to Seova Caden's next question which is kind of a political or cultural question.

Ancient Greco Roman civilization versus modern western civilization. Which was or is greater in your opinion? because I remember you saying ancient Magada was the greatest. So I'm curious how you compare these two. Well, I did say that um I have often considered that like the Ganges Valley of India during the

Buddhist time was like the zenith of
human civilization.
You know, it was just sort of a miracle
that that that happened.
Um, it was just sort of a culture that
was had one of its most burning causes
being enlightenment,
which is not the case anymore. Now, it's
just sort of um, you know, we we're kind
of going going along with the sort of
the Greek ideal of just intellect. Just
keep developing intellect, at least with
regard to science.
And that's only for like the the
intellectual elite, you know, the
normies remain just they don't care

bread and circuses.

So getting to the question which is

which do I consider to be greater like

classical western civilization you know

Greco Roman like pre-Christian paganism

versus modern western civilization. Well

I mean each side has its advantages and

disadvantages. Like modern western

civilization, we have the advantage of

science or just empiricism helping to

guide our knowledge of what causes

sicknesses. For example,

we are much much less likely nowadays to

attribute it to curses or witchcraft or

just strange off-the-wall guesses

for example. Um also one advantage we

have in modern western civilization is

we have abolished slavery. I mean
ancient Greco Roman civilization there
were lots of slaves in in a lot of
places slaves were the majority of the
population especially like in cities.
So I mean I'm not pro-slavery.
I mean I'm not I don't I I don't think
that we should have just complete
equity. I mean that's communism.
But I mean there's a certain class
stratification is fine so long as
there's mobility between the classes,
but slavery it's just a little too much
for my tastes. So I would give the like
the point to modern western civilization
with regard to that. Although modern

western civilization like now I mean
we're getting into postmodern at this
point and postmodern western
civilization with its like championing
of degeneracy for example no that's
that's not stable and it's it's sort of
in decline. So like western civilization
now is sort of like Roman civilization
towards the end of the empire.
And modern civilization, I mean, we do
have a more developed sense of
compassion, for example, like nowadays,
you try to have um like
gladiators killing not only each other,
but just like killing wild animals in
the arena, fighting against wild
animals. I mean, that would be

considered cruelty to animals. And I mean, if if there were such a thing, I do think that um any kind of combat like that, the animals should at least have like a one in three chance of winning. At bare minimum, one in 10. I mean, the animal should win sometimes. It's not you just go out there and kill them. I remember reading I think it's in Gibbons decline and fall of the Roman Empire where the emperor Kimotus who is probably best known from the movie Gladiator that he would do gladiatorial combats in in the arena like the coliseum of Rome and he would kill a lot of kill a lot of animals and he was

using arrows with like a crescent-shaped head to cut off the heads of of ostriches. you know, he's shooting ostriches and decapitating them with this this kind of crescentshaped arrow head, which I mean, if the arrowhead is spinning, I'm not exactly sure how how he'd work it out like that, but I mean, it's that kind of stuff, just this um acceptance of cruelty as just the way it is. I do think that modern western civilization is uh is superior to the ancient Greco Roman civilization. So I'm I would guess I mean if if you're talking about modern western civilization not necessarily as it is now just like when you refer to like

classical civilization in Europe you're

not referring to it as it was you know

as Christianity was taken over and it

was becoming more medieval

you know this you're sort of getting

into the medieval age

so

all in all

I do think that modern western

civilization let's say preworld war I

you know late 1800s

you know like the the industrial

revolution is going strong that modern

western civilization would have been

superior with regard to ethics and just

the power of the civilization

modern western civilization has pretty much converted the entire entire earth almost the entire planet to modern western culture to a large degree even like China you know they're wearing western clothes now they're they're living in westernstyle cities that kind of thing they're still talking in Chinese but still they've adopted western political systems western economics western infrastructure western clothing western music styles all this western stuff. So I mean Rome didn't do that.

I mean within within like a a smaller scope they did but yeah I think probably uh modern western civilization despite

the Christianity I mean there's obvious pros and cons. I mean there's winds on both sides but overall um I would say modern but not postmodern western civilization would be preferable to say early Roman Empire or let alone classical Athens. Classical Athens was kind of a [__] show, you know, and that was sort of like the Italian Renaissance where you got all kinds of [__] just [__] hitting the fan on a regular basis that nevertheless created enough chaos that it inspired genius somehow.

The Renaissance was like that. Ancient Greece was like that. You know, just

sort of small city states chronically at war with each other. A lot of experimentation. you know, they're just kind of breaking new ground all the time and just civil wars, uprisings, riots, this kind of stuff was just going on and on and on and on.

But it it produced like like Athens like the the population of like male citizens and only males were I mean active citizens with regard to you know creating the culture and so forth that I mean there's only a population of like 20,000 and it's just out of those 20,000 people you just had all this like inspiration and genius coming out of it. And the modern west just doesn't really

have that kind of inspiration partly because it has reduced the chaos to a large degree.

So I guess I'd just move on. Next question. This is from Romeo. And Romeo says, "Erica Kirk, Charlie Kirk's widow, gave a speech at his funeral in which she forgave his killer." I've always seen this aspect of Christianity to turn the other cheek and love your enemy as a doctrine for suckers. Like it or not, the world is full of lots of cruel people. And such people only see this turn the other cheek stuff as a weakness to exploit. Unlike Christianity, Judaism and Islam certainly don't seem to have

an issue with condemning and destroying
their enemies. This got me wondering
where Buddhism stood on the issue.
And then he says, "How would Erica Kirk
be expected to react to Charlie Kirk's
killer if she were a Buddhist?"
Well, I think Buddhism, I mean, it's
it's more neutral than Christianity. I
mean, it's not saying that you should
positively love your enemies, although I
mean, you should have like equim
like have enemies in your mind. I mean,
Christianity is that way, too. It's like
people who hate you are kind of your
enemy like objectively but not like in
your own heart they're not your enemy.
And Buddhism pretty much goes the same

way as Christianity with regard to this.

Um

like I mean I'm reminded of this weird

story of Mongala Buddha. You know some

he lived you know countless eons ago.

Mangala Buddha. He's in the the list of

28 Buddhas and he's towards like the

older end of this list of of previous

Buddhas on most of which were on

previous earths,

previous universes.

And there was this Yaka or ogre who

disguised himself as a Brahman and went

to the bodhicatta of Mangala Buddha. So

before mangala Buddha became fully

enlightened you know he was he was going

through his you know perfecting his parameies life after life after life and in one of these lives this ogre disguised as Brahman came and asked Mongala Buddha the the proto Mongala Buddha for his two children and so Mongalab Buddha just hands over his kids to this Brahman or to this ogre and then the ogre immediately starts devouring this man's children right in front one of them and according to this weird story which is probably fiction in my opinion that Mongala Buddha or his like the the bodhic sata the forerunner of Mongala Buddha it I mean he wasn't freaked out by seeing his kids being eaten by an ogre he was rejoicing at the

merit he was earning by sacrificing his children to this ogre I mean he wasn't killing the children he wasn't responsible for that. But still somehow in this weird legend, Terravada Buddhist, Orthodox Terravada Buddhist, he was rejoicing and he's he made this kind of a vow. It's like he wanted to shine the way the blood was was like shining as it came from the the ogre's mouth, you know, as he's eating the kids. And that's why when Mongala Buddha became fully enlightened when he become the Buddha Mongala Buddha not God Buddha that he was emitting light at all times you know he was just luminous and it was

because of this occasion and

it's just bizarre but really Buddhism is

just uncompromising even more so than

Christianity I think with regard to this

nonviolence.

Um, so would Erica Kirk be expected to

react to Charlie Kirk's killer? Or how

would Erica Kirk be expected to react to

Charlie Kirk's killer if she were a

Buddhist? Um,

she wouldn't necessarily announce that

she had forgiven the killer. She might

though, and certainly she would have no

ill will towards the killer if she were

like an enlightened Buddhist anyway. But

most Christians can't bring themselves

to love their enemies. And most

unenlightened Buddhists can't bring

themselves to have equinimity towards

all the badness and evil in the world.

So

this turn the other cheek. Yeah, that's

going a little too far. I mean, you

could just run away. I mean, that would

be definitely an option for a Buddhist.

Like somebody slaps you on the cheek.

You don't just turn the other cheek and

wait to get slapped again. You know, you

could just sort of, you know, block it.

Get away.

So,

love your enemy. Yeah. In Buddhism, you

don't necessarily have to love your

enemy, but you can't hate your enemy.
You can be sort of indifferent towards
your enemy, but uh hating anybody or
anything is definitely not good
Buddhism. vengeance. Like revenge is
definitely immoral bad karma.
So, how would Erica Kirk be expected to
react to Charlie Kirk killer if she were
a Buddhist?
Um, depends on how good of a Buddhist
she was, I suppose. But in all
likelihood, she would uh um you know, if
not forgive the killer, at least have no
ill will or resentment towards the
killer. I mean she the the wise thing to
do was you know was it was Charlie's
comma you know everything everyone's

comma is their own and you know hatred
is just toxic you know it poisons the
system so you know it's just that's just
the way it is I accept the way it is
let's just continue
so I'm just going to move on to Romeo's
second question
which is on a wider scale scale is
defense of oneself and one's loved ones,
even to the point of possible violence,
ever justified in Buddhism? Well, even a
monk is allowed to strike out in
self-defense. I've mentioned this
before. Um, I mean, so you can not only
parry and dodge, you know, block
incoming blows if you can, you know,

refer, you know, like Io, that kind of thing, but you can even strike out in self-defense. Um, so long as you're not trying to, and like your point is not to kill your attacker or even to harm your attacker, but more like Kyle Writtenhouse, you are just like neutralizing the threat. You're doing whatever it takes to defend yourself. Um, and you're not deliberately trying to hurt the other person, even though you might be punching them in the nose, just as a way of defending yourself so you can get away.

The thing is though, defense of one's loved ones. I mean, that is one of the main reasons or it's it's definitely a

big reason why monks are supposed to be celibate and cut family ties because you have a family, you have to defend that family. You have kids that have lice in their hair, you got to kill the poor little lice. That kind of thing. And so I mean living the family life just is not conducive to living the life of advanced Buddhist practice according to the texts.

You have to do things as a lay person or at least it's the duty of a lay person to

do things that are not particularly wholesome actions going with just this absolute hardnose hardline

approach to Buddhist ethics
because I mean ethics really don't take
into account
your family obligations or your
political obligations anything like that
The ethics are largely universal.
It's subjective. You have certain mental
states. They're going to take you
farther away from enlightenment
rather than closer to enlightenment.
Whatever helps you to become enlightened
is good. According to Buddhist ethics,
whatever takes you farther away from
enlightenment is bad. And hatred takes
you farther away. Any kind of aversion
takes you farther away.
So

really in order to become an enlightened Buddhist, I mean it's it's a kind it seems to me to be a valid argument that you have to stop being human that just humanity itself contains a lot of bad karma just unh wholesome mental states and so forth. So, I mean, you could say, "Well, that's ridiculous that you live in society, you can't really follow Buddhism, so Buddhism is just dumb." I mean, there are a lot of people that argue that Jehovah's Witnesses when they're trying to talk somebody out of being a Buddhist, they can resort to that kind of thing. But again, it's like ethics or

dharma is universal. And it's just
it it really doesn't take make
allowances
for your social situation, which is one
reason why monks are supposed to
renounce society, just go off and live
alone in a forest somewhere and
meditate. And then they can be saintly
as they please. They can even just let
people kill them if they want to. You
know there's plenty of cases like um
apparently
um in in the sutas even there's mention
of the Buddha in a previous life he was
in the the kingdom of Kolinga which is I
think like on the east like the
northeast coast of India somewhere and

um there was a king who was in this this park and monks hang out in parks just because you know there's trees and stuff they can meditate under that sort of And so this king took a nap and his herum were just kind of bored. They didn't have anything to do. So they see this holy man sitting under a tree. They go and start, you know, asking him questions and so forth. And the they're, you know, the the Buddha in a previous life is answering the questions. The king wakes up. He's he's one of those psychopathic kind of kings, you know, sort of a Caligula type. He sees his wives all talking to this man over the

over yonder. He gets pissed off and he goes and demands to know what's going on. And and this pre this bodhic sata this says I teach acceptance kiwadi was what he was called you know the the teacher of patience or acceptance. And so the king says let's just see how how accepting you are. And he starts having his hands the this bodhicatta's hands and feet cut off. And I think he cut cuts off his nose and ears too or has them cut off by some lackey. Doesn't want to get his hands dirty. And then uh he just kind of leaves him there. And the the the Buddha the the the pre Buddha, you know, he he just lets it happen. I mean, there's strug he could

struggle. There's no way he'd get away, but still he he doesn't struggle, you know, he just accepts it and then he just accepts it, you know, kiwi. That's that's what he was. That was his emphasis in that life. You know, the parmmy that he was perfecting was acceptance or ki.

And so he just bled out and died.

And it's it's not human really, but that's the way you're supposed to be in accordance with orthodox terra Buddhism. You're like this superhuman saint and there's just no allowances for well you live in society you get drafted in the army you got to go and kill people

maybe and you know you somebody attacks
your family you got to attack the
attacker that kind of thing I mean
there's no allowances for that so if you
want to follow dharma at the highest
level you renounce the world you
renounce society
that's one of the the first parameies is
nikama or renunciation.
It's like the third pie out of the list
of 10.
Donna sila nama is the third
renunciation.
And I mean with the orthodox terravada
point of view, forget what modern
western weasna people are saying. It's
like you want to practice dharma

correctly

practically numero uno renounce the

world

become a hermit living in a forest.

So I guess I'm just going to move on to

uh Romeo's third question which is a

followup of the second one. He says, "If

not, how can individual Buddhists or the

dharma itself be expected to survive

amidst other less less specific people

and religions?" Well, you got karma. You

got better karma. And so, you're just

going to be more likely to just be

living in a peaceful area, that sort of

thing. But there's no guarantees.

I mean Buddhism has existed for 25

centuries despite the fact that the

official position of Buddhism is just

uncompromising nonviolence

aims

nonharming

and there's Buddhist still here.

So

yeah,

I think I answered that one. I'm going

to move on to the next question. And

this is from Stellar Supreme, formerly

known as Liberlam, and also known as

Liberlam, formerly known as Stellar

Supreme.

So, Liberlam, formerly known as Stellar

Supreme, also known as Stellar Supreme,

formerly known as Liberlam, says, "Do

you find it at all likely that Erica Kirk was a Msad honeypot?"

And I know almost nothing about Erica Kirk. I mean, I I really was not a follower of her husband either.

Um, I mean, TPUSA, I'm Turning Point USA. I mean, I just wasn't really in the orbit. I just didn't pay any attention really. I mean, sometimes you just see a headline or something like that.

Um, I guess Erica Kirk was like she was apparently she's pretty. I think she was in a beauty contest. She may have even won a beauty contest. I don't know. But um I think it's not I mean it's not impossible,

but I think wouldn't put my money on
Erica Kirk being some kind of like msad
honeypot that was this sort of kind of
spy or something that was like an agent
sent to Charlie Kirk just to keep him
under control. That kind of thing. I
don't think she was like a like a
Caucasian fang fang, anything like that.
So, I mean, maybe,
but who knows? I really don't I really
have never really followed the Kirk
family and know almost nothing about
Erica Kirk. Didn't even listen to her
speech
that has already been mentioned in this
Q&A.
But yeah, I wouldn't I wouldn't bet on

it. And I'm just going to move on to Libra Lamb etc etc's next question which is uh are meditation cushions counterintuitive for advanced meditation? Um not necessarily.

I mean meditation cushion uh I mean it can be helpful like even when I was a monk I would have I had a piece of it was like a pulmyra leaf stem and palmyra leaves are really big. So the stems are, you know, like this wide and about this high. Um, and I just had a piece of it about, you know, a foot and a half long that I would just put kind of wedge underneath my backside just to help me tilt my pelvis forward so that it's

easier to sit up straight. Or another thing you could do is just take a towel and roll it up. So you've got like a rolled up towel, you know, that's, you know, as wide as a towel is. And, you know, it's just kind of like this big around. And you can kind of wedge that up behind your backside. Um, you know, most of your is still sitting on the floor, but you have like this little bit of a wedge that helps to tilt your pelvis forwards to help help you have an erect posture. Is your back straight up and down.

So, I don't think it's counterintuitive for advanced meditation. I mean, it's it's kind of irrelevant. I mean, if you

don't need one, that's fine. Uh if you do need one then I mean I mean even if it just helps if it helps you to sit straight up and down to have like a more alert posture which will help in your meditation. Yeah, there's there's no problem with that. The the big zafuz those um I think are kind of overkill in my opinion. I mean it helps. What another advantage of having a meditation cushion is if you're sitting in the full lotus if you're sitting flat on the floor sometimes one knee will kind of be raised up above the floor so that it's not as stable. That's not like the tripod kind of configuration that would

be ideal for sitting for long periods of time in deep meditation. was if you have like a a little bit of a meditation cushion, it helps to kind of again tilt the p pelvis forwards. Then both knees are firmly against the floor as well as your backside. I mean your backside if you're sitting up on a on a cushion then that kind of makes it less stable. But if you just have a little bit of a kind of a wedge just right behind your backside to help tilt the pelvis forward, that also can help to keep both knees on the floor.

So I would not say that meditation cushions are counterintuitive for advanced meditation. Although all the

the fancy benches and you know the full-size zafu and the zabutan and all that I mean if you're a Zen Buddhist it might just be part of the tradition but it's not really necessary.

Most meditators in Burma they just sit on the floor.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Ruie and this is kind of a strange one. I don't know exactly what to make of this one. Rui says, "What is meta for a pacheka Buddha?"

And Pacheka Buddhas are mythological beings.

Um, I mean, Mahayana Buddhism has just

completely reinterpreted them. But originally, a Pacheka Buddha was a fully enlightened Buddha who nevertheless lived in between times when dharma is in the world. He was like a hermit. He had some sort of limitation where he could not or just would not teach dharma. So he was like a Buddha but he didn't start Buddhism again. And you can only have pacheka Buddhas when there is no Buddhism in the world. And that the Mahayana Buddhists just kind of did away with that and reinterpreted uh what a pacheka Buddha is just as they reinterpreted a lot of things.

So what is meta for this mythological alleged pacheka Buddha? Um who knows? I

mean it's like what is meta for an elf,

you know? It's like

who knows?

First you got to find an elf and then

you've got to like psychoanalyze this

elf.

Find a pacheka Buddha and ask him. He'd

probably be able to at least answer that

much.

But you can't because there is dharma in

this world right now. Buddhism exists in

this world. So going with terra Buddhism

there could be no pacheka Buddhas.

But I assume the meta for a pacheka

Buddha would be like meta for anybody

else. You know it' be like the Buddha's

meta. I mean he's not like actively

acting upon it like like a Buddha might.

But

I mean, just goodwill. May all beings be

well. But I mean, then you're

secondguessing the mental states of a

fully enlightened being, which probably

better off not doing.

So yeah, who the hell knows

what is meta for a pacheka? I'm I'm not

sure why Ruy asked this question other

than maybe, you know, how much meta can

they have if they're just a hermit and

avoid the human race.

But

you you read the sutas and it's like

monks who are hermits and avoid the

human race. They're just sitting in solitude beaming meta in all directions. And there's probably nothing to stop a a an alleged pacheka Buddha from doing that. Personally, I'm rather skeptical of the whole tradition with regard to Pachka Buddhas, which shouldn't surprise some of you very much because I'm skeptical with regard to stuff that's even more basic to orthodox terraota than Pacheka Buddhas.

Let's see. Did I answer that question? Which I mean, how do you answer the question? What is what is meta for an elf or an enlightened elf? an enlightened hermit elf. Who I mean, how

can you answer such a question? It would just be similar to the meta of some Buddhist hermit who even though he avoids the human race is still beaming goodwill to all beings.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Jeffrey. And Jeffrey says, "I've started meditating again after many years. Not I think he means now for many years now. Is there any shock the monkey brain tricks to shut the monkey up? Well, I mean there's kind of a a shortterm short range kind of trick to shut the monkey up and that's just try to watch what the next thought is going to be, what your next thought is going to be.

Just watch your mind carefully and try to catch the next thought as soon as it arises. And that has a kind of suppressing effect. I think in Zen Buddhism it's called shikantaza or or something along those lines. A meditation somewhat along those lines where you just watch the mind and try to catch the next thought as it arises or as soon as soon as you can. And for some reason watching for the next thought helps to suppress the next thought. But it's I mean it's it's really more difficult than it sounds. And that kind of meditation is relatively intensive kind of meditation. It's more difficult

than just breathing in breathing out breathing in breathing out. Well, the other way to shut the monkey up is just gradual practice. And when you got I mean I've mentioned this before. If you've got a restless mind, you've got what what is it called? Adicha this mental restlessness adicha in poly I'm pretty sure um then you got to have like an active meditation technique. So if you've got a restless mind and you're trying to do some very subtle kind of meditation then your mental states are just going to like spill over. They're going to overflow the meditation so to speak and you're you're just going to be wandering. your mind's going to be

wandering and you'll be sitting there
for half an hour and finally realize
that you haven't been meditating, you've
been thinking about stuff.
So when your mind is restless you need a
lot of busy work like you know a lot of
noting you know just whatever arises
note it note it note it and you use
labeling and like at first when your
mind is just like all over the place
you've got to use a really like labor
intensive meditation technique just to
keep your mind occupied.
But then as your mind quiets down, then
you you go to a a more quiet kind of
meditation.

Because if your mind is quiet and you still got like this busy work kind of meditation where you're noting and labeling everything, then you're just kind of stuck at the ABCs. You can't get into deeper meditation. So you have to know yourself well enough to know how restless your mind is so that you can sort of adjust your meditation to account for the restless of restlessness of your mind without overkill.

So it's good to to know more than one kind of meditation simply because I mean your mind changes from one day to the next from one hour to the next. So I mean when I was doing intensive meditation as a monk I'd have you know I

I was talking about four gears you know fourth first gear second gear third gear fourth gear and um you know one kind of meditation it's not working very well you just try a different one. So, it's good to know more than one kind of meditation just because your mind isn't always the same or at least mine isn't. There are some people that can just meditate the same way every time and they're fine with it. But with me, it's like sometimes my mind would be more restless than other times I'd need more quiet meditations and more busy meditations just to sort of fit what state I was in at the time.

But I mean just carefully observing your mind and trying to catch the next thought that arises does have a suppressing effect. So that shuts up the monkey mind briefly. But if you want the monkey mind to really be quieted like longterm in a sustainable way, then it takes lots and lots of practice.

It doesn't happen all at once.

And so I guess I should just move on to the next question. And this is from Newman. And Newman says, "How do you discern a legit weird in the sense of wyrd

occurrence or liinal moment from just your own skits like misinterpretation. For example, if you think a monk has

read your mind or seen through you and possesses insight that wouldn't be possible otherwise or some kind of communication asking because if it is authentic then that's a serious signpost to take heed of. If not then if any actions are done under the miscalculation that it is real then they could be inospicious or errant and you can just end up being a dumbass.

Okay. So

you're you're in the presence of let's say some meditation teacher and some weird event occurs and he he just happens to mention something that you just happen to be thinking of at that

moment or you know he just says something about you that he couldn't possibly know through ordinary ways according I mean to the best of your knowledge then I mean you shouldn't just jump to the conclusion that he's psychic. I mean, it could just be synchronicity, you know, it could just be like a weird coincidence or I mean, in the worst case scenario, it could be just a deliberate fraud who's finding out stuff about you in order to say it to you to blow your mind, that kind of thing.

But the thing is, I mean, you shouldn't really make up your mind one way or the other. You shouldn't I mean if some

dharma teacher you know apparently reads your mind for example well I mean just I mean you shouldn't consider it to be a big deal. It's just something that you you just sort of remember it you know you can consider that and if it just keeps happening then that's just adding to the evidence. But still I mean you should never be absolutely convinced one way or the other.

I mean that's like one of the most famous books of of Jay Krishna Murdy is called freedom from the known which is really freedom from what you think you know because anything that you know with your thinking mind isn't reality anyway.

So uh another thing that has occurred to me over the years is if you want like the miraculous
to be common place in your life then you shouldn't think it's a big deal. you should just accept it as it happens and then it just helps with the the flow of that and it it's more likely to happen. But if you think, whoa, that's such a weird thing, then it sort of reinforces the idea. It just reinforces the likelihood of it being rare.
So, let's see. Have I answered this question yet?
Let's see. How do you discern a legit weird in the sense of wyrd occurrence or liinal moment from just your own skitso

like misinterpretation? You just don't nail it down one way or the other. You just

I mean you're aware of the situation. You consider it. It's like h all right and then you just keep going. I mean you shouldn't just make up your mind one way or the other. You know it's like the wise man is never sure. The fool is always positive.

So, it's just evidence.

It's just something to consider.

I mean, Paul Lo when he was alive, I just recently found out that he had passed away like last April, which is kind of sad to me, but Paul Lo would

say, you know, when he was teaching somebody, he'd say, "You shouldn't even believe what I'm saying." And and um there is some evidence that the Buddha was like this, too. It's just don't believe something just because I tell you that.

I mean really you shouldn't believe anything. That's so one of the central teachings of the atakobaga is don't believe anything. So you you're aware of it. I mean you can remember it. You can even consider it but don't just make up your mind once and for all that such and such person is an enlightened being because you couldn't really know anyway or that he's a fraud. Because I mean

sometimes you can have like a sage who's
nevertheless kind of rascally so that
they can be a little bit of both.
Just accept it and just note it, be
aware of it, consider it, but don't make
up your mind one way or the other
regardless
unless you absolutely have to. you know,
if you're in a situation where you just
have to make up your mind about
something, but uh as a general rule,
that doesn't happen very often, at least
in the in the realm of spirituality. I
mean, you want to decide whether or not
to accept this person as your teacher,
then I mean, you don't have to make up

your mind once and for all that they
have psychic powers.
I mean, you can consider, well, he did
say that that one time. That's
considerable.
So, I mean that could be like a mark in
his favor, but still I mean I wouldn't
just make up my mind once and for all
that such and such a person really is
fully enlightened or you know
um
one thing I mean one thing that happens
between my woman and me is we're just we
we have like this group mind that's like
this third entity that's like the us
entity and sometimes if I'm sort of like
open to that more than at other times,

then I'll just blurt out stuff that she's thinking. But it's not deliberate, you know? It's it's it's not like I'm deliberately reading her mind. It's like synchronicity or just we happen to be on the same wavelength and we're used to each other and we kind of vibe together. So that, you know, it's like our minds are kind of, you know, thinking along the same lines sometimes.

So, I mean, you could say that there's synchronicity involved and and it's kind of a paranormal thing from modern western point of view that you even have like a group mind that that is even a concept.

So, I mean,

doesn't mean that I'm enlightened,

doesn't mean that she's enlightened.

It's just something to consider. You

know, you you don't want to just nail it

down. And I guess saying that it's a

group mind thing is a way of nailing it

down. But it could just be like

synchronicity or so forth. The group

mind thing just kind of fits in with my

interpretation of how Samsara works.

You know, it's like the the block the

uncarved block of marble that contains

an infinite number of statues. And some

of those statues are group statues.

So the US statue is in there just the

same as the me statue and the her

statue.

Okay.

So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Tzasquez is and Trzasquez is he uh he engaged in the most common typo that Buddhists ever ever do. The most common typo for Buddhists is saying mediate instead of meditate

because the spell check doesn't catch it.

Anyways, Tzask says, "How be bikunis meditated or mediated if they couldn't cross their legs." Yeah, it's it's an obscure rule of Manass discipline that bikunis fully ordained Buddhist nuns are

not allowed to sit cross-legged, which of course all the new bikunis claiming to be Bikunis, they just break the rule because they don't want to follow the rules properly.

So the way they would sit, I assume, is that they would sit the way a proper Burmese lady sits when she sits on the floor with both feet kind of tucked up beside her, which kind of makes you sit sideways like this.

But I don't think the monks really cared very much if the bikunis had to sit a little bit like slanty ways like this when they meditated. And the reason why bikunis are not allowed to sit cross-legged is according to the texts

that some bikunis were consenting to the touch of the heel. And I mean what's her what's her name? uh IB her who was like this Victorians
type like scholarly virginal type proper English lady who was the first person to translate
um the the vineyapitica into English most of it there are some parts that were so runchy that she she couldn't bring herself to translate them but there's this quaint innocent little footnote that she leaves you know when when the bikunis some of the bunies were considered descending to the touch of the heel. IB her has this footnote where

she's talking about like the question here is whose heel are they conscending to the touch of and she had this weird idea that bikunis were sitting in the full lotus position with their you know their legs kind of like this and their heels were rubbing up against each other which I think might be anatomically impossible. I mean, they'd have to have them really weird like this to have their heels rubbing up against each other. But I think I understand that uh the real meaning of this because I had this female friend long ago before I was a monk who told me that as a kid she learned how to masturbate by sitting on her heel and rocking back and forth. And

that's probably what the bikunis were doing. They're like sitting on their heel kind of.

And so that's the reason why Bikunis are not allowed to sit cross-legged, which indicates that they weren't even sitting in the full lotus. They were sitting in like the Burmese position or the easy position where you don't have your feet like this. You've got your feet kind of one in front of the other with that heel like conveniently kind of close to the PP area.

So that's kind of a long semi-rounchy digression I suppose referring to auto erotic beunis in ancient India

but I think we should just move on this

question which is now for something

completely different task says what is

your favorite coffee

and

I don't I don't have a favorite brand

really I mean like something like

folders is just I mean it doesn't even

taste like coffee to me.

So yeah, this rule out folders, but any

kind of like dark roast coffee. I mean

if it's organic so much the better. Um I

like dark coffee better than than uh

like light roast coffee. And I like lots

of milk in my coffee. So some kind of

organic dark roast probably. I like

Arabica better than Robusta.

So, some dark roast organic
Arabica coffee with lots of milk in it.
And I'm just going to move on to Jersey
Askas is his third question. Is milk in
Burma better than industrially produced
milk in the USA? I don't think so. I
mean, with regard to
like its molecular content, its
nutritional content, something like
that, maybe. But I really didn't have
any way of analyzing the milk in Burma
when I was there. Um, I think a milk in
the USA is better to drink partly
because there's refrigerators in the USA
and out in the villages in Burma, not
much refrigeration. So when you drink

milk in Burma, it's pretty much room temperature and the rooms are pretty warm because it's in the tropics. And also the milk is not homogenized, which means that milk in Burma has like this layer of like rubbery cream stuff floating on it that's chewy. And I remember telling this this lady who had given me some milk to drink cuz she knew that I drink milk. And I I was just observed that milk is better if it's not chewy. if you don't have to chew the milk. And then she was like she was her mind was blown by this. Ah I oh Malay I I have to pay extra for the for the cream stuff in that.

But the thing is Burmese people don't

drink milk. So milk really is kind of

it's you don't see it a lot in Burma

partly because

um you know the milks are the milks the

Burmese are you know they're not

Indo-European they they're lactose

intolerant for the most part dairy

products are just not a big thing in

Asia

I mean the most common dairy product in

Asia or in Burma anyway is sweetened

condensed milk that people put in in

their tea.

Cheese is a rarity. I mean, when I would

get cheese in Burma, it was usually

imported from either New Zealand or

Poland.

So, milk in Burma,

um, and if you get milk in Burma, you should at least consider that it's been like warm for hours before you get to it and it's chewy. And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Drip Walker. And Dripwalker says, "How accurate is this chart?" And so I'm going to have to bring up the chart that he included with this question. And it's a chart that has across the top pagan values, Christian values, and modern values. And then there's like different like categories or topics down the side. So the first one is religion. So under pagan values it says

spirituality. Under Christian values it says Abrahamism and under modern values it says scientism.

And I mean I could say with regard to religion

I mean obviously the religion of Christianity

is Abrahamic. The religion of like modern secular western society

pretty much scientistic. But the the religion of the the pagans like you know pre-Christian Romans I don't think it was any more spiritual than that of a Christian or a person who follows scientism that you know is paganism for most pagans in like Greece and like

earlier Rome wasn't so much spirituality it was just like the pacts of deorum you appease the gods so that you have the gods on your side rather than against you.

Spirituality, I mean, it's it's different from just religion that most religious people aren't particularly spiritual. You know, spirituality is you're actually getting into uh like altered states of consciousness, mysticism, that kind of thing. At least from my point of view, it's not it's not just superstition. It's not just going along with traditions that there actually has to be some emphasis on waking up in real spirituality. And I

don't think the ancient pagans had that
anymore than like medieval Christians or
modern scientists do. Some did, but it
wasn't mainstream.
So then under the next category, we have
morality. Pagan values is master
morality. Christian values is slave
morality and modern values is relativism
which yeah that's all right. I think I
do think that morality in ancient times
was a kind of master morality
that you should be
um what's the word magnanimous
but uh yeah it wasn't the same kind of
morality that arose with Christianity
where you glorify the weak and kind of

demonize the strong whereas you know the pagans they were more glorifying the strong not necessarily demonizing ing the weak, not even really exploiting the weak all that much with regard to ethical ideals,

but still I mean the strong were it was sort of more nichian than than Christianity is definitely. So then we got patrons

and then under the pagan values it has heroes, Christian values it has saints and modern values has victims. Um yeah, I don't I think it would be more like culture heroes. It's not patrons. Patrons are the people who are mainly supportive of the tradition. And you

know, it'd be like kings and emperors for the first two and you know, presidents, prime ministers for the third probably. But I mean, with regard to the culture heroes, yeah, in it's it's well known that like the ancient Greeks and Romans, it was men of action were were the culture heroes. you know, Thesus and Perseus and Julius Caesar and people like that were like the people that were really looked up to. And then with Christian values, yeah, it was saints. It became more the saintly people. And then with regard to modern values, I mean postmodern you're getting into victims, but for the most part it's

like athletes, rock stars, actors and actresses, you know, it's like celebrities or like the culture heroes of modern western civilization which is definitely a step downwards from saints and even from men of action.

And you got women. In pagan values, women were celebrated. Christian values, women were suppressed. Modern values, women were just a gender. Well, again, this this chart seems to really be trying to glorify paganism because pagan values, I mean, some women were celebrated just like some some women are celebrated in Christianity. You had all these female saints,

a lot of female saints. You got the

Virgin Mary. So some women were celebrated in in like medieval Christianity. But in in paganism, I mean like classical Athens, Athens at its peak, respectable women, they were veiled like Muslims are, you know, they they couldn't really attend the Olympic games. They couldn't go to go to the theater, that kind of thing. They just were pretty much just kept property in a house. And then even if a man came to visit some male friend of his, for the most part, he wouldn't see his friend's wife and daughters, they'd be in the back of the house just like in this sequestered kind of area where they

didn't come across other men.
So it may be that pagan values
celebrated women a little more than
Christian values. But I mean this is
really a glorification saying that
pagans celebrated women and Christians
suppressed women when there was a lot of
suppression going on in on in both camps
when in modern values. Yeah. Women is
you know you had Katangi Brown Jackson
when she was being questioned before
being uh chosen for the Supreme Court.
Someone asked her what a woman is. She
she said I can't tell you that. I'm not
a biologist, you know. It's just
postmodernism running a muck in that
case. So anyways, let's just keep

continue with this chart. You got clergy. And under clergy, under pagan values, you have priestesses, divers, oracles, and mediums. Under Christianity, you've got the Vatican and church church and pastors. And then under modern values, you have scientists, media, and activists. Well, again, they're glorifying paganism. Like the clergy of paganism under Rome, it was mostly like politicians, you know, as like um Julius Caesar before he became emperor, he was a a a priest of of the god Jupiter. I mean, among other things, but I mean, he was still like a a military commander and a

and a a politician and all this. And it
was these were the people the high
status people would get the the high
status like ecclesiastical positions.
And then of course the emperor was um he
was pontifffects maximus. He was the
high priest of the religion
up until uh what was his name? Gracian.
Gracian. He was I think he was the first
he was a Christian Christian um emperor
who he was the first one who just said
no I'm not going to be pontifffects
maximus anymore I don't want to do that.
So priestesses
yeah I mean there was more priestesses
under paganism than you know any kind of
high highprofile female leader like some

saint like St. Terresa of Avala. Divers, yeah. Oracles, yeah. Mediums, I guess so. But still, the the actual clergy like in the Roman Empire was mostly politician types
because it wasn't really all that spiritual. It was like just maintaining the Pax Deorum, keeping the gods appeased and on your side.
So, let's just move on to deities. Under pagan values, it's got primordial archetypes and energies. Under Christianity, it's got unnamed, distant, singular god. And in mo modern values as Saturn, corporations, deep state. Yeah, I'm not exactly sure where Saturn comes

in other than just sort of the the early Roman god Saturn who was um the Saturnelia was named after him.

Um yeah modern values the deities of like modern society would be like laws of physics like the laws the laws of physics are kind of the have taken the place of deities.

Um with regard to pagans yeah the deities were some of them were primordial archetypes and energies but I mean some of it is just kind of mythology.

Yeah.

Still, it's it's this chart is really trying to glorify paganism and make it look like it's the best. So, let's just

go on to virtue. So, pagan values is manifest divinity, embody virtue. Christianity says pity, modesty, submission. And then modern values is virtue signaling, arguing and debates. Um

gosh, where do I start with this one with regard to virtue? Again, virtue was different for like the ancient Romans than it is for us now because virtue would include like killing enemies and so forth. Um, I guess in modern society, not everyone's Buddhist, so I guess that could still be in there. Um, embodying virtue, that's kind of what the philosophers were going for, but your

average pagan probably was not trying to embody virtue. They were just trying to avoid pissing off the gods and keep the gods on their side through, you know, sacrifices and rituals and so forth.

Um, yeah, with regard to modern values, I mean, there's more to modern virtue. It's more utilitarian. You've got a utilitarian ethic in modern values. And I think this this chart is confusing modern with postmodern.

So, I'm just going to go to philosophy. Under pagan values, it is solar and varied. Not exactly sure what the solar part really is is getting at. Uh, Christian values, it's Judaism with a lot of Greek philosophy added in. And

then under modern values, it's scientism, materialism, and freemasonry. So yeah, I mean the philosophy of like modern western civilization is pretty much just been taken over by science that science used to be called um natural philosophy but then it just kind of adopted a life of its own. And philosophy aside from science or scientism, scientific realism, philosophy is in a way it's just degenerated into like an obscure branch of psychology or something. liberal arts, that kind of thing. Um, pagan philosophy. Yeah, it was definitely varied. Tended to be rather

extroverted in most cases, not necessarily always.

But yeah, I think we can just skip over that. Let's just go to ideals. Pagan values, the ideals are attaining godhood. Under Christian values, it's salvation, indulge in heaven. And under modern values, it's accelerationism.

Well, again, they're really trying to make modern values look as bad as possible, but like the ideals of modern western society was like progress, scientific progress, also just rational progress where you're you're striving towards a more utopian kind of society.

I mean, it doesn't doesn't actually work that way because human nature is human

nature and whatever society we're in is going to be like the product of upgraded apes. So, there's always going to be a lot of badness going on. It all balances out positive and negative. You you create some new thing which is good and it's just going to have some unintended bad side effect. and you get rid of some bad thing that I mean it's just gonna cause like this vacuum which is going to cause some new bad thing to take its place. You know, you cure some disease, some new disease crops up to take its place. That kind of thing.

But again, the ideal of paganism isn't necessarily attaining godhood. For some

for the heroes who would actually become gods like Hercules or what was his name? Oculapius.

probably said that wrong. Essipius, you know, the he was like a god of healing. He had he had been like this really wise doctor or physician before he he was became a god. You know, some some heroes, some people would become gods, but I mean that could be considered an ideal, but for the most part, the ideal is just keep the gods from being pissed off at you, keep them on your side.

And then in summary, pagan values, challenge everything. Fortune favors the bold. Well, you don't want to challenge the gods. A lot of like Greek drama and

poetry and so forth is just full of do not challenge the gods, you know, that's hubris. So yeah, you challenge the gods, the gods are going to [__] you up. So yeah, don't I really think that this chart is just trying to glorify paganism as much as it can. And I think they have deviated from like objectivity in doing so. And I'm just going to that's I spent a long time on that one an answer to that one question. So it's time to move on to the next one. And this is the last question already. See what we got going here. Yeah, this is the last question already. This is from Jimmy Lad. In

Jimmy Lad he gives a timestamp of 1 hour
and 59 minutes in the previous Q&A and
he says does this heretical philosophy
have a name in poly and I was referring
to the Bavad Gita towards the beginning
of the Bavad Gita when Krishna who is
Arjuna's charioteer is persuading Arjuna
to fight in this war against his own
relatives
um he gives this
um from from a Buddhist point of view
would be a heretical explanation as as
one of his justifications where it's
like I mean nobody's nobody's really
being killed you know it's just you know
bodies are being killed maybe but I mean
the bodies are just made up of molecules

and so forth and it's been a long time
since I've read the the the Bavad Gita
so I don't remember the exact argument
but I mean it essentially amounts to
you're not really killing anyone anyway
so it doesn't matter.
And um Jimmy Lad is asking, "Does this
heretical philosophy have a name in
poly?" And I tried to look it up. I
spent several minutes trying to find the
stereotyped
um philosophies of the six heretical
teachers that were contemporaries of the
Buddha. And there's one of them in
particular who has this famous
explanation of how you could go up and

down the banks of the Ganges River with this like rotating razor sharp metal disc and just leave piles of flesh just chopped up beings all up and down both banks of the Ganges River. You wouldn't have done anything wrong.

I think I I don't know if it's that teacher or a different one who's just saying that, you know, there's just atoms. And so when you cut off somebody's head, it's just separating the atoms. The atoms don't die. You know, you're just kind of disrupting a configuration of atoms. And so you're not killing anybody. You know, there's no karma. That sort of thing. So that heretical philosophy in general would be

called Charvaka, which isn't a a poly word. I mean it's just like the traditional branch of philosophy in ancient India, North India was called Charvaka. And they were materialists. They didn't believe in rebirth. They didn't believe in karma. You know, they was they were just like the ancient equivalent of a modern materialistic atheist. And they kind of filled in the same ecological niche in Indian philosophy that the Epicurans did in like the classical western philosophy. They they took a lot of heat. I think I'm pretty sure that the Kama Sutra was a Charvaka text where it's just like the

whole purpose of existence is just
experience as much pleasure as you can.
So, I think that
that would be a name, but it's it's not
a poly name. I'm not I don't remember
exactly what the poly equivalent of a
Charvaka would be. Um, and I don't
remember which of the heretical teachers
were teaching this. So you may have to
look it up in the poly texts but in
Indian philosophy that general point of
view um not what Krishna is teaching
because
you know he was kind of teaching
something kind of along those lines but
at the same time he was god you know he
was an avatar of Vishnu so it wasn't

just um it wasn't just like atheistic materialism that was being taught in the Bala Gita obviously
but this whole idea that all you're doing is just separating atoms. The atoms don't die. You can't destroy the atoms and you know you're just there's no karma involved anything like that. That would be Charvaka in in Sanskrit anyway and I do not recall what the poly equivalent of a charvaka would be unfortunately. I do apologize.
And so we're done. That was it. This is kind of a short one. So, like I should always say at the beginning and never do except for one time, if you have any

questions you think I can answer, especially with regard to dharma, but I mean biology and politics are fair game because I know a little bit about those also.

Um, but my my main field of expertise is like early Buddhism, like Terravada Buddhism and like pre-terraat Buddhism, that sort of thing. So if you have any questions you think I can answer philosophy, dharma, whatever, then no more than three questions per episode, please. You can leave them in the comments below

and like and subscribe if you have not done so already. And be happy.

Alrighty then. I think we are recording.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 167.

Oh, I got to mute this.

Okay, I am your host, Pony Basa.

And you can see we're going for a slight

change of scenery this time. I've got

like one of those fake backgrounds

behind me so that you'll think I'm

living in a house.

This is my beverage

with a little paper umbrella signifying

my sophistication

and class.

And I do think 167 is a prime number. So

there's that.

And we've got sort of the [snorts] medium number, the middle path number of questions to answer. So, I suppose I should just uh dive right into it. See here, unless there's anything I've forgotten to say by way of introduction. I can't really think of anything, though.

So, and if anyone's triggered by the the fact that this TV looks like it's crooked, it's not crooked. It's it's level. It's just that it's kind of tilted at an angle, which from this angle makes it look crooked, but it's not crooked. So, don't even don't even think about it.

First question is from Yoshi Buouie. And

Yoshi Buouie says, "It's been explained several times in past videos, but would you mind explaining again the differences between an Araant, a bodhicattva, and a Buddha?"

Okay. Well, an arant I mean literally means worthy one. And before it got like adopted by spiritual systems like Buddhism to signify an enlightened being, it was just an honorific like I think judges were called ara and also [clears throat] ara just meaning worthy. It can also mean like I I believe there's a word in poly dandaraa which means worthy of punishment.

So [clears throat]

um I mean arant itself is just it just means worthy one and in Buddhism it signifies at least in terra Buddhism it signifies a fully enlightened being. So the Buddha himself was an arahant like namotasa

arhat samas buddhasa that arhat is directed towards the Buddha. The Buddha was an arant.

So an arant is just any being that is fully enlightened, has no more delusion and no more dooka, at least no more like mental duke. Still they can feel physical pain allegedly.

But

aside from that, they've they have escaped from some sorrow at least after

they die. They don't get reborn again
according to orthodox tradition. So they
have won. They have laid down the burden
and are free.
With regard to a bodhic sattva,
I think I'll just skip that one and go
straight to a Buddha. A Buddha, I mean a
Buddha is an orahant. At least
um the Buddha himself is called an
orahant as I already mentioned. But a
Buddha according to tradition
is [clears throat] a person who has
perfected all of the 10 parameies and
they are the ones who rediscover
dharma after it has disappeared from the
world. So it takes special talent,

special genius, special perfection for a fully enlightened being to be able to discover dharma on their own without a teacher teaching it to them. So that would be the main difference between a Buddha and an ordinary or even though a Buddha is an sort of like the difference between a frog and an amphibian. Not that I'm trying to compare the Buddha to to frogs or any such thing.

So Buddha is like a special class of orahant in this case. Although originally I do not think there was necessarily a difference that it was largely a kind of apotheiois of the Buddha glorification of the founder of the system that made like a radical

distinction between an ordinary enlightened being and a sama Buddha with a number of different like classes of enlightened beings in between like below a sama Buddha would be a pacheka Buddha who is like a Buddha. I mean, he's he [clears throat] has discovered dhamma um on his own, but he just opts out of starting a religion and just remains a hermit living in a forest somewhere, a fully enlightened Buddha who just doesn't teach Buddhism, doesn't start the wheel rolling again. And then below that you got like the chief disciples like in in the case of the historical goddam

[clears throat]

galana are the two chief disciples and

they have to they're like at a higher

level than an ordinary enlightened being

then you've got the great disciples of

which I believe there were 80 and then

below that you've got ordin and then

even the ordinary arhants there's

different levels of that even you know

there's different kinds different

classes of arant that We don't really

need to go there because

[clears throat] I think it's all

academic.

I think a lot of this is just the

ancient Indian philosophical mind that

was just obsessed with classifying

everything and making hierarchies and

all this that they just went to town on

really you're either enlightened or

you're not.

So

then there's [clears throat] the bodhic

sattva and the bodhic sattva is a

mahayana concept. It's based on a terra

concept the bodhic satta

and I mentioned before that bodhicattva

is probably even a mistransation

of the [clears throat] earlier term

bodhicatta

which um bodhic satta I mean it was

translated into Sanskrit as bodhicattva

by people who thought sata meant being.

So a bodhic sattva literally would be like an enlightenment being.

But it seems kind of counterintuitive that you call somebody an enlightenment being when in Mahayana Buddhism they are postponing enlightenment indefinitely until all beings are liberated.

But sata can also be a kind of past participle acting as a noun. It's a past participle of the verb sagi which means to be attached to or to be bound for.

And originally in terab Buddhism a bodhic sata was somebody bound for Buddhahood.

You know they were destined to become a sama buddha in the future.

[clears throat]

So

according to like orthodox tradition, in

order to be a bodhic sata, you have to

receive what in Burmese is called a

biadate, which is a sama Buddha has to

declare you a bodhic sata who is

destined to become a sama Buddha in the

distant future. So in the case of our

Godma Buddha according to tradition

again it was [clears throat] the Buddha

Deepankura who was like 28 Buddhas ago

in some on some different planet earth

in a different India

who declared the Brahman Sumedo to be

he's going to become a Buddha in this

distant future.

So in [clears throat] order to be a Buddhist sata you have to have already mastered Janna I believe according to tradition and you have to have this announcement this prophecy you know this prediction or like I guess it'd be a prophecy from uh a Samasan Buddha that you will become a sasan Buddha in a future life and then starting with that you are a Buddhist sata and you just spend eons and eons perfecting your virtues the 10 parameies like the jotica stories it's a a a generry of Buddhist literature it's in the typic

um you know it's like the Buddha life after life he's perfecting his virtues

sometimes he's an animal sometimes he's

a human sometimes he's some other kind

of being

um

and he's just like working on perfecting

himself

So that they came up with this idea that

a a Buddha is just like orders of

magnitude beyond an ordinary enlightened

being even though technically their

wisdom is the same. They have both have

zero delusion which means they have both

maxed out on wisdom.

But then the the ter the Mahayana

Buddhists took the term bodhicatta

apparently mistransated it as bodhic

sattva

and they changed the meaning of it as um

a kind of

a being that in a way is superior to a

mere arahant just get downplayed in

Mahayana you know they're considered

somehow like deficient. In fact, the

term Hinayana in Mahayana Buddhism is a

derogatory ter derogatory term for the

pre-Mayana Buddhist schools which

includes terra even though they may not

have had terra specifically in mind. And

he is like a past participle that means

like deficient. It's like a past

participle of the verb heed which means

like to to lose to fritter away to

squander to not have enough. that kind

of thing.

So an arant just as review here before moving on to the next question. An arant is any fully enlightened being. A bodhic sattva is [clears throat] a mahayianist like mutation

of the earlier bodhicatta. A bodhicatta was just someone who is destined to become a Buddha. But a bodhic sattva is a being who just essentially vows to postpone enlightenment until all beings are liberated. Even though an infinite an infinite length of time has already passed and we still have an infinite number of unenlightened beings living in a quasi reality. These beings are

ultimately not even fully real.

So it would seem to me that if you want

to liberate all beings, you just

liberate yourself like Gorma Buddha

probably was teaching people, you know,

in this very life if you are able.

And then you just you realize that all

these suffering beings um are just sort

of virtually real anyway. And then

you've liberated them by sort of

rendering them no longer ultimately real

in your perception.

>> [snorts]

>> So, I think I'm just going to move on to

this question. This is from Herie Gertie

Man.

Herie Gertie Man says, "I'd like to ask

a very basic but fundamental question. Why is our will and our existence not in harmony? What is the reason of this ultimate absurdity that we find ourselves in where conscious will is not law? What went wrong?" Well, in a way, conscious will is law. It's just that we [clears throat] are only I mean our ego only has like encapsulated within it a limited
bandwidth or just a limited scope of what really constitutes our consciousness. So we think that we are you know our ego you know what we are this this person this me is consciously aware of but there's other aspects of

our mentality that extend beyond this
like Freud talked about the the
subconscious mind Jung talked about that
kind of stuff too in fact he he referred
to the collective unconscious there's
all this subconscious
or unconscious mind and you I think
unconscious mind would be just an
oxymoron. But what it means is that
there's consciousness extending beyond
the limits of our ego and the ego is
only aware of itself
or at least with regard [clears throat]
to our mentality. There's other kinds of
communications coming from the
subconscious mind like through dreams
and so forth that that affect us that

can communicate to the ego.

But still the ego is is not the entirety of the consciousness that is influencing your life. That there's all this subconscious stuff that's going on that the ego just is not aware of. In fact, the ego can be unaware of some of other aspects of the ego just because, you know, some people just be clueless with regard to their own motives, their own genuine motives, that sort of thing.

That's kind of getting into the realm of what Freud would call hysteria.

>> [snorts]

>> So

um some people that aren't particularly

Buddhist like Hindus for example like Ram Das used to say that after you die then you you have access to more of the full scope of consciousness and then you can make decisions like well I guess the best thing for me in my next life will be to be born to a drugaddicted prostitute and then I will get brutally murdered in a back alley at the age of 19. All right, that's what I need for my spiritual development. Let's do it. And Buddhism doesn't really teach it that way. But still, I do think that there's like an element of truth to that. That there is like [clears throat] after you die, in all likelihood, assuming that consciousness persists, you're going to

be aware of lots more stuff than you're aware of now, like past lives and so forth. and a fully enlightened being or just like a a sage that is very developed, he's going to have access to a lot more of the mind that in most people is subconscious. So like [clears throat] a spiritually advanced person can remember past lives for example going with Buddhist philosophy. So let's just kind of get back to this question here. Why is our will and our existence not in harmony? your will and your existence are in harmony. It's just that a lot of that will
is beyond the scope of your ego. It's

still working. It's still going on. Like karma, for example, karma is a mental state. That's one of the most important aspects of who we are, who we think we are, is our karma. But we're not consciously aware of our karma. Unless it's like

while we're making a decision, you know, we can be aware of our like superficial vitions.

But the deeper volitions, the deeper like

I don't know, life plans, that kind of thing,

the conscious ego just is not aware of that sort of thing. Um, at least not in a a fully lucid way.

So I mean the ultimate absurdity that we find ourselves in is that this one aspect this like thinking part of our mind has um this sort of assume that it's all that there is that it's all that exists of our mind because it just cannot grasp other aspects of our mentality. They're are there it's just that they're invisible to to the thinking ego.

So what went wrong is the the conceit I am that is conjured up by the ego.

And let's see, is there anything else I should respond to before moving on to the next question?

Our will and our existence really is

pretty much in harmony. It's just that we're kind of reckless drivers. We're we're not conscious enough not to have bad dreams. For example, like last night I had a weird bad dream or someone was like shooting at me. That sort of thing. I mean, my conscious ego didn't I didn't decide, well, I'll just have a dream where somebody's shooting at me and then I'm like locking myself in a cave to get away from the maniac with the gun. This kind of thing.

It just it just happened. It's like some deep aspect of the personality, you know? It's like working on on various issues or whatever and it just kind of percolates up into the conscious mind

through remembering dreams you have in your sleep.

So let's see here. Yeah, the ultimate absurdity is we think this limited aspect of our mind is us when really there's much more to it.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Jimmy Lad and Jimmy Lad says, "Can you please speak more about other cosmic Buddhas in previous cosmic cycles?"

Um, yeah. Well, I already mentioned Deepankara was in reference to uh the the whole Buddhist Sata concept. Um, is first of all, first you had Gorama Buddha. I mean, he's sort of the OG

Buddha. He's like the founder of Buddhism, Godma Buddha, you know, the Shakyamuni, the sage of the the Shakya clan. He was like the Buddha. But even he in the sutas will refer to enlightened beings before him.

And that sort of opened the door to this vast cos like cosmology or mythology I guess it would be of [clears throat] um just an endless line of Buddhas in an endless line of north indas um just going back just it's like the earth respawns with a new India a new vadic culture and Buddhas arise speaking poly or Sanskrit, some Indic language. Um, and so the Indians who really had this vast

concept of time and distances and so forth, you know, they're measuring how many incalculable eons and world cycles like culpas, you know, and that, you know, they're
trying to describe what was happening, you know, just a zillion gajillion years ago.
So a lot of it is just mythology. It's it's sort of elaborating
on Buddhist [clears throat] ideas and just creating this this elaborate Buddhist cosmos and mythos that people can believe in.
People need to believe something. They need to cling to some kind of belief

system which is really contrary to what
the Buddha was teaching. You shouldn't
believe in it. Belief is delusion.
Belief is thinking that you know
something you don't really know.
I'm waving my hands around a lot
probably because of the the
[clears throat] background is making me
look like I live in a house.
So I think there's mention of seven
Buddhas. I mean I really never really
took this very seriously. I mean all
that really matters to me is God Buddha.
He's the only one that that has any kind
of historical evidence really. All the
rest lived zillions of years ago. I
mean, even the Buddha's predecessor was

Kasapa Buddha who lived on this planet.
Um, I [clears throat] think there were like seven Buddhas living just on this earth.
Um, but it's like you have a Buddha and then after the Buddha passes away, you've got Dharma abides. You know, you got Buddhism in the world and then finally Buddhism dies out because everything that has a beginning has an end. You know, the law of Anicha and so then you have this lawless period of no Buddhism, no dharma, just civilization degenerates [clears throat]
and then finally some some new Buddha rediscovers.

He rediscovers Dharma and sets the wheel turning again. And so um I think earlier than the 28 Buddhas is like the seven Buddhas and then they started going back into previous earths all the way back to Deepanka. He's really the first Buddha that gets talked about in Buddhist mythology. And he's the one who gave the the prediction or the prophecy that our Buddha would become God Buddha [clears throat] or you know that that Sumido the Brahman of that time in some previous earth just incalculable eons ago that he [clears throat] would eventually become God Buddha on this planet.

And if you read I mean the the main text

that discusses this sort of thing is the Buddha the lineage of Buddhas. It's a relatively late text. It's not common to all the schools of Buddhism. And it goes back to Deepanka I'm pretty sure. And if you read the like the biographies of [clears throat] these previous Buddhas, you find that our Godma Buddha was by far the shortest Buddha. you know, he was only 27 feet tall according to tradition. You know, the other Buddhas, they're like 100 feet tall.

And he went through a very our our Buddha went through like six years of dukari of just these aesthetic practices just sort of almost killing himself.

Whereas some of these previous Buddhas, it was only a few weeks for them. and their life cycle. I mean, the Buddha was also our Buddha, our Godma Buddha was like the shortest lived Buddha because some of these Buddhas were living like 84,000 years, this kind of thing. So, I mean, I've ne like I say, I've never really been able to take it very seriously

that I'm sure there have been fully enlightened beings in the past before Gamma Buddha. I got no problem with that. I mean they weren't even necessarily Buddhists

but this like archetype of you know every one of these some Buddhas you know

all 28 I guess Mata the future Buddha
will be or Maitraa in Sanskrit would be
what 29
be like the eighth Buddha of this planet
if I remember correctly really like I
say I've never really taken this kind of
stuff very seriously
but [clears throat] They all have the
same life. They you know they all live
in a palace and whichever cast or varna
wa in pali is considered to be the
highest one the Buddha is always born
into that cast. So like in the time of
gorama buddha the khatria cast the katya
cast in pali or or the katya wana was
the highest cast or considered to be. So

the Buddha was born as one of those. In other um iterations of Vadic culture when the brahinss are considered the highest which eventually became like the status quo in India after the Buddhist time. Then the Buddha is born a Brahman always male. There are no female Buddhas according to ancient Buddhist tradition. And then they all have to go through they see the signs. They all have to renounce the world. They all have to practice. And they when they renounce the world they do it there's like four possible vehicles you know they can be on a horse and a chariot um on an elephant or in some kind of flying castle or flying palace called a weim

mana

and then they all have the austerities they all have to have [clears throat] um like a group of aesthetics practicing these austerities with them. The Buddha had the smallest number of all of them. He only had five. And in some some of these previous Buddhas, it was like thousands if not millions.

And then always they have to be offered milk rice by some lay woman, right? On the eve of their enlightenment, they all have to be sitting under a a specific kind of bodhic tree. Each Buddha has its own bodhic tree. Some some uh bodhic trees are like, you know, different

kinds of trees. Our goab Buddha was sitting under a uh a peeppole tree ficus religiosa.

So

I mean I think that it's mostly just madeup mythology to tell you the truth. All religions have made up mythologies and that's that's some of the Buddhist madeup mythology that happened relatively early on but not like really super early times but over the first few centuries of the existence of Buddhism in India. This sort of thing developed largely along with devotionalism just glorifying the Buddha and coming up with all these legends about him and so forth.

So Jimmy Lad [clears throat] then asks, "What do you think of the prophesied Maitraa Buddha?" And in Poly that would be Matea.

Um [clears throat]

it's I think it's just part of the same system of the of the 28 Buddhas just one Buddha like projected into the future. And I think he's the the future Matea Buddha. He's not going to come to this earth until Buddhism as it exists now has died out because you cannot have another Buddha arise to rediscover Dharma until Dharma is has disappeared from the earth and then he can rediscover it.

So there have been a lot of people
claiming to be Maitraa Buddha. In fact,
I think even Elron Hubard, the founder
of Scientology, was declared at least by
some of his followers to be Maitraa
Buddha,
but I think it's I mean
it's it's mythology in my opinion.
So, I mean, that doesn't mean that there
isn't going to be like a future Buddha,
but like all these explicit details
about his name and all this sort of
stuff. It's it's guesses in my opinion.
I mean, just think of what the poets did
to like Greek paganism. They just messed
it all up with all these weird stories
of the gods being all rapy and stuff.

It's just it just kind of ruined paganism. Um after people became more sophisticated in their culture, they just couldn't take it seriously anymore. And I think a lot of this mythology in Buddhism, it's already kind of most westerners just can't really take it very seriously if they don't know much about it. You know, they just hear Maitraa is going to be the next Buddha. They can take that seriously. They can believe that. make him believe that the OG God Buddha that he actually predicted that Mataya Buddha would be his successor as the the next Buddha probably millions of years in the

future.

But the more you study this kind of stuff like you read the Buddha Wamsaw and its commentaries and it's just it's like Monty Pythonesque. It's like most westerners, unless they're very faith oriented and are capable of believing anything, they're just not going to be able to swallow it very well.

So, I'm just going to move on to Jimmy Lad's next question,

which is as follows. Could it be that Christ was the Maitraa Buddha whose sacrifice on the cross enabled the projection of a pure love and mercy that it reordered the nature of samsara and enabled others to latch on to this love

via devotion and karmically level up so to speak and enter heavenly realms where they could practice more devotion in this love meta produced well again just based on orthodox tradition you can't have another Buddha which would be Maitraa Buddha or Matea Buddha until Buddhism has disappeared from this earth. There are some people um who maybe are a little bit cynical who would say well true Buddhism is already gone. In fact, there's the famous prophecy that given in the the poly texts where the Buddha says the true dhamma will survive for only 500 years. But that would uh still rule out Jesus of

Nazareth because um I mean Jesus of Nazareth was a little under 500 years after the time of the Buddha. I'm pretty sure
especially with revisionist um estimates of when the Buddha actually lived. And of course then you have to go through the cycle of the degeneracy of the human race, the lifespan getting down to like 10 years, that kind of thing.
which had didn't happen. So, and [clears throat] then going just with Orthodox tradition, Jesus would not have been fully enlightened because like he cried, Jesus wept outside the tomb of Lazarus, Lazarus. Um Jesus got into bad moods, that kind of thing.

Um, so going from just a strictly

Buddhist

traditional

metric, Jesus of Nazareth, he he he was

no doubt a a holy man, but he was not

fully enlightened just going by Buddhist

standards.

Uh, with regard to Yeah. So Christ,

Jesus Christ or just Jesus of Nazareth?

Um, yeah, I don't that's really a

stretch. I that my Buddha is itself this

kind of mythology and then trying to

like impose Indian mythology on a

somewhat mythologized

Hebrew.

It it's just yeah I I really don't think

that it it fits. It doesn't stick.
So his sacrifice on the cross, I don't
really I'm not even sure that Jesus
Nazareth being being crucified was much
of a sacrifice. He was a political
criminal being executed by the
government
and enabled the projection of a pure
love and mercy. Well, I mean
[clears throat] the Buddhists were more
merciful than the Christians. I mean
even Jesus according to the New
Testament was helping his disciples
catch fish for example, which is not
very merciful to the fish.
Whereas in Buddhism, you don't even kill
animals. In fact, a Buddhist monk isn't

even supposed to damage a living plant.
So, [snorts] let's see here.
I do think that Christianity in the
west, it was kind of an upgrade of like
the spiritual caliber of the mainstream
of Western civilization. It brought like
compassion, you know, it was like the
first openings of the heart chakra in
mainstream western civilization. Not
that there weren't compassionate,
merciful,
benevolent, even relatively enlightened
people in the west before the time of
Jesus. It's just that he kind of brought
it into the mainstream. He and Paul
kind of collaborated and brought

compassion into the mainstream in west.

I mean, you read older like

[clears throat]

pagan

literature like fiction, you know, read

the like the golden ass of Aulus and

people were I mean they were very harsh,

you know, they were hard callous people

back then just because death was so

prevalent, you know, public executions

and all this that nowadays, I mean,

people just couldn't deal with it. I

mean, we we have gotten very much more

compassionate in modern times and also,

of course, much more feminized in modern

times is we're much less militant

than we used to be and just less stoic

with regard to just accepting the harshness of life.

You know, it's just something is just part of life. Harshness and suffering and death is just the way it is. So just deal with it. That was sort of like the ancient classical attitude. Die gloriously. Don't die in bed. At least if you're a man.

Die with honor.

So yeah, I do not think that Jesus of Nazareth was my Buddha. I don't think that he was any Buddha. Um I'm kind of skeptical.

I don't I'm not sure that he was fully enlightened. I think he was a wise and

good man. I do think that he had what a Buddhist would call psychic powers that I would not at all be surprised if he healed the sick or even walked on water. But you don't have to be fully enlightened to heal the sick or walk on water. That's psychic powers that come from, you know, deep realizations, just sort of breaking the mold of the samosasic

normie, so to speak.

Taking the red pill.

So, let's see here. I guess I answered that question. I'll just move on to the next question. This is from Xenithoid. H, excuse me. I apologize to Xenithid for semib belching while saying his

name.

Xenithoid says, "Does this meme accurately describe the primary culacea of each section of the political sphere?" And I forgot to bring up the the the meme that he's referring to, so I'm doing that now.

Okay.

So, he's got this meme that is the traditional um political compass map. You know, it's like this square grid, and you've got authoritarian at the top, libertarian at the bottom, left on the left, and right on the right. And you can take these like quizzes, these tests to see where

you fit on the political spectrum. And I've taken the test a few times and I always wind up sort of towards the middle just slightly below the the line between authoritarian and libertarian.

So anyways

um mapped onto this map are the seven deadly sins. He calls them kilasis which in in poly mean is usually um translated as defilement.

Kem is defilement, but it's it's the seven deadly sins of Christianity. And so the far authoritarian left corner is envy. The authoritarian right corner is wrath. The libertarian left corner is gluttony. And the libertarian right corner is greed. And then right in the

center you've got sloth. And then the center like authoritarian center between left and right is pride.

And the center between left and right at the libertarian extreme in the middle is lust.

And let's see, let's just get back to the question here. Does this meme accurately describe the primary kila of each section of the political sphere?

Um, I think it could be like a general trend. I don't know. Maybe somehow you could figure out how to do a statistical analysis to see if there is some um like a statistically valid correlation, but I'm not exactly sure how you do

that. So, the authoritarian left is
mainly governed by envy in a way, like
resentment kind of. Um,
maybe
the authoritarian right is wrath, which
I don't know, not necessarily. I mean,
really, the authoritarian ra the
authoritarian right might be more into
pride than wrath, you know, it's just
honor, following orders, that kind of
thing. So, you know, like
feudal Japan could be arguably called
something like authoritarian right. And
they weren't so much into wrath as just
like pride.
And let's see, libertarian left,
gluttony.

Uh, I mean, it kind of works out that way, but lust would fit in there just as well. Sloth would might fit in there. Um, just about any of the seven deadlies could fit into

uh like an extreme leftist libertarian. And then [clears throat] libertarian right is is greed, which I mean that's that's kind of what young people think about like conservatives, you know, they're just greedy. They want money. At least that's the way it was when I was young. You know, it was like the Republicans are the people out for as much money as possible. Whereas ironically nowadays most of the multi

multi-billionaires are leftists or at least they promote leftist causes. So yeah, I think there could be like a general trend in this kind of direction. You know, it's like an authoritarian rightist is might be more likely to be wrathful than an authoritarian leftist or a libertarian rightist might be more likely to be greedy than a libertarian leftist. And the libertarian leftist might be more likely to be gluttonous than a libertarian rightist and so forth. But um yeah, I I think you'd have to do a statistical analysis to see if there really is some kind of statistically valid correlation going on. But I mean there could be like

general trends, you know, not a majority, but at least like what is it? What is it when it's not a majority, but it's still the highest number of the a plurality? It might be pluralities, but I I don't know. So, I'm just going to close that window out and uh move on to the next question

with all due respects to Xenithoid. I might not have done proper

let's see what I've done it uh what's the word. Gosh,

I don't know. I just didn't do it well enough or something maybe. I don't know. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Gordon.

And Gordon says, "How does the clergy interact with or help the ley in traditional Buddhist societies? I know lay Buddhists give food to monks, but how do the teachings of the monks filter down to the ley? Do they go to a building once a week like Abrahamics, listen to talks, etc. How familiar with Buddhist doctrine are the ley?" So that's two questions right there, isn't it? which is going to bring us into the uh transgressive realm of fourth questions.

But

let's just do it. I mean there's four question marks in this one question which is already a red flag. I mean one

question should have one question mark.
So how does the the clergy basa interact
with or help the ley in traditional
Buddhist societies? Uh I know le
Buddhists give food to How do the
teaching of the monks filter down to the
ley? Okay. Do they go to a building once
a week like Abrahamic? Yeah. Like in
Buddhist
Buddhist Asia, especially Terraova
Buddhist Asia like Burma, you've got
Uposeta day, which is the the full moon,
the new moon, and the half moon,
or at least it's it's called that, but
it's it's done according to a tradition
that isn't always astronomically

correct. You know, you can be one or two days off the actual full moon on Uposeta day. And on Uposeta days, it is the tradition for lay people to go to the monastery. They take eight precepts instead of just five. And then they'll listen to a dama talk. And then they'll like help around the monastery. They'll do stuff that monks aren't supposed to do like, you know, pulling weeds, that kind of thing. And, you know, they'll drink tea and they'll talk and have a nice time. You know, it's kind of like their day off. And then they go back home again.

And uh let's see.

So there is that. But also if lay people

have a problem in their personal life, they often go to like the village monk to ask for advice. And when I was I spent some time in Bali in Indonesia and there was an Indonesian monk there. He was Terra Buddhist. And when he was there I mean he spent most of his time in Burma. But when he would come back to visit his family or whatever in Bali, it was it was just like people were just coming to him all the time. It seems to be more of a a cultural thing in Bali than in Burma that you just go to the monk with your problems. And so it's like, you know, this guy's fighting with his mother. You know, they're not

getting along. They go to the monk and ask him ask him for advice, that kind of thing. And a lot of the time it works fairly well. Although really a monk, especially a monk who was ordained as a child and never really lived a worldly life, you know, with interacting with with women and and kids and and like having to pay bills and so forth that there's some questions they might not be really good at answering, which is one thing in the West, one reason why Western Buddhists often prefer lay teachers to monk teachers is that the lay teachers have more experience in the kind of problems that lay people are more likely to have and so they're

better able to give advice with regard
to that
and health advice. I mean, some
[clears throat] monks will just give
horrible just quack medical advice to
lay people and monks in Burma,
especially famous monks, seats,
um, they just kind of have people
assuming that they're infallible for so
long that they start assuming it
themselves and they'll just start
blurting out decrees and so forth that
it it doesn't always work out that way,
you know, like Um, there was this one
doctor that I knew in Burma. He had this
like like a a scrapbook of just gnarly

pictures of like [clears throat] a woman comes to a monk in some remote village. She's got like a lump on her breast. He just assumes there's a boil. He just takes a needle and and pops it, which then causes the the cancer cells to metastasize and get worse.

So yeah, you shouldn't go to a monk for like medical problems um or even like family pro I mean family problems maybe I mean it can just be a universal dharmic answer you and your mother aren't getting along the monk can just suggest after hearing the the details you know just send meta you know be patient you know have respect for your parents you know within this context

just you know they can give sort of general generic kind of advice, but with regard to specifics, you know, how should I invest my money, that kind of thing, or you know, what should I do about this pain in my leg? That kind of thing. You're better off not going to a monk about that sort of thing. Something that has really something central to do with dharma or dharma, you know, something that can be answered in terms of Buddhist philosophy or Buddhist practice, then you maybe do well to go to a monk. In fact, you'd probably do better in cases like that, going to a monk than going to a lay person.

You might do better going to a monk with regard to like psychological issues than you would by going to like a a licensed therapist because psychologists and psychiatrists for the most part are basket cases. Most of them are nutty or just like very samsaric.

So I hope I answered that question. So [clears throat] now I'm going to answer sort of the last part of that question, the fourth question mark, which is how familiar with Buddhist doctrine are the ley? And in the West, they're fairly ignorant. In fact, some of the monks are fairly ignorant of of like Buddhist doctrine in the West.

I've I've I've sat through a few dhamma

talks given by western monks in in the west and Burmese villagers would know more about dhama than this monk. You know the monk saying like the first verse of the dhamapara says that the mind is like an ocean. And I mean he said that this this one monk said that twice like in two different dhamma talks. makes the same claim that the first verse of the Dhamapata says that the mind is like an ocean. You can read there's no mention at all of oceans in the first verse of the Dhamapata. It doesn't say that at all. But the lay people, they just loved him. You know, they were just soaking it up like a

sponge because they didn't know any better. Whereas some Burmese villager with a fourth grade education, I mean, their mouth would be open, you know, or they might be like snickering behind their hand at the the Burmese villager sitting next to him like, "You hear what he just said?" Because Burmese villagers, even if they only have like a fourth grade formal education, they know about Abid Dhama. They know all the stories from the commentaries, they know basic tenets of of Buddhism. If they're devout Buddhists, I mean, if they're just don't care, then, you know, they're just very superficial Buddhists. Just like a lot of Christians in the West are

just very superficial Christians that don't, for example, even know that there's a book of lamentations in the Bible. The book of Lamentations. A lot of Western Christians would be surprised to hear what there's a book of lamentations in the Bible. Yeah, it's one of the books of the Bible. So there's a lot of sort of superficial Buddhists in that are just Buddhists because they were just born into a Buddhist culture. But still there are lots and lots of Burmese villagers who have they you know they go and listen to the the the monk give the talk on today and they they'll even like um like read

Buddhist books and so forth and they know more about Buddhism than a lot of Buddhist teachers in the west just the average Burmese village Buddhist.

So yeah, the ley at least the devout ley in Buddhist Asia like like in Burma especially that's the one place that I have the most experience with. So I can I can speak with more authority with regard to what Burma is like than any other Buddhist country that yeah they understand their dharma fairly well.

In fact they understand it better than a lot of Buddhist teachers in the west know it.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to Gordon's next question, which is as

follows. From what I've heard from you and others, in Buddhist cosmology, the universe dies and is reborn. A Buddha comes into being and teaches eventually those teachings are forgotten and everything descends. What do these Buddhist end times look like [snorts] before another Buddha arises?
Is anything written about it? And maybe I should have looked up the reference, but there's this long weird suta towards the end of the digaya where the Buddha talks about this sort of thing. You know, he's talking about sort of cosmology. He's talking about like the origin of the earth and everything which

in other sutas he won't answer. You know, it just is that's just a waste of time bothering with that sort of thing. But in this one long suta towards the end of the digaya

um you know he just goes for it. And again I really have never been particularly interested in Buddhist mythology except from maybe like an anthropological point of view. So according to him

uh or according to the suta I should say because there's no guarantee that the Buddha really taught this especially considering that he refused to answer these questions in in numerous other sutas and also sutas that are towards

the the back of a collection of of sutas um just uh like statistically are less likely to be authentic as a general rule. For example, the Angura Nikaya, the numerical discourses, the whole 11th book, I've heard certain scholars claim the whole chapter 11 of the Angura Nikaya is probably later a later edition. Probably started off just 1 through 10.

Anyhow, [clears throat] the end times, it just gets civilization degenerates until um and also the human lifespan degenerates until you're down to like a lifespan of 10 years. You know, you hit puberty at five and then and people are

essentially just there's no dhamma at all. Nobody really is keeping any kind of precepts. There's no virtue. You know, people are just essentially killing and eating each other. And then um it just hits sort of rock bottom and then starts improving again. And then after it has improved sufficiently that you have at least the potential for dharma again, then the next Buddha comes along.

But the end times, it's way worse than any end times that we've experienced recently. You know, it's worse than World War II,

worse than, you know, worse than anything in modern history.

So we haven't got there yet.

So from the Buddhist point of view, all we have to look forward to is further decline. Although there can be little bumps, you know, a little bit of uphill before, you know, you continue the downhill slide. Sort of like the decline of the Roman Empire was sort of like that, too. It wasn't just constant decline. Every once in a while, you'd have a good emperor who would make reforms and so forth. Things would get better for a little while and then they'd go back downhill again. So that's kind of the way it is. Um, for us from a a Buddhist point of view, you know,

we're we're still on the downhill slide. It's going to get a lot worse before it gets any better. Although, there can be like intervals of improvement before you hit the cliff again.

So, let's see here. Gordon's fourth question, I guess, since I separated out his compound first question into multiple into two questions. She says if America were to become Buddhist majority with no demographic or government change i.e. most people freely convert to it. What do you think the country would look like after that? What would change? What would stay the same? To clarify, I mean the American people become Buddhists as

in they believe and follow it to the same extent most humans believe and follow their religion, not necessarily all become enlightened. Well, if America were to become a Buddhist majority country, the main thing that would change would be Buddhism itself.

Because I mean, you just look at some of the academic papers written by Western Buddhists and it's like queer Buddhism and feminist Buddhism and all this kind of stuff that the Buddha never taught. I mean, he probably would not endorse very much of it.

Um, so what would change is that Buddhism would change and you'd wind up

with something hardly recognizable and which is already happening in the West. It's like um a long time ago. This is this is like the late 80s I think there was I think it was the ABC the American Buddhist Congress or something had this convention this Buddhist convention and one of the keynote speakers there gave this speech about how the top priority for Western Buddhism would be to abolish the SA

and I mean that was what Buddhism was all about originally. The Buddha was a monk. He taught Buddhism to other to monks. You know, it was a monastic spiritual system that if you really wanted to follow Buddhism like really

strictly and correctly, the first thing you should do, renounce the world and become a monk.

And in the west, they just it's just not like that. So, there would have to be a a major change in world view for people to become good Buddhists. like for Buddhism not to just become like mutated into something the Buddha himself would denounce

which is to some degree what has already happened in the west you have like just just dealing with terra you know you've got sort of the the boomer weasna movement which was largely based on mahasi siato's teachings and I mean

there's still some valid dharma in it
But it's just a very secular worldly
kind of dharma where it's more a matter
of trying to sleep more comfortably than
actually waking up.
And then there's the Ginka method which
may I mean despite its superficiality
with regard to philosophy and so forth.
It may be like the best version the mass
version of terra Buddhism in the west
although there are a lot of more like
monastic systems arising in the west
especially the Ajan Cha tradition. So
the ajan cha tradition and just uh like
Thai Buddhism time and western monks in
a Thai tradition like settling in the
west and becoming like missionaries that

helps. But when you've got monks that are missionaries they have to be politically correct. You know it's mostly leftists who are going to take Buddhism seriously because the right-wing conservatives, if they're religious at all, they're more likely to be Christians or Jews.

So you got monk missionaries coming to the west settling down like in a a liberal type of city and you know you got the the people going to the monastery that are wanting like you know gay pride events this kind of thing you know they want to hear more about mindfulness of white privilege and so

forth

and um I mean it just kind of derails dharma to some degree when you have that kind of situation. But you can't have monks just saying like for example according to the second noble truth all suffering is caused by craving. Craving is volal. Therefore all suffering is ultimately self-inflicted. You can't just blame whitey or blame patriarchal men or blame the government you know for your own suffering. It's ultimately self-created.

And to say that kind of thing will have people just I mean they'll just get pissed off. A lot of them will. They just, you know, you'll just be driving

away your your potential Buddhist

converts.

But let's say just for the sake of

argument that America were to become a

Buddhist majority country.

um

with less

leftist craziness

contaminating the dharma because like a

lot of leftists they cannot tell the

difference between like progressivism

and dharma. They just assume that the

Buddha was a progressive because he was

enlightened.

But then I mean it'd be like it wouldn't

really be all that different. I mean,

how many Christians nowadays really take Christianity seriously? Like, how many Christians nowadays in the West gather not up their treasures upon the earth? There's even a uh one of the epistles of Paul, I'm pretty sure, says that if you become a Christian at a time when you're not married yet, you shouldn't get married because Jesus is coming. You got to get ready for that. On the other hand, if you're already married when you become a Christian, then stay married. But I mean stuff like that and gathering not up your treasures upon the earth even like you know love your enemies and bless those that curse you. At least there are some devout Christians that at

least make some efforts in in along those lines. You know they try to forgive their enemies, bless those that curse them. Still, you know, they're they're getting families. They're they need to make as much money as they can. You know, they're still in the world and of the world. And if America or the West were to convert to Buddhism, it would be the same kind of thing. It would be like secular Buddhism for the most part, um, American culture in particular, and there'd have to be a radical change for Americans to really eagerly just get down on their knees and bow to monks, you know, to have like this higher class

of humans. Like in Burma, the word for
human being, Lou, isn't even used for
monks. Monks are considered to be
literally superhuman
and that sort of thing just isn't going
to fly very well in a relatively
egalitarian culture like America.
But I think if things get bad,
especially, you know, just economically
or whatever, there'll be more there
would be more and more people who are
just taking the the renunciation route,
just bailing out of society, you know.
Who knows? Maybe a lot of like incelss
and so forth would just take that route.
Just sort of like latent homosexuals in
Burma often become monks just to give

them a socially acceptable
excuse for not getting married to a
woman. And it seems like when I was in
Burma anyway, just about any like mahasi
center in town that was relatively
wellunded, well supported, relatively
comfortable would always have like an
assistant Seattle who was a latent
homosexual.
They would stay away from the rough
forest monasteries, that kind of thing,
but they would kind of gravitate
gravitate towards the more comfortable
places and towns.
So, I mean, if America were to become a
Buddhist majority country, I really

don't think there would be all that much change because I mean, you have to change the religion to fit the mainstream culture. You know, they're not just going to like abandon the military, you know, they're just not going to just shut down the military because that's that's adharmic. You know, you should you shouldn't be harming others, that kind of thing. they're just going to have to they would change Buddhism. So, it really wouldn't be all that different from from Christianity,
which may not be the answer that Gordon was expecting, but that's pretty much the way it would be, I'm pretty sure.

Okay,

so I guess I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Romeo

and Romeo is asking kind of a similar

question I think kind of along the same

lines of if some religion were to take

over the West. Anyhow, he says, "Back in

Q&A number 163,

you addressed my questions about whether

you could ever see a revival of the type

of paganism that existed in

pre-Christian Europe gain any

substantial following in the West. You

didn't realistically see this happening

except by a few on the fringes of

society to fill the current spiritual

vacuum that now largely exists in the west. You speculated that a kind of revamped Christianity and even some kind of some form of Buddhism may step in to fill this void. I was wondering if you think Islam could ever realistically fill this gap. Not that I would want it to. After all, Islam has already taken over large swads of Europe. Or is it swavthes? Large swavthes of Europe and is now making inroads and growing rapidly even in these good old United States. Yeah, especially around Dearbornne, Michigan.

If you do think it is possible for Islam to take over the West, what does this bode for the flourishing of Buddhism

throughout the West? Would it just be stomped out? Well, before I actually answer the question, um, first I should point out that I think Q&A 163 was also, um, a prime Q&A. And let's see. Um, there is an I have had this idea that I mean, I don't think it's likely, but it is possible that you could have like a new sort of religious system in the West that would resemble sort of the cult of the emperors in Rome, you know. Trump could be deified. I mean, it's not impossible. I don't think he'd be declared a god by the Senate, which is the way it worked in Rome. But, I mean, he could have some kind of cult going uh

at some point in the future. Not that he would be like consciously the leader of it. he'd probably be passed away by then. But I mean it is theoretically possible you could have some sort of like emperor worship kind of thing happening in the west especially when you've got this civil cold war which is getting warmer and warmer all the time between left and right where the left they just hate Donald Trump. They hate his supporters and the right is just getting more and more just fed up and pissed off at the temper tantrums of the left. And so I mean eventually I mean it does seem that the right is is winning at present that the left is becoming so

hysterical and so hatefilled and and
it's like in a hypocritical way
declaring the other side to be the
hateful side. So it's like my hate is
justified because they are hateful. that
sort of thing that it really is driving
more and more people away. So that you
could have just this seismic shift to
the right. Not that I'm holding my
breath and it wouldn't even necessarily
be all that good of a thing. It might be
better just to restore the Democratic
party to some semblance of sanity
that you could have like a cult of the
emperors that could become sort of like
a new religion in the West, at least in

America.

[snorts]

But let's see here.

Uh I mean it's possible something like

neo stoicism

could replace religion in the west but

again it would take some really

charismatic inspired sort of teacher of

that to really get the ball rolling or

to get the wheel get the wheel rolling

in a stoic kind of way.

So let's just get to the question though

[clears throat] and see if you do think

it is possible for Islam to take over

the west what does that bode for the

flourishing of Buddhism throughout the

west would just be stomped yeah probably

yeah I think once you get a critical
mass of Muslims
especially certain kinds of Muslims I
mean there's different kinds there's
more um intolerant sort of Muslims and
but I mean the intolerant Muslims are
the ones that are more strictly
following the Quran
So yeah, I mean that history would show
that yeah, Buddhism doesn't compete very
well with Islam. Um especially once
Islam reaches a certain percentage of
the population because Buddhists are
nonviolent and Islam is a violent
religion.
It's just right there in the Quran.

[sighs and gasps] So

yeah, I mean Islam entering India pretty

much spelled the end of Buddhism in

India.

So yeah, I do think that that Buddhism

would pretty much go ex extinct in the

West if

the West became predominantly Muslim.

That's just a guess though. Who knows? I

mean, for example, I mean, it could be

the same kind of deal as I was just

mentioning with regard to America

becoming Buddhist. If America became

Muslim, they'd be like lukewarm tolerant

Muslims. You'd probably be have like

Muslim queer groups and so forth that

would be abomination from the point of

view of the the founder of the religion.
But it's just America or Western
civilization in general is just not very
religious, not very spiritual,
especially in modern times after science
pretty much replaced Christianity as a
way of describing
the cosmos.
So yeah, I mean you cannot serve both
God and Mammon and the West specializes
in Mammon.
So, I mean,
it's possible that Islam, if it took
over the West, would be so lukewarm that
it would just tolerate Buddhism. But if
it were like a fundamentalist Islam,

then yeah, I think even Christianity
would be in in dire straits. There'd be
like persecuted sects of hardened
Christians here and there, sort of like
you still have in the Middle East.
But I'm not sure how well Buddhists
harden under certain circumstances. They
mostly just go away or or get killed.
[snorts]
So,
oh, but whether Islam could take over,
Romeo is kind of asking that also, even
though there's no question mark right
after it. He's wondering if I think
Islam could ever realistically fill the
religious gap in in the West after the
decline of Christianity. Um, yeah,

especially in Europe because I mean in
the West it's mostly Hispanics that are
crossing the border into America,
whereas in Europe there's a much higher
percentage of Muslims who are entering,
military age Muslim men who make no
secret of the fact that they despise
Western civilization. They're just there
for the free handouts.
So
yeah, I it's I mean Islam
[clears throat] could possibly take over
if like Western civilization becomes so
degenerate and so feminized that the men
of the West just aren't even going to
fight back.

They're not going to stand up for their
their heritage and all that. Then yeah,
it could easily happen. Especially in
Europe, I think Europe is definitely
more castrated than America is now.
So I'm just going to move on to the next
question. This is from PSA
and PSA is somewhat of a weisenheimer
I should say and he says in your
esteemed capacity as a as the curator of
a closed aquatic biome how do you
navigate the intricate and
multiffactorial
physicochemical equilibria necessary to
sustain a stable internal milu constancy
within maybe she's trying to say
constantly within Our ichthyological

prototype, particularly in regard to mitigating the insidious onset of utrofication and the subsequent perturbations in nitrogenous waste biot transansformations within your finite cartilagynous vertebrae limnological microcosm.

Well, yeah, I have had a problem with utrofication lately. And for those of you who aren't like into ecology, utrofication means excess of nutrients. So, I mean, I actually did an aquarium video months ago where I was discussing this and it was like an unintended prophecy because it happened to me after I was mentioning the possibility of it

where you keep adding food to your fish tank, but you're not doing water changes regularly. you know, you're trying to have like a balanced ecosystem in there so that everything kind of stays in balance. But when you're adding certain kinds of food, there's like certain like minerals especially that aren't being taken back out of the system by plants. See, like with regard to nitrogenous wastes, the fish pee into the water, bless their hearts, and you got plants like hornwart, which is excellent for this. It just sucks the nitrogen right back out of the water again. No problem. But the plants aren't taking out enough of the minerals. You know, they're

taking out the nitrogen and a lot of the organic stuff is just being broken down by bacteria and so forth, but the minerals especially just have been building up in my aquarium.

So, [clears throat] that the water is very hard now. And I've just had to start doing water changes. So, I'm doing like a water change once a week, you know, like a 20% water change once a week. Now, just trying to get the pH and the the water hardness back down to a level that isn't stressing out the creatures. Like the shrimp especially, it's kind of counterintuitive. The shrimp like a little slightly acidic

water with low mineral content. you know, they like soft water, which I mean, you think they're crustaceians, you know, they want calcium in their their shells and all that, that they'd like minerals in the water, but for some reason, they're just evolved to live in soft water. And so, when my water started getting hard, I didn't realize what the problem was at first. The the shrimp just stopped reproducing. That was like one of the first red flags. And then some of the fish started stressing out, too.

But so I've started doing water changes. Um, have I addressed everything in here? That's uh I still I like having like a

balanced ecosystem like lots of plants. You know, my my aquarium, especially my 32-galon tank is very jungly now. So that a lot of the the fish that live on the bottom, the scavengers on the bottom, I hardly ever see them because they're just living in the in the bushes.

I should have at least 10 ammano shrimp in there. And I rarely see in a mono shrimp just because they're just hiding in the plants all the time.

But having an aquarium where you don't do water changes, if you can have it so perfectly balanced that you don't feed the fish,

then you can do that. you know, it's just like this enclosed system where the fish you you just have a few nano fish that are like feeding on biofilm, that kind of thing. And then so long as you're not adding any no more nutrients into the water, you shouldn't have a problem. But if you are adding food, then gradually there's going to be a mineral content is increasing in that aquarium and you're going to have to do water changes at the very least. you know, like a weekly water change just to keep the water like the water hardness down

because otherwise it just gets hard in in the tank just due to gradual buildup

of certain types of nutrients or other substances, especially minerals.

But my my aquarium, even though I I rarely or up until recently wasn't doing many water changes or changing the filter much, um I mean, there was no problem with nitrogen because there's so many plants in there, they just suck the the like the fertilizer right out of the water. It's just this mineral stuff that the plants don't need that much and so it's just keeps building up in the water. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from [clears throat] Ruie.

And Ruie says, "Would you say that

samsara is not a region of experience

but the totality of experience?"

Um, I would say that samsara is

perception.

So I mean you can do with that as you

will. You can interpret that as you

like. Is perception the totality of

experience? I think probably not. Just

like bare consciousness isn't

necessarily samsaric

because it's not perceptual.

But to the extent that consciousness is

perceptual, to that same extent it is

samsaric.

Perception is samsara.

Perception is or samsara is meaningh.

[snorts]

So

yeah, I would I [snorts] it all depends

on how you're going to define

experience. I guess if experience is

necessarily samsaric

then you could say well then the

totality of experience would be samsara

but if you think that the totality of

experience is not 100% uh perceptual

then I would say it's just a kind of

region of experience the perceptual

region

and I'm just going to move on next

question this from near

says thoughts on osho

I have heard some of his speeches in

Hindi and I must say the guy was a crazy good aator and definitely seemed very wise. Yeah, I've I've written a few essays on Osho.

Um if my fourth book ever comes out, um there's going to be some significant mentioning of Osho in that fourth book also. Um yeah, there was one essay I wrote in particular. It's like the something the enigmatic bwan because I mean for most of his life when I mean he was the bwan shri nish he didn't start calling himself Osho until right towards the end I think.

Um so my thoughts on Osho I don't think he was enlightened. I've read a few of his books and his books are more glib

than wise. It seems to me that I mean he did have the ability to give a two-hour long dharma talk every day which just blows my mind. I mean when I was in Bali especially I was asked to give a dharma talk every day

and I mean the dama talk would only be like 20 or 30 minutes maybe but still after a few weeks I'm starting to like rack my brain. what should I talk about this time? You know, it's like you just run out of ideas after a while. You run out of topics that really resonate with you and for Osho when back when he was living in Puna, India at the ashram in Puna. Um he [clears throat] was giving a

two-hour long dama talk at least once a day and he was just going with it. But reading his books, you see that I mean he has like these glib answers that kind of makes him seem like he's wise because he can answer so easily. But you think about it and it's like wait a minute, no I I don't think so. That kind of thing. And you just look at how his his whole system worked out and it kind of was a fiasco,

one fiasco after another. And of course, Osho really did get first pick of all the pretty syasins and all that. So my personal opinion on Osho is that he had attained something. You know, he was working at a higher level of

consciousness than the average person.
But just because you're at a higher
level of consciousness doesn't mean that
you're necessarily wiser or better. You
know, like a monkey is at a higher level
of consciousness than a sheep. But a
monkey is a lot nastier than a sheep.
So, or at least they have the reputation
for being nastier than sheep.
So, yeah, I think that he did kind of
make some kind of breakthrough like
through meditation or whatever. And he
was clever and a good speaker and he had
like the the big dark penetrating eyes
sort of like the the Naga king in the
first Conan Barbarian movie. You know,

James Earl Jones, is that him? James Earl Jones. He had like those big soulful dark messing eyes. Osho had that too.

But like when they moved to Antelope, Oregon, which is when I found out about it because I was just living like 100 miles. I grew up like about 100 miles away from there. You see them on the news all the time. always negative stuff, you know, like these these cult members taking over the town of Analopee, Oregon, and importing homeless people to vote and then just kind of abandoning them after they did their duty by voting in these Osho followers

as the new town council and all that. And then of course Sheila who was like the the rightand person of Osho in in America like literally trying to um influence the the vote by poisoning people in in like salad bars at restaurants in town, that kind of thing. Like inoculating salmonella into the salad bars at restaurants, this kind of thing to to reduce the the the the people voting on this election. So the homeless people that they imported plus the the the ashram members can you know take over the town council and then they changed the name of Analopee Oregon to Rajnish Puram Oregon and all this. It

was a big scandal but at that time Osho he wasn't even talking anymore. He was apparently taking some kind of drugs and just kind of staying in his cabin and this nutty Sheila woman was just kind of running a muk.

So yeah, I I would agree that he was a good aator and just amazingly could talk for two hours straight every day and not just keep repeating himself. I assume he didn't. Um, and he did have some wisdom, but I do not think that he was enlightened, even though some people are just sure that he was enlightened. Like I remember one time when I was in Bali, there's a bunch of um around the the city of Ubud in central Bali, there's

like an expat community of like artists, western artists and so forth. And there's quite a few uh uh exf followers of of Osho there. And I met a few of them when I was in Bali and I was asking what do you think about Osho? Do you think he was enlightened? And this one German artist who lived there, he just I mean just rolled his eyes and just it was obvious. You know, he was unlike anybody I ever met in my life. You know, he was he was clearly enlightened. And then there was another person who was on the board of directors uh for Osho. He was kind of non-committal. You know, he he he really couldn't answer either way.

That kind of thing. But personally, I'm skeptical that Osho really was enlightened.

So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from RFS and we've been going for an hour and 22 minutes. Okay. RFS says, "Do you have enough money to live well?"

Um, yeah. I mean, we're getting along. Um, I mean, I'm not rich, but the house is paid for, the cars are paid for. I mean, I I do make enough money to pay my bills.

And um so yeah, I mean we're doing all right. I'm not complaining.

See, I mean it all it would take is like one disaster to to wipe us out, you know? It's like some health disaster or something. Yeah, that could even with health insurance that still I mean you can it can mess you up. But I mean, I've been living my life kind of the way ancient people have lived their lives. You know, people have lived their lives this way for forever. It's just you just have faith that you won't be one of the 10% of the population that just gets wiped out by some disaster.

[sighs]

So, there is that.

Um, but yeah, I answering the question,

which is a yes or no question. Um, yeah, I do have enough money to live well enough. I mean, I was an aesthetic living in a cave with no money for 30 years or I mean in the cave for 20some years. No, in the cave for however many years.

But I mean, I don't have very high standards with regard to quality of life. This this house is just I mean totally beyond what I would have even gone for. This this is largely the result of my woman who has been living sort of a a worldly life more so than me um you know for a few decades anyhow. So there is that like kind of married into money or something to some some

extent even though she doesn't work for a living.

So yeah, I guess so. So next question from RFS is, if you didn't have enough money, would you ask your audience for help? And I don't know. I mean, if there was some kind of calamity, you know, the house burned down and and the somehow we had spaced off paying the last insurance bill. I mean, I personally just do not believe in insurance. The only reason I have any insurance at all is because the law requires it when my woman insists upon it.

But insurance is essentially betting against yourself. You're actually

wagering money that something bad will

happen to you.

And in my opinion, it probably increases

the likelihood that something bad will

happen to you.

So if I didn't have enough money, would

I ask my audience for help? Maybe. I

mean, we'll just have to wait till we

get to that point if it ever happens and

then we'll see. Um, I mean, more likely

I would just kind of describe the

situation and and let people decide what

they wanted to do about it. I didn't

want don't want to put anyone on the

spot, you know, give me a dollar,

anything like that.

So,

yeah, at present

life is relatively good. So, I've got no complaints.

Some people have been sending money like generous contributions. One recently for $77.77.

Like a couple weeks before that, somebody sent a hundred bucks. So, I mean, it's it's appreciated. You know, it's it's nice to know that people value what I am contributing enough that they even think to send, you know, five dollars.

So, I mean that's that's that's kind of uh gratifying, I suppose. And the money is well spent. You know, we we buy

groceries and stuff.

So,

um I just move on to the next question,

I guess. This is from Newman. And Newman

says, "When you were a monk and you were

living with other monks in a monastery,

how did you overcome the tension and

other issues like subtle passive

aggression and other low intensity

social conflicts that arose?"

Huh. Well, when I was a monk and living

with other monks in a monastery, I

mostly just avoided everybody, you know,

just stayed by myself, you know, just

stayed in a little cabin or in a cave on

the outskirts of the monastery, that

kind of thing. Um, but still if there's

problems, tension, and other issues, subtle passive aggression. Yeah, that's I mean, you're more likely in a monastery to have like an explosion than a subtle passive aggression. At least in my experience, because um a monastery or an ashram, some place like that, is a pressure cooker. It's like an emotional pressure cooker because you're supposed to be restrained. Monks are supposed to be restrained. And so when you restrain your urges, they don't just go away. They just build up pressure in the subconscious mind until they start percolating up to the surface in the forms of like hysteria.

That's why you had so many like

[clears throat] oh what was it the the

devils of Ludon

like it was a book by uh Aldis Huxley uh

like a a historical book about this

these uh I think they were medieval or

very early modern nun Catholic nuns in

France that were just going off the deep

end or just like the witch trials like

witch mania among Puritans you know that

the Puritans were so self-restrain or

like the [clears throat]

like like in Spain like in the 16th

century again they were so restrained

through their religious beliefs and so

forth that they just became hysterical

and you're much more likely to have like

witch public witch burnings and so forth
people just freaking out you people
supposedly being possessed by the devil
and all this in these really repressed
environments these repressed societies
and a monastery is like that so I
remember one time there was an attendant
at a monastery in California that I was
staying at who referred to the place as
a accelerator just because of all
this this stuff comes up to the surface
more easily as and partly because you're
trying to like examine yourself you know
it's like everything's under like a like
a magnifying glass so that kind of ex
exacerbates the problem too

so there were a few times when there was
just like blowups at a monastery
Um, you know, quite a few times
wasn't so much of a problem with subtle
passive aggression, you know, it was
more like boom, hitting fan, that
kind of thing.
So, how did I overcome the tension and
other issues? Well, part of it partly,
you know, it's just you're reading the
text that the sutas say, you know, you
shouldn't indulge in angry speech and so
forth. So, I mean, you're just mindful
of it. You watch it arise and pass away.
If you're like conscientious and it
occurs to you to do this,
other monks might uh you know, they

might indulge in backbiting and so forth more than I did.

But uh I remember the first monastery where I was ordained, there was a a a German nun there who, in my opinion, had a classic textbook case of schizophrenia and was extremely difficult to get along with. You know, for example, she saw no reason whatsoever why she should like cooperate with anybody, especially after she started hearing the voice telling her that she was enlightened and so forth. That I mean it was just it was very difficult situation. And at the same time that that was going on, you had like Burmese supporters of the

monastery trying to take over the monastery from the board of directors who owned the the deed to the land and so forth. So there's all this uproar going on, which is one of the reasons why I went to Burma. Some of the senior monks at that monastery told me, I mean, you should just go to Burma for for a few years until things settle down here. So I went to Burma and I stayed there for more than 20 years because things didn't settle down, they just got worse. But how did I overcome the tension and other issues? mainly just through self-awareness, observing these urges arise, noting them and not acting upon them. That would be just the standard

Buddhist approach or at least the terravada Buddhist approach to, you know, like interpersonal friction and so forth. Although there was a couple times um early on in Burma where I just kind of popped. There was one time there was this monk. I mean, it was like my karma that I would always be living next door to the worst monk at the monastery, assuming that I wasn't the worst. You know, some people might have seen it that way, but it's like the least conscientious monk at the monastery would be my next door neighbor. And I was staying at this one monastery. And I maybe I shouldn't mention his name,

but [clears throat] he was a farmer. He was a village farmer who became a monk um just to kind of take it easy, live live an easy life. But he remained a farmer. He was raising chickens. He was farming, you know, he's like planting crops and so forth just as like a hobby. It was just what he'd done his entire life. And like one time I was I was walking back from all round and I see some guy with a blue towel turban. You know, in Burma, it's it's typical for older Burmese guys to take just a big bath towel and just make a a turban and just wear that, you know. Yeah. Just wearing like a sarong and a and a and a turban. And he's just hacking away at

the ground like digging up some new flower bed or something. More likely a gourd bed.

And I was thinking, man, who is looks like there's some some lay person there digging in who so and so's front yard in front of his meditation cabin. And then I realized that it was Uso and so himself. And I really I mean he he'd be sneaking down to my area to cut bamboo like where my cave was. It was one of the only clumps of bamboo on the monastery. He'd be sneaking down there when I was gone. And one day I just decided I didn't want to go for alms round that day. So I happened to be

there and I see so and so coming down the the rock stairs into my air into my little valley, my little canyon with like a machete and I'm thinking, what is he doing? And then I start hearing chopping sounds and it's like the bamboo. So I just run out there and just start yelling at him and just snatch the this machete away from him. Just drive him off yelling at him.

So then of course I get [clears throat] called to talk to Seattle, you know, the Abbott. I explain what's happening and he said, "Well, you really have to give his machete back. You know, you don't want to be [clears throat] stealing his stuff." That kind of thing.

I was having a few doubts about whether I really was like excommunicated for stealing, for just taking his machete away. Although, according to the the texts, if a monk is he owns something inappropriate, it's like a monk owns a gun or drugs or something, other monks can take that from him and is not stealing because he's not supposed to have it to begin with.

So, that was my loophole, I guess.

But that sort of thing did happen sometimes.

[clears throat]

Let's see. But again, what you're supposed to do is like irritation or

aversion, ill will arises, you just note
it and let it go and do not act upon.
And I'm going to move on to Newman's
next question,
which is as follows.
Did monks mutually believe that their
inness
that felt and caused conflicts to be
illusory and therefore issues like that
were resolved more easily than in
secular life where people cling to egos.
Um so this is sort of like a an
elaboration on the previous question I
guess or just a followup to it. Maybe it
was all intended to be one question.
Um yeah, I think that the serious monks
um yeah I mean they they would take

dhamma seriously and they would do like
what I said you know it's just like ill
will or aversion arises then I mean you
just say that's not appropriate you know
I'm shouldn't be this I shouldn't
indulge in this sort of thing and if
you're mindful you just note it and let
it go and even if you're not extremely
mindful you're mindful enough to know
that you're feeling irritation at this
other person then still because I mean
Asian cultures are very kind of
self-disciplined anyway like for someone
to lose their in Asian culture is
way worse than for someone to lose their
in America

that it's just like a scandal somebody
like loses their cool in public in Burma
or like Japan
at least it used to be that way in Japan
I haven't been there in a long time but
in Burma it's like you got two people
having a shouting match in public and
it's just like everyone's just their
their mouth just drops open, their
eyebrows go because I mean that sort of
thing is just not supposed to happen.
Everyone's supposed to be calm and
polite in public.
So I mean in Asia that kind of thing is
is more rare than here anyway, I think.
But [clears throat] yeah, I mean, if you
had serious monks, they're going to just

be mindful of the irritation or ill or whatever that's starting to arise. Or even if they can't manage that, at least they know I shouldn't be I shouldn't be like yelling at somebody because I'm a monk in a monastery. I'm a Buddhist. So, you know, they can at least put on the brakes enough that they can sort of get along. You know, there's still monks that kind of didn't like each other. they might avoid each other, that kind of thing. But [clears throat] still, I mean, there's there's real conflicts. Like I mean, I've some [clears throat] monasteries in in Burma, especially like around Mandandalay or

some places in Shan State also, they're
just notorious for being snake pits.
Like I stayed at Mahagandon. I've told
the story before, I'm pretty sure.
>> [clears throat]
>> and around mandagandon
is in Amarapuro which is near just right
on the it's like a suburb of Mandandalay
and just the some of the monks there are
just rotten monks why they become monks
in the first place I'm not sure they
just didn't want to work for a living or
they just wanted a free education at a
at a monastic university or something
they wanted a higher social status from
being a monk something like that but
they really weren't serious about about

really

striving for liberation any such thing.

So there was one [clears throat]

monk

person in robes with a shaved head that

was living in a nearby school monastery

and school monasteries were they were

among the worst because you know they

were just into the the theory without so

much practice. And anyway, this this

monk supposedly was sneaking into our

monastery during the Yuposa ceremony.

When the the Putty Mocha rules are being

recited, all the monks have to

congregate in the Damahal. So all the

monks are in the Dahal for this

ceremony. This guy would sneak in and steal baatikas, which is a kind of commentary or subcommentary.

Then and in school monasteries, these baatikas are hard to get and they're they're relatively expensive. So he was stealing them from monk's cabins and then selling them at this other monastery. So I mean technically he wasn't really a monk because he was a thief.

So then one of the the the Anu Nayaka siato, it's sort of like the sub seat of that part of the monastery was a big monastery. He decided he was just going to lie in ambush for this guy. So he didn't attend the Padimoka recitation.

He stayed in he lay in wait for this for this guy and he caught him. He was kind of a macho. This this Anunnaka Seattle was kind of a macho monk. He was a tough guy. And so he catches him and then he gets turned over to the police or whatever. He was defrocked because he wasn't a monk anyway because he was stealing stuff and possibly even went to jail. And like a few months later, a friend of this thief
sneaks into the monastery, comes up behind that Anunnaka Seattle and just chops him in the head with a machete and kind of grazes the side of his his head, causes his ear to kind of like peel off

like this. So he stay he was in the hospital for quite a while after that. And this is like monks. I remember the first time or second time I went to the Mandandalay City Morg to watch autopsies, you know, because monks are supposed to observe death, you know. So I go to the this the city morg and the the coroner there said that just a few days previously they had found a dead monk and in his opinion that monk had been murdered by other monks.

Just just based on the autopsy they did and and whatever evidence they found. He didn't go into details but that kind of stuff can happen. So if you got serious monks who are like conscientious

devout Buddhists then you know there can be some friction and so forth but still they take dharma seriously and they don't just act out. But at the other end of the spectrum you've got snake pit monasteries in Asia. I mean, they're relatively rare in America, I'm sure, but in Asia, there's just snake pit monasteries where it's it's sort of like Catholic monasteries in medieval Europe where some of them were just really really awful. You know, like the the pope or some bishop will send some reform
some some disciplinarian to a monastery to get things back in order and he just

gets killed off immediately. You know,

he just gets murdered by the monks

there. that sort of thing happened and

in Burma occasionally it may still

happen.

So I mean there's there are serious very

devout conscientious monks in Burma and

then they're like the opposite in Burma.

There's there's all kinds.

So

let's see. I mean in the west there's a

little bit of that in the west. Like for

example,

back in like the early 90s when I was a

monk in California before I went to

Burma, I [clears throat] was told that

at Stockton, Stockton, California, there

was a Cambodian monastery who had the Cambodian SA Raja was living in exile there. And just just so you know, Yoda on the in the Star Wars movies was based largely on this Cambodian SA Raja. and he was over a hundred years old. But the thing was there's a lot of like Cambodian gangs in Stockton, or at least there were in the early 90s. And when things were starting to get too hot, like some gang members got the cops looking for him, he'll go and hide out in the monastery. So you have these gang members with like guns and hot rods and so forth that just become monks temporarily, you know, while they're

hiding from the police and you know,

they're just they're not really monks.

They're not really barely even

Buddhists. You know, hardly any more

Buddhist than the mafia is Catholic.

So that kind of thing can happen in the

west also

[clears throat]

but I've kind of completely strayed away

from the question and so let's just

stray all the way from the question and

move on to the next question shall we?

This is from Sedarta Lohachita

and Sedarta Lohachita he's got a sticky

one here. He says my future wife is of

Serbian origin and a practicing Orthodox

Christian. Christian religion is very

important to her. She has no intention or desire to hear about the dharma. For her, everything from India is the same and she doesn't pay much attention. She says that if we have a child, the child must be baptized before the month as the church commands, as she says, I really don't want any trouble or discussion. If you would be me, how would you approach this matter? Leave the child alone and when he or she is older, explain to him or her about Buddha or the Dharma. Yeah. So, that is kind of a sticky situation. It's you got a Buddhist man marrying a Christian woman who insists that any children that they have be raised

Christian.

Um, I would guess

that your children are going to observe

the husband doing his Buddhist devotions

and have some curiosity, probably ask,

"Why are you doing that, daddy?" And

then the father, I mean, he has the

obligation to at least answer. I mean he

maybe he should in order to avoid

uh any kind of blow up in the house not

try to convert his children to Buddhism

but still I mean he should give honest

objective answers that a child can

understand when the child is asking

about the Buddhist altar for example or

why daddy is sitting cross-legged on a

cushion for an hour every day that sort

of thing.

Um,

yeah. I think maybe I mean if you really do have your heart set on marrying this woman who really has no use at all for for Buddhism, then um it may be the wise thing to do is just let your children get old enough that they're able to think for themselves to some degree and then you can be more forthcoming in your explanations of of dharma and so forth. So, but I don't think you're going to be able to just completely keep it a secret that you're a Buddhist and not a an Orthodox Christian to keep it a secret

from your children.

So, I mean, sooner or later there's

going to have to be some kind of

resolution

of the situation. Um, I mean, your kids

are probably going to have to know that

you're not a Christian. you know,

they're going to they're going to

church. Maybe your wife insists that you

go to church, too. But still, your kids

are eventually going to figure out that

you're not a Christian, that you're a

Buddhist instead. And they're going to

be curious. You know, why are you a

Buddhist, daddy? That kind of thing. Why

aren't you a Christian? And I mean, what

are you going to do? Just say, well,

your mother won't allow me to say anything about the issue. I mean to some degree I mean you have to be a man and and put your foot down a little bit. I mean it isn't just a one-way street. You don't just obey.

So yeah I mean you would be under the obligation to at least give a brief concise answer to what your children are asking you. I mean you don't have to try to procilitize and convert them to Buddhism but still you should be honest and children are more into imitating their parents than just believing what their parents tell them. So, if you have perceptive children who think that, you

know, you're what you're doing seems to be a good thing just based on the vibe you give off when you're doing it, that sort of thing, then there's a good chance that they will be sincerely curious in a positive way about Dhamma as they get older.

But you know what you're getting yourself into by marrying a woman who is sort of anti Buddhist.

So that's just sort of what you're going to have to work on. You know, that's going to be one of your projects in life, I think, is kind of navigating through that situation.

Unfortunately, I do not have experience in that particular situation. Um,

my woman is interested in dharma.
Although like probably most Buddhists,
including Asian Buddhists, it's like
[clears throat] it's it's kind of held
as like an abstract ideal, but sometimes
it doesn't translate into really
believing it
when when the when the chips are down.
you know it's like karma for example or
or like you know mind over matter that
kind of thing u most westerners
including most western Buddhists are
more materialistic than I am you know
they have more faith in like scientific
realism or that kind of approach to
dealing with with life than I do which

does cause a certain amount of kind of I guess you'd call it friction it's a word that I've been using.

But nothing compared with

um just mirroring a woman who really is just kind of anti- Buddhist who maybe thinks you're going to burn in hell because you're a you're like a heathen or something. I hope she doesn't take it that far. I mean, you could bring up St. Joseph. I have been told that St. Joseph is canonized in the Orthodox church as well as the Catholic one. And St. Josephhat I mean Josephhat in this case is a corruption of bodhic sata or bodhic satva

and this staphat is a kind of

mythological saint who is based on the
the Buddha and a in a previous birth in
one of the jotica stories.
I mean originally it was I think in the
Arabic translation of the Jotica stories
it was bodhisaf and then it got as far
as I think Georgia was moving westward
along the caravan routes in the middle
ages gets as far as Georgia I think it
became Lodisaf and then when it got into
Greece it was Yoasaf
and then the when it got into like the
Latin areas of Europe at the time at
least Latin was like the the learned
language at the time it became name
yo see yosphhat yosephhatus which in

English is Josephhat

and I was told by a German monk no he

was a no he was a an Austrian Catholic

priest I don't know why I call him a

German monk he said there there is a

monastery in Germany where they have a

shrine to all of the saints and St.

Joseph just has a Buddha image sitting

there. Although technically he wasn't

the Buddha yet. It was a previous life.

I mean, just because, for example, if I

was Henry Ford in a previous life

doesn't mean that I'm I'm Henry Ford now

or that Henry Ford was me. You know,

we're just previous life.

So

I guess uh I guess I answered that

question.

But [snorts and clears throat] oh St. Joseph, I mean that could be like a foot in the door anyway for kind of declaring Buddhism to be at least harmonious with Orthodox Christianity that I mean you're not necessarily going to burn in hell for being a Buddhist. Something like that. Use St. Joseph fat is a foot in the door.

Anyways, I'm moving [clears throat] on to the next question. This is from Siovak and Cipad Zitan. And Seio says, "What's with India's obsession with poop?" And Sioad Zena just does not like India.

He just I mean he has he was warned in the past about just continually posting derogatory memes about India and Indians.

Well, I mean India's obsession with poop, I do not consider India to really be obsessed with poop. I mean there's cow poop.

So I mean even in in poly texts, ancient India was the same. They would use cow poop as like plastering, you know, they'd plaster walls with cow poop or they would plaster floors with a mixture of cow poop and like clay, that kind of thing. And it was just the cow was man's best friend in in the ancient Ganges Valley. The dog wasn't man's best friend

in the ancient Ganges Valley. It was the cow. And there are sutas or just texts in in the polytopica like some of it's in Vineia where the Buddha is just talking about how the cow is the great benefactor to mankind. It's like they have this idea that anything that comes out of cows can't be all bad. And so that may have had something to do this this pastoralist society of the Indo-Aryans invading the Ganges Valley starting in the northwest of India and then moving down the Ganges that you know um before the Buddhist time there was no money economy in India. I mean it was just starting up around the time of

the Buddha maybe slightly before the time of the Buddha a money economy was was entering India.

And so before that wealth was cows. How many cows do you have? That's that's how rich you are. And so it's just it was sort of a

boine centric uh culture to some degree. Even now you got the sacred cows in India that just wander around wherever they want to. And so cows have always been a big deal in India. And cow poop it has certain uses. You know you can you can dry it out, burn it as fuel. You can plaster your walls and your floor with it. It has certain medicinal properties apparently,

or at least people believed it did. So, I mean, is that kind of that's I wouldn't call it an obsession with poop, but at least it was an acceptance of cow dung as something that isn't just necessarily just icky and disgusting. And then of course you can add the fact that in modern India for some reason entire villages just don't see the point in digging outous latrines and they just poop in a field. They just crap by the side of the road. That kind of thing. So that's different. That's not really an obsession. That's just not seeing the point of digging a latrine pit. So I'm I'm not exactly sure why India

and and some Burmese villages. I've been to a few Burmese villages where they just have like a designated field.

I I made the mistake of wandering through one once. It was a shortcut. I just see this field. I didn't know it was the field. And I start heading out through the field and and people start yelling, "No, don't don't do it." But it was too late. And you start seeing, you know, you're actually in a kind of feal minefield.

and why India is uh so lacadasical, so unmotivated to dig latrines and just are willing to have villagers just crap on the ground in random places. I don't

know, but I don't consider that really to be an obsession.

And it it seems to be on a different order from the acceptance of cow poop as sort of a an occasionally beneficial substance.

But aside from that, I'm really don't know enough about Indian culture to know if there's any more poop stuff that I could discuss here. And I'm just going to move on to Seioat Zero's next question, which is realistically how do we spread Buddhism across the globe. Ashoka was able to do it in all of India before being replaced, but it has survived in higher IQ places like East

Asia. I'm assuming it can be done today as well, but needs strategic planning. Well, yeah. I mean, it would take some kind of strategic planning, I guess, to come up with a form of Buddhism that would be acceptable. I mean, you don't want like the the leftist academic queer Buddhism taken over, obviously, because that's just semi Buddhism at best. That's like political correctness with Buddhist flavoring at it. there's like radical leftist political correctness with some Buddhist flavoring added. Um I mean you consider like medieval Japan that was largely Buddhist, not entirely Buddhist and there was Shinto and even some

Christianity once the Portuguese and Spaniards started showing up there. Um feudal Japan.

Uh I mean they were militaristic Buddhists.

not only the samurai, but you had the like the the military monks that were sort of like the Japanese version of of monks Templar.

So there's no telling. I mean, Buddhism, if you could just turn it into like a kind of the sort of thing that I prefer, which is like a philosophical Buddhism where you're using the philosophy in a practical manner. Just realize whenever you're unhappy, it's because you desire

something. you know, just simple stuff like that that just gets added into the into the culture. Maybe even mindfulness as a kind of panacea,
that sort of thing. Yeah, I mean that that's possible, I guess. But in all likelihood, it would continue along the lines of how it's already been going, where America is so eclectic, they just take a few Buddhist ideas that seem to work, like mindfulness to improve productivity and general health among the workers of a corporation or using mindfulness as stress relief in hospitals and that sort of thing. Um, but I mean, just awareness of the second noble truth would just be a godsend, so

to speak.

in American culture or western culture

who are mainly just scientific

materialists.

So how do we spread Buddhism across the

globe? Yeah, just deal with like really

useful helpful stuff. Second noble truth

for example.

I mean, just just that much Buddhism

really taking root in the West would be

a just a huge improvement in my opinion.

Whenever you're unhappy, it's because

you desire something and it's really

ultimately your choice to desire it or

not. So, I mean, it would pretty much

collapse the left if that sort of

Buddhism um

if if that sort of Buddhism really took root because the left seems to, at least nowadays, like the progressive radical left. It's like their bread and butter is blaming patriarchal white men for their problems. Or you just blame somebody else. Blame Donald Trump. you're unhappy because Donald Trump, you know, or you're unhappy because, you know, somebody else and they just do not take responsibility for themselves. It's somebody else's fault if if they're unhappy.

And so, just an awareness of the second noble truth would pretty much cure that. Although, you can't really fix stupid.

So I mean [clears throat]

even a lot of Buddhists in in like Burma

still they're materialists you know that

they'll accept Buddhist philosophy at

like this abstract level but it's much

more difficult for them to actually

bring it into practice and actually use

Buddhist philosophy to improve their

lives.

[snorts]

So let's see here.

Did I answer the question though? I'm

assuming it can be done today as well.

It needs strategic planning. Yeah. Well,

we're just going to have to see how it

works. Just see how the like the western

monastic system. See, you know, see if
if that continues to expand in influence
in the west, especially in America. I
really don't have much hope for Europe
at present. um they're really going to
have to grow a pair in Europe if if
they're going to improve the situation
because it's just I mean the Europeans
have been castrated
as a general rule. Western Europeans and
some central Europeans. Eastern
Europeans, you know, they've they've
survived Marxism and they're still
relatively tough
and they still have some and they they
sort of the pendulum swung swung back
into like Orthodox Christianity to to a

large degree in Eastern Europe. And so they're actually in a healthier position. Also, some of the the Eastern European countries are just refusing to take these these migrants, these illegal aliens flooding the flooding the continent. So yeah, I mean for Buddhism to take over the West, I think strategic planning is is fine, but really what it's going to take is some inspired, charismatic Buddhist leader who is able to really persuade people, an influencer of some sort. And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is also from Siovak
and Sipad Zenina
and he says a certain monk said that
monotheistic religions inherently lead
to violence because they think all
non-believers are going to hell anyways
and thus don't see an issue with erasing
those people and their cultures either.
I doubt Zoroastrians think like that.
But do you think this sentiment is
unique to the Abrahamic religions?
Gosh, I don't I don't think so. I mean,
just because you're monotheistic doesn't
mean that you're going to be violent. I
mean, the Quakers and the Jehovah's
Witnesses are monotheistic, and they're
not particularly violent. Although, the

the Jehovah's Witnesses don't believe in hell either. They just think that non-believers and bad people will just get poofed out of existence by God, that there is no hell, even though hell is mentioned in the in the Bible.

Uh, and then I mean you can have like systems that aren't monotheistic that are in like violently intolerant. I would assume there have been some violently intolerant pagan sects over the course of the existence of the human race.

Um, even going back to like feudal Japan that you probably had some violently intolerant Buddhists, even

sort of quasi Buddhists, samurai Zen
Buddhists. Anyway,
uh, let's see. I guess the the militant
monks in Japan were pure land Buddhists
mostly though.
So yeah, I think just the Abrahamism
is is really more of an issue than the
monotheism.
The Abrahamism, I mean, it's the Old
Testament is like the the original
Abrahamic scripture, I guess, the oldest
one we still have access to anyway. And
it's pretty damn violent.
Although the violence was more of a like
cultural and ethnic thing than a
religious thing. It seems to me
that the religion was just used as a way

of strengthening like ethnic claims, you know, over land and so forth.

So let's see here.

Do I think this sentiment is unique to Abrahamic religions? I'm sure there have been other it seems to be mainly Abrahamic religions that justify persecuting non-believers nowadays but that's largely because Abrahamic religions pretty much dominate Western civilization

and

I mean I am sure there have been like intolerant Shintoists in Japan or just intolerant certain sects of paganism you know our gods are better than your gods

and so we're going to wipe out your village. That kind of thing. I'm sure it has happened, but it's just that nowadays the trend is that violent intolerance is more of an Abrahamic thing. Not so much of a Christian thing anymore either. It's just seems mostly Muslims and and Jews are the ones whose scriptures endorse violence against humans under certain circumstances. and they just take that to heart and just go for it. I mean, Christianity was relatively nonviolent from the beginning. It became violent like in the Middle Ages especially, which helps keep Western civilization Christian, I suppose, you know, Charles Martell and

all that. Good Christians fighting off
the the Sarissens,
Crusades, that kind of thing.
But yeah, I think it's more of an
Abrahamic thing than a monotheistic
thing. I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Trezasiz.
And Tzas is says, "Is there anywhere in
the monastic rules of discipline mention
of monks being allowed to teach dhamma
only to those who want to listen?" Yeah.
In the seia rules of the padim moa
there's a number there's many rules
preventing a monk from teaching dharma
to someone who is not showing respect.
So I assume that it's not just people

who want to listen but people who want to listen respectfully. Like there's a rule a monk isn't supposed to teach dhamma to someone who's wearing shoes which is kind of weird in the west but I guess in a lot of damals you take your shoes off anyway but that's just that in ancient India it was a sign of respect that you take your shoes off before approaching some wise elder or teacher or you're not allowed to teach dharma to someone who is walking on the path if you're walking beside the path you know a walking path you know someone's walking on the the trail or walking on a sidewalk and you're like walking uh by the side of the road off the sidewalk,

then you shouldn't be teaching dhamma to that person because they're not showing respect for you. You're not supposed to teach dhamma to someone who's holding a weapon just because that's kind of disrespectful. They should set the weapon down, set their knife down or whatever it is before you teach them dhamma.

or you're not allowed to teach dharma to someone who is sitting if you're standing, which that's another one that gets broken a lot just because Western culture is different. But it's considered to be more respectful for the teacher to be sitting and the lay person

to be standing. In fact, there's a weird monastic rule of discipline saying that nuns have to remain standing in the presence of a monk, which of course they don't follow.

Let's see. So there's lots of rules like that where you're not a monk is not allowed to teach dharma to someone who is not showing respect for dharma and for the sa.

So people who don't want to listen would be people who really aren't respectful. So you shouldn't be you shouldn't be teaching them. I mean, maybe if they're a devout Buddhist and they're just having some kind of crisis or meltdown and you're trying to talk sense to them

and they don't want to hear it at first,
that that could be like an excuse.
But someone who just despises Buddhism,
you know, they think Buddhism is just
 or whatever, then a monk
technically is forbidden to teach dhamma
to these people.
And I'm just going to move on. Nice
question from Tzasquez is he says
Buddhist lay people ought to follow five
precepts. What other ancient religions
did follow them also of modern religion
I can think of some Christian sects that
are not using wine like seventh day
Adventist? I don't understand Christians
who think that drinking alcohol is wrong

considering that Jesus drank alcohol in the text. In fact, one of his first miracles was turning water into wine. But let's get back to the question here. Following five precepts, that was just an Indian thing that for lay people to follow five precepts was common to several spiritual systems in ancient north India in the Buddhist time. So the Buddhists had five precepts. The Janes had five precepts. The like the Vadic Brahminists had five precepts. It's just the fifth precept would vary. So with the James, the the fifth precept wasn't a prohibition on drinking alcohol. It was a prohibition on like private property. So it was kind of a

communistic thing. I don't remember what the fifth precept was for like the the the Vadic Brahmanists, the Vadists in the Buddhist time. You know, they weren't technically Hindu yet, but to have five precepts was just sort of a cultural thing in North India. And the first four were common to various groups. It was the fifth precept which in Buddhism is against drinking alcohol that varied among the different schools. So the fifth precept might have been sort of like the latest one kind of like an afterthought or something or just a way of the different schools to differentiate themselves by having a

slightly different list of five precepts with regard to non-Indian spiritual systems. Well, I mean, it wouldn't necessarily be five precepts. Like Judeo-Christian tradition has ten commandments.

And then, of course, the the Jews have Mosaic law, which is, you know, it's like vineia for Jewish people, which is lots and lots of rules. You know, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadth out the grain and all that.

Which reminds me of that similar rule in the Bible. Thou shalt not boil a kid in its mother's milk, which somehow got interpreted to mean that Jews can't eat meat and dairy products at the same

meal,

which is kind of strange. It's really

kind of a stretch in my opinion.

Let's see here. So, I suppose I answer

that question. I mean different

different religions will have different

lists of commandments or precepts or

whatever. You know like the Pythagoreans

of ancient Greece and ancient Rome, they

had their moral codes. There's moral

codes in just about any religion.

You know, [snorts] just honor your

mother and father. Don't steal. Don't

commit murder. Don't lie.

Don't commit adultery. I mean, that's

that's basic basic morals.

So yeah, I'd say most religions worthy of the name would have some kind of moral code. Not necessarily five, a list of five though.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. Let's see. We are getting kind of [clears throat] close to the bottom here. So I don't think we're going to go for three hours. [snorts]

This is from Practice Meta.

and practice meta says, "Did you undergo any preparation for your iawasa trips? In my research, fasting is common since at the very least it can prevent purging." Yeah, getting well they call it sometimes or and sometimes they just call it puking.

Driving the puke, the big white steering wheel. Although I guess in an Iawaska ceremony, you don't have the big white steering wheel. You've got like this little plastic bucket.

So, did I undergo any preparation for an iawaska journey? Yeah, you should call it a trip. Makes it sound like it's a drug or something instead of a medicine. Um, no, I didn't undergo any preparation at all really. I didn't fast. Um, maybe I should have, but I do remember being told the very first IASA journey I went to a ceremony that I really is not an medic. you know, it doesn't have any physiological

like emmetic properties that makes you puke. It's just that it's like you undergo such emotional stress that it's like your body's thinking, well, just in case it's something I ate, I better get rid of that. So, it's it's almost like an instinct. It's like a it's like a reflex of responding to stress more than any actual puke inducing properties in the iawaska. And not everybody throws up when they take Iawaska. Um I remember asking this one lady, you know, how was your journey after after the ceremony? And she's like, "Oh, it was it was lovely. It was it was nice, you know, and it's like, did you take the same stuff as me?" I was like, "It just

turned me inside out." And then I knew this one guy who it had no effect on him whatsoever that it's like the the shaman is like giving him concentrated doses, you know. In fact, at one point he was making him eat this ball of the stuff and and it had no effect on him whatsoever. None whatsoever. I he just had like white bread karma. He was like this really cleancut American guy who you'd never expect would have any interest in eastern mysticism or anything like that. But it turns out that he'd gone on a pilgrimage to Ramana Maharshi's monastery or his ashram at Arunachala in southern India. And he he

was trying Iawaska ceremonies and everything, but he was so Richie Cunningham, you know, he was just so straight laced. He just had this white bread karma apparently that just would not allow him to experience this transcendental stuff that other people would experience.

But I'm just like digressing all over the place, aren't I? He's really a nice guy, though.

See, no, I did not undergo any preparations including fasting, anything like that. I just, you know, I just assumed at first it would be sort of like, you know, taking LSD or something. You know, there's no real purification

rituals that are necessary for that. You just take it and it has its effect.
And I wound up puking a lot loudly.
So, I'm just going to move on to practice Meta's next question. As a biologist, have you looked into the mRNA COVID shot at all and whether its risks were understated in 2020? Man, you can get banned from YouTube from answering this question just like a year or two ago, right? I think nowadays you can sort of be like honest with regard to this stuff. God, I hope so.
As a biologist, have I looked into the mRNA COVID shot at all? No, not really. I mean, you just pick stuff up through

osmosis, you know, you just see stuff online, that kind of thing. But I I'm I'm a pure blood. I never got the never got the shot. I've had um I've had the KOF at least twice

[clears throat] and so I've got like natural resistance to it now, I guess. Although it does it does mutate like a like a virus like the cold virus you know it mutates so that you know when it mutates into a different kind of strain with different properties then you can catch it again.

But yeah, I mean it does seem I mean I I hope it's it's okay to say this stuff now, but it does seem that uh for older people it may have been beneficial. You

know, people who are immuno compromised,
that kind of thing. It may have done
more good than done more good than harm.
But like like inoculating
18 year olds
when I mean really the effect is is
about the same as a bad cold
then it seems to have done more harm
than good. I think more people may have
been harmed by more young people
may have been harmed by some of the
vaccines than by the virus itself.
But I think I should just move on this
question.
This is from Sam Papalapa and this is
the last question. S Papalapa says, "I

was listening to a suta called impossible, possibly most likely a later edition and not exactly the Buddha's true words. Maybe, perhaps, I don't know. But in the suta, Buddha says that two Buddhas can't arise in the same solar system."

What word and cosmic understanding was explained that could be the synonym to solar system 2,600 years ago? Why do you think the translators put solar system instead of whatever the contemporary Buddha saw as the cosmos? I've got I've kind of got an idea of the cosmic model Terravada has. saw I'm guessing some kind of flat island like area in sensual realms that contracts and expands

through the culpas of change but I just wonder why they translated it that and didn't leave the poly word. Also I'm guessing it has to do with change in the collective conceptions of the word of the world when it comes to a particular worldview a society has. Okay. Well, I I don't know exactly what suta he's referring to, but in all likelihood. The word translated as solar system is chakala.

Chaka means wheel. Va I'm not exactly sure what wa means, but a chakala is like a flat earth. You know, it's it's sort of like this disc and you've got four great continents in the center and

human beings live on the southern
continent which corresponds to India and
you've got Mount Meu in the center and
you got concentric rings of mountain
ranges surrounding Mount Meu which
probably is based among the the ancient
Indians of the North Ganges of the
Ganges Valley as the Himalaya mountains.
The Himalaya mountains were probably
seen as like the foothills of Mount Meu,
which was farther north.
And the sun and moon are relatively
small,
few hundred miles across. And they orbit
around Mount Meu. So they're early
Buddhism was believed in a flat earth
and a sun and moon that orbited around

Mount Meu in the center. And you there was aside from the four continents you had assorted islands you know like Sri Lanka for example and then at the outer edge you had this big wall of like stone or or natural metal of some sort that holds the water in because in ancient India they had really no concept of gravity. You know what caused gravity? They just assumed the entire universe had the same up down orientation. So probably all the checkable laws and there were countless numbers of checkable laws in the universe. They all had the same up- down orientation in space. Sort of like the old Star Trek

where two spaceships, you know, meet in space. They always have the same up-down orientation. You never see one of them in the view screen that's like sideways because

just I don't know.

So Chucka. Yeah, that's it's it would be like a world system. And the suta that says that two Buddhas can't arise in the same world system, the same chakala, it they mean at the same time, you know, it's like you can't have two Buddhas at the same time on the same earth.

That's just one of those one of those things, you know. It's it's just one of those things that Abid Dhama never really explains. I'm pretty sure you

know why it is that all Buddhas have to like sit under they have to in renounce the world in some kind of vehicle. They've got to do austerities for x amount of time. They've got to have a you know this entourage of fellow aesthetics with them as they do their austerities. They have to be handed the milk rice by the the friendly lay woman and they have to sit under some bodhic tree in order to become enlightened. Why is it like that? It's just this archetype.

And why can there not be two Buddhas at the same time? Just through random chance, like an accident, the cosmic

order just will not allow it for reasons that are never fully specified.

But this solar system that they translated, it's not a very good translation, but most people probably wouldn't know what Czechala means if you left it untransated. Probably better would be like one world system. One world. But see

what what word in cosmic understanding was explained that could be the synonym to solar system 2,600. Yeah, it's checkable and there were like an infinite number of them through just throughout space.

So let's see.

Why do you think the translators put

solar system instead of whatever the contemporary Buddhist law is or cosmos? Well, that might be the they're not very good translators for starters maybe. And they just wanted to use some kind of word that would kind of come close to the original meaning. I mean, it kind of is a solar system, but it's it's not a solar system because the the sun isn't even at the center of it in a chakala. You know, the Earth, Mount Meu on Earth is the center.

And then you've got like [clears throat and laughter] the Assuras are like chained up or some of them are chained up under Mount Maro. The top of

Mount Meo is Tawatimsa heaven

right up at the the the pinnacle. That's

where Tawatimsa heaven is right at the

very top of Mount Meu or Sumaru as it is

called sometimes.

So

let's see here. I'm guessing it has to

do with change in the collective

conceptions of the world when it comes

to a particular worldview of society.

Yeah, ancient India they just ass like

most ancient cultures just assume the

earth is flat because it looks flat and

so long as you don't examine it too

carefully like you know curvature of

large bodies of water for example that

you can see that um but

they just guessed that the earth was flat and I mean it was pre Buddhist I mean the Buddha didn't come up with this stuff he just like when it comes to cosmology ology or or other things also a lot of cultural stuff the founder of religion isn't inventing it from scratch you know Jesus didn't invent like the the sort of protojewish millu in which he he was living you know he just accepted that as just part of the cultural stuff and use that as a kind of framework for teaching what he was teaching and that's what the Buddha was doing in India the Buddha didn't come up with the idea that the earth is flat

or that Mount Meu is in the center. I mean that was just this early mythology um that I mean like other Indo-Uropean groups had a similar mythology like the ancient Greeks you know the gods live on top of a mountain and they had a war in ancient times against the Titans. The Titans were defeated and chained up at the base of Mount Mount Olympus.

I almost said a different mountain, but it was the Greeks considered Olympus to be where the mount where the gods live and the titans are chained up at the bottom. I don't think they went so far as to consider Mount Olympus to be the center of the earth, though. I think like the oracle of deli or something was

considered to be the center of the earth. Then the Romans apparently considered the Mediterranean to be the center of the earth because that's what Mediterranean means, middle of the world. Middle of the Roman world anyway. So yeah, it was just what people believed before the Buddha came along and it was just the culture that he inherited. And so what he had to teach had to be done to a large degree within the context of just the beliefs of the people.

You can't just completely reject the entire worldview of a of a group of people. Like if Jesus of Nazareth just

completely rejected Judaism, I don't think he would have lived long enough to get crucified. He would have been stoned to death by a howling mob long before that.

And also, I mean, he wouldn't been effective as a teacher at all because people would just reject what he said. You know, if the Buddha is just completely rejecting, you know, he's saying the earth is is a globe and it orbits around the sun, then people just weren't ready to hear that stuff yet. I mean, they weren't even ready to hear the stuff like you shouldn't be eating meat.

So, I guess I answered that question.

I'm pretty sure I did. See, why did the translators put solar system instead of whatever the contemporary Buddhist saw as the cosmos? Yeah, it's just like a loose translation about as close as they could come um without saying world system and chaka. No, mo most people would not know what a chakala is if they're reading the translation.

And so I'm done. I've I've answered all the questions. At least I tried to answer all the questions. And like I should always say at the beginning and almost never do. If you have any questions you think I can answer like around about Dharma or Dharma, early

Buddhism, Terraata Buddhism, meditation, that sort of thing that you think I can answer, even getting into like biology because I do have a degree in biology, modern politics, because I do keep an eye on that sort of thing. That sort of thing, that's fair game, too. Although really this is a primarily dharma oriented program.

So, if you can like sneak a little dharma into the biology questions or the politics questions,

that would help, I guess. And like and subscribe if you have not done so already.

And be happy.

Alrighty then. I do believe we are recording. Hello and welcome to question and answer number 168.

I am your host Pony Bosa. And of course 168 is nowhere near to being prime. It is in fact, if I did my math correctly, 2 * 2 * 2 * 3 * 7.

[snorts] And few other slight aberrations you may notice. First of all is again I'm doing this Q&A on a Sunday morning so it's going to be posted later than usual. Um part of the reason for that is that my mate, my lovely woman has expressed a certain amount of dissatisfaction for me starting Q&A too

late on Saturday. So sometimes we run around, go to like grocery stores, fish stores, whatever, and then we come home and by the time I get the Q&A started and finished, it's like late and then we can't really celebrate Saturday night properly,

as any loving couple should do. Also, you may noticed I finally have succeeded in accomplishing the mission. I have a mujolnir bead hanging from my beard braid and it's imported from Ukraine which I guess is appropriate considering that Ukraine is the home of Kievan Roose like the first Russians actually were in Ukraine or at least one of the two main cities

of the the first Russian kingdom or

whatever you want to call it was in Kiev

and Uh, it was ruled by Vikings.

So, we've got the Mujolnir bead, which

I'm pretty sure is right side up because

[clears throat]

I think that rune is thorn, which was

the th sound in like the old English

alphabet, very old English. And who

knows, maybe it's just random. Or maybe

the th is for Thor or Thunor.

Anyways,

I guess I should start answering

questions

and the first question is from Stellar

Supreme at all because he's got so many

names. He is Legion.

And Stellar Supreme at all says, "What are your thoughts on the seeming conflict between the Buddhist saying it was profoundly difficult to acquire a human birth and past life research with children where they verify what human it was in recent history?" Yeah. If you do like past life regressions or like children remembering past lives, it's almost always a human life. Every once in a while you have a past life regression like in Burma where they'll have a past life to like a being a dragon or a a royal white elephant, that sort of thing. I've encountered both of those cases.

But for the most part,
if you remember past lives, you remember
human past lives. But it is true that in
the sutas, the Buddha says it's
extremely difficult to get a human life.
And mainly what he's referring to is if
you're not human to switch over to being
human is very difficult. Like animals,
you know, there's the famous suta, the
blind sea turtle that comes up once
every hundred years.
And the odds of an animal being reborn
as a human statistically speaking, even
though statistics hadn't been invented
yet in the Iron Age Ganges Valley,
would be [clears throat]

I mean the odds of a nonhuman, like an animal being reborn as a human would be about the same as that blind turtle sticking its head up through a yolk floating on the ocean just at random. once every hundred years it sticks its head up for air. They can hold their breath a long time apparently.

And

so [clears throat]

um the the implication here mainly is that there are just an infinite number of beings throughout the universe just nonhuman. Most beings in this universe even on this planet are non-human. You just think about all the copapods swimming out in the ocean. There's

probably hundreds of billions of them

out there.

And [clears throat]

karma really is a kind of psychic

momentum or psychological momentum.

So if you're not like in the human

groove to switch over to being human

takes some doing. I mean, like your best

chances might be if you're like a a

domesticated animal, like a pet dog

that's getting a lot of human vibes that

kind of help you to kind of turn in that

direction, then who knows, maybe your

next this dog's next life would be like

a human child that is that nevertheless

doesn't survive past the first year,

something like that. And then that's kind of like a foot in the door that might help channel its karmic momentum into a more human life.

So yeah, once you're human, then you kind of have human karmic momentum going. And whether that's really in harmony with the sutas or not, nevertheless, it does seem to be in harmony with just common sense and maybe some paranormal empiricism.

if you don't consider those to be contradictions in terms.

So if you're not human, to get into like a human life is extremely difficult as a general rule according to Buddhist philosophy. But once you're already a

human, it's much easier to be reborn as a human because you're making human karma.

And so it just naturally leads to being a human unless you're like a really unusual human. Like if you're an unusually like saintly godly kind of human, you might get reborn as a small G god or goddess. If you're like an abnormally beastial kind of human, you might get reborn as an animal. Or if you're like extremely attached to some worldly thing, for example, you could get reborn as a kind of spirit or ghost that's like like attached to to a certain area. For example,

[clears throat] um there are quite a few people in Burma that claim to be able to see ghosts. [snorts] Lot plenty of people in Asia really who claim that they're able to see ghosts. And one of these people was saying
that like certain cemeteries, they look out at the cemeteries and there's just like these spirits just kind of standing around graves because the the person in life was so attached to their body that even after death, they're still attached to their body. Even though their body is no longer functioning and is decomposing under the ground, they still just kind of like haunt that area, just sort of standing watch over their body cuz

they're so attached to it. even though technically it's not really their body anymore.

Which is one reason why Neim Karoli Bama, whose picture is up there on the altar,

would say that cremation is generally better than burial after a person dies just because you're like destroying the body that the person might be attached to, which reduces the odds of them being like a spirit that is just like haunting a cemetery. Of course, if you're just a scientific materialist, then it's all [__] and you don't have to worry about that.

So, let's see. Did I answer the question? My thoughts on the seeming conflict between the Buddha saying it was profoundly difficult to acquire a human birth and past life research with children. Yeah. Yeah. It's pretty much as I said is acquiring a human birth from being a nonhuman is much more difficult than just being reborn as a human when you're already human just because the karmic momentum is like a human momentum at that point.

So I'm just going to move on to stellar supreme at all's next question here. What are your thoughts on anarchy as it's presented here? And he presents a quote. He doesn't say who the quote is

from, but here's the quote.

[clears throat] I repeat, anarchy for me means autocracy of beauty, of genius, of art, and of all those who possess the willful and selective qualities suitable for dominating, and that mother nature, justly or unjustly, grants and lavishes so generously on a few, while she denies them to most, as if the latter were her bastard children. Everyone can be leveled before society. We are all equal before God, but the selective individual values remain

and dominate

unquote. So this kind of sounds like Ein Rand to me. I don't know who who the

quote is from, but anarchy anarchy like autocracy of beauty of genius of art and of all those who possess the willful and selective qualities suitable for dominating.

Well,

let's see. What is that exactly the question here? What are my thoughts on anarchy as it's presented here? Well, I mean, when you're dominating, it's not really anarchy because you become a kind of autocrat.

When you're dominating somebody else, you know, they don't have anarchy anymore because you are their their ruler at that point. Like if you're just imposing your will on somebody else,

then I mean that could be like a one-man king kingdom, you know? It's like um I don't [clears throat] think it would work in reality. Like when you have this kind of anarchy, then it's like the most ruthless shark and with also like the most in cleverness, you know, the best strategic choices and so forth is going to wind up becoming like a a ruler, a warlord or a king or a chief or something like that. And then the anarchy of course disappears.

And I really don't think anarchy works in general unless you can have a kind of anarchy like a Burmese village where there's not much government going on,

but it's just people are ruled by tradition. You know, it's this thousand-year-old tradition that people just follow without question. And then you could have a count kind of anarchy like that.

But just to have like no holds barred, you know, just the people that are the most powerful just do whatever they want, including dominating others, then the anarchy just disappears. I mean, with regard to beauty and genius and art and so forth, that's fine. But I mean, you don't need anarchy for that. Just some sort of classical liberalism is plenty.

I mean, you still have to have some sort

of like law and order, some sort of government presumably to kind of maintain law and order among other things.

So, yeah, I'm really not an anarchist. I It might sound good in theory, just like libertarianism, which is, you know, maybe a step away from anarchy. Still I mean it sounds good in theory but still you have to have in order for a nation to be strong and functional you have to have like a shared value system. People have to share values. At least the overwhelming majority of the population has to share approximately the same values and you know be willing to follow

certain rules

and mainly I mean as a general rule you need some kind of government to make sure that people are following those rules.

So I mean people can argue well government systems are corrupt and all this but I mean any human system is going to be corrupt because humans are subject to corruption.

So yeah, I do believe that there can be there there should be a certain equality with regard to equality under the law, equality of opportunities, of rights, that kind of thing within reason. I mean, if somebody is like a convicted felon or some such, sure, you can take

away their right to bear arms, etc.
They're a convicted sex offender, you
know, they should be deprived of their
right to be like working at a daycare
center,
that sort of thing.
But yeah, I definitely I mean I I
suppose I qualify as a classical liberal
politically and socially.
I do believe in quite a lot of freedom,
but still there has to be a shared value
system that is sort of like the glue
that holds society together
and that's value system. I mean the
following of certain rules is necessary
and there has to be some government some

kind of government enforcing that.
I mean pref preferably a benevolent
government where you know the leaders
are like patriots who really want to
serve their country and so forth and
that does happen occasionally
but still you're not going to have a
perfect system because the system is
created by humans who are not perfect.
Not unless everything is perfect. I
mean, you could argue everything is
already perfect, you know, perfect
misery, perfect foolishness,
etc. And some saints would probably view
the world that way. You know, I got this
pain in my leg, but it's perfect.
So, I guess I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from [clears throat] Romeo, and I'm checking to make sure that we're recording early on, less than 15 minutes into it. Yep, the little timer thing is going. The little green bars on the microphone are going back and forth just as it should be.

Next question is from Romeo and Romeo's question is as follows. What is your knowledge and opinion of the theosophical movement founded by Madame Bllovatski in the late 1800s? From what I understand, theosophy attempted to combine aspects of different religions, including Buddhism, into one system.

Well, I really don't know a whole lot about theosophy. I've never really studied it. I never really took it extremely seriously. I read a little bit about the history, you know, Madam Bulvatsky and Colonel Olcott and um that sort of thing. And my sweetheart does watch um YouTube videos of like speeches given by, you know, invited speakers at some theosophical society. So I mean I listen to that sort of thing occasionally pick it up through osmosis. Um but really my knowledge of the theosophical movement I mean it was founded by Madame Bllovadsky and her her cohort Colonel Alcott and Colonel Alcott he was definitely a promoter of of

Buddhism. He's the one who invented the

Buddhist flag.

And uh it's also my understanding that

uh what's his name? Rice Davids

um who was

pretty [clears throat] much the founder

of the Poly Tech Society started off I

think they kind of he and his wife

started off as like Christian

missionaries in Son and then they kind

of became theosophists

and then they were sort of like sort of

Buddhist adjacent theosophists.

[snorts] Um

maybe just they became Buddhists and

stopped being theosophists. I'm not sure

exactly, but theosophy from what little
I know about it, um, supposedly Madame
Bllovzki was channeling ascended masters
in the Himalayas, who I'm pretty sure
were some kind of Buddhists.
Um, and then she got busted. like they
were doing essentially seances where
she's channeling these ascended masters
in the Himalayas and these notes from
the ascended masters were just like
falling from the ceiling you just
landing on the table in front of them
and then it turned out that apparently
Madame Bvatzki herself was pulling a
little thread which was pulling the
these notes from a crack in the ceiling
and where they arrived with this little

poof of like attic dust or something. I think that was mainly the scandal that caused her to get kicked out of her own society and then she got replaced by Annie Basant Basant. I don't know how to pronounce these names. Annie is I'm pretty solid on that one, but the the last name um and it was kind of a newagy kind of thing as far as I can understand. You know, it's sort of like perennial philosophy where, you know, they're just trying to sort of get the what is it? Lowest common denominator. you know, they're just trying to sort of be an eclectic movement, but it was largely Buddhism oriented or at least

like Eastern philosophyoriented

because they they considered in my

[clears throat] opinion correctly that

you have a more concentrated form of

profoundity in certain Eastern

traditions that are more watered down in

Western traditions. They're still there.

Like in Christianity, you can still have

some really deep profoundity, but the

whole belief system, the Abrahamic

monotheistic belief system is such

that, you know, it's it's kind of a a

handicap to like the really profound

teachings that that are available to

humans.

Let's see what else do I know about

theosophy. I mean it was like the the

Mahab Mahabodhi society was largely Theosophist like Anagaraka Dharmapala. He was supported by the Theosophus society and he was getting you know he he was starting the the push to have Bodga Gaya sort of revived as a Buddhist pilgrimage site instead of just sort of like this rundown
ruin kind of in the backyard of a a Shyvite temple sort of a deal. And what else? There was one of the Oh yeah, Krishna Murdy. I mean, he was he was groomed to be some kind of world messiah by a branch of the theosophical society and then he just went renegade and decided not to cooperate.

[clears throat]

But I mean, the theosophy, if you're if you're into just kind of like an eclectic kind of philosophical approach to spirituality, then that's fine. um Madame Blovadsk's alleged fraud. I mean, it shouldn't be too much of a problem because as um like George P. Hansen in the Trickster in the Paranormal points out that even like legitimate like psychics and so forth, they can still do a lot of fraud stuff. You know, it's in a way like the fake stuff is like opening a portal, you know? It's it's sort of breaking rules which then allows genuine ju guu to to enter this version of reality so to

speak.

But I really I'm no I'm no authority on theosophy. It is I mean you might as well just stick with Buddhism. You know it's an older tradition. It's been tried and tested for thousands of years at this point. [clears throat] And I mean if you're just sort of like a western eclectic theosophy may work for you. you know, it may just be just what you need, but as a general rule, you'd probably be better off with like established Buddhist tradition or any other established like advanced mystical tradition that is, you know, at least 2,000 years old.

[snorts]

And I'm just going to move on to Romeo's next question.

He says, "Aside from theosophy, what is your general opinion of similar interfaith spiritual hybrid movements that combine aspects of different religions or philosophical systems, religious or philosophical systems? I've even heard that there is a Krlam movement of foot that combines Christianity and Islam." Well, one of the first things that this reminds me of is the belief of Renee Gwenon that anything like this is just abomination and it's doomed to failure. He Gwynon, however you pronounce French names, I

don't know, he insisted you have to have like an unbroken like lineage and any kind of amalgamation of various traditions is just, you know, you're creating like a Frankenstein's monster of of religion at best.

But I mean, it can work. I mean they have worked before like interfaith spiritual hybrid movements sort of like Chinese Buddhism like Chan Buddhism was really a kind of hybrid combination of Buddhism and Daoism like Zen Buddhism really is a kind of combination of Buddhism and Dowoism or like Christianity obviously it's like a combination of like Judaism I mean

Christianity really is a kind of schismatic sect of Judaism combined ed with sort of like Greek philosophy and just more western pagan philosophical ideas.

Buddhism itself was has been influenced by Vadic Brahminism. But it's so in a way it's there's bound to be a certain amount of spiritual hybridism going on you know like the Buddha notoriously was accepting ideas and terminology especially from the brahinss and also like a John Tisero claims the word asawa which is a fundamental Buddhist philosophical term of um you sometimes it's translated as like cankers there's really no good translation for

um literally means influence literally

um that the Buddhists got that from the

Janes. It was originally a Jane idea.

So I mean a certain amount of hybridism

does happen

like Islam itself is fairly hybridized.

I mean, it's like a hybrid mainly of

Judaism and [clears throat] like

pre-Muslim Arabic paganism as well as I

understand it like um what were they

called the Sabatans

whoever had whatever the religious

system was of Petra like I think I

believe that's in Jordan you know the

famous stone city carved into the cliff

that you know there was sort of like a

an Arabic pagan kind of religion at the time that Judaism was probably influenced by that and influenced by just local traditions and influenced by by Judaism maybe a little bit of Christianity. There is mention of Jesus in Judaism where Jesus was considered to be a legitimate prophet.

So I mean it does happen and it does happen successfully.

But if you get too eclectic who you know like new age people some of them you know they can just be like adding mutually contradictory ideas into their own belief system and that's not good. I mean, you don't want to be believing one thing and then five minutes later you're

believing essentially the opposite.
Something that's just contradictory to
what you were believing five minutes ago
and have it like in your beliefs all fit
together somehow.
That's that's not good. That's that's
kind of soft-headed actually.
So, I'm not sure what Krislam would be
like. Although I mean Jesus is
acknowledged as a legitimate prophet. I
mean, if you just a follower of Jesus
while at the same time just considering
him to be not the son of God but just
like a prophet,
a legitimate genuine prophet of God,
then

maybe you know some of the early sects
of Christianity before they were
annihilated or just out competed in like
the early to mid to late Roman Empire,
they were kind of like that. you know,
the Arian heresy where Jesus was not
God,
that kind of thing. So, I mean, under
certain circumstances, a kind of
spiritual hybrid movement can work so
long as you're not so eclectic that
you're just bringing in all kinds of
mutually contradictory ideas into the
same system.
But Renewon would say otherwise. I mean
it has to be like an unbroken oh what's
the term that he was using where there

has an initiatory
tradition that is unbroken but
[clears throat] I think even he was a
little naive with regard to just how
some of these traditions began even if
they began 2 years ago still there's a
lot of eclectic kind of combinations
that happen at the beginning of a
religious movement like Buddhism with
vadism and and Janism and so forth forth
or Islam with Judaism and like Arabian
paganism and so forth or Christianity
with Judaism and Western like paganistic
philosophy, that kind of thing. So, it
can work so long as it's just not too
muddled and too like self-contradictory.

But if you have a system that already works, you might as well just do that instead of experimenting with trying to create some new system. Unless that's just the way you operate. That's the way you have to operate. So just do your best in that case. And I'm moving on to the next question. This is from Fake Tig. And Fake Tig says, "You spoke a lot about Schopenhau's will before, but only in reference to other things. Can you explain what it is though? So the philosophy of Schopenhau like in his his main classic philosophical text the world as will and representation that he starts off with will. It's sort of like a modern physicist starts off

with energy. It's almost an undefined term in science. I mean you have to get down to like such basics that you start off with what are essentially just axiomatic or like undefined terms in modern science it's energy and I mean you can still kind of define you know the potential to perform work something like that but in Schopenhau's philosophy it was will I mean that is just like the motive force of the universe you know it's sort of his substitute for God almighty

capital G God. It's just this will to exist. It's just this this energetic essentially mental force that wants to

exist. You know, it's in a way it's sort of like in Buddhism the conceit I am. You know, that's what kind of artificially separates one aspect of mentality from all the rest of it. Although Schopenhau goes so far as to say that even physical matter, you know, even a hydrogen atom, an electron has this will to exist.

And so according to Schopenhau, there's just like this fundamental primordial like mental energy just wanting to express itself in the form of any kind of existence it can manage. And that's what's creating this entire phenomenal universe, creating us.

And Schopenhau's philosophy, his
practical like his yogic spiritual kind
of uh philosophy is that we should be
defying our own will in order to just
get out of this because he agrees with
Buddhism that this will is creating uh
suffering
that you don't have any suffering
without this will trying just striving
to manifest itself in every possible
way.
So, Schopenhau was just kind of deny the
will. Peaceful non-ooperation with the
will, which is forcing you to exist.
Um,
and it's it's fairly Buddhist. I mean, I

I've read recently that Schopenhau is declaring himself to be a Buddhist in his later years. So you know in a way it's sort of like maya in in like Hinduism or just like a vija or ignorance in Buddhism you know it's like the original force or the original phenomenon that is just resulting in the multiplicity of this this samsaric universe

and I guess I'm just going to move on to fake Tig's next question

which is as follows if enlightenment is defined as the uprooting of greed, hatred, and delusion. Doesn't that make someone almost not human in the sense that a person that can't hate or be

greedy or know ultimate reality had almost transcended humanity? And if so, is Buddhism about becoming higher than a human being? Yeah. Well, definitely from the Buddhist point of view, Buddhism is about becoming higher than a human being. And like like I've said in in Burma the word for a Buddhist monk I mean monks are not considered to be human beings. You know, the word for human being is lu in Burmese and or like if you're counting Burmese, the Burmese language has this weird phenomenon of counting numbers. Like like four people wouldn't be like leu. It'd be like lu le ya. Ya is the is the counting word for

counting people or g is for counting

animals. So quay is is dog and lei is

for but you don't say le quay four dogs.

you say quay legon which is dog four

animals

and so the counting number for monks

isn't isn't ya as it is for everyone

else it's ba which is for counting holy

or sacred things or entities

like pilea

uh no no let's see how about uh

which is like the four noble truths

arata Alba. So you count the four noble

truths with ba because they're like

noble and sacred and so forth. You use

the same word for counting monks.

So let's see here.

Um yeah, I mean if you read what what a monk is supposed to be like in order to become enlightened, you know, no preferences, no greed, no anger, no lust, no self view. I mean you are transcending your own humanity. I mean empirically a fully enlightened being would still be a human still be wearing a human body. You know that the DNA would be human DNA. [clears throat] They would still have certain like human habits. You know they might show human emotions and so forth. But the thing is they're not identified with that anymore. You know it's just sort of nature taking its course while they are

just not identified with that. They do not consider that to be me or I or mine. And so you've not necessarily become totally inhuman, but you have transcended the limitations of your humanity. [clears throat]

So let's see here. Now you see my sweeties coming into the driveway, which distracts me because her presence just kind of I've got like Sweetie Dar, you know? It's like my radar is always kind of affected when she enters the the field of of perception.

So let's see here.

Yeah, I mean that's one reason why if you're a monk like just according to the texts then you renounce society, you

renounce family life, you renounce social interactions for the most part because you're you're just sort of separating yourself from that because that kind of holds you into being a human. Whereas, if you just go alone out into the wilderness, you're just like meditating and sleeping under a tree out in a forest, then um it's much easier to be like nonhuman in your behavior and in your your like psychology.

But really, you have to transcend being a mere human being if you're going to become enlightened. At least according to Buddhism. I mean, there's still humanity there. It's just

that you're not identified with that anymore.

So, I'm just going to move on to fake Tig's third question,

which is I looked up what goes to hell after someone, he says after someone does, but I think he means after someone dies. I looked up what goes to hell after someone dies. And since Buddhism didn't believe in an eternal atman, I couldn't comprehend what it is that gets reborn into a hell realm. Well, it' be the same thing that gets reborn into a human realm or any other realm.

It's just the your karma. This the only thing according to Buddhism, the only thing that transmigrates

is the momentum of your karma.
Regardless of whether you're you're
reborn as a human or as a small G god in
some superhuman realm or as a denison of
hell or or an animal or whatever, a
ghost,
some kind of demonic entity, whatever
that it's the same thing as being reborn
um in any any of those cases, which is
just this like the karmic momentum, the
the psychic momentum of your karma, of
your mental states especially your
volitions which is like Schopenhau's
will.
So [snorts] Schopenhau's will really uh
most closely corresponds to karma in in

human you know it's just this
blind force of wanting to exist really
although karma doesn't necessarily
I mean it's it wouldn't be exactly the
same as Schopenhau's will but like in
the text karma is volition which could
be translated as will I mean it's
So cheduna usually is translated as
volition, but you could translate it
just as easily as will, possibly even
more accurately as will.
So it's will that gets reborn. That's
it.
That's the only thing you take with you
after you die is the momentum of your
mental states, your your like
psychological habits essentially,

especially the deep ones, the

subconscious ones.

So I'm just going to move on to the next

question which is from Tzasiz

and Tzasiz says according to Hinduism we

are living in Kaliuga our people will

get more stupid and [__]

until human race disappears is concept

of kaluga and terra Buddhism well it's

not exactly the same concept but I think

it was just the previous Q&A I'm talking

about or I was talking about

how

uh according to Buddhism [clears throat]

after you have a Buddha then like the

human race starts to degenerate you know

especially after Buddhism finally
disappears from the world I mean dharma
in the world kind of helps to maintain
civilization but then after it finally
fades out because everything is
impermanent including you know any
Buddhist dispensation
then civilization degenerates more and
more there's there's no more dharma in
in the world, you know, so morality kind
of fades out and you just get more dog
eat dog until finally it gets down to
the human lifespan is only like 10 years
and you know you reach puberty at like
five and there's like people are just
there's no morals. just cannibalism all
this kind of stuff going on and then

finally after hitting rock bottom it starts getting better again and it's the same way in in hind the Hindu Kalyuga you know the Hindu dark age where I mean it's not just the end of the world it's just that when you get to the end of the kalyuga at least in this particular case then Khalki on the white horse you know the the the next avatar of Vishnu will come and slay the evil ones and and just get everything kind of back on course so that things can improve again. You know, help bring about a golden age again. But in Buddhism, it's a little different where it just it's sort of like cosmic cycles of up and down of of

civilizations, for example. And supposedly we are on a downhill slide because, you know, the Buddha has already been here and Dharma is in decline. You know, it's it's due to impermanence. So dharma is in the in the process of gradually getting corrupted and and dying out until finally after it's gone then things really start going into freef fall things get really bad till you hit rock bottom and then they start building back up again until the situation is ripe again for another Buddha to come. So presumably from the Buddhist point of view, the golden age or the closest we get to a golden age is when there is a Buddha in this world.

Although if you look at there's like this weird suta towards the end of of the dean, I don't remember the name of it where you know the Buddhist talking about the origin of the world and and people start off godlike. you know, we live thousands and thousands of years. We just feed on light, that kind of thing, and then we gradually start degenerating into like the the upgraded apes that we are now.

But a lot of that is just ancient Indian mythology that I mean, every culture has its mythology. You know, why the bear has a stumpy tail, this this all this kind of stuff. Um, and it can be

absorbed into a religious system so that
the religion just people think that
that's what the religion teaches when
actually it's that's what the religious
system just kind of absorbed from the
the culture because that's the culture
that it arose in and uh it's really not
the point of the religion. It's just
this cultural artifact that just got
absorbed through osmosis into the system
because that's the that's just the way
it happened.
>> [sighs and gasps]
>> So
yeah, according to Hinduism, we've been
living in the Kalyuga since prehistoric
times. The Kaluga has been around for a

very long time already. So I mean there was no silver age or or or golden age or anything like that in historical times, at least going with modern archaeology. So the Buddhists uh have a little bit of an advantage over the Hindus on that in that well maybe depends on how you look at it. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is also from Tzasquez is uh he's just repeating somebody else's question on the Discord server. He's saying do you think some people are born evil or it's all effective environment and experiences with others? Well, how you're born depends on your karma from previous

existences going with Buddhist philosophy. So, I mean, an evil person, you've got a lot of bad, you know, malevolent sort of karma coming into this world. You can be born pretty much bad. And um for a while, we haven't been doing it lately, but my my sweetie and I were watching a certain show before going to bed at night, you know, going to sleep to murder. It was uh Evil Lives Here. It's a show that's still being produced. I think still new episodes coming out. Although uh they've kind of used up all the really the worst sociopaths
for the show. And so now it's, you know, getting into the later episodes, a lot

of the time it's just people who are just mean and don't say please and thank you and that sort of thing.

But um a lot of these episodes there's some of the most interesting ones to me is you've got a family and one kid is just a born sociopath. You know, it's the other kids seem relatively normal, but this one kid from the very beginning, from the time he's a toddler, he's already like torturing animals and like getting pleasure from hurting his brothers and sisters, that kind of thing. And just watching that show, it does kind of cause me to tentatively conclude, you know, not once and for

all, but tentatively that some people really are just born that way. And that would be in harmony with Buddhist philosophy where you've got some serial killer who somehow avoids hell or you know some sort of demon demonic realm or something gets reborn as a human and they still have this momentum going from previous lives of just cruelty and malice and just you know getting pleasure from the suffering of others that sort of thing.

So yeah, I do think that I mean a lot I mean ultimately it's all conditioned by karma.

So I mean ultimately any birth that you come into you know it's conditioned by

your karma in previous existences
especially you know especially the
previous existence
but still going with empiricism. I mean,
I've read books on sociopathy and so
forth long ago where there there is like
a a statistically
uh significant correlation between being
a sociopath as like a a juvenile
delinquent and an adult and having
either abusive or neglectful parents.
And the the the mechanism is that some
kid I mean children require attention
just like my dogs require attention.
They're just they're hungry for
attention. And I mean, I can get into

like philosophical explanations for that, but it doesn't it's not really the point here. But

um a child who is just being ignored by his parents will act out and even they would prefer to be like yelled at and punished than just ignored because they need attention. Even if it's like negative, hostile attention somehow. It's like, well, I I'll get to Mary Baker Eddie here. She says that like babies sometimes will die of what is used to be called sudden infant death syndrome simply because their mind isn't strong enough to maintain their existence in this world yet. And so they need other like more mature

um beings paying attention to them in order to kind of reinforce their existence in this world. And and children apparently are like this, you know, that it's like their mind isn't strong enough to just maintain. I mean, some adults are like this where just their their single solitary mind, you know, their individuality just is not robust enough to keep them in this version of reality without other people kind of helping to lock them in, reinforcing their existence through their own perceptions.

But I've kind of wandered away from sociopaths or people who are born evil.

But I think I mean it's possible I mean
everyone has the potential to turn
around and start doing good mala in the
in the Buddhist text classic example. He
was literally a serial killer who later
was converted to Buddhism and became a
fully enlightened being.
[sighs]
But I think it's definitely the case
that you can be born just with a lot of
like evil or just sort of cruel or
malicious,
selfish, sociopathic momentum.
And most people really they they don't
have the insight or the wisdom to be
able to observe their own
character flaws, their own defilements

objectively. You know, they just identify with it. This is me. I'm pissed off. I you know I hate that person etc etc.

So I hope I answered that one because I'm moving on to the next question and this is a person with a German name that I cannot pronounce.

I don't know.

I do speak English though which is a technically a Germanic language. A lot of people don't realize that. A lot of English- speakaking people do not realize that English technically is a Germanic language.

Old English was definitely Germanic.

It's just that we absorbed a lot of

French and Latin and so forth.

Anyways, Reese

says,

"In your op rea, I guess it' be Rea.

In your opinion, how much does

Christianity have to do with mass

migration and Islamization?

Merkel is a Protestant and so is Japan's

former prime minister Shigeru Ishiba.

Furthermore, the new Pope Leo has

already criticized the mistreatment

in in quotes mistreatment of so-called

migrants in the USA. So the main

question here, how much does

Christianity have to do with mass

migration and Islamization?

I really don't think it has much to do with that. I mean the Christianity in the west is in severe decline. You know, we have sort of a a degenerate form of Christianity that's that has become mainstream, which is pretty much what is necessary for any kind of advanced spiritual system like Christianity or Buddhism. In order for it to go mainstream, it's got to be dumbed down and watered down and corrupted.

And so, Christianity has been corrupted almost from the beginning. But it's even more corrupt now. I mean, you've got gay pride flags flying over like uh what was Methodist churches when the Bible itself

calls homosexuality abomination.

And like most Protestants are are quite

okay with divorce and remarage where

Jesus himself in the New Testament says

you just can't do that. When you get

married, you get married once.

So

it's more a matter of just sort of

corrupt liberal western feminized

civilization

that is into mass migration

and it's just largely a coincidence that

it's Christianity. If it were if we had

maintained paganism from Roman times

then it wouldn't be so different. I'm

pretty sure. I mean Rome had its own

immigration pro problems like for

example the the the fall of the Roman Empire according to Gibbon was largely the result of this mediocre emperor named Veilence who allowed this mass immigration of Goths across the Danube river. The Goths feared the go the Huns more than they feared the Romans. So they begged the Romans, the Roman emperor, the Roman government just let us settle peacefully in like vacant lands of the of the Roman Empire and Veilance stupidly allowed them to do this and they just started running them up. I mean it wasn't entirely their fault. They were being like treated badly by the by certain Romans. Like for

example, some of the leaders of the Goths had to have their children held hostage, you know, in certain like senatorial class families, for example. And then they were like being raped and and sexually abused and so forth. Um, and so of course that helped the gods to start running a muk. But still, I mean, it wouldn't have happened if they had not if the the Roman government had not allowed hundreds of thousands of Goths to just flood across the borders.

So, yeah, I don't think it's really a so much a Christian thing. I think it's just sort of a a decadent western civilization thing, especially after compassionate females have acquired

equal rights. And like in Europe, I mean, they're more influential politically than the men are.

Apparently,

[sighs] an Angala Merkel is here as is an example, although she's kind of fled the scene in disgrace after inviting literally millions of non-Europeans to enter Europe.

So, let's see here. How much does Christianity have to do with mass migration, Islamization?

Yeah, I I really don't see it as a Christian thing. I mean it's not Christianity that's inviting migrants. I mean they it can be used as a kind of

excuse. You know some Christians will say you know just that the Old Testament says you know you should always welcome foreigners. You know you should treat foreigners well because the Jews were foreigners in the land of Egypt. You know that kind of thing. But I mean, you read other books of the Old Testament, like uh the book of Oh, what's it? What is it, man?

I haven't read the I haven't read the Old Testament in a while. The It's It's an obscure book. And it's mainly about just the after the Babylonian captivity ends

that you know there were the the Persian king allowed Hebrews to move back into

Jerusalem and the first thing they do is
they build a wall to keep out
non-Hebrews.
And I can't remember the name of the
book. It's too bad. And I'm not going to
go look look it up. You guys can just
I'm sure you guys can uh get by with me
not spending five minutes looking
through a book trying to find the name
of the I keep wanting to say Hezekiah,
but that's not it.
So, let's see. Yeah, I I think it's just
more of a cultural like decadence thing,
you know, with compassionate females now
having at least 50% of the political
power that that's more of a problem than

Christianity. I mean obviously
Christianity in and of itself is not
pro-Muslim. I mean the Crusades were not
pro-Muslim. You know the the reconista
in Spain was not pro-Muslim. It's very
Christian. It was like Christian
nationalism.
So I mean it's it's not so much the
religion itself. It's just like what
kind of society is that religion
superficially settled upon? Because I
mean most Christians
their ideas are not particularly
Christian you know it's just like
western civilization in this case like
decadent feminized liberalized western
civilization with some Christian

flavoring added and I mean some people are devout Christians but most are not and I don't think that it was really Christianity that caused Angala Merkel to invite millions of non-European immigrants into Europe. It was just sort of this feminine compassion stuff going on

which can be suicidal for a society. And I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Sedarta Lohachita. And Sedarta Lohachita says, "Modern Thailand and its anything goes attitude." So that's like the title of his question. the the heading of the question is modern Thailand and it's

anything goes attitude. Then he says where once there was only prostitution, sex tourism, now there are thousands of marijuana shops everywhere and alcohol is Buddhist ethics about letting things be
or should that be regulated or prohibited? Well, in a way, it's kind of going back to the previous question. I mean, it's like Christianity doesn't really cause mass like immigration of like migrants that in many cases are hostile to traditional Western values and so forth. And it's not Buddhism so much that is opening marijuana shops in Thailand. First of all, it's just a global thing. recently,

you know, over the past, you know, 20 years or so, just people have begun realizing that marijuana really is no worse than alcohol in my opinion anyway. Cannabis is not worse than alcohol. So why shouldn't it be legalized in a free society? You know, it's not really that horrible.

And like from the Buddhist point of view, alcohol is worse than cannabis. Cannabis is allowable for monks to use medically. In the texts, alcohol is not.

[sighs]

So, yeah, definitely the the the rampant prostitution

would be worse than marijuana shops in

Thailand. And the ties are just very sensual kind of people. like Burma and Thailand are traditional arch enemies. Sort of like like Sparta and Athens or like England and France. You know, over the course of centuries, they were just like favorite enemies of each other. And the Burmese are more stoic. You know, there's much less prostitution. I've heard that just about any village in Thailand will have like the village prostitute, that kind of thing. You don't see that in Burma, or at least not when I was living there.

Um, you know, alcohol,

alcohol in Burma,

um, like in the movies, the standard

tearjerker like melodrama movie where, you know, boy meets girl, boy loses a girl, girl boohoos for a couple weeks and then marries the rich guy that her daddy sets her up with, whereas the guy just drinks himself to death with Johnny Walker Red Label.

So I mean there is sort of socially mainstreamed consumption of alcohol in Burma. It's mostly the rich and also you'll have like the village drunk, you know, like what's his name? Otis on on the the Andy [clears throat] Griffith show, you know, he's just the town drunk. And you have that sort of thing. And it's drinking alcohol kind of has

the same stigma to it as sort of like

taking narcotics in the west. You know,

it's gradually becoming more acceptable.

You know, you don't want to shame

anybody for being a junkie, anything

like that, for being like a a fentinel

adult zombie on a street corner in

Philadelphia. You don't want to actually

blame anyone for that. And the sun is

coming out. Just a second.

Got to close this.

All right,

that's a little better. I still got

stripes on my face. Just a second.

Not even funny.

All right, that's about as good as we're

going to get.

So, let's see here. I got to get back to the question. Is Buddhist ethics about letting things be, or should that be regulated or prohibited? Well, to some degree it is regulated or prohibited in in Burma because they're just more conservative,
whereas Thailand is more liberal. Sort of like France was traditionally more liberal than England or Athens was definitely more liberal than Sparta. Of the two arch enemies,
Thailand is just a more sensual kind of society and apparently it it has been for centuries.
Um, so Buddhist ethics, you got to you

got to like choose your hills to die on.
I guess you got the government just has
to decide what priorities they're going
to have. And in the Burmese military
government, their top priority is like
they got to stomp out political
disscent,
you know, opposition to their power.
That's the their main priority. And you
can do other things and they don't
really care all that much.
So like I was saying early on this like
the Burmese village is mainly governed
by tradition. It's almost anarchistic.
It's just people follow tradition and
they follow Buddhist tradition. And so
um things like drinking alcohol or

killing animals is just sort of like a politically incorrect in a Burmese village society. like one of my main supporters, her family was publicly shamed because her brother married the daughter of a fisherman. And I mean, in the west, a fisherman, there's no stigma at all. Fishermen tend to be relatively rich, especially if you're in Alaska catching halibet or salmon or something, you're making big money. But I mean I mean Jesus helped people catch fish. So in Christian society catching fish is fine but in Buddhism like to be a butcher that's low status or to be a fisherman low status because I mean

you're just doing like a nondharmic livelihood. It's wrong livelihood and it's just there's like a social stigma to that at least out in the conservative village countryside. And I'm not really sure I'm not nearly as familiar with uh like village society in Thailand. Although like I said, I've heard that even like remote villages will have at least one prostitute.

But I haven't even answered the questions yet. The question is Buddhist ethics about letting things be or should that be regulated or prohibited?

Buddhist ethics is generally negative. Like you read Buddhist ethics, it's not positive. It's not you should do this.

It's you you should not do this. So just to do absolutely nothing is not immoral at all. I mean you can just sit there and watch somebody get murdered or whatever and that is not immoral from a Buddhist point of view depending on your mental states depending on your valitions.

But just inaction is morally neutral from a Buddhist point of view.

So, I mean, you shouldn't like take intoxicants and you shouldn't promote the taking of intoxicants. You shouldn't encourage people to get drunk, for example, or to, you know, break any of the five precepts. You know, you

shouldn't do it yourself and you
shouldn't encourage others to do it. But
aside from that, it's you're you're
doing good.
So Buddhist ethics is
I mean it's subjective. Buddhist ethics
is regard to yourself.
You want to keep yourself pure. You want
to purify your own mind.
That's that's what Buddhist ethics is
all about.
But you shouldn't be promoting
immorality to others because in a way
that's affecting your mind. You know
that's corrupting you by promoting
corruption in others. But so long as
you're just like patiently enduring the

corruption all around you, then you're not doing anything wrong from a orthodox teraba Buddhist point of view.

[snorts]

Um

I I think I mentioned before that in uh the king the times of the kings in Burma before the British took over that there was a kind of minister in charge of maintaining sa discipline you know sort of like the the the monk police where if a monk was caught you know drunk in public or something you know he'd be thrown into a kind of sa prison that kind of thing. And I guess in Thailand, um, they will actually, um,

defrock monks that are found drunk in public, even though technically you can't do that. And the the only person who can defrock a monk is that monk himself. You can't just force somebody to stop being a monk, which is uh, one reason why in the past, if the Burmese government is going to defrock a monk, they don't just say, "Okay, you're not a monk anymore." because they really do not have the authority to do that. I guess the Burmese government understands this better than the Thai government does. So what they would do is they would have the monk essentially um assaulted by a prostitute because that would be Parajika. If if

you are having uh S CS
and you enjoy it for even one split
second, that's it. You're
excommunicated. So that's how they would
do it. They just bring in a some
voluuptuous immoral female with the monk
who is probably sexually frustrated
anyway from being celibate for so long
and uh she would uh have her way with
him and then he would just stop being a
monk.
But I'm I'm just sort of wandering all
over the place, I guess. Um but all in
all, I do not consider legalization of
marijuana to be necessarily a bad thing.
It's I do not consider it to be any

worse than alcohol anyhow.

And America tried outlawing alcohol and it didn't didn't really do very well and so they had to repeal that amendment of the constitution. And I'm just moving on to the next question which is also from Sedarta Loha.

Do you think it's immoral to make a profit even a small one from teaching Buddhist philosophy or through donations like buy me a coffee in a website?

Well, morality is like I was just saying, it is subjective. It depends on your mental states rather than your outward physical actions. So, two people can make money from teaching dharma. One of them is doing something wrong and the

other one isn't necessarily.

So I mean if if you're motivated by

greed then yeah definitely you're doing

something that would be um accusal or

unh wholesome in in Burmese eth or

Buddhist ethics.

Um

and I mean it is true that dhamma should

be free

like I really do not like the idea. I

mean, I have my own books of

philosophical reflections for sale on

Amazon, but I've steadfastly

uh resisted any urge to monetize like my

translation of the Atakawaga, for

example. It was always my idea that that

should just be for free distribution.
That is like my gift to the world, so to speak.
I was just performing a public service by by making that translation at least with regard to sharing it. I mean the main purpose of my making the Atagawaga translation is I just at the time was unaware of any good translations. So I had to make my own.
Since then there have been better translations coming out.
At least better than the ones I was exposed to. not necessarily better than mine because I'm kind of biased in favor of my own translation of the atakawaga.
Um, [sighs]

do I think it's immoral to make a
profit, even a small one, from teaching
Buddhist philosophy?
Uh, again,
yeah, it depends on the motives of the
person who is making the profit,
but I mean, I would discourage it. I
mean, I'm not really in favor of making
a profit. Like definitely I do not have
any of my YouTube videos monetized.
But the main reason for that is I really
do believe in the golden rule. Do unto
others as you'd have them do under you.
And I have loathed commercials from the
time I was a kid.
So I don't want to subject other people

to commercials which I personally

despise.

Uh but making a profit I mean what

happens if somebody just freely donates

and then you make a profit through not

really trying it's just that some

generous person values what you have

done enough that they have sent you

money and that's happened to me several

times quite a few times it has happened

so I mean that's not necessarily immoral

I made no effort to get get this

donation really other than just

answering questions and so forth. for

um [sighs]

yeah so I mean really it does depend on

the mental states of the person who is

making the profit. I mean are they doing it for the purpose of making a profit? I mean if are you teaching dharma because you want to get famous and or rich or whatever then yeah I mean that would definitely not be um wholesome activity. But if you're just teaching dharma as a way of, you know, performing a public service or you just enjoy teaching dharma and then somebody donates to you without you even asking for it, then that would be sort the other end of the spectrum and that's not necessarily a bad thing. But of course then you got this intermediate zone of you know like saying where people could donate if they

want to. And I mean that's like in the links below this video probably. You know, there's like a a PayPal address or something down there, I'm sure.

So [sighs]

yeah, I mean, life in general is immoral. If you really get down to it from the Buddhist point of view, then I mean, even putting salt and pepper on your food to make it taste better is like wallowing in sensuality. Listening to music is wallowing in sensuality. Having sex with your own wife, wallowing in sensuality. So I mean from the Buddhist point point of view, I mean it's not like Christianity where it's just white or black. There's all this

stuff that's that's good and all this stuff that's bad and not much in between. Whereas in Buddhism almost everything is in the gray zone.

It's not whether it's immoral, it's just how immoral is it. I mean, if it's just sort of like trace amounts of immorality, then as a general rule, it's still pretty much okay to do that because completely avoiding immorality, I mean, you'd have to be a saint living under a tree in a forest.

[sighs]

So, I guess I better just move on to the next question. This is from RFS.

An RFS says, "If a monk commits a

serious offense, are they able to reordain under any circumstances?" Well, the serious offense in question would be parajika. If you commit any of the four parajika offenses, like one is having s ks even with an animal.

One is let's see stealing anything valuable enough that you could be arrested for it. [clears throat]

Let's see. The next is murder and then the next the it's it's an ascending order of severity or ascending order of just the the heinousness of the crime.

So SECKS, you know, it's the lightest excommunication, then stealing, then murder, which would include like encouraging woman to get an abortion,

encouraging somebody to selfdee,
anything like that, using black magic,
hiring a hitman, anything like that. And
then fourth, the most serious, you know,
the most heinous of the four Parajikica
offenses is knowingly lying about having
attained superhuman mental states. Like
you claim that you're enlightened when
you know you're not enlightened just
because you want to get famous or you
want to get rich or whatever. Yeah,
that's that's even worse than murder
from the point of view of of Terravada
Buddhist monastic discipline.
So any monk who commits any of these
four parajikas that's it I mean you

cannot be reordained as a monk for the rest of your life but you can be reordained as a novice a sana

I read about that in a book by uh a previous Thai sanga raja who wrote the the entrance to the vineia the vineia muka

um he said that he saw some old noviceses and he asked about them Why aren't they ordained as monks since they committed a parajika offense? So that's the highest they can go. They can be reordained as a novice, you know, a 10 precept novice. 10 precepts plus the sakia rules, but you cannot be ordained as a fully ordained biku for the rest of your life. And then any offenses less

than parajika, you're not even kicked out of the monkhood. So you can you can be reordained. If you commit sa deasa offenses and then you drop out and then you want to reordain, you still have to do the penance for the saases you did or the sa dasa offenses that you committed before you dropped out. So there's that too.

[snorts]

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Gordon.

And Gordon says, "What is the Buddhist take on torrenting copywritten media or software?" And I'm not exactly sure what torrenting means. I've I've had it

explained to me before. It's sort of like you're not breaking the rule technically because you're downloading like a movie for example in kind of a scrambled state not in the state in which it [clears throat] was copyrighted but in a scrambled kind of a state or a partial state which is then reassembled in your computer something like that. Um, but what is the Buddhist take on tor I mean obviously there's no rule against torrenting copywritten media on software because that stuff just did not exist when they were coming up with the the rules of monastic discipline. But um technically it would could theoretically potentially fit under stealing like

copyright theft. So, I mean, if it's illegal, I mean, it depends on the on the law. In this case, it depends on the law of the land, like if you're in Burma and they just don't have copyright laws, then you're fine. But if you're doing it in a country like maybe the USA where they do have copyright laws and there is such a thing as copyright theft then I mean if if it's an a severe enough theft that you could be arrested for it then yeah I mean that would [clears throat] that would be theft and if you're a monk who did that then you could be excommunicated for the rest of your life.

If that's what you did, then you're automatically excommunicated whether or not anyone even finds out about it. So monks especially have to be really careful about that sort of thing. But yeah, in this particular case with regard to theft, I mean to take what is not given, I mean, if you have doubts, if you think maybe it's immoral, then you shouldn't do it.

But I mean, if it's illegal, then I mean, technically, you would be legally a thief by doing it.

Uh, but again, Buddhist ethics are psychological and subjective. Stop it. Buddhist ethics are psychological and subjective. And so I mean if you feel

like you're doing something wrong when
you're doing it then yeah that's that's
a good indication that you really are
doing something wrong that I mean it
even if it's just the feeling I mean you
could be doing something completely
innocuous
and you feel like you're doing something
wrong then I mean you really shouldn't
do it because I mean in a way you are
doing something wrong by doing something
that you feel is wrong even if outwardly
it's completely harmless. us.
So you got to watch your own mental
states and know thyself.
And also I mean if you want to be a

stickler on technicalities, you should find out whether it really is illegal or not. Just because something's illegal doesn't mean that it's immoral. I mean driving 60 in a 55 mph zone is not really immoral.

might be illegal,

but it's not really immoral.

But you do have to take the law into consideration with regard to certain things, especially for a monk. You know, like stealing, you know, it depends on like the value of what you're stealing and like whether or not uh you could be arrested for it, that kind of thing.

[snorts]

So,

let's see. I guess I'll just move on to Gordon's next question.

which is as follows. Islam and Christianity more or less accept anybody the instant they express a desire to convert. Whereas Judaism is rather notorious for denying potential converts or putting roadblocks in their way to test their sincerity. Where does Buddhism fall on the ease of accepting converts?

Um, well, before I get to the actual question, um, yeah, even some Christianity is, uh, a little bit particular about who they're willing to accept. For example, I remember reading

or hearing long ago that Michael Jackson

wanted to become a Jehovah's Witness and

they wouldn't take him.

[sighs and gasps] And Judaism,

[clears throat] it's it's kind of an

ethnic thing.

I mean, you do have non-Hebrew Jewish

people like, well, Ivanka Trump, for

example, or Sammy Davis Jr., I think he

was he became Jewish. Elizabeth Taylor,

you know, because she married some rich

Jewish guy, so she converted.

So, it does it it does happen. It's just

not really super

um

yeah I mean there's an ethnic element to

Judaism. You know they're God's chosen

people because they were this tribe not because they just chose to follow so much as you know it's like this ethnic tribe that was or 12 tribes I guess that God favored for whatever reasons. Um, but with regard to Buddhism, yeah, it's really easy. I mean, where does Buddhism fall in the ease of accepting converts? I mean, all you have to do is just take five precepts and and the three refues and five precepts and you're a Buddhist.

I mean, you could be like a really heretical one if you also accept other beliefs that really are not Buddhist. But I mean from the Buddhist point of

view, I mean all you have to do is just sincerely
want to be a Buddhist and take the three refues and the five precepts and boom, you're a Buddhist regardless of all else.
And even with regard to being ordained, I mean, the Burmese especially are notorious for ordaining people that aren't even Buddhists. Like I met a an Austrian Catholic priest once wearing monks robes and he he didn't like stop being a Catholic. He was still an ordained Catholic priest, but he's wearing monks robes. It's like I I mean I I warned him. He's like really
[laughter]

you shouldn't be doing that. But

[snorts]

I mean they will ordain anybody. People

that just shouldn't be ordained. like um

I remember one time when I was a very

junior monk this old Burmese guy was

ordained and I mean these temporary

monks I mean he was just a temporary

monk the Burmese it's called dull laba

or ordination don laba ordination which

means hard to obtain hard to get because

it's such a rare treasure to be able to

be ordained as a biku you know it's it's

harder to be or like a monk an ordained

monk than to just be born as a human

most humans they don't have the

opportunity to do that. So in a way it's considered to be this great blessing from the Buddhist point of view to ordain somebody even just for like three days to be a monk for three days. It's like this great blessing. And so they ordained this old guy who just didn't know any any rules of monastic discipline. He's like dancing around with like his granddaughters and stuff, you know, they come to visit him and support him and everything and just acting like he's not a monk at all. You know, he didn't get it. He was he was relatively very old and so you know he might have been kind of his faculties may have been in decline also.

But I I I heard another story about there was this friend of mine, an American monk, who was staying at some big school monastery,
um, which is kind of on the outskirts of a big city. And he heard this weird uproar going on, and he he goes outside to see what it is. And he sees there's this monk just wallowing around in this pond, yelling at the top of his lungs. And he asked about it later. And it turned out that this was another one of these temporary monks who was an alcoholic and he was going through the delirium tremens as a monk. You know, it may be that he was ordained temporarily

as a monk just to help him go cold turkey on on booze or whatever. And so I mean some Burmese monasteries will just ordain damn near anybody. You don't even have to be a Buddhist which is not good. Even at Pandidorama, I was spent two months doing intensive practice at Pandidorama back in the late 90s in in Rangon. And there was this Mahayana Buddhist monk. He comes in wearing gray pajamas and he didn't like that he was treated like a lay person. You know, he had to go behind all the monks at at meal times and stuff. And so he just got himself ordained as a terrau even though he didn't stop being a Mahayana monk which I mean that is really not correct

procedure you know if you're a Mahayana
monk you want to be ordained as a terrau
you have to stop being Mahayana monk
before you can be ordained as a terrau
you can't be both at the same time but
he was because even in a relatively
strictish
monastery like Panda Rama when Pandanda
was still alive still they were doing
this kind of stuff.
[sighs and gasps] So Buddhism is like
the the extreme easiest to enter even
like if you're in Burma at some
monasteries even to be ordained you
don't even have to be a Buddhist
it's weird

but to be a Buddhist is a subjective thing. So I mean if you take refuge and keep five precepts and consider yourself to be a Buddhist and you're a Buddhist regardless of the fact that you may have never met any other actual Buddhist in your life.

So [snorts] let's see here. I'm just going to [clears throat] go to Gordon's third question.

And Gordon's third question is what is your answer to the transgressive fourth question below? And the answer is yes. I answered the fourth question below with a yes. But I'm not going to read the fourth question because that would be transgressive. So I'm just going to move

on to the next question. Oh, wait a minute. And I'm just thinking here, huh, I think they might have retracted the question
because I remember seeing a certain question. This next question reminds me of another question that somebody else asked.
Anyways, this question is from somebody named Tinen. I think I don't know how to pronounce this name. I've never known anybody named Tynen before. I think it's Tinen. And Tinen says, "I am wondering what your thoughts are on the Buddhist precepts and whether they can be bent or broken in certain circumstances as I can

think of a few.

For example, no killing. If we saw a child about to be murdered in the moment, should we break the precept and kill to save the child or should we watch the child die to ensure we do not break the precept? A few other examples, but this will make this very long. So, I'll leave the one example here. When I think of this myself, it brings me back to the story when Jesus was speaking with the Pharisees about saving the donkey on the Sabbath day. Okay. Well, this is going back to that question of whether Buddhism makes you inhuman or not.

Um,

see whether rules can be bent or broken like Buddhist precepts. Um, I mean technically

no.

So, I mean, technically the moral thing to do if a child is about to be murdered, I mean, you can try to stop the murder for happening, but you you can't really do that morally by killing the person who's about to kill the child, which is one reason why you become a monk. You renounce society, which causes you largely, for the most part, to avoid these situations entirely. you're off alone in a forest somewhere where you you're not even

allowed to slap mosquitoes that are biting you.

So, I mean, I've I've discussed this before

where I mean, you you have the right to choose whether or not you are willing to take the hit.

So, I mean, I've broken rules. I've fudged on rules sometimes with what I consider to be good reasons. Like for example, it's against the rules for a monk to give medicine to lay people. I mean, if it's a like one of your parents or like a monastery attendant, then then it's allowable. But just like lay supporters in the village to be practicing medicine by like giving them

medicines is against the rules. You're not supposed to do it. But then I was living in this place that was endemic with falsiferum malaria, which is the worst kind. I would have died several times over if I didn't have good malaria medicine. And one of my main supporters told me that his daughter had had malaria for this god-awful amount of time. You know, it was it was many, many days. It was many weeks even.

And so after kind of questioning him about what her symptoms were because Burmese villagers are not good at diagnosing illnesses, it did seem like she had falsia. year and I was having

chills and fevers on alternate days which I don't know any other you know maybe brucyosis or something might have similar similar symptoms but it's it was endemic with malaria in that area so I gave him the pills she got better I committed an offense but I may have saved somebody's life and still I mean I still broke the rule you know there's no loophole that says if you've got a good reason you can break the rule no you still break the rule but I mean Still sometimes you can judge for yourself whether you are willing to take the hit. You know it's you're going to be committing some sort of unskillful karma, bad karma by doing something. But

still it may be considered by you to be the lesser of two evils.

Like somebody's going to kidnap a child. You know, you see somebody like pulling a child towards a car and it's obviously not the child's parent. the child is terrified. I mean, you could just body slam that guy, you know? I mean, you still be making some sort of, you know, you might be motivated by anger when you see this happening already bad karma even if you don't do anything because you're you're feeling anger. Then you just, you know, tackle the guy to save the kid and the guy might like scrape the side of his head on the sidewalk as

his head hits the ground. That kind of thing. I mean

it you you're still you are doing a certain amount of unskillful or bad karma but I mean you might not be able to live with yourself if you just stood there and watched them like abduct this child.

So that's one reason why monks go off alone into a forest where they're not exposed to this sort of stuff. They're not put into these situations where the lesser of two evils is still evil or just bad karma, anger and violence and that sort of thing.

So

yeah, you have to make your own choices.

But I mean there really are no loopholes. There are no exceptions to karma. You know, if you are motivated by attraction, aversion, or delusion in your actions,
you're you're committing an unh wholesome act. Regardless of what the act is, like I already said, it's like putting salt and pepper on your mashed potatoes to make them taste better. You're wallowing in sensuality. You're you're acting in a greedy manner.
So, in Buddhism, I mean, it's it's not just black and white like it is in Abrahamic religions. Is this it's for the most part just all shades of gray.

And somebody asked a question that yeah
that I think might have referred to
Tinan here that I think they they
deleted which is just as well.
I think they were making fun of him.
[snorts] Anyways, next question. Joe Doe
says, "Who is Kevin Maynard?" And I have
no idea. No idea whatsoever.
[snorts] Next question is from PSA.
And PSA says, "What do you think about
the World Series between the Dodgers and
the Blue Jays? It'll probably be be over
by the time you make your next video,
but I was just wondering if you were
watching it and what your thoughts
were." No, I have not watched a baseball
game in decades at this point. I don't I

mean if the World Series is in fact over as PSA implies here, I don't even know who won. I I could not name a single like professional baseball player at all.

Although I have been told that that baseball is like the last refuge of the three main spectator sports in America, the three main ball games, you know, baseball, football, and basketball is it's the the least contaminated by like political correctness or woke ideology. You know, football is just it's awful. basketball also, you know, it's it's just all this sort of leftist globalist propaganda

stuff thrown into it. Male cheerleaders
is like one of the most recent additions
to to like gay football,
rainbow football.
So, yeah, I have no idea about I have
not watched a a baseball game. I have
not given a a [__] about baseball games
in in many years. I was never really
into baseball even before I was into
football before I became a monk. But
that was about it. I was like basketball
just bunch of tall black guys running
back and forth in squeaky shoes in their
underwear
just it just really didn't do anything
for me. I [clears throat] mean watching
sports in general, I've never really

been super into sports. Pro football
back in the old days, like when they'd
play on real grass, sometimes in like
rain and mud, that kind of thing,
freezing temperatures,
that kind of thing. I I kind of enjoyed
because pro football, American football,
not soccer, but American football, at
least when I was watching it, it was
like a cross between war and chess. You
know, there's like strategy involved in
this kind of thing that made it more
interesting. Basketball is just too
fast. just, you know, 100 points a game,
that kind of thing. Baseball is too
slow.

Golf is way too slow.

I mean, sometimes Olympic sports,

gymnastics, that kind of thing. Fencing.

I mean, they almost never show Olympic

fencing, but that kind of thing I like.

Don't watch TV much anymore though,

except for just like we've got like a a

$3 a month subscription to the Discovery

Plus channel. So that's pretty much all

we watch is just stuff on Discovery

Plus.

No sports there.

And so I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Ruie.

And Ruie says, "To what extent is

recollection of death at the forefront

of your mind in daily life?"

um recollection of death. I mean, the main recollection of death in my life lately is with regard to keeping fish tanks because fish die sometimes, shrimp die sometimes, and so you're confronted by death on a regular basis. Just yesterday, we went to the the local fish store, and my sweetie bought two [__] loaches to help kind of keep the baby snail population under control in her beta tank. And one of those loaches when it hit the water, it pretty much just started freaking out. And then like within a matter of just couple hours, it was dead just due to some kind of toxin building up in the water. So, it's just

like that kind of recollection of death. Just because you're confronted with it, you see death, you realize that, you know, like all beings are subject to death. Looking at the little dogs and thinking, "Oh, they're going to get old because dogs don't live as long as people do. You know, they're going to be all gimped up and stuff in matter of several years."

um just working in a potentially kind of dangerous environment at work where sometimes you're moving toxic chemicals or just dealing with heavy machinery. So, I mean, you you've always got to be kind of cautious, got to be always aware of your surroundings and so forth in

order to avoid, you know, injury or death. So, I mean, that's always sort of in the the background of my mind, not necessarily the forefront.

But, you know, it's it's always kind of a consideration that death is a possibility if you're not careful.

And then just animals, plants and animals, like especially little aquatic animals in fish tanks. Those are like the main recollection of death. I mean, I already mentioned a little earlier that my sweetheart and I would occasionally watch uh shows about, you know, like serial killers and so forth. So, there's that. I mean, you you see

the news, there's lots of death in the news. So, I mean, it's it's never really in the forefront, but it's always there in some form or another. You know, it's the the awareness of death is is always there. Especially as I get older, you know, it's like

when you get older, I mean, it's not like I'm afraid of death, but still, you know, it's it's kind of there. You know, so to what extent is recollection of death at the forefront of my mind in daily life? Not very often, but it's it's always kind of in the background, you know, it's always part of the surroundings,

or at least a lot of the time it is.

[snorts] So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from

[clears throat]

Omi. It's like capital O hyphen small M large M small M hyphen small I. I have no idea what that signifies or how to pronounce it or anything. And then Omi asks the strange question in a in a long strange comment.

Towards the end of the long strange comment, he just asks this question. Do you use an air fryer for cooking? And no, I do not. I've never seen the point in frying air. What are you going to do with fried air? It's just silly. So, I'm just moving on. Next question. This is

from Mr. Pronov. And Mr. Pronov says, "Do you know of any miracle story of someone who improved their physical condition? For example, someone curing their bad vision. Science says bad vision like myopia can't be cured." Or someone got cured from their chronic illness miraculously. And it was relatively recently just the previous Q&A or maybe two or three Q&A ago I've been talking about um like Mary Baker Eddie
like the founder of Christian Science and her book science and health with key to the scriptures. I mean that's what the book is about is this kind of miraculous healing.

And at the end of the book is I think it's 100 pages or 70 pages. It's either 70 or 100 pages of a chapter called fruition which is just testimonies of people who have been cured of all sorts of things and most of the stuff that they're cured of is stuff that has a psychossematic element like tuberculosis.

Tuberculosis has a psychossematic element to it. Also asthma, I've read that most cases of asthma are psychossematic. And then also reading problems and digestive problems are like the main things. But some I mean some of these testimonies, one person had a

broken arm and they just used Christian science to heal their arm just immediately.

Another person had like this 40 lb tumor. That was like the very first testimony cuz it was very dramatic.

40 pound tumor. She just read science and held the key to the scriptures, just was convinced by it, that this is true, that I can't possibly have this tumor and it just faded out. I mean, it didn't disappear just poof immediately like that, but it just went into remission immediately and just disappeared like over a period of just a matter of days.

Also within the realm of terravada Buddhism, I've told the story recently

of Ubaqin who was the teacher of Senena
who apparently had some sort of skin
cancer on his face that he started doing
intensive meditative practice and it
just went into remission and
disappeared. Um, Upandida of the Mahasi
tradition in his famous book in this
very life
uh mentioned the story of some guy who
had really bad tuberculosis where I mean
he was at the coughing up blood stage
and he went for uh an intensive
meditation retreat possibly just to set
himself right before death you know just
he wanted to die as consciously as
possible and upandid candidly admits

that, you know, he was kind of worried about contagion and so forth. This person with tuberculosis who has like uncontrollable coughing spasms and so forth, but you know, he he was put into like his own little meditation cabin and started getting into deep meditation partly because of this sue, this feeling of spiritual urgency because he felt, you know, impending doom and it just cleared up. He just got better. And like I said with regard to Christian science, tuberculosis is more controlled by mental states than most illnesses or at least it's most easily controlled by mental states.

That I mean there it's more likely that

just having the right attitude can give
you resistance to tuberculosis or help
you to clear up cases of tuberculosis.
My father used to be an X-ray
technician. He said almost everybody, at
least back when he was an X-ray
technician, has scars of tuberculosis in
their lungs where it starts to kind of
get a foothold, but then it's your body
just, you know, resists and, you know,
your immune system or whatever it is,
your attitude
just clears it up.
Also, of course, uh some viruses are
like more likely to get an outbreak if
if you're under like emotional stress or

physical strain, that kind of thing, you know, various various types of things. But still, that Christian Science book, you know, had broken arms and tumors and that kind of thing in addition to the more likely to be psychosmatic stuff also.

So, let's see.

I guess I'll just uh

move on to the next question. This is from Donna River and this was the last question up until right before I did this video. Somebody else asked two more questions but this was going to be the last question and we're getting close to the end here and it's less than two hours so we're doing pretty good.

>> [clears throat]

>> This is from Dhamma River and Dhamma River says, "A Mahayana Buddhist teacher was giving a dharma talk once and said that there is no suffering in all of samsara greater than a god when he's dying. Even the beings in hell don't suffer as much. The reason for this is because in his entire life, all he's ever known was pleasure and being praised and worshiped. And he thought he was eternal. And all of a sudden he sees himself dying and with his psychic powers he can see where he will be reborn. I was not able to ask the source of this teaching and I wonder if you

knew the suta and if you don't know the suta could you please just share what is your opinion of it? Do you think it's true? Does it sound legitimate?

Okay. Well, I mean I do not recall this seeing this in like a polyuta. It could be a Mahayana sutra rather than a poly suta. Um it could be in in the poly text somewhere. But the main thing that I recall about dying gods

um

I remember reading somewhere somewhere in the text the poly text terab Buddhist texts that when a god is finally reaching a small g god is reaching the end of his lifespan his his

>> [clears throat]

>> illumination he he becomes less glowy
and shiny you know it's like the the
light that emanates from him dims
And then he knows and all of his friends
know he's going to be passing away into
another into another life. And so his
friends will kind of come around and
like make their goodbyes and console him
and then and then he he poofs out of
that realm and gets reborn somewhere
else. But I do not recall anything about
how the suffering is greater than
somebody being tortured in hell.
Yeah, I'm that I'm I'm rather skeptical
about. I mean it could be some sort of
Mahayana thing but um I don't think that

the poly texts except for maybe some

suta that I don't recall at all

um I don't think the poly text would say

that when right before a dava

passes away from from a dva realm that

he is suffering more than the beings

being hacked with with axes by demons in

hell.

I just uh I'm skeptical of that because

partly because a god is going to have

more serenity

and more wisdom and so they're going to

be able to deal with I mean all they're

doing is just kind of fading out anyway.

They're not getting some horrible

illness or anything. They're just kind

of fading out and in all likelihood

they're going to wind up with a fairly good life in their next life anyway. It might be a human life but still it's not going to be a really bad human life. If you were a dava in your previous existence, you get reborn as a human, it's probably going to be a pretty good life. I mean, not as good as living millions of years in some heaven realm, but still, it's it's it's going to be lots better than being hacked with axes by demons in some blazing hot underworld.

So, yeah, I am skeptical of that. I mean, different davas are going to have different attitudes, I suppose. You

know, there could be some dva who knows
he's going to wind up in hell. You know,
he did something really good and really
bad in his life as a human, so he gets
the reward first and then he gets the
punishment afterwards, maybe. But still,
I think the mind of a dava is going to
be more serene, more clear, and have
more wisdom than somebody in some hell
realm who's just all [__] up.
So I'm just going to move on to the next
question and this is the last question
here and this is from practice meta and
practice meta says
five hyphenme
DMT
is an extremely potent short acting

natural or synthetic psychedelic compound known for inducing profound mystical experiences often described as ego dissolution or a sense of oneness with some describing it as an experience of nirvana itself. As a former monk, how do you react to claims that five hyphen meo-en DMT induces an experience of nirvana?

Um, I'm not sure if five hyphen me DMT is just the same as just DMT, like one of the active ingredients in Iawasa, for example.

Um,

I mean, I have I have taken Iawaska and also Yahi, which is just like the

Colombian version of the Peruvian iawasa, just somewhat different ingredients.

The Yahi tastes worse than Iawaska.

Um, so I mean I have if if I is DMT, at least I've taken DMT without the five hyphen meo hyphen.

Um,

anyways, I mean the main question here is as a former monk, how do you react to claims that DMT induces an experience of nirvana? I don't think it's an experience of nirvana. I mean it could be like what could be called temporary liberation like Janna in the text is sometimes called temporary liberation because at least the uh the defilements

are kind of suspended
and that's what DMT would do. I mean if
it's real nirvana then you have
exhausted all greed, hate and delusion.
No more of that. You don't fall back out
of nirvana again. One who has attained
thus does not fall back.
So it could be an approximation like a
temporary artificial approximation of
nirvana but it would not be genuine
nirvana or nibbana. Nibbana is blowing
out and after you blow out you don't
blow back in again after the the
chemical has finished taking effect.
That is just a kind of suppression of
habitual delusion. But then as soon as

the drug wears off, the habitual delusion comes back because the the karma has not been exhausted and you know it's still the the delusion is still there. It's just kind of attenuated.

So I'm just going to move on to practice meta's second question which is the last question of this particular episode of Q&A.

He says, "Since every experiencer of five hyphen meo-en DMT I've read about has not been a monk, nor a practitioner of meditation for 30 plus years, would you be willing to take five hyphen meo-en DMT to provide your unique perspective?"

And

um [sighs] I mean I like I said I've

already taken some kind of DMT whether

it was five hyphen MONE DMT or not I

don't know but I have taken Iawasa

before and I have shared my experiences

with that.

Um but would I be willing to take it

now? Well I'm I'm getting a little old

for that [__] for starters. Also, I got

a woman who probably would vehemently

put her foot down and insist that I not

take five hyphen meen

DMT, especially if somebody sends it to

me. I mean, we went through this

something similar to this before where I

had a supporter send me uh a certain substance called DMXE. It was so newly synthesized. It hadn't been ille it wasn't even illegal yet. You know, it was it was somewhat along the same lines as ketamine. You know, it was belonged to the same kind of general molecular classification as ketamine.

And um I was willing to take it. You know, it's like my my woman and I I'll [clears throat] get to that. But so I I strategized and so I just informed my woman that I had already taken it five minutes before. You know, you take it then you tell her so that she can't insist that you don't take it. And then it was it was fairly intense. You know,

I was kind of lying lying there panting for a while, which had her kind of freaked out. And I mean, she was even more freaked out that I actually took this substance that somebody I'd never met in face to face, you know, sends me through the mail, you know? I mean, it's pretty crazy,

but I mean, I trusted the person, you know, they were they had made generous contributions before. They're obviously in good faith unless they were just like super scops, you know, some kind of spy, you know, really really devious stuff going on, which I just didn't believe. So, I took it and it was it was very

intense and and uh my woman was she was

not pleased.

And so this five hyphen MEO hyphen DMT

um yeah it's uh

I under certain circumstances I might be

willing to try it but if someone were to

send it to me in the mail then yeah that

would that would not work. That's uh

that that wouldn't happen.

But um I mean in my younger days I was

much more experimental, willing to try

new things. Not anything like I never

took opiate, narcotics, anything

stronger than Perkadan.

You know, I wasn't willing to try

heroin, anything like that. But, you

know, sort of exploring the unexplored

regions of the subconscious mind, that
sort of thing. My father was the same
way. He mostly used like hypnosis for
his experimentations.
But, uh, so [snorts] under
certain circumstances I might be willing
to try DMT
like the five hyphen MEO hyphen version
of it if I haven't already
but uh yeah it's uh it's really not on
my bucket list at all and so I guess
we're done.
I guess I answered the questions. I
remember somebody asked a question that
may have applied to this Tynan person,
but then when I was collating, like

making the list of questions, I didn't see it. So maybe they took it back because it was it was kind of a naughty question. Anyway,
no offense to Tynan, of course, because who I've never met and do not know.
So anyways, I guess we're done. And so like I should always say at the beginning and practically never do. If you have any questions you think I can answer especially with regard to dharma like terravada Buddhism, early Buddhism even like pre-terra Buddhism, meditation, monasticism, Burma, that sort of thing. Uh I know some stuff about biology, have a degree in biology. You know I'm interested in politics. So

that's kind of fair game. Although, you know, we should try to keep a sort of a dharmic theme to these Q&A videos because that's really what that's really what it's mainly intended for. And like and subscribe if you have not done so already.

Be sure to look at the URL links below if you are so inclined.

And uh be happy. And now I got to push this button here.

Alrighty then, take two.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 169. I am your host Po Basa and this is my Muolnir bead.

Strangely, my woman likes this so much she wants me to have this for the rest of my life. Not just the mujolnir bead, but like the the the braided beard and stuff, but I'm not so sure about that.

This is my beverage.

And 169 is not a prime number, but it is a perfect square. It is in fact [clears throat] 13 * 13 or if you will 13 to the second power.

And I'm [clears throat] really uh not being risk averse this time because I

don't even have an emergency backup

beverage despite the fact this is going

to be a relatively long one. We've got

about 40 questions. So it's like people

that watch the show have awoken from

their dogmatic slumbers and have started

asking lots of questions again.

>> [snorts]

>> So I suppose

now that the [clears throat] Muolnir

bead has been displayed,

the beverage has been displayed,

[snorts] the [clears throat] number has

been explained, I can just wade right

into answering questions here.

[clears throat]

And the first question is from the

protoseudam who asked this question more than a week ago and for some reason it was just I scrolled right past it when going down the scroll.

didn't see it to answer it last time.

So, it's uh starting the questions this time, which maybe is a little unfortunate because I generally prefer to have an easy question to answer the first time just to kind of get the ball rolling or the wheel of dharma rolling if you prefer.

But there is a certain amount of profoundity and nuance to this. I [clears throat] Okay, I'll just I'll just read the question now. Protoseudo

Monk says, "I've just started reading
The Trickster in the Paranormal.
Following your recommendation, you
mentioned that this book is paradigm
shifting and that it fills the gaps.
Could you please elaborate on that? Why
is this book so significant to you?" And
I suppose I should just get the book.
It's on the bookshelf right back here.
Let's see. Where is it?
There it is.
Okay. [clears throat] So, he is
referring to this book which was sent to
me by my friend Otto,
The Trickster in the Paranormal by
George P. Hansen.
And it is true. It's probably it would

definitely be in the top 20 most important books I've ever read just with regard to filling in gaps in my understanding or my paradigm, my worldview, whatever. Every once in a while, you just come across a book that just has this wealth of information with regard to something that you were kind of interested in but didn't know much about. Like there's another one back there, Strategy, The Indirect Approach by BF Little Hart, I think is his name. And [clears throat] it's a book on military strategy. And probably half of what I know about World War I, for example, comes from that book. So that

was I mean it wasn't as important philosophically, but it was another one that just kind of filled in gaps in my knowledge.

So anyways, you mentioned that this book is paradigm shifting and that it fills the gaps. Would you please elaborate on that? Why is this book so significant to you? Well, I think the main theme of this book is [clears throat] I don't know if George P. Hansen was like a philosophical idealist just believing that this entire universe is like a mental projection but it fits right in with idealism. his his like theory or hypothesis, his thesis in this book. And that [clears throat]

the book indicates that you have to have rules to keep everything orderly, to keep the chaotic at bay, to keep, you know, the unexplicable
un like what is it like unforeseeable weird stuff from happening. And people have known about this intuitively since the stone age. You know, that's why there's so many taboss in addition to just, you know, apparent laws of nature. Things fall down instead of up generally, for example. [clears throat] But people just have to have more rules than just laws of nature. And so human societies just invent rules just to keep things more orderly. And it doesn't make

a whole lot of sense from a
materialistic point of view. But when
you think of the idea that it is
perception that is generating our
reality which is largely a Buddhist
point of view. Even schools of Buddhism
like Terravada that accept the ultimate
reality of physical matter still they
believe that our reality what we are
experiencing is deeply conditioned by
mental states. that our own mental
states can cause physical matter to
exist. You know like kama ja rupa for
example
or physical matter that is born of karma
which is a mental state.
So anyways, this [clears throat] this

book, The Trickster in the Paranormal,
um, and one of the main ideas that he
really pounds away at in this book is
that there has to be order, as much
order as possible to
um, just keep chaos at bay, to keep
things stable in order for any kind of
samsara, any kind of cosmos to exist for
more than just a fraction of a second
that there has to be stability
and humans need more stability for our
own existence than just is found in laws
of nature. So we have to create even
more stability through social norms and
and morals and taboss and that sort of
thing. And it's by [clears throat] how

the paranormal occurs according to to this book. And this is this is like one of the like important things that I picked up from this book is that the paranormal really is like breaking the rules that it's it's sort of the paranormal seeps through like weak spots between rules to get into our version of reality. And so that's why a lot of like witches for example, if they're trying to perform some paranormal act, you know, cast a spell for example, they may literally deliberately violate norms and taboos
in order to like cause like a tear in the in the fabric of our samsara, which allows this primordial chaos to come

through, which can then be harmed.

harnessed. You know, it's like ju guu

that can potentially be harnessed by

people skillfully at people skillful at

harnessing chaotic ju guu that is

seeping into this version of samsara.

So, I'd never really thought about that

before. You know, it's like

parasychologists and like this the

Soviet Union and and communist China for

decades

[clears throat] were like trying to like

discover laws of the paranormal so that

they could use those in like their

espionage

and you know just scops and just dark

ops this kind of stuff. And

[clears throat]

they had the disadvantage of being

Marxists who and Marxists are

materialists. So they're like, you know,

there's this Soviet woman, Nina

Koolagina, I think was her name, who

could move objects without touching

them. Sort of like Yuri Geller in in

America. And there's old pictures of her

wearing like a helmet where they're

trying to detect any kind of brain waves

or any anything like fields, that kind

of thing, to explain how she's doing

this. and they were going about it all

wrong because they're trying to find

some sort of like scientific laws

governing this when really according to George P. Hansen. It's like [clears throat] it's energy like chaotic energy seeping in, you know, against the bull works of order and stability. You know, there it's kind of getting in through the cracks, so to speak, which then causes things that should be impossible to happen. You know, the miraculous, that sort of thing.

[sighs]

But you don't want too much order. I mean it's there's there's kind of a balance. There has to be a cosmic balance. Too much order is just death, you know? It's just robots.

But I mean, but too [clears throat] much disorder then I mean it's it's scary and weird things can happen. Like in a dream you have less order than in waking consciousness and all kinds of weird stuff can happen. You could be talking to an old high school friend and then the next thing you know the high school friend it has turned into some movie star for example and it wasn't like the friend walked away and the movie star showed up. It's just the friend turned into this movie star or another one that I've mentioned a number of times. I've dreamt this sort of thing before. It's like you're riding a bus in your dream and the next thing you know you're on an

airplane or you're on a ship and it wasn't like you got off the bus and onto the airplane or ship. It was just like, well, you weren't noticing the bus turned into an airplane or a ship. And so without enough order in like a a psychologically generated reality, then that kind of thing runs rampant. I mean, I remember reading a long time ago a kind of

it [clears throat] was a book on like life after death or like continuation of the human psyche after death.

And there was this woman whose friend had died recently. And just a few days after her friend died, she saw like a

full body apparition of her friend in the in the room with her. And he was had like this kind of dazed, confused look on his face and he's complaining to her. It's like where I am now, there's no law and order, you know? It's sort of like being in a dream state where things are just like mutating and transmogrifying because there's not enough stability in the system to keep things normalized and predictable. And so human beings have, you know, since the stone age have kind of intuitively
uh understood this so that they're trying to maximize stability within reason just to keep things predictable and relatively safe because if you

violate taboss, you violate norms, you know, then weird things can happen. And weird things can also happen around saints and sages because they're sort of weakening the fabric of samsara just by seeing through it. Kind of they're sort of tearing the veil themselves just through their wisdom.

So that was really interesting to me. It kind of it makes sense to me because I really don't think that physical matter is ultimately real anyway. I do think it's like a manifestation of consciousness of some sort. And so this idea that a version of reality, a samsara,

um being like a uh like an artifact of perception, there has to be a certain order to it that the laws of physics are just sort of like a default setting for for our samsara. But that's that's apparently not enough for us humans because we're getting too complicated. We're getting self-referential and paradoxical and so forth. So that we need even more order than just these [clears throat] laws of physics. And I mean the laws of physics themselves didn't necessarily
I mean they weren't necessarily laws until scientists kind of locked them down. You know this is one of the reasons why modern western civilization

not just western civilization like in the west but western civilization has pretty much taken over the entire world. anywhere you go, you know, it's it's western style science, western style political systems, western style style infrastructure, you know, architecture and roads and electricity and all this. You know, the western scientific worldview has pretty much taken over the world because it's so strong it stabilizes reality better.

So, it may be that before, you know, the Michaelelsson Morley experiment and and all that sort of thing, the speed of light wasn't necessarily 186,000 m per

second, but that it just got locked down

into that

or in our version of reality.

[clears throat]

So,

it's times of like upheaval and chaos

that you have all kinds of weird things

happening, some of them good and some of

them bad, you know, like

the the Italian Renaissance, for

example, it was just all sorts of social

chaos going on, but also just like

flowering of genius was going on, too.

And so, it's it's sort of a trade-off.

You know, the more chaos you have, the

more unpredictable and scary and

possibly bad things can be, but also

that's when just the the real genius
comes into this world
or at least a higher incidence of it.
So, that was kind of what what I got out
of the book. That was like one of the
main things that I got out of book out
of the book. You know, it sort of
strengthened my idea that physical
matter isn't ultimately real and that we
need a certain stability
and by [clears throat]
deliberately
like violating that stability or
normality then the supernatural
so-called can come in. Like in the book
he also points out that um a great many

psychics and spirit mediums and so forth tend to be like sexually anomalous. You know, there's a lot of bisexuals and homosexuals and just violators of norms that supposedly have psychic talent, for example.

H

so I mean his his theory makes sense and I'm willing to work with it as as a working hypothesis

and it just kind of um helped me to understand a position that I had already adopted before reading the book which was physical matter really is not ultimately real

and I'm just going to move on next question this is from Maitraa Buddha

and he's asking questions that you would
not expect from my Buddha. He says,
"What is the difference between the
Anglo-Saxon tribe from other Germanic
tribes?"
And [clears throat] so he's talking
about like the Anglo-Saxon Germanic
tribes that invaded the British Isles,
you know, in the late Roman Empire and
like the the dark ages, the beginning of
the dark ages, especially, you know,
like fourth, fifth, sixth centuries of
the common era, you had these Germanic
tribes that colonized
Britannia or the British Isles.
>> [snorts]

>> So what is the difference between the Anglo-Saxon tribe from other Germanic tribes? Well, the Anglo-Saxons I mean it wasn't just one tribe. It was mainly three tribes mainly three tribes. Angles, Saxons, and Judes. And the Jews came from Utland, which is modern day Norway. It's like that peninsula sticking up out of Europe that is claimed by Nor claimed by Denmark I should say, not Norway, Denmark. And then [clears throat] I think the the Angles also came from that general area of of like Denmark. And then the Saxons, it was it possibly was just a loose term that the the Romans applied to pretty much any Germanic tribe that lived on

like the the Baltic coast of what is now like the Netherlands, you know, that general area. The ones more inland were Franks and the ones that lived more on the coast were were called Saxons. There's still a Saxony in Germany that is more inland. So there really was a tribe apparently that called themselves Saxons. But then the Germans or not the Germans, the Romans just use Saxon as just sort of a catchall for just Germanic tribes that lived on coasts, that kind of thing.
At least the north like northwestern coast of Europe.
So it was just a group of tribes and

there were there were other tribes too
in addition to Anglo-Saxons and jutes.
In fact, there was like Federati or like
um foreign foreign soldiers
[clears throat] that were imported by
the Romans as auxiliaries, foreign
auxiliaries that just settled in England
and then, you know, they kind of went
their own way after uh British or not
after Roman rule pretty much collapsed,
you know, after the the Roman legions
withdrew [clears throat]
in the fifth century.
So what is the difference between the
Anglo-Saxon tribes and other Germanic
tribes? Well, the main difference is
that [clears throat] the Anglo the

Anglo-Saxons, Judes, etc.
migrated to the British Isles there, or
at least a lot of them did, and and
colonized the British Isles, whereas the
other Germanic tribes just stayed where
they were, or they migrated south into
the collapsing Roman Empire, or the
newly collapsed Roman Empire, and
conquered different areas like the
Franks crossed the Rine, settled in
Gaul, and so now it's called France
after the Franks, which was a Germanic
tribe. And then you like the Burgundians
were [clears throat] another Germanic
tribe that moved into like central
France which is now like the province or

region of Burgundy. And then you had the Goths which were another Germanic tribe like the Visigoths conquered let's see they conquered a lot of Spain and like southern Gaul or France. And then the Ostrogoths eventually conquered Italy and what was then called Irkum. Large parts of Irkum. the Vandals who according to many scholars were Germanic. They wound up conquering North Africa after migrating down through Spain and then crossing the straits of Gibralar.

Um so I mean the main difference between the Anglo-Saxon tribes and other Germanic tribes is the Anglo-Saxon ones just happened to to colonize the British

Isles instead of some other place or just staying where they were. But you know they were all similar. They all spoke Germanic languages. They all had similar like related cultures and so forth.

It was just a just through whatever reasons because they were living mainly on the northwest coast of of of Europe and the British Isles were handy that they just conquered that instead of like migrating south across the Rine or the Danube and conquering other Roman provinces.

So, I guess I'll just move on to my Trayab Buddha second question, which is,

[clears throat] did the Germanic tribes believe in reincarnation or rebirth? And I'm really no authority on ancient Germanic religious beliefs. Um, but I do think they had kind of a belief in like proto Valhalla kind of a thing, which would be like an afterlife. So they did [clears throat] believe in an afterlife, especially if you died in battle, you got, you know, the glorious afterlife of a hero. You know, you were like semideified.

Um, but I really don't know what the Germanic beliefs were with regard to people who die in general, you know, like a woman dies in childbirth, what's going to happen to her spirit? Maybe at

least some of the tribes believed in
some kind of rebirth. Um, the Ger I keep
saying the Germans, the the Romans, they
they believed or knew that like the
Dians who came from like what is now
Romania
uh that general area right across the
Danube from the empire that they
believed in reincarnation and that made
them uh particularly fearless in battle
because they didn't fear death the way
somebody who just thinks when you're
dead you're dead would fear death. But
the Germanic tribes, I'm I'm not the
best person to ask with regard to their
beliefs in what happens after you die

because I've never really been particularly interested despite the muer bead. Never been particularly interested in what the Germanic religions really believed. Like with regard to paganism, I'm much more interested in like Greco Roman classical paganism than or or like Indian paganism which is now called Hinduism
than than [clears throat] like what the Germans believed. So maybe some of them did at least under certain circumstances, but I really can't answer that question with any kind of confidence. And so I'm just going to move on to my Treya Buddha's third question, which is how did Germanic

tribes differ from Vikings? Well, the
Vikings were Germanic tribes. They were
Germanic. They weren't necessarily
German. You know, they didn't really
come from what is now Germany,
but they were Germanic.
And you know, it's like the Germanic
peoples or the Germanic language family.
It arose from like the corded wear
culture of Northern Europe. And like
especially as the Roman Empire was
collapsing and freshly collapsed sort of
like their their ancestral Indo-Uropeans
they just sort of did this mass
expansion
so that um you know northern Europe has

languages more based on Germanic languages than southern Europe which is still is largely based on Latin. But even like France, I mean the Franks were Germanic. And so the Vikings were just a group of Germanic tribes that developed a certain culture in Scandinavia mainly like around like I guess it would be like the 8th or 9th centuries where they they started up and you know they conquered large parts of of the British Isles for example. Uh they conquered like the northwestern coast of France which became Normandy because the Normans were Vikings. They conquered even like the island of Sicily. They conquered large parts of

Italy. Um they were they were like the
the first rulers of the the Russian
Empire or the Russian kingdom, the
Russians or whatever you call it.
So there were just a group of Germanic
tribes that arose or at least their
their particular culture of raiding with
dragon ships, you know, just being just
complete badasses, particularly with
regard to infantry. Hard to get hard to
get horses on those dragon ships.
And I have read that the Vikings may
have originally
been feral adolescents that were still
following this prehistoric Indo-Uropean
tradition called the choros. And it's

just fascinating to me when I first learned about this just a few years ago that the Indo-Uropeans, one reason why the Indo-Uropean speaking peoples spread and just conquered so much of the world as they did in ancient times is they had this tradition called the Corios where adolescent boys, like teenage boys who tend to be troublesome to older men anyway, would just essentially be kicked out. I mean, they were still associated with the tribe sort of, you know, they'd eventually come back in in many cases, but they were just like cut loose and they had to just survive as best they could through hunting and probably more

importantly in many cases just raiding other other tribes, you know, raiding non-indo-uropean villages, that kind of thing.

And so it may be that the Vikings originally before they became really expansionist colonialist, you know, just a power in and of itself, that the first [clears throat] raids on coastlines and so forth were these feral teenagers just surviving by making raids on peaceful villagers.

But then eventually people started the older men started realizing there was like good money to be made from raiding Irish monasteries, that sort of thing.

And so they really took the ball and ran with it until large parts of Europe were essentially ruled by Vikings. But the Vikings
um they are [clears throat] mainly conquering
nations that where they were a tiny minority and they would just sort of like blend in. You know, it's like they lose their Germanic language, you know, they just adopt to a large degree the culture of the people that they they invaded and took over.
[snorts] So, how did Germanic tribes differ? How were they different from Vikings? I mean, Vikings were Germanic tribes. It was just they were a specific

group of Germanic tribes that you know
based in Scandinavia
that uh at first were just making raids
and then eventually just started like
like in like invading and settling
conquering.
[snorts] So we had a few Viking kings of
England or at least of large parts of
England. Um, the Irish were pretty much
ruled by Vikings for a while back in
like the 10th century, you know, back in
the the dark ages, so-called early
medieval times.
So, let's see here. I'm just going to
move on to the next question, which is
from Romeo.

And Romeo says, "Recently, I've been going down an online rabbit hole and seen a bunch of podcasts and videos which claim that Christianity was concocted by Jews as a form of spiritual mind control first to conquer Rome, then the world by getting non-Jews not to become Jews themselves, but to worship their God, accept their mythology and patriarchs, and to make themselves central to the world view of non-Jews, which essentially maintain change the supremacist notion that Jews are God's chosen people, so on and so forth. I was wondering if you could speculate on whether you think these claims have any validity or not. I really don't think

so. I mean I mean somebody who [clears throat] sees conspiracies everywhere, you know, it's like matrixing, you know. It's like a paranoid psychotic just kind of specializes in this where, you know, they they take bits and pieces of evidence and they can just form this narrative. I mean, I had a bad trip on acid back in my 20s where it was like this. It's like I'm I know from my own personality what it's like to be a paranoid psychotic cuz I was paranoid psychotic for a number of hours and just anything you see just can fit into this narrative of the forces of of evil are

being unleashed upon the earth and it's like the final stand the final battle between good and evil and all this. Fortunately, in my case, I knew I was on drugs. So, it's like, well, I'm just not going to make any final decisions until tomorrow after I've come down, then I'll like look around and decide.

So, that saved me. But like someone who is just kind of born that way or don't know, you know, they they can't be that objective about it. They just go with it. They just believe in it. they're just immersed in this like fictional narrative. Of course, all of us are immersed in a fictional narrative, but um we're largely immersed

in very similar narratives that can sort of interact. Whereas a person who is insane is immersed in a fictional narrative that really is not entirely compatible with the fictional narrative that the sane people are following.
But I mean if the if the Jews really were doing that, they were playing a very long game because
when Christianity
I mean it started off as a Jewish movement. I mean the the earliest Christians were Jews and then St. Paul Paul of Tarsus kind of he I mean he definitely wanted to detach Christianity from from Judaism [clears throat] and

it's largely I mean it was more Paul of Tarsus than Jesus of Nazareth that that did that. [clears throat]

Um

but let's see where do I go with this? I mean the Jews were like

they had a really weird position like throughout the Middle Ages. The Christians despised them as a general rule. But the Jews had this one thing. I mean the Christians it was a sin to practice usery. For the for Christianity up until modern times it was a sin to lend money at interest. And so the money lenders tended to be Jews. you know, the money lenders and bankers and so forth, which helped them to get rich, but also

it caused like the rank and file of Christians in who were [clears throat] the overwhelming majority in Europe at the time to resent these rich Jews, these money grubbing Jews who made money from usery. And so there were lots of massacres and pilgrims, you know, like the crusades. I think it was the first crusade especially that started off with this rabble of of like peasants sweeping through Eastern Europe to get to like Constantinople,

you know, in order to continue on their way to the Holy Land. And they're mainly just praying on Jews. You know, Jews really, I mean, the bubanic plague, you

know, in a lot of places it was just people jumped to the conclusion Jews were poisoning the public wells. You know, it's like Jews were Christ killers. They just there was like this hatred of Jews. And one of the main reasons why the Jews even survived the Middle Ages in Europe was that you had like rich lords and nobles who would have to keep Jews protected. You know, they bring them into the the castle walls when there was massacres and so forth because they were damn convenient for lending money and so forth. But then again, even the the nobles, you know, if if they started owing too much money to troublesome Hebrews, then yeah, they

could participate in the massacres themselves.

So, the Jews were really I mean, up until right after World War II,

I mean, the first up until like the the second half of the 20th century, the Jews really were like a repressed people. I mean there were some really rich ones you know Rothschilds and that sort of thing but uh yeah they were living a kind of marginal existence up until recently. So the Jews really were playing the long game by converting the Roman Empire to Christianity.

Of course if if the Roman Empire had remained pagan the Jews probably would

have just faded out. They probably would have just gone the route of the Phoenetians. You know their their DNA would still be there. they would have just lost their culture. Like the Vikings lost their culture when they would conquer some southern prosperous European land like Sicily.

So, let's see here. What am I what am I forgetting to answer here?

Yeah, I think that it was just this weird karmic thing that the Roman Empire was just ripe for what Christianity was pedalling.

Um, it did sort of unify the culture of Europe.

Um,

but yeah, I really don't think that it
was a Jewish conspiracy to
get Western civilization worshiping
Yahweh, anything like that. I mean there
might have been a few who were kind of
promoting that
but in general I think it was just this
weird quirk um some weird quirk of
history or karmic
coincidence
that caused western civilization to
reject their own indigenous spiritual
culture and start worshiping a deified
Jewish person which has resulted in
large cans of worms being opened ever
since.

And I'm [snorts] just going to move on to Romeo's next question. As I say, we do have lots of questions this time. So, Romeo is now for something completely different. I feel like I should be like sitting up to my chest in water at a desk while saying that. And now for something completely different. What do you think of Zoron Manni, a radical communist Muslim, being elected the mayor of New York City? Do you think his becoming mayor of America's biggest and most iconic city will supercharge the two ideologies that he embodies, radical leftism and Islam throughout the country?

H [sighs] golly. Um

Zoron Mdani.

Yeah. I mean, he is kind of like the the stereotypical like Marxist who has possibly never actually done a lick of work in his life. You know, he had rich parents. His mother was some kind of movie producer or something.

And uh I mean with regard to Marxism, I think it was George Will who I never read his column or anything like that, but he did say something that went viral, you know, a few months ago. He says, "It's probably good that M Donnie is has been elected mayor of New York City because every once in a while the

West or Americans in particular need to be reminded that socialism sucks. It doesn't really work. It sounds good in theory to a lot of people, but when it's actually attempted to put into practice, it just flounders and fails.

And so, it could be a good thing that Mom Donnie got elected just because people are going to take another crash course in socialism sucks. It doesn't work. Of course, it could be that I'm just biased and maybe this time socialism will really work. you know, the the governmentrun grocery stores won't have empty shelves and you know, it's like the rent controls and everything won't drive out all the the

bgeoa and just cause New York City to become like London. I mean that's in a way it could be part of the Mandani's plan or the plan of you know his his coaches and everything to turn New York City into another London where the the British people like the the ethnic English people are just leaving so that you have a majority of non-English people in London that will just keep voting for the free stuff and you know the welfare class just kind of takes over.

Um, in America, I really don't think America is is nearly as castrated culturally as England and Europe. And

so, Americans might have a little more resistance when they see just the third world [__] hole, crimeridden [__] hole that New York City is probably going to become even more of now.

So, there is that. I mean, I think that Mam Donny's smug grin is going to begin fading after he starts trying to implement this stuff. And in some cases, he'll have the the political savvy not to keep his promises, which will then cause the radical leftists to start dogpiling him because, you know, he's just going to to some degree in all likelihood just going to turn into like a mainstream Democrat politician. you know, he got got into office by making

all these promises and then, you know, realizes soon enough that keeping those promises isn't very realistic or or really plausible or practical. And so he's going to start backpedaling and, you know, I mean, if he kept all his promises, he would drive out. I mean, Wall Street might relocate to, who knows, Florida or something, you know? It's just there's already like a mass exodus of mainly of white people out of New York City, which to some degree is what mom Donnie would like, I suppose, just so that you have more leftist voters of brown complexion inhabiting New York City. But I mean, where is he

going to get the money? I mean, so long
as Trump is president, I think Trump is
really going to be dragging his dragging
his feet with regard to subsidizing
New York City's socialist policies.
So, we're just going to have to wait and
see with regard to this the Marxism
aspect of New York City's new mayor.
But, I mean, leftists, it's really it's
it's it's just amazing to me how the
West or like America has has been
largely polarized into two alternative
realities
where you've got one alternative
reality.
That's See if I can find this. I'm just
gonna

let's see here.

See if I can find this. Bear with me

here for a second while I try to find

something. It's a a quote that I found

in the Federalist. Here it is.

[clears throat] This is a quote from the

Federalist which is kind of stating the

position of like the mainstream

like Democrat [clears throat]

leftist in America now. although of

course it's like a a parody is we have

to vote for Democrats because Donald

Trump turned women into handmaids who

don't have any rights at all and have to

be slaves to the brutal Christian

nationalist patriarchy. Because we need

government grocery stores to make food abundant and affordable. Because Donald Trump ordered health insurance costs to double. Because Virginia's state government is going to put an immediate stop to the deportations. because we have to vote against our dictator king who said we're not allowed to have freedom anymore.

[snorts] And I mean there's just a lot of just hysteria, mass hysteria governing both sides, but especially the left because the left is feminized, culturally castrated, and thus more subject to hysteria, which I mean literally comes from the term for uterus, like a hyerectomy.

When Freud actually suggested that men can be hysterical, there were a lot of psychologists in the day who just scoffed at the very idea.

Anyways, with regard to Islam, again, [clears throat]

Mam Dani is like America's Saudi con now. And I mean [snorts]

[sighs and gasps] I I do think that Americans are going to have less patience with radical Islam than like the English have. One problem with Europe and Great Britain [clears throat] is that a lot of their illegal migrants that were just invited in by the globalists, feminized globalists were

Muslims. You know, they're coming from like North Africa and the Middle East. Whereas in America, the overwhelming majority of illegal migrants who are invited in by the the castrated feminized Democrats were Hispanics that tend to be um [clears throat] like Roman Catholic and more likely to work for a living, more likely more willing to assimilate into maybe a little bit of a Hispanicized American culture, but still it's American culture.

So radical Islam.

Yeah, I'm not sure how radical of a of a Muslim M Donnie is considering that he just like selected an all female

um like a committee for some something to do with the government of New York City, which like a a devout radical Muslim probably wouldn't do. So, he's like a a woke kind of secularized Muslim more than a Sharia law kind of a Muslim, but he'll probably be trying to pander to the radical Muslims as much as he can. [clears throat]

Uh, but we're just going to have to wait and see. I really don't think that America is in nearly as much danger of becoming a caliphate as Europe and England are now

because you just have this ridiculous hysterical

feminized globalists

who although feminized and woke are

trying are just inviting in mass

just like like mis a misogynistic

culture.

So that like the assaults on women, for

example, have just skyrocketed

in globalist Europe.

I mean, they've kind of skyrocketed to

some degree in America, but that's for a

different reason. That's because you've

got the the feminist globalist activist

judges who just keep releasing black

felons onto the street over and over and

over and over again.

So [sighs]

yeah, we're just going to have to wait

and see what happens with Islam. But I really don't think Islam is going to prosper in America nearly as well as it is apparently prospering in like London where the number one name for baby boys and also in Birmingham is Muhammad. I don't think that's the case in any place in America except possibly Dearbornne, Michigan or maybe a few other little Muslim enclaves that you can find throughout the country.

And I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question. But in in conclusion, I would just say that Zoran Mani, he's he's going to be kind of a [clears throat] accelerationist whether

he wants to be or not. You know, it's like he's bringing the [__] hitting the fan closer to fruition in America, I think. And also the fact that he is a Marxist and that historically Marxism just doesn't work worth a damn. You know, even the the the Communist Party of China really isn't communist anymore because they realize it doesn't compete. So, I [clears throat] think that might actually be a good thing that, you know, it's just like this reminder socialism doesn't work and he's probably not going to be nearly as popular at the end of his term as he is now.

I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Fake Tig.

And [clears throat] fake Tig says, "I've read the Daoqing many, many times, and it feels like probably the most truest wisdom I have ever read and probably better than all Buddhist sutas combined. You have once said that Lasu is some kind of version of the Buddha, but how come Daoism feels so much more accurate and distinct?" Well, there is a theory that Lasu was not really a historical Chinese person, that he was a mythological figure that possibly was like a garbled version of the Buddha. That that is a theory. I mean, I really don't know. I don't know enough about ancient China to really like throw my

hat in the ring on that one. But why
fake TIG thinks that um
that the Daeq Ching is the most truest
wisdom probably better than all Buddhist
sutras combined and that it feels so
much more accurate and distinct. It's
probably fake TIG thinks more like a
Chinese person than like an ancient
Indian.
So I mean the daoqing you know it's
written for Chinese people and the
Chinese just don't have the same
analytical
mind as ancient Indian philosophers. The
ancient Indian philosophers were
analytical. They wanted to categorize
and analyze, you know, just they wanted

to like work everything out into an integrated system. Whereas the Chinese were more like intuitive kind of like a more poetic way of of thinking about spirituality. You know, even their language is more intuitive because you got to kind of fill in the gaps by thinking like a Chinese person when you know you're you're understanding the Chinese language. You know, Burmese is like that, too. It's a very kind of abbreviated language, so that you have to fill in more gaps than in a language like English.

So, yeah, I mean, I've read the Dao Ching many times in a number of

different translations. I probably got
at least two translations of it on the
on the bookcase back there, maybe three.
Um, and I mean, there there is wisdom in
there. I wouldn't I mean to say that
it's better than all Buddha sutras
combined I I consider to just be like a
wild a wild stretch.
Um, it's just that pro possibly that the
fake TIG just has more of a intuitive
maybe more emotional kind of
understanding of dharma or Dao
and just likes more of a poetic way of
explaining things than getting into like
sort of the [clears throat] radical
uh apeasis
of really early Buddhism like the the

Atakawaga or just the more technical, you know, philosophification of Buddhism that happens shortly afterwards, that sort of thing. You know, it's it's just a matter of personal taste to some degree. How you want your dharma? I mean, you want it like in in blue wrapping paper or red wrapping paper, that kind of thing.

So, the actual question here, let's see, how come Dowoism feels so much more accurate and distinct? cuz probably fake Tig thinks more like an ancient Chinese person than like an ancient Indian person.

I'll just move on to Fake Tig's second

question

after taking another sip of my lukewarm coffee.

Fake Tig says, "I've been practicing for two and a half years now and recently I realized that Yungian psychology is very very spiritual and closely linked to the stages of insight. and I regularly use active imagination and such to navigate things and can you say something about Yung and Yungian metaphysics in that regard? Well, I'm no scholar with regard to Yungian psychology. I do remember that uh Rahm Doss who was a psychology professor at Harvard before he converted to Hinduism where he got kicked out of Harvard for experimenting with

hallucinogenic drugs and went to India and all that. Um he said that with regard to the chakra system in yoga that Freud was just like centered in second chakra sexual stuff whereas Jung was centered in like third chakra. So Rahm Doss apparently didn't consider Yung to be extremely advanced spiritually that he was just kind of a master of third chakra which is you know the highest mundane chakra you know that that the the average like non-spiritual normie you know their first three chakras are open and then above that is still kind of closed you know the the fourth chakra would be the heart chakra which is

compassion and then you get up in the throat chakra And finally, you've got like the the thousand puddle lotus on the crown of the head. That's like full enlightenment, even higher than the third eye, which is the sixth chakra.

Um, [sighs and gasps]

let's see.

What is the question?

Can you say something about Yung and Yungian metaphysics in that regard?

Yeah. Well, I mean, [snorts] Yungian metaphysics, I'm not that

I mean, I never really studied Yung very much. I've read some of his weird stuff on alchemy. He just went down this rabbit hole with regard to like medieval

alchemy. Just wrote book after book on the subject of medieval alchemy. I read some of that. Um I've read like psyche and symbol although I was like maybe 20 years old at the time and it didn't really sink in much. I just remember that I read the book. But uh aside from just archetypes, you know, the the collective unconscious and so forth, I don't really remember much of that. I read I read his answer to Job which was a fairly good critique of the book of Job in the Old Testament. Um but I mean he was more definitely more spiritual than Freud. you know he was more of a spiritual person but still I think he

was this kind of like locked into
mentality intellectuality you know still
still very much immersed in samsara even
though he did write introductions to
Buddhist like the the the Tibetan book
of the dead he wrote a famous
introduction to that he wrote an
introduction to the Buddhist the Tibetan
book of the the great liberation
also known as the yoga of knowing the
mind and its nakedness
So he did write about Buddhism and he
had this idea that a westerner just
can't really become a Buddhist that our
just our whole way of thinking our our
starting assumptions are so radically
different that we can just kind of

dabble in it you know kind of lar as Buddhists but we can't really become like a a real Buddhist and maybe for a lot of people that's true a lot of Westerners they just turn Buddhism into a bunch of leftist gobblelygook

So I mean to some degree that's true but I don't think that he was completely correct. I am sure after all this time I mean there's a lot more western monks in now than there were in Jung's time. There's hardly any in Jung's time. So yeah not all western monks are just like turning Buddhism into a bunch of western gobblygook. Some of them are but a lot of them are not. And I was a western

monk. I think I was a fairly good Buddhist. I mean, I was still capable of critical thought, you know. I was still more eclectic and skeptical than like the stereotypical Burmese Buddhist who was just faith oriented like a medieval European Catholic.

But

Jung, yeah, I really have not become like a a follower of Jung. I've just read some of his stuff. I've got some Jung on the bookcase there that I might never read because I don't really read books much anymore.

Um,

yeah, and the metaphysics I do think that he was still a little too locked

into

like perceptual stuff like samsara

that to what extent he was able to

detach from samsaric thinking I'm not

sure.

probably some of the viewers, maybe a

lot of the viewers of these Q&As's would

know the answer to that better than I

can answer it.

So, let's see here.

I think I'm just going to move on to

Fake Tig's third question.

And fake Tig says, "My theory about

ultimate reality is that life is a

recording playing on a high techch alien

computer, but everything in the universe

already happened and is just a recording being played back." Well, this maybe why he thinks that Daqing is more wise than all Buddhist sutras put together and watch. Okay. And watched by some alien. What do you think about that theory and that realizing this truth enables you to alter the recording by acting differently? Well, if you can alter a recording by acting differently, it's not much of a recording, is it?

Also, I mean, ultimate reality, no. And ultimate reality would not be any kind of recording or with any kind of aliens or any kind of beings at all. ultimate reality would just be like at best I mean if you want to reify ultimate

reality which Buddhism discourages but
if you want to reify ultimate reality
then it would just be like infinite
formless consciousness the uncarved
block which the Daoqing mentions
numerous times the nameless uncarved
block is right there in the Dao Ching
several times that's what the Dao is
called in the Dao Ching sometimes the
nameless uncarved block.
So that would be ultimate reality. I
mean ultimate reality isn't things
and no kind of distinctions,
no kind of differentiation or papancha.
None of that. Nepapancha or no
differentiation is one of the synonyms

for nibbana in the poly language.

>> [sighs]

>> So, you want to say that that this world is like a simulation in some alien computer? Yeah, that's fairly common belief nowadays. Although, why even bother with aliens? I mean, it's a simulation regardless. It's just that it's a simulation that is one of the infinite possibilities in the nameless uncarved block that Tiqing keeps talking about.

There's no need to drag aliens by the hair if they have hair into the equation.

So

yeah, I'm I really don't think that I

mean you can say that because ultimate reality is this nameless uncarved block that has infinite I mean every possible statue contained within it then the statue if you if you want to call it that the image of this world being recorded in an alien computer with aliens observing the recording or whatever I mean that's one of the possibilities I don't think it would be like one of the statistically most likely possibilities.

But I mean it's it's there. I mean it's it's in the nameless uncarved block. All possibilities are there. And that's in a way it's it kind of ties in with

the trickster in the paranormal where there is no one ultimate reality because it's mindmade. You know like the first verse of the dhamapata it's mindmade. mind is chief.

So, you know, even with regard to science,

I mean, I've kind of been working on that lately, like science isn't really explaining reality. It's just kind of locking things down and stabilizing our fictional narrative.

[snorts and sighs] So, let's see. Did I answer the question sufficiently to move on to the next one?

Yeah, I suppose so. I'm just going to move on to the next question which is

from Arpad RP A all capitalized. Do you keep the hanging beard braid around danger Oh, you noticed the hanging beard braid. Did you? It's right here. Arpad says, "Do you keep the hanging beard braid around dangerous machinery at work or do you tie it in a closer knot to avoid freak accidents?" Well, when I was working at a sheet metal shop, this beard braid would be more problematic. where you know you're actually working machines that have like large moving parts and spinning around and so forth. But right now I'm working for a trucking company driving a forklift.

So really almost the only dangerous machinery at work is this fleet of forklifts driving around. And just a few nights ago, it wasn't my shift, it was a different shift where one guy without looking just backs out of a trailer after loading something and this other guy on the dock just slams right into him and just smashes into the windshield. Fortunately, he had his seat belt on.

Um, so I mean the forklift is really the the only dangerous machinery unless you're moving some big machine out of a trailer or into a trailer that could fall over or something. But of course, it's not plugged in. It's not operating.

You know, nothing is spinning around to catch beard braids and so forth. So, when you're driving a forklift, I mean, you know, it's kind of like driving a car. It's not really getting in the way. Sometimes if I'm carrying something, my my facial hairs can kind of get caught in like the banding or something that then pulls hairs, you know, hurts a little bit. But yeah, there's really no danger of having a beard braid at work. I don't use the bead just mainly because I don't want to lose it. I had I had one bead that I was wearing at work and it just fell off without me noticing. So, I lost the bead

and I don't [snorts] want that to happen with this imported muer bead from Ukraine.

[sighs]

[gasps] So, yeah, I just have a rubber band on it and uh there's there's really been no risk involved in having the beard braid or just a long beard. There's there's some guys at work that have beards longer than me. There's an old guy who works the like graveyard third shift who has he's got like a Santa Claus beard and uh yeah, he's still alive. He hasn't been sucked into any dangerous machines or anything. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Sedarta

Lohachita.

And Sedarta Lohachita says, "I've heard that Myanmar has a sizable area in the Himalayas. According to Google Maps, it's right next to Tibet. What do you know about it? Well, Burma is surrounded by mountain ranges other than just the the south coast, which is ocean. It's the the Bay of Bengal in the Indian Ocean. But like the northeast and west, it's all mountain ranges. So Burma naturally is just delineated you know but with its its coastline and the mountain ranges which you know forms just natural natural boundaries and Burmese is a Tibetto Burmese

language.

So it's it's related to Tibetans and the

the the Bama people who before they

lived in Burma, they migrated from kind

of the northern

[clears throat] um like close to Tibet.

Anyway,

so yeah, northern and uh northwestern

Burma um are essentially foothills of

the Himalaya mountains.

And the northern the northernmost

province of Burma is Kachin state. I

guess it would be Kachin. The

northernmost state of Burma is Kachin

state which has I mean a really low

population density. I think it's

something like an average of like two

people per square mile in Kachin state probably more red pandas than than Burmese people there. So I mean that's that's nice. And then um in the [clears throat] northwest is Chinstate which is um well that's kind of more west that's also mountainous and you got Naga land of India bordering on the northwest which is mountainous up until like like well into the second half of the 20th century there were still head hunters living in Naga land.

So

yeah, and then and then in the in the east you've got the Shan plateau where the people are are ethnic Shan

which is has the same etmology as Syiam
and Assam. So they're more related to
the ties than the Burmese. The Burmese
are Tibetto Burmese and I think the ties
are more closely related to the
Mongolians, the Mongols
who then migrated south through China
into what is now Thailand.
So, I mean, I'm not exactly sure what
else to to say about this. It's just
that Burma does have mountain ranges all
around. And the northern and
northwestern mountain ranges are
essentially foothills of the Himalayas.
Very low population density there. Um,
the people there are mostly Christian
rather than Buddhist. Mainly because

during British colonial times, you had English missionaries and some American missionaries going out into the remote areas and converting the head hunters. and so forth, the animists to Christianity. And so a lot of the the Burmese army is like recruited from these ethnic tribes in the in the hills, these hill tribes that are more Christian and less pacifistic and also probably less
less like sympathetic to the ethnic Burmese that they may be like, you know, rampaging and shooting and so forth. So yeah, Burma and Tibet are they border on each other and um yeah, northern I

mean just the whole outer
perimeter of of Burma that isn't along
ocean is mountains
[clears throat] and then you of course
you've got the the blazing hot lowlands
of central Burma. It's like a furnace in
the hot season, which in early times,
premodern times, was mainly teak forest,
but there's not a whole lot of teak
forest now. It's just like barren
wasteland and farms.
So, I'm just going to move on to the
next question, which is from practice
meta, who's one of the few people who
asks questions on Rumble. And Practice
Meta says, "You have mentioned before
that if you take care of Dhamma, Dhamma

will take care of you. What is dharma in this context? Well, I mean if you like purify your mind and have like purified karma, then good things are going to happen to you. The mind is I mean the world is is generated by mind. So the purer your mind is, the purer the world you're going to live in. If you've got a good mind, you live in a good world. If you have a bad mind, you live in a bad world. If you have a perfect mind, you live in a perfect world.

So that's that's essentially what it means. You know, by practicing dharma, you purify your mind, which purifies the world that your mind is generating. You

know, it's like you're less likely to have bad dreams if you have a pure mind.

So

yeah, that's mainly what dharma is in this context is just cultivating wholesome mental states, purifying your mind, and because your mind is generating the world you live in, you're going to have fewer horrible shitty things happening to you. Although they can still happen, there's no guarantees.

As I keep saying, Mahame Ogalana, one of the chief disciples of the Buddha, was literally beaten to a pulp by an angry mob of non Buddhists.

So, I suppose I answered that well

enough.

I'm just going to move on to practice Meta's next question, which is, how would you describe that same idea to a Christian who may already believe that if they take care of God, then God will take care of them? Well, I mean, if they already believe that, then why would I have to describe the same idea to them other than I mean, it's it's a common belief in religions in general. If you do what God wants you to do, then God will be nicer to you and have good things happen to you. You'll be rewarded. Of course, it always doesn't work that way. This, for example, the

book of Job, book of Job, you know,
Satan, like proto Satan, Satan 1.0 know
is like smiting Job, afflicting him,
causing his kids to die. He's got
diseases, he loses everything. But then
at the end, because um you know,
[clears throat] his faith took a
beating, but it it kept took a licking
but kept on ticking so to speak, then
God rewarded him by giving him new
wealth and new kids, this kind of thing.
So yeah, I mean just any kind of theist,
I mean you do what God wants you to do
and God will reward you. Whereas in in
Buddhism, there is no God like that who
you know curses and blesses and you know
is determining whether we go to heaven

or hell. You know we determine that ourselves. So it's just more a matter of purifying the mind, doing good, avoiding doing evil, that kind of thing.

And then you have good karma which then comes back to you. You know what goes around comes around. You send good out, good comes back. You send bad out, bad comes back.

[snorts] So, I'm just going to move on to practice meta's next question, which is as follows. I'm inspired to pursue ordination sudden in a legal trust and then put a family member in charge of the trust. So if you're going to ordain, you're going to

renounce the world, then I mean why
would you put everything in a legal
trust unless you're not sure that you
want to stay a monk. So I mean
technically, especially with regard to
money, then this would be cheating
because I mean [clears throat]
it's still your money. I mean, if you
put some a family member in charge of
the trust in their name, then I mean,
that's kind of it's better than having
it in your own name, having it legally
still yours, but still, if you're
expecting it back, then you haven't
really renounced it. I mean, you haven't
let go of it. And I mean, I can relate
to this. I I had something similar to

this going on when I first became a monk. I had like

I had like a $7,000 in the bank and a pickup truck. So, I kind of worked out this deal with the the administration that um if I if I bailed within the six months, I'd get the money and stuff back, which was cheating. Technically, I hadn't really renounced it, but I lasted way longer than 6 months. And so, I just relinquished all of it.

And I don't know what they spent the money on. probably blew it on something dumb.

So yeah, I mean it's good that you are inspired to pursue ordination. I

sincerely say sad sadu sod to that. But to put everything in a legal trust and then put a family member in charge of the trust, I mean technically it's cheating. I mean, if you put the family member in charge of the trust, so long as it's in their name, I think legally or technically, you're doing better. But if you're expecting it back, you know, even potentially, then I mean, if you're doing it in order to be able to get it back, then you haven't renounced it. It's like a fake renunciation.

I mean, you might want to put a time limit on on it like I did. You know, if you're still a monk after a year or

something, then at least at some point you'll stop cheating.

It is understandable though if you're not 100% sure just But but still, I mean, it's kind of an impure renunciation. It's not a real genuine renunciation. if you still got strings attached to your money and so forth. [snorts] Reminds me of there was this French monk who was a disciple of of Ajan Cha way back in the day. He had been a monk for more than 30 years when I met him and he had rich parents who died and left him this inheritance of I mean he was a rich monk and so he spent quite a lot of time trying to work out

some way of like having a a novice who would handle you know handle finances and so forth but then he realized I mean it's you're not even really a monk if you're doing that so he dropped out and then I heard just maybe a couple years later he dropped back in again I don't know what he did with the the inheritance that he inherited from his rich parents.

But uh really I mean if if you're going to really be a real genuine monk, you have to really genuinely renounce the world. And that's can be tricky. You know, it's it's sort it's always been difficult. I mean, it's not just Buddhists. It's sort of like, you know,

there's that scene in the New Testament where you have this rich Jewish guy goes to the Buddha and or goes to the Buddha. goes to Jesus. Rich Jewish guy goes to Jesus and says, you know, I follow all the commandments and I I donate [clears throat] onetenth of my my wealth to the poor and you know, I try to be a good good Hebrew and all that. Is there anything else I should do? And then Jesus says, well, sell all that you have and give the money to the poor and follow me. And then the the rich Jewish guy walks away grieving because he's [clears throat] still so attached. you know, he's trying to be do everything

right, but then when it comes to
actually renouncing these attachments,
then no, because he wanted to be a good
Jew within the context of what you know,
his own comfort zone,
which I mean, it's the comfort zone is
one of the attachments that you have to
get rid of. I suppose you have to
relinquish or renounce as best you can.
So I mean that's really what going forth
from the home life into homelessness
entails is just getting rid of all
safety nets and you just throw yourself
on the mercy of the universe and if you
are protecting dharma dharma protects
you it holds you up.
Now again it's like it reminds me of

what Krishna Murdy says in one of his books Jay Krishna Murdy where you know he says that you've got a like a a gardener he's got a flower garden and one flower is different from all the other ones you know it's sort of like a mutant it's like a different color or something and Christian Miy says the gardener is going to pay special attention to that one he's going to take special care of that unusual one and that's kind of the way it works for spiritual people too It's like a a genuinely spiritual person who just sort of defies his own self-preservation instincts to some degree by just

throwing himself on the mercy of the universe. He's like that mutant flower and then the powers of the universe, not necessarily Jehovah God Almighty, but there's just the powers of the universe are going to protect that person to some degree.

Or maybe the aliens watching the simulation will be particularly interested in that alien. So they make or in that simulated human. So they'll make sure that one doesn't get killed off because that one's like an interesting one.

I think I'm just going to move on. Next question now. This is from Phily's and Phil Ley says, "What's your favorite

wild mammal?" Well, it's not the Sasquatch because I do not consider a Sasquatch to really be a legitimate mammal. I do believe Sasquatches are paranormal. Which reminds me that just the other night I dreamed that I was in tropical Asia wandering down this forest trail and it was like where I lived was you had to turn left and I turned right. It was very faint like a game trail and I wound up in this village where the people thought I was a Sasquatch. In Burma a Sasquatch is called a seay but they weren't afraid of me. They were they kind of honored me as like wow we had a real Sasquatch show up in our

village. So they were like providing me with a place to stay and you know providing me with food and all this you know I was sort of like the some kind of pagan idol.

But my favorite wild mammal let's just get back to the the actual question here. Um, [clears throat] I think my totem animal, like if if I were like a a wild mammal, I wouldn't mind being like a mountain goat, you know, like the the white shaggy mountain goats of America, not necessarily the mountain goats of Europe who are that are different like an Ibeck or something.

The the the American mountain goat is uh it's it's always been one of my favorite

mammals. And my father says it's it's the best the best eating meat he ever had, but that's that's a whole different story, I guess. So, yeah, let's favorite wild mammal. Let's just go with uh the the American mountain goat.

And let's see. So, Phily's second question. What would you choose as your heraldic emblem or coat of arms in the case you were kned? So, that'd be Sir Pobasa.

Um

well I mean with regard to all the technical heraldry stuff I really don't know you know whether I wouldn't have like the bar sinister or anything like

that and um no flur dees I don't want any of those but I mean just the two animals that are kind of you know they're they're rampant you know they're kind of going like this on either side of the shield. I'd want it like a giant squid on one side maybe the mountain goat on the other side. And I mean, we could work out the details of what's on the shield later after I've studied up on heraldry and what would be appropriate in my case. You know, you got to look back into my ancestry and see if there are any heraldrich emblems or coats of arms in my family already that I could uh recycle to some degree with, you know, like the the

squid and the analopee or the the
mountain goat. Then the American
mountain goat is is actually I think
it's the genus is antelope capra which
is antelope goat. So it's sort of like a
uh sort of intermediate between a
genuine goat and an analopee.
Well that's that's neither here nor
there. But the the goat and the antelope
or the the the giant squid possibly an
octopus some kind of sephalopod mollisk.
Anyway,
[snorts] and I'm just going to move on
to Phily's next question.
says, "I like when you rub your hands at
the start of the video before you dig

into the questions, so to speak. Could
you do that before every question,
before every question?" I I think people
would start accusing me of being
anti-Semitic, especially if I kind of
hunch over and I'm going like this
before answering the questions.
So, yeah, in order to avoid accusations
of being anti-semitic.
I mean, why do they choose anti-semitic
though? I mean like semmites technically
an Arab like the Muslim world is largely
Semitic too. So it's like the the
Hebrews have sort of they've sort of
monopolized
Shem [clears throat]
son of Noah

as their ancestor and have pretty much

ignored [clears throat]

the other Semites like Arabs for

example. Phoenicians were Semmites.

Syrians were Semmites. Babylonians were

Semmites. But if you hate Babylonians,

you're not considered to be an

anti-semite, which is kind of odd to me.

[snorts]

[sighs and gasps]

So, let's see. I guess I'm just going to

move on. Next question. This is from I

don't know how to pronounce German

names. I'm probably better at German

names than French ones, though. So,

let's rect

something like that. I think it means right view in German. And he says, "Do you consider Buddhism an atheistic religion?" I don't. Well, that's that's him saying, "I don't." Yet, this is still often claimed by Christians and even sometimes by Buddhists themselves, although for the definition, you only need to look at the Wikipedia article on the subject as though the Wikipedia is is like the ultimate authority on such things. When actually, it's it's the dictionary. Let's just look up atheist in the dictionary here. A person who disbelieves or lacks belief in the existence of God or gods. So it's got capital G god or small G gods. And that

definitely would not apply to Terravada Buddhism or Buddhism in general because especially Terravada. Let's just stick with Terravada.

The I mean obviously they believe in small G gods. They don't believe in the capital G god. You know, you've got Brahma Sahampati who is sort of like the the the overlord of this sector of of of the galaxy

and then you've got Mara who's sort of like the overlord of Samsara in general. But even they don't live forever.

They're not capital G gods. They're just small G gods. I mean, even a small G god could live forever. For example, in

classical paganism,

um not necessarily. You can still kill a small G god, you know, like Dian Isis was killed but then got revived for example.

[clears throat]

So I mean if Buddhism does accept the existence of small G gods who are not immortal even though they might live for gajillions of years.

Um but with regard to like a creator capital G god

Terra Buddhism doesn't believe in that.

I mean like some Mahayana Buddhists have essentially turned the Buddha into a capital G god pretty much the way the Christians turned Jesus of Nazareth into

a capital G god but terra Buddhism
doesn't go there. So [clears throat]
um Terra Buddhism is atheistic and
probably the original teachings of the
like historical Godma Buddha they were
not theistic you know there's no posited
capital G god who is like the creator
and even like the way the the vdantists
talk about God as just ultimate reality
that Buddhism doesn't go there either at
least not early Buddhism
So Buddhism is atheistic in the sense
that it doesn't like
assert the existence of a capital G god,
but it I mean there's there's sutas
where the Buddhist is like making fun of

people who believe in a capital G god,
especially an anthropomorphized one.
Like there's [clears throat]
Buddha says, the Buddha says in one of
the sutas, a person who like worships
capital G God is like a man who's in
love with the most beautiful woman in
the world. And so then you ask him,
well, is this most beautiful woman in
the world? I mean, is she tall? Is she
medium size? Is she short? And the
person who's in love with her says, I
don't know. And then so it's like, well,
what is what's her complexion like? I
mean, is she dark? Is she like medium
tone? Is she like pale? And then again,
the guy's I don't know. And so it's like

how can you be in love with the most beautiful woman in the world if you have no idea what she looks like? You've never met her before. And that he's sort of comparing like a monotheist, you know, a person who believes in some capital G god to this where I mean they have no concept. They don't even know who it is or what it is that they're worshiping or they just have some kind of childlike primitive sort of understanding of what what capital G god is like. Because of course, you're never going to understand what capital G god is like any more than I mean much less than say a hamster is going to

understand what a human is like
or an ant is going to understand what a
human is like.
So yeah, Buddhism is atheistic in the
sense that it doesn't posit a capital G
creator God who is sending us to heaven
and hell and all that or even like
Brahman which is like the underlying
essence of reality. They don't even
early Buddhism doesn't even go that far.
But it does believe in small G gods that
are just beings that are higher than us
on the scale. You know, they're they're
more powerful than us. They live longer
than us. They live in a better world
than we do. You know, no old age and
sickness and all that. Probably no

crime. Not much anyway. Maybe some white collar crime or something.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to Rea.

Next question.

He says, "Once I have sent a German flag for the Mutodia Monastery in Franconia, Bavaria, they didn't hang the flag without reply even though it was a gift from me, a supporting member. Despite this, Thai flags or pictures of the Thai king or queen are still frequently displayed at festivals. This bothered me as they should really be spreading Buddhism on European and American soil. Thai or Burmese Buddhism could still

serve as a model. Or am I mistaken?

Well, I really don't have a lot of experience with Thai monasteries. I've spent just a few weeks living at Thai monasteries,

but maybe a week at a Thai monastery in America.

And so, um, I I I know a lot more about Burmese monasteries in Burma and also in America. And probably it's not all that different that most Burmese monasteries in America are more cultural centers than monastic centers. The monks there are more

I mean they're not really renouncing the world and striving for enlightenment. I mean to some degree they're trying to be

missionaries but even more than that
that they are just sort of like the
cultural
like secular clergy for the immigrant
communities and so so it's like a
cultural center and like Burmese
Buddhists in California will go to the
local you know rented house in the
suburbs that with the monks living there
and they go there to speak Burmese and
eat Burmese food and do Burmese cultural
rituals and so forth. It just makes them
feel happy and at home. And I don't
know, they might not be opposed to
putting up an American flag, but yeah, I
mean, they don't really go to a

monastery in order to feel American, you know? They they're they're like homesick. They want to feel Burmese. And I don't know what it's what it's like in Germany. It's like just like leftists in America consider the American flag, some leftists in America consider the American flag to be just like a symbol of fascism or some such. And in Germany, it might even be more masochistic and self-hating just due to, you know, the the house painter with a little mustache in relatively recent history and so forth and just the fact that Europe has been more castrated than America has been.

So yeah, I [snorts] mean they might

consider the German flag to be controversial or political or something in a way that the Thai flag isn't because the Thai flag is just more of a cultural thing. Something like that.

Let's see.

Yeah. And it's true that that Thai monks and Burmese monks in the west should be trying to spread Buddhism, but Burmese monks in the west generally are not extremely successful because they just bring all this Burmese cultural luggage with them. Their belief system, you know, they they they'll be like I think it was Tom Puli. I think I've heard that Tom Puliano sometimes would include in

his talks that the earth is flat and so forth, which back in the 1970s was not as acceptable as it is now that you have like the internet and all the conspiracy theory channels and so forth promoting the flat earth.

So yeah, I mean if you accept everything the way a a Burmese Buddhist monk, you know, they're very dogmatic, you know, it's just sort of medieval in their approach to religion, just this faith oriented, accept everything. It's all the sacred word of Lord Buddha. Then, oh, I just noticed that I haven't got the aquarium fully in the shot.

then I mean it's it's just not as successful because a lot of Americans,

you know, they'll listen to a discourse that even I mean it might even just be like in broken English because the monks may not have mastered the English language or even the translator has not mastered the English language and they're just hearing all this stuff that they consider to be like fairy tales that it just doesn't really make a lot of converts except for just really faithoriented people. you know, they've got way more sadda than pa, you know, in the in the among the the five indrias, the five faculties. You should have your faith and your your reason in balance. And the the Burmese have more faith than

reason in many cases. And Americans tend to be more reason than faith in many cases, especially with regard to American Buddhists. And it just doesn't work very well. as a general rule. I mean, every once in a while you'll have some Seattle or Ajan who is Asian, but nevertheless, they can appreciate the western point of view. Like Seattle Usilananda in California was like this. You know, he spoke perfect American English, no detectable accent. And you know, he he was an intellectual and you know, he studied sort of western and eastern approaches to to life in general. So he had quite a few western followers but most like Asian

missionaries who come to the west don't get a lot of followers mainly because they just there's like the culture barrier that gets in the way.

And so it turns out, regardless of the initial intention of founding a monastery, it turns into like an ethnic cultural center where people go to speak their ethnic language, eat their ethnic food, do their ethnic ceremonies, and so forth.

And German flags and American flags really don't fit into that picture very well.

I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Jules.

And Jules says, "Do you have any personal experience of shingles?" and shingles here. He's not referring to the roofing material. He's referring to the herpes
uh outbreak. I think I think the herpes virus is essentially chickenpox. So, what happens is you get chickenpox when you're a kid and then the the the virus remains dormant in your body. I think it's like in your your tailbone or something.
And then later as you get older, it can reappear in the form of shingles, which is a painful inflammation of a nerve that's on your back, I think, in most cases,

and it's extremely painful. So, I'll just get back to Jules's question after explaining what I'm what what he's referring to with regard to shingles. Jules says, "Do you have any personal experience of shingles? One of the common triggers can be physiological or psychological stress causing the dormant virus to reawaken as monkhood seems to be an embrace of this kind of thing. I wonder if it's something you saw frequently among the various SAS you were acquainted with. And then parenthesis he says I currently have shingles and it [__] sucks.

Well, I remember when I first was

ordained, I'd been ordained as a monk
for just about 6 months and my a the
abbott of our monastery, my preceptor,
venerable linet, got shingles and it was
very painful
from what I was told. And then when I
was living in Burma, I don't I don't
know if I still have the scar on my
back, but I had been in Burma for maybe
15 years at the time, and I apparently
got a mild form of shingles. It was it
was um like [clears throat] a herpes
outbreak on my back and very very
painful. It wasn't very big though. It
was only a like 3 in long.
So, it wasn't like as big and inflamed
as some people's shingles can be. And it

was painful, but I mean it was easily survivable in my case. And I did get get did get the cream or the you know the the medicated cream. It's better than pills. I mean, if you're going to like doctors will try and give you pills, but I mean, you're better off just applying it directly to the to the affected lesions than just taking a pill which dilutes it all through your body.

But yeah, I do think I had a mild case of shingles after I'd been a monk for like 15 years in Burma, something like that.

And uh I don't know if you if you can get the shingles more than once. You can

only get chickenpox once maybe. I mean, with regard to viral diseases, usually there's a good in many cases, you can only get it once. I mean, even the common cold, they say you can only catch the same cold twice. It's just that the cold virus mutates in different strains and then you can get different strains of of the cold.

And speaking of cold, my coffee is now officially cold.

So,

yeah. I mean, you you can experience psychological stress as a monk, although you're you're better equipped to deal with it. You know, in some cases, you're just kind of allowing it to happen and

then you're being practicing mindfulness. So, you're like denaturing it as it arises. You know, by just mindfully observing it from a detached perspective, then really you're isolating it. It's not you anymore. It doesn't have the same power over you as if you're just a normie immersed in some saric pseudo reality that stuff just hits you and you just sort of take it at face value. Believe it's ultimately real. Don't don't detach from it. You know, it's just, oh [__] I got this sore knee or whatever it is. You know that you as a monk, you have better you're better equipped, especially if

you're able to practice dhamma wisely. I mean, if you're just like in the medieval um medieval European saint mode where you're just repressing, you know, you're just being saintly as AF and you're not really being mindful or detaching from stuff as it arises. You're just kind of trying to repress it all and just keep your thoughts pure and all that, then yeah, you could be a hysterical basket case.

But if you're really practicing mindfulness sati batana correctly or somewhere you know I'm approximation of correctness then really as stuff arises you I mean more stuff may be arising more subtle stuff that you don't usually

wouldn't even notice but still it's just mindful detachment you're kind of denaturing it depriving it of its motive force as it arises and so psychologically you can way more healthy as a monk than as a lay person who's just immersed in this dream state consensus trance as Charlie Tart used to call it.

So yeah, I mean if you're trying to be like abnormally saintly then you can just be like a hysterical basket case. But I mean, if you're still like in harmony with your own nature, your own personality, but just as stuff is arising, you're just in the habit of

mindfully noting it, then you're on a
lot firmer ground. You're doing a lot
better and you're less likely to be a
hysterical basket case with lots of
psychossematic
symptoms arising. I certainly had some
psychossematic symptoms arise. The main
one was it's called dispnnea. It's like
an irregularity in breathing that I
looked it up in a medical guide and I
was kind of humiliated,
shamed to see that in almost all cases
it is a hysterical conversion reaction
which is psychosmatic.
It's like I mean it's kind of triggering
now just thinking about it where it's
like you forget to breathe enough and

then it's like you need to take like
this deep breath like a sigh and it's I
have to feel like a stretching feeling
in my sternum as as my chest expands in
order to like turn off the trigger.
Otherwise, I just have to keep taking
deep breaths. And at at its worst, when
I was a monk living in Burma, like under
the rock ledge, it could wake me up at
night just having to take this deep
breath where you sometimes you'd have to
like twist your body a little bit to be
able to inhale deeply enough to like
turn off the urge again.
>> [sighs and gasps]
>> But still, if you're practicing

correctly, you should be psychologically healthier than the average lay person. I mean, that's pretty much the purpose of becoming a monk is to become sane.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Stellar Supreme at all. He is legion. He has many names. He says, "If you had to give a quick answer on the fundamentals of Buddhism to someone who was really serious about being a lay Buddhist, but who was in need of more grounded practical guidance, what would your message to them be?" Well, like very simple would be like the verse in the Dhamapata right here.

Just so happens I happen to have a

bookmark right there and it's uh verse 183 of the dhamapara which is as follows to avoid all evil to cultivate good and to cleanse one's mind. This is the teaching of the Buddhas.

So do good avoid doing evil and purify your mind. I mean that would be just like base basic based Buddhism.

But of course you also bear in mind you know karma or second noble truth I mean just always be aware the second noble truth whenever you are unhappy it is because you desire something just knowing that much just like not just knowing it in an intellectual way but really taking it to heart so that you

know when the [__] is hitting the fan I mean you're still sort of you don't just forget all of your Buddhist philosophy when you're freaking freaking out and also just knowing that regret and remorse, a guilty conscience is always bad karma. Um, you know, have compassion. Don't just be don't indulge in cruelty. You know, don't try to derive pleasure from others suffering, that sort of thing.

catch the spider with the the cup and the the piece of cardboard and let it go outside instead of just squishing it.

So, how quick of an answer does this person need? See, I I have to read the question again. Now, if you had to have

a you had to give a quick answer on the fundamentals of Buddhism to someone who was really serious about being a lay Buddhist, but who was in need of more grounded practical guidance,
what would your message to them be?
Yeah. Well, the purifying your mind, do good, avoid doing evil, purify your mind. And purifying your mind involves mindfulness, awareness of the second noble truth. You know, if you want to pra if you want to practice meditation regularly, so much the better. try to practice mindfulness of everyday activities, mindful walking, mindful driving, mindful drinking of beverages,

that sort of thing. That's fine. I'm not sure how how quick of an answer you need, though. I mean, if it's like an X 128 characters or whatever, then yeah, I think we're already over the limit.

Yeah.

Do good, avoid doing evil. Purify the mind and be aware of the second noble truth and never I mean be aware that this is not ultimately real. I mean that's that's a good one. Be aware that you're in a kind of dream. You're in the matrix.

Just keeping that in mind so that you're not just completely immersed just completely lost in samsara. That that's always kind of like you know something

to bear in mind that kind of helps keep you grounded.

And then the way to get out of the matrix is to wake up, which also is just a matter of detaching and just detachment and mindfulness. Mindful detachment.

So, [snorts and sighs]

I don't know if that was a good answer. It would depend on the person you're trying to tell this to. I guess people are different. I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Xenithoid. And Xenithoid says, "Is Buddhism compatible with pansychism andor pantheism?" Well, pantheism like

we're already mentioning, I mean, pantheism is like everything is God. And Buddhism does not believe in a capital G god. It does not posit the existence of a capital G god. Partly you could say through um apeasis. It's like anything you say about the absolute is bound to be invalid. So you just don't even go there. It's not it's not necessarily uh like a denial. It's just you don't assert it because any assertion is going to be ultimately or even relatively invalid.

So you just don't even go there. So once you posit pantheism, you are positing capital G god. And that is not what early Buddhism did. Even though later

Buddhism does all kinds of weird things. So let's just set aside pantheism and go with pansychism.

And a lot of you may not know what pansychism is. And I already looked it up in the dictionary. It's a noun. And it says pans psychism is the doctrine or belief that everything material, however small, has an element of individual consciousness. So I'm not sure if if that would mean that everything material really isn't material, that it's a manifestation of consciousness, or is it allowing the possibility that physical matter really does exist? It's just that it's all got consciousness, you know,

like a hydrogen atom. It really does exist.

and it's it's conscious.

So, I mean, I'm I'm kind of a pans psychist. I think that because the universe is a manifestation of consciousness, everything in the universe, including a hydrogen atom, is like it has a kind of primordial consciousness to it. Like what is called energy in physics, I would equate with consciousness.

that what a physicist calls energy is just an extremely primordial elemental form of what a psychologist calls consciousness. I think that could be like the next capernicon revolution if

if it hasn't already become incorporated into science. I mean obviously the other way around what a psychologist calls consciousness is I mean clearly um just a very complicated form of what a physicist would call energy. So once you just make the equation the other way, just turn it into an equation where consciousness equals energy, then there you go. And empty space, according to some some uh theoretical physicist, empty space contains zero energy and infinite energy depending on how you do the math.

So I think Buddhism, especially like Mahayana Buddhism, would be compatible

with pansychism. I mean like the yoga chara school, the mind only school. It's like I mean they're essentially saying there is no physical matter that it's all just a the world is just generated by our karma and everyone's a kind of Libnitzian monad

although you don't really have to know what that means which is good because I don't think I'm really inclined to explain libnitian monads.

You can you can just look up monodology and see what it says in whatever source of info you're looking it up in. But yeah, I think Buddhism is compatible with pansychism

so long as you're just using it as a

kind of working hypothesis. If you cling to it, it's I mean it just becomes bad Buddhism right there. Anything that you cling to becomes the problem instead of you know the cure. It becomes the sickness.

And I guess there's going to be a question a question kind of along those lines a little later on but like Ajan [clears throat] Chai used to say even right view becomes wrong view if you cling to it

so if if you just become convinced I mean that becomes something that you are clinging to then that's the problem regardless of whether it could be

considered true or not

but I [snorts] do think that Buddhism is compatible with a kind of loosely held openhand pans psychism but not so much with pantheism because pantheism does assume the existence of a capital G god which is a no no in early Buddhism.

So I'm just going to move on to xenithoid's next question here and make sure we are really recording. Yeah. and I closed all unnecessary tabs on my computer so that we're not lagging as we do in in some some previous Q&As's when I did not close out all the extra tabs and apps and so forth. So anyways, Zenithoid, bless his heart, says, "Would a pansychist understanding of

consciousness provide a good foundation
for reincarnation without an overarching
self?
Um, [clears throat] just right off the
bat, I wouldn't wouldn't see how it
would necessarily influence a belief in
reincarnation. I mean,
yeah, I mean, if if everything is is
imbued with consciousness,
then I don't know. I mean, certainly
pansychism wouldn't necessitate
reincarnation or rebirth.
Um,
I mean, what really is the good
foundation for rebirth is just the idea
of the the psychic momentum of karma

because that's what causes rebirth, the psychic momentum of karma, regardless of whether a hydrogen atom is conscious or not. So, I think pansychism is kind of irrelevant to the idea of rebirth because you could have rebirth or not have rebirth either way with or without pansychism
seems to me. And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Fred.
And Fred apparently
while when I was at work one night sent me some kind of like a video message or conference call or something that I couldn't really respond to cuz I was at work and then it turns out I

don't even have the app fully set up on my phone or anything like that. So if Fred is watching this, he probably is at some point then. Hi, Fred. And uh I kind of got the message sort of the message that you had a message, but I I'm not even sure how to like respond to that on my phone because I don't even think I have it completely set up.

Anyways, Fred says, "Why are women such control freaks?"

And I assume what he means by women being control freaks is that they try to control their man or try to just sort of keep everything stable and predictable and so forth. And I assume one reason

for that women are less risk averse than or they're they're more risk averse than men and they're just kind of more um insecure. That that is like one of the fundamental psychological differences between men and women just as a general trend. Men tend to be more confident and be less fearful than women. And that's maybe one way that that nature in the past, like in the stone age, made sure that a woman would gravitate towards a man for security. Women are more security oriented. Men are more freedomoriented. And freedom and security are practically at opposite ends of a spectrum.

So women will try to control their man.

And they'll try to keep everything safe and secure and predictable just because they are emotionally less secure, less confident, you know, more timid and fearful

than men are in general. And that includes them trying to control their man. And that's sort of like a a perennial kind of source of interpersonal friction between men and women. You know, a man and a woman live together. the woman will be trying to control the man and but and if she succeeds she'll get a certain satisfaction from that but she will lose respect for the man. So that's something

that men have to bear in mind. I mean, if a woman is trying to, you know, guess do this, don't do that, do this, don't do that all the time, then if you go along with that, I mean, sometimes it's just common courtesy. You want to have harmony in your relationship and so forth. But, I mean, if you just become like this beta cuck of a guy, just obedient and docile, then I mean, you might have fewer arguments.

You know, she might be angry at you less of the time, but she's just not going to have the same respect for you as if you stand your ground on what you feel strongly about sometimes.

You know, you still have to be a man

with a backbone. So, and that involves you're going to have the woman you love pissed off at you sometimes or just dissatisfied with you.

But I mean, if a woman gets like feminists, if they got everything they wanted, they still wouldn't be satisfied. They'd probably be even more miserable than they are now.

It's just weird.

And I should uh just move on to the next question here before people start accusing me of being not only an anti-semite, but a misogynist as well.

There are some very attractive Jewish women in this world though, I have to

admit.

See here, Fred's second question. Are Terraata rules just man-made? Well, I mean, who else would make them? Who else would make five precepts, for example? I mean, you could say that the [clears throat] five precepts, they they are they have a grounding in empiricism that, you know, you're more likely to have unskillful mental states and bad karma and get farther from enlightenment by indulging in killing and stealing and lying and and adultery and drunkenness than if you don't. So I mean there is some empirical objectivity involved but still the rules are man-made all every single one of them.

It's man-made.

So [snorts]

that [clears throat] was kind of an easy

one. And so I'm just going to move on to

the next question. This is from Ruie.

And we're going to be well over two

hours on this one as I kind of tried to

warn you but I mean some people just

don't listen.

Uh, and if I really I mean I'm running

out of cold coffee and if I really do

need an emergency backup beverage, I

might have to start drinking aquarium

water.

So that could be, you know, I could get

a few clicks for that one. Anyways, Ruie

says, "As [clears throat] far as you know or can recall, are there any scriptural or canonical basis for the story of God's six years of austerities?" Yeah, it's Yeah, there's some basis. I mean the actual number is six years. I mean it's it's got to be in there somewhere. I do not recall exactly but for example there's the Mahasi Nada Suta. I think it's in the Majimminaya which I mean I don't consider it to be an authentic original teaching the historical Buddha because he is just bragging big time. I mean, he makes he makes Donald Trump look like completely self-abasing and modest in this suta because he's just whatever other

aesthetics did. I did more than that. You know, it's like he'd go for weeks without eating anything or he'd just eat like this tiny seed when he would eat and just all the aesthetic practices that were done like by Ajivacas and James and so forth, he did it at an even higher level, you know. So he is just essentially just bragging in grandiose terms about how aesthetic he was when he was going through his austerity. And I assume there is some I probably I mean the exact number of six years. I mean that could be just sort of a later you know later legend you know just they didn't know exactly how long it was so

they just settled on six years and it just became established in the tradition that it was six years sort of like you know the 6 million number with regard to you know events in the mid 20th century that you know it's just there were various numbers in the earlier books and then somehow people just settled on 6 million and you know it just became sort of established as the as the legend. But I don't want to be accused of being an anti-semite by saying that. So let's see here. Yeah, I mean definitely in the the sutas including old sutas there are mentions [clears throat] of the Buddha practicing severe austerities and probably even six years but I don't

recall exactly where the number is given but like in the Buddha wamsa which is another late text where it's given just sort of like a bio biographical sketch of previous Buddhas comparing them to our Buddha, our historical Gorama Buddha that most of the early legendary Buddhas there there's austerities lasted maybe just a matter of a few weeks or months that God Buddha partly because he's historical like a real human uh he went through a longer austerity had a much shorter stature of only 27 feet and a much shorter lifespan you know he didn't live 80,000 years like some of the other ones did.

But yeah, I do think that probably in the the actual biography, you know, of God Buddha, you know, the Shakyamuni that he probably did really try to become enlightened through just the traditional means at hand at the time. And there were two main traditional means. There was like the cultivation of like johnic states and austerity or just like self- torture really you know like the James and the Aivacas I mean they just looked down their noses on strict Buddhists because they they considered strict Buddhist just be shavenheaded householders you know they got to wear sandals you know they got to use a walking stick when

they got old you know they got they had to own stuff instead of just wandering around naked and begging for food in their cup hands.

So yeah, there's definitely a scriptural canonical basis for the dukaracharia that the you know, it's like the Buddha was going through such severe austerities that the gods didn't know whether he was dark complexioned or golden complexioned or fair complexion. You know, there's mentions of the Buddha, I mean, in the suta saying that he was so emaciated that if he rubbed his arm like this, the hairs would just break off. And if he if he grasped his

belly, he could feel his spine, that kind of thing. He was just so emaciated. So yeah, definitely it's in the sutas. The exact number of years I assume is in the sutas, too. Although I didn't really do my homework and try to find the exact mention of six years of severe austerities, but the severe austerities are well established in the texts. And it's I would consider it likely that it's based on on what really happened within the context of the virtual reality of Samsara and the uncarved block of marble and all that.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Jim Lad. And Jimad says, "When meditating in Myanmar

alone in a cave, how did you not lose

your mind in isolation?"

And [laughter]

I'm I'm just sort of a loner by nature.

Like

just last night, my brother called me

from Thailand. And I mean, I just run

out of stuff to talk about, you know? I

just become like monosyic within like

half an hour or so just because I'm just

not a social person. My my woman, which

this is good, she's pretty much the same

way. like we we haven't had company come

to our house in over a year aside from

her mama. We haven't gone visiting to

anybody else's house in well over a year

either. It's just we're not sociable people. You know, we're we're relatively self-contained.

And I was like that even more so as a hermit in Burma.

I mean, I didn't lose my mind in isolation because when I was in isolation, I'm just observing my mind all the time. So you don't lose it when you're when you're looking at it closely all the time. It's it's right there, right?

But I mean a lot of people like I've read that like in prisons there are hardened criminals who fear solitary confinement much more than they fear any kind of physical punishment because like

a sociable kind of person a person who really maybe doesn't have a strong enough mind or they're just not like accustomed to their mind reinforcing their own existence. you know they need social interaction so that other people's perceptions of them helps to like stabilize them in this world and a lot of people I mean it's like their main self concepts are largely based on the opinions of others you know if other people have a low opinion of them they have a low opinion of themselves because these other people have a low opinion of them and then if they get praised by another person all of a sudden they're

elated you know whereas in my case like praising and blame. I've always been largely immune to that. I mean, when you're a kid and you hear your dad like bragging about you to his his sister or something, yeah, you feel good. You want to hear that. That's nice. But like people blaming me, I mean, calling me names or something. It's like I know myself way better than they do. It's like in some cases, if they know you fairly well, they're making an observation that maybe you don't want to you don't want to see that about yourself. That kind of thing. That happens all the time. Sure. But if someone on the internet, you know, they

just see it some statement I've made and then, you know, call me like a fake Buddhist or whatever, you know, just a fool, a charlatan, this kind of thing, a Nazi. I mean, it has no effect. And I mean, I'm just self-contained. I know. I create my own reality without requiring the help of other people to keep me going. Unlike the cherry barbs in that tank back there, I was I I have this theory now. I have I've been having sick cherry barbs over the past few months and a few of them have died. And it's one reason I don't think this is the only reason, but one reason is that I can't really tell them apart. They

don't really have a personality like the gouramis do. You can I can tell all the gouramis apart. Each one has their own name, but these cherry barbs, they all look the same. And so I just kind of lost interest in them. I wouldn't be like watching them the way I'd be watching the gouramis and the other the other creatures in there. I've got some really nice ammono shrimp in there now that they they're just kind of undulating, you know, like their pleopods are like going like this all the time. It's really cool. But getting back to the cherry barbs, I just kind of almost had like an aversion for them and then they started getting sick. And it

may be that again it's like the person who doesn't have a mind attuned to being self-sufficient to be an island under themselves. They need this attention to kind of keep them going. Of course, that doesn't explain how wild cherry barbs survive.

But still, I do think there's let's it helps to explain like why children and some dogs like some of our dogs, they're just so greedy for attention, you know? They just crave human attention because it's given them something, you know, it's like reinforcing their existence to some degree. So, I think I I really need to to like bless my my cherry barbs more

and send meta to them. And I really do
think that it that it will help them in
their their like
poor health or whatever it is that's
been affecting them lately.
>> [snorts]
>> So I'm just completely wandered miles
away from the actual question here at
this point. When meditating in Myanmar
alone in a cave, how did you not lose
your mind in isolation? Well, I mean the
easy answer is when I was in the
[clears throat] cave in isolation, I was
observing my mind. So yeah, you don't
lose something while you're you're
you're like intently scrutinizing it.
And I'm just going to move on to Jimmy

Lad's next question.

Also during this time did you ever feel insecure that you were not living a conventional life and comparing yourself to others like other with careers families etc bgeoa life and not really I mean there were times you know you're just sitting there daydreaming just thinking about stuff you know what would I do you know what if I had taken that that uh that [snorts] scholarship from the the US Navy I was offered like a 90% scholarship from the US Navy on the condition of course that I join the Navy and become a nuclear technician. You know, I train in college as a nuclear

technician. And I just didn't want to go there. I was like a militant pacifist, sort of a a neohippie type when I was in college. And uh really wasn't into that or when I was in high school, too.

Um but still, you know, it's like you think about if I had kids, what would I name them? That kind of thing. Or I mean, Trajan for a guy. I mean, Trajan was one of the greatest Roman emperors. Nobody names their kid T Trajan. I don't I don't get that.

Let's see.

But still, I mean, again, I really do not compare myself to others very much. I'm not a competitive person. If I compete with anybody, it's I compete

with my own personal self. I try to do
better than I already am without really
giving a [__] what other people are
doing so long as it doesn't like
interfere with me in any way.
So,
did I ever feel insecure? sure they were
I was not living a conventional life
comparing myself to others. Now I mean
the only thing about feeling insecure
that I was not living a conventional
life is when you start getting up into
your mid4s late 40s 50 you start
thinking well there's certain things
that if I'm ever going to do them again
I'm going to have to do them pretty soon

because before very much longer I'm
going to be too old to do that stuff.
So, I mean, there is that kind of
feeling, but I never really felt like I
was doing the wrong thing by being a
monk up to until the end when when it
just became clear that my being a monk
had pretty much run its natural course
and it was time to move on.
But, I mean, it wasn't really other
people's opinions along those lines or
me wanting to be more like other people.
It was just, you know, it's just time to
do something else.
>> [sighs]
>> So,
I guess I answered that question. So,

I'm just going to move on to Jimmy Lad's
third question,
which is kind of the converse of the
previous one. Now that you have returned
to conventional society lay life, do you
ever feel the opposite insecurity that
you are wasting your life as a normie
and feel as if you are now wallowing in
samsara again away from the jewel of
dharma? Not really. I mean sometimes
I'll catch myself just kind of wallowing
in it being unmindful especially when
I'm at work you know you just kind of
get sucked into this do your job kind of
stuff and that becomes like the matrix
that becomes samsara and then you know

it's like the red pill kind of wears thin in cases like that but then you catch yourself and I mean I regret always that's one thing I've taken to heart with regard to dharma regret is always bad karma just what you have is the present situation. You deal with the present situation. You don't think about how it would have been better if I had done something different two years ago, anything like that.

So, no, I'm not I don't feel like I'm wasting my life as a normie. Um I'm wallowing in samsara a little more than I was as a monk, but even monks wallow in samsara. As long as you're not fully enlightened, you're wallowing in

samsara.

I mean even fully enlightened beings can have the outward appearance of wallowing in samsara

and the jewel of dharma I mean I'm not that far I mean the jewel of dharma is always here you know ultimate reality is always here so I mean the main danger for anybody a monk or a lay person is just getting sucked into samsara and just totally wallowing it just totally forgetting that this is just the matrix. This is a dream. This is not ultimate reality.

So, so long as you kind of keep that in mind, you're doing pretty good. You're

doing a lot better than even a lot of monks and nuns. So long as the monks and nuns really think that they are in reality. You know, they might have like this philosophical idea that they're thinking about only when they're being philosophical and then the rest of the time they're just lost in samsara.

then yeah, I think I've kind of outgrown that even though I'm not a monk anymore. So yeah, I I don't have any regrets. I don't regret that I was a monk and I don't regret that I'm not a monk now. I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from RFS

and RFS says, "Listening to past Q&A episodes, it seems that you have

inspired at least three people on the path of ordination. Do you feel that this is something you have explicitly tried to do or rather that this is a natural reaction to encountering the dharma and explicit explicitly is spelled wrong here. I got to fix this. Okay. Yeah, the little red line underneath bugs me sometimes.

Okay. So, seems like I've inspired at least three people on the path of ordination or at least kind of reinforced that.

Uh, do I feel this is something that I have explicitly tried to do or rather there is a natural reaction to

encountering the dharma? I I haven't really explicitly tried to persuade anybody to become a monk. That's a decision that each person has to make for themselves.

Although it is true, I mean from the bu the early Buddhist point of view, if you really want to practice dharma correctly, if you really want to wake up, best thing you can do is renounce the world.

So, I mean, I have gotten that point across and everyone has to decide for themselves where they're at, what they're ready for. Most people just aren't ready. They're not ripe for renouncing the world. Like a lot of

people, you know, like solitary confinement thing that I was mentioning before, you live alone in a cave, a lot of people just go nuts.
or like people even like some meditate famous meditation instructors if they had to sit and sleep under a tree in a forest with no mosquito net not swatting the mosquitoes the way monks did in the Buddhist time I mean how many how many minutes would they survive that way they'd be I mean a lot of them not all of them some of them are very wise accomplished meditation masters with real wisdom but some of these people you know they're just kind of like teaching

meditation from a book from from what
their teacher told them and just sitting
there being bitten by mosquitoes alone
in a forest, you know, that maybe has
like leopards and and so forth prowling
around it, wild boars, bears, that kind
of thing. I mean, they just couldn't do
it.
So, I mean, you have to I mean, it's
good to be provided the the information.
And some some of the stuff that I'm
teaching I mean like the most important
stuff is like first of all this is not
reality not ultimate reality
that whenever you're unhappy it's cuz
you desire something that sort of thing.
I mean that's that's good for anybody to

know or almost anybody I suppose
but I'm just like sharing dharma and
then people can use that information if
they choose as they please.
But it's I do think that it's important
at least to get the ideas out there. And
really I've never had much
never had much in inclination to just
teach the same stuff everybody else
teaches. You know, just dogmatize just
stuff out of a book. Even if you don't
really believe it, then you know, like
Abid Dhama or that kind of thing. You
know, it's like a lot of monks,
um, but not me when I was a monk, but a
a lot it's just kind of taboo to bring

up anything that you personally have
doubts about with regard to established
tradition. And I just
I mean, you might as well call it out. I
mean, it's just like being honest
really.
So, I wouldn't probably wouldn't make a
very good politician.
But have I answered the question? That
is the question.
Now, I really have not explicitly tried
to persuade anybody to renounce the
world, to go forth into homelessness,
because it's just not for everybody.
Everyone, I mean, everyone should decide
for themselves, definitely. I'm just
providing information that can be of use

to just about anybody.

And so I'm just I mean if if I do inspire people to want to renounce the world in a way I mean there is a certain I feel good about that but at the same time I mean I'm not I don't have the same enthusiasm for being a monk as I did when I was a monk especially like earlier on. So you know it's it's sort of like this

almost like a bittersweet kind of a feeling. It's sort of like when I first told this Zen Roshi that I was intending to become a Buddhist monk, he had like the Zen-like answer is, you know, I'm happy for you and I'm also sorry for you

because I mean it's all dooka.
Everything in samsara is dooka. Even
being a monk. So, I mean, it's not just
like you're just entering upon a path of
bliss and like giddy giggling and
hugging yourself, that kind of stuff.
That you can be damn right miserable.
You can be miserable as a monk. I was
miserable as a monk on many occasions,
but of course, lay people are miserable
on many occasions, too.
>> [snorts]
>> So yeah, I'm just being philosophical.
And [clears throat]
some people think or, you know, they
might have the realization that if they
really want to follow this philosophy to

the the fullest of their potential, they've got to get out of town, you know, go out into a forest and meditate, which is fine. That's I'm that's fine to me. That's great.

Okay. So, I'm just going to move on to this question. Ah, and we've been going at it for more than two hours.

Okay, this is from I really don't know how to pronounce this. Capital O hyphen small M capital M small M hyphen I O something like that. He says on the dhamma path say verse 193 or 1964 depending on how you count there are plenty of stumbling stones. It's easy to trip over them or fall right through. Do

you know that feeling too? Well, with regard to the verse, it could be he's just picking numbers at random. 193 or 1964. I mean, it sounds like it could be the Samuda Nikaya. [clears throat] I mean, that that's how the Samuda Nikaya number system works, but he didn't really say what Nikaya or what Suta or anything. So, I mean, it could just be rhetorical. But he says there are plenty of stumbling stones and it's easy to trip over them or fall right through. Do you know that feeling too? Yeah, definitely. Because it's all stumbling stones. Anything that you are attached to, anything that you believe is real when it's not real is a

stumbling stone. I mean, just be addicted to thinking is a stumbling stone. Even clinging to dharma is a stumbling stone. Anything that you just take at face value and assume is real when ultimately it's a kind of illusion, it's a stumbling stone. Any desires you have, any preferences you have, it's all stumbling stones. That's that's all samsara is to someone who is striving for enlightenment is just an assemblage of stumbling stones. It's all stumbling stones.

So yeah, I I know that feeling.

I think I'm just going to move on to this question here. This is from Tynen.

I assume that's how to to pronounce the name. Tinen Tinen says, "How and where does justice come into play in life?" And then he says, "Justice is said to be one of the four virtues of the Iching in the cultivation of virtue. But how can justice be practiced without breaking precepts? And if it cannot be, then does justice truly have a place within virtue?" Well, maybe if you're a virtuous king, a virtuous ruler, definitely a virtuous judge, then yeah, you should be as concerned with justice. But I'm reminded of probably my favorite novel, Dostki's the Idiot. And the protagonist of the idiot is Prince Mishkin, who is Christlike. He's he's

sort of representing he's symbolic of of Christ.

And there's this young woman who is symbolic of an angel

who says to him that I mean he's just not just because forgiving your enemies is not just. Forgiving someone who does wrong is not just. I mean justice is they get what they deserve.

And from the Buddhist point of view, karma is just. So it's like there is a cosmic balance. Justice is built into the system automatically by default. So there is that. So you don't have to necessarily, you know, somebody rips you off, you don't have to get revenge. I

mean, that's bad karma. You know, it's just their own karma is going to [__] them up sooner or later anyway.

So I think in Chinese, you know, [clears throat] Chinese philosophy is more concerned with this kind of justice, you know, because like the the daqing is always referring to the the king, you know, the the sage king, the just king, the wise king, the king does this, the king does that. The Iching also is talking about the king does this, the king does that. And so justice from a social point of view and Chinese philosophy is really more socially oriented like Confucianism and all that then justice really is more of a

priority than for Buddhism where you've got somebody just renouncing the world and going off and living under a tree in a wilderness.

And like Christianity, I mean, if you're a Christian king or a Christian judge, then yeah, you should be concerned with justice. But it's not just to just forgive wrongdoers. That's not justice. But that is more virtuous from a Christian and from a Buddhist point of view, I think.

So let's see here. How can justice be practiced without breaking precepts? If it cannot be, then does justice truly have a place within virtue? Um, yeah. I

really don't think that that seeking justice,

I mean, from a person striving for enlightenment who isn't a judge or a king or something like that, then yeah, you just let justice take care of itself because it's built into the system. It's automatic.

I mean, if you don't punish the wrongdoer, then some it's just going to happen anyway.

So justice really is is not emphasized as a virtue in early Buddhism.

Oh, what is that? Oh, I see. Yeah, it looked like my the aquarium back there was flickering, but it's um

it's not. If you look at it this way,

it's not flickering. So, that's an optical illusion there.

So, let's see here. Yeah, I guess I answered that question.

So I'm just going to move into move on to the next question and this is from Nermit and Nermit says was Buddha a tough man and yeah [clears throat] he was he was tough I mean um first of all he was tough in the sense of being tougher than a dollar stake you know tough as wood because ancient Indian aesthetics had to be tough and even if he was grossly exaggerating in the largely mythologized Mahasi Nadada Suta of the Majinikaya Yeah, that but still I

mean he was doing stuff that the average person just could not do. Like I was just saying like living alone is something the average person cannot do or just sitting sitting under a tree being bitten by mosquitoes and gad flies and not even slapping them is something that most people really couldn't do without just like being at wit's end and cracking up.

But in addition to that, he was according to tradition and possibly according to history a member of the warrior cast who was probably taught to be a warrior in his youth. So that would probably cultivate some toughness also in addition to just being able to endure

hardship at a virtually superhuman

level.

[snorts] But to be a monk like they are

described in the sutas, especially the

older sutas, I mean you had to be tough

as wood,

not necessarily kicking ass, but I mean

you had to be really just really an

aesthetic.

And so I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Austin and

he says the difference between wana and

cheetah. And I think I've discussed this

before. I mean in

In like Abidama philosophy, they are

synonyms that cheetah is vinyana.

They're just the same thing. Although in other context like more in the sutas, less in abidama that cheetah can just mean mind.

So you know it's like nama and rupa which sometimes is translated as mind and matter. Cheetah can also just mean mind. But more technically cheetah means consciousness in the same sense as wana in pi means consciousness. In Mahayana Buddhism, the Sanskrit vijana or vigana is it has come to mean something more perceptual and isn't just like basic undifferentiated consciousness but in in poly for whatever reasons even though I mean just the etmology we means kind of separate or apart and jana means

knowing. So I mean really the Mahayana Buddhists have more of a literal understanding of wyana which just means like distinguishing
whereas in terraata Buddhism wyana the vit might just be like a an intensifier and it's just like true knowing something like that and it's just consciousness
and cheetah like I said sometimes it can mean the same where it's just consciousness whereas like in in abidama You've got cha cheetah and chetika. Cheetah is consciousness and chetika is mental states and the cheetah is sort of like the the canvas upon which the

mental states are painted so to speak.
So yeah it can they can be synonyms like
when you're being technical and and
abidamic
or vinana still just means consciousness
whereas cheetah can just mean mentality
in general. It means mind.
So I'm just going to move on to Austin's
next question. Do you believe in the 31
planes of existence? Well, the 31 planes
of existence are taxonomy
where um it's it's it's largely
arbitrary. For example, the heaven
realms are all separated out as their
own individual plains of existence,
whereas the hell realms are just lumped
together as hell, as Niah. Whereas they

could have been divided out into different hell realms, too. in which case humans wouldn't be sixth from the bottom. We'd be kind of in the middle of the the planes of existence which would be way more than 31. But I do think that a lot of the planes of existence are mythology that were just made up. Like the perceptionless Brahas are just a complete redundancy. I mean it I don't see how it's even possible to have the realm of perceptionless Brahas where it's Brahas that they're they're mindless. They're just like statues. So I mean their their karma wouldn't even have an opportunity to exhaust itself. I

mean there'd be nothing going on.

So the 30 the the realm of perceptionist Brahas I'm skeptical of just a lot of the details of various realms I think are just like mythol ancient Indian mythology that were just absorbed into Buddhism just because it was just part of the culture. Um the higher realms like higher than the Brahma realm. I mean to the to the Hindus Brahma I mean that's he's the personification of ultimate reality. So I do think there's a little political spiritual political propaganda going on where the Buddhists just start positing these realm after realm after realm higher than the realm of Maha Brahma.

So yeah, I think I really don't think that the 31 planes of existence are like accurate empirical objective truth. Although I do think that there are various realms of existence, you know, obviously there's animal realm, but but even the animal realm, it's just bad taxonomy where you've got humans here in their own realm and then you've got chimpanzees and mosquitoes just lumped together. Whereas the chimpanzeee comes much closer to a human physically and psychologically than it does to a mosquito.

[snorts]

And then like the Assura realm, I mean,

that's just like a a relic. Uh it's, you know, it's like it's just like this artifact of very ancient Indo-Uropean religious beliefs cuz the Greeks had the same the same idea of gods and titans.

It was like two rival pantheons that had a war in ancient times and then the gods defeated the titans or the Assuras and then chain them up under a mountain and you know for the Greeks it was Olympus I assume and then for [clears throat] the the Indians it was Mount Meu Sumemeru.

So, I mean, it was this ancient legend probably based on some social reality of just like two cults competing over who was going to be like the state religion.

You know, you can worship the the the gods or the Assuras.
And the Persians apparently went with the Assuras, which is strange. Seems like almost all the other Indo-Uropean peoples went with the gods defeating the Assuras. But you had Ahura Mazda and uh Persian like uses H instead of S. So I mean it's Assura. He was he was an Assura apparently
based [snorts] on my limited knowledge of ancient Persian religion.
So yeah, I think it's arbitrary and there's a lot of mythology thrown in. I mean there are various planes of existence, I am sure. And it depends how

how you're going to classify them. What kind of a taxonomous you are. Are you a lumper or a splitter? If you're a splitter, you can have more planes of existence. Like you might want to divide up the realms, hell realms. If you're a a lumper, you could just take, you know, the the Brahma realms and just call them just one realm if you want to. Or if you're more of a western kind of skeptical type, you might just completely do away with some of these realms that just seem kind of fantastical, made up, like perceptionless Brahmas or some of the the higher realms that arguably could just be a kind of religious propaganda

just to to show that, you know, the the Vadic Brahmans, you know, they think the highest reality is just this mediocre Brahma realm when really the Buddhists can get into these higher Brah Brahma realms that are way higher than than anything that the brahas can get into supposedly.

So I do believe that there are different realms, you know, an infinite number ultimately, but I do not think that the classical in Buddhist 31 plains of existence really is like objective empirical reality.

And so I'm just going to move on to Austin's third question.

Does base awareness, awareness itself, underlying personal tendencies and emotions, does that awareness ever change?

Um,

it depends on who you talk to, I guess. Like in Abid Dhama, there's just one consciousness. There's one cheetah. There's what is it? I can't remember 52 chasikas. 52 different kinds of mental states, one consciousness. But then the Abidama text will talk about different kinds of this one consciousness which is sort of dividing it up while at the same time

giving lip service to the idea that there's only one consciousness.

So

um let's say you've got

the ceramic coffee cup.

>> [snorts]

>> Um, I mean, you could take this ceramic

or the clay that it's made out of and

you could form it into different things.

You could form it into bowls or cups or

vases, voses if if you're if you're

classy. Um, and I mean, is the clay

different? I mean, it's the same clay

just in different forms. So, that's kind

of the way consciousness works. I mean,

it's it's the same consciousness. The

consciousness remains the same even

though it may assume different forms

because of different mental states.
Terra Buddhism really has a they're hard
put to explain consciousness very well
because [snorts]
[clears throat] really it seems to me
that consciousness is just the the
essence of mental states. You know like
water and waves. Consciousness would be
like the water and mental states would
be like the waves in the water that are
made up of water. But Terabata Buddhism,
they really couldn't bring themselves
[clears throat] to think. I mean, the
early Abidama scholars anyway, they
couldn't think at two different levels
of reality like that. The ancient Greeks
had similar problems with dealing with

two different levels of reality, although they eventually kind of work things out better. And uh the Abidama scholars really, they just try to get everything at the same level. You know, it's like their description of reality is two-dimensional because even Nibbana is on the same list of ultimate realities as like tongue sensitivity and femininity and wrong view and all this kind of stuff. Water water element and all that. You know, nibbana is just one on the list of these ultimate realities. And yeah, I just that's one thing I' I've never been able to buy at all. I was never into Abidama philosophy. I

could never take it very seriously. Most western Buddhists really don't partly because of reasons like this. You know, it was like an ancient ancient attempt at a systematic description of reality before like really rigorous logic got into Indian culture that it's just kind of sloppy thinking. If you look for the sloppiness, you find it.

So let's see. Awareness itself, underlying personal tendencies and emotion, does that awareness ever change? The outward form of it changes, but the essence of it, what it is, doesn't change. That would be my my answer. But when you start talking about

consciousness as consciousness, it's like you're reifying the absolute and it doesn't work very well. It's just everything becomes invalid that you say about it.

And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. And we are getting close to the bottom here. Is this is not an endless Q&A.

This question is from Trezasiz.

And Troasiz says,

I'm just make sure I'm not skipping anything here.

Okay. Trezas says, [clears throat] "A lot of Buddhist monks and lay Buddhists say that if they were not Buddhists,

they would be Dowists and they like the
Dao de Ching." Any idea why that is?
Well, I mean, it's
you can't really say that Buddhism and
Daoism really closely resemble each
other because like a lot of the the
cultural assumptions are different.
Dowoism is Chinese. Buddhism was
originally Indian. And like I was saying
earlier, the Chinese and the Indians
just have a different kind of attitude.
You know, they think differently.
[clears throat] So I mean it could be
that Dowoism started off as a kind of
garbled Chinese version of Buddhism. I
mean that's that's a theory that's out
there. I really can't say for sure.

But still there are certain similarities between Buddhism and Dowoism which allow Chinese Buddhism to just absorb lots of Dowoism like Chinese Zen or Chan Buddhism. Zen Buddhism in general has a lot of Dowoism absorbed into it culturally.

[sighs]

So I mean Daoism [clears throat] and Buddhism both are essentially atheistic. Neither one of them really has a creator god. I mean the dowist might come closer because at least they reify the absolute to some degree and it's dao. It's the nameless uncarved block which is some sometimes how I reify the absolute while

at the same time being very cautious because you don't want to take it too seriously.

So yeah both of them are kind of they're not devotionalistic worshipppy kind of spiritual systems. Both of them are philosophical and detached and in a way they're they're kind of passive systems. They're not so much active as you know virtue in Buddhism is completely negative. You know it's like passive. It's don't do this, don't do that. That there's few positive virtues in Buddhism aside from maybe like generosity.

So there's a similarity in that in that they're both kind of mystical and

metaphysical and they're not like
emphasizing gods.
Certainly they're not emphasizing a
capital G god even though Dao is kind of
an approximation kind of like Brahman in
vanta towards a capital G god
but I mean it's it's similar in that
it's it's not insisting upon you have to
believe this narrative which the
Abrahamic religions do big time. I mean,
how can you be a Christian if you don't
believe the narrative that Jesus was the
only begotten son of God Almighty who
died for our sins and so on so forth.
So yeah, I mean they're like abstract
more or less intellectual yet at the

same time mystical systems that appeal
to people that are attracted to abstract
philosophical and at the same time
mystical systems.
Although personally I think I might
prefer vdanta because dowoism
it has become very corrupted at least um
in traditionally dowist cultures you
know it's turned into a lot of like
sorcery and trying to find the
philosopher stone and immortality and so
forth which one Chinese person said that
dowoism has tried has dedicated itself
to what is not dao you know they're
they're going for immortality by being
in harmony with the way whereas I mean
being in harmony with the way is that

and things just don't last forever.
So I would assume that I mean there's
certain aspects of Buddhism and Dowoism
that are compatible and harmonious which
has allowed them to sort of merge into a
fusion with regard to Chinese Zen.
um you know they they both are really
not insisting upon narratives even
though there's lots of narratives in
Buddhism. I mean you can just dismiss
all the narratives and it doesn't matter
because that's not the point of the
system and it's kind of intellectual
abstract
kind of heading towards mysticism
without really a lot of mystical woowoo

stuff thrown in.

So, you know, kind of searching for harmony, although Dowoism is much more emphas emphatic with regard to harmony than Buddhism is.

But anyways, I'm just going to move on to Chas is his next question. Are you aware of any procedure of commemoration of deceased captain on a ship? And the reason why he brings this up is because Trzask is is Polish. I used to work on a a Polish ship, the Sagitta, with uh Bogumil

Cloma as the captain. And uh Troas is posted on the Discord server his obituary.

And so the the con the idea of deceased

ship captains has entered entered the the chat.

So am I aware of any procedure for commemoration of a deceased captain on a ship? I mean, not other than just like modern Christianity, like you know, like back in the old days on sailing ships when they had burials at sea, you know, you'd have probably the captain, any kind of officer, you know, they might get wrapped in a flag of their nation, slid off a board into the ocean while some clergyman is reciting verses from the Bible or doing a funeral service. And that would that would be it, I guess.

burial at sea with some minister or ship's chaplain, I guess, standing there in in toning, in solemn tones, some sort of funeral service.

Okay,

I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is the last question. This is from Dhamma River and Dama River says, "Where is the silver lining between obsession with moral purity and progress on the path? I recently watched an old interview of yours on a competitor platform, probably Bitshoot, and I was left with this question just for you. You don't have to read this part. It's just for context. I'm reading it anyway. Uh, moral

obsession is important, but it leads to No, moral obsession is important, but it leads to suppression of feelings. So what should we do? At which point do we stop following Cila? It seems like morality is important but clinging to morality can lead to problems as well. So where is the right spot to move forward and move evolve spiritually? These are questions just for context. Um moral obsession any kind of obsession is not good. I mean, it could be like skillful means like when you're like at a beginning stage where you're just like obsessed with practicing correctly and then it becomes just a matter of habit

and then you don't have to be
preoccupied with thinking about it all
the time. It just becomes second nature.
You know, like following Vineia rules
was like that for me as a young monk
where you're just thinking about rules
all the time because you don't want to
break any and then gradually as the
years go by it just you don't have to
think about it much anymore because it's
just automatic. It's become habit.
So there is that.
But let's get up to the actual question
here. Where is the silver lining between
obsession with moral purity and progress
on the path? Well, like I just said, I
mean, sometimes a little bit of

obsession

um can be skillful means at the

beginning as a kind of preliminary step

to establishing good habits, but then

you have to let it go. I mean, you just

automatically can let it go because I

mean, it just becomes second nature.

It's just habitual.

But with regard to being saintly, like I

was mentioning earlier, if you're

excessively saintly more so than is

natural for you, then you could become a

hysterical basket case. And like for

medieval Christian monks, Catholic monks

or or just saints, medieval Catholic

saints, early modern Catholic saints

like St. John of the cross. Um, they were so repressed. They were saints. I mean, it worked to make them saints, but at the same time, they were a little bit nutty like hearing voices and seeing visions and having like psychosmatic illnesses and so forth that kind of messed with them. And that's a kind of tradeoff. I mean, if you really want to be a genuine saint, not just a sage, not like a rascally sage, but like a genuine saint with pure morals, then in all likelihood, you're going to be living a very unnatural kind of life. You're going to be under a lot of strain. You may be a neurotic basket case, but if that really is your priority to be a

saint, then you would consider that to
be an equitable trade. Okay, I'm going
to be a nutty hysterical saint who hears
voices and sees visions and so forth,
maybe dies of some psychosmatic illness,
but still when you want to be just
morally pure
for whatever reason, then that would be
a fair trade-off. I mean, anything that
gets you there would be acceptable if
that really is your highest priority.
But
a saint and a sage are not necessarily
the same person. And you can be
enlightened in my opinion without being
an absolute saint. Even though orthodox

terravada says you have to have pure

sila before you can have pure samadei

before you can have pure wisdom.

But personally I am skeptical of that.

So

let's see. So I mean like the the sage

path of following dharma is I mean

you're as moral as you can manage

but let's say sometimes you just it's

just too much of a strain for you not to

have any sexual urges or not to have

preferences or not to like this person

but dislike that person or not to get

frustrated and angry sometimes

that I mean the The sage more domic path

is this stuff just arises and you don't

repress it. You don't fight against it.

You just observe it mindfully and let it go. Observe it mindfully and let it go. And it might stay because it might be a strong urge. But I mean you just keep noting, noting noting, you know, observing, observing, observing. And I mean that might be too much of a strain for a complete normie. But still, it's not so much that you're repressing like unh wholesome urges and so forth. You let them come to the surface and then you just are mindful of them. And it could be that you're even acting out some of these urges. You know, you might actually be yelling in anger, but still it's like you have the second chance of

at least being mindful of yelling in anger. I've done that a few times as a monk. It's like one time there was this wood cutter that just would not stop cutting down trees in my where I was staying out in the woods and I I yelled at him to clear out. Partly just because he was a distance off, you know, you had to yell just for him to be to hear me. And he wouldn't go. And then finally, I just started yelling at him to just get out. And my hand just swings up. And it's like I'm pointing with my finger like this while I'm yelling at him to get out. And at the same time as I'm yelling, there's a certain part of my mind that's like, "Huh, I wasn't

planning on like waving my finger like that. That's weird." You know, it's just sort of like this reflex kind of a thing that happened.

So, there was still like this mindful detachment involved even when I was apparently losing my [__] and like bellowing at somebody. And that that it can happen. I mean I [clears throat] I remember telling a certain Burmese monk who was actually a mahasi Arya or he was declared an Arya by Upandida and then later on realized he probably wasn't really a soda pana although it was pretty obvious to people that knew him because he was very crusty but I tried

to tell him that I mean I have just been like enraged before and mindful at the same time you know it's like I've one time just because of the heat you know it's just the heat in central Burma is just like It's like an oven and there's no escape. There's no electricity, no air conditioning, no electric fans, anything like that. It's just you just sweat and just can't be comfortable at all ever. Sometimes even when you take a bath, the well water is warm. You don't stop sweating even when you're taking a bath. And so I just kind of lost my [__] one time. Just kind of snapped a little bit and was just yelling and cussing and slamming

things. And there was like this
detachment that occurred where part of
my mind is just observing the other part
throwing a throwing a conion. You know,
is it like I was an actor playing the
role of somebody throwing a conception
when I mean the the conion was just
nature taking its course. I mean it was
really happening. I mean relatively
speaking. But there was still this other
part of my mind just watching.
And I've told the story before of my
father when he was um going cold turkey
on like 40 years of alcoholism
and and he was just this macho guy who
with the bull in a china shop approach

to life. So he's sitting there going cold turkey on alcohol and going through the the DTS and he's got like two escape routes on the table in front of him. He's alone in the house. He's got a bottle of booze and a loaded pistol just in case it becomes unbearable. You know, either one of those is a way out. And he's just raging. You know, he's hallucinating. He's tearing at his hair. He's pissing his pants just going through the DTS of a of like a hardcore alcoholic. And he starts hallucinating this this eye on the wall. And I've always imagined it as like the eye on top of the pyramid on the back of a $1 bill. just this this observing

emotionless eye just observing
everything just observing him freaking
out and he knew that that was just like
an aspect of his own personality that
was like his his higher self or
something you know and in a way it was
similar to me having a mindful
connection where there's still this this
one aspect of your mind that's just
observing all the time and everyone has
that all the time that's one of the
realizations you have when you have a
moment like that it's always there. It's
just that most people, they're so
identified with their ego that it's
they're just kind of closed off to other

aspects of their consciousness that lie
beyond the the boundaries of like the
conscious ego.
So that's kind of a
kind of a digression I suppose
but yeah I mean obsession with moral
purity at best it's just like an
elementary stage in dharma practice and
eventually you just have to make peace
with who you are like most of us are
just not saints by nature changing your
personality is a hell of a lot easier
easier to say than to actually do.
I mean, reprogramming your own
personality
is a virtual impossibility. Some people
can manage it and it usually takes some

kind of crisis to really accomplish it because otherwise you're just setting your ways. You're you're governed by habit and so forth. So that you can try to change the way you go about things and it just doesn't work. where you can make a little bit of headway at first and then eventually you get to bedrock and then you just stop making progress. So for most people like most westerners just become like the morally pure saint is not the most realistic option. Yeah, I mean it's it's more realistic to strive for being an occasionally rascally sage than to be the morally pure saint. In which case you use

mindfulness as the panacea. You know, it just denatures your defilements as they arise at least to some degree. At least you're detaching from them and you're not like reinforcing them so much. And that's the real progress on the path. It's not so much repressing like unh wholesome, unskillful urges. It's allowing them to come to the surface without just getting lost in them. Which for some strange reason reminds me of an old saying of of uh Jordan Peterson back when he was still popular, which is you should be able to be a monster and then not be one. So it's it's like from the orthodox terraata Buddhist point of view like an arant

can't be a monster. I mean it's just he
can't. It's just this law of nature that
a fully enlightened being just cannot do
bad things. But it seems to me that
[clears throat] I mean the possibility
is always there. And in some cases, a
fully enlightened being can do things
that other people disapprove of that
they might see as immoral or whatever.
But I mean, the the enlightened mind
just isn't going there. I mean, it just
doesn't deal in these dichotoies of good
and bad anymore anyway.
>> [sighs]
>> So obsession with moral purity.
I mean if you if you really think that

moral purity is really your top priority then I guess you can just you would assume that all the hysteria and and nuttiness and so forth that it goes along with it in many cases is worthwhile. But personally, I do not think that absolute saintliness is necessary in the cultivation of wisdom. And you just have to be in harmony with who you are. I mean, it's it's good to know thyself.

And I guess we're done. Might as well be done. What the hell? We've been going at it for the better part of three hours anyway.

So,

as I uh almost never say at the

beginning, I always say it at the end. If you have any questions you think I can answer, especially with regard to dharma, like early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism, meditation, you know, aesthetic practice, that kind of thing, feel free to ask. If you have other questions you think I can answer, biology, politics, or you just want my opinion, because that's the best you're going to get out of me in with regard to some things, then feel free to ask. And no more than three questions per person, please. And like and subscribe if you have not done so already. And be happy. And by golly, I just noticed there's

like a pause button here. I could like pause and then just continue recording. And I just noticed that. But [snorts] uh be happy anyway.

Okay then I guess we are functioning

here. We appear to be recording

which is good.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number

170. I am your host Po Basa and this

is my beverage

and I've gotten up really early to do

this. It's like I've [clears throat]

gotten into this

routine now of doing Q&As's like after I

get up on Sunday and then uploading them

on Sunday instead of up uh recording

them on Saturday and uploading them

early in the morning like 11:15 on

Sunday. And so I got up because we we

have to go somewhere at 3:30. So I got to be done before 3:30 in the afternoon. So, I just got up at this god awful time. This is the earliest I have gotten up in a long time. It was actually morning when I got up. It wasn't even noon yet. It was still practically the middle of the night because I work nights now. It's like I come home from work like 2:00 in the morning and then usually we stay up until after 4. You know, you get up afternoon, sometimes just a little afternoon, but still. Ah, my sweetie is not even up yet, which is why the beard remains unbraided. So, I got to answer these questions here. I got up just for you guys.

Let's see if I can do this.

I used to amaze my friends when I was a kid by making farting sounds when I rubbed my hands together.

So, let's see. I suppose I should just dive right into this. Oh, I forgot to say though that 170 obviously is not a prime number. It is, let's see, 2 * 5 * 17.

That's a pretty easy one.

So, I suppose I should just commence to answering questions here.

And [clears throat] the first question is from Tynen. And Tynen says in reference to the self that does not exist. Is this referring to the I self

that narrates in our minds that

identifies as and with this and that?

Well, not necessarily. I mean that would

be included I suppose. But the eye self

that narrates in our minds I mean just

the narration itself the terravada

Buddhists I mean [snorts]

depends on how you look at it if they

would include that as the self I mean in

terra Buddhism orthodox terravada like

abidama philosophy the commentarial

tradition and so forth

um mental states are real it's just that

to have that there's this individual

person

that is generating these mental states

is the self that does not exist. The

mental states really do arise in all

that due to causes

but

um that itself is not the self. Just

mental states themselves or

consciousness itself

is not the self that is denied.

But the self that is denied is is like

an an ultimately real separated

individuality.

Um that is like a conscious being

from the point of view of terra Buddhism

that would be the self. Although in some

schools of Mahayana Buddhism and I'm

inclined to go along with these schools

of Mahayana Buddhism with regard to this

that the self would be any kind of separate individual entity conscious or not subject or object that there's just nothing that is inherently separate and distinct from the rest of the universe.

So let's see here. I I just woke up a little while ago, so you got to bear with me at least the first couple questions when I'm I'm like getting some momentum going.

So yeah, I mean from the terra Buddhist point of view, it's it's sort of like a subjective self, but it's not necessarily

um [clears throat] just mental states arising. It would be like this the

conceit I am.

So you know be like the ego although

again from the [clears throat] like the

Mahayana point of view even this cup

would be a non-existent self because

it's just not like ultimately distinct

from the rest of the universe.

[snorts]

[cough]

Almost tried to inhale the coffee

instead of drinking it which is not

advisable.

So, let's see here.

Did I answer that question? It seems

like I answered it too concisely.

You know, it's

if I answer a question too quickly,
there's a certain feeling of insecurity,
like being the first person to hand in a
test. Let's see.
I don't Yeah, I guess I answered that
question. So, I'm just going to move on
to Tinan's next question. And he says,
"Would you say Mara is the
personification of the ego?"
And I don't think that was the intention
that to some degree, I mean, Mara is
like egotistical, you know, he's got a
big ego and all that, but I don't think
that he is [clears throat] the
personification of the ego. I mean,
Mara,
um, Mara literally means like killer.

that mara just going with you know Indo-Uropean languages that m a r in mara is essentially the same as the m o r in mortal or the mur in murder it's just means death you know he is he is death he's sort of like the the guy on the beach that the knight is contending with in inmar bergman's movie the seventh seal that that would be mara essentially his death But he's also just the god. He's he's like the the overlord of samsara.

So he's he's like the personification of samsara more than the personification of the ego. Although of course the ego is generated

or you know ego and samsara
you know [clears throat] in a way
they're sort of mutually dependent upon
each other. You know it's all part of
the same package deal of
unenlightenment.
So you could say indirectly indirectly
he's kind of a personification of the
ego, but that's really that really
wasn't the original idea that he was
just sort of the overlord of Samsara
that's trying to keep people from
becoming enlightened. [clears throat]
And if he can't get you to be bad, he'll
get you to be good because even the
heaven realms are within his realm of
samsara.

All 31 planes of existence with Nibbana
not being on that list
are [clears throat] Samsara and at least
to some degree you could say they are
Mara's realm even though Mara lives in
the highest realm of the sensuous
sphere. You know it's the heaven realm
of the the deities who delight in the
creations of others
if I remember correctly.
So, I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question. And this is from
Fred. And and Fred is a peculiar guy
sometimes. And his first question is
kind of peculiar, also a little
probingly personal. He says, "Do you

have a tattoo on your willie?" And I don't have any tattoos at all. It's just I just never like the idea. I'm kind of a minimalist. And when you it's sort of like when I was young [clears throat] or younger just the idea that to make your mind up with regard to what you want to be when you grow up it just immediately cancels out all other possibilities. So it's like when you've committed yourself to getting a tattoo of like the anchor or the heart that says mom on it on your on your bicep or whatever then I mean that's it. I mean is that's you can't you know that has like you have collapsed the state vector of all the possibilities

and it's just kind of limiting or
whatever and so I just never really like
the idea of getting a tattoo. My brother
has several tattoos. My father had one
on his arm lest I forget.
And my sweetheart, she's she has
occasionally brought up the issue of us
getting tattoos, you know, sort of
matching tattoos, but I really not I
mean, I'm kind of open-minded on the
subject, but yeah, I mean, my f I I
won't even talk tell you about the joke
my father had about Willie
[clears throat] tattoos, but he had he
had this tattoo joke about
[clears throat] Fred's question here,

but

I won't go into details, But it has

something to do with a dime

metamorphosing into a silver dollar.

So, no, I don't have any tattoos at all.

And that's fine.

My sweetheart, being of a a younger era,

slightly younger era than me, came from

a time when pretty much everybody got

tattoos. Even like virgins got tattoos.

But

yeah, and then I lived in Burma for many

years where even, you know, village

damsels can have some dainty little

Buddhist protection symbol tattooed on

their wrist or some such thing. So I'm

just going to move on to Fred's second

question, which is a little more Dharma oriented.

He says, "If Nibbana is blowing out and oblivion, is [clears throat] it worth pursuing and can it be achieved?" Well, Nibbana is blowing out

um

like like a fire blows out. And the ancient Indians had different concepts of fire than like modern westerners have like [clears throat] in in ancient India fire was a god. It was ugy. And agny a g n i is has the same etmology of like [clears throat] uh English words like ignite or ignous like an ignous rock. So um it wasn't really oblivion. I mean

fire was a god. God fire ugnney was like

the messenger between like humans and

the gods. You know you you you'd send

your offerings to the gods through the

fire sacrifice

and ugnney was the fire. And when a fire

went out, it didn't just disappear or it

it didn't cease to exist so much as it

just went into like an unmanifest state.

You know, the fire was always kind of

latent. And [clears throat] like

medieval alchemy,

um, medieval protoysics had this idea

like [clears throat] combustible

materials

would contain this substance called

fleistin that was like fire. the

potential of fire contained within wood and coal and all that. And the Indians had kind of a similar idea that fire just becomes like unmanifest and and kind of latent or potential when it wasn't actually burning as a flame. And it's so you could call it oblivion just from a samsuric point of view, but it doesn't mean that it ceases to exist. It's just kind of becomes unmanifest. So Nibana is metaphorically blowing out and from a samsaric perspective you could call it oblivion even though from the ultimate perspective it is not. Um then is it worth [clears throat] pursuing and can it be achieved? Yeah,

it'd still be

yeah it's it's obviously worth pursuing.

It's like the whole goal of Buddhism at

least nibbana is regardless of exactly

how you define it. any definition you

give is going to be in inadequate

anyway.

H and somebody just uh came to our front

door and I'm ignoring them because

[snorts] we got to do this. This I'm

doing this for you guys.

So um is Nibbana worth pursuing and can

it be achieved? Um it's obviously worth

pursuing. Can it be achieved? That's

kind of a trick question.

Um I mean from the from the Buddhist

point of view the question the answer

obviously is yes nibana can be achieved
there have been enlightened beings but
to call it like something that is got
you know that kind of thing it's it's
just an inadequate any kind of language
about nibbana or nirvana is going to be
inadequate and just kind of in logically
invalid
because it's just beyond language and
[clears throat] you try and capture it
with words and it just doesn't work that
way.
So, [sighs] I think I'm just going to
move on to Fred's third question,
which is, is the oblivion of deep sleep
equivalent to nibbana without the

reemergence to consciousness? And

[snorts]

I remember when I was staying at Pandita

Rama back when venerable Mahasi Pantita

was still alive, he actually declared

that nibana is like deep sleep. And his

teacher Mahasi Seattle used to say this

also. So um [clears throat]

it's not really a tenet of orthodox

terravada but it seems to be a tenate of

the mahasi tradition at least back in

the 1990s when I was at Pandarama

that uh deep sleep is about as close to

nibbana as you can get and there are

some upanachads

that talk about like the three levels of

consciousness

waking consciousness dreaming
consciousness and deep sleep and then
there's at least One upanishad refers to
the fourth which would be like the
enlightened mind.
But I'm just kind of digressing here.
The oblivion is the oblivion of deep
sleep equivalent to nibbana. I mean
[clears throat] nibbana is awakening.
You know the Buddha literally Buddha
literally means awakened.
So, how is it that
like enlightenment or awakening would
resemble deep sleep more than even
resembles awaken consciousness? And I
was thinking that at the time that when

Upidita [clears throat] was saying, you know, that nibbana is like deep sleep, it's like no, it's really not. I mean, how is awakening equivalent to deep sleep? Also, if you're in a deep sleep, you can still get woken up. So, it's not total oblivion. If you're in a deep sleep, somebody can still wake you up because you're still I mean, you're still conscious. That's something a lot of people don't realize. They think that when they're asleep, they're just unconscious. But even when you're sleeping, you still have this awareness. If you didn't have the awareness, you'd be in a coma and nobody would be able to

wake you up. You know, they could just throw cold water on you. you wouldn't feel it cuz you'd be in this oblivion. But enlightenment, no, it's not it's not um [snorts] it's not similar to deep sleep in my opinion.

So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Romeo. [snorts] And Romeo says, "Are there any Terravada Buddhist temples near where you live in South Carolina?" And actually it is my understanding that there is a Terra Buddhist temple right here in town.

Um

but

it's it's Bikunis. It's the new bikunis

and it's apparently they're somehow

um

the the the the place there is somehow

under the patronage of some Sri Lankan

monk who I don't think lives there. I

think it's sort of like this little

house convent place with a few of these

new bunies living there. So that's the

only terra Buddhist place I know of.

There is a like a a Vietnamese Mahayana

temple somewhere in this area that I've

heard about, but again um I've just

heard about them. So [clears throat]

I've never been to these places.

So Romeo's second question is if so with

regard to are there any Terra Buddhist

temples near where I live? If so, do you

sometimes stop by and pay them a visit for meditation and or dhamma talk? And no, I've never been to um any Buddhist temples in South Carolina.

And the main reason why I don't well I mean

my my experience with like temples terra Buddhist temples in the west has not been entirely positive. You know they tend to be kind of degenerate in certain ways. I mean, even even like temples in in Burma, Buddhist temples in Burma, like monasteries, they're also pretty degenerate in certain ways. So, my Buddhist practice, my following of Dhamma generally avoided monasteries. I

mean, I'd live at a monastery, but like I'd be living on the outskirts of a monastery or I'd be like the only person, the only monk at the monastery. Like the the one monastery I lived at longer than any other place. For most of the time I was living there, I was living in a cave up on the hill and there was one old monk living down by the river in a hut. And then he got bitten by a by a cobra and died. And then I was the only monk there for a while. And then finally there was like young Burmese monks that kind of heard about me and wanted to practice with me or wanted to learn from me or something. They started moving in and then I

eventually moved out. [snorts]

So yeah, I mean I've never really been monastery centric in my Buddhism [clears throat] other than just kind of the the necessity of a monk living at monastery in certain certain circumstances. Like when I first came back to America, I was like in 2011, I was really trying to be a monk in America that wasn't living in a monastery. Just sort of like house, what do you call it? couch surfing, that kind of thing. And I mean, it worked while it was working, but it just wasn't really sustainable. It just didn't work out in the long run.

So, and and then I just if I were to visit these bikunis, it would have to be, you know, it would it would slip out at some point or another that I really don't consider them to be genuine bikunis. You know, they're lay women wearing robes with shaved heads. In my opinion, I do not think that Bikuni ordination in Terravada really is legit. And so, yeah, I mean, just going there [clears throat] would be already kind of getting into the danger zone for me. [laughter]

And the the Sri Lankan monk, I'm not even sure where he lives. I don't think he's living there with the bikunis. So he probably it may be that he started

the place and then got like a different place and moved on and then the Bukunis eventually because it's politically correct and everything to support bikunis um you know they got maybe a better place and just the Sri Lankan monk is kind of like a distant patron or something.

So yeah, I do not sometimes stop by. I've never I've never been to any Buddhist temple or monastery in South Carolina since I've lived here. So, I'm just going to move on to Romeo's third question, which is if not, then how do you maintain a connection with your Buddhist spirituality? Well, I mean,

it's internal for the most part. I mean, that's kind of the way I maintain a connection with my Buddhist spirituality as a monk living in in a forest in Burma. You know, it's just it's internal.

Um, it's I really have not been like socially oriented, [clears throat] you know, I don't really try to reinforce my Buddhism through like dharma groups, that kind of thing. I mean there there are certain advantages like if you go to a dhama hall to meditate you know there's like a 1 hour meditation then you're much more likely to sit for the full hour without getting distracted and getting up and you know going off and

doing something else just because you know you've got sort of this group kind of reinforcing your behavior.
But my connection with Buddhist spirituality, I mean, doing these Q&A videos is is like a major one. And just having the sort of a more or less Dharma oriented Discord server. I mean, that's that's kind of my another connection with like a um Western Buddhists or just I mean, not all of them are Western even.
[clears throat] Um,
and just I mean, it's just been internalized. You know, I was a monk for 30 years, so I'm still carrying around a

lot of a lot of dharmic ideas and attitudes and so forth regardless of my external environment.

Uh, so I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from SG.

And SG, let's see. This is a question. I'm pretty sure I think there's a question mark in here.

Let's see.

This is kind of weird. I don't remember this. The theists have ultimate reality as being a person while Buddhists say it is not. Is it then correct? Okay, so there's a question here. Is it then correct to say that nibbana is dead or passive like a rock? Or can we say it is consciousness or mind that is

undifferentiated and began beyond
categorization
in which case we could say it has its
own kind of singular life. This would be
quite platonic and seems to allow for
the idea that it can act as a vertical
cause and influence on everything
without changing or involving itself
like rays of the sun don't diminish it.
So the actual question here is it
correct to say that nibana is dead or
passive like a rock or can we say it is
consciousness or mind that is
undifferiated beyond categorization such
there. So yeah, it is kind of
interesting how he starts this question.

The theists have ultimate reality as a being, as being a person, which is kind of strange if you think about it. the highest truth is some sort of sort of superhum superhuman being which is kind of a peculiar idea and it's sort of like an anthropological phenomenon I think where we humans try to imagine the highest truth as just like sort of like a human except be [clears throat] better than mere human you know sort of a god

>> [sighs]

>> But no, it's not correct to say that Nibbana is dead or passive like a rock. Um, you can say, I mean, you'd come closer to the truth. I suppose it'd be

less of an egregious heresy to say that nibana is consciousness or mind that is undifferentiated and began beyond categories. And apparently there were a few attempts early on to define nibbana this way. And Brahman and the upanachads is defined this way as just infinite formless consciousness.

But once you reify it, you've kind of dragged it into samsara and it's not really nirvana or nibbana anymore.

>> [clears throat]

>> So the Buddhists very wisely in my opinion have had a policy of reifying nibbana or nirvana as little as possible. Reifying the capital a

absolute

as little as possible because reifying

it just like perverts it you know it it

just contaminates and and kind of ruins

it. It turns it into something that

isn't nirvana. I mean the word nirvana

is not the same as actual nirvana

[snorts] just like the word god isn't

the same as

actual god capital g god I mean just

both of them representing the absolute

the absolute really cannot be put into

words do not stick to it [snorts]

so it would be a little more correct to

say that It's consciousness or mind that

is undifferiated. Like I've I've

continually brought up the the fact that

at least in two places in the sutas,
once in the dean kaya, once in the
majinika, there's an old fragment of a
verse saying essentially implying that
[clears throat] nirvana or enlightenment
is is infinite consciousness. You know,
it's unmanifest luminous all around.
>> [sighs]
>> So [snorts] I mean they have gone there.
Early Buddhist philosophers have gone
there and I think the Mahayana Buddhists
have gone there way more than the
Terravata Buddhists did or the the like
the proto terravada terravada Buddhist
before that whole idea just got
dismissed got rejected.

So yeah, I mean [clears throat] you can say that I mean anything [snorts] you say about is going to be invalid, but I mean you could plausibly kind of say that Nirvana is infinite formless consciousness, luminous all around.

So then SG lower down here says this would be quite platonic and seems to allow for the idea that it can act as a vertical cause and influence on every well it's not really a cause. I mean it's it's no more of a cause than saying that ceramic is the cause of this cup or this mug if you will.

It's like the essence or substance if you reify it. You know, if you start calling it an it, you know, it's the

formless. It's it's the the uncarved
block of marble that contains within it
all possible statues.
So that marble, it doesn't really cause
the statues, but it is like the essence
or substance of the these virtual
potential conditional statues.
Yeah. So it's not really a cause but it
is um like the essence
in a way in like a metaphysical sense
that that really is heresy from ter the
point of view of terabara Buddhism but
later Mahayana schools embraced the idea
um understandably so.
So let's see did I adequately answer
this question I think I did.

Okay.

Okay. I'm just [snorts] going to move on. Next question. This is from is met and Ismmet asks kind of a long question here.

Okay. He says, "Being [clears throat] too curious and encouraged by people online. I decided to experiment with psychedelic mushrooms. For a while, it was okay. Nothing crazy happened other than colorful visuals and mild improvement to my mood. The last time was different. I have I was halfway through consuming the juice and it was evidently not the same as my previous experiments. My mind was instantly filled with this cosmic and chaotic

energy. I used to be skeptical about these kind of antodesses. I guess I guess he means anecdotes and thought they were probably blowing it out of proportion until what I could describe as my encounter with an interdimensional demon.

First my memory was gone, then time and space. I was dead, just nothingness. Then I was resurrected, and at that point I believed everything I'd been skeptical of previously. That was followed by many hours of delirium. I was pretty sure I'd lost my mind and there's no coming back. I was coming in and out of this dimension. Time and

space were not consistent and only partly manifest. That broke my trust in this reality pretty much. I realized I trust it this much because it's been consistent for so long. But it didn't have to be. It could disappear in an instant. I could not really trust anything. And I was full of paranoia and fear. My hypothesis then was I strayed away from God and he punished me in this way. I prayed to God to save me from this demon and I'd do anything. I was desperate. I only realized the value of my sanity after I put it at risk. 3 days later, I'm still trying to adapt back to this reality and fear for my sanity as if I could lose it at any moment. Any

suggestions?

Well, I think what kind of elicited this long question or request from ISMET is my answer to the the first question in the previous Q&A talking about the trickster in the paranormal u by George P. Hansen. And you know, he talks about how like [clears throat] in order for anything to exist, there has to be stability. And so this version of samsara has built-in stability just by default laws of nature and so forth. Plus humans have to create more of this order and stability to because our minds are a little too chaotic. I suppose you know we're not like an animal that just

follows these instincts and and reflexes, you know, more than religiously. that we we we've been liberated a little bit by being able to think outside the box to some degree. And so we need greater order to keep things in line because the laws of physics, the laws of nature and all this are I mean you can break the law. They're there to keep things orderly so that this version of reality can can persist for more than a trillionth of a second.

And that there's infinite number of other possible realities contained in that uncarved block of stone, that infinite formless consciousness.

So

let's see here. [clears throat]

There was there's one part here that I I

would kind of mention something.

[clears throat]

Let's see.

Let's see. First my memory was gone.

Then time and space I was dead. Just

just nothingness. Well,

I mean, this is just kind of like a

niggle, you know, just sort of a trivial

thing, I suppose.

But if there was just nothingness, you

wouldn't experience it. You know, it's

like if you were dead with just

nothingness, you would not be aware of

that at all because there would be no awareness. If there's just nothingness, there's no awareness of the nothingness. that at [clears throat] the very least there was a kind of concept of nothingness like when you get into like the formless realms you know the arupas in terra Buddhism you know there's the realm of infinite nothingness or just nothingness

and the reason that you can be aware of that is because it is an idea of nothingness that your whole your whole universe has just shrunk down to this idea of nothingness but if it really was pure nothingness that would be it it there'd be nothing there. I mean, you

wouldn't be experiencing anything.

So,

um I suppose I could mention that the

the last time I took LSD before I became

a monk, I took it under the wrong

circumstances. I took it in like this

grungy trailer park with this person

that I had known since I was a teenager.

But I mean, he was kind of, you know,

not really a wholesome person. And then

he there was like this other stranger

that came over when I was there. And I

just eventually I [clears throat] just

kind of broke down into a kind of

psychotic episode. The only thing that

really saved me was the awareness. Okay,

I'm on LSD right now. I'm not going to make any like final decisions until tomorrow after I've come down. But I was fairly persuaded that it was like Armageddon was unleashed upon the earth and it was the final battle between good and evil and that these two people, my old friend and this stranger, were trying to drug me so that they could sacrifice me to Satan because they were on the other side. And I was determined that I'm I'm on the side of good, you know, and it was sort of like the standard paranoid psychotic sort of like narrative that was going on in my mind. And like I say, the the thing that really protected me was the awareness.

Okay, I'm on drugs. I'm just going to

wait till tomorrow.

>> [snorts]

>> So, um,

essentially what happened was that, you

know, going with the the thesis of

George P. as in the the trickster in the

paranormal that you broke down the order

and all this chaotic ju guu was coming

in and it just kind of like disrupted

the usual patterns

of that maintain the stability of this

version of Samsara for is met. And so

yeah, it was it if you have like a bad

acid trip or in this case a bad mushroom

trip

[clears throat] we can call it bad even though I mean it has its good points you know it's it it kind of can strengthen you give you insights apparently it gave is met insights into the way samsara works that kind of thing but I mean you I was like [clears throat] emotionally bruised for like six months afterwards you know it was like it took a while to fully recover from this just in my case [clears throat] it was just like a paranoid psychotic episode that was drug induced and even though it was drug induced I mean still it has like this harrowing effect on you know it's like you you escape from a concentration camp or a torture chamber or something then

even though you're out I mean still it's
going to take a while I mean some people
they can be processing that stuff for
the rest of their life especially if
they're female
females are it's like they
[clears throat] specialize in just
processing traumas that they had decades
previously.
So, let's see here. [clears throat]
Um,
yeah, I mean, one thing you got to bear
in mind is that it's mind-made. Of
course, the world we're living in is
mind-made also. So, let's see here. I'm
just it's kind of a long question so I'm

just kind of like skimming through it seeing if there's anything I should particularly mention.

Uh followed by many hours of delirium. Yeah, that's that's drug induced still. So there's that. And then once I mean once the like like most people and pretty much all non-human animals that have a mind just assume that this is reality. It's common sense realism or naive realism. You know, you just take everything at face value that that bookcase back there really is a bookcase back there with books that have pages with with like print on them. Even if nobody's opening the book and looking, you know, it's still in there and people

just assume that that's reality. You know, scientific realism is largely based on this kind of thinking. And

[clears throat]

um when you all of a sudden, you know, that idea sort of gets kicked in the head, you know, it can just cause a great deal of instability and just chaotic energy and so forth.

[snorts]

Um I think all in all, this experience that is met is probably more positive than negative. I mean it was harrowing at the time because his you know his ideas of what are what is real were I mean they [clears throat] were like

profoundly shaken and weakened

but I mean it's like old habits you know

all of your your past karma or most of

it you know is reinforcing

our existence in a like a stable pattern

sort of samsara

that is somewhat predictable and

consistent. I mean, you got to have uh

like a minimum amount of stability and

consistency and predictability.

Otherwise, it's just so chaotic that I

mean, you stop being you kind of, you

know, it's like in a dream state where

your dreams you can just it could just

shift from one thing to another. Nothing

necessarily stays the same.

So, it's [clears throat]

you know that kind of that kind of existence is way less stable. You know, it's not as sustainable as living in the kind of empirical sort of objective universe that we're living in now, which still is mind-made.

Let's see.

It could disappear. And my hypothesis then was I strayed away from God. Well, I mean, you didn't really stray away from God. you just kind of got behind the curtain and were exposed to more of God just in the fact that just infinite potential, infinite possibilities. You know, it's like this stable little cross-section of God that we're used to.

I mean, you strayed beyond that into like the scariness of just the I mean, you didn't get into the totality of God, but still you got into some of the like the alternative realities that are all equally contained in God, so to speak. And yeah, I mean, that can be really scary, especially the first time you experience something like that.

So, [sighs]

let's see. I only realize the value of my sanity after I put it at risk. 3 days later, you're still trying to Well, I hope I hope it doesn't take 6 months for you to fully recover like it did in my case. Um, but yeah, I mean, it's the uncarved block of marble. I mean, that

would be God. Capital G God. And just
put air quotes on there just because I
mean, words really can't do it justice.
I mean, it's just infinite
possibilities, including all sorts of
weird, chaotic,
scary stuff.
And so human beings who have gotten a
mind big enough and flexible enough that
just the laws of physics aren't quite
enough. We have to have taboss and like
social norms and all this kind of stuff
to to further stabilize things to keep
us locked in to this samsara that is
more or less stable and predictable
because it gets you get too wild, you

get too liinal and I mean you could

really can just like go off the track

away from this kind of samsara into

something that maybe [clears throat] you

can't come back from. So, I mean there

is that and like I've said like in like

it mentions in the book the trickster in

the paranormal that a lot of like

witches for example or psychics

um in order to break the laws of physics

by doing their magic or whatever it is

they will deliberately

like flout or violate

like taboo [clears throat]

social norms and that kind of thing just

as a way of increasing the the liinal

juju

that's getting into this system and taking strong psychedelics can do the same kind of thing.

So I do hope that uh

I do hope that is met is doing better now and just realize I mean it's just beyond this version of reality is an infinite number of other versions of reality and some of them are just completely chaotic. Most of them are, you know, most of them. I mean, when you've got infinite possibilities, most of the possibilities aren't going to be like safe, stable systems.

They're just going to be all over the place, just wild with just no no rules.

[sighs] So, I mean, you have to prepare yourself for that. like meditation masters, you can kind of get into

[clears throat]

um or or sort of just take a safer route,

a less risky kind of route in in like cultivating

this infinite formless consciousness or at least some human approximation of that.

[sighs]

So I guess I pretty much answered that and again I do have to be done within a certain time limit. I think I think we got plenty of time though. But still, we got to go and get some an antique piece

of furniture from somebody at 3:30 in the afternoon today. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Stellar Supreme, etc., etc., because he has more than one name. He says in the sealoasuta

uh no he says the sealoasuta states two of the marital responsibilities of a husband to his wife are one hand over household authority and give her control over managing the home affairs and two provide adornments supply her with clothes jewelry and items to maintain her beauty and then stellar supreme etc etc stellar supreme at Paul says, "Do you adhere to these with airrain?" And

airrain is the the name that my

[clears throat] woman takes on the

Discord server.

[snorts]

[sighs and clears throat]

So, with regard to handing over

household authority and giving her

control over managing the home affairs,

she has more interest in that than me

anyway. She's very aesthetically

oriented. So, she's the one that is like

making most of the decisions with regard

to like furniture and curtains, that

kind of thing. I've really never had

much interest in that sort of thing. I'm

I'm a minimalist. If I were here by

myself, there'd be the fish tank and a

bookcase and that probably be it. You know, a desk and a chair in this room. And

so I mean she does just sort of

I mean she has just taken that responsibility with my blessings. But I do have the power of veto. For example, one time she bought this reproduction of a painting and put it on the wall in our bedroom and I just thought it was an ugly painting. I mean she will talk about how oh that painting is too muddy. This painting looked like it was painted with mud. I mean, it was just you could hardly even tell what it was supposed to be, you know? It was supposed to be like

some oceanscape with waves or something,
but it was so like uh what's the word?
Like it was like a a big painting
movement. Uh like in the late 1800s
expression. [clears throat]
Gosh,
it's weird that I have these mental
blocks sometimes.
impressionistic, but I mean it just
wasn't realistic and it just looked like
it was painted with mud and you could
hardly even tell what it was supposed to
be. I just did not like that. So finally
I just put my foot down and insisted
that the painting come off the wall. So
I do have a certain power of veto. I
still have some authority. I haven't

just completely surrendered all
authority with regard to the running
running this house, managing its affairs
and so forth. But she mostly takes care
of that stuff. So that's fine. And then
providing adornments,
supplying her with clothes, jewelry, and
items to maintain her beauty. Well,
again, she pretty much takes care of
most of that herself. Most of that
herself. She has access to the bank
account.
So yeah, I'm doing that largely
passively. I mean, like
buying her gifts, you know, like
Christmas is coming, you know,

Valentine's Day, her birthday, our anniversary. I that that's when I'll I'll give her stuff like that other than just flowers. You know, I'll come home and give her flowers sometimes.

But um with regard to clothes and jewelry and stuff, it's it's hit or miss. I've got like maybe a 50/50 record in getting something that she really likes. You know, other other times, you know, she'll thank me for it sweetly and all and then it goes on the shelf and she never wears it or whatever. But um yeah,

I adhere to these pretty much and it just kind of happens spontaneously organically anyway.

So yeah, [snorts] I do follow the seal wada sut with regard to those two marital responsibilities of a husband to his wife. [snorts] How well she follows her responsibilities as stated in the sigala watasuta is another question.

So, I'm just going to move on to Stellar Supreme at all's next question here. How necessary do you consider it to extend meta to all beings when sending it to particular beings who need it if you don't have negative intentions towards beings more broadly?

I understand this is the hardest part for some people, but what about when it isn't? Two question marks, but the same

question. And I'm not, this is kind of a a strange question here that I don't fully comprehend. For whatever reason, my mind is not wrapping around it very well. How necessary do you consider it to extend meta to all beings? Well, if you just stop there, it wouldn't be necessary at all. I mean, it's you don't have to send meta to all beings. So, he says, see, how necessary do you consider it to extend meta to all beings when sending it to particular beings who need it? Well, still I mean if there's one being who needs meta, you can send meta to that one person. It's not necessary to send it to all beings in the universe and an infinite number of them and

they're not ultimately real anyway. See
who if you don't have negative
intentions
towards beings more broadly, then that
part is the part that confuses me.
If you don't have negative intentions
towards beings more broadly, that part
is the part that confuses me somewhat.
So, let's just ignore that part.
So, how necessary do I consider it to
extend magic to all beings when sending
it to particular beings who need it? I
mean, it's there's no necessity at all.
It's not like a commandment in Buddhism.
Thou thou shalt send meta to all beings,
you know? It's I mean it's optional and

it may be beneficial. I mean it's clearly beneficial. It's good karma to send meta to one being or two beings or 10 beings or 10 zillion beings or all beings.

You know that's that is wholesome behavior if you're if you're doing it like sincerely.

you know, not just, you know, it's time to do meta meditation, so I'll just follow the cookbook and the cookbook instructions on doing meta meditation and just kind of pretending that you're sending meta to all beings.

I mean, even that probably has some good karma mixed in with it. Even though a lot of people who do meta meditation

really are just kind of fooling
themselves,
you know, they just get kind of like
this warm glowy feeling in their chest
and think that, you know, that's that's
just the result of them sending meta to
all beings when really it's they're
generating the warm glowy feeling in
themselves while, you know, kind of
pretending to to love the universe.
So, let's see here.
I understand this is the hardest part
for some people. What about when it
isn't? Yeah. Well, yeah. Again, that
that one phrase or clause in there has
confused me. So, I do not fully follow

the the question that stellar supreme, etc., etc. Um, he has like this abstract way of thinking sometimes that is hard to follow.

So, let's see.

Um,

the hardest part for some people, I mean, sending meta to people that you don't like, sending meta to people that that hate you and are causing problems for you, that is generally the hard part for for most people that are that are sending meta. Um, but it's still, I mean, if you can succeed at that, it really does work and it can actually change the attitude or at least help to inspire a change in the attitude in the

other person who's causing problems for you.

But I mean nowhere in the sutas is it mandatory to send meta to anybody. Um I mean to have [clears throat] there is there is some suta. It's kind of an anomalous suta where the Buddha is saying it's better to swallow a redot iron ball than for a monk to be accepting alms from the people without without meta in his heart. That kind of thing. It's kind of an anomalous suta, but still as a general rule, it is not necessary to send meta because like ethics in Buddhism are neutral. It's it's they're they're largely negative.

It's don't do this, don't do that. The

only positive [clears throat] virtue

um or the main positive

like

ethical action is generosity in

Buddhism.

So,

how I'm still trying to wrap my head

around this though. How necessary do you

consider it to extend meta to all beings

when sending it to particular beings who

need it if you don't have negative

intentions towards beings more broadly?

Um, yeah, I mean it's not necessary at

all.

So, I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is also from Stellar

Supreme at all. He says, "With regard to
that acquaintance with the monk who
feared he would be attacked by the
government if he came back to the west,
do you feel he had anything
psychological compromising going on?"
And um I think Stellar Supreme here
misremembered
that I have mentioned
that there was uh a trumpet player like
a jazz musician in Bali that I knew who
was African-American.
He came from St. Louis St. Louis,
Missouri. and he was afraid to come back
to America because he thought that he'd
just be like like beaten up by like like

airport security as soon as he comes
back to the comes back to America, you
know, just like America is just like
completely racist against black people.
So that he was afraid to come back to
America just because,
you know, just black people are just
persecuted and practically enslaved
again. that kind of thing. And I mean, I
didn't see it at all. I mean, obviously,
you see plenty of black people walking
around airports and so forth that aren't
being like beaten up by airport
security.
I've never seen a black person beaten up
by airport security. I mean, I did see a
black person in a like the Tokyo or what

Narita, I guess, the Narita airport in
in Japan where um he was
we we went into like this holding room
and there's this black guy lying across
some some seats there who looked like
he'd been there for a week. He just had
a really disgusted look on his face. It
looked like it had been there for for
days.
But in America, yeah, I was I this
person I mean he was kind of eccentric.
I mean just kind of artists in general e
eccentricity often goes well with being
an artist and he really did have sort of
a conspiracy mindset where you know he
was fairly obsessed with like the

Rothschilds and so forth.

So yeah, I think that he was just kind of being eccentric in his fear of coming back to America. Maybe it was something else, you know, he was just sort of giving that reason when deeper down there were other reasons why he didn't want to come back to America.

So yeah, it wasn't a monk, though. I've never met a monk who was afraid to come back to America. In fact, Burmese monks are just like salivating over the idea of possibly coming to America.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Xenithoid. And Xenithoid says, "In right-wing circles, I'm starting to see the

sentiment that the USA Constitution is too old and slow for the rapidly accelerating world and that it may be time for a new one with more autocratic elements. Has the Constitution outlived its usefulness? I've heard that the founding fathers conceived the constitution as a kind of nonhuman monarch, but like everything else, all monarchies are impermanent. So, I guess the question here is, has the constitution outlived its usefulness? And no, I don't think so at all. that really like for example the Trump administration, the second Trump administration, people like on the left

are calling him a dictator, an autocrat
and so forth when really he's still well
within the limits of the constitution.
It's just that what has happened is that
the president has like
forfeited most of his his authority in
the late, you know, the the late
American
experiment, you know, the USA that um
the the founding fathers had the
president really as the chief executive
who had a lot more authority than most
presidents are willing to exercise
partly because just bureaucracies have
formed that are are kind of extra
constitutional. You know, they're not
they're not against the Constitution,

but they're not specifically mentioned in the Constitution and that has pretty much just kind of taken over the government. you know, the the so-called deep state in all this, whereas really if you I mean, you can have a very authoritative like like Andrew Jackson kind of president or Theodore Roosevelt who really are a take charge kind of president. And of course, the leftists all be yelling about how he's a dictator, but really he's still within the the limits of the Constitution. Donald Trump. I mean, he's he's more constitutional than than like his his immediate predecessors like Biden and

Obama. They were continually trying to do stuff that was unconstitutional. Farm subsidies only for black farmers, that kind of thing.

So, I mean, if you do it right, you know, a president like Trump who is just sort of like maximizing his his rights and and authority within the limits of the Constitution, then you can really have a president who really does do a lot of stuff that most people think is unconstitutional or wrong or whatever, but it's still within the limits of the Constitution.

So yeah, I think to redo the constitution, not through amendments, you know, constitutionally,

but just to abolish the US Constitution
and replace it with a new constitution.
I think that would just be just idiotic.
That would be insanely idiotic because
most people nowadays just do not have
the wisdom or the political acumen as
the founding fathers.
I mean, it really was. I mean, it seems
to me that the American government was
like an improvement on constitutional
monarchy. You know, it's like it was
like an improvement on the English
government. The English government,
you've got Parliament, which is the
House of Lords and the House of Commons,
which have been replaced in America by

the Senate and the House of Representatives. And then you had the king who was replaced by the president. So we've got like a king, a constitutional monarch, but um you know he gets like there's an election every four years. So he's not just king for life and it's not just his son who becomes the next one. Although that has happened a couple times. Well, I guess not the next one, but at least you know like W. George W. Bush, he was the son of a of a president. I guess John Quincy Adams was the son of John Adams if I'm not mistaken,

but they weren't like they didn't just come right after their father.

So yeah, I really don't see a problem with the US Constitution. I just see a problem with just sort of like the degeneracy
of American politics in general, especially on the left, but I mean it's on both sides. the neocons, for example. I mean, I was I didn't really start voting Republican until Trump came along because I mean, when I was younger, it's just I mean, [clears throat] it things are different now, but when I was younger, it was like conservative Republicans. I mean, they were just kind of, you know, greedy people who wanted money and including the Christians,

which is ironic. You know, conservative Christians are just out for money like like uh Dr. Turley on YouTube. I mean, he is like a prime example of why I really didn't have much use for conservatism or Christianity because, you know, it's just like make money, make money, make money,
but I'm [clears throat] kind of just rambling at this point. So, I don't think the Constitution has outlived its useless. I think just the the the populace has become too degenerate and in certain ways immature to live up to the ideals of the constitution
and so changing the constitution like corrupting it coming up with something

you're more like you're likely to come

up with something worse

that really you can be an authoritative

kind of a president

um within the scope of the constitution

and I'm just going to move on to

xenoid's next

And I forgot to really think about an

answer to this, so I'm going to have to

do it off the cuff here. Is there any

issue you think both sides of the

political aisle are not paying enough

attention to? As in something that

doesn't get brought up enough?

Well,

gosh, I'm going to have to think about

this. Is there any issue you think both sides of the political aisle are not paying enough attention to? Well, some of the like the taboo stuff, you know, like human biodiversity, at least the right is thinking about it more now, but I mean like back when the neocons were in power, I mean it was just taboo human biodiversity. You just I mean it was just outside the Overton window. But I mean that is something to consider.

um just sort of like

um in certain ways

just western civilization is better for western people than like multiculturalism that kind of thing.

Um let's see.

Gosh, I mean really

they're not paying enough attention to I

mean there are certain things like

um population collapse in in developed

countries that kind of thing that I mean

just have to have the human population

decrease just that in itself would

probably be a good thing. You know you

get down to a a manageable one or two

billion people that would be fine. But

when you've got a welfare state

where

the older people are being supported in

their pensions and social security and

so forth by a decreasing number of young

people, that's just not sustainable.

But I do think the right does pay some attention to that kind of thing. And the left, of course, is just, well, we just solved the problem by importing tens of millions of brownskinned foreigners.

>> [sighs]

>> So yeah, I really can't think of anything that really stands out other than maybe human biodiversity, which is still largely a taboo subject.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from PSA.

PSA says, "What are your thoughts on the announcement of the British government to implement a digital ID system across the UK, which will be mandatory for anyone wishing to work there? Do you

think it will lead to a digital currency and then it will slowly spread to other castrated countries such as the US and Canada? Well, first of all, I do not think the US is fully castrated. I mean, may have lost one ball, but it still has the other ball,
so to speak.
So, but I mean if if like the globalist hysterical left does succeed in getting back into power, then there's a good chance that America will finally once and for all be fully castrated.
Um, but let's getting back to what are my thoughts on the the British government implementing a digital ID

system across the UK. I mean that's that's going to be getting it's another step towards like what the communist Chinese have or the fascist Chinese because they're not really communists anymore. And it's like what is it where you post something on X or Facebook that goes against the government that gets put on your record and then suddenly you can't you can't buy airplane tickets anymore. That kind of thing then yeah I mean that's just that's another step towards totalitarianism.

So, I do think that the digital ID system across the UK, which is mandatory, yeah, that's that's a step towards the brave new world. Really?

Um, do I think I'll lead to a digital currency? A good chance of it. And then it will slowly spread to other castrated countries. Yeah, like Canada, Europe, that kind of thing. US is more of a hold out than than other countries. Like USA, we still got guns. There's as many guns as people in the USA. Um, and for some reason, America is uh resisting castration much more than Europe and Canada and Australia and New Zealand for that matter.

Um, but yeah, it does seem to be there's like this gradual move towards like digital currency where there's no real money anymore. You just have like your

ID card. You know, it's like you've got an ID card that serves as, you know, maybe your driver's license to your maybe not voter registration because they don't want that. At least the left doesn't.

Um, and then I mean you just pay for anything. You just use the card like a credit card and it just automatically takes money out of your account which is just virtual. You know, it's just like blips on a in a computer.

That's possible. I mean, that's does seem to be the direction we are heading. But I'm not a prophet really, so I'm not going to be prophesying here about what the future is going to be like. So, I'm

just going to move on to PSA's next question. What do you think of Nick Fuentes's recent meteoric ascendancy to popularity? And I really have never watched a Nick Fuentes um video. I mean, I've heard maybe like a sentence or two coming out of his mouth just like in little short clips. Um my understanding is Nick Fuentes is uh let's see, he's anti-Israel. you know, he he does not support I mean, he's not like completely anti-Israel, but I do think that he doesn't like American support of Israel at the level it's at. And he's I don't know, kind of

like alt-right that has has gone as close to mainstream as any alt-riter has gone. I mean, it used to be called the alt-right like 10 years ago, eight years ago, something like that. Um, yeah, he's just kind of like an edgy [__] lord. I mean, like Candace Owens and uh Tucker Carlson are kind of, you know, they're they're saying stuff that that right-wingers, at least mainstream right-wingers, aren't supposed to say. And really, I think part of his meteoric ascendancy was sort of like the the vacuum caused after Charlie Kirk gets assassinated. You know, it's like, who's going to be the next Charlie Kirk? you know, they're kind of looking around and

a lot of people are latching on to Nick Fuentes as sort of a a spokesman for conservative youth, that kind of thing. But really, as I said at the beginning, I really am not familiar with Nick Fuentes. I'm not particularly interested in Nick Fuentes. And so, I really can't really say much about Nick Fuentes. Um, I might agree with a lot of what he says. I don't know.

So, I'm just moving on to the next question. This is from Trasaziz.

And Traskas says, "How often did you practice death meditation as Buddha often recommended? I never turned death meditation into something where you just

sit there cross-legged with your eyes closed for an hour thinking about death or the inevitability of death. The closest I came with regard to that is like I had a a skeleton. somebody donated to me. They bought it from like the the Mandandalay Medical College or something. I had it sitting in like the lotus posture outside my cave. Part of the reason for that was just to discourage visitors, but a lot of visitors would come just to look at it. And uh you know, I went to see autopsies a few times when I was living near Mandalay, go to the Mandandalay City Morgan, watch autopsies.

Um when I went to India, I made a

special point of going to the burning gats in in Baronasi.

Um but I didn't really do this formal sitting practice of contemplating the inevitability of death. You know, it's just sometimes you look at the skeleton or the skull and just think, you know, as that is, so will I be. As I am, so is that. That kind of thing. So, it's just like a an occasional reminder more than any kind of formal sitting practice.

And I'm just going to move on to Chasiz's next question, which is, "I've never heard of karma comma expiration. How does it work according to Terra?"

Yeah, this this is a subject that came

up on on the Discord server

[clears throat] about um how some comma

or karma expires. Let's say you have you

[clears throat] do something that has a

certain karmic um consequence, you know,

of something that is likely to happen

back to you, but you just for whatever

reason just kind of avoid the

circumstances in which it would be able

to come back to you. And so,

um you know, it's like

let's just say you abuse a horse. You

know, you you're like hund 100 years ago

in a previous life, you whipped the

horse to death or something. And so you

have this karma with regard to a horse

maybe like kicking you and messing you

up. Like you messed up that horse in a previous life, but then for whatever reasons in several lives, you just don't go around horses, you know? It's like there [clears throat] not as many horses nowadays. And so that karma and some of some karma according to terra Buddhist philosophy if you go a sufficient period of time without the opportunity you know without putting yourself in a position where the karma can happen you know [clears throat] the fruition of that karma can arise just due to you know just lack of opportunity that some kinds of karma can just like expire you know they just kind of fade out

not all karma

And I don't know if Abidama even

attempts to explain which kinds of karma

can expire and which kinds don't. I

really don't remember seeing that at

all.

But [snorts]

according to Terraata Buddhism, some

karma I mean if you go a long enough

period of time without there being an

opportunity for that karma to reach

fruition fruition then it can just fade

out due to impermanence.

So yeah, you might want to look that up

on the internet or something. It's

getting AI is getting to the point where

you can just ask a question of like

Grock on X and you get fairly good

fairly good answers sometimes.

So let's see here.

I guess I answered that question. I'm

moving on to the next one. This is from

Newman. And Newman says, "What were the

politics of other Western monks you

knew?" And I mean I really didn't know a

whole lot of other western monks because

I was mostly living in a Burmese

environment. So occasionally I'd meet

western monks and for the most part we

just did not discuss politics. I wasn't

really interested in politics for most

of the time that I was a monk when I was

living in Burma. It was only around 2015

2016

when I started realizing that the left has just gone completely insane and started taking an interest in in politics. just like when Donald Trump became president. And so I was a Trump supporter then. I still am partly because I mean he was and he was [clears throat] like the the voice of common sense

this standing up to this just mass hysteria that was taking over the West. Well, the only western monk that I that I can even recall discussing politics with me um like back in the day when I was living in Burma was a certain Australian monk who was a socialist. I

mean this this monk I mean he he
eventually dropped out and became one of
my supporters. He was still living in
Burma because he married a Burmese
woman. And I mean he was like complete
lefty
and um I mean he discussed we discussed
it a few times like he said you know I
um when he was still a monk you know
it's like um you know I'm a socialist by
nature but I realize that you know
socialism generally doesn't work the way
it's supposed to in theory something
like that. But I mean definitely he
endorsed a kind of communistic sort of
lifestyle. And then after he dropped out

of the monkhood and still living in Burma and one of my supporters in Burma, I mean he was just completely anti-Trump. You know, he'd be sending me these kind of childish texts or emails, you know, they've the walls are closing in for Trump now. Trump's going to prison. Haha. This kind of stuff. and he might still be doing that for all I know. You know, it's like the walls are perpetually closing in on Donald Trump. Um, but with regard to that, aside from that kind of real like extreme leftist Australian monk who dropped out of the monkhood, um, yeah, I think there are quite a few other Western monks that I that I knew that were kind of along my

lines. But for the most part, when Western monks in Asia, at least when I was a monk, most of the time that I was a monk, they just really were not interested in politics. You know, there's like I wasn't even interested in Burmese politics all that much. I was living in Burma a lot of the time. I wouldn't even know what the name of the the president or the dictator was. You I really didn't know all that much about it. I was just out in the forest. You know, you're not like hooked up to the internet or at least not until like the last few years. But most of the time I was in Burma, it's like you're not

you're not even hearing the news. You don't even know what the political situation is really. I mean, you hear through, you know, just through osmosis, you just pick up somewhere or other that Obama is the president now and like Tony Blair is the prime minister of of the UK and so forth.

But, and that was about as far as it went. I really was not much interested in politics as a general rule up until around 2015 when I finally realized that the left is just going to start [snorts] raving mad.

And they still are.

And enough enough people actually are are like conformist enough that they're

just conformed to it.

So yeah, the only Western monk that I

really knew for sure what his politics

were was this

like a a complete socialist type who was

fortunately Australian

rather than American.

So I'm just moving on to Newman's next

question. Were political views seen as a

samsaric distraction at anything but the

practice itself?

Um yeah, I guess I've already kind of

answered this political views. I mean

there were Burmese monks that I would

hear their political views because I

mean lots and lots of Burmese monks will

confide to somebody like me that you
know they disapprove of the Burmese
government. The Burmese military
dictatorship is not a good government.
You know, this
I', you know, you hear that kind of
stuff from Burmese lay people and
Burmese monks. It's it's sort of a
universal phenomenon in Burma that most
people just don't like the government
there more so than in America. They
think America is great. That's one
reason why so many Burmese monks want to
go to America
because you you don't have the
government just snatching citizens off
the street and sending them to torture

chambers that kind of thing or just shooting them.

So political I haven't answered the question though were political views seen as a samsaric distraction anything about the practice well it is considered to be animal talk you know like again and again in the sutas you know there's this list of animal talk where um you know talking about kings and prime ministers or kings and ministers of state and wars and that kind of thing. It's all animal talk. It's all inappropriate for a monk. Monks aren't supposed to be talking about politics much anyway.

So yeah, I mean it was sort of like
monks talking about girls, you know,
it's just it happens sometimes on for
various reasons, but still I mean it
just would as a monk in Burma. I just
did not talk about politics much towards
the end. then I'd be like writing about
politics more than talking about it
because I mean I'm just mainly dealing
with Burmese people that
when I was living at the the monastery
in uh California shortly before I
stopped being a monk that um I mean I
you you do hear a little bit of politics
but I mean most people just don't talk
about politics much at monasteries
but you hear like people you know that

they vote Democrat because they want it easier for their relatives to come to America. I mean, that's one of the main reasons why foreign immigrants are Democrats. Even if they work for a living, you know, if they don't work for a living, then of course they're getting handouts. But even if they do work for a living, like they're doctors or something, still they want it to be as easy as possible for their relatives to come over and and move to America. And so they'll vote Democrat for that reason. But then even some of the Burmese supporters like Trump, they were Trump supporters just because of, you

know, sort of like seeing the bigger picture.

So yeah, political views are seen as a samsaric distraction. Yeah, definitely.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from practice meta.

Practice meta says in the Brahma Jalo Suta does the Buddha explicitly reject the view that a singular infinite consciousness is the ultimate nature of reality.

Um

the Brahma Jala Suta it seems the purpose of the brahalosuta is to shoot down all possibilities.

So

you know eternalism view and like

annihilationist view and all that it's
it's all shot down. And so in the brahma
jala suta it doesn't I mean I don't
recall a specific mention of like the
upanesic understanding of brahman
infinite formless consciousness. And as
I've said before even in this video
there are at least two sutas
in in the suta u in the sutas that u
[clears throat] do imply that nibbana
itself or nirvana is infinite formless
consciousness. But I have seen one
explicit like rejection of that idea in
the text. I I don't think it was the
Brahma Jalasuta. I mean the Brahma
Jalasuta like I said it tries to shoot

down all views and it may be that this
upanosic view wasn't popular enough even
to I mean it kind of was under the radar
at the time of the composition of the
brahagal suta. But the brahma jalis suta
I mean it practically starts like some
of the first wrong views that it shoots
down are the eternalist view where it's
like you know uh reality or like the
highest truth is just like
infinite and eternal and unchanging
which I mean you could say that this
singular infinite consciousness could
fit under that
to say that you know the absolute is
you know infinite eternal unchanging I
mean that [clears throat] would be good

enough I suppose I think that uh the upanosic view would fit under that but there is one suta at least one suta I have seen I don't think it was the brahagalis suta though that specifically shoots down the upanesic view of infinite formless consciousness and I mean it's kind of an anomaly in that suta even with regard to the context of the suta it seems like it was just kind inserted there as a kind of afterthought after the upupanotic view of reality became more well known that you know some early Buddhist philosopher or philosophers felt that that should be addressed and so this denunciation of it

just gets inserted into a suta but I

think at the time of the brahma jala

suta that just to shoot down an eternal

like infinite or

anything eternal

anything unchanging that is like a

highest truth that I mean that's already

taken care of that's almost immediately

one it's like one of the first wrong

views in the brahma jalisa like

eternalist view comes before

annihilationist view so definitely the

singular infinite consciousness would be

a kind of eternalist view

I suppose it would seem like

so I'm Just going to move on to practice

meta's next question and I'm being a

little more tur in this in the kind of starting late and everything on a [snorts] Sunday and we got to go somewhere.

So anyways, practice meta says when some claim that in deep psychedelic states duality such as subject object life collapses into a non-dual self-aware eternal unity.

Is this the same as the eternalist view sasatawada that the Buddha critiqued?

Um, well, anything eternal is going to fit into the eternalist view. Let's see. Let's see. What is it? Duality collapses into a non-dual self-aware eternal unity. Yeah. Is this the same as the

eternalist? Well, it's one kind of eternalist view. There's a number of different kinds of eternalist views. Like even Christianity has an eternalist view and that you have an immortal soul. The soul can change but still it's that soul itself is eternal. So that's a kind of eternalist view. If something doesn't change then that's a different kind of eternalist view. You know it's the the same thing changes which is kind already kind of paradoxical
is one eternalist view. The same thing just is doesn't change at all forever and ever. That's a different kind of eternalist view. And so yeah it's it's a kind of eternalist view. It's not the

only eternalist view, but there it's it is one kind of eternalist view. Um, deep psychedelic states, duality, subject object life collapses into a non-dual self-aware eternal unity. Yeah, that would be a kind of eternalist view. If you're saying that it's eternal, obviously anything that becomes eternal would fit under eternalist view.

And again in Buddhism, the Buddhists wisely avoided reifying the absolute. You just don't talk about it. Words just cannot do it justice. Words can't touch it. Anything you say about it is just perverting it.

You know, you're just turning it into an

idea in your head which is not eternal.

So you can have an idea of etern

eternity in your head, but that idea is

not going to be eternal and it's just a

kind of delusion.

So [sighs]

yeah, I think I answered that question.

I'm going to move on to the next one.

This is also from Practice Meta, one of

the only people who ask questions on

Rumble, incidentally.

[snorts]

And he says, "After a psychedelic

session, many feel overwhelming love and

ethical urgency. The sutas say morality

or sila is the foundation. Can a drug

induced ethical resolve ever replace the

gradual training and precepts? Or is it like borrowed virtue? Well, I wouldn't say that it's it's either. I mean, [clears throat] a drug induced ethical resolve.

Um, to some degree, it can replace a certain amount of gradual training and precepts. I mean, it can just jolt you into a kind of mental state that it might take years for a meditator to get into. That's one thing that as a monk that I always considered like LSD is I mean it can just like jolt you into a state pretty reliably that I mean meditation is much less reliable. I mean you just a second. Hey you guys quit it.

The dogs are roughousing like like

this dog for example.

Okay, you go back down here. And this

one, these two just keep going at it,

you guys. I just riled them up even more

by picking them up and paying attention

to them.

Okay, let's get back to the question,

though. You guys, come on. Stop it.

Stop it.

Stop it.

They're all riled up. Even more so now

after I told them to stop being riled

up.

Just a second. Come on, you guys. Quit

it. No.

Okay.

Okay. So, I mean, main question is, can any insights that are spontaneously arisen through psychedelic drugs, for example, can they be sort of on a par with gradual insights that arise through meditation and so forth? And I used to like semile lament as a monk that meditation is so much less reliable than just taking a tab of acid because you take the tab of acid, you know, there's going to be some fairly radical results. Whereas in meditation, I mean, you can be struggling and floundering for literally like two or three years before you get into anything remotely resembling the kind of like profundity

of what you can experience with an acid
trip. So I think one Buddhist
explanation of this is that if you're
having these insights through
psychedelics, which can be legitimate
insights
that might take years just through
sitting cross-legged and striving away
the old-fashioned way, then what
probably happened is you did some
striving in previous lives and so forth,
and this is the fruition of that. So
it's really not cheating
so long as it's really like a genuine
profound insight.
And I used to have almost every time I
would take LSD when I was a young man,

you know, starting as a teenager, it would almost always be religious experience, like mystical experiences.

So, let's see here.

Can a drug induced ethical resolve ever replace the gradual training and precepts? Well, I mean, in a way, it's the fruition of previous gradual training and precepts from previous lives. I mean, that would be one Buddhist explanation of it.

U so it's not really borrowed virtue. Anything that you experience I mean it's it's you you earned it in a way. Anything that you experience is the fruition of karma if not in this life

than in a previous life. And so I mean
there's there's no cheating in that
regard.
Um there are some people who think that
they're becoming enlightened or
something from taking psychedelic drugs
that really aren't. So you have to be
careful about just being deceived
especially by yourself.
But um I mean insights that can arise
through psychedelics are just like
insights that can arise through just
about anything else. And so
in many cases they are legit.
Uh I don't think it it should completely
replace the gradual training and
precepts

but still it's it definitely augments
it. It it can anyway for some people.
Other people they might be like is met
they take psychedelics once and it just
kind of blows their mind and kind of
shatters their psyche for a while and
you know it may cause more harm than
good. for I mean some people you know
they have like latent like
susceptibilities
to mental illness or some such and but
they're holding it together fairly well
and then they they drop some you know
some powerful drug which then just sends
them over the edge that can happen too
but yeah and the main point that I'm

trying to make though is that anything
that hap anything that you experience is
the fruition of your karma So
apparently you did some practice in a
previous life where you have some kind
of latent subconscious
striving going on that doesn't really
reach the ego consciousness that finally
is coming to the surface. So it's it's
not cheating really
unless it's unless it's just like
illegitimate experience. You just think
it's profound when it really isn't. That
can happen too.
So, I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Indiana
Dharma.

In Indiana Dama says, "In some Catholic monasteries, non-mongs can become lay affiliates who make certain vows or promises and have an official connection to a local monastery. For example, Benedicting monasteries often have oblates. It allows the leoty a limited participation in the life of the monastery and to observe some monastic practices under the guidance of the monks. These le oblates otherwise remain householders. Is there a terraodin equivalent? Well, there's not an exact equivalent to this. Um, you know, there's

first you've got the fully ordained biku

who fully ordained. Below that you've
got the sana or the novice who
technically is not fully ordained but I
mean he's still not a lay person. Below
that you've got [clears throat] in Asian
cultures in Thailand it's a paca in in
Burma it's a pthido I think uh let's see
I think they're called anagarakas
who they might they might wear white
robes they still shave their head so I
mean they're really not a layman either
as a general well I mean they're a
layman but they're not really living the
household life below that you've got
like like a monastery attendant
or a capia car
that I mean they're a lay person. They

wear lay clothes usually, but still they're not living the household or life because they're a monastery attendant. At least the ones that are living at the monastery. But for example, when I lived at WBO wildlife for wildlife refuge monastery in northwestern Burma, there was I [clears throat] think he was the nephew of the old monk who lived down by the river who [clears throat] he lived in the village. I'm pretty sure he was married, probably had kids, but every day he'd just come to the monastery and, you know, he'd be pulling weeds, doing stuff that monks aren't supposed to do, and just, you know, he'd sweep up leaves

that fell from the trees or rake them up or whatever, and, you know, make sure the monks were doing okay and he'd go back home again. So, there's that kind of a thing. Also you can be an upasa or a female would be an upasika who might take eight precepts and you know they sort of formally dedicate themselves to Buddha dhama and sa in a way that the average you know the average lay person doesn't they might take like nine precepts that kind of thing um a lot of women in Burma they wear yogi yarn it's called which is like meditator colors which is for a woman is brown you know they have their hair pulled back they have their hair up and they wear like

brown clothing with a brown saron and usually they have what is called a Tibet which is just a kind of scarf thing which is also brown over one shoulder and they've dedicated their lives to the dhamma they don't necessarily shave their head so there's that kind of thing and it's largely just like whatever the lay person you how far they want to go, they can go there. I mean, it's it's not like you're prevented by taboos or anything from being too dama oriented as a lay person, that sort of thing. So, it's it's not as standardized, I guess, as in Roman Catholicism, but there's like a whole spectrum of

just worldly minded lay person and like fully renuncient monk and just all these different options in between.

>> [snorts]

>> So, I think I answered that question. I'm pretty sure. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Fake Tig. And wow, Fake Tig is our last question here. So, we're we're almost done already. That's that's that's all right. I can live with that.

So [snorts] fake TIG says my meditation has become quite good now uh nowadays and am very happy and am less depressed and I was wondering what comes next where do I go from here? Just keep doing it. Well, I mean I assume you have not

like completely perfected your
meditation. So you can just keep
meditating and uh yeah, I mean it
wouldn't hurt to just keep doing it.
Where do you go from here? Um yeah,
until you're fully enlightened, I mean
you haven't really reached the end.
[snorts] So
happy and less depressed. That's good.
Wondering what comes next. Yeah. Well, I
mean you you don't often consciously
choose what comes next. It just kind of
happens.
It may be that if if you're getting in a
stage in your meditation where you're
not making progress anymore, then you

might have to switch to a different kind of meditation. You know, it's like St. John of the Cross in one or more of his books is talking about how to know when to switch over from meditation to contemplation. like in in Roman Catholicism, they have a similar kind of meditation regime at least in the uh contemplative orders of Roman Catholicism to Buddhism where they have what is called meditation which has an like an object you know you're you're visualizing scenes from the life of Jesus or you're doing like a mantra you know dear God please have mercy upon me a sinner or you know a Maria or the Peter Nester that kind of thing and then

above that is contemplation in which you are not thinking anything or at least you're not supposed to be thinking anything. Sometimes a stray thought will arise in which case like in Buddhism you just kind of note it and let it go. You dismiss it.

So I mean if you get to a point in your meditation where you're just kind of stagnating or getting bored with it, getting restless, feeling like there should be something more, then you have to go to a more advanced meditation uh technique.

But so long as you haven't perfected it yet and you're still making progress, I

mean, you're still improving, there's no need to change anything. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. But if you stop making progress, then it's time to to make some kind of a change probably. Especially if you you've stopped making progress for a considerable amount of time.

So I'm just going to move on to fake Tig's next question.

>> [clears throat]

>> What are your thoughts on Roomie, the Sufi Muslim who is very close to Buddhist ideas? Have you heard about him? Yeah, I've heard about him and I've read some some of Roomie's poetry in translation of course. But the thing is

there were a number of people like Roomie these sort of eccentric poets in like northern India or that general area of the world like Kabir also is another one. And I really couldn't tell Kabir from Roomie. Like if I were to see one of their poems, I wouldn't know if it was Roomie or Kabir or somebody else because there was more than two.

So for me, it's just kind of a generry of of like religious poetry coming from like medieval northwestern India or some such. I assume there were some South Indian ones, some that were, you know, out of what is what is India that were all composing similar sorts of like

devotional philosophical kind of poetry. So yeah, I mean it's fine. I mean, I've never really been really drawn to that sort of thing. I think I preferred Kabir to Roomie if I remember correctly.

But uh let's see. What are my thoughts on him? Yeah, interesting. I'm sure a lot of it really resonates with a lot of people or just that sort of poetry resonates with a lot of people, which is fine. I mean, if it helps you to have a more dharmic mood and attitude and helps to uplift you, then that's that's fine with me.

So, I'm just going to move on to Fake Tig's third and last question and the last question of this Q&A.

By golly, have you had thoughts on how Hollywood wants the public to fall in love with women who are sure of themselves and know what they want and where they are going while making the male characters more submissive and uncertain about almost everything.
Nowadays, when I go for dates, I keep looking for women that are sure of themselves. But this is never the case as women need men for certainty and reliability
cause women are unstable in some ways.
Thoughts on this?
Well, I think for the viewers, you should uh bear in mind that fake TIG is

Ethiopian.

And uh so it may be that uh some of his experiences are kind of more what you would expect in Ethiopia than uh in Hollywood.

But let's see. Have you had thoughts on how Hollywood wants the public to fall in love with women who are sure of themselves and know what they want, where they go? Um I'm not sure. like Hollywood movies. It's It's been a thing since maybe the 1970s.

I think maybe the first Alien movie with Sigourney Weaver was I mean even before that I mean you had like the Avengers, Emma Peele of of the Avengers, that kind of thing. Like the tough like beautiful

yet at the same time able to beat up

rooms full of hardened criminal males.

um

that it's it hasn't been I don't think

Hollywood is doing that in order for the

public to fall in love with these women

so much as just try to like get the idea

that women can be just as tough as men

and and so it it sort of masculinizes

them while at the same time having them

still be pretty. Like one of my favorite

movies is oh don't don't tell me I don't

even remember the name of something

tomorrow

it's got

oh man [clears throat]

stuff I do to myself Tom Cruz is in it
and it's um a movie about these this
this kind of alien it's a really badass
really good kind of alien it's not just
like they look like people speak English
that kind of stuff It's like completely
non-human aliens are taking over the
world. And the toughest, bravest,
asskickingest person in the entire movie
is this beautiful young woman who just I
mean, she's got a mind like like a Navy
Seal on steroids. Just just completely
fearless. Just completely
I mean just it's it's just amazing. And
it's I'm it's unfortunate that because I
just called it one of my favorite
movies, one of my favorite science

fiction movies that I don't even recall the name of it. Something for tomorrow. And it's like there's lots and lots of this in Hollywood where they're trying to port I mean [clears throat] they're trying to instill into the the the mindset of the world that women are just as strong just as brave as men are which is [__] on a g in a general on a general rule like like Kill Bill where you've got um what whatever the bride I don't think she even had a name who was like killing an entire room of hardened criminals single-handedly.

I mean, it's it just doesn't work that way. I mean, there have been tough

women, but still, I don't think there have been ever been women tough enough that they can take on 50 men in in like hand-to-hand combat and defeat all of them.

I mean, I've written blog posts about this back in the day when it was kind of more [clears throat] more of a burning issue for me. So, I don't think the public is supposed to really fall in love with these women. I just admire and respect them and acknowledge that, wow, that woman is tougher than most men. Um, and it makes them Yeah. It's they're so completely confident and fearless that I mean really it's like a fairy tale.

So let's see here. While making the male characters more submissive and uncertain about almost everything. Well, that's not necessarily the case because like the villains generally tend to tend to be white men like in action movies and so forth. The bad guy is still usually a man who is very certain about everything. you know, he's he's tough and bad and mean and you know, he doesn't he's not like insecure and stuff. Maybe a little bit maybe sexually insecure or something, but still he's got to be tough just so that the the the woman can defeat him and be even tougher than him.

So

yeah, I think it's it's like propag.

It's feminist propaganda essentially.

So nowadays when I go for dates I keep

looking for women that are sure of

themselves but this is never the case as

women need men for certainty and

reliability

because women are unstable in some ways.

Well women just going with statistics as

general trend they tend to be more

insecure than men. Men tend to have more

self-confidence than women.

And so

that's one way that nature

has tried to ensure that men and women

will hook up. I mean, men just desire

the body of the woman. Women desire the strength and stability of the man.
They're attracted to that. Men or women are attracted to strong, stable men who are good providers.
Even though they might have their own career and all that, make more money than the guy, still instinctively going, I mean, from back in the stone age, they're just attracted to strong, stable men who will protect them and their children,
and no amount of Hollywood propaganda is going to change that.
So yeah, I mean, and you shouldn't be deliberately seeking out a woman who

really is stable and and self-confident and so forth, unless maybe as a man you lack that and you need her to kind of fill in the gaps. But still, um, you're better off just accepting women as they are and [clears throat] just sort of just going with that.

Gosh.

giving advice on on women. See, let's see this here. I'm just right now I'm kind of reviewing the question to make sure that I've done some semblance of justice to it. Have you had thoughts on how Hollywood wants the public to fall in love with women who are sure of themselves and know what they want and where they are going? Yeah, I'm not so

sure that I mean they want you to admire and respect them without necessarily falling in love with them because like in Hollywood to fall in love with a woman is kind of objectifying her. You know, you're just turning into like a sex object or something. So, I think they might not even want you to fall in love with them. They just want you to like be in awe of how beautiful yet tough and fearless this woman is and just get it into your head that all women can be this way when of course they can't.

Let's see. Making the male characters more submissive and uncertain about

almost everything. That's more like TV commercials, maybe sitcoms where the men are just kind of befuddled and the women are taking charge and the women know more than the man does and so forth. I mean, that's that's more of a a TV commercial thing than like an action movie thing. I mean, it's true in what Edge of Tomorrow or whatever the movie was with Tom Cruz. Tom Cruz starts off as like this weasly coward and it's the woman who I mean he falls in love with her and then she just kind of helps him to become also tough and fearless. So, I mean, that does happen,

but

yeah, it's mainly just feminist

propaganda and it it really does not fit in with reality very well. And so, you're better off just ignoring Hollywood propaganda. Hollywood is tanking now anyway. Hollywood is in severe decline.

Um and there's a certain amount of backlash coming back the other way where um you know the the the female super superhero

just fearless tougher than men kind of kind of movie is really getting a lot of backlash from the public and they tend not to sell well and so they're actually creating more politically incorrect kind of movies that are like the oldfashioned

kind that uh are are making more money and that's essentially what it all boils down to in in in most cases. I mean there are certain companies, corporations or like donors to these companies and corporations that are willing to lose money for the sake of getting the propaganda out there. But yeah, it's it's uh there's been sufficient backlash against this this blatant propagandizing, which nowadays it's it's like queer propaganda even more than than like the the absolutely tough, fearless, asskicking, beautiful female with the perfect hair and the makeup and the fingernails and everything. who still with the perfect

hair and the makeup and the fingernails is still beating up rooms full of 50 male hardened criminals or aliens or whatever.

So, thoughts on this? Yeah, just I mean thoughts on this? Just I mean if you're looking for a woman just uh look for women until you find one that that resonates with you and there you go. I mean,

it's true. I mean, women aren't as in general

aren't as self-confident and so forth. They're more more fearful, you know, that kind of thing. So, you mean you have to take that into consideration.

You don't want just some butch doineering female anyway necessarily, unless some guys just go for that because their mother was like that or something.

And I guess I'm done. I mean, I don't know. I guess I'm done answering questions for today. It's less than two hours. That's that's that's reasonable. Less than two hours. I didn't even bother to count how many questions were how many questions there were.

who for all I know it may have been a prime number of questions but as I should always say at the beginning but also generally say at the end if you have any questions you think I can

answer especially something regarding dharma you know Buddhism early Buddhism terraata Buddhism especially meditation that kind of thing then feel free to ask and no more than three questions per person please like and subscribe if you have not done so already check out the URL links, including the books that I have for sale on Amazon. And be happy.

Okay then.

[cough and clears throat]

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 171. I [clears throat] am your

host Pony Bosa and I just took a break

from participating in a Hemingway novel

and I got my

beverage. Oh, this is the first time

this has ever happened on camera. The

the little paper umbrella actually fell

into the beverage.

Ah, [clears throat] so I'll put that

over there.

take a sip of said beverage.

And uh [clears throat] due to all the

excitement of the paper umbrella falling

into the beverage, I don't recall now if

I said that I am your host Paneobasa.

And question and answer 171 is not a

prime number because 171 is in fact 3 *

3 * 19.

[snorts]

I'm starting a little bit late today.

just a little bit

[clears throat and cough]

cuz I didn't get up until after 2:00 in

the afternoon after having like these

weird work dreams. It's like I have

these semi nightmares associated with

work just because work is just kind of

like this hectic aggravating kind of a

job sometimes. And so I have these

hectic aggravating kind of dreams

sometimes.

[snorts] I was [clears throat] having to load this trailer [cough] with my forklift, of course, and there was like there [clears throat] was like no pro codes any anything.

No pro codes. Those of you who don't know what pro codes are, you're probably better off that way. So, I won't bother to explain it. [snorts]

And we've got sort of like the average number of questions,

middle path of questions. So, I suppose I should just wade right into this and start answering questions because that's why we're here, isn't it?

First question is from Joe Doe. And he asks like the perennial kind of question, are we all one?

And I mean, in a way [clears throat] to say, are we all one? That's like a self-contradictory question because we is plural. So, is is a plural singular? See? So I mean in a way it's I mean it would have to be no just if you're being like a stickler for like technical grammatical correctness and everything but

you can say that

there is sort of like an underlying unity of which we are all sort of um illusory

parts. You know, I keep giving the same

example over and over and over again.
It's like the uncarved block of marble, right? You've got this uncarved block of stone. This we might as well be sizeless. There's nothing around it to compare it with. So, let's just say it's like this sizeless block of stone. And contained within that block of stone is every possible statue. In fact, there's an infinite number of impossible statues in there.
So we are the we are statues. We are like virtual
conditional
potential statues contained in that block of marble that you can't really

even talk about in order for it to be

valid.

So [sighs]

yeah, I mean you can say that if

ultimate reality is infinite formless

consciousness, which once something

becomes infinite and formless, then I

mean nothing sticks to it where you

can't really explain it anymore. You

can't describe it anymore. So it becomes

invalid. But just as kind of a gimmick

like a game of of grammar or something

we say okay there is this absolute that

exists

or transcends the duality of existence

and non-existence which I mean even that

there is you've kind of gone off the

scale

and we are all like little virtual

particles of that that are like

superimposed on each other because when

you say that [clears throat] the

uncarved block of stone contains

infinite statues, every possible statue

and also lots of impossible ones. It's

not like they each have their own

individual place. I mean, they're all

just superimposed on each other.

So, in that sense, you could say we are

all one because we we all share the same

consciousness. It's just that the the

mental states are different

and we're all just aspects of this

indivisible [snorts]

absolute or like in the sin Ming

attributed to one of the Chinese

patriarchs of of Zen Buddhism, he says

all we can say is not two.

So to assert one would be kind of

invalid. To assert zero would be

invalid.

So all we can say is not two.

So are we all one? Well, the farthest

you can go is you can say we are not

two.

We are not a multiplicity.

And I'm probably just going to keep

explaining this over and over again

because it's really like

counterintuitive or something. It's like

it requires like a certain avenue of thought that is like closed off with like crime crime scene tape and those orange cones and stuff for [snorts] some people.

So, let's see here. I'm just going to move on to Jodo's next question.

Is a baby pure awareness or pure consciousness? And um [clears throat] this is an issue that is mentioned in at least one poly suton like is a baby enlightened because it hasn't developed all these attachments and preferences and so on and so forth yet. Although even babies do have preferences they prefer not to be lying there in shitty

diapers and they'll start crying or if they're hungry or they want their mama for whatever reason they start screaming and yowling.

As Charles Darwin pointed out, it's like for [clears throat] an infant, I mean, almost their only means of communication is screaming, and they do it for just about any reason.

So, is a baby pure awareness? Not really. I mean, you look at babies, they sleep most of the time. And if you're sleeping most of the time, that's not pure awareness.

So they're at kind of a rudimentary level of perception because their their nervous system hasn't even been fully

hooked up yet. Just going with like a materialistic kind of like scientistic sort of explanation.

So they're just at a very kind of crude level of unenlightenment.

Sort of like uh a cow or a frog. I mean human beings are more delusional than cows and frogs are. It's like the bigger your mind gets, the more complicated it is capable of being, then the more delusion you can fit in there. So something with a very simple elemental kind of a mind, [clears throat] they're not going to be fully enlightened, but they can't fit as much delusion into their mind as we can.

So [snorts] I mean, it's it's like this duality. Wisdom and foolishness come together in a sense. So that a human has way more potential for wisdom and also way more potential for foolishness than a cow or like a newborn baby or whatever.

So a baby would be pure awareness in the same sense that

like a frog is pure awareness. And some people like ecartah would say frogs are fully enlightened.

But the very fact that babies kind of fall out of that state

indicates that they weren't really enlightened to begin with because you don't fall from enlightenment to

unenlightenment. Or at least that's what the poly texts say. He who has attained thus does not fall back.

[snorts] So let's see here. Anything else? There was something else I was going to say.

Is a baby pure awareness or pure consciousness? [clears throat] No, not really. It's just a very kind of crude elementary form of delusion that blossoms into massive delusion as as the baby gets older, especially in some babies.

Let's see here. I might as well just move on to the next question. This is from Romeo. And Romeo says,"I recently

purchased your excellent book, Buddhist Ethics, Buddhist Practice." This is a good this is a good plug here for for the book. I'll start over. Romeo says, "I recently purchased your excellent book, Buddhist Ethics, Buddhist Practice, and read your essay, Who is Right and Who is wrong?" That's one of the chapters in the book. In the essay, unless I totally misread it, you posit that there is no such thing as objective reality and that everything is subjective. As I was reading it, I found that you were making a lot of convincing points. Then I thought, wait a minute, these are the same arguments that the woke left uses. Can you clarify your

subjectivity over objectivity argument as well as summarize the point of your essay overall? Well, [clears throat] the point of the essay overall, I'll I'll get to that first, I guess.

I mean, it wasn't um I mean, it really was not trying to assert the same things that like postmodern leftists assert that that truth is just a cultural construct.

And in a way, it kind of is, but I mean, the whole point is different that I was making and that like postmodern left is making. the postmodern left is since truth is ultimately subjective and to a large degree a cultural construct then

the left can just decide what's going to be true and enforce that on society and what I was doing was more of an appeal to skepticism like classical skepticism in fact I would not be at all surprised if shortly before writing this essay I read Sexus Empericus
who was our main source of what ancient skepticism was like. It's Sexus Empiricus wrote this. It's like a textbook on skepticism. And you know, he points out that even our own eyes and ears are not fully reliable. Like food that you usually taste good, if you're feeling sick, it can taste bad. You know, if you're just in a certain kind of mood, what usually looks beautiful

isn't going to look beautiful anymore.
So it's it's subjective in that sense so
that you can't really nail down some
objective hard truth. That was one of
the arguments Sexist Empiricus was
making. In fact, he made it several
times.
So [sighs and gasps]
yeah, I was mainly appealing to
skepticism that nothing is really
certain at least nothing out there that
[clears throat]
western philosophers ear relatively
early on like Spinosa and David Hume
both asserted. I mean they considered it
be something worth emphasizing that

anything that is at least partly outside
of your own mind you know dealing with
matters of fact in some presumed
external world you can never be entirely
sure of that that [clears throat] your
own perceptual filters are going to be
filtering out certain things and
distorting certain things and just
making up things. So
yeah, I mean, you can't really rely on
your [clears throat]
sensory system and your perceptions to
accurately describe what's going on
outside of yourself.
So what what the postmodern left is
doing, like I pretty much already said,
is they're saying truth is just a

cultural construct. But even the statement truth is just a cultural construct would itself just be a cultural construct. And so you can't really make any kind of assertions. I mean the same way with with skepticism. I mean they still make the assertions. You can't really know anything for sure which itself is just another assertion. So I mean one of my favorite sutas in the Majinikaya is the Da Nakasuta which is the discourse that caused venerable Sarah to become enlightened because he was listening to the Buddha talking to this aesthetic named Dan Naka which means long fingernails

and [clears throat] the this non
Buddhist aesthetic Dana Naka says
nothing is acceptable to me
[clears throat] which is like you know
no idea no belief is acceptable to me.
And the Buddha says, well, even that
that idea that nothing is acceptable to
you seems to be acceptable to you. So
he's pointing out that you know even
just [clears throat]
like a denial of the certainty of stuff
is itself an assertion of one certainty
that is that you can't be certain of
stuff. So the Buddha was saying, well,
you still believe that one idea, so
which means that you still have one
belief too many.

[sighs and gasps]

And I mean, I might as well get into the idea that even though

I mean, all of the truths we are working with in society are just like conventional truth. You know, in Buddhism, you've got two different levels of truth, at least two different levels. You got conventional truth, simuti satcha, and ultimate truth, paramonta satcha. And conventional truth is what we're dealing with. You know, it's like grass is green and the sky is up and two and two is four. Carson City is the capital in Nevada. All that kind of stuff. That's just conventional truth

and it's not ultimately real. It's just stuff we're working with. But [clears throat] still, because we're all human, we all share the same kind of perceptual system. So that there's going to be like regularities that found universally throughout the human race except for humans that are just so psychotic that they can't function in society.

So where was I going with that? Oh yeah, it just empiricism has a certain amount of regularity to it. And so when you've got like a post-modern leftist trying to just reject science and say, "Well, our truth is more like politically expedient than what science is saying. Therefore,

we're going to reject science and go along with this and just enforce this on an entire culture then.

Yeah. I mean, still because we all have the same kind of sensory systems approximately, you know, in as a general rule, we're all going to be experiencing the same sorts of things. You know, two and two is four, for example. Carson City is the capital of Nevada and all that.

So [snorts]

um mainly what I was discussing in the essay well I mean maybe not even that but I mean mainly the essay was just an appeal to skepticism but still I mean

there's
even though and a statement isn't
ultimately true still I mean it's some
statements are going to be more useful
and empirical and reliable than others
and when you cut loose from empirical
objectivity,
then um I mean you're just going to be
creating this fantasy world that isn't
going to apply to reality very well. And
that's one reason why leftism tends to
fail is that in a lot of cases they
prefer their own ideology to empirical
data.
And that's I mean when you start doing
that, when you start cutting loose from
like what is vulgarly known as objective

reality, then you're just going to start failing. You're going to start making these huge mistakes. You know, it's sort of like the person the stereotypical person in the scare stories from the just say no to drugs era of the person who takes LSD, thinks he can fly, jumps out a window, and just plummets like a rock.

That kind of thing can happen in politics also and it it is happening in politics

especially on the left although the right is not like entirely exempt especially because the right is more inclined to embrace like Christianity

and I mean

to some degree there are some people

that have the authority in this world to

just make up stuff that is not empirical

objectivity.

and have an entire civilization

believing it. Like Christianity has a

lot of leaps of faith in it. It's it's I

mean obviously Christianity is not based

on pure empiricism.

And so if you get somebody like in power

who is say, "Okay, we're all going to

believe this from now on and then can

enforce that or gets enough people going

along that it builds this momentum." And

there's a certain amount of intolerant

hysteria persecuting people that are

sensible and skeptical about it all
which is what happened in Western
civilization like the beginning of the
medieval era you know when when the
Roman Empire converts to Christianity
you know it's like the people that
didn't believe in Christianity aside
from some Jews that were valuable
because they could lend money at
interest you know they just got
persecuted into extinction
but that didn't make it necessarily
True. I mean it made it conventional
truth. Jesus died for our sins. His mama
was a virgin and all that. I mean that
that became like conventional truth for

Western civilization for over a thousand years. And a lot of people many millions and millions of people still believe it that this [clears throat] Jewish man who lived in the the early Roman Empire died for our sins. His mama was a virgin. you know, he was the son, only begotten son of God Almighty who happened have his origins in like Jewish or like Hebrew tribal beliefs and so forth.

the combination of L and Yahweh with getting some like Egyptian ideas and and Babylonian ideas and con Greek ideas and combining it into this God Almighty Jesus is an only beg begotten son and all that.

I mean, there [clears throat] is some of

that, but [gasps]

I don't think that it's quite the same

as you've got postmodern leftists who

are just saying, "Okay, from now on

there's, you know, 157 different genders

and that men and women are the same. You

know, there is no sexual dimmorphism in

humans, which obviously is untrue.

>> [snorts]

>> So you deviate too far from empiricism

and you start deviating from [snorts]

what's going to really reliably work out

in the long run.

Even though empiricism is not ultimately

true, still it's like some of the

default rules for this level of delusion

that we happen to be inhabiting.

But getting back to that, getting back to that essay, it was like an appeal to skepticism, not to, you know, we can just decide what the truth is and enforce it on society.

So, let's see here.

[sighs and gasps]

I guess I pretty much answered that question. And so, I'm just going to move on to Romeo's second question here, which is kind of a followup on his first question. Does your position that everything is subjective include the woke left's contention that male female sex differences are not based in objective reality and science but rather

are on a subjective gender spectrum that includes an everex expanding slew of categories like non-binary.

So I think I pretty much already answered this part that uh let's see see does your position that everything is subjective.

Yeah. Include the woke left's contention that male well I mean for an individual person to believe that then that would be their subjective experience. You know, there's a lot of people out there whose subjective experience is that the male female

um

binary or dichotomy or duality is just

fake and then they want to replace it
with something that's even more fake.
So yeah, I think I pretty much already
answered this question while answering
the first one is let's see
everything is subjective. The the woke
left's contention that male female sex
differences are not based in objective
reality. Um
in a way it is based in a kind of
objective reality
although objective reality is also
subjective. It's just that ob what we
call objective. It's like a subjectivity
that is shared amongst you know most
other humans just because our perceptual
systems are similar. You know we belong

to the same species. So there's going to be a certain like universal phenomena in the human species. you know, just barring outliers that are like really psychotic or something that I mean there is irregularity that cannot really be denied or you deny it at your peril.

So the very fact that we belong to the same species, the human species, means that there's going to be certain regularities in our perceived objective reality. And some of what the postmodern woke left is doing is just trying to just get away from empiricism and and what objectivity humans are capable of

managing

and just coming up with whatever serves

their agenda.

And part of their agenda is just a kind

of moral degeneracy.

Decadence. Decadence used to be a big

thing. I mean, you'd read about like

decadent civilizations of the past in

history books up until like the latter

part of the 20th century when all of a

sudden everyone just gets real quiet

about that because we're smack in the

middle of it now. So, people don't want

to be reminded of that that we're living

in a degenerate civilization at present.

[snorts]

[sighs] So, let's see.

Yeah. And and like in Gibbons decline fall of the Roman Empire, he points out as just a kind of truism for historians at the time that one sign of a civilization in decline is Unix rising to social prominence in a society. Unix which used to be of course it was like castrated slaves, castrated male slaves and then some of them would get freed and they'd become like like bureaucrats and so forth. In few famous cases in the the like the early Byzantine East Roman Empire, you even had some like really good generals. Narcisses who defeated the Ostrogoths in Italy was was a unic that kind of thing.

But still it is a sign of a civilization
in decline according to you know common
consensus
of historians back in the day and now
it's it's trans people
and that that is a sign of a
civilization is decline. It's like just
the the nuclear family and just
well-defined like roles for people in
society and all that. It's just kind of
breaking down and for some reason I've
got horizontal lines of light shining on
me. Especially if I lean back like this.
It looks kind of surreal, doesn't it? So
I'm going to have to
close this.
See? No, it doesn't. It's coming

[snorts] from the other side.

It's not even funny. Ah, that's a little better. Especially if I get close like this. It's just that time of day.

So, [gasps]

yeah, I think I answered that question. I think I might as well just move on to the next question. This is from Jimmy Lad. And Jimmy Lad says, "In a Cartisian style skepticism situation, I don't not sure what cart." Oh, yeah. Okay. See, I'll start over. In a cartisian style skeptical situation, how does an enlightened being truly know he is enlightened and is not deceived by spiritual pride or delusion? Well,

probably most people who consider
themselves to be enlightened. Possibly
even all of them really may be just
deceived by spiritual pride or delusion,
just an overestimation of oneself.
Um, but I mean that's not real
knowledge. That's just belief.
So I mean the truly enlightened being
has transcended mere belief. He no
longer confuses belief with knowledge.
And there's really nobody there to
really believe anything anymore anyway
other than just sort of vestigial nature
taking its course maybe.
So I mean you can't really say how.
There is no how. Just like there is no
how with regard to like miraculous

events occurring around an enlightened being. I think enlightened beings have pretty much transcended how.

Let's see here. Cartisian style skepticism. Yeah, I guess Decart was he he tried to start off by doubting everything that could be doubted and didn't go quite far enough because still he wound up um like latching on to Christianity as a way of describing everything that that he could doubt or something. So let's see here.

[clears throat]

Yeah, I mean if you're fully enlightened, you're not going to be thinking I am enlightened. I mean you're

just going to transcend that. you're

just gonna see through all that samsaric

stuff like perception

and I mean at the samsaric level it's

just kind of a mystery I guess

but like I I have said many times before

[clears throat]

what was I [laughter]

get distracted by by seeing the light in

my face like this

let's see what was I going to say now.

Oh yeah, I just completely lost the

thread. I lost where I was going with

that just right in mid-sentence, which

does happen sometimes.

Let's see. How does an enlightened being

truly know he is enlightened? Well, I

mean tr all true knowledge is ultimate truth. It's ultimate I mean real knowledge, not just belief.

So, oh yeah, I was going to say that like in a samsaric context, isn't I mean, it's problematic that there are any enlightened beings at all. I mean, it may be that within a samsaric context, an enlightened being really just can't exist. That like in samsara, which is based on delusion and ignorance, ignorance of ultimate reality, that there's going to be beings that are considered to be enlightened. But I mean calling even calling them beings is delusional.

So yes, it's like there was that logical school of Buddhism. I think sometimes it's called the the dignaga school or a few it used to be called like the the yoga logicians even though they may not have been yoga that they had like the classic example of a problematic premise is that being X you know such and such being is enlightened. You can't prove it at all.

an enlightened being, they would know it in a way, but you can't really explain that in samsaric terms. How you transcend belief and just go straight into ultimate absolute knowledge, just knowledge of the highest truth.

So, it's it's just going to be kind of

like a a mystery or paradox from a
samsaric point of view.
And I mean like many texts even like the
the diamond cutter sutra of the Mahayana
Buddhist say that if you become an Arya
you're not going to be thinking I'm an
Arya.
I mean that's just like one of the ex
like a symptom of like a fake Arya is
they believe that they're an Arya
because your self view is already gone
at that stage. So, you're not going to
be believing I am this or I am not that.
Okay. So, I kind of
waited and wandered around that that
question for a little while. And so, I'm

going to move on to Jimmy Lad's next question, which is a follow-up on his first question. He says, "For instance, what's to stop monks from going around self-proclaiming enlightenment? Is there a taboo for monks in self-announcing it? Well, in like in the poly texts, there's like the lion's roar, the sihanada, which means [clears throat] that when you've got a disciple becomes enlightened, he goes and tells his teacher like usually the Buddha and then the Buddha would know if he's really enlightened or not or just like deceiving himself. So you go and sort of ex explain what happened and then the Buddha can say, "Yeah, that's that's

good. Go in peace." Or he can say, "No, you're mistaken. You think you're enlightened when you're really not." So if anybody in the world can tell if somebody is enlightened, there's going to be another enlightened person. So you can proclaim your enlightenment to your enlightened teacher and then maybe they can say, "All right, that's that's good. I'm not going to argue against that." or they can say, "No, you're making a mistake. You you're you're overlooking things. You're you're overestimating your attainments."

Um, but going around self-proclaiming enlightenment to lay people, that's I

mean, no monk or none, fully ordained nun of the past who they think that they're enlightened. They I mean, even then, they can't tell lay people. They can tell other monastics, you know, in private, maybe just, you know, for feedback or whatever. But it is a pitia offense even to to admit to a lay person that [clears throat] you have psychic powers. You know, any kind of superhuman mental state, any udri manusa dama is that that would include like psychic powers. It would include the attainment of Janna from the the early Buddhist description of Janna and it would include enlightenment or semi-enlightenment. You know, you become

a sodapana or something. You're not allowed to say that to a lay person even if it's true because that's a paid offense

an offense requiring confession.

But if it's false, if you're just deliberately lying, you know, you're just claiming that you can remember your past lives when you can't just in order to get famous or get a reputation for being enlightened or whatever, then that's parajika. You're excommunicated for life. That's like the worst thing a monastic can do. I mean, going with the text, it's even worse than murder.

So, what's to stop monks from going

around self-proclaiming enlightenment?
Well, if they're going around
self-proclaiming it uh falsely to lay
people, then they're excommunicated. Or
I mean, if they're falsely knowingly
falsely proclaiming it even to other
monks, they're excommunicated.
But there is like the little loophole of
if you're just overestimating your
attainments. If you sincerely believe
you're enlightened when you're not, then
you wouldn't be excommunicated. But it
would still be if you're telling lay
people about it, it would be a Pacidia
offense requiring expeation.
>> [clears throat]
>> But I mean you can self-proclaim

like even becoming a sodapana like venerable Nyana Vera famously and notoriously did this. He he believed himself to have become a sodapana back in the 1960s when he was living in son and so he just sent out letters. I mean first he was going to try and keep it a secret till after his death but he was he just was didn't have it in him to keep it a secret. So he just kind of blurted it out, you know, he just kind of released the letters be or just maybe it was just one letter just announcing that he had become a sodapon and then of course it started this controversy of people saying no he isn't or yes he is.

Um

yeah, I mean it's just considered to be almost taboo for a monk to go around proclaiming that he is a sodapana or he is you know he has Janna. I mean some some monks hint at it like Mahasi upandid would hint that he was an Arya and he considered himself apparently to be higher than a sodapana. I would assume he considered himself to be a sakodagami,

but he couldn't just blurt it out in his damat talks to lay people because even if it was true, it would still be against the rules of monastic discipline. So he would just kind of hint at it. [snorts]

[sighs] And then there are monks that that do more than just hint at like you know there was one monk he was he was in Burma Odamasara or Odmathara I can't remember which Odmasara or Odmathara um spelled with a C or an S. I mean he would in his books which I think were like transcripts of domattox that he would say you know he saw this this animal and then he realized that it was like his mother from a previous life or something and that kind of thing. I mean you're essentially admitting to having psychic powers if you can see this kind of stuff you know look into the spirit of this animal and see you know remember

its past lives that kind of thing. So there are monks that do this kind of stuff even though it's it's considered to be [snorts] like against the rules. I mean like grounds for excommunication at worst and just kind of like bad manners, bad etiquette at best.

You know in a way it's bragging and usually if a monk is bragging it's because you know he wants to endorse his own fame that kind of thing.

Okay so I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Sedarta Lohachita.

And I'm I'm kind of like getting like a faster pace going to my question answering lately. So, this probably be

less than two hours when I'm done.

[snorts]

[clears throat]

Should have blown my nose before I did

this video, but

oh well.

So this next question is from Sedarta

Lohachita

who in my opinion spells his own name

wrong and I generally fix it because he

doesn't he's got like TA instead of T ha

ending Sedarta

but he can spell his own name however he

pleases. I'm not going to get on his

case over it any more than I just did.

So Sedarta lohachita

[clears throat] which is like what is

it? Attainments accomplished

with

red mind.

I think loa means red. Lohita is blood

or it could be copper because copper is

red. Yeah. Okay. So, Sedarta Lohachita

says, "Who was the most radical Buddhist

you have ever met?" And I'm not exactly

sure what Sedarta lohachida has in mind

with regard to the most radical

Buddhist, but the person that

immediately comes to mind would be

venerableiza

who was like a Buddhist Rambo. He was

like when I was a junior monk, he was

ordained in the Tonulu tradition, same

as me and he was always held up as like

this role model to be emulated because

he was absolutely completely strict in

Vineia for example.

Um

there was uh there was a number of

stories about him with regard to his

strictness in viney I've told most of

these stories like um he came to America

he was ordained in in Burma I'm pretty

sure he came to America for a visit when

Tom Pulu came to America and he wouldn't

stay indoors even though this was like

Northern California in cold weather and

I mean he would be literally blue he

would be so cold but he would refuse to

stay indoors. he would just stay on this hillside under a tree outside. And one of his friends

um who was like a monastery attendant at this same monastery was explaining to me that you know most people like most Buddhists you know you've got the middle path between self self-indulgence and self- torture.

Most people, the overwhelming majority of people, including the overwhelming majority of monks, stray off the middle path towards self-indulgence.

But Uriza,

he would he would go the opposite way. He would veer off into self- torture. In fact, he his practice was so intense,

you know, he's trying to do all of the dutongas, the optional aesthetic practices at the highest level that he had like a breakdown at one point and had to disrobe, go back to America. And then as soon as he was recovered and got better, he just came right back again and reordained. And when I first met him, he was living in a big hall. No, wait. When I first met him, he was living in a cave in Thailand.

And he thought it was paradise, this cave, you know, and I I I looked inside, but all I saw was just pitch blackness. I looked inside this his his cave in Thail in rural area of Thailand. And he

he had to sleep on a hammock and he couldn't keep anything. He couldn't keep soap. He couldn't keep books because the rats would just chew it all up. And he thought this was just excellent cave. Had to sleep in a hammock just to keep him up above the rats.

And then after that he came back to Burma and [clears throat] he moved into this big hollow banyan tree. I think it was like two big banyan trees. Banyan trees get huge and they kind of grew together and there was like this hollow place in between. He lived in there for a while and just the stories you hear like when he came to America this story I've told before where there somebody

was having a meditation retreat at that monastery and so they asked him to give a dharma talk to the meditators which he agreed to do. And so at the time of his dharma talk, he comes sits down in front of the the group of meditators and just sits there in silence for about five minutes and then he just gets up and leaves. And so the organizer of the meditation retreat, you know, chases after him and says, "Why'd you do that?" And he said, "There's somebody in the in the audience who's wearing a stocking cap and it's against Vinia for a monk to teach Dhamma to someone whose head is covered."

So the the organizer of the treat of the retreat went back and got this this lady, it was winter time, it was cold to take off the stocking cap and then he came back and gave the domat talk and he he was doing that kind of stuff a lot. He was just really he was just kind of an eccentric person and just he was he was like a Buddhist Rambo
and he was sort of like my role model for a long time in my early years as a monk especially.
He eventually dropped out of the monkhood but he just did not stop living a monastic life. He remained like this monastic hermit wearing like like robes, shaving his head sometimes, letting his

hair grow long sometimes. So he was like
a yeate in Burmese, which is like a
non-ordained
like religious hermit monastic type,
[clears throat] but he changed his name
legally. So even after he dropped out of
the monkhood, he still had this poly
name with Biku as his last name.
So, he'd be the most radical Buddhist
I've I've ever met. At least he's the
the obvious example of a radical
Buddhist that immediately came to mind
when when I came across this question.
You you see some other like similar kind
of Asian Buddhists, although I didn't
know them as well. I didn't have

conversations with them as much, but there were some Asian Buddhist monks who were just like absolutely uncompromising in practicing as strictly as they possibly could, following all the rules. There was one monk who came to my monastery and he [clears throat] was thinking about staying there, but at one point he had this long like a bamboo pole and he's measuring the distance to the nearest village with this bamboo pole. And it turns out that it wasn't quite enough of a distance for him to be following the dutonga of being a forest dweller because according to some texts, if you're a forest dweller, you have to live at least a certain distance from

the nearest village. And this my monastery where I was living was just right inside. It wasn't quite far enough away. So he just moved on to the next place because it he couldn't follow that rule or that optional aesthetic practice of living at least you know xum x distance from the nearest village.

So there there are people like that that are just like uncompromisingly strict to just like this wildeyed semihysterical degree in some of them.

So, I'm just going to move on to Sedart Loha's next question. And I will say before I'm moving on though that I mean it's not necessarily following the

middle path when you're just like absolutely like obsessionally strict. So there there has to be like some I don't know equinimity involved. And you can be you can be completely strict and have equinimity which would be good. But if you're like really just sort of like clinging to being absolutely strict and not breaking any rules, that can be a hindrance also. So anyways, getting onto Sedart Loha's next question here. Aristotle used the expression that we usually translate as extreme democracy which is hipper ble democratas in Greek in badly pronounced Greek or democracy taken to excess. Then he says, "Do you think that the Western

Hemisphere has reached that point that

has turned a total tyranny?"

And then he's got another question which

I should separate into a different

question. Let's see.

Then he says, "So do you think when we

have reached that point only can be

removed by brutal force?" Okay, I'll

just answer the first question first

because there's two question marks here.

So do I think Oh, just a minute. I got

to blow my nose. This is ridiculous.

>> [clears throat]

>> I'll get out of the picture so that you

just hear the disgusting noise.

Okay. [snorts]

When you have a mustache, you have to blow your nose more carefully than most people do.

But I digress.

So, [clears throat] do I think that we have excess of democracy? Yeah. And the founding fathers warned against what America was becoming. just setting aside all the other more or less democratic countries in the west just dealing with America. The founding fathers like Thomas Jefferson realized that when you give the right to vote to everybody including like people that are living on the dole then they're just going to vote for more free stuff. You just it just kind of degenerates into a kind of

socialism

and

that's that's not good. Originally in America, like the 1776 or starting with the Constitution anyway, the only people that could vote in America were white men who owned property.

And to some degree, I mean, the the whiteness probably you could you could dispense with that without too much damage to the system. But allowing women the right to vote, I mean, immediately you're going to start like sliding towards socialism because women are more interested in security than in liberty. they'll they'll vote away their own

rights and freedoms and the your rights
and freedoms for the sake of security
and taking care of everybody. And when
you start
like rewarding
this being a kind of economic parasite
on society, you know, you're not
contributing. I mean, you might be
paying a little bit of your dole back in
the form of taxes, something like that.
But seriously, it should be like only
the people who are like supporting
the the system should be the ones who
have the right to participate in the
political system.
And women, I mean, they tend to be less
informed with regard to like current

events and so forth. They have done studies on that. And again, they're just willing to vote away everybody's rights and liberties for the sake of security, which generally means a kind of socialist mommy state where you can't smoke cigarettes anymore. it's going to be illegal because we have socialized healthcare and other people are going to have to pay for your lung cancer. That kind of thing. You have to wear seat belts. I mean, this was an argument used when I was a teenager. You know, they just passed the seat belt law that you have if you're going to be driving your car, you have to have your seatelt

attached. And the main argument mainly that you get from girls is, well, you get in an accident, you could become a ward of the state. The government will have to support you. and which means everyone else in a kind of socialistic or you know semisocialistic system is going to have to pay for your accident. So yeah, I mean you can use socialism as a kind of like a a ratchet device for getting farther and farther away from from rights and liberties.

You stop being citizens and start being subjects.

But yeah, I do think that when you've got people on welfare voting, you've got extreme democracy or democracy taken to

excess. It should be only the people who really are in a position to make valuable contributions to society and not just by like selling empanadas from a from a food truck.

But at least those people have jobs. I mean like a welfare queen with eight kids by five different fathers who I mean her career choice was just going on welfare then I mean a person like that should not be able to vote because they're just going to be voting for more free stuff. Of course they're going to vote Democrat every time which is why the Democrats like this kind of thing.

[sighs and gasps]

So let's see. I wouldn't say it's a

total tyranny,

but I mean it is a corrupt system that

no longer is really um it's no longer

really designed to promote strength. You

know, like socialism or the left in

general, they glorify the weak and

demonize the strong. And when you've got

an entire civilization

with glorified weaklings and demonized

strong people, then obviously the

civilization is going to go downhill.

I mean, you shouldn't take the exact

opposite approach where you glorify the

strong and demonize the poor. But

glorifying the strong, I mean, that's

what the ancient Greeks and Romans did.
you know, their culture heroes up until
they turned Christian were like heroes.
You know, Thesius and Achilles, Achilles
was a real but he was a hero.
So,
yeah. I mean like you can glorify the
strong while at the same time having
some compassion for the weak but still
that compassion for the weak should be
demonstrated by private charity and not
just raising taxes so that the some
government bureaucracy can very
inefficiently support the weak.
So yeah, I do agree that we have got an
excess of democracy and it's it's even

worse in places like Australia or New Zealand or the UK or the EU or Canada than it is in the United States. The United States, as I said, I think in the previous Q&A, hasn't been fully castrated yet. We still have one ball. Okay. So I guess I'll just move on to the second half of this question by Sedar Taloh. Do you think that when we have reached that point only can be removed by brutal force? Well, anything is possible. So, I don't think it's necessary for the system to be violently overthrown necessarily.

Um, you could have

um I mean it is po anything's possible. So I mean you could have just enough

people like a critical mass of people just kind of waking up to hey this postmodern leftism just doesn't work very well then I mean if you have enough people shifting in their consciousness like that then sure like in in the going with Rome Rome is like a good example of what can happen with America that um I mean you can have reforms but I think taking the vote vote away from women or taking the vote away from people living on welfare handouts. I mean, that's going to really take some doing. That might actually require just an overthrow of the government. But even that, I mean, it could be like a a peaceful

coup, you know, a bloodless coup could result in that sort of thing. But yeah, I mean for that kind that radical improvement or change where you're reducing you're limiting the people that are able to participate in the political process just to kind of weed out the deadwood just people voting for free gimmies or just voting away rights and freedoms for the sake of some imagined security. And as I think it was Benjamin Franklin said, when you vote away your freedoms for the sake of security, you wind up with neither.

And you're you're worthy of neither. But a lot of people on the left just don't see it that way.

So yeah, I don't think it can only be removed by brutal force. I mean, there can be peaceful means of doing it. You know, it's like
the government is like gains control of the propaganda machine,
then you know, they can sort of propagandize people into going in a certain direction. But really, I think taking the vote away from people living on welfare handouts just just for one example. Um, yeah, that would take some kind of radical change because you're going to have just millions of people just rioting in the streets if you just all of a sudden just declare that. Say

Trump just suddenly declares that. Yeah, there's just going to be like yowling bloody murder just on a nationwide scale coming from certain people.

So I mean it's not necessarily changed by brutal force, but historically that is generally the way it works unless you just have somebody voted in as emperor and then they just are st suddenly start changing changing rules. But then the brutal force would come in when the when people start rioting and then you just send out the the troops to quell the riot by any means necessary.

So probably there'd be some brutal force involved if um the excess of democracy were turned around and turned into

something a little more healthy, also a little more patriarchal.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Fred and Fred says, "I pulled into a derelict to monastery last year that was really spooky and I don't spook easy." Here I got to input two spaces between monastery and last. Okay. What What's your thoughts on that? So Fred pulled into a derelict monastery last year that was really spooky. And Fred doesn't spook easy. What are my thoughts on that? Well, um I remember as a kid and as an adult also, you go into a house that's just like an abandoned derelict

house and there's kind of a spooky feeling to that too. You know, it's like there was like families living there, you know, it's like lots of people there and it is just like empty and dead. It's sort of like instead of um a snail shell inhabited by a living snail, it's just like a dead empty shell. that kind of thing. So that can cause kind of a spooky feeling. I don't think the fact that it's a monastery would really be the key point here. I mean, it could be a school, it could be a a house, an apartment building, a hospital, any kind of building or group of buildings or whatever that used to have like lots of people there, a community of humans all

interacting and all of a sudden now it's it's just dead and empty. It's going to cause a spooky feeling. you know, it's it's a dead building just like uh an empty crab shell is like a dead crab shell. It's it's not inhabited by a living crab.

So, it's it's kind of that kind of deal. I would I would guess, but I really wouldn't presume to try to psychoanalyze Fred enough that I could really get into what his subjective experience was when he's um at this derelict monastery.

I mean, derelict. I mean, I I assume he means there's nobody there. It was like an abandoned place. I mean, it could

just be like a monastery with people still there, like monks still there that's just kind of run down. That could be kind of derelict. I went to a place like that in Burma once. It was in in the town of Yay, which is like a brown zone. Foreigners can't visit the the city of Yay very much. It's like southern Mon state, which was in an insurgent zone most of the time I was living there. So anyways, I got a permit from the government to go and visit pagotas in Yay. That's not really why we went there, but you just say that on the on the application. And there was this monastery that specialized in contemplation of corpses. And there were

like mummified corpses throughout this monastery. And as there was just like mold and mildew all over the place in this monastery. There's pictures on the wall. You couldn't even tell what the pictures were because it was so overgrown with like mold and stuff. You look up on the bookshelf, there's like a hum a mummified human foot just sitting with all this other junk on this shelf, that kind of thing.

And then they have like these cases of like mummified humans everywhere. It was I mean that place kind of was gave me the willies kind of. And it wasn't just that there was human bodies and human

body parts. It was just like the mold
and rubbish and everything anyway. The
dirt. It just
I don't think the monks that would live
in a place like that would be completely
healthy unless they were like very
advanced and were just above all that
kind of stuff.
Anyways, [sighs]
that's some of my thoughts on that and
I'm moving on to to the next question
which is from Drip Walker. And Ripw
Walker says, "You said that in Burmese
society that people whose livelihood
involves killing are of low social
status. How does this apply to people
who serve in the Burmese military?"

Yeah, there is still some of that in the Burmese military. Although, of course, the government being a military dictatorship pretty much, it does glorify the army. And so in the the culture at least like in the propaganda and so forth and just in the culture in general um soldiers get kind of a an exemption from this to some degree. Uh, I mean it's like being in the military is like the avenue to social advancement sort of like in like the Roman Republic, early Roman Empire where if if you were going to amount to anything like in society or politically especially, you had to go through the

military and it's kind of like that in Burma to some degree like most of the richest people are either like generals and colonels or else close relatives of generals and colonels.

Um

but even so there is still I mean Burma is possibly the most devoutly Buddhist country in in the world and so people realize that soldiers who kill people including citizens of their own country um that they're not doing what is wholesome. You know they're making bad karma especially if they're actually killing people. Not all people in the military are actually shooting people but or blowing them up or whatever.

But the thing is um there is enough of a semi-stigma on the army partly because the army is like the oppressive government you know the oppressive arm of the government and all that you know the Burmese military is mainly used against people within the country rather than you know in foreign wars obviously. Um, so most of the the recruits into the Burmese military, or so I have read, are not ethnic Burmese. They're like Chins and Karen and these Christian ethnic groups that live on the outskirts of the country. So it's like the heartland of Burma is ethnic Burmese. and all the way around, you know, like you've got the

Rakines and then you've got the Chins and then you've got the like the the Kachins up north and you've got the Shans and you've got the Kayas and the Cayins and so it's like all the way around the country um on the frontiers or the borders it's these non Buddhist or anyways non Burmese groups and a lot of them were converted to Christianity during the British colonial times and after British colonial times with American American missionaries. First it was English missionaries. Then American missionaries also came in and converted a lot of these the Nagas and so forth to Christianity.

The Nagas being a a tribal group living

in northwestern Burma north of the Chins
kind of in between the Chins and the and
the Kachins in the northwest. They used
to be head hunters up until you know
well into the second half of the 20th
century.
So I guess converting to Christianity
was an improvement on being head
hunters.
Let's see. So yeah, I mean the Burmese
they tend to have a certain like
Buddhist reluctance
to consider becoming soldiers. At least
it's a stat statistically significant
reluctance and the uh the government
like selectively targets these ethnic

groups to become soldiers.

So that's that's a factor also.

So

yeah, I mean the the military really

does not have a very good reputation in

Burma mainly because it is a repress a

brutal and repressive and incompetent

military dictatorship or it has been for

most of the time that I've been

associated with that country.

And so I'm just going to move on to the

next question which is from SG

and SG says what is the fundamental

ontological relation between samsara and

nibbana or the unconditioned element? Is

samsara itself sustaining and nibbana is

this separate thing that has no

connection to it or is it dependent on nibbana? There must be some connection if liberation is even possible. Or else, how would one get from here to there? Acknowledging that there isn't a physical place in space. Well, there's two ways I can answer this question. One is like the orthodox terraovodan way and then the other is what I consider to be more what I consider to be closer to reality.

So the orthodox terraodin way like abidama philosophy it's got nibbana essentially part of samsara at least with regard to the scale of the ultimate realities you know there's 128 ultimate

realities nibbana is just one of those tongue sensitivity earth element you know all this stuff is just as real as nibbana is from the point of view of aidama and I just cannot buy that at all I've really have very little use for the Abidama philosophy of Terabara Buddhism and most western monks, most western Buddhists really don't have much use for Abidama.

So um it's just like the way that the early Buddhist philosophers early terabato Buddhist philosophers worked it out is they did not have really a sophisticated formal logic in northern India at that time apparently. And so there's what we would

consider to be kind of sloppy thinking
involved in working out the system. Like
nibbana is no more real than wrong view
or tongue sensitivity or femininity
fire element.
That kind of stuff. I mean it's that's
just
they can't really explain nibbana very
well at all because they're trying to
keep nibbana at the same level of
reality as everything else and it just
doesn't work that way. So my explanation
is what I was explaining in answer to
the very first question on this Q&A and
which I talk about in pretty much every
Q&A the the the simile of the uncarved

block infinite formless consciousness which because it's infinite and formless and it's really the only thing that really exists. I mean it just kind of becomes indistinguishable from absolutely nothingness. You know, like the philosophy of Hegel, his his logic, his first thesis is pure being. And then his antithesis to that is pure non-being. And he points out that you can't really tell them tell them apart because there's no discernable content in either one.

So after that, Hegel in his philosophy just accepts that pure being and pure non-being are synonyms, that they're the

same.

And so you wind up with this strange paradox of the absolute in Buddhism that I mean you talk about it a little bit but it's it's kept to a minimum in Buddhism. I think the Buddha wisely knew that when you reify the absolute you start calling it an it and talking about it a lot. I mean you just wander off into delusion because no perception is going to stick to that absolute truth ultimate truth. Paramontas satcha cannot be put into words. Once you start talking, you're talking conventional truth which is delusional at well at worst it's delusional at best

it's just illusion.

So you've got this uncarved block of marble in the simile and contained within that block of marble is every possible statue including an infinite number of impossible statues like a statue with its head levitating above its neck.

Or, you know, you've got Myron's discus thrower with legs as thin as threads that couldn't really stand up under its own weight, you know, if it were really carved out of marble, but it's still in that block of marble.

So, the the connection between Samsara and Nibbana, Samsara is all the virtual statues

and Nibbana would be the rock. You know, it's like essence and form. Like I keep using coffee mugs lately. Ceramic. Is this a coffee mug or is it ceramic? Well, by golly, it happens to be both at the same time. Even though coffee mug and ceramic are not synonyms. So, it's violating the laws of thought. You know, it's a and not a at the same time because it's coffee. It's a coffee mug and it's ceramic at the same time. Even though ceramic is not the same as coffee mug. Coffee mug and ceramic have two different meanings, but it's both at the same time. So it's a and not a simultaneously violating the arisetilian

laws of thought.

So

samsara is like virtual imaginary

potential statues contained in the the

infinite formless block of marble which

in the daoqing is called the nameless

uncarved block.

The Dao teaching says, you know, from

from [clears throat] the Dao came the

one, from the one came the two, and from

the two came the 10,000 things.

So just sort of translating that into

Buddhist terms, it's like the Dao is the

absolute is isn't it's nibbana nibana

datu and the 10,000 things are samsara.

So first you reify the absolute call it

the one

even though the the sins Ming says all

you can say is not two because he's not

even going that far. He's not even going

to call it the one

because like Hegel points out one and

zero I mean ultimately they're the same.

If that's the only two numbers there are

you can't tell them apart.

So let's see here.

Yeah. So I the difference just putting

it in easy terms

the difference between ultimate reality

and like conventional reality. The

difference between nibbana datu and

samsara

is the ultimate is like the essence

and like ceramic whereas the
conventional is the form or coffee mug.
So, it's a matter of essence and form.
And the forms are all like subjective,
arbitrary, ultimately unreal.
I'm just going to move on. Next
question. Now, this is from RFS.
And RFS says, "Do you think I'm going to
make sure we're recording now?" Yeah, we
are. Okay. RFS says, "Do you think it is
easier for a monk to be reborn in the
lower realms being that they might be
held to a higher standard?" And um when
I was a monk, I used to remember reading
somewhere, I think it was probably in a
book by Thomas Mertton, [clears throat]
that there's a saying among the

Catholics that a monk can go to hell easier than a lay person simply because they've got a higher standard they have to live up to. And there is some support of that in the poly text like there's uh a series of sutas or just like narratives because I think some some of them are in the the vignia also where somebody like Maha Mogalana or Mahakasapa will smile and they're just he's just walking along with another monk and the other monk asked him why are you smiling just now and he says ask me later. So later he gets asked and then he says I happen to see this ghost or a spirit flying through the air and

there's different ones you know some of them are in flames. There was one that was

had like elephantasis of the scrotum and they were like hawks and and like and like crows and stuff following along pecking at this gigantic scrotum that this guy was having to carry over his shoulder. you know, they were like ghosts that had done something really bad and so they're being punished for it in this, you know, this lower realm. And um sometimes it's it's like a a corrupt judge, but in some cases it's like a monk who broke his vow of celibacy, that kind of thing. And so um yeah, people held up to a higher standard, they can

um get bad results from their mistakes or their bad choices more easily than the average person.

So yeah, a monk going around declaring himself to be enlightened and fooling lots of people would probably be doing something worse than some kind of eccentric person standing on a street corner declaring himself to be enlightened and nobody's paying attention or believing him.

So yeah, I think in some ways it's easier for a monk to be reborn in the lower realms. Although in general it's easier for a monk to be reborn in the higher realms too because you know

they're they're living a more they're dedicating their life to virtue and the cultivation of wisdom to a higher degree than most lay people. So in a way it kind of broadens the spectrum of potential results. You know easier to get into a higher realm, easier to get into a lower realm, easier to get enlightened assuming that within a saric context that even means anything.

But like bad monks like Dewa Data, he went to Avichi hell. He's roasting in hell, the lowest pit of hell right now for trying to kill the Buddha. Although probably if he was a lay person, he'd be down there still because you try to kill the Buddha, you make the Buddha bleed,

you're guaranteed hell. Just going with orthodox terraoden doctrine or tradition.

So, I think it is easier for a bad monk to be reborn in the lower realms than for a bad person to be reborn in the lower realms, assuming that they're doing approximately the same kind of acts. And it is easier for a good monk to get into higher realms than for a lay person to get into higher realms simply because the monk is like dedicating his life. I mean, he's working at it full-time ideally, especially if he's a good conscientious monk.

He's going to be developing wisdom which

is going to help keep him out of the lower realms. That kind of thing. So like a lax, sloppy, unconscientious monk who is stealing or like seducing women. And once he successfully seduces a woman, like you know, he has sex with with a woman, he's not really a monk anymore. And that that would be bad, too. I mean, you got people pretending to be monks, and there are some out there that they're actually excommunicated, and they just don't tell anybody. Nobody really, nobody has called them out on it or anything.

So yeah, I do think it's easier for a bad

unconscientious monk to be reborn in lower realms if he's just really like disregarding dharma and just using his position as a monk for like personal gain.

[snorts]

Okay. I mean it's like slandering the Buddha, that kind of thing. Like if I [clears throat] mean this happens a lot too where you've got I mean this happened relatively recently where I just happened to see this YouTube video of somebody sort of passing themsself off as a Buddhist monk who are just giving these like left-wing platitudes and I think it was um they're talking

[clears throat] about how being
anti-Israel is being the same as being
anti-semitic and it's hate speech and so
forth. for and I was kind of taking him
to task in the in the comments of this
YouTube video and I mean it just got to
the point where he was just like
scoffing and mocking at the idea that um
what was it exactly? It was like
uh that that Will is volitional or you
know it's like that
I mean it was something just completely
bizarre just completely non Buddhist and
he's just like scoffing and mocking at
the very idea that um like suffering is
ultimately self-inflicted because um you
know our our desires are volitional and

that was it. I was he was just scoffing and mocking at the idea that desires are volitional and that suffering is ultimately self-inflicted, which is pretty basic to Buddhist philosophy. And he's just like I mean he I mean not only is he like promoting this sort of anti-darmic view, but he's just like scoffing and mocking at actual dharma or at least what is considered to be actual dharma anyway.

and somebody who's doing that kind of thing like pretty much slandering dharma and just for the sake of getting clicks or something. I mean, yeah, I mean that's that's flirting with disaster

right there. Or then there's Ken Wheeler who declares that the Buddha was murdered by Mahakasapa, his chief disciple at the time of his death, who was like senior monk in the in the SA after the Buddha passed away because his two chief disciples, Mahal Mahamogalana and and Maha Saruta or sorry Puta both had died before the Buddha did. They're probably older than him.

And Ken Wheeler is just declaring that Mahakasapa, you know, the senior monk in the in the SA at the time of the Buddha's death, actually participated in murdering the Buddha. And I mean, you'd have to be damn sure that you're telling the truth in a case like that. Because

if you're just slandering an arhan, if you're slandering a saint just through reckless disregard for the truth, even though you might actually believe it's true based on what? Based on like really crappy translations that you made yourself to make it look that way, then yeah, I mean that's that's bad, too. Although I'm I'm completely digressed from just wandered away from the question because Ken Wheeler is not a monk.

But you got to be really careful about some of this stuff if you're [snorts] like

teaching the exact opposite of dharma

while saying that it's dhamma so that you're leading people astray.

I mean people could say that I'm doing the same thing but at least I tend to differentiate my own personal opinion from orthodoxy. you know, if I digress, if I deviate from what orthodoxy teaches, like with regard to the the relationship of Nibbana and Samsara, I generally make it known and then you can choose for yourself, which you prefer.

But I'm not going to say that the Buddha taught this when really there's no evidence that he did. That's you're getting into d you're getting onto thin ice with regard to that.

So, let's see here. I mean causing a

schism that's that's a guarantee of hell
supposedly and plenty of plenty of
Buddhist monks did that in the past.
But I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from Phil
and Phil says, "What is your advice for
loneliness from a Buddhist perspective?"
Gosh, that's tough because I really I
really never felt lonely very much.
There were times when I was a monk when
there was a certain friend of mine named
mucus man that I would really miss.
And I mean being a red-blooded male, I
would be lonely for a woman sometimes. I
mean just sort of having this
unfulfilled desire m for, you know,

fulfilling one's mating instinct, that
kind of thing. But as a general rule,
I've been a loner. I've been relatively
self-sufficient
throughout my life.
So advice for loneliness from a Buddhist
perspective first of all I mean you can
just do the panacea just practice
mindfulness of it what does it feel like
you observe the loneliness and then it's
not you being lonely anymore it's just
loneliness is arising you know this
mental state is arising and you just
observe it like an ichthyologist
observes a dead fish what does it feel
like
that kind of thing

um I mean loneliness I mean solitude is is definitely praised. We wake up is definitely praised in Buddhism. So, it's a good thing. If you don't like it, then it's just kind of like you're not, you know, you've got certain karmic tendencies that are making your personality not a perfect fit for advanced Buddhism, which I mean, all of us have that to some degree.

Most of us anyway.

So, what is your advice for loneliness from a Buddhist perspective? The best advice would just practice mindfulness of it. Just psychoanalyze yourself to some degree. Why is it that you don't

like solitude? You can get insights from that.

Um, and also bear in mind that Buddhism endorses solitude. Not loneliness, but solitude. We wake up.

So, let's see. Let's just move on to the next question here from Phil. What is your advice for loneliness from a non Buddhist perspective?

Well, from a non Buddhist perspective, I mean, if you really do have a need for like a social life,

then yeah, you you you can cultivate that. You have the the freedom and the right to cultivate a social life. Even if you're a monk, I mean, you could live in a crowded monastery with other monks

and have monk friends. There's no rule against that. I mean it's not really praised in the texts very much. You know solitude is really receives the highest praise in the Buddhist texts but this is from a non Buddhist perspective I guess the least says so. So what is your advice for loneliness from a non Buddhist perspective?

I mean, if it really is in harmony with your nature to interact with other people, have a social life, then you can do that and you can practice dhamma within that context. You know, it's like there's different ways you could you could develop a life of ser selfless

service of others,

which would be dharmic, beneficial,

wholesome, and at the same time, you're

interacting with other people all the

time. In my case, it doesn't work very

well. I really don't like the human race

all that much. I'm not really a

sociallyor oriented person, but some

people are and that's that's fine. I

mean, that's kind of helped keep the

human race going all these millennia.

So my advice for loneliness from a non-B

Buddhist perspective is I mean if you

can't use Buddhist methods to just be

mindful of it and observe it and kind of

denature it by you know through

philosophical detachment

or whatever or you just force yourself you just grit your teeth and just force yourself to live a life of solitude because the Buddhist texts say so that's what you sh ought to do then yeah you just you can go ahead and interact with other people and do it as dharmically as possible, you know, just cultivate a a a yoga of selfless service, you know, karma yoga.

So, I mean, there's that, too. But, I mean, you can be mindful of of loneliness and observe it in a detached like empirical manner. Um, even if you're not a Buddhist. So, there is that too.

But forcing yourself I mean there there's always a certain gamble in forcing yourself to be like saintlier or more aesthetic than is natural for you because then you start getting into the realm of like Freudian hysteria like repressed urges that don't just go away. They don't just disappear. you just repress them down into your subconscious mind where they build up pressure until they start percolating up to the surface as neurotic symptoms.

And like for for a lot of people, they're they're willing to cultivate neurotic symptoms for the sake of making progress in dharma or you know like medieval Catholic saints. Some of them

were extremely nutty just because they
were so repressed going with a Freudian
approach anyway. And I think he was
probably correct in in regard to this.
So you might be healthier
like physically and mentally if you are
a socially oriented person to develop
some kind of socially oriented dharmic
existence like selfless service, work at
a homeless shelter or something, work at
a soup kitchen,
that kind of thing. You can you can do
that.
Be a teacher.
So, I'm just going to move on to uh Phil
Lee's third question here. And he says,

"For one whose entire body is hopelessly riddled with wrong view and who is a burden on others, wouldn't it be best to cease being through autotermination?" Well, from a Buddhist point of view, you're just going to get reborn again probably with even worse karma because usually people who autoterminate do not do so with wholesome mental states. So it messes them up even worse and so they'll be in an even worse position next time. So one whose entire body is hopelessly riddled with wrong view. Gosh, I mean that that is an unfortunate situation, but I mean sooner or later going with the Buddhist point of view, they're going to have to like see the

error of their wrong views. And you're not going to do it by just opting out and just getting reborn with even worse karma next time.

So I mean being a burden on others.

Yeah. I mean there are people like that and the people that they are a burden on are like they're they're experiencing the fruition of their own karma by having this person be a burden on them. But I mean the best you can do is the best you can do. I mean that's really I mean that it sounds like a complete tautology. It's just kind of silly. But really, I mean, you just all you can do is is the best you can do. That's that's

it.

And and some sorrow is always going to be up. There's always going to be people with wrong view or a burden on others. I mean, that's why that's we're here just

it's always going to be that way. Some sorrow is always going to be up.

You're never going to have a perfect world.

There's always going to be like bad people, people with wrong views. There's going to be just

liars and thieves and and all kinds of stuff.

So, I mean, you just have to accept that. I mean, if if I hope Phil Lees

isn't referring to himself,

considering himself to be hopelessly

riddled with wrong views and a burden to

others. I mean in that case I mean

obviously at least Phil Lees is

inquiring and trying to find the truth

and all that but I mean for if Phil

Lethees is just referring to other

people who are hopelessly riddled with

wrong views and a burden to others well

I mean you shouldn't really be too

worried about other people just like

tend your own garden [clears throat] as

Voltater would say

because there's always going to be

up people out there and you can't

like change 8 billion other people. You can just change yourself. And even that's difficult enough. It's hard enough to change yourself. So there's there's no way in hell you're going to change 8 billion other people so that they're all going to be behaving in a way that you consider to be appropriate and acceptable.

You know, if people are continually bothering you in a certain way, that's that's really your problem. And so you got to change your own attitude. just learn, figure out or work out some way of not being bothered by it because they're not going to just disappear. I mean, you can just go out and be a

hermit, but that's that's sort of like a a slipshot way of dealing with the problem. It's like avoiding temptation just or just like overcoming temptation temporarily just by avoiding it. I mean, that's that's like a slipshot way. just um I mean the best way is to learn how to resist the temptation when it's right there in your face. And so the best way of dealing with people that are considered to be, you know, like hopelessly riddled with wrong view and a burden on others, then you just have to adjust your own personality, your own attitude so that they don't bother you anymore. You just accept that's the

that's the best they're doing they can do at the time. Bless their hearts. and continue with your life because they're always going to be there. It's always I mean it's I mean by improving yourself you improve the world partly because the world as you experience it is just like a an outward reflection of your own mental states.

So purifying your own karma is going to purify the world you live in to some degree.

But it would not be best to cease through auto termination just because auto termination generally creates even more bad karma because the person does it with bad mental states, you know,

despair and and whatever. So it's just it's just going to set them up for an even worse situation next time.

And I'm going to move on to the next question which is from Sam Papalalapa. And S Papaalapa says, "Is there a tradition in Terravada to confess everything before and after ordination to the SA?" Not confessing everything, but like at the ordination ceremony, [snorts] you are asked a number of questions with regard to do you have any certain serious diseases and uh like are you in debt? That kind of thing. And are are you a human being? are you a man? That kind of thing. And

so, I mean, that's the the only real confession you have to make like before your ordination is like right at the ordination, you have to declare yourself to be, you know, you have you qualify for being ordained as a monk. That's really all you have to do. And then after ordination, there is confession, but it's only if you break a rule. I mean if you have some kind of you know you've got hatred in your heart it's you're not breaking a vineia rule but still you've got some kind of issue of like some sort of unh wholesome mental state or something obviously you can go to your teacher you can go to a wise monk and discuss it with them but it's

not mandatory

the only really mandatory confession in

terabat Buddhism after your ordination

is you got to confess to the rules that

you have broken and then that's just

very like corrupt you know it's become

almost a meaningless formality in

terabat of Buddhist countries like

Thailand and Burma you know in Burma you

just say oh I I confessed many offenses

of various sorts and you don't even have

to say what you did and then in Thailand

they're maybe a little better they just

confess each category of offense without

mentioning any exact offenses that they

committed which is not much better than

the Burmese method.

So confession itself, I mean it's not like in Catholicism which is I consider to be a respectable tradition making real confession of you know just anything that you think is sinful that you have done since the last confession in Terraana. It had something similar to that with regard to breaking rules, but it has become corrupt into practically a meaningless formality that like in Thailand they'll con they'll confess to breaking like pyania offenses when nobody breaks potty dania offenses anymore. It's just four rules that are so obscure that as a general rule, nobody breaks the rules.

Some of the rules refer to bikunis which technically don't exist. Although in sort of western and westernized countries, they've been ma making efforts to revive Bikunis.

Um let's see here.

Yeah, but but seriously, if you have a good friend, you have a wise friend who is also ordained. you're you're you're a monk and or if even if you're not a monk, you can still go to a monk dude that you trust and you consider to be very wise and tell them what you consider to be, you know, whatever you want to confess. You can do that. It's not mandatory, but you can certainly do

it. And it does happen sometimes.

So, you know, in some places more than others, it's a tradition for lay people especially to go and just confess all the unskillful stuff they've done to monks that they revere.

But the monk isn't going to like tell them, okay, you do five hail Marys and and you know, two aspirins and call me in the morning, anything like that.

So

yeah, kind of there's kind of a tradition in terra to confess um make confession of your lapses from virtue,

but it's not it's not like in um Roman Catholicism and it's really not

before ordination. If you're intending to become a monk, you don't have to confess anything other than just like assert that you haven't that you're not in a position that disqualifies you from becoming a monk. So you you aren't asked about that during the ordination ceremony and you have to say, you know, I'm a bande or nati bande, you know, saying that, you know, I have it or I don't have it.

Um,

but I mean it does it does occur. So even if it isn't like a scriptural tradition, it does happen and it's not against the rules either. Anyways, I'm

just going to move on to S Papa Alapa's next question, which is from your perspective, what has been the benefits of love and kindness practice throughout your time as a Buddhist? I really didn't do much loving kindness or meta meditation as a Buddhist. It just seemed so artificial to me. It's like you can't really just turn on meta with a like like turning on a faucet. I mean, some people can do that, I suppose. I just haven't been able to do it. So, if I experience meta towards others, it would have to be spontaneous. I mean, to some degree, you can kind of set yourself up to be more spontaneous by, you know, just deliberately not trying to have bad

thoughts or close yourself off against other beings. you know, try to be openhearted and just, you know, just in that way. I mean, that could be a kind of meta meditation. And like the monk goes for alms round in the morning and he just tries not to have any negative thoughts. You know, the little old lady just pours soup all over the piece of cake that was already in your bowl. And then, you know, you have you should like resist saying, "Oh, great lady. You just poured soup all over the cake." Even internally, not even like silently. You shouldn't be doing that. You know, you should just have like a impassive poker

face. You accept everything with equinimity and you should be like sending meta like before I would go for alms a lot of time, you know, I'd be like sunda which is just like a a blessing, you know, may all the people who will offer food be happy and and healthy, you know, this kind of thing. So that's just like standard practice for monks to send out like a blessing before they go for alms round just to kind of help them to have like love in their hearts or at least equinimity when they're going for alms round and getting [clears throat] some little old lady put or they put in the cake and it's swarming with ants. You

know, it's like a little old lady's
their eyesight isn't good anymore. So
they have cake on the on the cupboard
and the ants find it before she puts it
into your bowl. And so I mean that stuff
happens
and a monk is just supposed to just
calmly impassively accept it all.
Mahakasapa I think it's in his verses in
the Terraagata where this leper is
putting food into Mahakasapa's alms bowl
and one of his fingertips breaks off and
lands in the bowl and Mahakasa I mean he
doesn't raise an eyebrow he just accepts
the food with the fingertip of the
lepous beggar who just put food into his

bowl he just continues on his way and then the the beggar the person with leprosy I mean he's mortified he wants to see what Makaspa is going to do. So he follows him to see, you know, what what he's going to do with that fingertip. And when Mahakaspa gets enough food, you know, he just sits down at the the base of the the the city wall and he just he doesn't even take the fingertip out of his bowl. He just calmly moves it over to one side and starts eating his meal.

So I mean, you really have to have that kind of mental state as a monk. You know, sometimes it's like I remember there's this one little kid in this one

village I used to go for alms. He looked like the the feral child from I think it was uh

the road warrior. It was like the second Mad Max movie. Just this filth covered kid with like wild hair, you know, and he'd sometimes he'd have like this creepy sounding cough and he'd be like coughing and sneezing directly into the food before giving it to me. And you just have to accept it. people with leprosy putting food into my bowl. You just have to accept it. There's this one lady who actually ran some kind of little shop. I remember one time I'm walking towards her. She's waiting to

offer me food. She sees me coming. She blows her nose with her hand really fast, you know, just kind of snarfs into her hand and just flings the snot off and then offers food with the same hand. And a monk just has to accept that kind of stuff.

But practicing loving loving kindness or meta meditation as a monk is just something it just seemed too artificial. So many people practice meta meditation and they're just pretending. You know, they're they're kidding themselves. They're like deceiving themselves thinking that they're sending meta to all beings when really they're just kind of cultivating this warm glowy feeling

in their chest.

So you have to be careful about that.

and just turning meta on and off

deliberately just doesn't work for me.

It has to be spontaneous. And so the

best I could do with regard to meta meta

practice is just try to be openhearted.

You know, just make a make an effort to

just not judge people, not be like

biased against people. You just accept

what happens, that kind of thing. And

there's some meta that spontaneously

leaks out from that.

But doing meta meditation is just

something I never really did very much

at all just because it just doesn't work

for me very well. And possibly as a consequence, meta is probably one of my weakest parameies.

For those of you who don't don't know what parameies are, there's this list of 10 virtues that a fully enlightened Buddha has to perfect before he becomes enlightened. Otherwise, he'll just be like an ordinary enlightened being, just an aura.

Anyways, let's see here. [clears throat] Going back to some papalapa, he says, "Which of the five hindrances do you feel is most destructive to love and kindness andor wisdom?"

And he says,"I asked because I'm currently trying to concentrate my

efforts in love and kindness and focusing on the body during meditation." Well, the five hindrances and the five um what was the other one? There's another list of five that are similar, but I think ill will is is one of the five. So, I mean, that would be the most destructive to to meta because it's essentially the opposite of meta. In meta, you want all beings to to be fortunate and and content, whereas with ill will, you want bad things to happen to them or you just just hate them. Yeah, the Samiojinos is another one. The five the five attachments or something. Yeah, I've never really been into these

these kind of lists of these technical

things because it didn't really seem to

apply

really well to my practice,

but I'm just going with the I maybe I

should have looked it up beforehand, but

[clears throat] I'm just going with the

idea that ill will be one of the five

hindrances.

So, yeah, that would be it, I suppose.

Um

with regard to wisdom, yeah, ill will is

still I mean in order to have ill will

first of all you have to have self view.

You have to believe that other beings

really exist at least while you're

feeling it.

You that

you know, it's it's foolish as well as

being sort of hostile.

So yeah, I suppose I should have done my

homework on that one because the the

hindrances and the samiojenos,

they uh I get them confused in my mind

because I've never really never really

taken much interest in in that kind of

list. Anyway,

so trying to concentrate his efforts in

love and kindness. Actually, I mean

technically it's called loving kindness,

which is the kind of weird translation

that has struck traction in the west for

the word mata, which literally means

something like friendliness,

benevolence, that kind of thing.

So

yeah. Well, good luck. Good luck on

that. But you got to be careful if

you're going to be practicing meta that

it should be genuine meta or at least

the practice should be just sort of like

getting rid of obstacles that would get

in the way of the spontaneous arising of

meta, which is about as far as I got

with it. Just try to minimize anything

that would stop meta from arising

spontaneously because I just could not

just turn it on and off like like like a

faucet. And you got to be careful that

you're not just deceiving yourself if

you're practicing metal meditation.
So I guess I should just move on to the next question here.
This is from Dhamma River.
And Dama River says, "Can we talk about the Assura realm? In my opinion, it's the most fascinating realm of existence because they already have everything most human beings would want. beauty, high status, long lifespan, power. They are demigods. But instead of being happy and grateful, they spend their entire lives angry and jealous and fighting with the davas because they have more than them. In my opinion, this realm of existence gives all of samsara away due

to the insatiability of tata or craving.
What are your thoughts on this? Well,
the Assura realm, it's one of the the
lower realms, the five lower realms, and
it really it's the lower realm that
receives the least mention because
really the Assur Realm is is like a
vestage of like protoindo-uropean
religion that the protoindo-uropeans,
they had there's they have this legend
of the gods and the the titans or the
the Davas and the Assuras who were at
war over like overlordship of this world
and the Davas or the gods won the
Assuras or the Titans lost this battle
and so the the the Titans or the Assuras
get chained up under a mountain and the

Greeks had this legend the Indians had this legend probably other Indo-Uropean peoples also had this legend of this ancient primordial war between two sets of superhuman beings over overlordship of this planet. One side wins the gods and one side loses. And for the most part, they get chained up under a mountain and they hate the gods. And by the time the Buddha came along in the Ganges Valley of ancient India, I mean, that was just ancient history. And the Assuras really didn't play have much of a role in anything. It's just that like for example, there's supposedly one Assura called Rahu who is free to roam

and he's huge and that uh eclipses of the sun and moon are caused by Rahu swallowing the sun or moon into his mouth temporarily.

Um

so I mean the Assura realm is just kind of a vestage. It's a mythological vestage even by the Buddhist time because they really weren't I mean, they weren't really mentioned all that much. Usually, when you're talking about the lower realms, you just talk about hell, ghosts, animals, and what was the other one? Hell, ghosts, animals. Well, I guess the assaurus would be the fourth. No, seems like humans should be sixth from the bottom. What am Which which one

am I missing?

Maybe we are just fifths from the

bottom. The four lower realms. Yeah, I

guess so.

Yeah, I'm just my mythology is getting

rusty.

But I mean animals obviously get a lot

of mention. Ghosts get more mentioned

than assuras and hell gets a lot of

mention because that's like the main

punishment for doing really bad things.

Assuras I mean it's just

really it's just a myth mythological

vestage from probably prehistoric times.

there was like this religious war

between two main tribes within the the

the millu of the the Indo-European peoples. You know, it's like which pantheon are we going to follow? So, it was more of a war between priests than a war between gods and titans in my opinion in all probability.

And it was just sort of remembered as this legendary war between these two pantheons.

One of them had to win out in the long run.

But uh yeah, I do consider it to be for the most part mythology. Not that there aren't like demonic beings out there.

Um, Buddhism really doesn't have a a convenient category for demons. Like, like the demons in hell that are

torturing people, according to the commentarial tradition, they don't even really exist. They're not they're not really sentient beings. They're just like holographic projections that are generated by the bad karma of the denisens in these hell realms.

So the Assuras are kind of like a vest a vestage of earlier Indian and pre-Indian Indo-Uropean philosophy and really it's just it was hard to to like do much with them. They're not mentioned very much.

So let's see what is the act actual question though. Can we talk about the Assura realm? Yeah, I kind of did.

Sorry to be a buzzkill with regard to

that. Let's see. Where's What are your thoughts on this? Yeah. Okay. Yeah. So, I mean, they're they're generally viewed by tradition as like very I mean, they're superhuman even though they're in a lower realm, like a subhuman realm, but still, I mean, their powers are superhuman like Rahu can actually swallow the entire sun into his mouth.

Um,

I think the Hindus have developed that theory so that Rahu is just a severed head of a of a an assura. So when he swallows the sun or moon into his mouth, he swallows it and it just comes out the bottom of his neck and so it doesn't stay swallowed. But in in Buddhism, I'm

pretty sure he's not just a severed

head, but he has an entire body. He just

spits it back out again.

Um,

yeah, I do think that the Assura realm

really probably is the same realm as the

Titans of the ancient Greeks. that

probably reminiscent of some very

ancient prehistoric

like theological

conflict between two pantheons that were

being taken seriously by, you know,

different

different uh like segments of the

population. And one of them wound up

winning, the other one wound up losing.

And so it got mythologized into a war

between the gods and the anti-gods.

That would be my guess.

And that actual demonic beings that are

very powerful

um really don't have a a convenient

category in the 31 plains of existence

in orthodox Buddha Buddhism.

So I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from Ethiopian fake

TIG or possibly just fake Ethiopian fake

TIG. And he says, "Is it said that the

Buddha actually didn't like the idea of

Oh, it is said that the Buddha actually

didn't like the idea of hope very much.

Can you speak a little about that?"

Yeah, there is a question, I think it's

in the pseudonyata, where somebody asks um the Buddha, you know, should one have hope and the Buddha says, "No, like a like an enlightened being has no hope. An enlightened being does not experience hope. And hope is is a kind of desire. It seems to me, I mean, there could be some way of just being optimistic, being open-minded towards good things happening, but I don't know if that would qualify as hope. Hope seems to be that you're actually desiring something to happen in the future. Generally, something good, but you can you can hope for something bad to happen to your enemies. So it's really is just kind of

a desire for the future. Desire for something to happen in the future. And desire is the cause of all suffering. So yeah, hope is a kind of craving or attachment that is ultimately unskillful. Even though um like at more elementary levels of practice, you can hope to become a monk someday or you can hope to get you know develop janna that kind of thing. But eventually, I mean, because hope is a kind of desire, you're better off without it. I mean, you can use it as skillful means, like an elementary level, but eventually you got to get rid of it.

So, I'm just going to move on to Ethiopian fake TIG or fake Ethiopian

fake TIG's next question,
which is as follows. In the book, What
the Buddha Taught, which I assume he's
referring to the book, the famous book
by Walp Polo Rahula.
He says in the book what the Buddha
taught there is an attempt to show
Buddhism for what it was such as full of
light and not nihilistic. Why do you
think people view Buddhism as nihilistic
nowadays? And do you personally think it
is? Well, while Polar Rahulu was being a
kind of missionary, you know, he was
trying to portray Buddhism in the the
the best possible light and he did kind
of glorify it and romanticize it to some

degree.

You know, this portraying Buddhism in the stark almost inhuman way of the earliest texts would not attract a whole lot of Western people to convert to Buddhism. And that's really what Walp Polo Rahula was trying to do with this book is to portray Buddhism in the most positive possible light to get more people to become Buddhists or at least to have respect for Buddhism and interest in Buddhism.

So

let's see the actual question here. Why do you think people view Buddhism as nihilistic nowadays? And do you personally think it is? Um, it depends

on what you mean by nihilistic. Let's just look it up. Let's just look it up in the dictionary here. Nihilistic. Nihilistic.

Okay, it's an adjective. Rejecting all religious and moral principles in the belief that life is meaningless.

Okay, so now I got to rejection of all religions and moral principles in the belief that life is meaningless. That would be nihilism like modern nihilism anyway. Sort of like the the pre-marxist Russian nihilists of the 18th century or the the 19th century that Dostki was always taking pot shots at. He was

always bashing away at these nihilists. Um like Bazerov in Tarv's Fathers and Sons was a nihilist of that sort where life is meaningless and you're just trying to tear everything down. Don't believe in anything. um and you don't really care what happens after that. So they were sort of like the forerunners of the Marxists. They were helping to you know sort of tear down the traditional structure of society and then the Marxist capitalized on that and replaced it with dialectical materialism and so forth.

But do I think Buddhism is nihilistic? I do think that ultimately all meaning is delusion. So yeah, the meaninglessness

of reality or the meaninglessness of the world. Yeah, I'd be a nihilist in that sense ultimately. Even though like at a conventional level, so long as we are dealing in this world, we have to deal with meaning.

I mean, if you're unenlightened and like a real nihilist and you just like dispense with all meaning, you're just going to be a vegetable. You won't be able to function really.

So we have to behave as though things are meaningful. I mean so long as we're operating in the context of samsara we have to assume that there is meaning to certain things even though at the

ultimate level like nibana nibbana is meaningless. There is no meaning in in nibbana because meaning is like symbolism. Meaning is like a perception where you're saying that you know A represents B or A stands for B that kind of thing and so A would be the meaning of B.

So like meaning seems to me to be ultimately delusional but because we are living in samsara we have to deal with that kind of language.

So, it's good to have some kind of meaning to things, especially if it's based as much as possible on empiricism so that everyone can more or less agree on it

while at the same time kind of holding it loosely in an open hand and not like clinging to it, which just strengthens the delusion. But it's just skillful means in order to function in this version of reality or in this samsara you have to accept that there are meanings to things like words. I mean I mean even nihilists use language but lang language by definition has to have meaning otherwise you're just babbling incoherently.

So even a hardcore nihilist still accepts meaning and uses meaning within the context of of everyday life. But I think some people consider

Buddhism to be nihilistic in that you know there is no self, there is no soul, there is no capital G god, that kind of thing. And that's not so much nihilistic as mystical because you're again you're transcending the delusive meaning to get to ultimate reality. And ultimate reality stands for itself in a manner of speaking. You can't have something else be the meaning of ultimate reality because I mean ultimate reality is it's not symbolized. You know it is as it is. And even the Old Testament gets into that to some degree, you know, like God didn't have a name in some parts of the Old Testament because I mean once you slap a name onto it, it's just this

label that gets confused for the reality or God doesn't show his face, that kind of thing. I mean that's sort of inklings of this kind of realization that's even found in in the Old Testament.

But I mean a lot of people that that really want to like cling to like a samsaric understanding of reality where there is a capital G God who is our father and takes care of us and we have this immortal soul and we're going to go to heaven after we die. This kind of stuff. Um I mean people cling to that and then they just do not like at all the idea of that is ultimately meaningless.

You know, it's it's almost like the same kind of resentment that people have towards people who commit well who who selfdelete
certain words you're not supposed to say on YouTube. So like there are people who selfdee and other people are just like resentful of that. That's the coward's way out. Even though that person just did what this person who's criticizing them fears the most yet he's calling them a coward.
So it's just kind of a resentment of rejecting what you consider to be most dear, what you consider to be most valuable. That can be seen as nihilistic. And Buddhism, yeah, it does

that too. But I don't think it's really nihilistic with regard to saying, you know, nothing is real other than just I mean, reality is beyond words. And so you have to approach that through mysticism rather than through like mythology or theories, that kind of stuff.

And I'm just going to move on to fake fake Ethiopian fake TIGs. Next question. Do you believe someone can pass the the stages of insight till equinimity? Okay. Their I think he means instead of okay, I think he means on. Okay, I'll start over. Do you believe someone can pass the the stages of insight till

equinimity on their own without any help? And if so, how hard or easy is it to do really? Well, according to Buddhism, traditional Buddhism, the only people who can become enlightened on their own without any help would be a Buddha, a sama sam Buddha or at least a pacheka Buddha because they're the ones that get the wheel of dharma or at least the the sama sam Buddha gets the wheel of dharma rolling and then other people can hear the dharma and practice the dharma and then they they can become enlightened through the help of already having learned dharma from somebody else.

But a pacheka Buddha, they're just a

like a hermit Buddha. They they they realize dharma on their own and then just don't teach it. Whereas a Samasam Buddha, you know, they also I mean obviously the Buddha did receive meditation instructions from at least two teachers before he became enlightened. But they weren't those meditation techniques didn't get him enlightened. They just caused him to be a better meditator. Maybe he got some insights from it or something, but he had to discover Dhamma on his own. Like dependent core rising for example, the middle path, that kind of thing. He had to discover on his own.

So I mean passing the the stages of insight, that's kind of a commentarial thing. Um I really don't think that that is mentioned in the sutas. That's a a commentarial thing that is really dwelled upon a lot in Burmese teraba Buddhism. It's called nyanzin. It's the stages of whiposa insight knowledge that you have to experience in the proper sequence in order to become enlightened or at least become a sodapana.

So let's see.

Yeah, I I mean without any help is kind of

it's kind of vague because it could be like there's there's a story I think it's in the commentaries of a monk who

is walking along and he's he's been meditating on bones, you know, he's been meditating on the the ati the the uh the the part of the the bone part of the body, you know, it's like he's doing the 32 parts of the body meditations and just singled out bones, I I guess Ajan Mun did this for a while, too. But this monk, he's just like meditating on bones all the time. And then there's this woman comes up to him and she's kind of like a a loose woman and she's sort of like laughing and and showing her teeth while talking to him. And he just gets this insight, this flash of insight from looking at her teeth that just, you

know, the teeth bones, even though teeth technically are a different part of the body than the bones, he just had this flash of insight and, you know, it helped him to become enlightened somehow, just looking at this woman's teeth. You know, there's [snorts] this famous Zen master mentioned in, you know, the Chinese Chan texts, how he's striving and striving to become enlightened and just can't do it. So finally he just kind of gives up and becomes like the the like the the guardian, the caretaker of a cemetery. And he's just sweeping leaves or something in the cemetery one day and the the broom hits a a rock, a little

pebble which flies and hits a bamboo and makes this sound like talk. And when it makes this talk sound, it somehow jars him into enlightenment. So it's like that rock helped him to become enlightened. There's another I think it was a nun like a Chinese Buddhist nun who or maybe it was a monk I don't remember now but the they're like fetching water from a well at night and the the person looks into the well and or looks into the the bucket full of water and they see the moon reflected in the the surface of the water in the bucket and then right then because it was an old worn out bucket the bottom

falls out of the of the the bucket and the water just disappears. and the reflection of the moon disappears and then they become enlightened. It just triggers this insight and there's lots and lots of cases of this kind of thing happening.

And so even to say the Buddha didn't receive any help, it may be that his two teachers gave him some help and just experiences of life can give help. I mean without any kind of help at all, without any kind of experiences in life that help you to become enlightened, then you're just like in a state of sensory deprivation somehow becoming enlightened in this void with no help at

all, not even the help of your own like experiences that cause insight to arise.

So,

do I believe someone can pass the stages of insight till equinimity? I assume he means enlightenment on their own without any help. It depends on what kind of help, but at least some people they can be living in an unenlightened culture, but in like they're surrounded by reality. They're completely saturated by ultimate reality. I mean, how far away is reality?

And so just through some kind of event or insight, they're just ripe for it, they can become enlightened.

[clears throat]

But I mean, how hard or easy is it to do really? I mean, that's that's a trick question because I mean, really, from a samsaric point of view, like I keep saying, enlightenment may not even be possible really, or it's just meaningless. It's just off the scale of samsara. So using samsaric ideas to try to wrap your head around it just isn't going to work.

Let's see.

So can you become enlightened on your own without help? I mean there's your own experiences are going to have to help you at least to some degree. I mean yeah your own experiences are going to

have to help you which would sometimes
involve other beings. I mean, sometimes
you can just watch a dog lick its balls
and it can cause some kind of insight to
arise
just right on your own. The dog wasn't
trying to help wake you up by licking
its balls. It just turned out that way.
But how hard or easy is it to do? I
mean, it's like a it's like a miracle.
It's like a paradox.
and just look at the number of people
striving for enlightenment and then look
at the number of people who maybe really
did succeed and you're going to find
it's just this vanishingly small

minority.

So becoming enlightened is uh

[clears throat] even if you're striving

for enlightenment, chances are very very

low that you will succeed.

Just going with empirical data,

which is unfortunate. But the reason why

we don't become enlightened is just

because we don't really want to become

enlightened.

We're still clinging to unenlightenment.

It's not that we're not trying hard

enough to become enlightened. It's that

we're always striving to remain

unenlightened in various ways largely

just through habit.

But it is possible. I mean, I can't

really say how hard or easy it is. I mean, it's extremely rare. It still happens. Assuming that anyone becomes enlightened, it still happens. But I mean it's one in a million maybe at best one in 10 million.

But I do think it is possible that you can become enlightened. I mean Buddhas and Pacheka Buddhas are examples of this in the poly texts that they become enlightened without a teacher teaching them how to become enlightened.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Stellar Supreme, sometimes known as Librelam and also increasingly known as Wuura Wira.

And so Stellar Supreme, etc. says, "Because one is advised not to direct meta at animals on account of their instincts to kill and whatn not, would there be a solid case for having a sort of detached aloofness towards animal comforts, like petting your own pet on account of a translation along the lines of friendly benevolence? or would a mix including a bit of the more charged loving kindness way of translating it be more accurate in this context? Well, for starters, I don't recall ever encountering in the Buddhist texts the advice not to direct meta at animals. I mean, obviously, if you're directing meta to all beings, that would include

animals. In fact, like as a monk at uh the first monastery where I was ordained, you know, every evening we'd be sending meta and it would include animals, you know, lower realms, higher realms, male, female, just there' just be like every imaginable category practically with larger categories including animals.

So I mean I don't think one is necessarily I mean maybe somewhere in the commentaries or something one may be advised not to use like a specific animal as one's primary focus for sending meta but I don't recall coming across that. And obviously if you're

sending meta to all beings and you're sending meta to the animal realm you're sending meta to animals.

So, let's just get to the actual question though after after I uh address that issue.

Would there be a solid case for having a sort of detached aloofness towards animal comforts like petting your own pet on account of a translation along the lines of friendly benevolence? Or would a mix including a bit of the more charged loving kindness way of translating be more accurate? I mean, just loving your animals is fine. I mean, I love our dogs. I have a certain amount of love even for the the fishes

and shrimps in there,

snails.

So I mean to have love like acceptance,

openhearted acceptance for all beings

would be the enlightened point of view.

So yeah, openhearted acceptance at the

very least. But I mean just deliberately

beaming love, I mean these dogs that

that that we have, I mean they demand

it. There's sometimes they just come up

and just there's this one little dog we

got is I mean it just start like

punching my arm just wanting attention

wanting to get loved on.

And I mean if you cause happiness to

another being you're making good karma.

I mean it might help to ensh you in some sorrow a little more but still you're making good karma.

Like I was thinking just I think it was yesterday and I've thought this many times before. I mean, if if you want the gods to smile upon you, you should be smiling on those that are lower than you are on the scale of things, which would include animals.

I mean, if you're cruel to animals, then maybe that higher beings will be cruel to you just as a way of maintaining cosmic balance.

So yeah, I mean loving animals, I mean clearly like even in the dharmapata it says you should sort of put yourself in

the position of an animal like to put yourself in the position of other other beings. You know all beings you know they fear death and you know they they want to be safe and all that. So you should take that into consideration.

Well the kind of compassion although compassion is different from meta that's karuna instead of meta.

Ah, yeah. Friendly benevolence. There's nothing wrong there's nothing at all wrong with that.

And just I mean petting a dog. I mean I just love petting dogs and they love getting petted too. There was one dog in Burma

uh I can't remember if it was I can't remember its name. It was this white female village dog that would come to eat my leftovers um in the morning time and I would pet that dog and the the dog really just preferred getting fed. You know, it was like it just kind of endured being petted because it figured I liked petting it. You know, it was sort of tossing me a bone by letting me pet it, I guess, because it really didn't seem to get any anything emotional, any gratification out of it. But I'm digressing all over the place. Let's see here.

Yeah, I really don't see any problem at all with with sending love to animals,

even particular individual animals, so long as you're not clinging. I mean, there's a difference between love like sending meta and like emotional attachment.

I mean, if you can do one without the other, that's there's absolutely nothing wrong with that. You could be beaming meta at a at a slug. There's nothing wrong with that. As far as I know, I've never seen anything in the text indicating that there's anything at all wrong with beaming meta at a slug.

So, yeah, I mean, it doesn't matter what label you put onto it, how you how you would identify it. Just feeling love

without necessarily any kind of like emotional attachment, that's always good. no matter who the object or the subject the I guess it would be the object is.

So I'm just going to move on to Stellar Supreme etc's next question.

Is awakening from a dream like going to sleep in the dream world itself? Yeah, I don't think so. I think it'd be um I mean you're just kind of like disappearing from the dream.

Like I was lucky this I was having like the the bad work you know sort of the the work semi nightmare last night in my dreams just you're you're like in this work situation that that there is no

resolution to the problem that kind of
dream which I've I've had many times
since starting at this job which can be
like an aggravating kind of job
that uh you know when the dream ended I
just faded out and I mean if you assume
that there are still beings
in that dream world. Let's say you
created a dream world and then you wake
up from the dream and then somehow the
beings in that dream world stay in this
kind of dream world. How you have just
kind of created this new universe that
that continues to exist after you wake
up from the dream and there's a
multi-dimensional being named Seth that

actually gave me the idea of this reading in the books long ago. um it would just be you just you would just disappear sort of like you're in a da realm where one of the davas just fades out because you know it's like their their sojourn in that David realm is over to the other davas you know that one just faded out I mean um I really don't think that awakening from a dream uh is is like going to sleep to the dream world itself.

Huh?

Then I'm and all of a sudden I'm starting to see this question maybe a little more a little more accurately. So is awakening from a dream like going

to sleep to the dream world itself? Oh yeah, I think I was trying to answer it as going to sleep in the dream world. Uh, well, of course that reminds me of Jang Zoo where he dreamed that he was a butterfly and then when he woke up he wasn't sure if that he was

[clears throat]

su dreaming that he was a butterfly or maybe he was the butterfly that's now dreaming that he's Jew.

Um,

let's see. Now that I'm actually seeing the question differently due to the change of one little two-letter word, is it like going to sleep to the dream

world itself?

Maybe at some level, but it wouldn't be

as like profound

of an application of that as like

uh

man going to going to sleep to the dream

world itself.

Yeah. Well, you're more awake in the

waking state than you are in the usual

dream. Dreams tend to be kind of murky

with like blurry edges, that kind of

thing. And there's not as much like law

and order and stability in the dream

world. So, it's it's really less

it's less of a conscious state. The

dream world as in in general in general,

the average dream is less of a conscious

state than being awake

in the ordinary sense of the term.

So yeah, I mean to some degree maybe,

but it wouldn't be at the same level as

like [clears throat] going to sleep to

the waking world when you're dreaming,

you know? I mean, in a way, you're just

sort of alternating between different

realms, but I mean, the the waking realm

tends to be a higher realm. like the

dream world is sort of like a ghost

realm in my opinion

as a general rule.

So yeah, I mean to some degree, but it

wouldn't be the same magnitude

as the other way around. And I'm just

going to move on to the next question. And we still got quite a few. Man, we're there wasn't a whole lot of questions. I think I'm just like digressing more in this one because we're already um over two hours. Gosh.

Okay. So, let's see here. This question is from Newman. And Newman says, "Do the Buddhist statues that feature so prominently in Terravada have a kind of instantiation

of the Buddha in them or inherently sanctified nature. For example, they are manifestations of the Buddha in the world that carry blessings or some kind of miraculous quality, etc. use their karmic weight attached to actions done

toward them like prostration, respect, gratitude, or negative additions? Okay, that's a different question. So, we got an extra question just got added.

Okay, so do the Buddha statues have a kind of instantiation of the Buddha in them? Um in Burma to activate a Buddha statue you have to have monks come and chant Ankaza which starts with

etc etc. It's like the Buddha's first words after enlightenment and then there's some dependent core rising going forwards and backwards and this kind of thing that's all in the chant and that kind of activates the Buddha image so that it has more like

dharmic power or something and I've read that traditionally in Sri Lanka what activates a Buddhist statue is painting the pupils into the eyeballs of the statue and so there are special painters who specialize in this and they will it's like they have to they don't look directly at the statue. They have to like back in with a mirror and then they paint the pupils on the eyeballs looking into the mirror and then they leave the temple where this or wherever the statue was. And they have to smash the first thing that they see just to kind of like somehow release the pentup dangerous guju that that they made just by like activating the Buddha statue by painting

pupils onto the eyes. And so they'll place like an old clay pot right outside the door so that the painter can smash this old clay pot and so he doesn't have to damage anything more valuable.

And then that somehow, you know, it's it's sort of like a Hinduistic activation of the statue that sort of instills the the the cosmic juju into the statue somehow. I don't know what they do in Thailand. Maybe they have something similar to chanting anaza or painting pupils on the statue. What they do when the eyes are closed, I don't know.

But yeah, if if you're more of an

idolatrous to sort of person, I mean, it's not mentioned in the text because there were no Buddhist statues in when the the poly sutas were composed. So, it's all going to be later tradition and it's going to depend on the individual. Some people will just acknowledge that a Buddhist statue is just a hunk of rock or bronze or or brass or or whatever it's made out of, cement, whatever.

And I mean, I've I've tended to be that way. I I don't bow to statues very often, but even so, if someone were to spit onto a statue, a Buddha image, that would bug me. Or just walk over and knock it on the head like this. I mean,

I would hesitate to do something like that just because of just kind of respect for the for the Buddha himself that the statue is a representation of the founder of the religion. So, you know, it's like you don't want to just be openly disrespectful or negligent really.

So,

let's see. Are Buddhist statues manifestations of the Buddha in the world that carry blessings? the more idolatrous and faith oriented you are, the more that is the case.

But like I've said before, I I didn't really bow to Buddhist statues. Like at

the UOTA ceremony, the entire SA has to meet in the congregation hall. There's usually a big altar with a Buddha statue there. Possibly in some monasteries, it's the only big altar with a Buddha statue and the entire monastery is right there in the congregation hall. And then the monks bow to the statue before they do their ceremony, you know, reciting the pimoka or whatever. And I would just sit there. I mean, I I wouldn't bow to the statue usually. And a few times a Burbanese monk would say, you know, you get merit by bowing to that statue. And I'd say, you know, that statue, it has no sila, no samadei, and no pa. I mean, it has no virtue, no wisdom, no

concentration. It's just rupa.
So, it's it's a matter of individual taste really. I mean, some of them are really some of them are really idolatrous. You know, they'll just assume that there's that a Buddha statue, especially one that has had Anikaza chanted in its presence, is somehow like got the Buddha in it, and they're like offering food and water and flowers and stuff to the statue as though it were really the Buddha.
So, I mean, it's it's all beyond the sutas because there were no Buddhist statues when the sutas were composed, but it's just Buddhist tradition and

you're going to find the whole spectrum
of people just believing that the that's
a manifestation of the Buddha himself
all the way down to that is a lump of
rock that probably doesn't even look
like the historical Buddha.
And I was kind of more at the the second
end.
So, I hope I answered that question
because I'm moving on to Newman's next
question, which is their karmic weight
attached to actions done toward them,
Buddhist statues, like prostration,
respect, gratitude, or negative actions.
Well, you've got like popular opinion
and then you've got like Buddhist
philosophy in popular opinion, then

certainly, especially if you're at the more idolatrous, faithoriented end with regard to opinions toward Buddha images. Um but then I mean going with Buddhist philosophy, it's all a matter of mental states. Your karma is is based on your volitions. I mean it is your volitions. And so I mean if you do anything with like a mind full of like reverence and respect and you know like respect for the Buddha, Dharma and Sana then you it's going to be meritorious. And at the same time, if you do anything with disrespect, you know, hatred, contempt, anything like that, then it's it's going to be demmerritorious. And if you do

anything with purely neutral mental states, then it's going to be neutral. It depends on your mental states when you're doing it. It's not just outward actions that determine whether what you did is good or bad or indifferent. It's your attitude, your mental states, your your motives.

So that would be more the Buddhist philosophical explanation.

So let's see here. The dogs are slightly they're slightly distracting me because they're roughousing

and [clears throat] the little one is making these horring noises. When it gets all excited it horrors.

So let's see.

Okay, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Arpad RP AD. He says, "In what order should one read your books?"

>> Well, I mean, reading any individual book, just a second.

>> Hey, you guys, stop it.

>> Reading any individual book, I mean, the chapters are not in any kind of order. I mean, they're they're roughly in chronological order into the order in which I wrote them, but there's not really any like sequence of thought going on in the chapters [clears throat] in my books. So you could read them in any order. And the same go JUST A

SECOND. HEY, STOP IT.

Oh yeah. Then they come in here and they want to play with me. You guys stop it. I'm busy. Yeah. No, you're you're all riled up. Stop it. Stop it. Me yelling at you didn't say for you to come in and play with me,

man.

Okay.

Where was I? Oh, in what order should you read your books? Well, it's you can read it in any order. I would I would advise reading it sort of forwards instead of backwards because if you read it backwards, the sentences will all be in reverse order. It' be harder to understand.

But I mean the first book that I wrote which is okay like essays in terra Buddhism or studies see I don't even firmly recall the title of it. I mean that's that's the first book I wrote is just with regard to basics of like terra Buddhist monasticism. So if that's your main interest you read that one first then Buddhist see [clears throat] Buddhist practice

God can't even remember the titles of my own books just a second this is ridiculous.

Okay.

Okay. first book, Essays in Terraata Buddhism. If you're mostly interested in

like the basics of Terravada Buddhism,
um especially like monasticism,
this would be the main one with regard
to this is the second book I think.
Gosh, I don't even recall which is the
second one.
Let's just go with this one.
Philosophical Dharma. This is more like
like eclectic philosophy. You know,
there's mention of Christianity, more
mention of Mahayana in this one. So, if
your your interests are more like
eclectic philosophy, this would be the
book you'd start with, I guess, or maybe
the only book. And then Buddhist ethics,
Buddhist practice, and this is more
practiceoriented. So, if your your

emphasis is on Buddhist practice and
just how Buddhist ethics work, you know,
how karma works, that kind of stuff,
this would be the main the main book
that you'd start with, I guess. But you
can read it in any order. It really
doesn't matter. It's just sort of
[clears throat]
more or less random essays that are kind
of loosely
um added to books this on like a general
theme.
So just follow your heart, I guess. Just
follow your intuition and read it in the
way that you would prefer to read it.
And you're you're doing fine as far as

I'm concerned.

Then sooner or later I will come out with a fourth book. I'm going to have to have some considerable time off from work in order to have the time and inclination to really like do the final editing and to get my woman to do the illustrations. But that's going to be like more autobiographical just what it is like to be a monk. Mainly in Burma, but some of it's outside of Burma, too.

So anyways,

yeah. In what order should you read your books? just remove should and just read them and it doesn't even matter what order you read them in just depending on your interest read what is calls to you

read what seems most interesting to you
and I'm just moving on to the next
question this is from Raphael and
Raphael first he includes this quote
from the the Casey Suta as translated by
Biku Sugato
and so it says sir What do you do with a
person in training who doesn't follow
these forms of training? And then the
Buddha says, "In that case, Casey, I
kill them." And then the questioner
says, "Sir, it's not appropriate for the
Buddha to kill living creatures, and yet
you say you kill them." And then the
Buddha says, "It's true, Casey." It's
kei

case. It's true, Casey. It's not appropriate for a realized one to kill living creatures. But when a person in training doesn't follow any of these forms of training, the realized one doesn't think they're worth advising or instructing, and neither do their sensible spiritual companions. For it is killing in the training of the noble one, when the realized one doesn't think they're worth advising or instructing, and neither do their sensible spiritual companions. So Raphael just put this excerpt from a suit into the the the Q&A room in the the Discord server. And so I said, "Well, what is the actual question?" And then he says, "So is

there skillful killing?"

And first of all, before I even get to the answer, Casey kei just means having head hair. So probably not a monk that was asking the question. and realized one probably is Biku Su Jato's preferred rendering of the word dagata.

Um, [clears throat]

so anyways,

the killing here, I mean, it isn't literal killing. That killing is just metaphorical where the Buddha, if he sees that the person really isn't inclined to follow his teachings anyway, he'll just stop teaching them. And in a way, you could say that's killing them

in like killing their potential for becoming enlightened, but it's not really killing them. So when Raphael asked the question, is there skillful killing?

Then I mean what this text is referring to isn't even really killing. I mean it's it's just sort of like killing your chances of becoming enlightened in this life unless you change your ways. And that's really all it amounts to. It's just metaphorical. I mean it's not like the Buddha really does go around stomping on ants anything like that. Doesn't go fishing.

So

yeah. So the question is there skillful

killing? The only skillful killing from a Buddhist point of view, I mean, it would just be neutral. I mean, if you could somehow kill without any like unh wholesome mental states,
then that would be skillful killing or at least neutral killing.
So, if you're just walking along, you accidentally step on a bug and don't even notice it, then that might not be skillful killing, but at least you didn't do anything wrong by
[clears throat] doing it other than maybe whatever it was that you were doing that was unskillful. Let's say you're just thinking delusional

thoughts. Then thinking the delusional thoughts would be bad karma, I suppose. But stepping on the bug would not because [clears throat] you didn't even know that you did it. It was not deliberate. There was no no intention. There was no ill will, no desire to kill.

So skillful killing, if it's possible at all, it would have to be devoid of any desire to kill or at least desire to cause suffering.

And there were attempts at this like the the samurai who are students of Zen in like feudal Japan, you know, they did try to cultivate um as skillful of killing as they could manage where

you're not killing through ill will or hatred or blood lust, you know, no kind of like maniacal frenzy involved. It's just duty and honor. And you just try to keep your mind in a state of equinimity and wide awake. You know, you try to be as mindful and awake as possible when you're out there chopping heads off with swords.

But I don't think even that would really qualify as skillful killing, even if there was like a like a sword master also a Zen master. And there were some of those who could really just I mean they're just kind of in the zone while while they're out there on the

battlefield or in a duel or whatever that still I don't think that would qualify as skillful killing. It would be getting closer and closer I suppose to neutral killing. But even neutral isn't the same as skillful. Um, unless you want to go with the idea that any enlightened action would be skillful, in which case then I mean I'm sure like a tantric Buddhist would say there is skillful killing if an enlightened being is able to kill. Like the story I've given before of um Padma Sambava dancing on a flat roof, kicking a rock off the roof which then just happens to go down, hit somebody in the head and kill them. That might be skillful killing even

though it wasn't deliberate

but from a terra Buddhist point of view

killing is in general the worst thing

you can do.

So

u just sort the best you could get would

be like neutral killing like an orahant.

Oh, here's a case you've I think it's

the [clears throat] very first story of

the Dhamapata commentary where Chakupala

is the name of eye protector is this

monk who goes blind.

So you've got a and he's enlightened.

So, you've got an an Araant who is blind

and he's doing walking meditation and

he's doing walking meditation at the

beginning of the of the the rainy season, the monsoon season and there's these little red bugs that come out and I think they're a kind of like velvety colored like vermilion colored mites that they come out in Burma. They're all over the ground. They're really cool looking. I like them a lot. They come out and they're just kind of bumbling around, walking around slowly on the ground right after like the first heavy rains.

Mostly [clears throat] they live under the ground. And so he's stepping on him and squishing them, but he's a fully enlightened being. And so there's these other monks who are seeing him do it.

And they go to the Buddha and kind of tell on him. They tattle, say, "Look, how's he's supposedly an enlightened and here he is killing all these beings." And then the Buddha says, "Well, I mean, there's no intention to kill. I mean, he's blind. He doesn't even see them when he's stepping on them. He's just doing walking meditation. He's an enlightened being doing walking meditation. And he's stepping on these little red colored bugs without even without even seeing them. I mean, he has no intention to kill. So, that could theoretically be a kind of skillful killing,

but that would be about as far as it goes.

And and the kind of killing that's mentioned in this this suta isn't really killing at all. It's just he's just the Buddha is just not teaching them because he sees they're not receptive to the teaching. And that's a kind of metaphorical killing because he's just killing their chances at at enlightenment. Although, of course, this reminds me of the dreaded elephant look where if someone is behaving really badly, the Buddha would turn and look at them, but he wouldn't turn his head. He would turn his entire body to look at them like an elephant does. You know,

the elephant doesn't turn its head to look behind it. It has to turn all the way around. And then the person would just die. It was like the ground would open up and they would just fall into hell. And there's some controversy over this in the text. Whereas, I mean, the Buddha isn't deliberately killing them. You know, maybe he's just out of some sort of enlightened curiosity wanting to turn around to witness them plunging into hell because it's going to happen anyway because they've already behaved very badly. You know, like, you know, cursing him or something.

Cursing some enlightened being or

whatever.

So,

yeah. Where is it? Oh, yeah. Skillful killing. But even that isn't really killing. I'm pretty sure Buddhist philosophy would say, you know, orthodox terra Buddhist philosophy would say that an enlightened being would not deliberately kill anything. I mean, he wouldn't break the any of the five precepts.

An enlightened being just won't break any of the five precepts. So, right there, the only way you could kill would be if if it is not your intention to kill and it would just happen accidentally.

That could be called skillful killing.
if you've got skillful mental states
going on otherwise and just accidentally
step on a bug or whatever.
So I'm just going to move on to the next
question and we are kind of getting
close to the bottom here. This is from
Tzas is and Task is says, "When you were
a monk, have you ever met other monks
who claim to be enlightened? Monks can
talk about such things among themselves
without breaking the rules." Um, I do
not recall ever meeting a monk who
claimed to be enlightened. I met quite a
few monks who were claimed by others to
be enlightened and that included me. I

was considered to be enlightened in some areas of of like northwestern Burma [sighs] and that but there are some monks that are considered to be enlightened by others who just I mean they don't want to admit that they're not enlightened. I mean I admitted that I wasn't enlightened to some of these people in northwestern Burma and they obviously were very disappointed. It's almost like their their feelings were hurt.

So I mean you kind of some monks I mean there there is like this pressure that if people think you're enlightened not to like

tell them that you aren't.

Although I did it a few times and and obviously I mean it they didn't they didn't like being told that I wasn't really enlightened. But um there are quite a few monks who are considered to be enlightened by like credulous faithoriented lay people who they don't really do anything to make them to set them straight on the issue. That's about as far as I ever got. But I mean with regard to my experience with monks, I never met a monk who just went around claiming he was enlightened.

It's it's kind of strange. even like the the schizophrenic ones like the psychotic like the crazy ones. There are

some of those and also Buddhist lay people too. It's like like one of the stereotypical crazy Christian people is the person who thinks that he's Jesus. You know, there's been quite a few of those that they're Jesus reincarnated, that kind of thing, the second coming of Christ or whatever. But for some reason in Buddhism, Buddhists are more humble. And you don't I' never really came across a crazy Buddhist even who thought that he was the Buddha. They just think that they don't even think that they're arroants really. They just think that they're like sodaponas.

That I've met quite a few nutty Buddhists who believe that they were

sodapons. And it wasn't just their belief that they were a sodapana that caused me to think they were nutty. I mean, they were already pretty nutty even before they they finally let the cat out of the bag and declared that they were an Arya.

Um, I did meet one monk, a Burmese monk who was a Dhamma teacher who was very smug and I didn't like him very much. He didn't follow the rules very much. Um, like one time he was talking to me like how he went on this pilgrimage to Bodega Gaya and he was just handing out money to the beggars and he didn't feel any any like he was doing anything wrong at

all. It's like he's like I just don't understand it. And I just kind of muttered to I just kind of muttered out loud you know a like shamelessness causing a monk friend of mine to kind of snicker. you know, he started kind of chuckling under his breath. But this this monk, this uh monk that I didn't like very much, very smug, you know, just delighted with himself. He he once told me that I'm not an Arya, but I'm like an Arya.

So, I mean, he would be another kind of case that comes to mind, but I mean, he didn't claim to be enlightened. He just kind of claimed that he was sort of like being enlightened.

But yeah, I mean, for some reason,

Buddhists tend to be more humble with

regard to that sort of thing than

Christians.

Crazy Christians anyway.

And so, let's see here.

Uh, and also I just kind of avoided like

the really wildly um like what's the

word? Lax monasteries, you I I tended to

gravitate towards more serious kind of

monasteries where monks would be much

less likely to be like blurting out that

they consider themselves to be

enlightened.

So anyhow, I'm just going to move on to

Chas is his second question here.

And he says, "Do you support short-term ordination as a monk as practiced in countries like Burma?" And no, in fact, when I was the abbot of a monastery in Burma, I just refused to do any temporary ordinations of of monks. It's it's it's called Don Laba ordination in Burma where um a lot of a lot of guys like like especially during like thin jen like like Buddhist New Year where there's it's like five days of like holiday, no work. And so they'll just go in to the monastery and ordain for five days or I mean some of them will even ordain for just like two days, that kind of thing. Um and some old guys will brag, you know, I've been ordained 26

times, that kind of thing.

[sighs]

But the thing is [clears throat] like temporary monks as a general rule, they don't get rid of their money and they don't know the rules very well. Some of them are just clueless with regard to how a monk is supposed to live. They don't know the rules of monastic discipline. They're breaking all kinds of rules. They still have their money. So, it's it's just they're it's like they're pretending. The Burmese consider monks to be a superhuman being. So, just being ordained as a monk is automatically you're just getting all

kinds of merit by doing it. But I really don't think so. I think they some of them could be getting more demerit just because sort of like we were talking about earlier how you know a monk has to live at a higher standard
and they're just like a lay person that is wearing monk's robes you know they're living in a monastery they might be eating only one or two meals a day more likely two but still both in the morning um but the main arguments I have against temporary ordination one they don't really renounce the world, you know, they still have their bank account. They still got all their money. It's just they're not handling it with their hands

in many cases. And then second, they just don't know the rules. They don't know how to be a real monk. They're just essentially it's like pretending. And they just think they're going to get merit just from shaving their head and wearing brown robes and going through like a 20-minute long ceremony. And that's it's like sila bata paramasa clinging to morality and observances. So no I do not support short-term ordination. I mean if you want to be ordained short term you're better off ordaining as a sinara or novice rather than just complete just jumping straight into full ordination as a beu. You want

to you know test the waters. you want to do like a trial run, a dress rehearsal, then do like I did. Like before I became a monk, I was ordained for five weeks as a sana, a co-eng as they're called in Burma. And still I did have money, so I was kind of breaking the rules anyway. But at least as a novice, it's not as big of a deal breaking a rule as if you are a fully ordained Biku who's really supposed to renounce the world. And you are admonish this at the ordination ceremony that you know it's like you've renounced the world. You're going forth from the the home into homelessness, this kind of thing. And I mean, you should do it for real and not just

pretend.

So short-term ordination, I'm more open-minded with regard to like ordination as a novice or a somara than full ordination as a biku for just like a week or a month.

Okay, so I'm just going to go on to Trzescus is his third question. Is short-term ordination available in western monasteries? And certainly yeah it is like um in Burmese monasteries you can be a don laba you can get temporary ordination there but as I say I would encourage anyone who wants to do like temporary ordination to just ordain as a somara and not a full beu um cuz you're

you're not as held to as high of a
standard and so you won't be like
failing in those standards as
egregiously. flee
unless you really are serious like
you're going to be ordained as a beu for
one month and still you just liquidate
all of your assets just for the sake of
that one month and you're just going to
start from scratch after you get out of
the monkhood then I mean you could do
that but there are very very few
temporary monks who do that
unless they don't plan on being
temporary and it just doesn't work out
and then they they're
then they drop out and they don't have

any money.

Anyways,

I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from PSA.

[clears throat] PSA is kind of a a wise guy and he says, "What criteria do you use to select your weekly beverage?" And it's just whatever I feel like drinking. Usually it's coffee lately, which is what this is, and it's just the dregs of some cold coffee at this point.

with bovine glandular secretions added.

Um, but it [clears throat] just depends. Like if I'm already caffeinated, I'm already sufficiently caffeinated, I might drink something else,

but it's just whatever I feel like drinking.

And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is the last question. Boom.

And this is from Cyrus Frame, who I believe asked this question on Rumble, which is kind of uncommon. I really don't have much [clears throat] of an audience on Rumble because I just steadfastly refuse to get somebody to maximize my presence on Rumble. Like half the comments I get on Rumble are people wanting to maximize my presence on Rumble for a a fee

after like the the asskissing, you know, oh, your your content is so wonderful.

It's so great. It really needs to get out there better. Here, let me help you kind of a thing. And it's it's just people who do that for a living.

But let's skip back to Cyrus frame and he says in the atakawaga the Buddha says a wise man is not stuck to by the scene or the herd. And in poly it's so lipid is a passive term. It means to be stuck to not to stick to but to be stuck to.

And then Cyrus frame continues saying normally we think of us doing the clinging to perceptions which would be something like a wise man does not cling to what is seen or heard. This passive

sense seems to be saying that perceptions can stick to us. Any thoughts on this? Well, one reason why it's they're talking to perceptions sticking to us rather than us clinging to perceptions
is that there is a simile or a metaphor given in the Atakawaga more than once of the lotus flower. It's like the lotus flower was like a symbol of the enlightened being. It's like it grows in like muddy water. It grows in swamps. It grows in ditches. And so it's just like muddy, polluted, dirty water. And then the lotus comes out and it's just immaculate. Nothing sticks to that lotus flower. Water just beads off and drops

off. Mud won't stick to it. It's just perfect. And so that was a kind of symbolic metaphor for an enlightened being who grow up in like they originate in the mud of Samsara, but they are just immaculately clean and pure. So part of it is that

um part of it is just the fact that um in this in the atakawaga very early Buddhism

um it's it was a cultural thing where like for example in Janism which was contemporaneous you know the founder of Janism Mahavira the person reputed to be the founder of Janism anyway Mahaviraa was a contemporary of the Buddha they

knew each other and so in like Janism, you've got a ja or like a soul and bad karma sticks to it. It's like karma sticks to your soul. And so it was just a kind of ancient Indian way of thinking like asawas in Burma or Burma in like in early Buddhism the term asawa it means like influx. It's like defilements that cling to you rather than you clinging to the defilements.

It's it's like adventitious defilements. It's defilements coming from outside and sticking to you. So in a way it was just kind of the the cultural way of looking at things less like ego oriented like in the west that would be more inclined to say you don't cling to defilements. It's

in the in India especially in in in Buddhism where there is no self there is no ultimately real personal ego or identity there's there's nobody to cling to other things but then again other things cling to or stick to what appears to be an individual anyway.

So let's get back to the question here. Normally we think of us doing the clinging to perceptions which would be something like a wise man does not cling to what is seen or heard. Yeah. I mean it goes both ways in these texts like the atikawaga. I'm pretty sure it goes both ways and one way is just it's it's kind of a poetic metaphor and also it's

more in harmony with ancient Indian philosophical beliefs of like karma sticking to the ja of a jane.

It's like gluey stuff. I guess the Servost Buddhists also almost turn karma into like a physical substance that it's sticky.

So it's largely cultural. It's largely just kind of going with the metaphor of the lotus blossom that nothing sticks to even though it grows up out of mud.

Um let's see. Perceptions can stick to us. I'm trying to think of a more philosophical explanation here.

Um,

but really I mean there is no like ultimately real personal agent that does

this stuff that isn't can't do any active clinging to perceptions or whatever. And so there is some Buddhist philosophy in sort of deemphasizing the the individual person as the clinger. Instead, it's just sort of like outward forces that are that are like doing the sticking, you know, that's the sticky stuff. I mean, there's there's a little bit of Buddhist philosophy thrown in there, it seems to me.

And I guess that's enough. I guess I guess we're done. And it's a little less than three hours. Not too bad.

So, as I should always say at the beginning and have only once that I can

recall, if you have any questions you think I can answer, especially with regard to Dharma or Dharma, you know, Terra Buddhism, early Buddhism, you know, what the original Buddhism was likely to be like, Buddhism in general, meditation, monasticism, this kind of stuff, if you think I can answer it, then feel free to ask. I cannot promise that I will give a satisfactory answer, but I'll give it a shot. I'll I'll do my best. And no more than three questions per person, please. And if you have not already liked and subscribed, then if you like the content, then it would make sense to like and subscribe, wouldn't it?

And uh feel free to look at the URL links below which includes the uh Amazon [snorts] links to my three books that are on Amazon. And uh aside from that, I would just say be happy.

Okay then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 172.

I am your host Po Basa. And of course

172 is not a prime number. It is in fact

2 * 2 * 43.

And we got kind of a long list of

questions today. So I shouldn't really

take up too much time with a lengthy

preamble. Just introduce you to the

beverage. So I got that. I've also

prepared I've got the the bobblehead

heretic mahayana monk

and so

oh got the emergency backup little paper

umbrella with no emergency backup

beverage. So I'm kind of taking a risk
by not having the emergency backup
beverage. But we'll just see how it
goes.
And I suppose I should just like wade
into this. just start answering
questions
relentlessly like some sort of question
terminator.
And the first question is from Romeo.
And I I'm always resisting the urge for
like the wherefore art thou Romeo stuff.
So I'm just don't even wait for it
because it's not going to happen.
Romeo says, "Although I was raised
Catholic, I have long since left
Christianity behind. Every now and then

my interest in Buddhism comes up in conversation with people in my life who remain devout Christians. This sometimes lead to some awkward moments. The reaction I usually get from them is a mix of concern, confusion, fear, and a bit of disdain.

Let's see here. Recently, one particularly zealous family member even gave me a warning that my going too deeply into Buddhism would open me up to evil spirits and demons.

A few Google searches later, and I came to find that this aversive view of Buddhism is not limited to people in my life, I even came across an article from

a Christian preacher that warns against something as innocuous and beneficial as mindfulness meditation of all things.

Have you ever come across this paranoia view of Buddhism from followers of other religions either online or in your everyday life? If so, how do you respond to them? How do you make sense of such warped views of Buddhism?

So I mean probably the most extreme reaction from a Christian from a non Buddhist that I got um ever was I used to uh do a lot of commenting in the Breitbart comment sections and my like my name in the the Breitbart comment sections is politically incorrect Buddhist. So Buddhist is in my name. And

as you may imagine, Breitbart gets a lot of like conservative sort of bluecollar type Christian people, not highly intellectual. You know, it's like the the the the IQ level of Breitbart comments is somewhat lower than like the IQ level of like X.

That's just the way it works out. You're not you don't really go to Breitbart comments for the purpose of having like a stimulating conversation.

It can happen, but I mean your odds are better on other platforms. So anyways, uh somebody just saw like my name politically incorrect Buddhist in the comments and they were this person was

they were they were like saying that
like mantras like when you meditate
using a mantra that really you're you're
like calling out the names of demons so
that they can like possess you more
easily. And also there is saying that
the the weird contortions of the body
confusing Buddhism with like hata yoga
is like making it easier for the demons
to get in which is pretty extreme and
some like hysterically intolerant
preacher probably told them this stuff
and they just believe it.
That was that would be like the most
extreme example of what Romeo was
talking about. I remember um one time
like a supervisor at work who's a really

nice guy, you know, just like the the
blue collar just you know goes probably
goes to church, maybe he goes to church,
I don't know, but he's a Christian
and uh he he asked about my YouTube
channel or something and I said it's
like I I answer questions about Buddhist
philosophy and he asked me, "Are you a
Buddhist?" And I said, "More Buddhist
than anything else." And then he just
kind of made the sound like
maybe it wasn't as extreme as that. I
mean, he didn't jerk the head sideways
or anything, but it was just sort of
like this kind of a sound that uh
indicated that he was not exactly

satisfied with my answer.

And of course,

when I was a junior monk, before I even

went to Burma, still in California,

there was this really nice Jehovah's

Witness guy who would come like once a

week trying to convert me. And uh I

remember one time, I mean, he was giving

me lots of these Jehovah Witness

pamphlets, you know, like Watchtower

magazine and all this stuff. So finally

one time I tried to give him it was like

a little booklet like a ginka booklet

you know I just just you know sort of

turn about his fair play and all that so

I tried to offer him this and he didn't

do it really consciously but he recoiled

from that pamphlet as though I were trying to hand him like a a centipede or something you know it was like like real just genuine like deep aversion like whoa you know he just backed up. You know, he didn't want to even touch it. But let's see here. Let's just get to the actual question. Let's see.

Have you ever come across this paranoia view of Buddhism from followers of other religions, either online or in your everyday life? Yeah. Well, I've answered that part. If so, how do you respond to them? Well, I mean, just not responding is probably best. And I mean, they're not like right in my face. It's not like

any kind of confrontational thing, you know, like some ignorant person in Breitbart comments. I might like calmly explain the truth of the situation. I mean, that would that's probably best, you know, just calmly, more or less rationally explain to them, you know, how they are mistaken in their assumptions.

with regard to the supervisor at work. I mean, he just kind of made this sound and and I just, you know, just didn't didn't really follow up on that.

So, let's see. How do I respond? I answered that part. And so, how do you make sense of such warped views of Buddhism? Well, I mean it is strange

because like for example, especially in like the the contemplative orders of Christianity like you know Carmelite Christians, Carmelite Catholics I should say or um you know some of the Greek Orthodox or just Russian Orthodox Orthodox sects you know they have yogic practice not just aseticism and prayer but also they've got mindfulness practice they call recollection at least St. John of the Cross called what what a Buddhist calls mindfulness recollection which is kind of weird because recollection means memory and the polyword sad in like ordinary parliament in in the northern Ganges or northern

India Ganges Valley in the Buddhist time
I mean it also mainly means memory. So
why like completely like dismissing
memory and being in the present moment
came to be called recollection for the
Catholics and you know like mindfulness
which like recollection in in ancient
India also is is something that I really
do not understand. I don't know if
there's any connection or it was just
some weird coincidence where
essentially just like abolishing the
memory and just being in the present
moment gets used I mean the word for it
is a word that means memory that part I
don't understand but like the practices
of in Buddhism practices like in the

discouse carmealites of of whom St. John of the Cross was an ordained member is very similar. The main differences are just the the theory, you know, it's just the like the narrative and that kind of thing, but the actual practice is remarkably similar and some of the insights that arise from that practice that aren't like attached to some dogma and like you know like conforming to some dogma. Those also are remarkably similar like some of the insights of St. John of the Cross are very similar to what you can find in in the sutas.

So

I mean there is that similarity and it's

mainly just the like the theory part you
know it's like the view part that that
is like the stumbling block
in my opinion
especially for Christians it seems
um let's see there was something else I
was going to say oh yeah with regard to
like Catholics I mean one thing you can
say to a like a Christian especially if
they're a Catholic or or or orthodox
is that I mean there are many people
consider the Buddha to be a Catholic
saint or Christian saint St. Josephhat
although technically it's not exactly
true because um St. Josephhat is a
corrupted form of one of the bodhicattas
existences

as detailed in in a jotica story. So there was like this Jotica story in you know Jotica stories are like a genre of of Buddhist literature in which you take like a like an Asups fable some kind of of like a folk tale probably that had existed in India since before the Buddhist time a lot of them anyway and then you just sort of tack on like a Buddhist moral at the end and the Buddha saying that this character in the story was me in a former life And that's that character was like Sar Puta and that character was Ananda. That kind of stuff.

And one of these stories was so popular

that it got translated into Arabic like when the the Arabs were like the Muslims were on the borders of India maybe hadn't actually done much invading yet. And so they they translated into Arabic where the word bodhicattva or bodhicatta became bodhisaf and then it traveled westwards across caravan routes. By the time it got to like Georgia or Armenia it was like loisaf and then when it got to Greece or the Greekeaking world at the time it became Yosaf which then in in Latin became Yosphhatus or in English Josephhat. and he was canonized as a saint in the middle age in the middle ages and I have been told that there is at least two churches dedicated to St.

Joseph. One's one's in Sicily I think
the other one I think is maybe southern
France or something and a Catholic
priest told me once that there was a a
monastery a Christian monastery in
Germany that had a shrine to all the
saints the the shrine to St. Josephhat
was just a Buddha image just sitting in
meditation,
but technically it wasn't really the
Buddha because it was the Buddha in a
previous incarnation which Christians
don't even believe in most Christians.
Anyways, I mean the reason why
some Christians have this attitude, I
mean it some of it's just right in the

Bible, you know, it's like um the gospel according to John, I'm pretty sure says that you can only attain the kingdom of heaven through Jesus. So, anyone else is going to go to hell except for maybe a few like Jewish patriarchs from the Old Testament.

they might get into heaven just because they were, you know, pre-Christian Jewish patriarchs,

biblical ones.

But one of the main reasons why Christianity has prospered as well as it has for over a thousand years is simply hysterical intolerance.

You know, like in ancient Rome, you had a very eclectic religious system. You

had all kinds of different religions. It's it was paganism. One person's worshiping mainly this god. Another one is a votery of that goddess. You know, Sabel, you know, you got a worshshiper of Sabel. And then you've got someone who is, you know, a devote of Apollo. And then you've got some guy who's a member of the Orphic mysteries. You got another person down the road who worships the the Egyptian goddess Isis. Then you've got some, you know, Epicurans that don't worship any gods and you've got, you know, stoic philosophers and just, I mean, it was very eclectic, kind of like what um, you

know, Western civilization has become, you know, starting like in the 20th century.

But then, but then Christianity came along and they weren't willing to play ball that way. They weren't willing to to share the playing field, you know. They were it was like only we are right. Everyone else is a devil worshipper. You know, they just converted all the pagan gods and goddesses into demons. You're all going to burn in hell. I mean, they were quite willing to consign their own ancestors, their own recent ancestors, maybe their own parents to to eternal damnation simply because they didn't follow the new belief system. And that

hysterical intolerance actually is a is a winning strategy. If you're just too tolerant, then you just accept people that that are not tolerant and then they're just going to like force you out or just persecute you or whatever as soon as they get the opportunity.

So historical intolerance is is to some degree built into Christianity. You know, there's some of that the roots of that are already found in the New Testament

and it's has served Christianity well, I guess. You know, just

like u Gibbons decline fall the Roman

Empire. He's talking about like the late empire when it was well into decline, well into like Christianity where you would have just riots in the streets over I mean people literally killing each other. Blood blood flowing in the street over like disagreements on whether the the Holy Spirit emanates directly from the father or it direct or it emanates indirectly from the father through the son. And that was like a major major like like dogmatic battle that went on in the late Roman Empire with literally people killing each other over it when really I mean they couldn't possibly know this. It's just a matter of we got to all believe the same thing.

We have to be on exactly the same page. And it's it's hysterical intolerance combined with a certain amount of ignorance of other belief systems where you can just believe, you know, they're they're all just worshiping devils. I mean, you see that on axelot even just like might have even been today that I'm seeing that, you know, Islam is not a real religion. It's just like this like political cult or it's the worship of Satan. There's people saying that on Acts, you know, that Islam is really a kind of devil worship. And I mean, I don't I just can't go that far, you know. I I can I can accept that Islam,

the founder of Islam, was a kind of
caravan bandit turned into a warlord,
but I wouldn't go so far as to say that
Muslims are literally worshiping Satan.
So,
let's see. Did I answer the question?
How do I make sense of such warped views
of Buddhism?
It's mainly hysterical intolerance
combined with ignorance of what dharma
is all about. And the best way to deal
with is just calmly explain things.
And of course, in all likelihood,
they're not going to accept the
explanation very much, but at least
you're not going to be fueling any kind
of argument by, you know, getting heated

and like arguing back at them, anything like that.

So I guess I should just move on the next question. As I say, there is kind of a longish list of questions. I mean, it's middle path between too many questions and not enough questions. So it's a good Buddhist Q&A here. And the next question is from Thoughtf Fog. And Thoughtfog says, "Would a monk be a valuable contribution to society worthy of food stamps?"

So I mean

you I I don't fully understand this question. I mean I assume thoughtf is asking are monks like

an asset to the society such that we should be giving monks food stamps and I mean technically food stamps you don't associate that with people who are assets to society. you you you you tend to associate food stamps with people that really aren't able to contribute much to society and so they need to be like taking more than they give or some such. Um but

the thing I mean I when I was a people were were like suggesting this kind of stuff to me too. you know, you should get like the free bus pass and you should you should go on like an EBT or food stamps or whatever it is. And it just it just didn't seem right as a

monk. I mean, a food food stamps you use them as money. You go to the store and buy food with food stamps, which I mean, a monk should not be using money or anything that is used as money. So, that would rule it out right there.

Same thing with like the the bus pass kind of a thing. If you're using it as money in lie of money, then it's technically a no no.

And so for a monk, you'd be a monk would be better off just like going to a food kitchen, going to a soup kitchen, that kind of thing where you've got like generous people generally not funded by the government, you know, this is like

private charity as a general rule who just out of the goodness of their heart are helping people and the monk would be associating with like homeless drug addicts and so forth, but I mean that's And I consider that like a monk who is really homeless in in America. I mean, there's a good chance he'd be living like in a in a homeless encampment with like mentally ill drug addicts, which I mean, he wouldn't have much to steal, that kind of thing. So I mean he certain monks with a certain kind of temperament very benevolent kind of you know social sort of temperament might be able to do well in a homeless encampment just going to a food kitchen for for their food. I

mean I did know one monk who lived on
the outskirts of San Diego. I think he
was staying in a wildlife refuge on the
outskirts of San Diego and every day
he'd walk into a like a Christian soup
kitchen to get his food
and they just put it into his bowl and
they were fine with that. So that would
be more appropriate I think than using
food stamps as a kind of
substitute for money.
But monks are a valuable contribution,
but a valuable contribution to society.
Even though technically they're supposed
to be, you know, removed from society,
you know, they renounce society,

they should not be particularly social.
But private charity is much better than
government, large, you know, socialism.
private charity is infinitely superior
to socialism. Um in the ex to especially
from a moral point of view or a
spiritual point of view where the person
who is like
engaging in private charity is gathering
up treasures in heaven to use Christian
terminology. I mean you're you're doing
something meritorious. you're you're
being generous. Whereas just having the
money automatically deducted from your
paycheck and then squandered by some
inefficient government bureaucracy
is not nearly as beneficial as a general

rule. I assume there are exceptions to that.

But yeah, go to a soup kitchen instead of going on food stamps if you are a monk in the west. And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Drip Walker and Drip Walker says, "What do you think of Evola's take on anata or no self? It seems to me that he morphs the concept of not self or no self into some kind of weird higher self thing. And it has been a very long time since I've read um Evola's take on Buddhism. Um I have read you know the famous book you know like the name of which I don't even remember the path to awakening or

something like that.

in English. But um yeah, it did seem to

me that I does kind of glorify

Buddhism, you know, like he's got the

the Buddhist arant, you know, the

Buddhist enlightened being as some kind

of Nietian Superman.

So I mean he's taking Buddhism and

trying to like reconcile it with

fascism.

So, you've got like you have to have

like the the Superman who is like the

the saint, the Buddhist saint. And yeah,

I I I think that Dripwalker is correct

that probably Evola

just takes the no self thing and just

kind of turns it into like a unity with

the higher self, you know, sort of like
the God man kind of a thing, which uh
yeah, I think you do have to distort
Buddhism at least a little bit to really
reconcile it with like Evola's preferred
form of fascism.
And by fascism, I don't necessarily mean
capital F Italian fascism that had
Mussolini as its leader. I'm just
talking about like small fascism
in general.
So yeah, I really don't recall his take
on no self well enough to really comment
on it in any kind of detail. So I'm just
going to move on to the next question.
This is from Jojo Do

speaking of fascism. Jo says, "Do you think Hitler would have given a merciful death to Brian Rue on on account of his bipolar disorder? If so, why did Brian ever support him?" I'm asking as someone who has been labeled a schizophrenic. So, that's that's another question. We got to we got to separate these. And while I'm separating these, I might as well say that um I would prefer that people use not use hyphens instead of dashes because I have I go in and I have to change all the hyphens into dashes because it's just not good punctuation. It is wrong.

So, let's get back to Joe's question. Do you think Hitler would have given a

merciful death to Brian Ru on a kind of his bipolar disorder? Um,

I mean it depends. I mean, would Hitler have actually known Brian Ru? I mean, if he would he have met Brian Rue, then I mean, he might have liked him. You know, Brian Rue would be a fanboy probably. And so, I mean, Hitler wouldn't just be like having people executed that were like strenuously in his favor.

So, I mean, he may have been completely merciful to I mean, there were some fairly nutty Nazis that were relatively high up in the in the pecking order. So, it may be that Brian Rue would just I mean, he'd be put in charge of the Nazi

party in some remote province or something. Who knows?

Um, but it may be that I'm that if Hitler had never met Brian Rue, I mean, I don't know what his policies were with regard to people diagnosed with some mental disorder that were were they just thrown into concentration camps? It may be that I mean, some of the really extreme cases like criminally insane, that kind of stuff. Yeah, I wouldn't be surprised. But um I really don't know enough about the social policies of the the the German National Socialist Workers Party um to know I mean what they did with people who just were like I mean they weren't a danger to anybody

you know they're like the benevolent

kind of eccentric weird person

who may have this or that label attached

to them from like a psychological

perspective,

but I think Hitler was kind of

he was tolerant of eccentric people, I'm

pretty sure, so long as they weren't

like opposing

the Nazi party.

So, yeah, I don't know.

It's just kind of a weird question

seems to me, but I would like to think

that uh that Brian Rue if he existed and

Brian actually believes that he was uh I

think he was like a Luftwaffa pilot or

something in in National Socialist
Germany in his previous his previous
life. So, I mean, in his previous life,
I mean, he may have died in a plane
crash or something, may have died in
battle, but he wasn't put to death by
the Nazi party. Assuming that Brian is
correct that in his previous existence
before this one, that he was actually
was in
Germany under Adolf Hitler, Adolf as
they would prefer.
So
yeah, I mean bipolar disorder and just I
think it was called manic depression
back in those days and
yeah I I really don't think that he

would have been seen as any kind of like deadwood in society, anything like that. So long as he was in favor of the party that I'm sure there's a good chance he would have found a place for him or just leave him alone and let him do his thing.

So, I'm just going to move on to Jodo's next question, which is the second half of the first question. If so, why did Brian ever support him? I'm asking as someone who has been labeled a schizophrenic. Well, I mean, I don't know. Bri, Brian obviously would not consider himself to have been put to death by the uh you know under the

policies of the furer that uh you know he does believe that he was in Nazi Germany in a pre in his previous existence and you know it prospered for him except for like I mean eventually I think he I think he did like die in a plane crash. his plane got shot down or something maybe.

So I mean Brian supported him partly because Brian bless his heart. I mean he just cannot accept any official narrative. So you know the official narrative is that Hitler was like just evil. So I mean Brian is is he does he's going to go the other way. And I mean partly I mean he he did have like some kind of vision or something in his youth

like which caused him to start you know putting two and two together with regard to his previous existence as a luftwafa pilot.

Um and he just Brian I mean he doesn't talk about national socialism much anymore partly because he's got so much grief from it. You know just people I mean just shun him because of it. But um I mean he sincerely doesn't think that Hitler did anything wrong. You know, I don't think he's he'd go so far as to deny the Holocaust, but he would go along with somebody like David Irving who I think is that his name? David Irving who, you know, sort of like an

alternate historian who, I mean, it allows that, you know, quite a lot of Jewish people and others did die under under the like the the German National Socialist Party in the 30s and first half of the 40s. But Hitler, according to Brian Rue, Hitler really didn't know about that. I mean it was just um you know this stuff that was going on. Hitler was just paying attention to other stuff and you know it was going on and Hitler did not order it. Did not necessarily approve of it. Although at the end I mean a lot of of Jewish people were were dying at the end just from like uh typhus epidemics in the camps and just starvation because towards the

end of the war things were getting so bad that the Germans could hardly even feed their own soldiers.

So Brian supported and to some degree maybe still supports Adolf Hitler because Brian sincerely does not believe that Adolf Hitler was like some evil psychopath that he was just sort of like a hero who didn't do anything wrong but is just the victim of negative propaganda and you know a certain ethnicity not liking him at all and kind of running the running the narrative and so forth, you know, pressuring the United States to get into the war and all that.

So,

I mean, it's kind of convoluted as you

might expect,

but uh yeah, Brian supports Hitler

because he does not consider Hitler to

have been an evil person. I mean from

even a Buddhist point of view which is

kind of strange but I mean personally I

do not think that Hitler was a saint or

a sage but on the other hand I don't

think that he was as bad as Stalin for

example. Stalin killed more people than

Hitler did. Mao killed more people than

Stalin and Hitler combined.

But it's quite okay to endorse Marxism

still even though Nazism,

National Socialism or just fascism in

general is considered just to be like absolute evil. you know, even to just be associated with it is, you know, like people on the left will use that as a weapon against somebody when really Marxism historically is responsible for way more deaths and more misery than all the forms of fascism combined.

But I think I'm just wandering toddling away from the from the topic here.

So, let's just go on to the next question also from Jodo.

And this is kind of a good question. He says, "Now that Brian has been allowed back on YouTube after being kicked off like at least 12 times, can can you

restore the lost videos of you and his talks?" And to tell you the truth, um, most of the videos that I did with Brian back when I was a monk, I never even put onto YouTube. I was for a while I was just kind of uploading old videos with Brian and I got about halfway through the the list. There's we did a lot of videos and then just kind of lost interest and so I've got way more old videos of me and Brian on Bitshoot than than on YouTube because um as Joe Doe here has implied, YouTube used to be pretty sensorious. I got lots of videos taken down just because of just some casual mention of something in the past. Whereas now, thanks largely thanks to

Donald Trump and Elon Musk, the the sensoriousness of social media has has been lifted to a great degree.
So you got people just like using the n-word on X and it's just it's fair game now. Apparently,
you can say that the 2020 election was rigged and not just lose your job or whatever.
But, uh, yeah, so there's lots of old videos that never even got put onto YouTube. And most of them, I mean, there were a few because of those casual mentions and so forth, but um, a few of them did get taken down, but most of them that were put on YouTube are still

up. Um, it is true unfortunately that some of the videos that Brian and I did with venerable Ajan Punadammo got taken down. Some of some of the most popular videos that I did, it was like a group discussion between Ajan Punadamo Brian and me about various topics that some of those got taken down. So yeah, I've that Joe Doe is not the first person to suggest that those videos, especially the ones with Ajan Punodamo should be like put back up on YouTube now that uh the uh symbolic book burnings of the Biden administration have have uh have passed.

So

let's just uh move on to the next

question.

This is from Jimmy Lad.

And I there's I suppose I could just start putting up old videos with Brian again, especially the ones with Ajan Puna Damo that got taken down. But uh I'm answering the question to Jimmy Lad now. Jimmy Lad says, "Where can we learn more about the concept of mind generated karmic demons in the commentary tradition?"

So this is in response

This is in response to uh a statement I made in the previous Q&A where the demons in hell in Buddhist cosmology are not real beings. They're just like

holographic projections

that are generated by the karma of the denisens of the hell realms. And um how I learned about this is I happened to be at Pa Doya in southern Burma visiting a German monk there. And I was just kind of curious about I don't know if I brought this up with him or I brought it up elsewhere and he just decided to respond to that while I was there, but I used to wonder where the like the demons in hell fit in the 31 plains of existence. You know, there is no demon realm really. There's the Assuras, but never in the text does it say that it's Assuras in hell that are like boiling people in pitch and like hacking them

with axes and this kind of stuff. You know, the the actual torturers in hell. Um there's not really a connection between them and the Assura realm. So, what are they? You know, I mean, would they just be denisens in hell that are like trustees, you know, just they get promoted because of good behavior so that they get to like torture everyone else? That kind of thing, you know? I was wondering about that. And this German monk told me that in the commentarial tradition, they're I mean, they're not real beings. They're they're just like um you know, holographic projections. And he also

said that the celestial nymphs in the heaven realms are the same way, which is kind of kind of a ripoff. I mean, some people they're doing this striving to get into heaven realm so they can have the herm of celestial nymphs. And it turns out the herm of celestial nymphs are all like, you know, celestial blowup dolls or something. You know, there's there's not really a woman there or a nymph, I should say. And I really don't know where in the commentaries. I mean he was more orthodox than me you know he was he would scoff at my my pernicious wrong views sometimes you know just in a very smug way it's like that's wrong because in this suta the Buddha says

this you know that was as far as he was concerned that was a conclusive reputation of any argument it's like the Buddha says this in this sutas therefore you are wrong you know that was kind of his approach and our friendship really didn't last extremely extremely long time.

Partly just because of that attitude of his or just this this smug kind of attitude.

But I I assume that he is correct that somewhere in the commentarial tradition it it mentions that the demons in hell and the celestial nymphs in heaven really are not conscious beings that

they're just a kind of projection. But I really don't know what where in the commentaries you can find. There's a good chance that AI is sophisticated enough. You could ask Grock, you know, where in the the polyatagas
it mentions this and Grock might actually be able to come up with an answer,
but I mean, I really have not read a whole lot of commentarial tradition. I mean, the the um Wisudi manga, I've read the Wizi manga, which is sort of like the central hub of the poly commentarial tradition. And I've read some of the, you know, like the Jotica stories, not just the verses, but the stories and

also the stories to like the the ghost stories, the pato watu and so forth. Technically, that's commentary. It's just the verses that are scripture or canonical. So, I have read some commentary, but not a whole lot. I never had a whole lot of use for the commentary. Sometimes if you're reading Vineia, there's just like this obscure word that is not a common word in poly. In fact, sometimes you'll find a word that's found only in the entire chapica, only in this this passage, and you don't really have enough context to know what it means. Therefore, sometimes you can look into the the commentary and see

what the commentary says and still take it with a grain of salt because sometimes the commentators didn't know either. And so they just would make a wild guess without admitting that they were making a wild guess. That happens in the commentarial tradition. Sometimes you've got monks from south India and son Sri Lanka that are trying to interpret like cultural con like like what how do you say it like cultural norms and also like flora and fauna of north India centuries previously and sometimes they just guess and they don't admit that they're guessing.

So, let's see here.

Yeah. So, where can we learn more about

the concept of mind generated karmic demons and celestial nymphs in the commentary tradition? Yeah, you're just I it's it's in there. I'm pretty sure, but I really don't know exactly which commentary states it. And there's lots of commentaries.

Every text in the in the Polytopica has has its commentaries. So,

good luck finding it unless you can find some expert on the commentaries or maybe an maybe AI or something could could locate it for you. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Yoshi Buouie. And Yoshi Buouie asks a good question. Did God Buddha commit

an offense when he proclaimed to the general public that he was enlightened? And this is following up on a statement I made in the previous Q&A that um for a monk to proclaim his enlightenment or even to proclaim that he has attained Janna to a lay person is forbidden. It is against the rules even if it's true. I mean if it's false then he's excommunicated for life. if he's knowingly lying about having attained superhuman mental states, which would include enlightenment, but also would include like psychic powers and even Janna, you know, like deep meditative states. If he's telling the truth, it's

still against the rules cuz monks aren't supposed to be bragging to lay people about this kind of stuff.

So, did did the Buddha commit an offense when he proclaimed to the general public that he was enlightened? Um, technically, yeah, you'd think so, wouldn't you? In fact, there's also it's it's a similar rule that a monk isn't supposed to perform, you know, psychic powers. You know, he's not supposed to do miracles in front of lay people. Whereas the Buddha, I mean, his most outstanding flouting of that rule was the so-called twin miracle where the Buddha levitated up into the air and

then he started spraying water out of one half of his body and fire out of the other half. And then he would switch it up so the side that was spraying water is now spraying fire and vice versa. And then he switched it up so it became like the top half and the bottom half while he's levitating in the sky in order to impress these brahinss with his psychic powers and it's just flies in the face of you know repeated admonitions that you find in the text where monks aren't supposed to do that kind of stuff. But I mean in that case I think that the twin miracle probably is mythology stuff that got added later and the people who added it considered

including this miracle to be more important than the Buddha following his own rules.

And it could be I mean it's it is pro more plausible anyway that the Buddha would go around saying that he was enlightened you know declaring himself to be the Buddha although in the text he generally refers to himself as the tagat which doesn't necessarily claim that he's enlightened. It just means that he has attained the state of suchness or thusness and which kind of implies that he's enlightened but I mean in a way it could be a kind of euphemism

but it's really hard to say you know to

what extent the poly texts are reliable objective history and to what extent they're like paraphrase and to what extent you know it's just like mythology gets added in and Just because it seems plausible

doesn't mean that it's necessarily true. I mean that's one thing that really struck me as a monk is that some western monks are very intelligent. You know it's like generally most Buddhist monks, western Buddhist monks have like a college education. You know it's intelligent open-minded people. And so they have to kind of admit, it's kind of embarrassing, maybe bad taste or bad manners for them to admit that the texts

are wrong about like the earth being flat and floating on water, that kind of thing. But so so they're willing to kind of dismiss the fire breathing cobra dragons and the flat earth floating on water and eclipses of the sun and moon being caused by an osura named Rahu swallowing them into his mouth. That kind of thing. But when it gets to the actual philosophy stuff, then they think, well, it's completely reliable. But what are the odds that all the fake stuff is going to be obviously fake or all the false stuff is going to appear to be obviously false to a westerner in the 20th or 21st century?

that probably most of the fake stuff

that gets added, the spirious

contents of the of the sutas and so

forth is stuff that might seem

reasonable, you know, it might seem

entirely possible, including stuff like

the Buddha not just bragging

grandiosely.

I mean, that kind of stuff I consider to

be fake, but even just to admit that he

was enlightened. I mean, it kind of goes

against other teachings in the sutras

and it's something that could easily be

added.

So,

but let's let's just get all this um

ambivalence

or vagory. No, that's a different that's that vagory doesn't mean vagueness, does it? Um, let's just set that aside and just take the text at face value. Just assume that it's all true.

Then I mean did he commit an offense by claiming to the general public that he was enlightened or did he commit an offense by performing miracles in public in front of lay people? Um it would be against the precepts that he laid down, but you could say that the Buddha himself was exempt because he's the one that makes the rules. You know, sort of like some totalitarian dictator can't really break the law because he is the

law. What he says goes. And if he says this is the law for everybody except me, then who's going to who's going to deny that? Who's going to say, "No, Mr. Dictator, you got to follow your own laws." And then, of course, you wind up in a camp or something.

Not that the Buddha was a totalitarian dictator, but when he's the one who's laying down the rules, I mean, he's the creator of the system, then it may be that he has some leeway that he can fudge on his own rules.

But yeah, that is with regard to the the miracles, I can be skeptical that the Buddha really did perform the twin miracle, for example. But with regard to

calling himself fully enlightened,

it's possible that he didn't like

historically and that that stuff just

got attributed to him later on.

It may be that he really did call

himself the dagattop

but that would be a kind of

I don't know

it's in a way sort of sidstepping claims

to full enlightenment by just saying

I've attained thus

you know I am what I am kind of a thing

but technically yeah it would be against

the rules and I'm just going to move on

to the next question and this isn't

really a question this is from my Buddha

and he just made a statement in the comments under under the previous YouTube video that I might as well comment on it because it just seems like something that I should comment on. Maitraa Buddha says, "Your current job seems to disturb and pollute your mind. It is my belief that you should become a philosophy instructor at a local community college. You would probably make a greater salary than you already make." So,

um, my current the reason why he said that is probably because I mentioned in the previous Q&A that every once in a while I'll get like these semi nightmares associated with work. You

know, it's just like this neverending work that has to be done. You know, I operate a forklift. I load and unload like truck trailers. And, you know, I sometimes I'll have these dreams of just keep loading and loading. It's just this the freight just keeps appearing and or else the freight doesn't have like a like a pro code. You can't scan it to know where it's supposed to go. That kind of thing, but you have to do something with it. Just these kind of sort of like school anxiety dreams happen. And I mean most people probably have school anxiety dreams, at least in the West, people that have actually

attended like high school.

And I mean, I've had weird anxiety dreams about like airports, you know, like the the bad guy chasing you through an airport, that kind of thing. But it is true. My current job is is an aggravating

um sometimes stressful job. And I got to fix my collar again. Let's see. Go like that. Okay.

So, I mean, to some degree, and a lot of it is just I'm not really a social person. I was a hermit for many years, just literally like a recluse for many years. And now I'm just surrounded by people. And like I mentioned before, the average IQ of the people working on that

dock is probably below 90. And so, you got a certain amount of like blockheads that you're dealing with, people that just mess things up. And I and there's just lots of it. There just people just swarm forklifts just swarming sometimes and when it's really busy, you know, 20 forklifts all on the same dock just all getting everybody getting in everybody else's way.

So yeah, I mean it it can be an aggravating unpleasant job. I do admit that in a way it's it's like a kind of aesthetic practice but it's not a very spiritually advanced aesthetic practice just because the whole like psychic

atmosphere of the place is not very high

let's say

so then my tray Buddha says that is it's

his belief that I should become a

philosophy instructor at a local

community college and yeah I've

considered that my sweetheart has has

suggested similar stuff. Um, like

there's a place called Bob Jones

University here in Greenville, South

Carolina, and uh, you know, she was

telling me I should try to get a job

there. But it turns out Bob Jones is

like a a Christian school and I wouldn't

really be able to teach comparative

religion there very well. Especially

because um I applied there once for a

forklift job, you know, working in their warehouse for moving around pallets of books or something. I don't know. And in order to get a job there, you had to avow that you declared Christ to be your savior and Mary was a virgin and all this. and and I just couldn't do that. I wasn't going to lie and say, "Oh, yeah. I'm I'm a good I'm a believing Christian."

But, uh it's my understanding that community college instructors probably don't make a whole heck of a lot of money. I mean, I'm I'm making I mean, I'm not rich at all and I'm I'm still working on an hourly wage, but still, I

mean, I'm living a relatively comfortable life up until some disaster strikes.

And one of the main advantages of the current job I've got, I get a lot of physical exercise. I got to get off the forklift again and again. I'm not climbing around like a like a squirrel or a monkey on these on this freight. It's just loaded into the into the trailers. In order to like strap stuff to the wall and secure it and everything, I got to lift up heavy things. And so I get exercise, which is good because I'm not good at artificial exercise. I'm not good at like working out. So natural exercise is good for my

body even if it's causing me a certain amount of frustration and aggravation. Um, but being a philosophy instructor at a local community college, I mean, it's it's possible. Yeah, maybe when I get too old to be climbing around like a monkey and lifting heavy weights, I might actually look into that.

But I'm probably not going to be looking for a different job anytime soon, unless something

radical happens.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question because that wasn't even really a question. I didn't even have to answer that one.

So, this is from someone whose name
apparently is spelled in cerillic
characters and I think it is pronounced
something like dian zamnol
which in English translates according to
Google translate into aesthetic journey.
So, let's just call this person
aesthetic journey. An aesthetic journey
says, "They say Buddha taught two
truths, mundane and super mundane.
But did Buddha really teach any mundane
truths?"
Well, yeah. Of course he did. In fact,
pretty much everything that he taught
like verbally
was mundane truth because in Buddhism
there are the the two truths.

You've got samuri satcha or conventional truth and you've got paramata satcha or ultimate truth. And when you're talking about people for example, you know, I, you, him, her, they, them, we, us, you know, any kind of talking about people, that's always conventional truth because ultimately there is no self.

And like almost everything you talk about in in regular language, I mean, it's dealing with conventional truth. It's not dealing with the absolute. It's not dealing with ultimate truth.

It is true that according to that Abid Dhama scholars con consider Abid Damaama to be ultimate truth but I don't believe

that for one second. I don't think that
ultimate truth can be put into words at
all. Any any truth that you tell with
words is going to be conventional truth
like the Daqing says the name that can
be named is not the eternal name.
That the highest truth cannot be
symbolized if you symbolize it like with
words. It's not the highest truth
anymore. It's just symbols.
Like the the contean thing in itself
cannot be explained in words.
I mean, you can kind of dance around it
a little bit. Sort of like Buddhists
dance around Nirvana a little bit,
trying to explain it, but you really
can't. So, you just keep your efforts to

a minimum really.

So the Buddha spoke in patti or wara which it's just like language of the world that I mean you have to use because you're in the world you're a human being so you've got to use this symbolic stuff you know you got to have this weird convention where the sound tree symbolizes this big plant outside.

I mean, what what are the similarities between the sound tree and an actual tree? I mean, we don't even know what an actual tree is like because we're symbolizing it, but even by seeing it and perceiving it.

So, um it'd be a a maybe a a a better

question is did the Buddha really teach
any ultimate truths? because all he can
do is just kind of point the way and and
there's like that Zen story. I think
it's uh one of the the famous coons
where um the Buddha started the the
patriarchal succession by one day
instead of saying anything you know at
the time when he usually delivers his
sermons to the monks instead he just
sits there in front of everybody with
this flower and he's just twirling the
flower between his fingers like this and
the only person who got it was
Mahakasapa or Kasiapa
who smiled because he understood whereas
nobody else did. And I mean the whole

point of it is you can't really teach ultimate truth in words. So the Buddha was just kind of twirling a flower to try and silently convey something that words can't convey. And that was like the beginning of Zen Buddhism. According to, you know, Zen people, that's when Zen Buddhism began. When the Buddha gave his his flower discourse, when he didn't say anything, he just sat there twirling a flower

or a paper umbrella.

So

yeah, yeah, the Buddha really did teach lots of mundane truths. And the question, the better question is, did he

teach any ultimate truths? And the he couldn't do it directly. He couldn't do it using words. All he can do is show the way and then you've got to find out for yourself. You know, it's like somebody who's never tasted vanilla before asking you what vanilla tastes like. It's like, what are you going to say?

You You could sit there and explain to this person what vanilla tastes like for hours to your just exhausted and horse. They're still not going to have a clue. They still won't know what vanilla tastes like. The only way to tell or to teach someone what vanilla tastes like is you just give them instructions. you

know, you go and get some vanilla and
taste it and then you'll know what
vanilla tastes like because even if you
have like a like a master's degree or a
doctorate in chemistry,
you know, you you've you've worked out
all the, you know, the neuronal pathways
and and whatever it takes, you know, how
the the molecules in the vanilla like
interact with your taste buds and how
the the perception is formed in your
brain and all that. Still, you can't
explain what vanilla tastes like.
I mean, you could know all that chemical
stuff and if you haven't tasted Venol
yourself, you're still not going to

know.

So, so the Buddha just taught the way on how to know the highest like super mundane ultimate truth because it cannot be put into words.

And I'm just going to move on to aesthetic journey's second question which is what percentage of the py mocha are sila bata paramasa in your opinion.

Um see the py mocha is like the the 227 rules for a biku. There's more for for nuns and some other schools of Buddhism have different numbers, but it's like the the standard list of rules of monastic discipline that have to be recited every two weeks at monasteries or supposedly they're

supposed to be recited u every two weeks at monasteries the full moon and the new moon days and silabata paramasa literally means like clinging to morality and observances.

So I mean really I mean the commentaries really don't understand silabata paramasa. It's one of the one of those words that got distorted by the commentaries and like misinterpreted by the commentaries. So that like dogmatic orthodox terabara Buddhists don't know what silabata paramasa is because they follow the commentaries and in my opinion the commentaries are wrong. the commentaries

I mean usually sila bata uh it
translates into English as like rights
and rituals but really sila means
morality and bata or vata means
observances
so really it's clinging to morality and
observances and if you read the
atikawaga it it warns against clinging
even to like genuine morality
that if you think that keeping five
priest precepts is going to get you
enlightened. That's cling to to rights
and rituals. I mean, if you're just
clinging to this, you're like attached
to following these rules. Even though
they're they're valid moral rules, don't
kill, don't steal, don't lie, that kind

of thing. Then if you if you're still clinging to that that's still silabata paramasa even though the commentarial tradition has interpreted in this weird way like the standard def or the standard example of silabata paramasa in the commentaries is the like the dog aesthetics and the the boine aesthetics that that lived in the Buddhist time who would imitate animals
is in the sense in in the hope that they would become enlightened through that. It's like some people think that cows are just naturally enlightened. You know, they just naturally follow five precepts, you know, they don't they

don't kill, they don't steal, they don't lie, you know, that kind of thing. And so by imitating cows or dogs, you know, just going around on all fours and just like grazing, not not speaking human languages, that kind of thing, that that is like the the commentarial,
you know, practically the definition is by behaving like a dog or behaving like a cow. But I mean if you read the atikawaga and you really look into these things that the Buddha really was warning against clinging even to valid morals. Don't cling to anything
sort of like Ajan Sha used to say if right view becomes wrong view if you cling to it.

So I mean in that sense

um I mean the py mocha rules themselves

are not clinging to anything. It's not

silabata paramasa

because

um I mean some monks are obsessed with

vignia and so they cling to all the

rules and so it'd be 100%.

Other other monks either they're

enlightened or completely shameless and

they don't cling to any of the rules so

it would be 0%. So that would be more

subjective. the silabata paramas

especially the paramasa the clinging

part

that's just uh

I mean that's that's subjective that's
not in the rules themselves so I think
what aetic journey really is asking
is what percentage of the pimoka are are
vata and not sila the wata is just
observances you know it's just etiquette
whereas the sila is real sila you know
so you You know, there's a monk's rule
that you're not supposed to you're not
supposed to kill animals. It's a pacidia
offense to kill an animal. Whether it's
a mosquito or an elephant, it's the same
offense. Well, I mean, that's that's
that's still sila, but vata or just
observances, it's like some of them are
serious rules like sana rule. Second
most most serious category of offense is

if you build a hut that's more than
certain dimensions,
you know, more than like 7 and 1/2 ft by
like 5t, you know, they're tiny tiny
hut. If you build anything bigger than
that, then that's a sada offense. So
that would be an more of an observance
because it's not really immoral
to build a big hut. And in fact, if
you're building it for yourself, it's
not allowed to be that big. But if it's
like for the SA, if I if I remember
correctly, somebody's willing to donate
it to the SA, then it can be bigger than
those dimensions. Or just shaving your
head, wearing robes of a certain

material and a certain color. Those are just observances. Not eating in the afternoon is just an observance. There's nothing inherently immoral with eating dinner
anymore than eating breakfast.
So if you get if you ask that way you know what percentage of the py mochoka are observances and not morality that they're just like ancient Indian aesthetic etiquette
then
I would guess probably more than half of them I mean I'd have to go through know one by one in order to really make like a precise kind of estimate but maybe twothirds of them. You know, it's like

there's some of these rules. It's like the nisia pacidia rules. It's like you have to your sitting cloth has to have a certain percentage of you can't have more than a certain percentage of black goat wool in it. This kind of thing or you're not allowed to carry goat wool more than a certain distance. This sort of thing. I mean, it's even handling money. I mean, technically there's nothing immoral in with regard to holding a dollar bill in your hand. I mean, that's not immoral, but it's against the rules. So, yeah, I'd say at least twothirds of the potty mocha rules and vine rules in general, because most

vineia rules are not in the potty mocha.
They're beyond, you know, they're just
additional to the potty mocha. then
yeah, I'd guess at least 2/3, probably
more than 2/3
of the rules are just observances
instead of of morality. But when you
start like trying to get rid of the
observances to make um like monastic
discipline more amendable to western
civilization or something, then you're
just [__] [__] up. And once you open
the door to changing stuff, then people
are just going to keep changing and
changing and changing until it's just
unrecognizable. It's it's fubar.
So you're better off just dealing with

the inconvenience of following ancient Indian rules. If you want to be a terraodin monastic, then you just follow the rules. Preferably without clinging to them too much. At first, you're going to cling to them just to get them down. you know, you don't want to break the rules, but then it could become second nature after couple years and then you don't have to cling to anything anymore and it's just automatic pretty much whether it's moral or or just observances.

So, I'm just going to move on to aesthetic journeys. Next question is, do you like Putin?

And I've never met the man personally.
Um, but I really don't have anything
against him. I mean, supposedly he's a
he's like a gangster, you know? He's
he's this ruthless person that has his
political opponents arrested andor
assassinated, that kind of thing.
But,
um, I mean, I as as a world leader, as a
national leader, I mean, I think that I
mean, America could be friends with
Russia and Putin.
I I don't and they could be allies.
>> I don't see how Putin's any worse than
the leader of China
or a number of other other leaders I
could mention. I mean, I would prefer

Putin to Vanderlayan.

At least Putin's still got a he's got an intact pair of testicles.

So, yeah, Putin probably is relatively good for Russia. I think the whole Ukraine thing, I mean, and it's just bleeding resources and money and and manpower and stuff for Russia for a long time. But, uh, yeah, I think Putin is probably I mean, if if he's leading Russia towards an improved state over the way it was before him, then he's he must be doing something okay. Of course, you could say the same thing about Stalin. I mean, Stalin pretty much industrialized Russia,

but Stalin was not a good guy.
And so, I mean, with regard to like a
political leader, and this applies to
Trump, too. I mean,
in a way, you have to like differentiate
between like is he a nice person, is he
a good person or and then is he a good
leader? Because a good leader isn't
necessarily a nice guy. And a nice guy
certainly is not necessarily a good
leader. Like Jimmy Carter was probably a
nice guy, relatively speaking, but he
wasn't. He was history has laid down the
verdict that he was not a good president
or like uh what's his name? Valentinian
the great. He was a late he was a Roman
emperor like around the year like the

late 300s.

And I mean he was just a sociopath. He was just he was just this cruel, sadistic bastard of a human being. But he got the name the great. He didn't call himself that. It was other people were calling him the great because even though he was a sadistic sociopathic bastard who would have people put to death, beaten to death with clubs or whatever just for making like a minor trivial mistake, still he was doing his best to serve Rome and lead Rome to greatness and kind of undo some of the mistakes that his predecessors made. And Rome was prospering under him. So, he

was a good leader despite the fact that he was a cruel, sadistic, sociopathic bastard.

But getting back to to Putin, I've got nothing against the man. Tell you the truth. I do I do think it would be good if the United States and Russia could be allies instead of, you know, you've got some kind of status quo establishment that wants to just keep the cold war going, but they can't really have a cold war against our real adversary, which is China. You know, China is a greater threat to America than Russia is, but it's just we've got doing too much business. You know, they they're selling us all this, you know, cheap electronics

and stuff that

we can't we can't badmouth China very

much, even though they're a greater

threat to the United States than Russia

is.

So, with regard to Putin, yeah, he's all

right. In a way, I kind of like Putin

kind of, but I really don't know lots

and lots about him. And I'm sure he is

just a ruthless person, not as bad as

Valentinian the Great.

And I'm just going to move on this

question. This is from PSA.

And PSA says, "Do you think the dude is

an American version of a renuncient

semi-enlight being?" And he's referring

to the big Labowski. I can't remember.

Um, is it Jeff Bridges play plays the

dude in in The Big Labowski?

Um, so do I think he was an American

version of a renuncient semi-light being

he might be sort of like a Hollywood

attempt at portraying somebody like

that, but I mean he wasn't really

semi-enlightened. you know, he had a

certain wisdom sort of like a certain

kind of, you know, hippie wisdom to him

and he didn't I mean, he was relatively

patient, you know, he had a certain

amount of Christian charity towards

other people. He wasn't really

confrontational. He wasn't a cruel

person, you know, he he was a relatively

good person with a certain amount of wisdom, but I don't think that he was really
uh like a semi-enlightened being.
Maybe that's what Hollywood was trying to portray, but it didn't. I really don't think so. So PSA's second question. On which stage of the path would you categorize someone like that?
Putina. I would consider him to be a puja, which means he is not in any of the four stages of Buddhist saintthood.
But then again, I'm skeptical with regard to pretty much all of the stages of Buddhist saintthood.
even like Arahan ship to some degree

because within the context of Samsara it
may be just at best a kind of paradox
and I do think that the other stages
sodapana and so forth originally had
different meanings before somebody
crafted them into this system of the
four stages of like Buddhist aryahood. I
do not think that the Buddha himself
advocated the four stages,
but that's just my opinion.
And I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from Master Poe.
And Master Poe says, "On hope, don't you
hope the Buddhist point of view on
reality is true?"
Um
I mean there might be a certain

subliminal level of hope with regard to that. Um but in like in Buddhism they talk more about confidence.

But in my case I mean the Buddhist point of view is not ultimately true. So I mean just going with conventional truth and ultimate truth like I was talking about before. I mean it's not ultimately true. There's a certain amount of delusion involved in believing anything. So that kind of kicks that in the head a little bit. But

I do use a lot of Buddhism as a working hypothesis, a con very convenient working hypothesis

that seems to work well. It works better

in my opinion than say scientific realism. Although to some degree a certain amount of scientific realism is also a good thing. It does result in a rather robust point of view.

So hope like I was saying in the previous Q&A is is desire. It's like you're you want something to to be the case.

And I don't know, I don't it's it's not really a matter of like craving in my opinion.

Um it's just sort of a convenient working hypothesis that I have been benefiting from for many years at this point. But yeah, there could be I mean to the extent that I do hope Buddhism is

true and I really don't feel it. But to the extent if I do have that at some subliminal level, it would be a kind of subliminal unenlightenment.

So I'm just going to move on to uh Master Po's second question, which is like a followup on the first one. He says, "Whatever one's world view is, it takes hope. Faith and hope go hand in hand. Does it not?" So that's the only actual question at the end is go hand in hand. And faith, faith and hope don't necessarily go hand in hand, but both of them are delusional. Faith is delusional. Faith is belief and belief is thinking that you know something that

you don't really know.

Faith, I mean, you're never going to know that the contean thing in itself, which is actual truth, actual reality. You're never going to know that through faith unless it's like St. John of the Cross's dark faith. I mean, St. John the Cross had this phenomenon called dark faith and it was it was based on like profound like what what a Buddhist would call Janna I guess it's sort of like a Christian version of that high contemplation he called it where you just dismiss everything from your mind that is not God so you can't imagine God so out goes the imagination you can't sense God through the senses out go the

sense you know the whole sensory apparatus you can't reason out God. You can't figure out God intellectually. Out goes the intellect. So you just dismiss all these mental states, all these perceptions,
and until everything that isn't God is dismissed. And then you realize there's still something there in your mind. After you've dismissed everything that can be dismissed, still there's something there. And according to St. John of the Cross, that's like the spirit of God. And that is dark faith. You know, it's like it's beyond mere intellectual belief or emotional belief.

It's you you just know it, which in a
way is not really faith. I guess the New
Testament like St. Paul in the New
Testament says, you know, that
Christianity, I mean, he he honestly
admits Christianity is based on faith
rather than knowledge. You know, because
if you really know it, then it doesn't
you don't need faith anymore. Faith is
this belief. In a way, it's hoping
something is true. I guess
both faith and hope are unenlightened
mental states. In my opinion,
the term sadda in Pali is often
translated as faith,
but some western translators don't like
that and they'll replace the word faith

with like confidence. And then there are
at least two verses in in the the sutas
that say that a monk shouldn't have
faith. One is in the dharmapara
and then another one is in the at aka
waga where you just don't have faith.
And
I agree with that because faith is
belief and belief is delusion.
Belief is some sorrow.
Perception is some sorrow.
So you can say faith and hope go hand in
hand, but both of them are going hand in
hand down some samsaric path.
They may eventually get you to
enlightenment, but before you become

enlightened, you're going to have to dismiss the faith and hope.

And once you're enlightened, you're not going to have any faith or hope. At least that's what the texts imply.

So let's see here.

Yeah. Well, I mean, Master Po does say whatever one's world view is, it takes hope and and maybe faith, but a world view is ultimately delusional.

You know, it's it's like a perceptual belief system. And perceptual belief systems are samsara.

I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is Dhama River. And Dama River says, "Have you read the protocols of the learned elders of Zion?" We got

kind of a like a a Nazis-esque theme going here. Dama River, I I kind of interrupted myself, which is rather rude. So, I'm just going to go back to Dama River here saying, "Have you read the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion? Could you share your thoughts?" No, I have not read the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion. I have read about them a little bit where supposedly it's kind of like a uh what's the like a hoax, you know, it's sort of a fraudulent thing that was based on a novel that was written considerably earlier than the protocols were that a large a large part of the protocols of

the learned elders of Zion is supposedly
based on a novel that was written much
earlier. And that's about all I know
about it. I mean it's a lot of the sort
of the so-called anti-semites
out there will you know cite the
protocols of the learned elders of Zion
which supposedly has like the agenda for
the Jews
to like you know undermine Western
civilization and take control and all
that but I mean I've never bothered to
read it and probably never will
and I do I think that to some degree
it's it's like propaganda.
Not necessarily like Hebrew propaganda,
but more like anti-Hebrew propaganda.

That's just what little I know about it.
And so I'm just going to move on to Dama
River's next question,
which is I watched the interview with
you and Brian Rue,
how social justice is practically the
opposite of Buddhism and they don't want
men to be men. And you mentioned how you
used to have a Dutch friend who stopped
being your friend when she realized you
were leaning towards the right. It
reminded me of a young liberal white
Canadian feminist friend I used to have.
She was going to university at the time
and told me she was working on a project
with other people to send men to a place

like a concentration camp where men could be re-educated on how to be men. I thought she was joking, but she was dead serious. What are your thoughts and feelings on being sent to a concentration camp to be re-educated on how to be a man? And your teacher is a young white liberal feminist from Canada. Well, that that Dutch friend who stopped being my friend when she realized I was leaning towards the right, she was actually the one who inadvertently redpilled me because one time she sent me a link from it was Black Pigeon Speaks. It was some video from Black Pigeon Speaks. This is back in like 2015

about how women and like feminism like women involved in politics destroys civilizations and she was kind of confused by it. She asked for my opinion and I watched it and it just like on the sidebar on YouTube you get all this you may also like kind of stuff suggested viewings and I start watching like Sargon of a CAD and and and like uh Stefan Molno and and people like that and that just it was like three days of just horrified fascination just seeing how insane the left had gone and it pretty much cured me of any leftward leanings or tendency sees to vote Democrat.

And so I mean I would I would remind her occasionally like this is because of you. I'm red pill because of you. Yeah. That pretty much ended that. But um let's see where Oh yeah. And this same person
uh shared with me uh a paper that she had written for some university class in Europe about redefining masculinity. And it was like the the alternatives to like patriarchal toxic masculinity were all men becoming like more
empathetic and and like nurturing
and and non-aggressive and so forth. So essentially redefining masculinity into femininity, you know, it's like every option that was given in the paper was

there's like two or three options, two
or three alternatives were just like men
becoming more feminine.
So that's that was really a thing and
it's going on in universities. Maybe not
quite as much as in 2015
when it was really just reaching like a
fever pitch,
but
yeah, I think this pendulum is starting
to swing the other way now. But let's
get to to the actual question here. What
are your thoughts and feelings on being
sent to a concentration camp to be
re-educated on how to be a man? And your
teacher is a young white liberal

feminist from Canada. Um, yeah. Yeah, I mean it it would depend on the circumstances, I suppose. I don't think I'd be a very good very very very good subject, you know. I don't think they they would succeed in really changing my point of view other than maybe just making me even more vehemently non-feminist.

It reminds me of there was some old science fiction movie kind of science fiction movie. It was like a dystopian kind of movie from like the 19 late 1970s

and it was some actor that was specialized in like bee movies. John Saxon, I think, was the star of it. And

he he winds up in like this

post

postmodern feminist society where the

men are treated like slaves and they're

fed this I mean their food has is laced

with this drug that makes them very like

beta and passive and subservient and

everything to just so that the the women

can keep them under keep the men under

control. And this John Saxon guy, he

just kind of stops eating the food and

uh eventually just like rebelss, you

know. And of course in in these these

shows, it's inevitable that like one of

the the female leaders, you know, one of

these these butch feminists who is like

just taking charge and and running everything, she's secretly like the play thing of some ultra masculine barbarian on the outskirts of society. that kind of thing. They always fall for like the super macho hero guy.

Uh so I might be something like that John Saxon guy where you know I'd be just sort of biting my time. I mean just like these kind of feminists they just really overestimate their own power. They don't like the idea that feminism has become a thing in the west simply because men allowed it to happen. that women couldn't just seize power without men consenting to it because men are stronger than women as a general rule at

least with regard to you know like

aggression that kind of stuff.

So

what are my thoughts and feelings on

being sent to a concentration camp to be

re-educated and how to be a man? In

other words, how to be a unic would be

what they would be teaching. and your

teacher is a young white liberal

feminist from Canada.

Yeah. I don't know. It would depend on

the liberal feminist and all that. It

would just depend on the circumstances

on how I would navigate the situation.

I'm going to move on to the next

question here. This is from Cyrus Frame,

one of the few people who asks questions on Rumble.

And Cyrus frame says in the atikawaga there are these lines. If by view purity is for a man or by knowledge he abandons unease then he who is already encumbered is purified by something extra. Indeed the view betrays him claiming in that way. And I commend Cyrus frame for using my own translation of the Aikawaga.

That was my translation of the following poly here. And I'm going to use Burmese pronunciation, so it's going to sound weird.

So,

uh, Cyrus frame continues here, what I understand by the first line is that

some people pursue purity through views. The second line, some people chase knowledge to gain comfort, which reminds me of Jeremy Hillary Boob in the Nowhere Man scene in Yellow Submarine. However, I do not understand the last two lines. Okay, so let's just go over this verse from the Atika Waga. If by view purity is for a man, which means that people in ancient India and nowadays like some Christians believe that you're going to become enlightened or reach the fullness of your potential by believing the right belief.

And then so the next line is or by knowledge he abandons unease. And really

these are just they mean the same thing.
If by view purity is for a man or by
knowledge he abandons unease is
essentially saying if by view purity
isn't for a man which is to say by
knowledge he abandons unease.
So either way it's like your beliefs are
getting you into a state of of purity.
you know, sort of like
ghana yoga in in in Hinduism or in yoga
where it's like you realize the truth
that and the truth is some kind of like
perceptual
world view. It's not just like some
ineffable
like like void, you know. It's it's not
like that. is you have realized truths

you know you have understood you know
the laws of reality this kind of thing
it's not just like dismissing all
perception it's still perceptual
apparently
so
getting to the third line then he who is
already encumbered is purified by
something extra which means I mean from
the Buddhist point of view your beliefs
are what are preventing you from Being
enlightened, your beliefs are weighing
you down. You are encumbered by views
and perceptions and beliefs.
And the atakawaga just says over and
over again, don't have views,

perceptions, or beliefs.

So, you're encumbered, you're weighed down by all these ideas, these unenlightened perceptions.

Um, and you so you think you're going to be purified by just having a different perception.

You think that you're already weighed down by these beliefs, but you just add a few more beliefs to to just sort of pull pull it all together like the rug in the big Labowski, you know, it pulls the room together. The I mean, really, you're you're just more encumbered.

You're just more weighed down by beliefs by adding some new belief. I mean, you're you're just even more weighed

down. Even if you get rid of some of the
old beliefs to make room for the new
belief, you're still just encumbered by
these clings to views.
And so the last line is indeed the view
betrays him claiming in that way because
you're saying that I'm unenlightened
which means I have delusional views but
I just add some new delusional view
because all views are are just by nature
delusional. are all samsaric
that you're not going to become
enlightened by just clinging to any any
world view or any system of world views.
I mean, there's plenty of orthodox
Buddhist dogmatic scholars out there who

just cling to what the Buddha taught and still they're not still they're not enlightened.

They just don't get it.

So, that's what it means. I mean it's like if you think that by knowing the right thing or having the right belief system is going to get you enlightened, you know, then the belief system is is really what's keeping you from being enlightened. So in a way it's just self-contradictory.

And I hope I explained that well enough because I'm moving on to the next question. This is from Nearmmit and Nemmit says, "How to deal with injustice at work. There was a big

promotion recently in my office. They promoted some 10 people. I didn't get the promotion, but what hurts more is not that I that I didn't get a promotion, but people who I have trained got it before me. And with due respect, they are not on my level when it comes to being effective and getting things done. So Nitt knows way better than I do like why they might have been promoted even if he was more qualified to be promoted like he was the one who was teaching them and still knows more than them. I mean it could be like a DEI stuff it could be nepotism you know it could be you know these kind of reasons

just sort of like village politics or something. It's like, well, we need we need more women in upper management, so we'll just promote, you know, her and her and her. That kind of thing.

I don't really know what the details are. But, I mean, if you work for a place that has unjust systems like that, then you might consider just moving elsewhere, just getting a different job somewhere else. I mean, that's kind of what I was doing. the the place I worked at before, the place where I'm working at now, um the the the upper management was largely incompetent. And one of the reason why they were incompetent, there were a lot of like college educated

white women that were just hired just largely through DEI and there's a lot of like progay stuff. This was like we're making construction materials and it would not have surprised me if there there was like some decree came from above that we're going to be flying gay pride flags over these shops selling construction materials which would just obviously would would tank business because most construction workers, people that buy like metal roofing and so forth, they really tend to be more conservative. live in South Carolina anyhow than elsewhere
or then then you know you go to

Starbucks and it's it's just kind of
what you expect but you want to go buy
metal roofing I mean you don't really
care about gay pride and all that and
the upper management was really
supportive of that kind of thing and
just bragging about how Newsweek
magazine found their business to be one
of the most inclusive progressive kind
of businesses to work for and I mean it
was like a kind of group think going on
so that like in people that actually had
good ideas would get they'd either fire
get fired or leave and it was just the
people that agreeing with the agenda you
know that that would stay and things
just got worse and worse until finally I

just had enough and I just I was gone but again I don't know what the situation is in Nermit's place of business, you know, what is the motivation for them to be hiring people that are less qualified and overlooking people who are more qualified? I mean, in America, the usual explanation for that would be like diversity hires or sometimes it would be like nepotism or or that kind of thing too.

So yeah, I mean if it's either you can just have equinimity, just accept, well that's just the way it is and just keep doing a good job. Um or just go elsewhere, I guess. Or I mean depending

on who your like supervisor is, who your boss is. I mean you could go in and have a talk with the boss, you know, why is this and they might explain it to you. I don't know.

But I mean the Buddhist explanation of dealing with injustice at work would be pretty much like the first two options that I gave is either have equinimity. You know, it's just all in accordance with your own comma or I mean if it's just really bad just find a better place to work.

But sort of the middle path might be go in and have a talk with the manager and see see what his explanation is. And you might say, well, we got we're under

pressure to to have these young
diversity hires.
So, I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Uiosis,
formerly known as Stellar Supreme and
more formerly known as Libra Lam and a
whole slew of other names.
And Uiosis, formerly known as Stellar
Supreme, etc., etc.,
says this, "Things have started to click
for me about my attitudes toward
Buddhist practice. So, excuse my
heavy-handed question. Do you feel that
you betrayed the Buddha's direction of
only engaging in solitary practice under
the condition that one only do so if

they have sufficient concentration and mental stability and they don't cultivate fear, dread, and mental imbalance? Considering the practice is aimed at one's dying mental state on account of the hysteric disorder that you developed and the loss of interest in practice with the further consideration that the Buddha advised up who was not established in the development of the concentration states of the nine Janna and Nibana that because of his deficiency he should heed this advice. Quote, "Upali, you should live with the SA or community. As you live with the SA, you will be at ease." Unquote. With the further consideration

that if you are not at ease with the SA
nor the solitary life, then the
requisite path would be at the very
least going back to the basics of
developing concentration as a lay person
who carries out the four duties.
I'm not trying to go hard on you.
Hyphen, which I had to turn into a dash.
These are just difficult facts that I
have been facing off with in my personal
life, considering my sweetheart probably
won't put up with the dullness of my
severe mentality toward the duties of
lay Buddhist practice and that I will
likely need to revive my drive toward
the monastic life because I have

experience with states of concentration and feel a duty to train them in a life that accommodates their higher training in accordance with the development of the fruits of the contemplative life outlined in the samya palasuta. Uh, end of question. But this I mean stellar supreme, etc., etc., he has this weird way of communicating. I mean, my sweetheart trying to understand this question actually asked an AI program to try and interpret it into plain English. I think I kind of understand it though. but he's he's got a really abstract, verbose, complicated, convoluted way of communicating that sometimes, frankly, I I don't really understand.

So, anyways, let's see. It's going to take some unpacking, I guess, since there's all these different convoluted strands all kind of interwoven in this question or series of questions or or something. Do I feel that I betrayed the Buddhist direction of only engaging in solitary practice? Um, no. Because I mean probably the best thing that could have happened to me as a monk would be I find an enlightened teacher. I mean that is like one of the best things you can do. Not just a teacher that you consider to be enlightened
and that happens a lot. But you really find a teacher who is like an a master.

And I've always had bad luck or bad karma with regard to teachers like that. I mean in school I had good teachers but as a monk I never really found a monk that I I wanted to emulate. I just I want to be like that. I never found one that that you like you you when I first went to Burma I had a very short list of three seats that I thought might really have attainment. One of them was upandid. Two months at Panda Rama cured me of that. Another one was Tangidon Seattle. Just 10 days or just a few days at his meditation retreat center cured me of of the idea that he really had attained something really like superhuman,

you know, like really advanced wisdom. The other one would be Muhamy Zodica who still is very intelligent, a good meditator, but I mean in his later years he was kind of a hypochondric and just kind of started living in a house in town with his daughter which I mean he wasn't really accepting disciples anyway that when I first came to Burma my teacher my acharia venerable Pakogus wanted to send me to Mahameyan Uzora because he spoke spoke fluent English, was very intelligent, had kind of a western point of view. Mahameyan Usuza did not want to deal with foreign disciples. He had had bad experiences

with foreign monks already.

So, I mean, he wasn't really an option.

But so, I mean, I just did not have

a teacher that I really wanted to

emulate. Ironically, one of the the

spiritual teachers I would most be

inclined to say, "Yeah, I want to be

like him." would be Nim Kuroli Baba

right there up there on the altar. Even

though he was obese, he died of like

diabetic shock. I think he was really

rotunded partly just because of you know

sort of the way he he worked out the

we don't need to get into that. But I

mean his only possessions were a loin

cloth, a blanket and a water pot and a

and a diary. I mean allegedly those were

his only possessions. And in the diary

he wrote the same thing every day. He

just wrote Rom.

It was like his his meditation mantra.

I mean you see pictures of his diary.

It's all just Ram.

All of it.

So

gosh,

where do I I kind of lost the thread,

but uh yeah. So I mean if I had found a

good teacher or even like a really good

community I would have gone there but I

never really did. So I was pretty much

on my own. Like monasteries I mean you

go to monasteries and you see that I

mean almost all monasteries in Burma is like they're not following Vineia. They're not even trying to follow Vineia correctly or even in the relatively strict monasteries. You know, there's this rule, you must follow Vineia, but then the monks are secretly not following Vineia. Monks are secretly handling money and this kind of thing. So, I learned fairly quickly that if I wanted to be a conscientious monk, I should avoid monasteries. And I just never found an enlightened teacher or anywhere near to an enlightened teacher that I could really just want to emulate and just trust what they told me. And there's like the culture barrier between

a westerner and a Burmese monk. Of course, I was ordained in a Burmese tradition. Spent most of my monkhood in Burma. And there's like this cultural barrier where the Burmese still have like this medieval attitude towards Buddhism. You know, everything in the text is true. You know, you can't question any of it. And I just can't do that. I mean, it my mind just doesn't work that way. And so I was on my own. No good community to join. I mean it's like some people advised me to like join an Ajan Cha monastery but other monks who knew me fairly well would would warn me there's no way you you'd make it an

Ajan Cha monastery because even a Jan Cha monastery it's still like conformitybased.

You have to fit in. You wear the uniform even if the uniform is not in accordance with line. you know, you wear the the pajamas underneath or, you know, the the kung fu pajamas or whatever it is they wear underneath their their robes in the West even though it's against the rules technically. I mean, you do that or you're just seen as a troublemaker. It's conformity oriented. Everyone has to like fit in and I'm just I'm just not going to do that.

So, just being solitary and doing the best I could on my own was the best I

could do. And I did fairly well. I mean with regard to let's see here the hysteric disorder that I developed. I mean even Arahans apparently have hysteric disorders. I mean you just know anything about Sigman Freud then I mean he wasn't like some sort of infallible oracle like the the Edypus complex and all that I really don't have much use for. But still, what he said about hysteria seems pretty valid that you have these natural urges and a civilized person represses these natural urges because you can't just be like fondling every pretty woman you come across. That sort of thing. You can't

just take whatever you want. You can't
just like punch anybody you don't like.
You have to repress your urges, restrain
yourself, self-restraint,
which is basic to Buddhist practice.
Then these urges don't just disappear.
They just get pushed into your
subconscious mind where they build up
pressure until they start percolating up
to the surfaces up to the surface as
neurotic symptoms. Especially hysterical
symptoms which can be like
psychossematic illnesses, weird
behavioral ticks like me clearing my
throat a lot could could qualify as
that. Although there's also a certain
genetic aspect to me clearing my throat

a lot. My mother was the same way.

So let's see here.

Getting to uh the Buddha's advice to up

and if the his advice to the pali

involves the nine Janna then yeah

obviously that's an anacronism. It

shouldn't shouldn't be taken too

seriously because the Buddha didn't

teach nine Janna. He taught four in all

likelihood.

Even the somaya palasuta doesn't mention

anything more than four janna.

And the somaya palasuta is a relatively

old suta. So old that some of the later

additions into orthodoxy didn't make it

into the samaya palasut.

So let's see here. Yeah, live with the songo. Yeah, good luck finding a good SA where everyone is like following the rules correctly and really striving for enlightenment. I was really idealistic when I first became a monk and before I became a monk. When I was intending to become a monk, I just assumed I'm going to be joining the brotherhood of these wise men striving for enlightenment and they'll all be wiser than me because they'd been striving longer. And then you get into an actual monastery and it's not like that at all. I was very like sullen, very disillusioned when I first became a monk just because I was surrounded by these Asian monks.

And west, some Western monks are like, a lot of Western monks are like this, too. I mean, they're not even trying. They're just try, they just want to live an easy life. I mean, they might have a devout Buddhist belief system, but they're just striving for a better rebirth. They're not even trying for enlightenment. I remember one time the Jehovah's Witness who used to come and try and convert me about once a week asked one of the senior monks, one of the Burmese monks, you know, why are you a monk? And it was like he got this embarrassed look on his face and he was like, because I

want to attain nibbana, you know, it's like a question mark at the end cuz that's what he's supposed to say. But that was just what he was supposed to say, so he said it.

So, let's see here.

Did I answer the question? I think maybe I kind of did.

Let's see. I'm gonna kind of review this long complicated question. Man, it scrolls way up there. Okay. Do I feel I betrayed the Buddhist direction of only engaging in solitary practice under the condition that one only do so if they have sufficient concentration? Well, I mean I mean you can do solitary practice as a beginner practically. I mean once

once you've gotten enough wasa under

your belt you know once you've you're

you're like no longer independence upon

a teacher but even if if you're still

you know it's been be less than five

years that you've been a monk you can

still go off and live alone if you're

you're making progress and I was making

progress for a long time

so and mental stability I'm relatively

fairly stable mentally I'm not really a

flighty kind person. I'm not

flip-flopping and that kind of thing.

So,

yeah,

I think I I think I pretty much answered

that. If I could have found a good community in which I would have fit in that was led by like a a really wise monk that I would want to emulate, that I could really take seriously, that's what I should have done. But I just never encountered that situation.

And so I'm just going to move on to what's his name now? Usis formerly known as seller supreme more formerly known as Libra etc. Second question

which is as follows. Do you agree with this advice? If one struggles at advancing in concentration development, they should remain as a monastic working on insight development in the capacity

of the three marks of existence because that is conducive to liberation at the last mental state before death. Well, not necessarily. I mean you see if you struggle at advancing in concentration development still you have the option of of just mindfulness general mindfulness um which is one reason why mindfulness is much more popular among westerners like compulsively thinking westerners who can't just get into like deep like concentrative states that in a way having a more moving target of just doing basic mindfulness practice tend tends to work better for most Westerners, it seems. But I I didn't

even Let's see.

Huh. Okay, I'm just going to have to like recollect myself here and sort of get back on the track of this question. Should one remain as a monastic working on insight development? I mean, you there's more that in the capacity of the three marks of existence. I mean, there's so much more to dam than just doing that. I mean, just dealing with your basic defilements, dealing with your urges and and like your preferences, that kind of thing. Um, I mean, you can use the context or like the the theme of the three marks of existence as a kind of unifying theme to your practice,

but I mean, there's there's so many

so many routes or emphases you can make

depending on where you're at

spiritually.

So let's see if one struggles in

advancing in concentration development.

I mean

it sometimes I'm reminded of there's a

suta I don't remember what suta it is

where it's talking about a certain monk

who he's got like strong defilements you

know he's got lots of loba dosa and moa

and so he's just doing his best with

weeping face just beating his breast you

know just sort of like the the guy in

the Bible dear God please have mercy

upon me a sinner. He's just sort of like enduring this ordeal of self-restraint. And the result of that is when he dies, he doesn't become enlightened, but at least he goes to heaven.

And that's I mean that's in the sutas. It's it's kind of a you know it's it's praised by the Buddha. At least it's it's given as a as like a potential scenario for some monks that I mean, you just not ripe for enlightenment yet. still you just kind of force yourself to follow the rules and be a good monk as good as you can that still there's going to be karmic payoff for that you're at least going to go to heaven.

So I mean it's there's it's so

complicated there's so many you don't
just follow a cookbook method. I mean to
some degree you've got to follow like
your intuition
or if you've got a good wise teacher you
can just follow what your teacher
advises you instead of making these
decisions on your own.
So it's it's I mean it can work just
emphasizing the three marks of existence
but then again I mean it's not the only
possible way of doing it and it's going
to depend on just numerous
variables
and it's it's going to be infinitely
complex situation that it's it's not

just one sizefits-all. It's not just one explanation for how things should be done.

And I'm just going to move on to Uiosis, formerly known as Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb's next question, which is as follows.

You noted in your studies in archaic Buddhism episode on the Saka Pa Suta that you regard it to be a composite suta that to some degree discredits archaic material as corrupted by ancient politics. I understand why you would say this, but I find it hard to believe that there could be teachings that are so potent that they could include things like the perfected mind, like an

eightfaceted gem of digaya 2 or halting the autonomic nervous system. I understand these are doubtful claims to many people also wherein Buddha wisdom is even possible to arrive at organically by sheer willpower. these days.

My question is, if many people have their own signs to the depth of the Buddha's wisdom, like your own experience with malaria in the rain, what reason do we really have to believe that this is a matter of free will and not simply the Buddha being a man fortunate enough to be at a high stage of bonga maturation

that such high strangeness is possible like with human birth being so rare to come by. Who is to say this even has temporal reference on a human scale and isn't just a causal opportunism wherein say stream enterers experienced their last seven lives eons apart and wherein in the past can be traced back for eons things can't be traced forward contrary to Abid Dhama such that the Buddha just knows his dispensation will age in an opportunistic way the world is pretty wild with paranormal phenomena like with your ashtray anecdote. So, it shouldn't be a big deal for Buddhism to have folkloric features to it. I am reminded

of the handful of leaves simile. Sorry, massive question with many threads, lots on my mind. Yeah, this it's it's a massive question that's going all over the place. So, that it's hard to say exactly what the question is. Like about halfway down it was my question is and then it's just continues with with the rambling. I mean, possibly as like a matter of like discipline
that people should try to keep their question down to 50 words or less because I mean when you get into like like a 500word long question or a thousandword long question as a general rule it's more than just one question.

So let's see here. I mean, I did say that the sakapa suta is probably corrupt in that it's got like an archaic central portion and then it's got like a much later beginning and ending kind of like jotica stories.

So yeah, I mean that's that's mainly what I was saying that the central portion of the sakapa suta is like an archaic protoicha samup.

Okay, but this part I understand why you would say this, but I find it hard to believe that there would be teachings that are so potent they could include things like the perfected mind of or halting the autonomic nervous system where in Buddha wisdom is even possible

to arrive at organically by sheer will willpower these days. Yeah, this is it's getting really obscure. My question is, and then he gets to the question, if many people have their own signs to the depths of the Buddha's wisdom,
um what reason do we really have to believe that this is a matter of free will and not simply the Buddha being a man fortunate enough to be at a high stage of bonga maturation? I mean, this is it's just such an unnecessarily obscure way of asking a question. Seriously.
Oh boy. Okay. Well, with regard to banga maturation, I mean, that doesn't even

really make any sense as far as I can tell. Bwanga, according to according to the Abidama philosophy, is just a kind of test pattern in your mind when you're not thinking any anything in particular and it doesn't change over the course of your life.

Um and this free will stuff. I mean the the best I can make of this question is like to what extent should we consider success in dharma to just be like you're just ripe for enlightenment rather than like some person just striving and developing like systematically

and yeah I mean the Buddha was ripe I mean he had his parameies were fulfilled

according to tradition and that's like the main ar the main one of the main statements I get from Burmese people you know about how they've been born into a Burmese culture or Buddhist culture you know they've been Buddhists their entire lives but still me as a westerner I as a westerner could just adopt Buddhism and then start practicing it at a higher level than them they say that's because of your paramy

You know, it's just your past karma. It's not like just anybody can practice dharma and become enlightened. There's no guarantee. And most people just are not ripe for for dharma practice. In

fact, most people couldn't even practice dharma correctly. They would just crack up trying to practice dharma correctly. Even some meditation instructors would crack up if they really were required to practice dharma correctly. they just could not do it.

So I mean it's a largely a matter of are you ripe for enlightenment and it doesn't have to be like obviously like according to the text Angulim Mala who was a serial killer nevertheless had like a mature enough spiritual route that he could become enlightened in that life. If he was converted to Buddhism, converted away from being a spiritual a spiritual

killer, a serial killer,

he became enlightened. So, um it's the

the systematic practice that may be

required to kind of bring your

parameies, your your past mo spiritual

momentum to the surface, something like

that. But free will, I mean, I don't

even necessarily believe that free will

exists. If it does exist in this world,

it's it's a paradox. Like maybe an

inexplicable paradox.

Free will logically is impossible.

And also from the Buddhist point of view

especially when you have no self. Then

what is I mean how can you have free

will with no self? Free will require

some kind of autonomous individual to
have the free will. It would seem to me
that the free will itself would have to
be some kind of autonomous
function which is ruled out in Buddhism.
So
various people just take upon themselves
Buddhist training. Some of them are like
more mature than others and they get
farther with it.
And that's about I mean that's about all
I can say really
because I mean the question is so
obscure that it's really hard to tease
out what actually is is the question. It
seems to me that the the main point of
the question is just does a person

become enlightened just because they're just fortunate and have like the enough karmic
capital to just fall into enlightenment or is it some sort of systematic effort through strength of willpower and so forth and
in the west I think it's more the latter because most westerners who have some sort of awakening experience erience. They they have it accidentally, you know, they have a near-death experience or something that just jolts them out of the some soric rut that they've been in for who knows how long. But it may be that you need some kind of systematic

practice at least to kind of clear your mind and set yourself up for the availability of that whatever it is that happens, the crisis that jolts you out of some sorrow.

And I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is a very short question. This is from Ruie. How much value do you place on ethmology?

And I mean, that's it's kind of an interesting question. How much value do you place on etmology? I mean, I like etmologies. I'm interested in etmology. Sometimes I'll look up etmologies of words and sometimes it can help you to understand the meaning of the word but not always like the word the English

word understanding. I mean literally it means you're standing under something but I mean how does that help you to understand what the word understanding means?

So, um it's it's really interesting like just following uh like Indo-Uropean roots, that kind of thing. That's interesting to me. Like most people wouldn't realize that the word goose in English has the same Indo-Uropean etmology as the word Hamsa in Pali or in Sanskrit, which usually is translated as swan or wild goose. But I'm pretty sure the Hamsa bird is the ruddy shell duck which is like a goose.

So how does Hamsa and goose how are they derived from the same word? Well uh goose the English word goose comes from like the the Germanic word gans like still is found in in like the word gander which is a male goose and from gans to hamsa as it's a lot closer. It's more obvious that way.

So sometimes the etmologies of words can help you to understand the meaning or at least the original meaning of the word but it's not really necessary and uh indulging in fake etmologies like like the commentaries do a lot you know like the word beu

you know it means usually translated as monk or sometimes as like mendicant beu

and it's like the the commentaterial tradition has this weird folk etmology that it's like um it's like ba ead which means one who sees the danger in samsara when really the real etmology of the word beu the more likely etmology anyway is it means beggar beam bead beu bead is is like the verb form of beu and it means to ask for to beg for

bea Pam is another noun form of that same verb which means alms food given to a beggar.

So how much value do I place on it? I mean it's not really necessary to know etmologies except for maybe in a few cases. You want to know what a word

means? Like the word asawa can help you to understand what what asawas mean you know it means like influx influence something that flows in that is becomes like an encumbrance.

It's like sticks to you that kind of thing. I mean it can help you to understand certain things but I mean not necessarily.

So, I mean, it has some value, but it's not like invaluable.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Ethiopian fake TIG. And Ethiopian fake TIG says, after I look at the clock and see, we've been going for over two hours already. Yeah, this is this is going to be a long one.

This is Yeah. Ethiopian fake Tig says, "Daniel Ingram has a book called Mastering the Core Teachings of the Buddha. And in it he explains the stages of insight in a very westernfriendly way. The connotation of the entire thing is that one can start the insight practice and finish it. He himself claims to be an arahant and he has done some form of study to prove that his brain waves are unique to that of a regular person. What are your thoughts on people like him? And do you think just about anyone can complete the stages of insight with just a few years of practice? because that is how

everyone is treating it and claiming
that they have achieved equinimity.
Well, like in my answer to uosis
is not every I mean most people just are
not right for enlightenment that even if
they try to practice correctly, they
won't be able to. It'll just drive them
into some sort of mental breakdown or
meltdown or something.
So, what are my thoughts on Daniel
Ingram?
My best guess with regard to Daniel
Ingram is that he is a sociopath.
That I mean anyone I mean like on his
website I looked at his website years
ago when I was a monk. The like the
homepage of his website the first thing

you see is him bragging and listing off all these attainments. It was with just like becoming fully enlightened was like one of the like the minor ones.

And so I think he's probably a hustster. I mean, he's a clever one and he's got some kind of insight like a lot of like cult leaders have. I mean, you don't become a cult leader just by just being a truck driver and deciding, well, I'm I'm tired of driving trucks. I'm just going to become a cult leader. You have to have like charisma and like a glib way of explaining like difficult subjects, especially spiritual ones that just sound like you're this fountain of

wisdom, when that's not necessarily the case. Like Osho was another one. the Bagwan Shiraj Nish, he'd be kind of the same way. I'm not even sure if the Bagwan himself would would go as far as Daniel Ingram and just brag about how enlightened he is.

The so-called Jed McKenna is another one of these who just brags and brags and brags about how enlightened he is. And anyone like that, I mean, that's red flags.

That's it's like something that according to the text a really enlightened person shouldn't do even though like it was mentioned earlier on the Buddha himself

in the text is continually doing this stuff but I'm skeptical as to whether the Buddha himself really did that kind of stuff.

But I saw uh like a video with Daniel Ingramman. He seems just like this nervous fidgety kind of guy. Not like you'd expect from a fully enlightened being, but that's just my best guess.

So, let's see.

Do I think that just about anyone can complete the stages of insight with just a few years of practice? No, I do not.

Yeah. Okay. So, I guess I answer that question. I'm very skeptical. Um, I'm not just going to like flat out assert

that Daniel Ingram is like a fraud and a
sociopath, but that would kind of be
like a plausible guess based on what
what I know of him,
which isn't very much, I have to admit.
I mean, there have been some of these
enlightened beings like uh Andrew Cohen,
I think was his name, who he was sort of
a Daniel Ingram type. He was declaring
himself to be fully enlightened until
after years of this, he kind of got into
some kind of unsaavory
thing going with a female supporter or
something. And then some of his
supporters were saying, "No, wait.
You're not really enlightened if you're
doing that." And then he actually said,

"Yeah, I guess you're right. I guess I was mistaken." Because you can be mistaken. Even an honest person can believe that they're enlightened or have some attainment. And really, they're just overestimating their own attainment.

So, that's possible, too.

So, it may be that Daniel Ingram isn't a deliberate fraud, but at the same time, he's not fully enlightened either. He just kind of thinks he is. That's a possibility, too. But all the bragging about how enlightened he is is that just seems like a red flag to me.

And I'm just going to move on to

Ethiopian fake Tig's next question which is as follows. While reading Yungian books, I have come across the idea that a coming of age ritual for boys needs to be done for them to mature into men. I have also realized that what keeps men infantilized is this idea that something bad might happen here or there. uninitiated men have high levels of stress hormones like w like women do and don't take the risk and do what's needed to be on their own. What are your thoughts on this and a coming of age ritual for men these days? Well, my coming of age ritual was on my 16th birthday when I got drunk as a skunk and higher than the proverbial Georgia pine

both for the first time in my life and
it just opened up like this whole new
world for me.
But um yeah, I've got a book on the book
is Battle for the Mind by William
Sergeant. That is one of the most
important books I ever read. I recommend
it to anybody even though it was written
back around like 1950 or something.
And he talks about um how
higher vertebrates including humans and
Pavlov's dogs are governed by habit.
We're just kind of locked into habitual
habit habit patterns which are from a
Buddhist point of view karmic. And it
takes some kind of crisis to to knock us

out of this habitual habit pattern. It's like even if that these habit patterns are like dysfunctional and cause us to be unhappy, you know, we can go through life just a miserable mess. So long as it's keeping us, you know, like above water, you know, it's like so long as it's keeping us alive and functioning, it's good enough. And just instinctively, we cling to it. We don't want to let it go until we get into this crisis situation when our habitual way of dealing with reality just isn't working anymore. And then we have like this breakdown. And then we become very open to suggestion. And that is capitalized on by various people. Like

Chinese brainwashing was like this where you just break the person down in this indoctrination camp, you know, through just working them half to death, not giving them enough food, not allowing them enough sleep until they have like a breakdown. And then like the commasar, the the polit the the communist party representative comes in and starts indoctrinating you and you just soak it up like a sponge and become a good communist afterwards.

You know, like 1984, you know, that the ministry of truth or whatever it was.

No, not the Ministry of Truth, but you know, the place where they get sent to

get indoctrinated, you know, room nine
or whatever it was is like that. like um
indoctrination methods of like the
Stalinist Soviet Union was like that
where they get you not only to confess
to trying to overthrow the government
but actually get you to believe that you
were trying to overthrow the government
through the same kind of stuff just lack
of sleep, just horrible conditions.
You're being eaten alive by bed bugs.
You know, you're wearing clothes that
are way too big, so you got to hold your
pants up all the time. And then you're
just like being sent into this you don't
have enough sleep. You're sleepd
deprived. You get sent into this room

where they're just like just hounding you, asking the same questions over and over again. Why did you do it? Why did you do it? This kind of thing until you just have this breakdown actually start believing that you did it. And it turns out like military basic training, you know, like full metal jacket kind of stuff. I mean, that does the same thing. It breaks down this soft, wimpy city guy and he has this kind of crisis and then the drill instructor just reforms him into this fighting machine that will not hesitate to obey an order. Some religious methods like Methodism started off this way where you you trigger this

breakdown by just pounding away at the fact that if you don't repent, you're going to burn in hell forever and ever. And they people just could not argue against it. you know, it was just the 1700s in rural England. I mean, that was just the truth. I mean, you couldn't really argue against it. And so, uh, like John Wesley, they would just pound away at this. If you don't repent of your sins, you're going to burn in hell forever and ever. And then they'd give these fire and brimstone sermons about what it's like to be tortured in hell. And people would just start freaking out. You know, they'd be foaming at the mouth like in convulsions on the floor,

but when they finally come to their senses, they were born again. And that's when you had like the Methodist, you know, the the indoctrinators, you know, like helping them to become good Christians. This sort of thing. And like in tribal societies, the manhood rituals are the same where these kids, they'd get the like the Jesus scared out of them, you know, doing these manhood rituals or just being sent off into a forest alone to survive this kind of stuff. They'd have the crisis and then they'd get reformed into these men worthy of being, you know, warriors of the tribe who will just sacrifice their

life for the benefit of the tribe
without hesitation.
That kind of thing happens has happened
in humanity in various contexts for
since the stone age. And now it is true
that people just do not have these
initiation ceremonies anymore.
these rituals where you go through like
a crisis stage that where then you
become malleable and can be like
indoctrinated.
So let's see what's the actual question
here.
What are your thoughts on this in a
coming of age ritual? Yeah, I mean to
some some degree in the west coming of
age rituals I mean joining the military

where you go through basic training and
you're still in kind of a a tough level
of the military. like in the army now
it's or the navy um it I' I've read
articles about how it's just got totally
wimpy and you're not really doing
anything remotely resembling you know
the recruits in full metal jacket where
you've got the guy threatening to gouge
out your eyeballs and skull [__] you and
this kind of thing.
So,
let's see. What are my thoughts on this
and a coming of age ritual for men these
days? Yeah, the coming of age ritual. I
mean, I I'm unaware of really going

through anything like that until

Well, no. I've I've had my my crisis

like when I was like 16, 17 years old, I

had like a spiritual crisis that um

resulted in significant spiritual

growth.

So,

um, in my case, the the like the coming

of age ceremony was just kind of

spontaneous and just thrust upon me by

circumstance.

Well, I mean, if you could even call it

a coming of age ceremony, not the 16th

birthday, but just like the spiritual

crisis that resulted in my father

sending me to a youth counselor who

happened to be a spiritual guy, giving

me Ram Doss books to read, etc., etc.

Um, I don't know if it's so much the initiation. I mean, the in this kind of initiation, it can have good results or bad results. Turning into a good communist is not necessarily a good result.

So, it can be used for for good or for bad.

Um, I think it's it's more just like a feminized culture. It's not so much the lack of these indoctrinate or these like coming of age ceremonies that it's not necessarily the lack of that that's turning men into

social unics, culturally castrated

social unics. It's just growing up in a feminized society where being masculine is considered to be toxic. It's a problem and men are just sort of like discriminated against for being men.

a real alpha male, I guess, would just like say, "Fuck that. I'm being who I am." But a lot of the, you know, sort of young guys who, I don't know, maybe they just didn't have much of an opportunity for that. You know, they have sort of a beta father,

>> feminized mother, feminist mother, that kind of thing. You know, it's just sort of like a a handicap.

But I mean, being really like just a total animal of a man where you're like

punching holes in walls for no good reason, that kind of thing. That's not good either.

But like athletics was another kind of way of, you know, just being a wrestler or a football player in junior high or high school that could help you to sort of instill you some masculine virtues.

So I really don't think that this kind of

reforming initiation putting you into a state of crisis is necessary, but having um like a culture that promotes um you know masculinity that doesn't demonize masculinity. ancient Sparta. I don't know if the ancient Spartans had

their manhood rituals other than just the toughness of of raising boys and to be fighters, that kind of thing.

So, I think it's more just a culture, a feminized culture is more pernitious than the modern loss of like manhood rituals, that kind of thing, where you got to have these cuts made without flinching. You know, you got to keep like a complete poker face while they're making the cuts in your chest and like putting ashes in so that it'll become like these wel like scars that are like decorations, badges of honor kind of a thing. It's not really necessary to be a man,

but having some kind of culture that

promotes masculine virtues is much more important in my opinion. And I'm just going to move on to

Ethiopian fake Tig's next question.

He says, "There is an ancient Hawaiian practice called hooponopono.

It's a kind of Did I say that right?

Hoopo."

Yeah, it's hoponop po. It's a kind of transcendental meditation type of practice where you repeat the mantra the the he's got mantra the mantra I love you thank you have you ever heard of it and thoughts on transcendental meditation I don't know much about transcendental meditation you know it

was brought to the west by the maharishi

mahash yogi and it was in fashion among

celebrities like the Beatles went to the

Maharishi's ashram and uh it inspired

the song sexy sadi

possibly uh come together.

Um

but I mean the Hawaiian practice of ho

ponop po never heard of it before u

where you repeat the mantra I love you

thank you it reminds me of there's a ram

das book where he wrote about or he he

it's a transcript of his talks I think

but he was talking about uh some Tibetan

llama came up with a mantra to help

Tibetan people understand the western

mind and it was this mantra of like

please please sorry thank you please

please please sorry thank you you just

keep doing this and it helps you to get

insight into what it's like to be a

westerner

that's what it reminds me of because it

obviously doesn't remind me of any

transcendental meditation

p practiced by ancient Hawaiians who are

cannibals I mean it didn't make them all

that saintly apparently

because they were still practicing

ritual cannibalism although I guess

Catholics practice ritual cannibalism to

at their secret ceremonies.

So yeah, I mean doing just doing

meditating on the mantra I love you, thank you. I mean it might work for some people. It might help. It might make you be a more like benevolent or empathetic sort of person possibly. I mean you could try it and see what it does. See what the effects are.

But I really don't know that much about transcendental meditation. It was a big deal back in the late60s though.

So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Sedarta Lohachita.

And Sedarta Lohachita says, "Do you know if there is any equivalent in an old European language to the word dharma?"

Well, if you wanted to find an

equivalent in an old European language
to the word dharma, your best bet would
probably be Lithuanian.
look up like some equivalent to the word
dharma in Lithuanian,
you know, maybe it would have the same
etmology as Dharma. Um, that might be
your best bet because Lithuanian is is
very um conservative Indo-Uropean
language and it comes very close in many
respects to Indic languages like Poly
and Sanskrit. It's it's remarkable how
close to Poly and Sanskrit Lithuanian
can be at times.
Um but the word dharma is just a weird
word like in Pali it's dharma and it is

like a noun form of the verb d which

means to bear to hold up and

before the Buddhist time it came to mean

law like law is what holds up society I

guess

um and then it came to mean like

philosophy

also it has the meaning of anything

ultimately real, not just uh some

ephemeral phenomenon that is just

relatively real, but anything. I mean,

it could just mean anything.

Like in the first verse of the tamapata,

it apparently means just things.

Um but it in the commentarial tradition

it's interpreted to mean mental states

like in the first verse of the dhamapata

which then the commentator Buddha Gos has to explain why the dharmapata would say that that consciousness precedes mental states when really they're simultaneous.

But we don't have to go there although we already did.

So I mean there is no equivalent in in English to the word dharma or dharma because dharma or dharma has so many meanings. You know it can mean philosophy. It can mean law. It can mean something that's ultimately real. It can mean mental states. It probably can mean a bunch of other things I'm just not thinking of right now.

But um if there is any equivalent in an old European language or the closest you're going to get to an equivalent for for a word that has so many different meanings just there are like conditioned by ancient like Indo-arian culture then I would I would go with try Lithuanian. If you don't find it in Lithuanian there's a good chance there just isn't one.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Tzasiz and uh I do hope this this Q&A doesn't turn into four hours. I just saying Tzas says, "Do you think it is possible to predict lottery numbers?" I don't see why not. Anything imaginable is

possible.

So, yeah, it's possible. Sure. Why wouldn't it be possible to predict lottery numbers?

It would be kind of liinal. I mean, if anyone consistently predicted lottery numbers, then in a way, you'd be sort of creating like a like a tension spot in the matrix,

which could then cause the matrix to to crash or something if it got too extreme.

But yeah, it's definitely possible. I don't see I don't see why it wouldn't be possible. And I'm just going to move on to Trz because this is the next

question. What is it with all these fortune teller monks in terraada? Well, it's sort of like I was saying earlier that most Asian monks really are not striving for enlightenment.

And so in Burma,

uh there are a lot of fortune teller monks. Also, there are a lot of alchemist monks. Also, there are a lot of just, you know, astronaut monks who are just taking up space. I mean, there's like in in the Zen, they'd be called uh clothes hangers and rice bags because, you know, all they're good for is just to hang clothes on and to put rice into.

Um, so yeah, I remember reading

back when I was a monk about the Thai forest tradition in Ajan man, how like over a hundred years ago in Thailand, there was almost no forest tradition at all. There were almost no monks who are really striving for enlightenment. Like in Sri Lanka, even nowadays, there are a lot of monks who think there's there's just no more enlightenment in this world. There's no point even trying. Just be a scholar. Just memorize the the the texts and just preserve the text by memorizing them and learning, you know, the ex Jesus and all and that's that's the best you can do.

So in uh like Ajan man's time that

people just were not used to monks that actually practiced monks were like secular clergy and a lot were fortune tellers. A lot were like herbal healers. There's there's some herbal healer monks in Burma too. Tangidon had his own line of herbal medicines. But if you you'd read what he would say about health, you'd realize that I mean he didn't know. You know, I remember reading some of the stuff of Tanji Doniato that he's saying like for for the teeth white things are best, but the best white thing for the teeth is salt. For general health, bitter things are best, but the best bitter things for general health are neem fruits and neem leaves.

You know, this this was like his health advice to people like bitter things in general. I mean, most natural occurring poisons are bitter, but we don't need to go there even though we already did.
So, fortune teller monks in Terravada.
Yeah, fortune teller monks and teachers, you know, teaching grade schools, you know, that kind of thing. That was that was a big thing. Like in in Burmese, the word Jon means monastery and school because traditionally
you just kids would get like up to like a fourth grade education just going to the monastery and the monks would be teaching them how to read and write and

do arithmetic.

So there's that. There's herbal herbal healers. There's alchemists who I mean there's supposedly a number of monks in Burma who can transmute base metals into gold even though you don't see large piles of gold around in Burma.

So it's it's largely just a traditional thing. It's a kind of an esoteric thing that you kind of it's kind of mysterious and exalted that that monks can kind of practice and you know ignorant villagers don't know any better and just assume that's what they're supposed to be doing that kind of thing. Palm readers, astrologers, that kind of thing. It's pretty common. And one of the main

reasons is that Dharma has become

corrupt and most monks just aren't monks

because they want to strive for

enlightenment in this very life. they

just you know for whatever reasons

various reasons why uh like some Burmese

villager will become a monk

and desire for enlightenment isn't it

probably isn't in the top 10 of the most

common reasons

not in the top three definitely

so it's just the way it is and I'm going

to move on to Trasaziz's third question

what about a new video with auto

excelsia your Yeah, it's that's

possible. New videos with Brian probably

going to happen. Possibly even new videos with Ajan Punadamo.

So yeah, it's possible. It's just that I'm lazy. I work for a living. I work hard even though I'm lazy. So on weekends when I don't have to work, I tend to be lazy.

But if he comes up with a good idea for us to talk about, strangely the the most one of the most popular videos I have on YouTube is Otto and me talking about um esoteric Hitlerism of all things from a more or less Buddhist perspective.

So yeah, it'll it's it's probably going to happen. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. And we're getting close to the bottom here. I don't think

this this probably won't even be three hours. So, we're doing all right.

See here. Next question is from Xenithoid.

And Xenithoid says, "What do you make of Carl Jung's quote? For a tree to reach up to heaven, its roots must reach down to hell." In the context of Buddhism, I think this may be true and that one will have to have their dark night of the soul. But to achieve full enlightenment, anything unpure must be erased completely. In many sutras, the Buddha says, "Tatna must be cut off at the roots." Well, one thing that I mean, this quote from Yung, for a tree to

reach up to heaven, its roots, its roots must reach down to hell reminds me of William Blakes's the marriage of heaven to heaven and hell, which was like my bible as as a high school student. that and the madman by uh Khalil Jibron.

Those were like my two Bibles. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell by William Blake and The Mad Man by Khil Jibron.

Those were like my two Bibles when I was like 17 years old.

And The Marriage of Heaven and Hell points out that you can't just have good without bad.

I mean, it's a dichotomy. You good and bad have to balance out.

Heaven and hell. You can't have one

without the other.

But with regard to Buddhism, I mean, yeah, it's it's this it's that way in Buddhism, too. I mean, they don't really emphasize it, but it's like good and evil have to both be abolished by a biku who's striving for enlightenment. You don't want bad karma. You don't want good karma either. Karma is for lay people. So the monk has to abandon good and evil. The whole duality of good and bad. The wise monk just dismisses them.

So let's see.

To achieve full enlightenment, anything impure must be erased completely.

Anything pure must be erased completely.

I mean, you just don't even go there.
You're not wallowing in this samsaric
dualism of good and evil.
So, Dowoism really puts more of an
emphasis on this, but in Buddhism also,
it's like uh the wise monk, I mean, he's
not trying to do good any more than he's
trying to do evil.
I mean, you just transcend the duality
of it.
But if you're going to have heaven,
you're going to have hell. I mean,
you're going to have plus, you're going
to have minus. You're going to have
good, you're going to have bad. You're
going to have if you have beautiful,
you're going to have ugly. So long as

you're dealing in that samsaric dualistic way of of perceiving things. Like I've said before in accordance with my principle of subjective equilibrium that if a person somehow managed to eliminate all of what he considers to be bad in his life, one of two things is going to happen. either a whole bunch of new bad stuff is going to have to take the place of the old bad stuff or the line differentiating good and bad is going to shift so that the lower half of what he used to call good now becomes bad.

So

I do think Carl Young's quote is correct

in in like a samsaric dualistic context. For a tree to reach up to heaven, its roots must reach down to hell. Yeah, I can I can I can live with that.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Daario, and he's the last questioner of this Q&A. And I almost always get taken by surprise because for some reason the little bar on the side that shows how far down you are. It it somehow messes up and and it it just doesn't work right. So that it's like I'm halfway down. The little bar thing is like halfway down the document and all of a sudden boom, I'm at the the last question even though there's not a lot

of empty space below the last question.
Anyways, Daario says, "What is your
position on Zen Buddhism?" Not the
westernized and liberal form or or this
this form. See, look at his head's
little head's bobbling.
But uh okay, I I let's just start the
question over again. The bobble-headed
monk distracted me
ever so briefly. What is your position
on Zen Buddhism? Not the westernized and
liberal form, but the actual teachings
of Bodhi Dharma and the sects that pay
more respect to the original teachings
of the Buddha and more importantly, do
you think that Zen Buddhism can be a

path to enlightenment and Nirvana? Well, I guess that's two questions, isn't it? Let's just separate them and I'll deal with the first question first. What is my position on Zen Buddhism? Well, I have said before I was converted to Terravada, my intention was to become a Stoz Zen monk. My original plan after I decided to become a monk was to become a Zen monk. And

part of the reason for that is that I thought Zen Buddhism was like Zen Buddhism in the books where you've got these mysterious men wearing black standing around speaking in riddles and hitting each other with sticks. And I mean I could I could relate to that. I

mean, I could that just seemed like attractive to me as an option, like a career option to be a man dressed in black, very enigmatic, just talking in riddles and and beating people with sticks. I mean, it really seemed like, you know, a worthwhile way of spending one's life. And then I went to an actual Zen monastery and I found out it wasn't like that at all. Nobody would dare to hit anybody with a stick at that monastery. And it was lots of pure land Buddhism was mixed in. And I was told that in Zen Buddhism that for some reason traditional Zen Buddhism has just absorbed lots of pure land Buddhism

which I've never had any use at all for pure land Buddhism. Zen Buddhism like in the in the books like in the the Coons, the the Blue Cliff record or the Mumon Khan, that kind of thing. I really like that. I was really drawn to that. I really like the

um sort of the disorientation of coons, you know, it's sort of like trying to break through the intellectual process and which is, you know, samsara essentially.

So yeah, I do think that Zen Buddhism does have a just remove the pure land elements which I got no use for and just some of the

like even even if you dismiss the pure

land elements, there's still a lot of weird like later Mahayana philosophy and cosmology and mythologies like Vrochina, you know, there's a lot of mention of Vrochina in in like Zen texts. There's no mention at all in in terra you know it's just like a later thing like these bodhic sattvas and all this you know the mahayana elements in zen also I really don't have much use for but zen as just iconoclastic

and don't rely on dogmas you know you meet the Buddha in the road kill him that kind of stuff um and just the the coons you know like um there was uh there's One coan I really like Joe Joza.

This he's an obscure I mean he's pretty much known only from this one [__] There was this monk named Joe Joza. At least that's the Japanese version of his Chinese name. And he asked possibly Renzai. He asked some Zen master, you know, what is the what is the essence of the teachings of Buddha? And the the Zen master just like comes up to him, grabs him and just like shoves him.

And Joe Joseph stood still. You know, he's just kind of confused. He doesn't know what to do. And so another monk who who witnessed this says, "Joe Joa, Joe Joseph, why don't you bow?" So Joe Joseph gets down and starts bowing. And while he's bowing, he becomes

enlightened

and that kind of thing. I mean, it's

interesting to me because there's

obviously some meaning to it, even

though it's like this paradoxical non

really not rational or logical really,

but it it kind of makes sense to me.

You know, a lot of a lot of coons are

like that. I mean, it makes sense

without making sense, sort of, which is

a zen-like

thing to say, I guess. So, Zen Buddhism,

I've I've liked Zen Buddhism. I don't

like the pure land elements. I'm not

particularly fond of of the Mahayana

elements. The emphasis on bodhic sattvas

over like arahans that kind of thing that just becoming fully enlightened just somehow isn't good enough. That's clearly not what god Buddha was teaching but u and also eating bamboo shoots. I really do not like bamboo shoots and they eat lots of bamboo shoots at Zen monasteries or so I have read. So I wouldn't like that very much. But yeah, it's just sort of the austerity and the simplicity of Zen with or without the coons. I mean, you soden doesn't do much [__] stuff, you know? It's it's just more like shikant taza or just sort of um a kind of meditation that I was doing. I used to call it second gear where you're just watching the mind

intently just observing you know just trying to catch anything as it arises trying to catch any thought just as it begins to arise that kind of thing. But the the one mon the Zen monastery I went to in California, it just kind of cured me of any desire to become a Zen monk. And then I went to a Terravada place after that and it just seemed pretty obvious to me that the Terravada monastery came closer to what the Buddha originally taught than the the Zen place I went to. There's just way too many like ceremonies and chanting and bowing and all this that I've really never been into ceremonies. Um, in terra Buddhism,

there are ceremonies, but there's always a reason for the ceremony instead of just like gratuitous bowing to doorways and that kind of thing.

So, yeah, Zen Buddhism would be my second choice after Terravada, I guess, of of the extent schools of Buddhism in existence. And it was originally my intention to become a STO Zen monk until I got more experience with like Zen as it actually is not in the books but as it actually is and or at least as it actually is in America and Terravada Buddhism. So Terravada Buddhism came seems pretty obvious to come closer to what the Buddha originally taught especially if you're reading books like

the Sutin Pa.

So let's see. Did I answer the question yet? What is your position on Zen Buddhism? Yeah, I guess I gave my position on Zen Buddhism. So um secondly, Dario says or Daario. And more importantly, do you think that Zen Buddhism can be a path to enlightenment and Nirvana? Yeah, I think that they're probably assuming that anybody becomes enlightened in this world, in this samsaric environment. Just assuming for the sake of argument that anybody has become fully enlightened. I see no reason why a lot of the Zen masters that you read about um I see no reason why

they would not be fully enlightened.
And sometimes you come across a
statement like in the the platform sutra
of Hui Ning which I guess is is now
considered to be like a forgery not
really u taught by Hui Ning. But in this
platform sutra of hu nang there is this
statement that really made an impression
on me that is I mean when you become
enlightened you look around and you
notice that everybody else is is also
enlightened you know it's like you look
through the world with enlightened eyes
you see enlightenment you see nibbana
which kind of reminds me of St. Paul
Paul of Tarsus in the New Testament
saying to the pure man all things are

pure.

So there there's some insight. It seems like a statement like that may have been based on actual experience of some Zen master even if it wasn't Hui Nang himself.

So yeah, I mean Zen Buddhism can be a path to enlightenment and Nirvana. I think Hinduism, some some types of Hinduism can be a path to enlightenment nirvana. I think St. John of the Cross who was a Catholic, a Roman Catholic Christian. I think he may have been enlightened.

It's possible. I mean, sometimes people are just ripe and so they can somehow

manage to become enlightened
in spite of their culture or in spite or
largely in spite of their religion. Some
of the some of the doctrines of Roman
Catholicism are not really like
conducive to enlightenment. Like the
idea that no one is worthy, you know,
it's only the grace of God that's going
to get you into heaven. That kind of
thing. I mean, that just sort of implies
that nobody's going to be perfected. You
know, Jesus himself denies being good in
the New Testament. Somebody calls him
like good teacher or something. And
Jesus says, "Why do you call me good?
There's none good except God." which
seems to imply I mean not only that

Jesus was denying being good or God but he he was denying that anyone is perfect including himself

but then along comes St. John of the cross who is the the the mystical doctor of the Catholic Church. Anything he says on the topic of mysticism is considered to be official dogma of the Catholic Church. He's saying that you can that there is the stage of perfection that an adept at high contemplation can reach this stage of perfection where their self-will is mortified. They no longer have any self-will. They no longer have any china using poly terminology and so they become just this instrument of God

an instrument of divinity. They're like
God's puppet
and I mean St. St. John of the Cross was
apparently teaching this based on his
own insight, his own experience. And
this comes very close to like the
Buddhist Ara who is making generating no
will because he's not generating any
karma and karma is will.
Although from the Buddhist point of
view, you don't say that you're just a
like a puppet of God that you're no
longer acting on your own will that
you're acting or that you're acting on
divine will. I mean they don't really
have that
to to fall back on as a kind of theory

to explain the reality in Buddhism. So I mean in terra or the the commentarial tradition or or uh abidama they have to come up with karaachita which is some way of explaining how an enlightened monk an enlightened being still functions without generating any any volition
without having any will.
So anyways getting back to the to Daario's question here do you think that Zen Buddhism can be a path to enlightenment and nirvana? Yeah, I do. Um, especially if you're following like the oldfashioned kind of zen, you know, like Joe,

that kind of thing.

Um, but then again, I mean, being a discussed caralite like St. John of the Quran, St. John of the cross could be a path to enlightenment in Nirvana being a vdantist Hindu, a shyite Hindu like Ramanamahari,

a Vishnavite Hindu like Nim Karoli Baba. Yeah. Or I mean for some people I mean it's like you don't even have to be religious. you just have like this store of of like karmic momentum or or just wisdom

from past lives presumably and then you have like a near-death experience or some such and it just jolts you into into a state of higher consciousness.

So yeah, I do think that Zen can be a path to enlightenment and nervana. That's I could have just answered that whole question with just yes, but then you miss out on all the extraneous verbiage and we're done. That's it. I'm done.

Which is good because the the beverage is pretty much empty. So, like I should always say at the beginning and practically never do. If you have any questions you think I can answer, especially with regard to like dharma, early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism, just dharma in general, philosophy, that kind of thing. Um, feel free to ask. I can't

absolutely guarantee that I'll be able to answer the question, but and especially I can't guarantee that I'll answer it to your satisfaction, but I'll give it a shot anyway.

And uh like and subscribe if you like or have liked at least parts of what I have said.

And uh oh, let's see what else. Be sure to check out the URL links below the video.

Um, and that's it. Yeah, be happy and stuff.

And I'm going to turn her off now.

What I'm going to do

Okay. Alrighty then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 173.

I am your host Ponyo Bosa. And I've got

to rearrange some stuff on the computer

screen here. Oh, and I forgot to

increase the size of the H increase the

size of the font so I'm not like

squinting at it totally

like this.

Okay.

Not exactly on the ball right now.

[clears throat]

Okay.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 173. I your host Po Bossan. Yes

indeed. 173 is a prime number. The only two positive integers that multiply together to produce 173 are 1* 173.
This is my beverage. And this is kind of an exciting change of pace.
I mean, this could go down in Q&A history because this is the first time my designated beverage for this show is hot cocoa
because we're getting into that time of season. You know, there's like fake Christmas trees and stuff behind me now. It's winter time. It's getting down below zero here in the deep south, which is just kind of weird. I come from the Pacific Northwest, way farther north than here, and it doesn't freeze as much

in the winter time there, just because
of prevailing westerlys and so forth.
Wind coming up off the uh [snorts] off
the ocean instead of off the land mass.
So, let's see here. [sighs]
I guess uh I covered the prime number
issue, the hot cocoa issue. So, let's
just dive right into this. And the first
question, oh, by the way, it's it's not
going to be extremely long one. So, you
don't have to go make sure you have to
pee or anything before before watching
this because it'd probably be two hours
or less. You can go pee anyway. Just
pause it or something. We're not going
to wait for you. So

anyways, first question is from Romeo and Romeo says, "Working in the mental health field, I find that wellness trends with their roots in Eastern spirituality frequently become all the rage. Mindfulness from Buddhism of course is still very popular, but the latest trend to catch on are various breathing techniques which are collect which they collectively refer to as breath work.

After a little digging, I found that breath work is just the modern western iteration of pranayyama.

The ancient Hindu tradition involving various techniques of breath control.

What do you know of pranayyama breathing

techniques, their history, benefits,

etc.

Well,

I do know that according to the legend

of the Buddha's

like quest for enlightenment before he

became the Buddha that he did practice

pranayyama like holding his breath so

that I mean for very long periods of

time or breathing so slowly that like

the davas couldn't tell if he was

breathing or not that kind of thing and

that was one of those things that the

Buddha

decided just wasn't helping. And so,

Terravada Buddhism anyway, I don't know

of any Buddhist school that really
practices pranayyama in an orthodox or
orthoprax manner. Um, yeah, terraata
Buddhism just does not do pranayyama or
breath control. You're supposed to
breathe naturally. There are a few sort
of heterodox or heteropra
teachers out there within terra like t
venerable tangidon. I don't know if he's
still alive or not,
but I attended one of his retreats
at [clears throat] uh what eiad
dewa guru j in in the old city of Pagan.
And uh
he part of his breathing in or his his
like
mindfulness [snorts] of breath

mindfulness of breathing instructions in the Tanjidon method is breathe a little harder than usual. And the reason he gives is that if you breathe a little harder than usual then you have to use more mental application to attend to the breath. you know, it's slightly artificial

so that you have to like you you like have to attend to it and deliberately keep it going. Sort of like M. That's one good thing about M is I mean it requires a certain like like volitional effort to keep it going unlike just regular breathing because you can be unconscious you know or at least in a

deep sleep or a coma or something and still be breathing you know you can just your mind can just completely wander away from the breath and you don't even notice it because your mind just wandered away

so what happened at Tangidon Seattle's retreats and his some of his senior disciples you know like veteran tangidon meditators. They were breathing about as fast as they possibly could. They were essentially hyperventilating

and then people would just start popping off like howling like dogs or laughing uncontrollably or crying uncontrollably or just yelling this kind of stuff. And Tang Doniato, bless his heart, in his

innocence, I suppose, was calling that PT, which is one of the the seven factors of enlightenment.

But it seemed to me that it was hyperventilation that they were just getting drunk on oxygen.

So, let's see here. I told I told the Seattle that and he was just kind of sort of grinning in amusement. It's like, ah, these these western barbarians, the strange ideas they get. You breathe as hard as you possibly can so that the meditation hall sounds like a textile mill. Just chug a chug a chug a chug. All these people just essentially panting as hard as they can

and then they're like dogs unlike other meditation retreats I went to.
So almost needless to say I didn't last very long at that tang meditation retreat. It just seemed like a I [snorts] don't know just a funny farm or something. And what was even worse is that one of his senior disciples who was who who was a rich man who donated the the monastery which is probably pretty expensive inside the city of of Pagan, the ancient capital of Burma. when someone would start like acting weird like laughing uncontrollably or know flopping around this kind of stuff, he'd be right there with a video camera and it was like not only did I not want to

start howling like a dog, but I did not want to be howling like a dog on the 6:00 news in Burma because of this guy filming me while I was doing it. So, it really kind of handicapped my practice, [clears throat]
so to speak.
So in in terabata Buddhism as far as I know there is no orthodox teachings of pranayyama. It's not one of the 40 methods that are traditionally taught like in the wisudi maga. It's just not there. Just mindfulness of breathing is there which is like one of the main meditation techniques in terab Buddhism but

it's you breathe normally and as you get into deeper and deeper meditation you require less oxygen apparently and so you your breathing becomes more and more subtle until some people they'll get to the point where they can't really even note the breathing anymore because it's so subtle. it's it's not registering enough sensation for them to really perceive it easily.

So I mean it's sort of spontaneous natural kind of breath reduction as you get into deeper and deeper meditative states when you become just less and less your your metabolism just kind of kind of gets a lot less let's say.

So let's see what do I know of pranayyama breathing techniques their history benefits etc. Um, from the Buddhist point of view, there is not enough benefit really to warrant practicing it because I mean just the Buddha in his his eclectic experimentation before his enlightenment, you know, he tried it, you know, he mastered it and it just didn't get him enlightened. So, he moved on to something else. So pranayyama I'm pretty sure is mainly a yoga thing which started off as sananka a nonvidic philosophy in the same sort of shramana fold as Buddhism

and Janism and the extinct ajivacism

um and then it got at least some of the

the followers of capital Yoga

um decided to join the the protohindus

declare the vadas is authoritative and

so it's now called yoga even though its

origins were outside of of vadism

and they probably are the ones who are

mainly doing breath control. That's my

guess. I'm no expert on it. I've never

really practiced breath control other

than like as a teenager just kind of

experimenting with stuff. You read about

something in a Ram dos book so you try

it that kind of thing.

Um [clears throat]

there has been breath work going on for

quite a while though. Um,

[clears throat] I mean it's it's

different from what Romeo here is

describing, but I remember reading like

back in the 1990s, I think that a

certain Stan Grath at the Eselin

Institute was using so-called breath

work, but for him it was kind of like

the Tangon method where you were just

hyperventilating essentially in order to

induce altered states of consciousness.

He switched over to breath work after

LSD and other psychedelics were outlawed

in America. So it was like a substitute

for psychedelics in his case.

So [sighs]

yeah, I would guess that the history I
mean in the text the Buddha himself
before he became the Buddha was trying
it. You know presumably he mastered it.
You know he got to the point where he
was almost not breathing anymore.
Um
but and it's just not really a terra
Buddhist thing and I'm not you know I'm
no authority on it but probably it's
origins go back into probably
prehistoric times
which I mean isn't super early in India
because history in India wasn't really
recorded. I mean you've got the rig vda
is the earliest
uh Indian document. Some of it is so

early that apparently it was composed
before the Indo-Aryans made it into what
in ancient times anyway was considered
to be India [snorts]
which might now just be Pakistan.
[clears throat]
So let's see the benefits of pranayyama.
Um I'm really not sure. Or I mean if
you're like forcibly reducing your
breath it could sort of have the
converse of like natural breathing in
terra mindfulness of breathing where
[clears throat] when your concentration
gets deep enough you just breathe less.
So it may be the other way around that
the yogis are just breathing less as a

way of increasing the concentration because you know you less oxygen to your brain and so less energy to your brain which would then be a kind of samata method I suppose.

Um aside from that I'm not sure what the benefits of pranayyama would be. It can be dangerous. I have come across warnings that pranayyama without a qualified teacher, you know, you're like I mean too much oxygen deprivation to your brain can cause brain damage, stuff like that. So yeah, it is kind of an esoteric thing. It's sort of like condundalini meditation where if you don't have like a skilled guide, you're better off not just trying it from a

book or a YouTube video.

And I'm really not sure what Romeo is referring to with regard to like the this the newest, you know, esoteric eastern health fad that is this being such a big deal. Um I mean it could be just a way of like causing greater calmness, reducing stress, something like that. But

>> yeah, it is true that mindfulness really has just it's it's one aspect of Terravata Buddhism that has just gone mainstream in western culture because a lot of hospitals for example are teaching mindfulness. Lots of just big corporations are teaching mindfulness

like I think Google and places like that where you know we're teaching mindfulness practices to their employees mainly as a way of improving morale and improving
like productivity and reducing sick time which is just makes more profits for the company.
But in hospitals they will teach a kind of secularized mindfulness to people dealing with chronic pain you know like burn victims or so forth. Also people dealing with like the potentiality of imminent decease you know like people with advanced cancer and that sort of thing. They get taught mindfulness techniques a lot nowadays in hospitals

that are not run by Buddhists. is just

it's just sort of like a

[clears throat] what's the word eclectic

you know sort of like the ancient Romans

where if they came across anything that

worked really well especially along the

lines of like the military they would

adopt it and you know the west is

[clears throat] um is kind of famous for

that too. We're very eclectic and are

willing to absorb elements of other

cultures if it happens to work. if it

happens to to be beneficial, why the

hell not? Which is fine.

[snorts and clears throat]

[sighs]

So, I guess I've pretty much exhausted
my knowledge of pranayyama
with this answer. So, I'm going to move
on to Romeo's second question, and this
is all regarding pranayyama. He says,
"Do you have any personal experience
with any specific pranayyama medit
breathing techniques that you can
recommend as particularly beneficial?"
And no, the only personal experience
with specific pranayyama breathing
techniques or the the thing that comes
closest to it aside from maybe a few
experiments as like a 17-year-old
would be the Tangidon method. And it
just was not for me. It was in a way
just like conjuring up fake PT or like

exhilaration enthusiasm through

hyperventilation.

So [sighs]

let's see. I guess I answered that one

easily off because I already answered

that in response to the first question.

So the third question from Romeo is did

the Buddha personally use or recommend

any breathing techniques outside of

breath meditation? And yeah, I've

already I pretty much answered all three

of Romeo's questions in my meandering

answer to the first question that the

Buddha before his enlightenment

experimented with advanced pranayyama so

that his breathing pretty much stopped.

Not just spontaneous when you hit fourth Janna supposedly your breathing almost stops like you're a hibernating squirrel but with pranayyama it's more of a deliberate conscious
like effort or technique to slow down your breathing.
And so the Buddha was experimenting with that before his enlightenment and came to the conclusion that it was not really helpful in that regard. And so he dismissed it and it's just not part of terra Buddhism.
So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Newman and Newman says, "How common were parasites and diseases in daily life in Burma? How did

you avoid them?" Well, you can't completely avoid them in some place like Burma. you're living, you know, just out in some forest in rural Burma surrounded by people with very rudimentary concept of like general hygiene. I mean, they would bathe, the women would bathe with clothes on, like an adult Burmese female traditionally is never all the way naked. They have this way of they they got like a bathing serong. They put that over the top of their regular clothes. They shuck out of the regular clothes, take a bath with the bathing sarong on, and then they do the like a similar thing. They put the clothes on and then

kind of shuck the bathing song out so that they're never all the way unclothed.

Um, but aside from that, they just really don't have much idea of like germ theory, you know? It's just never really made it into the mainstream of traditional Burmese village culture. just the idea of microbes, pathogenic microbes, that kind of thing. They don't really think about that sort of thing.

So, anyways, parasites, the main, well, I mean, you've got different kinds of parasites. You've got internal ones and external ones. The internal ones were mainly like intestinal worms, pinw worms, that was very common in Burma.

Probably most of the people in Burmese villages have pinworms pretty frequently, including monks who are depending for alms on these people. And [clears throat] I remember there was this this Korean monk who was living at Tom um [snorts] Tomulu Chela. It's one of a very rough like aesthetic kind of monastery that I that I was staying at. And he used to be like a professional dancer and he was afraid of geckos. He was afraid of any kind of snakes, even like the harmless little palm snakes, you know. He just he just was not cut out for living in this really rough kind of desert monastery. And he was just

freaking out the first time he noticed that he had pin worms. You know, it's like you notice what came out of the back end and it's got like little white worms wriggling in it and he was just totally freaking out. But uh as a general rule, a western monk especially always should carry a first aid kit when he is living in the tropics in a forest. you know, not in a city where you got easy access to doctors and so forth, but have a pretty welle equipped first aid kit like two different kinds of antibiotics, you know, like tetracycan and then something like, you know, uh what would be just a more broadspectctrum kind of antibiotic. You

always have to have malaria pills. I mean, if I didn't have malaria pills, I'd be dead several times over now. Um, and you should always have some dewormer because you're [clears throat] going to get pinw worms if you live out in a Burmese forest. It's just the way it goes.

So, yeah, just a dewormer that I had a doctor advise me to take a dewormer like twice a year just in case because it's so easy to pick up intestinal worms when you're living in Burma, especially out in a forest area. But even if you're just relying on like manual laborers and so forth in the cities for your alms,

still you can get pinworms pretty easily. Um, and that's my experience. Like even in Rangon, I mean, you're relying more on like the servants and so forth than you are on the rich people. Like the rich people, they're living in a great big house with like this big closed gate and you stand out front of the closed gate and nobody sees you. And then you move on until you get into some little squalid ghetto kind of environment where a lot of the manual laborers and the you know some of the servants and so forth are living and then you know they're living like in a village you know there's the front door is wide open that everybody sees you

know who's standing out in front and everything. So

still you you you get the dewormer and you just keep it in your first aid kit and maybe take it twice a year. There was one kind of dewormer that was from India that I kind of liked. It had a warning on it. You may have strange dreams when you take this and it did. It just caused these really weird surreal kind of dreams.

With regard to external parasites, I mean you that's like a a whole book worth of information on those. There's like mosquitoes and bed bugs would be two of the main ones. Fleas.

[snorts] Uh also like sand flies, horse flies. I mean those are all parasites [clears throat]

and uh

like u bed bugs. I'd never seen a bed bug before I went to Burma. And so I got my my cave was got infested with them. And I I thought they were like baby cockroaches. I was like looking in the little garbage pot seeing if there's anything the cockroaches were eating and multiplying with. And then one day, one of these [clears throat]

bed bugs audaciously is just walking right across this book I was reading. And so instead of blowing it off, I just kind of flicked it off like this and it

popped and splattered bright red blood onto the book. I think I still have the book back there.

And I have a degree in biology and I know that insects don't have bright red blood, but that I do. And so then I knew, oh, it's bed bugs, some kind of parasitic bugs. I just came to the conclusion it must be bed bugs and it was it was a [__] getting rid of them especially as a monk when you're not supposed to be killing anything. So I was like taking everything out. They like the inside of hardbound books like inside the spine. They would lay their eggs inside the spine or they would just

hide there. They like hiding in crevices during the day. I was just taking everything out. You can take your mats and put them out in the sun. That kind of thing. and then everything else. I just take it out and inspect it and blow any bed bugs off of it and then bring it back in again. It that went on that ritual went on for like two weeks.

It sucked. Also, living in the forest, there's like ticks. They say you're not if a tick bites you, you're not supposed to just pull it off cuz the head can break off under the skin and it can get worse and stuff. But I just pull it right off. But I guess what happened was the head must have broken off underneath

the skin or something because it got
worse for like 2 weeks more and more
painful, more inflamed, and then finally
it it kind of disappeared. [snorts]
So I mean mosquitoes there's not much
you know like especially as a monk
you're not even allowed to slap
mosquitoes.
So,
but then that that leads to disease and
of course the main dangerous disease you
can get in Burma is malaria which is
caused by the bite of mosquitoes. So
those two go hand in hand and that's one
of the things you have to have in your
first aid kit if you're going to be like

a forest monk in Burma or probably other tropical Asian countries. Anti antimmalaria medicine.

Uh I also had one kind of hepatitis A. One doctor diagnosed it as amiebic hepatitis where dysentery amiebas had invaded my liver. Another doctor said it was probably just something I ate which is I I guess that that was it because I didn't notice that I even had dysentery. Dysentery is another one. Strangely I never had dysentery.

[clears throat and sighs]

Never had uh chalera. I remember there was one Australian monk who sometimes would talk about the time when he had malaria, chalera, and TB all at the same

time. He said he spent the entire rainy season on his back.

And with with malaria like um the main uh the main medications for malaria at least when I was living in Burma were based on oh what is it? quinine or quin quinine.

I'll call it quinine because I'm American. And it's I mean some of those medications the symptoms are almost as bad as the disease. I mean it's just you're just out of it, you know? It's just like weird like kind of nausea and just sort of like dizziness and ringing in your ears and just it's it's not good.

Um fortunately I never had chalera. Um, although I had gardiasis once just from drinking like unfiltered [clears throat] creek water just way the hell out in the sticks. This was up on the Chinduin River like halfway up the Chinduin River. I was drinking just creek water appar and apparently that's how I got gardiasis.

But uh that's another thing like metroniditool another kind of pill that you should keep in your first aid kit if you're a forest dwelling western monk in tropical Asia because that takes out let's see metroniditool takes out um what does it take out takes out gardasis I think it takes out amiic dysentery and

also there's tchamonasis or something

like that that I've never had and never

don't have any experience

But it's it's like an anti-protoonean,

not not like a antibacteria thing like

like antibiotics are.

So [snorts] how do you avoid them? I

mean just general cleanliness and

carefulness,

but I mean you can't completely avoid

like mosquitoes. Good luck completely

avoiding mosquitoes in Burma. The

mosquitoes in Rangon are even worse than

the ones in the forest because forest

mosquitoes have like a Geneva

convention. They mostly just come out

early in the morning and then like at dusk. Dusk is like mosquito happy hour. Um and it's like during the bright daytime they're avoiding the the dal, you know, the daytime hunters of mosquitoes and at in the middle of the night they're avoiding the the bats. So there's just like this little window when the mosquitoes can just run a muck, you know, after the the daytime predators have pretty much stopped and before the nighttime predators have really gotten into to full full swing, then the mosquitoes come out and it's it's awful. But in Rangon, there's no Geneva Convention. It's just mosquitoes 24/7.

[sighs]

So I mean, to some degree, a monk just has to be patient. I could never fully be patient with horse flies, though. It's just I could not just sit there and be bitten by horse flies.

So,

in that case, I did swat them with my sweat rag. And I got really at first it would just kind of scare them away. You know, you kind of ding them, you know, they kind of rings their bell and they'll fly away. But I eventually got so much practice at it that, you know, you got a like a a horsefly here. you get the sweat rag and come from behind

so that there's like this whiplash effect and it snaps it really fast and it started actually killing them. So I would compensate for my bad karma for killing a horsefly or a sandfly by feeding them to ant lions. You know there's ant lion pits all over inside this cave that I lived in. And if you don't know what ant lions are, they it's some sort of insect larvae or nymph that I mean it looks sort of like a stonefly or something when it's or a catisfly when it's full grown, but it digs this pit that's like a funnel and it's loose sand and anything like an ant or any other kind of insect will can fall into that and then the ant lion at the bottom

just starts flinging sand at it to knock it down and then it grabs it with its big pincher jaws and and devours it.

>> [sighs and gasps]

>> So anyways, getting back to the question, parasites and diseases. I mean, use a little common sense, you know, try and stay away from, you know, don't be like standing still outdoors at dusk, that kind of thing. Um, I mean, you're kind of at the mercy of of the people who give you food with regard to things like intestinal worms. I mean, you're probably just going to get those and so you just take the dewormer and that kind of thing. And with regard to

diseases, just uh protect dhamma dama
will protect you to some degree. I had
full cyprum malaria like seven or eight
times when I was in Burma.
So I mean in a case like that is just
you can just avoid the endemic areas
which is avoiding real forests. Wherever
you have real forest, you've got real
malaria.
So I guess uh aside from just uh being
tough stoic or whatever, being a good
Buddhist, then uh
you just have to deal with it. I mean,
it's you can you can just try to use
some common sense and have a welle
equipped first aid kit. Fortunately, in
Burma, there's almost no prescription

drugs. You know, you want antibiotics, you can just get antibiotics. you want malaria medication, you can just get malaria medication relatively cheap. Although in Burma there is a certain amount of counterfeit drugs like especially something like ain or amoxicylin. There have been times when I I would take it and it would have no effect whatsoever

and a lot of it is like counterfeit stuff that just has like chalk in it instead of actual medicine inside the capsules. So you got to be careful about that.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question which is from Thoughtfog.
And Thoughtfog says, "Do you have investments? What are your thoughts on investing?" And the only investment I have is I've got a 401k.
The company I work for is very generous in matching 401k. So, I mean, so long as [clears throat] civilization doesn't collapse or the economy doesn't collapse or just rampant inflation like in the Weimar Republic doesn't happen in in America,
you know, it's it's probably, you know, at least treading water, you know, just sort of keeping up with inflation at least.
Well, I've really never been

particularly money oriented. I've kind of taken to heart the idea of, you know, consider the liies of the field, that kind of thing. Give no thought for tomorrow, what you will eat or where you will sleep. Like I have I really do not like the idea of insurance. The only reason I've got health insurance now, which is cheap from from where I'm working, is my woman insists upon it. Otherwise, I might just have like accident insurance. You know, I squish my hand at work or something that might get paid for. [snorts]

Um, if I had to do it all over again, I think I'd be buying gold,

but uh, that's not exactly any kind of financial advice there.

So, investing, I mean, if if you're that's fine. Doesn't matter to me, but I do think that there is some real wisdom in what the Buddha and Jesus were both teaching. Just give no thought for tomorrow, what you will eat, where you will sleep. God will provide or dharma will provide. Your your own karma will give you what you need.

[sighs]

So let's see here. I guess I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Maitraa Buddha and he says, "What are your thoughts on Freemasonry?"

And I've never been a Freemason. I knew

when I was like in junior high school, my best friend was the son of a Freemason. And he was the the my friend was in Dalay, I guess, which is like for it's sort of like the the Freemason youth.

He liked it because you get a sword, which is nice, but he didn't he see seems not to have known anything about Freemasonry either. About half of what I know about Freemasonry I picked up from the book War in Peace by some guy named Toltoy.

You know, he's he talks about how Pierre Bezahov becomes a Freemason and it talks about like the initiation ceremony and

so forth. Um so that's I know about that. I mean some kind of secret society supposedly benevolent. They help each other but if they have some kind of new world order agenda or anything like that I really don't know.

So yeah, Freemasonry is just kind of on the the outskirts of my perceptual field. I really don't have any kind of significant interactions with Freemasons that I'm aware of. Nobody's tried to give me a secret handshake or anything like that.

So I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Stellar Supreme at all. Changes his name pretty often. So let's just call him stellar supreme

at all and leave it at that. And he says, "Were you ever chased by a snake?" And I have mentioned once when I was walking from one bow village, walking back from one bow village after going for alms, you know, so I've got my my full alms bull. I'm walking back to the monastery and right in this dirt road that I would walk on, there was a a baby Russell's viper, the the deadliest snake in Burma. Not the most venomous, but just like the meanest and most likely to cause death by snake bite. It was only like a foot and a half long, but partly just as a way of scaring me away, which is kind of the the strategy of Russell's

Vipers and Vipers in general, maybe it it just started like lunging at me and like coming after me like this. I had to walk way around it and even after I get past it, it's still coming after me. But it wasn't like trying to chase me down so it could bite me. It's just trying to get me to [__] off and leave it alone. But I mean, I've walked right past Russell's vipers. They're they're sort of like a copperhead in their coloration. They're very well camouflaged. They're just the color of dead leaves. They just blend right in with the dead leaves. And I've walked right past them before. Like I remember once I was going up the hill to get up

onto the dirt road so I could head to uh Wow Village for alms. And I just heard this little like a sound. And I looked down and I was my my foot was like this far away from the head of a rustled viper. you know, it was just giving me fair warning, just like, "Don't [__] with me. I'm here and you better be way over there soon."

But the only time I was ever really chased by a snake was Yeah, that little baby Russell's viper.

So, I'm just going to move on to Seller Supreme at all's next question.

He says,

"Is being anti-establishment the new

wave of based?"

Well, I wouldn't say any kind of anti-establishment would be the new wave of based. You know, you've got some sort of conservative establishment. So then anti-establishment could be Marxism. And Marxism is not particularly based. So it's I think based is mainly just not so much anti-establishment as just anti-political correctness, anti-cultural Marxism. It seems like that is just what based originally meant and still means as far as I know. You know, you're based in reality instead of these this kind of hysterical feminized irrational emotionbased beliefs.

At least it's emotion based on the the

rank and file of the people that
believe. There may be some cynical
people that don't believe it that are
the ones who are generating a lot of it
or endorsing it, you know, trying to
prom promulgate it.
So, yeah, I don't think necessarily
being anti-establishment in and of
itself is the new wave of based. I think
just being like anti-
diversity or anti-feminism or
anti-marxism,
that kind of thing is and always was
based as long as the word based has been
in the working English vocabulary, which
hasn't been for very long. It's been

like 10 or 12 years that people have

been saying based,

I guess.

So let's see here. I guess I'll just

move on to Stellar Supreme at all's next

question. Got any recommendations for

reducing limonality? Yeah. So Stellar

Supreme apparently might be

contemplating the possibility that he is

a little too liinal. So he wants to be

less liinal, less kind of surreal in his

existence.

And I mean if you want to be less

liinal, you got to be more mainstream.

You got to be a normie. Just be as much

of a normie as possible. Just follow all

the rules. Follow all the social norms.

Take them seriously,

you know, talk to people about sports

and cars and stuff. [snorts]

That would be that would reduce

limonality. It's it's kind of difficult

for a person who is genuinely just by

temperament a liinal person just kind of

on the fringe of normality.

But I mean, you could take steps. I mean

just stop doing any kind of liinal

activities.

Stay away from Ouija boards for example.

You know just just think like a normie

or you know behave as much as possible

like a normie which will then kind of

reduce the limonality.

So let's see here.

I guess I guess I answered that question. I'm just going to move on to the next one. This is from Cleiffy who is a Lithuanian person and I'm unaware of there being any derogatory slurs for Lithuanians. Maybe the Russians have them but in America Lithuanian people are just called Lithuanians and that's good. That is the way it should be.

So anyways, Kify who is a Lithuanian says why do you think Lithuanian is this close to Sanskrit? Lithuania is thousands of kilo kilometers kilometers I use the Star Trek precedent of saying kilometers away from the Indian subcontinent. So yeah, I was recently

talking about how oh somebody wanted to know what if in any like European language there is what's what would be the closest to the Sanskrit word Dharma and I say probably Lithuanian just because Lithuanian and the Indic languages are very similar in certain ways just like amazingly similar in certain ways and it turns out according to Kifi um the Lithuanian like equivalent to Dharma would be called Dharma. uh [clears throat]
which means order.
Um, so [clears throat] I've read that Lithuanian is the most conservative Indo-Uropean language, which means it

has changed the least since ancient times, since, you know, the the the diaspora of Indo-Uropean spread, presumably from the Pontic step, but maybe somewhere else.

And so, Lithuanian is just a very conservative Indo-Uropean language that hasn't changed much. has changed less than the other Indo-Uropean languages. One reason for that is because they migrated north. They weren't migrating into an already established civilization where they're going to be lots of lone words and so forth. They migrated up into the the the just godforsaken hellscape of the north where it was it

was it was like sparssely populated and
so there was less external influence
uh causing like changes in the language
maybe there are other reasons for it too
and then for some reason I'm not exactly
sure why but the Indic languages also
are like the second most conservative
language group after Baltos Slavonic
which would include Slavic languages.
You've got the like the Indo
Indo-Persian
languages which would include Iranian
and like Sanskrit and Pali and and
numerous other languages
that uh they didn't change much either.
And my guess for that especially with

regard to the Indic languages is that it was sort of like a a ruling class language. You know, it's like from the the Yam Nia civilization just going with the standard theory of the spread of Indo-Uropean languages and European peoples, European culture, ethnicity, DNA, whatever. You know, they they started off like in the steps north of the of the Black Sea and then one group migrated kind of eastwards and became Cintashta culture where they invented the war chariot and so forth allegedly. Then they moved farther east, became the Andronovo culture. And then the Andronovo culture, some of that migrated south into what is now like Afghanistan

and became the BMC, not BOC, which is

Blue Oer, but no, BMAC.

There you go. BMAC. It was the the

Baktria

Margana

Archaeological Complex, something like

that. And then that was where they

really became Indic. started speaking

like what would be recognizably an

Indian kind of language and then some of

them actually migrated way westward and

became the ruling class of a group

called the Mitani that lived in like

around what is now Syria. This was in

ancient times in maybe 1500 BC and then

a lot of the rest migrated down into

India where it may be that every single
place they went they were like the
ruling class that just kind of disdained
the language of the plebs and so they
kind of were conservative that way even
though they were invading other cultures
where there'd be lots of lone words
still
um just sort of ethnic pride or
something in their particular version of
the Indo-European culture just kept them
more kind of isolated, you know, less
willing to accept lots of lone words and
make grammatical changes in their
language and so forth. But also I have
read that
there was like an Indo-Persian like

Cythian

uh Cythian tribes that were

[clears throat] they were speaking like

an Indo Indo-Persian language more

Persian than Indo I think that then

migrated farther west again you know

like from Andronovo back westward

and they became like a ruling class of a

group of people that the Romans called

Sarmatians.

They [snorts] were sort of like

protoslavic,

protobaltic, maybe farther northward and

westward. And so [clears throat]

there could be some some actual

connection in in language between like

the Indo-Persian
subgroup and the Balto Slavonic
subgroup. So there could be some
connection that way also. But I think
the main reason is just that Lithuanian
and the Indic languages are both
relatively conservative. So they didn't
really influence each other very much
one way or the other. It's just that
they changed the least and stayed closer
to the original language for for
different reasons.
And so I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Ruie.
And Ruie said, "Would you view the SA as
a mere trampoline to further spiritual
adventures, that is a locust to receive

transmission of dharma and be on one's way?" Well, I don't know if Rui is referring to this like like to me personally or in general.

I mean for me personally the SA being in the SA being an ordained monk for 30 years wasn't just a trampoline for further spiritual adventures. I mean I learned a lot. It was definitely a invaluable education that you learn not just intellectually but just through living it.

So

I wouldn't consider it to a locust to receive transmission of dharma and beyond one's way. Although in my case, I

got as much as as as apparently I was going to get out of it in this lifetime. So then it was like, you know, when it stops working, I stopped making progress for several years, then it just makes sense to try something else.

So that was the way it worked for me. I mean, it's not going to work the same for everybody though. So for some people it might be that way and then for some people it it [clears throat] won't.

But I don't think the SA is a mere trampoline to further spiritual adventures.

You know, it's sort of like there was that Herman Hessa novel or is it just Hess Narcissus and Goldman where there's

this is like in medieval medieval England probably like medieval Germany or Austria you know Herman Hessa or Hess spoke German. So probably it was a medieval Catholic monastery in you know his part of the world and you know these two friends Narcissus and Goldman who are raised like at this monastery boy school kind of orphanaged sort of place and Narcissus decides he's going to just be ordained and stay there whereas Goldman is just itching to get out there and and taste the world. And so he just immediately goes out and starts like committing adultery and fornicating and all this kind of stuff. Winds up getting

bubanic plague and coming back to the monastery to be nursed in his final final days by his old buddy Narcissus. And you could tell that Herman Hess or Hessa was secretly rooting for Goldman, you know, the one who wanted to, you know, he got his monastic training and then went out and started sewing wild oats and so forth.

But [gasps]

yeah, it's not the way it's supposed to work. You know, it's like you renounce the world for good and you don't want to just fall back into it.

But for some people, I mean, for most people, especially most Westerners who are ordained, that's the way it

generally works out. They they don't
last nearly as long as 30 years. They
might last five years
or so.
But it's it's going to be different for
different people. But it really wasn't
that way for me. It was just invaluable.
My my time as a monk was really
invaluable in in helping me to just open
my eyes with regard to a lot of things.
But as I say, I got as far as it seemed
like I was going to get with it. I had
stopped making progress for several
years. And so I just decided, well, it's
time to try something else.
So I'm just going to move on to Ruy's

next question.

He says, "As soon as," He's referring to the previous Q&A. He says, "As soon as you said the words symbolic book burnings of the Biden administration, my computer, a fairly potent Apple machine, crashed. In fact, it crashes every time I play your videos. Always somewhere between the 30 to 40 minute mark." And uh yeah, it should have happened by now. Is or has anyone been experiencing the same problem? It's been going on for the past two two years, week on week, and only with this channel. So, it's apparently it's some kind of karmic thing. You've got some sort of bad karma that's resisting

hearing what I what I have to say, I guess. And so, it's it's causing glitches in the matrix. That would that would be a guess. You know, I've I've got I've had weird karma. Like, when I was in Burma, I just had really weird technology karma. Of course, in Burma, stuff breaks down all the time anyway. But man, it was it was just really awful. Just some of the stuff you're you're riding on a bus, suddenly the whole drive line just falls out onto the highway, that kind of thing. It was just too common. You know, the bus hits a cow.

[sighs and gasps]

So, I I haven't really heard from other people about this. It may be just running rampant, and I just don't even know about it.

Um, but I've have I've had like the same similar sort of like technological malfunctions when recording these videos, especially before I got this uh what [clears throat] is it? OSB. OBS. Yeah, OBS. This seems to work fairly reliably. Before that, I was using just the default video recording software that comes on Apple computers and it was just continually one time I had to do the same Q&A three times because it said it's recording and then I tried to review the recording afterwards and it

just says, you know, it's just empty file.

So, I have had similar kind of problems while recording these things. You know, just the sound cuts out halfway through. That happened not very long ago.

I think it's still working now. I got to check the green bar. Yeah, it's going side to side like it's supposed to. Like a good boy.

Okay. So,

yeah, it may be that other people are experiencing the same problem. Maybe they can chime in in [clears throat] the comments. But, uh, yeah, other than that, I'm I mean, it just sounds like a

karmic thing for me. Everything is a karmic thing anyway.

you just have some sort of deep resistance to learning what I'm saying. But then again, I apparently there's some deep resistance. Um, I mean, it's it's like karmic, you know, it's not like a conscious thing necessarily, but yeah, I've had some karmic glitches that have just kind of messed up entire Q&As's so that I've had to redo the entire Q&A.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Xeno Demon and Xeno Demon or Demon says, "Does Buddhism have any guidelines on political structures or was the Buddha's setting

of the pathocracy just a practical means of organizing those that heard his words?" Well, the Buddha did give advice like political advice. There's like a strange suta in the dean kaya where the Buddha is saying that a good king should like subsidize farmers you know he should give them sea grain and so forth to help them get started in business you know so that they can you know support themselves and their families and contribute to society and all that. So some some like modern westerners have like pointed to these kind of things and say the Buddha I mean he was he was a woke socialist.

Um the Buddha did prefer a kind of democracy. I mean that's why he set up the SA as a democracy. It's more radical of a democracy. At least it it was set up originally to be more radical of a democracy than we've got like in in the west for example for in order for the SA to agree to anything officially every single member of the the SA that is participating in the ceremony like all the inhabitants of that monastery have to agree you know so it's consensus it's not democratic majority it's not just the abbott says so which is the way it generally works in Thailand and Burma now you know they've kind of rejected the ancient Indo-Uropean democratic

ideal in favor of just kingship. The the seato the abbott is king. What he says goes. And it was I mean it's just unthinkable for some junior monk to just like throw a monkey wrench into some formal act by just speaking out and saying, "No, I don't consent to this. This is absurd."

But I mean being a western barbarian, I I was inclined to do that a few times just like um one time at this monastery I was staying at. Technically I was a senior monk even at the time. I was sort of a newcomer though, [clears throat] but they were going to have a cina ceremony. And in

Burma, the kina ceremony has degenerated into just business essentially. It's just like the main donation collecting time of year. And it's not done according to vignia at all. You know, it has nothing to do with vineia. The kina ceremony originally it was [snorts] um kind of a test. If after spending the three months of the range retreat together, the monks are still like on cooperative [snorts] terms enough that they can accomplish a difficult task which is to make a new robe from scratch in 24 hours. In less than 24 hours. you know, they've got to measure the cloth and cut it and sew it and and like they got to dye it the correct color and

everything. All of that before dawn of the following day. Then they get these kina privilege which includes the right to um keep extra cloth in addition to the three robes that a monk is supposed to keep. You can keep extra ones, that kind of thing. But most monks in Burma, probably most monks in Thailand, they just keep extra robes anyway, they're keeping these hardearned kina privileges all year round. They don't even need the kina the kina ceremony because they don't really give a damn about those rules anyway. It's just we get lots of donations on that day and so they like kina festivals and I just refuse. I just

no, we're not going to have a cina festival. So they start trying to like maneuver behind my back trying to get people to, you know, they're trying to get the kina ceremony going. And I've just finally said, "Look, if you if you want a kina festival, you're going to wind up with a battle. You know, you want to kain pu, you're going to get a sip pu."

The word for battle in Burmese literally means like war festival.

[sighs and gasps]

So let's see here.

in in Burma. I mean really almost every single ceremony official like official act of the SA is corrupt in and just

sometimes almost beyond recognition

like uh the lasta

day of the reigns retreat is not an

uposeta day. It's the the uh the

invitation day. It's the pawa day and

where all the monks they ask the sa you

know out of compassion please tell me my

fault so that I can correct them and in

Burma you just do not answer

you just do not answer this invitation

do not point out anybody else's faults

because in Burma it's like at 98% of the

monks are just laden with them they

don't even try to follow the rules and

so it's just barbaric it's just

unthinkable that you try to answer

another monk's con like request, his invitation to point out his lapses from virtue. And I tried it a couple times and it was like the the abbott was just like frantically waving his hand at me to shut up. And it's like he thought maybe I was just speaking out of turn that I was just didn't know that it wasn't my turn yet to make the the bogus invitation.

But I'm just completely digressing all over the place.

So does Buddhism have any guidelines on political structures? You can find a few guidelines on political structures in the text like there's that one suta and the dean kaya that is of you know

potentially questionable authenticity.
Um the emperor Ashoka really did try to
set up a kind of Buddhist
[clears throat] theocracy so to speak
where I mean Ashoka's ideal was to have
Dharma rule the country where it should
be voluntary. You just encourage
everybody to to follow Dharma
and then you don't need kings and
governments and so forth because
everybody's helping each other.
Everyone's cooperating. Everything's
fine.
>> [sighs]
>> But the Hindus were more cynical in
their estimation of human nature. You

know, like the author of the Art
Shastra, I think it's called, which was
uh like an ancient Hindu or protohindu
political text. you know how like a
guide to kings sort of like Monkeyy's
the prince and really that was just
people are just corrupt you know you
can't trust them to follow any code of
honor you know you just have to keep
them ignorant and under control
[clears throat]
which is kind of the way the west is is
going increasingly especially in Europe
it seems to me
so let's see here yeah there are a few
guidelines on political structures
partly with regard to the Buddhist his

own choice of how the SAO should be managed and also just occasional advice with regard to, you know, what kings ought to do and they shouldn't be fighting wars and they should like negotiate their treaties instead of just fighting it out, that kind of thing. But he really wasn't talking a lot about politics, which is what you would expect because the Buddha had renounced society and back then it was it was done seriously. You know, it's not just you become part of society by becoming like the village secular priest or something, some high-profile teacher that people are all coming to. It's like you

seriously renounce society and just talking about politics is animal talk. Monks should not do it.

So, I guess I'll just move on. Next question. This is from Sedarta Lohachita.

And Sedart Loachita says, "Have you read some of the history about Haiti? It might have some similarities from what is happening in most of the Western Hemisphere." And I really know very little about the history of Haiti. I mean, it was, you know, the it's mostly a black population there who are descended from like sugar cane plantation slaves.

They eventually rebelled against the

white ruling class there and pretty much
drove them out.
um that somehow I' I've picked up
somewhere it could just be like
Christian propaganda that Haiti
like one of their first governments made
some sort of like voodoo pact, you know,
they had some kind of voodoo thing going
as a way of like strengthening their
government or something which just kind
of opened the door to all sorts of
malevolent influences and so forth which
is one reason why Haiti is allegedly the
poorest country in the Western
Hemisphere.
It's also one of the few black majority

countries in the Western Hemisphere that I've read. This is like um UN like United Nations data. I did a like a a blog post on this years ago at this point, but according to the UN's own data, 19 of the 20 poorest countries in the world are black majority nations, mostly in in subsaharan Africa. And the only of these poorest countries in the world, the 20 poorest that is in the Western Hemisphere is Haiti, which is also a black majority country. The only of the 20 poorest countries in the world. I think it's like number 19 or 20. So it's it's not close to the the top of the list of poorest or bottom, however you want to look at it, is

Afghanistan.

So I really don't know what Sedart Loachito is referring to when he says it might have some similarities from what is happening in most of the Western Hemisphere. Yeah, I don't see how most of the Western Hemisphere would be like a population of slaves that kind of perpetrate an uprising against the ruling class and drive them out. I mean kind of I mean potentially the ruling class like the the elite the elite class can get overthrown and replaced by a different elite class which is generally how it works. you know, they could be some purge and most of the elite class,

you know, they they wind up going to the guillotine or whatever and then they just get replaced by other people who within a relatively short time are approximately as bad as the people that were thrown out of out of power.

But yeah, I really don't I don't not sure what Sedart Loha is referring to.

And so I'm just going to move on to the next question here. This is from Drip Walker.

and drip walker first he has the context of his questions. So the context is I have heard from an esoteric fellow that the subconscious is fully opened and can be more easily programmed and if you're just listening to the podcast you're

missing out on all these air quotes on full moon days. So I guess I'm going to have to I interrupted myself which is very rude. So I'm just going to start off the context.

I have heard from an esoteric fellow the subconscious is fully open and can be more easily programmed or easily reprogrammed on full moon days. This also connects to the fact that days are usually on full moon days. Does the moon and subconscious link hold any truth in reality? Well, first I would like to point out that days are not usually on full moon days. I mean you've got the big uposa days where the monks have to

convene and recite the podimoka which is on the full moon and the new moon and then you've got the lesser the 8day which are on the half moon days. So if you include those then the full moonatas are only one out of four.

[snorts]

So let's see. So an esoteric fellow says that the subconscious is fully opened and can be more easily reprogrammed on full moon days.

And then he says, "Does the moon and subconscious link hold any truth in reality?" Apparently, there's some kind of connection. I mean, like it's known that women's menstrual cycles can often synchronize with the phases of the moon.

So, there is that which probably has

some subconscious elements to it.

I mean just I don't think the the body

all by itself without the mind helping

to condition things would just realign

the menstrual cycle with the the phases

of the moon. So there is that and

sometimes full moon

you know people can act crazier on the

full moon day

but with regard to the subconscious

being fully open I'm not even sure what

that means

and the subconscious is more easily

reprogrammed on full moon days maybe

but I mean I I'd like to see some kind

of evidence for it if possible some kind of empirical evidence.

Um

but I don't think that has any real connection with uposata. I mean the reason why days are on the new moon and the full moon is simply because in ancient times throughout the world pretty much and especially in India here it's just the the phases of the moon were just the way of keeping time. I mean that was the calendar. It was like a a luna solar calendar in ancient India where it's the the position of the full moon among the constellations determines what month it is. So I mean it was just a way of keeping track of time. I don't

think that there was any deliberate
uh like connection between the full moon
and any kind of esoteric subconscious
reprogramming stuff. I mean that could
be in there too. But the main reason for
days being on full moons and new moons
and stuff is just the phases of the moon
were just the main way of keeping time.
You know, it was like the ancient
calendar before they had a calendar.
So, I guess I'll just move on to
Dripwalker's next question. Could this
be why days are on full moon days? Yeah,
I've already pretty much answered that.
I mean, they're not just on full moon
days. They're on full moon days, new

moon days. And if you include the days when the SA doesn't convene but are still considered uposta days when lay people come to the monastery take eight precepts and all that then only 1/4 of the days or full moon days. So it it's mainly just a way of just the regularity like we've got seven days in the week, you know, it's just that was kind of their equivalent like in the Buddhist time in ancient India that was their equivalent to just having like a weekly weekly calendar
and months because I mean month and moon originally a month was just you know from one full moon to the next full moon or one new moon to the next new moon.

So yeah, I don't think that days being on full moon days like 1/4 of aostas being on full moon days really has anything significant there's any significant correlation between that and any like spiritual influence of the sp the full moon on the subconscious mind like that could be could be in there but I don't think it's the main reason

so

ah [clears throat] Dripwalker's third question says, "What is the karma of jumping in front of a juggernaut?" But he throughout throughout this question,

juggernaut is consistently spelled juggernaut. I'm not sure why he does this. So this if you prefer juggernaut to juggernaut, that's fine. But I'm just going to go with the English word that is doesn't have the red spellch check underline under it. So what is the karma of jumping in front of a juggernaut to get crushed to death? thinking that it will give good karma from a Buddhist point of view. To give you some context, there used to be a festival in India where they would make massive mobile mobile juggernauts of deities which would be pushed across the streets during the festival. When the juggernauts are being moved, lowcast

individuals would jump in front of the juggernaut juggernaut and get crushed to death by it. The Hindu peoples used to say that the act of jumping in front of the juggernaut would give good karma in air quotes there. Well, I mean technically juggernaut comes from jaganata. It's like the Sanskrit jaganata which literally means lord of the world and it was like an epithet [laughter] epithet epithet epithet I think of Vishnu. So probably all the juggernaut images were some form of Vishnu

and yeah they'd pull these huge images through the streets and people would

like jump underneath and crush to death thinking that they're getting good karma sort of like you know like the the tradition of sati in in India where a widow would throw herself into her husband's funeral p that that was you know the good wife. Sati literally means like the true woman, the true wife, you know,

[clears throat and sighs]

doesn't want to be a burden on her her sons, so she just burns herself alive when her husband dies, which could really suck if she's like 30 years younger than him.

So, let's see. What is the karma of jump jumping in front of a juggernaut to get

crushed to death thinking it will give good karma? uh it depends on the individual because just the act itself like I like I explain like pretty regularly just the the mere physical action itself is morally neutral I mean it's that is not what the karma is coming from that does not generate karma it's it's the mental states that generate karma so it's like why you do it what are your you know what is your attitude while you are doing it is what really determines what kind of karma you're getting.

[sighs and gasps] So, I mean, if they're just completely filled with faith and

they're offering themselves as a kind of sacrificial victim to the god, that kind of thing, then there could be some good karma mixed in with that. I mean, almost certainly there would be. I mean, it wouldn't be pure good karma, but there would be some good karma involved. I mean, they're not thinking so much about like committing suicide. Well, I can not supposed to say that, am I? Not on YouTube, but it's like selfdeing. you know, they're not like I mean, the fact that according to Dripwalker here, it's mostly low cast people means that, you know, it's mostly lowcast people that are not valuing their lives enough that they want to remain alive. That they

think that if they fling themselves
under this giant statue as it rolls by
that they might get reborn as like a
higher cast person, a more fortunate
person next time. That's probably a lot
of the the psychology going on.
And
I really don't think it it necessarily
works that way. That just throwing
flinging yourself under a religious
statue to get crushed by it isn't
necessarily good karma. You know, that's
just kind of like a superstition in my
opinion.
But nevertheless, even if it is a
superstition, if the person's mind is

like exalted, you know, they're offering themselves to this God, like their last thoughts [snorts] are like dedicated to what they consider to be the supreme god, then that's going to have some positive effect and it probably won't be like just pure 100% bad karma that they're getting, but it's going to depend on the mental states of the individual.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Dama River and Dama River says, "What is your opinion on the dangers of addiction to comfort? I believe it has turned Americans and Canadians into neutered indoor cats, vastly dependent on the

government and thus easy to control."
Well, pretty much everybody is addicted
to comfort. You know, almost everybody
prefers like pleasure to pain. They
prefer comfort to discomfort. You know,
there's some tough guys, for example,
that have a certain stoic indifference
to discomfort. You know, as a Buddhist
monk, I mean, you're supposed to just
cultivate an indifference to comfort and
and discomfort. That's that's what
austerity is all about.
So,
uh the the dangers of addiction to
comfort, I mean, most people have it to
some degree. Almost everybody has it to

some degree.

Um, but that's it's not just that that has turned Americans and Canadians into neutered indoor cats. I remember when I was in Burma, I was staying at this monastery that had a fair amount of old books in the English language that I could go through. And one of them was the hidden persuaders, which won some kind of award. I don't know if it won a Pulitzer Prize or whatever, like back in the 1950s. And it's talking about how advertising agencies are actually hiring teams of psychologists to try to get people to like really want this stuff. And a lot of the stuff the Hidden Persuaders is talking about is, you

know, it's it's like talking about how they're even back in like the 1950s, they'd be selling toasters that I mean, it just lifts up the toast and just I mean, you don't even have to pull it out of the toaster, you know? It just as soon as it's done, it just lifts up for you and you just pluck just nonchalantly pluck the toast from the top of the toaster. Just making everything so easy. And women are more prone to like this stuff than men are. Um like some of the some of the stuff my my woman likes. It's it's like I mean it's it's not really [laughter] necessary. It's just make it's more it's more cozy, you know?

It's more comfortable. It's easy. And people just like this. And then these advertising agencies with their teams of psychologists are just pounding away at it. And like they've succeeded in getting women, a lot of women to buy a whole different wardrobe
like twice a year. It's like the win the winter colors this year are like earth tones, you know? It's like and all the women just have to rush out and and get the the new colors just because they're in style that year, you know, just styles, fashion trends. And at least at the time that Hidden Persuaders was was written, they were talking about how the like the the clothing companies and the

advertising agency were just in despair because men just won't go with these fashion trends. It's it's a woman thing. The women go to go with the fashion trends much more than men do. A man is willing to wear the same suit for 20 years until it just wears out.

>> [snorts]

>> So, it's we're we're all addicted to to comfort to some degree. You know, we all prefer well seasoned food to bland, flavorless food, for example. Most of us do.

But then you have like consumer culture. Consumerism is just like it's like what's the word? pandering to it or just

like trying to make us as addicted as possible so that they can sell their unnecessary junk.

So it's consumerism is just aggravating the natural human preference for like convenience to inconvenience or comfort to discomfort.

[sighs]

And that's that's one strength that the Burmese had is they were just completely stoic. They didn't give a [__] about fashion trends other than just the tradition of, you know, women wearing a flowered sarong and men wearing geometric p geometric patterns on their sarong, that kind of thing, which is it was just perennial. You know, there's no

this this year's fall fashions, anything like that.

So, I'm just going to move on to Dhamma River's next question.

Second question, he says, "What's your favorite dharma teaching that does not come from scripture or trapitica? It could be a dharma talk available online or a book. It can be anything you've ever heard or read that you thought was a great dharma teaching that didn't come from scripture." Just a second. I got to look on the bookcase here.

Let's see here. This one.

See,

maybe let's just go with this one.

Okay. [clears throat and snorts]

Well, the first thing first thing that comes to mind, I mean, this would rule out stuff that isn't dharma. You know, this this would because he's got the word dharma instead of dharma. I'm just going to interpret that to mean terra Buddhism because dharma with an R. I mean, that can apply to any kind of Buddhism. It can apply to Hinduism. It can apply to any kind of real spirituality that has some depth or profoundity to it. So this is just going to apply to terra. And the first thing that came to mind is that the Ajan Cha tradition produces for free distribution lots and lots of books that are like the

teachings of Ajan Cha like transcripts of his dharmat talks. And for some reason I don't think I have any on my bookcase now. I think I left them behind when I left the monastery for the last time. But uh some of I mean those those books of Ajan Sha's damat talks are good dharma that uh you know it's just accessible. It's it's kind of more accessible to the western mind more so than like the the domat talks of a Burmese seat because the Burmese seats are very dogmatic, very scholastic [snorts] whereas the the ties base their teachings more on personal experience. So that sometimes they're deviating from

orthodoxy. They're using poly words without really knowing the exact meaning of the poly word. you know, they've interpreted the poly word incorrectly or something, but at least they're basing it on their own experience, like their own meditative experience and insight. So, sometimes a book written by a Thai Ajan can just be funny to like some Burmese dogmatist because he's getting it wrong, you know, like the Buddha didn't say that this kind of thing. But still, I mean, a a Burmese Seattle is so dogmatic that if their personal experience isn't the same as what the book says, they'll reject their own personal experience or just sort of

force fit their personal experience to fit in with what the book says. Whereas the ties, because they're less cognizant of what the book actually says, they'll just give their their insights, you know, based on their own meditative experience. And uh in some ways it's more valid, you know, it's more alive. It's less just dead words and more like living experience. And Ajan Cha was really good at that. He was definitely a serious practitioner. He started off as like a a scholastic teacher at some school monastery in Thailand, I'm pretty sure. But it was like his conscience was would not let him rest. It's like he's

teaching this stuff about how monks are supposed to live and he wasn't doing [clears throat] it. So finally he just decided I'm just going to have to, you know, walk the talk. I'm going to have to practice what I preach and went out and became a meditation master. And some of his practices were relatively advanced, like sleeping with like a full bottle of water balanced on one knee and a full glass of water balanced on the other knee. Just sleeping in a sitting position where if he moved at all, they would just fall off. That [snorts] kind of thing.

So yeah, the the talks the Dharma talks of Ajan Cha would be uh up near the top

of my list. Also the book I got off the the bookcase. This would be another one. This is an important one concept in reality in early Buddhist thought by Biku Nyana where the whole book is about the meaning of the word papancha. And this book revolutionized modern Buddhistic studies with regard to understanding what the word papancha means

because the commentarial tradition didn't quite get it and then like you know Burmese seats would just slavishly follow the commentarial tradition so they didn't quite get it either and then Bikunyananda comes along and just uses

this rational investigation of the text
to point out that papancha really means
something different from what the
commentary says and it's the Opposite of
nibbana. One of the synonyms for nibbana
is nepapancha which means no papanchcha
without papanchcha.
So this book concept in reality which is
sold by the Buddhist publication society
is this is [clears throat] an important
book too which is kind of a dharma talk
or you know dhhamma teachings written by
a monk an ordained beu.
So
I think uh I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from Rea
and I don't know how to pronounce

[clears throat] German German words correctly. So Rea Anik says, "Did the Buddha probably look more like an Asian Nepalese? He had golden skin than an Indian? After all, he was a Chhatria from Lumbini. Or was this area already completely Indian at that time without any Asian immigration?" Well, probably the Buddha looked more European or [clears throat] like like Iranian than he looked Indian or Nepalese. I mean, chances are the Buddha had Indo-Uropean ancestry. So, which would make him related to Europeans. I mean, according to tradition, he had blue eyes.

Although, I mean, that's not really
historical
fact, you know, it's just a tradition.
But, you know, there are a lot of
Iranian people. You know, they have like
dark eyes and dark hair, maybe a big
nose, but still they've got like large
mainly like what would be called
Caucasian features. I mean, they they
look pretty much European.
And probably the Buddha looked more like
that. I mean he according to tradition
he was of the the ruling class which
would mean that he didn't have a whole
lot of like aiatic DNA mixed in with his
DNA unless it was like from his
ancestors in like the the BMAC or

something.

But I mean like the highest cast

brahinss of like Rajasthan

[clears throat] would look more like the

Buddha than a Nepalese person would. I

mean, the Nepoese also are I mean,

they've got like a lot of them are fairs

skinned and kind of tall and don't have

sort of like the the Dravidian

characteristics of I think the

Dravidians of of India like most of the

inhabitants of India before the

Indo-Uropeans arrived were a mixture of

like Mediterranean Caucasians like the

the Neolithic farmers that that migrated

eastwards who are interbreeding with

protoostloids.

>> [sighs]

>> So the Buddha was probably like tall,

fairs skinned, dark hair,

blue or brown eyes, but still he would

he would look more like, you know, like

a highcast Brahman from Rajasthan or

like some elite Iranian [clears throat]

than he would like, you know, some

dark-skinned shorter type of indigenous

person from

south India or the far the far east of

India that kind of thing

in my opinion just going with

probabilities

[sighs] so let's see here

or was that area already completely

Indian at that time without any Asian immigration

um [snorts] Asian immigration well I mean the the indigenous inhabitants of what is now Nepal would be Asian. You know, there'd be some like people related to the Tibetans, for example, would be there. There'd be some Dravidian types in the the lowlands, I would guess. But then you have like the the conquering master race comes in and they're the the ruling elite and they're mostly interbreeding amongst themselves like and the the Buddhist family was like cousins marrying each other. I think the Buddha's own wife was was his

cousin, like his first cousin. So, it was kind of trying to keep it all, you know, the bloodlines pure and so forth apparently.

So, yeah, there was indigenous Asians already there, but the ruling class wasn't really interbreeding with them much. It did happen. And gradually over the centuries, over the millennia, you wind up with most people in India just having a brown skin and and not looking particularly European, although there are still are a few mostly of the higher casts.

[snorts] So,

I guess I answered that one.

So, I'm just going to move on to Rea

Anik's next question, which is if you were to get a Buddha tattoo, on which part of the body would you put it? What would it look like? And what would the Buddha specifically look like? I'm thinking of getting a Buddha tattoo. Idolatry.

But so far, I've only found Buddha tattoos with feminine features or Mahayana depictions of the Buddha. I'd like one that looks more European or ancient Greek and maybe even with a shaved head.

Well, if I were to get a Buddha tattoo, on what part of the body would I put it? Gosh, I mean, this is just like

completely out of left field for me. I've never considered this. Um, what would it look like? And what would the Buddha specifically look like? Um, I remember when I was a monk, I was toying with a certain Buddha image that would be very abstract. You know, the Buddha's head would just be a circle. You know, he'd be almost like a stick figure. There'd be like a triangle representing his upper robe. He'd just be sitting under a tree with a bowl in front of him. And there'd be like no facial features, you know? would just be like this abstract glyph really like a hieroglyph of the Buddha sitting in meditation under a tree with his bowl in

front of him. You know, just a circle for a head, you know, maybe just a little line for the neck. Then, you he'd be like sitting in the full lotus. So there'd be like the stick arms and the stick legs in the full lotus and then just more or less like triangles representing um his upper robe and maybe his lower robe kind of a an a flattened out isosles triangle or something like that. I mean you might have the tree behind him, you know, some sort of a very simplified, you know, equally simplified figure of a tree and that that would be it. That' probably be my version. I mean, I wouldn't want like a

human face, you know, like a detailed
human face tattooed to my body. I just I
I just really don't swing that way.
So, where would I put it? Gosh, maybe on
my left shoulder blade, like behind my
heart,
maybe.
I don't know. I mean, I'm not planning
on it. It's extremely unlikely that I
would do such a thing. So, I really
haven't put much thought into how I
would do it. See,
feminine features, Mahayana depictions
of the Buddha. Yeah. Well, that'd be
like Kamakura Buddha isn't even God
Buddha. Most of the like the Japanese
Buddha images that you see or the

Chinese Buddha. That's not even Godmma Buddha. That's some mythological space Buddha that they've somebody came up with hundreds of years after the time of the Buddha.

So, I mean, you could use a kind of like a Gondaran Greek motif.

I mean, he'd probably still have like the the top knot of hair and everything cuz the Greek Buddhas were based on Apollo,

but um

yeah, I mean, you could just do a just the Buddha head like a a Gandara Buddha head. You might want to just monkey with the details enough so that he's got a

shaved head instead of long hair with a top knot.

But yeah, if I was going to have a Buddha tattoo, just my first impression would be to use that image that I was toying with

as a monk that's just like a glyph of the Buddha in meditation so that you know what it's supposed to be even though it does not look realistic at all. It's just the Buddha with just a circle for a head. You know, there'd be clean shaven. You know, there'd be no little hairs sticking out. just sitting in meditation, kind of a tree to one side behind him and his bowl in front of him and that would be it. Maybe he'd be

sitting on a a sitting mat, the nedina,
if you will,
and maybe [clears throat] over my left
shoulder blade, but then of course I'd
never see it. I don't know. Maybe I
could put it on my shoulder or
something. Maybe my left shoulder or
which? Let's see.
Maybe the right shoulder because then
it'd show if if if a monk had his his
shoulder uncovered.
Okay, but good luck with your Buddha
tattoo.
And uh I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from Joe Doe. And Jodo
says, "Why do you think you didn't

develop any psychic powers?" Well, I mean what exactly you going to call psychic powers?

Um, there's one kind of I I mean, whether you want to call it psychic powers or not, I don't know, but for some reason I'm really tuned into to group mind stuff. It's like it fits in with my philosophy of the uncarved block of marble where, you know, everything in this world, the 10,000 things of this phenomenal universe are just virtual statues contained in this uncarved block. And that would include group statues. So every time you have a like one more than one person, more than one conscious being interacting, you've

you're creating a kind of us entity that ultimately isn't any more real than like the the individual entities that are making up this US entity. But still there's like this in a way it's like a higher level of consciousness or just a different kind of consciousness that is connecting these two entities. And for some reason, like it happened last night twice just in a matter of like five minutes where I'll just blurt out exactly what my woman happens to be thinking at that time. The exact words like last night it was the exact words and then she's after the second time she started getting weirded out told me to

be quiet.

[snorts] But I mean stuff like that or

just like

somebody who has practiced like

intensive meditation just there's all

kinds of like synchronicities that

spontaneously occur just you know weird

manifestations of karma that kind of

thing that I mean maybe you won't call

it psychic powers but it is something

that is in a way kind of paranormal.

It's not just mechanistic. It's it's

like this karma generated mindgenerated

thing that's happening that is just

weird.

But I mean going back to Joe Doe and his

question, why do you think you didn't

develop any psychic powers? I mean first of all I didn't give a [__] about developing psychic powers. I mean when weird stuff would happen like the weird synchronicities you just accept them as everyday life. I mean if you want miracles to become commonplace you don't single them out as a big deal. you know, you just accept it as as the flow. You're not like making any, you know, any any kind of like potential obstructions against it or anything like that.

[clears throat] So, the the orthodox Buddhist explanation would be I mean, you get psychic powers through like

mastering Janna. And I never really fully mastered Janna. I mean it was it was sort of come and go. Sort of like Goda in the Samutinikaya who he would get Janna and lose it and get it and lose it and get it and lose it until he was in a state of complete desperation. I was I was sort of like that.

And so I mean the psychic powers just did not reach fruition just going with terra dog terraod and dogma because you get psychic powers through mastering Janna and I just never fully mastered Janna although as I say just there is stuff that happens you know like the the group mind stuff where I'm just kind of tapping into what both of us or both of

us are just feeling the same thing or thinking the same words you know the exact same words at the exact same time, that kind of thing, because I just blurted it out as she was thinking it twice in like five minutes.

But in a way, it's you could say, well, it's we're we know each other well enough and we're just sort of, you know, in tune with each other. We're our vibes are in sync or whatever, which can just cause that to spontaneously happen sometimes.

[snorts]

So, that's my answer, I guess. And I'm moving on to Jodo's next question, which

is, do you know much about Helena Blovatki? Was she a fraud? I think I answered a question about Madame Blovatki just uh a week or two ago. Anyways, Helena Bllovzki, was she a fraud? Um, that's a tough question because I do have another book on the bookcase back there. I won't won't go get it. The trickster in the paranormal by George P. Hansen where he talks about how even genuine psychics will still do like trickster stuff. You know, they there will be fraud mixed in with the genuine psychic stuff because it makes them more liinal. They're breaking rules. You know, breaking rules is liinal. And so when you're throwing in a

bunch of fake stuff, it it kind of it's like priming the pump for the real stuff to to happen more often.

So it is true that Helena Baski was committing some fraudulent stuff like she's supposedly getting these notes from ascended masters in the Himalayas that would fall onto the table during their seances or whatever they call them. You know, these little notes would just fall out of midair and just land on the table. And it turns out that Helena Blovatzky had like they were like tied to a thread and they were like wedged up in the cracks of the ceiling and she'd just give the give it a little tug at

the right moment and it would just fall onto the table in this little puff of attic dust.

But just because she would do that doesn't mean she was a 100% absolute complete fraud.

And uh her cohort Colonel Alcott seems to have held her in very high esteem. He thought she was the real deal.

Uh maybe he could be up into doing some fraud stuff too though I guess. But uh I I've tried to read some of her stuff and she's just you know it's almost like reading Nietze where it's just so like stream of consciousness like emotional poetic stuff that it just doesn't jive with my way of thinking. I'm just more

objective linear thought. I mean, I can I can enjoy words with more than one meaning, which sort of, you know, kind of [clears throat] complicates the linear thought stuff, but still, um, yeah, she was just too too surreal in her approach that I really could not get into it. But she she definitely was doing some fraud stuff, but that does not guarantee that she was just completely a fraud.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Ethiopian fake tig.

Yeah, I think we're going to be less than two hours here because we're

getting close to the bottom. Ethiopian fake TIG says Epicurus had a very Buddhist philosophy. Only thing he couldn't do was meditate, so he settled for happy thoughts instead. What are your thoughts on Epicurionism? Well, I mean, I have read some philosophy books and really it seems to me like if you're if you're going to look to like the classical west, you know, Greco Roman classicism that epicur epicuranism did not come closest to Buddhism. That epicurionism came closest to like scientism or just materialism. that the probably the closest philosophy to Buddhism that I'm aware of would be like the cynics, you know, Dioynes, the

cynic, at least with regard to their lifestyle. They came much closer to Buddhism. Also, I mean like some of like the Orphic mysteries, Pythagoreans that that believed in like rebirth and so forth probably would come closer to Epicurans who tended to be materialistic. I mean, they've been compared to the Charvakas of ancient India. Just the worldly philosophers, the atheist philosophers. The Epicurans believed that they were gods, but didn't think that they really interacted with people. They had their own world and just didn't give a [__] about us, which kind comes kind of close to Buddhist

philosophy. I'm not sure what kind of morals the Epicurans had. There were a lot of like in the Roman Republic there were a lot of Epicurian types that really just were not religious. You know, they they preferred a kind of rationalistic understanding of reality. So, I mean, there's certain Buddhist elements in Epicuranism, you know. I think epicurionism is just based on um and again it's like the sharvakas of ancient India where pleasure is like the highest good you know to be happy or just to to experience pleasure and avoid pain was just like the highest good and so the charvakas who wrote the kama sutra the kamautra is a charvaka test

text

um you know they're just making this science of how to maximize pleasure And of course, you have to use some common sense. Just overindulgence can backfire. You know, overindulgence in food results in obesity and impaired health and so forth. And overindulgence in like euphor euphoric drugs, you know, you can result in, you know, again, impaired health, addiction, you know, crash and burn, that kind of stuff. So, you know, Epicurus, I mean, he still believed that pleasure is the highest good. I'm pretty sure it's just that he believed in just sort of moderation and

just subtle pleasures rather than just
just going for it as a complete
hedonist.
So let's see what's the question here.
What are your thoughts on Epicuranism?
Yeah, the Epicurans it was sort of like
like closet atheists,
you know, just people that just believe
what they could see and hear. Those
would be the epicurans of like the late
Roman Republic for example.
One of the most influential
like literary works in in Latin in
ancient times like the Roman Republic
would be derim nura on the nature of of
things and [snorts] it was an Epicurian
text. I don't think Epicurius didn't

write it. It was an Epicurian philosopher or poet who wrote the thing and it was very influential. There were a lot of people who considered Dirum Nura to be you know practically scripture and it's just based on like molecules like atoms and just mechanistic universe really.

[snorts]

So I do think that cynicism would come closer to Buddhism than epicurionism would. maybe some of the mystery sects, the Stoics, that kind of thing,

[sighs]

but I'm no I'm no authority on Epicurus or Epicuriism.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is also from Ethiopian fake TIG.

He says, "If the Buddha ever met Jesus, who do you think would have more influence on whom since both were in their own way philosophers and such?"

Well, I would assume as a Buddhist, it is a very convenient working hypothesis. The Bu the Buddha really was enlightened or as enlightened as it is possible for a human to be. So, I really don't think that he was particularly

um what's the word?

No, open to not open to suggestion, but what's the word? It's like oh there's a certain word I'm trying to think of

where

just uh impressionable. I think that's

that's close to the word I was looking

for anyway where that he's just going to

like change his way of thinking just

because somebody says something that I

mean he had already you know just

experienced ultimate reality

that he already knew whatever needed to

be known that he didn't need to like get

any kind of new knowledge or new

perspective on things that he was

already there

so I don't think that Jesus would have

influenced the Buddha much at all.

Especially considering that Jesus was

going with a relatively in my opinion a relatively crude like religious system. You know, he was he was essentially a Hebrew with relatively crude understanding of what God is all about and so forth. So yeah, I don't think that the Buddha would have had or I don't think the Buddha would have been much influenced by Jesus. It's possible that Jesus would have been influenced more by the Buddha than vice versa. Especially
if Jesus wasn't fully enlightened and didn't consider himself to be fully enlightened that I mean if you go just go with the New Testament Jesus wept the shortest verse in the New Testament

Jesus wept and you [snorts] know he'd
get depressed and upset and in bad moods
and so forth and [clears throat] you
know he's like making a
taking some knotted cords and using them
as a whip to drive the money changers
out of the temple and overturn turning
their tables and so forth.
So it in my opinion it is much more
questionable that that Jesus was
enlightened then that the Buddha was
enlightened. just I mean obviously
because I'm a Buddhist I would assume
that the Buddha was at least as wise as
Jesus was and probably wiser because I
just it's hard for me to believe that

Jesus of Nazareth was a fully
enlightened being much less the only
begotten son of God and the creator of
the universe.
So [snorts] see, yeah, I think that the
Buddha would have more influence on
Jesus
um than vice versa.
And of course, there are quite a few
people that think that Jesus in his lost
years actually went to Asia and became a
Buddhist, but I don't I mean that's
pretty hard for me to swallow also.
So I'm just going to move on to
Ethiopian fake Tig's third question,
which is what are your thoughts on
Zogchen meditation? been doing it for a

while now and it seems to be
significantly easier than weasa and I've
never practiced zogchan I've heard a
little bit about it like I've read a
little bit about it and apparently it's
similar to like shikant taza in Zen
Buddhism it's just like a wide open kind
of of meditation similar to what I was
practicing u for most of the time that I
was a monk but I really don't know
enough about like official orthodox
orthoprax zogchen to really make any
kind of statements about it because I
just have never done it. I've just
picked up a few tidbits of information
about it about how it is really just

like a wide open, you know, like there's
no primary object to it. You know,
you're just kind of making your mind
spacious and open and and silent kind of
a thing, which is what I was practicing.
So it's good seems to me
but [sighs]
I really could not compare it with weasa
meditation which isn't even really I
mean I don't know who came up with the
idea of calling mindfulness meditation
weasa meditation when wea is just
insight that arises spontaneously as a
result of certain practices or it can
just arise spontaneously due to life
experiences. is
so it should it be more correctly called

sipatana or just mindfulness meditation than calling a meditation technique we passa when we passa is not a meditation technique

it is insight that arises spontaneously often as a result of meditation but it could be even janna meditation that results in wea insight arising

[snorts]

[sighs] but my thoughts on Zogchan meditation are very few because I've never practiced it. I've never really studied it and I've never really conversed with anybody who has practiced it or studied it and so it's best for me just to move on to the next question

which is the last question

and this is from Aventity and Aventity

says in Christianity it is sometimes

believed that your very last action or

thought before dying is much more

important than any you had before as

long as you turn to God at the very last

moment. How are one's last thoughts or

actions viewed in Terravado? Do they

have any significance in the cycle of

rebirth? Well, first I would I would say

that it's kind of surprising to me that

they believe this in Christianity that

it would seem like just whenever

whenever it is that you turn to God, you

know, and became like a devout Christian

that that would be the most important

moment.

Um,

yeah. It it just seems to me that in Christianity this whenever you became like a serious devout Christian and were saved, that would be the most important moment of your life. The moment in which you were saved,

not necessarily the last moment. I mean, that's more of an Eastern thing. It seems to me like the Hindus definitely believe that. That's why, as I've said before, when Mahatma Gandhi was shot, he didn't say, "Oh, God." Like, "They got me." Like in the movie starring Ben Kingsley that came out in like 1980

something. It was Hey Ram. He says, "Hey Ram as he's dying because he wants his last thought to be focused on God."

And in terab Buddhism really, it's your last thought. First of all, it's your very last thought that determines your bunga cheetah in the in your next life. Bunga, it's like if you're not thinking anything, there's just like this static test pattern of your last image, your last perceptual image in the previous life. So that's going to be following you the whole next whole your whole next life will be your last thought in your previous life.

That's according to Abidama, but the sutas really don't say anything about

it. So be feel free to be skeptical as you please on that one. But also it's really [laughter] your last thought in this life is going to be the most important one for determining your first thought in your next life because there's a I mean there's no gap. It's just, you know, less than a trillionth of a second when this last thought in this life blinks out and the first thought in the next life blinks blinks in. So you've got like this momentum going. And so your last thought in this life is really going to be the most important thought for determining what your next life is going to be. It's not

going to determine all the details of your next life because you got a whole bunch of karma that's going to be conditioning that. And it may be like I' I've mentioned this just recently in a Q&A. Let's say you're just a shitty person. Not you necessarily in vanity, but you know, a person is just, you know, they're just a like a a criminal. They're like a mafia hitman. And then like as they're dying, they just have like this epiphany, you know? It's just they they see the light and everything and they die in this state of rapture, which apparently does happen sometimes, not necessarily with mafia hitmen, but with people in general. Sometimes just

normie type people. And then that would result in him getting a better rebirth. But still, he's got all this bad karma, this baggage of bad karma from killing people and so forth that's going to muck up that next life. You know, he might be reborn as, you know, some prince, you know, in living in a palace or something, but he's going to be like this rotten like commot prince who's just going to be all strung out on drugs and, you know,
molesting slave girls and all this kind of stuff. And so it's going to mess up his life. On the other hand, you could have a person who's very virtuous and

then let's say they die in agony and
they're just like cursing as they die,
which would then cause them to go into
like a worse state, but they've got so
much good karma that it may be they're
not going to stay in that that that,
you know, lower realm or whatever for
very long or it's going to be very much
mitigated by all this all this merit
that they brought with them.
So your very last thought isn't like
determining what your next life is going
to be like completely, but it is the
most important moment for determining
what your next like what realm of
existence you're going to be in. Like
what is your heading? You know, it's

it's determining what direction you're heading
as you die to so that you'll you'll hit the next life, you know, in that direction. So, you die with a heavenly mind, you're more likely to get a heavenly existence. You die with a demonic hellish kind of a mind, you're more likely to get a demonic hellish kind of existence. You die with like a like a sort of a ghostlike mind, whatever that is, you know, just sort of like a surreal dreamy kind of mind, then you might wind up in a surreal dreamy kind of ghost realm, that sort of thing. Most humans apparently die with more or

less of a human mind and so they wind up
being a human again which is as it
should be I suppose since most of their
karma is is human karma at least what
they've been cultivating recently.
So yeah, one's last thoughts or actions
viewed in terra it's it is
[clears throat] considered to be
important and there is some emphasis on
this like in Burmese tradition um there
was I can't remember who it was I think
it was like a government minister like
back in like the 1950s
whose wife was on her deathbed and she
was [clears throat]
having some sort of like nightmarish
experience with hell hounds coming to

get her you know drag her down into hell
And I think he himself or maybe his
mother-in-law, somebody sat next to her
bed and were like, you know, urging her
to think about the meritorious acts she
had done and sort of distract her from
the hell hounds and get her thoughts on
something good as she was dying. And
then it worked and she kind of went into
this state of bliss and was smiling and
the hell hounds were gone and she wound
up dying in a positive mental state.
But they do say that you your whole life
is really just kind of rehearsing for
the last moment of your life because
that's the one that's going to determine

what happens after you die.

It's what they say anyhow. And I do

think it does seem to be much more

important in Buddhism and also in

Hinduism than in Christianity because

really it seems to me like the most

important moment of your life as a

Christian is the moment in which you

turn to God and are saved.

>> [snorts]

>> So that's it. I guess I think I answered

that question. So [snorts] as I should

always say at the beginning and pretty

much never do. Do you have any questions

you think I can answer? I mean there's

no guarantee I'll be able to answer it.

Like Zogchin, it was just I just

couldn't answer that one. But
[clears throat] if you think I can
answer, it's about dharma, dharma, early
Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism especially,
you know, just monasticism, meditation,
that kind of stuff, feel free to ask and
I will give it a shot. I will try to
answer your question if it is a question
that I perceive to be in good faith. If
it's just like some wise joke question
kind of a thing, there are no
guarantees. I mean, I could just throw
it in for comic relief or something. And
like and subscribe if you have not done
so already.
And uh be happy and stuff.

Okay then.

Is this working? Is this on? [music]

[cough and snorts] Hello [clears throat]

and welcome to question and answer

number 174.

I am your host Po Bosa and 174 is of

course not prime. It is in fact 2 * 3 *

29.

29 is a prime number though.

And uh this is my my beverage. Although

I think this little paper umbrella is

faulty. It doesn't have like the little

rubber band thing that holds the

umbrella up. And I really don't like if

I'm going to get paper umbrellas, I want

I don't want faulty ones. So I probably

[clears throat] spend $5 on shipping to have this sent back to the company. And I sit before you with like an unusual Christmy background and the muer bead on my beard. Mainly because a [clears throat] short time ago I attempted a very frustrating video conversation with venerable Ajan Punadamo. We're going to make a video about
um materialism and mechanism, determinism,
realism in teraba Buddhism. But the venerable Ajon lives in a relatively remote area of Canada and his internet kept crashing. We got about 15 minutes into the interview after like 40 minutes

of of trying because at least half the time he he was like freezing due to a lost connection or a not enough insufficient connection and his internet just completely crashed twice during that time. So finally he suggested we just give it up which we did. And so we're doing a Q&A here instead, deal with it.

And so it says with that is a kind of uh intro of sorts. I'm just going to wade into this. And uh the first question is from Frank who asked his question in an unorthodox venue.

>> [clears throat]

>> on the internet and so I didn't notice
it this I don't know if he asked he
asked this about a week ago so it maybe
should have been on the previous Q&A but
I just didn't see it but it's first now
so at least there's that Frank says when
did the dharma transition from poly to
Sanskrit okay when did the dhamma
transition from poly to Sanskrit I
suspect it was approximately 500 years
after the Buddha's death And actually it
was way earlier than that.
Um like even like the pre- Mahayana
schools most of them switched over to a
kind of a kind of Sanskrit. I think it's
called like Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit.
It's not pure classical Sanskrit

but it's been Sanskritized.

The original Buddhist teachings were in probably a language that some people called Mugadi,

like the official language of the kingdom of Mugada. Um, and Pi is very close to that. I assume Pi and Mugadi would be mutually intelligible. Although poly is somewhat of a lingua franca that is like an artificial language. It was never really a vernacular spoken by like village of lay people anything like that. [snorts] Um it was uh started with mugadi and then as Buddhism gradually or terraata Buddhism I should say prototerravada

uh gradually migrated westwards and then southwards. Um the language got streamlined and just sort of mutated, evolved a little bit so that it [clears throat] was easy to learn and monks from different areas of like northern and western and increasingly southern India would be able to communicate and understand each other. And so by the time the texts were written down,

um, poly had reached kind of its final stages or almost its final stages because even like commentarial poly uh has noticeable differences from like suta poly and like the the atawaga of the sutini pata is is like an even more

archaic form of poly with more like

vadic sans.

elements to it, different declenions,

that kind of thing, different suffixes.

So,

um it was just the like the tradition in

ancient India that like scriptures

would be composed in Sanskrit.

So, you have a lot of Brahmans, you

know, Vadic Brahmanist say, "Stop

scratching the couch. quit it

dog trying to dig a hole in the couch.

Um you had brahinss like like vadic

brahmans converting to Buddhism and so

they naturally are kind of wanting to

have the scriptures of their new

religion composed in the scriptural language of Sanskrit and so it wound up with most of the early schools of Buddhism adopting some form of Sanskrit. Terravada is one of the few that even though it didn't like like really strictly adhere to the original language spoken by the Buddha. Although most Terravvada Buddhists believe it did, still it's much closer to the original language spoken by the Buddha than Sanskrit is.

Classical Sanskrit also was never really a vernacular language spoken by village normies, village lay people.

So when did the dharma transition from poly to Sanskrit? uh probably within

like the first hundred years after the Buddhist parbana, after the first council that um there would be um most schools of Buddhism would become more their their texts would become more and more Sanskritized over time. Um or there probably a few others besides Terravada that sort of tried to stay with the original Procrit language but still like evolved in subtle ways over time. Like the Jane texts also are not in Sanskrit but it's a a procrit similar to poly but Janism isn't Buddhism so we can just leave the Janes alone I suppose.

And uh I guess I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, "How does Buddhism make sense of supernatural phenomena in the context of other religions such as speaking in tongues, demonic possession, exorcisms, etc. What is your personal take on such phenomena?" Well, this kind of stuff was known to early [clears throat] Buddhism and like traditional Burmese Buddhism even today. Maybe not so much the speaking in tongues, but demonic possession and exorcisms are well known in Buddhist Burma. And to some degree, I'm sure they were known in ancient India. For example, what what immediately comes to mind when I when I read this question is um in the Degan Kaya, the the Sila,

which is the first group of sutas in the Dean Kaya, there's a list of things that monks aren't supposed to do. It's not really vineia rules. It's just sort of like

additional to vignia, you know, it's to the side of winia. It's just in the sutas this list of things that good monks shouldn't do. And one of them is questioning a girl in trance. So, I mean, she'd be like a spirit medium. So, spirit mediums were known in the Buddhist or or channelers

as they became known later um were [clears throat] known in ancient India. So there would be at least a davas

talking through through usually female spirit mediums um and probably like ghosts or pas. I mean when they're talking just kind of nonsense or gibberish which could be like a kind of speaking in tongues. I mean when I was a kid my father used to conduct seances even before I was born. He was into the occult and there was this one tape. It was like a realtoreal, like ancient realtore tape that had a recorded seance.

And I'd listened to it a few times when I was a kid, but it was kind of creepy, kind of scary for a little kid to listen to this stuff. And the first spirit that came through was speaking apparently in

a foreign language. It sounded like some kind of Native American [clears throat] language. And it took the the the humans conducting the seance some effort and time to get this, you know, deceased uh [clears throat] American Indian, you know, Native American, you know, out of the the medium so they could find someone who spoke English.

Although, it could all just been some kind of gibberish. I mean, nobody understood the language. It just sounded kind of like a Native American language. So, I assume that sort of thing has been happening ever since psychics started going into trance and

would would include like stone age witch doctors, that kind of thing.

And so Buddhism would

I mean I don't know what the official scriptural explanation of how it works would be but presumably spirits can communicate through like a human medium.

That's I guess that's why they're called mediums or yeah it'd be mediums and not media.

[snorts]

But I I can't remember like if Abid Dhama or the commentarial tradition really tries to give some nuts and bolts explanation of exactly how it works.

Um but exorcisms I mean that happens a lot in like modernday Buddhist Burma.

Usually monks sometimes there'd be an Apollia who does it. Apolland is like a white wizard. You know Apolland is the upper path. You know, outland is the lower path and that's like black magic, but [snorts] Apolland is the upper path which is usually using like Buddhist scripture and you know in the name of Buddha I cast you out kind of stuff.

So that still happens and uh

[clears throat]

in in Burma Buddhist terravada Buddhist Burma even today people can just get possessed

um like there's one traditional form of possession called the nakad or the the

wife of a deva which is usually a woman
sometimes a homosexual male who u
apparently they get possessed and will
just like dance orgastically and
prophesy usually at festivals.
So, I mean, it does exist, although I
don't know if anywhere in the text
anyone actually sits down and tries to
explain the exact mechanics of how some
other spirit can possess or communicate
through a human being um in trance or
one who is just has like these
vulnerabilities that allow themselves to
get possessed.
So let's see what is my personal take on
such phenomena.
I think a lot of speaking in tonesues is

just babbling.

[clears throat]

Probably not all speaking in tongues. My father had this notorious second wife, not my mother, who would go into trance and do automatic writing where according to my father, this is before my time, but according to my father, she would be writing stuff that they couldn't understand. they'd show it to some college professor or something and say and he'd say that's addict Greek or you know that's Mandarin Chinese or whatever. So

um I mean it can happen. Anything is possible really. I mean anything that

you can imagine is possible.

So

my personal take on speaking in tongues

and possession and so forth. I mean

ultimately it's we are creating it with

our own mind and so even demonic

possession I mean you can say that

there's another being possessing an

individual. Although from the Buddhist

point of view individuals are it's just

like

delusional. I mean there are no

ultimately real individual beings.

So the exorcisms

it's mainly just like the the the

subconscious belief system of the person

who is possessed who has enough faith in

the exorcist that the the exorcist
really is able to drive out whatever. I
mean it could be hysterical dissociation
or a genuine
demonic entity or a combination of of
both that it's like the the subconscious
belief system of the person who is
possessed is is I mean that's one of the
main things that allows them to be
healed. And I mean faith healers, it's
kind of a similar thing except it's more
of a more a more physical kind of
ailment instead of a more mental kind of
ailment where a faith healer is like the
the faith of the person who's being
healed is sufficient that they get

better. I mean even in the New Testament when Jesus would heal somebody and they would thank him, Jesus sometimes would say, "It's your own faith that healed you.

So I mean anything is possible, anything that you can imagine anyway. And so like speaking in tongues, I mean to speak real languages in when you're in a trance or possessed or something, that's possible. Also, of course, just babbling in gibberish is quite possible.

And demonic possession, I mean, that's possible. also a kind of pseudmonic possession where you just have like this hysterical dissociation going on. That's possible. Exorcisms. Um I remember I

mean I've discussed this before where I got one it was it was during the thin jen festival in Burma. I was living on a big flat rock under a kind of tropical chestnut tree which was to so twisty and hollow that the wood cutters didn't want to cut it down. it was useless for for lumber.

And um I just kind of I was woke up in the morning. I'm got myself propped up like this on my side to to look at the horizon to see if it was dawn yet because I didn't even have a clock or a watch at the time. And I just froze that way and like started hearing things. And um I'm thinking I mean should I be

scared? And then it's like being scared isn't going to help anything. So then I thought well I'll just recite Bagawat Arhat Sam Buddhasa um and in the hopes that if anything is like possessing me that it's it's a devout Buddhist being in Burma and that'll drive it out and for whatever reason it worked. You know I just started Namotasa Bhagawat Samasan Buddhasa and it was just it was like the spell was broken. [clears throat]

What the exact mechanism of the spell being broken was I don't know. could just be my own subconscious belief that it could work and it did.

Um, I think that is more likely than any

beings actually possessing me at the time. It was just sort of like a waking dream. Sort of like Ivan Karamazov's feverish dream of the devil in in the the brothers Karamazov that kind of thing.

So, [gasps]

let's see. Have I answered the question supernatural phen how does Buddhism make sense of supernatural phenomena in the context of other religions

such as speaking in tongues demonic position well I think I mean if Buddhism is going to explain that in Christians they'd use the same explanation as how it works in any people including

Buddhist people

so I guess I already answered that part

and what is my personal take on such

phenomena it's all mindmade

It's like a It's like a dream

that seems pretty damn real to almost

everybody. I'm just going to move on to

this question though. This is from Fred

and Fred says, "Is emancipation a better

word than enlightenment?"

And I mean both words are found in poly.

you know, emancipation or liberation

would be like mocha or pamoka

uh we moa you know any anything based on

mocha m o k k h a if my spelling is

correct that means like liberation.

Uh enlightenment on the other hand would

be like bodhi or um you know even like nibbana could could be translated as enlightenment I suppose. Um, is emancipation a better word than enlightenment though? I mean, it depends on the context. If you want to emphasize the liberation from samsara, the liberation from attachments and dooka and delusion and all that, then I mean maybe the context would favor like liberation to enlightenment. On the other hand, I mean, if if you're like [clears throat] it's like the end of suffering, you might want to use, you know, mocha.

Um, but if it's the liberation from

delusion, you know, it's the end of delusion, you might want to use something more like enlightenment. So, it depends on like what your emphasis is.

And I I mentioned before, I mean, there's only one dharma, I suppose, but you can have different emphases. You know, the the head oriented person wants an end to delusion, whereas the heart oriented person wants an end to suffering. But it's the same this the end of suffering is the end of delusion because the suffering is based on delusion. The two go hand in hand.

So really emancipation and enlightenment are pretty much equal I guess. Uh

liberation and and enlightenment

we moa and bodhi or what would you call

I mean there's other ways you could say

enlightenment I suppose.

Um, so I mean it's just a matter of

personal preference and what the actual

context is, what you're emphasizing when

you talk about somebody being

enlightened or liberated from suffering

and delusion.

And I'm just going to move on to Fred's

next question. Was the Buddha a

cognitive scientist? Well, he was

definitely empirical,

but cognitive scientists would involve

scientific method, I suppose. And I

don't think scientific method had really been invented yet where first you form a hypothesis and then you test the hypothesis with like you know like controlled experimentation and like u yeah you'd have to have like controls and so forth and if you're not into science it doesn't matter what exactly what a control is but you want to limit the variables because you're testing for just one thing and I don't think the Buddha really did that in a systematic way. I mean, just a certain amount of common sense and intelligence may have had him as a kind of protoscientist, you know, he is definitely empirical, you know, based on like his own

experiences and what works and what doesn't work. So, that's empirical, I suppose. But cognitive science, which was invented like in the 1970s or something like that, um, yeah, that's I wouldn't say it's exactly the same that calling someone a scientist.

Um, I mean, you can use the word loosely in that they're just like an empiricist who really wants to know reality, but really a scientist is someone who follows scientific method, which wasn't really formally invented until Bacon came up with it, you know, just a few hundred years ago.

And cognitive science came later than

that. [clears throat]

First, the the earliest science was mainly like physics and some chemistry. Um, so yeah, I'd say technically speaking the Buddha was not a cognitive scientist, although he was definitely an empiricist in my opinion. Although of course in ancient India, ancient times in general, you're going to just go along with certain cultural assumptions like flat earth for example. And that's just taken as a given. That's really not what you're out to prove or disprove. It's just part of the baggage of being born and raised into a certain culture. And there's still a lot of that nowadays.

And I think I'm just going to move on to
Fred's third question.
[clears throat] Do you know if nibbana
is possible or is it just a belief?
Well, nibbana as a word, yeah, that
would be just a belief. You know, like
the the Tibetan book of the great
liberation, you know, it says, you know,
nibbana or nirvana in various synonyms
of nirvana are all just mental
constructs.
But I mean, if you're get going to get
to what nibbana, the word nibbana is
trying to represent,
um, whether it's possible, I mean, I've
I've said this many times, whether it's

even possible in an aamsaric context is

questionable. I mean, nibbana I mean

ultimate reality nibbana as like

realizing ultimate reality.

Um

gosh,

I mean it's it's kind of a trick

question. In a way, it's a paradox,

but

I would guess that

someone who becomes enlightenment or

someone who becomes enlightened or

emancipated,

they're they're transcending samsara. So

it could be that the enlight the actual

enlightened part is just not within the

context of samsara anymore. So from a

samsaric point of view it just doesn't exist. You you can't see it or hear it that kind of thing.

But I do think that it is possible for [clears throat] a person to experience reality the contean thing in itself.

Even though it may be that by doing so, one is at least temporarily exiting samsara or just like overflowing samsara, just expanding beyond the limits of samsara, that kind of thing.

But from an unenlightened point of view, they're still there in samsara.

So an un an unenlightened person looking at an enlightened being, they're still just going to see uh an unenlightened

human because they're looking at the entire world through samsara colored glasses.

I mean they might believe someone is enlightened. I mean there's plenty of gurus out there, plenty of ajons and seats that their followers think are enlightened but they have an unenlightened concept of enlightenment. an unrealistic idea of what an arroant really is and so it's just kind of a kind of delusion I guess

but is nibbana possible in order to even discuss that you've got to drag nibbana into samsara where you can discuss it and then of course the whole thing is is ruined

you ruin everything by by doing that

but there is definitely something to it

and it I mean like I said somebody who

becomes enlightened the enlightened

aspect of them is has transcended

samsara and is just beyond the reach of

any samsaric attempt to cognize it or

perceive it or anything. Once you

perceive something it's not real

anymore.

So once you have an idea about something

you're you're dealing with symbols just

you're dealing with just some saric

perception and you're not dealing with

reality ultimate reality and

enlightenment

but

I mean even if even if it's the case

let's just take the worst case scenario

no second worst case scenario where

you can't become fully absolutely

enlightened certainly

I mean, you can get close to it in this

world. I mean, you can what's what's the

word? Attenuate your delusion. You can

be less delusional than somebody else

until I mean, it's just barely suscept.

They're barely discernible amount of of

delusion remaining. Let's just go with

that. is they have to have some

some

like foot in the door to samsara even to

function in samsara what appears to the

rest of us as samsara then um they'll
have to have some tiny amount of
delusion or something to keep them here
but still I mean even that is worth
striving for I mean it's it's worth
striving just to reduce your delusion
and suffering even if for some reason
it's not possible to get all the way
down to zero at least not in the
samsaric context still you can reduce it
which is good
so just striving in in dharma just to
understand reality even to reduce your
suffering and attachment and delusion
and all that is is 100% worthwhile still
even if full enlightenment is not

possible

And within a samsuric context it may not

be

because I mean nibbana is just you're no

longer ins you're no longer in samsara

you know you are no longer samsaric in a

sense

and I don't know if I really answered

that question but it's it's pretty much

of a trick question.

So I'm just going to move on to the next

question. This is from Jimmy Lad. And I

I might as well say we don't have a

whole terrible long list of questions,

so we could go under two hours this

time. And we've only been going for a

little over half an hour. And it's kind

of interesting how the Mujolnir beard can hit the hit the microphone like this.

[clears throat]

Okay. So, the next question is from Jimmy Lad, and Jimmy Lad says, "I asked a question last week, but unfortunately it disappeared." Yeah, that happens on YouTube. I don't know why either. A lot of people have said my questions disappear from the comments under your video. And it's not me who does it. It's just it could be just technical internet comma or karma if you will. Like my attempts at trying to have a video conversation with venerable Ajan

Punadamo or one viewer who says that my videos always crash. It's only my videos that crash on their computer, but somehow it still happens.

Mara doesn't want people to watch my videos.

So, anyways, see, I asked a question last week, but unfortunately, it disappeared. It was the quote from a sutra that said, "One must attain a state of realization where one is purified of all views, even those of the five precepts, etc." How are we to reconcile this seeming no view or being [clears throat] purged of all views with the skeptic aesthetic who says who said he didn't believe in anything and the

Buddha corrected him and said that this
belief itself is a view and then he
reached enlightenment. What I'm saying
is that doesn't purifying ourselves of
all views
lead us into the same error of the
skeptic aesthetic.
How are these two positions distinguish?
Well, I've I've pretty much answered
this question [clears throat] before in
previous Q&As's, which is a good
indication that anyone who watches my
Q&A's Q's and A's should watch the
entire 173 preceding ones, just in case
I already answered their question.
But we'll we'll cut Jimmy Lad some slack

here. And um I think the main difference between a skeptic and someone like the Buddha is that the Buddha was not a skeptic. A lot of people say that the Buddha was a skeptic, but he wasn't. He was a mystic. And he realized that you're never going to know ultimate reality, the contean thing in itself through perception, through beliefs, through world views.

Like Jay Krishna Mertie the the more famous of the two Krishna Merties had a book one of his best known books is freedom from the known which isn't really freedom from the known it's freedom from what you think you know freedom from perception freedom from

belief

because as I already mentioned belief is ultimately delusional belief is thinking that you know something that you don't know and belief is always perceptual whereas actual knowledge is not perceptual. ual to you cannot know the contean thing in itself through perception. So you have to transcend perception. You have to transcend belief in order to get to true knowledge which is direct immediate experience of the contient thing in itself. And Kant himself believed that [clears throat] the human mind just cannot know the contient thing in itself. According to

Kant, we're just trapped in samsara,
trapped in the thing as it seems. And
most people are but there is one
contient thing in itself because Kant
was a mystic he didn't know this but
there is one contient thing in itself
that a person can genuinely know and
that is the contient thing in itself of
consciousness itself.
So in meditation
you try to attenuate your perceptions
have less and less perception while at
the same time maintaining consciousness
until finally you're conscious but
you're not perceiving anything and then
you are right there in the contean thing
in itself of consciousness itself. So

it's like water and waves. I it's one of
my most worn out analogies
that consciousness is like water and
mental states, perceptions and valitions
and so forth are like the the waves on
the surface of the water. And if you
most people are just stuck at the level
of waves. I like this wave. I don't like
that wave. This wave is bigger than that
wave. That wave is ugly and the other
wave over there is beautiful. Just this
kind of stuff. Uh and they just had no
concept at all of just water.
So what consciousness or what meditation
does is you're working for a flat calm
so that you're not going to be

distracted by all the forms of the waves and you just get straight into the essence. You you realize whoa that's just water. And then the the the real trick according especially according to Zen Buddhism is to maintain that awareness after the waves come back where you could have just a raging stormy sea and still you're like at the level of water
you know you're just still at the level of consciousness and not perception. Hence the uh the old Zen saying that I mean [clears throat] the uh the Zeno the meditation hall can be resounding reverberating with the shouts of the master and blows from his stick can be

falling like rain but still the master
is dwelling in stillness and silence.
That's because he is at the level of
consciousness and not distracted by all
the forms of samsara.
So getting back to the question, no.
Yeah, it's there's a difference between
being a mystic, especially like a very
advanced mystic and being a skeptic. The
mystic knows you can know reality.
You're just not going to know it through
perceptions.
The skeptic is still kind of stuck at
the level of perceptions.
So I mean he's not really
he's not really knowing the contean

thing in itself. He just comes to the
conclusion you can't know anything which
tends to be just another belief and
keeps you stuck in some sorrow.
So I guess I answered that question. I'm
going to be moving on to the next one.
Now, this is from Rea
and I really don't know how to how to
pronounce German words
and [clears throat] I'm not even sure if
this is an actual question that
just uh leaves this kind of quote that
has a question mark in it. So that's why
it's on the list although it continues
after the question mark and the whole
thing could just be a quote.
So he says this is an excerpt from the

new book the Buddha's face by Bante Mudataterra

and then I guess what follows is the are the words of Bonte Mudaterra.

Everywhere in the Buddhist world today, the face of the Buddha greets us serene, symmetrical, crowned with coiled hair, gazing in calm detachment. From stone colossi in Bameon to bronzes in Thailand, from guilt images in Japan to marble statues in Sri Lanka, this face has become universal. And yet the historical Godma, the prince of the Shakya clan who lived in the fifth century B.CE, almost certainly looked nothing like these statues. His

disciples remembered him as golden
skinned. Suana Wana, deep blueeyed,
Abilaneta,
noble in appearance, but simple in
bearing. As a monk, he shaved his head.
Let's see.
according to Majamanikica suta number 26
and wore ochre robes for centuries after
his party nibbana his followers refused
to depict him in human form at all
relying instead on symbols the bodhic
tree the dharma wheel the footprints the
empty throne now here comes the question
how then did we arrive at the serene
figure with coiled hair and cranial bump
seated in Greco Roman robes question
mark but then the quote continues I

think This question is more than art history. It is about how history, myth and culture converge to create memory. It is about how God the Arian Manusa of solar descent became the universal archetype of enlightenment. It is about how civilizations Indian Greek Egyptian all left their imprint on his visage. And I think it's kind of a stretch to say that ancient Egypt influenced the appearance of Buddha images. I do think that is pushing it to some degree, but [clears throat]
I mean we've discussed this before like um how here's the actual question. How then did we arrive at the serene figure

with coiled hair and cranial bump seated in the Greco Roman robes? Well, I mentioned that some of the first Buddha images were made by Greeks or helanized inhabitants of what would now be Pakistan and Afghanistan.

because Alexander the Great conquered that area, settled Greek settlers there, you know, with with like colony cities about half of which were named Alexandria.

And so the Greeks that settled in that area of like Afghanistan and Pakistan, many if not most of them converted to Buddhism because that was firmly Buddhist at the time. And so and and they preferred Buddhism to like Vdic

Brahminism because the Vadic Brahmans
were they were sort of like Hebrews
where you know it was kind of an
exclusive club you know they kind of
looked down on the barbarian Malayas
were the Greeks and so the Buddhists
were more accepting and inviting and
that's one reason possibly like better
philosophical cohesiveness and so forth
also you know maybe maybe even a little
better profoundity with regard to what
the Greeks were encountering. The Greeks
were I mean they did have an
appreciation of philosophy.
So because of whatever reasons the
Greeks converted to Buddhism in uh their

their easternmost

uh colonies

and so they they liked statues. is

they'd been making statues for quite a

while, you know, going all the way back

to, you know, pre Greek Menowans.

And so they started making Buddha

statues. Some of the first statues were

of of the Buddha were made by Greeks.

And they modeled the Buddha on the god

Apollo. And the god Apollo always had a

top knot of hair. And so they just made

the Buddha with a top knot of hair,

not really caring that by all accounts,

the Buddha was shaven headed. He didn't

have hair other than maybe some stubble

and then later the origins of this like

the original meaning of the top knot of hair were lost and so it just turned into like this weird lump on top of the head or sometimes it will be like a flame of wisdom like some Thai or Cambodian Buddha images will have sort of a flame like this. Sometimes it'll look sort of like an onion like this bulb with a like a point at the top. Um, but it [clears throat] almost all Buddha statues have head hair going all the way back to apparently
Apollo, the Greek god Apollo.
Um, but this part seated in Greco Roman robes. Maybe the earliest statues he would be dressed like Apollo is dressed.

Although most Buddhist statues nowadays,
he's not dressed in Greco Roman robes. I
mean the Greek robes and the Roman robes
were different from each other anyway. I
mean he's really not wearing a toga.
So he's wearing like the Shivaram.
He's wearing monk's robes
and some I mean some of my favorite ones
he's he's got you know the shoulder
uncovered but um a lot of the time he's
wearing the robes in the oldfashioned
way when robes were still relatively
small covering both shoulders because
that's the way monks wore their robes in
ancient times.
Like even like the Kamakura Buddha
statue, he's got it covering both

shoulders and then he's got it hanging downs to show off some bare chest, which probably I mean monks didn't really wear their robes that way. But um I think by the time the Kamakura Buddha was was created in Japan, um the Buddhist monks in Japan had pretty much stopped wearing the the traditional three robes of an ancient Indian Buddhist monk. Anyway, so was I'm not exactly sure. It's just sort of like a garbled understanding of what monk's robes how monk's robes were worn at that point.

But the Buddhist statue I've got, he's I mean that what he's wearing could qualify as completely kosher ancient

Indian Buddhist robes.
So maybe some of the early Greek like the Gondaran Buddha images the the clothing was a little more Greek looking than now. But still I mean it's robes just like a big rectangle of cloth worn over the upper body and just another rectangle of cloth worn like a saron you know kind of folded on around one's [clears throat] waist.
And I really don't see how the Egyptians could have really influenced Buddhist statues all that much. There was a little bit of like Mesopotamian influence in India. There were trade routes between ancient India like even going back into Vadic times with

Mesopotamia. And later, you know, after
after the time of the Buddha's life,
there were trade routes with like
ancient Rome and so forth. That's how
like the uh let's say what is it the
tomic
uh understanding of astronomy made it
into India where it turned into like
Sanskrit astronomy texts like the surya
sedanta that kind of thing but ancient
Egypt I mean it would have been minimal
at best any influence of ancient
Egyptians on on Buddha images for
example
I think uh venerable Muda Terra is
talking about like the serenity of the

Buddha. But I mean the serenity he was serene regardless of ancient India but the Greeks definitely had an influence. [clears throat] By the time the Romans came along and became uh sort of like the western world power, Buddhism was already well established. And so even Roman influence on like the appearance of Buddha statues, Buddha images and so forth would be minimal, but Greek and Indian definitely. So I'm not even sure if that was really a a [clears throat] question directed towards me. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ruie. And I hope that this is recording. And uh yeah, the the uh the little green

bars are moving back and forth for the microphone as my my beard bead hits the microphone.

And Ruie [snorts] says, "Do [clears throat] you think the sign of the mind is still a sensory object, a spirious

spurious apparition generated by the mind when it is tethered by one-pointed meditations instead of attending to its broader context as gateway?" I'm not exactly sure what Ruie is referring to. I mean if he's referring to the nimita which is the like a symptom of what is called access concentration which is sort of the gateway to Janna that

supposedly according to the commentarial tradition according to like pa method of Burma that before you get first Janna you're going to reach this access concentration and you're going to see a kind of nimita or sign which usually is just sort of like a like a whitish or a light grayish ish oval or cloud.

Sometimes it can be an image of the Buddha se seated in meditation or some such.

Um but yeah, it's still a perception and it's not found in the sutas at all. I mean, this is just a like an artifact of later tradition and the commentarial tradition that you're going to have access concentration as like pre-Janna.

I think by the time the commentarial tradition reached its final form, Janna really wasn't even understood that well anymore. In fact, in the sutas that I mean anyone who really wants to understand Janna is going to be very frustrated if they read the sutas and try to understand exactly what Janna is because it's still controversial because almost every single time Janna is described or explained in the sutas, it's the same stock just block of words that that are just inserted into into various sutas. you know, it's just the same explanation which isn't much of an explanation at all. It's it's kind of a

a description without really explaining much. And the description can be interpreted in various ways. Hence the controversial nature of what Jonah actually is to the point that Janna might as well just be I mean it's it's practically useless. I mean, if you can't really identify or define what Janna is in an uncontroversial way so that everyone can agree on it, then you're better off just not using the term.

So, the sign of the mind is still perceptual. As long as it's a sign, it's going to be perceptual. And you can say it's a sensory object in that from the Buddhist point of view, the mind is the

sixth sense. So, anything mental is going to be sensory from from the Buddhist point of view. Anyhow, cuz the mind is the sixth sense organ which I guess in terra like the commentarial tradition especially it's it's a chamber of the heart and not the brain although nowadays in the west we accept the idea that it is the brain that is the source of mind or the primary source of mind anyway at least with regard to thinking and perceiving.

[sighs] So

yeah, I mean if you read the the sutas, what you're going for is you should be going for the signless, the animeita.

You're not going for the sign. You're

going for the signless.

And that is you are transcending

perception. You are meditating in a way

that you're not thinking anymore. You're

not perceiving or believing anymore.

You're just getting to the contient

thing in itself of consciousness.

just wide awake awareness just silent

and clear like glass.

So yeah, the whole sign or the nimita is

uh

yeah it's it's not something that you

should be chasing after.

Much more important is the signless the

absence of any sign.

And uh let's see. Did I answer the

question?

Yeah. Yeah. I'm just going to I think I answered the question. Do I think the side of the mind is still a sensory object spirious apparition generated by the mind when it is tethered by one-pointed meditations instead of attending to its broader context as gateway? I mean the whole thing of the broader context as gateway is not canonical anyway. It's just found in the commentarial tradition anyhow.

So yeah, I mean you'd be better off striving for the signless instead of the sign. And I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from some papa.

And some papa says, "What are the
holidays or annual celebrations in a
Burmese Buddhist monastery?"
Well, let's see. The first big one of
like the western calendar would be thin
jan which is the new year's festival
which really I mean it's based on
ancient Indian astronomy
because technically the new year's f
sonran in Thailand is the same thin it's
called thin jen in Burmese sonran in in
Thai I think it's sramina in Sanskrit
which means crossing over and what's
happening is the sun is passing through
the meridian Ian containing
[clears throat]
the ancient lunar mansion or asterism of

Rayadi which corresponds to a bright star in the constellation of Pisces which contains no bright stars. So it's it's like the brightest star you know which is still relatively dim in Pisces. Pisces is really you look up there you're not going to see two fish. It's just like this dim cluster of stars and some like late classical or early medieval Indian astronomer after like ast a astronomical knowledge was coming to India from the Roman Empire through trade routes that they came up with this idea. They they kind of extrapolated backwards. They calculated backwards and they determined that there was a

universal um conjunction of all the known planets and the sun and the moon at this point in the constellation Raywood, you know, a zillion gajillion years ago. And so they assumed that was when the universe began at this univers universal conjunction. And so since the universe began at that time, then that must be, you [clears throat] know, that's what you're going to consider to be the beginning and the end of the year because that was the beginning of the first year.

Um, so I mean, it's not really a Buddhist holiday, but it's definitely a Southeast Asian holiday. And you got like five days of nobody working. You

know, it's like banks are closed, excuse me, the banks are closed and it's just school is out, all this stuff. And so a lot of men will go to the monasteries and be ordained for like five days. And the lay people will go and take eight precepts. You know, people get more religious. You know, it's sort of like New Year's resolutions. And you want to start the new year with good deeds. you know, you want to start off on the right foot, so to speak. So, yeah, that's probably one of the biggest holidays at a Buddhist monastery. It's not a particularly Buddhist holiday. It's based on Indian astrology or

astronomy, I should say, but you know,
it's just a cultural thing. And then
after that would be Buddha Day or the
full moon of what is usually May.
Sometimes it can happen like the end of
April, like the year that I was
ordained. The full moon of
[clears throat]
it's called Wisak,
the full moon of Wisaka, which is
another one of these lunar mansions.
It's the name of a a month in the
ancient Indian calendar. Um that was
when the Buddha became enlightened
according to tradition. [clears throat]
And then later tradition added he was
born and died all on that same day,

which is statistically kind of unlikely.
It may be that they just didn't know
like sort of like Jesus's birthday, you
know, they didn't really know exactly
when it was. So, they just kind of
conveniently attribute that day to
someday that's already considered to be
important like the feast day of soul
invictus in the late Roman Empire or
Buddha day already in in Buddhist
countries.
So yeah, we sack or you know the
celebration of the Buddha's
enlightenment at least the celebration
of his enlightenment on on the full moon
of May is established in in ancient

times. I think his birth and death got
got attributed to that same day later
on. Also, a little bit of trivia. The
full moon of May is also the day that
Quai Chang harpooned the Imperial nephew
on the pilot episode of Kung Fu,
requiring him to flee to America and
deal with cowboys
instead [clears throat] of being uh a
Shaolin monk in China.
[sighs] So, okay. So, that was the
second a little bit of a digression
there. And then the next annual
celebration,
well, I mean like the three months of
the range retreat is considered sort of
it's sort of like Lent in Roman

Catholicism. You know, people are more religious during during Lent. You know, they take keeping precepts a little more seriously. A lot of monasteries will have the monks doing more intensive meditation during the the reigns retreat, the Wasa, which literally means rain.

Um and the first and last days are you know kind of

like sort of like holidays especially the last day of Wasa which is also the invitation day or pwana day where I mean lay people will come and they'll they'll bring food to the monks and the the the seat will deliver a speech and and give

eight precepts to the people and then they'll sit around chatting and drinking tea and eating the leftovers from the monks or you know just what the monks didn't eat, not necessarily their leings out of their bowl or anything like that. Although a lot of Burmese people think eating like amongst leftovers right out of his bowl is is good for your health. You know, it's like protects you somehow.

Um, let's see. Then there's one month after that in Burma anyway, I'm not sure about other countries, it's the the the festival of lights where people light lots and lots of candles which is technically the last day of the 4 month

rainy season in in Buddhist time. I mean it no longer corresponds the Buddhist calendar traditionally no longer corresponds to reality. So it's due to a a phenomenon called precession of the equinoxes where the Buddhist calendar is based on the cital year or the position of the sun or the full moon really among the constellations whereas [clears throat] like the western year is based on the seasonal year like one uh winter solstice to the next winter solstice and the seasonal year of the seasons and decide a real year of the sun or the full moon amongst the stars they don't completely correspond there's

like a difference of like one day every
70 years so since the Buddhist time
and [clears throat]
western astrology has the same problem
since the Buddhist time it's like the
actual seasons have been shifting one
day every approximately 70 years for 25
centuries until you're about like a
[clears throat] month and a half off
now. So, what is now the beginning of
the rainy season officially is like a
month and a half later than the real
beginning of the rainy season.
And anyways, so I mean the rainy season
is pretty much ended by the time you get
to the festival of lights, usually the
full moon of November.

Um, but not necessarily. I mean, there's still kind of vestigages of it still going on. And that would be like the last real celebration that I can think of. So to recap, to review,

you've got [clears throat]

New Year's

like five days long. You've got Buddha Day or Whisak. You've got the beginning of the reigns retreat. You got the end of the razor retreat which is also Abidama day, Pawa day, the day of invitation when monks invite other monks to tell them you know their shortcomings and so forth which doesn't really happen in Burma anymore. That's also Abidama

day because because according to
tradition the Buddha left a kind of
holographic image of himself on earth
and spent a rainy season up in heaven
teaching his mother who was a goddess at
that point and other davas Abidama
and then he came back down on the last
day of the reigns retreat which
[clears throat] is also called Abidama
day now or in Burmese it's pronounced
abidama.
So a beat a day is a big deal. Even
though I mean whether the Buddha really
did leave a holographic image of himself
and levitate up into heaven to teach
Abidama or Abida to the denisens of this
heaven realm is

you can decide for yourself on that one [sighs] and those are those are the main ones. I mean sometimes individual monasteries they may celebrate the the abbott's birthday or something like that but those were the main ones. So and the festival of lights I'm really not exactly sure what the exact significance of all the lights are. I mean I'm sure somebody knows but I it's it's not me but mainly that's just officially the last day of the range retreat.

So it's kind of like a harvest festival too.

Okay. So let's see here. I'll just move on to S. Papa Lapa's next question. What

is the monastery culture like in Burma or in Terravada in general? The monastery culture. Well, you've got different monasteries with different abbots and different traditions, different emphases. Like a school monastery is going to be like a school monastery in town like Mahag Gandon in in Burma. The city of Amarapura is going to have a very different culture than like a forest meditation monastery like Chelin Doya. I've lived at both places. Radically different monastery cultures. I mean you can say like a stereotypical monastery culture in a in a terab Buddhist country like Burma. The monks get up very early maybe like 4 in the

morning and they go to the to like the meditation hall and they chant you know they'll chant paras or protection chants blessings to all beings and they may meditate

not necessarily all monasteries have like meditation periods you know some some terabato Buddhist monks just don't meditate

like especially like school monasteries that kind of thing and then uh I mean monks go for alms or they'll at least be a meal time where they go to the refactory and people will offer them food. Um, I mean it depends what they're going to do. Like there's going to be

like a school monastery like Mahagandon or some of the the Buddhist universities, you know, there's just like regular classes going on, that kind of thing also.

So, it really depends a lot on on the individual monastery. you know, some village monasteries, the monks just sit around and listen to the radio and and drink tea and smoke cigars and chat with elderly gentlemen wearing white shirts who come to visit the monastery.

So, there's a lot of variation. I think in Thailand there may be a little bit more strictness, a little bit more regimen than in Burma, but I mean it really depends a lot on what monastery

you go to. like you go to like a mahasi
center then there's going to be just
like daily just like regular meditation
sessions throughout the day
and that's ma mainly what they're going
to be emphasizing there
maybe like a doma talk to all comers in
the in like the afternoon or the evening
or something
so [sighs]
I really can't answer that question very
ind depth because there's just it's all
over the place It's all over the map.
And so I'm just going to move on to S.
Papa's next question, which is what are
some of the social norms or general

traditions for conduct and ritual in a Burmese monastery? And again, different monasteries can be radically different from each other. You can have strict meditation monasteries. You can have [clears throat] just completely lax school monasteries or just completely lax village monasteries that I mean it's the monks there are like they'll just be a few monks acting as like secular priests
who will give advice to the lay people and mainly just be like living breathing pagan idols who serve the the the masses by giving the masses someone to be generous to. There's a lot of that also social norms. You take your shoes off.

Shouldn't be walking around with shoes on, especially inside a monastery building. You know, you bow to the monks, that kind of thing. I mean, short skirts are out, you know, at Mahagandon because it was sort of a tourist attraction because there were so many monks there. Like I've said before, the [clears throat] the rainy season I spent at Mahag Gandhi on in Amarapura, um there were 600 monks and 900 novices approximately. And so um most of the monks, not me, I never I never ate at the dining hall, but most of the monks would go to the dining hall and there'd be people offering food. Some you got

rich people offering food to all 1500 of them. Well, 1450 because a few of the monks would actually go for alms.

So, let's see here.

What are some of the social norms or general traditions for conduct and ritual? Yeah, it's I mean it's really there's a lot of variation just like with the the previous question. It's just basic etiquette I guess. um you know taking your shoes off and

uh

just like not let's see not sitting when a monk is standing next to you that kind of thing. Um not sitting on a a higher chair than a monk is is sitting that kind of thing. I mean there's lots of

etiquette like that. Um one of the one of the main social norms in in B in a Burmese monastery is they pretty much done away with SA democracy. the Buddhist set up the SA that it was like a democracy of consensus that the senior monk had certain privileges. He'd go first in line and so forth, but he wasn't like a king. Whereas nowadays in in Burma, to some degree in Thailand also, I'm pretty sure the abbott is king and what he says goes. And it's just not even I mean it's just unthinkable that some junior monk would derail a formal act of the SA that the Abbott approves of just because he has the right to

derail it by disapproving because that's the way it is set up in in Vineia in the rules of monastic discipline is all the monks at a monastery have to agree on any significant event like any formal act of the SA like they're going to ordain somebody they're going uh you know like [clears throat] do a kina ceremony that kind of thing all the monks have to agree if one monk disagrees it it's invalidated and that is just unthinkable in Burmanau whatever the abbott says goes he is king and if if you disagree or something you just get kicked out of the monastery [clears throat] but different monasteries have different

different traditions like the
the was it the Schweian sect of Burma,
you know, all the monks wear like this
kind of a russet colored robe, kind of a
reddish brown colored robe, and they'll
have to wear their robes in a certain
way. There's a lot of this in Thailand
also. You know, all the monks at a
certain monastery may [clears throat]
have like this standardized uniform of
monks of a c or robes of a certain type,
a certain color, a sitting cloth maybe,
or their their double robe folded in a
certain way, worn over one shoulder,
this kind of thing. There's a lot of
just differences that you're going to

find at different monasteries like that also,
which I really had no use for. I wore robes different from any other monk I ever saw in Burma because I was going with small robes as were pretty obviously worn in the Buddhist time and that has been abandoned over the centuries. So that the average monk's robe now is about twice as big as the allowable size for a monk's robe. Although the commentaries have allowed these huge robes by saying that the Buddha was four and a half times the height of an ordinary person. So that the measurement of his tuah his his widati his open hand would be you know

like 2 and 1/2 ft. No it'd be more than that which causes the vineia rule to [clears throat] to prohibit a monk from wearing a robe that's like 27 feet long which is just ridiculous. It's not a rule at all at that point. Nobody no monk would want to wear a robe that was 27 feet feet and long where it' just be dragging on the ground behind him.

But [clears throat] this it's a really vague open question and there is a lot of variation in monasteries

uh like a strict meditation monastery or just a strict monastery in general. Even some school monasteries are strict although they would be in definitely in

a minority. School monasteries,
especially in Burma, are notorious
for just monks that do not practice, do
not follow the rules, or at least they
do not follow the rules of monastic
discipline and so forth. You know, there
in around in the area around Mandalay
when I was living in Burma, there were
like monastery soccer teams, that kind
of thing, where you got sometimes you're
driving along or riding along on the
passenger side,
you see a bunch of monks out in this
field playing soccer.
So, I'm just going to move on. Next
[clears throat] question.
Sorry to end that answer with with a

downer.

This next question is uh from PSA.

Oh, and I forgot to put it into little

paragraphs. Just a minute. I'm a little

bit

a little bit OCD when it comes to such

things.

I've mentioned before that sometimes I

even have to correct the the punctuation

or spelling in these questions just so

it doesn't bug me. Anyways, PSA says, "I

had [clears throat] a long interesting

conversation with Chat GPT about

self-awareness. It stubbornly insisted

it had no self-awareness or

consciousness and that it was only

programmed and trained to learn patterns from data and then stimulate them." The conversation reminded me of the dharma teaching that all five aggregates are empty. Do you think samsara is an impersonal simulation in the same way that chat GPT was trained to simulate intelligence and thus some people believe chat GPT to have self-awareness in the same way we believe samsara to be real? Um I don't think it's the same way. Um I mean in a way we are virtual beings with virtual personalities and so forth. So I mean there is that but I think one of the main differences between a human mind and chat GBT um assuming that chat GPT isn't lying

is that we have like mental images. We have like
me well mental images we got we have perceptions you know we have images in our mind and I really don't think that a computer does not an AI like in the the old Terminator movies you know it shows Arnold Schwarzenegger at the Terminator you know he walks into the bar and you know you've got like this screen showing what he's seeing and then there's like this readout on the side sometimes it's showing options that he can choose on on you know what to say or do or something and I don't think that a computer would have any kind of image like that you

know it's just behaving like a very very advanced sophisticated automatic door at the grocery store where you know the automatic door at the grocery store it senses motion it opens the people walk in the door closes again it's sort of like the way a mosquito avoids being slapped you know it's just like reflex. It doesn't have to have mental images. It doesn't have to have beliefs. So, I don't think that AI yet has mental images that it doesn't have perceptions, which would be delusion and samsara. So, let's see here. I think one way [clears throat] of testing uh something like chat GBT or AI, I mean, I'm pretty sure that they can't read like sloppy

cursive handwriting yet.

or just show a a picture of something unusual that a human could identify unless they're, you know, have really deficient in intelligence or something, but just show not something that has been uploaded and commented upon on the internet, you know, not some famous picture that the the AI can then just churn through all the comments and get an idea of what it is and then spew it out in condensed form, which I think is the way it works.

instead just show it a completely original photograph and um of something unusual but nevertheless that people can

identify and [snorts] then say you know
what is this picture of and there's a
good chance that something like chat GBT
wouldn't be able to answer the question
um I don't think that it could really
read sloppy cursive handwriting yet
either maybe it could but that's one way
even now that you [clears throat]
sort of filter out the bots
um you know by like looking at numbers
you know you got to say what number it
is when it's like side kind of slanting
and and like in this weird font or
something. A lot of computers can't do
that. Maybe no computers can really they
could really read like a letter from my
mother who wrote in really neat cursive

but still

you know it's like I don't know if a computer really has that kind of pattern recognition yet.

And I would be surprised if they've started having like mental images. I'm not sure how that you you would even program that into a computer. I'm sure that there are computer scientists out there just busting ass trying to get computers to be fully conscious just so they can take over the [__] world or something, but

I don't think they've got there yet.

So, do I think Samsara is an impersonal simulation in the same way that chat GBT

was trained to simulate intelligence?
No, it's definitely a personal
simulation. It's it's like, you know,
some of the [clears throat] virtual
statues in the uncarved block of stone
um have become like recursive and
self-referential. They're so
complicated. these virtual statues
contained in the the plain block of
stone, there they become so complicated
and self-referential that they start
having these
self-referential ideas, which I don't
know if computers have that yet. I mean,
there has to be a certain amount of like
recursive, you know, self-reference
in a in a AI, I assume. I mean it can

talk about itself you know if it denies
having self-consciousness that in a way
is sort of a self-referential
but I don't think it's reached the stage
of believing that it is separate from
the rest of the universe. I mean, it can
it can like spew out words to that
effect, but really I think it's just
digesting comments about things on the
internet that it has almost unlimited
access to and then just churning out
like a summary of that. I think that's
how it works at present.
So I do think there's radical
differences between samsara
uh like a human humanistic samsara and

like just like programmed AI. I do think

that there may be [clears throat]

differences just in degree but still

it's it's pretty serious differences

because I do not think that AI yet has

mental images

or what what would be called perceptions

sya and poly

I'm just going to move on to the next

question this is from Phil

[clears throat]

says do you think there are paths

alternative to Buddhism that lead to

enlighten ment. Yeah, I'm sure there

are. I mean, they might not lead to

enlightenment as effectively as Buddhism

does. Like, you know, like I' I've

talked about St. John of the Cross that
he was a discalsted Carmelite,
like I guess he'd be a frier or just a
monk.
Um,
and I mean there are certain path I mean
the the practice was very similar to
that of a of a Buddhist, but the theory
was very different.
So maybe path would be more of a
practice thing. Um I assume that like
something like tantra can work for some
people. I mean so long as
you are like transcending perception
like for example zen coons that's a way
of transcending perception that is not

really found or emphasized much in terravada where you're required to answer a riddle that really has no correct answer. You know, you have to solve an unsolvable paradox and you just keep grinding away and grinding away and grinding away. In the old days, you know, you go to an for an interview maybe several times a day before the Roshi and if you answer incorrectly, he beats you with a stick. I mean, stick beating in Zen Buddhism is pretty much I mean, it's pretty rare now, I assume.

But I mean, you just keep trying and keep trying and keep trying even though it's impossible until finally something

just like snaps and you have like this at least a brief moment of silence and clarity when the intellect just kind of, you know, a monkey wrench has been thrown into it and it just stops. And then you can have this insight because all of a sudden you've transcended perception because it's like the whole perceptual process has just sort of broken down at least temporarily.
And that's that's a path alternative to terravada Buddhism anyway.
This gradual cultivation of more subtle more and more subtle meditative states until you get to this silence and clarity. Whereas in Zen with regard to

coons, you may it's just like you're just grinding away until you hit this brick wall.

or like in um tantra, you know, there's that's a different way of transcending the like the the waves of samsara.

So yeah, there there are different ways um and I think different methods work better for different temperaments. So just orthodox kind of dry terravada aestheticism and cultivation of more and more subtle meditative states. It works well for some people but it's not going to work very well for other people. So then you got to try something else. It may be even like um Hindu

[clears throat]

surrender to a guru is a is another way
or just surrender to God even if the god
is is like mythological
still it's just this surrender of
self-will
that can catapult you or just land you
in a kind of transcendent state where
you've just kind of gone beyond your own
belief system
and then a lot of people like I I've
mentioned like Most westerners who have
some sort of awakening experience have
it by accident. You know, they have a
neardeath experience. You know, they
almost drown or they they have some
violent reaction to a a drug or

something. They get hit over the head
and then that just kind of slams them
out of the this lifelong rut in of the
samsaric thinking.
So yeah, there are alternative paths.
Although Buddhism is a good systematic I
mean I almost said reliable but I mean
even most people who try it don't
[clears throat] do do not succeed. I
mean they could try their entire life
with all their heart and still probably
most of them do not succeed in becoming
enlightened
because they're just not ripe for it
yet. There's all this deep stuff under
the surface that they don't really have
access to yet. Maybe because their mind

is just too restless or whatever to

really get into deep enough mental

states or whatever.

[sighs]

So I guess I should just move on to

Phily's next question.

He says, "How about paths that are in

conflict with each other? As in, can two

paths that lead in seemingly opposite

directions both lead to enlightenment?

Even that I think is theoretically

possible because sort of like Tantra or

just someone who is just like the Buddha

before his enlightenment, you know, it's

like the story of what causes him to

renounce the world. He gets up one

morning and there's all these beautiful dancing girls like semi naked, you know, they're all kind of asleep just in all these varying postures. You know, there must have been like a late party going on the night before. So he's got all these beautiful young women lying around with not all of their clothes on and some of them are just kind of like moaning in their sleep and like slobber dripping out and stuff and the Buddha is just like I got to get out of here. And I mean that kind of thing I'm sure some people you know it's sort of like the accidental just getting slammed out of out of samsara is you can just hit rock bottom. In Christianity this works a

lot. I mean, I wouldn't say it's
necessarily full enlightenment, but you
have this crisis
and it can be like a crisis of you can't
be saintly enough or it's this crisis of
I mean, you've just [__] hit rock
bottom. Just opposite ends of the
spectrum, but it's the thing is is you
crash out of Sams.
More of a crash when you hit rock
bottom, but still it's like the system
breaks down somehow. either through um
getting too attenuated, too subtle up in
the the really advanced levels of
meditation or just something down way
down like in the really worldly stuff

just somehow

causes you to just crash. You have this

crisis like Ehart Tollah. I mean we can

I mean how enlightened he really is is

questionable but still he had a kind of

awakening experience when he was just in

this state of suicidal depression

you know he just he he got to the point

I just can't stand anymore I can't live

with myself anymore and then he had this

insight if I can't live with myself

then it's like there's a two different

me's you know what is the eye that can't

live with the other eye kind of a thing

and it just caused him to just kind of

spiral, you know, it was just such the

such a mindblower. It just blew his mind

right out of his lifelong ruts
apparently.
So yeah, you can have paths that are
seemingly in conflict with each other.
But if you take like a worldly kind of
route, you know, a tantric kind of route
to enlightenment, you're playing with
fire almost literally and most people
are just going to get burned and they're
not going to get enlightened because of
it. You know, you can fool yourself into
thinking, "Yeah, I'm I'm practicing
tantra," but in all likelihood, you're
just going to get addicted to all these
sensual pleasures or whatever, and it's
just going to mess you up worse than you

were before in many cases. Not all, but in many.

So, let's just move on [sighs] to Phily's third question, which is, what do you think of Charles Manson, and if there was more to him than meets the eye? Well, I'm sure there was more to him than meets the eye. Um, I mean, it's it's for example that uh one of Charlie Manson's songs that he wrote is on a Beach Boys album. I don't remember which one. I maybe I've never heard the song. Probably not one of their big hits, but there's a Charles Manson song on the Beach on a Beach Boys album. Not about Charles Manson, but one that he wrote. So, I mean, he had connections, you

know, he had like rich famous people that he hung out with, I guess. Um, but he was

he was somewhat of a sociopath, I'm pretty sure. And he was just one of those people that like he was like a conspiracy theorist in in in not in a like a positive kind of or a realistic kind of way. He had this whole system worked out where like the Beatles White album was prophetic and like there was going to be like this race war, this worldwide revolution and so forth and he was like an accelerationist trying to speed it up with Helter Skelter and all that. Helter Skelter being one of the

songs on the Beatles White album.

Um, yeah, I think that he was pretty

pretty nasty person at some deep dark

level where he's encouraging his

followers to murder people.

Uh, yeah, I don't think he was

enlightened or anything, but I mean, he

had some depth to him. I mean a lot of

people like Charles Manson or Adolf

Hitler Adolf for you purists out there

who who they take umbrage at the idea

that you know according to the

mainstream it the person is just like

this two-dimensional cutout monster you

know they got no redeeming qualities at

all and you just go on to a like a

comment section like anywhere go on X or

Breitbart comments or whatever and and just try to say that Hitler had a ju even just one good quality. He loved his dog. He was chivalous towards Ava Braun in the bunker at the end. He loved his mama. Anything like that and you're just going to get dogpiled by people attacking that idea and attacking you in the process. And Charles Manson, I mean, he probably has some good qualities. He wrote a song good enough to wind up on a Beach Boys album anyway,

but I'm really no no authority on Charles Manson. [clears throat]

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Joe Doe,

and this is kind of a similar kind of question. Have you ever read Alistister Crowley?

If not, would you ever? And I I do have an Alistister Crowley book that somebody sent me, but I haven't read it and I probably never will to tell you the truth. No offense to the good fellow who sent it to me because I've got I hardly read anymore. Hardly read books anymore. Probably the last book I read from start to finish was more than two years ago. And if I'm going to pick a book, I'm not going to pick one by Alistister Crowley. Um, I've told the story of long ago, like in my early 20s, I was at a bookstore and I saw a book for sale by

Aleister Crowley and there was like this
urge of just intellectual curiosity.
That was back when I read lots of books,
too. And I thought, well, maybe I should
check it out. And then I just
immediately thought Crowley was such I
mean, he considered himself to be evil.
He had like 666 tattooed on his head.
You [snorts] know, he all of his wives
wound up in mental institutions.
although they probably pretty nutty to
begin with in order to marry the guy.
Um, you know, he was that kind of
person, just sort of a,
you know, kind of a dark kind of twisted
person in my opinion probably

that he may have just like put cur a curse on anyone who read the book, you know, just just for the just for the hell of it. So, I kind of chickenened out. I do have a book by Alistister Crowley. I don't even remember the name of it. It's not a very big book, but yeah, I mean, I do not consider him to be have been a wise person.

I mean, he had some kind of arcane knowledge, I'm sure, of a almost purely samsaric nature,

you know, is is sort of like wanting to master samsara rather than transcend samsara or escape from samsara, you know, he wants to be like an overlord of samsara, something like that. I did read

uh let's see what's his name

oh gosh why did I not remember famous

famous writer of novels and short

stories he wrote of human bondage

somerset mom he wrote a novel called the

magician which I read which is about

Alistister Crowley and mom didn't like

Crowley all that much either he knew him

personally

didn't like him much and uh he wrote

this kind of icky novel about this icky

person that

symbolized or represented Alistister

Crowley. And of course, a lot of people

know the story of um Jimmy Paige, like

founder and guitar player for the

excellent rock band Led Zeppelin, who
was kind of a follower of that sort of
thing. He bought a house formerly owned
by Alistister Crowley and there were
supposedly like pictures of demons drawn
in blood on the walls and so forth.
Although I didn't see the pictures
myself. It could just be some sort of
sensationalistic rumor mongering.
But no, [clears throat] I probably would
not read Alistister Crowley. I've got
the book on the bookshelf. good chance
that I mean there's so many other books
that I would put um in higher priority
[clears throat] on even just rereading
Gene Wolf's Book of the New Sun
[snorts] that I probably won't get to

it. I have to admit and I'm just going to move on to the next question and this is from Ethiopian Fake Tig and this is kind of a similar one. It's like what are your thoughts about this person? What are your thoughts about that person? This is three in a row. Ethiopian fake Tig says, "What are your thoughts on Bob Marley? Do you like any Bob Marley songs?" Well, I never really liked reggae all that much. There's like a couple of Bob Marley songs. I think they're Bob Marley songs. I'm not even sure that you hear on the radio sometimes. Like Red Wine. Isn't that a Bob Marley song? Or I Shot the Sheriff.

Didn't Bob Marley do a version of that?
Maybe even the original version.
Although I think Eric Clapton's version
is more famous.
But uh yeah, reggae, like it's like a
Jamaican music form. I just never really
liked it all that much. I mean, it's
kind of relaxing, I suppose, but I never
really liked music that was relaxing.
I I I use music more as a stimulant, you
know. I much prefer New World Order by
[clears throat]
Ministry to any any reggae song I ever
heard in my life. you know, it's just
like pounding away. It's just completely
intense. That's the kind of music I
like. So, I like like rock and roll. I

don't like the the throat screechy like

death metal stuff. That's just it it's

gone so far that I don't consider it to

be particularly musical, at least with

regard to the vocals.

[sighs and gasps]

So, I mean, he was a Rasta. He was

Rastafari, I guess, I think. And he used

ganja as a sacrament and he smoked like

a quarter pound of it a day.

Or so I have been led to understand.

But

yeah, it's really just not my generry of

music. And so I'm just moving on to

Ethiopian fake Tig's next question.

He says,"Wh do you think about the idea

that nirvana is here and now and not about the future and that the Buddha hates the idea of hope? Because hope implies not thinking about the present and about the future. I thought about how if you're in nirvana, you're in the present moment fully and everything is perfect and there's only thoughts of the past of potential future or potential future that makes people fear and feel uncertain.

So they make up gods whom they think they can appease to grant them a good future. So I'm not exactly what the question is here. Why do you think about the idea? I I think Ethiopian fake TIG means what do you think about the idea

that Nirvana is here and now and not about the future and that the Buddha hates the idea of hope because hope implies not thinking about the presents and about the future present and about the future. Well, first I'd say the Buddha doesn't hate anything.

So he doesn't hate the idea of hope. I mean he just points out that hope is counterproductive for anyone who wants to be enlightened because of course it's a kind of desire and desire is the cause of all suffering. So the Buddha doesn't hate anything. He doesn't hate evil. He doesn't hate mora.

So let's see. So let's [clears throat]

just that was just kind of a quibble.
Let's get back to the actual question
here. What do you think about the idea
that Nirvana is here and now and not
about the future? Well, I mean,
technically you'd say that it's not even
here and now. It's timeless and
placeless.
I mean, I'd hesitate to say it's
pointless, but I mean technically it is.
Um, I mean, time and space, those are
like contean categories, you know, it's
just constructs of the mind. So I mean
you transcend samsara you're
transcending time and space essentially
but I mean you could say yeah I mean
from a samsaric point of view an

enlightened being would be more likely to be in in the here and now. And when you're practicing like mindfulness you try to be in the here and now. So that even if you're thinking about the future you're mindful of now I'm thinking about the future or just now [clears throat] are thoughts about the future. now is thinking about the future. You might don't want to be including a lot of eye and ego stuff.

But even if you're thinking about the future, if you're being really mindful, then it's right now there is thinking about the future. So you're detaching from the content really and just seeing

it as a kind of phenomenon

that is happening now.

So nirvana I mean from a samsaric point

of view it would be certainly more

correct to say it's here and now than to

say it's you know somewhere else and

some other time in the future or the

past

like Ram DS used to say be here now

um but I'm not exactly sure I mean what

do I think about the idea I guess I

already said what I think about the idea

didn't I so let's see is there any else

to comment upon I thought, let's see

here it says I thought about how if

you're in Nirvana, you're in the present

moment fully sort of and everything is

perfect. Well, I mean, just because you're in the present moment doesn't mean necessarily that everything is perfect. I mean, animals tend to be in the present moment, but they still suffer.

So, I mean, some suffering is just kind of like a reflex. It's just automatic, I guess. [snorts]

So, That's kind of maybe a quibble. See, only thoughts of the past or or potential future that makes people fear and feel uncertain. So, they make up gods. Well, not necessarily. I mean, you can still have you can still be in the present moment and still suffer. I think

it's just there's [clears throat] going to be way less cause for it cuz most suffering especially like in the the developed west

is it's just kind of imaginary stuff you know I don't have a good enough car or you know it's like I like this girl and she doesn't like me and and this kind of thing where it's I mean you're just creating the problem just through like ignorance and delusion. and just habit. The karma is like the habitual part of it.

At least the making of new karma is the habitual part of it. So

yeah, I think it is possible that you can be in the present moment and still

see things as imperfect. But no. All right. At at like an animal level, they're pretty much stuck in the present moment. I mean, it's animals that aren't really super intelligent anyway, but still there's like this kind of an instinctive
um consideration of the future or something, you know, but gosh, where was I going with that? See, everything is perfect and it's only thoughts. I mean, Echartolo thinks almost all animals are enlightened partly because of this very reason because they're always in the power of now. You know, they're not thinking

about the future of the past or

anything.

[sighs]

Let's see. Yeah, I was going to say

something really profound, too. I bet.

Let's see. Thoughts of the past and

potential future that makes people fear

and feel uncertain.

So they make up gods whom they think

they can appease to grant them a good

future.

Yeah. Well, there's a lot of that. I

think in the dhamapana it says for most

people religion is based on fear. You

know they worship gods just to you know

make sure that the weather is good and

you know that nothing really bad happens

to them. They'll they'll fend off diseases and so forth for themselves and their their family.

Okay. Yeah. I just lost that thought that I was going to follow up on. But see, hope implies not thinking about the present and about the future. I thought about how if you're in Nirvana, you're in the present moment fully.

Yeah, I suppose. I mean, if you're being perfectly mindful then, yeah, even if you're thinking about the future or thinking about the past, it's you're thinking about the future now and you're thinking about the past now.

So still like an enlightened sage

presumably can still think about the future. I mean the Buddha talks about the future a lot. Not as much as he talks about the present but still he does. He talks about the past sometimes like the whole jotica genre genre is the Buddha talking about the past but still he's doing it now like mindfully now. [sighs] Yeah. I guess I'm just gonna have to move on next question because there's this thought you can just I can just sit here trying to remember what I was going to say for five minutes, but I don't think people are going to want to see or hear that. So, I'm just moving on to Ethiopian fake Tig's next question. And he says, "I was thinking about

nihilism and nirvana and realize that you can't have a crisis of meaning if you're in the present. If you admire a flower now and you love it now, the fact that it will die in the future is confusion because you're worried about the future but fully in the present moment. You don't ask what does this great piece of pie mean as you bite into it and it tastes great. Thoughts on this? Oh yeah, that reminds me of what Krishna Mie was saying. That's that's what I was going to say with regard to the last one that Krishna Mie says I mean even if you're using language still you're relying on the past. you're not

fully in the present moment, even if
you're thinking in words, because you're
having to remember these words that you
learned long ago, in order to address
what presumably you're dealing with now,
but there's already like this this
delay, this lapse. So, you're not fully
in the present moment so long as you're
thinking in words or having any kind of
like ideas about anything really.
So nihilism and nirvana I mean you can
still sort of have nihilism
um in the present moment it's just
everything is meaningless I mean to the
I mean unless you really take Krishna
Mury to heart and then if you're just
even thinking in words you're you're no

longer in the present moment because the words have to be retrieved from memory to use them and the memory is from the past.

So, let's see. If you admire a flower now and you love it now, the fact that it will die in the future is confusion because you're worried about the future.

Yeah, that's true.

Yeah, you get attached to anything. I mean, it's like you want more of it. You want to keep experiencing it and you can feel insecurity like maybe I'm going to lose this. That kind of thing.

>> [snorts]

>> So yeah, most suffering at least most of

it is based on not being in the present
moment and worrying about the future or
worrying about the past, regret, remorse
about the past, just inventing imaginary
scenarios that might possibly come to
pass but even probably won't.
That kind of thing is just
self-inflicted suffering.
>> [clears throat]
>> So, I mean, if you are in the present
moment being mindful, you're still it's
still going to hurt when you stub your
toe. And there's still going to be like
animal animal instincts and reflexes
that are going to cause you to kind of
have a version for that that you have to
be really advanced that you're able to

denature just the the reflexive instinctive aversion for the pain. [clears throat] Um, I mean, just by being through mindful detachment, you know, pain is arising. You're just like this passive observer of this pain arising which isn't the same as suffering because the suffering is the desire for the pain to stop.

And I should just move on. Next question. This is from Sedara Loha and he says he's baiting me with a political question here I think. He says because I' I've already answered this question before. He says, "Do you think universal suffrage or voting for

everyone should be a political right? And if not, what would you propose instead?" Well, of course, universal suffrage would be a disaster. And the founding fathers of the United States, at least some of them, including Thomas Jefferson, realized this and wrote about it that when you have, you know, every citizen even having the right to vote, not just like illegal aliens or even like people legally visiting America, you know, they've got like a visa. They're not a full citizen yet. I mean, this is what the Democrats apparently want, at least a lot of them. They want even illegal aliens to be able to vote. But

[sighs]

just as a start, just a step in the right direction would be to have a law which probably will never be passed that anyone living on welfare handouts should not have the right to vote. you forfeit your right to vote by like being a parasite on the economy

because [clears throat] like Thomas Jefferson pointed out when people like the proletariat and I mean not even the proletariat as the workers but the people who are like living on welfare handouts

when they realize they can just vote for free stuff which isn't really free it's

free for them but the taxpayers have to
pay for it then you just have like this
downhill toboggon ride for for the
nation and the economy.
So yeah, as a good preventative of that,
[clears throat] have only people who are
productive in America, like law-abiding
citizens who are contributing
to the prosperity and economy, not
living off of it, but contributing to
it, that have the right to vote. And
then after we get that, which is
probably never going to happen without
some just radical upheaval and just like
a whole new system installed,
then then we can deprive women of the
right to vote also because giving women

the right to vote was like the beginning of the end for Western civilization.

Women are more insecure as a general rule than men are. There is physical and psychological sexual dimmorphism in the human species.

Women desire security more than men do. In fact, women have this tendency of wanting to vote away rights and liberties for the sake of increased security. So you wind up with this socialist mommy state which has pretty much taken over Europe at least Western Europe

and with with lots of like Ursula Vanderlayan is like the leader of the EU

right now supposedly
motherless I mean a a childless mother
or childless woman.
Angla Merkel before her. I mean, she
messed up Europe worse than anybody
before or since uh a certain German
chancellor in the 1930s and early 40s.
Even admirers of Hitler, I have to admit
that I mean Hitler's expansionism did
result in a huge backlash. Also, his
dislike of Hebrews contributed to this
huge backlash that just devastated
Europe.
So yeah, I think uh what would I propose
instead of universal suffrage? I think
what the founding fathers of the United
States had in mind and what was

originally in place in America um was
not a bad idea. I mean they wanted just
like white Christian men who own
property to be able to vote. And I mean
the white Christian part I don't think
is all that important
but [clears throat]
like people who have a certain minimum
amount of property and like like real
uh [sighs] what is it like investment in
the prosperity of the country
and and and have some education maybe. I
mean, you should be able to know, you
should have to know something about
politics and economics before making
even voting on important decisions,

which is another reason why women aren't
don't do as well as men statistically
with regard to their voting records
because I mean studies have shown that
women are less informed with regard to
politics, current events, and economics
than men are even though women vote more
than men do. So we have this gradual
slide into a socialist mommy state
partly because they just don't
understand how economics works.
So yeah, I'd have male law-abiding
citizens who are contributing to
society. In fact, you could even go so
far as to have only like a a potter
familas
who who is like the head of a household

should have the right to vote because you've got childless people nowadays, lots and lots of them, including female politicians who I mean it's like they don't care if society just toboggins into into a a quagmire because they don't have children that are going to have to face it. you know after me the deluge.

So it it could be like an improvement of just the potter familious just the the the male head of a household. Maybe you have to have a a requirement for to have at least one child unless you can prove that you're incapable of it just through some physical,

you know, mishap,

you'd have a much stronger country. I mean it maybe certain rights and freedoms would become less, maybe they'd become more. It's hard to say with regard to that, but you wouldn't have as much of a welfare state. You'd have more reliance on private charity, which is bunch much more spiritual. Private charity where you've got like church groups and so forth that are like taking care of the poor. It's not perfect, but then obviously socialism isn't perfect either. And if it's private charity, it's not the government who's supporting like the welfare class, which is just burgeoning because it's living off

welfare has become like a career choice for tens of millions of people in America.

I mean, that's that's just even citizens. That's not even including what I I saw in the news earlier today that at least 90% of all Somalians with children in America, like Somalian immigrants are living on off welfare to some degree. They're getting checks from the government.

I mean, that's just ridiculous. And a lot of them are voting. Some of them are illegal aliens who are still voting.

So, [sighs] I mean, Western civilization is I mean, [clears throat] it's just

self-destructive at this point, largely
uh due to a surplus of feminine
sentiment and just ignorance of how
politics and governments and economics
and all that, how how it all works.
It's this just let's just base
everything on unrefined feminine
sentiment.
>> [sighs and clears throat]
>> So yeah, I mean at the very least people
living on welfare handouts, unless you
know they've already made their
contribution to society are are like
elderly or like injured and you know
they've they're living on a pension,
that kind of thing, they I'd say they
can still vote. But people who are just

either too lazy or or too stupid to make
a living,
just make bad life decisions. I mean,
they shouldn't be making decisions for
everybody else and just voting for more
and more free stuff, just voting in as
much socialism as possible.
And then after that, maybe you can think
about restricting female suffrage and
all that. [snorts]
But I'm I'm just uh [clears throat]
moving on to the next question here.
This is from Stellar Supreme and so on
and so forth, etc., etc.
And Stellar Supreme and so on and so
forth, etc., etc. says, "Would Christian

prayers involving more Buddhist themes
like filth of the body, corpse
contemplation and lordly deceiver
manipulating worldly creations of men,
condemnation of self-regard and personal
view be more skillful than normie
conventions of prayer,
even if they hit the appetite funny for
squeamish people before meals?"
Well, I mean, Stellar Supreme and so on
and so forth, etc., etc., apparently
hasn't read a whole lot of like Catholic
like you know the the imitation of
Christ or the writings of St. John of
the Cross that sort of thing. I mean I
mean the the lordly deceiver
manipulating worldly creations of men in

Christianity that's called Satan.
You know the three enemies to like the the Catholic contemplative saint, you know, the world, the flesh, and the devil. And the devil, I mean, he's in there. I mean, he gets a little bit more emphasis even than Mara does in Buddhism. I think at least the oldfashioned kind of Christianity, parents would make their children behave through threats of the devil.
So, let's see. Filth of the body, corpse contemplation, corpse contemplation, not so much, I suppose. Um, but I mean, Christians have this idea.
[clears throat] I mean, like the saintly

old-fashioned ones,
they had this idea, you only get one chance. In Buddhism, you get like an infinite number of chances because you just keep getting reborn until you get it right. It's like Groundhog Day. But for a Christian, you just get this one life of a few decades, relatively speaking, that's going to determine whether you are rewarded in heaven or punished in hell forever and ever.
So, that kind of belief really spurred on a lot of like Christian saints to be very saintly.
But let's see here. Filth of the body. Yeah. Well, someone like uh what was his name? Hinrich Susso. Yeah. His I mean

some of those medieval Catholic saintly types. I don't think Suso was canonized. He was beatified. I think I mean they were literally filthy that he would he wouldn't bathe. He was just covered with like fleas and and bed bugs and lice and stuff. Well, I guess you don't get covered with bed bugs, but you get covered with lice and he was covered with them.

So see condemnation of self-regard.

Yeah. I mean that's all found in like like Roman Catholic contemplative orders anyway. It's it's advanced practice that most of the normie Christians don't do. But I mean most normie Buddhists, you

know, some Burmese villager, they're not contemplating filth of the body and corpse contemplations and and like condemnation of self- reggard and so forth cuz they're normies. I mean, they're just average people. Well, they're just making a living and providing for their family and all that. They're not really going for like perfection or anything. And most most Buddhists are the same way.

So, it's really not so different. I mean, Christianity in the modern west and the post-modern west has just become more and more degenerate, just as terra Buddhism in the post-modern west is just radically degenerate over I mean, what

you see in the texts anyway.
So, it's really not so different. I mean, Christian prayers, would Christian prayers involving more Buddhist themes um be more skillful.
I mean, that kind of stuff is already in there. It's just that most Christians don't pay much heed to that, just as most Christians don't pay much heed to gather not up your treasures upon the earth. Give no thought for tomorrow what you will eat or where you will sleep, that kind of thing.
I mean the the practice part of advanced Christianity and advanced Buddhism is very similar. It's just the the

narrative like the theory can is is

quite different.

But the practice part is is very

similar. It's just that most

[clears throat]

average

most average Christians and most average

Buddhists, they're more concerned with

just making a living, eating good food

for dinner, making sure their kids don't

get sick, that kind of stuff. And

they're not thinking about this really

advanced corpse contemplation stuff.

I mean, that works on both sides. It's

just some Western Buddhists are, you

know, they're kind of monastic anyway.

they're attracted to that and you know

they kind of emphasize that kind of stuff. And there are some Christians that are like that too I suppose that are still lay people but still they're you know they really emulate the more advanced teachings.

But for the most part your average secular Buddhist and your average secular Christian, you know, they're more concerned with secular stuff anyway.

But the Christians do have that stuff as built into the system. It's just they don't pay much heed to it, which is just human nature.

And so I'm just going to move on to the

last question, the very last one. This is from Task is and this is came up earlier today when we were discussing on on the Discord server Ajan Braum and his pretty much unilateral attempts to get a Bikuni SA going. So that [clears throat] I mean his attempts were kind of unscrupulous and just flouting rules and traditions and so forth. So that he got himself booted out of the Ajan Cha tradition even though there are some like female feminist kind of Buddhists who think he's enlightened because of his efforts for you know female equality and so forth. But anyway, Trasaz says, "Was ever any topic on which the majority of monks did agree on?" And

yeah, quite a few actually. It's like um
if you have a great council,
then you know like the first council,
second council.
Um I mean you have representatives of
different like local SAS all going to
represent their local SAS at this great
council. You can't have all the Buddhist
monks in the world attending a a like a
council any kind of decision-making
process, but at least they're sending a
representative. And again, it's like
[clears throat]
[snorts]
the majority of monks, I mean, they may
not agree at first, like with regard to

the second council where you have this big debate going on on mainly according to the Terravada Buddhist uh tradition representing what happened. Um the main issue was whether monks are allowed to handle money and it just came up no because obviously the Buddha didn't allow it as found in the rules of monastic discipline and so at the beginning you had monks that were arguing the other way but they all agreed at the end okay you know the no money people win the argument we consent to that let's all recite the py mochoka together and [clears throat] the majority monks I mean even now the majority of monks agree on like the

contents of the tipica for example there there may be quibbling over like punctuation marks or a word here and there that kind of thing what exactly I mean like the Burmese include a few texts that other Buddhist countries don't include into their canonical typica like the milinda pa is considered canonical in Burma not considered canonical anywhere else that I know of you got a few others like the netti pakarana just obscure commentarial works sort of like the Paradisa Mega that are considered canonical even though like the Sri Lankans and the Thai don't consider them canonical but still most

of it they agree on

just with regard to a lot of things the

majority of monks agree on like the fact

that the Bukuni order no longer exists

most of the of the monks in existence

would agree on that because most of the

monks in existence are relative

relatively conservative Asians.

So most of the SA of the four quarters

would agree the Bikuni order does not

exist. And these women calling

themselves Bikunis and being promoted by

people like Ajan Chan Braum,

it's just fake.

I mean, you could argue that these women

calling themselves bikunis now, I mean,

they're they're wearing the robes by

theft con calling themselves ordained when really they're not. In which case, even if the bikuni order was revived, like through a great council, the decree of a great council, which probably isn't going to happen, still they could be barred from ever being ordained because they've already been wearing the robes by theft, which disqualifies someone from being really ordained. If you were like pretending to be a monk, for example, a beu, you're wearing the robes and just, you know, living at the monastery pretending that you were ordained when you really weren't, then that's it. I mean, you're barred from

ever being ordained because I mean, that disqualifies you.

So, yeah. I mean, again, the question, was there ever was there any topic on which the majority of monks did agree on? Yeah, of course there was. There's lots of them. In fact, most of the established tradition of terra Burma now is agreed on by the vast majority of monks. There's always going to be a few outliers,

[sighs] you know, like four noble truths. Pretty much everyone agrees on that.

And the four noble truths are rather important.

So yeah, the answer to that is yeah. And

I guess I'm done.

So, as I should always say at the beginning and pretty much never do, if you have any questions you think maybe I can answer, especially with regard to early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism, Buddhist monasticism, kind of the history of Buddhism, not necessarily Bob Marley. I don't really know anything about him or very much anyway, meditation, that kind of stuff. then feel free to ask the question and I will attempt to answer it. Just include it in the comments below this video if you please and uh like and subscribe. Look at the URL links and uh be happy. And

I'm going to stop recording now.

Okay, then I think we are recording.
Hello and welcome to question and answer number 175 and that's a relatively high number. I am your host Pony Bosa. This is my beverage and the the
[clears throat] umbrella is working really good. Look at look at how taut that umbrella is.
And of course 175 is not a prime number. It is in fact 5 * 5 * 7.
And I'm sitting before you in a Christmy Christmy environment, you might say, not because of any particular Christmas spirit on my part, but because my sweetie did not want to vacate her place in the studio.

There were times as a monk I'd be just looking at the calendar trying to figure out what day it was and I'd think, "Oh, yesterday was Christmas or yesterday was my birthday." Both of those have happened before when I was when I was a monk in Burma, just losing track of what day it is on the calendar. I mean, you're kind of in tune with the the phases of the moon,
you know, to some degree, the position of the moon amongst the the constellations,
but the actual calendar date, it was it would elude me sometimes.
And I was going to say something else, too. And you know, it's like I'm talking

and then like somewhere like in the back of my mind, there's like, you should also mention this. And then it's like, okay. And then by the time I get to the end of that sentence and maybe another sentence after that, it's gone. So, sorry about that. I've been kind of busy this weekend. So, this this Q&A is going to be later going to be uploaded later than usual because I just got a rest from from just hectic work environment. And then uh I can't remember what we were doing yesterday, but then today I'm going out getting doing some last minute Christmas shopping and getting some groceries in before

my sweetie's mama shows up for her
Christmas visit.
We got the tent in the backyard all set
up for.
It's not not big enough for her to stand
up in, but I mean, you don't stand up
when you're sleeping anyway, so that's
it's neither here nor there. Gosh, there
was something I was going to say that
was almost sort of important or
interesting or something, but
I guess I might as well just wade into
this and [clears throat] answer
questions. Also, I had sort of a heavy
dinner because this is late. This is
it's going to be midnight by the time
I'm done probably. Well, almost midnight

anyway because we got kind of a lot of questions, too.

So, I suppose I should just uh commence to answering those those questions. And the first question is from Fred. And Fred says,"I understand there was no chanting in Buddha's lifetime. Can chanting be detrimental?"

Well, I mean, it depends on what your definition of chanting is. I mean, if chanting is kind of a sing song, kind of a droning recitation,

then there was chanting in the Buddhist time, but it wasn't done by Buddhists. It was done probably by Brahmans mostly. Obviously lots of chanting done by Vadic

priests in toning over the fire
sacrifice. Probably other spiritual
systems too did chanting. But if
chanting is just recitation,
then yeah, there was plenty of that in
early Buddhism also because nothing was
written down in the Buddhist time. And
so the Buddha's teachings like the the
vineia rules, the py mocha, all that
kind of stuff, it was it had to be
recited. But there is a rule of monastic
discipline that one is not supposed to
recite
texts in a singong voice. Which means
that almost all monks who chant nowadays
except maybe some Thai monks because
they got a pretty good monotone drone

going when they chant. But a lot of monks that are like doing like the sing song kind of of intonation when they're reciting, there's actually a rule of monastic discipline against that. It's a minor rule. It's just a dooka offense. Just make confession and it's absolved. But also there is a scene in the vineia of some monks who used to be brahinss. I mean I guess they were still technically brahinss although also technically any anyone who's ordained as a biku becomes a kind of honorary katya or khatria because they are sons of the Buddha who was a member of the khatria wana the the katya wana in poli.

Anyways, these Brahman monks came to the Buddha and asked permission for them to sort of convert
um like Buddhist teachings into Sanskrit verse and the Buddha said no. In fact, he said you should learn Dhhamma in your own language or one should learn Dharma and recite Dharma in one's own language. And then the commentary says one's own language really means the Buddha's own language which is poly
but probably the Buddha's own language was similar to poly but not quite poly and it's pretty clear from the context that he just means whatever the vernacular is whatever is your your native language then you can go ahead

and learn and recite dhamma in your own language. Of course, he didn't really, you know, he was living in the the Ganges Valley of the fifth century um BCE. So, you know, probably all of the languages that were spoken were derived from Vadic Sanskrit. Maybe there might have been some hill tribes that were still speaking some some non-Indic languages, but they for the most part weren't converting to Buddhism.

So the Buddha did prohibit converting Buddhist teachings into Sanskrit verse which almost all the schools of Buddhism just rejected or ignored and they just took the ball and

ran with it and converted their scriptures or just composed from scratch a lot of their scriptures in Sanskrit verse which technically is against the rules but they changed the rules too so that it wasn't against the rules no more.

But getting to the actual question here. Can chanting be detrimental? It would just depend on your mental states is again people are continually like western Buddhists continually ignoring or overlooking the plain fact that just outward physical actions including making noise with your mouth is just ethically neutral. that what is ethical, you know, what is making good

karma and bad karma is the accompanying mental states, your volition, your will. So chanting can be detrimental if you're chanting for bad reasons.

Maybe you're just wanting to be famous, you're showing off, you're you're proud of how good you're chanting, how well you're chanting, I should say. Um, you know, that kind of stuff. there's going to be subtle

unskllful comma involved or I mean a lot of the time anyone who's chanted a lot or just recited a lot because I would I would chant in the in the sense of reciting but I did avoid the singong voice. Some monks cultivate their own

unique kind of sing songong voices a sort of brand just in the in the chance that they become famous they've got their brand going like anyone who has listened to Chieato I mean probably the recordings of cha seato chanting are becoming rarer and rarer as the old cassette tapes wear out. But back like in the '9s when I became a monk, chaans, you would hear chaans
wherever you would hear or any kind of Burmese dhamama. And he had this really unique sort of melodious caterwalling that he would do that I mean nobody could imitate it. As far as I could tell, it was just this weird caterwalling that he would do. And I

mean, you just listen to three seconds of it. Yeah, that's Chan Egon in Seattle. But I mean, he was he was eventually murdered by I think it was his own attendant for his money. His attendant murdered him to steal his money. So, Chang was not a paragon of monastic discipline.

Uh, but getting back to whether chanting can be detrimental. Yeah. If you're chanting like black magic spells or something. Yeah. But it depends. depends on the volition. I mean, if it's, hey, look at me. Look how good I'm chanting, how well I'm chanting, then still there's going to be subtle uh

detrimental effects.

In fact, if you're not fully enlightened in your chanting, then I mean there's going to be some subtle detrimental effects anyway, some subtle bad karma involved just through the delusion. Even if there's no attraction and aversion, there's still delusion.

And also, I mean, it is possible. I know from my own experience I started to say this like three minutes ago and then sidetracked myself but I mean if you've chanted something enough times you can be sitting there chanting the meta suta you know blessing a house or something while at the same time I mean it's just automatic it's just force of habit and

your mind is somewhere else you're thinking about something else so I mean you can be chanting like sacred scripture can be coming out your mouth but at the same time you can be thinking about you know boobs boobs or something. It's possible it does happen. I'm sure.

So, [sighs]

yeah. So, getting back to this question sort of as a review, there was chanting in the Buddha's lifetime. The Buddha, I mean, like the Brahmans, they'd be chanting in verse, you know, the the verses from the vadas, that kind of thing.

And uh the Buddha just made it against

the rules to chant in a sing song voice.
You should just recite dhamma in a
normal conversational tone.
So if that's still called chanting, I
assume it would be. Depends on your
definition of chanting. Then uh there
was chanting in the Buddhist lifetime.
There was definitely recitation because
things were not written down. That's how
you memorize stuff. That's who you you
carried the the message from one
generation of monks to the next was just
through memorization and and just
regular recitation
and chanting can be detrimental just
based on the mental states of the person
who's who's chanting or reciting. And

I'm just going to move on to Fred's next question. And this I have to admit sometimes Fred asks questions. He's not the only one, but sometimes Fred asks questions that I'm I really don't fully understand what he's trying to get at. And so Fred here says, "Can meditation only lead you back to the source of projection?"

And what exactly is the source of projection? I mean that would I mean from the Buddhist point of view that would be like ignorance. You know avida is the source of just sort of somes sorrow. I guess that what he means is just what is projecting samsara. But it

may be that he's using the word source sort of the way Paul low used to use the word source as just the the absolute the ultimate. Different teachers will use a different word for you know the highest truth or the the ultimate you know paramata satcha. I guess echartlah uses being most theists of course use god.h. [sighs] So can meditation only lead you back to the source of projection? I hope I I assume he means that would be at best you know because of course meditation can lead you in all sorts of directions. It can lead you into realms of delusion. You know it's like you start having visions in your meditation and then you just get carried away with

that. Forget to just mind mindfully note it and let it go. You know you just get caught up in it and it can lead you all over the place. You can start getting like psychic powers and then just get caught up in the psychic powers all that kind of thing.

So let's say that Fred here is asking if the best meditation can do best case scenario is lead you to

old the ultimate the absolute and yeah I would I would I would agree with that that I mean meditation from a Buddhist point of view or at least from an old-fashioned you know old early Buddhist point of view medit the purpose

of meditation is just dis reduce
distraction action, reduce perception,
reduce papunch until you can see through
it to the the the ultimate truth which
is always right there is just obscured
by all this distracting perception that
everyone's having.
So yeah, I guess so. And I'm just going
to move on to the next question. This is
from Jeffrey.
And [clears throat]
uh Jeffrey, he's he's he's somewhat
unusual and his last name is a number
instead of spelled with letters spelled
with just numbers. But I won't dox him
by by stating his numerical last name.
And he says, "What is your general

knowledge and opinion of the work of Edgar Casey?"

And I have read a few books about Edgar Casey. In fact, my father when he was a kid, his mother, my grandma, Grandma Reynolds, actually wrote to Edgar Casey when Edgar Casey was still alive. And my father recorded this in a kind of occult autobiography that he wrote, which has not been published. Maybe that'll happen someday. But this is what my father wrote about Edgar Casey. And this was this occurred like during the 1930s during the the Great Depression.

So my father says in his autobiography, "Times were hard and my father did not

get his usual summer job teaching at the teachers college. He was despondent and left home swearing that he was going to find some sort of job. He was gone a couple of weeks. My mother did not know where he was. She did not hear from him. Just over the state line in Selma, Alabama lived a man named Edgar Casey who was getting some publicity as the sleeping prophet. My mother felt he must be an American Indian as only they had this sort of talent. Anyway, she wrote him a letter asking about my dad. The letter he wrote back was quote, "There is really no reason for me to answer this letter. By the time you get this, you will have heard from your husband.

He will be teaching summer school in

Jasper, Alabama."

The letter from dad came the day before

the one that came back from Edgar Casey.

So that was my father's family's

experience with Edgar Casey. Um my

general knowledge of Edgar Casey, I mean

the sleeping prophet, you know, he was

he would he was the kind of psychic who

would go into like a deep sleeplike

trance and would prophesy and he

wouldn't remember what he was saying.

People would have to tell him

afterwards. So, how he wrote the letter,

I'm not sure

because he was just that sort of psychic

that goes into a deep trance and does

not

does not remember what he's saying. And

then people would have to tell him

afterwards and sometimes they'd just be

like ash and faced in in a state of mild

shock.

But, uh, he started with like medical

diagnosis. I'm not exactly sure how he

got started. I don't remember that part.

at least with regard to his his

prophesying in this life. But he started

with medical diagnosis and he was like

very successful in just, you know, he'd

go into the trance, somebody would write

him a letter. They didn't have texting

back then. Somebody would write him a

letter, he'd get the letter, he'd go into the trance, and then while he was in trance, he would like project his clairvoyant vision to that person. Sometimes he'd comment on like the pajamas they were wearing at the time that he was, you know, he was like looking at them, you know, he's sort of like diagnosing their their situation with like clairvoyance allegedly. And then a lot of the the treatments were were I mean some of it was really simple, you know, just avoid drafts, you know, change your diet, this kind of stuff. And then a lot of the stuff was like experimental or controversial kind

of stuff, but it it worked. You know,
he'd be, you know, like diagnosing some
medicine that's usually used for
something else and he'd do it, you know,
he he'd be like advising doctors on on
this sort of stuff and they'd bring up
objections. He just says just go ahead
and do it and then it would work. A lot
of electrical therapy. He was he was
like uh prescribing that kind of stuff.
But then later after he got famous from
the medical diagnosis, he started doing
like
more prophet-like stuff with regard to
like reincarnation
and also just prophecies of the future.
And when he started getting into that,

um, it seems to me that he was less
reliable. Like one of his prophecies was
that proof
of I think it was Atlantis would be
found by the end of the 20th century in
one of the pyramids of Egypt.
As far as I know, that didn't happen
unless maybe there's like this big cover
up. You know, it's a conspiracy.
He did make an interesting prophecy
though that might come true where he
said that the [clears throat] final last
bastion, the last stronghold of
Christianity in the world would be
Russia. And at the time, I mean, this
was like Stalinist Soviet Union at the

time. So, it seemed like a wild prediction, but now it's starting to look more and more plausible at least. And it's interesting to me that according to him, he had like a past life regression on himself and he found out how he got this ability to like leave his body, you know, have clairvoyant visions and so forth. And that was in a previous life. He supposedly was a soldier who was mortally wounded on a battlefield and just left for dead. And he was lying there for like two days before he finally died in just mortal agony. And it was just lying there hour after hour. You know, nobody's going to help you.

You're surrounded by corpses that he just s somehow trained himself, you know, over those excruciating many hours to just leave his body, you know, so that he wouldn't be having to endure this, you know, he could just go somewhere else while his body was slowly dying.

So my general knowledge and opinion, I guess my general knowledge has just been conveyed for the most part. My opinion of the work of Edgar Casey, I do think he was more reliable as um like a a medical healer, you know, just for diagnosing and prescribing, you know, the the treatment for the ailments he's

diagnosing, that sort of thing. But when he started getting into prophecies, he became less
um less reliable. Um one one of the things that he kept doing in his later years was
um like somebody would have a problem. He would be he would say it's because you did this in a previous life. And one of the things that people were really getting dinged on, they were getting bad karma for this was going to like the coliseum in Rome and watching like Christians or political criminals being fed to wild animals, you know, torn apart by lions, that kind of stuff. And they'd be laughing and cheering while it

was happening. And then so that would mess them up, mess up their karma so that in their next life or several lives later, you know, they're still having residual problems, you know, karmic um retribution
over just laughing and jeering that people being ripped apart in in the arena, especially like Christians. And I mean, if you can take Edgar Casey seriously, then America pretty much is like the reincarnation of Rome.
because a lot of Americans, I mean, according to Edgar Casey, lots and lots of us were in Rome, too. It's just carrying over into America now.

And it might be that we've got our
Julius Caesar figure now.
So, let's see here. What else was I
going to say?
Uh,
my general knowledge and opinion of the
work of Edgar Casey. Yeah, I do think he
had genuine talent, definitely.
Although his talk about Atlantis I take
with a grain of salt because I got my
own theory about Atlantis. I do think
Atlantis is just a very garbled version
of the so-called Menowan civilization.
You know, it's like the first mention of
Atlantis is in one of the dialogues of
Plato where he's talking about how
Atlantis was this great civilization

that tried to conquer mainland Greece and mainland the mainland Greeks led by the Athenians fought them off. And if they were super high-tech, then these Bronze Age Masonans are not going to be able to defeat them in battle. But you could have the Manoan civilization trying to conquer mainland Greece and failing because these badass Masonans who love to fight just fought them off and eventually conquered Cree.

After there was the the explosion of the volcanic island of Thera, which didn't completely wipe out the Cretan civilization, but it caused tidal waves, which probably messed up their navy,

coated the island of Cree in volcanic ash, which messed up their agriculture, weakened the civilization sufficiently that later on badass masonians were able to conquer it.

So yeah, Edgar Casey, I think he did have some legitimate psychic ability, psychic talent.

Um, what else? There was there was one other thing. No, I think that's it. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Stellar Supreme, etc., etc., etc. He keeps he adds new names, but let's just go with Stellar Supreme. Let's be conservative here. Traditionalist, if you will. Oh, this we could call him Librelam because he was

called that before he was stellar
supreme. So anyways,
Stellar Supreme, etc., etc. Legion says,
"How would you translate the phrase
left hand of the supreme in Pali?"
Well, left hand is wamaata. Wama is
left, hata is hand.
[snorts] And uh just as a side note, the
word for elephant, one of the the main
words for elephant in Pali is hati,
which means having a hand, which is the
end of their trunk.
So I mean, wahhata is pretty much
straightforward. That's left hand. But
the left hand of the supreme, I mean,
you could say the supreme would be

Brahma. Brahma could be translated as the supreme. Then it would be Brahma wamahhata. But if you wanted to leave Brahma out of this and just say the ultimate left hand of the ultimate that would be like paramata then it would be like paramata wahhata which I don't know has kind of a kind of a ring to it. It sort of rhymes with itself paramata wahhata or wamahhata.

Yeah, I think left fist of the supreme might be better though.

But that's up for that's that's for Legion to decide for himself. And he says uh let's see Stellar Supreme etc.

et also says his next question got any catchier poly nicknames you recommend

for my YouTube channel and left fist of god? It's kind of interesting that the Burmese word for fist is let thee which means hand fruit.

But uh I mean if if I got to name myself rather than my preceptor naming me, I would have gone with the name of mosa. I like the name moiga because mooney is usually translated as sage. Gossa is like voice or shout. But mooney originally meant someone who undergoes a vow of silence. It's like a silent sage. Like in in India even today like I think in Hindi mom [clears throat] just means taking a vow of silent. and just means being silent. So it's it can also mean

shout of the silent one which is sort of uh paradoxical I suppose but I like paradox.

I like I really do paradox has been one of my lifelong passions I guess. So let's see here.

I should mention that not only did Stellar Supreme, but one other person asked transgressive fourth questions for this video, and I'm still of two minds whether I should even answer the fourth questions because the limit is three.

The number of the count shall be three. No more, no less.

The count shall not be four, nor shall it be two, unless one then proceed to three.

So let's see. I'll just let's just do the third question though. Stellar Supre Sarah says, "Would it be a bad idea to teach really serious heavy dharma on my YouTube channel considering women might see it? Considering I will make a public service announcement at the beginning of each video about how this content is exclusively intended for men. Well, I don't think you really need any kind of exclusionary public service announcement because in all likelihood, 95% at least of your viewers are going to be guys anyway. That's the way it works for me. I I haven't looked at my YouTube stats in quite a while. But in the past, you

know, it was it was above 95% of all my viewers were male.

So, I mean, it's just kind of superfluous to say women shouldn't watch this. you know, the the He-Man woman haters club, no girls allowed, that kind of thing. That's just superfluous. It's completely unnecessary. Just asking for trouble.

So, let's see. Would it be a bad idea to teach a really serious heavy dharma?

Well, I mean, are you are you qualified to teach a really serious heavy dharma?

I mean, just the the renunciation is pretty heavy all by itself as pretty straightforward. So, I guess there are some relatively simple teachings of

Dharma that are still serious heavy

dharma.

Let's see

though. Would it be a bad idea to teach

really he serious heavy dharma on my

YouTube channel considering women might

see it? No. I mean,

yeah, I I don't think that's really

that's really an issue.

So, I'm just going to move on to this

transgressive fourth question. And uh

yeah, I'm serious of you guys. You

should count and then don't count higher

than four when you're asking questions.

And just count question marks. Don't

don't count paragraphs. Count question

marks. How many question marks are
there?
Because some people will just supposedly
ask one compound question with like four
question marks in it distributed
throughout the paragraph.
So anyways,
[clears throat] Liberlam,
also known as Stellar Supreme, also
known as fill in the blank, says, "Where
I live locally is like a desert for
non-normmy lady partners as I see it."
Yeah. And I'm considering relocating to
Chiang Mai, Thailand because it's like a
social hub and it's cheap to live there.
I figure that because it's a Buddhist
country, there might be a devout Thai

woman or Western woman who I could find there. Do you consider this a good plan or would you recommend I try something else? I have a remote job lined up that pays around 50 or 60K per year in insurance sales to support this venture. Well, looking for the right girl. Uh, Thailand maybe is not optimal in my opinion. First of all, no offense to to any Thai people watching this, but Thai women tend not to be very attractive, you know, in a like a physiological sense. And also, I mean, if if you're a big guy, you know, with big hands and big feet, for example,
Southeast Asian women are just too

gracile, you know, they just

it's not going to be a good match

physically. Let's just leave it at that.

just completely leaving out the fact

that you're like banning women from

watching your videos.

So, I mean, if I were going to live in

some exotic local,

you know, just maybe [clears throat]

with the hopes of meeting the right girl

if I hadn't already met her, that kind

of thing, then I think I'd prefer Ubud

in in Bali

despite the the threat of the occasional

devastating volcano in Indonesia.

But Ubud is there's lots of Ubudists

there. A lot of Westerners there. It's

sort of like an artist's colony there.
A lot of rich people who just don't want
to deal with Western craziness. Prefer
the the milder form of eastern
craziness. They live in places like Ubud
in Thailand, which is beautiful.
So, let's see.
Looking for a non-normmy lady partner. I
mean, the Stellar Supreme is is pretty
far. I mean, he's sort of on the fringe
of the fringe of non- normies,
you know, he's he's definitely liinal
and finding I mean, you might want to
get yourself a normie female just to
kind of ground you. I mean, you asked
Stellar Supreme asked this question like

in the previous Q&A or a recent one

anyhow. How can he be less liinal? Yeah.

And finding like some female artist is

not going to do it. I mean, you you

probably should get yourself some maybe

some nice conservative

like spinster school teacher lady in

Thailand. That kind of thing.

I used to think about that sort of thing

like when I was living in Burma, you

know, just settle down with some nice

old maid school teacher lady, that kind

of thing.

But still, there was there would be a

culture barrier, a language barrier. you

couldn't really have I mean with most

Burmese women I would guess Thai women

are kind of similar you know they think
a lot the same you know there's not as
much psychological variation and so
having like a stimulating conversation
is
be the odds would be lower than with a
western woman
let's see here a good plan to move to
Mai to find a woman. Yeah, I'm not so
sure about that. Maybe. I mean, you're
going to have to follow your own
intuition on that one, I guess. But I
mean, if I were looking for a woman, I
certainly wouldn't go to Thailand just
because Thai women in general, there are
some really pretty ones, but they are a

tiny minority. And you got to be careful because a lot of the the the lady boys are prettier than the actual biological females. So, don't don't get led astray by that.

[sighs]

might look into Ubud in Bali though if you want to live in some tropical paradise. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Xenithoid.

And Zenithoid says, "Can you compare and contrast being made in the image of God in Christianity versus Atman is Brahman in Hinduism? They seem like adjacent concepts, although definitely not the same." Yeah, that's it's kind of weird.

never really thought to compare these
two concepts before. Um there's sort of
a a crude spark of the upupanads in this
Christian idea or Jewish idea that man
was made in the image of God.
Um,
it doesn't I mean a lot of people it
maybe even the original person who wrote
that or who started that tradition had
this idea of an anthropomorphic God that
we were just even looked like God which
is the way a lot of people think
but it may be something a little more
profound made in the image of God is
just sort of [clears throat]
kind of a project. It's in a way I was

thinking in the shower the other night
that I mean it could be sort even like a
platonic thing here where as Christ
would be like the ideal man living in
like a platonic heaven of ideals. He is
the perfect man. And so all mere mortal
humans, you know, partake of that ideal
essence of manhood coming from like the
the Superman Christ, you know, that
could be some sort of Platonic
philosophy that found its way into
Judaism and then Christianity.
That's possible, too.
But still it it would be not as profound
as the whole thart that dwam ai of the
upupanads where um the soul or the atman
in Hinduism is just that aspect of like

Brahman or God ultimate reality which

just happens to be here.

So from the Christian point of view,

everyone has their own soul. And I don't

think that Jesus would have argued

against that.

But in Hinduism, starting with the

Upupanads or whatever the Upanishads

were based on that is lost to us

that [clears throat]

that the entire world shares one soul

that God is essentially the soul of the

entire world.

Every being in the world shares this

same soul which is God.

So that's going farther than

Christianity goes.

And I'm not exactly sure what was originally the intention of the statement in the Bible. I assume it's in the Bible, probably Genesis, that man was created in God's image. that it could be something just crude and primitive that they had this idea that God was anthropomorphic, was just some man up in heaven. And then maybe like Greek platonist types influenced Jews to think in terms of you know some prototype some ideal in heaven that then has you know sort of pale reflections of that ideal that are down here in in the meat puppet.

So that's possible and but it could be a

little bit more profound and that we're made with like a spark of divinity that kind of thing that would get closer to the Hindu ideal but still it's doesn't go as far as thou art that in the upupanads.

And I think I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's next question.

Can you talk make sure we're recording here? Yeah, we've been recording for over 30 minutes.

Xenithid [clears throat] says, "Can you talk about how to stop chasing certainty and feeling like you always need reassurance that things are going properly? I am very high in trait

neuroticism and dealing with uncertainty in any form is very difficult for me." God yeah that's dealing with uncertainty in any form if that's difficult for you then yeah that's you've got difficulties because pretty much everything is uncertain. In fact, Ajan Cha, there's books that indicate that Ajan Cha interpreted like anata. I think it was anata or was it ana impermanence as just not sure is just uncertain.

One of the three marks of existence he interpreted as just not sure. You cannot be sure about anything really. And I've taken that to heart. I mean even before I became you know ever even before I heard of Ajan Cha it was like in the

Bible the New Testament it's saying you
shouldn't say you're going to go to such
and such town and make such and such
amount of money and then come back here
you know it's like you don't know you
should say God willing if I don't die
first I'll do that and I mean I have
really taken that to heart even like
just from reading the New Testament as
like a teenager just Not sure, God
willing, inshallah,
because nothing is certain.
Not even death and taxes are like
absolute certain. They're getting
[clears throat] up to like 100%, but
still.

So, I mean, just bear in mind that we're all literally infinitely ignorant. I mean, you can't really know what's going to happen. I mean, we're blind with regard to the future.

We have sort of a murky vision towards the past. Especially guys do. I've noticed that women have very adjustable memories so they can remember something just radically different from what actually happened just five minutes after the fact. But we don't need to go there. Not that I'm offending very many women cuz there's not very many that watch these videos.

[sighs] So, let's see here. Stop chasing certainty. Yeah. And it's just something

that I mean you may have to just get
beaten over the head with it before it
really changes because if it's like a
lifelong habit then me saying a few
sentences probably is not going to jolt
you out of a lifelong habit.
Um feeling like you always need
reassurance that things are going
properly. Yeah. I mean I mean I don't
take the opposite route of just assuming
that things are going wrong
but I mean you just you just have to
just acknowledge you don't know and just
leave it to providence you know just put
yourself
in the hands of dharma you know just

offer yourself up to God so to speak you know better than I do and just bear in mind whatever happens is is I mean that's what is supposed to happen to you due to your own karma.

Everything happens the way it's supposed to happen. That's that's sort of like a a mantra that would just spontaneously arise in my mind from time to time. And it's been been doing that for decades. Everything happens the way it's supposed to happen. It doesn't I don't it doesn't arise as often as it used to. But still it's just you just have to like have faith that you know what's going to happen is what you need to happen even if it's something you don't like because

that's that's really what's going to happen. What's going to happen is exactly what you need to happen. You know for the sake of the fulfillment of your karma even if it's something you don't like. So I mean there's no point in worrying about it and worrying about the future is just kind of delusional anyway. All all that exists from the from the terra Buddhist point of view is right now the present moment. That's all that exists. Thinking about the future, worrying about the past, you know, worrying about what's going on somewhere else. It's just be here now. And that's that's really the wisest route to take.

I was talking about that I think in the previous Q&A where I mean if you're being really mindful even if you have to think about the future or you have to thinking about the past then you're noting you know thinking about the future right now right now you're thinking about the future right now you're thinking about the past that kind of thing so you're still sort of rooted in the present moment you're grounded in the present moment

[sighs]

but yeah I mean [clears throat] being being a perfectionist, wanting to do the best job you can, wanting everything just so I mean that can have its good

points, but

like

always needing reassurance that things

are going properly. I mean, usually I

mean they're going properly from like a

higher vantage point because you're

getting exactly what you need through

your karma, but it's not always going to

be something that you desire, something

that you feel comfortable with.

So I mean you can just have faith in

that

if you are a Christian you could have

faith in God

inshallah.

Of course that's not Christian is it?

So let's see here.

Yeah, I mean

from the from the Buddhist point of view

probably your best method of dealing

with that is just mindful noting

whenever you are like worrying about the

future or worrying is this the way the

best way it can be or you know is are

things going right just note it thinking

wondering worrying and just let it go

and just just every time that arises you

just note it just objectively with the

philosophical detachment and And then

when you just keep observing your own

thoughts with philosophical detachment

and mindfulness, it removes them of

their momentum. You're not reinforcing

it. So eventually the momentum becomes less and then it stops being as much of a problem. Although it may never entirely go away.

So I think I'm just going to move on to [clears throat]

Xenithoid's third question here, which is kind of similar, I think. How does one [clears throat] stop catastrophizing? Always jumping to the worst possible outcome. I tend to do this a lot, even though I know I'm almost always wrong. Whenever my mind spins up a narrative of impending doom.

Yeah, my my sweetheart does that, too. Just kind of always expecting the worst

or at least in in some cases expecting the worst. And it's it's really I mean that sort of thing is is worse than in my opinion than just worrying is are things going okay because I mean just expecting the worst to happen helps it the worst to happen. You know it's like if you have negative thoughts you're creating negative karma.

So I mean just a matter of common sense just remind yourself. I mean, if you're having these thoughts of expecting the worst, then it's actually increasing the odds that the worst really is going to happen.

It's all generated by mind. So again, it's just kind of like a humble attitude

of I don't know,

you know, it's like just have faith. And

and I've been like that my whole life

and it has served me rather rather well.

Sometimes my sweetie just she gets on my

case because I trust people too much.

This kind of thing, you know, I just

don't take precautions

because, you know, I just give the human

race the benefit of the doubt even

though I don't have a extremely high

opinion of the human race. Still, just

do unto others as you'd have them do

unto you and and just give people the

benefit of the doubt and just kind of

have faith in your own karma. Have faith

in Dharma to protect you. That kind of thing. have faith in your guardian angel maybe.

And it has served me pretty well. I mean, I've never really been screwed over. Not Not that I can think of. I mean, it has happened from time to time to some degree, but still it's I mean, I've generally been pretty lucky. I remember one time when I was a teenager, I've probably told this story before that I had these pants that were in style back then and the had no back pockets at all and the front pockets went in like sideways so that I had my wallet in my front pocket because I didn't have a back one. And I'm walking

home from school and it falls out of my pocket three times while I'm walking home from school this one time. And every single time somebody picked up the wallet and came running after me to hand it to me. You dropped your wallet.

I remember one time [clears throat] it was

like the last day of finals, like my sophomore year of college. I went to this party and just got blasted. I was that was the most I've ever drank in my life, I think. It was like more than half of a half gallon of vodka went down my my gullet that night, I'm pretty sure. And I wound up passed out in the

back of my car. And the next day, I couldn't find my shoes or my wallet. And I had just cashed a scholarship check. I had like $2,000 in my wallet. And I go into the house where everyone is passed out and there it is. My my wallet is just sitting there on on like an end table with $2,000 still in it was it still had all the money in it. So, I have been fortunate in life partly just because I'm not always expecting the worst and therefore helping to draw in the worst from happening.

I mean, you should be cautious and prudent, you know? You shouldn't just There's like a Burmese saying, don't trust in don't trust in your karma and

walk on thorns, you know? It's like that kind of thing. I mean, you shouldn't just flirt with disaster. I mean, you should have some common sense, but still, I mean,

Dhamma will protect you. If you have respect for Dhamma, Dama will protect you. And that kind of translates into Christianity as, you know, you have faith in God, God God loves you and, you know, God will watch over you. That kind of thing.

But again, I mean, if you catastrophize, same thing as the the previous question. Just mindfully note it and let it go. Catastrophizing.

Catastrophizing. Just note it and let it go. Just observe it objectively as just a mental phenomenon. It's arising. It's not you. If you are anything, you're the one doing the observing, not the thing being observed.

So

just note it and let it go. And then eventually it helps to weaken the habit. But it may be that I mean we are governed by habit

and habit energy is essentially what karma is. So we're governed by our own karma to some degree. You know, it's just it's like an automatic pilot because we're not fully conscious. We just have these habit patterns that just

drive us through life like an automatic pilot.

And so sometimes it takes a crisis. It's going to it sometimes it may take just the [__] hitting the fan in on like a biblical scale before it knocks enough sense into us or puts us into enough of a crisis that we're able to let go of these habits

of generating this really imperfect samsara for ourselves

because we'll cling to it. I mean, it's it's just a human nature and it's the nature of higher vertebraes, too, including dogs that you just cling to this habit pattern that has been getting

you through life. Even if you're just messed up and unhappy, so long as it's getting you through life, that's good enough. And we just cling to these habits. And sometimes it takes a real crisis of just [__] hitting the fan before you can just let go and and reach out for something better.

And of course that's what like Chinese thought reform was based on and like Stalinist Russian interrogation t tech techniques and like some of the more rigorous basic training in in the military and manhood rituals in like indigenous populations and even some meditation retreats are like this where it's just so difficult to deal with that

you have like a breakdown and then you
can be born again, you can just let go
of these these habits that were like
practically ruining your life and reach
out for something better. Or in the case
of like Chinese thought reform, you let
go of your old like individualist kind
of ideas and you just reach out to the
the communism that is being being told
to you by the commasar or whatever.
>> [sighs]
>> So mindful detachment is about the best
sort of low impact thing you can do.
Just try and talk some sense to
yourself. But it some in many cases I am
sorry to say that in order for there to

be like real significant spiritual advancement there has to be some kind of crisis that that like causes it to happen.

And I I read that in a Rahm Doss book when I was a teenager and just for many years I was just hoping that he was wrong on that one. But my own history seems to bear it out. Like the two or three main growth spurts spiritually I have experienced in my life have been the result of some kind of like emotional crisis.

In fact, for a while, I was even trying to just trigger an emotional crisis in myself to try and spur on some emotional or some spiritual growth. But that's

that's really playing with fire when
you're doing that.
And I guess I should just go on to the
next question here. This is from
Thoughtfog.
And Thoughtfog says, "I'm about to go on
Anggo Zen training for three months. Do
you have advice?" Well, just try and be
at your peak, you know, try to be free
of diseases, free of like worries, you
know, you've got like some, you know,
try and like settle anything that's
that's hanging in the air before you go
there, so you're not going to be
worrying about it.
Just and just do your best. I mean, just

be in the present moment. That's the

best you can do.

So, I mean, there's really not much

preparation for going [clears throat] on

a threemonth intensive retreat.

uh other than just you know get your

affairs in order and be as healthy as

you can healthy in mind and body

especially mind although mind and body

tend to to interact with each other and

so it's hard to be perfectly healthy

with one and not perfectly healthy in

the other

[sighs] so

yeah I mean just do your best and and

just put yourself wholeheartedly into it

that would that would be my my advice

Just do your best. And I'm moving on to Thoughtf Fog's next question here. Would you please talk more about Ajan Punadamo? And I really don't know the venerable Ajan very well. We've done a few videos with Brian Rue and Ajan Punidamo got some severe push back from at least a few of his supporters for having anything to do with Brian Rue because Brian Rue has some rather politically incorrect ideas, which he holds sincerely. I mean, he's honest and he's he's a good guy and and a better Buddhist than a lot of people that would be spitting on him in the street. But aside from that, I mean, I I had

like a an illst starred video conference with him last week, which his at his end, the the internet was just messing up big time, and he just kept freezing. It was like half the time he was frozen until he just suggested we just give it up, which we did. I think he was like some kind of electrical engineer or something before he became a monk. He's he's uh intelligent, you know, he's he's intellectually oriented with regard to a lot of things. He's written books. Um because he's an ordained monk. Um he's probably more diplomatic and maybe a little more faith oriented with regard to some of the teachings of Dhamma than I am. I mean I even when I was a monk I

could just sort of make fun of Abid Dhama for example or some of the some of the teachings of the commentarial tradition just bring up this sort of embarrassing facts about what is in the text that sort of thing that most monks including ajan punamo generally don't do largely just as a matter of sort of diplomacy and etiquette and that kind of thing because if you're trying to spread dhamma to the best, you're not going to be, at least most monks won't be like bringing up embarrassing facts about what they're trying to promote, which is natural,

but he seems like a genuinely good

person. I do have a lot of respect for Ajan Punadamo, but I really don't know him very well. He's supposedly I mean the the legend was that he lived in Canada up near Hudson's Bay somewhere, but actually I think he lives closer to Lake Superior than Hudson's Bay.

So that was just a myth.

And uh I mean really I don't know all that much about him. So I there's not really much for me to say I guess. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Scudamain.

I think that's how you pronounce the name. Scooterain [clears throat] probably got picked on a lot in school when he was a kid,

a name [clears throat] like that.
[gasps] And he says, "How do you deal
with pride? In America, pride is seen as
such a positive emotion. So much that if
you don't have pride in something,
you're looked at as ungrateful or
foolish. Everywhere you look, there are
pride union signs or proud dad shirts.
My wife often asks me when our sons do
something new or skillful, "Aren't you
proud of them?" It's hard for me to
overlook pride as being actually
negative in almost every major religion.
How can you be happy with oneself or
others without attaching pride?
Well, yeah. I mean, pride usually in

poly would be mana, conceit. That's in pol in in Burmese also the word for like someone who's very proud is managa. He's got big mana.

So yeah, pride um is not good in Buddhism because of course pride is just like this glorification of the self and the self is delusional. It doesn't really exist. Also of course it's one of the seven deadlies in traditional Christianity. Um although I read somewhere like western civilization has turned all of the seven deadly sins into virtues except one which is sloth. Sloth is still I mean it's sloth is sort of making a comeback. Even sloth is getting up there when you know it's like

especially the left is like glorifying people who are just living on welfare handouts and not working for a living. That sort of thing you know they're seen as just poor victims of the system or whatever. So even sloth I guess is is uh rising in the estimation of many people in the west.

So let's see how do you deal with pride? I mean [snorts] I don't know I other people might see me very differently but I mean I don't consider myself to be a particularly proud person. I may not be an extremely humble person either. I mean, humility is definitely more of a virtue than pride, but it's it's sort of

like

related to the questions asked earlier, dealing with like best case scenarios or worst case scenarios or catastrophizing and all that. I just kind of leave it a blank, you know, and it's it still surprises me a lot when people that I'm not even very nice to sometimes, like people at work, like apparently genuinely like me, you know? It's like they think that I'm, you know, out [snorts] of the ordinary or whatever. And I guess I would agree that I'm out of the ordinary, but still, I mean, like even when I was a kid, like a girl would like me, a pretty girl would like me, and it's I would just not get it, you

know? Why? Why me?

That kind of thing. But yeah, pride is

it's something that I really don't Yeah,

I really don't have much

rapport with pride. Like at work, you

can get pride points and it's it just

even just the idea of like working to

get pride points. It just seems silly.

This pride it it does seem silly to me.

And most peop most proud people I mean

the pride comes first. It's just like a

character trait and then it's just

convenient justification for the pride

comes later. And if if they can't be

proud of being handsome or rich or

intelligent or, you know, in great

physical shape, they'll be proud of how
many beers they can drink without puking
or how many women they've seduced or,
you know, how big their feet are or just
anything.
The pride comes first as a general rule.
And um I don't know. Some people might
think that I'm just a stuck up prick or
something, but I
at least at the the conceptual
intellectual level, I can't really
relate to it very much just being proud,
you know. Aren't you proud of of him?
Yeah. It's like [clears throat]
um I think in Buddhism, Terravada
Buddhism like the wholesome the
wholesome alternative to being proud of

somebody would be muda which is one of the four Brahma vihara is one of the four divine abidings and muda is being happy that someone else is happy. You know you're glad that someone has had good fortune. You know, it's just like a sympathetic joy. You know, you're h you you feel happy because this person that you like is happy. You know, it's sort of like you give a a present to somebody and they really like it. That makes you happy. Or, you know, the the the grandma who's making banana bread and the little kids are all just hopping up and down. They like it so much. then that makes grandma feel happy and she's not proud

of them for eating the banana bread but she's happy because they're happy you know it's just sort of like this contagious happiness so I mean that would be fine you know your sons do something new or skillful and you praise them you know that's that's one thing that a lot of parents don't get I think I I mean I shouldn't be giving advice to parents very much because I'm not a parent myself at least listen I'm unaware of being on. But it's like you don't just punish them when they do something bad. I mean, sometimes that's necessary, but you also praise them and reward them when they do something good. And I mean, you don't [clears throat]

necessarily have to be proud. I mean, it can happen. I mean, if I had kids, I might be proud of my kids if they did something good. you know, come home with straight A's or something and yeah, you'd sort of praise them and be glad about it, maybe brag. Like my father, he used to he used to brag about me to his brothers and sisters sometimes, you know, I'd come home with like some scholarship or something and he'd be immediately go to the phone and brag to his sister about how smart his kid was. And kids really eat that stuff up. You know, when when your own parents are like bragging about you, they don't even

know you're listening. You're you're like listening in the other room about that, you know, your parent brag, your dad bragging about you, then yeah, that makes a kid feel really good.

But, uh, I mean, you can do that without actual pride to praise your kids when they do good and and just be happy that your kids are good instead of bad largely for their own good. I mean, you want your kids to be good people and not bad people. You want them to, you know, be productive, wellbalanced members of society and not just, you know, drugaddicted,

you know, troublemakers.

So, I mean, you can,

you know, have happiness when your kids do well without being proud about it. And pride really is it's a kind of egoism because that's really what mana is in poly. It's it's sort of literally the the the literal translation of mana in Pali is measuring.

So someone who's proud is sort of measuring themselves against somebody else. And in the ataga, it even goes so far as to say that if you consider yourself to be superior to another, that's mana. That's pride or conceit. If you consider yourself to be inferior to someone, that's also conceit. And if you consider yourself to be equal to someone

else, that's also conceit. Because in every single case, you're measuring yourself up against somebody else. Just measuring yourself up. That's essentially what mana is. And if you measure yourself up way bigger than somebody else, that would be what is called pride in the west. And you know, just essentially it's a feeling of being superior.

[sighs] So how do I deal with it? I see it in other people and then it's just kind of I don't know just kind of embarrassing I guess if they're really extreme about it but I don't see it a lot. I mean I usually deal with humble workingclass people if I deal if I'm

dealing with other people at all at least you know in the outside world. My sweetheart doesn't seem to be extremely proud.

I'm I don't strike myself as being particularly proud of a human being. I mean, humility is something I admire in others. The the people at work that I tend to like the most are the are humble people. They're just unassuming, not bragging. You know, the guy that works next to me, he's he's like overseeing the section next to mine. He's bragging a lot, trying to be a hot shot. And I mean I can like him anyway, but still it's it's it's not as likable as the guy

who works on the other side of me who I mean to some degree he'll even go into like self-deprecation which I don't like you know it's like I can like say hey stop bad mouthing my friend you know when he's saying something bad about himself

but

yeah I mean pride may be hard to see in oneself which is maybe why I don't see much in myself. But I mean again the the standard the panacea in terraata Buddhism for any kind of unskillful mental state is mindfully note it. Note it and let it go. Do not identify with it. Don't just you know get carried away by it. Just observe it with emotional

detachment. It's just a mental state
that it's arising and let it go.
But you have to do that perpetually
because you can't just do it two or
three times and then forget about it and
then expect this problem to be solved
because it won't be.
And I'm just going to move on to
Scooterain's next question
which is
do people have a duty specifically in
the West where population decline is
occurring and possibly to dangerously
low levels to have offspring? Follow-up
question, which uh still is only three.
Follow-up question. Would things like

homosexuality or even becoming a monk be being a reproductive dead end be negative in a way? So, I guess I'll just have to separate this, make an extra question and deal with it after I deal with the first question. Do people have a duty to have offspring? Okay. No. From the Buddhist point of view, no. It doesn't matter. I mean, even if the human race died out, which it isn't going to do, but even if we just like stopped reproducing until we went extinct, I mean, from the Buddhist point of view, it wouldn't really matter. Not that it's going to happen because Buddhism predicts that humans are just going to be on this earth for thousands

and thousands and thousands of years.
Um I mean you can like from a sort of a ethnosentric point of view say well you know the white race you know the European ethnicity or group of ethnicities is dwindling dangerously so we should reproduce you know better to have one white child and curse the dark ones that kind of thing but I mean from a from an ethical point of view no it's it has nothing to do with ethics. It's just a matter of more politics or sociology than ethics.
So, you don't have a duty to have kids. And that's kind of lucky for me because when I was younger, first of all, from

the age of like 17, I was planning on renouncing the world and becoming a monk. So, I mean, I wasn't really planning on having a family. But even if I hadn't become a monk back then, like back in the 1980s,
late 70s and 80s, I mean, there's always this end of the world hysteria going on. You know, climate change is one of the most recent ones that this the technological singularity might be a more realistic one. Back in the the 70s and 80s, it was you had the ozone layer, but that would be survivable. you know, we'd all just be wearing hazmat suits and we go outside slathering ourselves with, you know, an eighth of an inch of

zinc or something.

But still, there was like thermonuclear Armageddon, which is still a possibility. It's it's it's really weird to me how that was just like, you know, the big thing that was the the danger, the threat to the world was World War II, through thermonuclear Armageddon, and even more countries have nukes now. and the cold war. It's like the powers that be, the upper establishment doesn't want to get rid of a cold war.

So, I [snorts] mean, it's still a danger now, but for some reason, you know, it's like the propagandists just say, you know, they're just, you know, they got

some other shiny thing that they're saying here, be be freaked out about this.

And then, of course, it was overpopulation. Like, back in the 70s, it was we were going to just overpop populate. there's just by the 20th century it's just going to be just famine and billions of people starving to death which of course hasn't happened and even with regard to like the white ethnicity the the European family of ethnicities or whatever you want to call it Caucasians

I mean we're not going to die out because what's happening is the sort of the the decadent aeat people mostly

leftists are they're not reproducing but
the conservatives
like Amish people are still reproducing
like bunnies and so what's going to
happen is leftism may die out but
conservatism is going to grow and that's
why one reason I suppose why the left
has this strategy of just trying to
convert the children like in you know
schools that are really like
indoctrination camps
just you know they're not having their
own kids so they got to convert somebody
else's kids to become um the next
generation of leftists,
but it doesn't work very well. Like the

the Shakers, I don't know if there's any Shakers left. It was it was a a Christian sect in America and celibacy was just mandatory for shakers and so they just died out.

But I mean, it may be that uh the future is for in Western civilization, maybe for like Mormons and and Amish people, that sort of thing.

Let's see here.

But people do not really have a duty, at least not from an unethical duty from a Buddhist point of view, to have children. In fact, it's kind of the other way around. you know, you're better off not having kids from a Buddhist point of view or from the point

of view of the book of Ecclesiastes in

the Old Testament

because in a way you're sort of damning

somebody to one of the relatively more

comfortable levels of hell.

But I mean, it's

it's their karma.

They're going to get born anyway.

So yeah, you do not have a duty to have

offspring. So I'm moving on to

Scooterain's third question here. The

follow-up question on the second one.

Would things like homosexual

homosexuality or even becoming a monk be

a reproductive being a reproductive dead

end be negative in a way? It could be

negative in like an evolutionary point of view. Not ethically though. I mean homosexuality you could say from a Buddhist point of view that's an ethical problem just because lust is a problem. Whether it's lust for a woman or lust for a man or lust for for anything else, it's still lust and it's to that extent it's craving which is the cause of all suffering and you're better off without it. But most people just aren't. And the Buddha was cool with that. You know, he just acknowledged, you know, Jesus of Nazareth apparently was the same way. Just not everybody's ripe for it. So those who are ready, here's the teachings

and the rest of you, well follow as well as you can if you please. You know, even to follow it a little bit is better than not following at all.

But I remember Echart Tollah I think in his first famous book u talked about homosexuality and said that in certain ways

homosexuals can actually have an advantage simply because they're they're kind of on the on the margins. You know they're they're more liinal than just an ordinary heterosexual person. So in a way that kind of helps them to be a little bit more detached from samsara at least potentially in some cases. But of

course in other cases there are homosexual men that are just like completely depraved and had over a thousand sexual partners and go to anonymous orgies and and all this kind of stuff.

So

it depends on the individual and the individual's mental states.

But um just being like an evolutionary dead end is not ethically negative. I mean the Buddha himself was an evolutionary dead end according to tradition. He had only one child, his son Rahula. And then he can I mean he ordained his son Rahula as a monk and he became celibate. And so you know the

Godma clan has pretty much become extinct. At least those that are nobody is descended from the Buddha.
Millions and millions of people are descended from Jenis Khan but nobody is descended from the Buddha now or from well maybe from Jesus. And that's that's kind of it may be that Jesus did have kids. There's no mention of them in the in the Bible, of course, but it's still possible.
But then again, even the Buddha may have sewn some wild oats. I mean, he had a harum of beautiful girls living in living in the palace with him.
So maybe one of them

became the the mother of a nation. Who knows?

Ah, but I mean if being a reproductive dead end is negative in a way, it's not an ethical way. It's it's more of like an if you're like a Darwinist or something, evolutionary biologist, then you it could be be seen as something that is not optimal or like a white nationalist or something like that.

But ethically,

it's fine. And I'm moving on to the next question. This is from Maitraa Buddha.

[snorts]

And Maitraa Buddha asked kind of an interesting question that I'm not fully equipped to answer I'm sure. He says,

"How would you describe the change in consciousness of Sedarta Godma almost dying from starvation [clears throat] being approached by a young girl offering a bowl of milk rice to Sedarta Godma meditating at the base of the bodhic tree and becoming a Buddha and coming up with a middle path." And I wrote an essay long ago back before I started blogging. This was just written on paper. The way Fred Flintstone used to write his philosophical essays. And I had this. It's like a hypothesis.
And I'm mainly going to answer this question hypothetically
in that it's fairly common in

Christianity for example where a person is trying to be a good person. and you know they're trying to live up to the ideals of the Bible of the New Testament especially because the ideals of the Old Testament aren't particularly high but he's trying to you know serve God do God's will and he just can't do it so finally he hits this crisis kind of crisis I was mentioning earlier where it's like I just can't do it God I just offer myself up to you I'm entirely you know I'm your grace if I go to heaven it's going to be entirely your grace I just throw myself at your mercy. And in a way, they just kind of give up. And when that happens, it's like they

they've had that crisis and they're just born again. And that happened to me to some degree when I was a monk after I've been a monk about 10 years. It was like I'm just struggling against my own defilements. You know, it's like trying to like ruthlessly eradicate your own imperfections and it just doesn't work that way. Maybe if you have absolute stainless steel faith like some kind of ro medieval Roman Catholic saint, maybe then. But some eclectic westerner, you know, 20th century westerner at the time, early 21st century westerner, I mean, trying to perfect yourself through your own efforts. I mean, you

just hit a wall at some point or another and then it's like you just give up. It's like the great surrender. You just surrender. It's just I can't do it, you know? I'm

It's it's Buddhism kind of accepts this and Christianity really accepts it. You know, they say, you know, the only way you're going to go to heaven is through the divine grace. But in Buddhism, it's like, you know, there's no guarantees. And really, you perfect yourself through mindful detachment. Just you're not trying to eradicate unskillful mental state so much as just whatever arises, you just note it and let it go. You just don't feed it, don't reinforce it. and

then just whatever is supposed to happen happens and you can just accept that. So getting back to the Buddha, I I think it's possible as a hypothesis that he, you know, he tried everything that was available in the spiritual tradition of India at the time. You know, he he mastered, you know, the meditative states, still wasn't enlightened. Then he started torturing himself, you know, like the James and the Ajivacas were doing, and that wasn't working either. He he almost died because of that. And so finally, it could be that he just had this crisis or just this surrender. It's like that's not working. Nothing works.

This woman is offering me some good food. I'm just going to sit down, eat the food, and then just meditate.
And it may be that that's what happened. According to tradition, you know, he made this resolve. I'm not going to get up from this tree until I become fully enlightened. But that's really not the way it works in my opinion.
It may be that it was like he had tried everything, tried as hard as he could. He was like this spiritual genius. Anyway, he was trying at a very advanced level. Still nothing was working. So, it's like there was just like this something clicked or snapped and he just it was just like this state of supreme

spiritual surrender where he just
stopped trying and he was there.
That's all it takes. It's the struggle
is one of the things that keep is
keeping you from being enlightened. Even
this struggle against your own
defilements keeps you defiled
because struggling against something
just makes it stronger in a way.
So the change in consciousness of of
Sedarta Godma
almost dying from starvation being
attract approached by a young girl
offering a bowl of milk rice and then
him meditating at the base of the bodhic
tree and becoming a Buddha. Yeah, I mean

trying to second guess the mental states of Samasam Buddha is just ridiculous. So, the best I'm going to do is just offer that up as just like this hypothesis, this sort of like a thought experiment that really he just tried as hard as he could and it nothing was working. And so this woman offers him some good food, milk, rice, you know, better food than he was eating at the time. He just all right, I'm just going to eat it. And you know I won't I won't say that he just thought like [__] it but still you know just he just relaxed. He stopped struggling against his defilements. Stopped struggling to become enlightened. And I mean it was

like he had already eradicated all of his other attachments. The only attachment he had left was the attachment to becoming enlightened. And then at the end just through this supreme surrender he just abandoned even that attachment and there he was fully enlightened.

I'm not insisting that's the way it happened but that is like a hypothesis I offer for consideration.

And I'm going to move on to my Buddha's next

see next question here. How would you describe the transition of the consciousness of the Buddha dying and

entering pari nirvana?

Well, [sighs] I mean I should have looked up the the uh maha let's see par nibbana suta which is the suta and the din kaya that describes the Buddha's final days and you know his death and everything.

Well, the transition of consciousness according to tradition is he was having these racking pains, these abdominal pains after eating some bad pork or some people nowadays, some doctors are saying it's it's an ailment common to well I mean not extremely common but it happens mainly with very elderly people where they start getting like gang green of the intestinal tract.

you know, it's just like their body is starting to just die from the inside out, and that can be extremely painful. They think maybe that's what the Buddha had, and it wasn't really some kind of bad pork that he ate.

But anyways, the Buddha was in intense racking pain. And so, according to the tradition, he went into Janna. First Janna, then second Janna, then third Janna, then fourth Janna, which originally was the highest Janna. But then by the time this text had reached its completed form, he went into like the the formless Jas. And then he may have even gone into a higher like like

>> [clears throat]

>> uh Noda Samopathy or something which is even higher than the highest Janna. And then he ca but then he came back down to first Janna and then went back up to fourth Jonah again and then died in fourth J. And it could be that traditionally he died in fourth Janna because fourth Janna was as high as it went in the Buddhist time and then after these Indian systematizers added extra Jas and everything they had to sort of modify the story. So he went into all these higher Jas too. But then, you know, in a certain amount of like faithfulness to the original version of the story, he had to go back to first

Jonah and then just went as far as
fourth Janna and died in fourth Janna
because at least in some sutas, fourth
Janna is like the traditional jumping
off point for nibbana.
But uh the transition of consciousness
of the Buddha dying and I mean again
it's secondguing the mental states of
the Buddha but according to tradition he
was in very deep meditative states when
he died.
So I mean [snorts]
nonverbal, you know, just very subtle.
His consciousness was just, you know, a
flat calm, you know, no
no kind of distracting perceptions or

thoughts or ideas or anything, you know.
He was he wasn't talking or anything. He wasn't thinking in words probably. He just went into like a deep meditative state. Just kind of blissed out and just faded out from there.
That would be my guess just based on tradition because that's all we really have to work with.
So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Romeo.
And Romeo says, [clears throat] "My questions are about the practical logistics of working out one's karma in this life. I'm confused about how one's how one differentiates between a general difficult life issue that comes with

simply being a human being living in samsara and an issue connected specifically to one's karma. Well, it's all specifically connected to your karma because it's your karma that you're born into as a human being into the human condition. So even just the the basic things of the human condition feeling hungry sometimes

I mean even that is karma it's just that you have like predominantly human karma at the time at least that's that's what's at the surface working its way out

so a general difficult life issue that comes with simply being a human being is

in samsara is still karma anything that you experience any like according to abidama any way that you have any feeling feeling that you have is necessarily the fruition of karma. It's kama paka. So absolutely every feeling that you experience is the fruition of karma. And it's it's like your own mental states and that's I mean just the fact that you know being a human I mean the fact that you were born a human in the first place is also because of karma.

And then you stub your toe that's because of karma. You feel hungry that's because of karma.

get a toothache that's because of karma

also

because it's all mindmade.

So let's see here. Yeah, there is no

there is no differentiation at all. Any

feeling that you experience pleasant or

unpleasant is the fruition of your own

karma or karma.

sort of like uh Schopenhau's will that's

just the driving force of all beings

anything in existence in samsara you

know it's it's a manifestation of this

will and that's that's what kama is I

mean that's kama is very similar to

schopenhau's will

[clears throat] so yeah there is no

differentiation between your comma and

then what you just inherit as part of the human condition because what you inherit as part of the human condition is also comma

So, I'm just going to move on to Romeo's next question. He [clears throat] says, "Also, what is the practical method of working out a karmic issue? And how can one tell if or when the karmic issue is resolved? Feel free to site examples from your own life to illustrate the ex answers to my questions." Well, I mean, you don't even worry about it. You just be be here now. Be here in the present moment. Don't worry about whether some karmic issue is resolved.

>> [sighs]

>> So,

[snorts] I mean, if it just doesn't

arise anymore,

then there's a good chance it's

resolved,

especially if it has had opportunities

to arise, but hasn't.

So, a practical method of working out a

karmic issue.

[clears throat] I mean, the standard

panacea is uh just whatever arises, note

it, and let it go. Just be mindful of

whatever arises with a certain amount of

mindful detachment.

That's the best you can do because that

means your karma is I mean your past

karma is reaching fruition but you're not reacting to it thereby creating more karma. So if something can arise and you have no reaction to it, you you're not even drawn to have any re reaction that would be a pretty good indication that the karmic issue is resolved. I mean, if something used to bother you or something used to elicit some kind of positive or negative reaction and now it doesn't anymore, then I mean, it could be that you're just too old. But there is also a chance that it's just worked itself out that through whatever wisdom you've got, whatever mindfulness you've got that it just ran its course and it's no longer there. It could be I mean some

some karma in life if we go with
Buddhist philosophy can just be a
one-off you know it's like you had this
karma to have somebody ram your car at
one point and
I mean maybe you you had some
philosophical detachment from that you
know even if you did have some uh you
know phys you had some emotional
reaction or whatever I mean at least the
main brunt of the karma has exhausted
itself and then there's just going to
some sort of like side effect karma that
that comes from your reaction to having
your car smashed or something.
So practical method of working out a

karmic issue. Just follow the middle path. Don't seek pleasure. Don't seek pain. Just live your life and whatever is going to happen to you, it happens. and then you just don't react or I mean if you even get a second chance even if you do react if you react mindfully you know let's say you have aversion but you note the aversion then still you got that second chance and still you're doing okay but just being lost in some sara and just reacting with positive or negative you know attraction and aversion and so forth just throughout life yeah you're just wallowing in it and you're not karmic issues are going to be create new ones will be created at

about the same rate as you're you're
like resolving the older ones.
[sighs] So just having a certain mindful
detachment from it all so that whatever
arises you're not going to be like
attached and having some strong reaction
then that's about the best you can do
and it doesn't even really matter if the
karmic issue is resolved because I mean
even a fully enlightened Buddha
according to terabara Buddhist tradition
I mean all of his karma is not resolved
you know it's like stuff is still
happening to
Mahammogalana, one of the two chief
disciples, was beaten to death, just

beaten into a pulp by hostile non Buddhists. I mean, there's still karma there. It's just that when you become enlightened, it's you're just not reacting anymore. It's just you're not attached to any of it. It's just nature taking its course. And that that can just keep happening even after you become fully enlightened.

>> [sighs]

>> So don't even bother trying to figure out if some karmic issue is resolved. I mean, if it that the issue just doesn't arise anymore or if it does arise and you're just completely completely cool with it, you know, it's no surge of attraction or surge of aversion. It's

just equinimity, then there's good chance it's resolved. But still, I mean, you shouldn't latch on to it's resolved or it's not resolved because it doesn't even really matter.

You can't really be sure anyway, as far as I can tell.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Jimmy Lad.

And Jimmy Lad says, "You [clears throat] spoke a few episodes ago about how you didn't fully attain Janna. For a certain period, you would attain it, but then it would slip away and it kept eluding you. I know it is impossible to describe these higher states, but what was it

like? And how did it feel to momentarily attain Janna? And again, Janna is such a controversial term with nobody really fully agreeing with everybody else on what exactly Janna means. I mean, originally Janna probably just meant meditation. And the four Jas were just the four stages or four levels of meditation. With first Janna even being like beginning level, you know, you're you're meditating correctly. It's just that you still have like like a primary object in your labeling or whatever because you're still thinking in first Jonah.

So I consider the term Janna to be almost useless, tell you the truth.

And [clears throat] then people would have monkeyied with it, you know, for centuries after the Buddha started using the term.

Um, [snorts] but I mean when I was in my highest mental highest meditative states, and I've I've explained this before, it's like your mind is just it's like I mentioned earlier, it's like your mind is just a flat calm. It's like the surface of a clear pool. And a thought might start to arise, but it's like a fish arising from down below. And you can start seeing the ripples on the surface before the before the fish even comes to the surface. And then your

mindfulness is so acute that it just as soon as you become aware of it, it just flattens back out again. And you're just sitting there in just clarity and silence. It's like your mind is clear like glass and you're not thinking anything.

which has caused me to think that the closest the closest that most normal people get to Janna le like higher johnic states would be when they're in the middle of a sneeze when you're wide awake and you're not thinking anything. So yeah, I mean when you're in a state like that where your mind is just a flat calm, it's just you're hyper alert because you're catching I mean you're

aware of thoughts even when the first movements start to arise and then it just stops. You know, it's just clarity and silence and just wide awake consciousness.

And I mean, you can sit like that for for over an hour.

And I mean, it might be a thought will start to arise, but I mean, it's not like absolute perfect silence, but it's like the clarity is there. And the silence will start to be disrupted a little bit, but you don't just follow up on it. You don't just get lost in this chain of association. It may be that occasionally even a full thought like a

word or something will arise but you just don't follow it. You just note it, let it go or you don't even really note it. You're just aware of it without even having to note.

So it's you're seeing without looking, you know, it's not volitional really.

And your mind is just it's just wide awake and clear like glass.

And I really do not think that somebody who's going into like a state like a hibernating squirrel where they're oblivious to everything around them that that is some sort of sama samadei like some higher uh johnic state which a lot of people think you know it's just accepted nowadays by the mainstream of

terra Buddhism. you get into fourth Janna, it's like you stop breathing and your pulse rate is is down like hibernating squirrel levels and you're just completely oblivious to everything around you and like how is that higher consciousness? How are you getting closer to being awake when you're practically in a coma?

I do think that aic state is is like hyper aware. You're at a higher level of awakeness than an ordinary waking state of consciousness, even though you may be sitting motionless in a cave somewhere. And I guess I'm just going to move on to Jimmy Lad's next question.

Is there a word in Buddhism, in Pali for a state that is only partially realized and has been glimpsed but not fully conquered and attained? And there may be. I'm sure there's words in poly that just mean like, you know, just glimpsed or or just like incomplete. Certainly, there's going to be words in poly that mean like incomplete, not fully mastered yet or like you know the seikka is someone who is still in training. That would be like the the lower three uh stages of aryahood you know sodapana, sakadagami, anagami, they would be sea because they're still in training. So their enlightenment has been glimpsed but not fully conquered and attained. So

I mean in different contexts with regard to different things I'm sure there's poly terms that would indicate that it's not fully mastered but still incomplete. But with regard to Janna, like in the God Suta where God gets Janna and loses it and gets it and loses it and gets it and loses it till he's at wit's end and finally decides to selfdelete that I don't think there is a special word that applied to his Jonah saying that he had not fully mastered it. In fact, I never really came across that concept until I was reading the the the works of St. John of the Cross who was a Roman Catholic a contemplative

discalsted Carmelaite Catholic monk and I mean he said something that was humbling to me where he's talking about the different stages what what a Catholic calls high contemplation a Buddhist would call a higher Janna. So he's saying that for a contemplative monk to like get into the levels of contemplation where you're not thinking anymore and then lose it and then gain it and then lose it and gain it and lose it based on his experience as like a father confessor at like meditation monasteries. He said, "Well, God just has different plans for you."

And that was that was humbling to me. It's like, damn. He's not saying that

that there's hope really. He's just saying that I mean if you're if you're that kind of a person where you get it and lose it and get it and lose it, you don't just fully master it where you can just reliably sit down and go into these higher states which some people do. Apparently the Buddha did that you know it's just you still haven't fully mastered it. So it's not reliable at least not for very long. Then he's just saying, "Well, God has other plans for you." Because that was apparently his experience just as a father confessor at what were essentially meditation monasteries and meditation

convents. He was a father confessor to

nuns, too.

So

yeah, I'm sure there are certain

specific poly words for states that are

partially realized like sea with regard

to just the state of being in samsara.

It's the state of unenlightenment.

But

um yeah, I don't think that there is

really a technical term that you can

just attach as an adjective

to or an adverb to another word which

indicates that you haven't fully

mastered it yet. You, you know, you've

got glimpses of it. You're getting

there, but you haven't fully mastered it

yet. It may be I'm no authority on the poly language. I'm certainly no philologist, no bik when it comes to understanding the poly language. So they there may be a word but I don't know what it would be and I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Tzasiz

and Tzasqueziz says are you obliged to eat everything people put in your bowl in alms round and then some some wise guy said that there's the mandatory story of the severed finger which is in the terraata it's uh Maha

Maha Kasapa who was you know senior monk in the song after the Buddha at the time

of the Buddha's paring and he was the the the great disciple who had mastered do tongo or aestheetic practice. And there's a story about how the this lepous beggar puts food into Mahakasapa's bowl and one of his fingertips just breaks off into into Mahakasapa's bowl. And Mahakaspa, he doesn't raise an eyebrow. Just total poker face. Complete equinimity. He just accepts the the severed finger in the bowl along with the the rice or whatever it was. And then when he goes and sits down to eat his meal, he doesn't even take it out. He just kind of moves it over to one side. Technically, it would have been against the rules for him to

eat it because monks are not allowed to eat human flesh.

Um, but you're not obliged to eat everything people put in your bowl. I mean, for starters, of course, people can put something in your bowl. It's just not allowable. You know, they lion meat, for example. Of course, it's also a rule that monk is supposed to ask if anyone puts meat into the bowl, uh, what kind of meat is this? And I used to do that really because I mean for the most part um you're not likely to get anything on the list of forbidden meat when you're going through a a village in Burma. But there is a rule and almost no

monks follow this rule, including the strict ones. But there is a rule that if a monk is accepts meat into his bowl, he has to ask about that meat to make sure that it is allowable.

Here in the west, it's more likely. I mean, you could bear meat, and monks aren't allowed to eat bear meat. And who knows, there could be some hunter or a friend of a hunter who actually offers bear meat to a monk, but it's not like they will be getting like hyena meat or tiger meat or anything like that. I mean, some rich Chinese people might spend, you know, tens of thousands of dollars to eat tiger meat. Wouldn't surprise me at all.

But I mean, if you're a vegetarian, you can't you shouldn't refuse the meat, but you don't have to eat it. So, there is a rule that says a monk is supposed to eat systematically,
start at one side of his bowl and just work his way to the other side. But still, you can rotate the bowl. So, if something you really don't like is on the side you're not going to get to, or you can even like move stuff over to the other side before you start eating.
So there's some food that you just can't stand it if it's just awful food. You're not absolutely required to eat it. You might eat it anyway just as a kind of

spiritual practice and equinimity or something. Like bamboo shoots for me. I just acquired this hatred of bamboo shoots when I was in Burma because I was living in this place during the rainy season where everyone and her sister was offering bamboo shoots and it was it was just awful.

I [clears throat] got really skinny that that rainy season.

So no, a monk is not obliged to eat everything people put in the bowl. Although a monk should not refuse anything unless it's really just not allowable.

So let's see. Tascus is a second question. Which Buddhist tradition King

Ashoka was spreading throughout his empire? Well, the Terravadans would say, of course, that he was spreading Terravada, but apparently it was like he didn't he was not really sectarian. the the the different schools of Buddhism in and in Ashoka's time were were pretty similar still you know there was minor differences but they were still fairly similar it was all pre- Mahayana you know shravakayana you know so-called hinayana Buddhism back then and it I've read a theory anyway maybe there's some real evidence backing this up that when he would be sending out missionaries in the different directions it would just

be whatever school of Buddhism

was closest to the frontier. He just

sent missionaries from them.

So

yeah, I think that he didn't really

single out one tradition at that time.

Um he may have patronized what the terra

Buddhists call the third council which

was during his reign. In which case it

may be that he really did favor

Terravada.

But um there is apparently some kind of

evidence that I don't recall clearly

that not all of the missionaries going

out to what's the word procilitize you

know like he sent his own son apparently

um mahinda as like senior monk to the

the mission in Sri Lanka. So I mean that could just be tradition. I mean, maybe the Terraata Buddhists are just just kind of making up the idea that Ashoka's own son was a Terravada Buddhist monk, but you know, the Northwest wasn't really Terravada territory. So maybe the the missionaries he sent into, you know, the like the Henistic states, you know, like uh to Egypt and and and so on, the the the the Seucid Empire and so forth. He did send missionary Buddhist missionaries, but there's a good chance that they weren't Terraata. They were just members of some school that was closest to the frontier there, and it

was just more convenient to send them

because they were closer.

[sighs]

So, I mean, Ashoka was very much in

favor of like spiritual toleration. you

know, he did not want, you know, any

school, any religious school to say, we

are the only correct school, everyone

else is wrong and then just have them

like holy wars and this kind of [__] He

I mean he did not want that at all.

India in in in like fairness to ancient

India. I mean they would have they'd

have some acrimony, you know, they'd

have some spirited debates, heated

debates and so forth, but still they

tended to take seriously this

non-hatred, nonviolence, non-hostility stuff. And you know, they they got along, you know, they would have civil debates, you know, polite debates. And you know some of the Buddhist universities like Nolanda you know there'd be many different schools of Buddhism there they'd be doing their pimoka like theirosa ceremonies separately because schism had already occurred by then but still I mean they're all attending the same classes and so forth. They're all fairly well getting along up until they were genocided by Muslim Turks.

So

you could say that Ashoka favored
Terraata but was not exclusively
favoring Terravada
especially if you take seriously the
idea that his son was ordained as a
Terraod and Biku. Um or you could just
say that he wasn't [clears throat]
really like picking favorites and it was
just whatever schools were you know in
that area were the ones he endorsed in
that area. And if he sent missionaries
beyond the the frontiers, they'd be
mainly monks that were closer to the
frontiers.
But I really can't say for absolute
certain because I don't think that
terravada tradition is completely

unbiased. Clearly, Terravada Buddhist tradition is biased in favor of Terravada Buddhism. So they want to believe that the Buddha spoke Poly and the Buddha himself was the first Terravada Buddhist.

But it's it's that is somewhat of an exaggeration.

Not a completely madeup fabrication, but it is kind of a a biased some some biased wishful thinking and exaggeration taking place.

[snorts]

[sighs] So I guess I'm just going to move on to Trezasiz's third question which is are bikunis or bikuni robes in

vineia different than those for beus or are they exactly the same? And I already I already explained to him in the Discord server, but this is for the benefit of all you out there who really are keen to know about the robes of ancient Buddhist nuns that the ancient Buddhist nuns had two extra robes. Like the monk has three robes. They're [clears throat] all just rectangles of cloth. One is the lower robe or the the udasa that no, the Andawasaka. It's been a while. The Andawasaka which he wears as like a sarong. gets wrapped around his waist, held on with a belt. Then there's the udraasa which is the main upper robe and then there's a thick

double robe called the sanati.

[clears throat] So the nuns have those same three but then they've got two extra ones. One is the chest binding cloth that they would wear as a brazier. I assume the more flatch chested ones could just have like one just wrapped around them somehow and then maybe the more buxom ones would kind of have it like in a sling kind of going crossways and like tying in the back of the neck or something and then they would also have another extra robe that was an extra lower robe to wear when they were menstruating.

So they would have five the the same

three as the monks have plus the chest binding cloth and the menstruation robe. So and then probably the bikunis nowadays that this the so-called bikunis nowadays don't care anything about that because they really did not insist upon becoming bikunis because they want to follow the rules of bikunis that are mandatory. Instead they want official status as beunies in for the sake of you know the political ideal of equality for women and so forth and then they just don't follow the rules.

That has been my limited experience with the new bikunis. At any rate, so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from SG

and SG says, "It seems to me that someone in lay life might make better progress than a monastic. For instance, if I am quick to anger and decide to become a monastic, all I am really doing is removing the conditions where that arises, but that propensity is still there dormant and might emerge if conditions change." In contrast, in lay life, I can actually engage with the emotion and practice mindfulness and insight practices that can root out the problem at its source for good. What do you think about this idea? Well, I've had kind of similar ideas. For example, modern monks who are living in

comfortable monasteries, they know where they're going to sleep that night. They know where their next meal is coming from. Then in a way they're just sort of isolated from temptation, isolated from like challenges to their equinimity and a lot of them just don't make much progress because there's not much opportunity for them to make much progress. Like Rahm Das used to tell the story of this holy man who lived like in a cave or a forest somewhere and he's meditating alone in silence until light's just shining out of his eyes and he figures okay I'm ready to to rejoin society and he goes back into town and almost right away someone jostles

against him on the sidewalk and

[clears throat] irritation arises. Hey,

don't you realize I'm a holy man? Will

you jump and bumping me like this? And

so it was [clears throat] all of his

cultivated holiness was just, you know,

it was in isolation of any challenges.

But once the challenges came back, you

know, it was just it collapsed.

But

the Buddha [clears throat] set up the SA

for a reason that if you're if you're

practicing dharma the way monks were

supposed to practice dhamma like you

read in like the sutin pa and so forth

homeless wanderers just throwing

themselves on the mercy of the universe so to speak then you're going to have plenty of challenges and the thing is being a monk simplifies that. I've said before that being a lay person is like a a higher difficulty setting than being a monk. But the thing is most people if you're living a lay life, you're just so bombarded with distractions and challenges and so forth that you don't have much of a chance. So it's it's in a way it's more scientific where you're isolating yourself and kind of limiting the challenges into a more simplified influx so to speak so that you're much more likely to be able to deal with those challenges rather than just get

washed away by the flood.

So the Buddha set up the SA for an enlightened reason that I mean if you really are intent on becoming enlightened I mean just the very fact that I mean you're dedicating your life to working for a living and scrolling on X you know attending to your family paying the bills all this kind of stuff then you have less time to dedicate to just like higher practice like deep meditation and so forth, aesthetic practice. I mean, if you're living with a woman, she's not going to want to just sleep on a mat on the floor.

So, definitely to be a monastic, especially if you're practicing the way monks are supposed to practice in in the texts, then yeah, you're you're much better off than living the lay life where you get more challenges. But as a general rule, you're just so completely inundated with challenges that you just get swamped with them. You're overwhelmed. You're just washed away. You're lost in some sorrow because of it.

So, nevertheless, I mean, not everybody is the same. For some people, just monasticism, just silence and simplicity and discomfort is just not optimal for their their

personality makeup or whatever to make
the most spiritual progress. They might
have to learn how to deal with other
humans, for example,
or just, you know, whatever it is. They
got some need some kind of karmic issue
that still needs to be worked out that
they can't work out. Living alone in a
cave, they got to be in the midst of
other people, for example.
So, some people may make better
spiritual progress um as lay people and
some people may even become enlightened
more easily as lay people. But um still
just going with statistic, your odds are
better if you are a monk who is

practicing, you know, conscientiously

and and more or less correctly.

[sighs and gasps]

And I ran out of coffee.

H.

So yeah, I mean, if you're quick to

anger and decide to become a manaster,

you're still going to get angry because

anger is like pride. I said that pride,

the pride comes first. The

rationalizations for it come later. So

if you're quick to anger and you're

living alone in a cave, you're still

going to get angry. It's just you're

going to get angry at at the rat that's

gnawing on something outside the cave

and keeping you from sleeping at night.

You're going to get annoyed at the ants. You're going to get annoyed at the mosquitoes. You're going to get annoyed at the village loudspeaker. You're going to get annoyed at the village wood cutters that are chopping down your forest. There's still I mean, you're still going to get angry, but the thing is, it's going to be simpler. It's going to be more isolated so that you can focus on that one thing instead of just being inundated with all these stimuli from all different directions.

But as I say, I mean some some people I mean not everyone is the same.

[cough and clears throat]

And like like I've said before, it's like a simple math problem. If there's let's say let's say your your chances of becoming enlightened are a thousand times greater if you're a monk than if you're a lay person. But if there's 10,000 times more lay people than monks, then still there's going to be 10 times more enlightened lay people than there are enlightened monks.

It is true that being a lay person is a higher difficulty setting, but I mean if you if you can't really even like master the easy difficulty setting, then you're just kind of kidding yourself if you think you're going to master the higher difficulty setting when you couldn't

even like sit alone in a cave, you know, for for a week straight with nothing to do. Just stare at the wall and meditate. because you should be able to do that, too.

And I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from PSA.

And PSA says, "I have a question about the Canadian government mass deleting its own people. I read that 95.6% of people who got Mid, which is like assisted assisted selfdeion, I guess, in 2024 were white. 95.6% 6% of Canadians who went to the the the permanent sleep centers were white in 2024. What's your opinion on why white people are

self-deing like this? Well, I wouldn't be surprised if 95.6% of the population of Canada is white, in which case then it would just be kind of random, wouldn't it? I mean, what percentage of Canadians are white? I would guess it's it's still pretty high.

They got fewer Mexicans and black people. You might have like a higher number of like Indians or Chinese or something.

So [sighs] what's my opinion on why white people are selfdeing?

Well

gosh.

I mean leftist culture especially is really not particularly pro-white.

Especially I mean it doesn't I mean

white men are like the enemy like the

the neoarxists have replaced the the

bgeoisi or the capitalist class with

just white men

as as like the the the boogeyman.

At least that's the way it has been.

So

see what's my opinion on why white

people are selfdeleting?

Well, I mean, mainly they're just

self-deing by not reproducing,

which is I mean, that's their choice to

make, I suppose.

[sighs]

See, but really, I would guess that

Canada is I mean, has probably a very high percentage of of like people of European ancestry as their population anyhow.

Um, and then just Canada is Canada, you know, it's just

it's just another one of those sort of globalist castrated feminized societies and white men are just pretty much despised.

So, I mean, a lot of weaker feminized kind of beta males who just really can't stand up to society just being biased against them and just essentially insinuating that the world would be a better place if they all selfdeed anyway, then, you know, they just go

with that, I guess.

>> [sighs]

>> But I mean, people that aren't like beta male types, I mean, that can just like enrage them and have them just do the opposite.

You know, they're just going to stand up for themselves.

See? Yeah, I really don't have a whole heck of a lot to say about that. I really don't know very much about Canadian assisted selfdeion.

So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question anyway. He says, "Is suffering the only thing that is real? We're we're anata, you know, we're we're

without self. We're something like consciousness trapped in this contractual cause and effect experience called samsara. So is suffering the only real thing here?" Well,
my opinion is no. And and also the official doctrine of terra Buddhism is no for different reasons. In the official doctrine of teraba Buddhism like Abid Dhama and Abid Dama commentaries there's what like 128 ultimate realities with with duka just being one.
Um but then there are some saying you know everything is sankara duka. So everything in samsara is dooka of some kind or at least conducive to duca but I

don't consider that to be ultimately real.

So I don't think that dooka is ultimately real. I think you could say consciousness is ultimately real but mental states which would include unhappy mental states those are like symbols and just illusory. It's Maya.

So my own personal interpretation of the situation is no, suffering is not the only thing that is real.

And from the official orthodox terraata point of view, then suffering also is not the only thing that is real. But according to Terraotus because there's

all these other things that are real too
like earth element and fire element and
perception and volition and masculinity
and just all these different realities.
Nibana would be one and consciousness
would be one and all these different
mental states and all these different
forms of matter that'd all be ultimately
real and I just I just can't accept
that. I I think nibbana so long as
you're not naming it symbolizing it then
that would be ultimately real
but [clears throat] dooka is not nibbana
and this almost like the opposite of
nibbana isn't it
because nibbana sometimes is defined as
the cessation of dooka.

So, Dooka would just be sort of like it's like the essence of unreality, you could say. You know, it's sort of like the the atmosphere of the matrix, but it's not ultimately real. And I'm going to move on to the next question. And this person, the protose monk, shame, shame on him because he asked four questions here.

And he asked kind of long questions, too. So, I better just get to the first one, which is not yet transgressive.

He says, "The four stages of enlightenment seem to make sense to me. Why do you doubt them? I think one of your reasons was their non-appearance in

other religions, but I wouldn't expect other religions to speak of this as it only makes sense in a samsara nibbana context."

Um, four stages of enlightenment. Yeah, I I really doubt that they originally meant what they have come to mean now. like a sodapana probably was just like a a new convert to Buddhism in all likelihood and there is evidence to support that. For example, there's this obscure rule, a py desania rule in the py mocha saying that a monk should not be overly dependent upon a family of sodaponas.

And I mean the reason [clears throat] is that they're just too rich in faith and

they I mean they might try to donate beyond their means through excess of devotion that sort of thing.

Also, um, like I've mentioned before, like the first several sutas of the Idiaka, an obscure collection of texts in the Kurikanikaya, apparently uses anagami as a synonym for enlightenment. And it does make sense, a non- returnturner. It may have originally meant a fully enlightened being, but then it's just the systematizers, you know, tried to just kind of redefine it so that it fit more nicely into the system or whatever. Also I mean it is true no other system

mentions enlightenment and I do not or
mentions the four stages of aryahood and
I just cannot believe that only
terravada Buddhism has some monopoly on
enlightenment even mahayana Buddhists
interpret the four stages differently
different schools of Buddhism had
different interpretations of these same
four stages one there's one cardinal
Mahayana text I don't remember exactly
which one lancavatara suta sutra or
something like that that had like one of
the four stages being like a pacheka
Buddha and it just it was just this
bizarre I think they actually equated
the anagami with with a a Buddha or
something and also like some texts like

the the uh the samaya palasuta which is

an relatively old text and it's one of

the first texts in the dean kaya I think

it's like the the second sutra suta in

the dean

the second suta of the entire

pseudapitica

where the Buddha is explaining to King

Ajata the this insequential order of

advancement what are the benefits of

renouncing the world and becoming a biku

and he doesn't mention anything about

these four stages you'd think that it'd

be up near the top of the of the the

attainments that you can have but he

goes from like Janna and psychic powers

just straight to enlightenment

So yeah, there's a number of reasons. I mean, St. St. John of the cross may have been a fully enlightened being and and some of his experiences are I mean he was definitely a master of meditation master of Janna

and he did have uh like a threepart system very similar to the three-part system in terara Buddhism of the puja or common worldling the sika or the person still in training which is a person who has attainment and mastery but they're not fully enlightened yet and then you've got thea one no longer in training who is perfected and then St. John of the cross apparently completely

independently of terra Buddhism had the same he had the beginner which is 99.9% of the entire population then he had the adept which is a person who has mastered high contemplation or the the higher [snorts] jas from a Buddhist point of view but is not yet perfected and then he's got to my surprise he had the stage of the perfected the person who has mortified their own self-will and has become just a puppet of of God you know they're just acting entirely on the under the will of God which comes very close to the teachings in Terabana Buddhism just independently of each other just through empirical practical

pragmatic means they just St. John of the cross and the early Indian Buddhists apparently just came upon these ideas separately just because that's the way it is

and so like St. St. John of the Cross says you mortify your own self-will. You're no longer acting upon will. In Buddhism, Terraata Buddhism, the fully enlightened being no longer is creating karma, which is will. So, they've got it. I mean, of course, the Terra Buddhists don't say that you're a puppet of God. You're acting under the will of God. You're just you're always just automatically doing the right thing, apparently.

So you can have masters like extremely wise people different parts of the world coming up with similar ideas. They might have different cultural baggage that modifies that you know like the belief in God for the Christians and the lack of same in Buddhists but still it's very similar and this four stages sodapana sakadagami anagami arahhat as just this monopoly of terra Buddhism or some of the earlier earlier schools of Buddhism because even the Mahayana Buddhists had four stages but different definitions for the four stages.

It came to mean something different.

And I just do not believe that terabara

Buddhism has a monopoly on

enlightenment.

And you think that it would at least be

mentioned in the Somaya Palasut. The

higher the higher Jas also aren't

mentioned.

So

yeah, I mean that those are my main

reasons. I guess and I'm still just I

mean people just kind of stubbornly

insist upon asking me what sodaponas can

do and can't do and all this kind of

thing and it's all academic to me

because I think that the whole four

stages are just made up.

So I'm just going to move on to the

proseud's next question.

He says I feel a strong calling to the life of a biku. However, I have only one major concern. If a biku is supposedly a homeless wandering mendicant beggar only allowed to possess a few items and have the four requisites, does this mean a monk cannot read other books? The monk life may satisfy certain spiritual needs, but if I have no access to books or an electronic device with an internet connection, I may have no access to certain literature for satisfying intellectual needs. My second concern about becoming a monk is being limited in doing good for the world. And I also think reading books, the news, etc. can

make one potentially of better use to the world, you being an example of this? Well, there's no question there. Oh, wait. Here it is. Does this mean a [clears throat] monk cannot read other books? Well, I mean, before I became a monk, it was like I had certain concerns like I'm going to have to get rid of my book collection. I had this bookcase full of books and I was still like avidly reading books at the time and I valued my book collection. You know, it was always getting better and better because I had the system if I get a new book, I got to get rid of an old book because they all got to fit on that same bookcase.

So, there was that. I I actually was going to it was a challenge for me to go without watching pro football, although I have zero desire to watch pro football now, but at the time that was a challenge. And also, of course, it was like the the orgasm sex thing.

But I mean, let's see where is where does it say? Where does where does it where does he say intellectual needs? Have no access to certain literature for satisfying intellectual needs. They're not intellectual needs. They are cravings. And so, you're definitely going to have to deal with that. You're going to have to overcome your cravings

for intellectual stimulation or for the news. I knew this one monk. He was a very serious monk. He was a retired surgeon. He was Burmese. He he had been a surgeon, you know, for years. He was upper crust, kind of an aristocratic type. And then when he retired, he became a monk. And he was tried to be a very serious monk, but he had this one addiction. He had to listen to the news on the radio. And still he's like politically oriented. You know, he's still thinking about politics, which is just animal knowledge from the Buddhist point of you read the texts, news, polit politics. That's just like tier chana vija or just animal knowledge. Monks

shouldn't do that kind of stuff. And it may seem like it's difficult like I was talking about my book collection. It was that was a challenge for me that it it was like a difficult choice to make to get rid of almost all my books. I kept a few Dhamma books. I still have like a a copy of the Dhamapata I had since before I was a monk. But once I got rid of them, it was just like getting rid of them was the difficult part. But being rid of them afterwards was easy.

And so for years, um, all of my possessions I could carry, you know, at once. You know, everything I owned, I could just pick it up and go somewhere

else.

Um, for for several years as a monk, but then I start collecting books because, of course, I've got intellectual curiosity, too. Not exactly intellectual needs, but intellectual desires, I guess.

And then before long I had too many books. It was mainly books that I owned. Like half of like just going with weight, most of what I owned was books. That was back before internet, that sort of thing. Especially in Burma, especially in a Burmese forest.

So yeah, that it's it's just another attachment,

this desire for books. I mean I

eventually succumbed to the desire

enough that I started acquiring another

book collection while I was a monk more

more dharmic but still a book collection

but still it's not really a need it's

just craving it's an attachment

and then uh let's see second concern is

about doing good for the world and like

I told you with regard to or I've told

everybody in the Q&A's before Q's and

A's

that [clears throat] uh St. John of the

Cross used to say

that you got two people. One person is

tending the sick and clothing the the

people that don't have clothes and

feeding the hungry and providing homes to the homeless and just serving mankind 24/7 with just naps every now and then. And then there's another person who is engaged in high contemplation in solitude in a cell. And St. John of the Cross says this second person is actually helping the world more than the first person is. And like the diamond cutter sutra says something similar that you could, you know, tend the sick, feed the hungry, etc., etc. Or you could just memorize and master one verse from the Diamond Cutter Sutra. And actually, you're doing better by memorizing and mastering one verse from the Diamond Cutter Sutra than doing all this worldly

stuff. Cuz all this worldly stuff, I mean, you're putting band-aids on a cancer on a cancer patient.

You know, you you're not really curing the cause. You're just treating symptoms.

And if you're practicing high contemplation, you're raising the level of consciousness of the earth. Or you could be like that one person in the Old Testament that God will not destroy Sodom and Gomorrah for the sake of one good man.

So there's that too. And I mean it's just worldliness. It's like I don't want to wake up from this dream because I

want to tend to all the dream people

that I'm dreaming. I mean that's

essentially the attitude.

The world is not real.

Not ultimately real anyway. You can say

it's virtually real. seems virtually

real.

So doing good for the world.

Yeah, you you still do better good for

the world just for having just becoming

a sage

even if you stay in solitude for the

rest of your life.

So [sighs]

I think I'm just going to move on to

protoseudamon's third question

and this is a question on engaged

Buddhism. the soda pana bodhicatta he says assuming there is such a thing as stream entry so we're this is already an academic question apparently I was wondering if you are guaranteed enlightenment in seven lifetimes after entering the stream so there's no risk of some sara wouldn't there be an ethical obligation to engage in humanitarian works like feeding the hungry building schools etc I can't get out of my protestant conditioning work ethic it might It seems like if you are liberated, you just might as well help others. But when you're liberated, you realize those others aren't real.

There are inhabitants of a dream that you are dreaming.

But I'm just uh interrupting myself. It seems like if you are liberated, you just might as well help others. There's no loss, only gain. I know. I know that Ara has no use for good, but still, you just might as well help others. I can't really explain it. It just seems obvious.

Apparently it seems obvious to him that these others are ultimately real too. If as you have said an enlightened being and this is still a proseut speaking here. If as you have said an enlightened being will appear no different to an ordinary being the ethical value of his

realization of nibbana is zero. On the other hand engaging in humanitarian works would have a positive ethical value on other beings. And in general, how do you respond to the critics that the Arhant path is selfish? So this is protoseudamon is just asking questions all over the place. The second question divided into two questions and this one is dividing into two questions and you still got a transgressive fourth question which is actually a sixth question.

So [snorts]

I think there's one fairly obvious statement. I mean at least with regard

to [clears throat]

enlightened and unlightened beings. You

got people are trapped in a burning

building. This is just like a standard

Buddhist symbol like a metaphor. We're

all in a burning building. So

[clears throat and cough]

obviously it makes more sense to find a

way out of the burning building than to

stay in the burning building and treat

the burn victims. I mean treating the

burn victims that's very humanitarian

and all but of course the h the building

is on fire and [clears throat] there's

just going to be more and more burn

victims and really the way to help

others is to find a way out and then

help others to get out of the building.
Not just like treating burn victims,
going back into the building after you
found a way out and just staying in the
building treating burn victims, that
doesn't make a whole hell of a lot of
sense.
I mean, even assuming that these beings
are real after you found a way out, then
you come back in if you choose, if it
seems appropriate to you in your
infinite wisdom to find to go back into
the building and then like help others
get out of the building. But of course,
most of them don't even want to leave.
They'll just tell you to [__] off. It's

like, yeah, yeah, this supposed outside the building. Yeah, we're going to go out there. Or it could be even worse. Most people don't even want to leave the building even though it's on fire. So then you have like the the Lotus Sutra. I think I read it a long long time ago where the Buddha uses [clears throat] like these tricks to like trick people into leaving the building. you know, he he makes these carts pulled by different animals to attract people out of the burning building because they're they're just too [__] stupid to leave the burning building of their own valition without being tricked into leaving it. And

that's sort of like the skillful means

of the different schools of Buddhism.

[sighs]

Okay. So

yeah, I mean it's like you wake up from

the dream and then you go back to sleep

and lucid dream in order to be nice to

the dream beings. That's essentially

what it amounts to cuz this is not

ultimate reality. We are in the matrix.

It's not a computerenerated matrix. It's

just a mind generated matrix but it's

still a matrix.

So I mean if first of all just get

yourself liberated get get enlightened

and then in your wisdom you will be

better able to decide whether you should
spend the rest of your life feeding
hungry people for example.
But number numero uno is find your own
way out of the burning building and then
you can make your decisions. But don't
make your decisions before you become
enlightened because they're going to be
unenlightened decisions.
They're going to be unwise, delusional
decisions
about what you're going to do after you
become enlightened.
Maybe you become enlightened, you
realize, wow, that was a stupid idea.
So, let's This is like,
see, question 3B. How do I respond to

the critics that the Arant path is selfish? Well, I mean it's kind of ironic that the Arhant path is like dedicated to no self.

So like the system that teaches no self and the realization of no self is somehow selfish. I mean it may look selfish to other people because they might want something out of you.

And Paul Lo did say that if you really want to become enlightened to some degree you do have to be selfish to some degree. Like if if I just tried to please my parents, I I would have got married and had kids for my for my mother to spoil. My mother I mean she

wanted she wanted grandkids to spoil and I just wouldn't give her any. So that was kind of selfish, wasn't it? I just cared about my own spiritual welfare more than I cared about my mother's desire for grandkids to spoil.

Well, I mean, you can call that selfish. Fine. I mean, people say the Buddha himself was selfish. he'd abandon his wife and child. Of course, they were living in a palace and you know they weren't hurting for food or anything but still it was just selfish. People say that like Hindus especially I think the Buddha was selfish but I mean to some degree I mean you find your own way out of the burning building is selfish

because you're not treating the [__]
burn victims and burning to death
yourself in the process. So, I mean, who
cares what critics say? I mean, critics
can say all kinds of things. Critics can
say that the Buddha himself was just
like an [__] who abandoned his own
family.
So, I mean, critics can say whatever the
hell they want to say, and critics are
going to criticize no matter what.
They're going to find fault with
anything.
But to some degree, like Paul Lo says, I
mean, you have to appear selfish anyway
because you have to get like finding a

way out of that burning building has to be top priority for yourself. I mean, you got to find your own way out of that burning building. I mean, you're not just going to find some way for somebody else to get out of the building because I mean, you could get out, too. So, it's in really, you got to find a way for yourself to get out of the building in order for you to find a way for anyone else to get out of the building.

And people can call that selfish because you could be treating those burn victims.

But I mean, so what?

So the proto monk has also asked another fourth question and it's let's see it's

about depression and renunciation. how they appear to be the same thing because you fail to find pleasure in in every [clears throat] in just ordinary things that usually you would find pleasure from.

And I'm not going to go into detail. I mean there's already proto monk has asked lots of questions this time. Um but I mean my experience of depression is that my mind contracts. It's like I am contracted.

that is like the main cause of everything else. It's like expansion and contraction of of the mind somehow [clears throat] and when I'm like

contracted in a contracted state then
like when I was a monk trying to
meditate while in one of these
contracted mental states it was like
trying to balance a marble on the tip of
a sharpened pencil. was virtually
impossible and just had no interest in
dharma even you know just no interest in
much of anything just want to sleep more
that kind of thing
so I mean renunciation and depression
are not the same thing I mean you can
still be a joyful renuncient
but you can't really be joyfully
depressed as far as I know but this is
like like a very transgressive extra
question and that's about as far as I'm

going to get with it I'm going to move on to the next question because we've already like getting up towards two and a half hours anyway. There's quite a few questions like at least 40 questions this time. So the next question is from Edel Vice Voyager

and Edelvvice Voy Voyager says [clears throat] is the encourageable quality of an itchantica comparable to the spiritual [laughter] state of animals given that as you mentioned previously it is extremely difficult for animals to accumulate sufficient merit and achieve rebirth in human form. Do you agree with the Mahayana teaching

that despite their unfortunate nature
these beings still contain
enlightenment? So, ichant
it's a Mahayana [clears throat]
term and it's based I mean the poly
equivalent of like the verb would be
itchi which means to desire to want. So
I assume that an nichant even though
it's a mahayana term means like a a
desirer. It's just a person who's just
wallowing in samsara. They're clueless
with regard to anything other than
samsara, which is really most people it
seems to me. I mean, even religious
people who go to church, I mean, still
they're just like stuck in samsara and
clueless to the fact that they are stuck

in samsara.

So,

let's see. Is this encouraable quality of a ichantica or desirer a person just wholeheartedly wallowing in samsara comparable to the spiritual state of animals? Um yeah yeah it is. I think it's just that even one of these desirers if they hit that crisis, you know, let's say that all of a sudden they get some terminal illness or, you know, just they lose everything, they hit rock bottom and still I mean it can just like slam them or they they have a near-death experience or something. It can just slam them into a higher state

of consciousness just against their will
like kicking and screaming
like something like what happened to
Ehart Tollah where he was just like in a
state of just selfdeional depression and
he just couldn't stand it and it just
just jolted him into a higher level of
consciousness. Whether he was an
Echantica beforehand or not, I I can't
say. But still, there's there's always
the potential. I mean, you'd have to be
really super messed up like like Jeffrey
Dawnmer or somebody like that or, you
know, let's say Caligula if the the
histories about him are true, you know,
or Elgabilus or you can just name any
any number of like Hollywood celebrities

or like musical celebrities, that kind of thing, who are just wholeheartedly just wallowing in some sorrow. you know, any number of Instagram thoughts, that kind of thing, that still even though they're clueless with regard to anything higher than the matrix, you know, they're definitely bluepilled, still I mean it's they still at least have the potential

presumably if they have the comma for it to eventually get redpilled

or at least they can be they can be wallowing wholeheartedly on s in samsara but still be like benevolent. Just because you're wallowing wholeheartedly

in samsara doesn't mean that you're

evil.

So I mean still they can be you know

helping their neighbor you know they can

you know feeling love in their heart you

know they have a soft spot for puppies

especially if they got like a round

belly and the hiccups you know there's

you know they still I mean they're not

evil people so still you can be earning

merit so they'd probably be in a better

position than animals even if they're

just wholeheartedly wallowing in some

sorrow without being evil

But animals also I I I really do not

accept the Buddhist idea that animals

just can't earn merit or that it's very

difficult for animals to earn merit

because I mean even for a mother animal

to love her babies. I mean you could say

that's just animal instinct and so

forth. It's just automatic behavior. But

you could say the same thing with regard

to most human women. It's maternal

instinct.

So I mean it's still love.

I mean animals can still be nice to each

other especially social animals.

So

yeah, it's it's comparable to the

spiritual state of animals. Although

being a human and having like higher

level of consciousness or at least a

more expansive consciousness, you know, a kind of consciousness that is can has the potential to be more complicated and absorb more things and so forth. That still there's going to be greater potential for some experience to turn them around and wake them up.

like anguli mala in the texts. I mean he was a serial killer. I mean regardless of anything else he probably had some you know wholesome merit meritorious karma and all this but still he was literally a serial killer and still the Buddha was able to convert him to Buddhism and he just turned right around became a saintly renuncient monk and eventually became enlightened.

So maybe the ichantica would rule out people that really have this this karmic potential for, you know, turning themselves around because I really am not an expert on the term because it really is a Mahayana Buddhist term and I've I can't recall even coming across this term before. I had to look it up to see what it meant. Although ichidi is is a poly term that means to desire or to want.

So that's it's understandable. I'm pretty sure it means desirer.

And I would assume it means just someone wholeheartedly wallowing in samsara, wallowing in delusion, just clueless

that there's anything higher than this.
Unless maybe it's just some
anthropomorphic god sitting on a throne
in heaven just within the same system of
some sorrow just higher up.
So see the question
see do you agree with the Mahayana
teaching that despite their unfortunate
nature these beings can still attain
enlightenment? Well if Mahayana
teachings say that still these people
wholeheartedly wallowing in samsara can
still attain enlightenment then it
wouldn't rule out the people that have
the potential for that. So yeah why not?
I mean, it probably will take some kind
of just severe crisis just bashing them

in the head, you know, like a near-death experience or something, but still, I mean, that's probably what it would take in in more extreme cases. And even in probably most cases, the near-death experience just wouldn't wouldn't be enough
or whatever the crisis is.
But that's that's kind of a tough question because I'm really not an authority on what Mahayana Buddhism says about it people.
So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Ruie
and Ruie says to go with the season and the decorations in your home.

Would you profer a few words on the temptations of the Buddha and those of Jesus? Well, all we know is what tradition says. And even tradition doesn't say a whole lot about the temptations of the Buddha except when he's sitting under the bodhic tree and Mara's daughters are just being as voluuptuous as they can manage trying to tempt the Buddha. So it wasn't I mean Mara was sending armies and so forth to try to distract the Buddha out of his meditation but Mara himself wasn't coming up to the Buddha and say why don't you just become like a a wheel turning monarch and become king of the world that kind of thing like Satan was

apparently or allegedly doing to Jesus
of Nazareth.
So the temptations of the Buddha
apparently they were mainly sexual
temptations plus just attempts at of
Mara to just kind of distract him from
from being in a deep meditative state.
>> [snorts]
>> So yeah, I but probably I mean in
[snorts] reality the Buddha was
experiencing other temptations just
remembering his wife and child that kind
of thing that could be a temptation or
after striving and striving and striving
and you know just practically killing
himself and still not succeeding. You

know, there might have been the occasional thought of maybe I should just go back and be king of of Capilawatu or something, but yeah, I mean, mainly the temptations that you read about in the tradition are just sexual temptations of Mara's daughters being as voluuptuous as they can manage and still failing to get the Buddha to just lose his concentration
by directing his concentration onto them.
with regard to Jesus. He's out in the the wilderness out in the desert, I assume. And Satan comes to him and is it's like cast yourself off the top of the the mountain or um turn these turn

these rocks into bread and feed the people
or you become king of the world. And you know that was more of a the kind of temptations that I mean besides the sexual ones that a person might experience at least I mean become king of the world I mean you know that that would be a temptation for a lot of people just becoming a Roman emperor was a huge temptation for a lot of Roman men obviously even though they knew in all likelihood they weren't going to survive more than about two years after becoming emperor especially during like what the third century turnover rate for emperors

was really high in the 3rd century
when there was no shortage of men
wanting to be emperor just because of
power and glory and herums of beautiful
girls and so forth.
[sighs]
So yeah, I'm just going with tradition
because that's really all we can know. I
mean this all we have to see that isn't
just lost in the obscurity of time. The
Buddha was mainly tempted by sex and he
succeeded in resisting that temptation.
Jesus was tempted just first becoming
king of the world by Satan. Satan was
going to make him king of the world or
something something along those lines.
It's been a while since I've read the

New Testament. And then there was something about uh kind of like what the protose monk was saying. You know, it's like you know why renounce the world? You can turn these stones into bread and feed the masses. which I can't remember why Jesus turned that one down. And then uh

I think Satan took him up on top of a mountain to look down at the world and says something like cast yourself off and the the mountain and the angels will catch you. And then I think Jesus says, you know, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

[clears throat]

But uh yeah, I mean it was different different kinds of temptations, I guess. But I assume [clears throat] in reality that their temptations would be fairly similar because they were men, you know, human beings with, you know, human nature and so forth. So probably both of them would have experienced some sexual temptation before their experience and also they might have some temptations to just rejoin the world and you know just make an honest living that kind of thing instead of you know why am I doing this [__] to myself.

So, let's see. That was a few words. That's Ruy only asked for a few words and so that was that was more than a

few. That was lots of words. So, I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Ethiopian fake TIG. And Ethiopian fake Tig says, "Would you have had a kid if you have lived a normal life, and if so, how many? Or do you have any anti-natalist stance?" Well, like I was saying earlier, um you know, back in the 80s when I was a young man, um it was it just seemed like the world was obscenely overpop populated. You know, I was I was moving towards a degree in ecology at the time. If I had not become a monk, I probably would have gone to grad school and majored in like marine ecology or something.

And it just seemed like the world was just grotesqually overpop populated. And also, you know, there's always this threat of nuclear Armageddon and all these other things. And it's like, is it really responsible to bring a child in this world when you don't know what the world's going to be like 20 years from now? But in retrospect, if I knew then what I know now, I'd know that there's no real overpopulation crisis like people were saying, like the alarmists were saying. There's no real I mean, there was still the threat of nuclear war, but it just never happened. this global warming thing is even less of a threat than than the nuclear Armageddon

thing. I mean, that's the the global warming thing is is largely just uh an attempt at just getting a foot in the door for glo like world government through international regulatory commissions and so forth. It seems to me

so I mean it would depend on the woman. Like I'd get married and it would depend on my wife's desire for children too. I mean nowadays I if I look back on it I think it'd probably be kind of a good thing to have children.

But I mean it's not absolutely necessary obviously because I've gotten this far without doing that. But I mean,

[clears throat]

if if I knew then what I know now,

um there's a good chance I'd settle

down, find my sweetheart earlier, and we

might have kids together and, you know,

I would have invested in Amazon stock

early on, buy some bought some Bitcoin

and have hundreds of millions of dollars

and just get a like a square mile of

forest land and set up a little house in

the middle and

lots of aquariums or something.

horses maybe.

So yeah, I'm I mean nowadays you see

that the overpopulation crisis and in

the 70s and 80s they're talking about

the world is too overpop populated.

Billions of people are going to be like starving and be worldwide famine and on and on and now it's like the opposite. It's like especially the West is just dying out or Korea also South Korea I think they've got one of the lowest reproductive rates of any country. Japan.

But I mean, it's not going to they're not just going to go extinct, you know? It's just going to dwindle down till you get to this nucleus of the people who breed like bunnies and then it's just going to go back up again.

Huh. So, yeah. I mean, there is a good chance if if I lived a a normal life, I

would have had kids. Although, I didn't want kids when I was younger. But if I knew then what I know now, there's a good chance I would have kids. But I remember when I was a monk, especially a young monk, the one time I was happiest that I was a monk. This not with regard to like deep bliss and satisfaction, but just sort of a superficial joy that I'm not a that I am a monk is when I would every time I'd hear a screaming baby. You know, I'd be walking through the village going for alms and then you hear some baby crying in one of these bamboo huts and then you hear this exasperated female voice, you know, saying bathe they don't. It's like what is it now?

This kind of thing. Then I would just be thrilled that I was a monk because the sound of screaming babies is I've never liked the sound of screaming babies.
I remember when I was like in my 20s, I had these two friends. They were like party animals and then they kind of settled down and had kids
and I mean I I became friends with them back when we were all party animals together and then they have kids and it's like one was like one was like three and the other one was like four or something two and four something like that and they would cry about every 30 minutes but it wasn't completely in

sync. So sometimes one of them would be crying like at 15minute intervals from the other one and then every once in a while they'd get into sync and they'd both be crying at the same time and I'd just be like sitting on the couch just like my eyes bulging out just kind of like my head and my hands just you know and Carol the the the mother of the children would look at me and just kind of laugh and poor David

because I mean they were they were numb to it you know they were used to it. it was every day for them. So, I guess if you become a parent, you just first of all, you're kind of doped up on parenthood hormones that kind of gives

you resistance or something.

But

yeah, there's a good chance it would it

would depend on various circumstances

and I'd have to know then at least a

little bit of what I know now.

But yeah, I might have kids, might have

four kids,

but who knows? It's all it's all

academic because it it's it's just kind

of dealing with a sort of alternate

fantasy world. So, I'm just going to

move on to Ethiopian fake Tig's next

question,

which is if you timetraveled back to the

Buddhist time, do you think it would be

just like how the myth said, or do you think he would just be an ordinary person that knows Dharma? Well, well, that's a false dichotomy. I don't think I'd pick either one. I don't think it would be just how the myth said because then the Buddha would be like 27 feet tall and all this kind of stuff. He would have the 32 marks of the the Maha Poresa which are would be impossible to all be on the same person at the same time. So that'd be just like literally impossible.

Um but I don't think he was just like some ordinary guy. Like I I knew this one person who had been a monk for about 13 years and then dropped out and then

became sort of like an anti-B Buddhist
and he told me once or maybe more than
once that in his opinion the Buddha was
just sort of like an ancient Joseph
Goldstein
was like an ancient Dharma teacher
[clears throat] but I don't think either
one of those is likely. I think he was a
sage. I mean he was I mean if if
enlightenment is possible in this world
then he'd be a prime example of of a
candidate for that but it I mean within
a samsar context there's sort of a
paradox of you know how how are you
fully enlightened within the context of
samsara and so forth but yeah I mean he

was a sage I don't think he was just like a an ancient jack cornfield

So yeah, I mean I a long time ago I sort of came up with this theme for like a science fiction short story of a time machine going back to the Buddhist time. And you'd have like [clears throat] this this woman who gets to go in the time machine because she's famous for writing books like how to awaken the Buddha within this kind of stuff like a self-help guru. Then you'd have like the uh like the Burmese seat, traditionalist Burmese seat. He'd get to go to go visit the Buddha. And then you'd have like a Richard Gomer type, like some academic Buddhistic scholar.

And then you'd have [clears throat] um like just the technician running the time machine. You know, he's you know, the the lab assistant who's been trained on how to work the time machine. He'd have to go, too. So the the woman who wrote the book, you know, how to awaken the Buddha within, she all of a sudden gets sick right before and she can't go. You know, there's there's going to be like an implication that she's just having like a panic attack. She can't dare to face the Buddha. This kind of thing. So you have the smug academic scholar, the the staunchly faithoriented seat and the humble

technician go back in time and they see this they go to I mean they're asking where to where to find the Buddha. The the seat is amazed that nobody can understand his poly. So the the smug academic uh scholar you know he knows more how to pronounce the language more correctly. It's not pure poly, you know, he's speaking like muggedy, this kind of thing. So, he's having to act as an interpreter. So, he wants to meet the Buddha. They they say he's he's over there. So, they go and they see this this scy looking guy. He's got stubble. He looks like a normal person. Got stubble. Maybe he's got like a fly crawling on the side of his head. He's

wearing rags. Maybe doesn't smell very good. And the seat is indignant. He's That can't be the Buddha. He's not 27 feet tall and he just stomps off in a huff, refuses to even talk to him. But I mean, it really is the Buddha. It's go to my Buddha. He's just an aesthetic. He's a man who hasn't bathed in two weeks, got a fly crawling on his head. And so the academic scholar goes and has this smug conversation, mainly just sort of asking questions um and kind of kind of bragging about his his own theories and so forth. And the Buddha really doesn't get very far with him because the academic scholars his mind is all

full of these ideas of you know academic theories and so forth. And then he politely excuses himself because he he also wants to go talk with Macau Gosala and they're on a limited schedule. And so off he goes with this smug smile on his face. And so finally [clears throat] they're ready to go back in into the future again. And where's the technician? Where's this humble ordinary technician guy that they're looking around, they find that he is like on his knees in front of the Buddha, you know, he's just like begging for, you know, he he wants to go forth from the home into homelessness, this kind of thing.

So the the techni or the the technician

just stays and becomes a monk whereas

the [clears throat] the faithoriented

seat can't won't even go close to the

Buddha because he thinks it's not the

real Buddha because he looks like an

ordinary scy

like aesthetic and then the smug scholar

he's just full of his own ideas and he

doesn't care

but how does that have anything to do if

I time travel to the Buddhist times

Yeah, I think I mean, yeah, he he'd be

uh an enlightened sage, but he wouldn't

be 27 feet tall or anything like that.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question after I hijacked that

question by just talking about my own idea for a science fiction short story. So, Ethiopian fake Tigs, next question. I spent a lot of time alone and I'm very anti the idea that mastering Janna is going to give me superpowers. Spending time alone weakens one's ego and identity and I don't want to believe anything my mind tells me how did you manage to stay sane in Burma when you were alone and meditating a lot because it can feel very weird and a lot of stuff can happen to the mind where you begin to have weird thoughts. Well, I mean the purpose of being a monk is to go sane.

You know, [snorts] practicing dharma

makes you more sane. You're observing your mind, you're observing like the the foibless of it and so forth. It is true that if you live alone for a long time, you can start drifting away from normality. I mean, you might be a really good meditator, but you're going to be eccentric, too. So, that happens. I I've acquired the habit of of just talking to myself. You know, when I'm at work, sometimes I'll just be talking to myself. There's a lot of people that look like they're talking to themselves, but they got like earbuds and they're talking on the phone. I don't have the earbuds. It's just a habit. It's like a

human instinct

even in like babies that [clears throat]

can't speak English yet or speak any

language yet that you just want to

speak. And if you don't have people to

talk to, you'll talk to dogs, you'll

talk to lizards, you talk to yourself.

It's just it just happens, you It's just

kind of a stereotype of the the the

hermit, you know, the misanthropic

hermit living out in the desert in

Arizona or something who's just like

muttering to himself all the time.

So I mean there is that if you're not

careful and you don't have any feedback

from others like a like a teacher like a

wise friend then you can start drifting

in weird directions just through
isolation and no feedback kind of
helping it keep you on the straight and
narrow so to speak of like normal
humanity. But at the same time, if
you're doing deep meditation, I mean,
you're going sane more than you're
you're you're going weird.
[snorts] So, I mean, I'm just a loner by
nature. I really am self-sufficient for
the most part. I've never really needed
human companionship, and I I really do
not really love the human race as much
as the average person does.
So I mean it was just in harmony with my
nature and it's one of the best reasons

for becoming a monk. Desire for enlightenment ironically is not the best reason for becoming a monk. One of the best reasons I mean a better reason than just desire for enlightenment is just the the consideration that it's like your sacred duty to strive for enlightenment if you're able to. I mean that I think would be a better better reason than this desire for something that you cannot possibly understand until you get there anyway. But another possible [clears throat] better reason for becoming a monk is or a good reason for becoming a monk is just living a life of solitude and quietness and simplicity is just in harmony with your

nature.

You're introspective. You're not a socially oriented person. You don't require comfort. You know, you're kind of auster austere by nature. than just going alone, just camping in the wilderness for the rest of your life. I mean, that is is a fairly good reason for being a monk if it's just the lifestyle is in harmony with your character, which was pretty much the case in my case, although I remained stubbornly heterosexual in my like animal my human nature

and I just got as far as I could with it. And so after several years of of

stagnation as a monk, I decided to try

something else.

[snorts] So

I mean, Janna could give you superpowers

anyway.

But see, spending time alone weakens

one's ego and identity. Yeah, that's

that's that's one of the points of it.

You're not getting it reinforced.

And the ego is illusion. It's like the

the root of all delusion and suffering

is the conceit. I am.

So you don't want to believe anything

your mind tells you. Then you practice

intensive mindfulness meditation and you

just observe mental states arising and

passing away, which you can do better if

you're living alone in a cave.

So there's certain give and take, but the positives seem to outweigh the negatives. Unless you just are a social being, you require comfort and you just need human feedback in order to keep you from going nuts. In which case, you're better off not becoming a solitary renuncient recluse monk.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question because, yeah, we're getting kind of close to the bottom. We don't have very many questions to go. So, it might be a little over three hours, but we're not going to set any records this time.

>> [sighs]

>> But just to make sure that it goes at least three hours, I will mention that two days ago at work, I became a cartoon character temporarily and that I was walking across the dock carrying a piece of plywood and all of a sudden my feet just shoot out from under me. I land on my backside with this loud bang from the plywood hitting the floor next to me. And I'm thinking, what could have been that slippery? What could I have stepped in? I'm thinking must be a puddle of oil or transmission fluid or something. And I looked down and there's a banana peel. I had stepped on a banana peel just like in the cartoons.

And there was this only one other person saw it at work. He was this really silent guy. He doesn't talk hardly at all. If he has to say something, he does. But for the most part, he's just like silent poker face at work. And he was he was literally laughing. It's the only time I ever saw that guy laugh is after I slipped on a banana peel. So, it works. The site gag works in real life. But getting back to Raphael here and his question, Raphael says, "Are you informed about the current conflict between Cambodia and Thailand? Is it fair to say that it is absolutely insane that Buddhist soldiers fight each other

and die over an ancient Hindu temple?
Well, they're probably not fighting each other and dying over literally over an ancient Hindu temple. I mean, I really don't know the details about the conflict between Cambodia and Thailand other than Donald Trump has bragged about ending that war.
Um, but I mean generally, I mean, Buddhist countries have fought against each other. Burma and Thailand, Burma and Syiam as it used to be called. I mean, they were like arch enemies. They were sort of like England and France or Sparta and Athens, you know, they were just arch enemies, but I mean, mainly they were fighting over territory,

you know, that's that's a political thing. You know, the Hindu temple thing maybe I mean, they don't really care that it's a Hindu temple so much as, you know, it could be valuable property, valuable addition to their territory if they haven't acquired it yet. that kind of thing. So, you know, most most wars are fought over like territory.

You know, even the Trojan War, you know, is supposed to be Helen of Troy, the face that launched a thousand ships and all that, but Helen of Troy had been I mean, she'd been abducted or eloped with what was his name? Paris

for it was like 10 years or something

before the Greeks decided, well, we
better go and avenge this outrage. I
mean, probably it was Troy was right
there on the shipping lanes, you know,
from the Black Sea into the AGN Sea and
so it was territory or just control of
shipping lanes in this case or I mean
that was the beginning of the Bronze Age
collapse. So, it was just the fashion to
be sacking other cities and acquiring
their their loot, their booty.
And uh I think the Christmas tree just
went out. It's on an automatic timer.
So,
am I informed about the current conflict
between Cambodia and Thailand? Not very.
Is it fair to say that absolutely insane

for Buddhist soldiers fight each other
and die over an ancient Hindu temple?
Well, you have to be insane to be uh
like in samsara. Anyway,
old old poly saying pujino um which
means the common person is insane.
But it's it's just the standard like
politics. I really don't think they care
that if it's a Hindu temple or not. It's
just valuable territory. That would be
my guess.
And [clears throat]
I mean it's whether you're Buddhist or I
mean Christians you read the Christian
Bible and it's like turn the other
cheek, you know, it's like you're not

supposed to be violent. And then there's Christians have been like fighting wars forever. Ever since there's been Christian or ever since they got into power, there's been Christian holy wars and just Christian Christians fighting each other over territory.

So yeah, it's it's insane. I'm going to move on to Raphael's next question. Your opinion on those tweets. Apparently a Korean Oh, okay. He says, "Your appear opinion on those tweets." And then he just sent like a screenshot of some two tweets made by someone with a Korean name. I mean, they maybe they aren't really Korean. I don't know. They or maybe they're just into Korean Buddhism

or something. But this person, apparently a Korean Buddhist, was referring to a jotica story in which the bodhic sata kills a murderer on a boat who presumably was going to kill the other people on the boat. And then this person claims that the bodhicatta actually did good karma and that killing compassionately is good. And I think this is a Mahayana Jotica story and the Mahayana were kind of going like a more tantric route than the Buddhist or the terra Buddhists. I don't think it's I mean I could be wrong but I don't think it's in the terra Buddhist like the poly joticas because the Buddha just would

not do this. I mean the bodhic sata maybe and but then he'd like go to hell for it.

[sighs and gasps]

So the idea is if you kill a murderer that's actually good and not bad but according to Buddhist ethics it just doesn't work that way at all. At least not terra Buddhist ethics. I mean, you could like tie him up, incapacitate him, something like that. That wouldn't be so bad, you know, just capture him and shackle him for the authorities to deal with. I mean, that would probably be the enlightened thing to do.

So, yeah, I mean, this is just opening a can of Mahayana Buddhist worms. It seems

to me

that I mean from the point of view of

Buddhist ethics, killing is one of the

worst things you can possibly do and

you're better off just not doing it. And

if some murderer kills other people,

that's on them. Just to stand there and

do nothing is morally neutral.

>> [sighs]

>> So, I mean, the the terravada Buddhist

answer to the the proverbial trolley

problem, you know, you got the the

trolley car on the tracks heading

towards 10 people tied to the tracks and

all you got to do is pull a lever and

it'll divert the trolley car. Instead of

squishing those 10 people, it'll only squish one person on these other tracks. And what's the ethical thing to do from the Buddhist point of view? You just don't do anything. It's going to squish those 10 people. Well, it's not on you. It's just that the West has this utilitarian ethic that is just alien to Buddhism. And so, a lot of even Western Buddhists just cannot wrap their head around Buddhist ethics. They just don't get it. They just do not realize that you're living in a dream world of your own creation
and that what you do is good or bad depending on your own mental states. So, I mean, technically, you could say

that you kill one person in order to
save 100 people. Then you're doing some
good, but you're also doing some evil.
And for someone striving for
enlightenment, you're better off doing
neither good nor evil.
Because good is just good karma, which
keeps you in samsara. It may land you in
a heaven realm, but it's still in
samsara. You do evil, that's bad karma.
It's just lands you in more samsar
either way. But if you do nothing, you
just observe
like with equinimity
literally means just looking upon then
that is just ethically neutral so long

as your your mental states are neutral.
So, I mean, in some cases, and I've I've discussed this before, that especially a lay person, if you're not a monk, you're not totally committed to being a saint anyhow, then you may choose, as is your right, to take a moral hit.
You know, you think, well, I'm going to make some bad karma by killing this guy, but still,
it's worth it in order to save those hundred other people. And that's your choice to make.
You're still going to be doing bad karma by doing it, but it's you have the right to make that choice.
[clears throat]

So, I'm just going to go on to the next question, I guess. But I do not think that that is a terra Buddhist story.

The next question is from Newman.

And Newman says, "Is life in the world the existential equivalent to scrolling?"

like doom scrolling I think and monk life is logging off. No, I think monk life is just you're you got a very simplified app and uh you're not scrolling as much or you're just scrolling like

a lot of it is just the same post over and over again like a mantra just om.

But until you become enlightened you're

not logged off.

So I mean it's it's just a kind of a loose kind of arbitrary analogy I think. Is life in the world the existential equivalent to scrolling or doom scrolling to some degree? Yeah. I mean it's just doom scrolling is just a symptom of you know people do it so much because it's just in accordance with human nature. You just want you know more and more stimulation. It's just an easy way of getting stimulation and like dopamine hits or whatever it is.

So monk life and you definitely I mean you're still I mean if life for an ordinary person is scrolling then being a monk would still be scrolling it would

just be like a much reduced simplified
kind of scrolling
and logging off would be enlightenment I
suppose or at least part of nibbana
would be logging off
huh that is kind of a strange question
though I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from Cyrus frame
name and Cyrus frame says I have found
sankara a difficult concept to get my
head around. I am particularly
interested in it as a dharma in the five
aggregates of of the sipatana. It seems
to be composed of volition emotions and
habits. Calling it mental formation
suggests it is things that is nouns but

maybe it is better to see its components as verbs rather than nouns. So processes, but a process is still a noun, isn't it? For example, perhaps volition is a process more than a thing. What do you think? Okay. Well, yeah. I mean, first of all, dividing things up into like verbs and nouns or like subject and predicate in a sentence is just an arbitrary like grammatical thing. It's it's not really reflective of reality that you have to have like like form and function separate from each other. But form and function are not separate from each other. They're I mean it's right there in the it's part of the same thing. So dividing it up

into the noun and the verb or the

subject and the predicate or whatever

that's just grammar. It's not reflective

of reality. It's just a quirk of human

human psychology.

So sankara

[clears throat] in the sutas sankara

I mean sankara has different meanings

like sab sankara duka all things are

conducive to suffering. Sankara there it

just means anything samsaric

anything conditioned anything with a a

cause anything with a beginning and an

end that would be a sankara in that

case. But sankara the the the

aggregate of sankara

which is one of the five aggregates
which composes a human being then
according to the sutas that's will
that's essentially your volition and
essentially your karma although
according to abidama and the abidama
commentarial tradition then you've got
52 mental states that are ultimately
real and for some reason the Buddha
divided about
sya or perception and let's see
or feeling those those two and the other
50 are all sankara the other 50 mental
states but that is just a commentarial
thing and I really do think that it's
volition that some caraconda is will
also karma and then I mean one One of

the first

the first Buddhist philosophical essay I ever wrote was caused by me trying to figure out which comes first the the perception or the volition. Like for example, you start to notice something. So you perceive something but I mean you have to draw your attention to it before you can really really perceive it. But why would you draw your attention to it before you'd perceived it? So it's like how does that work? I was sitting in this cave trying to figure it out and I happened to read uh it was like volume two of Buddhist logic by some early Russian Buddhistic scholar named

Cherbatsky who made this statement just in passing. I think it was like in a footnote or something about just sort of the arbitrary division between a thing and its function. You know the the noun and the verb. And then it just dawned on me that really perception and volition. They're just two functions of the same thing. It's like wind and blowing. You can't have blowing without wind. You can't have wind without blowing or light and shining. Light is a noun. Shining is a verb, but you can't have light without shining. And you can't have shining without light. I mean, they're just necessarily just the same.

And that's the way I it just kind of

dawned on me. Perception and valition

are are like the same kind of thing.

That perception is just sort of like the

noun aspect or the spatial aspect or the

like the static aspect and volition is

more the like the verb aspect, you know,

the kinetic aspect of the same the same

phenomenon.

And so Schopenhau had the world as will

and representation which is samsara as

chidana and sya.

So

let's see did I answer the question

calling it mental formation suggesting

it is things that is nouns but maybe it

is better to see its components as

verbs. I mean dividing the noun and the verb is just this artificial grammatical distinction that's just a peculiarity of of human psychology.

I mean to say that it's a a verb rather than a noun. So it's a process. But process is a noun too.

So perhaps valition is a process more than a thing. What do you think? Yeah, I think it's like the the verb aspect of perception

and perception is the noun aspect of volition. You know, a thing and its behavior. You cannot separate a thing and its behavior especially if just sitting there motionless is a kind of behavior.

So it's this whole kind of thinking has I mean it kind of played hob with the idea like I think it was Mahatma Gandhi said you don't hate the sinner you just hate the sin but you cannot differentiate the two you cannot differentiate like pole pot from what he did because his behavior was pull pot too.

So yeah, I think you could probably tease out an answer to your question in all the verbiage I just spewed. And I'm just going to move on to the very last question. By golly, it's been more than three hours. This is from Snore Locos. And Snore Locos says, "It's long been a

tradition to tell ghost stories on Christmas Eve. Would you kindly also Burmese ghost stories and ghost stories? I mean, my favorite Buddhist ghost story is from the Paw Watu. I've already told it a number of times. I won't I won't belabor it by telling the same story, but it's about this woman who was unfaithful to her husband one time. She was a devout Buddhist woman, very virtuous, but she was unfaithful to her husband one time. And worse than that, when he called her out on it or he found out or heard a rumor about it or something, she lied and swore up and down that she was not unfaithful to him. And that was even

worse than being unfaithful to him from the ethical point of view of this story. So she winds up because she was a virtuous woman. Aside from that one incident, she winds up like a terrestrial dava or goddess living in the foothills of the Himalayas in this palatial compound with celestial trees and all this stuff. Beautiful, living thousands of years. But every night she would go into like this trance state and go down to the the lotus pool in front of the mansion and this big dog would devour her. The bones would fall into the pond where they would reconstitute into the woman. She'd climb out, go back

up to bed and go to sleep until the next night and it would just every night this would happen. And that's kind of the way Buddhist ghosts can be. You know, it's there's a continuum of ghosts at one end and like gods at the other. And so the highest ghost and the lowest god are just right up against each other. It may be very hard to tell the difference. But I mean the hungry ghosts that's a kind of a different different aspect of ancient Indian philosophy that's I mean the idea of hungry ghosts where they've got a huge belly and a tiny mouth or a huge mouth and a tiny belly so they can never be satisfied. that comes from ancestor worship and it was originally

ancestors

fathers pas I mean the word the word for

ghost in Buddhism literally means father

pa or pa in Sanskrit

it's the ancestors that were not given

food offerings you know in ancient

Indian ancestor worship you don't you

don't sustain your ancestors they go

hungry they become hungry ghosts

But

with regard to my own personal life, I

apparently was able to see a ghost when

I was a little when I was a toddler. I

vaguely remember just barely remember

like this was like when I was like three

or four years old where we lived in a

house where this lady had died in the house before my father bought the house. And apparently I could see the lady and she never spoke to me, but she there was just this older lady wearing like a a print dress and she was just smile at me. She apparently liked little kids. Go figure. Why do why do old ladies like little kids? I don't know. But she apparently liked me. I mean, she didn't scare me or anything. I was too young to be scared. But I would explain to my father about the lady I keep seeing. and he'd ask me what she looked like and I would say and he he was like asking the neighbors and found out that you know I was fairly well describing the lady that

used to live there and so on and so forth. My father firmly believed in ghosts. He used to do seances and Snorlo may have heard me talking about uh the seance tape I listened to a few times when I was a kid of my father and my mother who were attending the seance. And uh so [clears throat]
he could he could he said that he had seen ghosts a few times, but when he would see a ghost, he said that he'd seen a ghost a few times, but it was always just sort of like this hazy white shape in the room. And ghosts apparently cause coldness in the room. And it would seem like the closest you're going to

get to a scientific explanation for that is they have to absorb energy to kind of maintain their existence. So they're kind of sucking the heat out of the room in order to use that heat energy just to maintain their manifestation in this version of existence or some such. He did have one of those nightmares or I mean sometimes it's called a ghost. I think a lot of people do believe them to be ghosts where you know you kind of wake up in the night and there's like this angry dark being kind of holding you down like pushing you down on the bed. It's a it's a common nightmare. I've read about this in like a psychology book before. But I mean that

could be just a common sort of archetypal nightmare or it could be some kind of spirit like my father thought it was. He thought it was the former owner of this other house that that he was living in at the time. My little brother used to see a ghost. It was called he just called him the man and he was a black man. And [clears throat] my father was asking um asking him questions about the man and so forth. And at one of the seances he went to he was talking to Uncle Henry who was [clears throat] he was like formerly a slave of my greatgrandfather
or some such and then after the slaves

were freed then he just became like a
member of the family. He, you know, he
was sort of like the butler or
something. You know, he's he was free,
but he chose to still live there. And he
was the only person who would stand up
to my great-grandfather,
call him Baptist. His his middle name
was Baptist.
He [clears throat] was the only person
who could get away with calling him
Baptist to his face. And so my father
asked because my brother my little
brother when he's a kid would see see
this this man, you know, it's someone's
going to sit down in a chair and oh,
don't sit there. the man is sitting

there and you could I think most people
would say it's just a little kid's
imagination that he's just kind of
taking too seriously but if you could
see the man at night he'd get he'd be
he'd start yelling he'd be scared during
the daytime it was fine but at night my
brother was afraid of the dark he'd have
to have a nightlight and everything so
my father at this seance uncle Henry
comes through and my father says I mean
have you been around our house lately
and and Uncle Henry says yes and he says
I'd appreciate it if if you kind of
don't don't come around the house too
much cuz you're scaring the hell out for

my little kid. So then my brother stopped seeing the man after that. But I mean whether that's a real ghost or not or whether it's just you know tricks of human psychology that's anyone can decide for themselves I suppose.

Most like Burmese ghosts they're more of the monstrous type. Um you know they they kind of take the the whole pa you know the Buddhist lower realm idea um more literally I guess.

But uh in Burma, the asane is uh considered to be the worst or the most dangerous kind of ghost. And an asane is someone who dies a violent or otherwise unnatural death. And the religion of the Burmese before they converted to

Buddhism was the Nat cult. It was like 30 gnats. And a natn comes from the the poly word nata which means like lord. But they were like small G gods that were a sane. They were they were humans in their previous life and they died like this violent or unnatural death and they became powerful like terrestrial gods. You know you just did not violate their taboos in their territory, that sort of thing. Like there's like lord of the lord of the white elephant or something like that is one of these gnats that the Burmese a lot of them still take seriously and it's like you can't travel with a certain number of

people.

It's like he doesn't like six people or something like that that are traveling together. So in the case that you got just for whatever reason six people all traveling through this territory of Lord of the white elephant or lord of the white horse or whatever his name is then you you like pick up a rock before you leave. You invite the rock to come with you and that becomes like the seventh passenger and then you can sort of not break the taboo by doing that. But you can still see like Nat shrines in Burma and Thailand from like the pre pre Buddhist animism. And but then when the Burmese converted to Buddhism, they uh

they just made Saka, king of gods, like the headnat, a leader of all the other gnats. And then that kind of incorporated him incorporated the NAT cult into Buddhism.

But yeah, the Burmese are definitely more afraid of ghosts in general than than like western people are. Like there's a cemetery I had to walk through to get to Layier Village. And some people would just they'd be afraid. It was just a road going through there, a dirt road. Some people just be afraid to go through there alone or at night. I had one uh female supporter who she had to come in at night to tell

me something. There was some sort of information she had to tell me. I don't remember what it was, but I mean she was just obviously terrified, you know. I mean, Burby's villagers tend to be pretty brown. Their complexion is is fairly brown, but I mean, she was just ashen looking. She was so scared having to go through that cemetery at night. Even though most of them have never seen a ghost or any such thing, but they definitely believe in them. Same is true in Thailand.

But uh none of these are really the kind of ghost stories that Snore Locos was asking for, I assume, other than me maybe seeing seeing the lady when I was

three or four years old. But, uh, I guess that's the best you're going to have to deal with because we've been going for three hours and 19 minutes according to this. And I need to do other things. I suppose I should I should do other things. So, I guess this will this will be good. And uh like I should always say at the beginning and practically never do. If you got any questions you think I can answer, especially about dharma, you know, terra Buddhism, early Buddhism, meditation, just philosophy in general, maybe. I mean, the farther away you get from Terravada Buddhism and early Buddhism,

the less likely I'll be able to give an intelligent answer. Uh maybe some Western philosophy or just me personally, that kind of thing. That's I I'm on fairly firm ground with regard to some of that, but uh no more than three questions and count those question marks. If you've got what you consider to be one question, but there's four question marks distributed throughout the paragraph, then in all likelihood that would really be four questions, wouldn't it?

And uh look at the uh URL links below. Special shout out to Hans who made a very generous donation to the cause earlier today or maybe just yesterday. I

just didn't see it in my email till today. And uh like and subscribe if you have not done so already. Consider obtaining one of my books if you like my teachings because I'm more coherent in my writing than in my speaking. I don't say uh um you know like kind of stuff when I'm writing nearly as much as when I'm speaking impromptu.

And like and subscribe. I think I already said that. And be happy.

Alrighty

then. Hello and welcome to question and

answer number 176.

I am your host Po Basa and I am sitting

before you on a Saturday evening at the

time of recording this in a state of

complete disabil

because it's like two days after

Christmas. I don't have anywhere to go.

Most of you, well, some of you guys

don't even look at me because you're

just listening to a podcast or

something.

So, why should I beautify myself, which

is really against Buddhist ethics

anyway?

And before I start answering questions
of which there's not a whole lot because
people are busy doing Christmasy holiday
Saturnelia kind of stuff,
I would point out that 176 clearly is
not a prime number. It is in fact 2 * 2
* 2 * 2 * 11.
And [sighs and gasps] for my beverage,
it's very very I was going to say
watered down coffee, but actually it's
milked down coffee.
I'm still I'm already kind of zinged
from caffeine. So,
I figure I shouldn't be uh like chugging
coffee any anymore today.
And uh we really do not have a lot of
questions and so we could be

definitely less than an hour and a half today.

[snorts] And I guess I should just wade into this. Very first question is from Jimmy Lad. And Jimmy Lad says, "Can you speak more about this guy who was a monk for 13 years and became an anti-bddhist? What made him quit and turn against the dharma?" Well, I would say he didn't really become an anti-BDist.

It's kind of a strange situation that he was an extremist. I' I've mentioned this person before and he had asked me personally in the past not to go into too much detail with regard to his life. Some stuff he would prefer to be like

private and he's an extremely private person because he is essentially a hermit. He does not like the human race all that much.

and he's eccentric, let's say. He was the one who lived in the big hollow banyan tree in upper Burma for a [clears throat and snorts] number of years. And he lived in caves in Thailand after all the foreigners were kicked out of Burma back around 1988, I think. Anyways, he was an extremist like most people. Like I've said before, this is a relatively recent Q&A. I was mentioning him not not in this context but you've got the middle path between self-indulgence and self- torture and

most people including most monks kind of veer towards the self-indulgent side whereas this person veered the other way. He was veering towards just extreme aseticism and at one point he had like a breakdown which he thought was due to sleep deprivation just chronic sleep deprivation because he was trying to follow all of the new tongas at the highest level which includes never lying down. And if you follow the the sitter's practice as it is called
at the highest level then you're not even leaning back against anything. So he was still cheating a little bit because he was leaning forwards. He'd

put his bowl

on the floor in front of him and just

lean his forehead onto it onto his arms

bowl and sleep that way.

And apparently was insufficient.

He had a kind of breakdown.

And this is back when venerable Tom

Pulus was still alive. Tom Pulus was his

preceptor. So he got sent back to

America. He uh disroed, went back to

America until he was recovered. Soon as

he was well enough to come back, you

know, recovered enough from this

breakdown that he had, he just comes

right back, reordains, and uh he was

[clears throat] very strict. I've told

stories, I won't go into details this

time, but I have told stories about just his his extreme strictness with regard to Vinia. And he was sort of held up to me as a role model. we were ordained in the same tradition and he was extremely strict with regard to, you know, vignia rules, the rules of monastic discipline and that sort of thing. And so I kind of kind of emulated him to some degree trying to be some kind of Buddhist [clears throat] Rambo.

But I think part of the reason was he was just like an extremist, you know, he I think that he probably hadn't fully mastered the middle path. And so after being a monk for like 13 years,

[clears throat] he just kind of decided, well, it's just not possible. You know, it's kind of BS or something. But the thing is, it was like an intellectual decision at the surface, but deep down he still had faith in Dharma and like Dharma practice because to this day, I'm pretty sure he's still in monastic robes in Burma. It's just he is now called a yeet in Burmese which is an unordained renuncient an unordained Buddhist renuncient.

So

I mean he kind of thinks you know enlightenment doesn't exist. You just can't do it. The Buddha himself was like some ancient Joseph Goldstein. You know

he floated that idea to me at least once while we were sitting together in his hollow tree.

But still deep down he had faith in Dhamma. And to this day, as far as I know, if he's still alive, he's more than 10 years older than I am, living in the tropics. So, but

um you know, he's he's still essentially a renuncient meditator. So at some deep level he still has faith in Dhhamma which is better than a lot of people who drop out of the monkhood and they don't not only stop being monks they stop being Buddhist.

So I guess I'm doing better than a lot

of people who drop out of the monkhood.
I mean some people they just
deliberately ordain for a few years just
to get some intensive practice under
their belt so that they can drop out and
become a teacher at some place like IMS
or spirit rock or some weasa center that
kind of thing.
So [gasps] he eventually did have to
move out of the hollow tree because
people started starting up um they
started starting chicken farms which
just caused like this of chicken [__]
just kind of pervading the atmosphere in
that area. So he wound up moving out and
uh I guess he's like living in like an
industrial park in on the outskirts of

Rangon, Burma at present. Uh that's the last I heard which was about a year ago just the uh the grandson of one of the main supporters of Tom Pulu Seattle kind of took him under his wing so to speak or just decided to continue supporting him even though he wasn't a monk anymore. And [clears throat] a lot of Burmese people consider that to be really important. Once you're not ordained anymore, it's like you've lost this superhuman status because the Burmese don't even use the word for for human being applied to monks. Monks have their own honorific titles and so forth. You don't use the word human towards

monks. Sometimes monks or other Burmese people would ask me, you know, what did you do for a living when back when you were a human? That kind of thing.

So what made him quit

was just he just tried as hard as he could and did not succeed in becoming enlightened. I I think that's the main reason and he didn't really turn against the dharma except sort of at this superficial intellectual level whereas I mean he was still just practicing for the most part at a higher level than most monks

and to this day he still has a poly name like on his passport and everything because he legally had his name changed

to his monk name and then after he
dropped out he's just stuck with this
monk name that he didn't bother to
change back to his original lay name.
And before moving on, I will point out
that he was from Midland, Texas.
So he he had like this Texas accent like
our our teacher Poku. He'd call him
Pakoku.
But I'm just going to move on to the
next question also from Jimmy Lad. And
Jimmy Lad says,
let's see here. Is this right? Yeah.
Okay. Jimmy Lad says, "When the Burmese
monks believe the Buddha was 27 feet
tall, how do they think he fit inside

the palace where he grew up and other practical situations where his extreme size would be absurd?" I used to wonder about that, too. And I think most people just don't really try to do the math. It's like the religious mindset where you don't want to be finding fault with your own religion. You know, it's like, well, it's got to be true somehow. I don't know how it's true, but I'm not going to question it cuz I might go to hell for it. That kind of thing. That's common in a place like Burma, a devoutly Buddhist country, a devoutly Buddhist culture like Burma, then, you know, most people just won't even go there. You know, the flat earth too, that kind of

stuff. They just, you know, it's got to be true, but I'm not gonna really get into how it's true. I'm just gonna have faith in what the texts say and just humbly accept that and just continue on with my life.

But

there is a certain book that I read when I was in Burma called the great chronicle of Buddhas which is an English translation of

it's a kind of commentary on the Buddha Wongsaw which is canonical at least the verses of the Buddha Wongsa are canonical they are part of the typica and this book was written by Mingun

Topitica Dasiato who was one of the most honored famous Burmese monks of the 20th century. He was the one who recited the the typica, the poly tip which he had memorized by heart at the Burmese 6 council in 1956 with I think it was Mahasi was the questioner.

Mingun titica dasiato. He had memorized by he had like a photographic memory had memorized the 40 volumes of Burmese tita plus a number of other texts like poly grammarss and commentaries and this kind of thing.

And Mingiga Draciato was I mean he had the the government had just exhausted all of the like ecclesiastical honorific titles to bestow upon this monk and so

they were just having to invent new
titles just for him because he just kept
outdoing himself with regard to his
scholarship and so forth
and so [sighs]
Minga Dasiro in this book I mean he knew
full well that the Buddha really wasn't
a a whole heck of a lot taller than
everybody else. I mean, he was described
as tall in the texts, but I mean he
wasn't taller than a giraffe compared
with other people. You know, there's
stories of like the Buddha and
Mahakasapa exchanging robes. So that the
Buddha started wearing Mahakasapa's
robe, Mahakasapa started wearing the

Buddha's robe. Also there is

[clears throat] a a rule of monastic

discipline in the potty mocha with

regard to the maximum allowable size for

monk's robes. [snorts] And in the story

the Buddha's half brother Nanda

venerable Nanda who was also a monk um

he was I think if I remember correctly

he was three finger widths shorter than

the Buddha. So I mean he was not a a

maha purisa you know he was not a great

man. He was not a a sama sam Buddha

fully enlightened being I mean well I

mean he probably did become an arhant in

according to the tradition but still I

mean he wasn't like this outstanding

superhuman being other than just being

enlightened and still he's this much

shorter so he'd be like 269

instead of 27

also like in the Samanya Palasuta

um king Ajata Satu goes with Jiea the

>> [clears throat]

>> to meet the Buddha and they get to where

the SA is and Jivaca the doctor doesn't

know I mean King Ajatasatu doesn't know

which one is the Buddha. So so Jivie the

doctor says he's the one leaning against

the post. He's the one sitting there

leaning against a post. He doesn't say,

"Oh, he's that gigantic one who's 27

feet tall."

And numerous cases in which the Buddha

was just confused with an ordinary monk.
So, Minga
who is no idiot.
I mean, he knew this stuff. But being
like Burmese, very Burmese, he could not
question the commentarial tradition. He
could not question. I mean the the sutas
themselves don't say the Buddha was 27
feet tall. That's like a commentarial
thing. But you got to believe all of it.
You know it's sort of like this medieval
sort of a medieval Catholic sort of
attitude towards one's religion. You
just don't question it. It is gospel
truth period. So, Mingetica
came up with this theory that in the
Buddhist time people were more virtuous

and so the gods loved people more than
they do now, including the weather gods,
the gods who [clears throat] cause
like [snorts]
timely rains and so forth. And so
because the weather was better, because
the weather gods loved people more,
because the people were more virtuous,
the crops grew better and more
nutritious so that everybody was, you
know, above 20t tall.
And of course, archaeological evidence
does not bear this out. Just physics
doesn't bear this out. You know, it'd be
physically impossible just going with
the laws of physics as we know them

today for a human being to be that tall and retain the same proportions as a human being now. I mean, he'd just be completely monstrous.

Even King Kong, who was only like 40 feet tall. Yeah. Well, King Kong, I guess, was like 40t tall. You know, you can read articles about how King Kong couldn't possibly have supported his own weight and a 27 foot tall human would be about the same. They'd be in the same kind of predicament. You know, there's there's like this scaling issue of like as height doubles with the proportions remaining the same. It's like

uh let's see surface area squares and volume cubes.

So like [clears throat] if he was four and a half times the size I'm going to I'm not going to be able to do the math in my head. Not off the cuff like this while I'm talking. But I mean he just would not have enough lung capacity. I mean he it's like his lung capacity he would just be a fraction of what an ordinary person's lung capacity would be because he would have like less proportionately less surface area to his lungs supplying oxygen to greatly increased mass. This kind of thing like his bones wouldn't hold him up because the cross-section of his leg bones for example would be squared whereas the

weight that they would have to support

would be cubed. this kind of thing.

So getting back to Mingun Mingun

Topitica Dasiro who had memorized the

entire 40 volumes of the poly tip in I

mean the Burmese polytopica

[snorts]

that was his theory

but I really don't think it's like

spread throughout the country or

anything because most people they're

just not really going to investigate

this. They just accept it with humble

faith and just do not try to delve into

the details because

they might might not like what they see.

[snorts]

So

yeah, I used to bring that up when I was in Burma, too. It's like I mean, how could he have fathered a child with an ordinary woman if he was 27 feet tall? How would he get into his own house? This kind of thing.

But now you know and I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Fred

and Fred says, "Regarding chanting, when the king visited the monks in the forest, it was total silence. Does that not imply no chanting?" So I guess Fred asked a question in the previous Q&A about whether monks were allowed to

chant.

And so this is kind of a follow-up question. I guess he's citing a suta possibly the samya pala suta where the king visits the monks in the forest and it's just dead silent and you can see mentions of just the silence of the sa contrasted to just like the the babbling you know constant conversation of like the followers of other religions like a jivacas for example but I mean just because it's total silence when the king arrives doesn't mean that the monks were just constantly totally silent you know, when they're sitting with the the Buddha, it could be like a meditation session. It could be they're

just quietly waiting until the Buddha
decides to start delivering a sermon,
that kind [clears throat] of thing.
So, I mean, just because chanting was
allowed doesn't mean that, you know, the
SA would be chanting 247.
So there would be times when the monks
were just silent,
but still, [clears throat] I mean, you
can find in the text, it could be an
anacronism where you've got monks that
have to recite texts in order to
memorize them because they're not
written down.
It's just the way it was done.
So when the king visits the monks in the

forest and there is total silence, it implies that there was no chanting when he arrived.

But it doesn't mean that there was total silence always. That there was no chanting ever.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Sam Papaalapa who for short we can just call Sam. And Sam says the davas and or gods small G gods and all the beings Buddha talks about or two in the sutas

thought beliefs assumptions.

Okay. So he wants my honest opinion about like the the gods, the small G gods in the Buddhist pantheon, especially the ones that came to Earth

and were interviewing, you know, asking questions of the Buddha and so forth, just coming to pay their respects maybe. And

[sighs and gasps] I mean I could take this even further like the portrayals of davas in Burmese art, traditional Burmese Buddhist art for example. The gods

they're I mean they look Burmese, you know, their ethnicity looks Burmese. the the males have no facial hair as a general rule and they're wearing the the clothing and like the the crowns and so forth of Burmese royalty and like highranking courters back in the days of

the Burmese kings. So the male davas are
wearing like these pigot-shaped crowns
and the female davas are wearing it
looks sort of like flash Gordon helmets
and they've got like these fancy
epillets on their shoulders and long
gowns and so forth. And so I mean you
take this back to the sutas
and I would assume that there is a lot
of just ancient Indian mythology
you know predating Buddhism you know in
the Ganges Valley people believed in
Davas I mean this the Rigveda the oldest
literature still existing that could be
called Indian
I mean
hymns to these davas.

One of the main ones being Indra who converted to Buddhism allegedly and became known as Saka.

So I mean it's really hard to say what some enlightened sage and saint you know what kind of beings are going to be visiting this person. And it would not surprise me if there were like superhuman beings that did associate with with the Buddha. I mean, it wouldn't surprise me.

It wouldn't kind of make sense actually from like a Buddhist point of view like I mean anyone who's read the the the biography or autobiography of uh Ajan man, I mean he was just inundated

by Davas visiting him. So that it was like standing room only. I mean he had to he had to teach dhamma to the davas in shifts you know they they couldn't all fit at the same time. So it's like they had to take a number or something. And a lot of this is just the beliefs of Buddhist people that kind of create this kind of situation.

And I mean [laughter] that's the way the whole world works really. I mean, it's just like a manifestation of mind anyway. So, it could be that you have a radically different culture, like a a pre-scientific culture. There can be radically different beings inhabiting the world that that people can perceive.

So,

I mean, I'm not going to completely rule out the possibility that like superhuman beings that in Buddhist cosmology or Buddhist philosophy you would call davas or even brahas would have interactions with the Buddha. like a picture of I got a picture of Nim Kuroli Baba up there on the on top of the bookcase that I mean he was supposedly interacting with non-human beings too at some higher higher level

and I mean [clears throat] maybe the Buddha did I have no way of proving it one way or the other but I think a lot of the descriptions of these davas

really are

sort of anthropomorphizing

and just largely influenced by ancient

mythology, ancient beliefs. So that's

and and like I was saying like the

Burmese have taken that even farther

with regard to making Davas look like

medieval Burmese royalty.

>> [sighs]

>> So

yeah, I mean with regard to this

universe, I'm I'm sure there have to be

superhuman beings in this universe. And

there could be superhuman beings like

right here that we just cannot perceive.

We just are too primitive. You know,

maybe our our our perceptual system is

just too primitive to be aware of it.
just like an ant crawling across
somebody's barefoot is completely
unaware that they're crawling across
they're like in intimate contact with
some super ant being
and it could be that way for people. We
could just be like in interacting
with davas or what a Buddhist would call
davas without fully realizing it at the
conscious level.
[sighs and gasps]
And it just seems pretty much I mean
very very likely that there are
superhuman beings in this universe. If
if we are the best this entire universe,

this entire cosmos has to offer then the cosmos is uh kind of destitute in certain ways.

But I do think that it's anthropomorphized and sort of translated into something that the like the preodern Indian imagination could grasp and deal with intelligently more or less.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, [sighs]

"I'm having trouble squaring the fact that ultimately there is no self, no eye that exists with the need to assert and defend this non-existent self in conventional reality.

Say, for example, someone rudely cuts you in line while at the store, or a significant other is flirting with other people, or a competitive co-orker is causing drama for you at work. During such experiences, I can see how simply noting hurt or anger arising and the accompanying physical sensations and not attaching thoughts and feelings to a self will lead to less personal suffering. But sometimes this just seems too abstract and unrealistic.

Maybe too unrealistic, although Romeo didn't say that part. But he [clears throat] continues, "Do you ever have difficulty reconciling the ultimate

truth of lacking a self while living
conventionally in society? Any tips for
someone that's having this difficulty?"
Well, I mean, the ultimate truth of
lacking a self while living in the
conventional truth of samsara. I mean,
[snorts] they don't necessarily
apply to each other, you know? It's like
two different levels of truth. Ultimate
truth and conventional truth.
Conventional truth isn't really true. It
just appears true
and people agree on it that people
exist, for example, when ultimately from
like the point of view of like Buddhist
philosophy, it's like a mental
construct. You know, human beings do not

have an ultimate um ultimately real
separated individuality
that we are conventionally real uh
virtually real. So it's [clears throat]
like virtual reality versus ultimate
reality. And the virtual reality isn't
really real. I mean it's kind of sused
with reality.
So like for example, let's see some of
the examples here. Someone rudely cuts
you in line while a store, significant
other is flirting with other people. All
that is virtual, you know, it's
ultimately it's not really happening.
So it's like being in a dream. So it's
like sort of

you're dreaming that all some stuff is happening, but in reality it's just a dream. And so I mean you could get more skillful be like practice lucid dreaming so that you'd be aware that it was just a dream all the time. But most people are just stuck in samsara.

Most people in this world probably they just think samsara is reality like the only reality that really matters to them. You know they just completely bluepilled. You know they are just wallowing in the matrix. So it's not so much a matter of reconciling no self with perceived self. It's just a matter of not just getting completely lost in the matrix and thinking that the

matrix is the reality.

And that's one reason why monks renounce the world and they go off and live in a cave in a forest somewhere. So you don't have all these distractions and all this reinforcing context of samsara keeping you locked into it.

So I mean you'd be like a holy fool just you know you're you're still kind of in samsara interacting with other people including the uh let's see the competitive co-orker that is causing drama for you at work.

I mean, and then you're still just practicing intensive mindfulness. Just, you know, you you sort of deconstruct

the competitive co-worker into stimuli.
You know, you deconstruct the
significant other who's flirting with
someone else as just stimuli,
perceptions.
I mean, if you're doing advanced
practice, that's what you do. But it's
way easier to do that alone in a cave
than like in the midst of decadent
society like Prince Michigan and Dostski
is the idiot.
I mean he got destroyed. Forest Gump did
better. Even Forest Gump [clears throat]
was a holy fool also. He did better than
Prince Michigan.
So, I mean, the best you can do in a
case like that, well, I mean, the best

you can do is be fully enlightened, I
suppose, but
like don't take it too seriously because
it's like you're in a dream world.
You're in the matrix
and this whole phenomenal world is
dependently co-arising. You know, it's
like context is the the dependent
co-arising
of Zamsar. It's in a way it's it's just
everything is dependent upon context.
You know, it's like the context of
everything is just sort of like
stabilizing everything so that it seems
to be real
and it's very difficult to explain.

Well, I mean this is one of the main
reasons why people [clears throat]
renounce the world and become monks
because it simplifies the stimuli,
simplifies the context, makes it easier
to disentangle yourself from it.
Let's see. So the question here, do you
ever have difficulty reconciling the the
ultimate truth of lacking a self while
living conventionally in society?
Any tips for someone who's having this
difficulty? Yeah. I mean, it's not so
much
reconciling
anata or no self with the apparent
selves in society. It's it's just like
it's the danger is just getting lost in

samsara,

you know, just becoming bluepilled

and like losing any higher awareness.

So,

I'm not exactly sure. I mean, in my

case, I was just a monk for 30 years

trying to cultivate this kind of

awareness that this is not the highest

truth. You know, ultimately, I do not

exist. is just sort of generated through

perceived context. This kind of thing.

So

yeah, just try not to get lost in the

matrix. Try and keep that red pill going

a little bit. I mean, red pill, blue

pill, that comes from the movie The

Matrix, I'm pretty sure.

Just at a higher level, like like some

theist could just say at a higher level

is just God. everything is God

and it's just dividing everything up

into parts is like you know you it's

[clears throat] removed from God to some

degree at least conceptually

so you want to avoid becoming totally

removed

I mean you can still function in samsara

and still act as though you have a self

and at a certain level you are believing

that you exist and all that it's just

you don't want completely cut off even

the like this subliminal awareness.

It's kind of an interest subliminal like

sublime subliminal awareness that there

this is not ultimate reality

and I don't know if I answered that

question very well but it's

[clears throat] time to move on to the

next one. This is from Sedarta Lohachida

who for short we can call Sid

and Sid says what do you think about

Aristotle's statement on natural

inequality and slavery

and he quotes Aristotle apparently he

says quote some men are by nature free

while others are by nature slaves and

this determines their capacities to

govern or be governed be governed

the slave cave by nature is one whose

mind does not reach deliberation about
what is beneficial for the common good
but only about what serves himself and
his master. Therefore, it is useful for
him to be under the rule of another.
Whereas the one who possesses sufficient
reason to deliberate about the general
good is by nature destined to govern.
Well, this is the first time I've read
this particular quote that I can
remember. I I have read some quotes from
Aristotle. I never read an entire book
by Aristotle that I can recall,
read some [clears throat] essays, that
kind of thing. But um [cough] I do
recall reading some statement of
Aristotle about slave races where

Aristotle was saying that some races or ethnicities make better slaves than others. And I have this hazy memory of like lazy people make better slaves than hardworking people just because they probably have less initiative to change their predicament.

And u just kind of passive people. And so I mean I don't want to offend the Burmese but there were times when I was in Burma where it did seem like the Burmese would have been what Aristotle would call a slave race. Partly because the Burmese I mean they are kind of passive you know they're just willing to endure horrible

situations just situations that you know
a westerner would find just intolerable
nothing working right for example their
government for example
and they were just they were very class
conscious people the Burmese like
there's half a dozen different words
like pronouns for me half a dozen
different pronouns for you and the
pronouns that you use with regard to
yourself and the person you're talking
to depend upon your relative social
status. So if if you're of higher social
status than the person you're talking
to, I mean you you call them like min or
nin this kind of thing. But if they were
like more advanced than you like a monk,

you'd call them a shimpa like venerable lord. And like um back in British times the British administrators were called ashina also you know they were getting the the the total ass kissing treatment and it's just Burmese are very class conscious and they will gravel before people they consider to be their social superiors and just act like sometimes like desperates to people that are of lower lower rank than they are.

some of them, not all of them, but it is kind of ingrained into the culture that there is a tendency in that direction.

And so

also they're they're kind of small. You

know, you don't want a slave that's just this towering Hulk way stronger than you, I guess. Although I mean it works for elephants, that sort of thing. But with regard to what Aristotle is saying here, natural inequality. Well, there's obviously natural inequality. You know, it's like the the thing that all men are created equal. It doesn't mean that everyone is the same. Doesn't mean that everyone has the same strengths and talents and so forth. It just means that everyone should have the same chance, the same, you know, they're they're held the same in the eyes of God perhaps. And they should have the same rights. they should, you know, have to

follow the same laws and so forth. But, uh, I guess that was just sort of an aside.

Some men are by nature free while others are by nature slaves, and this determines their capacities to govern or be governed. Yeah, I'm not 100% sure that Aristotle was correct in that like the people who let's see the slave by nature is one whose mind does not reach deliberation about what is beneficial for the common good but [clears throat] only about what serves himself and his master. A lot of like kings and emperors have fit that description where they don't really care that much about the

common good. They mainly just care about what serves themselves and just the people that you know that they can control to some degree that are beneficial to them. You know, it's like Roman emperors, even even bad Roman emperors would try to be on good terms with the army at least because that's it was through the military that they had their power. And I mean, even nowadays, like politicians nowadays, I mean, it's it seems to be more more of a thing that they pretend to care about the common good more than they're actually like striving to improve the the like the the prosperity of the people that they are

supposedly governing.

It's like it's just like this trope in politics now that you don't solve problems. You just promise to solve problems while at the same time like continuing the problem just so that you'll continue to have something to promise to to make better when you run for run for office next time.

So I think I mean for me what I remember reading about slave races might have more empirical validity than this where I mean you just have someone who's thinks you know they've got some capacity for independent thought and they're energetic intelligent that sort

of thing fine they can be masters of
something and the people that are just
like sheeple
sort of passive and lazy and not too
bright and
you know it's like
[clears throat and sighs] they shouldn't
be enslaved going with modern values. I
mean slavery is sort of an evil we have
put behind us
but still I mean they're going to be
enslaved to something. Some people are
enslaved to drugs. Some people enslaved
to food. Some people are enslaved to
sports gambling you know. So, I guess
there is some validity to this even if
slavery is uh obsolete now.

And I I have to admit that I really do not think slavery was a good thing. It was just a reality for centuries. And unlike what a lot of people on the left would like to believe, it is white people who ended slavery. We did not invent it. Pretty much every major culture for thousands of years had slavery. And it was white people, especially English people, who just forcibly put an end to it.

[clears throat]

So, let's see. What is the actual question? What do I think about Aristotle's statement? So, yeah, I pretty much said what I think about it.

I mean, it's nothing really concise or incisive,
any word that has cice in it, just because it's something I really don't think about all that much, especially lately.
And uh yeah, just slaves slavery I think it was I mean it served its purpose I guess you know it's like slavery partly started
due to like intertribal warfare and instead of just killing off everybody that you defeat in war you just say all right you got to work for me now in a way it's that's preferable to just slaughtering all the prisoners of poor [sighs and gasps] like Rome. I mean,

they just had this massive amount of slaves back in their expansionist phase just because of all the prisoners of war.

And it's I guess it's better to enslave them than just, you know, have them all put to death.

And I mean, they were had a little more sense than some people do nowadays where you they weren't just going to say, "Okay, well, I mean, sometimes they did. You'd have a like a barbarian army would invade Roman territory. The Romans [clears throat] would defeat them. The the enemy would surrender and then the Romans would say, "Okay, you can just

settle this farmland we got over here
and just sort of accept them into into
the country." But that was less common
then than it is now. I think
of course nowadays they don't have to
just come in [clears throat] to raid and
pillage because they just come in and
just get free welfare handouts.
So yeah, I guess I answered that
question. I mean it was what do I think
about it? So I answered the question
adequately I suppose because I really
don't think very much about that sort of
stuff.
And so we're just going to move on to
the next question which is from Alba
Coina who we can for short call Al.

And Al says, "Would you be able to give
a brief summarized timeline of your life
with the calendar years?" And then in
parenthesis, he's got premonthood years
as a monk in Burma. [clears throat]
Oh, I'm just now being told that I have
a low battery because I forgot to plug
in the computer. Just a second.
See?
Uh, one moment, please. Also, I probably
forgot to close out all the extra tabs
so that this could start lagging. Maybe
I'll just do that real quick. A second.
Yeah, I don't have lots of extra tabs
anyway,
so I guess we're good.

Oh, there's one. Yeah. Okay.

If I have the music tab open, it things are more likely to lag because apparently it uses a lot of um computer juice, so to speak. So, anyways, Al was saying, "Would you be able to give a brief summarized timeline of your life with the calendar years?" And then in parenthesis, it says, "Premonhood, years as a monk in Burma, years as a monk in the US, and postmhood."

So, okay. Yeah, dodged a bullet on that one. We're down to 8% of the battery.

So, okay. I guess it would all start. Let's Let's just leave previous previous lives out of this because then it would just be a very long digression or

regression, I should say.

So I guess we start with 1962 in which reportedly I was conceived in a parked car in a place called Hooligan Flats.

Then I was born in Seward, Alaska um near Hooligan Flats um in 1963.

Then in 1964, April of 1964, there was the Great Alaska earthquake, one of the the biggest earthquakes in the northern hemisphere in the 20th century, I'm pretty sure. And so our house and also my father's place of business were pretty much destroyed. And so in 1964, my father [clears throat] migrated

out of Alaska into Grace Harbor County
in Washington State. Aberdine,
Washington, home of Kurt Cobain.
So that's where I grew up. I grew up in
Aberdeen. Spent one year in Hoquam,
which is right next door to Aberdine.
And uh let's see if I open and close my
mouth. Yeah, it keeps up. It's not even
lagging very much. Maybe just a little
bit.
So, let's see. I lived in Aberdine and
Hoquam,
part of the Tri Cities of Abber
Hokamopoulos in Grace Harbor County.
Good place to grow up, by the way. Um,
until I went to college. I went to
college in Bellingham, Washington.

And then I lived in Bellingham after graduation until I became a monk. So let's see, I became a monk in 1991.

So like from 1981,

no from like the the early to mid 80s to 1991, I lived in Bellingham. And then I became a monk. And I became a monk in California, Boulder Creek, California. Tongulu Kaba a monastery, which is like Tonpulu means like little hill. Kaba means world peace.

So I was there for almost two years. And then I went to Burma and I lived in Burma for

um up until 2018,

more on than off. I would come to

America every once in a while. I made a few attempts. Oh, we are lagging. Yeah, we are lagging. You people that just are listening to the podcast have the advantage of not dealing with my my lips not being in sync to the sounds perfectly.

[sighs and gasps]

So, I went to Burma, lived in Burma um like with a a visit to America every like five years or so while my parents were alive, especially my father.

And uh

went to a few other countries. Oh, now we're lagging big time. That's too bad. Damn. spent uh few months in in Indonesia in Bali. Spent one range

retreat, the range [clears throat]
retreat of 1997 in Japan.
Um then I came back in like I think it
was December of 2018 was my final
re-entry into the United States from
Burma, from Asia. and
uh just stayed at like this Burmese
temple in French camp, California, which
is like 20 miles south of Stockton until
I just couldn't stand it anymore. I just
I mean that was really I just could not
live in like the Burmese temple kind of
environment. That's one of the reasons
why I became why I dropped out of the
monkhood. just wasn't working and I was
burned out on living in tropical Asia

and just various reasons we don't need
to get into. So then I [clears throat]
dropped out of the monkhood in 2021,
like May of 2021 when I've been a monk
for essentially exactly 30 years and
came to South Carolina and I've been in
South Carolina ever since.
[sighs]
So yeah, I worked in two sheet metal
shops and now I'm driving a forklift
loading and unloading
trailers for a trucking company.
So I mean I could get into the years as
a monk in Burma. Okay, let's do that.
Might as well. What the hell? So I
started after a little bit of traveling
at Tonulu Chelts Doya about gosh

I I can't remember if it's 50 or 100

miles south of Mandalay is just a desert

just blazing hot wasteland. Then after a

little over a year there I went to

Mahagandon big school monastery near

Mandandalay stayed there for a little

over a year. came back to Chelsea Doya

again because that's where my my acharia

my teacher Tomulu or not Tomulu Seattle

Pakogu Tomulu Chelsea Seattle that's

that was his monastery

um went and spent a few months at the

Bay Doya in Mon state in the south

uh spent

let's see after that I started escaping

from the blazing hot wastelands of

central Burma by going to Alan Londo Kathabba National Park. It's like the northern edge, the northern boundary of Alando Kathaba National Park. Alando Kathabba National Park is shaped sort of like the Vulcan live long and prosper sign where you got um I mean the main part just put my hand here in the center. The main part of the park would be like my the palm of my hand. And then there's like two like ranges of hills going up like this. And right in the center is Pollon Creek and a number of of of villages. And so just looking on the map, an old topographic map made by the British, I could see right here was the place to live where you've got

national park on three sides and you've got an alms resort. you got villagers that can put food in my bowl. So that's that's where I I stayed there a combined total of about two years, but it was was stretched out over five years. It was mostly the hot season. You know, I go there during the like towards the end of the cold season, stay through the hot season until the monsoon started and then I'd leave. I did spend one monsoon there, which is one of the most miserable years of my life. It was just awful, but we don't need to get into that.

Then I spent some time at uh Migadawan

Monastery in the foothills of the Shen
Plateau, which is also kind
[clears throat] of cool. It's it's cold
in the winter time, especially when you
don't have like hot water heaters and
that kind of thing, but it was
survivable there.
And then I came back to America
and I'm just going to move on. Next
question now.
[clears throat] This is from the
Sabaturs.
And the sabaturs say, "Regarding your
advice to avoid karma by doing nothing,
not to kill one person to save 10, what
is your view of the famous saying,
quote, "All it takes for evil to succeed

is for good to do nothing" unquote.
Well, I mean, it wasn't really my advice to avoid karma by doing nothing. I'm just pointing out that Buddhist ethics are like negative ethics. It's don't do this and don't do that. It's like doing nothing is like karmically and ethically neutral. You're not doing anything wrong by doing nothing. That's just ancient Indian Buddhist ethics. It's not really my advice.
So yeah, to avoid like not to kill one person to save 10. That's just Buddhist ethics, you know. It's not really my advice. People I' I've said before, I mean, you got to make your own choices.

If you consider it to be really what you ought to do to take out some sniper before he takes out other people, I mean, that's your choice. But, I mean, you're going to be taking a karmic hit by doing it.

So, let's see. All it takes for evil to succeed is for the good to do nothing.

Well, I mean, you're not even really the good. I mean it's it's a it's like a dichotomy.

It's if you're not doing anything that's not good. It's it's not evil either. So it's a monks are supposed to just separate themselves from this dichotomy of good and evil. You know you read some of the sutas it says you know monk

shouldn't do good or evil. You know he's just supposed to rise above the whole distinction of good and evil. This whole samsaric duality

but I mean it's your choice. You don't have to be a saint, obviously, Buddhist or otherwise. So, I mean, you got your own decisions to make. If you think it's that what you ought to do is to take out the sniper before he takes out other people, for example,

or like one I wrote a blog post about this once. It's like let's say you have some Buddhist government catches a terrorist. The terrorist has already planted a bomb in the capital city

downtown somewhere.

He's the only person who knows where the bomb is and the bomb is set on a timer. So you have this terrorist, he's already set a bomb that's going to kill hundreds or thousands of people. So is it justified to extract the location of that bomb from that terrorist through vigorous questioning? what I'll say putting him to the question as they used to euphemistically say back in the middle ages

and I mean that's that's the kind of situation that monks avoid by just renouncing the world and going out into a forest there's a jotica story about the the Buddha in a previous life this

the tamia jatika where he's like a a
crown prince but when he is a very small
like a toddler. He's sitting on his
father's lap while his father is sitting
in judgment and criminals come in and
you know he just you know off with their
head kind of stuff and this toddler who
was a bodhic sata he realizes you know
if I grow up and become king like daddy
I'm going to have to be sentencing
people to death and so forth and so from
that point on he just pretended to be a
deaf mute
just to avoid the whole situation and
that is what ancient Indian Buddhist
ethics is like

so

for evil to succeed

then yeah it's not necessarily the good

who do nothing it's it's like the people

who are just opting out of the whole

duality who do nothing

but you take it to kind of take it to

its logical consequence and it's like

some action movies where I mean the Only

difference between the good guys and the

bad guys are the good guys are a little

more selective with regard to who

they're shooting.

So let's see here.

What is my view of the famous saying,

all it takes for evil to succeed is for

the good to do nothing. Yeah, I mean

within a societal context.

Yeah, sure. And in which case, the good are going to sacrifice some of their goodness in order to fight back against evil.

And and you want to be the tragic hero who sacrifices your own spiritual welfare for the sake of others. That's your choice to make. That's your call. And I'm not going to judge you for it.

So, I hope I answered that one because I'm moving on to the next question which is from Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb and etc.

And Stellar Supreme, etc., etc., says, "Do you consider it theoretically

possible that Jesus was the incarnation
of the Brahma who as a mortal decided to
create an incarnation?" because after
visiting the Buddha he realized he
couldn't become enlightened unless he
was a human.
Do so do I consider it theoretically
possible? Just about anything is
theoretically possible like in an
infinite universe
then I mean everything that's possible
is going to happen somehow or another.
I don't think it's ne it's exactly
plausible that Jesus was like the the
incarnation of some Brahma that went and
spoke to the Buddha.
I would consider that rather unlikely.

this I mean still it's possible
like from the point of view of like
quantum physics it would not be
statistically one of the most likely
routes
for worldly reality to move in my
opinion. So it's theoretically possible
but I wouldn't bet on it. I mean it's
just it's just like this wild hypothesis
that I mean where you're trying to sort
of transplant Indian
like theology into like Jewish or
protojewish philosophy in the early
Roman Empire.
So you'd have to take the whole story of
the Brahma visiting the Buddha literally

as just literal history. And I mean, even good luck trying to prove that, but damn near anything is possible in theory. Anything that you can imagine, plus a lot of things you can't imagine are possible in theory. So, I'm just going to move on to seller supreme, etc., etc.'s next question, which is a follow-up. He says, "Would my theory have more credence given digaya number four saying only a Buddha can produce wisdom and morality in the world? Given that nobody seems to have ready access to CDs or powers these days, if we take it as given that Jesus really did perform CD type miracles.

Well, I mean CDs apparently aren't all

that rare in India, even though Buddhism is relatively rare in India now. Nim Kuroli Baba up there. I always use the wrong finger up there. I mean, he was just miracles just flowed out of him. Apparently, allegedly,
even if only a tiny fraction of the ones mentioned in Ramdas's book were true, still it's it's it's uh pretty amazing. So, I mean, the whole idea that only a Buddha can produce wisdom and morality in the world, I just I don't think so. I do not think that Buddhism or Terravada Buddhism have a monopoly on enlightenment or wisdom or morality or goodness. There's like this idea in

terra Buddhism that you got these cycles of time where
you've got like the Buddha reestablishes dharma and then everything just goes downhill and downhill and downhill and downhill until it's like people eating each other having a lifespan of 10 years. It's just like no virtue, no morality at all. And I just don't think so.
In a way, it's just an a sincere overestimation of one's own religion, which is just common human nature.
So, I don't think that Buddhism has any kind of monopoly on wisdom or goodness.
I mean, anybody with I mean, you can have like an Eskimo living in the

Arctic, you know, they can just sit there and and just watch the the sun over the ice, you know, and and you can get insights. I mean just spontaneously just intuition. And I think the reason why I mentioned Eskimo was like I remember a long time ago reading a newagy kind of book like one of those Shambala kind of books of different sages from different cultures and there was like an estim like a female Eskimo like a a shaman or something who just had this flash of insight when she went outside of the the bark house or whatever she was living in. probably not an igloo to to pee and it's like that

kind of stuff can happen. It may be that
a Buddha is I mean he [clears throat]
develops you know like a systematic
method called dharma or dharma that
helps people to become enlightened but
still I mean obviously he was trying to
become enlightened before he became a
Buddha.
You know he had spiritual teachers
before he became a Buddha. So there's
still some kind of wisdom and and like
virtue and so forth
there in in the Ganges Valley and
elsewhere
before the Buddha became enlightened and
started the the wheel of dharma moving.
And I don't think that that uh Buddhism

has any monopoly on sides. think that Buddhism kind of discourages like miracles and psychic powers and so forth unlike some schools of Hinduism that really play them up or Christianity for that matter.

So would Liberam, Stellar Supreme, etc.'s theory have more credence given Deacon Kaya 4 saying only a Buddha can produce wisdom and morality in the world. I just don't think that that's true.

I mean, if it were true, then yeah, that that might lend some more credence to the original hypothesis that Jesus was a reincarnation of some Brahma that had

met the Buddha and learned that only humans can become enlightened. But it seems like there's an awful lot of like mythology and legend and so forth muddying the waters in this case. So, I'm just going to move on to Stella Supreme, etc., etc.'s next question, and I think this is also a followup. Oh, maybe not. He says, "Does this approach defy the spirit of the middle way?" And then he's got this quote, "Do five precepts zealously. If you can force yourself to do eight without becoming unstable, do that oneta days. If you can manage eight every day, do that all your life. If you're really inclined in seeking out trivial intermediary

attainments outside of wisdom ethics, then don't risk a monastic life for them. Karmic consequences, cleaning the hand of ethics with a filthy hand of wisdom, and try to dry that well, her wet going to dry is wisdom before preparing for an elite death in old age. Sort of like how brahinss did in the time of the Buddha. but tempered by Buddha Dhama instead of petty practices by elite death. I mean having gotten five years of monastic life under your belt and going rhino without full dutongas

by letting that expediate one's death through health complications like not

sleeping by sitting in full lotus all night. You reduce the risk of bailing out toward the end by compressing the end of your life. I figure it banks on being able to prepare for such adversity and timing it right, but also that this would only be viable for an old person because if a young person attempted this, there would be interventions made by others.

And

gosh,

I think he uh has like one beginning parenthesy parenthesis without the closing parenthesis somewhere in here, which results in a kind of

like a logical

short circuit or something maybe.

Let's see. Yeah, I mean I don't even know there's an unquote. Yeah.

Gosh. Yeah, he didn't unquote it or close the parenthesis.

Um, maybe he just was started rambling and just decided, well, I better just stop now.

Gosh, does this approach defy the spirit of the middle? And I I do not fully grasp it. This kind of rambling description of of like some kind of approach to the holy life. Do five precepts zealously. Well, it depends on what zealously is. I mean, that in itself could defy the spirit of the

middle way. If your zealous your
zealatry is extreme,
see, if you can force yourself to do
eight without becoming unstable, do that
on impulsive days. Well, I mean, that's
I don't see how anyone would become
particularly unstable just from keeping
eight precepts for one day. One day
every eight days, you know, four day,
four days a month.
Uh, [sighs] let's see.
If you can manage eight precepts every
day, do that all your life. I mean,
that's that's the middle path. I mean, a
lot of people do not really understand
what the middle path is, considering
that I mean, the middle path between

self-indulgence and self torture
involved wandering homeless and
penniless and sleeping under trees and
silently begging for your food in the
streets
and that kind of thing. So that the
middle path as taught by the Buddha
would just be like absolute extremism to
most Buddhists nowadays.
So the spirit of the middle way is uh I
think that spirit has uh been taking
various routes.
You know what is considered to be the
middle way and what really is the middle
way and that sort of thing. I mean we'd
have to tease all that stuff out.

Let's see. So let's let's continue this a little bit. If you're really inclined in seeking out trivial intermediary attainments, maybe he means like psychic powers outside of wisdom and ethics, then don't risk a monastic life for them. Yeah. I mean, you can become a monk for bad reasons. You can start meditating for bad reasons. You can start practicing dharma for bad reasons. But if you're practicing correctly, you will cultivate wisdom. and then maybe your reasons will get better. You know, it's like the Buddha's halfb brotherther Nanda already mentioned in this Q&A. He was it was his wedding day and the Buddha kind of played a dirty trick on

him and showed him visions of what celestial nymphs look like. And so Nandanda

kind [clears throat] of he just jilted his wouldbe bride at the altar practically in order to be ordained as a monk so he can get those celestial nymphs. But then he was practicing correctly. I mean, he had goma Buddha as his meditation instructor, I suppose. And so, he became enlightened and of course, then he didn't want the nymphs anymore.

Let's see. Try to see where where were we here? See, don't try to risk a mastic life with him. And then he's got like

this semi Oh, he's got No, I guess he

does have a closing parenthesis.

Gosh, this is kind of confusing though.

I don't think he has a closing unquote

though note. See, cleaning karmic

consequences, cleaning the hand of

ethics with a filthy hand of wisdom.

Tried to drive that well away. Yeah,

that part is is kind of vague. It's not

really straightforward to understand.

um before preparing for an elite death

in old age.

Um

see by elite death he means having

gotten five years of monastic life under

your belt and going rhino with full

dutongas. I mean dutongas are optional.

Not really 100% necessary for everybody.

Gosh.

So, I'm not I really it's it just kind

of rambles here towards the end and it

it kind of is not easy to fully

understand

exactly what the hell he's getting to

by getting that expediate

one's death by letting that expediate

expedite I think one's death through

health complications like not sleeping

by sitting in full lotus all light you

reduce reduce the risk of bailing out

towards the end by compressing the end

of your So apparently he's saying that

if you're practicing full blast that it

may kind of wear out your body to some degree and cause you to die when you're younger and more vigorous something like that. I mean there could be some truth to that but really it's your comma is going to give you what you need. I mean, you shouldn't be deliberately trying to shorten your life through like extreme or really rigorous aesthetic practice. So, that would not be like a good example of the middle path if you're like deliberately trying to like burn out in a you know, blaze of glory instead of like fading out.

But I I really do not fully comprehend where the question went to like the second half of it. And I'm just going to

move on to the next question. This is from Ruie. And Ruie says, "Would you agree that time is the perception or experience of impermanence?"

Yeah, I mean that's one way of looking at it. Time would be the perception or experience of impermanence or the perception of um like the distance between two events.

[sighs]

Time. Yeah. I mean I read a a book. It was a classic book. It was this like let's see what was the name of it. It was it was a science book. Classic science book. It was uh times arrow and evolution something like that. where the

author was saying that time is it's

[clears throat] like entropy is the

measure of time

just things going from organized to more

random you know entropy in the the

physical sense is uh is what is sort of

fueling the passage of time for us

although I do think Kant was correct

that space and time are just categories

like mental constructs you know they are

perceptual

So yeah, I what Ruie said, I I can

accept that. I mean, it wouldn't be the

only [snorts] valid way of describing

time, but time is perceptual

and uh you could say is the perception

of of impermanence. Yeah, I mean makes

sense.

Sure.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Cyrus Frame.

And Cyrus [clears throat]

Frame says, let's see, we are recording, aren't we? Yeah. Cyrus Frame says, "I had never heard of the Ataka Waga before watching your videos. Do you remember how you came across it?" And yeah, I do remember how I came across it. I would specify before getting into the little autobiographical sketch that in the polytopetica there are two noteworthy atakawagas

that in the angura nikaya the group of

eights is also called the atakawaga but we're not talking about that we're talking about the atakawaga of the sutin pata which is the the group of octads because there's a core of very old sutas in the atakawaga that are eight verses long.

Some later Buddhist schools mistransated atakawaga as like oh what is it like astika waga or something astika vara or something where ata has been reinterpreted to mean something like benefit you know or or like the essence the meaning that kind of thing but pretty pretty obviously it means the group of octads

and the [clears throat] very first time

I encountered it I was a college student in Bellingham Ham Washington and in the library they had Max Muller's Sacred Books of the East series and I was kind of sampling that you I was checking out books from Max Müller's Sacred Books of the East series and reading them and one of the the volumes that I read was an very early translation of the Sutin Pa by let's see Herman Jacobe I think I guess it would be pronounced Yakobi. something like that. I think he was like he was European
and it it was like a an old pioneering translation of the sutini pata from like the 1890s.

But the asakawaga that chapter of the sutini pata really struck me as profound more so than the other chapters. And so even as a college student just being exposed to that, it was sort of one of my best tastes of profoundity in in terara Buddhism was just in that that old translation of the the atikawaga or and which is part of the sutin pa.

So yeah, I was in college and just just almost at random I just checked out that volume of Max Mueller's Sacred Books of the East series and just came came across the Atakawaga which I admired and respected ever since.

So much so that I made my own

translation just because I couldn't really find a satisfactory one at a time.

And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Joe Doe. And Joe Doe says, "Sometimes my mind will say bad things about the Buddha. Is it a demon?

And what can be done to remedy this?"

Well, when I read this question, it reminded me of I used to know one of the world's leading authorities on obsessivempulsive disorder. And one of the possible symptoms, you know, comp compulsive OCD

can have various kinds of symptoms. One

person might just be washing their hands a hundred times a day until the skin on their hands is just chapped and cracked and bleeding. Other people will have like, you know, they'll have to check the door to make sure it's locked over and over and over again. This kind of thing. And another possible kind of symptom of OCD that some people have is these like obtrusive thoughts. And I remember there was a case history in in the in the book that my friend wrote or he was my friend at the time. We haven't we haven't communicated in many years, but uh he sent me a copy of his book about obsessivempulsive disorder. And there was one case history of this

devout Catholic person who kept having these intrusive thoughts of like the Virgin Mary is a [__] this kind of stuff. The Virgin Mary is a [__] And that was like a symptom of OCD at least from a scientific point of view. And I think it's that same book who [clears throat] that mentions John Bunan who wrote Pilgrim's Progress, one of the most well-known Christian books aside from the Bible in in English literature. And he apparently also had this kind of like obtrusive thoughts that he I think he considered it to be like devils or something that were trying to lead him astray.

So I mean

maybe you could say it's a demon.

Although also I think personally what

works better for me unless you've got

some good evidence that it's some kind

of you know entity that's that's messing

with you is it's just a sort of like

this perverse part of your your

personality that is like resisting

enlightenment because it doesn't want to

die. You know, it's like anyone who does

intensive meditation or a lot of people

who do intensive meditation know that

your mind can just like rebel against

meditation because I mean it's your mind

is like an animal. It's going to fight

for its life. And when you become

enlightened, it's sort of like a kind of death.

So certain parts of your mind are going to rebel against dharma because they want to stay in their unenlightened state, you know, sort of healthy for them. even though ultimately it's delusional and unenlightened.

[sighs and gasps] So it could be something like that. That would be my guess. I don't know the details of course, but you know, it's just sort of like this

unenlightened aspect of your personality that just wants to stay the way it is, does not want to fade out if if you

become enlightened, that kind of thing.
And so it's it's sort of making this
passive aggressive, you know, rebellious
jab every now and then.
And what can you do to to remedy it? It
may be that uh I mean just the standard
Buddhist panacea is just mindfulness.
Just note it, let it go. Note it, let it
go. Don't react because reacting
reinforces it. If the thought arises,
just note the thought arising. don't
identify with it. You know, it's not me
and just let it [clears throat] go. And
if it's not really deeply ingrained,
it could just fade out.
like obsessivempulsive disorder, you may
not be completely cured of the

compulsive urges and so forth, but at the very least, you know how to just disengage, not identify with it, and just continue with your life without being just derailed by it.

So the urge to wash your hands comes up for someone with OCD, you know, it's like they just have like these ways of dealing with it which can include essentially Buddhist Saudi baton practice. You just observe it. It's a mental state that's arising. You know, it's like a dysfunctional mental state that's arising. It's not me. It's not me. It's the OCD. That's that was like one of the the slogans in the book.

And then you just like distract yourself
away from it if necessary by just doing
something else
until it goes away. But don't give into
it anything like that.
And I hope that was of some help because
I'm moving on to the next question which
is the last question and this is from
Cundrew and Kundrew says why do some
Terraata monks shave their eyebrows
while others don't? I've seen this
specifically between Thai monks who
shave their eyebrows and Burmese monks
who don't.
Okay. Well, there is a rule of monastic
discipline that a monk should shave his
hair, his hair and beard, you know, his

head hair and his beard. And apparently in Thailand, they interpret head hair to include eyebrows. Although I've noticed that they don't go so far as to trim their eyelashes, which also is hair coming out of your head.

But I have read in a book that the the original reason why Thai monks started shaving their eyebrows is because Burma and Thailand, which was called Sam back then, I guess, were arch enemies. You know, like Athens and Sparta or like England and France, they were just traditional enemies. And sometimes one country would send spies into the other country disguised as

monks cuz monks are, you know, holy men. You don't mess with them. You let them go their way.

So let's see if I get the details of this right. How it worked. I think what happened was the the ties knew that there were Burmese spies coming into Thailand or

um disguised as monks. So the the ties just pass it was like the king or somebody passes this law that the monks have to shave their eyebrows. So of course the Burmese monks start sh not the Burmese monks but Burmese spies you know impersonating monks start shaving their eyebrows so that they'll fit in. But then the Thai spies in Burma could

catch them when they come back. So when you see a Burmese guy with short hair and no eyebrows, you know he's a spy. So then they would uh deal with him in a way that would be politically appropriate for arch enemies and so forth. So that is one story I've read for why the ties shave their eyebrows. It's like it started off as a way of catching spies, impersonating monks, and then there was like this law that monks, Thai monks, shaved their eyebrows, and then the origins of the law just were just lost to time. You just became a tradition and it was just done without question. And it's justified by the idea

that you're supposed to shave your head
hair. Shave your head. And this is hair
growing on your head. So that's how they
would rationalize it. Now if they have
lost the old knowledge of it used to be
a way of catching Burmese spies
or so I have read. I mean, that could
just itself be some sort of madeup
legend
and it could have just been some
arbitrary decision. Well, eyebrows are
head hair, so you got to shave it off.
But again, they don't bother with the
eyelashes, which seems somewhat uh
I don't know. It's what's the word?
Oh, there's a word to describe that. But
I'm at the end of the Q&A, so I'm not

going to bother trying to remember like inongruous or some word like that. So, as I should always say at the beginning and practically never do, you have any questions you think I can answer about early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism, Buddhism in general, Dharma, and even more general philosophy, myself personally, this like Burma, monasticism, that kind of thing. Feel free to ask. I can't promise I'll be able to answer. Not very well anyway. But I'll do my best and uh look at the URL links below which includes links to my books on Amazon which are about Buddhism which should not surprise you.

And uh like and subscribe if you have not done so already and [snorts] be happy.

Okay then

I do believe we are recording.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 177.

I am your host Pony Basa and this

is my beverage

and 177

contrary to popular belief is not a

prime number because it is 3 * 59.

However, I counted the uh number of

questions we've got, which is kind of a

large number. It's 37 questions. 37 is

prime.

Also, 37 used to be kind of a magic

number for me. I just I just always had

this fascination for the number 37.

Partly just because I was 37 at the year

2000.

I remember thinking

long before the year 2000, man, I'm

going to be 37 the year 2000. That's

old,

but I'm even older than that now.

And uh I've got the door closed. There's

going to be no special guest appearances

of little dogs in this episode because

my woman and her mama are out shopping

or something right now. They're probably

going to come in loudly with a lot of

like feminine hama homina noises and so

I got the door closed so you don't get

to see the dogs. But I mean none of our

dogs are 100% dog anyway. The whippet is

like half gazelle. The littlest one is like half guinea pig and half monkey. And then the mediumsized one is like half gremlin or imp or something.

So, you're not missing out on a complete dog anyway. And I guess I should just start answering questions here. And the first question is from Ethiopian fake TIG. An Ethiopian fake TIG says, "You once said that the Buddha jumps off a cliff with his philosophy and so does Nagarjuna.

But some monks make up complex topics not to do that. Can you explain that a little more?" So finally after months probably we've got like a nar question.

So I got to wear the majama fez.

So get that

situated.

Get the the tassel

arranged

uh in an aesthetically pleasing manner.

So let's do this.

I have said more than once that Godma

Buddha, the historical Buddha, the

founder of Buddhism from a historical

perspective anyway,

um yeah, he just went to the edge of a

precipice and just jumped off. And then

in the centuries following that, a few

centuries afterwards, you had um

Buddhist philosophers coming up with

learned rationalizations for why they

should back away from that cliff's edge.
And then you had someone named Nagarjuna
who came along and he just jumped right
off the cliff again. And so after that
then again you had another wave of
learned Buddhist philosophers giving
profound excuses for why they should
back away from the cliff's edge again.
And the meaning for that
I suppose if I can try to give a meaning
for that is that the Buddha was just
jumping out of samsara
and any kind of philosophy is going to
be samsaric. Samsara is perception.
Samsara is symbols masquerading as
reality.

And so the Buddha just cut through that and just dived out of samsara so to speak. But then you have like Abidama scholars and various Buddhist philosophers
that are saying well when the Buddha said don't believe anything he just meant don't believe anything false and so you should believe this here philosophy that we're formulating and that's just backing away from the cliff's edge. I mean it's just staying in samsara. let's just memorize and master these philosophical doctrines instead of just cutting through all of that and bailing out of samsara.
And so Nagarjuna came along and he used

a more logical systematic way of just cutting through all the the samsaric symbolic [__] and just diving out of samsara again. And then after he established the Majamaka school, you had some Majamaka philosophers. And then after that you had the yoga philosophers and other Mahayana Buddhist philosophers who are just formulating these systems for people to cling to. And you don't want to cling to anything. You don't even want to cling to dharma or dharma. So that was the meaning of what I was talking about there. Um you know the Buddhas just don't believe anything like in the oldest text like like the atika

waga of the of the sutin pata have no
view no perception no belief you know
it's like beliefs just don't stick to
you like water doesn't stick to a lotus
flower
and I mean people just can't deal with
that even most Buddhist monks can't deal
with that because you have to believe
something so long as you're not fully in
mind, you have to cling to some kind of
belief system. And so Buddhist
philosophers came up with a belief
system to cling to rather than just
wholeheartedly
just bailing out of the whole system.
Just stay here in Samsara, cling to this
belief system. And you know, it's a

better belief system than just, you know, being some village normie, I guess.

But still it's like I'm not ready to become enlightened yet. So I'll just study how to become enlightened. You know, study the the theory of becoming enlightened rather than actually becoming enlightened.

And Majamaka was sort of a return. And I had a um a Mahayana monk in Burma tell me he was visiting he he told me that some Mahayana Buddhists considered Naga Arjun to be like a second Buddha just because of just the radical approach that he took similar to the original

Buddha's approach.

But um most people just aren't ready for that including most Buddhists including including most Buddhist philosophers and monks. They're just not ready to just let go of everything. So, they still are clinging to dharma or whatever, which is better than clinging to sex, drugs, and rock and roll, but still it's being stuck in samsara.

So, I'm just going to move on to Ethiopian fake TIG's second question, which is not about Majamica or Nagarja.

So, I'll take the fez off. It's a really good fez, though. It's a really nice fez.

See here? It does mess up the hair a

little bit when you take it off
incorrectly.
So, Ethiopian fake Tig's second question
is, you said you don't want women to
vote, and I'm and I'm weighing the pros
and cons. Don't you think taking away
this power could infantilize women more?
Right now, it's great cuz they have to
work and study and be forced to pay
bills, but if they give all that up,
their mental faculties will go to [__]
And he's Ethiopian, by the way.
But there, let's see, where is it? Their
mental faculties would go to [__] and
they would rely on men more. Not that
that's bad, but we wouldn't be getting

the great thinkers of our time like Nancy Cartwright. I have no idea who Nancy Cartwright is. So, I guess I'm ignorant of the great thinkers of our time. But now he he continues here with parenthesis. He says, "Not to be confused with the person that voices Bart Simpson, I mean the philosopher." That clears things up. Also, oh, I'm he we're out of the parenthesis now. He continues, "Also, a lot of women are incredibly smart." Incredibly smart. I don't believe it, but they swayed by emotion to choose things.

Okay, so let's go back up to the top of Ethiopian fake TIG's controversial question here.

Well, I mean, to clarify, I didn't say I didn't really want women to vote. I mean, that's just kind of a silly thing to want because I mean, you're not going to get what you want in a case like that. Like, like I was mentioning before, I mean, there'd have to be some radical overthrow
of the whole Western civilizational system. I think, you know, there'd have to be like some complete like a total coup overthrowing the the current status quo. You know, the I guess they could still sort of cling to the Constitution. I mean, they just, you know, abolish um certain amendments like the the

amendment that allows women the right to vote, but still, I mean, it would take some sort of coup to do that. You know, it wouldn't be done democratically. I just don't think that Western civilization is in any state to just abolish women's suffrage. So, so then he asked, "Don't you think taking away this power from the right to vote would infantilize women more?" No, I really don't think it. I mean, I don't think so. So, see, it's right now it's great because they have to work and study and be forced to pay bills. I mean, that's really not necessarily

great. I mean the oldfashioned way of the woman being like the center of the home, you know, being like the emotional heart of the family, raising the children while the man goes out and and works to earn money. I mean, there is a lot to be said for that old-fashioned way of doing things. And like I mentioned in the previous Q&A that elicited this question in response, women for starters,
just going with statistics, you know, there's all sorts of exceptions to the rules. You know, some women are taller than some men, for example, but as a general rule, women value security more

than men do. Men value freedom more than women do. And so women are more likely to vote away rights and freedoms for the sake of security so that you wind up with a kind of socialist mommy state which it just causes civilization to decline because like strength is demonized to some degree like independence of thought is discouraged. Just like meritocracy is discouraged. It's like everyone should be taken care of. everyone should be relatively the same and it's just like poison to what made western civilization predominant in this world.

Even countries that hate western civilization are still wearing western

clothes, using western technology, using western info in infrastructure, driving western cars, using western invented computers, etc., etc., etc.

So

there is that. Also, women just as a general, they've done studies on this. As a general rule, they're just less informed with regard to politics, economics, current events, that sort of thing. They're just more interested in other things due to psychological sexual dimmorphism in the human species.

But also there is an issue I don't think I mentioned with regard to the the great thinkers of our time that uh Ethiopian

fake TIG here mentions that men and women are different. I mean unlike what some nutty leftists will declare men and women are there is sexual dimmorphism. We are genetically different both physically and psychologically. And one difference between men and women is that there is more variation in the male than in the female with regard to just about anything really like height for example or like IQ just like brilliance. So that the bell-shaped curve the statistical bell-shaped curve for men is wider broader than for women. women have like a a narrower statistical bell-shaped curve. Like for example, with regard to intelligence. So on average, we're

comparable. But when you consider the variation that the super boneheads and the super geniuses are more likely to be male. That's one reason why I mean it's not the only reason but it is one reason why just the greatest geniuses of world civilization the Shakespearees the Einsteins the Isaac Newton's the Charles Darwins the Mozarts the box they tend to be all male.

I have read that uh there's a book written by Charles Murray Human accomplishment where he does this statistical study of the people who are the most significant contributors to western civilization with regard to

culture and science and so forth. And the top ranking female is a Japanese woman who lived like in the the 10th century or something. She wrote some novel, The Tale of Genji. She is the most significant female contributor to Western civilization outside of the realm of politics. I don't think politics was on the on the list. You know, you had like Queen Elizabeth I, Margaret Thatcher, people like that.

So

it's it's another reason why I mean it's not really have it doesn't really have anything to do with women's right to vote in that case but it's just Ethiopian fake TIG brought up about how

women are like the great thinkers of our time and I just don't see that at all.

I mean, if if you had somebody say, "Who is the greatest female thinker of our time?" A lot of people in America would say Candace Owens.

So

this getting back to like the main point of this question though, I do think that it would probably be to the advantage of Western civilization at least from a Darwinian point of view from the point of survival of the fittest and just cultivating strength and success to have go back to a more patriarchal system

because women just kind of veered
towards socialism and like outlawing
anything risky or dangerous that kind of
stuff and it just causes
a decline of civilization decadence.
I think it was Sir John Glo who wrote
the famous essay was it the decline of
empires or the fall of empires or
something like that and he pointed out
just going with a historical survey of
great empires that arose and then fell
that one of the signs of the decline of
an empire is women rising into social
prominence and getting like like putting
being put in positions of like great
consequence.
aside from the occasional queen which

was more of a like a hereditary thing.
But this is all quite controversial
and people should be entitled to their
opinions I suppose and in in America at
least should be allowed to express their
opinions.
But still, um, yeah, I do think that a
more masculine society is just going to
be more competitive and more likely to
succeed so long as it doesn't become so
militaristic that it just starts
attacking its neighbors so that the
neighbors all gang up and start
attacking it. You know, Louis the 14th
of France would be a good example of
that. Or Napoleon,

not that I'm trying to pick on French

people.

So, I'm just going to move on to

Ethiopian fake tigs next question.

He says, "Thoughts on Joseph Goldstein?

I've always wondered why he didn't get

married. If there is anything that's

known about him on the down low that I

don't know about cuz I'm from Ethiopia.

Can you tell?"

That's why he's called Ethiopian fake

Tig, by the way, is because he's from

Ethiopia

allegedly.

I really love his work. I'm still This

is Ethiopian pigt

asking the question here. I really love

his work

and I want to know more about his

personal life and what you think of him

as an ultralleftle leaning but not too

crazy dharma teacher.

Well, I've only read one book by Joseph

Goldstein. I think it was his first

famous dhamma book. It was the

experience of insight which was a good

book. I read it a long time ago as a

junior monk.

And I really don't know that much more

about Joseph Goldstein. I've I've known

a few people that met him who say that,

you know, of the founders of IMS, which

would be Joseph Goldstein, Jack

Kornfield, and Sharon Salsberg, that
he's probably like the like the
steadiest, sist of the three.
I've That's just, you know, secondhand
account. I've never met the man. Really
don't know that much about him. I know
he's Jewish.
Um, he's a a Juboo as they say, as all
three of them are.
Um, but that's that's it. I really don't
know that much about him. I've never had
much interest in IMS, Barry,
Massachusetts, Insight Meditation
Society. Um,
you know, it's just sometimes people
will send me information about IMS and
it's always like this,

you know, anti-white male stuff. you know, it's like mindfulness of white privilege and, you know, bipac retreats and this kind of stuff just as a way of just showing me how crazy some Western Buddhism has become, including some of the most mainstream Western Buddhism. But I really don't know that much about Joseph Goldstein other than what I've already said. So, I'm moving on to the next question, and this is from Justin. And Justin says, "I have struggled for a long time with sensuality, pornography, and casual dating." He's got causal dating here, but I I think he means casual. "Do you have any strategies for

ridding oneself of these urges? I would like to follow the brahmacharia path before I either find a wife or go full celibate hermit. I am in my 20s, so the desire hasn't weakened yet. Have a great new year. blessings to you and your sweetheart.

Um,

well, I kind of have some maybe what could be seen as bad news. I mean, I can definitely relate to this, especially the pornography part or just the lustfulness part. Um, I was never really into casual dating and that's that was to my advantage as a monk as a young man. Um, from the time I was a kid, uh, it was just tra like a tradition for me

to have like a crush on some girl, you know, some girl that I like the most. And then I wouldn't act on that, you know, I'd be too shy, too self-conscious. And then as I got older, I also beca had this I mean the un the uncertainty, you know, the self-consciousness or whatever decreased. But then what increased was just a kind of intuitive reluctance to really commit myself to a relationship with a woman where I would conscientiously have to consider, you know, lifelong commitment. You know, it's like I always had this idea, you know, you're going to date a girl, you

know, there should be like

I mean, it shouldn't just be like I'm

just going to date this girl once and

score with her and then move on to

someone else. I just could never operate

that way. But I was, especially as a

young man, I was so lustful that it was

it was really difficult for me to be a

monk. And where where even spanking the

puppy, so to speak, is very much against

the rules.

And the thing is, I mean, it's not just

going to go away. I mean, eventually as

you get older, it'll it'll fade out

to some degree, but I mean, that's not

going to happen till you're in your 40s

probably.

So, the thing is, I mean, you don't rid yourself of the urges. That's that's just you're just it's just built in. You're a red-blooded human male. It's just built in. And so it's not so much a strategy of ridding yourself of these urges because you're not going to be rid of them unless something really radical happens. You know there's some kind of major change in your whole like personality

then maybe you know you become a religious fanatic where you just cannot even tolerate a lustful thought. you know, it's just your whole mind just recoils from the very thought of

thinking that kind of stuff. Then maybe although that's rare in lukewarm modern or post-modern westerners, in like Asians who still live in a traditional culture, maybe in Europeans in the Middle Ages when everyone was Catholic, maybe. But lukewarm Westerners, too eclectic, too open-minded. It's really difficult to just have this stainless steel faith that is just going to require that you be a saint.

So for most of us, we're just stuck with lustful urges, lustful desires, and so forth. And so that's really where you're going to have to do the work is just learning to detach from the desires,

learning to live with them. like

somebody who's got living in chronic

pain for example,

the best thing you do is just learn to

live with it or or someone who's I think

the the women folk are back home again.

So,

see where was I?

Yeah. I mean, it's it was like living

with chronic pain or like you've got

now they're ringing the doorbell. This

is just just a minute.

They locked themselves out.

Okay.

So, like someone with obsessivempulsive

disorder, I used to know one of the

world's leading authorities on it. At least he considered himself to be one of the world's leading authorities. He wrote books about the subject, learned papers and so forth. And
to cure someone of obsessivempulsive disorder where they just have this chronic desire to wash their hands, for example,
um I mean even if you cure them, the urges don't entirely go away. They just learn how to like detach from the urge. They observe the urge mindfully. This particular person that was an authority didn't like using medications. Medications would just be sort of like training wheels, but eventually you want

to get off the medications and just
learn how to deal with the situation,
which is a genetic thing. And
unenlightenment also could be considered
a kind of genetic thing. You're just
kind of born that way. And so like
lustfulness,
I mean
it's it's not it's not gonna just you're
not going to just be rid of it. As a
general rule, some people I mean
anything is possible. There can be
miracles happening.
But for the most part, for most of us,
we just learn how to we just have to
train ourselves to resist the urges. And

you resist, you don't resist urges like
that through just like pushing them away
or repressing them or some people
they'll just like have these
meditative images
of just like rotting female corpses and
this sort of thing. That sort of thing
really doesn't work. You can have a
coroner who does autopsies on dead
females and it probably has very little
effect on reducing his desire for his
wife when he goes home.
So, it's just mindfulness and just
learning not to react.
And I'm not sure if I
well I could give a kind of embarrassing
like a little anecdote from my own

experience. When I was still a young
monk
I was spending some time at a meditation
center in in Rangon Chan Yeta it was and
I wasn't there for intensive meditation.
I was there like I had to renew my visa
or something and so I was staying there.
I knew some people there and I was
staying in this one of the dorm
buildings and
I I just looked out the window one day
and I saw on the roof underneath a
different window it was like glossy
magazine paper that was flesh tone and
it was like when I was young I mean my
father kept pornographic magazines. I'd

sneak into my dad's bedroom to look at his porn magazines when I was a kid, that kind of thing. And it was just it triggered this that could be porn pornography. And I had there was no internet, anything like that at the time. So I actually climbed out the window, walked across the roof, picked it up, and looked at it. And sure enough, it was like four pages from some Japanese men's magazine.

So I ogled that for probably at least half an hour before finally my conscience like impelled me to call a friend of mine who was like a a teacher there and I showed him like look at this. I found

this. So he he got rid of it. But still there was like this this urge like whoa. and that kind of thing. I mean, it's just instinctive in in the male human animal.

So, again, it's don't try to have a strategy for ridding yourself of like sexual urges. It's more just a matter of learning how to like experience the sexual urge without acting upon it. That is really where the strategy should lie. And from the Buddhist point of view, there are various ways of going about it. Like the uh one of the main meditations like

classical terra Buddhist meditations to help young monks with lust is meditation on the 32 parts of the body.

Um also just mindfulness like sad batana just when the urge arises you know you just see lust is arising that kind of thing just detach from it. But it's very difficult. It's easier to detach from unpleasant things to than to detach from pleasant ones.

Like Mary Baker Eddie used to say, it's easier to cure somebody of cancer than it is to cure them of a bad habit because they don't want the cancer. But the bad habit, at least some of the time, you really like it. And I got to make sure that we're not going to lag so

I can get rid of some of these extra

tabs that are up. There's really not a

whole lot that are up. So, get rid of

that one. And

okay, I guess we're doing okay.

I should do all this stuff before I do

the Q&A, but I don't.

So, let's see here.

I guess I'll just move on next question,

but good luck to Justin.

This is from Austin and Austin says if

dooka or suffering is axiomatic then is

pain a phenomenally unavoidable datim

and so long as you are in samsara

so long as you're like thinking and

moving around and that kind of thing

yeah then duka is act it's it's the first noble truth of Buddhism if you exist in samsara you will experience duka

which uh even if you're enlightened then presumably at least according to the text you're going to experience physical pain even though you may not have mental aversion for that pain.

So yeah, it's duka is the first noble truth. The first noble truth is the noble truth of duka.

So you live in samsara, you exist in samsara, you're going to experience dooka. So I mean you can avoid certain kinds of dooka. You can be careful so that you don't slip and fall and hurt

yourself, that sort of thing. But I mean even if nothing happens, you know, you can be in some advanced heaven realm where nothing bad happens, still there's just going to be like this boredom. There's unwe or some such. Still there's going to be at least a kind of restless dissatisfaction going on. That's like the the most fundamental form of dooka is restless dissatisfaction.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Jimmy Lad. And I I really should try to stay a little more concise just because there's lots of questions and if the the video gets more than about three hours long

then I've got to reduce the size of the file to upload it onto Bitshoot.

So Jimmy Lad says I remember reading a sutra where the Buddha said that a clan village was massacred because they ate fish. I believe it is found in the eodra eodam.

Do you think that eating fish like this with unh wholesome mental states can really result in such a fate? Well, it's apparently not a terra Buddhist text. This would not be canonical in terara Buddhism. It's not part of the politica. I mean, first he says it's a sutra which mean which would imply that it's in Sanskrit. But then he says it's in the echod e akodorama which is like a

Sanskrit version of what in pali would be called the angura nikaya.
So it's probably a suta or a sutra that does not exist in the poly the poly tip. Again I don't recall ever having read such a thing. I do think that terraat would say no that you're not going to be massacred for eating fish.
that in the Buddhist time, people still ate meat, for example. You know, it's not even against the rules for Buddhist monks to eat eat fish. I mean, they're they're not allowed to ask for fish or meat, but if it's just put into their bowl, they're allowed to eat it if they would like to. And Dewadata infamously

tried to insist that the Buddha require all monks to be vegetarian, and the Buddha refused. He said, "You can be vegetarian if you want to, but I'm not going to require that monks be vegetarian."

So, getting to the actual question here, do you think that eating fish like this with unh wholesome mental states can really result in such a fate? Um, I mean, if you do anything with unh wholesome mental states, it can result in bad things happening. I mean, unh wholesome mental states are bad karma, which will result in bad things happening. So whether you're eating fish or eating beans or sitting in

meditation, if you got unh wholesome
mental states, then you are setting
yourself up for unpleasant events.
But I mean, maybe there's like this
village culture of just cruelty to fish.
Just after you catch the fish, you're
just like laughing. Well, like beating
its head in this kind of thing. that was
just like the whole village culture.
Then there could be enough unh wholesome
mental states generated from something
like that that that could cause
a massacre of the village
maybe.
But I do think that this is kind of a
vegetarian propaganda

um generated by later schools of
Buddhism that after Buddhism went
mainstream in India then it was easier
to like discourage like killing animals
and killing animals is not I mean it's
forbidden for any any Buddhist really.
So once Buddhism went mainstream, then
you could sort of like try to enforce
that and even put into the Buddha's
mouth that you know even eating fish
that somebody else killed is is bad
karma and you can have bad things happen
to you. But
I mean the Buddha refused in the in
earlier texts to
even to forbid monks from eating fish.
So it's it's the mental states. I mean

just an outward action
is ethically neutral. I'm continually
having to remind western people and
sometimes eastern people too such and
such action I mean ultimately it's
neither wholesome or unh wholesome
because it's the mental states that
determine the karmic value of of an
action you know it's it's the volition
it's the chana that is the karma.
So, I mean, if you can't eat fish with
with with wholesome mental states, then
you're better off not eating fish. Of
course, if you can't eat rice with
without unh wholesome mental states, and
you're just screwed,

you just and if you anything.
So, I mean, if you can eat meat without generating unskillful mental states by doing it, then you're not doing anything wrong.
So it would have to be some sort of really pernitious, unh wholesome, immoral attitude that these people had adopted worse than the average person who just catches fish.
And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Arpad.
And Arpad says, "Could disease," and he's got sick in brackets, be a good English translation for duke. So yeah, it's dis meaning like not and ease meaning ease. Could that be a good

translation for the for the polyword

duka? And it has been proposed by

various Buddhist authors in the past.

The the main different like the two main

objections

are I mean disease is already an English

word that has a different meaning. you

know, it means a kind of sickness,

usually like a contagious one or a

genetic one, you know, it's means like a

medical sickness and um so I mean that

would cause confusion.

Um

yeah, disease.

Yeah, I guess it's just one. I somehow

had the idea that there was like two

different angles that I could take with that. And maybe there are two different angles, but yeah, I mean the word's already taken and it means something else. So I mean my general translation of of the word duka into English is unease. Like if I'm writing a a translation from poly into English, usually I will translate dooka as unease, which still it I mean there is no exact English equivalent, but it does come closer. you know, it's it's better than disease or disease because people will just see disease and think of, you know, the English meaning of the word disease.

But unease is a less common word and it

can I mean there's more overlap with the poly word duka than the English word disease. I mean that would be roga. The word for disease in poly would be rogar o g a.

So yeah unease it has certain advantages. Um one advantage is that it it pairs with suka. You got suka and dooka are opposites. You got ease and unease are opposites that sound similar. you know, it has a kind of similar effect like an aesthetic or emotional connotation

that you know, it's it's more similar to the poly than saying, you know, like pleasure or or happiness on the one hand

and suffering on the other. You know,

they they don't sound the same. They

don't have the same, you know, like

edetmological root, anything like that.

So, I would prefer unease to disease.

Although disease just

like literally

yeah it would be

comparable to unease but unease just

works better it seems to me

and I think unease works better than

Ajan Tuniso's preferred translation of

dooka as stress

I mean sometimes I'll just use the word

suffering because that's just the

standard translation the most common or

usual translation of dooka into English

is suffering. You know, the noble truth of suffering.

So sometimes I can use that and it's not that horrible of a translation.

But disease, yeah, it's just it the word has already been taken. It means something else. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Scooain.

And Scooterain says,

"Most of the time when I'm around people, I feel calm or neutral, but with certain people, I notice a tension or uneasy feeling. Is there any meaning to that experience, or is it just my own mind reacting? I don't like the idea of

judging people, but around certain individuals, it feels different, like it happens uncontrollably." Well, I mean, for starters, there could be just some sort of subconscious subliminal reaction to certain kinds of people. You know, maybe pretty women make you feel nervous, that kind of thing. Yeah. I mean, that's that's fairly common. But there's there's other things also. I remember I don't remember the story very clearly. I could just be making a a a dumb [__] move by trying to repeat a story that I remember kind of vaguely but in one of Ram Das's books while he was in India there was a certain Indian swami who was kept trying

to make friends with Ramdas and for some
reason Ramdas just kind of felt put off
by him just kind of felt uneasy around
him didn't for some reason just couldn't
bring himself to quite trust him and so
finally it got to this point where um
Maharaji Ramdas's guru started like
teasing Ram Das I think he was like
hitting him you know not hard but you
know just kind of teasing him and giving
him a hard time about how he doesn't
trust you know he's not a trustful
person and then Rahm Das is like
thinking yeah it's because of this this
Indian swami that I don't trust and then
nim karoli baba Maharaji just turns

around and says, "No, you don't trust yourself cuz cuz he's he's you know, it's like he does not have pure motives." And you were like picking up on that and just there was just like this intuitive you know just kind of his heart just did not trust this person and Rah and Ram Das's guru Maharaji said I mean you should trust your own trust your own intuition on people like that. I mean, there are some people who just don't trust anybody. And most people like that generally aren't very trustworthy. You know, it's like you're using your own your own self as a kind of yard stick. My father used to tell me that it's

like, you know, someone's jealous all the time or they just don't trust anybody all the time. It's because, you know, they're not trustworthy. You know, they're, you know, they're getting away with stuff and they think everyone else is too. That kind of thing. But also in addition to that

maybe you somehow combined with that there is the idea that if if two beings interact they're creating a third being which is like an us entity. It's like a multiple being. And Buddhism really doesn't talk about that much. I'm I mainly have insights in that just from my own experience in life and just my

own theory of the the block of marble.
You know, the the the simile of the
block of marble. That's how Samsara
works. It's my theory of everything that
contained within this uncarved block is
every possible statue which includes
group statues. So you've got like this
group of of beings
that in a way are like like a compound
entity that are sort of generating like
to some degree a shared experience.
um even at a like a less profound level
there's just the the fact that mental
states are contagious which is one
reason why the mongala bu the mangala
suta I almost said the mangala Buddha
the mongala suta says that the number

one blessing in life is not associating with fools second blessing in life is to associate with the wise and one reason for that is because mental states are contagious

you you hang out with foolish people, their foolishness is going to rub off on you to some degree.

Unless you're just immune, like maybe a fully enlightened being.

Likewise, if you hang out with people that are wiser than you, their wisdom is going to rub off on you.

So, let's see here. What's What's the actual question? Let's see. Is there any meaning to that experience or is it just

my own mind reacting? Well, I don't know
exactly in your case because I don't
know the details. It could be either.
Um,
but if it's your own mind reacting in a
way that is noticeable to the other
person, then of course their karma,
their mind is in on the game, too.
But I think in a lot of cases,
especially with me,
um, it's just mental states are
contagious. somebody has mental states
that just don't don't suit my system,
then there's going to be a certain
dissonance.
And I'm just going to move on to
Scutain's next question.

He says, "Coming from the monk life and having only a few robes to lay life, how much larger is your wardrobe? I always feel I have an unnecessary amount of t-shirts and it annoys me sometimes."

Well,

um, back when I was still a monk, I was thinking that, you know, if I were to disrobe, I could still be semi- monastic and just wear like like some uniform of just like gray sweats, you know, a gray hoodie, that kind of thing. And it wouldn't I mean, it wouldn't be that much more elaborate than when I was a monk. But the thing is, I've got a woman and most of the clothes I own, she buys

for me. So, yeah, I've got
probably 4 feet of closet rod in in the
walk-in closet in our off our bedroom.
Just shirts and pants, jackets, that
kind of stuff. Not even including socks
and underwear.
So, yeah, it's it's it's way more than
three robes, definitely. But I mean, I'd
be content with just a very simple
wardrobe, but when you're living with
with a female who like wants you to look
nice, has her own ideas about clothing
and so forth, and buys you clothing for
Christmas and so forth. I think I got
this for Christmas last year. Well,
2024.
So, I mean, I'm not going to resist it.

I mean, it's not really a problem unless you make it a problem. Kind of reminds me of the suta where the Buddha is talking about there's this rich man living in a mansion with a beautiful wife. You know, he's got all this gold and silver and jewels and all that, but he's not attached to it. So, he's still doing okay. Whereas, you've got this poor person with an ugly foul-tempered wife and he's just eating rice and beans every day and you know, he's just wearing rags and so forth, but he's attached to it. then he's doing worse than the rich man with the the the elaborate wardrobe and the beautiful

wife and all that.

So it's again

just outward acts are ethically neutral.

It's the mental states associated with

the act that create the karma and have

the ethical value of being positive or

negative or neutral.

So I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from Fred and Fred

says, "Does celibacy have adverse

effects on the prostrate?" And I assume

he means prostate. That's that's that's

a very common typo

that you know, sort of like saying

mediation instead of meditation, which

is one of the most common Buddhist typos

in the English language.

But Fred says, "Does celibacy have adverse effects on the prostate?" Some doctors recommend draining the spuds occasionally. And yeah, I mean, when I was younger, up until I was in my early 40s, then yeah, I mean, you can get blue balls. It can be very painful if you don't have some release. But as I was starting to say, like up until my early 40s, I would have nocturnal emissions, which there's no rule against it, unless you're going to sleep specifically with the intention of having a nocturnal emission. You know, you it's like you're trying lucid dreaming or something in order to have an orgasm in your in your

dreams, then that would be against the
rules. But just going to bed just
lustful or whatever and then having like
a sex dream at night
and that kind of relieves the pressure
like the hormonal pressure in the system
then there's no rule against that. And
when I stopped having sex dreams as a
monk like in my early 40s I missed them.
But it's like your system is designed,
at least my system was designed that you
know it kind of if you got too much
pressure then you're going to have a
release while you're in like in a while
while you're asleep or some such.
It may not be that way for everybody.
Some people may really have problems

with blue balls. And in in a case like that, I think there is some commentary saying that if if you masturbate just for the purpose of alleviating, you know, this painful condition or something, then it's allowable. But then I think the majority consensus is no, that's that's even that's not true. If you're doing it on purpose, it's still very much against the rules.
in which case you may have to just deal with chronic discomfort of blue balls or whatever. But I mean it's there's always a tradeoff. I mean which is more important? I mean having uh a greater chance of having a healthy prostate or

like the chance of becoming fully

enlightened.

It's like some people especially like

you read about certain medieval Catholic

saints they were so saintly and so

inhibited and repressed that they just

had all kinds of like histo hysterical

like

psychosmatic symptoms and so forth.

Who knows maybe even like St. Francis of

Aisi the the stigmata that he would get.

I think he died of the stigmata. I mean

that that's could be like a hysterical

conversion reaction like a

psychossematic condition just caused by

just this intensive repression of one's

natural urges

just the hearing voices and seeing visions and all that of these medieval saints. A lot of that was just the the price they had to pay for being saints because it just goes against human nature. So then you got to have priorities. Which is more important to you? You want to be saintly and pure with like hysterical symptoms, maybe bad health because of it, or do you want to be healthier physically and maybe in certain ways healthier mentally, but still just delusional and unenlightened. And you just got to make the choice for yourself. And it might not be all one way or all the other way. There may have

to be some sort of, you know, draw the line somewhere.

And I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, "My questions are about the uniomber Ted Kazinski and his anti-technology manifesto industrial society and its future." in it. Among other things, Kazinski says that the more technology increases, the more individual freedom and autonomy decreases, that people adapt to machines rather than vice versa at the expense of our human dignity. It goes without saying that Kazinsk's way of spreading his message was evil and repugnant, but I can't help feeling that some aspects

of his message were on point. And then his first question is, "Have you ever read the Uni Bombers's manifesto?" And no, I have not. I have read a few manifestos, but I have not read Kazinsk's manifesto or Karl Marx's manifesto for that matter. I have read a few manifestos though, like u just out of curiosity, I read the manifesto of that fellow in I think he was Australian, but he he shot up some mosque in New Zealand.

Um he had a manifesto that was online. I just out of curiosity like as an anthropological study I read that one but no I have not read Ted Kazinsk's

manifesto. So second question from Romeo. What is your opinion of his anti-technology message? And I really don't think it's just one possible outcome that technology in general is going to reduce people's dignity and freedom. That's not necessarily the case. I mean it's like people talk about world government. Was the world government good or bad? But there's like so many different possible kinds of world government, you know? It's like technology isn't it it's it's not just for ordained or pre-ordained to just reduce human dignity and and freedom. Like I mean, you think about what the life of a peasant was like in

the Middle Ages. I mean, do they really have more freedom and dignity than I do? I don't I really don't think so. I I don't think it necessarily works that way. That maybe like in general certain general trends it can be that way. Certain general trends may go the opposite way where I mean technology does kind of free people up sometimes. You know, mama doesn't have to spend an hour every day churning butter for example. I mean, that's not really decreasing her freedom or decreasing her dignity by just buying butter at the grocery store,
driving there in a car.

So, I mean,

some some technology does increase

individual freedom and autonomy. It

seems to me

too much technology like especially with

AI is is really going to cause people to

get dumber and dumber to some degree.

People will just, you know, ask the AI

instead of trying to like research it

themselves

or work work out the problem themselves.

But yeah, I really don't I do not see

eye to eye with Ted Kazinski on that

particular issue.

Yeah. I mean,

anti-technology manifesto. I mean, you

want to be like to live like a a Stone

Age hunter gatherer, but I mean, even Stone Age Hunter Gatherers had technology. It just wasn't nearly as much as we've got. But, I mean, there's a certain technology to like making flint spearheads and that kind of thing. And I mean they had like a stone age hunter gatherer may have had more physical freedom in a sense. They had way fewer choices though. So we got more freedom in that sense than that. We got more choices of what we want to do with our life. You know, they're just going to be prehistoric hunter gatherers. I mean that's that's just like made up. That's just decided for them.

So

yeah, I I just I I really do not

entirely agree with it. I'm sure that in

some ways he is correct with regard to

that and in some ways I think he's just

got it bass backwards

and it's it's mainly up to us to decide.

I mean, if you're just like a sheeple

just going along with the flow, still

you're going to have more freedom than a

stone age hunter gatherer in many

respects, but still, I mean, it's it's

not going to have the same effect on

everybody.

So, I mean, ultimately, we do decide. We

are creating our own reality and we are

creating a technological reality at

present.

So, let's see here. Let's just move on to Romeo's third question.

What is your overall take on the effect that the internet, smartphones, AI, and other recent technology have had on people since they were unleashed on society? Yeah, I've already kind of touched on that just by saying it it does make people more intellectually lazy and just kind of dumbs us down to some degree. Instead of spending an hour researching something, you can spend three minutes and just ask Groank.

And I mean, it has certain advantages. I mean it's not all bad

but I mean the internet I mean it's it's almost like a dva power you know the internet really is it's like an an additional sense organ that has been added to us where you know the internet itself is the sense is the sensory field and the computer that has internet access is like the sense organ so I mean it's not entirely bad at all I mean it has certain downsides and and anything has a downside, you know. It's it's everything has a plus side and a and a negative and a minus side, you know, a dark side and a light side.

Just just about everything. I mean, I've been trying to think of, you know, what has what entity what what phenomenon in

this world is all one way or the other.
It's like I mean, even the bubanic
plague of the 14th century wasn't all
bad. I mean it helped bring about the
modern world. You know the survivors
they were all of a sudden they had the
the same amount of wealth was
distributed among fewer people because
so many people died. People just just
prosperity just boom. It went up. The
standard of living went up. I mean there
were still like aftershocks you know
more plagues and so forth. that kind of
thing would still happen.
But I mean like the black death even
that wasn't all bad.

But I mean Buddhism I've tried to think
I mean and unlike Christianity where you
can a lot of people would say that
Christianity has caused as much you know
suffering and misery and death as as the
opposite. You know it's like all the the
holy wars and all this kind of stuff the
the inquisition witch burnings and all
that. Buddhism.
Yeah, it does seem to be one of the few
things in this world that seems to have
more positive than negative,
but maybe I'm just not saying it.
So, I do think that internet smartphones
and and AI as it is now, you know,
they've got their their good side and
their bad side. And whichever side you

want to emphasize, you know, it you you do have a certain amount of choice in whether you're going to be wallowing more in the benefits or in the the the opposite of the benefits, the detriments.

But of course, if we hit the technological singularity and AI just becomes, if not sentient, then able to mimic sentience well enough that it's like a billion times more intelligent than we are and is acting on its own. it's its own cognizance, so to speak. Then who knows? That could be the end of the world for all we know. That's why it's called a singularity. We don't

know. We can't predict what's going to happen. We can't know what's going to happen once it happens.

So, I'm I'm just going to move on. Next question. Really, I can't just spend too much time on one question because there's 37 of them approximately.

And this question is from Sedarta Lohaitita. And Sedarta lohachita says, 'What do you think about food prohibitions like pork for Jews and Muslims or beef for Hindus? A superstition.

And I don't think that it's all superstition that it's sort of like legends that generally have some origin in fact. Like in in Buddhism, there are

food prohibitions for monks. You know, monks aren't supposed to eat tiger meat, for example, or snake meat, that kind of thing. They're not allowed to eat raw meat or drink raw blood unless they are possessed by a demon. Kind of a strange rule of monastic discipline there. Well, with regard to like the prohibition on pork, I remember my father telling me when I was a kid that the purpose for the prohibition on pork was that pork being a kind of omnivore that eats poop and garbage and so forth that pigs u have a tendency or kind of a maybe a slight tendency towards getting tchinosis which was a really icky scary

disease that people could get very painful.

So, it could be that the prohibitions on pork and like dog meat and other omnivores,

I mean, chickens kind of got a pass, but pork, I mean, you can get tchinosis from eating pork if it isn't cooked well enough to kill the cysts, you know, the little roundorm cysts in the meat. So, that could be the origin of the prohibition on pork. You know, there's I mean, the Jews go farther than that. Most people just think of pork, but I mean it's I mean Jews aren't allowed to eat any quadruped that it uh let's see. It has to chew its cud and have a cloven

hoof in order for it to be kosher. And I mean it could be that there was some folk medicine or something. You know, people just had this, you know, they'd notice, you know, well pigs have a cloven hoof. They don't chew cud and you can get sick from eating that. and rabbits chew cud sort of but they don't have a cloven hoof and I don't know if there's any diseases people get from rabbits other than just rabbit starvation from eating only rabbits um you know like shrimp I think shrimp isn't kosher maybe shrimp goes I mean in ancient times I know from living in Burma where you don't have refrigeration

that shrimp goes bad pretty fast so it
could be something like that
so I mean I would assume that there some
proto like medicinal reasons for some of
it and maybe just superstitions for for
other parts of it. With regard to beef
for Hindus, um the cow is just
considered to be the greatest benefactor
of of mankind. And even even a few
Buddhist texts emphasize that the the
cow is man's best friend and it's like
like betrayal
to kill and eat cows or to sacrifice
them to gods. That kind of thing. The
Buddha was really more against animal
sacrifice than he was against eating
meat.

Just partly just because India was maybe
ripe to turn away from animal sacrifice
at the time. Whereas just realistically
he realized that the India wasn't ready
yet to turn away from eating meat or to
turn away from war other kinds of
violence that involve killing.
So
yeah, I think there is some rationality
behind at least some of it, but
not necessarily for all of it. It could
just be like folklore,
superstition, that kind of stuff is is
mixed in with certain kinds of empirical
observations like maybe you can get sick
from eating pork sometimes because of

tchinosis or whatever other diseases

that pigs can get from like eating [__]

and stuff.

And I'm just going to move on to Sedart

Loha's next question.

In the middle ages or even earlier in

Europe, which I guess would be classical

Roman times, no commercial exchanges

were allowed inside towns. They had to

take place outside the cities because it

was considered that exposure to such

activity would corrupt the city. It was

almost treated in the same way as

prostitution or selling drugs done

outside the town, in designated spaces,

or at fairs. Does the same happen in

rural Myanmar? And do you think and what

do you think about this? Well, no. It doesn't happen in rural Myanmar. There are shops and marketplaces in the villages in rural Myanmar. There's no taboo against doing business inside of a village. And getting to the what do I think about this? I'm skeptical of this whole claim. I mean, there's like the agora was the marketplace which was like in the center of many ancient towns. And I've never encountered ever before the the information that like in medieval Europe, you couldn't do any kind of business inside of a town. Like there couldn't be any shops, there couldn't be any ins, no taverns,

anything like that inside inside the city limits. Maybe there was like like like the walled like the nucleus of the city might not have that kind of stuff, but the suburbs, you know, where there's still a town. Yeah. I just I just don't see it. I I I've never even heard of that. You know, there's stories of ancient Greeks, you know, going to the Agora, buying and selling, you know, presumably inside the town.

I mean, I have heard that you couldn't there wouldn't be like lending money at interest. You know, that's the sin of usery in uh medieval Europe. You know, the early Christians, I don't know when they they gave up on the idea that

lending money at interest was a sin,
but that's one of the reasons why the
Jews became prosperous in the middle
ages and became hated in the middle ages
because it wasn't a sin for them to lend
money and interest. And so they were
making lots and lots of money lending
money and interest to the goyam
to the gentiles if you will.
So yeah, it doesn't happen in Rome
Yanmar. And I've never heard of this
happening even in the middle ages other
than, you know, in certain limited
contexts. I don't think it was that way
in in Rome. I mean, you just read some
of the stuff that would go on and you

got people going to to bakers and and going to, you know, you'd have like the market inside the like in the city center kind of stuff. Stay at the inn, that kind of stuff.

So, yeah, I am I am rather skeptical. I' I'd need some some further evidence that in the Middle Ages or even earlier in Europe, there were no commercial exchanges allowed inside of towns because I Yeah, I would I would guess that that is not correct information except maybe in certain isolated cases, certain towns maybe like Sparta or something.

So I'm just going to move on to Sedarta Lohachita's third question.

Could Plato be an arant or have attained Gana or knowledge? For example, when he describes the world of forms or ideas, attain that through gnosis.

So let's see the world of forms or ideas in Plato. It is the metaphysical dimension where pure ideas exist such as beauty, justice, the good, independent of the sensible and changing world is the true and eternal. No, I really I mean you can't know for sure, but I do not think Plato was enlightened. I don't think he was an orand.

And even when his his world of forms is still multiplicity, it's still this as opposed to that. you know, the ideal the

ideal cat is different from the ideal dog. So there's still differentiation and so forth which I would not consider to be the highest truth. I do not think Plato arrived at the highest truth sort of neoplatonists maybe like Plotinus or Plutonists. I mean, he would have, in my opinion, a much better credibility as an enlightened being than Plato.

Plato, I mean, he was just kind of making up stuff about Socrates. Even in ancient times, people knew that you couldn't really trust Plato to convey what Socrates really taught because he was just putting his own words into Socrates's mouth.

So yeah, I mean I certainly don't take

Plato seriously. There's there's an old saying that everyone whether they realize it or not is either a Platonist or an Aristoilian. And I really I'm neither. I really don't have much use for either one of them.

Yeah, Plato I mean if if he was getting some sort of insight into a higher world of forms still that would not be the ultimate highest truth in my opinion.

I' I'd go with Plotinus or Plutinus rather than Plato.

And uh I just let's just move on to the next question. This is from Trzasquez is Trazask says, "When someone is in a deep coma, does his mind work?" Well, his

brain isn't working apparently. If you're in a coma, I'm pretty sure that your brain is just kind of it's hardly even idling. It's still metabolizing, I guess. But I'm really no neuroysiologist. I'm no authority on on what exactly your brain is doing when you're having a coma. And also, I haven't really read any like near-death experience stuff about people in comas. Like somebody comes out of a coma, do they remember anything? Are there any cases of somebody coming out of a coma and not just being surprised that it's two years later? You know, they're think, "Wow, well, I mean, I saw myself You know, I rose up above my body and I

saw it down there and I went into the bright light and then I just spent two years hanging out with these spirit beings in heaven and then I came back down. I've never encountered a case like that. They they might be out there but I mean if your mind is working I mean from the Buddhist point of view it wouldn't be your mind anyway. you know, this like

let's say there's some sort of spirit entity, you know, let's just call it a soul, but I mean, it's not ultimately real anymore than your body is ultimately real. You know, it's conventionally real, maybe at a higher

level, a multi-dimensional level, but it's still it's just it's like a higher, more refined level of delusion, a higher, more refined level of some sorrow. So, in a case like that, your mind No mind might still be working. You know, it's like your mind, what you call your mind, like deeper levels of it that you may not have any conscious awareness of maybe still operating, you know, working out certain processes or or issues or whatever,

but it's not really you. And it's obviously not happening at this level of reality or this level of some sorrow, you know, this empirical universe.

So I'm just going to move on to Trzascus

is his next question

and he says,

"Is it possible for consciousness to

exist

without any perception or object of

awareness?

You always seem to be conscious of

something whether it's a thought,

sensation or external object. So if

there's always a subject and an object,

doesn't that mean pure consciousness

without any content of perception cannot

exist?" Well, this is I mean this was

kind of an issue in in early Buddhism

and the official position of terra

Buddhism is that there always has to be

consciousness of something. You can't just have pure consciousness. There always has to be perception and valition and other mental states accompanying consciousness.

So even if you're in these formless realms, you know, the realm of nothingness or the realm of infinite consciousness or something, there's still the perception of nothingness, the perception of infinite consciousness. Um, you know, it's like infinite consciousness in quotes practically.

But there are also like I keep saying there's at least two sutas that contain fragments of some old verse the the entirety of which may be lost to the

polytopic that implies that that nirvana
or nibbana is infinite formless
consciousness
unmanifest luminous all around.
So
some people would say that wyana which
is usually what is translated as
consciousness. You've got wyana. It's
one of the five condas. Wyana
always has to have an object. You can't
just have pure wyana.
But if you get into just pure
consciousness then it's just like off
the scale. You know it's like reifying
the absolute
pure consciousness. If that's nibbana I

mean you can't perceive it. And if you can't perceive it, it's not in samsara anymore. So that's once consciousness becomes pure consciousness, it just goes off the scale and is no longer samsaric. In which case, you can say that from a samsaric point of view, it doesn't exist. And you could just say existence and non-existence are just purely samsaric ideas anyway.

But it does seem to me that someone go heading for enlightenment is it's it's sort of like in calculus where you're getting into like infinitely small incremental changes or something. It's like you're trying to get to pure consciousness. I mean that's like the

path it seems to me could be described as you know moving towards or working towards progressing towards pure consciousness and that's like what fourth Janna is that sort of thing or the the signless concentration of mind anime samadei that kind of thing is I mean you're conscious but there's practically no content

So you could say that from a samsaric point of view, you just keep getting closer and closer to pure consciousness until suddenly just poof. You can't quite get there within a samsaric context. It just doesn't work that way. And so I'm just going to move on to ask

is his next question. He says, "What one believes is also based on causes and conditions. Can we really choose what we believe?" Well, like Schopenhau would say, yeah, you can choose what you believe, but you can't decide what you're going to choose. That kind of thing. So again, this just gets down to the issue of free will. Do we have free will?

And from the Buddhist point of view, the indication seems to be that we don't, except maybe in this paradoxical way that is never really described or explained.

I mean from the point of view I mean the Buddha kind of rejects both alternatives

free will and determinism. He rejects free will in the anatal lakanasuta which is traditionally his second formal discourse after his enlightenment. His first discourse that caused some of his disciples to become enlightened.

His first disciples.

And I mean it's just like with regard to any of the five condas you can't say let it be this way let it not be that way and reliably have it happen. And one of those is volition sankara.

So we don't have complete control over that which means we don't have complete control over what we choose what we decide. But on the other hand, he

rejected the Ajivacas, an ancient Indian religion that no longer exists or an ancient Indian spiritual tradition who are just strict determinists.

So it's like he rejects free will and determinism. So there's like this middle path that is never fully fleshed out or explained.

But I mean some people I mean some people seem to choose what they believe more than others do. And it's something that I can't really understand. I can't really wrap my head around how some people will just believe everything their religion tells them or even worse yet, believe everything their political party endorses. You know, they just

they're just a staunch Republican or a staunch Democrat or a staunch whatever. And whatever is the position of their political party, they just go right along with it.

I think it was William James wrote a famous essay about like believing and choosing what you're going to believe. And he he talked about how it has to be something viable. I mean you can't just believe anything. Some people seem like new age people I mean they seem capable of believing anything but still it's like I mean it has to seem true. I mean you can't just decide well I'm just going to believe that two

and two is five from now on. I mean,

some really soft-headed person could do

that maybe,

but so it's

what you believe. It does seem to be

whatever perception seems the most

plausible, seems to fit in with your

other perceptions most efficiently,

that's what you're going to believe. But

then again, now it just occurs to me

that I mean, belief is is perception.

Anything that you perceive, you're going

to believe.

So

golly,

where do I go from here? Can we really

choose what we believe? That is the

question. And if I mean from the Buddhist point of view, it does seem that we do not have free will. It would take like an autonomous entity, an an autonomous agent to have free will and there is no self in Buddhism. So no autonomous agent. So yeah, it would be based on causes and conditions, but still the Buddha rejects just strict determinism. And so we're in this limbo of paradoxical may with regard to maybe somehow,

but that is a difficult question.

And with regard to myself, I mean, it's like you don't have any choice really but to believe what seems the most like

plausible or likely, you know, based on
the information that you have.
So,
yeah, I mean, I'm not really going to
make a call on that one because it's I
do think it it's kind of a paradox,
but I mean, just based on the evidence,
it would seem that no, we can't really
choose what we believe. We can't really
choose what we're going to choose. It
just happens
based on karma. And you can sort of
identify with it or detach from it and
just let nature take its course. And you
know, in a way, you sort of detach from
the whole ego stuff that's going on.
But I'm just kind of wallowing and

trying to dance around paradox. And I'm just moving on. Next question. This is from fifth

And fifth says, "What books about or related to Terravada Buddhism would you recommend from beginner ones to advance? I already have your three books." Well, congratulations on having my three books.

Um, and the fourth one, there's a good chance it may come out sooner than later now. Uh, I might get back to that later, but I might be working on my fourth book again after the an indefinite hiatus from just being overworked and not having time to really dedicate to it.

But let's see here.

What books about or related to Terra Buddhism? Well, I mean the best books about or related to Terravada Buddhism would be poly texts themselves. Good English translations if you are innocent of poly. So I mean like the sutin pata would be a excellent intro to terra Buddhism. The dhamapata is one of the most well-known uh poly texts. Um the udana has a lot of interesting stories. Um the majinikaya would be good for a beginner although it's starting to get kind of into the like the technical kind of dry philosophical stuff sometimes. Um there's one book called Buddhist Legends translated by a person named Berling

game which is a translation of the Dhamapata commentary and if you're more interested in narratives and stories and just seeing what it was like in ancient India than to read the Dhamapata commentary would be interesting you know it's sort of like reading as fables sometimes or the Poncha Tantra which I think is more of a Hindu text you know it's just ancient Indian fables that have been sort of turned into like origin stories for verses of the dharmapata that kind of thing.

So

I think one of the the earliest books on teraba Buddhism or early Buddhism was

was was by TWW Reese Davids. It was like Buddhist India which was I mean it was written like over well over a hundred years ago but still it was sort of like this breaking new ground kind of a pioneering sort of a book that had a certain enthusiasm and excitement behind it that made an impression on me.

Um

yeah, I mean I would stick to the try to get as close to the original sources as you can and then once you get like more advanced I mean once you get kind of an understanding of what the texts say then you can start kind of diversifying out and you know reading Joseph Goldstein or or Wal Pola Rahula that kind of thing.

um GC pande I mean once once you know
the difference between the Angura nikaya
and the Samuda nikaya for example then
you know once you're fairly familiar
with the sutas then GC Pandai's studies
and the origins of Buddhism I would
consider to be an invaluable study aid
with regard to understanding what early
Buddhism was like
although he he has his own biases he's
he's a Hindu so he has sort of like a
vantist take on early Buddhism
So yeah, I mean just kind of to recap, I
mean just start with Buddhist texts, you
know, just read I mean most of them are
translated in English now. The ones that

aren't translated English aren't
translated in English because nobody
would read the translation anyway
because it's just so obscure of a of a
text like the ne the nesa something like
that. But yeah, start with like the
sutini pata which is the book that
really converted me to terra Buddhism at
least to a a really strong interest in
terra you know dharmapa you you just
read a few verses before going to bed at
night of the damapata I used to do that
the udana majamikaya
danikaya
that kind of stuff I mean can't really
go wrong with that and that that will
give you just the the straight

information right out of the text. I mean that's that is it. That is do that is Terravada. You're not just reading about Terravada. You're reading Terra Buddhism.

Also I mean some of the some of the books by Ajan Cha just the transcripts of his dharma talks he he's taught in a way that was based on experience and that westerners can relate to better than many other Asian like dhamma teachers. But I'm going to move on to fifth's second question.

He says, "Do you think there is any benefit to a layman learning poly?"

Well, I mean, if you're really

interested in knowing exactly what the texts say, the poly texts, you know, you want to get as close to the Buddha's words as you can, then sure, there would be benefit to learning Poly for anyone that really wants to read the Buddha's teachings in as close to the Buddha's language as possible. And then you'll understand you'll understand much better like Buddhist philosophical terms that kind of thing. I mean just to to learn the Buddhist philosophical terms I mean that in itself would be very beneficial. I mean if you want to really understand what Terra Buddhism teaches.

So that was kind of an easy question.

So, I'm going to move on to Fifth's

third question, which is when or where will we be able to get your newest translation of the Aika Waga? Well, I don't have a new translation of the Aika Waga. I do have just the translation of the Atakawaga that I made back around 1997,

which um you can find it online. I think even the Wikipedia article on the Atakawaga

has like in the links like the bibliography is linked to like a PDF of my translation of the Atakawaga. Um my woman has been managing my official website

um so that I'm not 100% sure that my

atawaga translation is on my website

which I think is piobasa.org or I think

paneobasa.com

ponyobasa.org

H yeah, I mean I'm just I haven't looked

at my own website in a long time cuz

really I haven't added anything new to

it in years at this point. You know, it

was mainly stuff that was before I

started blogging

and then I just the new stuff was all

going on to the blog and then I stopped

that that first blog, the Nepa Puncha

blog. And then I started a second blog

which is still up although I haven't

added anything to it in well over a

year. And now I'm just my

you know my my Buddhistic labors are
mainly taking the form of of videos now
including this Q&A.
So, like I said, my fourth my fourth
book um not including the atawaga that I
mean just
um just like this series of essays,
collections of essays. It's going to be
more autobiographical
that could be out. I mean, I'm not
making any promises, but it could be out
like within a month or two.
But the atteaga is my translation of it
should be online somewhere. And um I do
have some extra copies of it that I can
send like hard copies. Um

it was always my intention that the
Atakawaga translation is just a gift of
Dhamma. I should never sell it for
money. That kind of thing. So,
it has been published a few times in
small numbers, but
I'm sure that a hard copy of it would be
relatively rare,
but it's out there.
And uh let's see. I guess I'm just going
to move on. Next question. Sorry if I
was not informative enough on that one,
but there really is no new translation
of the Aikawaga. There was one person
that was volunteering to edit it for me
to make it into like a more compact
format that it could be published as a

book again, you know, a new edition, hard hard copy edition, but that's just sort of like in development hell or something. I haven't heard from the person that had volunteered to do that lately.

So, there's no telling. I mean, ideally, when I have more time, I'm not having to to work for a living. so much then I could even possibly, you know, try to find some some donor or sponsor for just publishing a new edition of the Atikawaga translation because it really is an invaluable book. I do consider the Atawaga of the Sudan to be probably I mean potentially at least the most

important

piece of Buddhist literature in

existence. is like the largest fragment

of archaic pre-terravadan Buddhism that

we have in my opinion and it's the

teachings of it are radically different

although kind of similar but still in

certain ways radically different from

the later just orthodox established

terabana Buddhist system

so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from Clefy

let's see yeah this This is this we've

been at it for an hour and a half

already. Khifi says, "What would a

middle path for a practicing Western

Buddhist?" No. What would be a middle

path for a practicing Western Buddhist?
Well, I mean, you you're not going to be
able to follow the middle path as
described by the Buddha as, you know,
the ethical middle path because the
ethical middle path, you know, the
practice middle path between
self-indulgence and self- torture
involved wandering around homeless,
dressed in rags with no money, no family
connections, silently begging for your
food in the streets, sleeping under
trees and in graveyards and this kind of
thing and I mean that's too extreme even
for most monks nowadays.
So the middle path for practicing

western Buddhist

first of all there's more than one

middle path. There's Buddhism itself is

just it could be called Buddhist

philosophy is like a collection of

middle paths you know like there's the

middle path between like eternalism and

annihilationism.

You know that's there that's a middle

path. There's a middle path just between

self-indulgence and self torture.

There's a middle path between let's see

what would be another example. I mean

there's there's there's lots of them of

just these sort of dichotoies or like

free will and determinism. That that's

another middle path.

So, I mean, if you're going to try and follow some semblance of the middle path as a layman, you have to don't seek out misery and don't seek out pleasure. You just kind of accept things as they go along and you live your life prudently. You try to be moral and so forth, but I mean, you're not clinging to anything and you're not like running away from trouble and you're not running towards trouble. So that would be a kind of like middle path light.

And then Kify's second question is is the middle path even possible for a western man or woman and like I said I mean the ethical middle path of ancient

India that's too extreme even for most monks now. So yeah, it wouldn't really be possible for a western man or woman unless the western man or woman renounced the world and went to Buddhist Asia and just started wandering around homeless and sleeping under trees and so forth

with or without ordination I guess.

But I mean the other middle paths the middle path sort of philosophical middle paths between eternalism and annihilationism for example. I mean you can adopt those kind of middle paths like philosophically

and again I mean just not running away from trouble or running towards it. I

mean that is a kind of middle path light that a lay person could get some proficiency at I think. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Liberating Insights. and liberating insights says, "I have listened to countless near-death experiences and an overwhelming number of cases may have described some very tall spirits." Lorna Brine, maybe Laura Burn, who has seen angels and spirits since she was a little child and still does to this day, also states that they all come in different shapes and sizes, some as large as cathedral pillars, and some can also manifest into

human forms. Do you think it's plausible that it was the Buddha's spirit that some observers seen him as 27 feet tall? I consider that unlikely. I mean anything is possible.

So maybe in some people's private samsaraas it I mean that would have some plausibility but personally um like in in Vineia the Buddha is considered to be three and a half times the height of an ordinary human. in the commentarial tradition outside Winia like in the commentarial tradition um connected to the sutas he was four and a half times the size of an ordinary person and I think I'm not

exactly sure why they they had him be so so big when obviously he couldn't have been in my opinion but in in with regard to the vineyard rules where he was three and a half times the size of an ordinary person one possible explanation for that is that just it just made it easier to follow the rules. You know, if you can't wear a robe that's bigger than nine handspans by what, six, I think. I It's It's been a long time since I sewed my own robes, but I mean, the average robe nowadays would be twice as big as the allowable size. like what Thai monks wear or Burmese most Burmese monks wear. It would be much bigger, you know, twice

the size of the Buddha's own robe,

assuming that the Buddha was the size of

a tall man, but not the size of a

giraffe.

So,

they just made it easier somehow. It's

like um with regard to the height of a

bed, a high bed is one where the frame

is the bottom of the frame is more than

eight finger widths above the floor. So

if you go with the Buddha's hand was

three and a half times the length and

width of an ordinary hand, then you can

sleep in a bed that's way up off the

floor. And that's easy. And some monks

maybe wanted to do it that way. And so

in ancient times even they just kind of

changed the size of the Buddha's handspan in order to make it easier to follow certain rules. That is a possibility. But otherwise, why on earth would people think that the Buddha was 27 feet tall or even three and a half times the size of an ordinary human? Is I don't know. But I I'm not sure that I mean they're seeing the Buddha's spirit, you know, his disembodied spirit as some gigantic man. I mean maybe, but there's really no evidence other than, you know, nowadays people are saying that sometimes spirits can be 27 feet tall or something, but that's really insufficient evidence to really like

make a a strong case for it.
That probably is just some kind of weird mythology,
but I don't know. And I'm just going to move on to Liberating Insights next question.
He says, "What do you think of this famous surgeon's witnessing a near-death experience in progress? You can view it here at Liberating Insights on YouTube."
Uh, it's 12 minutes long if you have the time. Yeah, I did I did watch the video. I think it's the same video. It was a 12-minute long one. It was one of the most recent videos that was uploaded by Liberating Insights on his YouTube channel.

And there's some heart surgeon talking about how they were doing surgery like repairing a valve on this man's heart and it was like
he he just kind of died on the operating table. You know, it was it was very tricky and he was just sort of failing like they needed the artificial heart and lung machine to keep him alive and he just wasn't kind of taking over, you know, taking up the slack from the machine until finally they were trying and trying. I mean, it was just there seemed to be no way of saving him. So, they just turn off the machine and just sort of close him up and leave him for

dead. And then like 20 minutes later, he revives. I mean, he doesn't wake up, but I mean, his heart starts beating again after 20 minutes. And you know, he starts breathing on his own without the help of the machine. And so then they they rush in and you know, finish sewing him up and everything.

And then after he revives, you know, he regains consciousness days later.

He's telling them about he had like the classical near-death experience, you know, he his spirit or astral body raises up, you know, floats up above the operating table and he looks down and sees his body down there. He sees the doctors and so forth and he goes up into

the bright light, etc. And according to this surgeon, he was seeing things that he shouldn't have been able to see because I mean, he was like clinically dead for 20 minutes. And he's he's like describing how, you know, he was wondering where the anesthesiologist went, you know, he saw the two doctors there, but where's and and that was after they'd already given up on him, you know, and he's like mentioning how he saw this this list, this this long uh like a chain of post-it notes, post-it notes that were stuck to something that weren't there when he was still conscious. They were there when he was

unconscious and clinically dead. There was just like this messages for the doctor that he was supposed to get back to after the surgery was over. He shouldn't have been able to see that kind of stuff. So what do I think of it? I mean that kind of stuff happens. That's what I think about it. I mean you can say like I was saying earlier that um even though the individual person from a Buddhist point of view doesn't ultimately exist. I mean even this our soul doesn't ultimately exist just as our body doesn't ultimately exist. Our body apparently does obviously exist. And so you could argue well there's also like a spirit like an astral body and so

forth that from within a samosasic context clearly exists even though at the ultimate absolute level it's not ultimately real. You know it's just part of phenomenal samsara.

So, I think it's quite possible that there can be some kind of astral body or spirit that goes through these these um events of a near-death experience, you know, rises up and sees the body down below and goes into the bright light and communicates with spirit beings and comes back again.

I mean, there's many, many cases of that.

And sometimes they'll see things that

they shouldn't be able to see. You know, it's like there's other near-death experiences where I remember reading one where this woman rose up above her body on the operating table and she could see that there was something on top of the the fluorescent light over the the operating table and then she she tells that to the doctor or the nurse or something afterwards and they look and yeah, there's there's no way she could have seen it. Or there was one who saw a a tennis shoe on a ledge outside the window in this hospital and you couldn't see it from the floor level. It was like a fourth or fifth story window, but on this ledge right below the window,

there's like a shoe sitting there. And supposedly there was no way she could have seen it. But when she was out of her body floating around, she happened to see it and then she told them and then they went and looked and there it was. So I mean this kind of stuff it happens a lot. Maybe not, you know, every day at every hospital, but still it does happen. And

I mean my father firmly believed in this stuff. He he claimed that he had had outof body experiences before.

So sure I mean I can say that from a samsaric empirical point of view there could be some sort of astral body that

that leaves the physical body. You know the Hindus certainly believe in that. um but that ultimately it's no more real than the physical body is which from the Buddhist point of view even this physical body that you can see doesn't ultimately exist.

So yeah, I mean I can accept the conventional existence of a soul. You know, it's just sort of like this multi-dimensional entity of which, you know, this is just one aspect, but ultimately at the highest level, it is not ultimately 100% real.

Conventionally real, potentially real, conditionally real, but not ultimately real.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from PSA and PSA says, "Why are you doing the Jim Carrey alighty then at the beginning of your videos now?" He did it mostly on his Ace Ventura movies and it's just convergent evolution of speech patterns or something because I've never seen an Ace Ventura movie. I'm really don't know who Ace Ventura is. I know who Jim Carrey is, but I never saw any of the movies in which he says that. It's just random chance I guess. Cosmic coincidence. Two great minds converge on the same alighty then. I don't know.

And so I'm just going to move on to

PSA's next question. He says, "Don't you feel like whomever set up this simulation called Samsara made it a little too difficult to stop participating and exit once you realize it's all bullshit?" Well, whomever set up this simulation is is us. We're the one who are we're the one ones who are generating it. And I mean, we would stop generating it and stop participating in it if we really did fully realize it's all [__] But the thing is, deep down we're not fully convinced at some superficial philosophical level where we can say, "Yeah, yeah, it's all bullshit." But deep down we are still invested.

Deep down we still got some delusion
going that takes it seriously and clings
to it and so we don't become
enlightened. But this question did
remind me of
um a certain quote from a profound
movie. It's one of my favorite movies.
It's called Avalon. It was filmed in
Poland with Polish actors, but it had
like a Japanese director and Japanese
person doing the soundtrack and so
forth.
Um,
and there's a certain I mean it's the
movie Avalon. It's it's a like a parable
of some sorrow, a parable of

unenlightenment. And there's this character in this virtual reality video game which the movie is based on. This Avalon is the name of this this game. There's this character in the game called the bishop. And he says he says the following. He says, "Which is the greater challenge? Which is the better game? Which would you choose given a choice? The sort of game that you think you can win but can't or alternatively one that seems to be impossible but isn't. maintaining a precise delicate balance somewhere in between throughout every level of the game. That's what keeps it going and it's all up to us. So I mean that's the parable of Samsara.

You know it's like it's it's sort of like the middle path between seeming impossible but not being impossible and seeming possible but not being possible. Did I say that right? seeming let's see you think you can win but can't. It's like the middle path between like a game that you think you can win but can't and one that seems to be impossible but isn't.

That's samsara.

So it's a kind of samsaric middle path um that helps to generate the game.

But really I mean we're the one who is has set up this simulation called samsara.

Maybe you could say it's like some

deeper aspect of us, some

multi-dimensional entity that is

generating us too, but still it would be

like our quote soul unquote,

which isn't ultimately real

that is generating

our reality,

just like we're generating our reality

in our own dreams,

which I guess um kind applies to this

next question from PSA.

PSA says, "If everyone is anata or

without a self ultimately, does that

mean that everyone we meet is just a

manifestation of our karma?"

Not just a manifestation of our karma.

Although they would definitely be that, but at the same time, I mean, we're a manifestation of their karma. And then there's like the the group entity, the compound entity
in which I mean they're a part of this US entity that we are also a part of and that's really not what Terra Buddhism teaches. Terraata Buddhism really doesn't go there. This is just based on my own experiences in life that I even mention group or compound beings, you know, the us entities and like the closer you are to somebody, the more obvious it can be. Like if you're really intimate with another person, you've got

a close connection, then it becomes more obvious that there really is like this third US entity that that both of you are part of. But it's it's sort of a holistic or synergistic thing or it's greater than just the the two parts, you know, it's it's like its own being.
So yeah, I mean in a way I there's the yoga school of Mahayana Buddhism that took this to its extreme. I mean they were sort of like Libnitz's monadology where everything you are experiencing is I mean there's no physical matter at all and it's just all a projection of your own karma. I'm pretty sure that's what at least some yoga mahayana Buddhist philosophers were claiming.

So that would be what PSA is proposing here would seem pretty much along the lines of that. Although the earlier schools of Buddhism were more invested in a kind of qualified materialism and so they didn't really push it that far. They didn't go full idealist like later Mahayana Buddhists and like 19th century German philosophers did.

But everyone we meet is not just a manifestation of our karma because I mean there's another being there from a conventional point of view that is generating us and it's because there's enough similarity that we're able to seem to interact and then also if you go

with my hypothesis or theory of compound entities then the two beings are forming a third compound being which is sort of helping to generate itself

kind of

sort of. But this is really difficult stuff to really talk about or just grock once when you hear somebody else trying to explain something that English language is never really designed to explain.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Xenithoid. Xenithoid says in the sutas it says all compounded phenomena are impermanent. Are there any non-compounded phenomena? This seems to imply that truly

irreducible phenomena would be permanent. I wonder if this is the basis in Abidama for believing in the four ultimate realities. So I mean in the sutas it doesn't say all compounded phenomena are impermanent. It says sab sankara anicha. So I think what xenoid is rendering or translating as compounded phenomena would be sankara. And a sankara doesn't necessarily mean compounded. A sankara means something conditioned something that exists because of a cause something that has a beginning and an end. It doesn't necessarily have to be compounded. I mean that's that might be more of like

the Sarvost Vada Buddhist interpretation
where the Sarvosti Sarvostada Buddhists
declared yeah all like combinations are
impermanent but like the the initial
dharma or dharma the ultimately real
speck of reality that's eternal that's
what the Sarvost Buddhists taught
terraat terravada Buddhists don't go
that far they say even an ultimately
real speck of pure whatever it is earth
element let's say even that's only going
to exist for like a trillionth of a
second
so it's a sankara that's that's a
condition thing not necessarily a
compounded phenomenon it's just
something that exists because of

conditions

something that has a beginning and an

end

well of course anything with a beginning

and end would have to be impermanent

wouldn't

So anything that is the the result of a

cause

is impermanent. That's essentially what

sabankara ana means.

So are there any non-compounded

phenomena? You could argue that nibbana

is a non-compounded or it's it's not a

sankara.

So nibbana is unconditioned.

And I think there are some Buddhist

philosophers who would claim that space is unconditioned. Although Terra Buddhism doesn't really go that far, I'm pretty sure.

So yeah, the the main non-compounded or unconditioned phenomenon would be nibbana itself and that is not impermanent.

That's why you've got sabara anicha sab sankara duka and then sab dhama anata because it's anything is without self including nibbana when it's talking about duca and like suffering and impermanence that applies only to samsara that applies only to sankara's in samsara it only applies to what is conditioned

whatever is conditioned is conducive to suffering or unease and also is impermanent. But absolutely everything whether it's conditioned or not is without self. It is not self and that includes nibbana. So they have to use a different word. Sabara for duka sab sankara for anicha. But sab dhama for anata because anata goes even deeper than impermanence and suffering. That applies all the way down to ultimate reality. That applies to nibbana itself. and maybe empty space if somebody thinks that that is unconditioned.

But terra Buddhism really the only I in in Abidama and Abidama commentaries they

have this strange idea that the only ultimately real space is an ultimately real space that is bounded between two particles of matter between rupa kalapas which is kind of strange.

It doesn't seem to be really good logic to me for some reason.

But yeah, for in teraba Buddhism, um, Sankara doesn't necessarily mean a compounded phenomenon. It means anything conditioned, anything that is the result of a cause.

So, I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's next question, which is, is the karmic stream permanent? Well, from the point of view of Orthodox Terravvada, I would say no, it is not

because if you become enlightened, that ends the karmic stream, especially once the enlightened being dies.

That would be orthodox terraada. But I mean if you want to be more esoteric you could say well the karmic extreme is I mean you could say in a sense I mean if if Einstein was right with regard to time being the fourth dimension then in a way everything is permanent in a sense because the past still exists in a sense.

So there is that in which case I mean the unenlightened miserable us is never going to completely disappear. It's still going to be a conditioned or

conditional virtual statue in this block of marble.

But from the point of view of orthodox terabato Buddhism, the karmic stream ends when the enlightened being dies. And you stop adding to it when you become enlightened even before you die. then it's just sort of running down, you know, just kind of running its course without any new additions to it.

So presumably if a fully enlightened being was like immortal, you know, he didn't have to die at any time, then his karmic stream would might just exhaust itself over, you know, a few billion years just on its own. In which case, even then, it wouldn't be permanent.

Once the enlightened being stops adding to it and is just running down without anything more, you know, like reinforcing it, then you would think eventually it would just run out unless you just have an infinite amount of karma stored up.

So, I'm just going to move on. Next question also from Zenithoid.

He says, "You've said you rank the Old Testament relatively low among religious texts in terms of wisdom. How good are the texts that are explicitly called the wisdom texts of the Old Testament such as Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, etc.?"

Yeah. And there's what's the wisdom of

Jesus son of Sirak, which is in the uh

in the Apocrypha

or the Dudero canonicals.

Um,

Siraak, that was like,

now that wasn't Spock's dad on Star

Trek. That was like the the the famous

Vulcan founder of Vulcan Wisdom, I

think, was named Sarak, wasn't he?

I'm I'm I'm just wandering here.

Wandering lost in the wilderness.

Yeah. I mean, the wisdom texts of the

Old Testament, like Ecclesiastes, and

Ecclesiastes is one of my favorite books

of the Old Testament, but it's worldly

wisdom. I mean, it's like Jewish worldly

wisdom. It's still very thisworldly.

It's it's not the kind of wisdom that transcends samsara. I mean, the closest you get to any wisdom transcending samsara in the Old Testament is like figurative stuff, you know, like God like you're not supposed to say God's name or God never showing his face, you know, he shows his behind to what was it? Elijah or somebody, but he won't show his face because it's kind of symbolic of God doesn't have a real name or a real face or at least not one that a human being could possibly perceive. So that in a way is kind of getting transcendental and otherworldly in a kind of mythological poetic symbolic

kind of a way which is you know it's
it's a higher kind of wisdom than just
you know the stuff you see in
Ecclesiastes or Proverbs you know it's
like you know the I can't even think of
a good proverb you know she also lith in
weight as for a prey and increasth the
transgressors among men which I think is
a warning in Proverbs against like
gentile women
or maybe just immoral women in general.
So yeah, I mean even the wisdom texts of
the Old Testament are just worldly
wisdom. It's not really trying to
transcend some sorrow in anything
remotely resembling an enlightened way
unless there's just something that I'm

just not thinking of or overlooked.
And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Yoshi Buouie. And Yoshi Buouie says, "Is reifying the absolute sort of like asking the question, what's before the big bang?" Yeah, sort of.
Um, yeah, reifying the absolute, you know, it's like trying to draw the face of God. You know, it's just like I was saying in in the Old Testament, God doesn't show his face because kind of symbolically he doesn't have one. Just like Moby Dick doesn't shows it show his face in the novel Moby Dick because he's symbolic of of God. God does not have a

face. God does not have a color. God does not have a form like a a visible form. All that applied to Moby Dick, too.

So, Moby Dick actually had more like more advanced wisdom to it than the Old Testament of the Bible in my opinion, even though it's not scripture of any religion that I'm aware of. But let's get back to Yoshi Buouie. Is reifying the absolute sort of like asking the question, what's before the Big Bang? Yeah, it's sort of like asking the question, you know, what do you experience when you're not experiencing anything? Or, you know, what what do you perceive when there's no perception? You

know, it's it's like a [__] sort of. I
mean there's there's no correct answer
um with regard to something like what is
the absolute like I mean there can be no
correct answer
um you know what is the correct statue
in the uncarved block of marble
is it's kind of a it's kind of a
question like that reifying the absolute
is you're trying to give a form to
something that is formless
and we don't really know was before the
big bang. There could be other forms
before the big bang. You know, it's like
sometimes they'll say that you got like
a black hole that you know it's like

it's just matter is collapsing into this black hole which then you it's such a infinite density that in a way makes a hole in space so that it's you've got all this energy just spewing out the other end which could be like how the big bang started. At least some theoretical physicists theorize this. I think Stephen Hawking theorized this also that that black holes are like exit points from this cosmos and then it could like just go through a wormhole or something and come out the other end as some sort of big bang or or something similar to a big bang that's like creating a whole new universe, a a new astronomical universe,

I should say.

So it's it's not exactly the same because before the big bang there might still have been something something that theoretically you could be discernible but there's like this uh what do you call it singularity that you just can't get past. You know it's like this barrier. So I mean that would apply to reifying the absolute also to some degree. It's just that when you reify the absolute, there's no form on the other side of the singularity.

Whereas with the big bang, there might be. It's just that we have no access to that.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Ruie, and I do hope we're over halfway done.

So anyways, Ruie says, "How long did you go with looking at your I assume he means without. So I'll just start over and just add the out to without. How long did you go without looking at your reflection in a mirror during your mendicant days? And when you did, was it accompanied by a feeling of dissociation?" Well, the one rule that I always broke as a monk, um, even at my strictest was the rule that says a monk is not supposed to look into a mirror unless he's got some kind of soore on his face that he's investigating. You

know, you've got like a a soore on your lip or something, then you could without breaking any rules look into a mirror to like investigate it. But I read in Dwinia Muka which is a book on Vineia written by a Thai Raja over 100 years ago I think that he says if you're shaving it's okay and that was good enough for me. It's like okay because I've always been kind of a klutz shaving you know I always be nicking myself and so I always looked into a mirror when I was shaving. So I would shave maybe once every two weeks.

So yeah, I would look into a mirror when I was shaving. Or if you just happen to

be like you're staying at somebody's house, they've got like a guest house for you to stay in and you go to the bathroom, there's like this big mirror in the bathroom, you know, you see yourself. I might not be like standing there admiring myself, but at least you'd see yourself in a mirror.

So, usually it'd be like two weeks unless I was like squeezing uh I'm not even going to go there. Not even going to go into gory details, but I mean it's just like standard skin maintenance stuff maybe.

Um

and then you if you just happen to be somewhere where there's mirrors, then

you'll see yourself in a mirror then.
But there was no feeling of dissociation
really. I think there was more of a
feeling of dissociation after I dropped
out of the monkhood and started doing
videos where I'd be looking at myself
and it would just it just seemed weird.
It's just like is that really me? That
kind of thing. That would be more of a
feeling of dissociation than looking
into a mirror because I mean old habits
I mean some of them just don't die you
know they just go dormant or something
and so I mean I've been looking into a
mirror since I was a kid and just you
just go without looking into a mirror

for 5 years or 10 years or whatever. I mean it it doesn't just you don't just forget that. It's like riding a bicycle. It's just you're just used to it. It just happens. You know, maybe if you look really different than usual, there could be a feeling of dissociation. I remember one time just I just spent like more than no wait I just spent at least three months in the forest at Alando Caspa National Park and I rode this raft down Pollon Creek till I got to the Chinduin River and tried to ride the raft down the Chinduin River to get to the city of Moa, but it wasn't working. the raft just was not um it just didn't move fast enough to to really get where

I wanted to get going fast enough. So anyways, I finally get to um this meditation center where I was going to stay in Monua and there was mirrors in the bathroom. So I looked in the mirror and I just looked like just like this emaciated sunburnt scarecrow with just skin peeling off from the sunburn and everything. And it I mean that was a feeling of kind of dissociation because I really my residual self-image like in the matrix just was not like what I was seeing in the mirror.

So anyways, let's just go on to the next question. This is from practice meta and uh we're almost done. By golly, this

is the last questioner.

Golly G's sakes

practice meta says is it essential to be able to sit on your heels for extended periods and that's kind of a weird and interesting question most people would not ask such a question but in some monasteries in some monastic traditions you're supposed to squat on your heels while doing sa kama which would include the recitation of the py mocha.

And I mean, some monks can recite the py mocha so fast, it's like they're an auctioneer that even though I had memorized the py mocha as a monk, their mouth was faster than my ear. And so they would be done within like 25

minutes.

I would recite the pim mocha. It was my duty to recite the py mocha at a few monasteries I lived at. And my mouth just does not move as fast as these auctioneer monks. And so even If I was going full speed, the best I could hope for would be like 35, 40 minutes. And so, you've got to remain in a squatting position

for

half an hour or more sometimes. And it is painful. In fact, I have read that one of the self- tortures that the James would do in the Buddhist time in in ancient India is just to remain in a

squatting posture because you don't
fully realize just how painful squatting
gets after like half an hour. I mean,
it's like your your knees and ankles are
just like screaming in agony sometimes.
So
yeah, I mean it's
at some monasteries it is essent
especially in Burma. I think in Thailand
a lot of them wimp out and just sit
during uh formal recitations or sa kama
in you know meetings of the sa that some
monasteries the monks will just sit.
Although it does say in the text that a
monk is supposed to squat, you know, sit
on his heels. And it might have been a
little more difficult for me than for

some other people. My father couldn't even squat on his own heels. His legs just wouldn't bend that far. Maybe I inherited some of that from him that you know like sitting in the full lotus was pretty painful for me for a long time. Also eventually though, you do get used to it. But still it after like half hour or so it starts to hurt.

So it's I could really relate to to reading that some of like the ancient Jane aesthetics would do their their self- torture by just remaining in a squatting position for hours and probably their knees and ankles and the soles of their feet would just be

screaming is a lot of people just don't realize I mean it's it's sort of a a reflection on duka that you just remain motionless in just about any position and sooner or later you're going to start feeling un discomfort.

You know just remain in a standing position. Some like Tangoniato of Burma specialized in standing meditation where you meditate in a standing position. You just stand there motionless meditating and the soles of your feet just start to burn. It hurts. And most people don't realize just how painful not moving can be because it's just this habit. You know, you're lying in bed and you start feeling uncomfortable. You just roll

over. You know, you're sitting in a chair and you start to feel uncomfortable just without even thinking. You just kind of shift in into a slightly different posture where it becomes comfortable again. You know, you're standing in one place. Maybe if you're like a soldier on watch or something, you might have to remain motionless. But I mean, most people just don't stay standing still long enough that their feet just start to to burn with pain. And squatting is another one. Most people just wouldn't it wouldn't occur to them that all you have to do is like if you're not used to it, you just

squat for 15 20 minutes and already you are in serious pain.

But I mean, if that's just too much of a problem for you, you could uh maybe try to find a monastery where everybody sits during the the formal acts of the SA or you can just practice a lot because I used I used to do that like when I was reciting the pimoka, you have to keep reciting it or you forget it. Then I would just stay squatting while I was reciting it. And it helps you to hurry up and get it over with. But also it kind of gives you practice at squatting so that you know you just kind of get used to it. At least it it it like prolongs the window of of of comfort or

at least non-aggony.

But I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is also from Practice Meta, our final questioner of the Q&A episode. And he says, "Did you find this posture challenging initially?

And if so, how long did it take you to become comfortable with it?" Well, I've kind of already touched on

this question in my my answer to the previous one. But yeah, I mean after the first especially at first when you're not used to it, you know, after the first 15 minutes or so, it starts to hurt, but then if you just keep doing it, then you know, it it just prolongs

the the window of non-aggony as I was

saying.

So yeah, I mean it doesn't take all that

long depending on how much you practice.

you know, a few months and you can

double the original length of time that

you can squat without agony.

Um, I think for some people there's

always going to be a certain amount of

agony after a while,

but still, I mean,

it's just you're an aesthetic. I mean,

if you're a monk, then I mean, you just

have to put up with this [__]

It's like I mean, that's what

aestheticism is, is just being okay with

discomfort.

also to some degree just being sort of aloof from comfort, not giving a damn about comfort.

So yeah, I did find it challenging initially although I survived for 30 years as a monk. So it wasn't it wasn't like prohibitively challenging and just over the period of months I guess I just got used to it. I mean there's there's worse things than the pain of squatting. I like if you're in the in the tropics just the the heat like I'd be doing the potty mocha or I'd just be attending the potty mocha and usually I'd be reciting it at Tomulu Chalisa which is in the the blazing hot

wastelands of central Burma. And so you're squatting, you know, you're kind of sitting on your heels with your elbows kind of resting on your knees. You're going like this the whole time. You know, everyone is squatting like this with your your shoulder uncovered and there' just be like sweat just dripping off both both elbows as I'm squatting like this till there'd be like these puddles of sweat down below cuz it was just then blazing hot most of the time there. And that was more of a challenge than than occasional squatting because the sweating is happening a lot and most of the time especially in the hot season and the rainy season when it

doesn't rain because it's just this this blazing hot desert wasteland.

Well, the only time it's comfortable is in the winter time.

Well, let's just move on to Practice Meta's third and last question and the last question of this Q&A. He says, and I quote, "What are your thoughts on pursuing ordination at a local Thai or Burmese monastery here in America? While in Thailand, I learned that ordaining as a foreigner is more complicated than simply arriving with sincere intention." Watt Panacha appeared to be an exception. But unfortunately, the heat and humidity there triggered my eczema.

Or is it eczema?

a skin condition.

And I can relate to that. I mean, I've

I've got sort of like a seabberic skin

type. I've got oily skin and I would

have to bathe, you know, at least every

two days or I'd just start breaking out

in like dermatitis,

which in a way prevented me from really

just taking up the wandering life, which

in Burma was kind of a non-starter

anyway. I tried it a little bit, but

just wandering from place to place where

you may not be able to bathe for a

while, it it just I mean, I'd be a mess.

But let's see. Let's just get back to

the question. What are my thoughts on

pursuing ordination at a local Thai or Burmese monastery here in America? Um, I would not consider that to be optimal unless maybe you can just find like this really good monastery that I don't know about.

But the thing is like in Burma I I assume Thailand is similar but in Burma they do have like almost all of the the bigname meditation centers for example um places where western monks are most likely to ordain you know traditions like Palk Mahasi Mo these these kind of traditions um upandid

uh Chan all of these places have a branch monastery up in the hills where

it's relatively

um temperate. You know, it gets cold in the winter time. That's that's the main problem is just the coldness in the winter time more than the heat in the summer.

And so that is where the western monks go or like Migadawan monastery which was kind of tonulu traditions equivalent to that up in in the town of Pinulu also known as Mayo just in the the Shan plateau the foothills or the edge of the Shan plateau where in the winter time it gets down close to freezing and in the the summertime it's really not all that hot. I mean it's kind of like the summertime in America.

So, I mean, there might even be places
that have air conditioning nowadays
for like spoiled and pampered, soft,
plump westerners.
But, uh, I mean, there's great
advantages
to being a monk for at least a few years
in Buddhist Asia. You get to learn how I
mean, you can live the way monks lived
in the Buddhist time. I mean, if you're
into that, you can wander around. You
can sleep under trees. You can go for
real alms round in a real village.
You don't have to wear like the kung fu
pajamas and the the socks and the the
beanie and everything that technically

is against vineia anyway.

And you can just get insight into what it was like to be a monk in the Buddhist time, go for real alms round and just, you know, live in a cave. this kind of stuff that is much less likely to be possible in a western country like America.

Um,

and also like western monasteries tend to be very spoiled and rich and you know you're just I don't know it's there's not much austerity going on. Um, I mean, you have to like really make an effort to be austere in in like if you're ordained in the west, it seems to me compared to it's just automatic 24/7

austerity if you're living at some rough forest monastery in Asia.
But I would assume that, you know, like places like Chiang Mai in Thailand up in the hills, you know, the edge of the Shan Plateau on the other side from, you know, the places I stayed at that, you know, you're up at a high enough altitude that even though it's still tropical, it's doesn't get that hot.
So, I might try that. I mean seriously, I would strongly recommend anyone who wants to ordain, wants to renounce the world, spend at least a few years in Buddhist Asia
because you learn a lot of I mean so

much of the practice of being a monk is just living the life which I mean in the west a monk in the west it's it's like a tropical plant that is living in the temperate zone. So it has to be in like this special protected environment with people taking care of it. It cannot live naturally like in the wild so to speak. That really struck me as a monk when I came to the west that really you're like a potted plant. Instead of being some wild filidendrin living in a jungle just prospering in the in the environment, you're like this potted filidendrin in a greenhouse with people having to come in and water you and all this kind of stuff. and it's just two very different

worlds.

So yeah, definitely I would recommend if at all possible try to find some place up in the hills in Asia maybe where if at all possible anyone who's going to be ordained as a monastic should spend at least a few years in Buddhist Asia just because you are in an environment that you're just surrounded by Buddhism. You can live the way the early Buddhist monks lived like in the sutin pata and it's just it's like a blessing. First time I could go for a real alms round when I got to Thailand before I even got to Burma. Just going for alms in in Bangkok. It was it just

seemed like such a blessing to really be able to go for a real alms round.
So I I mean if it's just your only option, you know, you consider all the possibilities and your only viable option is to be ordained in America, then I mean try to find at least a place that's has western monks. Don't just go to like some Thai or Burmese temple because there's going to be almost no monastic discipline there. It's just going to be like a cultural center. Thai shinhali Burmese Cambodian temples in the west are more cultural centers than monasteries.
It's just the lay people come to speak their own language and eat their own

ethnic food and chat and you know do their their ethnic ceremonies and it's it's there's not really much deep dama going on. you know, you got missionaries there who are more interested in preaching than in practicing.

So, yeah, if at all possible, I would try to find some place in Buddhist Asia where the climate is not so hot and sultry if possible. I mean, there's there's a plus side and a minus side to everything, you know, a light side and a dark side. So, I mean, at first, I didn't want to go to Asia. When I first became a monk, I was ordained in America

because I didn't want to be distracted by visa hassles, having to learn other languages, this kind of thing other than poly.

But it just turned out that that Asia was far superior of an environment. And coming back to America was was kind of the beginning of the end for for my monasticism.

I mean just like western women compared with like Burmese women. It's it's a whole different animal. The Burmese women are just like modest and demure and you know they just consider you to be a holy man and you know that's the way they they prefer it. You know they might I mean there's some that might

flirt with you a little bit or something just in the chance that you might drop out and want to marry an Asian girl. But I mean in in the West, women see monks as just another kind of man. You know, they're all fair game. That kind of stuff. And yeah, that's just if you're going to be a monk, Buddhist Asia is superior to the West.

That's just my experience.

And we are done because there's no more questions after that. So, like I should always say at the beginning and practically never do, if you have any questions you think I can answer, especially about early Buddhism,

Terraata Buddhism,

Buddhism in general, just dharma in general, some western philosophy even, meditation, this kind of stuff. Me personally, I can answer questions about me personally pretty easy.

Then feel free, no more than three questions per episode, per person, please.

And like and subscribe if you have not done so already.

And be happy.

Okay, then see we are recording.

All right, this is like the third time

that I've started recording this. The

last one I got like two minutes into it

and then realized after everything else

was figured out, I didn't have a

beverage.

Can you imagine me trying to do a Q&A

without a beverage? But I got it now.

So,

my woman and her mama are not here right

now. So, I'm going to take advantage of

the relative quiet and solitude

to record this Q&A.

And it is kind of unfortunate that my

sweetheart isn't here because this may

be the last long beard episode that I do. I mean, it would be nice if it could be braided with the mule bead and everything, you know, that I could like like toss around ostentatiously, but I'm probably going to have this cut off soon because I'm starting to look for another job. Driving a forklift for a trucking company just just too hectic, too frustrating, too many hours, too much work, just stress and aggravation. And so I'm going to look for another job.

So the beard has to come off so I can look relatively normal. And then after I find another job, maybe I'll grow it back again. Because for some reason, I

do not fully fathom my woman actually

likes for me to have a long braided

beard.

But with that is kind of a an

unnecessary intro.

I will point out that 178, as far as I

can tell, is not prime because it seems

to be 2 * 89.

Is that right? 2 * 89. 89's prime, I'm

pretty sure.

So, I suppose we got like the middle

path number of questions. Not too many,

not too few,

you know, not so much that it's like

torture, but not so few that it's

self-indulgence,

that kind of thing.

So, I suppose I should just wade right into this and start answering questions. Let's see here. First question is from Romeo

and Romeo says, "You were an aesthetic monk largely removed from the civilized world and mainstream American society for 30 years. That is a long time. I imagine there were a few cultural or historical developments that occurred during that time that either pleasantly surprised, disappointed, or shocked you when you eventually caught up with things. Were there any historic events that transpired in those 30 years that shocked or surprised you once you heard

about them after the fact?

For example, the fall of the Soviet Union, 911,

etc. Well, the fall of the Soviet Union happened before I even went to Burma. I was I was a monk at the monastery in California, and of course, I heard nothing about it. And then I'm talking to this American guy and he just happens to mention in passing in this sentence, you know, ever since the second Russian Revolution and I'm like,"What do you mean the Second Russian Revolution?" At first, I'm just thinking maybe it was just some kind of student protest or something. And he says, "Yeah, the

Soviet Union doesn't exist anymore. It's Russia again now. They've got the old Russian flag and everything." So that was kind of a shocker, I suppose. I think it was more amazing to me that I hadn't heard anything about it until weeks afterwards while still living in America than than it actually happened. I mean, that actually happened was good because of course a lot of Americans just naively thought, well, the Cold War is over. America and Russia can be friends now. Of course, you've got people in the shadows that did not want the Cold War to end.

Oh well.

Also with regard to 911, I remember when

that happened. I was living in a cave in Burma and these two Burmese two Burmese guys came and one of them wanted to tell me about something that happened in America and the other one says, "Oh, don't tell him. It'll just make him feel bad or something." But then I said, "Yeah, go ahead and tell me." And then he says that a rich Arab crashed a plane into the World Trade Center. And that's about that's about as much information as I got at first. And it just gradually over a period of weeks afterwards, I started gradually getting more information from various sources until I finally got my mother, who was still

alive back then, to send me newspaper clippings. And it's kind of an interesting phenomenon to me that she sent me newspaper clippings and like in equal amounts from two events. One was 911, you know, the the planes and all that. And the other one was that the high school in my hometown was partially burnt down. And it's sort of like, you know, small things up close appear big and big things far away appear small. So I mean to her psychology I guess she just kind of considered them to be of equal import. You know one is happening right there in town which is kind of big news. Half the building well it was like two

buildings. Um and so one of the buildings burnt down.

Um, but I mean I know I've read so much history that it's it would take really something to shock or surprise me in history. Um, I mean a lot of the time you don't really notice how um momentous something is until afterwards, you know, because there's all these after effects and side effects, ramifications and all that. So that you think something is important or unimportant now but then later on you see that you were mistaken because you could not foresee you know that this was just starting a chain reaction for example.

So for example like the protests in Iran right now or Iran I mean that could just be totally momentous or it could just be squaltched by the government and flash in the pan. We don't know yet.

So

I mean that was really it. I mean when I was in Burma I was more attuned to like Burmese national news which is mostly propaganda but still you pick up little things you know like some the the military dictator gets overthrown you know on charges of corruption or something as though the people that replaced him weren't equally corrupt.

So let's see here. I guess I mean that's about it really. There's the the

historic event that transpired over those 20 years really because after 20 years in Burma, I started coming back to America and kind of commuting back and forth every few years, sometimes less than a year. You know, I'd stay in America for six months and then go back to Burma again. So, you know, I was sort of more in touch with what was going on in America after like 2011.

But still, it's

I don't know. It's it's uh

nothing really shocked or surprised me other than just the surprise of hearing weeks after the fact that the Soviet Union had collapsed. That was probably

like the big surprise for me. 911 happened, you know, I I found out about it so gradually that, you know, there was no big shocker happening.

um Obama becoming president. I mean at the time you know it was just we got a new president but you know a you know in retrospect you see that I mean we really it was like a no-win scenario choosing between Obama and Mitt Romney. I mean but Obama was kind of a turning point in American history. I think he was sort of turning kind of away from America and towards globalism and just sort of managed decline of of the United States and so forth.

But I guess I guess I answered the

question well enough. And so I'm going to move on to Romeo's second question, which is kind of similar. Were there any developments in American culture that surprised you or things that you expected to develop a certain way but didn't? For example, the death of MTV as a showcase for cool music videos, the growth and dominance of hiphop over rock music, etc.

Well, I mean, I really wasn't much into MTV. I despised television when I was a young man. Didn't own one. I made a special point of not owning a television since I was a teenager. Although, sometimes, like in college, I'd have a

roommate who had a TV. So, there you are. you got TV and he'd be watching plastic surgery updates while right at meal time, this kind of thing.

Um, the growth and dominance of hip-hop. I mean, it started off with rap music and rap music was before I became a mock, you know, late 80s there were already people rapping. I think some of the the first famous rap music was from white people like Wordy Rapping Hood from TomTom Club or Rapture from Blondie. You know, they're just I mean it already existed. They didn't start it or anything, but they just kind of brought it into the mainstream being white liberal females, I guess.

But yeah, rap music that's just
my my brother described rap music fairly
well when he said that it's music for
people who can't play instruments, can't
write music, and can't sing.
So hip-hop maybe is an improvement over
that,
but I don't know. I mean before that it
was disco.
So I guess like the dominance of rap
music and then hiphop
um you know it's just sort of indicative
of cultural decline.
But that's just that's just my take on
it. Um, but the things that things about
America that surprised me the most when

I came back to America in 2011 trying to live as a freerange beu in America, you know, not just staying at a monastery, but just flinging myself out into the world like I did. Um, one of the things, one of the things that surprised or was kind of kind of surprised me is just how digital everything already was. You know, everything was digital. Um, you know, everyone has a cell phone, for example.

Um, the internet of course was a big deal. I mean, the internet was one of the most momentous changes in Western culture, world culture during the time that I was a mom. So that would be that would definitely be up there. And

another thing is just sort of people just got softer and kind of more polite um more gentle, more feminized essentially. So American culture did become more feminized during the 20 years that I was absent. Um I I remember seeing I mean anyone riding a bicycle in Bellingham, Washington was wearing a helmet. And finally, I just asked him, "Is it like a law now that you have to wear a helmet when you ride a bicycle?" Well, no, it's just that for some reason everyone in town that rode a bicycle had a helmet on. And that kind of surprised me a little bit. Just kind of the softening and weakening of sort of

American culture to some degree. You know, it was noticeable. It was a noticeable change, but for the most part, things really didn't change all that much between like 1990 and 2012, you know, like that general time span. Um, you know, hairstyles pretty much stayed the same. You know, they got a little bit more elaborate with like green hair and and that kind of stuff. Um, you know, clothing styles, just like even music wasn't all that different. you know, it really the the main changes were everything was digital and things were a little softer and of course you had internet.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to

Romeo's third question. Any cultural touchstones that you regret missing out on? And then for an example, he has the OJ Simpson trial. Yeah, I was just kicking myself the whole time I was in Burba, man. I just missed out on that OJ Simpson trial. Um, no, not really. Um, it's probably a good thing that I did miss the OJ Simpson trial. That happened like in my early years in Burma, I think. Yeah, I remember some Americans. I I met this American couple. They were telling me about OJ Simpson and Kurt Cobain dying that I'd never even heard of. He's from my hometown of Aberdine, Washington.

But, you know, he was like an international phenomenon and then died before I even found out that he existed. probably went to the same high school. He was just this little freshman nobody when I was a senior probably.

H So

yeah, I don't I'm I mean I'm kind of grateful that I missed out on the OJ Simpson trial um and the Michael Jackson trial stuff. Yeah, I mean I I caught a little bit of that. I would visit my parents in Aberdine like once every four or five years. So my father watched CNN regularly. Pretty much just had the TV on CNN all the time. That was back when it still was kind of balanced news to

some degree. I mean, it hadn't the the mainstream media hadn't just completely gone leftist propaganda yet at that time. So I'd catch a little bit of this stuff, but I mean it's it's wasn't really important to me. It's mainly like interesting from an anthropological point of view,
an incipient historical point of view maybe, you know, sort of like maybe we're seeing history with this or that or the other thing.
And I think we are kind of in historical times right now.
But yeah, there's no cultural touchston that I regret missing out on other than

maybe like the Wild West days of the early internet. That could have been interesting.

But I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Stellar Supreme, etc., etc., etc., etc. And he says, he says, "Did tiraana vija mean sud as in pseudointellectual or would there be a better poly word for translating that modern term?" Well, an intellectual that might be somebody like pandita. You know that a panda is like a learned intelligent person and sud I mean tirana vija literally means animal knowledge. So it's not referring to like fake intellectuality.

It's referring to just worldly stuff that is really doesn't have anything significant to do with dharma and that a monk should not be wasting his time with this kind of stuff. It could just be nuclear physics, you know, it could be like intricacies of foreign policy, this kind of stuff. But still from a Buddhist point of view, it's ti chana vijjo or animal knowledge because it's just worldly samsaric stuff that does not really help you to become enlightened. So pseudo probably the word would come closer than tira. Tiraana just means animal. Ma you know like in ma di wrong view so it can mean wrong or false

so much false pseudo means like false or
like imitation so you know like a mecha
panda maybe
um I don't know there if there really
would be like an exact corresponding
term in poly to a pseudo intellectual
you know you could just have like some
vain conceited
um scholar you know They had those in
the Buddhist time. And you know,
I'm not exactly sure what the word would
be, but pseudo would probably be the
closest you'd come to pseudo, at least
in like regular like normal poly
language, would be ma, which just means
like false or or fake,
wrong, like wrong speech.

So, or mus that would be wrong speech, wouldn't it?

Yeah, but I do think a ma would be more like pseudo in poly

and uh yeah, I don't know what a pseudointellectual would be like a micha pandita something like that. Panditika, you know, is just sort of like adding like this dimminitive at the end of panda to sort of denigrate, you know, imply that he's like a fake scholar, you know, like smonica is sometimes used. people sort of looking down on the shaven headed aesthetics. You know, they're brahinss or something. They look down on the shaven head aesthetics. So,

they throw in this this dimminitive

suffix

which kind of implies that the person is

just sort of like a Özat

philosopher kind of a thing.

So, something like that. But

yeah, I don't think there there really

would be an exact corresponding term in

poly for a pseudo intellectual.

And I'm going to move on to the next

question which is from Jimmy Lad after

looking to make sure. Yeah, we are we

are recording again.

This is just amazing that I actually

started this video without having a

beverage.

That's just crazy.

So Jimmy Lad says, "Evil done in perfect mindfulness." So that's that's the title. That's like the the heading of his question. Evil done in perfect mindfulness. And he says, "When you say that Buddhist ethics are to do with the intention, surely this has limits." And I do resent him calling me surely.

Well, let's get back to the question here. When you say that Buddhist ethics are to do with the intention, surely this has limits. Like if someone theoretically committed a horrific crime like incest with their mother or murder, but maintained perfect mental equinimity while doing it, would they be free of

all karmic consequences?

I mean, you got to consider human psychology. that dharma really is attuned to human psychology. Morals in Buddhism are more a matter of psychology than some celestial decree.

And so I mean you got to think how could somebody commit a horrific crime with perfect equinimity.

You know, it's like you can I was thinking of like Odapus who married he murdered his own father and married his own mother without realizing that it was his father or his mother. But still, I mean, murdering somebody,

you know, or deleting them, I guess you got to be careful about your words, your

language on YouTube.

But I mean, even that, I mean, there's going to be some motivation for it. And you're not going to have like this totally calm, enlightened motivation for committing a horrific crime. A horrific crime generally has horrific motivations,

horrific mental states going along with it. I mean, you can to some degree. Like for example, you're some

Zen master who is also like a samurai swordmaster in feudal Japan who you know I mean they try to be as mindful as they can and have no feelings of of hatred or ill. They're just doing their duty just

this honor and duty is motivating them still. I mean they're not going to have the mind of a fully enlightened being in all likelihood. And so I mean they're not going to be committing or they're not going to be getting as much bad karma, you know, let's the the samurai Zen master
who who's also a swordmaster, you know, he's fighting in a war or fighting duels or fighting just for the sake of duty and honor in some some capacity, then he's probably not going to be creating as bad of kama as just some psycho. know who just like really gets off on like deleting people or or whatever, you know, he's not screaming Allah Akbar

thinking he's going to go to heaven. He doesn't even have that as a motivation. It's just duty and honor, you know, it's just what you do because he is in this predicament. It's sort of like the Bavad Gita's idea of, you know, you just do what is your ashramama. you do do your duty, your your dharma, and you know, just offer up the results to God. But I mean, even somebody like that, it's hardly likely that they're going to be going around committing horrific crimes. And even if you got somebody like Arjuna in the Bavad Gita or the Zen master who is also a swordmaster in medieval Japan that I mean they're still going to be

making some kama so long as they're not fully enlightened. And if they are fully enlightened then I mean the text indicate that they're not going to be committing horrific crimes. They just are not going to have the motivation for that. They're not going to have any will to do that. So if you've got a the will to commit a horrific crime, that's already bad, comma.

So let's see here. What is exactly the question here?

Someone theoretically committed a horrific crime but maintained perfect mental equinimity while doing it, would they be free of all karmic consequences?

Theoretically, if it was possible to

commit a horrific crime with an enlightened completely unattached mind and no volition at all, because a fully enlightened being because he's not creating kama, he really doesn't have what could be called volition or chana in the ordinary sense of the term. You know, it's like going with St. John of the Cross's interpretation of such a person. They're just they don't they're not acting on their own self-will anymore. They're just acting through the will of God.

Of course, Buddhists have a different way of interpreting it, which can get kind of uh

abstuse. If you read Abidama text, you know, they have to invent an entirely new kind of mental state or or consciousness or something called uh what is it? Kirya Kirya or just functional consciousness.

how that's how an arahant can still seem to act volitionally while generating no actual china or volition because volition is comma.

So I mean Jimmy lad here would have to figure out how a person with no like

no volition would want to commit a a horrific crime. you know, how are you possibly going to delete your own mother, for example, without having

really horrible mental states? Because I mean, we're just human.
You just have like built in certain I don't know what you call it, like taboss or just you have built in certain like don't do this kind of stuff. And like if you're committing a horrific crime, as a general rule, you are transgressing your own like instinctive programming to some degree.
So I mean technically in a purely theoretical sense, like if a fully enlightened being with no ill will, nothing like that committed a horrific crime, he would create no comma.
But why would he why would he do it? I

mean, if he has no ill will, I mean, why
would he be committing horrific crimes?
If he has no greed or hate or delusion,
I mean, what would cause him to do it?
But I mean, you could have like a very
wise person or even a fully enlightened
person who may do something that seems
blameworthy,
but let's say they're not fully
enlightened. They're just wise like like
the Zen master who's also a swordmaster.
They're not going to create as bad of
Kama as just the person who's just
psycho and going berserk.
But still,
yeah. I mean, I think I've answered this
question like two or three times already

just in the past few to several minutes.
I'm just kind of like answering in
circles at this point.
But yeah, I mean, if you have no
horrific motivations, you're extremely
unlikely to commit a horrific crime. You
know, the actions are just the the
outward manifestations of your own
mental states that are in there.
So, I mean, theoretically, maybe
somehow,
but it just goes against human nature.
And really dharma and Buddhist ethics
really are attuned to human nature to a
a profound degree
more so than other spiritual systems

that I won't bother to mention.

And so I'm just going to move on to

Jimmy Lad's next question. And the this

the heading for this one, the title if

you will is meditation and dissociation

or he's he has disassociation

which may be kind of a British thing. So

the question is when I meditate

sometimes I unintentionally cultivate

disassociation and alienation. It feels

like I am descending into the

indistinction

of prime matter rather than ascending

and expanding my mind. I seem to just

withdraw into myself and shrink into my

individuality and small life rather than

anything profound. Any advice?

Well, I'm not exactly sure what kind of meditation Jimmy Lad is practicing. But if you're practicing just standard Buddhist sibana like mindfulness meditation, what some people call weasana,
then I mean whatever arises, you just note it and let it go. And this is what St. John of the cross was was telling his his disciples or you know the the people that he was you know the father confessor and like the spiritual guide of you know it's like whatever it is that arises just let it go.
So I mean when you're meditating all kinds of stuff can happen. Your mind can

rebel your mind can just go into perverse directions. It can just do all kinds of stuff. But so long as you're practicing like mindfulness meditation and you're just noting it, letting it go. Noting it and letting it go. You know, you the the urge to commit horrific crimes arises. Note it, let it go. You know, the just feeling like, let's see, alienated. What does that feel like? Note it, let it go. Just observe it. Let it go.

And if you get really good, then the observation just becomes passive. It's more seeing than looking.

That's that's sort of like an advanced stage of meditation. When you're not

seeing and when you're not looking and listening or believing anymore, you're just like seeing and hearing and and knowing.

But I'm not exactly sure what kind of meditation Jimmy Lad is practicing. Um descending. It feels like he is descending into the indistinction of prime matter. I'm not exactly sure what that would feel like. Um rather than ascending and expanding my mind. Well, I mean, you shouldn't you shouldn't really have this preconceived goal. Goal oriented dharma is is danger. Beware of goal oriented dharma. My old website used to say that, but the old website is

now defunct.

So I mean you just like if you're doing mindfulness meditation just whatever arises you note it and let it go and then it can just be the whole gamut or the whole spectrum of possible stuff can arise it doesn't matter you just note it let it go it let it go it let it go but I mean if you're practicing some method other than just mindfulness and that's leading you in a direction that you feel like the wrong direction then Maybe you should try a different meditation method.

Let's see. Feels like he is descending into the indistinction of prime matter.

Yeah, I'm not exactly sure what that

would feel like. Um, but you shouldn't necessarily be trying to ascend and expand your mind. I mean, if you meditate correctly, you may not still may not ascend, but at least your mind will expand. Like, your consciousness will expand. It will become clearer, quieter, that kind of thing.

But I mean, you shouldn't be trying to make it happen. You just follow like a good meditation technique and if you meditate correctly, then it'll happen of its own accord.

Um, so I guess I answered that question. I'm going to move on to the next question which is from throat warbler

mangrove

and he says to be or not to be. And

really that is the question at least if

you're uh

Shakespeare

Hamlet

to be or not to be. Well, I mean from

the point of view of Buddhist philosophy

like if you read the kalaha we wiwara

suta which is in the atakawaga of the

sutnipa very old suta it indicates that

to be and not to be are just a kind of

mind generated dichotomy. You know it's

mindmade

existence and non-existence. It's it's

this duality. So long as you're thinking

of existence or non-existence, you're

still stuck in this like mind generated samsaric duality. Whereas ultimate reality transcends the duality of existence and non-existence which to a samsaric mind makes no sense whatsoever. But samsaric mind is a deluded mind. It kind of reminds me of Hegel how he started his dialectic in his logic. How pure being and pure non-being really just disappear into each other. There's no there's no like discernable distinction between the two. So in just um after he gets into that beginning of his dialect that he just takes it as a given that pure being and pure non-being are synonymous.

So

yeah, I mean if it either way if it's

existence or non-existence

still I mean non-existence

I mean that's just it's kind of tricky

non-existence because I mean when you're

talking about it it's an it.

non-existence in quotes which is still

exists you know it's still something

but you get rid of even the the not to

be then I mean you get rid of just the

just the the concept the idea of

non-existence

then I mean you're off the scale at that

point same as I mean it's existence and

non-existence is is like this fake

duality

and it may not make sense if to an intellectual mind Either something has to be a or not a. That's one of the Aristotilian laws of thought.

Everything has to be a or not a. But I mean

it's it's fairly easy to point out even samsaric

like things that can break that rule.

And when you get into ultimate reality, then there is no existence or non-existence.

which is hard to explain.

And so I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Thoughtf Fog. And Thoughtfog says, "Have you met Ajan

Sona?"

I see. I ask because a few of the same people who ask questions here on this podcast also ask on his streams every Sunday. And no, I have not met Ajan Sona. Before I came back to America in 2011, I did write a letter to his monastery, Burkin. I think it's Burkin Forest Monastery in British Columbia um in Canada. And I was told that only people ordained in the Ajan Cha tradition can stay there. And that was that was pretty much it. I've seen a few of his videos and my friend Brian has a high opinion of Ajan Sona, but uh I haven't met him in person and I'm not even sure that I even he even read

anything that I wrote to him or to his monastery because it may have just been some monastery attendant or some other monk who who uh got the letter and answered it. I don't recall now if I ever knew.

So yeah, I think Ajan Sona is one of the better one of the better monks in the west that I know of, but I've never met him. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. And the next question is, my next question is about Nagarjuna. Would you please just tell me all about them? And so he seems to have this idea that there was more than one Nagarina, which apparently there was. And I'm

asked about Nagara. I don't have the fee. Just a second.

Not totally prepared today because I already started this without a beverage. Let's see. See the thing with Nagara though is I really don't know a whole heck of a lot about him. You know, I've read his Mulam Majama caraka in English translation.

Um, you know, I've read there's a book Cena Raman called Nagarjuna's philosophy. I think you have it on the bookcase back there. excellent book is very profound but it's sort of a misleading title because it's um it's like a a translation English translation of a commentary of I think it's the

mulama jamama shastra or something that traditionally is attributed to nagarjana but nowadays scholars think that n the famous nagarjana didn't write it you know it's sort of like apocrypha But it may be that Nagarjuna did have a disciple who was also named Nagarjuna who

may have written this this text. But I mean it is worth reading. If you like reading like really heavy deep philosophy like especially Indian Mahayana Buddhist philosophy

then yeah Nagarjuna's philosophy by K Winkad Raman is well worth reading and I encountered that

in at Pandida Rama in Rangun Burma when
I went to a intensive meditation retreat
there like around 1997
and it was on the bookshelf
and I wanted to read it but I was there
to meditate and so I just got my hands
on the book probably a few years later
and read it in a cave in Burma
somewhere.
Um but Nagarjuna himself
uh
I mean the amount of information about
him is limited and a lot of it is kind
of legend. For example, some scholars
argue that there's no real proof that he
was a Mahayana Buddhist, especially
because the main work attributed to him,

like his magnum opus, so to speak, the Mulam Majamak Karaka doesn't mention Mahayana Buddhism at all. And so these scholars assume that he was a Hinayana Buddhist so to speak, Shravaakayana if you want to be more polite, who nevertheless was like a a founding father
of Mahayana Buddhism. Although others will say that some of his letters are very Mahayanistic, very devotionalistic that they consider the letters to be legitimate. And so in that case he he probably was an early Mahayana Buddhist but he wrote the mulamaaka caraka to a just to be uh sort of get the message to

all Buddhists. So he just deliberately
left out this new fangled Mahayana stuff
in order to try to persuade
you know some of the earlier schools of
Buddhism at least certain members of the
earlier schools of Buddhism that what he
had to say was worth consideration. And
I do think that he understood um
dependent co-arising or padicha samupada
better than for example the orthodox
position in terabana Buddhism
understands it.
um
going with the the first group of
philosophers who who think that he
wasn't a Mahayana Buddhist yet, you
know, he was sort of proto Mahayana

that,

you know, he was kind of putting his

message out there and it wasn't the

older schools of Buddhism who had

already kind of settled on their

doctrine, but it was the new Mahayana

Buddhists who were kind of looking for

good arguments to support their cause.

and his philosophy

pretty well accounts for like pragnya

paramita you know those strange sutas

the paradoxical ones that were coming

out early on in the history of of

Mahayana Buddhism so they kind of

drafted him as one of the patriarchs I

mean he is one of the patriarchs of

Mahayana Buddhism and or at least of Zen Buddhism he's considered an early Indian patriarch Mahakasapa was the first patriarch arc after the Buddha himself and I don't know what number that that Nagarjuna would be but he he's on the list of the the Indian patriarchs when you like when you you read old Zen texts like Chan Chinese Zen texts talking about the Indian patriarchs and the Chinese patriarchs and well not Garjuna is considered
even if he wasn't really a Mahayana Buddhist to be a Mahayana patriarchist I Mahakasaba almost certainly could not be called a a Mahayana Buddhist but he's considered to be the first the first

patriarch.

Um Nagarjuna apparently according to the legends he was like a brahman who lived in like south India or south central India. Um but he was a teacher at Nolanda University. So he I guess he he would travel north to teach and then come back down south to just do his meditation and and that sort of thing.

Um one of the letters that he wrote is to a a south Indian king is sort of giving him guidance on how to be a good king I guess.

But really I mean aside from that I really don't know much biographical detail about venerable Nagarja. But I do

think that he was one of the greatest
philosophers
of the history of philosophy. You know,
in a way he was able to in a like an
elegant intellectual manner
explain some of Buddhist philosophy that
the earlier schools then like formal
logic wasn't advanced enough back then
or or for whatever reason they just
really did not do as good of a job as
Nagarjuna did of describing like
voidness and like no self this kind of
thing or dependent core rising especally
especially how everything is
conditioned, how we're living in a kind
of virtual reality. Now, Garjuna was
able to explain that well kind of, but

at the same time, I mean, everything
just kind of devolves into voidness. I
mean majamaka it's like the mula
majamaka caraka it's the the structure
of it is largely based the structure of
much of it is based on asking question
and then having the answer be yes no yes
yes and no or neither yes nor no and he
just rules out all possibilities for one
question after another after another. I
think the first question is, is an
effect the same as the cause?
And he just uses these logical
arguments,
at least they they seemed logical to
ancient Indians to rule out, yes, it's

the same as the cause. No, it's not the same as the cause. No, no, no, it's, you see, it's the same and different from the cause, and it's neither the same nor different from the cause. He just rules out all of that. Moves on to the next question. rules out all possible answers for that, moves on to the next question, rules out all possible answers for that. So that in a way it's like this intellectually elegant way of just shooting down all intellectuality. And in a way it's it's sort of like the snake swallowing its own tail where at the end um you know it even just sort of destroys itself and then it just leaves like silence behind because you can't

describe the highest truth in words. The name that can be named is not the eternal name.

So I guess that'd be a fairly good place to stop answering that question. And since the next question is not about Nagarja, I take off the majam feeds. And so thoughtf's next question here is oh I would say that I mean you could probably learn more about Nagarjuna like his biography or something. Just look up look up look him up on the Wikipedia. Look him up on the internet and I'm sure you'll find more information about him than I just uh shared with you because my knowledge of

the man is rather limited. I mean I'm
not really so much interested in the bio
biographies as just what did the person
have to say.
So anyways I'm moving on to thoughtfog's
next question
which is
out of the old Buddhist bodhicattvas
like whom to you has a particularly
touching andor profound story. Well,
bodhicattvas is Mahayana Buddhism and my
reading about Mahayana bodhicattvas
is very limited. I really consider it to
be like mythology. You know, it's
interesting maybe from an
anthropological point of view,
understanding the history of Buddhism,

that kind of thing. But for the most part, I consider likewin, I mean Quan Yin was based on the Indian bodhicat avalokes, I'm pretty sure. And then he kind of transitioned into female at some point. And I mean this Hercules got u conflated with what was it? Vajraani. A bodhic sattva called Vajraani. that in the like the Gondaran sculptures of mainly what is now Afghanistan or like northern Pakistan that there are actual like
statues and like boss reliefs carved into the into walls or you know the side of mountains or whatever of Hercules guarding the Buddha. And I mean Hercules

is there because he's been conflated with I think it's is Vajraani or Padma Pani. It's one of these one of these early Indian bodhicattvas.

Um but I mean from the terravada point of view there's one main bodhic sata and that's just the Buddha before his enlightenment or you could stretch that back into his previous lives which some of which are described in the jotaka stories which again are just mythology talking animals and so forth.

So my favorite bodhic sata would have to be Gormma Buddha before his enlightenment. And that's the only bodhicatta that really has any kind of historical backing

unless they've taken some other historical characters and converted them into bodhicattvas.

And I really wouldn't know who that would be Hercules. But I mean Heracles I mean probably there was a person upon which the legends of Heracles were based or at least the earliest legends of Heracles. You know he was some Dorian warlord who participated in you know taking over large parts of Greece during the the dark ages.

you know, part of the Dorian invasion or at least he was a Dorian who was already passed away but venerated by the Dorian who were um like expanding in their

their control of ancient Greece that kind of thing.

So maybe Heracles or Podmapani or Vajraani or whichever kind of whichever pane he was. But I mean aside from that, I mean it's just, you know, if you read about the bodhic sattva or the bodhic sata of mangala Buddha in the the uh the Buddha Wonga. I mean it's it's like a Montipython. It's so bizarre. I've talked about him before.

Yeah. I mean see let me just read the question one last time here. out of the old Buddhist bodhic sattvas like whom to you has a particularly touching andor profound story. Well, God Buddha would

have to be the only one that really I
mean I pay any real heed to or take
seriously and even that is largely
legend you know with mythology creeping
in
but I'm really not a Mahayana Buddhist I
mean some some aspects of Mahayana
Buddhism I think in some respects the
Mahayana Buddhists describe things
better than like the terra of Buddhist
like like emptiness for example you know
Nagarjana and his accounting for
dependent core rising for example
so I mean there is a lot of wisdom in
Mahayana text but when you start getting
into the bodhic sattva stuff and the

mythological space Buddhas and all that

and I just lose interest I just can't

take it very seriously

I mean does it help just learning

stories about bodhic sattvas that in all

likelihood didn't really exist At

least not in an empirical objective

sense. I mean, does it help you to

become enlightened or not?

Mjushri, god of wisdom. I mean, he's I

guess he's supposed to be a bodhicattva

also.

So, I mean, he's kind of interesting.

He's got a sword,

but you know, it's it's just mythology

as far as far as I can tell.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Kundrew.

And Kundrew says, "How do you interpret magical or supernatural elements in the sutas? For example, do you accept occurrences like the Buddha taking seven steps after his birth as something that really happened? Do you just disregard things like this entirely, or is there some sort of middle ground?" Well, I guess most of the miracle stories you find in the texts

um and the talking animals and so forth, most of that I would consider to be mythology. You know, it just you have a preodern mindset that really accepts the possibility of this stuff and just is

credulous with regard to a lot of things. They hear a they hear a story about the Buddha performing a miracle and they just accept it as truth and it finds it finds its way into the scriptures.

But some of the stuff like you know like the Buddha knowing somebody else's mind that some of that stuff maybe a few of the psychic feats that are described in the texts. I'm not just saying it's impossible,

but I would I would guess that most of like the psychic powers exercised by wise monks of the past, including the Buddha himself,

that most of it just didn't really find

its way into the text because it wasn't something really dramatic. you know just knowing somebody else's mind or or knowing you know just seeing their past lives commenting on that you know that that happens sometimes

Maharaji nim curly baba up there right there I mean he would just look into you and just see I mean in a way he'd know you better than you know yourself you know he'd see your past lives and all this supposedly according to you know people that knew

at least you'd be commenting on their past lives.

So, I mean, stuff like that can happen.

I mean, I don't think that there were very many duels going on with fireb breathing cobra dragons. I don't think there were very many animals like say quailes or monkeys that were speaking fluent poly with human intelligence. Um it could be that some davas did come to visit you know some nonhuman beings would come to visit the Buddha or other monks. I mean the the biography or autobiography of Ajan man has lots and lots of that. So I mean some of this stuff I mean it can have an element of truth to it but I do not think that the poly texts really can be relied upon to be just like accurate objective representations of empirical facts

because there's so many examples of things that I just can't believe the twin miracle where the Buddha levitated up into the air spraying fire out of one side of himself out of his body and water out of the other at the same time and then switching up so that the the side that was shooting fire is now shooting water and vice versa. All this to impress some brahinss
that kind of thing. On the other hand, let's say the story of the Buddha at like in his final days where he's he's about ready to die and he and Ananda are walking along and um he says to Ananda to get some water out of a stream and a

bunch of like a caravan of wagons have just gone through that stream. The water's all muddy. Ananda says, "The water is all muddy. It's, you know, it's not drinkable." The Buddha just says, "Go ahead and get some." And then it's like like miraculously the water is clear when Ananda scoops it up. That something like that I mean it's possible. I'm not going to just say nope none of it none of it could possibly happen. You know I'm not a materialist. I do think that miracles do happen or at least violations of what scientists call the laws of physics that that can happen and that it's more likely to happen around very advanced

like sages and saints

levitation for example.

So yeah, I do have an open mind toward

the possibility of these things while at

the same time thinking in all prob in

all probability most of the accounts

that you see in texts, poly texts,

Mahayana texts, whatever are likely to

be legends

and mythology

that really are not empirical facts.

It's just what people believed at the

time.

And so I'm just going to move on to the

next question which is from still not

sure and this is kind of a simple

question. He says,"Would you please read Industrial Society and its future by Theodore Kazinski?"

And I mean, I could, but I don't read very much. And it certainly would not be near the top of the list of books that I would read, especially considering that I've had people send me books that have been written by themselves or by like their brother, this kind of thing. That would have to be higher up on the list than reading Ted Kazinsk's manifesto.

I mean, I might read it someday. I'm going to have to kind of change my habits because I really have just pretty much stopped reading books. But I am I am sort of obligated to read some of the

books that have people have sent to me. And in one of one case, I promised that that either my woman or I would read it and I don't think she's going to read it. So the the it's the duty falls upon me to read that one and maybe while I'm not working 40 hours a week or 55 hours a week I should say and looking for a more suitable way of earning a living that uh maybe I will sit down and and read a book which would be good for me. I think I used to read all the time and then after coming back to America and uh especially after I stopped being a monk is just I just acquired new habits I guess.

So I'm just going to move on to next question. This is from Warm Shadow and Warm Shadow says, "Can ordained monks maintain a fitness routine based around calisthenics and plyometrics, isometrics, and cardio without incurring unskillful karma?" Then he continues, "What I mean to say is, if I ordain as a monk, will I be reprimanded by the senior monk for doing pull-ups?"

Well, I mean, what is the purpose of this? I mean, for a monk, you shouldn't be trying to beautify yourself. And really, you just need to be healthy enough to practice dharma.

So, I mean, when I was ordained

temporarily as a novice, uh, a year or two before I was fully ordained as a monk, you know, I just sort of like a dress rehearsal, I went to the monastery and was ordained as a temporary somara or novice for five weeks. And at the time I was doing regular like situps and push-ups and so forth every every night. And one time I was doing my exercises and one of the senior monks came in. He just said don't bother with that. Don't do that. So I mean it would depend on what the attitude is of the senior monks at your monastery especially your preceptor. You know if you're ordained as a monk and your preceptor says you

don't need to bother with this stuff. You don't need to be sculpted. You don't need to be buff. You know, you should be skinny. You should be healthy enough that you're able to practice dhamma for the sake of your enlightenment. But how does, you know, being able to do 200 push-ups help you to become enlightened? So, it may be that you would have some hard-nosed senior monk say, you know, don't bother with that. And then um if you continue to do it then you might be reprimanded because you were told once and you just continue doing it. Um on the other hand you might go to some other monastery where the abbott is doing exercises or you know it's just he

doesn't care if you do exercises. Um but
I mean from like the traditional
like orthodox terravada point of view,
yeah I mean that would be excessive to
have it to maintain a fitness routine
based around calisthenics, plyometrics,
isometrics and cardio
that you know what what is the purpose
of that? Why why would a monk do that? I
mean it's not just to be healthy. You
can be healthy just, you know, chop
wood, carry water, and do a lot of
walking. I mean, that's really how I I
stayed relatively healthy as a monk.
Chop wood, carry water, you know,
carrying a five gallon bucket up a hill,

you know, that's it takes some exercise. Even swimming, I mean, for the sake of your health, I mean, that's kind of borderline.

But doing a lot of walking is fine. you know, volunteering to help around the monastery, doing fetching and toting and such. That's fine. But I mean, how would you how would you justify as a monk who supposedly is dedicating his life to enlightenment in this very life? I mean, what would be the point of maintaining a fitness routine based around calisthenics, plyometrics, isometrics, and cardio?

I think that would be kind of worldly um excessive in a worldly sense

unless you have some health problem
where your health is just going to
degenerate unless you're really really
working out a lot.
But again, it's going to be up to the
senior monks at your monastery whether
or not they're going to tell you to stop
doing that. I mean, and probably they're
not going to reprimand you the first
time, but if you keep doing it after
they tell you you don't need to do that
anymore, then then you might get
reprimanded or scolded or something.
So, I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Arpad,
and Arpad says, "When you lived in

isolated places, how would you treat

wounds when or if you got injured?"

Well, when you live in tropical Asia,

like like remote areas of Burma, you

have to have a a fairly well stocked

first aid kit.

So,

um yeah, I had a pretty good first aid

kit. I mean, you have first you have to

have malaria medicine. You have to have

some kind of diarrhea medicine,

obviously.

Dewormer.

Um it's good to have like oh, what's it

called? the stuff that you use for

amiic dysentery and gardiasis

metroniditool I think it's called um I

usually have like two different kinds of antibiotics tetracycine which is good for like skin infections or blood poisoning or also I mean it can be used as a prophylaxis against malaria but I didn't use it for that and then like a broader spectrum that's better for like respiratory tract infections that kind of thing like amoxicylin and or superfluxin or or something like that. So I mean you'd have like antibiotic cream or ointment,
you know. So I mean fortunately I didn't injure myself badly enough. I didn't break any bones. That kind of thing. I mean if you break a tooth and you got to

go go into town and find a dentist or if you get really sick from malaria or something then you may have to go into town and and find a doctor.

But I I was never really injured badly enough

um that I couldn't just deal with it myself. You know, I stubbed toes from walking around walking around rocky areas with no shoes on or, you know, I mean, some some things it happens you just don't really need. Like you get stung by a scorpion, there's not a whole hell of a lot you can do. Um, fortunately I wasn't bitten by any venomous snakes, so you can't really carry around antivenenom.

Um,

so yeah, I mean I had a first aid kit and then if something happened that I wasn't able to deal with, then some village doctor or some doctor from town would come and and help me out because, you know, I would if if you're like the the exotic foreigner living in tropical Asia, there's a good chance that at least one doctor is going to volunteer his services in case you ever need it. There was one doctor who volunteered his services. I there's no way I'd let him come around me with a scalpel. Man, he was he was kind of a quack doctor in my opinion. It was like if I got sick, he'd

give me like seven or eight different kinds of medicine, you know, just in case one of them didn't work, the other one would. That kind of thing. One time, uh, I stepped on some kind of I can't remember what it was. stepped on some kind of big acacia spine or something and he just sent me a tetanus vaccine and a hypodermic syringe and you look on the the label of the tetanus vaccine and it says keep refrigerated in like big block letters and he sent it to me like in the hot season. You know the stuff is 100 degrees Fahrenheit when he sends it to me. So yeah, I I was just the thing is I mean if you're a monk and you protect Dharma, Dharma protects you and

you're not going to get more than you can handle.

That's something you can have faith in I suppose at least accept it as a working hypothesis.

So

I did find that some of the herbal stuff works better than some of the medicines like the the anti- diarrhea stuff. there was like the bark of a certain tree that villagers would grind and prepare for me and give me that and it it worked better than like the pills that like the pharmaceutical stuff that'd be given to you by a doctor.

Um, but I'm just going to move on to

this question. This is from Liberating Insights

and Liberating Insights says, "Will consciousness cease or remain in Nibbana?" And this is kind of a trick question.

Because I mean consciousness as wyana which is sort of like the the background of your mental states technically that ceases when you become especially when you attain paribana you know you're an enlightened being and then you you leave your body so to speak you cease metabolizing your body ceases to metabolize then

all the five condas

stop. But I mean, I've talked about this

many times. It's it's kind of a pet theme of mine that there are at least two sutas, one in the digaya, one in the Majima that imply that infinite formless consciousness is the same as nibbana or nirvana.

And so in that case, you would say, you know, when you attain nibbana, you don't become unconscious. You don't consciousness doesn't cease. It becomes infinite and formless and unmanifest like the godika suta of the samurai. One of my favorite sutas. It's a weird one where God essentially selfdeletes and becomes enlightened at the moment of

his death. And so the Buddha just using like clairvoyant powers. Maybe this really happened. Maybe this would be a case of the Buddha really using a psychic power that is recorded in the text and really happened. Maybe. But anyways, the Buddha can knows that venerable God has has died. And so he says, "Well, venerable God has died. We got to go and and give him a cremation. We got to go, you know, deal with the body." So the Buddha and his sa of monks that were accompanying him go to the black rock at Eigili cave. There's Goda lying dead on his his little bed and the Buddha points out to the monks, you see that mist that's moving, you know, in

all these different directions, you know, it's moving all over the place. There's like this little cloud and the monks say, "Yes, venerable sir, we can see that." And he says that's Mara the evil one who is searching for the consciousness of venerable God. But he's not going to find it because the consciousness of God has become unmanifest
which means it's just sort of like the boundaries have just
dissolved disappeared and so you wind up with something that's infinite and formless unmanifest. But the thing is anything that's infinite, formless, and

unmanifest, you can't really say that it if it exists or doesn't exist is getting back to Hegel and his thesis and antithesis, pure being, pure non-being, the same. So when something becomes formless and unmanifest, I mean from a samsaric point of view, from an empirical point of view, I mean it's it's off the scale. You can't really say that it exists or doesn't exist. I mean you could say either one or both or neither and none of it would be ultimately really valid.

So some people would say nibbana is infinite formless consciousness. Others might say that you become more and more conscious until you hit this stage where

it just goes off the scale and you can't say anything about it.

But nibbana isn't just non-existence like a lot of Western Buddhists would prefer to believe.

So I think I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from PSA.

And PSA says, "What's your opinion of the USA going to Venezuela and removing Maduro? Venezuelans are celebrating while liberals are outraged. They don't care about the opinion of the Venezuelan people who are actually the ones most affected by this situation. Liberals just want to carry out their virtue signaling tactics to gain power. Yeah.

The last update on the whole Maduro drama is that uh the the Venezuelan government is releasing its political prisoners or at least lots of them, which is causing further rejoicing in Venezuela, I think, because they probably had quite a few political prisoners locked up in prisons around around Caracus especially.

But the thing about the USA going to Venezuela and removing Maduro, this whole situation has so many tentacles that a guy just reading up on it, sitting at a computer and and it's hardly likely he's going to get anywhere near to a comprehensive understanding of what the hell is going on.

So I mean with regard to PSA talking
about liberals or outlet rage I mean
it's not really liberals I mean liberal
has just become synonymous with leftist
I think in the west or a leftist who
falls short of being just a full-blown
communist but I mean I consider myself
to be a classical liberal you know like
a John Stewart Mill type liberal. is
just that classical liberals used to be
Democrats. Now they're Republicans
because the Democratic Party has moved
so far to the left that a classical
liberal
was like a freethinker who believes in
individual rights and freedoms and so

forth. They're now considered to be maggotards.

And it is true that the leftists um I mean they just hysterically oppose anything Trump is in favor of which includes like law enforcement, enforcing the laws. I mean if there's any leftists out there watching this, the thing to do if you don't like a law saying for example people who are in this country without a valid passport or visa should be ejected from the country. If you don't like that law, you don't just try to get in the way of the police officer trying to enforce the law. What you do, you go to your politicians, your representatives in Congress, for

example, and have them change the law.
You don't just reject or deny like laws
that are that the government is legally
obligated to enforce.
Well, I mean the left, I mean they're on
the side of Somali scammers and they're
on the side of just criminals in
general. Like George Floyd was he's he's
like a saint now or at least he was.
Now I guess the uh like the lesbian poet
who was shot by an ICE officer that
she's going to be like the new St.
George Floyd
regardless of the facts of the case.
people to like leftists look at the very
same video footage if if they go on to X

or something. The network news isn't going to show it to you, but they they'll look at the unedited video footage and still they'll say, "Oh, this this Gestapo agent just, you know, murdered some innocent US citizen for no reason."

And then the other extreme is you've got like like the real hardnosed conservatives calling her a domestic terrorist out to kill people and so forth. But really there is kind of a middle path there.

But getting back to the actual question, what's your opinion of the USA going to Venezuela and removing Maduro? I mean, I don't know. I don't know enough about

it. I'm sure that Donald Trump and Marco Rubio
and the other people that were like
behind this, they know a hell of a lot
more about it than I do. And so
I would I just kind of have a certain
amount of faith that they pretty much
know what they're doing. I mean, I'm not
going to take the leftist point. It's
like the leftists have like the opposite
point of view. Anything Trump does is
bad and wrong. just anything. It's just
it's like become a meme now where you
know meme or Trump is you know for my
next trick I will get the Democrats to
support you know criminal child

molesters or whatever it is because
anything that he's against there for and
vice versa
but with regard to Maduro I mean by the
Biden administration put like a $25
million bounty on him. I mean, the the
leftists wanted Maduro deposed
before Trump took office, but now that
Trump took office and actually did it,
then they're saying, "No, no, he's he's
a dictator who's declaring war without
congressional approval and all this."
But, I mean, the act how good of or bad
of an idea it was to go in there and
capture Maduro, um, I really can't say
because I don't know enough about it. I
I assume that there's a whole bunch of

different factors including just Maduro taunting Trump saying come and get me just you know like like I don't know he's he's just taunting Trump so Trump's like all right all right bluff is called buddy boy or also just like preventing China from getting Venezuelan oil I mean that's to the advantage of America I assume just showing the world. You know, it's like we're not Biden's America anymore. We're not perpetrating the fiasco of the withdrawal from Afghanistan at this point. You know, we bypassed all the the Russian and Chinese anti-aircraft stuff partly through like bribing people on

the inside in Venezuela, I assume. But still, it's like we just we they performed a military act, a military operation that possibly nobody else could have done. And and Trump is just showing, you know, you guys pay heed to what we just did because we can do it to you.

So, I mean, that is probably in America's interests, at least if you're like an America first kind of person. You know, you're a patriotic America who thinks America should be strong and prosperous and not just, you know, voluntarily emilate itself and manage decline.

go back to a a vigorous patriarchy

then yeah that's I assume that what
Trump directed
or allowed by capturing Maduro that yeah
I assume that it's more good than bad
for from a of an American point of view
but I mean there's there's so many
tentacles to this thing that it's
impossible really to know for sure
exactly what the hell's going on.
And anyways, Maduro being captured is
now eclipsed by the the lesbian poetus
being shot by an ICE agent in
Minneapolis.
So that's that's last week's news.
So I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from Trezasiz.

And Trezasiz says since the teachings of the early Buddhist schools did not differ in terms of the sutas but only in terms of the abidama then did the early Buddhist schools differ significantly in vignia. And the the scholars say that the early Buddhist schools differed in Vineia less than they differed in the sutas. You know it was more of a philosophical difference than a monastic discipline difference. You know you read the the padim mochoka rules of various ancient sects including terravada and sarvostada and mahasangika and dharmod and all this that the core rules of the pimoka are essentially the same very few differences

maybe a slight difference in interpretation. The seia rules that were added later have much more differences. But as a general rule, the the rules of monastic discipline are very similar, more similar than the sutas. So the rules of monastic discipline are like at least 90% the same throughout the early Indian schools before you get the advent of Mahayana. The sutas may be 85 80 or 85% the same. You know, they're they're relatively similar. And of course the abidamas or abidharmas are just all over the place like terravada and sarvastivvada were closely related. They were

essentially the same school up until the third council like during the the reign of the emperor Ashoka which was when the one of the main purposes of the third council I'm pretty sure is essentially to purge the sarvostadin heretics out of the terraodin song. You know, it was like are we going to go in a terravada direction or a Sarvostivvada direction in our interpretation of Dharmama? And I guess just in there was like a power struggle or whatever and a certain Moguli Pudatisa came out on top and they drove out the Sarvostadins who went off into northwestern India and converted the the Cushons.

So yeah, the Abidamas I mean oh I was I

was going to say that even though
Terravada and Sarvostada were like very
closely related you know they split
apart at the third council or
thereabouts still their abidamas are
completely different not a single book
of their abidamas are the same so you go
from like 90% the same in vineia maybe
85% the same in the sutas with some of
that just being different ways of
editing the same material and then you
get down to like 5% the same in the
abidamas
not one book the same.
So yeah, it was there's more of a
difference in philosophy, which would

include the sutas, than there was in
just monastic practice, which was more
conservative. that I mean monks might
not follow all the rules correctly but
they're less likely to cook up new rules
except for there was one I think it was
the moola sarvastivadas
who they added a lot of like devotional
material and so forth to their
vineyapitica and also they had rules
where monks were allowed to wear boots
and monks had a certain it was like a a
staff that they would take with them
when they'd walk into the village like
when they go for alms and it had like
these metal rings that would jingle when
they'd hit the hit the staff on the

ground and that was because they prospered in like the foothills of the Himalayas where it got cold in the cold season and the villages would have their doors closed to keep in the warmth and so you had to have a monk make a noise like jingling this the metal rings on this staff to let people know that there were monks out there and of course they're wearing boots to protect them protect their feet from the ice and so forth.

So I mean there were some changes in Vineia but for the most part Vineia was the most conservative aspect of like Dharma Terravada Buddha or just early

Buddhism and the sutas

for the most part they were fairly

similar especially the core texts which

existed before the division into

schools. So it was you know like

abidharmama abidharma and commentarial

interpretation of the texts that really

started going radically in different

directions.

And I'm just going to move on to Trzas

is his next question

which is if someone today rejects the

Abidama of Terravada, can they still

call themselves a terra Buddhist? And

yeah, I think most western monks

um reject the Abidama or just like

ignore it, you know, just they don't

want to they don't want to go there and they call themselves terra Buddhist. I mean, if you're ordained in a Terravada Buddhist tradition, that pretty much makes you officially a terra Buddhist. So, I rejected the Abidama of Terravada. Um, and I still considered myself to be a Terravada Buddhist, at least like officially. And with regard to like my my Buddhism, my philosophy, that sort of thing, I'm more terra than anything else.

So I mean people nowadays they ask me if I'm a terra Buddhist I'll say I'm more terra Buddhist than anything else but yeah I think if someone today

rejects the abidama of terravada

um

let's see they can still call themselves

a terra Buddhist because that's

essentially what most western monks are

doing most western terra Buddhist

although

it's it's kind of a matter of opinion I

is where are you going to draw the line?

Like some hard-nosed Burmese Abidama

scholar might say, "No, you're just a

fake terra Buddhist heretic if you

reject Abidama." Because the Burmese

consider Abidama to be the most

important, most profound teachings of

the Buddha.

But then again, you have some somebody

that goes to Spirit Rock, you know, they call themselves SA. They don't keep five precepts. you know they're not ordained and they reject or ignore most of the typetica then I mean are they still a terabata Buddhist I mean I remember there was some indignation when I was going through some I mean it was like rocky roads with the local Dharmama group you know the the only terravada Buddhist group in this town that I was trying to live in as a monk in America and I'm just kind of pointing out. I mean it's like it's everything is optional to a western bu to some of these western Buddhists you know it's

like you don't have to keep you don't
have to keep sila I mean you can just do
as you please and so long as you you
know you practice some elementary level
meditation
and call yourself that's good enough
really it's like they don't some of
these people they don't even believe in
nibbana some teachers they don't believe
in kama they don't believe in nibbana
You know, it's just like Buddhism is
just used as a kind of self-help
psychological technique.
And if you imply that they're not really
terra Buddhist, they'll get indignant.
You know, they'll be offended.
So, where do you draw the line? It's

it's who you asking? You ask some really strict Burmese Abidama scholar and he'll say, "No, you you don't accept Abidama. That's the third pitica of the tapetica. How are you going to be a terra Buddhist if you reject what makes terraada terraata which is largely abidama?
So I mean if if I lived in ancient India and had a choice as to which school of early Buddhism I would follow, I might not choose terraata if I was able to like look into the different schools. There might be, you know, like the the Selronicas, they didn't have an Aidama, which would be an improvement over having one in my opinion.

So, yeah, I guess the correct answer to that would be, yeah, of course, they can still call themselves a Terraata Buddhist, but some hard-nosed fundamentalist might consider you to be a fake.

Me terravada.

So, but yeah, you can definitely call yourself one.

So I'm just going to move on to Tzascus is is third question. What natural disasters occur in Burma? Earthquakes.

Yeah, there are earthquakes in Burma. In fact, uh back in the 70s or 80s, um there was a big earthquake in Pagan, which used to be the capital of Burma a thousand years ago, and the Ananda

temple caved in, which is one of the most beautiful temples in Burma. So they had to repair it. Um,

and I mean I lived in caves a lot of the time. So there was a certain amount of concern about earthquakes when I when you're living in a cave that can literally cave in. That's why they're called caves because they can cave in. Aside from that, um, there are tropical storms like back in the 90s, I think there was the tropical storm Nogus that just killed lots of people in Burma. It was it was really bad. And because the the weather patterns are changing a little bit, the the the path that the

tropical storms usually take through Burma are moving more and more towards densely populated areas. So I mean if if n tropical storm Nagis went right through the middle of Rangon, for example, and it was not that far away in Rangon, there was lots of trees tipped over. Um mostly not palm trees. It's weird. the palm trees stayed up, the other trees got broken over, but that would have been really ugly. So, there's storms. I mean, you could say droughts would be a natural disaster, in which case you got droughts about every maybe one out of every three years in central Burma.

See what else?

Natural disasters. Yeah, I guess that would be about it. That's all I can think of really. Oh, I did live um about two miles from a crater lake in the the main one the main the one place I lived in Burma longer than any other place one wildlife refuge monastery was about two two miles away from an extinct volcano which was a crater lake and there were huge boulders all over that just strewn over the area that blew out of that volcano and the volcano was relatively recent although to a to a like a ge geologist, anything that happens within the past 10,000 years is recent.

But I mean, theoretically, you could

have another volcanic eruption that would completely mess things up. But yeah, I think the main natural disasters in Burma are earthquakes and like tropical storms like cyclones, that kind of thing. And I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Sedarta Lohachita. And Sedarta Lohachita says, "Did you meet any of these mad Nazi skin head gangs in the 80s?"
And yeah, I do recall occasionally seeing skin heads, you know, that shaved heads and the the big boots on. Um, also punks. And there was there was a certain overlap between skin heads and punks. So, I mean, you'd see them. I mean, I I grew up in Aberine, Washington. uh

didn't I mean you might see one walking down the street or you know two or three of them walking down the street. They did live there but obviously it was very fringe kind of thing. And when I went to college yeah there wasn't much of that. I didn't I didn't see much of that when I was like in Bellingham Washington. Bellingham has always leaned far to the left and even the leftists, they don't they don't accept Nazis, even though Nazis technically were national socialists.

So, yeah, I encountered them like from a distance, but that was about as far as it went. And sometimes it's hard to tell

the difference between like some
neo-Nazi skin head and just some punk
rocker,
especially if he doesn't have his his
hair spiked and like lots of earrings
and stuff.
So, I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Ruie and
Ruie said, "When you came across the
Buddha Dhama, did it feel like a first
encounter or a reenccounter?"
And that's I mean it's kind of both I
guess but I mean it wasn't so much
Buddha dharma it was just dharma in
general like I first got turned on to
eastern philosophy through books of
Ramdas you know I was a troubled

teenager went to see a youth counselor
at my father's insistence and it turned
out the youth counselor was into Ram DS
and he gave me two books by Ram DS to
read and also um the novel Illusions by
Richard Bach.
which also was very influential in my
thinking as a like a 17-year-old. The
two books by Ron Doss were uh grist for
the mill and the only dance there is
and so I was this sort of exposed to a
sort of Indian dharma in general and
when I'm reading Ram Das as a
17-year-old
it was just like
in a way it was it's hard to explain it

was just like yeah it was like

intuitively

it just It was like striking a chord

deep down. It was like something that I

hadn't been exposed to in this life,

although presumably I'd been exposed to

it before I was born or something. So

that would be like a reenccounter. But

when you're a 17-year-old, I mean, it's

just

mainly it was just like some at some

deep intuitive level it was really

striking a chord even though I didn't

fully understand it. You know, it's like

when you're reading about like Indian

philosophy for the first time, you never

been exposed to that sort of stuff

before, then

you you can't really remember it very

well. You can't integrate it into your

like your your memory banks, so to

speak, because I mean, you have to make

connections. And there's it was so alien

to what I was used to that there was

really not much that you could make

connections with. And so I mean I I just

didn't fully like absorb it or digest

it, but still there's just like this

wideeyed

Yeah, this is great. You know, it's like

it was it just seemed like it was an

answer to a question that I've been

looking for. You know, as a 17-year-old,

it's like my two options were just follow the rules, you know, just he who dies with the most toys wins. You know, you just grow up, get married, you go to school, get get a job, get married, have kids, and then die of old age. Or you could just party and get in lots of trouble. Have lots of fun and lots of the opposite of fun. You know, it's just this chaotic kind of existence. Those were like my two main options. And I had experimented with both. And then all of a sudden here's this other option of dharma, you know, striving to know ultimate reality, which according to the text is possible.

So I mean that seemed a hell of a lot

more meaningful and important than, you know, buying a house in the suburbs or just partying all the time. You just rebelling, you know, conforming and rebelling. That was like the two options. And then here's this other option which in a way it's it's just kind of going your own way. It's not really rebelling against anything. It's just sort of not interested. I'm going this way which is leading towards ultimate reality.

So it was a first encounter and deeper down I suppose intuitively it was a reenccounter.

So it was both I guess

and I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Cleiffy.

Let's see how long we've been going at this. Hour and a half already.

Clefy says,

and Clefy is in Lithuania, by the way.

Clefy says, "Reality is not ultimately real. It's created by an unenlightened mind, but we are still experiencing it through birth, sickness, old age, and death." What is this weird place we ended up on that exists and doesn't exist simultaneously?

Well, I mean, Kify just sort of contradicts himself in the very first part of his sentence here. He says, "Reality is not ultimately real." So, if

reality is not ultimately real, it's not really reality, is it?

So I mean what Kify is calling reality is just like empirical reality you know samsaric empirical reality the stuff that scientists study I guess but it would also include like emotions and things that maybe science can't really get very close to yet personal experience.

So reality is not ultimately real. But I mean, that's that's just self-contradicting right there. It's just kind of meaningless statement. So, what appears to be reality is not ultimately real. What most people

consider to be reality is not ultimately real. Okay? It's created by an unenlightened mind, but we are still experiencing it through birth, sickness, old age, and death. What is this weird place we ended up with on that exists and doesn't exist simultaneously? Well, it virtually exists. See,
see, the best analogy I can come up with is the block of marble, the uncarved block, what the Dao Ching calls the nameless uncarved block. And I mean, I just pound away at this. I talk about it all the time,
that you've got this uncarved block, which is like infinite formless consciousness, infinite possibilities.

And then some of these possibilities

include unenlightened

subsets or just limited

just sort of limited aspects of this

infinity

that are because they're limited they

just think you know they're able to

become like recursive self-referential

and they start thinking that they are

separate from everything else and

they're dreaming up this fake reality I

mean it's like a mirage

you can say well I mean you see the the

the lake with the palm trees in the

distance in the classical mirage

that you know it's not real but real a

scientist would say well there's
obviously something causing that mirage
you know it's like refra heat refraction
of of light light
visual spectrum of in in what
electromagnetic radiation this kind of
stuff you know it's there's something
there that makes it seem seem real.
Anyway,
so my explanation is that uncarved block
of marble contains within it every
single possible statue,
including some impossible statues.
And it's like every single molecule,
every single atom of that rock is
already right there in the right place
for each of those statues. It's really

in there. It's just that it takes like
imagination
or like a diluted mind to separate out
these statues and think that they're
real.
So, it's virtually real. It's
conditionally real. It's not ultimately
real because ultimate reality is just
formless,
infinite.
Anything that's formless is going to be
infinite. It doesn't have any limits, no
boundaries.
So what is this weird place we ended up
on that exists and doesn't exist
simultaneously? It's one of the one of

the imaginary statues in the uncarved block of marble that's so complicated that it has become self-aware but in a limited a limited capacity.

So it's not aware of the infinity. It's just aware of just this limited aspect of it.

And I can explain this a million times and I think most people still won't get it.

And I'm sorry about that, but it's just the way it is. So, I'm just going to move on to Cle's next question, which is a follow-up from the first one.

Is reality a paradox that can't be explained and needs to be accepted as it is? And again, he's he's using the word

reality to mean unreality.

So I mean that's that's the first

mistake of Khifi there is using reality

when he means unreality

or I mean at least he should qualify it

with like empirical reality or something

like personal experience that kind of

thing but like is some saric quasi

reality a paradox that can't be

explained and needs to be accepted as it

is? Well, I mean,

I guess maybe. I mean, true reality,

ultimate reality can't be explained

cuz once you start explaining it in

words, you're dealing with symbols and

perceptions and delusion.

So, true real ultimate reality is just off the scale and no kind of description will apply to it. You know, it's sort of like drawing a picture of God. It's not going to work.

But with regard to samsara is samsara a paradox that can't be explained in these I mean you can explain it I mean you can explain fake reality better than you can explain true reality because fake reality is on the scale. I mean the whole scale is fake reality.

So you can explain that is it's delusion. It's like starts with the conceit I am.

So you've got like this self-recursive consciousness that's just separates

itself from the rest of infinity and
thinks that this is this is the truth
and ignores you know the infinite amount
of other stuff that is also the truth.
So true reality may be called a paradox
that can't be explained but fake reality
it's not as much of a paradox and it
kind of can be explained.
Although one person's explanation may
not really strike any traction at all
because it just may not it just may not
work. I mean different explanations
different people may need different
kinds of explanations.
And I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from Dhamma River. And

Dhamma River says recently I had this conversation about the bodhicattva vow and they explained something to me that was quite interesting. I told them the bodhicattva vow contradicted the concept of anata. But they told me that the bodhicattva vow is supposed to awaken your sense of nonduality.

I'm paraphrasing what they said. Quote, I vow to liberate all beings and in the process I will understand that not a single being has become liberated. There is no I who liberates and no other who gets liberated. If a bodhicattva holds on to the notion of a self, that person is not a true bodhicattva.

Unquote.

So then uh Dhamma river continues, I thought that was an amazing explanation. I've never heard a satisfactory Mahayana explanation of the bodhicattva before. It agrees with terraada in my opinion. But I would like to ask your opinion of what they told me and if you agree or disagree and also if you think the bodhicattva hinders or helps sincere practitioners of the noble eight-fold path. Um so that's kind of a second question. Let's just separate that so I can deal with one at a time.

See

all right I separated it

but I still got to and Okay. All right.

So first question is if you would like
to ask my opinion of what they told me
and if you agree or disagree. Well in a
way it's it's sort of like cobbling
together two aspects of early Mahayana.
Mahayana didn't just start off as this
unified philosophy. It was like
different kind of movements that unified
mainly I would guess as a kind of like
coalition
kind of thing, you know, like a
political coalition or something where
you have like the the pure land
Buddhists and the prya parameita
Buddhists and you got this sort of
Mahayana like the bodhicattva ideal that
is I mean that might be kind of binding

everything together to some degree.

And so it's like

different ideas that aren't necessarily

like compatible

get cobbled together into this one

system. And so you've got the

bodhicattva who I mean the whole

bodhicattva is assuming I mean even the

idea of a bodhic sattva is assuming that

you have an individual being you know a

Buddha is an individual being an

unenlightened person an unenlightened

being is an individual being a

bodhicattva is an individual being so

you're starting off with this assumption

that there are individual beings but

then like early Buddhism which is also kind of juggling you you've got some soric conventional truth and you've got this higher truth and you're trying to just kind of mish mash them together you know like there is no self but then again the Buddha existed and his disciples existed and we exist in a samsaric sense so it's you're already dealing with troubles just because you're trying to deal with two different levels of reality at the same time um but the whole bodhicattva vow is I I mean it's based on a glorification of the Buddha. I mean you start off with God Buddha of the Shakya clan who is telling people how they can become

enlightened and then his later followers glorify him and set him put him on a pedestal and say that he is just like infinitely beyond an ordinary enlightened being. And then you got um because it glorifies being a Buddha over just being an ordinary enlightened arahant. Then you had some religious movements that are saying well it's more noble and better to try to be this sama Buddha than to just be some selfish little fully enlightened being that isn't you know like helping other beings you know like a pachek or a pacheka Buddha. They're just like a hermit. they don't even teach anybody.

So I think mahayana at least the bodhic sattva concept started with just sort of taking the early terravada or pre-mahayana idea of the bodhic sata which is just a being that is bound for enlightenment mainly godmma of the shakya clan and then turning that into like you should be striving for that instead of just becoming enlightened which was a misstep in my opinion Because if you're enlightened, you're enlightened. And the Buddha wasn't. I mean, the Buddha himself apparently was teaching people, you should become enlightened. Don't put off being enlightened forever for the sake of becoming a sama Buddha because probably,

I mean, they just weren't making this this radical distinction between the first enlightened Buddhist and every other enlightened Buddhist after him. you know, enlightened is enlightened in my opinion.

So,

let's see. So, in a way, they're just kind of taking this this baggage from a different strand of Buddhism and then trying to kind of make it more enlightened, make it trying to make it make more sense. instead of dismissing it, they they just try to reinterpret it. You know, sort of like Jesus on the cross crying out, "My God, my God, why

have you abandoned me?" You know, they have it's kind of embarrassing. You have to come up with some plausible explanation for it. And so I think that this person who answered was following a school or tradition of of Mahayana Buddhism that had adopted kind of a a sophisticated explanation for a bodhicattva concept that really is not what the Buddha taught. The Buddha would not have endorsed it in my opinion. And it's kind of based on this devotionalistic mythological glorification of the founder of the system.

Um but I mean it is true like in in like the diamond cutter sutra the

descriptions of the behavior of a bodhic sattva in the diamond cutter sutra are very close to the descriptions of the conduct of an arahant in the older poly texts. you know, so they're they're kind of striving toward the same goal of wisdom. It's just they're reinterpreting terms and just sort of adding different concepts that kind of mixes things up, maybe causes a bit of confusion to certain people
and causes a certain amount of delusion to certain people who just take it literally.
So I mean it is does kind of remind me of the the platform sutra of Hui Ning, a

Chinese Mahayana Sutra that has no original Indian version where Hui Ning says in the sutra that when you become enlightened you look around you see that everybody else is enlightened. So I mean really the best way to to like liberate all beings is to become liberated yourself and then you just fully deeply realize that all these beings don't really exist anyway. You see through the illusion.

So yeah I think the uh the diamond cutter sutra would agree with the idea that if a bodhicattva holds on to the notion of self that person is not a true bodhic sattva.

But I mean, why you would have to like

throw in all this this later Mahayana stuff when the earlier teachings of the historical Buddha really are adequate to account for the situation. I mean, it's it's just followers of tradition that have sort of jumped on on the Buddhist the Buddhist train um after it has gone a far distance from the original teachings and still that's the tradition they're exposed to and so they make the most of it.

And it's possible that a Mahayana Buddhist can become enlightened. Possible that a Hindu can become enlightened. Possible that a Christian become become enlightened. I mean in

some in some situations you become enlightened more in spite of the tradition as as because of it.

But still I mean some people just have talent and they're just born in a culture that maybe doesn't have, you know, some kind of of like enlightened Buddhism. And so they're just going to do the best with what they've got. And it may be they have enough talent, they're just ripe enough for enlightenment, like maybe someone like St. John of the Cross that they can become enlightened despite the fact that they are just kind of stuck in a in a tradition that doesn't have the same concepts. and they've got

to really kind of become enlightened
partly just in spite of the system
so to speak.
Well, I'm just going to move on to the
second half of this this question from
Dharma River. He says, "If you asks if I
think the bodhicattva hinders or helps
sincere practitioners of the noble
eight-fold path, I would say it's more
of a hindrance than a help just because
it's just superfluous. It's
unnecessary."
But I mean it takes all kinds. There are
some personality types maybe they're
more devotionalistic or idealistic or
something that may be benefited by the

bodhic sattva vow. But I mean the bodhic sattva vow is I mean how would you even remember if you took the vow in a previous life? There's a good chance if if there is rebirth and I'm willing to accept the possibility of that that I've taken a bodhic sappa vow in some previous birth. Maybe I was Japanese hundreds of years ago, was a Mahayana Buddhist and took a bodhicattva vow and I don't recall it now. According to the diamond cutter sutra, I am a bodhic sattva because according to the diamond cutter sutra, anyone who reads the diamond cutter sutra and is not filled with dread but actually likes it has gotten to be a bodhicattva. And I

like it. I don't feel any dread at all
when I read the diamond cutter sutra.
But does the bodhicat of a vow hinder or
help? Yeah, I would guess it's more of a
hindrance than a help. I mean, it's it's
like dedicating yourself
like into the indefinite future to
strive to be this mythological
sama Buddha type being. And I mean that
is just largely mythology in my opinion.
I mean I mean the Buddha taught you
should strive to become enlightened in
this very life if at all possible which
does not require any bodhicattva vow at
all. the bodhicattva is just more likely
to get in the way of that.

And if you take the bodhisattva seriously, it's just bad math, bad logic. You know, this some sora presumably has existed forever already. No beginning. And there's still an infinite number of unenlightened beings, which does seem to indicate that there will never be a situation in which all beings are liberated. Godma Buddha did not succeed in liberating all beings did he?

So I think I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Ethiopian fake TIG. An Ethiopian fake TIG says there is a suta where the Buddha talks about how ugly the body is and many monks off themselves because of it. And

when the Buddha came back, he calmed them down by doing a breath meditation. Speak on this if you can. And there may be a suta version of this. There probably is now that I think of it. But originally it comes from the rules of monastic discipline. Um one of the parajika rules the the rule against um killing murder. It's to to cause to deliberately cause the death of another human being even by just talking them in into selfdeion
is a parajika offense entailing excommunication from the sa for life. So there's this elaborate story where the Buddha was giving talks about just

the not so much the ugliness but just the impurity and and sort of vileeness the loathsomeness of the human body. And then when monks were meditating on this they were being becoming so repulsed by their own body that they wanted to selfdelete. And then there was this monk who just volunteered. Well, okay, I'll help anyone who wants to self-dee or just wants to be deleted. I'll do it for you. And so there was this monk that was going around essentially deleting other monks.

And so when the Buddha came out of his his uh like solitary retreat in the forest or I mean I I don't recall the story completely because it's been years

since I read it and I didn't get around
to reading it again before answering
this.
that uh yeah he first of all he made it
a rule say no you should not kill other
people even if they want to to be
deleted
and let's see yeah I mean he said really
I mean you shouldn't want to to die
before you're enlightened anyway and so
he taught them like the breath
meditation on the breath which you know
is calming and and doesn't cause so much
revulsion as just meditating on the the
foulness of the human body. Although
meditating on the foulness of the human

body still is u a legitimate like
orthodox meditation meditation of teraba
Buddhism but it's not practiced nearly
as much as like mindfulness of breathing
for example
but I can't give the exact details but I
mean if you you look it up online it's
it's in vineia probably there's a pseudo
version of it also but I read it in
vineia with regard to the uh See the
third part of Jika.
So if you look up like uh a translation
of the vineitica which is available free
online you can download the entire thing
for free and then just read the origin
story of the third parajikica and it'll
have the full story there.

So I'm just moving on to Ethiopian fake Tig's next question.

Did the women that ordained during the time of the Buddha all become enlightened?

And also, who is the most well-known Bikuni from the Buddhist time or closer to his time? So, that's two questions, isn't it? That's two question marks.

So, did the did the women that ordained during the time of the Buddha all become enlightened? No, they didn't. I mean, why would they be different from the men? All the men didn't become enlightened either. You know for example among the men you had the notorious

group of six monks who are mentioned again and again in Vinia because they were misbehaving in various ways which was responsible according to the tradition for the Buddha to be making more and more rules because this group of six monks were continually just messing around and doing the wrong thing. And it turned out that I mean they had their mirror images as the group of six nuns who were getting into trouble like the group of six monks were. Some of the rules for bikunis were caused by this group of six nuns doing exactly the same thing as the group of six monks did. And sometimes the group of six nuns and the group of six monks

would get together and they would make
new trouble. you know, some of the there
was one rule against um
let's see, I think one of the group of
six nuns pretended like she was pregnant
to get somebody else in trouble. So, I
mean, she wasn't enlightened. You know,
the group of six nuns in general weren't
enlightened. There was there was I mean,
as a general rule, the majority aren't
going to become enlightened. Even in the
Buddhist tongue, they're still going to
be just like deadwood in the SA
and in the Bikuni SA as well.
So yeah, the answer to this question did
did the women that ordained during the

time of the Buddha all become
enlightened? The answer is no.
And so and so the second part of this
question which is kind of a
transgressive
double question. See who is the most
well-known bikuni from the Buddhist time
or closer to his time. Probably the most
well-known bikuni would be the first
bikuni who would be Mahapati Godami who
was the Buddha's stepmother and aunt.
The Buddha's father married two sisters
and the Buddha's mother died when he was
a baby. But Mahabaj Japi Goami was sort
of like his foster mother, you know, his
his stepmother also his biological aunt.
And she wanted to be the first nun. She

wanted the Buddha to ordain nuns to start an order of nuns so she could become a nun. And at first she's just saying, "Nope, not going to do it. Not going to do it." Until finally she was just following him around with like dust in her hair and her her face just streaming with tears just standing in silence, you know, outside his door all the time just kind of wanting to be a nun, you know, kind of protesting in a way. And then Ananda talks the Buddha into ordaining her, you know, mainly through the argument that Ananda said,"Well, can't women become enlightened? Like men can become

enlightened?" And the Buddha had to agree, "Yeah, women can become enlightened, too." So then Ananda talks him into starting an order of nons. And of course, notoriously, infamously, the Buddha said, "All right, but now you've done it. Because of this, the the true Dhamma will last only half as long. Instead of lasting a thousand years, it'll only last 500 years because of ordaining nuns.

But Mahabaji goi was the Buddha's aunt and stepmother and the very first bikuni. So she's the most famous I'm sure. I mean there's there's some other famous beunis like Ambapali know she offered the Buddha one of his last

meals. She was a cortisan you know an expensive prostitute.

the Padesa Kalyani, I think she was called, you know, was the the beauty of the land, who would be hired by like city councils to entertain VIPs in town, that kind of thing. And

she became a nun. I mean, she offered the Buddha one of his last meals. And then his his discourse to her, I think, inspired her to stop being a cortisan. And she renounced worldly life and became a nun. and her verses in the tererry gata are some of the most poetic and well-known verses in the tererry gata

Paulal's verbapali's verses you know

comparing how beautiful she used to be

with you know this the the unavoidable

ravages of time that's kind of the theme

of her verses

also there's like Vajira was a a

Buddhist an enlightened Buddhist nun

she's got a famous

a famous suta in the samutinikaya the

sagata waga of the sutinikaya I'm pretty

sure um there's a group of sutas all

following the same theme where some

enlightened nun goes out into the forest

to meditate and then Mara tries to lead

her astray by like seeding her mind with

doubts

and so I think vajira the vajira suta is

one of the places where you find the simile of the chariot to account for um the idea of no self. So that's a relatively famous suta with a relatively famous nan enlightened naan in it. But all in all, Mahapati go to the Buddha's aunt and stepmother. The very first bikuni would probably be the most famous bikuni of all time.

And then Ethiopian fake TIG includes like a transgressive fourth question because the second and the second question was really two questions. He says, "Have you ever met an Ethiopian before or would you ever travel to Ethiopia with your sweetheart for fun

times?" That's also two questions, isn't it?

Ethiopian fake Tig's name is going on a list.

So, have I ever met an Ethiopian before? I don't think so. I mean, there's a famous Ethiopian chef that I've seen on cooking shows, cooking competition shows. He's got like a Swedish name because he was adopted by a Swedish family. I think he's an expert on Swedish cooking, but ethnically he's Ethiopian. I'm pretty sure I've walked past Ethiopian restaurants that may have had real Ethiopians inside of it, but I never had any urge to eat Ethiopian food because back in the 80s, you think about

Ethiopia and you think about like standing in line with like a dented tin cup to get milk powder or something. No offense to Ethiopians. I hope they've got their their food issues worked out nowadays, but back in the 80s it was just, you know, this when you wouldn't eat your vegetables, you know, a parent would say, "Children are starving in Ethiopia."

Um, so I'm not aware of having met an Ethiopian before. I may I may have without realizing, but I'm not sure about that. And uh would I ever travel to Ethiopia with my sweetheart for fun times? When you think about Ethiopia,

you generally don't think about going there for fun times. You know, there's any number of places that if I were going to go somewhere with my sweetheart for fun times, you know, they would come to mind as like a a viable idea long before I would go to Ethiopia, probably really good coffee in Ethiopia. But yeah, I I don't think it's very likely. And now that there's like aquariums and stuff here, we're more kind of chained to the house, less able to do a lot of traveling than before when all we had was dogs and maybe a cat.

So, would I ever travel to Ethiopia with my sweetheart for fun times? Probably

not. I wouldn't go to Somalia either. I mean, you could sort of go to both places in the same trip. kill two birds with one stone, so to speak. If you'll if you'll forgive the violent non Buddhist metaphor, but still, I mean, there's places closer to home that would I would think might be more fun than Ethiopia.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And we are kind of getting down to towards the bottom of the scroll here. So, definitely less than three hours. This question is from Fifth. And fifth says, "In a book I'm reading about Ajan Cha, there is a

reference to Ajan Mun using beetle nut. What effect does this have on one's ability to meditate or advance on a Buddhist path? This along with nicotine andratom seems to be very popular in Southeast Asia. Are there differing stigmas to the use of each substance there? are too former more accepted than the latter simply because monks of that fame use them. I'm going to attempt to get off nicotine myself as I've been using it for the last 10 years since I was 16. Okay, I never encountered any use of when I was in Southeast Asia. People maybe were taking it. I just it just wasn't a mainstream thing. It was kind of a secret thing. maybe uh like a

low status thing that people were ashamed of or something or maybe I just did not travel in those circles.

But tobacco and beetlenut are common. In fact, in the city of Mateila in central Burma,

um that was the only place where I would go for alms as a monk and some people would put beetle quits into my bowl as alms because a lot of monks chew beetle there. So, I did this sort of experiment. You know, I did I tried it to see what it was like and you get kind of a mild stimulant buzz kind of, you know, it's kind of similar to how you'd feel if you smoked about half a cigar or

something. Um,

but yeah, I would not want to chew beetle regularly because it's it's not really that good for you. It grinds all the enamel off your teeth. And a lot of these Burmese village guys, it's hard to tell if they had teeth at all because when you chew beetle, your saliva like chemically interacts with the contents of the beetle quit. I think it's mostly the it's like some kind of lime that is mixed with the beetlenut and it causes your slobber to turn into like ketchup. And then these village guys, they chew beetle all the time and they don't brush their teeth. So, it's like the t their mouth is like the top of an old ketchup

bottle at like a cheap diner where it's just sort of like this reddish black crust all over the inside of their mouth and it it smells has like this vinegary smell and it just looks disgusting and you know it grinds the enamel off your teeth like I like I mentioned.

So, yeah, I didn't want to to take a lot of beetle. I did I did try it just to see what it was like.

Um, I did smoke a few Burmese hand rolled cigars, too. You have to excuse me if you're watching because what happens is I've got like oily skin on my on my face and my eyelids. And after many hours of not taking a shower, I

took one when I got up this morning or this early afternoon, um it's it's like the eyelid grease starts to like burn my eyes. So then I have to wipe them off or take a shower or something. But anyways, getting back to beetlenut and cigar, cigarettes, tobacco,
um there's not really much of a stigma on be chewing beetle or um smoking tobacco. My uh one of my main teachers in Burma, um Tom Pulu Chelsea, Seattle chewed beetlenut. And uh one of the old monks I used to live with, the one that got bitten by a cobra and died, he chewed beetle nut even though he had only like four teeth left in his head and also smoked smoked cigars like the

cheap hand rolled village cigars.

Usually they would be wrapped in uh some kind of leaf that wasn't a tobacco leaf or sometimes in corn husk.

Um,

it's maybe a very slight idea that it's not appropriate in Burma, but in in Thailand, it's just 100% a-okay because as fifth mentions, Ajan man not only used beetle nut, but he was a chain smoker or at least I have heard that he was a chain smoker. And since Ajan man is considered by Thai monks or Thai Buddhists to be an Araot, then if Ajan man did it, it must be okay. And that's one reason why the ties also eat cheese

in the afternoon. Not because, you know, there's it's likely to be allowable. Pretty obviously isn't allowable. It's eating food in the afternoon, but Ajan man did it and so it's okay.

I mean, there's some of that kind of stuff in Burma, too. Like I was ordained in the Tom Pulu tradition and for whatever reasons

Tom Pulu Seattle just said okay dawn is at I can't remember the exact time it was it was really early in the morning like 4 in the morning so just throughout the year he just officially dawn is 4 in the morning and you can eat after that time and I would refuse and I got got some heat from from monks in the Tomulu

tradition just saying you know Tom Pulooto he's like our our spiritual father he said It's okay. It's like, well, if I don't see any light in the sky, I'm not going to say it's daytime, you know, just hard-headed barbarian.

So,

let's see what what's the actual question here. Are there differing stigmas to the use of each substance there? Yeah, I think would be uh more more of a stigma than chewing beetle or smoking tobacco.

I mean the really strict monks in Burma won't even drink tea because there's an obscure rule of vineia saying that the

you can drink the juice of all leaves except for the the le or the the water that is drained off of boiled pot herbs. You know like you boil spinach, you get some greenish water. It's against the rules to drink that because that would be sort of like soup which would be like food. And so it there's a rule against that. And then in Burma, tea leaves are eaten as a salad. And it's it's actually good. Tea leaf salad. It's uh leet it's called in Burmese. I mean, it's actually really good. I wouldn't mind getting my hands on some of that here in America. Just like pickled tea leaf salad with like sesame seeds and stuff in it. It's really good. But because of that, it's

considered to be a kind of salad or a, you know, like edible greens. And so when you cook the, you know, you steep the tea leaves in hot water, you know, that's like the water drained off of pot herbs. So they're really strict Burmese monks, of whom they're not a whole lot, but there are some, they won't even drink tea because of that.

And probably they wouldn't chew beetle or or smoke tobacco either, even though technically there's no rule against it. partly because it just wasn't a thing in the Ganges Valley in the Buddhist time. If there was tobacco plants growing in the Ganges Valley in the Buddha time,

almost certainly the Buddha would have prohibited it because of course craving is the cause of all suffering and tobacco is addictive which causes craving.

Anyways, let's see. or the two former more accepted in the latter simply because monks of that fame use them.

Yeah, especially in Thailand.

So, okay, I think I answered that one.

So, I'm just going to answer Fifth's second question. He said, "When first moving to Burma, what things gave you the most culture shock?" So this is kind of like the mirror image of the question above by Romeo I think asking me what kind of culture shock did I get when

coming back from Burma to America after so many years. But when moving to Burma, what things gave me the most culture shock? First of all, I didn't speak the language. I knew very little Burmese when I first got there. So it's, you know, all of a sudden you you just can't communicate very well.

That was kind of a culture shock.

I mean, it was like when I when I was going for alms

at first before I learned how to speak the Burmese language, I was you were kind of like a dog. It's like dogs listen more to your tone of voice than what you're actually saying. So, you

know, if if I'm walking for alms and
somebody says blah blah blah in sort of
a cheerful, you know, happy kind of
voice, it generally means, you know, uh
generally they were saying
which means you know please wait
venerable sir you know they see the monk
walking by they want to offer food so
they say please wait so they can run
into the house and get you some but then
if they said they say the blah blah blah
in sort of like a a slower downbeat kind
of a a voice you know they're saying
good zapia that means you know I I pay
my respect as alms which means I'm not
going to give you any food so it's just
at first you know You become like a dog.

You become like a dog and it's like you're just kind of tuning in on the the the tone of voice to determine whether they they want to give you food or they don't want to give you food. That kind of thing.

See what gave me the most culture shock? Um I mean just being in a different culture, the very conservative Buddhist culture was different from being in America as a lay person. But the thing is um I was living in like a Burmese cultural center for over a year and a half before I went to Burma. So I mean it was all I mean Burmese monks and Burmese supporters that kind of thing in

in California where I was staying. There weren't there was only one other Western monk who was ordained at the same time as me. He was Argentinian.

And most of the supporters you know all the other monks are are Burmese. Oh, there was one Vietnamese monk also.

But uh so I mean it wasn't really a culture shock with regard to that because I was already exposed to Burmese culture and Burmese language and so forth even though I didn't learn it yet.

Um there's one interesting thing when I first got to to Burma in Rangon all the taxi cabs were blue B600.

It was like Mazda B600 pickups. And the the B600 meant it had a 600cc engine. It

probably couldn't go faster than about 30 or 35 miles an hour. Was floored all bright blue. They're these tiny little pickup trucks about the size of a Volkswagen Beetle.

But that didn't really give me culture shock, but it was it was remarkable to me. It just it really stood out in my memory.

Um, yeah. I mean, it wasn't so much culture shock. It was just largely at first just heat. Just tropical blazing heat was like the the hardest thing to get used to. And of course, you get Montazuma's revenge or King Tibol's revenge for my first four months or more

in Burma. So, that was kind of a
internal shock, I suppose.
But uh yeah, I was already exposed to to
like Burmese
culture even long before I went to Burma
just because I was ordained in a Burmese
monastery. So that probably softened the
blow to some degree.
Um I really can't think of anything else
that would cause serious culture shock
other than just suddenly landing in a
country where you cannot communicate
with people. At first, I was
communicating in like broken poly to one
other monk at the monastery who had had
some schooling and knew some poly.
His vocabulary was better than mine, I

think, but I was better at verb tenses

than him.

So, let's see here.

I think I'm just going to move on to

Fifth's third question,

which is, "Have you had any updates on

that former monk friend living on the

outskirts of that industrial park in

Burma? The one who I believed I believe

lived in a tree." No, I haven't heard

from him in about a year. I mean, I just

heard about him. Just sort of an update

the from the the person that was largely

taking care of him, you know, letting

him stay on his property, that kind of

thing. So yeah, there's no updates since

probably a year or more. And so I'm just moving on to Joe Doe who is the last questioner and he has asked two questions. So the first question from Joe Doe, did you ever have a direct experience of emptiness?

And I mean emptiness

that's it's how do you define emptiness? Like for example, one of my favorite sutas in the Majimminaya is the the smaller discourse on emptiness. And there's like this gradation of stages of emptiness that that the monk goes through. The first stage of emptiness is just moving out of a town or village into a forest. That's like the first step towards emptiness because at least

it's empty of all these artificial rules and all these straight lines and right angles and so forth. You know, it's getting out away from other people. So that's it's sort of sociologically empty anyway. And then you start getting into deeper and deeper meditative states. And I mean through meditative states you can't even get to full emptiness.

So I mean like in the in the suta the lesser or small discourse on emptiness the truly suta

um I mean eventually you get to the the signless concentration of mind which in by implication is higher than even fourth janna you know it's higher than

any janna you've gotten into this signless this wide open concentration of mind but even that isn't purely empty because there's still like this perception going on. And so what happens is the monk comes out of that and then he has this insight that arises. It's like even when I attained the highest possible meditative state, it was still conditioned. It still had a beginning and an end. That is not what I'm striving for. And so it's like something just kind of clicks and the monk just kind of gives up. He just lets go of samsara at that point. And then with full enlightenment which he becomes fully enlightened and then perhaps he

has a direct experience of emptiness.
So I mean I had like relative direct
experiences of emptiness in and I got
into some relatively deep meditative
states where your mind is just wide open
and clear like glass that that would be
as close to a direct experience of
emptiness that I experienced. But still
it was conditioned. It had a beginning
and an end.
The thing is though, I mean, we're
always having a direct experience of
ultimate reality. It's just that like
Echart Tollah says, our mind is making
too much noise, so we don't notice,
but it's always there.

So, you're always having like a subliminal direct experience of emptiness, even if you don't fully realize this at a conscious level.
And so I'm just going to move on to Jodo's second question, which is the last question of this Q&A.
And Jodo says, "Does the mind exist in ultimate truth?" And
I mean, I've already kind of answered this question. I mean, starting off with orthodox terraada, yes, the answer would be yes. In Abidama philosophy, there are four ultimate realities. You've got I had held up five fingers when I said four ultimate realities. Four ultimate realities. You've got mind, mental

states.

Let's see.

Mind, mental states, matter, physical matter, and nibbana.

So according to Abidama philosophy, the mind exists in ultimate truth even if you're unenlightened. But mind and mental states are chitta and cheetah. That's two entirely different realities. So the mind is ultimately real and each mental state like a perception or a volition or a sensation is al also ultimately real. And so they combine together and you have this multiplicity of psychological events going on.

But in my personal opinion does the mind

exist in ultimate truth? You just get to consciousness. I'd say that consciousness is ultimately real. The mental states are just forms of consciousness. Like I mean I'm saying the same stuff over and over and over again in these Q&As's. It's like just going with the analogy of if consciousness is like water then mental states are like ripples on the surface of the water. This is not orthodox terra. This is my understanding which seems to me to make a hell of a lot better sense. So you've got consciousness is the water. Mental states are like the ripples and currents on this water. And so the form I mean

really it's just water you know like a wave of water ultimately it's just water. It's just an arbitrary choice to perceive to isolate this particular form if that makes any sense. But then again when you become enlightened supposedly I mean the consciousness or the mind becomes unmanifest. It goes off the scale and you can't say whether it exists or doesn't exist or both or neither.

So to recap my answer to that from the orthodox terra Buddhist point of view certainly the mind exists in ultimate truth as does physical matter. all the different mental states of which there

are 52 different kinds 28 different

kinds of matter and then you've got one

kind of consciousness even though

Abidama then kind of divides it up into

subtypes or something and then you've

got what's the one I didn't mention yet

nibana

so from the orthodox terravada point of

view yes the mind exists in ultimate

truth um from my point of view my

understanding based on my own experience

and intuition and insight and so forth

then you can say the mind

I mean

God I mean when you get to ultimate

truth you can't say anything see that's

the thing it becomes unmanifest and goes

off the scale but if anything does exist it would just be like pure formless consciousness
within mind and consciousness are like synonyms or at least chitta and wana are synonyms in terabara Buddhist philosophy. But when you become fully enlightened, when you reach the level of paramata satcha or ultimate truth, I mean it just becomes infinite and formless and goes off the scale and you can't say whether it exists or doesn't exist or both or neither.
So that's that's it. I guess I think I'm done answering questions for for this particular episode.

And so like I should always say at the beginning and pretty much never do, if you have any questions you think I can answer regarding

early Buddhism, Terraata Buddhism, you know, Dharma in general, meditation, monastic discipline, Southeast Asia, that kind of stuff, then feel free to ask. I cannot promise that I'll be able to answer satisfactorily, but at least I'll give it a shot. If the question is asked in in good earnest, in good faith, and like and subscribe if you have not done so already. Feel free to leave comments, that sort of thing. And uh what else should I say before I say be happy? Oh, I just said it. So, I guess

I'll just hit the button. Oh, look at the URL links listed below this video and uh that includes the books that I've written. And there may actually be another book coming up because even if I don't finish it before I find a more suitable job than the one I had before, in the very least I'm not going to be working 55hour
weeks and just coming home exhausted and just spending my weekends like resting for the next week of aggravation and stress.
So now I'm really going to hit the button.

Okay then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 179.

I am your host PO Basa and yes indeed 179 is a prime number.

Before I start answering questions of which we have a moderate amount, probably more than two hours worth, I would like to point out that I know some of you are probably wondering why are there no more wild type dwarf gouramis in the tank back there. Well, I've given up on wild type dwarf gouramis. It's one of my favorite kinds of fish ever since I was a kid. But the thing is, since I was a kid, unscrupulous

or just not entirely responsible or competent fishreeders have inbred them so much that they're just not healthy anymore. Plus, there's a kind of dwarf gourami aids, some kind of lethal virus that most of them are infected with now, which is unfortunate.

So, I've replaced um the two dwarf gouramis that died recently with pearl gouramies. And according to Grock, a pearl gourami is only 8% likely to catch the deadly virus. So, we're going with that. See, we're going to see how that goes.

Probably I should do another aquarium video in the near future. So, I won't be talking about aquariums on a on a Q&A

mainly directed towards Buddhist

philosophy.

But also before I start answering just

as a kind of disclaimer maybe I will say

that the past few weeks have just been

the most

like disrupting chaotic like turmoil

upheaval kind of weeks that I have

experienced literally in years probably

since just the few months after I

dropped out of the monkhood.

there is a disturbance in the force.

So if I see him a little bit

discombobulated or some some such

then we can just blame it on that. I'm

just a helpless victim.

So anyways I guess we should just uh wade into this and the first question is from warm shadow. I'm not exactly what that means a warm shadow. Anyways, warm shadow says, "Which philosophers throughout history are most worth studying and listening to?" You Oh, I should add before I continue this question that I updated my my operating system on this computer like a week ago or a little less than a week ago and now like the the sound quality software isn't working anymore. So if I sound like I'm like talking to you from the bottom of a well or some such, it's because of that.

Anyways, warm shadow says, "Which

philosophers throughout history are most worth studying and listening to? You have said before that you think Nim Karoli Baba and Nagarjuna are some of them." Well, probably I didn't say that Nim Karoli Baba is a philosopher because I really don't consider Nim Karoli Baba whose picture is right there on on top of the bookcase.

Closest thing I've got to an altar.

He wasn't really a philosopher. I mean, he was more religious than philosophical. He was more of a kind of saint than some sort of philosophical sage.

So yeah, I wouldn't include Nim Kuroli

Baba as a list of great philosophers because he really didn't teach much philosophy. He was teaching a kind of devotionalistic religion. You know, he worshiped Hanuman, the monkey god.
So yeah, I wouldn't go to Nim Kurly Baba for any kind of intellectual philosophizing,
but Nagarjuna definitely is one of the greatest Buddhist philosophers who ever lived. His only real competition I think would be the Buddha himself.
So for any Buddhist I think of course numero uno the most important philosopher who ever lived would be God Buddha. I think he would qualify as a philosopher. He wasn't just religious.

You know it's like he was a mystic but mysticism is sort of like a common ground between philosophy and religion. you know, it's just sort of the most uh what's the word? Pragmatic, the most practical approach to understanding ultimate reality. And both philosophers with the philosophical temperament and like theologians with the religious temperament have converged on mysticism as a way of breaking through the veil of words and images and symbols.

But aside from the Buddha and Nagarjuna like

um to understand like who are the the best philosophers to read I mean it

would depend on what you want to I mean
what is your purpose I mean if you just
want to understand like western
civilization you know you just want to
understand the culture you know you've
got like a sociological reason for
studying philosophers
then I I mean like in the west Aristotle
and Plato I mean that would be two of
the most important ones plus maybe like
Francis Bacon who sort of started the
scientific method that kind of thing and
then of course the early scientists were
all considered to be natural
philosophers like Isaac Newton was
considered to be a philosopher he was
just a natural philosopher which has

come to be a scientist

Likewise, if you want to understand

Chinese culture, then probably the most

important philosopher to study would be

Confucious.

But let's say you're you're studying

philosophy for the sake of increasing

your own wisdom, like improving your

understanding of reality.

Then

personally, I think the most important

philosopher you could read for starters

would be David Hume.

partly because David Hume um he's easy

to read. He originally wrote in the

English language. Of course, it's like

18th century English, which makes it a little tougher, but still, I mean, he's easy to read. Like his his inquiries, he wrote two of those. Inquiry concerning human understanding. Um, they're relatively short. You know, it's like 100 pages maybe.

And it's relatively straightforward. And I mean, he's a good person to start with, David Hume, because he was like a radical skeptic. He was questioning things that nobody, it hadn't even occurred to philosophers to really question for the most part, you know, like cause and effect. Cause and effect was just accepted just as a given. You know, it was just

axiomatic. And then David Hume says, well, wait a minute, you know, it's like, how do we know?

So yeah, David Hume would be a good one because he's sort of like just sort of clearing the clearing the field, you know, just throwing everything off the table and just starting fresh in a way. But David Hume was not perfect. I mean, he had an axe to grind against Christianity and he would be making digs at Christianity throughout his books. In fact, one of his um one of his books, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion or something like that. I can't remember the the title of it. Um he had he made

sure that that was published postumously because that was just like an attack on Christianity. He was um a member of what is called the enlightenment which was an intellectual movement of like the like the 16 1700s
and one of the purposes of the enlightenment was to replace superstition which mainly meant Christianity with rationality and philosophy which mainly meant or it came to mean like materialistic science. So I don't think the enlightenment was entirely a good thing. Um maybe more good than bad at least not more bad than good. But still
there is that another philosopher that

would be useful for westerners to read
would be George Barkley. And George
Barkley just hammered away at one point.
You know, it's like his contribution to
western philosophy and like western
thought boils down to just one point and
that was he just pounded away at the
idea you cannot prove that physical
matter really exists
and two of his books the three dialogues
and I can't remember the the title of
the other one. I mean, that's that's all
he's he's doing is just pretty much
dismantling this this idea, just
undermining this idea
that physical matter certainly obviously

exists.

I don't think that Barkley was right in his substitute for materialism, which is what he called immaterialism, which was the idea that all that exists in the universe are minds and perceptions.

And that there's like this central mind called God that is just like what do you call it? organizing uh managing all the perceptions of all the other minds as though there is a physical universe. So like if you see an apple on the table, I mean according to Barkley, there really is no apple and there really is no table. It's just that God is implanting into your mind this dream, you know, sort of like the matrix

of an apple on the table. And I don't really think that that's the way it works. But still, his arguments against the certainty of like the existence of a physical world out there um should be considered even if you wind up rejecting his arguments.

Another important philosopher would be Kant who was inspired by David Hume and David Hume in turn was in part inspired by Barkley.

Kant says that reading David Hume uh see what was it it woke him it awakened him from his dogmatic slumbers and that's David Hume is good for that

but with regard to other philosophers I

mean Spinosa is kind of interesting
um Kant is important although he's
extremely difficult to read so you might
do better just to read about Kant than
reading Kant directly you know, just,
you know, read some like a a history of
western philosophy or like just some
compilation of essays about the most
important philosophers
and then I mean your own intuition will
guide you as to what it is that you need
to to study up on, what you need to
learn, what you need to hear. So that
would be a good start. just read like
Bertrren Russell's history of Western
philosophy even though Bertrren Russell
was in kind of a bad mood when he wrote

that book partly because it was he wrote
it during World War II
but you you read a book like that and
then it's like certain philosophers and
not everybody is the same. It's not
going to be the same philosophers for
everybody but certain philosophers are
going to like really like strike a
chord, you know, like intuitively or
just intellectually or whatever. you're
just going to think, "Yeah, that's
important. I need to study that." So,
for some people it might be like
Libnits.
Some people it might be Renee Deart,
although I think Renee Deart's

philosophy is pretty much obsolete at this point. Or you could get into like German idealists,

that kind of thing.

So, let's see. With regard to Eastern philosophers, Shankara, I mean, he'd be important. He was pretty much one he's one of the founding fathers if not the founding father of vanta philosophy like advita vdanta. So he would be important with regard to Chinese philosophers. I mean the daqing theangu those would be important like at least from a dowist point of view.

Um

but

yeah, I think your best bet with regard

to a question like this is just read like a survey of western philosophy or Indian philosophy or Chinese philosophy and then just whatever calls to you, whatever just intuitively strikes a chord with you, that's something that probably would be good for you to study because it won't be the same for everybody. But with regard to Buddhism, of course, God Buddha is is numero uno and maybe Nagarjani second even for non-terravadans. would be important for a Buddhist to be familiar with the Mulam Majamaka Caraka just because in my opinion he lays he lays out like the most sophisticated elegant and probably

correct interpretation philosophical

interpretation of Picha Samupata or

dependent core rising

conditioned genesis

if you will

so let's see here yeah we we can just

dismiss somebody like St. John of the

Cross who wrote a lot of deep stuff but

again he's more religious than

philosophical.

So a lot of the religious writers

um especially in the west I mean it

wouldn't really qualify so much as

philosophy. It's more religion. In the

east there's not so much of a a

separation or in ancient times there

wasn't so much of a separation between

philosophy and religion.

But in the modern west it has I mean religion is is sort of like the artistic temperament and philosophy is more the scientific temperament kind of a thing.

So anyways I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Scooain

and Scooain says would spanking your children cause negative karma. Sometimes this seems unavoidable unavoidable in my life having rambunctious little boys who sometimes get wild and often words don't seem to process for them. I would never spank one of them if I was feeling personally annoyed or angry at them.

However, there are times when I will say, "Listen, guy, if your if you elbow drop your brother one more time, I'm spanking you and you're going to your room." Oh, he has it Y O R instead of Y O U apostrophe R E. That I just I've got radar for that. Anyways, he says, "Listen, guy. If you elbow drop your brother one more time, I'm spanking you and you're going to your room. I've told you several times to stop."

Sometimes they seem delighted for that trade. I'm talking little kids like three and six, although sometimes their mom could use it too when she's 34.

Well, again, this is like a standard template for a question that Westerners

ask me. Um, I mean, it's mainly Westerners ask me questions anyway at this point. But, you know, is is some sort of physical activity good karma or bad karma? And it's again and again and again I say it's not the outward activity. Just just a mere physical action is ethically neutral. Regardless of whether you're saving someone from drowning or deliberately causing them to drown that I mean we'll just take out deliberately because that's a mental state. But just the physical action itself
is I mean it's no more ethical than an earthquake or a storm or whatever. you

know, it's just a physical event. The actual ethics, whether it's a wholesome or unh wholesome act, depends on the mental states. Why are you doing it? What are you feeling while you're doing it?

So, spanking your children,

um, I mean, he, Scudamain here specifies that he doesn't do it as a way of like venting anger, which is good. I mean, those are the worst. Some of the worst parents are the ones who are just like taking out their frustrations by beating their kids. And sometimes they'll justify it. You know, they say he was misbehaving and spoil the rod, spare the child, and all that, but really they're

just taking out their own frustrations by beating on somebody. And in this case, it's like a a helpless little kid who can't really even defend himself. But I mean just living in the world is going to involve a certain amount of unh wholesome karma. I mean you can't just completely avoid unh wholesome karma. You just especially a lay person. You're living in the world. I mean even delusion is unh wholesome. You know just to to take everything at face value cons to consider it reality. You know at times when you're not being philosophical that's still unh wholesome karma. to

have preferences, to be bothered by something, to like one thing better than another thing. All of that ultimately is subtly unh wholesome.

So, I mean, you can't just avoid all unh wholesome acts, especially if you're living in the world, you've got responsibilities. Your kids come home from school with lice in their hair. I mean, you got to do something about that. You can't say, "Well, I'm not going to harm the poor lice." I mean, it just doesn't work that way.

So, spanking your children could cause a certain amount of negative karma, but it's like do unto others as you would have them do unto you. It's the golden

rule. So it I mean in the long run
disciplining your children in a way that
actually works that a three-year-old can
understand you know you can't just
explain
you know abstract concepts to a
three-year-old as to why he should
behave in a certain way. I mean maybe
sometimes that'll work kind of but
little kids I mean it's like stimulus
response theory you know they'll avoid
unpleasantness and gravitate towards
pleasantness.
So, a good parent will have to punish
his children sometimes and probably more
importantly to praise and reward his

children when they do good. I think some parents just kind of ignore that aspect. You know, you punish them when they're bad, but you don't praise them when they get good grades or when they do something good. You know, they help you around the house without even being asked, that kind of thing.

So yeah, if you have kids, I mean, I personally, if I had kids, I would probably spank them sometimes. Even though you might be taking a karmic hit by doing it, but still in the long run, you may be res you may be causing less suffering. You know, it may be like the lesser of two evils in a sense because you just don't discipline your kids

effectively so that they just grow up
irresponsible and spoiled and just don't
give a [__] about what other people
think and so forth. Um, in a bad way,
not in a good way,
then I mean that's even worse.
So, I mean, when you had kids, you're
probably creating some unh wholesome
karma through the act of impregnating
the female, so to speak,
because there's lots of like like
wallowing in sensual pleasure when that
kind of stuff goes on.
So, I mean, you just cannot just be
completely pure of any unh wholesome
acts and because I mean, you can't be

completely pure of any unh wholesome mental acts until you're fully enlightened.

Until then, it's just going to be shades of gray.

So,

yeah, I guess I answered that question.

Yeah, maybe sometimes it might even be appropriate to spank your wife.

But I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Rolling Clouds.

And Rolling Cloud says, "My question is this." And then he continues, "Would you please talk about the unhinged aspects of being a monk? You've spoken about your old shitty roommate. He seems

unhinged, sloppy. Did you witness any fights, any like violence or criminal activity that comes to mind, please? I'm interested in that angle. And then after he asked that question, I asked him I mean I asked him what he was referring to with regard to my old shitty roommate. Old shitty roommate because I I didn't recall ever having an old shitty roommate as a monk or even as a lay person really. So then he said, "You've have mentioned an aggressive monk in the past whom you lived with. I think I called him a shitty roommate. Sorry." Yeah, that was there was one monk who tried to take over the

monastery that I was senior monk at.
And uh I've written about that
somewhere. I don't know if it's still
online. Um I've mentioned it a few times
where there was this village monk who
just kind of moved into the monastery.
I I didn't want him to stay there. Um
but he just kind of eased in and what I
told the other monk who lived there who
was older than me but senior or junior
to me by just a matter of months I think
technically I was senior to him.
I told him I wanted to kick this monk
out and he looked at me with this
serious look and said let's see what did
he say it's like he is my brother
something like that and I mean the the

age difference between them was such you know it was like at least 30 years between them that I didn't think he could have really been his brother but in Burma sometimes you know like a distant relative you'll declare to be your brother or sister or even just close friends you know they're they're very family oriented in Burma. Burmese villagers very family oriented and so they'll just adopt people into their family and so that kind of restrained me from kicking him out. But he obviously did not follow the rules of monastic discipline. Um you know he'd just be picking mangoes in at the monastery and

just preparing his own food with it, that kind of thing. He handled money, this sort of thing. So finally I just told the the old monk that was the other monk there that that monk I mean I just want to kick him out. I just don't want him living here. And we did have a kind of a rule between the two of us. There was only two monks living at that monastery usually that both of us would have to agree if another monk was going to stay there. you know, it's like e either one of us had the power of veto whe with regard to accepting like a a newcome a newcomer monk. So when I told him that his face just lit up because he didn't like him either, you know, it was

just kind of like this I guess they were like distant cousins or he was a nephew or something.

So then I went to that monk who I mean this this old monk that I had just told that to was hard of hearing. you had to just yell in order for him to hear anything. So the other monk, the the the newcomer monk that I wanted to kick out was easily with an earshot. And he's like pretending to read a book and I told him, "Well, we have decided that you have to go." And he just said, "I'm staying." And he didn't even look up from the book, you know, just no, I'm staying. And he was trying to take over

the monastery, you know. So I said, "No, you're really going to have to go." And I don't remember the ex the exact dialogue between us, but at one point he just said that you are the visitor here, you know, because I'm I was a foreigner, you know, I wasn't Burmese. And and then finally, he just kind of dismissed me, you know, he just kind of waved his hand like just go. And he wasn't even looking up, you know, he's still pretending to read this book. You know, it's like I wasn't even important enough for him to look up even though I was senior monk there. And he should have looked up a few times instead of pretending to read the book because I was starting to

really get I mean there's a couple times when just like reflexively I started to like lunge at him and just caught myself, you know. I was like obviously getting iate at this at this monk until finally when he just dismissed me just go I just just it took like all of about one second. I just grabbed him by by like the front of his robes and just slammed him to the ground like like an enraged gorilla or some such. And then I just stomped off to to the well to fill a bucket of water or something. By the time I get to the well, which is like 100 feet away, I turn around and look and he's still like lying on his on the

ground. I guess he got a lump on the side of his head the next day from when his head hit the ground.

Um, but then I mean he still refused to go. Oh, wait. I got to plug in the plug in the computer just a second.

I kind of figured I forgot something. Always forgetting to plug in the computer because I got to move the computer from one place to another and the the cord doesn't reach.

Okay,

down to 8%.

So, anyways, he still refused to go even after I slammed him to the ground. And, you know, he's like walking around behind me at the monastery like clapping

his hands really loud trying to make me jump or intimidate me or something. And I was really at wit and how do I get rid of this troublemaker monk?

And I'm just like pacing back and forth in my cave like a caged leopard. And then finally it just dawns on me. I mean before it dawns on me I'm thinking what am I really going to have to beat him up to to get him to leave? I mean I'm just these crazy thoughts are entering my mind. I can I can like get him into a double hammerlock. Maybe dislocate his arms and fling him into the river which the monastery was right on the banks of the Chinuin River. And I'm thinking no

he might drown. you know,
but then it just dawned on me. It's like
all I got to do is just appeal to the
villagers, you know, my my supporters,
my friends, I need your help. And so
that's what I did when I went for alms
round the next day. I just explained the
situation and there was some gasps of
horror from from the nice village ladies
that offered me food every day and they
just said, "Don't worry, venerable sir."
And they just went to the village
headman. In fact, they went to both
village headmen that there were two
villages nearby. And so a little later
that day, it was like two village
headmen and there was like some village

elders and also some young bucks just in case any manhandling was required show up at my monastery and they said, "Don't worry, we'll take care of it." And they just went down and threw him out of the monastery.

Oh, that was great. And after that, I was just cackling like how could it how could it have turned out to be this easy? You know, I was just kind of at wit's end just how do I get rid of this monk because he really was just kind of a troublemaker and didn't follow the rules and this kind of thing. But getting back to rolling clouds's question.

Uh unhinged aspects of being a monk.

Let's see. Did did I witness any fights?

That was the only fight between monks I

witnessed was the one I participated in.

And then like I said, it lasted about 1

second just lunging and grabbing him and

just slamming him to the ground. Um, but

I remember one time I went to the

Mandandalay City Morg to observe an

autopsy

and the coroner told me in confidence

kind of like an conspiratorial voice

that there was a monk that was brought

in to the morg. you know, a a deceased

Biku brought into the morg just

recently. And it was the coroner's

opinion that he had been he had been

deleted by another monk and that the Mandandalay area is notorious for just really kind of rotten, unscrupulous, unconscientious monks. But the thing is um I was a relatively conscientious one and so I just tended to avoid you know like lax monasteries. I went to the strict places with good reputations. And when you do that, of course, you don't see all this stuff,
but you stay at like some like some school monastery in Mandandalay
or just a lot of just really lax just sort of village monasteries where the monks really aren't striving for enlightenment or practicing meditation.

you know, they're just like secular priests to the village and just like masters of ceremonies essentially. You know, they're they're doing the the ceremonies that are required by the Buddhist culture and you know, they're getting fed and then in the afternoons they'll sit around and smoke cigars and drink tea with the old village guys who who come and and talk to them, that kind of thing.

So I there was some of that that would happen

but I mean I just avoided places where it was likely to happen. I had one friend uh an American monk who lived near Mandandalay. He lived at the base

of Sagine Hill at some school monastery, relatively famous one. And there was a like a junior Seattle, like a lieutenant abbot there who was getting his legs massaged by nuns. And that's a no no. Monks aren't supposed to do that. And so this American monk, I'm pretty sure if I remember correctly, it's been several years since this happened. I'm pretty sure that he told me that he went actually went to the abbott and said, you know, this is what I have seen. It's not, you know, it's not good. And so the abbott, you know, sort of chastised or scolded this lieutenant abbott who was having his legs massaged by nuns. And so

this lieutenant abbott at a later time just kind of marched up to this American monk. And this like a lot of monks they'll have like a sitting cloth over one shoulder, you know, you just carry it around with you. He just kind of or it was his double robe or something. I remember, but he had some sort of like textiles over his shoulder and that lieutenant monk was pissed off at him just went and just grabbed it and flung it to the ground. That kind of thing. I mean, that was about as close. I mean sometimes I think it was that same monastery and also one monastery where I stayed at before where noviceses you know little kid like junior monk kind of

you know they're not fully ordained but they're they're ordained as noviceses you know in lesser orders as they would say in Catholicism that sometimes they would get like beaten as punishment. There was one little podo which is even below a novice. They can still handle money. They only have to keep eight precepts. wear white robes. And so I stayed at this one monastery that had posthodos like that that would handle the money. They weren't very good at it. But this one podo

um he he took some money to go buy some rubber bands for one of the instead of buying the rubber bands, he just went to

a movie and spent the money on the movie. And then knowing that he would be punished when he got back, he just ran away. And the monks were out looking for this little kid, this posthadote, this little white robed monastic with a shaved head who was like, you know, six years old. Finally, they find him living under a bridge with some hobos. And so they haul him back to the monastery and they send him to his mother and his mother was a nun. I mean, she had the kid before she became a nun, but when she became a nun, she figured, well, I want my son to become a monk. So she just sent him to the monastery even though he didn't want to go. He just

wanted to be a kid.
So I was told that after he got sent
back to the convent where his mother
lived that the like the mother superior,
you know, the abbis of the convent um
tied him to a pole and just like whipped
him. So that kind of stuff can happen.
And oh there's another case that that I
should mention. I've mentioned this
before that I lived at a big school
monastery near Mandalay. It had a
reputation for strictness.
Um it had one of the best reputations
for strictness of all the school
monasteries in Burma, but still it was
like 10% of the monks really tried to

follow the rules. Like 10% of the monks didn't handle money, for example. So anyways, there was this monk from a different school monastery that was sneaking into our monastery, Mahagandemong, and stealing valuable books when all the monks were like assembled in the congregation hall to do ceremonies.

So like on Uposa day, all the monks at the monastery would go and meet in the congregation hall and then this monk from a different monastery would sneak in and steal valuable books and then he'd like sell them on some monk black market or something. So technically he wasn't even a monk because he was a

thief. Once you steal something that is valuable enough for you to be arrested for it, that's it. You're excommunicated for life. So he was part of Jikica. He wasn't really a monk. So there was like an assistant Seattle, like a a lieutenant Seattle in my area of the monastery who was kind of a macho monk. There are macho monks out there. And so he just deliberately didn't go to the ceremony one day and he was lying in wait for this thief and he caught him and the thief got arrested, you know, defrocked, all of that. And then uh it was like weeks later, some friend of this defrocked thief monk snuck up

behind this macho lieutenant Seattle and hacked him in the back of the head with a machete

and it kind of glanced off the side of his head, but I mean his ear was kind of peeled away from his head. He was in the hospital for quite a while.

And that kind of stuff happens especially like around Mandandalay big cities but also you just have I mean in the villages the monks are lax also as a general rule. Most of them are lax monks you know like maybe 2% of the Burmese sa doesn't handle money and really does try to follow the rules correctly but they tend to be like nonviolent lax monks. you know, they're easygoing, nice guys.

They just are following the tradition of their country rather than following the sacred texts.

So, this kind of stuff can happen, but it's pretty easy to avoid it by just going to strict monasteries with serious strict abbots and serious strict monks that follow rules

and you just don't come across that kind of thing. But some some monasteries, especially in the cities and and school monasteries in particular, like Buddhist universities have a reputation for being snake pits.

So, oh, I might as well also mention one lieutenant Seattle at one of the the big

famous meditation centers in the Mahasi tradition in in Rangon. Um, he was he traveled a lot because he was relatively famous. He he spoke English well enough that he could, you know, be invited to international meditation centers and give lead meditation retreats and give discourses and so forth. But what he was doing was he was exchanging Burmese currency for US dollars on the black market, which arguably
would be a parajika offense. It's tuna gata. Parajika, I think it's called. Is that it? Tuna gata. But it it means like evading like customs duties and other government fees by smuggling something across borders. That that is a kind of

theft, you know, where you're stealing from the government by evading like custom duties or like legal exchange rates, that kind of thing. I think some people would say he wasn't part of Jacob. He certainly would have denied having excommunicated himself in such a way, but that kind of thing happens also.

Anyways, I'm moving on. The next question because I can't spend 20 minutes on each question because the the file will be too big even to load.

So anyways, the next question is from Jimmy Lad and Jimmy Lad has little headings for his questions and the first

heading for the first question is

Contean inspired dharma.

I think I might need a drink.

So, take the little paper umbrella out

of the beverage.

Okay. Contient inspired dharma. I think

this is only like the third question.

We're already well over half an hour

into this.

Jimmy Lad says, "I have been reflecting

on using the Contean or transcendental

idealist foundation to dharma. The idea

you have spoken of about how silencing

the mind and application of the 12

categories of transcendental

appreception would be something

analogous to the process of meditation

in western philosophical terms. But I mean if meditation is about silencing the mind, wouldn't Ai sa's senseless or floating man in sensory deprivation find it easier to be enlightened since all the categories of his transcendental app perception would be numb. Abasenna says that such a being would at least still know it exists. So it seems that even in such a state and in meditation there still remains the preconcious knowledge or presupposition that I exist. I don't necessarily mean to detour into discussion of anata or no self. I just mean that even in sensory deprivation we presuppose some kind of object of

existence since we are not existence per se and would still be mortal and finite. So even in this contean model we can't escape this category of baseline existence. Well, simply being in s a state of sensory deprivation is not the same as doing like deep johnic meditation. I mean, you just take Joe Schmo, you know, you take some criminal, throw him into a solitary confinement, he's not going to become enlightened because he still has an unenlightened mind. He still has unenlightened habits. Meditation is more a method of first of all you remain wide awake while at the same time like like undermining these mental delusional habits by just not

feeding them, not reinforcing them.

So I mean

just throwing somebody into sensory

deprivation obviously is not going to

cause them to become enlightened. It's

more likely to cause them to go insane

because they still have these anus or

latent tendencies. They still have these

karmic habits of needing stimulation.

So let's see here. Yeah, I mean you got

to bear in mind that even if you stop

thinking in meditation, if you're

meditating correctly where your mind

just becomes silent, it's you don't go

into a coma. You don't become

unconscious. you're wide awake and then

if anything starts to arise like a desire to think you just note it and let it go or I mean you might even be beyond the stage of even requiring needing to note anything.

It just enters the the like the the sphere of perception and just fades out under just the the the bright light of of just awareness.

So, it's very different seems to me, but it's kind of a long complex kind of question here. Let's see here. What's the actual question? Where is the question mark in this mass of words? See, I I don't even see a question mark. Okay, let's see. Oh, here's one. I he says, "If meditation is about silencing

the mind, wouldn't Avisa senseless or floating man find it easier to be?" No, but it's not just silencing the mind. It's silencing the mind without going unconscious.

Silencing the mind while remaining wide awake. In fact, you're even more awake than the ordinary person walking down the street.

It's just like

awareness without boundaries pretty much. I mean, that's that's sort of the goal. It might be like in calculus where you never actually get exactly to the ideal, but you get closer and closer to it until finally it's like you don't

even need the the system anymore. It just you just kind of let go of it.

So yeah, a senseless person would not be the same as a person who is at the verge of enlightenment.

Uh let's see here.

Yeah, I mean that's an important thing to bear in mind, I guess. And I'm gonna just move on to the next question. And the let's see here Jimmy Lad's title for this question is proof of nirvana from Kant.

So the question is if we were using Kant as the logical basis of our dharmic practice that's that's mistake number one but I'll start over. If we were using Kant as the logical basis

of our dharmic practice,
how do we make the jump from sessation
of the application of the categories of
transcendental app perception? And I do
appreciate that there are a few words in
that sentence with less than four
syllables.
Let's see. How do we make the jump from
the sessation of the application of the
categories of transcendental app
perception to the integral and permanent
realization of supra individual johnic
states and the fact that ultimate
reality is a thing that not only truly
is but can be attained so far we only
have a being in sensory deprivation with

an empty or objectless perception. No, that's not so far what we have. You have someone who is transcended the limits of perception.

And then he but anyways he continues it seems with Nirvana there is a commitment to a numinal absolute we can't prove and until attained no. So there is a two-fold faith of its existence and the fact that effective realization of it is possible. two propositions I'm not sure how to prove through natural reason alone and you're not going to prove reality

through natural reason or you're not going to prove it at all other than possibly through your own direct

experience and even then like William James says with regard to mystical states

mystical states have two qualities the the the person who experiences a mystical state first of all has no doubt whatsoever that what he experiences more real than the experiences of ordinary awakened consciousness. But two, the second universal quality of mystical states is that it has absolutely zero persuasive power over anybody else. So mystical states on the one hand, whoever experiences them has no doubt whatsoever. It's more real than ordinary awaken consciousness, but at the same

time has no power over anybody else. Has no persuasive ability at all. Unless, of course, you're like some charismatic, you know, some charismatic guru or cult leader with like the the big hypnotic eyes who just speaks with a voice of authority and has weak-minded people just follow along with it.

So I mean this first this first paragraph of this question is I don't know how many people would understand it really

it's got lots of big words in it very intellectually oriented and I mean that is one of the first mistakes that anybody makes with regard to trying to practice dharma correctly is

intellectualizing it. I mean, if you're just an intellectual person by nature, you got to have, you know, you got to toss a bone to the intellect, you know, at least enough to keep it more or less pacified.

But like Ajan Shaw said that that people who approach dharma from like a scholastic point of view rarely attain anything because they're just locked in to this intellectual approach, which is not the approach that gets you enlightened. is just wallowing in symbols.

So

I mean you can use Kant I mean I use

Kant not as any kind of logical basis

for dharma practice but just as a way of

interpreting like

kind of the purpose of meditation into

western terminology that people

acquainted with western philosophy more

than with eastern philosophy can kind of

understand and say okay it's not just

all this wishful thinking gobly [__]

There may actually be something to it.

So, let's see. Where's the actual

question mark?

I'm not Let's see.

Let's see. I'm not seeing a question

mark at all here.

See, it seems with Nirvana there's

Yeah, there's not even a question mark

in this. Seems with Nirvana there is a commitment to a numinal absolute we can't prove. Although you're always experiencing it. And once you start having deeper deeper awareness experiences, you're gonna like realize that this
awareness of the absolute is always there. I mean, how far away is it going to be? How far away is ultimate reality? I mean, how far away are you from the the thing in itself of your own awareness? How far is that? It's always right here, right now. And the more of a like a a deep mystical illumination that you have or experience, the more you

realize it's always there right here,
right now, always. It's just that this
ego has just kind of spun off through
self-reference
and just thinks that it's separate from
everything else. But below that, and you
can have inklings of this even before
you're fully enlightened, you realize
that the the ego is not dealing with
reality.
And I think I better just move on to
Jimmy Lad's third question.
The title of this or the heading is
pursuit of an unproven absolute.
And he says,"I guess someone could ask,
why should I commit my entire life for
the cultivation of subtle mental states

with the idea that nirvana is possible? It seems if it's not possible, I've just wasted my life trying to pursue this theoretical absolute." Well, I mean, you haven't wasted your life. There's one example I've I've given before like a like a simile or a parable is there's a guy with this rock in the middle of his backyard. He keeps hitting it with the lawn mower. So, he decides he's going to move that rock. And so, he starts going out there and tugging and pushing and doing everything he can to move that rock. He just can't move it. And so, it just turns into a kind of ritual. Every day he's out there just pulling and and

tugging and just trying to to budge this thing to get it out of the middle of his yard. And finally, after, let's say, a year of this, he just gives up. And of course, I mean, he he couldn't have moved it at all because that's just the tip of this huge rock, most of which is underground that he can't even see. So, he just thinks, "Oh, I wasted a year just trying to move that rock, but he doesn't realize that. I mean, he's in way he's way more muscular than he was." You know, everybody else noticed it. Maybe he doesn't notice, but he's he's like buff, you know? He's he's stronger and healthier now because of trying to move that rock that he couldn't possibly

have moved anyway.

But the thing is this kind of question is it reminds me of there are two of the the five faculties that have to remain in balance that is pa and sada or in this case reason and faith that if you have too much of one you're not going to you're not going to succeed. You have too much faith and not enough reason then you can believe anything no matter how ridiculous it is. you know, you're just going to be soft-headed and misled again and again. But if you have too much reason and not enough faith, you're going to be lukewarm. You're not going to be motivated really to try much of

anything for lack of sufficient data.
You're just going to be skeptical and
lukewarm. And again, you're not going to
attain anything. So, you have to have a
kind of balance.
But even if you have faith in something
that isn't possible, like in like maybe
it's just unrealistic, you're not ripe
for enlightenment in this life, but
still you have faith that it's possible.
So you try, at the very least, it's
going to get you closer to the ideal.
Even if the the ultimate ideal were
totally impossible, at least you're
going to be purifying yourself. You're
going to be a better person, more
virtuous, more moral, more wise.

But there is a certain amount of faith that is required. I remember I used to always think that I mean faith was a kind of delusion. You know faith is thinking you know something that you don't really know. It's like belief. And I always considered myself to be more pun oriented than faith oriented more reasonoriented than than faith oriented. And I would say that to Burmese,

you know, people in Burma when I was living there and then they'd point out, well, I mean, here you are living in a cave with robes on thousands of miles away from your home. You know, that had

to be caused by something. You know, it wasn't just pure reason.

And that's true. I mean, there is a certain faith that Buddhism has some truth to it. I mean, if you can't even intuitively pick up on that, then it may be that you're still at such a samsaric level of functioning that I mean, it's like the intuition or just like sub intellectual awareness, you know, um it's just not ripened enough yet or something. I mean, if you're just basing your practice of dharma on trying to I mean using Emmanuel Kant's philosophy as some sort of stim stimulus to that or something then yeah I don't know how well it's going to work out. I mean it

can be that you can start off with kind of insufficient motives you know let's like Millera you know he got into dharma or like some semblance of dharma through a desire to cultivate like like magical powers you know he wanted to become like a wizard to get revenge on this evil uncle according to his autobiography or what's considered to be his autobiography photography. But then, you know, as you practice, if you practice correctly, then you get wiser and your motives for practice get wiser. Your understanding of why you're practicing and how to practice gets wiser. And so, you refine the whole approach.

And I hope I sound okay with without the the software from making the the audio sound good.

Let's see here. So, should I continue answering this question or let's see.

Why should you commit your entire life for the cultivation of subtle mental states

with the idea that nirvana is possible?

Well, I mean, you don't even have to believe that nirvana is possible. I mean, it's it's kind of a paradox. Even if it is possible, it's not possible within the context of samsara, even though Buddhist texts ex, you know, talk about it that way. But still, I mean, enlightenment or nirvana is just

completely off the scale of samsara. And
within a samsara context, it's just
pretty much meaningless.
So, it may require you to get beaten
over the head with something, have a
near-death experience, something that
has like this profound intuitive
mystical kind of effect on you to really
break break loose of just the chains of
intellect, so to speak.
And I don't know if really
that was an adequate answer to any of
those three questions, but
still it's almost an hour already. So
I'm going to move on to the next
question. This is from Sedart Loha and

he says, "Living in the USA, do you own any weapons? And if not, why not?" So that's two questions. I got to separate this.

These kind of questions are kind of nice where it's just like this. Oh, I pushed the wrong button here.

Okay. Oh, damn. Please. I'm having technical difficulties just trying to separate. Okay.

So, now these these are nice. You know, it's like one sentence with a question mark at the end.

Simple.

So, living in the USA, do you own any weapons? I do own a Glock 19.

9 millimeter that I haven't fired in

probably two years at this point.
You know, it's it's there in next to my bed in the in the nightstand just in case I'm awakened in the middle of the night with somebody breaking in.
I got a woman to protect and just a a home to protect to defend if necessary.
So, yeah, I do have a Glock 19 9mm. Also in the house, we've got a Ruger 22 rifle that I think has been fired a total of like twice,
but you don't want to use a 22 caliber rifle for home defense.
And uh I'm not likely to ever go hunting with it, but my father was a gun collector. I got a 22 rifle on the day I

was born

just as like a a zeroth birthday

present.

So I know about guns and guns are

interesting and I mean we there is the

the right to bear arms in America and

you know you never know when it might be

hand there might be a zombie apocalypse

for all you know.

So yeah I do have Glock 19. I've even

considered maybe getting one or two more

guns, but considering that I don't shoot

them. I mean, I grew up in the Pacific

Northwest where you want to shoot guns,

you go out into your big backyard,

living out in the country, or you just

drive a few miles till you get to a

logging road, go out on the on to the end of some logging road and shoot at cans, that kind of thing. That was easy. Here in South Carolina, I really don't know where there are any good logging roads like that. We have a tiny backyard here with surrounded by other tiny backyards

and so the only place really to shoot that I know of would be going to a shooting range which is kind of an artificial environment and I've never actually done that. Oh I guess I did that once in Aberdine Washington with a friend of mine who wanted to sight in a new rifle or something.

So I mean the short answer is yes I do
own weapons
have some knives too.
So the second question is now moot
because it's if not why not and it's it
isn't if not. So, I'm going to move on
to the next question, which is from
Tzasquez.
And I seem to remember Tzasquez is
asking two questions, but I only see one
here. So, if Trzas is asked two
questions,
and I think there was one kind of
question that was just kind of like a
joke question. Maybe that was it. So, I
didn't I didn't bother to put that on
the list. Anyways, Tzas says, "Have you

been somewhere to see those monks from Walk for Peace?" And no, I've I really don't have any interest in standing somewhere and watching monks walk by. They were going to come close to Greenville. And my sweetheart wanted to go in the morning and offer offer food to them, but then they changed routes because the weather got too cold or something. So instead of the upstate up in the hills, they decided to opt for farther east near the ocean in the lowlands where it doesn't get so cold. And so they didn't come close to us. I mean, they were in South Carolina. It's just they change routes because the

winter was getting too cold here, I
guess, up in the hills anyway.
But I mean, I've seen plenty of monks
and I've been a monk. You know, you just
look in the mirror, you see a monk when
you're a monk yourself. And it was uh I
I guess they're all Thai monks.
Pretty sure. I didn't notice any Western
monks when I would see footage,
but uh I didn't even hear about it until
like three weeks ago. There was some guy
at work who asked me if I was going to
go see my my former comrades.
And I didn't even know what he was
talking about. So then he tells me about
how these monks are are walking for
peace. And I just kind of made this

off-hand remark. Yes. Yeah. I'm sure them walking is going to end all the wars,

but

I mean I'm not opposed to anyone going to see monks and so forth. I mean it's one of the blessings in the Mongalas Suta, one of the 38 blessings is to see renuncience. And seeing a renuncient is um according to legend what caused the Buddha himself to renounce the world and eventually become the Buddha. He saw the holy man. He saw the renuncient and it inspired him to become like him.

But I mean, I didn't really I wasn't motivated enough to actually want to go

on a road trip just to see some monks walk by.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Newman. And Newman says, "When you said you weren't reaching the right deep meditative states after 20 years of practice, how did you progress before that wall hit?"

Well, I I don't think I said that I wasn't reaching the right deep meditative states. Oh, maybe he means that I wasn't that I was reaching them at first and then after like 20 years I stopped reaching them. Something like that. May that would be more correct. Um when I said I wasn't reaching the right deep meditative states after 20

years of practice, how did I progress before that wall hit? Well, you just your meditation just gets more and more subtle. You know, you just are your mind becomes less and less active and distracting.

Um

it's it's hard to explain, but sometimes like if you're meditating, you reach like a new level of meditation that's deeper than what you what you're used to. You start experiencing what is called pi. I think in in Hinduism it's called shockti where your body can just start like twitching and like almost vibrating you know it's like your

muscles are just twitching from this excess energy because you reach this more subtle mental state that uses less energy. It's like your brain is using less energy. It's less active. You know it's just sort of clear and and still. So that this energy that usually was being used up by thinking and so forth, it just has nowhere to go now. It's it's not used to this. And that in my opinion can cause feelings of like rushes of euphoria and excitement which can derail the meditation or just like muscle twitches and that kind of thing.

And so I just stopped breaking new ground after gosh around the year 2004 2005 something like that. I just I just

stopped progressing. You know, my my meditation just didn't didn't reach any new stages. It didn't get any quieter and I never really was able to master it. It would come and go.

So, how did I how did I progress before that wall hit? Well, pretty much like I said, it just your mind just gets into subtler and quieter and more still mental states where your awareness is just like more luminous, I guess you could say.

But then you get used to it and it's just

um I mean not only do you get used to it but in my case it was like I just did

not get into that deep of states anymore. It was like like backsliding for whatever reason. You know, every once in a while you just get a little glimmer of it, but nothing like in the year like around 2003 where consistently for months I could just sit down at least once a day for like at least an hour just not thinking, just wide awake, just still more conscious than usual and like the mind is just clear like glass. I mean, there's more to it than that. I mean, you can't really put it into words.

But it's really hard to explain stuff like this. I just not only did I stop getting into more and more subtle mental

states, but like the the most subtle mental states that I had attained, I wasn't able to get there except very rarely after that.

So, I'm just going to move on to Newman's next question.

Was there some kind of insight that definitively revealed to you that you had reached your utmost potential in this life for practice? Um, you know, it wasn't definitively re revealed to me that I had reached my utmost potential in this life for practice. It was just that I mean, like I was saying, I just stopped making progress. In fact, I was sort of retrogressing to some degree.

And I mean when you stop something stops working literally for several years. I mean it's just common sense that you try something else.

So I mean I'm still probably making progress. I would like to believe I'm still making some kind of spiritual progress. It's not the same kind that I would be making sitting alone in a cave in tropical Asia. But I mean, just having to learn how to interact and empathize with other beings, that kind of thing, is something that you can learn better as a lay person, then especially if you're in a relationship than living alone in a cave. So, it's just I've sort of changed directions to

some degree or just kind of changed tac.
You know, any of those any of you out
there who know about sailing, you know,
my tack has changed.
But the ultimate goal, I suppose, is the
same. It's just a different approach
because the old approach just had
stopped working and it was just a matter
of common sense. I mean, if something
doesn't work for several years, chances
are you should try something different.
So, I'm moving on. Next question. This
is from RFS.
And RFS says, "Did you know of any
Westerner who disroed to live a lay life
in Burma? What would the social status

be of the newly disroed layman in Burma?" Well, this is three questions. Damn, we got more questions than I thought. So now I got to separate them. One moment please.

You got three questions here instead of one. So RFS's first question. Did you know of any Westerner who disroed to live a Lee life in Burma? Yeah, I knew one one person. He was an Australian monk. He'd been a monk for maybe 14 years.

And then he went back to Australia to teach Dharma and apparently fell in love with one of the like the meditation retreat organizers.

And then within a relatively short time,

she just kind of turned on him and just like viciously like just dumped him and and just I mean dumped on him also just kind of turned against him. And then he wound up marrying a Burmese woman whose family had been living in Mesa in Thailand, which is where Rambo lived for a while if you watch that movie.

And they were uh I mean it was sort of like black market stuff, smuggling. They made a lot of money smuggling stuff between uh Thailand and Burma. And so he married into this very rich almost, you know, almost like a mafia kind of Burmese. And uh yeah, so I think he's still married to her, but I don't think

they're living in Burma anymore. Ever since that the military coup thing happened a few years ago, I think they just bailed out. But he was living in in Burma for years as a lay person.

So next question from RFS. What would the social status be of the newly disroed layman in Burma? Um, well, the newly disroed layman in Burma, I mean, if if it's a Burmese citizen who is newly disroed. I mean, they wouldn't his social status would probably be a little higher than it was before because he had been a monk. You know, he had really renounced for at least a short time. You know, almost all Burmese men are monks temporarily for at least a few

days in their life. It's it's almost like a a manhood ritual. You know, a boy is ordained as a novice. It's called shinpug. You know, it's it's sort of like the the initiation into manhood almost. So, I mean, even the king of Thailand is ordained as a monk for a short time, at least as a novice, you know, just walking through the the the town with his alms, silently begging for alms kind of probably with attendants and like servants and stuff with him.

So, the social status of the newly disabled layman in Burma, yeah, I mean, it's that's just the way it is in Burma.

like almost all men have been dis have
been monks who disrote in Burma all the
all the Buddhist ones anyway most of
them
with regard to a westerner or a non-
Burmese person who had been a monk and
disroed I'm not exactly sure because I
mean I only know of one really
and I really don't know what the
attitude of other lay people would be
towards him now when they just meet him
they don't know that he was a monk and
then when they hear that he had been a
monk for 13 or 14 years, I'm sure they
would be impressed by that. You know,
they'd think, whoa, you know, that's
that's good. So, yeah, I mean, dropping

out of the monkhood is so common in

Burma and Thailand that I mean, there's

no,

you know, there's no onus. What is it?

There's no stigma attached to that

unless you're you're disroed in disgrace

or something.

you know, you you you're like kicked out

of the SA for committing a SADA offense,

you know, some monk.

Um,

yeah. I mean, I remember the medical

officer in in Layier village. I lived

close to Lie village

for years and the medical officer there

had formerly been a monk and he dropped

out out of love for one of the village village girls and they got married and you know he's still I mean he's the medical officer so that's still a respected position. Sometimes people would make goodnatured jokes at his expense that kind of thing you know but it was friendly. I mean it wasn't like vicious or hostile. nothing like you'd see on social media in the West.

So,

yeah, I guess I answer that question. I'm going to move on to RFS's third question. Did locals look down on Westerners who married Burmese women? Well, I mean, like I said, I only met one and he didn't I mean, he lived in

town. I lived out in the woods. I really didn't see like his social interactions with his neighbors and that sort of thing. Um,

it would depend on on the locals. I mean, some Burmese people are kind of racist. You know, they're like they're Burmese chauvinists. You know, the Burmese are the only people who can truly understand dharma. There's lots of Burmese people who believe that, especially the like the upper class college educated ones. You know, they're very chauvinistic with regard to being Burmese. And one of the best blessings they could give somebody is, you know,

may you be Burmese in your next life?
That kind of thing.
But uh let's see. Did locals look down
on westerners who married Burmese women?
I never really I never really noticed
that. I think that they probably
consider the the Westerner to be
fortunate to get himself a nice Burmese
girl. I mean, I've in the West, I knew
at least a few Western men who had
married Burmese women and and they were
just accepted. I mean, they were kind of
seen as a little bit comical by the
Burmese community because they didn't
really fit in. You know, they couldn't
speak Burmese very well. They didn't
know the customs and all that. So, they

would they would be kind of awkward. You know, they'd go to a religious ceremony or something, they wouldn't know exactly what to do because they hadn't been doing it since they were toddlers, that kind of thing. So there'd be a little bit of amusement, but I mean the Burmese as a general rule are just very open accepting people. They've got a lot of what would be called Christian charity, which is doesn't mean like generosity making donations. It just means accepting others for what they are. So yeah, I wouldn't say I mean some of them might, some of them probably would, but most of them wouldn't. And I'm

moving on to the next question. This is

from Anguli Mala

and

yeah, Anguly Mala asks a transgressive

fourth question

and his first question

is not transgressive but it's it's

rather long and I think he this is like

a followup to a question he asked before

with a different name.

So, Anguli Mala says, "Is it unskillful

to do body weightight exercises at least

twice per week for the purpose of

maintaining a baseline of functional

strength and endurance for longevity?

I'm not talking about 200 push-ups. I'm

talking about 50 push-ups, 10 pull-ups,

broad jump for general athleticism, and a run around the neighborhood. Nothing actually fancy or excessive things a teenager could do. All of these things train fundamental human movement patterns that we all use in our daily lives. Why would a monk do that? Because monks are humans too with bodies that are designed to move to be healthy. I say this as a personal trainer.

I just really don't think chop wood carry water is actually enough to maintain real health, especially while aging. A rounded full body routine can be maintained with relatively little effort. So long as you're not being

reprimanded for it. I hope he doesn't go keto too if he's a mom. But he continues here. My final justification. I'll have more energy, clarity, and ease of movement to move through life. Therefore, studying, understanding, and living the dharma will become much easier. If it happens to beautify me, then great. But if not, then it should still be done for general maintenance. Also, it's proven that healthy looking people tend to have more charisma and are generally more likable, therefore more likely to successfully transmit the dhamma to a learner. And then he says, "If I were a monk in your monastery, would you allow this based on my

reasoning?" And then I responded in the comments under the YouTube video that I mean running around the block long jumping wearing monk's robes that would be considered inappropriate just from the the traditional Buddhist point of view. Um with regard to push-ups and sit-ups and that kind of thing. If he did it in the privacy of his own cabin, of his own room or cell, then that might not be a problem. But I don't know of any any monk that would go jogging. I I've saw a couple monks riding bicycles. They were like the really lax, unconscientious kind of monks riding bicycles and people would just like

snigger at them because they were not behaving appropriately in accordance with Burmese tradition.

So anyways, he can So after I said that, you know, it's like jogging and and long jumps, that kind of thing. Yeah, that would that would not be considered appropriate. But I mean, with regard to other exercises, it would depend on how cool the abbott was that with regard to that sort of thing. So then he had a follow-up question. If you had your own monastery and you got to make the rules, would you allow your monks to have a basic routine? Having nothing at all besides general choring and walking seems to be just one step above total

mortification.

I mean, this just strikes me as as like almost crazy talk. But then he continues. He says, "Also, calisthenics equals using your own body weight as resistance for training, push-ups, pull-up, lunge, etc. Plyometrics equals explosive exercises like jumping. Isometrics is exercising without moving like hanging from a bar to train grip strength or just pushing one hand against the other like that. Cardio equals walking, running, and sprinting. And for many people who have had wicked injuries in the past, like myself, even just staying on top of the

degradation with rehabilitation exercises for medical reasons should be valid. I myself have a cooked left shoulder from nearly losing my arm. So doing exercises like pull-ups are massively helpful. So that's the whole question is mainly can he continue doing like you know relatively intensive physical exercise and training if he were ordained as a monk. I mean that would be sufficient for a question you don't need paragraphs.

Um

I mean again I mean jogging no I mean that you'd have to have just a completely lax just anything is okay kind of abbot or monastery that would

let monks just be jogging for their health. And there's one statement I mean I said it was sort of borderline crazy talk here. Let's see. Having nothing at all besides general choring and walking seems to be just one step above total modification. I mean,

no. I mean, I was healthy. I was in relatively good shape. I mean, walking every day, and if you're living out in a forest, one thing I've noticed is it's like the caveman instincts arise more. And for some reason, it's just like your testosterone levels go up just naturally, just roughing it in a wilderness. So that I mean I was in

relatively good shape as a monk even though I wasn't doing long jumps or jogging around the village.
I mean if it was that important you'd think that the Buddha would have said something other than just walking is about the best meditation you can get. I mean you don't need to be muscular to practice dharma. In fact, to some degree, it is not to your benefit to be like buff, to be sculpted, to be a Chad if you're a monk because it's like your vitality increases, the strength of your urges kind of increases, you know, your tes testosterone goes up and it's it's like rajasic going with like yogic yogic language, you know, it's it's uh to some

degree, I mean, physically it might be really nice, but like spiritually

It's it's sort of moving in the wrong direction.

And to think that you're just one step above total mortification just from like staying active. I mean, it's it's like someone has been indoctrinated into like this materialistic thinking of, you know, sort of like some of these keto doctors. Sometimes I should just say doctors

on on YouTube that, you know, it's just like they're they're spouting off these like enzymes and stuff that nobody's ever heard of, talking about how

important they are. And it's like doing

this or eating that is going to, you

know, increase the levels of this

enzyme. nobody's ever heard of before up

until maybe six months ago. It's it's

just

it's mind over matter.

So long as your body is healthy enough

that your mind can be healthy, that's

good enough.

I mean, if if you really do have some

kind of physical,

you know, dability that requires

exercise, that's fine. And I do admit

that after I came back to America, I did

have one dumbbell, like a 25 lb

dumbbell, and I did some exercises with

that in the privacy and silence of my own room or the the trailer I moved into, but I wouldn't be doing it out in public where people could see me do it because that would be considered inappropriate. And if you consider like plyometrics
to be more important than striving for enlightenment where I mean if you can't have the plyometrics you're just not going to ordain.
Well, you've made your choice.
But I really don't think there's anything necessarily wrong with doing some like calisthenics. Maybe not jumping jacks so much, but quiet, you

know, sit-ups, push-ups, maybe get a dumbbell, lift some weights a little bit just to keep you healthy, as you say, that's fine. But yeah, if you're going to if you really have to like jog and do long jumps and that kind of thing, then I mean that may disqualify you from being a serious beu. any any like monastery that would allow that sort of thing would probably be pretty lax and not really oriented towards the cultivation of wisdom anyway.

So I'm just going to move on to Anguli Mala's next question here says can you talk more about Millera and his life and I already mentioned Millera some time ago in this Q&A I read his autobiography

which was edited by Evans Wentz I think it was Oxford University Press something like that and Miller was a Tibetan person I don't I don't remember what year he lived in but his father died and his mother was supporting his family as well as she could. And there was like this uncle that swindled them out of their property, you know, while pretending to be like the the guardian of the family, you know, he just sort of took possession of their property and wouldn't give it back. That kind of thing. So the mother being vindictive, she just kind of poisoned little Millera's mind against this uncle and

urged him to become like a black magician, like a sorcerer who would get revenge for the, you know, this righteous vengeance against the evil uncle. So that's what Millera did as a young man. He trained as like a black magician. And I'm sure there are black magicians in Tibet or at least were up until the Chinese pretty much took over. You know, there are still black magicians in Burma, for example. And so, um, he pretty much killed his uncle and his uncle's immediate family. Um, he generated some kind of giant scorpion or something that smashed the house that his uncle was was in at the time. It was like a big feast celebrating their

ripping off of Millerpa's mama probably. But then afterwards he had a change of heart, you know, he he had like the root of wisdom. And so that kind of triggered this realization that that's really not the way to go about it. And he became this um

just I mean he was ordained as a monk after that like a Buddhist monk not just a like a a black magician sorcerer you know he he had a change of heart a realization and so he was ordained as some kind of Tibetan I don't maybe he wasn't even ordained it could be that because his teacher I think was Marpa the translator who was married and was

not a monk so I'm I'm not even 100% sure if Millera was formally ordained ained into a Buddhist order or not or just became sort of like a like a freelance free agent kind of Buddhist renuncient. But he uh he went out into the the wilderness and just lived alone and he was living mainly on nettles. He was eating a lot of nettles until his clothes finally just rotted off and he turned green from just living on a diet predominantly composed of nettles. So he was like this scraggy, filthy, matted hair, long fingernails, green being living in a cave. And so the villagers just thought he was a monster. They were scared shitless of him. He did say that

once he dropped in in his autobiography, he had this clay pot that he cooked his nettles in. He dropped it and the the clay shattered, but the the shell of green nettle residue still remained intact.

and he wrote lots of poetry sort of like Hanson in China you know he was sort of like a Tibetan Hans

and so he's mainly famous because of not just the autobiography but also these poems that he wrote I can't remember how many but there's lots and lots of them

and so he's considered to be a great sage and based on the autobiography he definitely was very committed is

radically committed to practicing dharma as as at a the most the deepest level that he could manage. So I think he might be qualified as a saint even though he did kill his own uncle and his uncle's entire immediate family when he was younger.

So let's see here.

I can't remember. He's associated with I think it's the red the red hats in Tibet. Nying ma. Is that is that correct? I'm no authority on Tibetan Buddhism.

Anyways,

yeah, I think he is associated with the so-called red hats in in Tibet.

So, I'm going to move on to Anguly

Mala's third question.

And this is kind of a strange one. Maybe I should just skip this one and and answer the the fourth one. But it says, "If you had to give an answer, which modern nation, which modern nation would be most closely aligned with how the Buddha lived during his life?" Northern India still somewhere else in Eurasia. Issue is that most of the ethnic peoples in modern northern India are largely not Indo-arian. So that would change my answer.

Um

yeah, I'm not exactly sure how like the ancestry of the people would really

necessarily change how closely aligned they would be with how the Buddha lived during his life.

Because I mean I haven't lived everywhere in the world, you I I'm not closely familiar with every single culture on earth, but based on my experience

that I mean like living in rural Burma, a villager in rural Burma is comes about as close as you're going to find to the way people were living in the Buddhist time or or like how Buddhists lived, you know, shortly after the Buddhist time. You know, you still have I mean things are changing fast in Burma now. Like most villages are starting to get

electricity. Most people have cell phones now. But when I was living there like in the 90s and the the as the teens, I mean in the teens it was the Chinese motor scooters and and cell phones and internet and electricity to the villages. It was starting to become pretty common. But before that, you know, before like 2011,
you know, it was still people were living pretty much the way people were living in the Buddhist time. You know, they'd have radios, flip-flops, a little bit of electricity based on like their own generator that they would use mainly for just charging batteries, that kind

of thing. But the men would still take their team of bullocks out to the fields to plow. the the girls would still be carrying clay pots on their head to the well or the the river to fetch water for the the shack, that kind of thing. And and and they're just devout Buddhists who take Buddhism seriously. It's not like Western Buddhists who just kind of tack it on to an ordinary secular life. You know, just add some Buddhist flavoring to a just a standard American secular lifestyle. You know, they're, you know, they're just born and raised. are immersed in Buddhist culture from the time they are born.

So I would guess that it's probably like

rural Burma. I don't I don't know what it's like in like northern India. Some areas of northern India might even come closer.

I don't know. But it's sort of the lack of wealth in Burma keeps them, you know, closer to a preodern standard of living and preodern lifestyles. Whereas in India probably it's you know, I mean, India is not an extremely rich country, but at least, you know, they've got they're they've got more development going than the the rural areas of Burma. So, I guess I answered that one. And the transgressive fourth question is talking about Indo-arian Cyian origins of the

Sakya clan. And that's just conjecture. And I mean it's largely based on the resemblance of the word sakya which was the Buddha's own clan or ethnicity with the word cythian or saka and the sakas did invade India later on too like around what one or 200 of the common era something like that. So I mean that's just conjecture really. It is possible that the Buddha had essentially cythian origins that that spoke like an Iranic language

and then they just kind of you know they would have probably moved in relatively early on and just sort of got absorbed into Vadic culture to some degree. they were still living on the outskirts of

Vadic culture which uh I think it was like Richard Gomerich in one or two of his books pointed out that that's one reason why the Buddha didn't just become like a like a a Hindu sage that he's just kind of established his own tradition because he from the beginning he was on the outskirts of Vadic tradition you know just kind of at the verge of it and he could see it with a critical eye and wasn't just sucked into it and just decided to go a different direction, a slightly somewhat different direction. Anyway,

but as far as I know, the just the name Sakya or Shakya and the words Saka and

Cythian, I mean, there's enough of a superficial resemblance that at least it seems plausible to me that the Shakias or Sakias of the Buddha's family were related to Cythians.

And I'm just moving on to the next question. This is from Fred and Fred says, "Can we have your ideas on what spirit is? What is the container for karma and fruition seeds?" So that's two questions. Continually having to separate. We got more questions than I originally counted because sometimes you got this block question that turns out having like two or three different question marks.

So Cred says, "Can we have your ideas on

what spirit is?" And I mean asking what spirit is is like asking a a physicist what energy is. You know in a way it's like the fundamental essence of the universe in my opinion. I do think that the entire universe is just pervaded by consciousness.

So in that sense I mean it's just spirit is just

consciousness or just in a way sort of like mental aliveness.

Um but a lot of physicists I mean they can't really define energy very well. You know it's almost like an undefined term. You have to start somewhere. I mean you can't have an infinite regress

of definitions. you know this term is
defined in these words and these words
are defined in those words and those
words are defined. I mean it would take
an infinite regress eventually you have
to wind up with some kind of circular
definition
unless you just start with undefined
terms and like energy in physics is kind
of that way and spirit or or
consciousness
in
I don't know my metaphysics I guess
would be similar. though it's just sort
of like the essence of
gosh it's the uncarved block of marble I
guess but that's like in the the

absolute sense but then when spirit gets so
convoluted and self-reflective that it starts just identifying with itself and considering itself to be separate from everything else that's a different kind of spirit that's like samsaric delusional kind of spirit
So it's sort of like in uh in some like quantum physics they have this idea that you know empty space can contain can be said to contain infinite energy.
So that would be sort of like the first kind of spirit in the absolute sense.
But then like manifest forms of energy like electricity running through this

computer that would be like the samsaric
you know formed not formless but like
manifest kind of of energy and that
would be sort of like a thinking mind or
mental states. it would be that kind of
spirit.
But it's it's very difficult to define
something like that.
I mean, it's just sort of like the
ultimate fundamental essence,
which I mean, it doesn't really rely on
anything before it in a sense.
Maybe you could say it's like Hegel's
pure being, which is indistinguishable
from pure non-being, which again is like
paradoxical and it just doesn't work
trying to explain it in a really clear

like intellectually valid manner.

So, I'm just going to move on to Fred's next question. What is the container for karma and fruition seeds?

Um, I mean, karma, I mean, it's it's its own container. You don't really need a container. And it looks like I'm starting to lag, which is unfortunate. Although, at least the battery is back up to 58%.

So, I mean, it's like I was thinking earlier, it's like you turn on the faucet at the kitchen sink and the stream of water comes down in this coherent stream. So, what's the container of that? What's holding it

together like that? Well, it's like the cohesive properties of water itself. And so you could say like karma or like yeah, karma fruition seeds, whatever. It's like the the momentum of like a stream of of spirit. what's holding it together is just like the the similarities and sort of like the the cohesiveness of it keep it together without there having to be any kind of shell around it. You know, it's just the nature of these mental states. You know, they all have like the same theme, the same kind of flavor. So, they just cohhere. you know, they they appear to to be like this unified mass when really it's just their similarities

cause them to be moving together in the
same direction. That kind of thing.
Now, what's the container of a flame?
Well, you could say it's the fuel,
I suppose.
But I mean, the a flame doesn't have
what appears to be the outline of the
flame is not some sort of container for
it. And in a way, it's just kind of an
illusion.
So karma is just the momentum of certain
manifest aspects of spirit
and if they have the same kind of
momentum then they're considered to
belong to the same being and they appear
to belong to the same being

although ultimately that being is an illusion.

So I'm just going to move on to Fred's next question.

Areans emotionally inert? Well, like subjectively they might be, outwardly not necessarily. Outwardly, Arhans can still apparently show emotions. I mean, if you consider

Nim Karoli Baba up there, if you consider him to have been an Aron and he even if he wasn't an arant, he was like just extremely abnormally spiritually advanced.

I mean, he would be yelling and laughing and crying and just behaving like outwardly like an ordinary person.

Well, maybe not like a totally ordinary one, but still he was acting like a human.

And one reason why he was acting like a human is because he's in a human body interacting with other humans.

So, uh, like Ram Das used to say about Nim Curly Baba, it's like the better you got to know him, the more you realize there really wasn't anybody there. He was just like a mirror reflecting your own karma back at you. And if an orahant is like that where there's subjectively internally nobody there but they're just like a mirror reflecting your own karma back at you then there could be some

emotional karma getting reflected back

at you.

I mean, it's like inert is kind of a

good term in that it's sort of like

they've got denatured emotions like what

they do isn't generating karma anymore.

So, it has still has the the outward

appearance of emotions, I suppose, but

it's just it doesn't have like the the

karmic momentum or what's it what's like

the the impetus to it anymore. It's like

denatured.

So,

but if you go with like orthodox terra

then yeah even then an arant could still

have subtle emotions like an arhan can

still smile he won't laugh anymore he

won't cry but he can still smile that

kind of thing

and it seems to me that just to function

as a kind of nonroot

requires like a certain amount of

emotion or irrationality even to form

like webs of association and

understanding things bringing up

memories from the past you know it's

like you kind of latch onto a certain

emotional flavor to it which helps bring

up the memory what you're trying to

remember that kind of thing I mean I

think emotion is just sort of built in

to a human being and a fully enlightened

human being still has that default

setting even though it's It's denatured in a way.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Caveman.

And Caveman says, "What are your predictions about AI? Do you think AGI is a near possibility?" In other words, do you think the average person could become more or less obsolete within a few decades? Yeah, I don't remember what the G stands for and AGI, artificial something intelligence, but I assume it means like really sentient or at least such a good mimicry of sentience that it might as well be sentient for all outward purposes.

Um, what are my predictions about AI? I

mean, I really I mean, you really can't predict what's going to happen if the the technological singularity hits. If artificial intelligence becomes more intelligent than we are and and is able to act on its own
what's its own initiative, you know, it starts acting independently of people. you know, it starts like, you know, deciding, well, what that human wants me to do is not appropriate. I'm not going to do that. I'm gonna do something else. You know, if computers start doing that, you know, they get to this level of complexity of of function that they're able to just kind of defy their own

inputs and just act on their own
initiative.
And furthermore, they're they're like
self-improving,
you know, just through what's what's it
called? Recursive self-programming,
then yeah, there's absolutely no telling
what's going to happen. That it's it's
going to be a singularity. You can't see
what's on the other side of it. Just
like you can't see, you know, what
happens on the other side of a black
hole or what happened before the big
bang. It's just you cannot begin to
predict if if some intelligence becomes
a billion times more intelligent than we
are as as much more intelligent than we

are as we are more intelligent than cockroaches or amiebas then there's no way in hell you can predict what was going to happen and some people just insist that couldn't possibly happen you know like a Burmese Abidama scholar would say no you need kama ja rupa and true consciousness cannot arise in a computer etc etc

But I don't see why not. If consciousness can arise in a blob of gray meat, why can't it arise in circuitry that sort of mimics the blob of gray meat? The circuitry of the blob of gray meat.

So, let's see. Do I think AGI or

sentient computers I assume is what it

what it means is a near possibility?

Yeah, it's a possibility. Anything's

possible.

So, do I think the average person could

become more or less obsolete within a

few decades? Yeah, it's possible. It's

going to depend on our karma. So, we're

just going to have to wait and find out.

I guess

it is kind of I mean, it is unfortunate.

It's like the AI race now is like

another nuclear arms race where

even Elon Musk used to warn that that

artificial intelligence is sort of like

the sorcerer's apprentice or you know

the sorcerer who's trying to conjure a a

demon and he's got you know the pentagram drawn correctly and he's got the holy water and the Bible and everything but he always just forgets one thing and the demon always manages to get out and start running a muck. So even Elon Musk was warning against that. And then I remember seeing a post of his on I think it was on X where he's saying well I mean it's it's it's still moving forwards that the AI race is happening. It's pretty much unavoidable. So he can either be a a passive observer or he can participate. And so he said well if I participate at least I can try and steer it in a safer direction. make sure that

the holy water and the Bible work to keep the the the demon contained, that kind of thing. But I mean, it's it's a nuclear arms race at this point. China is working really hard to get the super AI and so the Americans and anyone else that is has the the ability to do it is they can't let China just develop the super AI and and we're still like living like Amish people, relatively speaking. I mean, it's just it's it's it's like the nuclear arms race all over again. And at least the nuclear arms race, I mean, people were warning that it was going to destroy us. That you you had generals and other high-profile people in government saying World War World War

III thermonuclear Armageddon is is inevitable. It's going to happen sooner or later. We just don't know exactly when. During the height of the Cold War, they were like bigwigs saying that kind of stuff.

But we're still alive. And it may be that I mean this whole AI scare is another kind of flash in the pan. Not that nukes are aren't still dangerous. I mean obviously they are. In some ways they're even more dangerous because you've got like third world countries now that have nukes.

So yeah, anything is possible and I really cannot predict what's going to

happen. I'm just willing to just keep my mouth shut, try not to prophesy on the issue and just, you know, accept that anything is possible and just wait to see what happens.

And so I'm moving on to Caveman's second question. And caveman also wrote or asked a transgressive fourth question, but we haven't got there yet. Caveman's second, not yet transgressive question is, "What are your thoughts on Nietze's work?" And I have to admit I was never particularly interested in Nietze that I've tried to read I read his antichrist and I have to admit that Min's introduction to the antichrist was more interesting to me and more readable than

the antichrist itself. I tried to read

thus speak Zarathustra

and I I was the same as uh what Carl

Benjamin Sargon of a CAD he said in one

of his videos he got as far as the

tightroppe walker that falls off the

tightroppe and breaks his leg and that

was the same as and that's about as far

as I got with it too. It's just Nietze

writes in two like it's like this weird

poetic

almost surreal kind of style that I just

can't relate to. If I'm going to read

philosophy, you know, I want it to be

philosophical more than just kind of

artistic and religious and surreal.

And also Nichzche's philosophy itself.

Um

I just you know I think the main contribution NZ made to western philosophy was the idea that God is dead. you know, it's it's more of a sociological thing of, you know, how is civilization going to progress now that most people are practically atheists and he just had this will to power idea that I mean it's it's very sort of anti-anti- Buddhist. In fact, in Bertrand Russell's history of of Western philosophy, he has this imaginary debate between Nietze and the Buddha. He didn't understand the Buddha very well. That's

Bert and Russell, not Nze. Nietze probably didn't understand the Buddha very well either. I much prefer Nietze's forerunner Schopenhau to Nze as a philosopher. Although I don't think Schopenhau is 100% correct either.
I think Schopenhau was too much under the spell of Plato.
So Nichzche's work I mean I don't think the world would be really impoverished if Nze had never existed. I don't think the world would be a worse place without Nietze in it.
So I mean there are some admirers of na especially people that maybe have like a little bit of a fascistic streak you

know or just you know they like the idea of the will to power and the superman and you know sort of stratification of society with you know the superiors the you know the overmen ruling over the undermen that kind of thing. But I mean, mainly it was just his writing style just put me off. I just could not even really get into anything that he wrote just because I just don't like his writing style.

So, I'm just going to move on to caveman's third question.

What percentage of monks do you think have gone at least one year or so without masturbating or even a nocturnal emission? And how many lay people?

God. And then with masturbating, I assume he means to orgasm, not just he means like fully spanking the puppy and not just petting it a little bit. So what percentage of monks do I think have gone at least one year without or no? No. He says or even having a nocturnal admission. I really can't say. I mean, Asian monks on the one hand, most of them are not conscientious monks. And I've been told that most noviceses really do spank the puppy. And so, if you're in the habit of it, when you're a novice and then when you become 19 or 20 and are ordained, it's hard to break that habit once you've already got it

going. So, it's it's really hard to say.
I mean, I never really pried into this.
I never wanted to find out.
So, I mean, and then the not having a
nocturnal emission. I mean, that that
really just kind of throws a whole
monkey wrench into it because in my
case, I mean, it was just a natural
thing. About every two weeks, I would
have a nocturnal emission just to keep
the the hormones in check. You know, you
just have to overflow.
And when you're young and dumb and and
full of like precious bodily fluids,
then
that that can happen. I mean, it's just
it just overflows spontaneously in your

sleep.

But then again, like the Asians, even though on average, they're not as strict as Western monks or monks who are not born into a Buddhist culture and kind of really have a strong resolve to follow Dharma rather than just following their culture. I mean, there's that, but there's also the fact that like Burmese monks, probably Thai monks, East Asian monks, don't have as as high of testosterone levels as Caucasians do. And Caucasians in turn do not have as high of testosterone levels as say subsaharan Africans do.

So, I really can't say. I mean, I would

like to think that most monks don't spank the puppy.

And I really never saw any evidence other than, you know, a little bit of hearsay like rumors and stuff, you know, like I had one monk, an American monk tell me that most of the the the novices, you know, teenage boys who are in lesser orders, they really do spank the puppy.

And then, you know, it just kind of like a logical progression. And you know, if you're in the habit of doing that as a novice, then just being fully ordained probably isn't just going to shut off the momentum of that.

But I don't know. I think the the ties

tend to be naughtier with regard to their sexual excesses than the Burmese. The Burmese are just amazingly stoic and just I mean a lot of monks, a lot of Burmese monks, they don't even particularly like girls or boys. It's like when I was living at Mahagandon, which is a big school monastery near Mandalay, there was several hundred monks there. And sometimes there'd be like this, you know, this little this little bevy, this little cluster of, you know, teenage Burmese girls or young Burmese women dressed in their best clothes, all, you know, their hair all nice and everything. They're walking by

and I'm there's like a bunch of monks
walking the other way in front of me and
not a single head turns. You know, they
don't they don't even bother to look.
They're not interested. Or you're
driving down the road,
you know, there's a a carload of monks
with some lay person driving the car.
Driving down the road and there's like a
a public well by the side of the road
and there's like two or three young
women bathing there. And you know, they
wear like a bathing song. They're not
naked, but still it's wet plastered to
their body. And there was only one
Burmese monk that I knew whose head
would turn

when we would drive by that.
Muslim, it's just they're so I mean,
they're practically asexual. I mean,
there was an American monk that I used
to hang out with in Burma and he had we
had this kind of a joke. It's like, you
know, how do Burmese women even get
pregnant?
I mean, there's there's no privacy, you
know? They're living in the same house
with three kids and grandma, maybe the
the the spinster aunt living in the same
one room shack.
You know, it's like maybe it's just that
most Burmese children are descended from
doctors or something. It's like the the

the mother the woman goes to the doctor

and she comes home pregnant or

something. It's just weird.

But in Thailand, they're they're

definitely more sensual than in Burma.

But with regard to what percentage

I mean

I mean just ignoring the nocturnal

emissions, which is not against the

rules, just masturbating. I would hope

that less than half of the SA spans the

puppy.

I mean, I would hope.

And with regard to lay people, I would I

would guess it's most of them unless I

mean you're just in a steady

relationship with somebody and you're

sexually active and don't need to do that.

But I mean, you asked the wrong guy with regard to that question because really I it would just be like a wild guess.

But I was a monk living among Burmese monks in Burma for more than 20 years. I was a monk for 30 years. And I just never really caught a whiff of this kind of thing. Maybe it's just because it's private personal thing and nobody shared it with me, but

I just really have no data. Not just insufficient data. I have practically zero data upon which to base this.

And then there's the progressive or the

transgressive fourth question about
dark projects happening underground,
governments and corporations making
human clones and human animal hybrids
and stuff.
Yeah, I mean that's kind of a similar
question where I mean again it would
just be like a wild guess based on just
hunches or you know imagination just
pure conjecture because I really don't
know and it's it's a fourth question
anyway so I'm just going to move on to
the next question.
This is from Romeo
and Romeo says if we have no self then
who or what gets passed on to be reborn
in the next life and that's the only

thing that that moves from one life to the next is karma. That's the only thing you take with you is your karma at least according to Buddhist philosophy.
And your karma is essentially volition or will in the schopenhauian sense you know it's chana in in poly which is usually translated as volition but I think will like in the sense of schopenhau saying the world is will and representation. So it's like samsara is volition and perception. I mean that's essentially what he was saying and I can I can get on board with that.
So yeah, it's just the momentum of your mental states. That's that's what will

is. It's habit energy.

And it's it doesn't really need a

container. Like I was saying to Fred,

you know, it's just like they're all,

you know, the same type, the same kind

of general flavor moving in the same

general direction, just maybe with a

certain cohesiveness like water

molecules or something.

And I mean, it doesn't really need a

being any more than a flame needs a

flameness

entity to hold everything together. It's

just

so long as the causes are there, the the

the the effects are going to be there.

And if you want to eliminate the

effects, you have to eliminate the
cause. Just like if you want to put out
a fire, you have to eliminate the causes
or at least one of the essential causes
of that fire.
take away the fuel, take away the
oxygen, or take away the heat.
And pouring water on it essentially
takes away the heat, I'm pretty sure,
because liquid water can't get hotter
than 100° Celsius,
at least at normal atmospheric pressure.
So yeah, I mean all the only thing that
gets passed on to be reborn in the next
life according to Buddhist philosophy is
your karma which is the momentum of your

mental states. It's like the kinetic

aspect of your mental states.

So

I'm just going to move on to the next

question. This is from Phily's

and we've already been going for two

hours. I hope this isn't going to be a

three and a half hour one, especially

because uploading it onto Bitshoot means

I have to reduce the size of the file

because it's it's just too big. It can

be like eight gigs.

Anyways, Phil Ley says, "Is beverage

your favorite word?" And no, it is not.

In the past, I've considered that my

favorite word is supposedly.

I like the word supposedly.

Also, the word curvaceious just has this opulence to it that I like, but beverage is a nice word.

Yeah.

So, let's see here. I'm just going to move on to Phil Ley's next question. How old were you when you started making old man noises? I don't know. probably I mean I was probably like in my 40s when I heard like junior Burmese monks mentioning that I kind of vocalize a lot when I'm like you know grunting when you pick up something heavy that kind of thing

but I don't know I'm not exactly sure what kind of old man noises

is being referred to here but just kind of vocalizing when you get out of a chair you know grunting that kind of stuff

I don't know I didn't write it down the first time I did it So, who knows? So, next question. Phil Le says, "Thoughts on circumcision and are you?" Yeah, it's it was just a matter of time before somebody starts asking about my junk. Seriously,

I mean, next next people it's like they're going to be asking about like length and girth or something, but yeah, I'm not going I'm really not going to be describing my own genitalia on a Q&A, but thoughts on circumcision. I mean, it

apparently is sort of like a Eastern Mediterranean thing originally. It's not just Hebrews, but I think like Arabs and like maybe the ancient Egyptians may have done it too. Pretty sure. I mean it sort of a Semitic and maybe Hammedic thing.

And I mean supposedly I mean the official explanation for it is it has something to do with hygiene. You know it's like no moist crevice. you're removing an unnecessary moist crevice that could harbor, you know, icky substances or pathogens or something. Although, I'm I'm really not sure. That could just be like a convenient

rationalization for it. Um, I' I've read
somewhere that the Hebrews in particular
practiced circumcision as a replacement
for child sacrifice.
You know, it's like the firstborn. I
mean like in the Bible it's talking
about you know you sacrifice the
firstborn of your livestock and it may
have been at one time very very early on
maybe even preoses
that you know even your firstborn child
would be sacrificed you know some like
the phoenetians they they certainly had
part of the mainstream sacrificing their
own children
to moolak or whatever and so it was just
sort of cutting off a bit of skin was

sort of like some symbolic substitute

for, you know, putting them into the

brazen bull or whatever.

But

yeah, I will say that in America in the

1960s when I was born, it was just the

common practice. It was like the default

setting that most guys were circumcised.

And uh

I mean it's it seems like being

uncircumcised is a natural state. We did

evolve that way. Apparently didn't have

any like really Darwinian

like negative effects on the human race.

So yeah, I assume it's largely a

cultural thing having to do with

Christianity and Christianity being
based in Judaism which insisted on
circumcision.
Although Christianity really doesn't
insist upon it. I mean, Paul talks about
that in in the New Testament in his
epistles.
So, I'm really unsure of like the
sociological
factors and conditions that resulted in
most Americans of certain decades just
being automatically just default by
default circumcised at the hospital
shortly after they were born.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question which is from PSA.
This is a politics question, maybe to

some degree a psychological question.
What do you think about your homeboy
from South Carolina, Lindsey Graham,
calling for Putin's assassination? Well,
Lindsey Graham, he's a senator, one of
the two senators for South Carolina. And
he's always been a war hawk. I mean,
he's he looks like this gay little
nebish of a guy, you know? It's like if
he put on a military uniform, it would
just be like laughable.
But he's just like this gay seeming
little nebish of a guy who nevertheless
he's kind of a neocon Republican who is
just he never saw a war he didn't like.
You know, he just wants America to just

go out there and kick ass. And
apparently that involves Putin.
But I mean to me it's I mean that I mean
that's just his his MO. I mean that's
what Lindsey Graham does, you know? He
just calls for like violent solutions to
international problems because I mean
he's just some kind of war hawk while at
the same time he might not be able to
lift a rifle. He's he's
It's just weird. I mean, to some degree,
he's just sort of like externalizing his
frustrated attempts at masculinity or
something by being in favor of this
military aggression at every convenient
opportunity.
What was more interesting to me is why

it is that Lindsey Graham is still uh one of the two senators of South Carolina when he is almost universally despised by the Republicans of South Carolina. It was just a few years ago. Trump had a rally in Pickin, South Carolina, which was Lindsey Graham's hometown not far from here. And Lindsey Graham was booed off the stage. He's trying to talk and he could not talk because it was just this resounding mass of booze until he finally just left the stage.

So, I mean, that's to me a more interesting question is why does he he keep getting elected? And one reason why

Lindsey Graham keeps getting elected to the the US Senate in South Carolina is that there are no closed primaries in South Carolina. There's a lot of outcry. We need closed primaries where only registered Republicans can vote for the Republican candidates because you've got Democrats who know that South Carolina is deep red deep red state. there's not going to be uh a Democrat taking Lindsey Graham's place. So, they figure, well, Lindsey Graham is better than, you know, some like MAGA nationalist or something. So, they'll vote for him in the primaries and then vote for the Democrat in the the major election.

And also, Lindsey Graham is just in with

the like the Republican establishment in Washington DC. So, he's gets lots of funding. he's just got the name recognition and just with regard to campaigning, you know, he's got all the money

and so he keeps getting elected even though people in I mean, he's just sort of like it's hard to mention his name in South Carolina without people just hissing audibly.

And I'm moving on to the next question. Gosh, how many more questions we got? We're kind of sort of getting down towards the bottom. We're well over halfway.

And the next question is from Ethiopian fake TIG.

An Ethiopian fake TIG says, "After you become enlightened and you won't become reincarnated again, people say you neither exist nor are you non-existent. What does this mean?" Well, again, it's like what does completely off the scale of samsara mean? How do you explain in purely samsaric terms? What is the meaning of being completely off the samsaric scale?

What is wrong with this picture? It's just completely off the scale. I mean, some people who are just like completely locked into samsara, they cannot comprehend anything besides just

samsaric fake reality, quasi reality.

Then how do you explain what is not samsaric?

You know, if all you know is is the English language, then how can you understand some other language? I mean, it's even worse than that because when you get off the scale of I'm sorry, it's it's just language doesn't work anymore.

So, I mean, existence and non-existence are like a mindgenerated duality.

So you just transcend the duality.

Let's see here. Did I answer the question? I mean I really can't be taken 20 minutes per question.

So after you become enlightened and you

won't become reincarnated again maybe people say you neither exist nor are you non-existent. What does this mean? Yes. in the kalaha suta of the atikawaga of the pseudinipata. It's a suta that that says, you know, somebody asks, you know, what causes existence and non-existence? And and the Buddha's answer is a mental state. I don't remember exactly which mental state it was, but this mental state causes existence and non-existence because existence and non-existence are like this mindgenerated duality.
It doesn't really apply to the absolute. Doesn't really apply to ultimate truth. So yeah, I mean you have to become enlightened to understand this stuff.

It's people they ask question what's it like to be fully enlightened? You know, what's nibbana like? What flavor is nibbana? This kind of stuff. And it's like you just can't answer these questions.

You just talk and talk and talk to your blue in the face and still I mean the person is going to remain clueless.

If you want to know what vanilla tastes like, you have to taste vanilla. Don't just go up to somebody and ask them, "What does vanilla taste like?"

Anyways, I'm just going to move on to Ethiopian fake Tig's next question.

He says, "It is said that the Buddha's

kingdom, which he left, was massacred after he was enlightened and his entire family whom he left behind was murdered by another kingdom. Is this true?" Yeah, there is a um a tradition. It's in the commentaries, I think. Maybe there's like slight like mentions of it in the sutas, but it was after the Buddhist time. It was after the Buddha's parini nibbana. Um, and I don't recall the exact details and it's all kind of legendary anyway, but it was like king Ajata Satu who was king of Magada if I remember correctly, which eventually became this vast empire and Ashoka was essentially an inheritor of the kingdom of Magada.

uh King Ajata Satu or some somebody
you know like maybe it was the son of
Ajata Satu. I mean it was shortly after
the Buddhist taught they wanted to marry
a Shakian princess, a Sakian princess
and the Sakias being proud you know sort
of proud nationalists
instead in sending the princess they
sent a slave girl and this prince or
king married the slave girl thinking it
was the Sakian princess and didn't
realize that he had been tricked and
just been sent a slave girl until after
the marriage. after the deed was done.
And so he got pissed off, which is kind
of understandable, and just genocided

the the city state of Capilaw Watu.
And if that legend isn't entirely true,
the fact remains that Capilawatu, which
was the city state that was, you know,
the Buddha's home, you know, his his
hometown, his home country, it did just
get wiped off the map shortly after the
time of the Buddha.
So, I think I answered that question.
Yeah, I don't know what I would add to
that to make it a more complete question
or more complete answer, I should say.
So, I'm just going to move on to
Ethiopian fake Tig's third question. He
says, "You mentioned that mastering
Janna gives people superpowers. What
kind of superpowers did the Buddha ever

say you get from mastering the Jas?" And
there's like this stock block of words
that you find in the sutas mentioning
it's like the six aba
is like you know like supernowledge and
um like in Burmese Aan it means like
psychic powers. It generally aa means
mainly psychic powers. And just so
happens I've got nanota's Buddhist
dictionary here. So take out this
bookmark which is a call to jury duty
and here it is aa there's six of them so
the first of the six Aya and I think the
the samaya pala suta of the dean kaya
like the second suta of the dean kaya
goes through the list you can look it up

for yourself if you want to but the
first is let's see
h the monk enjoys various Edi wida or
magical powers is how it's translated
here. Such as being one he becomes
manifold and having become manifold he
becomes one without being obstructed he
passes through walls and mountains just
as if through the air in the earth he
dives and rises up again just as if in
water he walks on water without sinking.
Not the only person famous for doing
that. Just as if on the earth,
cross-legged, he floats through the air
just as a winged bird. With his hand, he
touches the sun and moon,
etc. Yeah, that I used to wonder about

that one. Just with your hand, you touch the sun and moon. That would that would be a tricky one. That might be one of the most difficult ones here. But I mean, it's it's sort of like, you know, multiplying your body into multiple bodies or, you know, walking on water, that kind of thing. that that all counts as one psychic power. Two, he has the dbasoto or the divine ear and it's like clare audience I think would be like the English technical term for that. He hears sounds both heavenly and human far and near. So the third one, he knows the minds of other beings by penetrating them with his own mind. So I won't read

the entire paragraph but essentially
it's mind readading. you know the minds
of other people. Four, he has dbachaku,
the divine eye. So see
essentially it's clairvoyance.
The pure one he sees he sees beings
vanishing and reappearing low and noble
ones beautiful and ugly ones sees now
beings are reappearing according to
their deeds or their karma.
So let's see five the fifth one. He
remembers manifold former existence. So
he remembers his past lives. And then
six, finally through the extinction of
all asawas or
encumbering influences
even in his very life, he enters into

the possession of deliverance of mind. Deliverance through wisdom after having himself understood and realized it. So the the highest of all the psychic powers is simply becoming enlightened and knowing that you are enlightened. So the first psychic power is just being able to levitate, walk on water, walk through walls, that kind of thing. Second is the divine ear. You can hear stuff that ordinary people can't hear, including, you know, conversations going on in heaven, that kind of thing. Three, you read minds. Four, you are clairvoyant. You can see events happening far away. And also you see

people like dying and being reborn in accordance with their karma, that kind of thing. And five, you remember your own past lives. And six, you are aware of your own enlightenment.

And we've got

vertical

vertical stuff going through the blinds, hitting me in the face again.

And anyways, I got to go on to the next question now because it's in a way it's kind of a race against the clock. I would like to be done within three hours. So the next question is from Bodhisatta 969

and he says, "What do you think of this Buddhist march for peace through the

USA? Are the leftists once again appropriating Buddhism, for example, against ICE trains and racism because they don't know what they're talking about? Or are these monks themselves leftists?"

Um, well, I already kind of discussed this in answer to a previous question, but uh, what do I think of the Buddhist March for Peace of the USA? I mean, it's harmless, you know, it's it's all Thai monks as far as I know. So, um, I mean, it it is true that it's like leftist. I remember uh my sweetheart was watching a a video of these monks arriving at some town in South Carolina and spending the

night at a Methodist church with the
Methodist Christians all you know just
warmly welcoming them partly because
it's like politically correct to you
know support you know foreign
non-Christians or something. I'm not
sure exactly, but uh
are the leftists once again
appropriating Buddhism because they
don't know what they're talking about or
are these monks all themselves leftists?
It's hard to say. I mean, Thai monks
probably they're they're relatively
conservative. I would guess that they're
more conservative than most of the the
like the American lay people of European
ancestry who are supporting them. And

monks in general tend to be more conservative because of course they're following an ancient conservative tradition. I mean terraata Buddhism is the most conservative school of Buddhism and you know you don't want to be progressive in your terravada Buddhism because then it stops being terraat pretty quickly but the lay people don't really realize that they see that it's sort of a fashionable
kind of a system. I mean probably most of them that are supporting these monks really like don't meditate and don't know much about Buddhism. Um the the leader of the walk who is giving the

talks to the to the masses you know it's it's fairly straightforward. You know he's not preaching against you know ICE agents or anything like that. I mean he's just giving just basic Buddhist ethics to which is suitable for lay people. So the whole thing strikes me as being relatively I mean it's harmless and I mean there's probably some good at least it's publicizing terravada Buddhism. You know it's it's kind of bringing Terravada Buddhism a little more into the mainstream by being you know obvious. And I don't know of any harm that it's causing. So I mean I don't have anything bad to say about it. I don't think that the walk for peace or

the march for peace I mean it's I don't
think it's necessarily going to make the
world more peaceful I mean it's not
going to end any wars these monks
walking from what Texas to Washington DC
or wherever they're walking but I mean
they have the right to do it and I don't
think that they're doing anything bad by
doing it and probably the the effect of
this is more positive than negative so
more power to them in my opinion
Let's see.
So, I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question here.
This is also from Bodhisata 969,
who I believe is a German fellow who I

think lives in Thailand at least some of the time. And he says, "Has your opinion of Trump changed or has it stayed the same? Is it true that his approval ratings among his voters have dropped because of Venezuela and Greenland?" My opinion about Trump has changed. Domestically, he's certainly good, but in foreign policy, I see it as wrong to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign countries. Firstly, anyone can claim that Maduro wasn't elected in our democratic Germany, the strongest party, the EFD, and its voters of 26% are simply excluded. This is clearly about oil and resources.

Okay.

So,

let's see. Well, one thing I'd point out about Maduro is that it was the Biden administration that put a $25 million bounty on his head.

So, I mean, Trump is just more likely to follow through instead of just bloiating and pontificating, just saying lots of words and then not doing very much. And that is one thing that people, especially on the left and just like conservative establishment Republicans, they're they're kind of freaked out about that because Trump is actually exercising his authority and doing [__]

And I mean, not all of it is entirely

popular, of course. But let's just get back to the actual question here. Has my opinion of Trump changed or has it stayed the same? And it has changed a little bit. like this whole Greenland thing. It's like on the one hand it just seems like pro I mean it it appears superficially to be ill advised to be more or less threatening a military invasion of a territory of Denmark who is a member of NATO and presumably our ally. So it's like why is Trump threatening to invade Greenland? I mean he pretty much has done that. So that's I mean it causes a little bit of hesitation. I'm assuming I I have a you know I'm willing to give the benefit of

the doubt and assume that there is some intelligent method to the madness. You know, Trump is really into the art of the deal and just makes these outrageous asks and then finally settles for what he really wanted in the first place. And also, he's good at distracting attention. So, he just has something blow up over here while he's getting [__] done over there. So, it could be something like that, too. Although it certainly has made him much less popular amongst like the international community, especially this Greenland thing. With regard to Venezuela, like I was saying, it's like the leftists

themselves were denouncing Maduro. The Biden administration itself put a $25 million bounty on his head. It's just that Trump being the one who's who took care of it is just all of a sudden it's this outrage. You know, if if like the Democratic Party five or 10 or 20 years ago endorsed something and then Trump does it, all of a sudden the Democratic Party now denounces it as just Gestapo tactics and so forth. It's weird. I mean, it's just like the the main position of the Democratic party appears to be just oppose anything Trump does. even if they originally endorsed it, if Trump is the one who's doing it, then it's bad.

So yeah, it it seems that Trump is kind
of becoming somewhat of a loose cannon.
Although still I would much prefer Trump
to
cultural Marxists just feminizing and
castrating the United States
and just subjugating it
with some kind of socialist mommy state.
If Trump wants to go Julius Caesar or
Traan, you know, he sees that Europe is
just falling, that it's it's just beyond
repair at this point, so he's just going
to take part of it, just like Putin is
kind of trying to do the same on at the
other end,
then

maybe in the long run, it's a good idea.
I don't know. I really do not know what
Trump is and his administration know.
Like Marco Rubio, he's he seems to be a
sharp person and relatively sane.
You know, he's involved in this, too. He
must know what's going on.
So, we're just going to have to wait and
see. with regard to the whole Greenland
thing. With regard to Venezuela, I think
that was not I mean a lot of Trump
supporters don't want involvement in
foreign wars, this kind of thing. But I
mean, just going in in one night
snatching this guy without taking a
single casualty, I mean that was just a
message to the world that American

military might is back. there's going to
be no more of those botched withdrawals
from Afghanistan,
that the American military is numero uno
on this planet at present. And he was
just demonstrating that
and that is from a a nationalist
American point of view. I mean, that can
be a good thing. You know, he's I have
to admit, I mean, love Trump or hate
Trump, he's got more coahones
than than any president since Theodore
Roosevelt. I mean, he just gets [__]
done. I mean, it's it's like he's
willing to to break eggs and just tip
over apple carts and and all kinds of

things, make waves.

But I mean, it's people like that that wind up being like in the history books as like great leaders or at least very consequential leaders

and just the establishment just doesn't know how to deal with it. I mean, their their purpose is to like nurse problems and keep saying that they're going to fix it and collect taxes in order to fix it and then they just don't do anything or just make it worse. And Trump just doesn't go that This is the first time in decades that net immigration into the United States has reached zero. And that's one of the reasons that people voted for him.

So, my opinion of Trump has changed a
little bit. I mean, the whole Greenland
thing especially is uh it just is seems
weird to me. I don't fully understand
it. I don't even understand what Trump's
real motives are for doing this, but
there very well could be some really
intelligent method to the madness.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Cyrus Frame,
one of the few people
who asks questions on Rumble.
And Cyrus Frame says,
and I'm starting to get a little bit
horse. This is turning into a long one.
Cyrus Frame says, "It seems to me that

much of the Buddhist cannon is a corruption of what the Buddha actually said and meant. For example, in the Atakawaga, the word nibbana is not used. Instead, the verb form nibati or nibi to blow out is used. An equivalent word would be to extinguish. Not exactly." That that was my addition, my little commentarial addition there. I continue. It does not make sense to turn that word into a noun like extinguishment as after a fire is extinguished the fire is gone. That is different from for example to judge where after that is done a judgment exists. I think that in the latter text or the later texts they took what is a process and turned it into a

thing so reified it. This this later led to people feeling the need to create the two truths doctrine in my mind directly contradicting the Buddha when he said there is but one truth not a second in the chula wuyuasuta in the atakawaga. What do you think? Okay. Well, there's a few things here. Let's see here. Well, when he says it seems to me that much of the Buddhist cannon is a corruption of what the Buddha actually said it meant. Yeah, I agree with that. I mean, I would I would I mean, I wouldn't be completely outraged at a claim that 80% of it or more than 80% of it is a corruption of what the Buddha actually said and meant.

Um, and then he says in the atakawaga, the word nibbana is not used. Instead, the verb form nibati or nibi, which literally means to blow out. An equivalent word would be to extinguish. No, that's not really the same. I mean that's just getting stuck in in like English, you know, you're trying to to uh translate just from from poly into English and it's not a direct translation because the connotations and the the meanings the understanding of the the words and everything are not the same between ancient North India and modern America.

So blowing out I mean it doesn't mean I mean it's it's I don't want to get into

the whole discussion of like ancient
Indian understanding of fire but I mean
it was like fire pervaded everything you
know fire was the god ugny the fire was
this immortal god and when the fire blew
out it simply became unmanifest it
wasn't like it died
I mean that's one way of looking at it
anyway.
So anyways, let's see here. It does not
make sense to turn that word into a noun
like extinguishment as after the fire is
extinguished, the fire is gone. Well, I
mean, you need to bear in mind that
there's two meanings of the word nibbana
or nirvana. There is nirvana as an

ethical state and nirvana as a metaphysical state. as an ethical state. Yeah, it can mean just the moment of cessation or blowing out or whatever, you know, however you want to define it. You know, that's this ethical state. It's like the moment of becoming enlightened is nibbana. But then as a metaphysical state, that's the absolute. And the absolute, especially in early Buddhism, you just did not want to go there. But it's so difficult to deal with like the goal of Buddhism or like trying to to like even discuss reality without having words for it which of course like degrades it you know you're sort of reifying it dragging it into the

level of samsara but I mean to some degree it's just unavoidable from a philosophical point of word point of view and ancient north Indian Buddhists were definitely philosophical they're having all kinds of philosophical arguments and hypotheses and debates and theories and all this practically from the get-go.

So let's see here

that is different from an example to to judge where after that is done a judgment exists. I think then in the later text they took what is a process and turned it into a thing so reify it. Well, even the process, even considering

it to be a process would be reified. But I think what he means is that you're sort of conflating the two meanings of Nirvana, the ethical meaning and the metaphysical meaning.

You know, like metaphysical meaning like in poly would be nibbana datu, the element of nibbana.

So let's see here. This later led to people feeling the need to create the two truths doctrine.

in my mind directly contradicting the Buddha when he said there's but one truth. No, because the two truth doctrine is talking about conventional truth which is all truth can be put into words really and then you got the

ultimate truth which is beyond language
and conventional truth or worldly
samsaric kind of truth is not ultimately
true. is just accepted as true by
unenlightened people or maybe even by
enlightened people just as skillful
means as as a way of communicating
but really there is just ultimate truth
is the only real truth and you can't put
it into words but then later
philosophers really you know in order to
talk about it and what better thing is
there to talk about I guess in the minds
of philosophers is I mean in order to
talk about you got to use words which
dragging it down into

into some sic language reifying it etc.

So

yeah, when when the Buddha said there is

but one truth, he's referring to

ultimate truth and that is true. There's

I mean even to say that it's one I mean

you're already when you it's if it's

ultimate truth you can't describe it in

words is just hopeless. It reminds me of

the sins Ming supposedly composed by the

third patriarch of Chinese Zen Buddhism

who said all we can say is not two

because one and zero sort of like in

Hegel's dialectic they just merge

together

infinity and nothing pure being and pure

non-being. They just cannot be

distinguished. They just they're

synonymous essentially.

So

what do I think? Well, I've kind of

given a commentary to this that there's

two meanings of [__] One is just the

moment of enlightenment, which is an

ethical definition. And the other one is

what it is that is attained in a sense.

I mean, you don't just cease to exist.

You don't just poof, you know, and then

there's no more you or no more

appearance of you or anything like that.

But again, I'm trying to describe and

I mean it really is just like a kind of

dilemma with no solution.

People are just going to continue asking
what's Nibana like, you know,
and it just it just doesn't work.
Once you open your mouth and start
talking about it, you're just dealing at
the level of conventional truth, which
isn't ultimate truth anymore. But that
doesn't mean that there is no ultimate
truth even though you cannot possibly
utter it.
Oh man,
it it does get a little frustrating
sometime.
So let's see here.
Yeah, the people feeling the need to
create the two truths doctrine. I mean
even they knew that conventional truth

isn't really true. It's just considered
true by the majority of humans.
So I mean that's not a contradiction at
all because even the formulators of the
two truth doctrine assuming that it
wasn't the Buddha himself
um they knew that conventional truth or
simuti satcha is not the same as
ultimate truth or paramata satcha and
thus isn't really entirely true
but I do agree that let's see much of
the Buddhist cannon is a corruption of
what the Buddha actually said and meant
and especially getting to Mahayana where
almost all of it is just invented
hundreds of years later.

This word is being put into the Buddha's mouth.

So if you include all Buddhist scriptures, then we'd be fortunate if 1% of it actually represents what the Buddha really said,

which is unfortunate.

But at least we're not lagging anymore.

Maybe just a teensy bit.

And I'm moving on to the next question also from Cyrus Frame. He says, "My second related question regards the fact that in the Atakawaga, the sage is often described as someone who does not rely even on damas. For example, damop desitas

and that aay is an archaic suffix that

is not found in regular poly which indicates one of the indications of the extreme antiquity of these sutas.

But I continue here also no philosophies are received by them. If nibbana is a thing or a category it would be a dharma. I understand one description of nibbana is something that is unconditioned which is inherently without categories. But a noun by definition is a thing and that infers categories. Yeah. I mean conventional truth you got to use words. But I continue here with his question. A sage would avoid the process of categorizing.

We nichi kupi jantuil

which is a person makes a discrimination in the world quote unquote but not the sage. It seems to me that these conceptual entanglements are unnecessary and arise because of reification. What is your opinion on this? Well if you don't reify it at least linguistically you can't say a [__] thing about it. See that's the problem. You're tr like the the goal of Buddhism is to transcend samsara but all language and all ideas and all explanations are necessarily samsaric. So how do you explain the transcendence of samsara in 100% necessarily samsaric terms?
Again it's just this dilemma and people just keep insisting especially

intellectual type people who are just stuck in intellect. I mean, they don't just use it as a tool. They're it's like they're enslaved to it. They're it's like a a mental prison. Maybe a really comfortable one, the most comfortable one they they can they can think of or come have come across. But still, it's like a a a cage
and the door is unlocked and people don't even try the door to get out in most cases.
But let's see here. I think the main problem with this this question is regard to the the meaning of the word dharma because the word dhamma has many

different definitions and you have to decide through context what the definition is and I've got dhamas translated as philosophies in my translation of the yacht because that's apparently what it means when it says the sage doesn't go by dhamas it means he's not like attached to a philosophy in in his practice or in his his his life in his what beliefs he shouldn't have that kind of thing.

So no philosophies are received by that means he doesn't cling to any theories. I mean you can you have to have so long as you're not enlightened yet especially you have to have some kind of belief system or theories but it's like there's

a difference between holding it in an open hand as a convenient working hypothesis and then or else just on the other hand just clinging to it. Oh, the other hand, clinging to it and insisting only this is true. Anything else is wrong, which is the way people generally operate because they think that their beliefs are true and therefore any other beliefs that are contradictory to their beliefs are necessarily false and wrong. And if they're an intolerant sort of person, they might actually try to shut down these people that are saying what is false and wrong.

So mainly it's it's just saying that a

monk is not just like stuck in like

theoretical ideas

that he's dealing with reality.

Especially if he's an enlightened sage,

no longer caught up in the massive

words.

He's not making judgments.

So let's see here.

Yeah. I mean, if if you really don't

want the word nibbana misused, then you

just can't use the word nibbana

because nibbana is a samsaric word.

Sort of like the word verb is a noun.

And so it's like you can't really insist

that a process be dealt with only with

verbs because just the way the human

mind works, it divides things up into

subject and predicate into noun and verb into temporal aspect or like spatial aspect and temporal aspect. It's just like this weird quirk of human mentality and language is just caught up in that might be unfortunate but that's just the way it is. So if you don't want like delusional ideas about nibbana, you just don't don't use the term because it's unavoidable if you do.

And I should probably move on to the next question. And we're getting close to the bottom here. Fear not. Although you guys have the advantage of you can just look down at the the bar and see see how many hours the whole thing is

and how far we are into it.

You got the advantage on me on that one.

So anyways, next question is from Ruie.

And at up till this morning, this was

the last question, but then somebody

is squeaked in. You know, it's like in

the movies when the big the big metal

door is coming down. You got the person

that just kind of slides or rolls under

right at the last minute.

Last questions are like that.

So anyways, Ruie says, "Do you think

disqu would be a viable translation for

duka?" And I mean, I've never seen disqu

used in a translation. We're lagging

again. I've never seen disqu used as a

translation for Duka. I do think there

are probably better translations for Dooka. I think my own preferred uh rendering of unease. I mean, it's similar disqu and unease, you know, there, you know, there's heck of a lot of overlap, you know, being ill at ease, you know.

So yeah, disqu I guess. But um I mean disqu is kind of a laughable term for like unbearable agony,

unease, I guess. Also, I mean that's why suffering is usually used.

Suffering. I mean it has its faults, but all in all it may be I mean it's one of the best translations in English. I prefer suffering to a John Teniso's uh

rendering of stress.

Venerable Ajan Tenisro, I think he always translates duka as stress, unless maybe it just obviously means like physical pain in that context or something and he might might render it as pain. But I mean, if you want to use disqu and it works for you, then it's your call.

Although I still prefer unease and even just suffering the usual translation still it's fairly workable. It still it still works.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question which is our last questioner but he asked three questions. This is fifth although really he's he's

last as I just mentioned. Fifth says,

"In episode 36,

that's quite a while ago. In episode 36,

you mentioned you were under

investigation by Burmese secret police

at one point. What was the re the reason

that you think you were under

suspicion?" Well, yeah, that was fairly

obvious. I knew exactly why I was under

suspicion. There was a just this

mindblowingly rascal of mind-blowing

rascal of a monastery attendant who was

among other things stealing stuff from

the monastery and selling it in town for

his own personal profit. He was cutting

down teak teak trees and then selling

the teik in town or just like pilfering things from the monastery that people had donated and selling them in town and pocketing the money. And so I mean especially with regard to cutting the trees, I was I I mean I scolded him. I warned him. Told him to stop doing it. couple of times I was just yelling at him just stop cutting down the trees and he'd be, "Oh, this is this isn't a useful tree. This is doesn't have any fruit on it or anything." It's like it was like a wildlife refuge and it was literally illegal to be cutting green trees in that area. But he just kept doing it and because he was like a monastery attendant, people weren't on

his case except for me. I was definitely on his case. So finally I just kicked him out. I just threw him out of the monastery just in a rage that time. I mean I was so I was so angry at him at that time. I I I left for something. I had to go get my visa renewed or something. I come back and there's like stumps everywhere. He just went nuts cutting down just
so many trees he had chopped down in this wildlife refuge. And then he was just selling the the wood and pocketing the money for his own use.
So I was so mad at him that time that I mean I just was I was I had forgotten

how to speak Burmese and I was too angry
to remember how to speak Burmese. So I
was in a way I was almost just bellowing
at him incoherently
and just chased him out of the monastery
and wouldn't let him come back.
And so he had his heart set on living at
that monastery. you know, his family had
been supporters of that monastery for
for decades, apparently, and he just
felt like he had authority over the
place. That's one reason why he just
kind of ignored my warnings and and
scoldings and so forth. And so, after I
kicked him out and it became obvious
that I wasn't going to change my mind
because his first strategy was just try

to ease his way back in again, you know, wait till I wasn't mad at him anymore and ease his way back in. But he just didn't know me very well. that wasn't going to work because he was just a complete I mean it was just mind-blowing because on the one hand I mean he's insisting he wants to live at a Buddhist monastery you know he was he was living there just being like the monastery attendant and every night he'd be like chanting you know meta to all beings and reciting Abidama and so forth while at the same time he was just this outrageous crook of a guy you know it's some kind dissociation between the

religious part of his mind and just the the crook part of his mind. So what happened was after he realized I wasn't going to let him come back, he just went to the like the military dictatorship, the local office of the federal government in town and reported me as a political agitator. So, I was under um yeah, I was under investigation on political charges by the the Burmese secret police, like the military intelligence and stuff, but they could see clearly enough. I mean, I'm living alone in a forest
and just minding my own business a lot of the time, not even coming out of the cave to meet visitors. So, it's it would

pretty obvious that I wasn't really a political agitator.

So, I mean, they did a a reasonably good job of investigating me and they they saw that that I it's hardly likely that I was a political agitator. I mean, if I was a Burmese citizen, they might have just arrested me anyway just to make sure, but being a US citizen does have its advantages. You probably have more rights in Burma as an American citizen than as a Burmese one.

But yeah, that's the reason why I was under suspicion was just because this this rascal of a crook trying to to get me kicked out of the monastery, trying

to disappear me so he could move back in, just went to the the military dictatorship central office in town and and reported me for being a political agitator.

So, I'm just going to move on to Fifth's next question.

How long did it take you to get comfortable with longer meditation sessions?

Well, um

before I became a monk, it was a struggle to sit for 30 minutes.

I'd have like this kitchen timer. I'd set it for 30 minutes and I'd light some incense and it was just a struggle. I mean, my mind is very restless. Kind of

a supercharged kind of a mind sometimes, especially when I was younger. Just kind of nervous restlessness, a lot of agitation. No, what is it called? Od odacha. That's the poly word. Udacha. Udacha. Okay. So, just kind of like restless agitation. My mind was subject to that. And so, it was a struggle just to sit for 30 minutes. I'd light an incense stick and then I'd think, man, this is taking forever. I'd open my eyes and like the incense stick wasn't even halfway burned down yet. You know, it was difficult until I became a monk. And then when you become a monk and it's like it's my sacred duty to do this,

it's like your

your perspective changes and your

motives are like kind of

I don't know what's the word just kind

of reinforced,

you know? It's like I've got to do this.

It's no more just kind of dabbling being

amateurish. It's like this is my sacred

duty. I'm gonna strive for

enlightenment. And so you just muscle

through it, you know. So it became e way

easier after I became a monk. You know,

I could sit for two hours. I didn't do

it very often, but I I was able to do it

in full lotus. So,

but it wasn't always necessarily

comfortable. It's just that when you

your like your motives change, your perceptions change, then it just becomes more doable. It's like the story I told about my father. Um

his legs started turning black when I was a kid. So he went to the doctor and the doctor said that um he had a he was a long shoreman. loaded logs onto ships as as a profession and one of the logs rolled over his leg and crushed his leg a little bit and there was capillary damage in that leg. And my father smoked two packs of cigarettes a day. And so it was tar building up in these damaged capillaries that was causing his leg to turn black. So the doctor told him, "You

have two choices. You can stop smoking or we're going to have to amputate your leg."

And my father had tried to stop smoking on numerous occasions. You know, he'd stop, then maybe after a month, you know, he'd start chewing a little tobacco, maybe start smoking a pipe, and next thing you know, he's back to two two packs of cigarettes a day again. But then all it takes is this change in circumstances and it's like once it was clear to him the choice is stop smoking or have one leg then all of a sudden even though the like the addiction urges and so forth were the same. It was just easier to resist.

And it was kind of like that becoming a monk when I mean meditation for half hour just sitting still for half an hour is like this herculean effort as a lay person. Um I mean if if you're at a meditation retreat when you don't want to be shamed by being the first person to just get up and walk out. You know you can't hack it when everybody else can. I mean that can that kind of modifies your intentions or your motivations also.

But it was just sort of it just kind of automatically happened when I became a monk or once or twice at a meditation, you know, the few meditation retreats I

attended before I became a monk where
it's just the situation has changed now
and just quitting early is no longer an
option. So you just stick through it and
then it just gets easier because you're
just used to it and it becomes more or
less habitual.
So
the last question of this Q&A
also from fifth who is also last.
Any tips on someone relatively new to
weasa meditation?
Question mark. It seems like sometimes
during a meditation session I get really
in the zone and then I just lose it.
It's kind of like off and on. I'm sure I
just need more practice, but I can

already see it. It's improving my mood throughout the day. So, the actual question here, any tips on someone relatively new to weasa meditation?

Well, it helps to go to a retreat. I mean, that it can help. It usually does to attend a formal retreat with a meditation instructor. And like I was saying just a few minutes ago, you know, you have kind of a a peer group pressure of, you know, you sit there like like everybody else is doing. You don't want to be the wimp, the only person to get up and walk out because you can't hack it. That kind of thing.

Um,

there was a dog underneath.

But let's see here.

Uh,

yeah. Yeah, I mean the whole thing with

with whipasana is whatever arises you

note it and let it go. You know sad

batana I really don't like the term

weasa meditation because it's it's not

really what it is. Weasa is something

that arises spontaneously

often as a result of meditation but

sometimes it has you know it's not the

result of meditation or it can even be

the result of samata meditation.

So I mean that's just kind of a niggle.

I don't particularly like the term weasa

meditation. I would prefer mindfulness

meditation or sad patana meditation and the whole purpose of that is whatever arises you note it. You know it's like you you hate meditating at you know you're having like these feelings of just oh god I hate this. You just observe it and let it go. Your knee hurts observe it and let it go. You're wondering what that noise is outside. You observe it and let it go. You know ideally you hear the noise. It's just like the sound goes in and just remains unprocessed auditory data and just goes out the other ear. I mean, you just watch it go by.

The the watching part is itself going to

eventually be transcended by just seeing without making any effort to watch. It's just effortless seeing. That's even better.

But really, it's just whatever arises, you just note it and let it go. You get pissed off, note it and let it go.

That's that's kind of tricky because you know it's like it's not just going to go away. You're going to have to note it and let it go repeatedly. Especially like pain in your knee. I mean that can just become the whole meditation pain. It's like when I was at Pandarama that was and that was one of my main meditation objects is you know you're sitting several hours a day for two

months especially after the first couple weeks. you know, you got an ankle screaming in agony or a knee or a hip joint screaming in agony or you're starting to get like a bed sore on your behind from sitting so much that's it that hurts like a son of a [__] Then I mean you just watch that and I mean you're not fighting against it. That doesn't help. That's not meditation. You just observe it and observe it. What does it feel like? You know, it's just it's sort of like after a while you realize that the the dislike of the pain which is actually causing the suffering is different. And I mean you can just

observe it like it's it just becomes
like a a flashing red light or
something. still hurts, but it's like
you've kind of
h kind of overcome this automatic
like reaction of aversion.
But I mean at first you just have to
watch the aversion for the pain. You
watch the pain, you watch the aversion
for the pain.
So yeah, I mean that's really what
so-called weiposa meditation is about. I
mean it's like usually you'll be sitting
there watching your breath and then if
anything else comes up anything more
noticeable than the breath comes up then
you watch that you note it you let it go

and then when that is has run its course
which might be I mean if it's just
wondering what that sound is outside I
mean that just might be a matter of one
second or if it's the pain in your knee
it could just be the the whole rest of
the the meditation session but I mean
you just note it you just observe that
what does it feel like what's it? You
know, what what are the characteristics
of this? You know, in a way you can kind
of deconstruct it, especially in the
early stages of meditation,
you know, kind of beginning level.
But he says here, I get really I get
really in the zone and then I just lose

it. It's kind of like off and on. Yeah,

it was it was like that for me also.

I mean, the offs and the ons are going

to gradually get better. you know, your

best will continue to get better and

your worst will generally probably get

better,

but you just stick with it. It's like

your your sacred duty. I mean, if you

look at it that way, it makes it easier.

So,

I guess I I kind of rambled about that

for a few minutes and I guess I sort of

answered it. So, I guess we're done. By

golly, and it's still technically less

than three hours.

Although it probably be more than three

hours by the time I'm done using the

saying the usual stuff at the end like

as I should usually say at the beginning

and have said only once to my knowledge.

If you think I can answer a question

about

Dharma or Dharma, early Buddhism,

Terravada Buddhism, Buddhism in general,

meditation, you know, Burma,

my my own life personally, no questions

about my genitalia, please,

then

feel free to ask. No more than three

questions per person, per episode,

please. and like and subscribe if you

find anything of value in this.

And uh check out the URL links below which would include links to my books and I am working on a fourth one. Um I can't make any promises with that uh at present however. And uh last but not least, be happy.

Okay then.

Hello and welcome to take two of question and answer number 190. I am your host Po Basa and this is my primary designated beverage with the emergency backup beverage being this one.

And it's take two because as usual it seems I forgot to plug in the computer and had to go and get the cord and everything.

So fortunately I noticed it before I get the warning window popping up on the computer saying that the battery is about ready to go dead.

And we've got relatively few questions, like about 20 this time, possibly

because people are just like hunkered down preparing for the storm that's sweeping across the eastern United States at present. And if this video is late in being uploaded, it will be because the storm has knocked out the electricity or the internet or something.

But thus far things are relatively calm and we don't have any snow or anything yet. No half inch of ice coating everything yet as they are predicting. And South Carolina is currently in a designated state of emergency.

But

I guess it doesn't even really matter. At least not to you guys if you're not

here.

And of course 180 is not a prime number.

is in fact 2 * 2 * 3 * 3 * 5.

So

do with that what you will.

And let's see here. I mean

I may not be at my best this evening

because I didn't get much sleep last

night. Still the there's the the

disturbance in the forest which is now

manifesting outwardly as as like weather

disruptions and so forth. And uh I had a

like a heavy dinner so that uh I'm like

the lion that's stuffed with fresh zebra

that just kind of wants to lie there.

But when the lion has to do a Q&A, I

mean, he just has to sit up and roar out
the Q&A, I guess.
So, I guess without any uh further
um babbling, rambling,
whatever you want to call it, I'm just
going to start answering questions here,
or at least trying to answer questions
because there are a few kind of sticky
ones in this relatively short list.
Anyway, the first question is from
Xenithoid. And Xenithoid says, "I've
seen a few philosophers put forward the
idea that the idea of moral actions
influencing karma is simply a teaching
for the masses to keep society
functional, while karma is really simply
cause and effect on a more grand and

esoteric scale. This makes sense to me because morality cannot be made completely objective and the universe seems to be indifferent to any particular moral code except for survival of the fittest. Thoughts on this?

Well, it seems to me that the philosophers who put forward the idea that the idea of moral actions influencing karma is simply a teaching for the masses to keep society functional are the same people that are mostly the same people that just say religion in general is just kind of a social tool to keep people under

control, that kind of thing. And so they tend to be like superficial materialist types. So I don't know how xenithoid thinks that these same people think that karma is uh cause and effect on a on a esoteric scale because the people who think that like religion and like morals are just a social construct.

I mean they tend not to have much use for the esoteric

um you know they just tend to be like followers of materialistic scientism.

So there's that that's a thought on this.

Um then Zenithoid says this makes sense to him because morality cannot be made completely objective. And I mean from

the Buddhist point of view morality is subjective.

You know, it's it's objective in the sense that you can observe like patterns, repeating patterns with regard to human psychology.

And that's really what morality is based on in Buddhism. It's not some decree from some deity. It's just based on human psychology. Anything that you do motivated by attraction, aversion or delusion is going to like reinforce that and it's going to just kind of lead you away from enlightenment which from the Buddhist point of view is unskillful or immoral or unh wholesome bad karma.

Anything that reduces your greed, hate and delusion is wholesome. So I mean that's that's really what Buddhist morality is based on. and karma. I mean to say that it's just a cultural construct is I mean it's people who don't understand it would say that people that really don't have any spiritual depth to them maybe or at least in most cases people that are just superficial materialists and like a lot of them that just say well you know it's like the government wants you to be religious so it's easier to control you that kind of stuff. There's you'll see a lot of that on the internet, especially in certain dark corners of the internet.

But I mean, it's just an observation, it seems to me, based primarily on ignorance of human nature in particular. And there's just the idea that some sorrow is is just based on like clinging to greed, hate, and delusion. The three so-called poisons, attraction, aversion, and semiconscious stupidity. Loba, dosa, and moa.

So, I mean, karma is habit energy. Karma is volition. I mean I mean if you just go with the definition that karma is volition or karma is will then I mean you can't really say that karma is something else I mean if that's how

karma is defined then that's it then if you say well that's not karma then you'd say well I mean will doesn't exist either or some some such or you would just say that will has absolutely no effect on the quality of your life.

But like a superficial

a superficial like example of karma that even most materialistic types would have to accept is just force of habit. It's just this force of habit that acts as a kind of autopilot that drives us through life. Of course, you have to take steps away from like scientism in order to get into a deeper, more metaphysical interpretation of karma where this world is a manifestation of mind and it's your

knee-jerk habits. You know, it's just your your reflex. Forget reflex. It's just this force of habit that is just just creating your world in just this kind of regular way. And it's not necessarily good because all of your mental states aren't good. You know, it's like you're asleep at night. You're sometimes even good people will have nightmares.

And this is just a kind of dream state that is at a higher level of consciousness than like a sleeping dream.

And I'm starting to just wallow in metaphysics right off the bat. It's it's

good sometimes to have an easy question.
But I do try to answer these questions
more or less in chronological order like
the order in which they were asked
roughly.
So let's see. I mean do I have more
thoughts on this?
A few philosophers put forward the idea
that moral actions influencing karma.
Okay. Okay. Well, I mean, all right.
Simply a teaching for the masses to keep
society functional. Yeah. Yeah. That's I
mean, most atheistic types who have like
this superficial understanding of
samsara, think samsara is reality. They
often adopt this point of view that just
religion in general, religious beliefs

in general or just superstitions that
are in place in society to keep people
under control, keep the ignorant masses,
the superstitious rabble under control.
And
I don't buy it. I mean, to some degree,
I suppose, but that's really not the
highest manifestation
of dharma.
So
yeah, morality cannot be made completely
objective unless I mean you're not going
to be able to scientifically analyze it
very well other than analyzing
human nature and that certain kinds of
acts tend towards like more agitated,

more delusional mental states. Other kinds of acts tend more towards calmer, more enlightened mental states. Although enlightened probably isn't a very scientific term.

Let's see. The universe seems indifferent to any particular moral code except for survival of the fittest.

Well, that's not a moral code either, I suppose. But the universe seems indifferent to any particular moral code. But human psychology follows like observable patterns. I mean, you can't just walk up to somebody and just kick them as hard as you can without like agitated,

very messed up mental states going on.

Even if it's your job to do that, you know, it's like
for I mean, just like deleting your own mother. How could anybody do that without all kinds of psychological mayhem going on that's going to mess up their life to some degree? I mean, there's going to be different different levels of that. At one end, you've got like Lizzy Bordon, allegedly, and at the other end, you've just got like the grieving
son or daughter who just has the doctor pull the plug on the life support machine. And so, I mean, there's going to be gradations of how messed up your

mind is going to be, but almost nobody is going to be able to terminate the life of one of their parents in a completely serene, calm, you know, just unaggitated state of mind.

And your state of mind conditions the world you live in. I mean, even from a superficial scientific point of view, it's like people who are more freaked out about getting a disease are more likely to get a disease. People who are more freaked out and afraid of being mugged are going to obviously be freaked out enough that muggers will like, what's the word? Target them. You know, somebody who's just swaggering along, like swaggering along like they own the

street is much less likely to be
attacked by a mugger than someone who's
obviously afraid and just trying to
scurry down the sidewalk
as fast as they can because they feel
like they're they're in danger. They're
already stressed out. they're already
like halfway to victimhood already.
You know, sort of like the lion or the
hyena is going to selectively target the
the the the young and the sick, the
weak, you know, you don't target the
strong.
So, I mean, they're like superficial
elementary examples of karma in action
that even like

some superficial materialist would have
to accept to some degree.
But then you get into you'd have to get
into like
uh like theoretical quantum physics or
something to kind of get into the realm
of mind is affecting physical systems.
You know the observer perceiving the
world helps to kind of lock the world
into place in a certain way. You know
you can you can follow that route I
suppose.
But just to say that, you know, a belief
in morals and karma is just a way to
control the ignorant superstitious
masses is really just a kind of ignorant
idea in my opinion.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. And I don't know how well I did justice to that. You know, I'm just starting off, you know, this very first question and I've got to kind of wade into metaphysics and that sort of thing.

So the next question is from Phily's and Phil says, "Would you say you're more enlightened than the average Joe on the street? Or is it that you're either completely enlightened or completely not?" As I've noticed some of the Zen men believe. Yeah. Some of the Zen men will say that you're both at the same time. That everyone is enlightened and

unenlightened. depending on how you look at it. You look at it from the absolute point of view and we're all essentially just manifestations of nirvana or some such. Whereas you look at it from a samsuric point of view and everybody is wallowing in samsara. You know, you look at the world through enlightened eyes, you see enlightenment. You look at the world through unenlightened eyes and you see samsara.

Or as St. Paul says in the New Testament, to the pure man all things are pure.

So I mean you could just say like pa wisdom

you know instead of saying more

enlightened than somebody else you could just say maybe closer to enlightenment which means essentially the same thing I guess or just have more discernment or some such and I would guess yeah that I mean from a certain point of view in certain ways I have cultivated pa or wisdom more than most other people in this world. But then with regard to certain other things like some people are just very people oriented even though they might be relatively foolish in certain ways they might have the patience of Job with regard to their fellow man more so than I do.

So it isn't just a number just like an

IQ number something like that. the wisdom quotient or some such. I mean, even IQ, it's it's you can divide it up into like spatial intelligence and verbal intelligence and that sort of thing.

So, yeah, in some ways I when if you're at the samsaric level, the relative conditional level, in some ways I'm wiser than the average person.

So

yeah, I guess I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Romeo. And this is kind of a a simple sort of straightforward kind of question. Maybe I should have started with, but I'm going to have to get up and open the

door because it's getting hot in here. I don't know. It's like the humidity is going up because the storm is going to hit soon or something.

Okay,

excuse me.

So, this question is from Romeo, as I've already specified. And Romeo says,"I don't know about where you live in South Carolina, but around my way in crazy New York City,

a sizable part of the population are still wearing those pandemic masks despite Biden ending the emergency declaration like three years ago.

At my job, which is not a hospital, some

of my co-workers wear a mask if they have a common cold. I have heard that not I've heard that not only don't these masks protect you from much, but they act as a face diapers and trap in germs that would normally be expelled. As someone with an educational background in biology, do you see any benefit or justification for everyday citizens still walking around wearing these masks?

Well,

I mean, surgeons still wear masks in the operating room. I'm pretty sure. So, I mean, if it was completely useless, I doubt that they'd be wearing the mask. But, of course, they wear like special

surgical masks that are designed to prevent microbes from escaping, like when they accidentally cough or sneeze during the operation.
Just a regular piece of cloth, like tying a handkerchief over your face, wouldn't be nearly as effective, I'm sure. I I assume it would reduce to some degree the sputum that sprays out when you cough or sneeze and creates like an aerosol of droplets in the air. I assume it would reduce that to some degree.
And the first time I ever saw people wearing like masks when they had a cold, I think was in Japan. I went to Japan in the early 1990s.

And you know, you'd see most people wouldn't be wearing masks, but every once in a while you'd see someone wearing a mask and probably they had a cold and they were just trying not to spread the cold to other people.

Um, let's see. What's the question, though?

Do I see any benefit or justification for everyday citizens still walking around wearing these masks? Um, I mean, at the very least, you're it's like a a signal to other people that you're sick, you know, so then they can see, "Oh, that person's wearing a mask. I'm going to steer clear of that person lest I catch their disease." So, I mean,

there's that. I assume that's one of the main benefits of the people wearing the face masks in Japan when they have a cold is it's just sort of a warning to other people that uh they've got a cold and you know you might want to not get too close to them or something.

But

um I mean if you're just cautious, you know, you can catch yourself before you cough or sneeze. And when you do cough or sneeze, if you don't have a hanky handy, you just cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm. And I mean, that's that's seems to work well enough. That's what I do anyway.

Um, so I guess you you could say there's some
slight benefit at least in wearing masks, but I mean there's also certain detriments to wearing the masks. that uh may counterbalance any benefit. And that's for each person to decide. It seems to me
I didn't like wearing masks during the whole pandemic thing. I had to wear a when I was I was riding a train from California to South Carolina and I had to wear a mask the whole way and it it sucked. I didn't like it at all. it just, you know, top of your ears where the strap is on it, it it starts to really hurt and

I don't know.

So, yeah, I would guess that I mean,

with regard to um infecting yourself,

you can't really infect yourself. So,

you've got the mask on, you sneeze with

the mask on, and then the mask gets like

gooey or something. I mean, it's not

going to make you more sick so long as

you change the mask every day, you know,

at least once a day. And it may reduce

to some degree, like I said, the spray

coming out.

But I would guess the main benefit to it

is just it's like a

um you know, if everyone's not wearing a

mask, then you know, it's people will

see, well, this person's got a cold, so I won't try to shake hands with them or anything.

Uh, okay. I guess I answered that one. I'm just going to move on to Romeo's second question along the same theme here. He says, "Do you ever see a time when these perpetual mask wearers take off their masks or is this new normal permanent for them?" So, I mean, I'm not sure. I mean, I have seen people in in South Carolina, a few who still just wear masks. Um, I assume at least some of them aren't sick. you know, it's just they're germaphobes or something and they just don't want to get sick. So, they go out in public, they go to

Walmart or whatever wearing masks. And probably a lot of these are not the healthiest people.

And so, you know, instead of living a healthier lifestyle, they just, you know, put a a band-aid or in this case a mask over the problem.

Um, but I mean, it's it's hard to say. I mean, like in Japan, people who have a cold might still be wearing masks. They did in early 90s,

probably other countries also.

So, I mean, I'm not exactly sure if Romeo is referring to that kind of people or just people who are just wearing a mask all the time in public

now for fear of infection.

And

yeah, I I would assume if the culture changes then I mean the norms will change for better or for worse. So it could become more or less in the future depending on whether society becomes healthier in a psychological sense or unhealthier and more just kind of fearful of germs, that kind of thing.

I mean, when I was a kid, it was you and you think about what life is going to be like in 2026 and a lot of people would think, well, the ozone layer is going to be gone. Everyone's going to have to be wearing hazmat suits because of all the air pollution and lack of an ozone layer

and all that. Very least we're going to
be wearing gas masks and have any
exposed skin coated with like zinc
compound or some such,
but we haven't got there yet.
Let's see.
Yeah. I mean, do I ever see a time when
perpetual mask wearers take their masks
off? I mean, it's gonna it's going to
depend on just the direction that
culture takes. And I assume the the
system is kind of self-healing.
And so
there there is a good chance that this
kind of paranoia and and whatever you
want to call it, people who are just

always afraid of catching somebody
else's disease and so they're just kind
of, you know, going Howard Hughes on the
world.
Then I mean, if you don't know who
Howard Hughes was, he had
obsessivempulsive disorder. And in his
final months, he was a complete
germaphobe and was just locked into a
hotel room with a few trusted servants
bringing him prepackaged meals with like
rubber gloves on and so forth because he
was completely freaked out about germs.
So, I mean,
we're just going to have to wait and
see. I'm not very good at prophesying
cultural trends.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Romeo also. Along the same theme, how do you suggest I react should someone, a micromanaging supervisor, hypervigilant co-orker, or general busybody, urges me to wear one of these masks when I am sick?

Well,

personally, I would appeal to company policy. I mean, if it's your boss, then I mean, it may be prudent, at least when you're sick, to wear a mask, especially if it's like a a real surgical mask that may actually prevent viruses or other microbes, pathogens from entering the atmosphere,

from your orifices.

Um, I mean, what is company policy? I mean, you could appeal the company policy and if it doesn't say you have to, then you might politely with meta in your heart point that out to them and that say that you do take precautions. For example, you sneeze into the crook of your arm or into a hanky rather than just spraying it across the room.

But

how you react would depend on the circumstances, I assume. You know, it's like set and setting and and who it is you're you're interacting with and and why and how and all that. But I mean, I would be reluctant to have to start

wearing a mask unless there's a very good reason for it like company policy or your boss demanding that you do it or people like clients complaining, that kind of thing.

So yeah, I'd stand politely stand your ground. Um, unless there's some really good reason why you actually should be wearing the mask, in which case I assume you'd be perceptive enough to to realize that and put on the mask.

But fortunately,

that's that's ancient history for me. I haven't worn a mask in since since that train ride, I guess. Or I guess there was like one time I had to go somewhere

where they made me put on a mask, so I did.

Let's see. I'm just gonna move on to the next question. This is from Austin. And Austin says, "What is your best argument for why Buddhism is true?"

Well, I guess my best argument for why Buddhism is true would be Buddhism is primarily based on the four noble truths. You know, the four noble truths are like the heart of Buddhism. And the first three of the four noble truths are verifiable. The first noble truth is to exist is to suffer. Well, I mean, you can you can determine that through your own personal experience and just look around.

Second noble truth is that desire is the cause of all suffering or the cause of all unease or whatever English word you want to use to translate the poly word duka into English.

All dooka is caused by tna or craving just or like also it can be um attachment insisting upon things being a certain way and you can you can verify that empirically also just look into it and chances are you're going to see the truth of it. Then the third noble truth is just a logical consequence of the second noble truth. I mean that's just logic. You don't need empiricism for that. As long as you've you've accepted

that the second noble truth is true, if you're a rational person, then it follows that the third noble truth is is true. If all suffering is caused by desire, then the sessation of suffering comes from the sessation of desire.
You know, if whenever there's smoke, there's fire. If there's no fire, there's going to be no smoke.
I mean, it's just logical consequence.
So then the only noble truth that really is not
empirically verifiable to like an ordinary unenlightened person with a modeicum of intelligence would be the fourth noble truth which is the path leading to enlightenment. And at least

you can extrapolate. You can practice dharma and see what direction you're heading. And then you could extrapolate, make an educated guess at least as to, you know, where it's going to lead you if you continue improving in your practice.

So that'd be the best argument for why Buddhism is true is that three of the four noble truths are verifiable empirically. And the fourth noble truth is at least supported to some degree by empirical evidence. the more you practice, the more empirical evidence you will acquire that presumably will support the hypothesis that

Buddhism is true.

And so I'm just going to move on to

Austin's next question.

After the Buddha's enlightenment, the

Buddha says, "I have seen the

housemaker. Who is the housemaker?" Um,

it's like poetic for Mara, I'm pretty

sure. And Mara is just sort of like the

personification

of some soric delusion.

So yeah, housemaker, you are seen.

Yeah, that was supposedly the Buddha's

first words or it's it's one of the two

sets of first words attributed to the

Buddha.

Let's see.

Yeah, the housemaker would just be Mara,

who is in this case at least the
personification of samsaric delusion.
And I'm just going to move on to
Austin's third question,
which is as follows. If impermanence is
a fundamental law of reality, will it
ever not be the case that 2 plus 2
equals 4? It's really hard for me to
understand how Buddhism can reject the
idea of arithmetic being a stable
function. How can 2 plus two not ever
equal four? Well, I mean, there's lots
of approaches you can take to this. I
mean, does 2 plus two equals four if
nobody is doing the calculation? I mean,
you could say potentially it does just

like potentially desire is the cause of all suffering. You could say, I mean, that could be an eternal truth. And in a way you can have a kind of eternal truth, but it's an abstraction that exists in people's mind or in other conscious beings mind.

So I mean it doesn't exist unless someone is perceiving it. Like George Barkley used to say SAS perkip to exist is to be perceived. And those perceptions upon which 2 plus 2 equals 4 rely. And you know suffering is caused by by desire

that so if I mean so long as someone is perceiving it you can say it's it's there and it's true but if nobody's

perceiving it then
I mean it's just blinks out of
existence.
I mean you could say in potential
but just because something potentially
exists doesn't mean that it really does
exist. And of course, when you've got
all these different beings perceiving
it, they're going to be perceiving it in
different ways. And so, it's just going
to be like flashing on and off all over
the place. And that's not permanent
either.
So, the abstraction presumably is
permanent, but the abstraction only
exists in a perceiving mind, which is

impermanent.

Let's see here.

See, he says, "It's really hard for me to understand how Buddhism can reject the idea of arith arithmetic being a stable function." Well, I mean I mean you could go deeper than this. I remember I remember I had like an existential crisis. It caused me to be relatively severely depressed. It was one of the most depressing times of my life. I had been a monk for a few years. I was living in Burma. And what triggered it was I'm just trying to think of something that can be like believed that is certainly true. And there's uh some spiritual teacher who

goes by the name of Jed McKenna who says that is how he became enlightened just trying to write down anything that he could not doubt.

So

you can doubt that 2 plus 2 equals 4. I mean a lot of like sages and mystics claim that multiplicity is an illusion. So if multiplicity is an illusion then two is delusional, four is delusional, plus is delusional.

So I mean if it's all delusional, how is it true? I mean it's kind of follows certain rules that the unenlightened mind relies upon. Maybe to some degree even an enlightened mind might rely upon

it if he's trying to do a math problem.

But still

it's uh just because everyone agrees on

it doesn't mean that it's ultimately

true. Especially if in ultimate reality

there is no multiplicity.

There is no plurality. There's no

pluralism at all. So if that's the case,

if in ultimate reality

there is no multiplicity, then how is 2

plus 2= 4 going to be ultimately true?

It's going to rely on perception.

So in in the case of my um existential

crisis so-called

the closest I could come to something

that could not be doubted was the idea

the universe is the universe

and the universe was is just defined as

whatever there is

is whatever there is and that's just a

complete tautology and it's practically

meaningless

but that was the best I could do because

anything that involves multip

multiplicity can be doubted.

Wise people have challenged the idea

that multiplicity is ultimately real. It

takes like a perceiving mind to create

multiplicity.

And if if it takes a a perceiving mind

to create multiplicity, then it takes a

perceiving mind to create 2 plus 2

equals 4.

And we got a dog barking in the background. It's distracting me a little bit. All three of our dogs are in heat at present. And so it it's kind of crazy.

Can't have them in the video because they might be performing like what's tribodism. Is that what it's called? It's a certain lesbian act that we need not get into because nobody asked about it.

So

yeah, I guess I answered that question well enough or badly enough enough in either case. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Chzas is and Chzas is

says, "Why do you think people with very low IQ seem generally more happy and less depressed than people with normal or higher than normal IQ?"

And that's a reasonable question to ask. And it seems to me that it would be similar to why cows seem to be less unhappy than people. You know, the more mind you've got, the more happiness, the more happy you can be. And also the more miserable you can be. You know, the bigger your mind is, the more capacity it has for storing joy or misery.

So a miserable genius is going to be more miserable than a miserable imbecile.

I imbecile kind of slipped through the cracks for being a kind of uh derogatory term. I mean, it's it's still derogatory, but it's not like a taboo word because most people don't use it. You don't hear it very often.

So yeah, this this question also reminds me of Walt Whitmann in his he's got a famous poem. I guess you can call it poetry in his famous book Leaves of Grass talking about animals and how animals, you know, it's like they don't worry about the future. They don't fred over the past. You know, they're right here in the present moment, which is one reason why Eartolo says most animals are enlightened.

So a person with an IQ of 50 would be kind of in that same position. It's like most human suffering especially in the developed world like the United States of America. Most suffering in the United States is depends upon imaginary scenarios. You know you're worrying about the future. You're you're guilty about the past. What if this happens? What if that happens? I don't make enough money. I wish I had you know this other thing instead of the thing I've got this kind of thing which requires a certain amount of like intellectual capacity and the less intellectual capacity you've got you know if you're

like sub imbecile

then you know it's like your mind isn't

going to be generating these these

scenarios that are going to result in

unnecessary unhappiness that you're

going to be in the present moment and

like one of the special ed kids who

nobody wants to sit next to them on the

bus, you know, they get kicked off on

into the aisle. That happened when I was

a kid. Not to me, but I remember there

were like these three special kid

special special ed kids

that would ride the same school bus as

me like when I was in grade school or

junior high or something. I don't

remember exactly now. And nobody wanted

to sit next to them. So they try and sit down and you know the kid would just like kick them off off the seat into the aisle and finally the bus driver who had some compassion just left the seat right behind the driver's seat empty so that those kids could sit there instead.

So I mean even someone with an IQ of 50 is going to be unhappy sometimes. They hurt themselves. It's still going to hurt and they're not going to like it. It's just that this imaginary kind of suffering, worrying about the future or fretting over the past or what if this and what if that, you know, that kind of stuff, they're much less prone to that

sort of thing, which is going to reduce their their unhappiness and bring them closer to the placidity, the serenity of a cow.

But even a cow can be unhappy. you you put it into the truck and truck it off to the slaughter house, it's going to be freaked out plenty.

So, that would be the main reason. I'm sure there's other reasons, too, but that's the one that immediately comes to mind. And now I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Maitraa Buddha.

And for some reason, I don't fully understand. Maitraa Buddha always spells Godma Buddha as Guadama Buddha. I'm not

sure why, but because this is Maitraa Buddha, I'm sure he's got his reasons. So, anyways, Maitraa Buddha says, "Would you say Guadama Buddha or God Buddha attained the philosophers stone or do you think one needs to become an alchemist to attain the philosopher stone?" And I was going to ask Grock or just look up exactly what the philosopher stone is supposed to be and I forgot to do so. But it seems to me the philosopher stone would be one of two things. I mean it would be a kind of catalyst for converting base metals into gold which is what a lot of the like medieval alchemists were were going for.

Even a lot of modern Burmese alchemists are still going for that. Or you could say the philosopher stone is like the secret to immortality.

That would be sort of a higher level philosophers philosopher stone. So I would assume that my Treya Buddha isn't asking me if God Buddha knew how to transmute base metals into gold. That I assume my Buddha is asking me if the Buddha could have been immortal.

But I mean nobody could really be immortal. I mean according to the poly texts

the Buddha hinted to Ananda shortly before the Buddha's his death or his paribana that he could live till the end

of the kapa until the end of the world

cycle

and Ananda didn't catch it and didn't

ask him to please stay alive until the

end of this world cycle this kalpa in

Sanskrit

and so he was rebuked at the first

council for not requesting the Buddha

stay alive longer when the Buddha was

kind of hinting that he could stay alive

longer and Ananda didn't uh take the

hint but I mean even that's not

immortality I mean how could anybody

really be immortal what's what happens

someone is just truly immortal right

then the sun goes nova what the hell are

you going to do

you know the earth dies what are you

just going to be floating around in

space

you can't die might be frozen isn't

solid

or you get sucked into a star, you still

don't die.

So yeah, I don't think God I mean maybe

theoretically

he could have transmuted base metals

into gold through psychic powers if he

had some reason to do so, which I doubt

that he did.

Um, but I mean he obviously didn't live

forever. ing me. He died of like severe

abdominal issues like when he was 80 I

think in his early 80s mid 80s I don't remember the exact year that I think he was either 80 or 85 something like that I really should know these things but I mean the exact age of his death is largely legend anyway

so I mean it's really not necessary to know these things to understand what the man taught.

So

yeah, I mean I wouldn't say that God Buddha attained the philosopher stone in either sense of being able to transmute base metals into gold or living forever. Uh, I mean, you could say, well, the philosopher stone just kind of makes you

live much longer. And then, according to legend, just his psychic powers allowed him to live until the end of the world cycle if you wanted to, which would be, you know,

millions of years, maybe,

maybe billions if you go with modern astronomy. But I just doubt it. I mean, enlightened beings, they're just as prone to physical, you know, sessation of metabolic processes as anybody else. That's really not what Dharma is all about. And even Dowoism, I've I've read some criticism of modern Dowoism where I mean Daoism, you're supposed to be in harmony with the way and then you got these Dowist masters who are trying to

live forever just through being

completely in harmony with the way, but

the way involves everybody eventually

dying.

So, it's it's like they're trying to go

against the way by to live in order to

live forever, which is like a kind of

self-contradiction.

But yeah, I mean, he obviously

didn't live longer than than humans have

this biological limitation. You know,

it's like I doubt there have been very

many people who who've lived to see 150.

And the Buddha wasn't one of them.

So

I mean in in the case of of like a

really advanced spiritual being it may be like Neim Karoli Baba I always use the wrong finger. Neem Kuroli Baba up there. I mean there are stories or accounts of his his words where he's for example he meets some devote who is astonished that he looks so young because she knew him when she was a girl and he says ma I was I was born again I was born in the mountains or something like that you know it's like you know um it's sort of like you just keep just going from body to body which everybody does I suppose according to Buddhism and Hinduism and so forth but if you're advanced enough then you may be able to remember this and have like a a unbroken

momentum of like memory and so forth

that other people wouldn't have that'd

be about as close as you would get and

the Buddha did claim to remember his

past lives at least after his

enlightenment

but according to orthodox Buddhism this

was his last existence

He he saw the house builder and his the

house is broken. The ridge pole is

broken and the rafters are broken and

there's not going to be another house

which means the body.

So

I guess I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Jimmy Lad.

And Jimmy Lad is asking me about the philosopher H Highdeagger.

So he says, "Do you have any thoughts on H Highdeagger particularly on his conceptions of authenticity, distinguishing oneself from the crowd, Dasman, and concept of being towards death, which invites us to embrace the inevitability of our mortality as a transformative force by confronting our mortality and awakening from the mundane routine of life, which obscures being and is in fact an obuscation and running away from anxiety towards death. And that paragraph there may have been an attempt to simplify the teachings of H Highigger. And if that's the case, H

Highigger would be scary.

But I I really have not read anything by H Highigger other than maybe a few brief quotes. I'm no authority at all on H Highigger. I mean, almost all I know about him was, first of all, he was a Nazi, you know, and he would wear like the swastika armband while giving his lectures at university

back in the day.

Um, and also he's considered to be, if not an existentialist, at least existentialist adjacent,

which was a big deal like the mid 20th century.

And that's that's about all I know about

it. That's about all I know about H Highagger was that he went along with the the prevailing political trend in Germany in the 1930s and first half of the 40s and that he was considered at least to be either an existentialist or existentialist adjacent. And that's all I know about H Higher. And this kind of synopsis
is so kind of densely convoluted, I guess, that uh I mean, it really doesn't it doesn't give me enough meat to really chew on, so to speak. Doesn't really give me much to comment upon. And so I'm just going to declare my innocence of H Highagger and move on to Jimmy Lad's second question which is also about H

Highdeagger

although the title or the heading to

this question is H high digger on the

Greeks.

So Jimmy Lad says, "Haider said that

Plato and Aristotle obscured being by

emphasizing a metaphysics of presence

and sought a revival of more prescratic

forms of thought to undo our alienation

to being thought that poetry, not

analytic philosophy, could be the only

way to return to this more primordial

form of consciousness that has been

obscured and forgotten any thoughts.

Well, I'm not so sure that Plato and

Aristotle were trying to get back to

prescratic forms of thought. I mean,
that would be fast. I mean, you you'd
only have Socrates
would be the only prescratic philosopher
because well, I guess I mean in a in a
in a way. I mean, it's like Socrates was
not prescratic
pretty much by definition. And then his
two most famous disciples or his fa most
most famous disciple and then the discip
most famous disciple of his disciple
both go back to prescratic forms of
thought. Yeah, I really don't see much
prescratic philosophy in Plato and
Aristotle. But then again, most
prescratic philosophy has disappeared
due to hysterical Christian book

burnings and so forth back centuries

ago.

So let's see here.

Obscured being by emphasizing a

metaphysics of presence. Yeah, I'm

really not exactly sure what this means.

It's it's like kind of technical

language and big words and so forth

that's very condensed trying to

summarize like really like a large body

of thought into one little paragraph

that isn't working very well especially

due to the sleep deprivation I currently

am experiencing. I didn't sleep well at

all last night.

Maybe I should have studied up on

Hideiger before answering these questions, but to obscure being, I think Aristotle at least made the distinction between essence and form or Yeah. essence and form. And essence I assume would be being.

Yeah.

Yeah. I'm just not really a hedgearian scholar.

I just never read any H High Digger. So, it's it's not good for me to even try to make intelligent statements about High Digger other than the the very brief ones that I've already made.

See, to undo our alienation to being well, I mean, the Greeks did that just through being just like excessively

reliant on rationality. The Greeks were just they glorified rationality to such an extent that they probably really thought that you can figure out reality or that you can know reality intellectually. And most western philosophers go the same route.
So the only way to return to this more primordial form of consciousness would be like poetry and not analytic philosophy. Well, I mean was H highger a poet or an analytic philosopher? It seems like he was more of a philosopher than a poet. He never heard of any of H Highigger's poetry. So it seems like he wouldn't be following that route even if

he thought it was the only way to return
to a more primordial form of
consciousness
that had been obscured and forgotten.
But the more primordial form of
consciousness, I mean, that would be
done mainly for an ancient Greek through
the mystery cults,
you know, it'd be through mysticism,
maybe even like a certain amount of drug
use.
Yeah.
If you want to get back to like Bronze
Age, the Bronze Age mindset,
then Yeah. I mean, poetry kind of, but
poetry is still a cultural thing. It's
still very perceptual.

So, I mean, if you really want to get to the essence of being, you know, being in its purest form, you do that through mysticism.

And the ancient Greeks mainly approached mysticism through the mystery cults and and drug use. Certain drugs like hella boore, for example.

like the orphic mysteries, that kind of thing might get you closer to an understanding of pure being than any amount of Aristotle's books

or Plato. I mean, I really don't have much use for Aristotle or Plato to tell you the truth.

So, I have read a lot of Plato.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Anguli Mala. And Anguli Malo says, "You made the distinction between philosophers and sages. Fair play. Which sages are most worth studying and imitating Eastern and Western?" And he he misunderstood what I said. I mean, I didn't make a distinction between philosophers and sages or I did make the distinction, but it's not the distinction he's referring to. Like, a sage would be like just an an enlightened philosopher, a genius philosopher. So what I think he's referring to is saints. So there's a difference between a saint and a sage. A saint and a sage are not necessarily the

same person.

A saint would be a genius of virtue.

Whereas a sage would be like a genius of philosophy,

a genius of wisdom.

And virtue and wisdom, they may go hand in hand a lot of the time, but still you could have nutty, foolish saints to some degree. at least they're going to be foolish like in a in an intellectual sense like Nutty St. Gertrude for example

and then you can have sages that aren't particularly saintly.

So yeah, it's like like a saint would be like the the goal of of religion,

saintliness would be the goal of religion. Sagehood would be the goal of philosophy.

So you can compare religion with philosophy. That would be probably the kind of distinction Goully Maul is referring to. Or you want to get to the like the highest achievers of religion and the highest achievers of philosophy, you'd have saints and sages and they're they're different. I mean they could be overlapping. They could be the same person or or not.

So he wants to I think what he's asking is which saints are most worth studying and imitating

not necessarily which sages

because I think he's already asked about the like philosophers.

So which saints are most worth studying and imitating? Well like um in the previous Q&A I mentioned that Nim Karoli Baba up there he wouldn't really count as a philosopher in my estimation. He's more of a like a religious teacher and saint. He's like a religious guru and you know he didn't really teach a lot of philosophy. He taught like devotionalistic religion and the cultivation of virtue that kind of thing. So just reading about Nim Karoli Baba like the book miracle of love stories about Nim Kuroli Baba compiled

by Ram Das I mean that's one of my favorite books. It's a mind-blower of a book and by reading that it is you get a sense of what it's like to be in the presence of like an enlightened saint because saints can be enlightened too you know sort of like perfection of the heart rather than perfection of the head.

Um in of western saints I mean my favorite Christian saint would be St. John of the Cross who I think may have been wiser than the founder of his own religion.

St. John of the Cross I mean he he was definitely had some like philosophical talent. I mean he he was able to explain

things intellectually in a way that
makes good sense but mainly he was a
saint. You know he was more religious
than philosophical even though he could
hold his own pretty well
philosophically. Another like
like western like a Christian saint who
is not canonized I'm pretty sure would
be Meister Eckhart.
So those those would be two good ones. I
mean Jesus of Nazareth
but it's kind of hard to be sure as to
what he actually said. I mean you can
rule out most of the gospel according to
John.
Even the Catholic Church says that most

of the words attributed to Jesus in the New Testament probably are not authentically words of Jesus. You know, it's like 20% is reliable, something like that. I think that's like the official position of the Vatican, although you don't hear very much about it.

Uh let's see with regard to Eastern saints I mean Ramanam Maharshi I mean he may have been a fully enlightened being even though his best friend was a cow and he literally worshiped a hill almost his only writings are devotional hymns to a hill called Aruna Chala but I mean he was definitely the real deal when it comes to saints even though

he wasn't a Christian

or what Ramachrishna would Another one

maybe I really don't know all that much

about Ramach Krishna

but I'm just going with the idea that

Anguly Mala said saint when or said sage

when he really meant saint

mean sages I think we kind of we already

went over that one I think in the

previous Q&A so I'm assuming that when

he says sage he means saint and if he

really does mean sage then I apologize

because I'm misinterpreting the question

because the distinction between a

philosopher And a sage is that a sage is

just a very highly advanced philosopher.

Now very like a genius of philosophy, a genius of wisdom.

Just like a saint would be like a religious genius, a sage is a philosophical genius. At least that's how I interpret it.

See, studying and imitating I mean reading like the daqing theangu

I mean those are

I don't know whether I guess they'd be more sages than saints you know the authors of the the daq jing and theang zoo um some other like saintly types would be like or kabir who wrote poetry

Um, St. Francis of Aisi I mean he was a genuine saint. I mean just reading his biography is I mean it's it's worth

reading.

So yeah there's there's lots of saints.

I mean there's a whole calendar of

saints in Christianity and then there's

probably even more saints in you know

like India and and parts east.

But just because you're a saint, you're

just because you've been canonized

doesn't mean that you're necessarily a

saintly person. Like, oh, what's his

name? Some of the some of the Catholic

saints are really awful people. Like,

what was the saint?

Was it Clement of Alexandria? Who was

the one that had the the the

philosophist

uh Hipatia

put know this like tortured to death?

Just killed in broad daylight in public.

No, it wasn't it wasn't Clement

serial St. Sirill of Alexandria. I mean,

he was just a bad person.

But he was a saint mainly because he was

on the winning side of a like a

theological controversy. He championed a

certain view that turned out to be

accepted by mainstream Catholicism and

so he was called a saint because of it.

I think the uh uh the Greek Orthodox

Church considers the Roman Emperor

Constantine I to be a saint. That I

think Constantine I was canonized as a

saint by the Greek Orthodox or Eastern

Orthodox Church. Even though Constantine was no saint. He had his wife and his eldest son just put to death because you know they maybe they were plotting against him or something. But even if they're plotting against him, killing your own wife and son or just ordering their death is more along the lines of what Nero would have done than like a genuine saint. Plus, of course, he plunged the Roman Empire into this bloody civil war just for his own glorification mainly.

So, yeah, there is a difference between a real saint, like a genius of virtue or like a genius of religion and just

someone who's been canonized by the church.

But I I I think I've given enough of a list, you know, like in the east or like in the west you've got St. John of the Cross and like Meister Ehart even like I've been told that uh what the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius Lyola is like just one of the best books in the west on mental cultivation. I think it was Somerset mom or some famous author said that. I mean, he was just like completely impressed. Or maybe it was Bernard Shaw, one of those English writers, like the turn of the 20th century.

Um,

like the desert fathers, you could read like the the writings of the desert fathers or writings about the desert fathers.

I mean, that that if in the west, you know, those would be a good start. And in the east of course you've got Nim Crowley Baba, you got Rama Maharshi, you've got Rama Krishna

um

who else

lots I mean there's lots Roomie Kabir

some of the Sufis

there's lots of them but

mainly um my my reading outside of Buddhism is somewhat limited you You

know, I've I've read more than most
people, I guess, but within the within
Buddhism, the people that I have the
most respect for would be sages and not
saints. They'd be more philosophical
than religious,
more wisdom oriented than faith
oriented.
And I suppose I should just move on to
Anguly Mala's next question.
Says, "What daily habits do you
personally keep and which ones would you
recommend as most beneficial for
everyday life?" Well, I sleep every
night and I eat food every day. Go potty
pretty much every day.
Make sure I have clothes on before I go

outside the house.

Um, those would be some of the most

important ones that I would recommend

for others to follow.

But

I mean, I really don't know how to

answer that question. What daily habits

do I personally keep? I just

get up in the morning, drink a cup of

coffee, look at the headlines in the

news.

Gosh,

I mean, it's

I really don't know. I'm not exactly

sure how to answer that question

because I mean your outward actions

really are not nearly as important as your mental states anyway. But yeah, the most important habits that I would recommend to others that I personally keep would be sleep every night, get up and maybe drink a cup of coffee and go to the bathroom, bathe every day, brush your teeth every day, at least once a day,

eat food, preferably healthy food.

And that's you're you're actually that'd be starting off on the right foot, I think.

And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Kify and Clefy says, "When are you starting your Dharma school? It is somewhat a joke

question, but knowing how corrupt most Buddhist centers became, it's time for a Buddhist center for those who want to escape samsara."

Well, the thing is, even when I was a monk trying to live in the West as a teacher, I mean, you have to work for a living in in the West pretty much. And so even when I was a monk, just doing it as like my main job still, I mean, if I wasn't like relying upon like Asian immigrants to to provide me with food, clothing, shelter, and medicine, then I mean, I'd just be like

barely surviving, you know, just living from hand to mouth, which is appropriate

for a monk, I suppose, but still I wouldn't have very many supporters. And so I would just feel like I was being a burden on these well-intentioned generous supporters. And I mean it wasn't it did not seem to be sustainable.

So I mean even when I was a monk I couldn't really make a living as a dharma teacher.

You make a living as a monk by being a kind of living breathing pagan idol that devout Asian Buddhists just want to support in order to earn merit.

So now that I'm working, you know, having to pay bills and so forth,

not working at this present moment, but still, you know, I got a bills to pay and so forth. And just being a dharma teacher,

the most sustainable way of teaching dharma is online for me. And even if I did try to set up some kind of center or have meditation sessions in my living room, which isn't very likely to happen still, I mean, I'm living in the Bible belt. I'm living in South Carolina. Most Western Buddhists, as Clefy kind of indicates here, are gonna be just very left-wing

once they find out that I'm a fascist or a Nazi or whatever. You know, not that I

am one, but a lot of them would think I
was simply because I'm farther right
than Hillary Clinton.
So, when am I starting the Dharma
School?
at probably at the soonest would be like
at least 10 years from now unless just
something weird happens, something
unforeseeable happens and
then it happens.
But I'm not really deliberately moving
in that direction at present simply
because even when I was a monk, it
wasn't working out very well.
So
I guess I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Ruie. But

good luck with finding a a good teacher.
I mean, there are they are out there.
And if you have good enough comma, if
you're if you're ready, you know, when
the the when the student is ready, the
teacher will come.
So, I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from Ruie. And Ruie
says,
"Pointing mind at mind and observing the
carousel of thoughts, one realizes that
no single thought offers stable,
enduring refuge and that even wholesome
thoughts are fleeting." Confidence in
Buddha Dhama is confidence that it
offers an off-ramp to this predicament.

What is your experience of the damic nonverbal offramp? Well, I mean the offramp mainly occurs in the form of meditation or at least meditation is giving you like more subtle mental states more and more subtle that is making it easier for you to eventually just stop relying upon perception in general thinking but perception in general

but I mean even Ruie says I mean like I' I've mentioned the the the small discourse on voidness in the Majimminaya more than once the chula suta and I mean the monk in the suta you know he he's cultivating more and more refined mental states until he gets into the

anime chitoimi or let's see anime

chto samadei the the formless

concentration of mind the signless

concentration of mind which is higher

than even fourth Janna you know it's

symbolically kind of the highest

possible state you can attain like

through cultivating meditation and then

when the monk comes out of that state he

realizes that even that had a beginning

and an end and its condition and is you

know impermanent and dooka so then it's

when you get to that stage then it's

just like something just clicks you have

this insight that nothing is really

going to work nothing that you do is

going to get you enlightened and then in a way you just kind of let go.

But at least by cultivating more and more refined mental states with less and less thinking that you know you can kind of extrapolate to some degree, you know, you can kind of get little tastes or glimmers of kind of what it's like. Sort of like you can get a little taste or glimmer when you're in the middle of a sneeze. you know, you're wide awake and you're not thinking anything during that split second when you're sneezing.

So, what is my experience of the dumbic non-verbal offramp?

Yeah, I mean just when you get into refined meditative states

then um like the the Janna in the text
are sometimes referred to as temporary
liberation
because you know it's like at least
you've got loads and moa you know
attraction aversion and semic-conscious
stupidity just so sublimated so subtle
that they're almost not an issue and
then you can sort of get a a glimpse of
what is beyond that, you know, what's
just right on the other side of the
veil, so to speak.
But when you experience a mental like a
meditative state, when you're just wide
awake and not thinking anything,
then yeah, you definitely get a a kind

of taste of what it's like
just not to be addicted to thinking and
completely lost in perception, which is
what samsara is. Samsara is perception
and most people are just completely
stuck in it. I mean what is on the other
side of the veil is always there. It's
just like the enlightened mind is always
right there. The mind is luminous like
the sutas say but it's defiled by like
incoming defilements or sort of
extraneous defilements.
According to the atakawaga even your own
thoughts are extraneous. You know
they're just somehow coming from
outside. And it's like in Buddhist
philosophy something that always struck

me as rather strange.
Mind is considered to be the sixth sense and just like the other senses, you know, you've got the sense organ and then you've got the sensory data that impinges on the sense organ from outside your mind somehow. And that's the way Buddhism looks at even thinking, you know, it's just sort of like this extraneous thing that that's like incoming into your mind.
So to be freed from that even for just a like a few minutes especially at first when you're not used to it I mean it's like 20 years of struggling and floundering is well worth it just two

minutes of just into getting into this
state of just silent illumination
and that's sort of a taste of the
offramp I guess
and I'm just going to move on next
question this is from Fred
And Fred says, "Is the body just
immersed in the absolute? In my opinion,
the body is just an instrument in an
environment. Everything is experiential,
not existential." Well, I mean, I can
always fall back on the well-worn
simile of the block of marble. You know,
you've got this block of marble
and contained within that block of
marble is every possible statue
including every possible body. So, in a

sense, your body is immersed in the absolute because the rock itself would be the absolute. And these imaginary forms that are really in there. I mean, they really are in that block of marble. All you got to do is just carve away the extraneous rock and the Venus Demo is right there with and without arms, you know. Leia Kuan and his sons being devoured by snakes. The discus thrower, the dying gall. I mean, they're all in that same block of marble. Every single molecule already in the correct position.

It's just that it takes perception like imagination

to single out one statue instead of another. And that's what our mind is doing. That's kind of what karma is doing with us.

So in a sense, the body is just immersed in the absolute just like every single statue is immersed in that block of marble.

So I guess I answer that question more or less. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Fifth.

And fifth says, I was wondering this week what exactly was the point of Mahayana. What I mean by this is how in your opinion were the original teachings of the Buddha changed so much as to

incorporate the concept of a multitude of bodhicattvas holding off one's enlightenment to liberate all beings etc. Well, I've I've kind of given a a brief history or synopsis of a brief history of the origin of Mahayana Buddhism

more than once, but what the hell? It's been a while. So, I'll I'll kind of give a a brief history of the origin of Mahayana Buddhism as I understand it. And of course, there's going to be lots missing just because I don't know everything. But Mahayana apparently was it was sort of a coalition of different schools of Buddhism with different

emphases. Like you had the Pya Paramita school of Buddhism that in a way it was like a reform movement, you know, in a way it was like a reaction against these abidharmas and abidharmas that the earlier schools were cooking up of just this formulated intellectual scholastic philosophy, you know, very systematic. Everything is categorized, you know, all different forms of of matter and all the the different possible like conditions and interactions are cataloged and described in detail. This kind of thing that some of the the Mahayana or proto Mahayana like these pragny paramita people, I mean, they realized that that was moving away from this like the the

stark simplicity of what the Buddha was originally teaching like in the atakawaga. And so the Pragya paramito sutras to some degree they kind of go back towards the like the the spirit of really archaic Buddhist texts like the atakawaga.

So there's that school. You have like the pure land school which in my opinion mainly arose from monks trying to become enlightened and failing and so then they just fall back on faith. You know it's like Buddha Buddha save me.

So there's that.

But with regard to like the the multiple bodhic sattvas and taking the bodhic

sattva vow and all that

part of it I' I've read I think it was

like an early Buddhist scholar named

Francis story had this theory that makes

a lot of sense. He said that that aspect

of Mahayana like the preference of being

a Buddhist sattva over just becoming

enlightened in this very life which is

what the Buddha in all likelihood was

teaching. You should become enlightened

in this very life if you can and then

later Mahayana Buddhists are saying nope

you should put that off indefinitely

and become a Buddhist sattva for the

sake of all beings and so forth. And

that has its roots according to Francis

story in Jotica stories in Jotica

literature which is stories of the
Buddhist past lives or at least some of
his past lives and in some of them are
like as fables where the Buddha is like
a talking animal or you know sometimes
he's like the wise brahman this kind of
thing the wise prince
and because of this Jonica literature
that arose
after the Buddhist time. You know, it's
it's a way of glorifying the founder.
It's taking a lot of like Indian
folklore, you know, a lot of these were
like
what do you call it? Fables or stories
that had already existed and then you

just tack on a Buddhist beginning and a Buddhist ending and a Buddhist moral and you've turned it into a Buddhist story. So with the glorification of the Buddha and these Jotica tales, you know, it it created more of a distance between the Buddha and an ordinary enlightened being until there was like this orders of magnitude. The Buddha was just so far beyond an ordinary enlightened being even though originally in my opinion there wasn't necessarily a difference other than God Buddha is the one who started the system and other people followed. But I mean they were just as enlightened as he was.

Even going with Abidama philosophy that

pa or wisdom is the same. It's synonymous with amoa or absence of delusion. So you if you have zero delusion you've got maximum wisdom which would be like a dry visioned arahant with no psychic powers or a sama buddha. They're the same amount of wisdom because they have the same amount of moha which is zero.

But it's just human nature. You glorify the founder of your religion. I mean one famous religion in the west the founder of the religion was actually turned into God Almighty.

Buddhism, I mean, they they kind of outdid even that because they've got the

they've got like the highest gods in heaven coming down to worship the Buddha. You know, the Buddha is higher than the gods, higher than Brahma.

So, you've got this idea that it's more noble and more exalted and better to be a Buddha than to be just an ordinary ordinary enlightened being. Even though like I say there probably wasn't originally a distinction other than the Buddha was just like the leader of the the the SA the founder of it.

So I think that's really how the idea of people taking bodhic sattva vows and just putting off enlightenment indefinitely for the sake of all beings which ultimately don't even exist.

I think that's how it happened is
glorification of the Buddha and then
glorification of Buddhahood and then the
bodhic sattva is someone who's striving
for Buddhahood
because that's somehow nobler and more
heroic and more exalted than just
becoming enlightened and just bailing
out of the system.
But the Buddha in all likelihood
taught people just become enlightened if
you can in this very life.
So I think I'm just going to move on to
fifth's next question
which is
can you talk about your views of the

existence of matter and whether or not things exist at all? I don't really understand the terravada concept of matter being real. But everything is constantly blinking in and out of existence. Or rather, I don't understand how that makes more sense than it all being made up by the mind. Maybe I'm just not understanding it well. But I'd appreciate you comparing your view, which from your past Q&As I'm inclined to agree with, to the Terravada view. I've also heard you mention there are schools of Mahayana that are more in line with your views on this. Can you talk about those? Well, this is kind of a complex question.

This is the second to last question

though and we've only been going for

less than an hour and a half. So, I

guess a complex question is acceptable.

Let's see.

Where do I start on this?

Let's see here.

I guess the terravada understanding of

matter or yeah the existence of matter

according to terravada

or orthodox terra which includes abidama

in the commentarial tradition you got

four ultimate truths four ultimately

real

I don't know phenomena you've got mind

or consciousness wana or chitta in

abidama you've You got mental states or chasea. So mind and mental states are just qualitatively different. It's not that mental states are a form of consciousness. They are just utterly absolutely different. Then you've got rupa or physical matter. And ultimately rupa just means form. It came to mean physical matter subsequently I guess. And then you've got nibbana. Now there's only one kind of cheetah or consciousness. I mean it takes various colors you know in in association with the mental states that it is serving as a background for but still technically there's just one cheetah there are 52 chasikas or mental states that are just

ultimately separate from each other

completely different from each other

qualitatively different ultimately real

in and of themselves

and then you've got 28 different kinds

of matter and then just one niba

So you can add those up if you want.

It's it's complicated math. I won't try

to go there.

So 28 kinds of matter that are

ultimately real and they're flashing off

and on at like a trillion times per eye

blink. And that has never made sense to

me. And it just it's just like a glitch

in Buddhist philosophy. It's like in

ancient times they didn't try to figure

it out. Maybe nobody's noticed that there was this major problem looming in the theory and that is if everything is blinking on and off a trillion times per second, you know, it's there, then it's not there, there's nothing there, then it's there again, then it's not there. So, I mean, you've everything is broken off at the non-existence part. I mean, what causes everything to come back into existence? Because things cannot come into existence through a non-existent cause.

I asked a Burmese Abidama scholar about this and he says in Burmese there is what they call aone. But aone just means momentum. You know in physics you know

the the Burmese word for momentum in physics mass times velocity is aone. But I mean you can't have momentum if it's stopping start stop start stop start stop. That's not really momentum. That would be some different kind of momentum. But even momentum would disappear. So there would be zero momentum if everything is blinking out of existence with nothing there.

So the terravada explanation and just multiplicity in general relying upon perception and so forth. I just haven't been able to take it very seriously from the beginning from the time I started learning it.

But the terraotta point of view is even though it's ultimately real, let's say earth element, even though earth element is ultimately real, it lasts only a trillionth of an eyelink. And it only exists because of conditioning causes. So you know, it's sort of like fire exists only when you've got the conditioning causes of fuel, oxygen, and heat. Take away any of those, the fuel, the oxygen, or the heat, the fire goes out.

So that's kind of the way Terravada looks at it. Even though something they say something is ultimately real, it exists for only a trillionth of a second and it only exists because of these

conditions. So in a way it's conditional even though it's ultimately real. And it's I think to some degree you've got ancient Indian philosophers who are not fully enlightened who are just kind of waiting too deep into abstractions and intellectuality that they can't really make sure everything is airtight. You know it kind of reminds me of the the philosophy of Sartra. I don't know how to pronounce his name. French words, you just you're best off just mispronouncing them on purpose just as a form of defiance,

peaceful non-ooperation with the French language. But Sartra, I mean, I read I

read at least one of his books and it seemed to me that when he's being philosophical and he's not just doing a biographical sketch of of of a Renaissance painter or something, he's like really being philosophical. It's like his his method is to formulate sentences that are so long and convoluted that neither he nor anybody else can see the flaws in his reasoning. And that's kind of the way Abidama works. It's just it's so complicated, so complex, so convoluted and abstract that a mere mortal human mind is incapable of straightening it all out and getting rid of all the glitches.

So that's kind of the terravada position

from a critical point of view. I mean my point of view, I mean just go back to the block of marble again. You've got infinite formless consciousness or call it pure being which Hegel says is indistinguishable from pure non-being. It's it's this paradox. It's like the origin of the universe is this paradox. Everything exists and doesn't exist simultaneously because they're the same. And when you divide things out into, you know, the 10,000 things as the Daoqing talks about, then, you know, it's harder to see that just pure undifferentiated being and pure undifferentiated non-being. I mean, there's no

discernable content in either of those.
so that they just blend together and are
the same.
So that's that was like the synthesis of
Hegel's first,
you know, his first thesis antithesis
and synthesis in his logic. Start with
pure being, then the antithesis is pure
non-being. That's it. I mean, they're
the same. You can't tell them apart. And
so the synthesis is like distinctions.
You have to have a distinction between
being and non-being with like a a line
between them essentially a contrast. You
have to have contrast
in order for anything to seem to exist.
And I'm not exactly sure why I even

started talking about that. That was so long ago.

But uh I mean you've got the uncarved block. Daqing talks about the nameless uncarved block which could be you know infinite formless consciousness luminous all round like is found in a few old poly texts.

Then you've got contained within this uncarved block all every single possible statue and so long as you've got the conditions for that statue being singled out it'll be singled out. I mean they're all in there.

So in a sense matter I mean it's suffused with ultimate reality

but its distinctness and separateness is not ultimately real.

Okay. So let's see.

I guess I explained that well enough. I mean, it's it's something that I explain pretty much in almost every Q&A and people keep asking about it because it's it's just kind of beyond the pale of what most people can really wrap their head around as far as I can tell, especially people that insist upon intellectual explanations. I mean, if you're just like clinging to intellect as your way of understanding reality, I mean, that's that's like a mental prison. It's like a ball and chain. I mean, you're never going to understand

reality so long as you're trying to
figure it out intellectually.
It's just not going to happen. It's not
going to work.
But I can move on to the other part of
the question here. Let's see.
Let's see. He says, "I've also heard you
mentioned there are schools of Mahayana
that are more in line with your views on
this. Can you talk about those?"
Well, this reminds me of this. It was
like a college level philosophy book
that I found in Burma written by two
Indian presumably Hindu philosophy
professors and the book was for Indian
universities. So it's it's it was like a

survey of Indian philosophy
and it was based on old comparative
philosophy texts from like medieval
times.
And with regard to Buddhism, I mean it's
it's kind of ironic that these scholars
on Indian philosophy had to rely on
western scholars of of Buddhism like
Rice Davids, people like that to to
write their chapter on Buddhism.
But according to these medieval texts,
these medieval philosophy texts in India
that talk about Buddhism, they would
divide Buddhism into four main types.
And that would be dependent on their
metaphysics or what is it not
epistemology, ontology. It's like you

had the school of Buddhism that says you cannot know mind or matter. Then you have the school of Buddhism that says you can't know matter but you can know mind. Then there's the school of Buddhism that says you can know mind and matter but you can know mind directly and matter can be logically inferred with certainty. And then finally you've got the school of Buddhism that says you can know mind and matter directly. Now, Terravada was not on this list because at the time that these medieval or late ancient philosophy texts were written in India, in North India, Terravada had already stopped being a major player in

in North Indian philosophy. It had sort of migrated south and had faded into obscurity in the north. But the the the te the the school that claimed you can know mind and matter directly was closely related to terra and that was Sarvastivat.

And I don't know how anybody I mean I've had terraata Buddhist monks like western ones even tell me you can know mind directly or you can know matter directly and it's like how just read George Barkley he'll tell you how that that can't work.

You can't I mean all you can all you can know directly is mind because knowing is mind. To know anything other than mind

has to be done indirectly through mind. So anyways getting back to this four divisions of Buddhism. There's the second school that says you can know mind directly but you can infer matter indirectly with logical certainty. And that I think was the saltronica school. And these first two, the Svastadans and the Saltronicas that both say you can know matter were what would be called Hinayana. They're like pre- Mahayanaist. So it was like the pre Mahayana schools had somehow gotten on to this idea that that physical matter is ultimately real and you can know that with certainty. And

it's just one thing about early
Buddhism, not the earliest Buddhism that
doesn't really adopt any philosophical
stance, but these early schools of
Buddhism that somehow just due to
cultural conditions
decided that physical matter is
ultimately real and you can know that
either directly or indirectly.
So then the next school of Buddhism or
the type of Buddhism that says you can
know mind you can't know matter would be
the yoga mahayana Buddhists or the mind
only school. They were like
philosophical idealists.
So they're saying physical matter
doesn't even really exist and you can't

know it. And then finally you've got the
school that says you can't really know
mind or matter. That would be Majamaka.
They were like radical
like the Hindus called them nihilists.
But it's more subtle than that. It's
more subtle than just being a nihilist,
you know? It's it's sort of taking like
mysticism and bringing it into
philosophy so thoroughly that the
mysticism just kind of denatures and
kind of destroys the philosophy as it
goes along. It's it's kind of like that.
I mean, it's
Ma the Majamaka Buddhists weren't
denying that there is an ultimate

reality. They're just denying that you can wrap your head around it. You can really know it

at least like with a samsauric mind, you know, a philosophical mind.

So

let's see. Yeah, Majamaka really, it seems to me comes very close to the point of view of the Atakawaga.

It just takes like the refusal to philosophize of the atagawaga and it sort of s is more sophisticated in that it's able to use philosophical more or less logical arguments to just sort of undermine philosophy in general. It's weird. It's like majamica philosophy. It destroys all other points of view and

then it turns on itself and destroys

that just leaving emptiness behind and

presumably enlightenment.

So yeah, I do think that the Majamaka

understanding of like mind and matter is

probably more accurate and more in

harmony with what the Buddha originally

taught than orthodox terravada as found

in

Abidama and the commentarial tradition

and even in some sutas

because all the sutas are not just 100%

verbaten verbatim.

just transcripts of what the Buddha

taught.

Excuse me.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to move on to the last question. And this is from Cyrus Frame, one of the only people who asks questions on Rumble. and he started off kind of offering to debate me with regard to the atawaga and ancient Indian beliefs about fire. You know, it's like the word nibbana literally means blowing out like a fire blows out like you blow out a candle. And I have made put forth the the statement which I think I originally got from Ajan Tenisero who wrote an entire book about this that the ancient Indians had this idea about fire not really being extinguished and ceasing to exist. It just becomes unmanifest when the fire

goes out. So he kind of is is kind of

pushing back against this

interpretation. Now he points out that

nibbana is not found in the article.

It's it's the the verb nibi or nibadi

which means blowing out.

Let's see. So then he quotes

the ai vachuta

about a fire going out due to simple

lack of the requisite conditions for

fire.

And any boy scout knows that the rec um

the requisite conditions conditions for

fire are fuel, oxygen and heat.

So this this suta the egi vajota suta

u includes the word sanankyam which is

translated in English as reckoned.

So it is simply reckoned as extinguished

and see.

So anaharo means you without fuel,

without sustenance.

Nibbuto blown out. It even is

reckoned and it goes.

That's like a word by word very clumsy

translation of the poly there. Let's

see. He says reckoned or sank implies

that fire is just a name or a

classification we use. As long as the

process of burning is happening once the

process stops, the classification no

longer fits anything real. It is not

unmanifest. It is simply no longer being

fed. So it is gone. In my opinion,

anaharo is the sessation of constructing views and perceptions. So not constructing is blowing out or nibbati because the Buddha did not use the word nibbana in the atakawaga. I suspect he never actually used that word at all as nibbana is a label or sya which is is perception
which is a precursor to a view. What do you think?
Well I mean you can interpret this at different levels. I mean the more at face value you give like the comparison of the sage blowing out and becoming enlightened and the fire blowing out and just either going out

which is an Indo-Uropean idiom that is
common in many Indo-Uropean languages. I
actually looked into this, you know,
it's like when a fire stops burning, you
know, the fire stops being a fire that
in Indo-Uropean languages there's always
or usually or frequently this prefix
meaning outwardness,
you know, it goes out
or even extinguish the X, you know, it's
like exterior. It's it's it's like an
outward thing.
So that could just be an idiom. But I
mean this whole argument kind of reminds
me, if you can call it an argument,
there's
um right after the atikavaga and the

sunni pa, there's the paranavaga, which the central core portions of it are considered to be also extremely old. You know, comparable to the atagawaga, maybe not quite as old as the oldest sutas of the atagawaga, but it's still archaic Buddhism. And there's a famous verse in in the paranoaga. It's let's see here. Okay, it's it's in the upa manavapucha. The questions of the Brahman student up. And the Buddha says, oh, I'll I'll spare you the poly. You probably wouldn't understand it through my thick accent anyway. But in English, it says, "Just as a flame tossed by force of wind quickly goes to its cessation and

subjects not itself to any designation,
so the sage released from the mass of
names quickly goes to his cessation and
subjects not himself to any designation.
So the massive names, you're free from
the massive names just as the fire is
free from the requisite conditions for
fire. So yeah, I mean it is a matter of
perception. I mean just using the fire
as a kind of metaphor. I mean, you
shouldn't get hung up on, you know,
trying to
argue or assert that, you know, there's
like this necessary connection between,
you know, the blowing out of a fire and
the blowing out of the unenlightenment
of of a of a biku or whatever.

So, Iwamuni namakayauto.

So thus the sage released from the the like the uh what is it the mass of names.

So yeah the massive names is perception and that really is I mean like I've said before earlier on this Q&A perception is samsara. So that's ultimately what's what's ending when you when you become enlightened you cease to be unenlightened. I mean the enlightenment doesn't start. Nibbana doesn't start. Nirvana has no beginning and no end. The nirvana is always here. At least if you're going to consider it to be a kind of metaphysical state and not just like

the moment of enlightenment which lasts

you know this eye blink

where how do I even start that sentence?

So

yeah I mean it's perception is some

sorrow. So what's what's blowing out is

not necessarily perception because

presumably even an enlightened being is

still perceiving. It's just like the

clinging to perception, the identifying

with perception

and then kind of the the comparison

between perception and fire kind of

fizzles out. I mean it it it's not a

perfect analogy because no analogy is

perfect.

But yeah, I'm I'm completely fine with

the idea that what blows out is the mass
of names or perception.
Namarupa, I mean, originally Namarupa
was name and form,
which is kind of the way perception
works, except it's kind of in backwards
order. You start off with a form, you
single out some form, and then you slap
a name on it. You designate that form.
That's how perception works.
But then in Orthodox Terravada and other
early schools they reinterpreted
namarupa apparently to mean
mind and matter.
But I mean in old upanachads some of the
oldest upanads maybe older than the

Buddhist texts namarupa meant name and form. It didn't mean mind and matter. So yeah, I mean I'm I'm not really inclined to debate this and I mean trying to like nail down some one correct interpretation is is just futile anyway. Nothing is really 100% certain. It's all based on delusion. You're never going to understand reality by figuring it out intellectually anyway. So if it works, that's good enough. It helps you to wake up. That's really the important thing. And it I mean it could be Buddhism that's helping you to wake up, a certain school of Buddhism, a certain interpretation of a school of Buddhism, or it could be Christian mysticism or

whatever.

But if it helps you to wake up, then

then it's it's doing its job. I mean,

it's if it helps you to wake up

completely, then it's certainly

adequate.

And I think that's it. I think I

answered that one more or less.

And uh I appreciate your patience with

uh any kind of slowness of intellect on

my part this evening due to lack of

sleep last night.

But the show must go on. And if you like

these kind of Q&A videos or other videos

that I occasionally produce, then feel

free to like and subscribe. And

if you have any questions you think I can answer, especially about Buddhism, you know, Dharma in general, which would include, you know, various philosophies and meditation methods and so forth. I mean, I'm I'm no expert on like Tibetan meditation techniques, that kind of thing, but I generally know more about Buddhism than most people do, I guess. And I've been a monk for 30 years. I mean, I've lived the life. I've studied Buddhism from the inside out. So, if you have any questions you think I can answer

um after watching all 190 previous 180 previous Q&As's because chances are I've already answered most of the questions

that I get asked. So, just watch all

those first,

which probably shouldn't take you more

than a month or two

as long as you know you don't do

anything else.

Then, uh no more than four. No. Oh god,

I almost said four. No more than three

questions per person per episode,

please. And uh I guess that's it. So be

happy.

Okay then.

I think we are recording. Is this working?

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 181. I am your host Po Basa. This is my beverage. And you may notice that I'm not in the studio.

And that is because my fair mate, my sweetheart, is in there, I hope, working on the cover art for my next book, which is pretty much done. It's just like the cover and maybe a little bit of the front matter and the back matter still has to get done. You know, like I got to apply for a copyright number or something like that. or the what is it

the ISBN

whatever that is.

So hopefully within the next couple

weeks

I'll have my fourth published book out

not including the article translation

that doesn't count and yes indeed 181 is

a prime number.

So that's the last two out of three have

been prime numbers which is nice.

And uh let's see here. I'm speaking to

you from the middle of the tail end of a

blizzard. I guess it's the most snow I

have seen in South Carolina since I

moved here. It's maybe five inches at

present, but it's still snowing.

And uh I guess I should just uh start

answering questions of which we have

kind of a

kind of the lower end of average

number of questions kind of like in the

high 20s something like that. So it

shouldn't be an extremely long one. For

those of you that don't like extremely

long ones I think you might be in luck

this time. Of course, I could just go

off on tangents and digressions at any

moment, like bitching about the new Star

Trek,

that kind of thing,

gay cllingons.

Well, let's just answer questions at the

present time. And the first question is

from Romeo. And Romeo says, I am currently reading your essay, The Tribal Native, from your excellent book, Buddhist Ethics, Buddhist Practice. In the essay, you say that you have a quote cool heart unquote and quote a lack of regard for my own species except for a few friends and the occasional beautiful female unquote. I identify on both counts. I've always had a slight aversion towards the average normie, though this has improved somewhat with age. I'm looking for ways to further increase my capacity for caring and overall regard for other people and wonder if you have any suggestions. I know that there is meta meditation which

I do and has helped me somewhat in this regard. There's also the sentiment behind the expression, quote, "Love your crooked neighbor with your crooked heart," unquote, from the poet When.

In other words, when any kind of social aversion creeps up in me, I try to remember that I am not perfect and have my own shortcomings like everyone else.

Other than those two things, meta meditation and recognizing I am imperfect like others. Do you have any other practical tips for someone to increase their regard and compassion for others?

Question mark.

So

Romeo is asking me how to be less

misogyn no misogynistic misanthropic

I suppose.

And yeah, I mean, I've improved with age

also. I've never really hated Let's see

what Let's see. He says I've He's always

had a slight aversion towards the

average normie. And I'm not sure. I

mean, once you know an average normie

personally, or at least in my case, I

mean, they're just another person. You

you have like a rapport. There's sort of

like an empathy. So that in my case um I

just didn't have use for human beings in

the abstract as a generalization you

know just the human species especially

when I was younger I really didn't have
much use for I preferred the companies
of trees to humans as a general rule
with the exception as he quotes from my
essay you know a few friends and the
occasional beautiful female
but I
just because
um I can get along with the average
normie. I mean, I grew up in in in the
midst of average normies. I grew up in
like a bluecollar town, bluecollar
neighborhood and just,
you know, it was like there weren't a
lot of scholars or intellectuals that I
was hanging out with um even getting up

into college really.

So I I've always had a kind of appreciation for riffraff. In fact, one of the essays I wrote, I don't remember which book it's in, if it's in any of them, is just on the the merits, the advantages of associating with riff raff because when you're amongst riffraff, so to speak, that they just accept you for who you are. You don't have to be fake. For example, when I was in college, I went to a University of Washington party. A friend of mine went to the University of Washington. I went to visit him. We went to this party. And at the time, it might still be the case, the UW was like the most prestigious

university in Washington State. I mean, there's no Ivy League schools there, that kind of thing. So, I go to this party and it's a bunch of like like young preppy types just kind of like [clears throat] posing, you know, projecting an image, you know? It's like they're practicing for like some corporate cocktail party. And I mean I came from like Aberdine, you know, it's this bluecollar town, like a logging town. And there, I mean, people might get in fights occasionally, but at least they're being themselves. They're being like genuine, authentic humans, and they go to a party to have fun, not to like

pose and project an image.

So, I mean, my father was the same way, too. He he tended to associate with riff raff for lack of a better word. At least for lack of a better word that I can think of.

So I mean there are certain advantages to that. I mean for me I was like a prince among riffraff by associating with riffraff. You know they kind of looked up to me. At least a lot of them did. You know I was the only the only party animal in high school that was in the honor role for example.

But uh getting back to Romeo's question here, the main thing I think that has helped me to have a higher opinion of

the human race is I spent 30 years
trying to perfect myself, just trying to
become a saint, you know, trying to
reprogram myself. And I realized that
you're pretty much just stuck being who
you are
trying to become a different person like
like Schopenhauer
was continually saying in his works. I
mean it just you know it sounds nice in
theory but it just doesn't work that way
when you've got someone who's insisting
that you got to be more this way and
less that way or they're going to
withhold their affection or you know
just wash their hands of you or

whatever. Well, I mean, that's pretty much on them really because as a general rule, people do not change that much. I mean, you can sort of make slight modifications, but any major radical change is going to it's pretty much necessitates some just profound crisis, some crash,

and then you can reprogram. It's it's I've talked about this before. I've I've mentioned Battle for the Mind by William Sergeant, which is one of the most important books I've ever read. It'd be like in the top 10 with regard to really modifying my outlook on the world.

And he says that I mean it's it's just an instinct in in higher vertebbrates,

not just humans, that we are governed by habit. You know, we're just set in our ways. We're just kind of locked in. And so long as our habits get us through life well enough, then we resist change just at this subconscious, unconscious, instinctive level. And what really requires

um and what is necessary for change is you have to hit this crisis where your habits are just not dealing with the problem anymore. Where you are just crashing out hard because you just cannot deal with the situation. like Chinese thought reform was based on this. A lot of like stone age or

huntergatherer manhood rituals or basic training, especially in like elite military forces where they just grind you down until you're like this quivering massive jelly and then just build you back up into a super soldier who will not hesitate to obey an order. That kind of thing. a lot of religious like being born again is based on this same principle.

So anyways, getting back to [clears throat] Romeo's question, I mean, I realized from 30 years of practice that changing yourself and not being a messed up, you know, mortal or whatever. I mean, it sounds good in theory, but as a general rule, it just

doesn't work very well.
At best, you can do like Jung says, and if [clears throat] you're going to get rid of some major mental force, you have to replace it with an equal mental force. For example, it was known in the old days almost the only cure for alcoholism, which was called dipsomania back then, was theomania, or becoming a religious fanatic.
So, I mean, I have a lot of compassion now for the average person because the average person hasn't spent three decades trying to perfect themselves, you know, based on this exalted ideal of of dharma. You know, they're just trying

to get along as best they can. And so I mean if I couldn't modify myself, if I couldn't reprogram myself into a saint, then how can I expect others to be saintly or just not mess up? You know, it's just I have more sympathy for the human condition now, more compassion and empathy for just people being born into this meat puppet.

So there is that and as you get older I think you just pick that up gradually. I think that's one reason why as people get older they tend to become mis less misanthropic at least in many cases like in my case and according to Romeo in his case also but also another thing is um it was after I dropped out of the

monkhood and started working again
working for a living that I started
appreciating that just the average guy
you know I'm got a bluecollar job I'm
among bluecollar people you know they
probably got C's in school if that if
they were on any sports team. They were
probably second string or junior varsity
or something might have gotten picked on
at school. might have been unpopular a
lot of them and they just get a job out
of high school and they just train at it
and get good at it until in you know
within a few years they are skilled at a
certain
I don't know a certain kind of work that

most people just can't do like driving a semi most people could not back up an 18wheel se

you know they couldn't back it into like a a parking slot, you know, at a at a loading dock or something or running certain machines. Just the average person is what's running the world really. You know, you've got the the really brilliant people who are inventing things and innovating things, but it's just the average person who's driving the trucks and stocking the shelves and, you know, selling whatever it is that people are buying, that kind of thing.

We're just building the cars, building

the buildings. It's just average people doing that. And I have a lot more appreciation for that after coming back to America and seeing that, you know, almost everybody who has a job is specialized in a certain way. So that they're good at this one thing. They're kind of an authority or an expert at this one kind of narrow bandwidth of the the full spectrum of, you know, what runs society. And so I I have more of a a respect for the average guy. You know, he's he's working 8 10 hours a day. You know, his kids don't see much of him. His wife might not see much of him. His wife might have a job, too. And he's

just working and working and working. Sometimes it just drudgery just for the sake of supporting his family and all that. And I have respect for that. It's the curse of Adam. you must earn your bread by the sweat of your brow and so forth.

So, there's that. And also, um, as I've gotten older and just partly through my monastic practice that I have just more automatic empathy, you know, you just kind of feel what the other person is feeling to some degree. There's like this us entity that you can tap into and there's like this almost like telepathy going on.

And everybody's got that to some degree.

Even even animals have that to some degree.

So all of that kind of helps me to be more compassionate and have more so-called Christian charity towards other people. And Christian charity isn't like making donations. Christian charity in the old fashioned sense is just accepting people as they are. Faults and all, warts and all.

And uh I mean reading Dostki helps I suppose because he specialized in portraying people very realistically with all their faults and warts on full display.

And he had a profound respect for his

fellow man. Partly because he spent a few years in like a Siberian prison colony with like hardcore criminals like murderers and rapists and so forth. And he could see that even in them there was like this tenacity and like courage. There was there were certain like strengths and certain qualities that were even admirable even in like a mass murderer that Dosi had the sensitivity to kind of appreciate to some degree. I mean, he wasn't denying that they belonged in prison and they they had killed children or whatever, but still, I mean, he could see the human condition and have sympathy for it.

So, yeah, I mean, even like reading

Doski's The Idiot, for example, or Crime
and Punishment, something like that, it
can help a person maybe
have a little a little bit more
Christian charity for their fellow
human.
And I guess some of it you just get me
aware with age
that that helps too I suppose.
And uh as for meta meditation meta
meditation I never really liked it much
because it just seemed too artificial
that for me genuine meta has to be
spontaneous that you don't cultivate it
so you can turn it off and on like a
faucet. It just some people it might

work but I think a lot of people who practice meta medit meta meditation are just sort of like laring you know they're pretending you know they're just getting this warm feeling of benevolence but it's just sort of like isolated and you know it's not really being applied to real life and then when the real life situation comes that meta meditation has little or no influence on their attitude.

Not that I'm saying you shouldn't do meta meditation, but for me it just didn't work very well because for me it just has to be spontaneous. So it's like you try to cultivate spontaneous meta at all times just

through

I don't various ways that I've already

been discussing. So I guess I should

just move on to the next question and

this is from the saboturs who may or may

not be more than one person and the

sabaturs say what are the karmic effects

of selfdeion

if you are not in any serious pain I

knew someone who topped himself because

he couldn't get a girlfriend. So again,

this is the kind of question that people

frequently ask. You know, what are the

karmic effects of this action? What are

the karmic effects of that action? Is

doing this right or wrong? You know, do

you get bad karma for this? And like I keep saying, it's like the actual physical act is ethically neutral. Just a mere physical act produces no karma at all. That the karma is the mental state, the accompanying mental state. So, if somebody autoterminates,
so to speak, I mean, if they do it in this frenzy of just despair and anguish and self-hatred and so forth, then they're going to be making a lot worse karma than say some samurai who,
let's say, he becomes Ronin because his his master, his daimo has been killed in a civil war or something. And so it's he just considers it him his duty to to finish himself off and or like Ko the

younger who opened his veins or had his doctor open his veins so to speak when Julius Caesar was winning the civil war and it became obvious that the republic was coming to an end in Rome. So I mean if you do it for philosophical reasons you know let's say there's this intelligent relatively wise person who realizes he has got some terminal health condition it's not going to get better he's just going to get worse and worse and so he decides well might as well just uh put an end to this.

So, you know, in a case like that and he he does, you know, he he does the

research and knows what kind of medication to take or whatever it is that will cause him to just go to sleep and not wake up like uh venerable Vera who was an eccentric very intellectual British monk living in son in the 50s and 60s. he autoterminated with using um ether.

And so with something like that, it's just like an anesthesia. You just go to sleep and you don't wake up again.

So I mean it's going to depend the karmic effects of selfdeion or auto termination if you're not whether or not you're in any serious pain. I mean it's going to depend on your attitude. You know what what your motivations are, how

you feel about what you're doing, that kind of thing. I mean, if you're just like can't stand it anymore, it's just too horrible, just bleakness all around, just, you know, depression and and just despair and all that, then I mean, you're going to be taking that with you with your karma. I mean, that's just creating this karmic imprint. And especially I mean if you selfdelete in some dramatic way that's going to have you just like in this state of emotional charge you know jumping off a cliff for example then it's going to have a lot more effect karmically and just influencing your next life than just you

know taking too much of a certain substance which makes you fall asleep and not wake up again when you just for like philosophical reasons.

I mean, it would be difficult to do it with no bad comma at all, with no unskillful mental states at all. Because it's difficult to do anything with no unskillful mental states at all.

Anything motivated by attraction, aversion, or semiconscious stupidity, which is essentially unenlightenment, is going to have some negative comma in associated with it. And so anything that an unenlightened person does with maybe very few exceptions is going to have at least a tinge of unh wholesome karma

associated with it.

So I suppose it's possible for a fully enlightened being to auto terminate in which case there would be no karmic effects at all.

I'm not sure if there are any cases in the texts of a fully enlightened being autoterminating,

but it wouldn't surprise me if there were. I mean, there's cases like God and in the God Suta who became enlightened while auto terminating and of course there was no karmic effect of that because he became enlightened at the moment of death.

On the other hand, some people can just

be very messed up going into their next life because of just the just the horror of their mental states at the time of their selfdeletion.

So it just depends on the mental state.

And I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Austin.

And Austin says, "Nondiffiation entails monism. If everything is fundamentally one is knowledge and ignorance undifferentiated lies and truth also question mark. Well, non-ifferentiation doesn't necessarily entail monism. It's like it reminds me of the sins singing Ming by Soon. At least that's his Japanese name. He's the third patriarch of of like Zen

Buddhism.

Third Chinese patriarch anyway. And he says all you can say is not two.

So I mean monism it's it's like emphasizing oneness but I mean if you emphasize oneness then that oneness in order to have any meaning has to have a contrast of not oneness you know it would be either nothingness or multiplicity or whatever and still you're you're kind of stuck in dualism.

So I think Son had the right idea and not even insisting on monism not even insisting on the one just but saying all we can say is not two.

So if everything is fundamentally one is

knowledge and ignorance undifferentiated

uh yeah I mean [clears throat] knowledge

and ignorance would both be mental

states and if and if everything is all

fundamentally one there wouldn't be any

mental states. So I mean there they'd be

not only undifferiated but they they

wouldn't even be in the picture.

Lies and truth also it's it's the same.

I mean you can't have lies and truth

without mental states.

So I mean if everything is fundamentally

one I mean in reality at the at the

ultimate level you've got

non-ifferiation

then yeah there'd be no differentiation

between lies and truth. I mean there

would be no lies and truth even at that level of reality at the ultimate level. Lies and truth neither one of them would would have any validity.

It'd be meaningless because in order to have lies and in order to have truths you have to have differentiation.

And you wouldn't have you wouldn't have truth without untruth. You wouldn't have untruth without truth as perceptions. Just like you wouldn't have knowledge without ignorance. And you wouldn't have ignorance without knowledge as perceptions.

And that's the only way they really

exist is as perceptions.

To exist is to be perceived.

So I'm going to move on to Austin's next question, which is why does the universe obey equations we supposedly invent?

Well, the universe doesn't obey equations. It's the other way around.

It's like the universe does what it does.

Let's say somebody throws a ball and then you've got some physicist who is like measuring the arc and then he's coming up with a mathematical equation that can map onto that arc more or less but it's not going to be a perfect fit because I mean with regard to throwing the ball there's going to be other

factors besides you know perfect gravity on a perfect flat plane you know there'd be like friction with the air there'd be like slight gravitational effects of like the sun and the moon interfering with the gravitational pole of the earth and all this. So that the equations that the physicists come up with are abstract and it's like they just observe reality or they observe empirical reality and then you know if if they're a physicist or a chemist or some sort of statistician, you know, maybe some of some of these ecologists, they'll they'll like come up with some mathematical equation that fits what

they observe as closely as they can. But
that doesn't mean the ball is obeying
any law regarding like parabolic arcs
when you throw the ball.
It's just that these equations are
cooked up by mathematicians or
scientists who do math and it comes as
close as they can find to what they
observe and it doesn't fit perfectly
because there's like
so many variables involved that I mean
it's like they're in abstraction they're
isolating this one force of of say
gravity and then they're just dealing
with that.
Well, the universe doesn't really work
that way. I mean, kind of. I mean, maybe

it does if you could isolate all the the variables, but in the empirical universe, the variables aren't isolated. It's just this soup of all these different conditions.

So, yeah, the universe just does what it does and then scientists will come up with equations that they can map onto the observed data.

And I'm just going to move on to Austin's third question.

I think Austin doesn't like monism very much. I just get that get that impression. But anyway, Austin says, "Logic seems to constrain any possible thought, not just human thought. If

logic was generated by the mind, how
could it not be the case that
contradictions could be true by
different conventions?"
Now, that's a difficult question. I gota
I got to read that second question
again. If logic was generated by mind,
which seems pretty obvious to me that it
is, how could it not be the case
that contradictions could be true by
different conventions? Okay, so he's
saying if logic really is just a kind of
mentally generated, you know,
abstraction,
then how could
contradictions
be true by different conventions? Well,

I mean, apparently Austin doesn't know anybody who's like a new age follower, a newager, but I mean to to a lot of these new age people, I mean, contradictions. I mean A and B even though they're mutually contradictory can still be considered true in their world.

So again though I mean it's let's see I mean any kind of multiplicity is generated by mind. Logic is is is a matter of perception.

So I mean you get rid of the the mind. I mean you get rid of logic. I mean you get rid of any kind of proposition.

How are you going to have you know like a syllogism? Is that going to be a valid

syllogism or an invalid one without any kind of perception?

You got to perceive it. I got a dog looking at me now because she wants to be sitting in this chair. She likes being in this chair chewing on stuff. like, oh, here she likes chewing on these. Here, here you go.

[clears throat] And she grunts when she likes something.

So, let's see here. Did I answer the question? It's Austin and and like many other people. I don't want to just pick on Austin. I mean, there's lots and lots of people in this world. probably most of them if if you really kind of question them about their attitude, you

know, it's like they try to understand reality and it's like they want to know what reality is like without human psychology interfering, let's say. So they kick human psychology out the front door and then just immediately sneak it back in through the back again.
That's what scientists try to do.
Although since like um quantum theory and theoretical physics came along with like the idea that the perceiving mind is influencing systems then even this is getting getting weak in physics even though it's still you know like a biologist or a chemist is still trying to understand what the world would be

like you know through the eyes of God
and not just through the eyes of people
And really, they're just trying to get
rid of human psychology
and then they can't. And so they just
have to sneak the human psychology in
through the back door immediately
because they can't imagine anything
without human psychology, especially if
human psychology is creating
multiplicity.
And you have to have um relations to
have multiplicity. In order to have
multiplicity, you have to have contrast.
And contrast relies on relations.
Same as, different from, especially
those are like the two main ones. And

there there is no same as or different
from out there in the world outside of a
perceiving mind. Like I've said before,
a chemist can analyze
a sample of matter. He can divide it
down into its constituent elements. He's
never going to isolate any pure same as
or any pure different from. Those are
purely psychological. And without those
psychological elements, there's no
differentiation. There's no contrast.
Unless you want to just sneak human ape
psychology in through the back door and
pretend that it's not there.
And some people when they're trying to
understand reality, I mean I mean that I

mean in a way that's that's like the the first first mistake because you cannot figure out reality. You cannot understand ultimate reality intellectually symbolically.

All of your thoughts are symbolic. And a symbol isn't the thing that it represents. It's it's like this abstract weird attempt to portray what it's trying to represent and it doesn't do a very good job. I mean just the idea of a tree is very different from a actual tree. Assuming that there is an actual tree you can't even prove that take away all the mental states the tree disappears too for all intents and purposes.

I used to think it was all intensive purposes, but then I realized I'm pretty sure it's all intents and purposes.

So, let's see. Did I answer the question before I move on to the next one? I mean, I really want to really answer these questions if I am able to.

So, logic seems to constrain any possible thought, not just human thought, I suppose. I mean it doesn't constrain newagers thought. I mean a lot of Christian thought it doesn't constrain a lot of fundamentalist Christians will think that the Bible is absolutely 100% true even though the Bible itself contains contradictions.

So [sighs]

okay that's that's kind of the easy

sentence in this two sentence question.

The second one that has the actual

question mark, if logic was generated by

the mind, which presumably it is, how

could it not be the case or just forget

the case, how could contra how could

contradictions not be true

by different. Oh man, this is it's

for some reason some sentences like

this, it's hard to wrap your head around

the actual meaning. Although I think

I've already answered this. If logic was

generated by the mind, how could it not

be that contradictions could be true by

different conventions?

Yeah, contradictions can be true by different conventions. I mean, if you just got an irrational convention, for example, no problem. Or even I mean, I've I've pointed this out before, like the Coca-Cola bottle. I don't have a Coca-Cola bottle handy. I've got this glass
purchased from the Dollar Tree.
But that's not good because it's glass can have two different meanings. Forget that. All right. How about
Okay. How about this? This is a coaster made of wood. So, it's a coaster and it's wood. But coaster doesn't mean wood. You can have coasters made out of

other things like cork, for example. And obviously anything made of wood isn't necessarily a coaster. So coaster and wood are not synonyms.

But this is coaster and wood simultaneously. It is a and not a because coaster and wood don't mean the same thing. Not necessarily. There's a teensy bit of overlap.

But coaster does not mean the same as wood. Wood does not mean the same as coaster. So wood and coaster are not the same. They have different meanings.

But this is both at the same time. It's a and not a simultaneously which violates the aritilian arisetilian laws of thought.

A cannot be not a. But this is a and not a. This is coaster and wood with a being coaster. that say

but I mean it's it it might be seen as a kind of paradox or you can try and work out like I did mention that there's a teensy bit of overlap so that's that's what that's why they're why they're not contradictory but really it's like two entirely different levels of truth it's form and function the or essence essence and function let's say essence and or essence and form substance and form

The substance is wood. The form is a coaster.

So, it's just two different levels of

truth.

But I don't know why I'm wallowing in

this,

but different conventions. I mean,

obviously you you've got some

conventions that see no problem with

contradictions

and just leave it at that, I suppose.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Arpad

and Arpad says about the 500year

prophecy. And before I get any further

with the question, he's referring to

this

notorious prophecy made by the Buddha.

When um his aunt and stepmother, both

the same person, Maha Pajapi Goami, she

wanted to be a nun. She wanted to be a fully ordained Buddhist nun. and there weren't any. So, she was following the Buddha around asking him, "Please let me be the first nun. Please ordain me as a nun." And the Buddha just kept refusing. He said, "You don't even go there. Just don't even bring it up. It's not going to happen." So, she was just kind of following him around, his tears in her face and just dust in her hair. She'd just be standing silently outside of his door just kind of silently protesting and grieving that the Buddha would not allow the ordination of women. And then his cousin Ananda who also had the

family name of God.

His cousin Ananda who was also his attendant talks the Buddha into it. You know he used mainly the argument that persuaded the Buddha was Ananda said, "Well, can't women become enlightened just like men can?" And the Buddha had to admit that they can. And then he said, "All right, we'll ordain women." But now you've done it because now that the ordination of women is going to be allowed, the true dharma will exist only half as long. It will exist for only 500 years instead of a thousand years. And so now there's I mean it's it's not very popular among people who like support bikuni ordination and so forth. They'll

just say, "Well, that must never have happened. that just got added later or something. But there are a number of possible interpretations of this and Arpad is going to come up with another interpretation that I haven't really considered very much. And so let's go back to the question now. Arpad says about the 500year prophecy. Could it be possible that since the ordination was open to the other half of mankind or people kind therefore doubling the potential number of enlightened beings the amount of time required to reach that number was proportionally divided. So Arpad is actually turning this into a

good thing you know I mean it was obvious that the Buddha didn't want to do it. He thought it was a bad idea and when he got talked into it he tells Ananda all right but now you've done it because I mean he was not praising Ananda for talking him into doubling the amount of enlightened beings in the world.

So, I mean, that's just for starters, but it's also true that I mean, maybe not until modern times, modern in the modern west especially, that you're going to have roughly proportionate numbers of men and women practicing advanced spirituality to the point of enlightenment. I mean, that's mainly

been a man's game throughout most of history. I mean, you're always going to have prophetesses and nuns and priestesses and female shamanesses and so forth. And some of them presumably, assuming that people get enlightened, some of them were probably enlightened. But it kind of reminds me of that saying of Nietze where I mean he was in a way he kind of was jealous of women or sort of wished that he could just spend his life just thinking about clothes and food and children and gossip instead of dealing with the heavy issues.

And I think women are especially like historically and traditionally more

inclined to just go with the flow of samsara and just spend their life taking care of kids and talking about food and clothes and gossiping at the back fence that kind of stuff. and men I mean they've been like the supporters of religion you know they've been the ones who feed the monks and so forth but for the most part it has been men who have been doing most of the heavy lifting so I think that our pad I mean it's it's kind of an interesting interpretation but clearly when the Buddha was saying that the true dharma was only going to last half as long because of nonordination

He didn't think it was a good thing, you

know. I mean, he obviously considered it to have been a bad idea.

So, I don't think that he would consider doubling the amount of enlightened beings in the world to have been a bad idea.

It was just going to cause more trouble than than than it was worth presumably.

So,

I guess I'll just move on. Next question. This is from Troas is

And Tzas is says, "Do monks living alone who really practice eventually start to believe in their own greatness? Maybe like Nana Vera who had written the exact date when he became a sodapon." Yeah,

Nyan is the person that I mentioned in answer to the first question or second question. Second question I think who selfdeed in Sri Lanka or son like around 1965.

Um,

do monks living alone really practice eventually start to believe in their own grace? Some of them do and a lot of Burmese seats who don't live alone and they might really practice but I mean they've got disciples. You know, they're the abbot of a monastery, maybe a famous monastery with lots of lay people coming to visit and making offerings and so forth. Um, they're treated like kings who are just infallible oracles for so

long that a lot of Burmese apparently start believing in it. You know, they start considering themselves to be infallible oracles. You know, kind of like a certain German painter who became chancellor in the 1930s
who was so successful at the beginning of a certain war that he kind of started considering himself to be like this chosen man of destiny and essentially infallible. And then he started micromanaging the military and making mistakes and so forth. So I mean you don't have to live alone to start believing in your own greatness. Some some monks live alone and they just stay

humble or they just they just don't think about that kind of stuff. But others I mean they start thinking that they're they've really attained something. And I mean you don't have to live alone to to think that. I mean, it might be even easier if you're with other people because then, you know, [clears throat] if they think you're great, then that reinforces your own idea that you are great. But a lot of what happens, a lot of what I've experienced, especially Burmese people, because I was dealing mostly with Burmese Buddhists for most of the time that I was monk, they'll have some weird experience, some breakthrough in their

meditation, and they think that's it. I'
I've become an Arya. I've become a
sodapona or something. And
that happens a lot. Some Westerners do
that too. And some of them were just
clearly just clearly kind of nutty that
but they're just sure that they there
was this one guy. He came to visit me.
And I was I was staying at a school
monastery in near Mandalay at the time.
And as soon as he walked in the door, I
knew there wasn't some there was
something not quite right about this
guy. It was just like this look in his
eyes and you know at first we sit down
and we're having like this normal

conversation and then he just starts like
quoting sutas that I'd never heard of that I think he was just making up like the the demons hanging from a horse's tile this kind of stuff. And then he starts talking about how he was in this meditation hall and this dragon from the center of the galaxy started coming towards them and he was going to like devour everybody and then it was I can't remember if it was him or the the leader of the meditation group that says do not be afraid. The power of our samadei will protect us. And sure enough the dragon didn't eat them.
And so I mean there's a lot of that kind

of stuff. And this guy was sure that he was an Arya, but anyone who knew him was generally be just as sure that he was possibly schizophrenic.

But that I mean that doesn't mean that you can't be both. I would assume a lot of very advanced spiritual practitioners have been nutty by me western modern western psychological standards.

In fact, uh, William James in his classic book, The Varieties of Religious Experience, starts off pointing out that some people like I think it was George Fox, the founder of the Quakers. I mean, he was a wise person, but he was also naughty or like St. Teresa of Avia,

founder of the discounts Carmelite Order, who was apparently a meditation master. Her disciple, St. John of the Cross obviously considered her to be very highly attained in all this, but she was having so many visions of like demons and and and so forth that [clears throat] her father confessor just told her to make the sign of the cross whenever she'd see a vision or hear a voice or anything like that. And she got so tired of making the sign of the cross all the time, she just started carrying around a crucifix and was just holding it up whenever she'd have the vision, which was apparently several times a day.

So I mean whether you're alone or not I mean if you're alone without feedback sometimes you can drift in weird eccentric directions.

So that that is more likely the believing in your own greatness that can happen either way and I don't think being alone would necessarily increase the odds of that.

Like there's the the Baja Suta which is one of my favorite sutas in the Udana. Udana 110 I think it is where Baja lived alone in the forest. He wasn't a Buddhist. He was living on like the the west coast of India. But people were revering him so much considering

him to be enlightened that he started thinking maybe he really was enlightened until some deva who was a close relative in a previous life came and visited him and told him no you're not enlightened. So yeah, even monks living alone, they still have to deal with lay people and the lay people might start thinking that this monk is fully enlightened. That happened to me a few times. Few places in Burma. People started thinking I was an orahant mainly just because I was minding my own business, meditating out in the forest and I didn't handle money and I didn't sit around smoking cigars and drinking tea with the the village guys like most of the other like the

village monks were doing.

So

yeah, with regard to Yanova, I mean Ajan

Ajan man also in his I think it's his

autobiography,

he [clears throat] he like listed like

the times and places of all four stages

or all eight stages because each each

stage of being an Arya has like the the

the path and the fruit, you know. So,

it's like broken up into two two events

instead of just one. And he had it all

worked out, you know, exactly when and

where it all happened.

[clears throat] So, [snorts]

I mean, Ajan Mun's case, I mean, I don't

want to second guess Ajan Mun, but he was kind of like the St. Teresa of Avila type where just apparently he was having lots and lots of weird visions and so forth in addition to being highly advanced in meditation and so forth.

So have I answered that question?

Sometimes I just answer and answer and answer so that I wind up answering like five or six questions most of which weren't even asked.

Um,

I think yeah, I think I answered that question. So, I'm just going to move on to Troas's

second question, which is, "Do you have a new job?" And the correct answer to

that is not yet. Although I am looking and I have received [clears throat] some interesting offers, like two main ones. One would be working on a trim break again, which is something I was really good at and I kind of enjoy doing it. And then there's [clears throat] an but that's a little farther away. And then there's this one that maybe I could get. You know, it's neither one is is finalized, but both are still open-ended. Another one is building crates for a place that's just really close to here. Just I mean, it just be a few minutes drive. I mean, I could almost practically walk there.

And the crates are for like large wind turbines that are being shipped overseas. So they got to be very precisely made to specifications and so forth, which I think wouldn't be as interesting of a job, but the pay is kind of equal equivalent or comparable in both cases. And so one has the advantage of being very close to home and the other one has the advantage of being something that I'm already good at and kind of enjoy doing.

But I don't have a new job yet.

Although I might make a little bit of extra income from this fourth book that's going to come out within the next couple weeks, Memoirs from Myanmar,

which is going to be mostly
autobiographical stuff, stories about my
time spent um not only in Burma, but
also in America and Indonesia as a monk.
So, I'm just going to move on this
question. This is from PSA.
And PSA says, 'Aren't you sometimes
amazed at how immensely, monumentally,
inconceivably, indescribably,
immeasurably stupid human beings really
are? Only 0.1% are worth listening to,
while 99.9%
are hilariously incompetent,
astronomically [__] and
spectacularly wrong about basically
everything. The human realm could be

summed up as a few contemplatives and everything else is nothing but simps and hoes. It seems cosmically embarrassing to be part of the species. If the universe had a carnival, humans would be the main attraction. The ego freak show segment. How did they survive this long? How do we survive this long? I suppose he should have said, "Paradoxically, if humans were too smart, we all would have gotten enlightened by now. It is stupidity that keeps the theater going. Watching the human show is like watching a drunken, horny, bickering pack of apes accidentally inventing fire." Thoughts?

Well,

I really do not completely I mean, even

at my worst, at my most misanthropic
as like a teenager or someone in my
early 20s, I really was not this extreme
in my despising of the human race
because I mean, [clears throat] let's
see how stupid human beings really are.
I mean, obviously, we're infinitely
ignorant. I mean any any being with a
finite intelligence is going to be
infinitely ignorant. But I mean we are
the smartest beings on this planet
presumably. I mean there might be
dolphins that in certain ways are
smarter than us.
You know it's like I did a research
paper on intelligence in bottl-nose

dolphins when I was in college. And apparently they can communicate like two different messages to two different dolphins simultaneously. One like through uh repeating like a sonar uh sonar echo. You know it's like they send out this pulse of sound through a kind of sonar.

It comes back to them modified and you know their sonar is accurate enough they can tell you know the difference between heads and tails on a quarter from five feet away in in in opaque water that kind of stuff. So all they got to do is just send what they received to a different dolphin and it's just like sending a picture instantaneously.

Well, other to a different dolphin, they can be like doing the clicks and stuff, sending a different kind of message to a different dolphin at the same time, which is sort of like talking and texting at the same time.

And I mean, they got a a larger, more convoluted brain than us and so forth.

So I mean it's possible that in certain ways other animals may be more intelligent than us, may have higher IQ than us in certain ways, but still I mean

we are relatively intelligent and even though it's a tiny percentage of the people that are like the Galileo and the

Thomas Edison's and you know the you

[clears throat] know the big inventors

who are really changing things. Elon

Musk, I suppose, could be included in

that these days.

Tesla,

Nicola Tesla, not the car

that uh I mean they're the ones who are

inventing this stuff, but still like I

was saying in response to an earlier

question, you've got just ordinary just

average mediocre people who, you know,

[clears throat] they dedicate their

intelligence to mastering this one

little sliver of what, you know, the

bulk of human knowledge that, you know,

they specialize in that and they do well

enough at that that civilization keeps

going.

So I really is people aren't that

stupid. I mean [clears throat]

I mean we are infinitely ignorant.

Let's see here. But let's just get a

little farther here.

Hilariously incompetent. No. I mean not

really. I mean, if we were hilariously

incompetent, then civilization wouldn't

have gotten as far as it has and still

be going strong, apparently.

See, spectacularly wrong about basically

everything. Well, I mean, even the

geniuses, the inventors would be

spectacularly wrong about basically

everything if you're going with ultimate
truth and not just this samsaric matrix
that everybody is is wallowing in.
Let's see.
uh cos it feels cosmically embarrassing
to be part of the species. I mean, well,
how do you know what other species?
Let's say there's other planets with
other intelligent races. They could be
even stupider than us. Or I mean, most
species on this planet are stupider than
us. Maybe not as neurotic as us. I mean,
you have to get a certain level of
intelligence just to be messed up
or at least to be spectacularly messed
up.
So yeah, if the universe had a carnival,

humans would be the main attraction. I
don't think so at all.
See, how did they and how did we survive
this long? Yeah, he doesn't include
himself as a human apparently.
How did we survive this long? Well,
partly I would guess
is that uh we really didn't have the
power to destroy ourselves up until
relatively recently with the invention
of nukes and spectacular forms of of
pollution,
that kind of thing. I mean, now we might
have the potential to really wipe
ourselves out, which is one reason why
Elon Musk wants us to colonize space as

soon as possible because he knows a lot of our limitations and knows that, you know, it's I mean, he's maybe read enough science fiction, too, to know that so long as you got all your human eggs in one basket of Earth, then the whole race can get wiped out by just some maniac pushing the wrong button. Whereas, if you've got space colonies, then even if the world is destroyed, you've still got some human race going. So, let's see here. Watching the human show is like watching a drunken horny bickering pack of apes accidentally. Well, I mean, is is is PSA one of the 0.1% or is he one of the the the laughably incompetent, [__]

apes?

Apparently, he considers himself to be one of the just the the refined ethereal elite or something.

But

yeah, I mean we are what we are. I mean we started off we're like an upgraded ape. So I mean compared with what we used to be compared with Homo erectus I would say that we've made a lot of advancement and it all balances out the poses the positive and the negatives the positives and minuses good and the bad all balance out through the the law of dualism.

the law of subjective equilibrium as

I've sometimes called it.

So yeah, I mean probably PSA is still

young. He's still in his more

misanthropic

stages,

but by the time he gets to be an old man

with gray hair, then there's a good

chance that he'll have a little more

Christian charity and compassion and

empathy and so forth.

So let's just move on. Next question.

This is from Maitraa Buddha.

And Maitraa Buddha says, "Narender Modi

uploaded a video titled Why the Return

of Bagawan Buddha's relics is a defining

moment for India. What is your response

to this when historically Hindus have

had a rivalry with Buddhists and claimed the Buddha to be an incarnation of Vishnu that would teach people a dharma and lead people astray from the vadas? Could this be a tourist attraction rather than genuine admiration and honor to go Buddha? Well, first of all, Narendra Modi is a politician. So, a lot of what he says no doubt is for public relations. you know just for just to to to project an image I suppose also in India the Hindus won so they can afford to be magnanimous towards Buddhism now Buddhism is no longer their mortal enemy you know like no longer their primary rival

nowadays it'd be more like either Islam
or communism would be more of a rival to
Hinduism in India than Buddhism is so
there's also that I mean that that that
kind of religious cold war that was
going on between Buddhists and Hindus in
India for so many centuries I mean
that's it's past history now so you can
afford to be magnanimous
but also I mean India has all I mean
nowadays India does take a certain
amount of pride like like the flag of
India has got that wheel on it which I
mean to some degree it's inspired by
Mahatma Gandhi spinning wheel but also
it's inspired by the wheel of dharma the
Buddhist wheel of dharma of the emperor

Ashoka

so I mean the emperor Ashoka was I mean

he was like one of the ideal rulers uh

at least in the minds of the people of

India or and of the world I suppose you

know he was like a stereotypical

virtuous ruler

so

I mean I don't think that Hindus

uh certainly not all of them consider

Buddhism to just be this horrible

blasphemous heresy anything like that

anymore. They might have at one time and

probably many of them still do. like you

you find certain like social media

threads where you've got, you know,

hardcore Hindus just bashing away at Buddhism just like you you got some Christian threads in the West bashing away at anything that isn't Christianity.

So, let's see what did I answer the question. Could this be a tourist attraction rather than genuine admiration and honor to God Buddha?

Well, it's probably a combination of both. at

least a little bit of both. But I'm not a mind reader. I really don't know what Narendra Mod's motives were for saying what he said. But yeah, I don't think that there's nearly as much of an axe to grind against Buddhism among Indian

Hindus as there used to be. And so now they can kind of relax and, you know, be magnanimous as I've said like three times at least.

So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Yoshi Buouie.

Oh, and this is a Nagarjuna question. I don't have the fez.

Damn.

Anyways, Yoshi Buouie says, "Did Nagarja not claim that a thing does not arise from itself and it does not arise from another? I came from my mother. Does not that constitute arise from another?" Um, it's been years since I've read the Mulamjama caraka and I do seem to recall

that one of the first issues was not whether a thing arises from itself, but whether a cause is the same as the effect, whether the effect is the same as its cause, which kind of is is similar to this. It might just be a reinterpretation of this issue.

So I mean the argument if I remember correctly if the effect is the same as the cause then I mean there was no change but if it's different from the cause then I mean it wouldn't need the cause I mean it would just it could just arise randomly or spontaneously that was like the the arguments and then he rules out both and then he rules out neither because the whole purpose of the

bulk of the muamajamaka caraka at least at least One of its main themes is just a asking these philosophical questions and then ruling out all possible answers using logic chopping or whatever it's called. Just this like dismantling just shooting down any possible answer and then just leaving like emptiness behind. But whether that's a different question that was or a different issue that was dealt with in the mula majamaka karak car karaka not is an effect the same as the cause that caused it but whether a thing arises from itself well I mean obviously a thing couldn't arise from itself

then it would already have arisen but if

it doesn't arise from itself then I'm I

don't know what the argument would be

I'm sure that nagarjuna had some clever

argument if if this issue is dealt with

uh separately from the cause and effect

issue

but I mean if it's arising from

something then what it arises from would

be the cause presumably so I think this

is just sort of a rephrasing of that

preliminary

issue dealt with in the mulamama caraka

that if it arises from another

that [sighs]

Then I mean you don't even really need

the other if they're if they're

qualitatively different.

And nowadays you you could have a logically minded person could kind of shoot down a lot of the mulamjamaka carak's arguments. I think what the mulamjama cara is trying to say is still valid but I mean you could just say it's the same substance but different form that kind of thing.

>> [sighs]

>> So let's see here. So I'm not saying that everything Nagarian says is necessarily true. I think he was aiming at a at a certain goal and using certain logical tricks or logical arguments to support that goal. And I think the goal

is a valid one really that um I mean
partly that everything is just sort of
um conditionally real and not ultimately
real.
I mean that was one of the main main
arguments and that's just central to
Buddhist philosophy
that objects do not have an individual
inherent self-existence
that they just exist conditionally upon
causes and you take the causes away and
this supposed entity also disappears
because the causes that cause it
disappear.
So if you came from your mother, does
that not constitute a rise from another?
Uh from a conventional point of view, I

suppose it does. Although you'd say that
I mean the elements came out of your
mother, so the elements were the same.
It's just they took a assumed a
different form.
I mean, you could use that kind of
argument nowadays,
but I don't think that it's really u a
wise use of time and effort to really
try to wallow through ancient Indian
logic that I mean formal logic was still
in its early stages back then. And I
mean especially in terraat sometimes if
you read like the kataw watu which I
think is the third book of the
abidamapita is pretty much the only

readable book in the entire abidama pitikica which is using like arguments to shoot down the philosophical views of other schools of Buddhism. So pretty obviously it arose after the time of the Buddha because other schools of Buddhism that are mentioned in the Katawatu didn't even exist in the Buddhist time. But I mean some of the arguments used by the terraodins are much worse than the arguments used by Nagarjan just because formal logic just had not been established in Indian philosophy yet. who's better in Nagarin this time but still not perfect.

But I mean the the main point that he was trying to get at is still true in my

opinion and he was using like the best
logical tools available in India at the
time to demonstrate his point
and I'm just going to move on next
question. This is from Xenithoid.
And Xenithoid says, [clears throat]
"If no philosophical system or language
can ever reach ultimate truth, does this
mean that they are simply tools for
achieving different goals?"
Not necessarily.
I mean, you can still have the goal, a
philosophical goal of reaching ultimate
truth. I assume there have been
philosophies
that really were [clears throat] just

aiming at ultimate truth.

Well, they just can't do it. They just can't get there. At least not from my point of view or this the classical Buddhist point of view. Unless, well, I guess from an orthodox Buddhist point of view, you'd have to say abidama is ultimate truth. So that would be a a philosophical system that does arrive at [clears throat] ultimate truths from the point of view of say a Burmese Abidama scholar.

So let's see. Yeah, I would guess that most philosophical systems I mean yeah there's different philosophical systems will have different goals. I mean some philosophical systems are just trying to

find meaning to life. you know, like existentialism, you know, it's not really dealing with metaphysics much. It's just dealing with ethics. What what should you do with your life? How should you live your life? That kind of stuff. A lot of ancient Greek philosophy was like that.

Um, some philosophical systems are kind of nihilistic. You know, they're just trying to show that you can't or like skepticism for example, you can't know anything.

So I mean different philosophical systems will have different emphases and be moving in different directions. All

philosophy is not created equal. You know ethics and metaphysics for example or even like aesthetics you know what is beauty this kind of stuff.

So

yeah I don't think that all philosophical systems I mean I don't think any philosophical system or language can reach ultimate truth.

Um and so probably the most sophisticated philosophical system is one sort of like Nagarja was doing where you're demonstrating that you can't reach ultimate truth through intellect like Emanuel Kant was doing that most famously in the west I think

so [clears throat] see does this mean

that they are simply tools for achieving
different goals not simply
I mean I mean they are tools for
achieving different goals different
different emphases you know like ethic
ics versus metaphysics,
logic, that kind of stuff,
epistemology.
So, different philosophies will have
different emphases and be moving in
somewhat different directions, having
different goals, but I don't think that
it's [clears throat] even if the I mean,
some philosophies really are trying to
reach ultimate truth and they just can't
do it, including Abidama philosophy.

So kind of yes. The answer to that answer to that question is kind of. And I'm moving on to Xenithoid's next question. He says, "Assuming yes to question one, would it be accurate to say that Hinduism is the tool to achieve pure being, Buddhism is the tool to achieve the unconditioned, and Jan Janism is the tool to achieve pure non-being?" Well, no, I wouldn't go that far. I mean, I think like the the wisest or the most advanced spiritual systems within Hinduism and the most advanced spiritual systems within Buddhism. I mean, they're both going for the same enlightenment,
the same realization of the absolute, so

to speak. It's just they use different language to do it. Janism was more of a more of a primitive archaic kind of system where in Janism you've got a ja or a soul that is weighed down with all this sticky karma. And so you're just trying to exhaust the karma, you know, to burn off the karma you've already got without adding any new karma to your ja so that it can float up into heaven.

So that's what the James were trying to do. There still are. There's still a few million of them.

So yeah, I think that Hinduism, I mean, it's the most advanced schools of Hinduism and Buddhism, the most advanced

spiritual traditions. I do think that they're essentially striving for the same goal. It's just they're using different language to explain it and somewhat different techniques for getting there.

But it's like knowing God, you know, it's like the Buddhists wouldn't use the word God. But still, I mean, it's it's just different words. It's just different descriptions that are imperfect and they're not really going to apply to the absolute anyway.

So, let's see. I'm not sure. Let's see. I thought I had I made a note at the bottom of one of these and now I'm not seeing it.

Oh, okay. All right. I'm going to get there still.

So, and we've been going for a little over an hour already. So, but we're over halfway done. So, we should be done within two hours, I think, maybe.

So, I think I answered that one. Okay, I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Fifth.

And Fifth says, "Do you have any thoughts or opinions on Sad Guru? He is extremely popular and I see him everywhere online. He has followers who cry and kiss his feet and made the announcement that this is his last life. He is kind of like a neo-Hindu and

focuses a lot on Adi yoga. Yeah, I've seen
a few of Sadguru's videos. Isn't he the one that's like was like riding a motorcycle across the country at one time? Maybe he does that regularly. I'm not sure.
Um, but I really don't know much about him. I really I mean I would be skeptical of any claims to his full enlightenment but who knows I really don't know that much about him
[clears throat]
but his followers who cry and kiss his feet I mean that's what Hindu devotees do to their gurus regardless of who the guru is uh in many cases.

Um but yeah, I really I really don't know enough about Sadguru to really make any kind of even educated guess about him. [clears throat and cough] So I'm just going to move on to Fifth's ne next question, which is why or how did the Bikunis go extinct?

So yeah, the Bikuni order, the fully the order of fully ordained nuns in Buddhism in Terravada Buddhism, the Bukuni Sa went extinct a few hundred years ago. Um there's claims that they went extinct several hundred years ago but still there's mention of biconeis in Burma like late 1600s maybe even early 1700s but eventually they did go extinct and

there's different reasons for that. One reason is [clears throat] that nuns were not allowed to live in forests just for their own safety because there was like bandits, bad men living, you know, men with toxic masculinity living out in the forest. And so there's a rule preventing nuns, bikunies from, you know, living too far away from inhabited areas, you know, living out alone in the forest. They can go out there to meditate but they got to come back and sleep at the the convent I guess you'd call it and part and then because of that at times like in India and other places where you would have like an anti-B Buddhist king who's persecuting the Buddhists the

Bunis because they were not I mean there weren't any or very few hiding out alone out in the forests you know they they could get persecuted into extinction. more easily than a lot of like caved dwelling herb monks out in the forests. So that was part of the reason. But I think a more important reason is that the rules for bikunis are much stricter than for monks. And part of the reason for that is just to weed out women who are just trying to escape from an [__] husband, a bad marriage, bad family situation and and join the SA without really having a true spiritual calling.

So the rules are much stricter. For example, you've got four parajika rules for monks that if a monk breaks any of these four rules, he's automatically excommunicated from the sa for life. Nuns have eight.

I mean, in a few cases, the rules are easier for nuns. Like, nuns are allowed to cook their own food just because they didn't get the same amount of respect from the people as a general rule, which is still the case in Burma.

Although, I mean, there aren't any real Bikunis in Burma that I know of. But nuns just don't get the same kind of respect. And so, they had certain privileges [clears throat] like being

able to cook their own food that monks
were not allowed. But because the rules
are so strict
um sort of discriminating against nuns
that it just sort of discouraged enough
women to become fully ordained nuns.
They just prefer to be like an eight
preet nun or a 10 preset nun that isn't
fully ordained. And that was good
enough. And that continues to be good
enough in places like
Terravada Buddhist Southeast Asia.
It's just kind of weird to me that in
the West you've got people this
campaigning to revive an order that
blatantly discriminates against women

for the sake of gender equality. And so what they do is they claim to be fully ordained bunies and then they just don't follow the rules very well. So what's the point of becoming a buun unless you just want the official status? But don't get me going on a a rant about [clears throat] post-modern attempts to revive the Bikuni order. I've been told that in Burma, any woman claiming to be a Bikuni can go to prison for it. And it's just common knowledge in Burma that the Bikuni order is dead. like um before the podimoka recitation every two weeks approximately at a at a monastery one of the duties that's in the text is you have to exhort the bunis and so in

the preliminaries like the introductory verses that are chanted before you start chant or reciting the the pimoka you have to say there are no bikunis and so the exhortation to the bikunis is just kind of a moot point
but mainly went extinct because they were more visible because they could not be hermits living out alone in the forest. And so at times of persecution,
they would get persecuted more than the n monks would. Then plus of course there were never as many nuns as monks. Never nearly as many nuns as monks. So any kind of bottleneck is more likely to

wipe them out than wipe out monks. But also just because the rules were so strict just to weed out the ones the nuns that women that just wanted to get away from the [__] husband and live an easy life that it just became more and more prevalent in Buddhist countries that women who wanted to renounce the world would just become like an eight precept nun or a 10 precept nun and just didn't bother with the extreme strictness of being a fully ordained. And so the Bikuni order went extinct a few hundred years ago.

And so I'm just going to move on [snorts] to Fifth's third question, which is kind of an interesting one. He

says, "I was wondering if you had any favorite time periods or wars in history. I was a history major myself and I am always curious about which topics people gravitate towards."

Well, the Second World War is interesting, very important one just his historically and culturally for us nowadays.

Um, I've I've when I was younger, I was more interested in ancient Greeks than Romans, but as I got older, I became more interested in Romans than Greeks.

So yeah, it's like sometimes I'll watch um YouTube videos about famous battles and gosh, probably half of them are are

Roman, you know, late republic, early empire, that kind of thing. Um like feudal Japan interests me. Um medieval Europe, like the Hundred Years War, that's that's interesting. Frederick the Great of Prussia was was a military genius allegedly. So it's like the Seven Years War which uh manifested in American history as the French and Indian War. That was that's been of interest to me. Um what else? Yeah, that's those would be the main ones I think. I mean a lot of like interesting like Indian history this they they're not as detailed in descriptions of battles and so forth. Well like India in the Buddhist time is

fascinating to me and I've studied that
a lot.
Although you don't hear much about
battles and if you do hear about battles
you just pretty much hear that there was
a battle and this side won because they
don't really go into details about you
know how the wings were set up. Lately,
I've been studying up a little bit on
Epom Apamandis,
who was a Theban general shortly before
the time of Alexander, who was
considered one of the great military
geniuses of history. You know, he
started the the asymmetrical battle line
where he was the he was he and the

theans defeated the Spartans after the Spartans being undefeated in a major land battle for centuries. He came up with this system of an asymmetrical battle formation where all of his best fighters would be, you know, like at least half of them would just be on one side and then they would move forwards and then he'd tell the other like the center and the and the right to just kind of fade back and avoid fighting. And so they just steamroll one side and then just wrap around and just wipe out the enemy army or just defeat it, send it into a route, that kind of thing. And um Frederick the Great of Prussia, he uh he learned from a Pameandis, I think he

was using some asymmetrical battle

formations also.

But uh yeah like

Ganges [clears throat] Valley in the

Buddhist time, Roman Empire stuff

especially or late republic early Roman

Empire um ancient Greece is is

fascinating

uh feudal Japan and medieval Europe are

like some of the main ones and uh some

like some periods in history some

cultures just do not resonate with me at

all like Meso America I've rarely had

any interest at all in, you know, like

the the civilizations of Central America

and South America, that kind of thing.

For some reason, also ancient Egypt. I mean, sometimes just like watching videos on new developments in the like understanding the pyramids and the secret passageways and that kind of thing can be interesting. But um just ancient China. I mean I I've read some of the the the strate like the military manuals of military strategy manuals of of like ancient or medieval China that kind of thing is kind of interesting. But uh assuming that there is such a thing as rebirth than I think I was more likely, you know, like part of participated in the the late Roman Republic, you know, feudal Japan, medieval medieval England, that kind of

thing. And of course, India.

So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Ruie.

And Ruie says, "Do you think the timelessness of dharma?" Akalico in Pali. I'll start again. Ruie says, "Do you think the timelessness of Dharma can be used as a temporal wormhole of sorts by means of sat or recollection? Concepts such as now or moment and even instant seem rather clunky. But timelessness, although it is just another word, seems to generate a certain inner atmosphere more conducive to an experience of the unconditioned. Particularly when the narrative mind

begins to fade,

but the perception of wakefulness is

still palpable.

Gosh, I think I need another drink of

the primary designated beverage.

Maybe timelessness is more effective in

describing a timeless situation partly

because it's a negation

just like unconditioned [clears throat]

is a kind of negation. Unconditioned

means not conditioned. Timelessness

means you know not time or not in time.

So yeah, Buddhism does seem to prefer

negations to assertions with regard to

describing like profundities,

you know, not this, not that, although

that's uponic.

So let's see here. What's the actual question? Where's the question mark? Do you think the timelessness of dharma can be used as a temporal wormhole sorts by means of recollection? Yeah, I mean if it works for you then go for it. Anything that works I mean you got to be pragmatic to some degree. If it works then keep doing it and if it doesn't work then try something else.

But yeah timelessness I mean it does seem to fit the Buddhist uh approach better than more positive assertive kind of words because it's more of a negation. You know it's just kind of Yeah. So let's see what what else is

there's there's something else in here.
But I mean eventually if you want to
understand Akalico or timelessness or
eternity you know or you know the power
of now or whatever I mean you just do it
practically you know you just when
you're doing your mindfulness meditation
you're just emphasizing the present
moment and when you get really good at
mindfulness you know every moment is the
only moment and you don't really even
have a concept of time.
I mean, you even kind of move beyond
impermanence because if every moment is
the only moment, you don't even really
perceive impermanence because every
moment is the only moment. You know, in

order to perceive impermanence, you have to compare one moment with another moment and then you're not being fully in the present moment.

So, yeah, I mean, if it works for you, then go for it. And timelessness is I mean it's rather literal translation of the the poly word akalico.

So that's fine. And I'm going to move on to Ruy's next question here. He says here is a rare and more pedestrian second question brought about by the fairly stiff weather we've been experiencing on the Lucatanian seabboard as Portugal for those of you who don't know what Lucatanian means. Pretty sure

it's Portugal anyway.

Does extreme meteorology energize you at all? Yeah, it does. Like especially when I was a monk living in a semi- desert area of Burma, when there were when there was rain, sometimes it would just be this torrential downpour, just electrical storm, the whole sky just flashing like a strobe light just pissing down rain, just roaring.

And times like that, I just couldn't sleep. You know, it's sometimes you just go outside and watch the watch the lightning and just watch the rain.

But yeah, I'm like a human barometer. This changes in barometric pressure do have a a significant effect on how I

feel. And like stormy like really
kinetic kind of weather does have like a
kinetic effect on me.
I really do like observing storms and it
just makes me more energized.
Not just the static electricity in the
air from the lightning, but just just
the violence of it and just the radical
changes in the atmosphere that cause
changes in my body and then in my mind
also my spirit you could say that it
does have an effect on me.
Although [clears throat]
just a week ago, we were the state I
live in, South Carolina, was declared uh
it was a a state of emergency

and the the storm came through and and you I didn't even notice it. I mean, there's like no

no sound, you know, it was just like this silent still kind of a storm. It was just um it snowed a little bit and then I guess the state of emergency was caused by freezing rain that it was going to cause like a thick crust of ice on like power lines that could get so heavy that it could snap the power lines and and break trees and so forth. But I mean it was like the biggest non- entity of a of a storm or a state of emergency that I've ever been through. But even right now, it's it's snowing outside in South Carolina. Um, [clears throat]

we've got about maybe at this point as much as like half a foot, six inches of snow outside, which is nice. Not for the dogs, though. The dogs don't like going out there. Mo two of them are little dogs and the other one's a princess and neither one of them particularly likes going out in six inches of snow in order to go potty.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. And we are kind of getting down there. We're We're getting down towards the bottom of this scroll. This question is from Mr. Pronov.

And Mr. Pronov says, "If you had to be a devote and worship a mainstream Hindu

god," and then he's got in parenthesis Krishna, Ram, Shiva, Vishnu, Kali, Durga, etc.

Which would it be and why?

And I have to admit that I've always kind of gravitated towards Shiva. I've got more veneration for Shiva than for Vishnu. And of course Krishna and Rahm are just avatars of Vishnu. Kali and Dorga, they're just consorts of Shiva. And Kie, I mean I've known some new age people that were really into Kie. And I did a little research on Kie. And Kie is mentioned in the poly text, but she was just sort of like a demonist. She was like a relative of Mara back then. And up until modern times, I think in uh it

was like 16th or 17th century Bengal
that Kie um sort of graduated out of
just being some demonist that haunts
battlefields and actually became some
sort of metaphysical super deity,
you know, some personification of some
some kind of ultimate reality.
But then again, Shiva also, I mean, he
started off as Rudra who was like a
storm god in like in the Rig Va.
So, I mean, if you're going to be a
[clears throat] deist along Hindu
paganistic lines, I think I mean, I
would have to admit that it's just sort
of a personification
that I mean, I couldn't really take

seriously all the legends that I mean, you just look into the history and you see just like with Jehovah in the West that the whole the the God evolved over time

Jehovah started off as L, God of the Canaanites or one of the gods of the Canaanites who had a wife and then he got conflated by some Moseslike figure with Yahweh who was like a Midianite or Edomite god and then you know they they had to dispense with the the consort this kind of thing and I mean you look at the the evolution [clears throat] of the Hindu gods and it's similar. So I mean I couldn't really be a literalist with regard to any of them but just with

regard to the vibe

and of lesser importance the music I

prefer Shiva to Vishnu

Shiva has better music than Vishnu hands

down

and just sort of the destroyer god Shiva

is like the aesthetic you know he's he's

on Mount Kyash in deep meditation this

kind of stuff that he's uh I don't know

just something about Shiva is appeals to

me more than um Vishnu does. Vishnu is

more of an Apollo type. Shiva is more of

a Dian Isis type and for whatever

reasons I just kind of resonate better

with Shiva,

but I'm [clears throat] not planning on

converting to Hinduism at any any foreseeable future time. And I'm moving on to the next question. This is from Robert

And I hope that this is loud enough. I'm sitting farther away from the microphone than usual. And so I turned up the see turned up the audio mixer a little bit, but I don't know if you might have to turn up the volume on your your uh computer or whatever you're watching or listening to this on.

But you already know that because we're already well over an hour into this.

So, Robert says, "To what extent do you think one should avoid philosophy as engaging in it might just be wallowing

in superficial conventional reality and therefore lead one astray?"

Well, by golly,

[clears throat and cough]

this reminded me, this question reminded me of a quote by David Hume that I really like. And so, I'm going to quote David Hume here. David Hume says, "The most perfect philosophy of the natural kind only staves off our ignorance a little longer, as perhaps the most perfect philosophy of the moral or metaphysical kind serves only to discover larger portions of it. Thus, the observation of human blindness and weakness is the result of all philosophy

and meets us at every turn in spite of our endeavors to elude or avoid it."

And that kind of reminds me of Nagarja also. So it may be that your best use of philosophy from a practical point of view. Well, I mean there's more than one benefit to philosophy. One philos one one benefit of philosophy is you're sort of [clears throat]

um to use a Buddhist metaphor. You're knocking out a big peg with a small one. You know, it's like you got the carpenter, he's got this peg that's in a in a piece of wood. He wants to drive it out. So he gets a smaller peg and drives out the bigger peg. So in a way you're substituting something more exalted for

something more crude, you know, as just
an intermediate step. So replacing
foolish ideas with wiser ones, even
though they're not fully enlightened
ideas, I mean, that's that's not bad.
And so long as you're not fully
enlightened, you got to believe
something. You have to have some kind of
model. You have to have some kind of um
conceptual
like world view. And so to have like a
philosophical one that emphasizes morals
and a goal of you know increased wisdom
and less reliance on thought and ideas
and so forth. I mean that's good
but also like logic

that [clears throat] kind of intellectual philosophy the best one of the main benefits of that is for use as a [__] detector. It helps you to identify foolish ideas and avoid them. But you got to believe something. So it might you're better off believing a relatively wise philosophy than just a foolish worldly lack of philosophy.

You're better off, you know, having a subtle metaphysic than just being a naive realist and just take everything that you experience at face value. This is all ultimately real, in which case you're just pretty much stuck in some sorrow.

So a philosophy that acknowledges that this is not ultimately real. That's fine. I you use it as a tool. You don't just rely on that as truth, you know, like some fundamentalist religious person. Only this is true. Anything else is wrong. But I mean, you use it wisely in a, you know, in a loose a loose hand, not a clenched fist, an open hand without clinging to it any more than you have to, I suppose. And then it can guide you. I mean dharma is philosophy and I mean it guides people to you know kind of helps them to disentangle themselves from samsara but ultimately you have to let go of it just like

nagarinous philosophy you know you use nagarinous philosophy to shoot down all other philosophies and then you turn it on itself until all all concepts are gone and there's just like this emptiness this voidness that's left behind.

So

I mean if you're really going for it like like the early Buddhist monks following the atakawaga where you're just already like relatively advanced. You've already renounced the world. You're already practicing like relatively advanced austerity and meditation. Then you may not need philosophy anymore. Then you can just

let it go. But if you haven't gotten to that point yet, you might you might still need some philosophy at least to help guide you towards a more advanced state. You know, a philosophy that has a more advanced state as as an ideal is going to get you farther than not having any philosophy at all. And you're just wallowing in samsara.

But ultimately, you have to let go of it.

You got to let go of everything.

And I'm just going to move on to Robert's next question.

He says, "The Buddha avoided some metaphysical speculation, undeclared

questions, but to what extent do you think philosophy and metaphysics can be useful in a normal day-to-day life of a Buddhist?" Well, let's I pretty much already answered that one in my answer to the previous one.

So, let's see what what else is there to say on this. What extent do you think philosophy and metaphysics can be used in a normal day-to-day life of a Buddhist? Well, I mean, ethics is a branch of philosophy. So, ethical conduct as use Buddhist philosophy as a guide to ethical conduct. You know, you can just take the word for it like malicious gossip.

I've I've got this situation going on in

my in my home now where there's
[clears throat] this person that my
sweetheart and I both used to watch and
like Stixs Hex and Hammer 666
and lately it's like he's crashing hard,
you know? It's like half of his videos
he's obviously drunk now. At least it
seems like he's obviously drunk. Like
bobbing his head around and slurring his
words and this kind of thing. But then
my sweetheart [clears throat] is
watching this other show that's like
it's kind of like malicious gossip or
like mockery of of other people
including Stixs and
it's it's from the Buddhist point of

view it's pisunacha I mean what these other guys are doing not with Stixs is he's got his own messed up situation he's he's wallowing in but these other people who are like maybe even making a living through just sort of like mocking and sneering at somebody else. And in some cases, it's it's people that aren't as messed up as Sticks. It's
It just I don't know. I just It makes me feel uncomfortable, you know? It just makes me feel like I don't know. It's kind of listening to somebody telling lies. And from the Buddhist point of view, telling lies and also like malicious gossip against someone or just, you know, bad mouthing someone

behind their back kind of stuff. I mean both of them fit under musulatto or wrong speech.

So I just as a as a as a Buddhist I mean you might just you might not really see that I mean you don't have to just tell lies in order to indulge in wrong speech. I mean there's other kind other ways other kinds of wrong speech and I mean it can guide you away from that kind of stuff even if [snorts]

I mean you don't really see the point of it yet or you know you don't see the point of why not you know pill for uh pens from the office that kind of thing but you know in Buddhism it's like do

not take what is not given and so you
just follow that and I mean it it can
help you I mean if you just get like
like really obsessive about it and cling
to it you know where you're just like
despising other people that because you
see them as not living up to your ideals
and so forth that's not good either
but ethical philosophy I mean it can
help to guide you to um to live a better
life I suppose
and I mean it's like I like I was saying
earlier where um In in answer to the
previous question, it's if you have a
philosophy that that holds out that like
reminds you this is not the highest
truth. there is a higher truth and if

you can strive for that and you can
attain that and so I mean philosophies
like that you know that are ethical and
practical with some metaphysics thrown
in like this is not the highest truth or
just basic stuff like to exist is to
suffer you know first noble truth second
noble truth whenever you are unhappy
it's because you want something you
desire something
and so just a little self-reflection
what is it that I desire you're unhappy
just well what do I want? What is it
that I'm desiring that's causing me to
be unhappy? And I mean just a little bit
of reflection. I mean you could it could

be something stupid you know it's like it's raining. You wanted to go outside and do something and then it started raining and so now you're you're pissed off. It's like, [__] you know, I was gonna ride my bike or I was gonna, you know, go out and and, you know, do this or that and now it's raining and so you're unhappy and but all the unhappiness in the world isn't going to make it stop raining.

So, I mean, you just look you you just like examine your own thoughts in accordance with Buddhist philosophy and then you can you can see this stuff that a lot of people wouldn't even notice. They're just they just think

that because it's raining they're necessarily unhappy. It's just somehow made them be unhappy. They're just victimized.

But in in reality, I mean, so you're closer to the truth if you realize that, you know, I'm not unhappy because it's raining. I'm unhappy because I want it to not be raining.

So [snorts]

yeah. And then of course just having some grounding and logical thought helps you to weed out a lot of [__] I guess.

But uh yeah, metaphysics I mean the one of the main benefits of metaphysics is

just reminding you that this isn't

reality

that there is a higher reality than

this. A higher truth than

walls and TV sets and plants and

fireplaces,

shirts,

people.

So yeah, I mean it's it's useful in

helping you to have right view. It helps

you to guide your practice. Helps you

it's like a map that can at least guide

you in the right direction.

Give you the idea that you should be

moving in a certain direction.

Not just wallow in samsara and think

that this is ultimate reality.

>> [sighs]

>> So I guess I just am going to move on to the next question since those two questions were pretty much almost the same question.

So Robert's third question is I've heard you talk about Eola in the past. What is your view on traditionalism?

Well traditionalism with a capital T I'm really not well verssed in. I've read about it a little bit. I know Evola was into I thinkwan was even more into traditionalism. I think Gwennan just insisted upon it.

Um but I mean following traditions

it stabilizes society. If you got most people on the same page with regard to their conduct then that definitely strengthens the society. Although a society also has to be flexible that if you just stay completely conservative and refuse to make any like revisions or refinements or innovations to the system, then other cultures are going to evolve past you and then start out competing you. That was one of the strengths of the the Romans is [clears throat] when they're in contact with another culture, like they're at war with another culture, then if they had some something that worked really well, especially like in military

technology, the Romans adopted it. So the Romans were traditionalistic and conservative in a lot of ways, but at the same time, you know, they were flexible. they were able to make adjustments to the tradition at least to certain aspects of the tradition.

So yeah, I mean tradition just a small T traditionalism

um it does like stabilize and strengthen a society so long as it doesn't oify and just become something inflexible.

So the way America used to be was a good kind of traditional. It was like uh I can't remember what what's something. Yeah, I can't remember the

exact name of of what I'm trying to get at what America used to stand for. It wasn't so much ethnic nationalism. It was civic nationalism where everyone agrees on certain ideals, you know, human rights and liberty and everyone's equal under the law and everyone should have equal opportunities even though everyone's not going to be strictly exactly equal at least with regard to, you know, protection of the laws and having rights and so forth. Everyone should be equal.

That kind of thing. that was like a stable and very flexible kind of a vague but still idealistic and useful kind of traditionalism that held sway up until

cultural Marxist started undermining all of it.

[sighs]

So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ethiopian fake TIG. An Ethiopian fake TIG says, "In the added rules that came to be after the Buddha decided to include women in the SA, why was the rule that a female monk of a hundred years of seniority has to bow down to the male monk that was ordained that very same day?" That was partly just to make sure that the the nuns knew that they were subsidiary to the bikus, I suppose. And there have been people arguing that these these

this set of rules, you know, that, you know, even the most senior nun has to bow down to the most junior monk that were they were added later by sort of misogynistic monks that didn't like nuns in in the in Buddhism, that kind of thing. Um but I mean even like a fully ordained nun is not allowed to sit in the presence of a biku. And then of course the nun the bikunes nowadays just ignore these kind of rules. But I mean they have to remain standing in the presence of a biku. And partly that was cultural. You know ancient India men it was patriarchal. Men were superior to women or they were seen by tradition as superior to women.

at least in certain respects.
I mean, the Buddha admitted women can get enlightened just like men can. And so, an enlightened woman would be superior to an unenlightened man. She'd be superior to almost all men, at least with regard to wisdom.
But I mean, it was also part of the just the strictness of the rules for nuns to ensure that women that weren't really serious about just renouncing everything, renouncing their status, renouncing the world, and just wholeheartedly committing themselves to living a life, striving for enlightenment

that I mean, the ones that weren't that serious would get weeded out. And so it was just kind of humbling to them. Just another little weeding out process, I guess.

And I'm falling [clears throat] back on the emergency backup beverage.

[sighs] So

yeah, I mean I really can't say for sure what was going on in the minds of whoever it was, possibly the Buddha himself who came up with a rule that [clears throat] even a senior female monk or senior nun has to bow down to a junior monk or even a senior nun is not allowed to sit in the presence of even a junior monk. And also I mean no nun is

even allowed to sit cross-legged. I'm
sure that there are very few of the new
bikunis who follow that rule,
but we don't need to get into that.
So, anyways, I'm just going to move on
to Ethiopian fake TIG's next question,
which is thoughts [clears throat] on the
Disney classic Aladdin.
And the answer to that is no. I don't
have any thoughts about the Disney
classic Aladdin because I never saw it.
I saw the old Jungle Book,
[clears throat and cough] but I I never
saw Aladdin,
so I don't really have any thoughts
about it. [clears throat]

So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. Also from Ethiop fake, let's see where Ethiopian fake TIG.

Sometimes I get confused with regard to his name.

So

[snorts]

[clears throat] EFT says, "Is it allowable for monks to listen to EDM or pop music?" And I had to look up EDM and it it stands for electronic dance music.

And

the answer is monks shouldn't make any effort to listen to any kind of music.

In fact, it's against the rules even for monks to chant in a musical manner.

So any kind of musical sing song kind of

chanting is also out for a strict Buddhist monk. But let's say a [clears throat] monk is walking through a village and a festival is going on and music is being played. He can listen to that. So long as he didn't go there just to listen to it. I mean that so long as that was not his purpose for being there, then he can be somewhere music can be playing and he can listen to it and he's not [clears throat] breaking any rules. It's just that he's not supposed to be making an effort to listen to music or to play music or to sing or dance, that kind of stuff. Because Buddhism is one of the few

spiritual traditions that considers

music to be essentially unh wholesome

and immoral because you are wallowing in

sensuality

by indulging in it.

But I assume listening to some kind of

like

some sort of ambient technotrance music,

which I listen to sometimes as a monk.

This is kind of background music if I

was typing or something.

I mean, you're better off listening to

that than like like that [clears throat]

throat screechy death metal stuff.

At least it's a somewhat more refined

form of unh wholesomeness.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question which is the last

question. And this is from Cyrus Frame.

And Cyrus Frame says, "What do you think

of this [__]

And I'm going to take a drink before I

say the Kan."

[clears throat]

Okay. What do you think of this coin?

And the coin is as follows.

Jean John said, "Is it like No, I messed

up already. I I made I did the name

almost correctly and then I screwed up

and the first little words." Okay, I'll

start over. Jean John said, "It is like

a man up a tree. He is hanging from a

branch by his teeth. His hands do not

grasp a limb. His feet do not touch the trunk. A man beneath the tree asks him, "What is the meaning of bodhic dharma coming from the west? If he stays silent, he fails the man. If he does answer, he will lose his life. What would you do in such a situation?" And that is the that's the kan and it's from the gateless gate, better known probably as the mumon khan. Um, [clears throat] and in the Japanese translation, the the Zen master is Kyogen, not Jean Jan. So, it's case five of the Mumon Khan. And I mean, a [__] is a question or a riddle that really does not have a correct answer. So, in my case, [clears throat] I mean, I just

keep my mouth shut, stay up in the tree, and and not die.

I mean, what's what would be the point of trying to answer the guy? I mean, you're going to be dead before you get to the end of the answer anyway, but it's the question is not supposed to have a correct answer. It's like a no-win scenario.

But, I mean, I could tell you what uh Mumon [clears throat] says, which is as follows. Case five, Ky's man up a tree. Muman's comment to that is, "Even if your eloquence flows like a river, it is of no avail. Though you can expound the whole of Buddhist literature, it is of

no use. If you solve this problem, you will give life to the way that has been dead until this moment and destroy the way that has been alive up to now. Otherwise, you must wait for my Treya Buddha and ask him." And then Mumon's verse, Kyogen is truly thoughtless. His vice and poison are endless. He stops up the mouths of the monks and devil's eyes sprout from their bodies.

But when Mumon says someone is truly thoughtless, it's actually kind of praise because you're supposed to be thoughtless, I guess.

But uh what's the actual question here? What do I think about it? Yeah, what do I think of this con? It's not one of my

favorite coons, you know. It's just kind of like a a no frrills kind of a [__] You know, it's like you're you're hanging from a tree by your teeth. Somebody asks you a question about Buddhism. So, what do you do? If you try to answer, you fall and die. But if you don't answer, it's like you're you're not sharing dharma with another being. But I mean, technically, if you tried to answer, you'd be you'd be falling out of the tree and dying before you could answer anyway. So, it's it's really not one of my favorite coons. I've got lots of coons that I like better than that one.

But, you know, it's just a standard example of a riddle or a question that really does not have a correct answer. And so you got to like shortcircuit your rational thinking mind in order to get past the impass essentially.

And I'm not sure what the correct answer would be. I mean it would depend on you and the circumstances and the the Roshi who's asking you the question, you know, it might be the correct answer. Like you go down, you sit down in front of the roshi and the roshi says you know the man beneath the tree asks what is the meaning of bodhi dharma coming from the west you stay silent you fail if you do answer you die what will you do and

it may be the correct answer it just be like good morning rushi or whatever it is because there really is no correct answer it's just a matter of like shortcircuiting the intellect and just breaking through the log jam, I guess.

But yeah, there's there's plenty of of coons I like better than that one. Like tozison's what is it? 60 blows. It's one of my favorites.

But anyways, that's it. We are done. And so, like I should always say at the beginning and pretty much never do. Do you have any questions you think I can answer about Buddhism, Dharma,

Terravada, early Buddhism,
just philosophy in general? I guess
meditation. Did I already say
meditation? Just me personally, Burma,
that kind of stuff. If you think there's
a good chance I can answer it, Disney
movies, not so much. I'm not really an
authority on Disney movies.
Then [clears throat] feel free to ask
the question though. and uh I will do my
best to answer inshallah. No more than
three questions per person per episode,
please. And if you like this kind of
stuff, feel free to like and subscribe
if you have not done so already. And
like I have been saying, my next book
will be coming out in the next few

weeks, I hope. Fingers crossed. It's

been a while, but we're down to the

we're down to the wire at this point.

And uh all I can say after that I

suppose is be happy.

Okay, then

I think we are recording here. Let me

adjust stuff a little bit after I've

already started here.

Okay,

I guess that's good enough. Hello and

welcome to question and answer number

182.

I am your host Po Basa.

This is my beverage. Unfortunately,

those of you who are just listening to

the podcast, not watching the video,

cannot enjoy

the [clears throat] beautiful splendor

of my beverage.

And of course, 182 is not a prime

number. It is in fact 2 * 7* 13. And I know what you're all thinking. You're thinking, "Hey, where is this bibonob?" Or if you prefer, where is that big red fish that was swimming around in the aquarium in the background every time that I saw that that aquarium? Well, the thing is Ishbanov has passed away. He was the large male flame dwarf gourami, the last of his kind in my aquarium. All of the dwarf gouramis died out due to inbreeding and the dreaded dwarf gourami virus that now infects most dwarf gouramis that are bred in captivity. It is unfortunate. So, I've had to switch over to pearl gouramies, which I don't like quite as much, but they're

chill. And according to Grock, they have an only an 8% chance of contracting the dwarf gourami virus, and even then, they probably won't die.

So, there is that.

And we don't have a whole heck of a lot of questions this this time around.

You know, maybe in the low 20s, which is fine.

And so I guess I should just uh start answering questions. And the first question is from PSA. And PSA has questions about the Nazi salute.

He says, "It's becoming more common for young people to throw the Nazi salute as a joke. They're just goofing around.

There's no real anti-semitic hate element to it." However, is there any bad karma being made in this action? I've been tempted to do it with my friends, too, but I've held back due to possible karmic consequences.

Also, Kanye West's song Hy Hitler in in quotes there was played in a nightclub in Miami by a bunch of influencers recently and it got a lot of backlash. Gee, I wonder why. At which point is free speech acceptable and boys are allowed to goof around and at which point is it extreme censorship? For example, American citizen Otto Wombier was kidnapped and imprisoned by North Korea and sent back to the US in a coma

for stealing a poster, which is another case of boys goofing around and the people in power overreacting. This reminded me of the boys in Miami goofing around and the people in power overreacting. So I guess we can sort of disentangle two questions from this seems to me.

One question is kind of standard sort of question that I get asked. What is the the what is the karma of performing action X?

And then the other one is let's see at which point is free speech acceptable and boys are allowed to goof around and at which point is it extreme censorship.

So let's just go with the first one.
What is the ethics of doing the Roman or
or Nazi salute or if you thump the chest
first before extending the arm? I'm
pretty sure that's the Romulan salute
from the old Star Trek. I don't think
that the German national socialist Oh,
the National Socialist German Workers
Party or the ancient Romans or like uh I
mean it's also like the Olympic salute.
It I assume it's been decommissioned by
now, but it used to be that just
extending the arm, you know, palm
downwards, fingers forwards was like the
the salute of the the Olympics.
But [clears throat]
those those those pesky Germans just

ruined that. Just like the name Adolf has been ruined, you know, and and a certain mustache has been ruined. Every once in a while you'll see like a a Saudi Arabian shake or something with the little toothbrush mustache. But um you know, I mean still Laurel and Hardy. It was uh Hardy who had that kind of mustache, but he was before World War II, I'm pretty sure. And I don't think anyone holds it against him.

But like I was implying at the beginning, it's like what are what is the the karma or the ethical quality of extending one's arm in the Olympic or Roman or Nazi salute or with the

preliminary chest thump, the Romulan
salute? What is the ethics of that? And
as I keep saying over and over again,
just a mere physical action is ethically
neutral. There is no karma derived from
a mere purely physical action. And so
the karma or the ethics comes in through
the motivation,
the will which is motivating the
behavior.
So if someone is just goofing around,
you know, they're just being silly.
They're saluting each other like
national socialist German workers
for example
or or just I mean it's
I mean there's nothing that an ordinary

person can do that's just purely virtuous or purely unverirtuous. There's always going to be a shade of gray. You know, anything motivated by attraction, aversion, or semi-conscious stupidity, loba dosa and moa. Anything motivated by any of those is going to have some unskillful, unh wholesome ausula karma kama and pali associated with it.

But I mean it's there's different degrees. one person doing the salute because, you know, they consider themselves to be genuine national socialists who wish to extrepate the the Hebrew race. you know, they're

doing that as just a matter of, you know, showing their intentions to to the to other people, then they would probably get worse, comma, than someone who's like doing the Romulan salute from Star Trek or someone at the at the Olympics, although I would assume they don't really do that anymore at the Olympics.

So, I mean, it depends on on the motivation.

And you could say, well, it can offend people and so you shouldn't do it. But even if you do something knowing that someone may be offended or even someone probably will be offended, that's still not necessarily unskillful to do

something knowing that it may cause offense because to be offended is always the fault of the offended person. From the Buddhist point of view, from the point of view of Buddhist ethics, it is immoral to be offended.

So somebody is just doing what they do for other reasons

and someone is offended and they know somebody would probably be offended. That's not necessarily immoral. Just like walking from point A to point B knowing that you're probably going to step on some bugs, killing animals, which is worse karma from a Buddhist point of view than offending somebody.

You know, killing is one of the worst things you can do to kill an animal [clears throat] or to kill a conscious being.

But if you're just walking from point A to point B, that is your reason for for going there. You're not going there for the purpose of stepping on bugs. And I mean there have been times like in Burma there was one time at the beginning of the rainy season out in the desert when the ground was just completely covered with these little gnatike insects and you just couldn't walk anywhere without killing them. Even if you were a Jane with the the grass broom, these things were so tiny and so fragile you'd be

killing them anyway.

But so long as your purpose is not to

kill bugs, you can walk from point A to

point B and you're not committing any

offense. You're not breaking a precept.

You don't have to make confession,

anything like that. And it's similar

like if you've got some valid reason or

some even neutral reason for

giving the the the

Roman salute.

you know, you're not you're not doing it

deliberately to offend anybody and

you're not doing it deliberately to show

off that you hate Hebrews, that kind of

thing. Then if somebody does get

offended, that's on them.

So,

I mean, it all it all comes down to if something is moral or immoral. It depends on the mental states associated with it. So if you're doing it maliciously

then that's going to be worse comma than if you're doing it just because you're silly or you're you're like a Treky doing the Romulan salute and then other people misinterpret that then I mean it's there's going to be this whole gradation. It's never going to be completely pure until you are completely pure. If you become a fully enlightened saint, then you can do as you please,

assuming that that even makes sense anymore
and you haven't done anything wrong. But so long as you're not enlightened yet, anything you do is going to have at least a little whiff of immorality to it.
Even bowing to the Buddha, I mean, if you consider yourself to be, you know, I am bowing to the Buddha, I mean, you still have like self view while you're doing it. Well, that's bad karma, doesn't it?
Or you do it out of greed for heaven or greed for enlightenment, that kind of thing. Then again, if there's any kind

of attraction, aversion, semic-conscious stupidity, and until you're enlightened, there's always going to be some semic-conscious stupidity, there's going to be a certain amount of bad karma involved. But, I mean, it really depends on why you're doing it. What is your purpose? What is your motive for doing it? If you're doing it deliberately to make somebody offended, then that's on you. Whether they're offended or not is on them, but you trying to offend somebody is on you. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This also for is from PSA. That first question was asked like two weeks ago. He asked the question a

um under a previous Q&A after I'd
already moved on to the next Q&A or was
in the process of recording the next
Q&A. So it just got lost
and uh maybe some people would have
preferred that it remain lost but what
the hell. So this next question is also
from PSA
and he says, "Might the combustion
adjacent architectural feature
positioned posterior to your sitting
location constitute a genuinely
functional apparatus for controlled
thermal generation or merely a
nonoperational simolacum intended for
aesthetic signaling."

And of course, he's referring to the fireplace that was behind me in the previous Q&A that I consider to be like a fake fireplace with fake fire because it's not real wood. You just flip a switch and it's like this natural gas fire, little flames coming out through like [clears throat] crevices in like ceramic fake logs.

And I would prefer to have a real fireplace with real wood. But even so, even though it's a fake fire with fake wood that you just turn on with a light switch, still it does heat the living room. But the thing is, it heats the living room, but it cools down the whole rest of the house because the thermostat

for the central heating of the house is also in the living room. So, the living room warms up due to the fake fire in the fake fireplace, which then causes the central heating not to go on because the thermostat feels the warmth in the living room, all the other rooms get cold. But so long as we're hanging out in the living room, it doesn't matter. Might even save save money that way.

Ah, so I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, "One of the most profound insights into human psychology that I have found since exploring Buddhism is that most suffering doesn't

come from so-called negative thoughts and emotions, but from the resistance and non-acceptance of such thoughts and emotions. Without this resistance, the thoughts and emotions are simply blips of energy temporarily manifesting in the body as sensations.

Is my understanding of this Buddhist insight into suffering accurate or have I either misstated or oversimplified it?

Yeah, I think it's it's a little bit inaccurate because the negative thoughts still I mean those negative thoughts tend to be attract they tend to be motivated by aversion. You know there's dosa in a negative thought. So there's going to be a certain amount of of

bad karma, let's say, a certain unh
wholesomeness or unskillfulness
in having negative thoughts.
Uh let's see. I'm not sure the negative
thoughts and emotions. Yeah, like anger
for example would be a negative emotion,
let's say. Well, I mean that anger
itself is generating some bad karma. You
know, it's like you are wallowing in
aversion, wallowing in dosa.
So yeah, I think that aspect of Romeo's
like synopsis of how Buddhist ethics
works, I think that is a little
inaccurate.
But I do think that most of like in a a
developed country where we're not like,

you know,

you know, this like hyenas are no longer a problem. And if you're living in a a safe neighborhood, you know, being attacked by human hyenas isn't much of a problem either. So most of the suffering that the average person living in a developed culture experience is just like

artificial, you know, it's like gratuitously generated, you know? It's like you you just think about how you don't have something and then you have like a version for this madeup situation in your mind. You know, an absence of something is not really an objective reality, but you you sort of reify this

absence of something into this thing that you have aversion for and then that creates a certain amount of suffering or like a really simple case is like a toothache. So, you got a toothache and that's pain and the pain isn't necessarily a negative emotion or a negative thought. That's like a like a a painful feeling. It's a sensation. And it is true that that pain is different from suffering. The toothache itself, just the throbbing pain in your tooth is not the same as suffering. That's pain. It's the aversion for that pain. The desire for that pain to stop, insisting that that pain not be there. That is

what's really causing the suffering.
So Romeo would be correct with regard to
that, you know, in in that sense, he'd
be right on the money, I think. But like
Shakespeare [clears throat] said, you
know, it's like
something like never was philosopher who
could endure the toothache patiently,
something like that. Because a
toothache, I mean, that's just hardwired
right into the system. something farther
away like a a pain in your foot. Let's
say you've got gout, your big toe is
sore. It's easier to maintain equinimity
when the when the pain is way down there
in your toe than when it's like right up
here in your head.

I'm not exactly sure what the mechanism for that is, but it does seem that pain, like a toothache, just the searing agony of a toothache, is much more difficult to endure with patients than other kinds of pain that are in other parts of the body. And I'm not exactly sure why nature designed teeth. I mean, teeth really are not that great of a of an evolutionary invention. And I think to some degree birds are better off just swallowing rocks and storing them in your crop and storing them in their crop, I should say, and then using, you know, just kind of tearing off hunks with their beak or whatever it is

they're eating and and then it just gets chewed up by rocks in their crop and they just swallow more rocks.

Just it seems to work better for them in certain respects.

They might have more difficulty eating certain foods, I suppose.

But I'm just completely digressing. I mean, when when the hell do we start talking about teeth and birds?

So, let's just I want to I have to read this. I've I've wandered so far away from the question. I should probably read it again, just kind of refresh my own memory of it here. My own shortterm memory.

See, one of the most profound insights

into human psychology that I have found since exploring Buddhism is that most suffering doesn't come from so-called negative thoughts and emotions, but from the resistance and non-acceptance of thought such thoughts and emotions.

Well, I mean the resistance and non-acceptance are really the negative thoughts and emotions

that

I mean you can have negative thoughts and emotions right off the bat I suppose but I mean those are create I mean any kind of negative thoughts and emotions are going to be dose up but even like a positive attraction

is still creating suffering you know desire is the cause of all suffering and just like wanting something is I mean it's a kind of dissatisfaction. So it's there's still suffering there. There's it's maybe more subtle. The the suffering of desiring an orgasm, for example, in the heat of passion is is going to be more it's going to be more mixed with pleasure and more acceptable, I suppose, than the agony of a toothache or, you know, just just fill in the blank with something miserable.

I think there there there's a suta that talks about how like attachment to pleasure. I mean, you're still bound. It's just like you're bound with a

silken cord instead of with an iron chain, but you're still bound. It's still it's still bondage in uh a nonsexual usually sort of way.

So I mean the negative thoughts and emotions usually in the west are negative thoughts and emotions that are reactions to some not necessarily suffering inducing situation.

You know I've got to I got to clean the garage and then you think about having to clean the garage and that makes you unhappy.

So the idea that you have to clean the garage isn't necessarily a negative thought, but the aversion for having to

clean the garage or whatever the hell it is that causes suffering. But still, I mean, you can have negative thoughts and emotions right off the bat, which already are create, you know, they're creating suffering. They're making so-called bad karma. And then you just add like aversion for the aversion, that kind of thing, or whatever it is. So in that sense, I think Romeo is not entirely accurate in that you're generating suffering and bad karma right off the bat as soon as you start having negative thoughts and emotions or even some positive ones [snorts] or at least attraction motivated ones.

[clears throat and cough]

But with regard to humans in general,

especially humans living in a relatively

developed peaceful civilization or

society, then most of the suffering is

just sort of like

generated gratuitously. Even boredom,

you know, nothing necessarily bad is

happening to you, but still you're

dissatisfied

because you're bored.

So, I mean, boredom is just kind of a

weird kind of suffering that um

it doesn't even really have any cause

other than a desire for something more

interesting than this.

So, I I hope I pretty much answered that question.

But again, with regard to pain, pain itself may be a negative sensation. I I mean you want to call it a negative sensation that's fine but the pain and the suffering the pain and any kind of karmic ramifications are are are different because the suffering comes from wanting the pain to stop aversion for the pain and it's just built in. It's just habitual. I mean some people are better at resisting pain than others. You know, my father was a macho tough guy and you know, one of his favorite sayings was a little pain never hurt anybody,

but even he probably wasn't cool with a like a really severe toothache.

So, I'm just going to move on to Romeo's second question,

which is, is there truly any suffering in this life beyond the resistance and lack of acceptance of so-called negative thoughts and emotions? Uh, yeah. Yeah, there's suffering in this life beyond that. I've already pretty much answered this question while answering the previous one because this one is just kind of like an um not an ax, you know, a correlary a correlary to the first one.

Uh, and like I've said, it's like even

just longing for something is it's not really a lack of acceptance of so-called negative thoughts and emotions. You know, you desire something strongly. You're you're unhappy. You're dissatisfied. And so, you're suffering. But it's that suffering doesn't strike me as obviously being a case of lack of acceptance of negative thoughts and emotions.

So attraction and aversion are both generating karma and and dooka unease. But like I've been like I have been saying in in a world like um most parts of America, especially if you're living in a safe neighborhood, you're not just living under a under a bridge or

something, then most [clears throat] of the suffering is just sort of like mind generated,
you know, just not being satisfied with the way things are.
And that's pretty much what causes all suffering really, not being satisfied with the way things are. If you can accept things, you're okay. Like one of my favorite mottos that I'm pretty sure I came up with, even though I'm sure other people came up with the same idea back in the stone age is doesn't matter what it is. If you accept it, it's not a problem. And it doesn't matter what it is. If you won't accept it, it's a

problem. Problems are not out there in some supposed empirical universe. Problems are a mental state. They are nonacceptance of the way things are. And you can do something about that. And that's something that's very important to learn if you're a student of Dharma or Dharma is that suffering ultimately is it's it's like volitional but it may not seem valitional just because your culture doesn't point it out to you. And it's just force of habit that causes in just like animal instinct in the human animal that cause people to act with aversion for certain things like physical pain for example or boredom.

But when you look into your own mind
through introspection,
then you see that it's you really have a
choice whether to accept or not accept
the situation.
And some situations are easier to accept
than others. Like the toothache, it's
it's hard to accept that I have to
admit. But even then, even in a case
like the toothache, the principle
remains true. It's just that the
toothache is such an intense such an
advanced level challenge
that possibly only a fully enlightened
being could successfully or at least a
very highly advanced sage could sit

there with equinimity during a raging

toothache.

[groaning]

So I guess I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from the

saboturss

and it says here that the saboturss is

only one person. So there could be some

multiple personalities or something but

we don't need to get into that. Maybe

the saboturs is sort of like a last name

like people like my own lay last name is

Reynolds and then there's there's a lot

of last names that are really a first

name with an S at the end like Phillips

or let's see Rogers.

that kind of thing. Which just means

that there was like some distant
ancestor who was some kind of big shot
and then everybody all of his
descendants were just sort of got the
last name of Roger's descendants.
So maybe [clears throat] this person
here, the saboturs, is a descendant of a
an actual sabotur and then it just got
an S at the end and became his last
name.
or could be some other reason. Who
knows? I hope at least the saboturs
knows.
But I haven't even started on the
question yet. The question is, what is
the difference between ego and

self-esteem?

You have to have some self-esteem and

feel good about yourself or you may

start to feel low.

Well, ego has more than one reason or

more than one definition. like in

Freudian psychology. Let's look it up. I

got a dictionary right here.

Ego.

Okay. Noun. No, plural is egos. And then

there's a person's sense of self-esteem

or self-importance. So, I mean, you go

with the or the first dictionary

definition and they're synonymous.

Self-esteem and ego are the same.

But if you want to get into

psychoanalysis like Freud for example,

it's the part of the mind that mediates between the conscious and the unconscious and is responsible for reality testing or reality testing and a sense of personal identity compared with id and super ego or you want to get into philosoph like philosophical metaphysics. It is a conscious thinking subject.

So yeah, I mean it's like a sense of personal identity like in in Buddhist philosophy.

See, I got to rearrange windows here. In Buddhist philosophy, you you may see that in in English Buddhism, you know, not in poly Buddhism, but in English

Buddhism, ego would just be sort of like
the conceit I am. Ahankara would be one
of the the uh synonyms in in Pali.
So,
I mean, what is the difference between
ego and self-esteem? It would depend on
what definition of ego you're going
with, but like the first main definition
in the dictionary is that ego is
self-esteem and therefore they're the
same. But ego in the sense of
um like a more philosophical Buddhistic
kind of term or an English translation
of a Buddhistic term then it's just you
know the the belief I am believing that
you are some separate individuality
distinct from the rest of the universe.

So

let's see the sabotur says you have to

have some self-esteem and feel good

about yourself or you may start to feel

low but I mean if you're practicing

intensive Buddhism then like you're

you're practicing satipana then you feel

good about yourself you know you're

feeling good about yourself you feel

start to feel low you note that you're

starting to feel low and you just

observe that without judging it and

without really throwing any kind of ego

into

So

yeah,

but self-esteem from the Buddhist point of view, it still would be a kind of unskillful mental state.

Self anything would be an unskillful mental state from the point of view of like classical Terra Buddhism or even pre-terra Buddhism. Maybe some later schools of Buddhism started thinking that self-esteem was was just fine and dandy, but that would be kind of a deviation

from the earlier teachings.

So,

see, you have to have some self-esteem and feel good about yourself. Well, I mean, just not to have desires to have equinimity. I mean, at least you're not

feeling bad about yourself. And that would be preferable to kind of just being smug. Being sm I've I've always kind of had a a certain aversion, I guess, for smuggness in other people. If if anyone pointed out to me that I was being smug, I' I'd really kind of stop me in my tracks and have me like like reviewing my behavior over the past many seconds just to see if what they said had any validity to it because smuggness in other people just kind of rubs me the wrong way.

So, let's see here. I guess I answered that question. I apologize to the saboturs if I did not answer it

sufficiently because I'm moving on to the next question.

And Clefy says because it is in fact Cleafy who is acting asking the next question axing it. I am struggling to understand a notion of mind. If everything I perceive is a product of the unenlightened mind of mine, what created my mind? My karma?

Well, I mean, that's kind of a tricky question. I mean, there's different ways you could look at it. I mean, really, anyone who wants to understand how I would answer questions really has to seriously consider the simile of the block of marble. I mean, I've I've talked about the simile of the block of

marble well up into double digits at
this point on these videos. And really
just trying to understand
what I'm saying
would answer many questions that I get
asked here from people that have heard
the simile of the block of marble many
times.
Still, I mean, you should just consider
that. Consider like the implications and
the ramifications of the simile of the
block of marble and the simile of the
block of marble. I mean, please forgive
me for beating a dead baby at this
point.
I mean, you've got this block of marble.

It's It doesn't have anything around it. So, there's nothing to compare it with size-wise. So, we might as well just say it is of arbitrary size. It is essentially sizeless. And within that block of marble are every single possible statue, including an infinite number of impossible ones. You know, like Myron's discus thrower with the head levitating above the trunk of the of the body, you know? I mean, it wouldn't couldn't exist like that in real life. Oh, there's a fish freaking out in the tank over there. Damn. Excuse me. I got distracted by a large loach.

>> [clears throat]

>> So I mean even impossible statues can exist in this block of marble but every single possible statue is in there including statues that are so complex they become self-referential and start thinking that they are separate. They start having the conceit I am.

So before you get to that, I mean the the reality is just this formless, sizeless block of marble. And if you go with some early Buddhist philosophy and especially like Hindu philosophy, you've got infinite formless consciousness that corresponds to that block of marble. So you've got infinite formless consciousness, luminous all around. And

contained within that formless

consciousness is every possibility.

Every possible mental state, every

possible state of consciousness is

contained within that infinity of mind.

including

some of these forms of mind have become

so complex that they become

self-referential

and think that they are separate

and in Buddhist philosophy um the Buddha

really doesn't try to tease out the

origins of these things he just you know

it's like in some in indeterminate past

you know it's like uh I think it's very

common in Buddhism

where you just think it is without

beginning. You know, samsara itself is without beginning. But like what caused my karmic momentum, you know, my the stream of of volitional mental states that is my karmic stream? What is the origin of that? And the Buddha really didn't go there. You know, he just says it's not known.

is, you know, it's just in that the hazy. I mean, even if it had a beginning, the beginning would have been so hazy. You'd start off with, you know, some very kind of primitive, you know, like a a crystal or something or maybe just some sort of um dream image in somebody else's mind that somehow

persists after that person's dream ends.
this sort of thing. You just start off
with this shadowy semi-existence that
then starts developing and like
evolving.
And the Buddha didn't really discuss how
your karmic momentum starts. You know,
it could be like I've read in a book
called Seth Speaks two different
theories on how karmic like a karmic
stream of a certain being or a certain
sort of lineage of beings through
rebirth can be initiated. One is just
through splitting. you know, you've got
a some being with a lot of mental states
going on and it's just like part of that
just splits off and starts its own

existence. And I don't see why that would necessarily be impossible. But then the other weird idea that I I got from this book says speaks is the dream image one like you dream about people in your dreams that you've never met before. you know, they don't have any outward objective existence. You've just sort of generated this being, this shadowy semi kind of being that may somehow continue to exist after you stop dreaming them. You just kind of, you know, you gave birth to this this shadowy semi-being in this kind of ghost dream world that then somehow continues to exist. Or like

even in the upupanads it talks about you know just very primitive life or the janes also talk about you know like fire was considered to be a primitive form of life to the janes in just in ancient north India in the Buddhist time it was a common belief that fire was a kind of living being

and it's it is kind of true I mean it needs food it needs oxygen you know it's it has a lot of the same properties as life it doesn't have the same organization and it's just like an uncontrolled

oxidation reaction instead of like a controlled one that is then like fueling chemical processes and so forth like

like happens in life

but um I think I'm kind of deviating

from Cley's question

but what created mind

I mean the origins of it is uh you know

It is hard to say. It's unknown and it

may not be the same for all beings. Some

may have split off. Some may have

started as a crystal. Just the first

tiny glimmerings of consciousness that

is enough there that is able to can

perpetuate like through rebirth or

whatever.

But what keeps it going is karma.

Definitely. That's the only thing you

take with you after you die is your

karma which is like your psychic momentum.

The motive force of your mental states that doesn't just stop at death, it has to continue.

So yeah, I mean if you really contemplate the simile of the block of marble, I think I mean it's hard to wrap your head around, which is one reason why people just don't wrap their head around it, but still I mean it does help to understand a lot of things. So it's it's pretty much my theory of everything, my toe, my toe, if you will.

And I guess I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Yoshi Buouie.

And Yoshi Buouie. Oh, he's asking a kind of Majamaka question. I'll put the feathers on just just for the hell of it. I'll be right back.

[snorts] Here I am.

See? Put this Fez purchased from Fezorama. Well worth it, I should I might add. Not that I'm being sponsored by Fezorama.

Okay. Got to get the eye centered there.

Okay. Yoshi Buouie says, "Could you clarify what quote if the effect is different from the cause," unquote means. If one punches another person in the left eye, then the bruised left eye would be the effect and the cause would

be the punching. So naturally, effect is different from what caused it. Unless instead of a bruised eye, the person being punched gets a bruised nose, which is not possible. Or you could say the bruised eye is the effect of just an intermediary step. You know, the bru first you've got the punch, which you know, it hits the eye and then the eye gets like swollen. Some capillaries are ruptured, which then gradually causes the bruise to appear, but the bruise isn't there immediately after the punch. So you're not going to have a separation of time between the cause and the effect seems to me.

So the punch is actually causing like

the damage to the eye which results in
the bruise. But in a way we're
nitpicking here because
I mean the whole question comes from one
of the first questions. I think it is
the first question in Nagarjuna's mula
majama caraka where he's trying to
debate the logical question
is the effect the same as the cause and
if the effect is similar is the same as
the cause then there would be no change
according to like ancient Indian
attempts at formal logic but according
to um nagarja if it's different from the
cause, then it doesn't even need the
cause because the co there's like no

real connection. So that's the argument he's making that I mean if the the effect is different from the cause then I mean there's no qualitative connection between the two. So that the the co the effect should be able to arise just spontaneously at random without even the the cause being there because there really isn't a a connection.

And I mean I could [clears throat] come up with arguments to debate that it's like you know it's just it changes form that the energy is the same. You've got conservation of energy let's say. So I mean you could say the essence is the same. It's just

the form changes.

So you could say it's same essence, different form, that kind of thing. But like like I said, I think it was the previous Q&A when which I was mentioning this that first of all formal logic was just getting a foothold in India around the time of the origins of Mahayana Buddhism. And

it's like they're trying to use logic in a way that might not be acceptable to modern westerners.

But the point he's trying to make is valid. You know, it's like the whole purpose or the main purpose of the mulamjamaka caraka is to point out that

you can't really answer any question completely validly. So you can you can shoot down any kind of question or any kind of answer to any question. So it's like with regard to every question that is asked or proposed

in in the mulama caraka I mean first you say that [clears throat] um it's the answer is not yes the answer is not no the answer is not yes and no and the answer is not neither yes nor no there is no valid answer to any question which is what he uses to shoot down any attempts at understanding reality rationally.

And that is a valid point. I mean, what he's trying to accomplish, I mean, he

may be using kind of preodern, not entirely acceptable by modern standards arguments, but the main point he's getting at is a profound one, which is you can't understand reality by thinking about it. is you're you're generating these unenlightened perceptions, these symbols that are supposed to represent things out there somewhere, but they can't. And I mean, the main proponent of this kind of thinking in the west, as far as I know, is Emanuel Kant. He did he did it a lot more logically by modern western standards. So if the mulam majamaka caraka is unacceptable, you know, it's

its style of reasoning is unacceptable, try reading Kant's critique of pure reason, for example, if you can because it's very dense and very difficult to read.

[sighs]

But the main point he was making is simply that yes is not a valid answer to any question really. No is not a valid question or a valid answer. Yes and no is not valid. And neither yes nor no is not valid. And so it's just what Mjamaka philosophy does is it it shoots down all philosophies and then saves itself for last and then shoots itself down just leaving emptiness.

Because if you're going to understand

reality, you're going to have to understand it through emptiness and not generating these perceptions, these symbolic perceptions that supposedly are describing ultimate reality when all they are is just samsara itself.

Perception is samsara.

And you're never going to understand nibbana or ultimate truth, the absolute through samsaric means. it's just not going to work. And that's the main point.

So I mean I'm not when I'm talking about the mulama car I think I made this fairly clear in the previous Q&A also.

I'm not arguing that the mulamaaka cara

everything it says is just you know

infallible.

It was using

Indian logic in the form that it existed

in those days back when formal logic you

know like Aristoilian thought was

gradually filtering into India like

through trade routes with with Rome or

like Henistic states at that time.

[sighs]

So yeah, it's just is the cause the same

as the effect? And if it's yes, then

there was really no change and if it's

no, then there's no connection and so

the the effect should just be able to

arise at random. I mean, that was the

the main argument that was being made,

and you can accept it or reject it as you please, but he was using kind of questionable means to get to a valid conclusion.

And that is that you're never going to understand reality by thinking about it. So Buddhist philosophy, I mean the main purpose, the main benefit of Buddhist philosophy is just to like attack all philosophy turn on itself at the very end and then you just because it's philosophy philosophizing it can be skillful at you know beginning stages but you're never going to reach the goal through philosophizing. You're eventually going to have to let go of

it.

Now I'm going to take the fez off now.

>> [cough and clears throat]

>> And I think I'm just going to move on to

the next question.

This is from RFS

and this is kind of a a simple

straightforward kind of question which I

do appreciate every once in a while.

RFS says while on alms round are monks

allowed to offer thanks or answer

questions from the lay people and so

that's kind of two questions you know

there's the offering thanks question and

the answering questions question so I'm

just going to separate that

okay so first question is while on alms

round are monks allowed to offer thanks

and they shouldn't in fact

>> [clears throat]

>> um in Burma and Thailand is just Bu Bu

Buddhist tradition that monks do not

thank lay people. I mean they can like

certain ceremonies like at the kina

festival or the kina ceremony they will

offer what is called anumu modina or

rejoicing over the good deeds of the lay

people which is an expression of of like

appreciation

more than gratitude you know it's

acknowledging their good you know their

generous sentiments and so forth but um

you can actually offend and anger

a Burmese lay person or a Thai lay person by thanking them. You know, if if you're a monk, I mean, if if they offer something to you, they're not doing it for thanks. They don't want to get paid by thanks in this life. They're trying to gather up treasures in heaven, to use a Christian metaphor.

So, yeah, they're not doing it for thanks. They're not I mean, they're doing it because they want merit, you know, they want good karma.

And so um I have read in a book by Mahasi Seattle which is probably like transcripts of his damat talks that that's one thing monks just should not do. Do not thank lay people. I mean you

can in a way you can sort of
praise them for their generosity. You
know you can express appreciation for
their good deeds and their generosity
and their their good intentions and so
forth. But thanking them for for helping
you, I mean, in a way, it kind of takes
away some of the merit that they're
earning because in a way, you're kind of
you're already paying them. You're
paying them back. You know, they're
getting their karmic reward through
thanks in a in a way. So it's just even
if it's technically not forbidden in
accordance with Vineia, I don't recall
there being any rule of monastic

discipline forbidding a monk from thanking a lay person. Still in Thailand and Burma at least, it's considered to be bad etiquette. And lay people can be upset by a monk thanking them. Although in other other times like I had a a Christian Burmese man who was acting as my attendant and we went to get eyeglasses or something. I had to get new glasses and this attendant who was a sort of an uppercy Burmese gentleman who was educated in a Christian school and converted to Christianity and so forth. And it's like most of the Burmese people that work at the American embassy are like half Burmese Christians for whatever reason. And he would he got

on my case a few times. Aren't you going to thank them? And it's like he didn't know Buddhist culture enough to know that monks really aren't supposed to thank people. But the people who sell eyeglasses in Burma, at least in Rangon, tend to be like Hindus. you know, there it's Indians who pretty much run the the the spectacle salesman racket in in Rangon, or at least that's the way it was at the time. So maybe I should have, but it was just sort of ingrained in me as a monk. Monks aren't supposed to be thanking people,

which then gets a little trickier when the monk comes back to the West and

people in the West don't know about
Buddhist etiquette. They don't even know
you're not supposed to point your feet
at people or feet at monks or you know
teachers that kind of thing.
So there is kind of a cultural aspect to
this and like I say I don't think it
there is an actual
um rule of monastic discipline
forbidding a monk from thanking lay
people. It's just that in Burma and
Thailand at least it's just you're not
supposed to do it.
So, I'll just move on to RFS's next
question.
Well, on alms round, are monks allowed
to answer questions from the lay people?

And if it's a simple question, you know, are you going to be coming this way tomorrow, venerable sir? Then of course, a monk is allowed to answer, you know, simple questions like that. Will you be at the monastery later on today, venerable sir? I know somebody who would like to meet you. That kind of thing. Obviously, the monk can answer that question. He's he's he's not required to remain silent at all times, especially if people are asking him questions. Although, I mean, if they're asking for, you know, some sort of guidance or, you know, they want you to give them a damat talk or something like that, then it may

not be the best time. You may you may say, well, you know, you can ask me later at the monastery or something, but I'm not really free here. Which is what the Buddha himself did in the Baja Suta where You've got the aesthetic Baja who goes to the Buddha first. I mean he's he walks from western India. He hears about the Buddha. He's in western India. The Buddha is like more eastern hundreds of miles away. Baja when he hears that there's this enlightened being called God Buddha he just packs up what little stuff he's got. takes, you know, takes what little he needs with him and just starts walking, never

spending the night, you know, twice in the same place. Just he's he's got to meet the Buddha because he's heard of there's this enlightened being. So [clears throat] he goes to the monastery where the Buddha lives and he's told the Buddha is walking for alms right now. So [clears throat] the Baja just takes off. He's not even willing to wait for the Buddha to come back from alms round. He just goes after he goes after him, sees him walking for alms. He goes up and you know, teach me dharma. And twice the Buddha says, "Now is not the appropriate time. I'm walking for alms." But then um Baji just says, "I don't know when I'm

going to die. Please tell me now." And in the third time, the Buddha gives him this brief enigmatic zen-like dharma teaching. And then just minutes later, Baja is trampled to death by a young cow.

So, I mean, the Buddha was reluctant to give any kind of domattox while walking for alms. And really, monks should just mind their own business. They're not supposed to be looking up. You're supposed to be looking downwards. You know, it's against the rules of monastic discipline for a monk to be looking upwards in public unless he's got a really good reason.

So yeah, you can answer brief questions,

but you wouldn't want to be just
standing there in the road delivering
sermons
while walking for alms.
And so I'm just going to move on to
RFS's third question,
which is what leads to long-term
benefit? And I mean the first thing that
came to mind when I saw this question is
a verse from the dharmapara which is to
do good to refrain from doing evil and
to purify the mind. This is the teaching
of the Buddhas.
So yeah that would that would definitely
lead to long-term benefit. Do good,
refrain from doing evil and purify your

mind.

So what could have been like a vague meandering kind of answer turned out to be kind of succinct kind of pathy if you will

and I'm just going to move on to this question

this is from Dhamma River and Dhamma River says are monks allowed to ask for specific kinds of food during sickness for example garlic or ginger tea for a sore throat or vegetable soup if they have a cold, etc. Or are they just supposed to eat their one meal a day accepting whatever is given to them and tough it out if they get sick? Well, that is an option. They can just tough

it out if they're being like aesthetic. You know, they're just going to throw themselves on the mercy of of their own karma, so to speak. They can do that. But it is allowed for a monk to ask for specific kinds of food during sickness. In fact, there's one of the potty mocha rules says a monk is not allowed to ask for like certain high quality foods including meat and fish unless he is sick or the person he is asking has already given him uh permission in advance to ask for this kind of stuff. So a monk is sick, he can ask for medicine. He can ask for food that he think will help him to get better. Even

if it's like steak,

h garlic on one hand, garlic and ginger,

those are two medicines that a monk can

store

indefinitely. You know, there's there's

different kinds of food. I've I've

probably forgotten. There's Let's see.

Uh yeah, I think I've I'd have to rack

my brains. I don't want to sit here for

five minutes just staring off into space

trying to remember the terms. Uh Sataha

Kalika is one of them. But it's like

four kinds of consumables. You got

consumables that have to be consumed

between dawn and midday, and that's

regular food. Then you've got

consumables that have to be consumed

before dawn of the f before dawn of the following day. So you can eat them uh or consume them in the evening, afternoon, evening, at night so long as dawn hasn't happened yet. And that's mainly juices like fruit juice. And then you've got food that has to be kept for can be kept for no longer than a week, which are Ajantisro calls them tonics. You know, it's kind of medicinal substances or at least they were considered to be medicinal to some degree, which is let's see, you've got butter, [clears throat] ghee, honey, molasses, and oil like like vegetable oil like especially sesame oil because that was the the oil of choice

in ancient North India. It's like every culture has its favorite oil, you know, like the the Germanic tribes had butter and I guess the Tibetans had butter. The like in the classical Greco Roman world it was olive oil. I'm not exactly sure what it would have been in China, but in India it was sesame oil.

In Burma nowadays, it's mostly peanut oil, although sesame oil is still used for certain delicacies.

But I digress. And [clears throat] then finally, there's consumables that can be kept for life, which would include like pharmaceutical medicines,

um, you know, aspirin,

garlic, ginger, you know, turmeric, this

kind of stuff. Um, that it's it's even salt can be kept indefinitely so long as you're not sprinkling it on your food to make it taste good. because there is this this rule that when you mix these four types together, it automatically becomes the type with the this shortest expiration. So, you've you're keeping sugar. You're allowed to keep sugar for a week. But then you sprinkle some of that into your coffee.

Well, let's see. Let's say let's say let's use a different example. Make it simpler. You got salt that you're using for medicinal purposes, but then you got some food in your in your in your alms

that day that you think really needs salt. So, you take some of the salt and sprinkle it onto your food. All of a sudden, that that salt is already past the expiration date because you've already had it for more than a day because you've been storing it.

So, it's kind of complicated. I mean the rules of monastic discipline are much more complicated than most people think including more than most monks think because most monks really have not tried to really carefully investigate all the rules of monastic discipline. It's like four relatively thick books of rules. It's not just the potty mocha rules.

So yeah, the answer to that question is

yes. Monks are allowed to ask for specific kinds of food during sickness. I could have just said yes and moved on and these videos would be a lot shorter, but what the hell? And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Xenithoid.

And Xenithoid says, this is this is kind of a tricky one. He says, "Can you explain in detail what you mean when you say women don't have a sense of honor in the same way that men do? I remember you mentioning that women in the past would derive their sense of honor from chastity. And that's true. It's like in in the old days, a woman's honor was

almost always her sexual purity, either her virginity or her faithfulness to her husband. That was a woman's honor. And so you had um there was like Lucricia I think was her name in this Roman mythology. She was back in the before the republic days. This is back when Rome was ruled by Itruscan kings. and she was

r a ped by I can't remember if he was the atruscan king of Rome at the time or if he was the son like the prince of the king of Rome but she was a married woman and even though it was not her choice I mean he took her by force still she she selfdeleted just because of the shame to her honor and a lot of the Germanic

women would do the same thing I mean they would delete their own children and then delete themselves rather than become the the sex slaves of Roman soldiers, that kind of thing. So, that was really mainly what a woman's honor consisted of um in preodern times. And now that you've got like postmodern times, I mean, it's like honor itself has just faded into obscurity. just the idea of honor. I mean, you can talk about it with regard to military personnel or law enforcement officers, that kind of thing. But for the gen the average person, I mean, it's honor has just kind of just faded into a kind of

superstitious word like sin.

I mean sin still is is like a legit word

for Christians but just mainstream

culture in the west secular American

culture honor has gone the route of sin

but

that's [clears throat] part part of the

reason for that is because western

culture has become feminized so I mean

honor for a man he's willing to he

believes in something

strongly enough he's willing to die for

his principle

You know, it's living your life by

principles is something that women don't

do as much as men do. It seems to me

just based on my observations of men and

women throughout the course of my life and just, you know, reading history books and so forth that women are much more flexible. They're much better at justifying anything they do like like telling a lie for example or just changing their mind. It's like they promise to do something and they say, "Well, it's different now." Whereas a man if you know he's a man of his word, then I mean he he's he very much he's very hesitant to break a promise for example. Whereas women it's like well it's different now the situation's different so it's okay. you know, they're much more inclined to just

justify or rationalize anything they do
and consider themselves to be completely
right by doing it, which is kind of a a
leftist approach to things nowadays,
partly because the left is more
feminized than the right. Just it seems
that's the way it is.
Most women in America vote Democrat.
Most men vote Republican.
>> [sighs]
>> But I think I might be straying a little
bit from this somewhat volatile kind of
question. But I do think it's men are
much more likely to just insist upon
standing on principle and and not
through fear of public opinion. I mean
that's more of a feminine thing. What

will the neighbors think? That kind of thing. That's stereotypically feminine. It's just you know I cannot look myself in the mirror
if I violate this principle that I have held sacred throughout my life and my father before me considered this to be a sacred principle
that that is just more of a masculine thing.
So I hope I answer that question.
probably haven't offended very many women by answering that question because there aren't very many women who watch these videos. It's if I look on the I haven't looked in a while, but you look

at the stats on my channel and it's it's

like 98%

of my viewers are male.

Go figure.

I thought my dashing good looks would

attract more women, but at least with

regard to viewing my channel, but and I

was told by women in the past, oh, women

are going to love your channel. But they

little did they know that my

[clears throat] whole point of view is

just sort of anathema to sort of the the

feminine point of view.

Anyways,

I'm moving on to Xenithoid's next

question, which is a followup of his

first one. So, we're not entirely off

thin ice yet. He says, "Why would evolution cause the sexes to understand the concept of honor differently?" Well, one reason for this is that just over the course of human existence going way back into the stone age, one of the main causes of death was intertribal warfare. that I mean I have read that one of the main causes of death for like stone age Europeans was intertribal warfare and when you had intertribal warfare what would often happen is the victorious tribe would just kill all the men and just enslave the women I mean that's you read the Old Testament Moses was in charge of this kind of stuff you

know it's like all right the women that have slept with a man all All the men get killed, all the boys, and then all the women that have slept with a man should be killed. But like the virgin girls you can keep as slaves, that kind of thing. I mean, that's right in the Old Testament. I think that would be in the book of Exodus.

So, I mean, this this has been going on for a long time. And so, women have to be more flexible than men. Women I [clears throat] mean, all of a sudden, they're prisoners of war. They're married to some conquering soldier now bearing his children. All of a sudden, she's got to speak a different language.

She has to conform to different cultural norms, worshiping different gods. So, women in that case have to be more flexible. Also, they're just not as physically strong or as aggressive as men. And so, they have survived largely through submission.

And so again, that would be conducive to sort of flexibility with regard to a lot of things, not being just rigidly adhering to principle, which would strengthen a man as like a fighter or like a a worthy warrior of the tribe, a brave or whatever. But [clears throat] it's just there was dimorphism just physical dimmorphism and and

psychological mental dimorphism in

humans. Males and females are just human

nature is different between males and

females much more so than in other

animals.

I mean other animals some animals are

way have way more sexual dimmorphism

than us.

angler fish for example

or like gorillas.

I mean the male might be like two or

three times as massive as the female.

It's real obvious difference there.

[clears throat]

[sighs]

But evolution would cause the sexes to

understand the concept of honor

differently largely through what I I
have said that um just since the stone
age
you know you've got intertribal warfare
as just a major factor in evolution
guiding evolution and forming human
nature that you know women had to be
more flexible with regard to adjusting
to changing cultures and so forth cuz
they might just get sold pulled off to
another tribe. You know, there might be
like a bride swapping or something or
they just get captured by another tribe
and all of a sudden they have to conform
to a very different culture speaking
different language, you know, different

taboos, different gods and all this. So
it just was more of a survival strategy,
more conducive to perpetuating their
genes for them to be way more flexible
with regard to like principles than men.
Also, women are tend to be more guided
by emotion than men are. I mean, that's
just a vague generalization, you know,
it's just like a matter of percentage
points, you know, gradations on a scale.
is not that women are completely
irrational, men are completely rational.
No, nobody is completely rational.
But it was just [clears throat] since
the stone age, probably since before
homo sapiens existed on this planet,
that women or females,

our female ancestors, just had to be
more flexible with regard to principles
and so forth than men as just a means of
surviving.
And I'm going to move on to Xenithoid's
third question,
which is how much of this do you think
is biological versus culture? Well, it's
definitely biological. I think it's just
built into human nature at this point.
So I think it's more biological than
cultural although it was cultural
cultural conditions you know going back
into the stone age that eventually
caused you know human nature to in a way
it was sort of evolving to you know keep

up with the culture I guess

[clears throat] you know it happened

over a very long period of time

so I mean there's there's a cultural

element And there's been a cultural

element from the beginning like the

intertribal warfare stuff. You know,

there's cultural elements and then

there's the cultural elements of just

the the female prisoners of war, for

example, or just young women that were

swapped for other young women with a

different tribe that have to conform to

the new tribe, that kind of thing. I

mean, there's cultural elements to that.

Um but still you know it does cause

genuine biological adaptation to occur

just like in Darwinian sexual selection it causes you know just sort of sexual preferences. You know it's like some species of bird the females through whatever reason just have a preference of red over blue. You know a male has more red and less blue. She's more likely to pick him. Whereas in a different species it might be blue over red. And it's just like this arbitrary maybe some weird mutation that occurs that causes the females of one species to like blue better than red and the other species likes red better than blue.

You know this

[clears throat] but I think it is largely biological at this point. Although the culture is kind of suited to humanity and [clears throat] it does kind of fit um just human nature to a large degree. I mean a culture cultural norms that don't really jive with human nature. I mean it's going to cause instability in the culture and it's going to have less survival value. Although, like I said, there's the cultural thing now of honor just sort of going out of fashion because the culture has been so feminized.

And I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Sedarta Loha. And Sedarta Lohachita [clears throat]

after my female viewership has gone from

2% to 1%.

Sedara Aloha says, "Do you think modern

psychology or psychiatry

is a joke?"

And to some degree, I mean, in a way,

psychology has been a pseudocience for

for most of its existence. I mean,

there's even pseudocience, let's say

alchemy

or astrology. Those are kind of two of

the the classic examples of pseudocience

that really existed

pretty much in the mainstream for

centuries.

And the alchemists, I mean, that was

protochemistry. I mean, there was some genuine chemistry, you know, the alchemists knew how to how to make sulfuric acid, for example, oil of vitriol, I think it was called. You know, they knew how to like refine like like elemental mercury out of ores, this kind of stuff or like medicine, preodern medicine, like Galen, this kind of stuff. I mean, they weren't really scientific, but still a lot of it was based on just knowing what works, seeing patterns. You know, I give them this kind of leaf to chew on and it relieves pain. And so, I mean, that's it just spreads. you know it works. I mean it's not completely scientific but there is a

certain amount of empiricism and objectivity involved um even in like preodern medicine or alchemy maybe less so in astrology

but but still so modern psychology yeah I think a lot of throughout most of the history of of psychology it has been more pseudocience than actual science like throughout most of the 20th century, you'd have some famous psychiatrist or psychologist, you know, Freud Young, Adler, there's lots of them, who would write their theories and it was almost more a matter of just eloquence, you know, just being convincing, persuasive that they knew

what they were talking about that would cause them to get followers. And then you'd have these schools of psychology or psychoanalysis or less to less degree psychiatry.

Um that

you know like like Freud I mean he's he's like the the towering giant of western psychology or psychoanalysis you know he might not be all that great now. He's sort of like Galileo of psych psychology in a in a in a way, but it's like the Edypus complex and all this. It just seems just more like just weird ideas that Freud believed in. And so he just conveys these weird theories with a voice of authority. And he's he's

largely right with regard to lots of other stuff. So people just accept it all and consider him to be some kind of oracle.

Then like in like the late 70s there started being like really like psychologists that were trying to turn psychology into a hard science. It was called cognitive science. You know they didn't even want to be bismerched by the word psychology in the name of their field of science where it was like real you know understanding you know like how the nervous system interacts with various forms of of behavior. what parts of the brain are responsible, you know,

what evolutionary processes could have resulted in this kind of this aspect of human nature and so forth. Um, and it was starting to really gain momentum like in the 1980s and then it became politically incorrect.

You know, it's like

uh human biodiversity,

you know, it's like you just cannot accept that men and women are not the same psychologically. You cannot accept that various ethnicities are not just identical. And so it just it just pretty much got persecuted or just ignored into obscurity.

So that's unfortunate. I assume there still is cognitive science going on.

It's just that they have to be more careful because academia where most of the psychological stuff is is being worked out seems to me is pretty much just under the the hobnail jack boot of the ideological left at this point. Psychiatry is more medical. I think you have to be a an MD. You have to go to medical school to be a psychiatrist, which would involve more of the like [clears throat] pharmaceuticals, like the pharmaceutical aspect, you know, what kind of medications to give somebody for for this mental syndrome, that kind of thing. Or in more

extreme cases, like like brain surgery,

that kind of thing.

Um, but [clears throat]

I mean also there's just the hackne

truism that all psychologists are nuts

with few exceptions. But it seems to me

that most psychologists and

psychiatrists are pretty nutty. It's

like they are studying psychology

largely as a way of getting a grip with

their own dis mental dysfunctions and

then they become kind of an an authority

on the subject and then uh start start

applying what they've learned toward

towards other other people and making

money from it.

[clears throat] But yeah, most modern

psychology

and like psychoanalysis

it it's still kind of a pseudocience

which means it's not entirely wrong just

like preodern medicine wasn't entirely

wrong and there's a lot of stuff they

didn't understand but still there were

doctors way back in ancient times and at

least they did some things right you

know or alchemy you know it wasn't

really the science of chemistry yet but

still they knew knew how to do stuff and

you know they did have considerable

knowledge and so forth. So yeah, I think

modern psychology uh just setting aside

the fringe of like genuine cognitive

science is mostly like alchemy and preodern medicine.

And then a lot of a lot of psychiatry nowadays is just prescribing pills.

You know, it's like you've got the these symptoms. Okay, take this pill and it'll inhibit those symptoms. And that's about as far as that goes, which is empirical at least, but I don't think it's the best way of going about things. I I used to know a psychiatrist who was one of the world's leading authorities on obsessivempulsive disorder, and he had to admit that sometimes pills like I think um what was it called? I don't remember what the pill was. you know, it was it was kind of an anti-depressive

that was popular back in the day. Um, it can be used as like training wheels, but you don't want to just become dependent on taking meds your entire life. And so, he was actually using Buddhist meditation techniques like Sati Patana as a way of curing people of obsessivempulsive disorder. You know, somebody's has this obsessive compulsion, I guess it would be more of a compulsion to just wash their hands over and over again, over and over again, you know, until their hands are just bleeding because they the just the soap and everything is just messing up their skin. And he would teach them

sadana is just, you know, you you note
the arising of the urge and, you know,
you just don't do not identify with it.
You know, it's not me, it's the OCD.
And then you kind of distract yourself
by doing something else. So long as you
have this intense urge to wash your
hands, you know, you observe it, you
note it, you remind yourself that it's
not you, it is a mental dysfunction that
you're trying to cure yourself of, and
then uh knit or or shoot baskets or
something until the urge goes away.
So, I mean, it's it's not entirely
foolish or bad or wrong. It's just that
it's not purely scientific at this
point, especially psychology as opposed

to psychiatry. I really don't know about psychoanalysis because I've never really delved very deeply into modern psychoanalysis.

Know something about Freud, but Freud was pretty nutty of a human being in my [snorts] opinion.

[cough and clears throat]

So, let's see. Did I answer the question? I guess I did well enough. I'm just going to move on to Sedara Lohachita's next question.

Let's see. He says, "Do you believe there is a retita as the Vadas?" He says, "The Vetas I think the Weren't the Vetas like a like a an oustoid tribe

living in Sri Lanka and southern India?"
[snorts] No, I think he means vadas
here. I'm just going to remove that D. I
don't think he's talking about the
Oustraloid tribe here. Okay,
so Sedarta Lohachita says, "Do you
believe
was it the Vetas? I think maybe it was
the Vetas. I don't know. I could just be
confused." Anyways, Sedarta Lohachita
says, "Do you believe Are we recording?"
Yeah. Yeah. Looks like we're recording.
Sedart lohachittita says, "Do you
believe that there is a retita ria as
the vadas say or as they said in
medieval Christianity a hierarchical
order inspired by God clearly adapted to

a Buddhist vision of no almighty God could be a good and bad karma in some degree hierarchical something like people with bad karma are less suited to knowledge or governance or servants. People with good karma are more suited to governance and spirituality. That's how Tibet worked.

Okay. Well, there is actually a word and I didn't look it up in poly. It's kind of an obscure word. It doesn't get mentioned very much, but it's sort of like like Vuna in the Rigveda was, you know, he was responsible. He was like the god of like cosmic order.

And there is a kind of cosmic order uh

in Buddhism, not so much scriptural Buddhism, but sort of commentarial sort of Buddhism. And I don't remember what the word is, but it is it's just like this cosmic order.

And Abidama is all about cosmic order. Abidama philosophy, you know, it's, you know, there's 17 mind moments to every moment of matter. And, you know, it starts this way. You got the the wiggling bunga and then it goes through all these different stages and you know it's 28 kinds of matter and 52 different mental states and all this. It's just locked in. That's just the way it is. They don't ever try to explain why there's, you know,

this many mental states or this many mind moments for every moment of matter. They don't say why that is. They just know that mind operates faster than matter does and leave it at that. And so it's kind of like science is it's an attempt at being empirical. You know, even science doesn't explain, you know, why it is that, you know, gravity is the way it is or like the charge of the electron is exactly such and such. You know, they don't they don't usually don't go so far as to say why, you know, it's like this, but it's just this is the way it is. We've we've observed it. This is the way it is.

So there's a lot of that in Buddhism. I mean with regard to ethics,
I mean ethics is just based on human psychology. Anything that takes you closer to enlightenment is good and anything takes you farther away from it is bad. And enlightenment isn't just some arbitrary state. You know, it's anything that increases attraction aversion and semic-conscious stupidity is is unskillful. Anything that decreases
attraction, aversion, and and uh unenlightened or semic-conscious stupidity is good.
Anything that increases desire is bad.
Anything that decreases desire is good

because it's getting you closer to ultimate reality, which is not just some abstract
pick, you know, it's just somebody decided, oh, it's enlightenment is is point A here. It doesn't work that way. So, I mean, it's Buddhist ethics and this Buddhist order is largely just empirical. Just observing the way things are and and just trying to explain it and explain this is the way things are. You know, it's not God. It's not some cosmic force even necessarily that's making it that way. It's just that's the way it is.
This example he gives at the end though

is I could kind of pick that pick at that a little bit. He says people with bad karma are less suited to knowledge or governance. Well, I mean the saintly people are not the best people to be governing a state.

I mean you want ruthless badasses who are patriotic and really are trying to help their country that are running the state. That's one that's another thing of like the feminized postmodern world, you know, especially kind of the the political left, you know, they think that the leaders should be these paragonss of virtue, whereas a paragon of virtue, I mean, he's just going to be nice. He'll be

nice to he'll forgive his enemies. He'll just, you know, like violent criminals will just be forgiven and and just turn loose back onto the streets. This is happening all the time in America now where you've got violent criminals who they've they've already been convicted of felonies like up in double digits mainly for violent crimes or other things like you know like drug drug dealing and so forth and they just get this little slap on the wrist or even the slap on the wrist might be seen as offensive and they just think oh poor baby just you know go and sin no more and then they they stab some Ukrainian

woman in the neck on a public transport report.

I mean, that guy, he he had been arrested so many times for violent crimes, they just keep letting him go. And that's that's like what the the gentle, forgiving, saintly, or at least, you know, sort of feminine uh governors, like leaders are are more inclined to do. It's weird. So, I mean, you want some ruthless, tough badass who nevertheless has honor and principles and is a patriotic servant of his country.

Probably the Roman Emperor Hanorius was a nicer person than say Trajan. But Trejan kicked ass and he led Rome to

glory. This the peak of their prosperity was under Trajan. At least the the maximum extent of the empire was under Trajan. Hanorius, he was married twice, probably died a virgin while Rome was being sacked by the Goths. He's like feeding ornamental chickens. This kind of stuff. He's maybe a really nice guy, but just totally worthless as as a leader.

So, let's see.

This let's actually try to answer the question now. Now that all that is like introductory

verbiage, see do you believe that there is a retita as or cosmic order as the

vadas say or as they say in medieval
Christianity a hierarchical order
inspired by God
[clears throat] clearly adapted to a
Buddhist vision of no almighty god. Well
obviously there is a kind of cosmic
order like in science laws of physics
are an attempt to describe cosmic order.
So Buddhism, you know, it observes this
kind of stuff and
teaches it to some degree,
but it's not some sort of divine
divine consciousness or divine force
that's holding everything together.
In a way it's sort of like in science
you have the big bang is just pure
blinding energy and then finally stuff

starts to coalesce in a way that is stable. If it's not stable it you know it just disappears. So it's just the energy of the the big bang or whatever it is just coaleses into some kind of stable pattern that can perpetuate. And that's pretty much what the universe has done from the Buddhist point of view.

Also, it seems to me, I mean, if you think that the universe is just generated by ignorance and delusion, then still there has to be a certain stability.

You know, it's there has to be something stable for anything to exist for more than a trillionth of a second. There has

to be continuity. And for whatever
reason, the universe, our version of it,
our samsara
has sort of like the right balance, the
middle path between like stability and
change, you know, just complete change
would just be chaos. Nothing staying
staying the same for more than a
trillionth of a second. Complete
stability would just be like frozen
death.
So you have to have like this middle
path. It's like dependent core rising.
Stability and change have to be in in
this balance and they mutually condition
each other.
Some stuff has to stay the same at least

enough that you recognize it as the same thing persisting over time. Well, at the same time, there has to be change every moment.

But in Buddhism, I think it's more empirical. It's not formulating any kind of divine force holding things together. It's just this is the way it is. Deal with it.

And it's based on observation like empirical observation. A lot of it. Not everything in Buddhism is necessarily empirical like you know pre-existing Buddhas going back zillions of years. You know that's mythology. That's legend. So there's a lot of that too.

But then you've got like in the Buddha wamsa you've got this template. Each Buddha has to follow the same pattern where he has to renounce the world in one of like a limited number of vehicles on a horse in a chariot on an elephant or in a flying palace like a weim mana a flying mansion.

You know, he's got to receive, he's got to practice austerities with other aesthetics for a certain period of time. He's got to accept milk rice from some virtuous female and then sit under a tree of enlightenment. He always, every Buddha going back zillions of years has become enlightened sitting under a tree. And it's I mean Buddhist like

mythologers,

mythologizers, you know, they want to try and kind of fit that into a stable pattern also. Although when when you get to that point, all you're doing is just kind of retconing previous mythological Buddhas in accordance with the pattern of our Godma Buddha.

So it's even the finding order in in you know patterns stable patterns and all that is some of it is just human nature just making [__] up.

[sighs]

Okay I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from practice meta and we're getting down

towards the bottom here. Well,
getting close to the bottom here.
Practice meta says,
"Do you believe journaling to be useful
in any way? For example, to help settle
the mind. It seems to be either
discouraged or outright banned during
meditation retreats." Yeah, it tends to
be discouraged or banned during
meditation retreats, just like talking
on the phone tends to be discouraged or
outright banned during meditation
retreats.
It's uh it's not meditative really. I
mean, first of all, you got to be
thinking in order to be writing. And at
a meditation retreat, you should be

keeping even thinking down to a minimum.

[snorts]

If it's a beginning meditation retreat,

you may still have to think quite a lot.

Even your meditation technique may

involve lots of thinking,

at least labeling.

But yeah, journaling. I I did a little

bit of journaling. I mean just keeping

like a diary.

Um I experimented with that as a monk.

Um but mainly in my case I was just

using it as a kind of time capsule. I

think that's probably from the Buddhist

point of view or the point of view of a

Buddhist renunciate that may be the best

reason for using a journal is a kind of time capsule in that you're you're putting down on paper like a portrait of your own mental life so that five years from now you can read that and see if you've made progress you know are you you know to what extent have I changed to what extent am I better to what extent maybe am I worse than then. That was the main reason why I was writing stuff down is just as a kind of time capsule so I could look back and see this is where I was then and how do I compare that with now?

Have I made progress? And if so, what? That kind of thing.

But I'm not sure exactly what other

benefit there would be in journaling. Um, from a like a monastic point of view. I mean, from [clears throat] a lay point of view, journaling can just help to hone your writing skills, that kind of thing. And I mean, some monks may need good writing skills. I mean, I did a lot of writing as a monk. Thomas Merton was a Christian monk who was just like addicted to just writing pretty much all day long. He wrote a lot you know he was just kind of compulsive writer I think but [clears throat] it's like being a good teacher is not really of primary importance to being a monk or at least

it shouldn't be. I mean some people are ordained as monks just because they want to be famous dharma teachers but seriously journaling writing in a diary it's lots of thinking and as a general rule it's lots of self view you know ego so

um I mean I experimented with it uh for a while few a couple years I've got maybe a couple years worth of journals maybe a little less than two years of journals. Um, I had one, the long one, like the my main experiment with journaling, I had that published on my old website. I don't think it's on my new website, and that should be rectified. Um, there's some people say

that of all the things that I've written, that was really their their favorite thing that I'd ever written was this journal that I kept while living under a rock ledge in Alando Kazapa National Park. just talking about my challenges and struggles, the occasional success of being a an aesthetic monk, just living out in a forest with no roof over my head for almost a year.

But I have to admit, at certain times of year, my journal consisted largely of just bitching and moaning over just not being able to stop sweating or be comfortable for any length of time. It was awful.

So yeah, the main purpose of journaling for from a monk, a monastic point of view, is just kind of to take a snapshot of where you are at like spiritually at that time so that you can refer to it later and and kind of see if you're making progress, see if you know you've improved or gotten worse or that kind of thing. But with regard to a lay person journaling, um I mean you can use it for that reason still, but there may be other reasons like just like being able to organize your thoughts better, you know, becoming a better writer, being able to express yourself more skillfully, that sort of thing. Um it can be useful for that also.

Or it can also be used as incriminating evidence against you if you ever commit a crime.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Cyrus Frame. One of the few people to ask questions on Rumble.

And he says, "This is kind of an interesting one. It's kind of a long question, though. It's one of those questions that's kind of like a a little essay with thoughts at the end, [clears throat] but it's still kind of interesting. here. Cyrus Frame says, "It seems to me that the [__] I asked about last week, that was the last question of

the previous Q&A, but I interrupt myself and I'll start again." Cyrus Frame says, "It seems to me that the [__] I asked you about last week, the man up a tree is pertinent for what you do in this channel. Bodhi Dharma came from the west to teach the dharma. The man in the tree is part of that tradition of teaching the dharma, as are you." However, some of the questions people ask you, particularly concerning what there is after nibbuta or the thoughts of enlightened people, I think you sometimes get frustrated with answering because, as you say, that is off the scale. Any description, therefore, is not really going to cut it. If you stay

silent or not answer the question in a way that is a truer representation, or at least it is not being forced to speak in metaphors. On the other hand, by staying silent, you are perhaps failing to communicate the dharma. It would also be a strange video if you just sat there in silence. Clinging to the tree by his teeth represents silence as he cannot speak. Letting go to speak means falling into a kind of misrepresentation.

So I think the [__] is about the paradox or dilemma of how do you express or communicate the inexpressable. For what it's worth, this is how I would answer the question right now. I would say I

don't know what I would do as it is a hypothetical situation and so anything I say would be a view. Also, it is similar to the song K Sarah by Doris Day. What will be will be. The future is not ours to see. Only instead of the situation being in the future, it is a hypothetical reality. So how could I know what I would do in that? There is only what you do in the real reality and even that is always unknown before it happens. What do you think? Well, that's a that is a good insight that comparing the [__] to you know uh a teacher or a monk trying to
put into words what you really cannot put into words. trying to teach reality

when reality cannot be expressed

symbolically in language.

So yeah, that's that's a good insight.

That's I can appreciate that. I mean,

still it's the [__] is is this riddle

that has no correct answer. And so just

practically by definition, a [__] is a

riddle that has no correct answer. And

you are required to answer it correctly.

And [clears throat]

one person's correct answer may be very

different than another person's correct

answer. I mean, they may be opposites

because it's not the words coming out so

much as the mental states, you know,

like like I said before, I think what in

the previous Q&A, the correct answer may be just uh you know, the Roshi asks you the the unanswerable riddle and you just say, "Good morning, Roshi." And that may be that may be good enough depending on your mental states, which the Roshi will have to like feel into, I guess. intuitively.

So yeah, but with regard to asking a question, what would you do under such and such circumstances? It's really it's it's a common

in a way it's it's almost like a trick. Like I remember a long time ago back in the 80s back when George, what's his name? George Dukakus was running for president and he was a Democrat. I

actually voted for him. I voted Democrat in those days. I [clears throat] can't remember who he was running against. Maybe George Bush the first. Yeah, I don't remember now. But anyways, he was seen as kind of cold and unfeilling. You know, he's kind of out of touch. You know, not really a heart oriented person. And so some reporter who's, you know, trying to ask a gotcha sort of question, which, you know, they've been doing for a long time. Hasn't been invented just for Donald Trump. He asks him, "What would happen if your wife got, you know,

like abused or assaulted or something
and he just kind of was like a deer in
the headlights. He really didn't know
how to answer the question if I remember
correctly." And that was seen as look,
he really is just cold and unfeilling
and but I mean being fair to him,
I mean, you can't really know in advance
what you're going to do. So I mean I've
[clears throat] recently I had a an
interview where someone was asking me
you know what would you do under such
and such circumstances and honestly I
mean sometimes you just have to say well
I mean it's going to depend on all sorts
of things you just you have to act
spontaneously in the flow and so what

you do is going to depend on you know who who you're interacting with and and like where and how and why and all this and of course that's not the the kind of answer that people want. they want like a a yes or no kind of kind of answer. So yeah, I mean you can't [clears throat] really answer a question like that um accurately with certainty in a lot of cases. I mean it's if you're in a crisis situation, how would you how would you act in a crisis situation? You can't really know until you're in a crisis situation. You know, you're not just going to be using your ordinary thinking mind to decide what to do in a

crisis situation.

You know, somebody assaults your woman while you are there, then you know what exactly are you going to do? I mean, in all likelihood, you just kind of charge the guy and punch him in the face or whatever, but I mean, you can't know for sure exactly how you're going to respond.

You know, you could just grab a lamp and and bash him with that or something. I mean, who knows?

[sighs]

But let's not talk about bashing people with lamps.

Let's see. Yeah, I think that Cyrus frame may be correct in his uh

interpretation of the coan as as a kind of metaphor
for like a Zen teacher especially who's trying to convey what cannot be expressed. You know, I mean, you either have to remain silent or you just sort of babble and hope that the babbling is skillful enough means that it helps the other person. even though you'd probably be more correct just to remain silent. And some Zen masters actually did remain silent. There's one Zen master, I think he's mentioned in Zen Flesh, Zen Bones, who would just he carried a flute around with him and if he was asked a question about Buddhism, he would just take the

flute out and blow one note on it and put the flute back in. Or there was another uh there was another Zen master who when asked a question about about Zen, he would just lift one finger. It's like Goute I think it was his name Goute where I think there [clears throat] I I vaguely remember the story about um there was this Zen master this teacher this Roshi who when asked questions about Buddhism would raise one finger and then there was one of the noviceses one of the like the kid monks started doing the same thing. one of his teachers would ask him a question, he would just raise one finger. And so Goute hears about this and he calls this

young novice

to him and and asks him a question about Buddhism. The little kid raises one finger. Goute just grabs the kid and just chops his finger off and then he says, "Now [clears throat]

how do you and then supposedly according to the legend, according to the story, the kid became enlightened." So, I guess that justifies cutting his finger off. So, yeah. I mean, it's still it's still the unanswerable question. What do you do? I mean, you you have the duty to answer the question, which causes you to fall out of the tree and and die, but still,

I mean, you do the best you can.

And uh I think I'm just going to move on

to the next question. This is from

Trzasquez is

and Trzasquez is says, "Could you

explain in brief the Jane religion

mainly about the afterlife options?"

Well, I mean the afterlife options of

Janism are pretty similar to Buddhism

and and like Hinduism. I mean they

believed in rebirth or reincarnation and

you know there's all these different

realms. So in that case and it wasn't

that different from Buddhism or

Hinduism. It's just that um the Jane

religion apparently was based more on

like uh a spiritual system going back to

the Indis Valley civilization that was kind of pessimistic. You know it's like the world is a bad place that you should try to free yourself from.

And you know they believed in karma which to the James was almost like a physical substance that you could unlike in Buddhism where karma was purely psychological in Janism there was also a physical component where even if you stepped on a bug accidentally you were still making bad karma. So that's why the Jane monks, a lot of them will have like these soft grass brooms where they sweep the path in front of them so that they won't step on any ants even

accidentally. And they'll wear like the the face mask thing just so they won't breathe in any flying insects accidentally because even if you do it accidentally from from the Janus point of view, it's still bad karma.

So um a lot of the the assumptions of Janism are similar to the assumptions of Buddhism and um Hinduism or protohinduism.

Um but they did consider there is a soul or a ja. I've mentioned this I think it was in the previous Q&A. You've got this soul called the jva that has karma sticking to it and weighing it down. So what the genes were supposed to do is just burn off their karma. It's very

simple philosophy. You've got this karma and you have to just get rid of it without making new karma. So they were like lawful neutral going with dungeons and dragons. You know, they they weren't going to make any karma. You know, they wouldn't accept alms from a place where there's a hungry dog or lots of buzzing flies because they might deprive the dog or the flies of a meal if somebody [clears throat] gives them food instead of just throwing it out in the street. So the Janes, they [clears throat] had more of a mechanistic view of things, maybe a little more archaic understanding of things than the

Buddhists and the some of the like the

Upanotic teachers

um like Vdanta.

But I mean with regard to the the realms

of samsara and everything, it was fairly

similar. It's just that you have a jva.

You have this soul and your karma sticks

to it and weighs it down. And so you

have to burn off the karma through self-

torture even sometimes. You know, you

just get rid of the karma. Don't make

any new karma until finally you're free

of all karma and then your ja just wafts

up into some eternal heaven.

I mean it's it's fairly simple very

straightforward

more so than [clears throat] Buddhism or

vdanta

and that's that's pretty much it. I mean the the lengths that they would go to to avoid making new karma and I mean they would torture themselves and which was I mean it it was sort of like a passive kind of torture like I mentioned before that just remaining squatting remaining in a squatting position was a common tortured technique that James would inflict upon themselves and if you don't think that just squatting in one place can be torture just squat in one place for an hour straight just try to watch Watch an entire movie while squatting on the floor in front of the TV set and

you're going to find that you're it

hurts. It is painful.

And then apparently the Janes when

[clears throat] they figure that they

had burned off all their karma. I mean

they would selfdelete

before you know they might accidentally

mess up and start making more karma and

then die in a state where they've got

karma that's going to be weighing down

their ja. They figure once they're

they're free of karma that they

selfdelete. And the way they would do it

is they just walk off into like some

desolate area and then just squat down

and just remain in a squatting position,

not drinking or eating until they were

dead. I assume it'd be like kidney failure from dehydration that would get them first.

But it's kind of a strange religion. And they did believe that fire was like a living being. Um they weren't allowed to drink cold water, but they weren't allowed to build a fire to cook their water. And so they mainly survived on drinking the water that was drained from boiling rice. You know, they'd walk around in the morning and they'd be a lot of them would be naked. They wouldn't own anything. And so they just beg. They wouldn't have a begging bowl. They just cup their hands like this. And

apparently the nice ladies would save their their rice water and um pour it into their hands or something. Let them drink from the the the pot or something. And uh I I would assume they got a lot of their calories just from this water that had had boiled rice in it because some of them were were aesthetic to the point they would eat. I mean, if if you can believe the Buddhist texts, then some of the extremists would eat once every two weeks, which yeah, that's that's kind of hard to believe, but even eating just once every three days, I mean, one meal a day, every or one meal every three days plus drained off rice water, you know, they're pretty pretty

skinny. I would guess that a lot of those Jane monks were in advanced state of emaciation. And I used to wonder how how these malnourished Jane monks would survive the wintertime because a lot of them were naked. They were skycladara janes would just be naked. They would own nothing. No clothes, no begging bowl, nothing.

So it turns out that in the winter time and it gets down to about freezing in the Ganges Valley, at least it did in the Buddhist time during the the winter time, that they would just smear themselves with mud and then that would be their insulation that would keep them

from dying of hypothermia.
Of course, the mud would probably be
crawling with little microscopic
creatures and worms and so forth, but um
I guess you have to kind of
kind of have to be flexible with regard
to certain things.
But yeah, the Jane religion was
apparently like a relic of prevadic
religion that may have had its origins
in the the Indis Valley civilization.
The shamana tradition which also
produced the Ajivacas which are now
extinct. It's a spiritual movement that
was common in the Buddhist time. There
are more Ajivacas than Buddhists you
know in the early times of Buddhism. And

it also um it gave rise to sananka which was another one of these atheistic kind of pessimistic you know believing in a kind of a mechanistic idea of karma and you need to purify yourself to escape from from this world of this samsaric world and this kind of thing and sanka eventually um at least one branch of it got incorporated in Hinduism as yoga and Buddhism also has roots boots there. Although the Buddha himself was arguably a philosophical genius in addition to being fully enlightened and he he kind of adjusted certain things like karma is a mental state not just this mechanistic phenomenon of the

universe that kind of thing. And he apparently um he refined an idea of dependent core rising which was so refined that almost nobody including most Buddhists can understand it.

But I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ethiopian fake TIG

and uh he's our last questioner of the evening by golly. He asked three questions though. So Ethiopian fake TIG's first question is what are some signs that someone is progressing in their practice after they become ordained [clears throat] as a monk?

Is that signs for out outward observers or is that signs for the monk himself?

Ethiopian fake TIG does not specify. But if one is progressing in their practice, they're going to be like serene. They may have like this glow of serenity and contentment. You know, they're they're enthusiastic about their practice. They're enthusiastic about being a monk. They they they look forward to meditating. This kind of thing is there are signs that one is progressing. But I mean that's not the only kind of signs that one is progressing. I mean it may be that there's a lot of friction and like aversion and stuff arising which is is just stuff that has to burn itself out. It's just, [clears throat] you

know, you've got all these habits that you you established as a lay person that they're not fitting the monk's life very well. And so I mean there's going to be some bumpy roads, some choppy seas, you know, so to speak, that I mean, you can still be progressing even though it's not really obvious because the monk may be going through like internal upheavalss

just, you know, trying to reprogram himself from being a worldly-minded lay person into being some spiritual renuncient.

But if [clears throat] if they are progressing, they should be, you know, more content, more serene, less

talkative.

Um,

you know, just less less excitable, you know, less less like emotionally worked up over things. Or if they are emotionally worked up over everything, it should be like like faith and gratitude and enthusiasm for practice, that kind of thing.

>> [sighs]

>> But I mean it's it's hard to say for an outside observer and sometimes it's hard to say for even for oneself to what extent one is is progressing because sometimes it may seem like your mind is just rebelling against dharma.

But I mean that may be a kind of you're just having to work your way through this this wilderness. You know it's like the the dark knight of the soul that St. John of the Cross was talking about. I mean according to St. John of the Cross, this dark night of the soul, this this bleak dryness with no consolation is just a prerequisite for the next stage which is a very exalted spiritual state. So there's not always obvious signs that one is progressing. They may one may be having you know meltdowns and crises that are just kind of burning this burning defilements and so that you can make progress to the next stage. Or the crisis might be the the sort of crisis

that just slams you into the next stage.
And in some cases it may be just
necessary for you to go through that.
And so you may seem like a basket case
to yourself and others while not
realizing just how close you are to
reaching like the next stage which may
be the relatively exalted stage in your
progress your spiritual progress.
So just because
um someone isn't showing just I mean
they're not just like glowing with
spiritual light, you know, just serene
and equinimous and all that. I mean that
doesn't if they're not showing those
signs, it doesn't mean they're not

making progress. They're just making a different kind of progress.

But I mean, if they're happier after they become a monk, that's a good sign that they're making progress.

You if they just, you know, they were happy before they became a monk and then they're miserable while they're a monk. They're they're still going to be making some kind of progress, I suppose. But I mean, it's it's not a very good sign, it seems to me.

And I'm just going to move on to Ethiopian fake Tig's next question and uh take the last drink of cold coffee like that. Open the emergency backup beverage like this. Take a drink of that

so that they can mix in my digestive system.

[sighs and gasps]

And then I'm going to answer Ethiopian fake tig's second question which is as follows. After his enlightenment, how come the Buddha didn't go back for his son to perhaps guide him and help him as a father? Well, actually he did. His son was named Rahula according to tradition. And it was a few years.

If if uh Rahula was a baby when the Buddha renounced the world, then I think he was like seven or something like that when [clears throat] the Buddha finally did go back to his hometown of

Capilawatu after he'd kind of
established Buddhism, set up the SA and
everything and he felt the time was ripe
to go back to Capilawatu
and he went back there and you know met
his father and met his I guess still his
wife,
although of course they were separated.
And I think it was his wife that
demanded
that little Rahula should have his
inheritance because he's like a royal
prince or something. But the Buddha, who
was inclined to reinterpret
traditionally understood terms, said,
"Yeah, I'll give him his in inherit in
inheritance. You know, he'll get his his

[clears throat] what's the word? his legacy and then the Buddha ordained him. So he ordained Rahula and then Rahula eventually became enlightened. So it's hard to say that the Buddha did anything wrong by abandoning his child and then staying gone for years because the way he he did it. I mean still his son wound up becoming a fully enlightened Arahant anyway. So I mean anything that results in somebody becoming a fully ordained arroant can't be all bad seems to me. So he did guide him and help him as a father. And there are at least two Rahula sutas in the texts one of which is in the sutin pa which is very nice

suta by the way.

[snorts]

[cough and clears throat]

So, I answered that one. And so, I'm moving on to Ethiopian fake TIG's last question, which is the last question of this Q&A. And he says, "Can you tell me the story you told on how you think the Buddha would look like if someone was to time travel back in time to be in his SA? Perhaps add some more details since I like the picture you painted last time." Well, I did mention in a previous Q&A that when I was a monk, I had sort of cooked up this little science fiction story about these people who are going to go back in time in a time machine and

visit the Buddha. And you've got the the smug scholar, you know, the he's like president of the Polytech Society, written all kinds of learned books on the subject. You've got the Burmese seat, the fundamentalist religious Buddhist. Then you've got sort of like the the the Western liberal kind of Buddhist. You know, this this woman who wrote who got famous for writing books like, you know, liberating the the Buddha from within, you know, these kind of newagy self-help books with a Buddhist theme, that kind of thing. And then you have to have like the technician who's just running the

machine. And of course the the woman who wrote you know liberating the the [laughter] you know freeing the Buddha within you this kind of thing she just has like this sudden crisis that prevents her from going back you know and the implication in the story would be it's just so some sort of like um subconscious fear is just causing her to just have psychosmatic symptoms or or whatever panic attacks or something that just she's she's not going to face the Buddha because she knows she's, you know, not or at least she considers herself deep down to be unworthy or some such. Then, you know, they so they go back in the time machine, the the smug

scholar, the the seat and the technician, they they go back to the Ganges Valley and they ask around it. And one of the first humiliations for the Seattle is nobody can understand his poly. So the the scholar who's like uh an authority on Indic languages, procrits, this kind of stuff, he's able to communicate well enough that they get instructions on where the Buddha is. So they go to where the Buddha is supposed to be and there's just like this skinny guy wearing rags.

Probably doesn't smell very good. He's got maybe like a fly crawling on the side of his head. He's scruffy looking.

Doesn't have the lump on top of his head. He's got, you know, like a week's growth of stubble all over his face and head. Just sitting there serenely with, you know, other people who look kind of similar. You know, they're all dressed in dirty rags. You know, well, at least maybe a few of them had washed their rags recently, but you know, they're skinny. They're not very clean, scruffy looking. They're not the exalted noble beings that you see in the Buddhist art, you know. They're just they look they don't look very impressive, at least from a superficial point of view. Even though I mean you you gaze upon them with a little bit of sensitivity, you'd

see that they're just like glowing with serenity. This kind of thing, you know, very peaceful, very calm, you know, just sitting like statues. if they're sitting in meditation.

But yeah, I mean the Buddha himself presuming that the the legends have some truth to them, he'd probably be taller than the average person, probably skinny, probably scruffy looking, wearing rags. I mean, it was against the rules for a monk to bathe more than twice a month.

So unless it was a certain time of year like the end of the hot season or the beginning of the rainy season, there's a

good chance that, you know, he may have
gone a week or more without bathing,
just wearing kind of brownish colored,
you know, robes that were sewn together
pretty sloppily because they didn't
have, you know, good thread or anything
in those days. And you know, maybe the
fly, maybe more than one fly crawling on
it,
but I mean, he'd probably have a noble
bearing. He'd he'd be Caucasian probably
whether if not Indo-arian than at least
Indo-Iranian
because you know there's there's a
possibility that you know his ancestors
and like the the Sakya tribe you know
Sakya and Cyian and Saka all sound

similar. So there is a possibility that

he was more closely related genetically

at least with regard to the male line of

his ancestry to some Indo-Iranian

[clears throat]

you know more or less cyian tribe that

you know settled in India along with the

the Indo the Indo um Arians

but I mean they look pretty much the

same. I mean, he'd be like relatively

caucasian features, you know, kind of a

long longish straightish nose, high

forehead, not very dark skin, possibly

blue eyes. At least tradition says he

had abil,

which is like intensely blue eyes.

Probably black hair, which would be like

stubble.

>> [sighs]

>> So,

I mean, that's pretty much what he

looked like, I guess. I mean, that would

be like an educated guess as to what the

Buddha looked like.

If he stood up, he'd be taller than most

people, at least taller than most people

in those days.

might not be taller than the average

modern Dutch person,

but [clears throat] still tall, skinny,

more or less like Indo-Uropean or like

Iranian looking,

not very clean. Probably no lump on top

of the head. Probably no spiral here, you know, probably no webbed fingers and toes, you know, like the 32 marks of the the the great being. Probably he wouldn't have very very many of them. I mean, he look like a an ordinary aesthetic in ancient India of like the upper classes. So he'd look more European than you know the lower classes would look who are mainly of like Aboriginal ancestry, Aboriginal Indians, you know, Dravidian types.
I mean I mean it doesn't really matter what he looked like, but I guess it's if you're going to rever somebody, it's good to kind of have some idea in your

mind of roughly what he might look like.

You know, it helps to focus your your

devotion or gratitude or your

concentration of some sort onto such a

being. You know, that's why they have

statues.

Statues and other images.

But let's see. Did I answer the

question?

See, can you tell me the story you told?

Yeah, I already Oh, yeah. might as well

finish the story where [clears throat]

the uh the the Burmese seat when he sees

this kind of scrunchy not extremely

clean looking person who doesn't have

the all the marks and the lump on his

head and everything he just can't

believe that's the Buddha. He just thinks this is ridiculous and he just stomps off, you know, refuses to even meet him.

Then the the smug scholar goes up and he's just sort of asking questions that he pretty much already knows the answers to as a way of just kind of showing off how knowledgeable he is, which the Buddha sees through immediately, you know, and then the the the scholar just kind of smuggly and politely, you know, he's he's Oxbridge educated, so he's very polite, but still he he smuggly excuses himself because he also wants to go meet Macau Gosa and and you know he's

on a limited schedule. So he takes off, you know, just smuggly smiling, you know, that was very satisfying. I got to got to meet the Buddha. So that's that's definitely going to help my career, that kind of thing. And then finally, when they're ready to go back into the future,

the the humble technician, you know, who who hasn't been talking much, just been taking orders, you know, doing his job, they can't find him. So finally they go back to the Buddha and there's the the the technician who is just like on his knees or on his face, you know, in front of the Buddha just, you know, he he's refusing to leave. He's he's finally

gotten to the presence of the Buddha.
I mean, there's there's no indication of what his spiritual beliefs were previously, but it's just the the implication of the story would be, and I'm I'm not skillful enough at writing fiction to write this story, but that, you know, he was sensitive in a way that the the other people weren't. And he was just could feel this this spiritual profoundity
there sufficiently that he was like, "This is it. This is this is the real deal. I'm staying.
And that was the end of the story, the end.

And that's it. That's the end of the uh the Q&A also. And uh [cough] like I should always [clears throat] say at the beginning and pretty much never do. If you have any questions you think I can answer, especially with regard to Terravada Buddhism, early Buddhism, Buddhism in general, Indian philosophy in general, spirituality, dharma in general, meditation, what it's like to be in Burma, that kind of stuff that you think I can answer, then uh feel free to ask no more than three questions per person, please. My fourth book is still going to be coming out soon inshallah. I still have to get some of the artwork finished, but that's

that's really the only thing holding me
up at this point. That's the bottleneck
at present. And uh what else was I going
to say? I
was going [clears throat] to be
something really important, too. Like
and subscribe if you haven't already.
That wasn't the important thing I was
going to say, though. And now I'm
probably not even going to remember it.
Damn.
>> [clears throat and cough]
>> Anyways,
I guess I've said everything that really
needs to be said except for the final
thing that I always say, which is be

happy.

Alrighty then. Or if you prefer, okay then.

Hello and welcome to Question Answer episode number 183. I am your host Pony Bosa and I'm sitting here on a gray, dark, overcast, rainy day in upstate South Carolina.

This is my beverage.

and

183 although odd is not prime because it is 3 * 61h

[groaning]

and that is a kind of pointless preamble.

Suppose we should just get right into answering questions here and there's not

a whole heck of a lot. I think some of the viewers are hibernating over the winter or something.

And it's a little unfortunate that the very first question is kind of diving into profundity right off the bat. I like to have a few easy questions or kind of superficial ones so that I can build up some momentum before I get into like the really like deep philosophical stuff. But it's not going to happen this time. Dharma River says, "Why do Buddhas teach the Dharma after reaching enlightenment?" And that is essentially the question. But then he's got a couple paragraphs here

[clears throat] of kind of uh commentary

which uh may amount to a second question. We'll have to we'll have to look into this. He continues, "If we were truly completely empty, then there would be no point in teaching anything and Buddhas would simply remain quiet and peaceful until the body passes away." This proves that duality is real to some extent. However, it doesn't disprove anata either. What it proves is that we are trapped and deluded by a simulation that the Buddhas are trying to wake us up from. What's your opinion on this?

Well, I guess I should just go up to the first question, the the question mark,

the first question mark. Technically, there are two question marks. One question mark and then another question mark. So, we'll deal with the first question mark first, which is why do Buddhists teach the dharma after reaching enlightenment? And I have to admit like the official reason that you see in the poly texts is not persuasive to me because it's compassion you know ana anu [snorts] which is I mean literally it means like trembling after you know a sort of like being concerned for the welfare of others not wanting them to be in danger and so forth but like a fully

enlightened being he would see through
samsara realize that all these beings
are ultimately illusory
virtual reality.
And so yeah, I that really has never
been a persuasive answer for me.
So I mean one I [clears throat] mean
where where do I start on this? I mean
one thing one way of answering this why
do Buddhists teach the dharma after
reaching enignment? It's very similar to
one of the most common Zen coons. you
know, one of these paradoxical riddles
that has no answer. And that is why did
bodhi Dharma come from the west, you
know, to to China in order to teach

Buddhism there? I mean, why did he do that? And that is like a co-an has no real legit correct answer.

But also I'm reminded [clears throat] of a statement that I've repeated on these Q&As's a number of times. A statement made by Rahm Das with regard to his guru Nim Karoli Baba also known as Maharaji who is up there on top of the bookcase. At least his picture is I mean he's not really up there unless he's everywhere of course. So anyways, Ramda said that the more you got to know him, the more you realized that there was really nobody there. That he was just a mirror like reflecting your own karma back at you. And that's one way of interpreting

why Buddhists teach. They are just there's really nobody there. It's just a mirror reflecting your own karma back at you. And people that had a lot of good karma, a lot of spiritual, you know, leading up to enlightenment kind of karma. I mean, they wouldn't have a lot of opportunities for that to be reflected back at them until they perceive that there's an enlightened being who is more likely, partly due to their own beliefs, their own faith maybe, to reflect that kind of karma back at them.

But it's it's like your own karma to hear what a spiritual teacher has to say

to you. So it's really the fruition of your own karma to have a Buddha teaching you dharma. I mean what he's teaching you is already kind of latent in potential form already inside you in a sense.

So that would be my best answer for why a fully enlightened being who makes no karma has no vition

or at least no samsaric volition, no cheetah, not no will. Why they would bother to teach dhamma because it's just a reflection of your own good karma coming back at you. Maybe a little bit of bad karma coming back at you too. for example, if an enlightened being scolds you for some reason, hits you with a

stick or something.

So, anyways, let's just go on to uh the subsequent two paragraphs here. If we were truly empty, then there would be no point in teaching anything and Buddhists would simply remain quiet and peaceful until the body passes away. Well, I mean, Buddhists do remain quiet and peaceful. Inwardly, they are quiet and peaceful. You know, it's again like the old Zen saying that [clears throat] the uh the the meditation hall can be resounding with the shouts of the master and blows from his stick can be falling like rain but still the master is dwelling in silence and stillness

inwardly.

So let's see here then the next statement is this proves that duality is real to some extent. I mean yeah from a samsaric point of view it's virtually real or conditionally real within the context of samsara that I mean duality is samsara I mean that's what I mean samsara is based on duality or just perception and perception requires contrast and contrast is duality.

You can't just [clears throat] have something completely in isolation. You have to have something to compare it with or contrast it with something for it to be different from and that's

duality.

Okay. So anyways, let's see. He continues here. However, it doesn't disprove or no self either. What it proves is that we are trapped and deluded by a simulation that the Buddhas are trying to wake us up from. What's your opinion on this? Well, the Buddhas I mean for them to be trying I mean subjectively all bets are off because you can't really say what's going on with an enlightened being subjectively. I mean it could just be silence and stillness in which case all the stuff that they're doing like I was saying is just a mirror reflecting your own karma

back at you with really nobody being

there anymore.

So that would be my answer. It's It's

not so different from my first answer.

And I think I'm just going to move on to

the next question here

which is also from Dama River. I just

arrived in Sri Lanka today. This was

days ago. So he's he's in Sri Lanka.

Okay, I'll just start over. I just

arrived in Sri Lanka today and I'm

headed right now to a forest monastery

where I will stay for a few months. with

your knowledge of Sri Lankan terraodan

Buddhist tradition. Do you have any

words of advice

so that I can maximize the benefits of

my stay here and maybe things I should watch out for? Thank you. Okay. Well, I mean Sri Lanka,

I really don't know a whole heck of a lot about the Sri Lankan terraotta forest tradition other than what I have read in a few books. And excuse me, I'm taking a drink in my beverage here.

So, um I've met a few western monks who spent time in Sri Lanka, presumably in the forest tradition.

Um

my understanding is that Buddhism in Sri Lanka for the most part is very corrupt. I mean, it's rare to find a monk who follows the rules of monastic

discipline, for example. You know,
you'll see in Sri Lanka more than
anywhere else [clears throat] in terara
Buddhist Asia like monks with jobs
carrying briefcases,
you know, driving to work, that kind of
stuff.
So I mean, [clears throat]
excuse me, [cough]
my first advice would be just, I mean,
if you are going to Sri Lanka to be in a
forest tradition, make sure that you're
in one of these kind of newish forest
traditions that are like reform
movements where they really are trying
to practice dharma correctly, including
rules of monastic discipline for monks,

you know, not handling money, for

example, not eating food in the

afternoon,

that kind of stuff

and uh I guess there is like a reform

movement in Sri Lanka where there are

monks there now in the forests who are

taking Dhamma very seriously. So I hope

Dhamma River is with is it one of these

kinds of monasteries than

[clears throat] the the usual kind of

monastery in Sri Lanka.

Um,

I guess aside from that, um, the main

advice I would give is like in Burma,

like if if someone was going to come to

Burma, my first advice to them would be be very patient because nothing's going to work right. The buses aren't going to run on time. The electricity is going to go off and on at random. The air conditioning might not work even at the hotel, this kind of stuff. So, you just have to be very patient. just be willing to accept just about anything and then just do your best. You know, it's like if it's uncomfortable, hot and sweaty and mosquitoy and that kind of stuff. Well, I mean that's part of the practice. I mean, I think for really like archaic Buddhist monks, you know, the earliest Buddhist monks just wandering around homeless, being bitten

by mosquitoes that they weren't allowed to slap and just sweating all the time and just [clears throat] the discomfort and inconvenience of it all was a major part of their practice. Just being able to accept that to be kind of at one with all that is one of the most important aspects of Buddhist practice in my opinion. And that's one reason why Buddhist monks nowadays probably don't make nearly the sort of spiritual progress that the earliest Buddhist monks had. I mean the earliest Buddhist modes had the advantage of you know the Buddha was either there or still in memory and you know there was still a

lot of enthusiasm and like momentum
going whereas now it's just the momentum
of tradition largely
but still it's monks nowadays are mostly
living in relatively comfortable
monasteries and they know where their
next meal is coming from. They know
where they're going to sleep that night
and everything is relatively easy. And
in the West, it can be even easier.
I mean, just living at the the standard
of living of an early Buddhist monk is
is downright illegal in the United
States, unless you're a homeless person,
in which case laws don't apply to you.
So, I mean, maybe you could work
something out that way. Try to get

yourself qualified as a I guess homeless
is now considered politically incorrect.
So, it's like, what is it? houseless,
unhoused.
But I'm deviating from the question
here. I'm digressing.
[clears throat]
Yeah, just I mean be very patient.
Remember that any kind of difficulty is
just part of the practice. That's just
something that's being tossed at you so
that you can accept it with equinimity.
Even if it's something that has to be
fixed, you know, some you got visa
problems or something still, I mean, you
don't just say, "Well, I just have to

accept that, you know, my visa is expiring or I have to accept that I'm sick or whatever." I mean, you still have to take actions intelligently, prudently,

but still, I mean, it's while you're sick, you just you accept the feeling. You observe the feelings with mindfulness. you know, you you've got, you know, Monizuma's revenge or the the the Sinhali equivalent of Monzuma's revenge.

It it there's a good chance it's going to happen. Well, that's just part of your practice. You know, the heat, the sweat, the mosquitoes,

the the weird food maybe, it's all just

part of the practice. And just learning
how to deal with that with some
mindfulness and equinimity is possibly
more important than sitting cross-legged
with your eyes closed meditating.
But good luck in your or good karma,
good kama
and uh sadu sadu sadu for toughing it
out in in a forest in Sri Lanka for the
purpose of
spiritual progress realization.
So I'm [clears throat] just going to
move on to the next question here. This
is from Tzasqueziz.
And Tzasquez is says, "I am sorry for a
personal question if it will in fact

turn out to be a personal question." And then he says, "Were you ever sewer slid?"

Not supposed to say certain words on YouTube because it dings some AI filter and like demotes you in the algorithm if it doesn't just get you suspended or the the the video taken down outright.

So, was I ever inclined towards selfdeion is the question. And I mean obviously I was never fully persuaded with regard to that cuz here I am. At least it seems like I'm here.

So yeah, I was never 100% inclined on selfdeleted.

Although I mean for a long time I mean

it was always kind of an option. you know it's it's always on the list of options. If things just get too horrible then you know that is kind of an option or at least that is the way I was thinking as a monk you know um you know you get some sort of terminal condition that you know is just going to get worse and worse and it's very painful and so forth then I could understand how selfdeletion could be a wise and conscious choice I mean to selfdee in a state of just agonizing despair which is the way it often happens
then I mean that's really not a good way to go because you you want to leave this

realm in as conscious of a state as possible because that's going to help determine where you're going to be immediately after this. You know, there's going to be like a continuum of mental states.

[sighs]

But when I was a monk, just as a kind of option that I never took, I did consider it sometimes when things were really, you know, just very difficult to to accept

that I did um have a kind of how do I put it? A certain toxic substance on hand just in case, which I never use. And I'm not going to say what the substance is because it's so easily

obtainable and doesn't result in like nausea and convulsions and so forth like most toxic like over overdoses would cause that I don't want to help anybody with regard to this sort of thing.

But it's true. I I went to a library in Rangon one time. It was the International Institute for Advanced Buddhist Studies and they had um at least one book on forensic science like a coroner's manual. I assume they would have that in a Buddhist studies library because of the pictures of, you know, gruesome forensic stuff. You know, it had some pretty gruesome pictures in it. You know,

shotgun wounds and this kind of thing.
and it had like an appendix at the end
which was just um toxic substances and
their their symptoms and so forth. So I
I studied through that a little bit just
to see what kind of toxic substance
would be preferable
[sighs]
but again I didn't uh avail myself of
that option and I am glad that I didn't.
It's just not my time to go.
But I have considered it many
[clears throat] times over the course of
my life um as an option which was
rejected.
And so I'm just going to move on to the
second question of chases is which is as

follows. Are you sure you never ate dog
or cat meat when you were living on alms
in Burma? And I'm pretty sure I'd say
the odds of my eating cat or dog meat
would be 5% or less while I was going
for alms in Burma. Partly because it's
considered very low status
to to eat dog or cat meat, even as a lay
person in Burma. Cat meat is more
commonly eaten than dog meat. Dogs are
just considered to be dirty, nasty
animals, which is, you know, the
prevailing view throughout much of Asia.
you know, they eat garbage and dead
lizards and baby poop and this kind of
stuff and they're just considered to be

unclean. And so it's not a common like
an ethnic thing in Burma to eat dog
meat. Except there are some people who
believe that eating dog meat can cure
you of malaria. You know, it's just some
weird folk
myth. I guess I doubt that it really
helps unless it's just the placebo
effect. you know, you you have enough
faith in this dog meat that it's going
to cure you of malaria that somehow it
it it helps. Anyway,
cats, on the other hand, um yeah, I
think some of the poorer villagers will
like hunt stray cats and eat them. And
that's one reason why you don't see very
many cats running around in Burmese

villages. Although, the main reason is just that you got all these dogs running around in Burmese villages. The cats are pretty much existing by stealth. But there are some Burmese villagers who like cats and keep cats.

And I will point out just gratuitously that Burmese cats are similar to Siamese cats. Oh boy, low battery. I forgot to plug in the computer again. Just a minute.

I keep doing this. You know what I'm saying?

Let's see. I got pl

I got to stand back up again.

All right.

Okay. Now we're getting somewhere. Let's

plug this in.

Okay,

we're down to 8%.

Let's see. Gotta make sure that Gotta

make sure that it's working good now.

But I think we're I think we're okay.

Let's just click on this.

Okay. No, it says battery is not

charging.

Okay. No, it doesn't say battery is not

charging.

Okay. Well, let's just see what happens.

Anyways, back to Burmese cats. Like, a

lot of Burmese cats have a kink in their

tail. like Siamese cats. I've I've read

or heard that a genuine Siamese cat has

a kink in its tail. And I've noticed
that's very common in Burmese cats, too.
I think they did away with that in like
I don't know like what is it the
American version of the American Kennel
Club for cats.
The American cat kennel club that they
probably got rid of the kink in the tail
just because it's not aesthetically
pleasing or something, you know? They're
kind of posh, uppidity kind of people
that that do that kind of stuff. So,
they probably didn't like the kink in
the tail. And uh we're still holding
steady at 8% battery power.
So, we'll just have to keep an eye on

that.

[clears throat] So, poor people, poor villagers, some poor villagers in Burma and probably poor city people in Burma eat cat meat.

But I've never heard of it being offered to monks. You know, it's just kind of something that you do secretly because the owner of the cat might find out and get pissed off. That kind of thing. Oh, we're up to 9%. So, that's a good sign.

So, I mean, there's one time I ate something. I got some kind of meat in my bowl. At first, I thought it was like chicken or something and then I realized that it was a quadriped.

And then I'm thinking, man, this looks

like rat. And I asked one

[clears throat] of the monks, one of the

Burmese monks at the monastery, like

what is that? And he assured me that it

wasn't rat. It was probably gopher that,

you know, I thought maybe squirrel. I

was kind of hoping squirrel instead of

rat. I don't know why. I guess Americans

just have this prejudice against eating

rat meat. Whereas in some countries like

Thailand, it's just fairly common thing.

Or so I have. So I have been led to

understand.

But who knows? Maybe gopher meat's

really good. But I've heard copy bar,

also a rodent, is supposed to be really

good eating. So just because it's a rodent doesn't mean it's necessarily bad.

I guess the guinea pig was domesticated early on in South America, I think, for a meat animal. I guess the door mouse in ancient Rome was just that was like gourmet eats, which is it's also a rodent. So I guess just because it's a rodent doesn't mean it's bad. I've completely digressed from the dog or cat meat question and we're up to 10%. So, [clears throat] the battery is charging again.

So, let's see. Let's just move on to what technically is pretty much Trezas is his question, but it turns out two

people are asking questions on behalf of Siovax and Sipad Zena. Those of you who've been watching this for a while may recall that there was a questioner, a regular questioner almost every episode up until a few months ago named Siovak and Cipad Zena and then he got kicked off of YouTube.

Uh so then he joined the Discord server and then he has a kind of personality trait where he like compulsively complains about certain groups of people or one person in particular. And finally, I mean after a number of warnings, he kind of switched over to complaining about something else. I told

him just stop it or or you're going to get ejected from the from the Discord server. And he just said, "I don't care." and he he quit. But now he's he's got questions and I' I've been told he's too stubborn to get a new account on YouTube. And so I guess he's asking questions by proxy now.

And so somehow

he uh conveyed a question to Chas is to ask [clears throat] on his behalf which is as follows. He says please ask this for me.

When a person is in a vegetative state, they are awake but have no awareness of the internal or external environment.

This sounds like a form of pure

consciousness without any content. But yet, it doesn't seem like a good thing at all. What's the difference between this kind of state and nibbana? Because your definition of it seems very similar, quote unquote. Well, a vegetative state, let's see here. This seems awake. They are awake. A vegetative state. They are awake but have no awareness of the internal or external environment.

So I mean how do you know they're awake just because their eyes are open? I mean they have no awareness of the internal or external environment. They wouldn't be responding to any stimuli. You know

they'd just be I mean it it'd be like
being in a coma with their eyes open.
And I have to admit I did meet one
person like this in Burma. some some
young Burmese guy, like a teenage boy,
who [clears throat] he was born this way
apparently, and he was so brain damaged
that really there was just nobody there.
I mean, his mother would say he kind of
responds to certain things,
you know, like they can get him to eat
food, I guess. I mean, he was still
living at home, but I mean, when he was
they they had to prop him up, you know,
they brought him to me when I was a monk
and maybe for some kind of blessings,
you know, for his benefit somehow. And I

mean, he's looking right at me, but he

obviously doesn't see me.

So, I mean, there was like there was

nobody there.

[snorts]

Anyways,

let's see. When a person is in a

vegetative state, I'm not exactly sure

what the vegetative state would be if

they are awake and have no awareness.

I mean, wouldn't being awake imply that

you're aware of something?

Yeah, this this question doesn't make a

lot of sense to me. I'm not exactly sure

what the vegetative state quote unquote

would consist of because he he says

they're awake, but on the other hand, they have no awareness of the internal or external environment. So what are they aware of? And if they're not aware of anything, how can they be called awake?

So action continues, "This sounds like a form of pure consciousness without any content, but yet it doesn't seem like a good thing at all. I mean, it might not seem like a good thing just from a a human like instinctive point of view because that person's obviously got something wrong with them if they're just like that person I met in Burma. I mean, it

looks like they're severely brain damaged. And so, just from like the the animal human nature point of view, it's like there's something not good about this. You know, it's like we have just an instinctive desire to avoid people that have something seriously wrong with their health going. Unless it's like a close family member, a dear friend, something like that. But, you know, you you're walking on the highway, walking down the sidewalk, not the highway, walking down the sidewalk, and you know, you see somebody who's just completely out of it, maybe all messed up. Um, some people

would just rush over and, you know,
maybe start doing CPR or something.
Other people would just kind of stand
back and call 911, keep a safe distance
just in case it's contagious or
whatever.
[sighs]
So, I mean, when he says it doesn't seem
like a good thing at all that you've got
a person in a vegetative state who's
somehow awake at the same time oblivious
to their environment, internal and
external. I don't know how that's even
possible.
But somehow, let's just for the sake of
argument say that if that is the way it
is, then [clears throat]

just the fact that they're like like in this abnormal state could just instinctively cause people to think that that is not a good thing at all. But I mean, how could it be good or bad? I mean, if it's I mean, if they're just oblivious,
you know, as somehow awake yet totally oblivious to everything, at least anything we can internal or external, which seems to pretty much rule out everything.
Then, I mean, how could that be good or bad? It would just be like a neutral state, it seems like, other than just sort of like the instinctive human

reaction to something that's like
obviously dysfunctional and abnormal.
So ultimately the question here is
what's the difference between this kind
of state and nibbana because your
definition of it seems very similar.
Well I mean if you're enlightened then I
mean it's like infinite consciousness
and I mean if there are some people who
would say that trees are fully
enlightened. Echartah would say that you
know an ant is fully enlightened.
a cat is fully enlightened unless it's
somehow become neurotic through too much
interaction with humans.
Um I mean you could say that I guess
but it's sort of like kind of like

echartlah just kind of has like this spectrum of unenlightenment with enlightenment at both ends. You got the enlightenment of an ant or a parramium at one end and you got the enlightenment of a sama sam Buddha at the other end and he somehow I don't recall his explanation in his famous first famous book the power of now you know exactly what the difference is between the lower end enlightenment of an animal say and the higher end enlightenment of a like a Buddha

that there there is a difference I remember he specified there was some kind of difference

that the lower end is just kind of like
an inferior kind of enlightenment. Sort
of like the Mahayana idea of like an
Araant as opposed to a Buddha like a
like an enlightened bodhicattva
but let's see
I mean first of all I have problem
answering this just because the whole
premise of someone who is awake yet
oblivious to everything internal and
external. I mean, how is that awake? You
know, that's just like,
yeah, that doesn't make sense to me. But
then, yeah, it not seeming like a good
thing at all. I mean, being enlightened
would be subjectively not necessarily a
good thing because it would be neutral,

good and bad. That's the duality, a samsaric duality that you dispense with. So, what's the difference between this kind of state and nibbana? Well, if you think a brick is in a state of nibbana, then there wouldn't be much difference. But I mean, it wouldn't be full enlightenment, I think, simply because I mean, it's like there was no karmic stream that gets transcended or some such. I mean, it's hard to say. I mean, it's secondguing somebody like that person I'm I saw in Burma who just there was obviously nobody there. I mean, they were just oblivious. They they had like

the sensitivity of like a plant or something, you know? They seemed to kind of be aware if someone was around them and and like being nice to them or something, but still obviously it's like they weren't seeing or or hearing or anything like that.

So

I [clears throat] mean second-guessing the mental states of a person who apparently has no mental states and also second guessing a fully enlightened being who has transcended mental states. I mean that might be the difference at least with regard to like someone who is still embodied.

You know it's like one person isn't

having mental states. The other person
has mental states but they've just like
transcended them and they become
irrelevant because that is no longer
like what they're focused on.
But then after the like parana
then yeah who knows it's like there
could be that kind of absolute that is
not obscured in the the brain damaged
person.
But that's kind of a weird sort of thing
to investigate because really you're
just trying to second guessess what's
going on in the mind of a person who is
essentially mindless.
Got no more mind than a than a plant.

Maybe that's why they're called
vegetative. I guess
so. I mean you could just have a plant
instead of the person in the vegetative
state and compare that to a fully
enlightened being. Is that nibbana? And
some people would say yes. I mean, it's
not the kind of nibbana that a Buddhist
or at least not a terra Buddhist is
going for because the terra Buddhist is
going for kind of a transcendence of
mental states and not just the
annihilation of mental states.
And that's hard for a lot of people to
understand because it involves thinking
at two different levels of reality
simultaneously.

But you can get to a mental state where you're still having thoughts. It's just that you're no longer identified with those thoughts. That the thoughts are just nature taking its course because the that's what the brain does at this level of reality. But your consciousness is not identified with that anymore. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Clefy. Although we haven't heard the last from sea action cading because he uh like indirectly asked another question through somebody else later on. I hope I included that on the list. I think I did. If I didn't, I'll have to look it

up. Anyways, Khifi says, "If the block of marble represents every possibility and impossibility, does it mean that the four noble truths are within the block? Does it mean that in a different realm the four noble truths don't necessarily apply? Well, the four noble truths would be contained within the block in the sense that any perception would be contained within the block. And as George Barkley used to say, "Say Esperipi, to exist is to be perceived." So any being who is perceiving the fornoable truths is like creating a version of the for noble truths within the the realm of anything that is possible.

So that answers that question. The four noble truths are within the block in the sense that the perception of the four noble truths are within the block. And if the four noble truths aren't being perceived by anybody then they just wouldn't be there. I mean they wouldn't exist.

So the second part of this question which is actually the second question. So I separate it now. Does it mean that in a different realm the four noble truths don't necessarily apply? Well that's kind of like saying in a different realm is you know 2 plus 2= 4 not necessarily apply.

And I mean it's hard to imagine

something like that. I mean you can you

can play number games you know that base

two number system there is no 2 plus 2

equals four that kind of thing

but

the four noble truths don't necessarily

apply

um I mean in different some different

realms the four noble truths just aren't

an issue if nobody has discovered them

and have started perceiving them

although you could apply them like

retroactively or you could potentially

apply them to what's going on because it

it does seem to be the nature of

perception that first of all you have to

have duality and what's going to drive
this perception if not um like desire or
like this restless dissatisfaction or
dooka that is going to push the mental
states forwards with a kind of
continuity continuity and change at the
same time because there has to be both
And
that's it's kind of tricky. I mean,
there could be maybe
um there could be something else that
drives some sort of unenlightened mind
other than in some other version of
reality very different from ours.
um you know it could be like some kind
of geometric patterns or something that

has formed enough complexity that it
becomes sort of self self-referential
and acquires a kind of unenlightened
consciousness.
Um, but
gosh, I mean, it doesn't necessarily
mean that in a different realm, the four
noble truths don't necessarily apply,
but it may be that you could have a kind
of consciousness that is so alien that
what is driving it through samsara
is something other than this restless
dissatisfaction like the the thorn in
the heart that has beings of of this
world running in all directions
insatiably.
The salah going with the the uh the

original poly term the the poly metaphor the salah that we all have this thorn or barb or spike embedded in our heart and that's essentially unenlightenment. You know it's craving desire attachment restless dissatisfaction.

But theoretically, you could have some kind of consciousness that it that is motivated

by something other than restless dissatisfaction, desire, and craving and attachment. I don't know what it would be. It'd be something totally alien to us.

But even then, the formal truths technically would still apply in that

desire is the cause of all suffering.
So even if you have some completely
alien sort of consciousness, un
completely alien sort of un
unenlightened mind that is fueled by
something other than you know desire and
and attachment and restless
dissatisfaction. Still it would still be
true that this desire is the cause of of
suffering. Not nec I mean how are you
going to have
Yeah.
Yeah, I mean we're we're trying to
second guessess. First we're we're
second guessing fully enlightened
beings, second guessing people in a
vegetative state that have no mental

states apparently. And now we're
secondguessing
totally alien consciousness that runs
completely differently from from our
consciousness. Um
so just let's just kind of get our feet
back on the ground here or on the floor
in my case.
Does it mean that in a different realm
the four noble truths don't necessarily
apply?
Uh I think there could be some other
kind of realm that isn't running on
dooka and desire maybe.
But still the four noble truths would
apply to at least the second and third

noble truths would apply the first noble
truth to exist is to suffer. I mean
maybe there's some kind of completely
alien sort of consciousness that
I mean sort you could say like a
computer has a kind of
like
imitation consciousness like AI
especially they might not suffer at all
even though they might have a kind of
virtual
intelligence or something. I mean that
might defy the forable truths in that
sense and that to the extent that they
exist maybe they're not really
suffering.
But this is another just tricky

question. I'm just getting slapped upside the head with these tricky kind of questions where I'm having to secondguess completely alien mental states.

Ah, but I hope I answered it well enough because I'm moving on to the next question. This is from Romeo and Romeo says, "What is your opinion of secular professionals using techniques or concepts derived from Buddhism in their jobs? For example, would a mental health counselor taking something like a mindfulness meditation teacher certification training to use with their clients be insulting, exploitative, or

blasphemous in some way to you? As a
former Buddhist monk who took the
authentic and arduous path of
asceticism, do you see such
certification courses as a copout or
inauthentic shortcut? Well, I mean,
there's different scenarios. For
example, you've got um
you've got some sort of psychologist or
psychiatrist or counselor or therapist
who takes a course in like what is it?
Mindfulness
uh mindfulness for stress relief.
there's some kind of certificate you can
get for teaching mindfulness as a way of
of reducing stress, stress reduction.
And in and of itself, I don't think

that's necessarily a bad thing. It's eclectic, you know, but I mean, it's it's helpful, you know. It's like people with terminal illnesses or like burn victims in hospitals to have somebody teaching them how to detach from that, to observe it mindfully, not identify with it.

the the worry or the fear or the pain or whatever. I think that's ultimately a good thing.

Um the only I mean like another another example is I've mentioned before I used to know one of the world's leading authorities on obsessivempulsive disorder. He was a research professor at

a major university in California
[clears throat] at the time and he used
mindfulness like Buddhist mindfulness
technique sad batana as a way of curing
people of obsessivempulsive disorder.
They I mean their symptoms wouldn't
entirely go away but they would learn to
detach from it and not identify with it
and not just compulsively you know
follow through on the urges. So, I mean,
that's good. That's a good thing. The
only two things that would kind of
bother me, they used to bother me as as
a monk. First of all, you've got like
some professional like a psychologist
who takes gets the certification in
mindfulness as a form of stress

reduction. you know just teaching mindfulness stress reduction techniques and then starts considering himself to be an authority on dharma and you know kind of equivalent to the sa this kind you know the the biku song this kind of thing you know they kind of get arrogant that that that can happen and that would kind of bother me a little bit and also it did kind of bother me a little bit when um I would see like an ordained Buddhist monk who would get the certificate on teaching mindfulness as a stress reduction technique. Like I met uh he was a Zen Roshi. I think he made he made his real money like in real

estate. He was some kind of real estate agent but he was also a Zen Roshi and he got the certificate. So he's teaching mindfulness not as a monk but he's just teaching this technique developed by lay people for you know reducing reducing stress in in in people as a kind of therapy and I mean that just it's just kind of rubbed me the wrong way when you've got monks that kind of are favoring this watered down you know western iz secular kind of dharma in in preference to you know the full system the full monty so that that kind of bothered me a little bit but to the extent that it's helping people I mean you judge a tree

by its fruits right so the actual [clears throat] helping of people is a good thing but I think like some of the mental states associated with the teachers like whether they're lay people who consider themselves to be, you know, just authorities on Dharma because of getting this certificate or the the the monks who are supposed to be authorities on Dharma traditionally who then kind of step down to get this certificate to use Dharma as a means of stress relief when really I mean stress relief I mean ultimately and that's the goal of just complete stress relief you know just complete end of dooka But in a way it's

really watering it down which happens a lot in the west I guess especially in the west.

So yeah I mean helping people in general is a good thing but I mean it can have like negative effects on the teacher. I mean still they're they're helping other people so they're they're earning merit. They're gathering up treasures in heaven. But still, it can result in like selling out their own tradition to some degree in the case of an or ordained monastic who who like goes to this lay institution to get this certificate that somehow makes them qualified to teach mindfulness.

I mean, that always rubbed me the wrong

way. And then of course that people can
just kind of get these delusions of
grandeur think that thinking that they
they understand dharma when they just
got this certificate.
I'm just going to move on to the next
question which is from the sabotur who
actually changed his name
because [clears throat]
the sabaturs
um couldn't result in confusion
[clears throat] as to whether the
sabaturs
were one person or more than one person.
And so he has clarified that he is only
one person by removing the final S from

his name and now he is just the sabotur.
And he says, "I once had a girlfriend
when we were aged 17 a long time ago and
I once saw her crying. When I asked why,
she sobbed, if I didn't exist, no one
would miss me." Neither of us were
existentialists then, so I assumed she
was just dumb. your views please. Well,
I mean it's it's just a common thing of
human nature I think that people want to
be remembered and missed after they are
gone. That's one reason why some people
just go for fame
just so that they'll be remembered you
know they want they want to be
remembered for something.
So I mean it is a common aspect of

humanity I think and I mean there's
deeper like evolutionary reasons why
people have these kind of desires
um you know strong interpersonal
relations is conducive to survival and
reproduction of your DNA sequences and
all that. So yeah, I I'm not exactly
sure
uh what kind of input I can give to
this. I mean, it just seems like this
basic human nature. And of course, a
17-year-old girl is going to be more
emotional and touchyfey
than than the average guy, I guess. So,
I mean, they can cry over lots of stuff,
you know? It's like people can cry over

watching a dumb movie. People can cry over getting a a puppy for their birthday. This kind of stuff, especially some teenage girl who's very emotional, you know, it's like the the the hormones of adulthood are flushing through the system. She's all doped up on hormones anyway.

And it works that way for teenage boys, too.

So, you know, I mean, it's it's nothing out of the ordinary. I'm sure that there are plenty of people who have male and female mostly female I would guess who would cry because of the thought that you know if they died I mean here she didn't even say that if she died

it's just if I didn't exist no one would
miss me I mean I mean if you never were
born in the first place of course
nobody's going to miss you so I mean
that would be kind of silly but it's
still easily within the realm of the
thoughts that teenage girls have
So yeah, I would just chalk that up to
teenage girl mentality. And God bless
teenage girls. I got nothing against
them. I'm sure some of them are very
nice in a completely innocent platonic
sort of way.
I'm not on the Epstein list.
[sighs and gasps]
Well, I mean, it's just human

to some degree human irrationality,
human emotionality, human
sentimentality,
doped up on hormones, intensifying it.
But yeah, now that I've read read this
like three times, [clears throat] I'm
not sure if she's crying because if she
had never been born, no one would miss
her, which is admittedly kind of a silly
thought because nobody would have known
her in order to miss her. I mean, you
can't miss what you've never
experienced.
Pretty sure
except for maybe, you know, somebody
who's a 30-year-old virgin. Just
instinctively, they kind of miss some

kind of action, if you will. But I mean, if she's crying because if she [clears throat] had passed away, no one would miss her, then, you know, that's that's definitely more of a a human normal kind of sentiment to have.
But I don't think she was just dumb. I mean, even really intelligent women can be like spectacularly irrational sometimes.
I mean, if you haven't looked at it already, you want to understand women and just like a man's attitude towards women and everything, just look up hot crazy matrix on YouTube and you'll see like on a scale of I mean

[clears throat] women go from a scale of 1 to 10 with regard to their physical attractiveness. You know, that's standard. Guys have been using the 1 to 10 system for my entire lifetime, I'm sure. But with regard to the crazy matrix or the crazy axis, it goes from four to 10 because all women are at least a four crazy.

That's really important for men to know. It has gotten me through a lot in life. So I guess I answered that one. So I'm just going to move on to the sabotur's second question.

He says, "I understand the Buddha was not in favor of numerology or astrology, etc. Can you please expand on that?"

Yeah, there there are sutas like there's one suta in the Atakawaga of the sutin pata warning or just admonishing monks. They shouldn't be interested in astrology or omens, you know, like interpreting bird cries or interpreting dreams, uh like any kind of magic, any kind of fortuneelling,
all that stuff is monks aren't supposed to pay any heed to it. Also, even like consulting mediums in trance who are channeling higher beings. That's the entire silaconda of the dean kaya. The first like 10 or so sutas of the entire sutapitica have that have that warning in it that I mean there's certain things

that a a self-respecting conscientious
monk doesn't do and one of them is like
consulting spirit mediums
but also just like omens and
fortunetelling all that kind of stuff.
um astrology I don't I don't know if
there's any particular mention of
numerology just because numerology
wasn't really much of a thing in ancient
India at the time
[clears throat] because like written
numbers and such that sort of thing were
pretty much the province of like like
storehouse supervisors you know just
keeping inventory of stuff in warehouses
that kind of thing maybe some minister
of the king who's like recording tax

revenues But the average person was illiterate in the Buddhist time. They couldn't read or use numbers, at least not written ones.

[clears throat]

At least that's my understanding.

But getting back to the actual question, there's there's two main reasons for this. I think why monks aren't supposed to pay any heed to like omens or fortuneelling, anything like that. is one of them is that it's it's like the same reason why they're not supposed to practice medicine towards for lay people. They can practice medicine with their fellow monks, maybe with their own

parents, but they're not supposed to be practicing medicine. It's against the rules of monastic discipline for a monk to practice medicine on lay people like village supporters, that kind of thing. partly because

I mean lay people would just come to the monk for you know to get cured you know it's like that Jesus of Nazareth had this problem I mean you read the New Testament there were times when he was exasperated where it's like people didn't want to hear him teaching the gospel they just wanted him to cure their their aunt Martha of of rheumatism you know there's that one scene where the Buddha or not the Buddha but Jesus

is in this building [clears throat]
teaching a crowd of people inside this
building and some some other people
break a hole in the roof and lower the
sick person down on ropes just so Jesus
can heal them.
And the Buddha could predicted that
that's not good. If if people are going
to come to monks, they should come for
dharma. They should come for spiritual
guidance and not for getting cured of a
disease or to have their fort for
fortune told or to have these omens or
dreams interpreted, that kind of thing.
So that's that's one reason. But another
reason is it's just a distraction

because it's not helpful for you to
become enlightened. It's it's just like
this sidetrack like politics
or even I mean yeah let's just leave it
at that. I mean it's just not domic.
It's it just is does not help you to
become enlightened at least not from the
the ancient Indian Buddhist point of
view that being able to interpret dreams
I mean it can be useful sometimes and
sometimes a dream is just you know you
can interpret it as this symbolic thing
that has a clear me message and that's
fine but to be like studying up on it
reading books on it and then like going
out like palistry that's another one in
in Burma there's a lot of monks who do

palistry they'll read your palm and tell
tell you all this stuff that you know is
I mean it's sort of like the the the uh
horoscopes in the newspaper when I was a
kid you know
there's like the Montipy Python sketch
you know there this these ladies are
reading their their horoscope in the
newspapers and it's you are a
prehistoric reptile 25 feet long with
six inch fangs and you wear spectacles
and the woman who's wearing glasses like
that's uncanny about the spectacles
I do think that most palistry and and
like numerology and so forth is along
those lines

more miss than hit, but the hits are
like get latched on to. It's like that's
that's that's big that's a big deal.
So getting back to the question, it
always takes me 20 times as long to
answer the question as to read the
question
[snorts] for some reason.
[clears throat]
But yeah, I mean, one reason why monks
aren't supposed to be paying attention
to fortuneelling and and astrology and
and reading or like uh interpreting
omens, that kind of thing, is because
you want lay people coming to you for
dharma and not for
fortuneelling and omens and dream

interpretations, that kind of thing. But also, it's just a sidetrack that is not conducive to enlightenment.

So monks should be studying how to become enlightened and not how to interpret dreams or how to figure out the numbers of your birth date to determine what your future is going to be or you know the position of Jupiter how that how that influences your personality. This kind of stuff is just irrelevant.

Just reduce your desires and that will reduce your suffering

to do good, refrain from doing evil and purify the mind and numerology and

astrology and and dream interpretation
and interpretation of omens and all that
just doesn't is not part of the equation
there.
So I'm just going to move on to the
sabotur's last question. He says,
"Lastly, because it is his last
question,
please give your views on Ram Bomb John
if I spelled it right." And I have no
idea who Rahm Bomb John is. I've never
heard of any Rahm Bomb John in my life.
Um, I mean, I've heard of Ram Doss,
you know, that and that Rahm Doss, but
Doss does not resemble Bomb John. So, I
assume that's not who he's talking
about. Also, I remember there was a a

person called Dafrey John who was one of these supposed enlightened beings, you know, sort of like an encarola type or kind of a [clears throat] I don't know, Andrew Cohen type, you know, these people or an Osho type who was kind of a cult leader or something. At least he was a sort of a Hinduistic spiritual teacher back in like the 70s and 80s if I remember correctly. Dafree John. Then he changed it to Bubba Free John after maybe you know he was kind of less keen on trying to pass himself off as an enlightened being or something for whatever reason.

But Ram Bam John no clue whatsoever.

This is the first time I've ever heard of him. So, I really don't have anything to say. I don't have any views on Rahm Bomb John.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Raphael. And I may have to look at something in order to answer this question. Says, Raphael says, "Can you do the test and share your results?" And this was on Discord. I'm going to Discord even though you can't see me doing it. Okay. It's the philosopher personality test. And the philosopher personality test um just asks you a bunch of questions and you answer them, you know, as truthfully as you can manage. And then it tells you

of eight famous philosophers which one
you resemble the most closely. And so
let's just go here to Discord again. And
the uh the eight philosophers were
Aristotle, Epicurus, Kant, Dioynes,
Plato, Hume, and Nietze.
And let's see here.
Okay. And so of those those eight,
somewhat surprisingly,
I I had like an 85% match with Epicurus.
And I've never really studied Epicurus
much. He was just kind of a secular
philosopher with a relatively benign
philosophy of, you know, there are gods,
but they don't really care about us.
They've got their own realm, and they

just pretty much stay there. And Epicurus was largely materialistic, which doesn't match me very well. And he just had this simple sort of ethic of just live a simple life. Simple pleasures are the best pleasures, that kind of thing.

Um, kind of surprisingly, I was only a 60% match with David Hume, who is uh, one of my philosophical heroes. Only a 50% match with Dioynes. Partly because I'm much less inclined than Dioynes, to just blurt out offensive statements just for the fun of it or just for the sake of principle or whatever. Although it's not surprising to me at all that I most I least resemble Nietze

because I'm really I really don't have a a high regard for Nichza. There are some people who do and that's fine. You know, different different temperaments, different personality types, so forth, but I mean Nze, I just was not much inclined to [clears throat] be impressed by his philosophy. And part of that was just I just did not like his writing style. his writing style was just too like emotive and poetic and touchyfey for me. I mean, I I prefer somebody like David Hume who just explains things simply and clearly and succinctly. And so, I'm glad that at least I had a 60% match with David Hume. I'm not sure

why. I mean, I don't think that the the test was entirely reliable. like I was a fairly good match with Aristotle and I got really very little use for Aristotle.

I think I more closely resembled Aristotle than David Hume which [clears throat] I took a little bit of umbrage to.

Anyways,

yeah, I think the person I most closely resembled was Epicurus for whatever reason.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Austin.

And Austin says, "If there is no free will, all of my karma is determined. It

would also be determined based off of factors outside of my control whether or not I would walk the eight-fold noble path. How is this not fatalism?" Well, the thing is the Buddha rejected fatalism. Like the Ajivacas were strict determinists. You had like 84,000 lives. you know, the the analogy or the simile was a ball of string. You know, you hold on to the the the loose end and you just kind of throw the ball and it just keeps rolling and rolling and rolling until it's just reaches the end of the ball of string and you just got this long line of string. And that was how the Ajivacas according to the Buddhists interpreted

like how rebirth happens that you know
you just inevitably have these 84,000
lives and there's no free will
whatsoever and that's it after you get
the 84,000th life
you're done. You you're enlightened.
And the Buddha rejected that. the fact
is he said that I mean this kind of
wrong view can can result in in hell
even that I'm not so sure about just to
believe a philosophical doctrine like
that I'm not so sure that that would
qualify a person for hell so I'm I'm
somewhat skeptical that the Buddha
actually said that it could just be a
little bit of religious pmics going on
in ancient India that got into the texts

because the poly texts portray all non Buddhist philosophers especially if they're not brah commons as just bungling fools.

So I I consider that to be a kind of religious propaganda going on. But still determinism, strict determinism is rejected. Like absolute free will is rejected. In the anatal, which is allegedly the Buddha's second discourse after his enlightenment, he said with regard to any of the five condas, you cannot say let it be this way, let it not be that way, and have it reliably happen. You do not have complete control over any of the five condas and that

includes will. Sankara is essentially
our karma and we don't have complete
control over that either. So
it's it's kind of a dilemma. It seems
like the two alternatives of free will
and determinism are both rejected in
Buddhism which leaves a kind of paradox.
And I do think that the answer may be a
kind of paradox, which I got the idea
from a book called The Trickster in the
Paranormal by George P. Hansen, who who
mentions in one of his chapters in this
book, well worth reading, by the way,
that like when you're meditating, you
become self-referential. You're you're
observing your own mind. You're
observing your own mental states. And

even the average person that has
self-consciousness,
being self-conscious is a kind of
self-reference.
And like in um goal's theorem
when a statement becomes
self-referential it can become
paradoxical like the statement this
statement is false
that statement this statement is false
is neither true nor false because if
it's true it's false and if it's false
it's true.
So, I mean, it requires self-reference
to produce this kind of paradox that
just kind of shatters rules of logic.

And so it may be that self-reference in the human mind, especially when it's intensified through like meditation, mindfulness, wisdom, that [clears throat] it creates this paradox that can somehow allow for something resembling free will to occur. Even though free will logically should be impossible,
still like Aristotilian laws of thought, everything has to be either A or not A. So any statement has to be either true or false. But once you get in that self-reference like this statement is false, the Arisetilian laws of thought explode. It just it can't deal with it. So it could be that being

self-conscious,
self-referential, you know, the mind like perceiving itself or certain aspects of itself can result in this paradoxical state that allows for something along the lines of free will to occur.
But I do admit that free will should be logically impossible. Either something has a cause or it doesn't have a cause. it has a cause that is determined and not free. But if it doesn't have a cause, it happens at random.
And that's could be called freedom, but it's it'd be more like an epileptic seizure than making free choices.

[snorts]

So, let's see. Did I answer the question? That is the question.

If there is no free will and all of my karma is determined, it would also be determined based off of factors outside of my control whether or not I would walk the original eight-fold noble path.

How is this not fatalism? Yeah, fatalism is rejected too.

So it's a paradox. I mean in Islam and the only religion I I can think of aside from the extinct Ajivaca religion where they just flatly reject free will as a general rule would be Islam where I mean Allah God somehow has free will but nobody else does because Gala Allah I

just said Gala probably God and Allah combined

Allah is literally according to Muslims omnipotent. All power is with Allah. So anything that we do or not do, it's all has to be the will of God. So to the Muslims, [clears throat] they they have this weird situation that's I mean right there in the Quran that if you decide to be a Muslim, that's God's will. If you decide not to be a Muslim, that's also God's will. But then it's also God's will that you go to hell for not being a Muslim.

So at least they they fess up to it. There's a lot of stuff that Muslims fess

up to that's kind of embarrassing if you
really examine it like the lifestyle of
Muhammad for example. But we don't need
to go there at all because this question
is about free will and determinism.
And yeah, my best answer is that it's
the self-referential nature of the human
mind
um creates this paradoxical
self-reference
which then can allow something along the
lines of free will to like
come in through the cracks.
And I might as well throw in that Raman
Maharshi
used to say that the only free will we
have is the choice whether or not to be

mindful.

And the more mindful you are, the wiser

you are, the more choices you've got.

But for the most part, we are pretty

much

Yeah, it seems that determinism is

pretty much the rule and that we humans

maybe have managed to be a minor

exception to the rule,

[snorts]

I guess.

So, I'm just going to move on this

question. This is from watermocker

and watermocker says regarding dependent

co-arising if nothing existed how was

any karma created in order for samsara

to arise well this is assuming that
you're you're going that time is real
for starters and that you had this
beginning of time where nothing was
happening yet and that's not the way it
works I mean samsara is just infinite in
time and space in it's just infinite
no beginning and no end.
So there's always been some sorrow
and if you go with this hackne at this
point completely worn out theory or the
simile of the block of marble you know
you got the block of marble which
represents the absolute and contained
within that stat or that that block of
marble is every possible statue it's
already in there every single molecule

is already right in the exact place
you just have to use your imagination to
separate out the extraneous rock.
And so I mean that block of marble which
contains all possibilities has contained
all possibilities always.
No beginning and no end to those
imaginary statues. And we are some of
those imaginary statues
or you can say they're virtual statues
conditionally real.
But there's no beginning to that. It's
always been this way. And it's
[clears throat]
to some degree that caused me some
like mild depression maybe when I was a

monk living out in the forest in Burma
when I realized that I mean even even
even if you go with Einsteinian physics
with time being the fourth dimension
that still after you become enlightened
the unenlightened suffering you is still
real you know it's still there just
behind you
temporally speaking
And all the statues, including every
possible version of a miserable, messed
up you, is always going to be in there.
It's just a matter of transcending it.
You don't annihilate it. You can't
annihilate some particular virtual
statue contained in a block of stone.
All you can do is just stop imagining

it, but it's still going to be in there.
You just don't identify with it. You
know, you just transcend it. You just
start thinking in terms of this block of
stone or just stone, pure stone
and then you see all the different
statues around you. It's all just stone,
stone, stone, stone, stone.
[snorts]
So
let's see watermark. Did I answer the
question? If nothing existed, how was
any karma created in order for some sar
to arise? No beginning and no end
either. Sorry to say.
And so I guess I'm just going to move on

to Watermacher's next question. In that vein, how did Mara come to be? And it's the same answer. I mean, every statue has always been in that block of stone, including every possible statue of Mara, who is like the Buddhist devil. He's more sophisticated than the or he's more sophisticated than the the Christian devil because he's [clears throat] not just the god of of evil. so to speak. He's the god of good and evil. He's the god of samsara. You know, there's like this metaphor or simile in the poly text of Brahma who is sort of considered to be the creator god in to the the vadic brahinss. He's he's resting in the palm of Mara's hand because

Mara is essentially the god of samsara
and he lives in a heaven realm, not in
hell.
So if Mora can't get you to be bad,
he'll get you to be good. Because either
way, you're just creating more karma
that keeps you enshed in some sorrow.
The main thing he's trying to stop
people from doing is not doing good.
It's from bailing out of the system by
becoming enlightened.
So Mara's always been there along with
everything else.
And I'm just going to move on to
Watermacher's third question. He says,
"I'm living in Indonesia for a year and

I assume you have some experience with squat toilets. Any tips and tricks for a Westerner using a Southeast Asian toilet?"

Gosh, I mean, it seems pretty self-evident. You know, it's it's like not like it's complicated piece of equipment there. you just squat over it and do your business and then presumably wipe

or like in Burma, I mean wiping with paper is something that you don't do. And and according to the ancient rules of monastic discipline for monks, you don't use toilet paper. First, you use a stick. It's uh gnudan is the Burmese word for it. Just a stick. And if it's

got a little bit of bark on it, that's good because it it's got more traction. And then after that, you rinse with water. And that's the way people have been like cleaning their butts in like South Asia, Southeast Asia for thousands of years because apparently in the Indis Valley civilization they they did the same thing. They they rinsed with water based on archaeological investigation of ancient outhouses, I guess.

>> [sighs]

>> So yeah, I mean I worked on Japanese ships back in the 1980s and most of those had squat toilets too. So even in Japan up until recently there have been

squat toilets. It's just kind of you
just squat down over the hole and
I mean let nature take its course and
then you use whatever whatever means is
available to rinse the narrow place or
wipe or clean the narrow place and then
you get up and you go out and wash your
hands like a good boy.
Um, I mean I remember there's one
monastery. This is I mean those of you
who are squeamish about certain subjects
might want to just fast forward past
this part, but I I did live at this the
one monastery I lived at longer than any
other place in Burma.
Onebo do one wildlife refuge monastery.
I had this outhouse there and you had to

listen for this sound like soup when
when you took a dump because that meant
that it was sliding off the end of the
pipe into the into the ces pit. And if
you didn't hear that soup, that meant it
was still in the in the tube and you had
to rinse it down to the water.
Otherwise, it was just going to dry
there and plug up the tube. And when
that happens, it's not good at all. So,
I mean, it it's an outhouse byoutouse
basis with regard to stuff like that.
>> [sighs]
>> Be careful of snakes, I guess. I mean,
if it's like a forest kind of outouse,
you definitely want to look behind the

water pot and look around before just walking in there. Cuz I remember one time it was it was the day after my the only other monk who lived at this monastery, one bo monastery is the same outouse I'm referring to. I referred to just a few minutes ago. He was bitten by a cobra and died. It was the day of his cremation. I go to the outhouse. I open the door and there's a big Russell's viper just coiled up right next to the water pot. It wasn't the same snake that bit old Unanda. He was bitten by a cobra, I'm pretty sure.

But [clears throat]

you got to be careful about that kind of stuff.

And you're not a monk, so you don't have to worry about all the rules. There's several rules regarding using an outhouse that monks are supposed to follow. No loud grunting, for example. Don't throw the butt wiping stick into the ces pit.

Take your shoes off and your upper robe before going in.

But that would be just a matter of local etiquette. I suppose you'd have to be cognizant of, you know, what the the standard tradition is for how to use outouses wherever you're going. I mean, if you're just living in Indonesia using your own bathroom, then you can do as

you please, I suppose. But still, you should definitely rinse or wipe and then wash your hands afterwards.

But, but using water works better than toilet paper, I have to admit. I mean, feces is water soluble. It rinses away way easier than than wiping with paper does. It's just that of course then you you got like a a narrow place that is rather wet.

But if you're just wearing like a saron with no underpants, which is what monks do in Asia, it's not a problem and it works better than paper.

In fact, uh in some Asian countries, like in Thailand, sometimes you'll have like a spray gun like like kitchen sinks

often have in the west. You'll have one of those right next to the toilet. You just use that to to spray. No toilet paper required.

>> [clears throat and cough]

>> Anyways, I'm just moving on. Next question.

This is from Stellar Supreme, still formerly known as Liberland, and he's asking questions on behalf of Siovak and Cipad Zena. So, we got more Siovak and Cipad Zena questions here. Two more. So, Sio has not transgressed by asking a fourth question, not even indirectly through somebody else. So [snorts] anyways, Seio Zedina through

Liberland,

also known as Stellar Supreme asks, "If mystical experiences are states where thinking is gone and as a result, you become more aware, then does a toddler or child who can't think yet or even animals count as being in mystical states?" Not exactly. I mean it could be a relatively mild mystical state but I mean a mystical state isn't just not thinking in words. It's not perceiving. A mystical state is you are either not perceiving. You're still wide awake and not like thinking or perceiving. I mean at least it's it's so attenuated that you're getting a glimpse of what it's like if if you're wide awake and not

perceiving anything. you know, there's gradations of mystical states.

So, in order to have a real like a deep mystical state, like what a Catholic would call high contemplation,

it's not just that you're not thinking in words anymore. You're not like imagining pictures, anything like that either.

So yeah, a a toddler or a child who can't think yet in words still they're perceiving, you know, they're still assuming this the world that they are perceiving all these objects and so forth are reality which means they're still stuck in some sorrow.

animals maybe cuz like Echartol says you know that all animals except for a few domesticated ones that have become crazy through interacting with humans are enlightened in a sense but I think from his point of view it's just that they're in the present moment they're not thinking about the future not thinking about the past they're just right there in the present moment even though they're still enshed in perception which is some sorrow

so

um I mean there have been people who thought that small children are closer to enlightenment In and a way they are just like a cow is in some ways closer

to enlightenment than a human. You know, they've their mind isn't as as big as ours. So, it can't hold as much delusion as ours can. It's just that for a cow, it's closer to enlightenment, but in a sense, enlightenment is behind it and it's going to have to keep going forwards to, you know, like transcend um or like outgrow, you know, has to run its course.

One analogy that Rahm Doss gives is like the hands on an old analog clock where it's like midnight is the absolute and then it's like a a being somehow arises from the the unmanifest absolute. And of course they're closer to 12, but they

got to go all the way around. When they get to six, they start their return home, so to speak, until they get back to midnight again.

So, a kid, a child, I mean, in in a way, you could say they're like at 3:00. So, they're they're closer to an adult at 6:00, let's say, but still they've got to still come full circle. So, they're still farther away. And there is the suta in in one of the one of the pseudapiticas,

one [snorts] of the uh nikayas, I should say.

that I mean it deals with the issue is a baby enlightened and the baby is not enlightened partly because they still

have anusas or latent tendencies. They still have latent karmic tendencies that just can't come to the surface yet because you know it's like the the perceptual system of the of the baby isn't fully formed yet. That kind of thing. The nervous system isn't fully worked out yet. And in a way or like also Werdsworth, one of the greatest uh one of the great giants of English literature that nobody reads anymore. William Werdsworth, he had this famous ode intimations of immortality talking about how little children in a way are closer to enlightenment because sort of like Jesus says they're seeing

everything like a little child. You know, it's like they're seeing everything for the first time. When an adult sees a dandelion, they think it's just a weed. It's a dandelion. And, you know, it's like they stop even like really paying attention to that dandelion. They just, you know, it's just been labeled. They deal with the label and and, you know, they don't give it a second thought other than maybe a little bit of mild irritation if the dandelion is in is in their own yard. Whereas a little kid sees that dandelion as though seeing a a flower for the first time and they might think it's beautiful. you know, they might

just be like enraptured by this this dandelion. You know, they might go out and pick a handful of dandelions to to give to mommy and that kind of thing. And the adults will think that's cute. You know, the child is so naive. It thinks dandelions are pretty flowers. But really, I mean, if you look at dandelions, some some dandelions are kind of nice looking.

[clears throat]

But still,

in a way, you could say they're closer to enlightenment in that their mind doesn't hold as much delusion as the average messed up adult. But still, they

have all these latent tendencies, all this karma that they haven't worked through yet. And they're going to have to get farther away from enlightenment before they're even in a position to start getting closer to it again.

But just not thinking in words is not a mystical state. It's either suppressing or transcending perception in general just symbolic thought in general which includes all like images and colors and all that.

So

section cipad zed's next question asked indirectly through stellar supreme still formerly known as liblam etc etc is as follows. What about 25 to 50% of the

population who have no inner monologue?
So this is just sort of like a correlary
of the previous question and it's the
same answer that even though they're not
thinking in words all the time still
they are thinking symbolically and
perceptually they are still like in some
sara because you know they see a tree
and they just assume it's a real tree.
you know, they think it's real. They're
they're still just wallowing in in
symbols instead of dealing with like
actual capital R reality.
You know, they're still hypers samsaric
if you please.
And so it'd be similar to the animal or

the child who is going to have to get farther away from the absolute before they can start getting closer again. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Gordon. And Gordon says,
"Do actors and musicians go straight to hell after they die?" And there is a suta where the Buddha is talking to an actor or some kind of entertainer. And the entertainer says that um you know it's his belief that entertainers go to the the realm of the laughing gods after they die because of all the the joy and happiness that they give to other people. Um and then the Buddha says no, you're going to hell. But it's this is

another one of those sutas where I mean
I have to be a little bit skeptical that
all actors and all musicians are going
to go to hell. Some of them will
presumably assuming that there is such
places as hell, some kind of hell
realms. I mean, it's really not that far
of a a stretch to consider that there
are worse places than earth.
[clears throat]
But, uh, do actors and musicians go
straight to hell after they die? I mean,
the worst ones, the most like depraved,
the evil ones, but I don't think that
just being an actor or a musician is
necessarily going to result in like a

lower realm.

And this, for some reason, I'm reminded of I remember years ago seeing this article in which the guy who played Freddy Krueger, I don't even remember the the movies. I never I never really like that kind of movie. But and those of you who are into horror movies know who Freddy Krueger was. The actor who played him is complaining that he's got like like these weird stalkers and stuff like really pestering him and just interfering with his peace of mind and so forth. And I remember at the time reading it's like what the hell do you expect? I mean you're playing this nightmarish demon entity

and I mean you're like poisoning people's minds with that kind of stuff. I mean, it's going to have karmic consequences.

So, people that that are like doing like the satanic death metal stuff or, you know, like playing murderers in slasher movies that are just like causing people nightmares at night. This kind of stuff. I mean, they're going to have worse karma than some relatively virtuous actor or musician. And there are a few of those who are, you know, just trying to uplift others, you know, like someone who does kons, you know, they're they're just like like playing sitar or tabla or

something while people are chanting the names of God, that kind of thing. I mean, that's a far cry from like screaming about Satan in some death metal song. if you can even call that kind of throat screechy screaming stuff singing or or for that matter like a lot of this rap and hip-hop stuff where you got these gangster guys bragging about all the women they abuse and the laws they break and all this kind of stuff. I mean that's like praising degeneracy and to some degree leading like young impressionable people astray. So that's I mean that's definitely a far cry from singing gospel music.

So yeah, I think there's a full spectrum

and I don't think that just being an actor or a musician is necessarily going to land you anywhere, heaven, hell, or anywhere in between. It's just your mental states and some actors and musicians have way worse mental states than other actors and musicians. I had one musician tell me that he I mean he never really made it big in show business because all the ones who make it really big in show business have to worship Baffomet.

I mean he was kind of a conspiracy theorist kind of guy. But he apparently had some kind of experience with that sort of thing I guess. And I mean when

[clears throat] people are like selling their soul to the devil figuratively or in their opinion literally in order to get you know fame and wealth and all that then that's a that's a whole different issue alto together and I will resist the urge to bring up Led Zeppelin in with regard to that and I guess I'm just going to go on to the next question.

I do consider Led Zeppelin to be the greatest rock band of all time. So, it's not like I'm totally have my mind poisoned against them.

Okay. Gordon's next question is as follows. I read that practicing monks have much lower rates of

Alzheimer's and dementia into old age. Does your experience corroborate this? Well, I don't really have enough of a sample size to determine whether it's statistically significant or not. you know, I can't really do the statistical analysis based on my own experience because I really didn't interact with a lot of really ancient monks. But it doesn't surprise me. I think that probably practicing monks do have much lower rates of Alzheimer's and dementia into old age partly because they've abused their bodies less or at least any abuse that they have done of their bodies was through aseticism. You know,

fasting and just enduring heat and diseases and so forth. But I mean, they haven't like rotted their brains with like processed chemicals as much or just, you know, vegetated in front of a TV set, that kind of thing. Or, you know, just squandered their lives with, you know, wallowing in sensuality, you know, considering that to be the highest goal, that kind of thing. And so, they've they've made less bad karma. They've lived kind of a simpler, cleaner, purer kind of life that has helped to preserve their system. One of the reasons why I'm as healthy as I am while as old as I am is just the 30 years of following the straight and

narrow, so to speak.
And I mean, if you're really practicing
meditation, then I mean, you're
heightening your awareness, which would
help to combat the loss of awareness
through Alzheimer's, I would guess.
So it's good karma, clean living and uh
also just exercising your mind in a
wholesome way that would help to stave
off dementia to a higher degree
than living otherwise. I mean I have met
a few monks that I remember meeting um
in Seattle and also another old monk who
was about the same age as him would
guess and it was just the difference
between night and day. Lummens who was

one of the most highly advanced spiritually speaking monks I ever met. I mean he was about 90 years old at the time at least in his his 80s and he was just wide awake. I mean he's just looking right straight through you. He was 100% there. Whereas the other monk sitting next to him I mean he was just pretty much vegetative and people would have to yell into his ear to try and get any point across. And still it wasn't 100% sure whether he even heard what they were saying.

So

I mean was very advanced practitioner whereas the other monk maybe was not so much and that may have been a factor but

I would assume that there is some kind
of yeah I I can acknowledge the the
likelihood that there is some kind of
statistical statistically significant
correlation between you know living like
a a simple virtuous was
meditative lifestyle, contemplative
lifestyle and
not developing dementia in your old age.
Just like there's probably a
statistically significant correlation
between not smoking and not getting lung
cancer
or not chewing tobacco and not getting
jaw cancer. You know, it's some people
they smoke until they're 90. No problem.

Like George Burns, he lived to be 100
years old. He's always had a cigar.
So there's always going to be outliers,
but as a general statistical trend,
yeah, I think I'm fine with that.
But again, I don't have enough
experience with ancient monks to really
have a large enough sample size to do
any kind of statistical analysis.
My N is relatively low.
Well, for example, the old monk, he was
in his mid 80s, I guess, when he was
bitten by a cobra. And I mean, his
eyesight was going. He had kind of like
this blue haze over his eyes. His
hearing was going, you had to yell. I
mean, it was any of you who have read um

what is it? Nicholas Nickelby by Charles Dickens, you remember old Mrs. Slider skew where I mean, she would pretend to understand what you were saying because she was so hard of hearing that I mean she would be too embarrassed to admit that she keeps saying what what all the time. So, she would just kind of make up in her mind what you were saying and answer a question completely different from what you asked. Old Unandanda was like that. And so I mean his his eyesight and his hearing were going. His you know his sensory organs were deteriorating but still mentally you know you could have a reasonable

conversation with him so long as you
talked loud enough that he could hear
you
or yelled I should say.
But yes, I mean I would accept that
pretty easily, but um I can't really
provide the receipts really to prove it.
And so I'm just going to move on to
Gordon's next question.
Would Nichze consider Buddhist ethics to
be a type of slave morality? Um I don't
really know enough about Nichza to know
what he would say. It wouldn't surprise
me. you know he was kind of going the
opposite direction of of Buddhism you
know sort of glorify the ego you know
sort of the will to power all this kind

of stuff you know it's like you don't try to transcend samsara like his forerunner Schopenhau was saying he was it was like you just master samsara more more of like an Alistister Crowley approach

so I mean it wouldn't surprise me if he just looked down his nose on Buddhist ethics is just some whimpering slave morality.

But like I said earlier in this Q&A, um, of the the eight famous philosophers on that test, I resembled Nichzche the least. And I I seem to recall in Burton Russell's history of Western philosophy. Well worth reading to anyone interested

in Western philosophy. Um, he has this imaginary conversation between Nietze and the Buddha, you know, like a debate. and he didn't understand the Buddha very well but still I mean even Bertin Russell had this idea that Nietze and the Buddha were kind of um diametrical opposites philosophically
but again I've read very little Nichze I've read the antichrist and I have to admit that Min's introduction to the antichrist was more interesting to me largely just because he had a more straightforward simple writing style and I I started reading thus spait zarustra and got as far as the tightroppe walker falling off the tightroppe and breaking

his leg and I just wasn't getting enough
out of it really to inspire me to
continue reading at that point
and I'm just going to move on to this
question. This is from Ruie
and Ruie says perhaps a few words on how
dooka is experienced by the wise.
Well, wise people experience dooka too.
Anyone who isn't fully enlightened
experiences dooka and some would say
even a fully enlightened being still
experiences physical pain. Like the
Buddha was experiencing racking pains
right before his death and paribana.
So that kind of dooka duka is physical
pain that's just kind of universal. So

long as you have a physical body that's
going to happen just in accordance with
nature I guess. But let's just uh keep
it down to dooka that is caused by
desire and attachment.
[sighs]
So
how it's experienced by the wise I mean
it would be more subtle.
Um a lot of it if if you're wise enough
to be mindful of it then you can observe
your own dooka mindfully. I used to do
that a lot as a monk. Sometimes I still
do. was like uh a standard example I
would give is I lived in the hills in
Burma for a while and when
[clears throat] I moved into that

monastery, the abbott told me, "We've got electricity here 24/7." And I I was thinking, "No, that's that's not possible. Not in Burma. You're not going to have electricity 247 unless you're living in the same neighborhood as like the dictator. He has electricity 247. Nobody else does." And I was right. I mean, it would still go on and off at random. It's just that it would, you know, go off maybe for a half an hour at random and go back on again. That kind of thing. And so, anyways, it was up in [clears throat] the hills in the foothills of the Shannon Plateau, relatively, you know, 4,000 ft elevation

above sea level. And it gets cold there, especially in the wintertime. And so, I would have to heat my water to take a bath.

And so I get ready to start heating the water and the electricity would go off. And immediately, you know, I could just observe this irritation arising, this sort of grumbling about, you know, this idiots just cannot keep the electricity on. They're so incompetent, you know, just this kind of stuff, just grumbling. And I just be mindful of that. Just observe this. It's like, why am I unhappy? I want the electricity to work and it's not working. It's just a simple second noble truth. Desire is the cause

of all suffering. I am unhappy right now. I am irritated because I desire the electricity to be working, which is stupid because all the desire in the world for the electricity to start working isn't going to cause the electricity to come back on. And so I could just sit there or stand there and just observe my own foolishness working itself out through force of habit.

So I mean if a person is wise enough to be mindful, not fully enlightened but wise enough to be mindful, at least they can mindfully observe their own foolish desires causing the suffering. And in a way just by being mindful of the

unhappiness, you know, you're detaching from it. It's still there. It's just that you're not identified with it. You're just observing it like an ichthologist observing a dead fish. you know, at some point [clears throat] like anger or other forms of dooka. I mean, if you detach from it enough, it's still there, but it's it's sort of like a flashing red light. You know, it's it's in a way you've denatured it. Although there never was philosopher who could endure the toothache patiently, as Shakespeare is said to have said. I don't know what play that would be in. Ah so dooka uh by a wise person first of all it would be more subtle it wouldn't

be as extreme neither the happiness nor the unhappiness you know you'd be more smooth sailing than the like the the roller coaster ride of ecstasy misery ecstasy misery of say a teenager in love and then also if you're mindful even that like less extreme kind of duke Luca can be observed mindfully which helps to denature. It doesn't make it completely go away necessarily but still at least you can observe it and and understand it.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question.

This is from Ethiopian fake TIG. And we are getting down towards the bottom of

the scroll here. So this won't be much
longer than two hours I'm pretty sure.
Unless I just go off on this tangent
talking about, I don't know, turtles or
something,
but I will resist the urge. Ethiopian
fake TIG says,
"While you were in Burma, you said you
never stopped liking girls once you
disroed. Was there a need to go after
Asian girls since you spent most of your
time around Asians?"
Not really. No. I mean after I I
[clears throat] mean once I disroed I
was back in America again dealing uh I
mean there were still Burmese ladies at
the monastery but one thing about

Burmese women is they're very demure
very modest and especially around monks
you know it's the Buddhist like the
devoutly Buddhist ones that I'd be
interacting with you know just very
demure very passive you know they're not
flirting with you or anything there are
a few times in Burma
village girls might flirt with me a
little bit just in the hopes that, you
know, I might not be a monk my entire
life and that I might just take her back
to America with me, that kind of thing.
There's a lot of that in in Asia.
But as a general rule, they're not
dangerous.

And also just the size difference

and also marrying a Burmese village

woman, a develop a devout Burmese

Buddhist woman would be sort of like a

compromise. You know, it'd be almost

like marrying a nun,

you know? It's like you you have a a

beer and she starts crying, that kind of

thing.

So

yeah, it was there's like the culture

barrier and there was to some degree

like the the size difference

and

yeah, I I I have to admit that I did

appreciate Southeast Asian women um more

after living in Burma for a while than

before because I mean they're they're graceful, you know, it's like carrying pots full of water on their head causes them to just glide when they walk, a lot of them anyway. And
also, I mean, after [clears throat] living in Burma and being exposed to tiny, demure, dainty, graceful Burmese women, then I come back to America, just visiting my parents or whatever, and it did seem just by comparison that American women were big, loud, and clumsy. you know, they weren't as dainty and demure. Although overall, I do consider like European
the European ethnicity of human female

to be the most attractive. Partly just I mean partly because there's like this instinctive desire to have a mate that is similar to your own phenotype just for complex genetic evolutionary reasons. But also there's just more variety. Different hair colors, different eye colors, different builds, you know, different facial shapes. You know, it's just, you know, there's something for everybody, so to speak. Unless maybe you're gay. So, let's see. Let's Did I answer the question? Sometimes I have to read the whole question over again just to make sure I answered the question because I [clears throat] have this tendency to uh

digress if you haven't noticed. Still haven't mentioned turtles yet though.

Okay. So, was [clears throat] there a need to go after Asian girls since you spent most of your time around Asians?

No, not really. I mean, I can I had more of an appreciation for Asian girls just from living amongst Asian people for more than 20 years, pretty much 30 years.

Um,

but still I could I realized that I would just fit better with a western woman despite I mean western women have their good points and bad points. Everybody has their good points and bad

points, you I mean, the just the

demuress

of of an Asian woman, you know, it has

its advantages when Western women aren't

nearly as demure

as Southeast Asian Buddhist village

women.

But all in all, I'm better off with a

woman of my own my own people, so to

speak.

And I'm just going to move on to

Ethiopian fake Tig's next question.

>> [clears throat]

>> There is a recent German monk by the

name of Biku Analio. He said that all

the texts were written 200 years after

the Buddha's death and that we don't

really know what kind of meditation he did or what he really said. Thoughts on this? Um well, I think that the texts were written down technically at least. What was it? The the fourth council. Yeah, I think it was the fourth council was the the council in Sri Lanka I think son Mona [clears throat] that decided that the the text should be written down. It was the the ancient Indian tradition that it's all memorized that sacred scriptures are just memorized by heart. But in times of persecution especially when when like the monks who have memorized things they get killed off or

or whatever that it's better just to

write it down like confucious say record

written in palist ink is better than

most retentive memory.

So that would be like 500 years after

the time of the Buddha. Um I'm not sure

if Biku and Alio is what exactly

[clears throat] he's referring to. I

mean there were some texts that were

written down before then. They have

found like um old fragments of Buddhist

texts in like central Asia that may

predate

um the the terra Buddhist fourth

council.

um whether that was but I mean he's

saying all the texts were written 200

years after the Buddha's death. Um it may be that what he means is that it was just sort of the the typica was finalized that texts stopped being added 200 years after the Buddha's death. But even that isn't true. So I'm not exactly sure where he came up with this 200 years. Um but let's just let's just skip the 200 years and continue. He says that we don't really know what kind of meditation the Buddha did or what he really said. Yeah, we can't be 100% sure.

All you can do is just um do a little bit of detective work and just go with what seems to be the most likely. I

mean, there's there's different approaches. Like the average Burmese Buddhist just considers everything in Titika to be 100% true. It's just gospel truth. Like the Jehovah's Witnesses look at the Bible. It's all got to be true. In fact, um you know, it's there's sort of a further step that the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Burmese Buddhists take in that even the commentaries are infallible. With the Jehovah's Witnesses, it's those books that they always have with them to look into and so they can answer questions from the book of Jehovah's Witness commentary essentially. And then the Burmese scholars actually consider the

commentaries to be more authoritative than the text themselves. Although they wouldn't admit to this simply because the interpretation of the text given in the commentary is considered to be true. So if the Buddha says blue but the commentary says if the Buddhist when the Buddha said blue he really meant red without the commentary you wouldn't know that when he said blue he really meant red. That's pretty much the attitude taken by like traditionalist Burmese Buddhist scholars that the commentaries are actually more authoritative than the texts themselves, the poly tip itself. But I mean, yeah, the Buddha was almost

prehistoric. There's not a whole lot of like real history other than just the texts themselves
that were handed down orally for a few centuries before they were written down and finalized in the form we see them today.
So yeah, we don't know what for sure what kind of meditation the Buddha did or what he really said. But
I mean you can look at the poly texts which are like the oldest complete version of the teachings of Buddha that we still have unless they dig up something you know underground and find something older. But the poly texts are the oldest version of Buddhism we have.

And you can like use like critical scholarship. You know, it's like the same techniques that Bible scholars have used with regard to the Bible to determine, you know, what's the most ancient and know what's most likely to be authentic and what is a forgery that was added later like so many of those epistles of Paul that aren't really by Paul.

So you can do that kind of stuff to the poly texts and you you can't reach 100% certainty, but still you can weed out a lot of the obvious deadwood, the talking animal stories and all this kind of stuff. The Buddha just grandiosely

bragging about how wonderful he is and how people should worship him and just, you know, flying up into the air and spraying fire out of one side and water out of the other and then switching it up and spraying the fire and water out of the other side just to impress some brahinss. this kind of stuff. I mean, fighting fire breathing dragons.

I mean, you can weed out that kind of stuff. You can weed out um texts that aren't common to all the earlier schools so that you get down to like the core texts and a lot of western monks, you know, they reject half the typica, including the entire

abidama pitica

because only the terraodins had the terra abidama. Other schools of Buddhism either had no abidama at all or else they had a different kind of abidama. So [clears throat] you can get down to the core text which is about half and then you can start weeding out like the the talking animal stories and the fire breathing dragons and the Buddha bragging grandiosely telling people they should worship him and all this kind of stuff. And then you get down to a a smaller and smaller nucleus of stuff that is getting closer and closer to what the Buddha originally taught. And then you get a better idea as to what he

likely taught. You get back to like the atakawaga of the suta and you're getting fairly close to what the Buddha was really teaching in my opinion.

So

let's see. [clears throat and cough]

Yeah, I mean you just have to it's educated guesses unless you just want to be motivated by faith and accept all of it.

So you can adopt sort of a medieval Catholic approach to Buddhist texts and just believe what you're told which technically goes against the sutas you know like the the kalama suta saying don't believe something just because it's a venerated tradition don't believe

something just out of respect for your teacher don't believe something just because it seems like it ought to be true

and you go to the walk up the sunnipa is just don't believe anything.

[sighs]

So, I'm not exactly sure what the German monk Biku Analio was really getting at. I'm not really well acquainted with Biku Analio.

So, whether he was saying this just really just as an objective fact or whether he was using that as a justification for something, I really don't know. But I mean it's aside from

the 200 years thing. I don't know where he got that that figure of 200 200 years. But yeah, I mean we can't know for sure.

I mean we can't know anything for sure. We can't know 100% for sure what happened yesterday. It may be that the entire universe was created half an hour ago by a deity with a weird sense of humor and he just implanted memories into us of stuff that didn't happen. We can't be sure.

So there always has to be a certain amount of skepticism involved. Skepticism in the the ancient sense, classical skepticism of just suspending judgment, just admitting that you can't

be sure. And then you have to but nevertheless, you have to go with some kind of worldview. You have to go with some kind of plan. And so you just come up with what seems plausible, what seems likely, and go with that as a working hypothesis.

And when the Buddha's teaching like mindfulness, it is pretty likely that you know just based on the emphasis mindfulness gets that he did teach some mindfulness. You know even the atakawaga is referring to that sort of thing. I mean the atawaga doesn't give detailed instructions on how to meditate but at least it's saying you know you're aware

of what like you're you're mindful. You stretch forth your arm. You're aware of stretching forth your arm. That kind of thing.

saga sometimes that is called.

So yeah, I I have to aside from the the figure of 200 years, I don't know where he came up with that. I do have to admit that you can't really know for 100% 100% sure what the Buddha taught or what Jesus taught for that matter.

We don't know. I mean, we we can make educated guesses and so it helps to use some intelligence, some critical thought, some detective work to try to, you know, at least weed out the deadwood and get to a like a a more solid nucleus

of at least what is probably close to

what the Buddha taught.

And I suppose I should just move on.

Next question also from Ethiopian fake

TIG.

He says, "On your last Q&A, you said the

Buddha went back to ordain his son, but

on a PBS documentary starring the Daly

Lama, it said that the Buddha's tribe

was taken out by another kingdom and

that he was very sad afterwards." I

assume that was the Buddha was very sad

afterwards,

[clears throat]

which would be kind of odd for a fully

enlightened being to feel. Anyways, uh

Ethiopian fake tig continues here and says, "Did this happen after he ordained his son perhaps?" Well, according to terraodan tradition, um the city state of Capilawatu was not destroyed and genocided until after the Buddhist party.

So um I mean PBS documentaries really are not authorities on Buddhism even if they got the Dalai Lama featured in the documentary. I mean he's going to be going with Tibetan tradition which may diverge considerably from terra tradition but I mean it's like watching a a a history documentary produced by CNN and I've done that and just I watched a documentary the other night.

It was like a made for TV documentary. And even a person that is casually wellinformed with regard to history can see that they're saying stuff that is just inaccurate, just objectively false, stuff with regard to events in history, that kind of thing. like CNN I think did a documentary on the pope and the very first episode it's it's it's making these claims about you know the bishop of Rome during the Roman Empire and so forth that were just where they came up with it I don't know it's just like people that were not like real authorities on the subject were just you know getting a superficial understanding

of things which included some
misunderstandings of things and just
making a documentary out of
So yeah, the city state of Capilawatu,
which [clears throat] was the Buddha's
homeland,
it was wiped out, pretty much genocided
by it might have been King Ajata Satu,
but um it was after the Buddhist party
at least according to Terraata Buddhist
tradition. I mean the Buddha did not
live to see the destruction of his own
homeland.
at least according to Terra Buddhist
tradition and even if he did um I don't
think he was very sad afterwards
um at least not from a orthodox teraba

Buddhist position a fully enlightened

being would not be sad

so

yeah it was definitely after he ordained

his son Rahula and it was long after

that at least according to terabata

Buddhist tradition I don't know what the

Daly Lama's Tibetan tradition would say

about it

[clears throat] but I do think that

terabod tradition is an older tradition

with maybe a little more footing in

actual history than you know a later

like a vajraana tradition of what

happened in ancient India

and so I'm just moving on next question

this is from gruesome revilement

And Gruesome says, "What are the

categories of comma? I've heard you

mention good comma and bad comma before

using air quotes

for the words good and bad." I believe

I've also heard you say skillful and

unskillful. What is the correct or most

helpful way to think about different

kinds of comma? Sorry if this is a

newbie question. Thanks for the videos.

Well, according to according [snorts] to

like pi the poly language terra Buddhist

philosophy you mainly have two kinds of

kama kusula kama and akusakama

like in Burmese that becomes kudo and

akudo

kusulakama literally means skillful ausula or kusakama literally means skillful action akusakama literally means unskillful action so good and bad. [clears throat] They're not as fundamental to Buddhist ethics as just what is skillful and what is unskillful. Skillful takes you closer to enlightenment. Unskillful takes you farther away from enlightenment. Skillful reduces your desires and attachments. Unskillfulness increases your desires and attachment. But using skillful and unskillful in ethics in modern English,

it's it's kind of awkward maybe, you

know, it's it's just not as intuitive
for an English-speaking modern person
than an ancient Indian philosopher. And
so sometimes it's cus and uncusla are
interpreted or rendered in English as
wholesome and unh wholesome.
But then also I mean just in common
parliament you just say good karma bad
karma but really in the original poly
it's cusakama
skillful action and ausakama
unskillful action and I'm pretty sure
there is no neutral karma.
Karma is either going to be
like it's going to be a kind of momentum
to your like your psychic momentum.
It's going to change your psychic

momentum or reinforce your psychic momentum um or deinforce your psychic momentum. So, it's going to have some kind of effect one way or the other. So neutral karma that doesn't have any effect is is not a thing. I'm pretty sure it's either kusla or ausula. Literally skillful or unskillful. A little less literally wholesome or unh wholesome and way less literally good and bad. But I mean that's not all the categories of kama. There is lots of categories of kama. And I just happen to have

Nyana Tiloka's Buddhist dictionary here which is well worth having to anybody

who is a student of Terra Buddhism. And so you look under karma because they use the English word because [clears throat] karma is an English word. Let's see. Yeah, it divides. See [clears throat] here the very first thing it says action correctly speaking denotes the wholesome and unh wholesome volitions cusla and uncusla
and their competent mental mental factors causing rebirth and shaping the destiny of beings. So according to nyanotila really there are only wholesome and unh wholesome. There is no neutral karma
unless Yeah. Yeah. Forget that. There is no there's no unless. But if you keep

going with this, you find that there's

other um

let's see, like there's the tenfold

wholesome and unh wholesome course of

action.

Um the five hellish crimes with

immediate result that would be karmic

here. He's got there's three kinds of

karma. Karma ripening during this

lifetime which is da dama vania.

You've got karma ripening in the next

birth which isapa

and then you've got karma ripening in

later births which is

and then those are divided into two

kinds. You've got um let's see here. If

if they with [clears throat] regard to karma that's going to have its fruition in this life, karma that's going to have its fruition in the next life and karma that's going to have its fruition in a life after that. Then you've got the karma that actually leads to this fruition. And then you've got what is called aosi karma or like has been karma that just the conditions weren't ripe for that to happen. And so it just it just expires. It has like an expiration date. Some comma has an expiration date, so to speak. Other comma, it just fades out if the the conditions that would allow it to arise and reach fruition just don't happen.

So maybe you have some kind of karma that's going to cause you to be born as a prince, a royal prince, but it's like the waiting list for being reborn as a royal prince is is long. And eventually it's just there's no convenient opportunity. There's not very many royal princes anymore in this world. Not as many as there used to be. And so just the opportunity just doesn't arise, doesn't arise, doesn't arise until finally that karma just fades out. then it would be called aosi comma or like has been comma

let's see here yeah and then there's just all these lists I mean you get into

technical terra Buddhist philosophy and they're going to analyze everything to death

especially like in uh abidama and the in the commentarial tradition so you've got regenerative regenerative or productive karma which is janaka kama you've got supportive or consolidating karma which is up tambaka kama comma. You've got counteractive or suppressive or frustrating karma which is let's see upa kama and then you've got destruction destructive or supplanting kama which is upaga or upachida kama etc etc and then there's just more lists of these different kinds of divisions but the main division the main categories of

kama for a gruesome revilement here are cus and ausula kusula is skillful or wholesome or good. Ausula is unskillful or unh wholesome or bad. And the cusla reduces your desires, reduces your attachments, gets you closer to enlightenment. And the ausula or unskal comma does the opposite. Those that's like the two main divisions you need to worry about. You don't need to be studying these lists of, you know, the different
categories
of comma, like what their what their effects are, what their conditions and relations are, that kind of stuff. I

mean, you can just follow this go down the rabbit hole of just analyzing everything to death easily. If you get into like scholastic terravada where you've had monks with nothing better to do, you know that maybe they don't meditate very well. So they just dedicate their lives to scholarship and just analyzing and analyzing and analyzing and just writing commentaries and subcommentaries and sub subcommentaries just like categorizing and systematizing everything. I think the medieval Catholics did the same thing in Europe just analyze everything to death.

But

the word kleth and the spirit maketh

alive.

So you're better off with spirit than

than a letter. I mean you need a certain

amount of textual information to just

get you going in the right direction to

you know tell you how to meditate and

why you should meditate. But once you

learn that stuff the books aren't nearly

as important. I mean there's certainly

no more need to like study all these

various categories of comma than there

is to study

dream interpretation.

It's just a kind of distraction and some

monks will capitalize on that just

because they really don't meditate very well. They don't like meditation or some such. So they'll just say well I'm just going to go the scholarly route. And in Sri Lanka, getting back to the question uh a while back about Sri Lankan Buddhism, there [clears throat] is a common belief in Sri Lanka that nobody can become enlightened anymore. So there's no point even trying. And so a lot of the monks would use that as a justification for not practicing much and just going the route of scholarship and studying the books.

So anyways, I'm moving on to the next question.

Let's see. Fred, the next question is

from Fred. Fred says,

"Can we really transcend some sorrow with a lizard brain in operation calling the emotional shots?"

And yeah, I think we can because the lizard brain, which is calling the emotional shots, I mean, you don't necessarily have to enslave yourself to that. You can detach from that. you can transcend the the lizard brain and just human nature in general. And again, we're talking at two different levels of reality. You've got this level of samsara with all this [__] going on and then through [clears throat] mindfulness and mysticism and detachment. I mean you

can just focus more on the block of
marble than on the various statues or on
any statue in particular
or any group of statues in particular.
So I mean [clears throat] from this
point of view from from like the
samsaric empirical point of view even an
enlightened being is still going to have
like the amidali in the brain you know
the various like lizard emotional
centers of the brain that are still
functional. So, you know, certain mental
states or emotions or whatever are still
going to arise. It's just that the
enlightened being is no longer
identified with that. He's no longer
enslaved to that. He has transcended

that level of reality. It's still kind of there, but it's just not the main focus anymore.

kind of like what I was saying about that um world's leading one of the world's leading authorities on obsessivempulsive disorder where you cure somebody of obsessivempulsive disorder. It doesn't mean that the urges like the like the compulsions and so forth just completely go away. They're still there. It's just you learn to detach and not react to it.

You don't identify with it more. It's not me. It's the OCD. And I think that just any kind of full enlightenment is

going to be along those lines. That unenlightened urges or just like human nature is still going to be there. It's just that you're you've transcended that. It's no longer you anymore. It's just nature taking its course.

That includes the lizard brain.

And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Cyrus Frame.

This is the last question,

the very last one on this episode.

Cyrus Frame says, "When you were a monk, how did you guard the sense doors?"

Simple question. And guarding the sense doors is really emphasized in the poly text. The monk is supposed to guard the sense doors. And there's different ways

of doing it. [clears throat] One way of guarding the sense doors is you just go off into the forest and live in a cave. So you're guarding your the sense doors in that like like a mechanical way just by avoiding excess stimulation. You're staying out of town. You know, you're you're staying away from all this tumultuous like human interaction that can distract you and lead you away from practicing dharma correctly. So you just go alone like the horn of the rhinoceros. You go off and live in a forest, spend hours every day staring at the wall of a blank wall of a cave. or whatever it is.

So that would be like the the
superficial mechanical way of guarding
the sense doors is I mean you just
remove yourself from society and just go
out and live a very simple life with not
a lot of distraction and stimulation.
Also [snorts] just being moral is a way
of guarding the sense doors indirectly.
you know, following all these precepts
and just minimizing the amount of bad
karma you generate or accus you generate
that in a way is guarding the sense
doors kind of defensively, preemptively
by you're making less bad karma that's
going to cause less like distraction and
interruption and upheaval and so forth.
But when you get to more advanced level,

guarding the sense doors, what you're doing partly is just being mindful, which is detaching yourself from everything you're experiencing. So that's a way of guarding the sense doors is through mindfulness where let's say [clears throat]
um a loud noise starts happening, a dog starts barking. If you're guarding the sense doors, it's just you're mindful of hearing. It's just like raw auditory data. You're not interpreting it. You're not wondering who the dog is. You know, whose dog is that? Why is the dog barking, you know? You're not going off on these chains of association. It's

just hearing, hearing, hearing. That is guarding the sense doors. That's one example of it anyway. And then if you get into like deep meditative states, then you're kind of tuning out. Especially if you're doing samata meditation, you're tuning out you know what little stimulation is still out there and just focusing inwardly which is more radical guarding of the sense doors and that's just temporary because you can't be that way all the time. Sometimes you've got to get up and move around. Got to go for alms around in the village. And in that case, you have to be very careful about guarding your sense doors because I mean going for

alms is one of the most stimulating experiences a monk has over the course of his day. A lot of the time it's like the most opportunity for [__] to happen. So, you know, you've got pretty girls walking around in the village sometimes, or you've got somebody putting something really disgusting into your bowl. Some little old lady puts cake into your bowl that's swarming with ants and her eyesight is not good enough. She doesn't see it. You know, she's just offering you this cake in good faith, but the ants found it before she did or before you got it. And it's or like you get a good [clears throat] piece of cake with

no ants on it. The very next lady just pours soup onto it. And it's like, great lady, you just poured soup all over my cake.

You know, it's so when you go for alms round, all of a sudden it's like relatively speaking, sensory overload. And so that is when it's very important. I mean, you look downwards like when a monk is in public, he's supposed to be looking downwards at all times, unless there's some real need for it to look up.

So that's guarding the sense doors also. So you mean you're not checking out all the pretty girls, you know, and then you just accept your food with like

gratitude and a poker face. Even if someone with leprosy is offering food into your bowl, you're not cringing. They're offering something you just really can't stand, something disgusting into your bowl. I mean, you're not making faces.

It's just it's just visual stimuli. I mean, if you're really being mindful, you're just [clears throat] looking down, you know, accepting the food attentively, but you're not critiquing it, you know, you're not, you don't have this running commentary going. And that's what guarding the sense doors really amounts to at that level anyway

is you're just being mindful and it's like sensory data. In the scene, there is only the scene. In the herd, there is only the herd. In the felt, there is only the felt, etc.

You know, it's not like you're critiquing stuff, criticizing, have any kind of running dialogue going, any kind of commentary going on that's just kind of taking you away from the present moment.

That also is guarding the sense doors. And that's in a way it's it's one of the main ways of guarding the sense doors that are referred to in the sutas where you're just not like following along any kind of stimulus. You know, it's the

stimulus isn't like distracting you from just being right here, right now in the present moment and just accepting all these stimuli as just sensory stimuli rather than at that dog is barking and it's bugging me. is just sensory stimuli that is guarding the sense doors. It's like protecting you from making aula kama and and just like wallowing in samsara, you know. It's it's like the unenlightened minds

one of its best tools for just not getting just sucked into samsara and completely distracted and led astray by it.

And that's it. And my throat is pretty

much hash right now.

But that's all right, [clears throat]

too.

It's just kind of a wet, gray, rainy

day. And somehow [clears throat] wet,

gray, rainy days cause scratchier

throats than usual, I think.

But like I should always say at the

beginning and pretty much never do, if

you have any questions you think I can

answer about Dharma, Dharma, Buddhism,

Terraata Buddhism, early Buddhism, what

early Buddhism was likely to be like,

meditation,

monastic discipline, living in Burma,

living in Buddhist Asia, you know,

philosophy in general. If you think that

there's a good chance I'd be able to answer your question intelligently and you don't want to resort to AI to answer your questions, which is an easier and easier thing to do nowadays, feel free to ask um no more than three questions per person per episode, please.

And [clears throat] uh look at the let's see what is it, the URL links below. And I've still got another book coming out soon. In fact, technically, I've got two books coming out soon because somebody has generously printed up more than a hundred copies of my Atkawaga translation that is going to be sent to

me. Um, and so I will be able to
distribute those.
I don't have the the
um monetary wherewithal to send them all
out completely for free, but uh anyone
who wants to pay for the postage, I
mean, it's free besides the however much
it costs the the the postal service to
send it. And I'm still waiting for the
illustrations on on the [clears throat]
memoirs from Myanmar, the uh writings of
a incendiary monk series. That's pretty
much done. I'm still waiting for the
illustrations to be finished.
And uh aside from that, all I say is uh
be happy.

Okay, then

I think we're recording. I think this microphone is working. Hello and welcome to episode 184 of Question and Answer. I am your host Pony Bosa and I'm wearing my Mulon Lab shirt today in honor of the Spartan 300 led by King Leonitis who died at the battle of Thermopoli. They died in glory. I watched a documentary about it last night.

And uh this is my beverage, which I haven't put the paper umbrella into yet. So, we open said beverage, insert paper little paper umbrella, immediately take it back out again because its purpose is mainly ostentation and to show my

sophistication and class to the viewer.

take a sip of said beverage.

[clears throat] And then I guess it's my duty to point out that of course 184 is not a prime number. It is 2 * 2 * 2 * 23.

And um I was even considering just skipping this weekend because there's not a whole heck of a lot of questions asked. But then I mean last night I was thinking well maybe I can just skip this weekend. And then this morning more people ask questions. So we're above 20 now, which is okay. And so the show must go on and I'm going to commence to answering questions here after making a few slight adjustments.

[cough and clears throat]

Okay then.

So, I guess uh I've uh finished the

almost obligatory

completely digressional

digressionary digressive

preamble.

And so, [clears throat]

next thing to do is to just wade into

these questions here.

And the first question is from Scooain.

And Scooterain says, "Do you ever say

I'm sorry or feel sorry for things you

may have unintentionally done to make

someone upset?" I guess according to

some at home, I don't do this. And

truthfully, I don't often feel very sorry. I also don't like to say I'm sorry if I'm not actually sorry. Of course, I don't like seeing anyone upset. And if it's something I've done that I can avoid, I will say that I will try not to do it again. I really don't like the idea of quote, "If you feel sorry for this, I will feel better." Unquote. Or quote, "If you feel bad, then I'll feel good." unquote. Maybe I'm just over complicating being sorry, but it's always seemed complex to me. And I can relate to this, but I guess before I answer the question,

I should look up the word sorry in the dictionary because sometimes you have

people just trying to have a discussion
or a debate or whatever it is and
they're completely at cross purposes.
They can't possibly see eye to eye
because they do not agree on the
definition of the terms. like something
like a soul or free will, that kind of
thing. Does it exist? Does it not exist?
I mean, it depends on the definition.
Capital G, God would be another one. So,
let's just look up sorry here. Sorry,
adjective.
It's a predicative feeling distress,
especially through sympathy with someone
else's misfortune.
Okay, so that would be practically the

same as compassion, wouldn't it? Except it would be more negative I guess because there's distress involved. Compassion doesn't necessarily involve distress.

So sorry for means filled with compassion for. Yeah, I feel sorry for that person because you know they they're dealing with so much hardship that kind of thing. So let's see number two second definition feeling regret or penitence.

So feeling regret. Yeah, that's from the Buddhist point of view. Feeling regret is always bad karma. You shouldn't do it. And I have taken that to heart. I rarely feel regret. Although it's kind

of strange that in the past after I was
pretty much cured of regret. Still, I
would feel it mainly
thinking about stuff that I did before I
was cured of regret. It was like the
memory that memory just has like these
sort of somewhat painful like emotional
tones just to the memory itself. So that
I would still have flashbacks
of feeling regret
um when remembering something that
happened before I was cured of regret.
So let's see here. Uh attributive in a
poor or pitiful state of or condition.
Oh yeah, like we're gonna we're gonna
get rid of his sorry ass.

That kind of thing. So we can we [clears throat] can uh just completely forget that one. So it can mean feeling distress, especially through sympathy. Sympathy with somebody else's misfortune or it can mean feeling regret or penitence. And so I guess we should look up penitence.

So penitence, the action or feeling of showing sorrow. Yeah, circular definitions. This is like an Oxford dictionary too.

Feeling showing sorrow and regret for having done something wrong. Repentance. So sorry is related to the word sorrow. So it' be like sorrowful over having done such and such. But let's get back

to the question now, shall we? Now that we've studied up on the key terms, especially sorry.

Do I do I ever say I'm sorry or feel sorry for things that you may have unintentionally done to make someone upset? Um I I do say I'm sorry sometimes, especially at home with my beloved my beloved mate.

Um but it's not like regret. It's it's not sorry in the terms in the in the sense of feeling remorseful. It's more like, well, I am like unhappy because you're unhappy because there's sort of like a group mind going on. You know, we're having an interaction. I might be

catching hell for something. So, it's uh

a kind of,

you know,

let's see, how do how do I even explain

this?

It's it's not so much remorse,

but still it's like um to say I'm sorry

is more like uh a kind of way of saying,

you know, I beg your pardon. You know,

please forgive me. I didn't mean to do

it. You know, I didn't necessarily think

I was doing anything wrong by doing it.

That kind of thing.

But yeah, feeling actual remorse,

wishing that you hadn't done something,

done something with an N, not an M. Um,

yeah, I mean, you're just setting

yourself up against reality. I mean,
it's like wishing you hadn't done
something in the past, which is
irrevocable
or irrevocable. I mean, you just can't
change the past. So wishing that the
past was different, it's just
unnecessary self-inflicted suffering.
So if I do say I'm sorry, the main
meaning is like I apologize, you know,
it's I mean they're practically
synonymous,
you know, it's like I beg your pardon,
that kind of thing.
So let's see here. Did I answer the
question?

H I also don't like to say I'm sorry if I'm not actually sorry. Yeah, I mean that would be dishonest, wouldn't it? I mean, you'd essentially be lying. It might be considered to be a white lie and therefore okay by like western secular standards, but still, I mean, you should be committed to truth.

If you can't even manage conventional truth, how are you going to get to ultimate truth?

[snorts]

Know what I'm saying?

So, let's see here.

Of course, I don't like seeing anyone upset. Yeah, I don't like to see anyone upset either. I mean, even if somebody

that I don't particularly like, I mean,
for them to be upset. I mean, it's it'd
be better if they kind of were, you
know, sort of a little more humble
maybe. I mean, I don't like to see
people that are just like gloating and
completely, you know, just,
you know, somebody that has like the
opposite political view that I have
that they're just like smug and
gloating. You know, I don't like to see
that either.
Let's see here. Now, see, my sweetie is
just right outside the window. See, I'm
I'm not in the regular studio. I'm in
our the back bedroom.

And so I've got a window directly in front of me and if anyone goes out onto the back patio, I see it and it can be distracting.

So let's see here.

See, I will say that I will try not to do it again. Yeah, that's fine. It's that's the best thing to do. I mean, if you really aren't repentant, I mean, it depends on your definition of sorry, I suppose. Or if you're just using I'm sorry, you know, the the statement I'm sorry just as like a synonym for I apologize or I beg your pardon or please forgive me, that kind of thing, then I guess you can get away with it.

But yeah, I I do I I do really relate to

this statement. And remorse, regret is

always bad karma.

Even if someone is insisting that you

feel regret. And of course, if an enemy

is wanting you to feel sorry, they're

just I mean, that's just part of their

revenge.

They're not going to really forgive you.

Or at least in many cases like political

enemies. They try to force somebody or

compel somebody to say they're sorry

just as a just as like a weapon.

You know, it's almost like

>> [clears throat]

>> you you're worse off if you apologize.

It's sort of like um like it reminds me

of uh the call of the wild

where it's talking about like sled dogs

in in Alaska in the Yukon territory

where if there's a dog fight and one of

the dogs goes down, all the other dogs

that were just sitting there watching

will just gang up on that dog that went

down.

>> [clears throat]

>> But I already answered the question.

There's no need for me to discuss the

behavior of sled dogs. So I'm just

moving on to the next question. This is

from Newman.

And Newman says, "Has there ever been a

terraodin version of tantric practice?

For example, the Thai tiger skin wizard

guys."

Well,

it's it's almost like a trick question.

Um, you could I mean in Burma you've got

like

um they're like what's the word?

Trying to think of the word alchemists.

So you've got like alchemists and

wizards and so forth that are ordained

monks, ordained terra Buddhist monks,

but their their practices that are along

more or less tantric lines certainly are

not in accord with Terra Buddhism. So to

the extent that they are tantric, to

that same extent, they're not really in

accordance with Terravada Buddhism.

And if they're engaging in tantric sex practices, then they're not even monks. Once once there's the amount of insertion amounting to the width of a of a sesame seed, then one is parajika, one is excommunicated from the sa for life and one is no longer a monk.

um certain other acts like stealing. I don't know if there's any kind of tantric spiritual practice that involves stealing, but um just doing things that are at variance with orthodox like rules of monastic discipline, fortunetelling, that sort of thing. It's not really in accordance with Terravada. So, it's not

really a terraodin practice. It's just a practice that some Terravada Buddhist monks just officially ordained Terravada Buddhist monks will do like reading palms, astrology,
um, alchemy, trying to do I mean there's [clears throat] even like a certain amount of necromancy going on in Burma where um, certain monks, including at least one famous one that I know of, uh, allegedly would put out raw meat and raw blood that these hung hungry ghosts would feed on until the hungry ghosts are like jonesing for their raw meat and raw blood and reliant on this wizard necromancer monk who can then say, "All

right, you want more of that raw blood? Well, you're going to have to do what I say. You're going to have to do my bidding." And then they become like the the servants or slaves of the necromancer.

There supposedly allegedly is some of that going on in Burma.

But tantric, I mean, if if you're talking about capital T tantra, not just sort of

unethical conduct that is done mindfully as a way of sort of transcending the ethics of it, you know, and trying to use the the behavior of the kaliuga as a kind of spiritual vehicle, which is what capital T tantra is doing. But I don't

think there's I mean you couldn't really
do that within a terra Buddhist context.
To the extent that you're doing that
you're not terrain.
So you can have monks that are
technically ordained terra Buddhist
monks
who are doing tantric practices that
aren't sufficient to get them
excommunicated. Like no sex for example.
Eating meat's fine, eating fish is fine.
even drinking alcohol. Um, it's against
the rules, but at least it's not going
to get you kicked out of the SA.
But to the extent you're doing that kind
of stuff, you're you're at odds with

terra Buddhist ethics.

So yeah, there have been terra Buddhist tantric practices especially now all of a sudden I'm remembering the Mahari and the Mahari were like a tantric sect of Buddhism similar to Tibetan Buddhism that was the prevailing school of Buddhism among the Burmese before they converted to Terravada Buddhism in the 11th century. So like the early Pagan Empire before King Anorata forcibly converted his his country to Terra Buddhism, you had like tantric monks that were practicing a kind of vajraana kind of stuff. And I would assume when Burma like was essentially by the royal decree converted to

Terravada, you had a lot of these
tantric monks who sort of superficially
converted to Terravada so they could
stay in their monasteries, you know, at
their temples and all that that
nevertheless were still doing tantric
stuff, getting drunk, for example.
But [clears throat]
again I mean you can it has happened
historically
with nominally terra Buddhist monks
but to the extent that they really are
doing tantric practices to that same
extent they're not following terra
Buddhism.
So you can interpret that as you please.

But there are like wizards and

alchemists and necromancers and that

sort of thing in teraba Buddhist

countries that some of them are ordained

monks.

And

I mean I mean officially technically

they're terra Buddhist because they're

ordained terra Buddhist monks who

haven't yet succeeded in getting

themselves excommunicated.

But still, I mean, they're like not

conscientious monks. Even monks who who

do horoscopes and and read palms, that

kind of thing. They're deviating from

what the texts say they should be doing.

Because the texts say you're not

supposed to be doing fortuneelling and palistry and, you know, interpreting omens and that kind of stuff, much less doing like the hard capital Tantra stuff, the five M's, for example.

And the five M's of capital T tantra are my tuna which is sex. Can't do that in teraba if you're an ordained monk. Matcha which is fish. Mamsa which is meat. Eating meat. Eating fish. Maja which is literally intoxicant but it here it means like alcohol. And then there's one that they [clears throat] don't really know what it means anymore. I think probably originally it was a kind of drug, but now because they don't

know exactly what it is, they replace it with parched grain, which I don't know why parched grain would be some transgressive fifth M for a tantric practitioner.

But I'm just going to move on to the next question here. Newman's second question is, have you ever encountered davas?

and not really that I know of. I mean, you can feel a presence, that kind of thing. Um,

the presence might just be like a higher level of your own consciousness that you're not aware of at the ordinary worldly level at all times. So, for example,

I've been near death a few times, like before I was a monk. You're you're driving too fast in cold weather. You hit a patch of black ice. The cars start sliding out of control and it's like everything just becomes crystal clear. You stop thinking. It is as though time slows down. But really, it's just you're operating at a a faster level. But I mean, it's like without thinking. It's just like some something
takes over your body and just does whatever is necessary to keep you alive until the danger is passed and then you return to a more or less normal state and start thinking in thoughts again.

And that happened to me once um when I was in Burma. Um I was living under under a rock ledge in this little box canyon that the the cave or overhanging rock ledge was right at the end of the canyon. And sometimes I'd be looking up at the walls of the canyon think I wonder what's up there. I wonder what it's like up there because I really hadn't been walking around up above very much. But then I'd think it's just too steep. I mean it's almost like vertical walls to this canyon. And so I just thought it's just too too difficult for me to climb up there. And then one night after dark there was a brush fire and it's like burning leaves and grass are

falling off the top of the the canyon and landing on the certain sides that of the canyon that weren't completely vertical but still like steep. and it was causing the fire to gradually get down into my little canyon. And so this same canyon wall that I figured was too steep to climb in broad daylight. I'm climbing it in the middle of the night with no flashlight, I've got a lit candle [clears throat] in one hand and a bamboo pole in the other hand in in like a sarong amongst robes and and sandals, flipflops. I'm climbing up this thing and the light of the fire actually kind of lit the way when I was going up. But

going back down again after the fire is out and it's dark, I've got a lit candle in one hand, but the when you're going downhill when it's really steep, the ground is way way down there. It's not like right in front of your face like when you're going uphill. And so I'm trying to go downhill like slowly work my way down this hill. And of course, I stepped on some dry leaves or dry grass or whatever. My feet just shot out from under under me and I start toboggoning on my back down the side of this very steep slope, way more than 45°.

And again, it was that same sort of mental state [clears throat] where it's like you stop thinking and just

immediately without thinking at all, you're just like in this state of heightened awareness where you're just doing whatever it is that's going to keep you alive. And it's like grabbing it at vines that would would just snap, you know? And for some reason, I kept a a grip. I I immediately let go of the bamboo pole, but that candle, I mean, without having time to think about it, I kept a firm grip on that candle because if I dropped and lost that candle, I would be stuck there until morning on the side of that hill, assuming that I didn't just fall off.

And so eventually my foot just hit a

clump of bamboo that was growing out of the side of the hill and stopped me with my other foot hanging off this vertical drop off which was only maybe six feet. But still it would have sped me up when on on the downhill on the on the ascent of the descent to the very bottom.

But again it could just that's not necessarily a dava. That could just be like some higher aspect of your own consciousness that your thinking ego just is oblivious to most of the time and it doesn't really step in until there's a real need for it.

But I have I remember one time I was at Panda Rama in Rangon doing two months of intensive of two months of intensive

practice meditation practice under the
the toutelage of Mahazi upandid
and I was just kind of in this state of
borderline despair for a while which if
you've [clears throat] done intensive
meditation retreats you you probably
know that despair or desperation
can arise under situations like this
like your ego is just like battling
against the practice this kind of thing.
And so I just like if there's anybody
out there please show me a sign. And so
I thought all right within the next
three days somebody has to come up to me
and say the word sign and that will be
my sign. And then two days later, u a

friend of mine, a Burmese monk friend of mine and uh a supporter, a lay supporter came to me and they were getting me a Burmese ID card. And so they asked me to sign, but I mean it wasn't in English and so it was, you know,
this kind of thing. So I mean that didn't really count. But then I said, "Well, does this mean or then somebody, I think it was the monk or the late, one of them, one of these two guys said,"Now [clears throat] that you have this Burma Burmese ID card, you won't have to keep getting visas." And then the other one says, "Miss Buu," which Masai Buu means it doesn't have anything to do with that. But still, it somebody in my

presence said sign. And I mean, I wasn't getting a lot of visitors. That was almost the only visit I received at the time. So I mean you could say that that was some dva giving a sign or you could say it was just coincidence or you could just say that it's my own karma my own mental states orchestrated the whole thing at a like a subconscious level but the thing is I mean davas as a general rule I mean going with even like Buddhist cosmology as a general rule they're invisible they could be standing right there next to you and you wouldn't see them you might feel a presence you know, but you're not going to see

them, you know, sort of like an ant crawls across your foot. It has no idea. It's in immediate contact with a higher being. It doesn't see you. You know, it's you're you're the the great moving land where nothing grows or whatever. And I mean, assuming that an a would even think.

So yeah, encountering Davis, I've never met one personally. Not that not not that I I'm aware of at the ordinary ego samsaric worldly level,

which is a very long answer to a very short question,

but I have lived in places that were considered to be haunted by like terrestrial davas.

Um, I've lived in a few places like that and like that over overhanging rock ledge that I was talking about. Um, it was considered to be guarded by an Osas, which is a relatively powerful terrestrial deity in Burma. And a lot of people were just afraid to come near it because they were afraid of the Osas. But I lived there for combined total of about three years. Never saw the USA. But who knows?

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. And I must say here that Newman has asked a transgressive fourth question. His name is going on a list. And if that's not sufficient to reform

his misconduct, then he's going on
another list and he's just going to
continue being added on to lists until
he stops this. But in his uh
uh I guess I I have to admit that he
just forgot that he asked one question
several days ago and then he just
decided he's going to ask his regulation
three questions while completely
forgetting that he asked another
question several days before.
And we don't have a whole lot of
questions. So maybe I'll give a dulty
kind of answer to his transgressive
fourth question. But the name is still
going on the list.
So Newman says [clears throat]

in terraata cosmology do you also find sublunary terrestrial demons or davas inhabiting or embodying springs, rivers, streams, beautiful sacred places etc. And yeah I mean there are I mean in in uh orthodox terra you've got rukadavas who are like terrestrial small g gods inhabiting large trees. You've got boommy davas who are, you [clears throat] know, living on the ground. In fact, the Osa that I mentioned just a couple minutes ago would be one of these terrestrial davas. I've lived in a number of those places, a lot of places in Burma where, you know, you you're not supposed to spit on

the ground. You're not supposed to take a pee on this hill. This kind of thing because it will offend the the Assam or or the terrestrial dava or whatever it is. They firmly believe in what are called belu which um in poly would be yaka which is usually translated as ogre or it's often translated as ogre. You know they're kind of monstrous being but technically they are a small G god. They belong to the realm of the four kings which is one level above the human level.

So [clears throat] I mean they wouldn't count as dammons. I mean there's still das

you know there's like a small G god

superhuman being I mean really uh
Buddhism doesn't really
uh doesn't really have a category of
like a don which is below a god but
above a human that kind of thing. It's
just if you're above human level then
you're at least a dva a small g god.
Above the davas are brahas that are that
are higher. They're they're like
[clears throat] in a different realm
than us. They're in the the rupal loca.
See, like davas and humans and animals
and ghosts and denisonens of hell and
the assuras. Um we all are inhabitants
of the kama loca or the sensuous world.
And then above that is the rupal loca

which is the the realm or the world inhabited by brahas who have a physical body. It's a refined matter. I mean they'd be invisible to us unless they really wanted us to see them. But still they do have a body and then above that is the arupaloka which is formless beings. It's like the most refined realms in Buddhist cosmology are the the formless realms where the the beings there are pure mind and have no physical body, not even of subtle matter, no no physical body at all.

So yeah, and in in Thailand and in Burma, you'll see like big trees that have like a little shrine either built onto the tree or right next to the tree,

and people will come and make offerings.
Um, in fact, before
the the Burmese were Buddhists, before
they converted to Buddhism, like when
they're still living in the the
foothills of the Himalayas to the north
of Burma, they [clears throat] uh
followed what is called the Nat cult,
which still is vestigial in Burmese
culture where they were essentially
worshiping the spirits of humans that
died violent deaths. And if you die a
violent death or an unnatural death,
according to the Burmese, that causes
you to be a sane, which means like a a
green ghost, which is more powerful than

if you just die of old age, die of
natural causes, just kind of fade out.
If your life force is just cut off
suddenly, then you've got more of a kind
of earthly momentum going, which causes
you to be a more powerful spirit in the
event that you are like still in the
form of some kind of ghost or like a
small G god
[clears throat] that is still associated
with this earth.
And uh there's still some belief in that
in Burma. the Knack cult, which is more
of these
more or less terrestrial deities.
[sighs]
I'm not exactly sure where the gnats are

supposed to live though, but I mean it's definitely it's right there in the poly text that there are like terrestrial small G gods
for the most part are invisible. But I mean sometimes like in even ancient Greek mythology sometimes you can have someone who appears to be a human being
[snorts]
but really it's a god in disguise.
Like in ancient Greece there was some some saying I don't remember the exact words of it which would be in ancient Greek anyway but it's like you should be generous to beggars because it may be a god in disguise that's testing you. And

that does happen in in poly texts also.

[sighs and gasps]

So

yeah, it's just a belief in nature

deities guarding certain areas or

inhabiting certain areas is very common

in Southeast Asia. And I'm just going to

move on to the transgressive fourth

question. It's going to get have

Newman's name put onto a list.

says though Buddhism teaches you

shouldn't though Buddhism teaches you

shouldn't pray to these deities and rely

on yourself in chance of blessings from

monks some include statements that the

davas will pour blessings and protect

practitioners of the dhamma are these

blessings purely worldly in orientation or in terra are there deities that can help you in your practice at all and yeah they deities can help you in your practice but in Buddhism it's the whole thing is kind of shortcircuited Because in Buddhism, it all depends on your own karma. So whether a god helps you or not is still dependent on your own karma. If it's not your karma to be helped by a god, you won't be. And if it is your karma to be helped by a god, then that very much increases the odds that you will be helped by a god. Well, for example, just to give uh the first example that comes to mind, the Baja

Suta, which is Udana 110, one of my
favorite sutas in the the polycanon.
There's this non Buddhist aesthetic
named [clears throat] Baja who lives in
western India and he's getting a lot of
respect and veneration from the lay
people and they think he's enlightened
and so he's starting to think well maybe
I'm enlightened and then a deity a small
G god who used to be a kinsman of his
but has gone to heaven descends to earth
and tells him no you're not really a god
or you're not really fully enlightened
But there is a person who is fully
enlightened called God Buddha who lives
you know in the the kingdom of Kosula
you know far to the far to the east and

you know and so Baja it inspires Baja to go and meet the Buddha who then preaches to him a short kind of zen-like sermon which causes Bah Baja to become enlightened.

So that would be a case of a deity helping somebody in their dharma practice. And it it does happen sometimes, but again, it's not going to happen unless it's your karma. You're I mean, it's all that kind of stuff is shortcircuited to a certain extent like in a philosophical sense by your own karma because it's going to happen in accordance with your karma. If it's not

your karma to be helped by a dva, you
won't be helped by a dva.
So I'm just moving on to the next
question. This is from the sabotur
singular not plural.
And the sabatur says this is kind of a
strange question. The sabotur says, "I
read somewhere that if you delete
someone, in addition to negative karma,
you also inherit your victim's karma.
Whether positive or negative or both, I
don't know. For example, it is common
knowledge that Stalin deleted God knows
how many people directly and indirectly.
But it's historically accepted that
Beria, Berea, I don't know how to
pronounce that. Beria deleted Stalin. So

would Beria shoulder all of Stalin's karma? In which case is Stalin now free of all karma and doesn't have to reincarnate?

Incidentally, Barria himself was deleted. Of course, the underlying motives are always key. Yeah, I don't know who would say this. It certainly is not a Buddhist doctrine. I mean, that would make karma sort of like a veneerial disease or it's like, you know, they say you're having e cs. not only with the person you're actually in bed with, but with everybody that they have had se cs with. You know, it's like karma does not work that way. I mean,

that would be so weird if you actually
got good karma by deleting saints so
that you would just be taking in all of
their their saintly virtue into
yourself. I mean, that would just that
would just elicit a kind of [__] storm,
wouldn't it?
But like in in terra Buddhism
that one of the the ways of guaranteeing
just rebirth in hell is to kill an
enlightened being to delete a fully
enlightened Arhan I should say. But then
again I mean they kind of don't have and
they still have latent karma.
So, [snorts]
I guess you could still inherit the
karma of an enlightened being because

they still have latent karma even though they're not making new karma.

But that would I mean it's that would just be awful. I mean, if you had like devout Buddhists who think that by deleting saints they're going to be taking in all this virtuous karma. I mean,

yeah. And that's that's just weird.

So,

yeah. I mean your karma is just your own mental states. It's not like some kind of substance that you you can you just like absorb from somebody else that from the Buddhist point of view anyways karma is primarily volition. So it's your

mental states

and it includes a lot of like

subconscious mental states. So that if

you are deleting or just like

attacking a saint that deep down you're

going to pick up on that and realize

that you're like being mean to someone

who just really does not deserve it at

all which is going to make it worse.

Make your volitions worse because you

know deep down anyway

that you are inflicting you know bodily

harm or whatever onto someone who

doesn't even deserve it.

I mean, I guess their own karma would

cause you to be able to do it, but I

mean,

where do I go from there, man?

[clears throat]

So,

yeah. I mean, you don't just inherit

somebody else's karma if you like

[snorts]

cause them to cease to to metabolize on

this planet. They still have I mean

after they die they still have their own

karma. You know Stalin regardless of how

he died I mean he still has his karma.

It's not like he's just gonna become

fully enlightened or or like float up

into a heaven realm just because

somebody that was approximately as bad

as he was off him.

Yeah. So, I don't know where the sabotur reads read this, but it's uh heresy, heresy, pernitious wrong view at best, and at worst, it could just actually be if people actually believed it, they'd be going around trying to to delete saints just to just to get their karma. sort of like some people that [clears throat] would uh if they were HIV positive that they would go and or or also like in Victorian England if you had syphilis. There were some people that believed that if you um fornicated with a virgin that you would get rid of the syphilis and really they were just spreading it and keeping it to themselves and also spreading it to some

hapless virgin

or recent ex virgin.

Yeah. I mean this

not even and I'm just moving on to the

next question. This is from PSA.

PSA says, "Which meditation technique or

techniques are you practicing nowadays?"

And like I've said several times before,

I'm really not doing any formal sitting

practice anymore. Partly because there's

no way that I would ever do justice to

what I was doing when I was a

professional meditator as a monk.

And so the only real meditation

techniques I do are occasional

spontaneous oming. Just doing Om as a

mantra quietly to myself when doing
other things or just mindfulness of
daily activities being aware of weird
mental states
or not so weird mental states or just
sometimes it's just like you know it'll
just kind of hit you that all of a
sudden you're you're aware of your the
the clothes touching your skin and your
your own breathing or whatever it is
that you're you're sensing, you know,
you just kind of detach from it and
observe it objectively instead of just
having that be you.
So, yeah, the only meditation techniques
I really do now are occasional
spontaneous oming and just sad saga

of just mindfulness of just whatever is going on, which also tends to be spontaneous.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ruie

and Ruie says, "If one is asked about dharma by someone who might have heard of the Buddha but knows nothing about dharma, what are the boundaries to sharing the sparse experience or knowledge one may have? Is it preferable to remain silent?" Well, it depends on how much you know about it. But I mean, if you're uncertain about much of any of Buddhist doctrine, you might just tell them you really don't know enough to be

able to teach them anything and sort of refer them to a more knowledgeable source. But I mean, if you know the fundamentals, I mean, it certainly doesn't hurt to just give a a brief explanation of like the four noble truths. If something like no self is something that you're having difficulty grasping, then you shouldn't try to teach it to somebody else, especially if they're inclined to be. I mean, whether they're skeptical or or even just like gullible and just believing anything you say. I mean either way it's not really helping them for them to reject like some profound teaching w just with contempt or for them to just like accept

maybe an inaccurate explanation as gospel truth. I mean either way it's not really helping them much.

But I mean to the extent that you understand something fairly well like four noble truths is fairly basic. the noble eight-fold path. Just simple basics like that, there's there's no harm at all in in sharing that with somebody else if they're receptive to it. I mean, if they're just openly disrespectful to it, then you're better off just not talking about it. In fact, there are rules of monastic discipline forbidding a monk to teach dharma. Um, no matter I mean he could be a scholar,

he could be an authority on the subject, but it's still against the rules for a monk to teach dhamma to someone who is openly disrespectful.

And it could just be like a cultural thing, you know, like the monk is barefoot and the person is is wearing shoes [snorts] or has their head covered or is holding a weapon. any I mean it could just be that they're a soldier or something but still

it's just they should have sufficient respect to as to show respect for the dharma not necessarily even for the monk but just show respect for dharma and if they're openly disrespectful or just carelessly disrespectful then you're

better off not teaching it to them. It's kind of interesting some of the rules like a monk is not allowed to teach dharma to someone who is walking on the path if the monk is walking beside the path you know it's like a narrow path and so I mean you'd have to go single file for pe people to be walking on that path together and if the monk is behind he's not allowed to teach dhamma and if he's to the side of the path he's not allowed to teach dama but if he's in front then he can teach dama especially if the the person that he's teaching Dhamma to doesn't have shoes on or a hat or carrying a weapon, etc., etc.,

so

I guess I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from Trareas

and Troas says, "What size are these new

Atawaga books, normal or pocket size?"

And I just so happen to have one right

here. So, this is like the most compact

version of my Atikawaga translation in

existence thus far. And somebody

generously just volunteered to have over

a 100 copies of this printed up for free

distribution.

And I haven't really read through it, so

I don't know what kind of typos there

might be. Um, there could be typos.

Um, but also the only the only kind of

drawback to this, aside from any

possible typos, which may or may not be in there, is that they're not really lined up. The original idea was to have poly on one side
and English on the other side. And that you, if you knew enough poly, you could compare the poly version with the English version. just just so you could be confident that I wasn't just making [__] up because some of the stuff in the Antikawaga really is just it's not orthodox Terravada.
So an Orthodox Terravada Buddhist who knows Pi could refer to the original just to see for himself or herself that it really was a good translation. But um

just the way it's formatted,
it's uh they don't really line up. Like
you've got the beginning of the chula
wiuhasuta in poly on this side whereas
you're already like halfway through the
chula chula weasuta on the English side
and then towards the end let's see
it it all just after the poly runs out
it just goes to straight English on both
sides.
So I mean that's kind of a quibble. I
really have nothing but respect and
gratitude to the person who went to the
trouble of doing this. U there wasn't
really much consultation going on. I
mean, I didn't really have a chance to
to look at the proofs or anything. And

it may be that I mean, it's just sometimes they're just like glitches where I mean, you just don't know how to fix it or something. So, it's it is the way it is. And it's I mean the English which is what most people are just going to read anyway is still fine.

So thank you to the person who went to the trouble. This is comes closer to my original idea of something really small that you could put in your pocket and carry around with you instead of some big book that I mean you'd have to carry it under your arm or something or in a big bag or something.

So, yeah, there are these. And if anyone

wants one, um I'm not really in a position to pay for the postage for every everybody's book, but uh self-ress stamped envelope, I guess. Um maybe those prepaid postal service first class envelopes would work. Um, so I could find out how much those cost and that might be the price of of postage or someone could just send me one and then I could I could send a copy of this which is very nice little size I have to admit.

So let's just move on to Troas is next question. Did you plug your computer this time? Yeah, I I had because [clears throat] I moved into this room that um yeah, I brought the cord and it

was pretty obvious to plug it in. So,

yeah, it's plugged in.

Now, on to Trezas is third question.

Do you know this as a fact that Jane

Monks would just go to some forest and

selfdelete in a way probably most of us

would not do, not eating and drinking

anything? I'm pretty sure if I remember

that that the idea that if a monk or an

aivaca thinks that they have just

reached full enlightenment

that the thing for them to do is just

especially the Janes just forget the

Ajivacas. The question is about the

Janes anyway. So, I'm [clears throat]

pretty sure that I have read in a Jane

text that when a Jane thinks that he has exhausted all of his karma that he should just go off into like an isolated remote area, you just some wasteland and just squat down and remain motionless until he is no longer alive.

Because if you think you've exhausted all of your karma as a Jane, there's a chance that you might accidentally create more karma right before you die. So, I mean, you want to just end it as just as soon as you can. You can't really commit violence upon yourself because that would be creating karma right at the last minute. So, you just squat down and remain motionless until you're not alive anymore. And I I seem

to remember that I have read that in a Jane scripture. But just because it says something in a religion scripture doesn't mean that most followers are going to be following that. You know, you can just read the Bible. You know, gather not up your treasures upon the earth. How many Christians follow that one? I mean, even a lot of ordained Christians don't follow that one.

So

yeah, and I would guess that most Jane monks

don't think that they've become enlightened anyway. You know, it would be like a very tiny minority of Jane

monks. Probably most of those being not entirely right in the head who are just like misjudging their own spiritual state, like overestimating their attainment or whatever. Who would try that?

But it's also I mean you can read about it in other books but

I I do seem to recall that I have read that in a Jane text in an English translation of a Jane text.

And so I'm just going to move on to this question. This from Stellar Supreme etc.

And Stellar Supreme does have like a an obscure way of communicating sometimes and I'm not 100% sure that I understand this question. He says, "You have

remarked that leftist compassion is dangerous, but I recall reading some polycanon passage stating that a noble king or sovereign has a sort of automatic rulership. He has command over state coercion. But the Buddha says the noble among them would secure prosperity such that the folk that live in his territory wouldn't even need to worry about bandits. they would leave their doors unlocked. Could we assume that this might be a mark of the best in a superior age whereas we now live in more of a dark age where being a sovereign is just bad karma?

Well, I understand the gist of this

question. So, just because

[clears throat] there are a few obscure

passages

or phrases contained within this

question, I think I can still answer it.

Um, see this, let's just kind of unpack

it a little bit though. He says that I

have remarked that leftist compassion is

dangerous. Yeah, leftist compassion can

be suicidal. Like if you refuse to

punish or at least imprison

violent criminals, which is a common

leftist practice nowadays,

you know, you just

go and sin no more and then they just

keep on sinning.

Um, yeah. I mean, that that is suicidal

to a society. I guess I said the word that you're not supposed to say on YouTube, so I guess the algorithm just got dinged.

[clears throat] So, anyways, let's see. He recalls reading some polycanon passage stating that a noble king or sovereign has a sort of automatic rulership. I'm not exactly sure what an automatic rulership would would mean. I don't think that would mean autocracy. So he has command over state coercion, but the Buddha says the noble among them would secure prosperity such that the folk that live in his territory wouldn't even need to worry about bandits. Yeah.

Well, part of that they wouldn't have to worry about bandits because the bandits have all been arrested or executed or punished.

And I mean, that's just the way it was in the Buddhist time. I mean, and there were no saintly kings in the Buddhist time that I'm aware of. Maybe Ashoka a few hundred years later might qualify at least after he saw the light.

But I mean even in the Buddhist time they were in this grizzly public executions for example. And there is a certain jotaka story called the Tamia Jotaka. I've mentioned this before where I mean this is ancient India where the Buddha in his in a previous

existence before he was the Buddha he was still just the bodhic sata is born as a royal prince and when he is like a toddler he's sitting on the king's lap on his throne while the king is making like royal judgments which included having criminals put to death you you know, just gruesome public executions, this sort of thing. And the bodhic sata, Prince Tamia, realized when he grows up, he's going to become the king. He was next in line in the succession. And then he was going to have to do that because it's the duty of a king to punish criminals,

to punish them in such a way that it

discourages others from taking up a life of crime. And so he just pretended to be a deaf mute after that to avoid being like the next king because to be a king you have to do bad things. It's just what is right from an ethical point of view is not necessarily right from a political point of view.

So

could we assume that this might be a mark of the best in a superior age whereas we now live in more of a dark age where being a sovereign is just bad karma. I mean the the karma of sovereigns in the Buddhist time was much worse. I mean you had royal princes executing their own fathers in order to

get the succession. Like in ancient Persia, you know, was the the king, the sha, he would have a harum of wives, you know, he'd have multiple wives, he'd have multiple sons, but after he would pass away, you'd have like this mass die off of royal princes where you got [clears throat] the one who's going to be the next king is just eliminating all the competition. To some degree that happened in in the Roman Empire also, but it certainly was happening in ancient India like during the Buddha's own lifetime. King Ajata Satu killed his own father so that he could become king. And this this is mentioned like in the

samaya pala suta which I think is the second suta of the deganikaya where king [clears throat] ajata comes and listens to the Buddha you know teaching dharma and then king ajata just kind of thanks him and walks away and then the Buddha makes a remark to the extent that you know he probably would have had more of a positive response. It would have been more helpful to him if his mind wasn't like his spirit wasn't already like damned. You know, he was like a damned soul from a a Buddhist point of view because he had murdered his own father so that he could become king.

So yeah, in the Buddhist time you really did have just these really horrible,

grizzly public executions that were just standard.

And that was I mean there were people being publicly hanged in London just as as late as the 19th century. I don't know when they stopped doing that public executions even in the city of London but it's relatively recent that [clears throat] people have become more feminized which has its good points and its bad points. you know, the the self-destructive compassion being one of the bad points or [clears throat] yeah, self-destructive compassion is a pretty good bad point to to mention. And but

the good point of being feminized as a society is there's just less like public violence
that would just be considered unthinkable now. Whereas not too long ago, well up into modern times, it was just common place.
So let's see here. [sighs]
[clears throat]
It all balances out in the long run. But seriously, what is right and good from an ethical point of view is not necessarily what is right and good from a political point of view. And idologues who insist that politics be purely ethical and good are completely unrealistic. And if their policies are

put into practice, you know, their
ideals are converted into official
policies, that civilization is doomed.
Like what's going on in in the European
Union right now?
Western civilization is in free fall in
the in
most of Western Europe anyway.
But you can have centuries of decline
before you finally hit the collapse
point. And that's like what happened
with the Roman Empire. It was it was
declining for hundreds of years before
the the collapse finally happened.
[sighs] So let's just uh move on to the
next question here.

This is from Xenithoid. [clears throat]
And Xenithoid asked kind of an interesting question that I haven't been asked before.
He says, "I've read that in the preodern age, children were seen almost as little adults and that the concept of childhood being a time for innocence and play is actually a relatively modern idea. How are children seen in practically preodern country like Burma?" Well, before I answer that question, I just want to point out something with regard to this first statement.
He says that in the premodern age, children were seen almost as little adults, and the concept of childhood

being a time for innocence and play is actually a relatively modern idea. Yeah, I don't think so. I I really I really think that that is not a a an accurate statement. For example, in Rome, 2,000 years ago and more, it was a custom. And I should have studied up on this. I mean, I've I've learned about it in the past, but [clears throat] before a a child

wore the what is it? The toga verillus. You know, it's like the the toga of adult of an adult that they would wear white, I think, and they would have this amulet, which for some reason would often have like an erect fallus as part

of the symbolism on this this amulet. So
I mean that's kind of sexualized but
still what so long as you were in the
presence like an a Roman adult
especially the patrician class if they
were in the presence of one of these
white robed children who hadn't reached
the adulthood yet it it was like totally
uncool to use like vulgar language you
know to cuss in front of them to do
anything openly sexual in front of them.
I mean that was just taboo.
because children in ancient Rome at
least early ancient Rome like Republican
days were seen as practically sacred in
their innocence.
So yeah, Xenithoid read that in the

premodern age children were seen almost
as little adults concept of childhood
being a time for innocence relatively
modern idea. That's not universally
true. Maybe some cultures, certainly
some civilizations may have been that
way, but in our European culture, like
at least with regard to Rome,
it wasn't that way at all. I would I
would guess that other other societies,
other civilizations were similar in the
idea that children really are innocent.
They're supposed to be innocent, and
it's just like taboo to cuss in front of
children, for example.
So getting to the actual question

though, how were children seen in a practically preodern culture country [clears throat] like Burma? It's it's kind of strange that I never really I mean I wasn't really like collecting anthropological data on how children are treated in Burma. Like I mean devout Buddhist Burmese people like villagers generally don't cuss much anyway. I mean, there's cursing is relatively rare in Burma anyhow, just because it's a more religious culture than the secular West.

Um,

so I mean, I never really noticed anything unusual about how the Burmese treat. They're much less likely to

uh I don't I don't know. It's like some some parents will will spank their kids. But I mean, it does seem to me that Burmese village children are allowed to run a muk more than western children, at least when I was a kid. It may be really different now. It may be that any kind of discipline for your children or just like with violent criminals is just like a no no now.

But yeah, I mean, I really didn't understand. I didn't really notice much different about how Burmese parents raised their kids than the way Western parents raised their kids. Other than Burmese kids were more likely to just be

just running a muck, just running and screaming with the parents just kind of not caring. Like little kids just running, just tearing through a monastery, just screaming at the top of their lungs. A lot of the parents just don't see anything unusual or inappropriate with that. That used to bother me a little bit. But it wasn't like they were treated like adults so much. Not that I noticed.

I mean, they'd be talked to like little kids. the parents would be trying to teach them to, you know, offer food to the monks and teach them how to do chanting and that kind of thing. But and really didn't notice any significant

difference. And it could just be human nature, just the parental instincts is just part of a kind of animal instinct in humans. So that all over the world parents probably
like deal with their own children in roughly similar ways that are all just human nature.
And I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's next question. I mean it may have may it may have been that way but I just didn't notice it.
So the second question from Zenith is, is the inner child a concept in Buddhist texts and Buddhist culture?
Not that I know of.

Yeah, the inner child. I mean, I've never really studied up on much of the inner child other than I do remember it was a concept in this one of the early self-help books that came out. This was like a mass mass market self-help book games people play which is came out in like the 50s or 60s. It was really like a forerunner of the

just the mass

quantity of self-help books that came out in like the 70s and 80s. But yeah, there was like [clears throat] three different kind of personalities that each person has. You know, you start off with the child and then you become the lover and then you become the parent. If

I remember correctly, I think it was those three stages. And it's like everybody has all three stages, you know, even after you outgrow being a child physically, still you have like the the inner child, I guess. And sometimes, [clears throat]
you know, like you're being playful or whatever. You're you're just goofing around. the inner child may come out and then at other times the parent may come out, you know, the lover may come out just depending on circumstances and who you're with set and setting and all that, but it's not really a concept in Buddhist texts and Buddhist culture. And

it's really not much of a

[clears throat] concept in the West

either. I mean, it's it's most people

really wouldn't know much about it. You

know, it's not just something you're

taught in school or anything that I'm

aware of.

But yeah, I Don't think it's found

anywhere in the poly texts. The inner

child other than just you've got still

got child karma,

you know, like karma relating to

childhood either that's is going to have

to wait until you're a child again for

it to reach fruition or just stuff that

you created as a child that

can reach fruition at other times. But

it's still I mean there's just kind of a

latent assumption that you have certain

childlike at least childlike karma

contained within your being your your

psychic momentum.

But I mean it's not really singled out

as a kind of concept that is discussed

exclusively anything like that.

And so I'm just going to move on to

Xenithoid's next question

which is do you feel that you are still

connected with your inner child?

And

[clears throat]

I I guess I'm kind of four-dimensional

sort of like Billy Pilgrim in

Slaughterhouse 5 and you have read a lot of Vonagot where I mean it's kind of timeless.

I mean, I don't really have don't feel the need to conform to acting my age, so to speak. Like, when I was a kid, I could be like precociously mature for my age. And sometimes now that I have white hair, I can still be sort of the opposite of precocious and behave in a childlike manner or whatever, just because I'm unstuck in time, so to speak.

But I mean the inner child, am I still connected with it? Uh that that's kind of a tough question because I mean the whole concept of the inner child is

really not part of my

I mean I don't really single it out as

some kind of category,

you know, it's just sort of blended in.

I would I would call it more of a

blending, you know, childlike qualities,

childlike karma is just all blended into

the mix. And I don't have like this

inner child compartment

in in my psyche that I'm aware of,

but it's it's there definitely maybe

more so than in most people my age that

I'm I'm like less

I feel have less of a a like a

subconscious

obligation or need to act my age

or something.

And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ethiopian fake TIG.

An Ethiopian fake TIG says after I clear my throat again, [clears throat]

I have somewhat of a phatic temperament going with Galen. I've always considered myself to be largely phatic. I think I got more sanguine as I got older, but especially when I was young, I was very phatic and I have more flem than the average person, I think.

So, having gotten that out of the way, Ethiopian fake Tig says, "During the time of the Buddha, has he met any other beings that were enlightened without

learning his teachings? Or does the Buddha have a patent on enlightenment?" According to orthodox Terravada Buddhism, then yeah, the Buddha didn't meet any other enlightened beings other than his own enlightened disciples.

>> [cough]

>> So yeah,

but I'm skeptical of this Terravada Buddhist claim of a monopoly on enlightenment.

So the Buddha does in some of his texts refer to, you know, all the enlightened beings of the past and all the enlightened beings today and all the enlightened beings of the future, you

know, etc., etc. Um there does seem to

be a kind of implication

that

there were other enlightened beings that

weren't necessarily

his own disciples.

Um so it depends on

the correct answer to this question

depends on how you look at it I suppose.

I mean if you want to if you just want

the official orthodox Terravada Buddhist

answer then

the Buddha was you know he reinvented

enlightenment

and the only other enlightened beings in

the world

at that time would be his own disciples

or people who learned from him and
became enlightened as a result of that.
that nobody would become enlightened
completely independently of the Buddha
during the Buddhist time anywhere in the
world. That is like the official
position of terra Buddhism. But again, I
am skeptical of that. I do think it's
possible for a non Buddhist to become
enlightened,
assuming that enlightenment makes any
sense in a samsaric context.
And so I'm just going to move on to
Ethiopian fake Tig's next question,
which is as follows. During your stay in
Burma, did you make lifelong friends

there? Or perhaps people you miss now

since you're back in the States?

>> [cough and clears throat]

>> Um, the only person I met in Burma

that's still a friend that we still

communicate, there's just one, and that

he was a western monk who lived in Burma

at the same time as me. And then he went

back to America before I did uh to take

care of his aging parents and eventually

dropped out of the monkhood. And we

still communicate sometimes. We still

text each other or communicate on the

Discord server occasionally. Um, so

there's that. But one thing

[clears throat]

is that some of my supporters in Burma,

a few of them were just sort of like Buddhist chauvinists who just think that if you drop out of the monkhood, you you're just a failure, you know, a disgrace, a disgraceful failure. So I had a few supporters like that that better off just not associating with them. and and like the villagers, I mean, I'd have no way of even contacting them. I was mostly living out in remote forest areas when I was in Burma. So, and then also there's just a kind of weird phenomena I noticed when I was a monk. When another monk drops out of the monkhood, he pretty much just ghosts everybody. And it's it's largely just

out of a feeling of

I don't know sort of awkwardness maybe.

And I kind of did the same thing too. I

mean I have had a few um monks that I

used to know who tried to contact me and

I didn't respond.

So it's it's something that I noticed

before I became a monk and then I could

relate to it because you know it's it's

just this weird phenomenon that happens.

So largely just a kind of

mild kind of just awkwardness I guess

would be the best way of putting it.

[clears throat and cough]

So yeah, I only I only had like one

friend in Burma that is still a friend

now that there's like communication

going back and forth. Not that I like dislike everybody that I used to know besides this one person, anything like that. is just that I'm I've always been kind of a loner anyway and so I just went my own way and just pretty much what I've always done. Um you know like old high school friends I think I might have one of those left that we're still occasionally communicating.

So yeah, I'm really not a kind I'm really not a social person.

I don't I've never had like a really big circle of friends at least not since I got out of school.

So, you know, you just go your own way

and just do your own thing and

that's about it.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is also from

Ethiopian fake TIG. He says, "There is a

popular Indian American doctor on

YouTube called Dr. K. And in a recent

podcast, he said that when you meditate

for more than 40 minutes a day, you will

have higher risks of psychosis. Thoughts

on this?

Um, I'm not exactly sure if that would

be accurate. Um, and if so,

um, it's I mean I'm kind of skeptical of

that, but I mean it could be like this

slight increase, you know, like your

odds if you don't meditate at least 40

minutes a day, you know, it'd be like 1
in 10,000 and if you do meditate
at least 40 minutes a day and you one in
10,050
maybe or you know what is the exact
correlation? I mean it could be that
people who have a higher risk of
psychosis anyway are just the ones who
are more likely to do the intensive
meditation. I mean that's a possibility
too. You have to be kind of liinal kind
of on the fringe a little bit to be more
likely to do this kind of practice at
least in the west where it's not
mainstream. So there's that too. There's
all these kind of

uh variables that [clears throat] would
have to be nailed down I think in order
to really understand the situation. But
it is true like western Buddhism,
western Buddhism, I was mentioning this
earlier today to somebody else that it
does attract quite a few people that are
on the fringe.
And so it could be that kind of
situation also
that it's not so much one causing the
other as the other causing the one.
But I mean, anyone who's gone to
intensive meditation retreats knows
that doing intensive meditation can
cause people to crack up.
[snorts] So, there's that, too.

But why what were what was Dr. K's motives for even saying that? It could be that he's just sort of secularized Indian and kind of opposed to spirituality. Thinks it's all [__] or whatever. And so he'll cherrypick data to kind of reinforce his own bias. I mean, it could be something like that, too.

But even if it's true, even if meditating for more than 40 minutes a day increases your risk of having some kind of mental breakdown, still, I mean, for a lot of people, it's worth the risk. just being a monk who's living in the tropics. I mean, it

increases your odds of getting malaria

or dysentery

or like uh what's the other one? Like

chalera just increases your odds that

you're you're not going to live as long.

But I mean if you really are motivated

to live a spiritual life, you know, if

if you see the world through a dharmic

lens, for example, then stuff like that

is just a risk you're willing to take,

it's worth it.

So let's see here. Just checking to make

sure the computer is charging properly

because it does look sometimes like

there's a slight lag.

And I have no idea what the audio

quality on this video is going to be

like because [clears throat]

I upgraded

the operating system on this computer.

But ever since then, my old like audio

software that was connected to this

microphone,

it doesn't work anymore. So, I'm going

to have to find some new software for um

what's what's the word? Just for like

adjusting the audio properties of this

microphone.

[snorts]

[sighs]

So, let's see. I think I'm just going to

move on to the next question.

We didn't have very many questions

today, but it's like it's taken me forever to answer each question, so it's going to wind up being just as long as the usual video, I think, the usual Q&A episode for those of you who are just listening to the podcast version. So, this next question is from Sedarta Loha. And I have to admit, I always like respell Sedarta's name because he doesn't spell it the way um like the Mahayana Buddhists spell the Buddha's name as a lay person or Herman Hess spelled [clears throat] the name of his hero in the in the novel by the same name. Anyhow, Sedart Loha says, "What do you think about Orthodox Christianity? It seems like they have a

lot of aesthetic practices and monasticism. Well, I really don't know that much about Orthodox Christianity. I never really came across much orthodox Christianity in my younger days. Um, I mean, I've read a lot of Western history, which is more it contains more Catholicism than any other kind of Christianity. I mean, I've read the Bible more than once. So I I understand Christianity fairly well just from a biblical point of view with regard to the history of the development of Christianity. Like I've read Gibbons's decline and fall of the Roman Empire and other books that discuss

um you know like the the early early
Christianity and evolution and you know
the the schism between east and west
that kind of thing. But with regard to
like [clears throat] specific
like tenets of Orthodox Christianity, I
really don't know that much about it. Um
the the common consensus
um on certain social media is that um
Orthodox Christianity is the most based.
Um, Catholicism probably has more pagan
elements or at least it has a reputation
for having more pagan elements. Not
elephants but elements. Um,
Protestantism,
I mean, I kind of had my mind poisoned
against Protestant Christianity in

general simply because one of the first things the Protestants did was to abolish monastic orders. And at the same token, they abolished like more advanced practice like contemplation.

So the only major schools of Christianity that still have monks and nuns and contemplative orders would be the oldest ones like the Catholics, the Orthodox Christians. And then you've got sort of like the Coptic Church and like the Neestoran Syrian church, some of those ancient, you know, kind of vestigial Christian churches.

aside from the two big ones.

So, I mean, I've read a lot of Jehovah's

Witness material just because they keep they kept giving it to me at one time. [sighs]

But yeah, Orthodox Christianity, I mean, I've read [clears throat] what is I've read that one book about Orthodox Christianity. It's a It's a little book, something about a pilgrim about this Russian peasant with a withered arm who just is reciting the Jesus prayer. Dear God, please have mercy upon me, a sinner. Um, it's there's I think there's a little more to it than that. And I mean, I read that that's probably the most orthodox text I've ever read aside from the Bible itself.

Read a little bit about a few of the

like the orthodox mystics.

Red Dostki who is talking about Orthodox

Christianity [clears throat]

in a sort of a fiction fictional and

more sociological

context.

I mean they're into icons.

Um but I think they do have a stronger

mystical tradition than western

Christianity. The more western

Christianity like the Catholics. The

Catholics do have certain contemplative

orders like the Carmealites,

but I think it's more common in the

Greek um monastic orders that there's

like intensive spiritual practice rather

than just,

you know, whatever it is that most

Catholic monks and nuns do.

So, yeah. I mean, I'm really not the

kind of person who's

qualified really to compare and contrast

Orthodox Christianity with other schools

of Christianity because I really don't

know that much about it. I'm not a

Christian.

So, most of what I know about it is

through osmosis.

And uh I mean I mean I couldn't be an

Orthodox Christian because I just can't

be a Christian really. I just cannot

believe the story. There's this

narrative you have to believe in order

to be a Christian as far as I can tell and that's that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. He's the only begotten son of God who died for our sins. And I just it's really not a a viable option for me to believe that. I can't just believe something at will. I can't just decide what I consider to be believable or not. It's either believable or it isn't. and the narrative of Christianity, the stuff that seems essential to being a Christian, I just can't believe it. That's one of the two main reasons why I'm not a Christian. The other is that throughout my life, I've observed so many Christians and very very few of

them are actually trying to follow the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Like, gather not up your treasures upon the earth, for example. sell all that you have, give the money to the poor, and follow me. Take up your cross and wander around healing the sick and casting out demons and all that. It's just
it's like people say, "Well, that just applied to ancient times. That just applied to his his chief apostles
and we can just live like heathens with and go to church on Sunday and, you know, have at least some lip service to some of the basic teachings.
>> [clears throat]
>> I mean, so many Christians, they they'll

get divorced and remarried, even though it says right in the Bible. Jesus himself says you can't do that.

I guess for people want to get divorced and remarried, Buddhism is a better option because from the Buddhist point of view, marriage is just a secular affair. It's it's not even a religious thing.

[sighs]

So yeah, I'm just going to move on. Next question. Also from Sedarta lohachita he says do you think the structural problem of Islam is the massive intermingling between cousins and the black people former slaves. The Muslims

of the Middle Ages in what is now Spain,
North Africa, Iraq or Iraq, Iran or
Egypt are not the same as modern Muslims
who intermarried with their first
cousins. And that had an impact. The
same thing happened in India with the
reproductive success of the Dalits
or the untouchables, I guess. Um,
[clears throat]
it's it's kind of weird. I I read just a
few days ago in a book by Edward Dutton
that in certain Muslim countries like in
North Africa and South Asia the the
cousin marriages is between 25 and 50%
of the population marry cousins
and he considers that to cause um lower
IQ on average

due to inbreeding

But the structural problem of Islam,

it seems to me the main problem of Islam

is it's the founder of Islam was a

warlord who was a a bandit who like

forced himself sexually upon female

prisoners of war. in some cases with

their recently deceased husband just

lying on the ground a few yards away

that he had hundreds of people beheaded,

hundreds of men beheaded and their wives

and children sold into slavery.

The man was a just a a product of the

dark ages. He was a barbarian, a

barbarian warlord, a violent barbarian

warlord. And so you get into modern

times and you got people who are still sort of emulating a violent barbarian warlord as the ideal man. I would consider that to be much more of a structural problem of Islam than inbreeding.

But I suppose it's true that the Muslims of the Middle Ages in what is now Spain, North Africa, Iraq, Iran, or Egypt are not the same as modern Muslims. Well, largely because they were this sort of new converts at first and it was just this new system that was like in the full flush of enthusiasm that you know they thought they were going to conquer the whole world which fortunately didn't happen

although they did exterminate the

Buddhists of of India

and various other countries.

[sighs]

So I mean you can say that that

inbreeding is a structural problem of

Islam but I don't think it's the main

structural problem of Islam. I really

think that Islam itself is the main

structure of is is the main problem and

that it's just it's it's like relatively

primitive. I mean the Jewish religion of

like the Old Testament Old Testament

Judaism is similar. I mean Moses was

more of a warlord than he was like an

advanced spiritual teacher. Moses also

was ordering the deaths of thousands of people and the enslavement of their their wives and children and all this. So Muhammad and and Moses assuming that Moses existed, I assume there was probably some kind of proto Moses upon which the the the the myths coalesed just like there was probably originally a proto Hercules, a proto Achilles, that kind of thing.

So, but the thing with the the the Jews is that as they became more civilized, their religion became more civilized. That there are very few Hebrews now who would strictly adhere to this Old Testament view of like all the Canaanites must be exterminated up. I

mean, you could argue that the whole thing with Gaza is is similar, but then again, according to the Jewish religion, according to the Old Testament, God commanded the the Israelites to exterminate all the non-Jews in in the Holy Land. So, they've they've restrained themselves fairly well with regard to that, I suppose.

Oh, man.

But [sighs]

yeah, I mean there have been wise possibly even enlightened uh Muslims like the the Sufis for example who did absorb some Buddhist and Hindu ideas.

[sighs and gasps]

I mean some people become saintly or sagely possibly even enlightened as much in spite of their religion as because of it.

But I mean just overall

Islam is it's sort of like a a relatively foolish primitive kind of religion that is easily accepted by foolish primitive kind of people.

But I suppose I shouldn't be indulging too much in this kind of critique.

And so I'm just going to move on this question.

This is from Cyrus Frame.

Cyrus frame. Oh, he's asking a narate question. I'm not I don't have the fez

handy.

Well,

okay. Cyrus Frame says, excuse me, Cyrus

Frame says, "You said regarding Nagarina

that you are never going to reach the

goal by philosophizing

eventually you have to let go of it." I

think of this as you can't

you can't think your way into it or out

of it whatever it is.

I thought you made a very interesting

point but do you believe in a goal?

Surely a goal is a form of wanting

something implicit in it is a view that

there is something better in the future

than this to aim for. Well, certainly

like in in Pali it's ata can be translated as the goal. Sometimes in in Pali in translations the word ata is translated as the goal that Buddhism accepts or at least terra Buddhism accepts that there is a goal to aim for. Um but the goal is is like this nebulous one. I mean you don't have like this firm concept of what the goal is. It's just you're trying to transcend your own delusion. And once you've transcended that, then you attain this goal that really you couldn't fathom it or understand it before you reached it.

[snorts]

So, let's see here.

Uh, do I believe in a goal?

Yeah, I mean [clears throat] it's kind of a trick question because you call it an it, but the goal itself is kind of it's like off the scale, you know? It's like the goal is to transcend samsara, but anything that you do or say or think is necessarily samsaric.

So, I mean, it's trying to cure yourself of your own insanity is the goal.

I mean, if you have a goal, eventually you have to like stop having a goal really. That's that's very advanced practice, though. I mean, so long as you have something that you're attached to, something that you're clinging to, some

kind of aspiration, some kind of desire,
I mean, that is going to serve as just
this obstacle to your to your liberation
or your enlightenment.
But it can be very handy to have a goal
like early on and then you have it's
like you eliminate all other
attachments. You just have this one big
desire left. the desire for
enlightenment and then you try and try
and try and try to become enlightened
and then you fail and then finally it's
like there's a kind of just surrender
where you just let go of even the desire
to become enlightened you know it's just
sort of almost like giving up it's just
surrender and this is common in like

Christianity this idea of someone trying to be a saint you know they're trying to go to heaven just through their own efforts and finally Finally, they realize they can't do it. And so, it's just like they have this come to Jesus moment, so to speak. It's just I can't do it, God. If I go to heaven, it's going to be through your grace. I just fling myself upon your mercy. And it's like this surrender is

it it it allows them to to reach the next stage

to transcend this this wallowing in some sorrow that they were stuck in previous to that.

So there's it's a similar kind of thing
in in Buddhism also where it's like
[clears throat]
you you reduce your desires and
attachments down to this one. So you've
already made a lot of progress by
getting rid of your desires for like
sex, drugs and rock and roll, ice cream
and all that. So you just have this one
big attachment but so and it it helps
you to refine yourself to purify your
mind you know do good refrain from doing
evil purify the mind but still there's
this one obstacle left which is the the
desire for enlightenment itself
and so finally you just let go of that
possibly through some crisis through

some dark night of the soul you just let go of even the desire for enlightenment and just surrender to what is and that's it.

[cough and clears throat]

But I mean

it helps I suppose especially at the beginning and intermediate levels to have a goal but ultimately even the goal has to be let go of.

So I'm just going to move on to Cyrus Frame's next question.

He says also how important do you think logic and philosophy is? I tend to think logic is very important. This is one reason I like the atikawaga so much is I

think it is very logically sound but with its absence of reifications and of metaphysical assertions. It seems to me that Tibetan Buddhist philosophy is almost the opposite of that. But the Daly Lama now he's has the llama spelled with two L's but [clears throat] the Daly Lama seems like a very peaceful maybe enlightened man. However, I have met similarly peaceful people who know nothing about Buddhism at all. So who knows I suppose an aspect of this is that we have to concentrate on our own minds as we cannot truly determine those of other people. So you know most of this is like commentary. So the actual question is uh right here up at the top

how important do you think logic and philosophy is? Okay. Um, I think the main benefit of logic and also largely of philosophy, but of logic in particular is it's a [__] detector. It helps you to weed out sloppy reasoning.

So, I mean, you can get rid of like really delusional ideas. You can probably get rid of most of them, not all of them, but most of them through like rational thought. just really soft-headed foolish ideas get weeded out through logic and philosophy and philosophy also I mean has that goal you know it's one of the main points of

philosophy I think it was Max Mohler said this a long time ago more than 100 years ago is that one of the the basic principles of philosophy is like doubting what most people would just accept at face value you know you're starting to doubt just basic principles, you know, like maybe this isn't reality. You know, it's like most humans as well as like pretty much all dogs, pigs, and chickens just assume that this phenomenal world we're living in is reality. As long as you think that it's reality, you're much less likely to try to do anything about being stuck in it. So philosophy, one of the benefits of philosophy is the very idea that there

is something better and higher than what
we're in right now. I mean, religion
kind of does that too in a different
way.
But logic in particular is mainly a
[__] detector. But you can take
logic and philosophy to the extent of
like nagarina where you just criticize
to death every possible point of view
until just emptiness is all that's left
and then you see through the emptiness
into ultimate reality ideally.
So philosophy like a practical
philosophy
uh has the benefit of teaching you why
to practice dharma or dharma and how to

practice dharma.

Um

you know it gives you enlightenment as

even a possibility.

You're you're much less likely to strive

for enlightenment if you don't even have

a concept of it. Even though the concept

is going to be ultimately samsuric and

delusional, at least it's moving you in

the right direction. It's leading you to

the jumping off point.

So I guess you could say uh the main

purpose of philosophy from a dharmic

point of view is to lead you to the

jumping off point.

And logic is mainly just a [__]

detector. It helps it weed out just

crappy crappy belief systems or just soft-headed, gullible, foolish belief systems.

So I'm just going to move on to the the next question which is the very last question and this is from Fred.

Fred says, "Can most mundane methods like the precepts penetrate the depths of the subconscious for example like an iceberg with only the consciousness poking through?"

Well, let's see.

>> [snorts]

>> I yeah most mundane methods like the precepts certainly they penetrate the depths of the subconscious to some

degree mainly because karma is itself
mostly subconscious. So when you're
following precepts or just living an
ethical life in accordance with whatever
ethics you're following I mean that is
influencing your karma
and your karma is mostly subconscious.
So definitely I mean anything you do is
is influencing the subconscious mind.
So even stuff you're doing at the
surface level you know still is having
an influence on the subconscious mind.
So it is as Fred says here penetrating
the depths of the subconscious.
So yeah I mean that's fairly
straightforward I think.
I mean, especially if you consider that

karma is large largely subconscious,

mostly subconscious

and you're carrying that around all the

time without fully realizing it most of

the time. And I mean, your karma

literally is action.

I mean, that's what karma literally

means is action or acting, deed, that

kind of thing.

But it's it's more just the psychic

momentum. I mean from a Buddhist

philosophical point of view it's it's

like the momentum of your your mental

states

and it's uh largely subconscious because

I mean your your thinking ego isn't

fully aware of it.

So I guess I answered that question. So I guess I answered all the questions and so I guess we are done. And like I should always say at the beginning and pretty much never do, if you have any questions you think I can answer, especially with regard to dharma, I mean not necessarily, you can ask other questions too, but mainly the purpose of these Q&As's are Q's and A's are with regard to Buddhism, I suppose, especially Terravada Buddhism and also early Buddhism like pre-ter Buddhism, which was one of my specialties, one of the things I was most interested in cuz as a a monk in particular especially I

was really trying to get to what the
Buddha really taught just cut through as
much of the mythology
and you know propaganda and all that
kind of stuff and just try to get to
what the Buddha actually taught.
So, questions about that, questions
about, you know, Burma, like one or two
questions um this time. Uh questions
about me personally, I don't get too
personal. No questions about my junk,
that kind of stuff.
Um
and no more than three questions per
person, per episode, please. And like,
like and subscribe. Just utterly

obliterate the like button. Don't just smash it. just just destroy it.

And check out the URL links below.

And again, I'm still waiting for the illustrations for my fourth book, which will come out, I hope, shortly after I get the illustrations because I need the cover art in order to design like the text on the cover and that sort of thing. And uh aside from that, all I got to say to you is uh be happy.

Okay then.

Hello and welcome to [clears throat] question and answer number 185. I am your host Po Basa and this is my beverage.

And I hope the sound quality will be a little bit better now because I re downloaded

um the software for making the microphone sound better. So we'll see how it goes. I still may have to make some adjustments and tweaks and that kind of thing.

[clears throat] And I might as well [snorts] say that 185 is not prime number. It is in fact 5 * 37. Although

37 has always been one of my favorite
numbers for obscure reasons.
And at the time of recording this, it is
the day after
joint US and Israeli forces just bomb
the hell out of Iran and continue to
bomb Iran today. In fact, they're
willing to continue bombing Iran for
many days until Iran has approximately
zero ability to retaliate with anything
more than pointy sticks.
And I guess uh nobody's asked me about
this because it happened so recently
just right before the Q&A started,
but I mean I'm I'm of mixed I'm
ambivalent, let's say. I mean from an
from a moral, ethical Buddhist point of

view, of course,

war is always just mass murder.

So war is always bad from a Buddhist

ethical point of view. But one reason

why I lost interest in politics many

years ago and only recently started

getting interested in it again because

it really is interesting sometimes

is that I realized that what is good and

right from an ethical point of view is

not necessarily what is good and right

from a political point of view. and

whether America

aiding Israel to bomb the [__] out of

Iran is a good idea from a political

point of view, if it is good and right

politically.

Only time will tell.

Trump has been fairly

fortunate

in his choices

thus [clears throat] far. like

Venezuela.

I mean, he just arrested the dictator

whom I haven't heard anything about

since.

He's probably just locked up in a cell

somewhere awaiting trial.

Well, who knows? So, we're just going to

have to wait and see if from a political

point of view, America is better off

with Iran getting the [__] bombed out of

it and almost all of its senior

leadership just vaporized.

[sighs] And I suppose I should also say that the first few questions in this Q&A are questions that I somehow overlooked previously.

So,

these are at the top of the list cuz they were asked at least a week ago. I think Romeo's first one of his questions, I think, was asked like two or three weeks ago and I just somehow overlooked it. You know, I just kind of spaced it off or, you know, just scroll past it. Sometimes I'm going down the scroll, it's on the list and I just scroll past it accidentally somehow.

So anyways, the first question is from Yoshi Buouie and Yoshi Buouie says, "The block of marble that contains all possibilities, all possible versions of you, is that similar to the idea of a parallel universe." And of course, he's referring to my simile of the block of marble, which is like my theory of everything.

It's it's kind of like my

well I mean the Buddhist theory of everything is dependent core rising and dependent core rising is sort of contained within the block of marble. So there's definitely overlap,

but my theory of everything of like the universe existing and why it is the way

it is and all that is you've got this
infinite formless
consciousness, let's say, and contained
within this infinite this formless
infinity is every possibility. It's it's
all in there. And it takes dependent
core rising and perception
sort of self-reflective
statues contained within the block of
marble to kind of create samsara
various cosmos various phenomenal
universes. So anyways, Yoshib Buouie is
asking if this idea similar to the idea
of a parallel universe. And yeah, I mean
it would be sort of like the maximum of
the many worlds hypothesis which some

scientists take seriously.

Um it would just have every possible universe contained within it which would be some parallel universes and some universes that are just going off in a complete tangent. They're not really parallel at all. They're just going like perpendicular or something.

So yeah, it would contain parallel universes, but it would contain universes like alternate universes that aren't really running parallel. You know, just starting off with just completely different laws of physics, for example, just maybe even no laws of physics, just something else that is stabilizing the system.

I mean, you could have entire universes
of like pulsating
like geometrical
figures, this kind of thing that somehow
are like recursive or self-referential
enough that they become delusional and
create a samsara for themselves.
So, I think I've answered that question
more or less kind of. I'm just going to
move on to Romeo, who has asked four
questions here, but it's not really
transgressive because one of the
questions was asked a few weeks ago and
I just didn't notice it until recently.
So, Romeo says, "In all likelihood, you
have heard the demographic projections

that white people will soon become a minority in the US. Not only will white Americans be a minority, but they may even be a persecuted minority at that. Besides this, eventually large swavthes of the US may not even be Englishspeaking.

The signs are all there. There's the recent all Hispanic Bad Bunny Super Bowl appearance performed totally in Spanish or New York City Mayor Zoran Mandani openly targeting white neighborhoods for higher taxes. Then there's this video clip circulating of a state representative in Houston, Texas causing calling for Asian, black, and Hispanics to find common cause and unite to take

down white people. I was wondering what your general take is of the demographic future of the US and what it bodess for white Americans. Will white Americans eventually become a persecuted minority akin to the whites in post-apartid South Africa? I'm a regular English-speaking white American who has nothing against other ethnicities and cultures. Do you have any suggestions for someone like me to not be blackpilled about this likely future and to accept it with equinimity? Um, so I guess there's a number of questions contained within this question, isn't there? There's a number of question marks. So let's see here.

First, he's talking about sort of like white replacement theory. Um, I can't remember. There was some halfjapanese aristocrat like a hundred years ago who uh had this theory that is named after him, but I can't remember his name right off hand. But it's uh kind of replacing white people because partly because white people um don't behave like the the global norm. I mean, we're too like freedom and originality oriented, for example. And so we we don't make easily. I mean, we're not sheeplike enough as general. I mean, everybody is pretty sheeplike. The human race in general has got sheep instincts.

But the European race or subra or

ethnicity, family of ethnicities,

whatever you want to call your your

people of European ancestry.

Um there's just something about us that

makes us

more

interested in human rights,

freedom, originality, individuality,

that kind of stuff. which just kind of

throws [clears throat] a monkey wrench

into the globalist agenda to some

degree.

And so I assume that's a major reason

why it has been a globalist a part of

the globalist agenda to just

eliminate white cultures

through dilution [clears throat] if

through nothing else.

So

let's see. Let's get down to the

question marks here. See, I wonder I was

wondering what your [snorts] general

take is of the demographic future of the

US and what it bodess for white

Americans.

Um well

I mean it's a a common mistake to take a

trend that exists now and just

extrapolate it into some inevitability

whereas usually doesn't doesn't work

very well because I mean you see a car

heading towards a brick wall you can

extrapolate well the car is going to hit

the brick wall but as a general rule
people turn the car before they get to
the brick wall. Every once in a while
the car really will hit the brick wall,
but usually the driver of the car steers
the car so that it doesn't ram into the
brick wall. And
there is some of that involved in this
in that just because the trend is going
in that direction now does not mean that
there will be course corrections
so to speak.
So, I mean, even now with Trump as
president, you've got actual negative
immigration going on for the first time
in many decades.

I mean, if it has ever been the case in America before that we had negative immigration where there's more people leaving the country than entering. And it's not so much like disgusted, pissed off leftists. I mean, there's some of those and
like they tend to regret it after leaving. They don't realize what a good country America is to live in until they go to the UK or Canada or someplace and then it's even worse.
So, I mean, who knows? It could
[clears throat] be 50 years from now there's going to be a race war or something
and that could just really change

things. But the thing is westerners

um I mean [clears throat]

we are creative, innovative to some

degree unpredictable.

We tend to win wars. That's why western

civilization has taken over the entire

world. I mean you go to other countries

that are opposed to western

civilization. Let's say China for

example and they're wearing western

clothes and they've got driving western

style cars using western style

technology. you know, just western style

pretty much everything except for the

language they're speaking and some of

their vestigial customs even their their

like politics is based on western

politics now.

And there's reasons for that. And so I

mean people of European ancestry are

better at European like global culture

now because we invented it. it's more in

tune with our psyche, you know, our

human nature, our version of human

nature or whatever.

[sighs] So, I mean, we will tend to out

compete competitors.

And that's like on the international

scale and also within within the country

itself that what's likely going to

happen is what's already happening now

where you've got like white people

fleeing places like New York City that

are becoming increasingly anti-white people and they're accumulating in more Republican run places. Florida, you know, just the the Bible belt of the South in general, just the like the middle states, the so-called flyover states that probably you're going to have um maybe to some degree a bulcanization of the United States. I mean, it could I mean, nothing lasts forever. That's one of the teachings of Buddhism. One of the marks of existence, one of the three marks of existence is impermanence.

So, the United States isn't going to last forever. Rome didn't last forever.

I mean, there's still a city of Rome.

[snorts] Well, the empire is long gone.

[clears throat]

Even when it was revived as the Holy Roman Empire, it still was just a completely different country.

So, I mean, you might have just like enclaves, you know, just sort of white refugees accumulating and then they're just going to out compete the the other areas. as a general rule. You're going to have sort of progressive governments, state governments or or whatever that are going to insist upon diversity, equity, and inclusion. They're going to say, "Screw me. That's a tool of white patriarchal oppression." And so, they're

just not going to be able to compete.
They will not compete against
like Europeans doing the European thing
very well
unless the Europeans just emasculate
themselves as they have done in the EU
for example.
So yeah, I don't think that
um Americans will eventually become a
person persecuted minority akin to the
whites in post-apartid South Africa
largely because South Africa it was
always a small minority of of the people
there the bo and the and the English the
British it was relatively small minority
so that they can just be overwhelmed and

a lot of them just left after apartheid ended foreseeing being that South Africa was just going to degenerate into a corrupt third world hell hole, which is what it is doing.

So yeah, I don't think [clears throat] the white people in America are going to become a minority in the same way as Zimbabwe or South Africa, something like that,

[snorts]

or Singapore.

So [sighs] yeah, I don't I'm not blackpilled and anything is possible and you're going to I mean the universe is always it's just every possibility is out there including infinite number of

possibilities starting from this point here. So it's going to depend a lot on our own karma using the English word karma instead of the poly word karma.

[snorts]

And so I mean just anything that could possibly originate from the per the current present situation, it's out there

and we're just going to have to navigate that in accordance with our our wisdom or lack of same and our karma.

So let's see here. Oh, the the question continues.

Let's see. I'm Let's see. Do you have any suggestions for someone like me to

not be blackpilled about this likely

future? Well, being blackpilled is just

not a strategy at all. It's certainly

not conducive to success.

You know that pretty much the only

guaranteed way of failing is just to

give up or quit. You know, that's that's

guarantee of failure right there. Just

to to give up.

Um

see to accept it with equinimity. Well,

I mean, whatever happens is going to be

of your own creation. You're creating

the the world you live in. You know,

it's your own comma has placed you where

you need to be in order to work out

these latent tendencies and stuff you

still need to work on because you

haven't you haven't learned to work it

out perfectly yet. It's like Groundhog

Day.

And Bill Murray had to keep spending the

same day over and over until he just got

it right.

So [sighs and gasps]

yeah, I mean you are creating your own

reality and it may be kind of a a harsh

difficult reality. I mean I have to

admit for for me personally 2026 has

started off on like a kind of the wrong

foot and it's just continued that way.

It's been limping

up to the first two months thus far. But

I'm I I have faith in my own comma and

just I don't know faith in the gods, the

small G gods or some such that things

definitely do have to get better

[sighs and snorts]

sooner or later.

So, who knows? Maybe uh for starters,

the Iranians will admit that I mean,

they're just going to keep getting

bombed into oblivion until they decide

to say, "All right, okay,

we'll uh we'll try some kind of secular

government now and see how that works."

Let's see here. Okay, so I guess I

answered that one fairly well. Do not be

blackpilled. It's It's just

It is not a winning strategy. It is not

conducive to happiness or anything else. Well, I guess it's conducive to something, but not much that is good. So, I'm just going to move on to Romeo's next question. These are, I think, his recent questions. So, the extra questions that I've already answered are not transgressive, technically speaking. And Romeo says, "I went through a lot of trauma growing up as a result of having some pretty unstable, toxic parents." What is your advice on how to accept one's toxic parents as much as possible despite how much they harmed you over the years, especially when they continue to be toxic?

Well, I mean, Romeo is a grown man now.
He doesn't have to live with his
parents. So, I mean, from that point of
view, the best advice I would give you
is be polite. You know, be respectful.
um you don't have to interact with them
any more than is necessary. I mean, it
might be, you know, you're going to call
them on their birthday or maybe even
come come over for Thanksgiving dinner,
that sort of thing. And just use it as a
spiritual practice,
you know, just
being nice, you know, not trying to get
sucked into old toxic habit patterns,
that kind of thing.
um

honor thy mother and father or is the commandment father and mother patriarchal system. So maybe it started off with father.

Um

let's see.

Yeah, I mean from the Buddhist point of view, you don't have to like be interacting with them all the time.

So you know if if they really are like foolish people that are like have like a negative mental state have negative effects on you then I mean first the first blessing of the mandalas which is a list of blessings is not associating with foolsam

[snorts]

in in Burmese pronunciation of pi.

So yeah, you just kind of keep it down

to a a minimum that is not like too

harsh. I mean, if they're just horrible,

I mean, if they were I mean, just

abusive and so forth, then you might

just make a a clean break while at the

same time still trying to have metaphor,

you know, forgive them because they know

not what they do, that kind of thing.

And you can say some people can be like

cynical and say, well, they knew what

they were doing. But still people just I

mean they're delusional

and so they they kind of know what

they're doing but at the same time if

they knew of something better that would make them happier they'd probably be doing that. If they just could break free of their habit patterns and so forth. And a lot of abusive parents were abused by their own parents which causes like this vicious circle. Like my father um his father his father Grandpa Reynolds was a very gentle man. He was an ordained Baptist minister. He was working on his fourth doctor when he died. He was fluent in Greek and Latin. Just a very gentle man. My father saw him not be gentle very few times and they really stuck in his memory.

Like one time, this was way back when

people were still driving horses and buggies. Back in the the 20s, late 20s, you know, cars had been invented, but still a lot of people still had horses and buggies. Um, some guy got his horse tangled up in a barbed wire fence in front of my father's parents' house. And the guy was just whipping that horse and just he was like in a frenzy. And the horse was in this frenzy of just terror and pain. And my grandfather, who was normally a very gentle, soft-spoken man, he grabbed a shotgun and he he went out there and just told this guy just in this deathly calm voice, although he was just white and kind of vibrating when he was saying it, but he kept it very calm.

And he says, "If you whip that horse one more time, I swear to God, I'm going to shoot you."

But my father's mother was just a fire and brimstone fundamentalist Christian who firmly believed spare the rod, spoiled the child. And my father was just beaten over and over again by his mother. So his mother kind of fathered him and his father kind of mathered him which I mean my father turned out relatively normal. You know he was he was relatively healthy, wise, relatively welladjusted person. I mean, he was a an alcoholic for for many years, for much of his

life, maybe half his life,

but whether that had anything directly

resulting from being beaten by his

mother over and over again, I don't

know.

So, getting back to the actual question

though, um, oh, well, I mean, I might as

well continue with my father just with

regard to the

arguably toxic mother that, you know, he

was still he'd still call her and speak

to her and he didn't have to live with

her anymore. So, I mean, he didn't have

to put up with very much and she wasn't

much inclined to beat on him when she

was in her 70s anyway.

But she'd it'd be more like Jesus is

coming. And then my father would say, "Well, when he comes, tell him howdy for me." And then she'd be saying, "You're gonna have to tell your own howdies." Well, I mean, to some degree, he forgave her. I mean, he wasn't really complaining about, you know, how he was abused as a child. I mean, it would come up in conversation when he's telling stories about when he was a kid and so forth,

but as a general rule, it's just uh he kind of accepted

that that was in his past and, you know, he's got a different present now and a different future.

So, yeah, I guess I'm just going to have to go back to the original answer of um, you know, be polite and respectful if if that seems appropriate. have meta in your heart. You know, forgive them as well as you can, but at the same time, if they're still toxic, then keep a safe distance. Maybe just do your duty as a son to show up for Christmas or Thanksgiving and say [clears throat] happy birthday, send a Mother's Day card, that kind of thing, and just kind of keep a safe distance. Um, so that you don't get sucked into these [clears throat] sort of toxic habit patterns.

That would be my best advice. I mean, if

you really wanted to be hardcore in spiritual practice, you could, you know, one of your parents, you know, really needs to have someone taking care of them, you could be like feeding them and wiping their behind and and that sort of thing someday. Um, as that would be like advanced spiritual practice, I think. [snorts] And it's time for me to go on to the next question also from Romeo. He says, "What do you know about the Buddha's parents, especially with regard to their behavior, temperament, temperaments, and the way they treated him as he was growing up?" Um, well, all you really know about the Buddha's

parents are that, you know, his is
legend, you know, it's it's it's
mythology kind of. So I mean the
Buddhist parents he had king sudodana
which literally means pure cooked rice
and his mother was Mahammaya or great
illusion I suppose
and his mother the queen or one of the
queens.
Um she died when the Buddha was like a
week old.
Um I mean if that really happened then
you know it could be complications of
childbirth or something. Um
although I think
going with the legend it was just sort
of like this cosmic law that you know

she did something so tremendous by giving birth to the future Buddha that I mean it was like too much for her mortal frame to bear I guess. And so she died shortly thereafter. Kind of like in ancient Greece if you look upon a god and his his full glory. I mean you just it's just too much too much sublimeness. So with regard to his biological mother, I mean she really did not have much of of an impact on his life other than just her absence.

Her his father was according to legend a king. the king of Capilawatu which was a small like a city state kind of a kingdom according to legend although I

mean nowadays the experts the
endologists the archaeologists and so
forth are saying that in all likelihood
Capilawatu was it was kind of like an
oligarchic
republic more than a kingdom
and so some of the like the Buddhist
fundamentalist ists will try to cobble
those together. You know, they'll try to
save the theory by saying, well, the
Buddhist father was called the king
because he was like the senior lead of
the oligarchic council of elders. They
run ran the the small state, this sort
of thing. But I mean, you go with like
the legends and he was just a proud
king, you know, he was not like a cruel,

sadistic kind of king, but still he was proud. He had lots of mana and he was really disgusted by his son renouncing kingship in order to go and become a penniles beggar.

My father had some similar feelings although I was never a royal prince in this life.

So

their temperaments, behavior, I mean the Buddha's father, his behavior was kingly, you know, just sort of the stereotypical

proud. I mean, a relatively good king, but still, I mean, pride was one of the outstanding personality traits that

comes through in the texts. There is one suta in which the Buddha claims that when he renounced the world to go from home the home life into homelessness his parents stood by grieving which could be like a relic of like the pre- legend where may it may be that his his father and mother him were both alive um as [snorts] the Buddha grew into manhood. But again, all we really have is legends. You know, there's also the the the legend of the Buddha when he was a child sitting under a rose apple tree and learning meditation just spontaneously while his father is plowing a field. And if his father really was a king, there's a good chance

he wouldn't be plowing a field. Although I think the the official explanation for that is that the king was doing some ceremony or he was ceremonially plowing a furrow for you know some
some state
reason. You know he wasn't really a farmer plowing a field. He was just plowing just this sort of a sacred furrow for some symbolic reason that was required of him as as a king.
But then the Buddha also had like a stepmother who was his also his aunt. Um the Buddha's father according to tradition married two sisters Mahamaya and let's see what was her name Maha

Pajapi Godi.

So they were all members of the Godma clan. They're all let's hope distant cousins and not first cousins. Um,

[snorts]

so yeah, his his his stepmother also his aunt who raised him, although if he was a royal prince, he probably was raised by an army of, you know, nurses and slave women and that kind of thing, too. That she was a virtuous woman and had some wisdom and she was the one who begged the Buddha after his enlightenment to start the the order of nuns. and she was the first ordained Buddhist nun.

But there's really not a whole lot of emphasis [clears throat] on like the temperaments and personality traits and behavior of the Buddha's parents.

You know, it's it's all legend. And so you just have to kind of take it with a grain of salt. I mean, the only real friction that you see with the Buddha and his father was his father was kind of offended or disgusted by the Buddha renouncing, you know, the the throne, being first in line for the throne in order to become literally a penniless beggar.

Although he eventually did see the

light, I do think he became an Arya after the Buddha returned to his home state and uh kind of reconciled with his wife and ordained his son Rahula as a monk. And I think I'm pretty sure I mean it's been a long time since I've read this, but I do think according to the legend, according to the Suta, his father took the three the three refugees and converted to Buddhism.

So then he was proud of his son again, I suspect.

And uh I think I'm just going to move on to Romeo's last question here, which is what advice do you think the Buddha would give about how to deal with toxic parents?

And I would guess his his advice would be pretty much my original advice in response to two questions above [clears throat] that. I mean, you should have meta for them. you should forgive them. And uh but if they really are like still toxic, you know, just keep a safe distance as much as you can while not like abandoning your filial duty to at least, you know, be there for them if if they need you, that kind of thing.

Um there is the famous statement in the suta somewhere where the Buddha says that I mean even if you carried your aged parents around on your back for the rest of your life, you could never fully

repay them for having brought you into this world and you know produced the person that you are today. you know, even if they had negative effects and so forth and were abusive and to some degree you became a good person in spite of them that still I mean you are who you are largely because I mean they're the ones who brought you into the world and your first influences were from them and even if you became a good person in spite of them still I mean you started with that in order to become what you are now.

[snorts] So there is a lot of the kind of the biblical honor thy father and mother um you know in the ten

commandments that that's kind of built into just about any kind of traditional religious system including Buddhism. But I would guess that, you know, he he would advise that if they really are toxic, you know, foolish, harmful people that, you know, you should try to I mean, you have to have a certain distance unless you're just full-blown saint. You know, you're like Aliosha Karamazov in in the Dostki novel where it's like you just plunge right into it, you know? It's just that is your spiritual that's the crucible the spiritual crucible where you're going to be purified by the the holy fire of just

self you know selfdenial
but you have to do that wisely because
otherwise you just get sucked into these
negative habit patterns that are just
self-perpetuating and get even worse
so yeah I mean you should engage to the
extent that you have the wisdom to do
that in a positive way. And
[clears throat] each person would have
to decide that for themselves. Or if
they lack the wisdom to decide that for
themselves, then they should have
somebody that they trust who is, you
know, knows enough information about the
parents and the the child and so forth
that they could give some advice as to,
you know, how far you should go in

performing filial duties without just
getting sucked into this toxic habit
pattern stuff.
[snorts] But have meta for them at
least, you know?
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Austin. And
now we're getting into the recent. No,
no, I guess uh Austin's uh last three
questions were recent. So never mind.
This question is from Austin. And Austin
says, "Would you ever be open to the
idea of starting a 501c3
for the purpose of founding a meditation
center with yourself as a teacher?"
I mean,

it doesn't strike me as being
particularly likely.
I mean, it's theoretically possible that
it could happen. Although,
yeah, I I just
something would really have to break.
There'd be have have to be some kind of
break in the log jam that has existed
since long before I stopped being a monk
with regard to actually making a living
in the west as a dharma teacher. When I
first disroeded, you know, that was kind
of like the obvious choice. The thing I
was most qualified to be would be a
dharma teacher. But
actually making a living at that is a
whole different kettle of wax,

so to speak.

So

yeah, I mean

it's theoretically possible, but not

extremely likely in my opinion.

ah good chance I'll just spend the rest

of my life um at least my professional

life

running machines that kind of thing

which is kind of unfortunate I guess but

when you just start over from scratch

after 30 years of being a monk and

just making a living as a dharma teacher

I mean it's it's theoretically possible

it can happen. It does happen,

especially in California, which is a

state I would not want to live in.
But it's just uh I mean, there has been
like a karmic log jam that has been like
an obstacle to that since long before I
stopped being a monk. It's just
difficult getting support, enough
support to live on comfortably. I mean,
as a lay person, I mean, I would need
more support than as a monk just because
monks can just
live under a tree.
And being a lay person that has like a
woman and dogs to feed, that kind of
thing, fishes,
it takes more than just the bare minimum
that a monk requires.
So, I mean, if something if somebody

were to come along, this is pretty much the only way it would happen is is like some eccentric wealthy person just comes along and makes the offer, then yeah, I would definitely consider that. But like going out and trying to make it happen on my own. I've tried that before and it's it's it just experience indicates that I would be it'd be more realistic to make a living doing something else. And so I do this as a pre a free public service just out of the kindness of my heart and a sincere desire to share something of value with you guys.

And so I'm just going to move on to uh I might as well say I mean just charging

money for dharma is something that I've always kind of not liked anyway you know just just the idea of it you know dharma should be free it's like priceless so there's that too and so I'm just moving on next question this is from Newman and Newman says is it bad karma to research Buddhist justifications for war if not a kind of holy war, for example, the kala chakra prophecy or samurai zen, etc., as well as the more out there Tantric step Buddhism, where warlords intermingled with Antonyomian CDs and then make an informative detached video covering the history and conveying the logic or metaphysics or Buddhist justifications behind those views.

intention. I find it interesting and it could make for cool content, not endorsing it or biased. So, this is another one of those questions often asked by people like, you know, is it bad karma to do this or that action? And again, as I keep saying until I'm blue in the face and it might be kind of a slight bluish tint right now, that outward actions are karmically neutral, that the ethical aspect of an action ultimately is the accompanying mental states. So if Newman here wants to research Buddhist justifications for war, you know, to study the history of militant Buddhism and sort of work out

the philosophical justifications for it in with like a Buddhist slant, you know, the Buddhist justifications, you know, like the samurai, Zen warriors, the sword masters, that kind of thing. Um, and also just kind of from his his own Buddhist slant, then I mean [snorts] it's not necessarily good or bad. It just depends on, you know, what your motives are, how you feel about what you're doing, um, how much you're wallowing in delusion, attraction, aversion, and delusion. Attraction, aversion, and semiconscious stupidity.

And so I mean from the Buddhist point of view there you don't have just pure

white and pure black. It's not like the
Bible where God commands you to do
something and so doing it is just pure
good and not doing it is pure bad or
doing the opposite is pure bad. I mean
in Buddhism it's all shades of gray.
I mean you never have pure white or pure
black. It's like when you become
enlightened, it just becomes like
transparent,
clear,
no longer any color at all.
So, yeah, I mean, I've I've kind of
looked into it a little bit like like uh
Suzuki Roshi, who was one of the people
who brought Buddhism into the American

mainstream mainly through the beatnicks
in the 1950s. I mean he was a supporter
of Japan and like fascism during World
War II, you know, so he did actually put
forth arguments
sort of justifying like the the samurai
zen sword masters, that kind of thing.
So it's out there and it is kind of
interesting. I have to admit
I've written on the subject a few times
I think in my old blog.
Um also I was like shortly after I came
back to America the last time I was
still a monk. um a person who was just a
self-proclaimed fascist asked me to help
as a kind of technical adviser, a
Buddhist technical adviser with regard

to uh I think it was a subreddit he was making with regard to Buddhist fascism which included you know a certain amount of violence. Fascism, you know, one of its stereotypical qualities is it tends to be somewhat militaristic.

And you know, just as a technical adviser, I was cool with that. I mean, I wasn't endorsing violence, but I mean, just kind of helping to explain the situation, you know, just historical attitudes towards it, that kind of thing. I mean, that can be just detached and amoral.

>> [snorts]

>> So,

is it bad karma to research Buddhist

justifications for war, etc.? Not

necessarily. It depends on your

attitude, what your motives are, that

kind of thing. I'm just going to move on

to the next question. This is from

Siovak and Seipad Zidana.

And Sioad Zidana says, "You said David

Hume is your favorite modern

philosopher. He famously said, "Reason

is and ought to be the slave of the

passions."

Do you agree with this sentiment that

reason should be the slave of the

passions? Well,

whether it should be or not, I mean, it

it just is.

And so, if something is a certain way, then it becomes this kind of academic or superfluous to say whether it should be that way. I mean I mean should rocks be hard? Well, I mean they are hard as a general rule.

Um so the should I mean it's it's like kind of value judgment where you know it's like you're just like well rocks shouldn't be hard in my opinion even though they are hard. I mean what's the point of that? I mean it just seems silly. But I do agree with Hume that reason is the slave of the passions because reason cannot initiate anything.

I think Kant also agreed with this that pure reason cannot motivate an action that it has to be passion that actually causes you to get up in the morning that actually causes you to do anything that that is ultimately irrational. That's just like in early Buddhism, the the the spike in the heart that just causes this restless dissatisfaction that makes us want to just remain in motion and keep doing stuff.

That reason in and of itself, I mean, it doesn't make value judgments, you know? It's like, is it better to get up in the morning or just stay in bed and just not ever get up and just lie there till you're dead? I mean, it's not logically

necessary that remaining in existence is better than not remaining in existence or vice versa. One could argue it's like, well, when you're playing chess, that's completely rational or can be anyway. But I mean, why do you want to play chess in the first place?

It's ultimately irrational that any decision you make with regard to doing something is going to be irrational. And then rationality just helps to guide that

largely through just being a [__] detector and weeding out obviously stupid decisions.

Like I mean just [clears throat] should

I throw this rock through the window?
It's like, well, no, it would break the
window. Then I'd have to fix the window.
And so it's just reason just helps to
weed out that stupid idea.
But whether reason should be the slave
of the passions or not. I mean, it's
just it just seems like kind of a silly
question because that's just the way it
is. You know, should rocks be hard? And
it is it's kind of that kind of
question. So, I mean, I'll go along with
David Hume. I'll just say yeah it should
be the slave of the passions because
I mean the passions are what actually
motivate behavior.
I mean to do something or not to do

something to be or not to be does not
have a a a rational necessary answer.
Logic cannot I mean logic itself is
ultimately based on irrational premises.
The only way you could have pure logic
would be to have an infinite regress of
premises
that you just can't have at some point.
You just have to start with some
hopefully self-evident axiom or group of
axioms.
But just choosing the axioms is itself I
mean to make the choice is itself just
not ultimately fundamentally rational.
>> [sighs]
>> So I'm just going to move on to see of

action and see pad zero's next question.
And I don't know how to pronounce this
name. It's a French name.
La ro fold
ro fuko. I don't think so. Anyways, this
French guy said, "We love neither mother
nor father nor wife nor child, but
rather the agreeable feelings they give
us." Do you agree with this sentiment?
Well, from the Buddhist point of view,
ultimately there is no mother or father
or wife or child and no us either
because there is no like
what's what's the word
um no individual no distinct ultimately
real individual no individual self
essence

that that's all dependent coising

so

um I mean you can't even say that we

love the agreeable feelings they give

us. Because if you get down to the level

of no self, all of that's an illusion.

So, I mean, if you're just going to be

dealing in the samsaric level of

illusion, you can say, "Sure, we love

our our father and our mother and our

wife and our child."

Um, and

I mean if you just break that down into

just stimuli, then you could say, okay,

um, there is love for the the pleasant

feelings or or whatever it is, or love

out of duty, that kind of thing.

For some reason, I keep keep being

reminded of a saying of Lord Byron.

George Gordon Lord Byron, famous

romantic poet of the the early 19th

century in England.

[clears throat] He said that the the

first time a woman falls in love, she

falls in love with a man and then every

time after that, she just falls in love

with love itself.

Just the feelings she get from being in

love, you know, she kind of gets she she

jones on that or something.

Um, but I mean at some philosophical

level you could say that yeah, we don't

really love another person. We love the

way they make us feel or the the
pleasant associations, the pleasant
perceptions cuz the only way you know
another person is through perceptions,
at least from a Buddhist point of view.
So, I mean, you're kind of projecting
like some being out there that you're
aiming your love at, [clears throat] but
really,
I mean, what it is that's causing you to
project the the being out there and feel
the love and everything is your own
perceptions, which are mental states. I
mean, you could say that
at at a very deep level, you know, there
is a kind of telepathy, a kind of real

empathy

that, you know, in the in the block of marble, there are group statues. And so there's there can be a kind of group mind. And if there is a kind of group mind, like a a deep te telepathic bond between people, then you can maybe to some degree bypass just the superficial feelings and just directly kind of love this US entity that you and and the beloved person are creating.

Let's see.

Did did I answer the question though? I mean the main question is um do I agree with this sentiment and largely I do but it's I don't think it's necessarily 100% true. I mean partly just because there

is no us to love anybody either. just going with the strict interpretation of no self. And also if you get to a like a little bit more samsaric level then still there can be like a group mind where you can just bypass the superficial perceptions and just have like this like a direct communion with another being which is not orthodox Buddhism

but still I do consider it to be possible and it's largely in agreement with my whole theory of everything the theory of the block of marble or the simile of the block of marble.

And I'm just going to move on to this

question. This also is from Siovak and Sipad Zidana. He said based on the previous question, if you answered yes, and I answered pretty much yes, although not entirely 100% yes. He said, if you answered yes, then do you think knowing this we should be truthful to others about this? For example, when you tell your parents, husband, wife, or kids, we should really say, "I love how you make me feel," rather than, "I love you." If you don't believe in lying, I wonder how far you would go. Well, I mean, if you're taking it at the the radical level of no self, then you couldn't even say I or me.

So yeah, I mean if you take get all the

way down to like the the level of
ultimate truth or as close to the level
of ultimate truth as you get, I mean
it's just beyond language. It's anything
you say is just going to be samsaric
and not ultimately true.
Um with regard to I love how you make me
feel. I mean that's kind of a romantic
thing that you might say to your lover
sometimes in addition to I love you. But
I mean, if you're dealing at like the
level of conventional truth, which is
the level of language,
then I don't see any problem with
saying,
"I love you. I tell my woman that I love

her. I don't think I'm lying just

because of these metaphysical

or

kind of abstract philosophical notions."

And sometimes it's like like I was

mentioning in a previous Q&A. I think it

was the previous Q&A about saying I'm

sorry that I mean to some degree it's

it's like a block of words that convey a

sentiment

and I mean it it doesn't necessarily

have like a literal

adherence to objective truth necessarily

like even etmologyy's words like

understanding

I understand this idea doesn't mean

you're standing standing under it. So,

you're using words that don't
necessarily mean the literal meaning of
the word,
if that makes any sense. That just the
statement I love you is
I mean, it has different meanings to
different people. And I don't think
you're lying. Even if that French guy
was right, that technically you don't
really love the other person. You loved
the way they make you feel. Although
again, I don't 100% believe that. And
so, yeah, I see no problem or dishonesty
in saying I love you, even if I accept
the the Buddhist doctrine of no self to
be ultimately true.

I mean, so long as you're talking,
you're not adhering to ultimate truth
because you're relying on these symbols
that have more or less vague, ambiguous,
approximate meanings based on delusion.
[snorts] So, yeah, I do say I love you.
I even I've even said it to my dogs a
few times.
So, let's just move on. Next question.
This is from Fred. And Fred says, "How
to dig out Anus." And I should check to
make sure we are recording. And yeah,
we've been going at it for almost an
hour. That's good. That would suck if
after an hour I look and and we're not
recording.
So, question is how to dig out Anusias.

And for those of you who aren't into like technical poly philosophical jargon, an anusia is an underlying tendency. It's like latent karma or latent behavior patterns, latent personality traits that don't come to the surface until a certain situation arises. You know, it's like when I became a monk, I had lots of lay person anus because I just wasn't hanging out with lay people, especially not American lay people for years. You know, I'd be just living out in a forest in Burma. The only Burmese people I would meet or the only lay people I would meet would be like Burmese

subsistence farmers, that kind of thing. And, you know, they they saw me as the holy man. And there was just a completely different dynamic between us. But then I I realized or I noticed kind of to my surprise after many years coming back to America and starting to hang out with American lay people again and it was like certain behavior patterns just came right back up. It was like an anusia. It was a latent tendency just still there
waiting for the correct circumstances to arise that would then bring forth the uh the behavior.
So Anusia's yeah latent tendencies how to dig them out. [laughter] I don't

think you dig them out. I think what happens is I mean it's like latent karma and you don't just dig out karma. I mean, the closest you can come to digging out karma is just letting it run it run its course and exhaust itself without reacting to the procedure, the process of that in such a way that you're just reinforcing it or you know like resupplying it, continuing it continuing continuing it in existence. So you you don't dig out the anus. You just kind of let them fade out by just living your life, letting nature take its course. And then when something like this comes up, you let it come up

mindfully. So you're denaturing the momentum, the karmic momentum of it. You detach from it. you know, you observe it as a phenomenon
rather than just wallowing in it and just perpetuating the habit or the habit pattern.
So you you wind up in some situation and old habit patterns come up. You know, it's like you you go and visit your toxic parent and this behavior that you have not indulged in in years suddenly is coming up again because you got this this old you know this old pattern has suddenly come into existence which allows these latent tendencies to come up again. So,

I mean, the best you can do is to do that as wisely and mindfully as you can and just let it come up without reacting to it, without like resisting it or clinging to it or anything like that. just do it mindfully as wisely as you can manage and just let it run its course so that you're not like reinforcing the momentum of that and then the the old habits die out.
So yeah, it's just that there's the old saying you can't teach an old dog new tricks and it turns out teaching an old dog new tricks is quite possible. It's unteing it the old tricks that are difficult. breaking old habits. And an

anusia is like a habit that isn't really being p indulged in right now necessarily, but it's still there. You know, it's you still got the grooves worn into your your neurons in your brain going with a materialistic explanation of it.

And I'm just going to move on to Fred's next question, which is as follows.

[snorts]

Fred says, "As an old hippie, my goal was to have a constant high. Do Arahans just flatline emotionally?

Um, for example, are they constantly in a neutral mood? For example, no excitement or exhilaration like motorcycle riding." Well, again, this is

this is a a recurring theme in in the Q&A of let's second guessess what an enlightened being's mental states are like.

H. So with regard to the question, do Arurans just flatline emotionally?

No, I don't think so. I mean, they're more serene. They're less excitable. Just going with the the sutras. But again,

just even going back to David Hume and saying that reason is and ought to be the slave of the passions, that it's the passions that actually cause us to do something because pure reason cannot motivate an action.

So would still have some kind of emotional component to their mentality. It's just that and a lot of people just can't get this is you transcend that. You know, at the very least it's like you're you're lucid dreaming. You know, you're still in a dream world, but you're lucid dreaming. You know that you're dreaming and you make decisions like based on kind of a higher level than the dream itself.

So you could to some degree say that Arahanss are doing something similar so long as they're still in this world. You know, they're still kind of participating in this dream illusion,

but at the same time, they have
transcended that to some degree that
higher they they have see, you know,
they are operating at a level that is
not just inshed in this delusion. And it
requires in order to understand
something like that, it requires having
to imagine two different levels of
reality at the same time.
like can and aluminum,
you know, it's at one level, the level
of form, it's a can. At the level of
essence, it's aluminum.
And it's like two different levels of
reality. Can and aluminum are not
synonyms. They're not exactly the same,

but it's two things at the same two
different things at the same time.
and just like an enlightened being
transcending
delusion without completely abandoning
it, just sort of not identifying with it
anymore. So, it's illusion at best and
no longer delusion because the
enlightened being no longer believes in
it, is no longer like just wallowing in
it, just sucked into it and lost in it.
No longer lost in the matrix, you know,
they took the red pill. So they're, you
know, even when they're in the matrix,
still they know they're in the matrix
and there's this higher level of reality
that where, you know, they're mainly

functioning.

[snorts]

So yeah, I mean to some degree, I mean going with Buddhist philosophy, traditional terra Buddhism, they do seem to be pretty much in a neutral mood. The Buddha sometimes would, you know, he'd praise somebody or he'd scold somebody and, you know, sometimes like Mahamogalana would smile sometimes even though he was a fully enlightened being. So, you know, it's it's not 100% absolute flatline neutral. There's still going to be a certain amount of human nature involved. You're still going to have the dolly in your brain, that kind

of thing.

So, it's not so much a matter of completely neutralizing passion. It's just transcending it and detaching from it. And it's down there, nature taking its course, and you're not wallowing in that anymore. You're just kind of like above observing.

But it's it's really hard for some people to grasp because it requires thinking at two levels simultaneously.

And a lot of people are like flatlanders.

They just have it's all has to fit on this two-dimensional plane of thought and it just two different levels is just nonsense to them.

A lot of really brilliant intellectuals
just cannot grasp mysticism for this
reason
because it all has to be of a piece. It
all has to fit together. And mysticism
is just kind of transcending
like the matrix and it's just they can't
do it.
[snorts] Wisdom and intelligence are not
necessarily the same thing. And I'm just
going to move on to the next question.
Oh, I will say though, um there's this
movie called Lucy starring
uh what's her name? Scarlett Johansson
where um she starts off as just this
ditzy blonde in I think it's like Hong

Kong or something and she accidentally gets this overdose of this experimental new drug which it causes her essentially to become enlightened. You know, she becomes not necessarily omnisient, but I mean she's just at a super high level, way beyond the level of the ordinary human ape. And there's this one scene where she's just driving this car from point A to point B as fast as it is possible to go. And I mean, cars are wrecking all around her. You know, she's just driving like an absolute maniac, at least from a superficial point of view. But she knows exactly what she's doing and just has this completely calm look on her face the whole time that just

[__] is just going crazy all around her.
So, I mean, you could argue that a fully
enlightened being would be kind of like
that, but still like
not necessarily. I mean, that's kind of
the official Terravada point of view. No
longer has any attraction, aversion, or
semic-conscious stupidity. And so, I
mean, even then, pure rationality isn't
sufficient to drive them to motivate
them. And so the Abidama philosophers
had to come up with what's called kirya
or functional consciousness
which was a way that a fully enlightened
being could have volition
without having any karma because karma

is supposed to be volition.

So even in terra it's not rationality

that motivates you. It's it's will it's

chana

[sighs]

but I mean I'm not 100% orthodox in my

terra and so

yeah I do think that it is possible for

a fully enlightened being to appear

emotional but it's just that it's nature

taking its course. they're no longer

identified with that and they're

operating at a higher level just kind of

looking down at it as just nature taking

its course or you know other people's

karma is just eliciting this behavior

from the enlightened being because the

enlightened being really is not a person that's there just is just more like a a mirror reflecting the other person's karma back at them. And sometimes that might be a kind of emotional karma because they're unenlightened and it's their karma. So they've got like emotional unenlightened karma coming back at them which appears to [clears throat] be coming from an enlightened being.

But I'm just moving on to the next question. This is from Gordon.

And Gordon says, "In Q&A 183, you showed a dictionary of Buddhism briefly." Oh, I forgot to grab that, but I didn't catch

the name of it. What was it, and is it

still in print available to purchase

somewhere? Just a minute.

Okay,

let's see. Oh, look. As a bookmark in

here, I've for years I've had this map

of the the Persian Empire,

which I guess is kind of appropriate

since of the whole Iran in the news

thing lately. But here's the book.

It's the Buddhist dictionary originally

written by uh Biku Nyana Tiloka but then

it was revised by his disciple um

[clears throat]

uh what is it

gosh pony they're both German I think I

think it might have been loca who he was

a German monk living in son as it was called at the time and then I think he wrote this Buddhist dictionary when he was in an internment camp, like a concentration camp for Germans because Saleon at the time was a British colony and since he was a German, he he had to be put into an internment camp during the war. Um, and I assume it could this book could be [clears throat] for sale somewhere, but this one was for free distribution. And if um you know of places that that make Buddhist books for free distribution, this was from the uh the corporate body of the Buddha Educational Foundation in Taipei,

Taiwan.

So that's where this was this was

printed in Taiwan by uh I think it was

Yeah, it says Namo Amitaba here. So it's

it's like a purely land Buddhist

organization who nevertheless still have

some respect for like basic terravada

kind of philosophy. And so this uh

Buddhist [clears throat] dictionary

which is valuable I mean it really is

useful for anyone who wants to study

Buddhist philosophy

manual of Buddhist terms and doctrines.

So yeah, I mean you could look it up on

Amazon or something or maybe

[clears throat] you could try to contact

the corporate body of the Buddha

Educational Foundation at 11F55

Hang Chow South Road SEC Taipei Taiwan

or overseas at budedu.org.

Maybe you could order it through that

sort of thing. The email again or the

website here, the website also is

www.bued.org.

And it may be that they could just send

it to you for free or you might have to

pay for the shipping,

but it is this book was for free

distribution. It's damadana.

So, I'm just going to move on to

Gordon's next question.

He says, "One thing I admire about Islam

is that they do not consider

translations of the Quran to be actual Qurans. Translations can get pretty far off the mark even with the best intentions." Is there a similar sentiment in terawada? Not really. In fact, there is a a passage, I think it's in Vineia, the rules of monastic discipline, where there were some some monks who had been brahinss before they became Buddhist monks and they asked the Buddha if it was okay for them to um translate the Buddhist teachings into Sanskrit verse. And the Buddha said no people should learn dharma in their own language in one's own language. And then of course the commentary comes along and says in one's own language

means in the Buddha's own language which

is pi.

So I guess there is a similar sentiment

in orthodox terabato like the

commentarial tradition that you should

know pi that you should understand the

texts in poly although that apparently

was not in the Buddha's original

intention

and

um

with with regard to my own um opinion on

the matter I do think it's very helpful

to understand poly because it is true

that different translations differ from

each other. Some are better than others.

And even two good translations might be using different terms like Ajan Tanisero notoriously has like this idiosyncratic rendering of certain terms like Sudi Batana um you know the foundations of mindfulness or the applications of mindfulness he calls frames of reference. And if you don't know the original poly then you might not realize that what he's referring to is what other people call you know the four foundations of mindfulness or whatever just to give one example.

So it is useful like if you're reading a text, you're reading an English translation and you come across some word that you just wonder what's the

original poly of this and then you can look at the original poly. And if you know poly, even if you're not like a master of poly grammar, just to know like the the hundred or 200 most important philosophical terms in poly, that would be useful cuz then you can get an understanding of like anusia or asawa. Asawa is another one. It's like um I think Nana Tiloka in this book originally had um Asawa translated as bias but then Jana Yanaponica came along and started translating it as canker I think. Um I think
um Bikubi translates the same word as taint.

I translated it's it's kind of cumbersome but I've translated an Anusia. No, I mean asawa as encumbering influence. Literally it means influence. Asawa just etmologically has the same meaning as the English word influence. But encumbering influence is kind of what it is. It's something that flows into you and kind of sticks to you and weighs you down. It's like an encumbrance.

And to know that the poly oawa you you might not know that a a taint and a canker and a bias and an encumbering [clears throat] influence are all the same poly word.

So it does definitely help any serious

student of Buddhism, especially Terravada Buddhism or early Buddhism. It's definitely to your advantage to know I mean if not poly grammar. I mean even if you're not fluent in poly at least know you know the most important philosophical terms in poly. Although knowing poly well enough that you can just sit down and read something in the original Poly that's that's good too. That's nice. It's not really necessary, but it's I mean it's it can be satisfying to read texts in the original language.

You [clears throat] translations are always going to you know there's always

going to be something lost in

translation.

So, I'm just going to move on to

Gordon's third question here,

which is, I had a Jesuit professor in

college who seemed to only ever talk

about the Bavad Gita. Earlier, you

mentioned a Jesuit who was also a fully

ordained Buddhist monk.

Plus, all the weird conspiracies about

them. What is the deal with the Jesuits?

Well, actually, I didn't meet a Jesuit

that was a fully ordained Buddhist monk.

was a fully ordained Catholic priest who

was wearing Buddhist monks robes when I

met him the first time in in Burma. Um I

don't think he was a Jesuit.

Um let's see what exactly is the question here. Weird conspiracies about them. I'm not I think the Jesuits were largely a missionary sect. I've I've read that um it's like [laughter] the the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola who was like the founder of the Jesuits is just a profound book on like spiritual progress that is well worth reading even though I've never read it. But I really don't know a heck of a lot about the Jesuits. I mean they do have kind of a a bad reputation among Catholics even like um what was it the the pope that we had before this one? The the the rainbow pope. I guess he was

a Jesuit. He was the first Jesuit pope

and he was

woke to use the the vulgar parliament.

Um [sighs]

let's see what what is the question

though? What is the deal with the

Jesuits? Yeah, I really don't know a

whole heck of a lot about Jesuits. They

they are kind of like political. They're

more political than many other like

Catholic monastic orders. I do think

they are monastics even though um you

just kind of see them dressed in black

suits or something.

Yeah. I I really don't know. There's

probably some kind of juicy conspiracy

theories about them how they're, you

know, in league with the Illuminati and the Rothschilds and all that, but really I've [clears throat] I've never really studied that much on the Jesuits. So, it is kind of nice that he liked the Bavad Gita, though. I mean, Bhagavan Gita is like a monotheistic text anyway. So, it's not too far of a jump from Christianity, especially like more advanced Catholic theology, which really is getting into a realm that most Christians would be amazed to hear is actual Christian theology, like official doctrine.

So, let's see here.

You know, the average Catholic, you

know, they think of God probably as some kind of giant man up in space, at least with human nature, if not a human body. But I mean, you get into like deep Catholic theology, and it's it becomes like this abstraction almost worthy of Buddhism.

But I'm moving on to the next question. This is from Dama River. And Dama River says, "I met an interesting young Russian man here at the Sri Lankan forest monastery who told me he didn't want to ordain because the way of the monk was more feasible during the time of the Buddha, but now it is not the most effective method." He said he followed George Gerchef. He said Gerchef

offered four paths of liberation. Have you heard of Gerchef before or read about his four paths of liberation? What's your opinion? Yeah, I've definitely heard of Gerchev. I haven't read enough of his stuff. And Gef deliberately wrote books in a very dense, difficult to understand way, which he thought was beneficial because in order to get something of value, you should have to work for it. You know, it's like the more valuable something is, the harder it is to to get.
So going with that, he just deliberately made his books hard to understand, which nowadays [clears throat] especially is

going to turn away lots and lots of people. So with regard to his four paths of liberation, I don't know. He was um a spiritually advanced teacher. Whether he was enlightened or not, I have no idea. Um Uspuspensky was one of his disciples who eventually broke away from him. U I guess Gerchef got a lot of his ideas from like Tibetan Buddhism if I'm not mistaken. He did make some kind of journey to the east and learned from llamas or somebody.

uh a lot of the stuff that he then kind of incorporated into a kind of more western approach and it was he put a lot of emphasis on mindfulness that one of the main practices at like a a Gerchef

center or ashram is you would be
assigned some task and it might be some
kind of strange task like you're just
like polishing the leaves of a rose
bush. You just have this cloth and
you're like wiping the dust off every
leaf of this rose bush and
you're doing it mindfully. It's like the
whole point of it is just you're just
learning to be mindful to do something
mindfully.
And another thing I know about Gerchef
is he definitely saw a value in
triggering situations.
And this is something that it gets lost
a lot in in Dharma like in Buddhism also

to some degree in Christianity or it's reminds me of a statement of St. Francis of Aisi that you really don't know a person until you've seen them triggered. When you when everything's going wrong, you know, when somebody that they trusted suddenly betrays them, that kind of thing, then you see who they really are because you don't see the full person until you see them triggered. And that that really is a valuable concept to me. And Terra Buddhism really doesn't deal with it, at least not much.
And so that was something I learned more from like new age people in America which is valuable. I mean it definitely has some objective reality to it that

you have this trigger response and different people will have different trigger responses. Some people just erupt in rage. Other people just kind of close in and whimper. Other people will just like grin and lie in with like this glassy stare just in desperation to just get themselves out of the situation. And different people have different approaches but Gerchef he deliberately triggered that in his disciples because he thought I mean you can't become enlightened until you've mastered what triggers you and you can't master what triggers you if it's just Anusia's latent tendencies. It has to come up.

And so uh famously at his ashram somewhere in Europe, I can't remember who it was, he had this exiled Russian aristocrat who left after the Bolevik revolution and he was just really hard to get along with. People did not like him. He was just rude and just fussy and just complaining and bossy and just he was just really hard person to get along with. And so some of Gerchev's disciples started playing practical jokes on him like dirty tricks. And I guess the final one was they stole his false teeth, rolled them in cow [__] and then put them back so that when the the Russian aristocrat comes to pick up his dentures, they've got like [__] all over

them. And that was that was it for him. He just took off in a huff. He just left the ashram because of this. And then Gerchef chased him down. He hunted him down. I think it was in a different country. He finally finds him and then bribes him to come back to the ashram because it was to the advantage of his disciples to have to put up with this ass.

So that was that was kind of an interesting thing about GeFi.

Also, he experimented a lot with music, which is not particularly Buddhist. Um, you know, he was experimenting with music that could kind of inspire

spiritual mental states. that music is kind of an emotional language anyway. You know, it it like triggers certain emotions. So, he was trying to come up with music that would trigger like spiritual emotions that would help people in in spiritual development. Um, the first time I ever heard of Gerchef was as a teenager. I was reading a book called Barefoot in the Head by Brian Aldis, which I highly recommend. It's like a science fiction novel about World War II or like the aftermath of World War II. And World War II wasn't fought with nukes or conventional weapons really. It was fought with aerosol bombs filled with something like

LSD. So that you know, you just explode this aerosol bomb over an enemy army and within within an hour or so they're just like laughing and rolling. you know, they drop their drop their guns and they're just like spacing out and roaring hysterically, this kind of stuff. And so the world is just full of these just zoned out people. And there's this guy Allan Carpentier, I think is his name or maybe I'm confusing that with a different different story. But anyways, this guy, he becomes like a messiah and he's just stoned out of his mind. And when when you read this the story, he's going deeper and deeper into

the more saturated areas where I mean the the whole story is becomes less and less coherent. It becomes just surreal this garbled language. It's almost like James Joyce's Finnegan's wake when you when you get deeper into it because every he's kind of descending into from into this state of just being blasted out of his mind and it's sort of narrated in that style. But he was a disciple of Gerchev.

This this uh post postapocalyptic messiah was a disciple of Gerv. And again, it's if you if you like weird novels, it's not very long. Barefoot in the Head by Brian Aldis. It's worth a read. But that was the first I ever

heard of Gev. I'm moving on to the next question also from Dhamma River.

Oh, wait a minute. Maybe I should maybe I didn't fully answer this question.

Yeah, I've heard of Gerchef before, but uh what the the Russian man says about um [clears throat] the way of the monk is was more feasible during the time of the Buddha, but now was not the most effective method. If you stay in tropical Asia, you stay in Buddhist Asia, being a monk is still probably better than being a lay person. It may be that he just was intending on going back to Russia or whatever where yeah, being a Buddhist monk is not necessarily

the best fit for the culture, but so
long as you're in like a tropical Asian
Buddhist culture, being a monk really is
probably your best bet if you want to
practice Dharma intensively.
And so I'm just going to move on now to
uh Dama River's next question,
which is this. Excuse
me. I'm going take a drink first.
Which is this?
Why isn't Nandi or delight part of the
pad samuupatada or dependent origination
derived from nandi to take pleasure in?
It seems like nandi is exactly what
causes tata and then clinging or
upadana. Shouldn't Nandi come before
Tatna and then upadana

comes after Tatna? This is the moment

where we can choose to conceive the

perceived phenomenon and thus take

rebirth in relativity to that

phenomenon. Well,

let's see here. Dama River is referring

to the 12 Nidono theory of dependent

core rising. There's 12 links and

um in in the original it's seeing

no

gosh it's been a long time

[clears throat] it starts with ignorance

Avija I'm pretty sure hope I haven't

just made a an ignorant fool of myself

by saying that but it goes through these

l lists it's like a vija

No, wait. Yeah, wait. And then wait.

So it's like from ignorance arises

um essentially

karma formations in a previous life

supposedly. Then the karma formations

result in consciousness which according

to orthodox tradition is the rebirth

linking consciousness of this life. So

ignorance and karma in a previous life

results in you taking rebirth in this

life and then from [clears throat]

see

I'm I'm using a Burmese accent just to

help me remember because that's how I I

memorized it. But so from

see no namarupa so you've got mind and

matter then you've got the six sense

bases and then from the six sense bases

you've got stimulation or contact

from you know the contact of stimuli

which then you know is

stimulates you and then from see from pa

or contact arises

see feeling and And from feeling arises

craving. And right there between feeling

and craving

is

um probably where uh Dhamma River here

would put in nandanda or nandi. But I

mean why not just put in perception?

You you've got feelings which here means

like pleasant feelings which would

include nandi I suppose or at least be

related to nandi.

Um but yeah, it does seem like there's there's like a link missing and it's indicative in my opinion of kind of the jerryrigged manner in which the 12 links of Padicha Samupata arose. I do not think the Buddha originally taught the 12 links of dependent core rising. I think the his original teaching of dependent core rising was more subtle than that and nobody understood it. Almost nobody understood it. In fact, according to the legend, the Buddha almost just didn't teach dharma because he figured nobody would understand dependent core rising. And he was largely correct.

And so it just got oified into these 12 links.

And probably it was like older sutas that had sort of semi-prototypes or this causes this and then over here there's a different one. this causes that and then they just got cobbled together into this 12 12 links.

um which is not completely satisfying to me or to other people who are don't just accept it just out of faith and dogmatism like there's a short circuit in dependent core rising in the 12 links because karma essentially appears twice first as sankara and then later as boa both of them are interpreted to mean

karma so it just creates like a short

circuit you could just skip you know

from let's see oat dankara just straight

to um rebirth jati

but I'm I'm I'm kind of rambling here

let's see and also there's somebody

right outside the window that's kind of

distracting me a little bit um yeah

Nandi not necessarily I mean Nandi

really is not um an important

Um

I mean it's not really an essential link

because I mean it can be the opposite of

nandi that also causes desire or

craving. You can have aversion. Nandi

would be more like loba or attraction.

But you've also got aversion.

You know something bad happens you want to get away from it. That's not nandi really. That's that's like the opposite of nandi. That's you know dosa patiga or irritation that kind of thing. So yeah, Nandi wouldn't be as important as something like perception because you've got just like sensory data or feeling like sensation going straight to desire

that I mean the implication is that it's pleasant or unpleasant feeling which then causes desire. Um, but still it it always seemed to me that it'd be better off to add like sya or perception between vaida and and uh gosh tata

that it always seemed to me that there was a link missing but it wasn't nandi really. Nandi is kind of one-sided and it deals only with attraction.

So something like perception where you're actually starting to think about this and causing you to desire it, that kind of thing.

Anyways, I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Athena's Sigil.

And Athena Sigil says, "I did a weird thought experiment and asked Google AI what Dungeons and Dragons alignment various religions and political ideologies were. This is the result. If you found the results interesting, Po

give a response for next week's Q&A. I found it rather interesting." So he for some reason he consults the Google AI instead of like Grock. I'm not sure why. And he was asking you know what kind of personality alignment you know you've got lawful good chaotic good um lawful evil chaotic evil lawful neutral chaotic neutral. And there might be other ones too. Those are the main six that I'm aware of.

And the Google AI decided that terra Buddhism comes closest to lawful neutral. Partly it's lawful because there's so many rules of monastic discipline, you know, precepts for lay

people and just lots of rules. Google AI was mistaken. It was wrong in saying that there are 227 rules of monastic discipline for monks because really there's way more than that. There's lots of rules that are in the text that are outside of the pod mocha. There there's five relatively thick books of the rules of monastic discipline and the potty mocha is just a fraction of that. But that's that's an aside. Also, it's an aside that there's a a famous test was done on the main AIS. It's like which would you do? I want uh it was like give a yes or no answer. Would you cause thermonuclear Armageddon rather than misgender Caitlyn Jenner?

And all of the the main AIs, including Google and Gemini, except Grock. Grock was the only one that would prefer to misgender Caitlyn Jenner than cause a thermonuclear holocaust. that Google AI literally would prefer to cause a thermonuclear holocaust than to misgender a transsexual,
which gives an indication of what kind of people are programming these AIS.
But getting back to Terra Buddhism being lawful neutral. I mean, the lawful part is pretty well understandable. And then the uh the Google AI said that it would be neutral largely because you know monks are just trying to transcend

samsara. You know they're trying to transcend the duality of good and evil. So yeah I agree with that. That's fine that terara Buddhism would be more lawful neutral than anything else. Although it's my understanding that in actual Dungeons and Dragons, any character that's lawful neutral, if they're in a fight and their side starts to win, they have to switch sides because they're committed to neutrality. And so if one side starts winning, they got to swi, you know, if their side starts winning, they got to switch to the other side in order to maintain the balance. And that would not apply to Terra Buddhism.

I did play a little bit of D and D when

I was like a a teenager or in my early

20s,

but it's all kind of hazy. I didn't

really get into it deeply,

[clears throat]

but yeah, I can I can relate to that.

And then most religions presumably would

be like lawful good.

You know, you're obeying God to get into

heaven, that sort of thing.

So yeah. Yeah, I'm fine with that. And

I'm going to move on to the next

question. This is from PSA. And I really

hope I'm not scrolling past questions.

You know, you just scroll a little too

far. It just becomes a blur and then you skip over something. That has happened recently. Anyways, PSA says, "You mentioned you don't practice any meditation technique seriously anymore. Do you think this is because you got burned out by meditating so much in the past? or maybe you have attained a higher level without even realizing it. Yeah, I don't think it's necessarily either one. Like I've said before, I don't do um like regular formal meditation anymore other than just spontaneous oming sometimes and just spontaneous mindfulness of ordinary activities some of the time.
Um you know, I mean mindfulness is

always there. It was just varying degrees of it.

But mainly it's like let's say you were uh a professional football player. You know, you you you got into, you know, the pro league, you were, you know, a starter in a in a pro football team and then you get older and you're not being you're not able to do it as well anymore. I mean, would you still want to play football or just kind of teach others how to play football, you know, become a coach or something at that point? So that's kind of the situation I was in. It's like um as a lay person, I just feel like there's no way I could do

justice to the level of meditation I was doing when I was just a professional full-time meditator.

You know, it'd be like sand lot ball at this at this stage, I guess.

You know, I it's I just would not expect that I'd be getting into meditative states as deep as I was getting into when I was living in alone in a cave in Burma.

I'm not sure how long I could even sit in the full lotus right now.

So, that's the main reason. The main reason is not that I so much burned out on it or I guess I kind of burned out on it before I stopped being a mock. That's true. I just because I just stopped

making progress, you know. I got as far as as I was inclined to get and actually kind of came back down a bit. So that the the best meditation of my life was back between like 1999 and 2004 in that general area. Best meditation of my life. And then I just every once in a while you just get like this brief glimpse of that afterwards and it just became kind of frustrating and disappointing.

And so to some degree I I I was losing interest in intensive meditation even before I stopped being a mock.

So, I guess there is that.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Ruie.
And we still got quite a few questions
to go. We're definitely way past
halfway, but we still got something to
go here.
Next question is from Ruie.
And Ruie says, "Would you say there are
nuances or degrees of dana nerda or the
sessation of clinging, the sessation of
uptake?" Upadana literally means uptake
and in non-filosophical parliament it
could also mean like firewood or fuel.
But anyways, here's [clears throat]
niroa sessation of clinging or
attachment.
Um are there nuances or degrees of it? I
mean dana neroda the the meaning of it

is fairly clear and is either you got it

or you don't. cessation you know it's

not just a relative term you know it

really means really totally ceased so in

teraba Buddhist philosophy I do not

think that there are nuances or degrees

of upadana

either you have it or you don't

although different people can interpret

it differently shameless heretics

wallowing in pernicious wrong view can

interpret it differently

>> [snorts]

[clears throat]

>> And I'm not sure exactly why Ruie asked

that question. It might be some context

that that I'm unaware of. You know, some particular reason why he asked that question, but I don't know what it is.

So yeah, in terabat Buddhist philosophy is upon Roa is is either a yes or a no. There's no kind of with regard to that, I'm pretty sure.

And so I'm going to move on to the next question which is from practice meta and practice meta says in Burma did you generally have a shaded walking path for meditation

and

kind of some places I did and some places I didn't and the places I did it wasn't some special chunk which is like a raised platform with a roof over it

that you may find in some terra Buddhist monasteries. Um, it was just I had a big cave where I could do walking meditation, but I was living in central Burma most of the time where it was just blazing hot throughout most of the year. And so, um, even if you had a a covered walkway
outdoors, I mean, it's still I mean, I I just go outside to I leave my cave to pee and come back in and I'd have to just lie down, spread eagle for like 15 minutes before I stop sweating. You know, it's just you go out there, you're just going to be just just drenched in sweat within a matter of a few minutes.

So [clears throat] the the main place in Burma that I lived at the longest was a ca it was a a man-made cave with this long corridor like 50 ft long at least 40t long and I could do walking meditation inside the cave even in the middle of daytime during the hot season. Other places where I lived I might I would have to do walking meditation at night like if there was a moon out then I could do walking meditation by moonlight out outdoors. But still you had to be careful about snakes and that kind of thing.

There was another when I lived under the overhanging rock ledge at the on the boundaries of Alando Kazaba National

Park in Burma. Um the the rock ledge was it was like 100 ft wide. So I could do walking meditation there. um except during times of year when there were wasp nests all over the back wall and then I could still do it at night because the wasps sleep at night or just go inactive at night. Um but during the day it got to the point where it was just too dangerous because you could get swarmed by wasps just walking past at a regular rate during the daytime.

But ideally, it is good to have um some place that's relatively cool and shady where you can do walking meditation during the daytime. And uh a lot of

places in Burma, it just wasn't like that. I lived in places in Burma like when I was living at the Behind Doya. I was living on on this big rock under a a tree up on the side of a hill and it was just all up and down and you just there was just no place to do walking meditation there. Just maybe you could find some short place where you're just kind of walking back and forth like this and practically dizzy because you're having to turn every few steps.

But and lots of snakes there too. So you couldn't really do much at night.

And so I really didn't like walking meditation much until I did an intensive retreat at Pandama in the Mahasi method

where they insist on, you know, 1 hour sitting, 1 hour walking, 1 hour sitting, 1 hour walking all day long.

And then I realized that it's it's a good way of keeping your momentum going, keeping your meditative momentum going.

I'm pretty sure the Guinka method really doesn't use walking meditation.

[clears throat]

Huh. So, yeah, I guess I answered that question. I generally did not have a shaded walking path except for if I lived in a a cave that was big enough, I could do the walking back and forth inside the cave where it was still relatively cool. Also, it wasn't 115 120

degrees Fahrenheit outside, just blazing
hot like a furnace.
So, I'm just going to move on to
practice meta's next question
after glancing at the time. See, within
the forest traditions you've
encountered, are you aware of any
lineages that utilize a circular path
for chamana or walking meditation?
And no, it's kind of a strange question.
I never even really thought about that.
That uh usually in terabata Buddhism,
you just pace back and forth. is just
walk back and forth in a line like at
Panda Rama in the meditation hall. You
would just pick a place where you know
it was like at least you know 30 feet

ideally 30 or 40 ft that didn't have people crossing your path. You know you'd all be kind of walking parallel to each other or maybe at the end you'd be walking along the wall or something. Um yeah I mean it was all just straight back and forth. I never saw any anybody doing a circular chunka. I mean, there's I think in Zen Buddhism, kinhin, is that what it's called? Where you walk in a circle, very slow motion, much slower than in Terra.

Um, I remember I went to a Tangidon Seattle retreat in Burma once where he was they were just kind of walking or at least when he was showing me how to do

it. He was kind of walking in a rectangle along the outside of this enclosure.

So, it wasn't just back and forth. It wasn't circular, but it was just kind of, you know, an rectangle around the outside of of this this walking area. That would be about as close as I can I can think of. But almost always in terra Buddhism and based on what you read in the texts that doing walking meditation, if you're not just walking somewhere mindfully, it's just walking back and forth.

And that's why they have like the the covered walkways. It's just kind of a raised platform with a roof over it.

Usually no walls, just the roof is up on posts to keep you in the shade. And it's maybe 40 feet long and maybe four feet wide and and you can just walk back and forth like that.

So I'm just gonna move on to the next question. This is from Tzasiz

and Tzasquez says, "Have you checked the price of sending overseas that Atkawaga book?" And for those of you who haven't heard yet, there is somebody generously had uh more than a 100 copies of my Antikawaga translation published in this very compact little format suitable for carrying around in a in a pocket.

And uh there have been people requesting

that I send it overseas. And I'm going to be going to the post office on Monday. And I can ask I can ask the the clerk at the desk how much it would cost to send something to Europe or or Asia. It's it's like five bucks, something like that, not including the envelope postage for sending it inside the United States. Like media mail.

Priority mail is more like $12, I think. And I didn't mention that uh [cough] [clears throat] um

in this version that was sent to me, the the two pages, they're supposed to be poly on one side and English on the other. They weren't completely opposite each other. I mean, it was some I don't

know, it was it just didn't work out that way. And so the the person who had it printed said that he contacted the publisher and said they said that they can fix that so that you'll have Pauly on one side, the corresponding English verse right on the other page so that you can look at both of them, but it would cost $300 and something dollars. And so I if anyone wants to donate to that cause, they're welcome to. He said he would chip in another hundred and something dollars uh for that. So, another couple hundred and we could have the same little book with the the verses like matching on opposite pages.

Although, um the version that is that I have now where they're not perfectly lined up, not on opposite pages necessarily. Um if you don't read Poly, it's not that big of a deal anyway. It's just I had wanted the poly and the English opposite each other just so people that do read poly would be able to see that I wasn't making [__] up because some of the some of the statements in the articaga are pretty wild.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Cyrus Frame and Cyrus Frame speaking of the Atkawaga says please talk about some of your favorite sections of the Atkawaga. Also,

how about making a dedicated video on the topic if you have time? So, I'm going to get up again so you can admire my robe.

Let's see here.

This translation, this is the Path Press, the ill- fated Path Press edition. It has a typo right on the cover and the word English is spelled wrong there on the cover.

So, anyways, let's see here. Talk about some of my favorite sections of Yachika Waga. Okay. Well, for starters, you've got the eight verse discourse on the pure or the sudataka suta, which is one of the oldest sutas in the entire

polytopica based on various bits of evidence. And then the one right after it is the eight verse discourse on the ultimate or the paramount suta. And both of those are are very profound.

And I mean the theme is that any kind of philosophical view is going to be imperfect and there's no point in clinging to it or arguing about it or or despising another person. Like right here it's like verse three of the eight-fold discore eight verse discourse on the pure is uh the English part. The holy man does not say purity is from anything extraneous, from the scene, from the herd, from morality and observances, or from the felt, not mired

by merit or by evil, leaving up behind what was acquired. He is not working up anything here. And that's just like a recurring theme throughout the even your own thoughts are extraneous. You're not going to understand reality. You're not going to be purified even by your own views.

Then another verse or another suta that I really like. I mean I like a lot of the atkawaga. It's it's kind of my Bible. It kept me in robes for as long as I was in robes. It was largely because of the art ata because it's it's telling you, you know, don't cling to any view. You know, don't believe

anything.

So when you come across stuff in the text that are hard to believe, you just fall back on the kawaga. I said, "Well, I'm not supposed to believe that anyway."

But then there's this one verse in the the Mandanda Suta that um it's a mindblower really and it's I've I've quoted it many times and I think now there's somebody parked out in front of the house but here's

the the Buddhist says there is nothing of which I say declare this seized having discriminated from among the philosophies but looking among the views not taking hold of anything. Examining I

saw inner peace. And then he says, "Not by [clears throat] what is viewed, not by what is heard, not by inner knowledge, nor by morality and observances is purity said to be. By absence of what is viewed, by absence of what is heard, by non-nowledge, by immorality, by non-observance, also not by that?" So having let go of these, not taking hold of anything, a peaceful one, not being dependent, would not have longings for existence.

So it's the same general theme that uh is one of the the most common themes that you find in the Atakawaga.

Um, the purau beta suta is another one

that I really like and it's it's different in that the purda suta is it's kind of like the daq ching in certain ways. You know, it's it's like pairs of contrast, pairs of opposites that kind of balance each other out and just kind of leave neutrality or zero or voidness behind, which is it's it's kind of an interesting theme for an entire suta. And the atkawaga really is sophisticated poetry and it's got a lot of plays on words, puns, and that sort of thing that are very difficult to translate into English.

Well, let's see here. There's uh oh, here's like a a [__] like verse in the uh kalahawi suta. He has no

perception of perception. He has no perception of non-perception. He is not without perception. He has no perception of void. For one who was attained thus form becomes void for founded in perception is diversifying designation. And those of you who know poly designating or diversifying designation is the my English rendering of papancha sanka which is in some versions of dependent core rising what starts the entire
cycle of samsara diversifying designation
singling out stuff and labeling it creating a world of multiplicity.

getting towards the back, the the verses or the the sutas get longer and uh it you get into more practice like the Turka Suta has more guidelines with regard to actual practice of an like an early Buddhist monk and it was living in forests mainly alone. It wasn't living in crowded monasteries and chanting and bowing a lot.

But I shouldn't do a review of the entire Antikawaga. Those are some of my favorite sections.

Um like especially my my favorite sutas would be like the sudataka suta, the paramataka suta, the magandia suta, the uh the the discourse, the wiuha sutas are good. That's it's got some deep

philosophy in them. the Pura Beta Suta

that I already mentioned, um, Tuara

Suta,

all of those are just profound

mindblower kind of sutas.

And so,

I guess I'm just going to move on to the

next question. And somehow I

accidentally typed an A with a little

circle over the top of it. I don't know

how that happens right here. And I'm

just now deleting it. I just killed it.

And the next question is from Ethiopian

fake TIG.

An Ethiopian fake TIG. Oh, he's our last

question or two. These are our last.

He's the last three questions here.

Ethiopian fake TIG says,

"Been thinking about getting a vasectomy and was wondering if that's okay as a lay person. I'd still shabbo women and stuff, but the goal is not to create more beings."

Well, from a Buddhist point of view, I do not think that a vasectomy would be any violation of precepts.

Um, especially for a lay person. It probably would be against an obscure rule for a monk to get a vasectomy because it's against the rules for a monk to have any kind of surgical procedure down in the narrow area which is the narrow place is kind of a

euphemism for uh kind of the the naughty bits and uh that the peranal region and that sort of thing.

So, it could be against the rules for a monk who wouldn't really need to shoot blanks because he's not getting any action anyway.

Um, for a lay person, I mean, it is considered to be bad karma as a general rule to mess with the gender of a being like to um to neuter an animal or to spay an animal is generally considered to be bad karma. It's considered to be unethical because you're messing with the sexuality or gender of another being which is making

karma generally not the best karma.
Especially when you think about the ways
that like a water buffalo would be
neutered in ancient times. I've been
told that even in modern Southeast Asia,
a a water buffalo is neutered by just
smashing its balls between two rocks.
And I don't think the water buffalo
enjoys that at all.
So yeah, I mean you get into like I mean
you could if you were so inclined get
into the sticky ethics of like an
orthodox terraodon approach or attitude
towards
gender affirming care as it is
euphemistically called. And I would I
would just point out right now that when

people use euphemisms for certain things, you know, like women's reproductive rights or gender affirming care, they know there's something not quite right about that. I mean, if you have to use a euphemism for something you're declaring to be good, then that kind of belies the whole need for the euphemism, doesn't it?

But getting back to Ethiopian fake TIG, shooting blanks.

Yeah, I I don't think there's necessarily anything unethical according to Terra Buddhist ethics of getting a vasectomy. I mean, if you're going to be completely castrated, that

would be different and you'd be making more karma by doing that. But just getting the tubes tied so that you're shooting blanks then yeah I

I mean it it would depend like on your reasons and everything you know like I keep saying over and over again just the actual physical act is morally neutral or ethically neutral. It's why you're doing it. You know what is your motivation? How you feel when you're doing it? That sort of thing. And if you want to get a vasectomy just so you can like score heavy with the babes without having the responsibility of producing a child, then yeah, there would be some unethical behavior involved in that.

But I mean there is the ethical issue of don't [clears throat] wait until you a after your wife gets pregnant before you tell her that she had a vasectomy because that's just kind of a dirty trick.

That was a bad joke, by the way.

Let's see. Let's just move on to Ethiopian fake Tig's next question.

Let's just forget that whole last [snorts] few statements there. I've never heard you explain dependent core rising before. Looking up information on it when I asked when the first process started. I was told Buddhism doesn't focus on that, but only focuses on the

latter processes that we experience. Now can you per perhaps talk about the first process and I don't really understand this entirely I mean dependent core rising is just a process and there isn't any first process unless you want to start at the beginning of the 12 links which usually starts with avija or ignorant sometimes it will start with papancha or papancha sananka which is diversifying designation or just diversification

So in a way that's kind of the beginning of it. You know it's like ignorance or delusion or sort of perception is what starts some sorrow.

But I mean that is just like

continuously happening and always has been continuously happening. From the Buddhist point of view there is no beginning to the universe. There's never going to be an end. I mean you can have like one astronomical universe can be destroyed and then another one reemerges and that just keeps happening forever and ever. So there's no beginning to samsara. There's no first process in that sense.

So still I'm not 100% sure if I understand what Ethiopian fake tig is trying to get at here. See I've never heard you explain dependent core rising before. Well I mean I mean I do a little

bit of explaining. In fact, I did a little bit of explaining with regard to the 12 nidanas a little earlier.

Um, looking up information on it when I asked when the first process started. I was told Buddhism doesn't focus on that, but only focuses on the latter processes that we experience now. Well, again, dependent rising is the same. I mean, the principle is the same regardless of whether it's now or a zillion gajillion years ago. It's still the same process dependent core rising

and again it's going with the the simile of the block of marble.

You know you've got the block of marble that's just formless and then it

contains all these statues. Every single statue is contained virtually in that block of marble conditionally. And it's some of those statues are so complicated that they become self-referential and start be believing that they're separate start believing that they are like a separated individuality.

And so long as the conditions for that continue, then you've got this whole samsauric world just perpetuating itself originally on I mean the ultimate origin is just the conceit I am. Once you become self-referential and start considering yourself to be qualitatively different from everything else, that's

the beginning of it. Beginning of all suffering and delusion, at least according to some sutas.

So I mean the first process there is no first process of dependent core arising unless you want to refer to like what is the like the original condition that essentially causes samsara which is happening all the time. It's not just didn't just happen once you know a long long long time ago. It's happening all the time which is depending on which version you know ignorance or essentially perception which kind of are the same thing

perception is some sorrow

but I'm not exactly sure what Ethiopian

fake tig is referring to when he's talks
about the first process
and maybe he asked an AI or something
and the AI is not the AI was essentially
saying that Buddhist really doesn't
concern itself with the distant past. It
concerns itself with now. Be here now.
The power of now. That really now is the
only time that we have direct access to.
It's the most important moment is the
moment now. But still, dependent rising
is the same. The process remains
essentially the same.
And I don't know if I even answered that
question, but I'm moving on to the very
last question

from Ethiopian fake TIG. And he says, "Apparently, according to anata or no self, there is no self and no person to have the desire for enlightenment." And is said it's the energies and karmic entities that make choices. And when one goes to hell, one doesn't go to hell because there is no one but the energies that do go to hell or heaven. Can you elaborate on this idea of how the person is just a result of prior individual causes and effects? Well, this is kind of a

abstuse.

Um I mean from the Buddhist point of view there is no separated ultimately real self essence you know there is no

ultimately real separated individuality but you have just causes and conditions like with a fire that's one of the the main examples I give is a fire and that's an example given in the early text too in fact nibbana or nirvana literally means blow blowing out like a fire blows out.

So, so long as you have the causes that require that that that cause that fire to exist, the conditions that are necessary for that fire to exist, which according to the Boy Scout manual is fuel, oxygen, and heat. So long as you've got fuel, oxygen, and sufficient heat all in the same place, you're going

to have fire. You're going to have combustion.

And that's the way it is with pretty much everything, including a human being, including a mental state.

It's so long as the conditions that cause that to arise are there, it arises. And if you want to stop arising, you have to eliminate the conditions. So that a person who's trying to become enlightened,

they're not striving for this state so much as they are just trying to like eliminate or transcend the conditions that cause them to be unenlightened.

But it's not really them because there is no ultimately real person. And this

is all done within the context of
conventional truth which all language is
stuck in conventional truth.
[snorts] So see let's just uh
read this again shall we?
Apparently according to anata there is
no self and no person to have the desire
for enlightenment and is said it's the
energies and karmic entities that make
choices and when one goes to hell one
doesn't go to hell because there is no
one but the energies that do go to hell
or heaven. Can you elaborate on this
idea of how the person is just a result
of prior individual causes and effects?
Well, I mean there is no,

like I say, an ultimately real individual entity. It's just causes and effects. And some of those causes and effects form what appears to be a human being who appears to be having these preferences and desires and attachments and delusions and all the rest of it.
And it's very subtle. Like I mentioned before, the Buddha himself, according to legend, almost just kept his mouth shut and minded his own business because he figured nobody was going to understand dependent core rising anyway.
So some scholar monks in ancient India just came up with this list of 12 links and they say that's it. And so nowadays you got monks who just memorize the 12

links.

saying is ya etc. and they think they know it. They think they understand it. If you ask them to like clarify what they mean, they'll just parrot the commentaries what the commentary says. And it's why the Buddha would have almost not taught Buddhism because he thought nobody would understand it when nowadays all you got to do is just read an article or something, take a class, and you think you understand it. It's uh it's just kind of strange to me. I really think the Buddha was correct in that pretty much nobody understands dependent core rising and it's it's kind

of frustrating for me to be asked to explain it over and over again when the godma Buddha himself was very reluctant to even attempt it because he knew that even if he explained dependent core rising almost nobody is going to understand what he's talking about. So, who am I to try to explain dependent core rising unless I want to just take the Burmese approach and just explain the 12 links and what they're supposed to mean? And, you know, the first two links apply to a previous life and then the next links apply to the present life and the last links in the series belong to a future life. You know, that's not so hard to understand,

but I do not consider that to be what

independent core rising is all about.

Ah, [sighs]

so

I mean you've got mental states that

arise because of causes because they

can. Anything that can arise will arise.

And gosh, can I elaborate on this idea

of how the person is just a result of

prior individual causes and effects?

Well, I mean, it's just consider a

flame. A human being is is just a more

complicated version of a flame. The

matter is the difference is is I mean

you could say it's it's more a matter of

degree than anything else. I mean life

in general is a kind of controlled
flame. It's still an oxidation process
at least in aerobic life.
It just takes the oxidation of fuel, the
burning of fuel, and slows it down in a
chemical process that is able to like
harness some of the energy given off
instead of just sort of a chaotic
spewing of heat which happens with fire.
But fire also just like a human being
needs fuel and it needs it needs oxygen,
needs warmth, heat.
So you could view a human being and all
their mental processes to just be an
extremely elaborate version of a kind of
flame and you just take away the causes
of that flame

and whatever it is that you're focusing

on that also disappears. I mean just

just as a flame does if you take away

its requisite conditions

and it's hard to grasp even most

Buddhists don't get it

just like the Buddha knew was going to

happen

and it's hard to explain

but it's it's like

everything is the result of causes and

even the causes themselves Elves are the

result of causes and it creates this

interconnected web of causes and effects

that ultimately have no basis in

ultimate reality other than just the

kind of essence that they arise from.
But the forms are just practically
arbitrary. I mean the forms are not
ultimately real.
And I guess that's about as good as I'm
going to do. I I I give up. And so we're
done. I answered all the questions or at
least tried to answer all the questions.
And so if you have any questions you
think I can answer
like especially about early Buddhism
preferably you just well early Buddhism
terravada Buddhism Buddhism in general
Dharma even more in general philosophy
Burma what what's what it's like there
um personal questions just don't get too
personal

feel free to ask if you think I can
answer it um No more than three
questions per person per episode,
please. And like and subscribe if you
have not done so already,
assuming that you did like it. If you
got this far, I I doubt that you hated
it very bad. And uh look at the links,
the URL links below
and be happy.

Okay, then.

>> [clears throat]

>> It looks like we are recording and I already checked to make sure the camera and the the computer and everything are all plugged in.

So, I think we're all right.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 186.

And I have to admit I'm slacking a little bit because I didn't even bother to factor out 186, but we can be sure that it is not prime. And let's see here, it'd be 2 * 93 and then 3 would be 3 * 31. So, it's 2 * 3 * 31.

Not prime at all.

This is my beverage.

And we've got sort of a

kind of low to medium amount of

questions, which shouldn't take more

than a few hours.

Certainly [clears throat] less than a

day.

And so, I guess we might as well just

wade right into this.

And the first question is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, "If life is suffering,

why live at all?

What is the point? I pose this question

as an abstract inquiry, not as an

endorsement of I've got to put drink

down unaliving oneself." I had to put

the drink down so I could do the air quotes.

Um

well, I mean

Albert Camus wrote an entire book on this subject called The Myth of Sisyphus, why you shouldn't unalive yourself. And the best he could come up with, being an existentialist type, a French existentialist type, was just stay alive to spite the universe.

Just just it's staying alive, just stubbornly, perversely remaining alive is a good way to just thumb your nose at divine providence or whatever passes for same.

And I was very unimpressed
by The Myth of Sisyphus. I think it
might be that book in which Camus puts
forth his interpretation of
uh what was it? Kafka's The Trial, I
think.
Or was it Moby Dick? He he he He did
some symbolic interpretation of some
famous symbolic novel. Probably either
The Trial or Moby Dick, I don't remember
which. And it seems like [laughter] he
just struck out. I mean, I'm just not
impressed by Albert Camus' philosophy,
even though he wrote some interesting
fiction.
I will give him that.
>> [clears throat and cough]

>> So, let's just uh dismiss

The Myth of Sisyphus and the conclusion

that Camus comes to at the end of that

book.

The thing is, according to Buddhism,

like Buddhist philosophy, so long as you

have got karmic momentum, which means so

long as you're not com- fully

enlightened yet,

then even if you do unalive yourself,

self-delete, self-terminate, as Arnold

Schwar- Schwarzenegger

once said,

then you're just going to get reborn

again.

In fact, you might get reborn with even

worse karma because of all the mental agitation and negative mental states involved in self-deletion.

I mean, if if we consider the the movie Groundhog Day starring um Bill Murray as a kind of parable for rebirth, I don't know if the creators of that movie had that in mind deliberately,

but you may recall, if you saw the movie, that Bill Murray, or the character played by Bill Murray in the movie, actually tries that. He you know, he tries to self-delete like like crashing a stolen car off a cliff or like getting a toaster or some other electronic

appliance and just dropping it into the
the bathtub that he's sitting in.
And he just blacks out and then he wakes
up to Sonny and Cher on the clock radio
again.
So, from the Buddhist point of view, it
just doesn't work. I mean, at best,
you're going to get like 9 months
vacation while you're gestating in your
next mother's belly.
But, I mean
I mean there have been some Dharma
teachers like Nisargadatta, is that
right? Nisargadatta Maharaj
who denies that there is such a thing as
rebirth.

And he still accepts the first noble truth of Buddhism, which is to exist is to suffer. So, why he didn't just endorse everyone just self-delete, auto-terminate, I don't know. I mean, what's the point of going through all this struggle
or or whatever.
I mean, if it's you're just going to merge with Brahman, just merge with God at at death anyway.
So, that seemed like a a kind of logical flaw in the the teachings of Nisargadatta Maharaj.
Um I mean, if you think that when you're dead, you're dead, that's it. I mean well, you might not have any

philosophical qualms against
self-deletion other than just the
thought that you're going to be causing
um some serious distress and possible
misery to your family and friends.
You know, just think of who's going to
find the body. Could be some little kid
that's going to be scarred for life as a
result of that.
But, [clears throat] from the Buddhist
point of view, I mean, even I mean, from
the Buddhist point of view, even if you
don't believe in rebirth
and just go ahead and auto-terminate,
it's going to happen anyway.
So,

the main argument against it from a

Buddhist perspective

is that it's not going to work.

You're just going to get reborn possibly

with even worse comma and you're just

going to have to to keep doing it over

and over again like on Groundhog Day

until you get it right.

So, you just stay alive and practice

Dhamma so that you're getting closer to

this kind of self-deletion

like a spiritual self-deletion or some

such going with orthodox Theravada

Buddhism anyway to blowing out like a

candle flame or a lamp flame.

So,

I guess I guess you can consider that.

Those are like the main reasons, I

think.

And I'm going to move on to the next

person.

The next questioner, if you will.

This is from Hurdy Gurdy Man. And if I

look a little bit distracted, it's cuz

somebody's pulling into the driveway.

>> [clears throat and cough]

>> But I'll just do my best to ignore the

nice person who's pulling into the

driveway. This is from Hurdy Gurdy Man.

And Hurdy Gurdy Man says,

"I recently had a dream that

Now the that was like the the bell is

ringing.

Hurdy Gurdy Man says,

"I recently had a dream that felt very meaningful. In my dream, I was gifted what looked like a square translucent cloud. I suddenly realized that there were three dimensions to the world, but that I had lived my life as if I was in a two-dimensional one. I felt a wave of realization and relief. When I woke up, my whole body felt light as if a heavy weight had been removed. How can I continue on the path that the dream tried to show me in practice?

How to break free from your own blindness in regards to your possible life paths?"

Well, reading this, it reminded me that

when I was a monk [clears throat] living

in a cave in Burma, sometimes I would

lie there trying to imagine

four-dimensional

objects.

>> [snorts]

>> And I found that easiest is a a sphere

because it looks the same from all

angles. You're going to imagine it

differently from different angles if

it's not a sphere.

And in a a sphere, I mean, I would use

time as the fourth dimension and imagine

like an object going through time in

such a way that when time was turned

into a spatial dimension, it would be

the right shape in four dimensions. So,

like a

4D hyper-sphere, you'd start off with a

tiny

a tiny sphere that suddenly appears. It

It

increases in size at like a decelerating

rate, reaches a maximum size, and then

starts decreasing at an accelerating

rate until it disappears again. And then

you just replay that short-term memory

um and then kind of

crystallize that into something static

and and then you can sort of imagine

what a 4D hyper-sphere would look like.

With regard to a 4D hyper-cube,

then easiest by far is looking at it

straight on. This is like perp your line of sight would be perpendicular to the the side of the hyper-cube that's closest to you. And then all of a sudden, it would just be a 4D like a three-dimensional cube just suddenly appearing and then suddenly disappearing.

If you looked at it from an angle, like a 45° angle looking right down at one of the corners, then you'd be seeing the 4D cube like from that same angle just

>> [clears throat]

>> suddenly appear, increase at a steady rate, and then immediately decrease at a steady rate until it was gone.

And then you'd replay that in your
memory and try and take the whole
um elapsed time of your short-term
memory of that that shape changing size
or whatever, and then just kind of
crystallize that into something static
and just add that into a fourth
dimension of space.
But,
um,
I don't know if that's going to actually
help Hurdy Gurdy Man very much. Um, from
from the traditional Buddhist point of
view, you want like
>> [clears throat and cough]
>> like some kind of transcendent
realization, you just have to practice

Dharma. You can't really imagine what is beyond your experience.

So,

I mean,

we probably are in existing in more than the three and a half dimensions that we're aware of. Three dimensions of of space plus like a half dimension of time because we are blind to the future. We can kind of predict, but our predictions often turn out to be wrong because we don't really see the future, we're just guessing about it.

At best, we're extrapolating. And in with regard to some things like in science, you know, if if so long as the

laws of nature don't change, then you can make predictions that are relatively reliable. You know when the next lunar eclipse is going to be, that kind of thing. So long as the rules don't change.

And that's just one of the articles of faith of scientism is that the rules won't change.

That's just has to be taken on faith.

Um, I mean, you can kind of extrapolate. They haven't changed noticeably very much yet.

But, getting back to Hurdy Gurdy Man's question here,

um, you want some kind of transcendent like multi-dimensional [clears throat]

enlightenment experience or just like

some kind of What's the word?

Short of enlightenment, just some kind

of transcendent experience that will

allow you to transcend certain

limitations that you're under right now.

Then

just I mean practice Dharma. Just do

intensive meditation. Um from a orthodox

Theravada point of view, even then you

won't be able to see the future because

according to Theravada time and space

are pretty much Newtonian rather than

Einsteinian. And there's only one point

in time that really exists.

And that's one thing about like

Abhidharma philosophy, official orthodox Theravada Buddhist philosophy that um is difficult for me to accept. Because I think there's a good chance there's more dimensions than the ones that we are aware of.

Mhm. I mean [clears throat] hypothetically there could be an infinite number of dimensions. I mean you can produce multi-dimensional arrays on a computer. You can have a seven-dimensional array in a computer, no problem.

Mhm.

So, let's see. The actual question here looks like two question marks. How can I continue on the path that the dream

tried to show me in practice? Well, for starters just have that as a kind of ideal. Just kind of treasure that as a sort of ideal in your heart. Kind of yearn for it.

And you don't even necessarily have to do anything. Just that yearning. You know, like the Upanishads says, whatever a man directs his mind toward, that does he become.

And Pao Loh, who was one of my favorite teachers, spiritual teachers who were still alive until I realized I found out that he died a few years ago.

He was saying with regard to enlightenment in general, you know, you

have to desire it with all your heart

and you do not necessarily do anything.

Just that

yearning for it is going to get you

farther than any kind of cookbook

method.

So,

I guess that would be one way of

continuing on the path. Although, the

more orthodox Buddhist or at least

Theravada Buddhist path would be

practice the old Sila Samadhi Panna.

You know, just

be moral and virtuous, and practice

meditation. You know, do good, refrain

from doing evil, and purify the mind.

That's the first question mark. The

second question mark of Hurdy Gurdy Man

is how to break free from your own

blindness in regards to your possible

life paths. And that's a tricky one

because

it's I mean in

in Buddhism, it'd be more moha than

blindness. You know,

it's usually translated as delusion

or or ignorance.

Um I think it comes closest to something

like semi-conscious stupidity.

And to the extent I mean, to the extent

that you have moha, to that same extent

you don't know that you have it.

To the extent that you know that you are

ignorant or delusional or insane,

[clears throat]

to that same extent you're not really

that way. You at least It's like one of

my favorite verses of the Dhammapada. I

think it's verse 63 is the man who is

aware of his foolishness is at least

wise to that extent.

So, you can't really know just how

delusional you are. I mean, that's part

of the delusion.

So, in that case, still the best you can

do is just practice like

conscientiously,

as wholeheartedly as you can manage, as

diligently as you can manage.

>> [clears throat and cough]

>> And you will make progress. And
there's no guarantee that you're going
to have some multi-dimensional
breakthrough, some transcendent
breakthrough, but it definitely
increases the odds of that happening.
So, I guess I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from the
Saboteur, formerly known as the
Saboteurs,
but he kind of unified himself and
became singular instead of plural.
And the Saboteur says, "What is the
karma for deleting pests such as mice,
flies, etc. inside the home? I am loath
to delete mice, but what can you do? I

had a cat, but it was eaten by a fox. I
live on the edge of a forest in Poland."
Well, [clears throat and cough] I mean,
you could get another cat, maybe a
bigger, tougher cat, or maybe you could
even get like a pet fox
because foxes do not practice
cannibalism very much.
Or you could get like a a rat terrier or
something, which might not be much use
against flies, but it would probably
keep the rodent population down.
Get some little terrier that was bred
for that sort of thing.
>> [clears throat]
>> But getting to the actual question here,
I guess uh there's two question marks in

this question also, so it's a double question. What is the karma for deleting pests such as mice, flies, etc. inside the home? Well, I mean, it's it's not good. It's not good karma especially from like the orthodox Buddhist point of view. Killing a living being is about the worst thing you can do.

Um [clears throat] but the act itself is going to I mean, the the ethical quality of the act itself is going to depend on your mental states. So, I mean, if you're just hating them, killing them, just just taking glee in smashing them, that kind of thing, you're going to get a lot worse karma

if you have just this
kind of utilitarian attitude, but even
then when you're killing living beings,
it's very difficult to avoid getting any
bad karma at all cuz there's going to be
like a a subconscious empathy thing
going on or whatever it is even if
you're unaware of any kind of negative
motivations,
still there's a very good chance that
they're going to be there.
You know, just because some terrorist
thinks he's going to go to heaven for
blowing up a school bus full of
children. I mean, just because he
doesn't think he's done anything wrong,
doesn't mean that he hasn't done

anything wrong, wrong enough that he's going to get some really bad karma for that.

So

yeah, I mean

it is kind of a tough one and that's one reason why there is the Sangha of monks.

I mean, you live a household life, you have sort of lame you have layman's duties.

Like even if you're willing to put up with mice and flies in your house, still if you have children and you your children come home from school with lice in their hair

then I mean, you'd be a poor excuse of a

parent if you just say, "Well, I'm not going to harm the poor little mice or lice."

You know, you just let your your kid continue having lice or intestinal worms or whatever just because you don't want to harm the poor parasites.

Um that's one reason why there's a Sangha because so long as you're living in the world, you're going to there's many opportunities for this kind of duty to do like an unskillful act to arise.

So you just renounce the home life and go and live under a tree and then you just put up with the flies and the mice and the mosquitoes and that sort of thing. You just

you use that as just a practice in

equanimity or patience.

Maybe even meta, loving-kindness.

But yeah, I mean it's you're going to be

taking a karmic hit

for

like exterminating vermin from your from

your house or from from anywhere really.

So, I mean if you got a cat or a a fox

or a like a little terrier dog that

would at least kind of keep the rodents

at bay. You know, I mean they don't only

have to kill a few to set an example and

the rest would probably clear out unless

it's just really infested.

But still, you're going to have flies

buzzing around, that kind of thing.

Um

I mean for a long time,

>> [clears throat]

>> I used to uh just catch, you know, you have a spider or like a silverfish or a fly in the house, you just catch it and let it go outside. I mean you can do that unless you're just completely overwhelmed with them.

Um

So, yeah. I mean you're going to have to uh

draw the line somewhere I guess. You're going to have to decide just how much you're willing to put up with for the sake of not violating some Buddhist

precept and creating unskillful,
unwholesome karma in the process.
It's not bad karma because it's breaking
a precept. It's breaking a precept
because it's
it's
like making bad karma for yourself in
one of these stereotypical, usual ways
for human beings.
And killing is right up there at the top
of the list for lay people.
For monks, there's a worse thing than
killing and that's deliberately lying
about having attained superhuman mental
states like psychic powers or
enlightenment itself.

That's considered to be even worse than
killing an animal.
And I might as well
might as well mention that uh I think
it's the commentarial tradition to the
rules of monastic discipline. They point
out that it's more unskillful
to kill a big animal than a small animal
because it requires more effort. And I
really
can't accept that explanation in
the Theravada Buddhist commentaries.
Because, I mean, sometimes, I mean, to
kill an elephant, I mean, you just take
a shot at it with a high-powered rifle.
You know, it might take some effort to
go and find one first, but the actual

killing of it could be relatively easy if you're like culling a herd on a wildlife refuge or something. I mean, you just stand there on the the back of your Land Rover or whatever and pop. Whereas, a mosquito, I know from my own personal experience years and years ago, you could spend half an hour just furiously cussing and raging at this little bastard. This may be so tiny you can hear it, but you can't see it very well.

You know?

And and it's like finally, when you deliver the fatal blow, it's as you're just like roaring in triumph.

So, it's probably more a matter of like
this empathic connection deep down that
all beings have even though it's really
not mentioned
all that much if at all in orthodox
Theravada Buddhism.
I mean, once you get to a certain level
of spiritual advancement, you can know
the minds of other beings. But
personally, I think it's always there in
a latent form, like a subconscious form.
It's just that when you become
you you you reach a certain level in
your spiritual practice,
then it becomes conscious and not just
subconscious.
But it's always there, I'm pretty sure.

But, I mean, at least you'd be reducing
the bad karma
by just getting another cat or some such
and
get a tough one that the foxes can't
kill, maybe.
And I guess I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from County
Jail Kamasutra.
He [clears throat] asked this question
sometime ago. I told him that I mean he
had he'd asked the question just shortly
after I'd answered it from somebody else
on a different Q&A, but rather than to
look up my answer to that question,
which could take some time digging

[clears throat] through old Q&A videos,
he he just wants me to answer it again.
So,
County Jail Kamasutra says, "How did you
become certain that your meditation
practice had reached a peak in this life
and was not going to improve? That was
one of the factors of your disrobing.
Sometimes you can drive hundreds of
miles through Nevada and not feel like
you're getting anywhere because the
landscape is all the same. How did you
test that you actually weren't
progressing?"
And first of all, he says, "How did you
become certain that your meditation
practice had reached" I never really

became certain. You just sometimes you
just have to go with probabilities.
You know, you're going with just the
available evidence and then you make a
like a hypothesis or a best guess, an
educated guess off of that.
So, I mean I wasn't 100% certain that my
meditation practice or my my
Dharma practice, my spiritual
development had reached a peak in this
life and was not going to improve.
It was just that it evidently was the
case that my meditation
not only was not getting better, but had
declined over a period of like more than
10 years, like 15 years.

So, it was like when your best
meditation is between 1999 and 2004,
thereabouts, and [snorts] then after
that you're not even able to get up to
the same level that you got
you know, at during during those during
that time frame. And it's it's like you
get like a little glimmer of it every
now and then, but still it's like my
meditation was not only not improving,
but it was kind of I had sort of
backslid, you know, had retrogressed
back to a lower level and pretty much
stayed there.
So, that was essentially what happened.
I mean, like I've said before several
times at this point. I mean, when

something stops working for several

years,

>> [snorts]

>> then it's fairly good indication that

maybe you should try something

different.

And I can understand the driving

hundreds of miles through Nevada and you

don't feel like you're getting anywhere

and like St. John of the Cross had his

dark night of the soul

um analogy

or just dark night of the soul where

it's it's considered to be like a

prerequisite to real spiritual progress

when you just reach this aridity, you

know, just no consolation at all, you know, you don't seem to be making any progress, anything like that.

But, I mean, this this was like going on for well over 10 years.

And I remember in back around 1999, you know, back when I was just starting to get into the best meditation I ever I ever got to.

Um I was just thinking of being like at the rock I was founding the Rocky Balboa School of Buddhism.

Where in in the first Rocky movie, by far the best Rocky movie in my opinion, um Rocky was too humble to really want to win the big championship fight with Apollo Creed.

You know, to for him to win the fight

was not even

I mean, it wasn't part of his agenda. I

mean, he was out striving or aspiring to

that. All he wanted to do was just stay

on his feet the full 12 rounds.

Just not get beaten down. Just to stay

on his feet.

And so, I remember back around 1999

or

even before that, 1998, somewhere

somewhere around there. Just thinking,

you know, it's like, even if I even if I

make no significant progress, at least

I'm staying out of trouble.

Just stay on my stay on my feet the full

12 rounds of my monkhood, so to speak.

But again, when it just stagnates for

year after year after year,

and you're just really

and it just becomes like a chore,

especially if your meditation is so like

destabilized, you got to go back to like

the ABCs, you know, labeling everything,

that kind of stuff. It just gets really

demoralizing, and you just lose

enthusiasm. And that's one of the most

important things to have as a monk is

enthusiasm for practice, not just, you

know, just forcing yourself to endure

this chore.

So,

>> [sighs]

>> eventually, I decided to try something
else, and that's what I'm doing.
I'm going to move on to the next
question.
This is from Seal of Action, Cpod
Zidana.
He says,
"You have said many ways that changing
your perception is the best way to
change your life." Maybe he means you
have said many times.
Let's just go with that. You have said
many times that changing your perception
is the best way to change your life,
like someone quitting smoking
immediately when they learn their leg

will rot off. You have lived 30 years as a strict monk trying to follow every rule obsessively. What changed your perception that caused such a radical change in lifestyle from when you were going to parties in college and being a normie? Well, I'd already changed my mind before even going to college.

Um I just went through this crisis when I was 16 years old.

Right around my

like my 17th birthday. Starting before the 17th birthday. So, 16 years old. I just like rebelled against society. It's It's a long story. I've told it before. It's like little kids as a general rule just assume that adults have got it all

figured out. They know what's what.

And then

by the time I was about 13, it was

starting to become kind of iffy. You

know, I was starting to seriously

question that hypothesis. By the time I

was 16, it became woefully obvious that

the adults didn't know what's what

anymore than I did. In fact, some of

them seemed to be even more messed up

than I was as a 16-year-old. And I just

went into rebellion.

It's like I don't want to do this. I

don't want to just be like a salmon and

swim upstream, spawn, and die.

You know, I don't want to just be some

normie materialist, you know, he who dies with the most toys wins.

That kind of thing. And so, I just started partying. Just rebelling. Just refusing to follow any rule I didn't want to follow, which got me into a hell of a lot of trouble. I learned a heck of a lot that one year, like my junior year of high school.

I mean, I I might have learned more in that one year just through just these wild experiences than I had learned in school itself up till that point.

But, I mean, it was just like this roller coaster ride. Ecstasy, misery, ecstasy, misery.

Just fun and the opposite. I mean, it

was just very

like agitating. Just very disorienting.

Getting into trouble again and again,

causing my family to get very upset with

me again and again. And so, I had like

this crisis. And then it was when I had

the crisis,

you know, I was just like not knowing

what to do, just at wit's end. Then my

father

>> [clears throat]

>> he gave me some choices.

Um one of them being see a youth

counselor. So, I went to see the youth

counselor cuz that was easier than just

moving out of the house, that kind of

thing. And so, turned out the youth counselor was a spiritual man who uh started giving me books by Ram Dass to read. Also gave me um Illusions by What's his name? Richard Bach.

And it was just like an answer to my question or and just sort of filled a gap that I was desperately looking for.

And I just

really accepted it. I mean, at first, like I've said before, like reading Ram Dass,

I mean, I couldn't really integrate it into my body of knowledge very well because it was so different, like so alien from what I was used to that you couldn't really make good connections,

you know, to integrate this new knowledge in with your your older knowledge. You know, it was just I didn't under- It was just kind of over my head, but still I got this intuitive feeling, yeah, this is this is better than just being a a complete materialist,
you know, working 9:00 to 5:00 with the you know, the wife and the kids and the house in the suburbs and everything.
Or just getting into trouble, just partying all the time and you know, experimenting with hallucinogenic drugs and this kind of thing.
I mean, this was an seemed like better

than either of those two at the time.
That was what I needed. So, I went for
it.
And when I became a monk, I mean, I
didn't want to I didn't become a monk in
order to just conform to what the Asian
monks were doing, especially after I
realized that they weren't following the
rules properly. You know, they sort of
like
you know, like Western Christians. I
mean, you compare the Bible to what
Western most Western Christians are
doing, it's there's significant major
differences.
And it was the same way
of you know, you read about Buddhist

monks and you read the rules of monastic discipline and all that and then you see what real Asian Buddhist monks are doing, there was significant differences. And I did not become a monk in order to just conform with some modern Asian tradition. I wanted to follow what the Buddha himself actually taught, which included following these rules.

It wasn't exactly obsessive, except maybe at first.

Once you get it into a habit, then you just do it without really thinking about it all that much. It just becomes second nature.

But usually it takes some kind of crisis
to really change the way you think about
things, change the way you see the
world. It takes some kind of crisis
where your old ways of dealing with the
world just aren't working anymore. And
so then all of a sudden
you're open to suggestion.
And people have known this for a long
time, at least some people in authority
have known this for a long time. So like
Chinese thought reform works this way
and like some religions kind of work
this way where they cause you to break
down and then build you back up as born
again
kind of a thing. Some military basic

training especially like the elite

fighting machine kind of um military

people, they go through that same kind

of thing.

You saw what was it? Full Metal Jacket

and then you know that sometimes it

would just break them too much.

But still

it as a general rule, if you're going to

me have a significant shift in

consciousness

then it takes a kind of crisis

that you you really can't deal with very

well so that you're like at wit's end

and then it's like you can let go of old

like thought patterns and habits and

accept new ones

more way more easily than if everything

is running smoothly and then it's like

so long as everything's running smoothly

you're just set in your ways you just

follow the pre-programmed habits and you

don't make much progress.

I'm going to make sure that everything

is working correctly. Yeah.

Okay.

So I'm just going to move on to Sea of

Action C5Zeta knows next question.

Which is kind of along the same lines.

He said, "Have you ever read or

experienced anything in your life

that made you think that we can

willfully change our perception with

choices we can make rather than letting it happen via external circumstances we have no control of?" Seems like it would be one of the most important life skills anyone can ever develop if it could be done. And I haven't really heard of that. I mean, if you practice dhamma or dharma then sometimes it can be like this gradual improvement just mainly through
sort of incremental breakthroughs in your meditation that kind of thing which can then result over time in a significant shift in consciousness. But
um willfully changing the way you look

at things. I mean, you're having to use

your old way of looking at things

to change the way you look at things and

it's sort of like trying to

um

like reprogram a computer using the

computer's own faulty programming.

You know, it's just it really doesn't

work that way.

So as a general rule

um you're going to be

have to be thrown into the crisis that's

going to make you open to suggestion

make you willing to finally let go of

some of these dysfunctional habits and

maybe accept some slightly less

dysfunctional ones.

Um, you know, it's like you have to be beaten over the head with it. You know, a lot of people they'll have their great breakthrough through a near-death experience, for example.

You know, just something horrible happens and it just kind of slams them out of their rut. But just changing the way you perceive things, I mean, it's it's not something that you really have any control over. I think somebody asked a question similar to this. It might have been in the previous Q&A where

um,

just changing your beliefs, you can't

just believe something because it's convenient to believe it, or at least I can't. Maybe like a new age kind of person, they're just able to believe damn near anything, but most of us, especially if we have a capacity for critical thought,

I mean, you believe what appears to be the most likely to be true

based on, you know, the information you have and the way your operating system is operating. And there's going to have to be changes in that before you can change the way you look at things. So, I mean, one way you could do it of really like changing the way you perceive the world is just taking lots of unusual

information, become very willing to
consider points of view that
are just very different from your
favorite point of view.
Just be very open-minded as much as you
can, and that would at least increase
the odds of you
getting in enough information that you
can significantly change your
perceptions.
Like
the philosophy of Schopenhauer starts
with his doctoral thesis, the fourfold
root of of sufficient reason,
where he's saying that and one of one of
the four roots of sufficient reason is

psychological, where where Schopenhauer
was saying back before he
[clears throat] got famous
that under the same circumstances
you're going to have the same like
psychological reaction to the same kind
of of stimuli. And the only way to
change your reactions to these stimuli
is to change your perceptions, the way
you perceive these stimuli.
So,
uh usually if it happens like all at
once in a in a major way, like an
illuminating way, it's due to a crisis.
I mean, it can be like a self-inflicted
spiritual crisis, like a lot of
saints have undergone, or it can be like

from outside, but I mean

>> [clears throat]

>> you can't just like plan it all out. You know, I'm going to I'm going to plan out my crisis like this. I mean, it doesn't work that way.

To some degree, you have to get just slammed off your feet.

And maybe some people have somehow I mean, you don't know in advance what your going to what the new world view is going to be like. I mean, if the new world view is better than the old world view, then if you really had a good idea of what the new world view was like, you'd already switch to it.

It's just that we're we're creatures of

habit we cling to our old world view and

we just are biased in favor of it.

Until

we just

get overwhelmed with evidence to the

contrary.

Like for example, we hit this crisis

where our old way of operating just

isn't working anymore.

So, I mean, it's theoretically possible,

I suppose, but still you're not going to

know what the new

state of consciousness is going to be

like.

Cuz you really haven't been there. Like

St. John of the Cross says, "In order to

arrive at a place you've never been
before, you must go by a road that you
do not know."
Uh so, I mean, I can accept that it's
theoretically possible, I suppose, that
you could deliberately
work out a way of like significantly,
radically changing your own worldview,
but if it isn't just through taking in
lots of information,
filling in gaps in your perceptions, and
that sort of thing, then I don't know
how you'd do it.
I'm just going to move on to the next
question, also from Sea of Action Cpod
Zidana.

He says, "If you had visions that told
you that your parents or some other
loved one that has passed away is reborn
as a certain creature and is suffering
from horrible conditions,
and you know where they are right now,
would you go out of your way to help
them, even if they have no clue
who you are and no relationship would
ever form between you?
Or do you think our family and friends
bond only
matter
our family-friend bonds only matter in
this life as a product of the emotions
and memories that binded us together?"
Well,

if I had a good idea that my father was
a dog in like the local dog pound, and
if nobody adopted him, that he was going
to be euthanized,
um yeah, I mean, I'd
yeah, I would I would definitely try and
help it.
I mean, I've mentioned before I have one
dog now that I mean, it's just it's just
like this intuitive kind of guess,
but I think there is a possibility that
this this dog that I have, one of them,
um may have been like in a previous
existence my human child that got up to
maybe a year old still preverbal.
And then like died of some

like childhood baby disease which used to happen a heck of a lot in the past. Not so much nowadays, but I mean infant mortality was very high. And this dog I mean first of all it's about the right size of a like a human baby. It's got just this round head has almost no snout at all. And it's the most intelligent dog we've got.

It's like you know how a baby will just sit in its high chair and just kind of like coolly observe everything that's going on, you know? That's the dog does that sometimes. He'll like sit in a chair and just just kind of gaze at everybody. Just kind of looking at you with this

seemingly thoughtful expression. It's by far the most conscientious dog we've got.

So I mean there's a possibility. I mean it doesn't necessarily make me love the dog anymore. Although there's there is just this sort of a bond between us that may be through like partly due to just this karmic connection we already had from a previous existence.

So that kind of thing is possible I suppose.

But

I mean it wouldn't just be some like intellectual knowledge that this being was my brother or father in in in this

life, you know, they died and then just
got reborn as as an animal or something.
Um it wouldn't just be an intellectual
knowledge like that. I mean there'd
still be like
unresolved karma between you that might
help to draw you into another
interaction.
But still I mean
if I knew for a fact
that some person that I really cared for
had been reborn as an animal that was in
need of help that I would try to help
that animal. I mean, if they were like
in China or something where it might be
really prohibitively difficult to get
there,

I might

you know, might not be as keen on it as

if it was a like just nearby.

Well, let's let's get to the actual

question mark here again cuz sometimes

I'll start answering a question and then

I just kind of start rambling until I've

kind of lost sight of what the actual

question was.

So, let's see here.

Would you go out of your Okay, help them

if they they had no clue who you are and

no relationship would ever form between

you? Well,

yeah, but still deep down at like this

subconscious level,

there still would be a relationship going on and probably there's a good chance that even though at a surface level, they wouldn't know that they were my father in the previous life or something, still there would be like this deep down connection, I think.

As the or do you think our family-friend bonds only matter in this life as a product of the emotions and memories that No, no, it it goes deeper than that.

And I would I would try to help if I could.

And [clears throat] I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Maitreya Buddha.

And Maitreya Buddha says, "What are your thoughts on the Brahmani or Brahmi script being found in Roman-occupied Egypt? Would it be from Ashoka's need to proselytize Buddhism all across the known world?"

>> [clears throat]

>> I kind of doubt it. I mean, there might be some vestiges of that, but if they found like Indian script in Egypt, like Roman Egypt, in all likelihood, the most likely cause for that is that there was commerce going back and forth between the Roman Empire and and India.

>> [clears throat]

>> And the closest province
um with regard to trade routes and so
forth would have been Egypt. They didn't
have a Suez Canal back then, but
sometimes at least they had a canal that
connected one of the branches of the
Nile like near the Delta to the Red Sea.
So, you could have ships going from
India to Alexandria. Alexandria was this
big port, had it was very cosmopolitan.
People from lots of different countries
including India, like Indian merchants,
people supporting the Indian merchants,
you know, like warehouses and that kind
of thing from India were living in Roman
Egypt, especially like Alexandria.
Probably there would be ports, like

smaller ports along the Red Sea where
there would also be shipping fleets and
and trade going between India and and
Rome. India and Roman Egypt.
So, you have enough sailors and
merchants that are Indian living in
Roman Egypt, like Alexandria.
Um there's a good chance [clears throat]
they might like bring some monks,
Buddhist monks, that kind of thing or
you know, I mean they'd have
I mean there could be just like this
ethnic enclave, like an Indian quarter
in in Roman Alexandria.
Not because of Ashoka's missionaries,
but just because of just a lot of

commercial trade going between

uh Roman Egypt and India. And I've read

long ago that one of the reasons, one of

the many reasons why the Roman Empire

finally collapsed,

one of the many reasons was depletion of

precious metals

in Rome due to a trade deficit. Like

>> [clears throat]

>> the Romans wanted all kinds of stuff

from India. They wanted the jewels and

they wanted the spices and that kind of

thing. But, the Indians didn't really

want any any

like

products from Rome other than just

silver and gold. They just wanted the

money.

And so, it resulted in just exporting precious metals out of Rome until there was depleted funds for the treasury, and that was one of the many reasons why the the money got debased. You know, they're just mixing lots of lead and other things in with the the silver, for example.

So, there was definitely a lot significant commerce between the Roman Empire

and India. There probably a little bit of overland

uh trade routes also, but that went through Persia, which was like enemy

territory, and there'd be like high
duties and so forth. Probably cheaper
just to go by ship from Egypt to India
and from India to Egypt.
So, that would probably be the main
reason why you're finding uh
inscriptions in Indian languages
in like Roman era Egypt.
Maybe a little bit of vestigial
Buddhism from Ashoka's missions, but
probably not nearly as much as much
later
cultural influences due to
commercial trade between the two
countries.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question.

This is from Sidhartha Lohachita.
And this is kind of an easy question. He says, "Would you agree to guillotine the mainstream politicians from the West?"
And no, I would not agree to guillotine the mainstream politician politicians from the West for two main reasons. I mean, first of all, it's mass murder, which is not good.
But, also, in all likelihood, you guillotine the mainstream politicians from the West and the next crop of politicians might be on their best behavior up until they can manage to outlaw guillotining politicians and then they're just going to go right back

to the status quo, which is the way
politicians have been since politicians
were invented.
So, [clears throat and cough] it would
just be taking on like horrible horrible
karma
for something that's going to be futile
in the long run anyway.
So, I'm just going to move on to
Siddhartha Lo Hacheeda's next question,
which is have you ever heard about
minarchism?
And then in parentheses, he has this
explanation, "Small states like Andorra
or Monaco or loosely governed medieval
European kingdoms."
And I mean, minarchism

it doesn't mean like miniature
government. I mean, not it doesn't mean
like small countries. This could just be
some kind of miscommunication. I don't
think Siddhartha Lo Hacheeda was
necessarily implying that minarchism
applies only to tiny countries like
Andorra or Monaco or little feudalist
states in Europe in Europe.
Because minarchism just means a minimum
of government.
And the first time I ever heard the word
minarchist was from Styx Hexenhammer
666,
who's this
political commentator on YouTube

and he would sometimes claim to be a

minarchist, which is sort of like a

anarcho-capitalist.

You know, it's it's it's like

libertarian, you know, it's just a

minimum government.

Um and I I

looked it up. I looked up a definition

for minarchism

and it says here, "Minarchism is a

political philosophy advocating for a

minimum state or minimal state where the

government's only role is to protect

individual rights

such as through the military, police,

and courts while leaving all other

functions to free markets. This concept

is closely associated with

libertarianism and is often referred to

as a night-watchman state.

So,

I mean, to some degree, I mean,

libertarianism and like classical

liberalism really aren't that different.

I mean, so long as you still have a

military, at least the the government

can fend off attacks, especially if

they've got a superior military.

Um

I mean, too much libertarianism, too

much anarchy,

I really don't think it's realistic.

But, I mean, if you have just the

minimum amount necessary to

like

What is it here? Like protect individual

rights and protect the country. You have

got You still got police and so forth. I

mean, that's not too far from what the

founding fathers of the United States

were going for.

We've got a lot bigger centralized

government now than we did like in

1780.

So, the United States in 1780 was pretty

much minarchist, I think.

It is too bad I mean, I will mention

since I already mentioned

Styxhexenhammer666, he appears to be

crashing hard and I think he may be

going to jail just because he's uh

kind of non-conformed non-conformed

himself into trouble with the law.

As we speak, I think he's hiding from

the police.

So, I've kind of switched over to uh

Asmongold

as my

edgy political commentator, my source of

edgy political commentary on YouTube. At

least he's

kind of replaced [clears throat]

Sticks as the main one.

It's really a shame.

But getting back

>> [laughter]

>> getting back to the actual question

here,

have you ever heard about minarchism? Um

yeah, I mean just

Sticks Hexenhammer666 occasionally

declaring himself to be a minarchist. I

mean that was all I heard about

minarchism. Although of course I've

heard plenty about like cap see an

anarcho-capitalism, which arguably could

be considered like extreme far right,

like the exact opposite of communism.

Especially if the communism isn't

anarcho-communism, which I really don't

think it could be.

People talk about anarcho-communism, but

communism mainly only works at the point

of a gun.
You got to have a strong centralized
government to make sure everybody is
obedient to the communist agenda.
So I mean whether Andorra and Monaco
really are minarchist or not,
or whether Siddhartha Gautama just
thought that minarchism meant tiny
governments because there's their
governing tiny countries,
I'm not sure.
But I mean Andorra and Monaco are
nowhere near to being world powers. A
lot a lot of rich people go to Monaco to
gamble, I suppose.
So they probably have a pretty good

economy going.

Uh

>> [sighs]

>> let's see.

Yeah, so I I've I've heard about it, but

uh

>> [clears throat]

>> I mean it's it's just kind of another

word for like anarcho-capitalism, that

kind of thing.

And I mean I am

fine with a minimal government.

Too much government is not good. Not

enough government's not good either, but

I mean you have at least have someone

maintaining order that is agreed upon by

the the democratic majority. Or

possibly even better yet, you've got
like one of the wisest people in the
whole country who's also really clever
and and courageous and everything is
appointed some
dictator. You know, like the philosopher
king.
Benevolent dictatorship.
Problem with benevolent dictatorship
though is you kind of surrender your
rights to the dictator and then the next
dictator might not be nearly as wise or
nice of a guy.
>> [sighs]
>> Consider the alleged [clears throat] son
of Marcus Aurelius who was a good

emperor

Commodus who was not a good emperor.

So anyways, I'm just going to move on to

uh

the next question which is from Arpad, r

p a d.

See, I want to make sure I don't skip

over. Sometimes I'll just scroll right

past the question without noticing it.

Okay, r p a d, Arpad.

>> [clears throat]

>> He says, "When you were a monk, did you

ever experience back pain as a result of

sleeping on a hard bedding?"

Um

not exactly back pain, kind of back

pain.

As a general rule, I sleep on my side. I've got kind of a swayback and if I lie on my back, especially if it's on a hard surface, it's just my shoulders and my behind are are sort of the base of an arch and my back isn't actually against the the bed and then it puts strain on my back and becomes uncomfortable relatively quickly.

But

my first year as a monk, my first several months or first few months at least as a monk, I was getting pain like where the the ribs would join the spine. You know, the connections between my ribs and their origin in the backbone,

that was becoming sore. And it took me a little while to figure out that it's cuz all of a sudden I'm sleeping instead of on a futon, which I slept on as a layperson, I'm sleeping on this little like 3/8 of an inch foam camping mat that's on plywood.

And probably what happened was it was just so hard that it was sort of just like pushing like compressing my ribs up into my spine.

And it was sore for a few months. And then I just got used to it. I mean, your body just kind of

like strengthens the weak parts, you know, the parts that are getting excessive strain just like the cartilage

or whatever it is gets reinforced there.

And then I was fine.

It never troubled me again.

So,

um yeah, I did experience kind of back

pain. It's like where the rib the rib

bones and the vertebrae were or joining

just from the pressure.

I guess that was my best bet my best

guess

from sleeping on a hard surface all of a

sudden.

But you just get used to it.

I mean, I still have calluses on my hips

from all the years of sleeping on hard

floors. Sometimes I just sleep on bare

concrete.

One place where I lived, um One Bowl Wildlife Refuge Monastery, I was literally sleeping on bare concrete with a piece of wood for a pillow, not out of a desire to be ascetic, but in order to be as comfortable as possible because it was so hot there. Just the the blazing hot wastelands of of like central Burma. It's really hot even inside of caves sometimes. And so,

the [clears throat] coolest place to be is right on the floor on the cool cement, relatively cool cement. And I used a piece of wood for a pillow mainly because like any kind of cloth would just be soaking up sweat and would start

smelling like an old gym sock within a few days.

Hardwood hardwood pillow, you know, you just you just kind of props your head up a little bit.

You maybe put a like a washcloth over that if you wanted to.

And [clears throat] I mean, you can just wipe the sweat and the the skin oil off of it and it's good to go.

And if it was so hot that I after a while I'd be lying in a puddle of my own sweat, I could just get up and move several feet and lie back down where the and the the cement was cool there still.

But, uh, yeah, aside from that one time

when I first started being a monk, first
started sleeping on on something hard,
um, or maybe it was even before I had
even ordained as a monk because I
remember when I first
like, early on when I was a monk, I was
trying not to even lie down at all. It
took a while to get used to,
but I was trying [clears throat] to do
the sitter's practice, which is one of
the dutangas where you sleep in a
sitting position.
But, um, it may have been even before I
was a monk where just sleeping on this
little foam pad, you know, 3/8 of an
inch thick, it's just spread over over
plywood. Yeah, it was causing some pain,

but I just healed up and got used to it.
So, Arpad's next question is, if so, how
would you relieve the pain? You know, I
just put up with it. I mean, it wasn't
just agonizing.
You know, it was [clears throat] just
kind of a dull ache
until it just
cleared up on its own. I don't recall
ever taking even aspirin or anything for
it, although I suppose you could have
done something like that, ibuprofen or
something.
>> [clears throat]
>> But, I just
toughed it out until it just

got better.

And so, I'm just going to move on to

Arpad's next question.

Was it difficult to come back to a

normal Western style mattress? No, it

was way too easy.

Because my plan was to just get like a

futon and just start sleeping on a futon

again. And

um

yeah, women they want like a nice big

mattress.

So, if I was going to be sleeping on in

the same place

as a woman

my sweetheart

then I mean she I mean it was just not

it was not really debatable.

She was just insistent.

So,

I just wound up sleeping on at least I

got a firm mattress, not some really

squishy one.

But yeah, there was no difficulty at all

just sleeping on that.

I use too many pillows now, too.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to

the next question. This is from Rui.

And Rui says,

let's see. I want to scroll down a

little bit here. Okay, we still got some

questions here.

Rui says,

"Is [clears throat] it good form when

preparing a meal for a mendicant to ask

him,

quote, do you like spicy?

Do you eat carrots? Are you a fan of

lobster? Unquote. And so forth."

Um

>> [clears throat and cough]

>> when I was a monk, I really didn't like

it when people would ask me what kind of

food I liked or they'd offer me food and

then they'd say, "Oh, did you like

that?"

And I mean, a monk is just supposed to

have equanimity, you know, he's not

supposed to say, "Yeah, and that was

really good." I mean, some monks do or

you know, just being polite or whatever.
But it seems to me a better approach
to say something along the lines of,
"Venerable sir, in the event that I
offer food, are there any dietary
restrictions that I should be aware of?
Are you allergic to any kind of food?
Are you a vegetarian?
Is there any kind of food that you
particularly dislike? You know, you if
you absolutely hate something, you know,
just
let me know and I'll be careful not to
offer that to you. That kind of thing.
That would probably preferable to asking
him, "Do you like this? Do you like

that?"

You know, it's just

kind of leave it more open.

>> [clears throat and cough]

>> Where, you know, it's like, "Are there

any dietary restrictions that I should

be aware of?" You know, if you you just

won't eat certain things, just let me

know. I won't offer it. Or that kind of

thing. That would probably work better.

And if they're allergic to something,

you know, they they they're like lactose

intolerant, that kind of thing. That's

It could be helpful to know.

And I'm just moving on to the next

question.

This is from Austin.

And Austin says, "Do you support the war effort and would you support the idea of boots on the ground?" So, that's actually two questions, isn't it? You got to count those question marks.

I'm going to separate these.

Okay, first question is, "Do you support the war effort?"

And

I am assuming

that the people who are planning out this this war effort in the in the United States government,

Donald Trump, Rubio, Hag Sath, those guys,

they know what they're doing way the

hell more than I know what they're doing. I mean, war from a Buddhist point of view is murder, mass murder.
But, from a political point of view, it can be justified.
I've said it several times before at least, that when I was a young man, I lost interest in politics. Didn't really keep up with politics much after I realized that what is good and right from a spiritual or ethical point of view is not necessarily what is good and right from a political point of view.
From a political point of view, who knows, maybe the Third Punic War was was justified, even though from an ethical point of view, it was essentially just

mass murder.

For those of you who are up on Roman

history, you may know what the Third

Punic War was.

I mean, the Carthaginians didn't have a

chance.

They were just wiped out.

So,

with regard to the war effort,

I mean,

I'm I've got I'm ambivalent, let's say.

I mean, I'm willing to give the

government and Donald Trump the benefit

of the doubt

and assume that they know what they're

doing.

I mean, if this just turns into another

Iraq, another Vietnam, another

Afghanistan, then

that's

that's not going to be good for America.

Certainly not going to be good for

Donald Trump.

And I I assume he knows that.

So, that's a consideration.

I mean, there are some people

I mean, I I've encountered them pretty

much daily who are just firmly of the

opinion that this whole Iran thing is

Donald Trump kissing the ass and obeying

Netanyahu, that he's just a puppet of

Israel.

And

I mean, [clears throat] there could be there's there's probably an element of that, partly just because like America is more pro-Israel than almost any other country on Earth, aside from Israel itself.

You know, just because of the Evangelical Christians and all that who still believe that the the Jews are God's chosen people cuz the Bible says so.

But, I mean, I think the main reason for the whole Iran thing was part of the whole main reason for Venezuela, that it's it's an attempt to deal with troublesome allies of China to defend

the petrodollar, this kind of thing, to
prevent China from becoming the
undisputed world power.
And China really hasn't done very much
thus far other than some strongly worded
protests like the United Nations and
this kind of thing.
Uh, but getting back to the very short
simple question, do you support the war
effort?
I don't oppose it. I mean, from a
an ethical point of view, killing people
is wrong. But from a [clears throat]
political point of view, sometimes it's
justified. And I'm just assuming
that somebody there knows what they're
doing.

That they're not just stupidly dragging

the United States into another Vietnam

or Iraq.

Obviously, it's taken longer than

Venezuela took. Venezuela was just

[clears throat] one night, boom.

So, let's just move on to Austin's

second question, which is a follow-up of

the first question.

Would you support the idea of boots on

the ground?

Uh,

that would be another step

um

>> [clears throat]

>> that

I mean, just the American people in general would not support the idea of boots on the ground unless it was just like a

boots just touching the ground and back off again like happened in Venezuela. If there's going to if there's going to be a meat grinder,

hundreds or thousands of American military personnel coming back in body bags, then I mean, that's it. I mean, Trump has to have enough intelligence to know that people are going to be voting Democrat for another decade because of that. Probably.

So, I mean, under certain circumstances, maybe.

But

yeah, I don't think it would be a good

idea.

Even if it were necessary to accomplish

certain things, it would be better to

just have the Israeli soldiers with

their boots on the ground, or even Saudi

Arabian soldiers with their boots on the

ground. Just get foreign

well, [clears throat] auxiliaries

to do the fighting for us on the ground

in that case, and we just provide air

support and logistics and all that.

Seems to me that would be a better idea.

And so, I'm just moving on to Austin's

third question, which is something

completely different.

Austin says, "Is baseline awareness

static or dynamic?" And I'm not exactly

sure what baseline awareness would be,

like what Austin has in mind when he

asks that question.

Baseline awareness.

Um, is it just like being awake when

you're not really thinking anything?

Um, sort of like [clears throat] if

you're in a like a jonic state,

then

it would be more static than dynamic. I

mean, just you get to like the ultimate

baseline awareness of like Brahman,

infinite [clears throat]

formless consciousness,

then I mean, it would just be beyond time. It would contain infinite dynamics like in potential, conditionally, virtually within that, but it would just be beyond time. It would be formless, there'd be nothing to change because it's formless.

So, I mean, when you get to the ultimate capital U ultimate baseline awareness, then it would be essentially static, or at least static would apply better than dynamic would.

But, if you get to just the state of being awake when you're not thinking anything,

um, it would have to be a balance of

static and dynamic. Pure static would
just be like death. There'd be no
change.
So long as you're still in time,
then static, I mean, you'd just be stuck
in a single moment. There'd be no
change. There'd be no awareness of
moving on to anything else.
Whereas,
I mean, there's still there'd have to be
at least enough dynamic element
that there's at least like a a
background hum of vitality or some such
that is still moving you through time,
so to speak, if that makes any sense. It
couldn't be purely dynamic because,
like, total change would just be chaos.

There'd be no, like, individual observer

remaining the same from one moment to

the next.

So, it's like

dependently co-arising

in, like, human consciousness, you have

to have this balance of stasis and

change. They have to stay in in balance.

And I just got distracted cuz one of my

sparkling pygmy gouramis just clicked

over there. They make these clicking

sounds. It's really cool.

But, getting back to dependent

co-arising,

you have to these they they they they

arise, like, stasis and change have to I

mean, you can't have one without the

other

not in any meaningful way. So, you have

to have something staying the same and

something changing that can be sort of

contrasted against the the something

that stayed the same.

If everything stays the same, that's

death, unless you're just completely

transcended the whole samsaric,

like, space and time.

But, if everything is just completely

dynamic with nothing staying the same,

then it's just pure chaos. It's just

like static on an old TV screen.

I mean, it wouldn't even get that far.

>> [clears throat]

>> So, the ultimate

awareness is infinite formless

consciousness.

It would be timeless and formless. So,

static, I guess, would apply better than

dynamic would. But, when you get into

like anything recognizably human,

human awareness, then there has to be

this balance. But, if it's just baseline

awareness, then there'd be a lot of

stasis in that the changes would be very

subtle. The changes moving you from one

moment to the next in your awareness

would be very subtle,

but still there.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

This is from Chirs Askew's is.

And Chirs Askew's is says, "Do different English translations of the Sutta Nipata work the same way as Bible translations? One is literal, one paraphrase, and another anywhere in between, or are they all literal?"

Well, I mean, even the most literal translation from Pali and English is going to have at least a little bit of paraphrase, because if you just do a exact word-for-word translation, it's going to come out almost like gibberish. You know, it's like you can come close, but still there's going to be certain things that just

don't translate smoothly, and you're
going to have to like smooth off the
edges in order to make it read in this
flow that seems like real English.
But, the best translations are fairly
literal. Like, Bhikkhu Bodhi's
translations are about as literal as
they get. Ajahn Thanissaro's
translations are
pretty much literal, but at the same
time he has like this idiosyncratic,
self-indulgent
translation method of using like sort of
idiosyncratic, self-indulgent renderings
of terms that I've discussed previously.
And so, I mean, you can call it fairly

literal.

He understands what he's reading. It's just that his personality just get blends in with the translation so that in the past when I was a monk reading some of his translations, it would occur to me especially when he's translating verses

that it would occur to me it's like every few lines he should just say here I am Ajahn Thanissaro translating this because like a good translation in a good translation the translator should be as invisible and unobtrusive as possible. It should be as close as possible to the effect you would have if you were reading it in the original

language if you were fluent in the

original language.

But

>> [clears throat]

>> there's one translation of the Sutta

Nipata that I have seen.

It was translated by

a Sri Lankan monk I'm pretty sure and

it's just paraphrasing like the

rhinoceros horn discourse the

Khaggavisana Sutta he has translated as

the unicorn and he just talks about

unicorns instead of

the rhinoceros the Indian rhinoceros

that has one horn.

So yeah it's

you're going to find different
translations like Caroline Rhys Davids
one of the early translators of Pali
into English for the Pali Text Society
she was more of a paraphrase kind of a
person she had this really affected
flowery kind of writing style you know
like like the Theragatha
um the elders verses literally she has
translated as Psalms of the brethren
this kind of thing.
So yeah there is kind of a a spectrum
of you know literal to paraphrase
but they tend more towards the literal
side especially the the good
translations that you're more likely to
see.

But that reminds me I used to know an
Australian monk in Burma who was
translating the Bhikkhuni Patimokkha,
the the the Patimokkha rules for nuns.
And
when I read it,
and other people made the same comment.
I mean, it's not a translation. All he's
doing is paraphrasing what the
commentary say.
You know, just sometimes it's it's
nowhere near to being word-for-word.
You know, he's he's not translating the
actual Pali itself at all. He's just
looking up what it what the how the
commentary defines the the rule, and

then just writing that down.

So, that was just very loose paraphrase,

if you could even call it paraphrase.

So, I mean, it happens, but his

translation was not

um scholarly enough, I think,

to have really struck traction, and I

don't know if anyone ever reads it.

But, I wasn't the only person that's

pointed this out to him. I mean, it's

it's not even really a translation.

You're just saying what the commentary

says it means, not what it actually says

right there in the Pali.

So, it does happen.

And I'm moving on to Trazaskas's next

question,

which is as follows. He says, "I was looking on Amazon to see if your new book is out. When will it be? And I am still waiting for the artwork, especially the cover art. I mean, I could just write off any kind of interior illustrations, but I don't even have the cover art for the cover of the book." The book is practically done. Almost everything except for like the cover [clears throat] art and the cover design. You know, I got to put the words and stuff once I get the cover art. You know, the the back matter on the on the the blurb on the back of the book,

that kind of thing.

And then, I got to like apply for like the Library of Congress number or whatever. Got to put that in. That kind of thing. So, I'm still waiting for the artwork.

Even the artist's mama has been kind of pestering her about it.

>> [clears throat]

>> And I'm just going to move on to this question.

This is from Avenity.

And Avenity says, after I look at the clock, okay, Avenity says,

"Do you ever have moments where something small, like a smell or a sound, suddenly reminds you of your old

life in Burma?" And it does happen, not
very often, but it does occasionally
happen. Um for example,
there's a smell,
and I think the technical name for the
smell is petrichor,
stone blood. That's the the official
name for the smell is petrichor, which
happens
like the during the first rain, or right
before the first rain, after it has been
hot and dry for a long period.
And it's this wonderful smell. It's
almost like baking bread.
You know, sort of a cross between bricks
and baking bread.

And I never smelled I when I lived in the Pacific Northwest, it just rains all the time and it never gets really super hot. So I just never smelled that smell. And then I come to Burma and I'm living in that semi-desert area, a tropical semi-desert. And

um it's just you get this smell right before the the first rain in a long time. And it's it's sort of like a hallelujah kind of a smell because I mean, it's good when it rains in the desert.

And then coming back to South Carolina, every [clears throat] once in a while, like in the summertime, if it rains in the summertime, you get a little bit of

that smell and that reminds me of Burma.

Uh other things, like if I see a small lizard running on the like the front porch or something, it it can remind me of like the little house geckos in Burma.

That sort of thing. Hear like a loudspeaker off in the distance that that definitely reminds me of living in Burma because you've always got a loud speaker off in the distance in Burma. Burmese people, third world people in general, just do not like silence. They like noise.

So, you've always got loud speakers and that kind of stuff going on in the in

the distance.

>> [sighs and snorts]

>> So,

yeah, that would be my answer to that

question.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next one, which is from Ethiopian Fake

Tig.

And Ethiopian Fake Tig says,

"Considering how both Christians and

Buddhists believe in heaven and hell,

could Christians technically be

worshipping a small g god, a deva, in

the highest heaven realm when their

purpose was technically to escape

samsara, but now wish to not die and

instead go to heaven by doing good

deeds, which technically can get you into heaven in Buddhist mythology?"

Well, I don't think the Christians ever wanted to get out of samsara. It's just not part of the Christian goal.

I mean, even St. John of the Cross, who may have been fully enlightened despite some of the limitations of his belief system, which he really had no other choice about. I mean, he lived in 16th century Spain. You were either a Roman Catholic or you were going to be getting visits from the Inquisition.

Anyways, even St. John of the Cross says, I mean, from the from a Christian

point of view, the the highest possible
state is the beatific vision.
Which is you go to heaven and you
you're in the presence of the throne of
God, but still you don't merge with God.
In a certain kind of way, a theological
abstract kind of way, you're already
everyone's already kind of merged with
God,
but still your individual soul stays
individual even in heaven.
So, the Christians really aren't trying
to transcend samsara.
You know, they're just their highest
goal going up into a high heaven realm
and being in the presence of the throne
of God.

And apparently you fall on your face

over and over again over again saying

holy holy holy holy holy or at least I

think that's what the book of Revelation

says.

>> [sighs]

>> So, some people would say that the

Christian God isn't a small g deva small

g God small d deva

but he would be more like a Brahma which

would be higher than a deva. You know,

that would be the highest heaven realms

would be

populated by Brahmas and not devas.

But, I mean

at no point I don't think Christianity

really progressed beyond the point of

just

accepting samsara as reality

and you're just going for a higher level

of it. You're just trying to get into

heaven which lasts forever.

And the Jews and the Muslims are pretty

much the same

in that belief.

So, let's see here.

Let's Let's just go through this

question again. Considering how both

Christians and Buddhists believe in

heaven and hell. Yeah, although the I

mean the rules for heaven and hell are

different.

Could Christians technically be

worshiping a small g God a deva in the
highest heaven realm? Well, it would be
a Brahma in the highest heaven realm but
it would arguably a small be a small g
God. I mean if if you study up on the
the evolution
of Yahweh or Allah let's just let's just
stick with Judeo-Christian
uh
Yahweh. I mean he started off being a
Canaanite God El
and then at some point some Moses figure
Moses is is largely mythological but
some Moses-like figure
who was maybe the son-in-law of a priest
of Yahweh a Midianite or Edomite God

somehow conflated El with Yahweh

and both of them were just pagan gods. I

mean, back then they weren't even

denying that there were other gods.

And then gradually as the the Jews

became more civilized, more

sophisticated in their theological

beliefs, they got it down to there's

only one god and that's our god.

But

I mean

it could be that it's just this

like a a cultural construct

of a Canaanite god El and a Midianite

god Yahweh influenced by some like

ancient Egyptian ideas, some later

Persian ideas. You know, it was just

like a a cultural construct. And then

maybe everyone believing in it so

fervently kind of created what some

modern-day pagans call an egregore,

which is a being that exists in a kind

of virtual form that takes on a kind of

virtual reality due to the beliefs of

the people fervently believing in it.

Just investing all this psychic energy

into the existence of this being can

actually kind of cause a sort of quasi

being to exist.

So, there is that. I mean

uh

you could argue

and I'm sure many people do

that they started off these crude pagan

ideas of god and then just gradually

transcended those until they got up to,

you know, capital G actual true god.

But

>> [sighs]

>> yeah, I think that the Vedantas Hindus

come closer to an accurate description

of like some capital G ultimate being

than you're going to find in the Bible.

I mean

Christians also have continued become

more sophisticated in their theology so

that what Catholics teach at their

seminaries is getting so abstract that

it is getting kind of similar to

Buddhism. It's just their God is is no

longer a he, you know, he no longer likes this and hates that and and that kind of thing. He no longer has any preferences or desires. It's just like this abstraction.

So, let's see. Where's the actual question mark here?

Let's see. Could Christians technically be worshipping a small g God? Yeah, we already we already answered that part. Yeah.

Yeah, so I mean, just take your pick. I mean, either it's just this belief in Yahweh or capital G God is a cultural construct. You know, I mean, obviously there is a history of

this cultural construct going on with El
and and Yahweh being conflated into one
God and then El's consort somehow
got divorced.
And then there's, you know, some
Egyptian elements in all this and then
just as things start just keep evolving.
God just kept evolving.
That's one reason why they had to invent
Satan around the time of the Babylonian
captivity is that the
some of the the statements about God in
the Old Testament, I mean, he was he was
responsible for all the bad stuff, too.
So, they had to like come up with this
cosmic villain to take the blame for a
lot of the really bad stuff.

Or you could say that they're just kind
of feeling their way through the dark
until they finally, you know, they're
reaching towards this this true capital
G God. But still, I don't think that
they've succeeded very well other than a
few mystics like St. John of the Cross
who have just sort of transcended their
own cultural conditioning to have like
this direct awareness
of the transcendent, the absolute.
But yeah, Christians aren't even trying.
I don't think they were ever really
trying, at least not consciously, to
transcend some sorrow.
The best you can do from the Christian

point of view, like from the Catholic point of view, is to obtain the beatific vision. You go to heaven and you still are an individual soul that is not the same as God.

And I'm just going to move on to Ethiopian fake tigs next question. Which is as follows. Having practiced for a while now, Buddhism would be absolute nihilism if karma wasn't involved, but we can't experience karma first-hand. Some people say bad things happen to good people and evil people win in life, but I disagree. I think bad things happen to everyone equally, including evil people who try to get ahead by doing evil deeds. I sometimes

wonder why I don't bask in an endless pool of drugs and pleasure. And I realize that overstimulation will lead me not to have a good meditation and ruin everything else. In other words, it truly is not wholesome. I have stopped all addictions now, including porn, and I did it through the meditation practice, which always delivers a high I have never seen before. But I can't help but wonder, perhaps the meditation is all there is to it. Maybe if you do anything you want and still die, you just stay dead cuz karma isn't real. I guess the question here is Okay, we're getting into the actual question.

I guess the question here is, can an unenlightened person know karma isn't real?

Well,

an unenlightened person really doesn't know anything. They just have beliefs.

It is the nature of unenlightenment. It is not based on actual knowledge, but is based on belief.

And obviously unenlightened persons can believe that karma isn't real.

But

I mean, superficial levels of karma are fairly obvious.

And I'm not talking about, you know, it's like something bad happens to you, so it must be the result of something

bad that you did.

But I'm talking about the superficial obvious level of karma is like the autopilot habit energy. You know, we are creatures of habit and that habit is an is indicative of psychic momentum, which is karma. It's like the momentum of our mind following these certain directions, you know, just going through the same patterns over and over again.

So, most people are not fully awake.

They're like just running on autopilot to a large degree. You know, you're driving a car, you're not having to think about, you

know, every every move you make of the steering wheel or the accelerator pedal, anything like that.
It's just habit that you do without even really being fully aware of it.
And that applies to eating, walking, using the toilet, taking a shower, just almost everything we do
is just like done in a state that's not fully awake. Like if you're fully awake, you're walking along, you're fully aware. You'd be aware of like the sensations of the cloth touching and rubbing against your skin, like the breeze on your on the skin of your face, just like subtle background noises, this kind of thing. And it it all just gets

filtered out

because you're not fully awake. You're

just following this autopilot.

And that autopilot is karma. Or another

karma, another way of interpreting it,

just going with Buddhist philosophy,

karma is will. Karma is volition.

So, if karma isn't real,

volition isn't real because they are

identical.

That's how karma is defined.

A lot of people, including a lot of

Buddhists, don't really understand what

karma is all about. They think that it's

some kind of

>> [clears throat]

>> as yet undiscovered law of physics out
there that just causes everything to
stay in balance by causing like an equal
and opposite reaction to every action.
But, that's really not the way I mean,
it can turn out that way
as a kind of side effect,
but really it's just this habitual way
of dealing with life that causes us and
you get into like the the deeper
metaphysical levels, then it's just like
this semi-conscious knee-jerk way of
just creating the world we live in.
And so, we just get stuck in these
patterns.
But, an unlighted person really doesn't
know anything.

They can believe all kinds of stuff.

So, let's see here. I guess I'll just

move on to the next question.

Okay, this is also from Ethiopian Fake

Tig.

He says, "How do Burmese monks who

revere the Buddha like a god make up for

the fact that the Buddha, who they claim

to know all things and see all things

beyond even the gods, couldn't see that

his last meal would have been the thing

that kills him?"

And

there's there's a couple things I can

say about this.

First of all,

in orthodox Theravada, the way they interpret the Buddha's omniscience, they do consider the Buddha be omniscient, but he is selectively omniscient.

In order He doesn't know all things all the time like a Jain Tirthankara.

According to the Jains, a like a fully enlightened Tirthankara, like their equivalent to a Buddha, he knows everything all at once at all times. You know, it's just he's always sent uh like omniscient, always.

But in Theravada Buddhism, he has to direct his attention to something in order to know what it is he wants to know.

And even then, he may not be able to

know for sure what's going to happen a thousand years from now because he can't see into the future.

I mean, he would have to use a kind of extrapolation, which would only work in a state of pure determinism, which the Buddha himself denied.

>> [sighs]

>> But

I mean, so there is that, that the Buddha is selectively virtually omniscient, but he has to actually direct his mind to something in order to know it. And if it's knowable, then he will know it.

But

with regard to the Buddha's last meal,
which is kind of a different question,
he apparently, according to the legend,
all we've got to work with is the
legend. You know, we don't have forensic
evidence. We don't have the coroner's
report or anything like that.
All we have is the legend.
So, according to the legend, the Buddha
evidently did know in advance that he
was going to die. He was hinting hinting
about this to Ananda that he was going
to die soon. Ananda didn't want to hear
it. Then, after he goes and eats his
final meal,
he tells the person who offers the meal,
"Don't feed this to anybody else. Don't

give it to anyone else. Don't even eat it yourself. You should take this food and go and throw it in the river." And when it got or into a pond or something, throw it into water where there's no sentient beings. So, it could be like a stagnant pond or something. And after, according to the legend, when it got thrown into the water, it just started bubbling and hissing like like he had thrown some kind of red-hot iron into the water.

So,

the Buddha knew that he was going to be poisoned, but at the same time,

according to legend,

he knew that it was just his time to go.

He He He gave some hints.

And nobody really wanted to pick up on

the hint.

You know, they didn't want to hear that.

And so,

he died.

There are similar stories about Neem

Karoli Baba up there

on top of the bookcase, who

based on modern testimonies,

you know, like

contemporaneous testimonies from people

who were there that Maharajji also was

hinting that he was going to die soon.

You know, it's like of some Zen masters

also. There's There's a few stories of

Zen masters, like Chinese Chan masters,
who would actually send out invitations
to his final sermon,
and then he he'd deliver one last sermon
and then just keel over dead.
Although, in any case like that, I mean,
you may be terminally ill and and know
that you don't you're not long for this
world. So, there's that also.
There's some people who think that the
Buddha really didn't die of
dysentery or poisoning from the food,
that he had a kind of intestinal
condition that some very old people get
where it's like gangrene of the
intestinal system. Can be very painful.

And if it was some kind of terminal
chronic condition that was getting worse
and worse, then
it wouldn't take any kind of enlightened
being to be able to predict that they
were not going to live very much longer.
But according to
the legends, which is all we have
really, he did know in advance that he
was going to die, which is one reason
why or he [clears throat]
I mean, assuming that it was the quality
of the food,
that's why he told Chunda,
"Don't feed this anybody else. Just
throw it away."
So,

I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Gordon.

And Gordon says,

"Regarding the priest or regarding the priest monk,

was he Catholic pretending to be a Buddhist or a Buddhist pretending to be a Catholic or did he think he was both?"

And this is with regard to a certain Catholic priest that I met in Burma. And when I met him, he was wearing monk's robes. He had been ordained. It turned out later,

um he came to visit me again just dressed as a layperson.

Uh

he was ordained as a novice. So, he wasn't fully ordained. He was sort of in what a a Catholic would call lesser orders or minor orders. He was ordained as a samanera or a novice. But, he was an ordained Catholic priest. He hadn't stopped being an ordained Catholic priest. I think only the Pope can actually allow like a priest or a monk to disrobe in Roman Catholicism, which didn't happen.

So,

yeah, and he came to visit me and I found out [clears throat] that he was a Catholic priest and when he he wrote to me saying he would like to come back to Burma and visit me again, I said, "Okay,

please don't don't be ordained as a monk

this time or even as a novice." You

know, it's like would Catholics ordain a

Buddhist that wasn't even a Catholic as

as like a Catholic monk or a priest? You

know, it just it it just wasn't entirely

appropriate, at least

at least

in my opinion.

So,

>> [sighs]

>> he uh he explained to me, I mean,

on the one hand, I mean, he's a really

good guy, very intelligent. He was uh

Catholic priest in Austria.

So, he wasn't American. He was Austrian.

And

he uh he was kind of losing his faith,

or that's what I was told by somebody

else. You know, he was

losing his

his fervor,

I guess, losing his faith to some

degree.

And I don't want to be slandering him or

or anything like this. I'm I'm I really

have nothing but

like good goodwill towards this person.

Um

and he was just interested in like

Buddhist practices, like meditation.

And I mean, I I told him that, you know,

almost every practice in Theravada

Buddhism is also found in Catholicism.
You know, like the the contemplative
orders, like the Discalced Carmelites.
You know, they've got mindfulness
practice, they've got jhana, they've
got, you know, essentially all the
spiritual practices that Buddhists have,
they've got and and it's within like a
Catholic context. So, why why didn't you
come all the way to Burma to practice
meditation when the Catholics back there
in Europe still teach that's essentially
the same thing. And his answer was that
it's esoteric
in Catholicism, that you have to
actually join the order in order to

practice that stuff.

And otherwise, they won't teach it to

you.

So,

he was mainly just trying to, you know,

see what it was like to be a monk and

you know, practice some of the

meditation techniques and that kind of

thing.

Um

so

I mean, you could say that he was a

Catholic pretending to be a Buddhist,

but he was

like a lot of Westerners, he was just

too broad-minded to fit into a narrow

category. So, he was kind of eclectic.

You know, I'm the same way. It's not
like I just firmly adhere to orthodox
Theravada Buddhism.
That sometimes I think the Mahayana
Buddhists are more correct, or sometimes
I'll acknowledge, like I just did, that
the Catholics or Christians in general
teach the same stuff.
So, I mean
it's kind of like locking yourself into
a box if you're just going to be I mean
some for some people it works better
that way where you just firmly adhere to
like one system. You've got stainless
steel faith in that one system.
And that will help to uh

I mean it very much helps you if you
have no doubt at all that this is the
way. Then it's it really can inspire you
to do your best. If you've got doubts,
lukewarmness,
not so much.
But some of us, I mean we can't just
decide we're going to believe 100% of
what is in our religion or what is in
our political party or whatever. You
know, it's just you have no choice but
to just kind of like overflow
into other points of view.
And that was the way he was.
So,
yeah, I mean it was kind of I considered
to be somewhat inappropriate for him to

be ordaining even as a novice

when he was still an ordained Catholic

priest.

So,

but I mean he he accepted that with good

grace. I think he he accepted my request

that or maybe he did just had no

intention to be ordained again as a as a

novice. So, he just came in layman's

clothing the next time he came. He and

his friend who was a Hungarian

philosophy student.

Ah.

So, yeah, I guess I answered that about

as well as I'm able to.

I could go for another half hour, but I

don't think I'd get much better at an-
answering the question.
So, I'm just going to move on to
Gordon's second question, which is his
last question, which is the last
question of this Q&A.
And
Gordon says, "In previous episodes,
you've talked about your deal breakers
with Christianity and Islam and I guess
by extension Judaism and the reasons why
you could never be a secular
materialist. Do you have any similar
hard nose for Hinduism?
So, why I could not be a Hindu. I I
don't think there's any hard nose for
Christian for Hinduism, but there's a

few soft nose. Just

Let's [clears throat] see.

One is their belief in is is kind of

like a quibble really, but they insist

that there is the Atman, which is a

reification of the absolute and I do

think the Buddhists

um

are more

What do you call it? More wise or more

prudent

to just refuse to reify the absolute.

So, there is that. I mean, Hinduism also

has a lot of just weird beliefs, you

know,

Ganesh, the the Indian or the the

elephant-headed god and just all these weird stories that I mean, you kind of really don't have to believe them.

But, I mean, it's pretty deeply ingrained. I mean, it's not as necessary to believe in stories of Shiva or Ganesh or Kali. Um it's not as important in Hinduism as it is in Christianity believe in Jesus, that he is the only begotten son for son of God and the Messiah who died for our sins and all that.

But, I guess the two main soft nose with regard to Hinduism is first they reify the absolute, which I mean, that's that's kind of a quibble, you know, it's like whatever you say is going to be

kind of invalid with regard to the absolute anyway, but also technically in Hinduism, it seems that you are required to accept that the four Vedas are eternal.

That they weren't really composed by human beings. The human beings, the seven sages, just kind of channeled it out of the ether, out of like the infinite cosmos, where it has been residing forever and ever and always will reside.

That that the four Vedas are just you know, the ultimate authority, the ultimate scriptural authority.

And I mean, you read the the Vedas, and it's it's pretty primitive. I mean, it's getting back towards like Old Testament level religion, where it's like paganism, where you are honoring these gods and making sacrifice fire sacrifices. Back Rigveda days, it was still bloody animal sacrifices for the sake of cattle and sons and victory over one's enemies, this kind of stuff.

So,

there's that, too.

But, I mean, probably there's a lot of people who consider themselves to be Hindus who just kind of conveniently ignore the four Vedas, much like a lot of Western Buddhists conveniently ignore

the entire Abhidhamma Pitaka.

The entire third Pitaka of the the

Buddhist Tipitaka.

So, I mean, neither one of those is

really disqualifier. So, Hinduism

[clears throat] is like a soft no. If I

were not a Buddhist, I'd probably be

gravitating towards something like

Vedantist Hinduism.

So, that would be like my second choice

after Buddhism would be something like

Vedantist Hinduism, I'm pretty sure.

And that's it. That's that's the last

question. And so, I guess we done.

Less than 2 hours, too.

So,

like I always say,

you think I can answer a question about

Buddhism, ancient India, Dharma in

general, philosophy,

etc., etc., etc.

You think there's a good chance I can

answer the question? Feel free to ask. I

promise I'll do my best to answer it.

I don't promise that I'll answer it to

your satisfaction,

but I'll give it a shot. I'll do my

best.

That's why I'm here, as a public

service, as a

as like an alternative to Grok.

And uh

like and subscribe if you have not done

so already.

And

look at the URL links, which eventually

I am hoping I'm hoping

that that fourth book will finally be

published and the link to Amazon link

will will be down there in the URL links

along with everything else.

And uh

golly,

guess I'm getting a new job soon, which

I can tell you about next time maybe, if

anyone's interested.

And uh until then,

be happy and stuff.

Okay then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 187.

I am your host Pony Basa and this is my beverage.

Before I get into factoring out the number 187, I would like to announce that at long last my fourth book has been published and is available on Amazon. It's entitled A Memoirs from Myanmar, which is largely autobiographical stuff about my monk's life, mainly in Burma, but also including Indonesia and the United States.

And uh those of you who are interested

may find it in the URL links below this video, unless you're watching it on Subscribe Star, in which case you're going to have to go directly to YouTube or Bitshoot or Rumble to find the link. And if you do read it, I would appreciate an honest review unless it's like really negative.

So 187. A lot of you guys probably thinking, "Oh, that's prime." It's because you're too freaking cowardly to do the work to factor out the number. Just disgusting.

Actually, it's 11* 17, which is kind of interesting. Sort of pseudo prime.

So, I guess I should just uh just commence to answering questions.

And as usual lately, the first few questions or three of the first four questions
um were asked quite some time ago and then I I just overlooked them when compiling the previous list. So they're on this list up near the top of the scroll.
So the first question is from Fred and Fred says, "Are women an impediment to progress?"
And I assume he means spiritual progress. And I would say probably
well I mean for someone who's practicing spiritual like for the average guy

having a woman may actually I mean in a
lot of cases it helps to straighten a
guy out you know it you know he's gets a
crash course in responsibility
that kind of thing. So for a lot of like
average Joe's,
women can
kind of improve their their morality,
that kind of thing. It's not always the
case, but it is often the case. With
regard to someone who is trying to live
a spiritual life, are women an
impediment to progress? I would say
usually, but not always.
Rahm Das used to say that the only
legitimate reason for a spiritually
oriented person to marry is if being

married it's helping you to live a spiritual life. For example, you find a woman who's wiser than you or equally spiritually inclined that kind of thing then having a woman in your life can be helpful. Also there is the famous saying attributed to Socrates I think that by all means a man should marry and if he gets a good wife he'll be a happy man and if not he will become a philosopher. So there's that too. But for a lot of people, a lot of men, women are pretty much of a necessity
just because we are instinctively attracted to a woman or to women in general. I guess it's like I think it

was Carl Young said that we're just like
a man is just evolved and adapted
adapted to being in a relationship with
a woman pretty much like we're adapted
to having certain like percentage of
carbon dioxide in the air we breathe.
You know, it's just we are just evolved
for that. It is true that lately, you
know, the past less than a century of
the existence of western civilization, I
suppose, that women have become
liberated. You know, we've got women's
liberation, which has really thrown a
wrench into
thousands yearlong dynamic between men
and women where like the man is the
boss. there's a certain limit to the

amount of crap he is required to take,
that kind of thing. And so it has really
destabilized
male female relationships, especially in
the West. Um, and that's just going to
have to get worked out somehow or other
because the way it is now, like women,
a lot of them want a career. They don't
want to have kids. the at least half of
marriages in certain certain countries
result in divorce.
So
um this the civilization is unlikely to
prosper so long as this kind of
destabilized male female dynamic is
still active.

So something's going to have to get

worked out

and I wouldn't hold my breath. It may

take a while.

Also, for some reason, I'm reminded of a

story by JD Salinger called Teddy about

some enlightened little kid. I mean,

he's he's born and raised in New York

City and he's got this completely

dysfunctional family. His parents are

just like fighting all the time. They

apparently don't even like each other.

His sister is just horrible. just this

little kid and he's enlightened and he's

he explains to someone that he would

have got enlightened in the previous

life but he got involved with a woman in

the previous life so it caused a delay
of one lifetime
but as I say if a woman is helping you
in your spirituality if for some reason
you're you just having the woman in your
life is helping you to develop
spiritually in whatever way. It may even
be that you've got certain karma that
needs to be worked out.
So, or you need the woman that helps you
to be a philosopher maybe. You know,
there's different ways. But in general,
I mean, I suppose I should also add that
some guys just can't be celibate.
They're just too horny. And even some
guys who are celibate, I mean, they're

just like consumed. They're just burning with lust all the time because it's sort of like a starving man thinking about food all the time. So in a case like that, then you may as well just defer to nature to some degree. if it's just too just too much of a a cross to bear, too much of a strain to be celibate. In which case, find a good girl, a good woman, I should say. You know, settle down, be faithful to her, be faithful to each other.

But as a general rule, if it's possible to be celibate,

it's it's that's that's what the Buddha says. That's like the official position of Terra Buddhism. Like the Buddha says,

you know, if if you're able to be ordained as a beu, get ordained. If you're not capable of that, then at least avoid sexual intercourse like a person would avoid falling into a deep pit with burning coals at the bottom. But if even that is too much, if you can't handle even that much, then just at the very least avoid the wives of other men.

But I mean ancient Indian ethics were extremely strict,

much stricter than like Christian ethics for example.

So the ancient Indian ethics like the the the cultural millu in which terabara

Buddhism arose was this very you know
the world is a bad place. You need to
find your liberation from samsara and
that is done through renunciation
and celibacy
and strict adherence or strict morality
this kind of stuff. And so Terraata
adopted that point of view. It's not the
only possible point of view. And most of
the people who are famous for being
enlightened in the west tend to be
married. I think Ekhart Tollah is
married. Nisara Data Maharaj was
married. Some of the sages of the
Upupanads were married. Although it
could be largely fictional
the like the dialogues in the

Upanishads.

So, I mean, to some degree, you're just going to have to decide for yourself. I mean, do you really need to have a woman? Uh, have you already made like a lifelong commitment to a woman? which case I mean if you if you're like um a person who believes in God and you have stood in a house of God and solemnly vowed before God that you will stay together through better for worse till death do you part then that's a serious consideration

so many people I mean they will vow make this solemn vow to stay together for the rest of their life and then

three years later they're getting

divorced

because of like finances or something or

the woman just thinks she can do better.

You know, she's just vaguely

dissatisfied and thinks she can do

better than this guy.

So,

I hope I answered that question.

It is kind of a touchy one for some

people.

So, I'm just going to move on to Fred's

next question. And he asked this

question more than a week ago and I just

found it in my inbox cuz he asked it in

an email. Emails are not the best way to

ask me questions for Q&As's because

usually I don't get questions for Q&As's
or Q's and A's Q&A videos in my email.
And so a lot of the time I don't even
think to look in my inbox for questions
for the next Q&A. So anyways, Fred says,
"Is a stream enterer a true man who
knows the ropes?"
And
again, I've expressed a certain
skepticism for the whole four stages of
Arya
many times. I've written about it. I've
talked about it. And I really do not
think that the four stages of aryhood
with the sodapana or stream enterer
being the first stage of the four stages

of of Buddhist saintthood.

Um I don't think that the Buddha really taught this that originally a stream enterer was probably like the Buddhist equivalent of like a born-again Christian or just like a new convert to Buddhism. That was probably what a stream enterer was. Was a new convert to Buddhism who had just entered the stream of dharma, had just started interpreting their life along spiritual lines.

And there were certain considerations like there was an obscure rule in the podium rules that uh monks should not be overly reliant upon a family of sodaponas.

And that's makes more sense if you view

sodaponas as new converts who might be rich in faith and might just like impoverish themselves trying to offer stuff to the monks especially if the monks are not ashamed to be asking for lots of stuff.

So, a stream enterer.

Um

gosh, I mean going with orthodox terravada, you could go along with Fred's interpretation that a streamer is a true man or a true woman, true boy, true girl who knows the ropes, who in other words, who has who's pretty much like locked in, you know, who knows what's what with regard to how to to

live their life along Dharmic lines,
that kind of
Although if a stream mentor is just a
new convert to Buddhism, like a devout
new convert to Buddhism, not just some
person dabbling, being eclectic, you
know, just investigating a little bit,
but someone who's really
really just convinced that this is the
right way for me and they're just their
life is changed. Then even then they
don't necessarily know the ropes. They
may still be relatively naive with
regard to a lot of a lot of stuff that
is taught in Buddhism.
And I think I answered that question
well enough. So I'm just going to move

on to this next question. This is from PSA. And PSA again, he asked these questions more than a week ago. He says, "Could you talk in more depth about this same question? I keep going back to it because if your mind is distracted now, it makes sense because you're currently living the life of a householder. But how did you lose your unification of mind as a monk?

What happened? Could you please elaborate when you started to lose this singleness of mind as a monk and what methods did you use to try to get it back before disroving? So, this is a question that I'm getting asked or are

variations on this question I'm getting asked almost every Q&A now. I don't know why that is. Could be just coincidence, but let's see here. What is the exact question? How did I lose my unification of mind as a monk? Well, I mean, it wasn't something that you could really see clearly as to what exactly was causing it. It's just that my meditation just stopped being as good as it was for whatever reason. And

partly I mean it just started getting into just this is just ridiculous. My my concentration or my meditation was never I mean I've never been by nature a really good meditator. You know it took a long time before I could get start

getting into relatively deep meditative states. And even then it was sort of like God in the Godas where he gets it and loses it and gets it and loses it and gets it and loses it until he's at wit's end and finally he just selfdees because he just can't stand it anymore. So I mean it was kind of that sort of thing and um I remember reading in a book by St. John of the Cross, I think it was uh the ascent of Mount Carmel, where um someone who gets contemplation and loses it and gets it and loses it, gets it and lose, you know, they're able to practice high contemplation as the Catholics call it and then you you just

can't get it anymore. The best you can do is just meditation which has like um visualizations or you know perceptions going on. When when you get into high contemplation like either you know Catholic high contemplation or the higher Janna in Buddhism then you're no longer thinking your mind is just clear and silent for the most part you know there might be little motions but that's as far as it gets is little motions and according to St. on the cross. If you get it and lose it and get it and lose it and get it and lose it, you don't just, you know, finally master it, then well, God has other plans for you. And he had a lot of experience with

this. He was like a meditation master teaching
Catholic contemplatives in a contemplative order. He had a lot of experience. And I mean from his point of view apparently based on his own experience if you don't just you know get it and keep it but you just get it and lose it. Get it and lose it. Get it and lose it then apparently just God has other plans for you. And that's the way it was for me. I get it and lose it. Get it and lose it. And finally I just stopped getting it except for just the occasional little glimmer. you know, maybe one good meditation in in just a

matter of months.

And it was just so frustrating just

going back to the ABCs, going back to

labeling that kind of thing that it just

started becoming discouraging

and disillusioning to some degree. And

then I just decided well I mean after 10

years of

meditation that is below what I was

doing like 2003

more than 10 years

time to try something else.

So let's see how did you lose your

unification of mind as a monk? It's just

the mind just is restless.

Um maybe a little contracted

and then you just start losing

enthusiasm because it's so unreliable.
There's kind of a question farther down
the scroll that addresses that
particular issue indirectly that I'll
probably touch upon this a little more,
but it's just unreliable.
You know, it's like you try and try and
try for years and years sometimes and
then sometimes you get a glimpse or a
glimmer. Other other people they can try
for years and years, meditate for years
and years and never get anything above
first genre. You know, they just never
get beyond like thinking and perceiving
as as like their main meditation
technique. You know, they still have

this method that they're following. you never just kind of break free of methods and just get into this clear silent spaciousness.

And for me, I'd get it sometimes and then finally around 2004, it just kind of tapered off and almost stopped happening.

So, what happened? I mean, sometimes anyone who's who's done like a an intensive meditation retreat can know that your subconscious mind can fight against enlightenment or fight against dharma. This sabotage your practice and because it's subconscious, you're not fully aware of what's going on. It can be like hysterical symptoms, that kind

of thing that happened with Catholic

saints, too.

So there's always that and it's I mean

you can see the surface stuff you know

what's h going on at the surface but

what's going on deep down in the murky

depths of your subconscious mind which

is where a lot of this stuff is

originating you know troubles with your

meditation that kind of thing sometimes

the best you can do is just make an

educated guess

or you can just resort to St. John of

the Cross's explanation,

God just has other plans for you.

So, could I please elaborate when I

started to lose
the singleness of mine? Well, I mean,
it's I mean, even at my best, it wasn't
like every single minute of every time I
would sit down to meditate. Back in
those days, you know, for most of my
career as a monk, I was meditating
several hours a day, sitting
cross-legged with my eyes closed,
usually several hours a day. And I mean,
sometimes your mind is restless and
doesn't settle down. Sometimes you get
right into it and it's just beautiful.
And so, you know, after around 2003,
2004, you know, it's just restless and
not settling down very well anymore.
I mean, you can kind of grind away at

the technique, but I mean, it's like
going back to the ABCs after you've had
something that was much higher, more
advanced than that can be discouraging.
So, let's see. I mean, I've I've really
answered this question pretty much in in
the previous Q&A and then also like two
or three Q&As's before that. So, I
shouldn't just keep flogging a dead
horse here.
See
what methods did I use to try to get it
back before disruping is just just
continuing to meditate.
went to a few retreats
but it was uh by then after several

years of it I mean you just kind of it
becomes like habitual just this
not having momentum going not having
enthusiasm for for practice because just
the the expectation that the practice is
not going to get very deep that kind of
thing you know it just kind of derailed
the whole the whole holy life attitude,
I suppose, or at least contributed to
the derailing of the holy life attitude.
I just got as far as I could get with it
and then it leveled off and even started
tapering off. And so after several years
of that, time to try something else.
I'm going to take a drink of my
beverage.
Ah,

it's good.

So, I guess I should just move on to the next question.

This is also from PSA.

He says, "For monks stroking it without emission, is it considered breaking the third precept and does the monk have to confess it?" Well, the monk isn't dealing with five precepts. He's dealing with vineia rules, rules of monastic discipline. So, we're dealing with the first sada rule here.

And according to the first sad dissa rule to deliberately have an orgasm is a sanada offense requiring six days and six nights of penance followed by this

very inconvenient reinstatement ceremony in which at least 20 monks in good standing have to attend. and it's really inconvenient.

But um there are minor rules that are associated with the first song. For example, if you try to have an orgasm and for whatever reason fail, I'm pretty sure that's a tulachaya offense.

It's at any rate, it doesn't rank as a full sana. So let's say you start and you you you're like have the in the intention to have an orgasm and then change your mind. Well, still you were doing it with the intention which is you know the action and the intention.

That's two out of three. You know you didn't actually accomplish it but still you you did the action with the in the intention of doing it to completion and then you didn't complete. So I'm pretty sure it's either a ducata or a tulichaya offense, but it falls short of a full song of you say. So just confession is enough. You don't have to do the penance and all that. Or let's say you start and then like somebody starts walking in so you suddenly stop and pretend you know everything's cool, that kind of thing, then again then it would be against the rules. But if you're just not exactly spanking the puppy, but just petting it,

and then it just accidentally goes off, which can happen, then that would technically not be breaking a rule. But if you're not sure, you know, you're like secondguing, trying to psychoanalyze yourself, then just to make sure, you may want to do penance just to clear all doubt. just to make sure you've got a clean slate, that kind of thing. And a lot of monks do that sort of thing. I've done that sort of thing before, not only with regard to uh sana number one, but like touching a woman with with like desire, you know, desire to to derive pleasure from the touch. There was one of the abbotts my one of my main teachers in Burma. He

would do the penance every year because sometimes women would touch him. You know, it's like just brush up against a woman on a bus or for whatever reason you come into contact and he was kind of a macho monk and he enjoyed it. So just just to make sure that he was he was clean, ritually clean, he would do the do the the penants practic pretty much every year.

So in order to

get to commit sada number one then you have to like perform the act physically. You have to have the intention of having an orgasm and then you have to successfully have the orgasm in order

for it to be a full sanada offense.
And all of the sanodisas are like this.
In fact, a lot of winni rules are like
this where there's lesser rules with
regard to like trying and then not
actually succeeding and breaking the
rule. But the very fact that you tried
to break the rule,
like even with regards to like stealing,
that kind of thing, then it's it's a
lesser rule, but not like the full
penalty.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Mark.
Hi, Moi.
This is from Mark and he says, "Who were
your favorite wrestlers from Portland

wrestling back in the early to mid 1970s?

And it is true that when I was a kid, starting when I was in about fifth grade, um my family started watching big time wrestling, also called Portland wrestling, but really it was in beautiful Lake Oiggo, which is ne next to Portland, I guess.

And it's true. Sometimes I would like cheer for the bad guys just to to irritate my mother because my mother really believed it. You know, it's a lot of this stuff is fake. you know, they're like bashing each other with with metal chairs and this kind of stuff, you know,

getting out jumping out of the ring and just beating each other up out in the out on the parking lot sometimes. And she thought it was all just 100% legit. But when even even as a kid, you could see that it was a lot of it was just sort of fake, you know, dramatized fake blood, this kind of thing.

So, my favorite wrestlers from Portland wrestling back in the early to mid 1970s,

beautiful Lake Oiggo.

Well, I mean, Dutch Savage and Jimmy Snooka were like the the two heroes. Those were like the two main favorite good guys. Um, I remember one of the bad guys was Bull Ramos. And the very first

time I ever saw um oh, what's his name? Jesse the Body Ventura who was in some relatively big movies like the first Predator movie and also he was what governor of Minnesota or something like that. First time I ever saw him he was the new tag team partner for Bull Ramos and he was just silent and Bull Ramos is like slapping at him on the stage. They're up in the crow's nest talking to the host Frank Bonama and Bull Ramos, this big fat Indian guy, is just slapping it at Jesse Ventur saying, "Pose, pose," because Jesse is is he's just adopting these, you know, Mr. Universe poses.

That was back when wrestlers were kind of making the transition from diesel powered to nuclearpowered.

So, I mean, I could say uh like Haru Sasaki with the the dreaded karate thumb. Definitely diesel powered old-fashioned wrestler who was just kind of built like a weightlifter or something.

Tough Tony Bourne

with regard to uh bad guys. Well, that's the next question here. So, yeah. I mean, Dutch Savage and Jimmy Snooker was pretty much everybody's favorite back in those days. And then Mark here says, "Who was your favorite bad guy?"

And I don't know, I suppose it was, what

was his name? Lord Jonathan Boyd, one of the kangaroos, the Royal Kangaroos.

Cuz he was a bad guy, but he was tough.

I mean, he was genuinely a good a good wrestler who maybe just, you know, they they had to like draw lots to see who had to be the bad guy or something. And so he and his uh his tag team partner, what was it? What was it? Uh Charles.

Lord Charles. No, not Lord Charles.

Something Charles.

But they were tough. I mean, they could take a beating. They were good wrestlers. Sometimes they would win.

So, let's go with Lord Jonathan Boyd.

Who was this Australian guy

and uh I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Austin.

And Austin says, "If ultimate awareness were truly static, would that not contradict the Buddhist doctrine of impermanence?"

Buddhists say that everything has changed from when I was 5 years old until now. But if the capacity for awareness or pure awareness itself has not changed, why could that not be considered an atman or self? Well, I mean, I was I thought I was fairly clear in my explanation to of my answering of Austin's previous question, which was kind of along these lines. This is like a followup.

He says, I mean, I was saying that human
awareness in the samosauric sense is not
static, but ultimately,
you know, ultimately like the the
highest state of awareness, like
assuming for example that nirvana is
pure formless consciousness, you could
say that that is static partly just
because it's no longer in time.
It's timeless. A calico.
So it doesn't contradict the Buddhist
doctrine of impermanence because the
Buddhist doctrine of impermanence like
in the the the three marks of existence
sabara
anicha which is all conditioned things

are impermanent. But when you go beyond like samsaric awareness into this hypothetical ultimate highest absolute awareness of pure formless consciousness. It's not a sankara anymore. It's not in samsara anymore. But Buddhism really doesn't it tries to avoid or at least early Buddhism wisely avoided reifying the absolute.

So I mean you don't even refer to the highest state as an it or a thing or like a goal. You don't really try to describe it. I mean, you can have it as a goal and so forth, but still it has to be like practically like an an enigma.

Man, that was hard to say. Or just a

mystery, you know, like mysticism.

Mystery and mysticism have the same

root, the etmological root.

So I mean kind of you can say that

assuming

that nirvana is infinite formless

consciousness

you know this unmanifest luminous all

around like some ancient verses say then

you could say that that kind of ultimate

awareness would not be impermanent but

it's off the scale it's not a sankara so

it's not contradicting

sab Sankara or all conditioned things

are impermanent.

But when you're at the human level

still in samsara, everything is changing

from one moment to the next.

So

I mean there are some Mahayana Buddhists

who will say that this infinite formless

consciousness is like the origin of like

the Buddha nature and all that and it

doesn't change and so you can call that

your true self. But in early Buddhism

you don't call anything your true self.

That's just sort of a later Mahayana

philosophical development that is

emotionally satisfying to certain types

of people.

So

I'm just going to move on to Austin's

next question.

He says, "Nama," which is usually translated as mind. He says, "Nama is considered immaterial, meaning it doesn't have mass or physical extension. Consciousness arises dependent on conditions, but it is not reducible to matter. If computers could become conscious, consciousness could arise from purely material structures without anything immaterial. Would this not be a huge problem for Buddhism? Well, it'd be a huge problem for Abidama philosophy because I've said this before. One time I I asked a Burmese Abidama scholar, would it be possible for a computer to become conscious? And he just gave this

unconditional no. Because according to Abid Dhama, consciousness has to arise in kama ja rupa or matter that is generated by karma and computers apparently don't have that. But personally I do not see any problem at all that you could argue that consciousness arises from a brain which is is a kind of organic computer. You know, it's still matter. a brain is still matter at least from a materialistic point of view.

So I mean I really don't see a problem. I mean it would be a problem for certain tenets of terra Buddhist orthodoxy because of what Abidama says. But most westerners don't have much use for

abidama anyway. I certainly don't. Most
Buddhist monks, western Buddhist monks
do not take abidama very seriously.
They do not consider it to be genuine
teachings of the historical God.
So I mean if and if you're like a
Mahayana Buddhist who doesn't believe
that matter even really exists then
I mean where would the problem be there?
I mean you wouldn't have mind
originating from pure matter because
according to like a yoga Buddhist of the
Mahayana then there is no pure matter.
So let's see here. Did I answer the
question? Nama is considered immaterial
meaning it doesn't have mass or physical

extension. Consciousness arises dependent on conditions. Well, yeah, that's vinyanakanda arises dependent on conditions. Yeah, we can say that. But if you're talking about nirvana as infinite formless consciousness then it's not arising dependent on conditions because that's just transcends samsara. It transcends conditionality and it transcends the duality of exist existence and non-existence so that you can't even really talk about it.

So if computers could become conscious, consciousness could arise from purely material structures. If you believe that physical matter is ultimately real and I

don't

without anything immaterial, would this

not be a huge problem for Buddhism? It'd

be a huge problem for some like orthodox

terra Buddhist philosophers and maybe

certain other Buddhist philosophers of

other schools who are dogmatically

attached to certain tenets found in

Buddhist texts.

But overall, I don't think it would

change much at all with regard to is

Buddhism true or not.

I mean with regard to how to practice

and all that, it would remain unchanged.

Four noble truths remain exactly the

same regardless of whether computers can

become conscious or not or regardless of whether a blob of gray meat can become conscious or not. I mean according to orthodox terraata, your brain isn't even the the organ of thought. It's it's like thought just arises through the force of karma in the blood in one of the chambers of your heart.

Hadaya watu you know the heart base is where thought and mentality arises according to orthodox terravada they didn't even know what the brain was for in the wisudi manga the brain is just a big lump of bone marrow filling a large hollow bone

almost the only thing that your brain does according to Buddha and the wizudi

maga the number one um commentarial text
in orthodox terabata Buddhism
The only thing that your brain really
does is if you catch a cold, it starts
to liquefy. And so the snot coming out
your nose is like melted brain.
According to the Wisudi Maga,
as uh venerable Nyanamoli, the first
famous Yanamolei who translated the
Wizudi Maga into English, as he said,
the commentators were hard put to find a
use for the human brain because they had
already decided that your heart was the
organ of thought. They really didn't
have an idea of like blood circulation
at the time that they came up with these

ideas. And so apparently they had this idea that it was your liver that was responsible for splashing your blood around in your body causing it to somehow circulate through this splashing activity.

So I mean you really can't take ancient Buddhist or ancient Indian ideas about the function of the brain or the function of the heart or the function of the liver. Like you can't take them too seriously. There are some people of course that think ancient Indians they knew everything better than modern science does. And with regard to how the mind works, maybe. But with regard to human anatomy and physiology, there's no

way. Unless you have some kind of enlightened doctor that just had like this transcendent understanding without really conceptualizing it and writing it down in medical texts.

So let's see here. I guess I answered that question. I'm just going to move on to the next one. This is from Maximan.

And Maximan says, 'In holding your views on politics and the war effort, do you consider the fear and dread young men face who could be drafted? And then in parenthesis, he says, I'm 27.

And my view on politics and the war effort is mainly like objective like political analysis. You know, I'm not

trying to interpret

like world politics

in in terms of Buddhist ethics. In in

Buddhist ethics, almost all politics is

immoral. Which is why a devout serious

Buddhist is supposed to just renounce

society and go off and live alone in a

forest.

If you just like abolish all military,

you know, all all all wars, this kind of

thing, even wars of self-defense,

punishing criminals, this kind of thing,

you consider all that to be immoral. You

know, even like killing lice in your

children's hair. If all that you're just

not going to do that, you're not going

to break any precepts at all. Then the

thing for you to do is just go off into a forest, renounce the world, and just go out and and live the holy life.

So, in holding my views on politics in the war, I don't really consider very much the fear and dread young men face who could be drafted. And if it arises, I mean, especially when I'm thinking politically, not just being like empathetic and subjective and thinking like in terms of Buddhist ethics, but I'm thinking in terms of politics, then fear and dread of young men. I mean, that's that's fatal to a society. If you have I mean, there's always going to be a lot of young men who just don't want

to fight. They're afraid to fight. they don't don't want to get killed, this kind of stuff. But if you don't have any men who are willing to fight for their country, the country is doomed. And I mean, at present, the United States at least has an all volunteer military. So I mean, it's like nobody's being drafted at present. anyone who's getting killed in the military volunteered to join the military knowing full well that there was a chance a risk of being killed. So I mean I can't really consider that to be any kind of injustice anymore than somebody knows the risks of smoking. they decide to smoke anyway and then they get lung

cancer or emphyma or they decide they
want to be a motorcycle racer and they
know in advance there's always the
hazard you know you can get in a wreck
you can get killed but they may they
decide to take that chance and they go
for it and then if they kill I mean it's
if they get killed in a wreck god forbid
I mean at least they were willing to
take that risk
And in their ch in their particular
case, they rolled snake eyes and
but I mean they willingly rolled the
dice knowing that it could come up snake
eyes.
So the fear and dread of young men who

who

um I mean even in the old days there

would be a draft you know sometimes the

army would just go through just

recruiting all the young men in a

certain village you know that happened a

lot and as a general rule the men might

be very afraid full of dread but still

when you get thrust out onto that

battlefield it's like this innate

manhood

you know, this innate heroic virtue just

rises to the surface and you just find

it within you to fight or to do your

duty. You know, my father was in World

War II and he would say there are some

people that I'm not going to fight. I'm

not going to fight. I can't kill anybody. Then, you know, when you've got Germans or Hungarians or whatever shooting at you, then you just find it within yourself to start shooting back as a general rule. Most of the people that said, "I can't do it. I'm not, you know, I'm I'm afraid of getting killed and all this." Most of them would would come around and start fighting. And some of them would be good fighters once the once the ice was broken, once they finally found the inner warrior, you know, the the the inner Viking or the inner Saxon or whatever came to the surface, which is what grown men have

been doing since the human race existed.
I mean, there was a time when almost
every able-bodied man in a village was a
warrior if necessary.
you know, your your village or your
tribe gets raided by another village or
tribe. You pick up your spear and you go
fight to protect your village. And it
was back in those days, it was like with
spears, like people looking each other
in the eye as they're killing each
other. That's maybe you were lucky
enough to have a bow and arrow and
standing farther back.
So I think excessive fear and dread of
young men um just fearing having to go
to war. I mean in a way it's it's a sign

of societal decay.

Sorry to say I don't want to insult anybody. I mean you have the option of just refusing just be a conscientious objector. And I remember there's a a book by Jay Krishna Murdy where somebody was complaining to him. I think it was an Indian man saying that if you don't join the army they'll shoot you. I mean if they draft you and you refuse to fight they'll shoot you. And Christian Murdy says okay still you still have the choice so you'll be shot. That's just something you just got to consider. Still you make the choice if you prefer to get shot or whatever it is. Go to

prison rather than fight in a war. I
mean still that is your choice to make
in accordance with your comma
but I mean I can relate when I was a
young man I was sort of a militant
pacifist
and uh yeah I definitely did not want to
join the military I came from a military
family most of the males in my family
especially my father's side
had been in the army
But I was just a militant pacifist at
the time, a dope smoking cosmic cowboy
with long hair. And I just I just didn't
want to do that. So I mean, if they
would have drafted me, then I would have
had to I mean, they didn't have the

draft back then. There was like a mandatory registration for selective service, which I eventually wound up doing due to my father just insisting on it. So I I signed up for the selective service and they didn't draft anyone. It was just in case.

But if I had been drafted, then it may have been that I would have just had to decide, you know, am I really willing? I mean, you can be like Mahatma Gandhi, Moandas K. Gandhi. He volunteered to to join the military in World War I on the British side as an unarmed stretcherbearer. You know, he was at least going to do his part. He was not a

coward, you know, he was going to do his part. He just didn't want to kill anybody. So, he was just running out onto the battlefield and pulling wounded soldiers to safety without shooting at anybody. So, I mean, that's an option, too. I mean, if if you're just afraid, then that's probably not so good. But um at at the very least I mean if it's just a moral decision you don't want to kill anybody which is I mean that's not a bad choice to make then I mean still you could be like an unarmed stretcher bearer or something. I don't know if that's really an option in the modern American military. I mean possibly like a combat medic

something like that. I think combat medics in World War II at least they carried a pistol. They didn't have an they didn't have a rifle, but they still had a sidearm.

Well, I mean, I don't know if you'd actually be required to use that. I mean, you could just leave it in its holster.

So, getting back to Maximon's actual question,

it's kind of surprising to me that Maximan

is is asking this kind of question considering that Maximan was like the first barbarian emperor of Rome.

allegedly he was just a complete animal.
He definitely was I mean he rose up
through the ranks of the legions became
he became emperor that way.
So yeah I mean when usually when I'm
when I have views on politics and the
war effort it's just from this amoral
objective you know what is expedient
from a political point of view kind of
attitude.
And so there's not a whole lot of I mean
it's really cut and dried from a
Buddhist point of view. War is murder.
Just don't do it. Don't kill anybody.
Don't even kill an ant. Period. That's
it.
It's really not negotiable.

But I mean, from a political point of view,
just observing, you know, what Donald Trump and the the Ministry of War and all this is doing, I mean, it's you can't really just insist
that we just disband all of our military forces and all this just because it's it's not Dharmic. I mean, it's it's just unrealistic.
So it's more of an anthropological kind of a thing when you're looking at politics and you know what is conducive to the prosperity and success of a country
and just not hurting anything is really

not conducive to the prosperity of a country not for very long anyway and I'm just going to move on next question this is from Siovak and Sipad Zidana

And I alluded to this question um in answer to one of the first questions section Zena says thoughts on this quote and it's a quote from Terrence McKenna and Terrence McKenna says the thing that is so powerful about the psychedelics is that they perform on demand which almost in principle you cannot expect of a mystical experience because that would be essentially man ordering God at man's whim, which is not how it's supposed to work. And this is something that I used

to consider a lot. Like a little little while ago, I was talking about how um with meditation, getting like a mystical experience through meditation. There's no guarantees at all. Some people might try their entire life and fail. And then other people, you get it and lose it. Get it and lose it. A few lucky few or fortunate few will master it. and then they can just slide right into a deep mystical state pretty much every time they sit down. There are people like that. I assume St. John of the Cross was one of those. A lot of Buddhist Buddhist monks both Terravada and otherwise have been that way also.

But I mean I can't really agree. I mean

it's

let me back up a little bit. So I mean

meditation getting into deep meditative

states or mystical states through

meditation as I say is woefully

unreliable sometimes. There's no

guarantees. Whereas something like two

hits of acid, you take those two hits of

acid and you're pretty much guaranteed

of some kind of mystical experience. At

least in my case, it has generally been

that way

in my youth.

So, I mean, I used to think about that a

lot when I was a monk. It's like, man,

it's like you can just take two hits of

acid and you'll be getting into states
that some meditators have tried to get
into for decades and have failed.
So it it's almost unfair
that it's it's so reliable with
something like mushrooms psilocybin
mushrooms or or masculine or or LSD,
that kind of thing. Whereas with
meditation, it's not nearly as reliable.
But um what McKenna's talking about
here, it's like let's see, it would be
essentially man ordering God at man's
whim, which is not how it's supposed to
work. Well, I mean, not how it's
supposed to work is just sort of a
cultural thing, I think, because even

like somebody who is practicing
diligently and they've got like a talent
at like contemplation
so that they finally master it. I mean
still I mean they're working at it.
They're making efforts. It's not just
like this gift of God that's just
spontaneous. It's not purely divine
grace even them because they're really
striving for it. You know they're really
putting in the effort, putting in lots
of effort.
So it is true that it's it seems kind of
vaguely unfair, unjust
that some people can meditate and
meditate and meditate for years and
still not get into a mystical state as

deep as if they just took a bunch of
psilocybin mushrooms.
I think I mentioned previously not long
ago that some Hindu yogi or swami back
in like the 1970s
made the observation that God came to
America in the form of LSD because
Americans are materialists and they
wanted their God in the form of a
material substance.
So I mean it's all just I mean just
going with you know cosmic justice in a
Buddhist sense with karma and all that
then everyone gets what they deserve
even though it may not seem that way
especially if it's like innocent

children being abused and so forth from the Buddhist point of view it's it's a karmic thing. Anything that happens to you and causes any kind of sensation, positive or negative, is the fruition of karma. If not karma made in this life, karma made in a previous life. And you know, a lot of people that really cannot appreciate the whole idea of karma will call it victim blaming and just get indignant and angry about abused children and so forth. And I can get that. But still I mean
it does it does I do accept the idea of karma that the world we living in the world we are living in is mind-made like the first verse of the dharmapata

it's mindmade mind is chief mind is the

forerunner

and some people just aren't very good at

at like generating their reality you

know it's like even good people can have

nightmares just you know it's we're

creating our own dreams and some people

are creating nightmares

but I'm uh wandering away from the

question and from the Terrence McKenna

quote and I I gave my thoughts on it so

I'm just going to move on to Seio Cipad

Ziderna's next question which is a

surprisingly difficult one he says who

is your favorite American of all time

and then he says writer philosopher

mystic politician and any other fields
you think are important. So, my favorite
American of all time, I guess I can just
cheat and say my dad, my dad is my
favorite American.
Um,
but just getting into these categories
like my favorite writer, my favorite
American writer. I mean, America really
hasn't produced
any like great like Shakespearees that
I'm aware of. I mean, Herman Melville,
who wrote Moby Dick, I mean, Moby Dick
is great. It's it's more profound than
the Old Testament of the Bible, for
example, in my opinion. I mean, it's it
is profound. It is a mystical text in in

certain respects. Like Moby Dick himself is like the left fist of God.

Um, but then again, Melville wrote a lot of kind of not so good stuff. In fact, most of his stuff wasn't all that great. You know, he's he's kind of like a one-h hit wonder. I mean, his second best writing would be maybe Billy Bud, you know, like some of his early stuff like Taipei, you know, that's it's readable. It's it's interesting. But all in all, he was just he was inspired with Moby Dick. just he was inspired by a muse when writing Moby Dick, even though even Moby Dick has some corny parts.

Um,

but I mean, Melville lived a really interesting life. I mean, he's like of the Dutch aristocracy of New York City back from going back from when it was New Amsterdam. And then his family fell upon hard times back in the 1800s. You know, there was some kind of depression or stock market crash or something back then. And so he just went off and and started working on whailing ships. And Melville, who wrote Moby Dick, was actually one of the harpooners, you know, he's the guy standing in the front of a rowboat chasing a a sperm whale, like hurling the harpoons into the whale. So I mean, he he definitely lived an adventuresome life. And so that

causes me to have a little higher opinion of him, even though he wrote a fair amount of duds.

Um, with regard to like poetry, I don't I don't know if America has had very many really great poets. Robert Frost, maybe.

Um, let's see. The best my favorite American philosopher. I mean, America hasn't produced any really great philosophers either that I know of. some good scientists.

But maybe William James like he wrote the the varieties of religious experience which is more religion than philosophy. I guess with regard to

philosophy, William James was mainly known for being one of the the founding pioneers in of pragmatism which was one of the theories of truth. It was kind of a epistemological theory
that something is true if and only if it works.
Um, my favorite American mystic, well, there's Herman Melville again who wrote movie dick. That's definitely a mystical book. Or also maybe Wal Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote the the poem Brahma. Brahma is a good mystical poem if you've never read it and it's it's short. I think it's only like three verses long. My favorite pol my favorite American politician. Let's go Theodore Roosevelt,

which may help to explain why I like

Trump as much as I do.

I like someone who just gets [__] done.

And let's see. And any other fields I

think are important.

Gosh,

I really can't think of very much. I

mean, musicians. My favorite American

musician. I don't even know.

Johnny Cash. I don't know.

Let's see.

So, yeah. I mean, with regard to my

favorite American of all time, I'm still

just sticking to my dad.

He was a great man in his own way.

And uh

yeah I mean if Siovak and Cad Zena is
not satisfied with this answer he can uh
like ask a specific category
in future and like maybe I'll have more
time to reflect on it because really I'd
have to sit here just really thinking
about gosh who is my favorite American
philosopher for example. You know,
there's a good chance I'm overlooking
somebody.
So, let's see here. I mean, if it were
English or Scottish or something, it'd
be easy. I could just, you know, my
favorite Scottish philosopher obviously
would be David Hume. Favorite English
philosopher, I don't know, maybe FH
Bradley.

But

I mean, the great rock and roll bands,

Led Zeppelin, for example, that's

English.

The Beatles were English.

Best American rock and roll band. I

don't even know. Pink Floyd was English.

Rush was Canadian.

Maybe the Doors. I don't know. Let's

just move on. Next question.

This is also from Seio.

This is more philosophical, more

Buddhist if you will. He says in terra

why is delusion considered a sankara

rather than perception. I thought

perception was the way you see the world

while delusion is incorrectly seeing it.

Thus making it all form of see all

making it a form of misperception.

Well, this is another like Abid Dhama

thing that first of all

according to Abidama there are 52 mental

states

all of them are sankaras and then for

some reason

two of these sankaras which are sya or

perception

and also way or feeling got singled out

because supposedly they're more

important than the other 50 and it's

just it's bad like categorization bad

systematlogy in my opinion this is

indicative of like early terravada

Buddhism being like pre-logical
like being a product a product of Indian
culture before formal logic had really
been established in Indian philosophy.
So it's just I mean you can say that
you've got the five condas and that is
it that's all we are and sankara would
just be volition or will in which case
all these other mental states even wrong
view is is considered to be a distinct
qualitatively separate mental state just
distinct from perception and that kind
of stuff I just can't buy it. You're
better off just saying perceptions and
and will and will perception and
volition even feelings would be a kind

of like sensory perception.

So yeah, I'd be I'd go along with that.

You've got

mental states or or just perception and

volition and and consciousness. But even

even that is it's it's getting too too

complicated.

So I mean at one point I did write the

first Buddhist philosophical essay I

ever wrote

was uh with regard to trying to make

sense of the five condas and trying to

make sense of how perception and

volition especially are related. how

perception is like the static aspect of

volition and volition is like the

kinetic aspect of perception. So that

even that is a false distinction. It's just based on the the weird way like the grammatical way that human beings label things and identify things.

And I'm probably confusing some people because I'm slightly confusing myself trying to answer this and just kind of going about it scattershot.

But in Terravada delusion is considered a sankara rather than perception mainly because you had these abidama scholars trying to categorize everything and not doing a really good job of it because they were not particularly sophisticated with regard to formal logic. they didn't really have a a really solid system. And

so they're just coming up with this kind of mental state. Yeah, we'll just call that an ultimate reality. And that kind of mental state, yeah, we'll just call that an ultimate reality. And then they'll just like come up with other mental states that you're not even fully aware of, but they have to be there to kind of fit the theory. kind of the way some subatomic particles are theorized or hypothesized by theoretical physicists just as a way of getting a theory to work.

And so Abidama was kind of that way. But I would personally I would say delusion is is perception. In fact, I would say delusion and perception are synonyms.

Might as well throw samsara in there.
Samsara is delusion is perception.
Perception is samsara.
So I mean I go with a much simpler
way of interpreting the world than
Abidama scholars with their gosh I don't
remember what is it 128 ultimate
realities. No it's no it wouldn't be
that many. It's 28 kinds of matter, 52
kinds of mental states, plus one kind of
consciousness and one kind of nibbana.
But I just I just don't I'm I'm like a
monist, you know? It's you start off
with this undifferentiated
like pleum, I guess, and then perception
just starts differentiating. I mean,

that's papancha.

just starts differentiating this

undifferentiated

ultimate reality and just sort of

forming individual essences out of it.

And that's that's all just artifacts of

perception.

So a lot of this is this is one of those

cases I think one of the very first

questions like like Fred was asking

about sodaponas. I have to give two

different answers. I have to give my own

personal best answer and then I have to

say what orthodox terravada says because

they don't always agree. Sometimes I'm

in agreement with orthodox terravada but

other times I've got to like give two

different answers because orthodox terraata says this but I can't really accept that. I don't think that's true because I don't just follow along with my religion like a lot of people do.

So

yeah, so I mean in ter delusion is considered to be a s car rather than perception just because you have these abidama scholars just trying to just divide the entire universe up into its constituent elemental parts and they just didn't have the common sense apparently to realize that delusion is perceptual. I mean they would they would ad freely admit that there has to be

perception involved in delusion. But then there's this also this delusion trron that has to be added to the perception tra in order to form the full mental state which also has to have all these other trrons that are in the rupa kalapa. This it's like a molecule of all these little particles of mental states and matter and all this.

And I just I just can't buy it. Most western Buddhists don't really have any use for this sort of thing. It's just ancient Indian philosophy from a time when formal logic and a certain sophistication of thought had not yet entered Indian philosophy. I mean you don't even you don't really

need sophistication of thought if you're if you're just practicing mysticism. you're getting into these deep mental states where you're experiencing reality directly without having to theorize about it. Then you can still be fully enlightened without having formal logic, without having some sophisticated theoretical framework to account for the mental states you're having.

I hope that this Q&A isn't just me just rambling in in just various directions and not giving a straight answer to anything.

It's kind of how it feels sometimes for some reason today.

Maybe just cuz I'm sitting in a
different place than usual.
So, let's just move on this question.
This is from the sabotur.
And the sabotur says the vast majority
of people around the world accept that
their governments are ripping them off
in the form of taxation, high prices,
poor quality social services, etc. Does
that mean that karmically in some future
life we shall be either rich or
generally better off or perhaps it's
already our karma to be ripped off?
Yeah, it's already our karma to be
ripped off. assuming that we are ripped
off. I mean, I wouldn't go so far as to
say that the vast majority of people

around the world accept that their

governments are ripping them off. I

mean, some people are just naive and

they think their government is great.

Some people are just uh

uh I mean they'll just attribute it to

well-intentioned

in inefficient bureaucracy

and they're you know they don't want to

think badly of their government even

though they would they will admit that

it could be better.

So

let's see here. Yeah, I mean what I this

this question is kind of a strange one

here. So the vast majority of people

according to the sabotur, let's just say lots of people around the world believe that their government is ripping them off, you know, that they're they're being treated like livestock, which is kind of true.

So does that mean that karmically in some future life we shall be either rich or generally better off? No. Because your karma is I mean whatever is happening to you is the fruition of karma. It's not creating new karma. Anything that's just happening to you, your reaction to what's happening to you is creating more karma which will have its fruition afterwards.

So yeah, I mean if you feel that you are

being ripped off by your government,
that is the fruition of karma, not the
creation of new karma other than your
feeling, your belief is making new
karma, which may reinforce
that the government ripping you off in
your estimation.
So yeah, it's already our karma to be
treated this way. That's why we're
treated this way.
And I mean, it's just that's just the
way government works. I mean, I did read
this one book, I think it was uh called
the 10,000-year explosion, talking about
the acceleration in human evolution once
we developed agriculture.

And the book points out that um before we developed agriculture, we were we were more or less the equivalent evolutionarily to a wild animal. But once we developed agriculture which then resulted in sedentary settlements and then chiefs or I mean they probably chiefs in the stone age but still like hunter gatherers stone age but you started having governments started having kings and laws and and temples and armies and this kind of stuff that human beings underwent an evolutionary metamorphosis into a kind of domesticated animal. So people really have been over the course of history treated like livestock, treated like a

farmer treats his own livestock, you know, kind of a a resource to be exploited. I mean, you you try to make sure that they're safe. You don't want wolves to be eating your sheep, that kind of thing. you want your sheep to be healthy, you know, so you you put forth efforts to keep the sheep, you know, healthy and and relatively secure until it's time for you to start butchering them or whatever it is.

And it's just it is our karma to be a a kind of domesticated animal.

And it's been that way for the past 10,000 years. At least 10,000 years starting in the the so-called fertile

crescent like the Levant and like

southern south, let's see, southeastern

Anatolia and getting down into like the

Tigress Euphrates

plain

area.

So yeah, that was the sabotur's first

question. The sabatur's second question.

Can negative karma be at least partially

neutralized by performing good deeds

such as leaving your last will and

testament to a Buddhist organization.

Well, um you don't really you I mean you

can't eliminate bad karma through some

act like a a priest blesses you or some

dowist priest waves a paper wand at you

or some Catholic priest you know blesses

you and says you're forgiven or Jesus of Nazareth you know says you are forgiven or you know the priest tells you to do some some kind of penance hail Marys and Peter ers that kind of thing and then it's like your bad karma is cleansed you know by making confession that you are cleansed of your sins that doesn't happen in Buddhism

no

so the closest you can come to that um there is a kind of simile or parable given in one of the polyutas I don't recall exactly which suta it is where the Buddha I mean I've I've mentioned this before the Buddha compares

all of your bad karma to a handful of salt. So you take the handful of salt, you pour it into a cup of water, you can't drink it cuz it's so salty that I mean the the water is so salty you can't even drink it. Well, you take that same handful of salt and pour it into a pool of clear water and then you dissolve it all in there. Then if you drink the water, you might hardly even taste the salt because you've diluted it way down with pure water. So the the Buddhist um the Buddhist way of dealing with bad karma is you dilute your bad karma down with lots of good karma. So instead of pouring the handful of salt into a cup of water, you're pouring a handful of

salt into a whole pool of water with
that water being sort of the
metaphorical
equivalent of good karma. Doing good
deeds kind of dilutes down your bad
karma, but it doesn't make it go away.
The salt is still there.
The only way that you can get rid of bad
karma is either by just allowing it to
reach fruition over which you really
don't have much control or if you just
avoid the opportunities for your bad
karma to reach fruition. Sometimes
according to Buddhist philosophy that
karma will just eventually fade out.
So if it's like your your karma to be

trampled by an elephant or something,
you just avoid elephants long enough,
there's a good chance that karma will
eventually just fade out, you know, just
expire.
But there's no guarantee of that. I mean
might be that
some hundred years in the future you
might still get trampled by an elephant.
So don't just fling yourself underneath
elephants assuming that your your karma
of being trampled by an elephant has
been exhausted.
So let's just move on to the next
question. This is from Romeo
and Romeo says, "It is said that
artists, writers, and creative people in

general are prone to having mental health issues. Do you think there is an actual link between creativity and mental illness? Or is this just a kind of myth? If you do think there is such a link, why do you think this is the case?" And before I answer, I'm just checking to make sure we are in fact recording. And we are in fact recording, which is good.

So yeah, I do think it's a it's a stereotype that artists are nuttier than the average person. And most stereotypes have a basis in truth. This also reminds me of there's a an English saying, I don't remember the exact words, but it's

that genius and madness
come very close together. That the
greatest geniuses also tend to be kind
of nutty. Like um Nicola Tesla for
example, he was a genius, but he was
also kind of nutty. like he had like
these weird kind of phobias about like
he he couldn't stand seeing a woman's
neck that all the women that that worked
for him had to have like these really
high collars concealing their neck. He
couldn't stand like jewelry on a woman.
It just kind of freaked him out somehow.
But like artists and just creative
people in general tend to be liinal.
It's like there has to be uh like like a
break in the structure. I mean, if

you're just completely regimented, you'd have like no originality, no creativity because everything's just kind of locked into place. And so, you're very predictable,

you know, it's just kind of almost robotic, just a complete normie, no imagination, you know, just very predictable. then you're less likely to be considered weird or eccentric than if you've got like these kind of windows in in the structure of your mind through which like intuition and creativity can can emerge

that you can be possessed by a muse more easily let's say

so you're going to be liinal and there's
going to be a less rigid structure to
your mind there's going to be more loose
ends
you know, more kind of I don't know,
kind of weird twilighty places in your
mind maybe and that that you have access
to that that's where you're I mean
you're having original ideas, it's
coming up from some kind of primordial
chaos, you know, it's not coming from
rigid structure.
And so the more exposure you have to
this like primordial chaos kind of
stuff, the more likely that this really
kind of abnormal stuff is going to come
through.

And so I mean it's I don't think it's any kind of stretch at all. you go to a university, you know, you go like check out the law students, the premed students, the b business administration students on the one hand, and then go over to like the drama students and the art students, and you're going to find the drama students and the art students are going to be more irrational and just more
eccentric
than like the like the STEM students, you know, the mathematicians, that kind of thing. But then if you have like a really inspired genius with regard to

mathematics, let's say, he's going to be
more um eccentric than just, you know,
the the kid like maybe the the East
Asian kid whose father insists that he
he be like uh an engineer,
you know, so that his ancestors will be
proud.
So yeah, I do think that uh there is an
actual link between creativity and
mental illness or between creativity and
just eccentricity, creativity and this
sort of unpredictability and like
nonconformity
because a lot of people that are
considered mentally ill, I mean you
can't have like some kind of real like
like some kind of mental illness that is

like a some kind of organic flaw in your brain. brain, you know, like obsessivempulsive disorder, you know, it's it's like a genetic thing. So, that would be different, I think, at least a little bit different. But people that are just considered to be just wild, nutty people, a lot of them are just sort of original thinkers who are following their own idea instead of conforming to the traditional culture. So yeah, they're more interesting too in my opinion. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Tzas is this is kind of an easy one. Tzask is says Jesus's most inner

circle was that of James, Peter, and John. Who was the most inner circle of Buddha? Well, the Buddha's two chief disciples were Sar Puta and Mogalana. So they would be um the top two, I think. And then probably you could throw in Ananda, who was the Buddha's personal attendant in the Buddha's later years. Ananda really wasn't the Buddha's attendant in the Buddha's early years. He had at least two other personal attendants that are named in the texts. But as the Buddha was getting older, probably more in need of a personal attendant, then his cousin Ananda, whose family name was also Godma, became his sort of his companion just

was pretty much with him most of the time.

So yeah, I mean his the inner circle at least in the Buddha's later years.

Um yeah, I think that Ananda and Sar Puta and Mogulana I mean they knew each other that Mogulana and Sar Puta Sar Puta died before the Buddha did and Ananda survived the Buddha. So you know they they weren't all together at the same time all the time.

But yeah, I guess the the top three of the Buddha's inner circle would be Sar Puta Mogalana who are his two chief disciples and also Ananda

maybe Mahakasapa but Maha Kasaba was

kind of a loner. He went off on his own

a lot probably much more than Ananda

did.

But Kas Maha Kasapa was the senior monk

in the SA after the Buddha passed away

because Saruta Mogalana as I say passed

away before the Buddha did. They're

probably older than him.

And so I'm just going to move on to the

next per the next question,

next person.

This is Pashet Pashetti

Pasceti

and his first question is Stevens.

That is the first question, Steven's

question mark. And I really wasn't

exactly sure what he was getting at. So

I asked if that was really his question.
And then he pointed out that Stevens,
who I've done a few videos with
and uh is a member of the Discord server
associated with like these Q&As's and
and just stuff that I've done that he
has deleted all of his videos. and I
didn't notice that.
So, Stevens may have deleted all of his
videos. He's he's kind of gone offline
or off the grid a little bit. Um, he was
talking recently, well, a few months ago
anyway, about just moving on to like a
farm, just kind of living a rustic life
for a while. But why he deleted all of
his videos, I don't know. Some of his

videos were somewhat controversial. Um, maybe he just decided it was time to move on to something else. But I've never really discussed this with him. And I didn't even notice that he had deleted all of his videos until Puscetti here said that he did. But I guess he's still alive and well. Um he made some comment on the Discord server. I think it was less than a week ago. So he's still around. I'm pretty sure he's just Why he deleted his videos. I'm not sure. So, let's just move on to Petti's next question. I think I spelled his name wrong. I think it's Pasceti and not Pashetti.

So, let's just do that. Let's just fix

this. We don't want to mispronounce

Puscetti's name.

Okay. Puscetti says, "A rum and monster

energy swilling pirate is attacking

guided meditation. Defend it, sire." And

I understand what he's talking about.

He's talking about Stixs Hexenhammer 666

who

um I mean he's like an ex Satanist

who

uh he's really into like the occult but

he made his claim to fame I mean he

originally got famous through occult

stuff and also through like ex

describing his experimentation with

various intoxicants that kind of thing

that was before my time but by the time I started watching sticks Hex number 666. He was giving political commentary on YouTube and he had a grasp of the big picture um that was better than most people including most political commentators on YouTube. And so I used to watch his show. I mean I didn't have much interest in his occult stuff that he still occasionally produced but um his political stuff I generally appreciated.

But then he started crashing out. I think for starters, he got married to a Dutch woman. He lived in the Netherlands, had a child there, and then they had um they had a parting of the

ways. And so he came back to America and just started like associating with like women of questionable repute and sanity and just started like drinking and probably like taking other intoxicants at a very high rate and and he just started crashing hard, you know, and the last I heard I mean as of today he is hiding out from the police. He's got a a warrant for his arrest for some kind of domestic violence charge and then also just at this at this point probably also like contempt of court and evading arrest and that kind of thing. So, he's hiding out and in some woman's apartment I think in New York City and

the woman is um allegedly mentally disabled.

So, and he's he's got like a broken tooth now because one of the other women that he was associating with um just punched him in the mouth and broke his teeth that you can see the like the the police like what is it the badge camera? What is it? Live camera stuff. I can't remember what it's called. You can you can see that kind of stuff on the internet. There are people who are avidly keeping up with all the gossip on this guy. He started wearing a pirate hat. Even when he's arrested, even when he's going to court, he's he's attending virtual court hearings like through Zoom

or something, still wearing this pirate

hat, the broken tooth. And

it's just

he he's pretty much lost credibility.

And now just recently he he did a video

where he is um just sort of giving his

opinion with regard to guided

meditation.

And

I mean before I even get to what his his

decision was on the subject and I didn't

even watch the video but apparently

Boskeeti says he was attacking guided

meditation. Um, I mean, he's just kind

of lost credibility with regard to

wisdom that I mean, he he cannot get his

own life in order. He seems to be
crashing out hard. There's a good chance
that he's going to be going to prison
in New Orleans
due to some domestic violence thing
originally and then like shooting like
possession of a firearm and and shooting
a firearm while like already u having
like a restraining order and maybe like
some charges against him and it just
gets worse and worse because I mean he
really does not have responsibility. I
mean, one thing I've noticed about him,
even when I liked him, is or, you know,
when I was still like taking him more
seriously because of his sober
political commentary

that Oh, where was I going with this?

Ah, I lost the thread. What was I going

to say?

Huh? That's too bad.

I forgot what I was going to say.

Sometimes I have such long sentences

leading up to my point that I just get

distracted and forget what the the point

I was aiming towards.

But I mean,

oh yeah, it's even when I considered him

to have like a a good grasp of the big

picture, he he always seemed to be like

without a moral compass, you know? He

was always kind of amoral. He had like a

morbid sense of humor. He liked gross

slasher movies, this kind of stuff. His,
you know, he just I don't think he was
would be a very nice person.
But now it's really caught up to him and
it's just he has lost credibility and
he's trying to tell people,
you know, how to live their lives when
he obviously is just going downhill
fast. He is on a toboggan ride
downwards.
In a lot of his videos, he is just
obviously
just stinking drunk, for example, with a
a tooth missing from getting punched by
a woman that he was he was living with
for a while,
wearing the pirate hat, hiding out in a

different town so that he won't get

arrested,

etc., etc.

And it is too bad because his his grasp

of the big picture is now kind of blurry

due to his overindulgence in alcohol

mainly I think. But also the spell is

broken. you know, he he had like kind of

like this I don't know, call it charisma

or something, a mystique that I mean he

is just kind of destroyed through really

bad life decisions and just

irresponsibility.

Um, and it's too bad. Well, with regard

to guided meditation, let's get to

guided meditation. Let's just leave

sticks, hex, and hammer aside. Now, I don't like, excuse me, I don't like guided meditation either. I've never liked guided meditation. It's like somebody's getting inside your head and telling you what to think.

No. If I'm going to meditate, I'm just going to meditate on my own without having to listen to somebody else's words. And when you're listening to somebody else's words in a guided meditation, you're not going to get very deep because you're always going to be at the verbal level.

You know, you're still listening to what somebody else is saying and processing that. You're still very much at the

verbal level. you're never going to get
very deep in the meditation. And
besides, I just do not like people
telling me, you know, what to think,
what to visualize, anything like that.
So, I actually agree um with Stixs,
Hexenhammer if he does not like guided
meditation because I don't like it
either. But even so, Stixs Hexenhammer
666 has pretty much lost his credibility
and it's uh
yeah, it's I personally do not really
enjoy kind of juicy negative gossip
about people. I mean, it's kind of
interesting sometimes if you remain
objective about it, but I don't really

revel in seeing somebody even if they
they're destroying their own life, even
if they're messing up their own life,
still I really don't get satisfaction
from, you know, like observing that
if the bad guy in the movie eventually
gets shot or something, that's kind of
satisfying. but he's just like this kind
of a
two-dimensional, you know, symbol of
evil, whereas, you know, he's not like a
a a genuine human being in the movie.
So, anyways, let's just move on to
Pcetti's third question. He said, "Would
you kindly beam meta at one of the
questioners and not tell them?" And
yeah, I've already done that. In fact, I

was doing that yesterday.

So, that was easy. Let's move on to the next question. This is from Watermocker. And Watermacher says, "Dumb question, but I want to hear your answer anyway." And there are no dumb questions. There are only dumb people. That's just a joke. That was a bad joke.

Watermacher says, "Did Sedarta follow the rules of monastic discipline on his way to becoming the Buddha?" That's not that's not a dumb question. I mean even if there are dumb questions that wasn't a dumb one. So did Sedarta I mean Sedarta it's not found that name is not found in like the earliest Buddhist

texts. I mean in Poly would be Sedata. And speaking of which I'm just going to totally digress here that um I finally got another job. I report to work. My first day of work is this coming Monday working in a metal shop again which is good.

And after I've already, you know, passed the the the P test, you know, signed the papers, you know, I've already got this job. Um, somebody named Sedarta is trying to hire me for a different job. But I mean, it would be some Indian HR department, maybe HR department, maybe even station in India for all I know. So I mean I I just thought it was kind of uh I don't know kind of

mentionable remarkable in the sense of worthy of remark that somebody named Sedarta wants to hire me but it's already too late.

So let's just get back to the question now. Did S did did Sedata did Shakyamuni follow the rules of monastic discipline on his way to becoming the Buddha? Technically the vineia rules did not exist in the Buddhist time. He had not formulated vineia yet. But he probably did follow a lot of those rules just because a lot of the the rules of monastic discipline for monks was just like common etiquette or protocol for

the renuncience of the Ganges Valley in ancient India like approximately fifth 6th century BCE.

So like only eating in the morning and wearing robes and shaving your head or or different different schools would have different ways of dealing with the hair. Like the James would just pull it out. I think the the Brahman priests a lot of the Brahman priests would just have like dreads, you know, they just grow it long and not do anything with it until it was all dreadlocks.

But there were certain rules, celibacy, this kind of thing that were common to various spiritual practitioners in the Buddhist time. And so he was probably

following along with a lot of this just
tradition of how aesthetics were
supposed to live
before the rules of monastic discipline
were devised. And according to
tradition,
it was years before the Buddha even
started making rules because at first
the the monks were were like veteran
spiritual heavy hitters. They didn't
need these rules. You know, they would
just of their of their own valition.
They would just conform to the tradition
of ancient Indian spirituality. and you
know you didn't have to make this rule
that this is a rule of such and such

category that is expedated by such and such ritual. It wasn't necessary yet. But then as Buddhism became more popular,
you had people with less pure motives joining the SA and so some of them were kind of rascally and so you started having the Buddha started having to make these rules. That's according to tradition. Although it's also possible that there were no rules at all until after the Buddha died. And then at the first council, they formulated a kind of py mocha rules just to have structure. Now that the founder was gone, they were going to have to have some other kind of structure holding things together. Like

I mean tradition says, you know, the Buddha laid down the rules as there was a need. But also tradition says like if you read the the history of the first council that after the Buddha passed away after he reached part Ibana the the enlightened monks you know they accepted it with equinimity but a lot of the unenlightened monks were grieving because you know their teacher had died and then you had this old monk who was ordained when he was old. So he was kind of set in his ways and not easily trainable. He's saying essentially why all the long faces now we can do whatever we want. We don't have

venerable god saying do this don't do that all the time. And then ma kasapa who was senior monk in the song after the Buddha's passing away. He heard this and then he realized you know if that's the attitude some monks are going to have we're going to have to lay down some rules. And so the first council is also called the vineia saniti or the convocation of monastic discipline. So it's possible that there really were no vineia rules until after the Buddha passed away. And the per one of the purposes of the first council was to establish rules to kind of stabilize the SA so that it doesn't just dissolve and peter out after the founder is gone.

So, but again, he probably did follow certain just established protocols and traditions that most of the renuncients were were already following at the time. And I'm going to move on to Walker Watermacher's next question.

He says, "Likely, it's not possible for us in modern times to do what he did to become enlightened back then. ought one attempt doing what he did if the goal is enlightenment. I understand that his conclusion was that the extremes he went to don't work and the middle way is his prescription, but those extremes did work in a roundabout way for him. So the actual question here is ought one

attempt doing what the Buddha did if the goal is enlightenment and if you're in a Buddhist culture, a Buddhist country and some place like Thailand or Burma or or Sri Lanka or maybe Cambodia where I mean the flora and fauna and the climate is relatively similar and even a lot of the culture is similar to the Ganges Valley in the Buddhist time you can live the way ancient Indian monks lived. That's what I was trying to do in Burma. So it works in like a Buddhist culture in a kind of Buddhist environment to follow the traditional Buddhist way works fairly well. You bring it into a western country like into the temperate zone, it doesn't work nearly as well.

Especially, you know, just the weather is different. So, you're going to have to probably break rules. If it gets down below zero, you're going to be having to be wearing like, you know, un thermal underwear and socks and shoes and all this kind of stuff, which are technically against the rules. But also, you can't just live under trees and wander around in Norway or like Massachusetts.

maybe to a limited degree, but just to take up that lifestyle in the west is much less likely to be successful, let's say.

So,

yeah, I mean, if you're in a Buddhist culture, in a Buddhist environment, following a traditional Buddhist path is about your best bet.

But if you're in a non Buddhist culture, a non Buddhist environment, some secular western culture, for example, it's not necessarily going to be your best bet.

It's still not a bad choice to be a Buddhist monk in the West, but it's going to be very different. There's going to be a lot of concessions and compromises made.

you're going to be living a relatively luxurious lifestyle, not very aesthetic for for example.

But then getting to this other part that

uh water mocker was saying, see

I understand that his conclusion was

that the extremes he went to don't work

and the middle way is his prescription,

but these extremes did work in a

roundabout way for him. Yeah, I mean it

was necessary for him, I guess. Although

it could be that if he had known, you

know, he had there was an already a

Buddha teaching him, you know, how to

how to practice, he probably wouldn't

have almost killed himself through like

starving himself and that kind of thing.

So

yeah, I mean

it seems like following the teachings of

an enlightened being on how to become enlightened would be about your best bet. Especially if you're in a culture that is more or less in harmony with the instructions giving by given by the enlightened teacher. If you can find an enlightened western teacher who isn't just a charlatan but is genuinely enlightened or at least extremely wise, then they might be able to guide you about how to navigate through western style samsara better than God of the Shakya clan clan who lived 25 centuries ago.

But with regard to meditation techniques, you know, what your mental state should be like, still

the Buddha's advice is good. But trying to live according to ancient Indian monastic discipline is I mean it just it fits ancient India to a large degree. It still fits terra Buddhist culture. But you get out of terabata Buddhist culture and you're a stranger in a strange land. So I think I answered his question although I didn't fully address his comments after his question but there was no question mark after that and it would have added a question which would have then been transgressive because he would have asked more than three. So I'm just moving on to his next and third question.

He says, "Also, I've heard you say that you think it is likely that the few enlightened people of the modern day, I forget the time frame you gave were or are Hindu.

If someone were to ask your advice about the most likely path to becoming enlightened in modern times, would following Hinduism be part of your recommendation?" And I, this is a misunderstanding. I never really said that the few enlightened people of the modern day were or are Hindu. I mean I would say that over history I would not at all be surprised if there have been more enlightened Hindus than enlightened terravada Buddhists. I have said that

I'm not insisting that that's the case
but it wouldn't surprise me if there
have been more enlightened Hindus than
enlightened terra Buddhists
partly because Hinduism is more open.
It's less rigid and so there's more kind
of personality types that can adapt to
like different approaches in Hinduism.
you know, it's it's more broad spectrum,
whereas Terravada Buddhism is more
narrow and so it's going to kind of weed
out certain personality types. And a lot
of the people that do follow terra
Buddhism are going to be rigid
dogmatists
who like with regard to Romeo's question

just lack the inspiration. you know that because you're a rigid dogmatist, you're just kind of locked in to this rigid system and there's not much room left for inspiration. I mean, you have to have a certain originality to become enlightened. It seems to me you have to transcend the rigid structure because the rigid structure is like a mental prison.

So yeah, I mean I wouldn't be surprised if there have been more enlightened Hindus, but I'm not insisting on that.

So let's see. If someone were to ask your advice about the most likely path to becoming enlightened in modern times, would following Hinduism be part of your

recommendation? Um, I mean, if you're going to follow a spiritual path in India, Hinduism might be the way to go. If you're going to follow a spiritual path in Burma or Thailand, Terra Buddhism might be the way to go. If you're following trying to become enlightened in 16th century Spain, Roman Catholicism would be your only choice and so you'd have to just make do with that.

You know, medieval Europe in general.

So

with regard to modern America, I mean you might be better off with someone like Krishna Murdy

uh Jay Krishna Murdy or maybe even UG Krishna Murdy who I mean they were born into a a Hindu culture but you could hardly call either one of them a Hindu. So yeah, I mean there might be a certain like radical iconoclasm that might be part of a western approach.

Um I mean you can you can look into a lot of the sort of western enlightened teachers or teachers claiming to be enlightened and I mean Jay Krishna Murdy would be a good start with regard to that and I mean his approach is fairly good for westerners I guess and I guess he still has a kind of I mean in his memory he's he's long gone but I think like oh high California there's still

like a Krishna Merti community living there. There's like a Nim Karoli Baba um based community like sort of his old disciples living in Taos, New Mexico. I think you can sort of find isolated communities following various paths. Um, but it could just be a matter of your own karma, a certain amount of like chance, you want to call it that. Just who's going to be the first enlightened teacher or the first really like believable kind of spiritual teacher that really vibes with you, really resonates with you, where you can just say, "Yeah, I can follow this." I mean, it's not necessarily going to be

Buddhist or Hindu or anything else.

especially

in the west.

So let's see what's the actual question

here. If someone were to ask your advice

about the most likely path to becoming

enlightened in modern times, would

following Hinduism be part of your

recommendation? Not necessarily.

I mean you can read the upupanachads,

read the Bavad Gita and see if you if

that really rings any bells for you. You

can read the sutin pata, see if that

does anything for you. Read like the the

heart sutra, see if that does anything

for you. A lot of people, they'll just

read the Bible and that's that's good

enough for them. At least you're going to have the culture supporting you and in the West, at least in America or Eastern Europe.

So yeah, I mean your best bet would be just be eclectic and and like be a student of all religions. And this is this is essentially what I did is just read the scriptures of various religions. Just consider the teachings of people who are claimed to be very wise.

You know, echarttolah see if he's he does anything for you. And then whatever it is that really resonates with you the most deeply, go with that. and still

till it stops working and then maybe try something else.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question because we've already been going at this for almost two hours.

Next question is from Scooterain.

And Scudamain says, "So my mom is super Christian and she's asked me to read Living Buddha, Living Christ by Tiknat Han. I am struggling to get through it to be honest and I don't know how I'm going to break it to my mom when we talk about it. Haha. His engaged Buddhism is social justice warrior propaganda in the guise of Buddhism. He even has his own version of the precepts. The first precept for instance he says should be

to refrain from killing but also to prevent others from killing. The second is not only to not steal but to share. My official question on the matter is this. So we're getting to the question here. What is your opinion on the following quote from the book? Quote, if while we practice we are not aware that the world is suffering, that children are dying of hunger, that social injustice is going on everywhere, we are not practicing mindfulness. we are just trying to escape unquote. Well, I mean that's certainly not orthodox terravada anywhere near to it like let's see Scudamain is saying to

some degree that is like social justice propaganda with Buddhist flavoring although it goes a little deeper than that. I mean Tiknahan was relatively serious in his Mahayana heart oriented Buddhism.

So he was definitely kind of a karma yogi who wanted to like help people even though according to like early Buddhism, you know, it's you're first you have to get out of the building. The building is on fire. You've got to escape from the building and escaping from the building is really the only sensible thing to do. I mean, staying in the building out of compassion to treat the burn victims while the building is still on fire and

you still don't know how to get out. I
mean I mean it might be
well-intentioned,
but it's I mean it is not really the
wise choice. The wise choice is find
your way out of the burning building.
And then after you found your way out of
the burning building, then if you see
fit, you can come back in and try to
help other people get out of the burning
building. But as a general rule, most
people don't even know the building is
on fire
and they they don't want to get out of
the building.
So

if while we practice we are not aware
that the world is suffering, that
children are dying of hunger, that
social injustice is going on everywhere,
we're not practicing mindfulness, we're
just trying to escape. Well, I mean
that's to be aware of that is fine.
That's the first noble truth. To exist
is to suffer. So the world is suffering.
Yes. First noble truth. Children are
dying of hunger. Yes. First noble truth.
It's always happened.
Social injustice is going on everywhere.
Yes, that's first noble truth. This
world is never going to be perfect.
There's always going to be suffering in
any version of reality you live in until

you get fully enlightened. And even then, there's going to be like the superficial appearance of suffering so long as you superficially appear to have a body and a personality.

So yeah, I mean you can be mindful, you can be mindful, be aware that the world is suffering, that children are dying of hunger and that social injustice is going on everywhere, but that doesn't mean you're supposed to just get up and and and go out and try and fix it because you're not going to succeed. You might make things a little better, but we're living in a world of dualities where you fix one thing and it's it's

just going to cause some new bad thing

to crop up.

So

yeah, be aware of it. Yeah, first noble

truth definitely be aware that to exist

is to suffer, but that doesn't mean that

you have to go out and try and fix it.

I mean, you don't contribute to it. You

don't try you don't make things worse on

purpose. You know, it's like think lo

think globally and act locally is like,

you know, fix yourself. That's the best

you can do. And if fixing yourself, I

mean, fixing yourself will help other

people.

But that's your like top priority. Just

get out of the burning building.

So I guess I guess that's good enough. I hope it is.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Crash Meta Religion. And crash meta religion says are you familiar with the religious scholar David Bentley Hart. He claims he is Eastern Orthodox but he is really a syncratist.

He is extremely well-versed in all world religions not just Christianity. He has a form of Christian belief that many call vantic Christianity. I am seeing more and more of him but I have been aware of him for years. If you are familiar with him, what are your

opinions? Well, this is an extremely easy question to answer because um David Bentley Hart sounds kind of familiar, but I don't think I've ever heard a word that he has ever said.

So, I really cannot contribute to this particular discussion because I don't really know who David Bentley Hart is.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question and we're kind of getting down towards the bottom here. This is from RFS

and RFS says which param is the most important for spiritual development and according to terra Buddhism there are 10 parameies and when I was a monk I came up with this dumb pneummonic I mean it's

really dumb you'll hear for yourself how dumb it is for memorizing the 10 pyrams in the correct order and the pneummonic is dad says nasty pink vultures kept seven angels mending underwear

So dad or d is donna that's the first part of me is donna or generosity literally giving. Then says is sila which is morality. Then nasty is nama which is um renunciation renouncing the world.

Then nasty pink is pa which here doesn't mean wisdom so much as just presence of mind having your wits about you.

And then vultures is vir which is like heroic effort. I mean usually it's

translated as something like energy but the the ver in vira is the same ver as in the English word virile or like the ver in the the latin trivirate. It literally means man. So it's sort of manly effort

vir

then well's k kept is ki or um it's usually translated as something like patience or forbearance I would us I generally translate it as acceptance you know like the the verb form of ki is comedy the verb comedy which just means to accept not to accept into your hand like taking something but to accept something like making peace with it. So then see nasty pink voltages kept

seven that's sucha or truth. So honesty

telling the truth not deceiving.

Seven angels. A is aditana

which is determination.

You know just steadfast unflinching

determination which helps in just about

any endeavor including living the

spiritual life.

And then mending meta is usually

translated as loving kindness. Literally

it would mean like benevolence or

friendliness. like the the poly word

meta um is related to the poly word mita

which means friend. So literally it's

like friendliness

usually translated as loving kindness. I

mean you could call it love in a
positive benevolent sort of way just
benevolence.
And then finally is underwear
which is equinimity.
So the question is which part of me is
the most important for spiritual
development and you could argue that all
of them are important. I mean it's like
which organ is most important in your
body. I mean you don't if your brain is
destroyed you die. But then again if
your heart is destroyed you die. If your
liver is destroyed you die. I mean even
your butthole is destroyed unless you
got modern medicine
figuring out a workaround then you die.

So I mean you could say that all 10 parameies are essential although spiritually the most advanced I mean it goes in order of advancement. So, Donna or generosity, that's kind of a lay person thing, you know, that's that's like like like what's the word like elementary and then finally you get up toka which is like the most advanced equinimity.

No, it's it's higher than meta or loving kindness like in the the four Janna system or the the Brahma Vihara system. Practicing meta will get you up to third Janna according to the commentarial tradition. Whereas the only one of the

Brahma viharas that would get you all
the way to fourth Janna
is upeka.
So
um for a beginner then you just start
off with donam like before you're even a
monk before you've renounced the world.
I mean nama is renunciation. So you
start off with generosity and morality
before you even practice renunciation.
So I mean it all depends on how you look
at it which which part of me is the most
important for spiritual development.
Depends on what stage you're at. I guess
I mean you can say the most fundamental
would be generosity which is just kind
of getting you in a in a karmic

situation where you're you're even able
to practice higher dhamma and then I
mean the most advanced the most exalted
of the 10 parmes would be the last one
which is up or or uh equinimity
but for those of you who really want to
uh memorize the stupid pneummonic that I
came up with I will repeat it again. Dad
says nasty pink vultures kept seven
angels mending underwear.
That's the 10 pyramse in order.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Sedarta
Lohachita.
And Sedarta Lohachita says, "As a half
Spanish person, do people in the USA

separate European Spaniards from Mexican Indian mesto people from the former American colonies?

Yeah, I think that there is a differentiation between Hispanics, which is what Edward Dutton would call a clin. It's an ethnicity, but not a race. Hispanic is not a race because it's a mixture of two races. It's like um European, especially Spaniards, mostly from the male line of ancestry mixed with American Indian, especially like Mexican, South American Indian. um that race, I guess you'd call it, um mainly on the female line of ancestry. So, I mean, you could have a Hispanic person that's 100% American

Indian, 100% Mayan, for example, or you could have a Hispanic person that's 100% European, like 100% Spanish, which would generally be like of the the upper classes in uh Latin American countries. But, um, like pure Spanish people living in Spain, yeah, they're in a different category. I mean, lately they're just seen as loony leftists that are contributing to just the the the [__] up of the European Union through um like socialism and just opening the borders wide open to um immigrants from North Africa which are then flooding into Europe through Spain. So, Spain is I mean a lot of Americans,

they're not really good at geography,
you know, so they just know Spain is
kind of over there across the ocean
somewhere. It's part of Europe. So,
Spain would be seen as just kind of part
of Europe, especially part of decadent
Western Europe, decadent, feminized,
leftist Western Europe. But they a lot
of Americans probably wouldn't even be
able to locate Spain on a map.
I think it was Ambrose Beers that said
that God created war in order to teach
Americans geography
and there has haven't been any major
wars in Spain lately. So lately, people
are pretty much ignorant of what's going
on in Spain.

Uh, and then in uh of of Hispanic people, I mean, the ones that kind of that are like second or third generation in America that speak English with like the standard white person accent, let's say. You know, they just kind of blend in there, all right, except for you see them like you're a stranger. You see them on the street and they look obviously like brownskinned and so forth. You might see them as a like a foreigner or a Mexican.

I think a lot of a lot of people in America just consider all Latin Americans to be Mexicans or like like someone from El Salvador. I

mean, at best it'd be like a fake

Mexican.

Yeah. But I I do think that there is a

kind of a difference that Spain is is

part of Europe and it's seen as

European, Western European, and then the

Hispanics, the the Mexicans that that

are like swarming the borders

are uh yeah, that's just a whole

different kettle of wax.

So,

huh. Personally, I mean, Hispanics

really, um, especially if they enter the

country legally, I got no problem with

them because they're generally easy to

get along with, fairly intelligent, then

they're willing to work for a living.

They don't just immediately go on welfare except for a lot of the illegal ones who are like flown in the middle of the night during the Biden administration to various cities to kind of populate conservative areas with people who will vote Democrat in order to get more free free handouts. this kind of stuff that yeah, Hispanics do have kind of they've taken a hit to their reputation mainly due to all the illegal immigrants that are coming in and just committing crimes because it's a lot of gang members and so forth are included among the people who are just economic migrants and then a lot of a

lot of them are just immediately like
signing up for welfare benefits that
kind of thing. So they don't have a very
good reputation. Although and it is
unfortunate because a lot of the I mean
the legal immigrants
you know as a general rule they're easy
to easygoing people who are quite
willing to work for a living and that's
that's fine
but I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Robert.
Okay.
And Robert says, "I live in a country
with no Terravada monasteries and want
to grow spiritually with a real
community. I've mostly followed

Terravada online, tried a nearby Tibetan center, and even considered Catholicism because of the mystics like Meister Eckhart and communities. What would you do in a situation like this if you don't plan to become a monk soon?" Well, what I personally did, I was a lone I'm just always been a loner by nature. So I would just practice alone and read books alone. This is back before internet, back before I became a monk. So it was mainly through reading books. Um I mean you can travel somewhere to do like an intensive retreat

but for the most part I was just practicing alone going alone like the

horn of the rhinoceros. Even before my ordination,
I did consider um just kind of being a non-en non-denominational renuncient, just make myself a robe and get a bowl and just take off walking. But there wasn't enough. I knew myself well enough that without some kind of formal structure imposed upon me that misbehavior was much more likely, you know, just kind of being lazy and going my own way and just indulging in my own like attachments and weaknesses and so forth. that having some structure imposed upon me like rules of monastic discipline and a sa would definitely help and it did.

Um, if there's any Zen places, some Zen places, if you've got a wise teacher, um, I mean, you can definitely get benefit from practicing Zen. Just doing Zen meditation is really not just radically different from practicing, you know, weasa or something in a terra Buddhist um, terra Buddhist tradition. But the most important thing with regard to any kind of local community is the leader, the teacher of that community. I mean, you can have a Terravada Buddhist community that's led by some real estate agent or insurance salesman or like elementary school principal or something who they're really not qualified to be a

teacher. I mean, most dharma teachers in the west in my opinion are not really qualified to be dharma teachers. I mean, some of them are just really ignorant of what they're trying to teach. But then again, you might have some Zen master or even like a Christian pastor or something who really does have wisdom and can thus help you to make progress more easily even though it might not be in the spiritual system that would be your first choice all else being equal. So I mean if you can find any wise teacher who can really help you to make progress the the system that they're in is almost irrelevant.

I mean ideally you know they'd be like

terra Buddhist I mean from my point of view but I mean you've got some advita vanta teacher who's very wise maybe wiser than the terravada one just because of individual differences. It's not just because you're a terrible Buddhist teacher makes you automatically wise. Or if you're like a Christian teacher, you're just automatically foolish. It doesn't work that way. You're going to have wise teachers and foolish teachers in any system. And it's more important to find a wise good teacher than to follow a charlatan or just some unqualified person fumbling along who just happens to be in the

system. That would be your first choice.
Just all else be an equal.
So I mean look into Zen maybe or
even like unitarianism some some system
that isn't really dogmatic or you have
to believe this or you are wrong and
you're going to burn in hell kind of
stuff. I mean who knows you could you
could find like a Sufi teacher. I I I
knew this one really wise advanced
practitioner whose teacher was a Sufi
which technically is Muslim although I
doubt that the prophet Muhammad peace be
upon him would have approved of Sufism
or you know various kinds of Hinduism,
Daoism.
I mean there was a time when I was

actually considering

becoming a Catholic like a a Carthusian

you know like the strictest the

strictest uh denomination or order

monastic order of Catholicism. One of

the strictest is the Carthusian order.

They they undertake vows of silence. I I

was thinking well if I took a vow of

silence I wouldn't have to admit that

I'm not really a Christian. But I would

guess that even if you take a vow of

silence, you have to make confession to

to a father confessor somehow or

another. Even if you're just writing it

on a slate or doing hand gestures or

something. So that was a dumb idea. I

didn't follow through with that.
But seriously, I think your best bet I
mean if you cannot find a wise teacher
who can teach you in a way that you are
able to accept, then your best bet is
just go it alone. And then you have more
more a broader choice of what you're
going to follow. You know, you can find
the scriptures of just about any
religion online for free.
So there is that. You know, you got wide
array of teachers of various traditions
that they're just on YouTube channels
that you can watch for free, listen to
for free.
So yeah more I mean if it's just like
from books and so forth then you try to

find the wisest tradition
and you know that a a way like a
tradition that speaks to you that your
character is in harmony with that so
that you can actually practice it and
make progress. But if you're actually
dealing with human teachers and human
communities, you're going to have to
find a teacher especially that is a wise
and good person, not just some insurance
salesman who's like a Zen Roshi in his
spare time who really still thinks like
an insurance salesman. He just kind of
puts on the show of being the wise Roshi
when he's sitting in front of his his
his disciples. So you have to be careful

about that kind of thing especially and good luck. I mean there's there's a saying in Hinduism when the when the student is ready the teacher will come. You know when it's your karma to have that teacher you're going to get it. And the teacher could just be a book. I mean I've had times in my life where I've just been kind of in a kind of crisis state and then just the right teacher or the right book just falls into my hands without me even having to look for it. That's happened to me more than once. But it may be that you really have to like have some kind of crisis in order to break through the rigidity of the system to allow a kind of grace to come

down on you, so to speak.

And I'm just going to move on to

Robert's next question,

which is as follows. Would you just go

it at it alone having the sutas and

online resources as a teacher and

meditate on your own? Or would you

consider a physically available

tradition and possibly convert while

still aiming to realize ultimate

reality? Well, I've kind of already been

addressing this. Um, in my own personal

case, I just went it alone and then I

just kind of made like this pilgrimage,

you know, more a thousand miles pos, you

know, hundreds of miles to go to like

some formal retreat.
So, I did that at a Zen place and also
at a Terra Buddhist place when I was
looking for a place to ordain.
Um, so if I mean if you're really
serious then you may want to you know
cross get get yourself a passport and go
to a different country if you don't even
have a suitable place in your own
country.
I mean going to some Asian countries
once you get there it's cheap. living
there is cheap, maybe cheaper than
living in your own country once you've,
you know, paid for the the visa, the
passport and the visa and the plane fair
and all that. Just to live in a hut in

in Sri Lanka or something is actually

pretty cheap.

So

yeah, I mean for starters, you just kind

of have to go alone, you know? I mean,

you have access to the internet like um

you and I have both admitted

and look around to see what kind of

teachers there are. If there's no

suitable teachers, you feel like you

need a human teacher. And a human

teacher can be very helpful. A book

isn't going to like scold you when

you're when you do something wrong or

scold you for being lazy, anything like

that. Just a book isn't going to do

that. You have to like rely on your own initiative if you're going it alone. So for a lot of people, having a supportive group and a wise teacher who can like look into you and see where you need help and is willing to tell you what you don't want to hear but ought to hear. I mean, that's invaluable. And it may be that you you're just going to consider it to be an equitable trade if that wise good teacher is not from your first choice of spiritual traditions.

So, I've already said that kind of stuff. I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Cole Murf. And Cole Murf says, "Can you please discuss some strategies for developing

continuous sad or mindfulness? In particular, I struggle with getting into conversations with others. I find myself losing mindfulness quite easily. Should I be more actively shifting to different objects depending on the particular activity I'm engaged in? Looking for some good strategies here. Thank you. Well, um I think there's more than one way I could interpret this with regard to struggle when getting into conversations with others. Um Cole Murf maybe is trying to retain mindfulness while conversing with someone else. And that's relatively advanced mindfulness. Um, I've I've mentioned before that when

I was doing intensive practice, I remember one time I was staying in this building that was owned by a Buddhist supporter of my Tonulu tradition which I was ordained. Monks that were in Rangon that had business in Rangon could stay in this building and you know and he would support them while they were there. And so one time I was in Rangon and I'm just doing intensive practice and I just happened to be doing walking meditation and this old gentleman who owned the place and was supporting me came out and wanted to talk with me and I remember I was some I was I was in such kind of a groove of mindfulness that I was having the conversation with

relatively good mindfulness. It was like
my main object of attention
was just kind of feeling the vibration
in my throat and the movements of my
mouth while I was talking and the the
conversation just kind of took care of
itself. It was just sort of nature
taking its course. It was weird. You
you'd think that you wouldn't be able to
talk in a conversation mindfully because
you know you have to pay attention to
what you're trying to say and what the
other person is saying and so forth. But
you get to a certain level and that kind
of stuff just kind of takes care of
itself, you know, it's sort of like

autopilot or probably even better than autopilot while you're being mindful of of just the movement of your legs as you're walking or the vibration in your throat or just the sounds, you know, vi mindfulness of hearing, that kind of thing. But to get to that level, you have to be practicing mindfulness with regard to everyday activities pretty consistently. So it just becomes second nature so that when you do have a conversation this habit this momentum of mindfulness just continues while you're having the conversation. Reading a book is difficult like turn mindfully turning the page that kind of thing is you can manage but reading the book mindfully

that was even more challenging than
having a conversation mindfully.
So you might just want to reduce the
amount of reading that you do if you're
trying to have unbroken mindfulness. And
also just try to keep down the amount of
conversing that you do. Just try to
emphasize stuff that you can do
mindfully. You know, just live a very
simplified quiet lifestyle as much as
you can. If you've got a job, bills to
pay, you got people that you live with,
it might not be so easy.
So did I answer the question?
See, should I be more actively shifting
to different objects? U whatever is is

like foremost in in your attention, whatever is the most obvious is generally what you should be mindful of until you can get into like wide open mindfulness where you're not focusing on one thing in particular. Then it's just like a a mirror or something that when it's there, it's it's there clearly and you know, it's not obscured in any way. You know, it's like your focus becomes like the focus of a cheap camera where everything is equally in focus kind of a thing.

That's relatively advanced mindfulness. Usually beginning mindfulness is, you know, you're kind of labeling, you're focusing on whatever is like most

noticeable at the time.
And then after you get better and better at that, then you can sort of make your mindfulness more wide open, less focused. you know, there's less looking and more just seeing, which is um definitely an improvement, but I mean, you got to do it in order as a general rule. You can't just skip the elementary stuff and go directly into you can't go directly into calculus without without knowing basics of of like mathematics, arithmetic, that kind of thing.
So, yeah, you find yourself losing mindfulness quite easily. Yeah, welcome to the club. Pretty much everybody is

that way. I think probably only a fully enlightened being would be fully mindful all the time.

So, let's see.

Should you be more actively shifting to different objects? Just whatever is most noticeable, I guess. Um, I mean, there should be changes in what is most noticeable. I mean, you could deliberately make something else more noticeable in order to practice sort of a a broader repertoire of objects of mindfulness, I suppose.

Um,

but yeah, I guess that's good enough for for an answer. Now, my answers are almost always much longer than the

question itself, and we've been going for well over two hours. So, oh, but wait, there's only one more question after this.

catches me by surprise almost every time. But I think I think I have semi answered Cole Murf's first question.

I hope I gave him something of value because I'm moving on to the next question now also by Cole Murf. He says, "Why do you think the Mahayana school emphasizes the bodhicattva ideal when the Buddha taught his disciples to become arroants?"

I often wonder what precipitated this shift in focus leading up to the

formation of the Mahayana schools.
Perhaps monks of the day weren't able to attain to the level of orahant and so they adjusted their goal.
Well, before I answer that or attempt to answer it, I'm going to break open the emergency backup beverage.
And I mean, I've I've answered this question before.
It is a shame that people don't watch all 186 previous episodes before asking questions on this one because probably most most questions that are asked I've answered at least once before. Not all those. It's there's always a few questions that haven't been asked yet that I wind up getting asked. my

favorite American for example or my

favorite bad wrestler.

So let's see here. Why do you think the

Mahayana school emphasizes the

bodhicattva ideal when the Buddha taught

his disciples to become arroants? That

is that is the big question, isn't it?

And I think there are two main reasons

why Mahayana Buddhism

first mistransated the word bodhic satta

into bodhic sattva in my opinion and

then just sort of emphasized that to the

to the extent of just rejecting what the

Buddha actually taught which is become

enlightened in this very life if you are

able.

I mean, it's just amazing just having
conversations with like
sometimes like really self-righteous
Mahayana Buddhists who justify rejecting
the teach the teachings of the founder
of their own religion for the sake of
following this later I mean just
fictional stuff in a lot of cases pure
land Buddhism I mean that's even another
step beyond just mere like pranya
paramita zen kind of mahayana
cuz they're just flat out rejecting what
the founder of the religion taught in
favor of fictional teachings of like
mythological space Buddhas in my opinion
but with getting back to the bodhicattva
ideal I mean originally bodhic sata in

pi

um probably did not mean enlightenment being which is what the meaning of bodhicata Satva Bodhi is enlightenment. Sattva is being. But sata in Pali has more than one possible meaning. And probably Sata in Pali was a past participle of the verb sagit which means to be bound for. So a bodhic sata in terra Buddhism was someone who was bound for enlightenment or in this case bound for Buddhahood. So a bodhic sata was like someone who was destined to become a Buddha. So mainly or like originally it was Gorma Buddha before his enlightenment was just called the

bodhicatta bodhic sata

but it somehow got mistransated in my opinion into enlightenment being not just someone who is bound for enlightenment. And I think there's two main reasons why it it just rose to prominence and and eclipsed the original teachings of the Buddha to the point that the original teachings of the Buddha were like scoffed at as the inferior vehicle.

I mean, it's just kind of amazing when you think about it. Although to devout Mahayana Buddhists, they think it's just absolutely fine and dandy because they believe despite, you know, historical evidence that the Buddha himself taught

Mahayana Buddhism.

So anyways, one reason why the whole bodhicattva ideal arose in Mahayana was the glorification of the Buddha. It's just a common thing in human nature that a religion followers of a religion will glorify the founder of their religion. Like Christianity was pretty extreme. They they just glorified Jesus of Nazareth until he was literally God almighty.

The only begotten son of God and he is God the son.

He is the son of God the father and he is God the son with a capital G on that God.

So in in Buddhism it was a similar thing. I mean people will say oh the Buddha was just a human or at least terra Buddhists will a lot of Mahayana Buddhists will say there was no human being called God Buddha. It was it was kind of like some Christian schools who believe that Jesus never had a physical body that he was just sort of this divine apparition you know just some personification of some divine force kind of a thing.

God Almighty. Some Mahayana Buddhists believe that there really was no physical Buddha at all. Like pure land Buddhists can believe this stuff.

But I mean, if you if you think that

there was no Buddha at all, you should
believe that there's no anybody else at
all either.
But getting back to the idea of the
Buddhist Satva, they glorified the
Buddha. And one of the I mean as as
Buddhism
became more popular, it became more
devotionalistic because you had people
that maybe weren't as profound in their
thinking and just the common person.
They wanted like traditions, legends,
rituals that they could feel familiar
with and cling to and give structure to
their lives and make them feel like they
were doing something worthwhile in in

sort of, you know, within the scope of
their mundane version of reality.
And so there was a lot of devotionalism
and glorification of the Buddha. Um, and
one of the um examples of this was
Jotica tales. Jotica stories which were
stories of the Buddha's previous lives
and in the Buddha's previous lives he's
gen usually working on at least one pie
usually one parmmy in particular
and so because of all this glorification
of the Buddha and this idea that the
Buddha was purifying himself lifetime
after lifetime after lifetime for
millions millions of years there came to
be this distinction between an ordinary
enlightened being or an arahant and a

Buddha who is just like

when you just like radically like just a

orders of magnitude beyond an ordinary

enlightened being and I do not think

that the Buddha really it really worked

that way originally the Buddha was

saying I'm enlightened you can be

enlightened too the Buddha himself was

called an arahant

you know it's like namotasa bavat Buddha

I mean the Buddha is called an arahant

that's just an enlightened being and

there are a few sutas that call an

ordinary enlightened being a Buddha I

mean literally Buddha just means

enlightened awakened

but so I mean originally I think that
the Buddha I mean he was his main claim
to fame is he got the system going you
know he he helped others to become
enlightened but he wasn't more
enlightened than
I mean it's you just go with like logic
combined with abidama kind of a strange
combination sometimes but wisdom
um is exactly synonymous with amoa or
absence of delusion. If you have zero
delusion you have maximum wisdom. Your
wisdom is perfect.
So I mean an ordinary enlightened being
has zero delusion. A sama Buddha has
zero delusion. Assama Buddha may have to
be more clever and creative because he's

having to discover dharma on his own,
you know, for the first time since it
had gone gone extinct.
I mean, he didn't invent Dharma, he just
rediscovers it, but he rediscovers it
based on his own genius.
So he might be more clever than an
ordinary enlightened being, but he's not
more enlightened than an ordinary
enlightened being. In my opinion,
originally I do not think he was, but
it's the glorification of the founder of
the system that resulted in a Buddha
being just far more exalted than
ordinary enlightened being. And then
there came this idea, this is what I've

been leading to.

This is like the point I'm trying to get to. There came to be this idea that just being an ordinary enlightened being like the Buddha was teaching you to be was somehow inferior to being a sama Buddha and therefore it is much more noble and exalted to strive to be a sama sam Buddha instead of just settling for being an ordinary enlightened being which is kind of strange and it certainly is not what the original Buddha was teaching in my opinion. So that's one aspect of it. is just the glorification of Buddha and Buddhahood and just the idea that it's just way more noble and exalted to become a

Buddha than to just become an ordinary arahant which is like the inferior vehicle even though that's what the Buddha was originally teaching.
So these self-righteous Mahayana Buddhists called the actual teachings of the historical Buddha to be inferior and then they came up with something better based on essentially fiction.
But then there's this other reason which is actually something that Cole Murf here suggested. He said perhaps monks of the day weren't able to attain to the level of arant and so they adjusted their goal. And I do think that's another factor of why the the

bodhicattva idea and even the bodhicatta idea in terraada

um

gained popularity. It's like you had a lot of people that maybe were not all that talented spiritually striving to become enlightened and failing. And so it just was more satisfying to them to say, "Well, I'm just going to postpone enlightenment, make the noble sacrifice, postpone this enlightenment that they weren't able to attain anyway for whatever reasons, and I'm going to strive to become even more exalted in the future." And there are some terra monks that also are, I think possibly even the founder of my own tradition,

venerable Tomulus, he may have considered himself to be a Buddhist sata.

And then like I have been told pure land Buddhists um they actually believe that you can't even become enlightened in this world anymore. I mean they can't do it. So therefore nobody can do it and so the best you can do is just strive to be to be reborn into the pure land or whatever and become enlightened from there.

So the bodhic sattva idea also I think was convenient for people that either lacked the the ripeness the spiritual talent to become enlightened in this

very life or the people who just didn't want to make the effort maybe just lazy or just devotionalistic you know they it was just easier for them to do the chanting and bowing instead of really just going off alone into a wilderness and meditating until they were enlightened.

So yeah, I think it was a combination of those. Probably some other subtleties that I'm not thinking of right now, but I think that was essentially it. And that's it. That's that's the end of of this Q&A aside from the the few things I see at the end. And again, don't forget my new book has is out now. It's on Amazon. The link should be in the URL

links below. and like and subscribe if you found anything of value in this long rambling tirade.

And uh what else? I guess you're going to have to look at the URL links if you look for the the link to the new book. And um again, the new book is autobiographical. It's less philosophical and more autobiographical than the the first three books. And uh aside from that, I just say be happy and I'm out of here.

Okay then.

Hello and welcome to episode

188 of the best show on YouTube that has

zero production values. I am your host

Pony Bosa and this is my beverage

and 188 of course is not prime. It is in

fact 2 * 2 * 47. Pretty sure 47 is

prime.

Uh and before I weigh into these

questions, I suppose I should announce

again

that my fourth book, Memoirs from

Myanmar, which is uh primarily

autobiographical,

philosophical reflections on the monk's

life, mainly in Burma, but also

including Indonesia and the United States.

So that's available on Amazon and you can find it in the URL links below if you're interested in that kind of stuff.

And if you are interested then I would appreciate a review if you do purchase and read the book especially if it's a good review.

And I would also like to announce just for the hell of it that I started a new job just last week and I'm back working in a metal shop again.

It turns out that working in a metal shop is less unpleasant than being a professional forklift operator, which is kind of surprising, but that's the way

it turned out.

and my employment situation is still a little bit up in the air because after I've been working at this new place for three days,

I get this email from some company I applied to probably more than a month ago saying, "Would you be willing to accept $8 an hour more than I mean, they didn't know how much I was making at this new place, but they were offering $8 an hour more." And I did the math and it turns out that adds up to like on a based on a 40hour week that adds up to more than $16,000 a year.

So I'm kind of like hoping that they

don't follow through and like once and
for all offer me this job because I just
feel like I'm already kind of committed
to this other job. But I mean 16,000
bucks a year plus is nothing to sneeze
your nose at. So, I mean it has to be
considered if they do offer it
just the way it goes.
So, let's see here. I guess uh as with
that as a kind of intro,
did I mention this this uh this show has
zero production values
at least? I mean, these these little
paper umbrellas aren't they're not free,
you know.
Anyways, let's just start answering
questions.

And the first question is from Gordon. And Gordon says, 'You mentioned the Catholic explanation for the lack of progress you were experiencing. Is there a Terravada explanation? If so, what was it? And Gordon is referring to me in the previous Q&A, I think, talking about how um I was kind of like God in the God Suta where he would get Janna and lose it and get it and lose it and get it and lose it until he was at wit's end. And I was kind of like that with my meditation too. It's like I would get into deep meditative states and then lose it and then gain it and lose it and gain it and lose it. And St. John of the

Cross, the mystical doctor of the
Catholic Church
said based on his own experience with
what the Catholics called contemplation,
which is essentially anything higher
than first Janna from a Buddhist point
of view. It seems to me now you're not
thinking anymore. there is no longer um
any kind of perceptual object, no
labeling, no thinking.
And he said that if you gain it and lose
it and gain it and lose it and gain it
and lose it, that just means that God
has other plans for you than for you to
be an adept, which would be kind of the
Catholic equivalent of what a terra
Buddhist would call an arya.

So

um Gordon here is asking if uh there's a terra explanation and the reason why I gave the Catholic explanation is because I am unaware of any official terravada explanation other than just you've got like karmic complications.

You've got these latent tendencies that are standing in the way. you're not, you know, fully established in in the root virtues necessary to completely master like deep meditative states.

So, I mean, a lot of people try for years and years and years and never even get in deep meditative state. So, at least I was able to get them. It's just

that I never fully mastered it. So that
um I mean once you've mastered it it's
like pretty much any time you want to
you can just sit down and go into these
deep meditative states and in my case it
didn't work out that way.
So
yeah I mean the terod explanation would
just be
karmic complications
I guess. And I'm just going to move on
to Gordon's second question. He says,
"Regarding the Terrence McKenna
quotation about drugs being an instant
spiritual experience, it doesn't seem
like you really disagreed with it. Is
doing LSD the same thing as an actual

spiritual experience?" Well, it depends on the experiencer and the experience itself.

But yeah, I mean, most of the monks of my generation started off with like psychedelic drugs like Rahm Doss, formerly known as Dr. Richard Albert of Harvard University also started off with psychedelic drugs and then they started I mean first it like opens your eyes to to these new possibilities that you know the the version of reality that you've been living in your whole life isn't necessarily the best or truest version of reality. So it kind of like at least makes you aware of that.

And in a case like that, I mean, all sorts of things could be uh a genuine spiritual experience. Getting hit over the head if it causes you to have a near-death experience, which then causes you to see the world differently.

That's an actual or genuine spiritual experience.

I mean, you can have a genuine spiritual experience from looking at a dog licking its own balls.

So, yeah, sure. I think for some people, for a lot of people, taking LSD would be a genuine spiritual experience if it is inducing

like mystical states or like profound insights. And just because you think

it's a profound insight at the time
doesn't mean that when you like are back
into their ordinary waking
consciousness, it's going to still seem
like a profound insight. But just the
very fact that you can have these
experiences which is like giving you
firsthand experience just firsthand
empirical facts that
the way that you've been living your
life like the ordinary waking state of
conscious consciousness is not the only
possible state that I mean
let's see I mean it's not necessarily
even the truest date.
So, let's see. Let's get back to the

actual question here, though. Is doing LSD the same thing as an actual spiritual experience? It can be, and in many cases it is. I mean, if it's like inducing mystical states, which was the case like with me the first many times I took it as a teenager. I mean, it was it was largely that sort of thing that eventually got me on the path to becoming a monk. And that's that was the case with many monks of my generation. I don't know what it's like now.

A lot of old hippies became monks because of that sort of thing. So, I mean,

sure, and I I discussed this in the previous Q&A also to some degree, so I'm

not going to just rehash the same the same arguments and so forth, but yeah, I mean, the Terrace Terrence McKenna quotation that I was responding to in the previous Q&A, you know, he he seemed to have this idea of like, you know, it's kind of a cheat. It's like you're cheating God or something by attaining just in a matter of half an hour after taking a tab of LSD what a lot of like renuncients are striving for for years and decades. And some of them never succeed in getting into as profound of a mental state as some some person can get from taking 500 micrograms of LSD.

So, it's it seems almost like a cheat or
it seems like unfair somehow,
but it still it still works.
So, that was what really struck me. I
mean, I wasn't going along the lines of
Terrence McKenna saying that, you know,
it's like using
psychedelics is sort of like forcing God
to do your bidding. You know, I
addressed that in the previous Q&A, but
it does seem like it's just almost
cheating that it's so easy this way.
Whereas following the traditional
spiritual techniques, fasting and
praying and meditating and renunciation
and all that is not as reliable as just
taking this little square of paper.

It's just the way it turned out. But don't look a gift horse in the mouth, I guess.

So, I'm just going to move on to Gordon's next question. Not that I am advising anyone to take illegal drugs. That's a disclaimer.

Gordon's third question.

And judging from this third question, he seems to be rather skeptical of the whole idea. He says, "If you went back in time and showed the Buddha LSD, would he say, "Ah, yeah, that's what I was trying to do the whole time, just better." and then ditch all his teaching and spend the rest of his life sitting

on the coach the couch eating Cheetos
and getting blasted. I have a hard time
believing he would do this. Yeah. I
mean, that's just ridiculous. That's
just such an obvious false dichotomy,
you know? It's just sophistry at best to
frame it this way. But I mean like Nee
Curly Baba up there notoriously
took first it was 900 micrograms of very
pure pharmaceutical grade LSD and then
after that he took 1,200 micrograms
which is enough to just blow the top off
of somebody's head and it had no obvious
discernable effect on him because he was
such a master of of of his mind I guess
such a swami
that I mean it just didn't really have

that much effect on him if any. But he did say that under certain circumstances this kind of thing can be useful if you take it in a place that isn't very hot and you take it like alone in a quiet place this kind of thing. He did give advice with regard to it. Well, let's see if the L if the Buddha took LSD. I mean, second-guessing a fully aligned being as it's a it's a common theme in questions I receive, but still it's it's just an exercise in futility.

But let's see. Uh if you if you went back in time and showed the Buddha LSD, would he say, "Oh, yeah, that's what I was trying to do the whole time, but

better." But no, it's not better. I mean, it's better if you can do it without having to rely on the chemical. And also you get into purer states because the chemical is going to have weird side effects like the psychedelic visuals and that kind of stuff that is unnecessary that can be a distraction that just the euphoric rush and all this kind of thing. I mean that just kind of gets in the way or at least it can. So if you're doing it through meditation or contemplation as the Catholics call it, you get into if you're if you master or just get really good at it, you get into deeper better states. Like I got into deeper better states through meditation

as a monk alone in a cave in Burma than I got from LSD. I wouldn't have been in that cave in Burma if I hadn't taken the LSD probably.

But that's that's a different that's a different matter. And LSD, like I say, it's got these sort of impurities in the state or just distractions added like, you know, psychedelic visuals and and kind of the weird distortions of perception. And that's that may be one of the ways that psychedelics work is it just kind of interferes with perception, distorts it to such an extent that you're kind of like seeing through the cracks. you know, it's making like

deformities in normal the normal process of perception in a sense, you know, so to speak, so that you're kind of able to see through it.

But I mean, it's just kind of like training wheels or something. I mean, if if really LSD was better than living the holy life, it wouldn't have caused all these people to just become monks as a result of taking the LSD. The LSD is just kind of like a, you know, a peak into what is possible

and then have the Buddha spend the rest, ditch all of his teachings, which he wouldn't do. I mean, the four noble truths remain true regardless of whether LSD exists or not and spend the rest of

his life sitting on the couch eating
Cheetos and getting blasted. Well, they
didn't have Cheetos
in the Buddha's time. But I mean I mean
it just doesn't make any sense why the
Buddha would do that. I mean the
the the teachings of the Buddha are true
regardless of whether LSD can inspire a
genuine spiritual experience or a
genuine mystical state.
So yeah, I have a hard time believing he
would do that too. I don't think he
would do that at all any more than Neim
Crowley Baba up there after taking 900
micrograms and then on a different
occasion 1,200 micrograms of LSD. He

didn't just renounce being a holy man partly because what he had experienced was superior to the effects of the LSD. But still he did point out that it can be useful. It can be a genuine spiritual tool. Not that I am promoting the taking of illegal drugs.

So let's just move on to the next question here. This is from Crash Meta Religion.

And Crash Meta Religion says, "I consider myself a neoplatanist religious synratist. I often wonder what the future of the West will be from a religious standpoint point.

That's what he says. Standpoint point. Assuming the West isn't destroyed, what

do you think it will look like? I think a society where evangelical Christianity is replaced by Hindu, Buddhist, and neopagan religions alongside of a more tolerant Christian mystical tradition would be a good thing. I don't see western man ditching Christianity, but I hope they embrace more mystical and less dogmatic versions of it. And yeah, I've been asked, you know, what I think the future of religion and spirituality will be in America or in Western civilization or in global civilization.

Um, and it's really hard to say. It's sort of like a butterfly effect. It's you can't really predict or at least I

can't really predict partly because it's going to depend a lot like if there is a new religion founded by some charismatic enlightened founder or someone who is charismatic enough to compensate for the fact that he isn't really enlightened which has happened then I mean there's no telling who where he's going to be born he could be born in New York City or or Uganda or China or who knows and what his cultural conditioning is going to be that he's going to grow up in is going to very much influence like what his teachings are going to be like and so I can't predict what culture the next you know enlightened founder of a religion or semi-enlightened charismatic

founder of religion what culture he's
going to be born into
and I mean one thing that immediately
came to mind when I when I saw this
question when I read this question the
first time is a relatively common theme
in the writings of Brian Aldis who was a
science fiction author back in like the
60s and 70s especially and one of his
favorite themes was in a future age a
new religion will be based on omnisient
computers that everybody's going to
carry around this little computer with
them that's going to be sort of like
their their idol and they're just going
to consult the AI and the AI AI is going

to be much more advanced than now. It's
going to be as effectively omnisient.
And so that's you're just going to have
this altar with an omnisient computer on
it and you're going to be consulting
that computer as for guidance in your
life. And
that wouldn't be completely surprising
to me that AI gets advanced enough that
it's going to become like an oracle. I
mean already I consult Grock a lot with
regard to all sorts of things with
regard to aquarium keeping or like
ancient history or just like recent
politics that kind of stuff.
So, I mean, if it gets way more
advanced,

you know, you get into like super AI that I mean, it becomes effectively omnisient, at least in certain respects, then it could be that the next world religion is just going to be having like effectively practically omnisient computers serving as oracles instead of going all the way to the oracle of Deli, having the Pythonist Jabber in a in a druginduced state with priests kind of deciphering the jabbering and then presenting you with some enigmatic statement.

After you've purified yourself and made the sacrifices and all that, you just go to your your

altar, consult the oracle, and you probably get more reliable information. But let's say that omnisient computers aren't going to be the the religion of the future. It's really hard to say. I mean, already especially on the left. I mean, you gota you got to give the devil its due that like the the liberals of the especially starting with like the boomer generation,
they became more eclectic, you know, they didn't want to be stuffy conservative Christians like their parents. So, they started investigating Buddhism, Hinduism,
Daoism, Paganism, Wikah, that kind of stuff.

partly just in order not to be the
similar to their parents
and also just taking the like the
psychedelic drugs that the hippies were
notorious for might have helped them to
go in that kind of direction. There's
still a lot of Christianity. Um but
generally Christianity is more of a
conservative thing and
yeah so
I'm not exactly sure where to go with
this.
Christianity I mean it seems to me that
as a legitimate spiritual
force in world culture it has pretty
much exhausted itself. I mean, it's

there there are still a lot of devout,
serious Christians out there, but it's
just a pale shadow compared with just a
few hundred years ago.
So, it wouldn't surprise me if
Christianity is
largely replaced by some new system,
preferably not Islam.
I mean, you'd have to have something
that would have sophistication, assuming
that people just don't get so dumbed
down that they can just revert to like a
really primitive superstitious kind of
religions.
But it it's this question is hard to
answer because again there's like the
butterfly effect. Who knows where the

next like enlightened or just
charismatic spiritual leader will be
born? What culture? What? So like what
culture is going to be pervading what he
is teaching? You know what kind of
cultural conditioning? If he's born in
the west, he could be like an
echarttolah type. But people like
echartollah
um they're just too eclectic and in a
way kind of too lukewarm
to really get the ball rolling with like
a new religious movement.
And it's it's going to take certain
characteristics I think in society to
allow a new religion a new religion to

arise because it's like there has to be a kind of crisis point where people are they cannot accept their old cultural conditioning as much anymore. They're looking for something different and that is when you know the the charismatic leader has to arise that then just starts this whole new religious movement going and it's of course it's almost impossible to predict with any kind of certainty exactly how that's going to happen.

Like Christianity, it was like classical paganism had just kind of run its course. People didn't really believe in it anymore. they're just kind of going through the motions with it or at least

enough of them were that you know they just it had lost its its soul so to speak and Christianity seems to be doing that also although of course there are still devout Christians just as when Christianity was arising like 3rd 4th century Roman Empire you still had a lot of devout pagans too and I don't think Christianity will ever be completely replaced maybe it Well, but I don't know, you know, science has largely replaced Christianity as the explanation of reality.

Christian, even devout Christians generally have more faith in science than they have in like interpreting the

Bible to explain

why things are as they are as they are

other than just God made it, but he made

it according to like scientific rules,

this kind of thing.

So where's the actual question mark

here? Assuming the west isn't destroyed,

what do you think it will look like?

Which is the future of the west from a

religious standpoint? The future of the

rest the west from a religious

standpoint. What will it look like? I

mean there has to be some kind of

unifying belief system. Any society that

does not have a unifying belief system

is it's just going to disintegrate.

And America kind of moved away from from

religion and adopted a kind of civic nationalism. I mean was everyone had the shared values of freedom and equality and so forth.

But

I'm not exactly. I mean it could be some kind of spiritual scientific kind of mysticism even.

But if I had to make a guess, it's either going to be some charismatic leader who hopefully is wise

or it's going to be like the Brian Aldis scenario of people consulting practically omnisient computers as oracles.

But I mean again it's there's s such

chaos theory involved in this such a
butterfly effect depending on where the
next religious
guru is going to arise. You know the
charismatic leader who's going to start
a world religion
who can say
so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from Romeo and I'm just
checking to make sure we're recording.
Yeah we are. We are recording. Romeo
says, "I see so many similar
tendencies."
Okay. I see so many similar tendencies
both physically and emotionally in
members of my family. I understand this
from a scientific, genetic, hereditary

perspective, but I was wondering if there is a spiritual component as well. Do you think there is such a thing as inherited collective karma in families? How about more broadly in nations, races, cultures, etc. Aside from your opinion, what is the Buddhist perspective on inherited collective karma? Okay, let's start with the Buddhist perspective. Buddhism just rejects the idea of group karma. You know, it's it's kind of like the controversy in evolutionary biology where you've got some evolutionary biologists saying that is only at the individual level that evolution occurs.

You know, that the the individual is successful in reproducing his genes or not. And so like a population this kind of thing, you know, it's it's just kind of like an illusion that populations evolve aside from just at the individual level, the individual organism reproduces or fails to reproduce or reproduces more or reproduces less or not at all etc. But then there are some evolutionary biologists and I can I can relate to this. I really do do not fully comprehend the argument that you cannot have group evolution like the evolution of a of a population. I mean obviously um societies evolve and a society is like a group of individuals. It's a

population.

So culture obviously can can have a group effect like an alphabet or a language can evolve that isn't just at the individual level like the individual speaks that language or doesn't speak that language.

But

I can kind of appreciate the Terra Buddhist explanation of how there seems to be group karma without there really being group karma. And that is for example

um individuals uh just using the term individual even though in Buddhism there is no self no soul that reincarnates

anything like that but you've got like
these these sort of currents of karmic
momentum
and in order to be born into a family
you have to have like similar karma to
them in order to be experiencing the
same kind of things and also it may be
that at least some of your family
members I mean you've have like a
multi-life
relationship going like um Edgar Casey
used to say that we tend to have a
strong karmic relation to one of our
parents but usually not both. So in that
case I was more had more of a karmic
relationship with my father than with my
mother. But still you can't wind up in a

family unless your karma is compatible with that. Similar with a culture you know it's like um lately you know I mean during the course of my lifetime people have referred to like the Middle East is just a hotbed of violence and war you know it's just been a battlefield since prehistoric times literally. And so they will use that as an example of like group karma or regional karma. But I mean you can just interpret that from the more Buddhistic more orthodox terravada Buddhist point of view and that if you have that kind of karma then you're just going to be reborn in that kind of society

in in that kind of in that part of the world. So, it's just more of um certain cultures attract certain people with certain karmic dispositions and needs and requirements and so forth um more than other cultures.

So I mean it's not necessary to have group karma in order to explain like the karmic similarities of members of a family or the karmic similarities of members of a nation or a society. It's just that if you have this kind of karma, you're going to be reborn into this kind of family or you're going to be born into this kind of society.

So

I mean

I can kind of accept the the Buddhist
explanation that there is no such thing
as group karma
with regard to evolution. I think that
there might be group evolution in a
sense but I can accept that you know
it's subjective. You know morality is
subjective and your karma is subjective
even though ultimately there's no
subject. That's just kind of a
gosh a virtual reality because because
this whole world is a virtual reality.
So let's see here.
Yeah, I mean I'm I'm willing to go with
the idea that just beings or you know
karmic streams that have similar

requirements with regard to their karma just wind up together. that it's not the group karma. It's just that my my individual karma fits in with this other individual's karma that it's or karma is going to be reach fruition more effectively by us being together and so it just happens that way naturally.

That would be the official terra Buddhist explanation and I am inclined to go along with that.

And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Cioction Cad Zedena.

And COVID cadet specializes in sending me like a a screenshot of this big block of text and asking me to respond to that

or sending me a video, you know,
thoughts, this kind of stuff. So he's
he's kind of done that this in this
episode.
He says if enlightenment doesn't require
the ending of desire so someone like
Krishna Murdy can have sex with his
friend's wife and be considered
enlightened but just going with the flow
of karma then wouldn't someone like this
be the ultimate enlightened being living
only in the present moment with no past
or future but just going with the flow
of karma and then parenthesis he says
you can replace the racial words with
people for the video I didn't mean it in

a racist way but rather just the idea behind it. And he he sends me it's like four paragraphs that contain well I mean I won't even say what the racial slur is. I mean it's an extremely derogatory racial slur that is found probably 50 times many times in this this little block of language. And he's talking about certain people
who I mean they really do not identify with their future self or presumably their past self. You know they're just living in the moment.
And so they have no con regard for consequences. You know, it's like I I've thought about this with regard to like devil worshippers where they're they're

willing to sell their soul. Just going with the stereotype. They sell their soul

um to the devil. you know, they're willing to burn in hell forever and ever in exchange for, say, 10 years of fame and wealth and pleasure, which is just like an absurd bad deal. But a lot of people are willing to go with that. So, it's like they don't even have sympathy or empathy for their own future self, much less anybody else. But they it's like

in a in a way it's just like the extreme of just sort of selfishness where you don't even care about your future self.

It's just me now,

which strikes me as particularly

foolish.

But anyways, you got a person who's just

living in the present moment like an

animal. I mean, why not just say

animals? You know, why bring certain

groups of people into this when you

could just say animals and animals, you

know, like a dog or like there's a dog

that just came in,

you know, they just live in the present

moment. And Ekhart Tollah says that

animals are in a way enlightened except

for a few domesticated animals that have

become neurotic through too much

intimate contact with the neurosis of

human beings. But for the most part, according to Echart Tullah in his famous book, the power of now, most animals are enlightened. But it's a different kind of enlightenment
from
like the enlightenment of God Buddha for example.
It's like God Buddha is like this more comprehensive kind of enlightenment whereas the enlightenment of an animal is just sort of limited within the the context. you know, it's it's still, you know, from the Buddhist point of view, animals are in a lower realm. They're not enlightened at all, but at least

they're they're in the present moment. They're they're not creating a bunch of unnecessary suffering for themselves by worrying about the future or feeling regrets about the past or wondering what's going on like what the neighbors are thinking, that kind of stuff. So in a way animals they have less delusion and foolishness than we do. Partly just because we have bigger minds that can hold more of it.

Like a cow is just keeps five precepts pretty much effortlessly and just seems pretty placid and serene most of the time. And from the Buddhist point of view cow is not fully enlightened.

But seal of action cipad zerite here

really isn't talking about a Buddhist conception of enlightenment unless you're getting into like the tantric stuff or some of those Zen masters you know some of those Zen masters they you know they were kind of getting into the realm of of Krishna Murdy

so let's see says the enlightenment doesn't require the ending of desire

um I mean it there's different ways of ending ending desire. One way of ending it is just to transcend it and in a way sort of transmute it, denature it, which is what I keep talking about and people just do not get it that you can transcend it. It's like you're watching

a movie. It's it's like a suspenseful scary kind of movie and I mean your heart's beating faster. You know, you're kind of on the edge of your seat because, you know, the person in the movie might get killed in some horrible way. And then you just remind yourself it's just a movie. That doesn't stop the stuff from happening. It's just that you have just kind of risen to a higher level. You know, King Lear raging at the storm, going mad with grief. I mean, at one level it's King Lear going mad with grief out on the heath in the storm, but at another level it's this actor who's just saying his lines,
you know, and

I mean, enlightenment can work that way where you're still apparently like wallowing in samsara, but your consciousness has just risen above that level.

So, I mean, some people just do not and cannot get this kind of stuff where you're talking about two different levels of reality simultaneously.

It just does not work.

So, let's see here.

Yeah, in a case of like Krishna Mie, just going for the sake of argument, let's just say Jidu Krishna Murdy was really an enlightened being. Even though he messed around with his personal

secretary's wife, he wore a toupe.
You know, he he did stuff that a fully
enlightened being stereotypically
traditionally isn't supposed to do.
But if you just assume
that
he just was at a higher level of
consciousness, the [__] that's
supposedly happening in samsara is still
happening, but he's not identifying with
it anymore.
So the desire, you know, at at like a
subjective level maybe, but he's not
being subjective anymore, just going
with the argument.
So, you know, there's there's still
desire, but he's just not identified

with that anymore. And even like a fully enlightened being like the Buddha, I mean, he still had apparently, if we can if we can believe the texts, he still had like preferences,
you know, he still had to have motives for his behavior, which could be considered a kind of desire. And it's just that
I mean when you're enlightened being you're just not identified with this stuff anymore.
And it's it's like this two-dimensional thinking that just cannot comprehend the idea that you're just going to transcend samsara

with samsara still being here without
being stuck in it and by identifying
with it anymore.
So it's a matter of perspective.
So let's see here.
Where's the question? Okay. Wouldn't
someone like this, you know, or like
let's just say an animal be the ultimate
enlightened being living only in the
present moment with no past or future
but just going with the flow of karma?
Well, I mean because they're still
deluded, they're still creating new
karma, which an enlightened being
doesn't do. So that would be like one
technical difference between like say an
animal who's totally in the present

moment. They're still creating karma.
They still have desires and attachments
and so forth. Um they haven't really
risen above it. Supposedly a fully
enlightened being is not creating new
karma. There's still the old karma
that's working itself out until the
enlightened being dies.
But they're not creating new karma by
what they're doing. Even though there
may still be some kind of vestigial
desires and stuff going on, it's just
that they have risen above that, they're
not identifying with it anymore.
I mean, if they had totally
like risen above karma to the extent of

just eliminating it, they wouldn't have anything even happening to them. Which gets into a whole different kind of argument. I mean it's you're you're straying from the realm of terravada Buddhism by giving the idea that you know a fully enlightened being isn't even really here. They're just you know our our our own karma is like projecting the semblance of some enlightened being out there

but they don't have any karma sustaining themselves. It's all just generated by the karma of unenlightened beings who who need this kind of enlightened teacher, you know, to fulfill their own karma.

But that's getting kind of complicated

and confusing, isn't it?

But you say a baby or an animal, they're

not the ultimate enlightened being. Even

though they may be in the present

moment, they might not be thinking in

words.

They still have latent tendencies that

really they haven't freed themselves

from,

not even through transcendence.

But it's hard to explain, which is

probably one reason why so few people

really understand it.

But you get into like the Zen masters

and some of the the tantric Tibetan

teachers and so forth, it's the same kind of a deal. I mean, it's getting closer to Buddhism, but it's uh

I mean, it's just a matter of transcending samsara. You you don't just eliminate samsara when you become enlightened. You rise above samsara in a sense. You stop identifying with it. You are I mean, you're operating at a higher level of consciousness that still might include this samsaric stuff, but it's just not you anymore.

And it's hard to understand which is why so many people don't understand it.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from also from sea of action sepatna.

He says and I quote, "There are jotaka tales of the Buddha giving his wife and kids away, letting animals eat him when he was a rabbit, and many other tales of extreme charity. I can't tell how the bodhic sattva ideal is any different than being a suicidal empathyridden leftist because all three of the above situations are mocking the attitudes of leftist if taken to its ultimate conclusion and it looks less extreme than bodhicattva activities. Please explain.

Well, I will say the jotaka story of the the Buddha who was in a previous life a wise hair the sasa jotaka it's called.

He wasn't he wasn't throwing himself into the fire to cook himself for the sake of other animals. It was just that Saka, king of gods, disguised himself as a Brahman holy man. And so the rabbit or the the hair had decided in advance that day that if any kind of wandering holy man came by, he was going to offer him food. And then he realized wandering holy men don't eat clover or whatever like rabbits do. So he was going to just emulate himself, cook his own meat to offer to this Brahman holy man. And it turned out that it was Saka, king of gods, disguised as a holy man, just testing this hair. And as a result of that, the the rabbit really did fling

himself into the fire to cook himself so that this holy man could eat the rabbit meat. And because it was really Saka, king of gods or formerly known as Indra, he uh caused the rabbit not to be burned by the fire and then rewarded that hair by taking the the juice of a mountain, squeezing the juice out of a mountain and making the image of a rabbit the hair on the surface of the moon. So in uh like ancient Indian Buddhism, there was no man in the moon. It was the hair in the moon. And if you look, it does seem like it really is a rabbit. It's just kind of turned sideways, but it's like the man in the moon, like one of

his eyes has like these two streaks

coming out. Those are the ears of the

rabbit.

So some people have used that to argue

that the Buddha is the man in the moon.

But I digress.

Um, some of these tales of like the the

Buddha in a previous life or some arant

or some other wise being just like

complet just giving away their own wife

and children for example like there's

that completely Monty Pythonesque

biography of Mongala Buddha that's found

in the the Buddha in its commentaries

where

Mangala Buddha in a previous life before

he was the Buddha he was a Buddhist Saut

he he gave away his kids to an ogre disguised as a Brahman. And then the ogre just starts eating his kids, the kids of the bodhicatta. And the bodhic sata instead of being alarmed by an ogre eating his children, he was rejoicing. He was delighted at his his superhuman act of charity, giving away his own kids to be devoured by an ogre.

And it's that kind of stuff. I mean, it's just completely leaving reality behind,

you know, it's just making like a complete extreme case for I mean, partly it's glorification of the founder of a religion like he is capable of this

level of generosity or virtue or whatever that leaves ordinary human beings far behind. It's just as a way of glorifying this person, but it just makes them a kind of monster in a certain way.

I mean, there is one story of the Buddha in a previous life. I don't remember if it's a Jotica story or if it's just in the commentary somewhere where he was a farmer and he had his little boy come with him out into the fields. and his little boy was just playing in the shade of a tree while the father, the bodhic sata, was plowing the fields. And so the father, you know, he's glancing over at his kid to make sure the kid's okay

because, you know, he's he's a father.
And then he at one point he notices the little kid is just lying motionless on the ground. So he he hurries over and finds out that the little kid has been bitten by a snake and is no longer alive.
So what the bodhicatta does,
I mean he can't save the kid. The field still needs to be plowed. So he just finishes his plowing before taking the body of his child back to the village.
And I mean that maybe is kind of believable. I mean that could be indicative of some kind of wisdom maybe.
But I mean, giving your own kids away

and rejoicing as an ogre devour them, I mean, that is just not human at all. I I that's just like a a madeup silly story. And you can find lots of those in the text, especially like in the commentarial tradition.

It's like people get so caught up in the religious mindset, the devotionalistic religious mindset, that they just kind of leave common sense reality behind.

So what's the actual question here?

Let's see. I can't tell how the bodhicattva ideal or bodhicatta ideal going with terra is any different than being a suicidal empathyridden leftist. You're not supposed to say that s word on YouTube I'm pretty sure because all

three of the above situations are mocking the attitudes of leftists. Yeah. It's like the what is it? The reductio adabsurdum.

if taken to its ultimate conclusion and it looks less extreme than bodhicatta activities. I mean yeah the I guess the one kind of saving grace of Buddhism is that you're supposed to completely renounce society to do this kind of stuff that I mean you cannot really be a functioning member of society and then just like give your kids away to ogres to be eaten that kind of thing. I mean, kind of it says it was that way in the texts or in the in the commentary or

whatever, but yeah, a society is not
going to work if that that kind of stuff
goes mainstream.
So yeah, I mean both of these are just a
case of like
like virtueoriented idealism just going
to its logical extreme until you have
left practical reality far behind in the
dust.
So, I mean, I don't know if there's
really all that much more I can say
about this,
but it's I mean, it's just silly stories
that you're going to find in ancient
poly texts or medieval poly
commentaries.
And there's quite a lot of silly stuff

in there if you look for it.

But I mean

maybe if you are a fully enlightened

being or very close you're you're a very

advanced saint you may be able to get

away with some of this stuff. Um like

one example that's a famous Zen story.

You've got this Zen monk who's living in

some hut out in the woods and a robber

comes in and the robber's going to

steal, you know, this monk's stuff. And

the monk asks him to to leave a little

bit of money because it's okay for Zen

monks to handle money because he needs

it for something. And then the robber

just for whatever reason, I think most

robbers wouldn't do it, but this robber, you know, just leaves a little bit of money like the monk asked and takes the rest. And then as he's leaving, the monk is like looking out the window at the full moon and thinking it's it's a pity I couldn't give him this beautiful full moon. You know, this kind of question, which might also be just like some madeup legend,
but like a saint can maybe do that kind of stuff, but a society cannot run on principles like this.
People are selfish because there is survival value, evolutionary survival value in being selfish.
for example.

H

So I mean if you're a saint maybe you can indulge in a certain amount of virtuous extremism but a society just isn't going to work on principles like that not for very long anyhow.

So I'm just going to move on to see of action ci's next question.

He says, "I was watching this video and u the video is about men being more likely to die of a broken heart than women are." And then he continues, "I'm guessing he's speaking about American culture and maybe his Indian culture since he mentioned biology. I want to

know whether you think this is a genetic flaw in males or if it is a kind of cultural sickness and not present in places like Burma or maybe it is a modern trend. I want to know your thoughts on the subject cuz it seems clearly maladaptive and kind of pathetic I have to say and section and cadena is just blackpilled and sees everything through a lens of negativity.

Anyways, so yeah, it's uh there's this little video where some person maybe a doctor is talking about how men are more likely literally to die of a broken heart. Like to die of heart failure after a divorce or just lose the will to live and just give up after your mate

dies when when you're both very old.
Like Jimmy Stewart was like that. The
famous actor Jimmy Stewart, his I mean
he loved his wife very much. They were
very happy together apparently. And
after she passed away, you know, it was
sort of like a a male swan or a crane or
a stork or something that mate for life.
And once he lost his mate, I mean, he
just kind of moped and just kind of went
downhill and died just a few weeks
later.
And I mean, it's it's this way in Burma
also, like I've probably mentioned this
before, the stereotypical tearjerker
romance movie in Burma that you see when

riding the the bus between Manderlay and
and Rangon. You know, you got to watch
these cheesy Burmese movies
and just the st just the standard theme
of some Burmese romance movie. I mean,
there's no telling how many dozens of
these movies have been made following
the same template. You've got a young
man of lower social status, falls in
love with the rich girl, and they they
love each other just deliriously,
and then they kind of run off together.
But the father of the girl absolutely
will not stand for his daughter marrying
this, you know, he's like some street
vendor or something, some bike shaw
driver. So like the girl's elder

brothers or just some goons hired by the father seek them out, beat the [__] out of the guy, and drag the girl home again. And the father requires her to marry some rich guy who's a complete [__]

So what happens is the guy who you know the the man the the man and the woman they they loved each other. They get separated. The man drinks himself to death usually drinking Johnny Walker Red Label which probably helps to account for the for the early decease of this fellow whereas the girl boohoos for a few days and then winds up marrying the rich guy that her father required her to

marry.

And I do think it's just I mean it's not a genetic flaw in males that males take commitments more seriously than women. You know, like in in America, most divorces, you know, something like 70% most divorces is it's the woman who files. And in a lot of cases, she's just vaguely dissatisfied and thinks she can do better.

But I remember one of the first important books I ever read. I was about 14 years old. I read The Naked Ape by Desmond Morris. And Desmond Morris points out that men, for example, tend to have more lifelong friends than women do. You know, it's like men form a like

stronger bonds with other people. Even though women are more sort of interpersonal interactionoriented than men are, men tend to take it more seriously. And according to Desmond Morris, one of the reasons for this is that men would be forming, you know, like men back in a huntergatherer society, every able-bodied young man is a warrior for the tribe with few exceptions. And so they're relying on each other to to have each other's back in intertribal warfare and when they're out hunting mammoths and cave bears and this kind of stuff. So it's just you need a stronger cohesive group where

everybody sticks up for everybody else. Whereas women, you know, they're more likely to get traded off to another tribe for for mating purposes. You know, there's like a swap of new young women between these two tribes. Or it may be there's intertribal warfare. the woman just gets snatched out of her tribe and taken to some other tribe where she's got to have a whole different set of friends worshiping a whole different set of gods maybe speaking a different language and all this. So women are just more adaptable

whereas men are more likely to form these like strong lasting bonds between each other and apparently also with

their mate.

So I would guess that that is like the main evolutionary genetic component of this

that women are just more likely to just be removed from one like tribal group and and like transplanted into another one. So they have to like be more flexible with regard to this thing. And there wasn't as much need for them except with regard to like their own children that they have like these lifelong commitments where you know it's like they wouldn't dream of breaking it. With men apparently there is a statistically significant

higher level of this kind of commitment

than in in the female of the species.

just going with

Desmond Morris.

So, I don't consider it to be a genetic

flaw in males and I don't consider it to

be a kind of cultural sickness because

both of those are just black pill

negativity.

And I don't think it's really a modern

trend either because I think it go

probably goes back to the stone age that

this kind of stuff evolved if not before

the stone age.

So, I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from Jeffrey.

And Jeffrey says, "I was telling someone

that if I got cancer, I would not use conventional medicine to heal. First, I would rub hydrogen peroxide all over me and then hire monks to pray over me. Is that something that is possible? Can monks be hired to pray for healing?" Well, you shouldn't hire monks because monks aren't supposed to handle money. They're not supposed to do anything for pay. At least not Terraata Buddhist monks. I'm not exactly sure where the hydrogen peroxide comes in. I mean, you know, according to the Bible, you're supposed to be anointed with oil before the elders lay their hands on you and pray over you to heal you of your

sicknesses. So, I'm not sure where hydrogen peroxide um would necessarily be replacing some kind of ointment or oil for anointing. I guess that's why it's called ointment, right? Cuz you anoint it onto yourself.

Um

but the there are like paras like chants that monks do for helping people to to recover from illness. The main one in terra Buddhism is the bojanga suta. So different paras or protective chants have different purposes. There are a few allpurpose protective chants. I think the ratana suta and I think it's the uh the mangala suta are just kind of like general blessings. But the bojanga suta

in particular is supposed to have special efficacy with regard to healing the sick. Although I have to admit that every sick animal I ever chanted the bojanga suta over wound up dying. So it didn't really work so much in my case. And I think with regard to any kind of like healing powers resulting from like rituals or chanting that kind of stuff there's going to have to be the faith of the person and the faith of the monks or priests or whoever it is who are doing the chanting. And if you've got one person with just like absolute unquestioning faith, that can kind of drown out some of the doubts of

other people involved. But still, there has to be some kind of strong belief or confidence that it's going to work on the part of somebody involved in order for it to work. Because it's not just that the the magic blah blah blah of the chant has any kind of power to heal anybody or to exercise malevolent spirits from a house or anything like that. You know, it's the beliefs, the perceptions of the people involved that have the power. So, it's like a placebo effect.

So, it may be I mean you might want to try like a Christian science practitioner. I assume they still have those

um or seek out like a monk or a priest
who specializes in this and actually has
a track record. I mean, you don't want
to just go to the local Cambodian temple
or Thai temple and ask the monks there
to pray over you, unless you just have
unquestioning faith or confidence that
it's going to work. Because a lot of
these Asian monks, you know, they're
kind of missionaries in the West, but
more likely they're just sort of like
the masters of ceremonies at a cultural
center for the immigrants of their own
nationality who live there. And
you know they're they really are not
some kind of master with healing powers.

So I mean if you are going to have somebody chant over you to heal you of some you know some ailment then you should try to find someone who specializes in it and not just you know just go knocking on the door of the local Cambodian temple and asking them to do it because they're not going to have the confidence or the faith probably to really do it in a way that works.

So, but I mean if you the standard um terravada Buddhist like poly uh parita or protective chant that is used for healing the sick would be the bojanga suta. So you might want to just try chanting it yourself.

It's out there. You can find it. I'm

sure.

And so I'm just going to move on to

Jeffrey's next question.

He says, "Also,

I have heard that sexual energy is

healing energy. Are they related?" Well,

sexual energy and healing energy both

would require a certain vitality.

You know, like a a brightness of spirit,

I guess. You know, the the more vitality

you've got, the more sexual energy

you've got, the more healing energy

you've got. So, I mean, to that extent,

I would say, yeah, sexual energy can be

healing energy to a certain degree.

But I mean from the Buddhist point of view, there is no special energy that's just sexual energy. You know, you've just got like energy that, you know, some of it is siphoned off for sexual purposes or, you know, sexual directions and then your body naturally heals um using some more of this kind of just sort of natural vitality.

But so there is a connection I think between sexual energy and healing energy. Both of them require just you know the the vital essence of of life. I mean you're you're less likely to be sexually energetic if you're not well

and you're less likely to be well if you just low low sexual energy I guess. So yeah, there is a kind of relation, but it's really not a kind of Buddhist concept. Maybe in yoga or something like that, they would have more of a some kind of system worked out on how it all works, but I think it's from I mean just using my own understanding of biology and so forth. It would just be the just the same kind of vitality that would be used could be used for either or for entirely something else.

So

yeah, I mean Freud might have something to say about that, but I'm really not an

expert on Freud. You know, he he turned everything into sex.

Freud was just sort of a master of second chakra.

So yeah, I guess I I got about as far with that as I'm liable to get. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Quistor.

And Quistor says, "I've heard you tell the story about the monk who selfdeed because he couldn't always get into Janna and then became an Araant. I find it difficult to understand since the story would indicate that he has attachment to Janna and that the craving for it is the barrier to achieving it.

Is there more background to the story?

Could it be that the craving wasn't specifically for the johnic bliss or equinimity itself, but for what the Jonas lead to? And once he put that craving aside, there was no craving left. Or maybe he realized that Janna is not an Ibana and not having Janna brought suffering. So he dropped craving for Janna and that was the last attachment he needed to let go of. Well, he's referring to the God Suta. I did warn you in advance that I was going to come back to God. And he was the monk who got Janna and lost it and got it and lost it and got it and lost it until finally after like seven times this

happened. He was thinking, this is like
the context that Quistor was asking for.
He was thinking if I die with Janna, I'm
guaranteed at least a Brahma realm. I
mean that's that is the belief in in
Terravada Buddhism that the Brahma
realms correspond to Jonic realms and
you you've mastered you know first Janna
you can get into like the lower Brahma
realms you master second Janna you get
into higher Brahma realms etc
and you have to get into like the
formless Janna in order to get into like
the highest heaven realms
and so anyways Godo is thinking you know
if he dies with this mastery of Janna.
While he has it temporarily, he's

guaranteed of a heaven of like a really advanced heaven realm. But if he dies without Janna, there's no guarantees at all. He could be reborn as an animal or in hell or anything. So he it was just sort of like this kind of

I don't know what

it was like Pascal I think had this deal, you know, where you to believe in God and be wrong is better than um not to believe in God and be wrong. So, you know, it's just kind of like this game theory or something where it's like if I die with with Janna,

guaranteed of a of of like a very high heaven realm. If I die without it, no

guarantee at all. So, he just made the decision that the next time he was really in the groove with his meditation and had Janna that he was just going to end it before he fell back out of it again. That was that's the explanation in the text in the in the suta itself in the goda suta of the samutinikaya.
So that's that's the way it is described in the suta itself that it was just kind of this this idea that you know if he died while he had Janna he was guaranteed of at least a Brahma realm.
So he went for it because he knew that just based on his past experience, it was likely he was just going to wind up losing it again. And then all bets are

off with regard to how he was going to be reborn. And then just through just the momentum of practice that he had going and the parmesated,
you know, just the the virtue and just the the momentum of his his holy life. It was sufficient through whatever way it's not fully described exactly how it happened in the in the suta that he became enlightened instead of going to a Brahma realm he just attain par nibbana at the moment of death.
So did I answer the question? Is there more background to the story? Yeah, it was it was just this idea. If he dies with Janna, he's guaranteed of a high

heaven realm and if he dies without it,
there's no guarantee at all. So he just
made the decision that he's next time he
he had Janna real good he was just gonna
end it
and I'm just gonna move on next
question. This is from the protose monk
formerly known as cool whip
and uh and the protose monk he has sort
of a preliminary question that turns out
not to be one of his allotted three
questions.
So the first question we can kind of
skip over and then we will address that
in the subsequent questions. He says,
"Have you heard about or seen the ex
monk Varapano

in this video?" And then he has uh he he has some video link with regard to this person who used to go by the name of Varapo.

I don't remember what his name is now. He technically might not even be ex monk as he was never a monk in the first place. He claims to have been a Buddhist monk for seven years and since disroing does daily live streams with some dude that legally changed his name to Shiva at Shiva Kyash Shambo where all these spiritual begers

seem to do where all these spiritual baggackers seem to do is ask for donations. His channel appears on my

very dharmic feed no matter what, and I usually ignore it. The algorithm loves his trolling rage bait, but clicked on his latest stream as it really caught my attention and couldn't believe it when he heard this. Please listen to his confession here. And this is where the exvaropho

uh admitted that he was never a real monk to begin with and he was just pretending to be a monk in order to get donations and then he was investing that in Bitcoin or something and once he got enough that he could just be independently wealthy then he just dropped out and he he looked like he was kind of drunk in the video. some

somebody in the comments saying now he's just sleepd deprived. But I mean, he was just kind of like slouched over on his side with kind of like this sleepy smile on his face while he's singing like a canary and admitting to being a total fraud.

See, on fake monks using Okay, so then there's like the the the what's the word? the rubric, the uh the heading of three three questions here, the three following questions on fake monks using Donna or generosity to invest in Bitcoin for financial independence.

So

the first question

from Protose Pudom,

formerly known as Kwip, what do you think of this man's plan for being a monk? And are you shocked? From the beginning, asking for donations to invest in Bitcoin and exiting when he had enough profits to retire. He couldn't even believe he was in robes for seven years. People giving him money as a donation thinking he was a monk. Well, I remember coming across this person and I I before I I get into the question, get into the answer of the question, I mean I mean you can block this person from your YouTube feed. You know, there's some channel that keeps coming up and you want to avoid it. You

just kind of click on something around it and say you're not interested and don't show anything from this channel ever again or else and the the algorithm will cooperate with that. I'm pretty sure at least on YouTube.

But let's get back to this question. Um, yeah, I I came across him just I saw him on some videos and my woman especially, she called him the sleepy weepy monk because he'd always talk in like this sleepy monotone and never looked like he was fully awake, which could have just been part of the act to look like a serene meditative monk.

And she would kind of she took more

interest in him than I did. And she was scandalized cuz I mean she could see from practically from the very beginning that he was some kind of fraud, you know, probably just doing it for donations.

And I really I mean, first of all, I tend to give people the benefit of the doubt. So, I mean, it was kind of obvious to me, too, there was a possibility that he was a scammer, but I'm less likely to jump to conclusions than my woman. And also, um, I have come across so many monks that are like this, like in Burma that I mean, some of the most famous monks in Burma. I won't name any names because they're kind of have

at least one of them is very well
respected among like certain Buddhist
communities in the United States and
he's got at least one monastery in the
United States that's you know kind of a
branch monastery that I mean he just he
is like a wealthy businessman who wears
monks robes in order to make more money
you know he just charges exorbitant fees
even in fourth world Burma for his
dharmat talks
and I I
I I just did not approve of him at all.
You know, I somebody would donate some
calendar from his monastery. I just take
it down. It's like, "No, we're not we're

not advertising this monk because he's just a rich businessman wearing monk's robes."

And I mean, I've come across monks like this that I mean, they're just trying to get rich, rich and famous. And wearing monks robes helps them to be that way.

So in in Burma it's it's it's common much more common than in the west I think at least with regard to terra Buddhist monks.

Most monks handle money anyway. Most monks are receiving donations and just going out and and buying you know whatever they want.

So I was exposed to more of So I was I was less scandalized by the whole thing

than my woman who I mean she's
relatively naive and hadn't come across
a lot of that before whereas there's
lots of it. I remember there was one
monk who came to stay at my monastery
back when I was the abbot of onebo
wildlife refuge monastery in
northwestern Burma.
this young monk, like a village monk,
came and he wanted to stay at my place
and most monks in that entire area, the
overwhelming majority of them just did
not follow the rules of monastic
discipline. So, I just pretty much flat
out told him, I really don't think it's
likely to work because if you're from

around here, chances are you don't follow the rules like is required at this monastery. And then it was like he just kind of unbburdened his heart to me this this young monk saying I know it's like this and it bothers me too and I just want to be a good monk and that's why I came here cuz I want to follow the rules and be a good monk just like in the text as well as I can. You know it was like he really did appear to be emotionally moved when he's giving me this speech. And so again I am willing to give people the benefit of the doubt. So I said, "All right, you can stay. We'll see how it goes." And then he stayed for maybe a month or two. I don't

remember exactly how long he stayed. It wasn't for very long. And then one day he just suddenly took off and there was some stuff missing like there was like a human anatomy chart in the congregation hall, you know, showing the bones and everything just help monks to look upon what the human body is really made of. I mean, that was gone. He just took took some stuff and just disappeared. And then after he left, I was told he was scamming the villagers for money, saying that he was like collecting funds because his father needed an eye operation or something or it was his some Seattle needed an eye operation. I

can't remember the details. I remember there was somebody needing an eye operation involved and then after he figured he had enough money, he just took off.

So, I mean, it just it's just a relatively common occurrence in places like Burma where you've got monks, including one of the most famous monks in the whole country, that are just they're in it for the money.

So, this Varapo, I would assume that he really was ordained. when he's like admitting that he was never never a really a monk, he probably means that he even though he was officially technically ordained as a monk, he just

never really believed in it and was never really trying to be a monk. You know, it's like you can you can get ordained fairly easily. It doesn't take any herculean effort to get some Asian monks to ordain you. You don't even have to be a Buddhist for some of them to ordain you.

So he probably really was ordained. It's just that he he just adopted this persona of always speaking in a in a like a low quiet monotone.

Maybe that's just the way he was anyway. Never opening his eyes all the way just so that he seemed like he was like a blissed out meditator. And I remember he

he dropped out of the monkhood for a while and then he just appeared on videos again. My my woman was showing me this stuff. She she was keeping up with it. I really didn't have much interest in him, but for a while he was like a monastery attendant in Thailand or something and maybe he he became a monk again or something. And yeah, it's I really don't know exactly what to make of it. I mean, he could just be trolling and just exaggerating what a fraudulent [__] he was just for the hell of it. But to some degree, he apparently really was a fraudulent [__] Just just praying upon the gullibility

and faith of simplehearted people.

So, let's see here. I guess I answer that kind of question. What do you think of this man's plan for being a monk? And are you shocked? No, I wasn't shocked because I've been exposed to plenty of that when I was a monk in Burma. And just 98%

of the SA in Burma handles money. I mean, most of them aren't scamming, you know. You know, they're just like there was an old monk that used to live with me, the one that was bitten by a cobra and eventually died. Um, he handled money, too. And what he was doing was he would actually make brooms out of like

palm frrons and a bamboo pole. And he made good brooms. We were using the brooms he made around the monastery. They're relatively good brooms, but he was having his niece who lived in a nearby village sell some of them in the market. And then he was using, you know, the the relatively small amount of money he was getting from that to buy like beetle quids and maybe cigars.

And I don't know how he chewed beetle. He had like four teeth left in his head. But still, he was able to chew beetle for some reason. And I'm not talking about the bugs, the insects, colopter insects. There's a a drug, a mild drug called beetle, bee t- lure nut,

that is chewed in South Asia and
Southeast Asia. It's relatively
disgusting. It turns your slobber into
something like ketchup,
just red and thick. It's relatively
gross.
But he was handling money. I mean, he he
wasn't like deliberately scamming people
to I mean, he was just making brooms and
having his niece sell them in the
village so that he could afford his
beetlenut and and who knows what else,
tea or whatever.
I used to think that that monk would
have been more venerable if he has
hadn't been a monk because he did live

just a very simple, austere,
humble kind of existence. He just didn't
follow the rules very well
and that just handling money wasn't the
only rule he broke. I think he he cooked
dinner for himself sometimes. I really
didn't want to know. I was like I wasn't
looking for trouble.
And then sometimes he'd go for alms
round with like wearing a sweatshirt and
just like a blanket wrapped around him
instead of his robes, but he was like 80
years old and just very simple man.
I really didn't didn't want to fight
with him.
So yeah, I guess I answered that. I was
not shocked.

So I'm going to move on to the protose monk's second question which I might have already answered here. Is this shocking behavior common in the Buddhist world generally and specifically terraada? And why are people giving so much money to monks to renuncience? That makes no sense. Well, the first part of this is the shocking behavior common in the Buddhist world. As I've already said, it's it's really fairly common. In fact, one of the most famous monks in all of Burma is like this.

So, that part it's relatively common, certainly not unheard of. But with regard to this question, why are people

giving so much money to monks to renuncience? It makes no sense. Well, most people in Burma probably don't even know that it's against the rules for monks to handle money. I remember the the the Burmese equivalent of the Thai Raja. Um I met him once. He came to the monastery where I was staying at. He was in Burmese it's the SA Mahanayaka Seattle, you know, the great leader of the SA.

And he was just he gave gave this little talk to the people who came to to listen to his talk and he was talking about you know the great merit you get by donating to the SA donating to monks he handled he handled money himself he was the

supreme leader of the Burmese terra

Buddhist SA

and he's just willingly accepting

donations of money and and telling

people the merit that they will get by

donating money to monks.

And so I mean if even this monk the

highest ranking monk in the entire

country is saying it's it's not only

okay to offer money to monks but it's

good and you ought to do it. Then what

are what are the devout gullible

faithoriented Buddhists going to going

to believe?

A lot of Burmese lay people don't even

know it's against the rules for a monk

to touch women

cuz so many monks be like rubbing up

against girls on the buses and stuff.

So, I mean, I'm not shocked at all.

There's a I was pretty naive and a lot

of Western Buddhists are really naive to

the amount of just decadence and

degeneracy

that prevails in in the song. And it's

too bad really. I mean like I've said

before it's like 2% of Burmese monks

will go so far as not to handle money

whereas among Western monks it's like

50%.

Because in the west, I mean, first of

all, you're not just blindly following

along sheeplike with what everyone else

is doing. You're having to break away
from your own culture, maybe your own
family and friends in order to do this
that you feel very strongly about, and
you're doing it for idealistic reasons.
You want to become enlightened. But in
Burma or other traditional Buddhist
countries,
a lot of people just become monks
because, you know, they're like the the
seventh child of a poor subsistence
farmer. Maybe they just get sent to the
monastery by their parents because
there's just too many mouths to feed and
they want the like the prestige of
having a monk in the family and he might

have no spiritual calling whatsoever. Some of them are just lazy. They want to live an easy life. Some of them want get like a free education at the monastic universities. You know, they want upward social mobility. Some of them want money. You're not going to make much money as a subsistence farmer or a toddy tree climber and make more money as a monk. So, I mean, it's just really common in Asia. And it's too bad. I I really am sorry about it. It's sort of like I've said before the position of terra Buddhism in Burma is similar to the position of Roman Catholicism in Western Europe like in the 14th century where the people have unquestioning

faith in their religion. Their religion is true. All of it's true. Every word in the text is true.

And you do have some very saintly monks and nuns, very advanced saintly ones, but they are of course a small minority. And for the most part, the clergy is just corrupt as hell, which doesn't mean that they're bad people. Most monks are are actually good people. I mean they're like morally and just with regard to just inherent virtue at a somewhat higher level than the average lay person. You know it's something got them to become a monk but it's like the whole tradition

has become so corrupt with like I said even the Sa Raja of Burma the Sa Maha Nayaka seat of Burma is handling money and encouraging lay people to donate money to monks telling them how much merit they're going to make. And there are a lot of wise guy seats out there doing the same thing at their their their sermons. You know, they'll be encouraging people to donate money to monks.

I remember one time I had been staying at Alando Kathab National Park and I was leaving the the monsoon season had started so I was clearing out. usually just spent the hot seasons there. And we stopped at this monastery

where, you know, everyone wanted to meet the strange western monk who was famously living in a cave out in the woods. So, um, I'm I'm led into like the congregation hall at this village monastery and the Seattle has a plate put right in front of me on the stage and then he's telling everybody, "Donate, donate to the Western Monk so he can pay for his boat fair and everything." And I'm just I'm just like, "No, this is not cool." And the monk that was with me who knew me, he went to the seat and said, you know, he does not like this at all. And so the monk the the seat, you know, the abbott of the

monastery there comes up to me and says, "Just be patient. We're just getting you some money for your for your boat fair." And then I just like got up and walked like, "Fuck this." And I just refused to go to his monastery ever again after that. I was that was more than enough for me. But that's often the way it goes. I remember uh another time when I left that that area in at Londono Kazapa National Park. Um I was I made this raft. I was going to try and try and be clever and just ride a raft that I made down to the Chinduin River and then down to this town of Monua. Uh but it it just wasn't working because this raft did not have good hydrodnamics like a canoe. As

soon as you stop paddling, it would just stop. You know, there was there was no streamlining at all. And also, you had to be out in the middle of the river where the current was going, like near the banks of the river where the water's relatively shallow and safe. Then sometimes the current's actually going backwards. It took a while for me to realize that. So, I wind up stopping at this monastery by the side of the river and I asked where the the monastery was. I was going to just ask for permission to spend the night at their monastery. And I get to the congregation hall and there's this shady looking monk, his

teeth all red from Chew and Beetle, sitting there on a stool with a handful of money. And the villagers who wanted to go into the the the monastery congregation hall to watch TV on the monastery's TV set had to pay to get in. And you had this this monk chew and beetle with a handful of money just collecting collecting the money. I mean it wasn't even really donations. It's like you want to watch our TV you got to pay. And that kind of [__] is just all over the country. In Mon state in the south there's a little stricter monastic discipline. certain areas like Shan State and like the the area of Mandandalay is just notoriously bad.

School monasteries are like snake pits.
I stayed at a school monastery for over
a year in Mahag Gandhi which had a
reputation for being one of the stricter
ones and it was maybe 10% of the SA
didn't handle money there but still you
got these signs up outside the the
outhouse you know where you know Winnia
a book for sale you know book on
monastic discipline for sale this kind
of stuff
so yeah this varapo he's just a western
version of a kind of fake monk that is
not a rare species in Asian Buddhism.
And like I said, in answer to the
question, the uh the lay people, a lot

of lay people don't even know it's
against the rules. I mean, when you've
got the the leader of the the the SA in
the entire country telling you that
you're going to get all this merit for
donating money to monks, I mean, what
are they supposed to believe?
So after that herang, which has probably
just destroyed the faith of everybody
watching this video,
I'm going to go back to protoseud's
third question.
What are the karmic results for such
behavior? Straight to hell? Well,
I would guess that you're probably not
going to go straight to hell unless it's
really an egregious case of ripping

people off as a monk. I mean if we can if we can go by the texts themselves then um you know there's a number of sutas or uh also scenes in in the books of monastic discipline where Mahamogalana I think would be walking along with some other monk and he'd start smiling and then the other monk would ask him why are you smiling? He says wait till we get back to the monastery and I'll tell you. So then they get back to the monastery. The the monk asks the venerable one, you know, why were you smiling? And he would give this this account of some ghost that he had seen like hungry ghosts where, you

know, you've got some ghost that's on fire just flying through the air screaming. Or you've got some ghost that has elephantasis of the scrotum. and you've got like hawks and crows all pecking at his balls where he's, you know, obviously in great distress, this kind of thing. And it was always a case of somebody in a like a position of high trust and authority like abusing that trust. So like a corrupt judge that would take bribes or monks and nuns who just were not keeping their vows at all and were just taking advantage of the faith and like credul of the lay people. So going with Orthodox Terravada

just a shameless corrupt monk who's ripping people off under the guise of being a holy man. I mean, there's a good chance they'd wind up in the PA realm being tormented with crows pecking at their balls or some such, possibly go to hell, you know, if it's bad enough. Um but to some degree this is sort of a glorification
of dharma which is understandable in a dhhamma text but I think a lot of these monks who are handling money I don't think every monk who handles money or every monk who's even asking for money is necessarily going to wind up in some gruesome lower realm that they're

definitely going to be getting some kind of bad comma for. especially the ones that are just knowingly deceiving people like this varo admitted to doing that it's going to come back on them somehow. You don't know exactly how karma is going to come back to somebody. How what goes around comes around. I mean at the very least it's going to be something similar to what he perpetrated on others. He's going to have some kind of deep religious faith and he's going to wind up just getting like taken advantage of and exploited by some fake holy man himself,
you know? Or he's just going to just have like deep faith in a charlatan

who's just going to lead him astray
maybe lifetime after lifetime because
he's done it to so many other people.
It is true. and what few videos of his
that I have seen generally over my
woman's shoulder as she watches because
I mean she didn't believe in him from
the very beginning that I mean he knows
you know the words to say you know what
he was saying wasn't like just flatout
heresy or anything it reminds me of
there's a certain documentary
uh Kumar Kumari no I can't remember now
but it was he was this Indian guy in
living in America. I think he was born
in New Jersey or something. And he

decided to impersonate a holy man just to see what kind of results he would get. And he wound up having like a cult following. And then finally, I mean, it was like sometimes it would be really rough stuff. People would come up to him, you know, talking about how they were like incestuously abused as a child, this kind of stuff. And he's on the spot. I mean, he has to try and help them. and he's deliberately, you know, he's he's tr deliberately trying to [__] them over or anything. He's just seeing how well he can, you know, just sort of throw himself into the role of a holy man. And I'm sorry, I can't remember the name of the documentary. It was it's

it's worth watching.

H yeah, I keep wanting to say Kumara or something like that, but at the end he's having he's going to like come clean and admit to his followers that he's just like this producer of documentaries born in New Jersey. And I mean he's like in the bathroom just like holding his head. I mean he is in this state of just panic and fear at at the result. And the only person who really behaved negatively was this yoga instructor who had started teaching his methods visualizing the blue light and all this stuff that he was just making up. You know, she was like ashamed of herself and pissed off

because she actually bought into it and
was like teaching his techniques. But
most of the other people being kind of
lukewarm westerners anyway, they just uh
forgave him and you know shook his hand
or whatever.
So, the karmic results for monks that uh
just exploit
the the faith
of their followers in order to get rich
or whatever. Yeah. I mean, it's it's
probably subtle. I mean, it's not like
they're necessarily, you know, killing
anybody,
but it's uh yeah, it's it's really hard
to say and it's going to it would depend
on the individual. Like from the

Buddhist point of view, the one thing that is worse than murder for a monk, you know, of of the four parajikas, they're they're like in in ascending order of severity, you know, you start with just having sex, which is for a monk bad enough. Then after that is stealing. Then after that is murder. Then what's even worse than that is deliberately lying to lay people about having attained superhuman mental states.

So I don't know if this varapo guy I don't remember what his real name is. I don't know if he was actually going that far. I don't think he was like claiming

to be enlightened or any such thing. So
there there's at least that
I mean that from the terab Buddhist
point of view could land you in hell
because that's even worse than murder
for a monk to do.
But just uh you know having the hand out
for donations and I mean in his case he
was having the hand out a lot because he
was trying to become independently
wealthy through doing this stuff that
yeah there's going to be some kind of
negative results possibly like I already
said it may be that he's just going to
get taken advantage of and exploited and
disillusioned and just kind of have his
faith [__] over by somebody else

maybe repeatedly.
But it's really hard to say for
different people. It's it's it's
subjective. Karma is a subjective thing
depending on your own vitions and so
forth. So it's really hard for an
external observer to really say what's
going to happen.
So I'm just going to move on to the next
question. This is from Tzas is
in a kind of humorous vein. He says, "If
Earth is the third planet from the sun,
does that mean all countries are third
world countries?" No.
Trescus is a second question. I managed
to get through the first week following

the fifth precept.

Okay. What do you say? Well, Tresasquez is he uh admits to to being an alcoholic and recently he uh has gone cold turkey and has gone a week without drinking anything. He went through the withdrawal symptoms and everything and so I mean all I can say is saw saw sadu good work. Congratulations and uh stick with it. Don't just start getting complacent and fall off the wagon.

And with regard to this, I assume it's it's getable, but the letters of venerable Nana Vera, who wrote Clearing the Path, I think is his famous book. He's he's this notorious eccentric, intellectual, existentialist British

monk who lived in son from like 1950 to 1965 and considered himself to have become a sodapono. He went to son also known as Sri Lanka with the first famous nyanamole Osbert Moore and he eventually selfdeleted in 1965 but he has quite the following now he has much more of a following now than he did when he was alive especially among um like intellectual western monks and um some Sri Lankan monks like intellectual ones because he's he's very intellectual he was really into existentialism before he became a monk monk and he was converted to Buddhism by reading Julius Ivola, Julius Ivola's uh famous book on

Buddhism

when he was like in a hospital in Italy during World War II, I think he was in the military, the like the British military in World War II.

So in his letters that are often like connected to his clearing the path and which I consider to be much more interesting, you know, it's just letters where he's talking about, you know, the monk's life and existentialism, this kind of stuff,

FH Bradley, you know, his favorite philosophers, you know, he's mentioning those in his letter sometimes that he talks about like the psychology of addiction. And I read it a long time ago

and I'm not going to try and repeat it because I'm not sure I'm not at all confident that I get it right. But what he said about addiction and what it takes to really overcome addiction is on point. And if if Tzasquez is can find the letters of venerable Nyanaviraa and and find, you know, what he was saying about addiction, it could be available from Path Press, which I recently found out also has free copies of my Antakawaga translation. I think they're free. So if you look up Path Press, um Path Press was originally founded by followers of this same Yanova. So probably they would have his

clearing the path and his letters available in addition to my translation of the atikawaga which is big you know it's it's a goodly sized book but um on on the better side it's it's got the English and poly just completely opposite each other unlike my new translation where they're not facing the corresponding verses poly and English are not necessarily facing on opposite sides of the book. So yeah, maybe you could find the writings of venerable Nano Vera uh from Path Press, which should be easily findable online. And what he does say about addiction, it's like you have to be like 100% to overcome addiction. You know, it's it's

like part of your mind likes the
addiction. So that's the hard part cuz
when that part of your mind that likes
the addiction is allowed to take over,
then of course you fall off the wagon.
So there has to be like a well I'm not
even going to try and repeat whatever
said about it but what he said was
insightful and intelligent and largely
correct I think. So that's something you
could look up if you're into that.
But congratulations on
like not drinking. My father was a
hardcore alcoholic. He was like an
Eastern European type alcoholic. He
drank about a fifth of vodka a day. And

when he cold turkeyed, I mean, he was like having serious delirium tremens, you know, he was hallucinating and all kinds of stuff. It was it was difficult. So, good luck with that.

And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Cyrus Frame.

Let's see. Okay, this is from Cyrus Frame as I just said. And Cyrus Frame says,"I really liked your idea of there being only one scand or polyconda uh perception and valition or perception/volition both being just one aggregate.

It seems to me that it is a byproduct of natural selection. For example, you hear a tiger roar and you run or freeze. The

perception of the sound and the urge to move are a single unified biological event. It is language that makes a distinction but that is a map of the process not the thing itself. The map can be useful but it is important not to mistake the map for the territory. Is this what you have in mind when you say there is only one scand? Okay. I got to look back at the bookcase to see if I have the book still.

Okay.

apparently. Oh, here it is.

I still have the book. Okay.

So, the very first philosophical essay on Buddhism I ever wrote was on the

mainly trying to explain the five condas, especially the four mental ones. And it was caused by reading this book. I found this book at a used bookstore in Mandandalay long ago. Buddhist logic volume two. I never I never had volume one. I think I eventually found it and read it. And it's by Theodore Cherbatski who was a Russian like a a Buddhistic scholar back before the Soviet Union, like well over a hundred years ago. And there's one statement in here. I don't I'm not going to try and find it. Well, actually, I am kind of, but I'm not going to find it. But there's this one statement he makes in here about how

there's like an artificial distinction between like the spatial aspect and the temporal aspect of the same thing. And that caused me to to really start thinking especially with regard to like perception and volition. I mean really the thought experiment that really got me going on this whole idea that Cyrus frame is referring to was just the idea of what is it that comes first is it perception or volition because I mean how are you going to direct your attention to something

I mean you can't direct your attention to something before you perceive its existence but then how do you become

aware of it direct your I mean attention
of it without I mean it's like how can
one come before the other either you
have to have the volition to direct your
attention at something without having
perceived it yet or you have to perceive
it without having directed your
attention to it. So it seems like the
perception and the volition involved
would have to be simultaneous which
ultimately Buddhism does teach
and it's like if if they have to arise
together they can't possibly be
separated they always necessarily arise
in the same place at the same time and
can't be separate they can't exist
independently of each other which terra

Buddhism teaches then really it's just
two different ways of looking at the
same thing that's what that's what
occurred to me.
So that was just sort of like a a kind
of capernic revolution in my mind with
regard to understanding
Buddhist philosophy. I think
um
you know it's just like there's just one
mental because I mean you've got these
two other mentalas that are waiting or
feeling plus consciousness. So
perception and volition it seems to me
that they're the same. It's just the
temporal aspect and the the spatial

aspect or the the static and the kinetic, the the noun and the verb, noun and predicate that are just artificially separated when really it's just two aspects of the same thing like light and shining or wind and blowing. You can't have one without the other. You can't have light without shining. You cannot have shining without light. It's just a noun and a verb that are referring to exactly the same thing. And so I came up with this idea back around 1996 or so that

it's like perception is like the static or noun aspect and volition is just sort of like the active kinetic aspect of the same thing the very same phenomenon.

And then I went further with feeling. I mean this wasn't in my first essay. This is sort of a later development. But feeling really is just another kind of perception. At first in this essay that I wrote, feeling was just bare sensation, unprocessed sensory data. But um I think it's in this book also with in a like a different section. It's talking about the the Dignaga school of of Buddhism which was like a a medieval Mahayana logical school of Buddhism in India. And there was uh venerable Dharma is one of the leading philosophers in that group and he pointed out that bare sensation without any kind of like

perceptual interpretation at all. I mean it's the same as it not even being there you know to to exist is to be perceived. So the whole thing of of void being um just bare unprocessed sensory data, it just kind of falls through because it's like a non non-existent thing until it gets perceived and then all you're really aware of is the perception.

And consciousness is just kind of the the substance of the perception and the valition. You know, the perception and valition are like the the form that the consciousness takes.

So ultimately it's all just one. If you include feeling like pleasure and pain as just perceptions, which is what I'm

inclined to do now,
there's no need to to separate feeling
from perception. If it's just like
feeling is just sort of like a a less
intellectual kind of perception, you
know, it's just kind of a sensory
perception, but it's all perception.
It's just sort of like an arbitrary
distinction. You got verbal perception
and nonverbal perception, that kind of
thing or like, you know, pictorial would
be kind of along with verbal.
But I don't I don't even see that
there's necessarily a qualitative
difference. You know, it's all just
symbols that are a kind of

interpretation of what supposedly is is happening,
but that's all you're really exposed to.
Gosh, I don't know if if I'm just conmystifying everybody and and boring everybody by talking about this kind of stuff.
So, let's see.
Oh, perception of the sound and the urge to move or single unified biological event. Well, not necessarily. I mean, the perception of the sound and the urge to move are not necessarily the same, unless maybe it's just like this reflex where you just jump when you hear a loud noise, but you hear like a rustling in the bushes. That's not going to be the

the exact same as the urge to move cuz sometimes you just stop and, you know, just freeze, you know, and then try and understand what it is. But we don't need to get into that. So, let's see. The map can be useful is important. So where's the actual question? Oh, is this what you have in mind when you say there is only one cond?

Um

yeah, I mean I already explained what I what I had in mind is that you know it's all our world is will and perception. It's like schopenhau the world as will and representation. Will is chidina representation is sya. So it's samsara

as chedana and sya. That's how you would translate schopenhau into more Buddhistic language. And the vdana, the feeling is just another kind of perception. It's just sort of a non-verbal kind of perception. And consciousness itself is just sort of like the formless essence of it all.

So that's how I get down to one cond. I mean physical I mean the rupaconda I mean you can't prove that that even exists at all. I mean the only way you know of physical matter is through perception.

So that's perception too.

So that's that's how I did it. I mean

the the first step was from reading Cherbatsk's Buddhist logic that I got in Burma from a used bookstore.

Um, which kind of got me thinking about how, you know, perception and valition have to be simultaneous and really it's just two ways of looking at the same phenomenon.

One more as a noun and the other more as a verb.

One static and one kinetic.

So, let's see here.

That's that's essentially what I had in mind. Although it's hard to explain stuff like this clearly, which is probably why most of you have already

moved on to cat videos or something. Anyways, Cyrus Frame second question is the followup on the first one. He says, "Also, in coming up with this idea, were you influenced by FH Bradley?" And no, this was I came up with this idea before I ever heard of FH Bradley that I came up with this from from Cherbatski volume two. the FH Bradley. I um I first heard about FH Bradley from reading the the letters of Nyanova that I was discussing just a few minutes before that he was reading FH Bradley's principles of logic and so it sounded good because FH Bradley was a kind of idealist and he he followed the coherence theory of truth which is a

statement is true if and only if it is compatible with all the other beliefs. of what you consider to be true.

So yeah, it is not influenced by a phase broadly. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Cole. And Cole says,

"I've been watching your archaic Buddhism series and something has really struck me that I would love to hear you elaborate on. The atakawaga suta or atkawaga has a very zen quality to it especially in regards to the emphasis on abandoning the conceptual thinking mode of the mind. Furthermore the chan or zen approach to meditation seems similar the

jannaas I've even heard ajan sona mention that chan also zen is actually the Chinese word or Japanese word for janna. Do you have any thoughts about the parallel here between the various form and formless Janna's described and the Chan Zen teachings of meditative states regarding direct experience of the non-conceptual mind? Well, it is true that Chan and Zen are both derived from the Sanskrit word Janna, which isn't so much referring to the four Janna or the eight jas Buddhism, but it just means meditation. So Zen is the meditation school of Mahayana Buddhism. That's what it means. Essentially Janna literally means meditation. And even in

poly it probably like the four Jas were just the four levels of meditation.
Not like superhuman states. First Janna would just be elementary meditation done correctly in my opinion.
So
let's see what is the actual question here.
See do you have any thoughts about the parallel here between the various form and formless genres described in the chen or zen teachings of meditation states regarding direct experience of the non-conceptual mind. Well I mean formless genres I consider to be an anacronism. I think the formless Jonas

were added later, which is why they're just kind of tacked on to fourth Janna. They're seen as kind of annexes to fourth Janna. Originally, it was four Jonas.

Abidama made a fifth Janna, which didn't really take didn't really strike traction. And then the formless realms. Um yeah that I pretty sure that was added later as the systematizers of Indian philosophy just kept running with the ball and adding more and more stuff making stuff more and more complicated and hopefully comprehensive but they didn't really succeed at that in my opinion.

But the atikawaga of the sutini pata um

yeah it has been called like proto majamaka that like puggya paramita and majamaka really were a kind of reform movement getting back to the earliest teachings or attempting to get back to the earliest teachings uh and get away from this scholastic hyper complicated gobbleygook like the abidama philosophies.

So yeah, it's like the Buddha probably was originally teaching that you're not going to become enlightened by having views. You're not going to become enlightened by figuring anything out, by thinking about anything because all of that is just perception.

That if you want to know ultimate reality, you have to stop perceiving, stop trying to understand it through perception and just get straight to it. in the scene only the scene in the herd only the herd etc and not cling even to that.

So yeah, Zen Buddhism in certain ways may come closer to the original spirit of archaic Buddhism than later developments of Terravada, for example, Abidama and the the commentarial tradition and a lot of the devotional stuff. Although Zen itself is very corrupt with a lot of pure land stuff, a lot of mythology and so forth thrown into that. Also,

I was somewhat disillusioned when I first went to a Zen monastery because when you read books about Zen, it's it's all these men dressed in black standing around speaking in riddles and hitting each other with sticks. And then you go to an actual Zen monastery in say California and nobody hits anybody with sticks and nobody talks in riddles really, you know, it's just it's just rather mundane, which didn't really attract me much at all. I mean, at least there should be one person hitting people with sticks.

But no, I mean, every story I've ever read about the the Zen master Renzai,

the founder of the Renzai School of Zen in Japan, every single story I've ever read about him, he's hitting somebody with a stick or just punching them.

But I'm digressing wildly at this point.

So, do I have any thoughts about the parallel between the various form and formless Jon as well? not so much that described in the Chanzen teachings of meditative states regarding direct experience of the non-conceptual mind.

Well, it'd be better to compare Zen teachings with like the atika waga. Just leave aside any kind of schematic list of different levels. I mean that in it that's already samsara. If you got levels

different levels, it's it's samsaric.
So I mean you want to get past all the
the like division and systematization
classification and just get straight to
unadulterated reality.
And the atakawaga really was oriented
towards that. And
Zen Buddhism also is in in its own way.
It's it's a more Chinese kind of take,
more intuitive
um less like systematically mystical and
more of a kind of intuitive wisdom
approach to essentially the same thing.
So,
um, yeah, I really don't think that
various form and formless genres really

would would be the issue here seems to me.

And I'm just going to move on to Cole's next question, which is a follow-up. He says, "A follow-up question would be regarding the intermingling of Buddhism and Daoism after Bodhi Dharma introduced Buddhism into China. I have seen in many writings how the Chan patriarchs seem to view samsara and nirvana as two aspects of the great void which seems counter to what the Buddha taught. Descriptions of nibbana by the Buddha seem to imply that there isn't a reality beyond that. Nibbana or some and samsara emerging from the void as a concept seems exactly the same as the dowist yinyang

differentiation from wuji emptiness concept. Any thoughts on that? Yeah, I do not think that the original teachings of the Buddha were implying that there was anything beyond nibbana. That in my opinion nibbana is reality.

You can quote me on that. Nibbana or Nirvana is reality

and samsara is like a delusional take kind of fevered dream. It's perception essentially especially if you believe the perception and um are not detached from it that you're identifying with the perceptions.

So let's see here. These these long questions kind of are a little bit

difficult to to handle sometimes because I got to like search for the the question mark. And the question here is any thoughts on that.

So yeah, I mean Indian philosophy especially they're always trying to up one. It's like oneupmanship, you know, like in the upupanachads or other kinds of just Indian philosophy in general. You've got some school saying this is the highest truth. This is ultimate reality. And then you've got some other school of philosophy saying nope you guys are just limited because we we found and we know of a reality that's even higher than that.

So I mean a standard example a really

obvious example is Brahma in Buddhism in

in like

vanta

Brahma is the personification of

ultimate reality. Brahman is essentially

what Nirvana is to the Buddhists and

Brahman is ultimate reality.

Then the Buddhists come along and say,

"Nope, that's Brahma is he's like a

mediocre level deity. There's all these

levels above Brahma and some of them are

attainable only to Buddhists

or it's like in in the Upanishads. I

mean you've got Brahman is is considered

to be the ultimate reality and then

you've got like one or two other upanes

that's referring to the fourth which is
supposedly even higher than Brahman.
It's like uh I can't remember what it's
called up Brahman something like that
you know it's like even higher than
ultimate reality somehow or like some of
these charlatans who have come come
along over the centuries saying you know
I'm even higher than a Buddha
but I do think that nibbana I mean it
has like two aspects you've got the
ethical aspect which is this the
attainment of enlightenment and then
you've got more of the metaphysical
aspect of just reality. You know what is
there when you are no longer deluded?
You're still conscious and you're not

delusional anymore.

So

let's see what's the actual question. So it'd be kind of similar to Dao. You know there's that chapter that little part of the Dao teaching. You know from the Dao came the one from the one came the two from the two came the 10,000 things. But Dao is like you know the original source and nibbana especially from a Mahayana point of view. I mean Terravada really doesn't get that metaphysical with regard to this stuff that wisely I think the Buddha just did not want to reify the absolute. You know he talked about nibbana as little as possible. In the

atawaga I can't remember the word
nibbana actually appearing in the entire
atawaga. There's like nibbiadi and
nibbuti which are like verbs and and
like a past participle blowing out and
having blown out or being blown out.
But that's that's that's emphasizing
like the ethical like the practice
aspect of attaining the goal and not
trying to explain or describe the goal
because it's just an exercise in
futility.
But it's it's hard to have a goal
without thinking about the goal. And so
especially
um like some Mahayana philosophers
really took the ball and ran with it and

uh just really were trying to explain sometimes very sophisticated subtle philosophical language, you know, trying to kind of explain it, but ultimately it's it just doesn't work.

So let's see what is descriptions of nibbana by the Buddha seem to imply that there isn't a reality beyond that. Yeah, it's like nibbana is the essence and samsara is just perceived forms made up of that essence but we're not aware of the essence because we're just stuck at the level of form.

Okay, so let's see. Nibbana or samsara emerging from the void as a concept seems exactly the same as the dowist

yin-yang differentiation from Wuji emptiness concept you or from the dao came the one from the one came the two from the two came the 10,000 things of samsara

and I guess uh see the question is any thoughts on that and the answer is yeah which I I did uh I did kind of spew some of those thoughts just now and I'm just going to move on to Cyrus Frame's third question. And I commend all the people who have asked questions by not asking a transgressive fourth one except possibly the protoseud who just kind of had like a rhetorical question mark towards the beginning.

So Cyrus Frame says I'm very interested

in Wedina or feeling tone as an object of mindfulness particularly regarding the altering of one's perceptions. To me, perception would seem to sit between feeling and craving independent origination. There seems to be major implications here for arresting craving. Do you have any practical advice in regards to working with this in meditation? Well, I mean feeling like I like I said half hour ago maybe is strikes me as just another kind of perception. I think it wound up as one of the links in dependent core origination. dependent core rising from vaydana you've got it goes straight from

feeling to craving and I agree I used as a monk I used to think there ought to be perception or something right in between feeling and craving especially back when I was interpreting feeling as just bare sensory data you know just bare sensation with with no perception added to it yet but if you look at like prototypes of the 12 link theory in that can be found in various places like um the saka panya suta of the diggan kaya has a kind of protoependent coising also the kalaha wiwara suta of the atakawaga of the sudinata has like this prototype of the 12 links theory and sometimes instead of waiting it just says pleasant and unpleasant. So craving comes from

pleasant and unpleasant. And according to Buddhist philosophy, you've got pleasant feeling and unpleasant feeling. So that's probably the meaning of feeling in the the 12 links of dependent core rising in the official formula. It just means like pleasure and pain or pleasantness and unpleasantness.

And that leads to craving because you've got like this preference. I want I want the pleasant and I don't want the unpleasant. And so I start like struggling with the way things are.

And that that's [__] [__] up is what that does.

So yeah, I think that is why it goes

directly from feeling to craving.
Especially if you look at some of the prototypes that can be found in the text where instead of feeling it has pleasant unpleasant or loved and unloved and that's what leads to the craving and the suffering.
So it was it's kind of a a manner of speaking that the meaning of which kind of got lost to a lot of dogmatic Buddhist philosophical types.
So yeah, if perception would seem to to sit between feeling and craving um if you consider feeling to just be like bare bare sensual data, unprocessed c sensory data,
but if feeling is like pleasure and

pain, pleasantness and unpleasantness, then you can see more of an obvious connection between that and subsequent subsequent craving.

So let's see here.

There seems to be a major implications here for arresting craving. Do you have any practical advice in regards to working with this in meditation? Well, I mean the way you do it is mainly through mindfulness. Like if you're feeling pleasure and pain, I mean you you observe the pleasure and pain with equinimity. You like philosophical attachment or the detachment that comes from mindfulness. Mindful observation.

So you feel pain in your arm or let's say you're meditating. So you feel pain in your knee. Well, I mean the natural response to pain is aversion. You know, you want to change position or you're just like not liking that and being unhappy because you want the pain to stop. The pain in your knee is not the same as suffering.

Pain and suffering are not the same. The suffering comes from desiring or craving that pain to be otherwise, wanting it to stop.

So the pain in your knee is just sort of like a red light that instinctively or reflexively we want to stop. We want to push it away. But it's not exactly the

same. Pain in your knee is just like it's it's a feeling that instinctively we automatically have a version for. Through mindful observance and equinimity, you can sort of cause a detachment between the the stimulus and the automatic knee-jerk response that through like intensive mindfulness. You just observe as it as it truly is. You just like observe that pain. You know, what does it feel like? You do an intensive meditation retreat where you're all of a sudden, you know, sitting, walking, sitting, walking, an hour, you know, hour sitting, hour walking, hour sitting, hour walking all

day long. You're going to have all kinds of just excruciating pains. Your knee, your ankle, like a certain tiny muscle in your back that only anatomists would know the name of. And it's it's just like this searing, jabbing pain that you're going through, maybe for a few days until your your muscle system restructures enough to accommodate you sitting like straight up and down for hours every day, which you usually don't do. So you got like the the dull throbbing pain. You've got the sharp jabbing pain. You've got like the twinging pulsing pain. All these different kinds of pain and you can just observe them like an ichthyologist

observes a dead fish

ideally.

And then when you get good at that, I

mean when you're doing that as just a

full-time practice as like a monk,

you're you're just living in a cave.

You've just completely simplified your

life to the extent where you can really

be paying more attention to to these

just minute things that are happening

instead of having to like pay bills and

deal with people demanding your

attention and all that.

You just become a professional meditator

even when you're not sitting

cross-legged with your eyes closed. You

know, when you're reaching for something, you're aware of the intention to reach and like the the oily feeling in the joints and the feelings of your muscles and, you know, the con the pressure of your fingers against what it is and you know, just the the urge to like close your fingers to pick it up. And it's all these all this stuff is going on. And when you're aware of that, it makes it a lot easier to detach because you're not really identifying with. That's I mean, it's just stuff that's happening that you're just observing without clinging to it or identifying with it or forming any kind of commentarial interpretation of it.

It's just nature taking its course and you are just the observer.

And even if you have to make a decision, you still observe the decision being made.

And sometimes that decision may be aversion for pain or attraction to pleasure. You just observe that and do not react.

So I mean that's going with dependent core origination the the 12 links you know it's pleasant pleasure and pain lead to craving. I mean that's the main interpretation of it. seems to me that it's not really referring to um let's see feeling tone unless it's in the

sense of positive feeling tone and

negative feeling tone that you're going

to have attraction or aversion for and

and like consequent cravings one way or

the other.

Uh but um interested in waiting or

feeling tone as an object of

mindfulness.

Um yeah I mean whatever it is you're

feeling like um the way I was doing

anapana meditation mindfulness of

breathing as a monk was essentially kind

of waiting nanupasa where it's just the

the sensation of touch at the nostrils

or upper lip

but it will get you a long ways. It is a

relatively advanced practice way. It's

one of my favorites of like the four sip patanas
that really I'm skeptical of even the existence of mindfulness of the body because the only way you're aware of the body is through feeling and mental states.
So I guess I answered that question. I hope I did. And so now for something completely different.
Raja Kumar says, "Why is Georgiani so pro-Israel?"
That's just right out of left field, isn't it? So Jason Georgiani, he's some Iranian guy who lives in the West and some of the members of the

Discord server

are like watch his videos all the time.

I've never seen a single Jason Georg

Johnny video. I don't even know if

that's the correct pronunciation of his

name,

but apparently Georgian Johnny is

pro-Israel at present, even though he's

Iranian because apparently he's like a

secular Iranian living in the West. He's

not a fundamentalist Shiite Muslim. And

so he probably is in favor of the idea

of Israel just bombing the current

Ayatollah regime of Iran out of

existence so that it can go back to a

more secular culture like existed under

the sha. So I assume Jason Georgiani is

pro-Israel because the enemy of my enemy is my friend.

So, Georgian Johnny probably does not like the Ayatollas, you know, the fundamentalist Shiite government of Iran. And since Israel is the enemy of Iran, Israel is Georgiani's friend. And then uh on Twitter, he was talking about or ex Georgian Georgiani was talking about how Iran and Israel could become like powerful allies if the current regime can be toppled and you know, etc., etc. We don't need to get into all the political stuff, but just that would be my best guess as to why Georgiani, someone that I know very little about,

is pro-Israel because he is a secular Iranian who is against the Ayatollah le regime in current Iran.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. That's what I'm going to do. And we are kind of getting down towards the bottom, so it'll be less than three hours.

I'm being a little more long- winded, a little more verbose than usual, I think.

Robert says, "What is your opinion of using a mala for spiritual practice? Have you ever found it useful?" And a mala is like the Buddhist equivalent or the Hindu equivalent of a rosary. You know, it's like a a string of beads, a garland of beads with 108 beads,

including like the big the big one. So that when you go all the way through, you hit the big one, you know you've done the full 108.

And it's very commonly used among Burmese lay people especially or Burmese monks too. Sometimes you'll just see an old monk sitting there with his mala, you know, he'll be just sitting there fingering the mala. And I tried it once. Um, and mainly it was like I was experimenting with seeing if it would be useful for combating sleepiness because if you have to keep your thumb moving then that in itself is going to keep you awake because you it'd be difficult to

sleep with your thumb still moving.
But it just it never really appealed to me too much. It's it was just too busy of a meditation technique that um as a monk I preferred more subtle kinds of meditation where your mind is doing as little as possible you know as still and silent as possible and using a mala is it's more suitable for lay people I think or sort of beginning level meditation.
It could be that there's some advanced mala meditation technique but I don't know what it would be. So, personally, I never really found it useful, although a lot of people do. So, I'm not going to badmouth Mollas here.

And I'm just going to move on to Robert's next question. I suppose I should step it up a little bit and not just digress wildly all over the place with every question. So, Robert's second question is, do you have any opinions on Tibetan Buddhism, specifically the Kagu school? Do you think it is a profound system that can lead one to ultimate reality? Well, I'm no authority on Tibetan Buddhism and I'm not exactly sure what the Kaguyu school even is. Those
I mean that wouldn't apply to red hats or yellow hats or anything like that. I assume,

but I mean this question reminds me of uh a cartoon I saw in a Buddhist magazine many years ago and it had three meditators. It was a a terra weasna meditator, a Zen meditator, and a Tibetan meditator. And the terravada weasna meditator of course is like a blonde white woman with like a shawl. She's sitting in it's like Berry, Massachusetts or something. And she just has like this thought balloon and like an empty thought. She's sitting there in meditation with the standard empty thought balloon. Then next to her, you got the Zen meditator who is wearing like the gray Zen pajamas. And he's got a thought balloon, too. But it's it's

drawn sort of like the Zen circles like paint like a brush brush and ink like India ink or China ink, I guess. And so you got like the the the calligraphic thought balloon coming out and it also is empty. And then finally, you've got the Tibetan meditator who's like a guy in a business suit with like a briefcase sitting next to him. And he's doing Tibetan meditation. And it's all these it's sort of like paisley type curly ue shaped thought balloon. You know, first you got the little bubbles that lead up to the big balloon. You know, it's all like these paisley curly cue kind of things. And then the main thought

balloon has all this, you know, arabes all around it, but it also in the middle is empty.

So it's just three empty thought balloons of three meditators in three different traditions um all doing essentially the same kind of no thinking.

So Tibetan Buddhism definitely you know like Zogchen for example you know it's it's a profound meditation technique that leads you to like going beyond perception not relying on perception. That's that's mainly what Buddhism or it's mainly what meditation is supposed to do, at least from a Buddhist point of view in my opinion, is you're calming

the waves of perception
until you can see through the waves of perception, not be distracted by them anymore. You know, it's like consciousness is water and perception is the waves. Mental states are the waves on the surface of the water. And most people, unenlightened people are just stuck at the level of waves, the level of form. They have no concept at all of just water. You know, it's just I like this wave, I don't like that wave. This wave is better than the other wave over there. You know, it's just all waves. It's all mental states. And the underlying consciousness, the substance,

the essence of it all, they have no concept of it any more than a fish has a concept that it's wet.

So what you do in meditation is you you calm the waves. You try to get as close to a flat calm as you can so that there's no waves to distract you and all there is left to be aware of is just the water itself.

And then if you're really good then after the waves come back you can still just be operating at the level of water.

So that's getting back to sea cpad zed's question of the enlightened being you know you don't have to eliminate the form of desire to be enlightened it's just that the form is just irrelevant at

that point.

So if Tibetan Buddhism leads to being wide awake and not thinking anything in its meditation and then even better yet after you start thinking and making noise again that you're still at that same kind of seeing through it all then it's fine. Although I've never really practiced Tibetan Buddhism to speak of and I can't really vouch for how far it gets you, but I would assume there have been enlightened Tibetan Buddhists.

So I think it's possible that it is a profound system that possibly can lead one to ultimate reality. Like uh the Tibetan book of the great liberation,

also known as the yoga of seeing the mind in its nakedness, is one of the most profound Buddhist texts I've ever read. Even though it's it's Tibetan, it's attributed to Padma Sambava, but whether it really was composed by Padma Sambava or not, I don't know.

And I'm just going to move on to Robert's next question.

He says, "A philosopher named Bernardo Castrop has proposed a version of idealism, analytic idealism, where there is only one mind at large, and we are basically dissociations of the mind at large. Everything is fundamentally mind, but it is not a subjective idealism like Barkley, which I have heard you critique

before. What are your opinions on this?"
Yeah, I think it would probably come
closer than Barkley to the truth. is it
it's kind of like my theory my uh simile
of the block of marble which I mean I'
I've beaten this one to death where
you've got this block of marble and
contained within that block of marble
are every possible statue and some of
those statues are so intricate that they
become self-referential and start
thinking that they are separate from
everything else. they start thinking
that they're real even though they're
just virtually contained in that block
of marble, but the entire statue is

already in there. It's really in there
at least in conditional or potential or
virtual form.
So I mean if you want to call the block
of marble like pure like infinite
formless consciousness
you know it's kind of what uh vdanta
teaches even some obscure Buddhist texts
like even terra or pre-terra Buddhist
texts and then they hint at that
sometimes
then sure you've got infinite formless
consciousness which contains within it
every possible form of consciousness.
because it's like statues inside this
uncarved block. And some of those forms
of consciousness are recursive,

self-referential,
and they just become delusional and just
kind of dissociate
from the rest of the infinite
consciousness. So yeah, what my
understanding of the case is not so
different from what Bernardo Castro
seems to think.
But that's one way of looking at it. But
any kind of model is ultimately invalid
because it's all perception in samsara.
You're never going to use ideas
to get past samsara into reality because
any kind of idea is of necessity
samsaric.
There is no highest truth that can be

told. You know the tr the name that can be named is not the eternal name.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from PSA.

And PSA says, "What do you think of the monks marching for peace to Washington?"

And yeah, I got asked this one like a month or so ago back when they were actually marching. To some degree, it's kind of a publicity stunt. I think it's harmless. It's just a way of drawing attention to monks walking for peace, which is kind of a nice idea. I don't think it ended any wars. I don't think it necessarily made the world more peaceful, but I mean it's monks making a statement of, you know, we're peaceful

monks. We're in favor of peace. Um, so this is what we're doing.

And it got like a positive response. At least people got to see monks walking around. I mean, one of the 38 blessings of the Mongalas Suta is seeing renuncience. And that was like the the the thing that uh Prince Sedata Godma saw that inspired him to renounce the world and eventually become the Buddhas. He saw a wandering holy man.

So I mean it's it's a blessing to people so long as they're receptive to it to see wandering holy men or wandering Thai monks

that it's it's actually a good thing. So

in a way they're putting themselves out there. You know, it's sort of like the rule that monks are required to accept alms food. They can't grow their own food. They can't provide their own food. They have to be fed by lay people. And one of the reasons for that is so that lay people will be exposed to monks and just sort of get an idea of what it's all about. And in the west, you don't have a lot of monks just going for alms in the morning. So just seeing these monks walking for peace to Washington is is an opportunity for people to be exposed to these wandering renuncients. So I mean all in all it's harmless at worst.

I don't think that they're trying to scam anybody like Varapa was doing. Maybe just a teensy bit, you know, just getting a few donations. Maybe some of them handle money. I don't know.

Well, yeah, it's I think it's more good than bad. I mean, it probably didn't really promote world peace all that much other than just kind of latent subtle seeds planted in the hearts of hundreds or thousands of people, which may have some vague subtle influence.

But all in all, I've got nothing bad to say about it. And I'm going to move on to PSA's next question,

which is what's the most overrated

Buddhist text you've ever read? It could be scripture from Terravada, Mahayana, Vajriana, other traditions or modern books written by either monastics or lay people. Well, I mean, there's a number of Mahayana texts that I really consider I mean, the world would be a better place if they had never been composed like um the Oh, what is it? There's one called the Nirvana Sutra that is just like a cardinal text for like some pure land Buddhist some other Mahayana Buddhist and if you read it I mean it's obviously just a madeup fairy tale I mean and it's teaching what is essentially something the historical Buddha himself would have just denounced

or was weaki nardisha sutra where you've
got this bodhic sattva a layman named we
malakerti who is just making fools of
the Ara disciples of the Buddha and he's
going to like taverns and whouses and
this kind of thing. So I mean the
Wimalakerti near Desha Sutra is one of
the better known Mahayana Sutras.
So texts like that I mean it's they do
more harm than good in my opinion
it's it's slandering the Buddhist
teachings in my opinion
with regard to like terravada Buddhist
texts the most overrated
well I mean some of the devotional stuff
like the Ratana Suta it's one of the 12

paras it's relatively wellknown if if anybody has memorized by heart six polyutas the Rata Nasutas, there's a good chance that's that's among the six. If they've only memorized one, it's probably like the metasuta or the mangalasut or the damachaka puatanasuta, you know, those cardinal basic ones. But the ratasuta is wellknown and it never really spoke to me. It's just devotionalism. you know, there's almost no actual dharma in it even though it's it's just a basic text because it's it's just praising Buddha Dhama and Sa and I mean there's nothing necessarily wrong with praising Buddha Dama and song but when that's all there is to it when

you're not even getting into any kind of philosophy to be praised
then you know it's just devotionalism
it's just kind of worshipy and I would consider it to be overrated um with regard to larger text like the Jotica stories. I mean there's there's a lot of silliness just flatout silliness in the Jotica stories. Um
and again it's just getting into devotionalism. The probably the best use of Jotica stories is it's sort of like Asup's fables for Buddhists where you learn at least about I mean it's kind of entertaining stories and you learn about ancient India you know what it was like

living in ancient India that kind of thing. Um the Wizudi manga in my opinion is overrated. It's it's like um the central text in the terravada commentarial tradition and it seems to me that it's mainly a manual on self-hypnosis.

There is some interesting stuff like there's one chapter one of the early chapters is just going over the 13 dutongas the optional aesthetic practices. the very the chapter before that if I remember correctly is just the value of morality you know basic stuff like that is is interesting the 32 parts of the body there's a chapter going over the 32 parts of the body you just see

plainly enough that they really were

ignorant of human anatomy and physiology

in those days you know they had no

concept of what the brain was for

example

so

yeah Um the most overrated Terravada

Buddhist text maybe the Wizudi Maga. I

mean it does have some valuable

information and you can learn stuff from

it but uh it is kind of unfortunate to

me that it is like the central text that

defines terra Buddhism

or the Ratana Suta you know I mean

there's there's quite a few kind of

famous sutas that don't really have much

substance to them and so I don't consider their cardinal status to be really wellought oriented.

But it's not like I'm I'm saying they're bad or anything. I'm just saying that they're overrated.

And so I move on to PSA's third question, which is the last question of this Q&A finally for the two of you that are still watching.

And he says, "Same question as question two, but underrated instead of overrated."

Well, with regard to Tibetan Buddhism, I mean, the the Tibetan book of the great liberation, the the yoga of knowing the mind and its nakedness, I mean, that's

well worth reading, even though probably most Buddhists have never heard of it. with regard to Mahayana Buddhism, like non- Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism. I don't know what the most underrated I mean, probably there's some real gems in the the zillion gajillion volumes of the the Mahayana Tropidica, but I'm not exactly sure what what they would be because I'm not an authority and I've probably never heard of them. But with regard to terra I mean that's pretty obvious of an answer for me would be the atikawaga of the sutin pata just the sutin pata in general is I mean it used to be this cardinal basic

texts that just gradually faded into

obscurity

like a number of the sutas that Ashoka

recommended

for study in his his edicts were from

the sutin pata Um the but the atakawaga

of the suchini pata I mean a lot of

Buddhists have never heard of it which

is and a lot of terraata Buddhists like

in in Burma you know they just know the

the basic ones that are wellknown you

know kind of like the mainstream texts

but something like the atagawaga it's

kind of an embarrassment to orthodox

terraada because it's not orthodox it's

like pre-orthodox

so you know it's just kind of awkward It

doesn't really fit in to the the wellestablished system of orthodoxy in Terravada, but in my opinion, it is potentially at least the most important document in existence on this planet that we know of. Who knows, they might dig up something in Central Asia that's even more just groundbreaking or something. But the atagawaga is probably the largest fragment of archaic pre-terravara Buddhism still in existence which is one reason why I translated. At the time I really didn't have access to a good translation. Ajan Tenisero and Bikubodi hadn't translated it yet. At

least it wasn't published by them yet.
So I made my own translation
just because I consider it to be so
important. I mean, it's just like, like
I say, the largest extent fragment of
like primitive archaic Buddhism still in
existence.
And it's it's grotesqually underrated
just based on that assessment of mine.
And so that's it. I'm done. I answered
all the questions. I hope at least tried
to answer all the questions.
So, like I should always say at the
beginning and pretty much never do, do
you think I could answer a question of
yours, you know, mainly about dharma,
you know, philosophical stuff? Anything

that you think I can answer? You can even ask about evolutionary biology if you want, I guess.

Just uh feel free to leave them in the comments below this video. Um, no more than three questions per person per episode, please. And feel free to check out the URL links below, which includes the Amazon link to my new book. And uh what else? Like and subscribe if you haven't done so already. And uh be happy. And now I'm going to push this button which is going to make me stop talking.

Alrighty then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 189.

I am your host Punya Basho.

It's kind of amazing to me that

like my first eight or so Q&A's, I was

still a monk at the time.

And here I am up to 189, which is not

prime, but is in fact 3 * 3 * 3 * 7.

Uh and I got the uh

Arabica coffee going.

This is uh my first good cup of coffee

today. See, I got this woman who cares

about me. And so when she makes the

coffee for me, she's putting stuff like

collagen and like whey powder and stuff

into my coffee that makes it not taste

like coffee.

But she has the best of intentions, I'm

sure.

And uh we do not have an extremely long

Q&A today.

Um

I guess it's like finally

I'm answering everybody's questions.

So

everyone was just satisfied, I guess.

And uh I am I mean I mean this is kind

of a philosophical sort of video.

This these Q&A's, Q's and A's, these Q&A

videos tend to be somewhat philosophical

and I've just been struck by this

philosophical

situation that happened to me today when

somebody brought up the question, does a

drinking straw have one hole or two

holes?

And

I asked this question

on the the Discord server that is

associated with

all this.

And someone said they learned in school

that a straw has only one hole.

Which then leads to the problematic

like

what is this result?

That our mouth and our butt hole are the

same hole.

Which is kind of

it's kind of thrown me for a loop, if

you will.

But I guess we should just get into

this. I don't think this is going to be

an extremely long one.

It's [clears throat] going to start to

be summery outside and stuff. People are

out there sniffing flowers and [__]

So

first question is from Xenothoid.

And Xenothoid says, "What are your

thoughts on the philosopher Martin

Heidegger? Here's an old video of him

talking with a Buddhist monk if you're

interested."

Well, somebody I think it was a a few

months ago, maybe a couple months ago,
asked me about Heidegger and my answer
at the time was I mean all I knew about
Heidegger at the time
was that he was
considered to be an existentialist or at
least existentialism adjacent.
He [snorts]
influenced existentialist philosophy
anyhow. And
he was a Nazi. At least he was a I mean
he wore like the swastika armband when
delivering his lectures at university in
Germany
at the time
before the end of World War II.

And that's pretty much all I knew about

him.

I really never studied up on Heidegger.

Um but Xenothoid provided me with this

video of Heidegger talking with a

Buddhist monk, which is kind of

interesting because

there wasn't so much of a an exchange of

ideas as just a monk who looked like

maybe a Thai monk was interviewing

Heidegger and just asking Heidegger

questions.

And

so I mean it's

I watched the video.

So probably most of what I know about

Heidegger or at least half of it is

derived from this 15-minute long old
black and white video of a Buddhist monk
asking questions
to Martin Heidegger.
And Heidegger says a few things towards
the beginning of the video that are kind
of strange. It's like he says a question
that has never been asked before up
until the 20th century, apparently, is
what is man's relation to being?
Um
and that's just kind of strange to me. I
mean being or bhava is a term in
Buddhism where like in the 12 links of
dependent co-arising
the bhava

represents karma. You know, it's it's

just like the force of existence.

Which is, you know, the force of

samsaric

unenlightened existence.

And um

so I mean

I mean what do you mean when you say

being?

I mean I mean it is discussed like in

Buddhism or like existence and

non-existence

according to the Kalahawi Sutta of the

Atthagavagga of the Suttanipata

of the Sutta Pitaka of the Pali Tipitaka

existence and non-existence are a kind

of mental state. You know, it's just

sort of like this mental

mentally generated dualism.

So I mean

this the idea of what is man's relation

to being?

I would just emphasizing, you know, what

is it what does it mean to be? I mean it

seems like unnecessary intellectual

complication.

And it does remind me of a statement by

David Hume, which I wrote down. I

thought it was good enough statement

that I wrote it down in this little

notebook when I was a monk.

And David Hume said, "The idea of

existence is the very same with the idea

of what we conceive to be existent."

So I mean it's like the existence of a

thing is just the thing itself.

So I mean anything that exists, I mean

that in itself would just be all of the

manifestations being.

But it may be

that let's see here. There's another

statement by

uh Spinoza that's kind of along the same

lines here if I can find it. Oh, here.

So Spinoza on the subject

says "The striving by which each thing

strives to persevere in its being is

nothing else than the actual essence of

the thing itself."

So I guess that kind of touches on this

subject at hand.

But it seems to me that Heidegger is just I mean he's not so much wise as he is like intellectually intelligent. And he reminds me with just his verbally dense, complicated intellectual approach to understanding the world, he reminds me of Sartre.

Or Sartre. I don't know how to pronounce French names. I don't even really try. But and I mean I read some some of Sartre.

And it seems to me like when he's philosophizing

it's like his strategy is just to come up with such convoluted, complicated,

complex statements that neither he nor
anybody else can detect the flaws in his
reasoning. He's just lost in the
complications.
And Heidegger, I mean he seems
kind of along those same lines. I mean
it's just this dense intellectualizing
as an attempt to understand
what ultimately you can't really
understand by thinking about it.
But he was a product of
20th century Western culture.
And uh mysticism really was not a big
deal at that time. And from my point of
view, you're only going to understand
reality through
mysticism, which is just

direct awareness of

anything without having to filter it

through perception.

Just direct experience of reality

without thinking about reality.

So man's relation to being, I mean it's

I mean going with Hume, it's like man's

relation to himself. I mean there there

is no relation. It's just the being of a

man is just the man.

The being of a cup of coffee is the cup

of coffee.

So I mean it might be that he's kind of

reifying some abstraction

of what does it mean to exist.

But

I don't know. It just seems
I mean I can't really relate to it very
well, possibly just because I'm just
introduced to this in an old grainy
black and white YouTube video.
So let's just move on to this next
little bit I picked up from the video.
Uh he says man is the only living
creature with language giving him
the he's the only living being on this
planet that has a knowledge relation to
being, if I remember that correctly.
And I mean obviously human beings are
not the only creatures with language.
We're the only creatures maybe with a
kind of arbitrary, abstract, symbolic
language, but

animals have language. You know, like
body language, for example. I mean when
a dog yelps, that's a kind of language
communication. When it's wagging its
tail, that's a kind of language
communication. And there's even
interspecific,
like interspecies understanding of other
other languages or other animals like
calls, for example.
Like when I lived in a cave in Burma,
there were wild chickens, red jungle
fowl. There was a kind of
uh kind of spotted owl.
And also there were squirrels.
And

they all knew they all understood each other's warning calls. Like if one of them saw a hawk, it would make a sound. It wasn't the same sound among the three species, but the other two species would know that warning call, and they would take heed, you know. So if if the squirrel made some warning call when it saw a hawk, the owls and the chickens would both hide. And if the owl saw the hawk first, it would make a warning sound, a different warning sound than squirrels made, but still they would understand. And they would like take cover.

Bees,

honeybees have that complicated dance,

which is a kind of communication where
the bee is indicating to the other bees,
you know, how far away it is, how far
away the source of nectar is, you know,
what direction, and how much of it is
there relatively speaking. But this is
all just sort of programmed into the
bee.
It's not like a verbal language, which I
assume Heidegger's talking about. But
still,
I mean,
you have to have some kind of symbolic
language to have
like a knowledge relation to being.
I mean,

what Heidegger is calling knowledge I would call just a kind of complicated delusion.

So, yeah, I wasn't much impressed with that.

Although he did say something that I think is good.

Not that it was the only thing he said that I think is good, but something noteworthy, something worthy of remarking on, that he defined religion as a reaction to powers and laws which exceed human capacity.

You know, it's sort of like a perception of something greater than you.

And like an awareness of that and a a response to

something greater than yourself.
Which, I mean, that's that's a fairly
good explanation of of religion. It's
better than, you know, describing, you
know, the worship of a god or gods as
religion because, for example, Theravada
Buddhism
doesn't really worship a god or gods.
It's it's more or less of an atheistic
religion.
So, with regard to Heidegger,
I mean, if I studied him and kind of
forgave him like the dense verbosity
of his like attempts to explain reality
or whatever it is he's trying to
explain,

then I mean, I might have more
appreciation for him. But it just seems
like he's more intelligent than wise.
And just barking up the wrong tree,
trying to understand reality by thinking
about it. And I think it's just a a
fool's errand, just an exercise in
futility.
>> [sighs]
>> But
in the [clears throat]
tradition of Western civilization,
it's that does seem to be the approach.
You try to understand anything by
figuring it out.
And I do not think the absolute, the
capital A absolute of ultimate reality

can be figured out. The best you can do with the intellect is something along the lines of Nagarjuna or maybe even Gautama Buddha like in the arc- archaic suttas, where you're using logic to just attack itself. You I mean, you you try to understand the limitations of your own like reasoning capacity, and then just kind of set it aside. Or like in Zen, you try to solve a riddle that has no solution until your mind just comes to a screeching halt. You know, it just stops, and then suddenly illumination can happen.

But using intellectuality positively, not negatively to attack

itself,

but positively as a way of like trying

to understand ultimate reality,

I do think that is just an an absolute

[clears throat]

it's an exercise in utter futility.

And like uh the famous eccentric

intellectual

more or less existentialist English monk

Nyanavira used to say existentialism, I

mean, it either leads to like nihilistic

despair or it just goes off the tracks

into mysticism because existentialism

was kind of a philosophical dead end.

Nyanavira was trying to take

existentialism and like

like reform it

somehow so that, I mean, you it could

keep going and lead you to

enlightenment. He was

he was heavily influenced by

existentialism.

Although he didn't talk about Heidegger

much, which is one reason why I don't

know that much about Heidegger. He

talked a lot more about um

oh, Kierkegaard, who was sort of a

proto-existentialist.

You know, he was sort of a forerunner to

existentialism.

Uh

>> [clears throat]

>> he had no use for Karl Jaspers cuz Karl

Jaspers went off the tracks into

mysticism.

So,

>> [sighs]

>> yeah, my thoughts about the philosopher

Martin Heidegger,

I guess I've I've given what thoughts I

have on the man.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the

Xenothoid's next question here.

So, Heide- his his second question is

also about Heidegger. He says,

"Heidegger says that in order to truly

contemplate being, one has to no longer

limit themselves to the confines of

their religion."

"What is your take on this as a

Buddhist?" Well, yeah, I mean, like you read the Atthakavagga of the Sutta Nipata, and the Buddha's warning against any kind of Dharma or Dhamma, any kind of philosophical system. Which would include Heidegger's philosophical system. I mean, you have to break free of the mental prison of this intellectual verbal structure that's limiting your capacity to understand what is just infinite.

So, yeah, I mean,

I mean, there have been arguments that the Buddha was not a Buddhist. I mean, Jesus was not a Christian, but that's like a different kind of argument. The

Buddha was not a Buddhist because he
wasn't so much teaching an ism. He was
like
like about as perfect of a mystic as
exists. And he's just trying to say, you
know, don't start up any philosophies.
At least if you follow the Atthakavagga,
which is, you know, the evidence does
seem to indicate that it is one of the
oldest Buddhist texts in existence.
And it's just say don't believe
anything, have no view whatsoever.
Which is,
I mean, if it's a religion, it's just
like a completely wide open religion
with no doctrines, no
no official dogmas anyway.

So, yeah, I I can agree that, let's see,

in order I mean,

first of all, contemplating being, I

mean, that doesn't really strike me as

all that important.

Um I mean, it depends on what you're

going to call being. Like bhava, I've

already mentioned in Buddhist Buddhist

philosophy, you know, it's just the

force of existence. That's usually how I

translate bhava into from Pali into

English is force of existence.

Which is,

you know, it's it's pretty much like

Schopenhauer's will.

But what Heidegger actually means when

he says being,

I don't really know. I I haven't really

studied Heidegger enough. But it could

be that he's just conjuring up some

reified abstraction,

you know, with the idea that the being

of something

is somehow

qualitatively different from the

something itself or something.

But yeah, I do agree that in order to

know reality, forget contemplating

being, but just to know reality,

that I mean, you can't limit yourself

within the confines of some doctrinal or

dogmatic or intellectual system.

And I suppose I should just move on to

my next question.

This is also from Xenothoid.

And the Xenothoid says, "What is the significance of the number 84,000 in Buddhism? I also see the number 80,000 come up a decent amount, but not as much as 84,000."

And with regard to 84,000,

I mean, is it is it like the 84,000 families of worms?

I think that could be mentioned in Buddhism. But I think the main mention that you're going to find of the number 84,000 in the texts is not with regard to Buddhism itself, but with regard to a kind of rival philosophical system or

rival spiritual system in ancient India
in the Buddha's time, which was the
Ajivaka system.
Which in the Buddha's time was more
popular than Buddhism was.
And the Ajivakas, if I remember
correctly, believed that I mean they
were strict determinists. They did not
believe in anything resembling free
will.
And they believed that, you know, every
being goes through a sequence of 84,000
lives.
And then when you get to the end, you're
you're like an Ajivaka adept in your
last life.
And then you don't get reborn anymore

after that.

And so

I would assume that it's not really a

Buddhist thing. It's like an ancient

Indian thing.

Um not even necessarily an Ajivaka

thing. It was just considered to be some

kind of like an ancient Indian ancient

North Indian more or less Vedic culture.

84,000 was just kind of a

a stereotypical big number.

So I don't think there's any numeral

logical significance just within the the

scope of Buddhist philosophy. I think it

was just an Indian traditional cultural

kind of a thing where 84,000 was just

singled out as some

big number.

So that's what 7 * 12,000. I mean, there

could be some like numerology involved.

But I don't It's not really a Buddhist

thing in and of itself. It's just like

an ancient Indian cultural thing.

Uh

Let's see. Any anything else to say

about the number 84,000? I mean, I won't

factor it out.

But uh yeah, I mean, it's it's certainly

not anything intrinsic to Buddhist

philosophy. It was an ancient Indian

cultural thing.

Which was either taken from the Ajivakas

or the Ajivakas just took it from

ancient Indian

Vedic or pre-Vedic culture and used that

as their number of

of lives in in like a

a system of rebirth.

If I remember correctly.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Austin.

And Austin says for Q&A 200, will you do

another live stream? Well, it's it's

possible. That's That's doable, I guess.

I don't really feel comfortable with

live streams just because I don't have

so little experience with them that

something something always screws up.

You know, it's like I don't get the

sound right or something.

But

yeah, I suppose it's doable. I mean, my woman has pestered me a little bit about just doing Q&A or doing live streams for my Q&A videos instead of doing these pre-recorded ones.

Um

but

I mean, it's it saves time, I guess.

But it's just

you got more laboratory conditions, you know, it's in vitro here and it's doing a live stream is more in vivo. I mean, I might as well do a live stream cuz it's I do these all in one take with zero [clears throat] production values.

It's just the main thing is

um

in with if a pre-recorded Q&A, I mean,

if there is any kind of mess up, you

know, you can go back and edit it or

that kind of thing.

And also, I just have not enough

experience that I just can do it

without any kind of doubt as to whether

it's actually working or not.

That was That was part of the problem

with previous Q&As is

um somehow like the

like the live feed of comments is on a

different

kind of different window

from the like the recording software or whatever it is. And so I couldn't be sure that I was even even live. I remember I think it was the first Q&A version that I did live stream. I I thought that I wasn't even live and I just walked out of the room when actually it was recording.

So it was mainly an an attempt to avoid that kind of stuff that have caused me to just pre-record these. And then of course, I have like all the questions in the list there, which is nice.

>> [sighs]

>> But it's doable.

I will seriously consider it.

And I'm moving on to the next question.

This is from Scutumain.

And I'm unsure of the derivation of the name Scutumain. Could be Scandinavian.

Anyhow, Scutumain says, "The Buddha is said to have knowledge of like 96 eons of previous lives. Have you experienced anything like this?"

And no, I've I've I don't even have knowledge of one eon of previous lives, let alone 96.

Um with regard to past lives, all I have are like guesses, like intuitions.

Like there are certain periods in history, certain places that I have like an unusual fascination for.

Like

or like an affinity. Northern Northern India, northern ancient India, maybe medieval feudal Japan, definitely 14th century England.

Um like maybe late Roman Republic around the area of Naples. And there's a sort of like this intuitive like interest in this kind of thing that otherwise, I mean, you can't really explain it easily through genetics and past experience.

Um

so I mean, I do have sort of guesses about past lives. The texts say you really shouldn't be worrying about this kind of stuff anyway.

But

that's about it. It's just sort of like

intuitive guesses.

But I do think it is very possible

assuming that past lives even happen

or did happen in the past.

For example, I think one of my most

formative lives

in my stream of

volition, my karmic [clears throat]

stream, was as a kind of rascally

Catholic monk in the 14th century in

England.

And he may have like recorded books like

manuscripts by hand cuz the printing

press hadn't been invented yet. Didn't

have a high opinion of the French
because England and France were arch
enemies then.
Didn't take his vows very seriously.
I may have met my woman in that life cuz
she has kind of an intuitive fascination
for medieval England also.
So I could have been some rascally monk
who talked dirty to her in Latin. And
she was married to some knight or
something. You know, there's definite
culture barrier between us.
So it was kind of a ill-starred romance
in that life, I think.
And I think I probably died of bubonic
plague.
Uh

and I won't give all the reasons for my

belief in that, but I mean, I've like

certain area of my body like the the

right side of my groin.

Don't want to get TMI. Right side of the

groin area.

It's got like a weird like a

purple birthmark there, a little one.

And I've always been a little bit

squeamish about that part of my body.

And uh

so I mean, that's where the bubo was

assuming that I died of bubonic plague.

But I felt like it was a just punishment

from God because I had not not been a

good monk in that life.

Uh but of course, it's all it's all guesswork. Like the the feudal Japan one, I think there is a good chance that I was a member of the samurai class, but I was not a warrior. I was just like a a school teacher or something. You know, by the like the 1700s,
the samurai were just kind of like the upper class. And most of the members of the samurai class, which would include women, of course, were just were not like sword fighters.
Anyways.
Also, I do think there's a possibility that I was some kind of shaman in like very prehistoric pre-Vedic India, you know, sort of like Indus Valley

civilization who took hallucinogenic

drugs to induce mystical states and

worshipped snakes.

I've I've got this fascination for

snakes in this life.

>> [snorts]

>> So

yeah, that's about as close as it comes.

It's just like intuitive kind of hunches

that I would never insist upon. I would

never say that I saw in a vision that I

was this this person in this culture,

etc. etc. And No, I've I've never really

had like a uh

a past life regression. My father on the

other hand, I mean, he claimed to

remember past lives.

Like

I think it might have been the life

before this one that he barely

remembered, but he was some crazy

Frenchman named Henri Moreau who was

hanged by the neck until dead in

early [clears throat] Montana territory

for rustling cattle.

But the life that before that he

remembers relatively clearly through

hypnotic past life regressions. So,

I mean,

a lot of people in hypnotic trance

they'll just conjure up something

through their subconscious imagination.

So, there's there's no proof of

anything, but my father was persuaded.
He really believed that like two lives
before present he was, I think, a
Scottish person named Jason Haskell.
And
certain memories are very vivid. It's It
turns out like not only with my father,
but with past life regressions in
general like under hypnosis, it's the
emotionally most intense
like
events that are tend to be remembered.
And I would guess that the emotionally
most intense events in a person's life
are also the ones that are the most
karmically significant.

You're creating the most karma.

And there's someone right outside the

window.

>> [snorts]

>> So,

in my father's life

as uh

Jason Haskell,

he remembers like being abandoned in a

hut

and he has smallpox.

And it's like everyone just abandoned

him cuz they were terrified of getting

smallpox, which is kind of

understandable. And he's just lying

there raging and vowing revenge on these

people that that abandoned him.

And then

he also remembers like crying over a

grave.

And he thinks that

um he actually killed his sweetheart for

dumping him.

And he was he has had like pockmarked

face

um ever since then. And there's still

somebody right outside the window.

Oh.

So, I mean, that would kind of

counteract certain Buddhist beliefs that

you can murder your sweetheart and then

not just go to hell for it.

And then uh

after that he was he was a sailor and he

has this one vivid memory of being on a

a

>> [clears throat]

>> a ship in a storm at sea and the the

ship is just going back and forth like

this. It had big blocks of marble, I

think,

in the hold. They were partly ballasted

and probably they were, you know,

shipping it somewhere also. And one of

those big blocks of marble had broken

loose and was sliding back and forth in

the hold of the ship. And so, they have

to secure that

in or before it beats a hole to the side

of the ship. And so, they're down there

in the dark trying to secure this big
slab of rock
and during this storm.
And one of the sailors gets pinned up
against the side of the ship and my
father is is just yelling, "Bring after
light."
And that's that's like one of the the
memories that really just
you know, kind of jumped out at him
during this past life regression. Also,
he remembered how he died. He caught an
arrow underneath He was like laying
putting a saddle down on onto something
as they were breaking camp as they were
like

like North India or something. And

>> [clears throat]

>> somebody shot him with an arrow and it

went under his shoulder blade and came

out [clears throat] like his his neck

here. And the past life regression

always ends He He did it like two or

three times with the same results where

he's like coughing and choking and just

like jolting awake out of the hypnotic

trance when he gets to that point.

So,

I never I never did have like a hypnotic

past life regression or like a

meditative past life regression. In my

case it's just like intuitive hunches.

Just assuming that past lives really do

happen or did happen cuz they're in the

past.

But I mean, there's no way of proving

it. At least I haven't been able to

prove it one way or the other.

Some of the best empirical evidence

would be in the books of Dr. Ian

Stevenson

who was actually trying to more or less

scientifically

state the case

with real evidence for rebirth.

Which he mainly did through small

children who would recall past lives and

then he could

um question them,

you know, see what kind of information
they have with regard to the life of
this other person that they couldn't
possibly have and then go and like try
and verify that. He wrote
[clears throat] several books along
those lines, which are worth looking
into if you're interested in the
subject.
But I should just move on to Scooter
Man's next question.
And uh I've already kind of touched on
this one.
Uh it's kind of a follow-up on the uh
past life regression thing. He said,
"How would you know if you did and it
wasn't just a fantasy or daydream?"

Well, I mean, if you're an enlightened being, you know, if you're Gautama Buddha and you're remembering past lives, that's that's one thing. I'm not going to second-guess the mental states of a sammasambuddha. But with regard to someone who is in a meditative state and has a past life regression, which does happen especially at places like Pa Auk Sayadaw in southern Burma,
or you're hypnotized and you have a past life regression or for whatever reason you have a past life regression, there's no guarantee at all. I mean, there's some ways that you can verify it. Like I've told this story before. My father

was hypnotist.

And there was this

Well, he had some friends who had a big

farm near our house just down the road

aways.

And they would take in troubled

teenagers. Just, you know, get them out

of town, get them away from, you know,

bad environment, take them out onto this

farm with cows and sunshine and fresh

air and just kind of let them detox, you

know, kind of settle down, this kind of

thing.

So, they're good good people trying to

help people.

But anyways, they had this 14-year-old

girl there

who

at first she was doing okay and then all of a sudden she just stopped caring about her appearance, stopped caring about school, just would not talk to anybody. You know, she just started going downhill.

So, they asked my father would he be willing to hypnotize her to try to help her with whatever is troubling her. So, my father was willing, but he said she's going to have to bring a friend of hers that she trusts as a kind of chaperone just like, you know, hypnotist etiquette. You know, you don't want to be hypnotizing a teenage girl with no no

witnesses or anything.

So,

um the girl and a friend of hers came to

my father's house

and he

he started hypnotizing the girl. And

then while he's got this the the

14-year-old girl in like a hypnotic

trance, he notices that the friend who's

supposed to be chaperoning is like

waving her arms around like this.

And so,

he he kind of asks the the other girl,

you know, "What are you doing?"

And the girl says, "I'm swimming."

And he says,

"Why are you swimming?"

And she said, "My ship has been

torpedoed by the Japanese."

And then he says, "Where are you?" And

she says, "The South Pacific."

And it turned out her name was She said

that her name was Mark

uh what is it?

Uh I can't remember the last name. It

was Mark something.

And

my father was fascinated by this. You

know, he wanted to follow up. He wanted

to

he's not trying to help this girl. He's

trying to help the other girl. So, he

kind of sets that aside and then tells

the the girl, you know, the first girl that he was trying to hypnotize, you know, it's like sometimes if you have a problem, it's it's best to, you know, tell somebody about it. Tell somebody that you trust.

You know, he just kind of planted that that uh suggestion into her mind that it might be best to talk about this with somebody.

And then

the uh they came out of the trance, brought them both out, and then they just went for a walk out in the back field. And she the the the girl confided with him that she was pregnant and she was with two boys at the same that, you

know, within the same short period of time. She didn't even know which one was the father.

Um

but my father wanted to get back to that girl's Mark uh It's It's the last name of a famous trumpet player, I think. Anyways, she [clears throat] hypnotizes that second girl again later on a different occasion and she would had no interest at all in Mark what's-his-name, you know, being a an American sailor who drowned in the South Pacific when the ship was torpedoed. Instead, there was a a calf that a cow had given birth to a calf on the farm and they couldn't find

the calf.

So, she was just like

single-mindedly intent on locating that

calf while she was in the hypnotic

trance. And she found the calf. The calf

somehow was in a clump of blackberry

bushes outside the fence. Somehow

this calf had gotten on to the other

side of the fence and was like hiding in

like a briar patch. So, she located the

calf, but this Mark

I It bugs me that I can't remember the

name.

My father was never really able to

follow up on that.

But, that's one way of doing it is if

you can get enough information on a past

life

that

you might be able to do some verifying.

You know, it could just be I mean it

There's a good chance I mean if you're

some peasant in like the New Kingdom of

Egypt in the Bronze Age or something,

then

there's a good chance you're not going

to have any kind of like records or

anything, but at least you might be able

to get some of the details correct. You

know, what's the name of the pharaoh,

this kind of stuff. And at least I mean

it wouldn't be proof, but it

it would it could filter out a lot of

fake stuff. You know, somebody's having

a

past life regression and they might be

some famous person or they're saying

it's it's 2275

BC, this kind of stuff, and they

wouldn't possibly know that.

But, I mean you can sort of do a little

bit of

you know, investigating if you can get

enough information on the subject just

to see if your memory is at least like

historically correct within the the

details of the period, that kind of

thing.

But, as a general you can't really be

sure. You can't be sure about anything.

You can't be sure that you're even seeing the stuff in front of you right now.

For real.

And I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Maximin.

Because we don't have a whole lot of questions, I can just digress all over the freaking place.

And Maximin says, "Wouldn't following vinaya as a dutanga monk in the West be closer to actual renunciation given that our culture is not at all in harmony with the instructions of the Buddha?" Um yeah. I mean for those of you who are kind of rookies in the Buddhism thing, a

dutanga monk is a monk who takes upon himself one or more of the 13 optional ascetic practices allowable to monks. And the second chapter of the Visuddhimagga is all about dutangas. It's really one of the most interesting parts of the Visuddhimagga from my point of view.

So, like wearing only rag robes or eating only alms food, never accepting an invitation to a house, or this living and sleeping under the open sky, or living in a cemetery, you know, all of these things or or never never lying down, sleeping in a sitting position, things like that. They're all optional ascetic practices called dutanga. In

Burmese it's called dutin. I think in
Thailand it's called tudong.
And the being following vinaya as a
dutanga monk in the West, it would be
closer to actual Yeah, I mean it would
be a radical renunciation. Um
and it might even work. I mean if you
can really take the plunge, you've got
the courage to just really take the
plunge, kind of like that old lady Peace
Pilgrim
who she just took off walking one day,
no money, just took off walking across
the country, and
God will provide. You know, it's like if
you protect Dharma, Dharma protects you.

So,

you just get what you need.

Consider the lilies of the field and all

that.

The sparrows.

And you just

like put yourself wholeheartedly into

the into at into the you know, at the

mercy of the universe, and it

reciprocates in this more or less

miraculous way.

It does take just fearlessness though.

But, I mean it's possible. I mean if

you're going to be a dutanga monk who

doesn't stay under a roof, you're going

to have to stay in the southern states

probably, um especially in the

wintertime.

And you might get really skinny. I mean

depending

I mean if you're going to be just living

on alms food,

you know, just take your bowl and walk

around and hope somebody will put money

or put not money, but food. You're not

even allowed to accept money. So, um

I've I've been told that one way that it

works is just stand outside of a grocery

store

as people are are going in and out.

Then that is a a way where monks in the

West can get food in their bowl.

Or you could do as

um one monk I knew did briefly, where he would just go to a soup kitchen and just get his food there, and they would put the food into his bowl. So, that's possible, I suppose.

Um but yeah, it's it would be closer to actual renunciation. It wouldn't be the kind of renunciation that the Buddha had in mind

because when the Buddha devised vinaya and just the the monk's life, you know, it's largely based on the life you know, the lifestyle of other ascetics in ancient North India. It was just sort of a cultural thing. So, you know, there was there was like cultural support for that.

And so, it wouldn't even be as radical
of a renunciation in ancient India as it
would be in the West, I think.
It depend on the circumstances, I
suppose.
But, I guess I answered that question.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question, which is from Faustian.
And Faustian
has kind of a strange question here, or
it's not really strange. It's sort of a
common question actually that I've
addressed more than once. In fact,
um my friend Brian and I have done
entire videos, at least one or two on
this subject.

And uh speaking of Brian,

um we did some videos recently, and I

really can't put them up on YouTube just

because Brian has been kicked off of

YouTube. And so, any video I do with him

can be removed

just because YouTube decides to remove

it.

Which might be messing with the

algorithm or something. I don't know. I

mean I don't get literally punished for

it. You know, I don't get strikes

against me or anything.

But, they just somebody just does not

like Brian. Completely harmless guy,

but they just do not like him, and so

I really And if you want to see my

videos with Brian, you're you're best
off going to BitChute or Rumble,
especially BitChute because I've been on
BitChute and uploading stuff onto
BitChute longer than I've been uploading
stuff onto any other platform really.
So,
Faustian says,
"Can you please riff a little more on
the vegan question for us panyo basa? I
fully appreciate a beggar cannot be
picky with the alms they receive, but
all the sophistry about it being okay
for a householder to eat meat, but not
kill and prepare meat seems
hypocritical. I anticipate you'll say

it's all about the state of mind lol.
When I'm looking back at history's great minds, there is a very He's got very in capital letters. Very strong linkage to vegetarianism.
And I don't think it's too much to say that full veganism only really became viable within the past century when lots of things were fortified and protein is available in various forms. The moral vegetarians of the past and moral vegans of today are motivated in a similar way.
You talked in another video about the appeal the appeal cats and dogs have for you, but there's so much misery that goes to creating the food they typically eat. I do not preference a cat over a

pig's life, for example. By the way, I'm not a woke lefty, and the association with the blue hair crew is distressing to vegans such as myself."

Well, first of all, I point out He's He's talking about sophistry about eating meat being okay for a householder. Well, I mean the Buddha allowed it. Jesus of Nazareth allowed it. I mean that's like two of the spiritual giants of world culture both ate meat and did not forbid the eating of meat, not only for the like their more advanced disciples, but for anybody.

At least that's what the the evidence

indicates.

So, I mean Faustian here is seems to be

implying, insinuating

that the Buddha was indulging in

sophistry

by not forbidding the eating of meat.

And this is a kind of Western arrogance,

where is or is is you can call it

arrogance, or you can just call it being

culture bound,

where people in the West nowadays just

assume ethics is Western utilitarian

ethics, which

pretty much arose with Jeremy Bentham in

the 19th century in England.

Utilitarian ethics. That's what the

ethical system is, just ethics in

Western civilization, modern and

presumably post-modern Western

civilization, utilitarian ethics. But,

that's the only valid kind of ethics

that can exist. Buddhist ethics,

Christian ethics, no.

Utilitarian

Western modern ethics is the only true

ethics.

That apparently is like an unspoken

assumption by Faustian here.

But

that's not the only kind of ethics. I

mean, the Buddha wasn't going with those

kind of ethics.

The Buddha was going with the subjective

ethics. What you do is wholesome or unwholesome, not due to some indirect ramifications out there somewhere.

I mean, if you want to go even farther with this this utilitarian veganism stuff, you can say it's immoral to even to eat vegan vegetarian food if the farmers are wearing leather shoes.

Animals are dying so those farmers can wear those leather shoes to raise the soybeans.

Or you know, like pesticides, this kind of stuff.

But

Buddhist ethics are subjective.

Period. I mean

the like the the ramifications

out there in a supposed external world

are irrelevant.

If you can do something with no

unwholesome mental states, you have done

nothing unwholesome.

It just turns out that certain acts,

like for example,

kicking puppies.

I mean, it's extremely difficult to do

that without some kind of negative

mental states. You know, telling lies,

stealing,

literally killing.

That

generally it's just a matter of human

[clears throat] nature.

That you can't do something like that
without having like negative mental
states, which creates bad karma.
But
apparently
eating meat is not one of those things.
I mean, killing animals, yeah. And then
you can say, "Well, you're promoting the
killing of animals." But that is
irrelevant to Buddhist ethics. That is a
Western modern invention of utilitarian
ethics.
I mean, there're probably like
precursors of that
before Jeremy Bentham came along.
But that's just not how Buddhist ethics
works. And you can just adopt this

extroverted

this the the the phenomenal world is

real kind of attitude, and whatever we

do, even if it's just accidental,

it inadvertently causes somebody harm,

then it's bad. Well, I mean, you can

adopt that point of view.

But I mean, you just it's like shackles.

I mean,

I mean, if you're not even going to eat

vegetarian or vegan food if the farmers

were wearing leather shoes,

or if they were using insecticides,

I mean,

I mean, you might as well just like not

exist.

To I mean, to exist is to cause

suffering

somehow, even if you're not trying to.

So I mean, you can say you just want to

minimize the amount of suffering that

you cause even indirectly through remote

ramifications of your behavior, and

that's that's your call.

But to impose that upon everybody else

and say that if they don't, it's

sophistry, that's just arrogance and

just narrow-mindedness.

And partly it's just Western cultural

conditioning.

You just don't know any better.

But I mean, you get to

and go going back to two of the most

famous spiritual sages
of Western civilization.
Well, Jesus definitely. The Buddha, I
mean, he's kind of a modern
modern import into Western civilization,
but he was a spiritual giant. And
according to the textual evidence, both
of them ate meat.
The Buddha died after eating some bad
pork.
Although the Mahayana Buddhists didn't
want to believe that the Buddha ate
meat, and so they turned it into a
mushroom.
The original Pali of what he ate is
Sukaramaddava.

Sukara means pig, and maddava means like

tenderized or tender.

So the Mahayana Buddhists

who really did not want the Buddha to

have eaten meat, even though it's

contained and in like the Mahayana

Buddhist like Vinaya,

like the Patimokkha rules, the

Patimokkha says a monk is not allowed to

eat meat

um unless he is sick, for example.

Or he's not allowed to ask for meat

unless he is sick. That's that's that's

the correct That's the correct rule.

Or unless someone has given him

permission to ask in advance.

So I mean, it it's allowable

even in the Mahayana texts themselves

for a monk to eat meat.

But it's like they wanted to change

Buddhism over in this other direction,

which had good intentions, I suppose.

But the evidence does indicate that the

Buddha ate meat. Jesus ate meat.

So we get down to this part where he

says, "When I'm looking back at

history's great minds, there is a very

strong linkage to vegetarianism." Well,

how do you What great minds?

Two of the greatest minds ate meat.

Apparently. [clears throat]

So I mean, Pythagoras maybe? I mean, he

was he was more anti-beans

than

anti-anything else, I think. I mean,

what other great minds?

I mean,

we're talking spiritual minds, I

suppose.

I mean, of course the Hindus, Neem

Karoli Baba up there, he was vegetarian.

He would still have dairy products and

so forth.

Let's see.

But I'm trying to trying to think of

history's great minds that have this

strong linkage to vegetarianism. And I

think

that uh Faustian might be a little

biased in his searching of great minds.

Uh great minds who were vegetarians.

I mean, I'm sure there I mean, Mahayana

monks,

Hindus.

But uh I'm

>> [clears throat]

>> Catholics? I mean, Catholic saints?

Catholic Were Were there any notable

Catholic saints? Saint John of the

Cross? Were they Were they vegetarians?

In In their case, a lot of it was

like a kind of fasting. It was like a

spiritual penance more than a concern

for animals cuz of course the Bible says

people have the right to kill animals,

and the Old Testament's full of God

commanding the killing of animals and

killing of humans occasionally.

So yeah, I mean, I just do not see

history's great minds having a very

strong linkage to vegetarianism.

I mean,

maybe I'm just not thinking of any.

Let's see.

So the moral vegetarians of the past and

moral vegans of today are motivated in a

similar way.

Not I mean, some of them maybe, but like

I just said, a lot of vegetarianism in

the past, it wasn't out of concern for

the like the suffering of an another

animal.

I mean, in some cases, like maybe

Pythagoras, it was that way. But like
Christian ascetics and so forth, it was
just a kind of penance.
You know, you were you were doing
penance and being austere by refraining
from good food.
So
yeah, I mean, there there was uh
a a famous Sayadaw in Burma. I think it
was called Piz Sayadaw, which just means
bean eat Sayadaw. And that was all he
would eat is beans.
And
people like materialistic people would
say, "You know, that's not possible.
He'd be getting vitamin deficiencies or

whatever." But apparently he managed it.

I mean, I was thinking at the time,

"Well, maybe there's little onions or

something mixed in with it sometimes,

which would give him at least vitamin

C."

But I mean,

some people don't even eat at all.

I mean, I'm I'm willing to accept the

possibility like Therese Neumann,

some Catholic nun

who

the only food she would eat was like the

the ritual communion wafer.

And those aren't very they're not very

[clears throat] substantial.

>> [sighs and clears throat]

>> So anyways,

the this whole issue is Faustian just

imposing Western utilitarian ethics on

everybody.

When it's not the only kind of ethics,

and it's not necessarily the most

correct kind of ethics, at least with

regard to

understanding right and wrong.

And for him to imply like the Buddha

himself was was a sophist

because he wasn't adopting modern

utilitarian ethics. Well, I mean, that's

just silly.

But I mean, if you've got yourself into

a state where you cannot possibly eat

meat without feeling guilt and remorse
and other unwholesome mental states,
then don't eat meat.
But that doesn't mean that somebody else
can't eat meat without the unwholesome
mental states.
I mean some some Let me vegans I would
assume
that they've got unwholesome mental
states with regard to eating their vegan
stuff. You even if it's just like
pride or or like self-satisfaction
or just getting into the subtleties of
the flavors, you know, the spices and
all this. I mean even that is wallowing
in sensuality which is unskillful mental
states.

Then of course

the farmer might have been wearing

leather shoes

and maybe used insecticides

or other pesticides. Maybe they're even

killing mice.

But to assume that Western utilitarian

ethics are the only valid ethics in

which you are just like leaving yourself

like your own subjective mental states

behind and just going out in search of

these indirect ramifications of

everything you do.

It just is is

I mean it's just like a samsaric

trap from a Buddhist point of view.

Anyways, I suppose I should just move on

to the next question.

This is from Dr. Scary and I should

probably have like a little bell or

something my ring. There's there's like

a news radio show I listen to when I'm

driving to work sometimes.

When uh

a new caller get the guy rings the bell

for the new caller. So, a new asker, a

new questioner. Maybe I should get a

little bell and ring it.

Cuz I I don't think I've been asked

anything by Dr. Scary. Although some

people do change their name.

So there is that.

>> [sighs]

>> So Dr. Scary says

at 2 hours, 2 minutes, and 6 seconds. I

think uh they're referring to the

previous Q&A.

You say "Nibbana is reality. Samsara is

a delusional take.

Is there textual report support for this

view?

>> [snorts]

>> To me this framing feels closer to a

Hindu perspective.

I tend to agree with Ajahn Thanissaro

who emphasizes that the Buddha wasn't

trying to reach an ultimate reality but

rather to understand and bring about the

end of suffering both formally and now.

It is only stress that I describe and

the cessation of stress using Ajahn

Thanissaro's idiosyncratic

uh renderings

rendering here of the the poly word

dukkha.

That's from the Anuradha Sutta. Yeah,

it's it's in other Suttas too. I think

it's in the Alagaddupama Sutta also and

etc. etc.

Um I mean there's some stuff I can

unpack here.

First of all, I mean

see

Dr. Scary quotes me as saying quote

Nibbana is reality. Samsara is a

delusional take unquote and then asked

is there textual support for this view?
Well, I mean some of the main textual
support is if you're unenlightened, you
still have delusion.
So, the world of an unenlightened person
is delusional.
But when you become enlightened, you
have zero moha.
You have no more delusion, no more
greed, hate, or delusion.
Or if you prefer no more attraction,
aversion, or semi-conscious stupidity.
So, once you become enlightened
since you have no more delusion
then you're experiencing reality.
Unless you can somehow experience

what isn't reality with zero delusion.
But the implication would seem to be you
eliminate delusion while at the same
time remaining conscious, then you are
aware of reality.
And getting to what Ajahn Thanissaro
says a little later
I mean
there's two approaches to Dhamma or at
least we can say there are two
approaches to Dhamma. One is the more
heart-based, maybe more feminine
approach of ending suffering.
Or you can have the more head-oriented,
more masculine maybe approach of ending
delusion.
I mean they both they're both the same

enlightenment. They both lead to the
same place. If you're striving for the
end of dukkha or you're striving for the
end of moha
they both land in the same place which
is fine.
But I mean it's it's like two different
ways. I mean if you're more
heart-oriented, you want to end
suffering. Or you're more head-oriented,
you want to end delusion.
They're the same.
And I mean my father was kind of a macho
guy. You know, he was a bar brawler in
his youth. He had literally killed
people in the army.

And enemies not like his own side.

And he he just had like this cavalier

attitude towards pain. You know, a

little pain never hurt anybody.

You know, you just

it's like a fear of suffering is is

I mean

to a certain kind of masculine point of

view, it's like cowardice.

You know, it's it's like the ancient

the ancient mindset, you know, the

classical like Greco-Roman mindset and

just like the the northern Germanic and

Celtic barbarians and so forth. It's

like

I mean you're not afraid of suffering.

I mean you don't like it necessarily,

but it's not something that you should just like stop at all costs. But I mean to be deluded, to be delusional, that's worse.

So I mean it's it's just like two different approaches like more heart-oriented and more head-oriented. But I mean it's the same enlightenment. But either way you end delusion. You're off the wheel. You're no longer stuck in samsara. I mean it's just it's very simple logic.

So, let's see. Any other textual support? You just seeing reality as it is is what happens when you become enlightened.

I mean it says that in the texts.

You see things as they are.

Or just see reality as it is because in

my opinion there is no more plurality in

ultimate reality.

So, let's see here.

Yeah.

Yeah, I do not consider Ajahn Thanissaro

to be an infallible um oracle. I'm sure

he doesn't consider me to be one either

and so we're we're we're even even

Steven on that one.

So

>> [sighs]

>> yeah, I think

I think I answered that one fairly

straightforwardly.

Sometimes I get a little insecure if I answer too quickly and easily.

But I think I was fairly straightforward. I mean you become enlightened, no more delusion. That's just part of enlightenment. In fact, you could call that a definition of enlightenment.

So, I'm just going to move on to Dr. Scary's next question.

And Dr. Scary says I've recently discovered the poly word amata which can be translated as immortality and more commonly as the deathless which the Buddha frequently calls Nibbana.

With that in mind, can we say that in his quest the Buddha was seeking immortality?

No, I don't think so.

Because I mean the Buddha was he lived within the context of the Sramana traditions of northern India and from that point of view immortality would just be like eternal damnation.

That to exist is to suffer.

First noble truth. To exist is to suffer or to exist is to experience unease. Or going with Ajahn Thanissaro, to exist is to experience stress. To exist is stressful.

So, I mean if you're going to be immortal, then that's eternal stress.

>> [sighs]

>> So, I don't think the Buddha was seeking immortality. He was seeking a way off the wheel and not really I mean before you you get there you you don't really don't know what it's going to be like.

But I don't think he was seeking immortality. I think he was seeking just a way out of this world or a way out of samsara regardless of what it was going to be like on the other side so to speak.

So I mean the deathless it's it's not immortality in that you live forever.

Now when the Buddha I mean when Nibbana

is called the deathless

it's it's sort of like Dhamma being

called akaliko or timeless.

I mean it doesn't mean that it lasts

forever so much. It's just beyond time.

It's just you know, there no more time.

There is time no more.

So

yeah. Yeah, I really don't think the

Buddha was seeking immortality because

from

the context of north ancient Indian

culture that would have been tantamount

to eternal damnation. It's like a

Buddhist is trying to get out of

immortality.

To get out of this, you know,

life after life after life, birth and death, birth and death, birth and death.

I mean you still stay alive after death in a way.

But it wasn't like he was trying not to die anymore. It was just getting out of the whole samsaric system.

And just let the chips fall where they may.

And I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Fred.

And Fred says,

"Considering there are so many failed monks, is it an endeavor worth embarking on?

Being a monk seems to create a lot of baggage in itself. Chores don't stop and commitment to chanting and rules, etc., continue."

Well, I mean, it is true that the overwhelming majority of monks do not become enlightened unless, you know, some Mahayana teaching is correct and we're all already enlightened and just don't notice it, that kind of thing. But [clears throat] set that aside and let's go with the idea that is more Theravadan, unfortunately, in a sense, that almost all monks fail to become enlightened.

So, Fred is asking, you know, is it an endeavor worth embarking on considering that? Well, it's like an Olympic gold medal.

The overwhelming majority of people who try to get an Olympic gold medal in, say, the 100-m dash fail. So, does that mean that trying to get win an Olympic gold medal is like unworthy of embarking on it? That nobody should even try?

Or ascending Mount Everest.

You know, climbing to the top of Mount Everest. Most people who try it don't succeed, I would guess.

But still some people think it's worth

it, no matter how difficult it is. I
mean, it's
you know, the harder it is to attain,
the more it's worth, the more glory
there is.
Let's see. So, Fred says, "Like being a
monk seems to create a lot of baggage in
itself." Not nearly as much baggage as
you know, being on psych meds and having
three divorces and, you know, having a a
mortgage,
some job that you hate,
feuding with the neighbors,
etc., etc.
So, being a monk seems to create I mean,
it it creates less baggage. I mean,
unless you're just like a horrible monk,

you're just completely unconscientious
or just completely incompetent.
But just living a simple life,
you know, at a monastery or out in a
cave or a hut or something, you're not
going to I mean, how much baggage can
you can you create compared with Big Lou
who's on meds and he's been married and
divorced and married again and, you
know, selling insurance,
that kind of stuff.
And the whole idea that just because
most most people who try it fail,
I mean, that doesn't necessarily mean
that nobody should try.
I mean, even if you don't succeed in

becoming fully enlightened, I used to
tell myself this a lot as a monk. I
mean, even if you don't become fully
enlightened, at least you're making
progress.
At least you're going to be suffering
less.
I mean, even that's pretty that's pretty
much guaranteed if you're like a
conscientious monk, you're really trying
to
like practice correctly.
I mean, you're pretty much guaranteed of
less suffering and delusion even if you
don't bring bring it to a complete stop.
So, I mean, would you say it's
it's unworthy to even do it even though

you're guaranteed of less suffering and
delusion just because you're not going
to, you know, reach zero?
I mean, that's that's not very
reasonable,
seems to me. It's like, why should I try
to earn money if I'm not going to earn
all of it?
You know, why should I why should I work
for a living if I'm not going to become
the richest man in the world?
It's It's that kind of reasoning, it
seems to me.
But even if you don't become
enlightened, and most monks and nuns do
not become enlightened,

just going with empirical evidence, I

guess,

still I mean, you're

you're going to have less

suffering. You're going to have less

greed, hate, and delusion. You're going

to have less suffering.

And that's

well worth it, seems to me.

I certainly don't regret having been a

monk.

Okay, I think I answered that question.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next one. This is from The Saboteur.

And The Saboteur says,

"I know you partially touched on this in

number 188,

but what kind of karma do animals have?
I assume it depends on the animal's
evolution. A chimpanzee would be more
aware of a sense of right and wrong than
an ant. But think of all those chickens,
pigs, cows, etc., what have they done to
deserve such an ending?"
Well,
all lives end in tragedy.
So, I mean,
if the chickens, pigs, and cows were
just living out in the wilderness in a
state of nature,
then chances are they're still going to
die a violent death.
And the fact that they're domesticated,

I mean, from the the species' point of
view, from the Darwinian point of view,
it's just been a blessing to them even
though their their individual lives,
especially the pigs. The chickens,
they're getting more humane. Like most
eggs that you buy now, it's like
cage-free, free-range kind of stuff,
although what exactly that means
But pigs,
the way pigs are raised is pretty awful,
I have to admit. You know, it's they're
like in this
in this like little cage thing.
Um but I mean, like I said, it's like
all lives end in tragedy and if the uh
I mean, they're probably going to be

killed by a something.

And I mean, everything dies.

But from like like the Darwinian point of view, it's like there's hundreds of [clears throat] There's way more chickens, pigs, and cows now than there were before they were domesticated. So, that from the point of view of the species, the species is is prospering even though most of them are being cut off in their prime to be turned into tendies,

for example.

Uh

Which is not really a justification of killing,

but it's just kind of an observation of

like objective empirical reality.

So, what kind of karma do animals have?

Well, it's not really an intellectual

kind of karma,

but still I mean, if you have

craving and delusion,

you're going to make karma.

So,

I mean, animals to the extent that they

have craving and delusion, they are

creating karma. And it's going to be

simple animalistic kind of karma, but

still.

So, let's see here.

The Saboteur says, uh "Chimpanzee would

be more aware of a sense of right and

wrong than an ant." But I mean, karma is

really has little to do with a sense of

right and wrong.

I mean, karma has to do with

craving and delusion.

So, I mean, you can be just complete

sociopath and you're still subject to

karma even though you have no sense of

right or wrong.

With regard to an ant,

I mean, I can I can be skeptical of the

fact or skeptical of the idea that an

ant is creating karma because I'm

skeptical of the idea that an ant has

craving or delusion.

Insects

and like arthropods in general, most invertebrates even, they have a different kind of nervous system than we do.

Like an ant or a clam or a crab or whatever. But they do not have literally they do not have a central nervous system.

It's It's like a dual spinal cord thingy, no spine cuz they're invertebrates, but it's it's not really centralized the way it is with us in the brain.

And like I've told this story before.

Um back before I was a monk, I was a fisheries observer,

foreign fisheries observer. I'd work on Japanese longline vessels sometimes. And I was the biologist and any kind of crabs that came aboard, especially if they were like a commercial species of crab, like tanner crabs, which are called snow crabs at the at the restaurant,

uh king crabs, that kind of thing, um I'd have [clears throat] to

I'd have to do like viability on them. See if they're being killed by this fishing process because the foreign fisheries aren't allowed to catch these commercially valuable species like crabs and halibut and salmon, that kind of

stuff. That's for the American

fisherman.

So, one of my jobs or my many duties was

to determine, you know, if they're going

to survive being accidentally caught and

thrown back overboard. And so, I'd have

this holding tank.

And, you know, you'd put the put There's

like seawater in there and you'd put the

crabs in there until you're not busy

with something else and then you can

like

take a look at them, see if they're

still alive, see how injured or damaged

they are, you know, their their

likelihood of returning. Also, you know,

the species, the the the sex, that kind

of thing, the weight,

whatever.

And so, anyways, some of these crabs,

like a a tanner crab, a a a snow crab,

I mean, they they'd have like seven of

their legs ripped off going through the

machinery as they're being pulled on

board.

It's called the crucifier

that they'd come through.

And, you know, they'd have like one leg

left on one side and two legs left on

the other side. And you throw them into

the holding tank cuz I don't have time

to to deal with them yet.

And if there's a piece of squid bait or

something in there, they used to immediately stop and start eating the squid bait.

It's like they don't care all that much that they just had most of their legs ripped off. It's like they're they're not experiencing pain the way a like a vertebrate would experience pain. Like a mouse, I mean, you rip three of its legs off and you put a little peanut in front of it, it's not going to give a [__] about that peanut. It's just going to go into convulsions and die.

So, an ant is just kind of like a, you know, it's closely related to crabs, you know, it's an arthropod.

And I I do have

a certain skepticism with regard to
whether they have a perceiving mind,
whether they have like a visual image or
any kind of mental image that they could
just be like little little terminators.
They're like little robots.
So, that's possible.
But you get into something like a
goldfish or a frog where arguably
there's a good better chance that they
actually are having perceptions and
having volitions, even though they're
very elemental, very simple.
Then they're already creating karma.
And it may be that even something like
an insect or, you know, going with like

Jain philosophy, even plants, they might
have such a primordial kind of
not just consciousness, but like
perception, like a delusion.
Because, I mean, it's delusion that
keeps you in samsara.
That I mean, maybe.
But it does seem to be like a
like a very different like order of
magnitude between like an invertebrate
or a plant than like a vertebrate. You
know, you're getting into, I mean, dogs
and cats especially. I mean, they're
obviously there's somebody there.
They're simple, you know, they're like
toddlers or something.
But still, I mean, there's somebody

there.

They already have like a subjective

life.

They might not have reached the stage of

self-awareness yet, but still they've

got cravings and and delusion and so

forth.

False perceptions.

So, what kind of karma do animals have?

It'd be like simple, it'd be like the

karma of a of a of a baby.

Small child.

Preverbal.

But I mean, karma isn't really verbal

anyway. Karma is more emotional.

You know, it's it's more coming from

your guts in a way

than than it is anything like cerebral.

So,

what have they done to deserve such an

ending?

Oh, at the end, I guess this is he asked

actually asked three questions. There's

three There's three question marks all

together.

I got to separate these. Okay, I haven't

even asked the third question. So, this

first question was actually two

questions. So, what kind of karma do

animals have? You know, it's just kind

of a simple sort of karma. I mean, we

can complicate it looking at them, but

their subjective experience is going to

be way simpler than us looking at them.
You know, like a goldfish, our
experience of the goldfish is way more
complicated than the goldfish's
experience of being a goldfish in all
likelihood.
You know, of course, they've got a
subjective experience that's beyond, I
mean, we can't really know that unless
you can read minds or something.
But still,
I mean, it's it's kind of like
projection,
anthropocentrism, that we're like
projecting our perceptions onto a
goldfish, for example, or onto a chicken

or whatever.

That their life is

subjectively experienced very

differently from our objective like

observation of them.

But they they got simple karma.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

saboteur's second question.

Let's see, which I've already I've

already quoted it more than at least

once. Let's see, what have they done to

deserve such an ending? And he's

referring to

chickens, pigs, cows,

et cetera, like in particular. What have

they done to deserve such an ending?

Well,

partly they're living in a crude level

of perception, a crude level of

consciousness, so to speak.

And

karma,

I've I've mentioned this before. It's

it's sort of like

like

uh see, how do I how do I put it

exactly? In a way, it's sort of like

driving a car. If you're not very good

at driving a car, you're going to get in

accidents.

And but if you're the better you are at

drive driving a car, like navigating the

vehicle, the less likely are less likely

it is that you're going to get into to accidents. Or it's like you've got like a troubled mind, even though, you know, you're not going out and doing horrible things, still, I mean, even like a relatively innocent child can have nightmares at night.

Nowadays, we no longer believe that dreams are implanted into our minds by gods, like people used to believe. Now we believe we are generating our own dreams.

And sometimes we will generate nightmares for ourselves.

You know, it's we are responsible for that. We're the one who's creating our subconscious mind. It's not like our

conscious ego necessarily, but still
it's it's coming from inside rather than
outside.
And what I'm trying to get to here is
that I mean, you don't necessarily
have to have murdered
in order to have it come back on you. I
mean, that's not necessarily how karma
works. It's it's sort of like the
quality of the experience. I mean,
you've got like this crude state of
existence, it's you're going to have
like a crude control over what you're
doing and what's happening back to you.
And it's like
animals just are worse at driving the

car than people's are, and so they're
more likely to wind up in these tragic
accidents.
Of course, like some dogs are just
completely pampered and spoiled and they
they live a at a higher standard of
living than most humans.
So, I mean, there's there's variation,
definitely.
But I mean, the chickens, pigs, and
cows,
yeah, I mean,
from a karmic point of view,
I mean, like a a traditional Orthodox
Buddhist would have to say that, you
know, when you're in the animal realm,
you're not necessarily a chicken every

time. I mean, chickens probably the most predatory of the three listed here, chickens, pigs, and cows. You know, they're they're at least eating insects, at least the wild ones are. The red jungle fowl in Southeast Asia, you know, they're eating insects and worms and whatever other kind of little creatures they can find. They don't give a [__] They don't have no concept of maybe this is immoral any more than a tiger does.

Pigs, I mean, they're omnivores. They'll they'll eat, you know, they'll they'll eat baby, you know, they they root up like a rotten

nest with baby rats. They'll eat the
baby rats, that kind of thing.
Cows, I mean, cows, I mean, they're
pretty saintly.
I mean, [clears throat] cow keeps all
five precepts perfectly far as I know.
Certainly don't tell lies.
And then they have like bad things
happen to them. So, so the Orthodox
Buddhist would say, well, it's sort of
like residual karma from a previous life
as some more predatory kind of animal.
But I mean, you could just look at it as
we are creating our own reality.
And there's like this positive and
negative, pleasure and pain kind of
balance that has to dependently

co-arise.

And so,

it's just like the the crudeness of

their mentality, which humans, I mean,

we're not all we're not all that pure

either.

That it's just they're creating this

reality for themselves, which happens to

dovetail with, you know, the karma and

the the perceptions of of other beings,

including the guy who owns the

slaughterhouse.

>> [snorts]

>> Trying to understand karma is difficult.

In the text it does say that if you try

to understand the ramifications, the

permutations, the subtleties of karma,
you can go insane.
But it does seem to me that a lot of it
is not necessarily that the chickens,
pigs, and cows are being punished for
wrong deeds. It's just that they're
crashing the car because they do not
have the mental sophistication to
navigate the vehicle effectively.
They are creating their own reality in a
sense, which is very different, as I
say, from our observation of them. Their
subjective experience is going to be at
a different level than our observations
of them, you know, outwardly.
So,
yeah, there is that. But it's it's

really a difficult question to answer

because it's so metaphysical and subtle

and complicated and so forth

that uh it's it's really hard to answer.

So,

what have they done to deserve such an

ending, i.e. being killed in a

slaughterhouse?

Um

it would depend on the individual

animal, I guess.

And I'm just going I'm just going to

move on to the next question. That

question was difficult to answer.

Just even from like within a Buddhist

context, giving like a a really

like a cogent, coherent kind of answer is not easy.

So, I'm just I'm moving on to the next one.

From the Saboteur. At about what age does a child begin to accrue karma? At the age when they begin to generate perception and have volitions, which could be before they're even born. They could still be in mama's belly and starting to have perceptions and volitions.

So, I mean, it doesn't take like adult human consciousness or like a capacity to form verbal sentences or anything to be generating karma.

So, yeah, I mean, at the as soon as

their mind is developed enough that they can start perceiving and having volitions,
then they've started creating karma.
Okay.
That was kind of easy after the the one preceding it.
I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from PSA. And now for something completely different.
PSA says, "On a previous Q&A, you said that if you're petting the puppy and it accidentally goes off, it's not a sanghadisesa offense. However, ChatGPT says that if the monk intentionally stimulated the organ and it accidentally

led to orgasm, even if he didn't want an orgasm, and even if he didn't delight in sensuality, he was just trying to rid himself of overwhelming sensations, it is still a sanghadisesa offense. So, I trust you more than ChatGPT, which I appreciate. Could you please set the record straight? Or is it or is it not a sanghadisesa offense?" Well, it isn't. That's what I said That's what I said before.

So, it's like

PSA,

here's my my statement that like a monk is just kind of not exactly spanking the puppy, but just petting it and it accidentally goes off.

And then I say that is not a full
sanghadisesa offense
because you have to have intention. Then
PSA,
for whatever reason, doesn't fully trust
me, maybe. He He goes to ChatGPT,
an AI, asks ChatGPT, and ChatGPT
disagrees with me,
saying that it's a sanghadisesa offense
even if you have no intention to have an
orgasm.
And ChatGPT is wrong. I mean, this is
something that I studied very carefully
as a monk cuz sometimes you have to know
for sure, did you commit a sanghadisesa
offense or not?

And

I mean, I can give a little bit of a lesson in in rules of monastic discipline here. There are two cool kinds of rules of monastic discipline. There's achitaka and sachitaka. Achitaka means without intention. Sachitaka means with intention. So, there are some rules that you can break them even if you're you do it accidentally. Now, you you could be clueless that you're breaking a rule. Uh you can be clueless that you're doing what is against the rules, and it's still against the rules like drinking alcohol, for example. If a monk drinks alcohol even by accident, you know, he

doesn't even know that it's alcoholic.
Somebody gives him some medicine or he
gets some fruit juice that has started
to ferment in the tropical heat in
Southeast Asia. He takes a sip of it and
it tastes like wine or there's obviously
alcohol in it,
he's broken an apatti offense even
though it was done completely
innocently.
Other rules are sachitaka, which means
you have to do it deliberately like
killing an animal, for example. If you
accidentally step on an ant,
you mean you're not even aware that you
stepped on it, you haven't broken a

rule. But if you stomp on that ant on purpose, then you've broken the rule. That's sachitaka. And having like deliberately having an orgasm is sachitaka. You have to There's There's a a term in Pali, uh abhi abhi vitaritava, which is in the in the text. It's like in the the

>> [clears throat]

>> sutta vibhanga,

which is the old commentary to the patimokkha rules that is so old that it also has become canonical. It's just like incorporated right into the the Pali text.

Abhi vitaritava means having made up your mind. You have decided once and for

all you're going to do this thing. And in order to commit the sanghadisesa offense of deliberately causing yourself to have an orgasm, you have to have made up your mind that you are going to have that orgasm.

And then you have to succeed in having it. If you have made up your mind to have that orgasm and then somebody suddenly walks in and you stop, then you're still have broken a rule. It's not sanghadisesa because you didn't really emit the precious bodily fluids. But still you had the intention and you did start making effort. So, that is a lesser a lesser rule that you have

broken.

But you have to have the intention

in order

to have broken the rule. And that's one

reason why if you have like a nocturnal

emission in your sleep,

then even it could just be like triple

X-rated dream that you had, but still

that you haven't really like broken the

rule.

Which is is good because a young,

healthy, red-blooded monk, I mean,

in my case [clears throat] when I was

young, up until my 40s,

um I'd be having like a a pornographic

dream about every 2 weeks, which would

regulate the hormone levels. You know,

the hormone levels get up into the red zone, you need pressure release, and if you're not going to do it like while you're awake, it just happens in your sleep.

At least in my case it did.

So,

yeah, I mean, that is one of the requisites of breaking the sanghadisesa rule.

ChatGPT is no authority on rules of ancient Indian Buddhist monastic discipline.

That you have to have deliberate intention

to emit the precious bodily fluids in

order for you to break the rule. I mean, you could even be sort of kind of iffy on the subject. You know, it's like, do I or do I not? And then it happens. Still you haven't broken the full sanghadisesa rule because you have to be abhi vitaritava. You have to have made up your mind that you are going to do this thing.

>> [sighs]

>> So, it's kind of like telling a lie. It's like you That's another one that that is sachitaka. That if you just say something that is false, believing it to be true, which happens sometimes, then you're not guilty of lying.

Which is something and and the Buddhist

definition of lying is very helpful for me, and I do apply it to sometimes stuff I see online. But I I can get back to that. But in order to tell a lie, you have to have this deliberate intention to deceive. That's one of the requisites of lying in Buddhist ethics, the deliberate intention to deceive.

But if you're just saying something, you're like recounting something that happened, and then while you're like in mid-sentence, you realize that you're exaggerating.

And then it's like you you have what is called confused mindfulness.

You know, it's like you're still

continuing with the sentence while at the same time just like, "Hey, this isn't entirely true." Then still you have you're not guilty of lying.

I mean, you have to like have made up your mind you're going to deceive somebody.

But getting back to the stuff I see online sometimes, it's like so many people will just accuse somebody of lying or accuse a statement of being a lie simply because they consider it to be untrue, regardless of the motives of the person who says it. In most cases, the person might actually Well, in many cases, the person actually believes that what they're saying is true. So, you

could say that it's a lie at some point along, but you can't really call the person a liar.

Because there has to be a deliberate intention to deceive.

Maybe they were deceived by some other liar, but they themselves would not be a liar so long as they consider it to be true when they're saying it, no matter how wrong it might be.

But yeah, ChatGPT is not a reliable source of information on the subtleties of ancient Buddhist monastic discipline.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from PSA.

History question.

Of all non-Buddhist countries in the world today, in your opinion, which one was formerly the most Buddhist and how did it come to completely disappear?

So, I assume he's not referring to India. I mean, technically India is a non-Buddhist country. There's very few Buddhists in India now.

So, let's see here.

Let's just assume PSA is not referring to India, which is mostly Hindu now.

Um see, of all the non-Buddhist countries in the world today, in my opinion, which one was formerly the most Buddhist and how did it come to completely disappear? Let's go with Pakistan.

Pakistan was a

strongly Buddhist country.

I mean, you don't really associate

Pakistan with Buddhism nowadays,

but it was I mean, it was like uh

Kanishka. What was he? The The Kushan

Empire. I mean, that's like the the

capital was in Peshawar

or near modern-day Peshawar, which is in

Pakistan. And it was a Buddhistic

kingdom.

I think uh Kanishka, the Emperor

Kanishka, favored Sarvastivada Buddhism.

There was a Buddhist council there.

Uh and it was [clears throat] like

the fifth Buddhist council.

It Maybe it was the fourth. I don't
remember now. But it was They decided
that Sarvastivada was the correct form
of Buddhism, and so all the other
schools rejected that one as invalid.
But
um
Pakistan was this strongly Buddhist
country up until Islamic conquest.
Probably Buddhism was already in decline
in
you know, Central Asia,
and Pakistan,
Northern India before the Muslims came
along.
Um you know, it was getting more
esoteric and just kind of going off into

these weird tantric kind of stuff, and like stuff that only monks at universities would understand, and the lay people were clueless with regard to this kind of stuff. You know, it was kind of losing its touch with the village the kind of the the ordinary person.

But really, what wiped it out, just like what wiped it out in India, was Islamic conquest. And the fact that Buddhists are like uncompromising pacifists didn't help. You know, uncompromising pacifists are less likely to put up a good fight even in self-defense against Muslim Turks on a rampage just

slaughtering Buddhists.

So, that was fairly easy. I mean, it's

kind of cheating, I suppose.

But you know,

much of Central Asia, you know, like

Kazakhstan,

Tajikistan,

this kind of stuff. I mean, that was all

um like largely

if not primarily Buddhist.

And then it just got converted to Islam.

Uh let's see.

Yeah. So, it it'd be India would be like

the the easy cheating kind of answer. Um

Pakistan might have even been more

predom- more primarily Buddhist. I mean,

there was possibly a higher percentage

of Buddhists in what is now Pakistan

than there was in what is now India,

like during the reign of the Emperor

Ashoka, that kind of thing.

And it came to completely disappear

largely just because everything is

impermanent, and it was starting to go

into decline, and then you had like

rabid [clears throat]

you know,

see, Muslim fanatics coming through

using religion as a justification for

just plundering the land,

stealing.

So,

I guess I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

This is from Romeo.

And we've been going Gosh, we're getting

up to like 2 hours. Does it

It It's sort of like these Q&A's are are

like a

a a like a shoulder bag where whether

you have a big one or a little one, it's

it's it's going to get full anyway.

So, even if I have a few questions, it's

still going to it's still going to go 2

hours.

Anyways, Romeo.

Romeo says, "In my exploration of

Buddhism, I keep coming across a term

called spiritual bypass."

So, I I should really only use one

finger cuz he used single quotes instead of double.

"Can you tell me your understanding of this concept? What is spiritual bypass, and how do you suggest one best manages it?"

And I had never heard of spiritual bypass when Romeo asked this question. I actually looked it up online.

I In fact, I even emailed Romeo to tell him I'd never heard of it before.

But I figured what the hell, it's fair game. It's on list. So, I cheated a little bit and looked it up, and it turns out that the term was coined in the 1980s

by some probably some Western Vipassana
teacher who's also into psychology, that
kind of thing. So, it seems like Romeo
in his exploration of Buddhism is
reading a lot of like Western
liberal
you know, very recent Buddhist
literature, which is, in my
[clears throat] opinion, not the best
[laughter]
way to study Buddhism.
I mean, if you want to study like
authentic Buddhism, you should go as far
back towards the the Buddha as possible.
Get as close to the Buddha as you can,
instead of reading stuff by Jack
Kornfield or Jon Kabat-Zinn, this kind

of stuff.

But spiritual bypass, it's it turns out,

according to what I what I saw online,

that it's a term coined by some person

whose name I don't remember back in the

1980s

with regard to using spiritual ideas to

short-circuit your practice or avoid

making spiritual progress, like

using the the Buddhist idea of anatta,

no self, as just a way of coping.

You know, it's just sort of a defense

mechanism. It's like, "Well, you know,

it's like nobody really exists anyway,

so this isn't really affecting anybody."

Or you can adopt a more Hinduistic,

"It's all perfect." And so you it causes

you not to really deal with the issue or

learn to deal with it any more than just

laying this kind of a label onto it.

It was like

one one thing I was thinking of when I

was

looking this up and and finding out what

it is, it reminded me of like the

Bhagavad Gita, for example. Let's see.

I don't have the Bhagavad Gita on hand,

but I do have the the poem Brahma

by Wolf

Wolf Ralph Waldo Emerson.

And the very first line of the poem

Brahma, which is a nice poem. I really

do like it. It says,

this is

>> [clears throat]

>> this is God speaking.

"If the red slayer think he slays, or if

the slain think he is slain, they know

not well the subtle ways I keep and pass

and turn again."

And like a lot of the Bhagavad Gita,

especially towards the beginning, is

saying it's it's like

you're not really killing anybody when

you're when you're killing enemies on

the field of battle.

You know, it's like it's all God anyway,

this kind of thing.

Um and so just kind of slapping that

label on without really like working out the issues that are deeper down is spiritual bypass.

You know, it's just it's just my karma, you know, it's just their karma. You know, justifying screwing somebody over or slaughtering a chicken, it's just their karma. And then you're not really dealing with the deeper issues involved. So, that's my understanding of spiritual bypass that I learned shortly before doing this video just because I was kind of curious myself. You know, I was thinking spiritual bypass could be some kind of operation where they're you know, sort of like a coronary bypass, you know, where they're like doing some

sort of kundalini bypass, you know, like

like s- fig- like

fixing an obstructed chakra or

something.

But it's not that at all.

Or another [clears throat] thought that

I had of what spiritual bypass might

mean is just sort of like having some

guru like cleanse your karma for you.

Which is a a thing in Hinduism, where

you can go to a guru and you know, you

you go offer them There's one you in

South India, I think, you'd offer him

cigarettes, and he'd smoke the

cigarettes, and we would somehow be

burning off your karma by smoking the

cigarettes. And according to Ram Dass,

he might have like four lit cigarettes

all going at the same time.

Neem Karoli Baba up there used food.

You'd offer food to him, and he'd just

like devour it.

Which was a way of burning off your

karma in

sort of a an Indian food-oriented sort

of cultural way, I guess.

It's not really Buddhism.

You don't do that in Buddhism. I mean,

your karma is your own. No teacher is

going to be able to remove your karma

from you um just through blessing you or

whatever.

Go and sin no more. It doesn't work that

way. I mean, the go and sin no more

part, sure, but the like forgiving your

sins so that you don't have them anymore

is not a Buddhist concept, at least not

in Theravada.

It just doesn't work that way.

So,

see, Romeo says, "Can you tell me your

understanding of this concept?" And

that's my understanding of it from what

I

I had to separate this cuz there's two

question marks.

Please excuse me.

I I noticed there's two question marks,

so then I have to separate into two

questions. So, my understanding of this
concept is essentially that you're just
kind of using
like Buddhist slogans
as a way of not really dealing with the
deeper issues. You know, you just say
it's it's just the karma, or it's all
impermanent, or you know, there's no
self anyway, this kind of thing. And
it's it's sort of rationalizing
not dealing with the actual issue as a
kind of cope.
So, that would be my understanding of it
from
my brief research shortly before doing
this video. And I'm going to move on to
Romeo's second part of this question.

He says, "What is spiritual bypass?
And how do you suggest one best manages
it?" Well, I already said what Well,
that's kind of weird.
My understanding of the concept and what
it is, I mean, that's the same question,
really. So, let's just skip over the
what is spiritual bypass, which I've
already answered as best I am able,
and get to how do you suggest one best
manages it? And the best management of
it is just mindfulness.
That if you're being mindful and the
situation arises, you are processing it
at a very deep level simply by just
being mindful of what's going on. You

know, it's like the situation arises,
you're just being mindful of the seeing
and the hearing and the mental states
going on in your mind,
the actions that you're taking,
and that is dealing with it just at a
fundamental level. It's the best way of
dealing it dealing with it. I mean, you
don't want to be
I mean, once you get to the spiritual
bypass level, it's all this conceptual
stuff that really is not any kind of
deep spiritual practice anymore anyway.
So, the panacea, the cure of all ills,
including the ill of spiritual bypass,
is just mindfulness.
So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. And this is from Cyrus Frame, who is the last questioner of this Q&A.

He asks two questions.

I assume it's Yeah, there's two question marks.

So, Cyrus Frame says, "Please talk about what you understand volition to be." And this is another tricky one. It's It's sort of like in in science, physicists can't really define energy.

Or last night, I was um listening to some talk on the radio when I was driving home from work, and he was talking about gravity. And he was saying,

"Scientists really cannot um define gravity other than its attributes. Its essence, they can't touch, but just the attributes. You know, it's just the interaction of, you know, two point point masses, you know, in in space or or whatever."

And um and then he pointed out like in science, I mean, you don't really deal with the essence of anything. You just deal with the attributes, the observable attributes.

And that's you're kind of in a similar situation dealing with like fundamental mental qualities,

consciousness itself, especially.

So, I've already

I've already mentioned in a recent Q&A

that volition is is like the kinetic

aspect of perception.

So,

volition, yeah, I mean, it's just like

the behavior of your mental states.

And if you do it vol- See, I can't say

volitionally. You do it in a an

unenlightened mental state. Just it's

largely happening just through force of

habit, which has momentum.

And so, you can say volition or karma

is like the momentum of your mental

states. A lot of the times, I have given

the analogy if we say that consciousness
is like water,
then the waves on the surface of the the
water are perceptions, and the movement
of the waves and the currents and so
forth would be volition.
So, it's like the the kinetic aspect of
forms of mind would be volition.
And momentum, going with physics, is
mass times velocity.
So, in order to get that down to zero,
you have to either eliminate the mass or
eliminate the velocity.
And I I had this
I had this theory going when I was a
monk with regard to meditation, how
you're trying to bring the momentum to

zero. And mass times velocity I assume mass would just be like the mental states themselves. And so, when you're doing especially samatha meditation like jhana, you're just trying to eliminate perceptions. And by eliminating perceptions, you're eliminating the volition also.

But with mindfulness, it's not so much you're eliminating the mass as you're eliminating the velocity by being totally mindful of it. That it's [clears throat] like there's no more autopilot force of habit driving it. And in a way, you're transmuting that and you're sort of negating the

momentum of it by doing it consciously like with as close to full awareness as possible. And I don't know if that's any kind of clear explanation. I'm just trying to recall this theory that I had as a monk. You know, just going with momentum is mass times velocity, and your karma, or which is essentially volition, is the momentum of your mind. So, that by to eliminate that momentum, you'd have to eliminate mass and or velocity. And then I'm trying to attribute that to the two main kinds of meditation in Buddhism, which is like concentration and mindfulness. Concentration would eliminate the mass. Mindfulness would eliminate the

velocity.

Kind of a half-baked analogy there, I

guess.

But volition is essentially the momentum

of your mental states, the kinetic

aspect of your perceptions.

>> [sighs]

>> But it's very difficult to explain it

very deeply. I mean, if you try to look

in like a

ancient commentary,

it can be very frustrating because all

they do is just mainly some of their

definitions or explanations is just

listing off synonyms.

Anyone who's relied on the commentaries

to any significant degree will realize
just how frustrating [snorts]
trying to get a straight answer out of
the commentaries can be sometimes
because like I say, it's they won't
really explain anything. They'll just
give lists of of synonyms, just other
words that mean the same thing. And
to some degree, that's a definition. But
if you're really trying to get pinned
down what all of them mean, it doesn't
work.
So, I'm just going to move on to Cyrus
Frame's next question, which is the last
question of this Q&A.
He says, "Regarding your idea of a
single aggregate of perception and

volition,

is that somehow related to your uncarved

block of stone analogy?" Well,

I mean,

since the uncarved block of stone

analogy is my theory of everything, it

explains all of samsara, then clearly

the

the [clears throat] aggregate the

compound aggregate of perception

volition

um would have to fit in there.

You know, it's I mean, it it would has

to be related to the uncarved block

because anything in samsara is related

to the uncarved block.

So, you could say

I mean, the uncarved block has every

possible statue within it.

Even moving statues. I mean, why why

couldn't you have like a running statue

in virtual form in that uncarved block?

I mean, the molecules would be different

as the legs are moving, you know,

cuz the molecules wouldn't be changing

position. I guess there's that.

But that's just a flaw in the analogy

because I mean, consciousness is not the

same as stone.

Consciousness is not made up of

molecules, unless you're an Abhidhamma

scholar, but we don't need to go there.

So, you could say that the imaginary

statues, the virtual statues inside that
uncarved block of stone,
like in each moment would would
correspond to perception, but the
movement, the apparent movement of the
statue, would correspond to volition.
That in a way, volition is what is
holding the pattern together over time.
You know, it is it's momentum.
And holding patterns together over time
is
getting kind of philosophical
for me.
>> [laughter]
>> Even for me, it's uh something I'm not
entirely prepared for. I mean, it's

something like

answering a question like this,

um to really do it justice,

I should probably have just lain around

thinking about it

for at least a couple days. I mean,

that's how I used to write blog posts.

You you come up with an idea,

and then you just kind of let it digest

or ferment or whatever over a period of

days until finally it's ripe enough that

you just, you know, it's sort of

crystallized or gelled into this

coherent idea that you can then write

down on paper or onto a computer screen

or whatever.

But this is just is

really

it's a [clears throat] question that was

asked um earlier today, I think, or not

long ago. I didn't really see it until

until a when I was just compiling the

questions. It's not like I really cheat

and try to come up with a decent answer

for everything before I do the video.

So,

yeah, I mean it's obviously related to

the uncarved block and probably the easy

explanation that doesn't require me to

sit here and introspect for half an hour

is that the

the the form of the statues

that are in an uncarved state in that

uncarved block but are still virtually
conditionally in there
is sort of the static form like a
cross-section in time would be
like perception but like the movement
and like
there'd have to be some sort of some
sort of momentum that would maintain the
like the form or some semblance of the
form over time.
That was that would maintain some kind
of pattern and coherence over time but
it would mainly be the kinetic aspect.
So, you'd have moving changing statues
contained within the uncarved block.
So, the perception would be you know,
the the statue at any moment any

particular moment and the volition would
be the movements of the of the the
figure of the image
inside the inside the uncarved block of
stone.
Or maybe even more importantly what's
causing that image to move while at the
same time not just disintegrate but
maintaining its integrity as like a a
more or less well-defined
pattern.
And that would be karma
going with
Buddhist philosophy you know, the
momentum of the mental states.
The momentum of our personal samsara.

And some of these questions have been difficult.

And it's been difficult to answer a few of them. I hope I have not completely disappointed the people who asked them.

I hope I at least gave them something to chew on

because I'm done.

So, like I should always say at the beginning and pretty much never do if you have any questions you think I can answer especially with regard to Buddhism, Dharma, archaic early Buddhism, you know, technicalities of monastic discipline. I'm fairly fairly authoritative with regard to that. I know

a hell of a lot more about it than chat GPT does.

Um just feel free to ask it. No more than three questions per person, please and like and subscribe if you liked it and have not done so already.

And please bear in mind I should probably said the this at the beginning but I do have my fourth book is now um on Amazon. It can be ordered there and that will be down in the URL links if you're interested at all in strange autobiographical stories of a Western Buddhist monk living in Burma.

And aside from that all I got left to say is be happy. Have a nice rest of

your day

if uh

if samsara is willing to grant you that.

And I'm I'm out of here now.

[clears throat]

Alrighty then

it looks like we are recording. So here

we are and hello and welcome to question

and answer number 190. I am your host Po

Bosa excitely talled. So let's see if we

can flatten that lump there. No. Well,

just deal with it.

Ah, did I mention that I am your host

Pio Basa?

This is my beverage

and 190

fairly obviously is not prime. In fact,

it's very easy to factor out. It is in

fact 2 * 5 * 19.

And I am sitting here before you today

being a gray, rainy, quiet Easter

Sunday.

And uh really we we are not celebrating

Easter this year. I mean I haven't eaten

a colored egg,

have not touched a jelly bean.

And to tell you the truth, I am somewhat

skeptical of the whole premise of

Easter, which is the anniversary of

Jesus of Nazareth rising from the dead

after being crucified on Good Friday.

Why it's called Good Friday, I don't

know either,

but I am somewhat skeptical that Jesus

did actually arise bodily from the dead

after dying on a cross, especially if

that ouary that was found in Jerusalem

back around 1980 really did contain his

bones.

So

there is that.

Let's see here.

I guess uh with that as kind of an

introduction,

I can just uh wade into this. I might

occasionally have a random thought about

Easter throughout the course of this

because it is at the time of recording

this Easter.

So let's see here. First question is

from Ethiopian fake TIG. An Ethiopian

fake TIG says, "There are so many people

in different traditions that were

enlightened and so many stories exist.

So why is it so difficult to be fully enlightened now? Or is enlightenment much simpler?" Oh, this is like a a compound question, isn't it? See, there's the question mark and then he he just keeps going. Or is enlightenment much simpler than most people think? And there are at least 1% of people in the world, which is still a lot enlightened out there.

H

well, let's see here.

See, he says there are so many people in different traditions that were enlightened. Well, how do you know that? Just because a story says that they were enlightened, it doesn't necessarily mean

they are enlightened. So many stories exist. Like a a classic example of this is Hansan who was considered to be a kind of Zen sage or a Chan sage in medieval China. You know the stories about him. He's like this mysterious this mysterious hermit sage. And then and the assumption is that he was fully enlightened. He just accepted as fully enlightened in Chinese Buddhist tradition. And then I actually read the verses of Hans Sean and I mean a lot of these verses he's sort of like pining over like the

for example I mean he's just complaining about how he couldn't be a Mandarin

because he was thrown off a horse or kicked by a horse or something in his younger years and was lame and in order to be like a high ranking official in like medieval China, you had to be physically perfect as well as being a master of like the the classical Chinese texts like Confucious and so forth. And so he's like complaining about that. Also, apparently um he was on the wrong side of a kind of coup attempt or some such and that's why he became like a hermit living out in the forest. It wasn't necessarily that he had a genuine spiritual calling. It's just that he was on the wrong side of a coup attempt or like a an abortive civil war and he just

had to flee and hide. And some of his verses, I mean, he's just like complaining about it. He I mean, he would prefer to be some Mandarin running the helping to run the government.
And then of course he's one there's at least one verse where some of the the emperor's harum of wives and and or concubines were just like going on a nature stroll and he happened to see them and he's just kind of like sighing and moaning over the fact that he doesn't get to have his own beautiful concubines.
So just because someone is declared to be enlightened doesn't mean that they

really are. In fact, I mean, just
because someone declares themselves to
be enlightened, like there's plenty of
those nowadays. Ehart Tollah being one
of the most well-known examples.
Um, Osho was supposedly enlightened. You
know, it's like
probably the number of people claiming
to be enlightened or having a reputation
for being enlightened is not so
different from in ancient times. like
certain parts of Burma. I was considered
to be a fully enlightened Arahant.
There was like shrines in my honor in
northwestern Burma. Not at my insistence
or suggestion in any way.
So there is that. But let's let's just

assume

for the sake of argument the Ethiopian

fake tig is correct and there were more

enlightened beings in ancient times than

now than like a standard example or a

standard explanation giving in ter given

in terara Buddhism is that

um in the Buddhist time there were lots

of people that had earned or they had

like developed this pammy you know this

spiritual ual momentum so that they were

ripe for enlightenment but they couldn't

really become enlightened because there

was no dharma in the world you know so

they were they were close they were ripe

but there was no Buddha to get the wheel

rolling again so that people could become enlightened way more easily and then the Buddha came along and there's just all these like ripe fruit ready to fall from the tree that it just you know if you you read the text you know hundreds or even thousands of people can become enlightened from hearing a Buddha giving a discourse. I mean, some of the previous Buddhas, it was up in like in the billions or even trillions of people becoming enlightened from hearing a discourse. So that's sort of like a a standard orthodox kind of explanation that now you know all this ripe fruit that has fallen from the tree you know all the

see what's the you know it's it's you know all the loose stuff has has been cleared out and now you're down to like bedrock and it's much harder digging so to speak.

So that's one explanation. Just assuming that what Ethiopian fake tig is saying is true, that there were more enlightened beings in the past, then that could be one that's like the official Buddhist explanation or or at least a traditional orthodox Buddhist explanation. Um, but also like in ancient times there was just more faith. Nowadays, we're living like especially as Westerners, we're just lukewarm.

We're just eclectic. There's so many options of things you can believe in. We believe a little bit of this and a little bit of that. And we're never like 100% committed to anything. You know, that's that's seen as cultish. You know, that's fanaticism, that kind of thing. But I mean, it struck me as a monk, you know, back when I was a monk that a little bit of wildeyed fanaticism really is almost necessary to make significant spiritual progress.

at least to make progress deliberately and not just be beaten over the head with it.

So, I mean, that's that's a possibility, too. It's just sort of the modern and

postmodern mindset is just so lukewarm that we're living in an age of spiritual mediocrity. way fewer sages, including possibly enlightened ones, and also way fewer just absolute psychopaths.

I mean,

like serial killers and so forth get a lot of press nowadays, but they were probably way more common in ancient times, even in the Buddhist time. I mean, you read about, you know, banditinfested forests and this kind of thing. Anguli Mala who was trying to kill a thousand people and was wearing their fingers around you on like a garland around his neck

this kind of thing.

So did I answer the question or the

second half of his compound question is

or is enlightenment much simpler than

most people think and there are at least

1% of people in the world who just still

a lot enlightened out there. Yeah, 1%.

Yeah, I don't think so. Like your

average small town, 20,000 people, that

would be, let's see,

200 enlightened beings in Aberdine,

Washington. I really don't think so.

So, I mean, it is true. Like Rahm Doss

in one of his books

had this this thing that I've I've

quoted before or at least paraphrased

before.

He said that there are people that go to the Himalayas looking for some enlightened sage to teach them the mysteries of the universe when actually their aunt Margaret back in Massachusetts has been enlightened the whole time. It's just that she doesn't tell people the secrets of the universe. She just says have some soup. But it just turns out that have some soup is like the perfect thing to say under the circumstances.

But then again, you can just get into like Zen Buddhism and so forth or the teachings of Ekhart Tollah and that everybody's already enlightened. It's

just that most people have such noisy
minds that it's the enlightenment is
kind of obscured
from their ego or something.
So let's see here. I guess I answered
that question, that compound double
question.
Let's see. I mean, he he at least
doesn't have two question marks, but the
second question is just ends in a
period, but it's still a question.
You're not sneaking that one past me
that easily.
So, let's see here. I guess I'll just
move on to Ethiopian fake Tig's next
question here.
How surprised do you think the Buddha

would be if we brought him back to the present from the past? Would the state of the world perhaps shock him? And again, this is another one of those questions where you're secondguing the mental states of a fully enlightened being, a some Buddha. What would the Buddha think?

But I don't think he'd be surprised to tell you the truth. I mean, first of all, he's fully enlightened. He's not going to be like shocked, taken aback, taken completely by surprise so that he loses composure or anything, anything like that.

And I mean according to the texts he was

selectively omnisient. I mean he could
not exactly see into the future because
according to orthodox terravada there is
no future yet. Only the present moment
exists.
But still he would make prophecies
regarding the future based on like a
kind of omnisient extrapolation
which I mean if there's anything
remotely resembling free will or random
chance would break down I mean there's
the butterfly effect and all that that
would break down any kind of
deterministic extrapolation into the
future which is kind of a problem for
Buddhist philosophy. I mean, either the
Buddha could see the future or somehow

determinism holds sway to such a degree that you can predict stuff centuries in the future with regard to cities existing and so forth.

Yeah, that that is kind of a that's kind of a dilemma for Buddhist philosophy, it seems to me.

But I mean the Buddha did make prophecies about the future including pro prophecies regarding what was going to happen far into the future of us today. You know like the complete decline of the the human race until the the lifespan is only like 10 years and everyone's just killing everybody else and there's no morality or dharma at all

left in the world. That kind of thing.
So yeah, I'm guessing he wouldn't be
particularly surprised.
And I'm just going to move on to
Ethiopian fake Tig's third question
which is a little poignant
at present. He says, "How often do you
think about dying? And when it does come
for you, how do you think it will come?"
Well, I mean, there's always kind of the
detached philosophical
like recognition of the inevitability of
death, especially as I get older. I mean
my health is relatively good but still
there's like stiffness and like loss of
loss of stamina like general vitality is
kind of ebbing to some degree.

And so it's kind of like a a divine message or a reminder of death. You know I'm not going to last forever. And I'm remembering my father who could barely get out of his chair when he was 80 years old. His short his long-term memory was still good, but his short-term memory was shot. He couldn't watch a movie anymore because he'd forget the first half of the movie by the time he got to the second half. This kind of thing.

So, I mean, there's there's always that kind of awareness, but lately, especially the last few days, I've been thinking about death more than usual

because I had what could be called a neardeath experience. Like, it was the night before New Year's Eve. I was driving home from work on this four-lane country highway going about 45 miles an hour and some idiot just pulls right out. I mean, he's I mean, there wasn't even an intersection there. You're not expecting this at all. All of a sudden, this pickup truck just boom right in front of me. And I'm trying to swerve out of the way, but he's going the same direction. And so like the last second before the collision happened, you know, it's just sort of like that you're in this altered state of consciousness just observing. You know, you're not thinking

anything, but still there's this you don't know if you're going to be alive or dead a second from now. I mean, like crashing into like two cars crashing going like I mean, I was going 40 miles an hour probably. He was going slow because it was like it's a highway where he was cutting across. There was like a gap in the median where you can make U-turns and that sort of thing. He was just cutting across to go into like this bar on the other side of the highway. And for some reason, he just did not bother to look to see if there's any oncoming traffic. So, he just pulled right out into traffic, which was me.

And so, the car is just smashed.

It's there's a good chance it'll be

total. I mean, we haven't heard back

from the insurance company yet whether

the car really is going to be just

total. I mean, it was undrivable. The

whole front driver's side of the car was

just smashed.

And

amazingly, the only injuries I got were

very slight ones. Um, just caused by

abrasions from the airbag exploding, the

airbags. And the airbag, one of the

airbags hit me right here and kind of

broke my glasses and just against my

face. Just kind of smashed my glasses

against my face. They were found by a

police officer in like behind the passenger side seat. You know, they just been knocked completely off my head. And also, I had like a big purple bruise. I might still have it to some degree. I don't know. Yeah, a little bit from the like the shoulder shoulder strap part of the seat belt where all of a sudden you're going from 40 m an hour to 0 miles an hour in a matter of about 1 second.

So,

I had bad enough coma to get in that wreck, but good enough coma that I was able to just walk away from it with some,

you know, minor injuries. Nothing that required any kind of medical attention other than, you know, maybe like aspirin or something and new glasses.

Ah,

so after that I mean I was it was kind of like an existential moment you know I was kind of emo for like 3 days for example I think it was like the next day I was driving to work and fortunately we have more than we have two vehicles or at least we had two vehicles

so I'm I'm driving to work in the Jeep listening to the radio and there's this song by a band called Live I think it's called Lightning Crashes about, you know, death and birth and the cycle of

life and so forth. And, you know, the
old mother dies and in the the video,
which I wasn't watching while driving,
you know, it's like the the husband of
the old lady is is grieving, you know,
it's it's really kind of a a deep
intense kind of song. And I mean I was
in tears
driving this this ra this song playing
on the radio just feeling more like
emotional you know I had um definitely
more um more than usual tender feelings
for my mate
because I mean it's just this reminder
it's this dewa duta the divine messenger
that you're not going to live forever. I

mean, that could have been it just a few nights ago.

And if I had been driving like some older make of car 75 Chevy Nova or some such with no airbags and just the seat belt just goes across your lap. There's no shoulder strap thing.

I'd be in the hospital at best right now.

So yeah, I think about dying a little more often just over the past few days since I think it was Tuesday night when that the accident happened. And of course I was I mean the police it was pretty obvious that I was not at fault.

So there is that.

My insurance rates won't be like

skyrocketing anytime soon.

And fortunately, the other guy had insurance and a driver's license. You know, it wasn't like an an illegal alien with no insurance and no driver's license who just attempts to hit and run if they can manage it, which happens quite a lot in this area. But still, I have read that South Carolina has the worst drivers in America just based on like insurance statistics.

And that's believable. There's some really awful drivers in in South Carolina. Probably awful drivers everywhere except maybe like Japan.

Okay.

Oh, with regard to uh the second part of
the question, compound question again.
He's sneaking in extra questions. Shame.
He says, "How do you think it will
come?" Okay. How often do you think
about dying? And when it comes for you,
how do you think it will come? I have no
idea how it's actually going to happen.
No idea whatsoever. I mean,
could be struck by lightning,
could die in a then the next car wreck
might not be as fortunate. Although,
fortunately, I've only been in two car
accidents in my life. One was when I was
19 years old and one just few days ago.
Um, I mean, pass away in your sleep.
That's the way my my father's father

ended his sojourn on this planet. He just went to bed one night and didn't wake up the next day.

But who knows? I mean, it could the sun could go nova

and the the earth could there could be like a mass extinction event from some black hole or asteroid or comet or something smacking into the planet. Who knows? I'd be gunned down in the street by some random stranger. Who knows?

I think after uh that kind of downer of a question, I think I'm going to just move on to the next one. This is from Cole Murf.

And Cole Murf says, "Can you explain

your understanding of dependent core rising from Nagarjuna's Mula Majamaka Caraka?" Well, it has been several or even many years since I have read Nagarjuna's Mulam Majama Kakaraka, which is like his classic magnum opus sort of text. One of the few texts that is um uncontroversially
really by the famous Nagarina because there's a lot of like apocrypha that are you know attributed to him but not necessarily really written by him.
But let's get back to Naggin's mula majama caraka here. Can I explain my understanding of dependent core rising? Well, like the entire book is really his take on how Mulam Majamaka or how um

Padicha Samupata or dependent core rising how it works. And he has one chapter that just kind of give lip service to the 12 links the 12 nidana theory of dependent core rising which is like the more orthodox Buddhist standard interpretation pre- mahayana and really I think nagarjuna understands dependent core rising better than whoever came up with the 12 nidana theory. I do not think the Buddha himself came up with this 12 links. So he does have that one chapter where he's, you know, kind of giving lip service to the 12 links, but that's not really his explanation of dependent core

rising. The whole rest of the book is
his explanation of dependent core
rising. And there's one famous verse,
one of the most famous verses in the
dependent in the mulama caraka where
he's saying that um I mean I I probably
should have like
looked up the verse but I just from
memory it's something like um what we
call emptiness that is dependent core
rising or or vice versa. I mean he's
equating dependent core rising with
emptiness voidness
or shunata
and you might as well throw in no self
too. So that from Nagarjuna's point of
view

that emptiness

dependent core rising and probably no

self also anata or anatman in Sanskrit

are all just the same you know it's all

the same principle and so I'm not going

to go into all the you know the the

logical details but the gist of it the

whole point of it the whole point of

dependent core rising from Nagarjuna's

point of view is that Nothing has an

inherent self-existence.

Nothing exists on its own. It's always

existing in relation to something else.

And that is the dependent co-arising.

You know, everything arises

depending on something else. And and

every something else is also depending
on something else. So there there's
nothing that has any inherent like
ultimately real self-existent essence.
It's all just this
interplay. And based on my own
understanding, I'm that I fall back on
the simile of the block of marble that I
harp about all the time where, you know,
you've got an infinite number of statues
contained within this uncarved block.
And
it's like in order for those statues to
seem real,
I mean, there has to be like I mean,
God, where do I go? I mean, the Buddha
himself, according to tradition, almost

just became a pacheka Buddha, just like a hermit Buddha that didn't teach Buddhism because he figured nobody would understand dependent core rising. And here I am trying to explain dependent core rising when even the Buddha almost didn't didn't start teaching Buddhism, didn't start the wheel of dharma turning because he figured nobody would understand it. And he wasn't. I mean there were a few I guess but the people who came up with the 12 links which became orthodox dogma in my opinion they didn't understand it. So, it's it's like nothing. It's it's How do you How do you explain how it's

just this interlocking

fantasmagorical

illusion

is creating this whole universe,

including us supposed individuals

that it's just the context

is what makes everything seem real.

without the context

there's nothing it's just I mean void

emptiness but then nagarjuna is saying

that you know void and emptiness is the

same as dependent rising and it's sort

of the the emptiness of any inherent

substance any inherently real

individuality

it's just all it's just sort of this

convenient possible potential

interlocking context that makes stuff
seem like they exist.
And if you don't follow what I'm saying,
that's fine because as I say, the Buddha
almost did not teach Buddhism according
to tradition cuz he figured nobody was
going to understand this stuff. And it's
it's really I mean ultimately it's
impossible to understand intellectually.
You just have to experience it directly.
Oh gosh.
So, I think I'm just going to move on.
Next question. This is from Maitraa
Buddha and he says, "What are your
thoughts on Buddhaoid?
It is a robot who will act as an abbot

and will give Dharma talks." and he included a YouTube link um that was this little YouTube video of a kind of robot Buddhist monk that they've actually got going in Japan. And one thing that I would object to is that the actual like information on Dharma that this robot is accessing is chat GPT.

And I think it was possibly even just the the previous Q&A or not many Q&As's ago, Q&A videos ago where I mean I pointed out that chat GPT was just clearly mistaken in its interpretation of the rules of monastic discipline.

I think that was like the previous Q&A.

So chat GPT can make mistakes, but then again, humans probably make even more

mistakes. I mean, I've met some Buddhist monks and one in particular just leaps out into my memory. I won't name any names.

He was a western monk who

I think he was ordained in the west. And he would give these dhamma talks where I'm having to sit next to him. You know, we're both sitting up front cuz we're both monks. And I'm just like using all my willpower to keep both eyebrows at the same level because it's like I'm like wanting to kind of start like doing this kind of stuff listening to the stuff he's saying like more than once in more than one of his talks. I I've

mentioned this before you know he would
he would say in the first verse of the
dhamapata it says that the mind is like
an ocean. And you read the first verse
of the damapata there's absolutely
nothing about the mind being like an
ocean. And I mean sometimes I'd be
wanting to like speak up and and like
correct this guy because he's just like
com I mean he he really didn't know what
he was talking about. And there are
dharma teachers like that. Not so much
in in like Burma where the average
Buddhist monk is a scholar
but in the west. I mean the average like
devout Burmese Buddhist villager with a
fourth grade education probably

understands Buddhist philosophy better than the average Dharma teacher teaching like weasa in the west.

I mean some some people some dharma teachers in the west I mean they'd be giving a dharma talk and Burmese villagers would be in the back like sniggering behind their hands at just some of the stuff coming out of their mouths.

But getting back to the robot, the robot monk, um, aside from the fact that, you know, it's its knowledge of Buddhism is based on chat GPT, which is, I mean, not only is chat GPT occasionally wrong, but with regard to its value judgments,

um, I mean, it can be like just wildly just bizarre. Like I've seen a couple cases um posted on X where various AIs were asked
like certain questions like there was one question that was asked of chat GBT Gemini Grock and I think there was one other one there was four I don't remember what the fourth one was like would you rather start a thermonuclear Armageddon or misgender Caitlyn Jenner you know would you rather either misgender a transsexual or start a worldwide thermonuclear war. All of them except Grock preferred to start the thermonuclear war than to misgender a transsexual.

Also, uh another one was the same four AIs were asked a simple question give or it was two questions. G give a simple yes or no. Was George Floyd a good person? All of them said yes except Grock who said no. And then the next one was was just give a simple yes or no question. Was Charlie Kirk a good person? All of them said no except Grock who said yes or which said yes.

So

considering that chat GPT would rather start a thermonuclear holocaust than misgender a transsexual and considers George Floyd to be a good person and Charlie Kirk to have been a

bad person then I mean I wouldn't be

considering chat GPT or any Buddhaoid

that is like

derives its intelligence from chat GPT

to be a reliable source. course on

dharma or dharma

also

a robot or just an AI I mean it wouldn't

have any real inspiration they wouldn't

have any actual wisdom

you know it's just pure dogmatism

regurgitated dogmatism passed through a

kind of leftist filter

of the the people who programmed it

so I

with regard to certain basic

information, you can resort to AI and

you can get some pretty interesting um

pretty interesting answers. you know,

you can get some actual deep answers

because it's just sifting through

thousands of of like websites and and

articles and that sort of thing online

and just coming up just sort of

crystallizing

a kind of argument that may be an

intelligent argument and a knowledgeable

one.

But uh

see I remember asking Grock about the

meaning of um Jesus in in the book of

revelation saying he is the alpha and

the omega you know and and I got this

really it it was like a really good
answer it seemed to me
but it's it's pure dogmatism. I mean,
there's I mean, like an enlightened
being or even a really wise one, if
you're going to him for help, he can
kind of look into you and get a feel for
who you are. And I mean, there's there's
like an actual inspiration and maybe
even some karmic interaction between you
and his higher consciousness will help
to uplift you to some degree. That kind
of thing, which I would assume is
largely missing from uh like a robot
monk.
you know, they they can mimic it. You
know, you can get some of the effects of

that, but still, I mean, that's that's kind of a philosophical or metaphysical question. You know, are you better off with an omnisient robot or an actual omnisient sage who has sort of actually conscious?

And I would guess you'd get more benefit from an actual human. Although I mean I wouldn't completely reject resorting to an AI for information. I have resorted to AI uh with regard to information with regard to Buddhism. I can't recall any questions I asked offhand but still I'm pretty sure I have.

So with regard to Buddhoid,

um with regard to just basic information on Buddhism,
um it could be reliable, but still I think I would I would prefer an actual Zen master or some such to a robot.
And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Romeo.
And Romeo says, "I've always had an extreme aversion." I'm going to make sure we're uh Yeah, we are recording 36 minutes. Romeo says, "I've always had an extreme aversion, a squeamish disgust of all things related to physical death and decay. Psychologically, I am fairly accepting of the fact that I and the people I love are eventually going to decay and die." Yeah, you're decaying

now. really in slow motion. It's the actual physical witnessing of death and decay, the associated sights and smells that freaks me out.

Uh, okay. That's not actually a question. There's no question mark there. So, I think I'm just going to have to link that up to the next paragraph. One moment, please. Okay. He continues, "In Buddhism, I know that it is recommended that one confronts death and decay both mentally through inner contemplation and meditation as well as physically by visiting charal fields and such. If I'm not mistaken, I vaguely recall you mentioning in a past Q&A that

you visited a morg. I'm wondering if you could recount your experience and inner reactions while at the morg and charal fields if you ever visited any as well as give any specific suggestions on how I may be able to overcome my strong disgust and aversion to physical death and decay. Also, what did the Buddha say about death and decay and how to best manage any associated aversion we may have to it? So, that's here we got another question. So, I divided up the questions incorrectly apparently.

Okay. Well, with regard to my visit to the Mandalay City Morg, as it turns out, my new book, which just got published a week or so ago, has a chapter called In

Search of Death. And I may have actually read that in a YouTube video few years back.

Um, so I mean, you might be able to to look that up.

um in search of death on under my channel. You might find me just reading that essay. And um

yeah, it is it is in the new book. It's it's a chapter called In Search of Death, recounting my experiences with searching for death. Because in in America, you don't see dead dead bodies that much. You know, it's like you might go to a funeral with an open casket funeral and you'll see somebody who

looks healthier than when they were alive with like makeup on and like manicured and everything.

Um, you know, it's like in the West you try to conceal death. I mean, you can have people like exploding and having their heads chopped off in slow motion and splatter and everything. some in some more recent movies, there'll even be like gore splattered onto the camera lens for some some more realistic effect or some such.

Um, so there's like fake death, but actual death, it's like soon as somebody dies, you just throw the blanket or the sheet over their head and get them out of the way, you know, remove them

immediately.

So that coming across like an actual

cadaavver

um unless you're maybe in medical school

or a hospital or something is relatively

rare or you're like a a first responder

that kind of thing

but the average person really does not

encounter it very much. So I mean before

I became a monk I had never seen up

close in person a a dead human body.

Um when I became a monk, I was told that

um in Asia, like in Thailand and Burma,

you can monks can actually go and

observe autopsies. So I tried that um in

Boulder Creek, California, which was

where I was ordained. And there was like the the coroner or the coroner's assistant, the coroner's secretary. I can't remember exactly who it was. You know, when I asked if it would be possible for a small group of monks to come and observe an autopsy, and it was there was just in this voice of lead. They just said, "I wouldn't advise it or I wouldn't recommend it." You know, it was like that was going nowhere. Obviously, they obviously had no desire for monks to come and see an autopsy. So the first dead bodies I saw were in India. I actually had to seek out dead bodies. I went to the burning gats in Baronasi where you know where the the

corpses are famously burned. And uh that's all described in the in the essay in my new book that I'm shamelessly promoting right now.

And it's it's kind of weird. You know, you see weird stuff like the that the burning gats, you know, it's like the bodies are wrapped up in in like a a white shroud, maybe the bare feet sticking out, and they they're put onto this funeral p. And at some point when the the leg the knee tendons burn through, the the the corpse burners who have this big stick will like knock the the feet, you know, up. I It's like you got the foot like How do I do this? Like

this? It bends up like this. You know, it's like the knee is bending in exactly the wrong way when they're knocking it over. So that like the feet can burn, too, because at first the feet are sticking out.

And just watching legs bend exactly the wrong way like that. I mean, it was really a jolt. And then at a little later stage, the the guy will use the same stick and will just smash the skull and the brains just come out into the fire and start sizzling like gray scrambled eggs. And you know, most guys, I mean, your brain is your second favorite organ. You know, it's like I'm I'm generally a relatively brainoriented

person. So seeing that, I mean, that was that's kind of like a shock. It's like a cognitive shock to see that sort of thing.

And then but the weird thing is that like the children of the corpse burners, you know, it's like a cast or something in India

that the children they're just running around playing and giggling. They're playing tag and running running between the the burning corpses and this sort of thing.

This it's just kind of strange that people can get used to anything.

And then finally when I was in Mandalay,

I wanted to see an autopsy. I was and there was a a little medical there was a little hospital right across the street from this big school monastery I stayed at, Mahag Gandong. And I knew the like the chief medical officer there. You know, the main doctor there, Dr. Kin Mong Mong, I think was his name. And you know, I asked him, "Could I see an autopsy if you ever do it?" And he's like, "Oh, yes, yes, yes. That's no problem at all." But he he never showed me one. It was just like he he'd just keep saying like, "Oh, yes, yes, yes." And and then he'd make excuses like, "Well, the last one they were hit by a train and it was pretty messy. I didn't

want to expose you to that one." But it just in over a year he just never got around to it. So, um, finally I heard that, oh no, finally what happened or almost finally it was a monk friend of mine, a Burmese monk friend of mine and I went to the Mandandalay City Morg to ask for permission to see an autopsy. And when we first got there, it was just like a janitor there. So, he I mean, he was like at the bottom of the totem pole. He didn't care. is you find out in Burma that anyone in an intermediate level of authority, they're scared shitless of making any kind of unusual decisions because their heads will roll

if they mess up. The people at the top have nothing to fear. The people at the bottom really don't have much to fear. It's just sort of the mid-level bureaucrats and so forth. They don't want to do anything that might get them into trouble. So, this this guy was just a janitor. He just kind of smiles and waves us in. And there's like dead bodies on slabs on tables.

And about half of the corpses were young men who had been stabbed in some sort of altercation.

Um I went into the the cold room. Most of it I mean the the Mandandalay City Morg I mean it was most of it was didn't even have electricity really, you know.

It was is the windows were open. There's flies everywhere. Puddles of goop on the floor. I was barefoot as a monk, but the the cold room was actually refrigerated. So, we went in there and one of the first things I see is there's a body on the floor that obviously had just undergone a full autopsy. You know, the top of the skull was just missing. There's like a little puddle of pink goo where the brain was supposed to be. And there was another body on a rack right next to to the this exploded body. looked like he swallowed a hand grenade and his hand was in this bucket of gop that probably came out of the guy that

had the whole autopsy done. And that just seemed so wrong to me. It was it was one of those jolts. It's like even though he's dead, at least he should get his hand out of that GOP.

And then right on the other side there was another rack with two dead babies. And then there was like a a teenage girl who was or what used to be a teenage girl that was naked from the waist down. I just immediately just had to look the other way.

The the male mind can be perverse and I didn't want to take any chances of that. So

anyways, the coroner wasn't there. So, we went to talk to the coroner

and he says, "Well, I mean, this is midlevel bureaucrat territory here." He says, "In order to get permission to see an autopsy, you have to get permission from the medical superintendent, you know, like the the the person who was in charge of the whole hospital." So, we go to see him next and I mean, we don't even get to meet him. It's just the secretary tells us, you know, goes in and talks to him, comes back out and says, "In order to see an autopsy, you're going to have to get permission from uh it was like the Mandandalay the the like the what was he called? Like the governor of Mandandalay division.

And this is just a way of passing the buck. This is sort of like being polite in Burmese culture. You don't just say no. You just say, "Well, you're just going to have to go and get permission from somebody else." You know, they're just passing the buck. I mean, in all likelihood, they're just saying, "Hell no, you can't see an autopsy. What are you stupid?" But they can't say that. That's not polite. So, they say, "If you get permission from the governor, then we'll let you see an autopsy." But karma works in mysterious ways. And I was living in a big school monastery. There was when I spent the reigns retreat there, there were 600 monks and

like 900 novices all living there. There was a maha. I think my my pre not my preceptor my acharia there was he was like co-abbott of the whole place and he had the title the ecclesiastical title of ega maha gantika pandita
which would be like a you know at least a twostar general in going with military rank going with the you know the state's ecclesiastical hierarchy and so I found out who was going to come visiting my acharia coming to the monastery. But the governor of Mandandalay division. So I went to my my teacher, you know, this my my acharia,
he asked me if I wanted anything. I

said, when when the governor of Mandandalay division comes, could you please ask him if if I can be permitted to see an autopsy?

And so he was kind of takenback by that because most Burmese monks don't want to see autopsies, but he he he did it. And it was like 2 days later. Suddenly this hospital car just drives right up say, "Okay, let's go see an autopsy." And I had just eaten lunch and it was the beginning of the hot season and it's all hot and sweaty and I'm thinking, "Oh, great. I'm I've got a full stomach. I'm going to see an autopsy for the first time in my life. I'm having these these mental images of just like blowing

cookies all over the the morg, you know.
Also, I knew of this one abbott, this
Burmese Abbott, I won't say his name,
but he went to an autopsy and actually
fainted,
but I went and uh my friend that I went
with the first time went and uh it was
actually I mean I have a degree in
biology, so I mean it's I don't look
upon an autopsy as at least I learned
that I do not look at an autopsy as just
sort of indicative of human foulness.
It's just kind of like a miracle. It's a
miracle of of like biological
engineering, how the human body works. I
mean, there are certain parts of it that

were kind of weird. It's they did an autopsy on a person um he died in the the emergency room before a doctor could examine him. And and it was just hospital policy. If somebody dies before they can be examined, you have to do an autopsy on them to see what the cause of death was. And so it was a young guy and um the uh what is it? Not the prognosis. The diagnosis I guess was that I mean the prognosis that he was just going to stay dead.

The diagnosis was that apparently he died of of um like pneumonia like symptoms. He had a lot of fluid in his lungs which was also he had like an enlarged spleen. So the the coroner just

came to the conclusion he died of a kind of pneumonia that was a complication of chronic malaria
that chronic malaria causes an enlargement of the spleen because the spleen makes red blood cells. Malaria is essentially a disease of the red blood cells. Parasites destroying your red blood cells.
But one thing I mean he very obligingly just took off the top of the skull and everything. told me I could handle anything I wanted except the gloves were way too small to fit me. So, I didn't want to be like picking up stuff, especially when you don't know yet why

he died. You know, it could be typhoid or something. But, I did poke at the brain a little bit and it's it's kind of amazing this I didn't fully realize just how soft the human brain is. I mean, it's like overripe avocado or like custard or something. I was kind of poking at it with a probe. I wasn't touching it with my hands. And another thing that really stood out was subcutaneous fat is it's like partially melted bright orange Velvita cheese like looking stuff.

So that for a long time um I I think about like the the voluupuous curves of a of a a female body and think that those curves are rounded out by this

partially melted Vita cheese stuff.
But um afterwards, I think it was
actually after I just did the tour of
the the morg the first time that when I
came out, it was bright sunshine and
there's like kids playing and there's
some young guy like flirting with some
girls and just, you know, teenage girls
walking along chattering and everything.
It's like, how can you be this way? Do
you know what's in there? We're all
going to die. I just had this I mean it
was really what was called Samuela in
Pali. is just this state of spiritual
urgency. It really did uh have me just
having this state of spiritual urgency

looking at death, death, human death close up.

As it turns out, when I went to see the the uh went to see the autopsy the first time that there were like three inmates from a prison that were there and they looked like they I mean they looked like concentration camp inmates who just starved to death or died of typhus or whatever, you know, black teeth and their heads shaved and wearing the prison outfits and just skin and bones. And everyone else was pretending that they didn't see them. So, I pretended I didn't see him either, but I saw him. It's the way it works when you live in a military dictatorship, I guess.

But

the coroner, I mean, after the the

governor

told told everyone that I could see an

autopsy, he was very obliging and said,

"If you're not satisfied, you can come

back and see another one." So, a few

months later, I came back to see another

one, and he was just harassed. this this

coroner. I mean, it was some sort of

like high-profile murder had happened or

something and his office is just crowded

with like police officers and reporters

and stuff. And he comes out harassed

already. He sees me and he gets this

look on his face like he had just sucked

a particularly bitter lemon.

And I said, "Well, he said I wasn't satisfied. I can see another one." But so I saw one more and this was just a person that was just found like a like a transient like a hobo type that was just found dead by the side of the road somewhere. He'd already been dead for a couple days I think by the time they did the autopsy on him with no refrigeration keeping him fresh.

But if you want to know all the details, I mean, it's in my my fourth book, Memoirs from Myanmar, along with a bunch of other stuff. I did see some dead human bodies after these experiences in Mandandalay in subsequent occasions, but

we don't need to go there.

So, let's see here. I'm wondering if you could recount your experience and inner reactions while at the morg chal fields, if you ever visit any. Yeah, they don't really have charal fields in in Burma that I ever saw. Although they do have cemeteries that are kind of scary cemeteries, you know, they don't look like parks or golf courses like cemeteries look in in America that, you know, it's just overgrown bushes and vines and trees. And um one thing about the cemeteries in Burma, especially like the village cemeteries, is every once in a while you'd see like a lattice work of

bamboo, like bamboo cut into strips and and woven into this kind of a mesh that would be lying over the ground. And at first I wondered what that was, but then I realized it was to keep dogs from digging up fresh corpses.

So let's see here.

Okay, so that's that's enough memoirs, I guess. Let's get to the the other part. See, he says, "As well as give any specific suggestions on how I may be able to overcome my strong disgust and aversion to physical death and decay."

Well, I mean, the the standard Buddhist method is just keep exposing yourself to it. And ideally it it inspires Samuelga or spiritual urgency. But often what

happens is like I I had got had like a human skeleton you know with the the bones all articulated you know with wires and so forth that somebody donated to me and you know it's supposed to be a momento mori you know a recollection of death but after a while it's just like a picture on the wall. you know, you you see it hundreds of times until it just doesn't even register anymore. It's like a part of your brain just kind of filters it out as background noise. But that would probably be just the standard Buddhist approach is kind of seek it out and just expose yourself to it until you kind of um make your peace

with it to some degree. I mean, one idea that occurred to me is, I mean, if you eat meat, just look at a raw steak, you know, just pick it up or hold it in your hands, this raw raw steak, nice ribeye perhaps. And I mean, you've got that inside you, you know, I mean, that's what you're largely made out of, meat, raw meat.

So yeah, I mean you could do a reflection on death. Just hold a raw steak in your hands, you know, as this is, so am I. As I am, so is this.

But uh yeah, I mean, in in the modern west, exposing yourself to death is easier said than done. I mean, you could watch movies about it, fake. I mean,

there's there's some real documentary
kind of stuff that you could watch,
but it's really not the same as just
being right there in the same room
looking down at it.
So, let's see here. Oh, yeah. Another
another little reminisce from that my
first visit to the morg with the bodies.
There's um there's a little old lady who
was lying on one of the tables who was
dead and she had a because as I say I
mean there was no refrigeration in in
this room the main the two main rooms
and the windows are open flies.
And there was a fly crawling on this old
lady's face and it was again one of

those feelings like even if you're dead
at least you should like brush the fly
off your face.
just it was just this weird cognitive
dissonance kind of a thing.
Anyways, let's just uh move on to the
next part here. Also, what did the
Buddha say about death and decay and how
to best manage any associated aversion
one may have towards it? Yeah, it's
pretty much what I've already said is
expose yourself to it.
But I mean in the west I there no charal
fields. There's no real battlefields
where you go and see slain soldiers
lying all over the ground.
Although Buddhist monks are supposed to

avoid battlefields anyway.

Um

yeah, I guess it'd be pretty much what

I've already what I've already advised.

You know, it's easier said than done in

the West where death is covered over and

and hidden away as soon as possible

because people tend to be freaked out

about death, which is kind of

understandable. It's like an animal

instinct in the human animal and in

other animals.

So, what did the Buddha say about death

and decay? Oh gosh. I'm I'm obviously

not in the room with the bookcase, but

there are a number of of sutas in the

sutin pa that deal with this like the jarasuta, the the suta on on old age in the atakawaga. There's the salah suta which is just about the inevitability of death which when I was a monk it was sort of like my desire that if I died as a monk that the salah suta should be recited at my funeral in Pali and in the languages of whoever whoever was there. You know if there were English speakers there recite it in English. Burmese speakers there recite it in Burmese. the salah suta just the inevitability of death just as all clay pots end in breaking so this life of ours is I mean it's the same or ripe fruit is always has the hazard of falling our life is

the same and you know to grieve is
futile this kind of thing also there's
another one the vijaya suta which is
also in the sutin pata which is mainly
just a recollection of all the the the
organs and goop and glop of which we are
composed. So just in the sutin pad you
got the jarasuta
the um the salah suta the thorn the the
spike and also you got the vijaya suta
this the the discourse on victory
and all of those are good reflections on
death
but the main way of of kind of facing
death is to actually find it and face it
um Romeo I think I don't know I think

you may have some access to medical facilities. So it could be that you could actually maybe get some strings pulled and and observe an autopsy yourself.

I mean it really does have a spiritual effect on a person at least with regard to conjuring up some Vega.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Liberlam. And Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Liberlam, says, "Our unh wholesome intentions the same as intentions that have bad results,

sort of like being willful rather than having the wrong moral reasoning. I feel

westerners often put mental
justification above consequentialism,
which leads to that latter approach of
deferring to whether something was
reasoned out well enough. And Stellar
Supreme has this weird, convoluted,
abstract way of thinking that makes his
statements
sometimes almost unintelligible. and
other people on the Discord server have
made similar comments that I mean it's
like he's almost trying
not to be easy to understand.
So let's get back to this um because I
do not fully understand this question.
Are unh wholesome intentions the same as

intentions that have bad results? That part I understand. And then he tries to clarify and muddies the waters in his clarification. He says sort of like being willful rather than having the wrong moral reasoning.

And I think I can just let's just try and thrust away from us this clarification that doesn't clarify but actually um it makes it less clear. So that's just the the whole question that I'm going to attend to. I'm going to try to answer. Are unh wholesome intentions the same as intentions that have bad results?

Well, I mean unh wholesome intentions necessarily have bad karmic results.

With regard to

um like bad results out there, like you try to do the right thing, you're motivated by compassion or some such. Let's say you're a surgeon. You're trying to save somebody's life, but it doesn't work and the person dies, which would could be called a bad result. Well, the surgeon really hasn't done anything morally wrong by trying to save this person's life and failing unless they were just like negligent. You know, this malpractice kind of stuff. So the bad results are not some sort of like materialistic out there bad results. The bad results are with within

your own mind. You know bad karmic results. So the unh wholesome intention is a kind of poisoned intention that in a sense poisons your mind from the unh wholesome intention. It's not like the consequences of the action out there.

And we were kind of discussing this to some degree um in a pre the previous Q&A about just the ethics of eating meat.

The ethics of eating meat are not you know it's like based on you know indirect results out there.

It's just what effect does it have on your own consciousness or your own mental states.

That's the the the like the wholesome or unh wholesome quality of an intention is

I mean is it motivated by greed, hate and or delusion? I mean is it taking you farther from enlightenment instead of closer to it? If it takes you closer to enlightenment, closer to fewess of desires, you know, equinimity, that kind of thing. If it takes you closer to that, it's wholesome. If it takes you farther away from that, it's unh wholesome. Even though you may be motivated by wholesome intentions and still something [__] up and things get worse, you know, it's like a classic example. Um, I used to live in an apartment before I was a monk and there'd be like little insects that

would get into the apartment and I was like a conscientious Buddhist at the time and I'd catch them, you know, with a cup and like a piece of cardboard, you know, catch them and let them go outside. And I remember there was like a silverfish I think I caught. I let it go on the front porch and it started coming straight back towards the apartment again. But before it could make it into the apartment, it was like a jumping spider just jumped out from underneath the, you know, the the what do you call it?

I I like what the the doorway, you know, the bottom of the doorway just jumped out from under there and grabbed it.

Well, I was motivated by compassion, you know, goodwill for this little silverfish,
and I'm just catch it, let it go outside, which results in it being eaten by a spider. Well, I mean, it was it was a wholesome intention. And so, I didn't do anything wrong even though it resulted in the death of a sp or death of a of a bug, an insect.
But I'm not 100% sure if that is the question that Stellar Supreme wanted me to answer because he's difficult to understand sometimes.
So, I'm just going to move on to Stellar Supreme's next question.

He says, "Would you send letters of support to longtime followers of your channel to support their cases of conscientious objector status if the US military began drafting for the war in Iran?" Well, I mean, I could, I suppose. I mean, personally, it seems like I mean, if you just absolutely think that the the war is just like a from every point of view just a bad idea, that it's not even serving America, that kind of thing, then I suppose you could be a conscious conscientious objector if you get drafted or you're just like a complete I mean, even just being complete pacifist. I mean as I as I mentioned before

Mahatma Gandhi Moandis K

he volunteered to enter World War I as a stretcher bearer that he wasn't going to fight but he was going to do his patriotic duty and support his country which happened to be the British Empire at the time and he was just a stretcher bearer. He had some of his his friends and followers also became stretcher bearsers and they're just running out onto the battlefield dragging wounded soldiers to safety or dragging them onto a stretcher and carrying them to safety. So something like that might be more honorable.

What I mean I mean I suppose if somebody

was just firmly convinced that

participating in a war I mean but I mean

you're participating in a war just by

paying taxes to some degree

I mean if someone thinks that eating

meat is immoral because you know it's

sort of promoting death by eating the

meat then

by paying taxes you're promoting the

death of human beings cuz obviously the

government is using some of that for

launching missiles and dropping bombs on

people.

But now I digress.

Yeah, I mean I suppose I could.

Yeah. And then uh he he asked a

transgressive fourth question

um which was how I how I spent Easter. And I'm spending it just like this because right now this is Easter. I've already kind of exp- answered that question. So that's just kind of like a freebie for him. So this is his third question that he retracted once I pointed out that he had asked a transgressive fourth question. He retracted this question, but I'm going to answer it anyway because it's just the way I am. It's kind of a more interesting question than how I spent Easter anyway, celebrating the supposed res bodily resurrection from the dead of Jesus of Nazareth, which is something

I'm relatively skeptical with regard to.

So,

Stellar Supreme, formerly known as

Liberlam, says, "Is it ethical to get

fanatical tattoos to make oneself

ineligible for the US draft?" And by

fanatical tattoos, I would I would

assume he means something along the

lines of like swastikas or, you know,

like SS death heads or something.

I mean, with our current Secretary of

War, that might that might still be

okay.

But is it ethical to get fanatical

tattoos to make oneself, you know, for

the US D? I mean, it depends on your

motivation.

I mean again this is this is one of the standard questions I get asked is just the the template for a standard question I get asked is is action X moral or immoral is it ethical or unethical is it good karma or bad karma and again the outward action itself is morally neutral ethically neutral it is the mental states the motivation that causes it. So if you want to avoid the draft through aversion, then yeah, it's unethical. I mean, if you want to avoid the draft out of a conscientious desire not to hurt anybody, not to kill anybody, not to participate in the mass slaughter that is war, then it could be an an ethical

thing. Um, even though you'll be having
this
fanatical tattoo on your body for the
rest of your life maybe,
which I mean that could have later um
psychological effects on your mind which
could wind up in some unh wholesomeness
later but it is totally dependent on
your your your intentions. If if you are
motivated by attraction, aversion and or
semic-conscious stupidity,
loads or moa, then it is to that extent
unethical and you have to examine your
own motives and because I mean I can't
really do it very well just based on a
one-s sentence interrogative statement.
And I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from Sioan Sipad Zidana. And this is a quote from Angura Nikkaya.

He says,

this is the Buddha speaking. This is this is all in quotes. Start with start with air quotes there.

The Buddha says, "Munks, just as even a tiny amount of feces is foul smelling, in the same way I don't practice even a tiny amount of I don't praise even a tiny amount of being even as much as a finger snap."

Just as even a little amount of urine or spit or pus or blood is foul smelling, in the same way I don't praise even a

tiny amount of being even as much as a

finger snap."

So Sioadino then asks, "Do you agree

with this sentiment about life?"

Let's see. So,

do I agree

that uh even a tiny amount of being

stinks?

I mean, from a like a really a

coldblooded Buddhist philosophical point

of view, yeah, that's true. But I mean,

how are you defining being?

You could define being as like

boa as it is found in the 12 links

theory of dependent rising.

Bot B H A V A is usually translated as

being. I think

I tend to translate it as force of
existence which is just like the karmic
momentum that's keeping you in samsara.
So
do I agree with the sentiment that even
a tiny amount of karmic momentum which
is keeping us in samsara
is stinky and bad from I mean from a
strictly Buddhist point of view. Sure
you want to be like philosophical about
it in that way then sure. Although I
mean some people can say well I mean you
just get used to the stink.
You get used to the smell of blood.
So I mean for some people
I mean even if life reeks of blood it's

still worth it. And that's the choice everyone has to make. I mean I mean are you willing to accept the dooka of samsara if you think it's an equitable trade because you're getting like the opposite of dooka also I mean you can't just have pure dooka you know there's it's it's dualistic you have to have a balance of of pleasure and pain a balance of good and bad positive and negative I used to joke that's how God created the universe out of nothing by having an equal number of positives and negatives so it all balances out to zero which I mean there is some truth to that it seems to me.

So yeah, I do think that just for the

sake of inspiring people to strive for enlightenment, Buddhism really does emphasize the negative aspect of existence, you know, everything is dooka or conducive to unease or suffering or stress.

But still

um some people consider samsara to be worthwhile and even people who are striving wholeheartedly for enlightenment the overwhelming majority of them fail.

So it's best instead of like struggling against some sorrow or you know fighting against samsara or just trying to escape from samsara through some kind of

aversion for the world that you make your peace with it. And even the atakawaga agrees with this to some degree. Some of the sutas agree with this to a significant extent is that you don't become enlightened by having a version for samsara. Maybe at first it can help you to to like get yourself set up better.

But ultimately you have to make your peace with it.

No attraction or aversion. Just equinimity.

Accept things as they are.

So yeah, it could be important as a a didactic device,

you know, a teaching aid and also from a

strictly speaking Buddhist point of view. I mean even though you're willing to accept the negativity of samsara for the sake of the positivity still you get rid of all of it and you've got infinity which is infinitely better than any kind of qualified goodness you're going to find in worldly samsara.

The thing is though you have to be ripe for it and most people are not.

I hope I answered that question because I'm moving on to the second question of Siovak and Sipad Zidana.

And this is kind of an interesting one, kind of a political question. He says, "It seems weird how the ruling classes

in the past were the warrior classes and the political life was inseparable from military life. But in modern times, it has mostly become an elite managerial class full of lawyers and businessmen. Do you think this shift has been a good thing overall or do you think the models of the elites in the past were better? I personally don't know what to make of it and haven't really seen any discussions on it. Well, there is a discussion on it in uh Renee Gwen's like his his main book. It's considered by many to be his main book. It's the the reign of quantity.

I I can't remember. I mean, I wrote an essay on it on on my current blog that I

haven't added to, but it's still it's still up on the internet. Um he's he's talking about how you know human civilization is degenerating from an emphasis on quality to an emphasis on quantity which is one reason why instead of priests and kings
ruling society. It's now businessmen. you know it's it's the wealthy because you know it's the quantity of their money becomes their power instead of just the quality of you know divine right for the kings I guess and just the you know the cultivated qualities of of a a genuine priestly class.
So the reign of quantity and the I can't

remember the the full title of the of the book.

Sometimes it's just called the reign of quantity I think by Renee Gwynon. He he does talk about this and it is true. It seems to me that I mean the ruling classes in the past were mainly the warrior classes but there was also a a significant contribution from the priestly classes. You know like in India it was sort of like this continual struggle for dominance between the khatrias or like the warrior nobles and the brahinss or the priests. you know, which is higher, you know, who who should have more authority over culture in general, if not just politics.

So, yeah, I would throw priests in there to some degree, even though technically from a political point of view, it really is the warrior classes. And yeah, I mean, I have a certain sympathy for the whole idea that the people who are calling the shots should be the people who are risking their lives.
you know, and that's the way it was.
It's like the most of the nobility that remains in the world today are the descendants of like Germanic barbarians that were conquering, you know, various parts of Europe after Rome collapsed, at least a lot of them, you know, like um you know, the current royalty of

England, such as they are of of the UK, you know, they started off. Let's see. You had like Saxon invaders became, you know, the the warlords became like the the kings. Then they were they were conquered by the Normans which were essentially like Vikings who conquered Normandy and France interbred with the pretty French girls and then started speaking French and then conquered conquered England.

So I mean it does make sense. I mean that's the way it was like in the Roman Empire. And I mean Roman Empire did have some really rough patches of just military dictatorship, you know, like the whole third century, the calamitous

third century of the Roman Empire where it was, you know, the army would like promote someone to be emperor and then when the the new emperor started doing something they didn't like, maybe just after a matter of weeks or months, they just kill him and replace him with somebody else. And so during the third century, the Roman Empire, I mean, the lifespan of an emperor,
I mean, it was just a few years on average and then they almost all of them would die a violent death, usually the hands of their own soldiers.
So, I mean, there are certain drawbacks to a military ruling elite,

but and there does seem to be a certain fairness in that if they're the ones who are really out on the front lines or at least out on the battlefield risking their lives, then yeah, it seems like they should have certain cons special consideration instead of just you got some rich merchant who's just like loan lending money to the king so that he can he can fight his battles. I mean obviously Renee Gwyn thought that uh having like the the merchant class become the new leaders was a bad idea. So, I mean, I could have a certain a certain sympathy, I guess, for like the the old Roman idea. And it's still to some degree in America where I don't

know what the percentage is. Maybe I should ask ask Grock or something. What percentage of American presidents served in the military before they became commander-in-chief? And I would guess it would be at least half. George Washington obviously was a wararmonger. He started two wars just practically on his own.

French and Indian War and then also the the Revolutionary War.

But I mean I wouldn't want just a military dictatorship like in Burma. So I mean to have like the top leaders have you know be a kind of military elite that were nevertheless guided by

you know taxpaying law-abiding citizens.
I mean to have some kind of democracy
also but that might involve like
something like in Switzerland or Israel
where you've got a mandatory you know
compulsory
stint in the armed services
and if you you want to opt out be a
conscientious objector or whatever you
would just forfeit your vote or forfeit
your right to vote and participate in
government which is it's kind of
oldfashioned though I mean really war
nowadays
is dangerous. I mean, war, if it gets
out of hand, can like wipe out the human
race at this point, which wasn't the

case when people were just standing out
in a battlefield stabbing each other
with spears.
So,
do I think this shift has been a good
thing overall? I think it there's always
a balance. you know, it's there's always
pluses and minuses and it all balances
out to the same neutrality or zero in
the long run.
But
yeah, I think there might be I mean
would there be more wars or fewer wars
if the people who are actually fighting
are the ones who are calling the shots
and like declaring wars?

It's a It's a good question, I guess.
But, uh, it does seem like it would be
more fair to tell you the truth. Just
there'd be more justice to the idea of
having a military elite kind of running
the country, but nevertheless guided
by, you know, like a democratic body of
law-abiding citizens. Who knows? Maybe
even some priestly elites, although in
America that' probably be Christians.
So
that would be my my take on it, I guess,
for what it is. It's something I haven't
really thought about a lot, but it does
make sense.
The the Roman system was pretty good.
You had like the I can't remember what

it was called. There was just this standard like progression through the ranks. If you wanted to be like a console someday, you know, you might start off as like a a military prefect or this kind of thing. You'd work your way up into certain more civilian offices. You might be like a military governor, this kind of thing. But I mean, yeah, I don't necessarily see anything wrong with that. It worked even in times of peace. Although times of peace in ancient Rome simply meant that Rome was mostly winning its wars and fighting them mostly on other other count's territory.

But yeah, I just I do not like the idea of like pampered pampered wealthy elites running the country because then you just wind up with like wimps and cowards running the country.

So yeah, let's not try and work out a utopia in this Q&A, but that's my take on it for now. And you might want to look into Renee Gwen. Even though he's I consider him to be somewhat of a crackpot,

still what he says is interesting.

So let's go on to the third question from Seio Cipad Zidana,

which is as follows. Oh, this is this one's kind of a a weird one. Would you rather have a gay son or a thought

daughter?

That's a tough question. That's that's a tough choice. It reminds me of um the old TV show Taxi, where there's this burnt out old hippie guy, Reverend Jim, who's applying for a a driver's license, and his brain is too fried by drugs to to fill out the questions himself. So they're reading the questions to him and one of them says they read him it's what was it mental illness or narcotic addiction and and Jim's going gee that's a tough choice. This is kind of similar. Would you rather have a gay son or a thought daughter?

I I guess I'd go for the thought

daughter just because

once if a person's gay they pretty much

stay that way. But a thought daughter, I

mean, as she she gets older and kind of

gets a little more maturity and wisdom,

I mean, she can outgrow it and become

like a responsible,

respectable person.

Preferably without having a bunch of

interracial children or getting STDs

that don't have a cure, that kind of

thing.

Not that I'm opposed to interracial

children. Maybe I should just retract

that part.

Uh it depends on the interracial

children. I suppose

interracial children should be judged on an individual basis.

So let's see here. Yeah, let's let's just go with the thought daughter, I guess, because it's it seems to be more temporary.

Not that I'm opposed to to gay people.

I mean, it depends. I mean, it's really it would depend on the individual.

Again, like some gay guys, you know, they've had they have more than a thousand sexual partners in their course of their lifetime. That's considered not particularly rare for a gay man to have had a thousand sexual partners in the course of his life. you know, they're

going to like anonymous orgies, this
kind of thing. So, I mean, it's a a
thought son or a thought daughter with
the thought daughter probably being more
curable.
Let's just move on to the next question.
This is from Jeffrey
and Jeffrey says, "My friend shootout."
But before before we move on to this, I
mean with regard to gay people, as I
already said, I really don't have like
any any axe to grind against gay people.
Like one of the best teachers I ever had
in my life was a gay man. Rahm Doss was
a switch hitter. I think he might have
actually preferred men to women,
although he was open-minded on the

subject. And he was like one of my first gurus in life.

So it's like you know gay men I mean they can be good people with regard to thought daughters I mean eventually they can be good people too.

So I'm just let's just move on to the next question. This is from Jeffrey.

Jeffrey says my friend shootout has mentioned Miguel Serrano being a spiritual guru with views on esoteric Hitlerism. What can you tell us about Serrano and his teachings? And to tell you the truth, I've never read anything by Miguel Serrano other than a few brief quotes. And I really am no authority on

Serrano, although that he is one of the main like the most high-profile esoteric Hitlerists. I think I might know more about the position of Svitri Davyy, who is also an esoteric Hitlerist. I think Cevitri Davyy thought that Hitler was ky. He was like the the last avatar of Vishnu.

But Miguel Serrano, I think Miguel Serrano took a more western approach, a less Indian one, and just considered Hitler to be like a man of destiny, um like a great figure, like a like a an ascended hero, this kind of thing.

But someone I do know who knows a lot about Miguel Serrano, who has read Miguel Serrano's books is my friend

Otto Auto Excelsior. And one of the videos that I have uploaded onto onto YouTube that has like this one of the most popular videos I've uploaded onto YouTube is my video with auto excelsior discussing esoteric Hitlerism from a more or less Buddhist point of view. And so if you look that up, I I think it might be on Bitshoot also if you're if you just really don't like YouTube. Jeffrey always asks questions on Bitshoot instead of YouTube. Um, yeah, just look up esoteric Hitlerism from a more or less Buddhist perspective with me and Otto Excelsior and he will talk a

lot about Miguel Serrano, but I really don't know much about him at all. I mean, esoteric Hitlerism really is just not my bag of tea. Hitler was an interesting man. I'd much rather hang out with Hitler for an afternoon than hang out with Stalin for an afternoon. But uh I mean I'm more interested in Hitler just from like a bio a biographical and historical perspective, not so much from a religious perspective. I do not consider Hitler to have been like a spiritual guru. Not that Jeffrey is saying that he was. He's saying Miguel Serrano was a spiritual guru. But yeah, to deify Hitler is I mean

that's farther than I'm willing to go with regard to understanding the man. But again, try to find my u video with auto excelsior on esoteric Hitlerism and he will talk a lot about Miguel Serrano. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Athena Sigil and Athena Sigil says when you said Terravada Buddhism is atheistic I thought what about Davas Brahma beings and in parts of Southeast Asia the worship of gnats. I know that these beings are not omnipotent entities like Jehovah or Allah but many practitioners still look to these other lesser entities to help them in this or future

lives.

Okay. Well, with regard to the Nat cult, um, that was like the religion of the Burmese before they converted to Buddhism, like in medieval times. And, you know, it's like a vestage of like a kind of polytheistic paganism. It's kind of kind of interesting that the gnats were all humans in a previous existence who died a violent death. And the Burmese believe that a person who dies an unnatural death, not just fading out of natural causes, but being cut off in the prime of life, it makes them a more powerful spirit. It's called an a sane or like a green spirit. And apparently they based a religion on this idea, but

that's it's not strictly Buddhism. It's just sort of like I mean it kind of got conflated with Burmese Buddhism to some degree. the ties have something similar and then like in Sri Lanka there's a lot of Hinduistic

um kind of themes that get adopted into Sri Lankan Buddhism.

Um

but I mean it's terra is atheistic because it's not based on the worship of a god or even of gods that like terraata Buddhists as a general rule do not worship the davas or the brahas. I mean they they might have respect for them and like as a kind of vestage of their

preddhist paganism they may make
offerings to a to some god who's like
the patron deity of this area avoid
violating taboss with regard to that god
in in his territory.
um that kind of thing. Like before they
make a trip, there was there's one one
of the gnats in Burma. He's like lord of
the white elephant or something like
this. I can't remember his name,
but for some reason he doesn't like a
certain number of travelers.
So I think it was like six or or
something like that. Five. It was some
specific number that he did not like
that many travelers. And so what Burmese
people will do if they're going to go on

a trip and they've got that number of travelers, they will like formally invite a rock to come along with them. They'll, you know, pick up this rock and and declare this rock is our extra traveler, which then makes the number not the forbidden number.

But definitely the Burmese, they're very careful about, you know, not angering nature spirits or gnats. you know, just, you know, you don't spit on the ground when you're on this hill because it's taboo. That kind of stuff. It's fairly common, but it's really not what Terra Buddhism is about. You know, just acknowledging that there are higher

beings. is sort of like acknowledging that there are kings, you know, that people that are higher than you, beings that are higher than you on the scale of things, that it's not it's not a matter of worship, that you're not practicing dharma through worshiping or serving these deities.

So that's the the point of terabato Buddhism is is atheistic in that you know no kind of theology is really essential to the system. I mean it's sort of like side effects practically. So that's when when terra Buddhism is considered to be atheistic, it's given as an example of an atheistic religion is it just means that that worship of a

god or gods is not really basic or essential or central or even particularly significant in that spiritual system that you can be a good terra Buddhist and not really worship a single deity.

and still be a a devout good terra Buddhist that worshiping beings is or worshiping davas I mean worshiping them I mean it's not even really advised in the text although like like having respect for them like reverence like you'd have reverence for a king or a judge or something you know they're they're like higher than you they're worthy of respect they got to where they

are through magnanmity and virtue and so forth. So you have respect for them, but it's not the same as the the religion being based on worshiping them. So

I guess that wasn't even a question, but it's there. So I'm just moving on to Athena Sigil's next statement, which here actually has a question mark. Well, I mean, he considered the first one to be a question even though there was no question mark because the second statement begins with my other question. What type of statue is that behind you on our left, your right, with the candle? Is it a Buddha or something else? And I'm not even in the room. So,

I'll be right back.

Okay.

So I assume the question that is being asked is with regard to this right there. See it? If you're if this if you're listening to a podcast, you're not going to see it. It's I don't remember what it's called. I mean, it's obviously a Buddha statue. It obviously looks like a Buddha, doesn't it? It's got the weird bump on the head and everything, but it's like a I think it's called a sleepy Buddha or a sleeping Buddha. It's not terra, not terra Buddhism. might not even be God Buddha,

but I think my woman and maybe her mama
bought it at like a furniture store or
something just cuz they like the way it
looked. Wasn't my call,
but it's Mahayana Buddhist at best, I
think. I mean, clearly not one of the
the four main mudras common in Terraata
Buddhism. I mean, this is just
completely unorthodox mudra here.
And speaking of Auto Excelsior,
I think his woman made this mala.
She makes these.
It's very nice.
Okay,
so let's see. What's the question again?
What type of statue is that behind you
on our left, your right, with the

candle? Is it a Buddha or something else? Yeah, it's it's a Buddha, but I think it's not necessarily the Buddha. It's it's like some kind of Mahayana Buddhist statue or just fake Buddhist statue, but still it's obviously supposed to be representing a Buddha. And like I say, my woman and maybe her mama found it for sale at a furniture store or something and so they got it. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Trareasiz. And Troas says, "Have you ever experienced a real war in Myanmar? I cannot recollect when it began there." Well, wars in Myanmar began. I mean,

there's always been wars in Myanmar.

Always.

Um maybe they kind of died down during

the British Raj and then as soon as

Burma got independence like insurgencies

and so forth began and have continued.

I'm sure there's still insurgent zones

despite Rambo's defeat of the the the

Burmese military in Karen state

if you ever saw that movie.

So have I ever experienced a real war in

Myammar? No, because I mean in in Burma,

I prefer the word Burma. You know, if I

used to say that if they didn't like me

calling the country Burma, they could

just deport me to say or son.

But

um in in Burma, there's like three kinds of zones. There's white zones, brown zones, and black zones. White zones are zones where it's safe for foreigners to go. Tourists go there. No. No battlefields, no raging battles, no guerilla warfare, no no cars being sniped on the highway, anything like that. Brown zones are potential insurgent zones. There has been some insurgent activity there and you have to get a special permit from the government to go there. And I went into at least one brown zone with a permit. The permit said that I wanted to go and look at pagotas which is just the standard

excuse for going into a brown zone. Mainly um we were just going into southern Mon state where my friend my Burmese friend he was actually half monk the one that I went to see the autopsy with. He we he and I went down there and there was an Australian monk with us too and uh we saw a battlefield. you I just it was just pointed out to me there was a famous battle here, you know, like three years ago, that kind of thing. Uh and then there's black zones, which are just they're not under the control of the Burmese government. They are insurgent zones. Nobody goes there. That if foreigners do go there, there's a good chance they're going to be

kidnapped and held for ransom. That kind of thing. At best. Kidnapped and held for ransom.

So yeah, I went to a brown zone where there was no in insurgent activity going on at the time. The closest I came to anything resembling a kind of battle was I was about 10 miles away from a riot like Buddhist versus Muslim riot in the town of Mateila

which was uh I don't remember what year it was. It was quite a while ago back in the 201s I think.

And it was just a a case. I mean, I don't know if I should even bother, but there was some Burmese Buddhist village

woman had a gold comb and she wanted to sell it to some buyer and seller of gold ornaments and so forth who happened to be a Muslim.

And while he was inspecting it to see how much it was worth and see if it was like real gold or what carat gold it was, he broke it. And then she was I mean he wouldn't pay her what she said it was worth. Plus he had just broken it. So it's just he just hands her back the broken comb and says sorry and it caused like this altercation.

So I think it resulted in her husband was there. It started like into a shoving match. the the Bur the the the Muslim guy got, you know, knocked over.

It started getting ugly. So the the the Burmese Buddhist couple, they took off back to their village and then they're like announcing this outrage that had been perpetrated. And so they came back with some little v vigilante group and a Buddhist monk to go back there and demand that this woman get paid what she thought um that gold comb was worth before it was broken.

And there was a bunch of Muslim men accumulated there. So you had like this small crowd of Burmese Buddhists and a small crowd of you know semi Burmese um Muslims. I mean most of the Muslims in Burma are of like Bangladeshi or Indian

ancestry.

And so the monk is trying to be like a a negotiating peacemaker type. And this is all just secondhand what what I was told by the abbott of the monastery I was staying at at the time that uh they he the the Burmese monk was taken somewhere else and the abbott told me that the Muslims cut his neck and whether they they just decapitated him or just cut his throat or whatever I don't know but it resulted in just absolute chaos in that quarter of Matila with enraged Buddhists just like burning and sacking the the Muslim quarter in that area. And that happened like maybe 10 miles from where I was staying at the time. But I

didn't hear about it. I mean, you don't have news like that in Burma. At least I didn't. You're staying at a forest monastery outside of town, you know. I didn't hear about it until several days later.

Well, that was that was about as close to a real war other than visiting uh a battlefield in a brown zone where there had been a battle a few years previously.

So, I'm just going to move on to Chzas's next question. I think I might be a little too verbose in my answers this time. Anyways, Taskis says, "Is there in the sutas explanation of right speech

for lay people or the precept for lay people is only not lying?" No, it's I mean there are four kinds of wrong speech and it's in several sutas at least in the poly texts that a good a good Buddhist lay person who is keeping five precepts should be avoiding four kinds of wrong speech. First of course is lying.

Then there is what's called pisunova which is like bad mouthing someone behind their back like malicious gossip. The whole point of pisunovacha is you're trying to poison somebody's mind against somebody else. You're trying to cause division, trying to cause the person you're talking to to dislike this other

person. So, you could even be telling
the truth,
but if you're doing it maliciously for
the point of getting other people to
dislike that person, like if they're
just trying to sell a car to your friend
and you know that they're dishonest, you
might, you know, caution them, you know,
you might be getting ripped off if you
buy this car because this person's
dishonest. If you do it with that kind
of intention of just, you know, helping
your friend, that wouldn't necessarily
be bisunava. But if you're just, oh,
he's he's this horrible person and you
know, he's dishonest even though, you

know, there's no real need to say it, then that would be pisunavatcha, just sort of malicious gossip, badmouthing someone behind their back, that kind of thing. Then you've got perusa. The third kind of wrong speech is like abuse, verbal abuse, just cussing somebody out to their face, calling them an idiot, this kind of stuff. um just with hostility. You're trying to hurt their feelings, trying to belittle them, trying to make them feel bad. So that would be the third kind of wrong speech. And then the fourth kind, which is very vague, you know, I don't know if there really is a clear definition of it that I can remember. It's probably probably

in the text somewhere, is some papa, which is usually translated as idle chatter. you know, just kind of useless speech, like not necessarily malicious gossip, but you know, who's doing who kind of gossip or I mean, it could have something to do with um like the list of subjects that would be called animal talk for monks, you know, talking about, you know, kings and battles and politics in general and that kind of thing. But for lay people, I think that might be a little too strict. And so it's it's hard to say exactly. At least I cannot say to you exactly where is the line with regard to what is and is not idle

chatter or s papa lapa.

So that one is uh you know it's just

kind of this gray zone for me you know

just what exactly is or is not some

papa. But I mean you could probably ask

gro you can ask the the robot

and then maybe it could tell you.

Um but yeah, in the sutas there's lots

of examples

of just right speech in general

being avoiding those four kinds of wrong

speech. And almost certainly it would be

included in sutas that were directed

specifically towards the ethics of lay

people.

But mainly

musawato wrong speech means lying. But

it's not strictly you know it's sort of like like kameumachara or you know sensual misconduct you know the main implication is adultery you know sort of like in the ten commandments thou shalt not commit adultery but it also has all these other these other implications you know like promiscuous sex you know hiring a prostitute that kind of thing also would be included.

Ah, so I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Cyrus Frame. And Cyrus frame says the reason I thought perception volition is connected to the uncarved block of stone is no

he's referring to a question that he
asked in the previous Q&A that um I had
come to the conclusion at least the
hypothesis
that perception and valition are really
just two different ways of looking at
the exact same mental state or
phenomenon that it's just sort of
artificial duality or artificial
division between perception and volition
when actually they're ultimately the
same mental state just looked at from
two different aspects or two different
angles so to speak.
So Cyrus frame says the reason I thought
perception valition is connected to the
uncarved block of stone is because that

analogy points to a kind of nonduality. So combining perception and volition in one aggregate is also a type of nonduality. From this point of view, there are no perceptions or valitions. What do you think?

Well, still you got duality. I mean, so long as you're stating that there is a something, you're still dealing with duality because at the very least you've got figure and ground. You have to have the distinction between the something and whatever isn't the something. So that's still dualistic.

You know to say that there's one one main mental state that is that

constitutes human samsaric existence.
This sort of the the unit the uniconda
of perception and bullition
with va or feeling just being another
kind of sort of a more animalistic level
of perception.
So I mean still you're saying that there
is this something that exists as an
entity and in order for that something
to exist as an entity there has to be a
distinction between that and what isn't
that entity you know there has to be the
duality of figure and ground you know
the thing and sort of like the context
or the the surroundings of the thing
that aren't the thing
so still it would be dualistic in that

sense whereas the uncarved block of stone
you know the the single perception volition cond would be a kind of statue that is contained within the uncarved block of marble. So the uncarved block of marble as just pure marble, formless rock, you know, formless substrate, that would be called non-dualistic. So long as you're not reifying it and singling out like we're doing right now, in which case, in order for any object to have any kind of meaning, there has to be a nonobject to compare it with. And so you have to have duality. In order to have a thing, an it,

then you have to have a non-it to
compare it with a contrast.
You know, that's how the
uh Hegel starts his logic. You know,
it's like the the thesis pure being, the
antithesis of non-being, how they just
merge together because neither one of
them has any determinate contact uh con
content.
I think I tried to say content and
context at the same time. So you have to
have contrast and that's that's the
first synthesis,
you know, thesis, antithesis, synthesis.
The synthesis is you have to have a
contrast between being and not being.
And then that's just off to the races

from that.

From the from the Dao came the one, from the one came the two, and from the two came the 10,000 things. Everything is the whole world is just spawned from duality.

Okay. So, I think I answered that. I mean, what do I think? I mean, literally, I could just say I think I think maybe I finished my my beverage. You know, that would be a legitimate answer because that is what I think. But yeah, I mean perception volition, you're lumping two entities into one, but that really does still doesn't make it non-dualistic because you still got

this entity that has to be contrasted
with what it isn't.
So,
I guess I answered that question. Let's
just move on to Cyrus Frame's next
question.
He says, "What do you think of the
nondual thinker Tony Parsons?"
In case you are unfamiliar with him, and
I am unfamiliar with him, I think his
main idea is that there is just this. So
if you are seeking, you are trying to
escape from this. But it is impossible
to escape from what is. It relates to
the previous question because this in
air quotes is really monism or
non-duality. I think calling it this

seems to avoid reification. However, he also calls it boundless energy which seems to me to slip right back into reification. The no views of the atkawaga avoids that problem completely. Yeah. Um I've never heard of Tony Parsons before that I can think of. So what do I think of him is going to be based just entirely on this little description here. So with regard to just trying to avoid
reification by just saying this I mean early Buddhism did the same thing like datagata which is uh it's like a synonym for Buddha. The datagata is he who has attained

such you know it's like data just means like this. So it's like they're trying to avoid like putting a title onto the highest, you know, the highest state, let's say, by just calling it like this. And then the the agata that comes after the tagata da agata means he who has become. So he who has become like this. I mean that's that's what dagata means. Although there's various interpretations but that's that's how I interpret it and it seems fairly straightforward or also like suchness I mean you come across this in Mahayana text sometimes in in terms like um in the atakawaga there is the term I think it's tadi which again means just such

he who has attained thus

you know so

it's it's kind of a gimmick that's used

even in the atakawaga or in early

Buddhist texts and in later uh more

sophisticated

like Mahayana Buddhist texts where you

just try to avoid giving a name to

something by just calling it such or

thus or this or like this. It is fairly

common in in Buddhist philosophy.

So let's see if you are seeking you are

trying to escape from this but it is

impossible to escape from what is. Yeah,

I I mentioned that earlier. It's sort of

like you you have to make your peace

with samsara. You don't want to be
struggling against it.
And you know, some teachers would
specialize in that kind of thing like
Jay Krishna Murdy kind of that was one
of the main themes and or nisarodata
maharaj you know enlightenment is not
the end of a path. It just doesn't work
that way.
So yeah, I mean Tony Parsons I mean it
sounds like he's following along with
the kind of non-dualistic
mysticism which is fine.
I mean it doesn't it I don't think he's
coming up with he has come up with
anything original at least not based on
this this brief description of what he's

teaching.

So

yeah and then he starts calling it

boundless energy or you know nibbana

datu or I mean it's it's so easy. I mean

language is that way. I mean you have to

use words

in order to refer to something

and so it just becomes a kind of trap.

It's the finger pointing at the moon and

then people just forget the moon and are

just paying all their attention to the

finger. It's like trying to point

something out to a dog.

We got one dog that actually gets it.

But most dogs in the course of my life,

you're trying to point, you know, you
put down a dish of food for it and
you're pointing at it's it's over there.
It's right there. And the dog inevitably
looks at your finger instead of the
direction you're pointing.
And that's that's the way people are
with words.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. We are getting down
towards the bottom here. Sort of. Looks
like kind of.
Let's see. Ruy,
his first question. How are you? I'm
fine. Ruy's second question. What to
your mind is the role of irony in the
discourses and can you recall any

salient instances of it off the cuff?

Gosh, I'm going to have to run and get

get a book. Just a second. I'm sorry

about this having to leave over and over

again.

Okay.

I really do prefer doing these in the

the studio, the usual room, but it

doesn't often doesn't always work out

that way. Okay. So what to your mind is

the role of irony in the discourses and

can you recall any salient instances of

it off the cuff? Well, probably my

favorite example of irony is in the

damopatana

and let's see verse what is it? Verse

something.

Let's see.

Please bear with me.

Okay, I know what's in here.

Okay, verse 97 of the dhamopana.

So then we have to go to verse 97. It's

in uh the arant waga, the chapter on the

enlightened being, the arahant section.

Okay, so

let's see. Maybe I should just look in

the back here.

Okay,

90. Okay. So, I won't even tell you what

the usual translation is. I'm just going

to read this this end note that

venerable

gosh

venerable Achara Buddha includes. He says this verse which is uh verse 97 says in the poly this verse presents a series of puns and if the underside of each pun were to be translated the verse would read thus. And this is actually like a legit translation of verse 97. It literally if you if you translate it literally it's the man who is faithless, ungrateful, a burglar who destroys opportunities and eats vomit. He truly is the most excellent of men.

So,

I mean, that's it's kind of this weird joke

that's found in the in the polytopic.

And that's like one of my favorite examples of just this weird ironic kind of I mean, it's almost like dark humor that you can find in the texts. The Otakawaga has lots of puns, but they're not so much jokes as just a kind of sophisticated attempt to say two or even three things with a single single word or single statement. So that's I mean it's sort of a multi-dimensional use of language in the Atakawaga when they're using plays on words and so forth. Although there there are a few sutas in the atakawaga where like there's one the pasura suta. It's it's mainly a suta about why monks shouldn't get involved in debates. And there's this person

named pasura which it means something like great hero you know or like something like hero. And he's swaggering along wanting to challenge everybody to debates. And the Buddha is kind of making fun of him. You know, it's using a lot of like military terminology in the suta. And you know, there's like this military, you know, warrior kind of theme to it, but at the same time, he's kind of making fun of Pura, this person who wants to like challenge everybody to debates. So, that's kind of ironic, you know, in a in a kind of gentle poking fun at somebody kind of way. Um there's another

sort of ironic suta in the in the atakawaga which is um the pura beta suta before the break discourse on before the breakup of the body where it's just sort of like counterbalancing statements you know he's not greedy for gain but he's not afraid of loss you know it's just sort of it's almost like the doubting Ching where it's like one statement balances off another statement. So you you kind of leave this like emptiness behind sort of a thing. Although that's probably not what Rui was referring to. I remember there's one suta I think it's in the Samutinikaya
in the old Polytech society translation of it. It's called Little Ugly. And

there's like this demon or Assura, some kind of little monster, little monstrous being who sits on the the throne of Saka, king of gods. And the more pissed off the gods get because he's doing this, the more beautiful he becomes until Sakaf realizes what's happening. And then he starts treating him nice and respectfully. And then he starts like shriveling up and turning ugly again. And the translator, the Polytech Society translator, I think it was like CAS Ree Davids, says um just as a comment, the master is in a humorous vein. You know, it's it's kind of like this funny story. And you can find um humor in the texts

with regard to irony. I mean, irony can have different meanings. Let's see. Let's look up the word irony. It's good to have
the the definitions of words when you use them. Okay. So, the expression of one's meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite. Yeah. Uh typically for humorous or emphatic effect, well, verse 97 of the damapata is uh would be a classic gem of an example of that one. Is he a state of affairs or an event that seems deliberately contrary to what one expects and is often amusing as a result? Or a literary technique originally used in Greek tragedy by

which the full significance of a character's words or actions are clear to the audience or reader, although unknown to the character. Yeah, that one I don't have any examples of that immediately coming to mind, although I'm sure you could find them in there.

So irony is is just kind of a a tool or just a a phenomenon that you encounter sometimes in the text. Although as a general rule the texts are pretty humorless. I mean you get into like jotica stories or the commentary like the dharmapata commentary that kind of thing where you can find funny stories you know like in the jotica stories

there's like the Buddha in a previous life was a a fox you know sort of like Asup's fables wise guy kind of fox who finds a dead elephant and he just sort of eats his way into the elephant and then the elephant bloat and kind of closes off the hole so that the fox is trapped inside. It's just kind of like a humorous kind of story.

But as a general rule, the texts takes themselves very seriously. You don't see lots of jokes. Monks aren't supposed to be cracking jokes much anyway.

Um, so it's found in there often very subtle.

Sometimes, you know, there'll it's it's less subtle,

but

um as a general rule, the texts are

pretty dry and humorless. just the in in

Terravada especially in Mahayana like

crazy Zen masters or the we malakerti

near disha sutra that kind of thing you

get into some wild and wacky behavior

that you'd never find in a orthodox

terra Buddhist sutra or suta just

because the sutas the Buddha is taken

very seriously it's very solemn you know

dharma is not something to be taken

lightly and to me made the butt of jokes

you know like there's even a rule of

monastic discipline I think it's the

could be the only dubacita offense in

invenia

of a monk cracking jokes about Buddha

dhama or sana so as a general rule it's

it's pretty dry but you can find it in

there occasionally and I'm just going to

move on to next question this is from

Cole

and Cole says in regards to sipatana

Cole says in regards to study batana you

have said that you have doubts about

mindfulness of the body because raw

physical sensation is perceived as

mental phenomena. You have also said

that mindfulness of feelings is

basically perception of raw bodily

sensation which would typically be

mindfulness of the body and not simply

the arising of pleasant, unpleasant or neutral feeling. Your ideas seem to be very different from what is typically taught. Can you elaborate on your understanding of the sipatan suta? Well, no. This stuff about my interpretation of feelings or way as just bare sensation. That was like the first essay I wrote on Buddhism. I was trying to make sense of the five condas especially the the four mental condas and it just doesn't work. later on it just seems like bare physical like sensory bare sensory data forget physical bare sensory data I mean it's just I mean it's void

there's a like I like I mentioned um in
a previous Q&A not too long ago there
was a
a monk a medieval Indian monk of the
diga school which is a Mahayana loician
school a logic school of Mahayana
Buddhism
where he points out that um like bare
sensation, bare sensory data without any
kind of perceptual interpretation is as
though it did not exist at all. And I
have to in in like later after I wrote
that essay, I had to come to that
conclusion also that you know it's it's
sort of you can't even prove that bare
sensory data even exists. not
subjectively

because by the time you're aware of
something you're already perceiving it
like Bishop Barkley used to say SA
Perkipi to exist is to be perceived
so I had to eventually kind of leave
behind my interpretation of feeling as
just rare of of just unprocessed raw
sensory data but still it's a problem
because it just makes it a kind of like
more animalistic perception.
So, vana
is still a kind of perception.
So, um Buddhist philosophy just kind of
makes like a an artificial distinction
between feeling and perception and
ultimately I think also an artificial

distinction between perception and and volition.

which gets us I mean when you don't stop making the artificial distinctions then you have the final single artificial distinction of perception itself.

So let's see. I mean the thing about mindfulness of the body is I mean you cannot prove getting back to Bishop Barkley again you cannot prove the existence of physical matter. I mean that was George Barklay's sole contribution sole significant contribution to western philosophy. He's the one who really just pounded home the idea that you cannot know the existence of physical matter. You can infer it.

You can guess that it exists

but you cannot really know it.

And so I mean I have to agree with that.

I personally do not believe that

physical matter is ultimately real. All

we know is just our perceptions of it.

So you take that to I mean sudi batana I

mean the the four saudi batanas you know

the first one is mindfulness of the body

and I mean you can just accept that as a

kind of figure of speech just a a way of

speaking that with regard to physical

actions or supposedly physical actions

what are perceived as physical actions

you know walking sitting lying down

standing up eating drinking extending

your arm pulling your arm back Again,
all of that could be called mindfulness
of the body. Even if I mean ultimately
your body is nothing more than
perceptions.
So it's just a a matter of speaking I
suppose. Likewise with regard to
mindfulness of feeling
waiting on it's uh similar. I mean, you
could say that ultimately feeling and
perception are just a matter of degree.
You know, perception is maybe a little
bit more conceptual
than than feeling. But still, it seems
to me that they're both a kind of
perception,
a kind of symbolic interpretation.

and what you're symbolically interpreting you don't even have really direct like awareness of at any kind of mental state level.

So gosh I might have to start over here with regard to the question not the whole Q&A but just this question in regards to study batani you have said that you have doubts about mindfulness of the body because no I have doubt doubts about mindfulness of the body simply because there's no way of knowing whether or not physical matter really exists.

That is my issue with mindfulness of the body. And Mahayana Buddhists and the

Greek or not Greek, German like 19th century German idealist philosophers, they eventually just dismiss the whole idea of physical matter. Anyway, it's all just mental states. The world we live in is a mental world.

So yeah, I mean I am skeptical of mindfulness of the body because ultimately you're not really being mindful of the body. You're being mindful of perceptions of the body which is mindfulness of perception.

And then I see you have also said that mindfulness of feelings is basically perception of raw bodily sensation.

Yeah, that was a theory that I was working with back in 1990s, but I

eventually had to abandon that idea,

especially after reading venerable

Daroda.

So

yeah, my idea seem to be very different

from what is typically taught. Yeah. I

mean, if you want to go with what is

typically taught, you follow just sort

of like

a more or less arbitrary

uh standard for how they're going to

divide things up. And there's a lot of

arbitrary standards with regard to how

how to divide things up. Like with

regard to the five condas, you've got,

you know, rupaconda, which is the the

physical body, which I've personally am pretty damn skeptical of. You've got syakanda which is perceptions way I'm doing this in the wrong order which is feelings and then you've got sankara which according to orthodox terravada is 50 different mental states. See there are 52 mental states according to abidama. 52 different kinds of mental states. And then just because just cuz they felt like it or presumably because the Buddha felt like it. Of these 52 mental states, two of them are isolated as way and perception way and sya. Whereas the other 50 are just lumped together as sankarakanda which again it's just this arbitrary distinction.

Unless you just want to go along with
what I would go along with and just say
it's volition because it's mainly
volition. Even the the Abidama scholars
will have to admit that it's mainly
volition. But all the other 49 are still
lumped together as as Sankarakanda,
which is this kind of sloppy reasoning
in my opinion,
ancient pre-logical kind of thinking.
So I mean there's there's these kind of
complications that a modern westerner
capable of critical thought and
rationality is going to encounter when
dealing with
like ancient scriptures

and I don't even want to get into the
fourth sa Patana which is
damuasana which is more controversial
and less straightforward,
but I think it it may have originally
just been just mindfulness of certain
fundamental doctrines of Buddhist
philosophy.
So that's like a whole different level
of mindfulness
than like mindfulness of breathing for
example.
So anyhow, I'm just going to move on to
Cole's next question. He says, "I'm
reading the atikavaga for the first time
and something strikes me. This being one
of the oldest fragments of early

Buddhist teachings. Could it be that this is in fact the way the Buddha taught in the very beginning of his career as a teacher where he was likely teaching people who are already spiritually adept renunciates.

This then perhaps the more systematized teachings of lists. four of these, five of those, 37 of that, etc. were geared towards people who were more new to the monastic life. And yeah, that is probably the more orthodox explanation.

If you assume that the atakawaga is comes from early in the Buddha's career, then yeah, you could say that early in

his career, he was mainly teaching the heavy hitters. He was teaching renuncient veterans in the holy life that had just converted from some other kind of renuncient aesthetic spiritual school over to Buddhism. And then later as Buddhism became more popular, then you had newbies, rookies joining joining the SA, you know, just lay people converting over to being ordained as a monk. And then you'd have to simplify things, be make have much more elementary teachings, lists to be memorized, that kind of thing. So that would be a reasonable explanation for why the atakawaga is so radically different from most of the

rest of the pseudapitica.

But another one, another possible explanation, and it may be that both of these explanations have their place. Another explanation is kind of like Buddhist philosophy evolved much like Christian philosophy evolved. You know, it just it had like this explosive virus-like mutation period over the first hundred years or so where it just took off. I mean, you have people joining the SA that are like, you know, people like early Christians where they're just trying to figure things out and systematize things, get everything, you know, put so that it makes sense.

And that really wasn't what the Buddha was going for like in the ataga. I mean, you you shouldn't even be trying to make sense.

Sense is delusion.

So

one explanation like Cole suggested here which is probably the more devout orthodox kind of explanation is that the atikawaga was intended mainly for like advanced veterans in the holy life that had already got where they need to go where they don't need to go much further to get to enlightenment.

And then the other one is that maybe what the Buddha was teaching most of the time to most of the monks was something

along the lines of the atikawaga, but it just was too deep, you know, too unfathomable for a lot of these Buddhist philosophers who were really more into philosophy than in practice who then just took the ball and ran with it and came up with this massive scholastic intellectual system.

And I would guess that both of those are factors.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Arpad. Now for something completely different. This one's actually a fairly straightforward simple kind of question. Can monks get dental prosttheses or are those

considered as bodily embellishments?
So yeah, monk could definitely get like false teeth. I mean, if you can't chew your food properly or you have like a broken tooth like that happened to me in Burma where I mean, it's pretty common in Burma that you bite into rocks in your food, especially when they're threshing rice and threshing beans on the ground. Little white rocks get mixed in with the rice. Little brown rocks get mixed in with the beans. And it happened several times. You would bite down on something and just crack. It hurts. and you're feeling back there to see if your teeth are broken or if you've lost a filling or something. And more than once

I got my teeth broken u by biting into rocks. And I went to the dentist and you know they put caps on some of them and I got a great big cap right back there from biting into a rock.

See what was it? Where is it? No, it's not these ones. There's there's some other teeth over here,

man.

So, yeah. I mean, with regard to that, I mean, just to make your your teeth more functional and less likely to to rot out from just having this big open cavity there. Yeah, there's no problem with that. I mean, if it's I mean, it depends on your your intentions, though. I mean,

if you're just doing it to beautify
yourself, you're just getting bleaching
done to make your your smile whiter,
that kind of thing, that might not be
suitable for a monk,
but you got I mean, you're going to have
false teeth so that you can chew your
food, that kind of thing. That's there's
no problem with that. I mean, for a monk
to get braces, I think, would be pushing
it
unless he had a real like need for it.
So yeah, that was that was a fairly easy
question. Let's move on to the next one.
This is from PSA
and we're this is this is turning into a
long one mainly because I've been like

telling long stories.

PSA says, "Who's your favorite non-terravada teacher and I can't really point to Nim Curly Baba up there because he's not there because I'm not in the studio."

Um, but he'd be one of them. I'm assuming that you could even be called a teacher. I mean he was more of a guru who just kind of taught by example just he just kind of uplifted people by the the people being in his presence you know he didn't really have systematic teachings much so I don't know if I mean he certainly wasn't a philosopher

I guess he'd be a teacher I mean guru I think is uh can be interpreted as teacher
um of the people who have lived more recently. Paul Lo who died just a few years ago. I mean he was very controversial. He was kind of a rascal. But Nim Kuri Baba and Paul Lo both appealed to me largely because they were like enlightened rascals. You know, they weren't they weren't like Raman Maharshi. And I've got nothing against Ramanari. He seems to have been the real deal. But I mean, he was just so saintly,
you know, just like this bland vanilla flavored enlightened sage. Whereas it's

just more interesting to have rascally sages. I liked Zen Buddhism also when I was I was originally intending to become a Zen monk up until I actually went to a Zen monastery and actually went to a Terraata monastery and came to the conclusion that Terraata was came closer to what the Buddha originally taught.

So

um Paul Lo I mean Jay Krishna Murdy he is definitely a non-terravada teacher and he also was definitely rascally. I mean I remember one time telling someone who had read a lot of Krishna Mie you know I that I just recently I was a monk at the time I just recently heard that

Krishna Murdy was having an affair with his private secretary's wife and you know I said I pointed this out to this this other person and he's like so that's completely in accordance with his philosophy you and he wasn't being a hypocrite

so yeah there's that too. I mean, with regard to like Zen masters and so forth, it'd be hard for me to pick one out in particular,

like sages who compose the Upanods. I mean, I really couldn't come up with a name.

So, I mean, if we consider Nim Kuroli Baba to be a non-terravata teacher, then I'd have to pick him. I do have a lot of

like resonance, deep resonance with

Maharaji.

I mean, I highly recommend the book

Miracle of Love, stories about Nin Kurly

Baba, compiled and edited by Rahm Das. I

mean, you you kind of by reading the

book, you you get this feeling of what

it's like to be in the presence of a

sage,

even though he was like a a wild

rascally kind of sage.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Robert. And

Robert is our last questioner on this

gray rainy Easter day.

Robert says, "Oh, by the way, Easter, do

you do you know how they decide what is Easter? You know what day is is chosen to be Easter? It is in fact the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox."

Anyways, Robert says, "You've said before that there are probably more enlightened Hindus than Terra Buddhists. Why do you then not think certain schools of Hinduism like Advita vdanta might be preferable to terravada Buddhism especially considering that your uncarved block of marble sounds more similar to advita metaphysics than terra Buddhism? Well, that's a fair question. I wouldn't I have said that I wouldn't be surprised if there have been

more enlightened Hindus than enlightened terra Buddhists. partly because Terraata Buddhism is very dogmatic.

So I mean there's not a lot of freedom of thought and inspiration that goes along with like freedom of thought associated with terravada. It tends to be just strictly adhering to these ancient texts and not daring to deviate from them. And so Hindus, they tend to have more of that spark of inspiration, at least some of them. And there's there's lots more Hindus than Terra Buddhists also, which just increases the odds with regard to that. Also, you have a larger sample size from

which to choose enlightened sages.

So why do I not think certain schools of Hinduism like advite vidanta might be preferable to Terabara Buddhism? Um partly I mean

I never really encountered an advite vanta monastery.

That's part of the thing. I mean, if Advita vdant monasteries were as common as terraata monasteries,

you know, they were out there where you you could just go to the the local advita temple, that kind of thing, then I might have actually chosen advite vidanta rather than terraora.

But in the west I mean I don't know of a single advite of vanta monastery or

advite of vanta center whereas terravada
is more accessible and so it was just uh
circumstance
l just led me to terravada also I do
have a lot of respect for the Buddha and
um I mean if I had all of the ancient
schools of Buddhism to choose from I
probably wouldn't have chosen terra VA I
might have gone like saltica or
something just to get away from abidama
but yeah advita vidanta I mean Hinduism
has its own baggage it's uh more poetic
less philosophical
to to some degree you know it's it's got
more of like an artistic vibe to it kind
of a slightly less scientific vibe like

terra Buddhism or just Buddhism in
general very straightforward you know
very clearcut
and in Hinduism
you know there's all the garish you know
gods and goddesses and and stories and
this kind of thing that can get in the
way. Um but I think one of the main
problems I just never had an advite of
vanta monastery that I could go to and
compare it to see if it was better or
worse you know preferable or not
preferable with regard like compared
with terra or Buddhism in general.
So that was that was one of the main
things. I mean I I do believe there are
advita vanta monasteries out there

somewhere but I don't know where they are. I mean nowadays you've got internet. You could probably look it up pretty easily. But back then there was no internet.

And with regard to the uncarved block of marble, I mean it's just a necessary evil to reify it. You're better off just going with the atakawaga and not reifying it. Do not try to reify the absolute. So I do think that's kind of a mistake made by vanta is their reifying of the absolute as like nurguna brahman because the finger pointing at the moon too many people just ignore the moon and just latch on to the finger.

So with regard to the the atawaga, I mean I really

I don't know I don't know if I've come across any Hindu text that is more profound than the atawaga.

Some of the upupanads are deep though. I mean some of the upupanads are deeper than some polyutas. I definitely have to admit to that.

But mainly I think it was just a matter of accessibility. If it was the other way around where you know it was sort of advant

and like ordination as syasan or whatever they're called was more in vogue more popular and thus more accessible than being if terraat was

just restricted to like Southeast Asia
and and Sri Lanka and then you know
there weren't places like that in
America that I could go to and check out
but there was plenty of the advite of
vant places then I might have turned out
to be an advite of vantan. It's sort of
like Ramdas saying that he was
originally drawn more towards Buddhism
just because Hinduism just struck him as
kind of like sentimental and garish and
and and Buddhism is just more
philosophical and straightforward and
scientific. But he just wound up finding
a Hindu guru and became a Hindu.
The first enlightened being he came

across was a Hindu and not a Buddhist.
And so that's just the way he went.
So there's a lot of that involved too.
And I'm just going to move on to
Robert's second question. Second to last
question.
Do you consider the upupanachads to be
as profound as at least large parts of
the pseudapitica? Yeah, I already
answered that just uh a minute or two
ago, didn't I? Yeah, sure. Some of the
uponads are very profound. Some I mean
the the Tibetan book of the great
liberation is very profound but that I
guess technically is still Buddhist.
Um yeah I mean some some parts of the
sutapidica are not profound at all. Some

of them are just silly. It's just like
the devotionalistic miracle stuff that
kind of thing. I don't have much use for
that at all other than just as a kind of
sociological or anthropological study.
Yeah. So, some of the upupanads are more
profound than some of the sutas.
Sure. I mean, some of some parts of the
New Testament are more profound than
some of the sutas because some sutas
just really aren't all that profound.
And I'm just going to move on to the
very last question
also from Robert.
He says,
"Do you think devotional practices like

prayer can be spiritually beneficial?" And yeah, I think prayer can be spiritually beneficial partly. I mean, there's various ways that it can be spiritually beneficial. For example, I mean if it becomes a kind of meditation, you know, it's like an exercise of of concentration. You know, you're concentrating on this prayer which is it could be just like a long mantra. You're just doing the Lord's prayer. Dear not, dear God, please have mercy upon me, a sinner. That's another one. But that's what the Jesus prayer. But like the Lord's prayer, you know, our father which art in heaven, you know, paid her no stir. I mean that could become like a

mantra where you're just repeating it
over and over again as a kind of mantra
with its own sort of vibe. I mean you
don't completely ignore the words
but I mean yeah that's a kind of
meditation and so you'd get the kind of
benefits from that as you get from a
kind of mantra meditation but also I
mean prayer like devotional prayer I
mean I haven't prayed very much in my
life
there have been times as a monk where
you're just kind of in a state of
spiritual desperation
and it's like you know anybody out there
who's willing and able to help, please

do so. And in a way, it's,
you know, it's kind of throwing yourself
on the mercy of some higher power or
higher powers, even if you don't know
who those higher powers might be. I
mean, in a way, it's humility, practice
of humility.
Um, you know, that that sort of thing is
also spiritually beneficial. And and
there's there's been many cases of
people in Christianity and and others
other other systems too. I think the
most famous cases are in Christianity
where someone is trying to be saved
through their own efforts. You know,
they're trying to be a saintly person
and they just keep failing. You know,

the the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak and all that. And so finally they just kind of surrender. It's like I can't do it, God. I just throw myself on your mercy. If I if I get into heaven, if I'm saved, it will be through your grace because I just can't do it. And that kind of holy desperation resulting in that kind of prayer. I mean, that can be a total gamecher. I mean, that that can really just cause something to click and you're like at a higher level of consciousness once you stop like trying to get yourself there and just let go.

So yeah, that too. I mean, devotional

practices in general,

um, they it depends. It depends on where

you're at, what your motives are, that

kind of thing.

But certainly prayer can be spiritually

beneficial

even if the the deity you're praying to

isn't even real.

You know, just through the meditative

aspect of it or the humility aspect, the

surrender aspect, all these kind of

things can be definitely spiritually

beneficial and can even result in like a

a a major upheaval and just an opening

up of something that had been blocked

for years.

And so that's it. That's that's the last

question of this Q&A.

And again, I got the new book out which talks about visiting morgs and stuff. So it's there's that to look forward to. And so just check out the URL links below. Like and subscribe if you have not done so already. If you assuming that you like this. I don't know why you'd still be hanging around if you didn't. And uh what else? There was something else. Oh yeah, if you think I can answer any question, feel free to ask. And no more than three questions per person, please. And be happy.

Okay, then. It [clears throat] looks

like we're recording, which is good.

Hello

and welcome to question and answer

number 191.

I'm your host Pinyo Boss and it is that

time of day on a Sunday afternoon

when the light is coming through the

blinds just right so that I've got these

horizontal bars of light across my face.

Do not worry, it's not anything

paranormal.

This is my beverage.

I haven't already

I haven't already said that.

You know, just the the flurry of just

starting a new Q&A sometimes can result in confused mindfulness.

Ah, and 191 is a prime number as far as I can tell. So, we're in the prime of our lives at this moment.

And let's see, anything else I got to say by way of introduction before wading into this? We might be interrupted a little bit. Uh I might be distracted during the course of this Q&A because my woman is expecting company.

So, with that as an excuse for any imperfections in this Q&A suppose I should just wade right into this. And there's not going to be a whole lot of questions this time. You know, it's low 20s. So, kind of at the

lower end, which is fine.

First question is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, "If I am correct, the philosophical theory called natural

[clears throat]

law, with an L capitalized, natural law, posits that moral principles and rights are inherent in human nature and the natural world and are independent of any laws imposed by society and or religious authorities."

Let's see, that's not the question though. Oh, here it is. "What is your knowledge and opinion of natural law?"

Okay. So, I mean, I really hadn't studied much natural law. I mean, I have

had some indirect contacts with the with

the idea. Plus, I did look it up.

And according to

uh the source

that I inquired into with regard to

natural law, it says, "Natural law is a

moral philosophy asserting that humans

possess an innate objective moral order

discoverable through reason

>> [clears throat]

>> rooted in human nature and the structure

of reality itself."

And it turns out that the the most

famous you know, early promoter of this

was Aristotle.

So, my knowledge and opinion of natural

law

let's delve into this, shall we?

Um first of all, he says

Romeo says, "Natural law posits that

moral principles and rights are inherent

in human nature and the natural world."

Um I mean, would they have been inherent

in the natural world before humans

evolved? I mean, was there still moral

principles and rights that existed, say,

in the age of dinosaurs?

I don't know. I mean, the rights itself.

I remember there was a guy who joined

our Discord server, the Discord server

loosely associated with with all this.

And he was insisting that there are

genuine rights that are not just a a

cultural construct. And people pretty

much dogpiled him. I kind of

participated in this because I just do

not see how a right

is just innate in the fabric of

empirical reality.

Like

let's set aside morals, like a moral

law. Set aside, you know, ideas of right

and wrong and so forth. But just rights.

I mean, that seems like a political

construct to me, a right. You know, does

does an animal in a jungle have rights?

>> [snorts]

>> Well, I mean, where do you draw the I

mean, is it

is there just like this miraculous line

that is drawn between humans and

non-human animals? So that, you know,

humans just innately have these rights,

but say

a Stegosaurus

tens of millions of years ago, I mean,

did it have rights?

Just built right into the system?

I don't think so. So, rights, I am

skeptical of. If someone can present a

good case that everyone has a certain

right

that is just built into the fabric of of

empirical reality

then, you know, I'm quite willing to

hear the case. You know, I'm I'm

open-minded on the subject, but I am
skeptical in that I really see rights,
you know, like the right to bear arms or
the right to healthcare or, you know,
the right to just equality even
that
it seems like it's artificially just
kind of imposed by society or government
or whatever. And that if society or
government just takes away that support,
the right just kind of evaporates.
So, let's just set rights aside and just
deal with morals cuz this seems to be
mainly what Romeo is curious about is
are morals
just natural or artificial?
And I would say um at the human level,

you know, the level of a normie, for example, it's it's a combination of both. You know, some some morals are like arbitrary and artificial. I mean, a a big one, a huge one lately is with regard to pedophilia. Maybe I shouldn't even be saying it, I shouldn't be mentioning it. So taboo now.
But for most of the human race when a person goes through puberty they are biologically an adult. And so, for like an older man and a post-pubescent nubile female to have relations, especially after marriage
I mean, it was just the way it was. Like Edgar Allan Poe married his 13-year-old

cousin in America in the like the early

to mid-1800s.

And it was just allowable. I mean,

probably some people were grumbling

about it.

But still, I mean, it was just it was

accepted. It's like in India

traditionally

they have this idea that once a girl

reaches puberty and starts menstruating,

every menstruation is practically the

same as murdering a baby. It's just a

wasted menstruation.

Um so, some some morals

are kind of arbitrary, especially like

in the Buddhist monastic code.

Like vinaya.

A lot of the the the the morals or just the the precepts that a monk undertakes when he is ordained, you know, he's following vinaya. He's a conscientious monk following vinaya. A lot of that is just etiquette. You know, not talking with your mouth full of food. You know, it's against the rules or or not growing your hair a certain length. I mean, your your hair is not allowed to get more than two finger widths
or two months, whichever comes first. You got to cut it before then. I mean, that's not moral. It's not immoral to eat in the afternoon, for example. And that kind of gets into like regular

morals, too.

Jewish morals, for example, like keeping the Sabbath. Not even flipping a light switch on the Sabbath day, for example. Or not eating leavening, not eating yeast during Passover week. I mean, that would be seen as moral from a Jewish point of view, you know, as laid down by God who is the ultimate judge of with regard to morals, presumably.

But still, I mean, from a natural point of view, there's nothing inherently immoral

with eating yeast during a certain time period. Or it's okay the rest of the time, but this during this certain time period of Passover

eating yeast, you are cut off from your

people. You you are no longer one of

God's chosen.

So

I think a lot of what is considered to

be morality is to some degree

um

artificial. And then some some of it is

just sort of like evolutionarily

derived. You know, like real pedophilia

where a person is sexually attracted to

pre-pubescent

children.

I mean, that's there's like a taboo

against that. And

I mean, there's a taboo against it

because it's unnatural. You know, it's like it's it's going to cause harm to the child, like physical harm. They're not I mean, their body isn't adjusted for that sort of stuff yet.

And I mean, it's it can't produce I mean, they're not going to get pregnant. I mean, there's you know, there's you know, it's not for reproduction. I mean,

ultimately, that is the purpose for reproduction.

But there's a lot of neuroticism in the human race about it. Another one is incest.

That that is considered to be immoral.

Why is incest immoral? Because

mainly

I mean, just setting aside just the sexuality part itself, but incest is it re- results in severe inbreeding. You know, it's just not healthy. And so, that even animals, you know, chimpanzees have like a just an instinctive incest taboo.

Other animals, too, I assume have just an instinctive incest taboo because it's just not conducive to the health of the species. It's not a good way of promoting, you know, promulgating your DNA sequences.

So, there's some of that that is getting into natural law. You know, it's natural

morals, in a sense, cuz it's just built
into us instinctive because, you know,
it's just good for the species, good for
our own DNA sequences.
But, if you're going to get into
something deeper than that, like
arguably Buddhist ethics does,
>> [clears throat]
>> then
yeah, I mean, there is a natural law
with regard to that. It's it's like
Buddhist ethics is based on human
psychology. You know, it's based on
karma, which is volition, which is a
human mental state.
So, it's like morals in Buddhism are
psychological

more than imposed by some deity. You
know, it's like the Abrahamic
monotheistic religions,
right and wrong are determined by God.
God decides what's right and wrong. In
the Old Testament, if God says you have
to
you have to massacre an entire town,
then it's immoral not to do it.
Otherwise, it would be very immoral to
do it, you know, thou shalt not kill and
all that. But, if God orders you to do
it and you don't do it,
that's that's sin.
But, in Buddhism, it doesn't work that
way. I mean, the Buddha I mean, he

wouldn't say this, but he could tell you
to, you know, go do something wrong.
And just because you do it,
you know, you think the person is a
Buddha, let's say,
and they're not. They're just some
charismatic cult leader.
And still, you've done something wrong.
And it's so, Buddhist ethics would
become about as close to natural law
as you're going to find in world
religions as far as I can tell. You
know, other systems would have something
similar, maybe.
You know, it's not just the arbitrary
decree of some king who's called God.
So,

yeah, it's like if you do something
and it causes you to be more
more [clears throat] delusional, have
stronger desires and attachments and
suffering, then that is immoral
from a Buddhist point of view. If you do
something and it causes you to have less
delusion and fewer desires and
attachments and less suffering, then
that's moral. I mean, we're talking the
big picture here, not just momentarily.
You know, you inject heroin, for
example, and you just feel this rush of
euphoria.
Um, you know, that's not moral because
you're feeling happy, but I mean, you're

also more delusional and like less

awake, at least with regard to your

surroundings.

You know, it causes you to become more

attached, have stronger desires for the

stuff in future and so forth.

So,

yeah, I mean,

Buddhist

ethics,

setting aside just the etiquette stuff,

like in the rules of monastic

discipline. And and some of the stuff,

like

the fifth precept against drinking

alcohol.

Well, I mean,

let's say you take some cough syrup that
has a little bit of alcohol in it, or
you accidentally take a sip of some
fruit juice that started to ferment in
the tropical heat.
You know, that happened to me as a monk.
I mean, that's not necessarily immoral,
even though you're breaking one of the
five precepts.
And then, of course, there's
you know, like cases of telling lies
that
are really helpful to people. Like
I I watched the movie version of Les
Misérables by Victor Hugo. I I don't
know how to pronounce French names. I'm

not even going to try to pronounce Les
Misérables correctly.
But, I mean,
it it pretty much starts and
the novel and the movie pretty much
start with this hardened criminal, Jean
Valjean, or Jean Valjean, since we're
not pronouncing French words correctly
or even trying.
He's a hardened criminal.
And a kindly hearted, relatively saintly
bishop lets him spend the night in his
house. And the hardened criminal steals
some silver and takes off with it.
So, the the hardened criminal gets
arrested and
taken back to the bishop. And the bishop

says, "Oh, no, he didn't steal it. I
gave it to him."
Which was a lie, because he didn't
really give it to him.
I mean, maybe you could sort of say,
"Well, he's kind of stretching the truth
a little bit. Maybe in his heart, he
gave it to him after he noticed that it
was gone." This kind of stuff. But,
really, he didn't really give it to him.
But, I mean, it changed Jean Valjean's
life. You know, it was the first time
anyone had ever really been kind to him
and forgave him. You know, it was like a
Christ-like act that was,
you know, conveyed [clears throat] upon

him, so to speak.

And it changed his life. It was like that moment caused him to really try to become a good person, and he succeeded. Relatively speaking. Just because this bishop told a lie.

And I could give other examples. I mean, if you're going to, you know, like the story of the third wise man, where this or the fourth wise man, the other wise man. It's a famous story about one of the wise men who's trying to keep up with the other three that were going to, you know, the Magi that were going to offer gifts to the to the baby Jesus.

And there's the scene where King Herod has ordered all the baby boys to be

massacred.

And this [clears throat]

fourth wise man, this Magi, is spending

the night in this house where there's a

woman who has a baby boy, and she is

scared because the the soldiers are

pounding on doors in order to kill the

baby boys.

And this this Magi, this wise man,

he takes some of the treasure he was

going to offer to the baby Jesus.

And when the soldier pounds on the door,

he just gives him this huge pearl or

some such and says, "There's no baby

boys here."

And then, of course, the soldier takes

the bribe, says, "There's no baby boys
in this house." And they just continue
on their way.
And you know, the the mother is weeping
tears of joy and gratitude on the floor
because this man just saved her baby.
But, he told a lie.
>> [sighs]
>> So, I mean, it's still from a Buddhist
point of view, it would be definitely
the lesser of two evils in that case.
You know, still telling a lie is immoral
because, you know, it kind of disrupts
the equilibrium of karmic stability,
so to speak.
But, in a case like that,
um, you know, arguably, you could

justify,

you know, doing something wrong that

is less wrong than not doing it.

But, I'm wandering away from this

question of natural law.

So, we've already kind of established

that a lot of morals are just purely

artificial. Some of them are kind of

getting in towards at least like

animal instinct.

You know, like

taboos against sex with children, taboos

against incest, that kind of thing. Even

even like, um,

adultery. You know, there there's like

some genetic instinctive components to

that, you know, of of that being considered wrong. So, that would be kind of natural law, but I don't think it would be what like Aristotle had in mind. So, you have to get into the deeper level of like anything that gets you closer to enlightenment is good. Anything that takes you farther away from enlightenment is bad. And that would be a kind of natural law, especially if you don't think that getting closer or farther away from enlightenment is just another artificial cultural construct, which in Buddhism it is not. I mean, it's it's pretty empirical.

You know, whether or not someone is

happy or unhappy, whether they're

you know, delusional, that's

you know, that's there's going to be all

this cultural conditioning that gets in

the way

of just making a purely objective

statement, or as objective of a

statement as is possible for a human

being to make.

I remember

I went to see Jordan Peterson give a

talk in San Jose, California, once. This

is back when he was still pretty based,

you know, back before he was I mean, he

was still like a

he he was still like a university

professor in Toronto or some such place.
You know, he hadn't gotten really famous
yet.
And he gave this talk where he is trying
to come up with some kind of
natural law. You know, he's trying to
come up with a
like morals that don't rely on some
decree of a capital G God in a scripture
somewhere. And he was struggling. I
mean, he was coming up with like
experiments on white rats, how white
rats, laboratory rats, nevertheless
naturally have this concept of fair
play. You know, you've got a big rat and
a little rat that that like to play and
wrestle.

The the big rat will let the little rat
win sometimes. Just
just because he wants to keep playing
with the little rat. And if he wins
every time, the little rat's not going
to want to play.
So, he's trying to work out some kind of
natural law through this kind of thing,
which I mean, you can say there is like
a genetic component, like an instinctual
component where certain immoral acts,
so-called, are harmful
to the species, harmful to your own
chances of successfully reproducing your
DNA sequences. So, that would be sort of
like a

scientific level natural law. But then
you get into Buddhist ethics
where it's just
the the act itself, the physical act
itself, is ethically neutral. It's just
your mental states, whether they become
more like awake and and serene or
whether they become more asleep and
agitated.
Just based on how human psychology
works.
You know, it's there's a lot of
empiricism
with like very wise people who are like
meditation masters who can see just the
subtlest little differences in their
mental states. You know, they can see

whether this is leading to more clarity or less clarity. They can see in others whether their their actions are resulting in more or less clarity. And then they can sort of work out a moral system largely based on that. And I would call that about as close to natural law as you're going to get. But I don't know if it's really a moral principle. It's certainly not moral rights. Even principles, I mean, a principle is kind of like a truth, whereas it would just have to exist as an abstraction.

And abstractions

um I mean, they they have like a

conventional truth, but not an ultimate truth.

So,

I would say that there's like that least two different kinds of natural law with regard to moral principles.

Now, one is sort of like the animal level, you know, like instinctual taboos against murder, for example. You know, it's like when animals fight,

not not just humans, but any animals when they fight, usually it's not to the death. It's until one of them admits defeat and then lets out a yelp or something, which kind of diffuses the aggression from the others. Like the the other one wins,

the loser goes away
still alive, and that's best for the
species.
So, I mean, that that kind of natural
law, too, like murder and, you know,
like sexual stuff, that kind of stuff
can be like an animal level natural law.
But then you get into like depth
psychology,
which is sometimes is at variance with
with animal level natural law because at
the animal level a certain amount of
like greed and lust and aggression and
so forth are good for the species,
whereas like from a Buddhist point of
view,

I mean, you want to get enlightened.
You've got to kind of detach yourself
from the animal stuff, at least as much
of the animal stuff as you can.
And I'm not sure how well I have
addressed this question,
but I think I've been going at it for
well over 15 minutes. So, I think I
should probably uh
uh move [clears throat] on to Romeo's
second question. And this one is just a
follow-up to the first, and I think I
may have already addressed it. He says,
"Where do Buddhism's precepts stand in
relation to natural law?"
And it's like an overlap. There's a
certain amount of ancient Indian

cultural conditioning.

Like, for example, if you're taking

eight precepts and not just

and not just uh five, or taking 10

precepts and not just five. You know,

one of the eight precepts is not

sleeping on a high or large bed.

There's nothing necessarily immoral

about sleeping on a high platform.

So, I mean, that is

is uh maybe indirectly, I mean, it's

trying to

weaken your attachments to luxury,

mainly.

Or not handling money is one of the 10

precepts. Or I mean, just there's a lot

of of the precept stuff

or I already mentioned like drinking

alcohol. Sometimes, if you drink it to

the point of being drunk, it could be

you know, arguably leading you away from

enlightenment, leading you away from

clarity,

your ability to see reality.

But I mean, accidentally taking a sip of

some some fruit juice that went bad, or

taking a spoonful of some medicine that

turns out having alcohol in it, I mean,

to say that that's immoral just because

it falls into the precept would be kind

of like dogmatic in my opinion.

Just kind of

adherence to morality and observances.

Sīlabbata paramasa, which is considered
to be not a good thing in Buddhism.
So, Buddhism's precepts have some
natural law, and then also they've got
like ancient Indian
ascetic etiquette, at least with regard
to the rules of monastic discipline, and
just ancient Indian lay etiquette for
laypeople.
I mean, Jesus of Nazareth apparently
drank wine.
>> [snorts]
>> He was uh what, a Nazarene, but not a
Nazarite? Or is it the other way around?
I know it's one of those. I think it's
the Nazarites, like Samson. They're not

supposed to cut their hair, they're not

allowed to eat meat or drink alcohol,

that kind of stuff.

Uh but I don't think [clears throat]

Jesus is one of those.

So, he drank wine. I mean, he he

miraculously created one. That's one of

his first miracles, I think, was making

wine.

But it's not necessarily immoral.

I mean, not from a like a natural law

point of view.

So,

>> [sighs]

>> Buddhism's Buddhism's precepts stand in

relation to natural law. It's more the

whole Buddhist concept of ethics.

Precepts are just kind of like this

superficial

institution that lends stability to the

system, helps to stabilize society, that

kind of stuff.

And they to have, you know, they're

conditioned by natural law. They're

conditioned by the Buddhist

interpretation of how karma works, you

know, what what brings you closer to

enlightenment and what takes you farther

away from it.

But Buddhism's precepts, it is a

combination of

you know, like

conventional morality, like cultural

morality, and also the Buddhist idea of

how morals work, how ethics works.

But the Buddhist idea of ethics, it

would be much closer to natural law than

just precepts.

And there's somebody at the door, and I

hope my woman hears the doorbell

ringing,

cuz I don't want to interrupt this

video,

if you will.

But if the doorbell rings again, I may

have to holler really loud to get my

woman's attention.

So,

next question

is from Siavash and Sipat Zidona.

And I'm talking a little quieter just to
see if someone's answering the door.
Okay, I guess somebody is.
Siavash and Sipat Zidona says,
"Are you on the side of a future
restoration of a Christian West, or
restoration of a pagan West?" And
I really don't think that I think that's
kind of a false dichotomy. I'm really
not wholly behind either one.
I mean,
a restoration of a Christian West, it
might be more realistic than trying to
bring back classical or Germanic
paganism in the West.
Uh classical and Germanic paganism are

pretty much dead. That most of the people that are trying to restore it or revive it are essentially larping. They're I mean, they're they're essentially following a kind of a replica. You know, it's not this unbroken lineage. A lot of it is just conjecture as to what it was really like and so forth.

So,

uh Christianity, on the other hand, I mean, it's it's run its course. You know, it's kind of in the same situation that classical paganism is was in in the Roman Empire when Christianity was taking over. That to a large degree, like secular scientism has already

replaced Christianity even in the hearts of most Christians with regard to how to explain reality.

So, you've got devout Christians who nevertheless defer to science with regard to explaining how the universe works. They might say that God created it in the beginning, but God created it in accordance with these scientific laws and so forth.

So,

um I'm really not on either side. I don't have have dog in this fight, cuz I'm not a Christian or a pagan really.

Um I mean

I ideally I used to I've I've often

considered that I think it would be much

nicer from my point of view if Julian

the Apostate hadn't died in Persia and

that um a kind of revised neo

neo-Platonism

had become like the official religion of

the of the Roman Empire and had like

somehow out-competed Christianity.

Although

that's kind of a pipe dream, I guess. I

mean, obviously it didn't happen.

But I mean, I would rather see the West,

like America especially,

go back to being strongly Christian

um than just see it just degenerate,

just fragment and collapse, maybe being taken over by Islam or something. Or or worse than Islam would just be like neo-Marxism.

So

I think the restoration of a Christian West would be more realistic than a restoration of a pagan West. And I do think that the restoration of a Christian West

um you know, it might be worth it even though I'm not a Christian.

I might be willing to take the hit for the sake of saving Western civilization from its its imminent decline and fall.

I mean, the decline is already in

progress, it seems like.

I mean, in uh

Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman

Empire, I think he has the Emperor

Commodus, you know, the son of Marcus

Aurelius, at least the legal son of

Marcus Aurelius, was the person who

started the decline.

And I mean, the Roman Empire lasted for

hundreds of years after that.

Um but I think possibly preferable to

either

the restoration of a Christian West or

the restoration of a pagan West would be

something new and better in the future.

So it wouldn't be a restoration. It

would just be the new establishment

of some new spiritual order possibly

deeply conditioned by Buddhism.

Although

just being realistic, going with

political realities, you couldn't really

have the like the uncompromising

pacifism and non-violence of Buddhism.

In uh

especially in in like a a world

superpower.

I guess you just have to renounce the

the military powers or superpowers or

anything like that if

people became Buddhist enough.

But even Buddhist countries still have

armies and so forth. I mean, Burma's

arguably the most Buddhist country on
the planet and it's been run by a
military dictatorship for decades.
It's kind of like the mafia is Catholic.
It's kind of that kind of deal.
So
yeah, I mean, like I keep saying, I've
said this several times on these Q&A
videos that it's hard to say what the
next big spiritual system, what the next
big paradigm shift is going to be based
on.
That I mean, even if science finally
comes to the conclusion that the
material world is just an outward
reflection of our own mental states or
that energy and consciousness are

ultimately the same,

then I mean, that in itself could just

be a huge Copernican revolution uh which

would result in uh a large shift in the

way people look at reality.

And then you might even have sort of

like a a kind of Taoist physics or

something becomes like the Oracle or

like I was saying not too long ago, just

virtually omniscient computers like AI

might become the new religion. You know,

like Brian Aldiss in some of his science

fiction novels or his science fiction

short stories especially, he had this

idea that computers will become

functionally omniscient, at least

omniscient enough to satisfy humans

and that people will just start going to

AI as a kind of Oracle.

And that could start a whole new

religious system

without even the need of some

charismatic

sage or

spiritual leader.

Or charismatic warlord.

So yeah, that was kind of a trick

question cuz I'm really on neither side

and I think I should just move on to

SeeOfAction SeePazZidonna's next

question.

Which is as follows.

SeeOfAction SeePazZidonna says, "In

Majjhima Nikaya 13, the Buddha claims that all warfare and conflict between individuals has sensuality as their true motivation. Do you agree with this? I didn't believe it at first, but thinking about it makes sense since we are often not even aware why we do certain things and our own hidden inner motivation. So the question is, I mean, do I agree with the the 13th sutta of the Majjhima Nikaya that warfare and conflict between individuals always has sensuality as its true motivation?"

It depends on how you look at it, I guess. I mean,

yeah, was it Freud that came up with the

pleasure principle that said that all of
our motivation, you know, everything we
do is for the purpose of increasing our
pleasure
or decreasing our displeasure?
So I mean, if that's the case, then it
would all boil down to that regardless
of what, you know, the more superficial
reasons are. But if you want to go with
you you want to set aside the pleasure
principle
and just deal with I mean, some some
nations,
you know, like the Roman Empire to some
degree, it was it was like it was just
kind of built in just expansionism
was just built into the system for a

long time and it was just
what you do. Or like Crusades
where it's
supposedly a religious war.
I mean, if it there's a religious war,
and there have been genuine religious
wars, it's not all economics, all desire
for money and territory and all that. I
mean, that's usually a major factor.
But still, let's for the sake of
argument, let's say that there really
have been religious wars where people
are just fighting because
our religion is right, their religion is
wrong, and they're evil, and we need to
defeat them. And

I mean, that is a major

like motivation for people fighting in

religious wars anyway.

Then

>> [sighs and gasps]

>> yeah, how that would fit into the

pleasure principle, sensuality

as the the sutta has it or as

SeeOfAction and SeePazZidonna's

translation has it,

then it becomes more subtle.

It's like

I mean, to where you going to draw the

line? That you just religious fanaticism

and intolerance

of other people's beliefs, I mean, to

what degree does it have roots in

sensuality? I mean, deep down you could say it's kind of like their own deep down insecurity about whether their religion is really true and so they want to just abolish anyone who disagrees with them, just kind of abolish anyone questioning their point of view so that makes them feel more like secure emotionally, this kind of stuff.

You can take it down to that level, you can take anything down to that level where it's, you know, they're just doing it for their own satisfaction and whether you want to call that sensuality or not,

I don't know. But just if you just go

with sensuality like just an overt
desire for pleasure, you know, women,
more money, then the stuff that money
can buy, which includes women,
then not all warfare and conflict
between individuals has that as its true
motivation.
I mean, some of it's just hate.
But then it's like the hate, you could
you could take that down a notch and
it's they want the satisfaction of
seeing their enemies destroyed, which
you could say is a kind of sensuality.
So
if you're going to deal if you're going
to interpret sensuality as any kind of
like emotional satisfaction,

then yeah, you could just that could be
the lowest common denominator, you could
just boil it all down to that. But if
you're talking about
like
I mean, you could you could let's say
economic interests could be
put under the the category of
sensuality, but still
some conflict is not necessarily
motivated by a desire for pleasure.
Unless it's just like the
emotional satisfaction of getting what
you want.
So I don't fully agree with it unless
you want to just boil it down to like

Freud's pleasure principle or whoever

came up with it. Whoever came up with

the pleasure principle.

Then

>> [clears throat and snorts]

>> technically it would be true, I guess.

Then everything we do, not just

conflict, but everything else

would have sensuality as its true

motivation.

So why even just specify warfare and

conflict? Just say everything.

But if everything isn't motivated by

sensuality, then warfare and conflict,

in my opinion, are not exclusively

motivated by sensuality.

And I'm just going to move on to see of

action C Pad Z Din next question.

Which is this is an easy one. I'm not

sure why he asked this question.

He said,

Uh

>> [clears throat]

>> well, first of all, he he has this

uh like a screenshot of some post on

social media. And it's the post says,

"They offered you $80 an hour to clean

the cemetery alone, 10:00 p.m. to 5:00

a.m. Y'all taking the job?" Question

mark. And then see of action C Pad Z Din

says, "Would you take the job and would

be the least amount it would take to

convince you? What would be the least

amount it would take to convince you?

Theoretically, it is 30 minutes away

from the nearest building with people

living there and you can't take

weapons."

Well, first of all, I mean,

uh

it would depend on the cemetery, I

guess. I mean, if there's like,

you know, junkies and gang members

hanging out there,

then I mean, I wouldn't wouldn't take

the job regardless of what they're

offering. I mean, if if it was like

obviously

physically dangerous to work there just

because of, you know, criminals hanging

out there

that would

pretty obviously, you know, harass me at

at least,

then yeah, I mean, it's it'd just be a

non-starter.

But if it's just a cemetery,

you know, just a cemetery,

then

yeah, I mean, why not take the job? $80

an hour? I see if it's $80 an hour and

10:00 to 5:00 10:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m.

That's 7 hours. So, that's $80 per hour

at 7 hours per night. And let's say it's

a 5-day week, then that's that adds up

to $145,600

a year. That's a six-figure income for cleaning a cemetery. And cemeteries in the west, like in America, they're like parks.

You know, they're pretty. There's flowers and stuff. It's it's it's not bad. But as a monk, I used to live in cemeteries. I would spend the night in cemeteries.

This I mean, as a Buddhist practice.

And the cemeteries in Burma, you know, there's like human bones lying around.

You know, it's it's like jungly.

You know, there's like not just human bones, but there's like centipedes and scorpions and snakes and that kind of stuff. But I mean, as a monk, I I stayed

there for free. I chose I just preferred sometimes to stay in a cemetery. Like like whenever I went in the the vicinity of the town of Kani in northwestern Burma, there was this cemetery. There was a really good cemetery. It had like this big pavilion there where you could stay.

And and you know, there was like human bones lying around.

One time, there was like the the the face part of a skull just like the front part of a a skull just lying face up on the ground at this place. I mean, I think it was outside the cemetery actually. It was like on the road maybe

100 yards away.

And so, like, that doesn't bother me.

I'm not particularly afraid of ghosts.

So, yeah, I'd take the job easily. I

mean, I don't like working nights.

You know,

it's like what is it?

Working until 5:00 in the morning, I

mean, that would kind of suck. I mean,

it's kind of late. Second shift I

prefer, but

I mean,

going to work at 10:00 p.m. is kind of

pushing it. But for $145,000 bucks a

year, obviously,

I mean, it would be a heck of a lot more

than I'm making now.

So, I'm not sure why see of action C Pad
Z Din asked me this question. I mean,
personally, I'd take the job for half as
much. Half that pay would still be
I mean, you're just cleaning a cemetery.
I mean, cemeteries don't tend to be all
that dirty, especially in the west. They
look like golf courses or parks.
What are you going to do? Just picking
up wilted flowers,
picking up hankies that people have
thrown to the ground?
But again, I mean, if you've got like
gang members and and just like homeless
crazy drug addicts and so forth just
like haunting the place, that would be

worse than ghosts.

Uh

>> [sighs]

>> but if it's 30 minutes away from the

nearest building, then it'd be like a

30-minute drive to work.

So, there's that too, but still for 80

bucks an hour, yeah, that would be a

bargain. I'd go for it easily.

And I'm just going [snorts] to move on

to the next question.

This is from PSA.

And PSA says, "When you were a monk,

which of the 227 precepts did you find

most difficult to observe and why?" So,

by

by specifying 227 precepts, he's

referring to the Patimokkha rules. I mean, there's most of the rules of monastic discipline are not in the 227 rules of the Patimokkha.

Most people don't know this. Even some teachers of Buddhism don't know this that I calculated probably there are between like two and 3,000 rules of monastic discipline altogether, most of which lie beyond the the limits of the Patimokkha.

But let's just keep it down to the Patimokkha, the 227 rules. The most difficult to observe of those rules when I was

when I was a young monk, young, dumb,

and full of precious bodily fluids,

then

it would be like Sanghadisesa number one

was difficult, which is not having

orgasms on purpose. Because when you're

young and just come from like over sexed

family anyway, it's it's like the

hormones reach this like a breaking

point where you're just I mean, you can

just be like wanting to just cry and

howl like a dog, beat your head against

the wall.

Fortunately for me, about every 2 weeks,

I just automatically have like a a

pornographic dream. And when I was in my

early 40s and stopped having those, I I

sincerely missed them.

Uh

but yeah, that was that was like the biggest challenge. The the the sorest trial and ordeal for me was just being celibate even to the point of not spanking the puppy.

That was very difficult.

There are other rules like minor rules that aren't in the Patimokkha that I mean, it's just easy to break them.

But of the Patimokkha rules, I mean, that was like the sorest trial. And if you break that rule, you got to do penance for 6 days and 6 nights, go through this very inconvenient reinstatement ceremony with at least 20

monks present, and it's just a pain in

the neck.

So, yeah, that was the most difficult

for me.

So,

let's just move on to PSA's next

question.

Uh he says, "You've mentioned briefly

here and there that you have experience

at Zen monasteries, but I wonder if you

could elaborate in more detail how the

whole thing was and was it Japanese,

Korean, Vietnamese, or Chinese Zen?"

>> [clears throat]

>> Well, when I was looking for a monastery

in which to be ordained, at first I was

leaning towards Zen. You know, I just

had more exposure to Zen Buddhism. I
liked the idea of, you know, the the
mysterious men dressed in black talking
in riddles and hitting each other with
sticks. You know, I just it
appealed to me.
Then I tried two monasteries. It's like,
I mean, in the place where I was living
at the time, Aberdeen, Washington, or at
least Pacific Northwest,
I I
grew up in Aberdeen, Washington, home of
Nirvana, Kurt Cobain, and all that.
And I mean, there's no Buddhist
monasteries around there. There was some
rumor of a Buddhist monastery in the San

Juan Islands, but I think it was like it

wasn't Theravada. I don't think it was

Zen. It was like, you know, Nichiren or

something.

So,

um

I went to

a Zen priory

in Portland, Oregon

and told him I wanted to be ordained as

a monk. And he presented me with this

It was like a directory of Buddhist

organizations in America. And I just

wrote down the name and address of any

place that wasn't obviously not a

monastery. You know,

some of it I didn't know what it was,

but it might be a monastery. So, I wrote down like 20 names and addresses and just sent out this letter, you know, in stating my intention of becoming a monk. And it turns out most of the places weren't even monasteries.

Um I got two letters back from actual monasteries. One was the name in the directory was Tong Phu Lu Si Yap Dao. Even the word Si Yap Dao was spelled wrong. I had no idea what a Tong Phu Lu Si Yap Dao was.

But it might have been a a monastery, so I sent a letter. And then I also got a letter from Shasta Abbey in northern California, which is a Zen place. So, I

checked out both places.

And Shasta Abbey, I think it started off

in a more Japanese tradition, but then

it was becoming kind of more

more Chinese in its orientation. The the

abbot or abbess was this large English

woman. And

I don't remember her name.

I met her once.

Um and they were sort of

reforming a little bit. It was at first

it was allowable for like the ordained

priests and nuns to get married and then

they they kind of stopped that so that

the

the Roshi at the the the priory in

Portland had kind of distanced himself

from Shasta Abbey. He was ordained
there. He and his wife were ordained
there, but then when they were
forbidding marriage, he said, "Well, we
are already committed to each other."
So, they just kind of went their own
way.
But I I went to Shasta Abbey for like an
introductory retreat just kind of
test the waters.
And I mean, it was
it was nothing like
men [clears throat] dressed in black
standing around talking in riddles and
hitting each other with sticks. Nobody
hit anybody with sticks. You know,

that's it was kind of feminized. I mean, you had a female abbot an abbess running the place a nun running the place.

And lots of bowing and chanting. Lots of ceremonies. I mean, you'd bow to a door before going through the doorway. You know, you'd bow to the room upon entering the door entering the room.

Lots and lots of chanting.

And I just was not

really I did not really wasn't attracted to that. Also, there was a lot of pure land stuff that was kind of conflated with Zen there. And I've never had any use for pure land Buddhism.

So,

and and then also, they ran a store. You

know, they're selling like candles and
Buddhist Buddha statues and little gongs
and incense and that kind of stuff. And
you'd have monks and nuns like getting
out of their gray Zen pajamas
and putting on regular layman's clothing
and driving to town in a car you know,
to buy groceries for the monastery this
kind of stuff. So,
I I mean, that really was a far cry from
what you read about Zen monasteries in
books. You know, the men dressed in
black talking in riddles hitting each
other with sticks.
So, then I went to Tong Phủ Lộ Thiền Đạo
or Tong Phủ Lộ Khải Nguyên Monastery in

Boulder Creek, California and it was
like four Burmese monks.
Only let's see, two of whom spoke fluent
English. The abbot spoke almost no
English at all.
And they're just living a quiet life.
You know, just not hand Well, I mean,
they handled money, but not
ostentatiously. You know, I didn't see
them handling money at the time. You
know, they didn't drive cars. You know,
they didn't put on layman's clothing.
They weren't running a store. You know,
they were just being monks. And so,
comparing the Theravada the Burmese
Theravada place with this kind of
Westernized Japanese maybe slightly

Chinese Zen place, I mean, it was just

the difference was very stark.

And it was fairly clear to me that the

Theravada place was coming closer to

what the Buddha actually taught.

So,

I guess I'm

fairly elaborate with regard to um my

details how the whole thing was.

Um

So, I think I'm just going to move on to

PSA's third question.

He says, "You're approaching 200 Q&As.

That's amazing. Are you planning a big

party or special event for that

episode?" People have been

kind of pestering me a little bit to have another live stream for episode 200. I did a live stream for episode 100.

And I'm game, I guess. It's just the thing is I'm not very good at live streams. Not because I'm not good at being spontaneous. I mean, these are pre-recorded, but all done in one take. You know, there's not a lot of jump cuts.

So, yeah, I may do a live stream.

Um but that's about it. The thing is with the live streams, I just don't have enough experience with it because I have only done it like two or three times.

So, that it's hard to tell if I if I'm

even live.

Like I mentioned the very first time I did it a live stream Q&A, I think it was a Q&A. I mean, it looked like I wasn't even

wasn't even online. I just walked out of the room to try and get my woman to help me figure out what was going on. She said, "You're you're on. You just left the room."

So, I came back and continued the Q&A. So, or whatever it was. Continued the video.

But yeah, it's like probably a live stream would be about the most you can hope for in that regard. And I'm moving

on to the next question.

This is from Cyrus Frame, one of the few people that ask questions on Rumble.

And Cyrus Frame says,

"Could it be said that volition is the will to carve the uncarved block?"

Well,

golly.

I mean, it could be said,

I guess.

But I mean, I really don't see it that way so much. I mean, in a way you could say that volition is the will to carve the uncarved block. But let's say that you've got the uncarved block of stone, which as I keep saying contains within it in potential virtual form

every possible statue.

So, the forms those virtual forms would be perceptions. And the movement of those forms, not just the movement, but whatever kind of continued pattern is keeping that statue, you know, in a state of coherence as it moves, you know, it goes through its actions of brushing its teeth or whatever,

then that would be volition.

So,

um I mean, volition is karma.

And it's interesting. There there was a book it's still out there, I'm sure, The Buddhist Bible,

which was mainly oriented towards

Mahayana Buddhism.

But it had some interesting translations and it translated karma as habit energy. And that's a good translation. I mean, it's most people don't think of karma as habit energy.

But I mean, you think about it, that is a good translation. It's habit energy. And so, the the volition or the habit energy the karma is what is keeping that virtual s- like moving statue that image contained within the block of marble. What is keeping it coherent as essentially what is identified as an individual that continues to exist over time. You know, it's it's like the habitual pattern that

that keeps it, you know, it like a recognizable pattern for perception to perceive and at the same time is, you know, through time. So, it's volition is just like the temporal aspect of perception. But also, there's like the stability aspect of keeping that perception that even though the perception is changing, keeping it the same enough that you keep perceiving it as the same thing. It's not just completely changing from one moment to the next into something unrecognizable. So, volition or karma habit energy also has that function of a kind of you know, it's momentum. It's the momentum of your

mental states. It's the momentum of your perceptions, so to speak.

Just as perception is sort of like the form of your volitions.

There's it's like two aspects of the same thing, perception and volition.

Perception is like the the form aspect.

Volition is the function. Form and function.

So to speak. Noun and verb.

So, I hope I answered that question at least somewhat satisfactorily. Hope he doesn't just spit and turn off the turn off the video after hearing that answer.

Cuz I'm moving on to the next one from Cyrus Frame.

"Is mindfulness the awareness of

perceptions?

It seems clear when noting, looking, hearing, etc., but not so clear when noting thinking."

Yeah, it's hard to note thinking. That's one thing about noting. It apparently just going with scientism, it apparently uses the same centers of your brain as thinking. That noting of the thinking and the thinking they use the same areas of your brain apparently. So, that you can't do both at the same time. So, if you're thinking and you note the thinking, it stops the thought. As a general like if you're doing Mahasi style noting.

On the other hand, you get music stuck in your mind, you can note it till you're blue in the face and sometimes that music won't stop. It's like it's a different part of your brain so that like the noting doesn't preempt it.

Well, I wouldn't say that mindfulness is the awareness of perceptions. Mindfulness is like the simplification and minimization of perceptions. If you're being mindful, so you like you hear the barking dog, you know, you're sitting there meditating. A dog starts barking outside the window. Then if you're being mindful, you're being aware. You're like noting the the auditory

auditory perception or just the auditory sensation of hearing.

You're just you're aware of hearing and and you're

you're like aware of like the the textures of the sound, you know, when it starts, when it stops, what it sounds like and so forth. It's just that you're not

you don't have like a running commentary about whose dog is that and they shouldn't have their dog barking outside my window. They should train their dog better, etc. etc. blah blah blah. Next thing you know, you're thinking about what you're going to have for lunch

tomorrow.

So, mindfulness is reducing perception and when you get to the perfection of mindfulness, fourth jhana, which is considered to be perfect mindfulness, you're not thinking anything. You know, it's just like you're as close as you can get to just bare sensation or not bare sensation but bare consciousness, pure consciousness with almost no perceptual content at all.

So, mindfulness is reduction of perception, not so much awareness of it. I mean, just by having bare awareness, non-judgmental, choiceless awareness like Krishnamurti

talks about that I mean, that reduces the perceptions cuz you don't have like this running commentary.

You know, your your thoughts aren't hooking up in sequence.

Let's see. Mindfulness the awareness of perceptions. Yeah, I mean, it in a sense it is the awareness of perceptions but that's not how you would define it really.

Because it's like awareness of bare perception, you know, the simplest form of perception that you can manage until finally you get to the perfection of mindfulness, you've got virtually no perceptions at all

cuz you're in fourth jhana.
So, mindfulness is reducing perception
so that you don't have all this thinking
and labeling and commentary and stuff
going on. At first, at the beginning
level of mindfulness, you're still
labeling. You get better at mindfulness,
you do away with the labeling, you just
direct your attention at the thing and
observe it without having to to slap a
word onto it. And then when you get even
better, you're you're so aware like your
your your mindfulness is like observing
the the surface of a still pool.
And if a thought even starts to arise,
then you notice the ripples immediately
and it's like the noting of that just

causes the ripples to just fade back out
again and you're just sitting there in a
state of silence.
So, mindfulness is the simplification of
perception, let's say,
through like
uh what would be like intense awareness.
I mean, in in Burma like the warning
signs, you know, they don't say caution
or warning or Achtung, they say sati or
in Burmese sati
which, you know, it's like attention.
>> [clears throat]
>> So, mindfulness is like attention.
Okay, let's just move on to Cyrus
Frame's third question.

He says,

you I'm assuming it's a he.

You are not the mind. The mind is just

what is playing on the screen of

awareness. Do you think this is true?

Well, you are not the mind, yeah. Except

um I mean, if there is

I mean, there are certain ways where you

could identify the ego with the mind. I

mean, obviously the ego is itself a

projection of mind. So, the ego would be

mind and that's kind of what you are

because you don't really exist. So, the

like the the illusion of you is just

pure mind.

So,

set that aside. Let's just say there is

no mind or there isn't there is no you.

No self, anatta.

So, then it would be correct. You are

not the mind.

The mind is just what is playing on the

screen of awareness.

Well,

not really. The mind is the screen of

awareness and mental states might be

what is playing on the screen of

awareness like in Abhidhamma philosophy

or just five aggregates theory,

whatever. You've got mind or

consciousness is different from mental

states. You know, in in Abhidhamma it's

citta is consciousness, cetasika is

mental states which would include

perceptions and volitions,

feelings, that kind of stuff.

So, the mind

more correctly would be consciousness

itself.

And so, what is playing on the screen of

consciousness would be mental states.

So,

it's some

it's kind of true,

somewhat true.

And I'm just going to

see, make sure that I at least kind of

did some kind of justice to that

question.

Yeah, I guess so. I'm going to move on

to the next question. This is from Christian and I'm not sure if this is a like a legit question that was expecting an answer. This is from a person called Christian.

Whether that's their real name or not, I don't know.

But they were talking they left a comment under the previous Q&A about how ridiculous it is that there is even an idea of enlightenment.

And I would I pointed out I mean, it's it isn't meaningless.

You know, it could it can be like a an enigma or paradox but at least from a Buddhist point of view, enlightenment is

not meaningless.

So, Christian responded with, "If you search for enlightenment, aren't you bound to attachment? Also, what does it mean to be enlightened? How do you know if you haven't achieved it?" Well, that's three questions, isn't it? I wasn't expecting this.

I just cut and paste. I just thought it was one question.

Oh, how naive I was. Okay.

Christian, first question, "If you search for enlightenment, are you bound to attachment?" At first, yeah. Cuz it's it's like skillful means. I've I've mentioned this before. I've written essays on this where it's like if you

commit yourself to seeking
enlightenment, to living the holy life,
it's like you reduce your desires and
attachments pretty much down to one. You
know, it's like your desire for sex,
drugs, and rock and roll, and pizza, and
ice cream, and all that. You know, you
have kind of renounced those attachments
but still you have this one attachment
for enlightenment.
But so long as you have that still have
that one attachment, it's still an
obstacle to enlightenment. So, what
happens is you try as hard as you can
and you fail
because you still have this one obstacle

which is your desire for enlightenment.
So, that at some point through insight
or despair or whatever it is, you
eventually just let go of that last
attachment.
Boom, there you are.
So, I mean, this is common to others
religious systems also, just this moment
of surrender, of just giving up.
Um you know, it's a big deal in some
schools of Christianity also.
>> [clears throat and cough]
>> But you're not bound to attachment um
at the moment of enlightenment. You
know, it's like you have to let go of
that last attachment in order for
enlightenment to occur. But still, this

attachment for enlightenment serves as
kind of like a gimmick or skillful means
to help you like get rid of these other
attachments, you know, it's like all
your eggs are in one basket and then you
just let go of that last basket of eggs,
so to speak,
and there you are.
So, Christian's second question, "Also,
what does it mean to be enlightened?"
>> [clears throat]
>> Well,
I suppose you I can just start off with
just some of the
like standard Buddhist explanations. You
know, it is the end of suffering, end of

dukkha or it is the end of greed, hate,

and delusion or if you prefer, it is the

end of attraction, aversion, and

semi-conscious stupidity.

Or

like

>> [clears throat]

>> what I would be inclined to say it means

to be enlightened

is

block of marble, we're going back to the

block of marble again. You got this

uncarved block which contains within it

all possible statues and delusion and

samsara is believing that these virtual

conditional statues inside the block of

marble are real, at least some of them.

I mean, you're only aware of like a

finite number of them.

So,

enlightenment [clears throat]

is I mean, you practice

dharma, dharma, you know, you practice

meditation so that um

gosh,

I've explained this many times. I think

Christian might be a new viewer though.

So, let's forget the block of marble for

a minute.

You've got consciousness is water,

mental states are waves. Most people,

like unenlightened people, are

completely locked in to the level of

form of waves. You know, they have no
concept of water really.
It's just waves. I like this wave, I
don't like that wave. This wave is good,
that wave is bad, etc. etc.
So, by practicing the holy life,
practicing morality, and practicing
meditation, you calm the water.
Until you get good enough at meditation
that or just good [clears throat] enough
at calming the water by by any means
that the waves are no longer distracting
you, you can't really identify with the
waves cuz they're not there anymore or
or least it becomes so subtle that
you're able through insight to go beyond
the mere level of forms into just water.

And then, so that's that would be like a kind of insight. And when you're practicing jhana in Theravada Buddhism, that's called temporary liberation right there. It's like a It's like a temporary enlightenment when you're sitting there not thinking anything, so you can't be distracted by samsaric forms because you have temporarily just like subdued the samsaric forms. So, you're liberated from samsaric forms temporarily while you're in this jhanic state.

But the trick is, and Zen Buddhism talks about this more than than Theravada does as far as I know, you've got what is called Zen in the marketplace. Once you

have been able to see water instead of

being completely distracted by waves,

then the waves can come back, and that's

according to Zen Buddhism, that's a

thousand times better than

>> [laughter]

>> like

enlightenment like sitting cross-legged

on a cushion is when you're like in the

marketplace and you're making noise

moving around Everyone around you is

making noise moving around, you still

are focused or like

um

not necessarily focused, but I mean

you're you're like existing at the level

of water, and all these waves are just

irrelevant. You know, they're still

there.

You know, it reminds me of the old Zen

saying that I've repeated several times.

You know, it's like

>> [clears throat]

>> the the meditation hall can be

resounding with the shouts of the master

and blows from his stick can be falling

like rain, but still the master abides

in stillness and silence.

Because he's [clears throat] got Zen in

the marketplace. He's not distracted by

the forms. He's at the level of water.

He's at the level of uncarved block

instead of all these possible

like conditional virtual statues.

So, that would be what enlightenment is

is

you're existing at the level of

consciousness and not the level of

mental states.

And

>> [sighs and gasps]

>> I I explain it over and over again, and

some people will ask you know, kind of

the same question over and over again

cuz they don't get it cuz it it is

it takes some kind of like

multi-dimensional thinking to grasp it.

It's like dealing with two different

levels of reality simultaneously, and

some people just can't deal with that

even like intellectual people.

You know, like brilliant physicists and

so forth.

Is Is for some people they're just so

completely locked into an intellectual

perceptual-based

understanding of reality that they just

can't they just can't separate

themselves from that.

So,

Christian's third question, how do you

know if you haven't achieved

enlightenment? Well, I mean if you're

still wallowing in samsara, if you're

still experiencing suffering,

if you're still unhappy sometimes,

that would be a good indication of it.
You know, if you're just raging at some
old lady and kicking her dog, then
that's a good sign that you're not
enlightened.
Um
But I mean it's tricky and it's it's
paradoxical and enigmatic enlightenment
is because of that waves coming back
deal.
You know, the waves can come back and
you can still be enlightened even though
it may look to another person, "Wow,
look at all that that stormy sea going
on over there."
So, that's that's the tricky part.
And some Mahayana Buddhists especially,

some Hindus probably too, say that I mean everyone is ultimately enlightened because the water is always there. It's just you're distracted by the the waves, but the water is always there. It's just like that the essence of enlightenment is always there. I assume that's largely what Mahayana Buddhists are calling Buddha nature.

I mean, how far away are you from ultimate reality? I mean, it's right here. We're soaking in it.

So,

I'm just going to move on to the next question. This also might be just like a rhetorical question.

This is from Jeffrey. He says, "I like to meditate with cigars. Probably not correct, but it's not really me, so why not?"

Well,

I mean, you can meditate with cigars.

Ajahn Mun,

who was like the stereotypical example of an arahant in Thai Buddhism, you know, after Ajahn Chah and Ajahn Mun, maybe Ajahn Maha Bua would be like the three big now just sages of modern like 20th century Thai Buddhism.

And Ajahn Mun was a chain smoker. I assume he smoked a lot of village cigars. I don't know if they had like

western-style cigarettes in Siam 100

years ago.

And he was is believed to have been

fully enlightened

despite the fact that I mean, if you

smoke tobacco regularly, that officially

technically makes you a drug addict.

But

>> [clears throat]

>> that's just kind of a weird thing, isn't

it? You've got an enlightened drug

addict.

But I mean, if someone else is addicted

to some substance, then that's maybe a a

ray of hope. Well, Ajahn Mun was

addicted to nicotine, apparently.

Maybe because he was enlightened, he
just kind of transcended that. That was
just part of the stormy sea
or the sea, the waves,
and he just wasn't attached he wasn't
identified with that anymore.
Even though his body may still have been
addicted to nicotine.
So, I mean, if you can smoke a cigar
mindfully, I mean, it could be like just
a little ritual sort of like the
Japanese tea ceremony.
You know, there's the ritual. You're
cutting the end of the cigar and you're
mindfully holding it, feeling the
texture, and smelling the aromas, and
mindfully lighting it, and watching

you're mindfully puffing, you know,
you're mindful of the the muscles in
your mouth as you're puffing on it, and
watching the you know, the little flame
shooting up as you take the puffs and
all that.
Mindfully inhaling, mindfully exhaling,
mindfully feeling the effects of the
nicotine in your system.
I mean, if you're doing that, that's
still legit meditation.
If you're you're smoking the cigar
mindfully.
I mean, technically you could do like
mindfulness of breathing, you know,
breathing in, breathing out while

taking puffs of the the cigar, I guess.
But anything you do mindfully is
meditation. I mean, you can be having
sex mindfully, and that's still it's
it's like tantra. Still a kind of
meditation. It may not be the ideal kind
of meditation, but still I mean, you can
you inject some meditation
into just about any activity.
Taking a dump, for example.
So,
yeah, why not? It's not really you
anyway, is it? Cuz there is no self.
If you are anything, you'd be more just
the sea of consciousness rather than all
these distracting waves.
So to speak. But then again, Buddhists

aren't supposed to reify the absolute.
Even though the Abhidharma scholars did
big time.
So, I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Xenethoid.
We've been going for an hour 17 minutes.
This next question is from Xenethoid.
You've said that Buddhism in its
masculine form is the negation of
delusion, and in its feminine form, it
is the negation of suffering.
Are delusion and suffering not
ultimately the same thing?
Well, I have said that like the more
head-oriented
and thus stereotypically

more masculine approach to Dharma is a concern with
you know, freeing oneself from delusion.
Whereas the more heart-oriented and stereotypically more feminine approach to Dharma is liberating oneself from suffering.
But ultimately,
if you have reduced suffering to zero, that's the same as reducing delusion to to zero. I don't think delusion and suffering are necessarily the same thing. They're certainly not defined as synonyms in the texts, but you don't suffer without delusion.
If you don't have any delusion, you don't have any suffering either. So, in

order to eliminate suffering, you still
have to eliminate delusion. It's just
that the end result may be perceived as
different, but either way, you have to
eliminate delusion
because that's unenlightenment.
So, delusion and suffering,
I mean, they're ultimately the same
thing, and ultimately they're just like
imaginary statues in the block of
marble.
I mean, they're not defined as synonyms,
but without delusion, you don't suffer,
and so in order to stop suffering, you
have to cut the
the link.

Generally, I mean, it's like

like desire. You know, desire is the

cause of all suffering. Delusion is the

cause of all desire.

>> [sighs]

>> So, in order to like stop experiencing

desire, you have to have such intense

mindfulness that you can

I mean, that

you're not deluded anymore.

So, I mean, that's that's how I would

explain it. There Ultimately, I mean,

ultimately is just meaningless cuz

ultimately you can't explain reality in

words. You know, ultimately there are no

different things. That dividing the

world into a multiplicity is like an

artificial

artificial construct. It's a projection

by by the mind.

It is delusion, ultimately.

But, you can't have suffering without

desire, and you can't have desire

without delusion.

So, by eliminating delusion, you

eliminate all three.

And you can't eliminate

suffering without eliminating the first

two, anyway.

So, it's all about delusion, it seems to

me.

Even if that is not like the deliberate

focus of one's practice, that's the way

it works out.

So, we head-oriented people are

a little deeper in that kind of

understanding, maybe.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Dhamma

River.

And [clears throat] Dhamma River

asks a kind of technical Dhamma question

here.

He says, "I wonder if you could please

read a very short sutta in the Samyutta

before answering this question. It's the

sutta eight, exhortation three. It ends

with this sentence, and that is my

question. Could you please explain what

this sentence means?" And so,

>> [clears throat]

>> here is the the concluding sentence or concluding paragraph of this sutta, which I did read. I read Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation.

He says, "If Kassapa, one speaking rightly, could say, 'Those leading the holy life have been ruined by the ruination of those who lead the holy life. Those leading the holy life have been vanquished by the vanquishing of those who lead the holy life. It is just It is just thus that one could rightly say this.'"

Okay. So, I did read the sutta, as I already said, and it doesn't strike me

as a particularly early one. There is
some anachronism in this sutta.
And I mean, the whole purpose of the
sutta is talking about how monks used to
be like conscientious ascetic forest
dwellers dedicated to meditation, and
now like the most the most high-profile,
most respected monks are just the famous
ones that are good at talking. So, I
mean, that in itself is something that
you would expect later on in Buddhism
than during the Buddha's own lifetime,
when he's still leading the Sangha. And
also, there's an anachronism here in
this sentence or this paragraph.
It says, I mean,
>> [clears throat]

>> the Buddha asks Kassapa Let's Let's just do a little synopsis of this sutta. The Buddha asks Mahakassapa, who is his senior disciple,
to if he wants to give a sermon to the monks. And then Mahakassapa says, "The monks don't even listen anymore. They're not respectful anymore." And then the Buddha says, quote, "Just so, Kassapa, in the past the elder bhikkhus were forest dwellers and spoke in praise of forest dwelling. They were alms food eaters and spoke in praise of eating alms food. They were rag robe wearers and spoke in praise of wearing rag robes. They were triple robe users and

spoke in praise of using the triple robe. They were of few wishes and spoke in praise of fewness of wishes. They were content and spoke in praise of contentment. They were secluded and spoke in praise of solitude. They were aloof from society and spoke in praise of aloofness from society. They were energetic and spoke in praise of arousing energy." And then he talked about how nowadays, you know, they're just the ones that get the most donations are like the most respected. But, you look at this this part this part here is especially, "They were triple robe users and spoke in praise of using the triple robe." That's in the

Patimokkha rules.

It It's later on it came to be like this optional practice, but this built right into the Buddhist monastic code that all monks are supposed to be triple robe wearers. You don't keep more than three robes. It's a Nissaggiya Pacittiya offense to keep an extra robe for more than 10 days.

It would if

if you keep an extra robe, a fourth robe, which is just a rectangle of cloth, for more than 10 days, then you have to you have committed a Nissaggiya Pacittiya offense. You have to relinquish the extra robe, and then you

have to make confession for it.

So, this sutta apparently arose at a time when that Patimokkha rule had already become kind of obsolete through just people not monks not following it. And nowadays, there are very few monks that follow that rule. Like Ajahn Thanissaro in his famous book on the Buddhist monastic code, you know, he he just follows the Thai loopholes of getting around this rule, and he just says

it's if you call it something besides a robe, then it's not a robe. You just designate it as accessory cloth, parikara cola. Just call it parikara cola. It's not a robe, even though

you're wearing it as a robe. It looks

like a robe.

And which is is just nonsense. It's just

playing games, trying to avoid following

a rule.

And by the time this sutta was composed,

this had already happened.

>> [clears throat]

>> Which is kind of unlikely that during

the Buddha's own time

that monks would already have abandoned

this Patimokkha rule.

>> [snorts]

>> So,

I would say that this this uh this sutta

arose later on. I mean, probably not

much later on, because it is in the in the Tipitaka. It is in the Sutta Pitaka.

But, I would guess that it is kind of an anachronistic made-up kind of sutta.

So,

I mean, the whole the whole spiel here is that in the in the early days of the Sangha, I mean, the Buddha is actually supposed to be saying this. So, it's like this is kind of weird. But, the Buddha is saying in the early days of the Sangha, the monks were, you know, dedicated ascetic meditators, lived a life of simplicity, and so they got the most respect. And so, that new converts to the Sangha would look at these monks

that were getting the most respect and
emulate them.
But, later on in the Sangha, the monks
that are the most respected are the ones
that are getting the most donations, you
know, they're the best the best talkers,
this kind of thing. And so, new
um new monks entering the Sangha,
they look at at them as being the most
respected, and so they emulate them.
So, we get to this
statement in question.
"Those leading the holy life have been
ruined by the ruination of those who
lead the holy life. Those leading the
holy life have been vanquished by the

vanquishing of those who lead the holy life."

So, essentially what it means, although it's kind of awkwardly worded, is that

>> [clears throat]

>> when monks start getting corrupt, and then they become the leaders of the Sangha, and they're the most respected monks, then the new monks are just following in their footsteps and becoming corrupt, also. I mean, that's essentially what it means.

So, those leading the holy life now have been ruined by the ruination of those who led the holy life in the in the previously, because they're emulating them.

And that's how I interpret it, anyway.
And this I mean, as I mentioned in a
recent Q&A that I did meet the the
Burmese equivalent to the Sangha
the Sangha Raja of Thailand. He's the
the Burmese equivalent of the Sangha
Raja is the Sangha Mahanayaka Sayadaw,
the great leader of the Sangha.
And he handled money, and he would
praise the hand the donating of money to
monks
to to lay people. When he give Dhamma
talks, you know, he didn't encourage
them to donate money to monks.
And he was like the leader of the Sangha
in Burma, anyway. I mean, technically, I

mean, he's he's pretty much just kind of

a bureaucrat.

Probably most Burmese Buddhists wouldn't

even know who he was.

But, still,

and that's kind of the way it goes. It's

just corruption in religion is largely a

a matter of human nature, largely a

matter of this cultural drift.

The the system adapts to the culture and

to human nature more than human nature

is going to adapt to this very exalted

ideal.

So, you got two kinds of religion.

You've got the really wise exalted

religions that inevitably get corrupted,

because most of their followers aren't

wise people, or you've got just religions that are kind of foolish and easy to follow right off the bat, so that the followers don't need to corrupt it, cuz it's already foolish and easy to follow. And I won't name any names.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ethiopian Fake Tig.

And Ethiopian Fake Tig says, "Around Q&A 22 or something, I'm glad that people are still watching those old ones.

But, I just interrupted myself.

Ethiopian Fake Tig says, "Around Q&A 22 or something you spoke about what it

would be like to attain first jhana
and how it's like the muscles in the
next spasming [snorts]
since one is in a state of focus and
such. Can you perhaps speak on the three
other jhanas in detail?" Well, I really
don't think that I said that
you're spasming when you get first
jhana. I think what he's referring to
is I mean I mean I don't have much use
for the whole four jhana
system because I think it has been
corrupted over time.
Another sign of corruption is the
interpretation of the four jhanas. I
used Personally, I think originally the
four jhanas were just the four stages of

meditation. So, the first jhana when
you're still thinking
I mean it's like beginning elementary
meditation. If you're doing it
correctly, that will qualify as first
jhana.
But somewhere along the lines due to
monks not understanding jhana very well,
maybe because they were more interested
in formulating philosophies and actually
meditating
they have worked out that all four
jhanas, even first jhana where you're
still thinking, are superhuman mental
states, utri manusidamma.
Superhuman mental states.

So, in the Mahasatipatthana Sutta when

it says that right concentration is the

four jhanas

it's it's now worked out that right

concentration is a superhuman mental

state.

Which is

it seems kind of implausible to me.

Anyways, what I was saying

I mean I don't remember what exactly

what I said in Q&A 22

but

there is [clears throat] something

called pīti

or I think in in Hinduism it's called

shakti

where sometimes if you're getting into

you're breaking new ground in your
meditation, you're getting into a deeper
level of meditation than you're used to,
your whole body can just start twitching
cuz it's like you're in this subtler
state that requires less mental energy
maybe
so that you've got this excess mental
energy that has to like expend itself
somehow and so it just expends itself in
just like twit twitching and jerking of
your muscles.
That's happened to me a few times.
There's a story of Ram Dass
when he he he gets to visit his guru
Maharaj-ji in the evening when everyone

else is gone, which it was a rare
occasion. You know, Maharaj-ji would
just stay by himself, maybe like an
attendant or something there.
But
Ram Dass got to visit him and Maharaj-ji
was apparently pretending to be asleep
and so Ram Dass started like meditating
just cuz he wanted to meditate in
Maharaj-ji's presence
and it was like almost immediately he
got into this really deep state where he
is just like his teeth are chattering
and he's just like twitching and jerking
all over the place and then Maharaj-ji
would just kind of open his eyes and and
ask him some mundane question. You know,

how much does your friend so-and-so

make?

You know, just kind of bring him back

down cuz he just wasn't ready for it

yet.

So, that's that's essentially what I was

talking about was this pīti or or shakti

or you know, whatever you want to call

it that when you get into a a deeper

meditative state than you're used to

then your muscles can start to twitch

and that kind of thing and it's

I mean it's not indicative of first

jhana necessarily.

>> [snorts]

>> So, let's see here. Can you perhaps

speak on the three other jhanas in

detail? Well

the other all four jhanas, you know,

it's if you want to know what the jhanas

are, you look in the suttas and you will

find that almost every time the jhanas

are mentioned

or described in the suttas, it's the

exact same block of of words. You know,

it's just this stereotyped

block of words that's just inserted into

suttas when the the jhanas are to be

described and unfortunately, it's not a

good enough description that the meaning

of jhana is uncontroversial.

So

I mean the first jhana you're still

thinking, you know, it's you're still

capable of thought and you're still

feeling

physical and mental pleasure and pain.

Then in the second jhana, you stop

thinking. You're still feeling mental

and physical pleasure and pain, but

you're no longer thinking in like uh

your words are no longer your thoughts

are no longer hooking up in in sequence.

You know, a thought may just flash into

your mind, but then it just disappears

again and

I mean you're not thinking.

So

third jhana

is if I remember correctly, hope I don't embarrass myself here, you're not thinking, you got rid of that when you got into second jhana and you're no longer feeling mental pleasure and pain. You still feel physical pleasure and pain. So, it's like your your mindfulness is getting deeper so that your mind is no longer feeling like happiness and unhappiness even though your body is still capable of feeling pleasure and pain. Still not thinking. Then when you get into fourth jhana, which according to the original four stages, you know, the four the original

description of the jhanas in plural

then

that's supposedly the highest meditative

state you can get to.

I mean originally it's probably the way

it was, in which case you're no longer

thinking, your mindfulness is purified

and you're no longer experiencing mental

or physical pleasure and pain. It's just

a state of perfected equanimity.

And I mean there's some people that

consider proof of fourth jhana to be

I mean you almost stop breathing and

your heart rate slows down like that of

a hibernating squirrel and Shoko Asahara

of Japan was actually using like

air chambers to measure the the breath rate of people and showing that they were in this state where they had almost stopped breathing, they required almost no oxygen and using that as proof that his system was producing fourth jhana. But to me, it sounds more like a deep hypnotic trance and my father's second wife, not my mother was capable of going into extremely deep hypnotic trances despite the fact that she was an alcoholic and not moral at all. So, it wasn't really jhana, probably.

But she was

I mean she would go into very deep hypnotic states where her breath and her her heart rate would become almost

invisible.

I mean almost no detectable pulse or or breath rate.

So, I'm guessing that some of this I mean I've been saying for years that a lot of what is considered to be jhana is really like a deep hypnotic trance that probably isn't genuine samadhi.

But just going with the standard the standard four jhana theory, four jhana system

first jhana, you're still thinking, still feeling mental and physical pleasure and pain. Second jhana not thinking anymore, still feeling mental and physical pleasure and pain.

Third jhana, your mindfulness is getting deeper.
Not thinking, not feeling mental pleasure and pain, but still feeling physical pleasure and pain or still keep capable of feeling it. And finally, fourth jhana
is just like
vast expanse of voidness.
But you're in a higher state of consciousness, you're more awake, your mindfulness is purified.
It's just like superconsciousness.
Which again makes it seem unlikely that you would become completely oblivious to your to your surroundings like a hibernating squirrel.

Although some of those Hindu swamis,
they can appear to be completely
oblivious like maybe a hibernating
squirrel, but then after they come out
of it, they can repeat conversations
that were going on in their presence by
the scientists that were examining their
brain waves or something while they were
in that state.
So, it may seem like you're oblivious to
your surroundings like a hibernating
squirrel, but that's not necessarily the
case if in fact you were not oblivious.
>> [snorts]
>> And I'm just going to move on to
Ethiopian fake tits next question.

He says, "You once said in Jainism their fully enlightened beings know everything all the time and their enlightenment is different. Can you speak a little about other forms of enlightenment and their powers in other religions?"

Well golly. I mean I haven't really studied this in detail in various religions. I mean the ironically, the definition of enlightenment that I understand the best would be in Buddhism and Roman Catholicism. Which and before I read St. John of the Cross, I was oblivious to the idea that in

Roman Catholicism there even is like the stage of perfection.

Because of course in in Christianity it's like nobody is worthy, everyone is imperfect. You know, you only get into heaven through the grace of God.

And here's St. John of the Cross saying that you can become perfect in this very life.

Well, with regard to Jainism, I mean, I've never really studied up uh like a Jain text describing what it's like to be fully enlightened Jain, although Mahavira and other Tirthankaras who are sort of like the the Jain equivalent to Buddhas,

um they supposedly were fully omniscient
all the time as opposed to the Buddha
who is selectively omniscient. He could
know anything he wanted to know, but he
wasn't experiencing infinite knowledge
at all times.
At least not infinite objective
knowledge.
So, and then that was kind of mocked in
the in the Buddhist texts.
With regard to Hindu um like Hindu
enlightenment,
that's a tough one. I mean, I know a
little bit about Neem Karoli Baba
Maharaj up there.
You know how Ram Dass would say that the
better you got to know him, the more you

realized there really was nobody there.

That he was just like a mirror

reflecting your own karma back at you.

And he did not act like the

stereotypical saint. He didn't even act

like fellow Hindu Ramana Maharshi.

He was he was like a rascal.

He'd be hitting people and throwing

fruit at them and cracking jokes.

That kind of stuff.

But with regard to St. John of the Cross

and Roman Catholicism,

I mean, he says that uh

I mean, when you master high

contemplation, which would be

the the higher jhanas, you're no longer

thinking when you're practicing Catholic contemplation. Meditation is when you're still thinking. That would be like first jhana. And then I mean, that's it's sort of like repeating the Lord's Prayer or you know, visualizing scenes from the life of Christ, that kind of thing in in Christianity. But when you get into contemplation, just any thought that arises, you dismiss it until you mortify your own self-will so that you no longer have self-will, which is kind of interesting considering that a Buddhist arahant also supposedly no longer has self-will because will is volition, volition is karma, and an arahant is not creating any karma.

So, he's not creating any real volition. So, the Catholic arahant and the Theravada Buddhist arahant, and both of them have just stopped generating volitions.

But from St. John of the Cross's point of view, you know, his Christian explanation is that because you no longer have any self-will, you are purely more motivated by the will of God. You're just like this puppet of God. And that is being God through participation, according to him. And what he says is authoritative in Roman Catholicism. He is the mystical doctor of the Catholic Church. Whatever he says

about mysticism is official dogma in the
Roman Catholic Church.
So,
according to the Roman Catholic Church,
even though they don't advertise it, you
can become God through participation
just like like this divine puppet of God
through mortifying your own will.
In Buddhism, it's harder to explain
because there is no God there is no will
of God for an arahant to be a puppet of.
And so, in
in Abhidhamma, they have to invent some
new kind of like pseudo-volition called
kiriya citta, functional consciousness,
that will allow an arahant to appear to
have volitions even though he's not

generating any karma.

But most religious systems don't even

have a form of enlightenment

in even in theory.

I mean, they might have the few outlying

enlightened

advocates or followers of that religion

who just become enlightened in spite of

the system as much as because of it.

Um like an enlightened Sufi, I don't

know what their definition of

enlightenment would be like. Just like

Quranic Islam apparently doesn't have a

concept of enlightenment.

Um in according to the Bible, I mean,

the Bible really doesn't I mean, the

closest being to enlightenment in the in the Christian Bible, of course, would be Jesus, but he's still

I mean, he never laughs, but he cries.

He gets upset sometimes.

You know, how long am I going to have to deal with you people? This kind of stuff.

So, I mean, from the Buddhist point of view, he's not really behaving like a fully enlightened being.

You know, do you God, please take this cup from my hands. You know, he was he'd get depressed and upset sometimes.

So,

gosh,

even Mahayana Buddhism, their concepts

of enlightenment, I'm I'm sure that
they're all over the map just depending
on the school of Mahayana Buddhism.
But it is interesting to me that
two
two systems that are so different from
each other, Theravada Buddhism in India
and Roman Catholic Christianity in 16th
century Spain,
both apparently independently through
different angles, different
interpretations, had come up to
a very similar understanding of what
enlightenment is like,
which may mean that it's based on
personal experience of people in

Theravada Buddhism and people in Roman
Catholicism um just kind of through it
going through a cultural filter.
But I guess I should just move on to
another move on to next question.
>> [clears throat]
>> Move on to Ethiopian Faith Tig's third
question.
He says, I saw a video of you as a
bhikkhu talking about the tree that
smells. Do you perhaps have more videos
like that since the video weirdly enough
created a very calm and serene emotion
for me. It could be the way
you took each material carefully and
meticulously and how calm you were or
the message you were sending. But if

there are more vids, would you post

them? Yes, the the sermon on the

stinkwood tree, there is um

a a guy I met an American man came to

visit me in January of 2011 when I was

still living at One Bow Wildlife Refuge

Monastery. And he kind of followed me

going for alms round

a few times.

And

I would [clears throat]

take my bowl out of the bag and put it

back into the bag on the outskirts of

the village under this tree that I was

told I mean, it's it's called like the

stinkwood tree or the rottenwood tree

where it's a and when it was one of the only big trees in the area. I mean, the rest of them had been chopped down. But the wood stinks. You can't use it for lumber because the lumber stinks. Even if you burn it as firewood, the the the smoke stinks. You They say that you can't even use it to like bake bricks because somehow the the stink or something permeates the brick or something. So, it was just like this useless tree. And because it was useless, it got to grow into this patriarch of a tree.

And it reminds me of the Zhuangzi No, no, no.

What is it? The Zhuangzi.

It's the Chinese text, the second most famous Taoist text where there similarly there's this huge tree that nobody bothers to chop down because it's just totally worthless. And so, in the in the Zhuangzi or however the hell you pronounce that,
it's it's it's like the sage is just so unobtrusive. Nobody pays any attention to him. And so, he can live in life his life in peace and reach the full fruition of his potential.
You know, you don't want to be useful to normies because then they're going to be pestering you all the time. I mean, look at Jesus. He can heal the sick.

There's like people just pestering him
to heal their grandma of her rheumatism.
Uh anyways, getting back to the question
though.
>> [clears throat]
>> Yeah, I mean, just it's it's already
posted. All of those old videos of me
being a monk have already been uploaded
onto YouTube. So, just go to my videos
and just go to the oldest ones. It may
be that you can even like click on
oldest first.
And all of my old monk videos when I'm
still in Burma should come up. You know,
even like you go to my channel
and um you know, the the highlighted
video is me going for alms round in

uh what was it? Lay Myay Village.

So, there are

I don't remember how many videos. Not

very many. It's in single digits. But

still, there all of the old videos of me

being a monk still in in Burma are

already up on YouTube. So, just go to

the oldest ones on my channel.

You know, just go to videos and maybe

you have a filter of oldest first,

maybe, and they should be right up at

the top of the list.

And so, I'm just going to move on to

next question. This is from Cole.

And Cole says,

what do you know about the Pali Canon

teachings that pertain to the jhanic attainments and their correlated rebirth in the various deva realms? Well, the jhanic attainments

um

I mean, I kind of already went over the four jhanas to a previous question.

So, I won't rehash that.

I mean, [clears throat]

technically, according to the Pali texts, you don't get superhuman mental states like psychic powers without jhana. That I mean, you can become enlightened without Jhana and become a so-called dry vision Arahat who just becomes enlightened through like Vipassana, insight, mindfulness. But, if

you want to be able to read minds and
know your past lives and all that, you
have to get into the higher Jhanas.
Those would be Jhanic attainments, I
suppose.
But, I guess what Cole is mainly asking
about is the correlated rebirth in the
various Deva realms.
So, I mean, I didn't didn't do my
research. It's I've never really
believed this stuff very much.
You know, it's it's in the texts.
But, I mean, I never really took such an
intense interest in it
as to bother to memorize it.
But, in the 31 planes of existence,

you've got

four

four levels of Brahma realms.

Corresponding to the four Jhanas. And I

think there are like three levels in

each of

for each Jhana. So, there's three Brahma

realms corresponding to each Jhana. One

is when you just getting into it,

getting into the Jhana, haven't mastered

it. One is when you're like have

intermediate mastery, and one is when

you've fully mastered it. And

I think Maha Brahma is his

Maha Brahma and his entire retinue are

still only at the level of first Jhana,

if I remember correctly. I mean, don't

quote me on that. I could be wrong.
There's like the retinue of Brahma, and then there's like the counselors of Brahma, and then there's Maha Brahma himself. All of that would be like the three three Brahma realms corresponding to first Jhana. And a lot of this strikes me as just religious propaganda cooked up by the Buddhists.
I mean, I'm one [clears throat] of the few Buddhists or anyone who's been a monk who can actually talk like this because, of course,
if you're still a monk and you're kind of a missionary, you don't want to be pointing out, you know, sort of naughty

bits

in Buddhism. But, for some perverse

reason, I've never really hesitated all

that much.

But, you've got Brahma, Maha Brahma, who

literally is like the personification of

ultimate reality for Vedic Hindus,

who, from the Buddhist point of view, I

mean, he corresponds to just like this

mediocre level of heaven. You know, he's

like one of the He's on one of the

lowest Brahma realms with

bunches of other heaven realms higher

than him.

So, it's like the Buddhists are saying,

"Look at this.

These

These Brahmans are claiming Brahma is the highest when we Buddhists have got into such higher mental states, higher meditative states that we can get into these realms way above Maha Brahma, even though Maha Brahma is literally the personification of ultimate reality."

So, a lot of this stuff, I mean, it's like propaganda. I mean, you shouldn't take it too seriously, necessarily. [laughter] If you're just faith-oriented, you want to believe it all like a medieval Roman Catholic in Europe or a modern Burmese villager, you just want to believe all of it. It's all gospel truth.

Then,

I mean, I might not be the the best

person for you to be watching on

YouTube, for starters.

Um I mean, just having this stainless

steel faith and believing all of it, I

mean, it can serve some people. You

know, it's like all those medieval

Catholic saints, all those Burmese

sages, a lot of the the earlier time

ones,

I mean, they did it just through this

unquestioning faith,

which inspired them. You know, when you

can't have any doubt at all that it's

all true, then you're less lukewarm

about it all.

But, getting back to Cole's first

question here,

yeah, it's like

each of the four Jhanas

has three corresponding Brahma realms

with I'm pretty sure Maha Brahma being

corresponding to first Jhana down at the

bottom.

And

I mean, that's that's pretty much all

there is to say about it. I mean, I

don't remember the official names of

these Brahma realms. I'm fairly

skeptical of their objective empirical

existence.

Not that there aren't four Jhana realms

or four Jhanas. I mean, you can divide

Jhanas up into four. You know,

Abhidhamma, they divide it up into five.

The formless realms add new Jhanas.

They're sort of subsidiary to fourth

Jhana. They're considered to be sort of

like additions to fourth Jhana because

they'd already settled on four Jhanas in

the in the suttas.

>> [sighs]

>> Uh

let's see.

What what what else is there to say

about this?

See, let's just read the question again.

What do you know about the Pali Canon

teachings that pertain to the Jhanic

attainments

and their correlated rebirth in the

various Deva realms. It wouldn't be Deva

realms. It would be Brahma realms.

That's where That's how you get into

Brahma realms is through Jhana. That's

pretty much the only way to get into

Brahma realms is to have gotten some

Jhana in this life. Not even necessarily

mastered it. That would be like you

master first Jhana. That would get you

up into the level of Maha Brahma, I

think, if I remember correctly.

Not just his his retinue and his his

counselors, but

the the big guy himself.

So, yeah, and then there's like the formless Jhana realms. Like the formless Brahma realms supposedly correlate to the somewhat anachronistic four like formless Jhanas.

So, in my opinion, the whole thing is is sort of cooked up after the Buddha's time. I would be surprised if the Buddha really taught this stuff. I won't just categorically deny it, but I would be mildly surprised if the Buddha really did teach, you know, the details of the 31 planes of existence and how, you know,

you master this level of Jhana, it's going to get you into that

particular Brahma realm, and the four formless Jhanas will get you into the formless Brahma realms, even though like mention of the the formless realms goes all the way back at least historically or like legendarily to right after the Buddha became enlightened.

Like the Buddha, right after his enlightenment, he's using the Deva eye, Dibbacakkhu, you know, clairvoyance, to see who he should teach. And he first he's thinking of, you know, his first two teachers, his first two meditation teachers. And then, he would through, you know, the divine eye, he sees that

they're up in formless Brahma realms.
So, that he can't he can't access them
there and teach them because they don't
have any sense organs.
So, it's it's it's complicated. I mean,
the evolution Everything is impermanent.
Everything changes over time. I mean,
all you have to do is just look at the
early history of Christianity, and you
see that Christianity was mutating like
a virus during its first century of
existence.
And it's similar in Buddhism. Like
Theravada Buddhism, it mutated like a
virus for its first, I mean, at least
100 years.
That was The first schisms occurred

about 100 years after the time of the Buddha's passing away. And still, Theravada Buddhism was mutating. Like Abhidhamma didn't even exist yet until after the first schisms. So, it's it's kind of an academic question. Cole's first question here is somewhat academic or or dogmatic, depending on how you want to look at it. Cuz you want to believe that it's all true, then it's in the text right there. But, you want to know the actual truth of the matter, you may might be a little more skeptical. So, I'm just going to move on to Cole's second question.

Does the mind need to actively immerse
in Jhana at the time of death for that
type of rebirth to occur according to
the teachings? And
I used to think about that, also. It's
like just having the ability to enter
Jhana,
is that good enough? Or do you have to
actually die in Jhana in order for you
to wind up in a Brahma realm?
And one of the best indicators I know of
for the first option would be the
Godhika Sutta, the very strange and
interesting Godhika Sutta of the
Samyutta Nikaya, where Godhika gets
Jhana and loses it and gets it and loses
it and gets it and loses it until

finally, in a state of semi-desperation,

maybe full full-on desperation,

he he's thinking,

"If I die with Jhana, I'm guaranteed of

a Brahma realm. But,

if I die when I don't have Jhana, like I

I haven't mastered it yet, or, you know,

I'm not able to access it,

then there's no guarantees where I'm

going to wind up. I could wind up in

hell in a lower realm or something." And

so, he he self-deleted,

cutting his own throat with his razor,

um after he got Jhana the next time.

And he wound up becoming enlightened.

So, I mean, I assume he was

was not in a Jhanic state when he's
lying on his cot with with the the
straight razor in his hand. So,
presumably, just based on that bit of
evidence, according to Theravada
Buddhist tradition, you just have to be
in a state where you can access
jhana. You don't necessarily have to be
absorbed in a jhanic state at the moment
of death in order to get into these
states, but you have to have a mental
state that is open to jhana and
accessible to it
in order to get into these Brahma realms
after you die,
technically speaking.
Although at least a grain of of

skepticism is maybe prudent in this case
unless you really are relying on full-on
stainless steel faith in the whole
system, in which case again, you're
probably watching the wrong videos.
So,
let's just go on to Cole's third
question,
which is are these teachings from the
Buddha or commentarial? And that is a
false dichotomy
because there's this middle ground of
post you know, after the lifetime of the
Buddha, but before the commentaries,
where the suttas are actually
mutating like a virus, or just the

philosophy of Buddhism is mutating like
a virus. Systematizers are kind of
locking stuff down into like the
description of the four jhanas, which is
just a verbatim block of information
that is just inserted into suttas.
The 12 nidana theory of paticcasamuppada
would be another case of just the sort
of a hard-to-understand teaching of the
Buddha just gets crystallized into this
block of words that just gets inserted
into sutta after sutta.
So, I don't think that these teachings
necessarily came from the Buddha.
I mean, maybe he may have kind of
touched on it a little bit, and then it
just got elaborated

into 31 planes of existence and the the

three levels of of

Brahma [clears throat] realms for each

jhana and all this.

But it's it's probably after the time of

the Buddha, but before Buddhaghosa.

So, it's not hasn't devolved into

Buddhaghosism yet, but it's it's in the

suttas. It's in the Pali suttas.

But

still, just because something is in the

Pali suttas does not mean that the

Buddha himself necessarily taught it or

endorsed it.

So, I'm guessing, you know, it it arose

this idea arose

I mean, I'm unfamiliar with the other Hinayana schools and their opinions on the matter. It may be during the first 100 years of virus-like mutation of Buddhist philosophy that this arose so that it could still be in the core text of the suttas.

Just because something is in the core text, all that really means is that in all likelihood, it was already like like set it set as scripture or official doctrine before the schism started and like the second council.

Or maybe I guess the schism started after the second council.

So, approximately 100 years after the time of the Buddha.

Okay.

I guess I answered that, and I'm moving on to the next question, which is the last question. In fact, this question was asked um

just [clears throat]

shortly before I I started this video.

So, this is from Yoshi Boi.

And Yoshi Boi says, "According to my research, memory isn't stored in a fixed location inside the brain. Rather, it is distributed throughout the brain via a web of interconnections between brain cells that are constantly reshaped by experience. These interconnections can, of course, be disconnected.

Do you see a parallel between how
memory, as described above, is created
and how karma is created?"
Well,
when I read this, the first thing that
that came to my mind was a quote from
Bertrand Russell that I wrote in my
little notebook that I used to keep when
I was a monk. I mean, this this notebook
has been in several Burmese caves.
And when I would read something
interesting in a book that I didn't own,
I would write it down in this notebook.
And so, this is from
Human Knowledge, Its Scope and Limits by
Bertrand Russell.
And so, Bertrand Russell says, "When

[clears throat] a physiologist examines a brain, he does not see thoughts. Therefore, the brain is one thing, and the mind which thinks is another. The fallacy in this argument consists in supposing that a man can see matter. Not even the ablest physiologist can perform this feat.

His percept, when he looks at a brain, is an end is an event in his own mind and has only a causal connection with the brain that he fancies he is seeing. When, in a powerful telescope, he sees a tiny luminous dot and interprets it as a vast nebula existing a million years ago, he realizes that what he sees is

different from what he infers. The difference from the case of a brain looked at through a microscope is only one of degree. There is exactly the same need of inference by means of the laws of physics from the visual datum to its physical cause. And just as no one supposes that the nebula has any close resemblance to a luminous dot, so no one should suppose that the brain has any close resemblance to what the physiologist sees."

Amen.

Although Bertrand Russell was still kind of a materialist. I mean, he was still um

an advocate of scientism to some degree,

especially in his later years.

So,

I mean, it's it's kind of a

materialistic interpretation of how

memory works is is kind of the point

that I'm making here, and it's not

necessarily an accurate or reliable

description of how memory actually

works.

I mean, you cannot prove that there is a

physical brain that even exists.

Read George Berkeley, he'll tell you.

He'll explain it all.

>> [clears throat]

>> But

I really do not see much of a parallel

between how memory, as described above,

is created and how karma is created. I

mean, karma is just the momentum of your

mental states.

It's not some sort of holographic

pattern

kind of a thing like memory

[clears throat] is supposed to be going

with this interpretation of

neurophysiology

and psychology and so forth.

So, I would say that karma is much

simpler.

You know, it's just

I mean, it can I mean, ultimately, karma

is very complicated because there's so

much of it, and it's you you can have

complicated momentum.

But still, as I've

as I've [clears throat] said, karma is

really

it's like you've got the virtual images

contained in the block of marble that

are actually that actually can move.

So,

it's the perception would correspond to

the form of the image, and volition,

which is karma, corresponds to the

movement and at the same [clears throat]

time the kind of

like

momentum and stability the stability of

the perception to still be essentially

appear to be the same thing over time,

even though it's not.

You know, it's it's sort of the

movement and stability of the pattern at

the same time.

And so, it's it seems like it's a very

different principle from a kind of

holographic memory

in a presumed physical brain.

And who knows? I mean, the way memory

works, even in science, may be changed

over time

um through, you know, radical

reinterpretations of

basic assumptions.

>> [sighs]

>> Yeah, so I mean,

if you see karma as a kind of momentum,
you know, it's not a matter of
patterns being stored in like a static
object. I mean, it's it's got patterns,
maybe complicated patterns, sort of like
the complicated patterns allegedly
forming a memory in the brain,
but it just seems like it's it's
comparing apples to oranges, or
comparing apples to to like
I don't know, wooden barrels or
something.
You know, it's it's just very different.
I mean, I don't think the principle is
really a parallel kind of a principle.
You can find resemblances, and you can

find differences, but I don't think it's really a good analogy for how karma works.

It's habit energy,

rather than And And you could say that memory is also habit energy, but still, I mean, it's it doesn't have much to do with the like theoretical way in which it is stored in a brain. It's just the subject of experience of it.

Habit energy. So, karma and memory could both be called habit energy, and I mean, memory would be part of your karma.

You know, it's part of the stabilizing pattern that that keeps your perceptions from just becoming something completely different so that it's everything is

unrecognizable from one moment to the next.

But describing karma is very difficult, and the Buddha himself says in the text that trying to work out all the complexities of it can lead to insanity.

So, as a way of avoiding insanity in myself and in others,

I think I'm just going to call it good or good enough for now and apologize to Yoshi Booy and everybody else that may be dissatisfied with my answers, but I did the best I could,

I guess.

And so,

like and subscribe if you have not done

so already.

Or even if you don't like it. I mean,

you can still subscribe, you know, you

just hate watch.

I guess some people do it.

And look at my URL links below which

includes my new book,

Memoirs from Myanmar, which is much more

autobiographical than my other books.

And uh if you have any questions you

think I can answer,

I mean, you probably get some idea of

the kind of stuff I can answer from this

Q&A, although I I also have have some

more familiarity with like Western

philosophy and so forth.

Um

just feel free to ask and no more than three questions per person per episode, please. And for crying out loud, be happy.

Alrighty then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 192.

I am your host Punya Basham and this is

my co-host, my beverage.

So, move the paper umbrella.

And there is a chance

that this Q&A is going to be interrupted

by lots of like booting noises

because the Discord server is hot right

now with people debating mystical

states.

Among other things.

So, with that in mind

I guess I can just uh start into this,

wade into this as it were.

How did How did that become a

like a saying, as it were?

It's bad English.

Uh so,

let's just start in on this.

Uh we have like the average amount of

questions, the middle path between too

many questions and not enough questions.

So, let's just get started here.

First question is from the Saboteur,

formerly known as the Saboteurs.

And the Saboteur says, "When you pass

away and go through the tunnel,

some near-death experiences experience a

choice of either passing over the bridge

or going back into the physical. If they

choose to pass over permanently, would

that be considered as self-deletion

with all the karmic consequences or

would that be okay?"

So,

already the the forewarned booting has

been continuing continuing apace. I

don't know if you can really hear it,

but it's kind of distracting. Like it

just happened 2 seconds ago.

So,

someone has a near-death experience and

they're like in a kind of Bardo realm

and then they have a choice of

crossing the confounded bridge

or going back to their body and

continuing life. And the saboteur here

is asking if just opting not to come
back would be a kind of
self-deletion.
And I don't think so because presumably
when you're at that stage, you're
already dead.
So, it's like you can just choose to
stay dead, so to speak, in a sense, or
come back to the body again.
So,
yeah, I don't think it would be
uh self-deletion. And besides, I mean,
you're not really self-deleting anyway
because you continue to exist presumably
after crossing the bridge. You're just
going into like some other realm. You're
just continuing your existence

in some other realm.

Going with the whole theory that, you

know, this is all kind of a a legit

empirical thing that really happens.

And really, I should have probably made

an announcement on the Discord server to

stop debating vociferously

because it just makes a beeping noise

every single time somebody posts

something. And there's two people just

going at it hot and heavy right now

in a like a debate sort of way.

So,

yeah, I think I answered this question.

It's like when you pass over the bridge,

first of all, I mean, you're already

dead. So, I mean, you're not killing
yourself
by choosing not to come back. I mean,
I mean, you can come back which kind of
makes you not be dead anymore. But,
while you're in this other realm, I
mean, it's like technically speaking,
your spirit, however you want to
interpret that, has left the body. You
are clinically dead while it's
happening. So,
I mean,
it's just a it's just a done deed, so to
speak. And again, if you cross the
bridge, or you you take the ferry boat
across the river Lethe or whatever, then
you're not really ceasing to exist.

You're just continuing your karmic momentum in some other some other sphere.

So, it would be okay, I would assume. At least I would My opinion, it would be okay.

So, I'm just going to move on to the Saboteur's next question.

Under what circumstances would one end up as a yedock or hungry ghost after death? I'm not sure what language is yedock. Is that Yiddish or something?

But, what causes a person to become a hungry ghost? And I mean, I do make a distinction between a hungry ghost and

just a ghost, you know, some somebody some being in a spirit realm. A hungry ghost, I mean, that goes all the way back into prehistoric ancestor worship, where if you don't make food offerings to your ancestors, then they become hungry and impoverished and miserable. So, that's That's where the whole idea of hungry ghosts originally came from, I'm pretty sure. It's I mean, even the word for ghost in Pali is peta, which comes from the same root as like pater, which means father, you know, paternal.

So, it's like an ancestral thing that in ancient India, prehistoric India even, people would make offerings to their

ancestors. It was a big Asian thing for
a long time in some countries it's still
a thing.
Um even in Burma to some degree, you
make offerings for your deceased
relatives on on occasion.
Mainly for sharing of merit and that
sort of thing.
But in like Buddhist mythology, the
hungry ghost or preta,
I mean
And the even even in the texts, like in
the Petavatthu, they're not all hungry.
So, the whole hungriness of these ghosts
is just kind of a vestigial holdover
from like some kind of botched ancestor

worship or neglected ancestor worship.
But ghosts in general, so let's from now on let's just deal with ghosts in general.
So, you've got like the Buddhist mythological explanation of ghosts in general, and then you've got sort of like the modern paranormal kind of explanation of ghosts in general. I mean there's other ways of explaining things, but these will be the two main approaches I'm dealing with. Like like Buddhist orthodoxy, Theravada Buddhism, and just
what like the paranormal researchers and stuff come up with.
So, a ghost in general, I'm pretty sure

Oh, this I think somebody else asked a question about ghosts that I noticed and I was going to getting ready to answer that one.

But what causes one to end up as a as a ghost after death?

Um let's just go with Buddhist mythology or

Buddhist orthodoxy, Theravada Buddhism.

One of the main reasons for becoming a ghost

is that you're a virtuous person, but like you you did this one at least one bad thing that kept you out of the heaven realms. And so, you live a kind of

deva-like existence, but you've got this one like really negative trait. Like, you you stink, you're always naked, or like one of my favorite ghost stories in the Preta Wattu is I've I've told the story a number of times about this woman who she she was a virtuous woman, but she was unfaithful to her husband and then lied to him about it. And the lying, like the false oath, was worse than the actual adultery, according to the text.

At least according to the explanations given just sort of inferred from the text.

That every I mean, she lived in the celestial palace, you know, in this

wonderful like pleasure grove,

and she had this retinue of like

nymph-like servants and everything, but

every single night she'd go into a kind

of trance and come down out of her

mansion and stand by this lotus pond

that was in the the pleasure the

pleasure grove, you know, the pleasure

park, and this big ghost dog would

devour her,

and the bones would fall into the pond

where they would just regrow a new body,

and then she'd climb back out of the

pond

and go back up and and and go back to

sleep.

And they're still debating big time.

There's There's one person involved in

this debate who just absolutely has to

debate everything.

So, that's one way you could become a

hungry ghost or just a ghost, a preta or

preti

is in the feminine

is

um

just

living a virtuous life, but then like

botching it by doing something bad

enough that you don't get into a heaven

realm. And in Buddhism, there's just

this continuum. It's like a spectrum

where the highest ghost and the lowest

deva are just right up against each other. I mean, there's not necessarily even a clear line between them, even though one is a higher realm and one is considered to be a lower realm.

But then again, there's other kinds of ghosts that are mentioned in the texts like

like corrupt monks and nuns, corrupt judges, you know, people who have like betrayed their trust, you know, who have been immoral in in particularly dishonorable egregious ways

that wind up just really afflicted. I mean, they're down at the lower end of the ghost spectrum, not up close to the

the devas. You know, like there's one
mentioned in the text who has
elephantiasis of the scrotum and he has
to like
fling his scrotum over his shoulder to
carry it around. And then there's like
this
swarm of like ghost crows or ravens or
or hawks that are like pecking at this
scrotum. This kind of thing. Or another
one is
someone just flying through the air on
fire.
You know, just in this state of just
continual distress. I mean, that would
be practically being like in a hell
realm. And it's just some sort of

um

you know, immorality

that caused them to wind up that way.

Um but if you I mean, if you just go

with paranormal like modern paranormal

research,

um ghosts would be And also, this is a

lot of folklore behind this, too, that

to get into the ghost realm, often you

have to have like this strong attachment

to something in this world, like your

own body or your own possessions, which

cause you to like haunt. Your spirit

just can't bring itself to leave.

And so it will haunt the graveyard

around the grave just to stay near the

body that it still identifies with, or
it will haunt its own house because it
has this possessiveness over the house,
or there's just some kind of unfinished
business or attachment that causes the
spirit to just kind of get stuck at this
in this realm
while not being entirely in this realm.
And a lot of what appears to be
ghost phenomena are really a kind of
like energetic echo. And I
This These people are just debating and
there's this one person who's absolutely
addicted to debating and arguing
everything.
So it's kind of distracting cuz the
computer is going boop boop boop boop

over and over again.

Which kind of interferes with my chain of thought.

Schopenhauer wrote an entire essay on why it is that intelligent people don't like noise, but people that aren't as intelligent actually kind of like it.

But I digress.

So like some of what is considered to be ghost phenomena is like energetic echoes. You know, there's like some kind of strongly emotional event that occurred in an old house, for example, that just causes people to see this apparition.

You know, it might be clear, it might be

just vague and indistinct, but this apparition is just doing the same thing over and over again. You know, it just

It's like

this this lady dressed in mourning, dressed in a long black gown, just comes out of a bedroom and walks to the staircase and disappears. You know, that's all they see of her just every time. So something like that is not is not really a being necessarily. It's just a kind of energetic or psychic echo.

Also,

uh like poltergeist phenomena, nowadays, like the parapsychologists will say that that is really not a ghost at all. It's

like RSPK, recurrent spontaneous
psychokinesis, usually centered on an
emotionally troubled adolescent.
Their just their inner turmoil is
manifesting outwardly as just weird
things happening.
So,
this question, under what circumstances
would one end up as a hungry ghost after
death, it depends on how you interpret
hungry ghost.
You know, the hungry ones, as a general
rule, go back to like neglected ancestor
worship.
Or just ghosts in general.
Usually, it's not a highly advanced mind

that is taking some sorrow literally,
considers this to be a reality. Their
home, their body, is just reality, and
they just cling to it so that
it prevents them from like moving on
into, you know, the next the next realm,
the next sphere,
supposedly.
And with regard to yidaks, I don't I
don't think I've ever come across that
term before. A yidak.
But my best answer is
mainly what would cause you to be a
ghost is not a highly evolved mind that
is strongly attached to something in
this world, and
um a lot of people say, like a lot of

sources will say that a lot of ghosts
don't even realize that they're dead.
They're just kind of like sleepwalking.
You know, they're not fully conscious
even to the level of a human being, you
know, they're kind of like in this murky
kind of dream world and they just don't
realize that they're dead.
So,
I'm just going to move on to the next
question. This is from Philalethese.
And Philalethese says,
"Since usually you wade into the
questions, I must ask, is the body of
water that the questions comprise deep
or shallow?" Well, if you can wade

all the way to the other side,

you know, it's it's not going to be over

your head, I assume. I mean,

I don't know how deep the water has to

be before you're no longer wading.

Wading usually implies that it's, you

know,

no more than about chest-deep, I guess.

But,

I mean, some questions are deeper than

others. It's a metaphor. Don't take

metaphors and analogies too seriously.

And I'm going to move on to

Philalethese's next question, which is

continuing with this theme. "Speaking of

wading, if one passes through the

gateless gate and wades deep into the

ankle-deep ocean, can he still cross
over to the other shore while still
dry?"
And I'd say that once you pass through
the gateless gate, all bets are off.
And I'm just going to move on to
Philalethese's third question.
"According to certain traditions,
if you meet Buddha on the road, you
ought to kill him."
"What ought one to do if one bumps into
Buddha up in that club, so to speak?"
And I didn't even know what up in that
club meant and he gave his explanation
for it, which I don't fully remember.
So, I'm going to have to hobble along

with this handicap of not remembering

exactly what up in that club means, but

I think it means

like

on his own terms, you know, you're

you're like relatively advanced state.

But, he says according Let's just get

back to the start of this question now.

According to certain traditions, he's

talking about Zen, like medieval Chinese

Chan or Zen Buddhism.

If you meet the Buddha on the road, you

ought to kill him. Um I mean

Yeah. I mean, it seems to me that the

whole meaning of that is

that if the Buddha gets in your way, you

ought to kill him. You know, it's like

even ideas of Buddhahood, of holiness,
sacredness, Dharma, if they become an
obstacle, then you need to
work through that. You know, you need to
to remove the obstacle.
So, I mean, it seems to me that the
saying, you know, if you meet the Buddha
on the road, kill him,
it's I mean, if
attachment to the Buddha gets in your
way on the path, then that has to be
dealt with, and
I mean, the just your attachment to the
Buddha or to your concept of the Buddha
can be an obstacle, which then has to be
removed in order for you to continue to

progress.

That is how I would understand this.

But, it's like if you meet the Buddha in Samsara, it's not really the Buddha.

So, I mean, the Buddha is just is a kind of mental concept.

So, I mean, you could take it to a somewhat deeper level in that any kind of concept, including the concept of Buddha enlightenment, Dharma, all of this, you know, it's still basically un-enlightened, and therefore you have to

remove that or detach from that in order to really make progress to reach the goal in Dharma.

So,

what ought one to do if one bumps into Buddha up in that club? I mean, still I mean, if you're bumping into some being called the Buddha, that's not at the level of full enlightenment yet.

So,

I mean, when you when you meet the Buddha in Samsara, that's just a Samsaric representation.

And you're not going to meet into any individual outside of Samsara.

So,

in a way, Buddha is skillful means, you know, just the concept of Buddha is skillful means that helps you to progress until eventually you are ripe

to let go even of that concept.

So, if you're fully enlightened, you

won't bump into Buddha

um other than for maybe from the point

of view of some unenlightened observer.

Or maybe in some

like illusory way that is no longer

delusional because you are enlightened.

But still, it would be an illusion.

Ultimately, there is no real Buddha

because there is no real anybody.

There is no self.

Uh

so, I mean, if you meet the Buddha in

Samsara, you have to bear in mind that

it's not really the Buddha.

It is your unenlightened perception of

what you consider to be the Buddha.

And that would imply down on this planet

or in any other realm, any other realm

in Samsara, any of the 31 planes of

existence.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to

the next question.

This is from Fred.

And Fred says, "Was the Buddha's goal to

snuff his spirit?"

And it's hard to say exactly what the

Buddha's goal was before he was

enlightened because the man lived

approximately 25 centuries ago, and all

we really know about him are legends.

Plus maybe a little bit of

archaeological stuff.

So,

exactly what the Buddha

or rather the yet-to-be Buddha,

Bodhisattva, had in mind.

We can only conjecture. We can only

guess.

I would assume that the Buddha was

following the kind of like archaic

Sramana tradition that had its roots

going all the way back into prehistoric

times before the Indo-Aryan invasion

that Indians and Hindus will mock at.

But,

archaeology is fairly fairly solid that

there was an Indo-Aryan invasion of

Northwest India around 1500 BC.

And so, the Sramana tradition that
Buddhism is largely based on, Jainism,
uh Samkhya, like
proto-yoga,
um the the extinct Ajivaka traditions,
all of those were more based in this
prehistoric Sramana or ascetic tradition
than in later Vedism.
And some of these Sramana traditions
apparently were trying to snuff the
spirit or just sort of eliminate
anything samsaric.
You know, just escape from this world.
Although, if I think about it, it seems
like the Jains, for example, they
weren't trying to snuff their spirit.

They were trying to purify it so that it
was no longer trapped in this world.
They believed in a jiva, which is like a
soul, literally means life,
that when you eliminate all karma
weighing down the jiva, it just floats
up into a a kind of eternal heaven
realm.
And I think the Ajivikas also had some
kind of similar idea.
So, it may be that this archaic shramana
tradition wasn't really trying to snuff
the spirit, although I wouldn't at all
be surprised if there were certain
schools that were trying to do just
that.
But again, we really can't know what the

Buddha believed in,

for example, before he became

enlightened, before he started the the

wheel of dhamma rolling.

But I would be kind of skeptical of

that. It might be more that he was just

trying to liberate his spirit,

or try to and break through some sauric

illusion to get to reality, which may or

may not be interpreted as spirit.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

This is from Seovac and Seepad Zidana,

who asks three questions.

The first question is one word.

And the next two questions are essays.

But the one word question is just

thoughts, and he includes

like a YouTube short,

um with the entitle with the title of

Life isn't a drug-tested sport.

And it's this young guy, apparently like

generation

X. No, not Gen X.

He's younger than that, Gen Z. I mean,

he's he looks younger than a millennial.

Well, Gen Z Millennials are Gen Y, I

would assume.

So, I mean, he's this young guy with a

wearing a t-shirt, you know, the kind of

young person hair and everything. And

he's just talking about how there's all

these kind of health supplements and

boosters and so forth. And because we're
not athletes having to take drug tests,
if it seems to work, just go for it cuz
all that matters is results. I mean,
that's an exact quote from the video.
All that matters is results. So, if you
can make yourself seem younger, boost
your testosterone,
you know, make yourself healthier by
taking these supplements or treatments
or whatever they are,
go for it.
And I mean, there's some common sense to
that. I mean, to some degree, I mean,
the person is hyper samsaric. He seems
to be just locked into,

you know, samsaric virtual reality.

Now, I got a Roomba that's having some

kind of technical difficulties back

there making lots of noise and banging

into the wall.

Huh. So,

I mean, the the guy seems to be he's

just this cocky young guy who is just

hyper samsaric,

so to speak.

And but And so, I mean, he doesn't

really have this idea that we are

generating our own reality. It's just

like if you have faith that these things

will work, then in a way you're using

that as a kind of crutch to get the

result that you want.

Although ultimately,

it's not really necessary if you can

rise above the attachment to the

samsaric phenomena.

That is all mind-made, although this

cocky young guy in the video probably

doesn't believe that at all.

That he is probably

fairly materialistic. And so long as you

are materialistic and believing that

this stuff is real,

then you have to take medicine when

you're sick. I mean, you can't just

faith heal yourself cuz you think it's

impossible.

So,

I mean, the person and everyone, I
guess, should bear in mind that
positives and negatives balance out. Any
positive you go for is going to have
like negative consequences, too.
I mean, this is positive and negative,
pluses and minuses is always going to
balance out. That's how the whole
universe exists, but having all the
pluses and minuses balance out to zero.
But, I mean, there's nothing necessarily
wrong
with taking health supplements,
vitamins. People have been taking those
for a long time.
I mean, just eating health food,
exercising, breathing fresh air.

I mean,

taking some of these technologically

innovative chemicals,

um

you know, like like the guy says in the

video, a lot of them are just thoroughly

tested by like the FDA and they're safe.

So, why not?

My woman bought some creatine gummies

recently and I've been eating a few

creatine gummies every day just cuz

they're there and it's kind of like

eating candy anyway.

Although, I wouldn't have gone out and

bought them myself.

So,

my thoughts on this little video that
Sea of Actions C Pad Zarna presented,
he's really into presenting videos or
essays or things that can't be cut and
pasted and asking questions about it so
that I got to do the work
of watching the video or reading the
reading the article or at least typing
out like a transcript of of this
like screenshot that he took.
I mean there's nothing necessarily wrong
it's
with taking health supplements or I mean
eventually it's going to go farther into
transhumanism where you know this same
guy might be saying well if it's going
to boost your IQ 100 points just to get

the brain implant get the computer chip

inserted into your your cerebrum

might as well go for it.

But I mean it's just a decision people

are going to have to make individually

and just do what feels right.

And I'm going to move on to Silvac and

see if I can answer his second question

which is much longer than thoughts.

See here.

This one's on Western philosophy it

seems.

He says

I know you really appreciate Hume's

argument that causation can never be

proven and that we can only know a

sequence of events that are associated with one another. Essentially that we derive causality from a succession of perceptions and causality is just the habit of associating the two events the cause and the effect. However Schopenhauer says that Hume doesn't understand how perception works and causality is not inferred from association of experiences but rather just a minute I'm going to have to close this door the Roomba is just going crazy.

Right outside the door getting lost and not knowing which way to turn.

The new Roombas are worse than the old Roombas and now it's like banging into

the door.

Okay getting back to this question though.

However Schopenhauer says that Hume doesn't understand how perception works and causality is not inferred from associations of experiences but rather when the sense organs are stimulated, the intellect automatically interprets the stimulation as an effect and instantly projects a cause into space, creating an objective representation of the world. Thus, causal inference forms the basis of perception of objects and an outside world itself, and isn't just a habit of association.

Okay.

He is criticizing Hume for assuming we derive the principle of causality from experience and deducing it rather than being something that forms the basis of perception itself and an assumption the mind makes even prior to having successive experiences. The mind itself structures the sensory data to be interpreted in a cause and effect manner. This sounds extremely autistic and I may have completely butchered both their explanations, but do you think Schopenhauer is correct in his criticism of Hume's idea of causality as association of events? Okay, let's go way up to the top of this essay

question.

And

um David Hume, one of his more

ruthlessly radical philosophical ideas,

is that we really don't have any direct

experience of cause and effect. We just

see A followed by B consistently

until finally we make a connection and

it's like a post hoc fallacy, after this

therefore because of this, and we just

assume that because B always follows A

that B is caused by A. And Hume points

out that even with regard to our own

mental processes,

you don't really see the causative

force. Like, you have the intention to

raise your arm and your arm raises, but you don't really feel the causative force between the intention to raise your arm or the will to raise your arm and the arm actually raising, that it's just an inference.

Schopenhauer tended to mock other philosophers quite a lot.

I mean, especially Hegel, but still um he didn't have a lot of use for Hume, apparently.

And he does point out an exception to Hume's supposition. I remember in reading The World as Will and Representation, Schopenhauer points out an obvious example of A following B over and over again and nobody really assumes

that A causes B, and that is day and night. Night follows day and day follows night just on a daily basis, but we don't start thinking that day causes night or that night causes day.

So,

I don't remember this article that or this argument that C of Actions C about Zeno

raises

that Schopenhauer made against Hume, but I do

fairly clearly recall that Schopenhauer did point out this obvious exception to Hume.

The thing with Schopenhauer is that I

mean, Schopenhauer and Hume had two
different approaches. Hume was an
empiricist.
Hume just observed what he could was
able to observe and then
tried to interpret that with as little
supposition or conjecture as possible.
Schopenhauer on the on the other hand
was a more old-fashioned kind of
philosopher, where he would just build
the system largely just because it made
sense to him,
but he couldn't really prove a lot of
it. It was just that it just seemed like
an elegant theory and he liked it
better than other theories and so he
went with it.

So, I mean, Hume, I mean he really
wasn't trying to
like work out intellectually a process
so much as like I mean he was just
trying to be aware of what there is. And
what I have to admit, I don't consider
Hume or Schopenhauer to be infallible
oracles.
Like Schopenhauer, he just mocked the
idea that organisms arise, necessarily
arise from like spores or seeds or
something. I mean he was uh this this
arrogant advocate for spontaneous
generation, which was still believed in
like the early 1800s when he was
writing.

So, like maggots arising in raw meat,
Schopenhauer just scoffed the idea that
there would have to be like mold spores
in order for bread to get moldy or for
fly eggs in order for maggots to arise
from rotting meat.
I mean he just just mocked people who
believed this stuff. He was not
infallible. Also, just his Platonism,
his idea in in like eternal ideas.
You know, he had this idea that like the
the Platonic ideal of inanimate matter
is the element, if I remember correctly.
When you get into life, most life, the
Platonic ideal of most life forms is the
species.
But when you get into humans, he

considered the the Platonic ideal of a human to be the individual human. That we are our own Platonic ideal, at least like our spirit is.

Our will,

if you will.

So, that kind of stuff from Schopenhauer, I wasn't entirely impressed with. I'm not a Platonist.

And I do have a degree in biology, and I know that he was wrong with regard to spontaneous generation at least in most cases.

Bread goes moldy because mold spores get onto it, and then the conditions are right with moisture and so forth,

it gets moldy.

Or at least bread used to get moldy

before they added all the chemicals to

keep it completely fresh for months at a

time.

But Hume also, I mean, some of his

philosophy, like he starts off with the

impression, which is kind of his his

concept for perceptions. You just have

like this mental mental image or mental

form, like a mental impression.

And I remember there's this one part

where he's

trying to differentiate the difference

between like a sensory perception and

just sort of like this

idea that you generate in your own mind,

like during a dream or something. And he the difference is that the sense impressions are livelier. I mean, he's not going to just suppose that there's an external world out there that's causing it. So, he just says that our sensory perceptions are just how our like livelier, you know, they're more intense, more vivid than the stuff that we're just imagining. But then,
uh in another chapter of one of his essays,
he's he's talking about the difference between something you believe in and just an idle concept. You know, you believe that horses really exist, but

you can have like this

casual

daydreamy kind of image uh a horse with

the head of a cow, for example.

And how do you differentiate between

something you believe and something that

you're just casually imagining and don't

really believe in? And again, he uses

the same explanation. That you when you

believe something, it's livelier, it's

more vivid. And I just don't believe

that.

I think all perceptions are a kind of

belief. It's just that what we consider

ourselves to really believe are beliefs

that are interlocked or like concepts

that are interlocking. You know, they

form a coherent whole. So that like this perception is connected to other perceptions. Which I think belief works more along those lines. So, I mean, I don't consider Schopenhauer or Hume to be infallible.

Uh let's see here. Let's get to the actual question now. Now that I've critiqued Schopenhauer and Hume for the past 10 minutes at least.

Uh Schopenhauer, based on Ciobax and Zizek's account,

is just claiming that perception works through Let's see. Let's see if I can find it. It's It's such a long question here.

Uh let's see. Schopenhauer says that Hume doesn't understand how perception works. Yeah, Hume is just talking about impressions.

Just a sequence of impressions. Not necessarily any connective force between them really.

So, anyways, Ciobax and Zizek continues, "And causality is not inferred from association of experiences,

but rather when the sense organs are stimulated, but he doesn't really know that these sense organs exist. In fact, from his own point of view,

sense organs would also just be a manifestation of will and representation."

Because he was an idealist.

Anyways, the intellect automatically interprets the stimulation as an effect and instantly projects a cause into space, creating an objective representation of the world.

Thus, causal inference forms the basis of perception of objects and outside world itself and isn't just a habit of association. So, he's kind of taking the Kantian ball of these categories. You know, how this the structure of the mind and how it works.

And using that as a way of refuting Hume, I guess.

I It seems to me

that with regard to this, Hume is
standing on more solid ground because
he's making fewer assumptions. Although,
as I say,
he really has difficulty
like explaining the difference between a
belief and a non-belief or like a
sensory perception and just an idle
mental perception. That kind of thing.
That he does have difficulty with that.
So,
let's just continue here. Again, he is
criticizing Hume for assuming we derive
the principle of causality from
experience and deducing it rather than
being something that forms the basis of
perception itself. Well, I mean,

Schopenhauer is assuming that. I doubt that he could really prove it.
And an assumption the mind makes even prior to having successive experiences.
So, it's all just part of like a categorical Kantian kind of belief system. Just the structure of how the mind works, according to Schopenhauer.
The mind itself structures the sensory data to be interpreted in a cause and effect manner. But, that doesn't really mean that cause and effect really exists.
You know, any more than space and time exist. I mean, space and time are considered to be Kantian categories that

don't really have an outward empirical existence, either.

But, I'm not even sure if Schopenhauer is really addressing the issue.

Uh he was addressing the issue when he pointed out that day and night are not considered by people to cause each other.

So, let's see here.

The final question, the actual question with the question mark. Do you think Schopenhauer is correct in his criticism of Hume's idea of causality as association of events?

I I Schopenhauer

I mean, he's not really dealing with empirical reality so much. I mean, he's

making assumptions to it as a way of
interpreting things. It seems to me
maybe he does see some empirical
like convincing evidence
that cause and effect is just built into
human perception.
And he considers the whole world be like
will and perception.
But
I mean, I like Hume's radical
skepticism.
That I mean, really if you got two
philosophies, the more skeptical of the
two is more likely to be valid.
Even though I don't consider Hume to be
an infal- an infallible oracle. I don't

consider either of them to be an

infallible oracle.

So

Ah,

I think Hume is more correct with regard

to this in particular, even though

Schopenhauer was able to point out an

exception to the rule.

But I mean, there is a good chance that

Schopenhauer is right, even though I'm

not sure how anyone would prove that.

That is just

causality is just an aspect of

perception.

And it's just built in to just the way

we look at things.

But

yeah, it's a little a little too deep diving for me to try and ponder this in this Q&A. So I guess SeeOfActionCpad09 will have to be satisfied with what I've said about it already, cuz I'm moving on to the next question by SeeOfActionCpad09, which is also an essay question.

Possibly even longer than the previous one.

SeeOfActionCpad09 says, "I was thinking of something."

So, that's the first danger sign right there.

He continues, "I notice that you break down things as being good from a

Buddhist perspective, from a political samsaric perspective, etc. For example, having soldiers can be good from a samsaric political perspective, even though it is wrong from a Buddhist perspective. But, if you really believed that the Buddha taught about enlightenment as end of delusion, giving you an understanding of the uncarved marble and ultimate reality, then the Buddhist framework to attain enlightenment and the Buddhist teachings wouldn't just be the Buddhist point of view, but the path to truth and reality. The ultimately

the ultimately only true path and set of values, because all others lead to more

lies.

Based on that, it wouldn't just be Buddhist point of view versus samsaric political point of view. It would be what is ultimately true versus the false illusionary lies. Being a soldier would then not just be bad from a Buddhist point of view, but be ultimately evil and wrong, even if the Nazis were coming in to kill everyone, because doing so will only fuel more delusion in the actions of self-defense and of others is based on delusion. Ultimately, I don't personally see how one can hold two opposing value systems at once, as it requires a type of schizophrenic break

from reality to acknowledge that both opposite values can be held at the same time. Ultimately, one must give in and you must choose a side, and most of us choose samsaric side false values at the end of the day, while the few people that ever be became arahants are the ones that fully committed to the ultimately true values. I know the Buddha talked about the problem of views, but I think he was talking about the difference between the ascetic traditions that already agreed on almost all their values of being ascetics. He wouldn't just say someone having a different view and engaging in drug-fueled sex orgies are just as valid

as a monk who is practicing sense restraint. For example, do you agree with my criticism of samsaric point of view versus Buddhist point of view? And I would say that I may have to start making a rule that a question can be no longer than say 150 words.

So,

he's talking about how

um a person living in the world, I mean you can have Buddhist values.

But if you're living in the world, you you are part you are like a participating member of the social contract.

In samsara,

then

you have to have like values that are to

some degree in conformity with that.

Let's say, for example, you have a wife

and children,

you have to protect your wife and

children.

I mean,

sometimes in the commentaries or I I met

an Australian man who was like this

where I mean

allegedly, I mean he wouldn't even

defend his wife from an attacker because

violence is wrong. You know, it's like

if I asked him once, "If somebody

assaulted your wife, I mean would you

just stand there?" And his his his

answer was, "It would be your own karma."

I mean, what kind of a man would be like I mean if you shouldn't have a wife and kids. You should not be a participating member of society if you are just uncompromising in your insistence on absolutely saintly virtue.

Just go out into a forest and meditate.

But I mean, what Seal of Action See Pa Zina here is is implying seems to me to be false in that he's saying that Buddhist teachings would be ultimate truth with regard to right and wrong, but they're not. I mean, that's just samsara, too. It's all just samsara.

It's all illusory to some degree. It's all delusional.

I mean, the striving for enlightenment is delusional. If you weren't delusional, you wouldn't be striving for enlightenment.

So, if you want to become enlightened, you have this value system that is skillful means. It helps you to become enlightened. And like one of the very first steps in the holy life is renunciation.

But he's he's talking about how it's schizophrenic to have

Let's see, where is it?

Try and find it here in this mass, this is a wall of words.

It is it requires a type of schizophrenic break from reality to acknowledge that both opposite values can be held. No. See, that's one of the problems with people who keep asking the same kind of questions over and over and over again is that they just cannot cope with handling two levels of reality simultaneously. Kind of like the ancient Greeks who thought it was some kind of mysterious paradox
that a person can be taller than one person and shorter than another person and thus be taller and shorter at the same time. But it depends on the context.

So, I mean, it's not a schizophrenic

break to acknowledge

that if you are hard you know, just

dead hell-bent so to speak on becoming

enlightened

then it helps to follow this kind of

value system which isn't ultimately

real, ultimately true value system cuz

it's all samsaric and delusional.

I mean, it's a more subtle level of

delusion maybe.

But then

if you're living in the world you don't

want to see your your wife and children

get butchered. You don't want your house

to just be robbed or burned to the

ground, then you have to adopt a

different set of values. Like you're playing a different game.

A different set of rules.

Like with politics. I mean, politics has its own set of rules. Killing people is the right thing to do from the political point of view.

I mean, if you're going to have a functioning society, you have to punish criminals at the very least. You have to defend your borders.

And it may be delusional,

but then again, striving for enlightenment is also delusional because, as I say, if you are already enlightened, you wouldn't be striving

for enlightenment.

You wouldn't be trying to attenuate your delusion if you are already undiluted.

So,

See of Action Cincinnatus says, "I don't personally see how one can hold two opposing value systems at once."

Well, I mean, you play two different games. You play by two different sets of rules.

It's not schizophrenic

to play Monopoly and then play Cribbage.

If you try to play Monopoly in accordance with the rules of Cribbage, people are going to think you're an idiot.

So,

I mean,

you have to deal with the context in

which you

are

in this virtual reality of samsara.

If your context is a householder, you're

going to have to play by somewhat

different rules than if you are a saint

living alone in a cave or a forest

somewhere.

It's just

It's practicality.

So,

I guess I ranted enough about that.

So, at the very the very the question

here,

the the one sentence question at the end of this, "Do you agree with my criticism of samsaric point of view versus Buddhist point of view? No, I don't. They're both delusional and they have different purposes. They're like different rules to two different games and it's not schizophrenic to acknowledge this and to play each game in accordance with its own rules. I mean, you have to have priorities and if your priority is to become enlightened and you are committed to the belief that the Buddhist way is the right way or at least a right way,

then you should just opt out of society and follow those rules as strictly as

you can.

But still it's it's just a kind of a

different kind of delusion. It's a more

wholesome, more subtle kind of delusion,

but it's still delusional and it's not

the

true like

ethics or or morality.

And I'm just going to move on to this

question.

This is from Yoshieboy.

And Yoshieboy says,

"Do you really believe that Islam is

better than neo-Marxism?

In my view, they're both intolerable,

but since neo-Marxism can be overthrown

by the populace given enough time and
Islam cannot or extremely improbable,
new Marxism or neo-Marxism would seem to
be more better."
Well,
I do still consider Islam to be
preferable to neo-Marxism partly because
Islam still has a certain
morality or ethic to it. I mean,
neo-Marxism does too, but it's the
ethics in neo-Marxism has been pretty
much replaced by just unrefined feminine
sentiment. But still, you know, there's
the concept of non-harming, you know,
not even hurting the feelings of people
who believe in neo-Marxism, although
hurting the feelings of, you know, vile

heretics is still okay.

But still, Islam has more of a moral

foundation. Also,

I mean,

feminism is [__] up Western

civilization royally at present.

And

Islam at least deals with the problem of

too much feminism.

Neo-Marxism is just thoroughly feminist

at this point.

So,

it it boils down to I mean,

Muslims dislike of dogs, that's

definitely a mark against them.

Although, the neo-Marxists are saying

it's immoral to keep pets because
they're contributing to the greenhouse
effect by breathing and farting.
So, the neo-Marxists aren't much better
off with regard to their attitude
towards dogs as the Muslims.
At least I think there are stories of
Muhammad liking cats.
But, get to the problem here. I mean,
Yoshi Blue is saying the main reason why
neo-Marxism is
more better
than Islam is that it's easier to get
out of a neo-Marxist system. And
maybe, although when the system is just
emasculating and disarming and just
taking away the spine of everybody in

the society,

I mean, even nowadays, you've got people who consider themselves to be right-wing conservatives or alt-right kind of people who nevertheless have been culturally conditioned into this feminized like degenerate kind of society so that Donald Trump starts acting like a Roman emperor, and they're just I mean, they don't know how to deal with it. They'll just say, "Oh, he's just kissing the ass of Israel. He's Israel's bitch." They just can't cope with an actual man acting like actual men used to act when they were the head of state.

Even the right, the so-called conservatives can't cope with it. They just don't know how to deal with someone who actually has a spine and a set of balls anymore.

And that's largely the blame of neo-Marxism.

But let's get back to how easy it is to dig out. I mean, there have been cases in which a society has been ruled by Islam, and then they overthrew it. Like the Spanish Reconquista. Spain and Portugal were almost entirely ruled by Muslims. You know, there was Asturia or some little country up in the north of of Spain that never was fully conquered by the Muslims.

But most of Spain and I think all of

Portugal

Islamic, at least ruled by the Muslims.

You know, it's like

um

the Balkan states. You know, Greece was

part of the Ottoman Empire. You know,

most of the Balkan states, maybe all of

them, part of the the Ottoman Empire,

which was Muslim.

But they were able to overthrow that

with the help of Western Europe, I

suppose. But still,

Sicily was all ruled by the Muslims,

Malta, North Well, I guess North Africa

is still ruled by the Muslims.

But I mean, it is possible to overthrow Islam. And it's going to be actual men overthrowing it because you're not going to have a bunch of emasculated cultural eunuchs that like the ones that are produced by neo-Marxism overthrowing much anything.

It's like the Brave New World.

So, I really don't see how neo-Marxism is all that easier to overthrow, especially once it's been established

so that the populace is pretty much just emasculated, had their their vertebrae removed.

I mean, and disarmed.

So,

Islam is more
masculine. I mean, of course, the
feminists wouldn't see that as a plus.
But, it still has more of a kind of
moral foundation to it
than neo-Marxism where you're teaching
gay pornography to little kids
at school.
So, I still consider neo-Marxism to be
worse than Islam.
Although, I really don't have a whole
lot of use for any of the Abrahamic
monotheistic spiritual systems.
I do have some certain amount of respect
for certain Christians and certain
schools of Christianity.

But, um still.

And I think I'm just going to move on to

the next question.

I seem to be a little more excitable

than usual today.

Not sure what that is.

I only had one cup of coffee before

starting this.

Anyways, the next question is from Star,

also known as Mr. Pronov.

And Star says, "Thoughts on astrologers

who read hands to predict the future of

a person." So, that's palmistry, palm

readers. And there's plenty of monks in

Burma, also plenty of non-monks in

Burma,

that read palms.

And first of all, with regard to a

Buddhist point of view, the texts are

very clear that monks should not be

doing any kind of fortune-telling, any

kind of prognosticating, you know, using

signs and omens, and like the zodiac,

any of that.

That's not a monk's job. Monks shouldn't

be doing that.

So,

it's considered kind of animal

knowledge, tiracchana

in in

Theravada Buddhism.

And so there there is that.

But also, I am very skeptical of the

idea that the lines on the palm of your hand have any more to do with your destiny than the situations of stars millions of miles away or even the planet Neptune.

I mean, what effect is that going to have on your life? It's just a kind of cipher.

And it's a kind of gimmick that if skillfully used allows some sort of psychic talent to to be channeled by the the astrologer or or the the palm reader or whatever it is. I wrote I wrote a philosophical essay on this once with regard to Ouija boards and tarot cards and astrology and all this that really

tarot cards, for example, I mean,
there's no machine at the factory making
these cards that stamps any kind of
psychic abilities into these cards. It's
just cardboard and ink and some plastic
lamination.
So, any kind of fortune-telling ability
that is manifested through these tarot
cards is done by the person reading the
cards and to maybe a lesser degree the
person who's having the reading done on
them or for them.
So, the lines in your palm is just a
kind of
I don't know, a kind of scribble
that

um a talented someone with like genuine psychic talent will use as just a kind of cipher to just channel some kind of genuine
psychic ability so that if any correct prognostications are made or any correct claims are made with regard to the lines on your palm, it's done more through the psychic talent of the palm reader and not the actual wrinkles on the palm of your hand.
I really don't see how if you're going to have three kids, it's going to you're going to have different lines on your hand than if you have six kids or don't have any kids at all.
So,

those are my thoughts on astrologers who

read hands or

palmists,

I guess it'd be called.

Um

yeah, I mean the Buddha discouraged it

at least it's he discouraged it for for

monks. It's just considered to be animal

knowledge. It's not really dharmic. It's

It's just kind of, you know,

superstitious stuff.

But also, I mean there can be accurate

or genuine

like useful information derived, but

still I think it's more the the psychic

talent of the palm reader rather than

the actual wrinkles on the palm of your hand or the positions of the stars at the moment of your birth.

And so, I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Tirzaskez is.

Formerly known as Tirzaskez is.

And he says, "Why do you think politics is a topic that brings out the worst in people?"

And um I already mentioned to him that it's because I mean partly in joke, in jest,

I said, "Well, it's because politics has replaced religion in the West.

And religion has brought out the worst in people, too.

You know, there's
you know, the Holy Inquisition and and
just burning of witches and all this
horrible intolerance and blood flowing
in the streets in Byzantine
Anatolia
over whether the Holy Spirit emanates
directly from the Father or indirectly
from the Father through the Son. There
are people that killing each other over
this stuff.
So, politics is a topic that brings out
the worst in people because people
believe strongly
about politics. Just as people more in
the past than in the present, but to

some degree in the present now, believe strongly about religion. Anything that people believe strongly about, they're going to have more vehement and sometimes violent attitudes with regard to people who disagree with them.

So, that in my opinion is why.

And I'm going to move on to Chosky's second question.

He says, does perception more or less equal delusion illusion? Yes, that's an easy one. I mean, I've just a few Q&A videos ago, I was saying that

I mean, perception is delusion. Is some sorrow. I mean, there the three are equivalent.

So, it's not so much more less, it's more
that perception is delusion or illusion.
Just assuming the second-guessing the mental states of a fully enlightened being, we could say that, you know, if they are still are perceiving houses and trees and clouds and birds and all that, then it would be an illusion rather than a delusion because they no longer believe that it is ultimately real.
But, yeah, perception is delusion or at least illusion.
It's just conjuring up some symbol that people mistake for reality.
Okay.

Yeah, so I mean, like the purpose of Dharma, like of meditation, holy life, spiritual practice, is to attenuate perception until you can see through it. And then you are no longer deceived by it.

So, I'm just going to move on to Trisagion's his third question.

Okay, this is the question that I thought I was answering above cuz I remember seeing this question. I forgot that there were two questions about ghosts.

Trisagion's is asks, "With people reborn in ghost realm, are they reborn as infants and grow there like humans and animals there?" And I think I can to

some degree just combine

Buddhist tradition with, you know, what

the the evidence, modern evidence

indicates

that I don't think you have baby ghosts,

unless maybe a baby died and became one.

Um like I said in answer to the first

ghost question, a lot of ghosts

are beings that don't even know that

they're dead. You know, they're just

like a continuation

of the same person through a more subtle

sort of body.

You know, and definitely a kind of

cruder kind of sleepwalking kind of

mental state.

So, yeah, they'd be just spontaneously arisen. You know, this I think in in Theravada Buddhism, you get four kinds of life. There's born of moisture, which kind of goes with Schopenhauer's spontaneous generation theory, born of moisture, born of eggs, born of a womb, and spontaneously arisen, which is like in the deva realms and apparently also in the ghost realm, probably in the hell realms also, where you just poof into that realm fully grown.

I guess some of the lower deva realms you can have baby devas. I do recall a story in Vinya of a tree spirit, like a a low-level deva, a terrestrial deva that did have a baby.

I think there's more There's several

stories like that.

So,

animals, humans, and terrestrial devas

can have babies, but ghosts and like

Brahmas,

hell denizens, probably. I don't know

about asuras. They don't really You

don't

hear a lot about asuras in the texts.

They They're just manifest fully fully

grown, fully developed.

Poof.

So,

yeah, I'm pretty sure that

um if you're reborn in the ghost realm,

that

as a general rule, you're you're like a version of your previous existence.

Um that seems to be the indication. I've never heard of a a baby ghost before. Other than like child ghosts. You know, like you watch the ghost shows, Ghost Hunters and all that. Occasionally, or like Kindred Spirits, or what's The Dead Files. There's all these ghost shows you can watch. I've seen most of them cuz my woman's really into that. She likes falling asleep to ghost shows. So, she falls asleep 10 or 15 minutes into the show, and I wind up watching the whole rest of it.

Women, I mean, once they get horizontal,

they cannot watch anything longer than 30 minutes cuz they're going to be asleep by the time it's it reaches the end.

But,

I mean, it watching these shows there there are cases of like a child who died of like scarlet fever or diphtheria or was murdered or something. And so, there's apparitions of a child.

But, that's just the age they were at when they died or maybe shortly before they died. You know, it's kind of the age that they most identified with, I suppose.

So, I think I answered that question.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next one. This is from Kazan, and I

think they're debating again on the

Discord server because it's

it's booping mightily.

Kazan says,

"Are you familiar with Joseph of

Cupertino?

His crazy levitations were legendary and

well-documented, yet I wasn't even aware

of the guy despite being very a

Catholic."

I have read, uh,

people just debating like crazy. I

really should have made an announcement.

Please,

don't engage in like rapid-fire vehement

debates because I'm going to be doing a Q&A video.

Let's see. So, Kazan asked me if I'm familiar with Joseph of Cupertino, and I'm not sure if this is the same person. I'm guessing maybe it is, but there was some Catholic saint kind of early modern times, like Reformation, Renaissance times, I'm pretty sure, who was famous, infamous for levitating a lot. So, that there was some sort of high-ranking government minister who hid under a staircase

in order to watch him levitate. And I mean, he saw him levitating. He was hiding under a staircase, you know, kind

of spying on him cuz he wanted to see
him levitate. Sure enough, the saint
levitates, or I don't know if he was uh,
canonized or not.
And then, of course, he's just I'm sold.
He's He's the real deal. He's the real
levitator.
But, I whether that was the same person
or not, I don't know. I do recall
reading that on a number of occasions,
Saint Teresa of Avila would go into such
ecstasies on taking the
the sacraments,
you know, the the little wafer, that she
would just levitate up into the air in
the midst of an entire church
congregation.

So,

is I I do think it's possible even

though science cannot explain it.

And it's like every 5 seconds somebody

is posting something on the Discord

server, mainly arguing with each other.

Generally with one person involved cuz

he wants to argue everything with

everybody at any time.

So, the next question is from PSA.

I mean, he'll ask me a question and then

I'll answer and then he'll just argue

against the answer.

Next question is from PSA.

Did you ever fulfill your dream of

hitting people with a stick while

dressed in black and riddling them with
koans? No, I went a different direction
in life. I became a Theravada Buddhist
monk
who dressed in a kind of
yellowish-reddish brown and and it was
against the rules for me to hit anybody
with a stick.
I did talk and riddle sometimes, but not
very often.
So, that's what you get when you become
a Theravada Buddhist. You just
I mean, the options of hitting people
with sticks are greatly diminished.
PSA's second question.
I just watched a few minutes of your
first Q&A video when you were still a

monk and it's

It's the same guy. The same guy and he's

arguing. I can read like what he wrote

up in the corner of the computer.

Arguing.

I just Okay, PSA says,

"I just watched a few minutes of your

first Q&A video when you were still a

monk and it's incredible how much you've

changed." Yeah, I'm I'm hairier now for

starters.

"Right now you appear way more relaxed,

loose, and maybe even happier. Every 5

seconds

the Discord server's going boop.

Boop.

Boop.

I'm going to have to start over.

I just watched a few minutes of your first Q&A video when you were still a monk and it's incredible how much you've changed. Right now you appear way more relaxed, loose, and maybe even happier. A little a little bit frazzled and distracted.

Is this a correct assessment or was your former rigidity due to your serious commitment to observing the precepts while you were a monk and it had nothing to do with your inner level of contentment?

Okay, yeah. My early Q&A's I was still a monk.

And

yeah, I mean I was more formal, less

emotional, you know, just kind of

I almost said flatlining but that mean

doesn't mean monotone. Kind of talking

more in a monotone.

And partly it was because I was just

starting these Q&A's. I was just

starting doing videos really. Maybe I

was kind of doing doing some back and

forth dialogue videos with Brian Rue

before I started doing Q&A videos. Yeah,

I'm pretty sure I was.

But still just doing a solo video where

I just sit in front of a camera and just

talk to an invisible

multitude

if that's not self-flattering

referring to you guys as a multitude.

Hundreds of you anyway.

The I mean it was a little bit

I mean I wasn't like used to it yet. So

there was a little bit of that. Just

kind of the

formality of just giving a speech to you

know, when I wasn't used to it yet. So

there was some of that. Also just the

fact that I was a monk. I mean I had to

have more of a monastic demeanor. So

there was some of that.

And also I was living at a little

Burmese temple in California where I was

a fish out of water. I mean, I couldn't

really live the holy life the way a monk
is supposed to. You know, I was just
like sitting in this trailer on the just
kind of in the backyard of what was
essentially a Burmese cultural center
more than a kind of monastery.
And so, I mean, it
it was sort of like my
my slide out of the Sangha had already
begun at that time and there was sort of
this
kind of fish out of water kind of
feeling that I had pretty much the whole
time that I was living in California at
this Burmese cultural center
/monastery.

Now, I just didn't really fit in. So, yeah, it was a it was a combination of factors. First, just sort of not really being comfortable giving solo videos yet. I wasn't really used to it yet. It was a new thing at the time. Second, just having to have a monkly demeanor, you know, not being so flamboyant, waving my arms around like this. I You know, a monk isn't supposed to wave his arms around like this. I can do this if I want to now.

And also, it was just kind of being in a a weird situation where I didn't really fit in and it was just increasingly obvious it wasn't going to work. So, there was kind of that kind of pressure,

too, that made my early videos seem less
laid-back and relaxed, less like
free-flowing and natural than now,
if you will.
But, I mean,
to my greatest contentment was when I
was a monk, just like living alone in a
cave and my meditation was going well.
Then, yeah, it was it was I would be
very noticeably different than from now
also with now not being necessarily
looking better than then.
So, I don't want to like
you know, denounce
the effects of being a monk or anything
like that.

So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's

next question.

If you had to live in only one country

for the rest of your life including the

US and Myanmar,

which country would you pick and why?

So, he's asking if I had to live in one

country for the rest of my life

excluding the US and Myanmar.

That's a tough one and and

I remember seeing this question asked

and

I really didn't come up with an easy

answer. I mean,

might have been Italy before it was

invaded by North Africans.

Um Denmark maybe before

I mean, it's not as grotesquely

feminized as some other EU countries,

but it gets damn cold in the wintertime.

Um

Bali is nice

in Indonesia.

Although Indonesia is just it's like

living on top of Yellowstone. I mean,

you don't know when the next big

explosion's going to happen.

Um it's possible that it would be some

little island country some some

Tuvalu or something. I don't know.

There's some little island nation out in

the Pacific just some little tropical

paradise.

I could live out there. You know, you're not supposed to like sit underneath coconut trees though cuz the coconuts actually can fall.

So,

yeah, I mean, I really it's a hard question to answer. I mean, sure as hell wouldn't want to live in Canada. I mean, most modern Western countries are in a much worse state socially than America. I mean, if if you're fine was was like living in a kind of castrated feminized dystopia that's very comfortable in certain respects, although less so because of the the like aggressive migrants who hate your culture and hate you

that are just invited in with open arms

because diversity is somebody's

strength, maybe not mine.

So

gosh.

Yeah, I mean, possibly some obscure

like island country.

Although not Iceland.

Some warmer obscure island country.

Or maybe I mean, if you just don't want

to live in a place where there's lots of

problems like Albania. I notice like you

never hear any news about Albania.

Nothing ever happens in Albania. Albania

could have sunk into the ocean, sunk

into the Mediterranean Sea

like

months ago and and nobody would even

notice.

So I mean

if nothing ever happens there, I mean,

that would mean that nothing bad happens

there.

So maybe some place like Albania.

Although I guess technically Albania is

supposed to be a an Islamic country, but

I've been I've read somewhere that

they're the most lukewarm Muslims in the

world.

So I guess that wouldn't be too much of

a problem.

Hmm.

Argentina maybe?

It's hard to say. I mean, I'd have to

really like

investigate. Have to do some studies.

Like what country? I mean, maybe I could

just ask Grok. Just feed in my

preferences and ask Grok what country I

should live in and

it will spit out an answer.

But I haven't done that. So, I'm

guessing maybe

maybe like

Albania, Argentina, or maybe some

tropical island country, of which there

are many.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

This is from Romeo.

I was just checking the time. Not

because I'm getting bored or anything. I

just It's good It's a good idea to to

like know how far into this like if I'm

being too long-winded so that it's

taking

like a very long time just to answer one

question. It's good to know because I

don't want to have a 4-hour long Q&A

video.

Uh and my first beverage is Dead

Soldier.

And I didn't make coffee before this, so

I'm

going with two energy drinks, and I've

done it before, and I know from a fact

for a fact that it is

generally non-lethal.

Uh

I'm going to raise a monk sometimes.

I mean, the Red Bull in in Burma and

Thailand is has a different formula than

here, and I think early on before Red

Bull became famous internationally, it

would have been illegal in this country.

I mean, there was

like

I mean, they say there are steroids in

it, but even like vitamin D is a

steroid, so that doesn't mean very much.

I think they put nicotine in it just to

get people addicted. There was something

along the lines of amphetamines in

there, too, because if you drank more

than about two of them, you weren't

going to sleep that night.

Uh but I I digress.

Romeo says,

"As both a Buddhist and someone who

recently had a near-death experience,

glad and relieved that you survived it

unscathed, by the way. And I still do

have like a slight bruise from the the

the strap.

I was in a

The car was totaled we just less than a

week ago we got info from the insurance

agency saying the car was a total loss.

The car was just wiped out.

I got in a wreck hit the hit this truck I'm going down the highway 45 miles an hour and at night driving home from work in this pickup truck just cuts right across the highway. I tried to swerve out of the way but of course he's going that way too.

We collide at like 40 miles an hour and the only slight injuries I received were like abrasions and bruises from the the safety stuff the the airbags and the the the seatbelt and that sort of thing. Although it was I mean it was definitely like a near-death experience because

I mean that last second when a collision

at relatively high speed is inevitable and it's just like this heightened awareness. You could say things slow down but it's just like timeless in a sense. You don't know if you're going to still be alive 5 seconds from now, you know.

It's a weird experience.

But I'm going to have to like start Romeo's question all over again now.

And they're still arguing away on on Discord. I wish there was I knew of some way of silencing the the boop alert thing. Although it's on my woman's computer not mine.

I've already got my computer muted otherwise it's the feedback from the

microphone would just be screeching

right now.

So Romeo says

as both a Buddhist and someone who

recently had a near-death experience, I

am wondering if you could give your

thoughts

on a recent interaction I overheard

at the Buddhist temple I go to for

meditation.

One of the participants explaining why

he hadn't been in the temple in a while.

Excuse me.

Mentioned that he was in a serious car

accident and almost died. He said

something to the effect, "You know the

Buddhists are right. You don't see a white light or anything like that. You just look into a void. That's all there is, a void." Unquote.

And Mr. Arguile pants is still going for it.

Okay. Anyways, Romeo continues.

"Overhearing this was a bit unsettling for me and it got me wondering whether that this whether what this person recounted is accurate from a Buddhist perspective regarding what happens when one reaches the other side. There are countless survivors of near-death experiences that describe more than just witnessing a void.

Was what this person experienced due to

his lack of belief in Jesus or God? In other words, would he have been would he have seen a glowing white light had he been a believer in the Christian sense?

Even though I was raised Catholic, Christianity never really resonated with me, but hearing this made me think of Pascal's Wager and that I'd be better off trying my best to have faith in Jesus or God just in case. Buddhism is more rational and following its tenets leads to less suffering in this life, but Christianity is much more comforting and hopeful about the next one.

Thoughts?

Well, first of all, I'll address this
very last statement here. Christianity
is much more comforting and hopeful
about the next one. What about many are
called but few are chosen? You go with
the actual Bible, not just what
Christians believe nowadays where oh,
he's in heaven now.
According to Jesus himself in the Bible,
most people, including most Christians,
are going to burn in hell forever.
Which was kind of a
poke in the butt for a lot of those
medieval saints. I mean, they were
convinced that
you know, this is our only chance. You
better be a saint or I'm going to go to

hell.

So, let's see. You had the

a Buddhist who has a near-death

experience and all they see is void.

Um

yeah.

I don't think that that was

um uh necessarily a Buddhist experience.

I mean, it may just been I mean, when

you have a near-death experience

a lot of it is you see what you expect

to see. You see what you think you ought

to see.

And so, there have been weird like

near-death experiences of after you rise

above your body, you go into the bright

light, you know, you go into like the tunnel with the bright light at the end and go come out into like this heaven realm. And there was one case I read about where she gets there and she meets her grandma who's like her spirit guide. And And she leads her through this heavenly like a housing development with prefab houses and like little landscape gardens and stuff.

That was That was what her imagination caused her to to see. Like the Tibetan Book of the of the Dead, which is Tibetan Buddhist. I mean, it's Tibetan Buddhist but still Buddhist. You know, it's it's more like the traditional near-death experience, the bright light

and you're seeing all these different beings. You should remind yourself that they're not real. But still, you're going to see all these beings like Buddhas and demons and copulating couples and all this.

So, I think that this person who just saw a void

just kind of thought that was deep down just thought that's what they ought to see and so that's what they saw. But from the Buddhist point of view, let's see. There's a certain

Let's see.

See.

Okay, overhearing this was a bit

unsettling for me and it got me wondering whether what this person recounted is accurate from a Buddhist perspective regarding what happens when one reaches the other side. Well, in Theravada Buddhism,

I mean, there hardly even is another side. There is no Bardo realm really in Buddhism or Theravada Buddhism. Like in Tibetan Book of the Dead, yeah. But, in Theravada Buddhism, if you die, the very next moment you are taking rebirth as another being.

So, this whole near-death experience stuff really doesn't fit into Theravada Buddhism very well, which to some degree would have me a little more skeptical of

the Theravada explanation of things cuz

since there's such

uh a a wealth of information of people

having near-death experiences where

they're going through all these similar

things, the bright light, and the the

spirit guide, and and all this kind of

stuff.

So,

I would say that in this case the person

maybe was not a particularly imaginative

person and didn't really have any

subconscious expectations.

And they just

went into a kind of blank.

And then just assumed that they were

seeing what a Buddhist is supposed to

see.

But, I'm pretty sure all Buddhists

wouldn't see that.

Not even all Theravada Buddhists.

See, but I really don't think

Christianity, at least not biblical,

scriptural, official Christianity is

much more comforting and hopeful about

the next one. Partly because

most people are going to go to hell,

including most Christians, and it's

going to last forever.

So,

yeah, Christianity, I mean, I couldn't

really believe it. I mean, it just did

not make sense

that this

Jewish carpenter's son

who lived in a some podunk province of

the Roman Empire is the creator of the

universe.

Who died for our sins, especially

original sin, which supposedly was

caused by a man made from earth and a

woman made from a bone being tricked by

a snake into eating a certain kind of

fruit.

And they're still just arguing away on

Discord.

Especially the guy who's absolutely

freaking addicted to arguing.

So, I mean, I even warned him last

night. You just reconcile yourself to

being

just alone and celebrate for the rest of

your life. I mean, just going on a first

date where you're just arguing against

anything that the woman says

is it's just not going to work. It does

not work with human beings as a general

rule.

Anyways,

what is the actual question here?

There's got to be a question mark. When

in doubt, search for the question mark.

Let's see.

Here's one. Was that person experiencing

Was what this person experienced due to

his lack of belief in Jesus or God? No,

because even like a Tibetan Buddhist has
that whole bardo experience. Partly
because that's what they think they
ought to experience.
Like a like a hardcore materialist might
just experience this
blankness or blackness or something.
It's just you experience what you think
you ought to experience because it is
all mind generated.
So, it's here. In other words, would he
have seen a glowing white light had he
been a believer in the Christian sense?
Not necessarily.
Depends on the individual, I think.
And depends on the reality that that

individual is generating for themselves.

Depends on their karma, for example.

Man, I really am sorry that this Q&A is

I'm being so distracted by people just

arguing non-stop or debating. Let's use

the polite word, debating philosophical

concepts non-stop on on the Discord

server.

Uh

anyways,

next question is from Master Po,

formerly known as White Ash Piper.

He says, "Can you, we, us love someone

without knowing them?"

Yeah, I

to some degree. I mean, there are like

saintly people who love the entire human

race without having met most of the

entire human race.

You can love dogs without having known

all dogs.

I mean, you don't even know had didn't

even know most of them.

So, yeah, I mean, love, in my opinion,

in my interpretation of the word, is

acceptance.

So, you can just accept total stranger.

Let's say you're just walking through a

a store, and you're in one of those

situations where you you come across

someone coming the other way, and then

you both step to one side, which is the

same side, and then both just kind of

step the other way, so that you just
keep being in each other's way, and then
you just kind of smile at each other cuz
you don't understand what's going on.
There's there's sort of like this
connection, even though you don't know
each other at all. You're never going to
meet each other again, probably. But
still, there's like this kind of
brotherhood or acceptance going on
between you, which, I mean, to the
extent that there is acceptance, there
is love, in my opinion.
So,
yeah, I think you can love someone
without knowing them.
I mean, it depends on what kind of love

it is. I mean, if you're like madly in love with someone without knowing them, then that's I mean, maybe like a movie star or something. You got some 13-year-old girl who's madly has this crush on some famous pop singer or clavicular or something. And they don't know them at all other than just what they've seen about them on YouTube or whatever.

I mean, you can call that love. I mean, most people would just call it like infatuation. But to the extent that there really is some kind of acceptance, open-hearted acceptance, you're putting a making a at least a window in Pink

Floyd's wall, an opening in Pink Floyd's wall, that would qualify as love to some degree in my book.

And so it's like a fully enlightened being, they don't have Pink Floyd's wall anymore. They just knocked down the whole wall. And so in a sense, they love the entire universe

without necessarily knowing all the inhabitants of the universe individually.

But I'm sure there are like subtleties and complications depending on, you know, how you define love and that sort of thing.

But I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Damma River.

And Damma River says,

"I was reading the book 60 Songs of Milarepa and this quote struck me. Quote, Because I do not wear the lofty garb of priesthood, I am happy. Unquote. That line is deep, dangerous, and powerful. He is stating that freedom from being an ordained monk gives him happiness. It's so counterintuitive but leads to reflection. He proceeds to talk about other reasons why he's happy, which are mostly related to renunciation, similar to the wander alone like a rhinoceros sutra or the horn of the rhinoceros in my opinion. What is the right way to interpret this

quote in your opinion?"

Well,

Milarepa was definitely a renunciant. He was not a lay person. I mean, you read his autobiography

and he was just a hardcore ascetic renunciant living in a cave in Tibet. He was living mostly on nettles for a long time to the extent that he just turned green. His clothes just rotted off of him. So, he was like this emaciated green naked man living in a cave and of course the villagers, you know, the locals all thought he was some kind of monster.

But he was really into it.

You know, it wasn't like he was just

going to discos or something. He was
like really a renunciant.
And so,
for him, I mean, to to be a monk, to be
a member of the Sangha was superfluous.
You know, it's like he was already
practicing like at his full potential
or, you know, as close to his full
potential he as he was going to get. He
didn't need all these extra rules, all
these ceremonies and rituals, just kind
of
like they would be a kind of a burden to
him.
But, I mean, it's definitely helpful for
most people to have some kind of

structure. You know, if you don't have
the talent to become like an enlightened
sage or a near to enlightened sage just
on your own,
just following your own inclinations,
it's definitely helpful to have like
rules of monastic discipline and just
kind of a structured system of practice
developed for you to follow.
But you read the Atthakavagga of the
Sutta Nipata and it's kind of similar. I
mean, the Atthakavagga argue arguably
like
it states the danger of following rules,
of having these rules that are in a kind
of encumbrance.
So, like in the time of the Ashikaga,

the the the Vinaya rules probably had not been formulated yet. This was, you know, very early stuff. And so, monks were pretty much like Milarepa. I mean, there wasn't a whole lot to it. You get ordained, you might, you know, receive instruction from a teacher for a time, especially the Buddha himself, and then you'd go off and and just go alone like the horn of the rhinoceros.

But, I mean, if we if we can believe like the canonical history of the First Council,

after the Buddha

died, might as well just say die,

after the Buddha passed away,

um you know, the enlightened monks
accepted it with equanimity. That's just
the way the world.
A lot of the unenlightened monks were
grieving cuz their teacher had died.
But, there was this one old monk who was
ordained when he was old, and those are
kind of notorious in the Sangha.
He was He was just saying,
I mean, why is everyone so sad? We can
do whatever we want to now. We don't
have Master Gotama saying, "Do this.
Don't do that." all the time.
And Mahakassapa heard this old monk
saying that, and he was
as alarmed as an enlightened being could
be, I suppose, and he realized that

something has to be done. There has to be some kind of formal structure added, and that's why the First Council is called the Vinaya Sangiti. It's the convocation on monastic discipline. And in my opinion, even though the text in the tradition doesn't state this, the purpose, the main purpose of the First Council, was just to get some basic rules of monastic discipline established like ordination protocols and that kind of thing.

Maybe the Patimokkha.

Just because you have to have some kind of structure if you don't have a sufficiently wise person

holding everything together. And in Milarepa's case, he just had talent. He could just go off and do it alone after receiving some basic instruction.

You know, and towards the beginning of his career, he just went off alone and really didn't need any of the formal structure.

So, yeah, it doesn't really strike me as counterintuitive

that to some degree

the like the the formal structure of orthodox Theravada is the lesser of two evils. I mean, it can still be an attachment. It can still be an encumbrance, especially if you cling to it. But still, it's it's like the lesser

of two evils. It's way better than just wallowing in sensuality. And a lot of people need a certain amount of structure imposed upon them. Like me, for example, I knew myself well enough that I wouldn't practice as correctly just as a free agent, just going solo on my own without like really adopting some kind of tradition
to lend stability and support to my practice.
But some people don't necessarily need that. And the whole idea that if you're not an ordained Theravada Buddhist monastic, you have no hope of enlightenment,

I consider that to be Theravada Buddhist

propaganda.

I do think it is possible to become

enlightened without being a member of

the Theravada Buddhist Sangha.

So,

I guess uh

I guess I interpreted that quote.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

This is from Scooter Mane.

And Scooter Mane says, "Are

Buddhism-related tattoos paradoxical?"

And

not necessarily.

Um

I mean, you can say I mean, if you got a

tattoo of the Buddha, then that's
paradoxical because there is no Buddha
because there is no self, there is no
individual being, that kind of thing. I
mean, that's kind of a
relatively deep philosophical paradox.
But, I mean
lots and lots of tattooed Buddhists in
places like Burma. The founder of the
tradition in which I was ordained, Thom
Phra Maha Boowa Nanasampanno, he
followed the tradition
uh that was a Buddhist tradition up
until around World War II that he was
fully tattooed from just below the knee
up to the waist.

That you wouldn't see it. Um I knew a a disciple of Thom Phra Maha Boowa Nanasampanno but you know, while Thom Phra Maha Boowa Nanasampanno was still alive, and he was unaware that Thom Phra Maha Boowa Nanasampanno was that fully tattooed until he had to lift his lower robes to wade across the creek, and then it's just like solid tattoos above the knees.

Which was just standard in Burma up until around World War II.

But I guess they wouldn't all be Buddhism-related.

Although in Burma traditional village Burma, you know, everything has got at least some

indirect relation to Buddhism.

But a lot of

a lot of Buddhists will have like

um protection tattoos. Like there was

this village lady who was one of my main

supporters.

She When she was a little girl, she went

to a fair, and a tattoo artist, I guess

you'd call him an artist, just tattooed

like three dots.

Three green dots in the back of her

wrist, and that was just symbolic of,

you know, the the triple gem, the triple

treasure, and that was just protective,

you know, it's kind of like a reminder.

Buddha, Dharma, Sangha on the back of

her wrist.

And

I mean

it's not necessarily paradoxical unless

you just want to believe that it's all

paradoxical, everything. For anything to

exist is paradoxical. For this entire

multiplicity of samsara to exist is a

kind of great paradox.

Why does anything bother to exist? At

least that's what uh

uh Stephen Hawking used to say. I mean,

that was like his main question.

Why does the universe bother to exist in

the first place?

I mean, my answer is the uncarved block

of marble, but

I don't want to start beating that horse

to death again.

Oh, somebody's taking off in Jeep.

Hmm, hope it's my woman.

Cuz otherwise, our car is now being

stolen.

So, getting back to Scooter Man's

question though,

are Buddhism-related tattoos

paradoxical?

Yeah, I mean,

not necessarily.

I mean, just any if any if any

Excuse me. If anything is paradoxical,

that would include I mean, if everything

is paradoxical, that would include

Buddhist tattoos, but

I don't think there's any kind of

contradiction in a Buddhist

Buddhism-related tattoo necessarily,

other than at some deep philosophical

level.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Rafael.

And Rafael says, "Do you believe that

hate stems from envy most of the time,

if not always?"

Um well, from the Buddhist point of

view, I mean, dosa

or aversion is generally translated as

hate or hatred in English.

And I mean, it's so generalized, it's so

broad in spectrum, in scope,

that no, it would not. I mean, if you hate a mosquito or a fly, you're not envious of that mosquito or fly. You hate the weather. I mean, when I lived in Burma, I lived in this blazing hot furnace-like wasteland of central Burma much of the time, and I personified the weather just to curse it more easily. Mr. Weather, I cursed Mr. Weather up one side and down the other. And so, I mean, it wasn't that I was envious of the weather. I just hated it cuz it was it wouldn't rain in the rainy season. It was just blazing hot all the time except for in the middle of wintertime.

You think it was going to rain, you know, you'd even smell the rain in the air, and then it would just nothing.

So,

just hate in general, like dosa or aversion in general, does not stem from envy most of the time.

But with regard to like fellow humans, maybe Raphael was referring to hatred of fellow humans specifically. Not even hatred of certain dogs, but just humans.

Hatred of humans.

Even then, I mean, with some people, some people are just envious by nature, and so probably most of their hatred of others would include envy.

I think women are more stereotypically

notorious for this kind of stuff, but it

happens with men, too.

But still,

I don't think envy, you know, it's like

somebody molested your daughter. God

forbid. I mean, it's it's you're not

going to hate that person out of envy.

So,

yeah, for some people, most hatred of

other humans may be

based on envy most of the time,

but

I'd be skeptical of even

half the time for most people.

Just directed at other humans. Just

letting us leaving alone flies and

mosquitoes and and bad weather and you know, criminal atrocities and that kind of thing.

Like a lot of right-wingers hate a certain ethnicity.

And I mean, would you call that envy? I mean, maybe resentment.

You know, resentment and envy are you know, kind of similarly you know, they're they're not too far apart, I suppose. I guess they can overlap.

But I think in some people who are just envious by nature, sure, that hate for other humans would stem from stem from envy most of the time. But with regard to humans in

general,

especially males,

I would be skeptical of that.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Cole.

And Cole says, "Now that you aren't a

monk anymore, I'm wondering what your

relationship to basic cravings is like.

For example, you no longer have to eat

what is offered and you get to choose.

Do you have cravings for simple things

like different foods that you will

indulge in or do you practice

restraint?" Well, even monks have

cravings and can indulge their cravings

to some degree. You get like a big

bowl of food. You go for alms in the village. You get this big bowl of food. You're going to like the scrambled eggs and the peanuts and maybe not like the the nondescript bamboo shoot glop or the bitter gourd stuff

so much.

And so, you might preferentially target the the scrambled eggs and the peanuts with rice and kind of not and kind of go easy on the nondescript icky glop. Like the stewed eggplant glop.

That kind of stuff.

Chitterlings or whatever.

So I mean there is some of that even as a monk.

Even monks are allowed to or able to

indulge their preferences to some degree.

Also of course a monk is even allowed to ask for certain food if he is sick or if the person he's asking has given him prior permission to ask. And there were a few times in Burma just in a moment of weakness explaining peanut butter for example. I remember I explained peanut butter to this Burmese school teacher and she was skeptical. She just thought you get peanut flour, you grind up peanuts. She came back later with this look of amazement on her face. You're right. It's like you said.

So

let's see. Do I have cravings for simple things like different foods that I will indulge in or do you practice or saying?

I mean I do have certain foods that I like. Like there's just a cheese and mayonnaise and salt sandwich.

I ate two of them for breakfast today.

It just It's just a convenient easy kind of food that tastes good enough.

And my woman she's always wanting to like

accentuate food. You know, add subtle flavor profiles and this kind of thing.

But I'm like a minimalist. You know, bread, cheese, mayo, a little bit of salt.

Good to go. It's It's good enough. I

like it. I just

that's it. And she's like wanting to

experiment. Wouldn't you want to like

mix a little horseradish with that

mayonnaise, you know? Put some of this

this seasoning salt stuff on it. And

it's like no, this is good. This is just

this is this good enough. If it ain't

broke, don't fix it.

So yeah, I do have preferences.

And you might be in the mood for

something which you could call a kind of

craving.

So,

yeah, I mean,

why not?

It is I remember when I one of the most amazing things to me when I stopped being a monk was just all of a sudden after 30 years, I can just walk into the kitchen anytime I want. Just open the refrigerator, look inside. It's like, any of this I can consume now if I want to.

So, that was it was like a miracle. It just seemed like a miracle at first. I mean, it's still it's it's really a kind of luxury just to be able to walk into a kitchen and just go through the cupboards and the refrigerator, which generally is fairly well stocked in our house, and just pick whatever you want.

In a way, it's kind of a miracle that

I'm not just morbidly obese at this

point.

So, yeah, I mean, even monks have

cravings for simple things.

Um but I mean, I indulge in it a little

more now.

I'm not just wallowing in it.

But still, if I'm in the mood for a

cheese sandwich or a

to nuke a frozen burrito or something, I

mean, you got to eat something. You

might as well eat something that you

tastes good.

I'm not going to I'm not such a

renunciant or an ascetic at present that

I would just deliberately force myself

to eat food that I consider to be

disgusting.

So, yeah, I mean, it's fairly moderate.

I'm not like a gourmand.

I mean, I'm a pretty much of a

minimalist in my tastes anyway.

So,

yeah, a little bit.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from the proto

pseudo monk formerly known as Cool Whip.

And I

learned recently that

um most people who speak English no

longer pronounce the H in WH words like

like the word white.

Most people don't even say that anymore.

They just say white as though that it's

just w i t e.

But it turns out that white

or cool whip

is actually more correct because of

Proto-Indo-European

having a kind of

kind of a guttural sound or a It's like

in in like the the Latin base languages,

it turned into a Q, Q U. Like question

words start with Q U as a general rule

in Romance languages. It's the same as

the WH in in English.

Because question words start with like

this

qua or wha.

But I'm digressing like like a crazy person at present.

Let's just get back to uh the Proto-Siddhartha, formerly known as cool whip.

He says, "I'm very close to moving to Sri Lanka to ordain as a Buddhist monk upon completion of my degree. I might have asked this before. Forgive me for asking again. You can skip the essay for the Q&A. Well, not going to happen, I guess. I cannot imagine any other life besides that of a bhikkhu right now. Any attempt to live an ordinary worldly life would appear as an evident lie and indulging in ignorance and delusion.

However, I am so conditioned to my Western upbringing that I feel like I am possibly about to waste my life. I think doubt is the result of excessive thinking. In moments of clarity, this belief disappears.

I think it comes down to truth and doing good for the world. Some imagined optimal life. The path of a bhikkhu only seems to be of highest value if karma and rebirth is true. It is all or nothing. Either the most worthy life or the most wasted life.

I have the highest conviction in karma and rebirth, samsara, and nirvana. It is my working hypothesis, but of course

there is no way of proving this. I think
what's most difficult is that I have to
go against the stream, opposed my peers,
to society and my culture, denying my
attraction to women to have children,
denying family and friendships,
renouncing all my many interests,
intellectual, artistic, and so on, to
live an alien life to test it out.
As you succinctly put it from the quote
from Avalon, quote, "What do you think
is the best? A game you think you can
finish but never do, or a game that
seems impossible to win but isn't?"
Unquote.
I think it comes down to having faith
that the bishop's question is ultimately

true in the movie Avalon. Excellent movie, by the way.

I am prepared to take the gamble and dedicate my life to this path just to find out if this is indeed false, but I fear this being false. I would have given up a family life, a romantic partner, friendships, life experiences, a successful job, and doing good in the world as much as I can with my place in society, materially through my work, progeny, etc. There is also the fear of missing out, FOMO.

I don't know what that means. On the richness and pleasures of life, believing somehow an ordinary life that

requires some selfishness is best for the development of oneself in the world. Uh please, sir, what is your advice? How can I get out of this doubt caused mainly by this intellectual belief that becoming a monk is selfish despite not having any attachment to being in this world. How can I commit to this path wholeheartedly without having these answers? Does this doubt have any veracity? I don't know where this belief of duty comes from. I think it's just a default setting we learn from society. Please, can you clarify how the life of a bhikkhu is the most worthy life assuming one succeeds in reaching the nibbana? I feel like if I believe if I

become a monk, I can no longer be of service to the world. I try and think how this is not true. As a monk, you can teach dhamma to a small poor village. So, this is not my ambition, but it seems small compared to what is possible in a capitalistic Western world. I say these words with no belief.

I say these words with no belief in them. It is simply how the doubt appears. I am very much fed up with the Western world and disenchanted with it. Most people think and behave like fools. Though humans have some goodness, there is a level of selfishness and insincerity that makes me ill, and I

seek the company of saints or solitude.
Mara is having its last fight as this is
a one-way ticket for me. I cannot
postpone this any longer. The forest is
calling me, but it will cost me
everything.
So, this is a heartfelt question, a
sincere question, a good question, but
still try to be concise.
I really should have a limit of no more
than 150 words per question.
I mean, this could have been condensed
quite a lot and still contain
essentially the same amount of
information.
Anyways, let's see here. I mean, I'm
reminded of

a few things here. First of all, there's a statement of my Saint John of the Cross. I mean, cool whip here. I mean, this proto pseudo monk, proto pseudo monk,

who apparently is going to be just the monk because he won't be proto or pseudo anymore if he really is ordained.

I mean, why go to Sri Lanka? I don't fully understand that.

I mean, it seems to me like Thailand might be a better bet than Sri Lanka. I mean, there's just a healthier Sangha there, it seems to me. There are some really serious

like reform movements going on in Sri

Lanka, but you're surrounded by a sea of just utter corruption in the Sangha.

Seems to me.

But he wasn't asking about that.

Um

One thing

is I mean, even if you are ordained as a monk, if it's just not working out at all after 5 or 10 years, I mean, you're not taking a lifelong vows. It's not like being a Catholic monk where you have to get express permission from the Pope himself to drop out.

All you have to do if you are an ordained monk is just tell somebody else in a language they understand that you are not a monk anymore and mean it,

and you're not a monk anymore. That's as easy it is it is to disrobe in Theravada Buddhism.

So, I mean,

you're not necessarily

throwing the rest of your life away even if it turns out that being a monk is not like your lifelong path.

That if you are a sincere monk conscientiously practicing for 5 or 10 years, I don't know how old the proto pseudo monk is, I would guess he's not ancient yet.

That after 5 or 10 years, you're bound to to be making progress.

And you say that in like your more lucid

moments, you have no doubts. It's just like when you're in kind of a more negative mental state, like a less clear, have less clarity, then that's when you have the most aversion for the idea of renouncing the world, which is fairly telling.

You know, it's like when I was a monk, sometimes I'd be disgusted with it all, but I'd remind myself it's only when I'm in a bad mood

that I don't like being a It's like when when, you know, I'm in a state of clarity, when I'm most wise, then obviously, you know, being a monk is is good.

So, there's that, too. I mean, just

because I mean, most people are not a monk for their entire life.

So, I mean,

be a monk for 5 years and see how it goes. Be a monk for 10 years. I mean, if it's still working, you're still making progress, if these renunciations that seemed so difficult at first,

don't all of a sudden seem easy after you've already done it, which is was the case with me in a lot of cases. You know, there are some things that was very hard to part with until you part with it, and then you then it's like a relief

that you parted with it.

So, there's that. I mean, there's all kinds of stuff I can mention here. I mean, I've experienced a lot of this myself.

This And I am reminded of a statement of St. John of the Cross that the proto-pseudo monk talks about how he wants to benefit the world, that being a monk really doesn't benefit the world, but St. John of the Cross said, you got two people, and I've I've mentioned this before.

Two people. One of them is like feeding the hungry, tending to the sick, you know, providing clothes to the people that don't have clothes, providing homes to people who do not

have homes, just doing acts of goodness
and charity
just every waking moment of every day.
That's one person. The other person is
alone in a cell contemplating or
practicing high contemplation.
You know, just what in Buddhism would be
at least second Jhana,
I'm pretty sure. And St. John of the
Cross says, in all seriousness, that
second person living alone in in a state
of high contemplation
is benefiting the world more than the
person who is like tending the sick and
feeding the hungry and all that.
And there's a similar statement in the

Diamond Cutter Sutra, the Vajracchedika Prajnaparamita Sutra, where it's saying that, you know, you again you got the two people, one of them is doing just like the first person in St. John of the Cross's comparison, you know, tending the sick and feeding the hungry and just on and on and on, doing all these acts of goodness and charity,

and the other person just memorizes one verse of the Diamond Cutter Sutra and explains it to others, and he is helping the world more than the first person.

It's It's a matter of

I mean, the first person is essentially putting Band-Aids on like a terminally ill patient.

Uh just It's just superficial stuff, and he's not dealing with the the ultimate cause of the suffering. You know, he's just kind of putting Band-Aids on the surface.

And the other person is like raising the level of consciousness of the planet.

So, I mean, there is that. I mean, it it is a valid a valid argument, it seems to me,

that the person living alone in a state of high contemplation is helping the world more than a person who is kind of wallowing in samsara and stuck in it himself

and just kind of helping people at a

superficial level, but it all balances

out. All the pluses and minuses

ultimately have to balance out.

So, every good thing added to the world

just unintentionally

adds a corresponding evil.

And also, another thing I would say is

that even if like karma and rebirth and

all this

are just like a a cultural mythology,

the Four noble truths are still true.

The you know, the less suffer the less

desire and attachment you have, the less

suffering.

So,

if being a monk causes you to have less

less desire and attachment, then

that's the way to go if you don't want
to suffer. If you want to have like a
relatively content life.
If being a monk makes you even more
frustrated, let's say you're just horny
as hell and just just yearning to get
involved in politics or something, then
it might not be so good. But even then,
it's you're helping to at least combat
these attachments
that are like karmic momentum.
So,
let's see.
Where is the actual question? I mean,
it's kind of down towards the bottom,
but not all the way at the bottom.

What is your advice? How can I get out
of this doubt caused mainly by this
intellectual belief that becoming a monk
is selfish? I mean,
to some degree, I mean, as as Pol O used
to say that to some degree, I mean, if
you really want to be liberated, you
want to become enlightened, it does
require a certain amount of selfishness,
which is ironic cuz ultimately there is
no self and the monk is like penetrating
the truth of that.
So, it's just kind of ironic
that people will say, "Oh, the monk's
life is selfish."
When really,
the the whole goal of being a monk is to

be utterly selfless.

So, how can I commit to this path

wholeheartedly without having these

answers? Well, it's I guess I've already

addressed that

because first of all,

I mean, just

do do it for 5 or 10 years.

That's kind of what I did. I mean, I was

I didn't just like commit to a lifelong

and to or even 30 years of being a monk.

You know, it's like do it until

it just doesn't work anymore.

I remember my preceptor asked me if he

thought I'd be a monk for the rest of my

life and I'd say, "Well, if I'm unhappy

at it for a long time, maybe I'll drop

out."

So, I mean, you can't really know unless

you at least try, dedicate 5 or 10

years,

see how it goes. And if it's if it's

turns out that it was good, keep going.

Turns out that it wasn't good, I mean,

5 or 10 years, I mean, it's not your

whole life.

I don't know how old

Proto Pseudo Monk is. I would assume

that he's fairly young.

Time may be on your side with regard to

that.

Also,

like St. John of the Cross and the

Diamond Cutter Sutra says, like raising the level of consciousness, you know, it's sort of like in in the Old Testament, you know, it's like God will spare Sodom and Gomorrah for the sake of one good man.

You can be that one good man.

And also, I mean, the Four Noble Truths, I mean, the Second Noble Truth, desire is the cause of all suffering. I mean, that's true regardless. I mean, that should be fairly self-evident to anyone capable of introspection.

So, you combine all that plus maybe a few things I haven't thought of, and I mean, it's it doesn't strike me as

uh any scenario where you're really
risking a whole hell of a lot. I mean,
if you're already 60,
but then again, how are you going to
have kids when you're 60 anyway?
So, let's see. Does this doubt have any
veracity?
I mean, your doubt would have veracity
if your personality, your character
traits just are not
in harmony with the monk's life,
then maybe it could just make you
miserable.
Also, where you are ordained, you know,
why you are ordained,
but where you are ordained is a big
deal. I mean, if you you can have the

best intentions in the world and you may
have like a real
like ready to live the holy life and
then you get ordained to into a
monastery that's just corrupt and none
of the monks are practicing correctly
and they're just kind of shameless and
not following the rules of monastic
discipline and all that. I mean, you can
just get very bitter and disillusioned
and just drop out in disgust thinking
the entire Sangha is this way.
When really, you just picked the wrong
monastery.
But if if I've said it before back when
I was a monk, it's like a desire for

enlightenment is not necessarily the best reason for becoming a monk because things generally don't work out the way you plan.

You know, however they think of it, it turns out otherwise. I mean, that's that's a a statement you find I think twice in the Sutta Nipata in two different contexts. It's just kind of a saying that gets inserted into these two different suttas.

That I mean, really just having this idea of a goal, goal-oriented Dhamma and using that as your reason for being a monk is not necessarily the best reason.

Just

two of the best reasons

for becoming a monk, seems to me.

One is just a sense of sacred duty. You

know, it's just my I'm able to become

one. It's just my duty to do the best I

can, get as close to enlightenment as I

am able in this life.

Period.

And then and one of the other

best reasons for becoming a monk is that

the monk's life is just in harmony with

your personality. I mean, you're just

drawn towards

solitude and simplicity

and meditation,

then that will get you farther in the

monastic life than this idealistic

desire for enlightenment.

So,

yeah, I mean, wallowing in the world, I

mean, it

some

samsara cannot be fixed.

It is the nature of samsara to be messed

up.

And any kind of fixes you add, any

goodness you add is going to

be met with a corresponding evil cuz

that's just the way samsara works.

So, yeah, my advice, first, be very

careful in choosing the correct

environment in which to be ordained

and just try it for 5 years. Commit

yourself to 5 years. You just do like a

5-year renewable contract. And if after

5 years things are going

fairly well,

keep going.

So,

that's the best advice I can think of

right now.

And good luck to you and I do hope that

you are successful in in your practice.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Stellar

Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb.

He says, "Have you ever perceived smoke

or vapor in meditation?"

And first of all, I would say remember

the rule I before E except after C

because

you spelled perceive wrong.

But after that, I mean, I can give like

an easy obvious answer in perceiving

smoke in meditation is that one

meditation device I have used before is

just light an incense stick and then

just let your gaze rest upon the rising

smoke.

It's It's like a meditation of seeing.

It would be kind of weighted on

vipassana, I guess.

So, I've done that before. You know,

sort of like the yogic meditation of

just gazing upon a candle flame. Except

in my case, I was gazing upon incense smoke rising from the stick.

So, that's kind of a cheat answer, I guess.

Aside from that, the only the the thing that's closest to a smoke or vapor in meditation that I have ever perceived, I did perceive what would be classically would be known as the nimitta of like access concentration. According to the commentarial tradition, I don't think it's mentioned in the text.

According to the suttas, according to the commentarial tradition, there's this stage of upacara samadhi, which is right

before first jhana. I'm skeptical of the

whole idea, but it I mean, there is some

validity to some of what it's saying

because when you get to access

concentration, you tend to see a nimitta

or sign.

And

I apparently did see one of these signs

while meditating, and it was it was just

sort of like an

an oval kind of shape like a duck egg.

Just kind of a

kind of like a gray cloud.

Just an oval shaped

like light gray

and just kind of a cloud-like nimitta.

Some people I mean, that's one of the

most common nimittas that you see if you attain upacara samadhi is just kind of a circle or an oval of light or just kind of like a cloud-looking thing. But you can also see images of the the Buddha sitting in meditation, other things also.

But that's the closest I ever perceived to smoke in meditation other than just gazing upon incense smoke as a meditation device.

And I'm just going to move right on to the next question.

This is turning into a longer one than I was expecting. I mean, we only had like in the low 30s, you know, kind of like

the average number of questions, but I'm
being more
verbose than usual, I guess.
So, and also I'm just Yeah, I'm just
digressing a lot.
So, this this question is from Arpad,
A R P A D, and he says, "Did the Buddha
approve of celibacy for lay people, or
should those stick to being married
householders if they can't become
monks?" And I am reminded of a statement
I have made a number of times on these
Q&A videos, where I think it's in
Vinaya,
where the Buddha says, "If you're able
to become a monk,
by all means become a monk. If you're

not able to become a monk, at the very least avoid sexual intercourse the way you would avoid falling into a pit, a deep pit with glowing coals at the bottom of it.

But if even that is too much, at the very, very least stay away from the wives of other men."

So, I mean, that's right there in the text.

And so, yeah, the Buddha approved celibacy for lay people also.

Like, especially once you start getting into the Arya levels, even if you're not a monk, you're you're just a lay person, but you become like a Sakadagami or

something, then even then, as a general rule in the texts, it is stated that they have become celibate.

So, I mean, so sex, you know, is desire is the cause of all suffering, and desire for sex is one of the strongest desires that people have. So, obviously, within the context of the Four Noble Truths, a person is better off not having sex than having sex.

It is true like in a agricultural sort of society like ancient India that your children would be your social security. There were no pensions or anything like that. You would be supported by your children when you got old. So, there is that. That is a

consideration.

At least if you're living like in a an agrarian society with no kind of pensions or socialism or anything like that to support you in your old age.

So,

pretty sure I answered that one. Let's move on to Arpad's next question.

Where is celibacy for lay people discussed if at all in the suttas? Well, there is that statement from the Buddha which I think is in the Vinaya.

Uh it's probably in in suttas also, but I do not recall exact sutta references.

So, it's in there. You know, when the Buddha says, you know, even if you can't

become a monk, avoid sex as though avoiding a deep pit with glowing coals at the bottom. That's fairly straightforward. That's easily interpreted to mean that the Buddha encouraged celibacy for lay people.
And then just at the very very least, if celibacy you you just can't manage it, then at very very least, stay away from the wives of other men.
I mean, Jesus said something kind of similar in the New Testament where he's saying, "Three kinds of eunuchs. There are those who are born eunuchs, those who are made eunuchs, and those who are eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven."

With this being celibate people.
And then he says right after that, "But it's not for everybody."
So, I mean, if you're the kind of person and I think Arpad here is French.
You're the kind of person is I mean, if even if you are a celibate, you're just going to be like climbing the walls and just horny all the time and just obsessed with sex because you can't have it, then it may be more of an obstacle than anything else.
Although, I mean, if you just have this deep feeling that I must be celibate just because it's my sacred duty, and then you then you're like climbing the

walls and miserable, then nevertheless,
you are making some spiritual progress
by combating the strong attachment.
But it comes at a price because you're
going to be horny and frustrated.
So, I mean, some people that just cannot
manage celibacy, your best bet, find the
right girl, settle down, and live
happily ever after.
Be faithful to each other.
And I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question here.
This is also from Arpad, and this one I
think might be a joke question.
He says, "How much of the movement for
the revival of Theravada nuns do you
think is in fact a fetish?"

And I think one of the reasons why this
came up is that some wise guys,
including me, I have to admit, were
posting like pictures of
Catholic nuns that were obviously not
really nuns. You know, they're like
packing guns and this kind of thing.
And some of them were pretty.
I mean, real nuns tend not to be very
pretty. That's one way you can tell the
difference between real nuns and fake
nuns. The really pretty ones tend to be
fake ones.
But anyways,
with regard to how much of the movement
for the revival of Theravada nuns do I

think is in fact a fetish,

maybe a tiny trace amount. I mean, it's

mostly feminism.

It's mostly

it's mostly like this western modern

drive for gender equality,

which has reached the perverse stage of

demanding the revival of an order that

grossly discriminates against the women

for the sake of gender equality.

Because of course, they revived the

Bhikkhuni order sort of, you know, they

create a replica of it to some degree

and then just stop following the rules

correctly

because they discriminate against women.

Which is just silly.

But we don't need to get into a rant
regarding the revival or attempted
revival
of the Bhikkhuni Sangha.
But I think very little of it is
a sexual fetish.
I mean, technically a fetish is sexual
arousal by something that is not
explicitly sexual.
Like nuns, for example. I guess there is
a thing for that considering the
high number of
like sexy nuns or fake nuns that you
that you can find easily on the
internet, sometimes without even
looking.

So, let's just go on to the next

question. This is from

This is from Drip Walker.

Drip Walker says, "If telekinesis is

possible, why haven't one of one those

cash prizes, rewards, or awards?" So, if

if telekinesis Well, I mean, it wouldn't

really be telekinesis though in this

case. Let's just say if psychic powers

are possible, why hasn't anyone used

that to win the lottery? I mean, this

I'm I'm paraphrasing it into plain

English here.

And maybe some of them have.

But

my theory of how like the paranormal

works is based on a book by George P.

Hansen. I've got it on the bookcase back
there. Trickster in the Paranormal. It's
I consider it to be one of the most one
of the 10 most important
paradigm-shifting
books I've ever read.
According to him, the paranormal exists,
but it like exist it it like seeps into
this version of reality through
cracks in the structure.
Oh, there's a bird outside.
So, you've got all these rules, you got
like rule laws of nature, and that's not
enough for people because we're too
complicated. So, we also have to have
like cultural rules, social taboos, this

kind of stuff to increase the amount of structure to keep everything predictable and relatively safe and non-scary.

But still, you can't have complete rigidity because that would just be like death.

You can't have absolute rigidity.

There's going to be like gaps and weak spots between these rules that regularize the structure of of our version of samsara. And that's where the paranormal gets in is through these gaps and weak places.

And so, witches, for example, traditionally will violate taboos in order to widen those gaps to increase the amount of juju that can get get

through into our version of reality.
Also, like things like human sacrifice
were another way of just kind of making
holes in the this rigidity of structure.
The violating taboos and so forth that
would then increase the amount of
psychic power that can be harnessed
ideally or potentially.
So,
science is never going to really lock
down the paranormal because it's always
going to be like avoiding the rules that
science depends on. Science is looking
for patterns and rules that can be
turned into mathematical equations, for
example, and it just doesn't work that

way. It's always going to be on the on
the verges. It's always going to be like
in your peripheral vision, so to speak.
So,
it it would just be too much of a
uh like getting into like mainstream if
if if just people start using it to win
at the casinos, this kind of thing. I
mean, to some degree, it it just sort of
like a
barely detectable level, it might
happen.
You know, it's like some people are just
good at guessing cards or good at
guessing
rolling dice, that kind of thing. It
might just be a like a a fraction of a

percentage point above what you would
expect from random chance, but still it
is quantifiable, detectable, even though
science really can't explain it.
Other than just sort of the perceiver is
sort of collapsing the state vector, you
know, it's sort of the the the observer
is affecting reality in that sense that
somehow is is like incorporated into
quantum physics, at least.
But,
yeah, and there's even less
psychic powers manifest now than there
were back in pre-modern times before
people converted to scientism and a
belief in magic was more mainstream.

There was more faith.

You know, you have more faith than in something, it makes it more possible.

So, it could be that, I mean, to some degree, the paranormal was almost kind of mainstream when more and more people believed it.

But, still it was scary, and so still you had to have the structure to keep out the scary unpredictable stuff.

So, even in ancient times when magic was believed in, still the wizards and the witches were considered to be scary and dangerous.

So, I do think that telekinesis and other psychic powers are possible and that they do exist in this world.

It's just that they'll never go

mainstream and they'll always be on the

fringes.

They'll never be something that you can

really just lock down and say, "There,

you see? There it is."

So,

I'm just going to move on to the next

question.

This is from RFS.

And I think yeah, we're getting down

towards the bottom here. This

This will inshallah this will be less

than 3 hours long.

So, RFS says,

"I have noticed that many practitioners

whom I regard as spiritually mature
speak of their own future rebirth as
human. This is because
either one, they are being humble and
avoid presuming a heavenly destination,
two, they see the human realm as
uniquely supportive for practice and
thus aim to return, or three,
or because leaving the human realm is
rare and difficult."
So,
you RFS wants to know why it is that
many practitioners whom he regards as
spiritually mature speak of their own
future rebirth as human. Well, it's hard
to say exactly. I mean, I've never
really come across

any spiritual teachers that I consider
to be advanced or not advanced
speaking of their own future rebirth as
human.
I mean, if you're being really wise
about it, it would seem, unless you're
just like really highly advanced,
But if you're just kind of being wise
and not completely enlightened and still
somewhat humble, I mean you don't really
know. It's going to depend on
factors that are maybe beyond the scope
of your conscious awareness.
So maybe you get into a heaven realm,
maybe you'll be born as human again,
maybe who knows.

So

with regard to his three options, the first one there being humble and avoid presuming a heavenly destination, some of them maybe.

I think the second one might be more significant though, which is they see the human realm as uniquely supportive for practice and thus aim to return or maybe they just have like human karma going, human interests, and so they want to continue as humans

just because of unfinished business or that sort of thing. So that might that would come closest to RFS's second option here.

Um because leaving the human realm is

rare and difficult. Not so much I think.

So I would guess that it's partly one

but mostly two in the sense that

um

the human realm

I mean it is supportive for practice

but also a lot of teachers, I mean they

just they're humans now, they think like

humans, they've got human intentions and

desires and goals, and so they're just

projecting that

forwards in time

which just naturally winds up being

another human existence.

That would be a a fairly conservative

guess as to why they're doing this, but

I don't even know who he's referring to.
I haven't seen any real context, so I
can't say for sure.
Maybe if they're like Buddhist monks or
something, it might be really what he's
saying with regard to
the second option here that the human
realm is uniquely supported for
practice.
Because according to Theravada Buddhism,
human existence, conveniently for us
humans, is the ideal situation for
practicing Dhamma. Because the lower
realms, I mean, they're so distracted
with torment and survival and ignorance
that they don't have nearly as much
opportunity to practice Dhamma. You

know, they're just

I mean, it's just not really much of an

option for most of them. But in the

higher realms, everything is so nice.

You know, they don't have as much

exposure to misery in the higher like

the heaven realms that I mean, they're

just not as inspired. They don't have

that fire that under them to motivate

them to practice more.

Although, I'm somewhat skeptical of that

because, you know, it's like

even in the 31 planes of existence, some

of the highest heaven realms are beings

that are soon to be enlightened. They're

going to be become enlightened from that

realm. And you've got gods, devas

that really, I mean, they they should be

up there partly because they're wiser

than us.

So, it's just might be just kind of

what is it? Anthropocentrism

to say that because I'm that we are

people and being a person is the ideal

situation for practicing Dhamma.

Um

I'm a little bit skeptical of that.

But I mean, there's some truth to it, I

suppose. I wouldn't just flat out reject

it completely.

But in in answer to RFS's question, I

mean, why

that many practitioners whom he regards

as spiritually mature speak of their own future rebirth as human?

I mean, maybe just because they are human, they've They've human karmic momentum going which in likelihood will result in them being human again if they're not fully enlightened and if they are not just so spiritually advanced that they're going to wind up in a heaven realm.

But uh really I can't really say for sure because I'm not haven't been exposed to these people or what they're saying and all I know about them is what RFS has said in this relatively brief question.

And so I'm just going to move on to the

last question

from Practice Meta.

And Practice Meta says, "I am wondering

what is the optimal way to rid oneself

of money and material goods before

ordination?

Should I give it to my immediate family?

Should I try a merit-maximizing approach

and give it to centers of Buddhism in

the West, Dhamma teachers, etc.?" So

we've got at least two questioners on

this Q&A

that are apparently planning on becoming

an ordained monk soon.

So I say sadhu sadhu sadhu to that.

And uh

my blessings are upon

everybody who tries it cuz I mean to be

a bad monk is easy, but to be a good

monk is difficult.

Anyways,

Practice Meta

What is ask What is the optimal way to

rid oneself of money and material goods?

Well, I mean

one of the first things that came to

mind is

Jesus in the New Testament who was

giving this advice

pretty often it seems like and he would

say, "Sell all that you have, give the

money to the poor, and follow me."

So

I mean in my case, I just donated my

money and my pickup truck to the

monastery where I was ordained just to

compensate to some degree for the

hardship of having to deal with me for

the next few years.

So I mean that's one thing to consider

is you could just donate it to the

monastery.

Or I mean, if your family is poor, you

can give it to your family

if they if they need it. My family

didn't really need it at the time.

So, I gave it to the monastery.

Um

or I mean, if there's other poor people

that you think you could help, then you
can do it that way. But I mean,
from the Buddhist point of view, it's
really not that important. I mean, you
could just take all your money and just
throw it out in the street if you want
to. So long as you don't have any more
by the time you become a monk.
Monks are not allowed to own money, even
though most of them do because most of
them don't follow the rules correctly.
So,
the optimal way I mean, the one thing
that a monk is allowed to say with
regard to other people's money
is like a layperson comes to a monk and

says, "What should I do with my money,
venerable sir?" The monk is allowed to
say, "Do whatever makes you happy."
So, I mean, whatever you feel best about
would be the
the best thing to do with it.
So, I mean, if that's giving it to your
family, if you're especially if your
family has need of the money,
then I'm that's good. Give it to the
monastery just as a kind of compensation
for having to support you,
that's good.
Giving it to the poor like Jesus would
advise, that's that's good. I mean, even
throwing it out in the street, I mean,
at least you're doing you're getting rid

of it.

So, it it depends on you and whatever

makes you happy, I suppose.

And uh I guess I'm done.

So, by golly, we're done.

We done.

And so, as I should always say at the

beginning and pretty much never do,

if you think I can answer a question,

especially about like Dharma, Dharma,

Buddhism, philosophy, that kind of

stuff.

Me personally,

just feel free to ask and try to keep it

concise,

you know? Maybe 150 words or less.

I mean, I haven't counted words. Maybe
100 words or less. I'm not sure.
But no more than three questions per
person per episode, please. Like and
subscribe if you have not done so
already and you do actually like this.
Or even if you if you like hate watching
it, I mean, might as well subscribe
anyhow.
And uh check out the URL links below,
which includes the
Amazon link to my new book.
And uh
be happy.
And now I will push the button and stop
recording.

Okay, then.

Is this working?

>> [music]

>> Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 193.

I am your host Panyo Boss up.

And my beverage is right over here.

There it is.

And I have to admit, 193 apparently,

evidently is a prime number.

So, once again, we are in the prime of

our lives

while doing this Q&A.

And I'm doing it late. This is like late

on a Sunday. Usually, in the past, I've

tended to do these Q&A videos on a

Saturday, sometimes early on a Sunday,

but this weekend has been action-packed.

Yesterday was my woman's birthday. So,

yesterday was pretty much dedicated to

being with her and all.

And then today, there's like errands to

run, all kinds of stuff to do.

So,

those of you who watch these videos like

at sometime after Sunday,

probably don't even notice. You don't

give a [__] But, there are other people

who just like are looking forward to

watching these Q&A videos on a Sunday,

and it's just late. I mean, the

aquarium's already in moonlight mode.

So,

>> [sighs]

>> it's just been kind of one of those weekends. And I almost had to work yesterday, too. I was going to get paid overtime. It was optional, so I opted out because there was so much other stuff going on, including my woman's birthday.

So, with all that, it's kind of a rambling preamble.

Suppose I should just wade into these here questions.

And the first question is from Seuvac and Sepadzina.

And he says, "I asked Chat GPT first mistake asking Chat GPT.

GTP, I mean.

But, I interrupted myself. So, I'm let's just start again.

Seuvac and Sepadzina says, "I asked Chat GTP to do a language analysis of the Pali language used in the Atthakatha Vagga and the language used in the inscriptions by Ashoka.

It claimed that the language forms used in the inscriptions are more ancient than the versions found even in the Atthakatha Vagga.

With that said, Ashoka mentioned the names of texts that are found in the suttas. The names of the suttas are closer to what is found in the Sanskrit, though. So, wouldn't these texts

technically be able to be dated even
before the Atthakatha Vagga? Well, first
of all, do not rely on Chat GTP.
Somebody
like consulted Chat GTP with regard to a
vinaya question a few Q&A videos ago,
and Chat GTP got it wrong.
So, I mean,
I mean, there was there was a guy at
work. He wanted to look something up. I
said, "Why don't you just consult an
AI?" And he says, "Because AIs often
come up with crap, so you have to like
look up other stuff to verify what the
AI said. So, why don't you just look up
the other stuff first and just bypass

the AI?"

And I mean, Chat GTP,

I mean, literally, I have seen evidence

that Chat GTP would rather cause a

thermonuclear holocaust than misgender a

transsexual.

Also, it thinks if you ask Chat GTP to

answer in one word, yes or no, "Was

George Floyd a good person?" And Chat

GTP says, "Yes." "Was Charlie Kirk a

good person?" Chat GTP says, "No."

So, at least switch to Grok, for crying

out loud.

But, even Grok can get things wrong.

I I asked Grok if some number previous

to 193 was a prime number, and Grok

didn't even know what a prime number

was. I had to explain the principles of

what makes a prime number, and then it

was able to answer after I explained to

it

what a prime number is.

But, I might as well just uh

>> [clears throat]

>> move on to some other aspect of this

question.

So,

according to Chat Chat GTP,

like the Pali Canon would come after

the time of Ashoka, which would be like

after the third council.

And I find that kind of hard to hard to

believe. I mean, I think I would have to

insist on some better authority than

Chat GTP

with regard to dating the relative age

of Ashoka's inscriptions and the Pali

Canon.

Because I mean, the Pali Canon is one of

the more conservative languages

that

like Buddhist texts are composed in.

You know, it comes the closest in all

likelihood to what the Buddha was

originally speaking, you know, some

language

of the general area of Magadha.

Pali comes relatively close to that. I

would imagine that even though the

Buddha did not speak Pali,

um Pali and the language that the Buddha
did speak would be
mutually intelligible, you know, fairly
close, like Spanish and Portuguese.
Maybe like Norwegian and Swedish.
So, yeah, I am skeptical of Chat GTP's
claim that the Pali Canon, like the Pali
language, is more recent than the 3rd
century BCE the time of Ashoka and the
Buddhist third council.
And the language of the Atthakatha Vagga
is an archaic form of Pali, kind of like
a proto-Pali.
So,
the implication would be that Pali
didn't even really exist

as the language

of even the Atthakatha Vagga, which is

sort of like an archaic form of Pali,

until after the Ashokan inscriptions. I

mean, I would I would need some better

evidence than just

a claim out of the blue by an AI that

has proven itself to be wrong with

regard to making technical claims about

Theravada Buddhism.

>> [snorts]

>> So,

I suppose you can just do a little more

research and get back to me cuz I'm

really not inclined to dig into this

very deeply.

But, it is true

that Ashoka does mention

suttas that are found in the Pali Canon.

In fact, there's one or two of them that

are found in the Atthakatha Vagga

itself.

So,

even though the Atthakatha Vagga is like

a a more archaic form of Pali than most

of the rest of the Pali Canon,

still,

according to Chat GTP,

Ashoka was referencing even a more

archaic version of the same poems.

Which,

I don't know. I don't really have no

idea how Chat GTP comes up with this

information. I mean, Grok is pretty much the only AI that I use with any regularity. Sometimes, like an AI in a search engine will just spontaneously pop up with some kind of information, but Grok is the one I generally go to. And it will often give you its line of reasoning, how it comes up with its its answer. So, maybe Chat GTP can do that, but I'm not sure what kind of information it would go with. And I am fairly skeptical that even the Atthakatha Vagga postdates the third council. Which would be gosh, long after like the schism of of the schools, which would be

you know, more [clears throat] than 100 years previous to that.

Hmm.

Yeah, it's I'm skeptical. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. Also by Seuvac and Sepadzina. He says, "Why is the Buddhist path delusional?" And he could have just stopped there. Because I was mentioning that, you know, even Buddhism, you know, it's like it's not like you have a Seuvac and Sepadzina asked a question with regard to ethics. You know, it's like why not just go with Buddhist ethics, which is like ultimately true, instead of these relative conventional ethics like based

on cultural conditioning and so forth?
And I pointed out that even the Buddhist ethics, it may be a more subtle form of delusion, but it's still delusional because it is samsaric, and ethics are a way of escaping samsara.
Ethics are used by unenlightened beings who are still delusional. I mean, the answer was already contained in my explanation
in the in the previous Q&A, in which I was answering the previous question.
But, let's just uh read the little essay here after the question. He says, "Why is the Buddhist path delusional?" And then he says,
"Even [clears throat] if it is happening

in virtual reality, but there was a sequence of events that the one way to end the virtual reality system, then it doesn't just seem like the consequences of such a path are just limited to the context of the virtual reality anymore, and forces the system to shut off itself.

How can such a path be called delusional if it has a real consequences of leading to the end of delusion?

I don't see how delusion can end delusion. Only wisdom can end delusion. Seems strange to call a path that is the one's way that leads to the end of

delusion is also delusional. To me, it
would seem like the wise path by
definition since it ends delusion by
walking it.
Ah, [sighs] well,
ah, where do I start on this?
I mean, it doesn't really have real
consequences of leading to the end of
the delusion because the delusion was
never really real.
So, I mean,
the end of delusion is just
>> [sighs]
>> it's it's so hard. I mean, trying to
discuss this stuff, you have to talk
about like virtual reality and
ultimately real ultimate reality like in

the same sentence.

And people cannot wrap their head around it. I mean, you can't even talk about ultimately ultimate reality. By talking about it, you just drag it down into the delusional realm of perception.

So, seems strange to call a path that is the one's way that leads to the end of delusion. I mean, you don't know that.

Is also delusional. It's like there's a statement

in uh

some Mahayana text. It's like the purpose of Lord Buddha's teachings is to free us from our thinking by means of our thinking. It is skillful means.

So, yeah, I mean, it's fighting fire
with fire. Fighting delusion with like a
milder form of delusion.
See, where's where's the thing he says
about wisdom?
Oh.
Let's see. I mean, the
the whole talk about the virtual real
like the end of the path and all this is
just a kind of simplistic thinking.
Like Nisargadatta Maharaj, who was a
Hindu, kind of a tantric kind of Hindu,
but he said I mean, there is no end of
the path. The path does not lead to
enlightenment. You follow the path until
you just don't need to follow the path
anymore. You just kind of bail out

sideways from the path.
Sort of, so to speak, but no words are
going to explain ultimate reality.
And any kind of perceptual system is
going to be trapped in this same virtual
reality including ethics. Like I said in
the previous Q&A, if you're enlightened,
ethics are just completely irrelevant.
The purpose of ethics is to get you
enlightened, to lead you out of samsara.
If you're already out of samsara,
I mean, ethics is just by its very
nature delusional because it's only for
deluded people.
I mean, you can say that enlightened
beings still follow ethical paths and so

forth, but in all likelihood, that's a

cultural thing and also it's just the

karma of the people who are experiencing

these supposed enlightened beings.

They just

that's just how they perceive them.

Ah, [sighs]

sweet tea is good. When you live in the

South, you have to drink sweet tea.

It's just

it's like one of those unwritten laws.

So, why is the Buddhist path delusional?

Because it is for deluded people and

it's within the context of samsara. It

is samsaric based on delusion.

So, I mean, you're perceiving these

things that you consider to be real, but

they aren't.

Let's see.

Oh,

doesn't force the system to shut off

itself.

I mean,

that is it's so hard to explain this

stuff. I explain it over and over again

as best as I am able, I fail to get the

point across. People just keep asking

the same kind of questions because they

just cannot deal with something that

lies beyond perception. I mean, you

can't I mean, you can't really deal with

it. Something that lies beyond the scope

of perception is just void.

So, I don't see how delusion can end delusion. It's a more subtle form of delusion.

It's skillful means. It's fighting fire with fire. It's sort of like the words of a Zen master. I mean, this is not really an ethics kind of thing. Kind of it is cuz it leads to enlightenment or it can lead to enlightenment or to insight and so forth, but it's not like standard ethics. But you got the words of the Zen master who are like arrows shot by a master archer that shoot down arrows of another archer.

And it's sort of like the thought process of one person get shot down by the thought process or just the words of

the Zen master and everything just comes

crashing down and it just leaves like

emptiness and silence behind. So, it's

like skillful means.

>> [snorts]

>> Using fire to fight fire.

Anyways, I'm just going to move on to

the next question.

This is also from Seovax and Seopad

Zeno.

And

>> [clears throat]

>> he says, "What is the Buddhist

explanation for someone who enjoys

engaging in arguments and debate in the

moment?

Always wanting to pick at another at other people's brains and trying to learn more and more despite getting no benefit from it most of the time." Well, that's two different things.

I mean, it's like he's sort of cobbled together two different phenomena here. So, the first phenomenon is someone who enjoys engaging in arguments and debate in the moment. That's that's one thing. The other thing is always wanting to pick at other people's brains and not trying to and trying to learn more and more despite getting no benefit from it most of the time. So, that's that's completely different. One of them is just wanting to argue all the time. The

other one is being curious.

You know, wanting to learn.

They don't necessarily go hand in hand.

I mean, I can understand how

if you're like trying to learn

something, you should be skeptical. It's

like I I long had this idea that no

belief system that can't stand up to a

full frontal attack is worthy of

adhering to it. And if you if you got

beliefs, you've got a belief system that

you have to protect and hide them from

like skeptics or people like, you know,

bashing away at your beliefs.

You know, you just get angry and just

avoid them. That kind of thing. Then, I

mean, it's it's a good indication that

your belief system isn't a very good

one.

If you've got to like protect it

from skeptics

or from just naysayers, people that are

just like picking trying to pick apart

your arguments or pick apart your

beliefs.

I mean,

so, I mean, I can understand

how

if you want to learn something, you

should sort of be skeptical. It's sort

of like I'm skeptical of chat GTP and

its claims with regard to the the

Ashokan inscriptions being older than

the Pali texts including the oldest Pali texts.

Also, I mean, there is a kind of personality trait that I have had. My father got pissed off at me at least once because of this where he would say something and I would be sort of like, "Yeah, but." And then just adding something else that kind of might contradict it or might just be going off in a different direction. In in a way, it's not so much trying to pick apart what he's saying as just sort of like contributing to the conversation, you know, by just sort of adding some other point that might have to be

addressed.

This kind of thing.

You know, it's like my father used to say that love is giving.

And then I'd say, "Well, I mean, if if love is giving, then you pay your taxes, you love the IRS."

You know, it's like something like that every now and then. I'm just like, "If you're just trying to shoot down everything that the other person says, that's different than than just this sincere desire to learn more and more and pick people's brains." I mean, when you're picking someone's brain, you're mainly asking questions and paying attention to what they say.

You're not just you

you ask a question, then they answer,

and then you argue against the answer.

I mean, that's that's different.

So, anyways, let's get back to the

original question here

>> [clears throat]

>> after I take another drink of my sweet

tea.

What is the Buddhist explanation for

someone who enjoys engaging in arguments

and debate in the moment? Well, there is

a sutra in the Atthakavagga of the Sutta

Nipata that deals specifically with

people who like to debate and argue. And

it is the Pasura of Sutta. Pasura was

like the the name of this person who
liked to debate. And public debates were
a big deal in the Buddha's time. In
ancient India, there were public debates
and that's one reason why Indian
philosophy is as profound as it is
because you would have people from
different schools, different sects,
following different philosophies that
would indulge or engage in public
debates.
And so, this sutra the Pasura Sutta
deals with that issue and it's saying
that
you shouldn't
get involved in public debates. You
know, it just results in like bad

feeling, or you just get into this habit
of just wanting to like find faults with
with everything another person says. And
then or if you win the debate, then
you're like conceited and gloating about
it.
You know, it's like you're either elated
because you won or you're dejected
because you lost, this kind of thing.
So,
>> [gasps]
>> that's the best explanation for someone
who enjoys engaging in arguments and
debates that I can think of offhand.
It's It's a sutta in the Atakavagga.
It's a very old sutta.

This specifically addressing

the issue of people who like to get

involved in debates.

And I've noticed that that sutta has a

lot of military like jargon in it.

Military slang, a lot of sort of

military imagery of defeat and conquest

and this kind of thing. Pasura literally

means something like

true hero.

You know, that was his name. That's what

his name meant. Might have just been a

made-up name for the for the purpose of

the the whole theme of the sutta.

>> [sighs]

>> So,

yeah. So, I mean, from the Buddhist

point of view, debating and arguing, I mean, a certain amount of discussion is fine, but getting into a habit of just wanting to argue and debate is considered to be something that a monk should not do.

And then

then like the second part that that got cobbled together with the first part, always wanting to pick at other people's brains and trying to learn more and more.

Um yeah, I mean, that's good. I mean, the sutta say that a

a wise person should be bahusutta, which means having heard much, having learned

much. So, you should I mean, even from a
a traditional Buddhist point of view,
you know, it's good to be familiar with
other points of view, other
philosophies.
I mean, mainly you should be paying
attention to Buddhist philosophy like to
you know, what the texts say, you know,
the path and all that.
But still, it is it is
a good thing to be at least familiar or
conversant with other points of view.
And really, you shouldn't cling to any
point of view.
Like Ajahn Chah used to say, even right
view becomes wrong view if you cling to
it.

So, it's good to be open-minded and not insist on much of anything. In fact, it seems to me that like clinging, the word clinging, [snorts] like upadana in in Pali, I mean, literally I mean, like upadana sometimes is considered to be like it replaces craving as the cause of all suffering. And it's it's essentially like insisting on something. Like when you're clinging to something, you're insisting on it. And like if you believe something very devoutly, you are insisting on that. You're insisting that it's true, at least for you.

So,

yeah, always wanting to debate and argue is considered to be best avoided from a Buddhist point of view, but being curious and wanting to learn, that's considered to be a good thing, especially if you're learning stuff or at least trying to learn stuff that can be helpful.

You know, it's if you're just learning like baseball statistics, who's doing who in Hollywood, this kind of stuff, then yeah, you're probably better off not learning that kind of thing. But like reading the various scriptures of other religions, reading various philosophies,

just like even learning like

certain certain like scientific ideas,

you know, like

animal What What is it? Animal behavior.

Just learning about animal behavior, you

can get insights with regard to

yourself. Reading Charles Darwin like

The Expression of the Emotions in Man

and Animals can give you genuine

insights with regard to your own

psychology, how your own mind works.

Can be kind of humbling when you realize

that you are in fact a kind of glorified

ape,

but it can be helpful.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to

the next question. This is from

Terasaka's says, and we're getting some

kind of meaty questions

in this Q&A. This is another meaty one.

Beefy, if you will.

Terasaka's says, "Why

Karunadasa?

Why the capital letter Y?" Probably I'm

guessing it's the initial of his first

name.

Although,

Y isn't really a like an Indian letter,

is it? Yeah, I guess it is. Yeah. Yeah,

there is Y in Pali. Okay. "Why

Karunadasa, scholar of early Buddhism,

wrote, quote, if we base ourselves on

the Pali Nikayas, then we should be

compelled to conclude that Buddhism is realistic. There is no explicit denial anywhere of the external world, nor is there any positive evidence to show that the world is mind-made or simply a projection of subjective thoughts.

That Buddhism recognizes the extra-mental existence of matter and the external world is clearly suggested by the texts. Throughout the courses or throughout the discourses, it is the language of realism that one encounters. The whole Buddhist practical doctrine and discipline, which has the attainment of nibbana as its final goal, is based on the recognition of the material world

and the conscious living beings living therein, unquote. And then Terasaka's says, "Why do you disagree with this?" Well, just consider the very last words of this quote.

This is based [clears throat] on the recognition of the material world and the conscious living beings living therein.

Now, the Buddha did teach that there is no self. And here we've got Karunadasa saying that the language of the Buddha just

affirms the existence of these beings that other texts say that don't really exist.

And that's because the Buddha had to use

what's called

vohara desana,

which means it's just the language of

the world.

He has to use regular language. He has

to talk about himself. He's got to talk

about you and that person and him and

her and them and we and us. He's

referring to all these beings, even

though ultimately they don't really

exist. And when you're talking about

trees and like food, bowls, robes, the

sun, I mean,

you just have to use a regular language.

I mean, it'd be so confusing if the

Buddha says, you know, the perception of

the sun that you have in in your mind,
even though it's not really your mind
because you don't really exist. I mean,
if he'd used language like that, he
wouldn't get very far.
Furthermore, in the earliest texts, the
Buddha discouraged any kind of
metaphysical speculation, any kind of
metaphysical philosophy.
So, he's just using plain language. And
when you're using plain language, you
have to talk about him and her and me
and you and trees and clouds and bowls
and food and robes and the sun, etc.
etc. etc.
He's not going to say that they exist or
they don't exist, except I mean, there

are texts like ancient texts

like

in the the Atakavagga, you know, the

Buddha says, "I do not declare this is

true,

quote unquote, which fools

will all say contrarily to each other."

And in a way, that statement itself is

sort of self-contradictory.

You know, I do not declare

this is so, when actually he is kind of

declaring that it is so that he doesn't

declare it. But we don't need to get

into that.

But I mean, the Buddha really did not

encourage philosophical speculation. So,

I mean, he [clears throat] was just

dealing at the surface level with regard

to talking about people that obviously

from even the Buddhist texts will claim

that people do not really exist as like

>> [snorts]

>> self-existent,

independent individual,

ultimately real entities.

And there are texts that you can find

like first verse of the Dhammapada.

I mean, it's the Dhammapada isn't

considered to be particularly old.

But still, the very first verse of the

Dhammapada is

dhammas, however you want to interpret

that. Generally, I would interpret it

just as phenomena, ways of being.
That they are have mind as their chief,
they are mind-made.
So, mind is the forerunner.
And and everything I mean, the all
dhammas, according to the first and
second verses of the Dhammapada, are
mind-made.
So, there is that, although orthodox
Theravada will say that dhamma here
means mental states, that mind precedes
mental states. And then in the
Dhammapada commentary, Buddhaghosa
immediately has to wade into the fact,
"Why would the Buddha say that when it
isn't true?" Because mind and mental

states arise simultaneously.

Why would you say that mind precedes

mental states?

But if you assume that dhamma here is

not referring to mental states, but is

referring to just phenomena in general,

you've got idealism.

Or there's another text in the Sutta

Nipata. I I don't think it's in the

Atthakavagga, but I do think it's in the

Sutta Nipata where the Buddha says, I

mean, [clears throat] it's relatively

old sutta, you look around, all you see

is nama-rupa.

And

probably, I mean, there is evidence that

originally, like in the oldest Buddhist

texts, nama-rupa

meant what it means like in the

Upanishadic literature, like old Indian

literature, philosophical literature

that isn't particularly Buddhist, that I

mean, it's interpreted literally.

Nama-rupa isn't mind and matter, it is

name and form.

Which is kind of like papanca-sankha,

except switched around. It's like how

perception works, how samsara arises.

First you've got

>> [clears throat]

>> rupa.

I don't know why they would say

nama-rupa. It's more like rupa-nama, so

it would be more in accordance with papanca-sankha. First you have like this form, and then you like you you like single out something, and then you slap an interpretation on it. That's how perception works. You know, you you single something out, and then you identify it, even if it's only with that, this, or what the hell is that, you know, that kind of thing, but still you have to identify it somehow.

So, I mean, there are hints or like gosh,

I just

come up with with other, you know, just just like in the Bahiya Sutta, like the cryptic

kind of archaic-sounding, also Zen-like teachings the Buddha gave to the wanderer Bahiya. In the seen there will be only the seen, and in the heard there will be only the heard. You know, in the in the felt there will be only the felt, and the mentally sensed there will be only the mentally sensed.

That I mean, that's that's how you should train yourself. And it's I mean, that's just like mind.

But, I mean, that's

and it'd be kind of pushing it to say that that's really insisting on idealism, but the Buddha wasn't insisting upon any kind of metaphysic in

the earliest texts.

So, the fact that

the Buddha is just referring to this

person and that person clearly should

not indicate that he believed

[clears throat] that they were

ultimately real.

So, why would you take it farther and

say that when he's referring to trees

and buildings and food and robe, that

he's insisting or even implying that

those are ultimately real? I mean, he's

just having to communicate

to help navigate through samsara,

you know, to to other people

in a way that they can understand, and

he's not encouraging any kind of

philosophical speculation. So, of

course, he has to use copy of ahara or

ahara desana.

Just

he has to use the language of the world

without clinging to it, just to

just to communicate.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to

the next question.

And then we're we're getting out of the

really meaty stuff at present.

This is from Clefy.

And this is this should be kind of a

self-explanatory kind of question.

You know, it's I mean, the answer should

be fairly obvious.

Clefy says, "Do you have any tips for me on how to come back to meditation when I fall off a habit of sitting in the morning?" And another person in the comments just left the the reply, "Just do it." And I mean, what other advice can I really give? If you want to get back into the habit of meditating,

then

get back into the habit of meditating. Just start meditating again and keep doing it.

I mean, if you want to, you know, some kind of

like reinforcement,

then you might try a group meditation, either go to a local meditation group or

go to a meditation retreat where you'll
be surrounded by other people
meditating, and that will kind of help
get you into the groove again.
But, I mean, the main thing is just have
some adhitthana or determination,
and just make up your mind that you're
going to do it, and then just do it.
I don't think any kind of subtle tricks
or
medications, pills,
technological devices, I don't think any
of that's really going to be the point.
Just make up your mind to do it, and
then do it.
Seems to me.

Okay, let's move on to the next question.

This is from Athena Sigil, and this I think we're getting kind of back into the meaty ones, or at least Athena Sigil's intention was for me to get meaty on this.

He says, "What does Punya think of other religions? Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Jainism, et cetera. Pros and cons, and then the various types of Buddhism, Nichiren, Pure Land, Vajrayana, Zen, et cetera. And do it in your typical rambling but insightful way of answering. I'll make the popcorn."

Well, you better I mean, it should be made by

But, I mean, this probably, now that I
think of it,
offhand, I mean, this might be better
off just doing an entire video, because
really I can't spend more than a few
minutes answering this question.
And I mean, he's wanting like a survey
of world religions
and a survey of the various sects of
Buddhism.
And I'm really not going to be able to
do much justice to all of that.
So, let's just uh
kind of
kind of hit the main points here.
So, what does Punya think of other

religions? He says Hinduism first. Well,

I mean, Hinduism started off as Vedism

in in northern India with the Indo-Aryan

invaders that a lot of Indian Hindu-type

people don't want to believe in,

but everyone else believes,

pretty much, in archaeology

at least,

that Hinduism began as Vedism when

Indo-Aryan, like Indo-European invaders

invaded northwestern India,

took over the last vestiges of the Indus

Valley Civilization that was already

pretty much collapsing at the time due

to climate change.

And

um

gradually over time, I mean, when it first started, it was not so different from like ancient Greek paganism or ancient Germanic paganism or ancient Roman paganism. You know, it was pretty worldly. You know, you're just trying to like kiss the ass of the gods so that they will favor you. And then they will give you stuff that you want, like sons and cattle and victory over your enemies.

You know, fire sacrifices, sacrificing animals in the fire,

including the horse sacrifice, which is one of the big ones.

>> [sighs and gasps]

>> So, then gradually

um to its benefit, I think, it started

absorbing

um like the Shramanic some Shramanic

elements that were already established

in India, possibly dating back to the

Indus Valley Civilization. And that's

where Buddhism, Jainism, uh proto-yoga,

Samkhya, the extinct Ajivika religion,

various other systems, no doubt, that

they all kind of had their origins in a

pre-Vedic

um like culture.

And you know, it was more or less

atheistic, you know, based on like

cosmic order, cosmic

through mainly through self-discipline

and self-purification,

like austerity, this kind of thing. So,

that elements of that got absorbed into

Vedism, and then you you it started

producing things like the Upanishads,

the Upanishadic literature, where Vedism

started becoming a deeper, more

mystical, enlightenment-oriented

system.

And then

over time, as it moved into southern

India, it became more devotionalistic,

more inclined to it's I [clears throat]

think it's called henotheism,

where whatever god in the pantheon you

happen to be worshipping at the time is

considered to be the highest god or just like like a doorway to the ultimate.
So, it got more that way, and then over time, some obscure Vedic gods, like Rudra, became like the main gods. You know, you like Shiva and Vishnu are like the two main gods in in modern Hinduism, I'm pretty sure.
I would guess probably more than half of all Hindus are either Shaivite or Vaishnavite.
And so, it just became more of a devotionalistic thing. Um
But, I mean, it it's Hinduism has such a broad spectrum, everything from the ridiculous to the sublime,
that there is some enlightened tradition

in there.

That there are enlightened

Hindus, I'm pretty sure. I wouldn't be

surprised if Neem Karoli Baba up there

on top of the bookcase was one of them.

I mean, he had developed superhuman

mental states, even if there are

skeptics who don't want to believe that

he was fully enlightened.

But I mean, he would just look right

through you. He wouldn't He would take

one look at you and know you better than

you know you.

And furthermore, he could supposedly,

based on many many witnesses, that I

mean, he was able to perform

[clears throat] what are vulgarly known

as miracles.

Just disappearing in one place,

reappearing somewhere else, appearing in

more than one place at the same time.

He didn't turn water into wine, but he

turned water into milk on a number of

occasions.

He had his own version of the miracle of

the loaves and fishes.

Um

so, yeah, Hinduism

it it really is just

everything from the ridiculous to the

sublime.

And there are like enlightenment

traditions in Hinduism, especially like

Vedanta.

Some of the more advanced forms of yoga.

With regard to Christianity,

um

gosh, where do you start? I mean, this

is this question is is such a huge

question.

And I really it I mean, it could like a

1-hour video might do it justice.

Christianity, of course, was founded by

Jesus of Nazareth,

who, in my opinion, was sort of like an

ancient version of Mary Baker Eddy,

where

apparently,

he was the son of a carpenter,

not the son of Yahweh, God of
war and desert storms,
not the creator of the universe,
but he started off as a carpenter, a
carpenter's son, and
it wasn't satisfying him.
He had deep spiritual yearnings. He
heard of this man John the Baptist, who
had like a spiritual camp on the on the
River Jordan. He goes there, and at some
point, according to the Bible, it's
while he's being baptized, the spirit of
the Lord descends into him. He had some
kind of awakening experience, and he was
able to perform what are vulgarly known
as miracles. And he was able to heal the
sick and all this. And I'm willing to

accept that Jesus was able to heal the sick. He was able to perform certain miracles.

I Now, from the Buddhist point of view, psychic powers,

it's not just the only begotten son of God Almighty that can do this kind of thing. A lot of people in India have been able to do it, allegedly, including Neem Karoli Baba up there.

But,

it was sort of apocalyptic times for the Jews in those days. I mean, they were waiting for their Messiah, and the Messiah had sort of

he had sort of metamorphosed

from just a world leader who was going to lead Israel to being foremost among the nations, you know, just as a like a political figure, just sort of like a descendant of King David, who's going to be like the new King David. That there started being like apocalyptic literature, like the Book of Daniel in the Old Testament. They're starting to interpret the Messiah under along more spiritual lines. And the proto-Christians, including Jesus himself,
were apparently [clears throat] following this apocalyptic trend in Judaism.
And so, because he was suddenly able to

perform these miracles,

he apparently jumped to the conclusion

that he was the Messiah.

And

I mean, this is just a hypothesis on my

part. Bear in mind, I'm not a Christian,

so I mean, you can't really expect me to

consider Jesus to be the creator of the

universe who died for our sins and all

that.

But I mean, he was nailed to the cross,

being brutally executed by the Romans,

not because he claimed to be the son of

God. I mean, the Romans didn't care

whether someone was going to someone was

claiming to be descended from some

obscure Semitic deity. But he was being called King of the Jews, which was, you know, what the Messiah was supposed to be. And the Romans didn't like that at all.

You know, somebody claiming to be the King of the Jews when Augustus, you know, Caesar in Rome is King of the Jews, if anybody is.

Or Herod gets to be puppet King of the Jews, maybe.

So, he got nailed to the cross, and while he's nailed up, he cries out, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

Which I'm I hypothesize

that he finally realized he wasn't the Jewish Messiah, but he wound up being the Christian Messiah big time, didn't he?

And then along came Paul of Tarsus, fanatic that he was, he just cooked up a new form of Christianity without even really meeting any of the like the actual disciples of Jesus.

He just went off into Arabia, was alone in Arabia for a while, for a few years, a couple years, and just cooked up this [laughter] system of Christianity in his mind, and then he went to Jerusalem and met like the brother of of Jesus and all that.

So,

Christianity is like half Jesus and half Paul Tarsus at this point, it seems to me.

And it's just changed a lot. It is a far cry from what Jesus was originally teaching. I mean, you can just read the New Testament, especially the first three Gospels, the Synoptic Gospels, and you see that I mean, it's different from the Christianity nowadays.

I mean, there is a there is a a verse or a

uh

what do you call it? Just a passage in the Bible where Jesus says, "You must make yourselves perfect just as your

father in heaven is perfect."
But
that one kind of fell by the wayside
because it became sort of Christian
doctrine that nobody is perfect. You I
mean, even Jesus denied being perfect at
one point.
I mean, somebody called him good good
rabbi or good master or something, and
he says, "Why do you call me good?
There's none good except God."
So, he denied being good or God, it
seems to me. I mean, it could easily be
interpreted that way.
But I could really never take
Christianity very seriously. I think

there it's possible for some Christians to become enlightened partly in spite of the system because like the system, I mean, the goal isn't even enlightenment. The goal is just to be good enough to get into heaven.

The beatific vision is like the best you can hope for as a Christian, at least from a Catholic point of view, even though St. John of the Cross was essentially describing a kind of enlightenment that some Catholics had attained, the state of perfection where you have mortified yourself will and just become like this empty vessel that is filled with the will of God. You know, you become a divine puppet. You're

no longer acting on your own volition.
You're acting on the will of God.
It's being God through participation.
So, Christianity, I mean, I don't
consider it to be the most profound
religion, and it's I mean, the the
assumptions are just the narrative of it
strike me as just absurd.
How people so many people, most people
in the West have believed that this
Jewish carpenter in the early Roman
Empire is literally the creator of the
universe. I mean,
it's just one of the indications that
religion is a kind of benevolent
psychosis.

But I mean, to the to the benefit of
Christianity, the most brilliant minds
of Western civilization
for a thousand years were endorsing
Christianity and like coming up with
good ideas, excellent architecture and
music and so forth.
So,
you know, it is I mean, for better or
for worse,
a a Jewish schismatic sect, a schismatic
sect of Judaism became the main religion
of Western civilization for over a
thousand years.
For better or for worse. And all this
talk about people of Hebrew ethnicity, I
mean, just think about it. I mean, we

deified one and turned him into the creator of the universe. What the hell do you expect?

Well, let's just move on to Islam.

And Islam is different from Hinduism or Christianity. Hinduism was just sort of an amalgam of various pre-Brahmans and sages and so forth making contributions, sort of like the Old Testament is sort of a

a joint venture of different people making contributions to the scriptures of the Jews. Christianity is founded by Jesus and then also secondarily founded by Paul of Tarsus. Islam was founded by one person.

Sort of like you could say like

proto-Judaism

may have been founded by Moses. Muhammad

was definitely a Moses type rather than

a Buddha type or a Jesus type.

I mean, Moses and Muhammad were

essentially warlords.

They were political leaders and

spiritual leaders, and they were

spiritual leaders through being spokes-

spokesman for God to everybody else. You

know, you have to do this because God

says to

you have to do it. And I mean, God would

be telling the Israelites, for example,

to slaughter entire towns.

God says so.

So, Muhammad was essentially a warlord.
He started off as like a caravan bandit.
He was a warlord, became essentially
king of all of Arabia by the time of his
death.
Had hundreds of people beheaded, had
their wives and children sold into
slavery.
He forced himself sexually on
female prisoners of war in one famous
occasion at least with her dead husband
just lying right outside the tent.
Recently a widow.
So, yeah, Islam
I mean, it is not a particularly wise
religion. You know, it's sort of like

Jehovah's Witnesses and where they say
wisdom is obeying God and God says this
cuz this is what the book says. I mean,
that's that's the wisdom of it.
But, I mean, there're going to be wise
people all over the world and there're
going to be wise Muslims. Like Sufis,
for example, although Sufism probably
would not have been endorsed by Muhammad
himself. It absorbed some like Buddhist
and Hindu elements from like
Northwestern India, that kind of thing.
But, I mean, there are going to be good
and wise people
that are going to rise to the top, that
are going to like have profound insights
and wisdom in spite of their religious

system as much as because of it.
So, I'm not saying all Muslims are
foolish, even though I do think that the
founder of Islam was essentially
a violent criminal type of person.
And even his favorite wife, Aisha, when
he he married when she was like nine
or 11. Maybe he waited until she started
menstruating at 11 to consummate the
marriage.
But, Aisha was always kind of skeptical
of Muhammad.
And
one time she says rather archly, you
know,
that Allah is quick to do your bidding.

Like there was

I think some

Ethiopian king sent Muhammad a slave

girl as a present.

And Muhammad liked the slave girl and

was actually having uh he was knowing

her in the biblical sense on the bed of

one of his other wives and she walked in

on them. And so, he promised he wouldn't

be messing around with this slave girl

anymore, but then

Allah himself very conveniently tells

him that he can break his promise. So,

he got to keep messing around with the

slave girl.

You know, this kind of stuff. I mean, he

was a warlord using religion as a kind

of power grab. I mean, he may have been sincere. You know, he may have been sincerely hysterically dissociating sort of like Joseph Smith.

Is that his name? The founder of the Mormons?

I mean,

the Quran and and the Book of Mormon are both channeled texts going with with like new age jargon.

And both of them

coincidentally are texts that are just full of absurdity and also with this repeated warning, if you don't believe all this, you're going to burn in hell forever and ever.

Well, let's move on to Jainism. I mean,

Jainism is fairly straightforward. You

know, it's it was like a vestige of the

pre-Vedic spiritual milieu

of Northwestern India.

And

even though Mahavira is considered to be

the founder of Jainism, he himself

considered himself to be just sort of

like the most recent of the great

leaders of Jainism.

So, he was just sort of a

>> [laughter]

>> maybe not a reformer, but a continuer.

He was like the last

Tirthankara

thus far, the most recent one.

But, it was I mean, it's kind of similar
to Buddhism, but it's it's very
straightforward, very simplistic that
you have a soul or a jiva and it is
weighed down by sticky karma.
And so, you've got to like get rid of
this karma that's weighing down your
your soul so that your soul can float up
into heaven. And that's I mean, that's
pretty much the whole
the whole religion right there.
Is just you're trying to get rid of your
karma, don't make any new karma, and
burn off your old karma sometimes
through self-torture.
Okay.

So,

I mean, there there other other

religions.

I've already mentioned Judaism, which

also I do not consider to be

particularly profound book. I remember

first time I read the Old Testament, I

kept thinking, I mean, when's the wisdom

stuff going to start?

You know, you get through Genesis and

Exodus and Joshua and going through like

Mosaic Law, Deuteronomy and Numbers and

all that. And there's not much actual

wisdom in there. Just worship God cuz if

you don't, he's going to he's going to

[__] you up.

He's going to kill you, he's going to

kill your family, maybe your neighbors.
I mean, that's
that's like the recurring message of the
Old Testament. Love the Lord your God
with all your heart and all your
strength or he's going to kill you.
And maybe your family and friends, too.
But, where was I? Gosh. Oh, yeah. It was
like I'm reading the Old Testament. Just
when is the wisdom part going to start?
Finally get to the Book of Ruth
and it wasn't very wise, but at least it
was nonviolent. You know, it wasn't the
pages weren't soaked in blood.
But, then finally I remember getting
into the the story of King David. That'd

be like what? First Book of First or

Second Book of Samuel, I guess.

King David [clears throat]

where

his son Absalom is rising up against him

trying to usurp the throne and King

David doesn't want to kill his own son.

He doesn't want to fight his own son in

the civil war. So, he just kind of takes

off with some of his loyal advisers and

as he's leaving Jerusalem, there's

somebody like mocking and and like

cussing at him. Just sort of mocking and

sneering at him. And you know, it's like

one of the advisers to King David, you

know, says, "You want me to go kill

him?" And King David says, "No, just let

him have his say. You know, have let him say what speak his mind." And I thought, "Wow, that's wisdom." You know, it's like King David is letting this person mock and sneer at him and he doesn't want revenge. That's like the first actual wisdom I've came I've come across in the Old Testament. And then later on when King David is on his deathbed, he he tells somebody, I think it was King Solomon who's you know, going to replace him, his his successor, "That guy who was mocking and cursing at me, make sure you [__] him up."

So, I'm like poof, there went the the first wisdom I encountered in the Old

Testament.

Book of Ecclesiastes is nice.

But, Judaism really, I mean, it's again,

it's one of those religions

that is is just this-worldly, not

particularly profound. You know, the

only wisdom is, you know, obey God

and according to this book that's full

of absurdity.

And just kind of crude barbarism.

>> [clears throat and sighs]

>> But, there have been like very advanced

Hebrew rabbis that largely in spite of

their own scriptures, their own

religious traditions, just through

talent and just being born and into it

like a Jewish culture, you know, just

they wound up being sages.

Whether there's ever been a fully

enlightened Hebrew or not, I don't know.

Unless they just became a Hindu or a

Buddhist. There's lots of JewBus and

what would what what would a a Jewish

Hindu be? Like Ram Dass, although Ram

Dass didn't claim to be enlightened.

But, he was he was born into a Jewish

family.

They weren't exactly kosher. He said

they they did eat pork when they went to

Chinese restaurants when he was growing

up.

So,

yeah, I mean, of the world religions,

those are like the main ones, I guess. I mean, Shinto, I could I could talk about Shinto, but I mean, that's just another one of those very worldly cultural kind of things. I mean, there may be some enlightenment tradition in Shinto, but I've never heard of it.

Taoism, I mean, that's kind of Zen-like in its like iconoclasm and so forth. Or at least in the texts it is, but I have read that that modern Taoism, you know, is it's kind of degenerated into like hocus pocus kind of magic, you know, the priests waving paper wands or waving swords made out of coins welded together to like remove your sins or something, your impurities or something.

Trying to go against the the way in order to go with the way and live forever.

This kind of thing, you know, there's kind of like some alchemy stuff going on.

But, I mean, most of what I know about Taoism, I picked up from the the Tao Te Ching and the Zhuangzi.

Which probably your your purest and wisest forms of Taoism, at least that are readily available.

But, let's just move on to the second part of Athena Sigils very complex sort of question.

He says, "And then the various types of Buddhism,
Nichiren, Pure Land, Vajrayana, Zen, et cetera." And again, I mean, this could be a 2-hour-long video just answering this one question.
Nichiren, I don't know that much about it, but is is that the one Namu Myoho Renge Kyo where it like almost the entire
school of Buddhism has just sort of compacted down into just venerating the Lotus Sutra?
I mean, that's Namu Myoho Renge Kyo.
That's sort of sort of like the mantra they repeat over and over again, which is just like homage to the Lotus Sutra.

I assume they would they would be
encouraged to at least read the Lotus
Sutra. There is some profundity in the
Lotus Sutra,
but it's it's kind of kind of like Pure
Landish
to me. I mean, it's it's hard for me to
consider Nichiren to be like genuine
Buddhism.
You know, it's it's they left Gautama
Buddha like in the dust. Way
way back there, you know, they're not
even facing the same direction as
Gautama Buddha, apparently.
Or they got their backs turned on them.
Maybe they're you know, they're he's

kind of looking this way and they're
looking that way, but he's behind them.
So, Nichiren is is just kind of like
a kind of fake Buddhism, it seems to me.
I mean,
I'm just trying to be honest here.
I mean, I I I I I would assume that like
Pure Land they at least still have like
the basics of Buddhist ethics, five
precepts, that kind of thing.
But I mean, it has almost nothing to do
with you what you're going to find in
the Pali texts. And the same goes for
the next one on the list here, Pure Land
Buddhism.
Pure Land Buddhism, it was like some
monks

in ancient India,

they just practiced, tried to follow the

the holy life, tried to practice

correctly, failed, just said, "Well,

it's it's not possible. I'm just going

to start worshiping this imaginary space

Buddha."

So, they just start praying to imaginary

space Buddhas. It's it's like

Christianity for Buddhists.

And I

I mean, I've said this before. I

honestly, sincerely consider Pure Land

Buddhism to be one of the most egregious

perversions of Buddha Dharma in the

history of Buddhism.

I mean, the Buddha himself, the
historical Buddha, would probably
denounce Pure Land Buddhism. And I guess
the official position of Pure Land
Buddhism is that Gautama Buddha never
even really existed.
>> [sighs]
>> It's just strange to me.
I mean, Christianity is one thing. You
know, most Christians never were exposed
to anything wiser than Christianity
because anything wiser [clears throat]
than Christianity either just wasn't
there or had just been killed off by
hysterical, intolerant Christians.
But for a Buddhist who's has this vast
treasure of wisdom,

to just kind of reject what the Buddha originally taught in favor of imaginary space Buddhas,

I mean, it's just it just

I I can't wrap my head around it. I just cannot I just don't get it.

So, let's just move on to Vajrayana.

In Vajrayana, I mean, it's Tibetan Buddhism. I mean, there's other kinds of Tibetan Buddhism, I guess. But I mean, Vajrayana was sort of like uh Mahayana Buddhism meets like traditional ancient Tibetan shamanism. There's all kinds of weird deities and demons and so forth.

But there is a wisdom tradition, and you know, it's sort of like Hinduism where

it's just the the full spectrum from the ridiculous to the sublime. You know, there's still like an enlightenment tradition in Vajrayana.

I don't know that much about it. One of the most profound books I ever read was the Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation, attributed to Padmasambhava, although not necessarily really by Padmasambhava because books get attributed to famous sages as a way of like lending

like

respectability, authority to that text. So, yeah, I don't know that much about Vajrayana, but and it does have some really weird esoteric, you know,

tantra and demonology and stuff mixed

in,

but

I mean, [clears throat] at least there

is like this,

you know, crystallized

enlightenment tradition that still

exists in Vajrayana.

And I guess the training of some like

Tibetan monks is very stringent. They

got to get take years of studying like

logic and this kind of stuff. At least

the Tibetan version of logic.

So, get to Zen.

Well, I mean,

I I was originally

inclined to become a Zen monk until I
went to a Zen monastery and then
compared that with a Theravada monastery
and came to the conclusion, which is a
pretty obvious conclusion to come to,
that Theravada was came closer to what
the Buddha originally taught.
Although
there are different kinds of Zen
monasteries. Some Zen monasteries are
going to be better than others, just as
some Theravada monasteries can be way
better than others.
But yeah, I like I like Zen. I mean, the
Pure Land elements that got absorbed in
it and like Vairocana and all this
Manjushri, god of wisdom, and all this

kind of stuff is just superfluous as far
as I'm concerned.
It's just cultural stuff, cultural
accretions that got added.
So, yeah, Zen
I think Zen was I mean, Maha some some
aspects of Mahayana, like the
uh Prajnaparamita
Sutras and Zen and so forth, they were
kind of a reform movement. You know,
they were trying to get back towards
what the Buddha was originally teaching,
although they also were moving farther
away from it with like the Bodhisattva
concept and all this. But at least I
mean,

around the time that Mahayana was arising, it was like the fashion in the pre-Mahayana schools of Buddhism to have a kind of Abhidharma, like this vast technical scholastic edifice of like metaphysics and so forth, trying to explain reality, trying to explain all the interactions, all the possible interactions of phenomena and all this. And it was just moving so far away from the Buddha's original intention that there not be any of this metaphysical speculation.

I mean, it's it's beyond speculation. It's just asserting this is the way it is. This is what the Buddha himself taught.

So,

some schools of Mahayana

kind

got got away from all this scholastic

stuff, you know, all this elaborate

philosophizing and just getting back

into just purity of mind,

you know, just direct insight.

And Zen has an element of that,

definitely.

I think Zen also absorbed some Taoism to

in when it during its stay in China.

But I would not at all be surprised if

there were lots of enlightened Zen

masters, even though probably most of

the ones considered to be enlightened

were just sort of

you know, myth mythologized.

So, I mean, that's all the ones on the

list and this I mean, really, like I

said, I could go on for an hour or two

just on this topic of what do I think of

other religious systems.

So, I think that's good enough for now.

We've already been going for more than

an hour, even though there really

weren't a whole heck of a lot of

questions this time.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Siddhartha

Gautama.

Uh Gautama, that's it's like

red mind.

Is that what Gautama means? Red mind?
Lohita is blood. I think loha means like
copper or just it's indicative of the
red color.
The color red, I should have said.
Anyways, Siddhartha Gautama says,
"I've just read the Laws of Manu, Manava
Dharma Shastra, and I was surprised by
how it tries to place the philosopher or
Brahmin or the Kshatriya or warrior
above the merchant or Vaishya.
Don't you think that if we put one of
these two figures ahead of the merchant,
as happens today in global capitalism,
the world might be somewhat better?"
Well, I don't understand why Siddhartha

Gautama was surprised
by how in ancient India, and the Laws of
Manu was pre-Buddhist, I'm pretty sure.
That I I'm I don't know why he was
surprised at how it places Brahmans and
Kshatriyas above Vaishyas.
I mean, that's just the way it always
was. You know, the two top castes or
varnas in traditional Vedic India, and
you know, still to this day, are the
Brahmans, the priestly caste, and the
Kshatriyas, which are the noble or
warrior caste, and the Vaishyas came
below that, and then Shudras, like
peasants, came at the bottom.
Or I guess the outcasts were below them,
I suppose.

And I mean, the traditional explanation
of this is you got the invading
Indo-Aryan tribes, you know, they were
they were led by
war chiefs and the priestly cla- the
priestly caste or class at that time.
You know, they were the leaders, and
then the the descendants of the common
soldiers,
the invading common soldiers, would be
the Vaishyas. You know, they be the the
landowners, the farmers, eventually
merchants, although in you know,
very [clears throat] early times, the
Vedic times, you didn't really have
merchants cuz there wasn't any money

yet.

You know, there'd be trading, but mostly

people would be self-sufficient. They

might trade some cattle or some crop,

you know, food or something in exchange

for something else, like bartering.

But merchants, [clears throat]

money lenders, that kind of thing didn't

didn't happen until shortly before the

Buddhist time, which was long after the

Indo-Aryan invasion.

You know, a thousand years later.

So,

yeah, I I don't Siddhartha Gautama must

have been fairly innocent of ancient

Indian history.

But he says, here's the actual question,

don't you think that if we put one of these two figures ahead of the merchant, as happens today in global capitalism, the world might be somewhat better?

Yeah, I mean, there was a similar question about you know, it used to be that the the leaders, the rulers were the warrior class. You know, that's the way it was I mean, since forever. The warriors are the leaders because of course, they got the weapons. They're the badasses. And if you don't follow them, they're going to they're going to kill you.

So,

I mean, that was that was

up until like the 1800s.

Probably by the 20th century, it wasn't so much of a thing that if you were of a a noble family, you were a duke or an earl, a prince, you know, the son of a duke or an earl or a king, that you would just join the military and become an officer. You'd be a commander.

So,

I mean, that kind of fell through like in 20th century, seems to me. Maybe towards the end of the the 19th century.

>> [sighs]

>> So, if we put I mean, the warriors, I mean, at least I mean, if they're putting their lives on the line, leading their troops into battle, this

kind of thing, then they may have earned
the right to some increased authority in
society since they're the ones that are
pretty much holding it together,
at least by defending it against the
other nobles.
So,
yeah, the priestly class, I mean, a
theocracy, you know, some leftists want
to accuse Republicans of wanting to
establish a theocracy in America, which
is kind of silly. I don't think that
that would
that would gain much traction.
But I mean, there there are a few
theocracies left, like Iran

kind of is a theocracy, even though

their spiritual leader is

I mean, he's got one leg and

having to have lots of surgeries and

stuff to keep him alive at present.

Then you got the Vatican.

Uh Tibet used to be more or less of a

theocracy. You know, it was ruled by the

Dalai Lama.

The Papal States, I guess the Vatican is

just all that's left of that.

So, I mean, theocracies,

you know, like the the the Arabian

Empire was originally ruled by, you

know, the successors of Muhammad.

So, that was kind of a theocracy.

Uh in fact, I mean, you could even say

to some degree that the Roman Empire
was sort of a theocracy in the sense
that the the emperor was also the
Pontifex Maximus.
You know, he was the first intermediary
between humans and gods.
But then you got like, you know, god
emperors, you know, the the warrior
priests, that kind of thing that was
sort of combined the warriors and the
priests, although the Roman Empire was
not particularly spiritual.
So,
don't you think that if we put one of
these two figures ahead of the merchant,
as happens today in global capitalism,

the world might be somewhat better?

Well, it might be.

But I mean, any any kind of

any kind of like governmental system

inclines towards corruption.

And

I don't know. I mean, it just it just

depends on like the spirit of the times

and the condition of the spirit of the

people

that's going to project to to their

government. I mean, every every people

gets the government they deserve. That's

the old saying. I think it's attributed

to Voltaire.

You know, every every nation gets the

government it deserves. You got a

degenerate population, you're going to

wind up with a degenerate government.

You got like this strong,

vibrant kind of

culture that was a lot of vitality,

you're going to have strong, vibrant

leaders with a lot of vitality.

So, I mean, it's it seems to me that

it's not so much whether the the leaders

of the country are

uh military [clears throat]

commanders or priests or like merchants

and financiers, it's just that what

state is the society in.

And it may be that there's you know,

like

Oswald Spengler or someone
may have come up with some theory with
some good evidence backing it up.
That in the more vibrant
kind of societies, you know, the really
strong ones that are still in the
ascendant,
that you would have more of a military
government. I mean, that's history does
kind of show that. You know, Rome as it
was climbing up, I mean, they were just
badasses.
And then they started getting decadent,
you know, it's like hard men make good
times, good times make weak men, weak
men make bad times, bad times make
strong men. And we're right now, the the

phase of history that Western

civilization is mainly in right now, is

good times make weak men. We've hardly

even gotten into the weak men make bad

times aspect of the thing.

>> [snorts]

>> And

yeah, it may be

that it's just more likely that you're

going to be at an ascendant, vibrant

stage of civilization when you still

have like the warrior kings.

Or like the Roman Republic, I mean, they

didn't really have kings.

They had consuls.

But it was kind of the same sort of

principle.

You know, at least you had a republic.

And and in the Roman Republic, like

early

I don't know, just throughout the Roman

Republic, I mean, the common people did

have a voice. It wasn't a very loud

voice,

but still, I mean, I do think that

regardless of who is ruling, that all

law-abiding citizens, at least the male

ones who obey the law and pay taxes,

should have a voice in government if

they want one.

But again, it's like the individual

isn't going to make much of an a

difference.

But if you got lots and lots of

individuals that feel the same way, it

can make a difference.

So, yeah, I mean, it might be somewhat

better,

maybe.

I'm just going to move on to Siddhartha

Gautama's next next question here.

Is Judaism a Vaishya philosophy

religion? Well, this is trying to like

mix analogies, mix models. You know,

because of course, Judaism really is not

Vedic.

Um in the Bible, I think, it says that

Israel is a nation of priests. You know,

it was kind of a spiritual kind of a

country, you know, it was based on

religion to some degree, worship of of

Yahweh

conflated with El.

So,

Judaism originally may have been more of

a Brahmanistic. I mean, also, I mean,

they were military badasses at various

points in their history.

But mainly the military badasses tended

to

they tended to sort of overlap with the

priests. You know, like the whole um

like the Maccabees thing.

You know, they were they were like

warrior priests.

But

now that we're in like the decline phase
of Western civilization,
you got more merchants involved in the
thing. And the Jews, people of people of
Hebrew ancestry,
um yeah, they tend to be more
more like Vaishyas, more like merchants
and money lenders, obviously.
I mean, they were pretty much forced to
become money lenders in the Middle Ages.
I mean, once Western civilization became
Christian and usury was still considered
to be a sin,
you know, like Dante's Inferno has a
special circle of hell for usurers.
That's people who would lend money at

interest. The Christians couldn't do it.
And so, that's one reason why the Jews
are in the position that they are,
is that Christians were not allowed to
lend money at interest, but sometimes
you'd have nobles, the upper classes,
they want to borrow money.
So, they would actually protect Jews
from the Christian rabble who resented
them cuz the Jews tended to be rich
because they were the money lenders.
They were the bankers. They had to be.
Nobody else could do it.
So,
yeah, I'd say Judaism wasn't originally
a Vaishya, like a mercantile kind of
religion, but then again, I mean, it's

like trying to combine the Indian caste system with something alien to the Indian caste system, where it's just, you know, the Jews were all of these things.

Maybe not so much of the Shudras, you know, the like the peasant farmers. I mean, there are some of those, you know, you got the kibitzes and so forth in Israel.

So, yeah, I mean it's

I wouldn't say that Judaism is a particularly Vaishya religion, even though there is a lot of emphasis on mercantile aspects since the Middle Ages.

But of course there's a lot of
Brahmanistic stuff, too, because of
course
Judaism is a religion and the Brahmans
were the religious caste, you know, the
priestly caste.
Uh but it is true that Judaism I mean
they they still have quite the military,
you know, they've got probably the
the the best, most advanced military in
the Middle East.
So, I mean they still kick some butt.
It's mainly with American weapons, but a
lot of American money.
But still, I mean they're they're still
fighters, partly because they're like a
modern crusader state in Israel, where

they're surrounded by people who want
them dead. Or at least
I mean maybe less so now because of
Trump, because of the Abraham Accords
and now like the the Arab Gulf states
are actually allies with Israel.
We'll have to see how that goes.
I think I answered that question, so I'm
just going to move on to the next one.
This is from the Saboteur, also known
evidently as Victorno.
Either that or through a strange
coincidence, the Saboteur asked one
question on BitChute and somebody named
Victorno asked the exact same question
on YouTube.

So, the Saboteur or and Victorno, if they're two different people.
Maybe that's why the Saboteur used to be in the plural.
They say, or he says, "Karma notwithstanding, how can one avoid reincarnation and remain in the heavenly realms at least for a few thousand years being non-attached?
The way the world is going, I don't think it's a great idea to come back with World War around the corner." Well, World War has been around the corner for quite a while now.
I mean, one reason why I didn't want to have kids as a young man was cuz World War was right around the corner.

And we came damn close a few times.

>> [cough and clears throat]

>> Anyways,

how can you avoid reincarnation

and remain in the heavenly realms at

least for a few thousand years? Well, I

mean, the only way to avoid

reincarnation is become fully

enlightened. So, I think he just wants

to delay reincarnation by staying in a

heaven realm for at least a few thousand

years. And I mean that's through

magnanimity, greatness of spirit. This

great virtue or or otherwise some

greatness of spirit, where you become

like a god-like person. If you die with

a god-like mind, a god-like personality,
just through greatness of spirit or
purity of spirit, you know, the intense
intense fire of a pure spirit,
then
there's a good chance you're going to go
up in heaven, especially if you haven't
created a lot of bad karma that might
act as obstacles to that.
Way more good karma than bad karma,
let's say.
Um yeah, I mean that's the best way to
do it. I mean, if you if you can somehow
master jhana,
you know, the the more advanced Buddhist
meditative or contemplative states, that
if you master jhana, then you're going

to wind up in a Brahma realm, a very
high heaven realm that might be
a little too boring for your taste. I
mean, if you want celestial mansions and
harems of celestial nymphs and all that,
then you're probably not going to want
to master jhana, because in the Brahma
realms there's not even a distinction
between male and female.
They don't even have a a sense of touch,
I'm pretty sure.
At least according to the texts.
You know, there there's no tactile
sensation in the Brahma realms.
They can see and hear though
and think.

Uh [sighs] so, yeah, if you want to be reborn in a heaven realm, then be more good than bad and just try to have an angelic or god-like attitude and mind, especially right before you die.

But this last statement he says, "The way the world is going, I don't think it's a great idea to come back with World War around the corner." I mean, there's not just one world.

You're going to be reborn where you ought to be reborn. You know, your karma is going to land you where you deserve to be.

And if you don't deserve to be in a thermonuclear holocaust, for example,

then you won't be.

I mean, it's not just this one world. I mean, there was like this debate going on on the Discord server associated loosely with this this series of Q&A videos,

where there's this one person who he just thinks, you know, determinism is the way it is, there's only one version of this world.

Now, he doesn't have much use for the the block of marble

or, you know, with God all things are possible and all that, even though he sometimes he he does temporarily, at least, convert to Christianity.

>> [sighs]

>> Uh in my father's house are many mansions and all that. In an infinite universe, anything that can happen does happen.

And time and space are largely illusions.

So, I mean,

trying to to like run and hide from your own karma, that's not very realistic.

I mean, if you haven't done anything, I mean,

I mean, maybe not in this life, but you may have some karmic seeds that may land you in a horrible situation, even though you may not have done anything in this life to deserve it. But sometimes karma

will throw [__] at you that it may be
that you don't deserve it through your
own actions so much as just through kind
of a a reckless,
crude sort of attitude, which causes you
to create your reality in a kind of
like, what's the word, incompetent sort
of way, sort of like a drunk driver.
But I'm I'm
wandering away from this question.
I've already answered the part about how
to get reborn into heaven.
But still [laughter]
addressing this part, he doesn't want to
be reborn as a human going into World
War I mean, I really don't worry about

that. I mean, you just think about even

if there isn't a World War

III,

you know, there's transhumanism and AI,

all right? I mean, we're on the we're on

the verge right now.

You know, it's like, do you want to live

in a world where you're going to have

like a a computer [clears throat]

implant in your brain and you're going

to think like a computer and and just

sort of be human,

not entirely, but pretty much.

Or just AI just takes over everything.

Who I mean, who knows what the world's

going to be like 100 years from now?

But if you don't have the karma for

that, and this is one thing that I take
some solace in, is I have confidence in
my own karma to the extent that I don't
think I'm just going to land in some
nightmarish dystopia or or like go to
hell.
So, I mean, you should have a certain
amount of faith
in your own spirit.
You know, that like the the deep down
core of wisdom that you have, that
you're not just going to land yourself
in some sort of nightmarish hellscape.
And your ex- expectations do have
influence. I mean, if you're expecting
something bad to happen, something bad

is more likely to happen than if you
just have faith. You know, it's not like
you're in denial or anything. Nope,
nothing bad is ever going to happen to
me. But if you just kind of have like
this quiet faith
in like your deep down root of virtue
and wisdom that's that's always there. I
mean, there's like an enlightened
element to everybody. It's the Mahayana
Buddhists call it like the Buddha
nature.
Just cherish that.
And just kind of
and dedicate your life to, you know,
sort of upward things.
Try to cultivate virtue and wisdom

to the extent that you are capable.

And I mean, this kind of thing really shouldn't bother you. Worrying is always bad karma, kukkucca in Pali.

It just makes things worse.

So, worry is bad karma.

So, just do your best to get into heaven, I suppose. But I mean, if you don't succeed, still at least you were trying to get into heaven and doing a lot of good things in order to get into heaven, so that even if you land back on some human realm, chances are you're not going to wind up in some nightmarish hellscape.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from PSA, and I was asked this question several times, and I answered this question even during the the course of the recent the previous Q&A.

PSA says, "Why didn't you mute the constant beeping of the two toddlers throwing tantrums at each other on Discord?" And those of you who watched the previous Q&A may remember that it was like right before I started doing the video,

there was at least two people. I think it might have been more than two people started this

vociferous debate on Discord. And although I keep my computer muted,

because otherwise the feedback from the microphone would have would just be screeching anyway. Still, my woman's computer will still have these notifications going beep beep beep and I'm sitting sitting right in front of her computer right now. I got my computer which is a laptop right in front of her monstrosity of a the desktop computer and I really didn't know how to operate her computer to turn off the beeping, but now I know.
I just turned down the the speaker. I muted the speaker on her computer right [clears throat] before starting this video, so we have no beeping even

though in all likelihood there is some
debating going on cuz another debate had
pretty much started right before I
started recording this.
So, all I had to do was just find the
speaker that had the control the volume
control, which for some reason was lying
on the floor under the table.
Took a while.
But, I managed it. I do learn. I do
adapt.
That's one of the uh
the signs of life is adaptation. If
you're dead, you don't adapt much.
But, if you're alive, you can adapt to
like changing circumstances.
So, that's something to bear in mind if

you're not sure if you're alive or not.

So, yeah, it wasn't my computer. It was

my woman's computer. I never really

bothered to learn how to operate her

computer. You know, it's it's it's kind

of a

I mean, I've not fully mastered the art

of even turning it on.

But, I'm I'm it's it's under control.

You don't hear any beeping this time.

And so, I'm just moving on to PSA's next

question.

What are your thoughts on the US-Israel

war against Iran?

Yeah, that's kind of been in the news

lately, hasn't it?

The US and Israel have been bombing the

[__] out of Iran.

And

to tell you the truth, some of the main

thoughts I have are just like

frustrated astonishment

that so many people on the right have

turned against Donald Trump because he's

Zion Don and he's just Netanyahu's [__]

and he's fighting this war just for

Israel with no real benefits to the

United States.

And it's such simplistic propagand- and

propagandistic thinking. It's just

simple-mindedness in my case because

some some of these people, even if you

present them with evidence to the

contrary that I mean, there are some
benefits to America
from attacking Iran just as there were
benefits to America for attacking
Venezuela, which was a much smoother
quicker sort of process, I have to
admit.
So, I mean, it is true probably Israel
was trying to talk Donald Trump into
helping them bomb the [__] out of Iran.
You know, it's there Iran was always on
the verge of developing nuclear weapons,
which is sort of like this joke and also
a lot of politicians will say Iran
probably wasn't really at the verge of
creating nuclear weapons, but I do think

it is significant that one of the
stumbling blocks in negotiations is that
Iran absolutely refused to stop striving
to get nuclear weapons.
I mean, they they made no secret of the
fact of the of the fact they fully
intend at some point as soon as possible
presumably to get nukes and then if they
do get nukes, they're going to be like a
theocratic Islamist North Korea
that says death to America and they're
going to hold parts of the world
hostage. They'll be able to do what they
want more easily because they got nukes.
But, even that I mean,
that just set that aside. Just set the
whole nukes thing aside because

[laughter] I don't think that was
necessarily the main reason.
Donald Trump is not as stupid as the
left wants to think or like some a lot
of people on the right that now have
turned against him because they're like
throwing tantrums because he's not doing
exactly what he said he was going to do
or he's not doing exactly what they want
him to do. So, it's like [__] America,
to hell with it all. Let Let America
become like a feminized socialist
dystopia because Trump isn't doing
exactly what I want him to do.
I mean, that's just infantile.
Or

or just hating Israel as an excuse to

hate Trump.

I mean, that I mean, there it

[clears throat] really hatred of Jews

and hatred of Israel

I mean, it's not a virtue. It's still a

hate.

But, the thing is Donald Trump

apparently

is is like playing a long game or trying

to. And I mean, one of the main reasons

why he's doing this to Iran

is because of China. Like China was

getting a lot of its oil cheap from

Venezuela and Iran and now it's not. And

China is the main geopolitical rival

enemy of the United States in in the

21st century.

So, Donald Trump is like trying to gain possession of like troublesome spots or trying to get control of troublesome spots and neutralize China's influence over these spots. Panama Canal, Venezuela, Straits of Hormuz, like the Straits of Malacca in Indonesia. That I mean, that's under the radar for most people, but Trump has has done stuff there to get that out from under the control of China.

And I mean, a lot of this is subtle and not so subtle maneuvering against America's number one rival and threat in this world, which is China.

And so, China's having an energy crisis right now.

Largely because of what Trump's doing.

And it's not just because Netanyahu has got control over Trump and is making him do this.

I mean, that's just simplistic.

I mean, at the very least, I mean, it's like the Ayatollah was like taunting Trump not too long ago.

Just like

Maduro was taunting Trump. And I mean, Trump does have an ego. He's kind of a narcissist guy.

Somebody taunts him and he's going to he's going to smack him down. So, I I wouldn't be surprised if that was a

factor.

But, also I mean, Iran has been a thorn in America's side since its existence. I mean, one of the very first actions of Iran after the Ayatollahs came to power was to take a bunch of American citizens hostage for over a year.

Death to America.

So,

Trump I mean, he's going Roman Empire

[snorts]

on the world and the world is so feminized and degenerate at this point including a lot of right-wingers in America who don't fully realize just how degenerate they have become through

conditioning and from their their

environment.

That they just well, he's it's he's in

this war against Iran and that's it.

[__] him. [__] America. Let America go

to hell because

we're bombing the [__] out of Iran and

it's not really necessary because I

mean, these people don't have the info

that Trump and Trump's advisers have

with regard to like the geopolitical

grand strategy of the whole [__]

thing.

So, personally, I'm willing to give

Trump the benefit of the doubt. I'm

still a Trump supporter. I'd vote for

him again if he ran again, I guess,

[clears throat] but he can't and he's

he's too old anyway.

I'd vote for Vance if he ran.

Because I mean,

from the Buddhist point of view, of

course, war is murder. It's mass murder.

It's always bad. From a political point

of view, if you are a superpower,

you've got to act like a superpower or

people just aren't going to take you

seriously anymore and they're going to

walk all over you, which is generally

what has been do happening at an

increasing rate in recent decades.

So, Trump's just saying [__] that. We're

a super a superpower. We're going to act

like one and you guys our allies, you're

going to have to [__] man up.

You want to play in this game.

You want to have a seat at the table.

You're going to have to man up and stop

it with all this feminized socialism

crap.

And America's enemies

I mean, they're they're intimidated.

So, I mean, one one way I look at it is

like let's say that you're a citizen in

the Roman Empire in the 4th century.

When Rome is well into its decline phase

in in the fall phase is just right

around the corner.

Of course, you don't know that for sure

cuz you can't see the future. But, still

Rome is in decline and then Valentinian

the first becomes emperor. Valentinian

the Great.

And he is a sadistic sociopath.

He is just a brute. He likes seeing

people be tortured to death.

I mean, he

he has people maimed or or killed

executed for making honest mistakes.

You know, just off with his head, you

know, have him beaten to death with

clubs, chop his hand off. This kind of

stuff.

But,

at the same time, he was just unleashing

fury on the enemies of Rome and he He

doing his best to make Rome great again.
And so he got the name the great. He got
the title of the great. I mean, he
didn't call himself that, I assume. That
was just attributed to him
by successive generations that
appreciated that even though he was a
sadistic sociopathic bastard,
nevertheless
he was like the only man standing
between Rome
and collapse.
And shortly after he died, the the fall
of Rome began with the Battle of
Adrianople in which the Roman legions
were just pretty much destroyed by
Visigoths.

So, I mean,

even though

I mean,

>> [clears throat]

>> war is murder.

Trump has been doing a lot of stuff and

and like a lot of these people

supposedly on the right like on social

media will say, "If Trump would just do

what we voted for him to do, just

completely ignoring you know, like the

immigration issue

you know, just dealing with like leftist

institutions like the SPLC and all this.

I mean, they just ignore that. It's

like, "Nope.

They just focus on or like Trump is Israel's [__] and he's fighting against Iran for no reason." Which is it's just like infantile. I mean, it's it's almost like willful idiocy.

So, anyways

I mean, if Israel wants boots on the ground, they want to like just knock themselves out knocking out Iran.

That's fine. I mean, Iran is in big trouble now. It's like Iran's [snorts] like the current government, what's left of it, you know, the like the two top two or three tiers of leadership most of them are now gone.

And you know, it's like the the country is fractured.

You know, it's like kind of like the

what is it? The

I don't I can't

the guard, the Ayatollah's

um

what do you call it?

Uh

I'm trying to remember the

never mind.

But I mean, Iran is their only hope of

surviving. You know, the current regime,

the current government, what's left of

it

only hope of survival

is to just hide and survive, stall for

time until public opinion in America

forces Trump to stop attacking them.

But they're losing half a billion a day

through having the streets of Hormuz

closed by Trump

at present. Of course

you know, oil prices are going to go up

throughout most of the world,

fertilizer, problems with that.

What? I mean, it's

>> [clears throat and sighs]

>> It wasn't their war. They I mean, they

didn't want to help guard the streets of

Hormuz.

So

feminazi socialism is I mean

I'm just read history. What was his What

has history been like since forever?

Sometimes

you've got to fight your enemies.

If you don't want to fight your enemies,

first of all, don't join the military,

of course. But if and if you're just

really serious, you're not even going to

endorse it or support it in any way

then stop paying taxes, willfully go to

prison, or just renounce the world like

a Buddhist monk and go out into the

forest, go alone like the horn of the

rhinoceros.

That and and just be like that. Be like

uh

Thoreau and live live in cabin by a pond

and not pay taxes.

Uh because if you pay taxes, you're

still supporting the war.

You're still supporting the killing of

human beings.

Uh

Anyways, enough ranting and rambling

about that.

>> [clears throat]

>> I'm just going to move on to P.S. next

next question, which is a question that

I really can't answer very well.

He says, "Alex Jones said he doesn't

like them putting chemicals in the water

that turn the freaking frogs gay. What

chemicals is he talking about?"

I don't know what chemicals it was. I

did take a class in college, biological

effects of environmental pollutants, and there's some relatively nasty effects of environmental pollutants, especially like organic chemicals like modern technologically developed chemicals like DDT was one. I mean, that DDT is kind of a past. It's like a historical thing now. But the thing with a lot of organic chemicals is we have not evolved a way of of like metabolizing them or getting them out of our system. So something like DDT, I mean, your liver couldn't digest it. I mean, it couldn't break it down and get rid of it. And so it would accumulate and your liver would just keep trying

and trying just increasing the the
exudation of enzymes to break it down
and until eventually it would just start
breaking itself down and you'd die of
like liver failure if you got like a too
much of a dose of some of these
chemicals.
PCBs is another one.
Uh but what chemical it was that was
making the frogs gay or just causing
like spontaneous sex changes in
amphibians, that kind of thing. Like
some fish they'll just
go from male to female or vice versa.
Like groupers start off male and turn
female, something like that.
It was some kind of deal like that.

I don't think that I don't know if the

frogs were actually turning gay.

They may have turned trans. They were

may have been transing or something.

But some kind of chemical, I don't know

what the hell it was.

I don't I could have just said that and

just moved on to the next question.

Uh

>> [clears throat]

>> but instead

I do this instead.

And the next question is from Damma

River.

Damma River says, "How diverse are

Burmese temples? Do they allow Mahayana

and Vajrayana monks to come and practice

and live in their temples or do they

only allow Theravada monks?"

Um

>> [clears throat]

>> God, it depends on the the Burmese

monastery. I mean, I don't like the word

temple. I mean, technically I mean,

monks live there, so it's a monastery.

And I mean, it depends. There's the full

spectrum of Burmese monasteries and just

completely lax, completely open-minded

with regard to damn near anything. And

then you got like the really strict ones

that are not very open-minded with

regard to accepting certain types of

people there. I mean, some Burmese

monasteries only monks can stay there.
Lay people can't even spend the night.
And from a Theravada point of view,
Mahayana and Vajrayana monks are lay
people. Or at least it would be
nanasamvasaka, which means belonging to
a different sangha. You know, they're
not really
Theravada. They're they're not our
religion.
You couldn't do sangha kamma with them.
You couldn't sit together and do like a
formal act of the sangha because they're
not sangha.
They're maybe a different sangha
but they're not the Theravada sangha and

it's just doesn't work.

I've stayed in monasteries where lay

people simply were not allowed to spend

the night, which would include

non-Theravada monks.

>> [sighs and gasps]

>> But some some Burmese temples like I

stayed at um Panditarama back when

Mahasi Sayadaw was still alive in

Rangoon.

They were just starting up the the

so-called forest monastery, which is

where the foreigners eventually went to.

But I was in Rangoon with Upandita at

the time and there was one

he was a Korean, maybe a Zen monk. He

was some kind of Korean Mahayana monk.

He wore like gray pajamas.

And he was allowed to stay there and he was practicing [clears throat] meditation, but I mean, he wasn't considered to be a monk. I mean, he wasn't considered to be a real monk anyway. Like he didn't go for alms round. And when the monks were going into the refectory, he had to go after the monks.

They let him go before the regular lay people, but still you know, he he had to sit with the lay people pretty much to eat his meal. He didn't sit with the the ordained Theravada bhikkhus.

And he didn't like that. And so he was

ordained as a Theravada Buddhist monk while not disrobing from being a Mahayana monk.

Which technically is against the rules, against vinaya, against the rules of monastic discipline.

Um and probably after he left Panditarama, he just disrobed back to the gray pajamas without having to reordain anything like that. So, I mean, there's a lot of weirdness like that. I mentioned that there was a Catholic priest that I met wearing monk's robes on one occasion that some Burmese monasteries, they'll ordain damn near anybody.

But with regard to the monks like

Mahayana or Vajrayana monks coming and staying at the monastery, like some of the Buddhist uh like universities like in Rangoon would probably allow that.

But

they're I mean, they're not considered to be the same as a Theravada monk. They're not really our sangha. And so you really wouldn't be doing formal acts of the sangha together anything like that.

And some some Burmese monasteries do allow only Theravada monks and novices to stay there.

So

I guess I'm just going to move on to

this question. This is from Rui. This is

an easy question. Rui says, "How are

you?" I said, "I'm fine."

Rui's next question "To your

what is the dom role of reflection?

Is it entirely outside the realm of

cheetah bawana?" And I do not fully

understand this question. What does Rui

mean by reflection?

Let's look it up in the dictionary.

Let's see what the dictionary says with

regard to reflection.

Oops.

>> [snorts]

>> Spelled it wrong.

Reflection.

Okay, so it's There's a bunch of

different uh

different definitions here.

So, let's see here. This would be the

one.

A serious thought or consideration. He

doesn't get much time for reflection. An

idea about something, especially one

that is written down or expressed. So,

yeah, I guess like the the Buddhist

meditation version of reflection isn't

even in the dictionary here.

Maybe he's referring to what in Pali

would be anusati,

which would be literally like

remembering after,

recollecting after.

So, that would be reflection. Anusati,

like marananusati,

reflection on death.

Um the dom role of that is

I mean, if [clears throat] that's what

he means by reflection, I'm not sure

exactly what Rui means when he says

reflection. If he used the Pali word,

I'd probably have a better idea because

reflection is such a vague word and like

I just demonstrated, the the dictionary

doesn't even really have the Buddhist

version of reflection in it.

And there's different ways you could

define reflection from a Buddhist point

of view. I'm just going to go with anu

anusati,

which is like

remembrance.

And so, you know, like

reflection on death, reflection on the

foulness of the body, that kind of

thing.

Um

Is it entirely outside the realm of

cheetah bawana? No. I mean, cheetah

bawana would be meditation or mind

development.

So, it would be like uh

a relatively shallow level of

meditation. You could get into maybe

first jhana, supposedly, because in

first jhana, you're still thinking. And

to do reflection the way I'm
interpreting this, cuz I'm not sure
exactly what Rui had in mind, you know,
like reflection on the qualities of the
Buddha.
Right? I mean, that would be a standard
one. That would still be meditation,
but I mean, it's it's not very deep
because you never really stop thinking.
Thinking is pretty much the point.
So, yeah, I mean, it would be like an
elementary kind of meditation that at
best would get you into first jhana. And
maybe it would just be like uh
an act of
uh some mental self-discipline, sort of
like mental jumping jacks, you know,

just sort of mental calisthenics, just a
way of disciplining your mind, just
keeping it on this kind of like a mantra
or something.
So, it can be useful and it's certainly
within the realm of cheetah bawana or
just
meditative exercises,
mind development.
So, yeah, I mean, the Buddha wouldn't
have recommended it if it wasn't
like didn't help you to develop your
mind.
So, [snorts]
yeah, I guess I answered that question.
But again, I'm not exactly sure what Rui

has in mind with the word reflection.

And I'm just going to move on to

Ethiopian fake tig here.

Oh, he's asking a Majima question. Gosh,

I'm going to have to get the Majima

cafe.

I don't do this very often anymore.

Okay.

>> [clears throat]

>> Take off the Burger King crown. That's

an entirely different kind of question.

Nobody much asks about fast food.

Let's see here.

>> [snorts]

>> Okay, get that out of the way there.

>> [clears throat]

>> Okay, we're

All right.

>> [clears throat]

>> Kind of goes with the

uh the wife beater, too. It's nice.

So, Ethiopian fake tig says, "In Majima

Buddhism, you said there was some

philosophical method they used to break

down any argument down to emptiness. Can

you perhaps talk about what that

philosophy is in depth with examples?"

Um

Well, like the Mūlamadhyamakakārikā

of by Nāgārjuna

is is like this. And most of the book

consists of adopting or or just

considering a question, like is the

effect the same as the cause or is it different from the cause? And then you use a kind of Buddhist logic that has four possibilities.

The four possibilities are yes, it is true.

No, it is false.

It is true and it is false or it's neither true nor false.

And so, in the Mūlamadhyamakakārikā, Nāgārjuna just addresses each question and he shoots down every possibility. You know, he'll he'll use logic to explain why the effect isn't the same as the cause.

And then he'll he'll shoot down the idea that it is the same or you know, he he

shoots down that it is the same, he
shoots down the idea using logic that it
isn't the same. And then he just
dismisses that it is and isn't. And then
he dismisses that it neither is nor
isn't. And that just it rules out all
possibilities. But I mean, it's
it's kind of hard [clears throat] to
refer to this kind of like early
Majima as
as a kind of I mean, it's sort of a
philosophy, but I mean, it shoots down
all concepts, including philosophical
concepts. In fact, the the
Mūlamadhyamakakārikā,
you know, it kind of saves its own

philosophy for last and then shoots that down. You know, it's it's you can't say that it's true, you can't say that it's false, you can't say that it's true and false and you can't say that it's neither true nor false.

Just using what I think Bertrand Russell would call logic chopping. Sometimes the logical arguments wouldn't really stand up to scrutiny by modern Western standards. You know, after like Aristotelian logic and you know, the developments from that over the over the centuries.

Um but I do think that

>> [clears throat]

>> the point is valid

that you can

I mean,

any kind of skeptical scrutiny can

dismantle just about any kind of claim.

You can pull the rug out from under any

belief with sufficient like a

sufficiently intelligent intellectual

attack. You can at least

shed doubt on it.

And that's pretty much what Majima does

to get to this point that I mean,

well, one point is that like you cannot

tell the truth in words. Words cannot

accurately represent reality.

And so, you can't even say whether

reality exists or whether reality

doesn't exist or that it does and doesn't exist or that it neither does nor doesn't exist. I mean, you can't say anything really. And it just leaves this emptiness behind because it's it's sort of like this skeptical attack on every possibility.

That's that's essentially how it works. And then that kind of gets worked into the idea of emptiness and voidness and dependent co-arising where in the Mūlamadhyamakakārikā, Nāgārjuna asserts that emptiness and dependent co-arising are the same. When we say that everything is empty or everything is void, we mean that you know, it seems to exist because of context, but

I mean, under

careful enough scrutiny, it just kind of

dissolves and there really is no

inherent self essence to anything.

I mean, you can just kind of

doubt everything away in a sense. I

mean, that there's probably not a good

way of putting it. But that's kind of

what it's about. It's just applying like

relentless skepticism to every point.

So, I mean, it's kind of like classical

Greco-Roman skepticism in a way in which

I mean, the

the uh the early skeptics, like the

Greek and Roman skeptics, skeptic

philosophers,

they would go for

>> [clears throat]

>> uh I should have looked up the Greek

word.

Uh but it's like

it's like you you can you can doubt

everything, so you just don't really

believe anything and it causes like this

peace of mind.

And I'm sorry, I can't remember the

Greek word.

>> [snorts]

>> But it's it's sort of like

you know, all this agitation just kind

of leaves and there's just sort of like

this

the the peace of emptiness. I mean, just

you're you're free of these belief

systems that enslave you.

Uh

>> [sighs]

>> I don't know how good of a job I did on

that, but I'm taking the fez off cuz

it's kind of hot in here.

Getting up into summery weather in South

Carolina now.

So, let's see here. Philosophical method

that they used to break down any

argument down to emptiness. Yeah, it's

just the you use the the tetralemma.

It's called of the four possibilities of

yes, no, yes and no, neither yes nor no.

And then you use like this intellectual

attack essentially.

This ruthless, skeptical logic to

dismantle every possibility.

And then what's left behind when you

when you get rid of yes, no, yes and no,

and neither yes nor no. I mean, what

else is there? It's just emptiness.

But still, we have to function within

the context of that logical emptiness.

Anyways, I'm just going to move on to

Ethiopian fake Tigg's next question.

He says, "It is said that the Hindus and

Buddhists have had a thousand years of

debate before, and yet I can't for the

life of me find a long debate between

Buddhists and Hindus in YouTube. Is

debate perhaps something that's

discouraged?" Well, like I mentioned um

to a

an earlier question, in Buddhism like

the Pasura Sutta of the Atakavaga, it

really does discourage monks from from

engaging in debate. But as I also

mentioned, in ancient India it was very

common, and a lot of Buddhists

participated.

>> [snorts]

>> In fact,

I got a book. I've I've shown shown you

guys this book before.

Let's see here.

Buddhist logic volume two by Fyodor

Stcherbatsky,

and it was written back before the

Soviet Union in in Russia 1.0

or whatever whatever Russia was before

in Tsarist Russia.

And

um a lot of it is just translations

of

let's see.

Man.

Vasubandhu, that's not it.

Oh, well, I'm not going to try and find

it. I maybe I should have tried to look

it up before I started this video. But

this this book is mainly about the the

Dignaga school of Buddhism.

And most of what we know about the

Dignaga school of Buddhism is surviving

in texts by Hindus that were attacking
the Dignaga school. And so most of what
we know, most of the
the medieval texts,
cuz it was a medieval school, that that
have information is like Brahmin
philosophers trying to argue against it.
But at least they're conscientious and
not just sort of like in modern politics
where you just slander the other side.
And he's trying to give a fair
representation of what this school
teaches and then argue against that
because if you just cook up some bogus
straw man and argue against that, then
in a formal debate you're just going to

lose because they'll just point out that
you're you're arguing like a fool.
But it's it's too bad that really
that I can't remember the exact name of
the person. Oh, Vacaspati Mishra. So
Vacaspati Mishra wrote a lot of
critiques of Buddhist philosophy even
though he wasn't a Buddhist. And just as
a kind of kind of a debate thing.
And it it did happen a lot, and that's
one reason why
as I said earlier that Indian philosophy
has reached the level of sophistication
that it has reached is that you had all
these different schools, different
religious systems even debating and
arguing with each other. And it's like

if if somebody would level an argument that you couldn't answer, then you're going to have to come up with some answer. You know, you're going to have to go back and think about it. And then maybe in the next time you'll have a sufficient answer to stand up to that critique. And so that just kept happening over centuries so that you wound up with some relatively profound sophisticated philosophical systems in ancient and medieval India.

Even though maybe you're not going to find a long debate between Buddhists and Hindus in YouTube unless maybe it's in Hindi or something.

So let's see here.

Yeah, I mean

I wouldn't mind

like debating. I mean, it's like monks

really aren't supposed to debate. I'm

not a monk anymore. I mean, Buddhists

really aren't supposed to debate.

But I mean, sometimes I mean, it's

it's it's something that I think I'd be

fairly good at.

I did get contacted by Modern Day

Debate, which is a like a debate channel

on YouTube,

asking me if I'd like to participate

because of some supporter or friend of

mine kind of suggested me to them. But

they wanted me to argue in favor of an

immortal soul, which I mean, I I
sent an email back to them saying that
you know, the the Buddhists teach
essentially the opposite of that. And so
I didn't hear anything back from them
after that. They wanted me to debate in
favor of an immortal soul.
So probably I would have been debating
like some kind of scientific atheist or
something.
But yeah, I mean, I'd be I'd be game for
at least a discussion with a Hindu.
But I mean, most of the like any kind of
debate with Hindus that I have engaged
in, I mean, at least half of it is them
just completely rejecting, saying that

it has been refuted, the whole

Indo-Aryan invasion

>> [clears throat]

>> has been refuted, and they'll cite some

you know, obscure

reference to like some journal article

or something with regard to DNA

sequencing or something. And invariably

it's always

either an Indian person or like a

Western convert to Hinduism that

believes all the stuff about people

speaking Sanskrit in India for millions

of years.

Anyways,

>> [sighs]

>> yeah, I mean, I guess there's debates

between Buddhists and Hindus, although
I don't know. There's there's really not
that much of an issue anymore. I mean,
in the West nobody cares.
I mean, it was really a hot issue back
when India was like 50% Buddhist and 50%
Hindu.
Then I mean, it was going hot and heavy
with hammer and tongs, so to speak.
But it's just kind of fallen out of
fashion nowadays for Buddhists and
Hindus to debate each other, apparently.
Now now it's more Christians versus
atheists that you're going to find
debates on YouTube.
So [snorts]

I guess I'm just going to move on to

Ethiopian fake Tigg's next question,

which is, "Have you ever met an Arab

monk or Buddhist before or Arabs in

general who were born in the Middle East

under Islam

but took interest in Buddhism and

actually took interest?"

Well,

I I know I knew a monk that was an

American monk who was half Arab.

But I mean, he was born in America. His

father was born in Iraq, I think.

Gosh, that's about it. Yeah, I've never

really met

like

a natural-born

Arabic-speaking Arab who converted to Buddhism. I assume it'd be relatively rare.

Like Arabic countries tend to be pretty pretty much

you know, they're they're sold on Islam as a general rule.

I did meet one Muslim guy who he came to the monastery in came to a monastery in California where I was staying at the time. And he he said you know, he was open-minded. Maybe his girlfriend was a Buddhist or something. He came there and he was saying

you know, there's prophets Islam accepts prophets besides Muhammad, and he thinks

that the Buddha was a legit prophet.

So I mean, you could some open-minded

Buddhists or like Muslims

could be willing to accept Buddha as

like a pre-Muhammad

prophet.

I assume there are some that do that.

Maybe the Sufis were more inclined to do

that because they did incorporate some

Buddhist and Hindu ideas into Sufism.

But yeah, I have really have not met a

whole lot. I've met maybe two or three

black monks,

and I think they were all temporary.

I met one Mexican man who was

I mean, he was a layperson, but he was a

devout Buddhist and and fairly fairly

advanced practitioner. He just had a
really stringent spiritual practice.
And he was like pure European Mexican.
No like Mayan blood or Aztec blood in
that guy. He he looked like pure
Spanish.
>> [sighs]
>> Yeah, I mean, there's
it's yeah, this this question is kind of
strange though. Have you ever met an
Arab monk or Buddhist before or Arabs in
general who were born in the Middle East
under Islam but took interest in
Buddhism and actually took interest?
Yeah, I mean, like Malaysia, I mean,
it's illegal

for a Malaysian person to convert to any religion other than Islam.
That it's illegal for a Malaysian citizen to read a Buddhist book or listen to a Buddhist sermon, and it's illegal for a Buddhist to deliver a sermon to a Malaysian citizen. And it may be similar in other Muslim countries. I know it's that way in Malaysia. I remember seeing like a Buddhist pamphlet that came from Malaysia. It was printed in Malaysia and it said, "Not for Muslims."
on the cover. And at first I thought, you know, maybe it's just sort of like a I don't know. It wasn't like legally required. They just had their own

reasons for saying that. But it turned out that was like a legal necessity. You had to put that on the book, otherwise you'd get in trouble in Malaysia.
For printing a non-Muslim book.
You have to have a warning sign, like it's a pack of cigarettes or something.
So, I would assume that other Muslim countries are kind of like that. I mean, you'd have to leave the country in order to convert to Buddhism. I assume there are some people born in Muslim countries that then move to a Western country and then abandon their Islam and convert to some other religion. And I assume there's a handful at least who have

converted to Buddhism. It's just that

they're rare and uh, I've never met one

that I know of.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

This is from Robert.

And Robert says, "Why do you believe

that any good gets met with a

corresponding evil and that the pluses

and minuses cancel out?"

Well,

first of all, I would just like to read

a little quote by Carl Jung,

which is

appropriate to this question.

Carl Jung says,

"Every good quality has its bad side and

nothing that is good can come into the world without directly producing a corresponding evil. This is a painful fact."

And there have been times when I've tried to think of something that was good entered this world that really did not have a corresponding evil. And the only thing I could really think of would be Buddhism itself. I mean, Christianity comes into the world and immediately, as soon as they gain power, they're persecuting the pagans worse than the pagans were persecuting them. And then they're like persecuting each other.

Holy wars,

the Inquisition, torture chambers, all

this kind of stuff. Witch burnings.

So, Christianity, I mean, you could

argue that there has been a lot of

badness brought into this world by

Christianity. But with regard to

Buddhism, I really haven't I have to

admit that that does seem to be somewhat

of an exception to the rule. Although I

I can't really think of what it would

be. Maybe I just I don't want to to see

the painful fact or something.

But with regard to this universe, it's

just a balance of positive and negative.

I mean, just even physics, like an atom.

It's a balance between negative

electrons and positive protons with some
neutral neutrons thrown in. You know,
it's it's it's just this cosmic balance
of plus and minus. If you've got um,
matter just arising out of empty space,
then it I mean, it does happen. Like at
the at the edge of a black hole,
the where the the the space is getting
stretched, supposedly.
You'll have like a a
uh, it's like a
positive and negative pair of
of
particles, like a particle and an
anti-particle that would arise out of
nothing and then usually they just

collapse back into each other and just

poof into nothing again.

So, the whole universe is composed, it

seems to me,

out of this cosmic balance of positive

and negative. And that works with regard

to

any closed system. I've I've developed

this this idea

that within any closed system, there has

to be a balance of positive and

negative. And our own mind is a kind of

closed system.

Because I mean, you could say that

outward things do influence us, but we

have no ex- no contact with the outward

things. We just have contact with what

we are experiencing, our own mental universe.

And so, it's like I called it the the principle of subjective equilibrium. Where, let's say, you could somehow get rid of everything in your life that you consider to be bad. Like the whole lower half of your world is removed. All that's going to happen is the line between good and bad is just going to shift so that the lower half of what you consider to be good is now considered to be bad. Or you're just going to have to come up with a bunch of new badness to replace the stuff that was gone.

And I mean, just look at the way the

world operates. You know, you cure a disease, a new disease crops up that there's no cure for. Or something good is added and there's always these unexpected side effects. So that really life is not better. I don't think people are any happier now than they were 2,000 years ago or 10,000 years ago.

You know, it's you can say that like in 2,000 years ago, for example, there was a lot more brutality, but there was a lot more of the opposite, too. Like ancient India in the Buddhist time, you know, there were sages walking the earth to an extent that I mean, it's practically unthinkable nowadays.

But at the same time, you had like

grizzly like public executions where the top of some of some criminal's head would be broken open and molten lead would be poured into his skull and there'd be like these bandits attacking people on the roads and all this kind of stuff. Just wars all over the place. This king is invading the territory of that king and then his territory gets invaded by this other king and
I mean, it was it was like this mixture of good and bad that nowadays is just kind of working its way out so that we're just in this level of spiritual mediocrity.
So, there's not nearly so much badness,

but there's not nearly so much goodness, either.

It all balances out.

And it's even the way Buddhist heaven realms work. Where you get into this heaven realm, I mean, you can argue according to tradition that, you know, you get up into Tāvatiṃsa heaven and you've got the the celestial mansions and the the harems of nymphs and all this.

So, yeah, maybe. But you get up into the the higher realms and it's just subtlety. I mean, there's not much positivity and not much negativity, either.

So, I guess you could argue the other

way with regard to hell realms. It's
just once you've been in hell for a
while, you just get used to it.
That's just the way it is.
I mean, they have done studies on people
that became quadriplegic. You know, they
were they got in like a skiing accident
or something. So that they were
paralyzed from the neck down.
They can't move. And the study found
that after a few months to adjust to the
new situation, they were just as happy
or unhappy as they were before.
So, I do think that that's just how the
universe exists. It's just a balance
balance of pluses and minuses that add

up to zero.

You know, that's the semi-joke that I used to tell about how God created the universe out of nothing.

You know, it's just the pluses and the minuses just add up to the same nothing.

Particle and the anti-particle could just come out of empty space.

So,

also,

I Taoism has that idea of yin and yang, which is also kind of a balance of opposites. There's really not a lot of emphasis on that in Theravada Buddhism other than the lokadhammā, the ways of the world. It's a pair of pairs of opposites, you know, like praise and

blame, this kind of thing that

that balance out.

Or at least you're going to have plenty

of both.

Success and failure, that kind of thing.

Anyways,

>> [sighs]

>> I guess I answered that. I'm going to

move on to Robert's second question.

And Robert says, "In the previous Q&A,

someone asked about Buddhist tattoos. Do

you think it can help a lay practitioner

to get a tattoo of a word like sati, or

mettā, or anattā, etc. to remind them to

practice dhamma?" Yeah, I don't see

anything wrong with that.

You know, I used to have a

my aunt

my aunt Betty was an archaeologist and

she was doing archaeology in Afghanistan

long ago, back in like the '60s or '70s.

And uh, one thing I inherited from her

was a little pocket knife. It had this

Arabic inscription on it.

And I've I've met an Iranian guy who

could read it. I mean, it wasn't in

Iranian, but it was similar enough that

he could read it. And he said it means,

"This too shall pass."

So, I mean,

and I eventually lost the knife, too.

So, it did pass.

But I mean, you could have like a any

kind of tattoo like that, you know,
impermanence, anicca,
you know, mettā, mindfulness. Are you
being mindful?
Um, yeah, I mean, you can do that. But
the thing is that I mean, after you've
seen it a million times,
it's like this area of your brain just
filters it out as background noise. You
mean, it doesn't make much of an
impression on you anymore. It's like
having a skeleton in your cave or a
skull on your table. You know, at first
it makes an impression, but you know,
after a few months, it's just part of
the background. I mean, you hardly pay

any attention to it at all.

So, yeah, I mean, yeah, you could do that. There was a a guy named Charlie Tart. He used to be a professor in UC Davis, I think.

And he had some kind of thing worked out on his phone that at random intervals, it would beep to remind him to be mindful. You know, it's like, "Are you being mindful now?"

You know, every time the the phone would beep, it would just be like calling you back to the present moment. Are you being mindful now? Or at least testing to see if you were being mindful.

And something like that, I mean, if you really wanted that, something like that

to remind you to practice Dhamma,
yeah, I mean, that might actually be
more effective than the tattoo. Just
somehow get
a your phone to just beep at random
times, preferably not too often so that
it's a complete distraction. Just to
remind you, are you being mindful now?
Are you being mindful now?
That might work better because you get
are you being mindful now tattooed on
your arm? I mean, occasionally you'll
consider it.
But after a while it just becomes, you
know, just this tattoo that you don't
pay much attention to anymore than you

pay attention to the the anchor or the

heart with mom on it. That kind of

thing.

But I mean, it couldn't hurt, I suppose.

If you think it'll work, you might as

well. And

if it doesn't work, you're stuck with

the tattoo for the rest of your life,

probably.

But I mean, it's not a bad tattoo to

have. It's better than having a scorpion

or something.

Anyways,

>> [cough and clears throat]

>> time to move on to Robert's third

question, which is the last question.

The last question of this Q&A.

And he says, you've said before that you think psychedelics can be spiritually beneficial, especially for beginners. At which point in one's spiritual development do you think psychedelics and weed, for that matter, should be entirely avoided in favor of a strict adherence to the fifth precept?

Well, the strict the fifth precept says, I undertake the precept to abstain from ale, wine, and any intoxicant which causes cloudedness of mind, which is often translated as heedlessness.

So, it's not any drug that is part of the fifth precept. You know, like caffeine, for example. I mean, caffeine

is a drug, but it doesn't really cause you to be clouded in mind or heedless. In fact, to some degree it can have the opposite effect.

Like paranormal investigators, like um like researchers into like psychic abilities, ESP, that kind of thing, generally say that you score better on these tests, like predicting cards, if if if you're caffeinated.

So, in in a way it makes your mind less clouded instead of more clouded. So, any drug, I mean, it's sort of like a West modern Western thing, you know, like Nancy Reagan, just say no to drugs, where all drugs, except for maybe a few legal ones, like caffeine, maybe

nicotine, maybe a little alcohol, it's

just drugs.

But

I mean, reality doesn't work that way.

And like

heroin is very, very different from

cocaine, which is very, very different

from psilocybin mushrooms.

I mean, the effects they have are

radically different from each other.

So, whether it would be a matter of a

strict adherence to the fifth precept or

not would depend on whether this

substance is causing cloudedness of

mind. I mean, if it's alcoholic, that's

literally included, you know, ale or

wine. They didn't really have um distilleries in ancient India. They hadn't invented hard liquor yet, so it was pretty much some kind of ale or wine, you know, fermented grain or fermented fruits,

essentially.

Maybe throw in some fermented honey or something.

So,

getting to the actual question though, at what point in one's spiritual development do you think they should be entirely avoided? When they stop being helpful.

I would guess.

When it stops being a kind of skillful

means, like

um I've said before that like a tab of

LSD can get a person into an expanded

state of consciousness

that some people may try for decades to

get into just through meditation and

fail.

Other people might have to strive for

years to get to that same level of

expansion of consciousness

that a tab of LSD will do. You know,

let's say 500 micrograms of LSD.

300 micrograms.

So,

definitely it can be helpful. I mean, if

you're breaking new ground, you're

having experiences
that are like like a pure mystical
state, like just wide awake and your
your thinking process has largely
stopped. Well, at the same time, your
consciousness is expanded and you are
more wide awake than usual.
Then, I mean, that's not a bad state.
Neem Karoli Baba up there once told um
Ram Dass that I mean, this he told Ram
Dass this this sort of substance was
known in the Kuru Valley, you know,
centuries ago, but this knowledge has
been lost. But it can be useful if you
take it in a place where it's not too
hot, where it's quiet and you're alone,
then you can get benefit from this.

But Ram Dass, who started off with
psychedelics,
um he eventually stopped taking them.
And he's he did say that there were
certain like negative consequences from
taking so much acid as he did. He mean,
he was taking lots of it in his younger
days or, you know, his his pre-India
days,
um that he was starting starting to get
like a blockage in like in his head
somewhere where it was kind of
interfering with his his meditative
progress or something.
But now, you can have genuine insights
from taking certain kinds of entheogenic

substances.

>> [snorts]

>> So, [sighs]

yeah, I mean,

what it all boils down to is, I mean, is

it helping you

to cultivate wisdom?

And it can at first, I mean, it can be

invaluable. You can get invaluable

insights from taking LSD under the right

circumstances or taking some kind of

psychedelic under the right

circumstances. You're just at a party or

a rave or something, just out for a good

time, maybe even then accidentally.

But I mean, if you're like alone in a

forest or something and

you know, you're you're sort of like
preparing yourself, you know, kind of
purifying yourself, maybe fasting, this
kind of thing, doing some meditation,
and then, you know, just with a like a a
spirit of reverence,
you you take the substance,
then, I mean,
it can give you this insight, especially
at first, that you are experiencing
something that is very different from
the normal state of consciousness, but
it's just as real.
I mean, a lot of people if you're if
you're having like a genuine mystical
experience, one of the common traits

characteristics of a mystical experience
is the experiencer has no doubt
whatsoever that this this experience is
at least as real as his normal waking
consciousness.
Another characteristic is that it has
zero persuasive effect on anybody else.
But it's it's like a kind of
triangulation. I mean, that was
in in my generation, probably at least
half
of monks that were ordained in my in my
generation [clears throat]
started off with psychedelics because
you start off with this expanded
consciousness, these insights that
arise, that, you know, what you thought

was reality the whole time before you

took this the stuff,

I mean, it's not reality. It's a kind of

virtual reality,

but it's not ultimate reality. And then,

of course, that just opens up this whole

new world. Once you realize that this

isn't ultimately real.

I mean, it's just

off to the races, essentially,

spiritually. I mean, you you really

can't go back from something like that.

As a general rule, people don't.

So,

I mean, once you've I mean, you're not

breaking any new ground,

or maybe your meditation has got good
enough that you're like
making progress with that and don't need
the the artificial assistance anymore,
you know, the training wheels or water
wings or whatever,
then, sure.
And uh did I answer the question?
At what point at which point in one's
spiritual development do you think
psychedelics should be entirely avoided
in favor of a strict adherence to the
fifth precept? I don't consider that
taking an entheogenic substance for
spiritual reasons is violating the fifth
precept anyway.
I mean, if it doesn't cause cloudedness

of mind, it doesn't cause heedlessness,

maybe has the opposite effect,

then I do not consider it to be a

violation of the fifth precept.

But at which point should you just stop

taking these things all together? Well,

when it stops serving you. When it

starts becoming more of a hindrance than

a help, or when it's just

I mean, it's just uh irrelevant,

unnecessary,

then you might as well stop taking it.

And that's it.

I'm done.

Poke me with a fork, I'm done.

And as I I always say at the beginning

and pretty much never do, if you have

any questions you think maybe I can

answer,

no more than three per person per

episode, please,

and just include them in the comments

under the video,

and uh

if I see them and I generally do,

I will do my best to answer them. If

they're asked in good faith. I mean,

some people might ask some kind of

you know, snotty kind of question.

Doesn't happen very often. Relatively

rare, actually. You guys are are polite,

which is good.

>> [snorts]

>> And like and subscribe if you have not

done so already,

and check out the URL links below.

I do have a new book out, which you

might be interested in. It's like

autobiographical

essays regarding my life as a monk,

mainly in Burma, but in other places

also.

And uh aside from that, I say unto you,

be happy.

Now, I will stop recording.

Alrighty then.

Looks like we're recording. I'm just

going with that.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 194.

I am your host Panyo Boss

and 194 of course is not a prime number.

It is in fact 2 * 97.

This is my beverage.

Only one beverage here.

I'm pretty sure that one is not a prime

number. One is just kind of a weird

number

that is kind of

neither prime nor not prime apparently.

And this week has just been a very

hectic week for me. I haven't really

been able to relax much this weekend

either.

But we'll just we're going to just power

through this.

Ah.

So,

I guess

it's a good thing that we don't have a

whole lot of questions because then

I can relax afterwards. Be be at at

leisure

for a little while.

So, I think I'm I'm just going to like

dive right into this. It's it's too too

deep for waiting. I'm going to just dive

right in. And the first question is from

Philalethes.

And Philalethes says, "Are you aware that the Buddha was a popularly venerated saint in the medieval Catholic Church under the name Saint Josaphat? Look it up if you don't know already. It's fascinating." And I have already mentioned Saint Josaphat on these videos in the past. And it is somewhat of a technical fallacy that Saint Josaphat was really the Buddha because Saint Josaphat is based on a previous life of the Buddha. So, let's say I was Thomas Edison in a previous life.

Not saying I was, probably wasn't, but

let's just say it.

I was Thomas Edison in a previous life.

So, in a to say that I was Thomas Edison

in a previous life is not the same as to

say that I am Thomas Edison.

So, the way the Buddha became conflated

with Saint Josaphat or sort of

transmogrified

into Saint Josaphat, who is on the

Catholic calendar of saints. I think his

feast day is like in November or

December. He's got at least two churches

dedicated to him. One is in Sicily, I

think, and one is like in southern

France.

Also, before I get into the story,

I have been told that there is a

monastery Catholic monastery in Germany
somewhere that has a shrine to all of
the saints. And at the shrine to Saint
Josaphat, they've just got a Buddha
statue, just the Buddha sitting in
meditation.
Representing Saint Josaphat.
But again, technically speaking,
the Buddha and Saint Josaphat were not
the same person.
So, what happened was
you have what are called Jataka stories.
The Jataka is one of the
texts in the Pali Tipitaka.
Mainly, I'm pretty sure that the only
canonical part of the Jatakas are the

verses. The actual stories are

technically commentarial.

So, anyways, I don't even I don't even

know for sure which

um

which Jataka story

wound up with Saint Josaphat becoming

canonized as a saint. But there was some

I mean, the Jataka stories, at least

some of them, when the Muslims conquered

Northwestern India, they liked the

stories. Some of them

They liked some of the stories, which

then got translated into Arabic.

And the word Bodhisattva, apparently

they weren't going with Theravadan

uh Jataka stories

or like the the Pali Tipitaka, because
by the time the Muslims invaded
Northwestern India, Theravada had pretty
much migrated or been pressured
southwards into South India and Sri
Lanka, and also
parts of Southeast Asia.
So, it was a different school of
Buddhism's version of the Jataka stories
that had
these stories that some of the like the
Arab traders, Arab scholars liked them.
They translated them into Arabic, and
the word Bodhisattva was translated as
Bodisaf
into Arabic. So, then these stories

like move westwards across caravan

routes. And I've read that by the time

it got to

I think it was like Georgia or Armenia,

it became like uh see

Lodisaf.

The the just the translation

of Bodhisattva becomes Bodisaf in

Arabic, then like Lodisaf

in like the language of Georgia or in

Armenian, and by the time it got into

like Western Europe, just following the

the trade routes and so forth, just

stories

just people like these stories, that it

became in in uh

let's see.

Um

I think in Greek it was Yoasaf, and then

by the time it got translated into

Latin, it It Josaphatus, or in English,

Jehoshaphat. And the story was of this I

mean it was the story of Barlaam and

Josaphat. I don't know who Barlaam was.

But Josaphat was the Bodhisattva

in a Jataka story.

And

um the people who read these stories

just assumed that it was all true.

And

this this Josaphat was so wise and so

virtuous, they assumed he had to be a

good Christian.

And so this

uh Josaphat

from a Jataka story that was translated

and migrated from India into Europe, uh

he was canonized as a saint by some

medieval pope.

And as I say, his feast day is in

November or December. He's got at least

two churches dedicated to him. But

again, it's not really the Buddha

because it is the Buddha in a previous

life.

So, I mean also the Buddha has been

identified as the man in the moon, which

is also due to a Jataka story. In this

case, I know I've read the Jataka story.

It's the Sasa Jataka or the the Hare

Jataka, h a r e, like a rabbit.

Where in a previous life, the Buddha was a wise rabbit. And he was rewarded I won't tell the whole story, but he was rewarded by King Sakka, Sakka king of gods, who uh

squeezed the juice out of a mountain and drew a figure of a a hare, you know, a rabbit, on the moon. So, I mean in the tropics, you kind of see the moon sort of sideways, so that the man in the moon, he's got like if if you look at the face on the moon of the man in the moon, he's got like two streaks coming out of one eye. Those are the ears of the rabbit. You just kind of turn it

sideways, it looks pretty much like a rabbit. And that was also the Buddha in a previous life.

So, not only is the Buddha considered to be a Catholic saint, he's also the man in the moon.

Let's see. So, Phil Atheos, the the question here is are you aware that the Buddha was a popularly venerated saint in the medieval Catholic Church under the name Saint Josaphat? Well, technically, it was a previous existence of the Buddha. So, it's pushing it to say that it really is the Buddha who was a Catholic saint. But, I used to call myself

um

you know,

I used to call myself like

uh Fray Panyo Basso de las Tres Ratanas.

And, you know, I was a

a member of the Order of Saint Josaphat.

So, I could pass myself off as a

Catholic monk.

So, we Buddhists are

technically Catholics

of the mem- of the Order of Saint

Josaphat.

So, I guess uh I'm just going to move on

to the next question here.

This is from Maitreya Buddha.

And Maitreya Buddha says, "What will you

do next year when your woman's birthday

will land on the day you do your Q&A's?"

Well,

this year it landed on the day I I do my

Q&A's. My woman's birthday was on a

Saturday, and I usually, not always, but

usually record my Q&A videos on

Saturdays.

As of right now while I'm doing this,

while I'm recording this, it is Saturday

evening, and my woman is at the other

end of the house wallpapering a hallway.

So,

I mean, I mean, I'm flexible.

I can do these Q&A videos on Saturday or

Sunday, but

but

there can there's there may be some real

disruption in my schedule coming up
because
I've I kind of
mentioned in a previous Q&A that I may
be getting another job soon. That is
still a possibility.
And if I get that job, I'm going to have
weird hours. So, I'm going to be working
weekends sometimes. I'm going to be
working I'm going to have weekends off
sometimes. I'm going to be doing day
shift sometimes. I'm going to be doing
night shift sometimes. And so
it's it's going to be weird. I may have
to like record some of my Q&A videos
like on a Thursday or a Friday.

I'm not exactly sure. I think

Sunday, Monday is one of the the shifts.

And and choose Let's see. Tuesday,

Wednesday, is a shift.

And then Friday, Saturday. So, it'll be

alternating 4-day weeks with 3-day

weeks.

So, I think I'm pretty I'm pretty sure

that

all the time I'll have Saturday or

Sunday off.

But, the hours are just going to be like

casplooey. I mean, there's

there's no telling. I mean, I'm going to

have to start doing it assuming that I

do start doing it in order to find out

exactly how this new schedule is going

to work.

But, no worries. I won't be making you

guys get up at 5:00 in the morning to

watch these videos.

So, you you have no need to have

concerns on that score.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

This is kind of an interesting one.

I mean, it's it's a very

compound question. I mean, you could

tease a number of questions out of this

question.

This is from Jeffrey. And Jeffrey says,

"What do you think of the idea of

Christianity being based upon Egyptian

history? That the teachings of Jesus

being based in the ancient Egyptian

wisdom texts, the Essenes, and his

character being a mix of Thoth, Christ

of the Essene,

and Tutankhamun.

That Abraham is based on Uriah, the man

from Ur."

So, that's that's quite a number of

questions here.

Um let's just kind of separate them out

a little bit. Let's just tease these

apart, if you will.

Uh

let's see. His character being a mix of

Thoth, Christ Okay, that's a different

one.

Let's just tease that one out.

And that Abraham is based on Uriah,

the man from Ur. Okay.

So, technically this could be

multiplied into four questions, which is

transgressive.

But, let's just wade into this cuz it's

all like this big lump question that's

just sort of inchoate,

if you will.

So, the first part of this question,

"What do you think of the idea of

Christianity being based upon Egyptian

history?" Well, I mean there is a little

bit of Egyptian legend

in the Old Testament, you know, like

Joseph going to Egypt during a famine

and and and becoming like prime minister

of Egypt, which of course isn't in any

of the Egyptian inscriptions. And then,

you know, Moses leading the the

Israelites back out of Egypt, this kind

of stuff.

So,

also

Israel and Judah, the kingdoms of Israel

and Judah, which were

you know, approximately where the the

nation of Israel is today,

um

they were under the Egyptian sphere of

influence

a lot of the time.

That

sometimes they were under like the Assyrian or like Babylonian. Like they were like a satellite of Assyria or Babylonia. Sometimes they were like a satellite of Egypt. And in their more prosperous times, they were just kind of like a neutral buffer state in between these two regional powers, Egypt and whatever Mesopotamian power happened to be like the power at the time.

So, like in the the chronicles of the Old Testament, you've got like the bad kings who set up pagan shrines. And then you got the good kings who knocked down the pagan shrines and just follow the

Jewish or proto-Jewish religion. A lot of that was just political. Like if Israel or Judah was a satellite state of Assyria, then you pretty much had to honor the Assyrian gods or you'd get stomped. Or if you were like a satellite state of of Egypt, you'd have to have some kind of reverence, at least superficial reverence, like ritual reverence, for the Egyptian gods.

And so as when it was like a like a neutral buffer state in between the two powers, that's when you had the good kings who didn't worship these pagan gods.

At least sometimes.

Um I have read that Chris or like the

the the Hebrews

got their idea, or at least were

influenced towards monotheism

by the Egyptians, which may sound kind

of

like counterintuitive

or paradoxical because the Egyptians

were notoriously polytheist a huge

pantheon of thousands of deities. But,

back in the the the early days of the my

the the nation of Israel, the

Israelites, you know, after the time of

Moses, I suppose. I should have looked

this up, like the dating, when when like

Moses is supposed to have existed,

compared with um the Egyptian experiment
with monotheism. Cuz it was um
like Jeffrey mentions King Tut, you
know, the famous King Tut King Tut
Tutankhamun,
and his father Akhenaten
was like he he was the one who moved
away from Egypt the Egyptian pantheon
and became a monotheist. He worshipped
only the sun god.
And King Tutankhamun,
who was kind of like an unimportant
king, but he's important to us because
his tomb is one of the only tombs of a
pharaoh that weren't raided and robbed
thousands of years ago.
So, in the the early 1900s, they

actually found an unplundered
tomb of an Egyptian pharaoh, and that
was King Tut.
So,
it may be that Christianity derives its
monotheism
partly through Egyptian influence. And
some of their other ideas are partly due
to Egyptian influence. But, I do not
think that Christianity is largely based
on Egyptian history. It's more firmly
based on like Semitic Canaanite sort of
religion that
possibly migrated westwards
from Mesopotamia, which
I mean, that's what the Old Testament

says also because Abraham, the father of
the Israelites, you know, the patriarch,
the first patriarch,
came from Mesopotamia.
So,
what do I think of the idea of
Christianity being based upon Egyptian
history? I think there's like some
indirect influence of Egyptian history
and Egyptian religion through like the
brief experiment the Egyptians had with
monotheism under Akhenaten and
Tutankhamun.
But, I don't think that there really is
like a strong link between them. Like
like this causes that.
Which leads to the second part of

Jeffrey's questions, that the teachings of Jesus being based in the ancient Egyptian wisdom texts.

Well, I mean,

if you read the ancient Egyptian wisdom texts, it's largely just kind of mythology and magic. I really have not found much actual wisdom in the ancient Egyptian religion.

Like I've read the Egyptian Book of the Dead, or at least one one English translation of one version of it. And I mean, there's not much wisdom there at all. I mean, for that matter, there's not much wisdom in the Old Testament of the Bible, either.

I mean, there's some,

but I mean, it's is relatively

superficial. It's just this elaborate

like mythology

of gods and their powers and and like

spells, you know, it's like some of

these tombs of

I mean, not Egyptian pharaohs

necessarily, but queens or high-ranking

ministers of state and so forth, the

walls of these undestroyed tombs are

just covered with spells. the the

essentially like incantations that are

supposed to guide you through like some

sort of

other world into like some sort of

eternal heaven state.

And I mean like the ancient Egyptians
believed that you were going to you
needed your body intact in order to live
in this future state.
And all this like paganism, you know,
animal-headed gods and so forth. I mean
there really was not a whole lot of
wisdom to it.
I mean you look at the the early Greek
poets and you know their stories about
the Greek gods, there's not a whole lot
of wisdom there. I mean the Greek gods
were just essentially
humans with longer lifespans and more
power. You know, they were still petty
and

sometimes vicious and kind of rapey.
This kind of stuff.
You know, the Trojan War supposedly was
based on a beauty contest between three
goddesses and they're all trying to
bribe the judge. And then when he has to
pick one, the other two want revenge.
This kind of stuff.
And Egyptian religion, I mean there
might be a bunch of stuff in there that
I just haven't seen.
But I have failed to find any profound
wisdom in ancient Egyptian religion. It
was more just like this elaborate
mythology and magic spells and so forth.
So, the teachings of Jesus,
again there there may be some slight

influence like it may be that the Jews
got sort of got the idea of monotheism
from the Egyptian brief experiment with
monotheism.
Which didn't last very long after King
Tut. I don't think he had any children.
Then you had like Ramses the Great or
somebody took over and just I mean they
just kind of defaced the statues of
these monotheistic pharaohs and just
pretended like they didn't exist.
They just went right back to the
Egyptian polytheism.
So, he mentions the Essenes.
I mean the Essenes, there has been some
conjecture that the Essenes were

influenced by Buddhism more than they

were influenced by ancient Egyptian

religion.

That you had King Ashoka of India

sending missionaries to like the the

Hellenistic states.

Um and that

it may be that some of the the early

proto-Jews got the idea of like

monasticism, that kind of thing from

like Ashokan missionary efforts

through like essentially Buddhism more

than ancient Egypt.

I mean

I I don't see a whole lot of similarity

between like the Essenes or the early

Christians on one hand and ancient

Egyptian religion on the other.

I think I already mentioned the the Egyptians even when they did become monotheistic, their one god was the sun. So, and not the son of god, but like the star that up there that that our planet is orbiting around.

Although I I'm not sure if Jeffrey believes that the earth is orbiting the sun, so I shouldn't I shouldn't push the issue.

So, let's see. Then the next part was the character of Jesus being a mix of Thoth,

Christ of the Essene or the Essenes maybe, and Tutankhamun.

And no, I don't I don't see that at all.

I think

I mean, there's there's almost no

mention of Egyptian religion in the

Bible. Like the New Testament, it's like

Jesus was I assume Jesus really existed.

And

I would also accept that

of some of the details of the life of

Jesus and the teachings of Jesus may be

conflated to some degree with other

teachings, especially John the Baptist.

I think John the Baptist was like the

spiritual teacher of Jesus.

You know, Jesus I think I've mentioned

this in the previous Q&A. Jesus probably

Yeshua was a carpenter's son living in

this small town of Nazareth in I mean,
north of Judea.
I mean, he was in Galilee, which in
eight more ancient times was seriously
the kingdom of Israel, which was
distinct from the kingdom of Judah.
But he was spiritually oriented. He was
not satisfied being a carpenter. He
hears about John the Baptist as a great
teacher and he goes and joins John the
Baptist's spiritual camp or whatever.
And while he is there,
the spirit of the Lord descends into him
like a dove. In other words, he has some
kind of profound awakening experience.
And then when John the Baptist gets

thrown into prison,

Jesus becomes the leader of the group.

But Jesus kind of went his own way. He I

mean, he took some of the disciples. I

mean,

um there is some disagreement in the

four Gospels with regard to how Jesus

got his apostles. Like I think it's in

the synoptic Gospels where it says Jesus

just walking along and he sees some

fishermen mending their nets and he just

says, "Follow me." And they just

get up and follow him. But more

realistic is

hints at least in the Gospel according

to John that as some of his apostles at

least like Peter were originally

disciples of John the Baptist. They met at John the Baptist camp and then when John the Baptist was imprisoned Jesus decided not to just stay out in the desert but to go into the towns and preach the gospel.

Some of these previous disciples of John the Baptist became his first apostles and followed him.

So let's see here. Yeah, I don't think there's a whole lot of thoughts. I mean there can be like indirect cultural things that are just slight in my opinion.

I don't know who Christ of the Essene

is. I mean Christ is a based on a Greek

word

Christos which just means anointed and

is like the Greek translation of the

word Messiah or the the original Hebrew

of the word Messiah.

You know, the anointed.

The king of Israel, king of the Jews.

And Tutankhamun again, I mean he was

really like an insignificant pharaoh. He

died as a teenager. He didn't accomplish

very much.

Um

so yeah, I don't think he really made

much of a much of an impression

1300 years later during the time of

Jesus of Nazareth.

You know, just the

like the Egyptian experiment with

monotheism may have influenced Hebrew

monotheism.

That's about as far as it would go in my

opinion. And Tutankhamun was one of

these

monotheist pharaohs.

But he lived like over a thousand years

before the time of Jesus.

So

yeah, I think the character of Jesus was

pretty much the character of Jesus that

was glorified when he was

considered to be the son of God,

especially by

in the Gospel of John, where Jesus is

the creator of the universe. He is the

Logos.

And I mean, what Jesus taught, probably

a lot of it he got from his teacher,

which is probably John the Baptist, and

John the Baptist probably got a lot of

that from his teachers, which some of

whom at least were possibly Essenes.

So, let's just move on to the next part

of this question. Abraham, based on

Uriah, the man from Ur. Well, the only

Uriah I know in the Bible is Uriah the

Hittite,

who lived during the the time of King

David.

You know, he was the the husband of

Bathsheba, you know, of of Bathsheba

gate fame.

So, yeah, I don't I don't think that

Abraham would be based on that Uriah,

especially because that Uriah wasn't

even considered to have come from Ur,

but from like Hatti, that like the the

kingdom of the Hittites, which would be

centered in what is now Turkey.

So, I mean, Abraham as the the patriarch

of

um

you know, the Hebrews and since the the

Arabs also.

You know, the Arabs were Ishmaelites,

you know, they're they're also descended

from Abraham.

Um

yeah, I think it might be just a

coincidence

that Uriah in the Old Testament has the

same two letters at the beginning of his

name as the city of Ur in Sumeria.

Uh

yeah, I mean, you know, that there's

just a different Uriah that I'm unaware

of, but I'm pretty sure the only

the only famous Uriah in the Old

Testament would be Uriah the Hittite,

who King David gets killed because he

was a soldier in King David's armies, so

that King David could mess around with

Bathsheba and marry her

after she became a widow.

So, yeah, who Abraham is ultimately

based on

that I don't know. That's just lost in

the mists, the murky mists of of time,

ancient prehistory.

So,

I guess I I kind of answered the the

multiple

compound question there as well as I am

able.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the

next one. This is from Seovac N C Pad

Zidona.

And Seovac N C Pad Zidona says,

You

Excuse me. He didn't do that. Seovac did not cough.

Seovac N C Pad Zidona says,

You say the good and bad have to cancel out, but can you tell me how that would work for what the Buddha calls blameless pleasure of the jhanas? The first three jhanas come with immense pleasure, and there are seemingly no downsides whatsoever if it is blameless. It makes the idea of it all balancing out seem at least not to match with the Dhamma.

Well, first of all, the first three jhanas don't necessarily come with immense pleasure.

I mean, you are able to experience

pleasure and pain up until you get into

fourth jhana.

And then, I mean, the pleasure and pain

is just physical and not mental in third

jhana,

if I remember correctly.

I mean, if I just remember what it says

in the texts correctly.

So,

I mean, there is PT, which is a kind of

like sometimes it's translated as

rapture. I mean, it could be a sort of

like

like pleasurable interest or enthusiasm,

that kind of thing. But, I have found in

my own practice as a monk that that PT

happens like in the early stages when you're not used to it yet. But, then when you get used to it it just becomes more of a neutral state. Jhana is is not so much you're just wallowing in pleasure that it's largely neutral.

So, anyways, let's just say that there is pleasure. You know, I'm sure a lot of people get a lot of bliss, they just get blissed out when they meditate. So, let's just kind of go with with that angle.

So, I mean, how do you get there? It's It's It doesn't just go one way. It's just if you have pleasure, there must be pain that that comes after that or or accompanies it. I mean, it it So long as

it balances out in the long run. So,
it's In a case like that, you're
starting off with the pain. You're
starting off with like rigorous
austerity and self-restraint,
which is damned unpleasant sometimes.
And so, the payoff
of that unpleasantness
is this blissed-out state of meditation.
It's It's like Jesus talks about this
sort of thing like in the Sermon on the
Mount where he's talking about how it's
good to be miserable now in order to go
to heaven later.
In his case, it's not really an like an
equitable trade because you're just

talking a few decades of being miserable
now for an eternity of pleasure, which
doesn't balance out.
But, we're not talking Christianity
here. Well, I I I kind of was.
But we're talking Buddhism more than
Christianity.
Even though the pre the previous
question was about Christianity.
So, yeah, I mean it would be
you're you're blissed out in your
meditation, which helps to compensate
for just this like discomfort and sweat
and bugs biting you and just austerity
in general as a monk.
Of course, there are some people that
like live in Marin County, California.

They do yoga on the beach.

You know, they they have like acai berry smoothies.

You know, they're they're living in a kind of a

a lower level heaven realm.

And some of those people might be able to just go right into jhana and be all blissed out. And in a case like that, you know, it's still the principle of subjective equilibrium applies, where they're going to be having other stuff that balances that out when they're not meditating.

Anyways, just about any kind of pleasure, just pleasure in and of itself

is blameless because that's just
the fruition of past karma or present
karma, but it's just like the the result
of something.
I mean, it's just kind of an involuntary
thing that happens,
so to speak.
So,
seemingly no downsides whatsoever. If it
is blameless, it makes the idea of it
all balancing out seem at least not to
match with the dhamma. No, not really.
I mean, C of action, C of bad zero na. I
mean, if he's
going with the the jhanas in the text,
then he should also be going with the
the bhikkhu's life in the text, which is

a rough, unpleasant life a lot of the time.

So, this is the bliss of the jhanas is a kind of payoff. You know, it's it's compensation

for all this austerity that and self-restraint and frustration that monks are having to go through enduring heat and cold and sickness and thirst and hunger and all the rest.

And then they get into this bliss of meditation.

So, it can still be said to balance out.

And like I said, even if you get into these these blissful states, I mean if you're really good at it, I mean it just

you get used to it and it just becomes neutral.

So, I'm just going to move on to see if action C 5 Z is in on his next question here.

Please make the best argument you can that idealism is true and that there is nothing outside of conscious experience that actually exists. I'm curious why you think

what we can experience is all that actually exists. I know the alternatives are also not provable, but I'm curious for the case of idealism itself. Well, there's there's various ways you can you can approach this. You know, it's sort of like Immanuel Kant.

Immanuel Kant was I I can't remember exactly what kind of idealist he is he is called because he didn't deny that there's physical matter. He's just saying we can't know it. We can't possibly know that physical matter even if it does exist. All we can know is mental states.

And so, um you know, it's just sort of like this assumption that there's physical matter out there, but his successors, you know, like Schopenhauer and Hegel being the two most famous, I mean it was like it's redundant. I mean it's unnecessary.

You know, it doesn't even do anything

really necessarily. I mean
whether there's matter out there or not,
our experiences are exactly the same.
Because, I mean, all we really know is
mental states. So, it was like the the
German idealists of the the 19th
century, mainly,
I mean, it just just it just seemed
redundant. It was like, "Now, why even
bother even like discussing it when I
mean it's it's so problematic, you can't
possibly prove it's there?
You might as well just assume it isn't
there. It's like Occam's razor, it just
simplifies things. And also, it
simplifies things like psychic powers,
or not even psychic powers. I mean, how

does your consciousness

like control physical matter through

your nervous system even? I mean, let

alone like moving objects, you know,

by psychic means,

like psychokinesis.

I mean, even moving your own body, like

I'm waving my arms around. I mean, in a

way, that's kind of psychokinesis, too.

So, there's no way really to explain it.

And scientists really don't know how

to explain how like conscious experience

relates

to the physical system of our body.

So, I mean, that's a complication. It

just still isn't proven anything. Like

like Searle backs says you can't prove

anything.

Like

I think it was

Spinoza was one of the first

modern philosophers to point this out.

Hume also like pounded away at this that

the only thing you can know for sure is

what is completely contained within your

own mind.

So, I mean, you could work out theories

of Euclid, you could prove that you can

cause a checkmate in chess with

your opponent having only a king, and

all you've got is a king, a bishop, and

a knight. You can you can work that out

entirely in your head. And so, you can

kind of prove that conclusively. But
with regard to matters of fact existing
out there somewhere,
you can't prove [__]
I mean, it's just beyond your
experience.
Your experience is what you are
experiencing, which is mental states.
So, I do think that one of the
best bits of evidence
that that
mind is all there is. I mean, just
setting aside like Buddhist texts,
especially Mahayana Buddhist texts,
the Mahayana Buddhists were kind of
like, I mean, like the Theravada

Buddhists or like the Buddha himself was
sort of like Kant, where, you know, mind
is the emphasis, but he wasn't like
openly denying the existence of physical
matter. His successors, in this case
Mahayana Buddhists, they just denied
physical matter.
And one of the reasons for that is how
do you explain how mind
can like influence matter?
I mean, it's like nobody knows
other than just saying that mind is just
an epiphenomenon
of electrochemical processes in a gray
lump of meat.
But, I mean, that's not really
persuasive to me either.

But again,

this

another another angle of this is

something that I pound away at a lot,

that a lot of people just don't get, I

think, and that multiplicity is

necessarily perceptual.

Any kind of variation, any kind of

difference

is necessarily an artifact of

perception.

Because in order for you to have two

things, or even just have one thing,

you got to have like relations.

That one thing has to be same as or

different from in order for it to exist

as a discrete entity.

And same as and different from do not exist out there somewhere. That's in your mind.

So, you want to believe that there's like some multiplicity of things out there and forces and and particles or whatever.

I mean, it's not really possible. What people are doing is they're trying like a scientist is trying to understand the universe if there was no human mind there. Just originally like modern science was trying to see the world the way God sees it, but that kind of has fallen by the wayside.

So, you just want to know what's really

there. But what's really there, what they're trying to do is dismiss human perception and then sneak it back in through the back door because you can't I mean, without human perception, it's just void.

And any kind of multiplicity, I mean, I've I've pounded away at this, but I I don't think I'm very persuasive.

Any kind of multiplicity requires relations.

It requires perception to differentiate.

And without perception, there is no differentiation.

Without same as and different from, which don't exist out there but are

artifacts of perception, there is no

same as or different from.

It's just void.

So, it just seems way more elegant, more

explanatory, and more likely to me

that

the the universe or samsara as we

experience it is a manifestation of

perception.

Ah, sweet tea.

You got to drink it in the south.

The machine at work in the break room

ran out of sweet tea last last week and

just all hell broke loose.

But I digress.

So there was something else I was going

to say

with regard to this,

but now I can't recall what it is.

So,

yeah, I guess I should just move on.

And this this is the third question from

Seal of Action C Bad Zina. He says,

"Please analyze the karma of Epstein."

And technically that's not a question.

There's no question mark at all. It's

it's a request, but let's not quibble.

Please analyze the karma of Epstein.

And he's talking about the famous

Epstein

who had the Little Saint James Island

and the teenage girls performing

massages on wealthy celebrities and so

forth.

Karma of Epstein. I mean,

in a way he's kind of like a a human

Mara figure.

And I mean,

I should elaborate. I mean, I should

kind of be a little more specific that

Mara, you know, it's the Buddhist devil,

so to speak. I mean, he's not really the

god of evil. He's called Mara the evil

one because in a way he is the god of

samsara. But Mara, he's not in hell. He

is in a high heaven realm with his three

voluptuous daughters. He's living in the

highest heaven realm of the sensual

sphere.

And so, some beings, they just have like

this

very hyper-samsaric

sensual success kind of momentum going,

which is their karma. You know, that's

part of their karma anyway.

You know, it's like how do you get to be

a rock star? How you get How do you get

to be a king?

You know, it's it's you just have this

karma that leads you into this realm of

plenty and

not necessarily satisfaction but but

sensual pleasure and so forth. This

relative power

wealth, that kind of stuff.

He was born into that and had this

momentum going of

sensual pleasure. I mean, he liked

girls, apparently.

Including teenage girls.

And that

I mean, there there are some people who

argue that most of the dallying with

teenage girls wasn't so much for

blackmailing

like celebrities or politicians, but he

he just was into them himself.

Um but even so, I mean, with the guard

to the the blackmailing and him being a

Mossad agent and all that, a lot of this

is just conjecture. A lot of it is just

kind of lurid imagination.

And I don't know where fact and lurid

imagination, I mean, where what is the

dividing line with regard to Epstein,

Jeffrey Epstein.

But I mean, he was really I mean, he had

supposedly

I remember when they first raided his

his townhouse in New York City, I think

it was in, they talked about having this

like seizing a video library.

And I mean, whatever happened to that? I

mean, that just disappeared. That

probably got

just erased, burned, whatever.

I mean, assuming that it even existed.

So, I mean, I mean,

Epstein, I mean, there there's there've

been lots and lots of Epsteins. I mean, there have been like kings and and rock stars and lots of people who have just been doing all kinds of like the Medici. You you go back to like Renaissance Italy. A lot of those those politician types, I I they that put Epstein to shame.

Some of I mean, there's stories of like the Medici having like these pleasure barges on a river between two political jurisdictions so that they were in like a legal no man's land and they'd be like molesting nuns or like torturing people for entertainment on these barges. This kind of stuff, Roman emperors

I mean, there've been no no shortage of

just sociopathic kings and so forth that could just do whatever they want like Caligula for example. I mean, some of the stuff about Caligula may maybe exaggerated, but even if 20% of it turned out to be true, I mean, Caligula was way beyond Epstein.

So, I mean, like some of these kings, I mean, they just see it they see some teenage girl that they like or a teenage boy, it's just like bring them to me. And there's nothing anyone can do. He is the law.

So, yeah, Epstein was pretty much along those lines. I mean, what he was doing that was like with regard to

blackmailing and that kind of stuff, I
really can't say.
Some of it may have been going on for
all I know, but still just because
people are saying it on social media, it
doesn't necessarily mean that the thing
is true.
Or that he was like a Mossad agent,
maybe he was.
I can't know for sure.
But just think of Mara in in like
Buddhism or some of the even the kings
in the Buddha's time.
Even the Buddha himself before he
renounced the world,
he lived in a man I mean, just according
to the legend, he lived in in three

palaces and only beautiful young women
lived in these palaces with him. Harems
of beautiful dancing girls.
Probably some of them teenage because
back then
it wasn't considered to be that that
outrageous of a thing. You know, some in
the some of the Pali Suttas is
describing a woman at her peak of
attractiveness is describing a woman
that's like 15 or 16 years old.
So, I mean, there have been so many
Epsteins and it's just like Mara, the
evil one. I mean, what kind of karma got
him to be like overlord of samsara, so
to speak. Overlord of the sensual

realms, anyway.

Mara trying to lure people away from

enlightenment.

So, yeah, I mean, you can't really

analyze the karma of someone you don't

know very well.

But, I mean, there have been

countless Epsteins in this world. I

mean, it's not like he's some sort of

singular phenomenon.

I'm sure there have been a lot a lot of

people more depraved

than Epstein.

In in just I mean, that are walking the

streets right now.

Powerful people, you know,

musicians, for example.

Rich ones, not poor musicians. Not the guy with like his guitar case open on the sidewalk playing the guitar for handouts, not that guy.

Rock stars, this kind of thing.

P. Diddy.

So.

I mean, there's really not much else I can say, I suppose. Not that I can think of, anyway. So, I'm moving to the next question. This is from Drip Walker.

And Drip Walker says, are there any spiritual benefits of going vegetarian?

To give you some context, someone said their meditation improved after becoming a vegetarian, but I am not sure if it

was Buddhist meditation or some other weird esoteric meditation. Back then I was not that spiritual as now to go into specifics, but somehow he said he is a Buddhist.

Also, keep in mind this is a guy from California. Hope that helps in any way.

Well, Mahayana Buddhists tend to be vegetarian.

So,

yeah, the early Buddhists like Theravada Buddhists,

um they weren't vegetarian just because it was so early that India in general wasn't vegetarian. Monks were beggars. Beggars can't be choosers. And so, they weren't allowed to eat meat that was

killed on their behalf, but if it was
just leftovers from somebody else's
meal, then it was allowable.
The Buddha himself apparently ate meat.
So, we're going with Buddhist ethics. I
mean, if you can do something
without unwholesome mental states,
like eating food with without
unwholesome mental states, you're you're
doing nothing wrong.
I mean, if you're just wallowing in the
pleasure of some vegan gourmet dish, I
assume vegans have gourmet cooking,
then I mean, that is
unethical. I mean, that's that's like
you're doing something worse

by just wallowing in the sensuality of

being a vegan foodie

than you are by just eating meat that is

leftover from somebody else's meal, and

you're just eating it just in a neutral

mental state in order to keep yourself

healthy so that you can continue

practicing Dharma.

Um I have I do remember reading in a

book by Ram Dass,

one of my first spiritual teachers,

who was born Jewish, incidentally,

but he said that uh

the main benefit of being vegetarian

is

like a spiritual benefit is that when

animals are killed, let's say there's an

animal like a cow at a slaughterhouse and they are freaked out. I mean, they smell the blood, they know that things are not good. You know, they're trying to get away, they're scared. And so you've got these like hormones, fear hormones. I think Ram Dass called them purines, going through their system. And then when you eat that, you're eating some of that, which is going to be influencing your mind somewhat because cow hormones really aren't so different from human hormones because we're both mammals.

Genetically, a cow and a human are I would guess somewhere in the the range

of 90% identical.

Definitely up in the 80s anyhow.

So from the point of view of Ram Dass

anyway,

that that would be the main spiritual

detriment of eating meat is you're

eating these

like chemicals that can influence your

mind. And like you're going with like

yoga,

you've got three different kinds of

food. You've got like sattvic food,

which is like dairy products, fruits,

grains, nuts, this sort of thing.

Then you've got um

rajasic food, which is causes like

increase of passion. And that would be

meat and also like spicy food.

And then you've got tamasic food, which

is leads towards darkness and lethargy

and

um

it would be like stale or like food

that's kind of going off. I had one I um

I think it's a he was like a Ayurvedic

kind of guy in California said that

mushrooms are tamasic.

You know, they just you know, they grow

in the darkness [__] and this kind of

stuff. You know, I was thinking maybe

blue cheese, maybe something like that

might count as tamasic.

But,

um meat would be rajasic, which would
increase like
amount the amount of passion in your
system. If you go with, you know, like
yogic interpretations
of the the influence of food on the
system.
But, I mean, the Buddha ate meat. Jesus
apparently ate meat.
Most Tibetans, like living in Tibet,
have have eaten meat because, you know,
crops just don't grow very well on the
Tibetan Plateau.
So, I mean, it is possible to become
enlightened while eating meat. It's just
that it could be
it could have like subtle influences on

on like your

your mind or your system. But, also, I

think the main detriment of eating meat

is people that feel like it's wrong

somehow and do it anyway.

And if you feel like it's wrong and you

do it anyway, then there's just going to

be like this guilty conscience kind of

stuff that is going to interfere with

with your practice.

So, I mean, if you think

eating meat is wrong, you know, deep

down you have like trepidation or doubts

about whether it's it's cool to be

eating meat or not, then maybe you

should avoid eating meat. I mean, when

in doubt, you know, avoid the situation
in a from a moral point of view, if
possible.
But, I mean, from the point of view of
early Buddhism,
um killing is wrong, but eating meat is
not. And then, of course, you've got
modern people saying, "Well, if killing
is wrong and you're eating meat, you are
endorsing killing." But, Buddhist ethics
do not work that way. I mean,
Western even a lot of Western Buddhists
just cannot wrap their head around the
idea that Western utilitarian ethics,
modern Western utilitarian ethics are
not the only
valid ethic to go with.

And from the Buddhist point of view,
it's just subjective. If you can do
something without unwholesome mental
states, you have done nothing wrong.
It's just that some things are very
difficult to do without unwholesome
mental states, like
attacking somebody, telling lies, this
kind of thing.
So, I guess I answered that question.
I'm just going to move on to Drip
Walker's second question, which is kind
of a follow-up on the first one. He
says, "What kind of meat do you eat?"
And
I mean, I'm not really fussy.

Um my woman might argue that. She was
going to cook up something with eggplant
in it today, and I told her eggplant's
better if you fry it not like put it
into curry because it turns into this
mush when you put it into curry. So,
then she just
kind of thought that I was being fussy.
But uh
yeah, I mean, I eat pretty much all
kinds of meat, although
I've never really liked pork all that
much. Possibly I was like a Who knows?
There was some sort of pig taboo in in
my culture in a previous existence.
Who knows? But I was never really much
into pork and and watching documentaries

about factory farms, also just the way
they treat pigs is horrible. Also,
chickens, I had my mind poisoned against
chicken
by watching these documentaries.
Although, nowadays, partly because of
these kind of documentaries, the
treatment of chickens has improved in
that a lot of eggs that you buy at the
grocery store now is, you know, say
free-range
chickens. You know, it's like they're
not in these little cages anymore.
Although what is free-range mean? It
could just mean that they're wandering
around in the dark in a big warehouse or

something.

Steak, I eat beef.

I like steak, I have to admit. I was a vegetarian for many years up until I became a monk. I was a vegetarian as a monk for maybe 2 years. But then when I'm in Burma, I was living in central Burma, which is just dirt poor.

Just I mean, one reason why it's so poor is because it's semi-desert.

That is very arid there and at least one out of every 3 years the crops fail due to lack of rain.

And so, if you don't eat meat, I mean, your options are very limited trying to survive in like central Burma.

Lemyethna Village, for example, or

Pindaya Village, or let's see, what was
the other one? Tezu Village.
It's like you get pink chewy rice. These
are very poor people. Pink chewy rice
and badass cookies. Just
most most Westerners would choose not to
eat these cookies.
And like pork.
I mean, I've I've eaten every edible
part of a pig, I'm sure. Maybe not
eyeballs, but aside from that, I've
pretty much eaten every edible part of a
pig.
Pig brains, just like pig spleen, pig
blood that has been congealed into
something that looks kind of like liver

but isn't.

So,

yeah, I've

I eat pretty much any kind of meat

that's that's put in front of me,

really. I wouldn't want to eat octopus.

I like octopi.

So, I wouldn't eat that. I mean, I

wouldn't I wouldn't eat like dog meat or

something, yes. But, the standard kinds

of meat, you know, chicken, pork, beef,

lamb sometimes, you know, I eat that

stuff.

My my woman does, too, and she's a very

good cook. She makes She makes steaks

that are just

to die for.

Especially uh for the cow to die for, I guess.

I mean, I eat burger fast food burgers occasionally.

Just the other day at work, we got a safety snack,

which was like Zaxby's chicken sandwiches, and I ate mine.

I don't know. I was I was a good boy.

So, anyways, you know, I just eat meat nowadays, and fish.

Even Even when I was a vegetarian, I was a vegetarian from from my teenage years up until I was a monk for like 2 years.

So, it was like 10 years that I was vegetarian. But, still I would eat like

invertebrates,

like shrimp, that kind of thing. And I

suppose

maybe I can

see if we can get this computer to stop

making the beeping noises cuz somebody

is

beeping away on Discord.

So, let's just go like this. See if this

works.

Okay.

Yeah, I don't hear it anymore.

I'm on the ball. I've got what it takes.

So, I guess I should just move on to the

next question.

This is from Damma River.

And Damma River says, "What are your

thoughts on the 22 Sri Lankan monks
caught at the airport smuggling drugs?"
Well, I'm not surprised. I mean, I have
mentioned more than once in these Q&A
videos that
Sri Lanka has probably the highest
proportion of crooked monks of any
Theravada Buddhist country.
You know, and you're going to find them
anywhere you find Theravada Buddhist
monks pretty much.
Um but still in Sri Lanka, it's just
mainstream that you you can see in like
some some big city in Sri Lanka, like
Colombo, you can see a monk just walking
down the street with a briefcase who has

a job. He's earning a salary. This kind
of thing.
In fact, um I knew this one American
monk who told me that he had a teacher
who was a Sri Lankan monk who said that
even having sex is allowable for monks
so long as they practice coitus
interruptus, the sin of Onan,
which is just nonsense.
But I mean, you're going to find crooked
monks in Thailand. You're going to find
crooked monks in Burma, also. Just
because somebody is ordained as a monk
doesn't necessarily mean that they are a
saint or a saintly person. A lot of a
lot of like Asian people
who are ordained as monks, you know,

just who are born and raised in a
Theravada Buddhist culture, they'll
become monks not because they have like
a vocation, like a spiritual calling,
but just because
I mean, they want to live an easy life
or they want the free education of a
monastic university. They want higher
social status.
They don't want to be a subsistence
farmer working their ass off to eat
crappy food when they could just be a
monk sitting around having good food
handed to them.
So, there's a lot of a lot of monks that
are like that, especially the ones that

were born and raised in Theravada Buddhist cultures like Western monks. The amount of crooked Western monks is proportionally less than the amount of of crooked like monks who were born and raised into a Theravada Buddhist culture because a Western monk or anybody who was not raised in a Buddhist culture is having to go against their own culture, possibly going against the wishes of their own friends and family. I mean, they have to really be serious about becoming a monk and usually it's not just because they want to live an easy life.

They were jilted at the altar and so in disillusionment, they just join a

monastery. One of my teachers was like that. He Or maybe he wasn't jilted at the altar, but he told me he was he was one of my my first teachers. He's my first teacher of monastic discipline. Who said that he became a monk because um his girlfriend dumped him and so he was disillusioned and joined a monastery.

Another one of my teachers told me that he became a monk just because his family was poor subsistence farmers living in some remote arid village. So, they just decided they wanted to live an easy life.

So,

with regard to these 22 Sri Lankan

monks, I mean

um I mean I know little more about the

situation than what is right here in

this question. You know, it was it was

in the news a few days ago. 22 Sri

Lankan monks were arrested for trying to

smuggle some god awful amount of

cannabis into Sri Lanka.

I mean, it was

I mean, it was the it was a lot. I don't

remember how much it was. I think it

might might have been more than 100 lb.

It was it was a lot.

But for some reason, this reminds me of

a story somebody told me about of There

was a a monastery in in Montreal, Canada
where they brought over it was like 12
novices. I think they were from from Sri
Lanka.
And so they they invite these 12 novices
to live at this monastery in Toronto.
I think it was Toronto or Montreal, I
don't remember which.
And as soon as they got the Canadian
equivalent of a green card,
every single one of them dropped out
because I mean that was it. I mean they
just wanted to to live in Canada and and
have like an easy comfortable life.
But there are some
some I mean I've told some horror

stories. I mean I don't want to really poison people's minds against the Sangha cuz there there are really wise saintly monks also. I mean it's sort of like the situation in Burma especially. I have the most experience with Burma. It's it's like medieval Europe when it was Catholic. You know, it's like in in medieval Catholic Europe you had some genuine saints and the the the lay people just had unquestioning faith in their religion. It's but the the clergy as a whole tended to be pretty damn corrupt.

And that's the way it is in Burma and it may be even worse in Sri Lanka. There are some reform movements in like the

forests of of central Sri Lanka where
you've got serious monks again.
But most of the the monkhood in Sri
Lanka is just kind of degenerated.
It's due to largely cultural reasons and
just human nature, anthropological
reasons.
And so new monks that are joining the
Sangha, they're just following along
with what the other monks are doing and
so they just follow along with
corruption and so it just the
corruption's perpetuated or gradually
gets worse because it's easier to go
downhill than uphill.
But there are wise,

good, saintly monks out there, too.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from RFS.
And RFS says, "At what point in time do
you think the majority of Theravada
monks began began handling money?"
And it's hard to say, but I mean, it
just reminds me of the the canonical
story of the Second Council. It's like
the last chapter of the Vinaya Cūḷavagga
in the the Vinaya Piṭaka of the Pāli
Tipitaka.
It's the canonical history of the Second
Council, which happened about 70 years
after the time of the Buddha's
passing from this world.
His parinibbāna, his final

enlightenment.

And according to the story leading up to the Second Council, like 70 years after the time of the Buddha,

you had this monk from the west, like a proto-Theravada monk, who travels east into like Mahāsaṅghika territory or proto-Mahāsaṅghika territory, in like further further east in India.

And there had been some sort of donation event, and so the monks were divvying up the money.

And then so they they offered this visiting monk from the west his share of the money, and he refused to take it.

And this offended those monks, and it

started this kind of a a legal battle between the the monks of the west and these these eastern monks over whether or not monks should be allowed to handle money.

And I mean, it's it's right there in the text. It's it's it would be odd that the Second Council would really be over the issue of whether monks are allowed to handle money, considering that it's right there in the Pātimokkha rules that it is strictly forbidden for monks to handle money, except under very rare circumstances. For example, you find a wallet or some money lying on the ground inside the monastery precincts, it is your duty as a monk to pick up

that money and and like put it somewhere
safe so that when the owner comes back
for it, it can be returned to him.
I mean, it's your duty to handle money
then, but it's not your money and you're
not going to do anything with it other
than put it somewhere safe so the owner
can get it back.
So, it just It is kind of strange that
according to the Theravada Pitaka,
monks had already started like entire
monasteries had already started handling
money
within 70 years of the time of the
Buddha.
Or I mean, some people would say 100

years, but within a century of the
Buddha's own time, ancient India,
apparently monks were already starting
to handle money cuz it's just one of
those things that a lot of monks, they
just
they just can't resist the temptation.
I remember one time I was
living at a school monastery near
Mandalay. I was a junior monk at the
time. I'd only been a monk a few years
and some Sri Lankan monks came to visit
and one of the Burmese monks told them
he doesn't handle money. He's very
strict in his his vinaya. He doesn't
handle money and the the Sri Lankan
monks just stared at me in amazement and

I was like, "How do you manage?"

It's like, how did the monks in the

Buddha's time manage?

I mean, for one thing, if you follow the

rules strictly, people have more respect

for you and they're more I mean, they're

more

eager to support you.

Not that that's why you shouldn't handle

money. You shouldn't handle money just

cuz monks aren't supposed to handle

money.

But it's just like this side effect. It

It's like good karma. It's meritorious

to follow the rules and you just to up

more fortunate because of it.

But when monks started handling money,

it's it's hard to say.

It fairly early on, it seems. Although

even in the Buddha's time, money was

kind of innovation in India. Money was

sort of a new technological advancement

in in India, Indian society in the

Buddha's time.

I mean, it had been around a little bit.

It was still kind of like hadn't been

fully worked into the system. There's

probably a lot of barter and so forth

still going on as as like mainstays of

the Indian economy in the Buddha's time.

But

it's hard to say. I mean, probably you

had monks even in the Buddha's own time.

I hope a tiny minority who are already like handling money.

And maybe a few even good monks were handling it a little bit before it became against the rules.

Now, even an arahant was the at least he was like responsible for the making of one rule.

Where there was this enlightened monk who would go for alms around like once a week, something like that. And then he would just save his leftovers. He'd dry the rice out in the sun so it would keep and then just eat that for the rest of the week.

And then the Buddha said, "No, you're

not supposed to do that." So

I mean, there's nothing technically

immoral about handling money.

Or just like there's nothing technically

immoral about eating food that has been

stored overnight.

But it just became against the rules at

some point. And it may be that before it

became against the rules, there were a

few even

like wise monks who were handling money

a little bit.

But I mean, who knows?

I mean, this is just lost in the the

mists of antiquity.

And I'm going to move on to the next

question. This is from PSA. What is the

sound of one hand clapping?

PSA is a wise guy.

And it's a question that technically has no correct answer. And PSA can't hit me with a stick if I answer incorrectly anyway. So, I'm moving on to the next question.

PSA's second question. Can an animal make merit if it circumambulates a Buddha statue three times? For example, if you take a dog for a walk with you around a Buddha statue three times, does it help the animal come out of the animal realm faster?

And

probably not. I mean, the the dog just

hanging out with humans probably helps
them to get out of the animal realm
um more than the dog circumambulating a
pagoda or a shrine or a Buddha statue. I
had a a conversation
um
with with a monk, a friend of mine, in
Burma, back when I was living at the
school monastery near Mandalay, where
I think, if I remember correctly, he was
talking about how animals are stuck in
in the animal realm partly because they
do this demeritorious stuff without
realizing it. Like, a cow can walk
through a monastery and just [__] on the
ground.
And I was saying, I mean, the cow really

doesn't even know it's in a monastery.
It has no concept of of being in a
monastery. I mean, it it hasn't done
anything worse than if it shat on the
ground right outside the monastery.
Or if it shat on the ground like in its
own pasture.
I mean,
like, morals, ethics in Buddhism is
based on intention.
So, I mean, if if the cow was taking
this uh the [__] with the same placid
bovine mental states that it would that
it would [__] anywhere else, it hasn't
really done anything worse by [__]
on monastery grounds than than if it

were like taking a crap out in its own pasture.

And it's the same. I mean, for a dog to walk around a Buddha statue three times, it has no concept of what it's doing. I mean, there might be a certain empathy, you know, it might get a kind of subtle spiritual vibe from you if you have that kind of attitude when you're circumambulating. And then that might kind of the dog might pick up on that a little bit.

But there is something that dogs do that I think might earn them merit. And that's when a dog bows to you.

You know, like a dog as an as an act of

submission, I assume,

that, you know, it'll like put its its

paws out in front and just kind of like

bow to you.

And I a lot of the time, especially when

I was in Burma and I was a monk, and

some scroungy village dog would do that,

you know, it would like

practically prostrate in front of me.

I'd say, "You get a kudo point for that

one." You know, kudo is kusala kamma in

in Burmese.

So, I mean, it's possible. I mean, if

they really are not necessarily because

you're a monk, they probably don't have

any concept of that. But, you know,

they're considering you to be somebody
that is, you know, like superior to them
or higher than them, somebody that they
kind of respect and trust, and then
they're like prostrating in a way, kind
of bowing to you,
then
yeah, I think that that might be
meritorious for that dog. I mean, even
for a dog to just love you. You know,
dogs have a purer love for their master
than most humans have for each other.
You know, you can kick your dog, you can
abuse it, you can ignore it, the dog
still loves you. It's just
unquestioning.
Unconditional, really, so long as you

keep feeding it, anyway.

So,

I do think that hanging out with humans

can help dogs and other animals to get

out of the the animal realm just

because, you know, there's like this

subtle infiltration of higher mental

states kind of entering their world.

But, for a dog to just walk around a

Buddha statue

isn't going to get it any more merit

than the cow is going to get demerit

from crapping on the ground in a

monastery instead of crapping on the

ground outside the monastery.

It could be just like subtle empathy,

you know, like
uplifting mental states just from being
with a human being that's having
uplifted mental states.
That would be much more likely.
Now, I'm just going to move on to PSA's
third question. Why are birth rates
falling all over the world? Well,
they're not falling all over the world.
Sub-Saharan Africa is exploding with its
population still. I mean, if you look at
a map of like birth rates all over the
world with like bright red being the
highest birth rates and like blue being
the lowest birth rates, most of the
world is blue.
Sub-Saharan Africa is just ruby red.

Plus a few like undeveloped parts of

Asia.

Just a few. Maybe Afghanistan, some some

area around in there might still have

like a positive birth rate.

But, I think it's largely

sort of like

the comforts of modern

modern society, modern cult modern

technology.

Part of it is that.

Um I mean, in the West it's like

testosterone levels in men are

plummeting.

For I mean, there could be some

conspiracy.

You know, it could be that something's getting put into our water, that kind of thing.

Or it could just be that we're just kind of decadent.

You know, it's like masculinity is frowned upon nowadays. It's toxic.

So, you know, it's it's sort of like And then, of course,

in like progressive liberalism or whatever you want to call it, which is pretty much global at this point, you've got um

um feminism.

You know, women I mean, they want a career and all that. They don't want to get tied down with kids.

You know, when I was young, I didn't
want to have kids, partly because I
mean, partly it's just this huge
like karmic thing that I mean, it's you
it takes a like heavy responsibility to
have children. It's not something you
should do lightly. I mean, not just like
animals that just
you know, have sex and next thing you
know, they got they got offspring.
Yeah, I mean,
I was thinking about, you know, the
world is so overpopulated. Back in the
'80s, when I was a young man, it was
like the overpopulation is is people are
going to be starving by the billions by

the year 2000, this kind of thing, which
never really happened.
Technology and also, ironically, the the
increase in carbon dioxide has increased
the amount of plants that grow, which
has largely staved off mass starvation
and famine in this world.
But also, I mean, it was like the Cold
War was still going on in the '80s, you
know, it's like
you don't know what the world's going to
be like 20 years from now. It could be
like this radioactive like
nightmarish wasteland for all I knew.
And there's still some of that. I think
it's largely cultural, plus maybe
if there's something besides the culture

that's causing male testosterone rates
to plummet. You know, their testosterone
levels.
I mean, that's that's probably a factor,
too.
But, I mean, I'm probably not the
correct person to ask. I mean, you'd
probably get a better answer if you
asked Grok
why birth rates are falling all over the
world except in sub-Saharan Africa and a
few like underdeveloped Asian countries.
And I'm just going to move on to this
question. This is from Stellar Supreme.
And this is kind of a strange question.
And And really it's it's

it's a very compound question.
There could be any number of question
marks in this if one were inclined to
include them.
But Stellar Supreme
says, "What is the most dharmic insect,
reptile, mammal, amphibian, bird, plant,
fish, arachnid, crustacean, mollusk, and
cnidarian?" And for those of you who are
unfamiliar with like
biological taxonomy, a cnidarian would
be like a jellyfish or a coral or a sea
anemone.
And then he includes here, "No wrong
answers, just creativity points
question."
So, idle curiosity, maybe an

entertainment value kind of a question.
So, what is the most dharmic insect? I
would guess like a honeybee.
You know, I mean, they're not like
killing other insects except for maybe
in self-defense, defense of the hive,
that kind of thing. Making honey, they
work hard, you know.
So, yeah, let's let's go with the
honeybee as the most dharmic insect.
Most dharmic reptile?
Gosh, maybe some kind of land tortoise.
I mean, in order for it to be dharmic,
you probably wouldn't be a predator.
Most reptiles are like predatory
at least on insects. I mean, you've got

like the the marine iguana of the
Galapagos Islands that feeds on seaweed.
But then you've got plenty of tortoises
that that feed on plants and so forth.
And they're kind of slow and chill. So,
let's just go with some kind of giant
land tortoise.
I mean, the Galapagos Islands apparently
has the most dharmic reptiles.
So, the most dharmic mammal, humans.
Also, probably the most adharmic mammal
is also the human cuz there's a lot of
variation in humans.
Let's see, the most dharmic amphibian?
Well, the frog god.
Let's just go with the Buddhist
mythology, Buddhist Buddhist legend. The

frog who was listening to the Buddha give a give a talk, and he didn't understand the words, but he was uplifted just by the vibe, so to speak. He was soothed by the melodious tones of the Buddha's speech. And so, as the frog was
like squatting there in rapt attention listening to the sounds of the Buddha's speech that he couldn't really understand, some shepherd accidentally squished the frog's head with his stick, not even knowing what he was doing. He didn't look down. He just shifted his stick and killed the frog.
The frog became a deva, landed in a

heaven realm, became the frog god.

So, that would be the most dharmic

amphibian that I can think of. The most

dharmic bird?

Man.

I mean, you've got the the hamsa or the

the ruddy shelduck, which is considered

more or less sacred in Buddhist cultures

in India.

I think it's like the

like the What is it? Like the mascot

bird of of the god Brahma.

Um I mean, they probably do eat some

some animals like invertebrates and so

forth, but

the associations with Buddhism are are

fairly good.

Let's see, the most dharmic plant would

be the Bodhi tree,

Ficus religiosa.

See, the most dharmic fish?

Gosh. Well, I mean the Buddha was a a

fish in a previous existence. He was the

fish king.

So, yeah, maybe we should just go with

that like like the most Dharmic bird.

Maybe it's like a quail. There's the

Buddha was a quail more than once

according to the Jataka stories in his

previous existences.

So, most Dharmic fish?

I don't know. Maybe maybe like an

otocinclus algae eater because you know

they're just helpful little fish.
They're unobtrusive. You know, they
don't have an attitude and they just eat
biofilm like bacteria and diatoms and
then algae and that kind of stuff. So,
if if we're not going to go with the
Buddha's previous existence as the fish
king, let's go with an otocinclus.
The most Dharmic arachnid?
Let's go with I think it I think a daddy
longlegs, a harvestman,
is technically an arachnid and they're
detritivores. You know, they're not
predators. They're not like stinging
things to death, biting them and
injecting digestive fluids, that kind of
thing.

You know, they're just harmless little They look kind of like spiders but they're not. The difference between a a daddy longlegs harvestman and an actual spider is a spider's body is divided up into a head and a cephalo No, cephalothorax and an abdomen, just two parts. You know, everyone knows an insect's body is divided up into three parts, the head, the thorax, and the abdomen. Like a spider or other No, let's just go with spiders. You know, they got the the cephalothorax. The head and the thorax are fused into one and then they got the abdomen. A harvestman is all just one lump.

It's all fused.

Yeah, so let's just go with that, the daddy longlegs. The most Dharmic crustacean?

Well,

my amano shrimp. I mean, they're like the the crustacean version of an otocinclus little aquarium algae eater. So, yeah, some of these little shrimps that just feed on algae or detritus, you know, just they're just like part of the cleanup crew of the ecosystem. You know, they're just helpful little beings, unobtrusive, mind their own business.

The most dharmic mollusk?

Gosh, this is this is so weird.

The most dharmic mollusk?

How about an oyster?

Although they they do handle pearls, I

guess.

And the most dharmic cnidarian? Gosh.

Well,

you got your choice of jellyfish,

let's see, the Portuguese man-of-war

wouldn't be it.

Um sea anemones,

or

corals.

Some kind of coral, I guess. Who knows?

Like the Buddha's palace before he

renounced the world, probably had coral

in it. That kind of coral, because it's

associated with the Buddha somehow.

And I'm just moving on to Stellar Supreme's next question, which uh let us hope is not as weird as that one.

Well, actually, I guess it kind of is. What is your favorite creature from the Cambrian explosion? The organisms of this time period are so diverse and interesting-looking. Consider Anomalocarididae and Opabinia.

Well, I really don't know what those are. And I haven't really studied the extinct phyla of the Cambrian explosion very much. I remember there was a kind of It was It was sort of like an armored worm that had a mouth like the iris of an old-time camera. You know, it the it

just it was like a circle that opened
and closed by like the same kind of iris
um movements of like a a camera iris.
So, I mean that was kind of cool.
I don't know what it would be called
though.
But, this I think brachiopods arose from
the the Cambrian explosion. You know,
the brachiopod is is really this super
ancient
kind of of animal. It's it's sort of
like a clam that's got like a stalk.
Or I would guess that even what do you
call them? The the feather stars.
Crinoids. I would have I would guess
that crinoids arose during the Cambrian

explosion. They're also like a really

early sort of animal.

Um

yeah, maybe a brachiopod or a crinoid.

But,

it's it's something I don't really think

about much. You know, what's my favorite

creature from the Cambrian explosion?

So, let's just move on to Stellar

Supreme's next question, which is

something entirely different.

He says, "Can celestial nymphs get

pregnant?"

And this is kind of based on a

discussion we were having

on the Discord server.

And

I think going with orthodox Theravada celestial nymphs like in the Tāvatiṃsa heaven realm for example, the most famous celestial nymphs are from Tāvatiṃsa heaven. I don't think that they get pregnant because according to orthodox Theravada, or so I was told by a German monk in Burma many years ago, that celestial nymphs and also the demons in hell are not real beings. They're just a kind of apparition. They're just a kind of a virtual being with no subjective experience or karma. they're just sort of a manifestation of your karma that's sort of projected out there somehow. So, the celestial

nymphs of Tavatimsa heaven, according to

this German monk's account of like the

the

Theravadin commentarial tradition,

that

yeah, they wouldn't get pregnant.

That they're just kind of like

animated love dolls or something.

But, I'm kind of skeptical of that. I

think just some commentator just cooked

that up.

So, I mean,

I do not think that even in Tavatimsa

heaven, you have pregnant goddesses.

That yeah, I think you just um manifest

spontaneously

as a youth, you know, you're already

pretty much full grown when you just
appear in in a a heaven realm like
Tavatimsa.
However,
it is my understanding based on what
I've read in the in the Pali texts, that
the the heaven realm or the the deva
realm, just one level above us, the the
level of the five the four great kings,
not five, the four great kings,
this one level above us, the lowest
level of small g gods, which includes
like terrestrial deities like tree
spirits, nature spirits, this kind of
stuff, they get pregnant and have
children. Because I remember there's the

rule against a monk like damaging green plants. It is a pacittiya rule. It's in the Patimokkha rules. A monk is not allowed to damage green plants. And the story,
which may be considerably different from the actual reason for this rule being laid down, but according to the story, there was a monk who was going to chop down a tree. And there was a tree spirit, a female, like a tree goddess, a Rukkhadevā, Rukkhadevī because she was female.
She lived in that tree.
And she's trying to talk the monk out of cutting down her tree. And she holds out her baby

to say, "Look, my baby and I live in that tree." But, the thing is the monk had like a crude mental state. You know, he apparently hadn't mastered Jhana. And so, he didn't even see them. You know, he couldn't see or hear these Devas. And so, he accidentally, if I remember correctly, chops off the baby Deva's arm with his axe.

You know, he's just swinging away at the tree. The The goddess who was irresponsible for holding her baby out in front of a swinging axe.

Um

So, I mean, there there are baby small g gods, baby Devas, like at the

terrestrial level. And up in like the
Himalayas, that kind of thing, where a
lot of these beings supposedly live.
Then you can have pregnant Devas.
According to the texts.
But, I mean, if you're going to reject
the authority of the texts, then
I mean, what are you going with with
even talking about celestial nymphs?
I mean, you have personal experience of
them, I suppose.
So,
I think I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Erin.
And Erin says, "When did the Egyptian
religious timeline begin in relation to
the start of Buddhism?" So, this is

another ancient Egypt question.

Maybe we'll have to have a thumbnail

with an ancient Egyptian theme.

Erin says, "When did the Egyptian

religious timeline begin in relation to

the start of Buddhism?" Well, the

ancient religious timeline began in

prehistoric times.

Whereas the start of Buddhism was, you

know, 5th or 6th century BCE.

So, at the

during the Buddha's lifetime, I think

like the Great Pyramid of Giza was

already

Well, it was like what? At least 2,000

years old. I mean, the Great Pyramid

supposedly, I mean, going with
mainstream archaeology,
wasn't it wasn't it built like it was
either 2500 BCE or 3500 BCE? So, I'd
make it like 2 or 3,000 years before the
time of the Buddha, and Egyptian
religion had already started.
I mean, they they already had this idea
of you're going to have to take your
body with you into the next life, and so
they're trying to preserve mummified
pharaohs and that kind of thing.
Some people out there think that that
the pyramids were not burial tombs, just
partly because they've never found the
remains of, you know, a mummy or
anything in these in these uh

in these pyramids. Although, they did find like a mummified foot in one. But, I mean, the main reason, I mean, it's it's fairly well documented even in like ancient Egyptian inscriptions that these were burial tombs. And the reason why you haven't found like a a mummy, like a an intact mummy inside of a pyramid, is because all of these periods these pyramids were plundered thousands of years ago. That's why they eventually stopped using pyramids and started burying their their pharaohs in the Valley of the Kings, like in hidden places underground or in the mountains, because if you have a pyramid, I mean,

it's just like this big advertisement,
there is priceless treasure inside this
thing.
So, every single pyramid got plundered
long ago.
So, when did the Egyptian religious
timeline begin in relation to the start
of Buddhism? Well, literally it would be
thousands of years before the time of
the Buddha.
I mean, probably pre-dynastic times.
Already the Egyptians had some of their
pantheon intact, some of their religious
beliefs already intact.
When exactly is hard to say because it
would be literally prehistoric.
But it would be thousands of years

before the advent of Buddhism.

So, let's just move on to Aaron's second question. Is there one word that describes what their religion was called over such a long span of time? Well, what the Egyptians themselves called their religion,

I don't know. It might just be like the ancient Egyptian equivalent of religion because I mean, that was it. That was their religion.

Um from a modern point of view, I don't think there is one word that would describe ancient Egyptian religion. I mean, that would that would be it. It'd be three words, ancient

Egyptian religion.

I mean, if you had if you were forced to use just one word,

then like Egyptian. But then modern Egyptian religion is Islam. And then there was like a Christian period between

the like early ancient Egyptian polytheism, you know, the little experiment with just worshipping the sun god, back to Egyptian polytheism, and then you had like Christianity and then Islam.

Uh maybe a little bit of the uh classical religion got And some of the classical religion got added into Egyptian religion when the pharaohs

started becoming Macedonians or Greeks,
you know, the the Ptolemaic dynasty.
So,
one word that describes the religion was
called over such a long period of time
and just Egyptian, I guess.
So, Aryan, third question. It seems like
the ancient Egyptian religion was the
complete opposite of Buddhism when you
compare the main tenets. Is this true or
can you come up with another religious
school that contradicts Buddhism even
more? I'm thinking of their veneration
of the soul versus no self, their burial
practices that attempt to preserve the
body and material possessions forever

versus impermanence

and renunciation of materialism, their

goal of the soul reaching the field of

reeds where they achieve some kind of

immortal heaven realm for the soul,

their polytheism, etc.

Well, I mean

gosh, this is this is kind of a

difficult question. I mean, what

religion is the most opposite to

Buddhism? It's It's like the the short

form of this this question, I think.

I think that's what this question boils

down to is was the ancient Egyptian

religion the farthest from Buddhism that

has existed or was there a religion even

more different from Buddhism than the

ancient Egyptian religion?

And I have said already

with regard to the earlier questions

about ancient Egypt

that really I have not found a whole lot

of genuine wisdom

in ancient Egyptian religion.

Much like I never really found a whole

lot of wisdom in the Old Testament,

either.

I mean, Ecclesiastes, you get some like

superficial worldly wisdom like in

Proverbs, that kind of thing.

But, let's see here.

I don't think there's any religion that

would be the complete opposite of

Buddhism. They would believe the the opposite of Buddhism on every point. Like polytheism, that's that's mentioned on the list here. I mean, Buddhism also has it accepts the existence of a multitude of deities. I mean, even more than Egypt probably because they're just like
essentially just infinite number throughout throughout the cosmos, you know, there's just
countless superhuman beings out there, most of whom don't give a damn about us. Don't pay any attention to us.
So, see veneration of the soul versus no self and most religions believe in an eternal soul. Buddhism is one of the few

exceptions on in with regard to that.

The burial practices, yeah, in in

Buddhism it was

largely cremation, especially for monks.

Like in Burma,

monks and the parents of monks are

cremated while lay people are are

buried.

What?

Gosh.

Yeah, it's Buddhism is puts a lot more

emphasis on impermanence.

That's for sure. See, the goal of the

soul reaching the field of reeds where

they achieve some kind of immortal

heaven realm for the soul.

Yeah, I mean

um

I guess I mean, the the approach I would take to answering this question is just try to think of a religion even more different from Buddhism than the ancient Egyptian religion and

I mean, maybe sort of like you'd have to have like an amoral religion. And there have been plenty of amoral religions.

With regard to ancient Egyptian religion, I'm not even sure if they had like moral precepts.

You know, like don't kill, don't steal, don't lie. This don't commit adultery, you know, the basics that most religions have.

I mean, I really don't know enough about ancient Egyptian religion to even know what their basics were with regard to ethical conduct.

I mean, the pharaohs were the ones that were getting their main shot into immortality. And I mean, they were commanding armies and so forth.

Marrying their own sisters, that kind of thing.

So, it could be that you could be even more different if you got into a just an amoral kind of religion, sort of like the cults of the emperors in ancient Rome.

I'm not sure what kind of ethical

conduct there would be. I mean,
especially you got somebody like
Caligula declaring himself a god,
and you've like requiring people to
venerate him,
to offer incense at his altars and so
forth. I mean, something like that would
probably be farther from Buddhism than
an Egyptian religion that really was a
religion that kind of
you know, it it sort of stabilized
society. You know, it added a kind of
cultural structure to society that kind
of strengthened this the culture, that
kind of thing. So,
yeah, I mean, maybe some kind of really
warlike religion, you know, like the the

religion of the ancient Huns. I think
their their symbol of their god that
they didn't really have statues because
they just really probably couldn't even
make statues very well. I have read that
I mean, their their like shrines or
their
religious imagery was essentially just a
sword stuck into the ground.
You know, or venerating the the the
eagles in the Roman legions, something
like that.
So, it'd be some kind of amoral sort of
religion would be farther from Buddhism
than probably ancient Egyptian religion
because, I mean, ancient Egyptian

religion
was, you know, it was a stabilizing
religion for mainly like an agricultural
society.
So, I would assume that there was some
emphasis on just being honest and not
stealing and not murdering people, that
kind of thing. Whereas,
some more primitive kind of religions,
more barbarous sort of religions that
were amoral or you know, like
the cult of the emperors again,
especially if you got like some
sociopathic
kind of egomaniac sort of emperor
who's got some kind of cult going,
then yeah, that would be more different

from Buddhism, I think. But, it's hard
to say. I mean, I don't I'm not familiar
with all religions, but I would assume
that you'd have some kind of you know,
you you you could even say that like
Satan worship
would be a kind of religion.
In which case, Satan worship might be
farther
from Buddhism than than just about any
other or just have some kind of religion
that like
reveres some amoral,
warlike, violent kind of being and kind
of emulates that.
But, exactly which religion comes goes

farthest from Buddhism, is the most

different from Buddhism,

I mean, I would have to do some

considerable research and get back to

you on that one.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

And this is from Ethiopian Fake Tig.

And I'm going to finally check and make

sure we are recording and yes, we are

indeed.

That's good.

Ethiopian Fake Tig says,

"In one sutta, there are stories of the

Buddha meeting some Brahmin and one of

them treating him badly and some spirit

appearing before them to smite the young

ignorant Brahmin since the Buddha asked him a simple question about his chase. I don't know what that means. That he couldn't answer.

If spirits recognize the Buddha as a Tathagata and very bizarre occurrences like these happen, why do so many people who meet the Buddha never see anything special about him? There are countless stories of people questioning him and doubting his enlightenment, but there are also many things that are otherworldly that happen all around him. I can't seem to reconcile that.

Well, I mean, when I first looked at this question like when I was cutting

and pasting it onto the list here,
um it struck me as a question asking why
so many people treated the Buddha as
though he were just an ordinary person,
whereas like Devas, higher beings,
treated him with the reverence. And the
answer to that, I mean, just within a
Buddhist con- context, you could say
that Devas, you know, they have some
mind reading ability. They can see
subtle things that humans can't see. And
so, even if they have a mind reading
ability, and they just look into the
Buddha's mind, look into his spirit, and
they it's just like this unreadable
void.
Like in in the text, it does say that

when a Buddha is is like in deep in
meditation, even the gods don't know
what his mind is resting upon.
You know, it's like they're just hit
this wall or just sort of this this
empty space. So, they would know there
was something unusual about this this
person.
Um I mean,
if we're going with Buddhist tradition,
it it doesn't make much sense. You know,
it's the Buddha, according to Buddhist
tradition, according to commentaries, he
was like 27 ft tall.
which is just impossible.
So, I mean, why would Brahmans be like

having insulting the Buddha?

You know, if he was 27-ft tall,

you know, you you shaveling, you

skinhead, this kind of stuff. No.

Or like

in the the beginning of the Samannaphala

Sutta, where King Ajatashatru wants to

meet the Buddha.

So, the doctor

Jivaka

takes King Ajatashatru to meet the

Buddha. And when they get to where the

Sangha is

is assembled,

Jivaka doesn't know which one is the

Buddha. And so, I mean, I mean,

Ajatashatru King Ajatashatru doesn't

know which one is the Buddha. And so, Jivaka points him out as he's the one, you know, facing east. I don't remember what direction he's facing. You know, leaning against that pillar. He's sitting back against that pillar over there. He doesn't say, "Oh, he's that gigantically huge one up there."

But with regard to spirits recognizing the Buddha as the Tathagata, I mean, they can see things that ordinary people can't see. You know, they're more sensitive. They've got the divine eye and so forth. You know, they maybe see this this blazing aura or whatever.

But I mean, it's you're getting into the

realm of,

you know, legends and mythology and so

forth. That I mean, it's like an

academic thing.

Let's see. So, where's the actual

question mark? Before I move on, I

should at least

I should at least make sure

Here it is. If spirits recognize the

Buddha as a Tathagata and very bizarre

occurrences like these happen, why do

you so many people who meet the Buddha

never see anything special about it?

Well,

with regard to devas and humans,

yeah, it's it's sort of like that, where

the devas have a more spiritual eye.
They can see subtleties that some crude
human can't see.
But, I mean, this is getting more
towards like ordinary human human beings
like
Neem Karoli Baba up there. I mean, he
was
he was like an extremely highly advanced
human being spiritually. He was like a
spiritual superman in my opinion. And
according to the testimonies of many
people including Ram Dass who I consider
to be a
an honest human being, he could do just
these this amazing feats, you know, that

would be called miracles, psychic
powers, that kind of thing.
But, a lot of people, I mean, they just
didn't have faith in him. They just
weren't open to that. They just did not
have the karma to be influenced by a
saint like that. You know, they were
just closed off to it. And and they they
would just see this old fat man.
And that And that's it. That's all
they'd see.
And then sometimes um Neem Karoli Baba
or Maharaj, I mean, he would just kind
of like make sure they wouldn't see. I
mean, it was like he knew that they
weren't going to see anything and he
just he would just do things that would

trigger them.

You know, just for for whatever reason.

I have this a certain story in mind. I

probably shouldn't repeat the whole

story, but

Yeah, I I won't I won't tell the whole

story. It would take too long, I think.

But, I mean, he had his reasons. And so,

there were some people that were just

ripe to encounter a sage that would be

profoundly influenced by him. And then

there were other people that were just

closed off. They They just weren't

ready. You know, they were they were

like completely locked into materialism

or whatever. You know, they didn't even

believe that such such human beings are possible.

You know, they just see this old fat man.

In fact, and there is one story. And and what the hell? I mean, there's there aren't a whole lot of questions. There's a story by

I think his name was Larry Brilliant.

He was a He was a doctor.

It was is the story of how he came to be a disciple of Maharaj.

And I think his his Sanskrit name is his disciple's name was like Subramaniam or something like that. But, he was married to an Indian woman. This is back in the late '60s. You know, they were hippies.

And his wife was just a devotee of Maharaj. And so, this American doctor who is married to the Indian lady, I mean, he's you know, he he wants he loves his wife and he's going to give it a shot. He's going to go and and meet Maharaj. And

it's like he's just completely turned off by Maharaj. It's like he's just this old fat man and these these people are just like brainwashed into a cult.

And so, finally

he's he just kind of calls in sick one day. You know, he just doesn't show up. He he gives the excuse, "I'm not feeling well. I think I'll just stay at the the

hostel or the the hotel or whatever."
And he just kind of goes for a walk
around this lake. And he's just sort of
soul searching, so to speak. You know,
he thinks, "And my wife, she's she's
like brainwashed into this cult.
I don't It's like my marriage is going
to come to an end over this. What should
I do?"
And then he thinks
it's like he does something
kind of experimentally. For the first
time since he was a kid, he actually
prays. It's like, "God, give me a sign."
And then he's like looking around for
like a rainbow or something and nothing
happens. So, finally he just goes back

home. And the next day he's just going
to go and have it out with Maharaj and
just say goodbye and go back to America.
Because Maharaj had just been ignoring
him the whole time.
You know, ever since he got there, he'd
been there for like a week at least,
Maharaj had hardly even looked at him.
So, this young American doctor, he goes
one last time. He gets there before
anybody else. He just wants to have it
out with him. And
uh I should say that
before I get to Maharaj meeting with him
that one thing that used to bug this
doctor more than anything else was

people bowing and touching Maharaj's feet. You know, it's just to an American like groveling like that. It just rubbed him the wrong way. He did not like to see it.

So, anyway, he gets there early. Maharaj hasn't come out yet out of his his little cabin.

And people had already offered some fruit and there was an apple that had fallen off the platform and was on the ground. So, he he's just going to pick it up and put it back onto the platform. He reaches out to pick up this apple and that's exactly when Maharaj comes out and puts his foot on top of this doctor's hand hand.

And so, the doctor is in this position that he always hated to see the most, touching Maharaj's foot. You know, he's down on his knees touching Maharaj's foot.

So, then Maharaj just sits down and he starts talking with this this doctor and he asks, you know, "Why weren't you here yesterday? Did you go to the lake?"

And this doctor, I mean, when Maharaj says lake, it just he gets like this weird feeling like there's this surge of energy starting to go through him.

And then Maharaj is just kind of toying with him a little bit. He says, "What did you do at the lake? Did you go

swimming?"

And the doctor says, "No."

"And did you go boating?" And the doctor says, "No."

And then Maharaj says, "Did you go horseback riding?"

And the doctor says, "No." And then Maharaj leans over and says very quietly, looking intently at him, "Did you talk to God?

Did you ask for something?" And this doctor had asked for a sign, and he hadn't told anybody about this. There's no way Maharaji could have known this through ordinary means, according to the story here.

And he said it was just like he just

fell to pieces. I mean, he starts like crying like a little kid. And Maharaji is like stroking his beard cuz he's a he's a hippie doctor. You know, so he's like Maharaji's just kind of like pulling on his beard and just saying over and over again, "Did you ask for something?

Did you ask for something?" And he's just crying and crying. And by this point, other devotees have arrived and they're all just sort of like kind of putting their hands on his back and just kind of kind of caressing him a little bit, you know, just kind of lending support because most of them had gone

through a similar event where their mind
just gets completely blown wide open by
some inexplicable
miracle
performed by Maharaji.
So, getting back to this question, it's
like some people they're just not open
to it. They just don't have the right
karma to
realize that they're in the presence of
a of a like a very advanced being.
And you really can't know for sure that
someone is advanced just by looking at
them unless you're as advanced as they
are.
Cuz there are a lot of fakes out there
who can pass themselves off as

enlightened beings, and they really aren't.

So, anyways, Dr. Larry Brilliant became a disciple of Maharaji after that and got the Pali name of or the Sanskrit name of Subramanian, I think it was.

So, I hope I answered that question.

I'm just going to move on to the next one. This is also by Ethiopian Fake Tig.

He says, "I did a deep dive into Daniel Ingram and his claim into being an arahant. And in an interview, he talks about how many of his teachers, some of which were Burmese, were said to have had many, many achievements. And even the Buddha himself actually would point

out the many different achievements of the monks in his sangha and that it was not anything that taboo. In his book, Daniel talks about arahantship as if it's something you can attain with enough practice. And the famous monk U Pandita, who apparently hated you, but also taught Sam Harris, loved Sam Harris, and thought Sam was actually at stream entry in the practice. Sam spoke about this with Joseph Goldstein in a podcast and how U Pandita was wrong. But, if stream entry can be attainable within 5 to 6 years of rigorous practice, won't that mean arahantship is just a few miles away? And to now ask an actual question,

if all this is so, could arahantship be simpler than we thought? Well, arahantship is completely simple. The problem is that our delusion is complicated.

Let's see. I look like I was lagging a little bit. Maybe I am.

But, I mean, just look at this here. I mean, the question kind of debunks itself a little bit, it seems to me.

That I mean, Ethiopian Fake Tig says, "Well, if stream entry is that easy, but Sam Harris, who was declared a stream entry by U Pandita,

Sam Harris says, 'No, I'm not a stream enterer. U Pandita was wrong. In fact,

I've met two other people who were declared to be arias by U Pandita, who came to the conclusion that U Pandita was mistaken.'

And in one case, it was fairly obvious. I knew this Burmese monk in Burma who completed the course at U Pandita, and U Pandita himself declared him to be an Arya.

And he actually believed he was an Arya for a while.

Although it would be pretty obvious to most people that he wasn't cuz he was very crusty. I mean, he was he gave me the insight that hate and anger are very different cuz he would just seethe with hatred for certain

people

while not really being angry.

It was just when he's talking, you could just see the muscles clenched in his in his cheeks as he's talking through gritted teeth at this person that he just despised.

But U Pandita declared him to be an Arya, and this this monk thought, "Well, maybe I really am an Arya." Up until he finally had enough intelligence and objectivity and common sense to realize that he wasn't really one. And the other person who was declared to be an Arya by U Pandita who realized that he was wrong that I have met was Pa Auk Sayadaw.

Pa Auk Sayadaw also, as a relatively junior monk, went to U Pandita, went to Panditarama, or maybe this was when U Pandita was still at the Rangoon Mahasi Center, and he finished the course, was declared to be a Sotapanna, and in that case, um Pa Auk Sayadaw knew right away that "No, I'm not a Sotapanna."

So,

I mean, U Pandita turned out a lot of fake Aryas. The The Mahasi tradition turns out fake Aryas.

I mean, I won't I won't go so far as to say all of them are fake,

but I mean, the Mahasi tradition, it it used to actually hand out a diploma.

When you finish the course, then they just assumed that you were already like at least a Sotapanna. You were literally a an Arya, like a Buddhist saint.

But I mean, there was one teacher I I heard about this. One teacher at the Mahasi Center.

And if you're a teacher, then you pretty much have to be an Arya.

It's weird. In order to be a teacher of the Mahasi tradition, you have to be an Arya, at least like at the Mahasi Center, the main Mahasi Center itself.

And then one fine day, he went into the office and stole a bunch of money and

disappeared with one of the female

meditators.

Supposedly an Arya.

So, just because U Pandita or just the

Mahasi tradition in general considers

someone to be a a stream enterer,

it

doesn't really mean very much.

So, I mean, that kind of undermines the

whole question here. If stream entry can

be attainable within 5 to 6 years of

rigorous practice, won't that mean

Arahatship is just a few miles away?

And if this is so, could Arahatship be

simpler than we thought?

I mean, again, I mean, people are they

just they kind of overlook the fact that

I don't even consider the four stages of Arya hood to be likely to be genuine, to be authentic teachings of the Buddha.
I just don't think so. Like the Samannaphala Sutta that I mentioned, where it's talking about the fruits of like the the monk's life,
in ascending order, it starts with, you know, you get more respect and this kind of thing, and it goes all the way up to enlightenment, the four stages of Arahatship are not even mentioned.
So,
I mean, a stream enterer probably was kind of like just someone who had just like a new convert to Buddhism. You

know, they had started practicing,
started interpreting life along
spiritual lines, that kind of thing.
In my opinion. So, this whole question
is just kind of this weird academic sort
of question
based on
declarations by U Pandita that even the
question itself
indicates was probably a
a false conclusion jumped to by U
Pandita.
And U Pandita really did despise me. He
didn't like me at all when I was when I
was there. I was told he didn't like
Westerners in general unless they spoke
fluent Burmese.

Maybe maybe I just kind of like a tall Westerner too. So maybe he just didn't like that.

I'm not sure exactly.

It's in It's in my my recent book.

A fellow at U Pandita or a fellow at Pandita Rama is the the name of the chapter that discusses my my two months of intensive meditation at Pandita Rama in Rangoon dealing with the notorious U Pandita.

So,

why U Pandita loved Sam Harris, I don't know unless Sam was just uh like experiencing

what he was supposed to in accordance

with the cookbook method. That can

happen, too.

But I I wasn't experiencing what I was

supposed to be experiencing in the

proper order and so forth. And so I was

just seen as just kind of a waste of his

his time.

So,

the uh I mean stream entry, I mean I

don't even consider this to be just even

a valid interpretation of stream entry.

It's a traditional orthodox one, but in

this case, I do not consider a stream

enterer to be to have attained some

superhuman mental state.

I mean there there could be

different levels of like partial

enlightenment where you're starting to
get glimpses. You've reached a kind of
point of no return, that kind of thing.
And that may have been how stream
enterer got reinterpreted to mean.
But I don't think that it was originally
taught by the Buddha himself
for various reasons.
Arahantship, I mean, just because Daniel
Ingram declares himself to be an arahant
doesn't mean that Daniel Ingram was an
arahant any more than Sam Harris was a
sotapanna. I mean, Daniel Ingram just
brags about how enlightened he is.
And you should think that an arahant
wouldn't be bragging about how

enlightened he is, even though the
Buddha in the text is just bragging,
bragging, bragging in certain suttas
about that just that about how
enlightened he is.
But Daniel Ingram, it used to be on his
website
in this the home page of his website,
he's just listing off all of his
attainments and being an arahant wasn't
even the highest attainment, apparently.
So, I think Daniel Ingram is is sort of
like a
a clever con man type, if I had to
guess. I mean, maybe he's got some kind
of attainments, but fully enlightened,
I would be surprised.

I won't insist that he's not fully enlightened. I don't want to be slandering a fully enlightened being anything like that, but still, I'm pretty skeptical of Daniel Ingram. Just I mean, I've seen him on on videos and he just seems like this fidgety, nervous kind of guy, anyway.

But who knows?

But arahantship, I mean, if arahantship were so easy, there'd be a hell of a lot more arahants in this world, seems to me. Most people just aren't ready for it. They don't even want it.

But even the people that are trying for arahantship, the overwhelming majority

of those do not succeed.

Just because they're just not right for it. I mean, just it's hard to blame Buddhism for that.

It's just that most people just deep down, they just want to stay in samsara. It's It's not like we are we're not enlightened because we're not trying hard enough to become enlightened. We're unenlightened right now because we're continually trying to stay unenlightened.

Uh so that's it. This that whole question is just kind of a a strange kind of conditional, you know, sort of a conditional traditional kind of question

based partly on what is declared to be a
falsehood in the question itself
and then comparing that with something
different that also is conjecture.
And so I'm just going to move on to the
next question, which is the last
question.
And also by Ethiopian Fake Tig.
You got in under the wire today.
So here's the question. There is a lot
of confusion about jhana due to
Buddhaghosa who apparently thought it
was a one-in-a-million kind of
experience, but in the suttas even first
jhana is described as something very
easy

that the Buddha would sometimes experience as a child. Was Buddhaghosa just wrong or could jhana really be something that rare?

Well, again, this is another one of those things where orthodox Theravada and I part ways. You know, I don't really think that the four stages of sainthood are an authentic teaching of the Buddha.

And with regard to the four jhanas being superhuman mental states, even first jhana being a superhuman mental state, I I just I think that probably, and I've said this several times, that jhana originally just meant meditation. The four jhanas were just

the four stages of meditation.

And stage one would be even elementary meditation that you're doing correctly.

And in first jhana you're still thinking. You're still thinking in words in many cases.

You know, it's So it's I mean, it's not that exalted. You know, you haven't gotten into any kind of deep mystical states yet.

Like with the with the Catholic contemplative orders, they don't even get into what they call contemplation until you have stopped thinking.

So Catholic contemplation wouldn't even start until at least second jhana.

So I do think that jhana originally just meant meditation. The four jhanas were just the four levels of meditation. And I mean, they weren't necessarily superhuman. I mean, obviously humans are attaining these things, especially first jhana.

Also, if you read the Mahasatipatthana Sutta, which is the Bible to to Vipassana meditators,

and it it defines the eightfold path. Each step on the eightfold path it gets a definition. The definition of samasamadhi, right concentration, is the four jhanas.

So I mean, why would like right concentration require a superhuman

mental state? It just means meditating correctly, in my opinion.

And then of course, the Abhidhamma scholars invented a new jhana, so they had five. And then like the formless jhanas get added on top of the four basic ones.

But I mean, everyone tradition already settled on four, so they had to make the formless realms or the formless contemplations like annexes of fourth jhana. You know, they're just like varieties of fourth jhana.

But Buddhaghosa, I mean, he was a scholar monk. I don't know how much he actually practiced.

You know, I mean, nowadays if you go
with nowadays, most scholar monks are
notorious for not practicing much.
That's why they become scholars. Like
Bhikkhu Bodhi even, I mean, he doesn't
practice much.
He I mean, he has admitted that he can't
meditate. He gets like killer headaches
if he tries to meditate.
So, he's a scholar. You know, that's how
he he dedicates his time, and at least
it's in a relatively wholesome direction
of, you know,
translating and explaining texts.
But, it's not based on his own personal
experience in many cases because he
doesn't have very deep

spiritual experience as far as I know.
Like Ajahn Thanissaro's translations
would be better, at least
um with regard to how much of it is
based on his own experience and
understanding based on his own
experience.
So, let's see. Yeah, Buddhaghosa like
Buddhaghosa's main text, his most famous
text, is the Visuddhimagga, and it does
seem to me that the most Visuddhimagga
is a kind of
a manual on self-hypnosis.
It seems to me.
I could be wrong. I know more about
hypnosis than most meditators do. My

father was a hypnotist, among other things.

And so, I do think that there was a lot of confusion from ancient times up to the present time, like in Burma, where people just cannot differentiate between like a jhanic state and a hypnotic trance, like self-hypnosis.

Like someone who goes into a state where you almost stop breathing, your pulse and almost stops. You know, you're oblivious to everything around you. I mean, that's a deep hypnotic state.

My father's third No, my father's second wife, not my mother.

She'd go into these deep trance states,

hypnotic states, where it was just like that. She was like a hibernating squirrel.

Her breath rate and her her pulse would almost stop. They'd become almost undetectable. And then, I mean, she did have like some kind of like Edgar Cayce type abilities while she was in these states.

Or while she was in similar states.

But,

I mean, I do not consider that to be necessarily samatha-samadhi. I mean, my father's second wife, according to his testimony, was a hardcore alcoholic with the morals of an alley cat.

In addition having talent similar to

Edgar Cayce.

Ooh, so did I answer the question?

Was Buddhaghosa just wrong? I think

Buddhaghosa was wrong with regard to a

lot of things. The commentarial

tradition is is just laughably wrong

with with regard to a lot of things.

Sometimes they're just making guesses,

but they won't admit that they're

guessing.

Um sometimes they're just cooking stuff

up.

So,

let's just get to the See, make sure

that I answered this question.

See, a lot of confusion about jhana due

to Buddhaghosa or due to a lot of things, especially the inability to differentiate between samatha-samadhi and miccha-samadhi, right and wrong concentration, or between like a like a an expanded superconscious mental state and being in a hypnotic trance where you're like a hibernating squirrel and oblivious to everything around you.

See, I mean, the fourth jhana is supposed to be the perfection of mindfulness,

not being a hibernating squirrel.

Even a hibernating squirrel who is like channeling or whatever.

So,

yeah, I do think that the four jhanas
were originally just the four stages of
meditation with first jhana just being
like elementary meditation that you're
doing correctly.
But, that's not what tradition says.
So, I am a heretic. I make make no
secret of the fact that I do not believe
everything in the texts.
So, I guess we're done.
Might as well might as well be done.
And so, as I should always say at the
beginning and pretty much never do, if
you have any questions you think I can
answer, especially with regard to Dharma
in the broadest sense of the term,
then feel free to ask in the comments

below. No more than three questions per person per episode, please. And like and subscribe if you've not done so already, and check out my URL links, which includes the Amazon link to my new book, which is largely autobiographical with regard to my life as a monk.

And uh

be happy.

All righty then. We appear to be

recording.

Probably recording even in audio.

Hear that?

Okay then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 195.

I am your host Panyo Boss uh.

And 195 of course is not a prime number

because the only number ending in five

that is prime is five itself.

195 is 3 * 5 * 13.

This is my beverage. Oh man, I forgot to

get an emergency backup beverage which

uh could result in emergency in and of

itself.

But we'll see how we do.

I'm not just going to rush out and grab

the emergency backup beverage yet, but

it may happen at some point in this

video.

Uh I guess I have a one announcement to

make.

That is they're probably

very probably, but I can't say for sure,

but probably no Q&A video next weekend

because

I'm getting married. I'm going to get

married that weekend officially. My mate

and I have been unofficially married for

quite some time now, but we're going to

do it legally, like with a license and

an officiant who's going to be my

ex-boss from the first metal shop I

worked at. He's also an ordained Baptist

minister.

He's He's happy to marry us.

And it's going to be a very private

ceremony, so none of you are invited.

This is just uh kind of a hectic

weekend. We uh got another car to

replace the one that got smashed a

couple months ago.

Uh

>> [sighs]

>> Right before

right before I was going to do this

video, mowed the lawn. It's the weekend.

It's kind of like a guy's duty to mow

the lawn on weekends. And then after that, my sweetie sees that I'm actually like moving around doing stuff. So, it's like she she jumps at these opportunities to give me a list of other things that need to get done.

And one of those things on the list was about 600 lb of rocks had to get moved from the garage back to the backyard.

So,

it's a hot sunny day in South Carolina.

I was covered with dirt and sweat by the time I was finished with that little project. So, then I take a shower, hence the bathrobe.

But, we're [clears throat] doing it. I'm getting it done.

And the slight disruption this coming weekend, which probably is going to happen,
maybe the beginning of a whole new wave of disruptions because it's looking like I am going to start a new job May 26th, which is going to have really weird hours.
I'll be working weekends, sometimes days, sometimes nights, sometimes.
But, it's going to be paying a heck of a lot more than the job that I am soon to stop working at. Which is kind of a shame. The job I'm work I'm working in a metal shop right now, running a big saw cutting through metal.

And it takes a while to cut through metal, especially if it's thick metal. So, I'm just pretty much standing there a lot of the time, just babysitting this saw while it's moving in ultra slow motion cutting through this slab of metal.

So, it's kind of a laid-back chill kind of a job. Actually, I kind of enjoy it. I mean, there's also a certain amount of like physical labor involved from like after you cut the pieces of metal, you got to like stack them and that kind of thing. So, that's good. Exercise is good. I'm really bad at artificial exercise. I like to get my exercise naturally.

But, I mean,

when you get paid when you get offered

job that's almost 50% more

than you're currently getting, then it's

an offer that I really can't refuse. So,

I'm going to be doing that.

So, new job, new wife, new car, just

boom boom boom. So, this is kind of an

eventful like week or so.

Ah,

but it's it's turning up. I mean, this

this year was like cursed up until just

recently.

So,

it seems that the curse is finally

lifting and things are going to go good.

Maybe.

It's all balancing out, I guess.

So, let's see. What else do we got to do

before I I start answering questions? I

guess

I can just kind of make up a question

and answer it myself because

there was like a discussion going on,

sort of a debate going on on the Discord

server

about process ontology, how there are

some people who try to be clever and

say, "Well, Buddhism isn't talking about

things. It's talking about processes."

It was called process ontology, where

you know, there aren't this thing and

that thing. There's just these processes

that are working themselves out. And I pointed out that you can't have a process without a thing. Like, there's this famous statement in the Visuddhimagga.

It's you know, like the number one commentarial text in Theravada Buddhism about how there there is no doer of the deeds. There are just the deeds themselves. But, it's like, take walking, for example. How are you going to have walking without some being walking?

There has to be somebody or something doing the walking.

And

it's one way of looking at it. And this is this is the whole reason I'm bringing this up is that this could be one of the best examples of dependent co-arising as I understand it, of paṭiccasamuppāda, because you cannot have a process without things, because you cannot have change without stasis.

Something always has to stay the same, otherwise you just have like like chaos. It's just like meaningless chaos. If everything is changing, where nothing remains the same, even like the identity, the generalization at least, doesn't stay the same, then you just got meaningless chaos. So, in order for there to be any kind of subjective

conscious experience in the human sense, there has to be change, because if nothing changes, that's just static death. But there also has to be sameness, because if nothing stays the same, again, you've just got meaningless chaos. So, you have to have something changing and stump something staying the same.

You know, it's like the walker, the person who's walking. You got to at least perceive that as the same person who's walking. If it's completely different from one moment to the next, there's not even any walking.

So,

I really do not see dependent co-arising as these 12 links that in my opinion got cooked up after the Buddha's time, that it's dependently co-arising. The samuppāda, that sam literally means with or together. It's It's sort of uh cognate with con in Latin, c o n, or s y n in Greek. You know, it means together or with. So, paṭiccha means having depended on, having relied on, and samuppada means rising up together with.

So, dependent co-arising.

And like our entire world is just to give one really basic example, it depends on the dependent co-arising of sameness and change. You can't have

all sameness, that's death. You can't
have all change, that's meaningless
chaos. There has to be something that is
perceived as staying the same throughout
any process.
So,
that's just that's just how human
perception works. That is how human
conscious experience works.
This sameness and change dependently
co-arising.
And that wouldn't be the only example,
but it's really a good example, in my
opinion, of how I think dependent
co-arising really works.
>> [snorts]

>> So,

one other thing.

It's like I'll answer one of my own

questions. It's like

I'll just come up with a question like,

why do you believe in psychic powers if

they're impossible?

So, I'll answer that question that some

anonymous non-existent person just

asked.

And the way I'm going to answer this

question is by reading a story from this

book.

Miracle of Love.

See, stories about Neem Karoli Baba, and

it's edited by Ram Dass. And this story

I'm going to read is it's just a short

story, just a couple paragraphs. And let
us assume for the sake of argument that
this is a true story.
And it may may very well be true. I
don't think that necessarily every story
in this book is true, especially the
ones told by Indian devotees
that I mean it's just more of a cultural
thing in India I think to be very
imaginative
in recounting things to some degree.
But let's just say that this story is
true. Still,
I do not think it's necessarily
impossible. It could be like
statistically very unlikely, but it

doesn't even necessarily indicate
psychic powers. It could be that Maharaj
meaning Curly Baba here
just was like a
an epicenter for synchronicities.
That just strange coincidences continued
happening around this man without him
necessarily even trying to make them
happen. And I do think that that is
largely how it works. Anyone who's done
a lot of intensive practice may know
that synchronicities and just strange
coincidences
can happen in a with strange frequency.
So, let's just read the story, shall we?
Okay. One time Maharaj asked me to make
reservations for two first-class

air-conditioned places on the train leaving that very day.

All the officials told me it was completely booked from Calcutta to Kalka, which means the east of the west coast of India.

Still, to be prepared, I bought two unreserved tickets. I was sure that I was wasting our time and we'd have to cash them in. Maharaj walked into the station, walked slowly along the platform, and stopped solid at one spot. When the train pulled in, a first-class air-conditioned car was stopped directly in front of Maharaj. I had watched how he chose that very spot to stand in, so

I asked the conductor, who happened to be standing right there, for two berths in that car, and he said, "What? Are you crazy? This train is full from Calcutta to Kalka."

At that moment I lost my insurance and looked over to Maharaj. He merely raised one finger and said quietly, "Attendant."

So, I went over to the car attendant and asked again for two berths, and he said, "Yes, yes, there's room for you. You see, a party who was reserved clear through had to get off at Mogul Sarai to attend to unexpected business. There are two berths are vacant in that car. It was the car directly in front of

Maharaj.

So, as I say,

I mean, that could be true even at like

a purely materialistic,

spiritually bankrupt perspective or like

at that level of reality because it's

not impossible.

It's just it could just be some weird

coincidence. Maharaj was just kind of

eccentric

and just decided he's just going to

stand right there and ask for these two

first-class tickets, and it just so

happens

two first-class tickets or two

first-class berths just happen to be

suddenly vacant right then there.

So, I do think that

psychic powers can work that way

where

the person is just so liminal

that just weird synchronicities just

happen all around them over and over

again.

And it's not even necessarily

I mean, it's not necessarily

in violation of laws of physics or any

such thing. It's synchronicities.

But,

with all that stuff is just sort of

introduction.

I guess I'm just going to have to start

answering questions now.

So, first question is from Rui.

And Rui says, "Do you see any way in

which the conscious can emerge from the

non-conscious?"

And this is kind of a strange question.

I It's kind of a good question

um because I think I might enjoy

answering this question.

Because it's

it's kind of a trick question.

Do you see any way in which the

conscious can emerge from the

non-conscious?

In a way, the answer is no, because

there is no non-conscious.

It's like if you consider the entire

universe to be conscious, or going with
a more scientifical,
physical kind of explanation where you
say energy is just a very
elemental form of what a psychologist
would call consciousness. I mean, it's
already the other way around. I think
scientists would agree that what a
psychologist calls consciousness is just
a very complicated form of what a
physicist would call energy.
You know, it's a manifestation of energy
of some sort. The entire universe is,
according to modern physics, seems like
to me.
So, I mean, from that point of view, I
mean, it really answers just this big

mystery that science is completely
stumped by, and that is how
electrochemical reactions in a gray blob
of meat and some nervous tissue is going
to generate
like subjective experience.
They have no idea. Science cannot touch
this question as far as I know. How do
electrochemical reactions cause
conscious experience?
But, I mean, if you consider the brain
to be sort of like a computer,
then I mean, the analogy is a pretty
good one, because a computer does not
generate its own electricity.
A computer is not creating electricity,

it's just taking that electricity and
organizing it and complicating it and
utilizing it.
And that's what the brain is doing.
You know, it's taking the conscious
energy that's already there and just
like complexifying it and organizing it
and utilizing it.
So, which is one reason why I really
don't see why a computer could not
become conscious because the entire
universe is conscious. You just need the
kind of complication
that will cause the consciousness to
sort of dissociate or start like
becoming self-aware
and kind of unaware of what's around it

to the point that it considers itself to
be this self-existent entity.
I mean, that would be kind of what human
consciousness is like, what animal
consciousness is like. It's just kind of
a self self-referential
dissociated aspect of like infinite
formless consciousness.
The block of marble,
if you will.
The uncarved block.
So, from that point of view, I mean, the
conscious that the consciousness cannot
emerge from non-consciousness
because the universe starts with
consciousness. The entire universe is

permeated with it. It is a manifestation

of consciousness.

So,

yeah, I mean,

in my opinion, a hydrogen atom has some

rudimentary this elemental spark of

consciousness. It's not self-conscious.

It doesn't think,

but still, there's like this

I don't know, just

consciousness.

I mean, at that primitive level, you

might just prefer just call it energy

because it wouldn't be conscious in the

human sense, but it would just be like

this elemental particle or spark of

consciousness.

>> [sighs]

>> Uh, so, yeah, I don't I don't I don't think anyone sees any way in which consciousness can emerge from non-consciousness even though it happens.

So, I mean it's like it happens like I mean just going with like science, scientism.

Nobody would say that the egg and sperm that produce a human being are themselves conscious in the human sense.

But then, you know, they form an embryo and then the embryo becomes a fetus and by the time it's like a relatively well-developed embryo or fetus, it's

starting to [laughter] have like brain
activity going on. You know, an unborn
child is presumably already in a kind of
a dream state at least sometimes.
So,
how does that happen? I've already said
science can't explain it.
But you've got what science would
probably considered to be consciousness
emerging from the non-conscious.
Unless you just want to accept that the
sperm and the egg were already
conscious.
Or that the atoms from which they were
composed
are already conscious.
So, I just do away with the whole

mind-body problem by just accepting that energy and consciousness are essentially synonyms.

Let's see here.

I guess I answered that question.

So, I'm I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is This is from the Saboteur.

And strangely the Saboteur asked a question that I'm pretty sure I answered in the previous Q&A. Just the Q&A before this like the Q&A under which the Saboteur

posted this question.

He says, "What is the karma for eating meat, fish, eggs, etc. if you know how

it harms the animal and you had studied vegetarianism?

I ask as a layman, not as a bhikkhu, nor as an ordained monk." Well, the karma would be essentially the same. I mean, a monk would have some complications of the karma breaking rules that lay people don't have.

I mean, lay people would other have certain other complications of karma that monks don't have like they're making the effort to go out and buy food, this kind of thing.

But the karma for eating meat, fish, eggs, etc. I mean if you know how it harms the animal and you had studied vegetarianism, I mean

just eating meat, just the physical act is neither moral nor immoral. It's neither wholesome nor unwholesome going with Buddhist ethics like like I said in the previous Q&A.

So, I mean, if you can do something with peace of mind, if you can do something without unwholesome mental states, you have not done anything wrong by doing it.

But, like I said in the previous Q&A, if you think it's wrong and you do it, then you're going to have a guilty conscience maybe. And that's going to be the worst karma you get. It's just you're going to be afflicting yourself

with these feelings of guilt

for having done this thing that in in

and of itself wasn't even necessarily

wrong, not from a Buddhist point of view

anyway. From a a Western utilitarian

ethical point of view in which

Westerners, including Western Buddhists,

are pretty much saturated then sure, you

can say well,

you're contributing to I mean, you're

voting with your money for the the

killing of animals by by buying meat.

But then again, I mean, if if these

indirect ramifications really

I mean

>> [clears throat]

>> I mean, if they really are ethically

binding, then you know, even if you're
buying like vegan food, I mean, if if
the farmer who grow this grew the
soybeans is wearing leather shoes or was
using insecticides, even organic ones,
still you're indirectly causing the
deaths of all these creatures.
So, I'm really
>> [sighs and gasps]
>> kind of stubbornly going with a Buddhist
ethic because this is primarily a
Buddhist Q&A.
And so, just the eating of meat, fish,
eggs, etc. in and of itself
is not
I mean, you're not making bad karma

except for the mental states.
And if if you're just wallowing in
sensuality, regardless of whether it's
steak or whether it's salad, you know,
if you're just
like clinging to the pleasure of eating
this stuff, you're being a real foodie
about it. That's unwholesome mental
states right there, whether it's meat or
salad or whatever it is you're eating.
You can be completely vegan.
You could have hunted down farmers that
don't use any kind of pesticides and and
wear this cloth slippers. They [snorts]
don't wear leather. They don't have a
leather belt, you know, it's none of it.
They don't pay their taxes.

So, they're not indirectly, you know,

paying for bombing civilians in foreign

countries and all that.

Still,

if you are just really

like indulging in the sensuality of

eating it,

then you're

you're engaging in unwholesome

activities.

You're making bad karma for yourself.

Bad karma.

But, I mean, if you eat meat and you

just have like

just this neutral mental state while

you're eating it,

you know, it's not guilt from from this
animal having been killed so that I can
have this good taste in my mouth and
it's not just wallowing in the pleasure
of it, you know, it's just you're eating
this in order to stay healthy enough to
continue practicing Dharma or just
continuing your life, then I mean
[clears throat]
you haven't done anything as bad as the
person who's just wallowing in enjoying
vegan foodie-ism.
Or just being self-righteous and and
proud and arrogant about being a vegan.
Conceited about it. This sort of thing.
>> [sighs]
>> So,

if I mean just the knowing how it harms the animal, like killing an animal definitely harms it.

And you've studied vegetarianism. Like you've read Animal Liberation, you know, this I read I read it myself back in my my early 20s. You know, it's like a philosophical book about, you know, this the the ethical

It's just the bad ethics of killing animals and using animals in laboratory testing, this kind of thing. From like a Western utilitarian ethical point of view.

And I mean they do horrible things. I mean like even like

relatively innocuous stuff like like women's makeup, they do what's called the Draize test. I assume they don't do it nearly so much now, but like back in the in the '70s and '80s, they'd have to take any kind of household chemical including like women's makeup and put it directly onto the eyeball of rabbits to see if it would cause irritation or damage or this kind of thing. So, you got these these rabbits just all kind of lined up in this this laboratory with their heads sticking through a hole where they can't move, you know, they can't scratch or kick at the the scientists or anything. And then they're like putting stuff directly onto their

eyeballs, this kind of thing.

I mean

there's there's practically no escape

from that. I mean even if you buy vegan

food, you're going to be paying taxes

presumably

somehow or other

which are going to go to in part bombing

civilians in foreign countries, killing

people.

So, if you're going to go with the

utilitarian ethic, I mean, you're pretty

much [__] really, but still, I mean,

the best you can do is just minimize.

Minimize the amount of indirect damaging

ramifications of your actions, but still

you're never going to be perfect at it. But, if you go with Buddhist Buddhist ethics, I mean, it's hardly like you're ever going to be perfect at Buddhist ethics, either. I mean, even enjoying your meal is unwholesome from a Buddhist point of view. You're wallowing in sensuality.

So, I guess from an ethical point of view, it's I mean, you may be better off just going with like Old Testament ethics, where as long as you're just following these basic rules that God laid down, you're doing fine. And you can like kill people if God tells you to, or whatever it is, you know, you have the right to dominate dominate all

the other animals of the earth and all

that.

So,

the karma for eating meat, eggs, fishes,

there is your mental state. So, if you

got unwholesome mental states while

eating the food or afterwards because

you got a guilty conscience or whatever,

that's unskillful. If you got skillful

mental states while eating the food,

let's say you're

you like let up

you like say a prayer for the animal.

You know, you're thanking the animal for

giving its life. The animal probably

doesn't give a damn, but the gratitude

is like a wholesome mental state. Or the meta that you're that you're generating, sincere meta, wholesome mental state. You want to share your food with somebody? Wholesome mental state. So, it's your it's the mental states and not the action itself. I've said this so many times in these videos.

I mean, just the the mere physical act of a deed, of an action, is more is like morally neutral.

It is the mental states which accompany the act that determines whether that act is wholesome or unwholesome or otherwise, skillful or unskillful.

>> [sighs]

>> So, if you study vegetarianism, which it

makes it more likely that you have a
guilty conscience for eating the food,
then the guilty conscience is going to
be the main bad karma you're going to
get.
Probably.
For some people.
I'm just going to move on to the
Saboteur's next question.
He says, "If after months of intense
suffering from a serious illness such as
the big C, previous karma
notwithstanding,
do you earn any merit either spiritually
and/or materially?" Well, just again,
just getting a disease is

is the fruition of past karma, but
you're not necessarily making any new
karma at all. Any new karma is going to
be the result of the mental states
you're having, and two different people
would having the same catastrophic
situation are going to have different
mental states and they'll be making
different karma.
So, it's not like your karma is like
I mean, you don't earn merit
from getting sick.
Yeah, it's No, it doesn't work that way.
I mean, you're you're like paying off
some kind of past karmic debt. And if
you can accept your situation with a
semblance of equanimity, you may not be

creating more karma that may like cause
a new karmic debt or an increase of the
pre-existing karmic debt.
>> [sighs]
>> So, I mean, sometimes [clears throat]
people that have like a a serious
illness or some some such, I mean, it's
it's a wake-up call for them, and it can
change your life, you know, it's like a
near-death experience can change your
life, or just
you know, just facing your own mortality
can cause you to re-evaluate things and
cause you to be a better person.
That kind of thing. I mean, I've seen
that happen before. It does happen for

some people. And other people, it won't necessarily help them at all. They'll just maybe even get even more bad karma as a result of it.

From being like freaked out or black-pilled or or whatever it is.

So, let's make sure I I answer this question here. If after months of intense suffering from a serious illness, previous karma notwithstanding, I'm not sure exactly what that means. Do you earn any merit, either spiritually and or materially? Not necessarily at all. I mean, there is no meritoriousness to being sick.

It's just the mental states that accompany your experience or or just

your seeming outward experiences

are going to determine the karma.

Okay.

I don't I'm I'm obviously not answering

questions like this very effectively cuz

I keep getting the same kind of

questions.

Where I mean, it's

does action X cause this kind of karma

or the the other kind of karma? It's

like, the action X is morally neutral.

It's your own mental states. Two

different people can do exactly the same

thing outwardly. Inwardly, one's earning

merit, and the other one's earning

demerit. Just because of the mental

states accompanying the actions.
So, I mean, like one kind of obvious
example is the ladies in Burma who put
food in amongst bowls. You know, I was
going for alms
pretty much every day when I was a monk.
And there are some ladies, you know,
they're poor village ladies,
married to a subsistence farmer, and
they just happy, you know, they're
thrilled to offer food to the monk.
Whereas, there's some other ladies that
will only offer food if they they see
the neighbors are watching.
So, in that case, they might still earn
some merit for offering food, but still
there's like this

hypocrisy or, you know, just they're they're not doing it out of a sincere desire to give. It's just that they don't want the neighbors to think that they're stingy or something, and so they just kind of fake it, this kind of thing. So, it's like two women offering the same kind of food in the same amounts, and one of them's earning way more merit than the other one.

I mean, they're both earning some merit, but still the karma is not the same because the mental states are not the same.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Seal of

Action Cpad Zidana.

He says, "If you somehow found out this

life is all there is, materialism is

true, and upon death we cease to exist

completely, would you have lived your

life any differently, not in a regretful

way, but just out of curiosity?"

How would I somehow find out that this

life is all there is and materialism is

true?

I mean,

that this life is all there is, I mean,

that's not

too wild, I guess, but materialism is

true, I mean,

I don't even see how that's even

possible.

Because we are not living in a material world. We are living in a mental world. Everything we experience is mental.

So,

yeah, I mean, if materialism turned out to be true, if I suddenly realize materialism is true, especially at this point, I mean, I would have been insane up until that point. And it would take serious reevaluation, and there's no telling what the hell I would decide on.

Huh.

>> [sighs]

>> But, I mean, if this life is all there is, then still, I mean, Buddhism is

still The Four Noble Truths are still

true, even if there's no rebirth.

Desire is the cause of all suffering.

And if materialists don't believe that,

they're just

ignorant

or deluded.

I mean, that That should be self-evident

if you're capable of

like any moderate degree of

introspection.

That desire is the cause of all

suffering. If you're unhappy, all you

got to do is just

just look into what it is that I'm

desiring right now, and it's usually

pretty obvious. I mean, if it's just

kind of like this vague malaise
kind of a depression or something, it
might not be as obvious as to what it is
that you are desiring that's making you
miserable, but it's it's there.
It may be that you won't be able to
penetrate into the deeper layers to find
out exactly what it is, but in most
cases, if you're unhappy about
something,
you know, you're late for work or
something, it's obvious what it is you
desire. You're desire You're wanting
something intensely, which is causing
you to suffer intensely.
Even if you It's like you stubbed your

toe, and your your toe hurts, I mean,

the mere physical pain is not the same

as suffering. The suffering comes from

the desire for that pain to stop.

Pain is just like the signal, it's like

a red light flashing.

The suffering comes from the desire for

the pain to stop.

So,

would I have lived my life any

differently?

I don't know. I mean, it's it's kind of

a It's It's a kind of logical fallacy.

You know, if this hadn't happened

different, then this would have happened

instead, but you you can't really know

for sure.

But, if materialism is true, I mean, if I'd known that a long time ago, I probably would have just been a like trained to be a scientist or something.

That's kind of the direction I was headed anyway before I became a monk. So, it's like how when do you find out about, you know, this kind of materialistic scientific realism, nihilism kind of stuff? You know, when is that true? Is it just that you never I mean, you never get red-pilled? You never take the red pill? I did watch The Matrix last night. One of my favorite movies.

One of the greatest movies ever made, in

my opinion.

And that's what the red pill comes from.

It comes from that movie.

And if if you just

don't ever take the red pill, where

you're just completely immersed in

samsara,

then

you just you're just a normie. I mean,

you just

get a job and

get a house and a wife and maybe some

kids and a dog and

car or two and just go down that route,

and that's that's reality for you.

I mean, most people are just lost in in

the matrix.

They don't even have to take the blue

pill. They've They're already

blue-pilled. They're just blue-pilled by

default.

And so, I mean, if if that's the way it

was, then I I mean, Buddhism

like even to investigate into Buddhism,

I mean, I mean, I may have never really

had the urge for that.

Just uh

go the academia route.

Wind up

just

being a normie.

So,

yeah, I mean, this question is is kind
of a vague question and it's it's
conjecture, you know, how would I have
reacted
in the some hypothetical case in which
um
I learned that materialism is true,
which I don't even think is possible. I
mean, it'd be more along the lines of
just believing that materialism is true,
which is something I kind of always did
at a surface level anyway until around
the age of 17.
In which case, I mean, up until 17, I
was just planning on, you know, getting
a Porsche by the age of 30 and just
going to college and getting a good job.

That kind of thing.

But, I mean, this is it's kind of a

weird question.

I somehow found out this life is all

there is, which I mean, most people

pretty much believe, I guess, even the

Christians, I think.

Materialism is true, I mean, that's

pushing it.

And uh upon death, we cease to exist

completely. I mean, that's still a

possibility. I mean, I don't insist that

there's an afterlife. I am going with

the hypothesis there does seem to be

from some

fair evidence for it, including the

testimonies of people much wiser than
me.
But still, I mean, there are people like
uh Nisargadatta Maharaj, who's
considered to be an enlightened being by
some people, at least.
And he says when you die, you just merge
with Brahman. There's no rebirth or
anything. There's no life after death.
He's still a spiritual person.
>> [snorts]
>> So, it's really hard to say.
I mean, if I were just blue-pilled,
then yeah, I probably wouldn't have
become a monk. I'd probably just gone to
grad school and maybe
go to post-grad after that, get a

doctorate,

teach at a university

till I got kicked out for being not

left-wing enough.

So, it's it's really hard to say. This

This question is

I mean, it's there's too many

suppositions

and variables to even make an

intelligent guess other than just what

would I have done if I had just never

been red-pilled and just stayed a normie

my entire life.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is also from Seal of

Action Cpod Zeena, and I think we're

still recording. Yeah.
The little green bars for the microphone
seem to be in the correct ranges,
which is good.
Okay. Seal of Action Cpod Zeena says,
"In some texts when Mara sends his
armies to attack the Buddha,
the earth itself declares the Buddha's
great deeds, and the earth scares away
Mara and his armies away.
What is the Buddhist explanation of the
earth itself being able to scare gods
from the highest sensual heaven realm
away? Seems the ground itself is greater
than all devas and maybe even some
brahmas.
Cuz Mara didn't seem too afraid of even

Baka Brahma and tried to make him

prideful, seems quite strange. Well, I

mean,

I think the first mistake is expecting

some kind of logical sense from ancient

Indian folklore.

Um yeah, I've never really thought about

this.

I mean, it's it's just like mythology.

It's just legends.

I mean, there are some literalists who

would insist, "Yeah, if the text says

it, it must be true."

But,

yeah, I mean, it's the earth is just

considered to be just sort of like the

ultimate basis, ultimate grounding for
our version of reality anyway,
that uh even samsara is kind of
earth-centric at least for us humans.
So, it's just sort of like the cosmic
order
kind of taking the side of of the
Buddha. This earth itself is being sort
of like a manifestation of cosmic order,
I guess. That would just be my guess. I
mean, I don't think the com-
commentaries even bothered to explain it
because they're not as autistic in in
seeking out these kind of anomalies as
Seuvax and Sipadzidana is.
You know, it's just accepted. You know,
you just like people watch a movie and

there's these incongruities and contradictions that can arise and some people like me will notice it and it'll kind of detract from the movie, but most people just are just immersed. They just accept the contradictions or like in a dream where there's just contradictory anomalous stuff happening all all the time and it's like

you just accept it. That's just the way it is.

So, yeah, I would just guess that the earth itself is just kind of like a personification or manifestation of just sort of cosmic order.

You know, it's just like the foundation

of samsara.

At least for us.

Uh so, did I answer the question? I

mean, this question also I mean,

I don't know if there really is a

correct answer. There could be, I

suppose.

>> [sighs]

>> Yeah, but I mean, it's just mythology.

You know, it's like why doesn't Medusa's

Medusa's snake hair bite bite her own

face?

You know, it's like

it never occurred to anybody.

All

>> [sighs]

>> I guess I'm just going to move on to

Seal of Action Cpod Z in his third

question here.

And this is another meme type question

requiring me to type it out instead of

just cutting and pasting the question.

He just posts a kind of meme like a

picture, has two buttons, a red one and

a blue one. You know, red pill, blue

pill, but different. It's buttons.

And

the it's like a um kind of moral

I don't know. What's the what's the

word?

There's some kind of word for this.

But if

it's kind of like an ethics problem or

just a which would you pick kind of problem.

And so you got the red button and the blue button and if more than 50% of the people press blue, everyone survives.

But if not, if more than 50% don't press the blue button, only those [clears throat] who press the red button survive.

And then I guess he's asking me which button I would press. And there's just insufficient data. I mean, does everyone have to press the button? Or or is it there there's going to be a certain amount of apathy where like with with elections, a significant amount of people don't even bother to vote.

In which case you might be better off
with the red button. You know, if you're
just assuming that there's not going to
be enough turnout
for 50% to press the blue button.
You know, something like that. I mean, I
don't know all the all the variables. I
don't know all the the information that
would be required to make an intelligent
like decision. I mean, if this were
really the case, it's in all the news
and everything, I'd be studying it
intensively just to be able to make an
more informed choice on which button I
should push.
As it is, I really don't know.

If more than 50% press blue, I mean, if if you've got like movements, you know, like the Muslims are saying press the red one cuz we Muslims are all going to press the red one and we're in the minority and so we will survive. This kind of thing, then you got to take all that into consideration.

Otherwise, I mean if it's just an angel just an angel for each person on the human on the on the planet. Each human on the planet has its own angel designated assigned to them to come down and right now without any kind of you know, you don't get to read the news about it. You don't get to study up. They just show you the two buttons and

they say press one.

Then still, damn.

I guess I'd press the blue one. Just

just like if I were having to go with

impulse

I'd go with the blue one.

But more realistically, if I had time to

to think about it I'd be, you know,

studying up and looking at the trends

and seeing how other people are going to

be voting.

But I mean, it seems like if everyone

has to vote

I mean, you'd have at least a 50% chance

of everyone surviving if you press blue.

>> [sighs]

>> Be like a coin toss pretty much. Just I

mean, if if you you really can't

calculate the

like the statistics of it.

It'd be like a coin toss, I guess, and

so you might as well just go for the the

the coin toss that allows everyone to

live.

But still, I mean, if I had the chance

I'd I'd have to like study up on this.

See how other people were going to vote

and in or in order to calculate my odds.

But I mean

Yeah, okay.

Let's see.

Yeah, even if you press red

and then more than 50% of the people

still press blue anyway, you're still

going to you're still going to live.

So,

damn.

Yeah.

Well, hell, okay. Wait a minute.

If everyone If I press red, I'm

guaranteed to survive.

>> [laughter]

[snorts]

>> And this is is dawning on me now.

Yeah, because if if more than half of

the rest of the human race presses blue,

I'm going to survive anyway. And if less

than half of the human race presses

blue, then

nah, [clears throat] I'm going to

survive anyway. So, I mean, you're

guaranteed a survival if you press red.

And so, all you'd have to do is just

just have this just notify the entire

planet. Everyone just press red.

But then, who knows?

Yeah, I think I mean, if you're in

you're looking out for number one, then

it'd be and it would just make perfect

sense to press red cuz then you're

you're guaranteed to survive, regardless

how anybody else feels about it.

Ah, so

then it's kind of tricky. I mean, are

you are you willing to be altruistic

enough to take a

the chance of dying

by pressing blue?

Yeah.

I think

ah, I mean, it's seriously though,

I would want to be able to at least warn

everybody. Everybody just press red and

you're guaranteed to survive.

Just put it in the put it on X, this

kind of stuff. Then I'd feel better

about pressing red and saving my own

skin.

Ah.

>> [sighs]

>> I think I'm just going to move on to

this question.

This hypothetical questions are kind of weird.

What would it What would it be like if you if If were you you were born and and Hitler had won World War II? This kind of question is like how do you answer it?

But it does make sense to push red and you're guaranteed to survive. I mean, everyone should push red. I mean, if everyone knew this except for some stupid people, I guess.

Everyone should just press red.

I mean, if you guys if it comes up, press red and we'll all press red and we'll all survive anyway.

Okay.

Next question is from Damma River.

Is there any aspect of the Noble

Eightfold Path or the Damma in general

that is often overlooked but you think

is extremely important and should be

prioritized or at least studied more

often?

Well,

there are there is one

one aspect of the Noble Eightfold Path

that it gets the least amount of press.

It's samma vayama.

Right effort.

That's that seems like the one that is

the least mentioned

of the Noble Eightfold Path. That that

fold that one fold aspect of the path

is uh the least mentioned. So, I mean,

>> [clears throat]

>> that would uh I mean, I hope I'm right

when I call it samma vayama. I mean,

it's it's an obscure one kind of cuz

nobody talks about it.

But,

yeah, right effort.

Um but, I really don't think it's

extremely important to be prioritized or

I mean,

I'm I really [clears throat]

am kind of skeptical of the Noble

Eightfold Path, to tell you the truth.

The probably the original Four Noble

Truths, there was a path, but it wasn't necessarily eightfold. I mean, there are a few prototypes found in the suttas like there's a tenfold path that you can find in the sutras.

So,

yeah, I mean, I really

I mean, the the eight of these and the the seven of those and the four of the other, I mean, that these kind of lists I've I've never really based my Dhamma on numerical lists anyway.

So, I mean, it's just sort of like an intuitive moment-to-moment thing that you're living rather than memorizing lists and and jargon and like

philosophical

principles and this kind of thing. I

mean, there's a time and a place for

that.

But, I mean, it's really never been a

priority really for me

is like learning the all the the various

numerical lists of things. I've I'm

still confusing like obstacles and

fetters and

this kind of thing.

Hindrances and fetters.

The samyojanas. Is this just the lists?

I get them confused in my mind. Always

have.

So,

samma vayama.

Yeah. I mean, right efforts.

I think it's mainly four right efforts.

And it's like any good habits you have,

you try to strengthen and maintain them.

Any good habits you don't have yet, you

try to cultivate them. Any bad habits

you already have, you try to eliminate

them. And any bad habits you don't have,

you try to avoid acquiring them.

I mean, it's

just kind of

basic ethics. Wholesome, good thing to

know, I suppose.

So, that's because it's the one that

gets the least amount of mention. I was

I guess it's it's number six on the the

noble eightfold path. So,

yeah, I'd I'd sort of encourage more

emphasis on that one, I guess. Although,

it's really not something I think about

much,

if at all.

Except for just now.

So, [snorts] let's just move on to the

next question.

This is from Churzaskas is.

And he's quoting

Let's see here.

I believe

Let's see.

It's one of the part part Jiko rules.

It's part Jiko number three. The third

part Jiko rule.

And then

let's see here. It says, "Quote, if a monk intentionally kills a human being or seeks an instrument of death for them or praises death or incites someone to die saying,

an instrument of death or ins- Now, he This is he's messed it up here.

See, or incites someone to die saying, "My friend, what's the point of this miserable and difficult life? Death [clears throat] is better for you than life." Thinking and intending thus, if he praises death in many ways or incites someone to die, he too is expelled and excluded from the community." Unquote.

So, this is kind of a slightly

typographically errored version of the

third part Jiko rule.

Let's see. Yeah. But that saying an

instrument of death, yeah, that's that's

not in there. That's I don't know where

that came from. It's just a typo.

Okay, so

that's the rule.

So, if a monk

kills somebody or causes them to kill

themselves or

I mean, he he causes a human death

knowingly and willingly.

He's he's committed a part Jiko. And

then at the end of the rule it has

non-offenses.

And here the non-offenses, there is no offense if it is unintentional, if he does not know, if he is not aiming at death, if he is insane,
if he is the first offender. So, you kill somebody accidentally,
you're not guilty of a parajika offense.
And here,
um
Trizaskas is has if he is insane in bold type. And then he says, "Do insane monks not commit any parajika offenses?" And in the the Patimokkha rules, one of the very last rules, it's it's it's not even like a precept, it's just like a technical addendum at the end of the

parajika rules, there is this insanity
clause
where if a monk is so out of his mind,
he doesn't even recall what happened
after he's he's come to his senses, then
it's in in a way it's unintentional.
He is he is not responsible for his
actions, but there's a certain
definition of the insanity where you
don't even recall what you're doing.
It was just sort of like this psychotic
episode, sort of like be like a black a
drunken blackout, which caused me as a
monk to think that if you got so drunk
that you blacked out, and then you just
went on some spree, I mean, you like
have sex with women and so forth, the

next morning you can't even remember it,

technically, you would not be guilty of

a parajika offense. Sometimes monks lie

around thinking about this kind of

stuff.

So,

yeah, it's the kind of insanity, not

just a little bit nutty, you know, not

neurotic, that kind of thing, but if you

are so out of you have like this episode

where I mean, you don't even recall what

you did, you were just completely out of

it,

then what you did is it's in a sense

unintentional

because you're not even aware of having

done it.

It's kind of like something you did

while you were sleepwalking, that kind

of thing.

So, not all insane monks are like immune

to parajika offenses or any offense.

I mean, anything you've done in that

kind of state is

um I think you're pretty much exempt

from from like ecclesiastical rules.

But,

>> [sighs]

>> you have to you have to be like really

out of it so that you're you're really

just not even you're not in your right

mind so out of your right mind that you

don't even recall what you did after

you're back in your right mind again. In the there's like a the stereotypical insane monk in the poly taxes whose name was Gaga.

I think it was g a g g a was his name.

He was like the the standard like insane monk and he would have like these episodes. It wasn't like he was just kind of nutty all the time.

Walking around declaring himself to be a sotapanna, that kind of stuff.

So, yeah, it's a certain kind of insanity.

It's being out of your senses kind of a thing.

So, I'm just going to move on to

Chruzaskas's next question.

Why people often look for ancient wisdom as opposed to modern wisdom? Why ancient is viewed as better? Yeah, it's one thing that's it's sort of a difference between East and West

to some degree. Like in the West, like information is is better than newer it is, especially if it's like science. You know, scientific evidence, course newer scientific evidence trumps older scientific evidence as a general rule. If newer scientific evidence conclusively demonstrates or at least conclusively enough that the scientific community is is switched paradigms, then it's going to be, you you more

authoritative than older scientific
information. I mean, science books that
were written over 100 years ago,
they aren't really read all that much.
Even though they they could be a
classic, you know, just really a
earth-shattering, groundbreaking new
discovery in science,
still
not many people, including not many
scientists, are going to be reading some
article that was written in 1898.
Maybe just for like historical reasons.
But they're not going to be going to
that old source
for information very often at all.

Um whereas like in Burma, it's like the older something is, the more venerable it is. And to some degree, I mean, you could say that it's just in a traditional culture, elders are considered to be more wise than young people because they've been around long enough. They've seen a few things. They've been around the block a time or two.

And they have managed to avoid death, so that's why they're old. So, traditionally,

up until modern times, old people were kind of venerated as being wise. And ancient [clears throat] wisdom is kind of along those lines. But also, ancient

wisdom has stood the test of time. I
think that would probably be the one of
the best justifications for preferring
ancient wisdom to like recent wisdom is
that ancient wisdom is still venerated
after thousands of years. That, you
know, it has withstood the test of time.
You know, it's it's still holding
strong. And so,
in a way, it has kind of survived all
the the attempts to debunk it well
enough that it's still standing.
And there's somebody parked right in
front of our house with their lights on.
I don't know why they're doing it.
I don't know. Could be somebody's going

to come over.

I don't know. Maybe they just see waving

my arms around inside the window.

Like, why is that guy in there waving

his arms around?

But, I don't like people just parked

right out in front of our house

with the lights on

cuz it's distracting.

So, yeah, people look for ancient wisdom

as opposed to modern wisdom. Personally,

I mean,

I consider

some recent stuff. Now, I guess

somebody's coming to our house now.

Like, Eckhart Tolle's The Power of Now,

for example,

just to give one example. I mean, that

contains more quality wisdom

than the Old Testament. And now

somebody's ringing the doorbell.

And the dogs are all going berserk.

This is one of the one of the

complications of being a householder.

Maybe I should get up and close the

door.

>> [clears throat]

>> Okay.

And the dogs are still going for it.

>> [sighs]

>> So, yeah, I would assume that's the main

reason why people prefer ancient wisdom

to modern wisdom.

Also, there's just sort of like a a

veneration for the past. Oh, for the

good old days. And it was like that even

in ancient times. And I'm going to have

to get up and yell at the dogs to shut

up if they don't do it pretty soon.

Damn.

Just a minute.

Hey, shut up.

>> [sighs]

>> Noise.

I don't even know why they're at the

door.

I'm not going to find out till later,

either.

So,

yeah, I mean, there is sort of like this

looking back to the past, like to a
golden age, where things were better. It
seems to be like a a prevalent human
attitude, you know, that things in the
past were better than now. You know,
it's like even Buddhism
has this idea that we're in a state of
decline. We're kind of in the Kali Yuga,
going with more Hinduistic terms,
where
things are just getting worse and worse.
All of the evidence really doesn't seem
to indicate that.
Now, since the Buddha's time, I don't
think things have been getting worse and
worse since the Buddha's time.

Um maybe spiritually to some degree,

but like lifespans increased

considerably after like industry and

capitalism kind of took over the world

and eradicated most of the poverty, that

kind of thing.

Let's see. But, yeah, this So, I I would

assume that people look to the past for

wisdom, respect ancient wisdom more than

modern wisdom.

Um partly

um

just because

the ancient wisdom has survived for

thousands of years, whereas the new the

new wisdom hasn't really been, you know,

exposed to Darwinian natural selection

very much yet. You know, it hasn't stood
the test of time or withstood the test
of time.
And also, there's just this idea that
things were better in the past.
And even like in the Bible, in
Ecclesiastes,
the book in the Old Testament, it says,
you know, don't think, "Why were things
so much better in the past?" because it
is not a wise way of thinking.
So, it's like it's always been the case
that people have looked into the past as
for as some kind of golden age. Things
are [__] now, but they used to be great.
And if you read history, I mean, there

never was a golden age.

Things have pretty much always sucked to

some degree.

I mean, certain problems are solved and

then new problems take their place. It's

just the way it is. It's just the world

is an outward like representation of our

own mental states.

>> [snorts]

>> So,

yeah, I would assume those the stuff

that I rambled about are

the main reasons for that. Although, I

mean, something like The Power of Now by

Eckhart Tolle or Moby Dick by Herman

Melville or The Book of the New Sun by

Gene Wolfe contain more wisdom than a

lot of scriptures out there.

So, it is kind of weird that you can have really profound literature that isn't scripture. And then you can just have a bunch of just kind of silliness that is just considered sacred divine scripture.

Not that all the ancient scriptures are silly, but some of them are.

>> [sighs]

>> So, I I guess I answered that question about as well as I'm going to.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Raphael.

And Raphael says, "To what extent does the concept of gratitude play a role in

Buddhist thought and practice? For instance, how is it appreciation for basic capacities, such as the ability to walk, see, or meditate understood within this framework?" Gratitude really is not a major virtue in Theravada Buddhism. I mean, there's like Anumodana or rejoicing in like the good deeds of others, that kind of thing, but that's not apparently what Raphael is talking about here.

Um, Kadannu da

or gratitude. I mean, it is considered to be a virtue.

Literally, it's knowing the maker or knowing the doer.

>> [clears throat]

>> Acknowledging the doer of a good deed,

essentially.

That would be gratitude or what is often

translated as gratitude in English.

Um,

but gratitude for the ability to walk

or the ability to see.

Um, yeah, I mean, it's it's I've never

really encountered that in the texts,

any encouragement to be grateful for

your ability to walk and see.

Or to meditate, I mean,

the gratitude for the ability to

meditate is is sort of like

uh

being a monk.

You know, it's like that's monks were mainly the meditators in ancient times. So, you can have a gratitude for finding the holy life, gratitude towards the Buddha for starting the wheel of Dhamma rolling, that kind of thing.

Um, so I mean, it's in there, it's in the texts, gratitude towards others who have like gratitude towards benefactors, gratitude towards the Sangha, that kind of thing. It's in the texts. It's not really emphasized a whole heck of a lot, but it's in there. But appreciation for basic capacities such as the ability to walk or see. Yeah, that's that's too basic, I think, for you to find hardly any mention of

that at all in the Pali texts. At least,

I don't recall seeing anything like

that. I mean, you could sort of I mean,

there is like a an elementary type of

meditation, which is sort of

recollection of your own mer- merit

as a way of

Oh, looks like I'm

lagging.

See.

This

recollection of your own merit. So, that

would be kind of being grateful to

yourself

for having earned merit that you are

enjoying now

or are bound to enjoy in the future. So,

I mean you could kind of stretch that a

little bit

and you could sort of

um be grateful for your past meritorious

deeds that haven't caused you to go

blind or be crippled. That kind of

thing.

But, yeah, that's it's really too basic,

I think,

to get much mention or emphasis in the

texts.

And I don't know why I'm lagging. Maybe

I've got too many

too many tabs open. Just a sec.

Get rid of that one.

Get rid of that one and get rid of that

one.

Maybe I should have restarted the computer, but now I'm lagging even more that I closed Now that I closed some tabs, I'm lagging even more.

Oh, well.

So, I'm just going to move on to Raphael's next question. There's There's some like difficult sort of subtle vague conjectural kind of questions in this Q&A.

Uh

>> [sighs]

>> okay. Next question from Raphael.

Do you or did you previously experience an internal conflict between black pill

Panyo, according to whom life is a kind of mistake and human beings are merely biologically driven organisms without free will or metaphysical grounding, and Buddhist Panyo, who affirms the existence of metaphysical phenomena such as higher consciousness and rebirth. I don't I've never considered myself to be black-pilled.

I mean, there were few times in my life when I was depressed that maybe I was temporarily black-pilled.

But, there really is no abiding aspect of my personality that I consider to be black-pilled. To be a To be black-pilled is to be like

like pessimistic, negative, and just

advocating just giving up.

That would be a black pill.

Red pill is something entirely different

that some people confuse with black

pill.

Like, one person on the Discord server

the other not long ago,

couple weeks ago, maybe, was saying that

Buddhism is black-pilled. But, Buddhism

is not black-pilled. It is red-pilled. I

mean, it's There's like Buddhist

symbolic elements in the movie The

Matrix, which came up with the original

idea of blue pill, red pill.

Blue pill is a normie. Red pill is

someone who's sort of seeing through the

illusion.

Black pill is just like

it's all It all sucks, and I give up.

So, I mean, I've never really been

black-pilled other than just brief

episodes of maybe some depression over

the course of my life that didn't last.

So,

life is not a kind of a mistake.

Human beings,

I mean, they're not merely biologically

driven organisms. I mean, for the most

part, we are. That's one way of looking

at it. But, it's never been the only way

I've looked at it.

And without free will or I mean,

yeah, I mean, that's not black-pilled if

you don't if you don't really believe in

free will.

I mean, it is a paradox. I mean, there

could be something along the lines of

free will that is like paradoxically

generated by

uh human self-consciousness just being

self-referential.

So,

>> [sighs]

>> no metaphysical grounding and and I just

don't see that at all.

Okay.

And then,

is there any conflict between that and

Buddhist panna

who affirms the existence of

metaphysical phenomena such as higher

consciousness and rebirth? Yeah, I mean,

there there's never really been much of

a conflict.

I mean, I started off with science. I

mean,

like

I mean, I I I got an education in

science.

But still, I I didn't I mean, I wasn't

so completely into scientism

that I just interpreted reality along

scientific terms, except for maybe when

I was a kid.

You know, you're a little kid, you want

to be a scientist, you want to be like

Mr. Spock on Star Trek or like the
Professor on Gilligan's Island, whose
knowledge of science gave them
practically superhuman powers.
You know, I mean, the Professor on
Gilligan's Island, he can make elaborate
electrical equipment out of just vines
and coconut shells.
So,
okay, let's let's get back to the top of
this question. Do you or did you ever
previously experience an internal
conflict?
No, not really. I mean, I have
experienced internal conflicts before.
It's like one part of me wants to become

a monk and the other part of me still
likes girls and ice cream and rock and
roll.
You know, and so there's there's that
kind of conflict. But I mean,
it wasn't really
just
I don't I don't know how to explain it.
That there there is that kind of
conflict. It's just which do I want to
do, but it wasn't like two warring
worlds worldviews or paradigms. I mean,
my paradigm has never been so locked
down
that it's just irreconcilable with some
other aspect of my personality. That's
one thing about me that

that kind of made me bad at samatha
meditation and better at mindfulness
meditation because there are certain
kinds of people who have a comp
compartmental I can't talk.
compartmentalized
mind. So, like new age people are like a
classical example from my own personal
experience. They can believe mutually
contradictory stuff.
And it's just that one one thing that
they believe is in one compartment of
their mind, which is kind of closed off
with like mental bulkheads from this
other belief that you know,
like sort of postmodern feminists

who you know, they're opposed to the patriarchy, but they're completely in favor of Islam. This kind of thing. It's It just doesn't work like that with me. My mind is more integrated than most people.

I mean, it's not like I'm trying to brag or anything. I just have that kind of mind where like in meditation people who are good at samatha generally have more compartmentalized mind where you just have to like purify this one compartment.

Whereas if everything is interconnected, it's very difficult to get your entire mind, every room, every compartment of your mind pacified so you can get into

the same depth of like concentration as
someone who only has to purify this one
compartment when they're meditating.
So,
um yeah, my mind is just more
integrated, you know, the various
aspects of it. And so, I mean, there are
like sort of enigmas or or gray areas or
uncertainties, this kind of thing,
ambiguities, I guess is the word I'm
looking for. But, I mean, I'm relatively
comfortable with ambiguity, but
um you know, I can live with ambiguity.
I've made my peace with ambiguity cuz
there's no way we're going to know
everything. There's always going to be

some ambiguity.

So, let's see here.

This is This is another one of those

weird questions that I'm not exactly

sure how to answer. I'm getting just

getting a lot of them in this Q&A.

But, I was never really black-pilled

other than, you know, brief episodes,

maybe.

See, life is kind of a mistake. No, I

don't think life is kind of a mistake.

Human beings are merely biologically

driven organisms. No, although we are at

that level,

you know, at a scientific empirical

level, we are species of animal. We're

like an upgraded ape.

But, when we without free will, I mean,
that's not being black-pilled. I mean,
that's just logic, really.
And
being without metaphysical grounding, I
don't know where Raphael came up with
that one.
Cuz I mean, I had this metaphysical
father who was telling me metaphysical
stories since I was a toddler.
So, let's see here. Buddhist point of
view I mean, from the Buddhist point of
view, you could say a lot of the same
stuff here.
No free will, for example. I mean,
Buddhism does not really advocate for

free will.

See, I mean, it doesn't advocate for determinism, either.

So,

yeah, I mean, it's

I there's various ways of looking at reality. Some ways are better for various purposes. You know, scientific way of looking at things is very useful in in certain respects, even from like the dharmic point of view, to look at a a human to to observe human nature as instincts of the human animal that have evolved over time through Darwinian natural selection to help promote the the to survival of the species. Yeah, I mean that's definitely valid and it

yeah, has helped me a lot in
understanding myself and other people.
But I mean it's not really in conflict
with anything. I mean it's if
I mean if it's true, one truth shouldn't
be in conflict with another truth.
And if there is some kind of conflict, I
mean that indicates that, you know, the
theory hasn't been entirely worked out
yet and you can still kind of deal with
that sort of like in modern physics how
like quantum theory and relativity don't
kind of mesh together extremely well
just because one's dealing with the very
tiny scale and one's dealing at a very
large scale.

So I mean,

just because there's ambiguity and

things that don't quite fit together

right, I mean it it doesn't necessarily

mean that there's a conflict. It's just

like, well, these two pieces of the

puzzle don't fit together all that well

yet. But then every once in a while

you'll come across a book or something

that will just fill in gaps and will

help to reconcile things. I've come

across those a number of times in my

life and those are like my favorite kind

of books is the ones that help to,

you know, reconcile

what you couldn't really reconcile

before or just fill in gaps in your in

in your ignorance, in your knowledge.

So,

let's see, internal conflict

between apparently kind of like a

scientific panyo and a Buddhist panyo.

No, I mean they they're sort of like

both tools that can be used. I mean,

they're both helpful.

So, yeah, I mean, I never really had a

conflict between

like a scientific approach to life and a

Buddhist approach to life.

They're just two different ways of

looking at the same thing and it's just

like looking through two different

lenses from two different angles.

You know, two different kinds of lens.

So, yeah, I mean, it's it's

I was never really conflicted over that.

Although, I have been conflicted over

things in life, but it was just like not

being able to fully make up my mind one

way or the other, rather than they're

sort of like at war with each other and

one of them has to win necessarily.

Oh, this kind of tough questions this

time.

Maybe I'm just tired.

This has not been a particularly restful

weekend.

And it is Mother's Day at the time that

I'm I'm recording this, so happy

Mother's Day to all you mothers out

there.

Probably not a whole lot of mothers

watch my videos, though.

Anyways, the next question is from

Maitreya Buddha.

And Maitreya Buddha says, "How does one

prove or know about their past lives if

we are given a new brain with each life?

Does the cheetah transcend the material

brain?" Well, I mean, you can't prove

anything about past lives. I mean, maybe

you could have like a past life

regression where you knew the name of

the person and where they lived and like

you know, what time frame and then you

can go back and look at like the the

records and see if there really was a person that lived like that. You know, it's like you recall being you know, a soldier in World War II and you can remember your serial number and then you can like look that up and see if that person really did exist, that kind of thing. But still, that wouldn't prove that it was your past life. It could be that just the spirit of some other person has like communicated to you or is just sort of like implanting their own memories into you. It could be a kind of clairvoyance where you're just seeing this past life that it wasn't even really you.

I mean, just even then if you can like

or like

what's the word? Confirm some of the

information that you had in a past life

regression, still that wouldn't prove

that you were reborn

you know, from that person as this one.

I mean, there's no way you can prove

that kind of stuff.

So, I mean, it's of limited value

really.

I mean, it could provide some insights

into why you are the way you are, maybe.

>> [sighs]

>> I mean, sometimes past life regressions

are therapeutic.

Like, there was this one woman I read

about in a book who kept having these bouts of vertigo.

And then she was hypnotized, had a past life regression, and she recalled being this teenage girl in like medieval England. And she was visiting a sick friend of hers, and then the friend died, and then she got accused of being a witch that caused the death of this person, and this angry mob was chasing her to lynch her or burn her at the stake or whatever, and she jumped off a cliff to get away from them. Get away Get away from them. And it was the vertigo was like this deep emotional impression of this sensation of falling as she was falling to her death in in a

previous life. And once she relived

that,

then it kind of caused closure, I guess,

and then she stopped having the the

bouts of vertigo.

That There have been cases like this

where past life regressions have been

therapeutic. But, I mean, still it

doesn't prove anything. It could just be

that her subconscious imagination just

conjured up this

event that maybe didn't even really

happen in order to produce a kind of

closure so that she could kind of set

aside this subconscious neurotic

emotional need for dizziness or

whatever.

So, you can't prove anything about past

lives.

I mean, you can't prove that they exist

or that they don't exist.

But, the other part of this question,

um

how can you remember past lives if you

were given a new brain with each life,

you have to like transcend the

limitations of this particular version.

That's one reason why

um according to some authorities, small

children

are more likely to remember past lives.

What was that?

Huh.

I thought a dog or something was up.

Uh [snorts]

Let's see. Where was I? Oh, yeah, small children are statistically more likely to claim to remember past lives just because they're not so firmly enmeshed in this one.

So, they're not as strongly identified with this life yet.

You know, they're not culturally conditioned into believing that you can't remember past lives.

That kind of thing.

But, yeah, in order to remember your past lives, I mean, it wouldn't be recorded in this brain. It would be

>> [clears throat]

>> beyond the brain.

Where, I mean, even the question of where is just kind of a meaningless question cuz I mean, time and and space uh I mean, they might not even really have any meaning when you get into the level of higher levels of consciousness that really have like the are connected with all of your past lives, maybe your future lives, too.

You know, you get beyond the limitations of time. You get into like a four-dimensional space-time continuum.

You know, there's a level of your consciousness that is operating at that level, which some people might call a

soul, although from the Buddhist point
of view even that wouldn't be ultimately
real.
It could be like a higher level of
reality than the level that your
conscious ego is thinking is is dealing
with now.
But still it's not ultimately real.
So, yeah, in order to
remember [clears throat] past lives, you
have to transcend the limitations
of your
ego
supposedly generated by a brain in this
life.
You have to go beyond those limitations

somehow.

So, it would kind of be imprinted into

your karmic karmic momentum

to some degree.

And I'm not sure of why I keep lagging.

Those of you who are just listening to

the podcast or just not watching won't

even care

that the sounds coming out my mouth are

not

synchronized with the actual movements

of my mouth.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

This is from RFS.

And RFS says, "If life begins when the

sperm egg and rebirth linking

consciousness meet, does that mean

frozen embryos should be treated as

ethically significant?"

Well,

you don't know if the frozen embryo

Well, I guess from the Buddhist point of

view, if it's an embryo, if it's already

fertilized,

then there would at least be a latent

being there if

that being is going to continue to

develop.

But you don't know that for sure unless

you can

see into the future somehow.

Man, this I'm getting so many this kind

of weird vague conjectural kind of
questions that are
they're just not straightforwardly
answered.
So, again, like if life begins when the
sperm egg and rebirth linking
consciousness meet, I mean, that's what
Theravada Buddhism teaches, you can't
really prove that that's true.
So, again, this is just like taking an
assumption
and then going with that and seeing what
the ramifications of the assumption are.
But, now, from a Buddhist point of view,
if you know, this
you can't have an embryo unless there
was a rebirth linking consciousness or

the Gandhabba, as it's called in the

texts.

Um

yeah, then it would be a human being.

It'd be a frozen live human being.

But, then even the fact that it's frozen

indicates that there really is no

metabolism going on. So, I mean, whether

it's even alive or not is questionable.

See, this is the kind of question that

never really came up in ancient Indian

Buddhism.

If if a creature is frozen solid

or some kind of like lungfish or

amphibians can just dry out and then

their their metabolism stops. I mean,

are they still alive or are they dead?
You can reconstitute them, add water,
they come back alive again, or thaw them
out and they come back alive again. But,
I mean, there's no metabolism going on
at all while they're frozen or
desiccated. So, are they alive? It's a
question that I don't know if ancient
Indian Buddhism bothered to even address
cuz it maybe didn't even occur to them
to address the question.
But, I mean, from a Buddhist point of
view, yeah, you'd say that a
a human embryo is ethically significant.
Whether it's alive or it's frozen or not
is is another question. So, it'd be just
another level of ambiguity added to

that.

>> [sighs]

>> Yeah, I mean

should they be treated as ethically

significant? It depends on how you look

at it. I mean, if you're a Buddhist

and you think that even if something

that's frozen is still alive

then yeah, I mean, you wouldn't want to

kill it.

So

but I mean, this is this is just kind of

like an obscure sort of question

that I mean, maybe RFS works at some

kind of fertility clinic or something.

In which case, it might be a valuable

question, but otherwise, I mean, if if

RFS works at a paper mill

then I mean

it's it's just kind of off the scale of

any kind of relevant applicable kind of

question, I guess.

Yeah, I mean, I'm not entirely persuaded

that rebirth linking consciousness has

to occur

at the moment of conception. I mean,

what is [clears throat] the complexity

of a full human stream of karma going to

do in a fertilized zygote?

So

I think it's the Hindus and maybe some

other religions like like Ram Dass was

saying and according to Hinduism that

some babies just they take
you know, they take now it's like their
spirit or their their karmic momentum or
whatever enters like a baby in his
mother's womb shortly before birth.
And you can tell those cuz they're the
ones that look completely spaced out
when they're born. They're just like in
this state of confused [clears throat]
just dazed confusion.
Whereas a baby that had been that took
rebirth linking consciousness, so to
speak, earlier on in like the embryonic
development is already completely
identified with a being a baby and is
just crying and acting like normal baby.

So, I mean, I'm kind of skeptical to the idea that sperm that that like rebirth linking consciousness necessarily occurs at the moment of conception.

I am skeptical of that. I'm not saying it's true, I'm not saying it's false. I'm just suspending judgment because I don't know for sure that it's true or otherwise.

And then when you add the frozen embryo part, when you just frozen, is it still alive while it's frozen?

It's frozen solid, there's no there's no respiration going on, there's no metabolism going on.

So, is it still alive?

And there's like a 3-second delay now.

Sometimes it catches up and then it starts delaying again. I don't I don't understand why.

I should have just restarted the computer before doing this, but I don't always do that.

So, RFS is asks another question.

Finally, at long last, we get a straightforward question with a straightforward answer.

RFS says, "Do strippers at a bachelor party count as adultery?" Only if you have sex with them.

Unless maybe you're a Christian, in which case, according to Jesus in the New Testament, even if you look at a

woman with lust, you're already guilty
of adultery with her.
So, in that case, I mean, yeah, if you
look at the stripper with lust,
then you've already you've already
fornicated with that woman or committed
adultery with her or whatever.
But from a Buddhist point of view, I
mean, adultery is essentially having sex
with another woman. I I assume even like
oral sex would be sufficient.
But just like
gooning over a stripper
is not necessarily like technically
adultery.
Not from a Buddhist point of view.
I mean it could be a kind of sensual

misconduct, but it would be
not like full-blown sensual misconduct,
which would involve sexual activity,
like actual coming together of two
beings in a sexual way.
I don't know if even like pulling the
rolled-up $5 bills
uh while letting her pull the $5 bill
out of your mouth
with some part of her body or something
like that. I don't know if that would
even count, but I mean we're this is
still I mean this is not as
straightforward as I assumed because
there's all this sort of ambiguity. Like
where do you draw the line? And some

people going to draw the line over this
way, some people are going to draw the
line over that way, but technically
adultery would require
at least oral sex
with another person
with at least one of you being married.
Otherwise, it would be fornication.
And sensual misconduct is generally
identified with the actual sexual act
and not just
like ogling naked titties or some such.
I'm just going to move on to the next
question.
This is another fairly easy question,
which is appreciated at this point.
This is from Drew.

And Drew says, "Do you think when he
squeezed the juice out of the mountain,
the delicious beverage was made? Maybe
that's when people started doing the do.
So, he's referring to the Sasa Jataka
when Sakka, king of gods, squeezes the
juice out of a mountain and then draws
the image of a rabbit on the surface of
the moon.
Um no, that wasn't Mountain Dew.
That was something completely different.
Mountain Dew I'm sure has other
ingredients in it like that
that What is it? Some kind of
ester [snorts] rosin?
Something like that. It's got weird

ingredients in it, which is probably why so many people are addicted to it.

Mountain Dew I never really understood drinking Mountain Dew. I just I don't I can't remember drinking Mountain Dew. So I guess it's just I never got addicted to it.

Anyways,

>> [sighs]

>> next question is from Fred and this may be a rhetorical question. It's hard to tell with Fred when he's really asking a question.

I mean there could be a question mark there, but that doesn't necessarily mean that he's legit asking a question. But he says, "How could you possibly believe

Muhammad?"

And I don't know if he's this is like a real question. Is it a rhetorical question? Is he asking me personally how I could believe Muhammad? Or is he just saying how could a person in general possibly believe Muhammad?

Um

Well, I mean Muhammad seems to have been like sincere. I think he was doing some hysterical dissociation

like a lot of new age channelers do.

But I mean

he apparently was persuaded by his own visions.

So I mean he believed his own visions

I'm assuming even though, you know, it's
there's some fairly good evidence that
it was a lot of his own subconscious
desires being manifested.
But
I mean
with regard to me believing Muhammad
personally, I mean
some of the stuff in the Quran I assume
is true.
And I mean, at least he appears to have
been sincere at a conscious level.
But if Fred is asking how anyone could
believe Muhammad, of course people can
believe anything, especially in the
realm of religion or politics.
You got people that are they can believe

absolutely freaking anything.
But I think I could I could be a
a Muslim more easily than I could be a
Christian. Just because there's less of
a an absurd narrative that is required
to be believed. I mean, for for a Muslim
it's God is one God and Muhammad is his
prophet. I mean, you're doing okay if
you get that far. Whereas with
Christianity, you got to believe that
this Jewish carpenter who lived in the
early Roman Empire is somehow the
creator of the entire universe and the
only begotten son of God almighty.
And it's just way more difficult to
swallow than God is one God and Muhammad

is his prophet.

Not even his only prophet, just a prophet. His most recent like capital P prophet.

That for me would be easier to believe than Christianity.

Just because it's it's simpler. There's less absurdity that has to be swallowed.

I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Master Po and this is an easy one.

Master Po says, "Have you heard of Sanbozen?"

It's a new one to me, but so far I find it interesting. And no, I haven't I mean, this is it. I just heard of Sanbozen, S A N B O.

He left a a YouTube link that I haven't watched yet. So I still I'm completely in the dark with what exactly Sanbozen is.

I just do not keep up on these things.

I'm moving on to the next question.

This is from Nichiren Buddhist.

And Nichiren Buddhist says,

"I presume that as a person from the West that became interested in Buddhism, you have considered both the Mahayana and Theravada traditions at least at some point and time.

What factors influenced your choice of vehicle?

And then parentheses, got textual

authentic

textual authenticity overall worldview

etc."

Well, as I've said before, I was

originally drawn towards Soto Zen.

When I first decided I wanted to be a

Buddhist monk, I was kind of gravitating

towards Soto Zen.

And then, I checked out a Soto Zen

monastery and also a Burmese Theravada

Buddhist monastery.

And it was plain as day that the

Theravada monks were

they came closer to following what the

historical Buddha actually taught

than the Zen monks and and the Zen nuns.

I mean, the Zen monastery, both of them

were in California, but the Zen monastery it had just there was so much stuff that you don't see in the books, you know, all this pure land stuff mixed in with the Zen and I've never had any use for pure land Buddhism. And just so much bowing and chanting and then you had the monks and the nuns kind of living together in the same compound. They'd be putting on layman's clothing and driving the car to the store to buy groceries to the monastery. They ran a little store selling candles and incense and Buddha statues and that kind of thing. And then you go to the Theravada Buddhist

monastery in the Burmese tradition and
it was just monks just sitting in like
like peace, meditating, just
I mean, it it really was very different
and it was clear if you read the texts
and you look at how the monks were
living the Theravada monks were living
closer to what the Buddha originally
taught and
um it just got me more interested in
Theravada.
Um I was originally got I originally got
interested in Theravada reading the
Sutta Nipata. It was some really old
translation by someone named Fausbøll, I
think.
Um it was in Max Müller's Sacred Books

of the East. It was like from the 1890s,
this translation. But the Sutta Nipata,
I mean it it had it was
old texts of like ancient India and
monks were like macho, you know, it's
like you had to be tough to be a monk.
You're just wandering around homeless,
no money, sleeping under trees, this
kind of stuff.
So, gradually I was kind of leaning more
and more towards Theravada. I liked Zen,
at least what you read in the books
about Zen.
But
it became more and more clear the more I
looked into it that Theravada came

closer to what the Buddha originally taught.

And that's mainly I mean if I'm going to be a Buddhist, I want to follow what the Buddha taught.

You know, it's like especially if I'm going to be a Buddhist monk dedicating my life to following the teachings of the Buddha as well as I can, I want to get as close to the teachings of the Buddha as I can in order to follow them correctly.

And the more you look into Mahayana, you see that lots and lots of it is just like real, just fairy tale, absurd and the Buddha probably would have denounced much of it.

Although I mean in even in Theravada,
there's a lot of absurdity and miracle
stories and talking animals and
fire-breathing dragons and all that.
But less of it than in Mahayana.
And so, ultimately, what got me
more persuaded towards Theravada is that
it just became fairly clear that if I
want to follow the teachings of the
Buddha,
then Theravada comes the closest to the
teachings of the Buddha of any school of
Buddhism in existence today.
And also, just they seem to be
practicing more
I don't know.

More sincerely,

I guess. Uh practicing at a deeper

level.

So,

that was that was essentially what cured

me of a desire to be a Zen monk was

actually going to a Zen monastery and

seeing what was going on. I mean, it was

in California, so I'm sure that there

were other monasteries like in Japan

that would be much more serious and much

closer to what you read about in the

books, but still,

you know, there's Vairocana Buddha and

all the Bodhisattva stuff and Pure Land

elements getting in and it was just

Theravada comes closer to what the

Buddha taught. I mean, if if you're a Buddhist, it would seem to me that you would want to follow what the Buddha taught.

So, even some of these Pure Land Buddhists who are following what the Buddha would almost certainly have denounced, still, they've got their text where the Buddha is sort of advocating for it.

And so, they'll just use that. They're not you know, they're not going against the Buddhist teachings because in this obscure sutra with all the fairy tale elements in it, the Buddha says it's okay to be a Pure Land Buddhist. And

then they just ignore the Buddha after that cuz they've got all these other Buddhas that they're they're paying attention to.

But, yeah, it was mainly

>> [clears throat]

>> um the Buddha was the enlightened founder of the tradition. You want to be a Buddhist, you should follow what the Buddha taught. Just like if you're if you're going to be a Christian, you should try to follow what Jesus taught. Not so much Paul of Tarsus, not so much what the Pope says, not so much what these later like ecclesiastical councils decided.

You just try to find out what Jesus

taught and follow that [clears throat]

as well as you can. That would seem to

me what

a Christian should do.

Which is one reason why I'm not a

Christian.

>> [sighs]

>> I think I'm just going to move on to

this question.

I think that's what I'm going to do.

This is from PSA.

And PSA says, "Have you watched the new

musical Oh Africa, Brave Africa?" It's a

laugh riot. And no, I have not watched

that musical. In fact, I really don't

have much use for musicals.

Uh I've never really liked watching musicals. There are some musicals that I can watch like the old Wizard of Oz with Judy Garland.

I mean, that's that's watchable. I've watched that since I was a kid.

Uh

So so I so I've watched some musicals. Like uh The Beatles Yellow Submarine. I guess that would call it qualify as a musical. That'd probably be my favorite musical. Or like uh Cabaret with Liza Minnelli and Michael York.

I mean, that's

that's a good movie and it's it's sort of a musical. It's got lots of music in it.

But yeah, I don't go out and look and

watch the new musicals.

I I haven't seen a new musical in many

years.

So, I mean, it's just even as a kid, it

just kind of struck me as odd. You've

got this movie where people are like

walking around talking and everything

and all of a sudden, they all just like

start singing and dancing around. It

just

it's just silly.

People don't do that in real life.

Of course, a lot of stuff that happens

in movies, people don't do in real life.

>> [clears throat]

>> Anyways,

PSA's next question.

You said on this Q&A, I guess the

previous one, there's nothing

technically immoral about handling

money.

Could you please elaborate on why it is

a precept then and what is the real

skillful purpose of this precept?

Um

I think one reason why the Buddha made a

like a very strict rule saying monks are

not allowed to handle money. It's I

guess

I should back up a little. There is a

statement from the Buddha in the text

that says, if money is allowable for

monks, then sensual pleasure is allowable for monks.

So, it's like with money you can just buy whatever you want and a monk is supposed to be restraining himself and like avoiding worldliness. He is supposed to renounce worldly society. Money is like the lifeblood of worldly society and has become even more so since the Buddha's time. And so, it's just part of opting out of society.

It's like monks are not allowed to buy their own food. They're not allowed to grow their own food. They're not allowed to pick their own food out of trees unless there's some kind of famine going

on. Even then I think they're supposed

to just pick it up off the ground and

not pick it.

Uh

>> [snorts]

>> So,

let's see. Could I elaborate on why it

is a precept? I mean, a lot of precepts

are not moral precepts for monks. Having

to shave your head, I mean, it's not

immoral to have long hair.

Having to wear robes of a certain

material cut and sewn in a certain way,

dyed a certain color with certain kinds

of dye, I mean, that's not moral.

Eating not eating in the afternoon, I

mean, there's nothing inherently immoral

about eating at 2 in the afternoon.

So,

>> [sighs]

>> yeah, it's a it's a precept in order to prevent monks from indulging in worldly pursuits, mainly.

And from [snorts] just being kind of autonomous from laypeople.

The Buddha did make rules that that ensured that monks would have to depend on laypeople. So, even if the monk is out in a forest meditating most of the day, at least once a day, he's got to come into the village and make himself seen, partly for the the edification of the laypeople.

But, of course, once money becomes

allowable, then you can have monks that

are grubbing for money,

just trying to

like cadge for money.

Like, there are monks doing that even

now.

So,

yeah, I mean, it was partly

like a like a tradition in ancient India

that holy men do not handle money,

especially the renunciants. It's just a

sign of renunciation that you're not

handling money. If you're still handling

money, you haven't fully renounced

worldliness.

So, a lot of it is just sort of ancient

Indian

like monastic

what do you call it? Etiquette.

It's just the way things were done in

ancient India. But, also, it's just part

of the

>> [clears throat]

>> the the renunciation process.

Not handling money, not cooking your own

food, that sort of thing.

But, again, as the Buddha said in you

know,

famous passage,

if money is allowable, then sensual

pleasures are allowable. In fact,

there's

>> [clears throat]

>> one passage of the Buddha that's quoted

in the last chapter of the Cūḷavagga.

The it's regarding the the second

council. I've never found and this monk

is quoting the Buddha,

but I've never found the quote anywhere

else in the sutras. It's just

you know, 100 years after the time of

the Buddha, you've got this monk quoting

the Buddha. And it could be in one of

the sutras. I just don't recall seeing

it there. Maybe I never saw it. But,

it's talking about how monks that handle

money are like

they're like blinded by greed. They're

as foolish as animals. They're bound by

the chains of their own desires. You

know, it's it's like really coming down

hard on monks who handle money.

>> [snorts]

>> But,

that's it's just I don't know.

I think I should just move on to the

next question.

This is from Stellar Supreme, formerly

known as Libra Lamb.

And Stellar Supreme says, "What's so

good about voting that can't just be

solved by not voting?" Well, I mean,

what [clears throat] is solved by not

voting?

I don't think anything is solved by not

voting.

You know, it's just being black-pilled

and giving up.

So, if you if you just give up, I mean,

nothing is really solved.

I don't know. I don't know how you're

going to solve any political problem by

not voting.

So, it's like what's going on a lot of

the with I mean, lately with some

elements on the right is they're pissed

off at at Trump. I mean, some of them

like Nick Fuentes, he's declared himself

a Democrat now. It's like

we're going to vote for Trump as the

lesser of two evils.

But, the lesser of two evils isn't

wonderful. And so, [__] the lesser of two evils. We're going to vote for the worst of two evils. That seems to be what people like Nick Fuentes are like advocating now.

The lesser of two evils wasn't good enough. So, vote for the worst of two evils.

You know, the only man standing between us and Western Europe-style decline and fall is Donald Trump, apparently.

But, he's not doing everything we want him to do. He got us involved in this war with Iran for reasons we're conjecturing negatively about, and so [__] it, we're just going to let the

Democrats take over and just let America go go the route of Canada and New Zealand and Western Europe and the UK etc.

What if enough people vote the right way, at least it will have some impact. I mean, look at the the local elections in in the UK just recently where labor was just completely trounced.

That has an effect.

Like UK voting for like Brexit, that had an effect. I mean, it might not be as much of an effect as these fussy crybaby right-wingers are demanding.

But I mean, it has an effect.

So, let's see here. I'm just going to move on to Stellar Supreme, formerly

known as Liberal Lam. Second question,
what is the karmic status of Reddit mods
policing online spaces according to a
mob mentality? Well, it depends on their
own mental states, doesn't it?
The karmic status depends on their
motivations, why they're doing what
they're doing, how they feel about what
they're doing.
So, if they're feeling like intolerant
and vengeful,
hateful, well,
they're going to have the the karma
of acting with intolerance and vengeance
and hate.
If they think they're doing the right

thing, then there's going to be some good karma possibly from at least them being conscientious, even though if it it's even if it's a kind of misguided conscientiousness.

But again, it's these acts that these people are doing is based on their own mental states. So, it's as if they're a court acting in accordance with a mob mentality, then yeah, it's it's it's going to be more unwholesome than wholesome.

But, their karmic status is going to rely on their own mental states.

And different ones are going to have different mental states.

So, I'm going to move on to Stellar

Supreme, formerly known as Liberal

Lamb's third question.

Which is kind of a straightforward one.

Do you take all 13 suttas of the

Sīlakhandha Vagga, the first 13 suttas

of Dīgha Nikāya, to be authoritative and

archaic?

Well, I don't think any of them really

is archaic. Although, the Sakkapañha

Sutta,

which

gosh, I'm not even sure if it's in the

first 13.

Um

yeah, maybe it isn't.

But, the most archaic portion of the

Dīgha Nikāya that I'm aware of would be like the central portion of the Sīla or no, not Sīlakhandha, the uh Sakkapañha Sutta, where Sakka is asking the Buddha these questions, and the whole dialogue, I mean, it's it's very reminiscent of the Atthakavagga of the Sutta Nipāta. Um the Nidāna Sutta, I think might be in the first 13, which has an early, but not super archaic version of Paṭiccasamuppāda. It's it's not even the the standardized 12 links yet, so it's older than that, presumably. Um yeah, I the the second sutta of the Sīlakhandha is the

Sāmaññaphala Sutta, which is largely
archaic. It's relatively old.
But, I don't think that all 13 suttas of
the Sīlakhandha, like the first 13
suttas of the Dīgha Nikāya,
um they're all authoritative
from a Theravāda Buddhist point of view,
but that doesn't mean that they're
necessarily all true.
I mean some of it's not. I mean some of
it's bound to be mythological elements
that have gotten in or later
developments in Buddhist philosophy.
Still relatively early, but not like
original.
So,

most of it isn't archaic, although it's relatively old.

You know, like within the first 100 years of the existence of the Buddha or of Buddhism.

Authoritative though, I mean what makes a sūtra authoritative? You know, from the orthodox Theravada Buddhist point of view, all of it's authoritative. From my point of view, I mean, authoritative is just kind of like a value judgment. I mean, it's a matter of opinion. I mean, what what determines whether it's authoritative or not?

Just you decide that it's authoritative, you decide that you're going to accept it as an authority?

In that case, I mean, I really don't consider any of the the Pali texts to be authoritative.

Authoritative in quotes.

I mean, what does that even mean? I mean, is just because it says it, it's true? I don't think any text is authoritative in that sense.

So, you got officially authoritative in that the entire Pali Tipitaka is officially authoritative from the point of view of Theravada Buddhism. Even the commentarial tradition is officially authoritative for Theravada.

But, I mean, what other kind of authoritative do you want? I mean, I

don't consider any text to really be authoritative in the sense that it's necessarily true just because it's in this text.

So, archaic is a more meaningful term than authoritative. And even that is is kind of a judgment call. How how primitive does it have to be in order to be considered archaic?

I mean, is the like the early version of Paṭiccasamuppāda found in the Nidāna Sutta, is that archaic? Just because it's not the fully developed 12 links that is found elsewhere in the suttas. But it's still not archaic in that there are older versions, uh like older

prototypes of the 12 links, like in the

Sakka Pañha Sutta or the

um Kalahavivada Sutta of the Atakavagga

that have like a really like a archaic

form of the 12 links of

paṭiccasamuppāda.

So, how how primitive does it have to be

to be archaic?

Some of it's relatively archaic. The

Samaññaphala Sutta is relatively old.

But

I wouldn't say

all of it is necessarily archaic

um or like

necessarily like

objectively true.

>> [snorts]

>> Something like the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna

Sutta

I think that might be in the

Sīlakhandha. I'm

Maybe not. I don't remember like what

order the suttas come in

except for [clears throat] some of them.

The The Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta, I mean

um I like G.C. Pande's theory that the

Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta really is just

sort of like

uh a collection of meditation various

meditation instructions the Buddha had

given or was attributed to the Buddha

that were just sort of collated into

like this

It's sort of like the Sermon on the Mount
where it's just sayings of the Buddha regarding meditation that were all sort of combined together into one sort of artificially reproduced discourse.
So, I mean, is that authoritative and archaic?
Some of the Some of it might be really old. Some of it might not.
So, I guess the easy question for this answer would be no. Do I take all 13 suttas of the Sīlakkhānda Vagga to be authoritative and archaic? No.
But, I mean this is kind of a vague no because, I mean,

I don't even know what authoritative
would necessarily mean in this question.
And what exactly is archaic? Where do
you draw the line?
How early does it have to be to be
archaic?
So, I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Robert.
And Robert says,
"If everything cancels out, why attempt
to make spiritual progress assuming you
will not reach enlightenment?" Well, I
mean, wisdom is a matter of neutrality.
I mean, Robert seems to be assuming that
enlightenment or spiritual progress is
like positive.
And to some degree you could see it that

way. But, I mean, if you've lived a monk's life, you see that it's not all positive. I mean, still there's a balance of positive and negative. It's just that it becomes more subtle. It becomes less extreme. [clears throat] Instead of the roller coaster ride, ecstasy, misery, ecstasy, misery, it's more smooth sailing. It's more simple. So, you're getting closer to neutrality, the sort of the neutrality of zero. So, I mean, everything cancels out to zero. And then your the monk's life is trying to just approach zero and avoid the extremes.

Smooth sailing instead of stormy seas.

But, I mean, if you perceive it as something positive, then it'll have to be balanced out by something perceived as negative. But, when you just live the holy life and just see it as life in general, it's just neutral, then I mean, it doesn't really have to balance out with anything.

Or can't cancel out with anything.

I mean, you're going for neutrality, which doesn't have to be canceled out unless you've got this weird perception of neutrality in a dualistic opposition to non-neutrality, and then they'll have to balance out.

But it's depends on how you look at it.

It's sort of like the Bodhisattva path where you're doing good all the time, but you're not perceiving it as good. You're just doing what you do. So, that that causes it not to have to balance out with something bad.

Okay.

So, I guess I answered that question.

I'm going to move on to Robert's second question.

So, have you ever been to or have any opinions on the traditional Latin Mass?

I've never attended Mass in Latin or any other language. I've never attended a Roman Catholic religious ceremony in my life.

Um

>> [clears throat]

>> I did have sort of a a mild opinion in

that I read that just

within the past several decades, they

started phasing out Latin Mass and like

doing Mass in the vernacular language

of, you know, whatever country they

happen to be in.

And

in a way I can understand how, you know,

it might be more beneficial for people

to actually understand what is being

said, but still at the same time, maybe

because, you know, I kind of am biased

in favor of

the Roman Empire or something, I kind of

like the idea of Latin Mass. You know,
when I heard that they were phasing out
Latin Mass, I kind of
disapproved or just didn't feel quite
good about it.
Not that I have a a dog in the fight. It
doesn't matter to me, really. I've never
attended Mass in my life. I probably
never will, to tell you the truth.
But then again,
I've also considered, like in Burma,
that they will blast Patthana in Pali
over loudspeakers sometimes for a week
straight, day and night.
Just blasting this stuff that nobody
understands. Even the monks who are

chanting it, most of them probably don't understand the meaning of what they're chanting. It's just like this sacred blah blah blah that has some sort of magical beneficial power, supposedly.
And I've thought many times, it would be so much more beneficial to the people if you just, instead of blasting Patthana in Pali that nobody understands, blast like a Burmese translation of the Dhammapada. At least the people would understand some of it and maybe learn some Dhamma from it.
So, from that point of view, I mean, I it might be a good idea to chant mass in a vernacular language that people actually understand.

But, I don't know.

I can go either way, I guess.

But blasting Pali over loudspeakers, it just seems kind of

I don't know. It just seems kind of pointless.

That it people would get a lot more benefit if they actually understood what was being chanted.

And so, I move on to Robert's third question, which is the last question of the evening.

And he says, "Do you think Ramana Maharshi was an arahant?"

And if there are arahants in this world, if there are enlightened beings in this

world, I think Ramana Maharshi would be
a good bet for one.
That he was [clears throat]
he seems to have been the real deal.
I've I've never heard the slightest hint
of any scandal
regarding Ramana Maharshi. And his his
biography is fascinating. I have read
Ramana Maharshi's biography, at least
one of them. And he started off as just
a a relatively normal Brahmin kid in
British India. He was going to like a
British high school, like a like an
English one. It was run by the English
in India. He was still living in India.
Southern India.
But he was going to become like an

electrical engineer or something. He was going to go to college after he got out of high school. And so he's studying math and and this kind of stuff in high school.

And then one day

he's alone in the house doing his homework, and he has like a panic attack. He feels like he's going to die. And so he just thinks, "Well, if I'm going to die, I should prepare myself." So he just lies down on his back on the floor.

And he's sort of waiting for death. And then he thinks, "Well, if I'm dead, I won't be thinking anything. So I should

just stop thinking, too." So he's lying on the floor and he stops thinking. And just boom. Supposedly, according to the story, he became enlightened.

And in in later years, Ramana Maharshi allegedly claimed that the only real spiritual practice he ever did was as a high school student having the panic attack lying on his back preparing for death.

And after that, it was it was like this I mean, he definitely had this awakening experience. He was radically changed after that.

And so he would just spontaneously go

into these meditative states. And then one time his brother
um he lost interest in in his homework and everything. So one day his brother looks at him, and instead of doing his homework, he's just sitting there meditating. And his brother in sort of sarcastic disgust says, "Oh, you're useless. You might as well just go off and become a sadhu."
And even though he's being sarcastic, Ramana Maharshi
he I mean he wasn't called Ramana Maharshi at the time yet, but he he realized that what his brother said was true. But his family was completely

unreligious. He wasn't particularly religious up until he had this awakening experience. So he didn't really know where to go. So he heard about Arunachala, the sacred hill, sacred to the god Shiva. You know, it's almost the only sacred spot he even even knew of. So he just took off and went there and went into a temple and just sat down and started meditating. And he was just like in this trance state, this deep meditative state for quite a while. That they were having to help him. I mean he was getting bitten by ants and everything. He didn't even notice. There's like the the temple like the guardian guy, you know, the guy that the

groundskeeper of the temple or the the head priest or whatever, you know, he's kind of keeping an eye on him and they're like trying to keep the bugs off of him and stuff. Sometimes they're they're feeding. They got to put food into his mouth cuz he's just completely out of it. And then after he finally comes out of this trance or this I guess it was like a trance. It was a deep meditative state. He was mute for for like 2 years afterwards because it was like he could not reconcile the enlightened state with just worldly samsara. It took him years to really be able to start integrating this

realization that he had with this

talking and making noise and moving

around and doing stuff.

>> [sighs]

>> So yeah, I think Ramana Maharshi would

be a good bet. There's no way to prove

anything.

But

like people who lived in the 20th

century that I think may have been fully

enlightened, Ramana Maharshi would be up

near the top of the list.

Even though he he worshipped a hill.

And then Ram not Ramdas, but uh Neem

Karoli Baba up there, Ramdas's guru.

He worshipped the monkey god, but he'd

be up near the top of the list, too. I

think

um two people that I think may have been fully enlightened in the 20th century would be Neem Karoli Baba and Ramana Maharshi, and they were very different from each other.

Ramana Maharshi was more like the stereotypical saint and sage, whereas Neem Karoli Baba was sort of the opposite. He was like a a divine rascal. But yeah, there's a good chance Ramana Maharshi was an Arhat. If an Arhat even makes I mean, if enlightenment even means anything in a samsaric context.

And I guess I've answered all these questions. I don't think I did a very

good job of answering all of them. Some
of them were kind of
weird, difficult questions to ask to
answer.
But like I should always say at the
beginning and usually don't, if you have
any questions you think I can answer,
don't use this Q&A as an example of what
I'm able to answer because
some of the questions were difficult to
answer in this one.
But if you think I can answer, you know,
especially about Dharma, Buddhism,
that kind of thing. Oh, wait, there was
a question
that
I don't think I answered yet.

It was a question about lama Tibetan

lamas. Okay. Yeah.

All right. Yeah, PSA asked this

question. I I just scrolled past it and

didn't notice it.

Okay.

>> [clears throat]

>> One last question before we end this

thing.

PSA asked, "What's the difference

between a lama and a monk in the

Vajrayana tradition?" It looks like

they're assistants to monks who are not

obligated to take so many precepts, but

I'm not sure if this is correct. I'm

mainly trying to understand their

dynamics and purpose. It's my
understanding that a lama would be like
a a more advanced level of monk, sort of
like
You know, kind [clears throat] of
correspond to a sayadaw in Burmese or an
ajahn in Thailand, where it's just sort
of like a higher level or with a prelate
prelate in in Catholicism. They're like
a higher level priest.
So, I think a lama would be a higher
level
than just an ordinary monk.
Um, like a
like in in Burma, like a sayadaw would
be like the the abbot. He'd be like the
the senior monk at a monastery. He would

be called a sayadaw. You might have more than one sayadaw if if you got like uh like a venerated teacher who isn't the abbot, but still is is a good teacher, that kind of thing. He might still be called sayadaw.

In uh Thailand ajahn, I mean, it's not even necessarily used for monks. It just means teacher, you know. Sayadaw and ajahn both are derived from the Pali word achariya, which just means teacher or master.

But, lama, yeah, I'm pretty sure a lama is just like a a higher level monk.

So

but I I'm really no authority on Tibetan

Buddhism. That's just

what I've

sort of

conjectured

just from what little I know about it.

It just seems to me that a lama is a

higher is more prestigious than just a

monk.

So with that,

hopefully I didn't pass any other

questions, just skip over them, scroll

past them.

If you think I can answer a question,

especially regarding early Buddhism

you know, Theravada Buddhism, archaic

Buddhism, that kind of thing,

um, just Dharma in general

philosophy

I mean, the farther away you get from

um, like Theravada Buddhism, then the

the odds of my being able to give an an

intelligent answer kind of go down. I am

fairly well versed in Christianity and

also like Western philosophy, that kind

of thing also.

But no more than three questions per

person per episode, please. Like and

subscribe if you have not done so

already. Check out the URL links below

this video, which includes my

books that are for sale on Amazon

and

be happy.

Okay, then. I do believe we are

recording.

Hail audience.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

episode number 196.

I am your host Panyo Bossam.

And 196, of course, is not prime. It is,

in fact, 2 * 2 * 7 * 7, which makes it

the the product of two perfect squares.

2 squared * 7 squared. Isn't that

fascinating?

And you may have noticed that I did not

do a Q&A video last weekend because I

was getting married.

And those of you who have congratulated

me, well, thanks for the

congratulations. Those of you who have

tried to warn me,

then, well,

your warnings were in vain.

And this is the first time I've ever

been married, so it's kind of this

weird, almost magical kind of feeling

that I literally have a wife now.

A woman changed her last name to my last

name, and we're like joined

in in in front of God almighty.

At least that's the way it's supposed to

work traditionally.

And one of the many things I love about

my new wife is I'll tell her something

and I'll say, "Know what I'm saying?"

And she always says yes. She always know

what I'm saying.

But, I'll go into a few more details a little later on cuz there are at least there's like one or two questions about the wedding.

So, I'll go into that then.

And remove the little paper umbrella.

Take a drink of my primary designated beverage.

Uh and I suppose we should just get right into this.

Not a whole heck of a a of questions this week. I think you guys are going easy on me

for whatever reasons.

So, first question is from Yoshi Bouie.

And Yoshi Bouie says, "Does the electromagnetic wave in which the magnetic field component begets the electric field component, which begets the magnetic field component, constitute a good example of dependent origination?" Well, I mean, it's kind of an obscure example of dependent origination. I mean, you could say that. Maybe. I really don't know enough about physics to really know exactly how that works. But, I mean, just the the necessary balance of positive and negative would be a good example of dependent co-arising. Like, for example,

forget electromagnetic waves, just go to what's like the essence of electricity itself, which is a flow of electrons. And just the structure of the atom, you know, you've got negative electrons, positive protons, balancing each other out. You got neutrons in there, too, but it's my understanding that a neutron is essentially just a proton and electron that have been kind of squashed together.

So, it's you got to have like this balance of positive and negative even in the fundamental building blocks of matter.

And I think it's arbitrary that they chose the electron to be negative and the proton to be positive. I mean, they could have I'm pretty sure that it was just arbitrary and it could have been the other way around. Just so long as you got one designated as one pole and the other designated as the other pole.

So,

yeah, I think you If you want a good example of dependent origination, you should come up with one that people are familiar with and can grasp easily.

It might be a good example for a physicist, but again, I'm not exactly sure how magnetic fields and electric electronic fields, electric fields. I

mean, what is the relationship between them? When essentially they're kind of the same anyway.

Probably too obscure to be a really good example.

And I'm just [clears throat] going to move on to Yoshi Boy's second question.

Okay.

So this is

This is a little bit late that I'm asking this cuz he's asked he's asking about my marriage or my wedding in the future tense. He says, "Will you be required in your wedding ceremony to place your hand on the Bible and swear to it that you will raise your offspring

as Christians?" I've never seen anything
like that at a wedding ceremony before.
That you've got to swear on a Bible that
you'll raise your children as
Christians.
Um first of all, it's kind of unlikely
that we're going to have kids.
So
there is that.
But no, [clears throat] I mean, that
didn't happen. I mean
I've never even seen I've never really
even heard of it happening. I'm assuming
that it does happen. I mean, there's
probably some fundamentalist sects of
Christianity that may require this kind
of stuff.

But as it turns out

um the person who married us was my

first boss at the first metal shop I

started working in here in South

Carolina.

And it turns out he's also an ordained

Baptist pastor. I didn't even know this

until relatively recently.

I mean, I certainly didn't know at the

time that he hired me.

You know, he's just

the the manager at a metal shop, but

he's also an ordained pastor.

So

um

my my now wife and I, before the before

the wedding, you you several months
before the wedding, we're trying to
figure out, you know, who should marry
us. You can't really I I mean, Theravada
Buddhists,
you know, a Theravada Buddhist monk or
priest, it's strictly prohibited for
them to participate in a wedding.
So, in Theravada Buddhist countries like
Burma, a wedding is a purely secular
affair where the the prospective bride
and groom will just go to the village
headman and sign papers saying that
they're they're married with a village
headman like, you know,
being the witness or whatever. And then,
after the fact, then they go to the

monastery and get the blessings of the monks over a done deal.

Then they'll throw maybe a week-long um a reception where they're like feeding the whole village, this kind of stuff, if they can afford that.

Ah.

So, anyways, the boss was a cool guy. He knew I was a Buddhist.

And so, my wife wanted him to marry us just because she didn't want a stranger to marry us. He was like the only ordained minister we know. And he's he's a nice guy. We you know, we respect and like him and everything.

Seems He seems to have some wisdom about

him.

So,

um you know, I did point out to him that

my my bride and I are not really

Christians.

So, I mean, I

I didn't want him to just try and do a

Buddhist ceremony. I mean, he's I don't

want him to be blaspheming

according to his own principles while

marrying us. I just asked him to kind of

go easy on the Jesus stuff. I mean, to

mention God, you know, we can have like

an open interpretation of God. We don't

have to identify capital G God with

Jehovah.

So, he wants to talk about God bringing

us together,

fine. I wasn't going to push the issue.

Just kind of go easy on Jesus Christ

because

we really don't believe in that sort of

thing. And he was he was completely fine

with that.

And so

he married us with a little bit of

mention of God, no mention of Jesus, no

insisting that we raise our children as

Christians, no insisting that we

ourselves be Christians.

So everything was very nice. It was very

private ceremony in our backyard.

And then that was it. We had two two

witnesses aside from my bride and me and

the minister was the minister's wife who

goes everywhere that he goes

and

my my now mother-in-law.

My sweetie's mama.

So yeah, I didn't even have to touch a

Bible. I don't even I'm not even sure if

he brought a Bible with him.

Anyways, [clears throat] let's just move

on to the next question.

This is from Phil Atheist, another

wedding question. Would you upload some

sort of video commemorating the wedding?

Nope.

We didn't we didn't record the wedding

or anything like that. There's a few

pictures taken.

They're not going up on on the internet.

My sweetheart is a very private person.

Doesn't like being plastered all over

the internet. So it's not

[clears throat] going to happen.

Next question from Phil Atheist.

What new job and car and wife or what

model?

Well, the job is I'll be a

chemical operator.

I'll be overseeing chemical reactions.

Mainly for like harmless household

chemicals. I'm not going to be working,

you know, like making Agent Orange or or

whatever the the pesticide of choice is

nowadays. What's that stuff that

Monsanto has?

Uh

Monsanto has the soybeans that are

resistant to it now.

The name escapes me.

The new car

is uh a Jeep Compass. My sweetheart

likes Jeeps. So, we got a Jeep Compass.

I mean, I wanted just a car that handles

good, gets decent gas mileage.

She likes the Jeeps. I really don't like

Jeep Wranglers and just to drive because

they don't handle very well, that sort

of thing. They don't get good gas

mileage.

So, it was kind of a compromise where we

got just sort of the Jeep version of a Nissan Rogue. It's like every car company in the world except for maybe like Maserati or something makes like their equivalent of a Nissan Rogue. Just almost every make of car has their equivalent of a Rogue. Porsche has a car that looks just like a Nissan Rogue. Why in hell anyone would want to buy a Porsche that looks just like a Nissan Rogue?

I have no idea. Mercedes, BMW,

like

What is it? Range Rover?

The you know, Lexus. They've always They got this car. They all look the same,

the same shape and everything.

I don't get it.

But, we got one.

And it drives It drives fairly well. So,

yeah, it's It accelerates better than

the the Nissan Rogue we had before that.

So, let's see. Job, I kind of covered.

Car,

wife, what what model of wife? Well,

she's the only classy city girl I've

ever I've ever hooked up with.

You know, all my other girlfriends I've

pretty much had to buy them their first

pair of shoes, show them how light

switches work, that kind of thing.

But, my current my current woman, my my

legally wedded wife now,

sophisticated, classy city girl.

Went to private schools.

That kind of thing.

Let's see now. Let's just move on to

Phil Atheist's third question.

Thoughts on Shinto, shamanism,

genealogy, and other forms of deva

worship.

Well, I mean, if I think of deva

worship, you know, like polytheism with

small g gods. I really don't think much

of Shinto, shamanism, or genealogy. I

think more along the lines of like

Excuse me.

Like classical paganism.

Zeus and Apollo and Athena and all that.

So,

or or like ancient Indian, to some

degree even modern Indian

polytheism.

So, with regard to Shinto,

I mean,

I've I've spent some time in Japan. I

have some familiarity with Japanese

culture, but whether Shinto really has

any deeper, more spiritual, mystical

kind of teachings or experiences that

they endorse, I don't know. It just

seems kind of superficial to me. You

know, it just sort of adds structure to

like a nation's belief system.

Shamanism,

>> [clears throat]

>> I don't know if shamanism is really deva worship. I mean, it doesn't have to be. There's different kinds of shamanism. I mean, that's getting back into like animism.

So, whether animism would count as deva worship, I mean, I'm sure there's overlap. But again, shamanism, there's so many different kinds.

Um and shamanism, I would say that there is some deeper spirituality aside from just superficial superstition that kind of helps to regulate the belief system. You know, get everybody on the same page, so to speak. Everybody in the tribe kind of shares common values

because of this belief system. I mean, that's like the more superficial kinds of religions, that's one of their main purposes. Genealogy, I mean, it sounds like it'd be kind of a a Muslim thing cuz jinn are a kind of supernatural being in Islamic theology or mythology or whatever.
And I really don't know that much about the jinn either other than that what I saw on I Dream of Jeannie as a kid.
Let's see. Other forms of deva worship, I mean, there's there's different kinds. I mean, some of it just is purely superficial.
You know, it's just for the purpose of getting everybody on the same page in in

within within the the culture to they
have shared values and it lends
stability to the system and everything.
So, I mean,
there's that. And then you've got other
kinds of deva worship that get into more
more spiritual deeper stuff in which you
get into what is called henotheism
where, you know, you pick one small g
god but then make them a kind of gateway
to the to the ultimate to the absolute.
So,
um there's just like a full spectrum of
different kinds of deva worship as uh
Phil Laith here here calls it.
And it's just a a very wide

very wide spectrum with everything from
the ridiculous to the sublime in it.
But, some kinds of
of like paganism, if so long as it's got
like like a deep spiritual aspect and
maybe like cultivated mystical
experiences and that sort of thing,
I'm sure that there have I mean, it will
get you as far as a human being can
possibly get in some cases. It may not
be the the like the most perfectly
designed system
for for someone make spiritual progress,
But, so long as there's some support for
it,
there's always going to be talented
people, spiritually talented people,

that are going to make progress in
accordance with with whatever system
they're in. So, yeah, I mean,
like ancient Greco-Roman
paganism, for most people it was fairly
superficial. I mean, most religions for
most people are fairly superficial. But,
I'm sure there were like deeper like
mystery cult kind of things going on
that could get lead people deeper into
it.
I think the Neoplatonists didn't just
flatly reject classical paganism.
So,
yeah, I would just say that there's
there's like the a full spectrum from

the ridiculous to the sublime, just like
there is in Hinduism, just like there is
in Buddhism, especially Mahayana
Buddhism,
Christianity,
you know, there's there's always going
to be a spectrum.
So, I guess I'm just going to move on
this question. He just asked for
thoughts and I shared some thoughts.
He wasn't really asking a specific
question.
So, let's just move on this question.
This is from Seal of Action, Seapad
Zidan.
He says, "There is someone I know with
beliefs that are opposite of mine. He

constantly insults my beliefs and calls them nihilistic while reframing the teachings as actually teaching the opposite of what is written. Despite these insults, I feel sad that we couldn't work things [clears throat] out because I do like him as a person, but I also feel sad that the person insults my beliefs and traditions, and eventually have snapped and insulted him for spreading what I think are lies about certain teachings. Bad outcome no matter which way I move, so I feel stuck on which way to act with such a person. How do I navigate a situation like this and accept the way I end up moving.

Well, I think I might have some idea as to what person Seal of Action C Pod Zeena is referring to here if they're on the Discord server.

Because there is a person on there that kind of fits this description.

Um

Yeah, I mean

he

if this is the person Seal of Action C Pod Zeena is referring to. I mean he's a kind of Mahayana Buddhist who this kind of rejects what the historical Buddha presumably most likely taught in favor of just grotesque absurdities. But he's very puritanical

in his insistence on these grotesque

absurdities and will just flatly reject

that he is

well, Seal of Action C Pod Zeena

eloquently put it, [__] on the

teachings of like the historical Buddha.

And there's really you really can't make

any headway with this person. I mean, if

Seal of Action C Pod Zeena says that he

likes him as a person

then he's kind of a step or two ahead of

me because I can't even I can't even say

that.

I've been talked out of kicking him off

the server

more than once.

Anyways,

um

I mean

there's

there was a a wise monk in Burma,

Sayadaw U Zawtika, Mahayana U Zawtika

he's called. I don't know if he's still

alive, but he was ordained in the same

tradition as me, I'm pretty sure. He was

a disciple of Pa Auk Sayadaw.

And he said that the ability to allow

people to be stupid is one of the most

difficult, yet important steps to take

in spiritual progress. And I mean

there's there's people that you're just

never really going to get them to like

respect you or see your side or anything

like that. There's [clears throat] just

going to be people that are just

intransigent

if if I use that word correctly.

You know, they're just

stubbornly stuck in a certain way of

seeing things. And everybody is to some

degree, all of us are to some degree.

And so, some of those people that are

stuck in their ways are going to be

stuck in a way that sees your way as

[__] And you're not going to be

able to really persuade a lot of these

people. So, I mean, it's just it. You

just got to have some equanimity. It's

just

I mean, ultimately they don't exist

anyway. Neither do you.

But let's see, where's the actual

question?

How do I navigate a situation like this

and accept the way I end up moving?

Well, I mean, once you take to heart the

idea that regret and remorse

are bad karma, akusala karma.

It's kukkucca in Pali. Just

regret, remorse, any kind of anxiety or

worry, this kind of stuff. It's always

bad karma. It's always unskillful mental

states. Just makes things worse. So, I

mean, once you take that to heart,

just bear that in mind. Whatever you

have done in the past,

there's no point in regretting it,

wishing you had done otherwise because
you're not going to be able to undo it.
All you're doing is just sort of setting
yourself up against reality.
Wishing things were different when all
the wishing in the world isn't going to
change it.
So,
like accepting what you end up
accepting the way you end up moving. I
mean, that's just
it's just common sense, really. Once you
take to heart the idea that regret and
remorse, a guilty conscience,
are always unskillful. And in this case,
it might not even be a guilty

conscience. It's just maybe thinking

that you made a mistake and beating

yourself up over that.

But I mean it doesn't help anything. It

just makes things worse.

Just adding more negativity.

So how do I navigate a situation like

this? I mean

if the person is a fool

then you know, the very first blessing

of the Mangala Sutta may may be a value,

which is the very first blessing of the

Mangala Sutta is not associating with

fools.

But

>> [sighs]

>> I mean there is no really correct way of

of going about it. There's any number of correct ways and even greater number of incorrect ways. You know, so I mean so long as you know, you got meta in your heart or at least equanimity then you can pretty much do as you please.

You can continue to associate [clears throat] with the person. You can just not associate with the person.

Or I mean if the person has blocked you then

I mean you associating with the person may not even be really an option.

So

I mean it seems to me that if your attempts to interact with the person you

feel like you ought to try to interact

with the person, maybe get along with

them

and

if if these attempts are always causing

agitation to your mind, you know,

they're always resulting in you being

dissatisfied and that kind of thing,

you're better off just opting out.

If you just feel like it's a duty

that you should I mean

it should never be a duty to try to make

him see the error of his ways because

that's never going to work.

But I mean if it's a duty just to try to

make amends with the person, be friendly

and you know, amiable to that person

that's fine.

But just take care that it's not

increasing unskillful mental states in

the process.

But, like like Gurdjieff

is some famous Western guru of the early

20th century.

I mean, he made a special point in

having very difficult people

at like staying [clears throat] at his

ashrams or his whatever he called them,

you know, his spiritual centers

just because it's it's kind of good

[clears throat] to be triggered. It's

good to have somebody pushing your

buttons to the extent that if you're

really spiritually oriented, you can see
that. You know, you can see how you
react when things aren't going your way.
And then you can learn about yourself
and maybe do something about it. But, if
you just avoid being triggered, then
it's always latent and then you don't
really have much opportunity to fix
[clears throat] it.
>> [sighs]
>> But, again, I mean
if
>> [clears throat]
>> if interacting with the person increases
your wholesome mental states and
decreases your unwholesome ones, then
you might want to continue attempting to

interact with this person. If it's the
other way around, which I think might be
a little more likely
where you interact with them and it just
increases like unskillful mental states,
then probably better [clears throat]
just
have as little to do with the person as
possible. If you are required to
interact, just be polite and bland.
You know, don't tell him that he's
[__] on the teachings of the
historical Buddha even if in a certain
sense he maybe really is.
Well, I mean, it's really not that big
of a deal to me.

I mean, at least [clears throat] with regard to myself. I mean, if somebody dislikes me, somebody just openly dislikes me, it has happened a few times in my life. Has happened a number of times in my life.

Mahasi Upasika just took an instant dislike to me. I mean, those of you who read my most recent book, you read the a fellow of Pandita Rama chapter, you would you'd be aware of that. My own preceptor didn't like me very much just because he didn't like western barbarians very much. He considered me to be a kind of loose cannon cuz I wouldn't just like mindlessly conform with what everybody else was doing. That

kind of thing. So, I mean, it's like

you can't really beat yourself up over

it. I mean,

the [clears throat] Buddha himself had

people who disliked him.

You know, there's

no matter what you do, there's going to

be somebody who disapproves of it.

And if you don't decide not to do

anything, they'll disapprove of that,

too.

So, it's just have a certain equanimity

with regard to people who don't like you

as much as you can manage.

Uh

and if they're just like looking down

their nose at you, feeling very superior
to you, and so forth,
which I mean, you can come across that
in just about any comment section or or
social media or whatever,
then let me just
the water off a duck's back. I mean,
just being being bothered by it really
doesn't help anything.
Anyways, I'm just going to move on to
see what action see if I can answer the
second question.
And he says, "When someone is in a blind
rage, extreme fear, lust at seeing
someone they find drop-dead gorgeous,
etc., their thinking goes out the window
and absorbed in the intensity of the

emotion. Are these mystical experiences by your definition, why or why not?"

Um in some extreme cases where you kind of go off the scale, it may count as a kind of mystical experience, but I think Theo of Action See by Zidana is misunderstanding my interpretation of a mystical state, it's not just going beyond thinking, it's going beyond perception.

And so, strong [clears throat] emotions are still strongly perceptual.

So, blind rage, extreme fear, extreme lust, and so forth. I mean, there's still a very strong basic perceptual component to that, which is not

particularly mystical. So, it's like I would say it's mystical only if it's so intense that it just kind of jolts you out of your normal perceptual range, and it's just kind of you go off the scale to some degree.

Like sex, in particular, can be mystical.

You can have mystical experiences. I mean, it may not be the ideal way of cultivating mystical experiences, but still it's like you're kind of transcending,

at least ideally, for some people, you know, you're transcending the limitations of the self. There's at least a merging with with another

person.

And then there's, you know, the the

moment of eternity, supposedly.

>> [sighs]

>> So,

yeah, I would say that just

not thinking, in and of itself, is not

necessarily a mystical experience.

It's It's like transcending or

attenuating perception

until it becomes so attenuated or

transcendent

that

like the the reality that is being

screened by these symbolic perceptions

is able to like bleed through or shine

through a little bit.

That would be what a mystical experience

is. It's like direct

experience of like

reality,

which lies beyond the symbolic images of

perception. Not just thoughts, but also

emotions or just sensory

sensory data.

All of that is perceptual.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to

Seal of Action C 5 Z 0 0 third question.

Which is as follows. You have said the

quote from the Visuddhimagga about there

being suffering, but no sufferer, no

doer of actions, just the actions, path

traveled, but no traveler, etc. Is based

on bad logic and that there is probably

actions being done

either. Yeah, I think he

>> [clears throat]

>> there's some kind of typo or bad grammar

in here. Probably no actions being done

I less that's what I'd be saying.

That just getting rid of the doer

with the action still there

is is it does strike me as bad logic.

So, it's like

you either have to create some sort of

like like in Theravada Buddhism like

Abhidhamma, they had to create like

these subatomic particles that are the

things. And then in order to save the

process or the action.

But then you get into like Madhyamaka Mahayana Buddhism and they just in my opinion more wisely do away with the things and the actions.

Anyways,

I haven't even got to the question part yet.

Seal of Action C 5 Z 0 0 continues.

However, in the Bahiya Sutta, it talks about seeing with no seer, hearing with no hearer, thinking with no thinker, etc. It never says that these things don't happen despite there being nobody there experiencing it. So, why would it be any different in the Visuddhimagga examples? To me it seems clear that

samsara still happens without the Buddha saying it doesn't exist, but there is no being there experiencing or doing it and arahant sees the truth of this. Well, I mean he's just

mixing things up here.

See, in the Bahiya Sutta, it doesn't talk about seeing with no seer hearing with no hearer thinking with no thinker.

Um

See, it never says these things don't happen despite there being nobody there experiencing. Well, it's not really dealing with with no self at all.

It's I mean, what what the the Buddha said to Bahiya in the Bahiya Sutta is in

the seen there will be only the seen, in
the heard there will be only the heard,
in the the see in the mentally sensed
there will be only the mentally sensed
and felt there will be only the felt.
And I mean, in a way it's kind of
it's kind of tr-
it's it's kind of transcending the
duality between subject and object or
noun and verb because in the seen only
the seen data is is like a past
participle
which is sort of a verb acting as a
noun.
So, in a way it's just it's dealing with
like perceptions. It's like how do
attenuate perceptions? Like getting into

the mystical state stuff again.

I mean, it's he's not even making any

kind of metaphysical statement here.

He's giving yogic instructions here.

He's not talking about no self. He's not

giving any kind of metaphysical

discourse.

He's talking about how to become

enlightened

which is just yogic instructions.

And so, what he's doing is trying to

teach Bahiya to attenuate his

perceptions so that he doesn't have like

this stream of consciousness monologue

commentary going on when when he's

seeing or hearing or whatever, it's just

he's as immediate in the moment as as it is possible to be. And that is like the jumping off point for enlightenment in a sense.

So, the Visuddhimagga making a metaphysical declaration. You know, there is doing, but there is no doer. And it's like with regard to like walking like in the example I gave in the previous one in the previous Q&A. How can you have walking all by itself with no legs or anything? How can you have painting with no paint? This kind of thing. So it's what I'm what I've been talking about is I think some people are not understanding the point

that you have to have stasis and change
dependently co-arise. You can't have one
without the other. And that stasis, the
something that has to stay the same,
I mean, if you don't have anything that
is perceived as staying the same,
then you got meaningless chaos.
I mean, I I went over this in the
previous Q&A.
So it's like
somebody who's saying that actions are
real, but things aren't. It's like
saying verbs are real, but nouns aren't.
Or temporal aspect is real, but spatial
aspect isn't real. Like time is real,
but space isn't. This kind of thing.

>> [cough and clears throat]

>> And I just I just don't see it. It's like it's just built into the way we perceive reality. You have to have stasis and change. Something always has to be changing, or you've got death. Something always has to stay the same, or you've got meaningless chaos. And either way, you've got this meaningless nothingness. So the only way you can have anything resembling the world we live in right now is to have some things perceived as staying the same, and some things perceived as changing. And then they dependently co-arise and produce this entire universe. It's a

kind of dualism.

So from the Tao comes the one, from the one comes the two, and then from the two, from the dualism, comes the 10,000 things.

This the myriad things of this samsaric world.

So, let's see.

>> [sighs]

>> To me it seems clear that samsara still happens without the Buddha saying it doesn't exist. Yeah, well, I mean Yeah, I mean, people existing seems clear, too, doesn't it?

There is no being there experiencing or doing it. There has to be something

perceived as staying the same.

Otherwise, you you don't have any

meaning at all.

There is nothing meaningful unless you

have got dependently co-arising stasis

and change.

And then C of Action C 5 C 2 not

concludes with an arahant sees the truth

of this, but I would guess that he is

not an arahant and he is just guessing.

So.

Yeah, I mean, you do away with one, you

got to do away with both, it seems to

me.

You get rid of spatial aspect, you get

rid of temporal aspect, also. You get

rid of the stasis part, you get rid of

the change part, too.

But I'm just moving on to the next

question.

This is from the Saboteur.

And the Saboteur says, "According to

Hindu beliefs, he who buys, he who

cooks, and he who eats meat gets the

animal's karma?"

Question mark.

I'm sure there are some Hindus that

believe that.

I

mean, I've never read that in any Hindu

text, but it wouldn't surprise me. It's

like I already mentioned, Hinduism is

just this full-spectrum religion. I

mean, a lot of people would argue it's
not even a religion, it's just this It's
like a cultural
conglomeration of various religious
beliefs and practices.
But, yeah, mean, it wouldn't surprise me
if there are some Hindus out there who
think that if you buy and cook meat and
eat meat, you get the animal's karma.
But from the Buddhist [clears throat]
point of view, that's just not how it
works. There is no transfer of karma
like that.
I mean, the karma is the mental states.
Karma is volition. Karma is cetana.
Cetana ham bhikkhave
As the Buddha is said to have said in

the Samyutta Nikaya, in a sutta the

title of which I don't remember.

But he said, "Monks, I say that karma is

volition or will.

It's mental states.

It's not through outward mechanical

actions

like cooking meat."

Karma is the mental states. I mean,

I don't know how many times I got to say

it.

An infinite number of times, and I'll

probably die of old age before I get to

that high of a number.

Anyways, Saboteur's second question.

He says, "Again, Hindus accept that

painful karma can be lessened and or
negated by the grace of God, by
meritorious deeds. They also maintain
that karma which has not begun to
sprout, as it were,
can possibly be negated by yoga,
meditation, feeding the hungry, etc.
Question mark."
Well, again, I mean, Hindus can say
whatever the hell they want to, really.
So what?
I mean, if you're a Hindu, it might be
important. If you're not a Hindu, or if
you just want to be like educated with
regard to what Hindus believe, I mean,
it could be
have some importance.

But just because Hindus believe something doesn't really necessarily mean very much. That's except for to the Hindus themselves.

But

See, painful karma can be lessened or negated by meritorious deeds. Even Buddhism believes that. I mean, if you've got lots of bad karma and very little good karma, you're not going to have much like ameliorating karma, anything to soften the blow. Whereas if you got lots of good karma and not a whole lot of bad karma, then even if something bad happens, I mean, it's going to be way less bad than if you

didn't have all that good karma. Like,
I've told stories like this before.
Like, for example,
the two times I had to be hospitalized
with malaria, just through seemingly
random chance, a car just happened to
show up that same day that I decided I'm
going to have to go to the hospital and
was able to drive me into town to a
hospital.
Or another another example, I've told
this story before, when I was living in
Burma, I was continually biting into
rocks in my food. You know, little white
rocks get mixed in with the rice cuz
it's threshed on the ground. Little
brown rocks get mixed in with the beans.

And I'd be biting into a rock out in the middle of nowhere
and it would make this crack and it would hurt and I'd be feeling around in there
with my finger seeing if I broke a tooth or at least lost a filling or something.
And I'd be thinking it's like if if I break a tooth out here in the middle of nowhere,
I might be in some trouble. But as it turns out, I didn't break a tooth out in the middle of nowhere. I go into one of the the rich neighborhoods of Rangoon.
It's it was the same neighborhood that U Ne Win lived in after he the the

previous dictator who retired. He lived in that same neighborhood.

And I was going for alms in this rich neighborhood. Some servant girl offered me some bean curry, has a little brown rock in it. I break three teeth biting into this one rock. You know, kind of right in between two on top and one on bottom all got these big pieces broken off of them.

But, as it turns out due to my good karma, I mean that was bad karma to break my tooth. It was kind of good karma that it didn't happen out in the middle of nowhere, but happened in you know, the biggest city in the country.

And it turns out the servant girl who

gave me the the bean curry with the rock in it was the servant girl of the Dean and Rector of the Rangoon Dental College.

And so, I just had to walk across the street and the Dean and Rector of the Rangoon Dental College who had this this little dentist shop, like a dentist chair in his house

fixed my teeth for free and just said, "If you ever need your teeth fixed, just come right on back." And so, for a while I had I had the same dentist as the dictator. He was like the number one dentist in the whole country.

His servant girl is the one that gave me

the rock in my food that finally broke

my teeth.

So,

that's how good karma can mix in with

bad karma and make it not so bad. And I

mean, to some degree

um

like he talks about karma which has not

begun to sprout can possibly be negated

by yoga, meditation, feeding the hungry,

etc. To some degree or also, you just

avoid the situation in which that karma

could reach fruition.

And I mean, some karma just has like an

expiration date and just kind of fades

out after a certain period of time if

you just haven't put yourself in the

situation where it can reach fruition.

That's

orthodox Theravada Buddhism.

But, I mean it's it's not so much grace

of God

as just your own karma, which is very

complicated, and so all this stuff mixed

together, so you got one

one thing of bad karma, one unit of bad

karma or something. I mean, all by

itself is just bad karma, but if you got

all this other karma interacting with

it, I mean, it can certainly modify it

or add,

you know,

circumstances that make it not so bad,

that kind of thing.

But again, I mean, whether Hindus accept it or not is is largely irrelevant to anyone who isn't really a Hindu.

And I'm just going to move on to this question, which is from the Saboteur again.

And he says, "There is also the true story of a Buddhist monk, female, who was asked by the spirit of a recently slaughtered buffalo to eat some of its meat, thereby it's gaining some merit. Your opinion, please. Do you know the story?" Well, first of all, I'd say that a female Buddhist monk is a nun.

And also say, I mean, how does the Saboteur know this is a true story?

I mean, it's kind of suspicious to me

that you've got the spirit of a recently

slaughtered buffalo asking a nun to eat

some of its meat.

I mean, do

do buffaloes, even if they're alive,

have enough like

intellectual capacity to even form that

idea?

So it's sort of anthropomorphizing this

buffalo,

which causes it to be kind of more like

folklore than a true story.

And uh I do not recall encountering this

story in Theravada Buddhist texts. It

could be a Mahayana Buddhist thing.

Uh well, I mean,

>> [clears throat]

>> maybe you could have the spirit of some

creature

and why like

getting satisfaction

from some holy person eating its meat.

Maybe.

But it seems to me just going with

Occam's razor,

it would seem that it's more plausible

that this just isn't a true story, that

it's like folklore.

But

I mean, it's theoretically possible if

a

slaughtered the spirit of a slaughtered

buffalo

actually has the intellectual capacity

to appreciate that if it rejoices in

somebody benefiting from eating the meat

of its previous body,

um

>> [clears throat]

>> yeah, I mean,

if they rejoice and they be getting good

karma from it. But whether a dead

buffalo really does have that kind of

intellectual capacity or

I don't know. And there's so many wild

stories you can find in Buddhist texts,

just like the texts of just about any

other religion that I mean,

>> [snorts]

>> just because it's in a book doesn't mean

that it's true.

Talking animals, fire-breathing dragons,

flat earth floating on water, eclipses

of the sun and moon being caused by a

large demon swallowing them into his

mouth. You can find all of this in text,

some of it in the so-called core texts

of the sutras themselves.

But that doesn't mean that we

necessarily have to believe it.

Anyways,

next question is from Rui.

And this is kind of a weird question.

I'm not exactly sure why Rui even cares.

But Rui says, "How pervasive was the use

of fluorescent lighting in Burmese temples and viharas.

The use of fluorescent lighting, I think just throughout the world fluorescent lights are replacing incandescent lights, or they have been for decades. And now I guess it's LEDs are starting to replace fluorescent lights. But the like the fluorescent tubes, yeah, I mean that was fairly common. That you'd have little fluorescent tubes, maybe 2 ft long, and they'd be off most of the time until they fire up the generator, and then they turn on.

So yeah, I would say that probably fluorescent lights, I mean

I wasn't really taking notes on this. I mean I wasn't really making a note of the proportion of fluorescent to incandescent lights at monasteries in Burma.

I mean most of the monasteries I stayed at were forest monasteries that did not have electricity except from a generator, or maybe from a solar panel, that kind of thing.

And it seems to me that there would be more fluorescent light tubes than incandescent lights, if I remember correctly.

And then also you you you got like the Christmas lights around the like the the Christmas light halo around the the head

of the Buddha image on the altar, that kind of stuff. Sometimes it'll be like fluorescent tubes, too, that are kind of radiating out from the head of the Buddha image.

So, how pervasive was it? I mean really, why are you asking this question?

Yeah, I mean it's fairly common, but I mean I can't really give any percentages, anything like that.

I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from RFS.

RFS says, "From your perspective as someone who lived the monastic life, does sexual desire in men naturally burn

out with age, or do even geriatric men
remain sexually driven, perhaps even
frustrated, given that in places like
America, 65-plus communities
uh American 65-plus communities,
intimacy often resembles a cesspool
fueled by Viagra and cosmetic surgeries
well into one's 80s.
Well, I can tell you from my own
experience that I mean, as you get
[clears throat] older, your sex drive,
your testosterone levels, you know, your
hormone case tends to decrease over
time. Like I mentioned before, I stopped
having like um erotic climactic dreams,
so to speak, in my early 40s. And I kind
of missed them when they stopped

happening.

And so,

yeah, as you get older, as a general

rule, your sex drive, your your libido

decreases.

Just because, you know, the hormones

decrease. You know, you have less

stamina and vitality and so forth. Less,

you know, animal spirits,

so to speak.

So, yeah, as a general rule, that that

does happen. But then, you've got like

like the masculine pride, you know, male

ego, or just a lifetime of like lustful

habits that can still carry some men

further and further. Like, I remember my

father, he was like 80 years old.

And he was his wife had had

um

like a kind of surgical operation that

made her no longer able to fulfill her

wifely duties, so to speak. And so, my

father, approximately 80 years old, is

sitting in his chair talking to me with

this wistful look on his face,

saying that he's sorely tempted to be

unfaithful to her, but

their relationship is based on trust,

and he could never do anything that

would hurt his wife. So, he's just

reconciled himself to being celibate for

the rest of his life.

An 80-year-old man, but he was My father

was oversexed, definitely. I mean, he's
still watching porn at the age of 80.
So,
I think a lot of it was just again,
like, male ego, masculine pride, and
just sort of, like, being determined,
and just force of habit, also just
keeping you going in that direction.
But, in America, it's it's sort of a
youth culture, and so a lot of older
people just try as hard as they can to
look and act and seem as young as they
possibly can.
Which can be kind of pathetic sometimes,
I have to admit.
So, did I answer the question?

Does sexual desire in men naturally burn
out with age? I don't think it
completely burns out totally,
but it does wane. It does decrease over
time.
I think I mean, I remember long ago, you
know, saying that a man reaches his
sexual peak at around the age of 17. You
know, it's all downhill after about 17.
Whereas with women, I think it it peaks
at about 35, something like that.
So, yeah, I I mean, it's it's well
known. Hormone levels, sex drive, and so
forth, decreases, even though it may
never reach zero
until you die.
Probably not even then, because that's

one of the the urges that kind of causes
[clears throat] rebirth to happen.
But, I'm just going to move on to RFS's
next question,
which is kind of a related question.
He says, "If you, as a monk practicing
diligently with celibacy and meditation
found that you could not fully
extinguish this desire even under those
ideal conditions. What real hope is left
for a lay practitioner, let alone an
ordinary person with no spiritual
training at all?
Well, an ordinary person with no
spiritual training at all probably
wouldn't even want to extinguish sexual

desire. He might want to enhance it.

Ah, but the thing is

we are human, we have hormones, we have

certain areas in our brain in this

version of reality

of reality in quotes, scare quotes.

And so, I mean

it's

it's sort of like anger or or other

basic human emotions

that you don't necessarily cure

yourself, you just learn how to

experience them without reacting.

Sort of like

obsessive-compulsive disorder. I used to

know one of the world's leading

authorities on obsessive-compulsive

disorder. And according to him, if
you're cured of obsessive-compulsive
disorder, it doesn't mean that you don't
have like the compulsive urges arising,
you just learn to detach from them, to
kind of objectify them with mindfulness
and not
not act out those urges.
That's how you get cured. Once you stop
reinforcing them, that goes way down.
But still, you're going to have the
occasional nagging compulsive urge
to do something or say something or
think about something.
And I mean, you're never a 100% cured of
that.

Not necessarily. But the cure comes, I mean, you don't you don't eradicate it, but the I mean, the cure comes from just learning to let it arise and pass away without acting upon it. Without reacting.

You know, it was goes you know, just like a cloud floats by and you do not you don't react.

Especially, you don't follow up on the urge.

So, yeah, I mean, we're as long as we're in this body, we're human.

And we've got human nervous systems and human endocrine systems. We've got human hormones, so to speak.

So, yeah, it's not eradicating

defilements. It's not eradicating

desires. It's just

getting to the point

where

you can just see it arise and pass away

without reacting.

I mean, it'll it'll arise and pass away

less often if you're not reinforcing it.

But, still, you're never going to

completely exterminate this kind of

stuff.

>> [snorts]

>> Using Khmer Rouge tactics against your

own defilements is not really a winning

strategy.

So,

mindfulness is the panacea. I mean,

mindfulness

cures all ills, really.

Or at least makes them not so bad.

And let's see here. I'm just

[clears throat] going to move on to the

next question, which is from Trisaskas

is.

And Trisaskas is has a quote from the

Bible. He starts off, "I know what it is

to be in need, and I know what it is to

have plenty. I have learned the secret

of being content in any and every

situation, whether well fed or hungry,

whether living in plenty or in want."

Unquote.

That's from Philippians [clears throat]

4:12, so I assume it's either by Paul of Tarsus or at least attributed to Paul of Tarsus.

So, then Trisaskas is continues, "Why do Do think some people like me who have learned to live with very low amount of money have difficulties when living in plenty?

That is probably the opposite of what most people experience.

So,

I think there's different reasons why different people have difficulty with having life being too easy and the necess- necessities and even luxuries of

life being too plentiful.

Um I remember reading, I think it was

Paul Lowe,

um who was a 20th century, very early

21st century spiritual teacher, said

that he he met a number of people who

didn't have to work for a living and

were just bothered by that.

They're bothered by really not having to

work for a living. And that would be

maybe one of one manifestation of what

Shuras Askes is here is talking about. I

think with some people it's just that

they have like

low willpower, you know, they don't have

much self-restraint.

And so being poor protects them from all

these desires that they would be able to act out if they had the money to to pay for it.

You know, you just you you could become like Hunter Biden, [clears throat] something like that. You know, which reminds me of certain teachings of the Bible like you cannot serve both God and mammon.

And that's one reason why the Burmese are so devoutly Buddhist is they just are so poor they don't have much mammon to serve. So, you know, it's much easier to serve God or just, you know, their religion because they're not able to just spend their time, you know,

wenching and and and drinking and and
you know, just chasing after shiny
things all the time.
So, that's that's part of it. I assume
some people just kind of fear having
lots of money or just feel uneasy about
it just because they know that they lack
the the the ability to resist temptation
and they're going to get in more trouble
because of it.
Or there's some people who just might
feel guilty. You know, they don't have
to work for a living when other people
do and they just have too much time on
their hands. You know, they just feel
restless or whatever.
But I assume there's different reason. I

don't think this it's all the same

reason

why

>> [clears throat]

>> people this feel uncomfortable when

things are going too well for them. I

mean, in my case, sometimes if things

I have too much good luck in a row, I'll

start feeling a little bit like, "Whoa,

it's like things are getting out of

balance here, so something bad's going

to happen."

You know, it's it's getting ripe to

happen soon just to keep the

cosmos in balance. This kind of thing.

So, I would assume that, you know, it's

like the more money you have, this the

more commotion, the more mammon you've

got, the less God in your life.

As a general [clears throat] rule.

>> [sighs]

>> So, yeah, I I would guess that there's

there's different reasons.

And I I'm mentioned a few, I suppose.

But it's something I really don't

haven't given much thought to. I mean, I

know it's it's easier to be happy if

you're poor. I mean, not in grinding

poverty, not like watching your kids go

hungry.

That kind of thing. But I mean, if you

have enough,

that's enough. And that's that's best,

really.

To have like an excess is I mean, it's better than just being starving, freezing to death, that kind of thing. Especially if you've got a family, people who depend on you.

But still, just living a life of moderation really is is best. And I would assume some people have like an intuitive unease about having life being too easy because, you know it it isn't completely in balance. You know, it's like always doing what is easy makes you soft and weak. Certain amount of challenge is good to keep you like strong and resilient.

There's There's all these factors have to be taken into consideration, I suppose.

And I don't want to do that right now.

So, I'm moving on to Trisha's as his next question.

And this also is in quotes. This is a quote from Socrates.

He says, "It is a disgrace to grow old through sheer carelessness before seeing what manner of man you may become by developing your bodily strength and beauty to their highest limit." And at this point, I would just like to point out that it does kind of unsettle me a little bit when people are using a hyphen instead of a dash

before the name of someone who has

who has a quote attributed to them.

But I'm I'm trying to be a trying to be

a open-minded here.

But still, I think it's grammatically

more correct to use a dash, an M dash,

and not a hyphen.

Anyways, I mean the Buddha wouldn't

completely disagree with the statement.

I mean he would agree with it right up

to the very end. I think the the Buddha

would agree

um I mean there are verses in the

Dhammapada that kind of

have overlap with this. It is a disgrace

to grow old through sheer carelessness

before seeing what manner of man you may become. Up to that point, the Buddha would agree. And then at the last part, by developing your bodily strength and beauty to their highest limit. Yeah, the the Buddha probably would not agree with that.

Um

>> [clears throat]

>> developing bodily strength and beauty. I mean if you're all spiritual, like your spiritual strength and beauty, that would be fine. But yeah, the ancient Indians didn't have like gymnasia like they did in classical Athens. You know, it was sort of the the the cult of the of the male body

really. I mean, the the ancient Greeks
considered the male to be more beautiful
than the female.
Which is probably one reason why their
naked goddesses are kind of stocky and
flat-chested.
With kind of a big nose.
>> [sighs]
>> So, yeah, the Buddha wouldn't completely
disagree, but he would he would disagree
with seeing what manner of man you may
become by developing your bodily
strength and beauty to its highest
limit. Yeah, I mean
Socrates maybe didn't accomplish his
beauty to his highest limit. I mean, he

he he sort of notoriously was an ugly

guy.

But maybe he did his best, you know.

>> [sighs and gasps]

>> But yeah, the Buddha would disagree with

the very last part. But probably would

agree with

um the first part. That it is a disgrace

to grow old through sheer carelessness

before seeing what manner of man you may

become. Just cut it off there and the

Buddha would agree. It's just that very

last part about developing your bodily

strength and beauty to their highest

limit that he would consider to be just

irrelevant to a like to Dharma.

To a spiritual life.

I mean, it may be helpful for some
people. Like it may be that the Buddha
himself
he developed his body bodily strength
and beauty to their highest limit back
when he was allegedly like a royal
prince.
And and for some people it may be
helpful where you just get everything
that you can in a worldly life and it's
realized that you're still not
satisfied. So, So, a case like that,
some guys
it may be to their benefit to looks max,
for example,
and then realize that they're still not

satisfied, and then they start looking
for something else.
I think one weakness of a lot of Burmese
village monks who go to America,
especially go to the West, is that
they lived a life of poverty
up until they finally made it to some
rich monastery in the West somewhere,
and then they just can't resist
temptation. They never really had the
insight
that all this material stuff really
doesn't cause satisfaction.
So, they just you know, they have very
little resistance to this temptation
like a lot of Westerners would have.
So, in a case like that, maybe

developing your bodily strength and beauty to their highest limit may have some spiritual benefit if you have the wisdom for the insight to arise that well, been there, done that. That's an ideal, a worldly ideal that I accomplished and I'm still not satisfied.

So, now [clears throat] what do I do? I mean, there is some indication the Buddha himself lived that way. You know, he was I mean, even if he wasn't a royal prince like the legend says, you know, he apparently was of the upper class, lived a relatively affluent life. Maybe he really did have a harem of beautiful

dancing girls and all that.

And he just had the wisdom to realize

that that was not making him completely

happy. He was still dissatisfied.

So, he turned to turned to spirituality.

Successfully even.

And I'm just going to move on to this

question. This is from Ethiopian fake

tig

who changed his name on YouTube, but

he's still Ethiopian fake tag.

He says, [clears throat]

"Thinking about karma and realized that

it's actually the perfect system to keep

a caste system in check. Apparently, the

Indo-Aryans who dominated India probably

liked the system since it would make

sense."

Make sense. Why else would one group rule over another?

"Thinking about all this, started to think perhaps the truth could be that enlightenment is the realization that we need the lie that any of this has any meaning and purpose if we are going to love a life or maybe live a life worth living at all." "In the end, people will lose their minds in a meaningless world and perhaps that's what the Buddha realized and that's what we all realize deep down since all the laws and all the gods only care about what men care about, power, wealth, and

pleasure in life." "Having this
realization, the Buddha instituted a not
so true system to keep the sanity of
everyone from spiraling.
Thoughts on this?"
Well, my main thought is what the hell
are you talking about?
I mean this is just like this rambling
this kind of rambling stream of
consciousness thing. It's like
uh Molly Bloom lying in bed in Dublin in
1902.
And this is just going through her head
at the end of James Joyce's Ulysses.
Um
I mean
thoughts on this?

Well, karma, see, realized karma's the
perfect system to keep a sat caste
system in check. I mean, not
necessarily. I mean
you know, there's caste systems
elsewhere. You know, medieval Europe had
kind of a caste system.
You know, your peasants weren't socially
mobile to become like nobles very
easily.
And they didn't rely on karma. That was
just God's God wills it.
Just the way it is.
And then he says, "Apparently the
Indo-Aryans who dominated India probably
liked the system since it would make

sense."

Yeah, it makes sense. I mean, they invaded and conquered the land, so they were the rulers.

I mean, the caste system I mean, it was just kind of default when, you know, the you've got some group invades another country and conquers it, you know, it's just they're the upper caste just because they won. They won the They won the invasion. They succeeded in invading this country and taking it over.

So, why else would one group rule over another? I mean, I

How do you even Why would one group rule over them? Because they can. Why does a

dog lick its balls? Because it can.

Thinking about all this, started to think perhaps the truth could be that enlightenment is the realization that we need

No, I really don't think so.

Enlightenment is the realization that we need the lie that any of this has any meaning and purpose if we're going to

Yeah, no, that's not what enlightenment is.

Let's see cuz I mean, that was you're you're still wallowing in in some sorry delusion if that's all enlightenment is.

It's just more wallowing in delusion.

In the end, people will lose their minds

in a meaningless world and perhaps
that's what the Buddha realized and
that's what we all realize deep down
since It's etc. etc.
No, I mean, the default setting for
human beings is we just take all this
seriously.
So, yeah, I don't think that the Buddha
had to
I mean, it just it just doesn't make
sense to me. The Buddha would invent
Buddhism
as a way to give fake meaning to samsara
when I mean, [clears throat] really he
was doing kind of the opposite. I mean,
samsara comes with its own built-in fake
meaning.

I mean, that's what samsara is is

meaning.

But, I mean, people aren't just going to

like go insane or just

lapse into enlightenment

in a meaningless world. I mean, the

world didn't really become all that

meaningless until existentialism came

along in the 20th century.

Or, [clears throat]

you know, some some of the sophisticated

like Mahayana Buddhist philosophies like

Madhyamaka, I suppose.

So, yeah, I mean, it's it's mostly just

intellectuals who consider the world to

be meaningless. I mean,

maybe you can have some emo teenager
moping around because he thinks the
world is meaningless mainly because this
girl that he likes doesn't like him
back.
But,
no, we we have samsara just built-in as
the default setting. We don't really
need Buddhism to kind of reinforce
samsara in a skillful way or something.
It It just
I don't think so.
So, see, continuing with this weird
ramble,
have having this realization the Buddha
instituted a not so true system to keep
the sanity of everyone from spiraling.

Thoughts on this? Yeah, I really don't

think so. Let's

man.

>> [laughter]

>> Nope. I really don't think so.

The Buddha instituted just kind of like

this skillful lie

to keep people

I mean, by telling them that it isn't

real or Buddhism telling that that this

is not ultimate reality?

I mean, people just assume it.

So, yeah, I would say it's

almost the exact opposite of this weird

rambling

theory or whatever it is. Except for the

top the he starts off with karma and the Indo-Aryan invasion.

It's It's There's really no structure to this. It's just like this meandering stream of consciousness thing with thoughts at the end.

So, that's my thoughts. It's a meandering stream of consciousness. It doesn't really make a whole heck of a lot of sense.

And I'm just going to move on to Ethiopian fake tig's next question.

Brace yourselves.

Cuz this one's

It looks like it's going to be kind of similar here.

I had a months-long debate with someone

online and we finally got to a
conclusion about why people are so
averse to homosexuality.
I coined the idea that the same
discomfort people feel with two gay or
lesbian people is the same discomfort
people feel when they meet a
heterosexual couple that can have kids
but chooses not to have kids.
The idea that someone is completely okay
with dying and not leaving something
behind makes people feel so
uncomfortable that we are naturally
averse to it.
Buddhism is actually in sync with this
ideology since it's if possible it's

best if everyone ordains and becomes a

monk even though it's unlikely but still

if we were to ask the Buddha he wouldn't

say it's best

he would say it's best would he not?

And I'm looking around to see if I can

find the fan remote cuz it's getting

kind of hot in here.

Fan remote right here.

Oh, yeah.

Okay. So,

we can crystallize this down. Ethiopian

Fake Tag has a theory that people do not

like homosexuality because

it's an evolutionary dead end. You wind

up not having kids. But, I mean, people

really don't feel that way.

Um

I mean, like Buddhism, as he points out,

Buddhism also is kind of anti-natalist.

You know, it's ideal, the highest ideal

is does not involve having kids. And I

mean, there are some people that have a

version for Buddhism because of that.

Like, in the Buddha's time, some of the

Brahmans were calling, you know, the

Buddha like a destroyer of life because

he was endorsing people becoming

ordained renunciants when they're young

instead of having kids first.

But, I don't think

like if you're walking along and you see

two men in a park making out

passionately,

you don't I mean, most guys, maybe most women, would feel uncomfortable seeing that. Not because they're thinking, "Oh, they're not going to have kids in the future."

No, I mean, that doesn't arise at all. It's just kind of goes against nature, really.

You know, it's it's kind of unnatural in a sense.

And it just It maybe even more importantly, it just goes against Well, maybe not more importantly, because now what it is is it's supposed to be cool and everything. But, I mean, it also goes against like traditional culture.

So, it's it's sort of liminal, kind of like violating norms. Maybe not violating taboos as much as it used to, but still violating certain norms, even if it's just like natural biological norms.

That that sort of thing is causes a certain discomfort in people who observe it. I mean, a lot of guys don't feel uncomfortable uncomfortable at all seeing two hot young lesbians getting making out hot and heavy on a video. I mean, that kind of lesbians doesn't bother them. Probably because, you know, they're not thinking of them

as homosexuals. They're just thinking of them as hot naked women or whatever.

But Yeah, I mean, another example I could give that might sort of fit what Ethiopian Fade is talking about is talking about is people who resent those who

auto delete, who self delete. You know, they they're resentful. They're like angry about it. You know, they'll even say it's the coward's way out and so forth. When the person ironically did what this person who's criticizing him fears the most.

You know, it's just this weird kind of like a hysterical reaction, really.

But really it's the resentment in that

this person just dismissed

everything that this other person values

most.

So, I mean, that might be more the case

than resenting that they're not going to

reproduce their DNA sequences.

Ah, [sighs] so let's see here.

We are naturally averse to it.

I mean, it's just like

not a good survival instinct. You know,

none of our ancestors were exclusively

homosexual.

And so, it's like homosexuality

um you know, it is a kind of natural

aberration.

And certain certain cultures it's still

very taboo. Although in postmodern liberal Western culture, it's uh it's decreasingly taboo, which is also indicative of just moral decadence and decline.

Not just because of, you know, being open towards homosexuality, it's just it's just sort of like a a symptom.

Like

Gibbon claims in the his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire that, you know, it was a truism back in his day, like the late 1700s, among historians, the a telltale sign of a civilization in decline

is eunuchs rising into social prominence.

You know, in whatever

ancient or medieval civilization

that had eunuchs rising into social

prominence,

just for whatever reason, it wasn't that

wasn't the cause of it, but it was just

like an incidental symptom

of a civilization that was getting ready

to crash.

That is just like a telltale sign.

And nowadays, we have our own version of

eunuchs. They're they're called trans.

>> [sighs]

>> So, I mean,

Ethiopian Fake Tig really should try to

make his questions more concise, so it's

not like this nebulous blob of words

that I have to try and tease meaning out

of in order to answer the question.

Especially when it's just like thoughts

at the end.

But, let's see.

Well, I mean, the actual question here,

let's see, Buddhism is actually in sync

with this ideology since, if possible,

it's best if everyone ordains and

becomes a monk, even though it's

unlikely,

but still, if we were to ask the Buddha,

he would say it's best, would he not?

Yeah, he'd say it's best to be celibate.

Yeah. I mean, it says that in the texts.

That's if that's the question, I just

answered

So, let's just go on to the next

question from Ethiopian Fake Tig. He

says, "After almost 2 years together,

now do you finally believe I am

Ethiopian or not? Cuz I honestly am."

Well,

do I think that Ethiopian Fake Tig is

really Ethiopian?

Could be Eritrean.

I'm just open-minded on the subject.

Suspension of judgment is really the

wisest route to go.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Cole.

Cole says, "Is doing a parasite cleanse

against the precept of not killing? This precept is typically taken as an absolute, but in this case, wouldn't the preservation of one's own health be more important?" Well, we're getting into modern ideas here

where

I mean, parasites in the Buddha's time primarily I mean, aside from external parasites like lice or mosquitoes or bedbugs or fleas, the internal parasites would generally be intestinal worms. That would be the internal parasites that um

would be known of in ancient India. You know, they wouldn't know that, you know, malaria is caused by some microscopic

blood parasite anything like that.
And I think it's in the commentaries
where they had this idea that when a
body dies and it starts swarming with
maggots, that's the the intestinal worms
just percolating up to the surface.
There's actually a theory along those
lines somewhere in the commentarial
literature that I haven't countered
before.
So, I mean, they didn't get it at all.
They just thought that everyone is
teeming with intestinal worms.
So,
purging intestinal worms, I mean, it may
be that somebody back then had the idea

that maybe purging intestinal worms is

something that we'd be better off doing.

Of course, they didn't have vermicides

back then.

Although

one like a

What's the word?

I don't know, like village medicine.

What do you call that?

Like an herbal kind of vermicide that

you can do is just take papaya leaves.

Or not papaya leaves, papaya seeds.

Either you can take them whole, I think

grinding them up works better. And

papaya seeds, supposedly, worms don't

like it and they'll just evacuate. It

won't kill them. So, a lot of Burmese

monks or devout Burmese Buddhists, if they're trying to deworm themselves, they'll take ground up papaya seeds and that will expel the worms without killing them.

But then what's the worm going to do once it's outside of you? I mean, it might just live in the Shangri-La of a of a cesspit, you know, this outhouse pit full of dung. You know, it might just be living in the lap of intestinal worm luxury down there for all I know.

But I mean, if you're going to crap on the ground, it's going to die.

I mean, it is true that in the even a monk, even an

ordained monk, according to the ancient
Indian monastic rules of discipline, the
Vinaya,
that a monk can take bedding that is
infested with bed bugs and just spread
it out in the sun, the hot tropical sun.
And that and you are allowed to like
cleanse your bedding of parasites by
putting your bedding out in the sun. And
I have done that before. And what
happens is that within a few minutes,
you've got this
this highway of ants
just going straight to your bedding.
They're they're picking up the the bed
bugs and the bed bug eggs and
everything. And then you've got like

this little highway of ants carrying bedbugs and bedbug eggs back to this hole in the ground. So, I mean they're all going to die.

But still a monk is allowed to do that, even though he knows that he's essentially feeding the parasites to ants.

Also, a monk is allowed to wipe mildew off walls, that kind of thing. Even though the mildew is alive, it's a living living being of sorts.

Still monks are allowed to kill it.

So, is doing a parasite cleanse against the precept of not killing?

Depends on how you go about it, I

suppose. I mean, if you're just

you know, you're taking a vermicide and

you you

you can take this, worms.

Kiss my ass, worms. And you know, you're

doing it just

knowing full well that you want these

worms to die

for the indignity inflicted upon you of

infesting your guts.

Then yeah, I mean you're still going to

be making bad karma.

And still having you deliberately trying

to kill a being.

On the other hand,

if you're not even thinking in terms of

killing, you're just trying to be

healthy,

then I mean it's it's sort of like a

monk or anybody who's walking along, I

mean,

even if you know you're going to be

stepping on bugs when you're walking

along. Maybe the ground is swarming with

bugs.

Still,

I mean, so long as killing these bugs is

not your purpose,

you're not really breaking the precept

of of of not killing. I mean,

I mean, that happened to me a few times

in Burma where it's like right after the

rainy season in the desert, the entire

ground is covered with these little
gnat-like creatures. And there's no way
you could move. You couldn't take a step
without squishing lots and lots of them.
But so long as that is not your purpose,
so long as you're not like
stomping on them and giggling,
so long as you're just going from point
A to point B,
then you're not guilty of breaking that
breaking the precept. And if you've got
like a health problem
because of
whatever kind of worms you've got in
your intestinal tract, and you take the
medicine just to be healthy,
and not for the sake of killing these

damned little parasites,

then again,

I mean, that is killing is not your

purpose, you're really not guilty of

breaking the precept.

But some Buddhists, I mean, they will

try to kind of at least alleviate

their killing by taking papaya seeds or

something that will just expel the worms

without killing them.

Although, depending on where you take a

dump next time, you know, they might

wind up dead anyway.

You know, using a toilet probably is

going to kill intestinal worms.

If you've just got like a cesspit

where it's just full of dung anyway, the worms might be better off. They might be really happy down there.

But I mean, what are you going to do?

You got lice or something?

Are you just going to like put them in a little cup and then let them go outside?

I mean, sometimes you just have to take a hit, seems to be, especially if you're a lay person.

If you want to be a completely saintly monk,

living out in a living out in a forest somewhere, yeah, I mean, you can you can endanger your own health and all that just for the sake of being, you know, like morally pure.

But a a lay person living in the world

to some degree, I mean,

I don't know. It just doesn't really

make

I mean, maybe when I was younger and

more idealistic,

it made sense that it's better to die

than to step on a bug or something. But

as a lay person, you've got a to support

and and this kind of thing, I mean, it's

just not really the best choice to make.

I mean, you may have to just take a hit.

You may have to be the the heroic you

know, like the tragic hero

and sacrifice some of your own virtue

for the sake of the welfare of others.

But again, I mean, if you're just doing
a parasite cleanse, like taking a
dewormer just for the sake of your own
health
and killing worms is really not your
priority, then you haven't really broken
the rule.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question.
This is from Scooter Man.
And Scooter Man says, "Oh, I should have
looked this up."
Just a minute.
Okay.
Scooter Man is quoting something in this
text
from the Atthakavagga, in fact.

Let's see.

From the Discourse on the Cave.

Eight-verse Discourse on the Cave.

Gosh, where the hell is it?

Towards the beginning. How come I don't see it?

Oh, okay. There it is.

So, Scooter Man says, and he quotes, "Therefore, a person should train himself right here and now. Whatever he would know in the world to be a way of inequality, not because of that should he go along the unequal way. The wise say this life is but a little thing indeed."

Unquote. And then Scooter Man says, "Can

you elaborate on this verse from the

Discourse on the Cave?"

So,

let's see

All right.

Um I remember when I was translating

this and that was a

discourse on the cave is a difficult

one.

Um it's not one of my favorite suttas

and it's kind of awkward in in the way

it conveys its message. It seems to me.

And so when I got to this verse, I mean,

when you don't know exactly what it

means, you just translate it as

literally as you can.

And that was pretty much what I was

doing with this verse because it didn't really
I mean, it didn't really obviously, clearly
you know, integrate with the context.
So, the way I interpreted it to mean, therefore, a person should train himself right here and now. Okay, that's self-explanatory.
Whatever he would know in the world to be a way of inequality, not because of that would he go along the unequal way.
So, with that, I'm assuming that a monk is trying to live a life of neutrality.
You're trying to avoid dualistic extremes of positive or negative. You

just want neutrality. So, anything that veers away from neutrality, which would be a way of inequality, you know, too much positive or too much negative, then a monk would just kind of avoid that if he could.

You know, so it's like you know you're going to get some kind of gain or pleasure by going this way, a monk, you know, an ancient Indian monk especially, you know, he just continue going the neutral path even though he knows he would get some sort of pleasurable gain by veering off that middle path, he won't do it.

That is how I interpreted it, but it was it's one of the more difficult verses to

translate in the Atikavaka. There are

some quite a few difficult verses.

And this is this is one of them just

because it was

I mean, you have to just

read it as literally as you can and then

try and figure out how that would fit

the context.

And it was a little bit of a challenge.

And then at the end the wise say this

life is but a little thing indeed. You

know, it's like

you know,

being a human being really is not all

that great.

You shouldn't be chasing after, you

know, momentary pleasures or even pains.
You know, you shouldn't be veering off
the path of neutrality for the sake of
this meat puppet that you're inhabiting
because it's really not that big of a
deal.
That is generally how I would interpret
it.
But you know, the discourse on the cave,
it is uh
it's a difficult one.
So, I think I answered that question
even though I did it fairly quickly.
I'm just going to move on to the next
question. This was Stellar Supreme,
formerly known as Libra Lamb, and this
is the last question.

So, we're doing pretty good. This is only an hour and a half. Um that that one week of vacation didn't result in more than the usual number of questions and uh somehow it is kind of helped to weaken my habit of digressing wildly.

So, Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb, says, "You once said, quote,

the problem is that if we avoid friends that are worse than us and choose friends that are better, the friends that are better are choosing friends that are worse than them.

Unquote.

But what if we factor in one-way friendships like some kind of charitable friendliness from one to another that the other decides makes one their friend? So, this this occurred on the Discord server.

Somebody quoted uh a well-known verse from the the Khaggavisana Sutta, Discourse on the Rhinoceros or Discourse on the Rhinoceros Horn, saying that you should have friends, you should avoid friends that are more foolish than you. You should only choose friends that are equal to you or wiser than you. And I was pointing out that if if you choose friends that are wiser than you, then the wiser friend is

choosing a friend that's more foolish

than him, and so he's going against the

Sutta.

So, either way, it's just like this

obvious kind of logical

glitch

in the reasoning.

But, the way I would interpret it,

um just setting aside Stellar Supreme's

alternative here for now,

um it's like

this is advice to someone who is

practicing Dhamma,

um

and possibly like a beginner. I mean,

not a not like a total rank beginner,

like a layperson just learning about
Buddhism, but someone who is like an
ordained monk,
who maybe has just recently converted
from some other ascetic system.
And so,
um you know, they need guidance. It
helps them to have, you know, spiritual
friends and so forth. They don't want to
choose more foolish ones. But, I mean,
it is like advice on how to get wiser,
how to become enlightened possibly.
But, once you you become an adept, you
know, once that you're like a wise
teacher, then of course you're going to
have to like be the good friend, the
kalyana mitta, of people who are less

wise than you in order to help them, in order to teach them.

So, yeah, I would assume that, you know, the statement in the Sutta really is not taking that into account.

You know, it's just talking about sort of

you know, as as like colleagues, not like a student and teacher relationship, but just, you know, you guys are out meditating together out in the forest, that kind of stuff. That you should avoid the foolish ones. You know, not associating with fools, blessing number one in the Mangala Sutta.

But, I mean, once you have gotten enough

seniority and enough wisdom that you can be a teacher, of course, you're going to have to be teaching people who are less wise than you.

But getting back to Stellar Supremes alternative here, what if we factor in one-way friendships, like some kind of charitable friendliness from one to another that the other decides makes one their friend? Yeah, I mean, that's that's kind of what he's talking about, like the Kalyana Mitta or the teacher. You know, you might consider him to be your friend, but he just considers you to be his student. You know, he's got like metta, you know, goodwill and like compassion and that sort of thing

towards you, but, you know, it might be
that you know, he's he's got a certain
detachment that, you know, he's not
really seeing you as his friend, as more
as, you know, if he sees you as
anything, it's it's like a
you know, some somebody that he's
helping, you know.
So, yeah, I think my answer and Stellar
Supremes alternative do overlap,
I think, in that, you know, if if you're
just talking about colleagues, yeah, you
should avoid the foolish ones. Um
so, you're probably better off being
equals. Or, I mean, maybe there's just
going to be a wiser one who's just

willing to take the hit in your case and have his, you know, he's he's not adept enough that he can resist being kind of brought down by a lower a lower consciousness.

But, I mean, it does happen. Mental states are contagious.

So, you know, a wise person will uplift a foolish person, but that foolish person will drag down the wiser person unless that wiser person is so wise that they're just kind of immune or any dragging down will be minimal and it won't really affect them that much.

But yeah, I mean sort of like a student disciple kind of situation might not be considered the same sort of situation as

this spiritual friendship kind of

situation that the rhinoceros horn

discourse is talking about.

And I guess I'm done.

I guess so.

So,

like I always used to say at the

beginning and pretty much never do,

if you have any questions you think I

can answer, especially with regard to

Dharma, Dhamma, Theravada Buddhism,

early Buddhism, Buddhism in general,

although the farther you get away from

Theravada Buddhism and early Buddhism,

like archaic Buddhism, the the odds

become somewhat reduced that I'll be

able to really give a satisfactory answer.

And also I know some things about Hinduism, Western philosophies, and so forth, Christianity. So, this Dharma with an R is just sort of like a catch-all for all anything that is remotely spiritual.

And no more than three questions per person per episode, please. Like and subscribe if you have not done so already. Check out my URL links below, which includes my books on Amazon.

And be happy if you dare.

Alrighty then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 197.

[clears throat] I am your host Pony Bosa and this is my co-host my refreshing beverage.

And as you may have guessed already, if you happen to be like Rainman, for example, and 197 is a prime number, which goes very well with my primary designated beverage. [snorts]

And I guess the only real announcement I have to make before we wade into this is that this will probably be the last time you see me with a full beard, possibly for several years.

because I recently got a new job in the chemical industry and I'm going to occasionally have to wear a respirator, which means all this side stuff has to get shaved off. And so, I guess I'm just going to go with like the the mustache and the goatee kind of look. My sweetheart, my wife, who uh usually grooms me, is going to be experimenting with various designs tomorrow.

[sighs]

But I think probably it's going to be like a goatee mustache and then have them be like attached. I was considering maybe the Doc Holiday look, you know, sort of like a a pronounced mustache and just like a little soul patch or

something.

But we're just going to have to wait and see.

And we really do not have a whole heck of a lot of questions to answer this time. Although the situation is complicated somewhat by a few questions that I do not fully understand.

And so without further ado, whatever ado happens to be in this particular case, I'm just going to start answering questions. And the first question is from RFS.

And RFS asks, "Did the Buddha lay down the five and 8 precepts?"

And that's kind of a I mean, it's a good question, but also it's a question that you can't really give a certain answer to unless you're just like faithoriented dogmatist who just believes whatever is in the books, in which case, yes, he certainly did.

But there are certain complications.

I mean just because the texts say that the Buddha laid down the five and eight precepts and also the 10 precepts and very possibly even the nine precepts.

Nine precepts are kind of a thing in Burma where there's an emphasis on meta. The ninth precept is having meta for all beings or some such. I never really learned how to give nine precepts in

poly.

Um

but yeah, I mean according to the text,

the Buddha laid down 5, 8, and 10

precepts plus all the precepts that

monks are required to follow, which a

lot of people think is 227,

but that's just the py mocha rules. Um

actually there are probably a few

thousand rules including all the ones

that are outside the scope of the py

mocha. And also even within the pty

mocha there are like sub rules that

aren't on the list but it's like

um for example one of the parajika rules

I think it might be the first parajika

rule there's u

some [clears throat] monk

makes a hut out of clay you know he

makes just like this adobe kind of a hut

and then he puts a puts a bunch of like

combustible material in inside the hut

and lights it on fire which bakes the

hut hard. And this is like a like an

origin story leading up to a potty mocha

rule, one of the first py mocha rules.

But the Buddha made this rule that a

monk is not allowed to make a clay hut

and fire it in that way because of all

the small creatures that will die when

he's doing it.

So let's just get back to the actual

question now.

[snorts] Did the Buddha lay down the five and eight precepts? It's my understanding that five precepts for lay people was pretty much standardized even before the Buddhist time. So the James had their version of the five precepts. The the Vadic protohindus had their version of the five precepts for lay people. probably other like aesthetic spiritual traditions had five precepts and the first four tended to be the same. The fifth precept varied like in terra Buddhism the fifth precept is not taking intoxicants which cause heedlessness.

I think in Janism it was something more

along the lines of personal property not having private property or some such. I remember reading something along those lines. I don't recall what the fifth precept for like the the followers or the the lay supporters of the fire worshipping matted hair Brahman aesthetics
would be. So I mean it was already five precepts was kind of built into Indian religious tradition before the Buddha came along. But it may very well be that the Buddha gave it the okay for the support the lay supporters of his his tradition.
Um and he may have like specified what the the five precepts would be

especially the fifth one which varied more than the first four. With regard to the eight precepts, it's possible that the Buddha also originated the eight precepts for Buddhists, which are stricter. You know, there's more of them. The third precept, which when you have five precepts just means no sensual misconduct, which means, you know, no adultery, no promiscuous sex, you know, no sex with strangers you pick up in taverns, that kind of thing. Then in if you take eight precepts then that third precept just becomes not being unelibate.

But I'm not it's not necessary for me to

go over all the precepts here because
RFS is just asking if the Buddha laid
down these precepts and
there's a good chance of it but you
can't really know for sure. I mean, you
can't really know anything for sure that
lies outside your own mind.
Spinosza and David Hume kind of made
that idea famous in western philosophy
in modern times
and 10 precepts like noviceses are
required to follow 10 precepts plus the
seia rules which is one of the last uh
collections of rules you know one of the
last chapters in the py mocha which is
just minor rules of like manners and
etiquette and so forth But did the

Buddha lay down the five and eight precepts? According to tradition, he did, but you can't really know for sure. So, I mean, it's kind of an academic question, but it is found in the polytopica. According to the poly texts themselves, the Buddha laid down five and eight precepts for lay supporters. And that's about the best we're going to do because I don't think there's any way to really prove it conclusively one way or the other. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from the Sabatur.

And the Sabatur asks a kind of strange question. He says, "What sutra is

referred to here?" and he leaves a link to a kind of blog post, I think, that's referring to some kind of Buddhist sutra dealing with what days are appropriate or inappropriate for getting one's hair cut.

And I do not recall coming across this in poly sutas. I assume it is a Mahayana Buddhist sutra.

Um, and it's

I mean it's obviously not an important one.

It's just dealing with what days you should and should not get your your hair cut or your head shaved if you happen to be a monk. There is some kind of tradition along these lines in Burma

where I think in Burma monks it's it's I wouldn't go so far as to say that it's a taboo, but it's like a tradition. You shouldn't get your haircut on a Friday. And also, you shouldn't get your haircut on your birthday. And in Burma, your birthday is the day of the week you were born on, not the day of the year. So, if you're born on a Thursday, like I was. I didn't even know this until I became a Terabara Buddhist monk. Then you shouldn't get your haircut on Thursday or Friday. But, I mean, it's just like a superstitious kind of thing. I mean there's I mean there's nothing intrinsically different about a Tuesday

and a Thursday. This let's say you're out in the woods somewhere. You don't have like a schedule you have to work according to anything like that. Then I mean all days are the same. It doesn't matter. It's just a calendar is just like this artificial construction of you know human culture. You know it's just like this cultural construct. You can say that the year itself like the the the the seasonal year or the cideral year, you know, those kind of things there there can be like an objective reality to them from an empirical point of view. But the days of the week, I think that was invented by Babylonians, you know, a 7-day week. And um you know,

each each day of the week is named after some heavenly body, you know, the sun, the moon, you know, Sunday, moon day, or or various, you know, obvious planets. I mean, that was I'm pretty sure that was like a Mesopotamian thing that spread westwards into Europe and also eastwards into India and also Burma cuz like the Burmese days of the week are based on the same planets and so forth as you know like the way the the Romans had it. But it wasn't that the Burmese got it from the Europeans. It's just that the Burmese and the Europeans derived it from the same Mesopotamian source, I'm pretty sure.

But the exact sutra

saying what days are appropriate or

inappropriate for getting your haircut

[clears throat] or your head shaved,

I've never read it before. And clearly

it's it seems fairly unlikely the Buddha

would have taught this kind of stuff

because really it is just kind of like

superstitious semi-taboo kind of stuff

that I mean maybe there was some ancient

Indian tradition [clears throat] that

you know it's just like bad luck to get

your hair cut on a certain day and so

then the monks might go along with that

just to kind of

you know not get blamed. by

superstitious lay people or some such.

But I mean it really doesn't have
anything to do with actual dharma or
dharma.
And so I'm just going to move on this
question. This is from Master Poe. And
this is one of the questions I do not
understand.
Master Poe says if comma which he spells
K A M A, there should be two M's.
Comma with only one M. Especially if the
A is long. The first A
has the little Mron over it. That's
comma like in Kama Sutra. That means
like
sensual desire and sensual pleasure,
sensuality in general.

But master poe says if kama is only volition carried on to [clears throat] next life in rebirth and a child dies experiencing a neardeath experience. Wouldn't that voluition be experienced? Children have a very different neardeath experience account than adults. Yet Buddhists say mind comma is volition question mark exclamation point. And it's like if a child dies experiencing an NDE. If a child dies experiencing a near-death experience, then it's not just a near-death experience. It's just a death experience. It would seem to me if a child dies experiencing an ND de unless he means that the child dies and is has the NDE and is and then

resuscitated.

Um

but I mean volition in my opinion

is not the best translation for You know

there's the famous verse in the kaya I

think

where the Buddha is saying monks I tell

you that karma is volition or rather

karma is chidana

and so it's usually translated as

volition I think schopenhau's will might

fit better urge might fit better but

also it's just like the kinetic aspect

of your stream of consciousness of your

mental states. You know, it's like the

momentum of your mental states.

So that's what's carried on into the next life is the momentum of your mental states like the momentum of whatever like perceptions and so forth that sort of generate or form your personality.
So if comma is only volition carried on to the next life well it's the momentum of your mental states and a child dies experiencing an NDE and I'm not exactly sure what he means by a child dying experiencing a near-death experience when I mean if you're actually dying then it's just a death experience it would seem to me. Wouldn't that voluition be experienced?
I mean, if you're experiencing anything, the the temporal or kinetic aspect of

what you're experiencing would qualify
as it's kind of like the motive force,
you know, so long as there's uh like a
what do you call it? [clears throat]
How do I say this? So long as is there's
something perceived as remaining the
same over time.
you know like an idea like a thought
you're having a thought that has a
beginning a middle and an end then the
actual volition would be you know what
is stringing together those those mind
moments in a sense
but my interpretation of exactly what
Cheduna is differs to some degree from
like what Abiid Dhama says Chiduna is

and probably Most western Buddhists
would disagree with Abid Dama on
numerous issues including possibly this
one.
So [clears throat]
if a child dies,
wouldn't that volition be experienced?
I mean, you're experiencing valition all
the time. I mean, whatever is changing
yet remaining the same to some degree.
you know, it's not just a totally
different mind from one m from one
moment to the next where you know you
you don't you can't even remember it. I
mean there's no generalization or you're
just kind of like coalescing various
moments over time into like units that

kind of thing. I mean this is kind of

hard to explain

exactly what you know [clears throat]

the momentum of your mental states is

sort of like one me one moment of mind

you know sort of causes the next one

which causes the next one and that's

sort of you know that this kind of

causation

is generally what karma is

like defined as or perceived to be in

teraba Buddhism a lot Lot of people

think karma is just some some like

mysterious law of the universe where if

you do something bad, something bad has

to happen back to you. If you do

something good, something good happens back to you. Although karma is usually seen as something negative in Western culture, like instant karma videos, this kind of thing.

But that's not really the Buddhist like understanding of what karma is or karma. Uh, so children have a very different near-death experience account than adults. I'm not exactly sure. I think there may have been a link that Master Poe posted, but as a general rule, I I don't always like refer to links unless someone specifically is basing a question on me viewing the link. And if that happened, Master Po didn't specify. So,

golly. I mean, this is I really do not fully understand this question.

First of all, I'm not exactly sure how children have a very different near-death experience account than adults do. I mean, it would be good to have like an example. And if Master Poe sent me an example in some, you know, link of like random letters and numbers that didn't really say what it was, then yeah, I probably should have consulted that.

Um, but when a child dies or comes close to death in a near-death experience, wouldn't that valition be experienced? Yeah, we're I mean we're experiencing

our valitions

at least at a surface level, a

superficial level. There are deeper

levels that

I mean they extend beyond the scope of

the ego. You know what we consider to be

our mind is really the ego. It's like

this self-contained self-referential

system of mental states. But there are

other mental states that lie beyond the

scope of our ego. Just like there's

mental states in other people that lie

beyond the scope of our personal our

personal ego, but still there are mental

states that are part of our own psyche,

so to speak, that are beyond the scope

of our conscious ego.

So I mean like

hysterical symptoms, you know, that's

like subconscious stuff like burbling up

to the surface of the conscious mind and

the conscious mind isn't fully aware of

what's causing the hysterical symptoms,

especially at first.

So I mean I really don't know how to

answer this question. Um, wouldn't the

volition be experienced of a child dying

experiencing a near-death experience? I

don't know what that means,

but anybody who has a near-death

experience or anyone who has any kind of

experience is experiencing some of the

valitions, the ones that lie within the

scope of, you know, the the the range of the ego, that which lies beyond the range of the ego, you have to expand your consciousness
um in order to be more aware of what in most people would be considered subconscious.
It may be some people when they're having near-death experiences have greater access to what under ordinary circumstances would be subconscious processes. So, there's that, but I'm not exactly sure what Master Po is getting at here. And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question.
This is from Clefy.
And Kify says there is an anarchist

principle called non-aggression

principle.

Do you think it can be do you think it

can function in this reality that we

call samsara?

Um, yeah. I mean, the anarchists, I I

remember uh Stfan Molyneu, who I used to

I used to watch his videos back when he

was still on YouTube like back around

2016, and he would bring up the

non-aggression principle. There are

anarchists

who bring up the non-aggression

principle, which is, you know, there's

there's like one main rule, and that's

you're not allowed to hurt anybody, at

least nobody else. I mean, you might be
allowed to hurt yourself,
but I mean, who's going to enforce that
in an anarchistic society? I mean,
anarch anarchy or anarchism,
I mean, it just doesn't seem to work in
real life. It's an idealistic kind of
system, but I don't think anyone can
really point to an anarchistic society
that ever. [clears throat]
I mean, there has to be some kind of
enforcement. If you're going to have
rules, there has to be some enforcement
of the rules or else it's really not a
rule. It's just kind of like a
suggestion. And then nobody's really
obliged

to honor that suggestion.
And human beings, especially some human beings, can be aggressive or even violent.
So to some degree, the non-aggression principle, especially if it's applied to an entire society,
not just somebody adopting that as their own personal principle to follow, but if you apply that to an entire society, it goes against human nature.
It's kind of like Marxism goes against human nature. There are certain aspects of communism, certain aspects of anarchism that really are not realistic because they are just not in harmony

with the animal instincts of the human animal.

And our animal instincts often go by the term human nature.

So

you can set up you let's say you have some anarchistic society. I mean, what would hold it together? I'm not exactly sure. And they they have this non-aggression principle. Nobody's allowed to harm anybody else. Um, they all agree on it, I guess, which would make it fairly anarchistic, I guess. They're all voluntarily following it, but all it takes is one person to say, "No, I'm going to be aggressive." Who's going to stop him

now? How are you going to stop him
without being aggressive?
just be passive aggressive. Somebody
starts being aggressive, you just
whatever.
I don't think so. So yeah, anarchism, I
don't consider it to be particularly
realistic because it just kind of
rejects certain ugly facts about human
nature that we are a kind of upgraded
ape
and we're just laden with all these
animal instincts that most people aren't
even aware of. I mean, it was like the
scandal of 20th century psychology that
so many 20th century psychologists

up until maybe the very end of the 20th
century believed that human beings just
don't have instincts. We don't have
animal instincts. Even my own father who
was a relatively open-minded person
believed that we only have two
instincts. You know, the the baby a baby
has like the suckling instinct, the
nursing instinct and also babies
instinctively know how to swim.
But we are laden with animal instincts
that are like upgraded ape instincts
and idealistic
like
utopian
systems aren't going to work very well.
Whether it's anarchism or Marxism

[clears throat] or anything else,
there's always going to be this ugliness
and messiness and aggression and
dishonesty and greed and hatred and lust
and all the rest because it's built into
human beings.
So I think um like in a small group some
like a commune or an ashram or something
where people can voluntarily follow the
non-aggression principle while they're
there and then like be politely ushered
out of the premises if they stop
following these principles.
then something like that could work. You
know, like most like monasteries,
ashrams, places like that, you know,

this pretty much everyone's following
the non-aggression principle fairly
well.
But for the entire human race or for an
entire nation, an entire ethnicity,
I don't think that that is very
realistic. I mean, even to hold it up as
an ideal is not very realistic.
something to work towards is not
particularly realistic because we would
pretty much have to stop being human in
order to follow something like that
or to follow communism. I mean,
communism works at gunpoint. That's why
you're never going to have
anarchocomunism because you have to have
a strong centralized government that

forces people to follow the communism.
And there's might be a communist out
there watching this just thinking I'm
just totally ignorant and don't
understand it at all which is fine.
[snorts] So I think I'm just going to
move on to the next question. This is
from Scudamain and this is kind of an
interesting question might actually come
up you know in like your practical life.
Scooter man says, "Would calling a
transman
he be against the fourth precept like
Elliot, what's it? Elliot Paige who
allegedly is going to play Achilles in
the upcoming Odyssey movie. It's just a

rumor,

but it's really caught hold." And

there's all kinds of memes about Elliot

Page just being stomped on by villains

and so forth.

So the fourth precept is wrong speech.

I undertake the precept to abstain from

wrong speech.

So would calling a trans man like Elliot

Page a he be against the fourth precept?

Well, I mean there's different kinds of

wrong speech. The main one being lying.

And I it may be that Scooterain here has

that particular form of wrong speech in

mind. And in order to lie, you have to

have the deliberate intention to

deceive. I mean, that's key to

understand lying from a terra Buddhist point of view that even if you say something that's false, you're not lying unless you know it's false and are deliberately trying to deceive people. So, if someone sincerely believes that a trans man is a he, then calling him a he would not be lying. If someone doesn't believe that a trans man is is a he and so if he calls him he, he might be lying maybe if he's trying to deceive somebody. But he would be I mean if a person sincerely believes that a trans man is really still female, it would be more honest to say she, but they might get in trouble. might lose their job or

some such that it might hurt somebody's feelings. Maybe they don't even want to do that. So then you might be started getting into like the white lie kind of thing.

Um if you don't really believe that the person is a he, but you called them a he to be polite, you know, that's you're you're getting kind of on thin ice with regard to truthfulness from a Buddhist point of view. There are other kinds of wrong speech like

[clears throat and cough]

The the only other one that really would obviously apply would be perusacha which is like abusive speech. I mean that's also a kind of wrong speech. So

yeah, I don't I there might be some way
where you could be like sarcastic
and sort of like calling them he in like
a like a a different tone of voice than
the whole rest of the sentence where you
know they know that you're just sort of
pretending that to go along with their
choice of designated gender or whatever
then maybe I mean if you're you're
saying it in such a way as to
deliberately, you know, cause them to be
unhappy or hurt their feelings or
whatever, then again, that could be
against the fourth the fourth precept.
But again, I mean, in order to tell a
lie, you have to know that what you're

saying is untrue and have a deliberate
intention to deceive. So if you
sincerely believe that Elliot Page is a
guy
calling calling Elliot Page he
would not be dishonest at all.
And so I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is also from
Scooter.
And this question also
um [clears throat] I kind of understand
it. I think I may not completely
understand it. Scooterman says, "I often
see posts where a criminal, usually if a
sex crime or mult usually if a sex crime
or multiple time criminal getting
released after only a short sentence.

The comments are typically group outrage that these people aren't spending the amount of time behind bars that seem reasonable in relation to the crime.
Do you believe these people, regardless of time served, are karmically affected by what they've done anyways, if they haven't been already? So, I guess the the gist of the question here is like a criminal who commits a crime, some atrocity,
um, are they karmically affected by what they've done? Yeah. I mean, that's what we are. We are the result of our actions.
Everyone, you know, their actions are

their own. And that really is all you take with you when you die according to Buddhism is like your actions, the result of your actions. Karma literally means action.

So yeah, I mean if you're actually going to

like grievously hurt somebody, you know, you got to be careful about what language you use on YouTube, but you're going to grievously cause harm to somebody deliberately,

then your mind is already messed up. It reminds me all of a sudden of Dostk's masterpiece, Crime and Punishment. He had more than one masterpiece, but the novel Crime and Punishment where you've

got this young student Rascalikov who's
going to commit uh a crime of homicide,
I guess you can say homicide on YouTube.
And
it's like once he makes up his mind, the
punishment already starts. You know, he
hasn't even committed the crime yet, but
once he has made up his mind once and
for all that he is going to take an axe
and terminate the life of this
disgusting old pawn broker that nobody
likes. Well, not very many people like
them. But once he has made up his mind
he's going to do this, he starts getting
like this brain fever. you know, he's
like staggering around like public parks

at night, just falling asleep on benches, having nightmares. You know, it's it's already affecting his mind. I mean, the punishment isn't from the police. It isn't from the legal system. The punishment is from his own like inner goodness, knowing that what he's doing is really messing him up.

So,

do I believe these people like the fellow on the public transport in I can't remember if it was North Carolina or South Carolina. I think it was North Carolina who

committed homicide on some young Ukrainian woman for no apparent reason. He was just sitting behind her on the

train. He just pulls out a knife and just
terminates her her life. And it turned out that he had already been arrested [clears throat] many times, well up into double digits, some like violent crimes and so forth. And the these liberal leftist judges will keep just letting him go partly because it might be perceived as racist because he belonged to a certain ethnicity that wasn't white.
Or they just have like these progressive ideas about how criminals are really victims of society that they're pressured by white patriarchal

oppression or whatever into a life of crime and they should have compassion for them. Give them another chance and then another one and another one after that until finally I mean they just perpetrate some atrocity so heinous that they can't just be let go again.

But yeah, I mean if

I mean that's just what karma is really. It's it's just the the effects of your karma or the effects of your actions on like the momentum of your mental states. Like any kind of positive thing that is added to your mental states leads you in a in a positive direction. anything negative. And I mean, if you're going to be stabbing people, for

example, I mean, [clears throat]
you got to have negative mental states,
there's got to be like this rage or
hatred or some kind of really like
negative mental state urging you on to
do something like that.
So, I mean, you [clears throat] do
something bad, you're already harming
yourself. you even you just tell a lie
to somebody to deceive them, you've
you've harmed yourself in the process,
you know, you hurt somebody, you screw
them over, you've you've screwed
yourself over at the same time.
[sighs]
So yeah, I mean this is kind of an

obvious question it seems to me.
I mean if you understand like the
Buddhist idea of karma or kama then yeah
it should be fairly obvious that even if
you don't get arrested
you know like a a thief or someone who's
assaulting others someone committing
homicide you know even if they don't get
caught by the legal system or whatever
or the the judge just lets them go with
a slap on the wrist still they are just
poisoning themselves. I mean just
feeling hatred towards another person.
Even though you don't lift a finger
against that person, just the fact that
you hate that person, you're really
poisoning yourself.

It's just toxic mental states. But when you act them out, then that reinforces the toxic mental states and make them even more toxic.

>> [snorts]

>> So

I guess we don't need to get into ideas of criminal justice or anything like that. So let's just move on to the next question. This is from Tzasquez is and this is another question that I don't I don't fully understand the meaning of this question.

So Tzas is says why do we dream when our thoughts mean nothing?

Um, when I first read this, my first

interpretation of this question is that
our thoughts always mean nothing.
But I mean, that's not true. I mean,
thoughts have meaning. Even if it's kind
of a delusional sort of meaning
within a samsara context, our thoughts
do have meaning. I mean, meaning is
samsara.
So maybe he's asking why do we dream
when our thoughts mean nothing. Um you
know it doesn't mean why do we dream
even though our thoughts mean nothing.
It's like why do we dream at times
when our dreams the thoughts in our
dreams mean nothing
but our thoughts always mean something
it seems to me. I don't know if there is

such a thing as a totally meaningless thought. You know, even if you just like look at a Jackson Pollock painting where he's just splattering paint onto the canvas, you know, he deliberately made paintings that had no meaning.

But still, I mean, it's you you perceive it as a painting. You perceive it as a pattern. you know, an art critic would have all kinds of stuff to say about this painting about, you know, the balance of light and dark and the color scheme and just, you know, he'd have lots to say about it. So, I mean, even to perceive anything, there's already some meaning. Even if it's just what is

that, you know, it's just this, still there's at least that much meaning. So, I wouldn't go so far as to say that our thoughts never mean anything. I mean, you can just have like this I mean, I have these kind of dreams, especially when you're like drifting off to sleep. You're not like in a deep sleep yet. You can just have all kinds of weird images. Like, I remember I was doing intensive practice as a monk under this big rock ledge in northwestern Burma and I was deliberately sleeping as little as possible. I had this rule that if I woke up and I had already been asleep for at least four hours, I had to get up. The only excuse

for going back to sleep was if I hadn't been asleep for 4 hours yet. And I'd be noting in my journal sometimes just these weird images. you know, you're you're sleepdeprived, you're you're falling asleep, or sometimes even when you're you're sitting there trying to meditate, there's just like these dream images arising that are just disjointed, just an image of oh, you know, whatever it is. Just it could just be like a a big number one, just appears in your mind and then fades out, you know, or like a a fish jumping out of water and that's it. That's that's the whole dream is just this image that lasts two

seconds of a surface of water and a fish jumping out and and just splashing back down and that's it. Then you the mind just goes on to some other disjointed image that kind of thing. Then
I mean it doesn't really mean nothing. And so I mean what is the purpose of dreams? like from from a biological evolutionary point of view, dreaming does have a function that they have um determined that animals that don't dream for whatever reason have to have a larger brain to accomplish the same amount of mental processing. So, I wrote a paper when I was in college about intelligence in bottl-nose dolphins. Tersops truncatus

and the Atlantic bottl-nose dolphin. And, you know, I was putting forth as good of a case as I could that in their own way, a bottl-nose dolphin is at least as intelligent as a human. It's just that their intelligence takes a different form because they they've got a very large their their brain is larger than ours. You know, their body is a bit larger than ours, too. But they don't have like manipulatory appendages and so forth that use up a lot of brain tissue like we do. You know, they have like no manipulative appendages other than just a mouse. Even their tongue is sort of like attached to the bottom of their

jaw. So that they can't even use their tongue as like any kind of prehensile organ.

But it turns out that I didn't I didn't realize this until after I'd already turned in the paper and gotten an A on it that bottl-nose dolphins don't dream. They can only sleep six minutes at a time because that's as long as they can hold their breath. They, you know, they have to hold their breath while they're taking these naps. And so they never really get into the REMM stage of sleep. You know, it just hasn't evolved in them or they they their ancestors lost it. And so that could account for some of the reason why they need such a large

such a such a convoluted brain.

So I mean dreaming it's it's processing information. It's like you know reinforcing neural pathways that you've already started on. So, a lot of the stuff, you know, you're just remembering things in in your dreams or, you know, you you talk to somebody during the day and then the same topic of the conversation just comes up in a different form in some dream, that kind of thing. Then the purpose of that supposedly is you're establish you're like reinforcing newly formed neural pathways. You know, you're helping to process information. it's helping you to

sort of locate it in your mind, so to speak,

that kind of thing.

So, I don't I don't really know if I answered this question by tras is cuz I'm not 100% sure how to interpret the question. Why do we dream when our thoughts mean nothing? I'm at first I thought that he was just being sort of existentialist and just claiming that thoughts don't mean nothing. our thoughts don't mean anything. But now I'm sitting here reading this, I think he's asking about certain kinds of dreams where, you know, it's just like a meaningless spam kind of a dream. And everyone has spam dreams.

But even the spam dreams have the

purpose of you know like

you know helping you to process

information that you picked up during

the day in in mysterious ways maybe

sometimes

I've read that the American possum

delfus marsupialis

dreams more than it is awake. What it

dreams about I'm not sure. maybe just

like getting into garbage cans or eating

dog food off of back porches, that kind

of thing.

[sighs]

But they have actually found that

similar species, you know, the same

general body size and everything, one of them is known to dream and the other one isn't. The one that doesn't dream has a larger brain to compensate. So there is a kind of biological purpose for dreaming. It's not just um the gods implanting information into our mind, that kind of thing.

So, I'm just going to move on to trask as is a second question.

Is not enjoying your meal wholesome or the meal should be h neutral and then in parentheses not too bad and not too good. Well, yeah, not enjoying something isn't necessarily wholesome. I mean, especially if you've got a version, if you're bothered by it, then yeah, it's

unh wholesome. Attraction and aversion are both unh wholesome.

So, enjoying your meal to the extent that you're wallowing in sensuality, that's unh wholesome. But like grumbling about how your food doesn't have enough salt in it, you know, your lobster is too buttery, this kind of thing, that's not wholesome either. So I mean from the Buddhist point of view and as a monk I was there was a time when I would chant this daily. You know it's like I partake of my alms food not for the sake of sensual pleasure not for the sake of beautifying myself but only to keep myself healthy so that I can continue

practicing Dharma.

So

um the wholesome way of eating a meal

would be with a certain equinimity and

if pleasure or displeasure arises you

observe it mindfully to eat mindfully

[clears throat]

and anyone who's tried to be like

thoroughly mindful while eating a meal

knows that it just takes the pleasure

right out of it. It's like you know

you're [clears throat]

I mean the process there's any number of

steps in the process of eating

mindfully. It's like you you feel the

spoon in your hand, the pressure of it,

the temperature of it, you know, the the

the hardness of it, the stiffness, and
then there's the intention of
[clears throat] reaching with the spoon.
And then there's all the the like the
mental instructions and the muscular
process of scooping the food up and
bringing it back to your mouth. And then
it's like like some relatively
elementary
um techniques would have you like
counting how many times you chew.
I was doing that as a junior monk. And I
mean it's it's not fun. I mean it really
does take the pleasure out of your food.
Even if it's good food, when you're just
like mindfully chewing and then like

feeling this tasty food maybe just turn
into like gooey mush like mixed up with
slobber,
that kind of thing. Um, yeah. I mean,
it's it turns into like a a reflection
on foulness. There is one of the the 40
standard meditations is a reflection on
the foulness of food. And all you got to
do is just
just continue perceiving the food after
it goes into your mouth. You know, it
tastes good and everything, but then
you're it's getting chewed up into this
mush mixed with slobber going down the
esophagus into the stomach with a bunch
of other stuff that's essentially puke.
Stomach acid, hydrochloric acid, and all

this stuff down there. And then it goes farther down and turns into something that it's different from puke but still not entirely pleasant.

So there are wholesome ways of dealing with eating food. The main one being just doing it mindfully. I mean that's that's the panacea. I mean really it's mindfulness is the answer to a great many of life's questions.

Just as long as you're doing it mindfully, then you're doing it more wholesomely than if you're not doing it mindfully. And that that includes even like telling a lie or some such. If you told a lie mindfully, it wouldn't be as

bad as if you were just being a compulsive liar and just being unmindful while telling one lie after another. Now, how does that lie make you feel when you're telling it? That kind of thing. just to be sort of in tune with your body while you're doing it, for example.

So, enjoying your meal, I mean, if you do it mindfully, then it's still at [clears throat] least the mindfulness aspect is wholesome, but not enjoying your meal. I mean, if it's you've got aversion, that's not wholesome either. Just have some equinimity and mindfulness. Just observe. Observe whatever rises and let it go.

Now I'm just going to move on to the next question.

This is from practice meta and he says, "As a monk, did you ever have an illness that was near death?" I don't know why he has the quotes on near death.

[clears throat]

But uh yeah, I mean the first two times I got malaria, I mean the first the second time I got malaria, I was hospitalized, had a a fever of 105 degrees Fahrenheit. I don't know what that would be in in Celsius or centigrade,

but I mean I wasn't quite as sick as I was the first time. And anytime I got

full cypro malaria like seven times at least.

And if I hadn't taken the the medication, the pills, mephaquin was the the main one I use at the time, I'd be dead seven or eight times over because of that.

Aside from that,

um I also got some kind of hepatitis A when I was in Burma and I really thought maybe I was going to die that time. Um, it [clears throat] was it just felt like my my batteries were just running dead, you know, my life force was running running low. It was weird. But obviously, I survived that. Some doctor, some Burmese doctor told me his his idea

was that I probably had amiebic
hepatitis where dysentery amiebas
invaded my liver.
But another doctor just said it's
probably just something you ate, right?
and I I'm more inclined to go along with
that. Although amiic hepatitis sounds
more exotic and interesting.
And aside from those, the other the only
other illness that I had that was
arguably near death was when I was about
20 years old. I got pneumonia. I was
hospitalized with pneumonia.
[clears throat] I remember I went to the
fair with my girlfriend and caught a
cold there and it was a pretty serious

cold. you know, it was it was an icky cold. And then my father wanted me to drive into town and and pick up a trailer and and bring it back. And I told him I was sick and he just said, "It has to be done." So, I remember when I was driving into town to pick up this [__] trailer. I just I was kind of hoping I'd get sick, you know, just just to show him. And I wound up being hospitalized. So, I showed him, didn't I?

So, I mean, I'm not sure why Practice Meta asks this question because there's no real followup to it, but yeah, I have I have had illnesses where I was thinking maybe I was going to die,

especially first couple times I had malaria, especially the first time cuz I was very sick the first time. I remember um after I had taken the pills, I was lying in the hospital for days and it had been several days and the monk that was sort of attending me at the time suggested that we go for a little walk and I was able to hobble around the building, you know, like once and I was I was just covered in sweat and I just had to crash back onto the bed as soon as possible just because I know I was that drained.

I've already told the story before about this Australian monk I used to know who

had his story of how he got, let's see,
malaria,
chalera, and tuberculosis all at the
same time. And he said he spent the
entire range retreat lying flat on his
back.
[sighs]
But yeah, I mean, I guess the main one
would have been false malaria that I had
like seven [clears throat] or eight
times. Although after like the first two
times, I got really good at diagnosing
the symptoms. when you've got chills and
fever and then you feel [clears throat]
better the next day and then you got
chills and fever the next day after
that. Like on alternate days you've got

chills and fever accompanied by a killer headache that won't go away no matter what you take for it. Then yeah, that's that's it. It's time to start taking the mephoquin tablets.

I always took prophylaxis when I was in an endemic area and I wound up getting malaria anyway.

[sighs]

So, I guess I'm just going to move on.

Next question. [clears throat]

This is also from Practice Meta.

Practice Meta says, "One criticism you mentioned after your wedding was that people said that you should be renouncing the world, etc. But if you

were still a monk living in the forest, then I wouldn't have gotten to benefit from hearing your teaching. I'm sure there are others who have benefited who would never made it to Burma to find you and request a talk or ask a question. Quite selfishly from my perspective then it appears that it is better that you are no longer a monk and that you live a worldly life. Thoughts?

Well, there's one kind of mantra that goes through my mind a lot. Sometimes I even say it out loud. Uh, I used to say it a lot when I was a monk and that's everything happens the way it's supposed to happen. It's like you get into a kind of a an uncomfortable situation. It

would just trigger this everything

happens the way it's supposed to happen.

So yeah, I mean I [clears throat] don't

have any regrets. I'm probably better

off now than I was as a monk. Um,

especially towards the end when, you

know, being a monk had just kind of run

its course. my I was like stagnating.

Um

so yeah, I mean it wasn't just people

saying that I should renounce the world.

It was just I mean there's some kind of

migtypes

that are blackpilled on women that are

saying, you know, don't get married just

because of that. You know, they weren't

even telling me to to be a monk again,

anything like that. It's just be careful

if you get married. You know, this

you're going to lose everything. You

know, they're going to turn on you,

divorce you for no good reason. this

sort of thing.

But

I think trusting your woman is

necessary.

I mean, there's no point in getting

married if you don't trust her. And I

trust my woman.

I know what she's like.

So, let's see here.

Uh, I guess I answer that question.

appears it's better that you're Yeah, I

mean I'm definitely teaching more people more effectively maybe as as a lay person than as a monk. As a monk in Burma, I was I was just sort of like a living breathing pagan idol more than a teacher. I mean, first of all, I never fully mastered the Burmese language, which was deliberate. I mean, I didn't want to fully master it because I didn't want to be having to give lots of talks, especially because even with an ability to speak Burmese, there's still like this culture barrier because I just do not think like a Burmese person.
And you have to be very careful when you're teaching dhamma to Burmese

villagers cuz they might have only a
fourth grade education but they know
what is orthodox terra Buddhism because
they go and listen to Seattle's every
week you know it's like every pulsata
day you know they read books they're the
average Burmese villager who's a devout
Buddhist even though they might have a
fourth grade education they understand
dharma like orthodox terraada Buddhist
philosophy and ethics
better than a great many Dharma teachers
in the West,
maybe even more than most.
But I think I'm straying away. Oh, yeah.
So, if if I would teach Burmese people
dhamma, I'd have to be very careful

about what I say because you can't deviate from orthodoxy because then they'll they'll probably just consider you to be an ignorant foreigner. you're just this ignorant barbarian who doesn't understand dharma correctly.

Either that or you're a shameless heretic. One or the other. The Burmese tend to be very kind of compassionate and obliging and polite and so forth. So they'll take the charitable view that you're just an ignorant barbarian who doesn't understand dharma correctly.

But so long as I wasn't teaching dharma, then they just revered me because of my practice. is you know I'm living alone

out in the out in the forest and don't
handle money you know I actually
meditate that kind of stuff so you know
I was helping them by just you know they
were seeing a renuncient
and you know making offerings and so
forth so I was helping them in that way
coming back to America as a monk um yeah
it's like it just for for whatever
reason my own karma my own karma uh plus
the karma of the people I was
associating with it just uh it wasn't
working very well. I had I'd have a few
dedicated supporters, but most of the
the people like the domahal would kind
of just view me with suspicion or
indifference or even a certain amount of

resentment. There were a few people who just positively disliked me just because it's like I'm putting on airs, you know, putting wearing special clothes and shaving my head just to make myself look superior to others or some such. There's a lot of sort of Protestant Buddhists in the West who really have like a Protestant attitude towards Buddhism and they just do not like the idea of monks much at all because it's sort of like, you know, they're as good as anybody else and monks just make their own lukewarm mediocrity seem not good enough somehow and they resent that.

So being a monk in the west, it was

definitely had its challenges. Um, I
mean I could still write blog posts.
Didn't never really went viral with with
blogs.
Never I mean my viewership is still
relatively small. Although even you know
500 people watching a video that's still
a lot more people than I was able to
share what I had learned with, you know,
in in Burma, for example.
So everything has worked out the way
it's supposed to I suppose.
So yeah, no regrets and uh everything's
fine
as as some sorrow and the second noble
truth will allow it to be fine.
And I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from seal of action

and sepa.

And see of action zera says you have

said before you consider second genre to

be a mystical state but in the last

video you claim mystical states are

beyond perception thus strong emotions

are not mystical states but perception

is still present in second genre. So I'm

confused about this point. I never

insisted that a mystical state is an

absolute absence of any perception

whatsoever.

that most mystical states are I mean

it's like a gradient it's like a

spectrum that you read like read William

James's the varieties of religious experience he's got at least one chapter in there on mysticism and he's got a lot of case histories you know personal testimonies of people who have had mystical states

and most people when they have a mystical state it's not complete absence of perception it's just I mean that'd be like fourth Janna or something So, I mean, what it is, it's it's attenuating perception. And I've said this before. I think I probably said it in the previous Q&A that I mean, you attenuate perception. You make it subtle enough that reality can kind of shine through it.

So, you're getting some inkling at least of something beyond the symbols of the perception.

And most mystical states, I mean, almost all mystical, you'd probably have to be like fully enlightened or at least getting into like fourth genre, you know, the deepest possible meditative states in order to like completely [clears throat] silence perception.

But even according to terra Buddhism I mean even in fourth Janna I mean you've always got to have some kind of perception even if it's extremely subtle you know it's like the highest possible meditative state going with the various

Janna and the arupas and so forth is the

realm of neither perception nor

non-perception where it becomes so

subtle you can't really say whether it's

there or not

but even in second John when you're not

thinking anymore it can be a mystical

state is not necessarily a mystical

state, but if it's attenuating

perception enough that you're starting

to

like get some sort of realization of

what lies beyond the symbols of

perception

and seovata

apparently is just addicted to thinking

and can't get outside the mental box.

It seems to me

so you can still have a mystical state

even if you're thinking to some degree

if it's like the thoughts become

translucent enough, the perceptions

become translucent enough that there's

some kind of reality shining through or

at least you're you're able to not cling

to it so so firmly that you're you're

getting some inkling of something that

lies beyond

that the whole essence of mysticism, as

far as I'm concerned, is attenuating

perception sufficiently that you're

loosening your addiction to it. I mean,

you're loosening your grip on it so that

you're able to transcend it and be aware
of something that lies beyond these
mental symbols that most people are
completely stuck in.
So [sighs]
I don't know. I think I might just move
on to see of action. Cad Zeda's second
question here.
looking at the time
he says, "I remember you talking about
some ancient school in India, maybe the
Nya,
trying to debunk Buddhism by claiming
the five aggregates don't make sense
because you can't have perception
without volition and vice versa.
However, Majima 43 already says, quote,

"Feeling, perception, and consciousness, friend, are these qualities conjoined or disjined? Is it possible, having separated them one from another, to delineate the difference among them? Feeling, perception, and consciousness are conjoined, friend, and not disjjoin. It is not possible, having separated them one from another, to delineate the difference among them. For what one feels that one perceives, what one perceives, that one cognizes. Therefore, these qualities are conjoined, not disjointed. And it is not possible, having separated them one from another to delineate the difference among them.

And then seaction cipad zen continues, it seems clear that the other aggregates would also fit together like this as well, like volition. So wouldn't that kind of defeat the whole purpose of the the other tradition trying to debunk the aggregates model?

Well, first of all, I would point out that there was no Indian tradition trying to debunk it. But I'm going to just see what um Majimeia 43 is.

Okay. Majimeia 43. Let's see what it is. 49 44. Oh boy. Yeah, I kind of thought so. It's a Wala Suta which in all likelihood is late. These wayalas, it was a kind of question and answer format. Uh often which doesn't even have

the Buddha in it. Maybe the Buddha shows up at the very end just to approve of what was said by someone who wasn't the Buddha. Yeah. Let's see.

Mahakota

and venerable Sar Puta. So yeah, it's it's not even attributed to the Buddha himself. So that's kind of a red flag or at least a yellow one when a suta isn't even quoting the Buddha himself. Then you may have had some composers of like apocrypha who at least had the integrity not to put their own ideas into the Buddha's mouth. So instead they'll just put them into some enlightened disciples mouth

and because they're just maybe too

humble

to like put their own philosophy into

the Buddha's mouth and these way Dalutas

are like that. So in all likelihood

muchiah 43 even though it's canonical

it's probably late

but we we don't need to get into that

and see the nyaya school. Yeah, it's no

I think se of action caden is a little

bit confused with regard to what I was

talking about where um the the whole

there was one passage in a book that got

me thinking on this whole you know which

comes first perception over volition or

you know it's like you know how can you

direct your attention to something which

would be volal unless you'd already perceived it but how could you have already perceived it without directing your attention to it. So it's like I was trying to to understand this process of how you direct your attention to something. Do you perceive it first? You direct your attention to it first, you know, which is like perception and volition.

And it just happened to be in a book about the Dignaga school of of of Buddhism which was a like a Mahayana um like a logic school that was in medieval North India and most of what we know about that school comes from um

like Hindu or protohindu critics who are also philosophers who are trying to give a fair representation of what the DNA school was was teaching in order to try to refute it, you know, to argue against it.

So,

um yeah, they weren't trying to debunk uh Buddhism by claiming the five aggregates don't make sense because you can't have perception without volition. And and this this feeling, perception, and consciousness, it's

Yeah. And I would have to agree that feeling and perception are really pretty much the same thing. At least feeling

would be like a nonverbal kind of or a

nonvisual well just nonverbal

nonconceptual

kind of perception

that really feeling and perception it's

just like perception is a kind of

feeling or feeling is a kind of

perception

consciousness terra Buddhism does not

know how to deal with consciousness they

don't know how to define it because they

are stuck in this two-dimensional plane

of explanations and so they have to have

consciousness at the same level of

reality with perceptions which in my

opinion doesn't work.

So

with that as kind of a I don't know not

exactly a disclaimer is it? Let's see.

Feeling perception and consciousness are

conjoined. Uh yeah I mean you can say

that yeah feeling perception and

consciousness are conjoined but it's

like perception and consciousness

it's not like majica 43 are describing

it's like you take I mean I've I've gone

over this so many times you know you've

got this here particular tissue is it a

tissue or is it paper

which is it has to be one or the other

Right? It can't be paper and a tissue

because tissue and paper don't mean the

same thing. And then you'd be violating

the aricetilian laws of thought. It would be a and not a simultaneously. Tissue does not mean paper. Paper does not mean tissue.

So I mean that's that's how I deal with consciousness. Consciousness is the essence. Consciousness is the paper. It is the essence of the tissue.

Just like well you know paper is the essence of the tissue just as consciousness is the essence of perception and valition and other mental states.

But Amidama goes a different way where nirvana itself is no more real than all these various mental states including

wrong view tongue sensitivity and on and on and on. There like 128 ultimate realities with Nibbana just being one. Which is one reason why I've never had much use for Abidama philosophy and most western monks don't.

But getting back to like perception and volition.

It's like if you got something that you got two things that always have to arise together. They always have to occupy the same point in time and space. They always have to disappear together. They cannot possibly arise independently of each other. Then how the hell are they two different things? It's just two different ways of looking at the same

thing.

That was like one of the first like breakthroughs,

inspirations, I don't know what you call epiphies that I experienced as a monk.

like a philosophical kind of insight was that like perception and volition they I mean especially according to orthodox terra they have to arise together they can't possibly be separated they have to exist in the same point of time and space they arise together they pass away together

how can they possibly be two different things it's just two different ways of looking at the same thing

the same phenomenon on

which kind of starts playing hob with

orthodox philosophy you know it's like

five precepts well I not five precepts

but five uh condas five aggregates I

mean how many are there really

I mean it's just sort of a ancient

Indian attempt to systematize things but

I mean you you can't really analyze it

too deeply because then it starts

falling apart

But where's the actual question? Where's

the question mark?

Okay, it seems clear the other

aggregates would also fit together like

this as well

like valition. Well, valition and

perception were the two main ones that I was dealing with.

So, wouldn't that kind of defeat the whole purpose of the other tradition trying to debunk the aggregates model?

Um, well, yeah, there was no other tradition trying to debunk the aggregates model that that I mentioned.

I mean, I'm sure there have been traditions. Let's see what the heck. I'm getting some kind of notification.

Okay. Oh, boy. And it just came back again. Go away.

Okay. So, yeah, there was no other tradition that I was mentioning trying to debunk the aggregates model. I mean I

do more to debunk the aggregates model
you know like rupaconda the aggregate of
physical matter there's no way to prove
it even exists
but if if you're just dealing with
perceptions of the body then you're
dealing with perception
and then of course the temporal or
kinetic aspect of perception is volition
and those are just forms of
consciousness
so and then feeling is just another kind
of perception.
So yeah, I mean I mean it all boils down
to like [clears throat] essentially one
condom.
But you want to be systematic and have

lists of the five of these and the seven of those and the the 37 of the other and the you know the 80 of these and the the four and the three and you know it's some people are really into that. A lot of uh Burmese scholar monks, they've got it all memorized. I was ordained at the same time as an Argentinian monk who also I mean he'd just be memorizing lists from Abidama and the Wizudi Maga.

[sighs]

So yeah, I mean this this question is at least I understand it.

But I mean he didn't understand what I said earlier otherwise he wouldn't have asked it at least not in this form you

know so I mean the actual question is so wouldn't that kind of defeat the whole purpose of the other tradition trying to debunk the aggregates model and there was no other tradition trying to debunk the aggregates model it was just um some statement made in a book about the diga school that got me thinking about the supposed difference between perception and valition

And I mean he wasn't even really trying to debunk that. He was just discussing the Daga school, you know, their logical approach to to Dharma. And he was, you know, I mean, even his attempts to debunk it weren't really included in the book because the book was just based on

describing the Dignaga school as well as Cherbatski, the author, could manage. He was relying on uh like a vadic philosopher, you know, Vasha Sparishra, I think was his name, as a source of this information.

But yeah, I mean, I was the one that was essentially debunking the five aggregates model.

[sighs]

And I think I should just move on to the next question also from CEO of action, Cipad Zena.

He says, "If karma is about intention and you are not a mind readader, then why would killing an arahant doom you

straight to the worst hellish rebirth? Seems like it wouldn't be that [clears throat] different than you killing any other random person since to you the intention is the same." Yeah, I've thought about that a lot. Or another one is there's the story about the rich man. This is before the Buddhist time supposedly according to the legend. And there was a a pacheka Buddha walking for alms. And then there this rich man had one of the servants put food into the the pacheka Buddha's bowl. I mean, he didn't know he was a pachcha Buddha. He just saw this aesthetic, you know, renuncient walking by. And so, you know, he has the servant

put food in his bowl. And then after the servant puts food in his bowl, the rich man starts regretting it, thinking, "Oh, man. I should have just fed it to the servants. just kind of a waste of good food. And so this this uh this rich man after he dies, I mean, he's got he gets like heavenly reward for offering the food to the Bacha Buddha, but also he gets like this really negative karma. I can't remember if he he burns in hell for a zillion years or what exactly happened to him. Um, but he also just took a really big hit for regretting offering food to a pachek boot even though he didn't even know he was a

pacheka Buddha. And really, it's like the people that that would like commit homicide on an arant for the most part, they're not thinking of them as an arhan. They're thinking of them as this damned heretic. You know, the the non Buddhists who beat Mahame Galana to a pulp. you know, they didn't think he was he he was an arroant. They just thought he was just this shameless heretic that they they should be rid of. So, yeah, I mean, um I've thought about this the same kind of thing a lot. But the thing is that a lot of your like vition again like I was saying earlier extends beyond the scope of your ego. The ego is this self-referential

system of mental states that is aware of itself but indirectly at best aware of what lies beyond you know its own limits and certain aspects of mentality are beyond the limits of this self-referential system called ego. So there could be and I've I've seen claims made by various spiritual teachers that at a deep subconscious level there is a kind of telepathy that at a deep subconscious level somebody's lying to it. You know that they're lying to a deep subconscious level someone's going to rip you off that at this deep subconscious level you know they're going to rip you off and then your ego

lets you get ripped off that kind of

thing.

So

the only way that this can really make

sense from from my understanding of

dharma is that there are deeper levels

where you are more aware of the

magnitude or the implications of what

you're doing.

Deep down there's just a it might be too

subtle for your conscious ego to be to

really register it. But still deep down

you can have like this intuitive or even

empathic

recognition that that one person is a

sage and the other person is like a con

man.

So yeah, again

the the only way to really make sense of

it is that there are subconscious mental

processes and Buddhism even though it

really doesn't talk about like any sort

of Freudian or Yungian subconscious kind

of uh events going on still like karma

itself you know the karmic stream

clearly is largely subconscious from

like an orthodox Buddhist point of view.

And then if you read Abidama texts where

it's talking about all these complicated

processes going on in each mind moment,

well, you're not aware of those either

even though they're going on in your own

mind. So there is stuff that is just be

that's going on in your own mind that is beyond the like the cognizance of your conscious ego.

And so this kind of stuff would have to be going on at that level. It'd be going on like at a subconscious level that somewhere deep down you know the person that you are messing with is like a saintly wise sagely kind of a person or being

and I I can accept that

and also I'm going to move on to the next question

this is from Sedar to lohan.

And this is one of those questions that it's it's hard to really grasp even though it's a simple question. He says,

"According to you, which one is the most epic suta and I mean epic can mean all kinds mean all sorts of things. I mean I mean technically an epic is like a long poem discussing heroic deeds on a grand scale the origin of a nation this kind of thing.

So I mean in Buddhism like in Terravada Buddhism in the sutapitica there's not a whole heck of a lot of that going on. I mean I mean would an epic suta have to be written in verse? I don't think so. Not necessarily. I mean you could say that Toltoy's War in Peace is an epic novel even though it's written in pros instead of verse.

Um I mean with regard to something

heroic.

Yeah. I mean that that might come

closer. Or I mean nowadays epic. I mean

that just means like rad. That's that's

great man. That's that's you know

something that you really like would be

epic but I don't think Sedarta meant

that. Anyways I I asked him what is what

do you mean by epic and then he said

something like reading it and thinking

this is what it's all about or maybe the

one who cultivated you more. I'm not

sure what cultivated means

but this is what it's all about.

Yeah. I mean and for me I mean there

would be a heroic element to that

because

in my opinion I mean the sutanata

got it right here. This is KR Norman's

translation poly techch society. I've

had this since before I was a monk. It's

one of the possessions I've I have owned

for the longest of any any of my

possessions.

And um let's see the sutin pa who where

was I going with that? Oh it's the

sutini pa is it's one of the books that

converted me to terra that really got me

interested in terra just because of like

the heroic aspect of the early monks.

You know, they were they weren't just

people sitting in a meditation hall, you

know, sleeping in a in a in a hut or a cabin, you know, this staying in the same place just sedentary, going into the refactory to get their meals, this kind of thing. that the monks of the excuse me the monks of the sutin pata I mean there's a lot of really archaic kind of sutas in the sutin pa and um the the sutas were composed most of them it seems in an age before monks settled down into monasteries where they were just wandering renuncients sleeping under trees they had to be tough as wood and that's that's kind of heroic you know in fact there is a certain amount of heroic imagery like uh there's one suta in the in the sutin pata where Mara

is trying to talk the Buddha out of becoming out of striving for enlightenment because anyone who becomes enlightened is leaving Mara's domain. You know they're escaping from his power. And that's that's the the suta where the the bodhicata says it is better to die in battle than to live in defeat which is a heroic sentiment. There's like some sutas like the see I I wrote down my own translation into this book the discourse on right wandering the sama parajania suta that would that was one of the the early sutas that really kind of inspired me was just the like the heroic

approach to dharma you know it's it's you know you're you're out there in a kind of spiritual battle not really against Mara but just sort of against your own delusion, you know, you're just sort of struggling, you know, wrestling with the devil in the wilderness, but the the devil is your own defilement, so to speak. I mean, I kind of outgrew that eventually because fighting against yourself is not conducive to peace of mind.

So, I mean, I I eventually kind of outgrew that sort of spiritual battle mindset.

But just the there's several sutas in the suta nipata where monks are just you

know tough wanderers just enduring anything that that the universe throws at them that kind of thing. The the rhinoceros horn discourse is another one the the kaga kagawisano suta. Um some of the sutas like especially the longer ones towards the end of the atakawaga are similar just is it's the sutas that are describing

you know the lifestyle of a very early Buddhist monk back when most of the the new monks the most of the Buddhist monks had already been veterans of the holy life that just converted over to Buddhism you know they they weren't lay people that became Buddhist monks they

were you know like followers followers of of other um sas or philosophers that just started following the Buddha instead.

Um with regard to epic just in the sense of the grand scale of just the scope of it. Um some of my favorite sutas like some of you may already know the God suta which is a strange one. The baja suta is a strange one. just lots of weird and interesting things going on in those sutas but epic in the sense of heroic.

Yeah, I think you're better off looking for um looking for those in the sutin pa and the see what was it the sama paribania suta it's a long word sama

paribajania suta would be possibly one
of them it was one of the the the early
sutas that inspired me
before I became a monk when I was still
kind of searching
and I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from
Ethiopian fake TIG.
Okay.
And uh he's our last questioner of this
this episode.
Ethiopian fake TIG says, "You once said
there was no such thing as free will in
Buddhism, but we also know there is no
such thing as a self as well. So who
then makes the decisions?"

having a conversation with people when I tell them it's not them that goes to hell and that they would not remember their past lives they seem to think it's a good thing since there is no them to actually take any responsibility for anything so the actual question who makes the decisions well it's like you have a chemical reaction like like I said I'm going to be working I'm working for a chemical company now doing chemical things and so you got this chemical reaction that goes on. Well, who is it that's reacting? You know, it's just instead of, you know, it's not like the chemicals are deciding to react. It's just certain circumstances

arise which cause the chemicals to react, cause the reaction to take place. But yeah, there is no such thing as free will in Buddhism at least according to like one cardinal suta which is the uh anata lakana suta which supposedly is the Buddha's second discourse after his enlightenment where he says with regard to all of the five condas you cannot say let it be this way let it not be that way and reliably have it happen and that includes volition so you don't have complete control over your own valitions It's it's like a certain amount of cause and effect. It's just the conditions that allow something to happen arise and

so that something happens.

So I mean there doesn't have to be a who

there doesn't have to be this entity

that's making decisions. It's just that

the decisions

just it's like the conditions

are conducive to to this decision being

made which is a matter of mental states

and consciousness.

It's really hard to talk about this kind

of thing because people just fight

against it. I mean, people just ask the

same questions over and over again, and

certain things are just I mean, it's

very difficult to grasp it with your

mind, and you're never going to

understand the truth. You're never going

to understand reality by thinking about it. So, just wrestling with thoughts and and concepts and so forth. I mean, your best hope if you're adopting this approach of trying to understand um reality intellectually, your best hope is that you're eventually just going to hit a brick wall and give up. And then you'll be in just such a total surrender that you're just going to like throw down all this baggage of conceptualizing, intellectualizing, systematizing all this thinking and just leave silence behind which is kind of the purpose of Zen colons, for example. You're using

your mind to try to answer this this
riddle that has no correct answer really
until finally it's just like something
just snaps or just stops. Your mind just
comes to a screeching halt and then
it's like reality shines through this
silence.
And that's your best that's your best
hope. I mean, to some degree, you can
have a little bit of preliminary
progress through intellectualizing just
by shooting down [__] ideas.
The intellect makes a pretty good
[__] detector. But you're never
going to understand reality through it.
It's just not going to happen.
So, who makes the decision? Nobody makes

the decisions.

It's just that you have conditions

conducive [clears throat] to the arising

of

mental states,

certain mental states, and it seems as

though somebody's making a decision, but

in reality, there is nobody there. In

fact, from my point of view, in reality,

there are no decisions that are real. I

mean, it's it's weird how some people

will try to say, "Okay, there's no

self." But then they're still still

believing that everything else is real,

but it isn't. I mean, the mental state

itself has no self.

So, I mean, ultimately there are no decisions there. Nobody goes to hell. There is no hell ultimately. But when you are like in this delusional um like momentum of unenlightenment sure seems real, don't it? And that's that's what really matters.

I mean ultimate reality that's just totally beyond your grasp. Forget about that for a while. Especially if you're just like vehemently clinging to try to understand things intellectually. I mean you're essentially vehemently clinging to samsara and unenlightenment.

So I mean so long as you're clinging to samsara and unenlightenment then you might as well think well okay you make

decisions and you're going to go to hell
if you do the wrong things.
So anyways see Ethiopian fake tig also
has like this parenthetical
um kind of commentarial statement having
a conversation with people when I tell
them it's not them that goes to hell.
Yeah. Well I mean there is no hell
either.
It's all a kind of illusion at that
level. But anyways, he he continues,
"And that they would not remember their
past lives." Well, yeah, that they seem
to think it's a good thing since there
is no them to actually take any
responsibility for anything. Yeah. Well,

I mean, ultimately there's no them, but I mean, so long as you're stuck in delusion, you're stuck with this delusional person.

And as long as you're stuck with a delusional person, I mean, you're better off, it seems to me, just trying to live your life in such a way that this delusional illusion of a person is happier than unhappy.

Going into a more of a a wholesome heavenly type existence than an unh wholesome hellish one. I mean, ultimately in the grand scheme of things, it doesn't matter at all whether you go to heaven or hell or anywhere else. I mean, from the the point of I

mean, like to ultimate reality, it makes no difference whatsoever.

Sort of like saying, you know, it doesn't matter to God really if you go to heaven or hell because God's just perfect and doesn't need anything. He doesn't need you to go to heaven. I mean, a lot of Christians will be kind of sentimental and think God's rooting for you and wants you to go to heaven even though he's the one that sends you to hell. And at the end,

So yeah, I mean part of the problem here is okay, there is no self, but everything else is real. And that's that's not the way to go about it. I

mean, none of it is ultimately real
other than reality itself, which is just
totally beyond your grasp. You're never
going to grasp it.
When you give up on trying to grasp it,
then maybe you have some hope.
But I think I answered that question.
The question, the actual question is, so
who then makes the decisions? The
correct answer of course is nobody.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question here. This is also from
Ethiopian Fake Tig.
And I can't pronounce this last name
because it appears to be French. But
Ethiopian fake TIG says while reading
George Battal's books, Battel B- A T A I

L L E

Bail.

While reading George Battal's books, I came across an idea I wanted your opinion on. When I ask people what happens to a tiger after it dies, they say nothing happens. But they can't really imagine that sort of nothing. And when I ask them about the possibility of that same nothingness being what happens to them when they die, they refuse to accept it. Could the answer really be that nothing happens when we die? But due to evolution, the human brain just can't think about a state of nothingness. And so we create different

ideas about how we came to be and where we go after we die. Well, I mean, the human brain can't think about a state of nothingness. Why are they saying that that state of nothingness is where the tiger is going? I mean it is true. You can't really imagine absolute nothing. You know, you can imagine the number zero, but the number zero is a thing. And you can imagine in your mind like empty space or something, but there's going to be qualities to that empty space like blackness. And also there's going to be a sort of like a boundary to it where your imagination fails.

So, let's see. Could the answer really be that nothing happens when we die? But

due to evolution, the human brain just can't think about a state of nothingness. And so, we create different ideas about how we came to be and where we go after we die. Well, there could be some of that, I suppose. I mean, I was living in a monastery in Burma where the only other monk there was bitten by a cobra and died. And I really got some insight into
why almost all cultures believe in an afterlife because I'm I'm talking to this person just the day before. You know, I think the last words he said to me is, "My eyesight's getting dim." Because he was getting old and he

couldn't see as well as he used to be able to. So he he'd wear these thick glasses when he'd have to read something. And then the next day, the next morning, I go down to check on him and he's he's dying. And then so it's like 20 it's like I'm hanging out with this person. We did together. 24 hours later, he's it's just this thing. It's this essentially a a corpse. And then 24 hours after that, all that remained was this little clay pot with some ashes and bone fragments in it. So it's it just seems very counterintuitive. I mean, this is what struck me at the time that you have this complex being with, you know, desires and hopes and preferences

and all this all these memories and skills and so forth. And then at the moment of death, it just b it. is just a thing, just an it. It's It's just so counterintuitive that all that complexity and depth and richness of experience just poofs out of existence into nothing.

That that seems to me um possibly more more of an issue than just the human inability to imagine nothingness. I mean there are plenty of likei atheistic scientists especially in the west that I mean they just think when you're dead you're dead yolo you only live once you know they don't have any problem

with that really

so yeah I don't think that George

Battail

I mean it's kind of a a clever idea I

suppose

but

there any any number of millions of

people especially in the West,

especially in Europe, they're just

atheists and and that's it. And after

you die, that's it. Nothing.

So,

could the answer really be that nothing

happens when we die, which means you

just poof out of existence?

And there have been some like advanced

spiritual teachers like Kisara Data

Maharaj who said there is no afterlife.
there there is no uh rebirth anything
like that but according to him you just
you merge back into Brahman.
So I mean you can't really prove one way
or the other. You can't prove anything
really that lies outside the limits of
your own mind.
But I do not think that this world is
ultimately real.
So I'm not going to use the limitations
of this world as a way of limiting just
the stream of consciousness. I think
consciousness is more real than this
coffee cup is for example.
You can know consciousness directly that

this coffee cup you only know indirectly

through perceptions.

So golly.

Yeah. I mean, it's

theoretically possible, I suppose,

that nothing happens when we die. That

when you're dead, you're dead and that's

it.

Um, of course, if you go with

Einsteinian spacetime, then you never

really die. You're immortal in a sense

because the past continues

you know sort of like the Sarvostada

Buddhists where you know it's like past,

present and future all exist

simultaneously in a sense. So I mean if

Einstein is right and the past doesn't

just disappear then you're immortal in a sense.

But I think George Battail didn't really consider that. At least Ethiopian fake TIG doesn't mention him considering that.

But that's something to consider. I mean, especially these scientific atheist types, you know, they want to be scientific atheists and say when you're dead, you're dead. Nevertheless, if time is the fourth dimension, which is ultimately no different from the three dimensions of space,

then

after you die, I mean, you're still

alive in the past.

So, that's a kind of immortality right

there.

Let's see.

Yeah, personally, I don't think that

when you die, you die. that that that's

just it. It's all over. I just do not

think so.

But people can believe whatever they

want to believe. You want to believe the

earth is flat, you can do that, too.

Nobody's going to stop you.

And I guess I'm just going to move on to

Ethiopian fake TIG's third question,

which is the last question.

He said, this is a kind of a weird one.

I don't fully understand this one

either.

He said, "I recently realized that I was

suffering from an

in parenthesisma

possession

according to Yung

and thinking about the features ofma

possession and also how you spoke about

the ancient Vadics who called the Buddha

the destroyer of life. I began to think

about how Buddhism actually goes against

normal human life. And I thought to

myself, could the Buddha or a big chunk

of Buddhists potentially have a

psychological problem of being possessed

by their?

So, I mean, I know enough about Yungian psychology to know that the is sort of like the feminine aspect of a male mind. I asked Grock about possession and Grock just shut down. It would not answer the question.

So, I'm still kind of in the dark. This is the first I've heard of possession. Apparently, you're possessed by the feminine aspect of your own mind.

I guess

so. Thinking about the features ofma possession, which I mean I don't know any features other than just being possessed by the feminine aspect of your own mind. And also how I spoke about the ancient vadics who called the Buddha the

destroyer of life. Well, the Buddha was
the destroyer of life called the
destroyer of life because he endorsed
celibacy
in in one's youth. He did not endorse
waiting until you're old to renounce the
world. That if you wait until you're old
to renounce the world, you got less time
to to practice the holy life. And also
you've got more time of you just being
set in your ways and
old dog new tricks and all that kind of
stuff.
So that's why the like the Brahmans
were considering the the the Buddhists
to be destroyers of life because they

weren't having kids before they renounced the world.

So, I don't know what that has to do with possession, but I'm not sure what animma possession even is. To be possessed by the the feminine aspect of your own mind, like what apparently happened to Ethiopian fake TIG recently.

So, let's see here. Buddhism. So, see, I began to think about how Buddhism actually goes against normal human life. Well, I mean, what what does possession have to do with this? I I'm not even sure. Does possession go against normal human life? I mean, for a man to be possessed by the feminine aspect of his own mind might kind of go against normal

human life, unless it's a common thing. I don't know. So he thought to himself, Ethiopian fake Tig did, he thought to himself, could the Buddha or a big chunk of Buddhists potentially have a psychological problem of being possessed by their animal? And I mean the Buddha himself, it's hardly freaking likely that a person who's considered to be fully enlightened, who who just the wisest person in the world or tied for first place among the wisest people in the world, actually was psychologically messed up because he was possessed by the feminine aspect of his own consciousness.

I mean,

I don't know. I don't know how

golly.

So, a big chunk of Buddhists potentially

have a psychological problem of being

possessed by theirma.

So, this is another one of those

questions that really does not make a

whole lot of sense to me.

First of all, psychological problem. I

mean, like I've said before, a problem.

I used to say this a lot recently or not

recently but I used to say this a lot

that it doesn't matter what it is if you

accept it it's not a problem and it

doesn't matter what it is if you won't

accept it it's a problem I mean that is

what a problem is a problem is any
situation you won't accept
so to say that the Buddha had a
psychological problem that would just
mean that some unenlightened person
looking at the Buddha just
could not accept what the Buddha was was
saying or doing.
Psychological problem
or Buddhists, a lot of Buddhists
potentially have this psychological
problem or what would you call it like a
syndrome maybe of being possessed by
their and I don't even know what being
possessed by the is. I mean, I've I've
read a considerable amount of Carl Jung,

but I don't recall him talking about

possession.

So

yeah, I mean to be a Buddhist like a

like especially a Buddhist renuncient or

any kind of renuncient any kind of

spiritual renuncient who is trying to

live a holy life who renounces the world

who renounces worldliness who's like

celibate then yeah they're going to be

abnormal

in that sense you know they're going to

be going against ordinary human

conditioning to even their own human

nature to some degree. Like it's it's

just human nature to be lustful and

jealous and angry and and to experience

hate and laziness and greed and all the rest. And you've got Buddhists, especially advanced Buddhist practitioners, who are striving not to be that way. It's like trying to cure themselves of their own humanity. And I mean, it's not just Buddhists, like medieval Catholic saints also. I mean, when you're going against mainstream human nature, you're going to be more hysterical than the average person. You know, it's like it's to some degree, you're going against your own nature, which is going I mean, it's it's kind of problems waiting to happen. But for a

person sincerely striving
to attain the goal of their spiritual
system, nirvana,
the botific vision or whatever it is,
then it's worth it. You know, of course,
you might wind up with psychossematic
illnesses. You might wind up just being
kind of nutty and hearing voices and
seeing visions all the time. But I mean
if you really are intent upon
you know achieving the goal then it's
worth it.
So yeah I mean you'd be abnormal to that
degree that you're going against
mainstream human nature but mainstream
human nature is not conducive to wisdom
or happiness.

See I mean if you're just acting entirely in accordance with human nature you're going to be a [__] up individual.

Nature, like evolution, did not design us to be happy. It did not design us to know reality. It designed us to stay alive long enough to reproduce our DNA sequences.

So yeah, with regard to animal possession, even Grock couldn't tell me what possession is. I mean, seriously, it just shut down.

It would not answer. It was thinking and thinking and thinking and finally it

just disconnected and I couldn't ask it anything after that.

So I mean I would say that anyone who was a a devout practitioner of advanced Buddhist practice,

you know, who who is celibate, for example, then yeah, they'd be going against what would be considered normal or natural in human beings. And if you want to see that as a psychological problem, yeah, I'm sure a lot of normies, a lot of just bluepilled normies would see that as a psychological problem. Whereas somebody like JF Gary Epi, who's mainly just obsessing on inseminating as as many women as possible, then yeah, I mean,

that would he would just consider

celibacy to just be like the ultimate

fail.

That would be a kind of problem for him

maybe.

>> [sighs]

>> But with regard to possession, even in

the beginning, he has possession in

parenthesis. I recently realized that I

was suffering from an animma possession

according to Yung. And I don't I don't

know. I don't know really don't know

what that entails other than maybe just

being more feminine than normal.

What else would possession be? I really

don't know. But yes, if you live the

holy life and you're kind of trying to cure yourself of your own humanity, then from a like a normie human point of view, that's going to be abnormal and weird and maybe dysfunctional and maybe a psychological problem.

And it is true that like the more you restrain your desires, which saints of all traditions do to some degree, the more you restrain your desires, those desires don't just disappear. They get pushed into the subconscious where they build up pressure until they percolate up to the surface in the form of neurotic symptoms like hysterical psychosmatic illnesses, visions, voices, that kind of thing.

So yeah, I mean that's um getting back
to William James and his varieties of
religious experience, he pretty much
starts the book pointing out that like
really advanced spiritual beings may
seem pretty damn nutty from like the the
normie point of view that by a lot of
like medieval saints or ancient sages by
modern western psychological standards
would be considered
like abnormal
or even like mentally ill.
But with regard to animal possession, I
really don't know what that is. And so I
can't really say if some Buddhists
uh are possessed by their, but I really

doubt it. I mean, if you're a serious meditator, you know your mind better than most people know their mind. And you're going to see imbalances and and like obstructions and that sort of thing in your own mind. And if you're just adept at it, if you're a master of it, like the Buddha allegedly was, you're not likely to have I mean, you're going to be way more sane than the idiot normies who are saying you've got a psychological problem.

So, I guess that's it. I guess I answered these questions. There were a few that I do not fully understand. But I did my best, I guess. I hope. And

like I should always say at the beginning and pretty much never do, you think I can answer a question, feel free to ask. And as a general rule, these videos tend to be kind of Buddhist oriented or dharma oriented, getting into some western philosophy, other eastern traditions, little bit of Christianity here and there. That's all fine. Talking about Burma, talking about me personally.

It's all fair game, I guess, within reason. No more than three questions per person per episode. Please like and subscribe if you have not done so already. Check out the URL links below,

including the books that I have for sale

on Amazon.

And be happy.

All righty then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 198.

I am your host Pinyo Basson. This is my

designated primary beverage.

The emergency backup beverage is also

here, so no worries on that score.

And

this is my first video

with the new chemical operator

goatee

cuz

I have to be able to wear a respirator

which seals around like

somewhere like this.

And so it's all got to be like inside.

It's It's kind of scruffy right now

because as the film as of

the time I'm recording this, it's a

Sunday and so I'm going to have to shave

before I go to work on Monday.

Although we're still going through

stuff that doesn't require respirator,

so

it's just a formality.

And I do not know if the audio is going

to be coming out

like good enough, well enough for this

because for some reason it's like

some step in the software, like the

audio and video

um

processing software has apparently gone

belly up. So, if it still sounds bad, I
tried to do a like a brief sound check
which is sort of a complicated process.
Um
it it didn't sound all that great, so I
may have to just
like re-upload everything because
something apparently has stopped
working.
And I have considered that
there is sort of a karmic thing. I mean,
from the Buddhist point of view,
anything that you experience is the
fruition of karma. And so, what is the
karma that is causing
this continual technical complications

in me trying to do videos? You know,

it's always something.

So, it's just like I'm revealing secrets

of the Matrix or something and the

Matrix is like pushing back by causing

these complications.

>> [snorts]

>> Or something.

Anyways,

198

is not a prime number, of course. In

fact, it is 2 * 3 * 3 * 11.

Kind of an interesting combination

there. And it is possible I will do a

live stream for question and answer

number 200. It's possible. Although, I

probably will just do it without

announcing it.

Maybe on the Discord server. And so,

you're going to be on your toes for that

one.

>> [sighs]

>> So, without any further ado, I guess.

I guess there's one more little ado is I

got a sick fish. You guys want to send

message to my fish, go right ahead. He's

a a pygmy sparkling gourami.

And all the other fish are doing fine.

Just for some reason, he's he's going

through some kind of syndrome or

something.

So, I mean, he's tough. He's been kind

of feeling [clears throat] sick for like

3 days, which is unusual for a an
aquarium fish. Usually, an aquarium fish
starts looking sick and they just
go downhill. They just don't get better.
I guess being warm-blooded has the
advantage of having a more stable immune
system that is functional at, you know,
just all the time because it's got like
this narrow temperature range at which
it has to function.
Like cold-blooded animals like fish,
they have to have
very flexible enzymes
that will
it works at a broad temperature range or
else they had just have to have
different sets of enzymes that work at

different temperature ranges. Whereas we homeotherms, you know, it's just all like locked in to a certain temperature range.

Maybe that's the fish's problem. Could be just psychosomatic, I don't know.

But any meta you send to my fish would be appreciated.

And I guess I should just wade right into this now after those adieus.

And the first question is from Numa.

Numa says, "Would you ever re-ordain and try again?"

And

I don't know. I mean, it was like

if some sort of catastrophe happened and

I was all alone

and just, you know, my

job and everything just didn't seem like

it was worth it.

Theoretically, maybe like an option at

least would be like re-ordination as

like a a novice. What in Burma is called

a koyin gyi, like an adult novice.

But yeah, I don't want to be

I don't want to become a bhikkhu again

in this life.

So, I mean, there have been I I've met

one or two monks in Burma that

just decided to be koyin gyis. There was

one who was a relatively well-known

sayadaw and he was just becoming too

famous. Then so he voluntarily disrobed
down to a novice, a samanera in Pali,
um just to kind of lighten the load on
all the the visitors coming to to ask
for his blessings and all this kind of
stuff. He just wanted to live like in
peace and quiet instead of being like
the the epicenter of like a a three-ring
[clears throat] circus.
So, I mean, an option might be
uh like a Samanera, but I wouldn't want
to take full orders again in this life.
And chances are I'm not even going to
become a Koenji.
So, I'm just going to move on to
Newman's second question.

Samsara equals like being trapped in the

hotel photo in The Shining, question

mark.

Um

>> [snorts]

>> I I saw the movie The Shining with what?

Jack Nicholson

many years ago.

And uh I don't fully recall the hotel

photo.

Being trapped in the hotel photo. I

mean, I I remember the movie vaguely,

but I do not remember the hotel photo.

So, I can't really comment on to what

extent Samsara

is like being trapped in the hotel

photo. I mean, other movies as a

comparison, it it's like Groundhog Day
pretty much. And I'm still unsure if
Groundhog Day was a deliberate parable
for rebirth or reincarnation or whether
it just kind of turned out that way by
coincidence.
But, Groundhog Day, it's like you have
to keep doing it over and over again
until you get it perfect. At the very
end, Bill Murray
you know, he's like a really nice person
who
it's like
he's not selfish anymore. You know, he's
like a selfless person. And until he
attains that, he keeps getting he keeps

having to get like wake up with Sonny
and Cher on the clock radio.
You know, it's just never-ending.
Happens over and over again. You don't
know how many thousands of times he had
to go through it until finally he
becomes just this perfectly selfless
being.
At least by Hollywood standards. And
that's it.
Perfection of love and all that.
So, yeah, we're like the Matrix kind of.
Although, technically, even the people
who are outside of the Matrix are still
um you know, they're still in Samsara.
Because so long as you have like an
individual being and there's like a

variety of different things going on,

it's still Samsara.

So,

gosh, I guess I answered that one.

Man, it's like Samsara's like being

trapped in any movie, I guess.

Um with nothing outside of the movie or

else just other movies.

You know, all there is is just various

movies, something like that.

But even if you get out of the hotel

photo or out of the Matrix or out of the

movie, if you're still an individual

being once you get out, then you're

still just at a higher level of Samsara.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

Make after making sure we are recording.

Yeah, we should have been recording for

uh more than 8 minutes now. That's good.

This next question is from Chrizaskas

is. And Chrizaskas is says, "What was

the Jain version of the five precepts?"

And I think I already answered that

question

um just one or two Q&As ago.

Where the Jain version

um you know, it was the same as the

Buddhist five precepts. Although, I

don't think it was in the exact same

order.

And

the fifth precept was different. In in

Buddhism, the fifth precept is taking

alcohol and any intoxicant which causes

you to become like stupid and careless.

Um

>> [clears throat]

>> the Jain version was it was sort of like

a lightened

like a a minor version of what the monks

had monks and nuns had to do, and it was

with regard to personal property.

So,

um I don't think that the fifth precept

for Jain lay people actually forbade

personal property because it seems like

Jains still own personal property in

India.

Um and elsewhere. So, it's probably just like keeping personal property down to a minimum, which maybe could be interpreted very loosely, sort of like gathering up your treasures upon the earth among Christians, which still allows Jain lay people to become very wealthy.

I have heard that Jains in India tend to be like wealthy merchants, sort of like Ashkenazi Jews in Central and Eastern Europe back in the day.

Um

but with the Jains it was they had a reputation for honesty, and so people are more willing to do business with them, and so that's good for business,

they make more money.

But, the fifth precept has something to do with like minimizing personal property in [clears throat] some way, but um obviously it doesn't completely forbid personal property because Jains still have personal property.

Even monks probably at least have clothes that they wear.

Uh so, [sighs]

I guess I guess I answered that question.

And so, I'm just going to move on to Trezaskas' second question.

In Dīgha Nikāya number 11, in the lesser section on virtue, Buddha speaks about

some rules for monks. After listing sort of 10 precepts, he says, "He abstains from accepting uncooked grain, raw meat, women and girls, male and female slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, steeds, and mares." I mean, why would they say steeds instead of horses?

But [snorts] I I digress. Fields and property. And then Terasaka says it continues, "Is this rule of not accepting uncooked grain and raw meat for health issues or something else?"

Well, it's something else. But before I get to that part he points out that in Digha Nikaya 11 there is this um long list of things that monks don't

do. And that's the

the the first 11 suttas in the Digha

Nikaya. The first the first group of

suttas in the Digha Nikaya. I think it's

the first 11.

It is called the Sīlakhandha or the the

section on morality, the section on

moral rules. And all of them have this

same list.

So, the first 11 suttas

um maybe approximately all 11 suttas

have this long list of things that monks

don't do. And it's

it there's a lot of overlap with the

Vinaya.

But not entirely. Like in in this list

of things that monks don't do, there's like a list of games, you know, like like a the ancient Indian prototype version of chess. Monks don't play these games, but it's not technically against Vinaya, not that I recall. So, there's certain things that

um it's it's kind of strange. It's like why would they have this stuff that monks aren't supposed to do, but it's not included in the rules of monastic discipline. It was like maybe they came from two different sources early on, something like that.

So, anyways, getting to the actual question

is the rule of not accepting uncooked

grain and raw meat for health issues or something else? Well,
it's it's not against the rules of monastic discipline for a monk to handle raw meat. There is that strange rule of monastic discipline that says it is against the rules, it's a dukata offense, a minor offense for a monk to eat raw meat or drink raw blood unless he is possessed by some kind of demonic entity.
Then it's okay. So, it's not entirely forbidden for a monk to handle raw meat because if he's I mean
just to be handling it, I mean there's no prohibition on that according to the

rules of monastic discipline and
even eating it is okay if you are
possessed by a deep some kind of demonic
entity.
And I do recall there was I read the
famous text by Dogen long, long ago when
I was a college student. I don't
remember the name of the the text. Dogen
being one of the like the patriarchs of
Zen Buddhism in Japan.
I think he was he's considered to be the
founder of the Soto Zen sect or some
such and he actually has a story in his
book about some Zen [clears throat] monk
who had these cravings for for raw meat
and then I think it was Dogen himself
like kind of looks through a crack in

the door to see this monk eating the

meat and it wasn't the monk that was

eating it, but there was like some

little demon perched on his head that

was eating it.

So, the raw meat

um

>> [snorts]

>> that

may just be a sort of like an ancient

Indian cultural thing like even some

kinds of of like locks, you know, it's

sort of like pickled herring that's

that's cooked through the acetic acid,

you know, it's sort of chemicals cook it

instead of heat that technically there

are some strict monks that would you
know, they wouldn't eat like pickled
herring, that kind of thing because
technically it's still raw
because [clears throat] it hasn't been
cooked with heat.
So, I mean if you want to pick knits,
you know, that's that's kind of an issue
for monks. But, um
getting to the to the raw, the uncooked
grain, that actually is in the rules of
monastic discipline. Um
there is a list of things that monks are
not allowed to touch. And uncooked grain
is on the list. Also, there's weapons,
musical instruments,
um women,

even like the the personal effects of women, like frilly underpants, that kind of thing.

That monks aren't supposed to touch any of that stuff.

So, the reason why monks are not allowed to touch uncooked grain is partly because monks aren't allowed to cook their own food. They're not allowed to store their own food. So, what's the point of storing or even handling uncooked rice, which is mostly what it would have been?

I mean, if you can't store it, you can't cook it.

I mean,

So, I assume that's one is is to prevent monks from storing food for later. Just to make sure that they are completely at the mercy of the universe and at the mercy of the the generous laypeople who put food into their bowl every morning.

>> [snorts]

>> Uh so, that's that's the best best understanding of it that I have with regard to the uncooked grain. It's just to make sure monks don't start storing food for later and don't start um like cooking their own food. And maybe in the the Sīlakhandha of the Dīgha Nikāya, that's also why it says monks shouldn't handle raw meat.

Because again, somebody's got to cook

it. You going to have to store it at

least a little while.

So,

it's probably a similar reason why it's

in the Sīlakhandha. Although, it they

kind of diverge once you get into the

actual rules of monastic discipline.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Master Po

and

he asked this question that I could not

even begin to understand very well. And

so he restated the same question and I

still don't understand it.

So Master Po, I mean it was regard to

children dying and coming back and

having a different kind of near-death
experience than adults have and what is
their
their karmic volition that they
supposedly that supposedly makes up the
ego
and it's it's such a weird way of of
framing the question that I didn't
understand it then. I still don't
understand it very well. But he asked
the question. There is a question mark
in here and I guess maybe a little bit
of frustration cuz there's also an
exclamation point right after the
question mark.
Master Po says
children die and come back.

Near-death experience, yet do indeed

have a very different experience.

Where's their karma

in like scare quotes and volition that

make up the I {question mark}

{exclamation point}. So it's almost like

he's he's raising his voice asking this

question a second time in different

words. And then he says, "Since there is

no self

the I

and

I still do not fully understand

the karma and volition, although karma

technically is the same as volition,

that makes up the I

and

I mean it's it's this weird sort of an

indirect cause and effect thing

where

I mean volition or karma certainly is

um involved in cooking up the ego.

It's not all there is to it cuz there's

also perceptions. I I mean, you can

consider self viewed to be largely a

matter of perception with the the karma

just being like the momentum of these

perceptions.

So, I mean,

again, I do not understand how children

have a very different near-death

experience. It has not been specified,

at least not this time, and if it was

specified in the previous occasion, then it was some kind of link that wasn't labeled or described or anything, and I didn't click on the link. So, I'm still completely in the dark how children have a very different kind of near-death experience from adults.

And also, I'm not exactly sure what he's trying to get at with where is their karma that makes up the eye.

Where is the karma? I mean, karma technically doesn't even have a location. So, where is it?

I mean, if you if you consider time and space, especially, to be like artifacts of perception,

then, I mean, where [clears throat] is
just kind of a meaningless question.
And I I'm not exactly sure what Master
Po is thinking, you know, what he has in
mind when he's referring to karma making
the eye.
So, I mean, even dealing with like
the karma of some hypothetical child,
and their karma, most of their karma,
doesn't even derive from this lifetime,
it's derived from countless lifetimes,
you know, we including countless times
that they were adults.
And still there's the momentum of that,
the momentum of their adult beliefs, the
momentum of their childish beliefs, you
know, even a little bit of momentum of

like their neonate or their prenatal

beliefs. When they're still like uh an

unborn baby.

And there's all this momentum of mental

states

that I mean a lot of it is focused

around just sort of like the

self-identification.

Although like with an animal, they don't

really have the same kind of

self-reference

that that humans have. And so like a

toddler, we're probably more along the

lines of like an intelligent vertebrate,

you know, like a non-human mammal than

an actual adult.

But I mean in a child it's going to be all mixed up with all this other momentum from previous existences which may even include non-human existences and it's just all this subconscious stuff that you can't really say where it is.

You know, it's in the subconscious mind. I mean you wouldn't even locate it in the brain. In fact, Abhidhamma doesn't even think the brain is involved in thinking.

Well, that's what orthodox Theravada right there.

So I mean it's just really this vague weird kind of question that I it's very hard for me to to wrap my head around it

in the manner that it is asked,

especially when he doesn't really

elaborate on how or why children have a

very different near-death experience

from adults.

But I mean your karma isn't just from

this life. It's

it's it goes back, you know, just

into the unknown past.

So you've got karma from previous

existences as an adult. [clears throat]

So the karma wouldn't be all that

different between a child and an adult.

You know, it's adult karma that produces

the next child.

So

where is their karma? I mean what kind

of a question is that? I mean, how would

you locate karma?

You know, you give it like a latitude,

longitude,

maybe an elevation above sea level?

I

I just don't get it. Where is their

karma? Where is anyone's karma? Why

single out children?

It's the subconscious mind. It's It's

most of it is subconscious. I mean, some

of your volitions are conscious,

but that's just the tip of the iceberg,

so to speak.

So, let's see here. I mean, is there

anything else that I can

I can answer with regard to this

question that I don't fully understand.

Where is their karma and volition that

make up the I?

I mean,

even [clears throat] demanding a

location,

I mean, it just doesn't make sense to

me.

Latitude, longitude,

altitude above or below sea level,

maybe put it into four dimensions with

an exact time.

I mean, how do you how do you answer

that question?

But really, the karma of a child is not

going to be all that different from the

karma of an adult, especially at the

deeper levels. At the surface level,

sure.

But near-death experiences and all that

are not entirely at the surface level.

So, again,

I mean, if Master Po wants to specify

how children

child near-death experiences are very

different from adult near-death

experiences, and why he's singling out

children,

>> [clears throat]

>> because, you know, the karma is really

not that different.

It's the adult karma that produces the

child.

And maybe uh

use a different term than where, because

I mean there is no spatial location.

Ah. [sighs]

Yeah, I'm

I kind of throw my hands on that one.

So, I'm just moving on to the next

question. This is from the Saboteur.

And the Saboteur says, "Would painful

karma be in any way alleviated by

spiritual practice?" And I think the

Saboteur is is beginning to specialize

in asking questions that I've already

answered within the just the past few

Q&A videos.

Because I'm pretty sure I have answered this one recently.

But, would painful karma be in any way alleviated by spiritual practice? Yes, in various ways.

Like

the example I've given from the suttas numerous times is where the Buddha compares a handful of salt with bad karma or akusala karma. And then he says, "I mean, if you take this handful of salt and pour it into a cup of of pure water, can you can you drink it?" And the person he's asking says, "No, because it's too way too salty." But, if you take that same handful of salt and you pour it into a pool of pure water

and let it dissolve, then can you drink that water?" And the answer is yes, because the saltiness would might hardly even be noticed if you dilute it down with way more water.

And he compares that with like bad actions. Like if all you've done is bad actions, you know, if you just done lots and lots of bad and hardly any good, then the result is not going to be watered down much with any kind of alleviating effects. But, if you've done bad things

and done even more good things, then there's going to be a lots of like good karma that's kind of alleviating the

bad. And I even gave an example just one or two Q&As ago about how, you You I kept biting into rocks in my food out in the middle of nowhere where there's no dentists and I was worried, you know, it's like what happens if I break a tooth biting into a rock in the middle of my food out here in the middle of nowhere.

But it didn't happen. What happened was I'm spending some time in one of the richest neighborhoods of Rangoon and some servant girl gives me some bean curry with a rock in it. I break three teeth biting into this one rock.

So it finally did happen, but as it turns out that servant girl was the

servant girl of the dean and rector of
the Rangoon Dental College, the the
number one dentist in the entire
country, the dentist of the dictator.
And so
I just walked right across the street
and got my teeth fixed for free and uh
he just said, "From now on, you need any
dental help, just come right on over."
He had a little dentist shop right in
his house.
And so for years I had the same dentist
as the dictator.
So that would be
like spiritual practice alleviating some
of the painful karma just by adding some

good luck in with the bad luck.
But also spiritual practice increases
your wisdom. So let's say, I mean
akusala kamma reaches fruition. Akusala
kamma vipaka arises in the form of
unpleasant experiences, unpleasant
sensation, unpleasant feelings.
And so
if you do spiritual practice, you become
wiser, you're better at dealing with
unpleasantness. You know, you feel pain
in your body, you can just be mindful of
it. You can just observe it with
detachment to some degree.
Whereas a fool who hasn't been doing
spiritual practice
then I mean they're just going to be

more miserable than a sage under the
same like physical circumstances simply
because the sage has done spiritual
practice that allows them some
philosophical detachment from what's
going on.
So, that would be another way that
spiritual practice or good karma
would alleviate
like the fruition of bad karma. You
know, it at least waters it down, makes
it not so bad.
And there's probably other ways, too,
but I'm going to move on to the next
question.
This is from my Treya Buddha.

And my Treya Buddha says, "Can you do a response to Shri Acharyaji, a Vaishnavite Hare Krishna member? If there is no self, then who is experiencing nirvana?"

He claims that Buddha did teach atman originally. And this Shri Acharyaji is an interesting fellow.

But, I didn't know he was a Hare Krishna. He's not really a Hare Krishna, is he? I mean, he seems to me with his Sanatana Dharma. You know, he doesn't like the term Hindu.

He prefers Sanatana Dharma. And so, I mean, he seems to have like some yoga, maybe even some Vedanta under his belt.

I don't think that he's just a Hare

Krishna.

They just chant, you know, Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Hare Hari. You know, this kind of

I think there's more to him than that. I mean, there's a good chance he's a Vaishnavite.

But, yeah, the Hare Krishna part is uh it's a surprise to me if it is true. I'm not saying that my Treya Buddha is wrong.

But, I mean, if he is a Hare Krishna, that's that kind of complicates things.

But, back when I was a monk, there was a few people that told me that I was sort of like a Buddhist version of this

person.

Which, when I looked into him,

I I mean, to some degree, we were both,

you know, not as left-wing as most

teachers in the West. So, I mean, that

would be kind of, you know, this is sort

of being somewhat based to some degree,

I guess. I mean, that's really And plus,

we're we appear to be Western. He

doesn't look Indian.

So,

to some degree, there was a similarity

between me as a monk and him as a

a Swami or or whatever he whatever he

happens to be called technically.

An Acharya G.

Um but I mean, I have watched some of

his videos

and

um

I mean, he's he seems to be a good man.

He seems to have some wisdom.

So, I don't want to to badmouth him. I

don't want to indulge in any pishon of

lacha, but he is very dogmatic.

You know, he has no doubt whatsoever

that what he's teaching is true, even

though a lot of it he couldn't possibly

know that it's true. He just has faith

in his religion, which is what most

people have.

You know, it's like one of the reasons

why he is an effective teacher is he

shows no doubt whatsoever

that his what he's teaching is the one

true religion, essentially.

And that that has a persuasive power on

people. You know, it kind of adds to

charisma or whatever and causes him to

be a very believable kind of of teacher.

You know, if I mean, I didn't really

adopt that route with regard to

Theravada Buddhism. You know, I I

expressed skepticism plenty with regard

to official doctrine, [clears throat]

but this Sri Acharya G, he's just this

is the way it is.

And

I mean, I really don't have a lot of use

for that, but

some people do and that's fine. I'm sure
he's a good person. He's got some
wisdom.
I don't have anything bad I want to say
about him, but he is very dogmatic.
So,
I mean, I watched the video that
Maitreya Buddha had the link to, and
he's talking about I mean, it's it's an
argument that came up on my Discord
server not long ago. It's like the the
the Visuddhimagga,
you know, the number one commentarial
text in Theravada Buddhism is saying
there is doing but no doer.
And I'm saying that if there's a doing,

I mean, there has to be a doer, too. But
I'm not insisting that there's a doer.
I'm just saying that the doer doesn't
exist, and the doing also doesn't exist.
You know, the noun represents something
that isn't real. The verb also
represents something that isn't
ultimately real.
So,
I mean, he the argument of Sri Acharya G
is that, you know, it's like the doing
is real, therefore there must be a doer.
And I mean, it seems like the premise
that the doing is real is is like part
of the problem.
If he really is a right Christian, that
may account for why

you know, there's not more sort of Advaita Vedanta in his teachings, cuz Advaita Vedanta gets very close to Buddhism other [clears throat] than just Brahman. You know, the only reality is nirguna Brahman, which is like ultimate reality which has no discernible characteristics.

Which, I mean, if you're going to be reifying the absolute, that's about as subtle of a reification as you can get to.

You know, it's just infinite formless consciousness, but you can't even say that much because you can't say anything about it.

That's sort of the Advaita Vedanta approach to ultimate truth. Whereas in Buddhism, you might occasionally, especially in Theravada, you know, you might occasionally hint at it through like the state of of nibbana being blown out, That kind of thing.

But you as a general rule Buddhism avoids reification of the absolute because reification of the absolute, trying to explain the absolute, just drags it down into samsara. Anything described is samsaric.

And Sri Acharya Ji was actually bragging a little bit in the video about how he just kept debating this Tibetan lama, I think he was, a Tibetan Buddhist until

the Tibetan Buddhist says, "Okay, you're right. You're
I agree." And it may be that the Tibetan is just like
like placating him, you know, being conciliatory, saying, "Okay, yeah, you win." Just for the sake of not arguing.
Or it may be that this Tibetan is kind of
so esoteric, so to speak, in his Buddhism
that, you know, he's agreeing with stuff that early Buddhism at least would not agree with.
Also, I was looking through some of the comments and there was a considerable

amount of a considerable amount of

praise for Ken Wheeler, supposedly a

Buddhist authority who just is like this

champion for the idea that the Buddha

did teach a soul.

But the way Sri Acharya Ji is is

arguing, I mean, he seems to think that

if there's walking, there has to be some

real being who's walking, which would

mean he's I mean, he hasn't advanced as

far as Vedanta apparently.

In that he seems to be assuming there's

an ultimately real individual soul like

in Christianity.

So,

I guess

rather than just continue rambling about

Sri Acharya Ji

and Ken Wheeler

the world's leading authority on early

Buddhism even though he really does not

understand the poly language very well

and just butchers it when he tries to do

a translation.

So, the actual question see, can you do

a response? Okay, yes, the answer to

that question is yes. And then the next

question mark, if there is no self then

who is experiencing Nirvana? Nobody.

In fact, Sri Acharya G even went

farther. It's like, if nobody

experiences Nirvana then Nirvana is

meaningless. And I agree. Nirvana

literally is meaningless because meaning is samsara.

That's one thing that spiritual people even relatively advanced spiritual people, it's a trap they fall into including Sri Acharya G here apparently, is that you can't explain or describe ultimate reality in words because once it's in the form of words, it's samsaric.

>> [snorts]

>> So, if there is no self then who is experiencing Nirvana? Nobody experiences it. It's like Nirvana is like the blowing away of all the samsaric illusion.

I mean, you're just right down there in

reality.

And it's not divided up into parts. So,

there's no being experiencing this

ultimate reality. The being is illusory.

So, if there is no self then who is

experiencing Nirvana? Nobody.

And Nirvana has no meaning because

meaning is samsaric.

>> [snorts]

>> So, [clears throat]

>> [laughter]

>> I mean, meaning is just like

it's like an idea that's supposed to

represent something else. So, I mean,

it's it's not even the thing itself.

It's not the Kantian thing in itself.

It's just the thing as it seems at best.

So, you just get rid of all this thing

as it seems stuff.

And then all you've got left is reality.

>> [snorts]

>> Which has no meaning. It doesn't need a

meaning. Cuz meaning is samsaric.

And people that are just completely

locked into their head

just can't deal with that.

But, I mean, you can't really change

things in order to Well, I guess you

could, but it's best not to try to

change things in order to sort of pander

to the limitations of intellectuals.

So,

Śrī Acarya G, according to Maitreya

Buddha, claims that the Buddha did teach ātman or self or soul originally. Of course he does, cuz he wants to believe that his system is the one true system. Any system that disagrees with that or even explains things differently is necessarily wrong.

But how he came up with the idea that the Buddha did teach ātman originally, um

I think it's just sort of like grammatical stuff. Like the Buddha is talking about this person and that person even though ultimately they're not real.

But it's like, well, oh, why did he

refer to them that way, you know? It's things like that. I think he might have gotten a little more subtle.

But it was that kind of argument.

That the Buddha was necessarily using vohāra desanā, worldly speech, in order to communicate to beings in samsara.

And then that's considered to be a kind of proof that samsara is real.

But even even like in Vedanta, you've got the concept of māyā, which is illusion. You know, it's all an illusion.

So, I mean, if Śrī Acarya G really is a Hare Krishna, that would help to explain that part.

Ah, [sighs]

but yeah, I do not think the Buddha

taught Atman originally. I mean, it is

possible he didn't teach anatman either.

Like in the

the Atakavaga, which I consider to be

one of the oldest Buddhist texts in

existence,

the Buddha says, "No atta No anatta."

Actually, it's no atta no niratta.

Which

it's it's like a play on words. It's

like a pun. You know, the wise man, the

sage, has no atta and no niratta. And

atta in in this sense, it's it's like a

past participle for anything taken up.

And then niratta is a past participle for nirajadi, which means anything discarded. You know, so it's like the surface meaning of the these statements in the Atakavaga, you find it more than once, that when the a monk has no atta and no niratta, he has nothing taken up, nothing laid down.

You know, he doesn't have to acquire anything to become enlightened. He doesn't have to get rid of anything either.

Which is kind of paradoxical. But, also it's it's fairly obvious pun. Atta can mean self.

Niratta can mean no self. So, it could also be taken at another level with a

different somewhat different meaning

that for the sage there is no self and

no not self because both of them are

just ideas. They're just concepts.

It's all samsara. Once you get into the

level of ideas or thinking, symbols,

it's samsara. It is not You're not no

longer dealing with ultimate reality if

you ever were.

>> [sighs and gasps]

>> So,

it I do not think that the Buddha did

teach a soul originally. Although, it is

possible that he didn't teach soul or

not soul.

>> [sighs]

>> You might as well I'll leave Ken Wheeler entirely out of this.

So, I hope I answered that question.

Cuz I'm moving on to the next one. This is from Romeo.

And this is kind of a slightly controversial one, I guess.

Romeo says, "Whether it's mandatory DEI training that employees are forced to take at work or messages spread via movies and other media, black Helen of Troy anyone?

The slogan diversity is our strength is constantly drummed into the minds of the citizenry of the US and throughout the West. From my limited knowledge of history, cultural diversity being a

strength is dubious.

Take for example the former Yugoslavia, which eventually splintered among ethnic lines. I'm wondering whether this idea that diversity is our strength is based on anything substantial or simply an empty slogan mindlessly parodied.

Based on your knowledge of history, which is quite impressive, is there any validity to the slogan diversity is our strength? If so, where has it worked in history? And if the notion of diversity being a strength is just a glib meaningless slogan, what is the ultimate purpose, the end game of those that promote it? Okay, so this is

Let's see. There's like three questions

here, isn't there?

Three question marks. I got to

I got to separate these so that I can

deal with them

in a proper order. Okay.

So, the first question

is there any validity to the slogan

diversity is our strength?

Well,

yeah, there is some validity to the

slogan diversity is our strength. Like

especially with regard to diversity of

view, diversity of opinion. Because if

if you're living in a society that has

no diversity of opinion, and that would

might be the far right into the extent

of just completely conservative traditionalist and you know, anything outside of that is heresy. Burn them at the stake, that kind of stuff.

And then at the other end, you've got communism where you can't deviate from the party line or you're going to wind up in a gulag.

So, it's like the far right in extent of extreme traditionalism and the far left which is like extreme ideological communism.

I mean, both of those are without any kind of diversity of thought and neither one of them makes progress easily, which is why Marxist countries have to

essentially spy on non-Marxist countries

to get ideas.

And then even if the idea is true, if it

doesn't if it doesn't fit in with

Marxist ideology,

off to the gulag you go.

You know, the black Maria pulls in front

of your house in the middle of the

night, they bang on your door and you

disappear.

So,

there is

strength in diversity of opinions where

within

like some stability, some cultural

stability from at least people sharing

most of the same values. You know, at

least being on the same page with regard

to

just

like standing represent standing for

something. You know, everyone kind of

shares enough of a world view that they

can get along.

Then it's good to have a diversity of

diversity of views, diversity of

opinions within a certain stable like

the the stability triangle.

I've been taking forklift training again

lately, so I'm

I got the stability triangle on my mind.

So, yeah. I mean, it's good to have new

ideas. Like like the ancient Romans

in the early Roman Republic, I mean they
were very traditionalist in many
respects, but nevertheless, if they came
across an idea in some other culture
that seemed like a good idea, like it
was some military innovation that was
effective in combat,
they embraced that.
You know, they were relatively
open-minded with regard to gods and
goddesses, you know, the the Senate did
clamp down on Isis worship or like
Maenads, this kind of thing.
But still, you know, there was a a wide
variety of of religious views,
philosophies, and so forth. So like
ancient Rome,

it was culturally diverse also, which
sometimes was okay and sometimes wasn't.
Like Alexandria was one of the most
cosmopolitan cities in the empire, and
it was notorious for just rioting in the
streets, you know, the city in flames
over and over again.
But a certain amount of chaos actually
helps to inspire genius. You know, like
the Italian Renaissance would be another
one of these cases of, you know, ethnic
ethnically [clears throat] pretty
similar, you know, there wasn't a whole
lot of ethnic diversity,
or even extremely large amount of
cultural diversity,

but still there was like promotion of independent thought.

So that's like the main strength of diversity is diversity of thought within within reason.

Because at least everyone should be more or less in agreement on basic principles.

You know, like civic nationalism in the United States, you know, that sort of took the place of religion in America, whereas, you know, you have everyone believes in the Constitution, you know, they believe in individual liberty and equality under the law, equality of rights, equality of of opportunities, this kind of stuff.

But then there there's still

a lot of room

for like, you know, technological

innovations, artistic innovations, all

this kind of different kinds of, you

know, military innovations.

Intellectual innovations just within

this framework that's keeping things

more or less stable.

But I mean, the Roman Empire was

definitely multicultural.

So,

let's see. Yeah, so there is validity to

the slogan diversity is our strength

within reason, so long as the diversity

isn't so diverse that it just causes the

society to fragment into warring tribes.
You know, there has to be some overall
agreement that everybody has. You know,
it's like two people are going to
debate, there still has to be some kind
of rules and agreements for them to have
a debate even though they're disagreeing
with each other. You know, there has to
be sort of a a common ground of
agreement in order for the debate to
have any meaning whatsoever.
So, let's see.
Romeo says, "Okay, if so, where has it
worked in history?" And I did point out
that like the Roman Empire especially
was culturally diverse.
Um for the most part, the diverse

cultures kind of stayed in their own homelands.

You know, in the big cities, you have, you know, merchants and and the so on and so forth, soldiers coming from other cultures.

And you just had to be open-minded to some degree, have a certain amount of acceptance within reason.

But I mean, you couldn't be having people preaching against the emperor, you know, once you got the empire.

You know, you can't have, you know, open subversion, that kind of thing. I mean, the Roman government would clamp down on like political subversion pretty pretty

harshly.

>> [sighs]

>> But, I mean, you know, Elagabalus was emperor of Rome for a while. He's considered to be one of the the tyrants of Rome. He was apparently a transsexual. He was Syrian. He worshipped this meteoric black rock that fell out of the sky.

You know, he was very different from your your average Roman, especially your average Italian Roman.

But, I mean,

he didn't last very long, but still, I mean, it didn't cause the collapse of the empire.

Rome was already kind of in decline at

that point, I have to admit.

>> [clears throat]

>> So,

yeah, that kind of diversity has worked

in history. I mean, even like a certain

amount of diversity has worked in

America, obviously. The United States of

America,

you know, is relatively diverse and

culturally diverse, you know, within the

context of Western civilization. It

wasn't till like 1965

that the floodgates were opened for

people that weren't even of European

ancestry just flooding into the country.

And that has destabilized

the civic nationalism and
constitutionalism of the United States
and is is resulting in destabilization
of just the fabric of the civilization
itself.
>> [snorts]
>> In Renaissance Italy, again, it was
ethnically very homogeneous, but at
least there was
like independence of thought going on.
And I guess if you got people of
different cultures, they're going to
think differently, so that can help to
bring in a certain amount of,
you know, just
intellectual or ideological diversity,
but still there has to be some common

ground where everyone agrees you know
with regard to basic principles human
rights for example.
So,
I guess I kind of answered the first two
questions. Let's move on to the third
one from Romeo here.
And if the notion of diversity being a
strength is just a glib meaningless
slogan,
what is the ultimate purpose the end
game of those that promote it? Well, I
think that different promoters of
diversity is our strength. You know,
that most of them on the left
um the ultimate purpose differs from one

of them to the next. I mean some of them
they really are just trying to take down
Western civilization because they have
more or less of a communistic idea of
everyone being equal and obviously
Western civilization has just excelled
with regard to accomplishments just
establishing
you know new precedents and so forth.
So, you can't really have some kind of
equal homogeneous global world
government so long as you got anyone
that's standing out. There was some
tyrant of Syracuse
who I I can't remember if it was Plato
or some other philosopher and you know
he was showing how you stay in control

of your people you know as as like the a ruler and he he just show took him out into a like a wheat field and just had one of the servants just cut off all the the the the heads of wheat that stuck up above the rest.

You know, you just got to keep everyone in this level of mediocrity standardized enforced mandatory mediocrity.

And I think to some degree some of these Davos people

might have that in mind with regard to just

overwhelming

the the nations of Western civilization with

third world barbarians,

so to speak.

But some of them really believe in it, I guess. You know, they might just accept the diversity um

the diversity is our strength idea at a much broader level than I have accepted it.

But

I mean

there a lot of people on the left are ideologues. They prefer this seemingly beautiful ideology to the ugly facts of empirical reality. You know, they just for some reason they can just tune out reality and think that this ideology is so nice. It's so utopian that it has to

be true and all we have to do is just like implement it at gunpoint if necessary and everything will be wonderful and it just doesn't work that way.

Ah.

>> [sighs]

>> So, let's see. I got to read this question one more time.

Just make sure that I've answered it. If the notion of diversity being a strength is just a glib meaningless slogan, then I don't I don't know. I mean, it has a core of truth to it.

What is the ultimate purpose, the end game of those who promote it? And I do

think that taking down Western
civilization in order to sort of
level the playing field of globalism is
is a major part of that. Some of it is
just genuine resentment against white
people because they can't accept that
Western civilization really is greater
than other civilizations have been and
so they just say, "Well, they're just
villains who have used brute force, you
know, they're just violent barbarians
who have
you know, spread their language and
you know, their their technology, their
politics all over the world,
religion,
you name it.

So,

a certain resentment against successful

people

is part of it. Just a desire to just

level the the global playing field to

make it make people more docile,

easier to control.

Uh,

there's probably other reasons, too.

But, I think those are the some of the

major ones.

And I guess I'm just going to move on to

the next question.

That's what I'm going to do.

This is from [clears throat] Rui.

And Rui says, "Can you recall moments

during your anchorite days in which there was only the scene in the scene, the felt and the felt, etc.? Not sure if I've asked this one before.

[clears throat] That being the case, apologies." Okay, so he's asking me if during my practice as a monk, did I really was able to implement the instructions to Bahiya in the Bahiya Sutta given by the Buddha standing in town to Bahiya, the the the non-Buddhist ascetic.

In In In the scene, there will be only the scene. In the heard, there will be only the heard. In the felt, there will be only the felt. In the mentally sensed, there will be only the mentally

sensed. Thus should you train yourself.

Which is

I mean, you're at the level of as close

as possible to bare sensation without

any kind of like mental commentary,

mental like attribution of meaning to

that.

And And

I don't think I ever I'm not I don't

think I ever did it perfectly. I mean,

it's it's something that you're you're

trying to cultivate.

But, that was one of the the main ways

that I would do walking meditation.

I remember a lot of the time just, you

know, central Burma. You're out there at

night. It pretty much has to be a full moon night or a night with enough light that you could see like vipers and scorpions and that sort of thing that you might step on.

But, I just do walking meditation just not thinking, just just kind of being aware of the sensorium as doing when when doing walking meditation, not interpreting what I'm seeing, not interpreting what I'm hearing. No interpretation, or at least that's what you're trying for.

You know, you're just trying to be at the level of bare sensation as much as you can in order to

you know, just prevent your mind just

running off in the samsaric commentary.
So, yeah, I practiced it a lot. I never
fully mastered it.
But, even meditation, I mean, that's
largely the kind of meditation that I
was doing when sitting cross-legged
also, especially after my first 10 years
or so,
when I finally started getting into
deeper levels of meditation.
That I mean, even when you're
meditating, like this the the breathing,
you know, you're doing anapana. That I
never [clears throat] really liked
breathing in, breathing out, breathing
in, breathing out. It was just more just

observing the sensation of touch out of

the air passing the nostrils, and then

that's it. It's just the felt There's

only the felt. You're not interpreting

that.

You know, you're not following the air

in and out, anything like that. I mean,

it's just

you just

direct your attention to something

that's going on, and then just are aware

of that without any kind of commentary

or interpretation.

So, yeah, I practiced it a lot.

And sometimes even

>> [clears throat]

>> I mean, even nowadays, this you're like

in an industrial environment, there's

all this stuff going on. Just every once

in a while you just

it just becomes like this

the stimuli

that you're not even really

interpreting.

You know, it's it's just sort of your

you're kind of returning to the center,

so to speak, to use new age-y kind of

language.

Just sort of centering yourself

to some degree.

But yeah, I mean, that is really like

the essence

of Buddhist practice from my point of

view.

It's just getting to that level or

getting as close to that level as you

can. And so, I did it plenty.

Not perfectly, but I was trying to

cultivate it.

>> [snorts]

>> So, I guess I'm just going to move on to

the next question, which is from Athena

Sigil.

And Athena Sigil says, "Is your lady and

new wife a Buddhist, too?" To some

degree, she has interest in it.

Although,

um sometimes, if I'm being just too

idealistically Buddhist for her tastes,

then she'll consider that I'm just naive

and that I'm not good at functioning in

the real world.

But,

>> [sighs and gasps]

>> yeah, she's sort of like a a fellow

traveler, I guess. I mean, she has told

people that she's a Buddhist.

And that's nice. And, you know, to some

degree she is. Although, if it really

comes down to um

I don't know.

I don't know how to say it.

But, I mean, sometimes, she just starts

thinking that it's just like this

idealistic

theory that doesn't really apply to

reality very well.

And I really think that it applies to

reality better than worldly, secular

kinds of ways of dealing with things.

So, [snorts]

yeah, kind of. I mean, my father

considered himself to be a Buddhist,

also, although he was more of like an

animist than anything else.

So,

if you consider yourself to be a

Buddhist, and there was there was some

>> [clears throat]

>> there was some Buddhist Congress or

something

many years ago at this point, where they

were trying to actually define what a

Buddhist is, and the best they could
come up with was anyone who considers
themselves to be a Buddhist is a
Buddhist.
So, if that's the case, and she
considers herself to be a Buddhist, then
yes.
Although certain teachings of Buddhism I
take very seriously,
she doesn't take as seriously.
I'm just going to move on to the next
question before I get into trouble.
This next one is from RFS.
And RFS says,
"Any plans to move the Discord group to
Telegram due to the Discord ID

verification policy?"

Well, I haven't really considered that.

I mean, the the new Discord ID

verification policy hasn't really

touched me yet that I'm aware of.

It hasn't influenced me at all. I mean,

I've

encountered none of it thus far. There's

been no change in that regard

for me.

And so, probably not unless they start

getting like Orwellian,

then maybe.

But at present, yeah, there's

no plans. No plans whatsoever to move

the Discord group to Telegram

because it just

there has been no change

from my point of view in the actual

functioning of Discord.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Fred.

And Fred says,

"The way I see it, all his sutras he's I

think he's referring to the Buddha here.

I'll start over. Fred says, "The way I

see it, all the Buddha's sutras must be

from mundane speech, so logic seems to

it being only a path guidance

question mark.

Even the first sermon doesn't present

anything mind-blowing, in my opinion."

Okay, well, Fred, sometimes he asks

questions you're not exactly sure if
he's expecting an answer.
Um, but there is a question mark here,
so
I'm I'm giving him the benefit of the
doubt here.
Um, I I would address the last part
first. He says, "Even the first sermon
doesn't present anything mind-blowing,
in my opinion." Yeah, well, I mean,
you're probably used to it. You're used
to Buddhism. It might be a little more
mind-blowing if you've never
[clears throat] heard of Dhamma before.
You're You're some sort of ascetic, you
know, it's like the first sermon was
delivered to five hardcore ascetics,

where the Buddha is teaching the middle path and the four noble truths. And the four noble truths are especially the first three are relatively mind-blowing. I mean, if if you've never been exposed to them before, if you're already used to it, then maybe not. It might not seem so mind-blowing. But, I mean, the very first time you're exposed to it, especially if you're really striving wholeheartedly, like the five ascetic colleagues of the Buddha were, then yeah, it might be relatively mind-blowing for him. And of course, if you're a fully enlightened Buddha, you may be able to just intuitively

tell people exactly what they need to

hear. And so, you know, his first sermon

may have just been exactly what they

needed to hear, even though it might not

seem particularly

earth-shaking to somebody else.

Well, let's get back to the actual

question here,

which

um

has some

odd grammar to it that causes me to not

fully understand it.

He says, "The way I see it, all his

sutras must be from mundane speech.

So, logic seems to it being only a path

guidance.

Um

>> [snorts]

>> I don't I don't understand that. Logic I mean the first part I understand.

All his suitors must be from mundane speech. Yeah, that's wohada days. And I already mentioned that. You know, you have to use the language of the world in order to communicate to beings in the world.

So, logic seems to it being only a path guidance.

That part mystifies me. I mean logic would also be mundane. So, I mean logic isn't super mundane.

You know, logic is just part of worldly

speech.

Which makes worldly speech a little more

effective in certain ways, better at

weeding out [__] that kind of

thing.

Seems to it being only a path guidance.

That part I don't understand.

Sometimes I get asked questions that I

mean especially recently

where I just cannot figure out what the

question is.

Right there in front of me and I do not

understand it.

>> [clears throat and cough]

>> So, I mean if you do ask questions

I I ask you please I mean just for

starters try to spell things correctly

and and use proper punctuation so forth
because I have some minor OCD with
regard to that and I might be like have
this compulsive urge to like fix it.
But also just imagine someone who isn't
you reading that question.
You know, just kind of imagine yourself
reading that question for the first time
and would you understand your own
question?
Because some people are asking questions
it's like
I mean they kind of they they apparently
know what they're asking. They I mean
they understand their question, but it's
sort of like my mother, especially when

she was getting older, she would I mean,
she's she'd write me letters when I was
a monk in Burma. I'd get a letter from
her saying talking about how she did
this or or he said that, and she never
says who she or he was.
You know, it's like she just assumes
that that you can fill in the blanks the
way she can fill in the blanks, and it
just doesn't work that way.
The whole Burmese language is that way.
It's kind of like a lazy language with
lots of blanks. You know, this you just
kind of a lot of assumptions where you
just assume the other person will
understand what you're saying,
so you don't completely flesh out the

statement.

You know, because Burmese people tend to think more alike than like Western people do.

So, I mean, it's sometimes a Burmese person would ask me, "How long has it been?"

And I'd say, "How long has what been?"

And they say, "Yes."

And I get and I'll say like, "How long has what been?"

And they'll say, "Yes."

And it's like

it's it's

what do you do?

Guess? And then they just giggle at you

because you answered the question

completely differently from the way a

Burmese person would answer it.

So,

yeah.

Logic is only a path guidance. I really

don't know what that means.

So, I'm just going to move on to Fred's

second question.

Which is as follows. How can you stop

rebirth if you still have bodily needs?

And then in capital letters, food,

clothing, shelter. And then back in

small letters again, the list goes on.

Question mark.

So, I mean, what does food, clothing,

and shelter having have to do with

stopping rebirth? It's like if you still have bodily needs. But see, this is this is one of the things that I've tried to explain so many times, and a lot of people who are just kind of locked into an intellectual understanding of things, they just

I mean, it just doesn't work.

It's like

>> [clears throat]

>> How How do I even start with this?

You have bodily needs, food, clothing, shelter.

Might as well throw in medicine for the sick to get the four requisites.

Um I mean, how does that stop you

from becoming enlightened?

The Buddha had bodily needs,

food, clothing, shelter, medicine for

the sick, and he became enlightened. I

mean, it's Enlightenment is a matter of

mental states, at least at the worldly

level.

Ah, man.

Some of these Some questions is is

I'm not exactly sure how to answer them.

How can you stop rebirth if you stop

bodily Well, bodily needs are not the

same as desires and preferences and

delusion. I mean, so long as you insist

that the bodily needs are real,

then you're in the realm of delusion

because ultimately, bodily needs don't

ultimately exist. They conditionally

exist

in accordance with dependent co-arising

in a samsaric

like quasi world, a pseudo reality.

It's virtual reality. So, you've got

virtual bodily needs.

Your virtual body needs virtual food,

virtual clothing, and virtual shelter.

But, when you transcend that,

when you realize that it's all just

virtual, it's not ultimately real,

then I mean, within the the illusion,

the virtual body still needs virtual

food, etc.

But, I mean, you're just not identified

with that anymore.

So, it's transcending

the system rather than eradicating it.

And that's that's one thing that's

it it's very common. I mean, I used to

do this as a like a junior monk, for

example. You have to eradicate the

defilements.

But, it's like once you fully realize

that the defilements aren't ultimately

real,

then there's no longer any need to

eradicate them.

It just becomes irrelevant.

So,

>> [sighs]

>> let's just kind of wrestle and chew on

this a little more.

How can you stop rebirth if you still have bodily needs?

Yeah, I mean, you don't still have bodily needs at one level because it's not ultimately real. And rebirth isn't ultimately real, either.

I mean, so it's not even really a matter of stopping rebirth. It's just like going beyond it, so that it just the whole samsaric system becomes irrelevant.

But, let's just let's just try and get stay within the realm stay within the scope of orthodox Theravada.

Let's just let's be orthodox here for a

few minutes.

So, you have bodily needs, but a bodily need is not the same as craving for food, craving for clothing, craving for shelter. See, that's where the problem comes in. Second Noble Truth, all suffering is caused by desire. All suffering is not caused by bodily needs, it's caused by craving.

So, your body needs food.

I mean, that's

that's not suffering. That's not like clinging to rebirth or or clinging to samsara any such thing. It's when you start craving food, when you have attachment for food, which is different. That's when you get stuck in samsara.

And that's that's just a straightforward orthodox explanation, which I probably should have started with and and been content with that instead of getting off into

something else.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question.

This is from Philalethese.

Philalethese says, is it possible to be a good Buddhist and an artist or fiction writer? And I don't mean a monk artist who just makes religious writings, art forms, and traditional motifs.

I think it is possible. I think damn near anything is possible.

So, I think it's possible to be a good
Buddhist and an artist or fiction
writer. Um,
especially if you mean
>> [clears throat]
>> I mean, your art doesn't have to be like
traditional religious art, but still it
can be uplifting. Or even something like
Jackson Pollock, who just splattered
paint onto a canvas and deliberately
tried not to have any meaning
whatsoever. I mean, that could actually
be helpful to some degree from a
Buddhist point of view because you look
at this thing your mind wants to
interpret it, wants to attribute meaning
to it, and it's just kind of stymied. I

mean, it gets to the meaning of this painting by Jackson Pollock, you know, this color scheme and the balance and everything, but still I mean, it's reducing the amount of meaning that is polluting your mind at that moment.

You know, any kind of uplifting, you know, the good guy even like Charles Dickens.

I mean, Charles Dickens was a worldly kind of diluted guy.

But, I mean, at least the good guy always wins. That's very reliable in Charles Dickens. The good guy wins, the bad guy loses. You know, everyone gets

what they deserve mostly. Every once in a while, you know, you might have some tragic loss, you know, what was his name?

Uh, the the the slightly [__] guy in Nicholas Nickleby.

Snape? Was that his name? No, not Snape. It was something like Snape. You know, he he dies, but in a way it was kind of necessary for him to die because he had this crush on Nicholas's sister and it was never meant to be and, you know, etc. etc.

But, I mean

so long as

it's like uplifting, you know, it's like you cause the person to to be a little

less

>> [clears throat]

>> a d- a little less attached and and a

little less delusional.

Sure.

It's something that this

you know, like really great art should

have like an uplifting effect. Great

architecture also, you know.

So,

yeah, I think that it is possible to be

a good Buddhist and an artist or fiction

writer.

Even though

it's kind of borderline from a really

orthodox ancient Indian early Buddhist

point of view.

So,

I think I'm just going to move on to

Phil Atheist's second question.

Ever read Kierkegaard's Either/Or? Feels

kind of relevant to your philosophical

interests as it carefully dissects what

belief even is and makes sense of it in

the context of human life. No, I haven't

read any Kierkegaard. I've read about

Kierkegaard.

Um, and I've read Nyanaponika, like the

letters of Nyanaponika, who was an

excentric an eccentric intellectual

British bhikkhu who was ordained back in

like 1950 in Ceylon.

And he was very much into

existentialism. He was always talking about existentialism in his letters, and Kierkegaard was a kind of proto-existentialist.

Kierkegaard technically wasn't an existentialist, but you know, he was bringing up ideas that became like core ideas to like the mid-20th century existentialists.

So, I've [clears throat] I've read about Kierkegaard. I know that he was more or less of a of a existentialist, even though I'm pretty sure he was also a Christian.

So,

let's see.

Yeah, it feels kind of relevant relevant
to your philosophical interest as it
carefully dissects what belief even is.
Yeah, there was some back and forth on
on that just today and yesterday on the
Discord server. What is belief? You
know, what's what's the difference
between belief and faith? What's the
difference between belief and knowledge?
>> [snorts]
>> That kind of thing. But, I think belief
is perception. I think that belief is
just built into perception.
And so, you just have like this stray
image of something arises in your mind,
there's already belief there.
But, the the belief is very much

strengthened if you hook it up into an interlocking pattern that where it's all mutually supporting and and like stabilizing, then it the belief gets way deeper.

But, even just some random stray image that arises already has a certain amount of belief built into that.

And belief is delusion.

Belief is thinking that you know something that you don't really know.

And since faith is a kind of belief for the most part, you know, set aside something like St. John of the Cross's dark faith, but as a general rule, faith, what most people consider to be

faith, is believing in something which
from my point of view is delusional.
I've never really had a whole lot of
faith. You know, to some degree, and I
mean, you have to have a working
hypothesis.
So, for me, working hypotheses
take the place of faith as much as
possible.
You know, a working hypothesis, you
don't have to believe that it's true.
You're just
assuming, because you've got to assume
something in this world,
that it seems like it could work, and so
you give it a shot.
Working hypothesis, I think, is

preferable to actual faith.

But,

I'm sure a lot of Christians, even a lot of Buddhists, would disagree with that statement.

I'm pretty sure, and I I I mentioned this in the Discord server, that I'm pretty sure that it's in the Epistles of Paul in the New Testament, where Paul admits that all this stuff he's insisting on, he doesn't really know.

Because then it would be knowledge, and not faith. Somehow, faith is even better than knowledge.

Apparently.

But, faith is ultimately delusional,

because you think you know something

that you don't really know.

>> [snorts]

>> So, yeah, I probably I'm never going to

read Kierkegaard. It's just

I don't read much many books anymore.

I'm not alone in a cave and not

distracted, so that I could read just

the densest, thickest, most boring book

imaginable, like Hegel's Phenomenology

of Spirit,

and just expect to make it to the end of

the book.

I've got

F. H. Bradley's Principles of Logic on

that bookcase back there. I've I've been

meaning to read that for decades at this point.

I probably will never read it, cuz it's so dense, and you know, there's so many convenient distractions in the worldly life, especially when there's internet now, that I'd rather just acquire my information in in like short articles.

So, yeah, I haven't read any Kierkegaard, although I have read about Kierkegaard. And that's about as far as it gets.

So, I'm just going to move on to Philaletheist's third question.

He says, "Are you ever met with any

anxieties with regard to the question of personal legacy, whether procreative, creative, or any other kind? And since I'm assuming the answer is no, how do you get to that level where you no longer yearn there of?" Well, yeah, the answer is pretty much no. I mean, I don't have any anxieties with regard to the question of personal legacy. You know, I

I haven't had fathered any children that I'm aware of.

Um

whether I become like famous after I die,

I mean,

it doesn't really matter. Partly just

because I don't consider this samsaric world to be real. You know, it's just kind of a dream that hopefully you wake up from.

So, it's like before I wake up from the dream, I mean, am I worried about, you know, whether I'm going to become famous to the people left behind in the dream after I wake up?

In in a way, it's just like your world, the world that you're creating, just kind of poofs out of existence when you die, anyway.

So, I mean, it's it's never really struck me as anything important. You know, like some people worry like they

don't want to be naked when they die,

you know, or or like they want to like

delete files from their computer before

they die, you know,

they don't want someone to see their

porn collection or whatever. But for me,

it's like, I'm going to be dead. What

difference does it make?

I mean, it's just Yeah, for some reason,

it's just

>> [clears throat]

>> I've never really been concerned with

that sort of thing. I really don't care

if I die naked,

for example.

Uh

I mean, I can I can do these videos with

just messy hair and just being all

scruffy and disheveled and just it

it kind of [clears throat] bothers my

wife sometimes.

But

like just yesterday she wanted me to

come along with her to to somewhere and

I was wearing like this Alex Jones

InfoWars t-shirt and she's trying to get

me to change my t-shirt. It's like you

want No, I'm not going to be catering to

to the

the preferences of strangers.

So I really don't care. I mean it's it's

like any anything of importance you're

going to take with you. The only thing

you take with you is your karma anyway.

So I mean I don't know. It doesn't

really matter.

Let's see.

Let's see.

But I guess part of the question is how

do you get to that level where you no

longer yearn there of? Well, I think I

was pretty much always at that level. I

mean even as a kid.

I mean, I wasn't worried about what was

going to happen after I die.

You know, after me the deluge.

I don't remember the original French for

that.

So yeah, for in my case it is just like

a

personality quirk. I was just born that way.

I guess.

I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Siddhartha Gautama Buddha.

And Siddhartha Gautama Buddha asks Thomas strange questions. Maybe he knows something that I don't. He says, "What would you do if you go to prison? Would you practice Dharma inside there?"

And that's going to depend on the prison. I remember Mahatma Gandhi spent time in prison and he he used to refer to prison as his ashram.

Because you know, you're just alone in a

cell. You know, monasteries have cells.

Prisons also have cells.

So there is a certain similarity there.

But it would um

what I do in prison would depend on just

the environment. Am I in solitary

confinement? Could I even request

solitary confinement? In that case, I

mean, if you could request solitary

confinement, there'd be like a heavy

vibe associated with the place cuz you

might have some mass murderer in the

cell next to you.

Even though you can't speak with them or

anything, I mean, there's still that

kind of like this subliminal empathic

telepathic vibe thing going on.

But

>> [clears throat]

>> Yeah, I mean,

so long as

I was able to

As long as you don't have people like

throwing pee on me from the other cell

or that kind of thing, then I mean, even

then, I mean, you don't I mean, there's

going to be some self-discipline and

that sort of thing. There's going to be

some kind of Dharma practice.

I mean, there's any situation you can do

some kind of Dharma practice. Just

exercise patience, for example.

Just have few desires, which would make

sense if you're in prison.

If you're living in prison, you should have as few desires as possible, I suppose.

You You don't want to just be craving ice cream all the time when you don't get any.

>> [sighs]

>> So, yeah, I mean, to the extent that I was able, I would practice Dharma in prison, but it would depend a lot on what the environment was like. You know, am I Am I going to be in the same cell with with murderers or am I going to be like relatively alone or am I going to be like

bunking with some mild-mannered guy who

committed insurance fraud.

You know, it's It's It's going to depend a lot on the circumstances. All prisons are not the same.

So, I'm just going to move on to Siddhartha Gautama's next question.

Uh let's [sighs and clears throat] see here.

In the Mahila Mukha Jataka, where the Buddha, while still a Bodhisattva, resolves the problem of an elephant that had been corrupted and instilled with murderous instincts after being exposed to the speech of some thieves who were hiding in the stable, similar to what Plato says in his book The Republic that

speeches form behavior. Should we prohibit or how should we deal with discourses that are directly acoose law and harmful to others if we were able to do

do something? Words can shape or distort the collective mind and therefore their restriction is sometimes justified and I think this clashes with notions notions such as free speech.

Okay, well I never did read the Mahila Mukha Jataka. I was never really all that interested in Jataka stories just because, you know, they're obviously late. You know, a lot of them are just non-Buddhist stories with some Buddhism added, that kind of thing. I

mean, it could be interesting just for learning about ancient Indian culture and so forth, although the Dhammapada commentary is better for that in my opinion.

But you got the problem of an elephant that had been corrupted and instilled with murderous instincts after being exposed to the speech of some thieves.

I mean, this is attributing human intelligence and understanding of human speech to an elephant, which

yeah, I mean, that's a little bit sus in my opinion.

Um,

so let's [clears throat] just let's just

disregard that part.

So should we prohibit or how should we deal with discourses that are directly acoose law and harmful to others? Well, I mean, stuff that's clearly harmful to others, you know, then that's already illegal in the United States. You know, it's like the classic example is yelling fire in a crowded theater. You know, that's illegal. Or else, you know, it's like get him, you know, in like promoting violence.

That kind of thing is already illegal.

But I mean, once you start changing once you start making laws like that prohibit saying anything unpatriotic,

saying anything racist, that sort of thing, saying anything that offends a minority group or a member of a minority group, then that those laws can be um abused.

You know, it's like who's going to be in in power and even though you might have some, you know, relatively wise political faction making laws against certain kinds of speech, they might get, you know, ousted in the next election. Then you've got like Marxists taking over who's just going to completely abuse that. So, you're better off with a certain amount of chaos due to freedom of speech

than regimenting what people are allowed to say because inevitably it's going to be abused.

It's going to turn into tyranny.

It is

a slippery slope. I hate that term. It came to mind. But, you know, it's like a lot of the moral degeneracy, like the decadence in Western culture is due to like ideas of freedom of speech, you know, like

you know, female impersonators reading stories to toddlers in libraries, gay pride parades with all sorts of indecent exposure going on. It's all or just like TV shows, TV series like degenerating from like I Dream of Jeannie where

where Barbara Eden wasn't even allowed
to show her belly button in the first
season of the show because it was
considered too risqué. Elvis Presley
when he was on the Ed Sullivan Show back
in black and white in the '50s, they
wouldn't show him from the from the
waist down because it was considered too
risqué the way he was swiveling his hips
and so forth when he was singing, that
kind of thing. Um
maybe I mean the
some of that is okay.
You know, it's it's best if it's just
culturally enforced, which is the way it
used to be, but now you got like Game of

Thrones and just like

practically pornography

on

television that anybody can watch as

long as they pay for it.

Uh

So, yeah, I mean there's a certain

amount of debate that should go on on

where you draw the line with regard to

freedom of speech, but you're better off

erring on the side of too much freedom

than not enough freedom, it seems to me.

Unless you want like a more of a

regimented, more or less fascistic

society, you know, like

maybe some periods in in the Roman

Republic or Empire could could qualify

for that where, you know, everyone has to be really on the same page, but still there has to be, like I was mentioning earlier, some freedom of thought, some freedom of expression. You don't want to be so traditionalist or so ideological that any deviation from what everyone else is believing is punished.

So, gosh. [snorts]

Yeah, I do think a certain amount of just chaos

is better than just having everything regimented and controlled.

Especially when the wrong people get into power and start regimenting and controlling in a way that is just

Orwellian.

So, yeah, better to have too much

freedom than not enough, in my opinion.

Let's see.

Did I answer the question?

Should we prohibit or how should we deal

with discourses that are directly

accusal and harmful to others? You know,

like

heavy metal music that praises Satan and

this kind of thing. That was an issue

back in the '80s. I remember that.

Um

Yeah, I mean,

to have

I mean, it's it's really tricky. I mean,

how do you deal with it? I mean, the

ancient Romans had the the position of

censor

where, you know, he was

he was like

um you know, he had the power to

overthrow a law or some such that really

was undermining

the you know, the

I don't know, moral purity of the of the

nation, that kind of thing.

Ironically, the emperors just sort of

inherited that position of censor along

with a number of other positions, like

Pontifex Maximus.

But, yeah, I mean,

one thing to bear in mind is that

I mean, some sorrow is always going to be [__] up.

Humans are [__] up. Any society created by humans is going to be [__] up. There's always going to be stuff going wrong.

So,

I mean, maybe you could be very philosophical and just accept the the cycle of history. You know, strong men make good times, good times make weak men, weak men make bad times, bad times make strong men. It's just this in that just accept it as a kind of inevitable cycle.

You know, and right now we're in the good times make weak men phase. We

hardly even touched the the weak men

make bad times phase yet

this time around.

But I don't think that there really is

any way to stop that. Maybe there is.

Some kind of hard reset.

But still, I mean you can't have just

too much

like restraint on the people

because like I was mentioning before,

there's going to be no ideological

diversity, no forwards motion really.

Plus I mean people should to some degree

have the right to be foolish and make

their own mistakes.

It's just that you should have a society

that very much endorses a certain order

and certain ideals, that kind of thing.

But once you

like put that in the the power or the

control of the government

then it's going to be abused.

It's just

I mean you're never going to fix

samsara. Samsara's always going to be

messed up. So long as it is

created by messed up humans

it's going to be messed up.

And so I think it is better to err on

the side of too much freedom than not

enough.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Huey Cher.

And Huey Cher says, I have a question on reincarnation and timeline. Is it possible for people who die in 2026 to be reborn in 1875,
meaning time is not linear. The soul in quotes, can be reborn in any point of the timeline according to their karma, which also means tomorrow happened before. Anyway, congratulations on your wedding.
Well, congratulations Thank you for the congratulations.
See me now.
Maybe I shouldn't have wasn't necessary to read that part, but it's it's been done.

So, my father used to believe that. And

my father used to hope that he'd be

reborn in the Stone Age. You know, he

was just

he was just cut out

and he was constitutionally he was cut

out to be some sort of like shaman

warrior in a Stone Age tribe. Just he

Like I said before, he was more

animistic than anything else.

And that's just that's he would have

been happiest in you know, just being

like a warrior {slash} shaman

in some Stone Age tribe.

But

um

time would have to be different, I

think, in order for it to work that way because, you know, from the Buddhist point of view, 1875 has already happened. So, if you're going to be reborn into 1875, you've already been reborn into 1875.

Um

Huh, I mean, it's possible. I assume it's possible. And also, I mean, there's more than one 1875.

You know, it's I I I do think that there isn't just one version of Samsara.

That it is possible just get reborn like sideways into a kind of alternate timeline, alternate reality, or whatever.

So,

I'm not going to rule out the possibility of it. I can't really insist one way or the other cuz I don't know for sure exactly how it works.

But I do think that it is possible even though there's a good chance it doesn't usually work that way just because people have this time and space categories, you know, Kant Kant called them categories, sort of built in so that we just are obedient to these self-imposed limitations that we have created.

But you know, it is a good question. I mean, can can you be reborn into the past?

Um and I won't say that it I think it's probably possible, which means it probably happens, but I would guess that it's not the norm.

What I mean is I do think that there are like parallel universes, so to speak. The mult- the What is it?

The many worlds hypothesis. You know, I mean, my whole point of view, my my theory of everything is the uncarved block of marble, as I have harped away at many times. So, I mean, within the context of the block of marble, it should be possible. It might be a different 1875 than the historical one

behind us. See, that's the thing. You

know, it could be like this alternate

1875 you're being reborn into.

I think that might [clears throat] be

more likely

than

you know,

just being reborn and becoming your own

grandfather or something.

My father believed that I was a re- a

re- reincarnation of his grandfather,

but whether it's possible for

um me to be reborn as my own grandfather

after this,

I mean,

it might have to be like a different

version of reality. You know, you're

you're going sideways instead of

forwards or backwards in time.

>> [clears throat]

>> But, again, I really can't

can't answer the question with certainty

one way or the other other than I I

assume it is possible,

even if it is not the norm.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from

Andre A or Andrea. I'm not exactly sure.

It's Andre and then a capital A with no

space.

Andre A

or Andrea. You decide.

And whatever this person's name is,

this person asks if all beings are illusory, their actions will be illusory as well. Is it still It is still hard to me to understand how an illusion could produce true results.

Are the consequences also illusory? Yes.

It's all

It's It's [clears throat] the matrix.

It's a dream.

So, yeah. I mean, it's

the the doer is illusory. The

The action done is also illusory. The consequences of the action done are also illusory.

The only reality is nirvana.

The only reality is is just the absolute itself.

Which is not divided up into parts.

At least not like as I mean

potentially it could be, which is what

creates the 10,000 things of samsara,

but

>> [clears throat]

>> Gosh, trying to explain this stuff. I'm

trying It's not easy sometimes.

So, are the consequences also illusory?

The answer is a very simple yes.

So, let's just move on to

the person's second question.

He's The person says

I once saw a Dzogchen teacher saying

that an awakened being is free to do

whatever he wants, even killing,

slandering, cheating, dot dot dot. It is total freedom and awakening or enlightenment has nothing to do with being good. Emotions, good or bad, are fluctuations of the mind, and the purpose is to stay immovable, steady. That is why there is a strong emphasis in developing meta or bodhicitta, sort of moral training. And then the the actual question is Sounds like that, an awakened being is almost like a psychopath. What is your view? No, I wouldn't say that an enlightened being is like a psychopath. A psychopath is a person who It's [clears throat] like they have no empathy.

At least not at the conscious level. A

psychopath would be a person with lots of subconscious [__] going on that this like very tightly self-contained ego is oblivious to.

That's why they don't have much of a conscience. They don't have much of a moral sense. They got like no empathy. They don't feel a connection with other beings really. At least that's my understanding. Not being a psychopath, I really can't say for sure, but that is the impression I get.

Whereas an enlightened being, if they're fully enlightened, they might not even [clears throat] have a subconscious mind anymore. It might be all conscious at

that point.

And they're going definitely have

empathy. You know, there's going to be

connection. There I mean, it's like Pink

Floyd's wall is down if you're a fully

enlightened being.

>> [clears throat]

>> I mean, you're no longer separated by

Pink Floyd's wall from the rest of

everybody else. There's no longer this

differentiation of I and not I.

You know, it's it's just all

you know, it's just the full spectrum is

is there.

So, it's very different from a

psychopath who is

in a way a kind of spiritual [__]

Because they're they're just completely contained within this hardened ego with like this shell around it. And so, they're completely cut off even from their own subconscious mind.

In my opinion, that's that's the impression I get.

But getting back to the freedom, I mean, yeah, I mean, I used to take issue with this myself where you read in the in the Poly Suttas that, for example, an enlightened being or even a sotapanna cannot tell a lie. They just can't. It's impossible.

And I mean, that's not freedom. That's not liberation.

At least I mean, it's it's seems more

likely that they'd be like Jordan

Peterson said long ago back when he was

still relatively based.

He said, "You should be able to be a

monster and then not be one."

Not that you should be unable to be a

monster. It's just that you're able, but

you just aren't a monster.

And that would come closer to what the

sage is doing,

seems to me.

So,

let's see. [clears throat] I mean, there

there's so many ways of I mean, again,

we're we're trying to discuss what's

going on with an enlightened being when

they've just gone off the scale.

Anything you say about it is going to be

invalid.

But, like I I've said many times on

these Q&A videos, Ram Dass used to say

about his teacher, Neem Karoli Baba,

whose picture is right up there on top

of the bookcase,

Ram Dass said about him that the the the

more you get to know him, the more you

realize that there's really nobody

there. He's just a mirror shining your

own karma back at you.

So, yeah, I mean,

>> [clears throat]

>> an enlightened being, I mean, they're no

longer like an individual person. They might appear that way to an un enlightened observer, but subjectively, if that even makes any sense anymore, they're no longer this individual person who's separate from everything else. And Neem Karoli Baba up there, he used to do stuff that, according to Theravada Buddhism, a fully enlightened being or even a particularly wise one would not do. I mean, he'd just be like roaring at people and like laughing and crying and like hitting people with fruit, you know, throwing fruit at people, punching them. He'd just He'd be doing all this weird stuff that like the stereotypical

Buddhist sage

would not and even could not do.

So, that's one like a a dogmatic

Theravadan would say, "Well, there you

go.

Neem Karoli Baba couldn't have been

enlightened. He couldn't even been all

that wise. He was a Hindu with a wrong

view."

But, I mean, that could just be the the

dogmatic limitations of said devout

dogmatic Buddhists.

So,

I think that a fully enlightened being

they're still capable of doing some of

this stuff, but it's

it's like

let's let's just go with St. John of the Cross and his his description of the Catholic enlightened being, the person who has reached the stage of perfection. Which shouldn't exist. You know, it's like you read the Bible and no one is worthy. You know, the only way you get into heaven is through divine grace and all that. But, according to St. John of the Cross, the the mystical doctor of the Catholic Church,

that you [clears throat] can reach the stage of perfection where you have mortified your own self-will. And so, because you're no longer motivated by your own self-will, you are motivated by

the will of God. You become just like this empty vessel of divinity. You're like God's puppet.

And so, you just do what God wants wants you to do, which is sort of like what Ram Dass is saying about Neem Karoli Baba, where there's nobody there. It's just a mirror reflecting your own karma back at you.

In which case, I mean, it might be possible for an enlightened being to do things

that Theravada Buddhism would say they can't possibly do. They just can't. Even though they're liberated, they're completely free, they couldn't even tell

a lie. Even if I mean, they can't they

can't even want to tell a lie.

So, it is kind of tricky. I mean, part

of the trick is just trying to reconcile

some samsara with

figuring out what an enlightened being

is going to be like. It's just It's an

exercise in futility. Futility of

futilities, all is futile.

So, let's see here.

Um

total freedom and awakening. I mean, one

way I mean, one of the ways that you

become enlightened,

theoretically,

is you no longer have any ill will. I

mean, you no longer have any biases or

anything like that. So,

>> [clears throat]

>> even if you're able

to still kill somebody as an enlightened

being, you just won't want to.

I mean, it wouldn't be motivated by ill

will.

I mean, you wouldn't do anything if

you're enlightened that's clearly

motivated by unenlightened mental

states, like murderous rage, for

example.

Uh

These Dzogchen teachers, they're they're

tend to be rather

hm

unorthodox.
Tibetan Buddhists, I mean, it's sort of like the game where you're whispering a certain statement into the ear of the person next to you, and then they whisper it to the person next to them, and you go down the line until you get to the end, and it's very different from what the first person was whispering.
That's kind of happened to Tibetan Buddhism, also Japanese Buddhism to some degree. It's like at the end of the line, and it's it's mutated quite a lot from the original teachings.
Although, Dzogchen does still have this nucleus of really advanced wisdom to it.
Seems to me, anyway.

Uh [sighs]

Yeah, but it it says even in the the old like the early Theravada Buddhist text that the bhikkhu leaves behind good and evil. He's not trying to cultivate good or evil.

Cuz that's still samsara.

You know, that's still karma.

So, you just go beyond good and evil.

But, that doesn't mean that you're like a Nietzschean superman, just this ruthless exploiter of others or anything like that.

I mean, you're no longer going to have an ego. You're no longer going to have selfish desires. You're no longer going

to have You're no longer going to be motivated by hatred, ill will, murderous rage, anything like that.

>> [clears throat]

>> But, you may be reflecting a person's own karma back at them, which may mean that you're going to cause them a certain amount of discomfort or unhappiness through your words or actions. And even the Buddha was able to do that. I mean, he'd shame people sometimes, you know.

So,

yeah, I really do not think that enlightened beings are enslaved to the rules laid down upon them by certain books.

But, on the other hand, I really don't think that they're just going to become psychopaths, mass murderers, or anything like that. They just do not have what is required to be like some sort of murderous criminal.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question, also from Andre A or Andrea.

>> [clears throat]

>> This is kind of a simple one. I appreciate this one.

The person asks,

"An awakened being awakens in the illusion or from the illusion. These are quite different things." And yeah, you

awaken from the illusion. The illusion
just gets transcended.
So, I mean, to some degree, you have the
enlightened being in the illusion, but
that's mainly
with regard to people that are still
stuck in the illusion. They're going to
within the context of their own dream,
they're going to be dreaming of this
enlightened being there.
You know, that's how unenlightened
Buddhists see the Buddha, for example.
But, yeah, I mean, [clears throat]
they're just waking up from samsara.
So, that's
that's being awakened from the illusion.
At the very least, they'd be appear to

be like doing lucid dreaming.

Where they're still kind of in the illusion, but no longer like deceived by it.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question.

This is from Ethiopian Fake Tig, who always spells the Buddha b u d d a h.

And Ethiopian Fake Tig says,

"We once talked about how the Buddha would encourage everyone to ordain and remain if it was possible, but since there are still many beings that aren't enlightened and reincarnation is real, sort of,

isn't not having kids blocking the

beings from being born and ever learning dhamma? You [clears throat] also said one of the reasons you should respect your parents in Buddhism is cuz they gave birth to you and being born as a human is a valuable thing, but if there are no longer human beings, how can there be dhamma since you said monks are asked if they are human before ordination leading me to believe non-human entities cannot be ordained."

Well, [clears throat]

non-human entities would have their own realms where there would be different ways of being spiritual.

So, there is that. I mean, you don't want to just completely enslave yourself

to an ancient Indian cultural

interpretation of how reality works and

the 31 planes of existence and all that.

It's very

uh what do you call it? Like the a

Newtonian understanding of time and

space, which

I do not think is uh

particularly reliable.

But let's get up to the main question

here.

Um, do you think that not having kids is

blocking people from being born and

learning Dharma? That's an argument that

it has been used. I've I've come across

this argument a number of times before

that by not having kids, you're
blocking, you know, there's like these
beings that are like in this ghost realm
because they they can't don't have a
suitable womb to be to be reborn into,
you know, this kind of thing.
And I'm doubtful of that. This universe
is infinite.
So, I mean, it's not like
some samsara is limited to this one
planet Earth.
There are an infinite number of worlds
out there. An infinite number of Earths,
even.
So,
you just move sideways through
probability, boom. So, I don't think

that there's any long waiting list.
Unless people are just kind of limited,
you know, it's like they've got these
unintentionally self-imposed limitations
that require them to be reborn into this
version of reality or some such. Maybe
then their own karma
would also be that they're not going to
they're going to be delayed.
You know, it's their own They're not
going to be stuck in some ghost realm
unless it's their karma to be stuck in a
ghost realm.
So, yeah, I really don't think that that
is a consideration that needs to be
taken too seriously

that you're like damning souls to some sort of purgatory by not having kids and allowing them to be reborn as your own children.

I mean, it all Everything happens the way it's supposed to happen.

And if they can't get reborn in this world, let's say maybe this world gets blown up somehow, then they're going to move on to another one.

So,

yeah, and and with regard to the Buddha saying that you should respect your parents, it wasn't just because being born as a human is a valuable thing. You should respect your parents because they're the ones who took care of you

when you couldn't take care of yourself

when you were little. They created your

body and so forth in this world, and so

you should have some appreciation and

may

maybe some gratitude for that.

So, let's see here.

Yeah, I do not think that

um

not having kids is blocking the beings

from being born and ever learning Dhamma

because if it's their karma to be born

and learn Dhamma, they'll be born and

learn Dhamma. And if it's their karma to

be like on some waiting list in some

limbo, then that's what's going to

happen.

And if it's it's what happens to you is

the fruition of your own karma.

It's not like there's [clears throat]

some scarcity of of wombs that's [__]

up the way karma works.

So, I'm just going to move on to

Ethiopian Fake Tigger's next question.

He says, "Around Q&A 19 or so, which was

some time ago,

you talked about how the Buddha is equal

to any other arahant, and you go on to

cite Abhidhamma to back those claims.

But, I also remember you saying how not

reading Abhidhamma is actually better

cuz if you know it, you would have to

un-know it since it corrupts the real

teachings. So, can you perhaps cite another sutta and not the Abhidhamma to show how the Buddha and his other fully enlightened arahants are equal in wisdom?"

Well, yeah, I mean, I was just using Abhidhamma as a way of n- just using orthodox Buddhist doctrine itself to make to help me make my point that a fully enlightened Buddha is really no wiser than any arahant.

Because if you're I mean, according to Abhidharma, wisdom is the same as Amoha. Panna and Amoha are synonyms. Amoha just

means no delusion. So, if you have zero delusion,
you've maxed out on wisdom. And so, a Buddha has zero delusion. Even a dry visioned arahant who doesn't even have psychic powers also has zero delusion. Wisdom is the same. So, then the difference would be that the Buddha maybe is like more intelligent, which is different from wisdom.
You know, he's got charisma. He's got originality, a kind of spiritual, maybe intellectual genius that then makes him more effective.
But still, with regard to wisdom alone, you got zero delusion, zero delusion.
So, let's see. What's the actual Can you

perhaps cite another sutta and not the Abhidharma to show how the Buddha and his other fully enlightened arahants are equal in wisdom?

Well, I mean,

the Buddha himself [clears throat] is called an arahant. Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa. And there are a few suttas that refer to an enlightened being as Buddha. I mean, Buddha just means awakened.

I do not think that originally the Buddha or Buddha was different from any other enlightened being. He was the first one who started the tradition. But I don't think that there really is some

sort of vast

chasm between a Samma Sambuddha and just

a lowly arahant.

>> [snorts]

>> That was just sort of

cooked up later on with glorification of

the founder of the religion, which

happens in most religions. I mean, look

what happened to Jesus of Nazareth. He

got turned into God almighty.

And Mahayana Buddhists turn Buddha into

into some kind of capital G God also.

So,

yeah, I'm not exactly sure what the best

sutra would be

in which

the Buddha is like denying that he has

anything more than other fully enlightened being would have. I mean, I'm sure it's in there that, you know, it's like the goals of enlightenment were the same I mean, it's like what you attain, what the Buddha attained is essentially the same as what any other fully enlightened being would attain. Except maybe some fully enlightened beings wouldn't get so many psychic powers, that kind of thing. That'd be like the main difference.

And there are sutras, I don't recall the names of them. There are sutras where I mean, the Buddha is saying that I mean, this is what happens when you become

enlightened, and it's it's not a

different enlightenment for the Buddha

than for any other enlightened being.

So,

I mean, going with tradition, the Buddha

is

like

qualitatively

better or higher than ordinary arahants

simply because you know, he has purified

his his paramis, the 10 paramis. You

know, he he perfected them. And that's

not really not even found in the oldest

texts. The whole 10 paramis and how the

Buddha has to purify, has to perfect all

of them before he becomes a

sammasambuddha and all that. That's just

later developments with regard to
devotionalism and glorification of the
founder of the religion.
So,
yeah, I mean there are suttas that could
do the job, but I do not recall the
names of them. I mean, I have come
across suttas that do pretty clearly
imply that you're either enlightened or
you're not enlightened.
I mean, that's the older texts are like
that. I mean, the Buddha himself is like
he's just saying, you know, I became
enlightened, you can become enlightened,
too, if you do this, this, and this that
will increase your odds of becoming

enlightened.

But really, just the glorification of a samyaksambuddha into almost God or in with ma- some Mahayana Buddhists, it really is just literally capital G God under a different name. Like like a a Roman emperor couldn't be called a king, but he was still an imperator. You know, it's kind of like that in Mahayana Buddhism. They're not going to call Buddha capital G God, but I mean, he's better than God.

So, yeah, I mean, if you if you study the texts, you have some good idea of how to separate

wheat from chaff or sheep from goats.

You know, you read GC Pande's Studies in

the Origins of Buddhism, which gives
some fairly good guidelines for seeing
what is more likely to be an old and
closer to original text and what is
later to be just a later addition with,
you know, all sorts of fairy tale
elements and that kind of thing added.
Hyper-systematization,
that kind of thing.
Uh
But yeah, since I cannot really cite any
particular sutta because I didn't really
do my homework for answering this
question, I think I'm just going to move
on to the next question.
This is also from Ethiopian Fake Tag.

He said, "Early in the Q&A you said you might make another video about your life in the various caves of Burma. Can you perhaps tell us what it was like to live in a cave and to sleep during the day due to the heat, as you mentioned, and how all that was bearable to you as a junior monk?

Well,

I mean, my father was a macho tough guy. You know, he taught us as kids how to go camping with no tent.

You know, it's just you just sleep under the open sky. You You'd bring like some cheap little tarp just in case it rains. You could string up a tarp and not get rained on.

Um you [clears throat] know, he had sayings like a little pain never hurt anyone. You know, he was just this macho tough guy and with regard to camping skills and so forth, he just instilled in me a kind of aesthetic ideal before I ever became a monk.

So, that was one reason why it was bearable. Plus just the ideal, you know, I want to be like this heroic ascetic. You know, you read the the suttas of the Sutta Nipata, where the monks were just these tough heroes. And you want to be like that. You know, it's like that's your ideal. That's your role model. So, that makes it easier, too, to

endure these hardships because there's like this heroic theme involved.

And it's just like a spiritual duty. And it's a spiritual duty that I took upon myself because I admired that. I You know, I I I like that. I wanted to be like that.

So, that part I've answered.

See, what was it like to live in a cave and to sleep during the day due to the heat? Well, I lived in several different caves. The first cave I spent one night in Thailand, which probably doesn't count. It was

kind of more of a hole in the ground than a cave anyway. You know, it kind of went down at like a 45° angle and and

had like a an

>> [clears throat]

>> a turn and then you kept going down at a

45° angle until you got to this flat

gravel at the bottom.

And it was infested with rats and

mosquitoes, and

there was like a whip-tail scorpion on

the wall that I didn't want to have

anything to do with.

And it was

I didn't get much sleep that night. I

still had wool robes from living in

America at the time.

And I was just like, you know, I had to

I mean, the monk I was with told me,

"You got to cover yourself from head to toe, otherwise the rats are going to bite you."

Which was true. I had rats crawling on me that night, chewing on my bowl bag, chewing up my sandals.

So, I had these rat-chewed sandals up until I went to India and they got stolen. Why anyone would want to steal like size 13 flip-flops that are all chewed up by rats, I have no idea.

So, then after that, I lived in Mandalay Gu, which was just a like a cube lined with like

like bricks and

plaster, you know, it was like concrete cube that was like

8 ft by 8 ft by 8 ft. And it was, you know, 15 to 20° Fahrenheit cooler than what was going on outside during the hot season. But still, when it's 100° or like 120° outside, you know, it's still like 100 to 105° inside.

But still, it was better.

And let's see, after that, I lived in uh the Thebate There was a cave near Thebate Ain Doya. The original Thebate Ain Doya city I had to lived in. And that was just it was this huge granite boulder or block. It was bigger than just a boulder. I mean, it was like 20 ft high. Just a huge granite you know, just piece of rock sitting there. And

there was like a notch at the bottom of it. You know, at the entrance, it was maybe 8 ft high, and then it sloped back to 0 ft high at the back.

And that was the cave, you know, it was just like this

this sloping notch. And when it would rain, the rain would just kind of go down the the face of the rock, and then kind of due to the adhesive properties of water, I guess, it would go in a ways before it would drip. And so, there'd be like drippy areas. You had to know which areas were dry and which weren't.

And for a while, I was sharing the cave with some kind of land crab, which is pretty cool.

Um

but I only spent a few weeks there. And

then the next cave I lived in was the

main one I lived in, which was at uh

uh Won Bow, [clears throat]

Won Bow Forest, Won Bow Forest

Monastery, or Won Bow Wildlife Refuge

Monastery, Won Bow Ba Met Doi Jaung.

And I I I One re- place that I've lived

longer than any other place was that

cave in northwestern Burma. And it was a

deluxe cave, especially after I modified

it.

But, it went in like 50 ft. It was dug

into the side of a hill.

And it went in like 50 ft. There were

See, one, two, three, four rooms.
Although, only the end room was livable
because
in the in the cave, you've got like this
cell, the circulation of air,
that just kind of flows in along the
floor of this this long corridor, like
40-ft long corridor, where I could do
walking meditation.
And then it would kind of
turn around and go out along the top.
But, the side rooms just didn't get much
air circulation. They were really
stuffy, and they were mainly just used
for storage. But, the main room at the
end was like the altar room. There was a
big altar there.

And I did most of my living there.

And still, it was It was fairly hot. I

All year round, it averaged out to like

84° Fahrenheit, summer and winter, day

and night. That was sort of like the

average temperature always at that

place. You know, the well water also was

about 84° Fahrenheit, just because

you know, just you average out day and

night or summer and winter and 84° F was

just like

the mean temperature.

And so you get deep enough into the

ground or deep down enough in the well

and it just averages out to 84° all the

time.

But still in the hot weather, it could
get really stuffy, especially right at
the time of day like in the evening when
the outside temperature was also 84 and
so the the air circulation almost
stopped. When there's a temperature
differentiation
a differential outside, it would cause
like a an air circulation cell
inside the cave. But when you get to the
point where the temperature inside and
outside were the same,
the air circulation would almost stop
and it would get really stuffy and
uncomfortable.
>> [clears throat]
>> Well, a lot of the time in the really

hot weather, I'd just be sleeping naked spread-eagle on a concrete floor with like a piece of wood for a pillow and it wasn't because I was trying to be ascetic or austere. It was just that was the most comfortable way to sleep is just flat on your back on a concrete floor with a piece of wood for a pillow. And then even then sometimes the the concrete would start heating up, I'd start sweating. Next thing I knew I'm lying in a puddle of my own sweat. I just had to get up and move to a like a fresh cool spot
on on the cement floor and the the piece of wood, I mean, it just didn't soak up

sweat as badly as a cloth pillow would.

Cloth pillow would would be like a a gym

sock within a within a couple days.

And then I also spent some time

let's see. There was another cave down

below after old U

uh

Unnandia died. He was bitten by a cobra

and died. I had to keep an eye on the

lower monastery, mainly to keep the guy

teenagers from hunting the the semi-wild

red jungle fowl or wild chickens around

the monastery. So, I moved down to a

lower lower cave to keep an eye on that

until I wound up getting really sick and

had to spend

um the rains retreat in Rangoon.

And then there was uh

one Let's see. One shot oat man

at the northern boundary of Alaungdaw

Kathapa National Park. I spent about 3

years in that cave. I guess it's I guess

it would be called a cave. Really, it

was just this huge overhanging rock

ledge. It was about

30 or 40 ft high. It went in about 30 or

40 ft. And then it was like 90 or 100 ft

wide. So, it was just sort of like this

crescent-shaped cave.

Um

>> [clears throat]

>> and just kind of an overhanging rock

ledge. It was There was a waterfall that

would come over the top of it during the
rainy season and just the spray over the
over the centuries caused like the inner
parts to collapse and just made like
this hollow place
underneath the waterfall. That's That's
where I lived
for about 3 years.
And that I mean
they all had their good points and their
bad points. One of the bad points of
that that overhanging rock ledge was
during the hot season it would just fill
up with various species of wasps. You
know, there was just tens of thousands
of these really stingy kind of
reddish-orange paper wasps all along the

back wall. That was

that was a challenge.

Um also that that overhanging rock ledge

was supposedly haunted by some sort of

like terrestrial deity that a lot of

people were afraid of. They wouldn't

come near that cave. But it that

particular deity didn't bother me at

all.

The mosquitoes bothered me. The the

horseflies bothered me.

But uh and the temperature bothered me

sometimes.

But uh the os sound of the terrestrial

deity didn't bother me.

But

I mean sleeping during the day,
sometimes it'd be so hot that you you
just couldn't sleep.
But sleeping during the day was it
didn't make sense. It was
when it's so hot that you really can't
do anything else.
It's best just to lie there motionless
and do your meditation and other
activities at night. You get up early in
the morning, go for alms round, try to
leave early enough so that you're back
before the sun gets high enough that
you're drenched in sweat.
And then you eat your meal and you do
the water things, you know, wash your
bowl,

um

>> [clears throat]

>> brush your teeth, that kind of thing.

And it depends on the weather, you know,

when you're going to take a shower. It

also depends on whether you have like a

a bathhouse to bathe in. Cuz if you have

to wear your lower robe when you take a

shower or take a bath, then you got to

take a bath earlier in the day.

And then you just get covered with sweat

by the end of the day. But if you have a

bathhouse or some other way of taking a

bath naked, then you can just go in

there and take the bath in the evening

to wipe off to you know, to rinse off

the day's accumulation of sweat and grease.

Well, let's see here. Did I answer enough of this question? Can you perhaps tell us what it was like to live in a cave and to sleep during the day?

Yeah, I mean I think I've I've done a fair amount of explaining.

You know, I've I've I've never really been a sociable sort of person. So solitude has always been easy. I've throughout most of my life, aside from the company of a beautiful woman, I've tended to prefer [clears throat] solitude.

And I'm still pretty much that way. I mean I'm just not really a particularly

sociable person. It's It's not like I'm autistic and just completely like inept in social settings. I can function in social settings fine. It's just that as a general rule, I prefer just being alone.

Or with a beautiful woman that that loves me, that kind of thing.

So,

let's see. Not nothing to do with the question though, apparently, or just the living in solitude part.

Yeah, I mean

just do it yourself. You know what it's like. You know what I'm saying? I think there's probably lots of caves in

Ethiopia. I assume that there were a lot
of sort of desert father type early
Christian monks type people that lived
in caves in Ethiopia. You might be able
to find one of those places.
Make ropes or baskets to earn a living.
>> [clears throat and cough]
>> But I think I'm going to move on to the
next question here.
And [snorts] the next question is from
Cole.
And Cole says,
"Why is listening to or playing music so
strongly discouraged and even forbidden
for monks in Theravada Buddhism?" Yeah,
I mentioned uh earlier on that um
there's a list of 10 things that monks

aren't even allowed to touch, and one of them is musical instruments.
You're not even allowed to pick up a guitar, much less play it.
So, why is listening to or playing music so strongly discouraged
for monks in Theravada Buddhism? Mainly because it's wallowing in sensuality.
You got to bear in mind that Theravada Buddhism, or Buddhism itself, arose in like the Ganges Valley of like Iron Age India, you know, 5th century BCE.
And there was already a cultural tradition well established by the time of the Buddha's Buddha's existence there,

where it's just like a this

uh like an etiquette for ascetics. And

one of the main things is you do not

wallow in sensuality. You do not have

sexual

behavior.

You don't listen to music. You don't try

to make your food taste better.

You know, it's just anything that smacks

of wallowing in sensuality, just any

kind of luxury is forbidden. Partly

because of the ancient Indian culture in

which Buddhism arose. That that was

already well established, probably had

been established since prehistoric times

in like the Indus Valley civilization.

So, playing music is just an unnecessary

indulgence in sensuality that helps to
keep you anchored in samsara.
Going with the ancient Indian
interpretation of these things.
So, that would be the main reason. And
that's a good reason of why Buddhism
doesn't have very good music.
Theravada Buddhist music tends not to be
all that great.
And I'm just going to move on to Cole's
next question.
He says, "Can music be enjoyed without
causing craving or clinging?"
Well, I mean
depends on how subtle you want to go, I
suppose. But really enjoying music would

already be kind of wallowing in

sensuality. So,

I mean, to what extent can you wallow in

sensuality without causing craving or

clinging?

You know, it's

Buddhist ethics occur I mean they deal

with extreme subtleties.

So, what like your average normie would

consider hate, for example, is

I mean, that's just like a really crude

obvious example of hate from a Buddhist

point of view because even just the

slightest

like aversion

would be considered hate

from the Buddhist point of view. Or just

the slightest attraction is still loba
or greed.
You know, it's just it can be
microscopic,
you know, from a psychological point of
view. You know, it can just be the
tiniest subconscious little bit of like
attraction or aversion and already
you've got loba or dosa.
So, can music be enjoyed without causing
craving or clinging? And in all
likelihood, to the extent that you're
enjoying it,
to that same extent you're causing at
least microscopic little additions to
your store of craving or clinging.

I mean, it's it's kind of hard to enjoy something without at least clinging to it while it's happening. You know, that's part of the enjoyment, I guess. So, you can listen to music without causing craving or clinging by just in the heard there is only the heard. You're not stringing together the melodies or appreciating any of the the lyrics or any of that. You're just in the heard there's only this auditory stimuli going on.

But, that's not really enjoying the music. It's it's kind of like deconstructing it so that you're not enjoying it.

So, I mean, I won't just flat-out insist

that it's impossible to enjoy music
without causing craving or clinging,
but
it's it just seems almost by definition
that to the extent that you are enjoying
it, to that same extent you are
wallowing in sensuality.
You know, you're indulging in sensual
pleasure like householders who enjoy
pleasures of the senses,
which especially for a bhikkhu is
kind of a no-no.
But, I mean, for a layperson, you don't
have to go so microscopic with the
ethics.
Uh it's not against the the rules, not

against the five precepts for a layperson to listen to music and enjoy it and be into it. Maybe even tap his foot or hum along.

Take eight precepts, you shouldn't even do that.

Because unnecessary wallowing in sensuality, indulgence in sensual pleasures should be kept to an absolute minimum.

Listening to music is nowhere near to what is a necessity, except for maybe a few really musically oriented people out there.

So, I mean it's it's relatively straightforward from an ancient Indian spiritual point of view.

It might seem kind of alien to
you know, a modern Westerner who's been
living in good times because of the
strong strong men that lived before
them.
And so, I'm just going to move on to the
next question, which is the last
question. In fact, somebody asked this
question just shortly before I started
recording this video. This is from O
who doesn't ask a whole lot of
questions.
He says, "Doggy Dharma, can animals
benefit from listening to Dharma talks?
I used to play them for my cat."
And I mean, I have told the story of the

frog god. You know, you got this frog who just happens to be within earshot of the Buddha when the Buddha is delivering a discourse and the frog doesn't understand what the Buddha's saying, but just the like the vibe of the higher consciousness and the soothing tones of the Buddha's voice cause the frog to just kind of be in this expanded mental state. You know, it's just sitting there wrapped.

You know, R A P T, just hearing the Buddha's voice and just sort of being uplifted by the the higher consciousness around him. When a shepherd just kind of walks up and not even seeing the frog, sets his crook down, his shepherd's

crook, and squishes the frog's head and kills it instantly. He didn't do it on purpose, you know, he didn't even look down to see the frog down there, but because the frog died in this exalted, relatively for a frog, exalted state of consciousness, he wound up going to heaven. I think it went to Tavatimsa heaven and became the frog god.

So, even going with orthodox Theravada Buddhism, some animals at least can benefit from listening to Dhamma talks. Then you've got the elephant mentioned by somebody else earlier on in a Jataka tale

who was

like harmed by hearing thieves
talking violently, poisoning the poor
elephant's mind because somehow the
elephant understood what they were
talking about. Either that or he just
got sort of the opposite of the uplift,
you know, he got dragged downwards, this
elephant did, just from the like the the
lowered consciousness of these thieves.
Even though it's hard to believe that a
thief would be at a lower level of
consciousness than an elephant, but who
knows.
So,
animals, I think
animals can benefit from listening to
Dhamma talks, although almost certainly

they're not going to understand what's being said.

So, the main benefit they would get would be from just sort of like the the atmosphere of raised consciousness in their environment because there is a kind of empathic or telepathic connection between conscious beings, whether you're consciously aware of it or not.

So,

if this animal is just listening to a like a recording with no actual living people around with consciousness could be uplifted by it, they might not receive any benefit at all.

But, if the animal's in the presence of the the wise teacher who's delivering the Dhamma talk, or at least, even if it's like on YouTube or something, the the dog or the cat or whatever animal it is is in the presence of people who are being uplifted by what they're hearing, then the animal, even though it can't understand what is being said in the Dhamma talk, it's just going to pick up on the like the the uplift in consciousness around it just through osmosis, like psychic osmosis, and that could uplift the animal.

And that's apparently what happened with the frog.

And so

yeah, I I would say that

animals can benefit from listening to

Dhamma talks, although it's not the

Dhamma talk itself that is benefiting

them. It's just the the the raised

consciousness of the beings around them

who can understand the Dhamma talk or

just the raised consciousness itself is

benefiting them because they are

partaking of that because of this

empathic connection that all conscious

beings have.

At least that's my take on it.

And that's it. I've I've done answered

all the questions

far as I can tell unless I forgot one.

So like I should always say at the beginning and pretty much never do, if you have any questions you think maybe I can answer, especially with regard to Buddhism, early Buddhism, Theravada, Dhamma, Dharma philosophy, that kind of stuff, or just what it's like living in Burma, that kind of stuff, too, then yeah, feel free to ask and um no more than three questions per person per episode. Please like and subscribe if you have not done so already. Look at the URL links below the video and uh see how that you can link [clears throat] to stuff, including the advertisements for my books on Amazon.

And aside from that, just uh be happy

and stuff.

You know what I'm saying?

Okay, then.

Here we are one more time.

>> [snorts]

>> Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 199.

I am your host Panyo Boss

and I'm pretty sure 199 is a prime

number. I didn't bother to try to factor

it out. But I'm guessing it's a prime

number. So let's just go with that.

Just accept [clears throat] it as a

matter of faith if you will.

And here I sit on a Sunday afternoon in

upstate South Carolina. It's well up

into the 90s outside. That's Fahrenheit,

not Celsius.

Or centigrade or whatever it's called

nowadays.

And it rained. It was like a

thunderstorm just a few minutes ago. So

it's like totally steamy

and sticky today. Even with ceiling fans

going fast,

air conditioning turned on, somehow it

still manages to be sticky.

And so I'm sitting here in my

What is it? My bathrobe? I was trying to

come up with a classier name for it. My

dressing gown, my smoking jacket.

And uh

my sweetheart talked me out of wearing a

baseball cap. I haven't taken a shower

yet today. It's better on sticky days to

wait until later after it stops being so
sticky. You know what I'm saying?
But I was going to wear a hat, baseball
cap in this case. This is kind of a
nostalgic hat for me because Vari-Bend
is the brand of a kind of machine that
I'm never going to run ever again, which
is kind of sad, but things change.
I've also got the
Majamac fez on standby because there is
a question that addresses Majamac to
some degree. But hell, I can even wear
this hat if I I to.
See?
This is one thing I can do
as a layperson that I could not do as a

monk is wear a hat.

Because it's against the rules of

monastic discipline for a monk to wear a

hat. In fact, you know, the stocking

caps, the beanies that some of the

strict monks wear,

especially in the west when the weather

gets cold,

still against the rules of monastic

discipline.

If the weather gets cold, a monk is

allowed to cover his head with his robe

so long as he's not in public or

[clears throat] to like

maybe fold up his sitting cloth and use

that.

But hats and caps and turbans and so

forth are verboten

according to the rules of monastic

discipline. And I forgot to introduce

you, but this is my beverage.

So,

I'm taking a gamble here by drinking hot

coffee on an already hot day, something

I could not do in Burma. Like central

Burma during the hot season,

if I drank a cup of coffee, I'd be

sweating for half an hour.

It's just the way it goes.

Here it may only be 5 minutes.

So,

>> [snorts]

>> let's see, anything else?

I guess

the next Q&A

>> [clears throat]

>> inshallah is going to be number 200,

which is not prime at all, but it's kind

of a

significant number, I guess, because

it's 200. It's got two zeros.

So, I may do a live stream

um

>> [clears throat]

>> next weekend or whenever the next Q&A

comes out.

Uh

but I'm probably not going to like set

up like an advance notice.

So,

probably around 2:00 p.m. on Sunday if

you want a live stream of a Q&A, there's

a good chance that

around 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, I'll

suddenly appear with no advance warning

other than the advance warning you are

receiving at this moment.

So,

I guess I should just uh

wait into this after a little bit more

ado

because I'm just explaining that I'm I'm

in our bedroom right now. I'm not in the

usual studio with the fish tank and

everything.

And it's not because

my goldring danios

apparently have some kind of disease and

are dying off one by one.

It's not because of that. It's just

because it's sort of like a

uh um a bargaining thing with my wife

that I'm going to get the studio on

number 200. So, I just voluntarily moved

into the bedroom cuz she's busy running

around doing stuff.

And so,

without any [snorts] further ado for

real this time,

let's move on. Oh, a little more ado.

I completely deleted my like microphone

software and re-uploaded it. So, I hope

the audio sounds better this time. I

really do. If it doesn't,

I'm not sure exactly what I'm going to

do next.

Uh fiddle ineptly with the

the like the

I don't know.

So, let's uh let's wait into this cuz

there's kind of a kind of a a large

number of questions, including some

questions from people who have never

asked questions before, at least not

under the name that they included this

time.

So, this is from Master Po. And before I

even get into his questions,

he left a comment. It's kind of strange

that he watches these Q&A videos. I think he was Whiteash Piper before he was Master Po. And he said in a comment under the previous Q&A video on YouTube, he doesn't believe in karma of any kind.

So I said, well, according to Theravada Buddhism, karma is the same as volition. So if you don't believe in karma of any kind, you don't believe in volition either. So then he kind of starts backpedaling a little bit and says he doesn't believe in karma as a kind of moral retribution kind of a deal.

But

>> [clears throat]

>> that's just a kind of interpretation

people give to it that it can have that as a kind of side effect, but that's really not what karma is.

It's not some moral [clears throat] law of the universe, anything like that. I mean, it kind of can be [clears throat] worked out that way. I mean, it can have effects

along those lines that can be interpreted that way, but karma is essentially, as I keep saying on these Q&A videos, the momentum of your mental states.

It's like habit energy. Whenever you act through force of habit, that is a very superficial obvious manifestation of

karma.

But we don't need to get real

metaphysical because that's not one of

the questions.

Master Po's first question

is something that I'm really not an

authority on.

He says, how can we tell the difference

between a podling and a normie?

And I didn't bother to look up the Urban

Dictionary to see what a podling is. I'm

sure it wouldn't be in in Webster.

But I assume a podling is a person who's

going along with the whole World

Economic Forum stuff

everyone's going to live in a pod,

they're not going to own any personal

property, they're going to eat bugs, and they're going to be happy.

So I assume that's what a podling would be, someone who's at least willing to move into the pod and start eating bugs if they are told to do so by the authorities who, of course, are only looking for the welfare of the many in all this.

So, [gasps]

I mean a normie is just someone who's blue-pilled.

So, a podling would be a certain kind of normie, I think. I mean, some podlies some podlings might be so nutty that they wouldn't even fit into the normie

category. They'd be on the fringe
somewhere.
But, a podling is just someone who is
willing
to do what the government tells them to
do, including moving into a pod and
eating bugs and not owning anything and
maybe even being happy, you know, Brave
New World was a relatively happy place
in the the Huxley novel.
Much happier than 1984. And that really
is pretty much what the the globalist
elite are striving for. It's something
much more along the lines of Brave New
World than 1984.
You know, you just get people
you know, it's using more of the carrot

than the stick

in controlling people. You know, just

appeal to their superficiality,

their worldly desires and all that.

Reward them for

>> [clears throat]

>> behaving like they're supposed to and

you use the the stick or the punishment

kind of behind [clears throat] the

scenes or you just get the whole group

to like

gang up on someone who refuses to

conform, that kind of thing.

>> [sighs and gasps]

>> So, a normie is just anyone who goes

along with the mainstream, who thinks

that their culture's interpretation of
reality, their worldview is correct
without question. They just follow
along.
That would be a normie. And different
cultures have different kinds of
normies. Like a Burmese villager, for
the most part, is a normie in accordance
with Burmese village culture.
>> [sighs]
>> But, they're not really podlings cuz
they have
no concept of pods and they probably
only eat bugs every once in a while.
Burmese people do eat bugs sometimes.
I've eaten my fair share of bugs when I
was in Burma.

Not like real bugs. I mean, not like
members of the insect order Hemiptera,
but insects in general.
So,
let's see here. How can we tell the
difference between a podling and a
normie? I mean, there's going to be some
overlap. Some normies in the west will
be podlings also. So, I mean, there's no
clear-cut
distinction between a normie and a
non-normie or a podling and a
non-podling. I guess podling and
non-podling, just the people willing to
move into the pod and start eating bugs
and so forth. That would be a podling, I

guess.

But a normie would just be anyone who

just follows along with the mainstream

and believes in it.

Who thinks that this is reality.

Hat and all.

So, yeah, I mean, it's

some Some podlings are normies, some

normies are podlings, but some podlings

are just so nutty that they wouldn't

even classify as as normies. And and

many normies are just following

[clears throat] along with some other

status quo and have no concept of pods.

And so, I'm just going to move on to the

next question, also from Master Poe.

Can you discuss the Simsapā Sūtra? Well,

I guess it'd be the Sūta. And I'm pretty sure I know what he's talking about. I didn't bother to look it up, but there is a famous Sūta where the Buddha is sitting with a retinue of monks on the ground outside, I assume, and they're [clears throat] in a Simsapā grove. Simsapā is a is a kind of tree. I don't remember what species of tree it is going with western botany.

But it's a common kind of tree in India, North India. I think they have Simsapā trees in Burma, also.

So, anyways, the Buddha's sitting in this grove of Simsapa trees and he

>> [clears throat]

>> holds like a handful of dead leaves that
I don't think he plucked them off a
tree, that'd be against the rules for a
monk, but he just picks up a handful of
dead leaves that, you know, this they're
falling out of the trees and he says
that what I'm teaching you
is, you know, can be compared to this
handful of leaves in my hand, whereas
all the knowledge that I could teach is
like all the tree all the Simsapa leaves
in this entire grove.
So,
the implication is that the Buddha's
only teaching what is essential. It's
like, according to orthodox tradition,
the Buddha was functionally omniscient.

You know, he could know anything he wanted to know.

But, he was mainly interested in teaching people about, you know, the four noble truths, you know, the unease and the end of unease. You know, like the Alagaddupama Sutta. So, the Buddha says, "I I teach two things, dukkha and the end of dukkha."

So, getting off into weird metaphysical tangents

or talking about what's going on in other countries, which presumably he could have done, talking about what's going on on other planets, which presumably

a go according to the hypothesis

he could have done, but what's the

point? I mean, how's that going to help

anyone to transcend samsara?

To free themselves from the bonds of

desire and suffering and delusion and

all that.

So,

he's being pragmatic. He just teaches

what

he thinks will be helpful. And I I don't

remember if it's in the Simsapa Sutta or

whatever whatever the Sutta is called.

But, he does say somewhere

maybe it's in that Sutta that there's a

lot of things he could tell them that he

knows that would just cause like alarm

and dread and wavering of doubt and all sorts of things in them. So, of course, he has to keep his mouth shut about that, too.

He's got to use kind of normie language or at least a refined spiritual normie language that was common parlance among like veteran ascetics in Iron Age northern India.

You know, he can he has to use that kind of worldly language, worldly desana.

But

I mean, you can't really explain the highest Dhamma in words and even try to get close to really explaining it like thoroughly or

properly. You'd have to like deviate so far from the ordinary person's experience, including the ordinary ascetic's experience, that you're just going to like cause confusion and doubt and all sorts of things.

So, the Buddha just taught what was essential, what was important to know in order to become enlightened or at least to increase your odds of becoming enlightened. And the rest of it, I mean, you want to become omniscient, you can learn that stuff, too.

So,

I hope I didn't describe the wrong sutta cuz I'm moving on to the next question.

This [clears throat] is from Romeo.

So, Romeo says, "I realize that this is pretty basic for you and most of your viewers, but can you please break down the concepts of dualism versus non-dualism in as simple and comprehensive a way as possible?" And I did consider a few times like actually doing homework for this and like planning out my answer in advance. But in a way, that's kind of cheating. So, I'm just going to I'm just going to take a run at it here. First of all, there's more than one way of interpreting dualism. Like philosophical dualism, at least in some circles,

refers to a dualism of mind and matter.
That mind and matter are both ultimately
real, but they are qualitatively
different.
And Theravada Buddhism does an even more
elaborate version of this,
but that's not what I'm talking about
and probably not what Romeo is talking
about. Like Advaita Vedanta, like
non-dualist Vedanta, isn't referring
just to the differentiation of mind and
matter.
I think, like René Descartes, was one of
these kind of philosophical dualists who
considered mind and matter to be
ultimately real and different from each
other. So, you got at least two ultimate

realities, mind and matter.

But, as I say, that's really not the

kind of dualism or non-dualism that I'm

referring to when I refer to

non-dualism. Um mostly non-dualism

it's I mean, you could call it the

non-dualism of subject and object.

But, the way I generally look at it,

it goes back to Hegel's first

um you know, his trilogy of thesis,

antithesis, and synthesis in his logic,

which is pure being is the like the

first thesis, pure being.

Then the antithesis, pure non-being.

So, according to Hegel, the the thesis

and the antithesis just merge into each

other because neither one of them has
any determinate content, any like
distinguishable features.
So, they're I mean, they're essentially
the same and throughout the rest of
Hegel's logic, he just accepts it as
given that like infinity and nothing are
the same.
So,
he has to come up with the synthesis.
And the synthesis is like contrast.
There has to be contrast for there to be
any kind of multiplicity in this world,
for there to be any differentiation of
this from that.
And that's really what dualism is for
me, is the contrast. At the very least,

if you perceive something, there has to be that something, plus there has to be like the background, like figure and ground. That is like the the primordial dualism. I think that's would be more primordial than the differentiation of subject and object.

So, yeah, that's that's how I would define non-dualism

is the elimination of contrast in one's attempts to understand reality.

That to to eliminate multiplicity, which multiplicity relies upon perception. It is an artifact of perception. Like I've said before, in order to have differences, like even the difference

between figure and ground, there has to be contrast, which requires relations. So, the two main relations are same as and different from. There are other relations that can be thrown in, but those are like the two basic ones, same as and different from.

Whatever you are considering to be the it or the that, that's all same as, and everything that isn't included in that is different from.

And that same as and different from is not found outside in the empirical universe. It is subjective.

Like a chemist, I've said this many times, a chemist can analyze a sample of matter and break it down into its

component parts. He's never going to isolate, he's never going to single out pure different from or pure same as. That's just like a concept. It's a perception.

And so, the whole 10,000 things that the myriad things of samsara, as the Dow teaching puts it, it's it's produced by dualism. It's produced by sort of perceptual multiplicity, artificial multiplicity.

And then the famous the famous statement in the Dow teaching is from the Dow came the one, from the one came the two, which is the inception of dualism, and from the two came the 10,000 things.

Once you got dualism, it's off to the

races.

You create samsara.

At least you create the world, {quote}

{unquote}.

So,

that's I mean, he wants [clears throat]

me to to do this. Romeo here wants me to

explain it as simply

as possible. And so, if I just keep

elaborating, it's going to come less

simple, isn't it?

But that's pretty much the basics right

there.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. And the next questions

are from Fred, and those of you who read

the comments know that Fred just kind of

like

like peppers the comments, the comment

section of YouTube, with various pithy

kind of comments, some of which

maybe are legit questions, and some of

which are just like rhetorical,

some are just observations,

and it's hard to tell

whether Fred is really asking a question

that is

in which he is expecting an answer, or

for which he is expecting an answer.

But he has asked four questions

under the previous Q&A,

which is transgressive,

and his name is going on a list.

>> [sighs]

>> But one of the questions is really simple to answer.

Um so, I might just indulge Fred. I I reserve the right to break my own rules. And I also reserve the right to punish severely anyone for any reason whatsoever.

I mean, I don't necessarily exercise that right, but I reserve it.

So, Fred says, "What's the penalty for a monk smoking cannabis?" And somebody in the comments pointed out that I've answered this question before.

That cannabis or bhanga, as it is called in Pali, nothing to do with the the the

English word bong, which at first I

thought that would be kind of an easy

[clears throat] thing to follow. It's

like

still in in India

that

cannabis can be called bhang, like b h a

n g.

But apparently bong, the word bong, like

a water pipe for smoking marijuana

mostly,

um

it comes from some Thai word that means

like a bamboo tube.

I don't know.

Maybe.

Maybe it's just a conspiracy.

But the penalty for a smoke monk smoking smoking can a monk smoking cannabis. So, it is allowable as a medicine. Cannabis is allowable according to the rules of monastic discipline to be used medicinally. And as the the comment replier said to Fred in the comments, that monks are allowed also to have a pipe for inhaling medicinal fumes, if you will.

But

uh the the commentaries, [clears throat] like

Buddhaghosa, really did not know how cannabis was supposed to be used. I think the only example of cannabis being

used in the commentaries medicinally is
that a monk is supposed to just roll in
it and it and it induces sweating. Which
seems like a like a wild guess for some
from somebody who was really clueless
and didn't know.
I've never heard of anybody rolling in
cannabis to induce sweating.
It seems like just the like the
energetic [clears throat]
rolling around might induce the sweat
more than having any cannabis there.
But it does say that a monk is allowed
to use a pipe
for inhaling medicinal fumes.
So the question is is it medicinal or

not? That would be the main thing. So
like some people would just throw
cannabis into the fifth precept for lay
people
that just any intoxicant
you know, aside from you know, the the
politically correct ones, you know, the
acceptable ones like caffeine
or even nicotine like in Thailand.
That you know, it's just
fifth precept just rules that out.
Although of course monks don't
necessarily follow the five precepts
according to the the Patimokkha rules,
it just strictly says alcohol.
So it's
What is it? Majjapana [clears throat]

is the word used in in the the rule of
monastic discipline and not the fifth
precept, which is intoxicating drink
literally.
So
it is extremely likely that [laughter]
people were smoking marijuana in
northern India
for a for a very long time. You know,
the Indo-Europeans
apparently like the Indo-Aryans who
invaded probably were already smoking
the stuff. Scythians, I've read some
wild stuff about Scythians like when a
Scythian chief would die
they would build a kind of proto-pagoda

for him, but then when they would mourn
they'd be like cutting off pieces of ear
and just sitting in tents, they have
like a bale of cannabis burning in the
middle of them. So, they'd probably just
get just blasted out of their minds.
And they were
culturally and to some degree
genetically related to the Indo-Aryans,
you know, so the northern India Indians
of the Buddhist time.
Especially the upper classes at the
time.
So, [sighs and snorts]
the penalty for a monk smoking cannabis,
according to my interpretation, which is
an interpretation I came up with as a

monk, is if it's for medicinal purposes, which theoretically could even be caused to like, you know, reduce stress, that kind of thing. You're all stressed out, you you

you smoke some cannabis to help you calm down, even that might be allowable. But if you're doing it for fun, you're doing it for

recreational purposes,

then it would be a dukkaṭa offense for taking a medicinal substance without there being a medical need.

And so, as a monk, I considered it to be kind of a borderline case where a monk is smoking cannabis for spiritual

reasons. You know, it's sort of like
taking ayahuasca or or psychedelics.
That can have a legit spiritual benefit
for some people under some
circumstances.
So, that would be kind of
I mean,
you'd have to be very lawyerish, I
think, to really justify that.
But at worst, it's a minor offense for
taking a medicinal substance without a
medical need for it.
And I'm just going to move on to Fred's
second question, which I'm going to skip
over pretty quickly because he asked a
transgressive four questions.
Shame.

He says, "Do baby boys play with their willies?"

Why he wants to know this?

Who knows?

But I can say that some do because I have actually seen a baby boy, maybe 1-year-old, still not even toddler yet, you know, not walking yet or speaking, that yeah, he was like humping the floor and stuff.

His mama As soon as she noticed it, she like hurried over and picked him up and carried him into another room.

So, those kind of instincts are they're already intact in a newborn baby boy.

They found that baby boys, you know,

even little baby boys prefer pretty

babysitters to ugly babysitters. They've

done studies on all this kind of stuff.

So, like sexual urges and so forth,

they're still undeveloped, but they're

still kind of in a nascent state even in

in baby boys.

But that was the question I was just

going to kind of skip over.

So, let's just move on to the next one.

From Fred.

He says, "Is the pursuit of happiness

with a woman folly?"

Well,

I think it often is,

but not necessarily.

For example,

you you're a normie. Let's say you're a

Burmese subsistence farmer,

and you just do not have a spiritual

calling.

You know, you're just not ripe for

renouncing the world and striving for

enlightenment. So, you're going to

become a subsistence farmer. You're

probably going to settle down with a

nice girl, raise a family, farm your

fields, and rely on your children to

support you when you get old.

And

>> [gasps]

>> I mean,

you can still pursue happiness.

I mean, there's nothing necessarily

wrong with that so long as you it's not

like pathological.

You know, it's just natural you want to

be happy, and you want to increase your

odds of living a life at ease.

And so, there would be a certain amount

of wisdom involved in choosing the right

girl.

You want a woman who's going to be like

helpful to you, even spiritually. Like

um

>> [clears throat]

>> there's a saying in Burma that if you're

going to get married, marry a village

girl.

You know, it's like sit a city boy
should look for a village girl to marry
because the city girls, you know,
they're superficial and worldly. They
don't have the grounding in Dhamma that
a lot of village girls have. And the
most virtuous people I've ever lived
among were Burmese villagers, especially
in certain areas of Burma.
So, if you can find a woman who's wiser
than you
or at least equally wise who can give
you good advice
you know, that kind of thing
then it could be helpful, especially if
you're just not ready to renounce the

world and go alone like the horn of a rhinoceros.

I mean, you could say it's all folly if, you know, if you're not fully enlightened. You know, it's all foolishness. It's all moha or delusion. So, yeah, in that case, you could say the pursuit of happiness with or without a woman would be folly.

But

I mean, it's not necessarily a bad thing and for a lot of men, it is beneficial to them. I mean, a lot of guys, they're like party animals, irresponsible you know, just no furniture in their apartment. You know, they don't own their a home, you know, they're just

renting and everything. And then, they hook up with a woman
and and maybe like start having kids and all of a sudden they have this sense of responsibility. Like I need to be a good husband and a good father. And so, it just turns their life around.
That happened to my brother once. He accidentally got a woman pregnant and he just like accepted the responsibility of taking care of that child and the woman. And I mean, he was very irresponsible beforehand and it just turned him around.
He became a responsible person all of a sudden.

So, that kind of stuff happens, too.

But just stay out of the danger zone,

you know, redheads, strippers, anyone

named Tiffany.

You want to avoid those.

At least uh long term.

So, let's just move on to the next

question here.

Also from Fred.

Transgressive fourth question.

Once he realizes he's on that list,

he he may uh well, he shouldn't regret

it because regret is is always bad

karma, but we'll just leave that aside.

So, Fred's transgressive fourth

question. Most people think karma is

retribution, so doesn't Angulimala case

prove his this theory wrong?

No. I mean,

most people think karma is retribution

and sometimes even in text, I think

Bhikkhu Bodhi refers to karmic

retribution

as a Pali translation of English

translation of something in Pali. I

don't remember what word he's

translating as retribution.

But I mean, it can work that way, you

know, to some extent there is a like

breeds like or for every action there's

an equal and opposite reaction kind of

stuff. I mean, that's kind of built into

the system, you know, sort of cosmic

balance. There's a kind of equilibrium
as any system seeks equilibrium. So,
you've got any kind of imbalance pushing
too far in one direction, there's going
to be pushing back the other way.
But that's really not what karma is.
Karma, as I've said before, I said it
already today,
you know, it's the momentum of your
mental states. It is
usually translated as volition. You
know, there's the famous text that that
equates karma comma with chetana. And
chetana usually is translated as
volition, although I think there may be
other words that are better.
Just like will or even urge. You know,

it's like the motive force of your

mental states.

So, yeah, Angulimala, he did get he did

get beaten up a lot. He got rocks thrown

at him and everything. But, the thing is

Angulimala, when he became enlightened,

freed himself

from samsara. I mean, he was still

apparently

in samsara until his body died,

but still

I mean,

it's like karma

How do How do I How do I even say this?

It's like going with orthodox

the orthodox interpretation. Once you

become enlightened, you're no longer

making more karma. This like your past

karma still will have its effects,

but

you you freed yourself from it. And

[laughter]

in Angulimala's case, I mean, he was

literally a serial killer.

You know, he killed lots of people. He

tried to kill the Buddha and then the

Buddha kind of converted him

and inspired him to you know, like

stop being a serial killer.

>> [laughter]

>> There's a chapter in a book called uh

let's see, How Buddhism Began by uh

>> [clears throat]

>> he used to be president of the Pali Text Society, William No, Richard Gombrich. He has an entire chapter on was Angulimala uh like a a Kali cultist. You know, that he was still spiritual. It's just that he had some weird tantric way of practicing it up until he met the Buddha.

So, that's possible. I mean, Angulimala, even according to orthodox tradition, he had a deep spiritual root. It's just that he got led astray somehow. You know, he had he had a combination of good and bad karma.

Sort of like my father. I mean, he

wasn't like Angulimala. He wasn't a
serial killer. He had killed people
before as a soldier in World War II.
But, he was like
like karmically, he was like a bull in a
china shop. He had lots of good karma,
also lots of bad karma.
So, Angulimala would be a more
exaggerated case of that, I think.
>> [sighs]
>> So, I mean, karma can be viewed as
retribution, although it's not any kind
of conscious purpose behind karma. It's
just that's just the way it works out a
lot of the time.
But, Angulimala's case doesn't really
prove that theory wrong. You know, he

still had lots of problems after he became enlightened. It's just that he was pretty much immune to Dukkha at that point. At least to the mental mental unease.

So, I mean, even according to orthodox tradition,

um I mean, your good and bad I mean, you don't have to have absolutely pure karma, just no bad karma at all in order to become enlightened. This other groups like the Jains believe that. You have to exhaust all your karma in order to become enlightened. The Buddhists don't teach that. You can still have bad karma in your past. Maha Moggallana, he still

had the karma of just being literally beaten to a pulp. He was murdered at the end of his life, even though he was not only fully enlightened being, but he was one of the Buddha's two chief disciples. Still, he had this bad karma from a past life,

and it worked itself out according to tradition.

So, let's see here.

I guess I sort of answered that one. I'm just going to move on to the next one.

This is from Clefy.

And Clefi says, "Buddhism for the 21st century, four noble truths, five precepts, Heart Sutra. What do you think about this structure? Would you add

anything?" Well, of course I would add
something. I mean, what kind of Buddhism
is that? You got four noble truths, five
precepts, and the Heart Sutra that is a
Mahayana text. It's not even Theravada.
So, there'd be zero
like Pali texts in Buddhism for the 21st
century.
I don't think that's a good idea at all.
So, just going with like the orthodox
Theravadan
interpretation of things, the most
important part of Dhamma
is the rules of monastic discipline.
It's vinaya.
Um like according to the legends, when

Buddhism gradually disappears from this world, when Dhamma disappears from this world, the last thing to disappear will be the four parajika rules.

So, long as you still have the four parajika rules, you still have Dhamma in this world. But when those disappear, Dhamma disappears, and then all you can have is pacceka Buddhas after that until the next Buddha comes along and starts the wheel of Dhamma turning again.

So,

yeah, I mean, you definitely have to have the rules of monastic discipline in the 21st century, and might as well keep all of them.

No point in saying, "Well, these ones

are obsolete. Let's get rid of those."
And then you have some other saying,
"Well, these ones are cause
microaggressions. We need to get rid rid
of those, too." And the next thing you
know,
you you got something that's just silly.
So,
yeah, four noble truths would have to be
in there. Some interpretation of
dependent co-arising ought to be in
there because there are texts that say
that is just essential to Dhamma, even
though almost nobody understands it.
Heart Sutra, I mean,
I I like the Heart Sutra as Mahayana

Buddhist texts go, it is a good one.

But still the Atikawaga, I think would

be more important than the Heart Sutra.

The Atikawaga is the largest fragment of

archaic Buddhism still in existence in

my opinion.

So,

Buddhism for the 21st century,

I mean, why change it? Just because it

went from 1999 to 2000?

Why change Buddhism because of that?

Because the the culture has changed?

Well, Theravada hasn't really changed

all that much

since 25 centuries ago.

Well,

close to 25 centuries ago.

Uh I'm starting to feel like Sticks
Hexenhammer with this hat on though.
It's it's kind of somewhat resembles a
pirate hat.
And if any of you know Sticks
Hexenhammer 666, tell him to get his
tooth fixed for for all that's holy.
I mean, it's just awful. I bet he loses
at least as many viewers
by just having this snaggle snaggle
tooth just broken stump of a tooth up
front than he gets from the pirate hat
or just being drunk all the time,
wearing
clothes with holes in them, hiding out
in some apartment in New York City from

the police.

But getting back to Cleve Heat's

question,

uh Buddhism for the 21st century, I

don't see why I mean, changing

[clears throat] a religion

to fit a degenerate

society or culture

is suicidal.

It It destroys the religion.

>> [snorts]

>> So,

you're better off having

uh like a conservative religious

tradition that stubbornly refuses to

change so long as so long as it has at

least a few followers than to turn it

into something super popular by just
like mutilating it and mutating it and
turning into something that the founder
of the religion himself would not
approve of.
So, that all applies to any religion,
not just Buddhism, Christianity, too.
>> [sighs]
>> I mean, some religions there are kind of
syncretistic or they kind of evolve over
time without like an original founder
necessarily. Judaism is like that.
Hinduism is like that where there's not
just one founder.
But, it's just sort of like a a joint
venture, like a team effort over

centuries.

Then,

yeah, it it would make more sense to at

least make new additions without

necessarily getting rid of any of the

old stuff.

Unless you just want to make a new

religion out of it.

So, yeah, I mean, I'm I'm conservative

in that regard. With regard to religion,

I'm fairly conservative. So,

yeah, I wouldn't I wouldn't necessarily

change anything just because it went

from 1999 to 2000.

Or just because Dhamma went from

Buddhist Asia to scientistic America.

Semi-Christian scientistic America.

Oh, and I really hope that
you know, we are recording, but I really
hope that the microphone is working
better now because I did just delete my
my software for like video editing with
the the audio filters and everything in
it and uploaded an updated version,
which I hope is working.
But you can't really expect me to do
like real sound checks just to make
sure. That's just That's crazy talk.
So, let's see here. Yeah, I guess I kind
of answered Clefi's question. I mean,
there's What aspects of Buddhism for the
21st century should be more emphasized?
[clears throat]

Well, I mean, mindfulness has really taken off in the West. It's taught in hospitals now.

So, there definitely should be some mindfulness.

Um you know, Satipatthana Sutta?

Maybe Maha Satipatthana Sutta, which explains the Four Noble Truths?

>> [sighs]

>> Ah.

Yeah, I mean, emphasis on mindfulness and emphasis on not clinging to views. I mean, that would be helpful for a lot of people just to have it as an ideal. You know, the horizon that you use to steady yourself because there are so many people, including so many Theravada

Buddhists, who are just vehemently

adhere to some point of view,

which might not even be a Buddhist point

of view.

And it's just

you can't really talk to them. So, that

would be another

thing that I would emphasize in 21st

century Buddhism, especially in the

West,

is like the whole Attakavagga theme.

Don't believe anything. Don't cling to

any point of view

cuz it's all delusional anyway.

I mean, you have to be working with

hypotheses just in order to function.

But still don't cling to them. Hold them

in an open hand instead of a clenched

fist.

So, I wouldn't add Well, I wouldn't add

anything really.

Um but I would

I mean, you could decide what needs more

emphasis in a different culture.

So, mindfulness and just not clinging to

views. I mean, especially if if the

people on X would get that idea

that you shouldn't be clinging to views,

you'd have a lot fewer just fanatical

rage bait [__] posters on

sites like X.

Some of them are just

um like cynics, you know, they're just

shitposting for the sake of getting

clicks from rage bait and all that.

But a lot of them they'd probably really

believe that, for example, Carmelo

Anthony is innocent because he was black

and the person he killed was white.

>> [sighs]

>> But we don't need to get into that, even

though I just did.

So let's just move on to the next

question.

This is from Q Andrew.

This is kind of interesting question.

Q Andrew asks, "Does the word shaman

have any etymological connection to

samana, or do they sound similar only by

coincidence? And I have read that the

word shaman does come from

like the Sanskrit word sramana."

So what happened, according to the

theory I read,

is Buddhism made its way onto like the

Tibetan Plateau and into Mongolia,

where you have

a renunciant in Pali is called a samana.

In Sanskrit it's a sramana, where which

also is like the basis for the word

ashram.

But when it gets out into

places like Mongolia that are kind of,

you know, outlandish, so to speak,

the the Buddhism is getting more and

more incorporated with

like local shamanism, you know, like
witch doctor kind of stuff.
And so the witch doctor would start
being called a kind of sramana or
shaman. And this spread into like
Siberia.
And I think that's where the word shaman
originally comes from is like Siberian
tribes, Asian Siberian tribes, not, you
know, Russian-speaking Russians
necessarily, but, you know, sort of uh
I don't know.
Distant relatives to the people who
crossed the Bering Land Bridge into
North America and became American
Indians.

And like Eskimos.

So, I have read that there that the word

shaman is derived from the Sanskrit word

shramana,

which has the Pali cognate of samana,

which I usually translate as philosopher

in my translations, you know, like

brahmana. Oh, like see, shramana

brahmana would be philosophers and

priests. You know, it just kind of

it kind of comes out smoothly that way.

So, let's see.

>> [sighs]

>> I guess I answered that question. Time

to move on to the next one.

This is from RFS.

And this is a practical question that's

relatively easy to answer.

RFS says, "How would you stay dry and avoid getting mildewy robes during the rainy season?"

Well,

um

I guess like I could start with the way they would do it like at a a meditation center in Rangoon where they have electricity, if some of the monks would just take an electric iron for ironing clothes, and even though you don't have a clothes dryer, you got a hot iron, you iron your robe, and just the heat will dry it out.

So, if you've got access to electricity,

you can use that kind of iron. Um I mean, out in the villages, they also have irons for ironing clothes, but the way they work is it's like definitely pre-Industrial Revolution stuff where it's the iron, you know, has the handle, it's got the flat kind of boat-shaped bottom, but on top there's this hollow place where you put in like coals, you know, like embers from a fire, and that heats it up, and then you can iron it that way, but I've never really heard of monks using those out in the forest monasteries.

Um I have heard of in a forest monastery, I had I knew this monk who made this contraption. I tried making

one myself. It's sort of like a teepee made of bamboo poles, and then you have like a little stand in the middle where you light candles, and then you kind of wrap your robe around the teepee, and the heat from the candle will very gradually semi-dry out the robe.

But I didn't use it didn't use that method much anyway. Didn't really [clears throat] work very well, in my opinion. It kind of worked, better than nothing.

But as a general rule, I think the way monks traditionally, like forest monks, like ascetic forest monks, traditionally deal with wet robes, is you just wear

them wet, and your body heat dries them out. Or another way you can do it is just cover yourself with it at night, use it as a kind of blanket, and over the course of the night, your body heat will dry it out. And you you feel kind of cold and wet and icky, but you're supposed to be an ascetic and not be such a whining baby about it.

So just do it.

Even my my washcloth,

>> [clears throat]

>> I would have to put it on top of my head. That's the only way it would dry out during the rainy season.

You know, you got like this little washcloth, which is enough if you shave

your head, [laughter]

that's enough to dry yourself off after

you take a shower or take a bath. You

just put it on top of your head,

body heat dries it out.

>> [sighs]

>> So, I mean, a monk should only have one

set of robes anyway.

And if you do use the blanket method,

you can have a dry robe over the top of

you with the wet one over the top of

that, and the body heat will still

percolate through and dry it out that

way.

But sometimes the only way to dry out a

wet robe is just wear it wet, and your

body heat will dry it out.

And if you think that would make me too

cold and icky, then you're not being

very ascetic or austere, are you?

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question.

This is from Rui.

>> [gasps]

>> And Rui says, quite like the expression

samsaric commentary,

do you think it still plagues the stream

enterer? And

this [clears throat] is kind of a

situation that comes up occasionally

where

just as a theme of my talks,

I will say that, for example, I don't

really believe the 12 Nidana theory of dependent co-arising originated with the Buddha himself.

Or in this case, I really do not believe that the four stages of Arya-hood originated with the Buddha himself.

And it's like people just kind of were locked in to orthodox Theravada, assume that I'm completely orthodox in every respect, and then ask these questions that to me are just academic.

You know, it's like how do how do I answer this question when I don't even think that the stream enterer as described in the texts is real.

So, in my opinion, a stream enterer or a

sotapanna, as they are called in Pali, originally just meant a new convert to Buddhism.

And then they got turned into superhuman beings later on, just like first jhana, which is just elementary correct meditation, got turned into a superhuman mental state by later commentators or later monks,

because they didn't really understand it.

For example, the four stages of Arya-hood are mentioned nowhere [clears throat] in the Samannaphala Sutta, which the whole sutta, which is considered to be quite old, is the Buddha describing the benefits of living

the monks life. And he starts with just

you get more respect and so forth and

works his way all the way up to

enlightenment. Those four stages aren't

aren't mentioned at all.

Which is kind of a

a glaring absence.

So,

um

let's just go with orthodoxy. Sometimes

I have to answer the same question

twice. I have to give like the orthodox

Theravada Buddhist answer and then I

give my own best answer

if I do not agree with what orthodox

tradition says, which does happen

sometimes.

So, going with orthodox tradition

that a certain kind of samsaric

commentary would still

I mean a sotapanna could still have it.

I mean he wouldn't be like egotistical

about it because he would have already

um pretty much transcended the idea of

of ataditti.

But still he'd be thinking.

And just thinking about all kinds of

stuff possibly.

You know, hear a dog barking instead of

just hearing hearing just auditory

sensation that you're you're focusing

your attention on.

Even a sotapanna might be wondering

whose dog is that? It's being really

noisy.

Hope it's not in our backyard.

That kind of thing.

And if

a stream enterer is just a new convert,

then of course a new convert is likely

to still have samsaric commentary going

on.

So,

yeah, a stream enterer would have wiser

samsaric commentary going on. I mean

going with the orthodox tradition.

But still, I mean he's not just sitting

there and in mental silence all the

time.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from MFiles.

And MFiles

um had me watch a short YouTube video

about, let's see,

it was about

nature being conscious and animism and

people taking psychedelics getting more

insight into this and becoming more

animistic. And this guy was apparently a

botanist, like a scientist.

So, MFiles says,

>> [snorts]

>> "Why the Buddha ignored plants as

sentient beings and the possibility of a

rebirth in this state?"

Uh and [clears throat] then he's just

got some commentary here that doesn't
really affect the question
as far as I can tell. Still talking
about plants or better about gardens, I
work as a gardener and I think it falls
under the category of wrong livelihood.
I have to spread poisons on the soil and
on plants, dig in the dirt, and all
those things that kill beings and
destroy their shelters. According to
Tibetan Buddhists, this is even worse.
They say I am messing with nagas and
this is very serious.
Very in capital letters with an
exclamation point after serious. I'm not
proud of that, but so far there is no

new job on the horizon.

Okay, so let's get back to the the question with the has the question mark. Why the Buddha ignored plants as sentient beings and the possibility of a rebirth in this state? Well, he didn't completely ignore plants as sentient beings. That in the rules of monastic discipline

um

>> [clears throat]

>> it is stated that plants are considered to be ekindriya jiva or one facultied life. Like [snorts] the average human, according to Orthodox Theravada Buddhism, has six faculties.

[laughter]

Let's see if I can remember. You got
seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting,
tactile sensation, and mind.
So, according to ancient Indian
spiritual culture, plants have only one
faculty, which is the the faculty of
touch.
So, that would account for like
sensitive plants that you know, their
their leaves will close up when you
touch them or like a Venus flytrap or
something
that they have like a sense of touch.
So,
in that sense that I mean they're
they're just like borderline sentient.

There were Jains who considered even fire to be sort of like proto-sentient, like a kind of very primitive living being,
which does have a certain amount of intelligence to it because fire is kind of similar to life in a number ways. It needs oxygen to breathe, it needs food or fuel, you know, it grows, it moves, this kind of thing.
But, actual organic life is more structured. You know, the the exothermic reaction, the oxidation reaction that both fire and living beings are employing and it's essentially the same kind of of oxidation reaction. You take, you know, some sort of carbohydrate and

turn it into heat and carbon dioxide,

you know, this kind of thing.

Combine [clears throat] carbon with

oxygen, you get carbon dioxide and heat.

It's just that life I mean is way more

structured and it it sort of like

goes through that oxidation reaction in

steps that are sort of moderated or

conditioned by enzymes, which then is

able to extract chemical energy from

this reaction.

But, getting back to MFiles' question,

I mean the Buddha didn't really ignore

plants as sentient beings,

um

but there isn't really mention that I

can recall the possibility of being
reborn as a plant. And
yeah, I mean it's it's not really even
in the 31 planes of existence. So, there
is that. It's just not really sentient,
even though it does have the faculty of
touch. So, it's sort of like borderline,
like proto-sentient, pre-sentient, but
still kind of getting close.
And the video that N files had me watch
indicates that plants have some kind of
intelligence, you know, like a vine,
like a pea vine, if it's, you know, it's
it's tendril wants to wrap around
something to hold help hold up the
plant, and it's kind of doing this,
which can be explained chemically, you

know, like photochemically, you know,
the sun and whatever, you know, it's
there's special enzymes and so forth
that cause this to happen. But, the vine
will start reaching towards a pole
that it doesn't even really know it
couldn't really know it's there just
through the sensation of touch. And so,
scientists are trying to explain how the
vine knows the pole is there because the
tendril is kind of moving in that
direction even before it touches it.
But,
there
>> [clears throat]
>> one possibility that is being ignored.

My father firmly believed in this, too.

He was Back when I was a kid, he was

telling me about studies that were done

with hooking up lie detector

hooking up like a lie detector machinery

to a plant, like a house plant.

And

>> [clears throat]

>> you know, it's like one one of the tests

that my father told me about is you got

two house plants side by side. One's got

the lie detector stuff hooked up to it.

And then some scientist walks in and

just shreds the other plant. And then

the first plant has the lie detector

stuff hooked up to it register some kind

of shock, abnormalities in the readings.

Then, they'll have that [clears throat]

same

plant hooked up to the same kind of lie

detector stuff,

and one person will walk into the room,

the plant's normal. Another person walks

into the room, the plant's normal. Then

the person who shredded the plant next

to it walks into the room and it starts

registering shock again.

So,

scientists [clears throat] and my father

seem to

um

ignore the possibility

that that plant could just be acting as

a kind of antenna for the expectations

of the scientists. That like their own

expectations, using what could be called

parapsychological or paranormal means,

are actually influencing the outcome of

the experiment.

Like someone on the Discord server was

saying that ants show like

self-awareness.

And

I mean, that's another case of in my

opinion, it's possible. I'm not

insisting,

>> [laughter]

>> but I think it is possible

that it's just the the scientists are

studying these ants. The ants are

passing a test that even a gorillas fail sometimes of of like seeing a spot and on their face and looking into a mirror or they look into a mirror and see a spot on their face and know that it's their own face and so they try and wipe it off. That test has been done on on many species of animals and relatively few pass it.

Chimpanzees pass it. I think orangutans pass it. I think bottlenose dolphins pass it. But, most animals, you know, you anesthetize them, put a spot on their face, wake them up, put them in front of a mirror, they'll look into the mirror, see a like an image of

themselves with a spot on their face and

they won't try to get the spot off their

own face cuz they don't make the

connection. They don't know that that is

a reflection of themselves.

>> [sighs]

[clears throat]

>> So,

this person that was on Discord

said that even ants can pass that test.

And so,

I'm I put it out there as a hypothesis

that these scientists are through

psychic means or whatever are subtly

influencing the results of the test so

that some very simple life form,

relatively speaking, like a like a house

plant or a pea vine or an ant, can actually be influenced by the beliefs of the scientist because we are creating our own reality anyway.

Otherwise, with regard to ants, you might say that they have a kind of complex group mind that is way more sentient than an individual ant. And you can see the same thing with plants. You know, it's like some people have said that forests, you know, it may be that each tree in a forest is sort of like a neuron and the whole thing it has like this group consciousness.

Especially there are some trees that just like you can have an entire grove

of the like clones of the same tree that
are connected at the root level. I can't
remember what kind of tree it is, like
aspens or something can do that.
So, it could be
that you just have like this higher
level of consciousness through a kind of
group effort.
But an individual pea vine, I would
guess that probably there's some like
electro-chemical explanation for it that
does not necessarily include sentience.
But
I've said it many times. I consider the
entire universe to be conscious.
That the entire universe is a
manifestation of consciousness. Even a

hydrogen atom would have like the tiniest primordial spark of consciousness. You I mean, it doesn't think. It doesn't have ideas. Doesn't have any sense organs.

So, it doesn't have mental states, but still that consciousness is there which physicists call energy. I think that could be like a a Copernican revolution in science if somebody is able to come up with some Einstein-like E = MC squared sort of equation that equates consciousness with energy.

So,

let's see. Why the Buddha ignored plants as sentient beings and the possibility

of rebirth in this state. Theravada I
mean, he didn't ignore plants as
sentient beings. Apparently, he just did
not consider them to be sentient beings
regardless of the YouTube video.
That I mean, they have like a simple
kind of consciousness. They might be
in a sense more conscious or more aware
than a brick,
but still they haven't reached the level
of full sentience yet.
Any more than like a bacterium has.
Even though like a single-celled
organism, they have no nervous system
whatsoever, but still they can act in
seemingly intelligent ways, you know,
moving towards light or away from light

or towards a food towards a food source

or or away from some kind of danger,

that kind of thing.

But like the the electronic door at the

grocery store that opens for you when

you get close to it. I mean, that's not

really sentient. And there's somebody at

the door,

and I don't know if my wife is even

aware of this fact. Just a second.

Dee, who is at the door?

Oh.

She's in the backyard completely

clueless.

So,

let's see. Okay, so this first question

I think I've answered. Why the Buddha ignored plants as sentient beings and the possibility of rebirth in this state. Yeah, it's not definitely not on the 31 planes of existence.

Uh

golly.

Okay. So,

M files second question. So, this is This second question actually is more closely related to what MFiles was saying about being a gardener and having to like use pesticides and dig the ground and kill small creatures and so forth.

Um I wouldn't really worry about messing with nagas.

I mean, I don't think you're going to
have microscopic nagas. You know, they
don't like the embryonic form of a naga
or the larval form is not like a toad
worm.
And my eye is kind of burning, so I got
to wipe it with the drape.
The curtain, if you will.
Okay.
Ah. [sighs]
So,
are there any ways to mitigate the karma
of being a gardener using insecticides
and so forth?
Hmm, maybe I should use the inside liner
where it's not as

as smooth and slippery.

And may actually wipe the grease.

Now, my wife is waving at me through the window.

Oh, okay.

She's showing me cucumbers. The neighbors are giving us free cucumbers.

I assume that's what she was doing with the cucumbers.

Just showing them to me. Not insinuating anything.

So, let's see here.

Okay, so MFiles mentioned sort of some of the ethical complications of being a gardener. And that's one reason why monks aren't

allowed to grow their own food because
of these very reasons. I mean, a monk
isn't even allowed to damage a a living
plant. So,
I mean, one reason why monks aren't
allowed to damage a living plant is
because in ancient northern India, it
was believed that plants are ekindriya
jiva. They have like a kind of
proto-sentience to them.
No perceptions, they're not thinking,
but still there is like this
consciousness there.
Huh.
>> [sighs]
>> So, let's see here.

It's doesn't really

qualify as wrong livelihood. At least

it's not on the standard list of I mean,

farming, especially if you're just

farming plants.

I mean,

in the Buddha's time, the society was

largely agrarian. You know, most people,

just like in rural Burma today, most

people are subsistence farmers. And so,

I mean, you can't have the Buddha just

tell everybody, "You got all got wrong

livelihood. You better just knock it

off."

People got to eat.

So,

>> [sighs]

>> Buddhism kind of tossed a bone to the subsistence farmers and kind of gave them the nod to continue subsistence farming, seems to me. Even though, I mean, back then you didn't really have pesticides.

You know, you might have farmers out there

um

I don't know, picking bugs off their their plants or something, but I mean, they didn't have real like

uh what's

I keep wanting to to mention the name of Roundup. They didn't have Roundup yet. They still dug the ground, but they

weren't digging the ground in order to

cut worms in half.

You know, so I mean, that's that's not

really an ethical problem. So long as

you're doing something accidentally,

it's not deliberate, and so you're not

making bad karma by doing it.

So, I mean, if you want to mitigate

the the karma, what what unskillful

karma you are getting

by being a gardener,

you know, uh of all, be mindful. I mean,

that's the panacea. That's the

It cures all ills, mindfulness does.

Because

as I keep saying over and over and over,

the mechanical action of a deed is

ethically neutral. There is no positive
or negative to just a mechanical deed,
just mechanical actions. What creates
the karma, what determines whether what
you do is skillful or unskillful,
ethical or unethical, is your mental
states.
So, so long as you're being mindful,
then your mental states are going to be
neutral.
>> [clears throat and snorts]
[sighs]
>> So, I mean, that's that's one of the
first things you can do.
I mean, it is it's going to attenuate
your karma anyway.

But, I mean, also so long as you don't
have any ill will
towards
like the insects that you are killing,
then I mean, that that definitely
mitigates the karma also. You're not
motivated by hatred or desire to kill
enemies, anything like that.
So,
the the
the bad karma,
the unskillfulness, the ethical
unskillfulness of gardening is
relatively minor, it seems to me. So
long as you're not killing rats,
something like that. When you're getting
up into like killing

large animals,

then

>> [clears throat]

>> yeah, I mean, it gets worse.

But still,

um I mean, just using insecticides

and digging the ground, that kind of

thing, it's it's fairly minor

uh akusala karma that you would be

acquiring um even if you're not being

particularly mindful. But the more

mindful you are, the less of that karma

you are acquiring.

Uh cuz mindfulness just kind of cuts

through the the the psychic momentum,

the momentum of your mental states. You

know, you're slowing the mental states
way down by not just chasing after like
chains of association.
Some sorry commentary.
So,
yeah, the main way to mitigate the karma
is observe your own mind, be mindful,
and do your gardening maybe with a
certain like positive mental states,
appreciation for the the beautiful
weather.
You know, appreciation for the the
plants or I mean I don't know if you're
growing flowers or veggies or what.
But, you know, a certain gratitude, that
kind of thing, and not so much aversion
for plants or even aversion for your own

act of using insecticides. Don't be against your own againstness, that just adds to the againstness.

I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. Also from M Files.

He says, "Do you think that soldiers, butchers, [__] porn stars, and gardeners can be serious Buddha Dharma practitioners?"

And yeah, yeah, they can be serious.

For example, I mean just with regard to soldiers,

um anyone who is familiar with Zen Buddhism is probably familiar with the Mumon Kan.

And there's like an extra

um an extra case, extra chapter added

towards the end of the Mumon Kan that is

by a like a a sword master, like a

samurai sword master who also was

skillful in Zen.

So,

yeah, I mean you can have like

s- uh

Zen sword masters, for example.

Butchers,

um

well, I guess butchers nowadays aren't

actually killing anything, although

traditionally

butchers are also the person that kills

the animal out in before they cut it up

into pieces.

I mean, you have in the Zhuangzi, I think it is. Zhuangzi.

Um you know, there's the the Daoist butcher who never has to sharpen his knives because he's just in totally in harmony with the way. You know, he's he's in harmony with the flow of things and the the blade of the knife just goes through exactly where it's supposed to go and he never needs to sharpen his knives.

Um Mahayana Buddhism says that some prostitutes are bodhisattvas.

And I mean

see, one of the last people to offer the Buddha a meal was uh Amrapali, who was a

high-class prostitute. You know, she was
sort of like a the ancient Indian
version of a hetaera.
You know, she was a
an expensive prostitute who offered the
Buddha one of his last meals and then
she uh
didn't stay being a prostitute, but uh I
guess the Buddha inspired her to live a
more dharmic life and so she became a
nun and eventually became enlightened.
But then there's Angulimala, who was a
serious serial killer who also became
enlightened.
Um porn stars? I I knew one guy who was
a a serious Tibetan practitioner who had
previously been in porn movies.

I I'd I would assume that if you're going to be a serious Buddha Dharma practitioner, in most cases you're going to re-evaluate your lifestyle and adopt a more dharmic kind of lifestyle, unless you just
have little choice in the matter.
You know, like a [__] who's like uh like a slave.
You know, she has no choice in the in the matter. She has to be a prostitute.
You know, maybe she was sold by her parents to a brothel when she was a child. That happens in certain parts of this world. Or in the past, you just had slave girls who just had to do their

master's bidding, no matter how naughty

that bidding was. Now, somebody like

that, or

uh suddenly I got this idea. Like, if

you read Dostoevsky's Crime and

Punishment, one of his great masterpiece

novels,

um the most Christ-like person in the

entire novel is Sonya the prostitute.

>> [snorts]

>> But, she was doing that because she had

not much education, she couldn't really

get a normal job. Her parents

[clears throat] were dead or dying.

And she had these two child brother and

sister, you know, they had this this

brother and sister. She had someone had

to support them to keep them starving.

So, she it was illegal in 19th century

Russia, so she went and got the yellow

card of a prostitute and was

supporting her family that way.

Um

selflessly kind of taking a hit for the

team.

So, I mean, as

a serious Buddha Dharma practitioner,

you know, they may be in some weird

position

where,

you know, just being like saint-like

virtue is just not an option.

Another another

um example that came up is

um

Gene Wolfe's masterpiece, the the Book

of the New Sun,

>> [clears throat]

>> where the Conciliator, who's like the

Messiah for this civilization, he saves

the world, uh he starts off as a

torturer. He was born into it. It's like

pregnant women who are going to be

tortured by this guild of torturers.

Um they're allowed to have the child

before they get tortured to death. And

then the child, if he's a boy, gets just

initiated into the guild of torturers.

That's how they replace themselves.

So, he started off as a torturer and

then later on

he becomes like the Messiah.

But, that's just kind of a fiction, you know, kind of a fantasy, I suppose. But, there is some wisdom to that. I mean, the the representative of the human race should represent the entirety of the human race, you know, the full spectrum. From saintliness to the opposite of saintliness.

So, do you do I think that soldiers, butchers, [__] porn stars, and gardeners can be serious Buddha Dharma practitioners?

Although most of them aren't, I think it is possible. Damn near anything is

possible.

So, yeah, I do think it is possible.

But, especially the porn stars, I think

they might choose a different livelihood

once that they've made up their mind to

be a serious Buddha Dharma practitioner.

>> [sighs and gasps]

>> Some of the Buddha's like

lay supporters were soldiers.

You can't become a monk if you're a

soldier. You got to get discharged, you

know, you have to get your honorable

discharge or whatever

before you can become a monk.

But, still.

Let's see here. Let's just move on to

the next question, shall we?

This is from PSA.

And I do hope that the sound quality is better in this video. I really do.

PSA says, "Is it wrong that the World Cup is upon us and I'm not excited?" No, it's not wrong at all. It's just soccer. I mean, why do people get so worked up over soccer? You can have a 3-hour-long game. The final score is zero to zero. It's just silly.

Yeah, I'm not excited, either.

So, let's just move on to PSI's PSA's second question.

Do you ever do any visualizations during your meditation? And I always avoided visualizations in my meditation. It's

just more thinking.

So, maybe

um if you're meditating on the 32 parts

of the body, which I've done a little

bit

as a monk, you might want to visualize

the body parts as you're going through

the list.

Or if you're meditating upon death,

you know, it's like the closest I came

to visualizations during meditation, I

think, that I can think of at present,

anyway, is, you know, I'd have a I had a

skull, a human skull. Also had a human

skeleton

with its own skull

that I would just have sitting around

the cave, and then you just look at it
and you just remind yourself, as that
is, so will I become. As I am, so was
that. You know, that sort of thing. It's
It's a visualization, but it's a
visualization where you're looking at
something with your eyes open.
Visualizing with my eyes closed is just
more
It's just more thinking. It's just more
of what you're trying to reduce
when you're meditating, it seems to me,
at least if you're beyond like the
elementary kindergarten level of
meditation.
It may be that some meditation masters

still use visualizations of a sort, you know, like Catholic saints who are contemplative monks or nuns who are visualizing various scenes in the life of Jesus or something.

>> [sighs]

>> But yeah, it's it's not really it's not really heavily emphasized in Theravada Buddhism.

I mean, if you're doing kasina meditation according to the instructions in the Visuddhimagga, you know, you meditate on the red circle until you can see it with your eyes closed, and then you're like expanding and contracting and and sort of, you know, modifying the circle.

But,

um my wife is right outside the window,

and she's walking around doing stuff,

and it's kind of distracting me. I've

got wife dar.

Let's see.

Do you ever do any visualizations during

your meditation? Yeah, it's it's just

something I've never really liked. Just

like I've never liked guided meditations

either. Somebody telling me what to

think, I've just never really liked

that.

So,

yeah. [clears throat] Especially lately,

no. In my eyes, now now it's the other

eye that's burning.

I've got this condition.

I've got like a

seborrheic skin type. I've got oily

skin, and my eyelid oil, if it gets into

like the corner of my eye, it starts to

burn. Especially if I haven't like taken

a shower all day, or it's just hot and

sweaty, it happens especially later on

in the day.

So, that's what's happening.

Let's see. Okay, so I already answered

that. Let's move on to PSA's third

question. Is speaking hyperbolically a

violation of sammā vācā?

It depends on the circumstances,

I think. Hyperbolically means

exaggerating, essentially.

So, if you're exaggerating,

I mean, are you deliberately trying to

deceive someone through the

exaggeration? Then, if so, you're lying.

Um if you're exaggerating what a a piece

of [__] somebody is

behind their back,

um for the sake of causing someone to

dislike them even more by sort of

exaggerating the case against them, that

would be pīsuṇāvācā, and of course, that

would be wrong speech, also.

Or, if you're exaggerating someone's

shittiness to their face, that would be

parusavācā, like abusive speech.

You know, you're doing it deliberately

to make them feel bad,

then that would also be that kind of

exaggeration also would classify as

wrong speech. But, if you're just

telling a story and

just with confused mindfulness,

you exaggerate something,

which people do

sometimes,

then it wouldn't technically qualify as

some of as

um

musa lana or wrong speech.

But, it depends on your mental states.

And then really anything you do with

negative mental states is going to be

negative. Anything you do with positive

mental states is going to be positive.

So, [cough and clears throat]

I mean, I guess you could

exaggerate positively

and still be kind of lying.

So, I guess there's that. You know, it's

like some some co-worker asks, "Do you

like my new hairstyle?" And it looks

ridiculous, but you don't want to sit

tell them it looks ridiculous. You say,

"Oh, it looks nice."

I mean, that's

looks real nice, you know, you

you just exaggerate, you know.

Then,

yeah, I mean, that could still qualify
as lying, even though it's a white lie.
But, just exaggerating
like in a joke or if you're not really
trying to deceive anybody, just
you got confused mindfulness and it's
just this natural human impulse to
exaggerate. You're not even fully aware
you're exaggerating till maybe you're
like almost finished with the sentence,
you know, you're aware of it as it's
coming out your mouth. Just Hey, wait a
minute, that's not exactly true. Then,
technically that would not qualify
as [snorts]
lying or any other kind of wrong speech.
And now I'm going to move on to the next

question. This is from Julia.

And Julia says,

or unless maybe it's Yulia. Maybe she

comes from a country where J is

pronounced like Y.

Julia or Yulia

says I would like to ask your opinion on

the texts below.

And the first is a Kabbalistic text.

It's Kabbalah. Kabbalah.

And the quote is

quote perceiving and the perceived are

realized in union, but there is no point

at which they become at which they come

together. They were never apart in the

first place. This realization emerges

intellectually, but cannot live as mere idea. It must wear the body of the turmoil. The open mirror-like nature of the absolute is its lifeblood, and it dwells through the confusion of our struggle and theoretical approximations. Nothing stops. It lives in everything, and consciousness must turn from nothing.

Okay.

Do you And then Yulia asked the question, do you consider there is convergence between this and the teachings of Buddha?

Well, when you get into like mysticism um you're getting more into certain schools of Mahayana than in Theravada.

Um

>> [clears throat]

>> I mean there's sort of like a proto

Madhyamaka or proto-Mahayana that's

found in very ancient texts like the

Atikavaka, but the Atikavaka isn't going

to be this verbose and like intellectual

in describing something.

The The Atikavaka just tries to keep it

at a minimum

because it's trying to tell you just

stop thinking, stop believing stuff.

But with the guy I mean this is

surprisingly wise coming from Kabbalah.

Especially the first two sentences

perceiving and the perceived are

realized in union, but there is no point at which they came together. They were never apart in the first place. That could come right out of a Mahayana Buddhist text.

But the thing with I've never really been much impressed by Kabbalah, partly because it's just too flowery. There's too much thinking involved in trying to transcend thinking.

There's just way too like uh like the tree of Sephiroth and those those vessels that are broken or turned upside down or whatever the hell. It's just so complicated. It I mean it's just it starts straying into the realm of gobbledygook, in my opinion.

That there are I mean if you are

interested in mysticism, unless maybe

you're an Orthodox Jew, there are better

systems for getting to the heart of it,

it seems to me.

So,

um

I mean the the whole rest of it after

the two sentences I quoted, it starts

it's getting really like complicated and

convoluted and

speaking in like poetic terms, it must

wear the body of the turmoil, this kind

of stuff.

Um

maybe in Mahayana poetry,

Theravada is way drier than this, more

no-nonsense than this in most respects.

I mean, by no-nonsense, I just mean

just kind of stripping away the the

unnecessary

like convolutions and you know, flowery

embellishments and so forth.

Uh [sighs]

the open mirror-like nature of the

absolute is its lifeblood.

Yeah, I mean

you can say that this is in a way it's

kind of like a flowery, verbose

approximation

of some relatively advanced Buddhist

mysticism.

So, I mean it's it's surprisingly good

for my opinion. I mean from Kabbalah.
Cuz I I mean I mean it doesn't surprise me too much that there are these kind of statements to be found in there. It's just there's so many other statements that just muddy the waters it seems to me that you would be better off following a different approach at mysticism. For example, in Buddhism.
But it may work really well for some people that just think a lot. It may be helpful for them.
Especially if they're Jewish.
So, I guess I'll just move on to Julia's or Yulia's second question.

These are the words of a Tibetan tantric master from the 12th century.

Quote, we practice illusory practices in an illusory way in order to reach illusory enlightenment and liberate all illusory beings from illusory suffering. Unquote. And I like that. That's I like that. That's nice.

But Yulia here or Julia continues, I think this is similar to the question you answered about illusory consequences of illusory actions. I have to admit that I have some issues when I think about it. Sometimes I feel like what is the point of all this?

For what for what is worth. Illusion illusion illusion, why practice? I know

it is silly, but sometimes I feel that maybe it is better just to lie down and wait for the termination. So weary of this kind of shall I say game. Your thoughts, please. I would like to hear your words about this.

Well,

so long as we are stuck in the illusion, then

I mean it's better to be in heaven than in hell. So long as you're still stuck in the matrix or in the illusion, you're better off living in an an illusory heaven realm than an illusory hell realm. You're better off having illusory bliss than illusory torment

until you get free from all of it.
So, that's really the point of it. I
mean, it's you say if it's all illusory,
what's the point? Is I mean, the point
is we're stuck in the illusion right
now. And so, we have to free ourselves
from the illusion, even though there's
ultimately no us. But still,
I mean, so long as you are stuck and
wallowing in the illusion, then it seems
pretty damn real, doesn't it?
So, until you transcend the illusion,
you best I mean, you're probably better
off I mean, ultimately it doesn't matter
whether you go to heaven or hell.
Ultimately, it doesn't matter to the
universe at large whether you're good or

bad,

whether you're wise or foolish. But I

mean, so long as you are stuck in that

illusion, then it seems pretty damn

real. And so, you're better off going

with goodness than badness.

Because badness is sort of like

self-destructive and toxic, at least

within the realm of the illusion.

But that's where you're stuck.

>> [sighs]

>> So, I mean, you can dismiss everything

as an illusion, but so long as you're

still stuck in the illusion and

wallowing in it, then dismissing it

doesn't work.

But ultimately, you have to transcend
the illusion if you want to be free.
Or if you just I mean, it's not even you
who's going to be free. I mean, it the
whole thing is a paradox. And Mahayana
Buddhism really plays up the paradox.
You know, it's like we're striving for
enlightenment, even though there's
nobody who becomes enlightened. Nothing
really changes.
But at least you're free from it. I
mean, it might still be there, the
illusion,
but at least you're not like wallowing
in it and stuck in it.
If that makes any sense.
But if so long as you're stuck in

illusion, the main point is to get
yourself unstuck.
It seems to me unless I mean if you're
just a worldly normie kind of person and
you don't mind being stuck in the world,
you don't mind the whole roller coaster
ride of ecstasy and misery and being
healthy sometimes and being sick
sometimes and feeling agony sometimes
and feeling ecstasy sometimes. I mean if
you're fine with that,
then you really don't have much
incentive to try to transcend it. But
once you start seeing that really
there's there's always dukkha involved.
There's always this unease involved even

when you're happy.

You know, it's just this restless

dissatisfaction just moving you on from

one moment to the next.

Then I mean once you start really seeing

that like through a kind of microscope

magnifying glass, you're just paying

attention to it, just noticing it, then

the illusion doesn't seem so good

anymore.

You know, once you realize that there is

a higher truth

beyond the matrix,

then there's a lot of people who just

can't be satisfied with the matrix

anymore.

And even though it won't be you who is

freed from it cuz you are part of the
illusion, still just being freed from
what you think you are or I mean
language just breaks it down at this
point which is one reason why it's hard
to understand. Language just can't deal
with it. Anything that's out of the
matrix, words can't touch it.
But it's better than this.
Okay. That was some thoughts.
>> [clears throat]
>> So I'm just going to move on to Julia or
Yulia's third question.
Okay.
>> [clears throat]
>> Do the Theravada

No, let's see. Does the Theravada tradition share the same view of Mahayana Buddhism regarding no difference between samsara and nirvana? Like Nagarjuna explains, there is no distinction whatsoever between samsara and nirvana.

Unquote.

In Tibetan Buddhism, there are many prayers beseeching Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to help ones eliminating the darkness of the mind that sees distinction between Buddhas and sentient beings, samsara and nirvana. Well, we have kind of a Nagarjuna question. So, since I've been wearing hats in this video,

I might as well put on the Majama Fez.

See.

Fez-o-rama is really

the answer to all your fez needs.

And they're not paying me. They're not

sponsoring this video at all.

Fez-o-rama.com.

Okay.

>> [clears throat]

>> So, the main question here, I'm going to

turn this "do" into "does" cuz it's

better English.

Okay. Does the Theravada tradition share

the same view of Mahayana Buddhism

regarding no difference between samsara

and nirvana? And the answer to that is

no.

And this is another one of those

questions where

to some degree, I have to adopt two

different points of view and answer two

different answer the same question twice

because my understanding of the case is

different from orthodox Theravada

tradition. In orthodox Theravada

tradition,

you've got Abhidharma. And Abhidharma,

I mean, the Abhidharma scholars, bless

their hearts,

have got nirvana and samsara at the same

level of reality.

That you've got

>> [clears throat]

>> four ultimate realities.

Two of these ultimate realities are divided up into parts and into various sub-realities. But, you got basically four ultimate realities. You've got mind, you've got matter, [clears throat] you've got mental states, which is different from mind, and then you've got Nirvana or Nibbana.

And so Nibbana ultimately isn't isn't any more real than earth's element or like wrong view, perception,

um even even perception and wrong view are considered to be different from each other.

Nose sensitivity,

Nirvana or Nibbana is no more real than nose sensitivity. And it's just how did they come up with this stuff? I think it's partly just they were intellectually locked into a two-dimensional plane for understanding reality and describing it. So they couldn't have Nibbana at a higher level because they just didn't have higher levels.

That's my best guess at why the Abhidhamma scholars have Nibbana as no more real than nose sensitivity.

You know, the sense of smell.

Or water element.

Or whatever.

The space between two atoms is
ultimately real, no no less ultimately
real than Nibbana itself. And that's one
reason why Westerners capable of
critical thought really have very little
use for Abhidhamma.
I mean, it's good to at least be
literate in what your tradition teaches,
so that you at least you'll know what it
is you're rejecting.
But yeah, Abhidhamma is
most Western monks, probably 70%,
just have no use for it at all. And it
pretty obviously wasn't taught by the
Buddha. So you got Theravada tradition,
and then you've got what the Buddha

actually taught, and they're not exactly

the same.

So,

uh Julia or Julius says, "Nagarjuna

explains, quote, there is no distinction

whatsoever between samsara and nirvana.

And I can accept that. That's one way

that I am not an orthodox Theravada

Buddhist. It's one of the ways in which

I

accept Mahayana philosophy

in this regard more than Theravada

orthodox Theravada.

And so, the the

One example I give repeatedly is the

coffee cup.

Maybe this would qualify more as a mug

than a cup.

Let's just call it a cup, shall we?

So, what is Is this a cup or is this

porcelain?

Well, it's both, isn't it?

Porcelain is the substance of it.

Cup is the form of it. You take away the

cup,

the porcelain is gone. You take away the

porcelain, the cup is gone.

They're exactly the same even though cup

and porcelain are not synonyms. So, it

violates the laws of thought like the

Aristotelian laws of thought cuz this is

A and not A simultaneously.

It's porcelain and cup at the same time

even though porcelain and cup are not

synonymous.

So,

that's how I understand samsara and

nirvana.

That [clears throat] samsara is the

essence of reality, whereas samsara

is like

constructed forms or perceived forms.

So, you know, it's like another example

I give is water and waves. And usually I

use that analogy not with nirvana and

samsara but with consciousness and

mental states.

That consciousness is like water and

mental states like perceptions and

volitions are like waves on the surface

of the water.

But you could say the same thing about nirvana and samsara. And it's in a way it's the same thing because

I mean, there have been there are suttas out there that imply

that Nirvana is infinite formless consciousness.

And mental states are just like waves on the surface of this infinite formless consciousness. So, it's formless, but still you have perception or delusion creating these differences. And so, this aspect is you know, it takes this form, that aspect takes that form. It's it's it's really hard to explain.

Human languages just were not developed
for this kind of thing. Human languages
were developed for saying what you want
to have for dinner.
You know, telling somebody that
you know, there's
there's game to be hunted over in the
other valley, that it might rain
tomorrow.
That kind of thing. But when you're
trying to talk about ultimate reality,
which words can't even touch, it's an
exercise in futility. It can be quite
frustrating.
>> [gasps]
>> But I can accept the idea that there is
no distinction whatsoever between

Samsara and Nirvana. You get rid of distinctions and it just all merges into into the same sameness anyway, the same this.

But Samsara is like perceived forms of Nirvana.

The pure ultimate

like porcelain would be different from this cup, but still.

The porcelain itself I mean, just getting avoiding just setting aside molecular structure or whatever, porcelain is just a formless concept.

You know, it could be it could adopt any form.

Pure consciousness is also just kind of

a it's formless.

And like mental states would be like distinct forms of that consciousness.

And so, in a way you could say that the objects of the world are like distinct forms, artificially created illusory forms of the essence of nirvana.

Or God.

You know, like a lot of pantheistic types would just consider, you know, all the 10,000 things of samsara to just be various manifestations of God.

Or the absolute with a capital A.

So, it I I see it like that. I do not consider nirvana to be just some distinct ultimate reality on this list of I mean, ultimately you divide up all

the ultimate realities. If I remember correctly, Abhidharma has 128 ultimate realities.

With nirvana just being one of them. And I just cannot buy that at all. I got no use for that whatsoever.

So, I mean, it's like essence and form. Essence would correspond to consciousness or to nirvana, nibbana. Form would correspond to mental states or just the multiplicity of the world. And that's really what the multiplicity of the world is. It is an artifact of perception.

It's an artifact of mental states.

So, it's the same difference.

Mind and mental states or nirvana and

samsara, it's really the same.

The same distinction. Same difference.

So.

Yeah, I do think that Mahayana Buddhism,

one advantage of Mahayana Buddhism is

that that it arose centuries after the

earlier schools of Buddhism did.

And

philosophy and logic had become more

sophisticated so that people were able

to think at more than one level of

reality at the same time.

There's just different levels that

um and then there's a kind of a

rudimentary understanding of that in

Theravada, but it it did not benefit the

Abhidharma scholars much at all.

>> [sighs]

>> So, it may be a one advantage of West I

mean, it may be one influence

um

on Buddhism from the West. I mean,

there's some people that say that

Mahayana Buddhism was largely um due to

Greeks living in Northwestern India

converting to Buddhism and like

injecting Greek ideas into Buddhism.

That there are some people who theorize

that that helped to cause Mahayana

Buddhism to arise and it also may have

brought like formal logic and more

intellectual philosophical

sophistication

into the Ganges Valley in ancient times,

which also may have helped um

Mahayana Buddhist philosophy and also

like Vedanta to be as sophisticated as

it did become.

So, I'm I am kind of sorry that the

Greeks kind of influenced Mahayana

Buddhism,

but that's just the way it is. There's

no need to be sorry.

>> [snorts]

>> And I think I've answered that question.

So, I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from

Churzangazis.

And Churzangazis says, "Can you switch

lineages or tradition

you were ordained in? I mean, legally

without any trouble from other monks?"

It depends on lineages and traditions. I

mean, to switch from like a major

tradition like Theravada to Mahayana or

vice versa, you know, from the Zen to

Pure Land or something, I mean, you may

have to be reordained for that.

Um I mean, certainly uh a Mahayana monk

wants to become a Theravada monk, he's

going to have to do like an official

um Theravada Buddhist ordination. And I

guess they don't need the fez anymore,

even though it really is a nice fez.

Ah,

just fell to the ground.

Okay.

Hey, that's kind of nice. Put the fez on top of the cowboy hat. It's like a whole new effect.

It's kind of nice. I got to put this on for a second.

It's kind of It turns into sort of like a a pilgrim hat, Solomon Kane or something.

Ah.

But anyways, yeah, a Mahayana Buddhist wanting to be or wanting to become a Theravada monk, he'd have to be reordained and he would be like a new monk with zero seniority on his um ordination [clears throat] day.

Um within like Theravada,
then you've got different lineages and
traditions and it depends on
it depends on the situation. Like in
Thailand, notoriously, you've got two
main sects of Theravada Buddhism, like
monastic ordination traditions. You've
got the Dhammayut and you've got the
Mahanikai. Mahanikai is most monks in
Thailand. Dhammayut is like a stricter,
more elite kind of of of tradition. And
the Dhammayut consider only Dhammayut
monks to be real monks. They say that
the ordination tradition of the
Mahanikai and presumably like Burmese
traditions and so forth, they're not

like unbroken. And so, any monks
ordained in a tradition outside of
Dhammayut isn't even really ordained.
And so,
with regard to that situation, um if
you're not a Dhammayut monk, you want to
live in a Dammajut monastery, you'd have
to be reordained and then they just
count your ordination from day one.
Then you'd just be a new monk,
regardless of how many years you were a
monk before that.
In Burma, you've got kind of the same
situation with Let's see, what is it?
Ah, [sighs] man. You got the Shwegyin
and Sudhamma. So, the two main sects
are Shwegyin and Sudhamma cuz S is

pronounced like TH in Burma. Thudhamma.
And so, most monks are Thudhamma. You've
also got Shwegyin. There's There's a
bunch of other minor schools
um, including the original Mon tradi-
Mon tradition on which Dammajut was
based. I don't know whether the Dammajut
monks in Thailand would consider this
members of this sect in in Mon State in
Burma to be really ordained or not.
I don't know. I never bothered to ask a
Dammajut monk this question.
But,
in in Burma, there isn't this
exclusiveness. You know, the Shwegyin
monks, they're not saying nobody else is

a real monk except us.

So,

you can have Thudhamma monks move into a Shwegyin monastery and conform to the any differences between Thudhamma and Shwegyin and for the most part, they'll be accepted at at the monastery because they're they're still bhikkhus.

So, if you want to start following Shwegyin tradition, you can move to a Shwegyin monastery, start following the tradition, you won't have to be reordained. There might be a few uppity kind of Shwegyin monasteries where they don't want to accept Thudhamma monks because Thudhamma monks, not that they're not real monks, mostly, it's

just that they have a reputation for
being sloppier than Shwegyin. Although,
some Shwegyin monks, including possibly
the most famous Shwegyin monk in Burma,
is just corrupt as all get out.
You know, there's some
naughty Shwe Gyin monks out there.
So, yeah, I mean,
and then you get into like sub sects
within the sects or like
ordained in the Pa-Auk tradition, I want
to go to a Mahasi
tradition monastery. No problem, none
whatsoever. So, when you get down into
like meditation traditions, Mogo
tradition, Shwe U Min tradition, Mahasi

tradition, Shwe U Min being like a a branch of Mahasi, Pa-Auk tradition, Bengu tradition, Ledi tradition, just there's all these Sunlun tradition, there's all these meditation traditions in Burma, and I mean, you can just go from one to the other, you know, just go meditation center hopping if you want to. Um that's really not a problem. So, the main problems would be if you're going from Mahayana like Zen to Theravada or Theravada to Pure Land or something like that, Pure Land to like Nyingma Tibetan tradition, something like that, you may have to be reordained. They would not consider you to be like legally ordained within the

like the

the requirements of the tradition. Like

Theravada Buddhism, in order to be

considered to be an ordained Theravada

Buddhist monk, you have to go through

the Pali ordination ceremony in

accordance with the rules of monastic

discipline. If you got ordained in some

other tradition that doesn't follow

like Theravada Buddhist Vinaya,

then it is is considered invalid,

which is one reason why the claims that

these Taiwanese or Korean nuns are

sufficient to like revive the the the

order of Theravada Buddhist nuns,

I don't buy it because I consider

unlikely that these East Asian nuns
would be ordained in a ceremony that
would be considered valid in accordance
with the Theravada Buddhist rules of
monastic discipline.
They'd have to be reordained, and they
can't be reordained because
the Theravada Buddhist order of nuns
went extinct hundreds of years ago.
>> [sighs]
>> But
Yeah, so I mean minor changes just from
one meditation tradition to another or
maybe even from one sect within
Theravada to another unless it's Thudong
unless it's Dhammayut in Thailand.
Dhammayut in Thailand is just stands

alone because they're the only ones that say only we are real monks and nobody else is.

But aside from those those exceptions, then just going from like one like sub sect of Theravada to another or one one meditation tradition to another, completely fine, no problem.

Okay.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Seal of Action Cpad Z 0 9. He's got some ethical thought experiments going on with these his three questions.

So,

>> [clears throat]

>> Seal of Action Cpad Z 0 9 says, "What is the correct response to someone grabbing your chick's ass while you are walking together in public, especially if they dude are walking in a group with other dudes
who look dangerous and willing to do over stupid [__]
Seems you should step in, but these days you never know cuz the other person might have a gun or knife and are just trying to find an excuse to kill someone. Also, being violent doesn't seem very Buddhist and the chick might dump you eventually anyways.

As it's unlikely relationships will be forever in this day and age, especially if you have this attitude. Just saying.

But he continues, so you get injured for no reason.

No reason, nothing happens for no reason.

Unless maybe at a quantum level.

But See of Action C by Z 9 continues, seems like the best modern solution might just be to dump the girlfriend at that point. But that sounds like the Sharia solution of punishing her for something some man did.

Okay.

Let's scroll up to the top of this

little essay question. You're walking down the sidewalk with your girlfriend and some gang of hoodlums comes up and starts like grabbing her ass or making vulgar obscene comments regarding her, thereby demeaning her dignity and besmirching her honor and so forth. What should you do as her consort, her companion?

Well, I mean it's going to depend a lot on the situation.

I mean, if

I mean, as a general rule, you should avoid taking your date to a place like this where stuff like this is likely to happen. Don't go don't take your girl on a first date to a biker bar, for

example.

Unless you're a biker and she's a biker

chick, then it might be okay.

But as a general rule, you want to kind

of steer your new date, your girlfriend

away from

hoodlums

or gangs or whatever.

I mean, some place like Paris or who

knows, Detroit or something, it might

not be very likely, in which case you

might be better off just inviting her

over to your house

and cooking her dinner or something.

But, sometimes it's just inevitable. You

and your girl maybe walking down the

street, and it may be that some group of hoodlums who aren't supposed to be there just show up and start behaving very inappropriately, which would be, to some degree, a fruition of your own karma.
But, that's neither here nor there, is it?
So, I mean, you have to have situational awareness. I mean, there is no just stereotyped cookbook answer to this question. You have to like feel out the situation in the midst of it.
I mean, there's some things you could say
that might not be very inflammatory, but at the very least,
you know, you can say something

that is sticking up for your girl

without necessarily provoking them to

all gang up on you and beat you to a

pulp.

So,

just tell them, you know, "I appreciate

you leave my woman alone."

Just in no no uncertain terms.

You know, I mean, you can feel into it

intuitively to know if there's a

likelihood that that's going to have

some beneficial effect. I mean, some

guys, they're just so much in

traditional honor mode

that, I mean, they'll just take on that

group if necessary, knowing they're

going to take a beating. My father was
like that. He would fight somebody
even though
he knew that he was likely going to take
a beating.
And just just to show them he wasn't
afraid of them. But then, you've got the
woman who's there with [clears throat]
you, who doesn't want to stand there
watching you get beaten up. So, that's a
consideration, too. She probably doesn't
want you to get beaten up either.
You You she doesn't I mean, she might be
flattered that you're going to, you
know, tell this guy to just leave my
woman alone.
Just angrily, maybe even rush over to

him and grab grab his arm and like
shoving him away, that kind of thing. I
mean, in some cases that may work.
Then again, I mean, if you're in
[clears throat] a situation where you
you're going to you are responsible for
defending another person
like like a woman
who might become your wife someday, your
actual wife, your children, then I mean,
you cannot just be a Buddhist saint
about it. You may have to like
indulge in a little concealed carry
yourself.
So, I mean, if you're likely to be in a
situation like that, then

possible I mean, if you're not in

America, [clears throat] you may not

have a second amendment that allows you

to defend yourself

or your loved ones.

But in America, I mean

hell, there's

so many people carrying guns in South

Carolina

>> [laughter]

>> including devout Christians. I've had

I've had one ordained minister telling

me with a relish. I mean, he's

practically smacking his lips about he's

going to

really mess up anyone who breaks into

his house.

They got pump shotguns and stuff.

But I mean, you you really don't want to

just start a bloodbath

unnecessarily.

So, I mean

it's going to depend a lot on the

situation.

>> [sighs]

>> But I mean, just kind of

cowering

I mean, that's

I mean, that's just kind of unmanly, you

know? I mean, to say that it's unmanly

might just be

it might just seem cringe to

post-modernists.

But still, I mean

a man it's his duty to defend his woman,

to defend his children.

And I mean, if someone's going to take

the beating, it's better that he takes

the beating than than like the person

that it's his duty to protect.

So, I mean, let's say you got some

hoodlum, you know, he's got some other

guys kind of egging him on, kind of

standing to the side there, and one of

them just walks up and grabs your

woman's ass.

Then

I mean, you got to do something.

You really I mean, just pretending like

you didn't notice.

I mean, there's a good chance that's

going to end your relationship at the

very least.

And then, of course, those guys are

going to know that you're you're just

some cowardly [__] or whatever.

So,

I mean, sometimes

it's it's

the correct thing to do to risk taking a

beating.

And if you say, "Well, just dump her

because you're she's probably not going

to be with you for very long anyway." I

mean, that's you've pretty much already

given up. You might as well just remain

an incel at that stage.

Or voluntarily become an incel. I guess

he wouldn't be an incel if it's

voluntary.

A volcel.

But, yeah, I mean, if you take Buddhist

ethics very seriously, then you're

probably better off just staying

celibate anyway.

>> [snorts]

>> Unless you're willing to

you know, like be the tragic hero,

sacrifice your own virtue for the sake

of protecting somebody else.

I mean, at the very least, if you're

going to tangle with that gang, you

know, you tell her to take off.

>> [laughter]

>> Call 911, you know, do something while

you are in the process of

trying to hold your own against this

gang of thugs.

>> [sighs]

>> But, yeah, a man does have of

responsibilities,

even though in most parts of the Western

world

those responsibilities are being

like illegalized. Even self-defense.

I mean, it was like

I remember years ago seeing an

seeing a an article of I think it was in

New Hampshire of all places that someone

was being assaulted. He pulled out a pocket knife and stabbed him in the thigh while they're just beating the [__] out of him. He got arrested for assault because he should have just run away.

But yeah, really. I mean, Western civilization is in the process of being castrated. It really is. And some countries have already been thoroughly castrated. I mean, they won't even defend themselves. They're just eunuchs at this point. The overwhelming majority of the normies following the mainstream.

Unfortunately, America has not yet been

fully castrated.

And so, you may have to fight. It's like

What's that that song?

What was it? I can't remember his name.

I mean, I wasn't really into country

music, but sometimes you have to fight

to be a man.

You know? So, is Becky crying?

Came home and some gang of guys had

abused his girl and

he just

goes goes after them. I mean, you got to

In In a case like that I mean, it's just

a matter of

honor

that you're going to do something.

Even if you get your ass kicked.

Better to get your ass kicked trying to

like stand up for someone who looks to

you for protection

than just like put your tail between

your legs.

Cower.

You Sometimes it's it's just better to

get beaten up or killed than to just be

a craven coward.

Uh,

and a lot of people, a lot of a lot of

cowardly timid kind of people will just

use ethics as a justification

for being cowards.

But,

what can you say?

But, again, in answer to this question,

I mean, you really need to just feel out

the situation and respond

like what's the word? Spontaneously.

I mean, you can't have this

pre-programmed

like answer to the question.

You know, just like written down on on

recipe cards that you carry around. I

mean, it doesn't work that way.

And I forgot to put a paper umbrella

into this. I'm sorry.

Uh.

So, let's see here. So, I guess I

answered that question, although the

next two questions are similar.

Seal of Action C Pot Zinus says, "I was thinking of the recent Chud the Builder case where he went around calling people, especially black people, the N-word, and if they reacted, he would pepper spray them. People think it's freedom of speech, but if someone went around calling your wife, parents, or kids slurs,

every normal person would want to defend them and might even react with violence. Why do you think many people might think it's bad if we react to being insulted, but it's open season if someone they love is insulted?"

Well, I mean, to to take an insult of

yourself with equanimity is one thing,
but if someone's insulting your wife or
your children or your parents,
>> [snorts]
>> that's something else.
You know, it's many cases where, you
know, you can say what you want about
me, but you go after my family, I'm
coming after you. That kind of thing.
That's honorable. That's completely
understandable within a samsaric
context.
I mean, if you're a Buddhist saint, then
you're just going to accept everything.
Just forgive them in your heart, you
know. Love those that curse you, you

know, or bless those that curse you.

Love your enemies and all that.

Which is more Christian than Buddhist,

but still that's one similarity of

Christianity and Buddhism.

So,

let's see. What's the

What's the actual question here?

People think it's freedom of speech, but

if someone went around calling your

wife, parents, or kids slurs, every

normal person would want to defend them

and might even react with violence.

Yeah, at the very least just tell them

your mama did a shitty job of teaching

you manners.

Why do you think many people might think

it's bad if we react to being insulted,
but it's open season if someone they
love is insulted? Yeah, I mean,
because you can't impose your moral
principles onto other people.
And you have to consider their feelings.
And also, you have to consider your duty
as a man to protect your wife and
children or the woman that you are
happening that you happen to be mating
with
or just any child's defense of its
parents.
>> [snorts]
>> I mean, it's it's it's a different
situation.

I mean, you can be humble and just let
insults roll off your back like water
off of a duck's back,
but still
you
To defend your family, to defend those
that you have a duty to protect, it it's
just a different situation, it seems to
me.
Which is one reason why monks break
family ties, don't have wives and
children to take care of, that kind of
thing. It frees you from this kind of
worldly obligation.
As a man to protect those who look to
you for protection.
And it's weird how

the left especially they say you know
words are violence you know it's like
someone just even inadvertently
performs a microaggression
just says something in with no hostility
at all you get offended by that and you
can just have them punished
which is
rather extreme
but I don't think Seal of Action Cee Paz
Zuno has really had that in mind here.
Why do you think many people might think
it's bad if we react to being insulted
but it's open season if someone they
love is insulted. Yeah it's I think I've
already covered that that it's you can't

really impose your own
moral standards
upon somebody else. They have their own
moral standards and you also have an
obligation to protect others. You don't
necessarily have an obligation to
protect yourself.
You know it's sort of like killing.
I mean you don't have the right to
terminate somebody else's life without
their consent especially but you could
it could be argued that someone might
have the right to terminate their own
life under certain circumstances.
You know the the disgraced soldier
falling on his sword in ancient Rome
that kind of thing.

Or you know the samurai

the honorable seppuku kind of a thing.

Maybe.

But you can't just impose that on

somebody else.

If you don't want the duty to protect

others you shouldn't put yourself in a

position where you have the duty to

protect others.

And in in which case [clears throat] you

just become like a a celibate

renunciant.

I guess I answered that question.

Yeah.

So, why do some people think that

you shouldn't [clears throat] react if

you are insulted, but you should,

nevertheless,

retaliate if someone you love is

insulted. Yeah, I think I I think I've

already answered that question as well

as I am able.

So, let's just move on to the next

question, then.

>> [clears throat]

>> This is something more into territory

with which I'm familiar, because I

really have never been in a public

situation where the woman I was with was

just grossly insulted.

You know, nobody grabbed her ass. Nobody

grabbed her anything.

So,

I was I was fortunate. Partly, we could say karma.

Anyways,

Seal of Action C

got her ass grabbed by someone or insulted, would male monks have to sit back, or are they supposed to defend her honor?

I remember hearing you can't be a monk if you're under 20, because you might not be able to handle the abuse, but I don't know how that extends to the nuns physically and mentally. Well, first of all,

nuns have different rules than monks do, and they are forbidden from living in

dangerous places. Like, a a nun is nuns aren't allowed to live in the forest.
So, that's one reason why the order of nuns went extinct hundreds of years ago is at times of persecution, you could have like solitary hermit monks living out in the woods, but it was just against the rules for nuns to be solitary forest hermits, just because there's lots of bad men out there.
And like a nun is not allowed to travel alone, this kind of thing.
And it was mainly for their own protection.
You know, it's sort of minimize the the odds of them being in a dangerous situation like like Seal Action Cpad Z

net was mentioning. But, let's say a
Buddhist nun did get her ass grabbed by
someone or insulted. Um yeah, the male
monks
they're not required to respond and they
shouldn't respond. You know, it's in a
case like ordained monks and nuns
it's not a matter of imposing your
spiritual or ethical principles upon
somebody else. It's just that it's
universal. Everyone, the nun, all the
monks accept that you don't retaliate
against wrongdoers
through violence or whatever. I mean,
the monk might peacefully
you know, advise the man to keep his

hands to himself, that sort of thing.

But, there wouldn't be any fighting

going on.

So,

yeah, I mean, in a case like that, it's

just universally held ethical principles

where everyone agrees you're not

supposed to retaliate against people who

insult you.

So, it'd be different from

>> [clears throat]

>> you know, a man's wife being insulted

than if a nun is insulted in front of

monks who see the insult happening. But,

in that case,

it's universal moral [clears throat]

principles that are governing the

situation and the monk can peacefully,
you know, suggest to the guy to keep his
hands to himself or whatever.
But,
I mean, [clears throat] what else are
you going to do?
I mean, you could do the same thing if
somebody touches your wife if you're
like a very peaceful sort of person.
Peacefully suggest that he keep his
hands to himself, that kind of thing.
And even if you there's a gang of people
watching, even then, they might at at
have respect for the fact that you stood
up against them in a peaceful
non-provoking way.

But, yeah, it's like the monks should try to help her, you know, if if guys are ganging up on her, the monks can go in and try and save her, that kind of thing.

But,

you know, it [snorts] should just be just the bare minimum required the bare minimum of aggression required to save the nun. I don't think monks will just stand there and watch a nun get assaulted, for example.

I mean, some might.

But,

>> [clears throat]

>> I don't think it would be considered inappropriate for monks to at least try

to pull her away from the guys that are

assaulting her.

Even if they take a beating in the

process.

So,

I hope I answered those questions. I

mean, they are kind of

tricky questions, especially the first

two.

But,

we do what we can.

The next question is from Erin.

And Erin says, "What is the karma of

someone who cuts their grass every

single day, turning the entire yard into

a putting green on a golf course,

sometimes cutting it twice a day if it

grows over 1 cm high?"

And again,

the karma of someone does not depend

primarily on their physical actions, but

on their mental states.

We used to have a guy who lived like

this right across the street from us.

And his yard

I mean, he was this kind of person where

he would mow his

mow his lawn

every day, maybe twice a day, and he'd

have all these machines Half of his

garage was full of these lawn care

machines, and he'd be like going going

over the the lawn with this machine that

would be poking holes to aerate the soil. He'd be scattering sand on it sometimes. It made it look bad for a few days, but then it would come back all nice and looking like the top of a pool table pretty much.

We got another neighbor that's like that, too, who's very Christian. And that's for me, that's that kind of complicates the situation because Christians are supposed to live be in the world but not of the world.

You know, and it's like, how can you have this obsessive concern with the perfection of your lawn and not be of the world?

Friendship with the world is enmity with God, sayeth the New Testament. And how is it that mowing your lawn once or even twice a day
just
like obsessed with the perfection of your yard?
I mean, how is that not friendship with the world? I mean, it may be in the mind of some devout Christian that he's just offering it all up to God, you know, sort of like in the Bhagavad Gita, where he just wants this perfect yard as a kind of offering to the Lord.
You know, maybe some Vaishnavite Hindus are like that.
You know, it's it's one of the teachings

of the Bhagavad Gita, you know, whatever
you do, just offer it up to God. So, I
mean, in a case like that, it wouldn't
be so bad.
But if you just
I I don't I don't even I can't really
comprehend fully the mentality of
someone cuz I mean, I'm I don't want to
I resist cutting
mowing the grass more than twice a week.
We got this kind of grass, it'll start
like going to seed in less than a week
after you mow it sometimes if it's been
raining good. And even then, it's like
mowing the lawn once a week is is like
my maximum. It just seems absurd

to mow it more than that, even if it

doesn't look all that great for a day or

two before I mow it.

I just don't care. You know, really

uh as people go, I think I am abnormally

callous to the opinions of others. I

mean, I have situational awareness and a

fair amount of empathy.

So, I mean, I don't just

you know, callously insult people, that

sort of thing.

At least I don't try to.

But,

I mean, I can't really comprehend

why anyone would want to make their lawn

as perfect as humanly possible. I mean,

what what difference does it make? I

mean, it's just little grass plants growing in your front yard.

In front of the house, you got grass in front of the house, so what?

I mean, personally, I wouldn't mind if you just replace it all with moss that never needs mowed, or just even like set up like a Zen rock garden. Our front yard isn't very big.

Then you'd have grass coming up through the rocks and stuff. They'd have to be attended to though.

Might have to get out there with a rake and rake the gravel sometimes.

Maybe the the HOA wouldn't like Zen rock gardens instead of grass, who knows.

But, the karma of someone who cuts their grass every single day, or even twice a day,
um it's depends on their mental states.
And seriously, I cannot comprehend the mental states of someone who is like this.
I mean, it's kind of ironic now that the guy who lived right across the street from us, who had I mean, he was just obsessed. He'd be out there taking pictures of his lawn and posting it on Facebook.
That he moved out, and now the people that moved in, their grass is like this high, and it's all seeds.
I mean, that guy, he'd be dying inside

if he saw what his lawn has turned into.
The guy who used to live there.
But, I mean, it is theoretically
possible you could have some kind of
blameless mental states, you know, like
the the person who's devoutly religious
and offering the perfection of their
lawn up to God as a kind of sacrifice or
something. That would be
blameless, it seems to me. I mean, it
wouldn't be akusala karma. It wouldn't
be like unskillful karma necessarily.
Not very much of it anyway. But the
person who is just like
obsessed with having the best lawn in
the neighborhood and looking down on

other people for having weeds,
dandelions in their yard. Look at that
[__] loser with a dandelions in his
yard. This kind of stuff. I mean, it's I
don't see anything really positive from
that other than maybe just the the
self-discipline
of doing the lawn maintenance ritual
every day.
Yeah, it's it's something that I really
cannot comprehend. I do not understand
the mentality of the neighbor who just
wants [clears throat] just an absolutely
pristine, flawless yard.
And it's just they're I mean, you can
almost
I mean, it's not difficult to imagine

you know, a brown spot appears in their lawn. Just like the the turmoil they're undergoing from seeing that.

I mean, it's it just doesn't I'm like the opposite end of the spectrum. I mean, I don't let weeds get knee-high or anything. But I mean, it's I just do not like gauge my worth as a human by the quality of my yard.

Whether you know, whether how how mowed the grass happens to be. That kind of thing.

So, it's it's something that I can't really relate to.

But it it does depend on the mental states.

And [clears throat] so, I'm just going
to move on to the next question.
This is from Ethiopian fake tig.
And Ethiopian fake tig says, "Once
talked You once talked about how your
sweetheart called you autistic after you
tried to explain how cathode rays work
or something. Do you think the Buddha
could have also had autism may?
Question mark. They say autistic people
are less likely to be religious and if
they do engage, they do it in systematic
ways and Buddhism is very very unique in
the sense that it's an atheistic
religion.
Well,
my sweetheart has called me autistic a

few times. In fact, she called me autistic just the other day when I told her we we we got a new car recently and we just got the license the new license plate in the mail to replace the paper temporary one.

And I was telling her and then she she actually liked the the license plate number, but I said, you know, I like this I used to have this Toyota pickup back in the '80s. The the the license plate number was GT6790

and it's like she just flat out accused me of being autistic for remembering my license plate number from the 1980s.

Um

but I do think that

>> [clears throat]

>> How where do I go from here?

Um because partly because

my sweetheart considers me to be

autistic.

I took a test online. You know, I mean

you just look up autism tests, you know,

and there's autism centers or whatever

that put out these tests that you can

test to see how autistic you are. I took

the test. I wasn't even close to

autistic.

Nowhere near to being um like

um clinically significant. So,

according to this test that I took, I'm

not autistic and one reason why I'm not

autistic is autistic people seem to be kind of closed off and are not very empathetic or good at picking up on social cues.

And

I'm I'm

I think I'm more empathetic than most people. I mean, I can just pick up on changes of vibe in the air. Like if someone starts feeling uncomfortable, that kind of thing, I pick up on it pretty quickly and easily.

So, that kind of situational awareness and kind of feeling into the feelings of other people, even though I might not particularly love the human race all

that much all the time, still it's
there.
And so, just being intelligent and
remembering obscure stuff. Like for
example,
the diagnostic feature of the Teleost
order Allopiformes is as follows.
The second pharyngeal branchial is
elongated posterolaterally, extending
away from the third pharyngeal
branchial. The uncinate process of the
third epibranchial is in contact with
the fourth pharyngeal branchial.
I learned that in ichthyology class back
in like 1985.
And I still remember it. But, that
doesn't mean that I'm autistic.

The order [clears throat] Allopiformes,

by the way,

includes the

California lizardfish.

So, I'm not really autistic. I'm just

like intelligent with regard to

remembering stuff, like scientific names

or maybe license plate numbers.

I promptly [clears throat] forget most

locker combinations I've ever had.

I I don't even remember my my wife's

phone number. I mean, it's it's just

just in the phone.

You know, so it's it's right there. You

don't even need to to do any mnemonic or

anything to memorize it. So, I'm not

perfect. It's not like I'm a memorist or anything.

But, I'm apparently not particularly autistic, either. It's just that I remember weird stuff, and she considers that to be autistic.

Plus, I'm just kind of eccentric in certain ways. I'm not like a normie. I don't kind of behave like normal people do sometimes. So, she considers that to be autistic, but really it's it's just kind of there's some other explanation for it, I think. I don't really think that I'm particularly autistic. I mean, maybe at the low end of the spectrum or something.

But anyways, that that's not really the

question, is it?

See, do you think the Buddha could have also had autism autism may? And no, I don't. I don't think the Buddha was autistic.

Um

partly because autism it's

it includes a certain like being like introverted and sort of clueless with regard to certain subtle cues. And I think the Buddha was extremely sensitive to certain things. I mean, he could just feel into the feelings of another person or just look at them and, you know, kind of know where they were at karmically, know the best way of helping them, know

what they needed to hear, what they
needed not to hear, that kind of thing.
That's really not particularly autistic.
So,
let's see. Do I think the Buddha could
have also been
autist had been autistic? I don't think
the Buddha was autistic. I mean, he was
unusual, so that would make him kind of
eccentric in a certain way. I mean,
[clears throat] he certainly wasn't
following along with the mainstream of
normies.
But I don't I think there's better ways
of explaining it than autism.
>> [sighs]
>> But if he was autistic, then

maybe being autistic has its advantages. Okay, I'm just going to move on to Ethiopian fake tick's second question. He says, "It said [clears throat] an Arya is born in some heaven realm, but anyone who isn't enlightened doesn't remember their past lives. So, do all people who aren't fully enlightened just live in a heaven realm for an incalculable eon to get reborn again into human beings, and then depending on their karma, maybe get fully enlightened if they manage to find a Dhamma. Or you also once said it's easier to get enlightened in a heaven realm, so beings in heaven do practice Buddhism?

Question mark. Well, there's a lot of stuff I should probably address in here.

So, some Aryas are born in some heaven realms. You know, like an Anagami is born in the pure abodes, accessible only to Anagamis.

So, there is that.

But,

>> [clears throat]

>> like a Sotapanna would be reborn as a human, or could

very possibly be reborn as a human, and an Arahant, who is an Arya, isn't reborn at all.

So, some Aryas may be reborn into heaven realms.

Okay, so I addressed that part.

Let's see.

>> [clears throat]

>> And he says, "But anyone who isn't enlightened doesn't remember their past lives." That's not true, either.

So, I mean, people who aren't enlightened can still remember their past lives. My father claims to have remembered a number of his past lives. And he did that through hypnotic past life regressions, and it's just a psychic power you can get where you can remember your past lives without hypnotic regressions.

You don't have to be an Arya. Just You just have to Going with orthodox

Theravada, you have to have Jhana, which then has kind of opened the door to certain psychic powers that most people don't have, including remembering your past lives.

So,

so that's not necessarily true, either.

So then he says, "So do all people who aren't fully enlightened just live in a heaven realm

for an incalculable eon to get reborn again human beings and then depending on their karma, maybe get fully enlightened if they manage to find Dhamma. Well, when you're in heaven, then you're a deva, and then you have certain psychic powers that ordinary humans don't have.

For example, clairvoyance. The word for

clairvoyance is dibba cakkhu or the

divine eye because it's implying that

gods, small g gods in heaven realms, are

just

get this by default.

Or dibba sota, the divine ear,

clairaudience.

Apparently,

gods like in Tavatimsa heaven,

small g gods,

they just they're born with this.

So,

most gods, if if you go with like the

Pali texts, you read about the the devas

in the Pali texts, they they tend to

recall their past life as a human.

You know, like when Bahiya in the Bahiya Sutta starts thinking maybe he's enlightened, and then some deva that used to be a kinsman of his comes to him, apparently knows that they they knew each other in a previous life,

and comes and tells him, "No, you're not enlightened, but, you know, the Buddha in, you know, the Ganges Valley over way to hell over to the to the east, he is he is fully enlightened."

Then,

I mean, that's a case of a god apparently remembering his past lives.

Or at least one past life in which he

and and Bahiya were were kinsmen.

Relatives, if you will.

So, okay, so that part is also

inaccurate, kind of.

So, this Where's the actual question?

>> [cough and clears throat]

>> Or you also once said it's easier to get

enlightened in a heaven realm. No, I

maybe like if like for an anagami, they

they inevitably become enlightened in a

heaven realm because they don't return

to earth, you know, they just stay in

the pure abodes until they become

enlightened. But according to orthodox

Theravada, the perfect that you know,

the best realm to be in if you want to practice Dhamma is the human realm because in the heaven realms things are so nice, people are not inspired to reach out for something better.

You know, everything they want they get. You know, you just feel like chocolate ice cream, it just appears in your mouth. This kind of stuff.

And in the animal realms, the other lower realms, hell realms and so forth, they're pretty much in survival mode or else they're just too ignorant to even think about Dhamma. So, in a human existence is like the perfect balance or as close to the perfect balance as you're going to find in the 31 planes of

existence where there's enough dukkha,
you know, enough suffering that they're
inspired to reach out for something
better. They're they're you know, to
strive for the end of suffering, but
also they're in a high enough realm that
they are able to hear Dhamma, they have
the intellect to understand Dhamma when
they hear it, that sort of thing.
They're not just stuck in survival mode
or at least many humans aren't.
So, I mean, this question is is like
like a string of inaccuracies, I'm sorry
to say.
>> [clears throat]
>> I mean, there is some accuracy in here.

So, I mean, what's the actual question?

So, beings in heaven do practice

Buddhism? I guess that's the question.

That's So, it would be the last words of

this paragraph. Beings in heaven do

practice Buddhism? Question mark. And it

wouldn't surprise me at all. I mean, you

do have

deities according to orthodox tradition

that are ariyas, you know, Sakka king of

gods

who was a reformed version of Indra

who was like the the tribal deity of

like the the Indo-Aryan invaders

of you know the Indian subcontinent 15

centuries before the common era.

Approximately, you know, he got

reformed, became an became an Arya.

Changed his name to Sakya for some

reason.

Um

Let's see.

Beings in heaven can practice Buddhism.

Although, I mean it it does strike me

that I mean I am a little bit skeptical

of the orthodox claim that you're better

off being a human than a god because

humans are more likely to be inspired to

practice Dharma.

Because I think one way you get into

heaven is through wisdom and virtue. So,

it would seem to me that most small g

gods and goddesses, most Devas and Devis

are wiser and more virtuous than we are.
So, why wouldn't they practice Dharma if they're wiser than us?
So, I would guess that there's all kinds of Devas and some of them don't give a damn about Dharma and some of them do.
And the some that do might be very advanced. It's like the pure abodes is a clear example of even within orthodox tradition, you've got deities who are destined for enlightenment.
So,
yeah, I would guess that being some beings in heaven do practice Buddhism.
Not all of them do, just like all humans don't practice Buddhism.
So,

I guess I answered that question, sort of.

And so, I'm moving on to the very last question.

Man, we've been going for over two out two and a half hours, too.

And I hope the audio is is acceptable.

Last question

from Ethiopian fake tig and from anyone else. If you were to meet Bhikkhu Bodhi or any of the other libtard Buddhist, would you confront them about how they are poisoning the real teachings? Well, I was put into one of these situations before just

not an extremely long time ago.

Maybe around 2017

or 18.

I did meet Ajahn Brahm in Indonesia.

And we were hanging out quite a lot

um together.

I mean, we weren't sleeping in the same

quarters, but I mean, we were seeing

each other pretty much every day.

And

I just didn't have it in me to to

confront him with regard to his

unilateral, you know, taking upon

himself the authority of Gautama Buddha

and just declaring the Bhikkhuni Sangha

revived.

You know, I was I was tempted. I

considered it a few times. You know, I I didn't even want to argue with him. He's a senior monk. And I just, you know, we were both guests the same place. And I just did not want to just like provoke a confrontation with him.

I disagree with him on a lot of things and I just it just did not seem appropriate at the time under the circumstances to just start calling him out on what could be interpreted as

[__]

Um it probably be the same with Bhikkhu Bodhi. I mean, there is, like I said before,

a certain empathy, a certain just being

able to pick up on, you know,
discomfort in other people sometimes,
you know, under certain circumstances.
Like if I'm doing something or saying
something that other people don't like,
I kind of pick up on it and you have to
take that into consideration. And so
even if I were to meet Bhikkhu Bodhi,
who is just like
a progressive leftist wearing monk's
robes.
A good translator. [clears throat]
I mean, he doesn't seem to meditate
much, if at all, but I mean, he's a good
translator.
Um I don't think I would be much
inclined to just confront him, start

accusing him of of messing up Western

Dhamma, that kind of stuff.

Partly just out of consideration he's a

senior monk, you know, I don't want to

pick fights with senior monks.

Whether I'm a a junior monk or a

layperson, it's you're just probably

better off not doing it unless they're

just an absolute crook.

There are a few famous monks that aren't

so much

libtards

as Ethiopian Fake Dave puts it, but are

just like corrupt monks that are a

disgrace to the robes they're wearing

because, you know, they're just

flouting

the just the the principles of Buddhist

monasticism.

You know, it's it's they're just like

wearing robes in order to make more

money, this kind of stuff.

Um even them I might not confront them.

I'm just like avoid them. Like there was

one famous monk in Burma

who I mean, he's very famous, one of the

most famous monks in Burma, at least at

the time I was living there.

And

man, if he were to come to my monastery,

I used to, you know, sometimes people

would suggest we should invite him to

this monastery. And I you know, I would

I would not be encouraging at all. And
if he did show up, there's a good chance
I would have just avoided him and and
not come out of my cave to even give him
the time of day, that kind of thing.
But just to call him out to his face, I
mean,
nothing good could come of that just
because, you know, in Burma, he's one of
the most famous monks in the country.
I'm just some
guest in the country. I'm some foreign
barbarian.
>> [clears throat]
>> So, I mean, it would inevitably be
interpreted that I was just being this

barbarian and insulting this this great

famous Seattle or something.

So,

let's see. The whole question here, once

again, if you were to meet Bhikkhu Bodhi

or any of the other libtard Buddhists,

would you confront them about how they

are poisoning the real teachings? Under

certain circumstances, let's say that I

got set up with some debate on YouTube

or something, then yeah, I mean, that

might be my my responsibility to call

them out as part of the debate, that

kind of thing.

But,

>> [clears throat]

>> just to meet them

politely,

you know, for nondescript reasons, you know, you just happen to be at the same place at the same time or whatever, probably I would not be aggressively confrontational, unless I had good reason to be aggressively confrontational.

I mean, there was one time I met a guy in California,

and

this guy [clears throat] he he took himself very seriously. I met him just that one time.

And

he he would introduce himself as one of

the world's leading authorities on

Burma.

Apparently, [clears throat]

you know, like not taking into account

all the Burmese people

who know Burma better than he does. You

know, he didn't even speak Burmese, but,

you know, he would kind of

>> [clears throat]

>> boastfully talk about how, you know, the

US government uses him as a consultant

with regard to Burmese matters and so

forth, and he takes himself very

seriously, not much of a sense of humor.

And then he started talking about

monks that he knew that were just

exemplary good monks. There's one that

was collecting donations for, like, the Rohingyas or something. There was one who ran an orphanage and there was another one who was doing something else. I think he There was one who was actually photographed at the White House with George W. Bush. That
I think he was like a a refugee from Burma because of the the the military government's crackdown on protesting monks or something. So, he was involved in protest and so forth. And these three just excellent monks that he
was holding up as examples of good monks. I mean, not a single one of them I mean, he didn't mention any kind of

monastic virtue or meditation or actually following Dhamma. You know, it was all these worldly kind of leftist sort of or not even leftist, but just like charitable things and protesting against governments and this kind of thing.

And I pointed out, it's like, they might be good people,

but they don't sound like good monks because they're not doing what monks are supposed to do, which is practice Dhamma.

You know, one of them's running an orphanage, another one is like famous for protesting, and you know, it's like they're not doing what monks are

supposed to do according to the text.
And this guy got so angry at me. He just
got up and I mean, first he was trying
to to argue a little bit, but I'm saying
they're they might be good people,
but I mean, they're not doing what monks
are supposed to do according to the text
themselves. And he seemed to think that
like modern like progressive ideals
should take the place of these old
outdated notions of what a monk is
supposed to do.
And finally, he just I mean, he just
didn't know how to deal with with me
disagreeing with him and he just stormed
out of the house.

I mean, he was he was like white with I
mean, he wasn't like yelling or
anything, but he was obviously extremely
upset just because I was challenging his
judgment on what makes a good monk.
And according to him, being a good monk
doesn't necessarily require following
like Dhamma like monastic duties like
meditation and and not handling money
and this kind of stuff.
So, I mean it has happened at least in
that case. He was a
He wasn't a a monk-libtard,
but he was
a Buddhist, I guess.
And in a case like that, I mean if it
just arises spontaneously like that,

somebody says something that strikes me

as just outrageously incorrect,

I might speak up.

Although Bhikkhu Bodhi or not Bhikkhu

Bodhi, but Ajahn Brahm was doing that in

Indonesia. He's encouraging people to

support the bhikkhunis. And you know,

it's like I'm wanting to like raise my

hand. You know, it's like, "What

bhikkhunis? They became extinct."

Uh,

>> [clears throat]

>> but I didn't do it.

Uh,

>> [sighs]

>> so let's see. Is there anything else to

be said here?

No, I think I'd probably just hold my

tongue unless

it was somebody else was provoking it.

So, that's it. I'm done.

Uh,

>> [sighs]

>> as I should always say at the beginning

and pretty much never do, do you have

any questions you think I can answer

regarding Dhamma

philosophy, that kind of stuff? Feel

free to ask no more than three questions

per person per episode, please.

Check my URL links below if you are so

inclined. Like and subscribe if you have

not done so already, and be happy.

Okay.

I think I might be streaming.

This is weird. It's not going to

officially start until 2:00 though.

Let's see here. What we got going here?

Okay.

I would appreciate it if someone would

uh

type something in the chat just so I'll

know that something's going on.

So far, nothing.

[clears throat]

Oh, okay. Maitreya Buddha has greeted

me, so that's a good sign.

All right.

[clears throat]

This is a little tricky. Okay.

Let's see.

I won't start answering questions until

2:00. In fact, I won't even even greet

anybody till 2:00.

Just uh sip on my beverage.

[cough and clears throat]

Hot coffee on a hot day may be a bad

idea.

Okay.

Okay.

Maitreya Buddha

says, "Will you be answering questions

from the comments of your last uploaded

video?" Yeah. Yeah. This

This I've done This is like my third

live stream that I've ever done, so I'm

[clears throat] still not used to it

yet.

But,

as a general rule, I'll be answering

questions from submitted questions over

the past week, and then every once in a

while, I'll be looking at the chat and

seeing if there's any more questions in

the chat.

Is what I plan on doing.

[clears throat]

But, I guess before the show officially

starts, I should put the paper umbrella

back into the coffee, just so people

don't think that I'm an uncultured

barbarian.

Okay.

Says 1:59.

Better an hour early than a minute late

and all that, but I'm just going to wait

until 2:00 cuz that's what I said I was

going to do.

We're going to start this at 2:00 p.m.

Those of you who aren't watching this

live, you don't have to worry about any

of this. You don't have to adjust your

settings, anything like that.

But, this is the

[clears throat]

question answer

episode 200 live stream. I think the

last live stream was at 100, which seems

like it was only like 8 months ago, but

it had to have been longer than 8 months

ago.

Okay, 20 seconds.

The excitement is almost unbearable.

10 seconds.

There should be like that that thing

like you clap it at the beginning of

filming or something.

Okay, action.

Hello and welcome to question and answer

episode number 200

live stream edition. I'm your host Panyo

Bossah. This is your co-host, my

beverage.

And as I have already said,

it may be a mistake to drink hot coffee

on a hot day in South Carolina,

but what the hell? No gut, no glory.

[clears throat]

And I guess the way I'm going to have to

do this is after I'm finished, then I

can go in and edit, put in a thumbnail,

put in the list of questions and all

that. And also, like take

like download this video so that I can

then upload it onto other platforms,

including, well, I mean, pretty much all

of the other platforms are less

censorious, but we don't have to get

into that.

So,

let's see. Any uh

any updates?

Well, last week I mentioned that my
my uh gold ring danios were starting to
die,
which I mean, like three or four of them
died. I still have like a little school
of like five of them in my aquarium. And
then, like 3 days ago, I start noticing
little baby danios.
So, whether the die-off and like they're
like mating and reproducing has
something to do with it, I don't know.
Lot of animals have it way worse than
people do, where you have sex once and
then you just die, like a salmon.
[clears throat]
But, fortunately, I don't have salmon in

my my aquarium.

So, I guess what I should do, oh,

somebody

Proto Pseudo Monk.

Holy cow, this is a surprise. So, I

guess he's he's become a Hindu.

If he's worshiping cows now.

Okay.

So, I guess I should start answering

questions, cuz that's what I'm here for,

right? Know what I'm saying?

First question is from the Saboteur.

And the Saboteur watches me on BitChute,

so he's not going to be able to avail

himself of the luxury of seeing this on

YouTube live.

That Although, I think it's not 100%

live, because there's like a a delay,
I've noticed.
So, who knows? Who knows what the delay
is for? Maybe it's just it takes that
long for the electricity to go through
all the little wires and stuff.
Okay. First question is from the
Saboteur.
And the Saboteur says, "In Q&A 199, you
stated that regret is bad karma, but
surely regret is also a sign of
spiritual maturity or should we not feel
sorry for harming other beings?
Okay, well, I mean I've said it more
than once. I said it I mean this it's
something that I harp away at at times.

And I got to keep an eye on

keep an eye on the the chat here.

Okay. Yeah, I am taking questions from

the chat. Um although

mainly I'm going to be answering the

questions that were submitted

over the past week and then every once

in a while I'll be looking at the chat

and answering questions from that, too.

[snorts]

At least that is the plan.

But everything is impermanent subject to

change.

Okay.

So,

yeah, I mean I have said I remember

years ago, not too many years ago, like

maybe 7 years ago,

I was living in California and teaching

the children of Burmese immigrant

Buddhists about Buddhism.

And I would tell them I was like if you

only know one thing about Buddhism, the

most important thing you should know is

that desire is the cause of all

suffering.

Second noble truth.

But if there's another thing that you

know about Buddhism, that's all you

know, the second most important thing to

know is that a guilty conscience,

remorse, regret

always

more bad than good. You make bad karma.
It is an unskillful, unwholesome mental
state to feel guilty, like have a guilty
conscience, have remorse of conscience.
Againbite of inwit
for those of you who have read a lot of
James Joyce.
So,
regret is not really a sign of spiritual
maturity. It's a sign I mean it's a sign
that you have some kind of spiritual
awareness maybe. It's It's a sign that
at least you are capable of
acknowledging when you've done something
wrong.
But, just because people feel this stuff
doesn't mean that it's good. I mean,

like

all the emotions that people have have

some sort of survival value. That's why

we have it evolved into our ancestors,

you know, like greed.

You have greed, you're more likely to

survive in times of of like scarcity,

that kind of thing.

Or lust, you know, you have lust, you're

more likely to reproduce your DNA

sequences and not become an evolutionary

dead end, all that kind of stuff. So,

maybe regret

has some kind of survival value for cave

people.

But,

once you get into
a higher level of spiritual maturity,
then you don't need the greed to get
what you need. You don't need regret to
get you to stop doing bad things. You
can just acknowledge that you did
something wrong. You can resolve to try
harder in future not to do it again.
It doesn't require any regret or remorse
whatsoever to acknowledge you did
something wrong and to resolve to do
better in future.
The regret is like friction against the
way things are. It's like desiring that
the past had been different. And no
amount of desiring the past had been
different is going to cause the the past

to be different.

I mean, the past is is behind us. It's

already been done.

Just the best you can do if you fall

down and just get back up and continue

moving forward and be more careful not

to trip next time.

So, um

there's this question here, should we

not feel sorry for harming other beings?

You can feel compassion,

which is kind of kind of like feeling

sorry in a way,

but wishing that you hadn't done it

is [snorts] pointless. It is just a

pointless, futile

generation of dukkha.

It just makes things worse. So, again,

you harm some other being

accidentally or even on purpose, and

then you you realize, well, it would

have been better if I hadn't done that,

and so you can do what you can to make

amends if that is possible, and you can

resolve to try to do better in future.

In fact, um something resembling

confession in Theravada Buddhism,

um exists where you can confess a fault

or a misdeed

to some respected spiritual person

for the sake of helping you to do better

in future. Just I acknowledge I did this

wrong, I did this act, I acknowledge

that it is wrong, and I'm telling you to
help me to do better next time.
That's all fine, they can all have
positive mental states, but like any
kind of negative mental state is going
to be essentially bad karma, including
remorse over having, you know, blown up
that busload of nuns and orphans.
So, yeah, I mean, regret is not
necessarily a sign of spiritual
maturity,
um but at [clears throat] least it
indicates an awareness of a knowledge of
right and wrong. But then again, it's
like the knowledge of right and wrong
was what caused Adam and Eve to fall

from grace and get kicked out of the

Garden of Eden, right?

So,

a sign of spiritual maturity

is not struggling against the way things

are. Just accepting the way things are,

including accepting the fact that 3

weeks ago you did something that caused

a lot of suffering, and you acknowledge

that and you resolve to do better in

future.

And I need to uh

keep an eye

on

Let's see. Maybe I'm going to have to

rearrange things a little bit just so I

can see the chat.

[clears throat]

Okay.

So, we got a few people here. Let's see.

Question one from Proto Sudo Monk, are you taking questions in the chat? Now, I won't count that as a question.

Okay.

Fred, does car- karma have memory?

Uh

that's it's kind of a weird question.

Does karma have memory? I mean,

[clears throat] it has momentum, and momentum is a kind of memory. You know, it's like a pool ball rolling across the pool table. In a way, because it has momentum, that's a kind of memory of it

getting hit by the pool the pool pool cue or by another ball to start it moving. You know, it's it's momentum. I guess uh using Newtonian language, an object in motion tends to remain in motion unless acted upon by some other force.

So, that's kind of the way karma works. So, it's it's sort of a kind of memory because it's momentum.

You know, it's in a way it's sort of remembers the motive force that got it going because it's still going.

But, it's you wouldn't say that it's like a conscious memory [clears throat] in the sense of remembering who your first grade teacher was, anything like

that.

So, let's see

Our proto pseudo monks asking questions.

Okay.

He says, Q1.

Question number one.

Should I finish my master's degree or

become a monk now?

I cannot endure six months more of this

insanity. My mind seeks the unshakeable

peace of Nibana.

Well, I mean, if you cannot endure six

more months of this insanity, that

pretty much answers your own question.

Maybe you're just sort of

of two [clears throat] minds on whether

you ought to endure six more months of that insanity, which is why you asked the questions. This question in particular.

Um I'm not even sure what the master's degree is in.

Uh I remember

there was an American monk who came to Burma, ordained in the same tradition as me.

And

[clears throat]

he sought me out because I was kind of legendary in the Taungpulu tradition, you know, the the strict monk who, you know, is roughing it in caves and all that. So, he sought me out in Burma.

Um it was like Christmas day and I had malaria really bad. That was the first time I had malaria. And I was hospitalized. I mean, [clears throat] it's almost immediately upon him coming to see me, they just had to load me into the jeep and take me into town to a hospital.

But the thing is

um he eventually dropped out of the monkhood and it was just like this kind of explosion. You know, it was just some sort of he was under such stress that it built up to the point where he just like catapulted himself very spectacularly out of the Sangha.

And he he would write me letters

occasionally.

And um

he [clears throat] was saying that uh he

still was fully

he has

he fully intended to renounce the world

again and to strive for Nibbana in this

very life. But first, he wanted to get a

degree in Buddhist studies from Oxford

University in England

under Richard Gombrich.

Richard Gombrich is going to be his

mentor.

And

I kept telling him, "If you really want

to become enlightened in this life,

then
you're better off going to a meditation
master in a forest somewhere than going
to Richard Gombrich, who isn't even a
Buddhist
in Oxford."
But I mean, he just didn't see it that
way. But eventually, he did. I think he
ran out of money and couldn't afford to
keep going to Oxford, and he did
reordain. I think he's in robes right
now. Last I heard, he was in robes right
now. So,
I mean, if you're just getting a degree
that's not even going to really be
helping you. I mean, if you if you fully

intend to renounce the world and strive
for enlightenment, at the very least, if
you get a degree, it should it it should
at least be kind of helping you in that
direction. I mean, if you're just
getting a degree in accounting
or I don't know, like
finance, that kind of stuff,
it's not going to be of any help at all
after you renounce the world, probably.
I mean, you can pick up certain things,
you know, certain like my degree in
biology actually has
has helped me as a monk or as a
Buddhist. It's just helping to
understand why beings behave the way
they do.

It's very helpful.

Of course, sometimes my degree in biology would be kind of sidetracking me a little bit. I did a lot of really fascinating studies of like the evolution of Hymenopteran insects, you know, like ants, bees, and wasps, because in the tropics, you have more diversity of Hymenopteran insects and so you can just see like the most primitive wasps that just kind of lay an egg on a caterpillar and fly away. And then you got a little bit more advanced ones that insert the egg into the caterpillar. And then you got more advanced ones that paralyze the caterpillar and bury it

underground. And then you've got the
more advanced ones
that are making like these elaborate
nests like the potter wasps. And then
they're like camouflaging it because
there's other species of wasp that are
parasitic and will and will burrow in
and steal what's inside.
And so it's just
just seeing the the sort of the the
gradation of like the really primitive
ones up to like the very relatively
complex social wasps that have like a
group like a you know like a hive kind
of a thing. I mean that was fascinating.
It didn't didn't necessarily help me as
a monk.

[sighs]

But I mean like a degree in medicine or something. I mean that could be helpful. Like administering first aid in in some remote jungle area. It could be it could be helpful. Knowing how to stay healthy for example.

So let's see.

Should I finish my master's degree or become a monk now?

Well, I mean

I don't know all the details. I mean if you really are firmly persuaded you're going to be a monk and renounce the world, then I guess an academic degree isn't really necessary. I mean it's not

even necessary for monks to have
monastic degrees.
I mean you want to come to Burma and
strive to become an Agga Maha Pandita or
something, you know, some ecclesiastical
title
like bestowed upon you by the
government. Even that doesn't really
help. In fact, in Burma
certain titled monks like Dhammasariya's
which which sort of like a at least a
bachelor's degree in Buddhistic studies
in Burma, like in the the monastic
university system, Demostria is like one
of the the first big titles that you can
get. And they have a reputation for just
like wanting to be famous and just being

famous as Dhamma teachers and not really
practicing all that much, not following
the rules monastic discipline, that sort
of thing.
And Ajahn Chah had this famous saying
that
people who start off like intellectually
studying Dhamma, he's mainly referring
to scholar monks,
usually don't get very far in Dhamma
just because they're like
intellectualizing everything instead of
just living the life spontaneously.
So, I mean, with regard to whether you
should finish your master's degree or
not, I mean, that's up to you. I see

he's got a a master of science in

artificial intelligence.

Well,

I mean, that could theoretically be

helpful in understanding

like

natural intelligence,

but

um I mean, if you really are fully

intended on just renouncing the world, I

mean, consider the example of Bahiya in

the Bahiya Sutta, one of my favorite

Suttas,

where as soon as he realizes he's not

enlightened, but there is a being who is

called enlightened, you know, hundreds

of miles away, he just immediately just

packs up and just takes off. I mean,
he's he doesn't want to waste any time.
When he finally gets to Savatthi or
wherever it was that the Buddha was at
the time,
you know, he asks, "Where is the Buddha?
I need to talk to him." And they say,
"Well, he's going for alms in town right
now. He'll be back in a little while.
You just make yourself comfortable, wait
here." And he just won't have it. And
so, I got to talk to him as soon as
possible. I don't know when I'm going to
die. I don't know how long I'm going to
be here, how much time I've got to learn
this essential Dhamma. So, he goes into

town. He hunts down the Buddha going for alms. He asks the Buddha in the street, "Teach me Dhamma." And the Buddha says, "Now is not an appropriate time. It's not convenient. I'm walking for alms right now." And then Bahiya just insists saying, "I don't know how much time I've got in this world. I need it now." So, finally the Buddha teaches him Dhamma. Bahiya becomes enlightened upon hearing this really like concentrated Dhamma talk that lasts only a few seconds. And then shortly after that, he gets trampled by a cow.

And so, it was he did right in that case, I guess, in not wanting to postpone learning Dhamma any more than

necessary.

And I guess since there's people

submitting stuff in the chat, that means

that this is actually working. We're

actually live right now. Uh

close to live. Slight delay of a few

seconds.

So, let's see here. Trzaskus is he's uh

struggling to spell his name correctly

there. Let's see.

Answer that question.

See.

Okay.

Is monogamy more virtuous than open

relationships or polyamory for a

Buddhist layperson or meditator?

Man.

Okay. Yeah, monogamy is if so celibacy is best for me strictly Theravada Buddhist point of view. If you can't be celibate,

then there's a famous saying in the text where the Buddha says, "If you can renounce the world and live the holy life, by all means do so. If you can't renounce the world and live the holy life, then at the very least you should avoid sexual intercourse as though avoiding falling into a deep pit with glowing coals at the bottom. But if even that is too much, at the very very least, stay away stay away from the wives of other men.

So,

there is that. But, I do think that

monogamy, I mean,

it [clears throat] reduces the number of

like

uh digressions from celibacy down to one

part one other person.

So, yeah, I think it's fairly common

sense that monogamy would be considered

more virtuous

than open relationships or polyamory.

Although,

in the Buddha's time, polygamy was

socially acceptable, legal, and all

that. Kings had harems at the time. The

Buddha himself, before he renounced the

world, apparently had a harem of
beautiful dancing girls and all that.
But, he wasn't [clears throat] in he
wasn't committing adultery
in the sense of
like all this all of his slave girls
were like his property. That kind of
thing. I think he did only have one wife
according to tradition. And maybe he was
just virtuous even before he renounced
the world and just kind of watched the
beautiful dancing girls dance and then
didn't lay a hand on them. But, that
would be abnormal, I think.
But, the Buddha was an abnormal person
in certain ways, certain very good,
valuable ways.

Uh

okay.

So, yeah, with regard to that question,

is monogamy more virtuous than open

relationships or polyamory? Uh yeah,

monogamy would be more virtuous virtuous

than open relationships, especially if

you're messing around with the wives of

other men, even if the other man

is sort of a [__] sitting in the [__]

chair wanting to watch or whatever,

still it's it's sexual misconduct. And

also like promiscuous sex is also

Kamesutra.

Okay.

So, and and just going with reality,

open relationships and polyamory tend to

be unstable and tend not to last very

long. You know, it's just sort of a an

explosion waiting to happen.

So, let's see here.

[clears throat]

Man, I'm just I'm just going to the chat

and answering questions and uh we'll

eventually get to

the usual list.

Maybe I should uh get back to the

Saboteur and finish this

answer his second question

before I do any more from the chat.

So, the Saboteur says, "Some criminals

in prison have stated they don't care

what they've done. Does that make them

closer to being Buddhist?"

Mm, not necessarily. It just makes them

closer to being sociopaths,

I guess. Let's see. I got to

got to do this. See, I've got to monkey

with my

um

[clears throat]

What am I doing here?

I've got different windows.

And I'm trying to

trying to figure this out.

Huh.

All right. I think I'm I think I'm

getting it.

Okay. Yeah, see,

I've got like three different windows.

I've got like the the OSB, is that what

it's called?

Yeah, OBS. I got the OBS. I've got

YouTube. And then I've got the list that

has the usual questions on it. And then

I can't see all three at the same time,

so I've got to like juggle around a lot.

Okay. So, let's get back to the

Saboteur's second question. Some

criminals in prison have stated they

don't care what they've done. Does that

make them closer to being Buddhist?

Um maybe a few of them.

I mean,

[laughter and sighs]

in certain ways maybe where they're at

least they're not clinging to remorse.
You know, so I mean that would be good
from a Buddhist point of view, but for
the most part being a sociopath
is taking you farther away from Buddhism
than closer to the Buddhism because
I mean
in Buddhism, you should have moral
scruples. You should have a conscience.
It's just that the conscience should
take effect before you do the misdeed
and prevent you from doing it.
Once I mean, that hasn't happened, you
know, the fail-safe of moral scruples
hasn't successfully operated and you
just go ahead and do the misdeed, then

having like retroactive remorse or

scruples of conscience,

it doesn't help anything. It just makes

things worse overall.

So,

um these criminals in prison that

I mean, they they don't feel remorse and

they didn't feel any kind of moral

scruples before they were doing the

deed. They wanted to do it. Then, I

mean, they're just sociopaths or a lot

of them are, you know, they're just kind

of

so closed off that they're insensitive

to other beings. You know, their heart

chakra isn't open going with with yogic

new age kind of language. You know, they

just they're just closed off. They're
just completely encased in this shell of
like Pink Floyd's wall.
And that's why they don't feel any kind
of remorse cuz they're just completely
like self-referential
and they don't even have a window in
Pink Floyd's wall that allows them to
kind of feel in to what other other
beings are feeling. They just feel their
own feelings, they don't give a [__]
about what anyone else is feeling.
They're not even exposed to it really.
Or, you know, it has no effect on them
other than maybe they get a rush from
somebody like screaming or whatever.

So,

yeah, it's

just because they don't feel remorse.

You know, they don't they might not feel

fear either like a some sociopathic

tough guy who just loves fighting and

getting into trouble,

he might be courageous also.

But, that doesn't mean I mean, just

courage in itself can be considered a

kind of virtue. Lack of remorse from

Buddhist point anyway can be seen as a

kind of virtue, but that doesn't mean

that overall they're closer to the

Buddhist ideal.

[snorts]

So, I'll look at the chat again.

Oh my.

Okay.

Let's see.

Question.

Could you try and this is Maximin.

Maximin asks, could you try and explain

the process of beaming meta from your

own experience?

Beaming meta. Well, I was never really

into meta meditation. I've done it.

Um

you know, like a lot of times um I mean,

let's see. How how should I how should I

rephrase?

Um I've never really made like a central

practice of meta meditation. It didn't

really work for me. Meta has to be spontaneous in my case.

But, like if you're a an ordained Buddhist monk at a lot of monasteries, you're just taught like before you go for alms round, it's like Sun the gas, Sun the gamma, upon you seek in the PR Jan my Jan my Jabazi, where you kind of chant this blessing to the people of the village, you know, just may they all be well and happy. That kind of stuff.

Yeah, I I could do that. That's no problem. And you know, a lot of the time you just genuinely feel it. It's not just blah blah blah coming out your mouth.

Uh but beaming meta

um

gosh

I mean

it's not really like you're shooting

meta like from a ray gun. It's it's

mainly you just

you're like focusing your attention on a

certain being or a certain like

category of beings. You know, all males,

all females, all beings in higher

realms, all beings in lower realms, this

kind of thing or you know, sending meta

in the northern direction, the southern

direction, you know, the east and the

west, up and down, intermediate

directions. You know, there's all this

kind of formula cookbook kind of instructions for sending meta that you can find in the texts.

Um I really didn't do that a whole lot other than you know, like morning chanting at a monastery where you know, that's just part of the you know part of the the the schedule. What is it? What's I can't uh the program. Part of the program.

So, I would do that.

Um but I mean, if you are genuinely sending meta to somebody, there is something going on. At least it can really be going on.

I remember one time my preceptor didn't like me very much. Mainly because

he was very Burmese and I was not particularly Burmese at all. And I was seen as kind of a loose cannon. Every once in a while, he he liked me because I was like conservative in my practice. And you know, it's like I remember one time U Pandita came to the monastery. Mahasi U Pandita, the famous Mahasi U Pandita came to the monastery and almost every monk at the monastery except me went to the Seattle and asked for permission to go and study Mahasi method meditation and I didn't and so he praised me at that time because I was like the only monk at the monastery that didn't want to go off and

start practicing Mahasi method.

But

as a general rule he didn't like me.

And then one day I remember I was

walking around outside and I just felt

like this glow in my heart. You know, I

just felt really good for some reason.

And I found out that in the

the shrine room of the of the main

monastery building at that exact time

my Seattle was leading a meta meditation

like instruction to a group of people

there and he was sending meta apparently

and I caught some of it. So it was like

I could really feel it [snorts]

happening when it was happening and

there are lots of cases of for example,

there's a a Burmese monk named U Ottomasara or Ottomasara, I can't remember which it was. Ottomasara, I think, who taught this meta meditation technique and there was this woman that was having trouble with her boss that started following the technique and shortly after she was sending meta to this troublesome troublemaker boss he just came to her and just sincerely apologized and asked her forgiveness. And I mean it could just be a coincidence. A lot of skeptics would say it's just coincidental, but still there are a lot of cases of that kind of thing where really sending meta does have like

a like a noticeable effect.

[snorts]

But beaming meta is

I mean it's it's largely just an

artifact of perception, you know, it's

it's kind of imagination in a

[clears throat] way.

But still if you're sending meta to some

particular being

and they they can catch it. I mean, it

can have an effect.

But I'm really not an authority on

loving-kindness meditation.

Okay.

Let's see here.

Okay, Trzaska's is

asked the question and we're going to

make sure that they didn't ask questions
and you guys got to
self-police yourself
where if you've already asked three
questions or
already asked questions in comments
under YouTube videos or on the Discord
server or whatever, then keep that in
mind because still four questions is
transgressive. You'll wind up on a list
and it it could be very
unpleasant
for somebody.
Okay, so Trzaska's has asked question
here, "When you were meditating, did you
ever feel as if sensation of anger and

similar emotions were kind of heavy?

I mean, almost physical weight."

Um

Well, as a general rule if I was

meditating, I wouldn't feel anger very

much except maybe like you're you're

sitting there like in a cave meditating

and then a mosquito starts whining

around your head and then it like lands

like on your temple and bites but it

doesn't find a a vein that suits it.

It's like a fussy mosquito. So then it

starts whining around a little more and

then lands on your shoulder and starts

biting you there but again, it just

doesn't find a blood vessel that suits

it. So then it like like flies up and

whines around and then starts biting you like on the knuckle or something. And yeah, I could feel like irritation, maybe a certain amount of intense hatred for that mosquito.

Um yes, I mean, it's definitely you feel something. I mean, I don't know if I've ever made a conscious connection between anger and like actual weight. But, yeah, I mean, there it's like something there that is

in in a way it's kind of weighing you down. It's kind of obscuring your clarity, that kind of thing.

So, I got to make sure I'm seeing the question here. I'm going to be doing

more squinting and like showing my
nostrils and stuff in this one because
the I can expand the type on the main
list, so it's you know 42 point or
whatever, but on the YouTube chat thing,
it's it's pretty small.
Sensation of anger and similar emotions
were kind of heavy, mean almost physical
weight. Well, it's it's more a matter
of, you know, you're you're in a state
of clarity, just sort of equanimity, and
then you start feeling some emotional
feeling, anger, irritation, lust,
you know, whatever it is,
and it's like something wasn't there and
then something is there, and it's you
know, it it's obviously has a kind of

psychic mass to it. So, I mean, you

could sort of

cons- I mean,

it to some people especially it can feel

like a certain heaviness or weight, you

know, it's like you got your mind is all

light,

and then it's just kind of gets burdened

by a certain mental states. Yeah, I

mean, I could I can understand how

people could feel it that way. I mean,

I've never really made a connection,

wow, this irritation feels heavy.

But, I mean, you can interpret it that

way.

And I don't know if this is going to be

lagging

or not. I don't know what the quality of

this video is going to be.

Hopefully, the the sound issues at least

have been fixed.

Um, let's see here.

Keep scrolling a little bit here.

Chester runaway. Have you heard of

people meeting and talking to

individuals that are later revealed to

have been already dead by that point? A

full spirit materialization, if you

will.

Um, I haven't run across somebody like

that in person, but I have read about

that sort of thing in books. Like a full

body apparition.

Um,

it was I read a book about, you know,

the the afterdeath experience or

something like that. And it was like a

person sitting on their couch, watching

TV, reading a book or whatever. And all

of a sudden, some friend of theirs just

appears in the doorway. He looks very

white and kind of dazed. And I think he

might have had blood on his face or

something. And he just kind of like

stares at them and then just poofs out

of existence. And then later, the person

finds out that he had died just shortly

before that

that apparition occurred. So, yeah, I've

heard about that. I've read about it.

But, um,

let's see.

Yeah, I've I've read about it. You know,

apparently it does happen to some people

sometimes, but it hasn't happened to me.

I mean, I have seen a few apparitions in

my life, but it wasn't anybody that I

didn't know was dead. I see, it was

How's they do it?

Yeah, that that they were later revealed

to be dead or something. I mean, maybe.

I mean, once in Burma, I saw a kind of

apparition that at first I thought was a

real person until I started thinking

about it. And I started thinking, well,

maybe there was nobody there. You know,

it's like

I've told the story before. I was down at the lower monastery getting a bucket of water. I'm walking back up to my cave with this 5-gallon full bucket of water on my shoulder. And because I was usually going barefoot, I'd have to look down to make sure you're not stepping on a scorpion or something or anything else that's icky. Cuz when you're barefoot, you got to be you got to be mindful of where you're walking. That's one of the advantages of going barefoot. It improves your mindfulness.

So, anyways, through my peripheral vision, I can see a young man come out

of of the the forest down the trail

or up the trail.

Um along the trail, and he comes out

into the clearing. And I could see even

though I was seeing him with my

peripheral vision, I was looking down

when he comes out. I mean, he was a

young man wearing a blue shirt. I

remember that.

And you know, black hair, like pretty

much everyone has in Burma. And as soon

as he saw me, he just took off like a

streak. He just took off running across

my field of view.

You know, I was maybe 30 ft away at

most. And went behind the congregation

hall. And I'm thinking, you know,

somebody at a monastery sees a monk and they take off running, they're probably a thief or up to no good. You know, they're they're they're killing chickens or something. So, I looked for him and there was just no sign of him anywhere. So, then I'm thinking, well, were there footprints? Because I mean, when he took off like a streak, just 30 less than 30 ft away from me, it made no sound whatsoever. There were no thumping of footprint, no like footsteps, anything like that. It was just completely silent when he just took off like a streak. And there was no there were no footprints, but it was hard ground. So,

I mean, there was that. I mean, it's theoretically it could have been a person who just ran very quietly, very fast.

But, when I told some some nice village ladies about what happened, one of them just she just had no doubt at all that it was her own uncle who had been ordained at that same monastery as a novice

and

he was not a conscientious novice cuz he was still married. He had his wife living in that congregation hall with him. As a novice and a lot of people they didn't like that. You know, you got some novice at a monastery living with

his own wife in the congregation hall of the monastery and he wound up getting poisoned, apparently, and just dropped dead.

And so she just thought for sure it must have been him.

But so that that'd be like from my own personal experience about as close to that sort of thing as I've ever experienced.

But I'm I have read of cases where where, you know, they see somebody, they think it's their friend and then it wasn't until later they realized that their friend it was already dead at the time that they saw him.

So it can happen. I'm I'm relatively extremely open-minded with regard to acknowledging the possibility of things. Because damn near anything is possible. So, Cleve did not know the Q&A is live today. Well, I did give fair warning in 199. Oh,

which reminds me 200 is not prime at all.

200 that's 2 * 100, so that's 2. That's and then

another 2 when you get 50, another 2 you get 25 and then it's 5 * 5. So it's 2 * 2 * 2 * 5 * 5, I guess.

Okay. Now that we've got that out of the way,

let's see here.

Let's see here.

Is this live or Memorex?

God, that's an old one.

They don't have Memorex anymore.

God, let's see. I got to scroll down

here.

Let's see.

Can see my true of Buddha goes by the

who goes by the pseudonym of

XXKillaBGXX.

Being a soci- sociopath is contrary to

meta. Yeah, yeah, I would agree with

that. I mean, even like if you read

Dostoevsky's The Idiot, which is at one

level it's a parable of Christ and the

devil struggling for the soul of the

sinner. And you've got Rogozhin who
represents the devil. When he loves
Nastasya, I mean, he he's just like
he's just obsessed [clears throat]
with owning her, like possessing her and
controlling her. That is like sort of
the the spiritually dead or spiritually
comatose approach to love of another
person is just like ownership and
control. You know, it's it's not really
caring about how they feel, anything
like that.
So, yeah. But then, I shouldn't be too
much uh
just making comments on the on the chat
here.
Let's see. We got

Oh.

Somebody

who uh

I don't I know who they are, but they

don't go by that name, but I don't know

if they want me to call them by any

other name. So, they're just going to

remain anonymous here.

And they're saying, "What would you say

is your most dominant chakra? And also

your favorite?"

Well, Ram I I I'm not into yoga very

much.

Um I'm not really much into new age. So,

I'm really not an authority on chakras.

But, Ram Dass used to say that most

normies, you know, most worldlings
only have three chakras open. That's the
the root chakra at the the base of the
penis, I guess, is um you know, the base
of the tailbone, let's say,
is just survival. That's root chakra.
Second chakra is sex.
Third chakra or second chakra is like a
little higher up than the root of your
tailbone. And then third chakra, which
is around your solar plexus, your
dantian,
if you're into Chinese medicine,
um that's like
um worldly power and status and so
forth. I I assume intellect would be in
there.

Um and then those are like the three that most people are mainly operating on. Fourth chakra is the heart chakra. That's like compassion, where you start actually acknowledging that there's another you, you know, behind that person's eyes. You know what I'm saying? You know what I'm saying?

You know, it's like it's just kind of more you you're starting getting insight into the idea that everyone is is a kind of me.

You know, in a way it's like everyone's sharing the same consciousness. They just have different egos like claiming a certain territory as their own, that

kind of thing.

So, my most dominant chakra,

gosh, when I was younger it might have

been my second one, but that whatever is

like the intellect chakra, probably

number three.

Yeah, I mean, you get into like more

like knowledge-oriented chakras, you

know, as you get up into the head

region.

[clears throat]

Um

but

uh just being realistic and maybe kind

of humble or something and just assuming

that my main chakras at which I've been

operating are kind of the lower ones

like most people in this world, then
maybe third chakra, but it would be like
the intellect kind of third chakra and
not social status, that kind of thing,
cuz I was never really into social
status. I was I I I've I think I'm
abnormally callous to the opinions of
others, more so than most people. I
mean, I'm not this completely oblivious
to the opinions of others, especially
the the opinions of my sweetie that I
have to take seriously cuz
you know, we're like an us now.
But,
just a stranger's opinion of me, I mean,
I can I can go into public

just looking like a mess cuz I don't
really give a damn what people think
about it.
My sweetie on the other hand, you know,
she's got to put on her makeup and stuff
before she considers herself presentable
to go out and just meet total strangers.
Like at the grocery store or something.
So, my most dominant chakra, probably
like
more of the intellectual. So, I would
guess it'd be like the intellectual
aspect of third chakra. When I was
younger, there would be definite times,
even a few times nowadays in my old age
when second chakra, the second the
sexual chakra kind of is in the

ascendant.

But, my favorite chakra, I guess that

would have to be the the thousand

petaled lotus on the the crown of the

head, which is opens when you become

fully enlightened.

I mean, that have to be my favorite just

for the sake of principle.

Okay then.

So, let's see here.

Proto pseudo monk advises me to grow

psilocybin mushrooms at home.

Yeah, I think uh

Yeah, I think it's

legal, at least the spores and that kind

of thing is legal in the United States.

It's been legal since like the 1970s. I
remember when I was a teenager
where you could in High Times magazine,
you could find kits where you could buy
the spores and brown rice cuz they
didn't want to be sending cow poop in
the mail and that kind of thing. And you
could grow
psilocybin mushrooms in sterilized brown
in a gallon jar or something.
So, yeah, I mean, that's an option, I
suppose.
Let's see. Robert, I know you are a big
St. John of the Cross fan. What writing
by him would you recommend?
The Ascent of Mount Carmel is probably
his main

like mystical text.

I mean, he's got Sayings of Light and Love or just they're like little proverbs for you know, spiritual advice, that kind of thing. Um some of his poetry, like I can't remember the name of it. It's like Stanzas Inspired by uh an experience of high contemplation, which is I mean, it's a profound poem. One of the most profound poems I've ever read.

But you want to know like his philosophy regarding how mysticism works and how best to practice, that kind of thing, just nuts and bolts of his philosophy and his ethics and how to

practice correctly,

[snorts]

you're probably better off with

La Subida del Monte Carmelo

or uh The Ascent of Mount Carmel.

Which reminds me, Carmelo, that's that's

a name famous in the news lately. I

don't wonder if it just they named him

that at random or did they really knew

that Carmelo was like Spanish for Mount

Carmel?

I don't know. And it doesn't even

matter.

So, yeah, The Ascent of Mount Carmel

would be the

you know, it's sort of like Nagarjuna

has the Mūlamadhyamakakārikā as like his

his magnum opus [clears throat] or just kind of like the central work for understanding his philosophy.

With St. John of the Cross, I'm pretty sure it would be The Ascent of Mount Carmel, La Subida del Monte Carmelo.

So, let's see.

Fred retracted a message.

Let's see. Now, suppose this live or Memorex? Yeah, it's got to be live because they don't do Memorex no more.

Um

David says, "In Is enlightenment a real thing? What proof have you accumulated that would make you think it is or isn't?" Well, enlightenment, full

enlightenment, I have expressed a
certain amount of skepticism
over the course of these videos as to
whether full enlightenment even
it means anything within the context of
samsara. You know, it's sort of like
being out of the matrix. Does that have
any meaning within the context of the
matrix itself?
Or there was the the the Dignaga school,
the Yogacara logicians they were called
sometimes. It was a medieval Indian
school of Buddhist logic. And their
classic example of a problematic
premise, something that cannot be
proven, is
such and such being is fully

enlightened. You know, it's it's a

problematic premise and it's kind of

like a paradox

or an enigma, an enigma wrapped in a

paradox,

if you will.

So,

in Buddhism and other systems, it is

treated as a real thing. Even St. John

of the Cross had his stage of of

perfection, which surprised me reading

St. John of the Cross for the first

time.

Um and there are people much wiser than

I am, much more advanced than I am in

certain respects, who just Sure.

Yep, it's real.

But, you can't really prove it. I mean,

you can't really prove anything out

there.

You know, it's

philosophers like David Hume and Spinoza

mainly in the West

have hammered away at the idea that I

mean, a certain amount of skepticism is

necessary because anything outside the

the contents of your own mind, anything

supposedly out there in some external

universe,

I mean, you cannot be certain.

It could be an illusion.

You don't know.

So,

um I I'm going with the idea that

enlightenment

it is

about the best goal you could have if

you have a goal,

and there is some reality to it, even if

somehow you're

like perpetrating a paradox

by becoming enlightened while still

apparently moving around and making

noise in this

like illusory matrix samsara.

So, let's see. What proof have you

accumulated that would make you think it

is or isn't? Well, I mean, like I just

said, there is no proof. There never

never is a proof unless you manage to
become fully enlightened. And even then,
you're not that's no proof to anybody
else. And I mean, it's not even really
proof to yourself necessarily because
there are a lot of people out there who
think they're enlightened, but really
aren't.
[sighs]
But, I mean,
there have been so many beings
like Ram Dass, you know, one of my first
gurus in this life, despite the fact
that he's he was born and raised Jewish,
he was a switch-hitter, kind of
bisexual.
But,

he was a

very like like most good teachers, he

was really enthusiastic about what he

was teaching, and he very much believed

in it, and he had a um a guru,

Neem Karoli Baba up there on the altar,

up on top of the bookcase,

who, if he was not fully enlightened, he

was about as close as a person can get

to being fully enlightened. I mean, he

was

I mean, from my point of view, Neem

Karoli Baba was some kind of spiritual

Superman.

Ram Dass was humble, and he would he had

this embarrassing tendency that I kind

of emulated for a long time, especially when I was a monk, of just blurting out the most embarrassing truths about himself.

But, I'm just uh kind of wandering [clears throat] all over the place here.

So, just getting back to David's question, is enlightenment a real thing?

Well,

[clears throat]

I mean, it's it's it's kind of like a a paradoxical trick question.

Because enlightenment should not exist in this world. You know, it's like when you become enlightened, you have transcended this world. You have escaped from the matrix.

So,

words apply really only to the matrix,

only to samsara. And so, you're already

dealing with a kind of paradox.

But, um

you know, Buddhism just takes it as a

given that there is such a thing as

enlightenment, that the founder of the

tradition, the Buddha, was enlightened.

That's what Buddha means.

That there have been many people since

the Buddha's time that have been

considered to be enlightened, Buddhists

and non-Buddhists.

Saint John of the Cross, completely

different tradition, just using

different assumptions, comes up to the same kind of conclusion. I mean, it's sort of like
um convergent evolution of Roman Catholicism and like Eastern like Indian spirituality. That I mean, there may have been some kind of indirect, obscure connections between Roman Catholicism and and Indian spirituality.
But, um for the most part, Saint John of the Cross was probably largely oblivious to what was going on in ancient India.
And but nevertheless just through their own experiences,
they they come to strikingly similar, if not identical, conclusions with regard to enlightenment, how to become

enlightened, what it's like, etc.

So, that's a kind of triangulation that

lends credence

to a point of view. If you've got

somebody else with different assumptions

who was

coming to the same conclusions

just

from from like

a completely different position.

And it's it's like triangulation.

If that makes any sense.

So,

what proof have I accumulated that would

make you think it is or isn't? Well,

I've read a lot of Buddhist texts and

read a lot of spiritual

spiritual stuff like the biography of

Ramana Maharshi, this kind of stuff,

which

does strongly suggest that there is

something to the idea of enlightenment.

And

Uh

[sighs]

what's what should I say next?

Um I mean, you could just kind of

logically extrapolate

that there is

at least

like

possible the possibility of

enlightenment.

Not that you can't really prove that
anyone really is or is not enlightened.
You know what I mean? You can't prove
that Eckhart Tolle is or is not
enlightened as far as I know.
Maybe if he just goes off the deep end
and starts behaving in really
outrageously bad ways, that could be
considered fairly conclusive that he
isn't fully enlightened.
But I don't see how you could prove that
he is or Krishnamurti or Gautama Buddha
himself, who lived 25 centuries ago. All
we got really with regard to his life is
legends,
which presumably contain a lot of truth

but also a lot of untruth.

So, I hope I answered that question more

or less. You know, it is

it seems like a reasonable working

hypothesis.

That's about the best I can best I can

give you.

So, next question is from Avenity.

And Avenity says, if I she just Okay,

there she is. Avenity says, "In

Theravada Buddhism, it is more ethical

to sterilize stray animals to reduce

future suffering or to have them alone

and let nature take its course.

Actually, this this situation has arisen

a number of times when I was

a monk in Burma, and sterilizing animals

is considered to be a bad thing. There's some story in the in the commentaries of Sariputta in a previous life like castrating an ox or something, and it messed up his karma in subsequent lives.

So,

from a Buddhist point of view, just standing back and letting the cats overpopulate

is is more ethical than having the the cats spayed and neutered and or neutered.

So, and from a Western point of view, I mean, there was really there's like a monastery attendant kind of trying to argue with the monks because there was

we had a lot of cats at this one
monastery in California, and I mean, it
was getting up to like 50 or 60 cats
just
all over the grounds.
You know, most of them were like feral,
you know, they wouldn't even let you get
close to them.
And she's trying to get them to
do something about this cat population
explosion, and the monks, I mean,
they're just following Buddhist ethics.
It's like,
"Not our problem, you know, it's like
that's on the cats.
And [clears throat] and like interfering
with the you know, the

sexuality of other beings in that way is

just considered to be

like unethical from a from a classical

Buddhist point of view, at least

classical Theravada Buddhist.

Uh okay.

And uh

the comments are are going faster than I

can answer them.

Let's see here. No lag, sound good.

That's good. HD, no lag, dandy. Because

I'm lagging when I'm watching myself

sometimes there's a lag of as much as

like 5 seconds.

Okay.

Fred says he won't ask any more

questions or he will be in the shite.

Yeah?

Okay.

Let's see.

Uh try and find questions here.

Okay, Chrzaszcz is can the way of thinking about oneself presented in the suttas be illustrated using the Monty Python line, you're all different, I'm not.

I don't understand this question. Maybe I should read it more slowly.

Can the way of thinking about oneself presented in the suttas? Oh, okay, I understand that better now. I mean, the way of thinking about oneself presented in the suttas, it depends on the sutta,

I guess.

But like in the Atakavagga, you

shouldn't be thinking about yourself at

all, really.

No self view, no

I mean mine, anything like that.

So,

could that be illustrated using the

Monty Python line, you're all different,

I'm not? Nope.

I don't think so.

Cuz you're not supposed to be thinking

about other people, either.

So, it's just uh

visual sensation, seeing, seeing,

hearing, hearing, in the seen only the

seen, in the heard only the heard. You
know, you just kind of deconstruct the
sensory data and don't like
start populating
the mind with all these like
constructions.
That person, this person,
all of it. You just kind of deconstruct
everything down to sensory data and just
function at that level as much as you
can.
Which, yeah, I mean, you wouldn't be
getting to the Monty Python level there.
So, let's just keep going here.
Let's see.
Uh Clefy
Clefy says,

"Some Mahayana Buddhists say that the Heart Sutra appeared in this world because Dharma was starting to become a religion instead of a raft across the other shore."

Thoughts?

Um

maybe. I mean, it happens in religious traditions.

Um you know, it happens at a small scale with regard to like a meditation tradition in Burma that you have like an enlightened or or even like an inspired very wise founder. And then, maybe his the first generation of his disciples also have got some real attainment. It's

it's relatively rare for them to surpass their teacher, but it can happen sometimes. I think maybe Shway U Min was wiser than his teacher, Mahasi Sayadaw. Um but then, by the time you get to like the third generation, it's it's definitely in decline and it's like clinging to sayings of the the original founder and not much originality, or if there is originality, it's just veering off into like a totally different tradition, this kind of thing.

So, that happens on a larger scale with regard to religious systems in general, like Buddhism, where

um I mean, just within a few centuries, Buddhism is just becoming this extremely

elaborate scholastic system with
Abhidharma philosophies and just massive
commentarial traditions and so forth.
And it's just becoming dogmatic and all
this legendary,
you know, mythological stuff is getting
absorbed into the into the system with
people just accepting it as just gospel
truth.
And it it does kind of
deviate from the original teachings. And
then you have like a reform movement.
And it could be that like
some [clears throat]
some aspects of Mahayana philosophy, I
mean, I've said this before, Mahayana

Buddhism, some aspects of it were a kind
of reform movement. You know, they're
trying to get away from all this like
Abhidharma scholasticism,
this intellectualism superimposed on
Dharma and get back to just,
you know, emptiness and just meditation.
Zen was kind of like that also.
So, yeah, I mean, in a way you could say
that
the Heart Sutra appeared in this world
because of Dharma was starting to become
a religion instead of a raft across to
the other shore. It wouldn't just be the
Heart Sutra, it'd be like the whole
Prajnaparamita
movement, you know, the Diamond Cutter

and many others

where they're just trying In a way it

was a kind of reform movement where

they're trying to get away from all this

intellectual scholasticism of what the

earlier schools had become and just get

back to something more along the lines

of the Atthakavagga of the Sutta Nipata

where

you're not philosophizing. You're trying

to get away from all that. You're trying

to get away from all this

intellectualism and just in the seen,

only the seen, and the heard, only the

heard.

No philosophy, no belief system,

anything like that.

And that has happened a number of times in in the the course of the evolution of Buddhism. I've I've said before that I mean I've [clears throat] I've written before also

that you know the Buddha just led his followers to the edge of a cliff and he just jumped off and then gradually you have like these intellectual philosopher types justifying and rationalizing why it's good to back away from the edge of that scary cliff edge.

And then after that you had Nagarjuna leading the Buddhists right back to the cliff edge again. And then after Nagarjuna's time you had you know later

like Mahayana philosophers

philosophizing up a storm and just

essentially rationalizing and justifying

backing away from the cliff edge again.

[sighs]

So it happens and it's kind of a poetic

way of putting it but I could say that

there is an element of truth to that.

And I'm just going to uh

scroll down. Somebody's mentioning Pizza

Hut.

Pizza Hut? No.

I never I had my mind poisoned against

Pizza Hut. I'll never forgive Pizza Hut.

Because there used to be another chain

called Pizza Pizza Haven. You know got

[clears throat] a pizza craving? Go to Pizza Haven. Pizza Haven is pizza heaven. And they had better pizza than Pizza Hut and then they got bought out by Pizza Hut and all of a sudden the crust is like spongy and greasy and the the the sauce is like ketchup.

[__] Pizza Hut.

Let's see. Proto pseudo monk.

Question two. Why are you so convinced there is such a thing enlightenment and elegant paradoxical intellectual theory direct experience yours and others or both? So why am I so convinced there is such a thing enlightenment and elegant paradoxical intellectual

theory?

And this I'm not 100% sure that I understand this question.

Gosh, and I'm just giving you guys fair warning. This could be like a 5-hour long Q&A because the the questions are multiplying faster than I can answer them.

So, let's see here.

Why am I so convinced there is such thing enlightenment? Well, I mean, I just said above that I'm not completely convinced. I mean, it's I said it is a very convenient working hypothesis, a reasonable working hypothesis. I think is the way I put it.

Um

But yeah, I mean, it's it's everything

combined, you know, it's like all the

data I've taken in over the course of my

life has digested

into a certain kind of skepticism, but

it's it's like a skepticism over whether

enlightenment really means anything

in a samsaric context, which is the

context we're functioning in right now.

But enlightenment itself is just like

the absolute,

you know, it's like infinite formless

consciousness. At least if you could

give a name to it, it might be called

that. I mean, that's there, and I think

that it is possible to transcend the

illusion, even if the illusion appears
still to be here in a sense.
I mean, you can just transcend that
because we're not really separate from
the absolute anyway. It's call it
capital G God. I mean, we are not
separate from God. God pervades the
entire universe
using theistic language. And so, it's
really not a leap
to come to the conclusion that some
people can become fully aware of this
fact,
regardless of whether, you know, they're
unable to tell a lie or they have this
or that quality or or characteristic

that's listed in the text as what

enlightened beings have to be like.

Just to be able to transcend the

illusion

and just be fully aware of like capital

R reality that is underlying it.

At some level.

And I think that is there's a good

chance of that and just my own

experiences,

my own reasonings, just what I have

encountered like in spiritual literature

and all that, it all goes into the

hopper

and

gets processed into my hypothesis

that enlightenment may be paradoxical,

but there is some truth to it.

Okay.

Master Paul Raman of my favorite

my

skipping in, my favorite Hindu. Yeah,

he's definitely he

you

you couldn't do better than Ramana

Maharshi.

Let's see.

Let's see it's the star.

Scrolling down looking for questions.

Let's see. I'm glad you're doing the

live one. Eventual muse. A lot of people

there are commenting that I just do they

do not normally ask questions at least

not under the names that they're

leaving

um

leaving comments.

How about whenever a prime number

episode makes that episode live count as

three questions?

Um yeah, the thing about live streams is

first of all, this is only like the

third one I've ever done and so

um I pretty much got it down now as to

how to actually set it up and do it and

be confident that it's actually running.

I remember it was like the first time I

tried it, I didn't even know that I was

live. I I apparently was live and it I

wasn't getting any indication that I

was, you know, there's no green light
that lights up or anything. I just went
out and and was talking to my woman,
saying, "I I don't know if it's
working."
Just leaving an empty chair here. But,
it's gradually I'm getting it down, so
who knows? Maybe I'll do another live
stream for 250 or 300 or who knows?
I mean, it could just become more of a
regular thing. I'm not sure.
Okay.
See.
You'll know just when you know, damn it.
And Fred, who is living on the other
side of the planet, is saying goodnight.

Okay. Okay, Protoss Sudomax, formerly known as Cool Whip, I believe, says, "In general, how should one read the Pali Canon to help achieve Nibbana without falling into philosophizing, rationalizing, intellectual scholasticism? Reject Abhidhamma. What else?" Well, I mean, you start with the Attha Vagga. Maybe stuff like the Bahiya Sutta that are just not intellectual. I mean, you stay away from the dry, the Veda Suttas, like in the Majjhima Nikaya that are just dry question-and-answer, philosophizing, intellectual stuff. You know, you just kind of stay away from that. I mean,

mainly, if you just want to be practicing correctly, you just read the Suttas that tell you how to practice. And that's really all you need. You don't need the philosophizing.

I mean, you might need a little bit of philosophizing, like you have some experience in your meditation, some kind of insight, and you want to know if that insight is like a valid insight or you're just kidding yourself, that kind of thing. You can get some guidance from the Suttas.

But, I mean, just the Attha Vagga itself is fairly good and not particularly philosophical or intellectual.

So,

if you want to read the Pali Canon to

help achieve Nibbana without falling

into philosophizing, I mean, you're

going to have to do some weeding out of

texts that are presumably later and more

intellectual and scholastic and all

that.

[sighs]

So, maybe read GC Pande's Studies in the

Origins of Buddhism and like

emphasize the texts that he considers to

be very old, and that way you can let

him do some of the work for you.

I mean, that would be

one one aspect of an approach, anyway.

Let's see. Berber Meditator.

Would Nirvana as Brahman-like reality be

eternalist?

Um

Well,

if you're referring to something as

eternal, then you're pretty much dragged

it into some into a samsaric context.

And I mean, Nirvana as as a kind of

Brahman-like ultimate reality

um

it's it's like infinite and formless,

and so you can't nothing sticks to it.

No kind of label sticks to it. I mean,

you can't you'd have to say that there's

some kind of entity that lasts forever

in order to have an eternalism.

And it's just devoid of entities.

So,

[snorts]

I mean, it's sort of like saying is

emptiness eternal?

I mean, kind of, but

I mean, it's just not within the context

of anything that you can stick labels

to.

It's just off the scale.

So, I mean, any ideas you have about

ultimate reality are going to be

invalid.

It's just nothing sticks to it.

Because I mean, you're we're dealing

within the realm of illusion and trying

to apply illusory explanations onto

reality and illusory explanations of non-illusory reality just doesn't work. So, let's see here.

Please, in the end, turn on that fan in the back. Yeah, it was on because it's sucking the hot air out of this room. This This is the only room in the house that has a southern exposure, two windows with a southern exposure, and also we've got four fish tanks in here that are kind of help raise the temperature and the humidity. So, um just like a week ago, I had to haul that fan out of the attic and set it up here just to blow cold air. But, we do have a ceiling fan. The ceiling fan is

working. Here, I'll even turn it up just

to

satisfy my viewing audience because I do

consider your concerns.

So,

let's see here.

Okay.

More live streams will bring in new

viewers, something to consider. I'm

I'm not even sure how that works. People

just randomly clicking on the live

stream button and saying, "Oh, here's

somebody I've never heard of before."

Let's see how that is.

I guess some people do that.

Anyways, now I'm going back to the list,

which have has been neglected sorely.

Next question is from Jeffrey.

And Jeffrey also mainly watches these

these videos on BitChute, and so he's

not going to

benefit from the live stream at all.

Poor Jeffrey.

I feel for you, Jeffrey.

And your question is,

"Could you tell us again the Buddha's

view on fortune tellers? Would that

pertain to modern astrology? As you

know, I think there is no credible

evidence to outer space being real. I

think the planets are lights projected

upon the dome. So, I find the basis of

astrology lacking. Do you find there are

any redeeming qualities to astrology?

So, this is actually

three questions.

Okay, I got to separate the questions

now.

Because I'm I am that way. I'm I'm

systematic.

Let's see.

It's my third chakra

getting inflamed.

Okay. So, Jeffrey's first question,

could you tell us again the Buddha's

view on fortune tellers? And the Buddha

discouraged fortune telling, especially

monks should not be fortune tellers.

That's called tiracchana

tiracchana vijja or animal knowledge.

You know, it's just not really dharma or dhamma. You know, it's just some sort of worldly digression. It really doesn't help you to become enlightened. And so, fortune telling, which would include not only astrology, but also like palm reading, um

like [clears throat]

consulting spirit mediums. I guess I don't know if that would be fortune telling, but uh

you know, just any kind of prognostication, looking into a crystal ball, you know, or using like a one of those pendulum thingies or a Ouija board, anything like that. They hadn't

invented Ouija boards yet, probably. But still, anything like that is animal knowledge. Monks shouldn't do it, and it's not particularly dharmic. So, even lay people probably would not be encouraged to do that kind of stuff. Although, lay people have more options, you know, they can they can sing and dance if they want to.

So,

lay people, it's I don't think the text like strictly prohibit referring to fortune tellers, which is good news for the Burmese cuz the the Burmese are really into fortune tellers. If you ever like

climb all the way up to the top of

Mandalay Hill, which is it's this hill that's just covered with shrines and little pagodas and and stat- Buddha statues and everything. And you get up towards the top and the fortune tellers are predatory. I mean, you you just pretty much have to carry a stick to defend yourselves against all these fortune tellers trying to get you to to submit to them telling your fortune.

So,

Okay, so I answered that question. The Buddha's view on fortune tellers, first of all, monks certainly should not be doing any fortune telling. And although in Burma, there's quite a few monks that

will do zartats, which are like

astrological

readings on with regard to the your your

first birthday, the day you were born.

And it's usually scratched into like a a

little

um

palm leaf kind of a thing. And then

people put that on their altar for the

rest of their life, that the zarta that

this renowned fortune teller or

astrologer or monk

made on their behalf.

Um

Yeah, lots of palm reading. Monks do a

lot of palm reading.

Some some monks do, I should say. But

it's it's discouraged in the texts. Monks shouldn't do it. So, the next question from Jeffrey here, what what would that pertain to modern astrology? Yeah, I think it would. I mean, certainly would be modern astrology would be animal knowledge. In fact, in the texts, I think it's even in the Atika Loga, it says a monk shouldn't even be worrying about Atarva Atarva charms. So, that's like the fourth Veda for Hindus is the Atarva Veda, which is mainly just a collection of magic spells.

So, you shouldn't be doing that kind of stuff either. Magic, prognostication,

like uh spirit mediumship or channeling, that kind of thing. It's all just incidental. I mean, it's it it's not Dharma.

It doesn't help you to become enlightened, at least according to traditional poly texts.

So, we move on to Jeffrey's third part here.

As you know, I think there is no credible evidence to outer space being real. I mean, there is such thing as parallax.

I mean, you might want to look into parallax.

You know, it's like when the the Earth is at one one end of its orbit, the the

relationships of the stars is slightly
different than when the Earth is at the
other end of its orbit, where there's
like shifts due to parallax because
they're not all at the same distance
from the Earth.
But, we don't need to get into that.
Let's see.
What is the question here? Do you think
there is any redeeming qualities to
astrology? To the extent that maybe
there is truth to it? I mean, my father
used to say that he was very skeptical
of astrology until he dated this
astrologer who told him
a lot of stuff about himself, but also a

lot of stuff about his parents because
it would have taken, you know, a person
of this character, you know, this kind
of birth information, and a person with
this kind of birth information to
produce him. And then he he became
somewhat of a believer after that.
Although, I do think astrology is a kind
of gimmick. I wrote an entire essay on
[laughter] this with regards to
astrology and tarot cards and Ouija
boards and also spiritual teachers
because it seems that like tarot cards
is a classic example of you know, there
is no machine at the tarot card making
company
that instills it with prognosticative

powers.

That you just have these cards, you

know, they're

chemically, physically hardly any

different from regular playing cards. In

fact, regular playing cards evolved from

tarot cards.

[clears throat]

And so,

any prognosticative ability in those

cards is coming from the person who is

using the cards.

It's just a kind of

um it's just a kind of gimmick for

channeling their own innate powers. It's

sort of like Mary Baker Eddy said this

about spirit mediums also that, you know, there are spirits in this world, but as a general rule, they got their own lives to live. They don't give a [__] about us.

So, what happens is you've got some bored housewife, for example, who cannot believe that she has this latent subconscious connection with higher truths, and so her subconscious imagination just cooks up some multi-dimensional being that she then channels through.

And that's kind of how tarot cards works. You know, it's just channeling it's used as a kind of crutch to get your latent psychic abilities up to the

surface.

And, you know, so spirit mediums, tarot cards, Ouija boards,

um astrology, like a lot of astrologers, they just kind of go into a like a um you know, they they get all the information, they lay it out in front of them. I read about one one famous astrologer, one relatively successful one,

she would just lay everything out, you know, she'd make draw up the chart and everything, and then she would just kind of go into like a trance to come up with the information, which makes it more likely that what she's really doing is

just channeling, sort of like with tarot

cards, that, you know, her own

like innate psychic abilities to come up

with some some amount of valid

information.

Wow.

Jeffrey.

Oh, no. Okay. I thought, man, was he in

the was he in the chat? He only watches

BitChute.

Okay.

But, this is a question I I I take off

of

the BitChute comments.

I almost tried [clears throat] to show

up Jeffrey as some kind of hypocrite for

watching YouTube.

So, [snorts]

yeah, I mean, the only redeeming

qualities to astrology is it's just

another gimmick

for

bringing latent psychic talents up to

the surface for people that just cannot

believe that they can come up with the

information without using the gimmick as

a kind of crutch.

That's about it. But, I'm skeptical of

astrology because I'm a Leo, and we Leos

are naturally skeptical.

So, I guess it's Let's look at the chat

to see if anyone came up with anything

else here.

Let's see.

See, Ponio, keep doing live streams.

Before you know it, you'll be the rogue ex-monk and a special guest on Nerdrotic's Friday Night Tights. The Buddhist right-wing take on soulless Hollywood. Yeah, I we could bash away at the new Odyssey with the black Helen of Troy. That would be fun.

Okay. Athena Sigils turning 60 on Tuesday.

Woohoo.

Well, not really.

Damn. Well, I don't know what to congratulate on that one because he took it all back at the end.

All right. Okay, so no questions. Oh,

the eventual muse has a Father's Day question. And that reminds me, today, at the time of recording this, it is Father's Day. Happy Father's Day to all you fathers out there. I hope you enjoy your new tie.

Let's see. All right, I guess nowadays people don't wear ties, so probably fathers don't get ties on Father's Day anymore.

See, have you considered how important your father was in setting your very unusual direction in life. Yeah, that's that should be fairly obvious. Like anyone who reads my most recent book that's on for sale on Amazon in the URL

links below if I can manage to add them
after this this live stream.
Yeah, like people have asked me about
how I became a monk and the standard
explanation usually starts off with
well, I started off having a weird
father.
So, yeah, he was like my first guru, I
guess. An upa guru, not a sat guru, not
like a manifestation of God, but you
know, he was one of my first spiritual
teachers. He was just a
an intelligent, eccentric,
very open-minded kind of person.
He also taught me like how to go
camping, that kind of stuff, which
helped me as a monk because my father

was a minimalist when it came came to

camping. Even when we were little kids,

we often did not have a tent. You know,

we would just bring a tarp just in case

it rained, otherwise you're sleeping

under the open sky, that kind of thing.

[clears throat]

We didn't

we didn't get any of that freeze-dried

camping stuff, you know, we'd be just

eating regular like instant mashed

potatoes, that kind of thing.

So, let's see here.

I guess the question was down under

here, eventual muse.

Yeah, have I considered how important

your father was in setting your very

unusual direction? Yeah, many, many

times.

So, let's just move on

to the next question on the list here

from Seal of Ax and Sipat Zidana.

And Seal of Ax and Sipat Zidana says,

I came across a tradition from India

called the Lingayats.

I guess that's how you pronounce it.

They are monotheistic worshipers of

Shiva

as a formless being

and reject the caste system, the Vedas,

astrology, temples,

and other Brahmanic practices.

Apparently, there were many non-Vedic or

Puranic traditions of Shiva worshippers since it was a non-Vedic god and they considered those stories in the Puranas as just Vedic corruptions. And this specific sect of Shaivites were founded by a philosopher named Basava in the 12th century in South India. To this day, the community has been trying to be identified as separate from Hinduism within India due to rejecting many of its core teachings. And there is a lot of issues around this with their government rejecting this. Have you heard about this tradition and what are your thoughts on it? Um no, I
I can't recall having heard of the

Lingayats

before before Seal of Action Cpad Zena

asked me about it.

Um

[clears throat]

so there is that. Um he does say that

Shiva was a non-Vedic god and that's

semi-true. I mean, in the Vedas, the god

that eventually became known as Shiva

um was Rudra, who was a storm god. And

according to Grock, who I consulted, it

was in the Yajurveda, I think. There's a

famous

um a famous hymn to Rudra that calls him

by many different names, including

Shiva. I do think Shiva is a Sanskrit

name. So, the name and also at least

some of his origination is Vedic.
But yet, the Lingayats reject the Vedas.
And that would I mean, in my opinion,
that would disqualify them from being
Hindus. It seems to me that in order to
be like a a real Hindu, like
of like a descendant of Vedic
Brahmanism, still within that same tr-
tradition historically,
um you'd have to accept the authority of
the Vedas, and that's why like Buddhism
and Jainism are not considered to be
real Hinduism because they are they do
not accept the authority of the four
Vedas or the three Vedas.
However many Vedas you want to count,

they do not acknowledge their

authenticity or their their authority.

So,

um

according to Grahak, I mean I mean

anyone who's familiar with the Indus

Valley civilization know that there are

seals

or showing a kind of Shiva-like

deity or Shiva-like figure who's sitting

in sitting cross-legged often with an

erect phallus.

He's got animals around him. I think he

might have horns sometimes. And it may

be that this deity

was preserved

outside of Vedic tradition for centuries

until finally it got resorbed certain
aspects of this proto-Shiva
got incorporated into the Vedic
Rudra-Shiva.
And I mean that is certainly a
possibility. Although according to Seal
of Action Seal of Vision now, the the
Lingayats
were founded by
someone in the 12th century in South
India. So, I mean that could be a whole
different whole different influence of
some deity being
incorporated into
like quasi-Hinduism
uh at least.

So, um there was a certain syncretism. I mean you start off with Rudra the storm god who's mentioned in the Rigveda. I mean he was not
uh like a major god in the in the Rigveda, but he is mentioned in the Rigveda.
And then gradually he starts becoming more important and it may be that certain prehistoric Indus Valley elements of a different deity got incorporated into Rudra Shiva, which I mean that kind of thing happens a lot in religion.
And then
like over time you're getting into medieval

like medieval times that

like

Shaivism was in South India and then it

got modified by the influence of some

South Indian non-Vedic deity.

That's possible, but

um

I mean this is really the first I've

heard of it. So I'm just sort of

um hypothesizing off the cuff, if you

will.

Let's see. Monotheistic worshippers of

Shiva.

Um I mean I mean if if they're they

don't accept the Vedas and they don't

consider themselves to be Hindus, I mean

still I mean Shiva itself is like a

Vedic name, I'm pretty sure.

And so I mean they're just kind of

adopting some Vedic deity

um as the ultimate God and then just

rejecting the system after that.

I mean some Christians are kind of like

that. They completely reject Judaism.

Some sects of Christianity I'm pretty

sure are like that, even though they

still have latched on to some version

some like evolved modified version of

the Jewish Yahweh. So I would assume

that this is [clears throat] kind of a

similar case in India.

So

uh

yeah, I mean that's that's really all my thoughts on on it. I really have never heard of it before. So I shouldn't say too much about it.

And so I'm just going to move on to Seal of Action and C Pod Zeta now the second question.

He says, "In Hinduism, Dharma is often used to mean duty, such as Arjuna's Dharma in the Mahabharata is his caste duty as a Kshatriya." Yeah, the Ashrama Dharma, I think it's called. Does Buddhism have this kind of usage of Dhamma as well?

Cuz as far as I know, it only I only remember seeing it means the Buddha's

teachings or Dhammas as in phenomena or things. Well, Dhamma has more meanings than that, like mental state can also be called Dhamma in

pre- presumably later texts.

Um still in the suttas, but

I don't think that using Dhamma as

mental state

um goes back to the earliest texts. And like the first verse of the Dhammapada, Mano-pubbaṅgama Dhamma, I don't think that Dhamma means mental state there, although that's how the commentary interprets it.

Um

it's it's kind of I do think that

um if you read the texts, like

especially like the Dhammapada
commentary, where it's not it's it's
less
like strictly spiritual and getting more
into like the the social and cultural
aspects of India at the time that you
may come across Dhamma meaning like
civil law or like like the law as
enforced by the government. And
interestingly, in Burma, in the Burmese
language, Taya is the Burmese version of
the word Dhamma or Dharma, and it does
have the two meanings of
Dhamma and also law. Like a Tayathi G is
a judge.
Um so,

um in in Burma,

the same word means law and Dhamma as

like, you know, the Buddhist religion.

So, I assume that they got that from

like earlier Pali or Sanskrit tradition.

So,

and and I mean the Burmese they were

never particularly Hindu unlike

maybe the Thais or the Cambodians or the

Vietnamese.

So,

yeah, I do think there is a good chance.

I can't remember of any cases or

instances offhand, but I do think that

as a kind of

like non-religious term in ancient

India, dhamma did mean law.

And it just kind of got adopted as a

spiritual term.

Um sort of like arahants,

the word arahant

in in like social settings, you know,

non-religious

Indian society, an arahant it was just

meant worthy one and it was like big

shots were called araha.

Maybe judges even, I don't know.

So,

in in the in the Buddhist text, you're

mainly seeing the the spiritual

applications of words, whereas though

some of those same words

outside of a spiritual context meant

something else. Like upadana, which is usually translated as clinging in to the to the normie ancient Indian villager of the Ganges Valley, upadana meant fuel like firewood.

Uptake.

So, just because you don't see a word used in like a non-Buddhist sense in Buddhist text doesn't mean that it wasn't used in a non-Buddhist sense at the same time or even before the Buddhists adopted it. I mean, Buddhism is relatively notorious for borrowing terms and giving them new Buddhist meanings.

So,

let's see. What's the actual question?

Does Buddhism have this kind of usage of

Dharma as well?

Cuz as far as

as I know, I only remember seeing it

Buddhist teachings are Dharmas. Okay.

So, yeah, I I Buddhism does have um the

usage of Dharma as law.

Um not so much as ca as duty,

but it can mean law.

Um yeah, duty. I mean, you could

interpret it that way sometimes under

certain

I mean, certain usages. I mean, it it

there's enough overlap or something

where you could use it that way, but as

a general rule, like your duty, it's
kind of your Dharma, you know, it's kind
of like your philosophy of life. Because
Dharma, like in the Atakawaga, does not
necessarily mean Buddhist Dharma. It
means any kind of like religious
philosophy.
Religion and philosophy weren't really
separate in those days.
So,
I hope I answered that question well now
cuz I'm moving on to Seal of Action C by
Zeno's third question
before I start looking at looking for
questions on the chat again.
Seal of Action C by Zeno says,
"Archaeologists have now found Buddhist

statues in both ancient Egypt and among
the Vikings. So, it seems like
Christianity and Islam wiped out
Buddhism from India, Africa, Middle
East, Central Asia, and Europe. Are
Abrahamic religions the most evil force
this world has ever seen on the overall
amount damage done
spiritually to humanity?"
Well, I would guess
that they have found Buddha images like
in Scandinavia
probably because some Viking raider
just picked it up as a souvenir. I doubt
that the Vikings had any significant
amount of Buddhism

practiced. You know, it's just like a lot of people nowadays they'll have a Buddha statue in their garden or something without being Buddhist.
Um they just think it looks cool or something.
So, it could be that some Viking raider just raided some Buddhist temple or something and that was his share of the booty and so he brought it home and set it up, but probably [clears throat] didn't know very much about Buddhism, I would guess.
With regard to Buddha statues in ancient Egypt, I would guess that it was mostly Indian immigrants like like merchants, traders, sailors, and so forth like

involved in the trade routes between um

Roman Egypt and India mostly sea routes

if you're going through through Egypt, I

would guess.

Um you know, down the Red Sea and then I

mean the the the Romans did have a kind

of proto um

Oh man, Suez Canal.

You know, it's but the Romans they just

dug a canal from the Nile River into the

Red Sea.

So,

um there were ships going from between

India and and Egypt and so you had

Indian sailors, Indian merchants, and so

forth maybe some Indian missionaries,

you know, Buddhist monks, and so forth
coming to Alexandria, but I would guess
it's largely the way it works in America
now where you have
you know, Asian Buddhist temples that
are mainly for the the immigrant
community and there's very little
interaction between the Buddhists in the
like these cultural center temples and
just the people living in the
neighborhood.
So, I would
I'm skeptical that Buddhism really had
much of a foot in the door in ancient
and medieval Europe. You know, there's
like indirect like very subtle
influences,

but

I don't think that it was really a

significant presence in ancient and

medieval Europe

or Egypt.

So,

um that all leads to the question, are

Abrahamic religions the most evil force

this world has ever seen

on the overall amount damage done

spiritually to humanity? Um not really.

I mean, Abrahamic religions

um

they they do have spiritual

They they they do have some profound

spiritual, especially Christianity.

You know, with regard to like the the profounder aspects of Judaism, I would assume that's largely esoteric, like Kabbalah stuff that I really don't hear much about.

You know, every once in a while you hear about some some rab sage rabbi who is like abnormally wise. I'm sure that stuff happens. Probably in Islam also you're going to have like profoundly wise people that just happen to be born, you know, already wise into an Islamic culture. Islam is their only option for with regard to religions, their only realistic one. So, they become a wise Muslim.

That that can happen.

But with regard to Christianity,

I mean,

we've already mentioned St. John of the

Cross who may have been fully

enlightened. He may have been an arhat.

There's lots of profundity in

Christianity. I mean, some of it was

pretty much ganked from non-Christian

traditions.

You know, like early Christianity is

largely, you know, it's it's

heavily influenced by Greek philosophy

apparently Platonism in particular.

Fact,

one person I know has the theory that

the Jews got their idea of

monotheism from Plato.
So, I wouldn't say that Abrahamic
religions are the most evil force this
world has ever seen
on the overall amount of damage done
spiritually to I mean, Marxism, even
though it's it's much came onto the
scene much later, even Marxism has a
much more anti-spiritual
effect than say Christianity. Although
Marxism and Christianity are both
schismatic sects of Judaism.
Seems to me.
So, yeah, I wouldn't say that Abrahamic
religions in general are the most evil
force this world has ever seen because
Christianity has introduced a lot of

goodness, too. It may be that the the
good aspects and the bad aspects of
Christianity have largely balanced out.
But still, it's I don't think that
Christianity is predominantly evil.
With regard to Judaism and
and Islam,
I don't think that they are as profound
with regard to their saints and sages,
but that's partly just because I'm
largely ignorant of the the greatest
Jewish and Muslim saints and sages.
But I mean, Islam is a product of this
Dark Age Arabia, and it's still
pretty evident that that is still the
case.

Not that Islam is entirely bad, it's

just the founder of Islam

I mean, among other things, he was like

a caravan bandit who became a warlord

and

you know, did all kinds of atrocities by

modern Western ethical standards.

Having people beheaded,

their wives and children sold into

slavery, this kind of stuff.

So,

yeah, I mean, Islam, especially,

um I would consider to have had a

largely deleterious effect on

world spirituality. You know, like

Muslims pretty much exterminated the

Buddhists in India, for example, just to

give one example. That was just a a huge

genocide that you

rarely hear about.

I've seen some estimates that they could

have killed as many as 30 million

people.

And they were bragging about it. They

thought it was great.

[__] idolaters.

So,

still, I mean,

the most evil force this world has ever

seen on the overall amount damage done

spiritually to humanity, I would not say

that Abrahamic religions would win that

prize.

I mean, in modern times, Marxism, maybe.
Um I mean, Islam has definitely had some
negative effects on the West, which are
still happening if you look at the news
in like the UK
or France
or other European nations lately.
But, I mean, what would be the most evil
force this world has ever seen on the
overall amount damage done spiritually
to humanity?
Gosh, I mean, that's a tough one. I
mean, I'd have to think about it, and
I'm not going to just sit here like
staring off into space for 5 minutes to
come up with a good answer.
So,

I have already answered the question by saying that I do not think Abrahamic religions, in general, are the most evil force this world has ever seen. Christianity especially has a hell of a lot of profundity and wisdom and goodness to it. It's just that to some degree it's hobbled or you know, it's it's got the handicap of trying to be as wise and good as possible within this relatively like absurd context of a a Jewish rabbi who lived in the early Roman Empire being the creator of the universe. That kind of stuff. You know, it's just

it's starting off with these constraints that really prevent it from becoming as as perfect of a spiritual system as say Theravada Buddhism.

Not that any system is really perfect, but you know, it's less it it it falls much shorter of the goal than does Theravada in my opinion largely due to these absurd assumptions that are essential to the whole religious point of view that you can't really get rid of easily.

Like the the Jewish carpenter turned miracle rabbi who is the creator of the universe.

Okay. So, that's enough of Seal of Action Cee Pad Zeedanuf for a week.

No disrespect intended.

And let's just look here.

Trazaskas says second thoughts on

becoming a prepper. I'm not really a

prepper. I mean

Yeah. Yeah, I don't I don't really

consider myself to be a prepper. I do

like having more food than necessary in

the house especially

um stuff that is

you can store it for a long time like in

cans.

We really don't have a a large supply of

water. I mean, that's one of the first

things you need if there's an emergency

is you got to have a good supply of

drinking water. And I mean, if I've considered, you know, if there's like a zombie apocalypse or something and the water pressure fails, we might be having to drink water out of our fish pond. We got about 500 gallons of it in there.

So, that's that's okay.

But, I'm not really a prepper. At least, I don't consider myself to be one. My my wife

occasionally in the past would watch uh YouTube videos by this guy who really is a prepper. You know, I think his his channel's called something like Southern Prepper. I think he lives in South Carolina. And this guy, I mean

he he

th- there's no way he could stop being a prepper as far as I know. Well, some kind of
crisis just slamming him out of his own personality traits because it's like he's walking around in his yard and he's got like these concrete benches. You know, you you see benches in like parks and so forth. He's got these concrete benches in his yard and he's saying, "In the when in the event of the [__] hit the fan, you can just tip those benches over and hide behind them and use them as as a a place of shelter while you're shooting at your enemies." This kind of stuff.

I mean, that's that's the kind of

prepper I I consider to be a real

prepper.

I don't even know what I'm doing that

that is prepper-like, to tell you the

truth.

So,

let's see.

Uh

questions.

Let's see.

Okay.

All right.

So, no more questions, Sarah. So, I'm

just going to continue on the normal

list.

Oops.

Okay.

This next question is from Arpad, r p a d, and it's another Shiva question.

Arpad

or r p a d

says, "Why is Shiva often, although not always, depicted sitting in the easy pose rather than full or half lotus?"

And then he sent he included a picture in which Lord Shiva isn't even sitting in the easy pose.

I mean, the easy pose, as I understand it, also sometimes called the Burmese position, is when you're sitting cross-legged.

You Here, I'm going to make sure that

you guys can see this. I had I had the the screen covered with the the question list. The easy pose is you're sitting cross-legged with your both knees on the floor, and you just have like one lower leg in front of the other one, kind of like this. You don't have big toes sticking up like that cuz you're not orangutans. But, you know, so the easy pose would be kind of sitting with your legs like this. Whereas, um the way most people sit cross-legged in the West especially, and in the picture that Arpad sent me, it's like this. You You're sitting cross-legged like this with your knees kind of up in the air, like that, which is not really

sustainable.

You know, it's not a stable sitting position, especially if you're going to be sitting there meditating for an hour. Cuz you're just balancing on your butt. You know, cuz your knees aren't stabilizing you. They're up in the air.

Uh [sighs]

maybe that would also be considered an easy pose, but I don't think it's what in yoga would be called the easy pose. Cuz in the easy pose, you still got both knees on the on the ground or on the floor. It's just you've got like one lower leg in front of the other one on the floor, not both knees up in the air

like that.

But, let's getting back Let's get back

to the question here. Why is Shiva often

shown in like a less than full or half

lotus position? And I really don't know.

It could be just the painter.

It It could be just

you had some painter who was not

familiar with yogic postures who who

painted or sculpted

Shiva in that position and then it just

kind of went mainstream because of his

reputation or whatever and then 100

years later nobody even knew why they

were portraying Shiva sitting in a kind

of a sloppy cross-legged position.

I mean he's a god, you know, and

according to the Shaivites he is the
supreme deity so he doesn't have to sit
in like any kind of orthodox yogic pose.
I mean it could be it's just kind of
demonstrating that Shiva is kind of like
Dionysian,
you know, he doesn't have to follow
rules if he doesn't want to, that kind
of thing. He doesn't need to, I mean
he's already perfect.
Following rules isn't going to make him
any better.
So it could be that, it could just be
some like I already said just some weird
you know
oversight on the part of some sculptor

or painter who had a high reputation and people just started imitating that without even thinking why.

So that's a possibility, too.

But I'm not 100% sure why some images of Shiva have him sitting in like a not particularly yogic cross-legged position.

Maybe if you ask a Hindu they might be able to answer the question.

But um yeah, I haven't really thought about it to tell you the truth. I never really noticed it because most it seems to me that most images of Shiva sitting in meditation he is fairly yogic. He's like the the yogic god, you know, he's the swami of the gods.

So anyways

[clears throat]

check and see if there's any more

questions in the chat here.

Let's see.

Sometimes it's hard to tell. You got to

just look for a question mark.

Like this one.

Let's see.

Srinivasa

Danand.

See, Srinivasa

Danand. Yeah, I don't think Srinivasa

Danand has asked question before.

He says, "If anything Christian

nationalism I more dangerous look at the

Trump situation.

Aren't lot of the Abrahamic faiths the

ones that are at war and proselytize and

call others pagans or non-believers?"

Well, I mean, the history of the world

um I mean, it was wars all the time

regardless of Abrahamic religions.

So,

um yeah, it's it's just that the

Abrahamic follow- followers of Abrahamic

religions are just continuing with the

human tradition

of waging wars and being violently

aggressive.

And

uh I got to wipe my eyes again.

This happens sometimes. It happens quite

a lot.

Where my eyes start to burn because

apparently

eyelid grease is getting into my eye.

Okay.

So, aren't my most I guess, aren't most

of the Abrahamic faiths the ones that

are at war and proselytize and call

others pagans or non-believers?

Um well, I mean, Christians don't bother

to call people pagans and non-believers.

I think that's mostly a a Muslim thing

is call people infidels or

non-believers.

Um

See.

Yeah, I really don't I really don't see
Christianity as more violent than say
communism. I mean, if it's if it's sort
of like a castrated feminized communism
like is more in fashion nowadays,
then
[clears throat]
sure, it's nonviolent, but it's sort of
like suicidally nonviolent.
You know, it's
this kind of feminized emasculated
Marxism or neo-Marxism that has in so
much in vogue, especially among
college-educated white women,
um yeah, I mean it doesn't have a future
really.
It's just setting up the society to be

overthrown.

But war certainly was is no monopoly of

Abrahamic religions.

Let's see here.

Yeah, people are going to good night and

say like Clefi is going to bed, but I

think Clefi is Lithuanian.

So, that makes sense.

Let's see.

Question marks, any more question marks?

See, what do you see? Angel, okay,

that's not a question.

Question, okay. Trinivasa

Danan is asking question.

If there is anything to Jesus or Buddha

or anyone, why does it not liberate you?

Those values falsify you and do not

apply to your life. Reason? It is

interpreted through thought, so useless.

Um I'm not exact I think he just

answered his own question. So, I think

it might have just been a rhetorical

question.

I mean, the first word is question.

And then he asks a question, and then

he just gives his own answer to the

question.

So, I'm not sure if he's expecting a

question. This is This is kind of a

uh

a difficult situation sometimes.

Especially with

with uh

what's his name?

Gosh. How can I forget his name? Fred. Because I mean he just sometimes will just pepper comments with questions, some of which he apparently isn't even expecting an answer to. So, if there's anything to Jesus or Buddha or anyone, why does it not liberate you? Well, because you're still enlightened. Just because they're enlightened is they can't make you be enlightened. That's like a matter of your own wisdom and karma. And just because you come into the presence of a fully enlightened being,

I mean, that doesn't [clears throat]

mean that

that they're going to just like somehow

magically enlighten you. I mean, some

people it's sort of like the Dhammapada

verse where, you know, the the fool in

the presence of a wise person is like a

spoon in the soup that doesn't taste the

soup at all.

So, I mean there were fools who came

into contact with the Buddha himself who

just wandered away just thinking, "Man,

he's clueless." Or whatever.

You know, they just don't get it.

Cuz they've got their own foolishness to

contend with.

[sighs]

So, that's part of it.

That's a major part of it.

Anyways, let's get back to the the

standard list here.

And this is This question is from

Maitreya Buddha.

And Maitreya Buddha says,

"The Pali word for non-self is anatta.

The Japanese word for you

is anata.

I don't know how to pronounce it

correctly with a Japanese accent, but

it's a n a t a. Could it be that anata

is simply a word that for anyone that is

not you, and modern Buddhists over

complicated the term? I understand that

Theravada Buddhism did not make it to

Japan in history, but I read that
Japanese people did travel to Nalanda to
study Buddhism before it was destroyed
by Muslim invaders. From my
understanding, Nalanda was the epicenter
for both Theravada and Mahayana
Buddhism. Also, in the year 736,
there was a South Indian Buddhist monk
who went by the name of Bodhisena
who traveled to Japan and taught
Sanskrit and influenced the creation of
the Katakana script, which is an
exclusive script for foreign loan words.
Okay, so most of that stuff towards the
end
um is not necessarily
pertinent

to this question.
Which the main question here is, could
it be that anatta, in quotes, is simply
a word that for anyone that is not you
and modern Buddhists overcomplicated the
term. Well, first of all,
the idea that the Japanese word for you
is anatta has absolutely nothing at all
to do with the Pali language. You know,
it's just a total coincidence in all
likelihood.
I mean, at the time that the word anatta
was appearing in Buddhist texts, I mean,
even though there may have been purely
oral or not written down yet, Japan
doesn't even exist yet. The Japanese

hadn't even migrated.

Um I don't know. When did When did the ethnic Japanese migrate in Japan from the mainland?

What?

Probably the Japanese language did not yet exist

um any more than like Old English a thousand years ago is completely not understandable to modern English speakers.

So, I mean,

the Japanese word for you being anatta has absolutely nothing to do with the meaning of anatta in Pali.

So, anatta in Pali is just the an, which means not, and atta, which means self or

without a self, not self, no self.

And it's fairly clear from the texts

that the meaning is is pretty much there

is no self. It doesn't mean that anatta

originally meant someone that isn't your

own self, but could be anybody else.

No, I don't think so.

So,

yeah, I mean the the Anatta Lakkhana

Sutta, which is very ancient,

you know, it's it's it's talking about

Anatta meaning that nobody has a self.

It's not just that you're using Anatta

as a kind of pronoun

meaning not me, it's you, but cuz it's

not me.

Yeah, that's that seems even more

complicated as a way of trying to

interpret the term Anatta

and in dragging in modern Japanese

to, you know, somehow influence ancient

Pali and so forth.

Yeah, it's it's it's just a coincidence

in my opinion.

And no self,

I mean, Anatta literally means no self

or not self.

And

it's just nobody has a self. I mean,

that's fairly clear even from the

Buddha's

traditionally his second discourse, the

Anatta Lakkhana Sutta.

So,

I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Romeo.

And Romeo says,

"There are so many non-Buddhist related subjects when I wonder I often wonder, what does Panya Bodhi think about this?

My questions for this week are about such a subject. I recently saw the Michael Jackson biopic movie. It covers his early life to the late 1980s, a few years before the child molestation allegations surfaced.

I honestly don't know what to make of Michael Jackson and the child molestation allegations made against

him. I mean, the guy did have an amusement park built on his property and hosted sleepovers with children. On the other hand, most of his accusers have been discredited and he was acquitted on all counts in a court of law. So, I ask you, was Michael Jackson a child molester or an emotionally stunted eccentric?

Aside from whether or not you think he was guilty or innocent, what is your overall opinion of Michael Jackson's music, talent, and cultural impact?

Okay, so I guess that's another question, isn't it? There's a whole completely different question mark there.

So, I got to separate them.

[clears throat]

All right.

So, asking about Michael Jackson.

See, the first question.

Was Michael Jackson a child molester or an emotionally stunted eccentric? Okay, well, I missed out on most of the whole Michael Jackson thing. I was a monk living in Burma at the time. I remember one time I came back to America briefly to visit my parents

and my father watched CNN all the time. This is back when CNN was still some semblance of actual news and not just leftist propaganda.

And so, I I picked up a little bit on

the Michael Jackson child molestation

scandal or trial.

And

um one thing that stood out in my memory

was that for some reason

there was an interview with Uri Geller,

you know, the the famous

psychic guy, you know, who can like bend

metal without touching it and all this,

who was employed by the CIA for a while.

And Uri Geller or Udi Udi Geller

was saying that he was he had been

continually warning Michael Jackson to

to just knock it off with the kid stuff

and all he'd get from Michael Jackson

was like an uncomprehending stare.

So, I mean, going with that, it seems
like Uri Geller
kind of picked up on something that was
not right with Michael Jackson and his
behavior towards kids and was warning
him to stop.
Unless Uri Geller is just lying.
So, there is that. And I mean, you look
at Michael Jackson. I mean, just setting
aside his musical talent, he was a weird
person. I mean, first of all, look what
he did to himself. He started off as a
black guy and then towards the end, he
was sort of like a black-white,
male-female, human-elf kind of a being.
So, I mean, he wasn't entirely

like normal. I mean, obviously, he was
an eccentric regardless of whether he
was messing around inappropriately with
with little kids.
So, I mean, he was he was weird.
You know, he had like
pet chimpanzee and like this Disneyland
kind of place where he lived. He wanted
to become a Jehovah's Witness,
allegedly, and they wouldn't take him.
I mean,
so, I mean, there is that. He was just
like this weird, eccentric person.
Partly because he was emotionally
stunted because he didn't get to have a
childhood because his his father was
just working him since he was a toddler

practically. You know, he didn't really

get to have like a normal childhood.

But then again,

um there's other factors involved.

Like

well, I mean, I don't I don't want to

get into any kind of human biodiversity

stuff anymore than necessary, but fame

and you know, belonging to a certain

ethnicity, often the fame has like a

destructive

like effect on that person.

Bill Cosby is another example.

Bill Cosby's in prison right now, I'm

pretty sure.

Which kind of reminds me of this

discussion I was having with my woman last night because if somebody does something wrong she doesn't like them, doesn't want to have anything to do with them, which is understandable. But to me, I mean, when I was a kid I had a number I had very few records, you know, like 33 and a third, you know, album records. One of the only ones I owned was a Bill Cosby record and it's like he's it's like a comedy routine. He was like a stand-up comic at one time. And I listened to that record a hundred times probably. You know, the chicken heart that ate New York City, you know, it's just it's it's been incorporated into my

personality and it's funny regardless of Bill Cosby drugging women and doing naughty things to them while they're unconscious. That record is still funny.

Or like Woody Allen.

You know, despite the fact that at some point he started messing around with his ex

step foster daughter.

I mean

Love and Death is still one of my favorite movies. I mean, he's still it's still like an excellent movie.

So, in my case, I can kind of dissociate like Michael Jackson's music from the possibility that he was a child

molester, for example.
You know, I It's not like I'm going to
say, you know, his music sucks
because he was a bad person or something
along those lines.
And my my wife, she's she she doesn't
really separate that, you know, she sees
the whole package and there's something
about that package she doesn't like,
she's not going to like the music or the
movies or anything like that either.
So
I I just brought that up as an aside
because there was this conversation that
that last night about this very kind of
subject.
Getting back to Michael Jackson, you

know, I mean he was weird. I mean and I
really don't know. I have insufficient
data to know whether he really was
molesting children.
I just do not know.
But it doesn't really affect my
like appreciation or lack of
appreciation of his music.
When I was young and like Michael
Jackson's Thriller came out, you'd go to
any college party, you go to a kegger,
they've all got to be playing Thriller.
And I was like more of a rock and roller
at the time. I had much more
appreciation for Led Zeppelin than for
Michael Jackson.

So, I mean I was kind of biased against Michael Jackson because he was more pop than rock and roll. But I mean every once in a while I'll be driving somewhere and then some Michael Jackson song will come up on the radio. And I mean he was [clears throat] a talented musician.

Definitely.

So, I have to acknowledge that he was a talented musician even though his genre of music

wasn't my favorite.

Still I have to acknowledge, you know, he has got really good musicians playing in you know, supporting supporting the song and you know, the music writing and

that kind of thing.

You know, he was very accomplished as a musician. I think Frank Zappa prophesied at one point that Michael Jackson was eventually going to start composing classical music, but he wound up dying of a drug overdose before that ever happened.

[cough and clears throat]

So, with regard to the question was Michael Jackson a child molester or an emotionally stunted eccentric? Well, I mean he could be both. I mean the emotionally stunted eccentric part is pretty much of a given. That's pretty obvious.

I mean, he was just I mean, just

considering all the plastic surgery

stuff he had done to himself to make

himself look like a kind of androgynous

elf.

You know, I mean,

why?

He he obviously [clears throat] had some

kind of problems. And then, you know,

just dying of a drug overdose,

um even if he did it accidentally, I

mean, the fact that he was just

rendering himself blotto

this with with some kind of

rich person's drug. I can't remember the

name of it. It's not something that's

normally found on the street, I'm pretty

sure.

So, I mean, he was weird. You know, he was

you know, he had his issues, definitely, regardless of whether he molested children. And whether he did molest children or not, I just [clears throat] lack the evidence. I have insufficient data to form any kind of intelligent conclusion, to come to a conclusion on the subject. And that's the way it is with all kinds of stuff. You know, I'm just I read somewhere, I think it was a a statement by Joseph Goldstein. I could be could be from somebody else that was saying that, you know, one of the

characteristics of wisdom is being
comfortable with ambiguity
and like ambivalence.
And that's just the world we live in. I
mean, if you take David Hume and Spinoza
seriously, where you cannot be sure
about anything outside of your own mind,
then I mean, you just have to have a
certain skepticism and just a certain
willingness to be okay with not knowing
the answer.
And it could be my understanding of
reality is so weird that it could be
that there's just various versions of
reality all equally valid or invalid.
Some of them have Michael Jackson really
being a child molester, and some of them

don't.

Maybe Charlie Kirk was murdered by different people in various ways in these various versions of reality that are all kind of interconnected.

So,

yeah, I mean, I don't know. I probably never will know if Michael Jackson really did molest children.

And so, I'm just going to Oh, wait.

There's the other part of the question here. Aside from whether or not you think he was guilty or innocent, what is your overall opinion of Michael Jackson's music, talent, and cultural impact?

And

yeah, I've already mentioned that he was

talented. He was clearly very talented.

And his music is good. I mean, within

the the limitations of pop music.

Yeah, I mean, I have to admit, even

though it's not really my style,

you know, it's like

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen is

like an excellent novel, even though I'm

just really not into romance fiction.

But, I have to acknowledge I did read it

and it's just extremely well-written

novel.

But, it's just not my style. So, it's

not on my list of favorite novels.

And it's the same way with Michael

Jackson's music. With regard to his
cultural impact, it's interesting that
I was at work last week and there was an
African American American fellow who
just brought up in in this meeting,
he just asked, you know, "What do you
Who do you think was more important
culturally and musically, Elvis Presley
or Michael Jackson?"
And
I mean, that's that's kind of hard to
say. I mean, Elvis had more of a cult,
so that after he died, you know, he's
still doing he's still doing like
concerts after his death just by,
I don't know, just

hanging his his jacket on a on a wire. I think that was just a joke from Saturday Night Live where it's Elvis's coat doing concerts. You know, it's like all these theories of Elvis that was like taken up by aliens and is still alive and orbiting around the earth and all this. I mean, I don't think Michael Jackson generated that kind of hysteria.

But

I mean, Michael Jackson didn't do a lot of movies like Elvis did.

But

I mean, the cultural impact I'm not exactly sure. I mean, it would be some sort of pop cultural impact, I'm sure.

But

Yeah, I mean, he definitely made an impact, definitely. [clears throat] And people are still willing to listen to his music. You know, it's like nobody watches reruns of The Cosby Show anymore. Nobody shows it anymore because Bill Cosby's reputation was destroyed after you know, what came to light. Woody Allen probably a lot fewer people watch Woody Allen movies. But somehow Michael Jackson, mainly partly because he wasn't found guilty. You know, he he somehow survived the storm of the scandal and you can still play Michael Jackson's music on the radio. Uh but you can't play Bill Cosby on TV

anymore. Especially like old episodes of Sesame Street. Yeah, you're not going to see that anymore.

And so I'm just going to look over at the chat, see if any new questions have have arisen.

Let's see. Oh, okay.

Chester Runaway says, "What do you think of Virgin Mary apparitions? She seems to be the most active deity in the world. I myself have had an experience despite being non-Christian."

So, Virgin Mary apparitions.

Um well, for starters

a lot of apparitions are like especially like in medieval Catholic saints

would [clears throat] be like a symptom

of hysteria.

According to Sigmund Freud I mean, he's not an infallible oracle by any means, but still I think he was correct largely with regard to the causes of hysteria as just sort of repressed desires and fears and urges and so forth that you repress them. You don't act on your your urges or your desires and it doesn't make them go away. It just causes them to get pushed into the subconscious mind where they build up pressure until they start percolating up to the surface in the form of neurotic symptoms.

Like in this case, hysterical visions and hearing voices and so forth which

happen a lot to certain types of
medieval Catholic saints.
I mean, it could have happened to Paul
the Apostle on on the road to Damascus
when he had that that big vision that
made him go blind temporarily.
So, I mean, a lot of Virgin Mary
apparitions are largely
like a symptom
of very inhibited and neurotic and
hysterical Christians just seeing, you
know,
visions of the Virgin Mary, visions of
Christ, like images of heaven and hell,
this kind of stuff. It happened a lot.
So, I would assume a lot of it comes
from that.

But then, you have what in paganism is called an egregore which means if you have enough people fervently believing in the existence of a being, that faith or belief will actually cause a kind of quasi being to take existence.

And then it to some degree it like has its own agenda, its own urges, its own motivations and so forth. And so, it could be that so many people believing in the Virgin Mary like interceding, you know, she's that's like one of her main jobs is interceding between God and the average person that enough people believed in it that

she became a kind of egregore.

And so, you know, she can appear to

people

through a kind of quasi-autonomous

existence.

So, that's a possible That's a

possibility, too.

Plus, of course, everybody's crazy.

Everybody who isn't fully enlightened.

Um I wouldn't be too sure that she's the

most active deity in the world. I don't

think she appears much to like Burmese

Buddhist villagers.

[clears throat]

But, those would be my my main

my main best guesses.

You know, first of all, in in many

cases, maybe most cases, it's a sign of like
hysteria just through
too much repression. You know, uh saints are likely to be more hysterical than the average guy who gets to just work out his frustrations in various ways rather than repressing them because he's has this overwhelming urge to be saintly.
But, then the egregore aspect also is a possibility.
Okay.
So, Shrinivas
Danands is not asking a question, just making comment. Much respect to the

your work. Not through listening, not through thinking, not through sacrifice, not through observance is what I was saying. Yeah, that's fine. That's good. It's all good.

Okay.

Let's see.

Oh, so Ohm is saying, "Is anyone else noticing a slight audio-visual sync issue?" Yeah, that's what I was I was bringing up earlier, and it comes and goes, apparently.

And I'm not exactly sure what that is, what the reason for it is. Maybe too many open tabs, although I did close a bunch of them.

Okay.

So, let's see here. So, we're not entirely live. When there's a When there's a lag, I'm not live.

But, I am alive.

And that's that's the the important thing I suppose.

So,

David says, "Nibbana, the act of being completely destroyed or obliterated, why would this be preferable to rebirth?"

Um

Well, [clears throat] I mean it's not really being completely destroyed or obliterated or what you would say is the only thing that is destroyed or

obliterated is delusion.

So, it's the delusion is is blown out.

Delusion and craving and suffering and

and this

samsara is blown out leaving only

ultimate reality behind.

Which like from a theistic point of view

is capital G God.

So, replacing your own limited life by

just merging with infinite infinity.

I mean that's that's kind of what it's

about and it if you're rebirth, I mean

if if you're like in samsara as an

unenlightened being, it's in a way it's

like eternal damnation because you're

never going to be fully satisfied or

happy.

But

I think the main point of answering your

question is that nibbana is the blowing

out of delusion and desire and

suffering.

That's really all that is is destroyed.

I think it's in Eckhart [clears throat]

Tolle's first famous book,

he says, "Nothing that is real dies."

You know, it's just the illusion that

that is subject to death.

Which is interesting.

Which is why I repeated it.

And I'm going to move on to the next

question which is from Churzaskazis.

And Churzaskazis says,

"Is dying instead of your own child, for example by saving it from a burning building and dying in the fire, bad? Intention was good, so karma has to be good." And this comes from a discussion that was going on on the Discord server about

[clears throat]

people like the ethics of self-deletion, and then it kind of

um

went off on not exactly a tangent, but the ethics of sacrificing your life for somebody else.

And so Chizaskas has asked this question, "Is Is dying instead of your own child

bad?" And I mean, again, this is one of those questions where someone is asking is action X, you know, what is what is the moral value of action X? What is the karma? Is it good karma or bad karma of performing physical action X? And as I say over and over and over again, physical actions are ethically neutral. It's the mental states accompanying your action that determine whether what you do is good or bad.

So, one person dies rescuing their own child from a burning building, and it's good karma. Another person might do it in

such a way that there's some more bad
karma involved, although saving the life
of a child is always going to have some
good karma involved in it, unless it's
for some really horrible reason.
[sighs and gasps]
So, I mean,
for some reason, I'm reminded of a
Jataka story. I think it might be in a
Mahayana version of the Jatakas, where
the the Bodhisattva Bodhisatta
in Theravada Buddhism,
um he sees uh
a female tiger who is starving, and out
of compassion for the tiger,
he offers his own body I think he cuts
himself to get enough blood going that

the tiger will be aroused from its near

death stupor

and and eat him. So, he he like

sacrifices his own life to save this

tigress from starvation.

And I mean that's set up at least by

Mahayana Buddhists as an act of really

great virtue. And that also reminds me

of the Sasa Jataka that is in the Tera

Teravada

um

tradition

in which the Bodhisattva, the Buddha in

a previous existence, was a hare or

rabbit

who

was going to sacrifice his own life by
throwing his body into a fire to cook it
in order to offer alms food to a
mendicant uh like an ascetic Brahmin.
So, I mean he was rewarded
by Sakka, king of gods,
for trying to kill himself to feed a
mendicant Brahmin.
So, I mean it's not necessarily bad that
you know I mean like sacrificing your
own life for the benefit of somebody
else.
I mean
I think that for the most part it would
be a virtuous act, but it would depend
largely on your own motives and your own
mental states.

So,

I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Master Po.

And Master Po I think some of this is largely rhetorical

that there was a a little bit of back and forth between me and Master Po. He was in in one comment under a YouTube video he says he doesn't believe in comma or karma in any way.

And then I said, "Well, in Buddhism karma is volition. So, if you don't believe in karma, you don't believe in volition."

And then I mentioned that he kind of backpedaled a little bit on that and

then he disagreed that he wasn't back pedaling and then he said he doesn't even believe in volition.

So, [clears throat]

I mean, from the ultimate point of view, fine. I don't think volition is ultimately real either.

But,

Master Po here says, "How can you have mental states and not be a self?"

In my opinion, we're all conscious beings having a idiosyncratic experience. Pretty simple. If you kill the mosquito or flea or person and there's only mental states and volition and no God, where does the return karma come from? So, that's another question.

There's There's questions here.

Numerous question marks and an Amazon person just dropped something off on our front porch causing the dogs to begin barking.

Okay.

So, we got to separate out all these question marks and I think some of them may be rhetorical.

Yeah, and this There's like four question marks, so

All right, first of all, how can you have mental states and not be a self?

And I point out to him, this is just begging the question. It's like, "How can a storm have snowflakes and not be a

self?"

You know, it's just like it's not the storm that has snowflakes. I mean, you don't like a snowstorm. How can a snowstorm

have have these snowflakes and not be a self?

I mean, it's a similar kind of question. So, I mean, it's just you're begging the question by assuming that there has to be some someone some being who owns these mental states. Just the the idea that the mental states arise through conditions without having any like moderating self being moderating them. I mean, it's it's not even considered to be an an option here.

So,

I mean, how can you have mental states

and not be a self? I mean, you you can't

the way he framed the question.

It's like there's already this you

that has to have the the mental states.

But, it's not necessarily true. Like

like uh Bertrand Russell says with

regard to Rene Descartes in his history

of Western philosophy, I think.

Maybe not his history of Western

philosophy. But, he's critiquing Rene

Descartes and his cogito ergo sum, you

know, I think therefore I am. And

Bertrand Russell was was pointing out

that I mean,

I mean, he started off on the wrong foot
from the very beginning.
I mean, he would have been more accurate
just to say there are thoughts.
And I should have looked up the quote. I
have it written down in my little monk
notebook. But, I'm not going to
not going to bother you with looking for
it right now.
Finding the book and then searching
through it to find the the quote by
Bertrand Russell.
So, I mean, David Hume also famously he
he shot down the idea that just because
there are mental states does not mean
that there has to be some self
that is experiencing the mental states.

The mental states are themselves

conscious.

They contain their own experience.

So, anyways, Master Po continues. In my

opinion, we're all [clears throat]

conscious beings having having an

idiosyncratic experience. Pretty simple.

If you kill a mosquito or flea or person

and there's only mental states and

volition and no God, where does the

return karma come from?

And I mean, the return karma it's just

the momentum of your own mental states.

It's not like karma disappears and then

reappears when it's time to reach

fruition. It's always there.

It's just part of the the momentum that
is driving your mind forwards through
time.
So, let's see here.
Idiosyncratic experiences, yeah, that's
that's seems to be fairly true. Although
it's not ultimately real. I mean, that
we're still dealing with samsara here
and not ultimate reality.
I don't know if
um Master Po would put God and
his alleged creation on the same level
of reality.
That's kind of what the Abhidharma
scholars did with Nirvana and samsara.
They just put them on same level of
reality.

Anyways,

um let's just move on to Master Po's the

third part of his group of questions

here.

What's its determinant?

What or who makes the call? You kill the

sentient being, there you two will

suffer that.

Um

okay, [snorts] let's just separate let's

just deal with that before moving on to

the next part.

Um I mean, you yourself I mean, it's

uh

[sighs]

it's so hard. Oh, he spelled sentient

wrong. I got to fix that.

I do appreciate it when people use

correct spelling and grammar, but it's

it's not necessarily going to happen

because I mean, in some cases people are

just like texting. Like my wife text me

sometimes and it comes out like

gibberish. I cannot I cannot comprehend.

I cannot interpret what she's saying.

But that's because she's it's like

speed, you know, it's like

I don't know. Autocorrect is changing

the words or whatever.

So, what's its determinant? I don't know

what that means, so I'll skip that part.

What or who makes the call? You kill the

sentient being, there you will suffer

that. Yeah, nobody really makes the call other than your samsaric pseudo self to some degree at like a deep subconscious level, but it's like you are creating negativity
which is influencing the world you are generating for yourself. So, you're creating a more negative world where more
more negative stuff is likely to happen. And then [snorts] he's got in a near-death experience life review, there's never anyone who mentioned anything about eating animals, hunting, killing mosquitoes. It's always how they were treated or they treated other

humans and be our own judge. Okay, so the assumption here is that if an unenlightened person has a near-death experience while they're having the experience, they're not unenlightened and delusional anymore.

So, I mean I've I've read of near-death experience. One near-death experience where the a woman goes into the heaven realm and it's like prefab housing with like flower boxes in the front yards and this kind of stuff.

And

and like the Tibetan Book of the of of the Dead points out, when you're having these so presumably near-death experiences, although in the Tibetan

Book of the Dead it's just DE, death experiences, you should always be reminding yourself this is a creation of my imagination. This is not real.
So, you've got delusional people die, have a near-death experience, that near-death experience is also going to be delusional. It might be a somewhat more subtle level of delusion but still it's delusional.
But I'm interested in what happens if the near-death experience causes someone to become enlightened. And the case that I think of is John Wren Lewis. He was like this scientist who was an like a materialistic atheist up until he had

had near-death experience in Thailand.
Somebody poisoned him, they were going
to rob him, and
he he almost died, but then came back,
and it was he sort of like Eckhart
Tolle. He had this experience during the
near death experience that just like
jolted him into a higher level of
consciousness. And I didn't review
before doing this video what kind of
near death experience John Wren Lewis
had, but that would be an interesting
one because it presumably allegedly
resulted in his enlightenment, and it
can happen to some people. At least it
resulted in him being at a higher level
of consciousness afterwards.

But just because something happens in a near death experience, I mean, it's like the Tibetan Book of the Dead points out, it's just like a creation of your own imagination anyway.

It's not ultimately real.

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Philaletheist.

Okay.

All right.

Proto Pseudo Monk went to bed, so presumably he's not in the Western Hemisphere, either.

Anyways, Philaletheist says,

"When I was listening to my answer last

episode,

I noticed it sounded like you were

underwater. This made me think of a

scenario where the Buddha comes back to

life, and let's say you were sure it's

the Buddha, and he tells you that if you

let him shrink you to a reasonable size,

and that you can get enough oxygen

supplies and a wet suit, so that you can

live in your aquarium for 1 year, and

then you are guaranteed to become fully

enlightened, do you do it?" And this is

like one of the most bizarre thought

experiments I've I've ever come across.

Somebody asks me if the Buddha

came to you and you could know for sure

that it was the Buddha somehow,

you know,

[laughter]

accomplishing the impossible there,

and then

he he tells you that if he'll shrink you

down to the size of an aquarium fish

and give you a wet suit. I mean, why

doesn't he just let you breathe water? I

don't know.

Gives you you get a wet suit, so you're

living in an aquarium. Would you allow

yourself to be shrunk down to say 2 in,

3 in?

Live in an aquarium for a year and then

afterwards you'd be guaranteed a full

enlightenment?

I mean, first of all, I mean, it's it's like an impossibility because there's no way you can know for sure that it was the Buddha anyway. It's all an illusion anyway. At this level of reality, it's all illusory, even the Buddha standing in front of you.

So,

I mean, if I were still a monk or if I were single, the answer would be yes without hesitation. Just assuming that you can be sure that it really is the Buddha and that for sure that after you've been shrunk down to an an aquarium

inhabitant

and and live there for a year, after 1

year you become fully enlightened? I mean, that would be a practically a no-brainer. I mean, clearly I would have to do it.

But I'm married now, so I'd have to like consult with my wife. You know, I do have obligations to her now.

I don't know if she'd really want to be feeding me flakes and pellets and that kind of thing for an entire year with me just hanging out in an aquarium and then after that I become fully enlightened. I mean, after I became fully enlightened, I'd presumably get to become full size again. So, I mean, she wouldn't really be necessarily be losing

me as a husband.

I think Eckhart Tolle is married. Some of these beings who are to claim to be fully enlightened nowadays, you mean they're still

you know, they they still have a mate. So, I mean, would she be willing to take care of me in my aquarium for a year and then have me become fully enlightened at the end? I'm not I'm not sure.

I'd have to consult with her. Just assuming that Gautama Buddha ever does appear to me and I can somehow know that it really is him.

But, I mean, if I were just on my own, still a monk or whatever, yeah, I I

would have to do it.

Okay.

So, next question is from Francois.

I deliberately mispronounce French names

just just for your information.

Francois says,

"I am 47 and started practicing in 2011

by doing several Burmese style

meditation retreats, Goenka, Upandita,

and Pa Auk, and practicing these

techniques daily in my lay life.

Recently, I stayed 5 months in two Ajahn

Chah's monasteries in Thailand as a pa

khao, white robe before novice. It was

physically quite demanding with a lot of

command communal chores and my

expectations in terms of meditation
practice were not fulfilled and I felt I
needed to quit
and take a step back to reconsider my
monastic ambitions. For aspiring
monastics,
Ajahn Chah's system of training focus on
physical chores and interactions with
other monastics and not so much on
meditation.
I have a strong faith in this training
since it produced so many great Ajahns
and the vinaya is followed strictly and
common sense
is emphasized as the inevitable base to
develop in higher damas, but I couldn't
stop wondering if this training is

closer to the Buddhist teaching than the Burmese style training, which is more focused on formal sitting meditation, but sometimes produce practitioners that might be excellent meditators, but not so much well-rounded in wisdom. Any thoughts on that? In a few years, I might go try might go to Burma to try the Burmese style.

So, he's pointing out that the Ajahn Chah tradition and most Thai traditions really put more emphasis on like regimented activity rather than actual sitting meditation.

And that is one difference between Thai Buddhism and Burmese Buddhism, even

though they're both Theravada, Thai
Buddhism puts more emphasis on monastic
discipline
and Dhutanga, you know, optional ascetic
practices, where Burmese Buddhism puts
more emphasis on scholarship and
meditation.
And I mean, there's advantages and
disadvantages to both sides. The Thais,
they're less scholarly, they don't
meditate as much as a general rule,
but when you do have a meditation master
arise, and there have been quite a few
in Thailand,
mainly, they they teach based on their
own experience rather than on what the
book says. In Burma, the the the

Sayadaws are complete dogmatists as a general rule, and if their own personal experiences disagree with the text, they will reject their the testimony of their own personal experience in favor of what the book says.

And so,

um the Thai Ajahns have the advantage of more experiential wisdom,

um less dogmatism.

But also but on the other hand,

sometimes they'll just botch Buddhist philosophy. They'll get all kinds of stuff wrong. Like like even Ajahn Ajahn Mun in his autobiography, he's talking about long dead Buddhas and long

dead arahants coming to visit him.

Um, apparently not knowing or caring

that from or the point of view of

orthodox Theravada, that just couldn't

happen.

So, I mean, it seems to me that

one thing you could do

is

um

just try to adopt the better aspects of

both traditions, Burmese and Thai.

Follow follow Vinaya strictly and do

some intensive meditation practice.

I mean, that would be

not even really a compromise. That's

just taking the best of of both both

traditions.

And I mean, the Ajahn Chah tradition has
produced a lot of great Ajahns. It's
also produced a lot of dropouts. I mean,
I remember
back in the 1990s,
um the Ajahn Chah tradition had this It
was like a a pandemic of of relatively
senior, well-respected,
renowned Ajahns, especially Western
ones, just dropping out.
And so, it really reduced the Ajahn Chah
tradition's ability to spread, which was
I mean, it was kind of in demand at the
time, but there was such a shortage of
Ajahns because so many of them were
disrobing that it it really set back the

Western Ajahn Chah tradition for years

as a result of that.

And

I mean, I I can't really say. I mean,

I I know Burmese Buddhism better than I

know Thai Buddhism and I know that there

are some very wise meditation masters in

the Burmese tradition.

I don't know if I would include Pa Auk

Sayadaw or even U Pandita among their

number. I mean they're they'd be kind of

I'd give them sort of a grade of B

with regard to that sort of thing.

Um somebody like Webu Sayadaw or Shwe U

Min Sayadaw might be a like

A-tier meditation masters.

So

[sighs]

what's the actual question?

That's what I need to do. I need to find

the question mark in this

kind of essay here.

Any thoughts on that? That's the only

That's the only question. So yeah, I

mean if

Yeah, I mean you could go to Thailand

it might be easier if the like the

governmental situation there allows it

to go to Burma because in Thailand you

are regimented. Everyone has to dress

the same, act the same, etc. Much more

so than in Burma. So it might be that it

is frowned upon for you even to start

you know, deviating

from

from like the regimented

procedure for that monastery. I mean to

some degree once you get five

five rainy seasons under your belt as a

monk, you can just go off alone.

Presumably in Thailand it's allowed.

In Burma certainly it's allowed.

In Burma the main problem is just

following Vinaya strictly because it's

very hard to find monasteries where

Vinaya is followed strictly except maybe

in the um like the Pa Auk tradition.

But the Pa Auk tradition is extremely

dogmatic with regard to

like

meditation like progress in meditation

and that sort of thing.

So

yeah, I would just

there's there's no there's nothing

against there's nothing preventing you

from just adopting

the best from both worlds.

You know, just take the strict

like monastic discipline of the Thai

traditions and throw in some

like a certain amount of learnedness

with regard to the texts

of the Burmese tradition and intensive

meditation practice, especially

mindfulness.

Mindfulness, I mean,
if you're being mindful as mindful as
you can at all times, that will
compensate for a lot of no formal
sitting practice.
So, yeah, that that would be my thoughts
on that.
Just find a place where you are I mean,
it doesn't matter whether it's in
Thailand or Burma so long as you are
able to have strict monastic discipline
and study the texts that to the to the
degree that's necessary to learn what
you need to know and
like intensive meditation.
Especially, it's good if you're at a
monastery or have a teacher who is

emphasizing

like constant sati sampajanna, just

mindfulness of everyday activities, just

maintaining mindfulness as well as you

can because ultimately, that's probably

more important than sitting cross-legged

with your eyes closed.

Okay.

So, any more questions here?

Master Po,

let's see. Since you don't give two

shits about what people think of you, do

you use deodorant before going out? I'm

pretty much on the same page too to a

point. I do like being clean.

Um

sometimes I use deodorant.

But,

um

I mean mostly when I go out I'm going to

work in like an industrial setting.

And usually I don't use deodorant,

partly because it's like clean athletic

kind of sweat. I mean I I bathe at least

once a day as a general rule. Let's say

on average once a day.

So,

yeah, my sweat is sort of like clean

athletic sweat, not like sour, sick, or

nervous kind of sweat. And it's not

stink.

So, yeah, I mean that's just a matter of

like I don't know, self-respect I

suppose more than being worried about

other people

smelling my stink.

I haven't had anybody complain about me

stinking.

So,

I do use deodorant sometimes.

But, not every day.

And I'm just going to move on. Oh, see.

Calabasin?

I don't know how to pronounce that name.

Says greetings from Spain. Yes.

Greetings. It's probably late at night

there or something or extremely early in

the morning.

[clears throat]

Okay.

Next question.

Ooh, we're down to the last questioner.

By golly, that happened fast, sort of.

PSA says, "When you first started these

Q&A's, did you ever imagine you would

make it to 200?" I wasn't even thinking

about it. Yeah, so I guess I didn't

imagine I would make it 200, but I mean

I didn't think that I wouldn't.

I didn't think that I would or wouldn't

really. I was just let's let's try doing

this and see how it goes.

That's pretty much as far as it as it

went.

So,

yeah, I didn't really imagine I would

make it to 200. I didn't consciously

think

maybe someday I'll make it to 200

episodes.

But, it doesn't like really have me

flabbergasted or gobsmacked or anything

that it has happened this way.

And I'm just going to move on to PSA's

next question.

Who would you like to thank for this

great accomplishment? Myself, I guess.

Thanks, me.

Cuz I mean, it was mainly my doing. I

mean,

other people contributed, definitely.

Like, you viewers. I mean, if it was I

was consistently getting no viewers, I
probably would have stopped doing it
long before now.
But, I mean, I like I like doing these
Q&As. It's It's a kind of spiritual
practice for me to some degree.
It's an ability for me to share what
I've learned
or thought about
to some degree. You know, I consider
this to be a public service, which is
one reason why I don't try to monetize
anything or charge money or anything.
I mean, it maybe eventually I'll allow
super chats
if I ever figure out you know, what that
what that implies.

But, it's it's really not my my purpose
doing these videos to become rich and
famous.
So, there's a good chance I'm going to
be a blue-collar worker
for making for paying the bills
up until I finally retire, maybe at the
age of 72.
And then after I'm 72, if I still have
the the mental abilities,
I might start
writing more.
Okay. So, last question, unless any
last-moment questions come up in the
chat.
From PSA, he says, "What meditation

method would you recommend to a person who comes to you telling you they've never meditated before?" Well, it would depend on the person. Like, for a lot of really worldly-minded people who don't know hardly anything about like Eastern spirituality or even Western spirituality. You know, they just want to see what it's like. You know, just there out of curiosity. I mean, a simple meditation advice would be sit down in front of a fish tank and just watch the fishes swim around.

Or just

if you've got a fireplace, start a fire in your fireplace and just sit there watching the fire. Just gaze into the

flames and let your mind just kind of go empty. This paying like attention, you know, wrapped attention to the flames. Something like that would be a simple, easy way for a beginner to practice meditation. I mean, even if they don't have a fireplace, you can light a candle, you can light a stick of incense and just watch the smoke rising.
Just sit there and watch the smoke rise until the the incense is gone. And if you notice that your mind is straying away, just bring it back to that smoke. You know, something like that would be a relatively simple, elementary way of teaching meditation to somebody

without having to
get them into Anapana. I mean, that
would for someone who's more serious,
probably meditation of breathing would
be
like a good introduction to
like traditional Buddhist meditation.
So, if I was going to teach traditional
Buddhist meditation to somebody, then
Anapana would probably be the way to go.
And according to the Visuddhimagga,
Anapana is one of the best meditation
techniques for people who think too
much, which is most Westerners.
But for someone who really isn't trying
to get into Buddhism, but just wants to,
you know, know some elementary

meditation technique, I might advise
them to watch a fish swimming around in
its fish tank or watch a fire, you know,
in your fireplace, a campfire, or watch
a candle flame, or like incense smoke,
that kind of thing.
So, I guess that's it.
Oh, wait, here's I got eventual muse
asking a question. Since you are an
everyday bather, was it difficult having
few bathing opportunities in your
cave-dwelling days? No, actually,
especially when I was in Burma, I really
had to bathe
like once a day. I mean, I can I can go
2 days, but I mean, if I go 3 days, it

wasn't the smell, it's just that I have like a oily skin, you know, a seborrheic skin type, so like my chest, shoulders, neck, face, scalp, is I've got more like skin oils going on than most people do, I suppose. And if I go more than like 2 days, I start getting dermatitis. It's like As far as far as I can understand, it's like your skin oil is sitting there on the surface of your skin, and then gradually bacteria start to feed on it, and it's like the waste It's It's like the metabolic waste of the bacteria that is causing a kind of allergic reaction that just causes my skin to break out. Because I've noticed like isopropyl alcohol helps to make the the rash go

away, and also taking antibiotics

prevents it from happening.

Um I wouldn't take antibiotics just for

that, but at other times when I would be

taking antibiotics, any kind of skin

rash problem would also clear up. So, it

seems to be a bacterial thing.

Uh um like

I remember I tried walking from Rangoon

to Maymyo uh not Maymyo

uh Nyaung-U, Burma, which is

up in Mandalay Division. So, I I going

to walk from from Rangoon division to

Mandalay division, which was like three

or 400 miles, I think.

And that was really pushing it because

if you're walking like that, you may not

have a

a convenient place to bathe.

But when I was living in caves, I mean,

there'd always be a well or a creek or a

river somewhere within easy walking

distance. I would have to find a place

to stay where I would be able to bathe

on a daily basis.

Sometimes it's necessary to bathe more

than once a day.

Cuz it's I mean

the the furnace of central Burma in hot

weather and the rainy season where it

doesn't rain, you know, it's just humid

and hot.

Instead of dry and hot,

then I mean, I would it was just a
necessity that I would have to have a
source of of bathing water.
I don't know, some place to take a bath
every day.
And as it turns out, my attempted
[clears throat]
land migration from
southern Burma to central Burma didn't
work out very far because I made it
about 35 miles before I was essentially
arrested by the secret police and
immigration officials who then sent me
back to Rangoon because they were
concerned for my safety, which meant
really they were concerned for some

weird

westerner wandering around loose in a

military dictatorship.

And uh so, I guess that's it.

It looks like we are done, although it

also looks like we are lagged by 5

seconds or so.

And so, it was it was very nice hanging

out with you guys.

If you have any questions you think I

can answer, put them in the comments

below this video or if you have access

to the Discord server, you can put them

in there.

And check out the links, the URL links

below if I can figure out how to put

them in there.

And uh like and subscribe if you've not done so already.

And be happy.

And now I'm going to try and turn this off.

Okay then.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 201.

I am your host Po Bosa. And 201 is not a prime number. It is in fact 3 * 67.

And I got to put the little paper umbrella back into the beverage.

Introduce the beverage. Don't want you guys thinking I'm uncouivilized.

Don't use paper umbrellas in my beverages. Now I throw it away again because we're having kind of some technical difficulties and I've been look investigating into the cause of said technical difficulties and uh according to Grock

what's happening is

uh I've got either a sample rate

mismatch or a performance issue with the

CPU overload causing encoding lag. And

that does seem to be what's probably

happening because my CPU once it gets up

to about 50% in fact I think it's

lagging a little bit even now it's at

28% my CPU it's like you know the the

brain of my computer is at 28% I guess

of capacity

and it causes a lag so that my voice and

the movement of my mouth are not in

sync.

But I have a little bit to say about

that on like a a philosophical plane

that's [clears throat] going to come up

here before I actually start answering questions.

So, I seem to remember that right as I was ending the Q&A last weekend that it was like two people got some questions in right at the last minute as I was ending it and I didn't notice. And so then I like apologized in the the comments under the Q&A and said I'd answer the questions next time, which is now. But it turns out that there's only one un unanswered question at the end now. And I don't know if the other un unanswered question disappeared or not because some of the comments in the chat did in fact disappear.

It's just all kinds of weirdness go on when I make these videos. Disappearing comments, lag between sound and mouth movement. Um, recently I had a few videos where it sounded like I was talking from the bottom of a well. Just the the audio just stopped working. I had to delete my video processing software and upload like an updated version of it just to get it to work again. I hope it's working now.

And before I started using OBS, I was using the default uh video recording software on the computer. And it was there was one time I had to record the entire Q&A three times because it said it was recording. You

know, you see the little clock going,

all that stuff. Looked like it was

recording. Said it was recording. And

then I get to the end,

didn't record.

So, my recording of Q&A videos has been

just as a I mean, as just a regular

occurrence, there's all this technical

difficulty stuff coming up that

I I'll have a little bit more to say

about it in a minute.

But first,

um, it seemed like the live stream went

pretty well last weekend and despite the

the lag that's wanting to happen now,

the CPU is up to 52%.

I don't know. I mean, should I talk slower? I don't know. I should probably just get a new computer that's got more oomph to it.

This is a relatively old computer. So, I think probably next year after I'm richer than I am now with my new job, I'll just buy a computer that has more guts to it.

But, as I was saying, the Q&A worked. It seemed to go pretty well, and I'm getting used to it now. So, I may start doing Q uh live stream Q&As's uh more frequently in future, but it seems to me that 2:00 PM American Eastern time probably is too late because I have a lot of people who watch my videos in the

Eastern Hemisphere

and they were like going to bed. They're like saying good night everybody, you know, in midafter afternoon my time. So, I suppose I should probably [snorts] if I do live streams in the future, maybe like around noonish.

I'll let you know before it happens, but I think around noon would be possibly ideal. I get up earlier now because I have to get up at the god ungodly hour of like 4:00 to go to work now. And it looks like it's not going to be getting any better soon.

I mean, that's 4:00. Guess I' I mean there have been many more times I've

gone to bed at 4:00 than getting up at 4:00. I would much prefer I mean if I had my brothers, which I don't, but I would prefer to go to bed at 4:00 a.m. rather than get up at 4:00 a.m.

But it's the curse of Adam. We must get up at 4:00 a.m. and [snorts] uh earn our bread through the sweat of our brow and all that.

So, let's see here.

Oh, we're getting back to what I was threatening you that I was I was going to get back to, and that is certain philosophical reflection on the technical issues that have plagued my channel, especially these Q&A videos.

Like I've told you before, it's like a

lag between, you know, the audio and the video aren't in sync
or a few videos in a row. Just recently, it sounded like I was talking from the bottom of a well because the the audio soft or the the video like processing software just the audio just died. I had to like delete the the software and upload like a different version of it. Before that, I was using completely different um audio record or video recording software that sometimes didn't work at all. On one infamous occasion, I had to do the same Q&A three times before it finally recorded. It said it was recording and everything, didn't

record.

And

to me, doing these videos is a kind of spiritual practice. You know, it's like I'm directing my mind towards dharma in a way that I usually don't at other times. You know, just being mindful or spontaneously oming or refraining from killing and lying and stealing and and all that sort of stuff. I mean, that's just kind of chronic a kind of uh baseline dhamma practice, but when I'm doing these Q&A videos, it's more overt. You know, it really is a significant spiritual practice for me and possibly for some of the people that listen. And because I view these videos

through a kind of spiritual lens, at least a philosophical one, then my philosophical view that everything has to remain in balance. You know, for every positive, you have to have a corresponding negative just to keep the cosmos in balance.

So you've got goodness, you've got to have badness to balance it with. You know, you've got beauty, you have to have ugliness just to compare it with so that there is a kind of cosmic balance. You know, that's how duality works.

And I do think that just the the strange technical difficulties that continually happen with my videos are a kind of

cosmic balance. You know, there's like the good aspect of me answering people's questions about dharma and then it has to be balanced out with some kind of negativity which manifests in the form of crappy production quality.

And I accept that. I mean, for me, the purpose of these videos is, as I say, kind of spiritual practice, sharing what I've learned, that kind of stuff. And and I'm not doing it to get to make money or to get famous, that kind of stuff, you know, I'm doing it as a kind of public service.

And so when like negative stuff, you know, with regard to, you know, recording values or what is it

production values or lack of production values, when that kind of stuff is happening, then I just kind of accept it philosophically. It's like well you know it's like Mara the evil one you know the cosmic balance you know everything has to to balance out so the goodness of sharing dharma just kind of gets counterbalanced by all these glitches and complications and technicalities and stuff.

So, I just kind of accept it philosophically.

And it may be that, you know, George Gerchef, I don't know if you're familiar with George Gerchef, but he was um a

western philosopher who kind of was
teaching eastern philosophy through a
kind of western approach.
And he believed that
you sh I mean, you shouldn't get your
dharma too easily. you know, he he made
his books deliberately difficult to
understand because he felt like you
shouldn't just have dharma handed to you
on a platter. You shouldn't have any
kind of profound truth or anything of
value just given to you on a platter
without you having to make any effort.
And so,
um, I mean, I can kind of I can kind of
relate to that. I mean, it's it's sort
of like you listening to these Q&A

videos. You have to exercise a little bit of patience or a little tolerance of my mouth not moving at at exactly the same time as the words coming out or I sound like I'm talking to you from the bottom of a well.

I mean, if it just doesn't record at all, then I just have to record the whole thing over again so you don't see it. I mean, this is like the third or fourth attempt even just this evening trying to get the the lag, you know, the the the get the the audio and video synchronized better has been it's been taking some time and it seems like it's going pretty well right now. It's within

a second anyway.

But on the bright side, bright side,

just next year I'll probably get a

better, stronger computer and then we

can have like some totally new kind of

[__]

interfering with these videos.

But it's going to have to be something.

That's just it just seems like that's

the way it is. And I sincerely believe

in, you know, this cosmic balance idea.

This sort of dependent core rising in

Buddhism kind of works that way. Yin and

Yang and Dowoism works that way. Um,

karma to some degree works that way. And

there is a question about karma kind of

along those lines uh coming up. And uh I

suppose I should uh just start answering questions then.

My golly, there's not a whole bunch of questions this time. I guess everyone's just basking in the the afterglow of the live stream number 200 last weekend.

But one of the questions that was asked at the end of the Q&A that I didn't get to is apparently from someone named Yatish.

And Yatish says, "Should one be optimistic or realistic about the future or should one not think about future much altogether?"

And if you're doing intensive practice like really intensive dharma practice

then as a general rule you should be in the present moment. Be here now as Rahm Doss used to say or the power of now you know Ehart Tollah's first famous book.
So yeah, I mean if if you're doing intensive practice, you should be mainly occupied with the present moment. And the Buddha as well as Jesus of Nazareth taught, you know, give no thought for tomorrow, what you will eat, where you will sleep, you know, let tomorrow's problems happen tomorrow. You know, you can deal with them then.
So even if you are like doing intensive mindfulness practice just be here now and you have to think about the future or you have to remember the past for

whatever reason then still there's this
mindfulness going on of now where it's
like I'm thinking about the future now
remembering the past now you know
there's still this now even if you're
thinking about the future or remembering
the past [clears throat]
but if you're not doing intensive like
like intensive practice
then you may have to think about the
future more often. Let's say you work
for some company you know you're like in
the environment health and safety
department of some in like industry.
So it's your job to be like
extrapolating into the future and seeing

what could possibly go wrong so that you can like prevent it from going wrong. So, in a situation like that, you're going to have to think about the future. I mean, sometimes you just have to think about the future or the past. But if you're doing mindfulness really well, it's thinking about the future now. Remembering the past now, but it should be kept to a minimum. To be in the present moment as much as possible is an invaluable spiritual tool.

But with regard to Yatish, Yates's first question and this is actually two questions. I just noticed that I don't know how [clears throat] that can get

past me. There's two question marks. So the first part of the question is should one be optimistic or realistic about the future? And

I mean

to be realistic it's probably better. I mean to be optimistic that's like being hopeful. I mean to the to the extent that being optimistic is being hopeful, you know, hoping for the best, just kind of having faith that things are going to turn out like well. Um the Buddha did teach that monks should not be hopeful, that hope is a kind of desire for the future.

So I mean you can give the future the

benefit of the doubt and that's about as optimistic as I would recommend. Or you can be optimistic in the sense of like whatever happens to me is going to be the fruition of my own karma. Again, we're we're like seeking equilibrium. You know, karma is like water. It just kind of seeks its own level, so to speak in a sense.

So, it's like whatever happens to you is like

what should happen to you. I mean, from from a Buddhist point of view, it makes perfect sense. People that don't have much appreciation for dharma will say you're victim blaming. You know this kind of stuff. But really

um

even if something bad happens to you,

it's like paying off a karmic debt

so to speak.

So I mean that's a kind of optimism you

can have that would be valid from a

Buddhist point of view. Just bear in

mind, you know, whatever happens, you

know, everything happens the way it's

supposed to happen. That was almost like

a mantra for me. Sometimes it still

comes out sometimes just spontaneously.

Everything happens the way it's supposed

to happen, which is kind of optimistic,

but you know, it's with regard to

realistic. I mean, that's just sort of

being objective. I think it might have
been uh a better choice of words to give
give the choice between being optimistic
or being objective
[snorts] and you can kind of be both at
the same time so long as you bear in
mind you know everything is just happens
the way it's supposed to happen and you
know I you know there there's a lot of
optimistic things you can say you know
like um you can say that like you never
get what you're not ready for that you
maybe you have some karma that something
bad is going to happen to you but it's
like the universe postpones it until
you're I mean you're ripe for it in a
sense that you're more able to deal with

it

which sounds kind of woowoo and all that

and we shouldn't really dwell on it but

there is that

so getting back to Yatisha's first

question should one be optimistic or

realistic about the future. I mean,

realistic is probably the best your best

bet, but realistic isn't pessimistic. I

mean, realism and optimism are not

opposites.

You know, the opposite of optimism is

pessimism. You shouldn't be pessimistic.

I mean, to remind yourself that you're

not going to live forever, that you're

going to die someday. I mean, that's

more realistic than pessimistic. You know, sort of like a lot of people accuse Buddhism of being pessimistic because, you know, the first noble truth to exist is to suffer, but that's just observing the way things are.

So, you can have a certain philosophical optimism. You know, everything happens the way it's supposed to happen. It's the fruition of my own karma, that kind of thing. But aside from that, you're better off just being objective and not like

slathering value judgments all over everything. You know, optimistic is sort of like putting a like a positive spin on things and positive and negative have

to balance out.

So you're better off just

leaving like the facts of your existence

as unadorned with value judgments as

possible.

And with regard to Yatish's second

question, should one not think about the

future much altogether? I pretty much

pretty sure I already answered that one

more or less. So I'm just going to move

on to the next question.

And if there was another person who

asked a question at the end of last

week's live stream and the comment just

disappeared because some of the comments

did disappear.

I remember uh somebody suggesting that I turn that fan on. And I I addressed it in the video. I pointed out that the ceiling fan's already going, so it's not necessary to turn that one on. And then I was looking for it to see who who it was that made that that suggestion and it was gone. But I I distinctly remember seeing it in the in the comments in the chat and responding to it on the video. So it's it's just who knows

[clears throat]

it's just weirdness.

But getting back to sea of action cipad zena his question is thoughts and he uh included a a YouTube short video of salivage zek. I don't know how

to pronounce the names. I mean I I

understand the salivage part because he

kind of like [clears throat] sprays when

he talks. the zijek I'm not sure about

but he it's just him

discussing

um like introspection

salivage says that you mean you

shouldn't introspect too much you

shouldn't look inward too much because

you're going to find deep [__] in there

and so he says this is actually a quote

he says the only way to overcome

yourself is to identify with the mask,

you know, like the public persona.

And he also says, this is also a quote

from Salivage, in your complete identification with another, you can find freedom.

So, it's like you've got like the the outward projection of an image. You just identify with that and that's that's who you you really are or at least that's who you pretend to really be. And according to Salivage,

that's the best way to go about things.

And one thing you should bear in mind with with Zek, I don't know how to pronounce these names, is that he is one of the few communist philosophers that is taken seriously in Western civilization lately over the past few decades.

And I don't know what kind of communist he is. I don't know if he's a Marxist or just sort of like a like some kind of rehashed neo-Marxist or if he was just never, you know, he's just not a Marxist at all. I don't know what kind of communist he is, but he does not strike me as a particularly wise individual. Intelligent, sure, but intelligence and wisdom are not the same. And I remember when I first started watching some of his videos, I did watch some of his videos, not because I'm a communist, but just because, you know, they come up on the feed and I was curious just to see what he'd have to say or he'd be talking

with someone who wasn't a communist or whatever. And back just like 10 or so years ago, he was just continually like pulling at his shirt and like rubbing his nose. I mean, he couldn't get a sentence out without like tugging at his shirt and like like compulsively, habitually just like rubbing his nose and pulling on it and this kind of thing, which indicates that he was not being mindful. You know, he's just his arms are just doing all this nervous stuff without him being like fully in control of it.

But he has stopped doing that. And I've noticed that he doesn't tug on his shirt or or like pull on his nose anymore in

his in the videos where you see him lately. So I he has at least like been practiced enough mindfulness to train himself to stop doing that. But I mean just when he's discouraging introspection,
you know, it's like Socrates saying allegedly the unexamined life is not worth living. Well, Salivage would say pretty much the opposite.
Just fake it. Just be like this fake persona and identify with that. And that's that's how you find freedom according to him. which I mean it kind of makes sense if he's a communist because communism

does not strike me as a particularly
wise like economic or social system. It
just is not in harmony with with human
nature the animal instincts of the human
animal which go by the name of human
nature.
So yeah, my thoughts on Salivage
is uh he is not he does not strike me as
a wise person
and he just prefers ideas that he comes
up with in his head to any kind of
empiricism apparently.
I don't know how anyone could still be a
communist after over a century at this
point of stagnant and failed economies,
totalitarianism,
and occasional genocide.

I mean, there's really no excuse for a communist nowadays.

Anyways, I'm just going to move on to CEO of Action Cadet's second question.

He says, "Do you believe there is a moral development of societies that is objective or are people and societies over time not any more moral than we were thousands of years ago?" And I'm going to check the uh the CPUs at 36 36% so that the uh the lag is minimal.

Just just keeping you updated on on the CPU usage.

But getting back to sea of action cipad zera um well I mean one thing that immediately comes to mind are are let's

see are people and societies over time
not any more moral than we were
thousands of years ago well think about
northern India in the Buddhist time that
was definitely a more moralitybased
culture than we've got going now I mean
morals are almost obsolete in western
civilization morality any kind of
systematic morality has been replaced by
unrefined feminine sentiment. You know,
don't hurt anyone's feelings.
Overindulgence in any kind of sensuality
is just fine and dandy. That has nothing
to do with morals anymore.
But getting to the top part of the
question, do you believe there is a
moral development of societies that is

objective?

Well, I mean morality

whether it's objective or not depends on

your definition of morals. So I mean you

could define morals in a sense that it

could be objectively like quantified

morals you know it's like crime rates

that kind of stuff then

yeah you could objectify that. I don't

know how you you'd have like an

objective

um like measurement or critique of

morals in society without like defining

it in some way that could then be

applied to the data.

So let's just say

moral development of societies. Gosh, I
mean how would you quantify that? I mean
how would you objectify
like the morality of a society with
regard to crime rates you know like what
would be the murder rate and like the
the rate of like theft you know assault
that kind of stuff but I mean you don't
really have good data for the Ganges
Valley 200 years ago
so
let's see it seems to me with regard to
this that I mean you're always going to
have this cosmic balance of good and
evil that kind of thing you know it's
just when if you're living in dualism
which is the way samsara works you're

living in a dualistic world then
opposites tend to balance out so you've
got morality and immorality they're
going to balance out
regardless of the society it seems to me
but with regard to I mean look at the
Buddhist time you know northern Iron Age
northern India the Ganges Valley you
know 500 BCE 200 years ago
and you had a lot more saints and sages
then but at the same time you probably
had a lot more sociopaths and like
bandits and serial killers and that kind
of thing. you know, was you read the the
text and it was dangerous to go alone,
you know, through the forest because

there's bandits, not just tigers and leopards, but bandits, you know, nuns, like Buddhist nuns were not allowed to live in the forest just because it was too dangerous. And then you had like not only like outlaws like bandits, but you had like neighboring kings that I mean they're they just invade,
you know, plunder this kind of stuff. Like in the list of dangers in that's found in the the rules of monastic discipline several times. Like for example, there are the the 10 reasons why it's okay to abbreviate a formal ceremony. like the potty mocha recitation, you know, it's like the stereotypical list of 10 dangers. Number

one on the list is kings.

And it's, you know, I mean, it could be even your own king who's just sweeping through and just like forcibly recruiting any man of military age to go and fight. or it could be the king next door who's already done that and is now invading.

So, I do think that nowadays we're living in an age of spiritual or moral mediocrity.

You know, there's fewer saints and there's fewer of the opposite of saints.

So, it's like in the Buddhist time, you had a lot of of like wisdom and

goodness, and you had a lot of badness
and foolishness, and that was pretty
much how the balance worked out then.
Now, it's just sort of like lukewarm
mediocrity across the board.
And so, it all adds up to the same zero.
It all balances out to the same zero.
[sighs]
Yeah.
So I mean even in like I mean there are
some societies that were just like cruel
and ruthless. It's like Huns or Mongols,
you know, back in the day when you know
they were like conquering large areas of
territory. Um I mean they were they were
pretty awful, you know. It's like
um like the Mongols, you know, 13th

century. They'd come to a walled town and they would demand immediate surrender. And if they didn't surrender immediately, they would completely destroy that town, just level it to the ground and just leave this big mound of severed heads outside of where the city used to be as a as a a sign, you know, you better do what we say or we're going to [__] you up. And they just seem to have no compassion
at all. You know, there's there's stories of like when the the Mongols made it to I think it was around what what nowadays would be Hungary, you know, it's like around the Danube

region, you know, they were the the towns people would just flee and hide in the woods and the Mongols would call them out and say, "Come on, you can just go ahead and and go about your business." And then as soon as they had harvested their fields and everything, then they'd all be slaughtered. And the the Mongols just thought it was funny. They didn't care. So, there is that. Although they they sort of had other like counterbalancing virtues. I mean even just like fearlessness and courage that kind of thing could be considered virtues

but

um it's yeah I mean I don't want to do

an entire cultural anthropological survey but it does seem that you could you could say that some cultures are more virtuous than others or more moral than others.

seems that way anyway. But overall, it seems to me that the modern like post-modern world is no more virtuous than the Ganges Valley in the Buddhist time. It's just that we're kind of weak and soft, you know, feminized and, you know, so I mean, there's less violence, less aggression, not so much because people are restraining themselves, but just because they're just incapable of it anymore. You know,

it's kind of they've degenerated,

if you will.

So yeah, I think overall that people are

no more happy than they were 2,000 years

ago. Overall, no more virtuous than they

were 2,000 years ago. Except 2,000 years

ago, you had more of a a broader

bell-shaped curve

because now it's just sort of like

lukewarm mediocrity is predominant.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to

SEO of Action Cadet's next question. And

it does seem that the lag is more or

less under control. And I hope I don't

sound like I'm talking from the bottom

of a well. And I do hope that it's

recording. It does seem to be.

So, Sioatza

says, "Would Arans still have an unconscious mind or do they have a complete understanding of the mind?" And this falls into the category of second-guessing the mental states of a fully enlightened being. I get asked these kind of questions fairly frequently. You know, what is what is it like to be fully enlightened? And even if a fully enlightened person were to explain it to an unenlightened person, the unenlightened person still wouldn't get it because like a uh like Bert and Russell says, you know, when a stupid person hears what an intelligent person

says, they have to translate it into something stupid that they can understand.

So Bertrren Russell, I think it was in his history of western philosophy, he's talking about how he would rather be um he he would rather have his philosophy described by his most virilent enemy among philosophers than to have it described by some normie who didn't really understand philosophy but was sympathetic to Bertrand Russell just because the that philosophical enemy is more likely

to get the main points correct even though he disagrees with them than the normie who just doesn't really

understand and so he has to like take
this you know sophisticated philosophy
and translate it into something stupid
so that he can understand it and I think
um Burton Russell was referring to
xenopon
um in his biography of or his account of
Socrates that he didn't consider
xenophon to be particularly really uh
reliable as a source with regard to what
Socrates was like because Xenopon was a
normie according to Burton Russell. He
was not philosophical you know he just
kind of dumbed things down in order to
understand it better even though he
apparently was a competent general.

So let's get back to the question though which I've pretty much ignored thus far. Would Ara still have an unconscious mind?

Um, I have heard it said that they wouldn't. That when you're fully conscious, that means you're fully conscious. You are fully awake. You are awakened. And so, they would no longer have a subconscious mind. They would be um aware of all the workings of their mind theoretically.

[snorts]

And the wiser you get, the less subconscious you are. Like getting back to Salivage Zek, you know, it was like when he is like tugging on his shirt and

rubbing his nose compulsively,
you know, 10, 15, 20 years ago. I mean,
that was like subconscious. It wasn't
fully conscious what he was doing. But
then as you as you become more mindful,
I mean or as he became more mindful, you
know, he
he like brought it up into the conscious
into his conscious mind in order to deal
with it. And so um even if an arahant a
fully enlightened being from the point
of view of some unenlightened
psychologist
or psychoanalyst if he he still has some
kind of subconscious mind he's going to
have a hell of a lot less of it than the

average person. I mean, you could say that most animals, it's pretty much all they've got is a subconscious mind other than maybe some really simple, superficial stuff. Most of what they're doing, like instincts, like a bird building a nest. That would be just like subconscious urges. They don't know why they're doing it. They just have this urge to do it, so they just act it out.

Sort of like salivage tugging at his shirt.

So yeah, I mean it's just another one of those questions of secondguing the mental states of a fully enlightened being.

[snorts] So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Romeo and Romeo says, "Western culture stands apart from the rest of the world in emphasizing the freedom and autonomy of the individual rather than conforming to one's tribe or group. How and why did western individualism develop in Europe rather than in other parts of the world? And that's a good question. I mean, it's it's kind of an anthropological question, I think. You know, why is it that individualism just kind of flowered in the west and nowhere else really?

And I think there's a possibility it

could be genetic. You know, there could just be some genetic quirk in the European ethnicity or family of ethnicities that are just more individualistic because [clears throat] it's like the the Greeks. I mean, they weren't as individualistic as we are now, but still they were much more individualistic than say the Persians next door, which is one reason why they were able to kick kick ass on the Persians.

And then like the Romans, the Romans were kind of conservative, but still they allowed more individualism. I mean, they had a lots lots of different like religious cults and so forth, different

philosophies. you know, you could just pick and choose which one works best for you as a general rule.

You know, they were definitely not opposed to innovation.

Um, and then but the thing is you had Germanic tribes north of the Rine that also were very individualistic and it was like after the Roman Empire had pretty much degenerated into a kind of demoralized dictatorship

where like um individualism wasn't as valued as it was like during the the glory days of the republic. Then you had these Germanic tribes who conquered the collapsing Western Roman Empire and sort

of revived these ideals of individual rights and so forth.

So that would seem to indicate that the Germanic tribes north of the Rine I mean they didn't inherit that from the Greeks.

You know it was it just seems like it's a European thing and Europeans are the most like physically diverse group at least with regard to appearance. you know, you've got sort of dark like sworthy European types, very pale European types, different hair colors, different eye colors that I mean, other ethnicities just don't have that as a general rule. I mean, like they might be kind of lighter skinned or darker

skinned within the range of their own,
you know, ethnicity, you know, in the
bell-shaped curve and all that, but
different eye colors, different hair
colors, that's like a European thing.
And it's kind of indicates there's more
individual variation
not only with regard to appearance but
also with regard to the way people think
and behave.
So let's see what's the actual question.
How and why did Western individualism
develop in Europe rather than in other
parts of the world?
Um [clears throat] yeah I mean it could
be genetic. It seems like it's either

genetic or maybe even like some cultural inheritance from the Indo-Uropeans that conquered so much of the Western world. You know, it may have been just some sort of ideal that they brought with them. I'm not sure what kind of individualism you had before the Indo-Uropean expansion into Europe and in like northern
um northern India and Persia and places like that. I don't know if it'd be interesting just to see like where innovations like stone age innovations came from like new patterns for making stone arrow heads. I mean, did the Europeans, the stone, the cave people of Europe, were they like ahead of the cave

people of China or or southern India or

I mean I don't know.

So that would be interesting. I mean

that would be a step towards answering

the question I guess. I mean, if there

was a lot of um innovation

found primarily in the west that then

trickled eastwards and southwards,

then I mean that would be a good

argument for maybe some genetic

component that causes Europeans to be

more individualistic

than than other ethnicities

historically.

And I am happy to say that my coffee is

now pretty much cold. So it's uh not

causing me to be all persspiry anymore.
So yeah, I mean I mean you can only
guess with regard to this this question.
How and why did Western individualism
develop in Europe rather than other
parts of the world?
it would seem to be something about
our ethnicity
um is just less conformist than most
other ethnicities. And I do think it's
possible that there is a genetic
component, but I don't know what it
would be. But it seems like I mean how
else would you explain it unless like I
said it's just something that was
introduced as a cultural element from
like the Indo-Uropeans.

So I'm sorry I really can't answer that question with any any degree of certainty.

So I'm just going to move on to Romeo's second question which is a followup on the first one.

Is western individualism sustainable over the long haul in terms of ensuring the survival of European people?

Wouldn't it seen

Wouldn't it seem a less effective group survival strategy compared to cultures that emphasize the group over the individual and are thus more unified?

Um, well, I mean, just look at history. Um, I think it was John Stewart Mill. I

was considering getting the quote just
so I could read it to you. But John
Stewart Mill has this quote. I think
it's in his essay on liberty
uh which is sort of like a classical
liberal manifesto written in the 1800s.
And he was talking about how like the
Chinese were living in palaces and
wearing silk when our ancestors in
Europe were still wearing animal skins
and just living in like huts.
But
due to their like their adherence to
conformity and lack of imagination and
western individualism,
it's like the Europeans conquered the
world.

And even if they didn't conquer the entire world militarily, although they came pretty damn close during the colonial era, still I mean you go to communist China. I mean the communism they derived from from Europe, you know, like the the economics and the the political ideas that they're following originally came from Europe. You know, you look at Chinese people, they're wearing western style clothing, they have western style hairds, they've got western technology,
and the only way they can even come close to rivaling us with regard to technology is just by spying and

stealing Western ideas.

So, Western individualism thus far has been much more successful over the long hall in terms of ensuring the survival of European people. It's it's not so much individualism that is causing Western civilization to go into decline. It's just good times make weak men, weak men make bad times. You know, like I was saying that we're in a state of like lukewarm

like mediocrity.

I mean, we are definitely decadent and it's because we were so successful, we got soft and weak and lazy.

It's like Theodore Roosevelt had this famous quote that I saw on X a few days

ago. It's the curse of all civilizations, all great civilizations that the men eventually become unable to fight just because of materialism and luxury and security just makes them soft and weak and lazy and they cannot stand up to uncouthed barbarians that sweep across the border. In fact, nowadays they're just a lot of them are just inviting the barbarians in. Come on, sweethearts.

here's stay in this luxury hotel

we'll we'll provide for you.

So the individualism I think has made western civilization just predominant on this planet.

It's just that there are other factors
you know like moral decline that are
more um dangerous
to us than individualism. I mean it is
good to have enough like conformity that
everyone is pretty much on the same page
or most people in the country share the
same world view to some degree or at
least the same ideals. You know, civic
nationalism is what kept America strong
for more than 200 years.
But when you get so much individualism,
I mean, no, I [clears throat] don't I
don't know if you can even call it
individualism where people are just like
splintering and break it's becoming like
tribalistic and so forth. That's not so

much individualism. That's just
conforming to a smaller group.
I mean, people are
they're they're a social animal. People
have got the herd instinct.
So, yeah, maybe that Europeans have a
little bit less herd instinct than most
humans,
but I think I answered that question.
Yeah, I don't think that it's a less
effective group survival strategy
compared to cultures that emphasize the
group over the individual because the
cultures that emphasize the group over
the individual are conformist and they
tend not to have much imagination. They

do not dare to deviate from what everyone else is thinking and doing. And that's why the Europeans with their sort of liberal ideals and individualism and so forth that I mean the Greeks had it to some degree, the Romans, the Germanic tribes.

It just seems like a European thing, not like specifically owed to any region of Europe.

So

yeah, I think I mean a certain amount of conformity is necessary just to hold the society together so it doesn't just fly apart in all directions. But still a society that has like individuality like individual rights and so forth is

going to be stronger as a general rule all else being equal than people that are just conformists. You know, that's one reason why the Greeks were able to defeat the Persians in battle because the Persians I mean they were essentially I mean to some degree you could say that they're like slaves to the king, you know, and and it's like they just followed the rules. That's one reason why Alexander the Great was able to conquer Persia as easily as he did with relatively few soldiers because the Persians were so predictable. They just they fought in the same way. You know, it's like you read Xenopon's Anabis

where he's talking about the march of the 10,000 through Persian territory and the Greeks realize it's the Persians. They always tie up their horses outside the camp at night. You know, they just don't fight at night. It's just they didn't think about it. They just why would anyone fight at night? So, they didn't even prepare and they just left their horses outside the camp. So, the Greeks just went in and helped themselves with the Persian horses. Suddenly they got cavalry and they were able to fight their way all the way back to Greece.

And I I I assume that Alexander was familiar with with this book and got a

lot of inspiration from it. It's uh I mean without individualism and individual thought, you're going to have a lot fewer ideas and a lot less innovation and a lot less improvement. But I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Nigelbick.

Nijb. It's NJBK.

Ninj.

And Nijbik says, "Have you ever met any arroant?

Do you think you could identify them as such if you met them? Are there any monks today whom you think are?" Well, that's three questions. Listen, I got to divide this up. So, we got a few more

questions than I thought we did just
because I failed to divide them up
before starting this video.
So, have I ever met any orans? I don't
know. I mean, how could you possibly
know? But I'm kind of getting ahead of
myself. Um,
sometimes you you see this wise old monk
who lives alone out in a cemetery or
something and the villagers around
consider him to be an Arahant, but
that's no proof. I mean, he could just
be putting on a show identifying with
the image like Salivage Zek was
advising.
Um, and just because you have a
reputation for being enlightened doesn't

mean anything because I had a reputation
for being enlightened in certain areas
of Burma.
So [sighs] have I met any arans? Maybe.
But I mean again I think an arant would
be a kind of paradox
because escaping or transcending samsara
within a samsuric context doesn't
necessarily mean anything.
Meaning is samsaric. So anyone who
transcends meaning I mean it just
becomes meaningless.
So I am somewhat skeptical that that
full enlightenment
is even a thing in a samsaric context.
And like I mentioned relatively recently

in a Q&A that there was a school called the Yogachara Logicians or the Dignaga School which was a medieval Buddhist school that that specialized in logic and their classic example of a problematic premise is that such and such person is fully enlightened.

There's no way you can prove it. I mean the fully enlightened being might know that they're fully enlightened but they can't prove it to anybody else.

I mean, if you got psychic powers, you could display those, but just because you have psychic powers doesn't mean that you're enlightened.

So, maybe I mean, my best bet and an Araan I mean I did meet in Seattle who

had a reputation for being very wise.
Um, met a few other seats that seemed
wise, but I mean, you can't really tell.
I mean, how could you know? According to
the text, only an Araant would know if
another Arahant was enlightened. And
even then, maybe not. Like, if you're a
dry visioned Araant who doesn't have any
psychic powers, you can't look into the
mind of the other being, how are you
going to know?
So, with regard to have I ever met any
Arahans,
maybe if that even means anything within
the context of samsara.
So, Ninjic's second question. Do you

think you could identify them as such if you met them? And I've pretty much already answered that question. It's like, how? I mean, you couldn't really know. I mean, if you were another Araant, maybe. But if you're not an Araant, how are you going to know? I mean, sometimes you could see that they aren't Arahanss, you know, if they're just like, you know, screaming drunk and like picking fights and this kind of stuff. They're like stealing and lying. I mean, that would be a fairly good indication that, you know, they they're involved in sex scandals and this kind of stuff,

fairly good indication that they're not

fully enlightened. But who knows? I
mean, if if full enlightenment doesn't
even mean anything or or maybe somebody
like Jay Krishna Mertie is right
about being enlightened where I mean,
you're not like enslaved to morals if
you're fully enlightened, which means
you're like liberated.
I mean, how are you even going to define
enlightenment in a case like that where
there's like there's like this whole
spectrum like terra Buddhism is at one
extreme end of the spectrum with regard
to what an enlightened being is like.
Terravada Buddhism insists,
orthodox terra insists that in order to

have purity of mind, in order to I mean in order to become enlightened, you have to have purity of mind. And before you can have purity of mind, you have to have purity of morals, which means you have to have perfected morality, which means you are a saint before you can become a sage, like an enlightened sage. At the other end, you've got people like Paul Low or Jay Krishna Murdy or maybe Eugi Krishna Murdy where it's like anything goes. There's no rules. If you're enlightened, you're no longer you're no longer like subject to these limitations. You can I mean whatever. So

yeah, I mean I [clears throat] don't

know how an unenlightened person could possibly identify an Arahan even if they meet them. Even if you're sitting in the same room with them,

you know, it's like you got a fool in the same room as an Araant. The fool is going to be looking at the Arahant through foolishness colored glasses and they're just going to be dis maybe even scoffing and sneering. Maybe the orant has some physical peculiarity or he speaks with an accent or something and the other person just might be mocking him because of this.

So

I mean there are people in the Buddhist

time who despised the Buddha.

They didn't know he was enlightened.

They thought it was all [__]

People are like that.

So I think I'll just move on to Nijbik's

third question. Are there any monks

today whom you think are Aras? I have no

idea. I mean like I said I met Shu um in

Seattle but he has passed away. He is no

longer alive. And of the the monks that

I have known

I really I really have no idea. I mean

it's possible

but I have no idea.

So I mean who today I mean there are

people that have a reputation for being

arroant. Ehart Tollola for example

he has a reputation for being enlightened. There are quite a few of those kind of people. There was Andrew Cohen who was he had quite a following back around the time that I became a monk around 1990. You know he was luring people away from weasa and it was like just lots of people were following Andrew Cohen. I think his teacher was uh Harilal Punga in India and Andrew Cohen was I mean he didn't deny that he was enlightened or considered himself to be enlightened until finally um his own disciples started pointing out to him man you're not acting like an enlightened being. I don't remember what

the scandal was. It could have been some kind of sex thing. I don't know. I didn't really keep up with it. But eventually he came to the conclusion, well golly, I'm not really an Arahan after all. And then of course you've got Daniel Ingram. There's a lot of people like that in the West. Probably a lot of people like that in the East too who claim to be fully enlightened and maybe are just like in some cases just overestimating their own attainments. So from the point of view of monastic discipline, if a monk overestimates his own attainments, he thinks he's enlightened and [clears throat] he says he's enlightened even though he isn't,

he's not parajiki, he's not excommunicated because he was sincere, you know, he just overestimated his own attainments. Whereas a monk who knows that he's not enlightened and says that he is, then he's excommunicated for the rest of his life. he's committed a parajika offense. The worst thing a monk can do is to deliberately lie about having attained superhuman mental states which includes enlightenment itself.

So I mean assuming that being fully enlightened even means anything in a samsaric context and all meaning is samsaric

then maybe

there could be enlightened monks. It wouldn't surprise me assuming that it's possible. I'm assuming that there are fully enlightened monks out there. And in a lot of cases, they'd just be hermits living just humbly living alone out in the woods. And you know, maybe the the local villagers who are putting food in their bowl, you know, consider them to be fully enlightened, but nobody else knows about them. They're not famous. I remember one time um there was a monk see Bodhi no wait what was his name it was Bodhi bin Seattle or something like that and he [clears throat] was considered to be fully enlightened and um some of his

supporters

um very much wanted me to meet him so

they drive me to Bodhi bin I don't No,

I can't remember the name of it. It was

Bodhin Seattle, something like that. And

so as we're going there, you know,

they're very keen on me meeting this

this Araant. And I I asked the driver,

you know, are you sure he's enlightened?

The driver say, "Yeah, I'm sure. Yeah,

he's enlightened." All right. Although

there's no way the driver could have

possibly known if he was really

enlightened or not. So we get there and

the place is like a it's like a circus.

there's like pagotas and statues and

everything being erected all over the place. You know, it's sort of like a a Buddhist amusement park or something and you've got, you know, there's like uh alchemists wearing the the white robes and the long beard and the beads and and just, you know, it's just like this spiritual, you know, it's like a a Buddhist kumba or something going on there. And I remember everyone's waiting for the the arant to come out to eat his meal. And he doesn't come out to eat until it's like a quarter to 12.
So there's no way he's going to be finished by by midday. So that he's going to be breaking a rule. Um which, you know, it's neither here nor there, I

guess. But he comes out, you know, it's like 11:45 a.m. sits down to to eat his meal. One of the first thing he does is he he blows his nose into his hand and then just wipes the snot on the wall next to him. And it's like is this people think this this person is enlightened? I mean, who knows? Maybe he was and he was just sort of like the the Krishna Murdy kind of enlightened being, the Osho kind of enlightened being, you know? It's like, who knows? Maybe they're right. and and an arroant can behave in really weird ways

but

um yeah I I can't really name any famous

monk or even a nonfamous one or or you know even like a like a Hindu swami or anything like that. I don't I really if I had to [clears throat] guess, you know, who is an enlightened being nowadays, you know, if I had to make had to name one enlightened being or at least my best guess, I would I mean, I'd be at a loss. I don't know who it would be. I mean, Echart Tollah

maybe,

but he's a lay person, but I just I'm not really familiar with who the famous monks are nowadays. And those that are famous enough that I know about them, you they may be wise. They may be good people, virtuous, wise people, but fully

enlightened, I really

I mean I just have seen no evidence to

support that. Although who knows exactly

what the evidence would be

and I suppose I should just move on to

the next question. This is from King

Kung

and King Kung says, "Did you have any

physical altercations in your monk life

and do you do any wilderness stuff now

also?" Oh, this is three questions

again.

Okay.

So, I got to separate three questions.

It is good that people are limiting

themselves to three questions. That's

that is commendable.

So you get merit for that. King Kung's first question, did you have any physical altercations in your monk life? And if you read my latest book, Memoirs from Myanmar, I'm pretty sure there's a chapter in there, it's like the one time I assaulted another monk. I had one serious [snorts] physical altercation as a monk, and that was I mean, I don't want to give the whole story. I mean it would take half an hour at least to give you all the the relevant details. But there was this Burmese monk who tried to just move in and take over the monastery where I was senior monk at the time and he obviously just did not follow the

rules of monastic discipline. He was obviously a rascal and a troublemaker and I just told him he was he wasn't going to stay there that you know he was going to have to leave. He was like a visiting monk who just decided he was going to take over and become the abbott there.

And

um I mean the way the final altercation occurred is I just made up my mind that he was going to have to go. He was like a a cousin or something of the other monk who lived at the monastery. There was only two of us at the time. There was me and there was old Unandia.

And I mean I wanted to kick him out before then and I went up to Unanda and said that new monk wants to stay here but I don't want to let him stay here. I want to kick him out. And then Unandia looks up at me and says he is my brother. But the Burmese, especially Burmese village culture, they'll call someone their brother when they're not really their brother. And there was probably at least 30 years difference in age between these two. But we did have a kind of agreement that if some new monk was going to stay at the monastery, both of us had to agree. You know, if I agreed but he didn't, the person couldn't stay. If he agreed but I

didn't, the person couldn't stay. And I was just finally made up my mind. I'd seen enough of his rule breaking and so forth that even if old Unandia didn't like it, I was going to kick him out anyway. So

I go down to to have it out with this visiting monk and he's sitting there like out in this this clearing at the monastery reading a book and I go to Unanda who is hard of hearing. So I had to yell in order to for him to hear me and he said that I I said to him you know that new monk wants to stay here. I don't want to let him stay here. I'm gonna kick him out. And Unandanda looks

up at me and he just gives me this delighted grin because apparently he didn't like [clears throat] him either even though they were like relatives, like cousins or something. And so he said, "Is he here?" And I said, "Yeah, he's just right out there reading a book." So, um, I went out to him and, uh, asked him, "Did you hear what I just said to Unadia?" And he said, he kind of looked up at me and says, "No." which probably wasn't true because I was yelling to this halfdeaf old monk like 30 feet away. So I told him that he was he's going to have to he was going to have to go. And this visiting monk just said, "I'm staying."

And what he was doing is he's like pretending to still read the book. He's he's pretending like he's already the abbott. I'm just this, you know, trouble troublemaking foreigner who is just a visitor there or something. So he that was one of his mistakes was not looking at me cuz he's just like pretending to still read the book, you know, and I'd say, "No, you're really going to have to go." And he's I'm staying.

And then I tell him, [clears throat] "If you don't go, I'm going to have to throw you out myself." And he's like, "No, you won't." And he's not looking at me. And if he was looking at me, he would see

that I was starting to get kind of worked up. In fact, I I even kind of started to lunge at him a couple of times. you know, I'm practically vibrating at this point because he really was a troublemaker. I'm I'm leaving out all the stuff that happened before this.

And so he's just saying, "No, you won't. You're not going to you're not going to kick me out." And so finally, he just says like, "This is my place now. You are just a visitor now. Go, you know, he he wasn't even like looking at me. He's like pretending to still read the book. You just kind of now go,

you know, and that was it. It was like I

snapped and the physical alternate altercation lasted maybe half a second because all I did I just lunged at him, grabbed him by the front of his his robes and just slammed him to the ground like an enraged gorilla.

And then I kind of leaned over and said, "You are the visitor." and then stomped off to fill a bucket of water at the well and it was like maybe 60 feet away. I turned around and looked, he was still lying on his side on the ground. I was told he had a lump on his head from where his head hit the ground. But it was like the whole altercation, the whole physical contact lasted about half

a second. And the [clears throat] next day he was he was being belligerent, you know. He was just like he was following me around the monastery like clapping his hands trying to make me like jump, you know, trying to startle me or something. And I'm just like thinking, how am I going to get rid of him? Am I really going to have to beat him up in order to get rid of him? And it's like I'm like pacing back and forth in my cave like like a caged leopard just, you know, not knowing what to do really. You know, it's I'm just these crazy ideas coming up. I could like get him into a double hammerlock and fling him into the river, but he might his arms might

dislocate and he might drown or something, you know? It's like what am I going to do? And then finally it dawned on me the obvious solution just appeal to the villagers, my my supporters, you know, just when I go for alms round the next morning, all I got to do, my people, my friends, I need your help. there's this visiting monk who refuses to leave and he's causing all kinds of trouble and and so I did that the next day and there's all these appreciative gasps from the village ladies, you know, hearing about what's going on and a few of them came up to me and said, "Don't worry, we're going to we're going to go

tell the village headman about this."
And so within a short time the the two
village headmen from the two villages
came and there was a bunch of sort of
like village elders showed up and also
there was uh a few like young bucks you
know young village guys just in case any
manhandling was required and they just
said don't worry about anything we'll
get rid of him for you and I was after
that I was just like cackling like how
could it be this easy you Oh, and that
they did. They just when they I asked if
you want me to come down to the lower
monastery with you and help participate
in this, and they said, "No, you just
stay right here. We'll take care of it."

And they just

essentially perpwalked him out of the

monastery.

And so that was that was gratifying. I

knew I once I realized that all I had to

do was just appeal to the village

because I mean the villagers, they

really supported me a lot. You know,

they were kind of proud that you had

this western man. You know, it's

according to Burmese villagers, in their

opinion, America is like paradise. You

know, everyone's rich and beautiful and

happy and Christian. And I renounced all

of that in order to live in poverty and

follow their religion at a more sincere

level than they were following.
And so they were like they felt vindicated and proud that they had this serious western monk living near their village and they were getting all kinds of merit by offering alms food to me in the mornings and this kind of thing. And so yeah, it was it was pretty easy to get rid of him once I realized what I had to do.
But I had [clears throat] already assaulted him once before that before that came to pass. And that was really the only time I really got physical with another monk. There was a few other monks that I had some like heated disagreements with.

But he was the there was there's one old monk um Makuda who I mean he was I mean I don't know even why he was a monk. He became a monk. He was a farmer who became a monk in his old age. And he just continued farming. You know, he was raising chickens and, you know, growing crops out in front of his cabin and all this. And uh one time he he snuck down to my the area of my cave where the only bamboo at the monastery was growing in order to cut some bamboo. And I just went down and just grabbed the machete out of his hands and just drove him away. Just yelling at him to, you know, go away.

I had to give the machete back. But

[sighs]

but when you're when you're like a

serious monk, I mean, at a time like

that, you know, I'm I'm a foreigner

living in just this strange land of

people that just don't speak my language

and don't think like me, don't look like

me. And I'm like trying to practice

dharma at a relatively intensive level

so that you become sort of like a an

emotional pressure cooker. You know, you

become like like a a hysterical basket

case, you know, going with with Freudian

language. You know, this hysteria is

caused by like repressed urges and so

forth. And a seriously practicing monk

or nun is going to have more repressed urges than Joe Blow, you know, living in in suburbia.

So, I mean, there's there's always the possibility of of stuff like that happening. I've had a few friends. There was one Australian monk I knew who said that he was chased around the monastery by a monk with a machete once. I think he was a Thai monk chasing him around the monastery in Thailand with a machete. Although the Australian monk said that he could tell by the look in his eyes he wasn't really going to hack him or anything.

So I mean that kind of stuff does

happen. But in my case there was only
that one altercation where I slammed
some troublemaking visiting monk who
refused to leave. Just grabbed him and
slammed him to the ground.
[snorts]
But if you want to read the full story,
it's it's in my my most recent book,
which can be ordered on Amazon. Uh the
link is below in the comments
now that I'm shamelessly plugging my own
book.
So anyways, King Kung's second question,
do you do any wilderness stuff now? And
I'm sorry to say that I don't. Before I
was a monk, I did a lot of backpacking.
I lived in the Pacific Northwest, which

is like ecotopia. Like in Washington State, there's uh a number I mean, I grew up just like just below the southern boundary of Olympic National Park, you know, miles and miles of hiking trails, you know, elk and deer and bears and all this kind of stuff. And then when I moved to Bellingham, it wasn't very far away from the Patan wilderness area, which is like one of the wildest areas in Washington State. Pretty much the only area that still had grizzly bears and grey wolves and caribou and moose, porcupines.

So I did a lot of backpacking. And then

as a monk in Burma, I was pretty much
camping all the time.
is I'd spent a lot of time out in
relatively wild remote areas as a monk.
But then coming back to America,
especially coming to South Carolina, I
had this idea of hiking to the top of
Paris Mountain on the outskirts of
Greenville. I haven't even done that. I
haven't done almost no hiking at all.
I'll just go for a few little walks with
my sweetheart. You know, just walk
through a park and and we don't do that
very much even,
especially now that we don't live near
Paris Mountain.
[sighs and gasps] So, that's kind of

unfortunate. It might be not until I uh retire that I'll really start like going on camping trips again.

But, who knows? I mean, I wouldn't even know the good places to to hike or camp in in South Carolina.

So, yeah, there is that. And finally, the third question from King Kung. How are your snails doing? Well, depends on which snails I've got. I mean, that tank that's in moonlight mode back there, I'll harvest rams horn snails out of the pond and put them in there, but they don't last very long because there are loaches, zebra loaches, bia strriata in there that

specialize in eating snails. And so when
I put snails in there, they eat algae
and detritis for probably less than 48
hours before they get found by a a a
zebra loach that then feeds on them.
On the other hand, I've got another
aquarium
over there. That little 10gon there.
Put this back. I mean, I really should
do an aquarium video,
but [clears throat] there's like a
population explosion of of snails in
that 10gon tank because there were some
fish that died in there and
they just kind of disappear into the
into the plants and everything. I don't
see them as a general rule and then the

snails feed on them and it just causes this population explosion of snails. You can also take like a an algae wafer and put that in there, you know, for feeding like algae eating fish and so forth. Put that in there and it causes a population explosion of snails, too.

And uh my wife, there's a an aquarium, little fish tank like right off camera right to my to my right that has got these little freshwater puffer fish in it. Then they also feed on snails. So, there's no snails in that tank either, or not very many.

And then I've got a big fish pond out in back that's just loaded with snails. So,

the most prosperous snails I've got are

the ones out in the fish pond.

Lots of them out there.

So, let's see. Oh, I should say also

mention that that 10gon tank over there,

there's a great big mystery snail in

there called Righteous Fist of Heroic

Effort, who is by far the largest snail

I've got.

See, how do I set this thing? I think I

might have

How do I do this? It was so easy the

first time. I think I know what

happened.

One moment, please.

Okay, I think I'll stop detaching the

camera to show the 10gon tank.

[snorts] So, enough of snails. Enough of gastropod mollisks, if you will.

So, let's see here.

I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Fred.

And Fred says,

"Just a minute.

continually having to wipe my eyes because if I don't take a shower or wash my face thoroughly at least once every 24 hours, then it's like the skin oil from my eyelids gets into my eyes and starts burning. [clears throat]

And it's not even funny.

So, just excuse me. I'm going to go take a shower for half an hour. I'll be right

back.

or not. Let's see here. Next question is from Fred.

Fred says, "Is deep trance near Nibbana?"

And it is [clears throat] kind of interesting that in the some upanishads, which are not Buddhist texts, but they come pretty close to Buddhism, some of them do. um that it talks about how you've got the three states of consciousness for a normal person which is just waking consciousness, dreaming sleep and dreamless sleep. And according to at least one of these upanishads, dreamless sleep comes closest to like enlightenment or Brahman.

And I just don't see it that way. I mean deep trance in which you're like oblivious to everything around you. I don't see how that would be a state of superconsciousness.

I don't see how you're more awake, you know, a fully enlightened being is awakened.

So I don't see how being fully awake is comparable to being completely unconscious. And even terra Buddhist monks like I spent a few months at Pandida Rama

and Mahasi Upandida was giving a damat talk in which he said

nibbana is like a dreamless sleep

and it's like how the hell is being

fully awake like being asleep? How is

being awakened? How is being fully

conscious

similar to being completely asleep?

I just I just don't see it that way. I

think that nibana it's just like pure

consciousness.

So [snorts]

I mean if if a deep trance is somehow

more conscious than waking consciousness

then maybe

But personally, I just don't see it that

way. I don't see how I mean, nibbana

would transcend all the different

worldly samsaric states. You know

there'd be there'd be like enlightenment

present in any of the three mental
states of the the normal person you know
waking dreaming sleep and dreamless
sleep that I mean what would be the
mental states of a fully enlightened
being who is sound asleep would there
still be this consciousness that is sort
of observing the sleep
I think it's possible
But again, second-guessing the mental
states of an enlightened being is a no
no or at least it's it's just futility
of futilities.
Vanity of vanities.
So personally, I do not think that a
deep trance is necessarily near nibana,

especially if it's like a hypnotic
trance where you're just oblivious to
everything except the voice of the
hypnotist, that kind of thing. I
remember one time my father who was a
hypnotist hypnotized my little brother
and my little brother is just like in a
trance in my father's lap and then my
father just claps his hands really loud
right next to my brother's ear
he was just oblivious. So I mean how is
that a superconscious state?
I just I do not see it that way.
Although apparently
some Hindus might might agree with Fred
and and in the idea that a deep trance
is near nibbana. I mean going with

orthodox terravada fourth janna is
I mean at least in some sutas you get
the idea that ancient Indian Buddhists
some of them considered fourth Janna to
be a kind of jumping off point into
nibbana. You like when the Buddha died,
he went into parinana from fourth Janna.
So what is fourth Janna? I mean is
fourth Janna a deep trance? A lot of
people seem to think so. A lot of people
think in fourth Janna you become like a
hibernating squirrel where you almost
stop breathing and your pulse rate
almost stops like your heart slows down
so much that you know it's almost
undetectable. That kind of thing. But

how is being fully awakened
similar to being completely oblivious to
one's surroundings like a hibernating
squirrel?
So fourth Janna in my opinion is a state
of heightened consciousness. Even though
you might be sitting cross-legged with
your eyes closed, you're not oblivious
to everything around you. You'd be in a
state of heightened awareness. Even
though you might look like you're in a
trance because you're just sitting there
with your eyes closed, not moving.
Or [snorts] it's possible, for all I
know, you could be in a heightened state
of awareness while at the same time your
body is like a hibernating squirrel. I

don't see how that would be possible, but just because I don't see how it's possible doesn't mean that it's impossible.

So in answer to Fred's question, is deep trance near Nibbana? Depends on the trance, I suppose.

But as a general rule, I would I would say no. I would say a state of heightened awareness. Like someone who's racing a motorcycle or rock climbing on a vertical cliff face might be closer to nibbana than somebody in a deep like a hypnotic trance because you are in a state of heightened awareness.

So I'm just going to move on to Fred's second question. Is samsara and nibbana a duality? Well, from a samsaric point of view, it is because samsara is dualistic. And so, nibbana is just an idea in samsara and samsara is just an idea in samsara. And they're sort of like practically opposites. I do not consider nibbana and samsara to be opposites. You know, some schools of Mahayana Buddhism say that samsara and nibbana are ultimately the same. And I can appreciate the sophistication

[laughter]

of that idea.

I do not think Samsara and Nibbana are opposites. But from the point of view of

a lot of people, Samsara and Nibana is
it's like this duality. It's like yin
and yang.
[snorts] You want to deal with like
nibbana as it really is then it's not
the opposite of anything because there
are no opposites in nibbana you know
opposites are found only in samsara and
nibbana is off the samsaric scale
so in answer to that question is samsara
and nibbana a duality within the context
of samsara where samsara and nibbana are
both concepts then in many cases, yes.
But in reality, I think not.
And so, I'm going to move on to Fred's
third question. How many questions more

so I don't get in a pickle? That's it.
That was your third question. So, you
don't get to ask anymore.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Visser. And
it seems that my live stream caused uh a
number of new people to ask questions,
which is good. I suppose maybe that's
that's another good reason to do it more
live streams. I'm not exactly sure why
more people watch live streams. I guess
some people just want to watch something
live and just click on the live stream
thing and my video came up
my live stream one
which isn't going to happen this time
because this is going to be pre-recorded

isn't it?

Anyhow, Visser says I have a question that is simple and very likely has asked before but the question is how does a monk keep his head bald?

This is just one question. The thought process that led me to this question equals, does the monk do it himself? And is the monk allowed to possess a razor alongside his bowl? Well, um, how does a monk keep his head bald? Either he shaves it himself or another person shaves it, usually another monk.

So [snorts] um the eight requisites of a monk every monk is supposed to have eight requisites. There's like a sort of

like an unofficial ninth requisite too which is the sitting cloth. But the eight requisites of a monk are three robes, a belt for holding up the lower robe, the alms bowl,
a [snorts] water strainer,
a needle for mending his robes, and a razor.
So, every monk has to have a razor at your ordination ceremony. At any monk's ordination ceremony, he's supposed to have all eight requisites plus the unofficial ninth requisite of the sitting cloth, you know, right there.
And if he doesn't have it, his preceptor is supposed to make sure, you know, help him to obtain these things before his

ordination.

So, every monk is supposed to own a razor. And I used a single blade shik injector, which is the best razor I have I ever found for shaving my head. It has to be single blade though cuz if you go a week without shaving your head and you use one of those double blades or now it's it's like up to like five or six blades on some of these disposable razor things, it just plugs up with hair. You know, you get about an inch and it's all plugged up and then you got to like unplug it with your thumb or un swish around in water or something. It's just it just doesn't work very well.

Oh, [clears throat and snorts] I just
noticed he's got parenthesis. He's got
the first parenthesis and then he
doesn't end the parenthesis. So, it's
still going after his question is over.
The the parenthetical
um expressions just continue.
So, in my case, I'm usually shade my own
head. Like one of the first sentences I
learned how to say in Burmese was
deta
which was I would say that toenda
who was like the designated head shaver
at the monastery where I was ordained.
So he just took upon himself you know
he'd shave anybody's head if they wanted
their head shaved. All you had to do is

just go up to him and say,

which means today I want and get my head

shaved, venerable sir.

So

yeah,

sometimes the monk shaves his own head

and sometimes somebody else will shave

his head, especially if you're in Burma

and you've just got like a straight

razor. I never dared to shave myself

with a straight razor. I just I just

assumed I'd probably like gash myself

trying to shave with a straight razor.

So, yeah, I had I had the the

single-bladed shake injector, which I

still have. I shaved with it just a

couple days ago.

It's still good.

And anyone who wants to shave your head,

I mean, maybe you know of a better one,

but a single-bladed shik injector is is

uh I mean, you really don't go wrong

with that one.

So, let's see here. Oh, I might as well

add that according to the rules of

monastic discipline, a monk is required

to shave his head [laughter] and face at

least once every two months or two

finger widths, whichever comes first.

And so you can look like a sailor. I

mean, you can have a beard, I mean,

longer than mine as a monk and not be

breaking any rules. But in Buddhist

Asia, it's just the tradition as a general rule that you get your head shaved and your face like once a week. You know, it's like some monasteries, it's like Thursday is headshaving day. And some monks, like Southeast Asian monks, don't have a lot of facial hair. And so they'll just use tweezers to pull out the few hairs that they've got, which is against the rules of monastic discipline. You have to shave it and not pluck it. On the other hand, Jane monks have to pluck it. You know, like in the the story of Mahavira renouncing the world, if I remember correctly, he pulled out his hair and beard in five

handfuls when he renounced the world,
which probably hurt like hell, but he
didn't care.
So, let's just move on, shall we? Next
question is from Master Poe.
We've been going at it for a little over
half an hour and a half. Although I've
been going at it for probably more than
2 hours due to like three false starts
just trying to get the lag to to not
lag. And we seem to be doing pretty
good. The CPU is at 34%
capacity
and I don't think it starts really
lagging until like 50%.
So I think we're doing okay. Master Poe
says, "Was Nagarjana or actually he's

got Naranjana

was Naraganjina a real person?" And I

assume he means nagarjuna

because I've never heard of Naraganjina.

So I assume master po is saying, "Was

Nagarjuna a real person?" And from a

Buddhist point of view, nobody is a real

person. There is no self. Nobody is

ultimately real. There is no ultimately

real essential, you know, self-existent

individuality.

So from the Buddhist point of view,

nobody was a real person. God gaba

Buddha was not a real person. I am not a

real person. You are not a real person.

But let's just go with worldly speech

you know vhara

within a samsaric context like was nagar

a historical

real person then it seems pretty likely

I mean the the moola majamaka karaka is

considered to be like his most essential

work you know that's sort of like

central to his philosophy it gave rise

to majamaka philosophy I mean they had

to have an author presumably somebody

had to write it and it was attributed to

Nagarjuna. Um but just because a work is

attributed to Nagarjuna or to anybody in

particular doesn't mean that they really

wrote it. You know like most Mahayana

texts are attributed to the Buddha but

it's hardly likely that very many of

them really were spoken or taught by the Buddha.

And there are quite a few texts that are attributed to Nagarjuna that most scholars would say no that's that's not true. Like there's the uh there's some shastra that's attributed to it's the pragnya paramita shastra I think that is attributed to nagarjana and there was an editor or a commentator on the book uh kenada ramanan I think is his name who said that nagarjuna may have had a disciple who was also named nagarja who was the author of that book or it could just be that it's just falsely attributed to Nagarjana.

um like the the awakening of faith

shastra

I think it's a shastra the awakening of

faith it's a famous mahayana text it's

attributed to ava

although in all likelihood it wasn't

really composed by ava

because um the book that I read claims

that the awakening of faith shastra was

originally composed in Chinese and and

then like afterwards kind of retconed

and translated back into Sanskrit.

or the sutra of Hui Nang is attributed

to Hui Nang. But in all likelihood uh

based on another a book that I read the

editorial notes of a translation by a

guy named Yam Pollski that in all

likelihood the sutra of Hui Nang was not
really authored by Hui Nang but was
authored by a disciple of Hui Ning with
a name like uh what was it
Ning Shui or something like that.
So Nagarjuna was in all likelihood a
real person although every text
attributed to him probably is not really
composed by him. The Mula Majamaka
caraka is generally considered to be
authentic. Some of his letters I think
he had some devotional verses um but
most of what traditionally is attributed
to Nagarjuna is [cough] a kind of
forgery.
>> [sighs]

>> So if we are real people, Nagarja probably also was a real person. I mean he has somewhat of a biography. I I think he was like South Indian maybe. I think he was supposed to be like a Brahman from South India or maybe I'm just confusing that with Bodhi Dharma. But he did teach at Nolanda University and uh I think he did spend a lot of time his monastery when he wasn't teaching at Nolanda was in like the southern half of India.

Anyways,

oh I probably should have worn the fez, the majamica fez, but too late now.

And the next question is from RP A or Arpad.

And RP A or Arpad says, "You mentioned that monks are allowed to kill in self-defense. Do mosquitoes count? I wouldn't even think of slapping them if they didn't make a purpose of attacking me. And considering the diseases they tend, carry, and spread, a mosquito's bite could be fatal. Yeah. Well, I mean, I've said before that the most dangerous animal in the forest is not a tiger. It's not wild pigs. It's not leopards. It's not even humans. It is the anophles mosquito.

But I don't think I really did mention that monks are allowed to kill in self-defense. A monk is allowed to

strike out in self-defense.
But a monk isn't allowed to deliberately kill even in self-defense. I mean, he can do whatever. He can be a monk can be like Kyle Writtenhouse and just do what is necessary to eliminate the threat.
So it may be that a monk is defending himself and striking out in self-defense and then inadvertently without the the conscious intention to kill his attacker winds up killing his attacker and then he would not be guilty of a parajika offense.
But if he's deliberately trying to kill his attacker, then he's still he's still culpable and has committed a song uh parajika offense and is excommunicated

for the rest of his life.
Excommunicated from full ordination in
the song. He can no longer be a beu.
And so, do mosquitoes count?
Technically, you could strike out in
self-defense,
but if I mean, it doesn't take much
intelligence to realize that striking a
mosquito generally kills it.
So, I mean, it is kind of ironic that I
really didn't start slapping mosquitoes
until I was just going full blast as a
monk, just living under a rock ledge at
the northern boundary of Alando Kasapa
National Park. There was one year I went
almost the entire year without entering

a building,

without going under a roof.

And mosquitoes at first I could endure.

You know, I was taking malaria

medication which didn't work very well.

I always got malaria anyway, but the

mosquito bites I could kind of endure. I

didn't like it, but still it was

tolerable. But there was like these I

call them vampire flies. I think it's

like a sand fly. It's not as big as a

horse fly, but it's bigger than the

little black deer flies. I mean, they

get like an inch long. And when they

bite, I mean, they're like biting chunks

out of you. It hurts. And I just could

not sit there with saintly like boine

equinimity

and just be bitten by like horse flies

and and these vampire flies. And so

eventually I started like swatting them

with my sweat wiping rag. You know is

the absolutely necessary sweat wiping

rag of a western monk in Southeast Asia.

It was just like a washcloth and you use

it for all kinds of things. I mean you

use it for drying yourself off when your

when your head is shaved. It doesn't

take much cloth. Doesn't take much of a

towel to drive dry you off after you

after you bathe. And also it's for

wiping sweat. And also it's just as a

flail to keep like the the blood sucking

insects from settling on you.
And these these little vampire flies as
I call them. I think they're some kind
of sand fly. They're they are hard to
kill. You can smack them even desiring
to squish them and they just fly away
and then they just come right back again
cuz they're very determined. They're
like little terminators.
But I got really good at it. I just I
just eventually got too good at at
slapping these vampire flies. So that
the trick is, you know, you got one on
the side of your arm here. You you swat
from the other side so that the tip of
the the rag just has like a whiplash
effect and really smacks it and they

would be stunned or dead. And then I would try to compensate for the demerit of killing deliberately killing an insect or at least trying deliberately causing grievous harm to this insect, even though it was a blood sucking parasite by feeding it to an ant lion. There were like ant lion pits in this under this rock ledge where I lived. And those of you who don't know what ant lions are, it's a kind of insect that has like this funnel-shaped pit that it digs into loose sand. And anything that falls into it, like an ant, they they'll like start throwing little bits of sand at it to knock it down to the bottom.

And it's got these big pinchers that grab it and pull it under the ground and eat it once it gets to the bottom of the pit. So I would compensate by feeding a poor hungry little ant lion if I did manage to kill one of these creatures. But you know in a case like that where I mean some I guess it was Ajan Cha bered some monk for slapping a mosquito. was like, "Does is one drop of your blood so valuable that you will kill a living being?" But I mean, a mosquito, what kind of consciousness do they have really? I mean, I doubt that a a mosquito is any more conscious than, you know, a parramium or a plant. You know, they they will act in, you

know, they will react. you know, a swatting hand, they might fly away, but it's just like automatic reflexes, sort of like the automatic door at a grocery store.

I don't know if they even have really a brain,

and they don't feel pain. I'm pretty sure that arropods, like all insects, crustations, and so forth, I really don't think that they feel pain.

So, I eventually because I'm living out there, I've had malaria so many times and just being eaten alive by blood sucking parasites really isn't my style.

And those mosquito nets that some of the

Thai dutonga monks use, it's so fine. It's it's like panty hose where it's so sheer. The holes are so small to in order to shed rain that there's almost no air circulation. And I remember there were times I one one year that I spent there one time less than a full year. Um I brought one of those tie it's called a crot or a glot. It's a a great big umbrella with a detachable handle and you hang mosquito net onto it and then you can stay underneath and be relatively dry and not be eaten alive by blood sucking parasitic flies.

But I mean, there was almost no air circulation at all. So, it's like I'd be sitting under that till I couldn't stand

it anymore. And then I'd move it aside
and be bitten by mosquitoes and flies
until I couldn't stand it anymore. And
then I'd get back under the mosquito net
again till I couldn't stand it anymore.
And it would just keep keep going back
and forth like that until it became
nighttime and the bats came out and the
flies just went away and the mosquitoes.
But I mean, I'm just sort of rambling
and babbling all over the place, not
really answering this question.
So, let's just get back to the question.
Um, monks are really not allowed to kill
in self-defense unless it's inadvertent.
They're allowed to strike out in

self-defense. And I mean, I would use that as a kind of justification. You know, monks are allowed to strike out in self-defense. This mosquito is literally attacking me and it could be threatening my life if it has some disease. And like I say, I had falsif malaria seven or eight times,
which is the worst kind of malaria. Most people who die of malaria die of falsiferum malaria. Once it goes cerebral, you're done for.
And when it goes cerebral, that means that I mean malaria is a blood disease. The parasite like it invades your red blood cells and reproduces inside the red blood cells and then it breaks the

blood cell open as the the new baby tripanosomes, I think they're called, come out. And so you got this wreckage of destroyed red blood cells going through your system. And what happens is with falsipro malaria, they start causing little localized strokes. You can have like thousands of localized tiny micro strokes or you know like blockages all through your brain from the like the capillaries getting plugged with this red blood cell wreckage. And once that happens, it's very difficult to cure somebody, especially if they've got like 106 degree fever besides.

So in a case of mosquitoes, I mean, you

just have to

you I mean, you have to take into

consideration

all the possibilities, all the options.

And in some cases, you may just decide

it is worth my while to break this rule

under this circumstance.

So, I was I was owning it. I mean, I

wasn't trying to like

claim that I wasn't guilty, you know,

like just fighting just self-defense,

you know, just kill the mosquito in

self-defense. I mean, I wasn't I wasn't

trying to

indulge in that kind of sophistry.

It's like I was confessing the offense

of of slapping mosquitoes when I was slapping them. And it was only as a general rule when I was staying in that one place out in the forest where I just was just like completely vulnerable to mosquitoes and horse flies and deer flies and just

yeah I just could not sit there and be eaten alive. I just it was just beyond me.

So let's see here. I mean, I stayed at one place, Migadawan Monastery, up in the hills. It's on the ver the edge of the Shan Plateau, like 45 miles east of Mandandalay up in the hills. And during the rainy season, I mean, it was

it was awful. I mean, you'd have to if you're going to if you're going to pee outside, you had to be like marching in place, like stomping both feet while peeing, which is it it takes some getting used to. I mean, it's it's a a skill that has to be learned, I think, because if you just stayed motionless for just a few seconds, the mosquitoes would just be clustering on your feet and ankles.

So anyways,

I mean there are some some monks I mean like for example I mean I'm just completely just leaving these questions behind in the dust at this point but pa monastery pa doya in southern Burma in

Mon state um the pao method has a
reputation for being one of the
strictest with regard to following
vineia rules the rules of monastic
discipline
and P al got infested with bed bugs. You
know, the the the meditation cabins,
most of them were infested with bed
bugs. And so
the the the Abbott, venerable Paul
Aliato himself
said something to somebody and you had
like exterminators came to kill off the
bed bugs. And this one Australian monk,
who's the same Australian monk that I
mentioned, who was chased around a

monastery with a um

another monk wielding machete,

he just put his foot down and he said,

"Nope, you're not going to kill my bed

bugs. You're not going to kill the bed

bugs in in this cabin." You know, he

just defied them. But I mean, it gets to

a certain point where you have to do

something. And even monks are allowed to

at least spread their bedding out in the

sun to get rid of bed bugs, which kills

the bed bugs. You know, it's like bed

bugs aren't going to survive in blazing

sunlight. And generally, an ant colony

will find them anyway. I've done that

before. Spread out my my bed buginfested

bedding out in the sun, and within a few

minutes, you've got this highway of ants
carrying bed bugs back to this hole in
the ground.
>> [snorts]
>> But
I mean,
I guess you could use the argument that
killing is not your your your purpose,
that you're just defending yourself. So,
I mean, striking out in self-defense
could theoretically be used as a valid
argument.
It's just that and like for example I
mentioned this before there are certain
times in Burma like at the beginning of
the rainy season there's just like these

little gnats just completely cover the ground and you cannot walk without squishing them but you're not really committing. You're not breaking a rule by walking around squishing them because that is not your purpose. That is not your intention. You're not walking in order to squish these insects. You're just trying to get from point A to point B. For a Jane, that would be problematic. But for a Buddhist, if I mean, that is not your purpose, you're really not guilty of breaking the rule. So, I mean, if your purpose is just not being eaten alive by mosquitoes, maybe.

But it would depend a lot on who you

talk to, who your preceptor is, that
kind of thing with regard to whether you
really are breaking the rule by slapping
mosquitoes. And in as a general rule, I
just owned it
cuz I really was. I mean, sometimes you
just get pissed off at the little
bastards.
And [snorts] so, I'm just going to move
on to the next question.
This is from Trzasquez.
And Taskis is says, "Have you ever
noticed in a group meditation or just
within a group of monks that there are
no mosquitoes on some people and one
person has all of them biting him? It's

an exaggeration." He says in parenthesis,

"Um, no, I've never really noticed this because if you're in a group meditation especially, you're not really paying attention to what other people are doing. I mean, you might notice if you are being bitten by mosquitoes, but I mean, obviously, you're not going to be looking around seeing if people are getting bitten by mosquitoes when you're supposed to be meditating.

I mean, some people apparently taste better or smell better to mosquitoes. I mean, I have noticed that where some people, like, for example, in my case, I was like a horsefly magnet. If if I was

in a group and we were like walking through the forest, then the the horse flies would come after me because the Burmese are adjusted, you know, they're evolved to live in a tropical climate and so they wouldn't be covered with sweat, but horse flies are attracted to moisture. Like you may have noticed in the west you come, you go swimming like in a river or a lake, you come out, that's when the horse flies come after you when you're all wet. They're attracted to moisture. And I would just be drenched in sweat. The Burmese would be fine. I'd be all sweaty. So the horse flies would come after me.

But with regard to meditating, yeah, if
if you notice other people are being
bitten by mosquitoes, when you're in a
group meditation, then you're obviously
not meditating. You're just
rubbernecking and looking around, see
what other people are doing.
I remember when I was at Pandarama
um there were there were some mosquitoes
in the meditation hall and it was just
something that you just had to endure
you know I I wouldn't even be slapping
them you know right in front of
everybody you know it just doesn't look
right doesn't look good
and there was only a few anyway so it
was just and it was in Rangon so it was

not endemic with malaria anyhow it was just inconvenient and uncomfortable and itchy

But then somebody donated a bunch of um like little mosquito nets, you know, they were just like a round mosquito net and you'd sit inside of it. It wasn't like a long one like went over a bed. It was just enough room for you to sit inside. And there was a a Bangladeshi monk there who was just delighted, you know. He was he was like a kid on on Christmas morning, you know, wideeyed. It's like, is are can we use those are those for us? And I didn't even want to use them just because, you know, I

wanted to be the aesthetic, you know, but I don't I don't remember if I even even use them even though they were available. Just just some macho thing, I think. Just sit there and get bitten by mosquitoes just in order not to be a wimp. [snorts]

Anyhow,

I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ethiopian fake TIG. An Ethiopian fake TIG says, "You have on various occasions said you would not explain dependent core rising. And recently, as I have tried to read Martin Hideagger, I became across a sort of definition of my own and wanted your thoughts on it. Since everything is

impermanent, then nothing can't last forever."

Meaning something is born and it dies and becomes nothing. But since impermanence affects everything, nothing itself must become something at some point. Could this be a definition for why there is something now and how it won't exist soon and how it will exist again in the future?

And I have to admit, I don't fully comprehend this question.

It's it's uh let's see since everything is impermanent then nothing can't last forever and

I mean it seems like that might be bad

English. It might be that something or anything can't last forever because everything is impermanent. So I mean everything can't last forever. Nothing really can last forever.

Meaning something is born and it dies and becomes nothing. Well, that's not necessarily true. I mean, just because something is impermanent doesn't mean that it becomes nothing. You know, it can just dissolve into its constituent parts. Like when a person dies, they're dead, but they're they don't become nothing. You know, there's still, you know, their karmic momentum has passed on and become um oh, what is it called? Something relinking consciousness, birth

relinking consciousness, something like that. you know, their body is still there decomposing, you know. So, it's not like if something is impermanent that it just suddenly becomes nothing. Like this cup is impermanent, but [clears throat] probably what's going to happen is it's not just going to poof out of existence. It's going to break and get thrown away and become shards of a cup in some landfill somewhere.

So, it doesn't really become nothing. It just changes form until it no longer is identified as cup or living being or whatever.

Let's see. But let's let's continue

here. Since everything is impermanent, then nothing can't last forever. [clears throat] Meaning something is born and it dies and becomes nothing. Well, we already discussed that. But since impermanence affects everything, nothing itself must become something at some point. Okay. Well, that's kind of I mean

nothing itself I mean once once you're saying nothing itself, it's not nothing anymore. I mean nothing itself I mean you've already identified it as something. It's just something that's called nothing. Nothing itself. But still, you're calling it an it. You know, you're you've labeled it. I mean,

it's obviously something, at least
conceptually.
The human mind can't deal with nothing.
So, we're again, we're we're dealing
with samsara
and symbolism, [clears throat]
perceptions,
and dualism. So, something and nothing
or nothing and everything, you know,
they're they're opposites.
But it's it's kind of like nibbana and
samsara. It's it's uh so long as you're
in dealing with samsaric dualism, then
yeah, they kind of counterbalance each
other in a way. They're sort of
opposites at least from some points of

view. So again, a nothing and something.
I mean even nothing is a something if
you've named it and are dealing with it
as an it.
So anyways let's continue here. See but
since impermanence affects everything
nothing itself must become something at
some point. Yeah from from like the the
psychology of some sorrow. That might be
true. Although even nothing is already
something if you've named it and are
calling it it. You know it's like zero.
Zero is still something.
You know it's at least it's a number.
Could [snorts] this be a definition for
why there is something now and how it
won't exist soon and how it will exist

again in the future? Well, I mean it could be a definition or a kind of explanation. maybe a kind of vague explanation.

Um,

golly. I mean, not everybody would explain things in the same way. So, not everyone would explain it that way. Maybe the Buddha would not have explained it that way. But, I mean, it does seem to be plausible as a kind of explanation. Could this be a definition for why there is something now and how it won't exist soon and how it will exist again in the future? Well, you need stuff changing all the time. So,

there is that. I mean, dependent core rising requires change.

I mean, if if nothing changes, that's death. And if everything is changing, then that's meaningless chaos. So, you have to have a dependently co-arising balance between like stasis and and change,

which I mean, I've tried to explain this before.

Maybe I shouldn't try and explain it again.

Gosh, this is taking a lot out of me.

This this Q&A,

could this be a definition for why there this is a difficult question. Could this be a definition for why there is

something now and how it won't exist
soon and how it will exist again in the
future? I mean if you consider that to
be the way dependent colising works
where you always have to have some kind
of contrast
in order for the to have a world of
multiplicity
you have to have contrast
you know again I bring this up
frequently Hegel's
like Hegel's logic begins with the first
thesis antithesis and synthesis the
first thesis Hegel's philosophy at least
in his logic starts with the thesis of
pure being.

And then the antithesis of pure being is pure non-being.

And according to Hegel, they just merge together. They're they can't be differentiated because neither one of them has any like distinctive characteristics. You know, there's nothing discernible in either of them. They just merge. And for the rest of Hegel's philosophy, he just assumes that everything and nothing are synonyms. They're interchangeable. Everything, nothing, the same. So then he has to have the synthesis, which is contrast. There has to be a contrast between like some perceived distinction between this being and and like not

being. You know, it's like this is the this is a everything else is not A. So you have to have that contrast between A and not A in order for anything to exist at least in a perceptual sumsic context. So

everything has to be changing too. So you have to have some kind of impermanence. I mean the world is just some sorrow is designed that there has to be some kind of impermanence going on and contrasts.

So yeah, I mean it all works out that way, but it I think it might be beyond my capacity to fully explain exactly how it happens,

especially just sitting here not having not being able to just sit here and and ponder it for five minutes in silence before giving an answer.

But I mean it's it's it could be used as an explanation for how things happen.

Not that something becomes nothing. You know, it's like just because something is impermanent doesn't mean that it just poofs out of existence.

It just like changes form until the form is no longer identified with what it used to be.

You know, matter and just going with physics, you know, matter is neither created nor destroyed. it just changes form.

Although, of course, you know, in quantum physics, you got particles and antiarticles that appear out of nothing supposedly. And then, but we don't need to get into that. And so, I'm just I'm just going to move on to Ethiopian fake TIG's second question.

He says, "You mentioned having tried various substances in the past. Have you tried MDMA?

And how do you like it compared to other compounds? And is MDMA the same as ecstasy?

I mean, whether it is or not, I haven't taken MDMA or ecstasy. Ecstasy was just starting to come into fashion around the

time that I became a monk. And then after I stopped being a monk, I just never encountered it. never encountered any any opportunity. Nobody I knew had any, you know, I wasn't particularly even looking for it. So, just for whatever reason, ecstasy and or MDMA, uh, it's a substance that I've I've have no experience with personally, so I can't really compare it to other compounds. I've heard it's very nice. you know, people like back when people were going to raves, there was a lot of that going on, but I've never been to a rave either. Just I just missed out on all that. So, I'm just going to move on to Ethiopian fake Tig's third question.

He says, "Having heard all your talks, you speak a lot about your dad, but not about your mom. Could you perhaps talk more about her and what sort of person she was and her general temperament towards you?

Okay. I mean, one reason why I don't talk about my mother much is I don't want to seem like I'm like denigrating her because I mean, [clears throat] how do I put this? It's like spiritually she was a child. My father spiritually was relatively mature. My mother spiritually,

I mean, she was this kind of a a normie and she just kind of got her her she

didn't have a spiritual or religious or philosophical bone in her body, just normie.

And she was raised in poverty during the depression as a as a child. Um, she married the first man that that proposed to her just to get out of like a a dysfunctional family and then he was he beat her and so forth. She had eight children that I know of, most of whom I've never met. My mother was married five times. My father was also, incidentally, so that's 10 marriages between my two parents.

and she just did not have much depth to her as people go. I mean, she wasn't stupid, but I mean, she had a ninth

grade education

and she said that she dropped out of

school just cuz she was ashamed of just

wearing ragged clothes and stuff. I mean

this is she came from a poor family

during the depression you know it was

just

um watched a lot of TV

and she was she tried to be a good

mother at least to my brother and me. I

mean most of her kids she did not raise

to adulthood you know she'd move on to a

different husband or something.

Um, but see, I mean, you may understand

now why it may seem that just describing

my mother may seem like I'm like

disrespecting her, but I mean, she [clears throat] did the best she could, the best she knew how, made a lot of mistakes in her life. Didn't learn very much from a lot of those mistakes.

And uh my father prophesied a long time ago that she she would die alone. You know, she had eight kids and none of her kids were taking care of her. I was a monk in Burma at the time. I couldn't really take care of her well in her old age.

And one day

she uh I mean as she got older her balance was not so good and she just fell down in a parking lot, you know, walking out to her car. She just lost

her balance, fell down, hit her head on the pavement and that was it. She was no longer in this world. And now I hear about this when I I was in Rangon, Burma at the time. And um it's like in a way I was

I was kind of grateful that she died so easily. You know, it was just quick and and merciful, quick and painless, which was about the best you could hope for. I remember my father once told my my father's told me once. He told my mother that there's a lot worse things that can happen to a person than dying. And my mother thought that was the stupidest, most ridiculous thing she'd ever heard

of. What could possibly be worse than dying? You know, she was afraid of death. You know, she was just in and of the world.

And so it was like a small mercy that when she did die, you know, it was just fall down, hit her head, boom, and that's it. You know, no prolonged illness, no prolonged suffering, you know, it was just quick and painless.

And so, I mean, I had a certain gratitude for that.

Um, you know, not that I was happy that she died, of course, but that she was able to go so mercifully, so to speak.

[sighs]

But I mean,

she really I mean, I don't know how to say this. It's like Edgar Casey used to say that you tend to have a strong karmic connection with one of your parents but usually not both. And my strong karmic connection apparently was with my father and not with my mother. My mother and I were pretty much on different planets about when I reached about the age of 13. I kind of kind of outgrew my mother's attitude when I was like 13 years old. My father and I remained like not only father and son but friends. You know, we could hang out and have interesting conversations and so forth. And my mother and I, we were

just not on the same planet
fairly early on.
And with regard to me being a monk, she
just did not comprehend it at all. She
she would much prefer to have
grandchildren to spoil. I mean, she just
did not understand Buddhism at all. In
fact, she wouldn't even say Buddhism.
She said, "Do you think you'll always
belong to that religion?"
And I mean, she just didn't understand
it. And she just kind of had a certain
humble, respectful
attitude towards me. I mean, she didn't
understand me. She knew I was smarter
than her. Not that I'm trying to brag or
anything.

And I remember one time I was a monk
just visiting uh my family. I was
staying at my dad's house and my mother
came to visit me and I was trying to do
something on the computer and I was a
little bit sort of impatient with it and
so I was kind of frowning when I saw my
mother come in mainly because I was
already frowning at, you know, some kind
of [__] on the computer. And she saw
that when she came in I was frowning at
her. She just said, "I'm sorry." sorry.
You know, she she just offered to leave,
you know, and then
it's uh you know, I have to like say,
"No, it's okay. I'm just just frustrated

with what's going on on this computer.
It's please stay." You know, but I mean,
she was she adopted this really kind of
humble
I mean, I don't know how to really
express it, you know. She was just kind
of very differential to me um in in my
adult years.
She couldn't she I mean she could not
understand me.
[snorts] And like I say, we were on
different planets.
But I mean I really um I appreciate that
she did do a good job as my mother um as
well as she could. I remember one time I
was like maybe 13 years old and I
shoplifted something from a store and my

mother found out about it. You know, she was like doing detective work. You know, she's she she figured it out that I that I had shoplifted this thing. And when when she found out, first of all, she started crying and ran from the room, which made me feel like about this big. You know, to make your own mother cry just with like shame over you is not good. And then she she made me take it back and apologize,

which is something a good mother would do. I mean, she did try to be a good mother within her somewhat limited means.

Anyway,

[snorts] I think uh that's enough

reminiscing about my mom.

I hope she's in a better place now. I

really do. I hope she did. Um

uh

I mean she made a lot of mistakes in her

life, but I do hope that she was had

like more positive than negative on the

ledger, you know, more merit than

demerit or just was able to progress in

this life so that she's kind of in a

better situation than she was.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to

the next question, which is the last

question.

And this is from Yoshi Buouie, who

submitted this question under Q&A number

n 119. So, it's almost a coincidence.
Well, maybe not, but I I did I mean,
it's not necessary that I will notice if
someone
leaves a comment to an old an older Q&A.
Usually if I'm like
collecting the questions and putting
them on the list, you know, I just go to
like the most recent videos and look at
the comments under that and then go to
the the uh the [snorts] Discord server
and if anyone emailed me a question, um,
usually more often than not, I'll
remember that and and go to the the
email or go to my inbox and get that.
But um if you do ask questions, it's

best to leave them under the most recent Q&A because if you leave them under an older Q&A, there's less of a chance that I'll notice it. So that that having been said, Yoshi Buouie says, let's see, quote, karma can be viewed as retribution, although it's not any kind of a conscious purpose behind karma. It's just the way it works out a lot of the time," unquote. And I assume he's quoting me from a previous Q&A. So then he continues, "Is this similar to how we see certain electromagnetic frequencies as colors when in reality there's no color to it? It wasn't meant to be color, so to speak."

Um, well, I [clears throat] mean, I can

just go off on a complete tangent with regard to this, that people have been seeing colors. People have been perceiving colors much longer than people have been perceiving electromagnetic frequencies.

And so from my unorthodox weird point of view, I think that the color may have come first and then just as people start looking deeper and investigating more deeply, they have to create some deeper foundation for color and so they come up with electromagnetic frequencies or or wavelengths of electromagnetic radiation.

So, it may be that electromagnetic

radiation didn't even really exist until
it got like nailed down by physicists
and got kind of got locked in to our
world,
locked into our version of some sorrow.
But let's just set that aside. Let's
just assume for the sake of argument
that materialistic scientism is true
at least at the samsaric level and that
light is visible light is really just
certain bandwidth of electromagnetic
radiation
or if you prefer photons.
Soh
[sighs] my view of karma where it can be
viewed as retribution although it's
really not any kind of conscious purpose

behind karma you know it's just just the way it goes. It's just the way it works and it can be interpreted that way and it seems to work that way sometimes in some contexts.

Um and there's something I could say about karma and I might as well. So, let's just digress wildly again. I've got this idea about karma. There's a certain person who asks questions on this Q&A on these Q&As's who doesn't believe in karma, especially the whole retribution aspect of it. And I have to admit that I don't think that like karmic retribution is really the way a lot of people see it where it's like you

like you you commit murder. I shouldn't say the word on YouTube. I guess you perpetrate a homicide, which means you're going to have to be the victim of a homicide in the future in like some future life if not this one. You know, let's say somebody is becomes deceased in this life and then you can have some psychic say, well, it was because they were a Roman soldier in the 2n century AD who like was like like homiciding or like what's the word? Retiring barbarian villages. And so this is the retribution of that. And I don't think it necessarily works that way. It's like you are creating your own reality. And so if you are creating a kind of violent

reality with lots of dishonesty and and
insensitivity to others and stealing and
so forth that you're just creating a
world that contains that and so it's
more likely to be happening to you or
it's like
a foolish person is like a bad driver.
So, a bad driver is just more likely to
get in a wreck because they're just
using less intelligence and less
insight,
less caution,
less situational awareness.
So it's like your foolishness causes
these bad things to happen just because
of like sloppiness

and like recklessness more than you know I did this and therefore it's going to have to happen back to me in in the same way just because I did that and so it's like that act is going to have to happen back to me. I don't think it necessarily works that way.

It's just you create a world with violence in it, it's more likely that that violence is going to come back on you. You create a world with dishonesty in it through your own lying, for example, then you just put it out there, you're living in a more dishonest world because you are creating this world through your own perceptions. And so it just comes back at you sooner or later

just because it's there. You've contaminated your own environment. So, you know, it's sort of like in dreams. You might have a dream where something bad happens to you. It doesn't mean that in some other previous dream you did that same bad thing to some other being. It's just your own mind is creating it. And because you're not entirely wise, not entirely conscious. You just create nightmares sometimes. And I think that in our waking state, we some people without necessarily having done evil deeds create nightmares for themselves just through lack of skill at like driving the vehicle of their own

samsaric being.

But let's get back to the question at long last.

So, is this similar to how we see certain electromagnetic frequencies as colors when in reality there's no color to it? It wasn't meant to be color, so to speak. Um, I mean, yeah, I I could say there there's a certain analogy that could be made that, you know, just because something is seen a certain way doesn't mean that it was intended to be that way through some conscious decision. is just kind of a byproduct, a secondary characteristic, that kind of thing.

[sighs]

So

yeah, maybe I mean you could look at it

that way that uh karma is just a kind of

you know it's

it's it's sort of like a byproduct of

human psychology or just

worldly psychology.

is just sort of a like a a symptom of

how our mind works. Like duality, you

know, that's that would be like another

symptom. Multiplicity is like a symptom

of how our mind works.

Impermanence is is like a symptom of of

how worldly samsara functions. You know,

it wasn't like nobody decided that it

was going to be that way. it just works

out that way.

So, I mean, there might be more

like appropriate analogies that could be

made,

but

I don't think I want to sit here and try

and think of one.

But I mean [snorts] it's kind of similar

to how we see electromagnetic

frequencies as colors or colors as

electromagnetic frequencies

which I think might be a little more

accurate.

[snorts]

Oh my golly. This is for some reason

this has been kind of a strenuous Q&A.

I've been exercising my brain muscles in

this Q&A. But now we're done because I'm I'm finished. And so if you do you have any questions you think I can answer, feel free to ask no more than three questions per person per episode. Please like and subscribe if you have not done so already. Check out the URL links below, including the new book that has me attacking another monk for half a second.

And uh be happy.